



**TOWN OF DANVERS
HIGH STREET INDUSTRIAL 1 (I-1)
DISTRICT STUDY**

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION - 03/16/18



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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RS VILLAGE PARKING
Spa
MAKERS
ERS
PIZZA
ESPRESSO
The Music Connection

HOOK SLAYA STUDIOS
by Bryan LaMontagne
TANNING

New Wave Salon

WELCOME
TS
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TITAN
WS
CRATES

NEW WAVE SALON
105-20-10000
CLUBS

♿
PARKING
ONLY

New Wave Salon
105-20-10000
CLUBS

47
Wednesday
SPECIAL
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DANVERS HIGH STREET CORRIDOR

District Vision Principles

What kind of High Street Corridor do we want by 2027?

A critical aspect of the High Street Corridor visioning effort was hearing from town residents and understanding more about how they wanted their street to look and feel by 2027. What were the things that they valued most about High Street and what was needed to change or progress in order to achieve an even better Corridor? The vision statement serves to guide the subsequent planning process based on what local residents told us about their neighborhood at site visits and the visioning open house.

In 2027, the High Street Corridor is a flourishing area offering residents a high quality of life by taking full advantage of, and emphasizing, its many unique assets - as a gateway to downtown Danvers, a strong sense of community, and by offering a vibrant mix of business and residential uses.

High Street's central location, its mix of business and residential uses, and its proximity to the nearby Danvers bike/pedestrian trail network and parks draw residents and visitors to it. As a residential neighborhood, it offers a welcoming, safe and enriching environment with a variety of housing options - market rate and affordable - for families, seniors and young adults. Redevelopment in the Corridor area has created a series of mixed use properties with shops and services fronting along High Street with residences tucked in the rear of the properties in a walkable environment attractive to young and old residents alike. Sidewalks, safer pedestrian crossings and trails link High Street to school and recreation areas, as well as adjoining residential neighborhoods and downtown Danvers. This appropriately scaled blend of service uses, retail, residential and smaller-scale office spaces attracts business, jobs and increased consumer spending along High Street while the Corridor itself has become safer and more attractive with additional trees and plantings, benches, lighting, consolidated curb cuts, and underground utilities.

Lessons from Community Concepts for the High Street Corridor:

Three groups of community members created concept plans for the High Street corridor at a community forum in May of 2016. The compilation of these concept plans identified overlapping ideas from the three groups and showed that nearly every portion of the study area is imagined to be part of the future improvements and investments imagined in the Vision Statement. The major components of agreement and overlap between these groups' ideas are summarized below.

High Street Improvements: The groups' ideas combine to show nearly continuous streetscape improvements on both sides of High Street with reduced curb cuts, increased street trees, and improved sidewalks with four additional locations for marked pedestrian crossings across High Street.

Expanded Street Connections: New street connections were identified to both frame redevelopment blocks and add more options for connecting the district and circulating through it. A connection at Warrant Street and an extension of Linwood Road are the two suggested locations for this approach.

Extensive Redevelopment Investment: Redevelopment was shown nearly throughout every property in the study area. The most frequent type of redevelopment shown was mixed-use redevelopment, commercial redevelopment was frequently shown on the eastern frontage of High Street, and residential redevelopment was shown to the rear of the properties west of High Street. Nearly all buildings were placed to define street frontages.

New River Access: A new park and trail was shown at the edge of the Porter River estuary to provide access to this natural amenity.

New Rail Trail Connection: A new rail trail connection and multi-use recreational path was viewed by all three groups as a unique and distinctive feature for the district that could help drive future positive change and economic development. Each concept showed it along the full length of the study area.

Integrated Parks and Plazas: In addition to the two primary district open space amenities of the riverfront park and rail trail, the groups showed other smaller parks and plazas integrated with future redevelopment. Many of these are placed between buildings or buildings and street frontages and could provide outdoor seating or additional landscape areas.

Improved Parking: Unlike its current configuration today, parking was not placed as a central feature of the district. When it was included in the concept plans it was shown integrated with surrounding buildings with a placement to the side or the rear of building structures.

2.0 INTRODUCTION



2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Study Background and Goals

The Town of Danvers has been active in planning and implementing regulatory changes for key locations of industrial-zoned land in its downtown and waterfront neighborhoods. The High Street I-1 Corridor is part of this strategy and previous studies have recommended that zoning modifications and design guidelines may be an important next step to promote safe, well-designed mixed-use projects that will enhance these districts. The High Street Corridor is defined as that portion of High Street from Route 128 to Danvers Square. This area was also identified as a Local and Regional Priority Development area in MAPC's 2011 North Shore study of potential development areas in Danvers and other municipalities.

Study Purpose

This study seeks to establish a community supported vision and to make recommendations for modifications to existing regulations in the High Street I-1 Corridor district to support that vision. Through the High Street I-1 illustrative vision and recommendations the Town and MAPC seek to create community-supported tools that addresses the several key questions:

- How should the overall community vision translate into specific district redevelopment and improvements?
- What are the critical characteristics of new buildings and development sites that could be included in redevelopment projects to implement the vision for the High Street Corridor?
- What are the public realm improvements that will contribute to a walkable, vibrant High Street?

2.2 Study Area Context

The Study Area that has been identified for this analysis is shown to the right. The boundary of the Study Area follows the boundary of the current Industrial 1 (I-1) zoning district boundary. The Study Area is centered on High Street immediately to the west of Route 128.

The context for this study area is shown to the right with the study area highlighted in yellow within the town boundary of Danvers. It is directly adjacent to downtown and a gateway into the downtown from Route 128.

2.3 Previous Studies and Relevant Information

The Town of Danvers has completed a robust set of recent studies that provide the foundation for revitalization of the High Street Corridor and that directly address several of this study's objectives, providing a strong base from which to build the community vision, redevelopment scenario, design guidelines and zoning. These recent initiatives include:

- Future Vision Plan – Maple Street I-1 District Project Area – 2016 by Brovitz Community Planning & Design with Dodson & Flinker Associates
- Design Standards – Maple Street Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District (MSTND) – 2016 by Brovitz Community Planning & Design with Dodson & Flinker Associates
- Placemaking Audit Existing Conditions/Challenges/Opportunities – Maple Street I-1 District Project Area – 2016 by Brovitz Community Planning & Design with Dodson & Flinker Associates
- Danvers Maple Street I-1 District Action Plan – 2015

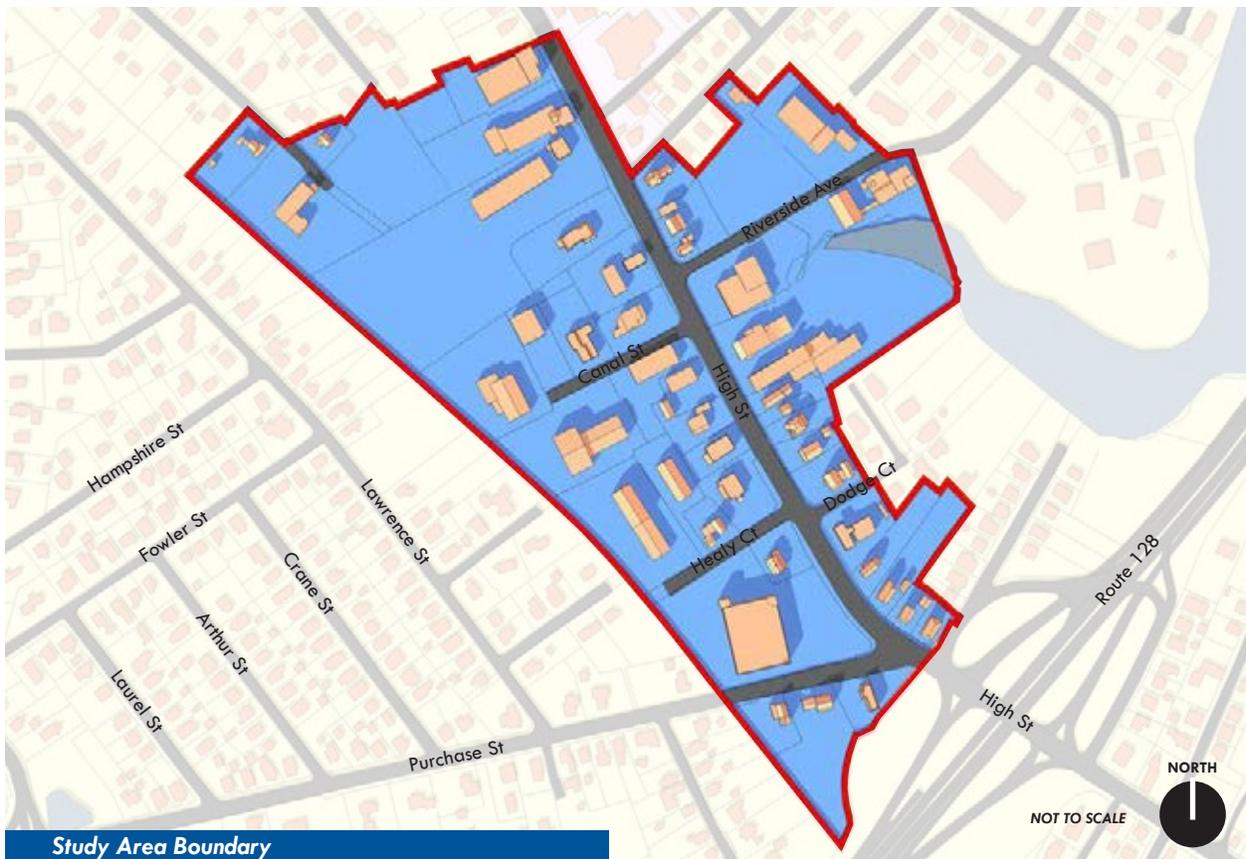
2.0 INTRODUCTION

- Nelson Nygaard Parking Study – 2015
- Danvers Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Priority Plan – 2015
- Danvers Tapleyville District Vision + Action Plan – 2013
- North Shore Regional Strategic Planning Project – 2011
- Study on Housing Needs in Downtown Danvers – 2010
- Danvers Mixed-use Industrial One (I-1) Report – 2009
- Visual Preference Survey Exercise – 2007
- Danvers Zoning Bylaw Report – 2006

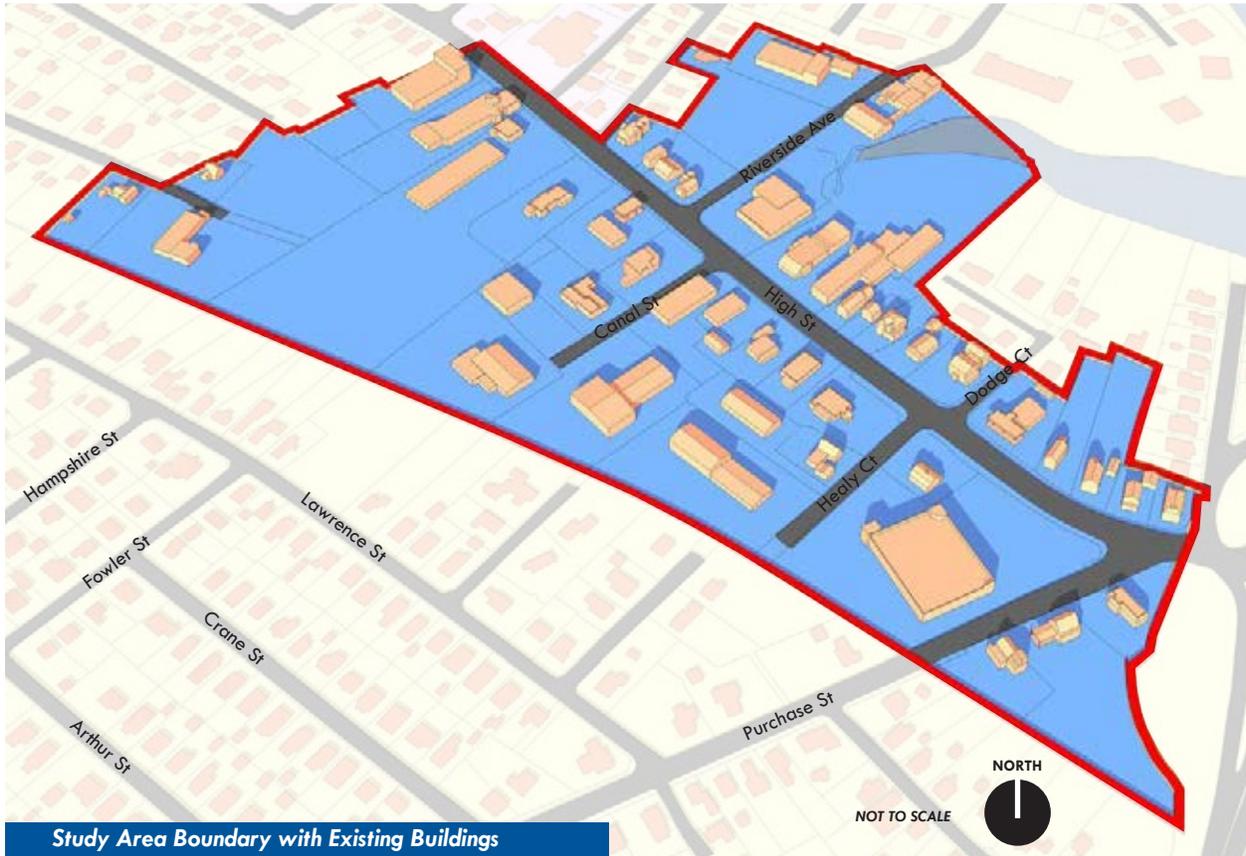
2.4 Study Area Illustration

The current Industrial 1 (I-1) zoning district that comprises the Study Area is shown in the illustration to the right. This three-dimensional digital model is an accurate depiction of the existing buildings, streets, and property lines in the Study Area. The three-dimensional depiction of the study area was used to explore the current conditions and to test future scenarios for redevelopment and investment in the district.

The Study Area is centered on High Street and includes side streets of Canal Street, Healy Court, Dodge Court, and Riverside Avenue. A detailed analysis of the existing conditions in the district is presented in Section 3.0 of the report.



Study Area Boundary



Study Area Boundary with Existing Buildings

3.0 COMMUNITY VISION



3.0 COMMUNITY VISION

3.1 Compiled Vision Statement

What kind of High Street Corridor do we want by 2027?

A critical aspect of the High Street Corridor visioning effort was hearing from town residents and understanding more about how they wanted their street to look and feel by 2027. What were the things that they valued most about High Street and what was needed to change or progress in order to achieve an even better Corridor? The vision statement serves to guide the subsequent planning process based on what local residents told us about their neighborhood at site visits and the visioning open house.

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3.2 Community Process and Exercise Results

In addition to the vision statement compiled from resident and stakeholder feedback, a survey of the community's design preferences was also performed. This survey asked community meeting participants to select the images they thought were most consistent with their future vision for the High Street Corridor. The most preferred images from this exercise

are shown to the right. The images were divided into three categories - street/sidewalk characteristics, building characteristics, and open space/plaza characteristics.

COMMUNITY DESIGN PREFERENCES



STREET/SIDEWALK CHARACTERISTICS



BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS



OPEN SPACE/PLAZA CHARACTERISTICS

4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS



James J. Sullivan
MECHANICAL SERVICES, INC.

James J. Sullivan
MECHANICAL SERVICES, INC.

4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

This report section summarizes the current conditions of the High Street district. The analysis of existing conditions is used to identify patterns in the demographics, the uses, and the built environment that are part of the district today. This information is used to provide an additional perspective to the issues and opportunities that have been identified by the community and to inform strategies that could advance the district toward the community vision.

4.1 Demographic Patterns

It is important to begin any planning process or discussion of the future with an understanding of the people who currently live in and around the area. Danvers, like many communities in the north shore region, has been and will continue to grow. Given demographic trends (explained below), as well as shifting cultural preferences for walkable neighborhoods with nearby amenities, the 37 acre Study Area may be able to accommodate some of that future growth.

Sources of Information

At the community level, the Census Bureau tabulates and publishes data in various geographical units. Census block groups are the smallest geographical unit for which the Bureau publishes sample data, and generally have a population size of 600 to 3,000 people. The Study Area falls within two census block groups. Data from these two block groups is the closest proxy to the Study Area itself. For clarity, data from these block groups will be referred to as the Focus Area.

Population Characteristics

As of the 2010 Census, Danvers population stood at approximately 26,500, a 5% increase from 2000 and a 9.5% increase from 1990. By 2030, MAPC projects the Town's population to grow a further 7% to 30,240 (See Note 1).

Approximately 2,500 people, or 9% of Danvers' total population lives in the Focus Area. Among this 2,500, 45-59 year olds represent the largest cohort (625), followed by 30-44 year olds (530).

Danvers, like other communities in the region, is aging and its population growth is projected to occur among older cohorts. By 2030 MAPC projects the percentage of 60-74 year olds to increase from 6.7% to 10.2% of the total population and the percentage of 75+ is to increase from 4.8% to 6.0%. All other age cohorts are projected to fall as a total percentage of the population.

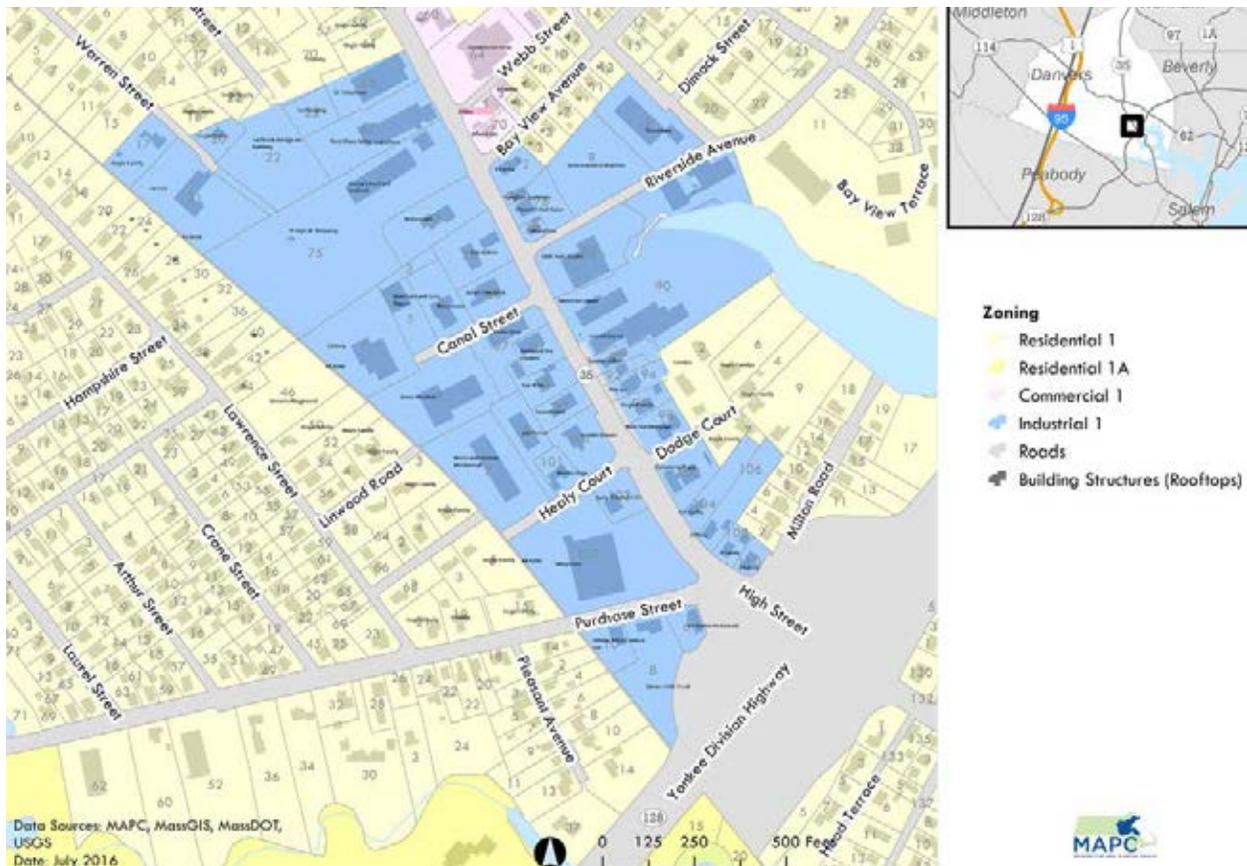
Household Characteristics

As with population, the number of households in Danvers has grown over the past two decades, up to 10,615 as of the 2010 Census. This represents a 11% increase from 2000 and a 21% increase from 1990. MAPC projects the number of households to grow a further 21% to 12,849 by 2030. The focus area contains 1,072 housing units, 64% of which are owner-occupied.

Adjusted to 2015 dollars, median home sales prices peaked in 2005 (\$450,000) and followed a downward trajectory until 2011(\$325,000). Since then home prices have increased, up to \$381,000 in 2015.

Median household income range for the Focus Area is \$60,000-\$75,000. Among the 1,072 households, 38% are considered cost-burdened, i.e., these households pay more than 30% of their income on housing.

There are approximately 1,082 workers age 16 and over living in the Focus Area. As would be expected for a suburban community lacking fixed rail transit, the vast majority, 84%, commute by car alone. The remaining 16% carpool, walk, work from home, or take the bus.



NOTE 1: MAPC has created a dynamic model of future population, household, and housing demand for the region. MAPC’s projections include two scenarios for regional growth. Each scenario reflects different assumptions about key trends. The “Status Quo” scenario is based on the continuation of existing rates of births, deaths, migration, and housing occupancy. Alternatively, the “Stronger Region” scenario explores how changing trends could result in higher population growth, greater housing demand, and a substantially larger

workforce. Of the two scenarios, Stronger Region is more consistent with the housing, land use, and workforce development goals of MetroFuture and has already been adopted by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development as the basis for the Commonwealth’s multifamily housing production goal. Furthermore, based upon a review of its previous projections, the Stronger Region scenario was the more accurate of the two scenarios. The projections in this section, therefore, rely on the Stronger Region scenario.

4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

4.2 Land Use and Development Patterns

Study Area

The Study Area that has been identified for this analysis is shown to the right. The boundary of the Study Area follows the boundary of the current Industrial 1 (I-1) zoning district boundary. The Study Area is centered on High Street immediately to the west of Route 128.

In the diagram, the boundary of the Study Area is shown as a red line. Also depicted in the diagram are the configuration of existing buildings, shown in orange. The configuration of the existing streets, driveways, parking lots, and sidewalks are all shown in gray. North is up in the diagram and Route 128 runs along the right side of the image. The diagram offers a slightly elevated and tilted perspective to allow the height and form of the existing buildings to be shown.

The Study Area is comprised of (48) individual parcels of property. The composition of the district has evolved with individual decisions for uses and investments on these individual properties. Currently, the (48) individual properties are home to (54) structures including smaller accessory structures. The total land area of the district is 1,601,113 square feet (SF) or 36.76 acres.

Although the composition of the district is the result of individual property decisions, it is interesting to analyze the overall division of land among specific components of the built environment. The rules and regulations that govern use of the land are, in part, responsible for this overall division of land resources within the district.

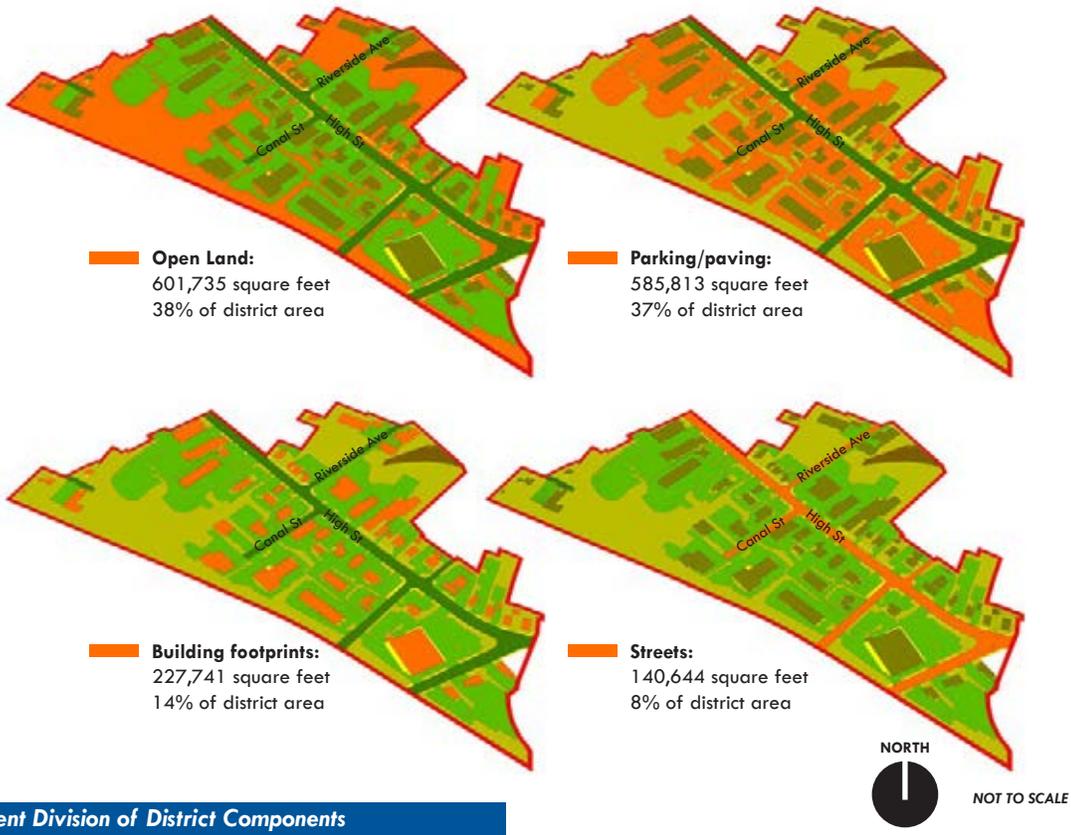
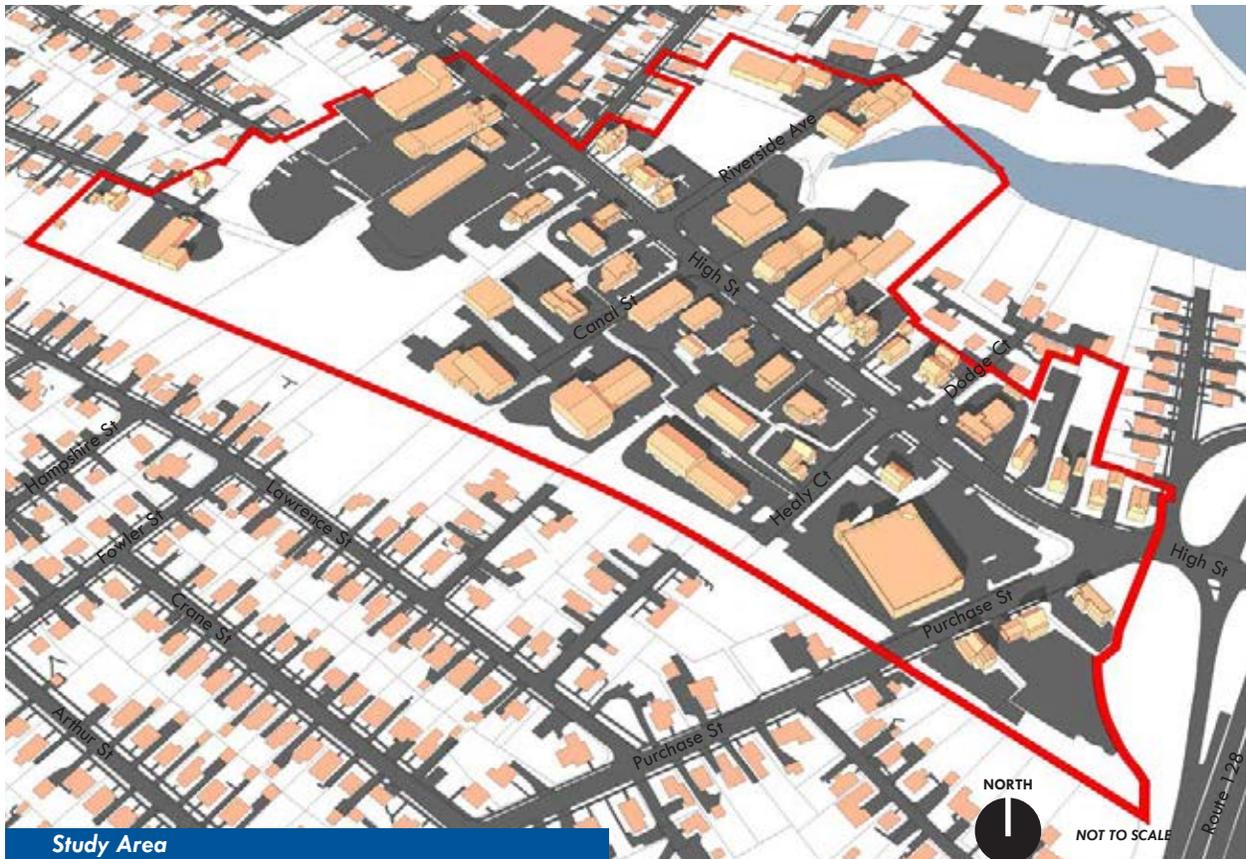
The four diagrams to the following page illustrate this division of the district by component. If the total district area is divided among six categories of components, including open land, parking/paved surfaces, building footprints, streets, sidewalks, and water body, the division of the district is as follows:

- Open Land – 38% (601,735 SF)
- Parking/paved Surface – 37% (585,813 SF)
- Building Footprints – 14% (227,741 SF)
- Streets – 8% (140,644 SF)
- Sidewalks – 2% (24,823 SF)
- Water Body – 1% (20,357 SF)

Analyzing this district in this manner reveals several observations. First, the district still includes a relatively high percentage of open land, while some of this area may be functional as open space or storage yards, much of it is underutilized, and may reflect a larger pattern of underutilization of land in the district.

Second, as can be observed in person in the district, parking and paved surfaces are a dominant feature of the district. While much of this parking may be necessary, as such a high proportion of the overall district, care must be taken as to how parking is located on a property and integrated with other uses.

Finally, building footprints are a relatively small proportion of the components and highlight that buildings in the district must be positioned and configured to maximize their positive impact on the character of the district.



4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

4.2 Land Use and Development Patterns

Land Use

In the Study Area, the High Street Corridor includes a diverse mix of current uses ranging from light industrial, commercial, and residential use. The uses within the district are generally distributed to form a pattern that relates to the High Street property frontage. The commercial retail uses in the district are located at properties with High Street frontage and occupy a high percentage of the properties that have frontage along this primary street. If a property with High Street frontage is not a commercial retail use, it is most likely to be commercial office uses.

Additionally, several properties with High Street frontage are light industrial uses. The light industrial uses also fill in the depth of the blocks adjacent to High Street, with many of the properties accessed off of secondary streets that connect to High Street used for light industrial purposes. The secondary streets include Canal Street, Healy Court and Riverside Avenue.

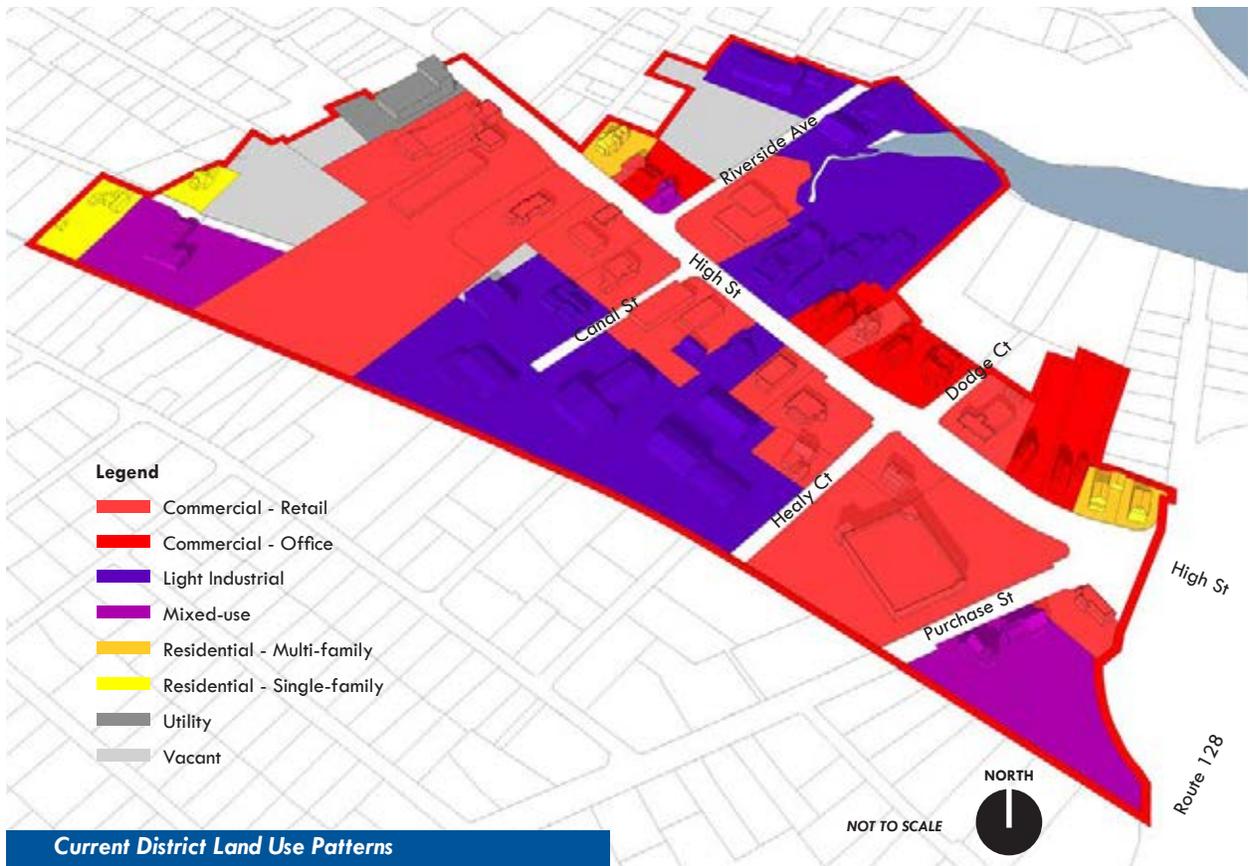
Several mixed-use properties are included toward the edges of the district on Purchase Street and Riverside Avenue. The mixed-use properties include residential uses and small businesses combined in the same building structure.

Other residential uses include both single-family and multi-family homes that are located on the outer edges of the district study area. Several of the properties in the Study Area are vacant. One property in the district study area is a utility use with frontage on High Street.

An illustration of these patterns of current land use are shown in the illustration on the following page.

The surrounding context of land use to the north, east, and south is predominantly single-family residential. To the west, along High Street is a continuation of a concentration of commercial uses in Downtown Danvers.

A diverse range of land uses in the district is a benefit to the economic vitality and flexibility of the properties and has been a part of the support for local businesses and services in the district. This diversity of uses also supports a transition within the district from the surrounding residential context to the commercial concentration of High Street and a transition from a corridor gateway on High Street at Route 128 to Downtown Danvers.



4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

4.2 Land Use and Development Patterns

Building Types

Across all land uses and properties in the district study area, about (5) five general building types are present. The current building types illustrate the pattern of development that has occurred in the district. The five building types include the single-family house, multi-family house, small commercial building (less than 5,000 square feet), mid-scale commercial/industrial building (5,000-19,999 square feet), and moderate-scale commercial building (20,000+ square feet).

The single-family house building type varies in building height, building area, and architectural style. The buildings typically have pitched roofs. The properties of the single-family house typically include a lawn and driveway.

The multi-family building type varies in building height between 2 and 3 stories. The building area and architectural style also vary, but consistently include a pitched roof. The properties of the multi-family house typically include modest setbacks that include landscape areas, driveways, and garages.

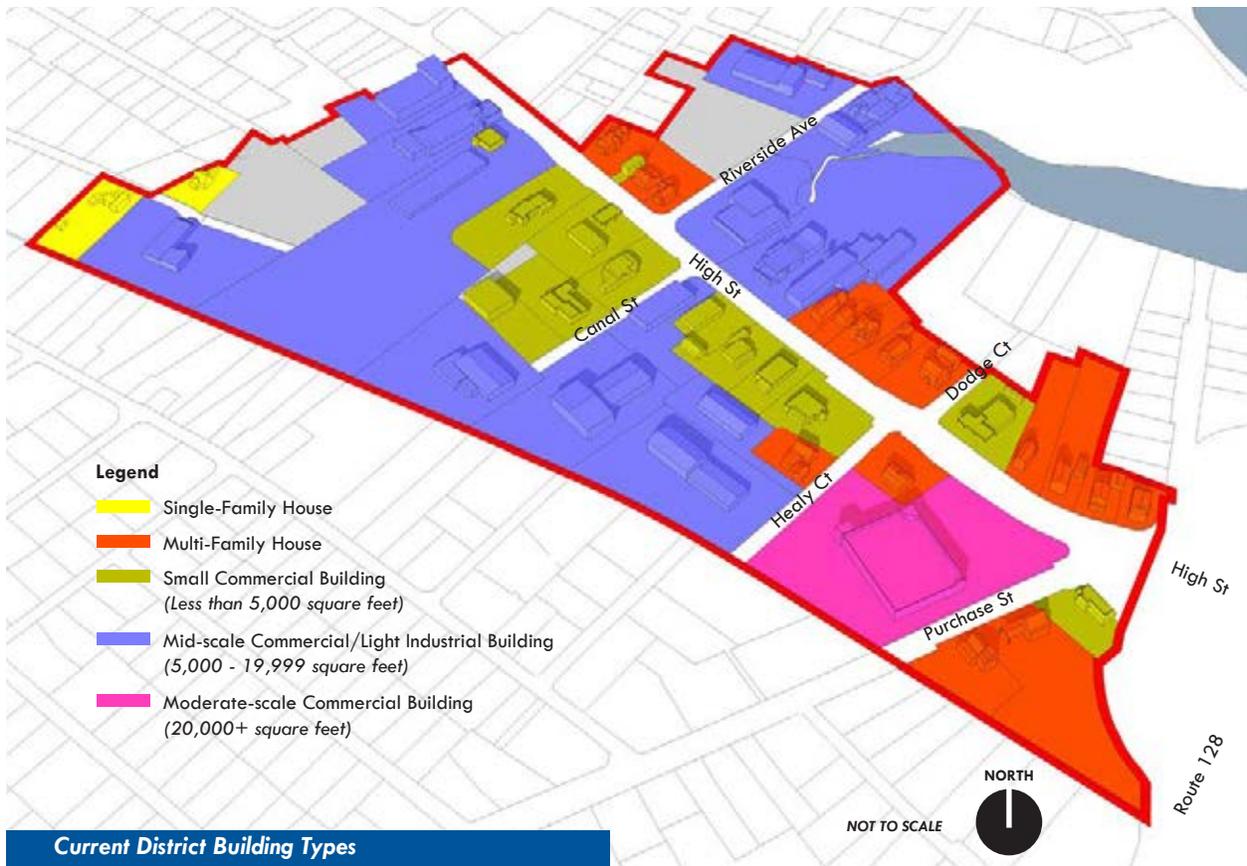
The small commercial building type with a building area of less than 5,000 square feet is typically located with High Street frontage. Most of these building types are one-story structures with flat roof structures. The properties are typically dominated by surface parking to support the commercial uses.

The mid-scale commercial/industrial building type with a building area of between 5,000 and 19,999 square feet. This building includes larger utilitarian structures. Many of the buildings have low slope pitched roofs are flat roofs that include larger span structures. Many are one-story structures, but may be taller than a typical one-story building to

accommodate larger scale interior work space.

The moderate-scale commercial building with a building area of more than 20,000 square feet occurs in one location. This type of mid-format retail building is often located on commercial corridors, state roads, and roadway interchanges. In the High Street corridor this building is located near the Route 128 interchange and is oriented to the roadway with high visibility and generous surface parking areas.

An illustration of these patterns and photograph examples of the building types are shown on the following page.



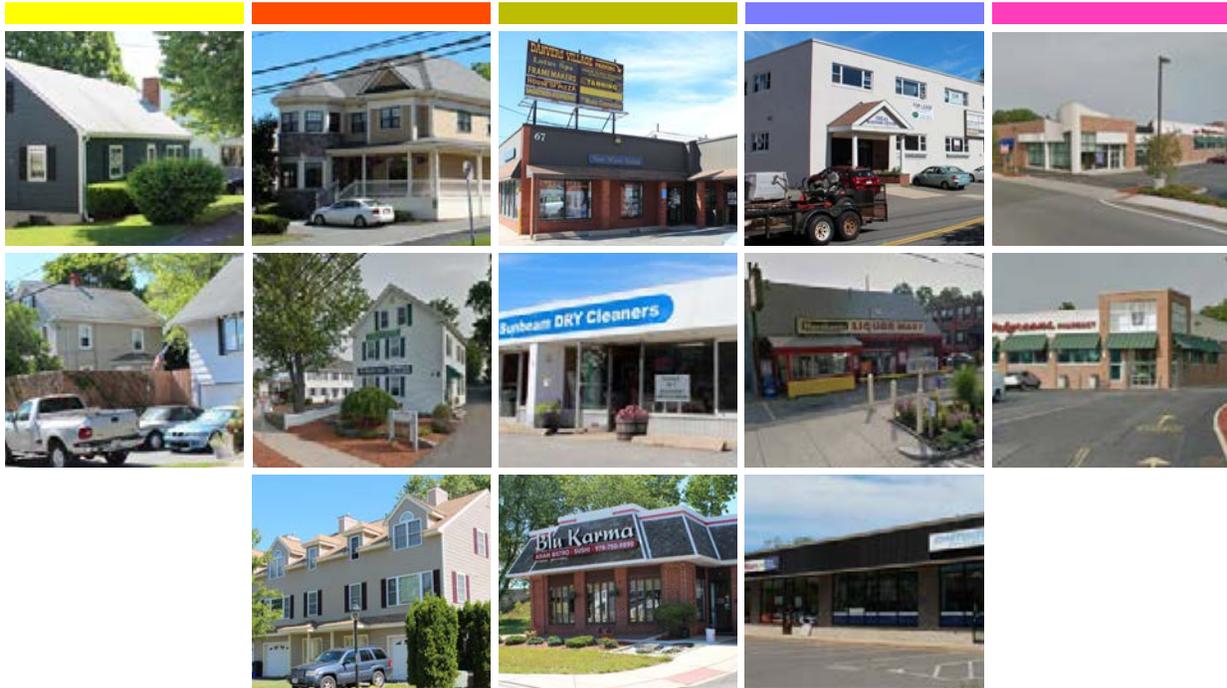
Single-Family House

Multi-Family House

Small Commercial Building (Less than 5,000 SF)

Mid-scale Commercial/ Light Industrial Building (5,000 - 19,999 SF)

Moderate-scale Commercial Building (20,000+ square feet)



Examples of Current District Building Types

4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

4.2 Land Use and Development Patterns

Density

In the analysis of the division of district components, one of the observations regarding the high percentage of land devoted to both open space and surface parking may reflect a larger pattern of underutilization of land in the district. Another way to measure utilization of land is by analyzing the density of buildings on the property. The Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a calculation that is frequently used to assess density. It is calculated by measuring the total building area on a property, divided by the land area of that property.

For example, if a 10,000 square foot (SF) building were placed on a 10,000 SF property, that property would have an FAR of 1. The building area would likely be configured on multiple floors. If the same 10,000 SF property had only a 5,000 SF building, that property would have an FAR of 0.5.

The FAR of each of the properties in the district has been calculated and is depicted in the illustration on the following page. This analysis shows that very few properties in the district have a moderate FAR. Most properties in the district have a low FAR, ranging from 0 (no buildings) to 0.49 (a building area less than half as large as the property). This analysis confirms that property in the district has the potential to be utilized more efficiently.

Property Utilization

Lot coverage and building coverage of physical investments are not the only measure of property utilization. A property may support a successful business and therefore be well utilized or a property may have high value through the valuation of property and the real estate investments that have been made.

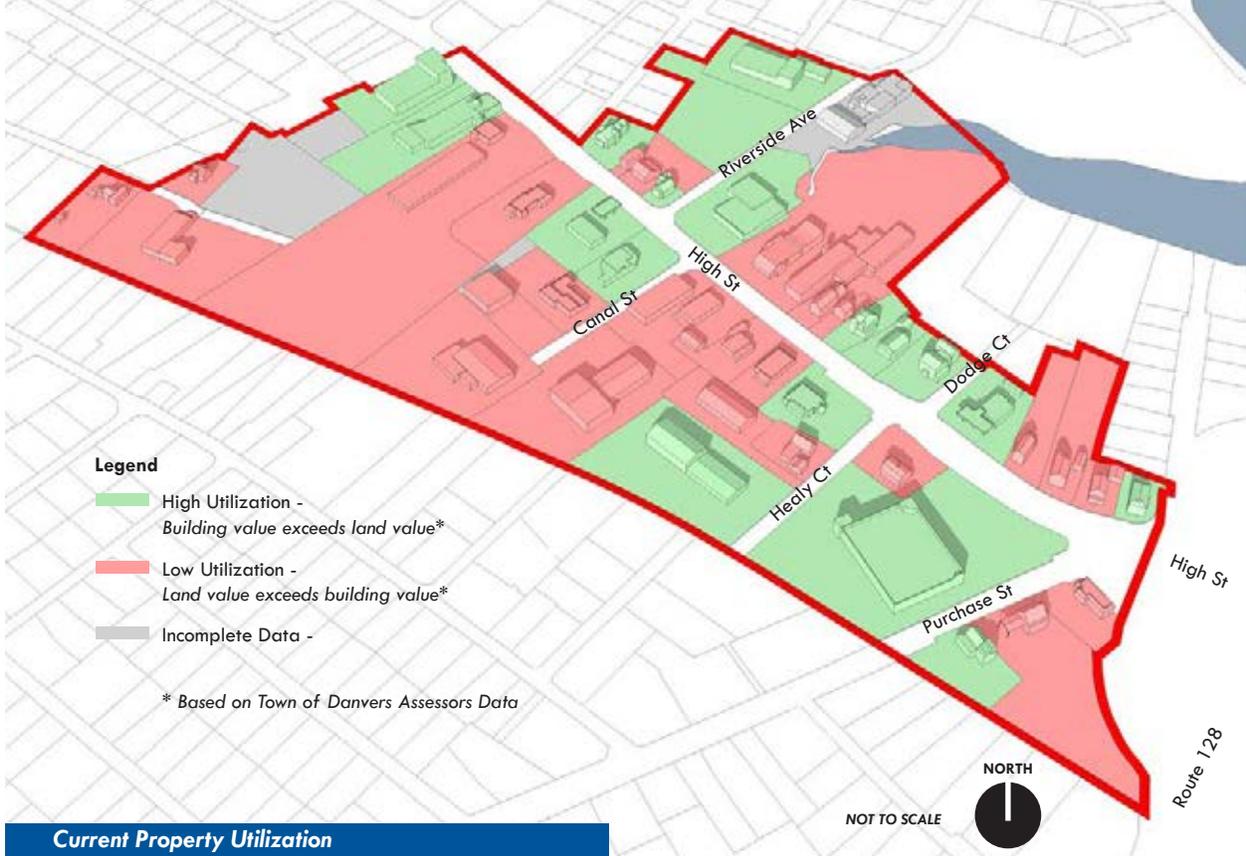
One way to examine the property utilization from a real estate value perspective is to compare the building value and the land value of a property. Typically, prudent building investments will be of more value than the land they are built upon. In certain circumstances, older building investments may depreciate in value, while land value generally trends upward over time. A comparison of building value and land value is not a perfect measure of property utilization, but it provides another point of comparison for how individual properties and the overall district are currently used.

Based on the Town of Danvers Assessors Data, each properties building value was compared to the land value. If the building value exceeds the land value, the property was labeled as high utilization. If the land value exceeds the building value, the property was labeled as low utilization. If data was unavailable for either of those figures, the property is labeled as incomplete data.

The diagram on the following page illustrates this analysis. According to this analysis, overall in the district, about half of the property is being utilized with an appropriately valued building and about half is underutilized with a lower value building on higher value land.



Current Density (Floor Area Ratio)



Current Property Utilization

4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

4.2 Land Use and Development Patterns

Historic Assets

In order to best understand how a district may benefit from change, it is also important to analyze what aspects of the district may benefit from preservation. While the Study Area does include several older structures that do contribute to the character of district, it does not include any structures that have been elevated as historic landmarks. The Study Area does not include any historic districts.

According to the Town of Danvers Assessor's Data, the district does include over (10) historical structures, built prior to 1949. The earliest recorded date for year of construction is 1840, showing relatively early origins of settlement in the district. Additionally, over (10) more properties are at least 50 years old and, therefore, eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Just over (10) properties include more recent building investments with a construction date ranging from 1970 to 1999. Only (2) properties are recent investments with a building construction date ranging from 2000 to 2004.

The spatial distribution of these buildings in the district is depicted in the following diagram.

While the presence of older structures provides a consistent set of features for the district, it is not the circumstance that the Study Area is home to a considerable collection to historic assets. Additionally, the lack of a concentration of more recent investments reinforces the previous observations about effective utilization of the land in the district.

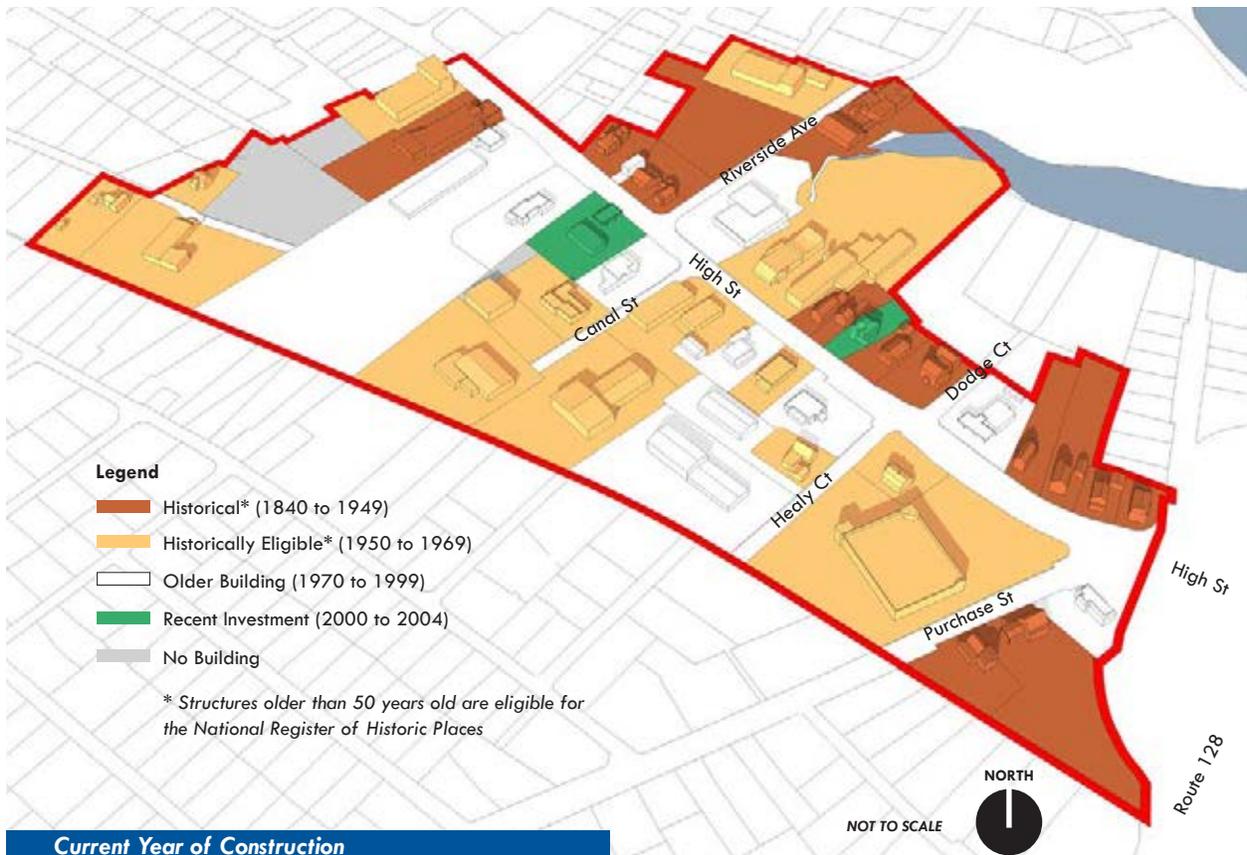
Ownership Patterns

Another aspect of the potential for change in a district are the patterns of property ownership and the size of parcels in the district. In very general terms, the location of the owner can indicate the level of local involvement of the owner. The more locally-based the property owner will often translate to an owner more directly connected to local issues. This sometimes can indicate an owner's willingness to make investments in property in alignment with a community vision.

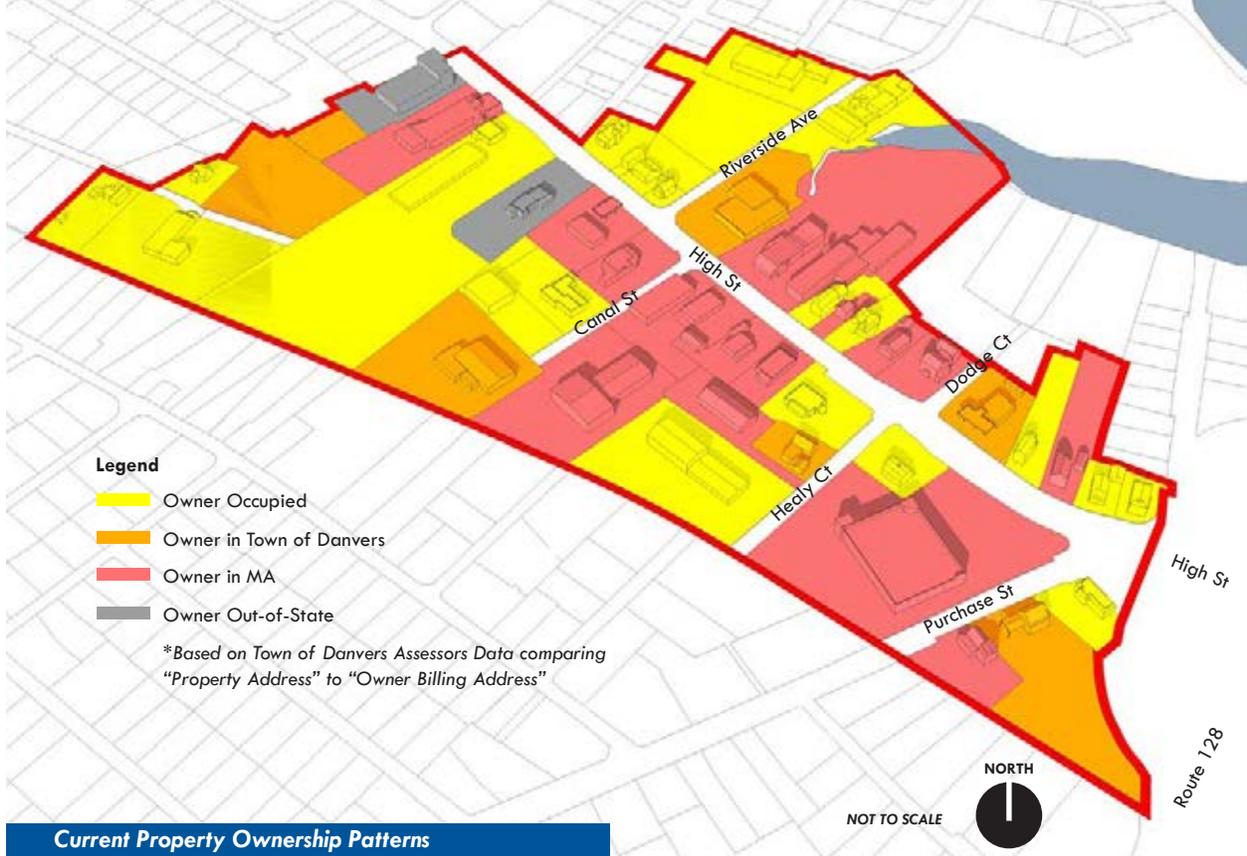
For example, a local business that owns and operates the business on a local property they own, can provide a very accessible local stakeholder that is interested in helping to advance improvements. Alternatively, a property that is owned by a national or international franchise that is based out of the state or out of the country, may provide a property that is difficult to even identify the appropriate person to discuss local improvements and aligning interests may prove equally as difficult.

The diagram on the following page shows this pattern of property ownership. This analysis is based on the Town of Danvers Assessor's Data, comparing the "Property Address" to the "Owner Billing Address". Each property is classified as either owner occupied, owner located in the Town of Danvers, owner located in the Commonwealth of MA, or owner out-of-State.

The diagram shows a substantial portion of the district is either owner occupied or owner located in the Town of Danvers. This indicates a potentially high level of local stakeholders willing to work with the Town to be stewards of district improvements.



Current Year of Construction



Current Property Ownership Patterns

4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

4.3 Circulation and Mobility Patterns

Roadways represent a key element of the public realm and, therefore, one of the prime opportunities to effect change in a community.

High Street (Route 35) forms the spine of the Study Area. This arterial provides direct access to Route 128 and the downtown on the north. Purchase Street, a connector, cuts through the southern portion of the site. Riverside Avenue, on the northeast quadrant of the Study Area, connects High Street to residential neighborhoods. The Study Area also contains several dead-end streets (Canal Street, Dodge Court, Healy Court, and Warren Street).

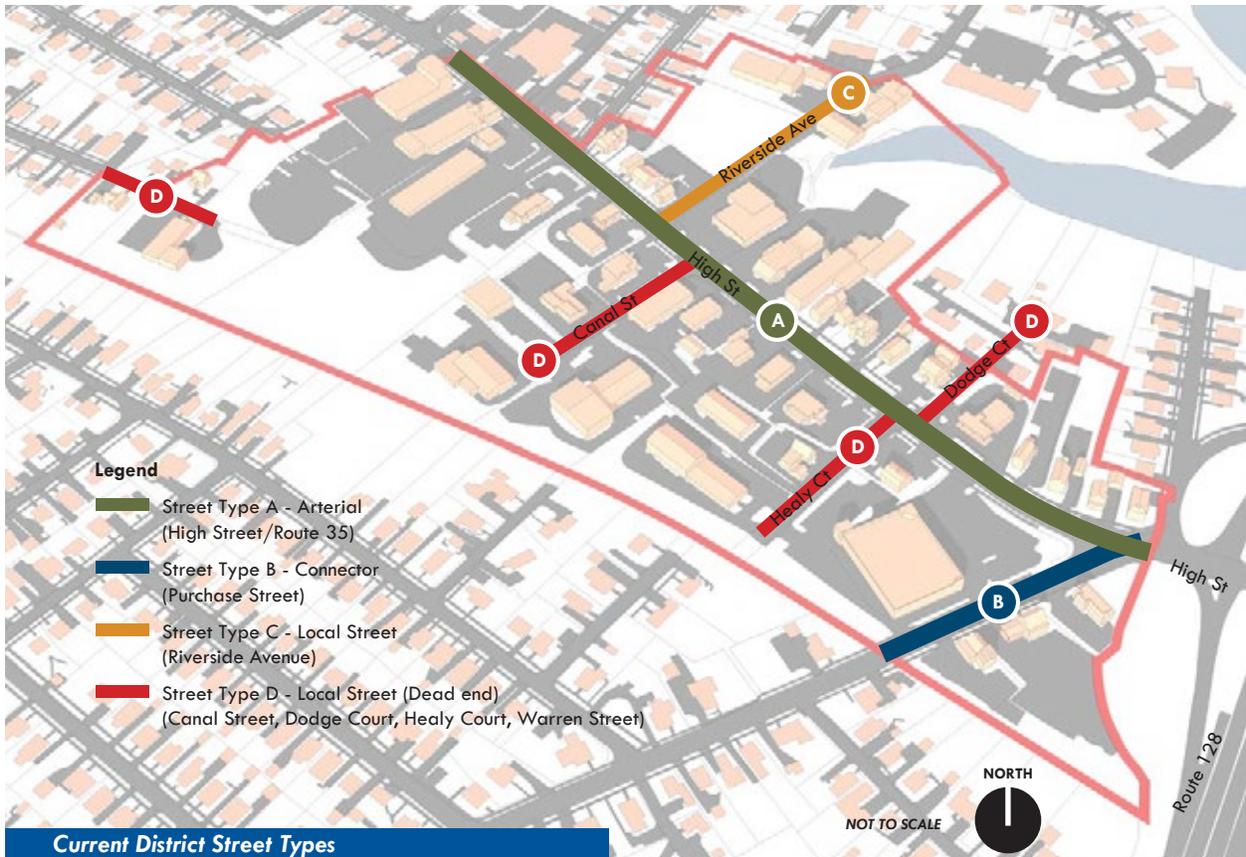
Roadway Challenges

High Street operates as a high-capacity, auto-centric through street. The roadway is excessively wide in areas, creating confusion as to the number of vehicular travel lanes.

While maintaining adequate vehicular level of service is critical, given the roadway's connection to Route 128, the street provides numerous challenges affecting the safety and comfort of pedestrians. The primary deficiency for pedestrian safety is a lack of sufficient crossing facilities, including lack of sufficient crosswalks and rapid flashing beacons, and wide crossing distances without refuge islands.

Creating a walkable environment extends beyond safety to considering comfort. Along High Street, the majority of properties have deep parking lots fronting High Street with frequent and wide curb cuts. This form is less conducive to creating a walkable environment. Overhead utility lines and inconsistent streetscape / streets trees further detract from the pedestrian environment.

The street also lacks safe bicycle facilities and bicycle parking.



A Type A – Arterial (High Street/Route 35)



(4) Vehicle Lanes, Lawn Strip, and Sidewalks, About 65' total width from back of sidewalk

B Type B – Connector (Purchase Street)



(2) Vehicle Lanes, Landscape, and Sidewalks, About 50' total width from back of sidewalk

C Type C – Local Street (Riverside Avenue)



(2) Vehicle Lanes, no other infrastructure About 26' total width of street pavement

D Type D – Local Access Drive (Dead end) (Canal St, Dodge Ct, Healy Ct, Warren St)



(2) Vehicle Lanes, some landscape, some segments of sidewalk, Varies between 18' and 30' total width of street pavement

Examples of Current District Street Types

4.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

4.4 Composite Mapping of Challenges and Opportunities

District Challenges

The district challenges are, in part, a result of the patterns that have been analyzed in the district. They are also issues that have been identified by residents, small business owners, and stakeholders who use the district.

The primary district challenges are illustrated in the diagram on the following page. They range from issues with connectivity, walkability, appearance, and impediments to redevelopment. Many of the challenges are centered on High Street.

In terms of connectivity, the district street network offers limited connecting streets and blocks due to the rail right-of-way and river, there is a lack of bicycle infrastructure in the district, there is little coordination or access across property lines.

In terms of walkability, a limited number of marked pedestrian crossings exist on High Street, frequent and wide interruptions to the sidewalk for vehicle access, and lack of pedestrian connections into sites to building entries.

In terms of appearance, parking is the dominant visual feature of High Street frontage, overhead electric utilities add to visual clutter in district, signs are sized for vehicles and not for pedestrians, and the streetscape and street trees are inconsistent or infrequent.

In terms of impediments to redevelopment, the river setbacks pose constraints on properties north of High Street and the depth of some of the properties also limit the ability in some portions of the district for redevelopment.

District Opportunities

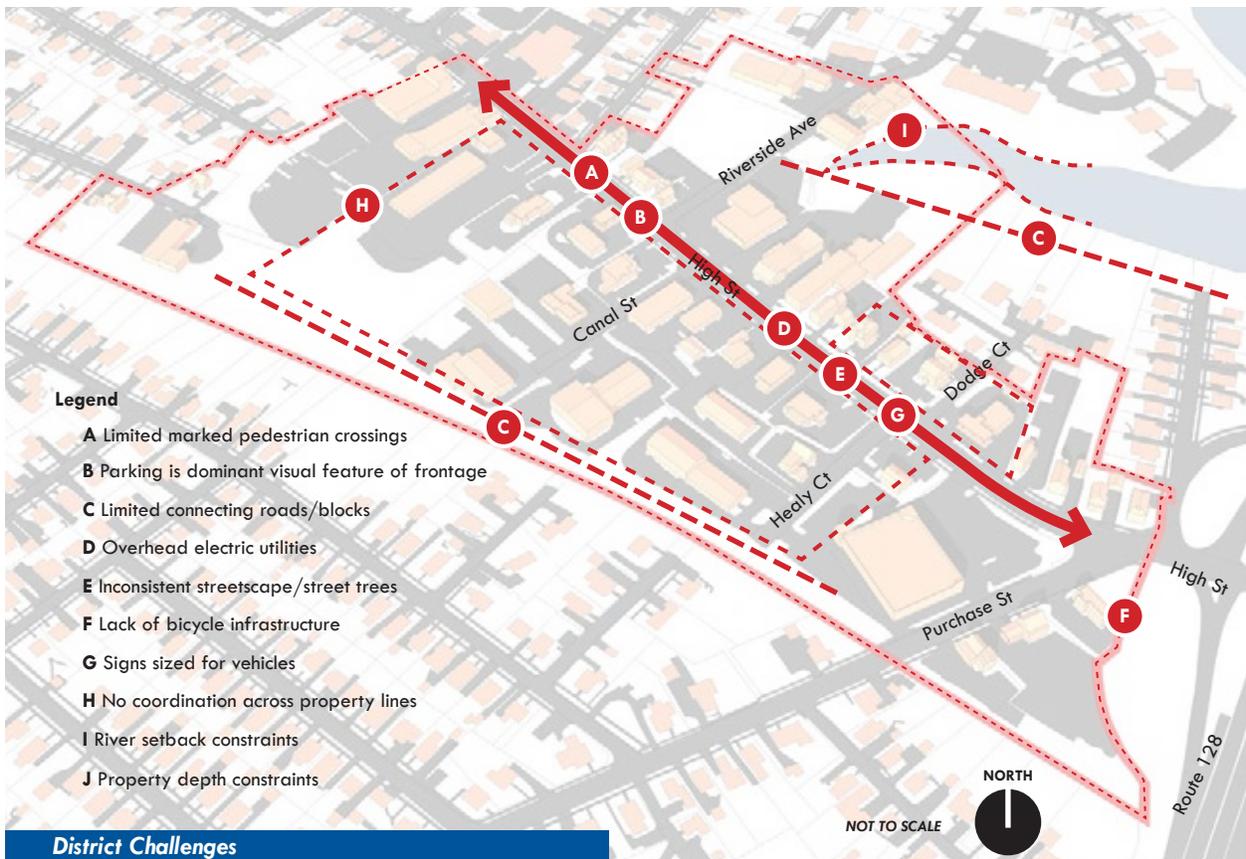
The district opportunities are also, in part, a result of the patterns that have been analyzed in the district. They are also opportunities that have been identified by residents, small business owners, and stakeholders who use the district and see the potential improvements that could occur.

The primary district opportunities are illustrated in the diagram on the following page. They range from leveraging assets, improving access, and encouraging investments.

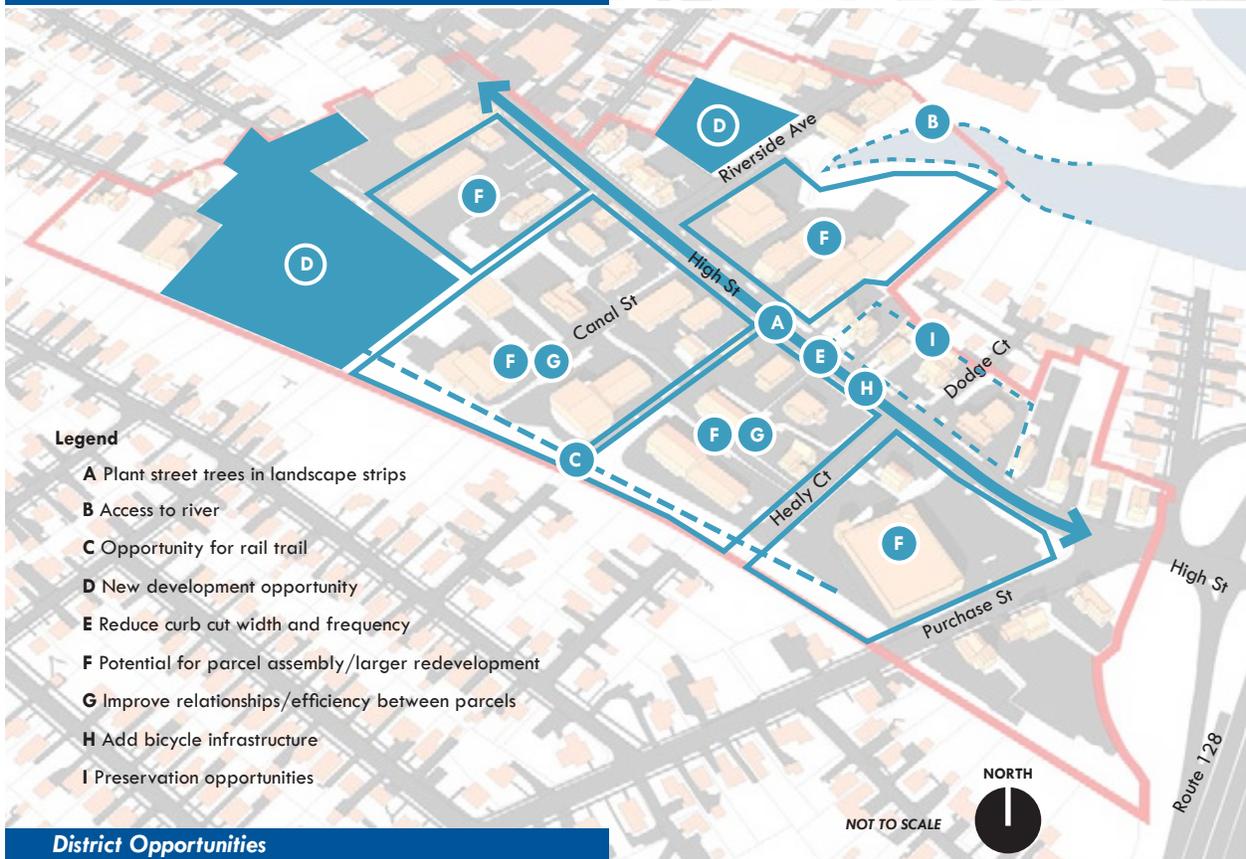
In terms of leveraging assets, access to the river could be improved, there is an opportunity for a rail trail, and opportunities to preserve historic building assets.

In terms of improving access, relationships and connections between parcels could be improved and made more efficient, and bicycle infrastructure could be added.

In terms of encouraging investments, street trees could be planted in landscape strips on High Street and secondary streets, new development opportunities could be encouraged on private property, curb cut widths and frequency could be reduced on High Street, and the potential for parcel assembly to encourage a larger redevelopment could be encouraged.



District Challenges



District Opportunities

5.0 APPLYING THE VISION



FUSO

MOORE
GMC Truck, Inc

OPEN

FUSO

4x4

MOORE

5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

The community vision has been articulated by the community and is compiled and recorded as the Vision Statement. Application of the community vision builds on the community engagement exercises that were undertaken as part of the second community forum that was part of this planning process. It also uses the existing conditions analysis as a foundation for this application to address the issues, opportunities, and patterns underlying the district.

5.1 Community District Scenarios

As part of the second Community Forum facilitated by MAPC in May of 2017, three groups of community members, residents, property owners, and stakeholders were asked to create a concept plan for the High Street I-1 District.

District Concept Plan – Community Group 1

The first group's concept plan included several primary elements with a focus on improving streetscape on High Street and adding pedestrian crossings. A rail trail on the southwestern edge of the district was added as a prominent recreational feature. It also considered the addition of new mixed-use or multi-family development to the rear of properties on the western side of High Street and the redevelopment of several properties at the High Street frontage. The group also added parking improvements to several of the large parking lots in the district. A new park at the edge of the river was added as a district open space.

This group of community members crafted the following vision statement to accompany the district concept plan:

“Use relatively underutilized land in the district to leverage mixed-use, residential, and

commercial development. Beautify the district as a gateway into Danvers (benches, trees, underground utilities). Increase the ability to get around by walking, biking and bus. Create a sense of community in the district - work and live here.”

Goals and priorities of the group included:

- Rail Trail
- Accommodate aging and youth in integrated housing
- Tapering uses, density, height (Downtown to 128) and frontage at High Street to rear of parcel

Images the group selected that were consistent with their future vision for the district included:





5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

5.1 Community District Scenarios

District Concept Plan – Community Group 2

The second group's concept plan included a focus similar to Group 1. The addition of a rail trail was a primary feature on the edge of the district. Warren Street was extended to create a connection south to the parking areas that connect to High Street. This new access and roadway would provide street frontage for new mixed-use development on existing parking lots. Strategic streetscape improvements and pedestrian crossings were added to High Street. Other strategic additions of mixed-use redevelopment would add vitality to the district, including along Riverside Avenue and Purchase Street. Recreational access was added to the river to better use this natural resource.

This group of community members crafted the following vision statement to accompany the district concept plan:

“The High Street Corridor extends the feel of downtown out from Danvers Square up High Street and extending to Purchase Street. With streetscaping similar to Maple Street, the corridor is a walkable, well-lit and landscaped street that features consolidated curb cuts, safer pedestrian crosswalks across High Street, and continuous sidewalks along both sides of the street. It also features interior pedestrian and bike access paths connecting businesses and residential use properties and the now active bike trail running along the spine of the corridor. Older industrial buildings have been replaced or re-used as mixed-use buildings along the High Street frontage of the corridor, with additional residential buildings towards the rear of some of the larger parcels. Some of the former commercial and light industrial uses have relocated to the southern end of the

corridor, closer to Route 128 and the corridor retains the service businesses associated with the corridor and I-1 zoning. There is structured parking in this area and a new shuttle stop that features transit access to the High Street corridor and Danvers Square. A new dedicated park in the lot in back of where McDonald's is now features green space, a playground for kids, bike facilities and access to the new rail trail. A new connecting court designed for walking and bike use only, crosses the rail trail right of way and the connects the High Street corridor with the adjoining residential neighborhood west of High Street, with easy connection for bikes and walkers to the downtown.”

Images the group selected that were consistent with their future vision for the district included:





5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

5.1 Community District Scenarios

District Concept Plan – Community Group 3

While similar concepts were also included in the third group’s concept plan, this plan is distinct due to the level of investment and redevelopment that was imagined. As can be seen in the diagram, many more new buildings were placed in the district as part of this vision for the future. On the east side of High Street new commercial investments align to the street frontage and frame a more walkable High Street. On the west side of High Street mixed-use development both frames High Street and turns the corner onto side streets and parking areas.

The depth of properties west of High Street is used to add residential development that is integrated with small open spaces. The rail trail is activated on the edge of the district and may connect to some of these open spaces. Circulation in the district is expanded by adding a direct connection from High Street to Linwood Road and Lawrence Street. New development at the corners of High Street and Purchase Street are framed to define a gateway into the district.

This group of community members crafted the following vision statement to accompany the district concept plan:

“The High Street Corridor will be a gateway to Danvers and act as a place to work, shop, and play. The emphasis on land use is on commercial use, supported by new residential development. The corridor should be safe and comfortable for pedestrians, as well as convenient for motorists.”

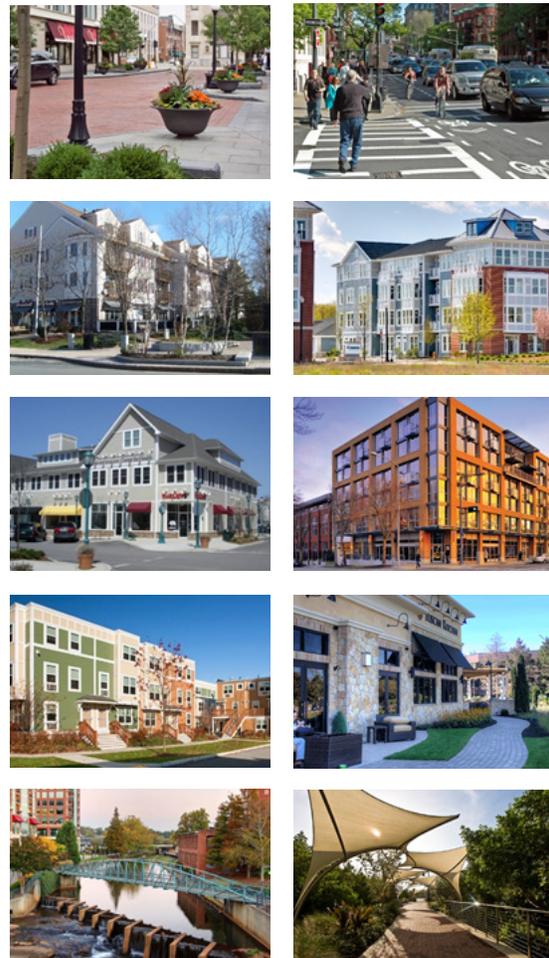
Goals and priorities include:

- Pedestrian amenities
- Add residential uses
- Review transportation strategies

The following additional notes were taken during the group discussion:

- Make it Danvers Square
- Mixed-use: residential and businesses – protect businesses
- “User Friendly”
- Walkable – places to go, safe pedestrian crossings, interesting
- Allow on-street parking?
- Streetscape – benches
- Beware of incompatible uses
- Need “buffer” from water and sewer use
- Issue: traffic at rush hour
- Additional offices for local

Images the group selected that were consistent with their future vision for the district included:





5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

5.1 Community District Scenarios

District Concept Plan – Compilation

Lessons from Community Concepts for the High Street Corridor:

The compilation of these concept plans offers an interesting diagram of the overlapping ideas from the three groups and shows that nearly every portion of the district is imagined to be part of the future improvements and investments. This diagram was created by copying each of the three groups' concept plans and adding them to the same base map.

The major components of agreement and overlap between these groups' ideas are summarized below.

High Street Improvements: The groups' ideas combine to show nearly continuous streetscape improvements on both sides of High Street with reduced curb cuts, increased street trees, and improved sidewalks with four additional locations for marked pedestrian crossings across High Street.

Expanded Street Connections: New street connections were identified to both frame redevelopment blocks and add more options for connecting the district and circulating through it. A connection at Warrant Street and an extension of Linwood Road are the two suggested locations for this approach.

Extensive Redevelopment Investment: Redevelopment of was shown nearly throughout every property in the study area. The most frequent type of redevelopment shown was mixed-use redevelopment, commercial redevelopment was frequently shown on the eastern frontage of High Street, and residential redevelopment was shown to the rear of the properties west of High Street. Nearly all buildings were placed to define street

frontages, including both High Street and side street frontages.

New River Access: A new park and trail was shown at the edge of the Porter River estuary to provide access to this natural amenity.

New Rail Trail Connection: A new rail trail connection and multi-use recreational path was viewed by all three groups as a unique and distinctive feature for the district that could help drive future positive change and economic development. Each concept showed it along the full length of the study area.

Integrated Parks and Plazas: In addition to the two primary district open space amenities of the riverfront park and rail trail, the groups showed other smaller parks and plazas integrated with future redevelopment. Many of these are placed between buildings or buildings and street frontages and could provide outdoor seating or additional landscape areas.

Improved Parking: Unlike its current configuration today, parking was not placed as a central feature of the district. When it was included in the concept plans it was shown integrated with surrounding buildings with a placement to the side or the rear of building structures.

5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

5.1 Community District Scenarios

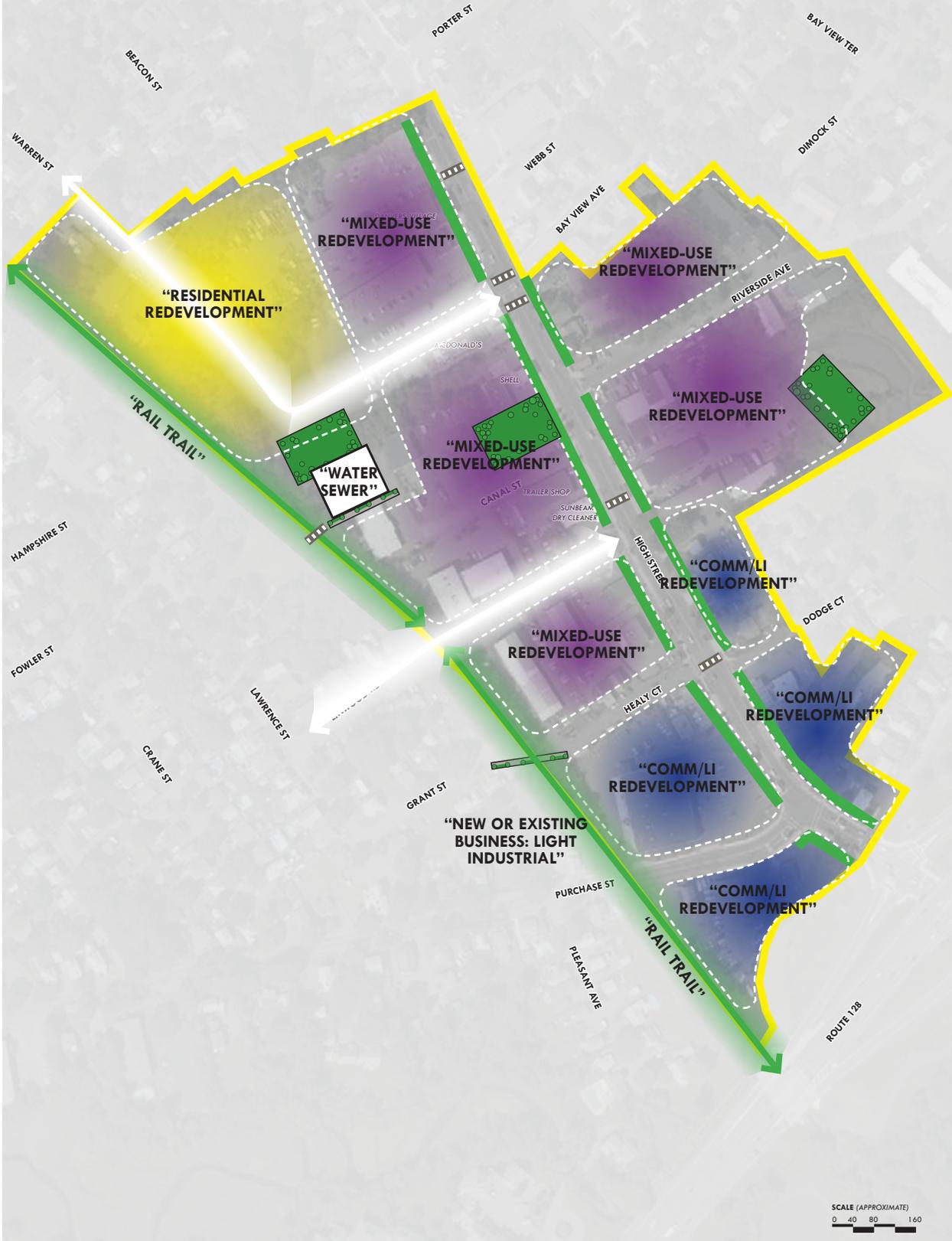
District Concept Plan – Compilation

The community vision directly addresses the challenges and opportunities that were identified with the existing conditions of the district. The illustrative plan builds on these existing conditions and addresses the major themes that have been highlighted, including: (1) Auto-oriented sites and buildings, (2) inefficient circulation and parking, (3) retention of local services and jobs, (4) opportunity for a rail trail, (5) overlay prominent surface parking lots, (6) curb cuts which are too wide and too frequent, (7) district gateways which are undistinguished, (8) the potential for new connections, (9) improved walkability, (10) new development on vacant land, (11) improved streetscape and frontages, and (12) improved access to the riverfront.

The district concept to the right represents a combination of the district concepts created by the community, responds directly to the challenges and opportunities, and applies the vision statement to frame future public and private investment in the district.



District Concept Plan - Vision Diagram



5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

5.2 Redevelopment Scenario and Illustrations

Following the compilation of the community concept plans the planning team assembled a redevelopment scenario that was responsive to the community ideas. This scenario is used to illustrate one potential outcome that may result from district improvement and rezoning strategies that are recommended. Several iterations of the concept plan were prepared and reviewed with the Planning and Human Services Department in Danvers. Two of these iterations are shown below.

The first redevelopment scenario showed more redevelopment occurring throughout the district and at a higher density. Feedback from the Planning and Human Services Department lead to another iteration that reduced the scale and frequency of redevelopment.



The refined redevelopment scenario below shows less development combined with the retention of more existing buildings and small businesses. The scale of redevelopment that abuts existing neighborhoods was also reduced.



5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

5.2 Redevelopment Scenario and Illustrations

The compilation of the community concept plans identified overlapping ideas and showed that nearly every portion of the study area is imagined to be part of the future improvements and investments imagined in the Vision Statement. The major components of agreement and overlap between these groups' ideas are illustrated below in a scaled redevelopment scenario that considers the potential sequence, scale, and location of future investments in the district. The key principles of this redevelopment scenario and the application of the community vision are articulated to the right.



DANVERS HIGH STREET CORRIDOR

Vision Principles

High Street Improvements: The groups' ideas combine to show nearly continuous streetscape improvements on both sides of High Street with reduced curb cuts, increased street trees, and improved sidewalks with four additional locations for marked pedestrian crossings across High Street.

Expanded Street Connections: New street connections were identified to both frame redevelopment blocks and add more options for connecting the district and circulating through it. Potential connections at Warrant Street and an extension of Linwood Road are the two suggested locations for this approach.

Extensive Redevelopment Investment: Redevelopment was shown nearly throughout every property in the study area. The most frequent type of redevelopment shown was mixed-use redevelopment, commercial redevelopment was frequently shown on the eastern frontage of High Street, and residential redevelopment was shown to the rear of the properties west of High Street. Nearly all buildings were placed to define street frontages.

New River Access: A new park and trail was shown at the edge of the Porter River estuary to provide access to this natural amenity.

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Integrated Parks and Plazas: In addition to the two primary district open space amenities of the riverfront park and rail trail, the groups showed other smaller parks and plazas integrated with future redevelopment. Many of these are placed between buildings or buildings and street frontages and could provide outdoor seating or additional landscape areas.

Improved Parking: Unlike its current configuration today, parking was not placed as a central feature of the district. When it was included in the concept plans it was shown integrated with surrounding buildings with a placement to the side or the rear of building structures.

5.0 APPLYING THE VISION

5.3 Illustrative District Plan and Recommendations

The community vision and illustrative plan point to a transformation of the High Street Corridor. The illustration depicts removal of approximately 100,000 to 150,000 square feet of current uses to create approximately 400,000 to 500,000 square feet of redevelopment opportunities. The new buildings could include approximately 100,000 to 150,000 square feet of commercial uses and approximately 200 to 300 new residential units. New buildings are between 2 and 3.5 stories with a maximum height of 45

feet. Parking is shown to accommodate 1.5 spaces per unit and 1 space per 400 square feet of commercial use with some sharing between the two. The illustrative plan diagram is not a representation of exactly what may happen in the future of the district. The illustration does define about (8) types of approaches or strategies for development applied to locations in the district which they may be likely to occur. These (8) approaches to redevelopment are described in more detail on the following page.



DANVERS HIGH STREET CORRIDOR

Development Strategies

- 1 Mixed-use Redevelopment to Update Commercial with High Street Frontage:** The redevelopment of High Street frontage may occur when existing single-story commercial buildings become vacant or underutilized. The opportunity to redevelopment property is encouraged by allowing a mix of commercial and residential uses at a greater allowable building scale.
- 2 New Compact Residential Uses at Unused Land:** The introduction of additional compact residential uses in the district on vacant parcels or portions of parcels would increase economic activity and vitality in the district. New residential development should increase the density of district residents and enhance the walkability of the district.
- 3 New Higher Density Residential Uses in Buffered Locations:** In locations that are buffered from adjacent lower density residential context, a higher density residential use may be appropriate. These locations that may be more central to the High Street Corridor district, could be an opportunity to invite additional residents as part of redevelopment in the district.
- 4 New Pad Infill Development:** Existing commercial properties in the district may provide an opportunity for a more active and productive use of property frontages that may currently be surface parking areas. Small buildings can be used to fill in the frontage of these sites and be leased as separate retail or commercial pad sites.
- 5 Conversion of Commercial or Light Industrial Uses to Mixed-use Development:** Properties that may not have High Street frontage should have the opportunity to convert to mixed-use development in the future, but should also be sustained and respected by changes that may occur around them. Existing commercial and light industrial uses should also have the ability to maintain current operations.
- 6 Convert Auto-oriented to Mixed-use:** New auto-oriented uses should not be allowed and current auto-oriented uses should be converted over time to more pedestrian friendly uses, and building and site designs.
- 7 Preserve Existing Services, Commerce, Jobs:** District investments and redevelopment should occur to integrate with and complement local services, commerce, and jobs found in the district.
- 8 Site and Landscape Improvements:** Improvements to the pedestrian environment should focus on the frontage of High Street with new investments increasing the attractiveness and walkability of the district. Site and landscape improvements should also reinforce connections on side streets that intersect with High Street.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION



H.J. BLANCHARD & SONS, INC.
RIGGERS
CRANE SERVICE



6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.1 Zoning Recommendations

Zoning Assessment

The current zoning districts in and near the High Street area are fairly exclusive to their dominant use classes. That is, the commercial districts allow primarily commercial development (retail and service establishments), while the residential districts are fairly exclusive to residential development. The result is that there are few opportunities to mix uses and, as all of the study area is devoted to business uses, there are limited means to support additional residential uses in the High Street study area.

Existing and Allowed Uses

Industrial Districts I and II zoning, such as in the I-1 High Street District and the I-2 areas account for approximately 813 acres of land in Danvers or just less than 9% of the community's land area. The sixteen Industrial District locations are scattered throughout the Town. The industrial districts such as are cumulative zones, meaning that they allow for all types of business uses.

Officially, the Industrial Districts permit warehouses, office buildings, light manufacturing buildings, salesrooms, hotels, motels, restaurants, bowling alleys, indoor theaters, ice skating rinks, shopping centers, banks, gas stations and other accessory uses normally incidental to industry. By special permit, industrial uses such as boat yards and/or marinas are allowed provided direct access is available to a navigable waterway from the land used for the boat yard or marina. Residential uses are not permitted in either the I-1 or I-2 Districts.

Historically, these areas were created for heavy industrial purposes; however this is no longer the case. More distribution, warehouse

facilities, and light manufacturing plants occupy these districts today. The original locally owned businesses centered in these industrial zones are slowly transitioning to other uses.

Although the entire High Street study area is zoned I-1, the area contains a mix of uses. As noted previously, the High Street study area includes 48 parcels of land with a total of 54 structures, and a total land area of 36.76 acres. The five building types found there include the single-family house, multi-family house, small commercial building (less than 5,000 square feet), mid-scale commercial / industrial building (5,000-19,999 square feet), and moderate-scale commercial building (20,000+ square feet).

Area Zoning Context

The surrounding residential and commercial districts that abut the study area are important to understand as context for potential zoning changes.

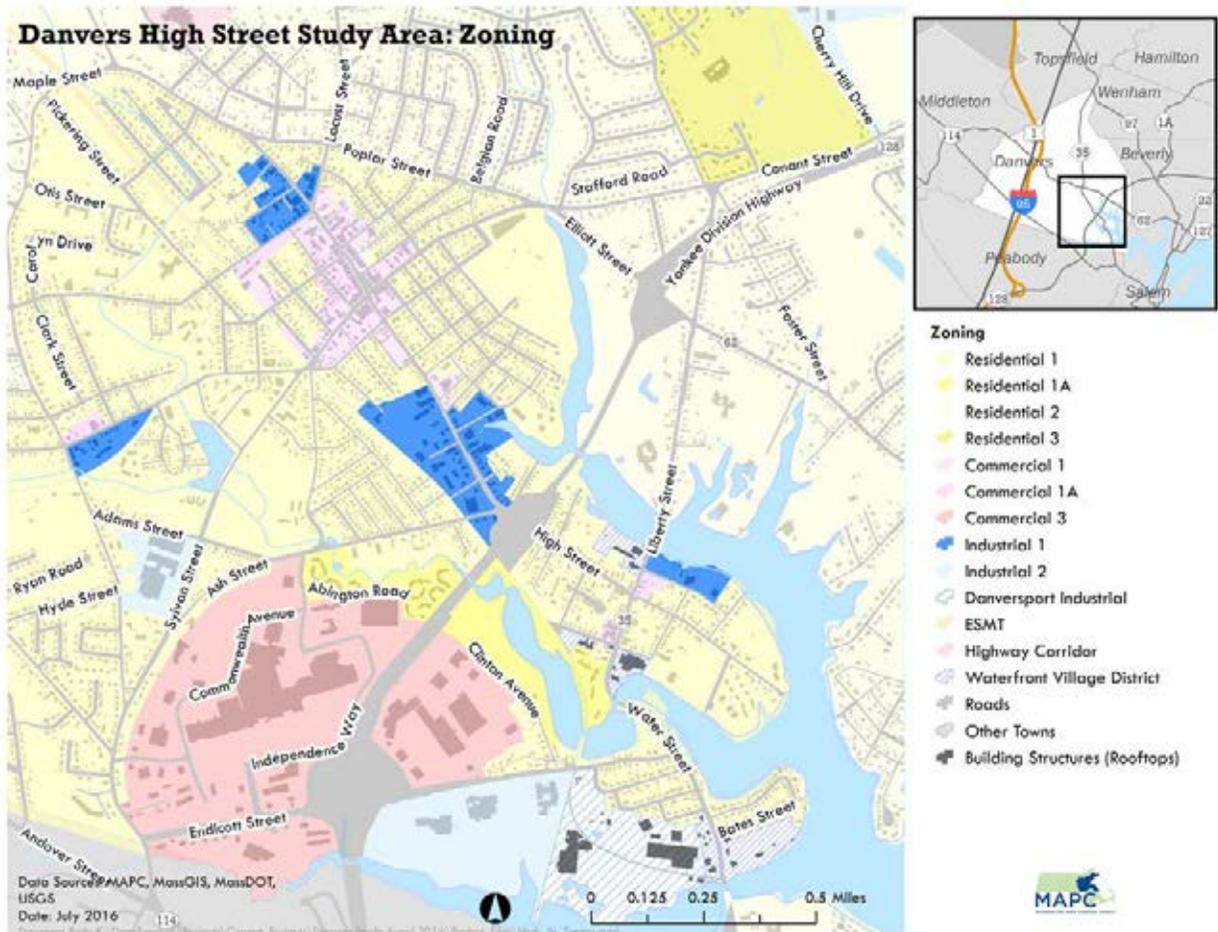
Surrounding all but a small area of the High Street I-1 area is R-1, a single-family and two-family zoning district, requiring a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet for single-family and 15,000 square feet for two-family homes. Multi-family homes (three or more dwelling units) are a Special Permit use, allowed only on lots of at least 30,000 square feet within the R-1 District. Conversions of single-family homes to two-family are allowed by Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals, requiring only a 5,000 square foot lot to be considered. The district also provides for a range of other allowed uses such as minor home occupations, accessory uses and small greenhouses. Neighborhood stores are the only commercial use permitted by zoning in R-1 and only by Special Permit from the ZBA. The Board of Appeals can also reduce dimensional requirements by Special Permit up to 20% for single and two-family homes if there are

extenuating circumstances involving the lot and if the reduced dimensions are not harmful to either abutters or the neighborhood.

On the northern edge of the study near the Central Fire Station and including four lots with frontage along High Street, the small C-1 District adjoining the study area serves the downtown residential areas nearby. It features assembly and processing uses, restaurants, retail and wholesale shops, services, small and large offices as allowed uses. Civic, fraternal, and non-profit uses are considered by Special Permit. Encouraging commercial uses, the C-1 district has no minimum lot size or frontage requirement, and the setback requirements are flexible. Single and two-family residential uses are not allowed within either the C-1 or similarly zoned C-1A Districts closer to downtown but multi-family developments by

Planning Board Special Permit are considered within C-1A. Major home occupations are an allowed use by ZBA Special Permit within C-1.

In summary, the primarily residential R-1 neighborhoods abutting the High Street study area are closely linked to it as nearby Danvers residents use and appreciate the mostly small and medium-sized businesses currently located there. Comments collected during site visits with abutting neighbors and interviews with High Street business owners, along with input gathered at the community visioning meeting indicated that residents' first concern was improving the appearance and safety of High Street while being open to retaining businesses and appropriately scaled redevelopment in the form of mixed-use, and a wider range of residential uses.



Dimensional Standards

The zoning within the High Street study area and the R-1 residential and C-1 commercial districts that adjoin it offer a wide range of dimensional requirements, creating some potential inconsistencies between the standards of development projects. The different zoning districts create distinct differences in the study area for building heights, setbacks, location of parking, lot coverage, and amount of open space.

The following table illustrates the different dimensional requirements for the High Street I-1 area and the adjoining zoning districts within the surrounding Danvers neighborhoods:

District	Use	Lot Size	Lot Coverage	Frontage	Depth	Setbacks			Height	Stories	FAR	Open Space
						Front	Side	Rear				
Existing												
I-1	Existing	NA	50% building max.	50	NA	50	25	25	55	4	NA	NA
Adjoining Districts												
R-1	Single Family Dwelling Unit	10,000	NA	80	NA	20 ^(1,2)	8	8	30	NA	NA	NA
R-1	Two-Family	15,000	NA	80	NA	20 ^(1,2)	8	8	30	NA	NA	NA
R-1	Multi-Family	30,000	NA	125	NA	40	30	30	30	NA	NA	NA
R-1	Accessory Uses	NA	NA	NA	NA	30	5 ⁽³⁾	5 ⁽³⁾	10 ⁽³⁾	NA	NA	NA
R-1	Dwelling Conversion	5,000	NA	80	NA	20	NA	8	30	NA	NA	NA
C-1	All Uses	NA	NA	NA	NA	10 ⁽⁴⁾	0/5 ⁽⁵⁾	0/5 ⁽⁶⁾	45	3	NA	NA
Notes:	1. Eaves, steps and porches may be less											
	2. No structure required to be set back more than average setbacks of existing structures on street											
	3. Side and rear setbacks for accessory structures not exceeding 120 square feet, otherwise principal setbacks apply											
	4. Not required to be setback more than average setback of two abutting and next adjacent lots on either side of subject lot											
	5. 5-feet only where lot shares a common boundary or property line with a residentially zoned lot, otherwise zero											
	6. 5-feet from another commercially zoned property											

Parking Requirements

Parking is a critical component to downtown development and can be an asset or a hindrance to the success of development around transit or mixed-use. One of the goals of diversified, mixed-use style development is to provide options for travel that do not rely solely on personal vehicles. Providing more densely settled, mixed-use areas with less parking near service areas is one way to ease traffic congestion and promote more walking and biking use as part of new development. As noted, 37% of the High Street study area is currently being used for surface parking. Community concept plans created by three groups or residents at the May 2016 workshop all showed a preference for integrating parking within buildings and locating to the rear and sides of buildings.

In Danvers, there are five public parking lots located in the downtown area, each with posted two-hour time limits. There is also a public parking lot diagonally across the street from the front entrance to Town Hall at the end of Elm Street at the five-way intersection which provides for unlimited, all day parking.

The parking requirements in Danvers are measured on a per residential unit basis or on a square footage basis for retail and office development. There may be an opportunity to reduce the residential parking requirement to a standard more consistent with other mixed-use type standards. Generally, the office and retail requirements are on par with typical suburban parking standards. Requiring two-spaces per multi-family dwelling unit, as well as one space for each 250 square feet personal retail and office uses as now written in the Danvers zoning bylaw might discourage the redevelopment of downtown areas such as the High Street District. Land area that could have been used, and taxed, for commercial or residential development is used for parking, reducing

the profitability of the site and often leading to smaller buildings surrounded by parking spaces that are under-utilized. Danvers does allow for up to a 25% reduction of its parking requirements under site plan review if the space is kept in reserve and the spaces provided prove adequate through an annual inspection by the Planning Board.

The Town's parking ratios for office and retail development in all of its zoning districts are somewhat consistent with industry standards for suburban development, but are slightly higher than what may be appropriate for a mixed-use downtown setting. The current ratio for office and retail development in the Danvers bylaw varies but is in the range of 1 parking space for every 200-250 square feet of development. MAPC would recommend that the Town consider standardizing its parking requirements and increasing its minimum parking requirements for retail and office development from the current range to 1 space per 400 square feet.

MAPC also recommends that Danvers consider implementing parking minimums and maximums for residential units, as well as adjusting the number of spaces required based on the number of bedrooms per unit. MAPC recommends the Town consider a tiered set of parking minimums and maximums as described below:

- Studio and One Bedroom Units – Minimum of 0.5 spaces per unit to a maximum of 1 space per unit.
- Two Bedroom Units - Minimum of 1 space per unit to a maximum of 1.5 spaces per unit.
- Three + Bedroom Units – Minimum of 1.5 spaces per unit to a maximum of 2 spaces per unit.

The Town should consider creating a shared parking ordinance between residential, office, and retail uses that are part of the same development. Mixed-use parking will often require that the developer provide parking equal to the sum of the parking requirements from each separate use on the site. This method can lead to excess parking on a site because residential uses typically have peak parking periods at opposite times of the office and some retail uses.

As per the new Maple Street Overlay Bylaw standards, the Town should consider allowing structural parking located within a block or be sure it is well-landscaped when fronting on a street. The Town should formalize the Planning Board's current capacity to reduce parking by more than the current 25% allowed by incorporating on-street parking credits and satellite parking in-lieu of new off-street parking when appropriate, incorporate new bicycle parking standards for any mixed use/residential area, and allow drive-thru facilities only by Special Permit

Zoning Recommendation

Incorporating the vision built by High Street residents while considering whether present High Street land uses are currently meeting high rates of utilization and efficiency can benefit the Town's quality of life and benefit Danvers taxpayers. As noted previously, most of the study area has low rates utilization and low Floor Area Ratios, not traits associated with vibrant commercially zoned areas.

MAPC approached this project with a viewpoint of respecting the existing High Street corridor uses with the demand for additional development along High Street realizing that many properties in the study area may not redevelop for years to come. But planning ahead of any redevelopment and getting the zoning and transportation network in place to support any new development is critical,

especially to ensure it is compatible with the community's vision for the area.

Reassessing the High Street Corridor's current I-1 industrial zoning was one of the key objectives of the project. Historically seen primarily as an auto-oriented commercial state highway corridor, the area is a Town gateway adjacent to a downtown that has experienced increased interest in developing a more diverse residential and mixed-use base, as evidenced by Danvers' adoption of the Tapleyville Mixed Use Overlay District in 2014 and the recent adoption of the Maple Street Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District and 40R Smart Growth Overlay District in 2017. MAPC has developed a set of recommendations for the Town to consider as it moves forward with its reassessment of the current I-1 industrial zoning.

Consider Overlay District or Baseline Zoning Changes

Overlay districts are often considered when changing underlying zoning would convert many existing conforming properties into a non-conforming status, either dimensionally or by use. The reverse danger is that if underlying I-1 zoning is kept in place, the Town runs the risk of having a project built under I-1 zoning that no longer matches the uses desired by the Town or the High Street neighborhood; a good example being the "Chocolate Box" building erected under I-1 zoning in what had become a primarily residential, small-business waterfront neighborhood. Though stronger markets for residential housing reduce the risk of this happening in the current climate, the town should consider the overall benefits of each option by looking at existing I-1 building conformity issues vs what might be created in a new mixed use district with uses, dimensions and design and parking guidelines in line with Tapleyville, Maple Street overlays and High Street residents' views.

High Street Mixed Use District

If the risk of unwanted I-1 uses and dimensions outweighs the potential nuisances of non-conforming uses within the High Street study area, the Town should consider creating a High Street Mixed Use District. The district would reflect the trend towards mixed-uses, appropriate commercial uses, and moderate density multi-family housing choices. Focus should be the retention of appropriate existing businesses, connection to the Danvers bike trail along with the incorporation of Complete Streets pedestrian, bike and streetscape uses, traditional neighborhood design and more efficient parking rules. The area should shift from being predominantly auto-oriented towards being more residentially-oriented, connected with the downtown, with limits on drive-thru businesses, consolidation of existing curb cuts, and no parking in front yard setbacks.

C-1 A District with Design and Parking Updates

Past studies (Stantec, 2006) have suggested that the High Street area be rezoned to C-1.

With the current trends pointing towards a need for increased in-town housing options this area should not be rezoned to C-1 as this would not fundamentally address the need for desired multi-family uses, better streetscape, pedestrian safety, community character and design improvements expressed by Danvers residents; it would also probably leave inefficient land uses in place. If shifting underlying zoning is found to be desirable but the High Street Mixed Use District suggested above is not, another alternative would be to consider rezoning the area to C-1A.

The commercial C-1A and C-1 Districts are designed to serve downtown Danvers and the surrounding residential areas as well. They feature assembly and processing uses,

restaurants, retail and wholesale shops, services, small and large offices as allowed uses. Civic, fraternal, and non-profit uses are considered by Special Permit. Encouraging commercial uses, neither of these two districts have either minimum lot sizes or frontage requirements, and the setback requirements are flexible. Single and two-family residential uses are not allowed within either the C-1 or C-1A Districts but multi-family developments by Planning Board Special Permit are considered within C-1A. Day care facilities are an allowed use in C-1A. Major home occupations are an allowed use by ZBA Special Permit in both districts. An updated C-1A district, a portion of which will be abutting the new Maple Street District downtown, could serve as an attractive southern gateway to downtown. With the flexibility of no minimum lot size frontage requirements already in place, maximum height set at 45-feet and more appropriate uses for a downtown area already established, non-conformity issues would be minimized versus the underlying I-1 zoning now in place. Allowed uses, including mixed use buildings, parking, streetscape and design guidelines for new development under C-1A could be updated to more closely match the new standards established in the new Tapleyville and Maple Street Overlay Districts.

High Street Mixed Use Overlay

If the Town decides that non-conforming properties would create a significant nuisance by changing baseline zoning in the High Street study area and that the risk of having an inappropriate I-1 project constructed are minimal given existing market conditions, it may wish to consider an overlay district for the area. This would follow the model established after the CAI ink plant explosion in 2006, located within another I-1 zoned area, and later rezoned to Waterfront Village Zoning, of looking at re-evaluating all of the I-1 areas in Danvers to see if the I-1 zoning was

still the best fit for the neighborhoods where it's located. In the case of the Danversport, it was deemed appropriate to create new underlying zoning whereas for Tapleyville and Maple Streets areas, overlays were chosen. If an overlay is used for High Street, it should incorporate a thoughtful mix of uses that respects the current uses there while beginning a gradual transformation that draws it closer to the downtown and its growing mix of uses and housing types. This should be a moderately dense, mixed-use and residential neighborhood that encourages a variety of housing types- from single detached to multi-family- with a projected density of around 14-16 units per acre.

Building on the principles already incorporated into the new mixed use districts created by the Town starting in 2009 and capturing the vision expressed by High Street residents, the study area should be anchored by the following:

- Improvements to pedestrian safety and streetscape along High Street;

- Expanded bike and pedestrian connections within the corridor and to what will be Danvers' next multi-purpose trail and to the Porter River;
- The addition of well designed, appropriately scaled residential and mixed-use redevelopment;
- With taller mixed use buildings fronting High Street and tapering to shorter, residential only developments further back from High Street on both sides to better blend with the surrounding R-1 neighborhoods;
- The redefinition of the southern gateway to downtown Danvers at Purchase and High Streets.

The following table illustrates the existing I-1 and offers a starting point for suggested alternatives:

District	Use	Lot Size	Lot Coverage	Frontage	Depth	Setbacks			Height	Stories	FAR	Open Space
						Front	Side	Rear				
Existing												
I-1	Existing	NA	50% building max.	50	NA	50	25	25	55	4	NA	NA
Recommended												
Subdistrict A	Core commercial, mixed use, retail, services	NA	40% building max.; 90% total	50	NA	Range 0-20	Range 15-20	Range 15-20	45	3.5	1.5	10%
Subdistrict B	Core residential, some services	NA	25% building max.; 65% total	NA	NA	0-20	Range 15-20	Range 15-20	35	2.5	0.75	20%

With I-1 front yard setbacks at 50-feet and side/rear setbacks at 25-feet, MAPC suggests that a flexible front yard range be set for a new overlay, with a zero-foot minimum and a 20-foot maximum. Side and rear setbacks would be a minimum of 15-feet, with a 20-foot minimum rear for parcels abutting a residential district. These setbacks offer will substantially increase land space and design flexibility while still respecting built uses using I-1 setbacks and neighboring single-family residential R-1 uses with 20-foot front yard and 8-foot rear and side yards.

Maple Street Overlay Ideas

Depending on the options the Town chooses to pursue above, the Town should consider standards incorporated into the recently adopted Maple Street Overlay Bylaw, including:

- Building zone Envelope to accommodate lot and setback flexibility.
- Bulk planes and building stepbacks. This can be accommodated through the Special Permit process when appropriate vs incorporating into an overlay's design guidelines as situations may differ, but should be included as guidance, either as policy for revised existing zoning areas or for new overlays if desired.
- The definition and use of multiple allowed principal building types and their allowed locations and dimensions, as deemed appropriate for each updated or new district/overlay. The use of special development types such as Cohousing, Cottage Court development and Gas Backward are particularly innovative and should be explored for other areas.
- The use of sub-districts to help define a proper mix of uses and settings.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.2 Design Guideline Recommendations

The community vision and the illustration of how the High Street I-1 district may evolve to include several important site and building design concepts that offer important guidance for future investments. The illustration shows one possible future. It is not possible to account for the multitude of variables and variations within one, or even several, simplified diagrams. However, it is possible to determine the key design features that will directly contribute to the community vision. This design guidance is highlighted in the overall diagram below and expanded in the following list of Design Standards. The key features include: (1) new buildings oriented to High Street and placed at

street corners, (2) site and building frontage at High Street that strengthens the public realm, (3) new buildings that frame new streets and blocks off of High Street, (4) integrating the parking supply into new streets, (5) reducing the visual impact of parking, (6) adding new building area where possible, (7) reducing the scale of buildings adjacent to residential neighborhoods, (8) creating new circulation connections, (9) connecting circulation between properties, (10) retaining tree buffers, (11) connecting to multi-modal trails, and (12) strengthening recreational amenities.



DANVERS HIGH STREET CORRIDOR

Design Standards

- 1 Building Orientation:** The location and orientation of new buildings in the district are of critical importance to increasing the sense of place, vitality and walkability of the district. Buildings should be located near the streets that are adjacent to the property and prioritize the buildings relationship to High Street.
- 2 Site and Building Frontage:** The site configuration and characteristics should reinforce the positive building orientation. The site area between the building and street frontage should be used to support and enhance the pedestrian environment with expanded sidewalks, small plaza areas, and improved landscape and streetscape. Less attractive site features, such as parking and service areas, should not be a prominent part of the site and building frontage.
- 3 Define Streets and Blocks:** Large properties or the edges between several properties should be explored for opportunities to define street connections and new block configurations. New streets and blocks would add flexibility to circulation and offer new street frontages that could be made more pedestrian-friendly than High Street with reduced car speeds and street widths. Buildings should be used to define the frontage on these new street connections. This is particularly important for corner locations where new streets intersect with High Street to turn the corner with the building and bring new frontage activity into the blocks perpendicular to High Street.
- 4 Integrate On-Street Parking:** New streets that may be created in the district should be integrated with on-street parking spaces. Depending on the site design and dimensional constraints of the property these spaces may be parallel, perpendicular or angled. Integrating parking spaces into the street design disperses the parking supply to reduce the need for large surface parking lots in the district.
- 5 Reduce Impact of Parking:** Where large surface parking lots do occur the visual impact of that parking should be reduced as much as possible. The first technique to reduce the visual impact of parking is to place it behind buildings. The second technique is to design several smaller interconnected parking lots that are integrated with landscaping, as opposed to one very large parking lot. Parking should always be integrated with landscape features and sidewalks and fit within the larger structure of streets and blocks.
- 6 Infill New Opportunities:** In addition to leveraging more transformative redevelopment to define these design standards in the district, new buildings can be added to fill in the patterns of development for existing properties. These new infill opportunities should emulate the design standards by placing buildings to reduce the impact of large existing surface parking lots, defining site frontage, and strengthening the structure of blocks.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.2 Design Guideline Recommendations

(continued)



DANVERS HIGH STREET CORRIDOR

Design Standards (*continued*)

- 7 Respect Adjacent Neighbors:** New development must respect neighboring properties by relating to the surrounding building massing and scale. Respect for neighboring properties may complement the existing patterns of use and buildings while anticipating other future changes in the district and providing an opportunity for improved patterns and synergies between adjacent properties.
- 8 Create New Connections:** In addition to creating connections internal to the High Street Corridor district, opportunities for future connections should be made when possible. New connections may be new pedestrian connections that may be created and phased into use over time. Such opportunities may exist for Linwood Street or Warren Street in the future.
- 9 Connect Properties and Parking:** In the future, district resources, such as parking, should be shared across properties as much as possible to increase the efficiency of use. This sharing is facilitated by creating vehicular and pedestrian connections between adjacent properties and specifically between adjacent parking areas. Physical connections may be combined with shared parking agreements to further enhance the efficient use of district resources.
- 10 Retain Trees and Landscape:** Existing trees and older growth landscape features of the district cannot be immediately replaced and should be preserved and retained. Most important are the mature trees at the edges of the district that provide a buffer to the neighboring areas.
- 11 Connect Sidewalks and Trails:** Multi-modal connections should be strengthened and leveraged for alternative modes of travel in the district including the conversion of the rail line for use as a multi-use rail trail. The district should offer frequent connections to the rail trail.
- 12 Strengthen Recreational Amenities:** The Porter River frontage in the district should be elevated as a district feature and recreational amenity.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.2 Design Guideline Recommendations

Street Frontage Guidelines:

- Add marked pedestrian crossings at all site driveways and across streets in locations that align with other sidewalks, curb cuts, and intersections.
- Add street trees integrated into the site design of the frontage along streets and accessways.
- Reduce width of vehicular access into properties and define curb cuts with curbs.
- Combine vehicular access and curb cuts between multiple properties.

Site Planning Guidelines:

- Integrate plazas, open spaces, and landscape areas between buildings and parking areas to maximize uninterrupted and contiguous space that can be used more effectively for outdoor activity or landscape buffers.
- Parking areas should be located to the side or rear of the structure. No parking area should be designed such that parking is within the required or authorized front yard setbacks.
- Design parking and site circulation to be combined with adjacent properties.
- To the extent possible, parking areas should be shared with the adjacent business. Shared parking should be associated with an agreement that describes the terms of the sharing of the parking resource between the parties that will be sharing.

- Parking areas should include provisions for the “parking” of bicycles in locations that are safely separated from automobile traffic and parking.

- Vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle features should be designed to provide a network of connections across individual properties. Allowances for pedestrian and vehicular access to existing or future abutting developments should be considered in the site and circulation layout.

- Site design should emphasize pedestrian circulation within the development.

- Site design should maximize the efficient use of existing and proposed parking facilities and minimize the area of land to be paved for parking.

Building Design Guidelines:

- Buildings should be of a design similar or compatible with the traditional architecture of the Town of Danvers in terms of scale, massing, roof shape, spacing and exterior materials. Design compatibility considerations should also include the industrial and manufacturing heritage of the High Street District.

- Designs should emphasize a relationship with the surrounding neighborhoods and enhance pedestrian access.

- The primary building orientation should be parallel with the front setback line to establish and preserve a consistent building line, with primary entrances oriented toward the street. Where appropriate, a building may be oriented around a courtyard or respond to a corner location.

- In addition to relating to the primary street frontage, buildings should be oriented to relate to side streets and access ways that are part of the site design. Buildings located away from the primary street frontage, should be oriented to relate to internal site access ways, open spaces, or other defining features of the property.
- A building's front façade should be composed of materials used in traditional New England architecture, such as brick, granite, wood clapboard and wood shingles. The main elements of the architectural treatment of the building's front façade, including materials used, should be continued around all sides of the building that are visible from a street or pedestrian plaza.
- A building's ground floor should be emphasized through the height of the ground floor, the height of the first floor of a mixed-use or commercial building should be taller than upper floors, and expressed through façade treatments that reinforce visibility and transparency of ground floor activity.
- Reduce building bulk – buildings more than 45 feet in width along the street frontage should be divided into increments not more than 45 feet wide through articulation of the façade, such as variations in building setbacks, roof lines or materials, window bays or other architectural methods.
- For commercial or mixed-use buildings, at least (30) percent of any ground floor façade that is visible from a public street should be comprised of windows with clear glass.
- Garage doors or loading docks are discouraged as part of the front façade of any street facing frontage. Garage and loading areas and access should be integrated with the surrounding pedestrian circulation and minimize the impact.
- Outdoor storage, trash collection or compaction, or ground level service and utility equipment, including air conditioning equipment, electric utility boxes or satellite dishes, should be screened from view from streets and adjacent lots.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.2 Design Guideline Recommendations

In addition to the Design Standard and Guideline recommendations outlined, the Maple Street Traditional Neighborhood Development Smart Growth Overlay District Bylaw was reviewed for pertinent information that may be applicable to the High Street district with minor adjustment. The list below highlights these sections:

18.6 Site Planning and Development Standards

18.6.B. Landscaping and Tree Preservation

1. Landscape Design
2. Tree Preservation
3. Landscape Buffers
4. Street Trees

18.6.D. Screening

1. Loading Facilities
2. Service Areas
3. Mechanical Equipment

18.6.E. Outdoor Lighting

1. Applicability
2. Prohibited Lighting
3. Energy Efficiency
4. Shielding
5. Location
6. Illuminance

18.6.F. Parking

1. Purpose
4. General Parking Requirements
5. Parking Adjustments
6. Special Parking Types and Standards
7. Standards for All Off-Street Parking
8. Surface Parking Lots
9. Structured Parking
10. Parking Special Permit
11. Bicycle Parking

18.6.G. Vehicle Access

1. Curb Cuts
2. Driveways and Vehicular Entrances

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.3 Other Recommendations

Public Realm Improvement

Public investment in the street network should be combined with private investment in property redevelopment and improvement. Public investment in the street network is a viable technique to encourage private investment in a district and can be used to strengthen walkability and bikability. These investments would be focused on a complete streets approach for High Street, Purchase Street, Riverside Avenue, Canal Street Dodge Court, and Healy Court.

A complete street is an approach to improving the street such that it is safe, comfortable, and accessible for all users, all ages, and all forms of travel. The improvements should be context sensitive and responsive to the hierarchy of streets in the district. Complete streets improvements would be complementary to the other improvements that are described in the district.

On High Street, a complete streets approach would add further definition for the use of the street between the curbs. The street width varies, but is approximately 44'. The only lane markings present are a double yellow center-line. If lane markings were defined for (4) vehicle travel lanes with 11' per lane, no space would be left on the road for other users. In this circumstance sharrows and share the road signage should be added to encourage bicycling in the lanes nearest the curb.

Alternatively, a stronger complete streets approach to High Street would be to reduce vehicular travel to (2) 12' travel

lanes. Add one side of on-street parking at 8' in width to increase district parking supply and reduce vehicle travel speeds. Lastly, add 5' bicycle lanes to both sides of the street with a 2' buffer between the bike lane and the on-street parking. This approach to the roadway is consistent with treatment of High Street as it transitions to Maple Street and the downtown.

Additionally, the walkability of High Street would be improved through better defined and more frequent pedestrian crossings and reduced curb cuts. Overall, reducing and structuring the intersection between circulation of pedestrians and vehicles is necessary for district safety. At High Street crossings, curb extensions should be used to extend the sidewalk out to the edge of the travel lane to increase visibility and reduce crossing distance. This curb extension should be combined with a rapid flashing beacon and signage to highlight the safe crossing point to vehicles. Additional crossing points should be added near Dodge Court and Canal Street.

On Purchase Street, a restriping of the approximately 34' roadway width would allow the existing shoulders to be used as bike lanes. Each travel lane should be striped at 11-12' in width with a 5' bike lane on each side.

All other district streets, new or existing, should be designed with sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle markings integrated.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.3 Other Recommendations

Incremental Redevelopment

The illustrative concept diagram that reflects the community vision would not likely be implemented in the near term or all at once. The diagrams to the right show the type of incremental redevelopment progression that may occur under the recommended zoning and design standards.

1 *Residential Development on Vacant Land*

Portions of parcels in the district have a low barrier for redevelopment, meaning that they are not occupied by a building or other use and should provide a near term opportunity for real estate investment if zoning were aligned with the right type of opportunity. By allowing residential uses, the rear areas of this type of a vacant portion of a property can be redeveloped for residential uses that are sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood.

The layout of new development on vacant portions of properties should be planned to support other future redevelopment opportunities on the property giving adequate space and clearance for new buildings and parking while creating a rational pattern of circulation internal to the site that has the potential to make connections external to the site.

2 *Leverage New Activity for Redevelopment*

The development of residential uses on a large property while other buildings and uses remain could provide the financial support for the redevelopment of other parts of the property that require more preparation and financial risk. In the diagram to the right, the incremental development of new residential uses at the rear of the site, may help support the future redevelopment of an underutilized strip mall into a new multiple story mixed-use building that redefines the High Street frontage.

This incremental change of a large property in the district may be the most realistic approach and the most economically viable when considering current buildings and uses on the property. The redevelopment of the High Street frontage also allows the creation of a more pedestrian friendly accessway and manages the visual impact of the parking on the new residential buildings and new mixed-use building.

1

Illustration of Incremental Change



2

Illustration of Incremental Change



6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6.3 Other Recommendations

Potential change in the district will not be isolated to a single property. It is important to consider the patterns of current and future investments adjacent to the property.

3 *Beneficial Site and Circulation*

The community expressed the desire to retain local businesses and jobs in the High Street I-1 District. It is important to consider that many of the properties in the district may not undergo a redevelopment transformation.

New investments must be designed to complement the existing uses and configuration of properties, but also to improve on the current district character. In some circumstances new investments will be establishing new patterns for where buildings or parking are located relative to its existing neighbors. These transitions should be designed to become as seamless as possible.

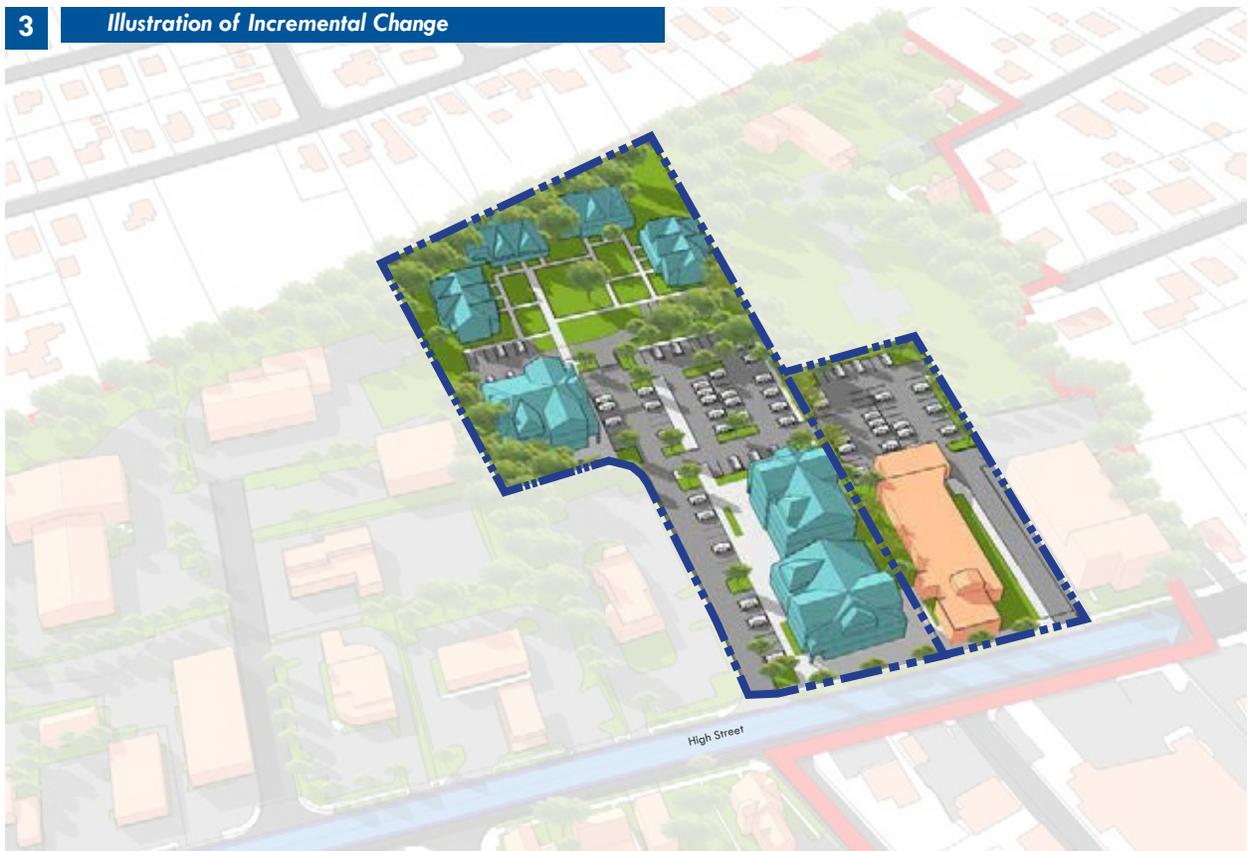
As illustrated, on one side of the property the existing structure may remain and be integrated with a new plaza on its High Street frontage and connected to new parking circulation in the rear of the building. Parking efficiency could be improved for both properties with shared parking allowing for the distribution of increased parking supply and improved access.

4 *Complementary Redevelopment Investment*

Another adjacent property may redevelopment with a similar mixed-use investment later in time. It should include a site and building layout that is complementary to the adjacent redevelopment investment that has already occurred. This should involve coordination and communication between property owners, even when the timeline for redevelopment are not aligned. This type of coordination allows for the efficient design of site access drives, reinforcing the sense of a series of blocks, and the integration of on-street parking with site access ways.

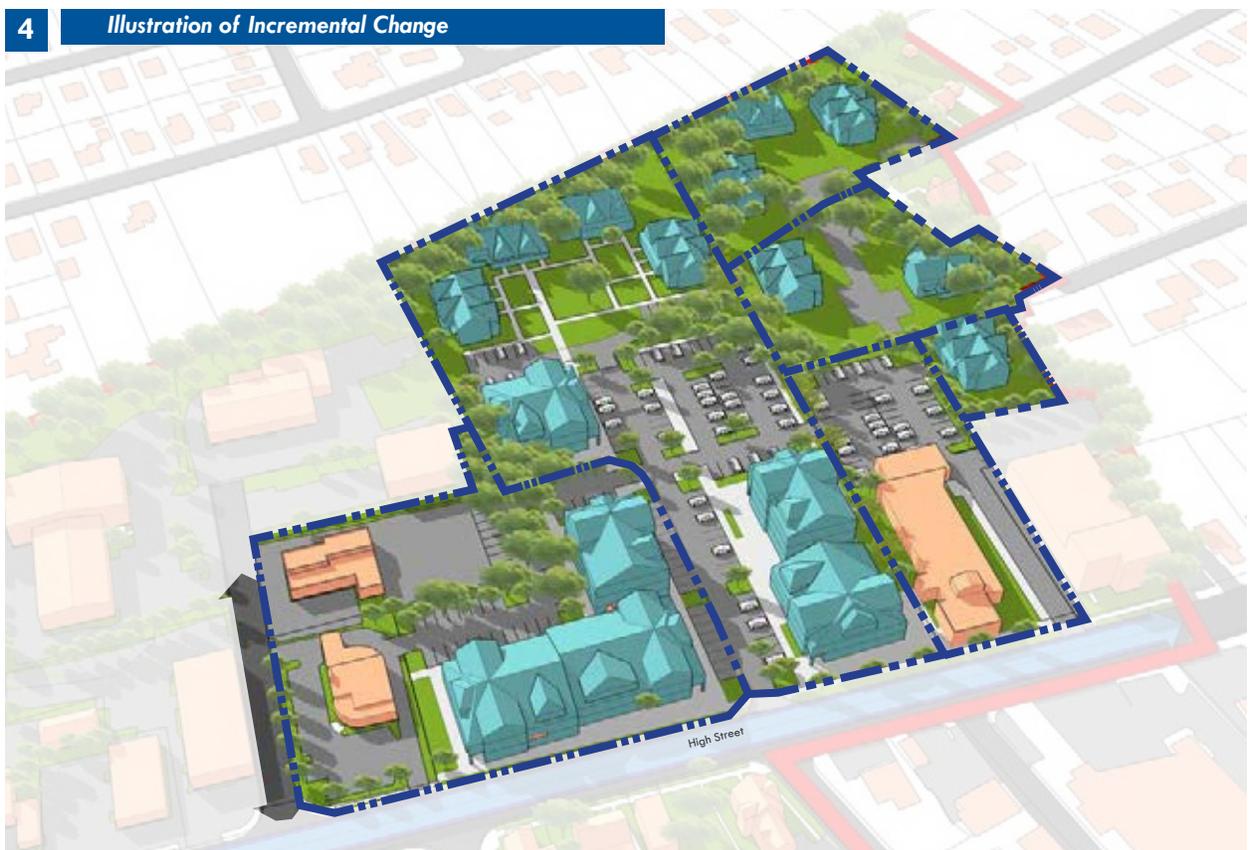
3

Illustration of Incremental Change



4

Illustration of Incremental Change



**TOWN OF DANVERS
HIGH STREET INDUSTRIAL 1 (I-1)
DISTRICT STUDY**

DRAFT FINAL REPORT

