

City of Portsmouth
Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan and Arts District Plan
Scope of Work

Task 1: Review of Previous Plans/Studies and Stakeholder Interviews

Objective: Review existing corridor studies and plans and interview stakeholders

Deliverable: Summary report with graphics

- 1.1 Kick-off meeting with city staff including the Planning Director, the Public Works Director, City Traffic Engineer, Parking Manager, the Deputy City Manager, the Art-Speak (the city's Cultural Commission) Coordinator, Economic Development Manager and the City's zoning consultant (Taintor & Associates). The purpose of this meeting will be to clarify project goals, to obtain input on the study area, and to clarify project outcomes.
- 1.2 Review and analyze the relevancy of previous planning and transportation data/studies of the corridor. Validate information vis-a-vis current development trends and conditions in the corridor. The following studies/plans should be reviewed. Copies of the following reports and plans will be provided by the City:
- City Master Plan (available on the city website and in City Planning Department and Library)
 - City Cultural Plan (available on the city website and in City Planning Department and Public Library)
 - Islington St. Streetscape Study (available in City Economic Development Department)
 - Islington Street Transportation Infrastructure Studies by VHB (1998) and by Maguire Group Inc. (2005) (both are available in City Economic Development Department)
 - Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance regulations and Zoning Ordinance Audit (available on the City of Portsmouth website)
 - North Mill Pond Pedestrian and Bike Trail (available in City Planning Department)
 - Corridor traffic counts (available at Rockingham Planning Commission).
 - Summary of Islington Street Art's District Study proposal (available from Art-Speak, the City of Portsmouth's Cultural Commission).
- 1.3 Review the inventory of key assets in the Islington Street Corridor. These assets include historic and cultural assets (public and private), economic and commercial assets, public infrastructure and other assets as identified. An inventory of these assets is included in the report entitled *Islington Street Improvement Study and Plan*. This report is available at Portsmouth City Hall as noted above.
- 1.4 Conduct interviews with key stakeholders in the corridor including, but not necessarily limited to representatives of the West End Business Association, the Neighborhood Associations (Islington Creek, McDonough, etc.), the Button Factory, the Schultz Brewery, the former Public Works complex, Plaza 800, independent businesses and owners of key parcels in and abutting the corridor such as owner of Heineman Publishing Company and the industrially-zoned parcel off Barlett St. The

purpose of these interviews will be to obtain input and information that will help define the planning needs of the corridor.

1.5 Prepare a summary report of information gathered in tasks 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 above.

Task 2: Arts District Plan

Objective: to define and brand an Arts District that includes the creative and cultural businesses and activities currently operating in the corridor and improves the long term viability of the same

Deliverable: Draft Arts District Plan

2.1 Identify existing cultural anchors such as the West End Theater, the Button Factory, galleries, former public library and The Pearl for development of an arts district along the corridor.

2.2 Identify stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of an Islington Street Arts District and review existing impediments such as visibility, current zoning, transportation, physical branding etc. Consultant will have the ability to confer with city staff and city planning and transportation consultants on current zoning and traffic concerns.

2.3 Identify opportunities and locations for increasing the concentration of arts and arts-related activities and creative businesses in the corridor which do not create negative impacts on abutting residential communities. Also, identify areas where residential use and arts activity is compatible and appropriate based on input from city staff, city planning and transportation consultants and the public.

2.4 Prepare a draft arts district plan based on information gathered from Master Plan, Cultural Plan, stakeholders, residents, city planning staff and city planning consultant, Taintor and Associates. Plan should include strategies that engender community support for the district and protect it from gentrification.

Task 3: Draft Corridor Improvement Action Plan/Arts District Study and Presentation

Objective: Prepare and present draft corridor improvement implementation plan/Arts District Plan

Deliverable: Draft plan with action table

3.1 Based on the findings of Tasks 1 through 2 above and in consultation with city staff, city planning and transportation consultants and the public, develop a draft corridor improvement implementation plan/arts district plan that satisfies the goals identified in the Project Goals section above. Plan should identify proposed changes to current land use, a priority order for action items and suggest appropriate city responsibility assignments for undertaking respective action items. Plan should also suggest appropriate funding mechanism for infrastructure improvements including grants, capital plan item, general revenues or new tools such as tax increment financing, public/private partnerships, special assessment districts or impact fees.

3.2 Present draft plan at an internal meeting to city staff, Economic Development Commission Subcommittee, Cultural Commission Subcommittee and other

appropriate board members or stakeholders (“Corridor Subcommittee”) as deemed appropriate.

- 3.3 Incorporate suggestions from internal review into a revised draft plan and present it at facilitated public input meeting. It is anticipated that the public meeting will last no longer than two hours. City will make all meeting arrangements, prepare notices and press releases and shall compile meeting summary notes. Meeting may be televised and if so, there will be a video record.

Task 4: Revised Corridor Improvement Action Plan/Art District Plan and Presentation

Objective: Prepare and present revised draft Corridor Improvement Action plan/Arts District Plan

Deliverable: Revised Draft Corridor Improvement Action Plan/Arts District Plan with action table

- 4.1 Incorporate suggestions from first public meeting on draft corridor improvement action plan into a revised draft plan and present it to Corridor Subcommittee.
- 4.2 Incorporate suggestions from internal review by Corridor Subcommittee into a second revised draft plan and present it at a second facilitated public input meeting. It is anticipated that the public meeting will last no longer than two hours. City will make all meeting arrangements, prepare notices and press releases and shall compile meeting summary notes. Meeting may be televised and if so, there will be a video record.

Task 5: Final Corridor Improvement Action Plan/Arts District Plan

Objective: Prepare and present final corridor improvement action plan

Deliverable: Final Corridor Improvement Action Plan/Art District Plan with action table

- 5.1 Based on input from the presentation of the second public meeting and after internal review, prepare final corridor improvement action plan.
- 5.2 Present final Corridor/Arts District Plan at a public meeting to which members of the City Council, Economic Development Commission, Planning Board, Cultural Commission stakeholders, and the public will be invited. It is anticipated that the public meeting will last no longer than two hours. City will make all meeting arrangements, prepare notices and press releases and shall compile meeting summary notes. Meeting may be televised and if so, there will be a video record.