



**Mayor Thomas C. Hoyer Jr.
Downtown Taunton Rent Rebate Program**

The Rent Rebate Program is designed to help facilitate the establishment of small businesses within Taunton's Downtown Business District. The program allows the City of Taunton's Office of Economic and Community Development (OECD) to provide rental assistance that is intended to help small businesses locating into vacant storefronts and upper floor spaces during the first two years of operation, by reducing the cost of overhead expenses. Businesses must apply for the program and meet the criteria.

Guidelines and Application:

<https://images4.loopnet.com/d2/fNzi3uVtHfRXkKFUftgM8mXXog7pzuO3KzHu26hzMpY/document.pdf>

News Articles:

State economic development bill takes cue from Taunton program:

<http://www.tauntongazette.com/news/20180405/state-economic-development-bill-takes-cue-from-taunton-program>

Mayor Hoyer touts rental-rebate program with downtown business ribbon cuttings:

<http://www.tauntongazette.com/news/20160920/mayor-hoyer-touts-rental-rebate-program-with-downtown-business-ribbon-cuttings>

Taunton City Council approves proposed rental rebate program:

<http://www.tauntongazette.com/article/20160217/NEWS/160216370>

Taunton receives \$50,000 grant for Downtown master plan:

<https://www.massdevelopment.com/news/taunton-to-receive-50000-grant-for-downtown-master-plan/>

City Councilors push for rent rebate program modeled after Taunton:

<https://www.newbedfordguide.com/city-councilors-push-for-rent-rebate-program-modeled-after-taunton/2018/04/26>

Hair to stay: Downtown Taunton salon adapts and thrives:

<https://www.tauntongazette.com/news/20181109/hair-to-stay-downtown-taunton-salon-adapts-and-thrives>

Downtown Taunton was the place to be for trick or treating fun:

<https://www.tauntongazette.com/photogallery/WL/20181022/NEWS/102209976/PH/1>

Grand opening of downtown Taunton art gallery with tattoo station is Saturday:

<https://www.tauntingazette.com/news/20180830/grand-opening-of-downtown-taunton-art-gallery-with-tattoo-station-is-saturday>

Three new businesses open in Downtown; all utilize Mayo's rent rebate program:

<https://www.taunton-ma.gov/home/news/three-new-businesses-open-downtown-all-utilize-mayors-rent-rebate-program>

City seizes, sells downtown Taunton sites as part of central business revitalization:

<http://taunton.wickedlocal.com/news/20180304/city-seizes-sells-downtown-taunton-sites-as-part-of-central-business-revitalization>

Taunton officials tackle downtown revitalization:

<http://www.tauntingazette.com/news/20160502/taunton-officials-tackle-downtown-revitalization>

Razed downtown Taunton plaza to get new life as park:

<https://www.tauntingazette.com/news/20181019/razed-downtown-taunton-plaza-to-get-new-life-as-park>

Taunton kicks off the Christmas season with 105th lighting of the Green:

<http://www.tauntingazette.com/news/20181201/taunton-kicks-off-christmas-season-with-105th-lighting-of-green>

Downtown Taunton comes alive for Fall fest block party:

<https://www.tauntingazette.com/photogallery/WL/20180925/NEWS/925009977/PH/1>

All revved up for cruise night in downtown Taunton:

<https://www.tauntingazette.com/photogallery/WL/20180719/NEWS/719009979/PH/1>

About Downtown Taunton:

The heart of Downtown Taunton is the town center, or the Taunton Green. The Taunton Green Historic District encompasses the core area of the historic 19th-century commercial downtown business district of Taunton, Massachusetts. It is centered on the town green, laid out in the 1740s, and now stands at the intersection of U.S. Route 44 and State routes 140 and 138. The district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

The Taunton Green was given to the town in 1743 as a militia training ground, and it is also where an early meetinghouse was built. Originally 88 acres in size, it is now much reduced by the surrounding development.

In the past, the Taunton Green has been a gathering place for troops headed to war. Monuments stand on the Green to honor soldiers of all the wars in which local citizens have participated.

"Tauntonians" gathered on the Green on October 21, 1774, to raise the Taunton Flag with its distinctive "Liberty and Union" motto. The flag was hoisted on a 112-foot liberty pole in defiance of King George III. The flag flies on the Green to the present day.

Since 1914 the Green has been the site of the city's annual holiday light display which attracts visitors from throughout the area, giving Taunton the nickname of "The Christmas City."

The **Taunton Business Improvement District (BID)** is a nonprofit organization established in 2010. Membership is made up of Downtown property owners working together to revitalize the City's central business district. Members contribute an annual fee equal to .5% of their assessed property value to fund BID operations.

BID programs include: Downtown maintenance services (daily sidewalk cleaning, storefront window washing, and supplemental snow plowing), beautification projects, collaborative marketing initiatives, and public safety enhancements.

Arts, Culture, and Family Fun in the Downtown:

The **Downtown Taunton Foundation** was established in 2011 to promote the social, cultural, and economic revitalization of Downtown Taunton, Massachusetts. The Foundation is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization and is recognized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a certified Community Development Corporation(CDC) for its service to the community.

The Downtown Taunton Foundation engages in projects and programs that promote the arts, strengthen small business, eliminate blight, create affordable housing, and improve overall quality of life in the Downtown neighborhood. The Foundation works in close partnership with the nonprofit Taunton Business Improvement District (BID), with which we share staff and office space.

The Trescott Street Gallery (TSG) was created in 2011 as part of a collaborative project to rehabilitate a vacant Downtown Taunton furniture warehouse into revitalized housing, office, and arts space. The Gallery is managed by the DTF. For more information about TSG and the programs and exhibits offered, visit trescottstreetgallery.org/.

Both DTF and TSG are located at 8 Trescott Street in Downtown Taunton.

Downtown Revitalization Project:

In 2013 the City completed the final phase of the city's \$2.1 million Downtown sidewalks Improvement Project.

The first phase of the project resulted in new sidewalks extending down Broadway from Leonard Street running all the way to Post Office Square. Parking kiosks replacing meters, new trees, and a new pedestrian-crossing island were also been installed. Phase one cost \$411,313 and was paid for with money from a federal Community Development Block Grant.

Another \$400,000 in block grant funding, combined with \$1.3 million in MassWorks Infrastructure Program state funds, paid for all of phase two. Included in the \$400,000 was \$52,000 to pay for nighttime water line work and sewer line upgrades.

Upcoming Downtown Projects:

- City Hall is being rebuilt on Main Street and is on schedule to be complete by the Fall of 2020.
 - A fire at City Hall in 2011 set by arson displaced City offices to an old school just outside of the Downtown.
- Liberty and Union Park

- Mayor Thomas Hoyer announced last week the City of Taunton was awarded a \$245,000 grant to redevelop Liberty & Union Park on Main Street. The new park will be open by June 30 of next year. Possible future uses of the new park include Downtown concerts, small festivals, and food truck events.

Press Release from the Governor Baker-Polito Administration:

The City of Taunton was notified by the state's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) that its application for a Housing Choice Initiative Capital Grant in the amount of \$245,200 for the rebuilding of Liberty and Union Park was successful.

In early 2018 Governor Baker announced the Housing Choice Initiative in response to the widespread shortage of housing stock across the state. The new program is designed to reward cities and towns for both their housing production and their use of housing "best practices" as determined by DHCD. Municipalities could qualify for the program in one of two ways. They may either show a net gain of 500 new housing units (or 5% increase) in the past five years or have a net gain of 300 new units (or 3%) in addition to having at least four of the nine "best practices." Taunton qualified by producing 519 new units in the past five years, 160 of which came from the HOPE VI developments at Lenox Green and Bristol Commons.

Sixty municipalities in Massachusetts qualified this year and, as a result, became eligible to apply for a capital grant of up to \$250,000 with no financial match required. The grant could be used for any capital expenditure. It did not have to be housing related but was rather a reward for a city or town's housing production success. Preference was given to projects that were already listed in city plans, such as a Master Plan, ADA Transition Plan, or Capital Improvement Plan. In total, there were \$9 million worth of grant requests this round and only \$4 million were awarded.

Taunton applied for the rebuilding of Liberty and Union Park located on Main Street. The park was originally constructed in 1980 with funds from a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant through the National Parks Service. As a condition of the original grant, the property must remain dedicated to Parks and Recreation in perpetuity and must be adequately maintained. The park was demolished in 2016 after years of problems that stemmed from the park's multi-tiered design which created a lack of visibility and accessibility.

In 2018, MassDevelopment conducted a study of Downtown Taunton which resulted in producing the Downtown Taunton Plan, a plan for the downtown that included ideas for attracting business, streetscapes, pedestrian safety, and activating public spaces. One of the components of this plan was a conceptual design of Liberty and Union Park. Renderings were developed and input was solicited from the public as well as the Business Improvement District and the Downtown Taunton Foundation. The final product was used in applying for this grant.

The scope of the Housing Choice Initiative Grant includes the installation of new paving, adding electrical hookups and lighting, and constructing an archway over the entrance. The City's goal is to reopen the park again and have it serve as a key venue for activities in the downtown. The work will be complete by June 30, 2019.