

**December 10, 2019 Visioning Session  
Hingham Downtown Association**

Group 1

**Question 1: Favorite Things?**

Dots	Response
3	Quaint character
6	Historic/history
3	Community aspect – it feels like a small town
3	Natural feel & beauty- worlds end, Wampatuck, harbor, main street
3	Proximity to water – harbor and coastline
6	Sense of community – citizen involvement making town great
1	Amount of open space
1	Sense of multi-generational residents
3	Community loyalty keeps the downtown vibrant – this is generational
2	Shared experiences and appreciation for Hingham
6	The Square – quaint, traditional, solid, safe
1	The reconstruction post train construction resulted in a mix of new and old businesses
1	Sidewalks downtown
2	Infrastructure – access to Boston
4	Schools and the many great opportunities the kids have, particularly in high school

**Question 2: Least Favorite Things?**

Dots	Response
16	Lack of customer parking in the square; lack of 15 minute parking downtown; lack of a mix of parking with different durations (30 min, 1 hour, 2 hour)
1	Resistance to change/something different i.e. The blending of new and old merchants and the level of community participation. Some owners and merchants downtown do not participate at all in the community or downtown association and don't seem invested in the community that is the downtown.
3	Lincoln building still vacant after 8 months. Due to excessive rent being asked but the vacancy isn't good for the downtown.
8	Mix of businesses could be improved
3	Lack of people wanting to get involved with other businesses. Need more collaboration and cohesiveness between the businesses in the downtown
1	Rotary is hard to navigate
1	Too few business in the square are open on Sundays
4	There is a lack of understanding in the town about who actually funds and does all the work for Christmas in the Square. People think it's the town but it is really the merchants and it is a huge effort. More assurance of the permanence of this and other events is needed and that would be helped by a stable funding mechanism (town, tax donation, etc.)
3	Lack of hotel or overnight place to stay, Inn
4	Cell service downtown and in town is poor
	Absence of a local paper

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### Question 3: What's missing?

- Lack of town funding for Downtown events, parade, fireworks, etc.
- Inn
- Parking Garage
- Urgent care
- Teen center
- Bike Racks
- More food options
- Better property maintenance of existing businesses – inside and out
- Need to activate and beautify harbor more
- Beautification needed in downtown and harbor
- Footbridge over 3a to connect downtown to the harbor
- Shuttle service from shipyard to the harbor to downtown to the train station, etc.
- Wayfinding signs
- Traffic light by St. Paul's
- Increased awareness of why to shop downtown versus the shipyard and derby street shops because the Hingham square and the merchants give back to the community while the larger retail spaces take the profits and do not give back.

### Question 4: Opportunities & Challenges?

#### Challenges:

- Areas with dense population
- More traffic
- Need new senior center, new police station, north and south fire stations, foster school so a big focus on capital expenditures is needed
- The high school is very crowded
- Cost of real estate is high
- Providing affordable housing options for seniors
- Resistance to accessory dwelling units
- Increase in stressed out and distracted drivers
- Downtown needs to provide one stop shopping instead of being a one stop destination
- Need traffic lights at main/middle and kilby/CJC
- Online shopping is competition for the merchants

#### Opportunities

- Inn
- More tax revenue
- Offer tax incentives to attract businesses
- Make the square more experiential
- Provide an amazing personal experience in Hingham square – comfort, personal service, safety
- Benjamin Lincoln house
- Create a larger historic campus

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- Historic tourism
- Capitalize on location and access to Boston to drive tourism and restaurant visits
- At the business level need to follow best practices and always improve operations
- Town of Hingham needs to follow a practice of continual improvement

**Question 5:- one thing to improve Hingham**

Dots	Response
5	Convert post office to an inn
2	Create working plan to support growth
3	Make it more affordable to live
13	Solve the parking problem downtown and add 15 minute parking sports downtown, add a parking garage
6	Get a trolley, connect harbor, downtown and other sites
4	Connect the square to lower north to the harbor in one commercial/entertainment district
10	Have a mix of businesses in the square that attracts people
1	Historic walking tour as part of the wayfinding signs, etc.

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Group 2

**Question 1: Favorite Things?**

Dots	Response
	Pride
7	Schools
	Culture
3	Walkability-sidewalks
6	Water access
2	Sense of community
4	Historic nature
1	stewardship
1	Open space
2	Downtown restaurants
7	Having a downtown. Having a center
2	Transportation – commuter options
3	Boston proximity
	parks
3	Family friendly
3	Traditions – parade, Christmas in the square, colorful stripes in the street
	volunteerism

**Question 2: Least Favorite Things?**

Dots	Response
5	Need traffic management to slow folks down
5	Downtown parking – there is not enough
2	Lack of people walking in downtown
3	Not enough open restaurants
8	Struggle for funding important town traditions – why can't there be some ongoing town funding?
2	Folks can't get from shipyard to downtown
3	3A is a barrier
5	Lack of diversity
	Need sidewalks shoveled
1	Lack of consistency in shop hours
3	Complex and hard to navigate regulations – working with town hall
	Signage regulations too restrictive
	Recognize pressure on town staff
	Town required mitigation is expensive, inflexible
	Barriers to folks using the square, (info/parking)
	Lack of business liaison at town hall
1	Need more work with landowners on retail mix and need to influence the mix somehow
	Generational conflict sharing the resources
	Need better civic dialogue

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9	Need to better market the square
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**Question 3: What's Missing?**

- Diversity, culture, restaurants all facets
- Active downtown night life
- Swimming pool
- More waterfront access/use
- Safer 3A crossing
- Making town less car centric – more sidewalks, increase walkability
- Store diversity – toys, books
- Beautification - flowers, no overflowing trash cans
- Environmental consciousness about recycling, etc.

**Question 4: Opportunities & Challenges?**

- Transportation systems that work
- Hard to downsize in Hingham
- Lack of affordable housing
- Make the square a destination for day trips
- Maintaining large homes as younger families move in
- How to encourage diversity as office space opens up
- Maintaining vibrant retail despite competition with the internet – make the square unique, attract visitors and tourists, make the square a destination,
- Hotel in the square
- Traffic control downtown
- Impact on schools of new development

**Question 5: one thing to improve Hingham**

Dots	Response
9	Increase the community's welcoming and expand diversity and inclusiveness
4	Fields and playgrounds need improvements
6	Bike racks and bike share programs
	Recreation center downtown
5	Town response to taking care of the most vulnerable
	Senior or multigenerational center
9	Plan for large downtown development sites – like the station street parking lot
8	Expand geographic footprint of what is downtown
2	Expand support for veterans and our military
6	Expand arts and culture