
MISSION HILL MAIN STREETS

REVITALIZATION PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was prepared by students in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as part of the “Revitalizing Urban Main Streets” class. It was written on behalf of Mission Hill Main Streets and is intended to provide guidelines for physical and economic revitalization efforts in the Mission Hill Main Streets district.

VISION

To foster an engaging and attractive district that builds on the diversity and unique character of the neighborhood and meets the needs of the people who live, work, and shop in Mission Hill.

STRATEGY

The strategies presented target key areas of the Mission Hill Main Streets district: Brigham Circle, Tremont Street, and Roxbury Crossing. Supported by bus and MBTA trolley or subway access, both areas currently serve as transportation hubs for Roxbury, Mission Hill, and the Longwood Medical Area (LMA). Given this accessibility, the improving of existing businesses and the introduction of new, viable businesses will expand the customer base and enhance the image and overall viability of the district. Successful implementation of the strategy also encompasses physical changes. Developing a consistent physical scheme throughout the district will bring together the two gateways, increasing the walkability of the neighborhood. It is our hope that the strategy, once implemented, will transform the district from a place that people pass through to a destination that serves the needs of the business community and residents.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this assessment of the district, we utilized a broad range of data sources, including previous studies by neighborhood groups and consultants, economic analyses, physical analyses, surveys and interviews. The following is a brief summary of the methods employed in our analysis of the district:

Demographic Analysis

2000 Census data provided insight into the demographic makeup of Mission Hill's residents. Statistics on age, ethnicity and household income along with household spending patterns obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics formed the basis for our subsequent market analysis.

Market Analysis

A retail gap analysis helped identify spending categories where we found substantial "leakage" of local spending to other districts. These represent potential opportunities to expand existing businesses or start or attract new businesses in Mission Hill to serve local residents and workers.

Physical Analysis

We conducted a detailed physical analysis of the district to assess existing conditions. Before beginning the physical survey, we walked the district to get a good sense of the area and then concentrated on the following characteristics: architecture, streetscape, district image, traffic, and pedestrian experience. This included a detailed inspection and observation of the commercial activity in the district and producing an inventory of land use and businesses.

Business Surveys

We distributed business surveys to understand business trends and historical performance; gain merchants' knowledge of their market and their view of key district issues; understand the level of their involvement with revitalization efforts; and assess their needs, interest, and support for different initiatives.

Intercept Surveys

We conducted intercept surveys of people in the district to help identify the market's potential customer base, consumers' perception of the district, major destinations, and reasons why people come to the district. Intercept surveys helped gauge the knowledge and attitudes of Mission Hill users. Surveying was conducted at different times of day and at different locations in an attempt to get a diverse and representative sample.

Stakeholder Interviews

Mission Hill Main Streets provided us with a list of forty-two stakeholders, consisting of Main Streets board members, business owners, residents, and directors of non-profit and institutional organizations. Members of the research team conducted interviews with these individuals and other key stakeholders in the Mission Hill community to better understand shared and conflicting goals for the District, perceived problems and strengths, and the status of past and current revitalization efforts.

Examine Precedents/Review of Previous Studies

In preparation for this study we reviewed several reports for projects in the district, including the Terrace Street Corridor Final Report (1998), the Ledge Site Report (1999), and the One Brigham Circle Report (2000), which contained a full traffic and pedestrian analysis.

THE IMAGE OF MISSION HILL

Historic Architecture

Now a dense, urban neighborhood, the Mission Hill area was once filled with farms, breweries, and quarries where workers mined Roxbury puddingstone. The German and Irish immigrants who crowded the neighborhood in the latter half of the nineteenth century monumentalized their identity in the iconic Mission Church, a beautiful work of Neo-Romanesque architecture and one of Boston's most recognizable landmarks. The church continues to have a thriving congregation and celebrated its 125th Anniversary with a special Mass on April 5, 2003. By the early 20th century, brick row-houses and triple-deckers for working-class residents had come to dominate the landscape around the church, and they continue to be the prevalent building types. The high-rise buildings that now share this landscape speak to an era of turbulence and renewal, but nevertheless they have been able to blend with their more unassuming counterparts. The neighborhood's rich history and evolving character is thus legible in the built form, making any visit to Mission Hill an enjoyable gaze into Boston's recent and distant past.

A Diverse Population

Once a working class Irish area, Mission Hill is now one of Boston's most diverse neighborhoods. Students at area colleges and universities, employees of the Longwood Medical Area, new immigrants from a range of countries, descendants of the older generations of immigrants, and others—rich, poor, young, and old—all share space in Mission Hill. The commercial district reflects this diversity with its Latino markets, Thai video stores, Irish pubs, and other businesses catering to the many ethnicities within Mission Hill.

Renowned Medical Institutions and Universities

Mission Hill has always felt the presence of the various hospitals, research centers, and educational institutions in the neighborhood and in the adjacent Longwood Medical Area and Fenway. While these institutions have provided jobs, medical care, and educational opportunities, they have also been a source of conflict, stemming from their various attempts to expand beyond their traditional boundaries. These efforts—including razing land for developments that never occurred and displacing large numbers of residents—have elicited strong protest and helped draw the Mission Hill community together.

The impact of these institutions can still be felt today, but the LMA, schools, and Mission Hill have made attempts to improve their relationships. In 1994, the Mission Hill Board of Trade organized “Hands across Huntington Avenue” to establish a positive relationship with the LMA. Mission Hill Main Streets, local businesses, and the community continue to try to attract LMA users and employees to Mission Hill. Likewise, the institutions play an important role in both the community and MHMS. While many in Mission Hill are wary of further institutional expansion, the new development at One Brigham Circle, with a large amount of space reserved for Partners Health Insurance, offers a precedent for further cooperation between Mission Hill and its neighbors.

Crime and Negative Image

While many residents feel strong pride in Mission Hill, calling it Boston’s “best kept secret,” the neighborhood still has a negative and dangerous image among outsiders. The Mission Main Public Housing development, the Charles Stuart case in 1989, and the disinvestment that has plagued many urban areas have given Mission Hill notoriety as a dangerous place, full of crime and drugs. The completion of the HOPE VI project at Mission Main in 1990 and new investment in housing and infrastructure have helped to improve this image, making Mission Hill increasingly desirable as a place to live and shop.

Students

The Mission Hill neighborhood is surrounded by a number of academic institutions, including Roxbury Community College, Northeastern University, Massachusetts College of Art, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy, Simmons College, Harvard School of Public Health, and Wentworth Polytechnic Institute. The combination of Mission Hill's proximity to these schools and affordable rents has resulted in an increasing influx of students into the Mission Hill community. At times, the community has expressed concern over the potentially negative effects of these residents who often do not have a high level of investment in the well-being of the neighborhood. Efforts by area schools to increase their on-campus housing and to pay for area police details on weekend nights have helped to ease tensions among long-time Mission Hill residents, students, and the schools.

Mission Hill Main Streets

The designation of Mission Hill as an official Main Streets district in 1997 came out of successful area improvement efforts by local business owners and residents. The Mission Hill Board of Trade, re-established in 1995 after years of inactivity, was instrumental in these efforts. They first organized other civic organizations and LMA institutions to carry out neighborhood clean-ups, advocate for greater City services, and host community events. The Board of Trade submitted an application to the Main Streets Program for its initial funding round in 1995. After that application was denied, the Board of Trade increased its efforts in the neighborhood and gained the support of a larger number of groups. Their application in 1997 was successful, and the Mission Hill Main Streets program has been successfully running since mid-1998 after the hiring of Maggie Cohn as manager.¹

¹ Seidman & Stroud, pp. 40-57

Today

Mission Hill has undergone significant changes from its beginnings as a residential neighborhood in the 19th Century: from farmland to streetcar suburb to dense, urban neighborhood. The neighborhood has made substantial efforts to preserve its historic character and incorporate the diverse populations who live within its bounds. Extensive development projects, both planned and in progress, could serve as catalysts for the continued revitalization of the business district and improve the outward image of the neighborhood.

SURVEY RESULTS

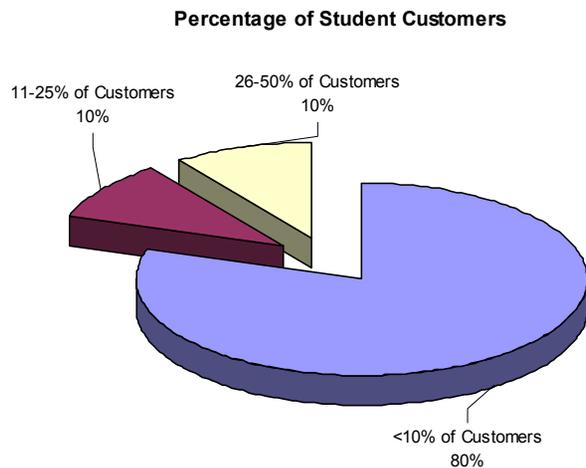
We surveyed owners and managers of businesses located in the Mission Hill Main Streets district in order to assess their needs and concerns, understand business trends, and determine their level of involvement in the neighborhood and support for a revitalization plan. In addition, we conducted intercept surveys of people in the Mission Hill Main Streets area to help identify the market served by the Main Streets district, consumer perception of the district, and opportunities for commercial and physical improvement. The full text of the surveys is in Appendix C.

Business Survey Findings

We distributed 70 surveys to Mission Hill businesses and received 24 responses. The survey analysis provided the following results:

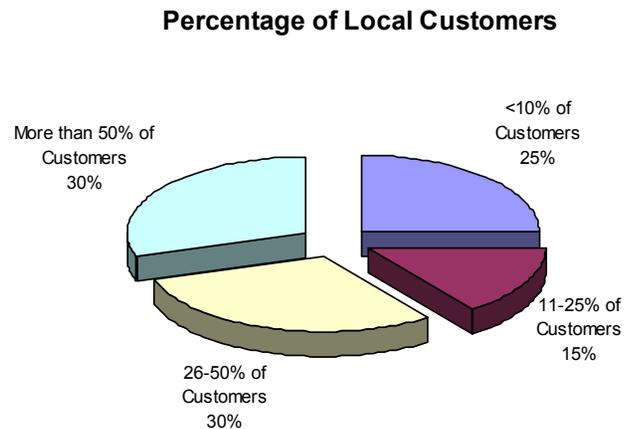
Overview

- **Mission Hill businesses are generally local and independent.** Of those surveyed, 92 percent classified themselves as independent. Only one business surveyed is a regional chain, and one is a franchise.
- **Mission Hill businesses supply a significant number of jobs.** Surveyed businesses report a total of 83 full time and 46 part time employees.
- **Mission Hill business growth is mixed.** In response to a question regarding sales trends over the last three years, 29 percent of businesses reported that sales are up 10–20 percent. However, 21 percent of businesses reported that sales are down 10–20 percent.



- **Control of real estate by business owners is relatively high.** Forty-six percent of surveyed businesses own either the building or the space in which they are located.
- **Many businesses would like to expand.** Half of surveyed businesses are interested in expanding within the next five years. Of those businesses, 50 percent would like to expand in their current location, but 33 percent plan to expand outside Mission Hill because of a need for more space.
- **Retail rents in Mission Hill are rising.** Thirty-eight percent of renters have seen significant rent increases in the past two years; most report a 25 percent raise.
- **Mission Hill businesses market and advertise in varying ways.** Local newspaper advertising and displays are the most common methods; many businesses also rely heavily on word of mouth advertising.

Customer Base



- **One-third of businesses report that over half of their customers are from Mission Hill.** Surprisingly, 25 percent of businesses report that fewer than 10 percent of customers are from Mission Hill.
- **Mission Hill businesses are generally not capturing the Longwood Medical Area market.** An overwhelming majority of surveyed businesses, 85 percent, report that LMA visitors and employees make up less than 10 percent of their customer base.
- **Despite the large student population in the Mission Hill service area, local businesses are not capturing the student market.** Eighty percent of surveyed businesses report that students make up less than 10 percent of their customer base.

Intercept Survey Findings

In addition to interviewing business owners, we also conducted intercept surveys (street interviews), with people in and around the Mission Hill Main Streets area. The team designed separate intercept surveys in order to address two different populations in Mission Hill. One survey targeted all users of Mission Hill and was administered in several areas throughout the district. The primary focus of this survey was to identify retail gaps, areas in need of economic and physical improvement, and the potential to increase consumer spending in Mission Hill. The other survey targeted individuals affiliated with the Longwood Medical Area (LMA) and the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) and was conducted in close proximity to those institutions. The main focus of this survey was to identify the percentage of LMA/HSPH affiliates that currently use the district and assess the potential for attracting more affiliates to Mission Hill businesses.

Mission Hill Customer Survey

The team conducted 93 intercept surveys at different times during the day and week and at several different locations throughout the district. The results are as follows:

- **The average respondent is 32 years old, has an annual household income of just under \$21,000, and spends \$10 per shopping trip to the Mission Hill business district.** The low income can be explained by the fact that 30 percent of the survey respondents are students, mirroring their share Mission Hill's total population.
- **Mission Hill customers are well educated.** Fifty-nine percent of the respondents indicated college or above to be their highest educational attainment.
- **The majority of respondents live or work in Mission Hill.** Forty-seven percent of respondents live in Mission Hill; 26 percent work there.
- **The majority of respondents—more than 80 percent—rely on public transit and walking to get to Mission Hill.**

- **Among those who drive, the majority cited parking as a problem:** Fifty-three percent of those who drive reported difficulties in finding parking, while only 29 percent see traffic congestion as a problem.
- **Respondents see a need for a more diverse retail mix:** Desirable retail and services that would increase visits to the Mission Hill commercial district include:
 - Supermarket: 55%
 - Clothing Store: 34%
 - Bookstore: 27%
 - Sit-down Restaurant: 25%
 - Coffee Shop: 25%
- **Other Improvements that would encourage visits to Mission Hill Business District:**
 - More attractive public spaces: 45%
 - Improved public safety: 33%
 - Cleaner public spaces: 32%
 - Attractive storefronts: 31%
 - Approximately 20 percent of the respondents did not see a need for improvements.

Customer Survey at Longwood Medical Area

We also completed 25 surveys of LMA and HSPH affiliates. Seventy-six percent of respondents work in the Longwood Medical Area and 16 percent are patients. Results are as follows:

- **LMA and HSPH affiliates surveyed are older, wealthier, and better educated than the average Mission Hill resident and customer.**

	LMA SURVEY	MISSION HILL SURVEY
Avg. Household Income	\$55,000	\$21,000
Avg. Age	37	32
% of Students	20%	30%
% College and higher	96%	59%

- **Many LMA and HSPH affiliates prefer other commercial districts.** Twenty-five percent of respondents who rarely go to Mission Hill said the district does not offer what they were looking for, and 83 percent shopped in other districts (Fenway, Brookline, LMA, or Centre Street).
- **Many LMA and HSPH affiliates lack knowledge about district offerings.** Thirty-two percent of all respondents did not know what retail and services Mission Hill offers. Of those respondents who came to Mission Hill only once a month, 42 percent lacked knowledge of district offerings.
- **Forty-eight percent said that marketing tools would make them more aware of offerings.** Forty-four percent would like to see a retail locator sign at Brigham Circle, 16 percent would like to have access to a retail locator map, and 16 percent would see value in having a business directory at their place of employment.
- **Safety concerns do not seem a deterrent to shoppers.** Public safety improvements, however, do rank high on the list of improvements that would make them visit Mission Hill more often.

- **The LMA customer survey revealed similar priorities for desired retail and services as the general customer survey:** Out of the top five retail and services that would increase their visits to the Mission Hill commercial district, four choices coincide with the priorities of the larger Mission Hill clientele we surveyed.
 - Supermarket: 52%
 - Sit-down Restaurant: 52%
 - Coffee Shop/Cafe: 52%
 - Bookstore: 44%
 - Discount Store: 28%

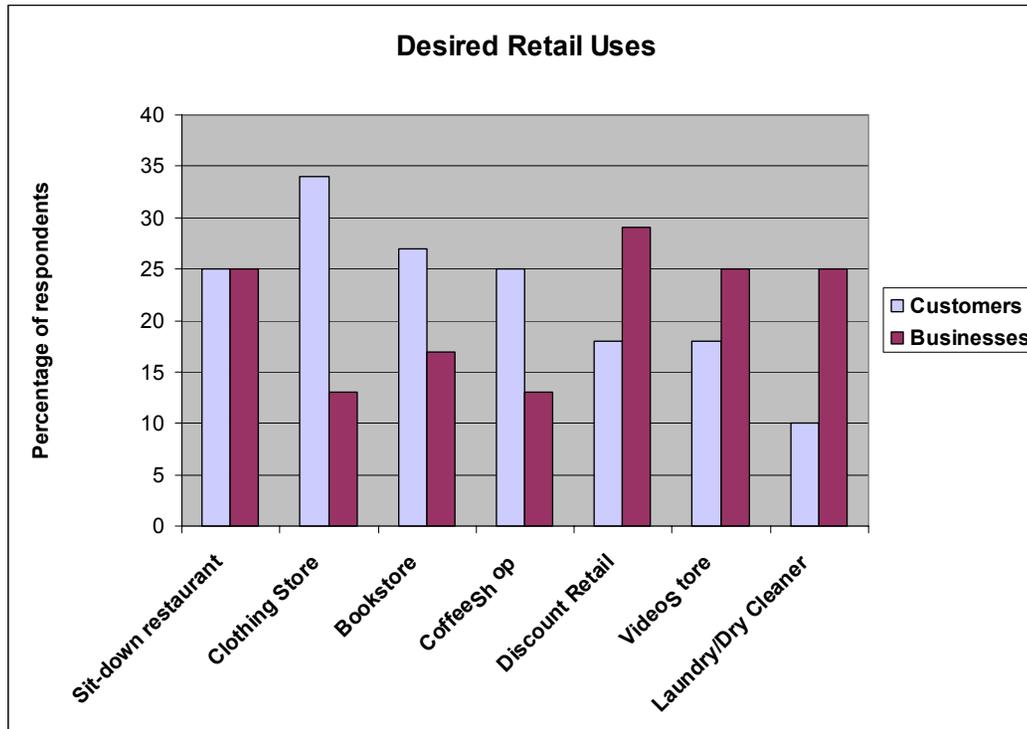
- **Top four priorities for improvements that would encourage more visits to the district:**
 - More Attractive Public spaces: 52%
 - Improved public safety: 52%
 - Attractive Storefronts: 36%
 - Better Lighting: 32%

As in the general survey, about 20 percent of the respondents did not see a need for improvements. Three of the four recommendations (all except better lighting) coincide with the results from the general customer survey.

Conclusions

A more diverse retail mix, more attractive public spaces, and increased public safety would generate more trips to the Mission Hill commercial district. Overall,

requests for public realm improvements show remarkable similarities across the business and two intercept surveys. The question about the desired retail uses revealed interesting differences in priorities. Customers expressed a need for more destination type businesses, such as sit-down restaurants, coffee shops, clothing and bookstores. Businesses, on the other hand, believe that the types of retail or services that would attract more customers and increase sales include primarily convenience-style retail, such as a discount store, a video store, and a Laundromat or dry cleaner.



Not surprisingly, Mission Hill is losing business to nearby districts. Business owners do not seem to be aware of the sales they might be losing because they are not targeting the available market or they remain unaware of their customers' needs. At the same time, many area employees are unaware of Mission Hill's

retail and service offerings. This points toward a need for Mission Hill Main Streets to provide technical assistance with respect to improving marketing techniques to capture a larger share of the area's residents and employees. Likewise, residents, area employees, and businesses all see a need for and the potential for Mission Hill to become a more attractive commercial district by providing more functional and cleaner public spaces, more attractive storefronts, improved public safety, and better lighting. Mission Hill Main Streets can take the lead in working with local business owners, city agencies, and, where appropriate, outside funders to implement these physical upgrades.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

We conducted over 40 key informant interviews with neighborhood residents, business owners, and representatives of institutions and social service agencies. These interviews with people who use or pass through the district on a daily basis helped shape our understanding of the needs and issues facing the neighborhood. Additionally, we hoped to increase interest and support for the plan by meeting with these community leaders to explain our project and get their input.

Overarching Themes

- *Mission Hill is improving, especially over the last five years*
- *Excitement about new projects*
- *Fears of institutional expansion*
- *Need for a positive external image*

While problems of crime, trash, and an inadequate business mix still remain, our interviews found that many people connected to Mission Hill feel that the neighborhood has improved significantly over the last five years. People are excited about new investments such as One Brigham Circle and the Avenue of the Arts for the new shopping and service opportunities these improvements will bring to the neighborhood. Both old-timers and newcomers appreciate the district for its diversity and hope that whatever developments and changes occur, neighborhood residents and businesses will continue to have a place.

“I know this may sound silly, but I think of Mission Hill a little bit like Sesame Street—a place where you meet all kinds of people walking down the street. It’s a refreshing change from most places I go.” —Institutional employee

When asked to define the business district, most consider it to be focused on Tremont Street and Brigham Circle, but many also mentioned Huntington Ave and Roxbury Crossing. Overall, Terrace Street is not seen as a core part of the Mission Hill district.

Residents

Many residents are proud to live in Mission Hill and have a strong connection to the neighborhood. While many moved to Mission Hill for its affordable rents or to be close to jobs and partners, they have remained in the neighborhood, buying houses, raising children, and building more relationships in Mission Hill. They want their neighborhood to be more vibrant, to capture some of its former glory from the days when Mission Hill boasted three grocery stores and a car dealership, and to better provide for their needs.

Many residents express a desire to shop in the Mission Hill district more frequently than they currently do. They feel that the current business mix, however, does not serve their needs, so they are forced to shop in other neighborhoods for basic items such as groceries, videos, books, household goods, and clothing.

Many also expressed the sentiment that the business district should focus more on resident needs for basic services and not attempt to cater to outside users, such as LMA employees or college students, who many perceive to be outsiders with few ties to the neighborhood.

“You keep focusing on the commercial district, but we think of this as a nice residential community, and the commercial district is just there to serve it.”

While some residents appreciate the institutional presence in the neighborhood, others feel a certain level of concern about school and hospital encroachment across Huntington Avenue, especially HSPH usage of storefront spaces for offices.

Residents who know of MHMS think the organization is doing a good job in the neighborhood. Many think that recent storefront improvements have brought a new vitality to the neighborhood and fixed up formerly undesirable businesses, such as Curtin’s Roadside Tavern, which was cited a few times.

“It’s a small community, but one you have pride in.”

“We deserve a commercial district like Centre Street [in Jamaica Plain] or Broadway [in South Boston].”

“You definitely don’t come to Mission Hill to window shop.”

“I see MHMS as something of a neighborhood captain, coordinating city services, like street cleaning and parking, which need to get done.”

Business Owners

“I located my business in Mission Hill because it was the closest affordable place to downtown and had potential for expansion. One Brigham Circle and the Avenue of the Arts made me think this area was ‘up and coming’ and I should get involved early.”

“My rent has been going up by ten percent a year. I’d like to own, but I know that the owner of the building won’t sell.”

“I’d love to see another restaurant in Mission Hill. It would bring more interested people into the neighborhood.”

Business owners also feel that the neighborhood is “up and coming.” Like residents, many business owners chose Mission Hill because of its affordable rents and proximity to the medical institutions and downtown Boston.

Business owners expressed a desire to stay in the neighborhood and many want to expand their businesses. For those who rent space, they feel the pressure of increasing property values through rent increases. Accordingly, there is a desire to have ownership opportunities.

While few business owners mention collaborations with other neighborhood businesses, they hoped that complementary businesses will open in the neighborhood—a restaurant owner wants more restaurants to bring people in and an auto-related business wanted a garage or mechanic to open up—to create small clusters within the neighborhood that would give the business district a greater identity.

A few business owners mention purchasing advertising space in newspapers or on the radio, but none speak of collaborative advertising. Additionally, most advertising is limited in scope, with most businesses relying on word of mouth to bring in new customers.

Many business owners also express the opinion that physical changes, such as more frequent street cleaning, better lighting, new street trees, and greater accountability by property owners for the space in front of their stores, would draw more people to the district and enhance the shopping experience. Business owners also desire increased parking in the area, greater police presence, and an expansion of MHMS façade improvement and design programs.

“There need to be more partnerships between the City and landlords to get landlords to take care of their front yard. One clean-up day a year is not enough.”

The business owners interviewed see their businesses as serving a variety of markets, including the immediate neighborhood, the medical area, and the greater Boston region, with the most successful businesses having something of a regional draw.

Social Service Agencies/Institutions

The Mission Hill district is home to a wide variety of non-profit institutions ranging from small social service agencies to world-renowned hospitals. Many of these institutions play a role in Mission Hill Main Streets by raising funds and providing technical assistance, and they are proud of their involvement in the community.

While some employees of these organizations live in Mission Hill, the majority are from outside the neighborhood.

“We’d like to hire more people from the neighborhood, but there aren’t a lot of people living here with the skills we’re looking for.”

Representatives of the institutions thought that the neighborhood is still negatively perceived outside the community; they feel it is seen as a place full of crime and drugs.

“Mission Hill has had a bad reputation since the Charles Stuart case, but if you look at the numbers, I guarantee that more crime occurs in the LMA than in Mission Hill.”

They call for physical streetscape and façade improvements to bring in more people, especially outsiders unfamiliar with the neighborhood. They think that MHMS should increase its efforts to publicize the district within the medical area, believing that the hospitals did not utilize the full value of Mission Hill.

- *Want to increase hiring from inside Mission Hill*
- *Concerned about negative external perceptions*
- *Concerned about student presence*

Many of the social service providers express concern over increasing numbers of students in the area and the encroachment of the LMA institutions, seeing those changes as negative impacts that push out the low-income clients they serve. These institutions call for greater job opportunities for neighborhood residents, especially youth, and for businesses catering to the diverse population that lives in Mission Hill.

Conclusion

- Concern about institutional encroachment by educational and medical institutions is paired with a call for increased institutional investment in the neighborhood. These two seemingly opposing sentiments lead us to recommend the development of guidelines for handling institutional expansion.
- Mission Hill is felt to be on the rise, giving way to concerns about increases in rents and commercial and residential gentrification.
- There is a need to strengthen Mission Hill's internal image of a close-knit neighborhood and to project that positive image outward on a regional scale. Physical public realm improvements are critical in achieving that positive image.

MARKET ANALYSIS

Overview

Before making recommendations for the economic development of the Mission Hill commercial district, it is critical to understand the character and spending patterns of the commercial district's primary market. Once we assessed those needs and patterns, we analyzed the current retail mix to identify potential clusters, sales gaps, and opportunities to expand the retail capacity of the district as a whole. This breakdown allows us to propose interventions that meet the needs of the community and fit with our vision of a vibrant, neighborhood-oriented Mission Hill.

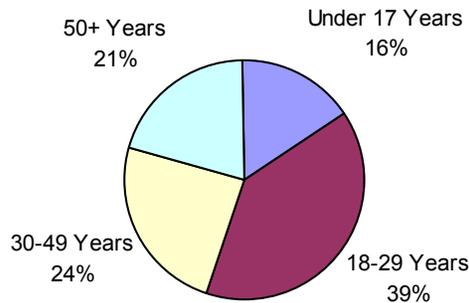
Our goal throughout our analysis has been to meet the needs of the local residents before targeting outside users of the district. We feel that this focus revealed the best opportunities for the commercial district, as we recognize that there are many established shopping districts in close proximity to Mission Hill.. At this point in time, we believe that the capacity of the Mission Hill district to fundamentally alter the shopping patterns of other districts' patrons is low and the likely rewards are minimal. From a purely market perspective, therefore, the Mission Hill commercial district will be more successful in focusing on the needs of the local residents rather than on high risk ventures to attract outside shoppers who may never materialize.

Census Analysis

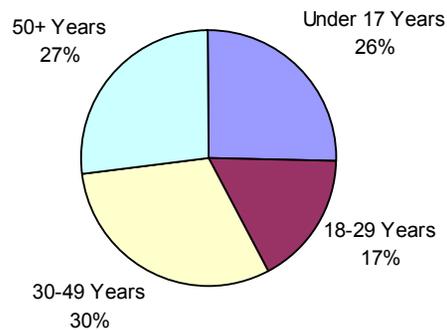
Our analysis of data from the 2000 Census reveals 9,596 households in the Mission Hill neighborhood for a total of 24,064 residents within the primary market area, defined as all census tracts that lie within one-quarter mile of the Main Streets district. The majority of customers will be drawn from this area. A secondary market area exists in the radius between one-quarter and one-half mile around the district. Given the local-serving nature of the existing retail,

however, we believe that households within the primary market area would be those making most of their purchases in the Mission Hill district.

Age Distribution in Mission Hill



Nationwide Age Distribution



One-half of the residents in the primary market area identify themselves as white, while 23 percent identify themselves as black. Twelve percent of the residents say they are Asian, and five percent are multi-racial. An additional 17 percent of residents respond that they were Hispanic, an ethnicity that cuts across all racial lines. These demographic patterns affirm that Mission Hill is a diverse neighborhood. This diversity, however, is not well represented by the existing retail offerings. There appears to be an opportunity to introduce ethnic products into existing convenience retail, if not develop new retail establishments that cater to these different groups. Currently, only Bangkok Video, the Thai video store and Balan Baalis, the African hand crafts store can reasonably be said to be leveraging the diversity of the neighborhood.

The age distribution of the neighborhood offers insights into retail opportunities as well. Young adults, many of whom are students, comprise nearly 40 percent of the population in the primary market area. Residents age 22 to 29 make up 22 percent of the district, with 18- to 21-year-olds accounting for an additional 17 percent. By way of comparison, nationally the 18–29 population makes up only 17 percent of the population. Similarly, while the American population as a whole is getting older, with 27 percent of the population above age 50, Mission Hill remains relatively young, with only 21 percent of the residents above 50. Nationally, 26 percent of the population is under 18, compared to only 16 percent in Mission Hill. These numbers indicate a significant opportunity to develop retail targeted at a student population.

It is often difficult to extract spending potential for students from Census data, as students often have greater purchasing power than their income would indicate. Nevertheless, given the presence of a large student population stores focusing on entertainment, used books or music, used clothing, and used furniture are good candidates for the neighborhood. These types of stores tend to flourish in areas with high rates of household turnover. While Census data at the block level does not provide length of residence, students and other young households tend to exhibit relatively high rates of turnover. Moreover, given that the

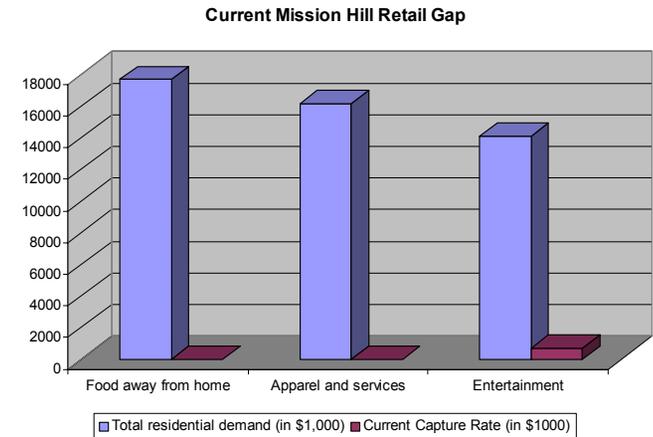
neighborhood's median household income is \$22,661 (compared to \$39,629 for Boston as a whole), these low to moderately priced retail establishments would be attractive to other households in the area.

Spending Patterns and Retail Gaps

Based on household income in the primary market area, we were able to calculate household spending patterns. The number of households used in the spending pattern analysis was 8,556. This differs from the previous figure (see Census Analysis, above) because of the lack of income data made available at the block level. The 8,556 households are derived from aggregate data where income data is available. Although this figure is approximately 11 percent below the previously described number of households, the analysis shows significant unmet local demand even for the smaller household figure. Household incomes from the Census were correlated to spending pattern data for the northeast released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which down household spending into different categories of expenditures by income range. The largest single category of household expenditure is, not surprisingly, housing, followed by transportation and food at home. We have calculated that Mission Hill households spend approximately \$26.2 million per year on food consumed at home. Another \$17.7 million is spent on food away from home, with another \$3.2 million spent on alcohol. Our findings suggest that:

- Demand for food and personal care products are not met within the neighborhood.

The opening of the new Stop and Shop at One Brigham Circle will meet most of the demand for food at home for the neighborhood. Assuming the 30,000-square-foot store sells \$500 per square foot, it will capture roughly 60 percent of the total neighborhood demand. A portion of the sales will fall into other categories of expenditures, such as housekeeping supplies and personal care products, and some of the sales will be made by non-residents. Other existing convenience stores also account for some of the spending in these categories, but even with these stores and the new development there still remains a gap



- *Demand for food and personal care products are not met within the neighborhood.*
- *There are an insufficient number of sit-down restaurants for area employees and residents.*
- *Residents' entertainment and clothing expenditures are nearly entirely lost to establishments outside Mission Hill.*

within the neighborhood. Ethnic food and personal care products could fill this gap.

- There are an insufficient number of sit-down restaurants for area employees and residents.

Food away from home is another area where the existing retail offerings do not meet the potential. The sales gap analysis for these expenditures is corroborated by anecdotal evidence indicating that more sit-down restaurants are desired in the neighborhood. Additionally, existing restauranteurs feel that additional restaurants would stimulate the market by adding to the variety of offerings and helping to establish Mission Hill as a place to eat for both local employees and residents. Restaurants that cater primarily to a lunchtime clientele, however, tend to be less robust than those that also attract a dinner crowd and do not promote the image of a round-the-clock neighborhood.

- Residents' entertainment and clothing expenditures are nearly entirely lost to establishments outside Mission Hill.

The largest losses of sales to stores outside the neighborhood are in entertainment and apparel. Households in Mission Hill spend \$16 million and \$14 million each year on clothing and entertainment, respectively. The opportunities in these areas are significant. It is important to recognize, however, that the aggregate spending potential is distributed across a wide number of households, many of whom have little disposable income. It is important to make sure that the stores developed to meet the neighborhood's apparel and entertainment needs carry appropriately priced items.

Existing Business Inventory

Business Inventory

The existing businesses in Mission Hill include a mix of retail, non-profit, and services. A closer examination of the map below, however, shows a few patterns of business location. The food and alcohol stores are almost all clustered within

a one block radius of Brigham Circle, aside from a few establishments near Roxbury Crossing. Retail options other than food and alcohol are limited and spread throughout the district. The establishments between the gateways at Brigham Circle and Roxbury Crossing are predominantly services like hair salons and doctor's offices, institutions like the Mission Church, and non-profit organizations like Sociedad Latina.

Implications

Brigham Circle is beginning to be known in the area for its mix of restaurants and bars, continued development along these lines has the potential to draw in more customers and strengthen both the identity of the district and its market potential. The vacant lots and underutilized buildings near Roxbury Crossing provide an opportunity for a strong development at that end of the district to meet the needs of shoppers who have limited options nearby.

Mission Hill: Business Inventory



MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning 11.439

EXISTING PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

General Impression

Mission Hill maintains a stable neighborhood-oriented commercial district adjacent to a cluster of large institutions, with a mix of independent businesses and national chains. The neighborhood's infrastructure and some properties are suffering from neglect. This neglect manifests itself in problems such as graffiti and trash, poor lighting, underutilized public places and vacant lots, uninviting storefronts, decaying sidewalks, and poorly indicated street crossings. These conditions hinder the development of a new image significantly detached from that of past decades. Recent and current development projects, such as completed storefront improvements, Brigham Circle, and the Avenue of the Arts improvements, are indications that the neighborhood is rapidly changing and community improvements have the opportunity to gather momentum.

Geography and Image as Seen in the Field

The Mission Hill Main Streets district is a large, dispersed area that abuts two principal transportation links between downtown Boston and its southwestern suburbs. The east-west route of Tremont Street provides an important pedestrian link between the Orange and Green Lines. The majority of businesses in the district line this street and the other principal corridor, Huntington Avenue.

Physical and psychological boundaries exist within the district and on its edges. These are formed by the significant physical impediments of the Southwest Corridor and Columbus Avenue, the uninviting façade of the Longwood Medical Area, and the relatively quick cessation of retail and pedestrian activity along Huntington's southwesterly and northwesterly extensions away from Brigham Circle. The Circle then is the strongest node, being a site of both neighborhood activity and commuter dispersion. It therefore presents an opportunity for overlapping commuter and local activity but is hampered by inadequate traffic



Plaza in front of the Roxbury Crossing MBTA station

and pedestrian schemes; the completion of Avenue of the Arts improvements and One Brigham Circle is likely to rectify much of this problem. Another significant node of activity is located at the Roxbury Crossing station, but at present, this area's vitality is hindered by the rush of Columbus Avenue, the dilapidation of several adjacent structures, large vacant lots, and underutilized public spaces.

Continuous activity between these two nodes is hindered by the lack of continuous street walls along the rise of the hill from Roxbury Crossing westward. The visual breaks in the street wall are an impediment to pedestrian activity up the hill towards the church. The downward slope of the hill from the Mission Church to Brigham Circle represents the most positive interaction of automotive and pedestrian traffic along a consistent street wall and generally attractive business corridor. In the 1970s urban renewal left its mark in the form of several high-rises, but their good placement of parking, fences, and vegetation help promote the human scale of the corridor. Terrace Street, extending southward from Roxbury Crossing, boasts many successful light industrial businesses but lacks visual connection with the rest of the district, increasing its isolation.

Architecture & Storefront Conditions

The district's architecture speaks of a late 19th century working class neighborhood with its abundance of regular building types, almost all dating from the two decades around the turn of the century. Generally speaking, the majority of structures are in fair to good condition. Triple-deckers abound on both principal commercial streets and side streets. They are of wooden construction and without front porches on commercial streets. Many have been refurbished with aluminum or vinyl siding. On the principal arterials stand many turn-of-the-century three-to-five story brick residential and commercial blocks, often with cast iron or copper detail. These streets also have blocks of single story commercial strips of twentieth century origins. The greatest amount of post-war architecture is visible at the Harvard School of Public Health and in 1970s Urban Renewal high-rise developments along Tremont Street, St. Alphonsus Street, and on Huntington Avenue at Mission Park.

The decline of industry, combined with an ever-growing institutional presence, has led to both pocketed dilapidation and a diverse population of students, professionals, and old-time residents. This diversity is reflected in varying storefront décor and the rehabilitation of some older residential structures contrasted with the continued neglect of other buildings, namely those occupied by students. Many storefronts possess unattractive street facades, especially those with pulled blinds and decaying or unnoticeable signage. Underdeveloped lots often have unattractive fencing. This contributes to a poor pedestrian experience along the street in certain locations. In general, we assessed a majority of commercial storefronts to be in a good condition, with far fewer in markedly poor condition. Recommendations on specific improvements may be found in the Public Realm recommendations chapter.



*Above: Pulled blinds create dead façade
Below: High-rise apartments on Tremont Street*





Above: Empty planter for sidewalk tree

Below: Tree cut off, leaving stump in middle of sidewalk



Streetscape

We define streetscape as the combination of physical features visible in the public realm. Elements that contribute to streetscape include sidewalks, vegetation, street furniture, public spaces, and lighting. A consistent style and quality among these features creates an attractive environment and strengthens the identity of a district.

Sidewalks

Sidewalk quality varies throughout the district. Certain sections are more conducive to pedestrian movement than others. We noted the following:

- All cement, averaging 8 feet in width
- Often in poor condition with asphalt patches
- Curbs sometimes replaced by asphalt slope
- Sidewalks on LMA side of Huntington Avenue newly improved

Vegetation

Mission Hill has room for a higher number of street trees and vegetation, and existing plantings are often unattractive or in poor condition. A walk through the district reveals the following:

- Tree-wells regularly spaced on main arterials
- Many trees missing from sidewalk tree-wells or have been cut down, leaving stumps
- Some trees leave inadequate room for passage on sidewalk
- Little vegetation in district other than trees
- Existing planter boxes on Tremont Street are in a state of disrepair

Street Furniture and Signs

The district has a combination of types and styles of sidewalk features. The opportunity exists to create a stronger district identity through consistent street elements.

- District contains few seating locations along the street
- Trash cans and public phones regularly spaced
- Trash cans not covered, allowing trash to blow into the street
- Harsh street lighting at irregular intervals
- Street signage missing at certain locations



Vacant Lot



Trash Overflowing

Vacant Lots/Parking Lots

There are many breaks in the street façade created by vacant lots and streetfront parking lots. These have the potential for physical improvement through infill development.

- District contains many vacant lots; most are used for parking
- Vacant storefronts
- Inconsistent street edge

Public Places

Mission Hill has two existing public open spaces, and another will be opened as part of the One Brigham Circle development.

- After renovations, Mission Hill Playground will be an appealing public place
- Veterans' Plaza in Brigham Circle is small and isolated, essentially invisible from across Huntington Avenue.



View up Huntington Ave., showing width of the street

Traffic & Pedestrian Circulation

General Pedestrian Crossings

The existing pedestrian crossings fail to promote pedestrian safety. Cars often race through the smaller intersections, regardless of pedestrians. No special pedestrian-friendly infrastructure exists within the district. Since Mission Hill borders numerous hospitals, it is necessary to ensure universal accessibility and traffic calming.

Brigham Circle

- Existing crossings in poor condition
- Width of Huntington Avenue makes crossing intimidating
- Brigham Circle confusing for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers
- Green Line trolley forms physical barrier separating LMA from Mission Hill

Roxbury Crossing Not Pedestrian Friendly

- Train and bus stations on opposite corners require frequent pedestrian crossings.
- Heavily used automobile corridor

Bus and Car Traffic Circulation

Both Tremont and Huntington Avenues serve as major arterials for public transit and private automobiles. These streets create strong barriers dividing the district into isolated pockets of commercial activity.

- Traffic is heavy on both Tremont and Huntington
- West of Brigham Circle, interactions between bus, trolley, and auto traffic become unclear

- *Mission Hill Link* shuttle connects T stops but is not well advertised.

Parking

Study

We conducted a study of the parking situation in the Mission Hill district in response to many complaints from business owners and residents. Most of the area along Tremont Street is marked for two hour (maximum) parking between 8 AM and 6 PM, Monday through Saturday. There is one block of metered spaces, and most of the surrounding streets are resident parking only. We surveyed the length of Tremont Street and surrounding streets that allow visitor parking, in order to ascertain whether cars are parked beyond the two hour time limit, which does not allow turnover for shoppers. The team recorded license plate numbers on Monday, April 28, 2003, at 10 AM, 1 PM and 4 PM. Almost all street spots were occupied during all hours of the day, except for a small number of spots on Tremont close to Roxbury Crossing. There were 471 license plates written down over the three time periods, meaning that there are approximately 160 visitor spots in the district. Of those, 24, or 15 percent, were filled by cars that were parked in the same spot for the entire day. Another 78 spots, or 49 percent, were filled by the same car during at least two time periods, meaning that they were parked for at least three hours. Since the owners of the cars could not be identified, it is difficult to figure out exactly who is parking over the legal time limits. Anecdotal evidence indicates that most of the drivers are either owners and employees of local businesses or employees at the Longwood Medical Area.

Implications

Better enforcement of posted parking regulations would yield over 25 percent more parking spots in the district. This would allow more parking for patrons of local businesses, who are the target audience for the visitor parking spots.

RECOMMENDATIONS—INTRODUCTION

Having completed our review of existing conditions and our means for gathering that information, we will now discuss our recommendations. These recommendations are inspired principally by our conversations with residents and business owners, our surveys of people using the district and the research discussed above. We have divided the recommendations into three areas that reflect the principal themes of the existing conditions analysis: the public realm, development and business development. It is our hope that these recommendations will serve as a stable foundation in addressing the needs of the neighborhood. We furthermore stress the role of creativity and continuous community engagement in the refinement and realization of these goals or any other strategies that MHMS may develop in the future.

Our revitalization plan focuses on building connections across Mission Hill: physical, social and institutional connections that will strengthen the commercial district and enliven the neighborhood.

The concept plan illustrates the potential for drawing nearby residents, students and institutional employees into the district by creating stronger physical connections across Columbus Avenue at Roxbury Crossing, across Huntington Avenue at Brigham Circle and throughout the district. The recommendations for public realm improvements, a development vision, and business development strategies all support this goal.

Connecting Mission Hill

- Creating physical connections between the Roxbury Crossing and Brigham Circle, the gateways of the district
- Connecting development to the needs of the residents and preserving the character of the neighborhood
- Connecting businesses to residents and customers

Mission Hill: Concept Plan



Connecting Mission Hill

RECOMMENDATIONS—THE PUBLIC REALM

Introduction

The quality of the public realm is vital to every Main Streets district. The public realm is defined here as the physical space that reflects the general image and identity of the district along with the pedestrian and vehicular experiences. While Mission Hill Main Streets has made great strides toward improving the public realm through storefront improvements and programming, there is much work to be done in order for the district to reach its full potential. Mission Hill currently contains visible signs of neglect with the presence of trash on the streets, unused street furniture, unpainted pedestrian crossings, and poor sidewalk quality. Roxbury Crossing and its vicinity remains disconnected from the rest of the district due to vacant lots and generally uninviting quality of the Tremont street wall.

At the same time, however, there are opportunities for MHMS to seize upon. Recent neighborhood involvement in developments such as One Brigham Circle presents an opportunity for MHMS to carry community momentum forward and ensure future investment in Mission Hill both from outside and from within. Strategies to improve the public realm should aim first and foremost at providing cohesion to the district. Cohesion provides a comfortable experience for pedestrian and driver as well as district character. Furthermore, each public realm initiative can be used as an opportunity to build capacity within the community and develop partnerships with outside institutions and organizations. Drawing on local creativity is always helpful in neighborhood projects; it will generate excitement and build on Mission Hill's unique identity and diversity. Every project gains strength from the creative efforts of its participants, who in turn benefit from a place that reflects and embodies their hard work and achievements.

GOALS FOR THE PUBLIC REALM

- Provide cohesion to the district through a series of targeted interventions
- Emphasize unique character of neighborhood through physical improvements to the public realm
- Become model for innovative and creative district developments.



Based on our research, we propose a series of strategies to be implemented over the short term and long term, that will help MHMS realize success in the public realm. The strategies consist of approaches to signage and lighting, basic maintenance, including sidewalk repair, traffic calming and pedestrian safety, storefront improvements, and vacant lot improvements. Finally we have included a discussion of more creative pursuits in developing the neighborhood's character either through the above mentioned strategies or entirely new methods.

Signage and Lighting

Adequate signage is important in signaling entrance to the district as well as providing a sense of identity for the area. The installed "Welcome to Mission Hill" signs at Brigham Circle and Roxbury Crossing supposedly perform this task, but they are neither prominently placed nor provide enough character to capture passers-by's attention. In order to promote a sense of place, Mission Hill needs additional signage that reflects the character of the district and aids patrons in knowing where to go.

Types of signs needed in the district:

- "Welcome to Mission Hill" sign *at Roxbury Crossing and Brigham Circle visible to pedestrians and drivers*
- Business locator maps *at Brigham Circle and Roxbury Crossing*
- Parking signs, especially for directing traffic to off-Tremont or off-Huntington lots
- Sign on Tremont at Terrace Street pointing toward businesses down Terrace
- Signs announcing the historic triangle at both ends of Wigglesworth and Worthington
- Mission Hill/Roxbury Crossing MBTA Sign



Existing city-issued "Welcome to Mission Hill" sign at Brigham Circle lacks prominence and character.



Sign and Light for Hyde Park Historic District in Boise, Idaho.

Source: www.northend.org

- Clear transit information signs for the green line and orange line MBTA stations, MBTA Bus, and Mission Hill Link

Lighting improves pedestrian safety and also provides a unifying theme to the district. Existing lighting is both ugly and insufficient in some areas, i.e., Parker Street between Tremont and Huntington. The district additionally contains remnants of previous generations of streetlights. Mission Hill Main Streets should work with the Lighting Division of the Public Works Department to reconfigure the streetlights in the district. Specifically, shorter lights, which are more conducive to a pedestrian feel than the current, excessively high lights, should be installed. These lights should provide adequate light coverage over both sidewalks and streets. Also, unused and inadequate lights should be removed, as their presence blocks sidewalks and clutters the landscape. The picture on the left is a good example of quality, pedestrian-oriented lighting.

Basic Maintenance

Maintenance includes necessities such as the cleanliness of sidewalks and streets, sidewalk repair and the pickup of trash. This is necessary in enhancing the image of the district.

Repair Sidewalks

In order to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and provide cohesion to the district, it is necessary to fix general sidewalk problems, such as holes, empty tree wells, irregular asphalt patches, and broken granite edges. Improving the quality of sidewalks also provides an opportunity for creativity by introducing artwork and greenery. Creative alternatives will be examined in more detail below. Sidewalk repair is a relatively simple way of improving the streetscape and removing an image of neglect.

- Cement over black asphalt patches along the north side of Tremont from Brigham circle to Worthington

- Plant trees in tree wells along Tremont and Huntington
- Reduce number of poles, non-functional light fixtures, and unnecessary obstructions along Huntington, especially at the intersection of Huntington and Fenwood
- Restore curb at the Mass. College of Pharmacy parking lot.

Traffic Calming/Pedestrian Safety

Physical analysis and interviews with local patrons indicate both the reality and perception of dangerous conditions for pedestrians along Tremont Street. While traveling on the sidewalks may be decent, crossing the street is a hazardous task. The district offers few accommodations for persons with disabilities, which is problematic in such close proximity to a cluster of hospitals. These recommendations aim to improve safety for pedestrians. In addition, traffic calming improvements signal entry into a pedestrian-oriented district that requires drivers to slow their speed accordingly. While Tremont Street provides an important link between heavily traversed Columbus Street and Huntington Avenue, its width and function as a commercial street requires automobile traffic to move slowly. Alternate routes better serve those pursuing quick passage.

This plan suggests three general strategies to improve both the traffic circulation and the pedestrian safety throughout the district. The first strategy concerns basic and necessary improvements, such as painting street lines, to reduce general confusion. The second suggests new pedestrian crossings to encourage pedestrian activity and safety. The third set of strategies proposes the redesign of intersections to calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety. The intersections were strategically chosen both for traffic calming and pedestrian safety effects, as well as improving the view and walking experience of the district.

Basic Improvements

- Paint all street lanes

Strategies for traffic circulation and pedestrian safety

- Implement basic and necessary Improvements to intersections
- Encourage pedestrian activity and safety
- Redesign intersections to calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety

- Paint the middle divider a color other than yellow to signal to drivers entry into a defined area. In Medford Square on Route 60 the city painted the middle divider red, white and blue.
- Repaint all crossings. These could also be in a color other than white.
- Place Pedestrian Crossing Signs on traffic cones or barrels at crossings on street median

Paint New Pedestrian Crossings

Some locations have a high incidence of jaywalking, likely the result of pedestrian-unfriendly intersections. This presents a danger to pedestrians and slows the flow of traffic. The following locations are recommended for new crossings

- Roxbury Crossing MBTA station to the bus shelter across Tremont Street
- Tremont Street at Pontiac
- Tremont Street at Wigglesworth



Faded crosswalks make crossing wide intersections difficult for pedestrians

Improve Intersections



Brigham Circle

- Ensure that Mission Hill benefits from Avenue of the Arts improvements

St. Alphonsus

- Pedestrian friendly crossings
- Reduces traffic speed

Parker Street

- Pedestrian-friendly crossings
- Provides order to intersection
- Connects traffic calming with economic development and storefront improvement efforts.

Roxbury Crossing

- Provides crossing from MBTA station to bus shelter
- Improves pedestrian crossings

IMPROVE INTERSECTIONS

Begin improvements with Brigham Circle and Roxbury Crossing gateways and spread towards core area. Improvements should announce to all modes entrance into an area of significant pedestrian traffic. Improvements along Tremont Street, particularly at the intersection of Parker Street, are important in maintaining the unity of the district.

This plan identifies four key locations in need of intersection improvements. As the design and implementation process could take years to complete, the following locations represent a range of opportunities and priorities for implementation. This plan recommends improvements at the two gateways plus additional intersections in between.

Parker and Tremont Intersection Improvement

The improvement of this intersection is vital for both pedestrian and driver, and its beatification would establish a visual link westward from Roxbury Crossing up the hill. It presents an ideal opportunity for the development of public space. It is critical to combine intersection improvements with storefront improvements to yield the greatest effect both in changing the image of the corner and in lending to the general purpose of establishing a visual link up Tremont Street from Roxbury Crossing. Considering the corner's reputation as a place for loiterers and drug dealers, we suggest as a first alternative:

- In the short term a temporary island can be put in the street to test how improving pedestrian experience affects traffic flow
- A permanent island with plantings could be built in the center of Tremont Street on the east side of the Parker Street Crossing.

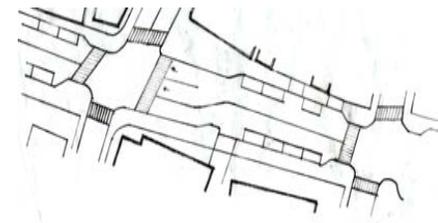
Ideally, instead of an island, a more effective expansion of pedestrian space could be realized in the widening of the space on the north side of



Parker Street Plaza Before



Parker Street Plaza After



Redesigned intersection

Tremont Street. This would involve a much broader and long-term initiative, necessitating the transforming of the corner's image and safety, but the result would be more satisfying. We suggest the following steps to discourage illegal activity and increase pedestrian traffic in the area:

- Work with beat police officers and Mission Main security officers
- Encourage storefront improvements to foster a new image
- Outdoor seating would encourage pedestrian activity
- The installation of a wider plaza and the reconfiguration of Tremont Street

Fenwood and Huntington

- Remove unused lighting supports
- Repaint the crossing

Brigham Circle

- The Avenue of the Arts improvement includes sidewalk expansions and improved intersections
- Ensure that the Avenue of the Arts and the One Brigham Circle project carry out their proposed designs for public spaces

Roxbury Crossing

- Extend median through pedestrian crossing
- Add crossing from the subway station entrance to the bus stop

Tremont Street and St. Alphonsus

- Lower priority area for bump-outs

Storefronts

There are two basic elements of storefront character: the physical quality of the storefronts themselves and the degree to which they promote an active street environment. While the general quality of the storefronts was considered fair in the existing conditions analysis, a dedicated effort towards storefront improvements could greatly enhance the district's character. Additional efforts to increase the interaction of storefronts with the street will also contribute to the district's vitality.

This proposal categorizes three types of storefronts in need of improvements. Immediate priority improvements represent the businesses in which the poor quality of the storefronts significantly detracts from the district. Storefronts needing small improvements can be enhanced with a coat of paint. Other efforts that are equally important may lie beyond the scope of a Main Streets design improvement. Finally, there are storefronts that contain blank walls either without windows or with perpetually closed blinds that do not encourage interactivity.

Immediate priority

MHMS should continue the successful storefront improvement program. Prior to significant investment of time and funds, MHMS should ensure that businesses will remain in the district for some time.



1439 Tremont



1560 Tremont

Inactive Storefronts in the Mission Hill Business District



Small actions

- Tremont Liquor – next to Solstice Cafe- remove advertisement, paint windows

Long term

- Funeral Home

Poor Street Interaction-

- Harvard School of Public Health -
 - *Short term: Display art of local school children in windows or use reverse blinds. -*
 - *Long term: Institutional offices can move into second floor locations*
- Center for Blood Research

Murals

Opportunities and implementation strategies for public art are further discussed in “Creative Pursuits in Developing the District’s Character”

- The south side of Sovereign Bank facing onto the Veterans Memorial to enhance the park and Brigham Circle
- Knights of Columbus Building



Harvard School of Public Health



Sovereign Bank Before and After

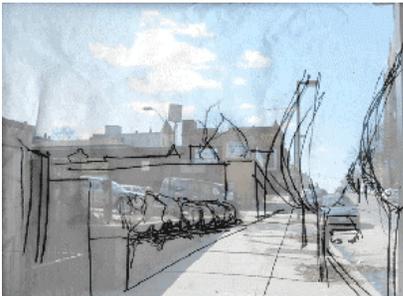
Vacant Lot-front Improvements

Vacant lots or underutilized spaces threaten the cohesion of the district, especially around the principal gateways of Roxbury Crossing and Brigham Circle and along the view up the hill from Roxbury Crossing. In the long term, new developments can hopefully restore most of the street wall. In the short term, MHMS may undertake strategies to significantly improve the physical condition of the frontage of these lots onto the sidewalk, making the pedestrian experience more pleasing.

- Brigham and Women’s Hospital- Plant large evergreen trees in front of its loading dock.
- Boston Clutch Works – Replace decaying fence with a row of shrubberies
- Texas BBQ – The corners of the lot and the side bordering Tremont Street could have plantings
- Vacant parcel 1463-1467 – currently unpaved parking area that could have either plantings or low fence
- Parcel 25 Tremont Street frontage – A wooden fence possibly used for advertising or painted
- Bates Auto Body lot has room for large potted plants



*Clutchworks Lot:
Current conditions*



*Clutchworks Lot:
After improvements*

Creative Pursuits in Developing the District's Character

The future of the district's character lies in Main Streets' ability not only to pursue a unifying and attractive streetscape but also to use creative approaches to the public realm that build on the area's unique diversity. This approach also has economic advantages: public art, for example, represents the existence and viability of investment through institutional and corporate partnerships at the same time that it builds character. Considering the neighborhood's status as a nascent arts community, the arts could be one avenue to pursue in emphasizing the district's uniqueness and diversity. Thinking creatively about the district in the short term could involve cooperation with local schools and building on the existing relationship with the Urban Arts program at Massachusetts College of Art. There are also opportunities for local artists to become involved in small projects, everything from murals to sidewalk motifs, which are more durable than tree plantings. MHMS can also research the possibility of a specific artist, preferably from within the Boston area, installing something more particular and permanent. This has been very successful in other cities. The murals of Isaiah Zagar on and around South Street in Philadelphia are beautiful examples of vacant lots and plain buildings turned into public art. Pedestrians find the work fascinating and frequently stop to look at his 'mosaic gardens' or murals.

Boston has many funding resources for public art. Such resources could be used for hiring an artist to lend permanent character and beauty to the neighborhood. Some funding sources, artist groups, and other non-profits are listed in Appendix B with contact information.

**SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE, PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND TRAFFIC CALMING
IMPLEMENTATION**

Target Location	Action	Primary Actor
Sidewalk Improvements	Cement over black asphalt patches Plant trees in tree wells Fix general sidewalk problems, holes, sidewalk edge	Boston Transportation Department
	Paint street lanes and pedestrian crossings	Boston Transportation Department (BTD)
Parker and Tremont Intersection	Create plaza/island	MHMS funding
	Bump outs	BTD
	Storefront improvement	
Fenwood and Huntington Intersection	Remove extra poles	BTD
	Add crossing	
	Expand sidewalks Add bump-out Define crossing areas	Leverage Avenue of the Arts and One Brigham Circle to improve Brigham Circle intersection
Roxbury Crossing	Extend median through pedestrian crossing	BTD
	Bump out in front of Plaza	MBTA
	Add crossing in front of MBTA station	
St. Alfonsus and Tremont Intersection		BTD

VACANT LOT-FRONT AND STORE-FRONT IMPROVEMENTS IMPLEMENTATION

Target Location	Action	Primary Actor
Brigham and Woman's	Large tree Plantings	Owner
Boston clutch works	Plantings	Owner
Texas BBQ	Plantings	Owner
Vacant parcel 1463-1467 – currently mud pit	Paving and Plantings or Low, Attractive Fence	Owner
Parcel 28	New Fence – Possibly Painted	McCourt Local School Artists
Bates Auto Body	Plantings	Owner
High-Priority Storefronts presently in Poor Condition	Façade Improvements	MHMS funding

RECOMMENDATIONS—DEVELOPMENT VISION

OVERVIEW

Business development is an integral part of the revitalization of the Mission Hill Main Streets (MHMS) commercial district. In line with the goals of MHMS, the primary goal of this project is to strengthen the existing businesses in the district. We developed a multi-level strategy for the district, capitalizing on and expanding the strengths of existing businesses and partnerships, while making recommendations for future retail and commercial development in Mission Hill. In keeping with the programming of Mission Hill Main Streets, we have restricted our analysis to commercial development.

The strategy focuses on three physical areas of the district, determined by analysis of the existing business capacity, and is consistent with the overarching goal of creating gateways to the district at both ends of Tremont Street and facilitating a walkable path along Tremont Street. Areas identified for business development are Brigham Circle and Roxbury Crossing, as well as the center of Tremont Street. These areas serve as key points in facilitating and encouraging commercial use of Tremont Street and adjacent sections of the Mission Hill district. The three areas fall neatly along a timeline of development, from near-term items such as filling vacant storefronts to long-term projects like development of Parcel 25. Currently under construction, One Brigham Circle will catalyze future development in the district. The central Tremont Street target area, a convenient five minute walk from either T station, has potential for retail development while filling critical service needs for the Mission Hill community. Although it has a longer timeline for development, Parcel 25 at Roxbury Crossing will hopefully begin a public planning process in the near future; its development should serve the needs of both residents of Mission Hill and its neighbors.

Recommendations encourage:

- Neighborhood-oriented development that also encourages transit use
- Concentration of development efforts
- Walkable district
- Active retail uses on the first floor
- Mixed-use and high-density development where possible

METHODOLOGY

Using assessor's data, stakeholder input, and site surveys, we analyzed all the potentially underutilized space in the district, focusing primarily on Tremont Street and Huntington Avenue. The analysis was subdivided into five categories: vacant storefronts, vacant lots, parking lots, underutilized spaces, and potential land swaps. Additionally, the analysis anticipates the impact of the new development at One Brigham Circle.

We built a database that includes the location, ownership, lot size and potential uses of each parcel fitting into the five categories listed earlier. This information is useful in matching vacant or underutilized properties with new retail uses. Lot size and building footprint information is useful in selecting appropriate replacement retail uses. Using information from the 2002 Retail Tenant Directory, we correlated the desired square footages for a number of local and national chains with the eight categories of retail identified in our surveys and interviews. These categories include:

- Video/Music store
- Bookstore
- Laundry
- Sit-down restaurant
- Hardware store
- Thrift store
- Discount retail
- Shoe store

The information in the database will allow MHMS to evaluate business development potential based on current ownership. The MHMS organization has significant knowledge and experience with property owners and landlords in the

district. This knowledge will be helpful in identifying which sites targeted for future development will be more feasible than others.

In conjunction with the database, we also mapped out the locations of the underutilized space, which allowed us to identify the spatial relationship between existing uses and underutilized retail spaces. The team identified all underutilized parcels, as defined in the eight categories above, but also included first floor office space to show where non-activated office uses could be moved to upper stories to allow for lively retail use. This analysis is most useful for determining the strategy for business development; the map clearly showed three concentrated areas of underutilized or inactive uses. These three areas are the target for the business development strategy outlined below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As shown on the existing conditions map, the vacant or underutilized parcels appear in three concentrated areas or nodes. These nodes coincide with the other elements of the strategy for the district, creating gateways at either end of Tremont Street.

Brigham Circle

Brigham Circle is defined as the intersection of Tremont Street with Huntington Avenue and two other secondary streets. With the pending completion of One Brigham Circle, this area serves as a catalyst for future development in the Mission Hill district. Huntington Avenue creates a barrier between Mission Hill and the Longwood Medical Area; the unforgiving street crossing and the transit lines prohibit movement from one side of the street to the other. Hopefully, development at One Brigham Circle, including a supermarket, banks and sit-down eateries, will draw residents and LMA employees alike and fuel further development. Likewise, MHMS-funded storefront improvement of restaurants at this end of Tremont Street and the impending Avenue of the Arts renovation

Neighborhood Oriented Retail Uses for Brigham Circle

- Book Store
- Video Store
- Laundromat/Coffee Shop
- Sit-down restaurants that cater to both lunch and dinner crowds

along Huntington Avenue make this the ideal time to focus development in this area.

Suggestion: Encourage Needed Retail Uses

This area of Mission Hill has at least six vacant storefronts; there is thus a large amount of development opportunity available without significant changes in the infrastructure. Interviews, surveys and analysis suggest that Brigham Circle is a suitable place for neighborhood-oriented social retail uses, such as coffee shops, book stores and video stores. One example of new retail in this area is a combination laundry/café. Attracting additional restaurants to the Circle would strengthen existing businesses by broadening the profile of the area and giving it a more round-the-clock feel. There is a strong lunch and after work crowd from the Medical Area as well as residents returning home from work and students. Stretching the after-work crowd into a dinner crowd will increase sales in local businesses. Brigham Circle is well suited for creating a retail cluster where residents can complete a number of necessary tasks in one trip.



The map above shows the small sizes of many of the storefronts in Brigham Circle that make them obsolete for the needs of modern retailers.

Suggestion: Enlarge Retail Footprints

Throughout the district, there are many retail spaces that are functionally obsolete, that is, they do not meet the needs of modern retailers. This is due in large part to the age of the buildings, which were built in an era when retailers needed small, easy to manage spaces. The triangular lot where the Choppin Block sits (724 Huntington) contains awkward shaped, three- to four-story, small buildings, some with footprints of only 1,000 square feet. Recommendations for this parcel include creating bigger footprints by combining parcels when adjacent properties become available, increasing the density over existing retail uses, and building out the existing parking lot behind the Choppin Block.

Central Tremont/Boston Clutch Works

The central area of Tremont Street, located within five minutes of either the Roxbury Crossing Stop on the Orange Line or the Brigham Circle stop on the

Green Line, has potential for both physical business development and the provision of services for existing businesses and the greater community. This is the heart of Mission Hill. A number of vacant or underutilized parcels define this area, including: Boston Clutch Works, the Mission Hill Church Rectory, and generic first floor office uses.

Suggestion: Resident-serving Retail

After much community uproar when he expressed interest selling his property to Kentucky Fried Chicken, the owner of Boston Clutch Works has welcomed the help of MHMS and the community in identifying better uses. We identified this site as an ideal location for community serving retail uses because of its central location on Tremont Street. Less than five minutes from public transit, we predict that development on either side will eventually draw regional visitors up into the heart of Tremont Street.

To the extent that land values support multi-story construction, new developments here should feature residential built on top of retail uses. Appropriate retail uses include a hardware/houseware store and a bicycle shop. Both of these would cater to the large population of students who are residents of the community and to students at Roxbury Community College.

Roxbury Crossing

The Roxbury Crossing area contains two significant parcels, the MBTA Orange Line Station and Parcel 25; both present an opportunity for transit-oriented development (TOD). The intersection of Columbus Street and Tremont Street contains primarily institutional uses, including the Reggie Lewis Track and Field Center, Roxbury Community College (RCC) and the MBTA bus and subway transit station. The intersection at Columbus is large and unwelcoming. The MBTA/MDC plaza in front of the MBTA station is cold and bare. Lewis Track, RCC, and the MBTA transit station draw in users from the Greater Boston region. The College draws a large number of commuting students. Lewis Track holds numerous large athletic events and conferences, drawing crowds from

Resident Serving Retail for Tremont/Boston Clutch Works

- Mixed-Use with ground floor retail and residential uses above
- Hardware/Houseware Store
- Bicycle Store

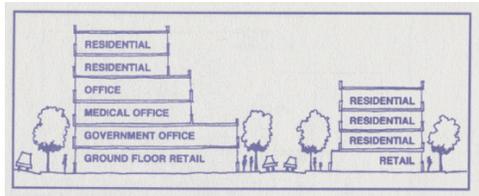
throughout the region. Redevelopment of this site is critical to promoting Mission Hill to a broader regional audience.

Suggestion: Serve Retail Needs of a City-wide Crowd

The MBTA Orange Line Station is an architectural eyesore, adding much to the cold, unwelcoming entrance of Mission Hill at Columbus Street. The one-story building could add to the district with greater density, better use of public spaces fronting the street, and more appropriate and stable retail uses for a transit station. Current uses in the building include Dominos Pizza, an MBTA community policing office, a day care facility, and other office spaces. Some of these uses, particularly the pizza shop, have little association with a transit station; however, the area caters strongly to RCC. There are few amenities provided at Lewis Track and RCC. During big events, the line for Dunkin Donuts at Lewis Track is fifteen people long and visitors are not allowed to eat inside. As many of the events held at Lewis Track are all-day sporting events, more food services on the Mission Hill side of Columbus Avenue would both serve the needs of users and draw them further into the district. Retail uses such as a sit-down coffee shop or deli would well serve the Mission Hill residents, RCC and other students, and visitors to the district. There are very few places in the district allowing residents to just sit and hang out, likewise, there are no family-oriented sit-down restaurants. Parcels near Roxbury Crossing would serve those needs well.

Retail for a City-wide Crowd at Roxbury Crossing

- Coffee Shop/Deli catering to RCC and Track Center Crowds
- Sit-down Restaurant
- Music Store
- Clothing and Shoe Store



This figure shows how different uses—ground floor retail, residential, and office space—can be combined to create transit-oriented development

Suggestion: Transit-oriented Development (TOD)

Parcel 25, across the street from the MBTA station, is currently vacant; discussions are underway between Neighborhood Housing Services and others about the future of the site. There are a number of vacant or underutilized parcels abutting Parcel 25, as shown on the existing conditions map. These lots should be developed in conjunction with Parcel 25. Together, these parcels are quite large and make an ideal spot for transit-oriented development given their proximity to the MBTA Station. The ideal makeup of the Parcel 25 site would be retail uses on the ground floor and office above. (See New Urbanism elevation.) If feasible, housing may be located on upper floors of higher density buildings

further back on the site. Similar development of the Roxbury Crossing MBTA Station into a higher density office and retail building would complement high density development at Parcel 25, assuming structural feasibility.

Suggestion: Move Non-Service Office Space of the First Floor

The development of Parcel 25 should involve mixed-use multi-story buildings. Institutional office spaces, such as for the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), should move their offices to second and third floors of this mixed-use development. The benefits to these institutional users include: concentrating satellite offices; locating near public transit; and, designing the space to company specifications and needs. Though the parcels right near the transit station are ideal for office uses and retail on the first floor, the rear parcels are well-suited to residential uses. In exchange for allowing institutional expansion into Mission Hill proper, the community should advocate for public benefits such as affordable housing and lower rents for local retailers.

Suggestion: Regionally Attractive Retail Uses

As mentioned above, this location caters to a broad range of people, students, residents, and visitors. Thus, the area is a good location for retail uses that target regional shoppers with comparison shopping opportunities. A count by the MBTA in 1997 found that over 4,000 riders enter the turnstiles at the Roxbury Crossing T station on the average weekday. The concentration of new development here is suited to impulse retail uses, that is, stores people happen to visit as they pass by. Stores suggested by residents and users of the district include a music store, video store, clothing store, and shoe store.

Secondary Areas of Interest

Terrace Street

Terrace Street has the potential to be developed as a regional draw. Improvements should target opportunities to improve the street experience and

to fill in the gaps further down Terrace towards the Building Co-op. Suggestions for new retail include a nursery and artist live/work space. It is a unique area and deserves much community input. This report's recommendations for streetscape improvement and business development, though not specific to this site, can easily be applied to Terrace Street parcels as necessary.

Church Rectory

The rectory building of the Mission Hill Church has been vacant for some time. Interviews with residents and employers in Mission Hill reveal that many have their own suggestions for this building. Reuse of the Mission Church rectory building is a highly contentious issue in the district. It is politically sensitive and public opinion is currently unclear; thus, with the Board's approval, we decided not to pursue options at this site. However, we have identified possibilities for the site. These include relocation of institutional office space, such as Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), to the upper floors non-active street front spaces in these buildings. HSPH is a reliable tenant, whose rents should subsidize the creation of a community technology center or business training center at the lower levels of the Rectory.

DEVELOPMENT VISION IMPLEMENTATION

Many of the interventions in this report call for both redevelopment of various buildings and new developments on vacant lots. Mission Hill Main Streets (MHMS), however, is not a developer and does not have the capacity to realize these projects on its own. As part of our implementation strategy, therefore, we suggest developing partnerships between MHMS, City and State agencies, and outside funders and developers. These partnerships can range from informal plans to share information, structured arrangements to actively work to solve problems together, to business agreements to pool resources and jointly enter into a project. MHMS can play a critical role in these ventures as a representative of the neighborhood and businesses and as a “facilitator” who can bring various parties together to realize the development vision of Mission Hill.

MAIN STREETS ROLE

MHMS as a “facilitator”

In facilitating business expansion and business recruitment, MHMS has a role in supporting Mission Hill’s development vision. Acting as an informal “facilitator” of retail space and available parcels, it can at the same time provide value to property owners and assume a certain level of control over the types of uses and developments in the neighborhood. Some Main Streets programs have been very successful with this approach, such as Washington Gateway and Hyde Park in Boston. MHMS has already begun to assume this role with the Boston Clutch Works property by working with the property owner to find a possible tenant that meets community needs better than the proposed Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant. This role is increasingly important as existing businesses seek to expand within the neighborhood.

What MHMS Brings to the Table

MHMS possesses a range of capacities that can be used to work with businesses and property owners. These capacities include:

- Organizing community meetings and surveys to gain input on development proposals and tenant selection
- Using MHMS' knowledge of the needs of the neighborhood's shoppers and business owners to help property owners to find appropriate uses for their buildings
- Providing business owners with demographic and market analysis data to use for business plan development
- Using connections with the City to help businesses navigate complex regulatory procedures or find alternatives.

In the future, MHMS could provide the following services:

- Online listings of available properties (lots & buildings): Some Main Streets programs, such as Bedford Main Street in Virginia, maintain a list of available properties in their district on their web site (<http://www.bedfordmainstreet.org/realestate.htm>). This identifies the agency as a contact for investors and developers and ensures its involvement in neighborhood development projects.
- Identify opportunities for existing businesses that would like to expand: Work with business owners to understand their intentions and with property owners to give preference to existing MH businesses looking to expand.
- Cooperative building ownership: In the long-term, Mission Hill Main Street could facilitate cooperative ownership of new or existing buildings for local businesses.

RECOMMENDED PARTNERSHIPS

Precedents

Mission Hill has, in recent years, seen partnerships that have brought together the knowledge of local organizations and the development and funding capacity of outside groups. Both the NHS/North Star/New Boston Fund team that developed One Brigham Circle and the Back of the Hill CDC/Jamaica Plain NDC team that is developing the Back of the Hill Homes provide useful models and precedents for additional development in Mission Hill.

Washington Gateway Main Streets (WGMS) has been effective in playing this role with private development through their promotion of a development vision, small improvement projects, and community events. WGMS also successfully pressured the BRA to dispose of vacant city-owned parcels for projects that met the state development vision, including first floor retail use.²

Parcel 25

Partnerships are especially important for large developments such as the transit oriented development envisioned for Parcel 25 and the surrounding parcels. In order to move such a development forward, MHMS will have to forge key relationships with a variety of public and private groups.

Firm commitments from the State's Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) to participate in a planning process for disposal of the land and to dispose of the land to a developer of the community's choosing is essential before significant planning efforts begin.

² Seidman, Karl. *Practitioner's Guide to Urban Main Streets*, 69.

MHMS must also work with the City of Boston, Wentworth Institute of Technology, and other land owners to assemble the parcels surrounding Parcel 25 into a cohesive site for development. Once these parcels have been configured and a plan developed, then the sites should be turned over to a developer to work with the community to create the vision. One Brigham Circle provides an excellent precedent of a community driven process that provided significant benefit for the neighborhood and a substantial return to the equity partner.

Institutional Expansion

The medical institutions located in Mission Hill and the adjacent Longwood Medical Area (LMA) have historically had a strong presence in the neighborhood, at times threatening to turn the neighborhood into another campus for their operations. Our interviews and surveys revealed that many in the neighborhood still have significant concerns about further expansion of these institutions into Mission Hill, and that any attempt to bring this type of development should proceed cautiously. We believe, however, that supporting institutional expansion within the guidelines of the MHMS development vision could potentially bring significant community benefits to Mission Hill.

- A partnership with Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) could guide development in a way that mediates community concerns. For example, the vacant Mission Church rectory buildings could be redeveloped in part as office space for HSPH to relocate those offices that are currently located in first floor spaces within the MHMS district. This move would free up a range retail spaces for expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses not currently represented in the district.
- The LMA Interim Master Plan guidelines created by Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) require institutions looking to expand to practice good urban design and provide community benefits. The guidelines stipulate:
 - Increasing the mix of housing, supporting retail, recreation, and community facilities in projects

- Using ground floors for uses that engage the public
- Institutions can qualify for density bonuses by providing public benefits in the workforce area such as on site ESOL classes, career ladder programs, etc.

These incentives could be used to create a neighborhood technology center within the Mission Hill Church Rectory Buildings as has been proposed by some in the community.

FUNDING SOURCES

While the current fiscal climate suggests that there will be limited public money for development projects, a number of funding mechanisms exist and should be explored to help MHMS realize its development vision. A list of funding available from the federal and local government as well as independent foundations is attached in appendix B.

STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC BASE

Revitalizing and strengthening Mission Hill is not just about recruiting new businesses or developing vacant land. In order to create a vibrant community, Mission Hill Main Streets (MHMS) must also consider the economic needs of Mission Hill residents. Mission Hill is bordered by the Longwood Medical Area (LMA), one of the largest sources of employment in the Boston area. By creating linkages to existing job training programs to help residents access these jobs and promoting local hiring within businesses and institutions, MHMS can help to raise the income levels of neighborhood residents, increasing the amount available to spend in local stores, and preventing possible residential displacement resulting from gentrification.

Career Ladder Programs and Job Training

Building on the success of earlier career ladder programs run by the Fenway Community Development Corporation and the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation to educate and train workers in the health care and research sector for better paying jobs in their field, the City of Boston and a number of hospitals, research institutions, and job training organizations (many located in the LMA or Mission Hill area) launched the Boston Health Care and Research Training Institute to expand this program and give a site for its activities in the Longwood Medical Area.

MHMS should take an active role in promoting these programs in the neighborhood, in order to help residents access these opportunities and build their economic base.

Hiring Locally

MSMH can help businesses and institutions hire local residents in a variety of ways. MHMS can provide a listing of available jobs in Mission Hill, providing

employers with a free listing service that will reach local residents. Allston Village Main Streets provides such a listing on their website. Such provision of information is an easy and low-cost way to help residents and employers connect with each other while strengthening MHMS's position as an important resource in the neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATIONS—BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Increasing business capacity and access to capital and services is integral to the overall development vision for Mission Hill Main Streets. The Main Streets development strategies can only go so far to encourage residents and area workers to shop in Mission Hill; existing and future businesses are needed to provide retail and service opportunities that keep customers come back again and again.

MARKETING THE DISTRICT

MHMS can play an integral part in marketing the Mission Hill business district, increase its visibility within the community and project the neighborhood's vibrant image to the world. Drawing on the experience and successes of ongoing events and promotions, such as the weekly farmers market, the yearly Festival of Fire, and the Mission Hill business calendar, MHMS is in a position to expand activities that will strengthen the district.

Events

Public spaces are only attractive and inviting when they are frequented by people. Events offer a unique opportunity to activate plazas, parks and streets, and to leave people with a positive impression of a place.

MHMS currently organizes a small but successful farmers' market at Veteran's Plaza in Brigham Circle during summer months. Farmers' markets not only support local farmers, but also serve to activate the streets and attract customers to the area. Our recommendation is to pursue permission to hold the farmers' market in the One Brigham Circle plaza upon its completion in the summer of

Outdoor Concert Series

At Main Streets South Orange in New Jersey, a brown-bag lunchtime concert series manages to attract office workers and parents with young children alike for an hour of live music and socializing. A similar event, either at lunch time or after work hours, might be an effective way to bring LMA employees into the Mission Hill business district and could be held in Smith-Sheehy Park after its redevelopment is completed.

Other possible events include theatre-in-the-park performances or street festivals. Funding sources might include local institutions or businesses sponsoring the event or from the City of Boston (Boston Cultural Agenda Fund).

The Business Reference Service is a consolidated listing of area cleaning services, accounting or bookkeeping firms, general contractors, lawyers, marketing firms used, needed or recommended by Mission Hill businesses. The reference booklet should be given out to Mission Hill businesses at no charge and will also be available on the MHMS website. The listing will be compiled by MHMS volunteers and staff by surveying local businesses to find out what services they use and need most often and collecting recommendations for useful businesses to include.

This listing is updated twice a year and includes feedback and ratings from Mission Hill businesses that have used the difference services. Feedback and ratings are achieved through follow-up phone calls by MHMS staff and volunteers as well as a short survey on the MHMS website. Businesses or services that are used least often will periodically be removed from the listing.

2003 and to try to attract complementary vendors, such as a bakery or florist, to complement the existing produce offerings.

In order to further enliven the neighborhood, other outdoor activities should be considered. Recurring events, such as a music series in the park or historic walking tours raise Mission Hill's visibility and create opportunities for press coverage and word-of-mouth advertising. Main Streets could capitalize on the momentum of volunteer activity building up for the Festival of Fire and expand into additional activities. The coming of two new or recently redeveloped public spaces, One Brigham Circle's plaza and Smith-Sheehy Park, is an opportunity to introduce new events to demonstrate their potential to be great public spaces.

Marketing to Institutions

The 35,000 LMA employees and thousands of college students in the immediate area are currently a market that only few Mission Hill businesses are tapping. MHMS could strategically market the district's businesses to employees at its corporate buddy, Brigham and Women's Hospital, and expand to other institutions in the future. Survey respondents indicated that they would find on-site business listings in the form of flyers, maps or menus helpful.

Marketing the district in Boston

MHMS is already working with Boston Main Streets on promoting the district with the shoppers discount card, which also doubles as a fundraiser for MHMS. Another way to raise visibility for the district would be to rename the Roxbury Crossing T station to Roxbury Crossing/Mission Hill. When we collected intercept surveys outside the T station one afternoon, numerous respondents asked: "Where is Mission Hill?" They had no idea that they were right at standing at the edge of the district. The MBTA might be more receptive to requests of this nature if several Main Streets districts articulate similar requests. Mission Hill might find out from other districts if this would be beneficial for them.

BUSINESS REFERENCE SERVICE

Mission Hill businesses are often in need of bookkeeping, maintenance, cleaning, recycling and technical services just to name a few. Who best to refer businesses to these services than other businesses in Mission Hill? The Business Reference Service is a way to connect Mission Hill businesses to high quality, dependable, and proven services.

MISSION HILL BUSINESS COOPERATIVE

According to the National Cooperative Business Association, a cooperative operates for the benefit of its members. These member-owners share equally in the control of their cooperative. Members invest in shares in the business to provide capital for a strong and efficient operation. All net savings left after bills are paid and money is set aside for operations and improvements are returned to co-op members.

We see the Mission Hill Business Cooperative as a purchasing and shared service cooperative and an outgrowth of the recently re-established merchants association. The coop serves two primary functions for Mission Hill businesses: purchasing and marketing. It will provide a number of benefits to members including lowering operating costs, purchase savings (typically between fifteen and twenty percent), and building community and relationships among business owners and operators.

Cooperative purchasing could include services such as cleaning, maintenance, trash and recycling pick-up, and window washing. Additional cooperatively purchased items could include web site hosting and design, advertising, and office supplies. Health and worker's compensation insurance for employees as well as general liability insurance could also be purchased through the coop.

Cooperative marketing for Mission Hill businesses could also be accomplished through the business cooperative. Marketing the Mission Hill business district as

a whole, as opposed to the individual neighborhood businesses, can help potential customers realize the many retail and dining opportunities available in such close proximity to one another. Businesses can also partner to promote each other's business and services through coupons and referrals. The existing business clusters of auto-related services, beauty, wellness, and dining can all build off one another's potential customer base and success.

Because the business association is a recently established organization, it needs to be strengthened before implementation of the cooperative will be feasible. MHMS volunteers and staff can work with the president of the Mission Hill Business Association to help get more businesses involved and establish the cooperative.

EXPANDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

MHMS already actively provides technical assistance to Mission Hill businesses, but there are additional activities and services MHMS can provide to increase the capacity and potential of local businesses.

Specialized training and technical assistance in such areas as business expansion, developing a business plan, marketing and promotional strategies, and problem solving should be provided. MHMS continues to work with Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation and city agencies, and should partner with new organizations like the UMass Boston Small Business Development Center, and neighboring groups like Roxbury Community College Business Club's Small Business Institute, Fenway CDC, and the Back of the Hill CDC.

BUSINESS MENTORSHIP

One method for increasing the capacity of new businesses in Mission Hill is through a business mentorship program. This program would partner new

business owners with more established local business owners. The mentorship program is intended for owners of related businesses to offer advice, support, and guidance in starting a new business in Mission Hill. This is intended to be an informal program where mentor and mentee would meet periodically or on as-needed basis for the purpose of sharing advice, answering pertinent questions, and offering general support.

NETWORKING

Small business owners typically do not have time much free time to interact with other local business owners. Periodic networking opportunities with city officials and service providers, local business leaders, and technical assistance providers could be beneficial for Mission Hill businesses. Informal breakfasts or task-specific seminars would provide a forum for information sharing but also in giving local businesses an opportunity to network and learn about what is happening throughout the Mission Hill commercial district.

ACCESS TO CAPITAL

Small businesses often do not have the capital for expansion, rehabilitation, or upgrading. Expanding access to capital including gaining access to loan funds and subsidy programs will help Mission Hill businesses meet today's technological and market demands. Because many funding sources are aimed at assisting local, small, minority, and/or women-owned business enterprises, MHMS can assist local businesses in registering with applicable state and federal agencies. Additionally, MHMS can help in matching potential grants with relevant businesses and completing the grant applications.

PARKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Our basic study showed that a significant number of the street parking spots are being used for long-term parking. If cars were parked for only the two hour visitor limit, over 25% more spots would become available. Based on interviews and discussions, many of the long-term parkers are owners and employees of local businesses. They need transportation to and from work, and have no place to legally park for the entire day. Because this is primarily a business issue, it would be better handled by the nascent Merchants Association, which is chartered to handle issues relating to all businesses in Mission Hill. We think that the solution to the problem lies in two different approaches.

Better Enforcement of Existing Regulations

First, better enforcement of the existing parking limits must be implemented. The city of Boston is going through a major budget crisis and is looking for new and additional revenue sources. Parking violations are handled by the Boston Transportation Department, which should be contacted to discuss possibilities for better enforcement. Another avenue of action is to install parking meters on Tremont Street between Brigham Circle and St. Alphonsus, an idea that is currently being considered in Mission Hill community meetings. Meters are another source of revenue, and serve as a physical reminder of time limits. This should be implemented immediately.

Leasing Spots and Encouraging Transit Use

Other options for owners and employees should be considered along with improved enforcement. There are a few empty lots, including one on Tremont Street, that are not currently marked for legal parking. The Merchants Association should investigate the ownership of these lots and work with the owners to negotiate leases for business owners and employees to park for the entire day.

Finally, the excellent public transportation network in Boston should be better utilized by business employees and owners. Both the Green and Orange lines have stops inside the district, the 66 bus goes down Tremont, and two LMA shuttles serve Brigham Circle. Businesses can participate in the MBTA tax credit plan, but may be constrained by the complexity of the program. This is a perfect opportunity for the Merchants Association to organize local businesses into a cooperative to work with the MBTA so that they can use the tax credits to subsidize MBTA passes for employees. The Merchants Association should also work with Masco to discuss the possibility of local employees leasing spots in LMA parking lots and riding the LMA shuttles to work.

INCREASING CAPACITY

Organizational Capacity

A committed and involved board of directors is essential to the success of non-profit organizations. Recruiting and retaining board members is not always an easy task. Some organizations have formal programs in place that introduce future board members to the organization and prepare them for board membership. MHMS needs to plan for continuous changes in the composition of the board and ensure that potential new board members are identified. Critical for the success of the organization is a volunteer and intern coordinator whose responsibility is to recruit, retain and increase volunteer participation and oversee interns in order to execute the activities of the various committees. MHMS should identify a committed volunteer to take charge of fundraising.

Partnerships

The proximity of large medical and educational institutions affords MHMS a unique opportunity to establish long-term partnerships and involve them in the revitalization of the commercial district. Partnerships could have the following positive results:

- Increased access to funding sources
- Access to information about institutional expansion or other planning-related changes that might affect the neighborhood
- Access to student volunteer networks at local colleges and universities
- Potentially political support for neighborhood improvement projects

The appendix includes a list of potential partners along with contact information.

Funding Sources

Similar to many non-profit organizations, MHMS spends a considerable amount of time fundraising to secure its existence. In addition to applying for grants (see appendix), fundraising events and programs are effective ways to increase the organization's visibility while raising necessary funds.

A "Friends of Mission Hill" program offering membership at different sponsorship levels is one fundraising approach Mission Hill is not currently using. Gateway Main Streets and Main Streets South Orange (MSSO) both offer such memberships, with MSSO offering gifts for higher membership levels. Both organizations offer extensive information on their web sites:

<http://www.gatewaymainstreet.org/circleoffriends.htm>

<http://www.mainstreetsouthorange.org/MSSO-membershipApp.pdf>

CONCLUSION

Drawing on a methodology that incorporated the views of residents, workers, and visitors to Mission Hill, this report proposes a vision for Mission Hill Main Streets and details strategies for achieving that vision. Our first priority was to produce a plan that is grounded in the needs of the neighborhood. Working off this premise, we elaborate short-term and long-term steps to reaching the goal of a neighborhood-oriented retail district that also has the potential to draw customers from the surrounding institutions. The guidelines offered in this report should always remain flexible in light of changing trends in the district. The report should be viewed as laying the groundwork for community-oriented planning activities and should serve to encourage residents' and business owners' input in the process. MHMS is encouraged to draw on the creativity and initiative of community members in carrying out its mission; MHMS's greatest advantage lies in the tapping of residents and workers' individual ideas, perspectives, and abilities.

The plan presented emphasizes the interconnectedness of the various strategies. The close-knit and diverse character of the neighborhood is rooted in our understanding that businesses' economic health, the experience of visitors and shoppers, and residents' day-to-day lives are inevitably connected to the physical enrichment of the district. The district's image may be utilized as a marketing tool to the outside world and also to residents, who deserve the assurance that where they live and shop meets their diverse needs and is also safe, comfortable, and reflects the pride they have in their neighborhood.

This plan stands as a foundation for Mission Hill's further enrichment; as one of Boston's great historic communities it is without doubt capable of a future of gratifying service to its residents, workers and visitors.

APPENDIX A—BUSINESS RESOURCES

Establishing and Funding a Cooperative

- http://www.northeastcoop.com/CUSTOMERS/BCSERVICES/Coop_Principles.htm
- http://www.northeastcoop.com/CUSTOMERS/BCSERVICES/Tips_For_Success.html
- <http://www.ism.ws/Pubs/ISMMag/020304.cfm>
- <http://www.ncba.coop/index.cfm>
- <http://www.ncba.coop/purch.cfm>
- <http://www.ncba.coop/primer.cfm>
- <http://www.ncba.coop/resources.cfm?rcatid=12&atitle=Cooperative+Development+Funds>
- <http://www.wastecap.org/altindex.htm>

Steps:

- Establish a need/desire to purchase products and services together
- Suggestions: start with services such as window washing and recycling, and marketing
- Branch into cooperative purchasing of products (office supplies, etc.), insurance, and employee benefits
- Solicit commitment from sufficient number of members
- Designate/hire an administrator (commitment approx. 12 hours a week)
- Set up good accounting principles and ensure good management practices
- Set up checking account, collect start-up fees from members to allow for a cushion

Guide to Starting and Running a Small Business

- <http://www.sba.gov/starting/indexfaqs.html>
- http://www.smartplace.org/small_bus/guide.html
- http://www.smartplace.org/small_bus/businessstips.html
- <http://www.toolkit.cch.com/BOTOC.asp>

Applying for Loans and Writing Grant Proposals

- <http://www.proposalwriter.com/small.html#General>
- <http://www.ny.frb.org/pihome/addpub/credit.html>
- <http://www.sfdc.umb.edu/>
- <http://www.bankrate.com/brm/news/biz/adviser/20001208a.asp>

Technical Assistance

- **Minority, Micro-Enterprise, Small Businesses in Massachusetts (MSBM):** The goal of the MSBM is to facilitate the growth, development and attractiveness of the Commonwealth's micro-enterprises, small business, minority and woman-owned firms by helping to provide valuable information, new market opportunities and financial resources.

Small Business Development Funding Sources

- **Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA):** MBDA fosters new minority business enterprises and maintaining and strengthening existing firms to increase their opportunities to participate and receive the benefits of our economic system. MBDA uses a portion of its program funds to award contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements to public and private sector entities which have the greatest potential for developing access to capital, market, and other opportunities on behalf of minority business.

- Two Possible Project Grants:
 - 11.803 Minority Business Opportunity: <http://www.cfda.gov/public/viewprog.asp?progid=1577>
 - 11.806 Minority Business Opportunity: <http://www.cfda.gov/public/viewprog.asp?progid=1430>
- Small Business Administration (SBA): SBA provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run, and grow their businesses. With a portfolio of business loans, loan guarantees and disaster loans worth more than \$45 billion, in addition to a venture capital portfolio of \$13 billion, SBA is the nation's largest single financial backer of small businesses.
- Two Possible Project Grants:
 - 59.005 Business Development Assistance to Small Businesses
<http://www.cfda.gov/public/viewprog.asp?progid=757>
 - 59.006 8(a) Business Development(Section 8(a) Program)
<http://www.cfda.gov/public/viewprog.asp?progid=758>
- Massachusetts Community Development Finance Corporation (CDFC): CDFC, a quasi-public economic development agency, provides debt and equity financing for small business and real estate projects in targeted low-income and moderate-income communities throughout the Commonwealth.
- Urban Initiative Fund - Financing is available for working capital, equipment purchases, leasehold improvements, new product development and under certain conditions, startups. Most loans have ranged from \$20,000 to \$100,000 though larger loans can be considered. Technical assistance may be provided to firms receiving UIF financing.
- Count Me In: Count Me In champions the cause for women's economic independence by providing access to business loans, consultation and education. The first online microlender, Count Me In uses a unique women friendly credit scoring system to make loans of \$500-\$10,000 available to women across the United States who have nowhere to turn for that all-important first business loan. The organization provides access to networks that expand contacts, markets, skills and confidence.

APPENDIX B—MHMS RESOURCES

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

In addition to already existing partnerships, the following institutions offer useful resources MHMS:

Planning and Development:

- Masco (<http://www.masco.org/areaPlanning.htm>)
- Harvard Planning Department

Small Business Assistance from Educational Institutions:

- UMass Boston Small Business Development Center, College of Management, (www.sdbc.umb.edu), 617-287-7750
- RCC Business Club, Contact: Elizabeth Clark, Director, Student Activities (617) 541-5332, Student Center, Room 317
- RCC Small Business Institute (<http://www.rcc.mass.edu/home.html>)

Community Outreach Programs (Volunteer Resources)

- Mass College of Art: Service Learning and Community Outreach (http://www.massart.edu/at_massart/)
- Mass College of Pharmacy (http://www.mcp.edu/ab/pr/pr_outreach.shtml)
- Emmanuel College: community service (<http://www.emmanuel.edu/studentlife/service.asp>)
- Northeastern University (http://communityservice.neu.edu/supp_comm.htm)
- Harvard School of Public Health (<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/volnet/opportunities.html>)

Non-profit Organizations and Associations

- Retailers Association of Massachusetts <http://www.retailersma.org/>
- JPNDC <http://www.jpndc.org/business/index.html>
- Fenway CDC <http://www.fenwaycdc.org/>
- Back of the Hill CDC
- Other Main Streets Program (Egleston Square, Hyde-Jackson)

POTENTIAL MHMS FUNDING SOURCES

- Microloans/direct grants <http://www.cfda.gov/public/viewprog.asp?progid=770>
- Project Grants <http://www.cfda.gov/public/viewprog.asp?progid=759>
- Community Development Block Grant <http://www.hud.gov/progdesc/cdbgent.cfm>
- Mission Hill/Fenway Trust is requesting proposals for projects and programs that would benefit the communities. Must be charitable organization. Info: Lauren Dewey Platt, 266-3257.

PUBLIC ART FUNDING SOURCES

- Artists for Humanity www.afhboston.org (617)737-2455
- The Boston Foundation www.tbf.org
- Project Pride www.ci.boston.ma.us
- Jamaica Plain Arts Association <http://www.jpart.org/>
- Mass College of Arts – Urban Arts Program www.massart.edu (617)879-7971

- New England Foundation for the Arts <http://www.nefa.org/>: NEFA has two programs, the Funds for the Arts grants and Visible Arts which pairs artist with community group to create public art in Boston that could be useful for public realm improvements in Mission Hill
- Sidewalk Sam <http://www.sidewalksam.com/>
- Spontaneous Celebrations <http://www.spontaneouscelebrations.org/mission.html>

STREETSCAPE AND TRAFFIC CALMING FUNDING SOURCES

- The Browne Fund is a city nonprofit that uses private money to fund public art projects and planning for streetscape and gateway improvements
- The George B. Henderson Foundation funds public art and public realm improvements in Boston
- National Transportation Enhancement Clearinghouse offers implementation assistance for transportation enhancements

DEVELOPMENT FUNDING SOURCES

Federal sources

- Empowerment Zone funds (www.bostonez.org)

Parts of the Mission Hill commercial district including Roxbury Crossing, Parcel 25, Terrace Street, and Tremont Street up to St. Alphonsus Street are included within the Boston Empowerment Zone. The Zone program provides funds for economic development projects, including large storefront revitalization projects, such as La Cocina restaurant in Roxbury. Businesses located within the Zone and employing a certain percentage of Zone residents are eligible for various tax credits for employing Zone residents, accelerated depreciation for equipment and purchases, capital gains reductions, and tax-exempt bond financing

- New Market Tax Credits (www.liscnet.org)

The New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) program is a federal tax initiative designed to increase the amount of capital flowing into low-income communities. The credits will provide investors with tax credits to offset federal taxes in return for new investment in eligible business. The tool works similarly to the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) which has been a significant funding mechanism for affordable rental housing. Unlike LIHTC funds, The funds will be channeled through intermediaries such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) or Community Development Financial Institutions.

Environmental Remediation

Before redevelopment on Parcel 25 and the former industrial sites on Terrace Street is able to go forward, significant environmental remediation will probably be required.

- Assessment and Remediation Grants

MassDevelopment (www.massdevelopment.com), the Environmental Protection Agency (www.epa.gov), and HUD (www.hud.gov) offer a range of grants for site assessment, remediation, and redevelopment

- Tax Credits

The Brownfields Credit for Rehabilitation of Contaminated Property provides tax credits of either 25% or 50% to businesses for environmental responses and removal costs (www.dor.state.ma.us)

- Environmental Cleaning Job Training Programs

In addition to remediation and assessment grants, the EPA offers additional funding in conjunction with clean up of sites for pilot programs that train residents of communities impacted by brownfields for careers in the environmental field (www.epa.gov)

City Sources

The City of Boston offers an array of programs for business development, industrial preservation, neighborhood revitalization, and public realm improvement. Particular programs of note include:

- The Office of Business Development offers a range of funding to new businesses and those looking to expand in Boston, especially in Main Streets and Enhanced Enterprise Areas such as Mission Hill (www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/OBD)
- The BRA's Backstreets program helps grown and retain industrial uses in Boston, a program that could be useful on Terrace Street or other areas where industrial uses would be appropriate. (www.cityofboston.gov/bra/backstreets)

APPENDIX C – SURVEYS

Mission Hill - LMA Intercept Customer Survey

We are conducting a survey on behalf of Mission Hill Main Streets to learn more about the needs of people who shop, work and live in Mission Hill and how the area can be improved. All answers will be anonymous.

<p>1. Do you live in:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mission Hill <input type="checkbox"/> Boston</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adjacent Neighborhood <input type="checkbox"/> Outside Boston</p> <p>2. What is your association with Longwood Medical Area?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Patient</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visitor <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>3. How often do you go to the Mission Hill commercial district?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Once a Week</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 Times a Week <input type="checkbox"/> Once a Month</p> <p>4. If you go to Mission Hill commercial district less than once a month, why do not come more often?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The district does not provide retail or services that you seek</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> You do not know what types of retail or services are offered</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Safety concerns</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>5. If you go to Mission Hill less than once a month, do you go to other close area locations for retail, restaurants, and services?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>5a. If yes, where?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Centre Street <input type="checkbox"/> LMA</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fenway <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Brookline Ave Galleria</p> <p>6. If you do go to the Mission Hill commercial district, when do you usually come? (check off all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Morning <input type="checkbox"/> Monday</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lunch Hour <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Afternoon <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evening <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Friday</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday</p> <p>7. Are you aware of the different types of retail, restaurants, and services offered at the Mission Hill commercial district?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>7a. If you are not aware of local retail and services, what would make you aware?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business Directory on-site</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retail Locator Map Handout</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retail Locator Sign at Brigham Circle</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>8. How much do you spend on an average visit to Mission Hill?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More than \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> \$5-\$10</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$20-\$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$10-\$20 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> <p>9. How do you get to LMA/Mission Hill?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Car <input type="checkbox"/> Walk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bus <input type="checkbox"/> Bike</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Trolley/Train <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>	<p>9a. If you came by car, where did you park?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On-Street <input type="checkbox"/> Unregulated Lot</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pay Lot/LMA Parking <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>10. Do you find certain types of retail or services missing in the district?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>10a. If yes, what?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retail <input type="checkbox"/> Dining</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Services <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>11. What types of services or retail would make you go to Mission Hill more often? (check off all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supermarket <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee Shop/Cafe</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Clothing <input type="checkbox"/> Video Store</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sit Down Restaurant <input type="checkbox"/> Bank</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Department Store <input type="checkbox"/> Bookstore</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Shoe Store <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry/Dry Cleaning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discount Retail (such as <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>Target, Wal-Mart, K-Mart)</p> <p>12. What other improvements would encourage you to go to Mission Hill more often? (check off all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More attractive public spaces</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner public spaces</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Improved pedestrian traffic/safety</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More attractive storefronts and signs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Improved public safety</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>13. What is your approximate family income?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$20,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$40-\$60,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$20-\$40,000 <input type="checkbox"/> More than \$60,000</p> <p>13. What is your employment status?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Student</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>14. How would you define your race or ethnicity?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic</p> <p>15. What is your highest level of educational attainment?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Some High School <input type="checkbox"/> College or Above</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High School Graduate <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>17. What is your gender?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male</p> <p>18. What is your age?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-54</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-69</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 25-39 <input type="checkbox"/> 70 or over</p>
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Thanks for your time!

Mission Hill Intercept Customer Survey

We are conducting a survey on behalf of Mission Hill Main Streets to learn more about the needs of people who shop, work and live in Mission Hill and how the area can be improved. All answers will be anonymous.

1. Do you live in:
 Mission Hill Boston
 Adjacent Neighborhood Outside Boston

2. Do you work in:
 Mission Hill Boston
 Adjacent Neighborhood Outside Boston

3. How often do you come to the Mission Hill commercial district?
 Daily Once a Week
 2-4 Times a Week Once a Month

4. If you go to Mission Hill less than once a month, why do not come more often?
 The district does not provide retail or services that you seek
 You do not know what types of retail or services are offered
 Safety concerns
 Other: _____

5. If you go to Mission Hill less than once a month, do you go to other close area locations for retail, restaurants, and services?
 Yes No

5a. If yes, where?
 Centre Street LMA
 Fenway Other: _____
 Brookline Ave Galleria

6. When do you usually come to the business district? (check off all that apply)
 Morning Monday
 Lunch Hour Tuesday
 Afternoon Wednesday
 Evening Thursday
 Friday
 Saturday
 Sunday

7. What is the purpose of your visit to Mission Hill?
 Longwood Medical Area Work
 Restaurants School
 Shopping Other: _____

8. How much do you spend on an average visit to Mission Hill?
 More than \$30 \$5-\$10
 \$20-\$30 Less than \$5
 \$10-\$20 NA

9. How do you usually get to Mission Hill?
 Car Walk
 Bus Bike
 Trolley/Train Other: _____

9a. If you came by car, where did you park?
 On-Street Unregulated Lot
 Pay Lot/LMA Parking Other: _____

10. Are there transportation issues that make it difficult to come to the district?
 Cleanliness/Safety at T stops Traffic congestion
 Parking availability Other

11. Do you find certain types of retail or services missing in the district?
 Yes Don't know
 No

11a. If yes, what?
 Retail Dining
 Services Other: _____

12. What types of services or retail would make you come here more often? (check off all that apply)
 Supermarket Coffee Shop/Café
 Clothing Video Store
 Sit Down Restaurant Bank
 Department Store Bookstore
 Shoe Store Laundry/Dry Cleaning
 Disc Other: _____

13. What other improvements would encourage you to come here more often? (check off all that apply)
 More attractive public spaces
 Cleaner public spaces
 Improved pedestrian traffic/safety
 More attractive storefronts and signs
 Better lighting
 Improved public safety
 Other: _____

14. What is your approximate family income?
 Less than \$20,000 \$40-\$60,000
 \$20-\$40,000 More than \$60,000

15. What is your employment status?
 Employed Student
 Unemployed Other

16. How would you define your race or ethnicity?
 White Asian/Pacific Islander
 African American Other
 Hispanic

17. What is your highest level of educational attainment?
 Some High School College or Above
 High School Graduate Other

18. What is your gender?
 Female Male

19. What is your age?
 Under 18 40-54
 18-24 55-69
 25-39 70 or over

Thanks for your time!

Mission Hill Main Streets Business Survey

1. What type of business do you own?
 Convenience Retail
 Restaurant/Bar/Coffee Shop
 Bank/Insurance/medical
 Laundry
 Hair and beauty
 Video store
 Other, describe: _____

2. How would you define your business?
 Independent
 Local Chain
 Franchise
 Regional Chain

3. How long have you owned your business?
 Less than 1 year
 1-3 years
 3-5 years
 5-10 years
 Over 10 years

4. What is the size of your store?
 0-499 square feet
 500-999 square feet
 1,000-1,499 square feet
 1,500-1,999 square feet
 Over 2,000 square feet

5. Number of full time employees: _____

6. Number of part time employees: _____

7. Do you own the building/space you are in? Yes No

a. If you rent, do you have a lease? _____ Yes/Expiration Date _____ No

b. Has your rent increased significantly during the last two years? Yes No

c. If yes to b, what was the percentage increase? Less than 10% 10 - 20% 20 - 30% Over 30%

8. If your customers drive to your place of business, where do they park?
 On-street
 You provide parking
 Parking lot
 Not applicable
 Don't know

9. Do you have an interest in expanding or relocating within the next five years?
 Yes - expanding:
 Increasing size of store
 Adding store(s) in Mission Hill
 Adding store(s) outside of Mission Hill
 Yes - relocating:
 Within Mission Hill
 Outside Mission Hill, please indicate where and when: _____
 No

10. What is your average dollar amount per sale?
 More than \$30
 \$20-\$30
 \$10-\$20
 \$5-\$10
 Less than \$5

11. What have been your sales trends over the past three years?
 UP 20% or more
 UP around 10%
 about the same
 DOWN around 10%
 DOWN 20% or more

12. Why did you choose to locate your business in Mission Hill?
 Personal affiliation or interest in area
 Long term business interests
 Saw a need for business
 Affordable rents
 Other, describe: _____

13. What percentage of your customer base falls into the following categories?
 % Local residents
 % Longwood Medical visitors/employees
 % Other commercial district employees
 % People from outside district
 % Students from nearby schools/colleges

14. How do you market your business?
 Storefront displays
 Local paper or newsletters advertisements
 Mission Hill Main Streets calendar
 Coupons
 Other, describe: _____

15. Are you aware of the Mission Hills Main Streets Program? Yes No

a. If so, have you participated in any of their activities or received any of their services?
 Yes No

b. If yes to b, how would you rate MHMS activities and services?
 Very good
 Good
 Average
 Poor

16. Is there any type of additional business or service that if located in the district would help you operate your business? (check all that apply)
 Supermarket
 Clothing
 Sit Down Restaurant
 Department Store
 Shoe Store
 Discount Retail (such as Target, Wal-Mart, K-Mart)
 Coffee Shop/Café
 Video Store
 Bank
 Bookstore
 Laundry/Dry Cleaning
 Other, please specify: _____

17. What kind of improvements in Mission Hill would attract more customers to your business? (check the top three)
 Additional Parking
 Retail Locator Map at Brigham Circle
 Joint business district marketing efforts
 More diverse mix of businesses
 More attractive public spaces
 Improved pedestrian traffic/safety
 Cleaner public spaces
 More attractive storefronts and signs
 Better lighting
 Improved public safety
 Other, please specify

Thank you for taking time to fill out our business survey! We will be happy to send you a summary of the results after completion. If you are interested in learning more about the Mission Hill Main Streets program, please contact:
 1530 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02120 (617) 427-7399 info@missionhillmainstreets.org
<http://www.missionhillmainstreets.org/>

APPENDIX D — RETAIL FOOTPRINTS MATRIX

Discount Retail	Size Needed	Headquarters of Locally-based Firms
Dollar Discount Stores	2,500-3,500	
Just a Buck	3,000+	
Sit-down Restaurant		
Au Bon Pain	2,500-4,000	Boston, MA
Baja Fresh	2,500	
Chipotle Mexican Grill	1,800-2,500	
Friendly Ice Cream	4,000-5,000	
Grillfish	3,000	Boston, MA
IHOP	4,000-5,000	
Jerry's Subs	1,500-2,500	
Uno	5,550-6,000	West Roxbury, MA
Shoe Store		
Foot Locker	1,800+	
Payless	2,400-3,000	
Video		
Blockbuster	2,500-4,800	
Knapp Video	5,000-8,000	Newton, MA
Video Thunder	3,000	Nashua, NH
Laundry/Dry Cleaning		
Anton's Cleaners	1,000-3,000	Tewksbury, MA
Zoots, The Cleaner Cleaner	1,000-1,800	Newton, MA
Hardware		
Aubuchon Hardware	6,500	Westminster, MA
TruServ	3,500+	
Woodworkers Warehouse	5,000	Lynn, MA
Books		
Barnes & Noble	2,800+	
Borders	3,000+	
Buck-a-Book	4,000-5,000	North Dighton, MA
Ice Cream		
Baskin-Robbins	1,400-2,000	Randolph, MA
Herrell's	1,200	Northampton, MA
Haagen-Dazs	<1,500	

Source: Retail Tenant Directory (2002), Mission Hill intercept and business surveys conducted Spring 2003.