

UMASS / TOWN OF AMHERST
HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN
NARRATIVE REPORT

Prepared by:

U3 ADVISORS

December 15, 2014

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2014, the Town Gown Steering Committee (TGSC), comprised of representatives from the University of Massachusetts and the Town of Amherst, engaged a team led by U3 Advisors to create a Housing and Economic Development Plan. As stated to TGSC, the scope of work was to:

"Recommend the strategies, interventions, and processes for UMass and Amherst to collaborate and create a stable balance in housing and economic growth that allows both the University and Town to prosper."¹

The consulting team utilized research and analytic tools such as publicly available data, information provided by the University and the Town, Geographic Information System mapping software, and information collected in interviews, focus groups, tours, and site visits to create the plan. The resulting work was presented in two different public TGSC meetings – Preliminary Findings on August 5th, 2014, and Final Recommendations on November 3rd, 2014. Both presentations were posted to the TGSC website (www.umass.edu/town-gown/) along with a Consolidated Report that combines the two presentations into a single 106 slide presentation.

The purpose of this document is to provide narrative context that translates U3 Advisors' Consolidated Report and information communicated in the two TGSC presentations. Mirroring that report, this Narrative Report is divided into the following sections:

- Framing the Problem
- Analysis & Observations
- Preliminary Recommendations
- Preliminary Feedback
- Final Recommendations
 - Site and Program
 - Development Mechanisms
 - Innovation Economy
 - Organization
- Implementation Steps

¹ June 26, 2014 TGSC Committee Meeting

FRAMING THE PROBLEM

The Town of Amherst is home to the University of Massachusetts, the Commonwealth's flagship research institution. UMass's impact on Amherst cannot be overstated, given the size of its physical land holdings, student body, and employment base, not to mention its role in not just supporting but driving the local economy through the secondary businesses and services that rely on its presence (along with Amherst College and Hampshire College). However, a research institution with nearly 25,000 students taking classes in a town with less than 40,000 residents is bound to create imbalances and points of friction that require a level of cooperation and management from leadership of both places.

In Amherst these challenges have emerged primarily in the areas of housing and economic development. As this report and the Consolidated Report highlight, Amherst's residential growth can be almost entirely attributed to growth from UMass. Yet, while UMass has added beds, few additional non-student housing units have been built in the town. The lack of supply forces students to compete with non-students for beds, and the rents that student beds can command is incentivizing the conversion of homes from a single-family use to student housing use, further eroding housing supply for non-students and creating upward pressure on housing prices. At the same time, the conversion of single-family homes to student housing is creating a quality of life challenge to non-student residents near campus, that are finding themselves living amongst student behavior that at various times becomes unruly.

While the Town and University grapple with the impact of student housing, they are also proactively seeking ways in which Amherst can leverage the market demand created by UMass. Taking into account the many students and employees coming to campus every day, not to mention its intellectual and research heft, there is opportunity for the local community to capture more of the tremendous benefit of hosting a large research institution. Many other college towns have a strong local economy that benefits not only from the presence of students, faculty, and staff in energizing their downtowns, but also have a strong business sector that is driven by university related research, discoveries, and ideas.

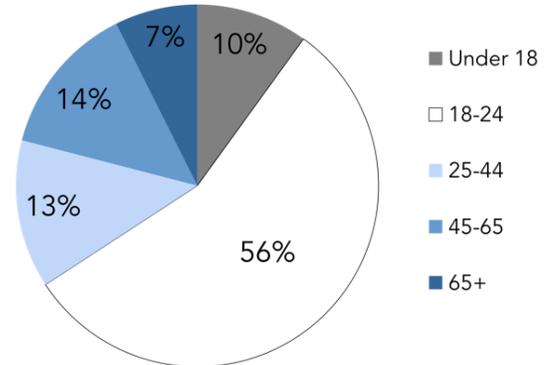
The Housing and Economic Development Plan utilizes data and analysis, qualitative input, community feedback, and best practices to create a set of recommendations describing how the Town and University can find common ground and work in concert to address these challenges. The ultimate recommendations do not view the two primary issues of housing and economic development in silos, instead framing them holistically and in support of one another, seeking housing recommendations that can support the economic development recommendations and vice versa.

ANALYSIS AND OBSERVATIONS

Town of Amherst Housing

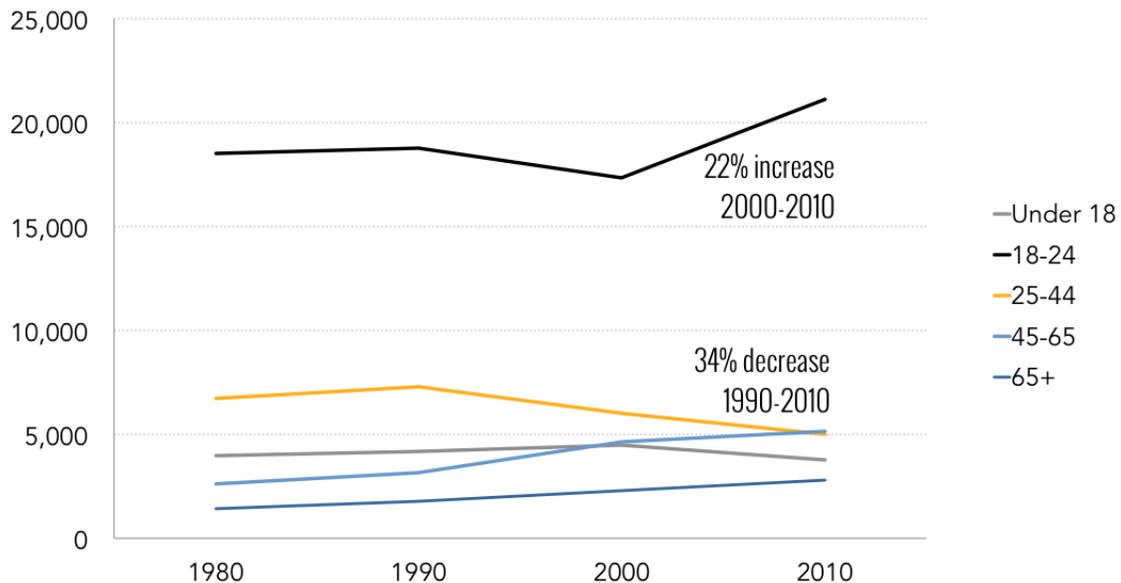
At last count by the US Census in 2010, Amherst had a population of 37,819 residents. Of those, 56% were in the 18-24 year age range³. This large share of young people can be attributed to UMass, along with the two other, smaller colleges in Amherst, Amherst College and Hampshire College. But that share of young people has not stayed stagnant. In fact, Amherst 18-24 cohort grew 22% from 2000 to 2010. During the same period Amherst's 25-44 year old cohort shrank 16%, bottoming out at just over 5,000 residents in 2010. A 14% gain in residents ages 45 and over during that decade (from just almost 7,000 to almost 8,000) indicates that residents may age into these older cohorts, or choose to retire to Amherst. But the trend-lines make clear that while Amherst has had an increase in young people because it is a college destination, the age that represents a young workforce is in decline.

Amherst Residential Age Distribution (2010)²



Source: US Census, 2010

Amherst Residential Population (1980-2010)⁴



² Census 2010

³ Census 2010

⁴ US Census Decennial Data, 1980 to 2010

The Town has 9,711 housing units. Of those, 46% are owner occupied and 54% are renter occupied. During the 2000 to 2010 decade when total population grew by 7%, housing units only grew by 3%, with the growth occurring entirely owner occupied housing units.⁵

Residential Property Types (2010)⁶

	2000	2010	% Change
Total Housing Units	9,427	9,711	3.0%
Occupied Units	9,174	9,259	0.9%
Owner Occupied Units	4,131	4,258	3.1%
Renter Occupied	5,043	5,001	-0.8%
Vacant Units	253	452	78.7%

While housing supply has remained stagnant, owner-occupied home values have sky-rocketed. The median owner-occupied house value increased 93% from 2000-2010, with a 2010 median value of \$340,000. During this same period comparable “Tier 1 Towns” as identified in the RKG Amherst Housing Study saw a median value increase of 39%, with a 2010 median value of \$273,000.⁷

As for the rental market, the median gross rent in 2010 was \$1,078, compared to \$872 for the Tier 1 Towns. Unsurprisingly, households less than 25 years old occupy a significant portion of the rental units, 39%. Comparatively, only 11% of rental units in Tier 1 Towns are occupied by households less than 25 years old.⁸

In summary, while the young population in Amherst is growing, its young workforce-aged cohort is shrinking. Housing availability and affordability plays a prominent role, as the supply has remained flat and prices have ballooned.

Amherst Employment

Regional employment is heavily dominated by “eds and meds”, and higher education in particular. One of every five jobs in Hampshire County is in educational services, and five of the 10 largest employers in the County are in Higher Education. Three of those institutions are located within Amherst. UMass is the largest employer in the County by far, with 6,397 employees (the second largest employer, Cooley Dickenson Hospital, employs 1,705).

⁵ Census 2010

⁶ Census, 2000 and 2010

⁷ RKG Amherst Housing Study

⁸ RKG Amherst Housing Study

Taking a closer look at Amherst, almost 60% of its jobs are in educational services. Tourism is another prominent sector within Amherst, given that the town is a cultural, historical, and outdoor recreational destination.⁹

Top Employers in Hampshire County¹⁰

	EMPLOYEES	TYPE	LOCATION
University of Massachusetts	6,397	Higher Ed	Amherst
Cooley Dickinson Hospital	1,705	Medical	Northampton
Smith College	1,350	Higher Ed	Northampton
C&S Wholesale Grocers		Food Distribution	Hatfield
ServiceNet		Human Services	Northampton
Mount Holyoke College	965	Higher Ed	South Hadley
Amherst College	870	Higher Ed	Amherst
US Veterans Medical Center		Medical	Northampton
Hampshire College	430	Higher Ed	Amherst

Distribution of Employment in Amherst¹¹

	Town of Amherst	% of Total
Total Employment	15,207	100%
Industries		
Educational Services	8,725	57.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,256	8.3%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	1,024	6.7%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	973	6.4%
Retail Trade	868	5.7%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	506	3.3%
Public Administration	362	2.4%
Professional & Technical Service	304	2.0%
Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	225	1.5%
Finance and Insurance	206	1.4%
Information	191	1.3%

⁹ ESRI Business Analyst, US Census 2010

¹⁰ Hampshire County Regional Agenda, U3 Advisors

¹¹ ESRI Business Analyst, US Census 2010

Construction	143	0.9%
Manufacturing	117	0.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	101	0.7%
Administrative and Waste	85	0.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	51	0.3%
Wholesale Trade	38	0.2%

Notably absent from the Town’s economic profile is a professional business cluster that is associated with the University’s research prowess. Small businesses, start-ups, and other entrepreneurial ventures are not populating within Amherst, despite its steady stream of discoveries, new technologies, graduates, and researchers.

While Amherst’s local economy is clearly driven by its higher educational institutions (with UMass by far the largest), the economic benefit is only accruing at a basic level of employing faculty and staff, and is not supported by a critical mass of businesses with roots that are traced back to UMass and the colleges.

UMass Residential Impact

As is evident in looking in the previous section at the distribution of ages and employment in Amherst, UMass is an immense enterprise. It employs 6,397 faculty and staff, has a \$1 billion annual operating budget, and enrolls 24,961 students at the Amherst campus. Of those students, 20,728 are undergraduates.

UMass Enrollment (Fall 2013)¹²

	Full Time	Part Time	Total
Undergraduate (including Stockbridge)	20,280	448	20,728
Graduate	2,090	2,143	4,233
Total Taking Classes at UMass	22,370	2,591	24,961
Continuing and Prof. Education (on-line)	438	3,119	3,557

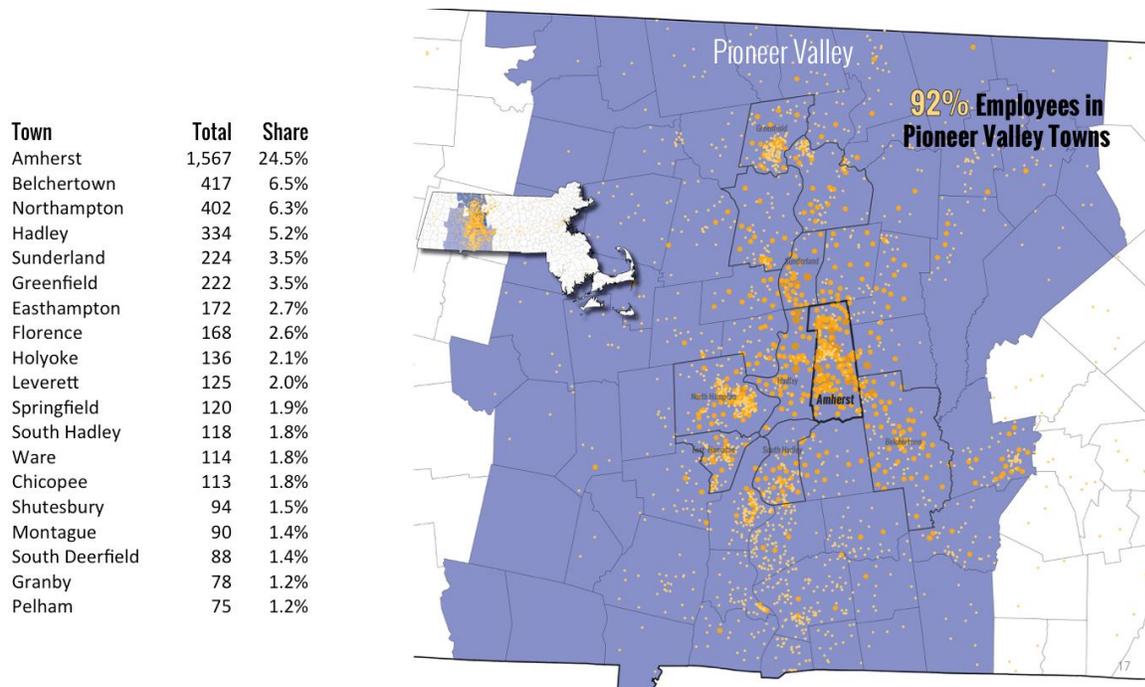
On campus, UMass has 14,300 beds. While this a large number of beds for a University to provide, their occupancy rate is extremely high at 97%. Of course this leaves the rest of the student body to find their own accommodations, in Amherst or elsewhere. Identifying the exact number of UMass students living within Amherst is extremely difficult because students are not required to report their non-permanent addresses, and the Town does not track this information either. The recently completed RKG 2014 Housing Study estimated that somewhere in the range of 4,000 UMass students live off-campus in Amherst. Their

¹² University of Massachusetts

accommodations off campus range from large apartment complexes to a room or suite associated with a single-family home, to a former single-family home that has been converted to group quarters. Given that Amherst has less than 10,000 housing units, these 4,000 or so UMass students comprise a significant part of the housing market. They are attracted by the perceived affordability of living off-campus, and the independence it offers.

Of the 6,397 employees, approximately 25% live within Amherst. Following that Belchertown, Northampton, and Hadley each capture more than 5% of employees.

UMass Employees Home Locations (Fall 2013)¹³



Although 24% of employees live within Amherst, whether or not that employee is a faculty or staff plays a significant role in location. 45% of UMass faculty live in Amherst, while only 18% of staff live in the Town. One reason for this difference may be that staff members, particularly those that are part time or not senior administrators, may not be able to afford Amherst’s housing prices.

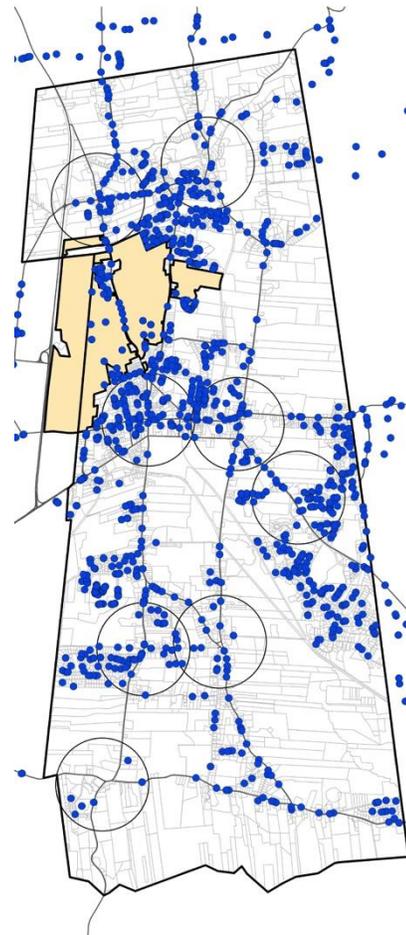
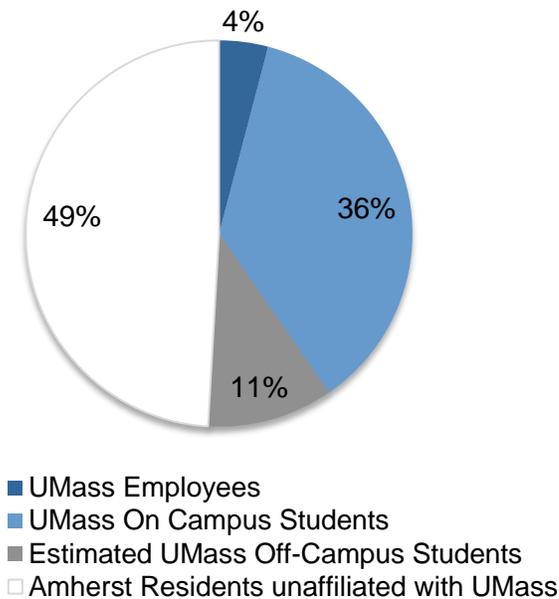
This information provides a better picture of UMass’s share of Amherst’s residential population. Almost 14,000 students live on campus, an estimated 4,000 students live off campus, and another 1,600 employees live in the Town. With an estimated population of 38,000, UMass’s students and employees represent half of the entire population in Amherst.

¹³ University of Massachusetts, U3 Advisors

UMass Employees in Amherst Home Locations¹⁴

This does not factor in the numerous UMass alumni that have located in the area after completing their studies.¹⁵

UMass Share of Residential Population¹⁶



Student Life and Dining Services

UMass has a significant impact on Amherst in many areas other than in housing. Student Life is a good example of this, particularly as off-campus partying has created safety and quality-of-life concerns in many neighborhoods and throughout the town. UMass has 400 student organizations with 11,000 total members, but lacks modern gathering, events, and performance space. Instead, academic buildings fill the void. Providing on-campus social events, particularly for underage students, is a significant challenge for any university, and UMass is no exception. A perceived lack of social options, on-campus or off-campus in structured environments, along with the ability to communicate over social media, attracts students off-campus into unsupervised settings for partying and underage drinking.¹⁷

UMass has invested heavily in its dining services, now hosting seven dining commons and 23 retail locations throughout campus. It is successful in enrolling students in the plans, with 83%

¹⁴ University of Massachusetts

¹⁵ Census 2010, University of Massachusetts, U3 Advisors

¹⁶ University of Massachusetts

¹⁷ Campus Master Plan

of undergraduates holding a meal-plan. In total this award winning dining program is the 2nd largest in the country.¹⁸

Research and Commercialization

UMass was responsible for \$194 million in research expenditures in fiscal year 2014. The University's research highlights and initiatives include:

- Institute of Applied Life Sciences \$100 million grant, with emphasis on translational research
- Industry collaborations with UMass Innovation Institute
- UMass Center for Entrepreneurship
- UMass Innovation Challenge
- 24 patents and 21 license and options agreements issued in FY 2013
- 3rd Statewide in National Science Foundation Funding¹⁹

Despite these successes, significant challenges exist to leverage UMass research and commercial potential locally. The UMass System has a responsibility to distribute resources across the Commonwealth to all of its campuses. In particular, the fact that the System's medical school is located in Worcester hinders the flagship campus's ability to leverage research for commercial application. In addition, the University has recently begun to invest in translational research that can lead to start-up efforts and new businesses. However, within Amherst, the Town lacks the organization and community of local start-businesses and entrepreneurs, along with the space to support them. Another significant constraint is Amherst's location relative to major investment markets, and difficulty with access to multi-modal transportation.

Despite these challenges, UMass Amherst generated \$1.9 billion in statewide economic activity in 2013.²⁰

Growth

In summary, housing supply is not keeping pace with growth and demand in Amherst. Much of that demand is generated by UMass, but UMass has also consistently added beds on-campus. From 2010 to 2014, the UMass student body grew by 16% (including continuing and professional education). In that same period, beds at UMass increased by 20%. Amherst residents have grown by an estimated 8% during that period, but much of that growth is again attributed to UMass student body growth. Concurrently, Amherst housing units have only increased by 3%, with the growth entirely in owner-occupied homes. The only *private market* response to the student growth has been the conversion of single-family homes to group student homes, exacerbating neighborhood concerns as opposed to alleviating them.²¹

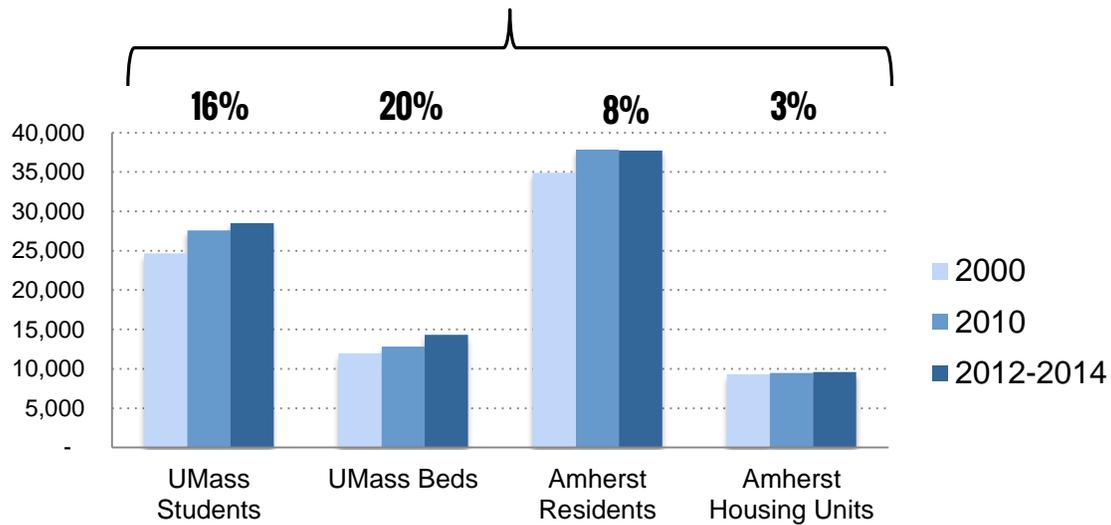
¹⁸ University of Massachusetts, Boston Globe September 10, 2013

¹⁹ University of Massachusetts

²⁰ University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, 2013

²¹ University of Massachusetts, US Census 2000, 2010 and 2012-2014 Estimates

GROWTH FROM 2000-2014²²



While the residential supply has not increased in recent years, there 469 new beds currently approved for construction in Amherst.

Planning and Land Use

In crafting recommendations for the Housing and Economic Development Plan, it is useful to understand the existing planning objectives of the University and the Town, to identify what the key goals are and see where there is overlap. Analysis of the UMass Amherst Master Plan from 2012 and the Town of Amherst Master Plan from 2010 identifies a number of key objectives and shared goals between the Town and University. In the Amherst Master Plan, key goals identified by the community relevant to this study are:

- Maintain Amherst's existing community character
- Encourage vitality in the downtown and village centers
- Balance land preservation objectives with more intensive development in appropriate areas
- Provide housing that meets the needs of all residents while minimizing impact on the environment
- Provide community services to meet the needs of all residents
- Diversify and expand the economic base
- Enhance Town/Gown relations and cooperation
- Promote an ethic of sustainable environmental and energy practices in all Town Activities

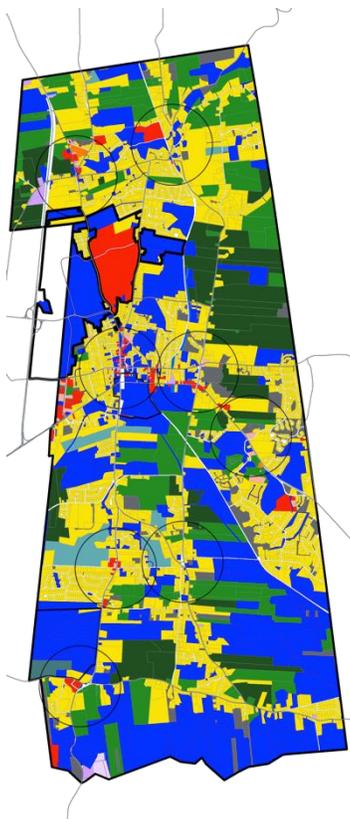
²² University of Massachusetts, US Census 2000, 2010 and 2012-2014 Estimates

Some of the relevant UMass development goals are:

- Support the 2010 Framework for Excellence, including increasing enrollment (3,000 students), faculty and staff (1,000) and research awards / expenditures (x2)
- Develop physical connections throughout the campus and between the host communities and region
- Develop a 24/7/12 mixed use campus core

While some of these goals are aspirational, the Housing and Development Plan is also working from within existing land use conditions and constraints. Of particular note from a land use standpoint is that 58% of land within Amherst is institutionally owned, protected in some form, or municipal. Another 27% of land is used for residential uses, and 12% of land is commercially used.

Land Use in Amherst²³



17,754 Acres

58% Protected/Institutional/Municipal (10,298 Acres)

27% Residential Landuse (4,793 Acres)

12% Commercial Landuse (2,130 Acres)

3% Vacant Residential (533 Acres)

6,159 Parcels

84% Residential Parcels
Including 9% Vacant Residential

Average Parcel Size: 1.02 Acres
Average Value: \$346,261

12% Protected/Institutional/Municipal

Average Parcel Size: 11 Acres
Average Value: \$440,164

2.5% Commercial - Other

Agricultural/Horticultural Land not included in Chapter 61A

1.5% Commercial Parcels - Retail & Services

<1% Industrial/Storage/Quarry

• Village Centers

This land use pattern is reflected in the zoning as well. The Town of Amherst places particular emphasis in concentrating development and commercial activity in its eight village centers. This is where land has been zoned for commercial or mixed use development, yet the actual land area allotted for commercial and mixed use is quite limited, 1.4% of the Town's land area. Within Amherst, there are just over 1,000 active businesses. Over 200 of those are for eating and drinking, retail, or arts, entertainment, and recreation. These are the establishments that

²³ Town of Amherst

have the potential to draw both students and residents, creating street activity and new interactions.

Businesses in Amherst²⁴

	# of Businesses	% of Businesses	Estimated Sales Volume	% of Estimated Sales Volume
Eating and Drinking	80	8%	71,654	6%
Retail	86	8%	153,076	13%
Arts, Entertainment, and Rec	39	4%	65,330	6%
Other	826	80%	870,569	75%
Grand Total	1,031	100%	1,160,629	100%

Analysis Summary

The following points summarizes the analysis above:

- Amherst’s economic and residential growth are both driven by UMass.
- Local housing supply is not keeping pace with demand, including student demand, which is destabilizing the market and creating conflicts within neighborhoods.
- Both economic opportunity and lack of housing is contributing to the decline in the young workforce as young workers are either priced out or unable to find the necessary employment opportunities to keep them in the Town or region.
- Development constraints (available land, zoning, approval process) are contributing to the imbalance between UMass and Amherst, as Amherst is not able to grow its non-student population or employment opportunities because of the lack of economic activity.

²⁴ ESRI Business Analyst, U3 Advisors

Observations

Beyond the findings revealed in the data, the plan incorporates input and feedback from the TGSC Steering Committee, leadership from within UMass and at the Town, business owners, residents and community members, students, and other stakeholders. Three primary observations emerged from those communications:

- 1. UMass and Amherst have disconnected and disengaged over time.** Universities are significant enterprises that need to establish their own facilities and services for their students, while also in many instances rely on their host communities to provide them if there is a market incentive to do so. This is what creates a “college town”, when off-campus housing, food, retail, amenities, and job opportunities creates a positive, lively, and sustainable community atmosphere. In the case of UMass and Amherst, over many decades that symbiotic relationship has eroded so that UMass has become a self-contained enterprise. It provides a large share of housing on campus and award-winning dining services on campus. Town businesses do not cater to UMass students, particularly for food and retail, out of a perception that students will not patronize these places. Research for UMass is an on-campus enterprise, with few evident commercial partnerships or new ventures launched in association with UMass research, but within the town. Physically the UMass campus, while in close proximity to Downtown, has no welcoming presence relative to the Downtown. It is self-contained without an active edge that can create more interaction between constituents of UMass and residents and visitors. This separation creates few opportunities for students to interact with residents and business people. Instead, some students fail to understand how to establish meaningful interactions with residents and vice versa.
- 2. There are a lack of forums encouraging collaboration between UMass and Amherst.** While there are numerous areas where the Town and University need to establish strong lines of communication around housing, neighborhood issues, development, special programs, student behavior, economic development, etc., the forums to do so are non-existent, ad-hoc, or created in response to conflict or crisis and therefore negatively framed from the outset. There are some notable exceptions to this. One is the Town Gown Steering Committee that, along with the report process, has engendered frank and constructive discussion and debate. Another is the Amherst Business Improvement District (BID). While still a relatively young organization, it has actively sought to engage the colleges and universities, both through board representation and through seeking student input.
- 3. Many levels of positive interrelationships exist between UMass and Amherst.** Too often the negative actions of a few can overshadow the collective good of many. Despite the town / gown challenges identified in this report and elsewhere, there are many positive interrelationships between the University and the Town. Beyond the 50% of residents who are directly affiliated with UMass as an employee or student, many other “non-affiliated” residents have a connection with UMass as an alumni, through family, or professional dealings. UMass’s sporting events and arts and cultural offerings draw a range of Amherst residents.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The preliminary recommendations are concentrated on identifying areas of common ground in which the Town and University can endeavor to make improvements. In this process this report identified the UMass objectives as:

- High quality housing for as many students as possible
- 24/7/12 campus environment
- Professional, research, and entrepreneurial opportunities outside the classroom
- A downtown that welcomes students

The primary objectives identified for the Town are:

- Vibrant downtown and strong village centers
- Diverse and affordable housing supply
- Preserved character, neighborhoods, and open space
- Local employment opportunities and increased tax base

Synthesizing the University and Town objectives creates three preliminary recommendations that this report will explore in greater detail:

- 1. Mixed-use development with housing for students and retail.** Identifying new housing opportunities for students was a must as part of this plan, to meet pent-up demand, and hopefully start to decant students from nearby neighborhoods where they are occupying former single-family homes, or at a minimum provide less incentive for single-family homes to be sold to developers for conversion to student group homes. At the same time, the report recommends the housing be mixed-use in nature, meaning that it has an active (non-housing) ground floor use that can generate street life and intermingling between students and non-students. While some students can create serious concerns for non-student residents, completely isolating students from non-students exacerbates bad behavior, and from an economic development standpoint, fails to allow businesses to benefit from a mix of students and non-students, reducing their market share.

Given that UMass cannot easily build more housing on campus because of limits on its capacity to take on more debt, while also recognizing it should exert a level of control over the type and location of the housing that is developed, we recommend exploring housing development through a public private partnership.

- 2. Foster local start-up and entrepreneurial activity.** Because of Amherst's relatively isolated location, strong residential and agricultural character, and lack of commercial space, the recommended economic development strategy is one that focuses on organic growth that leverages the intellectual and research heft of UMass. With less overhead and infrastructure needed for business start-ups today, Amherst is conducive to entrepreneurs that can start a business or new venture without much dedicated space. The \$194 million in research activity ongoing will lead to additional commercialization opportunities that can take root in Amherst as opposed to elsewhere, particularly with an overt strategy to create a community for entrepreneurs and provide assistance, networking, and appropriate space.

- 3. Shared approach towards future development.** There needs to be a continued focus on bringing together the concerns of the neighborhoods, business people, and University students and administrators to find shared vision for future development. This shared approach can include using or creating tools that preserve the existing neighborhood or village fabric, while contemplating future development.

Preliminary Feedback

After the “Preliminary Recommendations” were presented to TGSC and the public, they, along with students provided ample responses, criticisms, and suggestions that was folded into the Final Recommendations where appropriate. Community feedback after the TGSC meeting consisted of:

- Housing:
 - Concern for student impact on nearby neighborhoods
 - Tension between wanting to remove unruly student behavior and connect energy to Downtown
 - Importance of housing affordability
- Economic development
 - Desire for tax revenue
 - Need for a year round population
 - Desire for more dining options
 - Need for entrepreneurial space

Student feedback, solicited through a series of focus groups consisted of:

- Little incentive to utilize Downtown
 - Pre-paid, excellent dining options on campus
 - Doesn't have the same appeal as a Northampton or larger Downtown
 - Proximity is an issue
 - Recommended special events as an excellent way to attract more student activity
- Would welcome higher quality housing, but affordability is an issue
 - Belief that off-campus housing is more affordable than on-campus housing
 - Student group homes will always be desirable
- Desire by Greek Life to use a housing cluster as a means of legitimizing their organizations
 - Can create a new social hub for the University, compliant with University regulations, away from neighborhoods
 - May address *some* of the off-campus party conflicts

The community feedback and student feedback was incorporated into creating a set of final recommendations, detailed below.

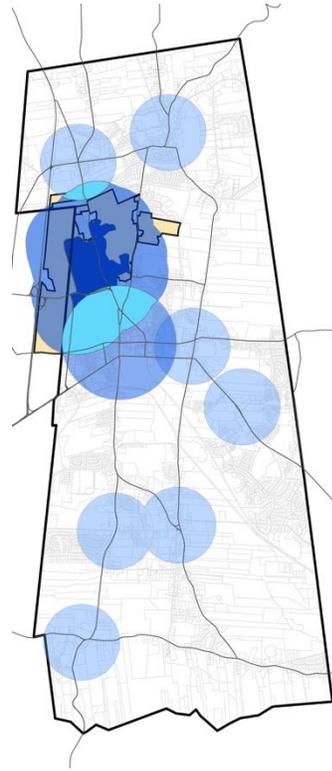
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS: SITE & PROGRAM

Building on the preliminary recommendation of developing mixed-use housing with ground-floor retail, this process identifies a recommended site and program.

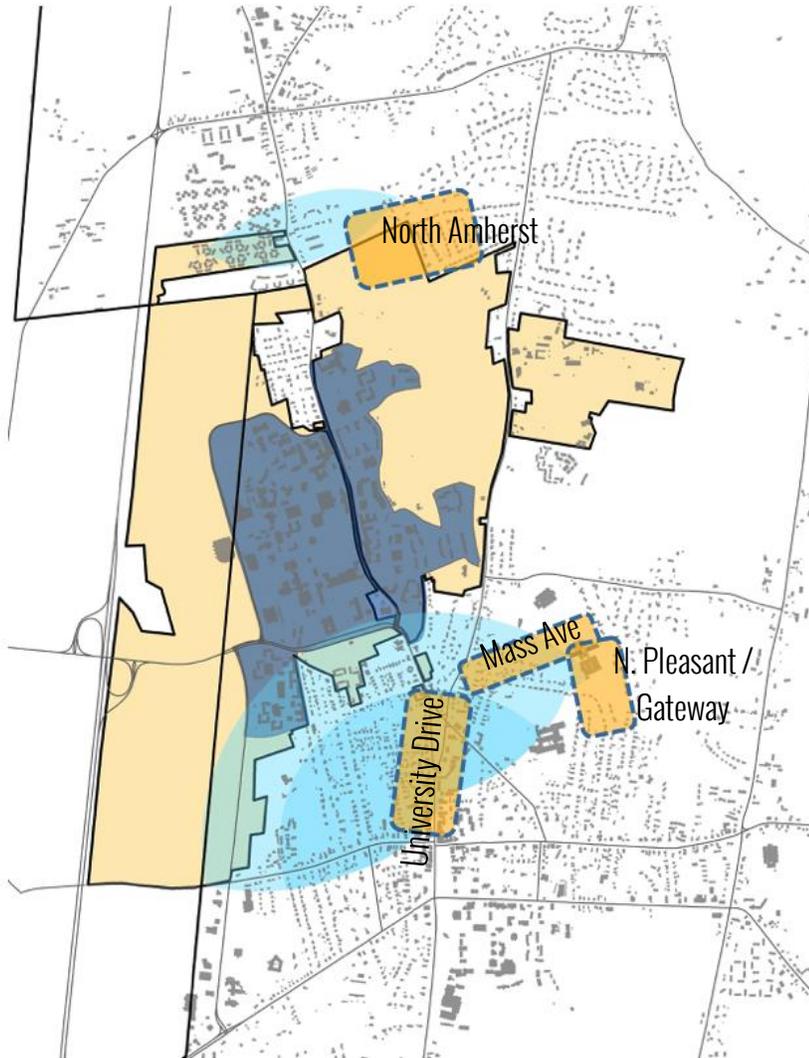
In terms of program, we recommend building enough student housing to take some pressure off of pent-up housing demand, but not so much that the new housing cannot be absorbed into the market. Typical mixed-use student housing projects of scale tend to be in the 300-500 bed range. As for the type of student, UMass has a significant undergraduate population relative to its graduate population. In addition, it is far more likely that the undergraduate population is creating tensions within neighborhoods as opposed to the graduates. While finding affordable graduate housing is a significant challenge that needs to be addressed, we place greater emphasis on building new housing for undergraduates. For a number of reasons, we recommend housing freshman in dorms.

To meet some of the economic development objectives of the plan, we suggest developing the housing with active ground floor uses, and locating close to the Downtown or village centers. However, the location also needs to be proximate to the campus core for students. Only a few areas are near both the campus core and Downtown village centers. Of those, we identified four potential areas that could developed with a mixed-use student housing program. Each is on land owned by UMass, with the reason being that identifying privately owned land to either acquire or partner with a developer on to redevelop is too expensive and difficult. It will be easier for UMass to retain control over the developed product if developed on land they own.

Overlap of Areas Proximate to Campus Core and Downtown / Village Centers



Focus Areas



The planning team created a design concept for each site to accommodate a mixed-use student housing program.

MASS AVE

Ownership	
■	Owned by Individuals
■	Owned by Entities
	Parking Lots
	UMass Property
	Buildings



The Mass Ave site identified is focused on surface parking lots owned by UMass. The site has two alternative schemes. Alternative 1 considers Mass Ave to be the “Main Street that activates the ground floor with retail, research and commercial space, and channels activity around the neighborhood south of campus and onto N. Pleasant Street.

MASS AVE ALTERNATIVE 1

- Mixed Use with graduate and upper-classman housing
- Active first floor with blend of start-up / research space and retail
- Mass Ave. as “Main Street” with dynamic small scale uses guide students coming from campus south along North Pleasant Street



Alternative 2 is similar, except that it proposes a new internal street south of Mass Ave that allows for a smaller scale street that connects with N. Pleasant.

MASS AVE ALTERNATIVE 2

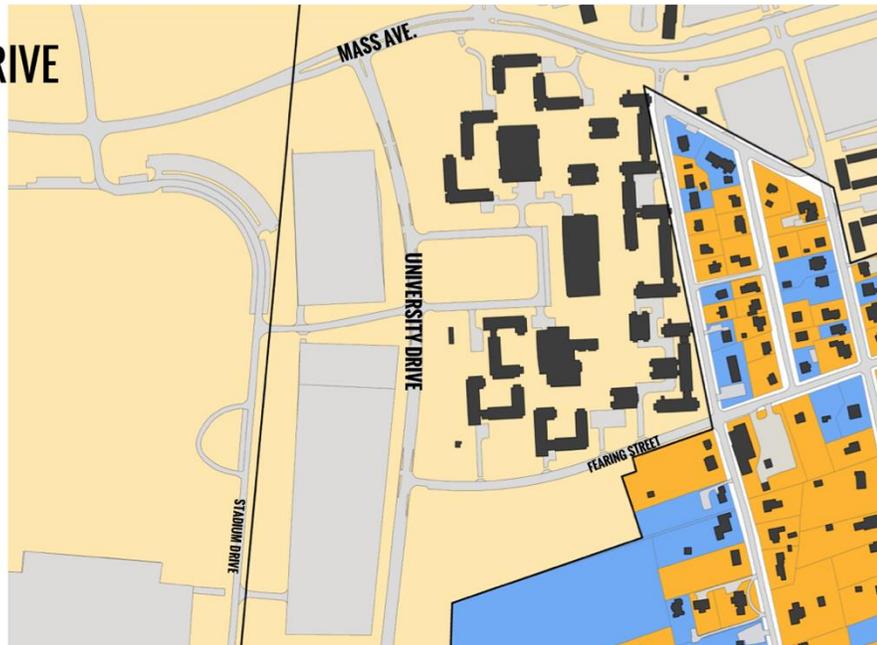
- Mixed Use with graduate and upper-classman housing
- Active first floor with blend of start-up / research space and retail
- "Main Street" south of Mass Ave. with dynamic small scale uses guide students coming from campus south along North Pleasant Street
- Neighborhood grid complete and made "public" to eliminate dead end streets



University Drive identified the surface parking lots south of Mass Ave and west of University Drive, owned by UMass, close to the Southwest housing complex.

UNIVERSITY DRIVE

Ownership	
■	Owned by Individuals
■	Owned by Entities
■	Parking Lots
■	UMass Property
■	Buildings



The scheme proposes a "student village" with ground floor uses devoted to retail and amenities appealing to undergraduates, and research or flexible commercial space.

UNIVERSITY DRIVE

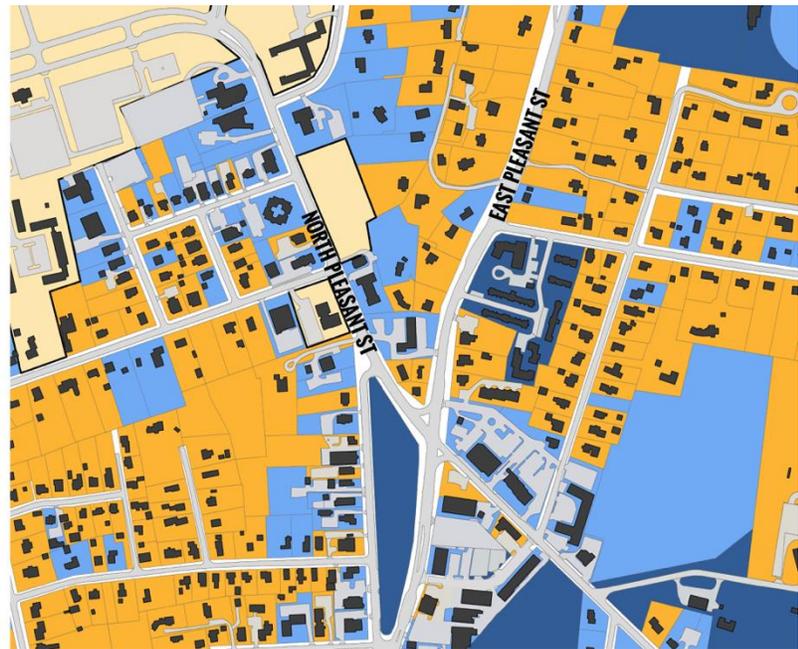
- Undergraduate “student village” with student housing and some academic / flex research space
- University Drive activated with active ground floor uses including retail



The North Pleasant concept identifies a combination of land owned by UMass, including the former “Gateway” site, and privately owned land, that ultimately connects to the recent investments near Kendrick Park and Triangle Street.

NORTH PLEASANT

Ownership	
■	Owned by Individuals
■	Owned by Entities
	Parking Lots
	UMass Property
	TOA Property
	Buildings



Because this redevelopment would be comprised of multiple publicly and privately owned parcels, it is envisioned as targeting a wider array of housing market cohorts, with a mix of housing for undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff in different buildings. This scheme establishes a strong connection between UMass campus and Downtown.

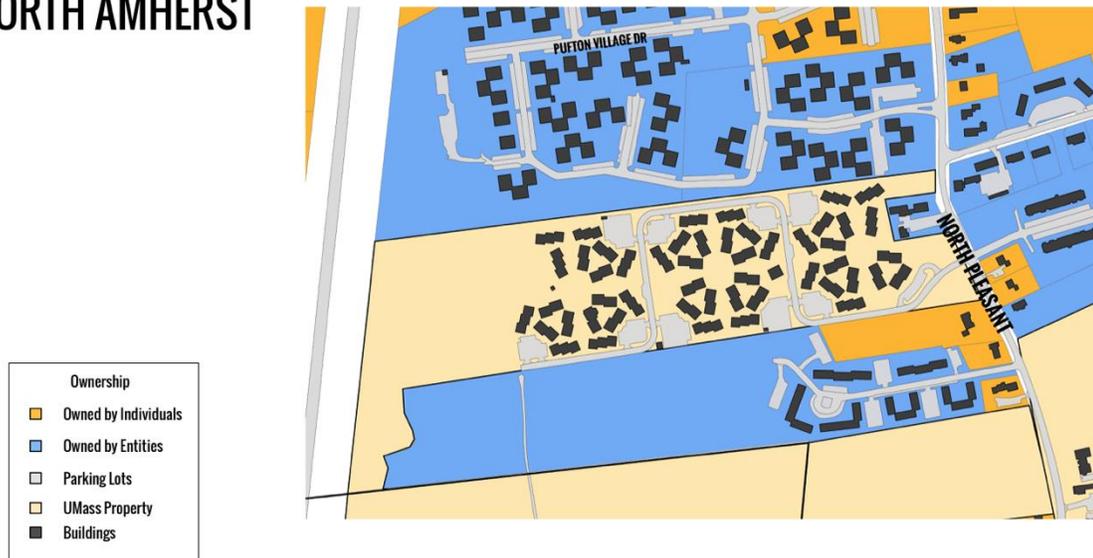
NORTH PLEASANT CORRIDOR

- Infill housing at the Gateway site with active uses on North Pleasant for faculty and staff, residents, and students
- Mixed use commercial, retail, housing, office space, co-working space on commercial site at Kendrick Park
- Consistent with Gateway Plan and Kendrick Place / Carriage Shops development



The North Amherst site is concentrated on the North Village Apartments currently housing serving as family housing for UMass students. Due to the substandard conditions of the existing apartments, we considered a redevelopment of the site that can accommodate new housing for the existing tenants in North Village and add additional units for undergraduate, graduate, or family housing.

NORTH AMHERST



The redevelopment project would introduce a grid system, making the area more walkable and establish better connections to the campus and nearby areas.

NORTH AMHERST HOUSING

- Redevelopment of North Village Apartments for graduate / family housing
- Cluster housing replaced by a street
- System with a primary “front door” street anchored on west and east ends by recreational amenities.
- Street grid connected north and south to adjacent development



In considering sites for mixed-use housing, the planning team also evaluated Olympia Drive as another viable alternative, given that there are student beds planned for that area and both the University and Town have an interest in seeing the district redeveloped.

It is evident there are two categories of sites in consideration. One category are sites that are away from neighborhoods and away from village centers. This includes University Drive, North Amherst, and Olympia Drive, but could include many other sites on UMass owned land. The second category are sites that are prominent to both campus and downtown. They are also in closer proximity to existing neighborhoods.

While all of the sites were identified due to their feasibility, we recommend MASS AVE & N. PLEASANT STREET as the sites with the most significant potential for impact. Some of the reasons for this recommendation are:

- They can serve as a bridge between campus and downtown
- Housing can be developed to accommodate multiple market types
- Tremendous opportunity to connect to nearby academic and research uses
- Can be developed contiguously in phases
- Identified on UMass Master Plan as a mixed-use opportunity
- Builds on recent private and public investment

In addition, we believe that by locating well managed student housing near non-student residents, there is a greater likelihood of creating a respectful student atmosphere where students will understand rowdy drinking and bad behavior have repercussions with their neighbors, creating a level of civility that is missing in certain neighborhoods on weekend nights. In addition, we believe by creating strong commercial corridors along Mass Ave and N. Pleasant, much more foot traffic will be channeled around existing single-family neighborhoods as students will feel comfortable walking along populated and interesting streets. As it stands, crossing through unencumbered parking lots and vacant sites is both the path of least resistance for students and inviting for illicit activity because the areas are unsupervised.

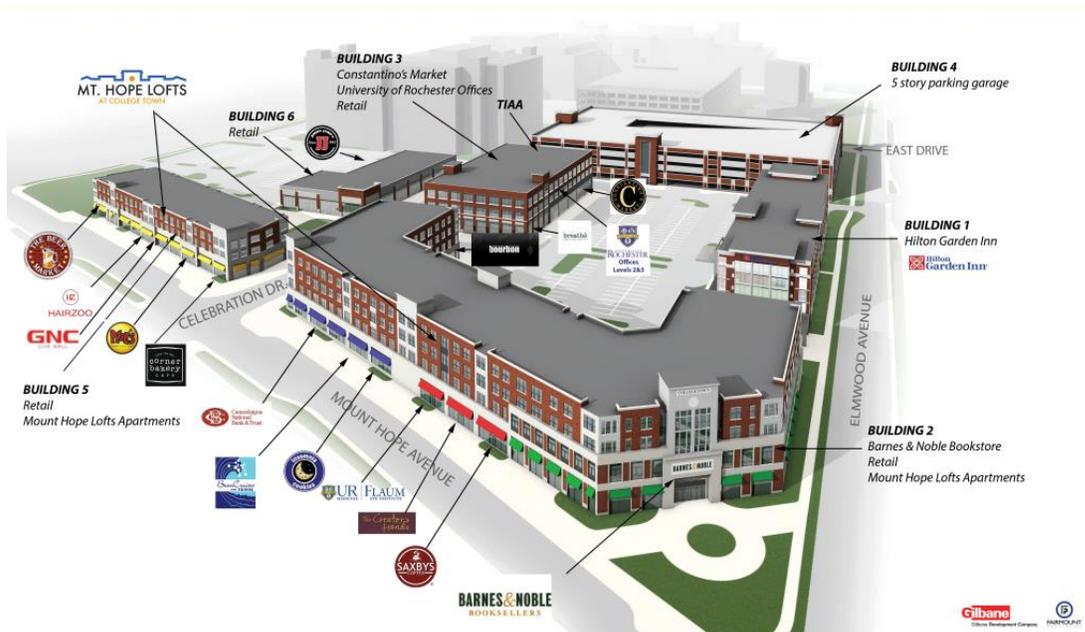
SITE EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

	Mass Ave	University Drive	N. Pleasant	N. Amherst
Ideal Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate upperclassman Graduate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate upperclassman Graduate Faculty & Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate upperclassman Graduate Faculty & Staff
Downtown / Village Center Connectivity	Moderate	Low	High	High / Village Center
Campus Core Connectivity	High	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Site conducive to development	Large footprints of surface parking	Large footprints but need to understand site suitability	Requires an assemblage / infill strategy but feasible	Requires significant demolition but quite feasible
Proximity to non-student neighbors	Relatively close	Relatively far	Relatively close	Relatively far

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Development Case Studies

It is helpful to look at other places that have seen the type of development recommended on Mass Ave or North Pleasant, in particular projects that connect a campus to a downtown, that are built at a scale relatable to Amherst. The Consolidated Report showcases examples in Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Rochester, highlighting developments that were mixed-use, with student housing and ground floor retail, arts and cultural space, and other commercial space. The Rochester example is particularly instructive for the Mass Ave and N. Pleasant sites.



Rochester "College Town" Site Plan

The Rochester Project, "College Town", is adjacent to University of Rochester and University of Rochester Medical Center. It consists of a 20,000 square foot market, a two-story Barnes & Nobles university / community book store, 150 apartment units (market rate for students, faculty and staff, medical workers, etc.), 50,000 square feet of office space including space for the University of Rochester, and a Hilton Garden Inn Hotel.



Rochester College Town

The project was conceived by a coalition consisting of the University, City of Rochester, the Mt. Hope Avenue Task Force, the Mt. Hope Business Association, and the South East Area Coalition. The planning process, incorporating input from community stakeholders and business leaders, led to a development project that can serve both the University and surrounding community. The developers, Gilbane Co and Fairmount Properties, are leasing the land from the University of Rochester and managing the development.



Rochester College Town

Another project not included in the Consolidated Report, but useful to this effort is Storrs Center, developed adjacent to University of Connecticut. Mansfield Downtown Partnership is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization launched by the Town of Mansfield and the University of Connecticut, comprised of six committees focused on a variety of town/gown issues. Mansfield Downtown Partnership entered into a public private partnership with master developer Leyland Alliance to manage the development of Storrs Center.



Storrs Center Site Plan

The project consists of 322 apartment units with ground-floor retail the UConn Co-op Bookstore, the Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry, and UConn Health Services, and Townhomes for sale.



Storrs Center

The two projects, Rochester's College Town and UConn / Mansfield's Storrs Center, have similarities in that they are mixed use, provide for a variety of housing for students, incorporate ground floor uses that appeal to both the students and community (retail, bookstores, markets, health services, cultural spaces), and both were developed as public private partnerships.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION: DEVELOPMENT MECHANISMS

Public Private Partnerships

When considering mixed-use student housing, it is critical to also understand the mechanisms through which the projects can be developed. As stated in the Preliminary Recommendations, pursuing a Public Private Partnership (P3) is a logical step for UMass as it can allow the University to add more beds without a significant impact to their debt capacity. As it relates to student housing, the typical P3 is structured so that a developer ground-leases land from a University (or Foundation), and develops the property, earns fees through development or management (or both). The University receives the benefit of adding additional beds without necessarily having to take on debt or risk associated with dorm building. However, UMass faces other significant constraints – legal, political, and financial – that may make such a project infeasible.

Before getting into those details, it is important to understand that there can be a range of products developed through a P3 structure. In the case of student housing, this can range from developing new housing that looks and feels like dorms that are part of campus. On the other end of the spectrum are projects that are at the edges of campus with ground floor uses that can appeal to either students or non-students. These are often built along commercial corridors where there is an overt strategy to create amenities for students that feel distinct from campus.

DEFINING THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (P3) RANGE OF PRODUCTS

 <p><i>South Campus Commons, U of Maryland</i></p>	<p>Campus</p> <p>Community</p>	 <p><i>Radian, U of Pennsylvania</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Appears part of campusPredominantly single useUniversity managedCost controlled		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Activates campus edgeMixed-use3rd party managedMarket rate

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While P3's are attractive options for universities to build beds, they also have inherent risk. For the University, they still risk having the project impact their credit if it is perceived to a "core" part of their operations by the ratings authorities. A solution to this is to locate project further from the campus core, not assume any controls over rental rates, and not participate in the project's leasing or financing. However the university gives up control in these instances that may be critical if the project is on university land. For the developer, they are concerned with managing the risks of development cost and leasing. The university can be helpful in mitigating

both of these concerns, but doing so may impact their credit or control over the project. This is all to say that a P3 only results after a complex negotiation between a university and developer, controlling for a number of variables, to arrive at a workable project.

Specifically as it relates to UMass, a P3 for student housing is untested and has legal, political, and operational hurdles. These include:

- Precedent for litigation related to privately developed student housing for public university students
- Can require a high standard of labor compliance
- Requires Board of Trustees approval
- Needs to address cost, student code of conduct, campus housing standards
- Desire by Town of Amherst to capture property tax revenue

Therefore, we recommend continuing to identify a project that is appealing to both the University and the Town, and use that as a potential pilot project that is worth the expending political capital on to move forward.

Other Development Mechanisms

While a P3 solution to adding more student housing will take time to implement, Amherst has at its disposal a host of other land use tools that it can deploy or legislate for:

Land Use Tools

OPTIONS	INTENDED OUTCOMES
INCLUSIONARY / INCENTIVE ZONE	Affordable housing created on- and off-site
OVERLAY DISTRICT	Infill and aggregated development
MIXED USE DISTRICT	Improve options and amenities
SPECIAL USE DISTRICT	Added units, e.g. accessory apartments
C.40R AND C.40B	Creation of controlled affordable units
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	Mitigation for bonuses
CODE ENFORCEMENT	Ensure safety and livability
LICENSE / REGISTRATION	Reliable data
DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT	Predictable process and known outcomes

These tools, if deployed correctly, can go a long way towards preserving neighborhoods, incentivizing development in appropriate locations, and contributing to the housing supply.

In the instance of larger scale developments, there are other processes that can streamline a typical approval process for development that creates greater certainty for the developer and the host community. One such mechanism that has been successful in Wayland, MA, Storrs

Center in Mansfield, CT, and University Station in Westwood, MA is a two-step development process. The first step is the approval of a master plan that establishes a plan of development design and performance standards. The second component is site plan review that is based on the master plan and application of the design and performance standards that gets approved prior to construction.

Another mechanism that moves a process outside of traditional zoning or other typical local land use regulatory functions is a Developer's Agreement. In this case a municipality enters into a contract with the entity that controls land to be developed. The contract includes terms, conditions, standards and responsibilities between the parties such as use mix, design quality, infrastructure improvements, mitigation, performance standards, phasing, town contributions, guarantees, and contingencies. This process has found success elsewhere in Massachusetts, such as with the redevelopment of land owned by McLean Hospital in Belmont, MA.

Finally, Amherst already has a powerful tool in place with its rental unit registration program. Continuing to build the program's ability to track data and enforce the code will further protect neighborhoods from an infiltration of student housing. This can include requiring property owners to denote if tenants are students or moderate, low, and very-low income. The registration program can also target recently converted homes from single-family to student use to enforce overcrowding, creating a disincentive for prospective developers to purchase other single-family homes and convert them if they know their income stream will be reduced through enforcement.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS: INNOVATION ECONOMY

The preliminary recommendations included fostering local start-up and entrepreneurial activity. To make this happen, Amherst needs to build out its "Innovation Ecosystem". Amherst already has the intellectual capital and research capacity to generate new ideas and innovations.

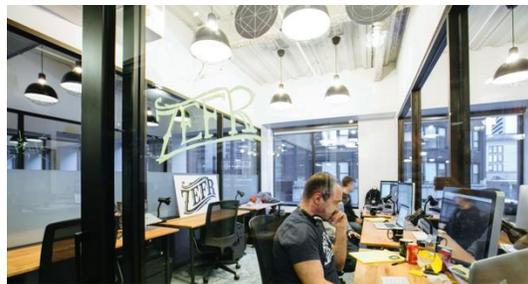
What is lacking is the physical space, supportive infrastructure, and capital investment that will allow these entrepreneurs to build new ventures around these ideas. Ideally, the locations where this type of activity occurs is walking in distance to the University and Downtown, so it has the dual impact of serving the entrepreneurial community while enlivening key commercial corridors. Many types of "hybrid spaces" encourage strategic partnerships and collaboration while promoting their activity through visibility from the street. Hybrid spaces include:

- Collaborative learning through research institutes like University of Wisconsin's Institute for Discovery, or academic programs like the Stanford University Design School
- Informal collaboration spaces that can be found in student housing complexes, cafes, and public spaces.
- Maker spaces that provide access to tools and materials for inventors and tinkerers alike, such as the Artisan's Asylum in Somerville, MA, or Makerhaus in Seattle, WA
- Coworking space that caters to entrepreneurs, start-ups, and small businesses such as WeWork in Boston, or Cambridge Innovation Center.
- Accelerators and start-up halls that provide additional services to start-up companies and new ventures such as mentorship and access to seed capital, (MassChallenge in Boston and y-Combinator in Silicon Valley are good examples).



Artists Asylum

The starting point for launching any of these types of spaces in Amherst is finding the right "director" to take on the responsibility of making it work. Often times a coworking space, maker space, or accelerator is the passion project of one or a few people that believe such an operation will lead to new discoveries or new businesses. It is those people that can assemble the business



WeWork

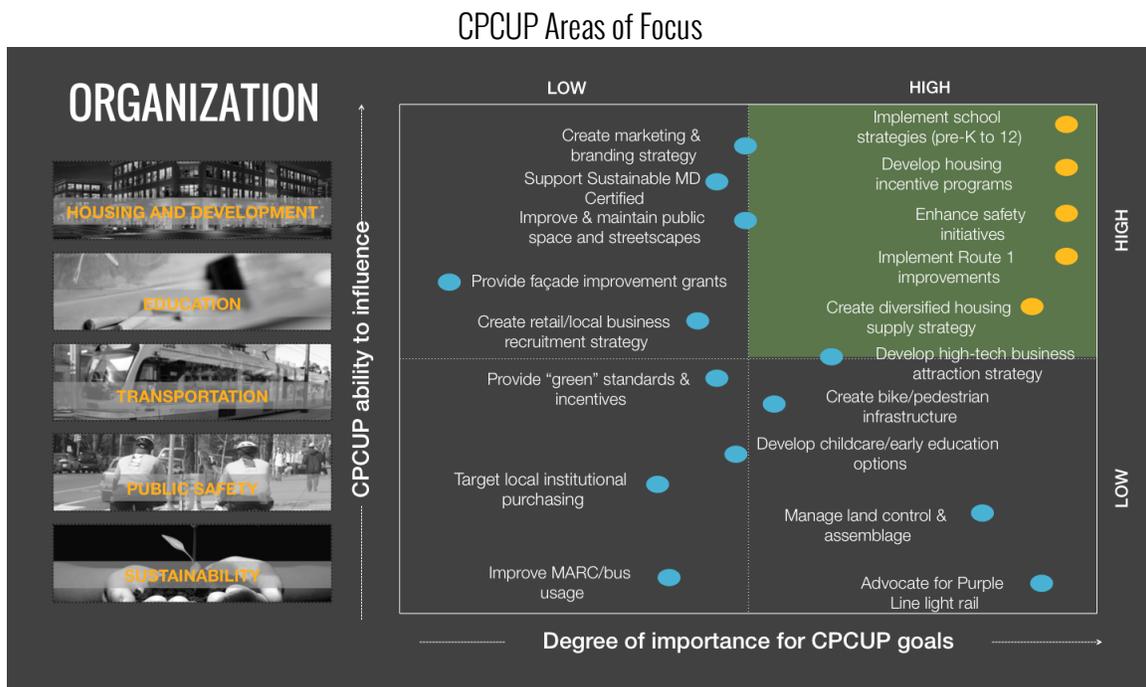
plan, identify the start-up capital, and recruit the first early users to ensure the venture can take root and ultimately thrive. Amherst has the seeds for such activity with organizations such as the Makers @ Amherst Media that bills itself as a "town gown makerspace". Supporting similar organizations by linking them to resources within UMass, finding appropriate, affordable

spaces to house operations, and creating venues for networking information sharing can all contribute to building Amherst's Innovation Economy.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS: ORGANIZATION

If UMass and Amherst are to collaborate on issues such as housing, economic development, and the like, there needs to be an appropriate forum through which that can occur. The Town Gown Steering Committee has proven that a representative group from the Town and University can understand, debate, and collaborate on points of intersection between campus and community. However, the future of TGSC has not been determined beyond the conclusion of the Housing and Economic Development Plan process. There now exists an opportunity to “institutionalize” TGSC as a permanent organization with a specific set of goals and objectives.

This type of collaboration has been fruitful in many other college towns. A good example is the College Park City University Partnership (CPCUP), comprised of leaders from the University of Maryland the City of College Park. While College Park grapples with many of the same points of conflict as what exists in Amherst, the CPCUP board has endeavored to improve five key areas of overlapping concern: housing and development, education, transportation, public safety, and sustainability. CPCUP only arrived at these five areas after evaluating range of issues, prioritizing them and ranking them by their ability to influence the ultimate outcome.



In Amherst, we recommend organizing and launching the University Town of Amherst Collaborative (UTAC). As the next iteration of the TGSC, UTAC can be a permanent organization comprised of representatives from both the Town and University. While there is no exact science to identifying how best to identify the appropriate seats and members, it is recommended that the board be large enough to be inclusive, but small enough to allow for efficient decision-making and quick resolutions to persistent sticking points. An example as to how the board can be constructed is:

- 3 UMass administrators or faculty, appointed by the chancellor

- 3 Town administrators appointed by the Town Manager
- 4 student representatives
- 2 business leaders
- 2 resident / Town Meeting representatives

In this instance where the organization is representing to primary bodies – the University and the Town – it will need to identify an executive function, such as alternating board chairs or co-board chairpersons that can be relied upon to make executive decisions in the best interest of the organization when necessary.

A sub-committee system focused on particular areas of interest is recommended as well. Based on the findings in this study, three areas have emerged as potential sub-committees:

- Housing
 - Student housing
 - Housing for faculty and staff
 - Affordable housing
- Economic Development
 - University partnerships
 - Entrepreneurship and start-ups
 - Food, retail, and amenities
- Quality of Life
 - Public Safety
 - Student behavior
 - Neighborhood concerns

Beyond the board, in order to launch UTAC, the organizers need to address the following issues:

- Structure – is the organization “virtual” or independent non-profit
- Establish a mission, by-laws, and articles of incorporation
- Identify dedicated funding sources, through the founding entities, philanthropic support, or other public funds
- Select staff as necessary, including an executive director if the funding allows
- Establish a strategic plan identifying the organizations areas of focus, geographic influence, and how it will work with the Town and University.

Separate from UTAC, the Town and University can make independent moves to further advance economic development in Amherst. For the Town, this includes hiring a Director of Economic Development to interface with UTAC or simply to work on behalf of the Town’s economic development initiatives. The position requires an economic skill-set particular to Amherst, including an understanding of University research and commercialization and a focus on arts, culture, and tourism.

As for the University, it can encourage greater engagement with the Town of Amherst through an “anchor strategy” that considers how every facet of the University impacts the town. Examples of this are working with dining services to create more opportunity for Amherst restaurants and food services. The University can also encourage student, faculty, researcher ventures to find a place within Amherst, as opposed to seeing them leave for Boston or

elsewhere. The University can also consider providing incentives for faculty and staff housing in Amherst to improve quality of life for its employees and create a stronger collegiate atmosphere surrounding the campus.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

In the near term, we recommend pursuing the following implementation steps to ensure for early progress and quick wins:

Organization and Economic Development

- Create a “strategic plan” for UTAC describing its core focus
- Identify founding board members and sub-committee co-chairs carry effort forward
- Translate strategic plan into mission, by-laws, and budget with sources and uses for approval
- Seek out “quick wins” to demonstrate successful town-gown efforts
 - Makerspace
 - Joint event planning in the downtown
 - Adoption of select recommendations from Commissioner Davis

Student Housing

- Refine design for optimal site, including housing unit mix, ground floor program, key design features
- Build a project-specific financial model to identify optimal economic structure, including verification of tax implications
- Work with UMass P3 committee to further understand legal and political implications
- Seek approvals and support from Trustees, Town, other leadership
- Solicit feedback from private sector via Request for Expressions of Interest or similar document

University of Massachusetts / Town of Amherst

Housing and Economic Development Plan

Meetings and Interviews

TGSC Steering Committee

Town of Amherst

- John Musante, Town Manager
- David Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager / Director of Conservation and Development
- Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director
- Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner
- Jeffrey Bagg, Senior Planner
- Nathaniel Malloy, Associate Planner
- Rob Morra, Building Commissioner
- Michael Olkin, GIS Administrator

UMass Amherst

- Kumble Subbaswamy, Chancellor
- John Kennedy, Vice Chancellor for University Relations
- Nancy Buffone, Executive Director for External Relations and University Events
- Tony Maroulis, Director of Community Relations
- Mike Malone, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement
- Jim Capistran, Executive Director for UMass Innovation Institute
- Dennis Swinford, Director of Campus Planning, and Planning Staff
- Representatives for Student Affairs and Campus Life
- Representatives for Residential Life

3 UMass Student Focus Groups

BID / Chamber Focus Group

- Dave Mazur
- Andy Jones
- Cathie Walz
- Barry Roberts
- Cinda Jones
- Sharon Povinelli
- Larry Archey
- Julie Marcus
- Jerry Guidera
- Felicity Hardee
- Youssef Fadel
- Don Courtemanche

Local Developer Focus Group

- Curt Shumway
- Andy Jones
- Wendy Jones
- Barry Roberts
- Cinda Jones
- Leigh Andrews
- Kyle Wilson
- Ron LaVerdiere

North Amherst Residents

- Christine Gray-Mullen
- Jack Hirsch
- Pat Holland
- Alisa Brewer
- Melissa Perot
- Janet Keller

Fearing / Sunset / Lincoln

- Freddie Manning
- Elissa Rubenstein
- Maurianne Adams
- John and Gretchen Fox
- Phil Jackson
- Steve Braun
- Nat and Rachel Barker
- Ken Rosenthal

Additional Phone / In-Person Interviews

- Sarah la Cour
- Jaymie Chernoff
- Tripp Peake

Tours

- Amherst tour provided by Town Planning Staff
- UMass tour provided by Campus Planning Staff