

# Urban Design & MBTA Communities Zoning

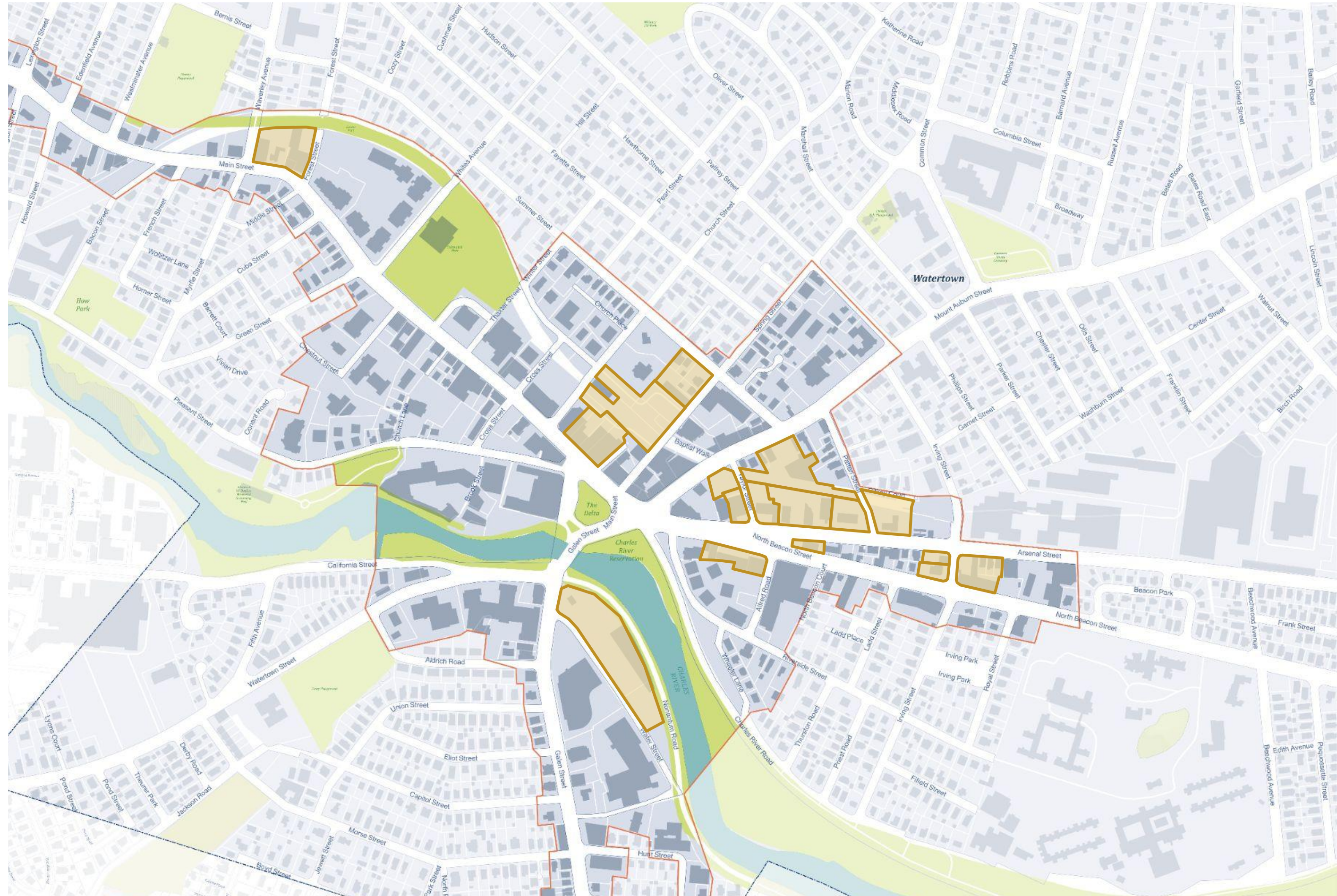
Potential Redevelopment  
Zoning Recommendations

# Opportunity Sites

## Soft Site Analysis



Soft sites identified prior to Design Charrette



# Opportunity Sites

Key Soft Sites Identified during Design Charrette



**Galen Street Gateway**



**MBTA Bus Yard**



**Old Santander Bank**



**Vacant Police Station**



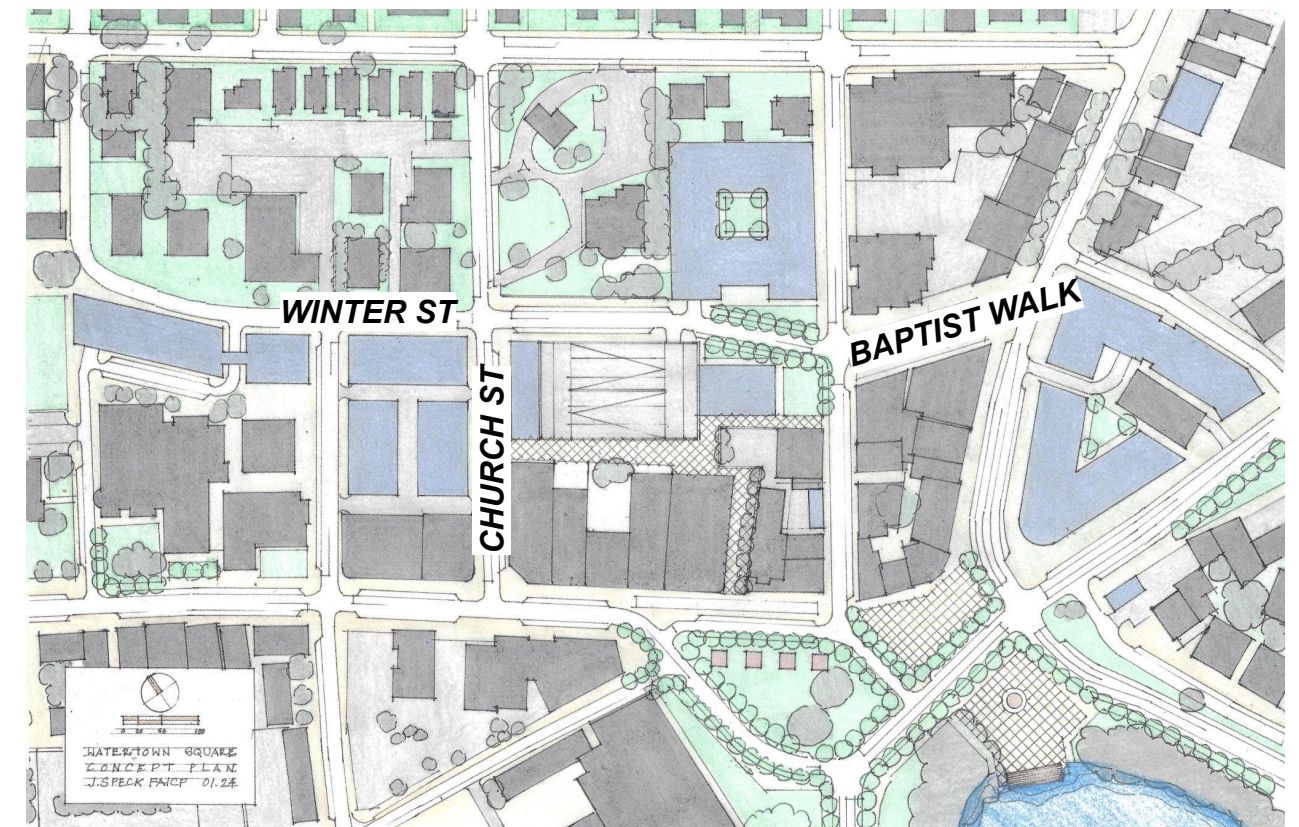
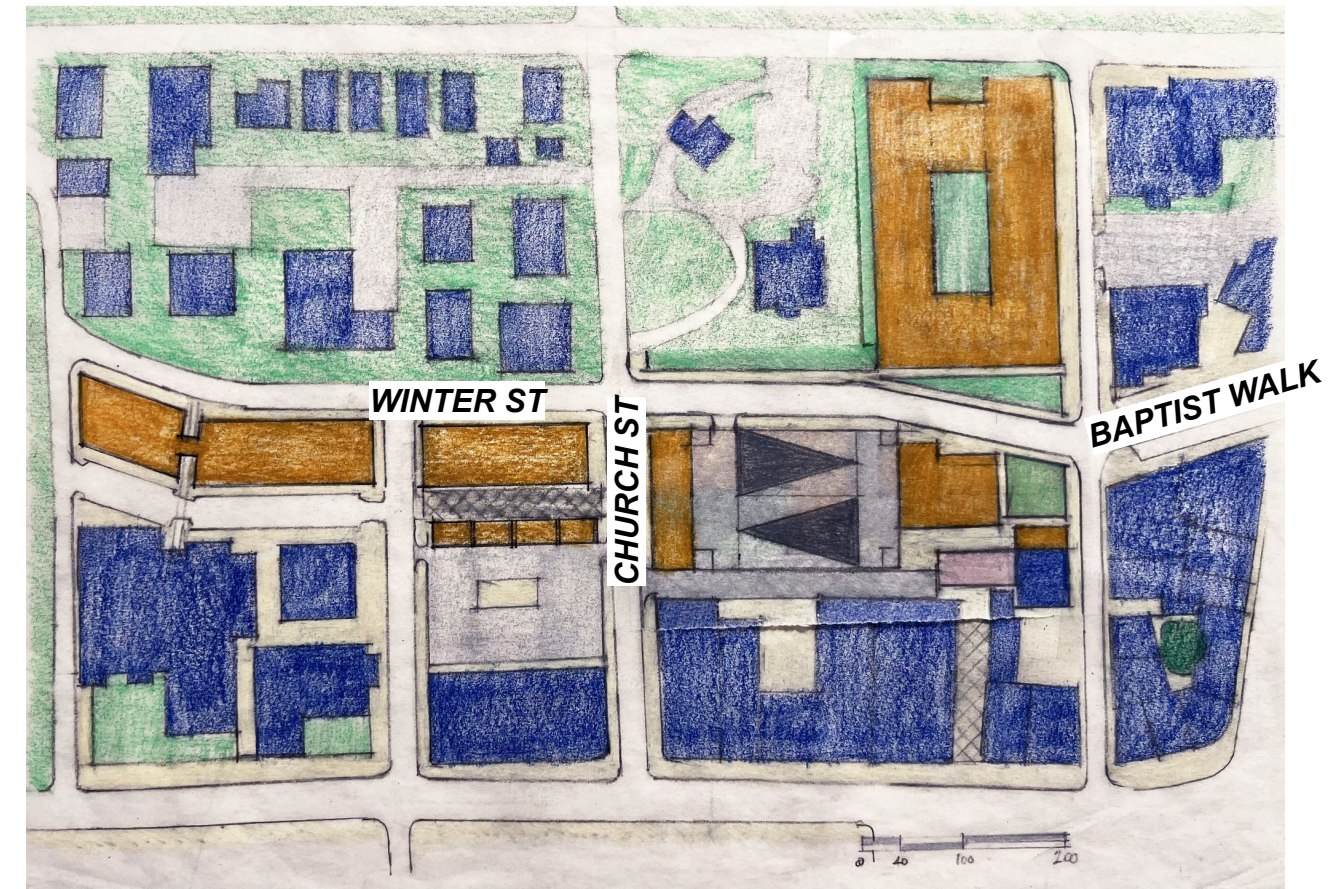
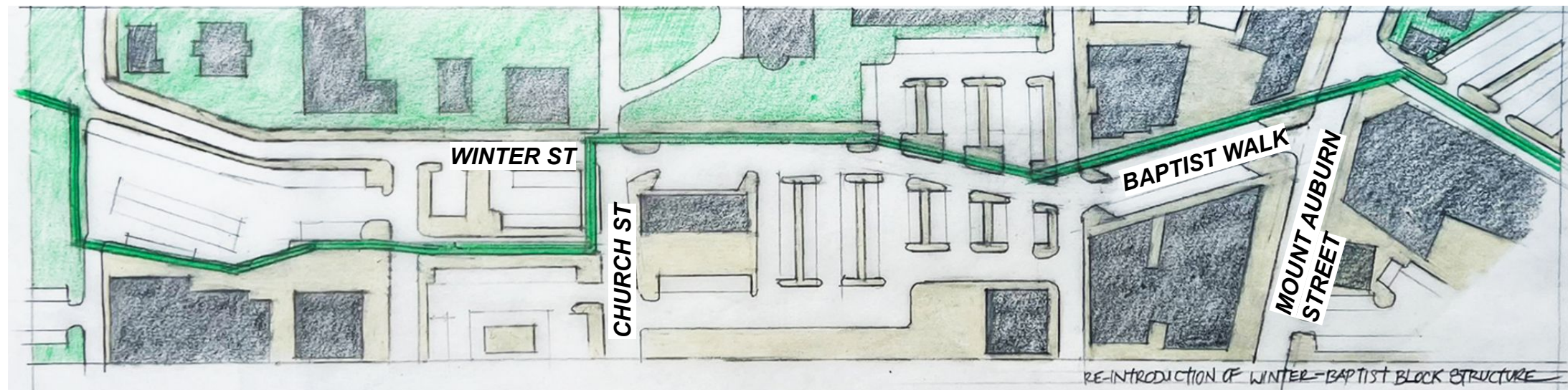
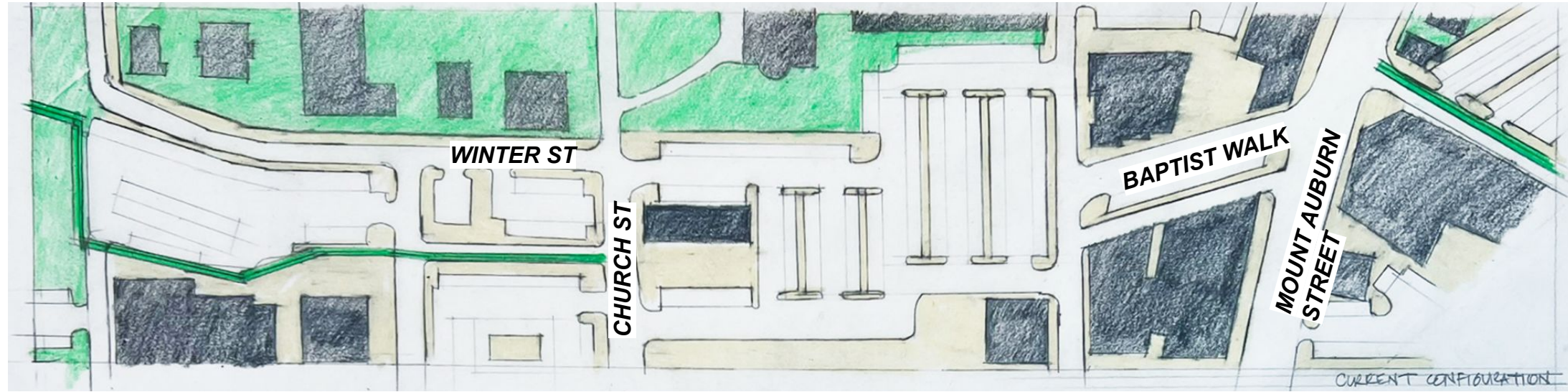
**Arsenal Street Block**



**East Site of Mt Auburn Street**

# Opportunity Sites

Winter St & Baptist Walk



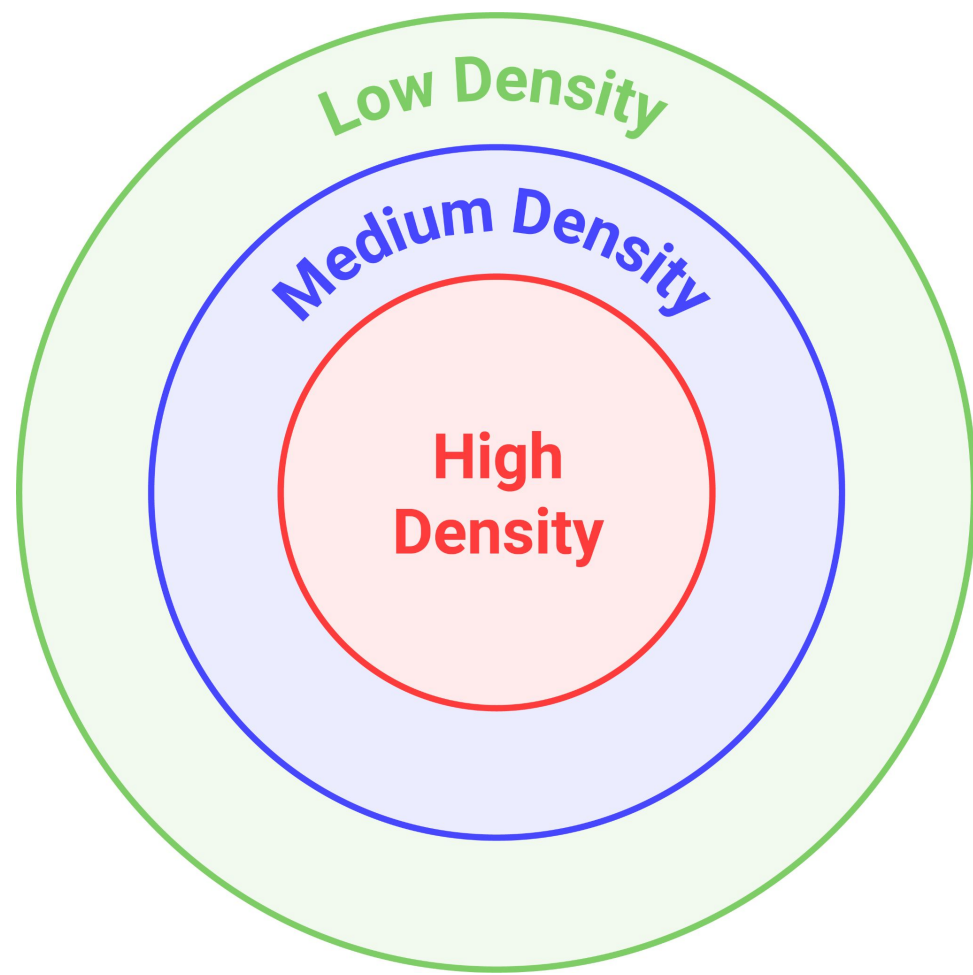
**Potential Block Reconfiguration - Jeff Speck Sketches from Design Charrette**  
 Current Block Configuration (top), Reintroduction of Block Structure (bottom)

**Potential Redevelopment Scenario - Jeff Speck Sketches**  
 Sketch from Design Charrette (top), Sketch after Design Charrette (bottom)

# Zoning Recommendations

Tiered Zoning Approach

The proposed code uses a **tiered zoning approach**: Higher density zones are concentrated around a central commercial area and lower density zones transition to smaller-scale residential areas.



**High Density:**  
**5.5 stories**



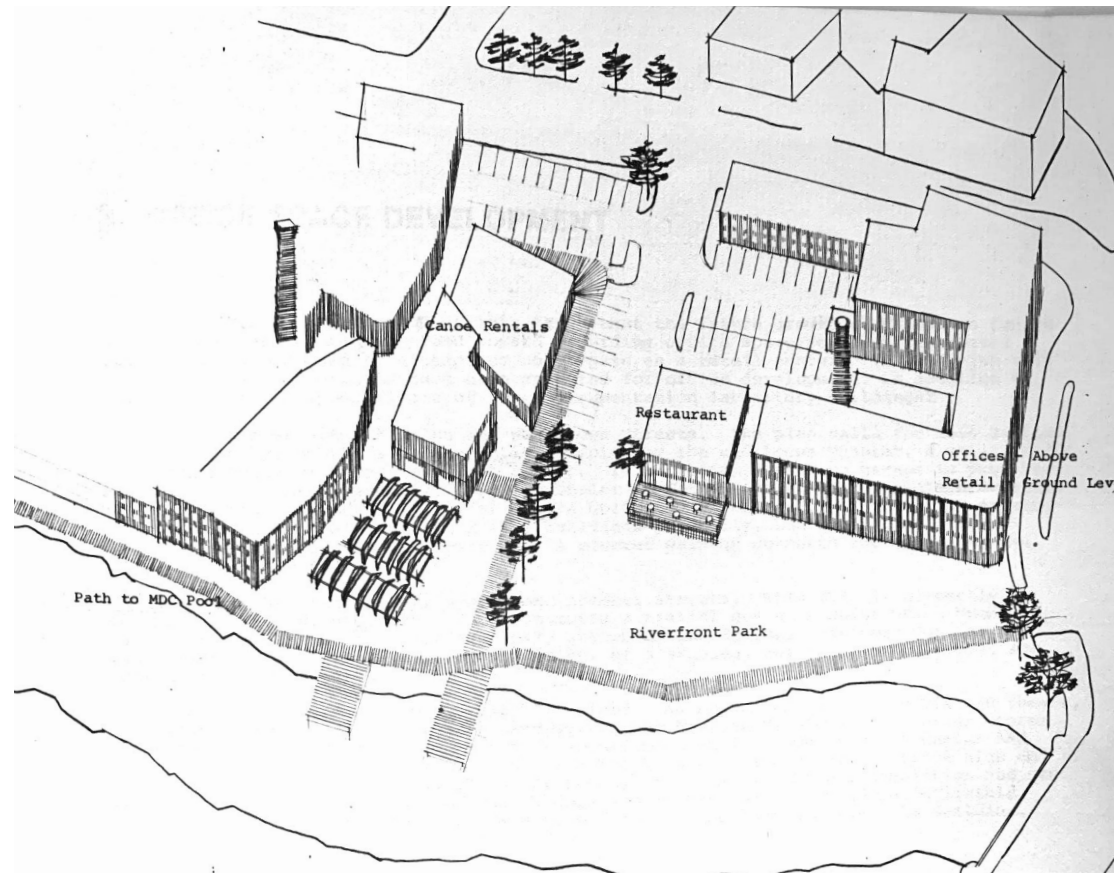
**Medium Density:**  
**4.5 stories**



**Low Density:**  
**3.5 stories**

# Four Corners

Refined Scenario: Sketch from Public Charrette



Janet Buck thesis proposal from Boston Architectural College, 1981

PLEASANT STREET



# Mini Main Street

Refined Scenario: Sketch from Public Charrette



# Existing Conditions





# Existing Conditions

Under-utilized surface parking lots

Opportunity for denser, context-sensitive mixed-use developments

Riverfront area feels disconnected from the rest of the neighborhood

Narrow sidewalks and lack of activated outdoor spaces

Low tree canopy coverage

# Four Corners

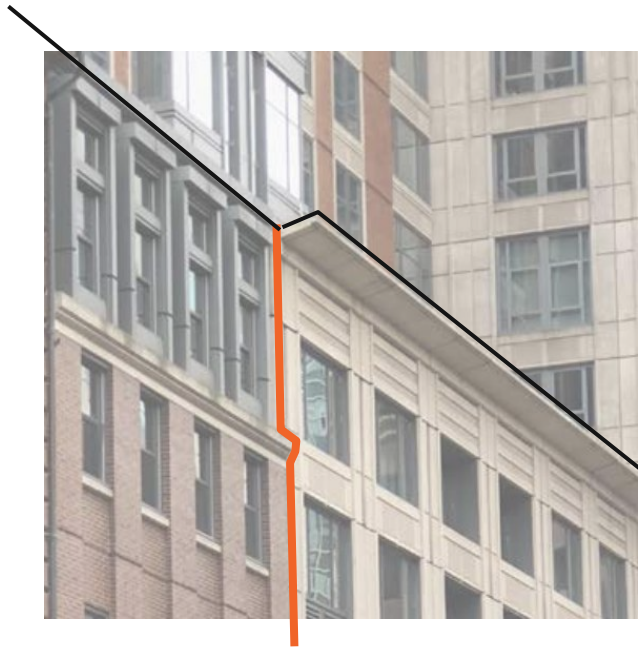
Concept Axonometric

- Residential
- Retail
- Parking



# Breaking up Larger Buildings

## Facade Articulation



**Demise Line**

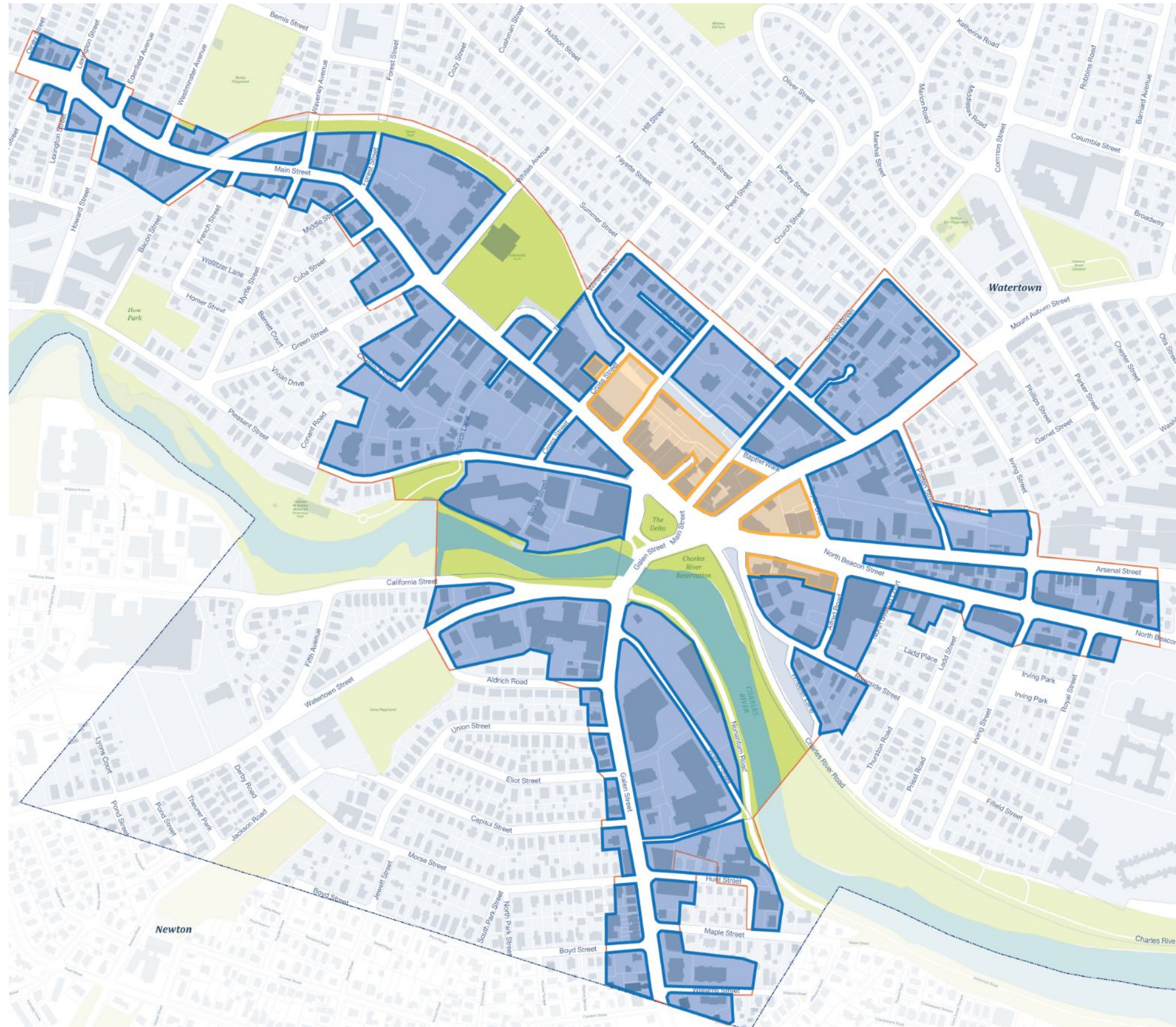
**Recess**

Required

Not Required

Required

Required



# Four Corners

Key Urban Design Moments

- Residential
- Retail
- Parking

Redistribution of existing off-street surface parking spaces to on-street parking and centralized parking structure

Denser, context-sensitive mixed-use developments

Redeveloped municipal parking lot sites

Increased residential developments

Pedestrian-friendly path

Activated street wall framing the Square

Increased retail frontage and public realm spaces

# Four Corners

Key Urban Design Moments

Programmed event spaces on expanded central green




Widened sidewalk and activated outdoor spaces

Expanded tree canopy coverage

Reclaimed open space and enhanced access to riverfront

# Mini Main Street

Key Urban Design Moments

-  Residential
-  Retail
-  Parking



# Mini Main Street

Concept Axonometric

- Residential
- Retail
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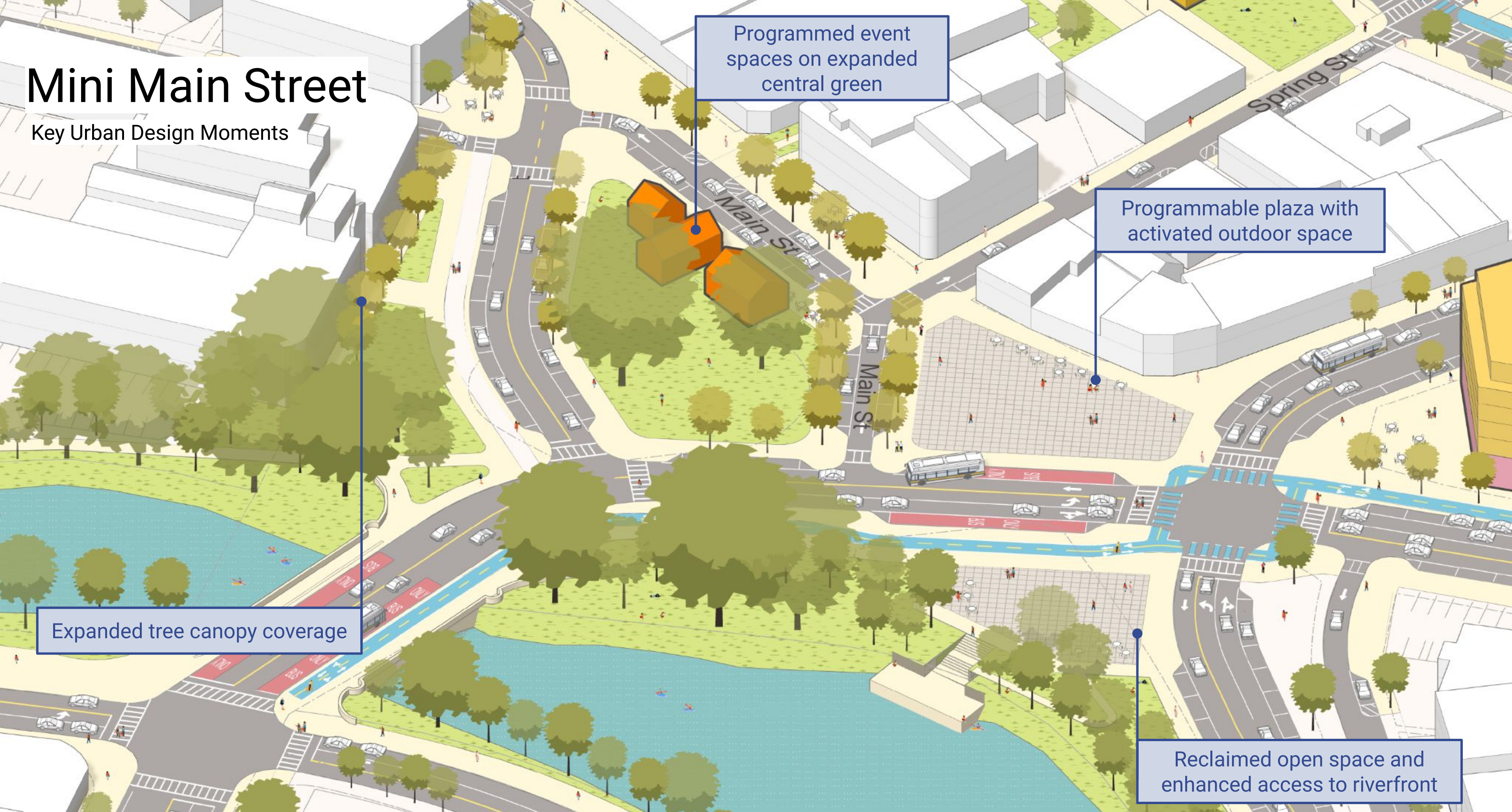
Pedestrian-friendly path

Activated street wall framing the Square

Increased retail frontage and public realm spaces

# Mini Main Street

Key Urban Design Moments



Programmed event spaces on expanded central green

Programmable plaza with activated outdoor space

Expanded tree canopy coverage

Reclaimed open space and enhanced access to riverfront



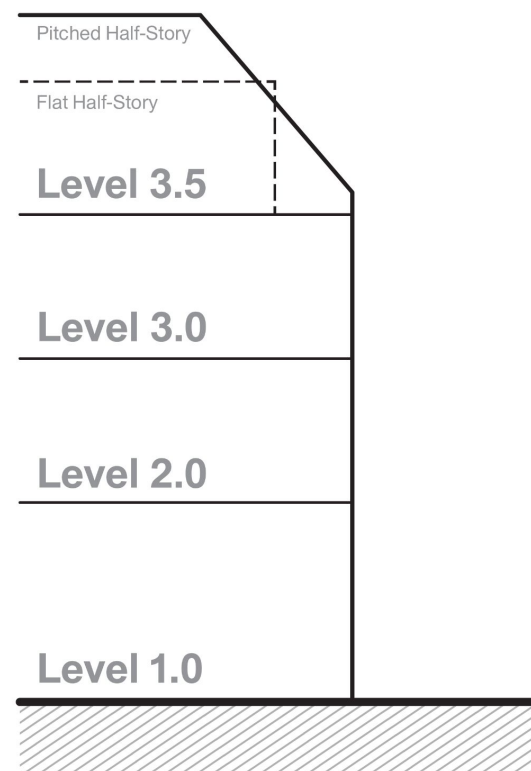
# Zoning Approach

Form-based code “light”

We propose a zoning code that regulates urban form through the following principal mechanisms:

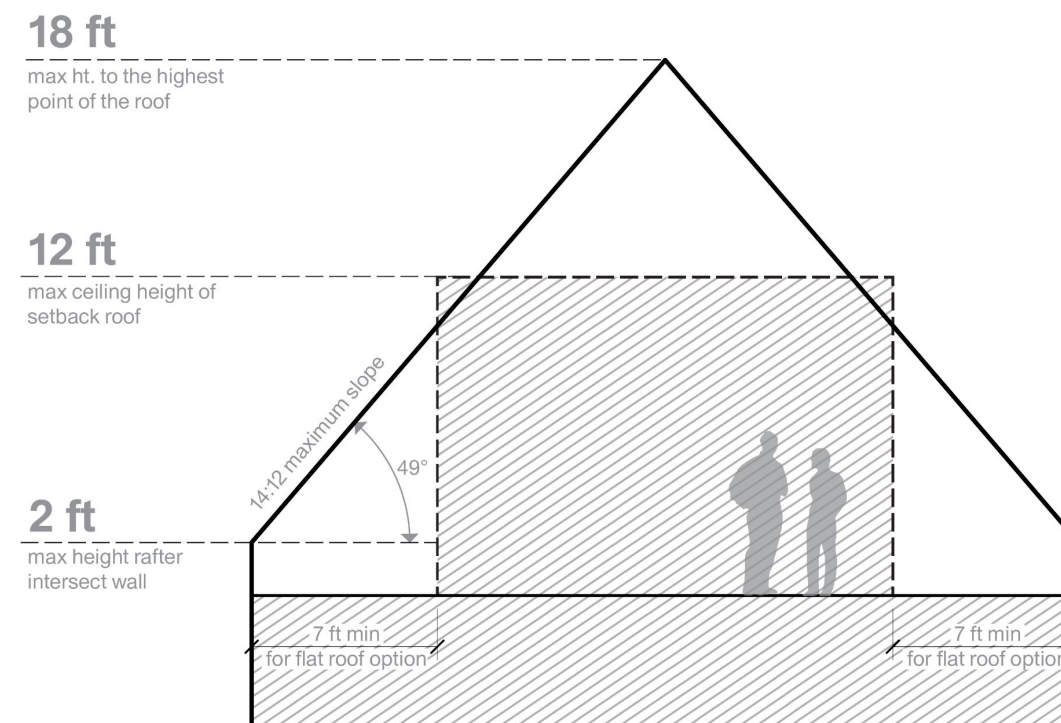
## 1 Building Height

Sets the maximum height in stories/feet



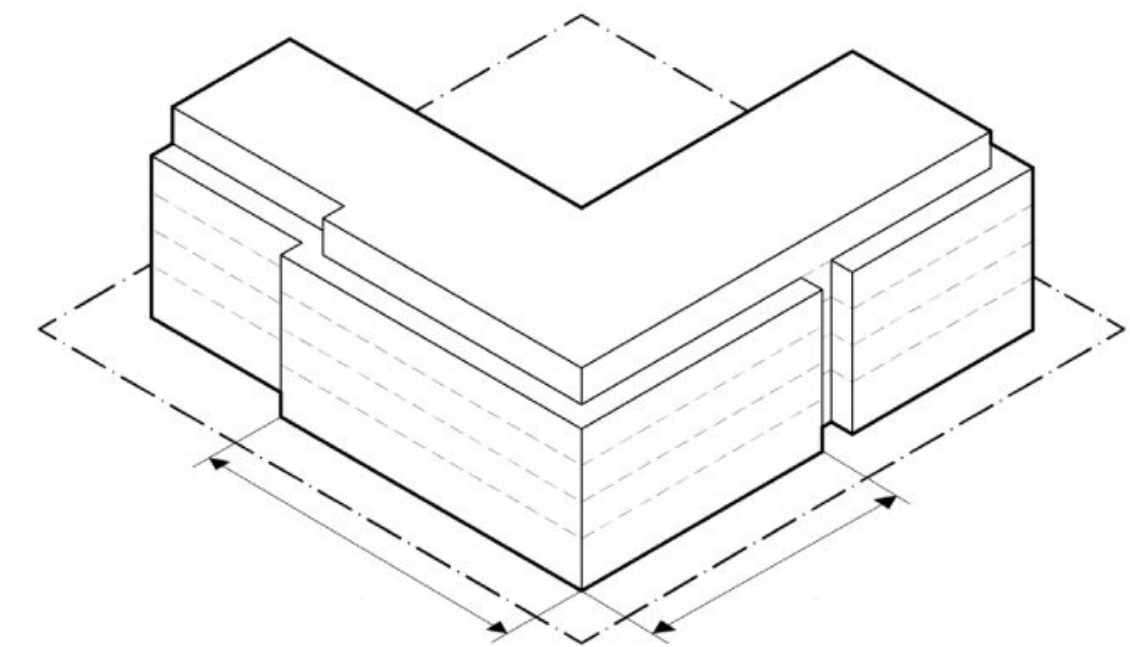
## 2 Roof Form

Provides options for a flat or pitched roof half-story



## 3 Facade Articulation

Provides options to break down building massing and diversify facades



# Zoning Approach

## Example Design Standards

### Shaping the Building

**Building Footprint** (area in square feet)

**Building Height** (number of stories\*)

**Half-Story**

- Height, max. (in feet)
- Stepback (7', min.)

**Pitched Roof Slope** (max. pitch 14:12)

**Ground Story Height**, min./max. (in feet)

**Ground Story Active Uses**

- Front Elevation width (100%)
- Fenestration (% of Front Elevation area)
- Glazing Standards (% VLT, % VLR)

**Facade Articulation** (max. continuous facade length)

**Architectural Features**, controlled by dim. standards

- Awnings
- Canopies
- Bays
- Balconies

**Building Entrances** (number, location, and articulation)

**Roof Features** (list of allowed features)

**Mechanical Equipment**

- Roof Screening and Setbacks
- Location of wall-mounted equipment

\*max height capped in feet

### Building Placement

**Building Setbacks** (distance in feet)

**Building Separation** (distance in feet)

**Building Placement**

- Facade Build-Out Ratio, min. (% of lot width)
- Sidewalk width

### Site Standards

**Usable Open Space** (% of lot)

**Parking Placement**

- Parking Setbacks (distance in feet)
- Access (allowed location)

**Curb Cuts and Driveways**

- Access (allowed location)
- Width, max. (in feet)
- Number per street frontage
- Distance from intersection (in feet)

**Surface Parking Lot Design**

- Landscaped strip, controlled by dimensional standards
- Screening requirements

**Loading**

- Access (allowed location)
- Screening requirements

**Service Areas**

- Location
- Screening requirements

# Zoning Approach

Perspective Using Example Design Standards



Existing Street View

## Existing Context

Uses: single-story small retail; two-story bank; three-story function hall with ground story retail



# Zoning Approach

## Perspective Using Example Design Standards

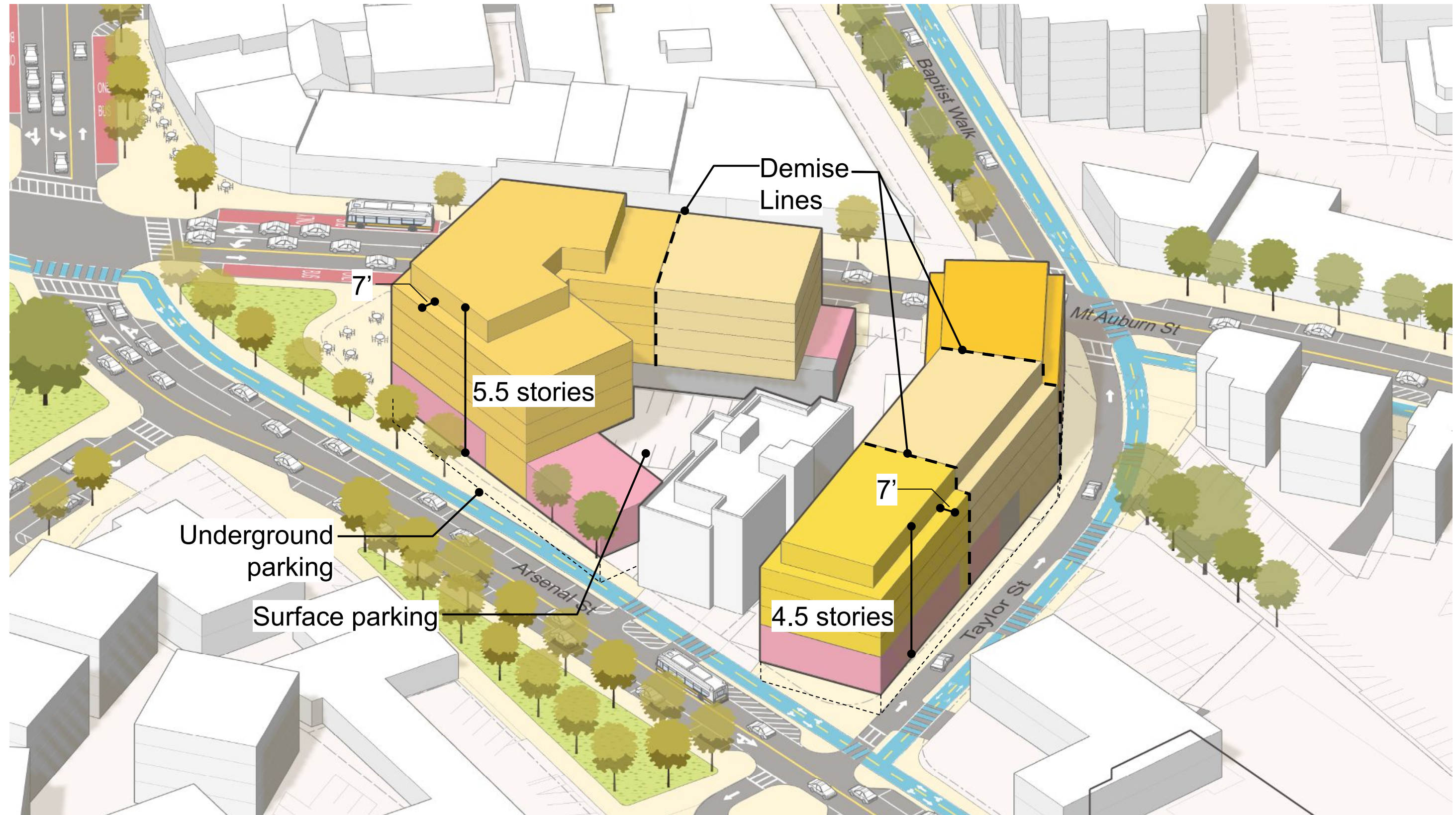
### Design Standards

- 1. Building Placement:**  
When development occurs on any lot abutting a sidewalk that is <12' in total width, inclusive of the Furnishing Zone, buildings must be set back an additional distance such that a paved area meeting City sidewalk standards of at least 12' width is provided, inclusive of the Furnishing Zone.
- 2. Building Entrances:**  
Principal entrances must either be recessed from the plane of the facade, or have a projecting Awning or Canopy, to signal building entry and provide adequate protection from the elements.
- 3. Architectural Features: Canopy**  
A wall-mounted structure that provides shade and weather protection over a storefront or building entrance.
- 4. Fenestration:**  
For ground story fenestration, glazing must have a min. 60% Visible Light Transmittance (VLT) and no more than 15% Visible Light Reflectance (VLR) as indicated by the manufacturer.
- 5. Number of Stories:**  
A pitched roof may be composed of roof planes with different slopes. The slope of any pitch must not be greater than 14:12 (49 degrees). The roof rafters must intersect the wall plate or top of wall frame of the exterior walls at a height no more than 2' above the finished floor of the half-story.
- 6. Half-Story Step-Back:**  
A required distance that certain upper stories of a building must be recessed from the plane of the facade of the stories below.
- 7. Parking Lot Access:**  
Access to parking lots and structures parallel to the Front Elevation is prohibited when access along another lot line is available.



# Testing Zoning Parameters

Zoning Parameters	
Front Setbacks	0'
Maximum Building Height	5.5 stories
Top Level Stepback	7' min.
Facade Articulation	Demise Line Required Every 100'



Residential
  Retail
 
  
N

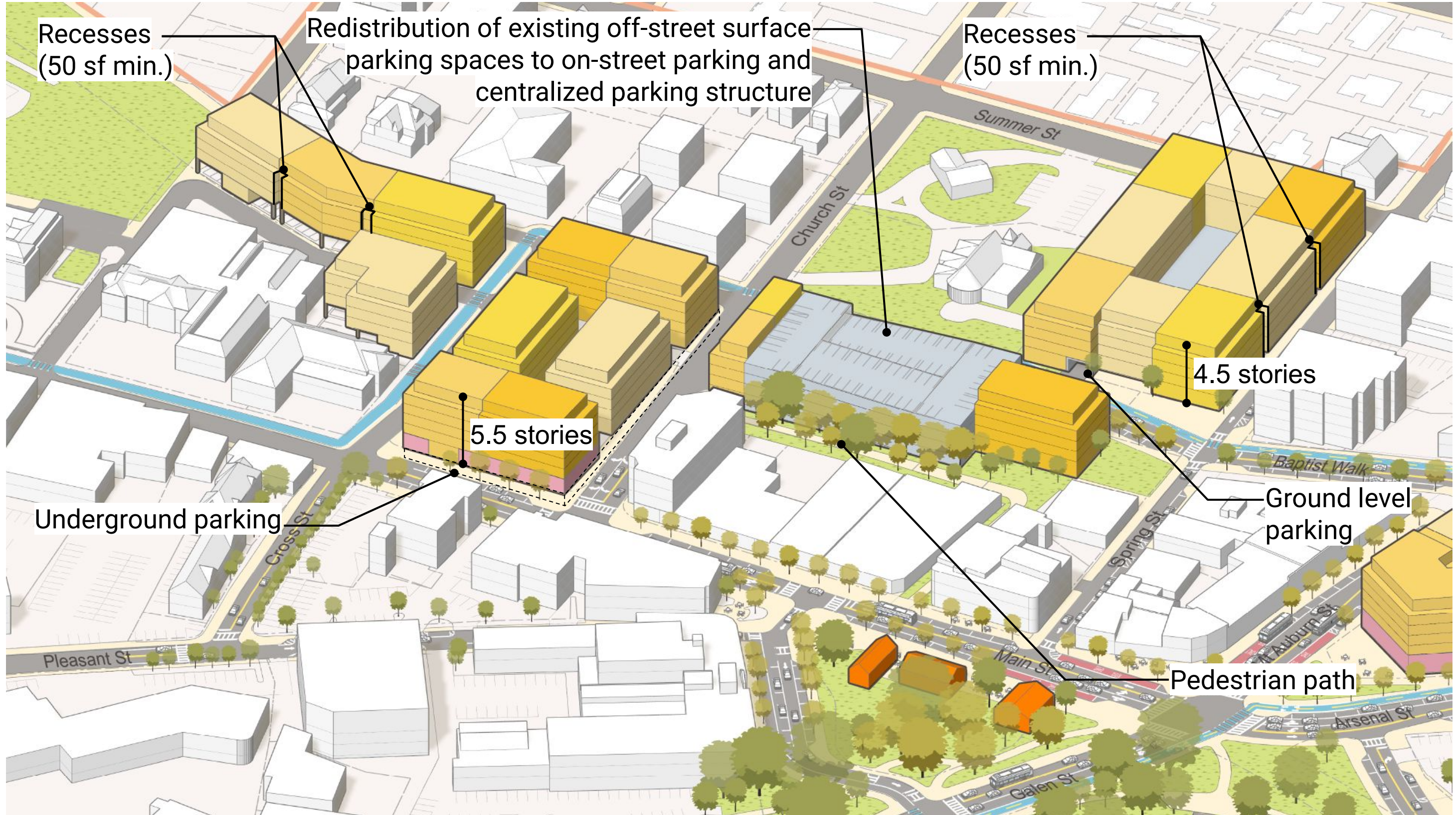
# slido



**Based on the building forms we're testing here, do you think that the draft zoning recommendations are heading in the right direction? Let us know your thoughts!**

# Testing Zoning Parameters

Zoning Parameters		
Zone	Zone A	Zone B
Setbacks	0' Front	0' Front, 10' Side
Maximum Building Height	4.5 - 5.5 stories	
Top Level Stepback	7' min.	
Facade Articulation	Demise Line Required Every 100'	Demise Line & 50 sf min. Recess Required Every 100'



Residential

Retail

Parking

N

# slido



What do you think of the potential to redevelop the parking lots behind Main Street? Do you think we should continue to explore the approach of redistributing existing parking spaces in order to unlock development potential in this area?



# Criteria for Compliance

MBTA Communities

## 1A. District Shape, Size, and Density

- Contiguity standards- 50% of land area in one contiguous district, all districts at least 5 acres
- Minimum district(s) area
- Gross Density requirement
- Mandatory mixed-use districts are limited to 25% of the required multi-family unit capacity

## 1B. Zoning Standards

- Setbacks, height limits, parking requirements, etc. allowed
- No age restrictions
- No restrictions on # of bedrooms, size of bedrooms, # of occupants

## 2. Multi-Family Unit Capacity

1,701 unit capacity

**Compliance Deadline:**  
December 31, 2024

**This is simply a zoning capacity - not a requirement to *build* a certain number of units**

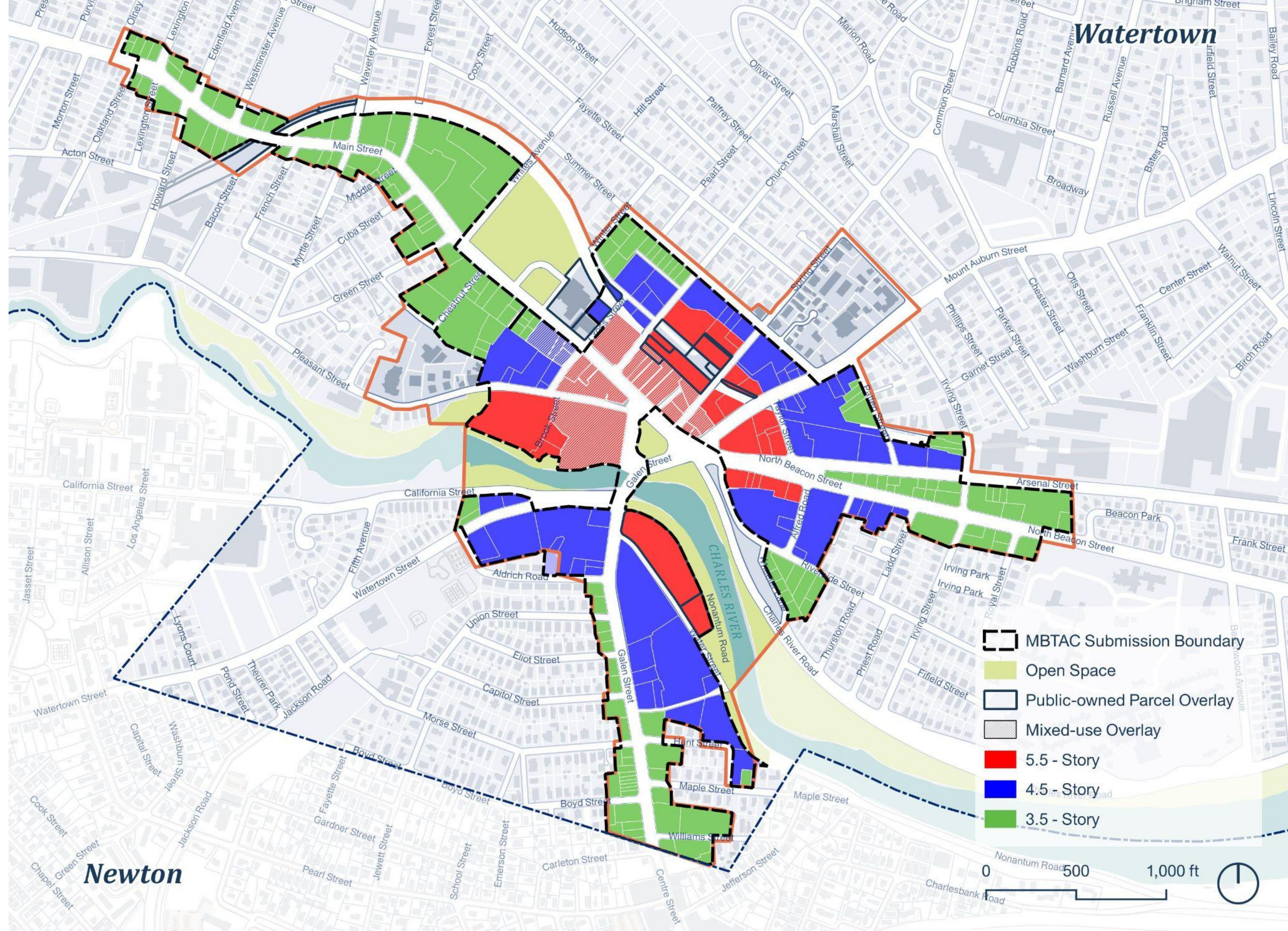
# Option 1

Entire Study Area Zoned By-Right

Proposed Zoning District	Residential Only Unit Capacity	Mixed Use Only Unit Capacity (excl. GF Commercial)	
3.5-story	2,362	0	
4.5-story	2,542	54	
5.5-story	796	566	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>6,320</b>
<b>Required Min. Capacity</b>			<b>1,701</b>
<b>Additional Units Beyond Min. Required</b>			<b>4,619</b>

**Notes:**

- Only zones within the submission boundary were tested
- Assumes 0.75 parking spaces/unit
- Includes Mixed-Use parcels



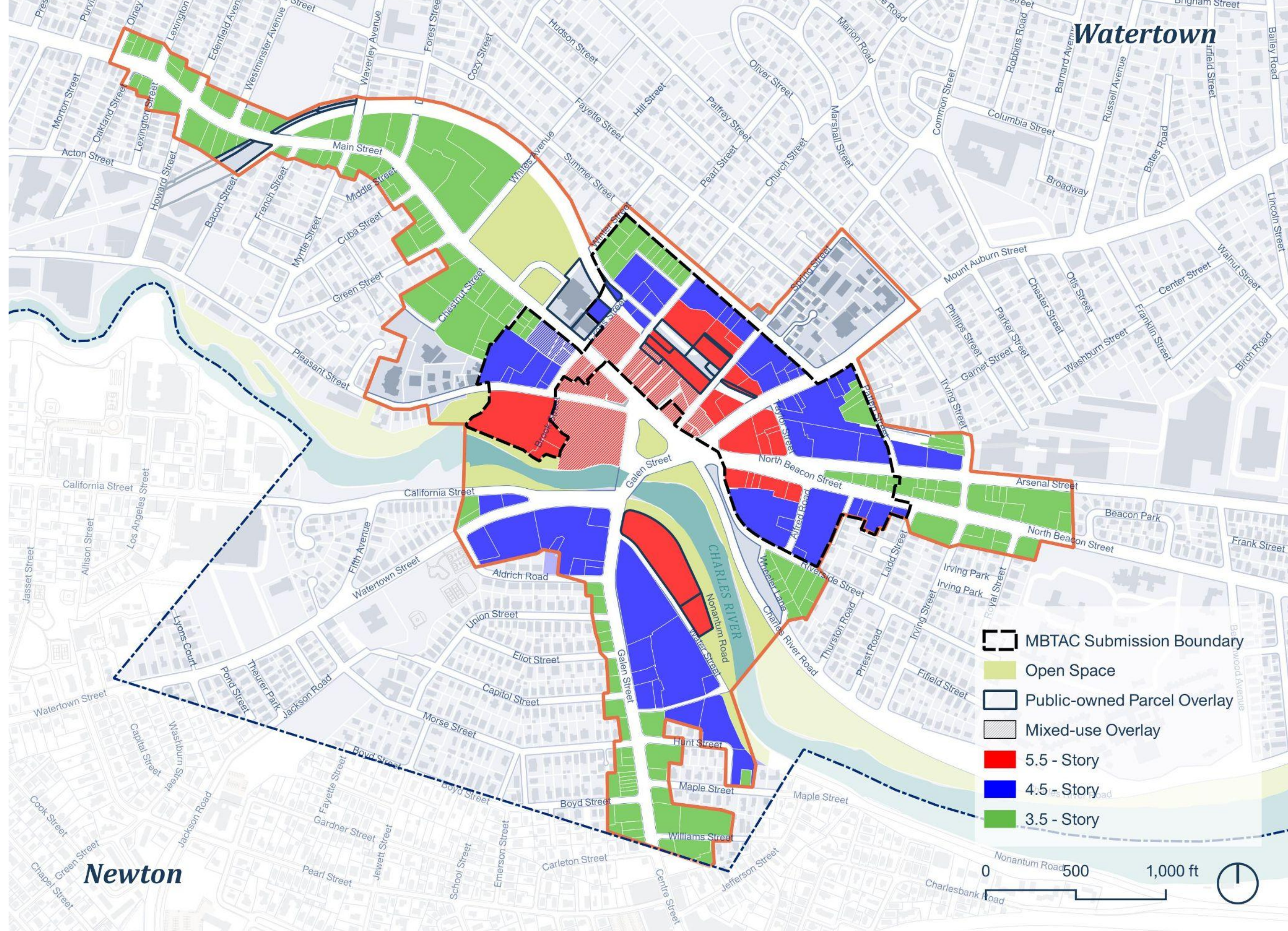
# Option 2

## Partial Study Area Zoned By-Right

Proposed Zoning District	Residential Only Unit Capacity	Mixed Use Only Unit Capacity (excl. GF Commercial)	
3.5-story	228	0	
4.5-story	1,280	54	
5.5-story	796	273	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,304</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>2,631</b>
<b>Required Min. Capacity</b>			<b>1,701</b>
<b>Additional Units Beyond Min. Required</b>			<b>930</b>

### Notes:

- Only zones within the submission boundary were tested
- Assumes 0.75 parking spaces/unit
- Includes Mixed-Use parcels



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Which version of the proposed zoning map would you like to see get implemented?

# Next Steps

Join us now for a station exercise where you can speak with the design team and provide feedback about the proposed streetscape designs and proposed urban design and zoning.

7:40 - 8:00: Participants provide feedback at tables in one topic area

*5 min shuffle for table facilitators*

8:05 - 8:25: Participants provide feedback in other topic area