

# Fund drive aims for Fitchburg alley makeover

By Cyrus Moulton

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FITCHBURG — A crowd-funding campaign is underway to transform a downtown alley into a temporary park with greenery, public art and a street cart.

“This project will transform an underutilized alleyway into a destination and entrepreneurial opportunity in downtown Fitchburg, increasing foot traffic for local businesses and adding vibrancy to this important Gateway City,” MassDevelopment President and CEO Lauren Liss said in a statement.

MassDevelopment and the civic crowdfunding platform Patronicity have launched a new Commonwealth Places campaign with the Fitchburg State University Foundation and Reimagine North of Main.

The organizations plan to transform Mill Street using movable AstroTurf, planters and modular decking.

They want to incorporate murals, other works of public art and decorative window treatments on nearby buildings, and make available a street cart where vendors can sell their wares.

If the campaign reaches its crowdfunding goal of \$40,000 by June 30 at



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midnight, the project will win a matching grant with funds from MassDevelopment's Commonwealth Places program.

“We are grateful to have the continued support of MassDevelopment in Fitchburg's downtown,” said Fitchburg Mayor Stephen

L. DiNatale in a statement. “There are many exciting projects in the pipeline — such as the Theater Block, City Hall, the Fitchburg Arts Community, and the Library Redevelopment — but these projects take time. Placemaking projects like Activate Mill Street are a great

way to build some low-cost, short-term wins towards that long-term change and continue the momentum that is pushing Fitchburg, and its downtown, in a positive direction as a vibrant center for arts and culture.”

More information is at [www.patronicity.com/fitchburg](http://www.patronicity.com/fitchburg).