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# Downtown Research Project

Spring 2008



**ENDICOTT COLLEGE**

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# Objectives

## Primary:

- Identify types of businesses wanted and needed downtown
- Identify what's needed to attract and retain such businesses

## Secondary:

- Compare statistics to 2002 survey where applicable
- Gauge business owners' knowledge of BMS
- Support YMCA in Cabot Street facility planning

# Methodology

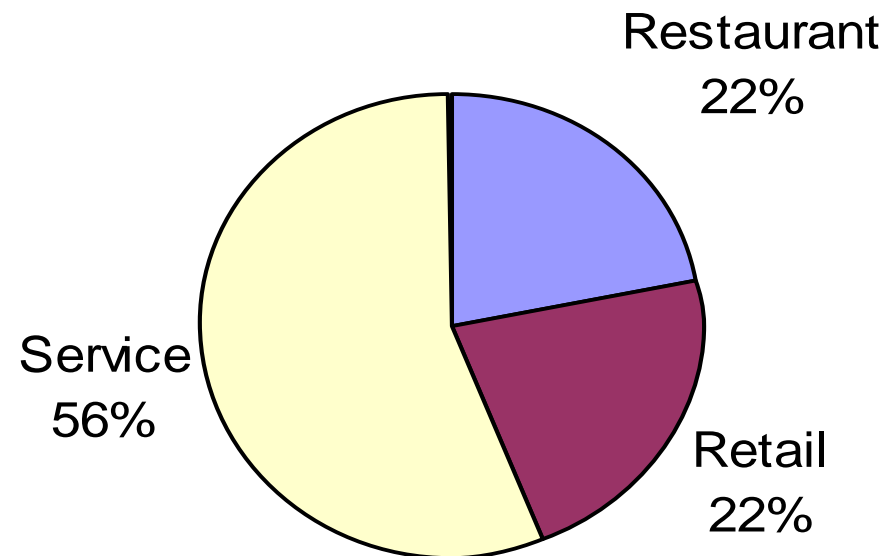
- Downtown = the BMS district in place at the time
  - Cabot St address from Salem Bridge to Cabot Plaza or a Rantoul St address
- Surveys & Focus Groups (163 participants)
- In person, mail, online, newspaper
- Quantitative and qualitative
- Business, residents and students were asked the same core questions (SWOT)
- Each group was asked unique questions (business info, “theme,” shopping experience)

# Participants

Category	Surveys	Focus Groups	Total
Business Owners	38	15	53
Residents (city-wide)	52	12	64
Students (Montserrat & Endicott)	-	12	12
Visitors	34	-	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>163</b>

# Business Segments (269 businesses)

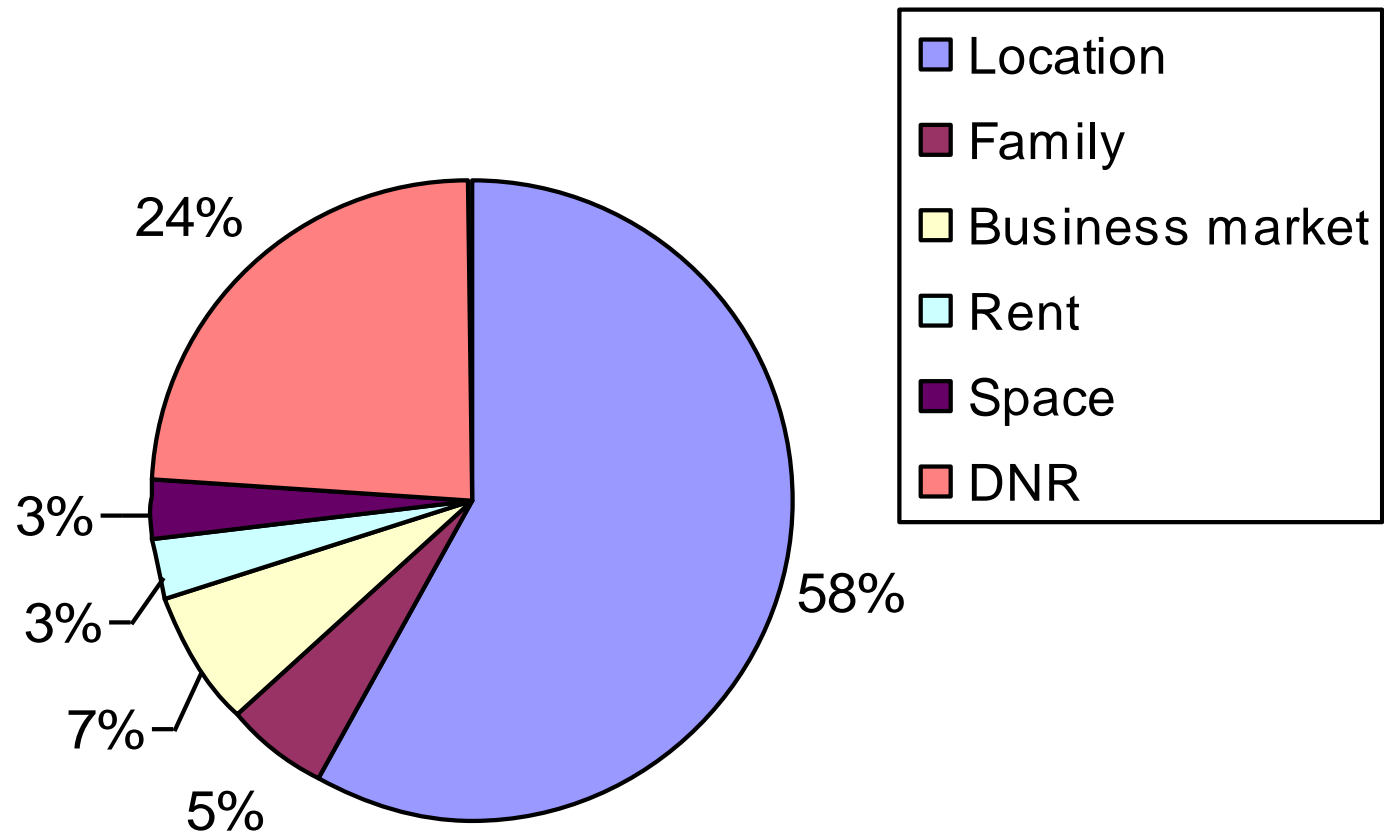
- Restaurant = businesses that serve food and drink ready for consumption (restaurants, bars, cafes, etc)
- Retail = businesses that primarily sell a product (general merchandise stores, health food stores, galleries, florists, etc)
- Service = businesses that provide a service to the public (banks, law firms, insurance firms, automotive, fitness, health & beauty, medical offices, etc)



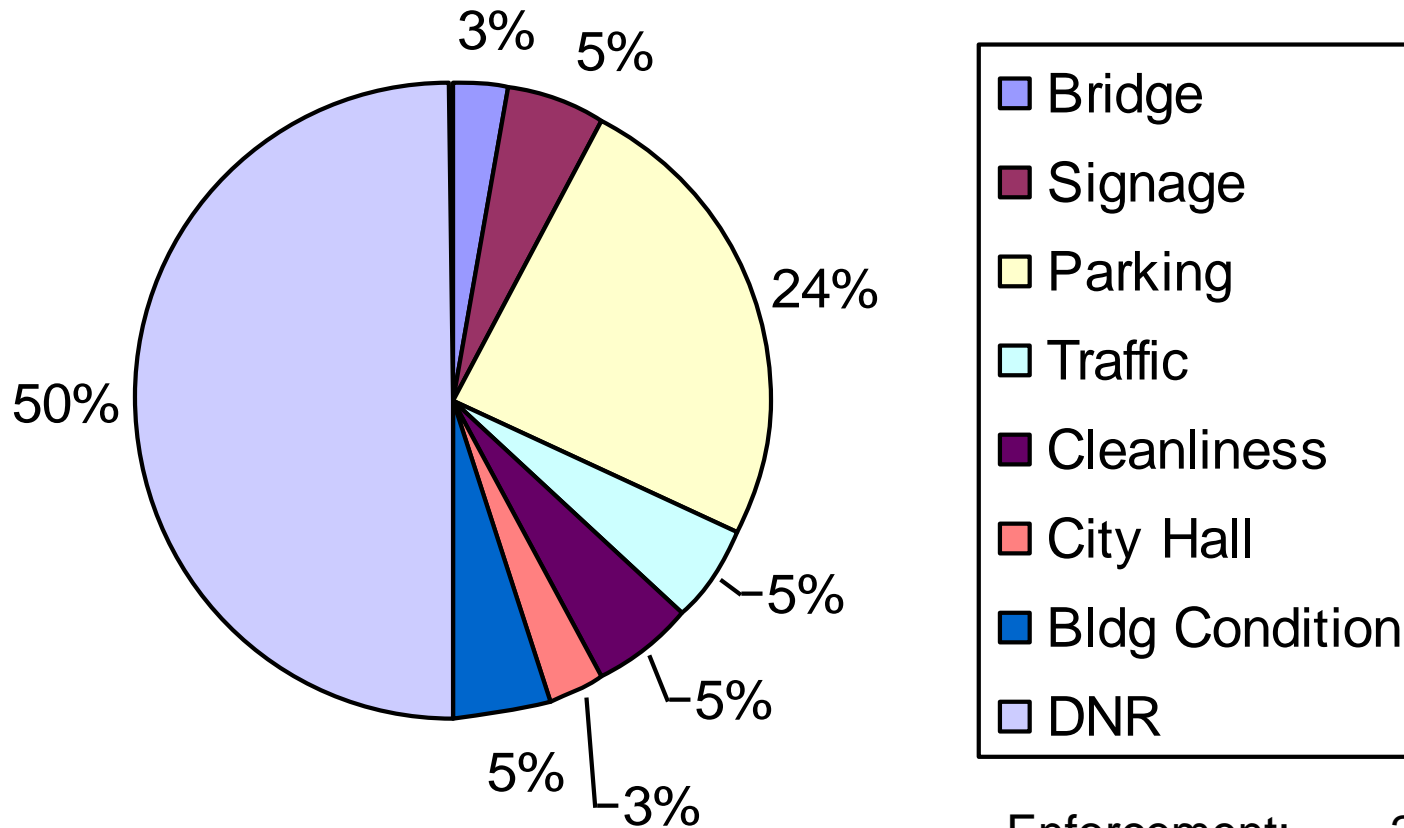
# Q5: Employees & Customers

- 80% employ 1-5 FT employees
- 34% employ 1-3 PT employees
- 48% of all employees live in Beverly
- 45% - 65% of customers live in Beverly

# Q6: Why Beverly?



# Q7: Biggest roadblocks?



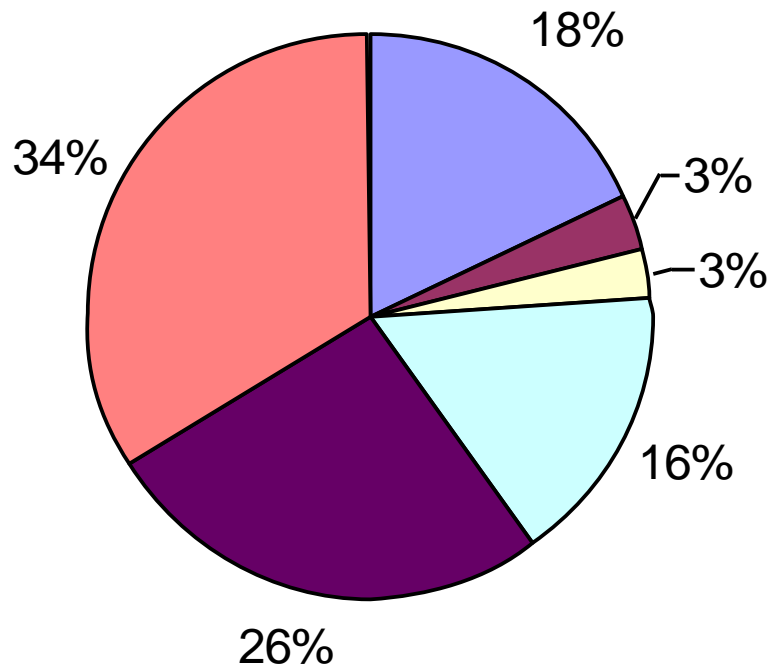
Enforcement: 27%

Lack of Spaces: 22%

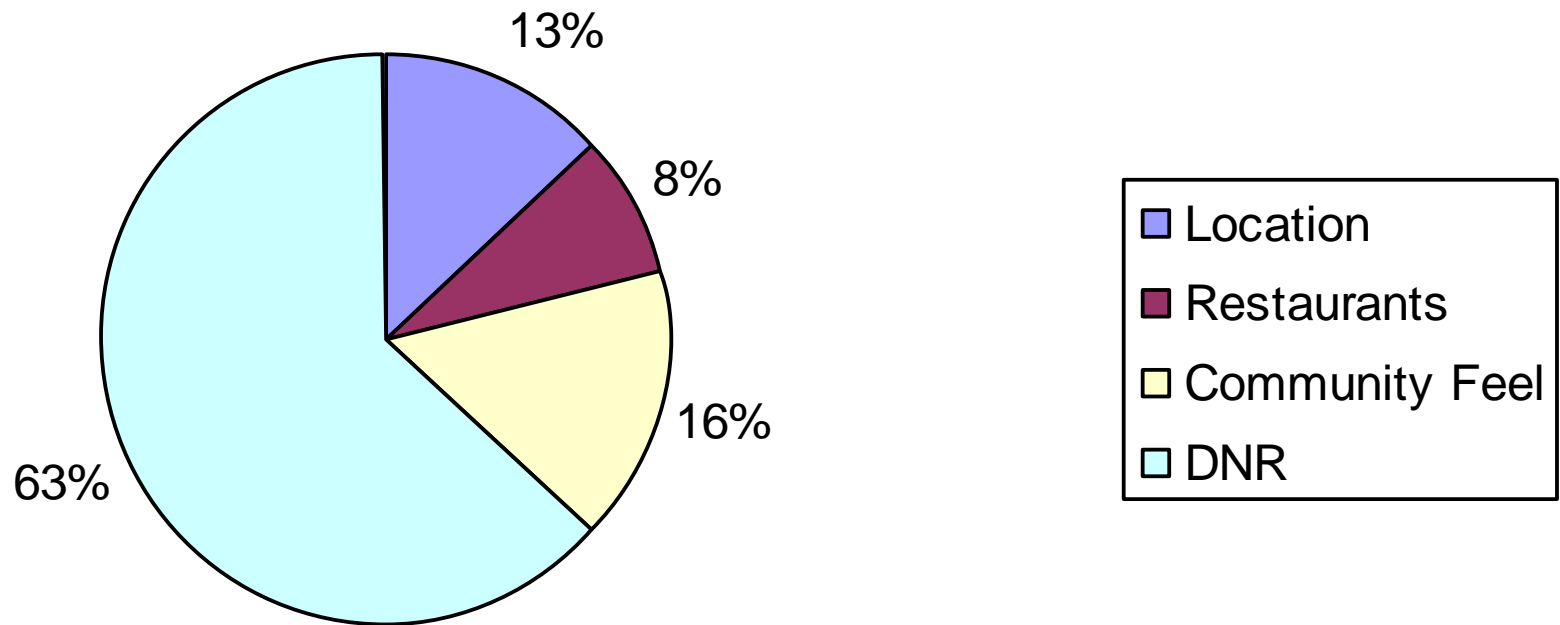
Signage: 8%



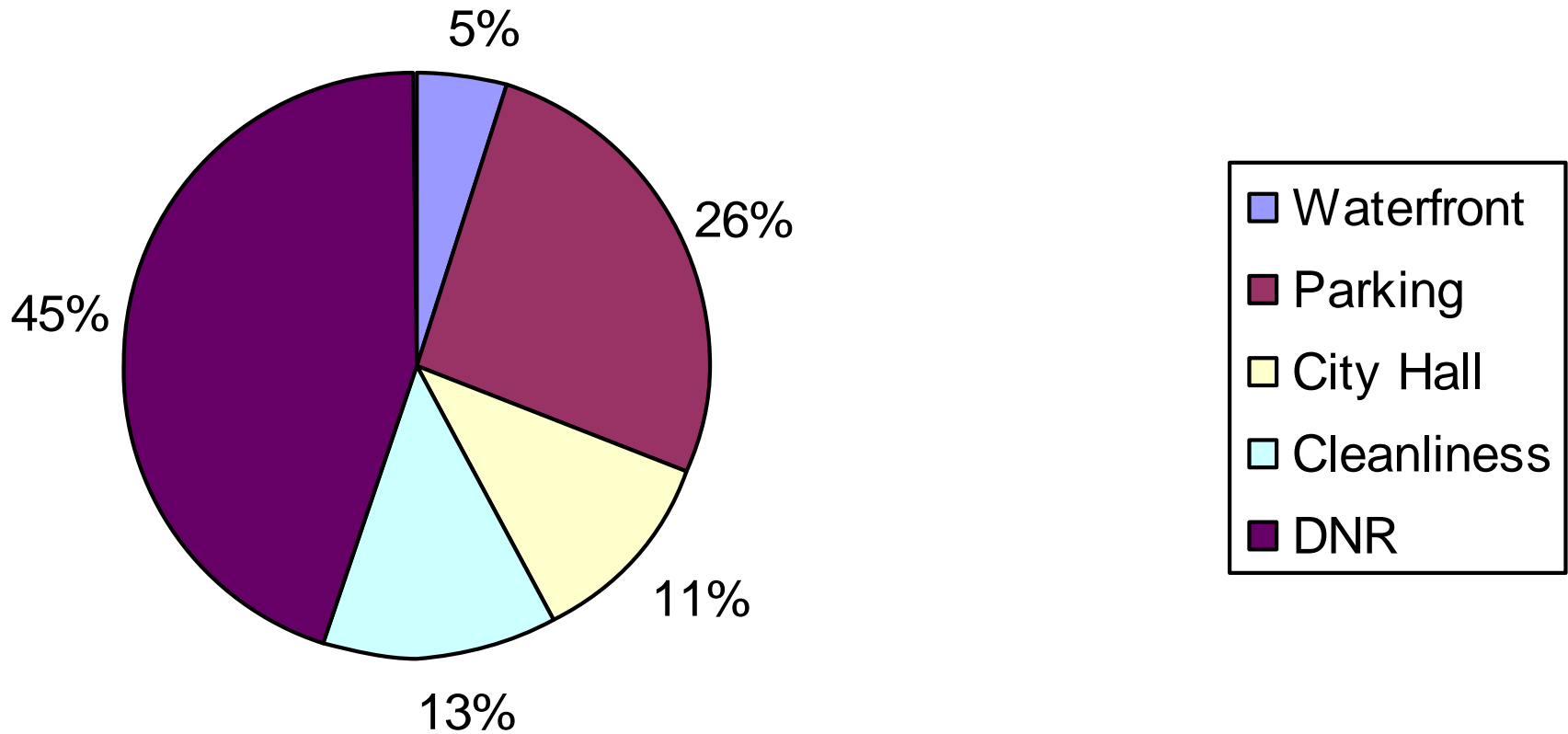
# Q8: We have enough...



# Q9: Strengths to leverage?



# Q10: Opportunities to fix?



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# Survey Results: Residents (52)



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# Q1: When do you visit downtown?

- 69% visit during the day; 31% at night
- 51% visit during the week; 49% weekends
- 65% drive; 35% walk

Visits/Wk	1	2-3	4-5	6+
Shop	73%	18%	9%	0%
Dine	57%	36%	5%	2%
Services	50%	41%	6%	3%
Work	20%	20%	47%	13%

## Q2: Business types we should recruit?

- Grocery store
- Book store
- Gourmet food store
- Community hall
- Family friendly restaurants
- Bakery
- Antique shops
- Clothing stores

# Q3: Types we should not recruit...

- Chain stores
- Nail salons (we love but have enough)
- Consignment stores (we love but have enough)
- Tattoo parlors
- Coffee shops (we love but have enough)
- Bars and restaurants (we love but have enough)
- Gas stations
- Drug stores

# Q4: Reasons I don't come downtown...

- Not enough to do
- Lack of good stores / lack of variety of stores
- Parking issues
  - Lack of parking, no free parking, limit on meters
- Traffic issues
  - Too much, too slow, too many crosswalks
- Skateboarders
- Homeless people



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# Q5: When not downtown,

- Most dine in Salem
- Most shop in Danvers at the malls

# Q6: Top strengths of downtown?

- Specific businesses
- Layout
- Historic buildings and architectural character
- Easy parking
- Walkability, accessibility
- Restaurants
- Small town feel
- RMV

# Q7: Top opportunities downtown?

- Parking tickets
- Higher end businesses
- Façade improvements
- More retail / grocery store
- Discourage loitering
- Improve the walkability
- Image / appearance
- Clean it up
- Flowers and planters
- Build on the arts community
- Stoplights on Cabot

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# Survey Results: Visitors to Cabot Street (34)



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# Visitor Profile (sunny Saturday from 10-2)

- 65% male, 35% female
- 74% from Beverly
- 33% were age 26-35; 23% were 46-65
- Most (21%) were there for a service
- Most usually visit in the afternoon (44%) and on the weekends (65%)
- Most visit 4-7 times per week (44%)
- Most drive to get downtown (56%)
- 44% have seen improvements downtown in the last 5 years (32% somewhat, 21% none)

# Visitor Profile (continued)

- Most (82%) find what they need when they come downtown; visitors aged 26-35 are most satisfied
- 59% say that downtown Beverly is not their first choice in destination
- 61% would like to see chain stores downtown (highest among ages 26-35)
- Highest preferences for the type of store wanted was health food store (66%), followed by Target, Modell's and bowling (each at 11%)

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# Focus Groups



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# SWOT Summary

	Businesses	Residents	Students
S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ocean</li> <li>•Cabot Cinema</li> <li>•Train</li> <li>•History</li> <li>•Architecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ocean</li> <li>•Cabot Cinema</li> <li>•Train</li> <li>•Dining</li> <li>•The Common</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Dining</li> <li>•Visually appealing</li> </ul>
W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lack of store variety</li> <li>•Underutilized waterfront</li> <li>•City Hall support</li> <li>•No hotel</li> <li>•Spread out stores</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lack of store variety</li> <li>•Parking</li> <li>•Signage</li> <li>•Storefronts</li> <li>•Family Dollar</li> <li>•Store vacancies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lack of store variety</li> <li>•Underutilized waterfront</li> <li>•Parking</li> <li>•Signage</li> <li>•Early closings of bars and restaurants</li> </ul>

# SWOT Summary

	Businesses	Residents	Students
O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Business recruitment</b></li> <li>• <b>Specialty shops</b></li> <li>• Night clubs</li> <li>• Endicott College</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Business recruitment</b></li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Nicer store fronts</li> <li>• Walkability to reduce traffic stress</li> <li>• Waterfront</li> <li>• Arts community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Business recruitment</b></li> <li>• <b>Specialty shops</b></li> <li>• Galleries</li> <li>• Advertise more to colleges</li> <li>• Activities</li> </ul>
T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Surrounding towns</b></li> <li>• <b>Chain stores</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Surrounding towns</b></li> <li>• <b>Malls</b></li> <li>• Another hair salon</li> <li>• Citizen oppositions</li> <li>• Lack of planning and identity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Surrounding towns</b></li> <li>• <b>Chain stores</b></li> <li>• <b>Malls</b></li> <li>• Unsafe</li> </ul>

# One Word about Beverly...

- Shopping
- Center
- Boring
- Tired
- Cute
- Traffic
- Pedestrian
- Vacancies
- Haphazard
- Slow
- Arts
- Small
- Cool
- Unattractive
- Unsafe
- Government
- Brown
- Dirty

# AARP







# Quotes that Stand Out

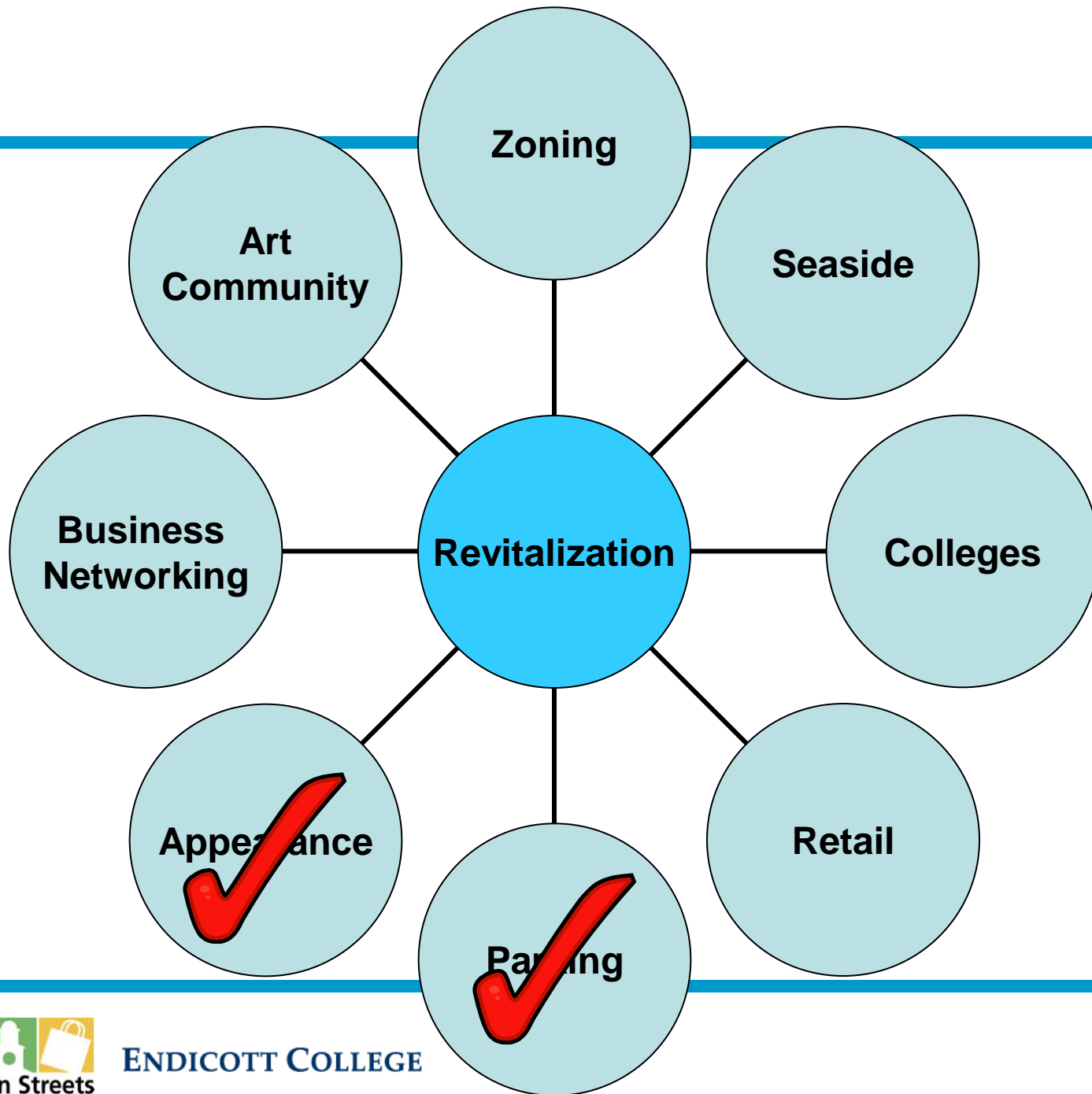
- “Too many people just sleep in Beverly”
- “When the restaurants are open, stores should be open”
- “Everything is geared to women”
- “What Beverly has, can be found anywhere”
- “Why is Beverly called ‘The Garden City?’”
- “City Hall fights the little guys”
- “I come for one specific errand and then leave”
- “People here don’t want to change”

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# Recommendations



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# Zoning

- Understand the issues and opportunities
  - Waterfront, Park St, River St
- Determine what role BMS should take
- Should we create downtown zones or sections?
- Design of Rantoul Street – now's our chance to look at the big picture

# Seaside

- Let people know that the beach is close
- Create wayfinding signage to the Common and the beach
- Create pedestrian walkways around downtown and to the beach (like the Freedom Trail)
- Offer Beach-y stores, picnic lunches
- Host group / family activities at the beach
  - concerts, sandcastle contests, volleyball nets
- Offer rentals – bikes, boards, kayaks, etc
- Create a map to all the beaches from downtown

# Colleges

- Market downtown to the colleges
  - welcome packets, parents' weekends
- List activities, events, music on college websites and boards
- Encourage colleges to open space downtown (galleries, bookstores, cafes, etc)
- Offer incentives for graduates to stay and open businesses
- Offer networking opportunities with established business managers downtown

# Retail

- Recruit
  - Develop
  - Retain
- } each has its own strategies
- Create a “Doing Business in Beverly” guide
  - Create a marketing packet for downtown
  - Create a “rapid response” to inquiries
  - Create a resource list

# Parking

- Continue subcommittee efforts to:
  - find more spaces
  - make the parking lot improvements as soon as possible
  - get downtown parking revenue re-invested in downtown
- Add a parking page to the website with a map to each lot, hours of operation, costs, etc,

# Appearance

- Award the Façade Improvement Program grants
- Make streetscape improvements
- Work with Public Services dept on cleaning, sidewalk repairs, crosswalks, etc
- Figure out wayfinding signage
- Revive the “Garden City” branding
  - Join the Beautification Committee as the downtown liaison
  - Contests, garden tours
  - Work with Beverly Garden Club, Beverly Improvement Society
- Create an awareness campaign for business owners, property owners, residents

# Business Networking

- Continue “Breakfast with BMS” events
- Host networking events for different business segments represented downtown (ex: wellness practitioners, restaurant owners, etc)
- Market the Business Directory on our website
- Create a mentoring program for new business owners
- Partner with the Chamber on educational events
- Leverage the Salem Enterprise Center

# Art Community

- Decide what being an “art community” means
- Determine how to better leverage Montserrat, Endicott, private and public schools
- Identify ways to bring art to the community
- Build an artists’ network
- Make BAM! Thursdays work!
- Create outside art



# What will it take?

- A Vision for Downtown
- Collaboration
- Residents
- Volunteers
- Money
- Communication
- Research
- Change

# Next Steps

- ✓ Review research results with BMS Board and Committees
- ✓ Prioritize focus areas
- 3. Share results and recommendations
- 4. Invite businesses, stakeholders, residents and students to participate
- 5. Set goals and create implementation plans
- 6. Get started!