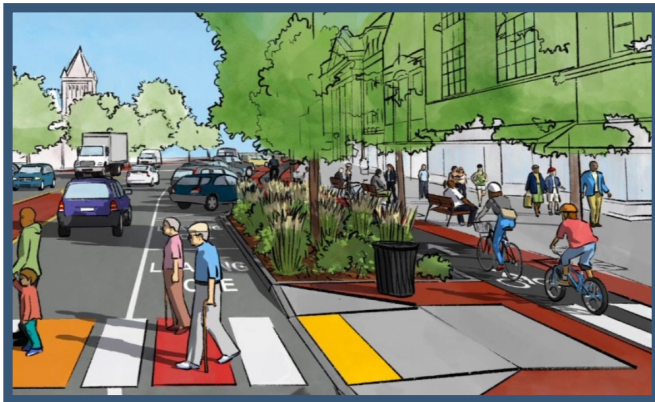


# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Picture Main Street: Project Timeline & Staying Informed!



The city has released an updated working timeline for the Picture Main Street project, providing a clear outline of the project by year. A detailed graphic of the timeline is now available (see page 2), so residents and businesses can better understand what to expect as we work to revitalize our downtown.

This graphic has been updated in response to comments that the project has been delayed significantly. However, it is important to note

that there is only a slight change from the prior estimated timeline. Construction is now expected to begin in the spring of 2026, with no construction activities planned for 2025. As we move closer to this exciting phase, we encourage everyone to stay informed about key developments, road closures, and construction impacts. Sign up for real-time updates by texting "PROGRESS" to 99411 today!

We truly appreciate your continued engagement and patience as we work toward a more vibrant and accessible Main Street. Stay connected and informed—we're in this together!

### Newsletter Sign-Up

Would you like to receive the City of Northampton's newsletter as soon as it's available? Simply fill out a quick sign-up form, and each issue will be sent straight to your inbox once it's published! Complete the sign-up form, [linked here](#).



See page 4 for information about Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes




**Mayor's Office**  
210 Main Street, Northampton  
(413) 587 1249  
mayor@northamptonma.gov

# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Picture Main Street: Project Timeline & Stay-In-The-Know Text Alerts!

### Picture Main Street Working Timeline

2025	2026	2027	2028
<b>DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION PLANNING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pardon Our Progress (POP) committee continues to work on construction mitigation strategies</li> <li>• Refining landscaping and streetscape elements</li> <li>• Finalizing lighting specifications</li> <li>• Designing underground fiber and water lines</li> <li>• Confirming right-of-way boundaries</li> </ul>	<b>WATER/SEWER UPGRADES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractor selected by MassDOT in late spring</li> <li>• Upgrade of water and sewer lines, progressing block by block through the length of the street</li> <li>• Focus on as little traffic disruption as possible</li> <li>• Some island removal</li> </ul>	<b>CURB LINE MOVEMENT PROCESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curbs relocated block by block, or building by building, alternating sides</li> <li>• Street grading, with street and sidewalks remaining open except for temporary sidewalk detours</li> <li>• Coordinated communication with business owners to minimize disruption</li> <li>• Focus on minimal disruption to through traffic</li> </ul>	<b>FINAL ADDITIONS PHASE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final street paving and striping</li> <li>• Sign installations</li> <li>• Landscaping and plantings</li> <li>• Additional close-out items</li> </ul> 

Updated: February 2025

## The POP Communication System is Live!



We're making it easier than ever to stay updated on the Picture Main Street project. Sign up today to receive real-time updates, important alerts, and essential information as we prepare for and carry out construction. Text "PROGRESS" to 99411 to get notifications straight to your phone. By subscribing, you'll receive key details about road closures, construction schedules, detours, and other critical updates. For more information, visit the [Picture Main Street webpage](#).



# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Northampton 375th Anniversary Planning Committee

Mayor Sciarra is excited to announce the formation of the Northampton 375th Anniversary Committee. This committee will play a vital role in spearheading the 2029 celebration, including brainstorming event ideas, planning activities, fundraising, and bringing the community together for this once-in-a-generation opportunity.

If you are interested in participating, in any capacity, please tell us about yourself by completing a brief application, [linked here](#).

## POP Update

The Pardon Our Progress (POP) construction mitigation group—which includes city officials, the DNA, the Chamber, business owners, and community stakeholders—has been meeting for over a year to develop strategies that minimize disruptions and keep downtown vibrant and accessible during the upcoming construction period. Last week, POP held its first meeting with a consultant, funded by a grant secured by the Mayor's Office through the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI). This consultant brings valuable expertise in construction mitigation planning, helping to assess potential challenges and develop proactive solutions tailored to Northampton's unique needs. By working together, we are committed to reducing disruptions and keeping downtown a thriving destination. Check back for updates as this initiative progresses!



## Make a difference in Five Meetings! Join the Whiting Street Fund Committee!

Are you interested in getting involved in our community? Can you commit to five meetings in the fall? Join the Whiting Street Fund Committee! The Will of Whiting Street established the trust fund in 1875 to provide financial assistance to those in need. Using the interest from the fund, the city allocates funds to the work of local non-profits. Under the terms of the Will, the Committee advises the Mayor on the focus for the year, works with the Treasurer to establish an application process, reviews the applications, and makes recommendations for distribution of funds. These funds make a difference in the lives of Northampton residents. There are two vacancies on the committee and we need you! If interested, apply online [here](#) or stop by the Mayor's Office for a paper application.

Interested in serving on another city board or committee? It's a great way to make a difference, share your skills, and help shape local initiatives. Check the latest vacancies and fill out the application form on the city website at [northamptonma.gov/192/Boards-Committees](http://northamptonma.gov/192/Boards-Committees) or stop by the Mayor's Office for a paper application.

# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Annual Street Listing

The City Hall drop box is now open to receive responses to the Annual Street Listing (Census). You'll find the drop box at the bottom of the stairs on the left side when you are facing City Hall. If your household receives multiple street listings and you'd like all family members to appear on a single list next year, please staple them together and write "Please combine lists" at the top of the first page.

Please note that voters cannot be removed from the street list without their written authorization. If someone on your list has moved to another community, they must send a written request to be removed from our voter rolls. Requests can be sent via email to [voting@northamptonma.gov](mailto:voting@northamptonma.gov) or by mail to: Board of Registrars, 210 Main St., Northampton, MA 01060.

If you are a registered voter, your form will indicate your party affiliation using one of the following abbreviations:

A - Conservative	N - New Alliance	AA - Pizza Party
B - Natural Law Party	O - Mass Independent Party	BB - American Term Limits
C - New World Council	P - Prohibition	CC - United Independent Party
D - Democrat	Q - American Independent	DD - Twelve Visions Party
E - Reform	R - Republican	EE - Latino-Vote Party
F - Rainbow Coalition	S - Socialist	FF - The People's Party
G - Green Party USA	T - Inter 3rd Party	GG - Workers Party
H - We the People	U - Unenrolled	HH - Unity Party
J - Green Rainbow	V - America First Party	JJ - Forward Party
K - Constitution Party	W - Veteran Party America	
L - Libertarian	X - Pirate Party	
M - Timesizing Not Down	Z - Working Families	

## Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes

The 2025 motor vehicle excise tax bills were dated and mailed on Tuesday, February 25th, with payment due by Thursday, March 27th. These bills apply to vehicles that the Registry of Motor Vehicles lists as registered and garaged in Northampton as of January 1, 2025. If you do not receive a bill for your vehicle, please contact the Treasurer/Collector's Office at 413-587-1293. Payments can be made:

- In person at 212 Main Street, Monday-Friday, from 8:30am to 4:30pm
- By mail using the return envelope or addressed to 212 Main Street
- Dropped off in the secure box by the entry door at 212 Main Street
- Online at [www.northamptonma.gov](http://www.northamptonma.gov) using an electronic check or debit/credit card (processing fees may apply).



# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## ARPA Updates

The Parlor Room Collective purchased the Iron Horse with the goal of reopening the iconic venue and reviving live music in Northampton after the severe impacts of the pandemic on the arts. The city awarded ARPA funding to the Parlor Room for accessibility and safety improvements during their planned renovation of the Iron Horse. The city is proud to contribute to the legacy of the Iron Horse and help make it a safer and more inclusive space for all members of our community. You can find a list of upcoming shows at the Iron Horse [HERE](#).

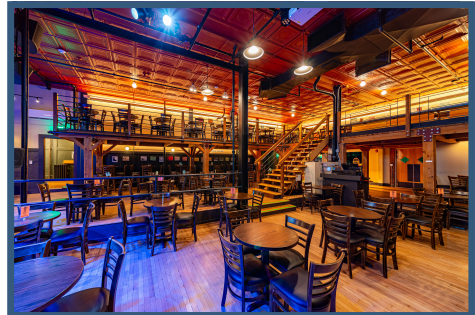


Photo by Leigh Chodos



The Parlor Room, in collaboration with Signature Sounds, will be hosting the Back Porch Festival from March 7th through March 9th. There will be 60+ bands at 10 venues across the city. More information about the Back Porch Festival can be found [HERE](#).

"The ARPA grant, along with the city's assistance navigating state agencies and bureaucracies, was instrumental in reopening the Iron Horse. Thanks to this transformative funding, not only is the Iron Horse open, but the Back Porch Festival is poised to be bigger than ever. The Parlor Room Collective firmly believes that live music is key to revitalizing our downtown economy, and the Iron Horse, Parlor Room, and Back Porch Festival embody this spirit."

- Chris Freeman  
Executive Director



Photo by Leigh Chodos



# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Black History Month in the Context of Public Health

February is Black History Month and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is celebrating the contributions of Black nurses, doctors, and other public health professionals. Black communities have long practiced the upstream approach that is the cornerstone of public health and have worked to foster community health through grassroots efforts when no other framework was in place. Much of the public health infrastructure we have today in the United States can be traced back to the work of dedicated Black Americans.

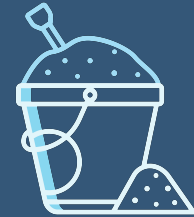
- [Black History Public Health](#)
- [History of Black Americans in Healthcare](#)
- “[Rebecca Davis Lee Crumpler, MD](#), was the first Black woman to receive a medical degree in the United States. In 1860, she entered the New England Female Medical College in Boston, and published *A Book of Medical Discourses* in 1883 as a medical guidebook to give advice on health care for women and their families.”
- “[Harriet Tubman](#) (1822-1913) was a nurse for the Union Army during the Civil War. She cared for wounded soldiers and freed slaves using natural remedies and home remedies she learned from her mother. She also cared for people she rescued on the Underground Railroad.”
- [Notable Black Nurses in History](#)



# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Did you know?

Northampton residents can visit the transfer station for free sand in advance of, or after, a snowstorm. This service is limited to a 2-5 gallon bucket per resident. No transfer station sticker is required. No commercial entities are allowed.



## Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Selected as a GAINS Center SIM Workshop Awardee

A few months ago, DHHS was pleased to share the news of receiving the DivCare grant from Massachusetts Department of Public Health, which focuses on supporting community members to meet their personal and wellness needs, while diverting them away from the criminal legal system. In efforts to support this work, DHHS is proud to share that the department has also been selected through a competitive process as a SAMHSA GAINS Center SIM Workshop awardee. While there is no direct funding associated with this award, [SAMHSA’s GAINS Center](#) will provide free Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) Workshops to support DHHS in improving strategies for addressing behavioral health needs within the criminal justice system. This technical assistance will be key in pulling together county-wide partners (across the justice system, as well as public health and safety) to determine strengths and identify gaps that can be addressed with the DivCare funds. The technical assistance will also include a report and recommendations that will be made available to community members.

## We want to hear from you!

Mayor Sciarra is inviting you to submit questions for possible inclusion in upcoming editions of this newsletter. Whether you’re curious about city projects, local policies, or just have a burning question about how things work in Northampton, we’d love to hear from you!

To submit your question for the Q&A with Mayor Sciarra, simply fill out the submission form linked [here](#). While we may not be able to publish every question, we’ll do our best to address a variety of topics that matter most to our residents.

# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Q&A with Mayor Sciarra

**Q: Why did the recent storm make road conditions so difficult to manage, and what is the DPW doing to address the aftermath?**



**A:** The storm on the weekend of February 15th was one of the most significant we've had in a long time—a 30-plus hour event with wet, heavy snow, sleet, freezing rain, and high winds. In reality, this was an ice storm sandwiched between two snowstorms. The result was a flash-frozen layer of ice packed onto our roads, making plowing operations and cleanup exceptionally difficult.

During the storm, our Department of Public Works (DPW) worked around the clock to keep roads passable, prioritizing main thoroughfares to ensure emergency vehicle access. Crews worked continuously from Saturday night through Tuesday morning, and the DPW did its best to respond quickly to requests for additional salt and sand in problem areas. During a regional salt shortage, we were fortunate to have hundreds of tons in reserve to keep the roads stable. Typically, we use about 200 tons of salt per storm, but in the most recent storm, we needed twice that amount!

At the same time, potholes have been opening up across the city due to the freeze-thaw cycle and the DPW is actively working to address these as well. Another top priority was, and remains, clearing catch basins ahead of projected rain to prevent flooding.

As for the snow in the downtown medians, warmer temperatures have helped with natural melting, and with the recent above-freezing weather, we anticipate this will continue without the need for additional resources to remove it. Logistical challenges also impact downtown snow removal, as the DPW's large dump trucks, which are used to haul the snow, currently have sanders installed. Removing these sanders is a complex mechanical task and with ongoing needs for road salting and sanding, the DPW cannot afford to take trucks out of service. As the department continues to manage the aftereffects of this storm - salting roads, repairing vehicles and equipment, and preparing for more expected inclement weather - prioritizing resources remains essential.

I want to take a moment to sincerely thank our DPW crews for their tireless work during and after this storm. Their dedication—often in the toughest conditions—keeps our city moving, and I deeply appreciate their efforts. I know this storm was challenging for everyone, and I also want to thank Northampton residents for your patience and understanding as we continue clean-up and pothole filling efforts.

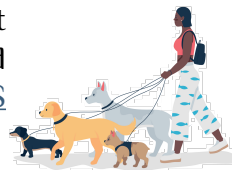
# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Calendar Updates

### Upcoming Events and Notices

#### VINS Dog Show

Volunteers in Northampton Schools (VINS) is hosting its 17th Annual Dog Show on Saturday, March 1st from 12pm to 3pm at Northampton High School. Registration is required for dogs. Vie for the coveted title of "Best Fetcher", "Best Hair", "Best Smile", and more! For more info. and contact information, visit the [VINS website](#).



#### Smith College Founder's Day



Join Smith College as it celebrates its 150th anniversary with special events! On Saturday, March 8th at 1pm the public is invited to "150 Years of Smith College & Northampton". For a list of other events to commemorate Founder's Day, please visit the website, [linked here](#).

#### Toilet Paper Drive - March 2025

This March, Forbes Library is collecting toilet paper donations for the Northampton Survival Center (NSC). NSC supports low-income individuals and families by providing essential items that can't be purchased with SNAP benefits, including personal care and cleaning products. Donations can be



dropped off at Forbes Library during open hours: Monday through Thursday from 10am to 8pm, and Friday and Saturday from 10am to 6pm. Your support makes a difference!

#### Back Porch Festival

Signature Sounds & The Parlor Room Collective present the 11th Annual Back Porch Festival from March 7th through March 9th. Featuring over 60 talented artists performing in 10 unique venues throughout downtown Northampton, this event brings the city to life with incredible live music all weekend long. Don't miss this unforgettable weekend of music, community, and celebration! For a schedule, locations, and more information, please visit the website, [linked here](#).

