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Middlesex 3 Coalition Spotlight: Alyssa Sandoval, Economic Development Director at the Town of Bedford

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Alyssa Sandoval
Town of Bedford

How has your community navigated the COVID 19 pandemic? Through our economic development office and board of health, we work closely with all businesses in sending out guidance on protocols and details released by the state. Our primary aim is to help businesses better understand the requirements needed prior to re-opening. We work with Bedford businesses to allow them to operate more flexibly in challenging conditions, such as providing a restaurant tool-kit with guidance for restaurants to expand temporary outdoor dining to sidewalks, parking areas, and plazas.

What is the most exciting economic development project for your community in 2020? This year, we have been working on an exciting project supported by MassDevelopment, to envision a new strategy for Bedford's Crosby District. For Bedford, the Crosby District is an important employment anchor and tax base, complementing the commercial, office and industrial activities around Wiggins Ave. and Hanscom Airfield. With approximately five million s/f of development, approximately 8,000 to 9,000 employees work in this district. The new vision for Crosby District will help drive decisions about policy, infrastructure investment, marketing strategies, and the partnerships necessary to bring about change and a new identity for the district.

What attracts businesses to your community? Bedford provides an ideal environment for the "development of ideas" from research to production and manufacturing. Bedford's strongest attributes - easy access, strong regional economy, natural setting, and range of building types and development sites - make it suitable for companies in every phase of their life cycle. Start-up companies find flexible, affordable spaces while mature companies find ideal headquarter locations to grow. Companies like to locate in Bedford to be close to other industries engaged in life sciences, advanced technology, computer services, medical devices, and other innovative activities. Bedford benefits from the major research powerhouse, MITRE Corp. in town, and the nearby presence of Lincoln Labs and Hanscom Air Force Base.

What M3 Coalition networking opportunities do your community and businesses in your community participate in? I participate in M3's weekly meetings with economic development directors and chambers of commerce across Middlesex 3 where we discuss topics of interest to our businesses and communities dealing with COVID-19. The town of Bedford has hosted several "What's Happening in Middlesex 3?" events often in partnership with our businesses, such as MITRE Corp., Instrumentation Lab, iRobot, National Development, and Jumbo Capital. I have found M3 Coalition's events to be a rewarding opportunity to learn about something new and to network and partner with others in the region.