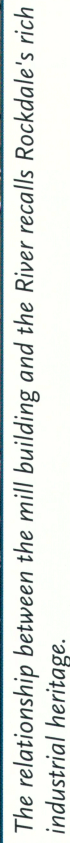
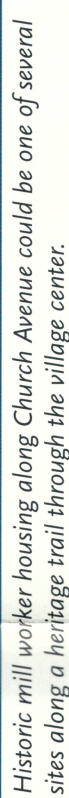


Rockdale Village has a rich history, visible in its historic homes and workplaces and brought to life through the stories of its residents. But the River that catalyzed the village's development lies hidden behind the buildings that line Providence Road. By reconnecting the River to the heart of the village through a community riverwalk, trails, canoe launches, and a waterfront park, the Blackstone River can once again provide the spark for bringing new life to Rockdale as a commercial and residential destination, serving new and longtime residents as well as visitors to the community.



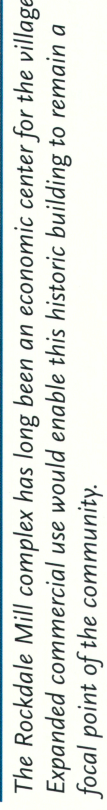
*The relationship between the mill building and the River recalls Rockdale's rich industrial heritage.*



Historic mill worker housing along Church Avenue could be one of several sites along a heritage trail through the village center.

*Tree-lined sidewalks, a village common, and historic homes on Providence Road create a pleasant walking environment.*

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*The Rockdale Mill complex has long been an economic center for the village. Expanded commercial use would enable this historic building to remain a focal point of the community.*

- Consider designation of the village as an historic district and/or create design guidelines to ensure that new development is consistent with the village's character
- Promote zoning that encourages mixed-use development, such as shops, restaurants, small businesses and housing
- Consider tax incentives that support revitalization
- Survey residents, focusing on young families and elders living in the village, about preferred locations for a community lot and safe walking routes to the village

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- Produce a map and guide to key sites (e.g. a self-guided walking tour brochure)
- Install plaques on historic buildings
- Connect this trail with other downtown and regional trails

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- Consider rezoning the mill area to support a wider range of uses, potentially including retail, restaurants, outlet stores, or specialized goods and services related to the regional bike trail
- Explore the feasibility of a visitor center within the mill complex
- Enhance interpretive signs along Sutton Street

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- Provide trail signs and new sidewalks to guide bikeway users to Providence Road via Gutton Street and Elston Avenue
- Provide amenities for cyclists throughout the village center, including bike racks, a bike repair shop, food, and rest areas
- Develop connections to the riverwalk, heritage sites, and park areas
- Work with MassHighway to finalize the route for the bike trail as it passes through Rockdale

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- Investigate the feasibility of a canoe launch behind the fire station and along the proposed riverwalk
- Establish a water trail connection to Farnumville Village in South Grafton

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- Work with property owners along the River to develop a riverwalk plan that enhances the value and attractiveness of existing properties while preserving all parking needed for commercial and residential uses.
- Construct a riverwalk trail in the area approximately between Sutton Street and Beane's Lane as a recreational amenity.
- Provide a small park along the riverwalk for community events and recreation, with seating, a pavilion and other amenities.
- Connect the riverwalk to Providence Road near the Rajotte Bridge, avoiding smaller lots where there is little space along the River's edge.
- Create a water access point for canoes and kayaks.
- Encourage the use of permeable surfaces for driveways and parking areas to reduce the impacts of stormwater run-off into the River.

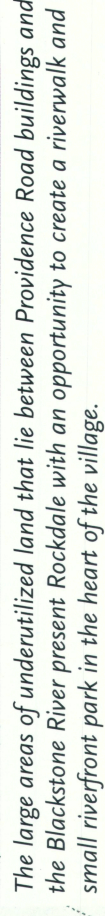
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- Initiate a study of flooding issues, including root causes and potential solutions
- When redeveloping condemned or abandoned properties in the floodplain, consider uses such as landscaping and pervious parking which are both environmentally sensitive and minimally impacted by water damage
- Oversee redesign and repair of bridge crossings, particularly at the Rajotte Bridge near Elston Avenue

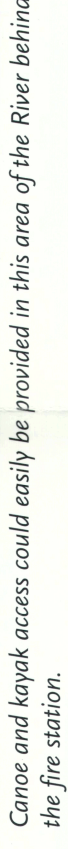
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- Create trails on public and privately owned land along both sides of the River
- Locate educational signs along trails, providing opportunities to learn about local wildlife
- Build a pedestrian bridge to connect the 1st Avenue neighborhood to Ashton Memorial Field and the River trail
- Explore the feasibility of a trail connection to Farnumsville Village in South Grafton

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The large areas of underutilized land that lie between Providence Road buildings and the Blackstone River present Rockdale with an opportunity to create a riverwalk and small riverfront park in the heart of the village.



Canoe and kayak access could easily be provided in this area of the River behind the fire station.

