

AMHERST WINTER PLACES

Amherst, Massachusetts



A DOWNTOWN WINTER WONDERLAND BRINGS JOY AND COMMUNITY IN THE DARK WINTER MONTHS

With funding from the Barr Foundation, the Downtown Amherst Foundation was able to create a downtown winter wonderland that included large snowflake arches, outdoor tables placed under and around the arches, extra holiday and winter lights on lamp posts, and a 4 day outdoor ice sculpture walk through the town's South Commons.

With the implementation of this project, foot and car traffic increased in downtown and even on the coldest days, families were outside playing under the arches and walking through the sculptures. At night groups of people would sit under and around the lights and eat take away dinner from neighboring restaurants.

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| PROJECT TYPE: | Outdoor, Play, Family |
| BUDGET: | \$29,000 |
| IMPLEMENTATION: | Medium - 8 days total |
| TIMELINE: | December - March |
| MATERIALS: | Snowflake lights and arches, winter-themed lighting, outdoor tables and seating, commissioned ice sculptures |
| MAINTENANCE: | Medium |

20,000+
VISITORS TO
THE PROJECT

75+
LOCAL BUSINESSES
INVOLVED



AMHERST WINTER PLACES HIGHLIGHTS



Restaurants and retail locations saw an uptick in sales



Foot traffic increased in the downtown area



A local artist was employed and multiple community partnerships were formed & strengthened

“Our favorite part of the project was seeing children, masked and bundled, running and laughing under the archways, parents and friends gathered outside with meals and drinks under and around the archways, simply put, seeing joy brought to all for no cost from them!

- The Downtown Amherst Foundation



PROJECT PARTNERS

The Amherst Business Improvement District

The Town of Amherst

The Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce

The Amherst Rec

The Amherst Dept. of Public Works

Sculptor, Joseph Almeada

AMHERST WINTER PLACES WHAT'S NEXT?

While the elements of this project are winter-centric, the Downtown Amherst Foundation will be using them for years to come with plans to expand winter programming in the years to come as year one of their Winter Places project proved that, people will gather outdoors, even during the coldest New England months.

“the impact

These projects brought joy and light to our community and to visitors in our darkest times. The local small businesses called us weekly to report that people came into town just to see the lights and/or the sculptures but decided to bundle up, stay, walk about and support small businesses. Amherst was down to 20% of volume during the pandemic with no students and faculty from UMASS and Amherst College. While we worked on MANY other initiatives to keep our small businesses and community afloat, this one absolutely had a direct impact.

*Project Funding
Generously Provided By*

 **Barr Foundation**