

*City of Taunton  
Office of the Mayor*



For Immediate Press Release: 05/16/2022

Contact Person: Ligia Madeira  
508-821-1000

## **O'CONNELL ANNOUNCES NEW DOWNTOWN OUTDOOR SEATING SPACE**

Taunton, MA... Today Mayor Shaunna O'Connell announced the City of Taunton will be opening a new outdoor seating area Downtown this week. The City received a \$40,000 grant from MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces program to implement a temporary open space seating area for the community to enjoy. The new seating will be located Downtown in the area adjacent to the sidewalks between School Street and Knotty Walk.

"With the warm weather coming, I'm thrilled we are able to offer a new outdoor seating area for people to dine, read, or meet for coffee and relax. Many cities across the Commonwealth have installed these public plazas in response to the pandemic. They have been a huge success and we are excited to bring this innovative thinking to Taunton with the help of Economic Development Director Bill Roth and the DPW team," said O'Connell. "Our goal is to have it ready for the Downtown Art Jam event on May 21st."

The outdoor space being created was suggested in both the Downtown Taunton Plan and the City's 2018 Master Plan. The seating area will be open during the warmer months this year. If successful, the City can look at options for making it permanent.

The area in front of 1-10 Taunton Green will be extended out to create a new public space with tables and chairs. The space will be protected from vehicular traffic by barriers, fencing, and impact attenuators with the appropriate safety ratings. Main Street traffic heading towards Broadway will be shifted over and subject to a yield sign upon approaching the Green.

This project encompasses traffic calming, activation of a new public space, and tactical urbanism, all important initiatives in the ongoing revitalization of Downtown Taunton.

Colleen Simmons, Director of the Downtown Taunton Foundation and Business Improvement District, is excited to have this new addition to the Downtown area. "We have so many great things going on Downtown. Having this additional space available for people to meet for coffee or eat their lunch or take a break while shopping makes Downtown even more appealing. I am thankful to Mayor O'Connell, OECD and DPW for pursuing this initiative and bringing it to fruition. We have a great team in Taunton," said Simmons.

For further information, please contact the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development at 508-821-1030. ###