

Economic Development Strategy

Groton, CT

2019-2023



Strategy Report



www.camoinassociates.com

Volumes

- **Volume 1: Strategy Report**
- Volume 2: Implementation Matrix
- Volume 3: Playbook

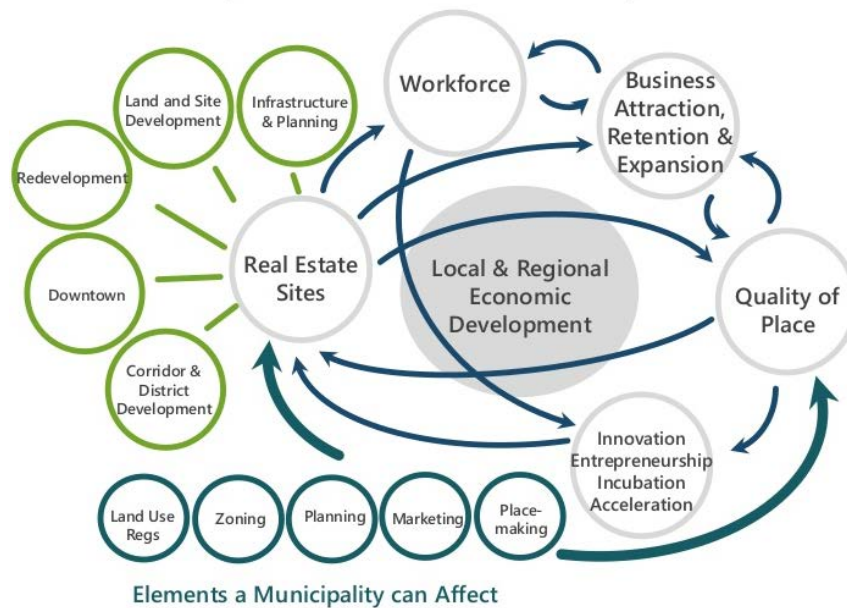
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Chapter 1: Why We Wrote a Joint Economic Development Strategy for the Town and City

Economic development is not just programs and organizations. It is about people and networks and, therefore, complex. Success requires a holistic approach. As illustrated in the image below, the Town and City have limited control over all the factors that influence the economy and local economic wellbeing. Therefore, they must work together, do what they can do well, and work with others to affect elements of the economic development network that is outside of their control. The economy is also rapidly changing based on demographics, culture, and technology. This means that the Town and City must be adaptive by promoting diverse opportunities, continually monitoring plans and implementation and adjusting accordingly.

Figure 1: Economic Development: A Holistic System



Source: *Futures Thinking for Economic Development, Presentation by Jim Damici of Camoin 310*

How is this plan different? First and foremost, it is about people and the intersection of people with place. It is set out to address what makes people want to be in Groton, work in Groton, invest in Groton and stay in Groton. It assumes and builds on the framework for collaboration between the Town and City. It is holistic in that it goes beyond jobs and businesses to the factors that drive what motivates people and enables them to be and thrive in Groton – it therefore covers the economy, education, transportation, housing, and places including nodes and corridors.

Our Vision is for Groton to be...

The community of choice for businesses, residents, visitors, and employees. Its diverse economy is thriving and the innovation and economic activity it generates is leading regional economic transformation and shared prosperity. The Town and City work collaboratively to provide seamless economic development technical assistance and leadership.

Our Mission is...

To empower the Groton community to create an economic future that realizes our full potential. To do this, the City and Town of Groton will:

- Increase the percentage of people who both live and work in Groton.
- Shape Groton's pockets of economic activity into places where people connect.
- Strengthen and diversify the transportation network to accommodate transformative growth.
- Promote and connect Groton's educational assets from early-education through higher education and lifelong learning and new career development.
- Grow and diversify emerging opportunities.
- Provide an environment that nurtures entrepreneurs and startup companies.
- Connect, communicate, and educate on economic development.

About the planning process

This is a bold plan for Groton that is designed to build on and accelerate the momentum achieved over the last several years. To guide the planning process, Groton retain the support of Camoin 310, a national economic development consulting firm that has supported the community with economic development services, starting in 2016 with an *Economic & Market Trends Analysis*. The process included a thorough analysis of Opportunities & Challenges as detailed in existing studies and reports for the Town, City, and region as well as observations by the planning team and their partners. This text was continuously reviewed, edited, expanded upon (see Attachment B). Economic Development partners were engaged early in the process during a strategy work session to identify challenges and opportunities, and design solutions around four core topic areas: communications and connections, housing, transportation and parking, and recreation and amenities (see Attachment A). Through a series of joint work-sessions with Town and City economic development and planning staff, a Vision, Mission, and goals were developed. The consultant team provided strategy design and project management support.

The resulting plan consists of three volumes:

- **Volume 1: Summary Report** – A presentation of the vision for Groton's economic development, supported by a summary of the goals and initiatives that Groton will employ to achieve its vision.
- **Volume 2: Implementation Matrix** – A detailed to-do list that provides Town and City staff, and their partners, the information necessary to implement the plan.
- **Volume 3: Playbook** – Additional technical information on how to implement some of the projects.

Building Groton's

Economic Development

Strategy

Groton has proactively engaged in a number of economic development endeavors over the last several years that have generated extensive knowledge and strengthened partnerships. The Economic Development Strategy is designed to leverage this work and strengthen networks to spur business development and job creation, and further diversify Groton's economy.

Economic Development Projects & Initiatives

The following initiatives created the foundation for strategic planning process.



Tax Increment Financing

- TIF Policy Approved
- Two TIF District Master Plans Approved

Incentive Programs

- Opportunity Zone Outreach
- Economic Assistance Fund Revised
- Revising Town-Wide Tax Incentive

Marketing for Economic Development

- Stand-Alone Website
- Cut Sheets and Presentation Folder
- Digital Media – Facebook/LinkedIn/Newsletter
- Promotion at ICSC Retail Conventions
- Business Testimonials Video Produced

Mystic Education Center

- Preferred Developer Selected - Approximately 800 residential units along with offices, coffee house, recreation, food market etc.

Groton Heights

- Preferred Developer Selected - Research and development plus corporate offices

Seely School

- Preferred Developer Selected - Multi-family housing development

Colonel Ledyard School

- Interviews Held with Potential Developers

Pleasant Valley School

- Marketing Property
- RFP to be Released in 2020

Wayfinding Signage

- Draft Plan Accepted by Town Council
- Funds Requested Through CIP

Development Process Improvements

- Zoning Regulation Complete, Rewrite Adopted
- Combining of Planning and Zoning Commissions to Streamline Process
- Creation of Doing Business Guide



Chapter 2: Groton's Economic Development Goals & Initiatives

Goal 1. Increase the percentage of people who both live and work in Groton.

The 2016 Economic & Market Trends Analysis for the Town of Groton noted that nearly 80% of Groton's workforce commutes from outside the town, living in other communities. The 2017 ACS Data suggests this number has decreased to about 75%,¹ which means as the local workforce in Groton is increasing, more people are choosing to live in Groton. This is a positive trend as more people living and working in Groton means more people will be invited in strengthening the community. Considering the large number of jobs becoming available, the Town has made it a priority to continue this trend and attract a larger portion of workers to both live and work in Groton by creating healthy neighborhoods and mixed-use commercial nodes that have quality housing and access to amenities and recreational resources.

Diversify, modernize, and grow the housing stock.

Housing creates community. It is the foundation of the built environment. To ensure the long-term wellbeing of the town, Groton must support a diverse, accessible housing stock that allows people, regardless of age, income, or life stage, the opportunity to live and work locally and take ownership of the community. A continued decline in household size, downsizing baby boomers, shift in housing preferences toward urban living, and growth of General Dynamics electric boat, is leaving Groton, and the southeastern Connecticut region, severely undersupplied with an appropriate mix of housing.² Groton's forward-looking approach to addressing the community's housing needs focuses on market intelligence, land use policy and maintenance, and finance.

Enhance access to amenities and recreational resources.

Access to amenities and recreational assets are critical for attracting the necessary talent to support Groton's future growth as well as retaining residents as they transition through different live-stages and supporting a vibrant tourism economy. Groton is rich with recreational resources and amenities; however, residents, the workforce, and visitors often lack awareness of the many options available to them. Strategies to enhance access to local recreational amenities and resources include projects and initiatives to communicate and build consciousness of the availability of recreational resources and strengthen connections between amenities.

¹ 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Commuting Characteristics by Sex, S0801

² Southeastern Connecticut Housing Needs Assessment, 2018

Goal 2. Shape Groton's pockets of economic activity into places where people connect.

Places don't make themselves, people make places. 'Placemaking' is about creating a built-environment with the right architecture, infrastructure, and amenities that allows synergies and shared experiences among people to occur. It is those interactions that give a place energy. Groton is a patchwork of villages, hamlets, and districts, each with its own unique personality and charm. Its development is somewhat unique in that it does not contain a single centralized hub or downtown/village center, but is a web of dynamic nodes connected by vital corridors that facilitate the flow of people and products. Therefore, when we refer to 'places' in Groton that drive economic activity, we consider both nodes and corridors to be these places, which embody Groton's historical and future identity, and play a critical role in the community's economic development system.

The purpose of Goal 2 is to leverage the activity within Groton's built environment to generate economic value with a networked, systems approach that puts people and the human-experience first. Through Groton's strategic planning process, the following places have been identified as priority areas for focusing economic development and planning resources:

- Downtown Groton
- Mystic Education Center
- Thames Street/Bridge Street
- Mystic
- Route 12 Corridor
- Center Groton
- Route 184 Corridor
- Poquonnock Bridge
- 5-Corners District
- Naval Submarine Base/Crystal Lake Road
- Avery Point

Goal 3. Strengthen and diversify the transportation network to accommodate transformative growth.

An efficient multi-modal transportation system is the foundation of a high-functioning economy. It connects firms to markets and workers to employers and furthers economic growth. Groton is well served by highways and the Thames River, which together have supported fast, reliable access to national and international markets and provide people with access to the northeast region and major metropolitan areas. To accommodate and enable future business and residential growth, Groton will work to strengthen and diversify its transportation infrastructure internally and externally: roads and bridges, public transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and parking.

Grow alternative transportation options.

Historically, Groton's transportation infrastructure has supported its ability to attract a regional workforce as commuters can get in and out of the community easily. This trend is shifting as Groton continues to develop its commercial, mixed-use nodes into walkable, connected, and complete places that attract more people to both live and work in Groton. Within the southeastern Connecticut region, Groton has the opportunity to be a leader in shifting to a less car-dependent culture, as it has the greatest density of individuals who commute to work via walking in the Census tract encompassing the U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London, as well as the greatest density of individuals who commute via bike in the Census tract around General Dynamic Electric Boat.³

As these trends continue, the required transportation infrastructure will change. For example, new housing within the Town's economic nodes may not be entirely car-based and walkability and bike-ability as well as reliable transit service will be critical for connecting communities. To ensure Groton can adapt to this coming transformation in transportation, it will assess existing and future potential demands for traditional vehicles as well as new and emerging technologies and prepare a comprehensive, town wide multimodal study and secure funding for implementation of the plan.

Address parking in economic nodes.

Adequate parking for employees, customers, and residents is closely tied to the economic success of a place. Groton will proactively address future increased demand for parking through a series of parking management studies, and funded implementation plans, that address existing conditions and needs today and plan for growth in the community's commercial nodes.

³ Southeastern Connecticut Regional Bike & Pedestrian Plan, SCCOG, 2019, <https://bikewalksect.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bikewalk-SECT-Existing-Conditions-Final-w-Appendices.pdf>.

Goal 4. Promote and connect Groton's educational assets from early-education through higher education and lifelong learning and new career development.

The exchange of knowledge and commitment to lifelong learning are the foundation of a vibrant, innovative economy. Quality of public schools is the top factor for young families' locational decision when considering home purchases. To attract more people to live and work in Groton, it must promote its education assets. And, to retain its young talent, better connect young people to local businesses and career opportunities. Businesses making location decisions are looking for a pipeline of workers with a diversity of skills and experiences to pull from.

Tell the story about Groton's great schools and the synergies between education and economic development.

Fitch Senior High School, Ella Grasso Southeastern Technical High School, and Marine Science Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut provide an extensive variety of high school programs. The Avery Point campus of the University of Connecticut provides undergraduate majors in American Studies, Marine Sciences and Maritime Studies as well as a range of undergraduate minors. The UCONN Department of Marine Sciences is also located at Avery Point. Groton offers outstanding educational opportunities for all ages, yet, a negative perception of Groton's educational system persists. The strategy to bring greater awareness to these education assets is to partner with educators and realtors to communicate with their established networks of existing and potential future residents.

Connect with K-12 students and help them experience local career opportunities.

Many of today's young people seek more than a job, they are looking for a place that ignites their creativity and aligns with their interests and desired lifestyle. Like most northeast communities outside of the major metros, Groton struggles to retain its young people as they pursue education and employment opportunities; but it intends to upset this trend. By partnering with local employers, guidance counselors, the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and others, Groton will elevate the social capital of its young people and strengthen their connections to Groton – the place.

Goal 5. Grow and diversify existing and emerging opportunities.

In economic development, supporting existing industry and businesses to thrive and grow as well as attracting new industry and businesses are both important initiatives. They are not exclusive and can be accomplished together through strategies and actions that create a welcoming business environment, a connected, amenity-driven place for residents and workers, support for education and workforce development, and housing opportunities. Both also require continued and coordinated communications between the Town, City, existing business, and business prospects.

Groton works with businesses from all industries to support economic growth while also paying attention to emerging opportunities in areas exhibiting a fit with local and regional strengths and assets. These include:

- Advanced & Emerging Manufacturing including Maritime Ship Building, Defense, and Wind
- Energy and Environment including Wind, and Emerging Energy and Environmental Technologies
- Marine, which includes anything at-near-on the waterfront, including aquaculture, recreation, boating, marine sciences and coastal sciences
- Visitation & Recreation; Food & Services - consumer-based (people)
- Healthcare Networks including Health Services and Biosciences

By working with both existing and potential new business and industry, Groton seeks to create a diversity of opportunities that allow it to adapt to increasingly rapid change in the economy. It also enables Groton to identify and support connections between sectors and opportunities not clearly defined by sectors.

Strengthen connections with existing business community.

The Town and City both have a formal business visitation program that is working well and will be continued. In doing so, Groton can both provide responsiveness to business needs as well as obtain valued intelligence for planning and implementation. The Town and City will continue to coordinate efforts and regularly share and assess results.

Growth opportunities need to be matched with a supportive real estate development environment, which means businesses, developers, and investors need to be kept aware of site availability and development opportunities. Groton will take a more active role in providing timely information as well as matchmaking between businesses in the market looking for space and property owners.

Finally, communities and businesses are continually at risk due to potential natural disasters and this risk is increasing. Groton will support business resilience/continuity planning through promotion, use of seCTer as a resource, and following the guidelines provided by the Sustainable CT program.

Focus attraction efforts on targeted sectors.

While Groton works with all businesses and industries, due to resource constraints business attraction requires a focused and coordinated effort. Based on recent regional and local analyses the industry sectors that best lend themselves to business attraction and are therefore the initial focus areas are:

- Advanced Manufacturing including Defense
- Energy and Environment
- Bioscience
- Agriculture, Fishing & Food Production
- Maritime Industry

Groton will begin an attraction initiative by preparing targeted Industry profiles and keeping them regularly updated. The Town and City will take a coordinated effort for attraction working together as well as with regional partners. Groton will provide clear, coordinated information on the Town and City's incentives to alleviate any confusion about which incentives a business in the City or Town is eligible for. A detailed attraction initiative will be informed through completion of an initial intelligence and competitiveness tactical plan.

Align workforce needs to support existing and emerging opportunities.

Workforce continues to be the top issue for businesses. Finding and retaining workers with sufficient skills and talent remains a constraint to growth everywhere including Groton. Groton will take a proactive approach to workforce development partnering with the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board and other local and regional stakeholders. To provide the latest insight, Groton will conduct a workforce skills analysis to both support existing businesses and help identify businesses and industries to attract.

Goal 6. Provide an environment that nurtures entrepreneurs and startup companies.

Entrepreneurship empowers individuals, improves standards of living throughout a community, and creates jobs, wealth and innovation in the economy.⁴

A robust entrepreneurial ecosystem, built on a culture of collaboration and mutual trust, drives innovation and economic growth by creating a system where entrepreneurs and small businesses can access the resources and information they need to advance their ideas and innovations to launch and grow their business ventures. The Town and City's role in this system is to support entrepreneurship and small business growth with efficient regulatory processes and incentives, as well as build community and connections.

Adapt internal structures to better accommodate small business and entrepreneur needs.

Small business owners and entrepreneurs typically require extra support understanding and navigating municipal, state, and federal requirements for operating a business. By prioritizing business customer service, the Town and City of Groton will remove barriers to entry and systematic problems that obstruct the community's ability to grow and accelerate startups, main street and place-based businesses, ideas and innovation from creatives and makers, tech and other sector-based businesses, and home-based businesses. This 'wide tent' will attract more talent and diversity into the entrepreneurial ecosystem, thus creating more opportunities for the creation and exchange of new ideas.

Be champions, conveners, and connectors of local entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Entrepreneurs and small businesses need champions who can advocate for local entrepreneurs and their companies by telling their stories, bringing them together through events and communications to help them find collaborators, and creating space for more people to get involved in entrepreneurship and innovation. Groton will continue to cultivate a collaborative entrepreneurial culture by communicating about resources, spotlighting local businesses in communications to wider audiences, and seeking opportunities to support the development of places that promote the collision of ideas and information (coworking spaces, coffee shops, pitch events, main streets, etc.).

⁴ *Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0*, ESHIP SUMMIT, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, <https://www.kauffman.org/entrepreneurial-ecosystem-building-playbook-draft-3/introduction>

Goal 7. Connect, communicate, and educate on economic development.

Economic development is a team sport; as evidenced by the many partners listed in the Action Plan Matrix. No entity can do it alone – everyone is a member of the team and, like any team sports, a mistake by one person can affect the outcome of the game. Everything Groton does to advance economic development, from business retention and expansion to marketing and attraction, is done with the assistance of many individuals that represent an array of departments, entities, and agencies. The purpose of this goal is to build on the momentum of the region's economic development ecosystem by bringing more people into the system to achieve greater outcomes.

Continue the momentum of the Town and City working together on economic development.

Groton's economic development strategy is the game plan for success, and both the Town and City have integral roles toward achieving that success. Further opening lines of communication among the municipal economic development and planning staff will support greater collaboration and alignment on city-town projects as well as help to further establishing Groton's overall brand as the economic engine in southeastern Connecticut.

Educate about economic development.

Economic Development is no longer just about preparing 'shovel ready' sites, incentives, and attracting business. While deals and incentives continue to be important, the field has expanded to include placemaking, entrepreneurship, data and analytics, and the need for rapid, continuous innovation. Today, economic development operates within a dynamic system of people, networks, and organizations and collaboration relies on meaningful interactions and trusted relationships. Acknowledging that there is a need for better communication and engagement by economic development staff, the strategies are designed to inform on, and build trust in, Groton's economic development processes and strengthen relationships internally within Town and City Government, with economic development partners, and the community at-large. Tactics include developing and maintaining educational content, hosting educational events, and employing digital marketing tools to better communicate around projects, metrics for success, and real results.

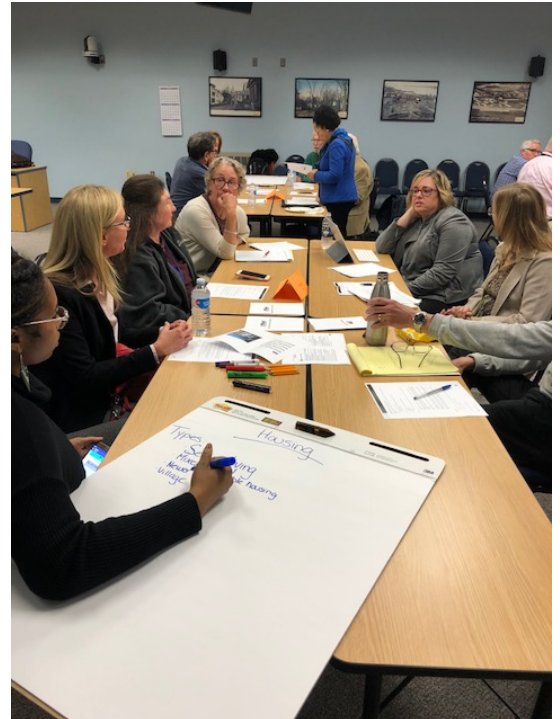
Attachment A: Notes from the Groton Economic Development Strategy Work Session

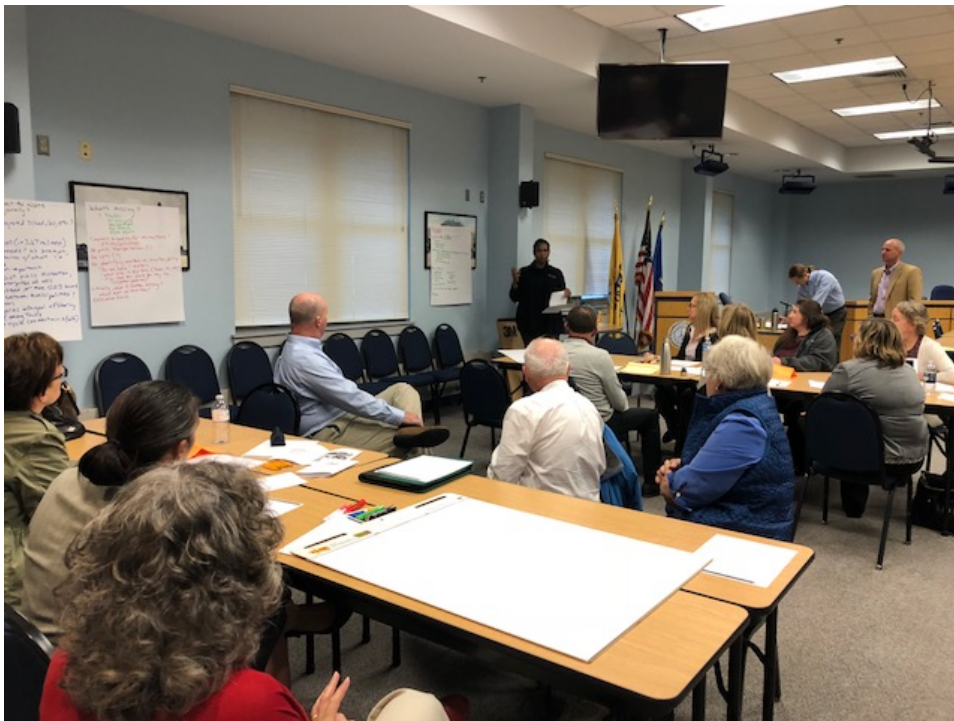
October 17, 2018

As part of Groton's strategic planning process, Camoin 310 facilitated a public meeting that asked participants to answer questions around four topic areas:

- Communication & Connections
- Housing
- Transportation & Parking
- Recreation & Amenities

What follows is a summary of the notes and themes that came out of these discussions, as well as photos of the working groups' notes. This information was used to develop strategies and initiatives for Groton's Economic Development Strategy.





Communication & Connections

Overall, the groups discussed the desire for easier communication. This includes both communication around "Explore More" branding and around economic development challenges/progress. For people to pay attention to communication around or participate in communication about either of these things, barriers to communication need to be removed and the information/forum needs to be easily accessible. Examples of making communication easier include mass branding (of "Explore More"), targeting Facebook/town events, and making all websites highly searchable (i.e. easy to use).

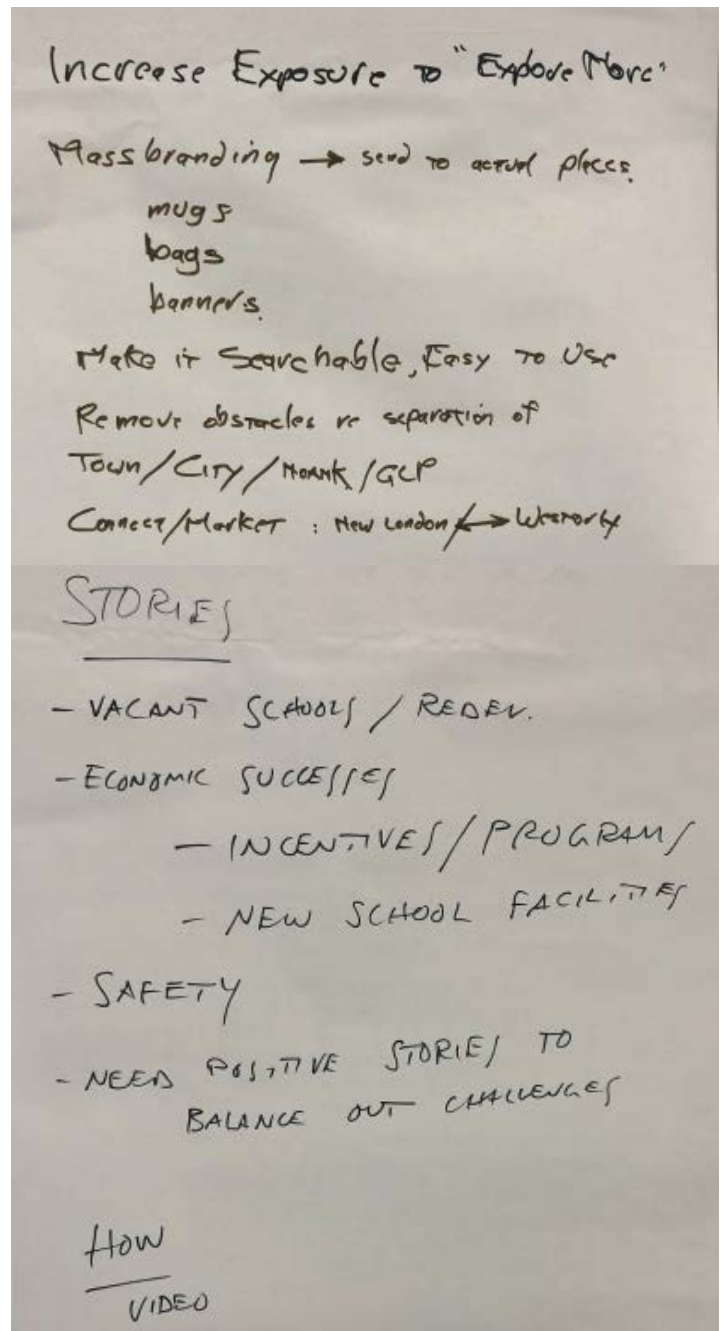
There is also a desire to focus on the successes/potential of economic development initiatives in communication, to balance out the challenges that the town faces.

How do we increase exposure of Groton's new "Explore More" brand?

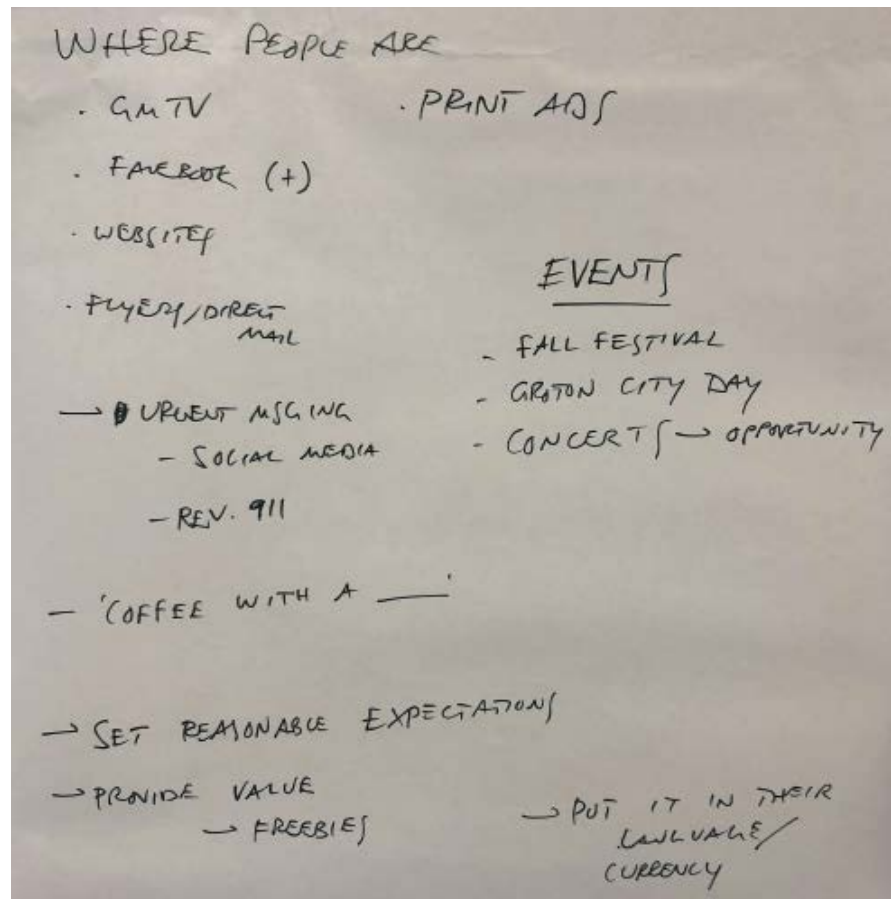
What stories to we need to tell?

To who?

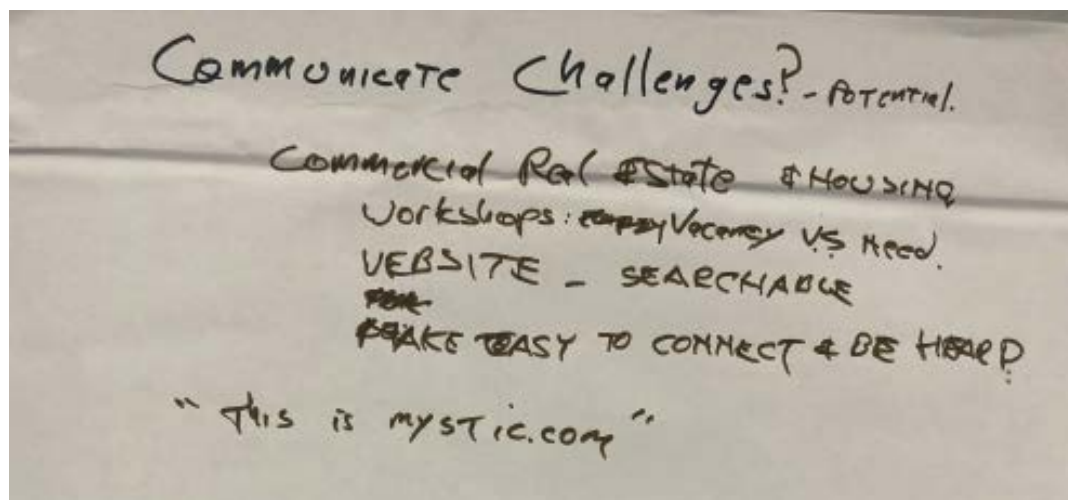
Why?



How do we bring communications to where people are?



How do we better communicate some of our economic development challenges?

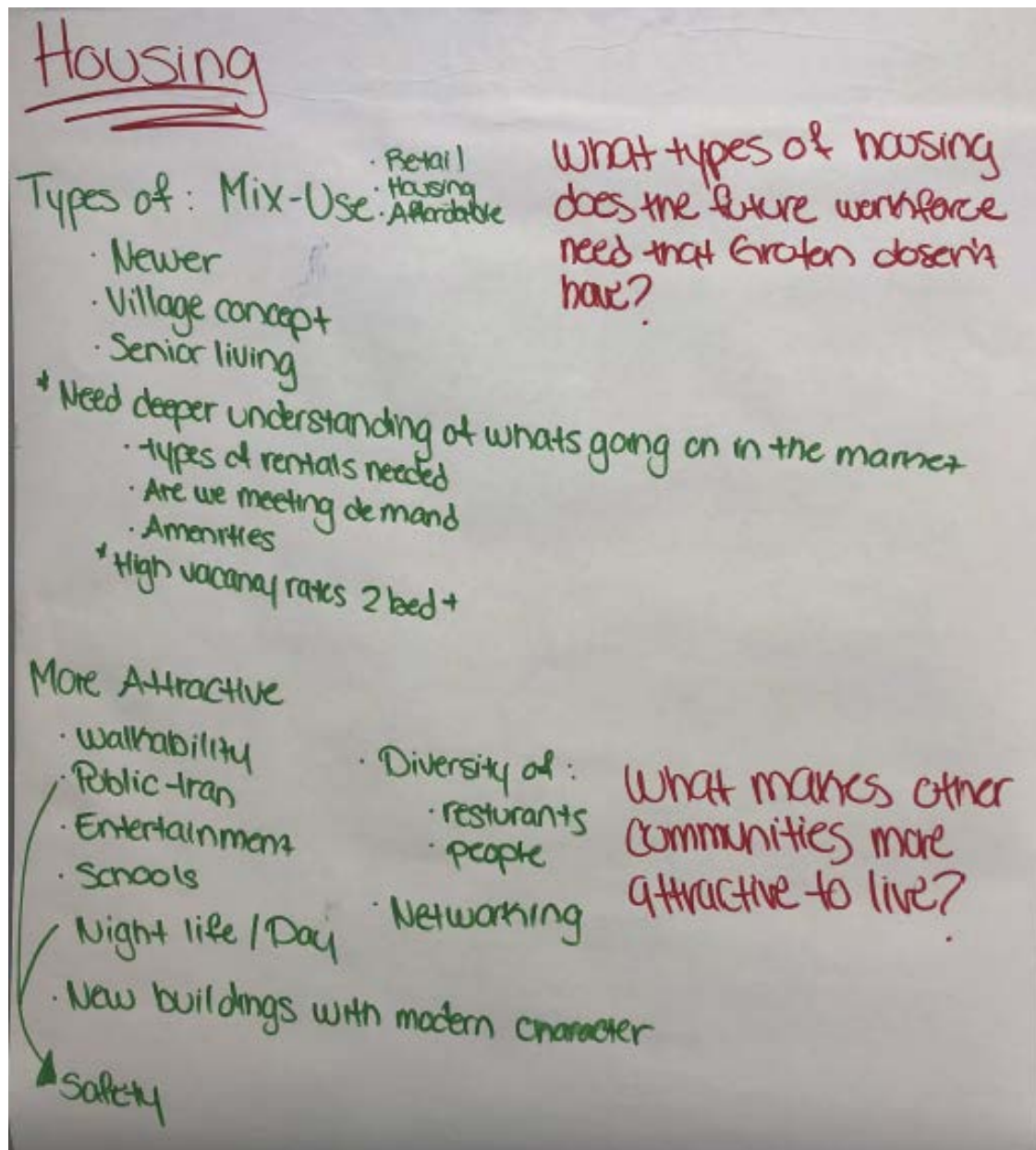


Housing

Groups discussed focusing on the development of the downtown area and adding mixed-use housing as important issues for Groton to be able to compete with neighboring areas in attracting residents and in helping to transform Groton's workforce growth into resident growth. Ensuring an availability of diverse amenities will also make the town more appealing.

What types of housing does the future workforce need that Groton doesn't have?

What makes other communities more attractive to live?



How do we turn labor force growth into residential growth?

How do we encourage homeowners to re-invest in their homes?

How do we turn labor force growth into residential growth?

Focus on downtown area (mixed use, transportation
restaurants, banks, stores
walkability, healthy)

Having a sense of place (millennials)

Brooklyn NY great place for millennials (public transp)

Affordability (Keeping labor force in Groton)

Housing suitable for labor force

How do we encourage homeowners to re-invest in their homes?

Guarantee to get investment back when sell,
(buyers want to come here)

Beautification Campaign - pride of place

low interest loans from community development
(creative bank financing) (advertise more)
energy conservation loans

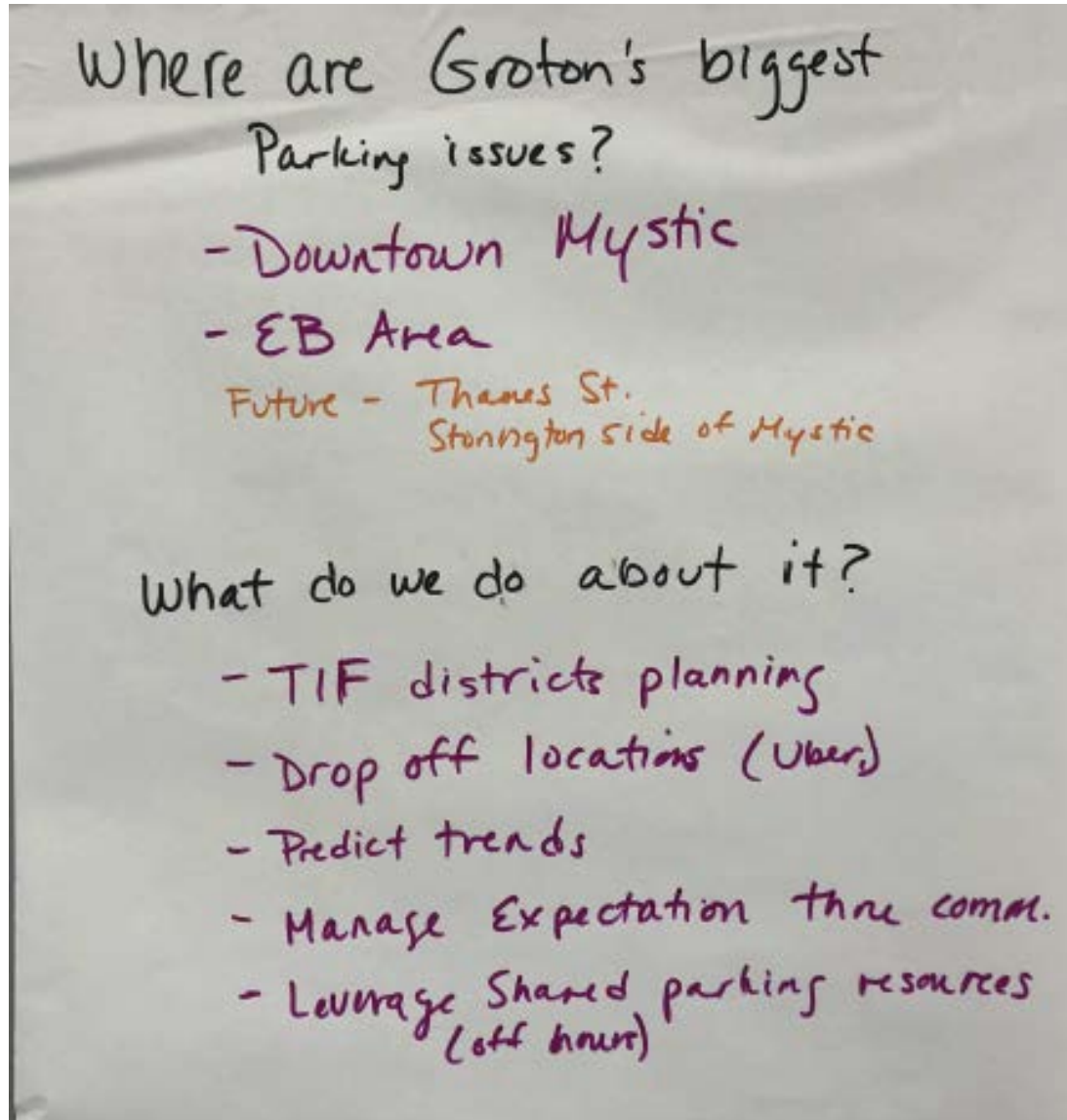
Builder/buyer collaboration

Transportation & Parking

There is a desire for more transportation options in Groton, specifically in parking and train access. The digital transformation in transportation could potentially help solve some of these issues. For example, the bus app could help increase the usability of the bus system and the creation of Uber drop off areas might help reduce dependence on parking availability.

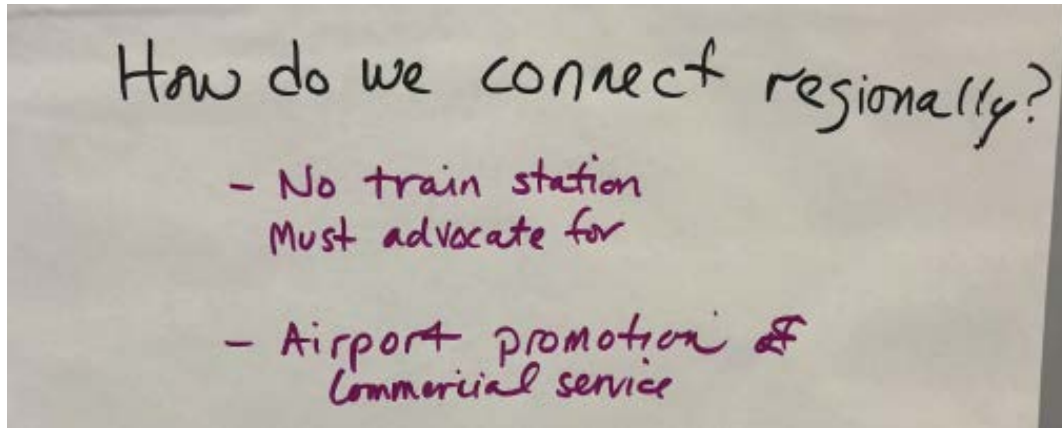
Where are Groton's biggest parking issues?

What do we do about it?



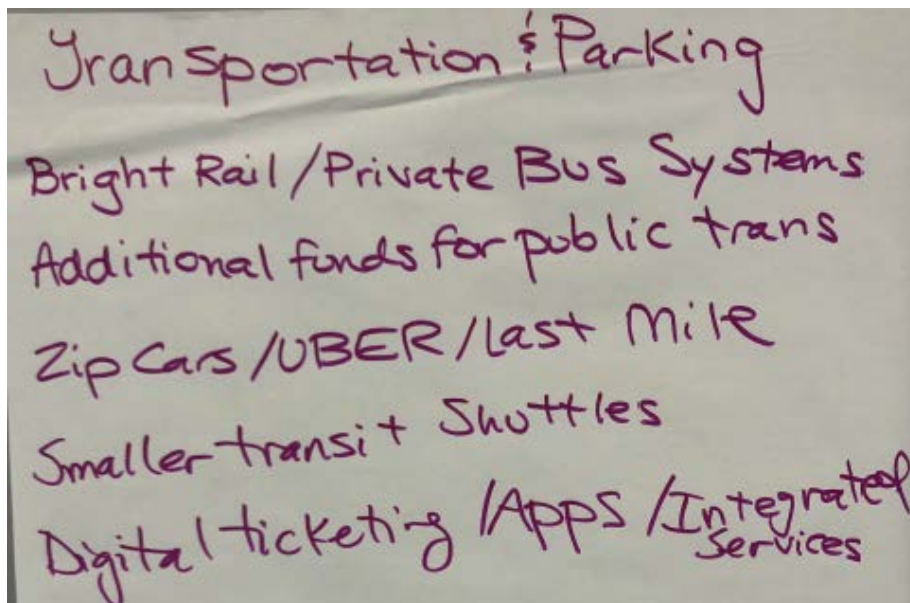
How do we connect regionally?

What's Groton's future role in the transportation network?

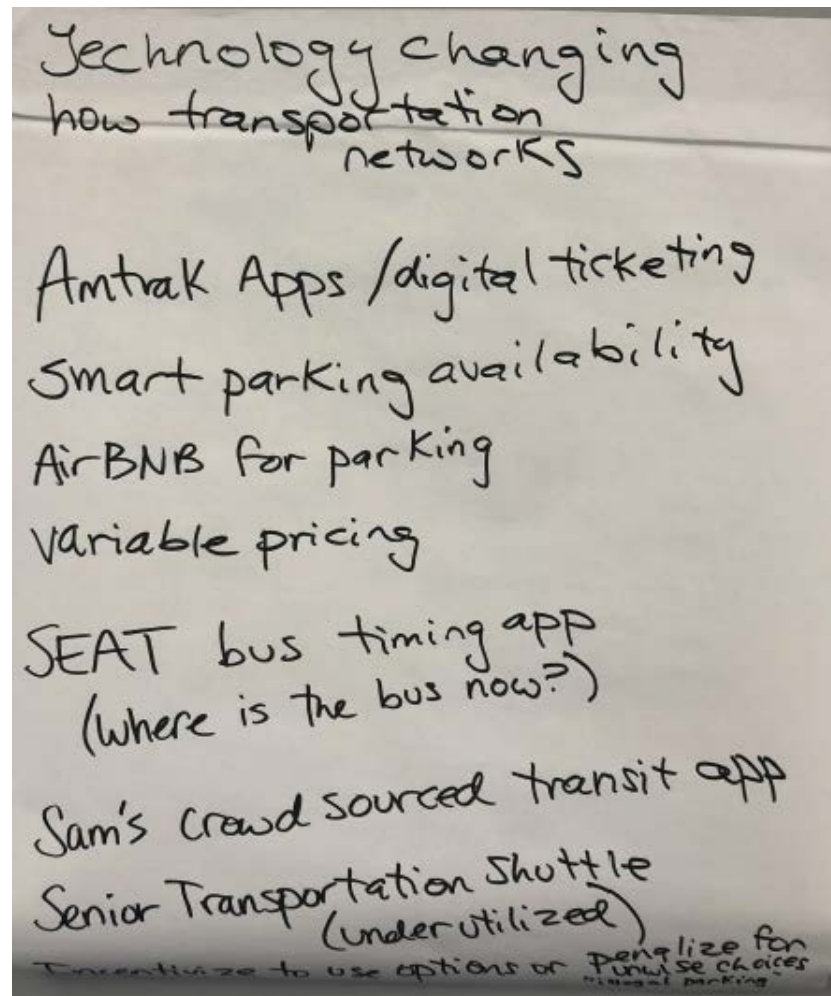


How will the future workforce get to work?

What can Groton do to prepare?



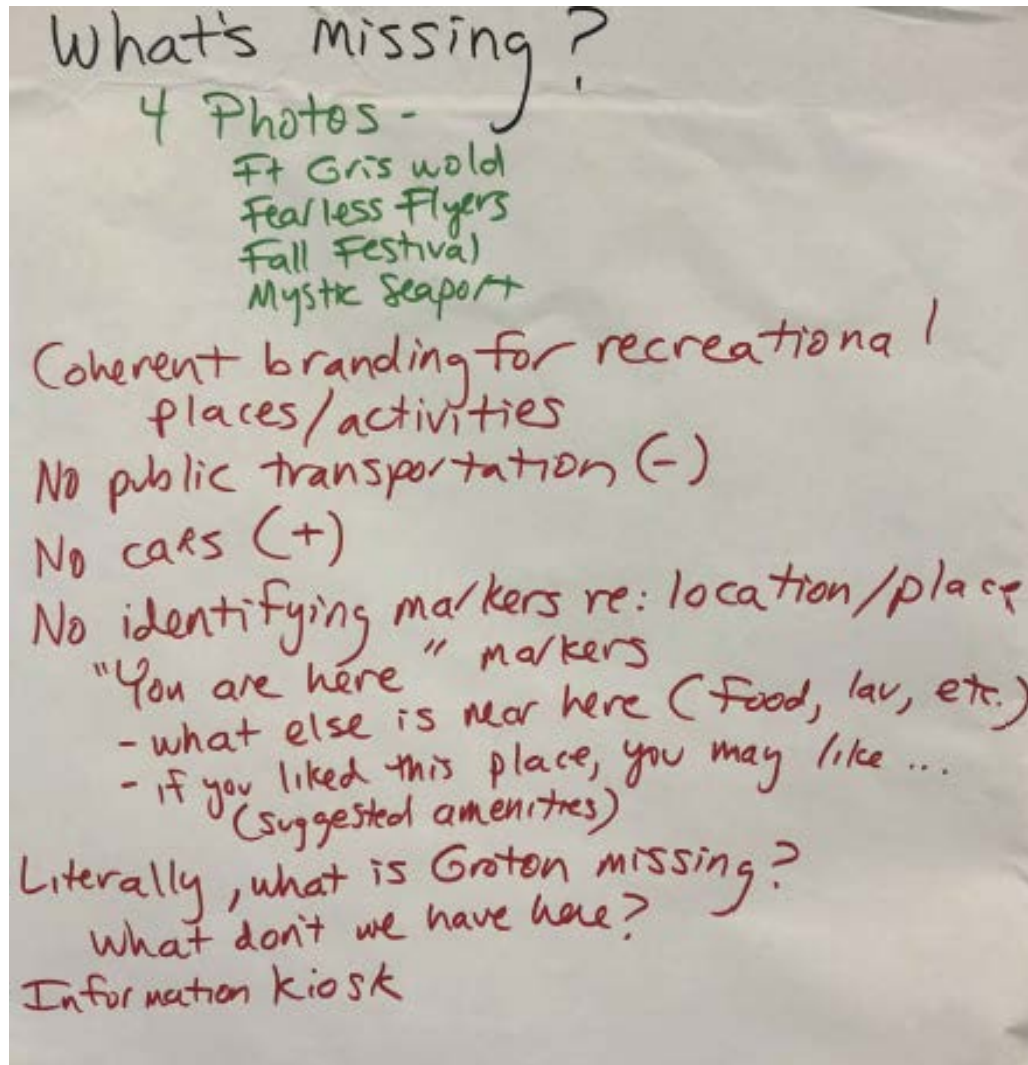
How is technology changing the way Groton's transportation networks operate?



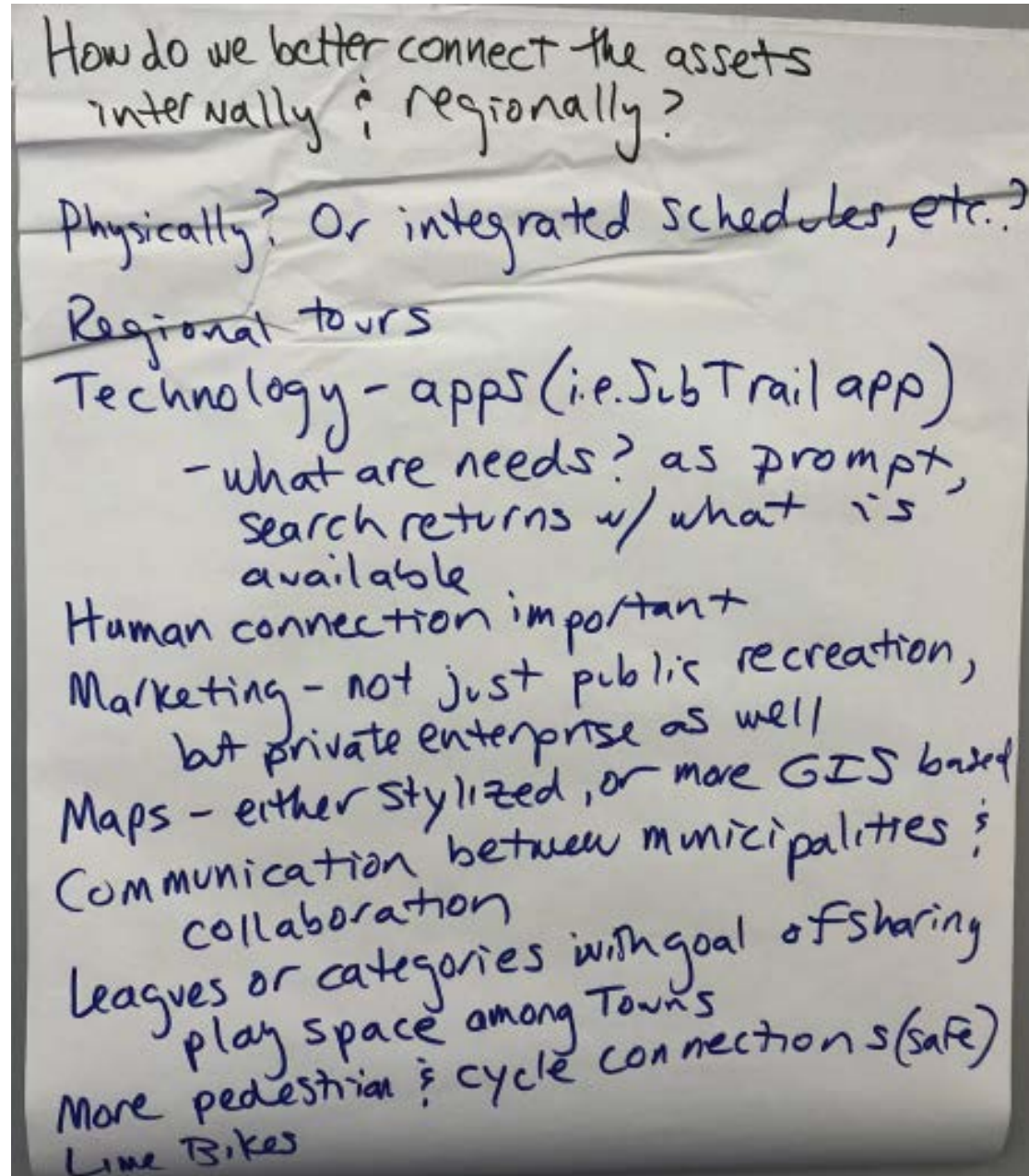
Recreation & Amenities

Recreation challenges and desires tie into themes that came across in other categories (communication, housing, and transportation). There is a need to improve the distribution of information about recreation options, and how to access them. Moving forward, technology should be used for branding efforts and for improving access to existing amenities. The development of new amenities should also be technology focused (ex. WIFI) and should contribute to creating a sense of place that is desirable for people to live in.

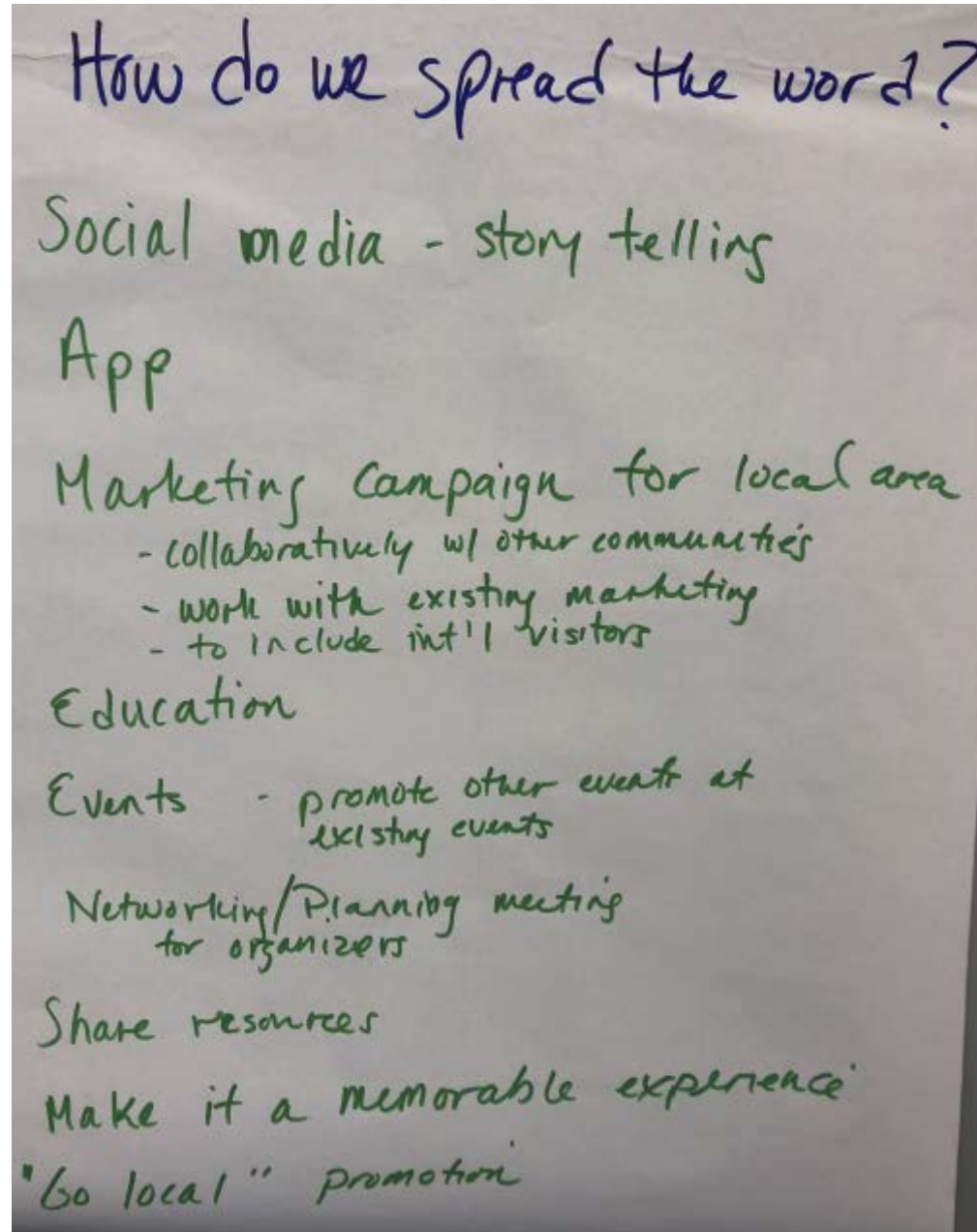
What's missing?



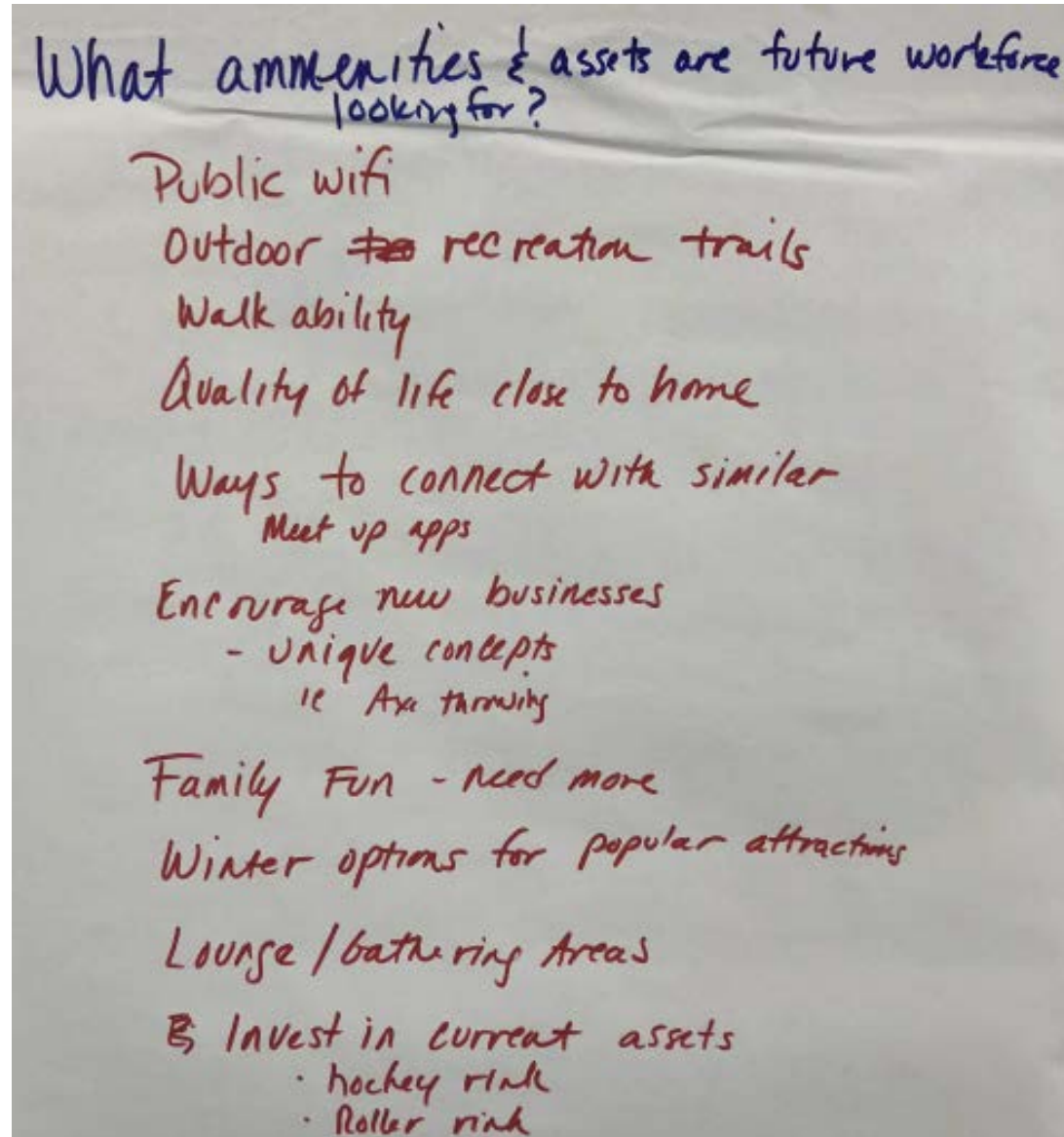
How do we better connect the assets internally and regionally?



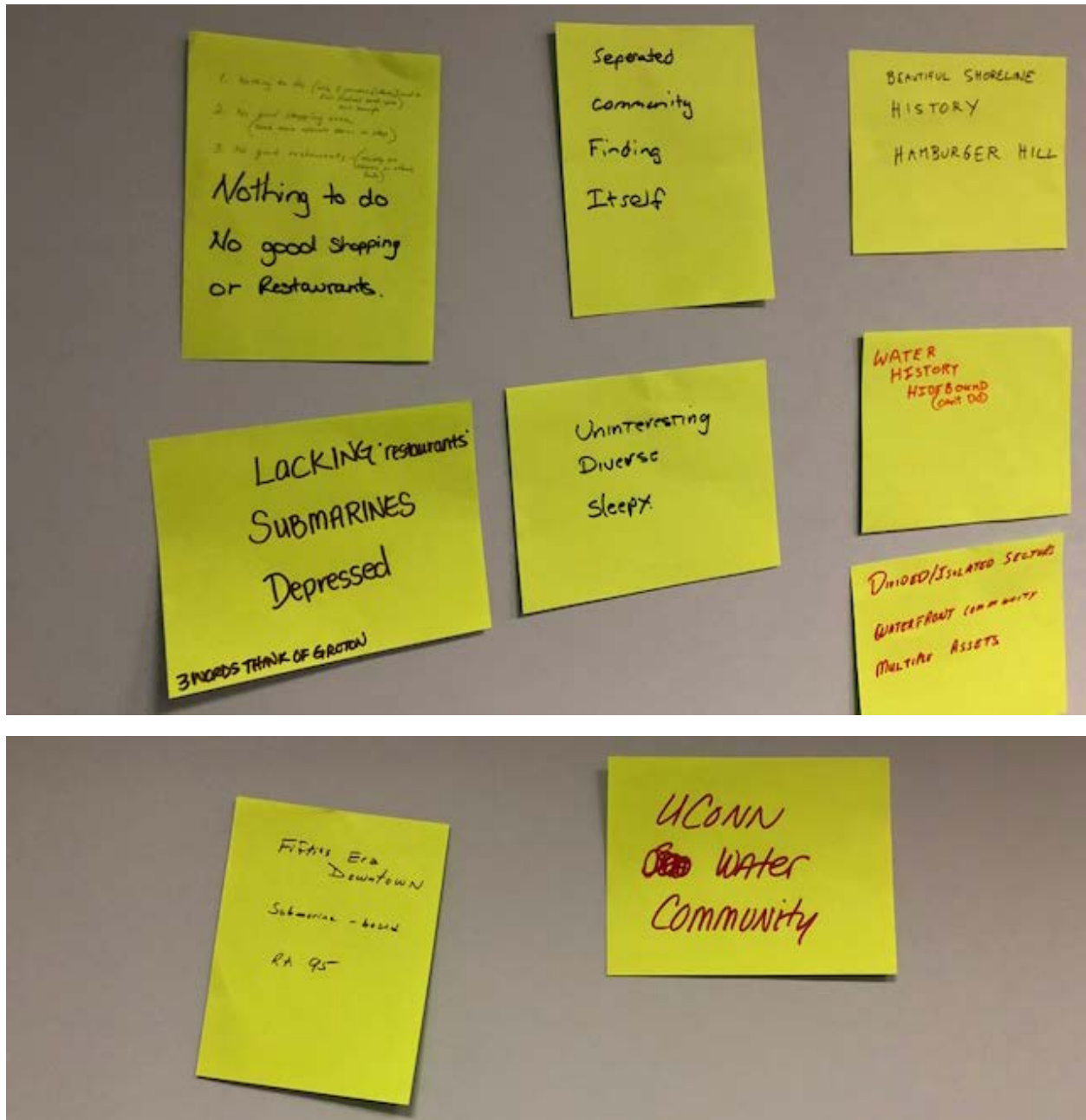
How do we spread the word about Groton's recreational and tourism assets?

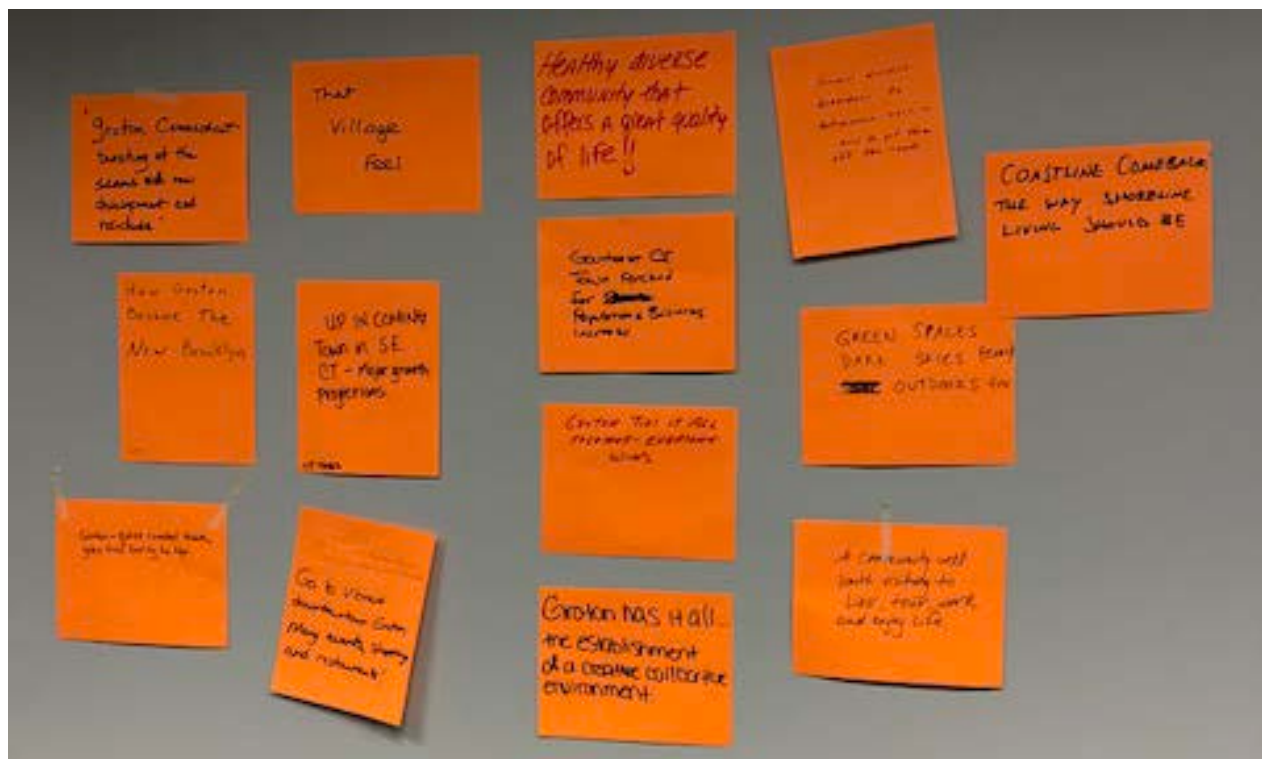


What amenities and assets are the future workforce looking for?



Write a few words that describe Groton today on the green piece of paper.
On the orange paper, write the headline for a future NY Times Article about Groton if we achieve our goals.





Attachment B:

Groton's Opportunities & Challenges

This strategic planning process began with a thorough review of existing studies and reports for the Town and City of Groton, as well as relevant regional reports. Key findings were organized into opportunities and challenges around the following themes:

- General Economic Development
- Communication & Connections
- Housing
- Transportation & Parking
- Recreation & Amenities
- Economic Real Estate Stock
- Education

Observations by the project team were also added to this inventory, which served as a reference throughout the strategic planning process. The results of this analysis are summarized in the following pages.

General Economic Development

Opportunities to Realize

- About 26% of Groton businesses predicted expansion plans in the near future, about 67% predicted they'd expand in Groton ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- Businesses want to see more arts and entertainment, and restaurants to increase patronage ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- TIF Policy and TIF Plans (Camoin Observation)
- Regional focus on manufacturing – seCTer specifically ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Small-scale manufacturing ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Support entrepreneurs and innovative businesses – small to medium size ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Largest industries in Groton are Manufacturing, Government, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- 2005-14 saw significant growth in Accommodation & Food Services, Manufacturing, and Health Care and Social Assistance (change in jobs). ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Wind power businesses – Deep Water Wind in RI is increasing work in CT – opportunity to grow local supply chain for this industry (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- High wage manufacturing jobs are being replaced with lower-paying service jobs ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- With the exception of growth driven by Electric Boat, regional economy is slow-growing (less than 1% job growth in last 10-years). ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Lack of economic diversity, and resiliency, continues ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Perception of statewide economic condition (Camoin Observation)
- Large businesses in ship and boat building and pharmaceuticals can easily disrupt the real estate markets by purchasing or selling property for prices outside of market trends, giving some property owners a false sense of value ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- East coast small and mid-sized ports are seeing an uptick, while CT declined 80% in cargo volume due to the recession and lack of focus on this industry. ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Marine Recreation - Resiliency is an issue; the increasing intensity and frequency of large storms driving up costs. ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- EB's Role – Their priority is workforce retention and they can be engaged in related initiatives; but, they can't lead Groton's transformation (Camoin Observation)
- 80% of the people who work in Groton today, live outside of town ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Getting the word out about available incentives (Staff Comment)

Communication & Connections

Opportunities to Realize

- TRIP strategy has sparked collaboration between Groton & New London ([TRIP, 2016](#))
- New logo, brand, and digital media presence (Camoin Observation)
- New business visitation program (Camoin Observation)
- Future infrastructure investments to physically connect people: Roads, Rivers, Airports, Tunnels, Gondola? (Camoin Observation)
- Ongoing investments into public education systems (Staff Comment)
- Public property redevelopment (ongoing) (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Communication could be better overall between different parties. Increasing communication between SUBASE and municipalities, with property owners and municipalities, etc.
 - Example: Only 33.7% of businesses interviewed were aware of tax incentives ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- Community feels economic development should focus on 'management of tax rates' ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#)) Also, internally within Groton's govt (city-town) - growing the grand list. (Staff Comment)
- Municipalities in the region historically haven't worked together very often but are learning to more recently, this project being one example, the TRIP study a second. (Camoin Observation)
- The 'Many Grotons' (town, city, neighborhoods) (Camoin Observation)
- Visitors are generally isolated from the rest of Groton and vice-versa ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Communicating some of the challenges – like housing. Public tends to think we have plenty; you don't realize it is an issue until you are in the market looking. (Staff Comment)
- Educating business leaders on the different type of housing types the younger workforce is looking for (i.e. not single-family homes). (Staff Comment)

Housing

Opportunities to Realize

- Demand is likely to come from young, newly forming households and retirees looking to stay in the region: low-cost rentals and single-family homes ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#)) ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Young households tend to rent in their twenties but purchase in their thirties. ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Homes that appeal to younger buyers: affordable, closer to work and amenities than in the past ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Seniors will represent 19% of the population but 30% of the households by 2030 - while most prefer to stay in-home as long as possible, when they do buy they are more likely to go for a townhouse, condo, or other non-single family home style ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Median home value is lower than adjacent communities ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Groton is one of the concentrations of deed-restricted assisted or other cost-subsidized housing in the region, with New London, Norwich, and Windham ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Recommendation: Modify land use regs to allow new products ([Groton POCD, 2016](#))
- Offer new housing options not currently in the market ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Strong interest in new mixed-use projects, high-demand (Staff Comment)
- Directly connect with new EB hires to attract to town (Staff Comment)
- Uptick in single-family subdivisions (Staff Comment)
- Multi-unit housing – growing interest, being built w/o incentives (Staff comment)
- Incentives to attract new employs to purchase homes? (Younger employees typically have large student loan dept and put off home purchases) (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Southeastern CT Region is undersupplied with appropriate housing ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
 - Trend: Continued decline in average household size means need for housing will grow faster than population
 - Trend: Baby boomers downsizing
 - Trend: Shift in housing preferences toward urban by younger residents
 - Trend: General Dynamics Electric Boat Growth
- Affordability challenges increasing for renters and owners - 29,000 households living in houses they can't afford in the region - demand for low-income housing is increasing ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
 - 48% renters cost-burdened
 - 30% owners cost-burdened
- Lack of sewer limits development ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- 55.1% of existing residents feel that there are enough condos/apartments in Groton ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- Absentee landlords and property owners ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Housing does not yet offer a ROI without incentives. Might be challenged shortly (Camoin & Staff Observation)
- Disinvestment in existing stock, esp. single-family - lack of character, lack of sense of place (Staff Comment)
- Gentrification? (Camoin Observation)

Transportation & Parking

Opportunities to Realize

- Well served by highway (Camoin Observation)
- Thames River offers water-travel options for passenger and freight (Camoin Observation)
- Recommendation: 'Mobility Hub' for bus stop ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Recommendation: Bike share at EB and SUBASE ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Groton – New London Airport (KGON) & Airport Development Zone (preliminary approval) ([SECTER CEDS, 2017](#)) Possible new connections to D.C. or Philly (Staff Comment)
- Water Taxi Service (Camoin Observation)
- Off-road bike paths being developed, opportunity to expand (Staff comment)
- Better wayfinding and signage – Town is wrapping up a wayfinding plan, which may eventually cross over to the City (Staff Comment)
- Streets in the city are wide, opportunity for bike lanes (Staff Comment)
- Dedicated parking for scooters? (Staff comment)
- Parking Garage in Thames St. Area? (Staff Comment)
- Transportation study is kicking off shortly for EB area (Staff Comment)
- Shuttle with New London for EB workforce (Staff Comment)
- Multi-use path over Gold Star Bridge - TRIP Work will explore this (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Amtrak stops in Mystic, but no other commuter rail in Town (Staff Comment)
- Lack of transit around the SUBASE ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Growth of EB is going to create traffic and parking challenged in the Route 12 region, and within EB itself ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Congestion on I-95 (Camoin Observation)
- Walkability is sporadic and need improvement throughout (Camoin Observation)
- Driving culture (Camoin Observation)
- Downtown is purely car-centric (Camoin Observation)
- Oceans of parking around EB = under utilized, high-quality property (Staff Comment)
- Perceived parking issues (Staff Comment)
- Connecting Groton & New London (Camoin Observation)

Recreation & Amenities

Opportunities to Realize

- Growing private sector recreation industry –become a tourism a hub? (Staff Comment)
- Supply chain opportunities? (Camoin Question)
- Hotels? (Camoin Question)
- Technology-based businesses (bike share)? (Camoin Question)
- Increase recreational access to the waterfront (Camoin Observation)

Challenges to Overcome

- Groton, outside of Mystic, isn't well-known as a place for recreation and tourism outside of the region (Camoin Observation)
- Tourists & Residents tend to patronize different amenities – tourists visit Mystic where residents shop downtown (Camoin Observation)
- Dated structures for some of the retail and services spaces that cater to visitors (Camoin Observation)

Economic Real Estate Stock

Opportunities to Realize

- Industries driving demand for space include tourism, health care, business professional services, and manufacturing. ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- TIF Policy and TIF Plans (Camoin Observation)

Challenges to Overcome

- Many absentee owners unwilling to sell or re-invest in their properties (Camoin Observation)
- Quality of place is easily overlooked during periods of growth ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Property owners over-valuing properties (Staff comment)
- Traditional separation of uses strong in culture (Camoin Observation)
- Lack of hotel rooms (Staff Comment)
- Lack of commercial building inventory/shell buildings 30,000 – 50,000 SF, losing opportunities (Staff Comment)
- Existing stock is old and tired, in-need of re-investment (Staff Comment)
- Accommodating business expansion on land-locked sites (Staff Comment)
- Overcoming perception of zoning and land use environment once new zoning is in-place (Staff Comment)

Education

Opportunities to Realize

- Ongoing investment into the school system for the town and state schools in Groton (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Negative perception of Groton's public schools (Camoin Observation)
- Community does not realize the great education system they have (Staff Comment)