

# Reimagining Railroad Strengthening Connections Downtown

Public Meeting #2  
June 23, 2014



# Welcome

# Presentation Overview

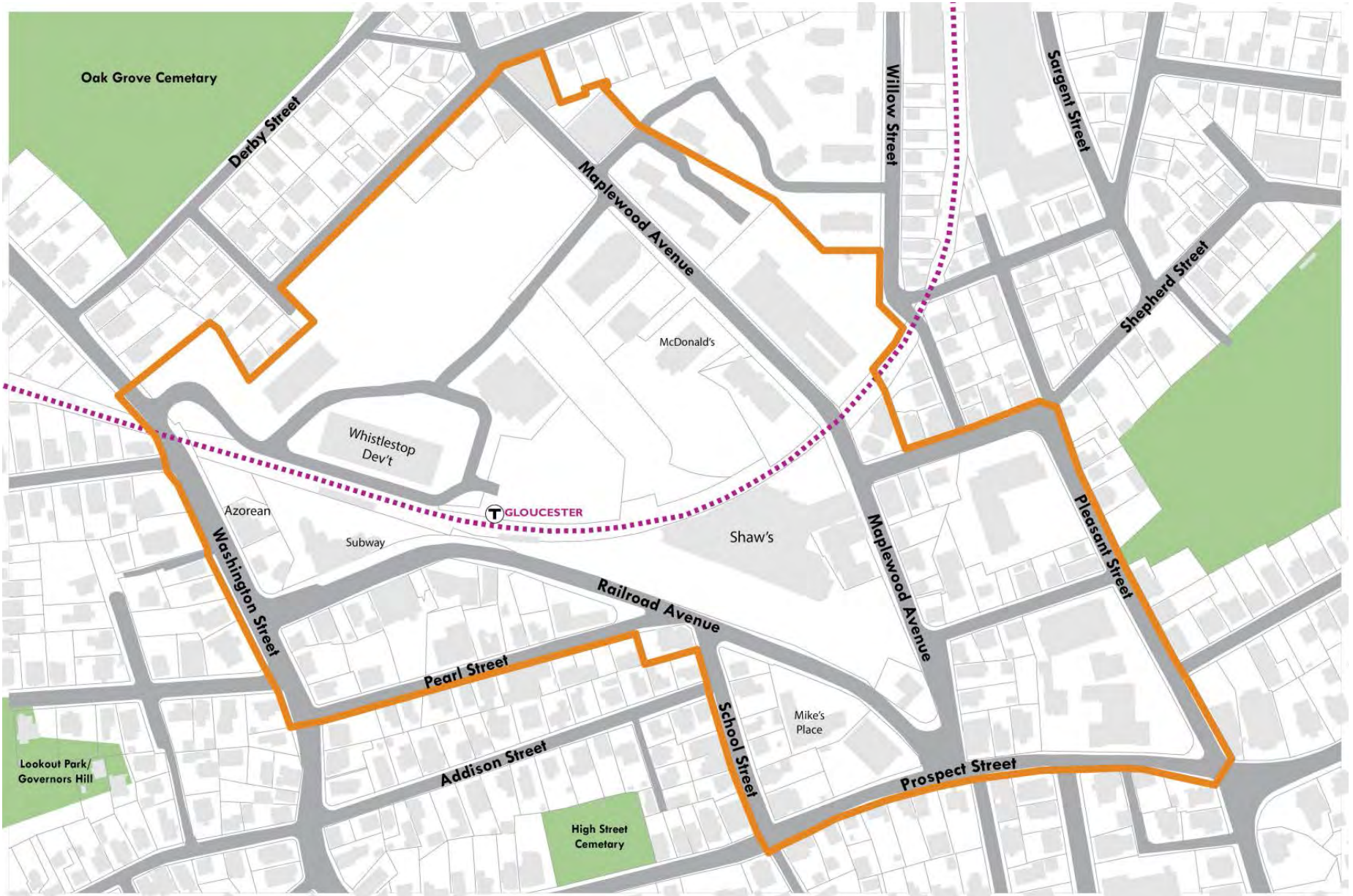
1. **What We Heard from You**
2. **Future Opportunities**
3. **Realizing the Opportunities**
  - **Market Study: Understanding the potential**
  - **Built Environment**
    - **Public Improvements: Knitting it all together**
    - **Development Opportunities: Setting the stage**
5. **Questions and Answers**

# Site Orientation

# Reimagining Railroad Strengthening Connections Downtown



# Reimagining Railroad Strengthening Connections Downtown



## What we heard from you:

1. The area should first and foremost **serve the residents**
2. The area should be **walkable** and provide **safe**, walkable connections to the downtown and residential areas
3. The area **complements** the downtown retail area but is also distinct
4. There is an opportunity to make the area *feel* like a **distinctive place** through public improvements and private development
5. Providing a **variety** of housing types and keeping housing **affordable** is important

# Future Direction



# Reimagining Railroad

## Strengthening Connections Downtown



# Market Study

## What is a **market study**?

A market study analyzes existing and projected demographic and economic conditions within a designated trade area (e.g. Downtown Gloucester) to identify the potential demand for additional investment.

- Can more **office** be supported? What kind and how much?
- What types of **retail** and how much square footage can be supported?
- How much and what kind of **housing** can be supported?

### Important Note:

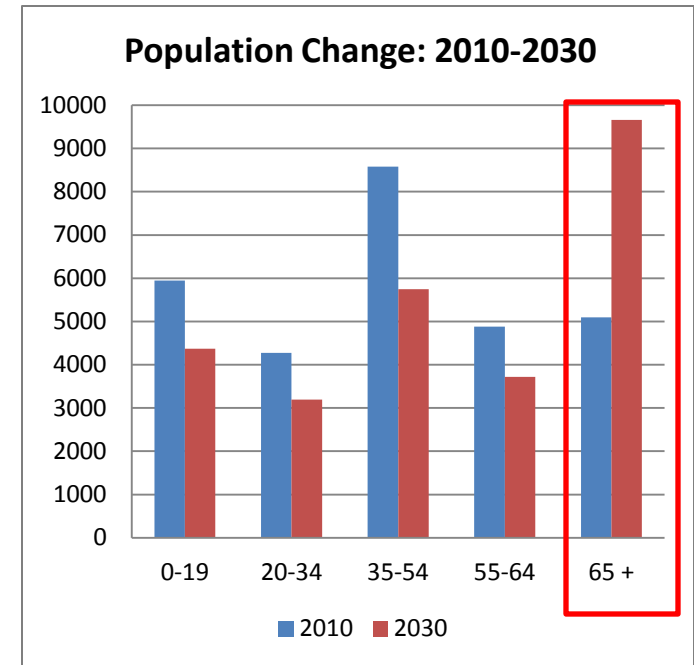
A market study is not a prediction of what will happen. It is a projection of what is possible given market conditions.

## What we heard from you:

1. More restaurants and eateries to serve commuters and surrounding neighborhoods
2. Housing that is affordable to younger people, retirees and families in Gloucester
3. More clothing and specialty retail
4. Child care facilities
5. Bicycle rental shop
6. Other small businesses serving the community's needs

## Housing Demand

- Demographic shifts and change in housing preferences will drive housing demand in Downtown Gloucester.
  - Population is aging
  - Young adults remain single longer
  - Young families having fewer children
- Household growth projected
  - Primarily senior households



## Emerging Market

- Urban-inclined households
  - Empty nesters, retirees and younger singles and couples
  - Many prefer smaller units, often in multi-family, amenity rich buildings and neighborhoods

HH by Age	2010	2030	Change
20-34	1,266	1,210	-303
35-54	4,776	3,547	-1,565
55-64	2,979	3,199	-675
65+	3,323	4,860	2,917
<b>Total</b>			<b>374</b>

# Housing Preferences

Limited supply of unit types (multi-family, townhouse) preferred by urban-inclined households in downtown.

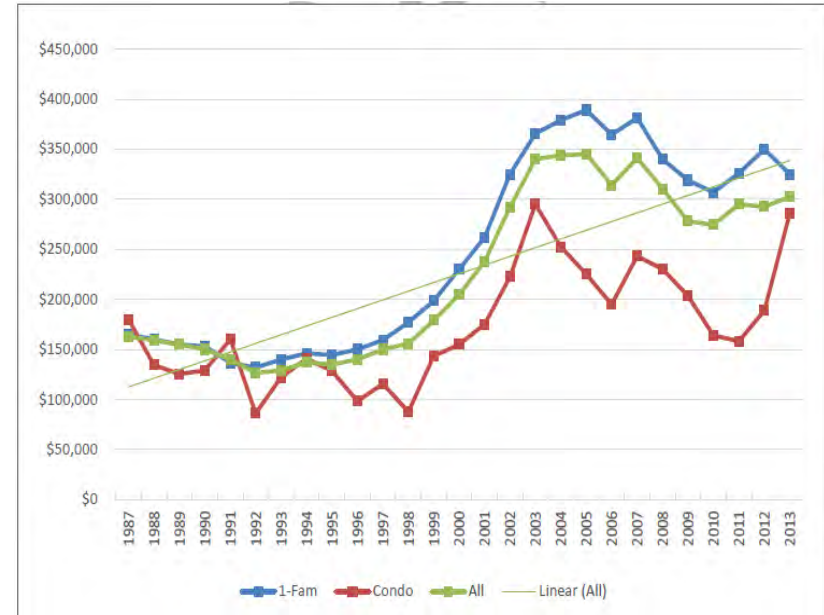
- Less than 10% of units are in buildings with 10 or more units.
- Housing stock is old, and likely lack amenities (elevators, gyms, finishes, common spaces) preferred by potential household segments.

	Study Area	Gloucester	Essex County	State
Single Family	28%	56%	57%	58%
Two Family	31%	19%	12%	10%
3-4 Units	28%	14%	11%	1%
5-9 Units	4%	3%	5%	6%
10-19 Units	2%	3%	4%	4%
20 or more Units	7%	5%	10%	10%
Other (mobile homes, etc.)	<1%	<1%	1%	1%

# Housing Market

- Housing market in recovery
  - Number of sales above pre-recession levels
  - Housing prices on the rise
  - Rental market strong in areas
    - Main Street: \$2K+ for 2BR
- Brokers and developers indicate market can support more residential.
  - Multi-family units between train and harbor desired
    - Empty nesters, young professionals
  - Single-family, two-family and row houses attractive to young families

Median Sales Prices: 1987-2013



# Housing Market Analysis Finding: Significant potential for additional housing

- Potential for 250 – 550 units downtown
  - Multi-family apartment and condos
  - Townhomes, infill housing
  - Adaptive reuse, live/work
  - Affordable units

	Emerging Markets				Capture		Units	
	Age of Head of Household	# of housing units	% Moving Over Next 5 Years	Total Moving Next 5 Years	Low	Mod	Low	Mod
Young Households	20-29	7,612	55.4%	4,217	2%	4%	84	169
Empty Nesters	55-64	23,803	23.5%	5,594	2%	4%	112	224
Retirees	65-84	25,646	13.7%	3,513	2%	4%	70	140
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>57,061</b>		<b>13,324</b>			<b>266</b>	<b>533</b>



# Retail Market Potential

- How much additional retail can Downtown Gloucester potentially support?
- Three analyses:
  - Retail opportunity gap analysis (existing residents)
  - Potential new residents analysis
  - Visitors analysis



# Gap Analysis: Downtown-Oriented Sectors

Downtown-Oriented Retail Potential: Current Residents within 5-minute Drive Time

	Avg Sales PSF	5-Minute Drive Time Retail Opportunity Gap	Median Store Size (Approx)	# of stores 25% - 50% Capture*	Supportable Retail SF (25% to 50% capture)
Furniture/Home Furnish Stores	225	4,045,527	4,000-5,000	1-2	4,500 - 9,500
Electronics and Appliance Stores	225	3,223,454	5,500	1-2	3,500 - 7,200
Clothing and Accessories Stores	190	7,636,594	4,000	1-3	5,000 - 10,100
Sporting, Hobby, Book, Music	190	2,521,309	5,000-8,500	1-2	3,900 - 7,900
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	220	5,446,198	2,000-4,000	4-6	8,400 - 16,800
Foodservice and Drinking Places	320	-7,732,224	2,000-3,000	2-3	5,500
<i>Full-Svc Restaurants</i>	350	-9,616,873	3000	0	0
<i>Limited-Svc Eating Places</i>	280	289,889	2000	0.5	1,000
<i>Special Foodservices</i>	280	101,782	2000	0	350
<i>Drinking Places</i>	360	1,492,979	2000	2	4,150
<b>TOTAL DOWNTOWN</b>				<b>10 - 18</b>	<b>30,000 - 55,000</b>

## Retail Opportunity from Future Residents

- New households bring additional retail spending with them
  - Some of that spending will be captured locally in Downtown
    - Some will be captured at existing retail establishments
    - Remainder will be spent in other retail areas outside of Downtown Gloucester

	Totals
Potential New Households	400
Supportable Retail SF/HH	75
<i>Subtotal: Total Supportable Retail</i>	<i>30,000sf</i>
Downtown Capture	50%
<b>TOTAL: Total Supportable Retail in Downtown</b>	<b>15,000sf</b>

# Visitor Retail Analysis

- Visitors are important to Gloucester's economy
  - Spending supports lodging, dining and retail establishments
  - Visitors would bring more spending
  - Supportable Retail Estimate:
    - 25,000 more visitors
    - \$2.5 Million in spending (avg \$25/pp on food/retail)
    - Supportable Retail: 5,000 sf



## Total Retail Market Potential

	Potential Retail (sf)
Retail Opportunity Gap Analysis	30,000-55,000 sf
Potential New Residents Analysis	10,000 – 15,000 sf
Visitor Analysis	5,000 sf
<b>TOTAL Potential Retail in Downtown</b>	<b>45,000 – 75,000 sf</b>

**Opportunities:** Retail that appeals to both residents and visitors.

- Clothing and shoe stores
- Limited service eating and drinking
- Home furnishings
- Stationary and Gift Stores
- Sporting goods or hobby
- Office Supply

## Market Considerations

- Multi-family not encouraged in zoning
  - Requires a special permit throughout downtown
  - Not allowed, even by special permit near station
- Most parcels are small and may not have the capacity for larger developments (10-20 units)
- Untested multi-family rental/condo market
  - Initial projects need to be done right, or may hurt future potential
    - Good, contextual design a must
    - Amenities and quality finishes to attract emerging market
    - Strong connections to Main Street and train station (commuters)

# Built Environment

# Public Improvements

## What we heard from you:

1. Sidewalk improvements, especially along Railroad Avenue
2. Crosswalk improvements
3. A safer way for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the buoy intersection
4. Streetscape improvements (lighting, trees, etc.) and greenspace
5. Wayfinding and signage



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**Strengthening Connections Downtown**



**This isn't working!**

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It's not working for seniors either.....

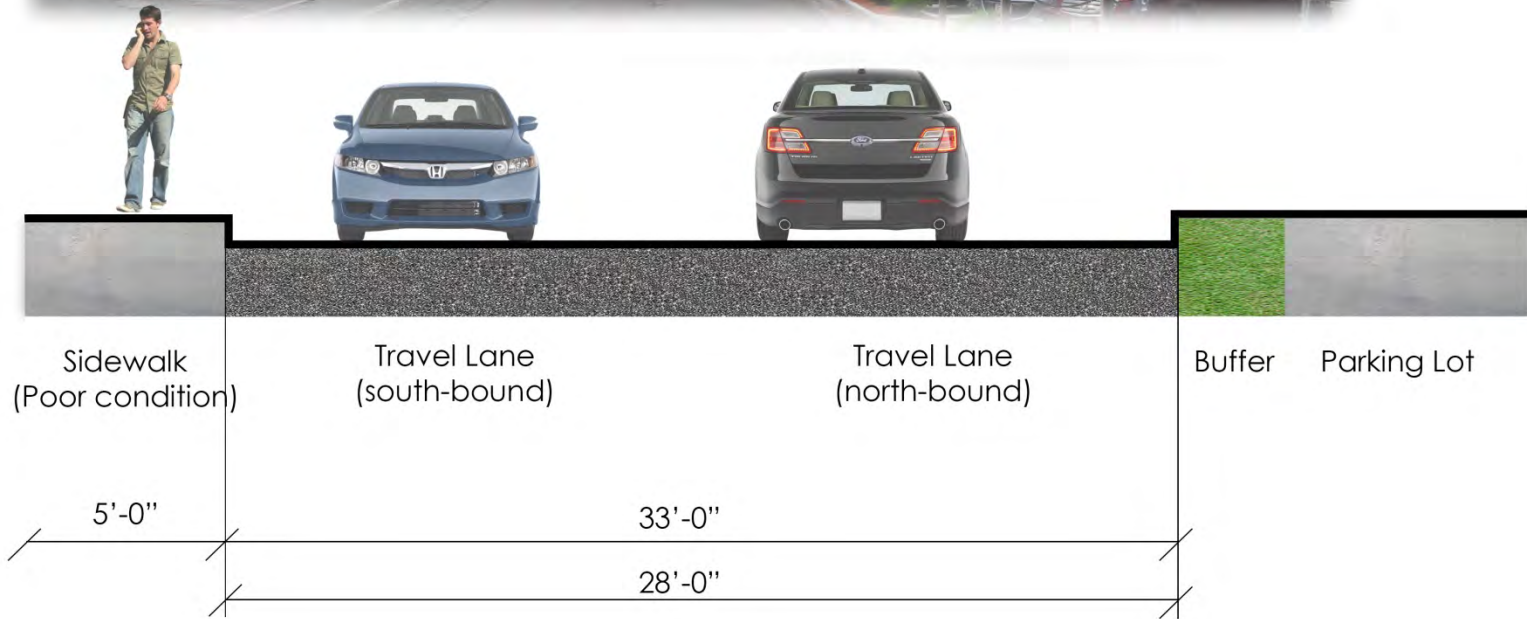


# During a walking audit and meetings with seniors....



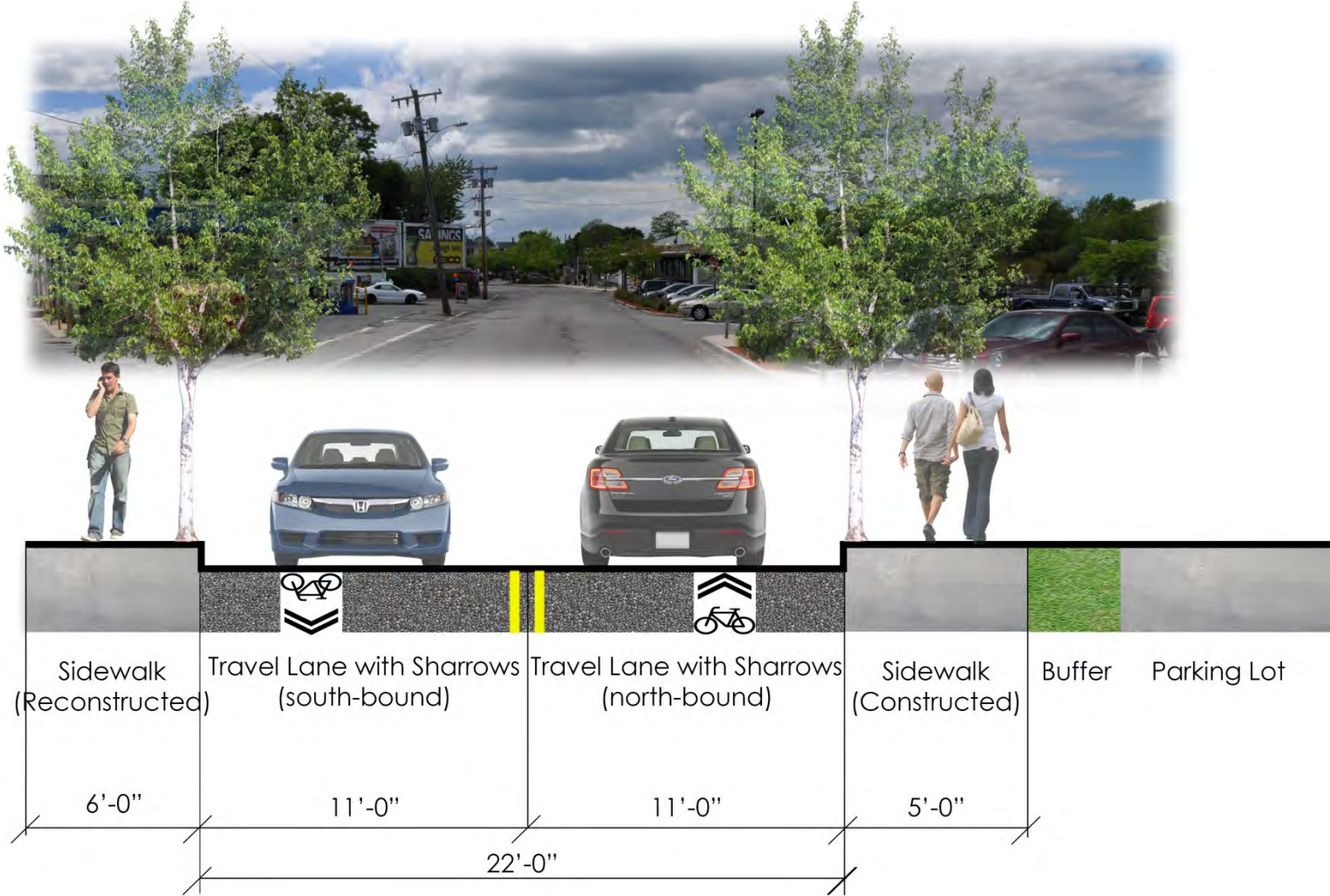
# What Can We Do About It?

# Public Improvements: Roadways



Railroad Avenue: Existing

# Public Improvements: Roadways



Railroad Avenue: Future

## The “Buoy Intersection”

**You Told Us:**  
“Intersection seems to function OK  
for vehicles, but it feels very unsafe  
for pedestrians and cyclists.”

# The “Buoy Intersection” – Short-Term Testing





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# The “Buoy Intersection” – Short-Term Testing



## The “Buoy Intersection” – Short-Term Testing



## The “Buoy Intersection” – Short-Term Testing



The "Buoy Intersection"  
*Short-Term Solution*



# The “Buoy Intersection” – Long-Term Solution





Where Do I Go From Here?

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# Wayfinding/Signage



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## Strengthening Connections Downtown



## IT'S NOT TOO FAR.

Walk [Your City] is an online tool to take offline action in your community.

Make directional signage for walking and biking in minutes with our Sign Builder, and help shape a more walkable city.





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## Short-Term



## Long-Term



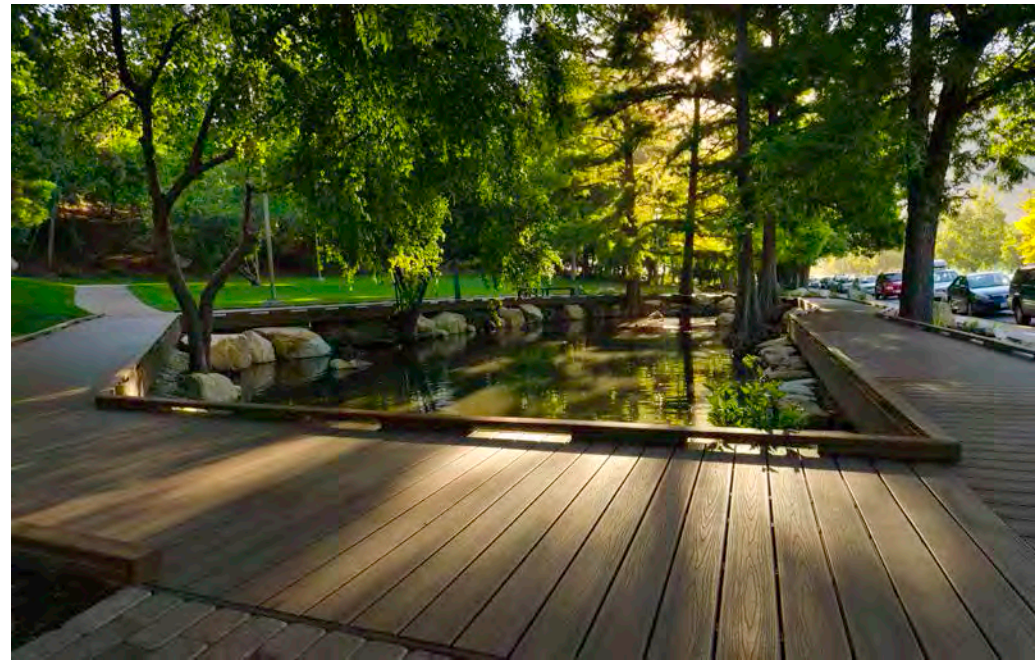
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**Streetscape**



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## Neighborhood Greenspace

# Do you think there is an opportunity to use this area for any of the following?

1. A neighborhood park or open space  
**13%**
2. Assist with stormwater runoff/storage  
**6%**
3. Act as a buffer between residential and commercial uses  
**19%**
4. Yes, all of the above  
**63%**
5. None of the above  
**0%**

# Development Opportunities

## What we heard from you:

1. Mixed-use buildings at appropriate heights
2. Buildings that activate the street and sidewalks
3. Live/work space
4. Buildings that are well designed, and take the environment into consideration

# Development Opportunities & Setting the Stage

How can the City use your ideas to improve and guide future development in the Railroad Avenue area?

## Cities can:

- Regulate, permit, facilitate, communicate, and even incentivize
- Build and maintain public infrastructure, resources, and amenities

# For Example

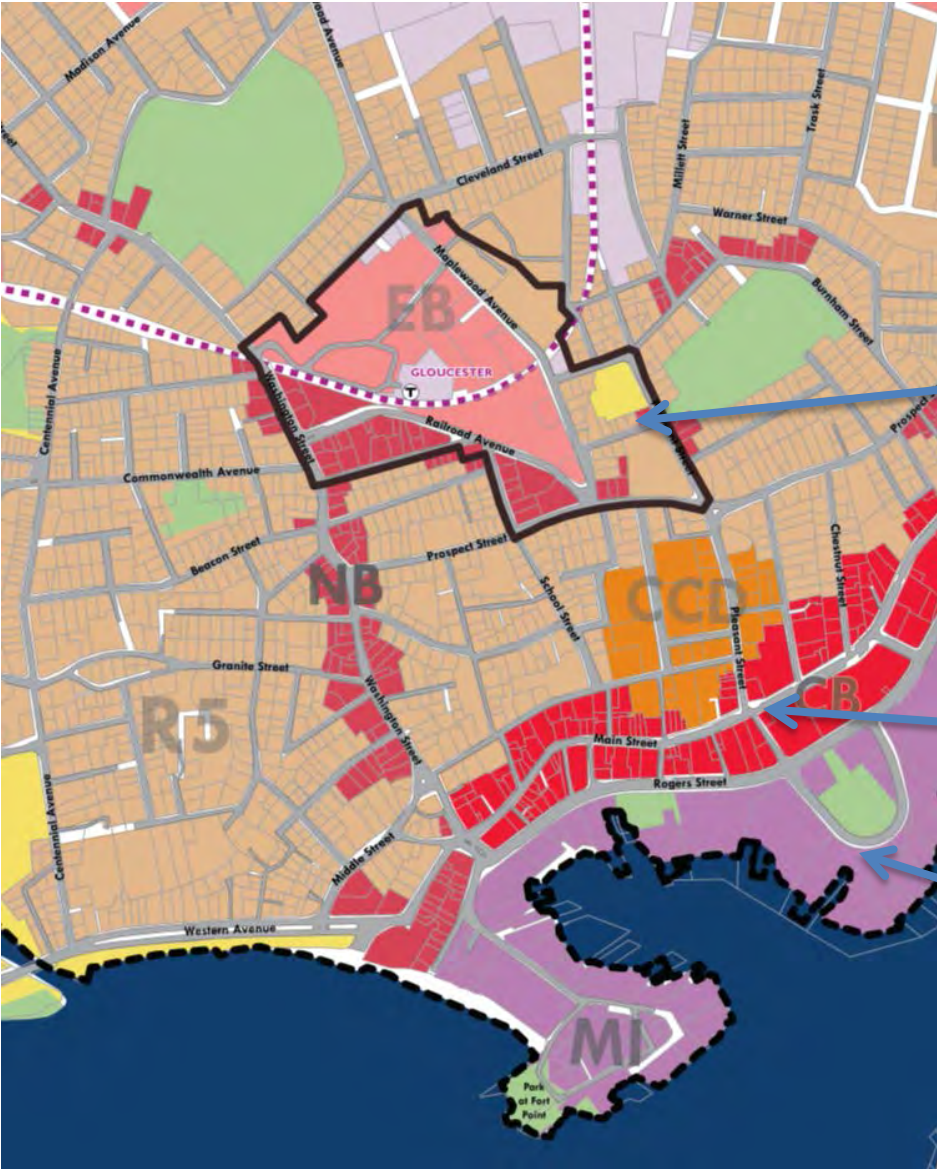
Regulations can be written to:

1. Provide for a mix of uses
2. Include design guidelines
3. Encourage “green” site and building design
4. Allow affordable and/or multi-family housing
5. Reduce setbacks from the street
6. Allow higher buildings
7. Calibrate parking requirements

**It's up to you!**



# Existing Zoning



Railroad Ave Area

Main Street

Harbor Area

Building Height

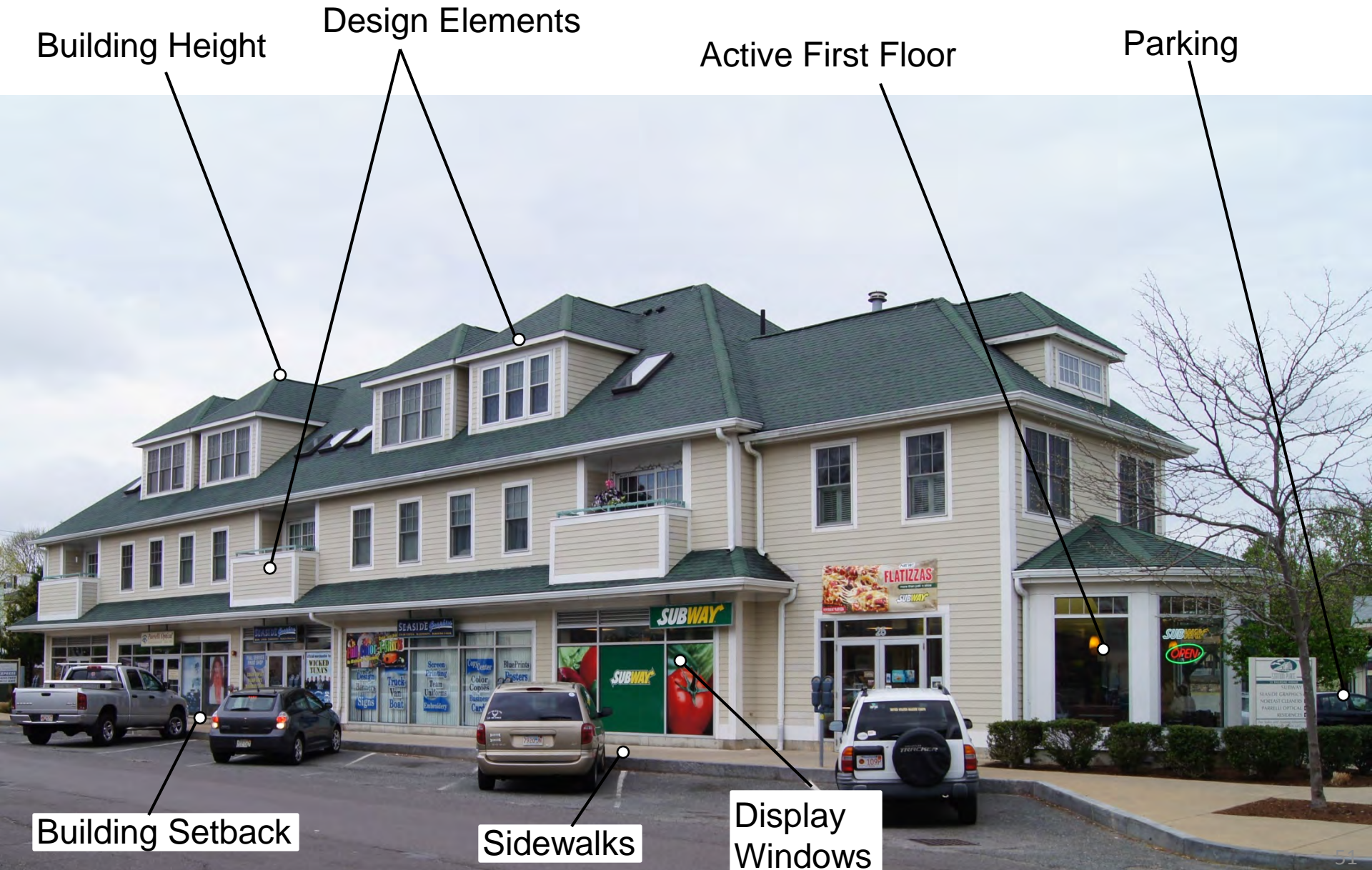
Design Elements

Building Setback

Landscaping

Sidewalks







Building Height

Design Elements

Parking

Building Setback

Windows

Design Elements

Building Height



Building Setback

Parking

Curb Cuts

Future Use?	EB/NB Zones	Considerations
Residential	Most of the study area not currently allowed	Uses similar to Central Business?
Office	Offices > 6,000 sf	Yes?
Retail	Motor vehicle sales or rental	Special Permit - Allow car sharing?
Mixed Use	Bulk storage/ Warehousing	No?
	Contractor, with outdoor storage	No?
	Contractor's yard	No?

**Building Dimensions: Flexibility, similar to Central Business (CB)**

# Bringing It All Together





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# Railroad Avenue



# How important is it that any zoning changes limit industrial uses (warehousing, outdoor storage, automotive sales/repair, etc)?

1. Very important

**56%**



2. Important

**28%**

3. Somewhat Important

**17%**

4. Not Important

**0%**

# How important is it that any zoning changes encourage a mix of retail, office, and housing in the study area?

1. Very important

**88%**



2. Important

**13%**

3. Somewhat Important

**0%**

4. Not Important

**0%**

# How important is it that buildings are built close to the sidewalk?

1. Very important

**26%**



2. Important

**37%**

3. Somewhat Important

**21%**

4. Not Important

**16%**

# How important is it that parking be located to the rear or alongside a building?

1. Very important

**59%**



2. Important

**35%**

3. Somewhat Important

**6%**

4. Not Important

**0%**

# Thank You!

# Questions?

For more information and project updates visit:

[www.mapc.org/rr](http://www.mapc.org/rr)