



## **FY 2027 Municipal Community Mitigation Fund Grant Application**

### **Application Instructions:**

- I. All applications must be received by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission by January 31, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. to be considered for funding for the FY 2027 grant round.
- II. Each municipality may only submit **ONE** application as a Word Document.
- III. Each project must have its own form within the appropriate category. Forms can be found below as Parts A-E. If there is more than one project in a category, please copy the form. All attachments should directly follow the relevant project form.
- IV. Be sure to fill in all the information requested on the application. Applications that are left incomplete will not be accepted.
- V. All applications must submit a detailed scope of work and timeline for implementation for all projects identified in the application.
- VI. All applications must contain appropriate backup materials that support the application.
- VII. The Municipal Grant Manager will be the person responsible for compiling the information for the quarterly reports. The application must be signed by the municipal administrator or an individual with signatory authority. Submit this completed form as well as any relevant attachments to [MGCCMF@Massgaming.gov](mailto:MGCCMF@Massgaming.gov) or as a response to the **COMMBUYS Bid BD-26-1068-1068C-1068L-121911**.

For more detailed instructions as well as the full FY 2027 Application Guidelines visit <https://massgaming.com/about/community-mitigation-fund/>

<b>Municipal Grant Manager Information (Person for filing all Quarterly Reports, etc.):</b>
Applicant: City of Northampton
Vendor Code:
Name: Annie Lesko
Title: Mayoral Operations Manager
Email Address: <a href="mailto:alesko@northamptonma.gov">alesko@northamptonma.gov</a>
Telephone: 413-587-1212
Address: 210 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

**Grant Budget Summary**

Your community’s FY 2027 proposed allocation can be found at <https://massgaming.com/about/community-mitigation-fund/>.

Use the space below to total all requests by category. Please clarify how many discreet projects your community plans to undertake per category.

Total FY 2027 Allocation:		
Application Totals by Category	# of Projects	Requested Amount
A. Community Planning	1	\$75,000
B. Public Safety		
C. Transportation		
D. Gambling Harm Reduction		
E. Specific Impact		
TOTAL		\$75,000

**(Applicants should indicate administrative costs by project where necessary and under specific impact when the funds will be directed across multiple projects.)**

Are you requesting a waiver for any program Requirement?

Yes

No

If yes, you must fill out a CMF Municipal Waiver Form. The waiver form can be found as Appendix E to the RFR on COMMBUYS or online at <https://massgaming.com/about/community-mitigation-fund/forms/>.

*Applications without a completed waiver form will not be considered for a waiver.*

**Budget Category Summary**

Use the space below to provide an overview of all projects to be covered by this funding. You may add as many items as is pertinent to your application (you can add rows by right clicking on the row and selecting “add row”). Please provide a category, name, brief description, and amount for each item.

Category	Project Name	Description	Amount
A. Community Planning	Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign	<p>The Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign is a multi-year initiative aimed at boosting the city’s regional visibility, attracting visitors, and strengthening the downtown economy through data-driven digital outreach.</p> <p>Year one focused on planning, procurement, and campaign development, including contracting a professional digital marketing firm. Deliverables through June 30 include stakeholder workshops, focus groups, interviews, surveys, and regular reporting to guide strategy.</p> <p>This new request seeks continued funding to move the campaign into full implementation and optimization during FY27, with ongoing stakeholder engagement, performance reviews, and community feedback to maximize impact and ensure a strong return on investment.</p>	\$75,000
B. Public Safety			
C. Transportation			
D. Gambling Harm Reduction			
E. Specific Impact			

Applicant Certification

On behalf of the aforementioned applicant, I hereby certify that the funds that are requested in this application will be used solely for the purposes articulated in this application.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature:

1/30/26  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

Gina-Louise Savara, Mayor  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Title of Signatory:

**Part A-Community Planning** - The application should include sufficient backup information for the review team to fully understand the project(s). This information could include locus maps, requests for proposals, detailed scopes of work, drawings etc.

<b>Project Name: Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign</b>	
Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.	
<b>Project Contact</b>	<b>Additional Project Contact (if applicable)</b>
Name: Annie Lesko	Name: Alan Wolf
Title: Mayoral Operations Manager	Title: Chief of Staff
Department: Mayor’s Office	Department: Mayor’s Office
Email Address: <a href="mailto:alesko@northamptonma.gov">alesko@northamptonma.gov</a>	Email Address: <a href="mailto:awolf@northamptonma.gov">awolf@northamptonma.gov</a>
Telephone: 413-587-1212	Telephone: 413-587-1067
Address: 210 Main St., Northampton, MA 01060	Address: 210 Main St., Northampton, MA 01060
<p>I. Please use the space below to identify the impact of the gaming establishment on your municipality. You may use the impacts identified in the FY 2027 Guidelines relevant to this category. If you are using an impact not identified in the guidelines, please use the space below to identify the impact. Please provide documentation or evidence that supports the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact (i.e., surveys, data, reports, etc.)</p>	
<p>Northampton, historically a thriving hub for arts, culture, and independent business, has experienced substantial economic challenges over the past several years, primarily due to the competitive pressures introduced by the opening of MGM Springfield and the subsequent economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These two factors are interlinked, as MGM Springfield initially drew visitor-driven revenue away from Northampton, and the pandemic further reduced the overall pool of discretionary spending available to support local businesses.</p> <p><b>Casino Competition &amp; The Pandemic’s Long-Term Impact on Local Revenue</b></p> <p>When MGM Springfield opened, it immediately altered the regional economy, redirecting discretionary spending away from Northampton’s independent businesses. Urban casinos often do not generate substantial net new economic growth, but instead capture and reallocate existing consumer spending. MGM Springfield has built a sophisticated marketing apparatus, offering a one-stop entertainment destination that competes directly with Northampton’s restaurants, music venues, and nightlife.</p> <p>MGM Springfield has successfully established its own live music venue, drawing top-tier acts and reinforcing Springfield’s position as a regional entertainment hub. While this investment contributes to the overall draw of western Massachusetts as a music destination, it has also intensified competition for Northampton’s long-standing music venues and further delayed the recovery of Northampton’s arts scene from the impacts of the pandemic on live events.</p> <p>Recent revenue reports show that MGM Springfield continues to generate significant financial returns, collecting \$282.35 million in gross gaming revenue in 2025. In December 2025 alone, it collected \$21.98 million, contributing over \$5.48 million in taxes to the state. Since its opening, MGM</p>	

Springfield and Massachusetts' two other casinos have collectively contributed nearly \$2.3 billion in state taxes. These figures highlight the scale of economic activity that has shifted toward casino-driven spending, making it even more critical for Northampton to reinforce its position as a distinct and complementary cultural and entertainment destination.

Just as Northampton businesses were adjusting to the competitive shift created by MGM, the COVID-19 pandemic delivered another economic shock. The pandemic caused sharp declines in visitor-driven revenue as state-mandated closures, capacity restrictions, and shifts in consumer behavior created significant declines in meals tax, local lodging revenue, and parking fees. This disruption placed a budgetary strain on municipal services and support for downtown businesses. While we continue to see these numbers bouncing back, foot traffic continues to decrease annually, and the long-term sustainability of many small businesses remains fragile.

### **Hard Work Toward Recovery & Local Revenue Trends**

Northampton has worked diligently to restore and promote its local economy. The city has taken extensive steps to reinvigorate its downtown and draw visitors back to local businesses with events and other promotions. These efforts include:

- **Outdoor Dining Expansion:** Since 2020, the city has facilitated seasonal outdoor dining, allowing restaurants to extend into public spaces, adding vibrancy and increasing foot traffic.
- **Bridge Lighting Initiative:** The city has installed lighting on key bridges to enhance downtown's visual appeal and encourage evening activity.
- **Public Music & Dance Events:** Northampton has sponsored Masonic Street Live, Bands on Brewster, the Florence Summer Concert Series, Salsa in Pulaski Park, and Parties in the Park, helping to revitalize the city's cultural life.
- **Summer on Strong:** This popular seasonal street closure program has transformed Strong Avenue into a pedestrian-friendly space with dining, live performances, and community engagement.
- **Taste of Northampton Revival:** The city, in partnership with the Downtown Northampton Association, successfully relaunched this beloved festival, attracting thousands of visitors and reinvigorating local businesses. The 2026 Taste, taking place on September 12-13, will be the fourth event since its revival.

Further, investments in Northampton.Live—which has been supported in part by the Community Mitigation Fund over the past six years—has been instrumental in these recovery efforts. This grant funding has allowed Northampton to develop a digital hub that has consistently strengthened the local economy by promoting businesses, events, and visitor experiences. We deeply appreciate the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's continued support in enabling these initiatives.

It is important to clarify that this funding request is not intended to fund Northampton.Live, but rather to include it as one of several tools under a robust digital marketing campaign that Northampton is currently implementing with its partner agencies. Northampton.Live has been a valuable asset in tracking and analyzing digital engagement, and we are sharing its data because it provides the best available insights into digital marketing efficacy for Northampton. However, as was the plan from the

start, Northampton.Live is no longer funded or controlled by the City of Northampton and operates independently. This initiative extends beyond Northampton.Live to include a comprehensive strategy encompassing targeted digital advertising, content marketing, and strategic partnerships with regional entities, including MGM Springfield.

That said, recent website data from Northampton.Live underscores the platform's success and the success of a digital approach in general:

- In 2025, the site received 74,000 visits from organic search, 33,000+ visits from direct search, and 2,500+ organic social searches underscoring that searching is the primary driver of traffic highlighting strong brand recognition.
- 2.8 million views on Facebook and 430,000+ Instagram impressions, extending Northampton's reach to potential visitors.
- 5,200+ email subscribers, keeping residents and visitors informed about local events and attractions.
- Ranked #1 on Google for searches like "Shopping Northampton," "Events Northampton," and "Live Music in Northampton," ensuring strong digital visibility for the city's offerings.

Additionally, revenue data shows that local receipts have begun to surpass pre-pandemic and pre-casino levels, but are not keeping pace with inflation.

- Parking Revenue: After years of losses, parking revenue has climbed back to \$2.71M in FY2025, just barely exceeding pre-pandemic numbers, but still not accounting for years of inflationary pressures.
- Hotel, Motel, & Short-Term Rental Revenue: Revenue has more than tripled from its low in FY2021 (\$286K) to \$1.13M in FY2025, though much of this increase reflects rising prices rather than sheer volume.
- Restaurant Revenue: Although improving, restaurant revenue has risen from \$477K in FY2021 to \$826K in FY2025, showing progress but still reflecting the ongoing struggles of local businesses.
- Total Local Receipts: Northampton's total local revenue collections have now just surpassed 2019 levels, growing from \$4.67M in FY2022 to \$5.8M in FY2025. However, when accounting for inflation, which has risen by approximately 26% since 2019, the city's actual revenue is still lagging behind pre-pandemic and pre-casino purchasing power.

These numbers indicate that while progress is being made, Northampton's economy remains fragile. Without continued investment in digital marketing and outreach, this slow recovery could stall, leaving local businesses vulnerable to shifting consumer habits and increased competition from larger regional draws like MGM Springfield.

### **The Struggle to Restore Northampton's Music Economy**

Live music has long been a cornerstone of Northampton's identity, with venues such as the Calvin Theater, Pearl Street, Iron Horse, and the Academy of Music serving as major draws for regional visitors. However, the pandemic and the casino have devastated the live music industry, leading to

extended closures and a slow return to pre-pandemic and pre-casino performance levels.

- The Calvin Theater and Pearl Street remain in a stalled state of uncertainty, with no clear timeline for reopening.
- Iron Horse and the Academy of Music have successfully resumed operations, but challenges remain in attracting both performers and audiences at pre-pandemic levels.

Bringing these venues back to full capacity is essential for revitalizing Northampton’s economy, as live performances drive restaurant sales, hotel stays, and increased foot traffic downtown. Without strong digital marketing and branding efforts, Northampton risks losing its reputation as a top-tier arts and music destination.

II. Please describe the project in detail and how the proposed project will address the impact indicated above. Please include a breakdown of the proposed scope of work, the scope should be sufficiently detailed to allow the review team to understand the steps required for project completion.

The Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign is a multi-year effort designed to expand the city’s regional visibility, attract new visitors, and strengthen the downtown economy through strategic, data-driven digital outreach. With support from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission’s Casino Mitigation Fund, the City of Northampton was awarded \$75,000 in the prior grant cycle to launch this initiative.

Over the past year, the city has completed a required public procurement process and has contracted with a professional digital marketing firm to implement the campaign. While the project is now actively underway, the timing of the procurement process meant that the initial grant year focused on planning, vendor selection, and campaign development. This current grant cycle presents a critical opportunity to build on that foundational work and extend the campaign’s reach, effectiveness, and long-term impact.

In the coming months, Northampton will work closely with the selected digital marketing firm to complete the foundational steps planned for the first year of this project. Deliverables to be completed by June 30th will include in-person kickoff workshops and stakeholder meetings with the Downtown Northampton Association, Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce, and Smith College leaders; focus groups with merchants, restaurateurs, cultural institutions, and residents; one-on-one interviews with external partners; a digital survey distributed through city and partner networks; regular project check-ins with city staff and leadership; monthly stakeholder roundtables; updates delivered at standing meetings; and findings and recommendations shared via an interim report and stakeholder workshop. In our reporting related to last year’s grant, we fully expect to report a resounding success to the gaming commission for phase 1 of this project, for which Northampton is eternally grateful.

This new request seeks continuation of funding to advance and expand the digital marketing campaign as it moves from launch into full implementation and optimization during FY27. Additional support next year from the gaming commission will help ensure a maximum return on this year’s initial investment. This will also include quarterly engagement sessions with stakeholders to review

campaign performance and refine strategies, and continuous digital surveys and social listening to capture community sentiment.

**Key elements of the continued campaign will include:**

- **Comprehensive Digital Advertising:** A targeted regional digital advertising strategy funded by casino mitigation dollars, utilizing Google Ads, social media platforms (Meta, Instagram, TikTok, BlueSky, Threads, Nextdoor), and display advertising to ensure Northampton maintains a consistent and compelling presence among potential visitors throughout the region. The city will work with Marketing Doctor to balance must-have vs. nice-to-have channels, paying close attention to which plan will provide the most value within the budget.
- **Landing Page & Digital Infrastructure Development:** The city is having in-depth conversations about assuming the direct management of Northampton.Live from the current outside vendor or leverage the digital assets, infrastructure, and content developed through prior casino mitigation funding support to create campaign-specific landing pages. In either scenario, this work will build on this Commission’s earlier investment to ensure Northampton has a centralized, sustainable digital hub for itinerary-building, event promotion, dining, shopping, and cultural highlights, while maximizing long-term value and local control of the platform.
- **Email & SMS Marketing:** The city will expand and manage opt-in email and SMS subscriber lists developed and supported by prior Casino Mitigation Fund investments, using them as long-term engagement tools rather than one-time marketing assets. By capturing and nurturing visitor interest through sign-ups on Northampton.Live, campaign landing pages, and event promotions, the city will deliver timely, targeted communications about events, special offers, and cultural attractions. This approach allows Northampton to convert initial interest into repeat visitation while building a sustainable, locally controlled audience that continues to generate economic impact beyond the grant period.
- **Social Media & Influencer Collaboration:** We are working on developing a steady stream of high-quality organic content, short-form video, and visual storytelling that highlights the vibrancy of downtown Northampton, including its arts scene, independent businesses, dining, and cultural events. Strategic influencer partnerships will extend the reach of casino mitigation-funded content to relevant regional audiences, maximizing impact without reliance on high-cost media buys.
- **Retargeting & Data-Driven Strategies:** Use of geo-targeting and retargeting tools to strategically reach past visitors actively searching for travel, entertainment, and cultural experiences in western Massachusetts and the broader region. The campaign will use Casino Mitigation Grant funds efficiently to reinforce Northampton’s position as a desirable destination. Performance data will be continuously analyzed to refine targeting, optimize messaging, and maximize return on investment, ensuring that marketing efforts translate into increased vision and measurable economic activity.

**Potential Collaboration with MGM Springfield**

A core aspect of this campaign is recognizing that Northampton and MGM Springfield exist within the same regional visitor economy. Rather than viewing the casino solely as a competitor, this project

seeks to explore opportunities for strategic alignment. Given the Casino is willing to embrace this plan, we envision:

- **Cooperative Marketing Initiatives:** Cross-promotion of Northampton’s independent businesses and cultural attractions to casino visitors.
- **Event Coordination:** Tying Northampton’s live music and dining experiences into the broader regional entertainment calendar, ensuring visitors extend their trips to experience both Northampton and MGM Springfield.
- **Itinerary Development:** Encouraging casino visitors to explore nearby shopping, dining, and arts venues in Northampton as part of a well-rounded Pioneer Valley experience.

This campaign will drive economic growth by increasing visibility and reinforcing Northampton’s reputation as an arts and culture hub. By leveraging data, modern digital strategies, and a potential collaboration with MGM Springfield, this project ensures that Northampton remains a strong regional draw despite shifting economic and competitive pressures.

We remain fully committed and eager to collaborate with MGM on this project. Last year, we made an effort to connect, but unfortunately were unable to establish a meaningful dialogue. This year, we plan to reach out again, leveraging the momentum and support of our marketing firm to present a strong, more coordinated approach. We are hopeful that this renewed effort will foster engagement and help establish a relationship.

This effort is not just about advertising; it is about sustaining and growing Northampton’s independent economy in an evolving landscape. The support of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission will allow the city to maximize its efforts and strengthen the long-term health of the downtown economy. Ensuring a vibrant arts and restaurant scene in Northampton will supplement the efforts of MGM Springfield to ensure that western Massachusetts is known for its arts and entertainment throughout the region.

**Proposed MGC Grant Budget**

Please use the following table to outline the project budget. Please include as an attachment any requests for proposals, quotes, or estimates that would quantify the costs associated with the mitigation.

Description of Purchase/Work	Timeline	QTY	Budget
Owing to the funding received through this grant process in FY26, Northampton has been able to envision an expansion of this Digital Marketing Campaign to include a multi-year scope, to demonstrate success, and secure future funding. The budget for this proposal totals \$75,000, on top of the \$75,000 already invested in this specific project by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission for FY26, on top of the \$404,000 that the Massachusetts Gaming Commission has invested in Northampton since the Casino Mitigation Funds inception. The budget breakdown is as follows:			
<b>Comprehensive Digital Advertising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google Ads (search and display): \$13,000</li> </ul>	*Upon grant funded through FY27		\$32,000

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid social (Meta, Instagram, TikTok, Nextdoor, Threads, BlueSky): \$16,000</li> <li>• Programmatic/display testing and optimization: \$3,000</li> </ul> <p>Directly addresses casino impacts by attracting casino and non-casino visitors to Northampton and increasing local economic activity through measurable impressions, clicks, and visitation signals.</p>			
<p><b>Landing Page &amp; Digital Infrastructure Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Platform Transition &amp; Technical Assessment: \$4,000</li> <li>• Landing Page Design &amp; Development: \$5,000</li> <li>• Content Integration &amp; Migration: \$3,000</li> <li>• Platform Optimization &amp; Training: \$2,000</li> </ul> <p>This cost structure ensures casino mitigation dollars extend the life and value of prior Commission investments.</p>	<p>*Upon grant funded through FY27</p>		<p>\$14,000</p>
<p><b>Email &amp; SMS Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List growth and segmentation</li> <li>• Campaign creation and automation</li> <li>• Ongoing management and performance optimization</li> </ul> <p>Converts short-term interest into repeat visitation and sustained economic impact, extending the life of casino mitigation investments.</p>	<p>*Upon grant funded through FY27</p>		<p>\$8,000</p>
<p><b>Social Media &amp; Influencer Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content production (video, photography, copy)</li> <li>• Influencer partnerships and deliverables</li> <li>• Distribution support for organic amplification</li> </ul> <p>Maximizes reach of casino mitigation messaging through authentic, low-cost channels that resonate with high-intent audiences.</p>	<p>*Upon grant funded through FY27</p>		<p>\$11,000</p>

<p><b>Retargeting &amp; Data-Driven Optimization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retargeting audiences (past visitors, high-intent users)</li> <li>• Performance tracking and dashboard reporting</li> <li>• Ongoing campaign optimization and refinement</li> </ul> <p>Ensures accountability and allows the city to demonstrate clear, data-supported mitigation outcomes ties to casino impacts.</p>	<p>*Upon grant funded through FY27</p>		<p>\$10,000</p>
<p>This budget reflects a balanced investment in digital advertising, creative content, and infrastructure, ensuring the campaign is data-driven, measurable, and effective in driving visitors to Northampton.</p>			
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>\$75,000</b>

**Path Forward**

Since the FY2026 application process, Northampton has made significant strides towards making this digital marketing campaign a reality. The city has contracted with Marketing Doctor, LLC to provide a digital marketing plan. The city has also engaged a group of downtown stakeholders and business owners to provide input on the direction of the marketing plan, as well as partnered with the Downtown Business Association and the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce to coordinate future marketing strategies and fundraising efforts. With additional funding from the Casino Mitigation Fund, Northampton hopes to extend digital marketing efforts for another year, as well as expand to create proposed digital marketing partnerships with MGM and other local communities. By creating partnerships and expanding our reach, we can strengthen the economic benefits for all of western Massachusetts as an arts and entertainment destination.

**[Attachments:]**

1. Letter of Support from Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra
2. Letter of Support from the Downtown Northampton Association
3. Letter of Support from the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce
4. Letter of Support from The Parlor Room Collective
5. Northampton.Live Data
6. Local Receipts Revenue Chart
7. Parking Revenue Chart
8. Bands on Brewster Poster
9. Parties in the Park Graphic
10. Salsa in the Plaza Graphic
11. Salsa in the Park Graphic
12. Summer on Strong Graphic
13. Taste of Northampton Graphic

Attachment 1 – Letter of Support from Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra



**MAYOR GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA**

**City of Northampton  
Office of the Mayor**  
210 Main Street Room 12  
Northampton, MA 01060-3199  
(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275  
mayor@northamptonma.gov

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January 31, 2026

Dear Members of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Northampton's application for the FY2027 Casino Mitigation Fund grant. With the Commission's support through last year's CMF award, the city has completed a comprehensive procurement process and is now actively working with a digital marketing firm to launch the Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign. We are encouraged to see this initiative moving forward and believe that continued funding is critical to achieving its full potential.

This campaign builds directly on the Commission's prior investment and plays an important role in supporting Northampton's economic vitality. While MGM Springfield has brought significant economic activity to the region, it has also resulted in visitors remaining largely concentrated around the casino. Northampton has long been a cultural and economic anchor in the Pioneer Valley, known for its independent businesses, vibrant arts scene, diverse dining options, and outdoor amenities. A sustained, strategic marketing effort is essential to ensuring visitors are drawn beyond the casino and into communities like Northampton.

Extending this campaign for an additional year will help strengthen Northampton's regional and statewide visibility and more fully showcase what makes our city unique. Increased awareness and visitation will directly support local small businesses, restaurants, and cultural organizations, while further leveraging the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's investment in Northampton.Live.

Thank you for your continued commitment to communities impacted by casino-related economic shifts. I strongly encourage the Commission to give favorable consideration to this FY2027 application so the city can build on the progress underway and maximize the long-term benefits of this important work.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any additional assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gina-Louise Sciarra".

Gina-Louise Sciarra  
Mayor

Attachment 2 – Letter of Support from the Downtown Northampton Association



January 28, 2026

Dear Members of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission,

On behalf of the Downtown Northampton Association (DNA), I am pleased to express our strong support for the City of Northampton's application for the FY2027 Massachusetts Gaming Commission's Casino Mitigation Fund (CMF) grant. Thanks to CMF funding awarded last year, the city has recently completed a thorough procurement process and is now actively engaged with a digital marketing firm to launch the Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign. We are excited to see this work getting underway and believe continued funding is essential to fully realize its impact.

This campaign represents an important opportunity to build on the Commission's prior investment and to ensure Northampton remains a vibrant destination within the Pioneer Valley. While MGM Springfield has generated significant economic activity for the region, it has also concentrated visitors in the casino area. Northampton has long served as a cultural and economic hub, offering a distinctive mix of independent businesses, dining, arts and entertainment, and outdoor experiences. Strategic, sustained marketing is critical to drawing visitors beyond the casino and into communities like ours.

The Downtown Northampton Association is confident that extending this campaign for an additional year will strengthen Northampton's visibility and amplify its unique character. Increased awareness and foot traffic will directly benefit local small businesses, restaurants, and cultural institutions, while further leveraging the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's investment in Northampton.live.

Thank you for your continued consideration and support of this important initiative. We strongly encourage the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to look favorably upon this FY2027 application so the city can carry this momentum forward and maximize the long-term benefits of the project.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [info@nohodna.org](mailto:info@nohodna.org) or 413-585-1616 if I can provide any additional information or support.

Sincerely,

Amanda Shafii  
Board President  
Downtown Northampton Association

Attachment 3 – Letter of Support from the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce



2026 Board of Directors

Ella Nathanael Alkiewicz  
Ella Aik Inuk LLC

Anna Bowen  
Strada Footwear

Michael Brown  
Davis Financial Group

Cheyenne Burnham  
Food Bank of Western  
Massachusetts

Jamie Cocco  
Empowered Digital Marketing

Jennifer Ewers, VICE PRESIDENT  
Edward Jones Investments

Caroline Gear  
International Language Institute

Douglas Gilbert, TREASURER  
Florence Bank

Jeffrey Hoess-Brooks  
HB Real Estate

Vince Jackson, CLERK  
Greater Northampton Chamber of  
Commerce

Felicia R. Lundquist  
Think Again Training & Consulting

Jeffrey Hoess-Brooks  
HB Real Estate

Meghan McCormick, IMMEDIATE  
PAST PRESIDENT  
RE/MAX Connections

Jim Nash  
CareerWorks

Nanci Newton  
The Healing ZONE Therapeutic  
Massage

Joanna Olin  
Smith College

Russell J. Peatter, EX OFFICIO

Catherine Reed  
Coolay Dickinson Hospital

Taylor Robbins, PRESIDENT  
UMassFive College Credit Union

Amanda Shafii  
CopyCat, Inc.

Elena Sharnoff  
B Strategic Communications

Mark Tajima  
B. Alpha Construction LLC

Isaac Weiner  
Familiars Coffee and Tea and  
Florence Pie Bar

January 30, 2026

Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Members of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission,

On behalf of the Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce (GNCC), I am pleased to express our strong support for the City of Northampton’s application for the FY27 Massachusetts Gaming Commission’s Casino Mitigation Fund (CMF) grant. Thanks to CMF funding awarded last year, the City has recently completed a thorough procurement process and is now actively engaged with a marketing firm to launch the Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign. We are excited to see this work get underway and believe continued funding is essential to realize its impact fully.

This campaign represents an important opportunity to build on the Commission’s prior investment and to ensure Northampton remains a vibrant destination within the Pioneer Valley. While MGM Springfield has generated significant economic activity for the region, it has also concentrated visitors in the casino area. Northampton has long served as a cultural and economic hub, offering a distinctive mix of independent businesses, dining, arts and entertainment, and outdoor experiences. Strategic, sustained marketing is critical to drawing visitors beyond the casino and into communities like ours.

The GNCC is confident that extending this campaign for an additional year will strengthen Northampton’s visibility and amplify its unique character. Increased awareness and foot traffic will directly benefit local small businesses, restaurants, and cultural institutions, while further leveraging the Massachusetts Gaming Commission’s prior investment in Northampton.live.

Thank you for your continued consideration and support of this important initiative. We strongly encourage the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to support this FY27 application so the City can carry this momentum forward and maximize the long-term benefits of the project.

Sincerely,

Vincent D. Jackson  
Executive Director

Attachment 4 – Letter of Support from the Parlor Room Collective



January 28, 2026

Dear Members of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission,

On behalf of the Parlor Room Collective (PRCO), I am pleased to express our strong support for the City of Northampton’s application for the FY2027 Massachusetts Gaming Commission’s Casino Mitigation Fund (CMF) grant. Thanks to CMF funding awarded last year, the city has recently completed a thorough procurement process and is now actively engaged with a digital marketing firm to launch the Northampton Digital Marketing Campaign. We are excited to see this work getting underway and believe continued funding is essential to fully realize its impact.

This campaign represents an important opportunity to build on the Commission’s prior investment and to ensure Northampton remains a vibrant destination within the Pioneer Valley. While MGM Springfield has generated significant economic activity for the region, it has also concentrated visitors in the casino area. Northampton has long served as a cultural and economic hub, offering a distinctive mix of independent businesses, dining, arts and entertainment, and outdoor experiences. Strategic, sustained marketing is critical to drawing visitors beyond the casino and into communities like ours.

The nonprofit Parlor Room Collective reopened The Iron Horse Music Hall, Northampton’s most iconic music venue last year after a 4-year closure and we are still reaching out to past and new patrons. The digital marketing program that the City is pursuing is integral to helping us reach our audience and sustaining Northampton as a cultural destination.

Thank you for your continued consideration and support of this important initiative. We strongly encourage the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to look favorably upon the City of Northampton’s FY2027 application so it can carry this momentum forward and maximize the long-term benefits of the project.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any additional information or support.

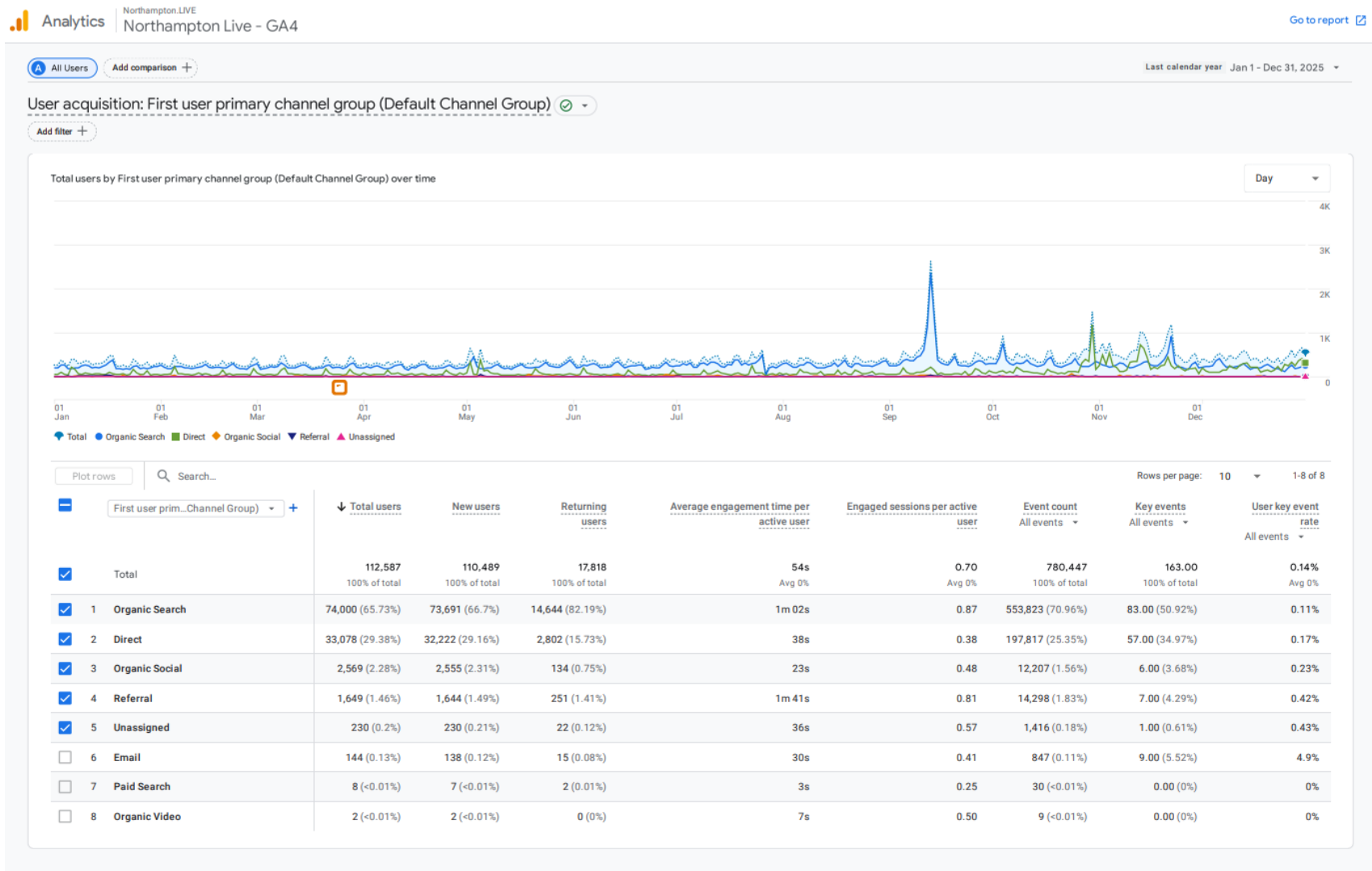
Sincerely,

Randy Krotowski

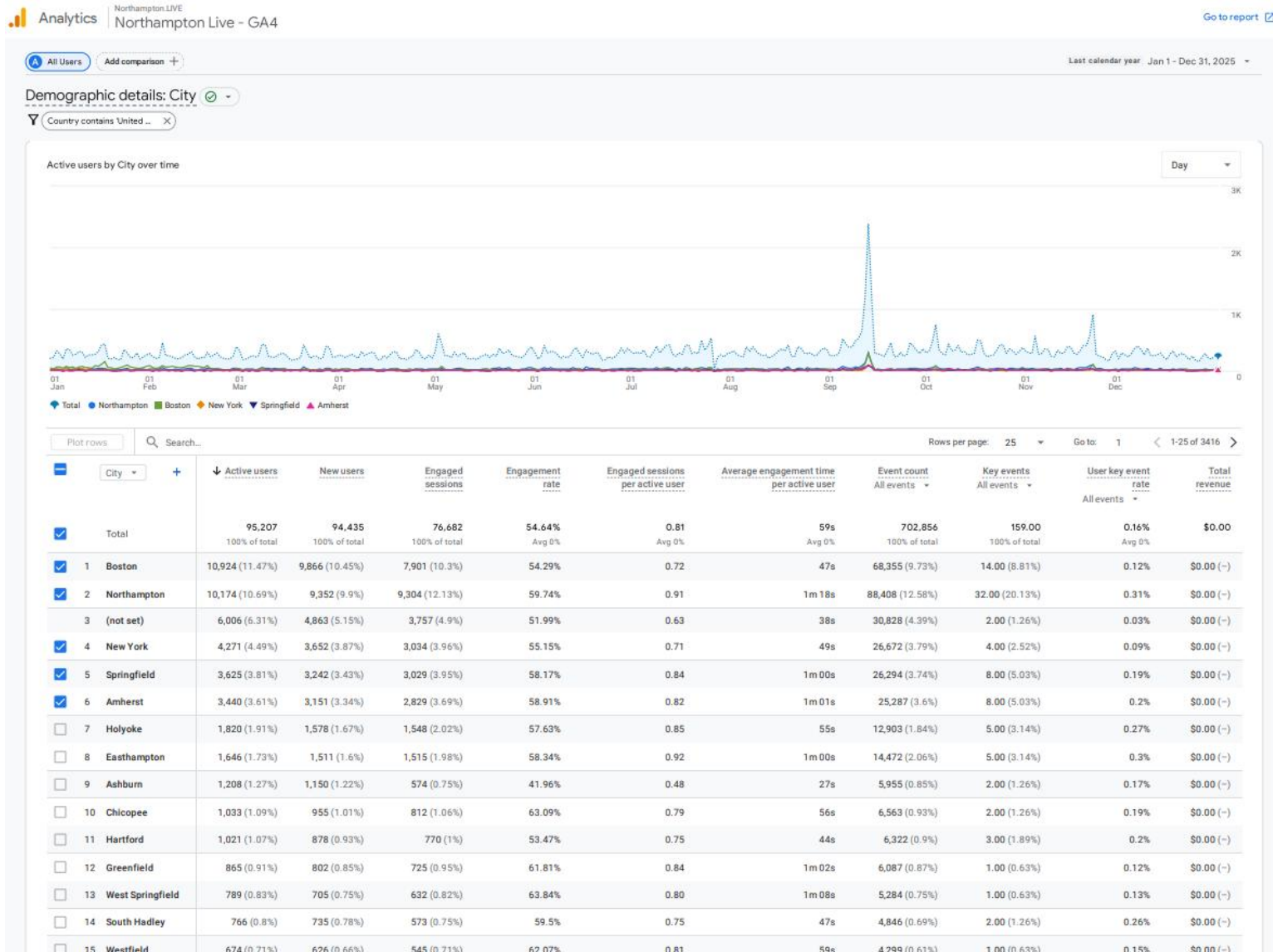
President, The Parlor Room Collective

The Parlor Room, Inc.  
32 Masonic Street, Northampton MA 01060

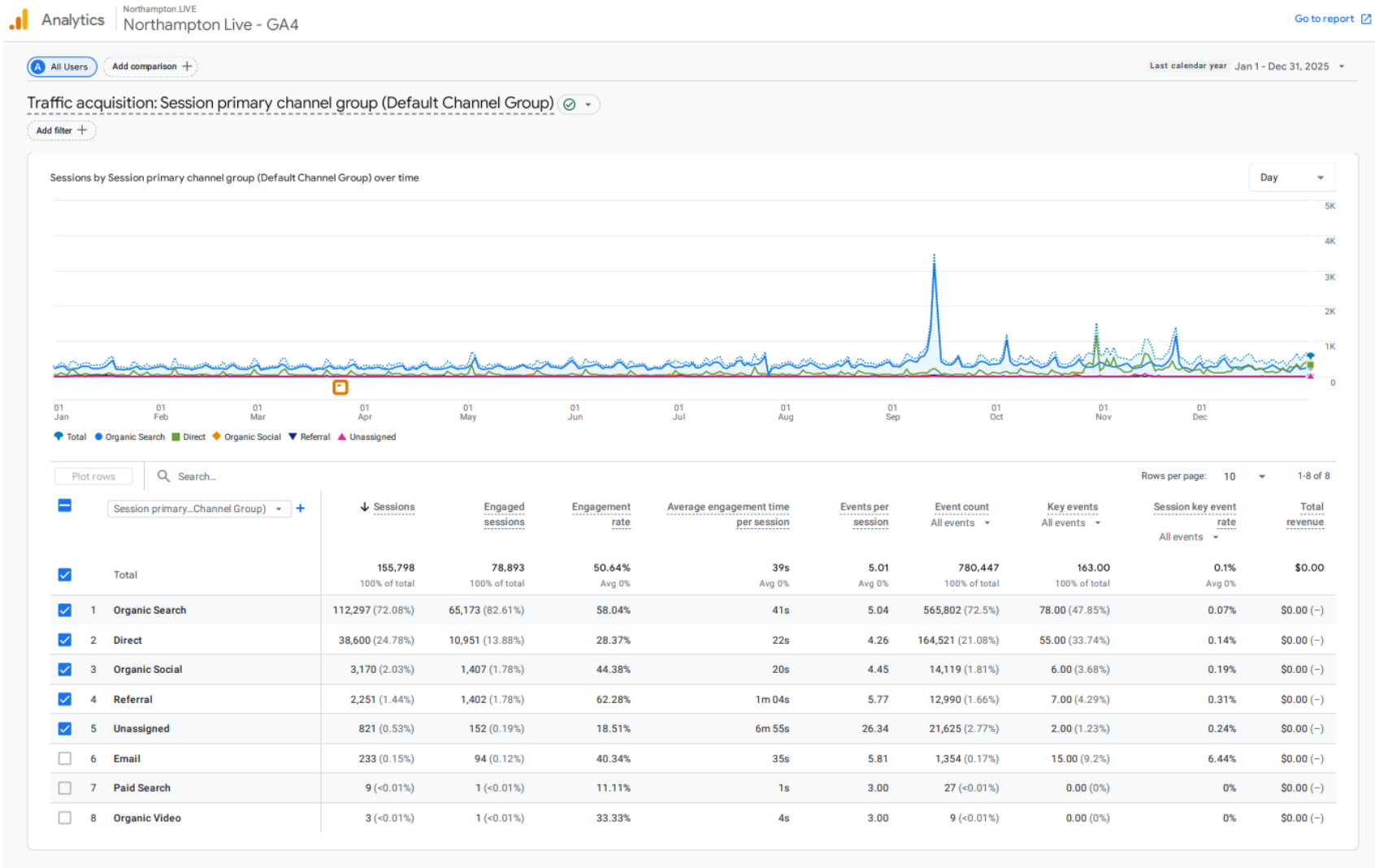
Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data



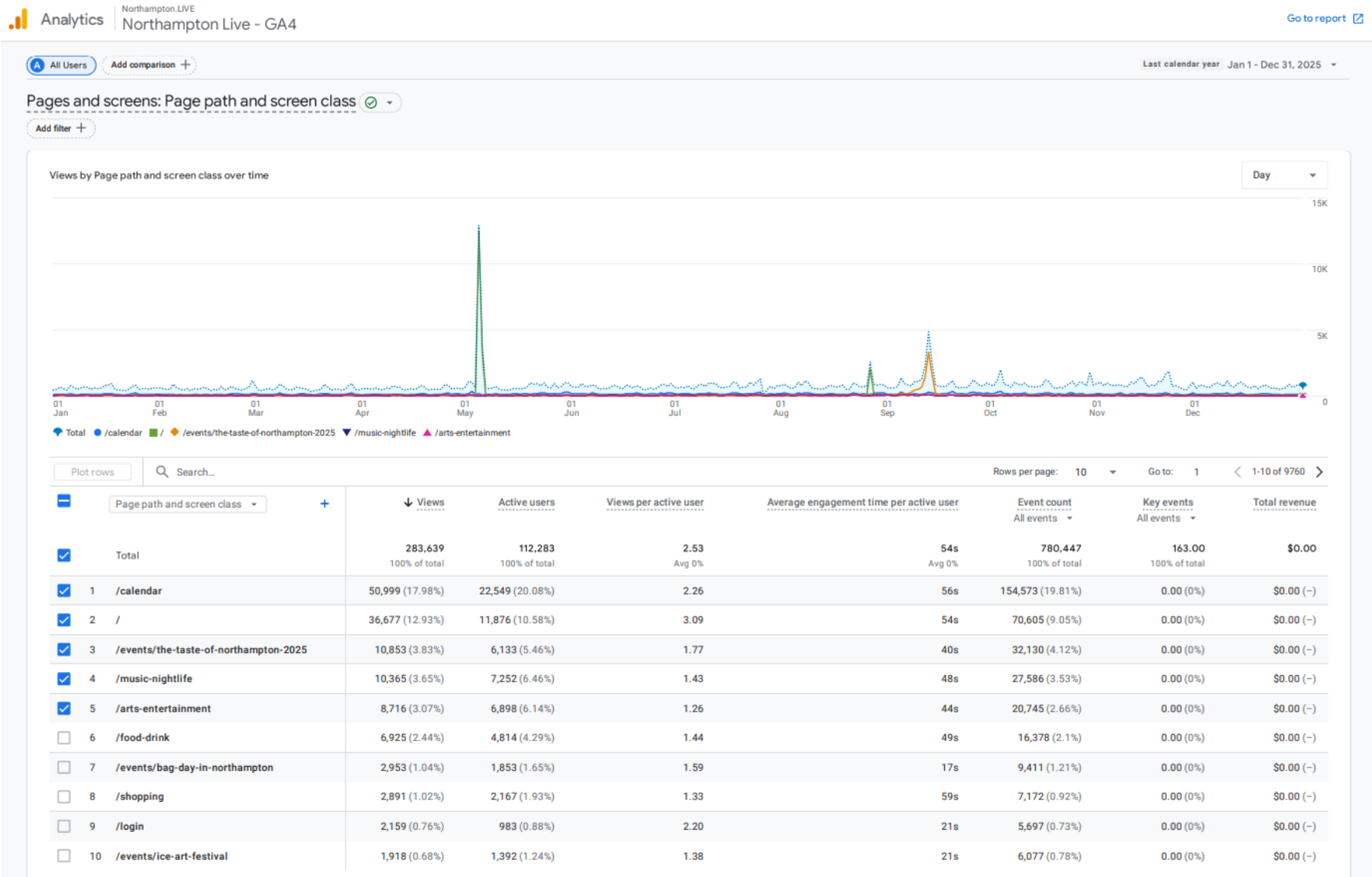
Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data (continued)




Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data (continued)



Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data (continued)




Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data (continued)

Subscribers and Open Rate  Edit

Add an optional description

 Favorite  Make a copy

Date range

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025 

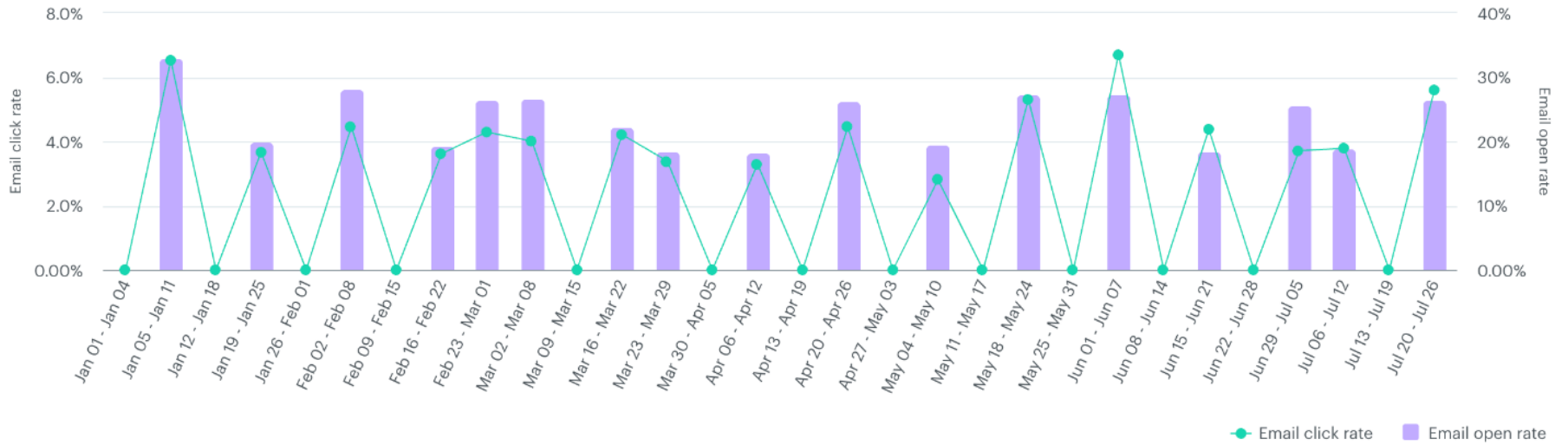
Updated 01/29/26, 12:36 PM  Refresh

 Email click rate

4.2%

 Email open rate

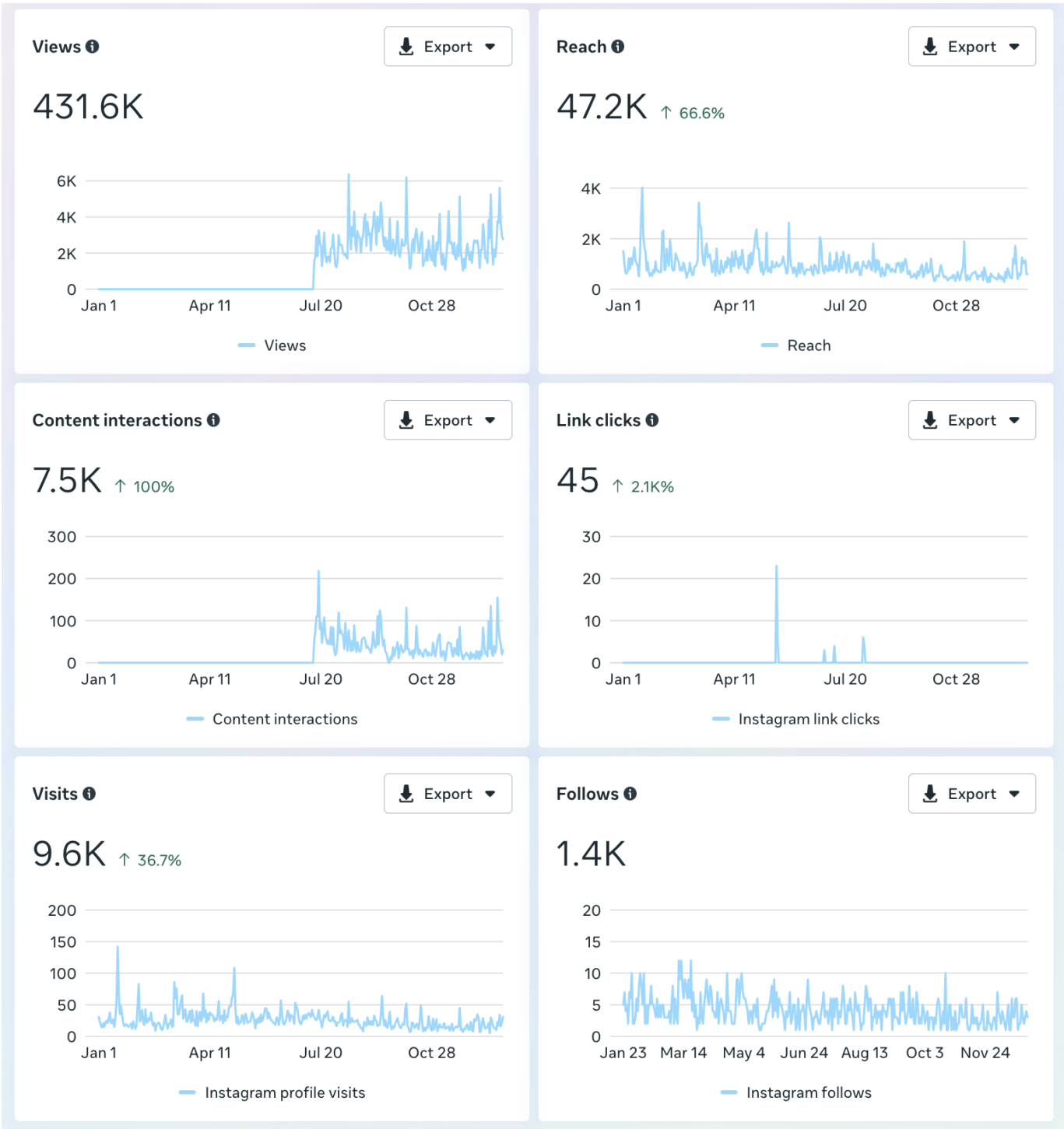
22.4%



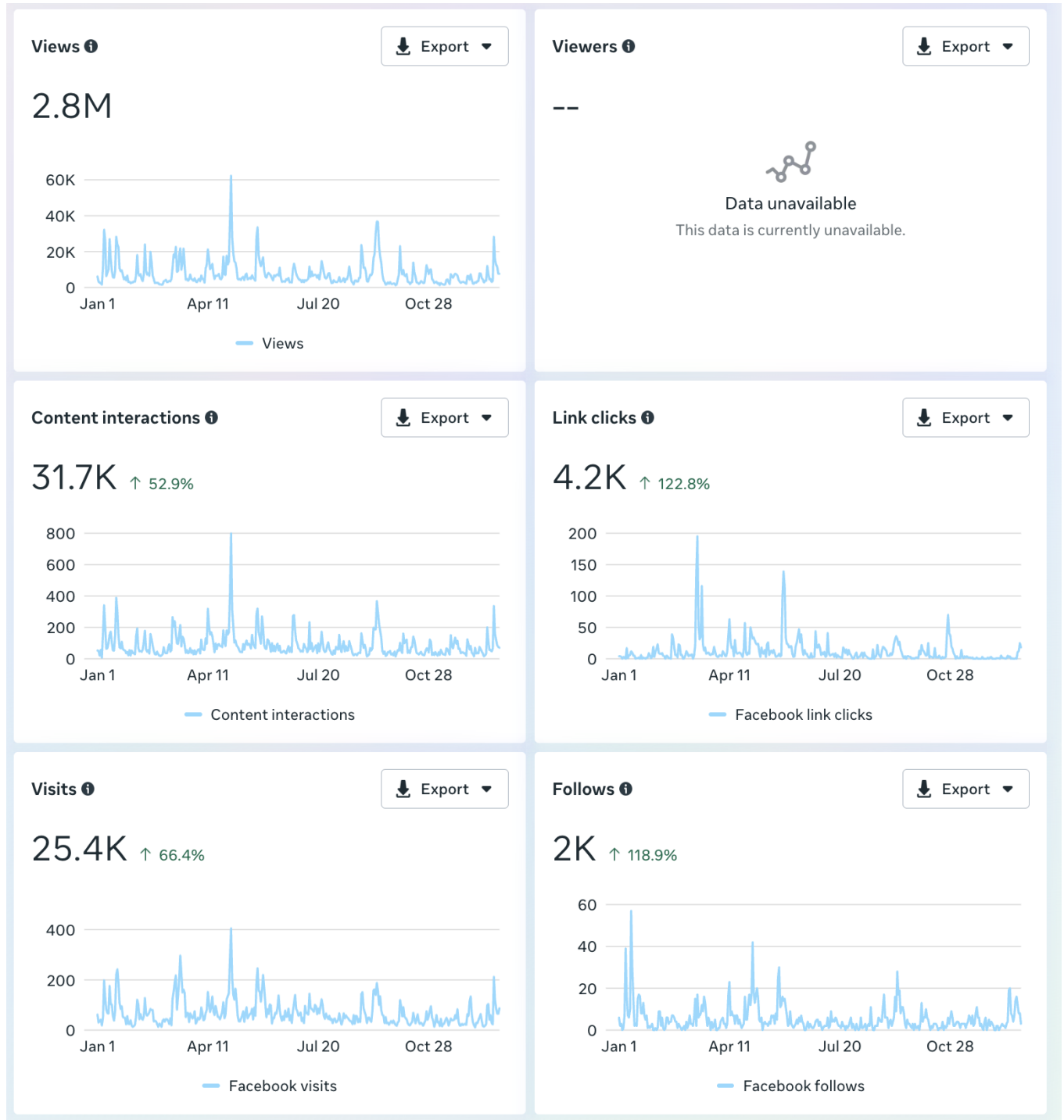
0 - 30 of 53 [← Previous](#) [Next →](#)

Feedback

Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data (continued)



Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data (continued)



Attachment 5 – Northampton.Live Data (continued)

# Contacts over time

Dec 30, 2025 - Jan 28, 2026 • Compared to previous 30 days

 Total contacts

**5,259**

▲ 113 (2.2%)

## Subscribed contacts

Email subscribers 4,526 ▲ 2.2%

## Unsubscribed contacts

Email unsubscribers 733 ▲ 2.2%

Attachment 6 - Local Receipts Revenue Chart

Months of Sales	Meals Tax					Short-Term Rentals							
	Year	Month Qtr Paid	Local Option	Est State Tax	Estimated Sales based on Pd Sales Tax	Year	Month Qtr Paid	Local Option	Est. State Tax	Estimated Sales based on Pd Sales Tax			
			0.75%	6.25%				3%	5.70%				
May, June, July 2025	2026	1. September	\$ 216,084	\$ 1,800,701	\$ 28,811,220	2026	1. September	\$ 21,851	\$ 41,516	\$ 728,357			
August, Sept, Oct 2025	2026	2. December	\$ 225,666	\$ 1,880,553	\$ 30,088,847	2026	2. December	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -			
Nov & Dec 2025, Jan 2026	2026	3. March	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	2026	3. March	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -			
Feb, Mar, April 2026	2026	4. June	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	2026	4. June	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -			
	Total FY2026					\$ 441,751	\$ 3,681,254	\$ 58,900,067	Total FY2026		\$ 21,851	\$ 41,516	\$ 728,357
May, June, July 2024	2025	1. September	\$ 210,635	\$ 1,755,292	\$ 28,084,667	2025	1. September	\$ 14,910	\$ 28,329	\$ 497,002			
August, Sept, Oct 2024	2025	2. December	\$ 200,459	\$ 1,670,493	\$ 26,727,880	2025	2. December	\$ 13,356	\$ 25,376	\$ 445,194			
Nov & Dec 2024, Jan 2025	2025	3. March	\$ 204,479	\$ 1,703,994	\$ 27,263,908	2025	3. March	\$ 11,679	\$ 22,190	\$ 389,296			
Feb, Mar, April 2025	2025	4. June	\$ 211,396	\$ 1,761,631	\$ 28,186,089	2025	4. June	\$ 12,239	\$ 23,254	\$ 407,968			
	Total FY2025					\$ 826,969	\$ 6,891,409	\$ 110,262,544	Total FY2025		\$ 52,184	\$ 99,149	\$ 1,739,460
May, June, July 2023	2024	1. September	\$ 201,746	\$ 1,681,218	\$ 26,899,489	2024	1. September	\$ 18,652	\$ 35,439	\$ 621,729			
August, Sept, Oct 2023	2024	2. December	\$ 205,393	\$ 1,711,604	\$ 27,385,669	2024	2. December	\$ 10,992	\$ 20,884	\$ 366,394			
Nov & Dec 2023, Jan 2024	2024	3. March	\$ 181,749	\$ 1,514,572	\$ 24,233,144	2024	3. March	\$ 11,132	\$ 21,151	\$ 371,075			
Feb, Mar, April 2024	2024	4. June	\$ 202,526	\$ 1,687,714	\$ 27,003,428	2024	4. June	\$ 16,922	\$ 32,152	\$ 564,076			
	Total FY2024					\$ 791,413	\$ 6,595,108	\$ 105,521,731	Total FY2024		\$ 57,698	\$ 109,627	\$ 1,923,274
May, June, July 2022	2023	1. September	\$ 203,303	\$ 1,694,191	\$ 27,107,059	2023	1. September	\$ 11,602	\$ 22,044	\$ 386,733			
August, Sept, Oct 2022	2023	2. December	\$ 204,512	\$ 1,704,264	\$ 27,268,228	2023	2. December	\$ 12,608	\$ 23,955	\$ 420,267			
Nov & Dec 2022, Jan 2023	2023	3. March	\$ 180,840	\$ 1,506,997	\$ 24,111,959	2023	3. March	\$ 11,371	\$ 21,605	\$ 379,039			
Feb, Mar, April 2023	2023	4. June	\$ 191,046	\$ 1,592,047	\$ 25,472,752	2023	4. June	\$ 10,448	\$ 19,852	\$ 348,278			
	Total FY2023					\$ 779,700	\$ 6,497,500	\$ 103,959,997	Total FY2023		\$ 46,030	\$ 87,456	\$ 1,534,318

Months of Sales	Traditional (Hotel) Lodgings					Cannabis							
	Year	Month Qtr Paid	Local Option	Est. State Tax	Estimated Sales based on Pd Sales Tax	Year	Month Qtr Paid	Local Option	Est. State Tax	Estimated Sales based on Pd Sales Tax			
			6%	5.70%				3%	10.75%				
May, June, July 2025	2026	1. September	\$ 353,803	\$ 336,113	\$ 5,896,724	2026	1. September	\$ 238,381	\$ 854,199	\$ 7,946,033			
August, Sept, Oct 2025	2026	2. December	\$ 329,555	\$ 313,077	\$ 5,492,582	2026	2. December	\$ 227,928	\$ 816,743	\$ 7,597,613			
Nov & Dec 2025, Jan 2026	2026	3. March	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	2026	3. March	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -			
Feb, Mar, April 2026	2026	4. June	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	2026	4. June	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -			
	Total FY2026					\$ 683,358	\$ 649,190	\$ 11,389,306	Total FY2026		\$ 466,309	\$ 1,670,942	\$ 15,543,646
May, June, July 2024	2025	1. September	\$ 300,231	\$ 285,220	\$ 5,003,856	2025	1. September	\$ 288,060	\$ 1,032,217	\$ 9,602,016			
August, Sept, Oct 2024	2025	2. December	\$ 324,096	\$ 307,891	\$ 5,401,600	2025	2. December	\$ 286,636	\$ 1,027,111	\$ 9,554,519			
Nov & Dec 2024, Jan 2025	2025	3. March	\$ 242,712	\$ 230,576	\$ 4,045,194	2025	3. March	\$ 307,948	\$ 1,103,481	\$ 10,264,943			
Feb, Mar, April 2025	2025	4. June	\$ 220,770	\$ 209,732	\$ 3,679,501	2025	4. June	\$ 254,301	\$ 911,244	\$ 8,476,689			
	Total FY2025					\$ 1,087,809	\$ 1,033,419	\$ 18,130,151	Total FY2025		\$ 1,136,945	\$ 4,074,053	\$ 37,898,167
May, June, July 2023	2024	1. September	\$ 363,801	\$ 345,611	\$ 6,063,355	2024	1. September	\$ 208,429	\$ 746,872	\$ 6,947,643			
August, Sept, Oct 2023	2024	2. December	\$ 324,369	\$ 308,150	\$ 5,406,142	2024	2. December	\$ 229,480	\$ 822,302	\$ 7,649,324			
Nov & Dec 2023, Jan 2024	2024	3. March	\$ 173,841	\$ 165,149	\$ 2,897,353	2024	3. March	\$ 224,039	\$ 802,808	\$ 7,467,979			
Feb, Mar, April 2024	2024	4. June	\$ 215,689	\$ 204,905	\$ 3,594,821	2024	4. June	\$ 282,864	\$ 1,013,597	\$ 9,428,814			
	Total FY2024					\$ 1,077,700	\$ 1,023,815	\$ 17,961,672	Total FY2024		\$ 944,813	\$ 3,385,579	\$ 31,493,761
May, June, July 2022	2023	1. September	\$ 201,938	\$ 191,841	\$ 3,365,637	2023	1. September	\$ 245,832	\$ 880,898	\$ 8,194,402			
August, Sept, Oct 2022	2023	2. December	\$ 324,096	\$ 307,892	\$ 5,401,607	2023	2. December	\$ 209,122	\$ 749,354	\$ 6,970,733			
Nov & Dec 2022, Jan 2023	2023	3. March	\$ 230,921	\$ 219,375	\$ 3,848,686	2023	3. March	\$ 188,596	\$ 675,802	\$ 6,286,533			
Feb, Mar, April 2023	2023	4. June	\$ 214,019	\$ 203,318	\$ 3,566,988	2023	4. June	\$ 202,603	\$ 725,994	\$ 6,753,433			
	Total FY2023					\$ 970,975	\$ 922,426	\$ 16,182,917	Total FY2023		\$ 846,153	\$ 3,032,049	\$ 28,205,102

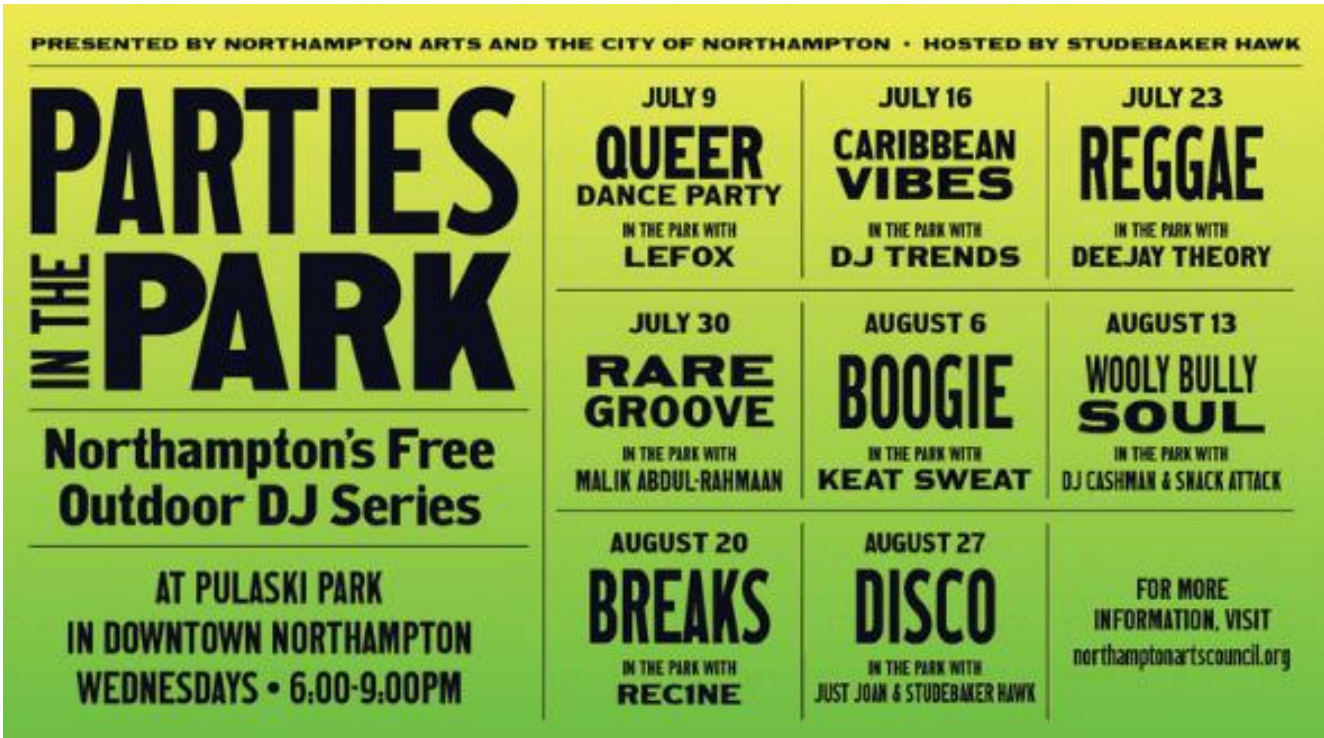
Attachment 7 – Parking Revenue Chart

TOTAL COMPARISON ALL PARKING REVENUE					
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Total to Date
FY26 2 Qtrs	857,007.04	562,763.85	-	-	1,419,770.89
FY25	602,716.97	662,154.27	776,332.60	669,069.57	2,710,273.41
FY24	617,254.61	632,914.27	730,244.46	680,533.87	2,660,947.21
FY23	503,060.41	484,962.07	534,565.16	639,385.93	2,161,973.57
FY22	544,815.99	530,831.73	428,848.49	485,437.51	1,989,933.72
FY21	233,993.66	274,962.27	423,438.93	433,332.86	1,365,727.72
FY20	633,907.27	770,303.73	482,073.13	273,837.28	2,160,121.41
FY19	694,652.73	700,527.53	721,642.34	732,031.56	2,848,854.16
FY18	697,222.40	683,368.33	693,532.74	726,405.48	2,800,528.95
FY17	721,819.81	709,602.63	637,364.46	870,935.56	2,939,722.46
FY16	659,261.89	783,014.11	734,512.22	705,725.70	2,882,513.92
FY15	571,585.60	788,435.65	617,608.73	776,445.10	2,754,075.08
FY14	702,334.20	737,390.61	675,196.22	688,271.44	2,803,192.47
FY13	693,185.01	742,358.78	701,191.06	671,945.63	2,808,680.48

Attachment 8 – Bands on Brewster Poster



Attachment 9 – Parties in the Park Graphic



Attachment 10 – Salsa in the Plaza Graphic

**Salsa in the Plaza**  
A free outdoor Latin dance party for the community!  
SALSA BACHATA MERENGUE KIZOMBA CRA-CRA

PRESENTED BY THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON  
HOSTED BY McCoy

**EVERY SUNDAY 3PM TO 5PM**

**DATES:**  
JUNE 06.01 06.08 06.15 06.22 06.29  
JULY 07.06 07.13 07.20 07.27  
AUGUST 08.03 08.10 08.17 08.24 08.31  
(DATES ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT)

**DANCENJOY**  
EJ Gare Plaza 44 Armory St. Northampton, MA  
Between the parking garage and Thornes

Attachment 11 – Salsa in the Park Graphic

**SALSA IN THE PARK 2025 LINEUP**

**SATURDAY 8/2/25 • 6 PM LULADA CLUB**

**SATURDAY 8/30/25 • 6 PM McCoy JAMISON**

**SATURDAY 9/6/25 • 6 PM DJ BONGOHEAD**

**A FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT SERIES**

THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON PRESENTS:  
**SALSA IN THE PARK '25 FREE!**  
PULASKI PARK - DOWNTOWN NORTHAMPTON, MA

Attachment 12 – Summer on Strong Graphic



Attachment 13 – Taste of Northampton Graphic





**APPENDIX E – BD-26-1068-1068C-1068L-121911.  
MUNICIPAL BLOCK GRANT FY 2027 WAIVER FORM**

Applicants may request a waiver of a condition set forth in the Application for the Commission’s consideration. All requests for waivers or variances shall be submitted with the Application. The Commission may in its discretion waive or grant a variance from any provision or requirement contained in the FY 2027 Guidelines.

<b>Applicant:</b> City of Northampton
<b>Program Manager:</b> Annie Lesko
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:alesko@northamptonma.gov">alesko@northamptonma.gov</a>
<b>Telephone:</b> 413-587-1212
<b>Address:</b> 210 Main St., Northampton, MA 01060
<p><b>I. Financial Variance Request:</b></p> <p><i>If your municipality’s proposed allocation is insufficient to mitigate identified casino related impacts, you may use the space below to request additional funds. Municipal waivers will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and award decisions will be based on available funding.</i></p> <p><b>Please Note:</b> The intent of this waiver is not to fund routine expenses but to find significant projects that would not otherwise be able to be funded under a municipality’s annual CMF allocation.</p>
<b>CMF Designated FY 2027 Grant Amount:</b> \$19,200
<b>Requested Amount Over Designated:</b> \$55,800
<p><b>Basis of Waiver Request:</b></p> <p>The City of Northampton appreciates the availability of \$19,200 in Casino Mitigation Fund support for this grant cycle. However, that level of funding is not sufficient to meaningfully mitigate the ongoing and compounding economic impacts associated with the presence of MGM Springfield on Northampton’s downtown economy.</p> <p>Northampton competes directly within the same regional visitor market as MGM Springfield for discretionary spending on dining, arts, entertainment, and overnight travel. The scale, frequency, and visibility of casino-funded marketing efforts far exceed what can be addressed through a limited, short-term allocation. A \$19,200 award would restrict the city to a narrowly scoped or intermittent digital presence, which is insufficient to influence visitor behavior, shift travel patterns, or counteract sustained competitive pressure.</p> <p>Effective mitigation requires consistent, multi-channel visibility over time, particularly in digital spaces where regional travel decisions are actively being made. The city’s digital marketing strategy, being built through prior Casino Mitigation Fund support, relies on coordinated advertising, content development, email and SMS engagement, influencer partnerships, and data-driven retargeting. At the \$19,200 level, the city would be forced to</p>

significantly reduce or eliminate key components of the campaign, undermining the effectiveness of the Commonwealth’s earlier investment and limiting measurable economic impact.

In contrast, an award totaling \$75,000 — including the requested additional \$55,800 — would allow the city to:

- Sustain a consistent regional digital advertising presence capable of reaching and influencing high-intent visitors.
- Fully leverage and build upon grant-funded assets such as Northampton.Live, campaign landing pages, and subscriber lists, rather than allowing them to stagnate.
- Deploy geo-targeted and retargeted outreach to audiences most likely to divert discretionary spending away from Northampton without intervention.
- Support locally owned businesses through increased visitation, extended stays, and repeat trips.
- Strengthen Northampton’s role as a complementary destination within the regional entertainment ecosystem, including opportunities for alignment with MGM Springfield.

Casino mitigation is most effective when funding levels are sufficient to change outcomes, not merely maintain visibility. A \$19,200 allocation would limit the city’s ability to respond proportionally to the scale of economic displacement experienced by independent restaurants, arts venues, and retailers. By contrast, the requested funding level enables a strategic, sustained response that directly supports mitigation goals and maximizes the return on prior CMF investments.

The city respectfully requests the additional \$55,800 to bring total funding to \$75,000, ensuring that this initiative can function as a true mitigation strategy — one that meaningfully supports Northampton’s downtown economy and strengthens the overall regional tourism landscape of western Massachusetts.

**II. Programmatic Requirement Variance Request:**

*A municipality may request a waiver from any application requirement. Municipal waivers will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and applicants will be notified of the Commission’s decision.*

**Basis of Waiver Request:**