Chamber questionnaire_Paul Lundberg 2025

How do you view Downtown Gloucester today? What is working and what is not? What are 2 or 3 actionable items that you would implement in your administration to promote small businesses?

Downtown today - and our merchants who make up this business center - is an incredible asset with a good deal of potential. But it needs a development plan that takes advantage of the combination of the entrepreneurial spirit of our business owners with the physical assets of an historically rich building component adjacent to a harbor. This combination is very unique in our area.

What Gloucester's downtown needs is already partially present. We have the plans that begin to address this unique asset - the Downtown Streetscape and Building Facade Improvement Plan, the Reimaging Railroad Avenue plan - and these plans can be the basis of the City's foundation of development to make the area a destination that goes beyond the current seasonal aspect of our merchant economy. The connection between our downtown retail space and the harbor can be developed to enhance the retail ambiance of the area from the West End to Flanagan Square. We can also incorporate some of the aspects of the Business Improvement District contemplated by State law.

The actionable items are 1) the City takes a leadership planning role for the infrastructure improvements (including beatification and parking) in partnership with the Chamber and the Downtown merchants with a target of the Fall of 2026 for a preliminary report; 2) raise our standard of cleanliness for the streets and sidewalks beginning Spring of 2026; and 3) complete the partnership that includes the marketing efforts of Discover Gloucester, and the goals of our cultural institutions such as the Sawyer Free Library, Cape Ann Museum and Maritime Gloucester.

How would you propose to balance the competing interests on the future of Gloucester's waterfront? Would you propose to modify the DPA boundary uses and what nonresidential uses would you like to attract and retain?

Waterfront -The DPA (State) and the Marine Industrial zone (City) govern the use of the waterfront in Gloucester Harbor. The Industries that these districts are designed to protect still exist, but their needs have evolved in major ways over the past 50 years. The State and the City need to continue these protections to our fishing industry, lobster industry and seafood processing industries. And we can also look to the examples of the emerging ocean scientific economies (GMGI, Ocean Alliance and others), and industrial economies (off shore wind electrical generation).

In addition to these uses - that require ocean access - we also need to develop as much public access to the waterfront as is possible, given the fact the city owns very little

waterfront property. A perfect example is I4C2 which has great potential as public open space. We need to continue the regulation of recreational boat use, for which there are other options beyond Gloucester's Inner Harbor

Tourism is a vital part of Gloucester's economy; how would you promote the city as a year round destination without burdening the local infrastructure and residents during the peak season and what investments would you make in visitor amenities?

Tourism is a vital and growing part of our economy. The City should make every effort to broaden the limited seasonality of our attractions. A great example of how we do this is the mission of Maritime Gloucester. MG has a distinctly ocean access characteristic which is seasonal. But they are developing their public offerings to become more educational, which has less seasonality about them. This approach is also compatible with the ideas described in Answer #1 which broaden the economic opportunities of our downtown merchants by expanding their seasons.

Immediate projects that can be supported by the City are 1) a plan to make cohesive investments in public amenities - restrooms, pathways, signage - that are properly developed and properly maintained; 2) partnership and promotion of the arts and cultural events and organizations that take place during the Fall, Winter and Spring seasons; and 3) continue encouragement and marketing partnership with emerging four season attractions based on our rich heritage, and eco-tourism. All of this can be done with the infrastructure improvements necessary to ensure we are not increasing burdens on our permanent residents.

Many businesses in our community struggle to attract and retain workers because there simply isn't enough affordable housing available nearby. What specific steps would you take to encourage the creation of more workforce housing options—particularly approaches that update or rethink current local rules to make it easier to build the kinds of housing our workers need?

Workforce housing to accommodate the above described expansions needs to be addressed, along with the entire issue of doing what we can to expand the availability of housing for our permanent citizens. We are not meeting the housing needs of our city employees, educators, seniors and families with school age children. We have the tools to start making inroads into the expansion of housing supply for all of these groups.

We have several zoning proposals from our Housing Production Task Force that could be immediately effective and can be brought back before the public for immediate consideration. As an advocate of the goal of preserving our neighbor and community character, I would promote these solutions in a way that expands housing opportunities throughout the City. In addition to this zoning reform, I would simplify the permitting process for existing homeowners and small developers, look for rezoning opportunities for

mixed commercial and residential use, and continue our search for state and federal funding opportunities.

We should always keep in mind that improved housing accessibility is also a key component in economic development