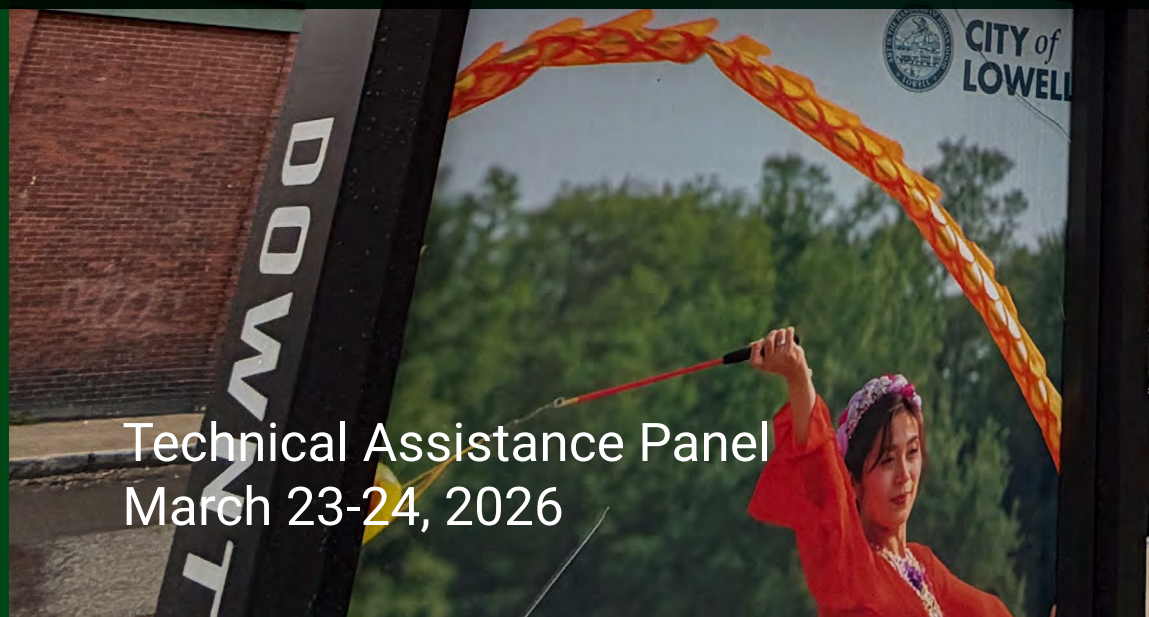
Boston/
New England

ACCELERATING HOUSING

Lowell, Massachusetts





Technical Assistance Panel
March 23-24, 2026

About

Urban Land Institute

The Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising nearly 50,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide.

ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and the Asia Pacific regions, with members in 80 countries.

More information is available at uli.org.

ULI Boston/New England

The Boston/New England District Council of ULI serves the six New England states and has over 1,200 members. As a preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI Boston/New England facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among local and regional leaders and policymakers dedicated to creating better places.

ULI Boston/New England Leadership

Jonathan Greeley
ULI Boston / New England Chair
Principal, Economic Development
Amazon

Michelle Landers
Executive Director
ULI Boston/New England

Zakeem Pitter
Senior Associate
ULI Boston/New England

Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

ULI Boston/New England is committed to supporting communities in making sound land use decisions and creating better places. A TAP brings together ULI members with a range of professional expertise to provide focused, collaborative consultation to a local government or qualifying nonprofit organization. All panelists have donated their time to participate as part of the TAP.

TAP Impact on Communities:

- 82% said their behavior and approach to Municipal Planning and Economic Development Strategies was affected.
- 67% said there were increased municipal investments related to the stated goals and recommendations of their TAP report.
- 62% said at least one key developable asset addressed in their TAP report had been redeveloped consistent with ULI Boston/New England recommendations.

Learn more at boston.uli.org.

Cover photo: JAM District signage provides helpful wayfinding assistance as well as promotional information about the City of Lowell. (ULI)

© 2026 by the Urban Land Institute

125 High Street | Boston, MA 02110

All rights reserved. Reproduction or use of the whole or any part of the contents without written permission of the copyright holder is prohibited.

ULI Terwilliger Center for Housing

The Mission of the Terwilliger Center for Housing is to ensure that everyone has a home that meets their needs at a price they can afford. The Center's activities include technical assistance engagements, forums and convenings, research and publications, and an awards program. The goal is to catalyze the production and preservation of a full spectrum of housing options.

The ULI's Terwilliger Center for Housing, through its Attainable Housing for All Initiative, leverages TAPs and other forums to directly engage with local communities, bringing expertise to solve unique affordability challenges and expand the production and preservation of attainable housing. This initiative is possible due to the generous support of Carolyn and Preston Butcher ULI Housing Initiative.

National League of Cities

The National League of Cities (NLC) is an organization comprised of city, town, and village leaders that are focused on improving the quality of life for their current and future constituents.

With more than 100 years of dedication to the strengthening and advancement of local governments, NLC has gained the trust and support of more than 2,700 cities across the nation. NLC's mission is to relentlessly advocate for, and protect the interests of, cities, towns and villages by influencing federal policy, strengthening local leadership and driving innovative solutions.

Housing Supply Accelerator Challenge

National League of Cities (NLC) and the American Planning Association (APA) has partnered with ULI's Terwilliger Center for Housing (TC) on the Accelerating Housing Production Grants which aims to provide technical assistance to cities participating in the Housing Supply Accelerator Challenge.

These grants support technical assistance panels focused on delivering and/or maintaining housing units attainable to cities' current and future residents. The Terwilliger Center partners with ULI's District Councils to advance efforts, bringing resources and expertise to enable housing production at the local level.

Acknowledgments

ULI Boston/New England is grateful to the City of Lowell, MA, National League of Cities, Northern Middlesex Council of Government, and ULI Terwilliger Center for Housing for their partnership and sponsorship of this Technical Assistance Panel.

About

Panel Co-Chairs

Scott Pollack
President Board of Managers
Opportunity Communities, LLC

Melvin Vieira
Real Estate Consultant
RE/MAX Real Estate Center
The Vieira Group

Panel Members

Amelia Casey
Senior Transportation Planner
Arup

Keir Evans
Vice President, Development
BXP

James Gray
Senior Principal
Stantec Architecture

Vineet Gupta
Former Director of Transportation, Policy, and Planning
City of Boston

James Rather
Director of Strategic Initiatives
Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission

Sandi Wolchansky Silk
Executive Vice President, Real Estate
MassDevelopment

Gretchen Von Grossmann, AIA
Managing Principal
AECOM

TAP Auditor

Jovan Aigbekaen
Sustainability Consultant
Arup

ULI Boston/New England Project Staff

Michelle Landers
Executive Director
ULI Boston/New England

Fabiola Yurcisin
Director, Technical Assistance Program
ULI Terwilliger Center for Housing

Elizabeth Okeke-Von Batten
Founder, Context Ventures
TAP Report Author





Contents

Executive Summary 1

- Purpose & Need of the Panel 2
- Recommendations 2

Overall Input & Takeaways 5

- The ULI TAP process 6
- What We Learned About Lowell – Background Information 6
- What We Learned About Lowell – Tour and Stakeholder Engagement 7

Recommendations 10

- Overarching Themes 11
  - Zoning / Planning 11
  - Public Realm 11
  - Partnerships 13

Conclusion 15

Appendix 17

- Implementation Matrix 18
- Glossary of Acronyms 19
- List of Stakeholders 20
- Panelists Biographies 21

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

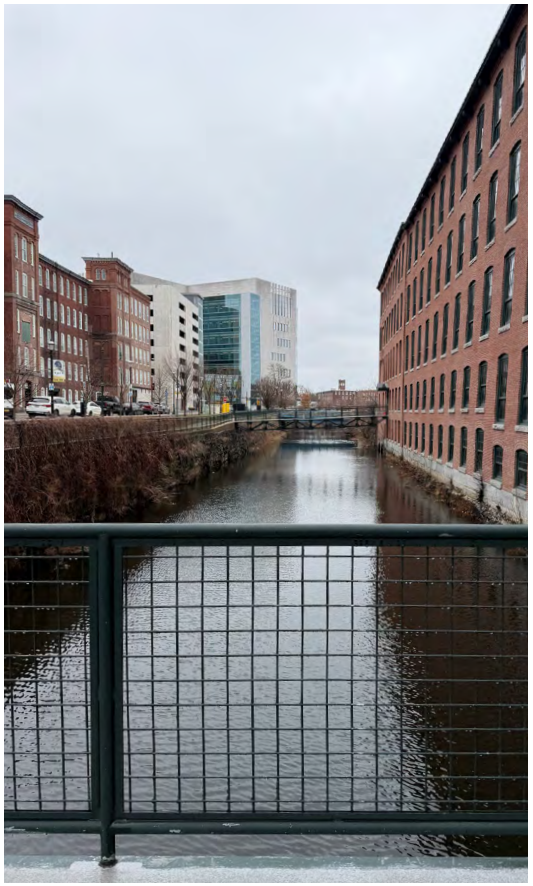
Purpose and Need of the Panel

The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) applied for a ULI TAP experience for Lowell, MA to examine the factors that have limited development around the MBTA Gallagher Station transit-oriented development (TOD) plan area despite the implementation of zoning ordinances design to encourage higher-density development, eliminate minimum parking requirements, and streamline the permitting process. The city has more than complied with MBTA Communities Act, (its district significantly exceeds the state's zoning requirement) and has established housing goals and strategies through its Lowell Forward comprehensive plan, providing a strong foundation for future housing planning and implementation and partnering with NMCOG. NMCOG and the city would like to achieve more walkable communities that contribute to local and regional economic vitality and community goals. To do this, Panelists were tasked with trying to ascertain why there is not more development interest and activity in the City of Lowell's transit-oriented area adjacent to the MBTA Gallagher Station despite the City's policies, zoning, and land use regulations and adjacent assets. For NMCOG, the goal of this TAP is to receive Panelists' recommendations in housing development, TOD, and infrastructure. These recommendations could be leveraged to overcome local objections and misinformation about perceived impacts of housing and mixed-use developments as well as provide much-needed support for (and /or adjustments to) NMCOG's At Home in Greater Lowell regional housing strategy work.

Recommendations

To address the TAP goals and provide NMCOG and the city with a roadmap for development around the most important transportation hub in the City of Lowell, Panelists framed their recommendations around three key themes of **Zoning / Planning, Public Realm, and Partnerships**. Panelists emphasized the need for the city to reinforce planning efforts with additional investment in public realm improvements that will emphasize the City's commitment to housing and economic development to spur private investor and developer interest.

Additionally, Panelists encouraged the city to be a consistent convener of local, regional, and state stakeholders and to further promote the City's rich cultural assets including literature, music, and food.



Overall Input and Takeaways from Briefing Documents

The ULI TAP Process

Prior to the March 23-24, 2026, on-the-ground visit to Lowell, Panelists received briefing information from the NMCOG regarding the Gallagher Station and adjacent JAM District study area including zoning, past studies, and current conditions. Then, Panelists met virtually to discuss the materials and ask further questions before arriving onsite.

During the morning of March 23, city leaders and city planning and economic development team and NMCOG's planning team provided Panelists with a walking tour from the Gallagher Station to the former Lord Overpass intersection, then east to Jackson, Middlesex, and Appleton streets to review the JAM District and then north to the Hamilton Canal District where the panel saw recently developed mixed-income multifamily housing development and parcels for future development. After the walking tour, Panelist boarded a bus to take a driving tour of the Downtown District, UMass Lowell campus, The Acre, and Cambodia Town, before arriving at Middlesex Community College.

During the afternoon of March 23 and morning of March 24, Panelists interviewed 20 community members and public officials to better understand the needs of the JAM District and its connectivity to the adjacent city districts and the wider community. After receiving feedback and further insights, Panelists met in a closed-door session to explore possibilities related to the assignment and develop recommendations for the city and NMCOG and presented those findings during a public presentation at the end of the ULI TAP program.

What We Learned About Lowell – Background Information

The City of Lowell is located within the Greater Boston region and has a rich history and a wealth of institutional assets including a national park, a large public university, a major regional hospital, and a commuter rail link to Boston's North Station. Over many generations, Lowell has been a place where people can afford to live and work, including immigrants who put down roots in this community with confidence that their children will also be able to live and work here. This pattern is starting to change, and Lowell needs housing of all types, sizes, and income levels to support current and new residents and the workforce for its major institutions.

Over the last several years, the city has worked hard to attract development by updating its zoning and parking requirements, creating incentive programs, and marketing the city's investment opportunities. The city has also worked with the community to create a community-led, shared vision for the future and has partnered with the NMCOG to support region-wide housing planning. Lowell has put special focus on the area



Study Area: Gallagher Transportation Terminal - multimodal center with parking for MBTA Commuter rail and regional bus service.

near Gallagher Station, including two Urban Renewal Districts (ACIP and JAM) and a master-planned district (Hamilton Canal Innovation District). Despite the city's policy work, planning efforts, unique location, and existing assets, Lowell has not experienced the anticipated level of investment and development. So, in partnership with NMCOG, Lowell is pursuing this TAP to try to answer the following questions provided in the local sponsors' application:

- Why aren't more developments being built in the transit-oriented area of Lowell despite the City's assets and developer-friendly policies, zoning, and land use regulations?
- What else can the city of Lowell do to increase transit-oriented development in the city?
- What is a realistic scale of development for the transit-oriented area, and how can the city attract developer interest in the area?

What We Learned About Lowell – Tour and Stakeholder Engagement

Armed with these questions and the review of a comprehensive briefing book from NMCOG, Panelists arrived in Lowell and were greeted by members of the city's planning and economic development team as well as NMCOG planning staff and City Manager Thomas A. Golden, Jr. at Gallagher Station.

When touring the study area and surrounding neighborhoods, Panelists observed the following:

- Throughout Lowell:
  - Lowell's historic downtown is appealing, intact, cohesive, walkable, and has great architectural integrity.
  - The city is host to a diversity of cultures and neighborhoods, some physically separated by infrastructure, but are often celebrated through food and festivals.
  - The city is home to a variety of commercial enterprises, including a supportive and connected local banking community.
  - The city is receiving development interest from outside partners; the Kerouac Center and the Hamilton Canal Innovation District.
  - The city's nighttime lighting – both on public streets and rights-of-way and by private business owners – is very attractive and inviting.
  - Canals provide water views, but the bridges over them both separate neighbor-hoods from one another and require an unidentified source of long-term capital to keep them in good working order.
- In the JAM District:
  - Due to canals, roadways, and rail infrastructure, adjacent neighborhoods



Downtown Lowell (above).

Panelists tour the Hamilton Canal District (below)



are physically disconnected, limiting transit connections and pedestrian/ bicycle infrastructure.

- There are beautiful historic mill buildings and other historic structures found throughout this district and in the adjacent Hamilton Canal Innovation District.
- Public, street amenities such as trees, pocket parks, curbs, sidewalks, and crosswalks are lacking in many of the neighborhoods.
- Building setbacks from street vary widely, with some building facades separated from the sidewalk or public right-of-way by chain link fences that may have been installed to limit vagrancy but are a detriment to placemaking.
- There are many vacancies in commercial buildings and spaces.
- There is a lack of services / amenities for families, children, and pets such as pharmacies, grocery stores, or medical facilities (urgent care, walk-in clinic).
- There are plenty of available parking inventory, both on the street and in currently underutilized city-owned garages.

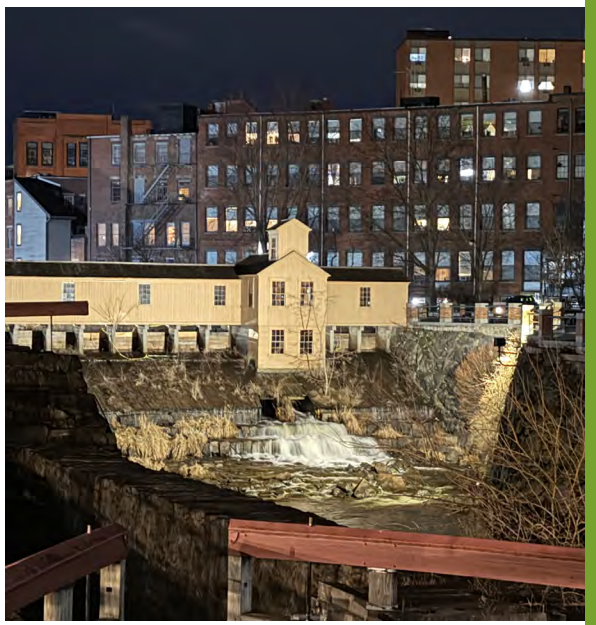
- In and Around Gallagher Station:
  - The station offers good intermodal transportation connections between trains, buses, and parking, but arrival of buses and trains are not always timed to provide direct connection.
  - The land around the terminal is held by multiple, different authorities and while sufficient for future development, requires consolidation before any development is possible.
  - This area feels separated from the JAM District by wide roads and tracks, even though downtown Lowell is within walking distance.
  - Though the former Lord Overpass was recently reconstructed, Panelists found it unwelcoming to cross on the walking tour due to the number of lanes and its complexity. This further disconnected



St. Anne's Episcopal Church in downtown Lowell.



Mixed Use buildings in downtown Lowell.



Historic Lower Locks lock chamber and gatehouse, part of the Lowell Locks and Canals National Historical Landmark District.

the station from the JAM district and downtown.

After the tour and to further inform Panelists' understanding of the study area and the housing and economic development opportunities and challenges faced by local partners, the Panelists interviewed stakeholders in small thematic groups. These stakeholders represented social services, real estate development, private investment and banking, anchor institutions, public sector and council representatives, and arts and culture organizations. Participants shared openly about the opportunities and challenges of this development area and housing development throughout the city.

Overall, stakeholders shared that the city is known for having policies that encourage development and for being a good partner that motivates investment.. The city has tried to encourage developers to create housing and commercial spaces in the JAM District through easy permitting processes and financial subsidies. Stakeholders understand that the JAM District's redevelopment progress has been slow, and that is a result of a disconnect between the city's development vision and market conditions.

Most notably, the stakeholders identified that the city suffers from a perception challenge – both how it views itself and how others view it. Stakeholders referenced examples such as an impressive food scene, arts and cultural amenities, well-known and attended festivals, and residents with much pride for their city. Yet, there remains a lack of belief in how far Lowell has come and the community's willingness to embrace all they have. This "low self-esteem" combined with connectivity challenges, low street activity resulting in not many eyes on the street, a large university that is geographically disconnected to the urban core has made it hard to attract outside private capital, and, like many cities and regions, there is a challenge with the supply of affordable housing and market rate housing.



Gallagher Transportation Terminal and the Thorndike Exchange building from Thorndike Street.



Pawtucket Street Looking toward UMass Lowell.



Thorndike Street.

Recommendations

During this two-day TAP, Panelists observed that ***while Lowell is a city of richly diverse neighborhoods, physically navigating between, to, and within those neighborhoods is very difficult.***

The challenge of inadequate connections to these special places within the city deeply resonated with Panelists and helped to inform their city-wide recommendations and particularly related to investment and development in the JAM District. Panelists' recommendations were framed around three key themes **Zoning / Planning, Public Realm, and Partnerships**, and the recommendations are as follows.

Zoning / Planning

The city's offering of zoning incentives in the JAM District and at Gallagher Station is not enough to spur robust demand for development, particularly high-rise development. Rents, including in communities with higher rents than Lowell, simply do not support current development costs and thus new housing projects are not happening in many places, including within Lowell. To attract interest and investment in this area, Panelists recommended the following:

Short-term:

- Leverage the upcoming zoning code audit to reconsider and amend zoning district boundaries to better define and streamline the JAM / TOD districts.
  - Actions:
    - Identify an existing or new internal entity to lead the implementation of the TOD zoning district (to spearhead the District Revitalization Initiative).
    - Identify parts of the zoning code that add development costs to determine if there are further actions the city can take other than providing incentives to reduce development costs.



Mixed-use building on Middlesex Street, part of the JAM District within the study site.

- Catalyze priority amenities in the district – working with partners (e.g. LDFC) to identify gaps and incentivize infill uses such as grocery, pharmacy, hardware, and other daily-needs retail.
  - Action: Launch an Assemblage / Site Selection Pilot Program on Appleton Street that engages both legacy and non-legacy owners / developers to start the conversation and unlock feasible development sites.

Mid-term:

- Create a developer-focused District Marketing Package that equips developers to tell a clear, credible story to investors.
  - Action: Identify approved and funded projects, timelines, available incentives, vendor / tenant collaboration efforts, captivating visuals, and the city's commitment to investments in the district.

Public Realm

The Panelists found that certain public infrastructure investments have not been prioritized in the JAM District, particularly on Middlesex and Appleton streets. The deteriorating condition of the streets and sidewalks, the lack of unified public safety signage and branding for the District, and the lack of consistent contact with current property owners signaled that it is not the right time to think of this area as a transit-oriented, let alone high-rise, development related directly to the MBTA Gallagher Station.



Example of wayfinding and promotional signage on Canal Street.

Before more private development solicitation takes place, the city should establish a planning process focused on designing and executing public infrastructure improvements and establish a "Coalition of the Necessary" - an advisory group of public and private partners that have a presence and interest in the JAM District to inform the process. The advisory group will be tasked to create a roadmap with milestones and priorities, including actions and next steps in the public realm design process, community engagement strategy and execution, and funding strategy. The funding strategy should highlight grants and the city's commitment to prioritizing city funding for public realm improvements – tying the work to the District Marketing Package. This group should meet on a consistent basis (suggested monthly) with facilitation to engage partners and establish direction and buy-in. NMCOG can provide support through funding and planning capacity for this advisory group. These improvements can signal that Lowell is a good investment for both developers and future residents.

After the advisory group is established and is meeting regularly, Panelists suggested that the city take on the following actions:

Short-term:

- Sync the new JAM+ Initiative, a $2 billion district investment, and its goals into the phased development approach.
- Address the District's pedestrian experience, such as street and sidewalk cleaning, fixing lighting, patching sidewalks, and painting crosswalks.
- Work closely with the shelter and charter school to understand current adjacent public realm needs and address public realm use and security for residents and visitors.
- Partner with local artists to create murals and other public artworks to activate the streetscape via pop-ups and activations.

Mid-term:

- Develop a Streetscape Design Vision.
- Design a new streetscape based on Complete Street Guidelines and complete the design up to 25% to ensure that community input is incorporated.
- Deliver consistent and reliable transit service that connects the JAM District, the Gallagher Center, and the Downtown District During the summer season, continue to expand shuttle service to best serve local and visiting festival goers.
- Work with the state MBTA to identify development parcels and undergo a feasibility study within the current TOD.

Long-term:

- Design and implement accessible and inviting canal waterfront pathways to promote better mobility throughout the city.
- Retrofit the Lord Overpass via a road diet and bike lane connections to slow down

traffic and make for a more pedestrian-friendly connection from Gallagher Station and Cambodia Town to the JAM and Hamilton districts.

- Rethink the TOD zoning boundaries around the station and what TOD means in Lowell.
- Work with the state MBTA, and other regional agencies and authorities to redevelop station-adjacent parcels.
- Work with MBTA and LRTA to consider an integrated mobility plan that realizes transit-oriented development goals and strengthens physical connectivity options that add value to the neighborhood.
- Rethink the area around the train station as an opportunity to help generate a neighbor-hood and not just as additional real estate.

By taking these actions, Panelists believe that steps will show that the district is a priority area for the city and that there is a cohesive vision for its development within the context of the broader area. This approach has proven successful in other areas such as in nearby Central Square Lynn.

Partnerships

Lowell is a city well-known internationally for its historic mills and downtown and regionally for its diverse cultural heritage, academic institutions, and arts community. The city is also known as a regional hub for social services and a large homeless and transient population. Panelists found that the city has perception and branding challenges and not just a demand problem when considering why local or outside development partners would want to invest in Lowell. Some perception challenges include long-time residents often underselling the city and its potential, relying on a business-as-usual model or status quo, and regional residents viewing the city as "just another mill town" - offering a limiting historic perspective. Some branding challenges include the lack of cohesive and consistent messaging about what Lowell has to offer residents and visitors.

In talking with local stakeholders, Panelists found that Lowell is a talent refinery, and the region's economic service center. The city is open for business and has an enduring history as a willing development partner with the private sector and institutional investors. Lowell's urban core has a rich and diverse intact building stock of architecture from the 1800s to today that would be the envy of many American cities. Yet, many of the key development sites that the city seeks to reposition and revitalize face a "who will be the first one in" challenge, understanding that capital investments spur other capital investments.



Example of wayfinding and promotional signage on Canal Street.

To help bolster the public's perception of Lowell, Panelists recommended the following:

- Offer right-sized subsidies and incentives in the JAM / Hamilton Canal districts to shape and catalyze future development.
    - The big 'flywheel' neighborhood revitalization will begin to turn as more of the right projects come online.
- Work with NMCOG and the annual CEDS update process to position JAM / Hamilton Canal districts as regional receiving areas for public and private investment.
- Leverage the Lowell – City of Opportunity brand by leaning into the city's strengths such as its vibrant cultural and food scenes, unique industrial and transportation history, significant architecture, year-round festivals, STEM presence and a home for leading educational institutions innovation labs.
    - Let NMCOG help tell the story in its member communities and funders that Low-ell's success is the region's success.
    - Leverage the Lowell Innovation Network Corridor (LINC) - a growing innovation ecosystem that drives research and economic growth and creates opportunities for students, faculty, and the local community.

To pilot these recommendations, Panelists suggested creating a user profile that could pinpoint the needs of a resident or visitor to Lowell and what their experience would be. An example provided was "Lowell, Your Family-Friendly Destination". In this scenario, the city would envision how a family would experience Lowell today and how that experience could be enhanced over time with strategic short-, medium-, and long-term actions by the city and its partners. Suggestions include:

Short-term:

- Highlight and showcase youth-driven social media buzz for events. Invite UMass Lowell students to explore beyond the campus and visit the plethora of authentic global restaurants.
- Create a "Day in Lowell" itinerary and encourage users to share their experiences using this guide. Perhaps the youth-driven social media could support the development of this short-term recommendation and inform a guide.
- Use input from activation events like "Day in Lowell" to inform future events and incentives to support family-friendly visits.

Mid-term:

- Activate public spaces with playful art installations to create destinations for respite, play, and further exploration.
- Better publicize a family-focused festival calendar – if Lowell is safe for families, it's safe for everyone and it provides signature events that should garner regional recognition.
- Expand cultural events to the public realm with specific family-focused activities.

Long-term:

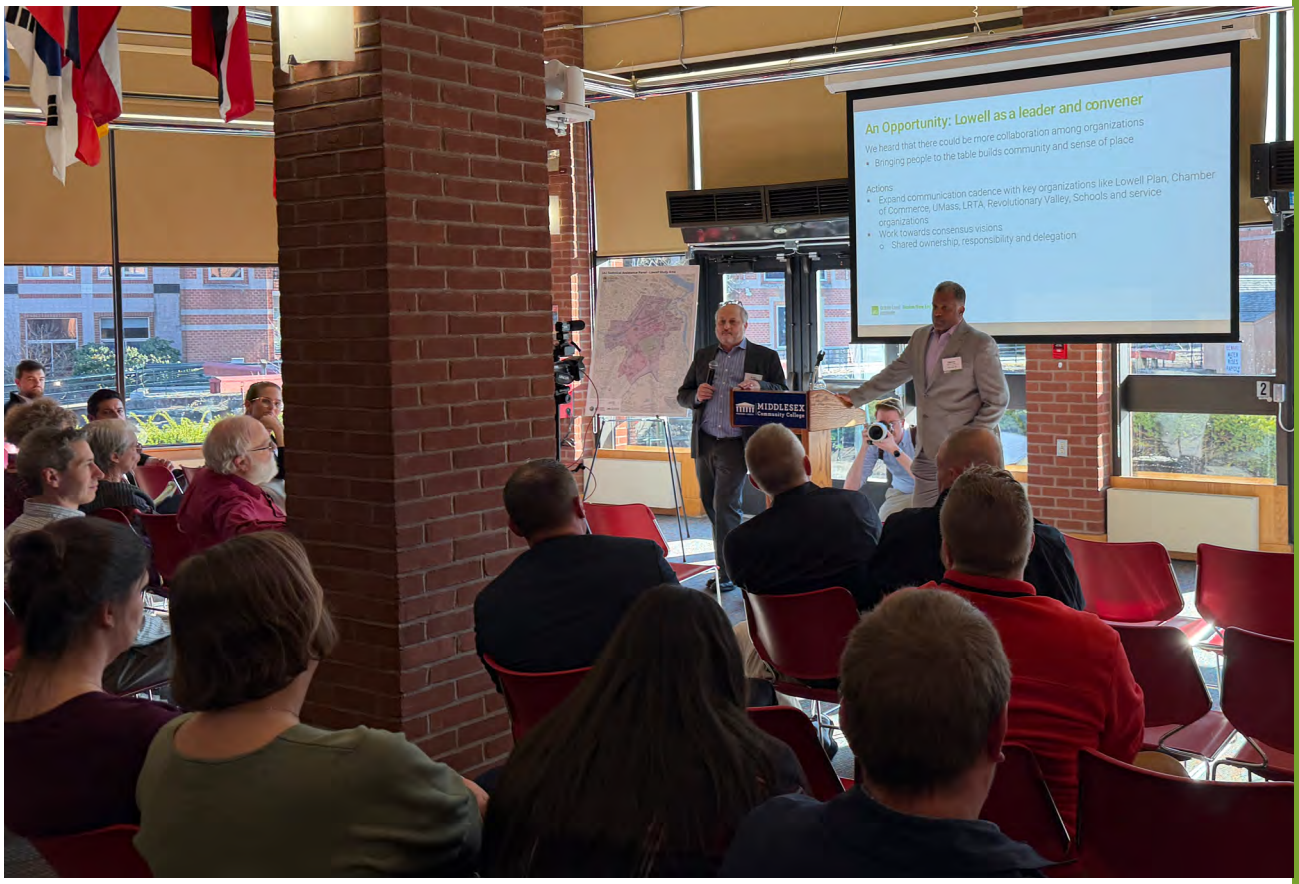
- Design and implement a new marquee playground and child-centered park space in the Hamilton Canal District for residents and visitors.
- Produce additional wayfinding that connects neighborhoods throughout the city.

Finally, Panelists emphasized leveraging opportunities to engage and work with Lowell's youth to help them shape the city's future in planning, economic development, and mobility. If there is more recognition from residents and visitors that Lowell is a safe, healthy, and fun community to visit and live in, then more residents will stay, and more would-be residents will be attracted to the city. As more residents and visitors support local amenities and experiential activities, there will naturally be more increased interest and demand by investors and developers to design and construct housing and related amenities.

Conclusion

The City of Lowell has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to be a leader in its growth and development. For more development and investor activity to take place, the city needs to invest in its infrastructure and work with local, regional, and state partners on a consistent basis to ensure a shared vision for the development the city would like to promote – whether housing or workforce development, especially in the JAM District.

As a convener, the city can gather local, regional, and state partners to consistently meet and work toward a shared vision for the city's prosperity and maintain Lowell's unique sense of place. Expanding communications cadence with key organizational partners such as NMCOG, Lowell Plan, Inc., the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, UMass Lowell, the LRTA, Revolutionary Valley, Middlesex Community College, Greater Lowell Community Foundation, the National Park Service, area schools, and service organizations will only benefit the city in its long-term growth and health.



Panel co-chairs Scott Pollack and Melvin Vieira present the panel findings to a packed room.

Appendix

Implementation Matrix

	Short-term	Mid-term	Long-term
Zoning / Planning	Leverage the upcoming zoning code audit to reconsider and amend zoning district boundaries to better define and streamline the JAM / TOD districts Action 1: Identify an existing or new internal entity to lead the implementation of the TOD zoning district (to spearhead the District Revitalization Initiative) Action 2: Identify parts of the zoning code that add development costs to determine if there are further actions the city can take other than providing incentives to reduce development costs	Create a developer-focused District Marketing package that equips developers to tell a clear, credible story to investors Action 1: Identify approved and funded projects, timelines, available incentives, vendor / tenant collaboration efforts, captivating visuals, and the city's commitment to investment in the district	
	Catalyze priority amenities in the district - working with partners (e.g. LDFC) to identify gaps and incentivize infill uses such as grocery, pharmacy, hardware, and other daily-needs retail Action 1: Launch an Assemblage / Site Selection Pilot Program on Appleton Street that engages both legacy and non-legacy owners / developers to start the conversation and unlock feasible development sites		
Public Realm	Address the District's pedestrian experience, such as street and sidewalk cleaning, fixing lighting, patching sidewalks, and painting crosswalks	Develop a Streetscape Design Vision	Design and implement accessible and inviting canal waterfront pathways to promote better mobility throughout the city
	Work closely with the shelter and charter school to understand current adjacent public realm needs and address public realm use and security for residents and visitors	Design a new streetscape based on Complete Street Guidelines, and complete the design up to 25% to ensure that community input is incorporated	Retrofit the Thorndike Connection via a road diet and bike lane connections to slow down traffic and make for a more pedestrian-friendly connection from Gallagher Station and Cambodia Town to the JAM and Hamilton districts
	Partner with local artists to create murals and other public artworks to activate the streetscape via pop-ups and activations	Start connecting the JAM District, the Gallagher Center, and the Downtown District via transit / a shuttle service that offers consistent and reliable service	Work with state MBTA, and other regional agencies and authorities to redevelop station-adjacent parcels
		During the summer season, expand shuttle service to best serve local and visiting festival goers, and market this pilot to get ridership to support a permanent program	Rethink the TOD zoning boundaries around the station and what TOD means in Lowell
		Work with the state MBTA to identify parcels and undergo a feasibility study within the current TOD	Work with the state MBTA, and other regional agencies and authorities to redevelop station-adjacent parcels
Partnerships	Highlight youth-driven social media buzz for events. Invite UMass Lowell students to explore beyond the campus and visit the plethora of authentic global restaurants	Activate public spaces with playful art installations to create destinations for respite, play, and further exploration	Design and implement a new marquee playground and park space in the Hamilton Canal District for residents and visitors
	Create a "Day in Lowell" itinerary and encourage users to share their experiences using this guide. Perhaps the youth-driven social media could support the development of this short-term recommendation and inform a guide	Produce a family-focused festival calendar - if Lowell is safe for families, it's safe for everyone	Produce wayfinding that connects neighborhoods throughout the city
	Use input from activation events like "Day in Lowell" to inform future events and incentives to support family-friendly visits	Expand cultural events to the public realm with specific family-focused activities	

Glossary of Acronyms

CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

LIHTC – Low Income Housing Tax Credit

LRTA – Lowell Regional Transit Authority

MBTA – Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

NMCOG – Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

TOD – transit-oriented development

List of Stakeholders

Jeff Bush, Heritage Properties

Matt D'Amico, Cabot, Cabot & Forbes

John Descoteaux, Lowell City Council

Jerry Frechette, Washington Savings Bank, Lowell Planning Board, and NMCOG

Julie Galonska, National Park Service – Lowell National Historical Park

Robert Gignac, Lowell Community Charter Public School

Hayley Glidden, Cabot, Cabot & Forbes

Ronnie Hoey, Project Kompass

James Hogan, Washington Savings Bank

Belinda Juran, Lowell City Council

Chris Kluchman, Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities

Jay Linnehan, Greater Lowell Community Foundation

LZ Nunn, Lowell Development & Financial Corporation and The Lowell Plan

Michael O'Brien, WinnCompanies

Jessica O'Hearn, Mosaic Lowell

Charles Ott, Eliot Church

Mark Palermo, Salem Five

Isaiah Stephens, Lowell Transitional Living Center

Jay Stephens, Lowell Five Bank

Patty Wilson, Rockland Trust

About the Panel


THORNDIKE
EXCHANGE
165 Thorndike Street
JADE LOWELL
OPEN
JADE LOWELL
LOUNGE • SUSHI

Scott Pollack

Panel Co-Chair
President Board of Managers Opportunity Communities, LLC

Scott Pollack is a retired principal of Boston-based architecture and planning firm Arrowstreet. Scott led a range of large-scale planning and architectural projects for over 35 years, including master planning, housing, retail, hospitality, and commercial life sciences. He oversaw planning and innovation projects for the National Park Service, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Army Corps of Engineers as well as the Departments of the Air Force, Army and Marines. Besides working as a nonprofit board member supporting Community Development Corporations, Scott continues to consult on planning approaches that start with people rather than facilities. Scott helps clients efficiently deploy capital resources to achieve the greatest impact by understanding constraints, uncovering opportunities and designing innovative ways to get people what they need, where and when they need it. He is part of a network of experts that, from digital ethnography to mapping and data visualization, are working to expand the field of planning's speed and capabilities.

Melvin Vieira

Panel Co-Chair
Real Estate Consultant
RE/MAX Real Estate Center | The Vieira Group

As a real estate professional with over 30 years of experience, Melvin Vieira has held several notable positions in the industry, including Past President of the Greater Boston Association of Realtors, Past Chair of Government Affairs for the Massachusetts Association of Realtors, and a past member of the Board of Directors for the National Association of Realtors. Melvin's experience extends beyond selling real estate, as he has actively worked on various housingrelated bills at both the local and national levels. Additionally, he has held real estate licenses in multiple states, including California and Massachusetts. Currently, Melvin is a member of several organizations and committees, including the Board of Directors for Youth Build in Boston, MA, the Membership Committee for the Boston College Club, and the Real Estate Advisory Committee for the Urban Land Institute. Additionally, he is a facilitator for urban planning education, teaching at universities, colleges, and high schools.

Amelia Casey

Senior Transportation Planner
Arup

Amelia Casey is a Senior Transportation Planner in Arup's Boston office, Amelia has experience in master planning, transit planning, corridor visioning, streetscape design, smart mobility initiatives, resiliency planning, and community-wide mobility planning. Her work has taken her to rural communities in Massachusetts to large counties in the greater Seattle area, where she applies her skillset to give communities the tools to create safe streets, enhance accessibility to transit, promote mode shift, and improve parking and curbside management practices. She embraces any opportunity to integrate data, design best practices, and community engagement efforts to create actionable and implementable projects. Her interdisciplinary skill sets include mapping and visualization, practical research, project management expertise, report writing, community engagement techniques, and the development of visual content for presentations.

Keir Evans

Vice President, Development BXP

Keir Evans is a Vice President of Development at BXP. Keir is responsible for leading the development of life science, residential, and commercial projects in Boston, Cambridge, and Waltham, Massachusetts. He has worked at BXP for 10 years and previously worked in construction management. Keir graduated with a degree in Architecture from Yale University and earned an MBA from Harvard Business School.

James Gray

Senior Principal
Stantec

James Gray is co-leader of Boston's residential business unit at Stantec Architecture. James designs affordable and market-rate multi-family housing across the northeast region. He has a passion for cities and is a strong advocate for transit-oriented design and bike/pedestrian friendly streets.

Vineet Gupta

Former Director of Transportation, Policy, and Planning City of Boston

Vineet Gupta served the City of Boston for 37 years, recently retiring from his role as the Director of Planning for the Boston Transportation Department. In that role, Vineet has directed the city's recently published transportation plan, Go Boston 2030, and its national award-winning Complete Streets Guidelines. His team implements bike lanes and Green Links paths; manages the Blue Bikes bike-share system; and redesigns major corridors and squares with a focus on the public realm. The team also leads Boston's inter-agency Vision Zero related programs. His work is driven by extensive public processes with a proven record of removing barriers to encourage participation by everyone. His Master of Architectural Studies and Master of City Planning degrees are from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

James Rather

Director of Strategic Initiatives Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission

James Rather is the Director of Strategic Initiatives at the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC). James comes to SMPDC from the planning departments at the City of Portland, City of New York, and several firms within private and nonprofit sectors. James oversees many projects in economic development and long-range planning for the agency. James holds a master's degree from UMass Lowell in Regional Economic and Social Development.

Sandi Wolchansky Silk

Executive Vice President, Real Estate MassDevelopment

Sandi Wolchansky Silk is a real estate development professional serving as the Executive Vice President of Real Estate at MassDevelopment. With over 30 years of experience, Sandi specializes in mixed-use development, public-private partnerships, and large-scale multifamily housing across Massachusetts. She is the former ULI Boston/New England Board Chair and currently serves as Governance Chair.

Gretchen Von Grossmann, AIA

Managing Principal
AECOM

Gretchen Von Grossmann is the Managing Principal of AECOM's Boston/New England Buildings + Places. As an urban design consultant, Gretchen has developed transportation-related projects for wide-ranging public clients. She then became a client employed at public and university entities (UMass Lowell, the MBTA, and Tufts University), where she directed internal and consulting project managers, consulting designers and contractors. As a skilled facilitator of group decision-making processes, including among competing interests, her passion is to encourage beauty in the design of complex, multi-purpose projects.

Jovan Aigbekaen

TAP Auditor
Sustainability Consultant
Arup

Jovan Aigbekaen is a Sustainability Consultant with Arup's Boston office. He recently completed a Master of Science degree in Sustainable Design & Construction at Stanford University where he focused on energy and decarbonization, specializing in enhancing interdisciplinary collaboration for integrated design and passive design projects, building performance modeling, energy efficiency strategy development, innovative techniques innovative techniques for decarbonizing buildings and energy infrastructure.