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## Town of Acton

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Town of Acton Receives State Grant to Plan Assistance Along Great Road Commercial Corridor

ACTON – The Town of Acton is pleased to announce that it has received a \$60,000 grant from the state Department of Housing and Community Development to address pandemic-related challenges among businesses in the Great Road Commercial Corridor.

The town applied for the grant, through the Local Rapid Recovery Planning Program, in December. The goal is to develop a tailored Local Rapid Recovery Plan that will address Acton's unique challenges. Recovery Plans can include a range of projects, such as infrastructure improvements, marketing and promotion, bike/pedestrian improvements, and façade and/or storefront signage enhancements.

"This is another example of how we are working tirelessly to support our businesses in Acton," Town Manager John Mangiaratti said. "I look forward with working with Land Use Economic Development Director Matthew Selby, Planning Director Kristen Guichard and the Economic Development Committee and other stakeholders on this new initiative."

In the next week the town will begin its planning efforts with a survey to obtain initial input from Great Road businesses.

The Great Road Commercial Corridor, from the Littleton town line to the Concord town line, is home to numerous small service- and retail-related businesses. 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 Town also identified other challenges along the Corridor:

- 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 will work with consultant Beta Group, Inc., to develop the Recovery Plan. Those projects then may be funded through public, private, and/or philanthropic sources.

"Massachusetts' downtowns and main streets drive local economic activity and provide a wide range of opportunities to residents in communities throughout the state," Gov. Charlie Baker said. "Our administration recognizes the challenges the pandemic has created for these districts and the businesses that comprise them, and we are glad to provide \$9.5 million in awards to help municipalities plan for a strong and sustained recovery."

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