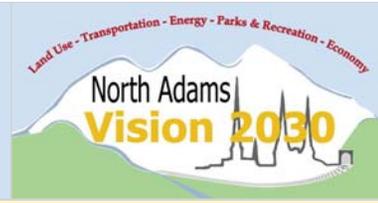


Economy

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



The following goals, policies and actions have been developed from community and stakeholder input, and were reviewed at a public workshop on November 14, 2012. Comments from the public workshop are noted on the right. At the conclusion of the meeting, participants were given five sticky dots which they placed next to the actions they believe should be priorities. The numbers before the actions indicate the number of priority sticky dots it received.

Goal 1: Effectively Rebrand and Market the City

Policy 1.1: Develop a rebranding package to effectively communicate the city to residents and visitors.

- (2) Action: Hire a marketing consultant to create a rebranding package for the city to guide a unified approach to communicating about the city to effectively reach the right audiences.
- (2) Action: Create a website for the North Adams Tourism office to take the lead in implementing the city's marketing strategy.

Policy 1.2: Work with local, northern Berkshire and regional entities to market the city.

- Action: Enhance local appreciation and use of sites and destinations through enhanced promotion of destinations, trails, and activities. This could include special rates or days for locals and students to encourage use.
- Action: Foster strong linkages between the North Adams Tourism Office and the newly formed North Adams Chamber of Commerce to offer a unified and coordinated planning and promotion platform for the city. The North Berkshire Industrial Park & Development Corporation can also provide assistance.
- Action: Work with local inns and businesses, as well as town info booths, to support customer referral to city restaurants, inns, and attractions. This should be done within the city itself, but can also be pursued with other northern and southern Berkshire sites to help drive increased day trips to the city from elsewhere in the region.
- Action: Work to strengthen representation of the city and its attractions within the regional marketing platforms in collaboration with Berkshire Visitors Bureau, Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, and Berkshire Creative, as well as regional media such as the Berkshire Eagle's In the Berkshires and events pages.

Workshop comments received:

Goals 1 & 2

- . We need youth (under 30 years); providing an artist residency program and music scene are key.
- . Marketing slogan suggestion: "NoAd – Hip without the Hassle."
- . North Adams Hospital = training and skilled jobs.
- . Target MCLA & Williams alumni to build local businesses by providing incentives.
- . Tie in with McCann for Healing Arts curriculum; guidance from Kripalu or existing healing arts in North County.
- . Add renewable energy technologies into Goal 2 actions.
- . Sending tourists up and down Reservoir Road is extremely dangerous. Road must be improved and made safer before considering this strategy.
- . A simplified action – the tourism office should promote outdoor & historic attractions.
- . Creation of and highlight trails helps item 2.2.
- . Disagree with trying to connect North Adams Regional Hospital with downtown (it's good that it is up the hill in the woods).
- . The hospital is already visible through billboards and advertising.
- . Cost of living in North Adams is one of the City's greatest advantages.

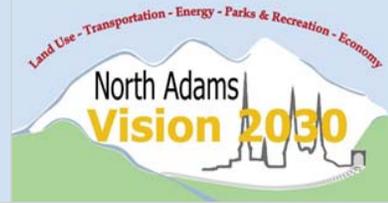
Goal 2 : Leverage the City's Many Assets into Economic Catalysts

Policy 2.1: Capitalize on the proximity of local colleges to grow new business and link graduates into the workforce.

- Action: Work with the college to support innovation challenges at MCLA and between MCLA and other colleges and universities in adjacent regions.
- Action: Create a seed capital fund for research and development related to programming at Berkshire Community College, Greenfield Community College, MCLA, and McCann to support local entrepreneurship and new business start-ups that directly link to courses of study and economic clusters in the region.
- (2) Action: Support MCLA investment in the downtown, including the Mohawk Theater, to enhance the City's arts and cultural offerings.
- (2) Action: Develop an Ashland Street Corridor study to explore ways for the city to maximize the potential economic impact of the new Center for Science and Innovation at MCLA.
- (2) Action: Explore the potential for place-based economic activity that could be supported through new programming at McCann, BCC (at McCann or other North Adams location) and MCLA such as historical preservation trades, sustainable agriculture, and high-tech manufacturing.

Economy

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



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Goal 2: CONTINUED: Leverage the City's Many Assets into Economic Catalysts

Policy 2.2: Grow the region as a premier active outdoor recreation destination in the northeast.

Action: Capitalize on the high volume visitation to Mount Greylock to draw people into the city through marketing, gateway redevelopment and signage, particularly in light of planned investments into Furnace Street and Heritage State Park, to draw people into the Downtown.

(2) Action: Leverage the proximity to Mount Greylock and other state forests to grow economic activity related to active outdoor recreation options including equipment design and manufacturing, outdoor adventure tours, river recreation, and rentals.

Action: Cultivate a range of outdoor race events throughout the year to highlight the outdoor opportunities of the city, make healthy lifestyles more visible, and draw in new visitors.

Action: Designate the city as an Appalachian Trail Community to enhance marketing opportunities via that national platform.

Policy 2.3: Strengthen connections between the North Adams Regional Hospital and the larger community, while supporting the economic vitality of the Northern Berkshire Healthcare.

Action: Promote community wellness through supportive programming regarding insurance, preventative medicine, and healthy lifestyle options.

Action: Increase the visibility of the hospital within the city through signage, advertising, and wellness messaging to highlight its prominence as an employer and regional health asset.

Action: Work with the Northern Berkshire Healthcare to identify employee retention factors related to community-based needs and develop process of addressing them.

Action: Support continued exploration of the potential for a wellness economic cluster, including alternative

Goal 3 : Work Effectively with Business, the Community and Investors to Achieve a Continual Cycle of Investment and Improvement in the City

Policy 3.1: Make permitting and city processes a model of business-friendly best practice.

Action: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the development services offered through the city to evaluate ways in which departments, staff, and processes can be co-located and integrated to offer streamlined, customer-focused services.

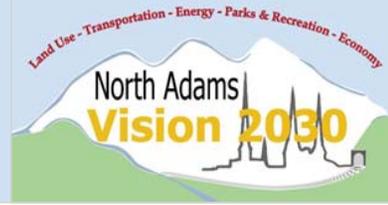
Action: Facilitate one-stop process for small-business development to ensure the right connections are made from the start. The city should encourage owners to take advantage of available business counseling services from outside support agencies.

Action: Update the city's permitting guide to include flowcharts, timelines, contacts and other features to improve the clarity and transparency for developers.

Action: Increase the number of forms and city services available on-line.

Economy

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



Goal 3: CONTINUED: Work Effectively with Business, the Community and Investors to Achieve a Continual Cycle of Investment and Improvement in the City

Policy 3.2: Make optimal use of tools and incentives to attract and leverage investment.

- (1) Action: Actively pursue New Market Tax Credits to make financially marginal projects feasible and spur investment in the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Action: Facilitate the navigation of Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits and Tax Increment Financing on commercial reinvestment projects by ensuring designations are in place for key sites. (See also historic preservation chapter.)
- Action: Explore the potential for establishing a Business Improvement District in the downtown through the North Adams Chamber of Commerce.
- Action: Develop small business incentive programs, such as offering façade rehabilitation program.
- Action: Work with local banks to explore creative solutions to small business financing needs, such as a bank pool-funded revolving loan fund for small business start-ups.
- Action: Maximize the use of public-private partnerships to leverage investment into the city. This could include working with groups such as the Partnership for North Adams or other parties interested in investing in new development or redevelopment projects in the city offering a public benefit.

Goal 4: Encourage Job Growth and Business Relocation in the City

Policy 4.1: Actively recruit new businesses to the city.

- Action: Develop a web-based platform to communicate about the city, including sites, incentives, market connections, and community amenities to potential future businesses looking to relocate. This could either be through the city’s website, northern Berkshire Chamber website, or other suitable entity.
- (2) Action: Designate a single point of contact for potential businesses looking to relocate to help answer questions and arrange a tour.
- (1) Action: Work with I Berkshire to ensure the city is well represented in marketing and business attraction materials. and discussions.

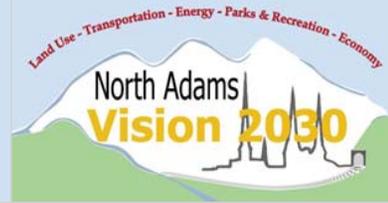
Workshop comments received:

Goals 3 & 4

- . Develop small business TIF program for addition of employees and/or increase in business square footage.
- . Place articles in business magazines or blogs that feature local businesses.
- . **(1)** Promote North Adams as a good place for telecommuters to live. These people draw income from larger economies and spend much of it locally. High quality lifestyle in the Berkshires can be a draw for people who can live anywhere and work via the internet.
- . Actively court good businesses to relocate and/or expand here, such as a brewery, milliner, etc.
- . Provide incentives for small business owners to take an intro to business session to impress the importance of business planning, savings, realistic growth potential, etc.

Economy

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



Goal 5: Grow a Skilled Workforce To Meet Economic Needs Now and In the Future

Policy 5.1: Offer a diverse range of internship, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training opportunities in the city.

Action: Work with local businesses to identify potential internships for high school and college students in the area to provide support to local businesses, provide learning opportunities for youth, and help forge professional linkages between graduates and area employers.

Action: Leverage the presence of McCann as a key workforce development component in the region through enhanced programming, apprenticeship programs and other venues.

Action: Pursue a stronger BCC presence in the city to make technology and professional classes more accessible to north county and city residents in a way that complements and expands, rather than duplicates or competes with, those opportunities already available at MCLA.

Action: Work with MCLA's Graduate Dean as the department identifies growth opportunities in the area of continuing education.

Workshop comments received:

Goal 5

- . We have tons of internship opportunities. We need more jobs. Identify ways to convert existing internships into jobs.
- . Develop an agricultural training program at McCann and use neighboring farm land.
- . Consider multi-grade classrooms. There are many benefits and it's a simple thing to implement.
- . Work with MCLA to offer evening degree programs.

(1) *Policy 5.2: Ensure that the City's Pre-K-12 education system is one of the best in the region.*

Action: Engage the entire community, including businesses, to promote early childhood education enrollment. Glean lessons learned from the Pittsfield Promise initiative to make comparable campaign-based change in the city.

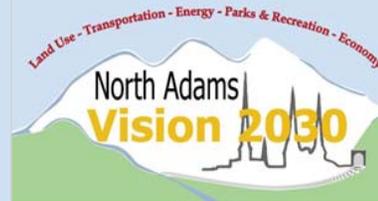
Action: Develop performance based targets for each school in the district to drive improvement and accountability to the taxpayers. This could be as simple as a specific MCAS score improvement or 4-year graduation rate, but should be accompanied by a realistic strategy for achieving progress in collaboration with the city, community groups and or social service providers.

Action: Encourage the public schools to offer innovative programs of study that are attractive to , such as music, theater, science, and place-based learning.

Action: Support use of the city's natural and cultural assets for place-based learning exploration, such as funding for field trips.

Economy—Downtown

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



Goal 6: Implement a Strategic Redevelopment Strategy to Reconnect and Rebuild the Downtown to Successfully Eliminate the Scars Left by Urban Renewal

Policy 6.1: Build upon strong anchor points within the downtown, expanding and connecting destinations until the cycle of reinvestment reaches the entire downtown.

Action: Systematically work with the Partnership for North Adams and private business and investment entities to achieve the successful redevelopment and reuse of critical priority development sites within the downtown. (See Downtown Priority Redevelopment Sites map.)

Action: Develop an inventory of downtown (and overall city) spaces available for rent, including details about cost and amenities available. Make the inventory centrally available and market downtown spaces as a priority.

Action: Develop downtown design guidelines to ensure that reinvestment retains the existing historic community fabric and that new development makes a positive contribution to the physical attractiveness of Main Street.

(1) Action: Revise downtown zoning to remove barriers for site reuse or expansion. This could include creating a mixed-use district within the downtown to encourage flexible and lively reuse of historic and underutilized buildings.

Action: Conduct or commission a parking utilization study to determine how well the existing parking supply meets the current and projected demands. Identify sites where parking may be excessive and redevelopment potential is high. Include key information such as the type of ownership (public or private).

Action: Develop a plan for low- or no-rent occupants as storefront vacancy is reduced. These spaces may currently be filled by galleries, artists, or non-profit organizations. Ensure that displacement due to positive market forces does not eliminate opportunities entirely. These individuals, businesses or organizations may be well-suited to some 2nd floor office-type spaces, or non-traditional spaces still available.

Action: Designate a Cultural District in the downtown to recognize and support the role of arts, culture and artists in the city's revitalization.

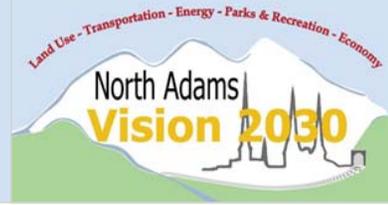
Workshop comments received:

Goal 6

- . The City and region need to develop an arts council to facilitate projects and initiatives.
- . Green the corridors.
- . Eliminate the chain barriers between River Street, Route 2, and Main Street.

Economy—Downtown

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



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Goal 6 CONTINUED: Implement a Strategic Redevelopment Strategy to Reconnect and Rebuild the Downtown to Successfully Eliminate the Scars Left by Urban Renewal

Policy 6.2: Target key pedestrian and bicycle improvements to foster safe and easy movement throughout the downtown and between the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

(2) Action: Build bike/pedestrian improvements into the annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) of the city to ensure that incremental progress is made. Begin with priorities and improvements identified in the walkability audits of the downtown and adjacent areas, as well as trail plans to connect sites within the downtown. Monitor or assess needs regularly thereafter to maintain a safe and connected pedestrian system.

Action: Enhance the sense of bike/pedestrian safety through the use of speed control mechanisms, enhanced lighting, and police patrol routes to ensure that students and others are comfortable traveling by foot by day or night.

(4) Action: Reduce excessive pavement in downtown, especially where parking is underutilized. Large areas of parking lot are a detriment to pedestrian activity and can prove dangerous for crossing and the land area in North Adams' downtown has an excessive amount of parking lot.

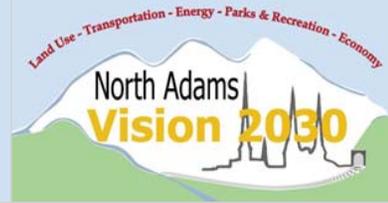
(2) Action: Capitalize on the shared use path development, and interest in alternatives to vehicular transportation, by planning multi-modal road design throughout and adjacent to downtown. Include bike lanes between MCLA and downtown. Take a Complete Streets approach to accommodate three modes of transportation (car, pedestrian, bicycle) on every street, whenever possible.

(3) Action: Address key problem intersections for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles by reducing crosswalk length, number of crosswalks to cross one street, modernizing pedestrian signals to include count-downs and audible beeps, and offering a refuge island in the case that road width cannot be reduced. Consider prohibiting turning right at a red light where pedestrian visibility is an issue, or there is a perpetual conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. Enact mechanisms for the ongoing identification of problem intersections so they can be addressed.

Action: Gradually build a multi-modal culture in the city by launching a public education and awareness campaign on the rules and safety practices for all modes of users to employ to safely share roads.

Economy—Downtown

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



Goal 7: Improve the Livability and Liveliness of Downtown
NOTE: This section will be elaborated on in the Housing and Neighborhoods Chapter.

Policy 7.1: Increase the number and variety of people living and working in the downtown.

(2) Action: Encourage a diversity of housing options in the downtown to meet a wide range of residents, and their preferences and needs. Ensure that there remain affordable housing opportunities. Offer tax incentives for private interests to develop appropriate housing, i.e. reinvesting in existing structures. Reduce municipal barriers to private residential investment in the downtown (i.e. incompatible zoning regulations or ordinances) to encourage growth.

Action: Target housing improvement programs within and adjacent to downtown such as River Street in addition to the areas detailed in the Housing & Neighborhoods section.

(2) Action: Develop an arts district in or adjacent to downtown to encourage the redevelopment of underutilized structures for affordable artist housing and arts-related businesses (from which art can be sold), through a mixed-use, housing and commercial space model.

Action: Develop student housing opportunities in the downtown in collaboration with MCLA and other educational and cultural institutions.

Action: Encourage transit to better connect local students with downtown. Support continued enhanced bus service between Williamstown and North Adams. Work with MCLA to add shuttle service between their campus and downtown.

Workshop comments received:

Goal 7

- . Mill renovations should provide residential and commercial space.
- . Existing arts related businesses aren't making money; some strategies may be premature.
- . Improving the pedestrian connection between MCLA and downtown should take priority.
- . Redirect Route 2 traffic back to Main Street, like other small cities such as Northampton, Lee, Stockbridge, etc.
- . The downtown diagonal parking is great.

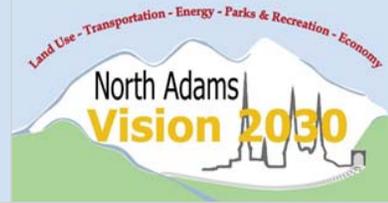
Policy 7.2: Develop attractive gateways and critical capture points to draw people into the downtown.

Action: Identify key points along major roadways into the city where additional signage or gateway enhancements could help direct traffic into the downtown, such as from Route 2 to Main Street or directing north from Furnace Street. Determine possibility to designate Route 2 for truck traffic only.

Action: Support the continuation of enhanced bus service between Williams College and the downtown.

Economy—Downtown

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



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Goal 7 CONTINUED: Improve the Livability and Liveliness of Downtown
NOTE: This section will be elaborated on in the Housing and Neighborhoods Chapter.

Policy 7.3: Diversify and expand the range of activities and attractions in Downtown.

(1) Action: Encourage programmatic connections between MASS MoCA, MCLA and downtown. Grow and support existing efforts such as MCLA’s Cultural Resource Center.

Action: Link special events in the city with those at the colleges, MASS MoCA and city anchors such as homecoming, parents’ weekend, music festivals to draw people into the downtown. This could include special store hours on those select weekends to ensure stores and restaurants will be open later.

(2) Action: Ensure permitting and regulations are user-friendly and supportive of continued Main Street-based events. Use regularly held events to attract people into the central core. For example, the Saturday Farmer’s Market is a popular event, but is held on the edge of downtown, rather than in the center. The city should facilitate street closures and collaborations between private and public entities. In addition, offer education and streamlined permits for food vendors and facilitate the process as much as possible.

(1) Action: Encourage and support agricultural- and food-based activities such as the Taste of North Adams, the community pizza oven, farmer’s markets, and urban community gardens.

(1) Action: Develop recreational opportunities stemming from the heart of downtown, such as a gateway to Mount Greylock and other natural attractions, and an urban walking trail system appropriate for all levels of mobility, and encourage supporting business development.

Policy 7.4: Integrate accessible and interactive community spaces for all ages throughout the downtown.

(1) Action: Encourage new green and open public spaces in the downtown, whether individual sites (i.e. a park), or linear (i.e. shared use path).

(2) Action: Work with the Hoosic River Revival Coalition and other community stakeholders to make physical and programmatic connections to the Hoosic River to elevate it to a signature feature and destination in the downtown. Develop green spaces and activity centers along its length to reconnect residents and visitors to the river, while maintaining or improving the same levels of flood protection. Wherever feasible, reduce or eliminate the physical barriers created by the concrete flood chutes and their surrounding land treatments.

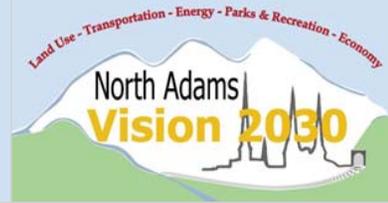
Action: Integrate interactive art throughout the downtown to make the pedestrian experience more compelling and encourage more street activity.

Action: Enhance the usability and attractiveness of existing downtown community spaces, such as Veteran’s Park and Colgrove Park.

(1) Action: Support the implementation of bike path extension through the downtown to connect the existing Ashutiwillticook Rail Trail in Adams to the bike path under construction in Williamstown.

Economy—Downtown

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS



Add your
Comments
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Goal 8 : Enhance Business Activity in the City Core

Policy 8.1: Coordinate and promote existing businesses in the downtown.

Action: Work with business membership organizations to encourage extended business hours and use city marketing vehicles to promote them. Provide marketing support and encourage a more robust evening and nightlife in downtown.

Action: Refine a central scheduling process and calendar in order to encourage event clustering while avoiding significant overlap among events both for city and larger region.

(I) Action: Establish a buy local campaign with supporting promotion. Include a focus on resident education about the economic impacts of buying local. Work with retailers to ensure there are local options with a range of price points.

Policy 8.2: Support programmatic connections between Downtown and anchor attractions such as MCLA, MASS MoCA and Northern Berkshire Healthcare.

(I) Action: Focus on developing programmatic connections from downtown to MCLA. While the distance between is walkable, it is far enough to require some incentive. For example, cultivate and promote downtown jobs and internships appropriate for MCLA students. Encourage and support location of MCLA’s fine and performing arts and arts management program to the Mohawk Theater.

(I) Action: Work with an MCLA focus group to determine ways to make North Adams a “college town,” such as the ideal range of retail offerings, locations, and business hours which appeal to college students, staff and faculty.

(I) Action: Work with MASS MoCA to reduce and eliminate the isolating effects on their visitors, and particularly on the campus businesses and their customers, which prevent or discourage many from leaving the site to go downtown, such as the fencing which surrounds their parking lot. Seek municipal infrastructure improvements to facilitate improved physical connections from the Downtown to the MASS MoCA campus.

Action: Identify and support programmatic connections between North Adams Regional Hospital and other Northern Berkshire Healthcare facilities and the downtown. Improve the transportation barriers to local healthcare access.

Workshop comments received:

Goal 8

- . Encourage/create small kiosks for rent during summer and early fall for arts, crafts, and food businesses throughout the week and weekend.
- . To encourage downtown visits, create a small green out of the former K-Mart parking lot.
- . Have a student/college “run” store that is a working classroom of sorts – business development, administration, operations, management skills; look into working with local artisans and craftspeople for this effort.