

Downtown Canton

Zoning and Design Guideline Updates



DRAFT FOR REVIEW
June 2023



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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HOW BEST TO HELP DOWNTOWN REACH ITS POTENTIAL?

Downtown Canton's zoning, the Canton Economic Opportunity Overlay District, has been in existence for nearly 20 years. Over that time, the overlay district has resulted in a number of mixed-use and residential development projects. However, the time has come to update the zoning to reflect best practices and to implement the Town's updated Master Plan goals.

As part of continuing neighborhood planning efforts, the Town of Canton, with input and guidance from local residents, business owners, and other stakeholders, have come together to guide updates and improvements to the zoning and design guidelines for Downtown. The work builds upon Canton's recently completed Master Plan which identified the need to focus on Downtown to provide a simplified and unified approach to regulations.

The study recommendations incorporate analyses of existing conditions, and respond to the redevelopment opportunities and challenges Downtown faces. Most importantly, the recommendations incorporate the thoughts of the community to define and refine the recommended updates to zoning and design guidelines for Downtown.



The Town's Master Plan was completed in 2020. The Master Plan established guiding principles for several focus areas in the Town including Downtown. For Downtown Canton, the Master Plan identifies the guiding principles as:

- Canton Center will have a strong sense of place. It will be walkable, vibrant with activity, have a broad range of uses, and connect to nearby destinations.

The Master Plan also defined relevant goals for Downtown, which were articulated as:

- Need one set of development procedures and standards for Canton Center
- Revise Table of Uses
- Update dimensional requirements
- Develop design standards for elements like building form, facades, pedestrian space, building materials and other important aspects of project design.

- Adjust parking requirements in the Zoning Bylaw to reflect best practices for a downtown
- Revise sign requirements to ensure high quality design and appropriately-scaled signage.

The recommendations defined in this study are consistent with the Master Plan and the established principles and goals. This report provides a summary of the process used to develop the specific recommendations for Downtown Canton zoning and design guidelines.

The report begins with a discussion of the origins and parameters of this study and the general context for Downtown.

The Existing Conditions chapter provides a more detailed analysis of the characteristics of the Downtown today in terms of its parcels, buildings, and development patterns.

The Community Process chapter provides a detailed description of the process, including community forums and surveys, the feedback received through this process, and illustrates the potential support for the recommendations.

The next chapter summarizes the vision for Downtown Canton and the feedback received from the community in this process. It also provides an overview of the primary recommendations of this study.

To further test the potential impacts of zoning updates the recommendations were tested through a hypothetical redevelopment scenario that is presented in the Summary Analysis chapter.

The last chapter, Implementing the Vision, provides the detailed recommendations and language for the two primary deliverables for this process:

- Recommendations for updated zoning for Downtown Canton
- Recommendations for updated design guidelines for Downtown Canton

In summary, MAPC recommends updating the existing overlay zoning to provide a more consistent and uniform application of regulations for Downtown. Updates to the overlay zone (Section 9.8 of the Zoning By-Law) would provide continuity and familiarity with the current regulations in Downtown while providing an updated set of regulations.

Based on feedback from the community that is detailed in this report, the following summary points reflect the recommended changes to the zoning for Downtown Canton, including:

- Updating the current overlay with a new boundary that is easier to administer;
- Reducing the likelihood of uses that are inconsistent with a downtown context;
- Focusing on regulating uses balanced with guidance on the form of development (building/site design);
- Retaining the same minimum lot size;
- Defining a front build-to setback (minimum and maximum) consistent with a downtown context;
- Retaining the currently allowed lot coverage;
- Retaining the currently allowed building height;
- Providing a new opportunity for increased building height as an incentive for mixed use

development;

- Allowing parking reduction through sharing/incentives;
- Reducing density requirements as an incentive for mixed use development;
- Reducing residential density requirements as an incentive for mixed use development;
- Combining guidelines and standards covering all topics that pertain to strengthening a vibrant downtown district; and
- Supporting a preference for site plan review (not by right or special permit approvals).

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OVERVIEW

The Town of Canton has been proactive in planning for its future and has been an active steward of Downtown Canton. The Town has recently completed its long range Town-wide Master Plan. The Master Plan sets goals and strategies to guide many areas of the Town including Downtown. The Master Plan highlights three focus areas: the Downtown, Route 138 corridor, and the Canton Junction area. The Town has been developing more specific plans, goals, and strategies to implement the Master Plan in these areas. Canton recently completed a study for Route 138, its primary commercial corridor, and a study of Canton Junction defining a vision and zoning recommendations for the area. The Town, working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), has undertaken this planning process to update the zoning for Downtown consistent with the goals of the Master Plan. Based upon the recommendations of the Master Plan, this plan utilized a community-driven planning process to develop zoning recommendations that integrate best practices to encourage economic development in downtown districts.

Downtown Canton has always been a center of the Town's economic activity and sense of identity. Downtown Canton is served by an MBTA Commuter Rail stop on the Providence/Stoughton Line. Downtown is centered on Washington Street. The Town of Canton has been at the forefront of communities planning for a successful Downtown. The Town introduced a mixed-use Downtown Zoning Overlay District more than 20 years ago and that overlay has resulted in substantial investment in residential and mixed-use development in the Downtown over the past two decades.

A Town Meeting vote in March 2002 created the Canton Center Design Review Board under a new Zoning By-Law for the Downtown. In 2003, the Planning Board adopted a set of design review guidelines for Canton Center.

The Town seeks to continue encouraging investment in the Downtown and continuing to improve the area as an attractive center of economic and civic activity in the Town. This area along with other nearby districts, such as Canton Junction, are places for the Town to accommodate the growing demand for walkable, mixed-use housing along with vibrant ground floor shops, restaurants, and services.

The relationship of Downtown to the other centers of activity in the Town is important.

Nearby Canton Junction has the opportunity to incorporate a mix of uses and become more of a neighborhood. The Route 138 corridor, which runs through Canton and provides direct highway access, is envisioned as being one of the primary focuses of commercial development in the future. At the Paul Revere Heritage Site, adjacent to Downtown, new development has created more than 200 new housing units, as well as commercial uses, and a 9-acre public park and trails.

STUDY AREA CONTEXT

Downtown Canton is located in the southwest area of Canton (See Figure 1.) The Downtown Study Area is defined by the current zoning overlay for the Downtown and is shown in Figure 2. The overlay zone, the Canton Center Economic Opportunity District, is divided into three sub-districts.

The first subdistrict, Section A, is the heart of the Downtown district. It includes the blocks on either side of Washington Street from Walnut Street at its southern end to Sherman Street at its northern end. Subdistrict A includes the Canton Center MBTA Commuter Rail Station and parking lot.

The second subdistrict, Section B, includes the blocks along either side of Washington Street from Sherman Street to Lewis Street and includes Canton's Town Hall.

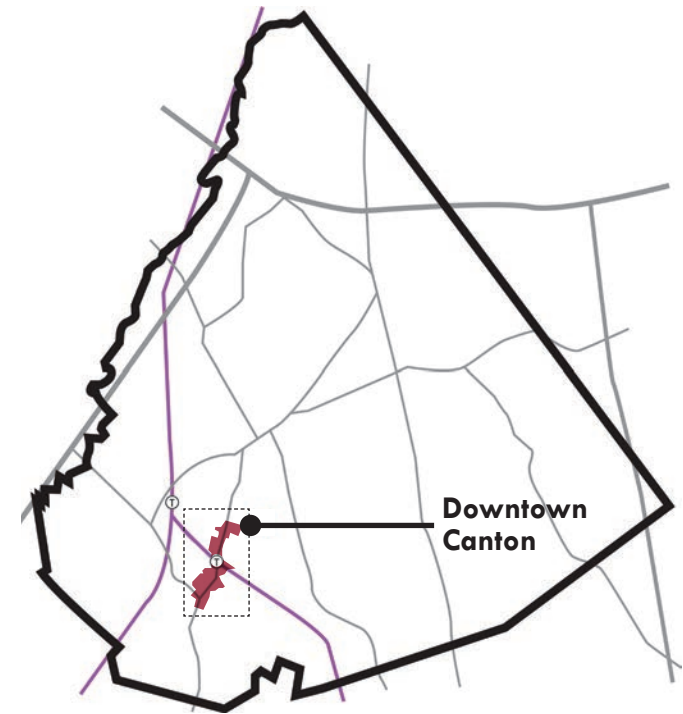


Figure 1. Location of Downtown Canton

The third subdistrict, Section C, includes the Paul Revere Heritage Site and the recent investments which have occurred there.

The Study Area is focused on the first two sub-districts, Sections A and B of the Canton Center Economic Opportunity Overlay District. The diagram on the following page shows the extent of those sub-districts and highlights the parcels and buildings that are included in the study. Refer to the Existing Conditions chapter for more details of the study area.

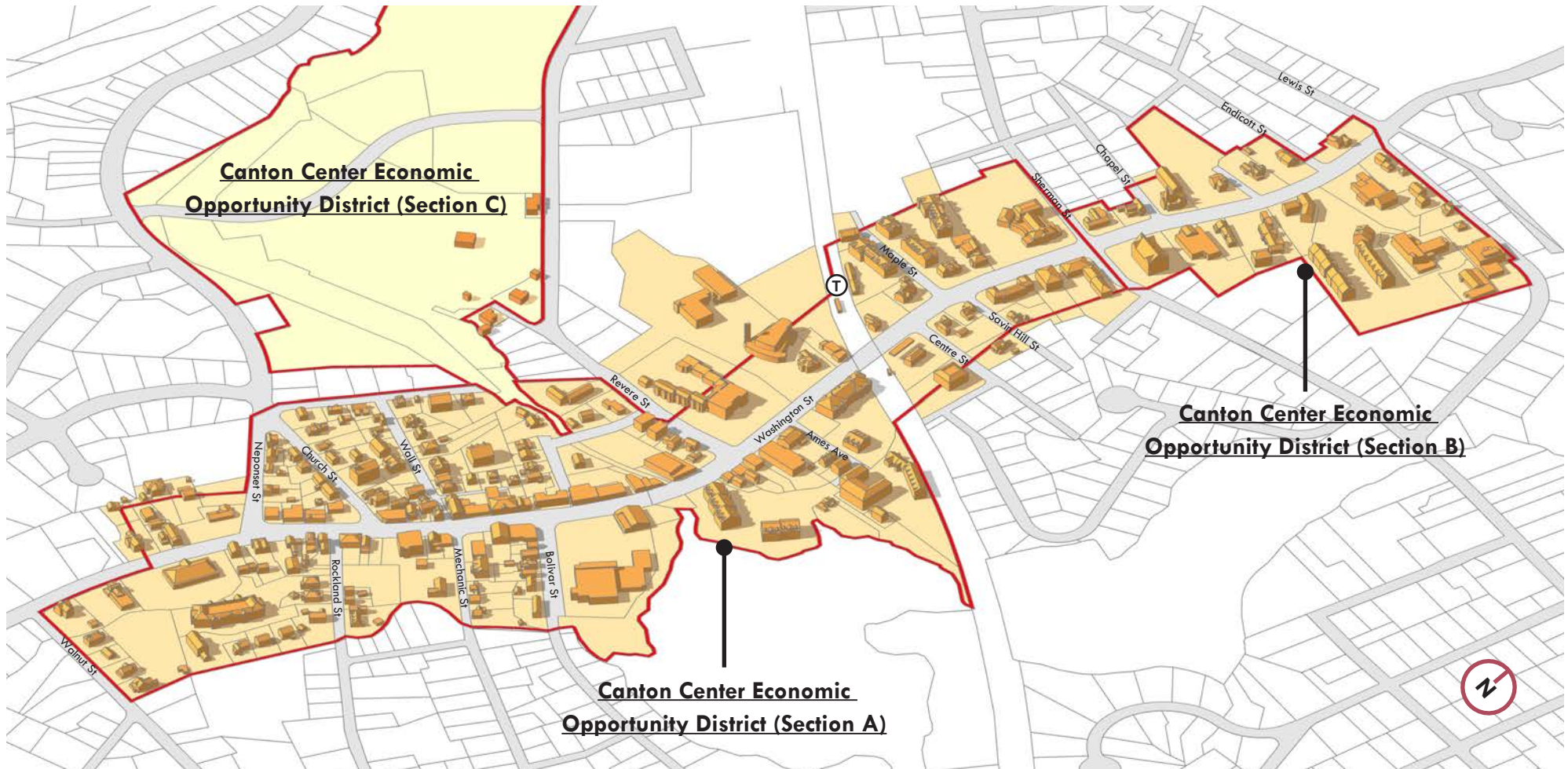


Figure 2. Downtown Canton Study Area

This bird's eye view diagram shows all the properties and buildings diagrammatically in the Downtown overlay zoning district with Washington Street at the center. The northern boundary of the district at Lewis Street is to the right of the diagram. The southern boundary of the district

at Walnut Street is to the left of the diagram. The Commuter Rail stop is near the center of the diagram. This diagram format will be used throughout the report to depict a variety of analyses of Downtown Canton. The full extent of the third subdistrict, Section C, is not shown in the

diagram. Only those parcels fully or partially within the overlay district are shown with a beige tone. Only those buildings on the parcels within the study are depicted with three-dimensional building massing in an orange tone.

HISTORY

A century ago, Downtown Canton was a large neighborhood of the Town. In the 1920s the train was the main form of transportation with service on what is now the commuter rail line and a street trolley that ran to Mattapan. The shops, goods, and services that were available Downtown were the center of life in the Town and included an upholstery shop, general store, public market, Post Office, variety store, shoe store, haberdashery, restaurant, tailor, theatre, churches, banks, library, fire station, playground, barber shop, and other uses.

The centrality of Downtown in the life of Canton's residents will never be what it was historically, but it is an important part of the Town's vision for the future. With all the competition that Downtown's face for residents spending time and dollars, it is important for the physical environment to be as attractive as possible and for the businesses and uses to provide a strong reason to visit.

LINK TO MASTER PLAN

The Town's Master Plan helps the community guide future growth through articulating a vision, identifying goals, setting strategies, and prioritizing allocation of time and resources. The

Town's previous master plan was completed in 2004 and placed a strong focus on Downtown. The Town's more recent Master Plan completed in 2020 also highlights and emphasizes Downtown.

The 2020 Master Plan defines guiding principles for Downtown, including:

- Canton Center will have a strong sense of place. It will be walkable, vibrant with activity, have a broad range of uses, and connect to nearby destinations.

The Master Plan developed more specific goals for Downtown, including:

- Need one set of development procedures and standards for Canton Center,
- Revise Table of Uses,
- Update dimensional requirements,
- Develop design standards for elements like building form, facades, pedestrian space, building materials and other important aspects of project design,
- Adjust parking requirements in the Zoning By-Law to reflect best practices for a downtown, and
- Revise sign requirements to ensure high quality design and appropriately-scaled signage.

In addition to this detailed guidance from the most

recent Master Plan, other past studies are also relevant to Downtown. These past studies include:

- Multi-family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities Presentation to Select Board, 2022
- Washington Street Corridor Study in Canton, 2022
- Canton center Rapid Recovery Plan, 2021
- Canton Junction Planning Study, 2020
- Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, 2018
- Town of Canton: Downtown Parking Strategy, 2018

CURRENT ZONING

This Downtown Canton Study is focused on defining zoning recommendations to encourage investment in the Downtown in an effort to continue to strengthen it as a destination in the Town that is walkable, vibrant with activity, and host to a broad range of uses. In order to provide these zoning recommendations the current zoning must be understood and evaluated.

The evaluation of the current zoning began through the Master Plan. The Master Plan reviewed the Town's Zoning By-Law and included a review of the zoning for Downtown.

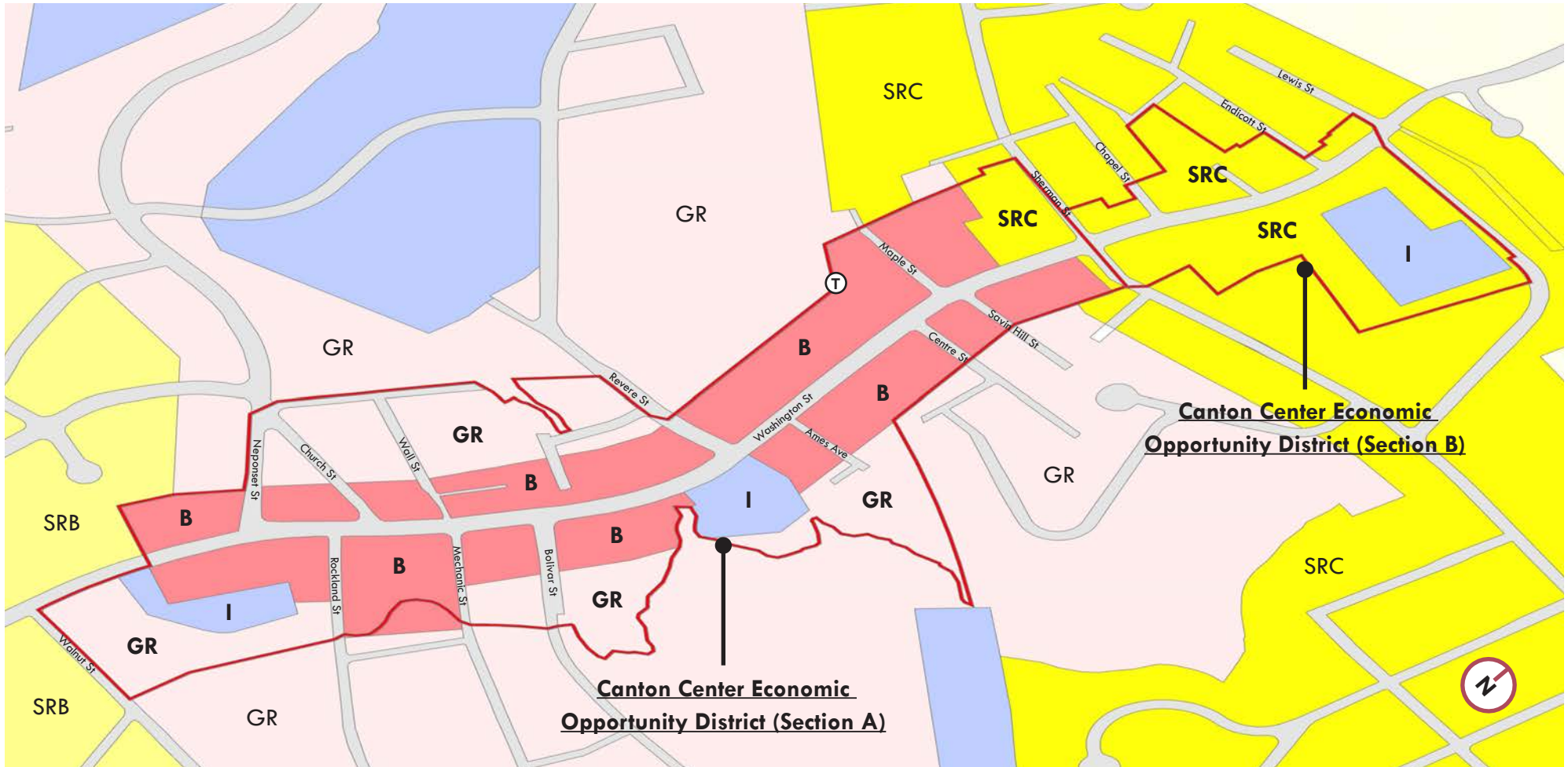


Figure 3. Downtown Canton Current Zoning

Figure 3 on this page shows the current zoning context. Downtown parcels are governed by both underlying zones and overlay zones. The underlying zones include Business (B), General

Residence (GR), Industrial (I), and Single Residence C (SRC). The surrounding zoning context includes Single Residence A (SRA), Single Residence B (SRB), and Parkland and Open Space. Each

underlying zoning district is associated with its own use limitations, dimensional regulations, and other rules that regulate the type and scale of development that can occur on a property. In

addition to the underlying zoning districts. A zoning overlay has been created for Downtown. The zoning overlay is referred to as the Canton Center Economic Opportunity District (CCEOD). This overlay district also applies to the parcels within its boundary and adds additional regulations for development in the Downtown.

Zoning is one of the most important tools a municipality has to help guide a district toward a future vision. Communities are divided into various zoning districts. Changes to one district will not impact another. In this study the zoning changes are focused only on the Downtown. Zoning regulates a number of aspects within each district that are critical to the character of that district, including:

- Allowable uses, such as residential, office, retail, industrial, etc. and whether the use is allowed by-right or through a special permit;
- Dimensional regulations, such as building height, density, minimum lot size, building setbacks from the property lines, etc.;
- Requirements for affordable housing, if applicable;
- The amount of parking required;
- The amount of open space required;
- Increasingly often, standards for design that

go beyond the basic dimensional regulations; and,

- Other requirements that are intended to ensure that a development integrates harmoniously into the district.

While zoning can be a tool to help achieve a community's goals, unfortunately it is often also an impediment to development, especially in diverse, mixed-use neighborhoods. As such, a key aspect in developing the recommendations that will help implement the vision for Downtown is an understanding of the existing zoning and how it may be negatively impacting some opportunities for investment.

The current zoning in Downtown has been successful in attracting investment over the past two decades. Nineteen development or redevelopment projects have occurred within the Downtown overlay zone since the year 2000. The addresses for these investments are listed below in reverse chronological order:

- 1-20 Audubon Way (2020)
- 39-43 Plymouth St (2020)
- 21 Capen St (2019)
- 19 Plymouth St (2018)
- 20 Mechanic St (2018)
- 17 Neponset St (2017)
- 725 Washington St (2017)

- 34 Ames Ave (2017)
- 34 Wall St (2016)
- 33 Rockland St (2012)
- 717 Washington St (2011)
- 21 Rockland St (2008)
- 25 Maple St (2004)
- 22 Maple St (2004)
- 56 Ames Ave (2003)
- 25 Wall St (2003)
- 24 Wall St (2003)
- 21 Wall St (2003)
- 16 Forge Pond (2002)

The location of these Downtown development projects is mapped on the following page in Figure 4. A few observations about this collective pattern of development. Most of the development has been residential with a modest amount of ground floor commercial in some mixed-use development. Most of the development has not included Washington Street frontage. While located in the Downtown, most development remains relatively suburban in its site layout in that the buildings are often surrounded by parking and the buildings are not being used to define the frontage on a street. While the past investments have served to attract additional residents and activity to the Downtown, most of the investments have not been transformative for how residents and patrons view or interact with the Downtown.

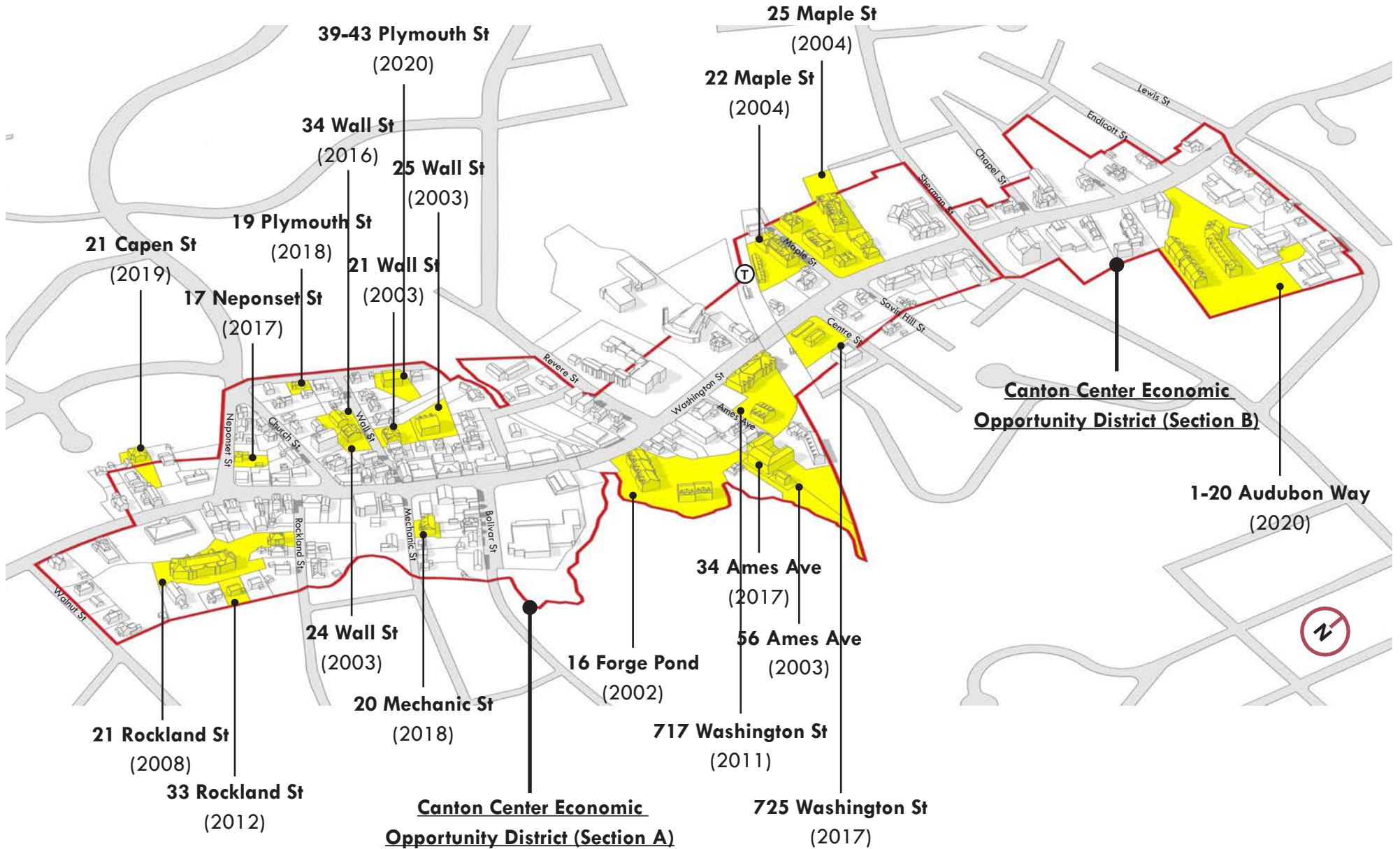


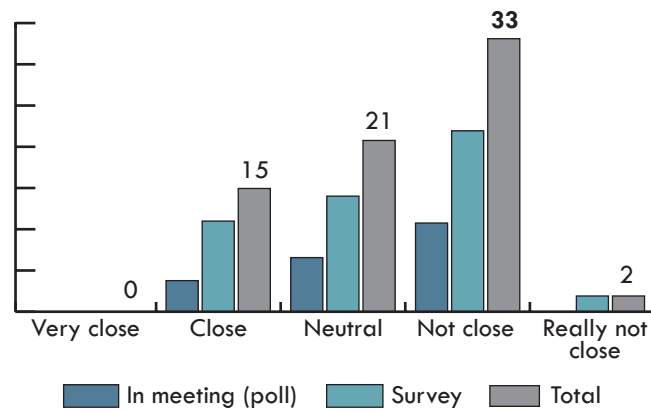
Figure 4. Downtown Canton Past Projects

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

As part of this study, the Canton community was engaged through a series of community meetings and community surveys that were designed to gather feedback on the Downtown and to shape the recommendations to update its zoning. The first Community Meeting was hosted on November 29th, 2022 at the Canton Library’s Community Room. The agenda for the meeting included presenting analysis of Downtown’s characteristics, exploration of potential zoning changes, and examples of other successful downtown zoning efforts. The follow-up Community Survey was available following the meeting and open for response for about a month.

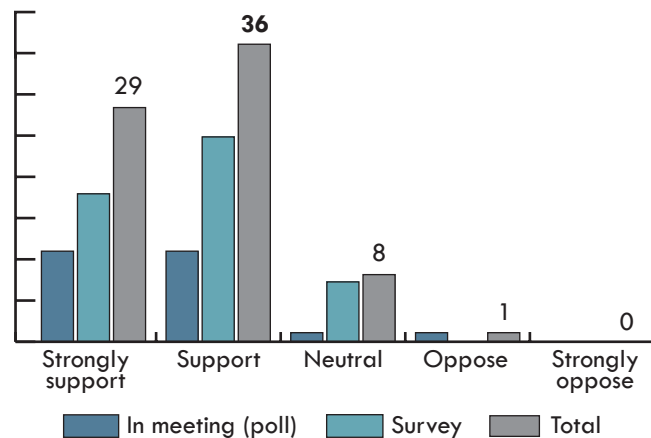
Initial questions from this first Community Meeting and Survey establish a baseline of information for how residents and patrons view the Downtown. This feedback helped to expand on the foundation that the Master Plan provided. The following charts show the responses to a series of questions regarding Downtown Canton.

Participants were asked **“How close is Downtown Canton to your ideal vision?”**



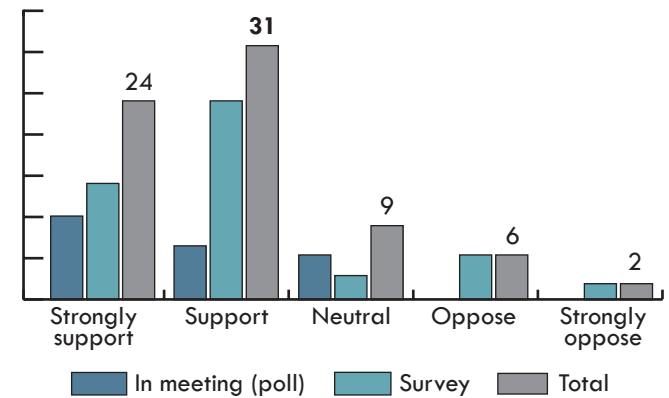
The responses show that residents are hoping for more from Downtown Canton. The most frequent response was “not close” followed by “neutral.”

Participants were asked **“Do you support additional private or public investment in Downtown Canton?”**



88% of the responses either strongly support or support additional investment in Downtown Canton. This connects with the first question and reinforces that future investments in Downtown are desired by the community to bring Downtown closer to the vision and potential that people see there.

Participants were asked **“Do you support additional development of redevelopment in Downtown Canton?”**

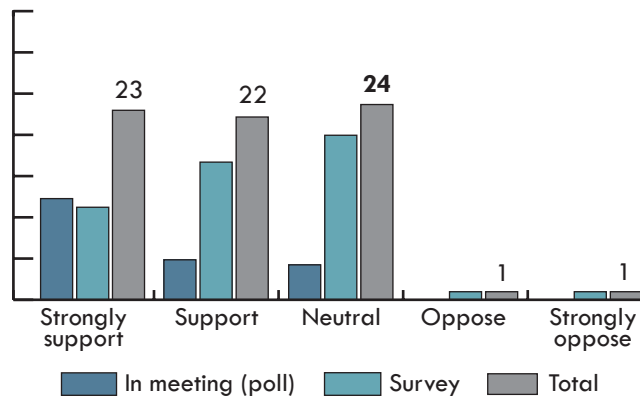


Compared to investment in general, support for development or redevelopment specifically is not nearly as resounding, but remains strong. 76% of responses were in the categories of either strongly support or support. This shows support for the type of changes that are hoped to result from the zoning recommendations for Downtown.

Participants were asked “**What is your biggest concern for the future of Downtown Canton?**” The responses to this question were open ended and some frequent responses formed a pattern to highlight traffic, walkability, and vacancies as the three most common concerns. A list of the most repeated concerns is below with the percent of responses that included language about this concern:

- **Traffic/traffic flow** (10%)
- **Walkable//pedestrian safety** (8%)
- **Vacancies/empty stores/desolation** (8%)
- Restaurants/dining (4%)
- Building too many residential units/losing businesses/amenities (4%)
- Not enough parking/parking (4%)
- Leadership/strong leadership (3%)
- Stagnation/no change (3%)

Finally, participants were asked “**Do you generally support updating the zoning in Downtown Canton?**”



This question was asked at the beginning of the process, so it did not include any details about the zoning recommendations. Nonetheless it is interesting to see the results for this generalized support for zoning updates. The strongly support and support responses combine to 63% which is just about at the 2/3 threshold required to pass zoning changes at Town Meeting. The remainder of responses are mostly in the neutral category. It is hoped that building the recommendations based on the feedback received from the community through this process that this generalized support would increase when considering the details of the recommendations outlined in this report.

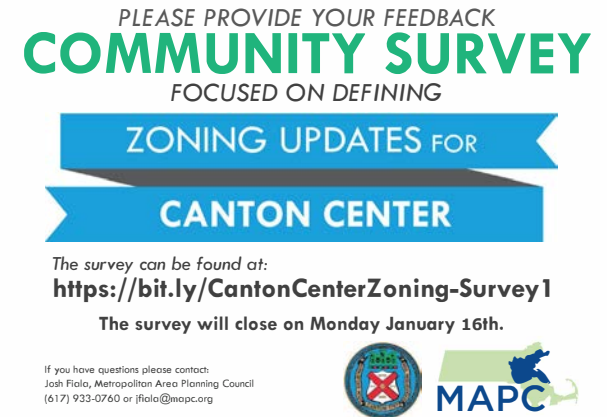


Figure 5. Community Survey flyer

A thumbnail of a flyer publicizing the first community survey is shown above. The survey was available online from the first community meeting at the end of November of 2022 through mid-January of 2023.

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding Downtown Canton's existing conditions and development patterns is an important aspect of defining the zoning recommendations. It is important to consider the overall patterns that result from the properties and buildings that comprise Downtown Canton to determine if there are positive patterns that should be supported or negative patterns that should be interrupted. The existing conditions analysis presented in this chapter is based on the Town of Canton Assessor's Data (2022) for the parcels that are within the Downtown Canton overlay zoning district. Collectively these analyses:

- Help set the context and provide a baseline understanding of Downtown
- Help inform the zoning recommendations by understanding what changes may need to be made to encourage patterns of positive investment
- Help to understand the Downtown from a different perspective and see some of the data behind a familiar place

The existing conditions begin with a selection of photos of Downtown Canton showing the current character and examples of a variety of building types found in the district.

Figure 6. Current Downtown Canton character and building type examples



Figure 7. Current Downtown Canton character and building type examples



Existing Conditions Analysis

The existing conditions analysis of Downtown Canton is presented as a series of diagrams showing the study area. The study area includes all parcels within the Downtown Canton overlay zoning district. The analysis is primarily focused on characteristics of the parcels in the Downtown in order to inform the zoning recommendations. For each parcel within the district, the current building has been drawn as a three-dimensional massing model to help visually depict the physical characteristics of the district. The following characteristics have been illustrated and analyzed in this way and include:

- Land use
- Building/land value
- Public/private ownership
- Owner occupied
- Year built
- Lot size
- Building height
- Density (Floor Area Ratio)
- Residential units

Transportation network

In addition to the parcels in a district, a district's roadway circulation can have a major impact on the character, functionality, and quality of life of the area. The designs, types of facilities, and streetscape elements can help unify a district, as well as make it safer, more comfortable, and accessible to all users. A safe and attractive

environment for all users requires a high standard of design and should include quality pedestrian facilities and integration with surrounding destinations and activity centers. While the transportation network is not the focus of this study, based on the feedback received, it is clearly a focus of the community.

Recent studies have been undertaken to improve traffic flow through the Downtown with a focus on Washington Street. The Washington Street Corridor Study in Canton is one in a series of studies supported by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization that address safety, mobility, and access on the Boston region's roadways. This report identifies specific transportation issues and concerns in the Washington Street Corridor and a major commercial district at Cobb Corner adjacent to the corridor; presents an in-depth analysis of multiple transportation-related factors, such as accommodations for people who walk and bike and safe access to adjacent businesses; proposes short- and long-term improvements to address the problems; and provides a vision for the corridor's long-term development.

The central feature of Downtown's street network is Washington Street. Washington Street is an important regional connection and is a route for commuting and pass-through traffic. It has a single travel lane in each direction with an intermittent center turn lane. For much of its length in Downtown, Washington Street has on-street parking on both sides of the street.

Since Downtown Canton is primarily focused on Washington Street it is important that properties with frontage on Washington Street are contributing to the attractiveness, vitality, and sense of place for the district as much as possible.

LAND USE

A land use map is an illustration of the principal use that occurs on any property. Understanding the land use provides a snapshot of what is in the district today. This snapshot helps inform whether the types and mix of uses should evolve over time. The color coded map typically groups residential uses into yellow tones and commercial uses into red tones. In a Downtown district it is typical to see a range of uses, but there should be a concentration of commercial or mixed-use properties on the primary frontage of the main street. In Downtown Canton this is Washington Street.

Commercial properties include shops, restaurants, offices, personal services, and others. Residential properties vary by the number of units from single family to a large multifamily structure with a number of residential units. Mixed use, light industrial, and institutional (municipal, religious, or other) uses are typically their own categories.

Several observations can be made based on the Figure 8 which shows the land use diagram on the following page. The concentration of red

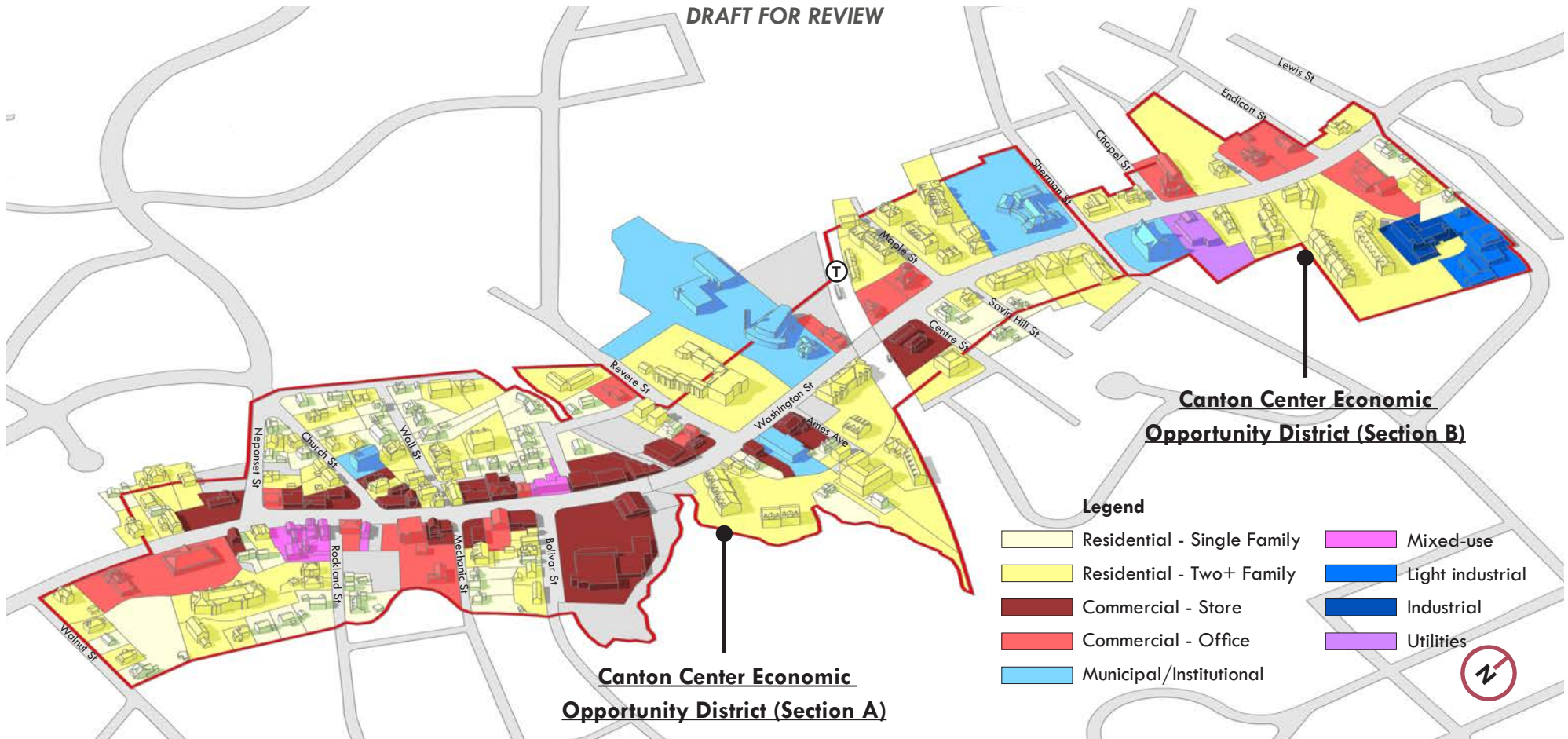


Figure 8. Downtown Canton Land Use

along the Washington Street frontage is strong and relatively continuous south of the Commuter Rail station in overlay subdistrict A. This is the part of Downtown that feels most attractive and interesting to walk along with a variety of businesses, storefronts, and a consistent Downtown feel. North of the Commuter Rail station that continuity of red tones along Washington Street is not present and is replaced with predominantly residential yellow tones. While still an attractive stretch of Washington Street moving north along

Washington Street feels like a transition out of Downtown.

The parcels adjacent to the Washington Street frontage are primarily residential with a variety of housing types and density. The most predominant use is single family homes including 44% of the properties in the district. Two family homes are the second largest share of the properties including 18% of the district. The district is punctuated by several larger institutionally used properties that include

churches, the Canton Public Library, and Canton Town Hall. Light industrial uses are visible in the northeast corner of the Downtown district.

This diagram points to the importance of the Washington Street frontage and the need to strengthen and grow the commercial uses that contribute to the critical mass of destinations that would draw residents and visitors to the Downtown. Currently the commercial uses including shops, stores, restaurants, and services include about 15% of the properties in the district.

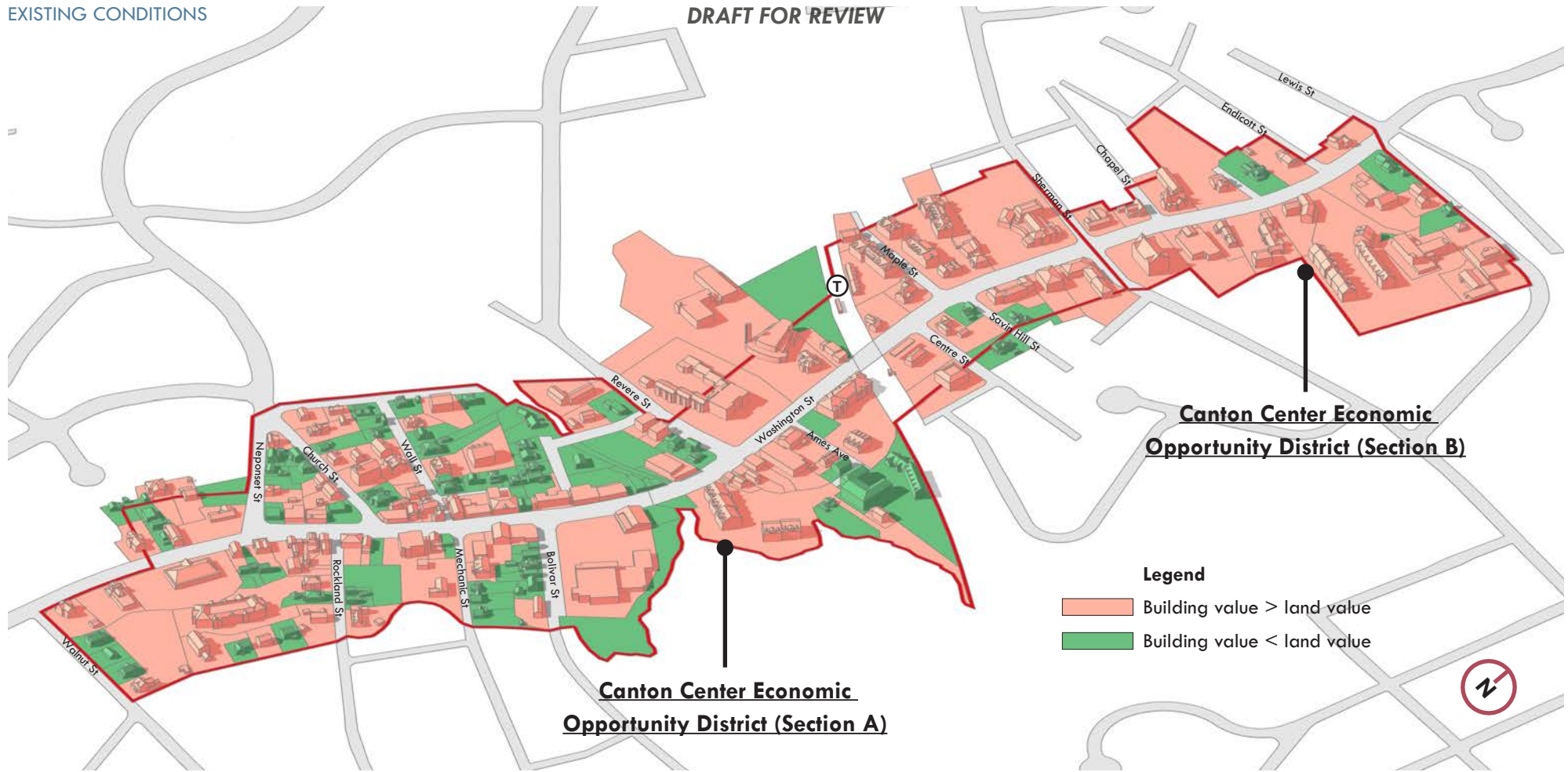


Figure 9. Downtown Canton Building/Land Value

BUILDING/LAND VALUE

One way to examine property utilization from a real estate value perspective is to compare the building value and the land value of a property. This comparison is a simple way to understand the level of investment that has occurred in a district. Typically, when a property's land is more valuable than the property's building, that property is more likely to be targeted for future investment. This comparison

does not provide a perfect indication of which properties in a district may change or evolve, but it does give a useful snapshot of the number of properties that may be subject to future investment. This isn't the only way to measure the value of a property, for example, a property may support a successful business or may hold historical or cultural significance.

In Figure 9 above, the building and land value for a property are compared based on Town

of Canton Assessors Data. A property shaded green has a land value that is higher than the building value and may therefore be more likely to change in the nearer term. A property shaded red has a building value that is higher than the land value and may therefore be less likely to change. Currently about 53% of the properties have a building value that is less than the land value. Most of these properties do not have frontage on Washington Street.

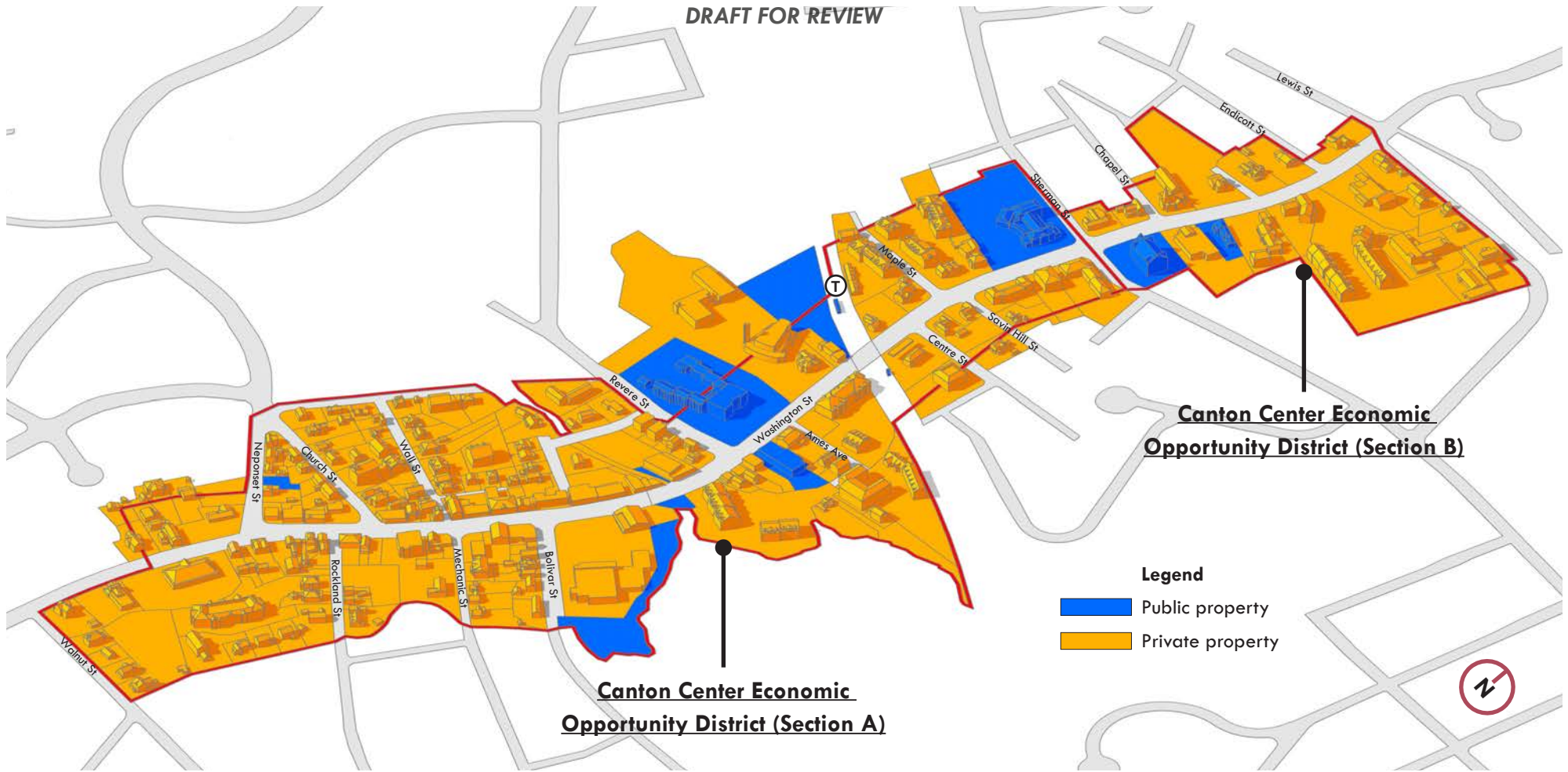


Figure 10. Downtown Canton Public/Private

PUBLIC/PRIVATE

The ownership of a property is an important aspect of its future opportunities for investment. The primary categories of property ownership are whether a property is publicly owned or privately owned. Publicly owned properties may be property that is owned by the Town of Canton, a public agency, the Commonwealth, or other public entity. Privately owned properties are all the properties that are

owned by a private entity whether that be an individual, trust, business, condominium association, or other private ownership structure.

In Figure 10 above it shows that the properties in Downtown Canton are primarily privately owned, about 95% of the total properties. This provides the most flexibility for future investments in the Downtown, but also reduces the amount of control that the Town may have over future change in the district. The primary publicly owned

properties are civic destinations that contribute to the Downtown and include Town Hall, the Canton Public Library, and Post Office, among others. Additional public lands include the natural buffer to a water body and the MBTA Canton Center Station land for the commuter rail platform and commuter parking lot.

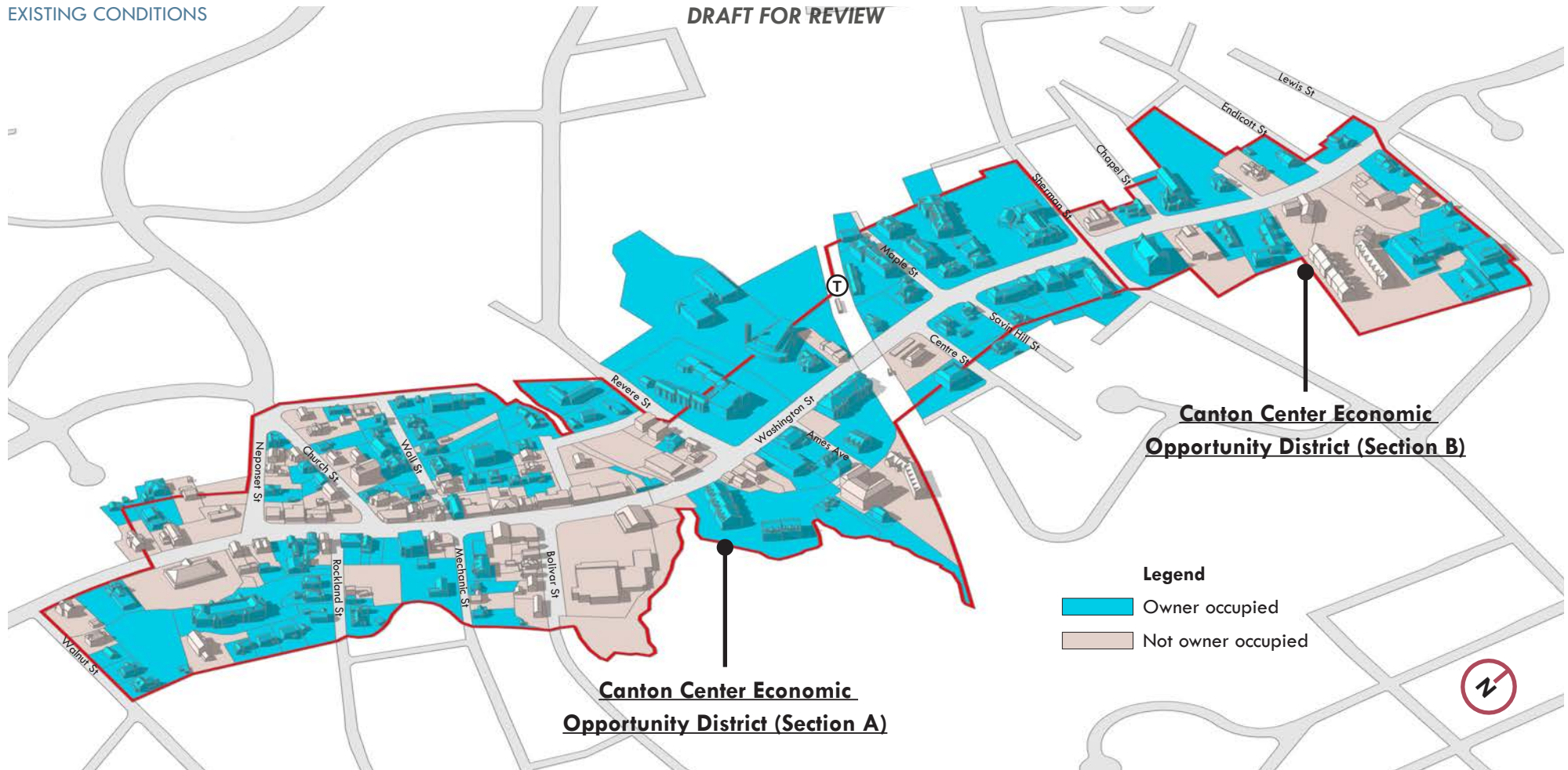


Figure 11. Downtown Canton Owner Occupied

OWNER OCCUPIED

The relationship of the property owner to the property can provide some indication as to whether the property is more or less likely to redevelop in the future. In order to estimate owner occupation of the property, the Canton Assessors database is used. The owner address data is compared to the property address data for each property. This will generally show if the owner is also an occupant of the property as a resident

or business owner. Of course, this analysis isn't completely accurate and may improperly identify owner occupation for some properties. Although it is not perfect, it does give an indication of owner occupied property in the district. About 57% of the properties in Downtown Canton are not owner occupied as shown in gray in Figure 11 above.

This is an important characteristic of the Downtown properties since investment in the Downtown will primarily occur through private actions on private

property. Whether Downtown properties are owner occupied or not, it would benefit the Town to strengthen communication with the Downtown property owners.

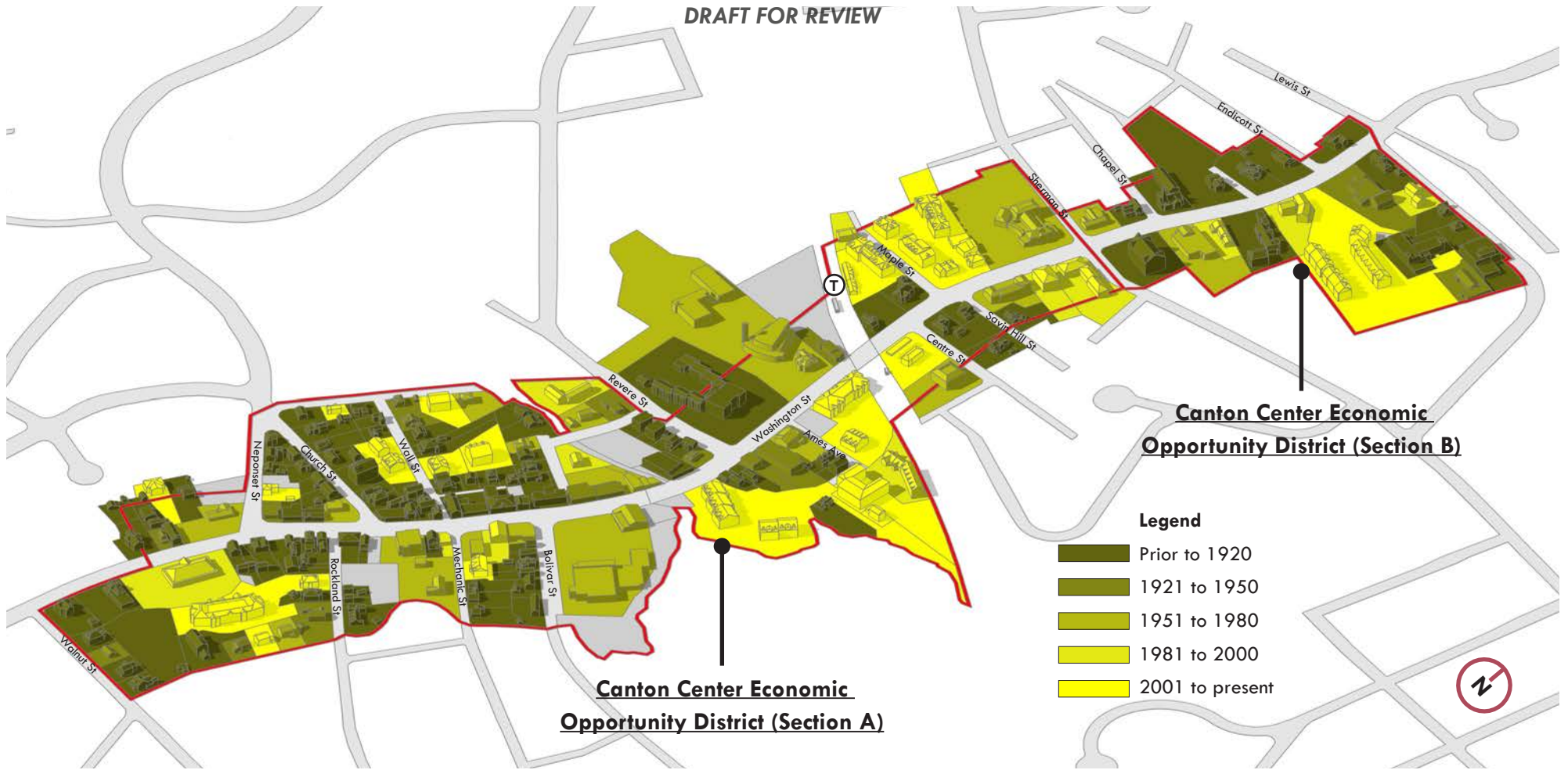


Figure 12. Downtown Canton Year Built

YEAR BUILT

Districts are constantly evolving through redevelopment and investment. Private properties change ownership and are subject to building investments and real estate redevelopment incrementally over time. Most downtown districts have a mix of historic buildings that may date back to the origins of the downtown and new buildings that may have been built in the last year.

Figure 12 above shows a comparison of when buildings were built on the properties in the Downtown zoning district. In this diagram, the darker tones show older buildings with the lighter yellow properties being the most recently built. The average year built across the entire district is 1907. The largest share of properties in the Downtown are within the “Prior to 1920” category with 59% of properties. Generally the older properties are smaller lot sizes and buildings.

The newer buildings are on considerably larger properties and the buildings are generally larger and taller. These differences point to the historic evolution of the scale of development to larger structures over time and point to the need to accommodate modern parking requirements which translate to requiring a larger property.

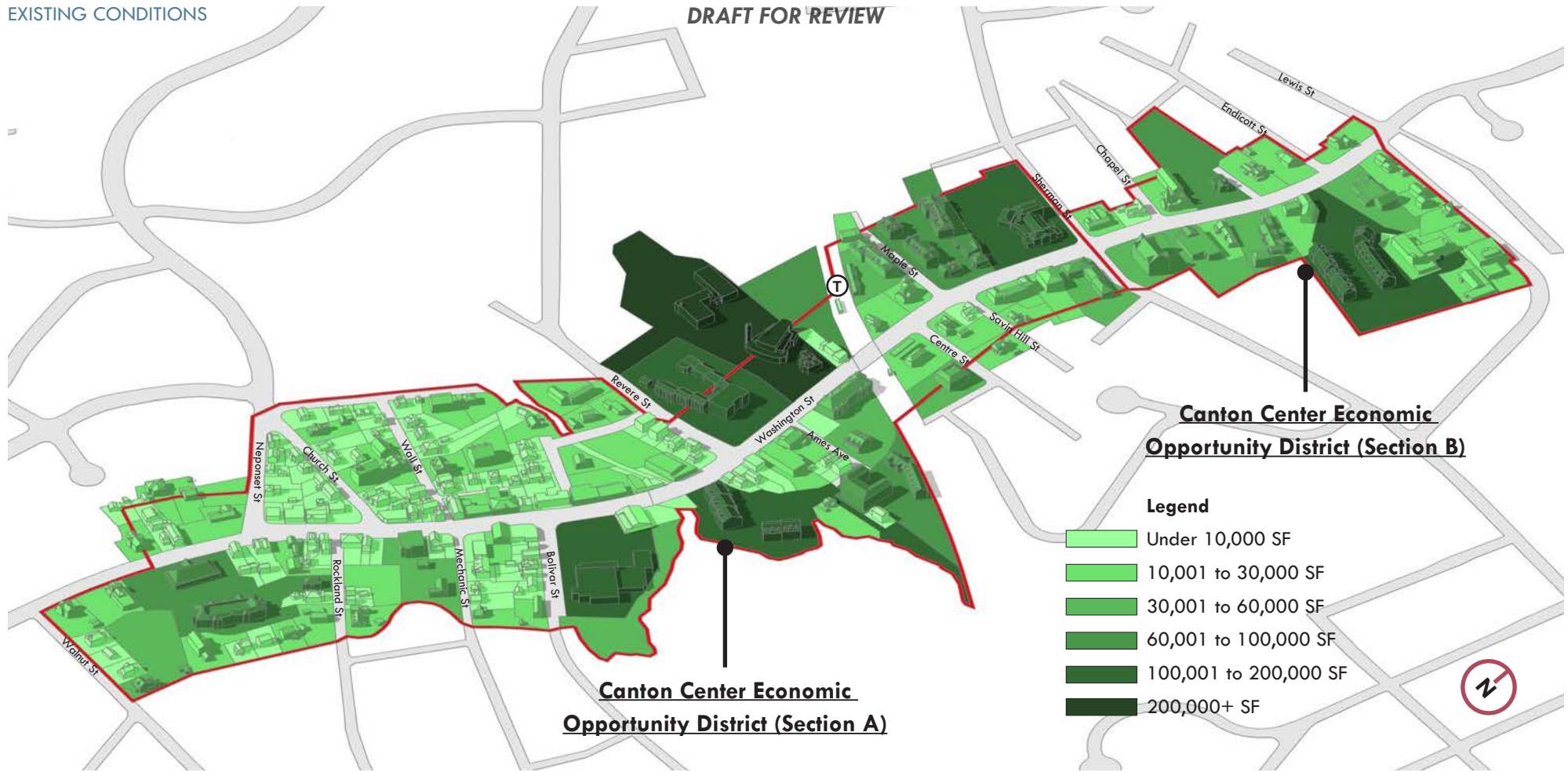


Figure 13. Downtown Canton Lot Size

LOT SIZE

The lot sizes in existing Downtown districts have mostly been established by historical development patterns. The general pattern is that lot sizes were historically smaller as construction methods and development patterns favored smaller structures in denser development patterns. As redevelopment occurs the smaller historic structures and lots are sometimes combined into larger lots that would support a larger building

which is more typical of modern construction methods and development patterns.

In Figure 13 above, the pattern of lot sizes in the district is depicted. The darker the shade of green the larger the lot size. The more recent redevelopment investments are correlated with the larger lot sizes. Often these redevelopment investments have been the multifamily or mixed use redevelopment that has occurred under the current zoning regulations. One of the exceptions

to this observation is the Canton Housing Authority property on Washington Street which is a larger lot where the use of the original structure was changed to housing. The zoning recommendations should anticipate the pattern of lot sizes combining to become larger over time. The average lot size in the district is about 22,500 square feet or about 1/2 of an acre.

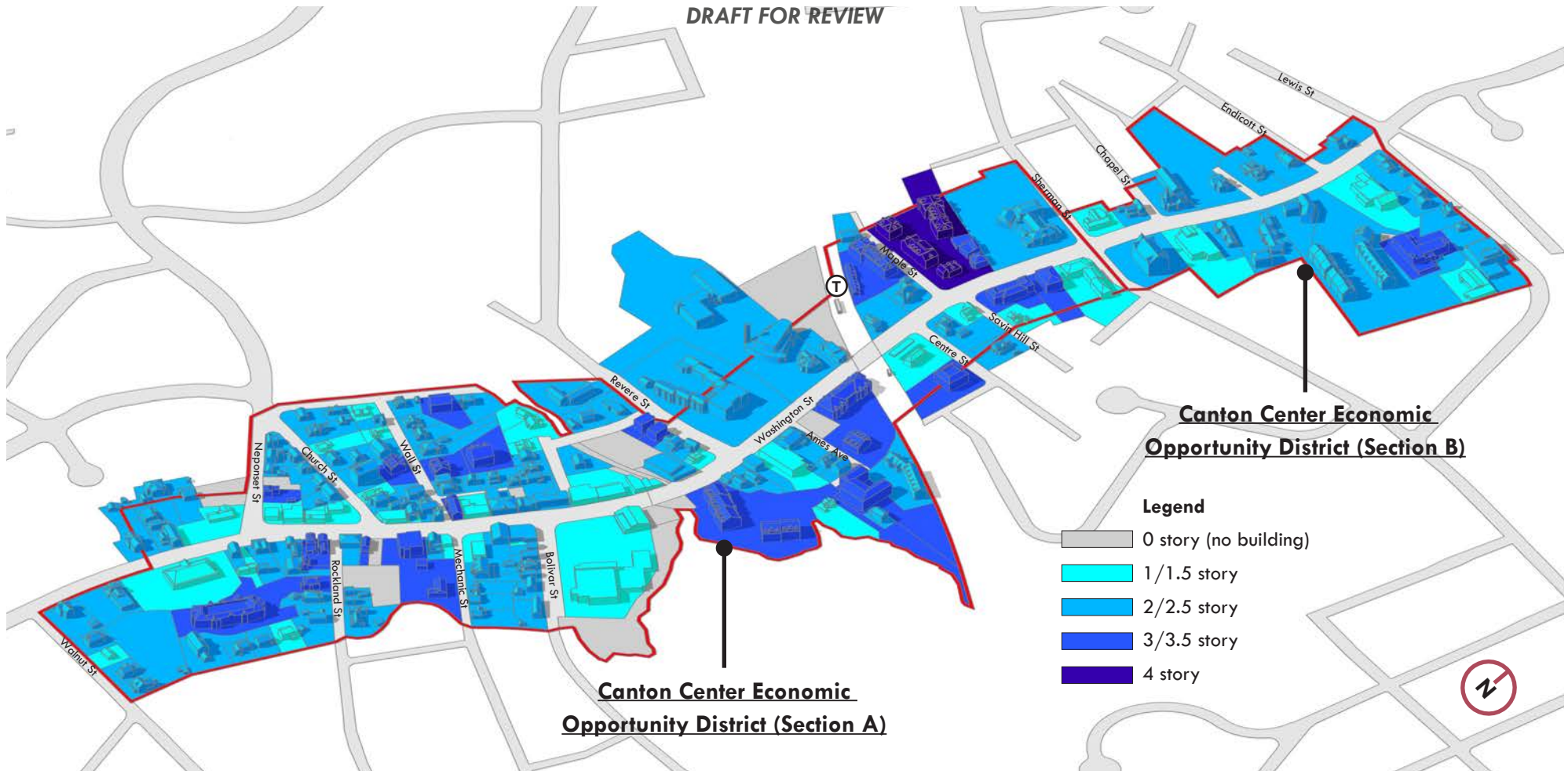


Figure 14. Downtown Canton Building Height

BUILDING HEIGHT

The existing building heights in Downtown Canton are relatively consistent and occur across a relatively narrow range of 1 to 3 stories. Historically, a one-story commercial structure defining the frontage of the primary street in the Downtown may have been considered full utilization of the property. Today, a one-story structure is potentially missing an opportunity for upper story residential uses in a mixed use

redevelopment and may not fully utilize the benefits of a property in a downtown.

In Figure 14 above, the pattern and range of building height in Downtown Canton is shown. The darker the blue tone the taller the building. The average building height in the district is 2 stories. Most properties, about 64%, are in the 2/2.5 story height range.

Most recent redevelopment is at least 2 stories

and often 3 stories in height. This height is better utilizing the scarce resource of land in the Downtown district. In many redevelopment circumstances, the minimum parking requirements are the limiting factor that is linked to the maximum building height and density of development that can be achieved.

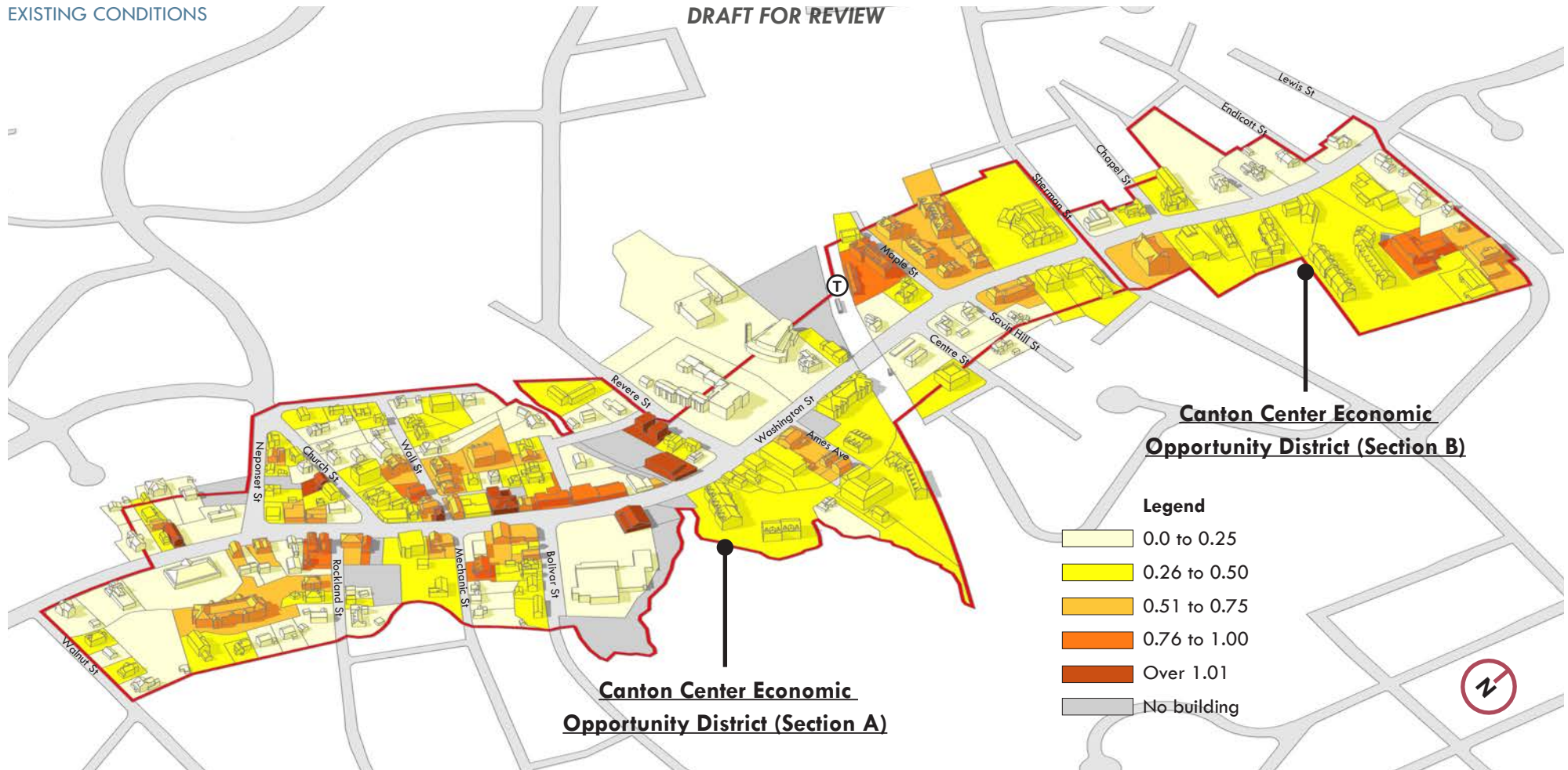


Figure 15. Downtown Canton Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

DENSITY (FLOOR AREA RATIO)

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 total 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. This could be a single story building that covers the entire property, a two story building that covers half the property, a four story building covering a quarter of the property, etc.

The FAR of each of the properties in the district has been calculated and is depicted in Figure 15. For the darker orange tones in the diagram properties are denser. 635 Washington Street is

among the most dense with a single story structure that nearly covers the full property. This analysis shows that most properties have a relatively low FAR. The average density in the district is an FAR of 0.4. The majority of properties are below an FAR of 0.5. 40% of the properties are below 0.25 and 35% are between 0.26 and 0.5. This analysis helps confirm that many properties in the Downtown have the potential to be utilized more effectively.

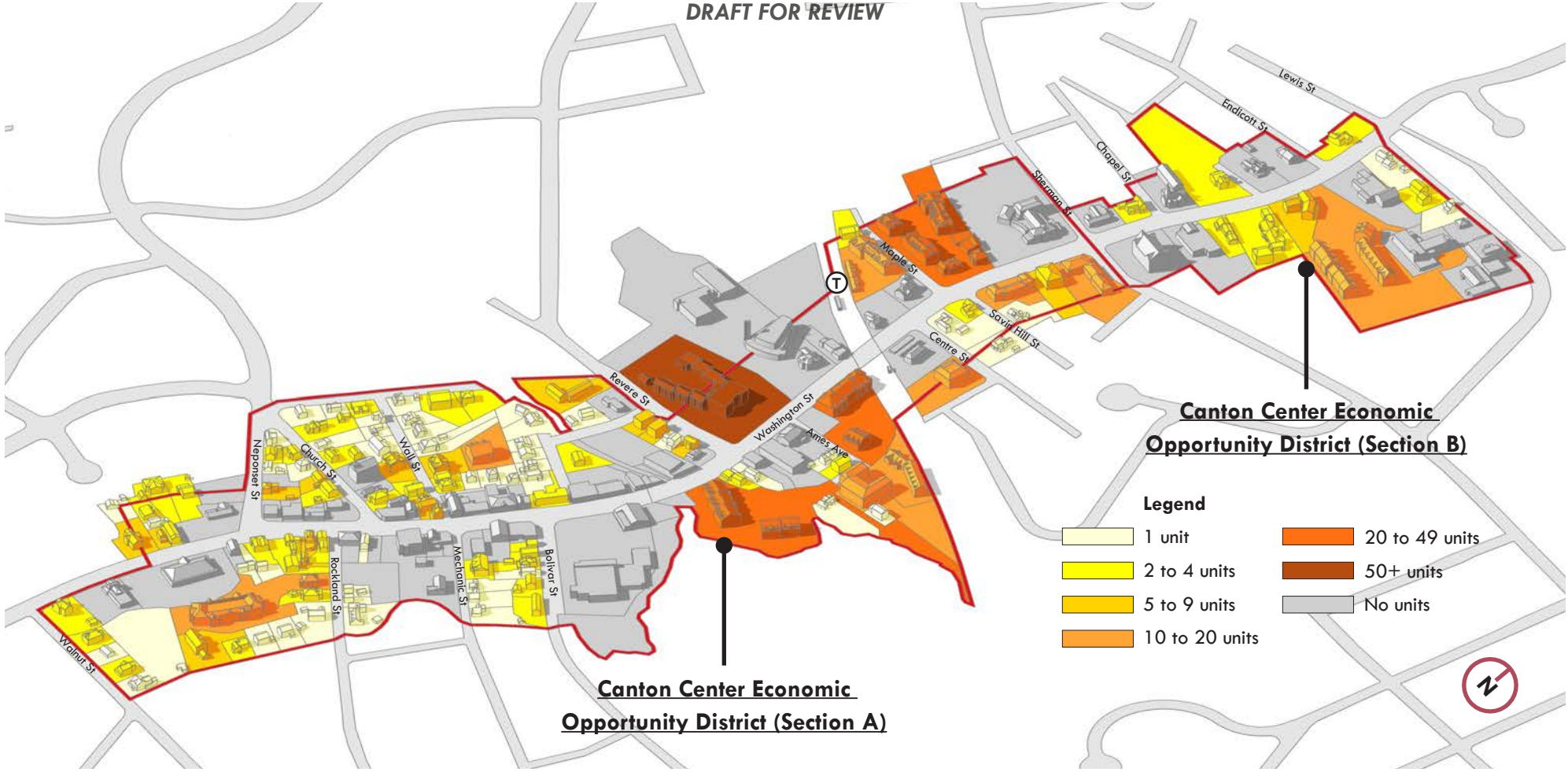


Figure 16. Downtown Canton Residential Units

RESIDENTIAL UNITS

The diagram above, Figure 16, depicts the number of residential units that are present on properties in Downtown Canton. The variation in unit counts is relatively wide. A number of single family homes are located in the zoning district with 1 residential unit on the property. There are also a few sizable multifamily developments in the district that include close to or more than 50 residential units on the property. The most

units on a property are located at the Canton Housing Authority property at 660 Washington Street with 56 units. Grover Estates at 25 Maple Street, mixed use development at 16 Forge Pond, and mixed use development at 717 Washington Street are the next three properties with the most residential units.

Single family homes are mostly located on the residential side streets in the district such as Neponset Street, Church Street, Wall Street,

Rockland Street, Mechanic Street, and Savin Hill Street. Some single family residential homes are present on the Washington Street frontage. In the context of the primary street frontage in a Downtown District, these residential homes could better contribute to the district if converted or redeveloped for another use.

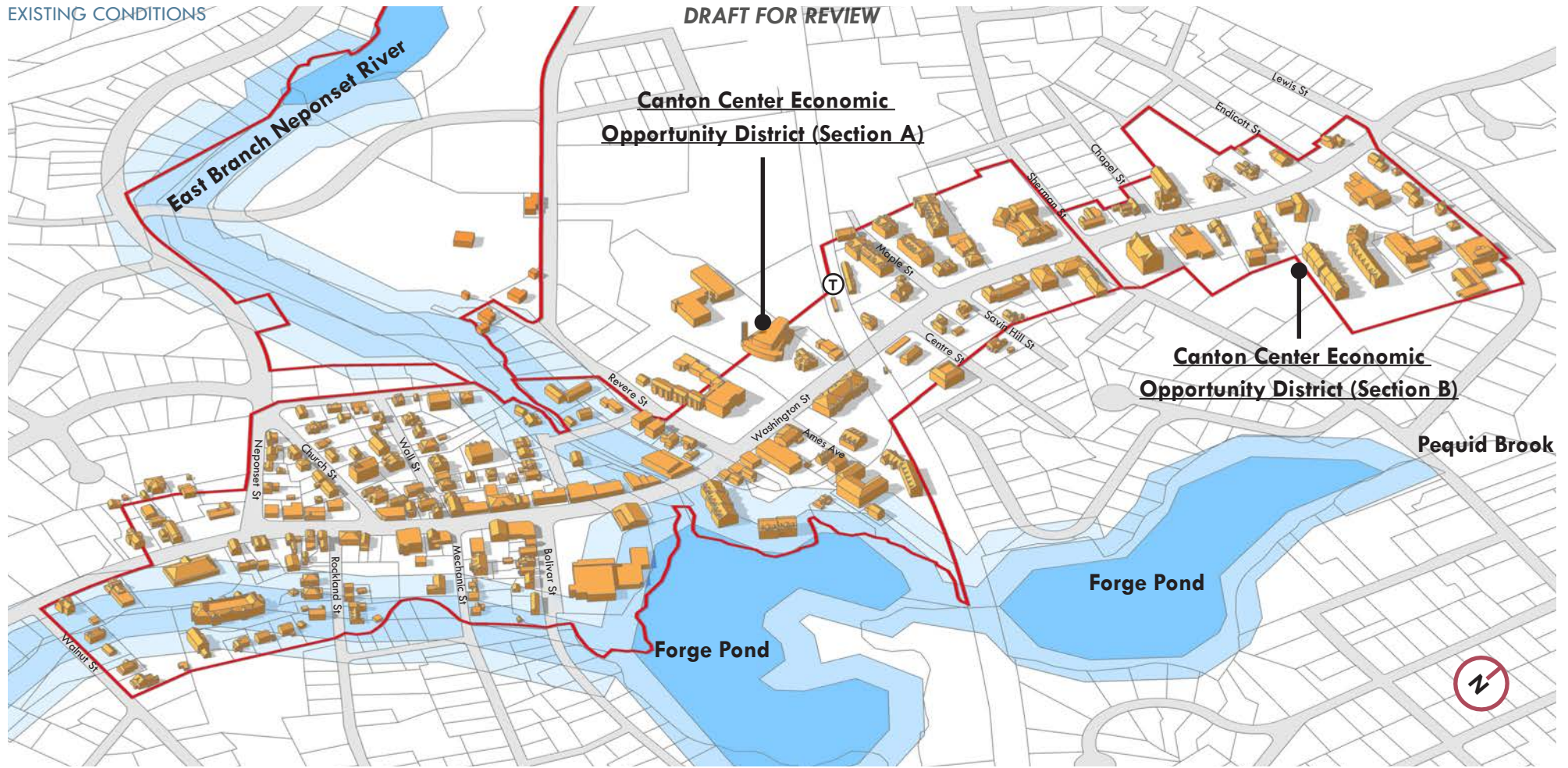


Figure 17. Downtown Canton Water Bodies and Wetlands

WATER BODIES AND WETLANDS

Downtown Canton has historically had a close relationship with its adjacent water bodies. Forge Pond was critical to powering early industry and iron works in the Town. The former industries of steel, copper, and textiles have long transitioned to the more familiar form of today's Downtown. Forge Pond and Bolivar Pond have transitioned from an industrial role to one as important natural resources and amenities for the

Town. They are habitats that support wildlife such as beavers, bald eagles, river otters, and swans, among others.

As can be seen in the diagram, Figure 17 above, the water bodies do potentially impact the review and approval of development activities on a number of properties in Downtown Canton. In addition to complying with zoning regulations, parcels that are within the 100 foot buffer zone of a wetland and the 200 foot buffer zone of a

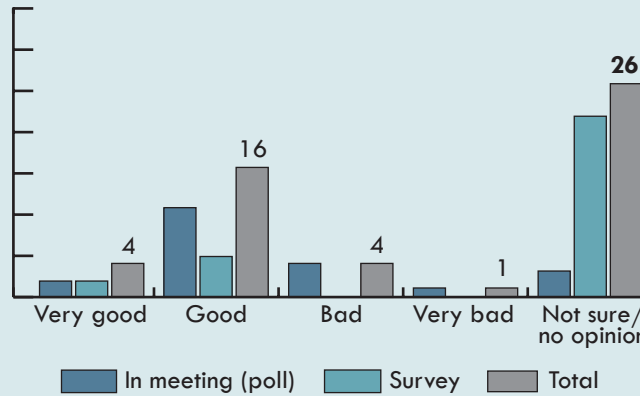
river or stream require additional permits from the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission ensures that proposed activities will not alter resource areas and the public interests they provide by reviewing projects on a case-by-case basis according to the Commonwealth's Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Protection Act, and Canton's Wetland Protection Bylaw.

It is helpful to review comparable examples to consider lessons learned that may be transferable. For Downtown Canton, several other downtown districts in the Greater Boston area may provide some similarities that would warrant examining the zoning regulations of those places to explore common patterns or different approaches for supporting a thriving Downtown.

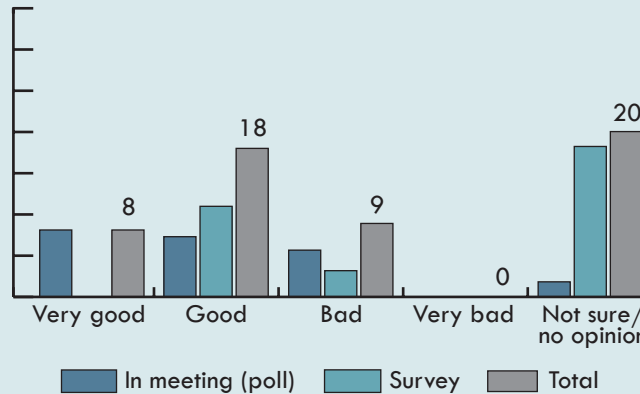
Comparisons can also be sensitive and sometimes difficult to get right. In order to focus on the right comparisons, the community was asked at the first community meeting and through the first community survey if three suggested comparable downtowns were good comparisons to explore. The three suggested downtowns included Downtown Reading, Downtown Scituate (Front Street), and Downtown Dedham (Dedham Square).

Each of these municipalities are roughly the same size as Canton and the downtown districts are of a similar scale as well. The results of the initial inquiry about the appropriateness of these examples are shown below. Based on the results of the community feedback, the downtown districts selected for comparison were changed to include Dedham, Needham, and Norwood. The key features of the zoning in these districts is described on the following pages.

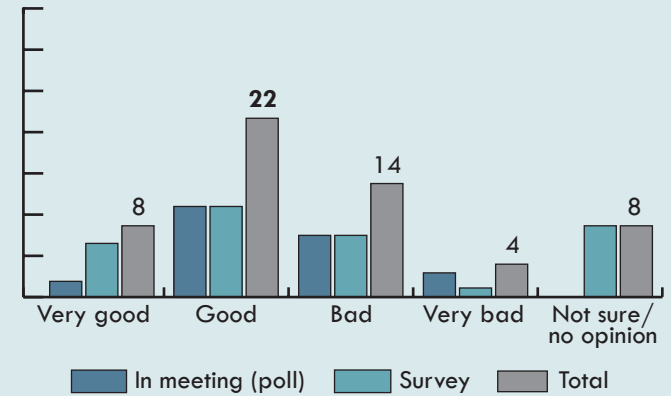
Is downtown Reading a good example?



Is downtown Scituate a good example?



Is downtown Dedham a good example?



Participants were also asked for additional suggestions for comparisons. **What downtowns should Canton review as an exemplary model?** Frequently received responses included:

- **Needham (11%)**
- **Norwood (with Town Green) (11%)**
- Hingham (10%)
- Wellesley (7%)
- Millis (5%)
- Concord (5%)
- Newton (3%)
- North Easton (3%)
- Lexington (3%)
- Easton (3%)

Downtown Reading

The Town of Reading has a population of 25,518 compared to Canton's population of 25,223. In the photo to the far right is the context of Reading's downtown. It has a similar scale and feel to Downtown Canton. The photo to the right is an example of redevelopment that has occurred in Reading's downtown. It is mixed-use with a commercial ground floor and residential above in a four-story building.

Figure 18. Potential Comparable Downtown Redevelopment Examples



30 Haven Street, Reading MA



Downtown Reading Context

Downtown Scituate

The Town of Scituate has a population of 19,185 compared to Canton's 25,223. Along Front Street is Scituate's downtown district. The character of development is shown in the photo to the far right. Front Street is also the only commercial street frontage of the district similar to Washington Street in Canton. Scituate has been able to attract several 3-story mixed-use developments in the district. One example is shown in the photo to the right.



Front Street, Scituate MA



Scituate Front Street Context

Dedham Square

The Town of Dedham has a population of 25,240 compared to Canton's 25,223. Dedham Square is shown in the photo on the far right with its mix of 1 and 2-story structures that provide an active and mixed-use district. Dedham Square has attracted several 3-story mixed-use redevelopments that fit within the context and add to the vibrancy of the district and sense of place.



360 Washington Street, Dedham MA



Dedham Square Context
Downtown Canton Zoning and Design Guidelines Updates

Downtown Needham

Needham, MA

The zoning in Downtown Needham is the “Center Business” (CB) underlying district and a mixed use overlay district (MUOD). The underlying zoning district is commercial. The MUOD is referred to as the Needham Center Overlay District.

Use Regulations

Multifamily dwellings are allowed by special permit on the second floor of a building. The use regulations prohibit uses not complementary to a downtown including automobile service stations, commercial garages, and car washes.

Dimensional Requirements

A minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet is required with a minimum frontage of 80 feet. A minimum front setback of 0 feet and maximum front setback of 2 feet is required. No minimum side or rear setbacks are required, except when abutting a residential district. A minimum building height of 2 stories or 27 feet and a maximum building height of 4 stories or 48 feet is required.

Other Requirements

All dwelling units must be located above the ground floor with a separate entrance. Parking requirements include 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit. 10% of the housing units must be affordable.

Downtown Norwood

Norwood, MA

The zoning for Downtown Norwood is the “Central Business” (CB) district. The underlying CB zoning is combined with a mixed use overlay district (MUOD).

Use Regulations

Multifamily dwellings are allowed by special permit granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Dimensional Requirements

The zoning requires commercial uses in the building frontage. The setbacks include built-to zones for the front setbacks. A minimum building height of 2 stories and a maximum building height of 4 stories or 45 feet is allowed. A building step back is required at the 4 story height.

Other Requirements

All dwelling units must be located above the ground floor with a separate entrance. Parking requirements include 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit. 15% of the housing units must be affordable.

Dedham Square

Dedham, MA

The zoning in Dedham Square is the “Central Business” (CB) district. It is an underlying nonresidential zoning district with a mixed use development special residential regulation that applies to the downtown.

Use Regulations

Mixed use developments are allowed by special permit granted by the Planning Board. The use regulations prohibit uses not complementary to a downtown including salesrooms for automobiles, automotive sales, trade shops, commercial boat rentals, kennels, and auto body and paint shops.

Dimensional Requirements

The only setback requirement is a minimum front yard setback of 2 feet. The maximum lot coverage is 80%. The district uses Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to set a maximum density of an FAR of 2.4. The building height is a maximum of 45 feet, measured from the average finished grade to the high point of the roof or eave of a sloping roof.

Other Requirements

All dwelling units must be located above the ground floor with a separate entrance. Parking requirements include 1 parking space per dwelling unit and additional parking for nonresidential uses.

DRAFT FOR REVIEW



OVERVIEW

Community engagement for this planning process to determine zoning recommendations for Downtown Canton featured four principal approaches to gathering input and feedback as recommendations were developed. These four principal approaches of community engagement included:

1. Two community forums focused on Downtown Canton;
2. Two online surveys that followed each forum for those unable to attend in person;
3. Interviews with a variety of Downtown stakeholders;
4. Discussion of the process and progress at a series of regularly held Planning Board meetings.

Together these four approaches to community engagement resulted in about 140 participants engaging with this process to help define and refine the recommendations for Downtown Canton's zoning. This chapter reviews the feedback that was received throughout this process.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The Canton community was invited to participate in two Community Meetings that were held in Downtown. The first community was hosted by the Canton Public Library in the Community Room. The Community Meeting was held on November 29th, 2022 at 6:30 pm and recorded by Canton Community Television. The recording was available on Canton Community Television following the meeting.

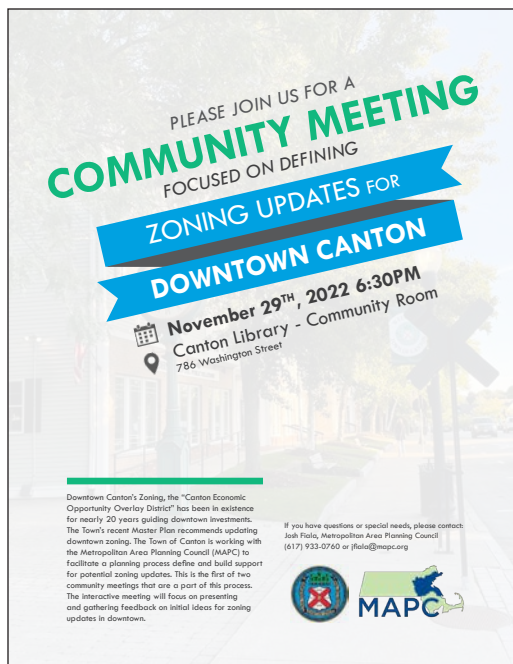
The first community meeting provided a welcome and introduction to the study, a presentation of the Downtown Canton analysis presented in

the previous chapter of this report, exploration of potential zoning changes to gather initial feedback, exploration of potential design guideline changes to gather initial feedback, and suggested examples of successful downtown zoning to gather feedback. The community meeting closed with an open opportunity for questions or comments. The first community meeting opened the first community survey which is discussed in the next section. The results of the feedback received are outlined later in this chapter.

The second community meeting was hosted at Canton Town Hall in the Salah Meeting Room.

The Community Meeting was held on March 16th, 2023 at 6:30 pm and was recorded by Canton Community Television. The recording was available on Canton Community Television following the meeting.

The second community meeting provided a welcome and introduction to the study, a summary of the current characteristics of Downtown Canton, presentation of the feedback received from the community to guide the zoning recommendations, presentation of the initial recommendations to gather additional feedback, and an open opportunity for questions or comments. The second community meeting opened the second community survey which is discussed in the next section. The results of the feedback received are outlined in the next chapter.



ONLINE SURVEYS

The engagement activities and polling questions that were part of each community meeting were provided for those who could not attend the meetings as an online community survey. The survey links were promoted in the meeting, meeting recordings, and on the Town's website. The first community survey opened on November 29th, 2022 at the Community Meeting and closed on January 16th, 2023. The survey was open for about one and a half months.

The second community survey opened on March 16th, 2023 at the second Community Meeting and closed on April 26th, 2023. The survey was open for over a month. Both surveys helped to expand the number of participants who provided feedback on the zoning recommendations for Downtown Canton.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

A series of stakeholder interviews were undertaken to expand the type of stakeholders engaged in the process and to gather additional input to guide the recommendations. The stakeholder interviews included Downtown property owners, Downtown business owners, and Town of Canton leadership. Interviews were performed via Zoom and phone.

PLANNING BOARD MEETINGS

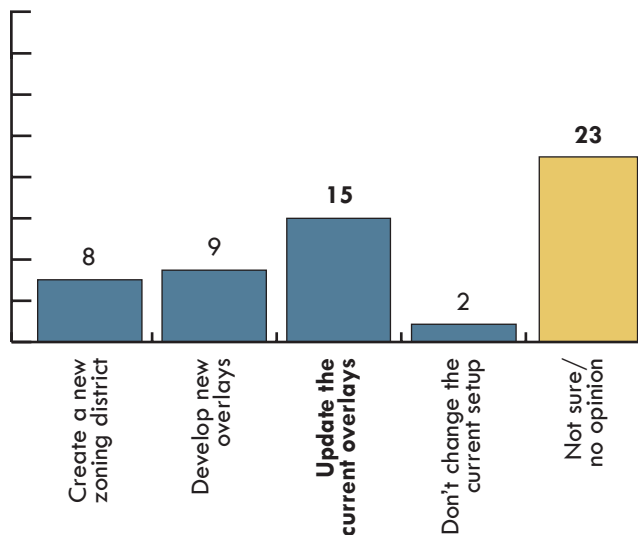
This zoning study and Master Plan implementation effort has been led by the Planning Board. In addition to the Community Meetings, the study was discussed at regular Planning Board meetings on September 21st, 2022 and February 1st, 2023. The progress of the study as well as preparation for community meetings were discussed.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The process described provided the foundation for the zoning recommendations in this report. The following results are compiled from the first community meeting and online survey. The feedback from the community guided the direction of the initial recommendations. The initial recommendations were then presented at the second community meeting. The feedback from the second community meeting and online survey is summarized in the next chapter alongside the zoning recommendations.

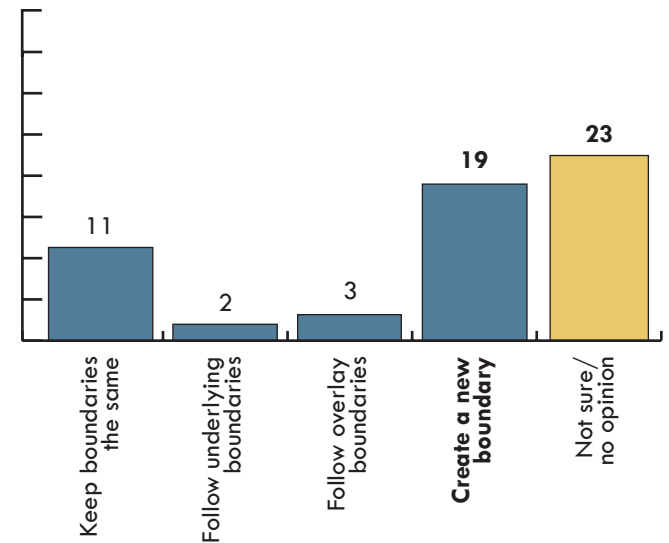
Feedback about potential zoning changes.

What option seems most appropriate for the type of zoning district?



The responses to the type of zoning district that was most appropriate show a preference for continuing to use the overlay structure that already exists for Downtown Canton. This approach does have advantages in that it would be familiar to developers who have done work in Downtown and familiar to those who administer the Town's zoning and review processes. This approach would also allow a more seamless integration of new recommendations into the structure of the existing Zoning By-Law.

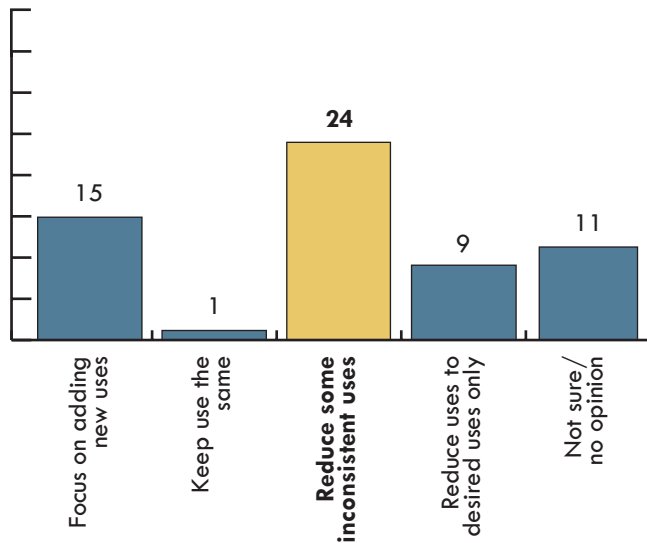
What option seems most appropriate for the boundary of zoning changes?



The responses for the most appropriate approach to the zoning boundary show a preference for creating a new zoning boundary. The existing

zoning boundary does create some issues and this approach would create an opportunity to resolve those issues. The current zoning boundary does not follow property lines and therefore divides some property's into portions that are inside or outside of the overlay district. The creation of a new zoning boundary would allow it to follow current property lines which would help to clarify the zoning intent and simplify whether a property is inside or outside the Downtown district.

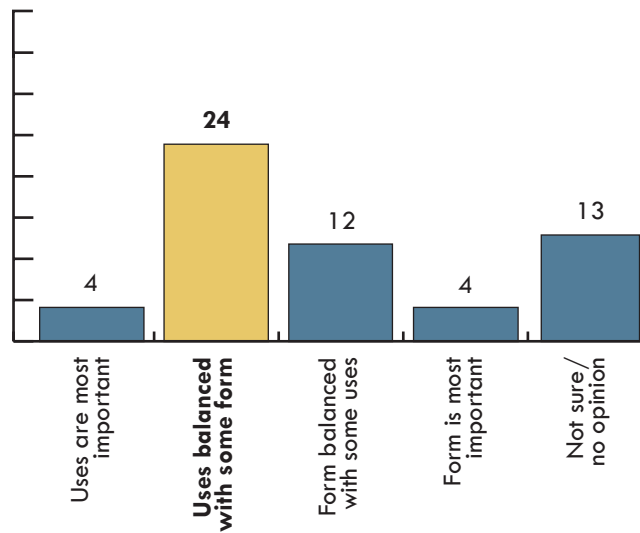
What option seems most appropriate for use regulations?



This question about the use regulations is asking for input on the magnitude of change desired compared to the uses that are currently allowed or prohibited in Downtown Canton. The responses

show a preference to modify the current uses in such a way as to reduce what may be allowed today to make it more consistent with the context of the Downtown.

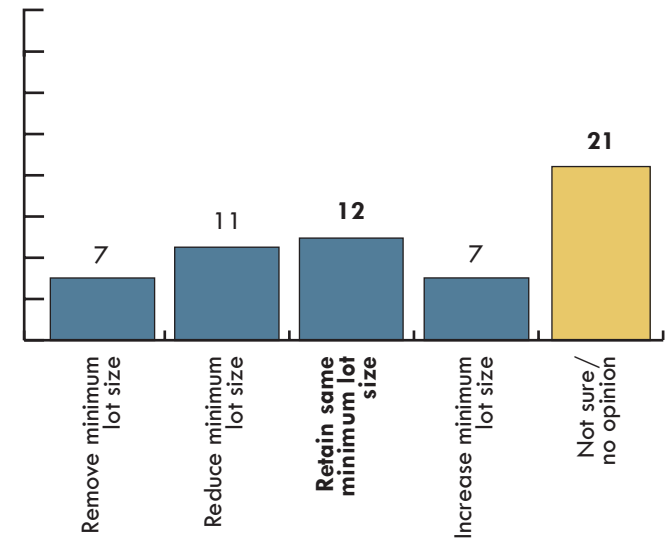
What option seems most appropriate for emphasizing form in the regulations?



This question inquires about the preferences for balancing use regulations with guidance on the form of development. The preference stops short of indicating form is the most important which would suggest introducing form-based zoning into the recommendations. Instead a preference for uses balanced with some guidance on form was clear. This would indicate that a model similar to what exists would be preferred where design standards and guidelines are used to complement

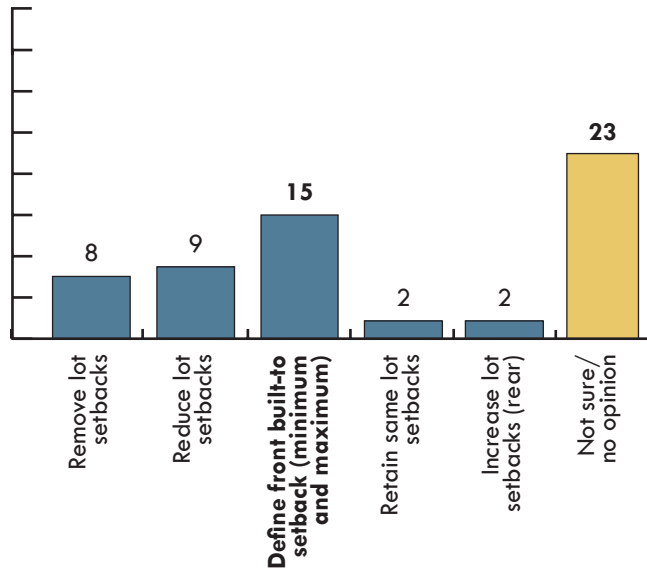
the Zoning By-Law for the downtown district. The regulation of uses remains more important than guidance on the design of the buildings, site, and development patterns.

What option seems most appropriate for minimum lot size?



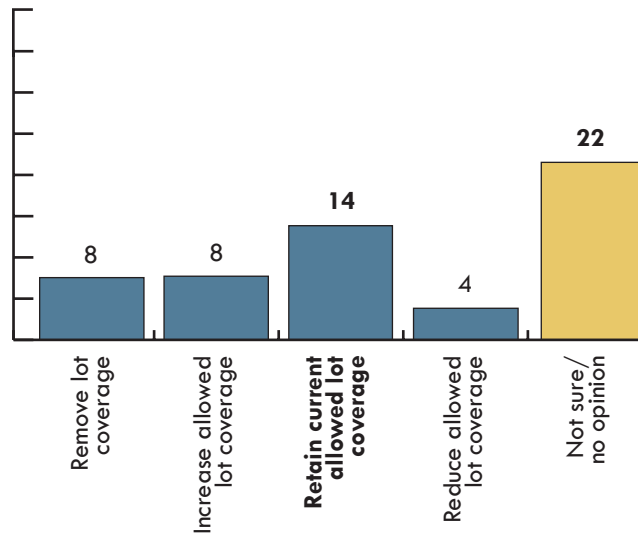
Exploring the preferences for minimum lot size shows a comfort level with maintaining the current minimum lot size in the district. A slight preference for reducing the minimum lot size is also apparent in the responses. The current overlay zoning has a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. No minimum lot size exists in the underlying Business (B) district. A minimum lot size of 1.5 acres exists in the underlying Industrial (I) district.

What option seems most appropriate for lot setbacks?



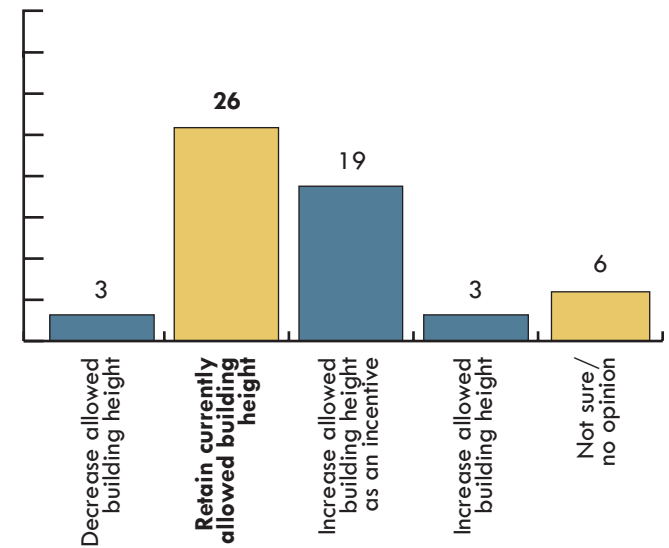
The current setbacks are one area where the current Zoning By-Law could be simplified for the downtown. The setback requirements vary for each underlying and overlay district. For example in the underlying Business (B) district the front yard setback is 25 feet, the rear yard setback is 6 feet, and the side yard setback is 6 feet. While in the overlay district the front yard setback is 15 feet, rear yard setback is 25 feet, and the side yard setback does not apply. The responses show a preference for defining a maximum and a minimum front setback which would help to strengthen the downtown environment with buildings located consistently on properties.

What option seems most appropriate for lot coverage regulations?



The preference for adjustments to lot coverage or similar to those for minimum lot size to retain the current allowed lot coverage. Some preference is shown for increasing the currently allowed lot coverage or removing the maximum requirement completely. Either of these options would increase the amount of density allowed downtown. Typically the allowed lot coverage is not the active variable that determines maximum density. A combination of the building setbacks and parking requirements are more likely to determine the size of a building footprint on the property.

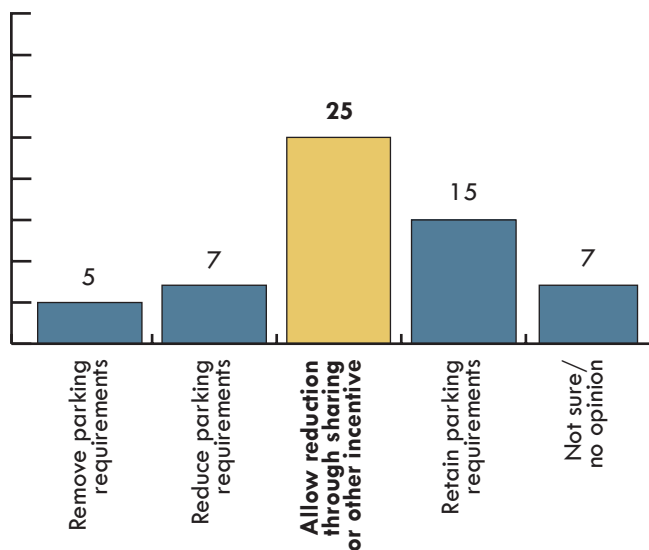
What options seem most appropriate for building height regulations?



The allowed building height is another area where the current Zoning By-Law could be simplified for the downtown. The height regulations vary by underlying zoning district and by the overlay district's sub-districts. In Section A of the overlay the maximum building height is 40 feet or 3-stories. In Section B of the overlay the maximum height is 36 feet or 3-stories. A preference was expressed to retain the currently allowed building height. The allowed height should be made consistent across the downtown and should be expressed as a number of stories to give flexibility in the design of buildings, floor-to-floor heights, and roof forms. A preference is

also evident to explore an increase in the allowed building height as an incentive to achieve other goals for the downtown. One such approach would be to allow an additional story of development if the development was mixed-use with a non-residential ground floor.

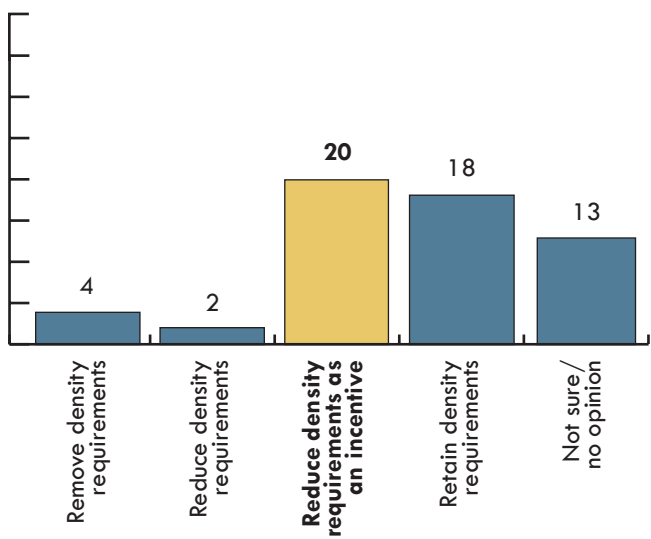
What option seems most appropriate for parking requirement regulations?



Similar to building height, for the parking requirements a preference was shown to allow a reduction in required parking through shared parking regulations or as an incentive to achieve desired development outcomes for downtown. High parking requirements are difficult for a downtown in particular due to its dependence

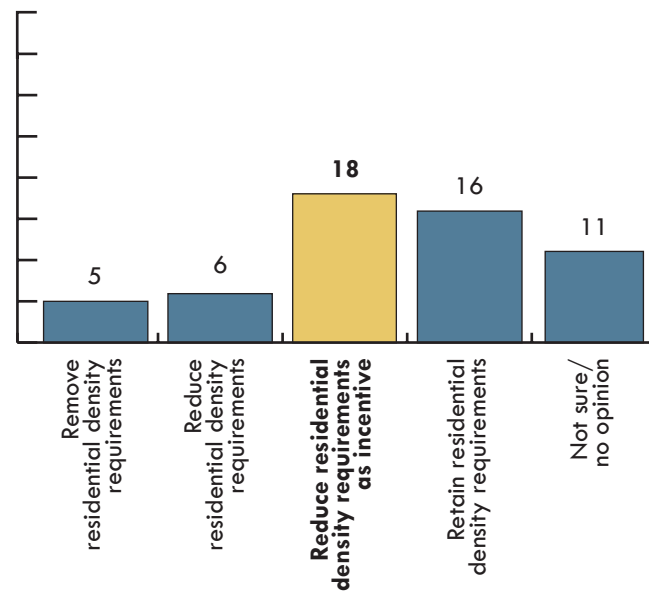
on walkability. Surface parking lots disrupt the continuity of a downtown district and negatively impact the sense of place.

What option seems most appropriate for density regulations?



Limitations on the achievable density impact the financial feasibility for downtown redevelopment. The current overlay district has a density requirement that limits buildings so that they may not cover more than 50% of the buildable lot area. The survey responses show a preference for reducing the density requirements as an incentive to achieve desired development outcomes for downtown.

What options seems most appropriate for residential density regulations?



In the current zoning overlay, additional density limitations are established for residential development. These limitations require 10,000 square feet of lot area for the first dwelling unit and 2,000 square feet of lot area for each additional dwelling unit. The survey responses show a preference for reducing the residential density requirements as an incentive to achieve desired development outcomes for downtown.

In addition to these specific questions about potential zoning recommendations, an open-ended question was asked about any other topics

participants thought should be addressed with the potential zoning changes.

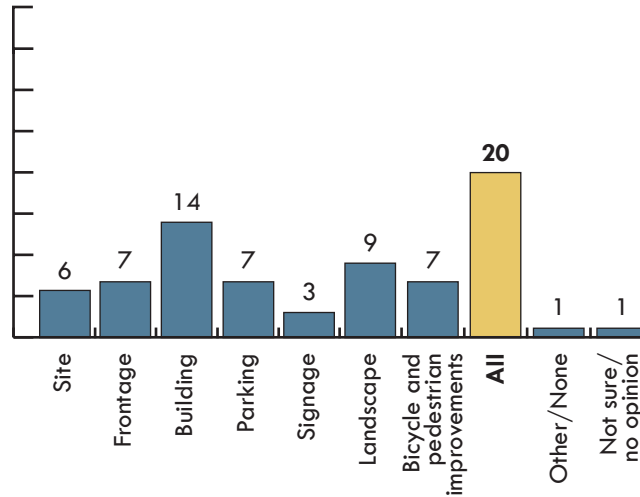
Do you have other comments about potential zoning changes?

- Outdoor dining (7%)
- Green space/open space (7%)
- Traffic calming/safety/speed (7%)
- Pedestrian safety (7%)
- Mixed-use (7%)
- Community space (5%)
- Bike lanes/bicycle safety (5%)
- Dining/restaurants (5%)

The responses show that providing additional guidance for outdoor dining should be a part of the zoning for future restaurants in the downtown. They also show a desire to include requirements for green space or open space to add to the small plazas and parks that are a part of downtown today. Other responses expressed a desire to address traffic calming and pedestrian safety through the zoning requirements. The preference for mixed-use development was also reiterated in these responses. A desire to include requirements or incentives for community space, bicycle amenities, and restaurants were also included in these open-ended preference responses.

Feedback about potential design guidance.

What seems most appropriate for the content of design guidance?

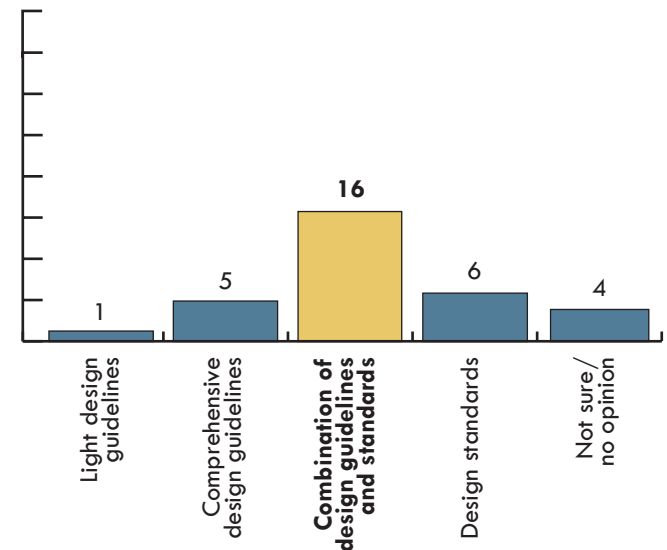


Participants were asked about their preferences for what topics should be covered by design guidance for the downtown district. The preference was for the design guidance to address all topics in the district. The individual topics that received the most response were the building and landscape.

Currently the overlay zone for downtown has a special permit criteria regarding the impact on the visual character of the neighborhood. A set of design guidelines were previously established for Downtown Canton in 2003, but have not been actively used in recent years. The previous set of

design guidelines covered topics that included: overall building guidelines; materials and color; facades, windows and doorways; storefronts; residential-character buildings; awnings; signs; utility structures; summary for new construction; landscaping and open space; handicapped access; parking areas; and automobile services.

What seems most appropriate for the type of design guidance?

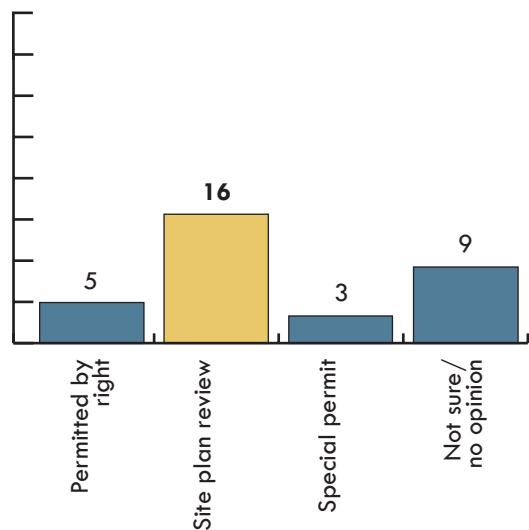


This question is exploring the preference for how definitive the design guidance should be. The more detailed the requirements for development outcomes the more likely they are to match the community’s vision. However, trade-offs exist between being overly prescriptive and flexible. Both types of design guidance are useful. Design

standards are mandatory and are useful for those characteristics which should occur under any circumstance. Design guidelines are not mandatory and can provide suggestions for desired outcomes while retaining flexibility to resolve the design based on the context and situation. Both types of design guidance are valuable and both can be integrated into a zoning district.

The preference expressed in the responses was to employ a combination of design standards and design guidelines.

What seems most appropriate for the type of approval required?



Similar to the considerations related to mandatory design standards and advisory design guidelines

a range of potential types of project approvals are also available for consideration. At one end of the range is permitted by right. In this type of approval if the standards and requirements set by zoning are met by a proposed project, then the project is approved only with an administrative review. This type of approval can be associated with a design review process, but the ultimate approval of the proposed project is not subject to other considerations.

Under site plan review, the approval process includes the practice of reviewing plans showing site conditions and proposed developments. The reviewing authorities are able to request reasonable conditions in regard to aesthetic and environmental impacts of the proposal as part of the process of approval. Site plan review is the regulation of a use rather than its prohibition considering public protection through reasonable terms and conditions. Typically, site plan review is used to shape a project as proposed.

Under special permit wider discretion is given to the reviewing authorities in deciding whether to approve or not approve a proposed development. If conditions expressed through the process of review are not addressed in a manner satisfactorily to the reviewing authority, then the reviewing authority can choose to not approve the proposed project. While special permit does give the Town more control over what could occur

in a particular zoning district, it does also reduce the predictability as to whether a proposed development will be ultimately approved. This lack of predictability is an impediment to development and adds upfront costs to the development process.

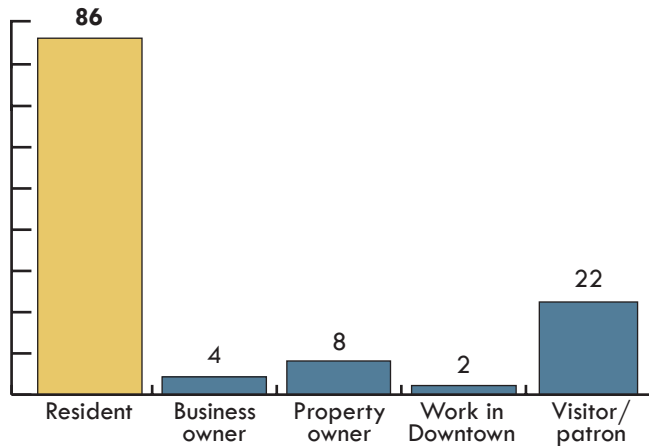
Of these options, a preference was expressed in the responses to retain some of the control that comes with a site plan review process, but to give more assurance that a project would be approved than under a special permit approval. This type of approach to the approval process would pair well with the development of design standards and guidelines for the district.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this planning process were voluntarily asked for information about themselves to better understand who was engaged in this process. During each meeting and survey during this process a brief participant survey was offered. The graphs below show the compiled results for the participant surveys and describe the characteristics of the participants that were involved in this process.

The first question asked of participants was:

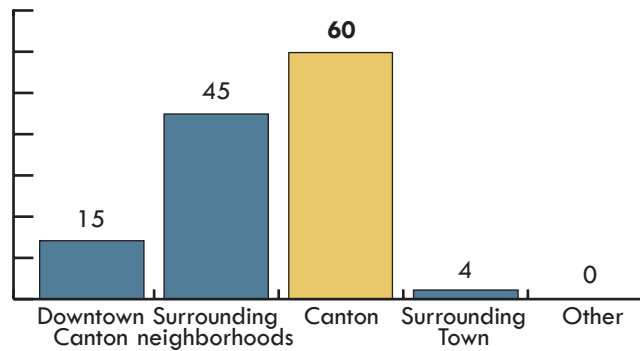
What is your primary relationship to Downtown Canton?



Most respondents self identify as a resident. Several other types of Downtown stakeholders did engage with the process and provided feedback including business owners, property owners, and employees and patrons of the district.

The second question asked participants:

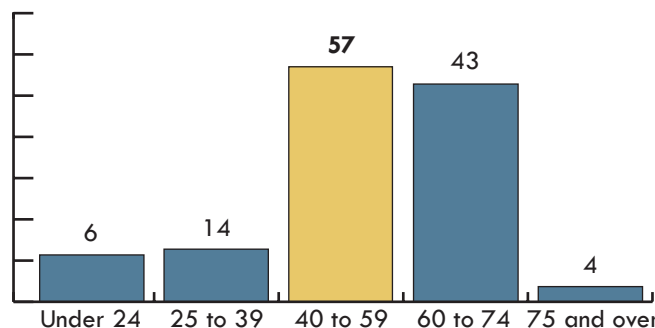
Where do you live?



This is a very helpful detail since most participants identified as residents. The residents are predominantly from the Town of Canton. A good portion of the residents live closer to the Downtown and self identify as living in a surrounding neighborhood and a small group are residents who live in Downtown.

The third question asked participants:

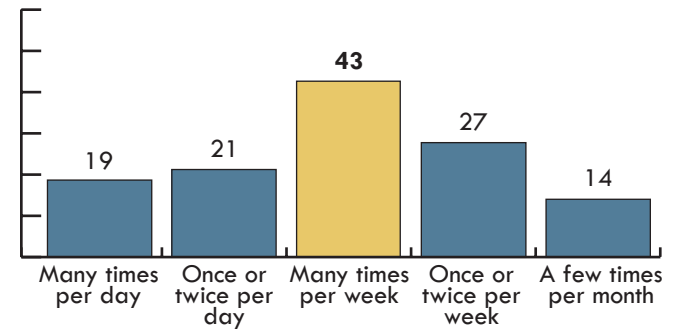
What is your age?



All age ranges were represented with the middle age range (40 to 59) representing the largest share of responses, followed by the next older age range (60 to 74).

The final question asked participants:

How often do you visit Downtown Canton?



Participants are very familiar with Downtown Canton. The most frequent response was visiting Downtown many times per week. Most participants are visiting at least once or twice per week and a good portion visit as frequently as many times per day.

DRAFT FOR REVIEW



DOWNTOWN CANTON RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations for Downtown Canton's zoning and design standards and guidelines are based on the foundation of data, analysis, and community feedback that has been summarized in the preceding chapters. The specific recommendations are defined in this chapter for zoning changes for Downtown Canton properties. The recommendations also define design standards and guidelines that complement the zoning changes and guide development toward the vision for Downtown Canton.

Downtown Canton Vision Statement

Downtown Canton will have a strong sense of place. It will be walkable, vibrant with activity, have a broad range of uses, and connect to nearby destinations. Strengthen convenient and safe access to Downtown including parking.

PRINCIPLES SUPPORTING THE VISION

The vision statement is supported by a series of principles. These principles provide greater detail for how the vision will be achieved in the future.

Downtown Canton will have a strong sense of place. The Downtown should take advantage of its location, unique assets, and history to position itself as a distinct destination within the subregion. Future development and public realm improvements should create a cohesive look and feel based on traditional New England downtown principles.

Downtown Canton will be walkable. Walking throughout Downtown should be a safe, pleasant experience for all pedestrians. Sidewalks and crosswalks should be present and well-maintained throughout the area. Walkability goes beyond simply being safe for pedestrians. Walkable areas are places that people want to walk around and are comfortable doing so. Widened sidewalks, more shade trees, trash receptacles, benches, and other amenities, combined with best-in-practice site planning guidelines, help to achieve a truly walkable district that attract people.

Downtown Canton will have a broad range of uses. Downtown should be a true mixed-use district. This means ensuring a balance among

residential, office, retail, and other commercials uses. Downtown Canton has a particular need to focus on uses that will create an active, attractive, and dynamic ground floor. This may include local shops, restaurants, cafes, and some types of office uses, located in buildings where the building meets the sidewalk and parking is located in the rear. These uses elevate Downtown as a destination and help to create a vibrant, pedestrian oriented neighborhood. While it is not realistic to expect enough market demand for the entire district to follow this pattern, a critical mass of these types of uses is needed.

Downtown Canton will connect to nearby destinations. Walking throughout Downtown should be a safe, pleasant experience including convenient connections to surrounding destinations. For Downtown this means connecting to the parks, restaurant, and housing at the Paul Revere Heritage Site, Forge Pond, Canton High School, and surrounding neighborhoods. Improving walkability to surrounding destinations and neighborhoods will improve the vitality of the Downtown and reduce parking demand.

Strengthen convenient and safe access to Downtown including parking. Many visitors to Downtown will continue to arrive by car. The

process of getting to Downtown by any means of travel should be safe and convenient. The parking supply in Downtown should continue to be improved to make it more clear and convenient including defining short and long term parking areas, and patron and employee parking areas. Visitors should be encouraged to park once and visit multiple Downtown destinations. Improved walkability and wayfinding will help to achieve these outcomes while maximizing the efficient use of Downtown parking.

VISUAL IMAGES

The images on the following page help communicate the vision in ways that supplement the vision statement and principles. The project images that follow are a mix of some of the existing context that people like about Downtown Canton and some nearby examples that may be a good fit for the sense of place that is desired for Downtown. The current zoning has visual character listed under special permit criteria, but nothing more specific is required for the type of design features that could be suggested or required. Design guidance will help to define the important features of a new project so that it contributes to the desired vision for downtown and fits with the existing context.



Figure 19. Examples of the types of building and landscape character desired for Downtown Canton

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

The approach outlined in the Master Plan goals for updating Downtown Canton’s zoning are a great starting point. One of the primary goals is to clarify the current zoning. A part of the improved clarity will come from simplifying the districts that apply to Downtown. For Downtown properties the current zoning includes four underlying zoning districts – Business, General Residence, Single Residence C, and Industrial. It also includes one overlay zoning district, the Canton Center Economic Opportunity Overlay District, with two Sub-districts A and B.

Zoning Type and District

The configuration of the current zoning requires reviewing existing districts across a few sections of the Zoning Bylaw. It can be difficult to definitively determine specific requirements or regulations that apply to a particular property. It can also be difficult to interpret and administer the zoning requirements. Unintended consequences can arise from the variety of zoning options available in Downtown Canton today.

In terms of how the zoning districts are organized for Downtown Canton, the number and type of districts could be simplified. The type of zoning district is an important foundational aspect of the zoning recommendations. This simplification could be done in several ways and the community

expressed a preference for working with the existing overlay districts and clarifying the applicability of the district.

Based on the community feedback, scope of the zoning recommendations, and continuity with current zoning administration practices, the recommended approach is to modify the existing overlay district focused on Downtown Canton. Additionally, the underlying zone for properties in the Downtown could be changed to Business only.

Section 9.8 of the Canton Zoning Bylaw defines the Canton Center Economic Opportunity Overlay District. Under this approach, this section would be the focus of the zoning language changes. The recommended approach is to use this section and edit its current language to create an updated overlay district for Downtown Canton that clarifies requirements and makes them consistent with the current vision for Downtown.

Zoning Boundary

Another aspect of bringing clarity to the current zoning for Downtown Canton is the boundary of the zones. The Canton Center Economic Overlay District boundary does not align with the boundaries of the underlying zoning districts nor does it align with the parcel boundaries of the downtown properties.

The recommendation is to redraw the overlay district as part of the zoning changes. The purposes of the redrawn boundary would be two-fold. The first purpose would be to clarify

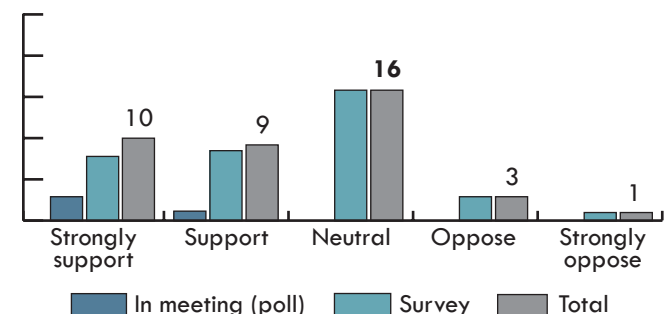
the zoning districts applicability by aligning the district’s boundaries with current property lines. The second purpose would be to narrow the focus of the overlay district to concentrate on Washington Street and properties with frontage on it.

The following is a summary of the recommended approach:

- Combine two overlay sub-districts into one overlay district
- Focus on the Washington Street frontage
- Follow property lines incorporating all parcels partially in the underlying Business district
- Reduce the parcels in the underlying General Residence district
- Change the underlying zoning of any property within the new overlay to Business

The diagrams on the following pages show the current zoning boundaries and property lines and the proposed zoning boundaries.

Participants in the second community meeting and survey were asked: **What is your reaction to this approach to the type of zoning and zoning boundary?**



DOWNTOWN CANTON ZONING - CURRENT UNDERLYING ZONING DISTRICTS AND OVERLAY BOUNDARY

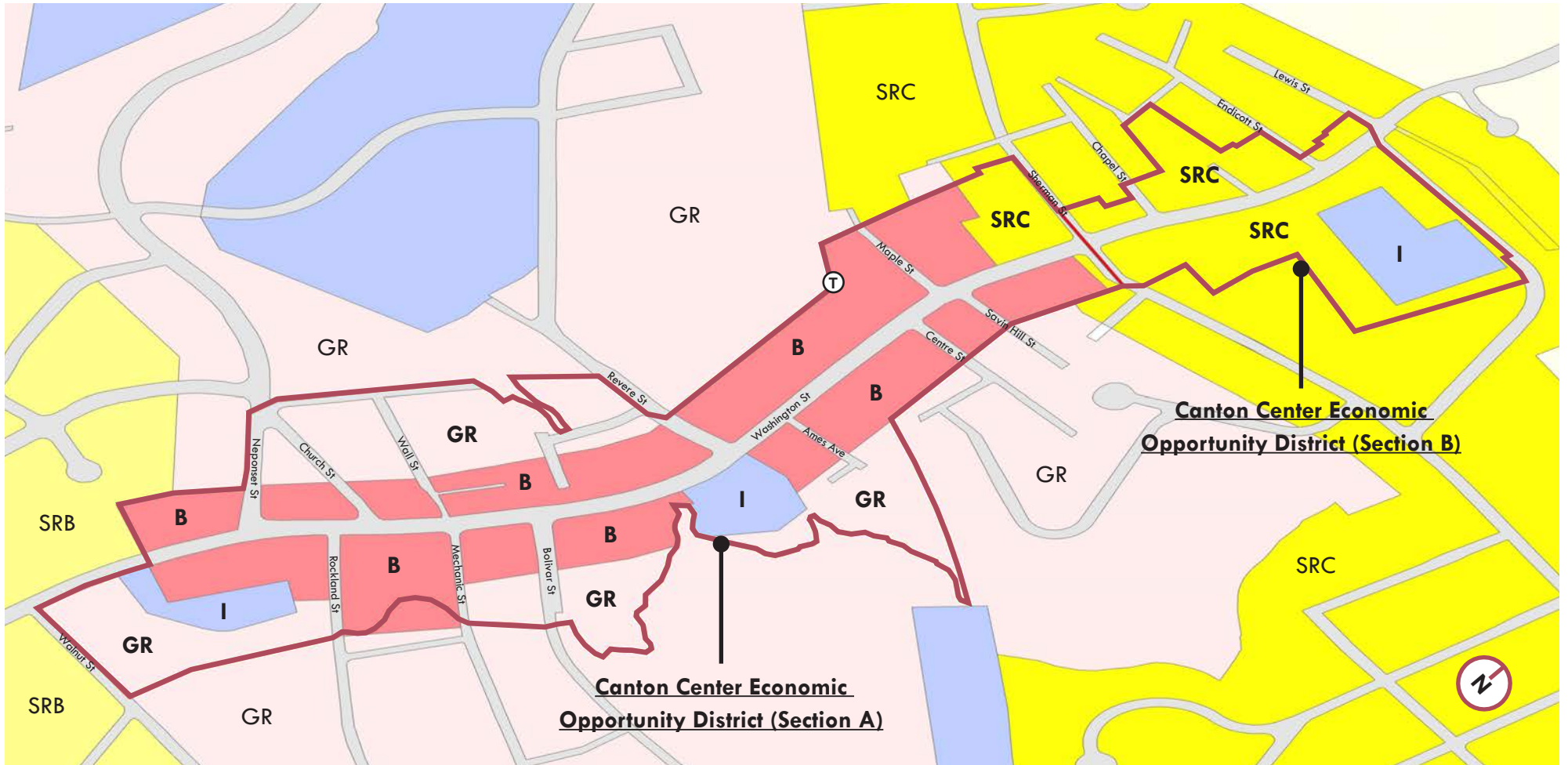


Figure 20. Current Canton Center Economic Opportunity District and underlying zoning district boundaries

Legend

Current Underlying Zoning Districts

- Business (B)
- Industrial (I)
- General Residence (GR)
- Single Residence B (SRB)
- Single Residence C (SRC)

Overlay Zoning Districts

- Current Overlay Boundary

DOWNTOWN CANTON ZONING - PROPOSED UNDERLYING ZONING DISTRICTS AND OVERLAY BOUNDARY

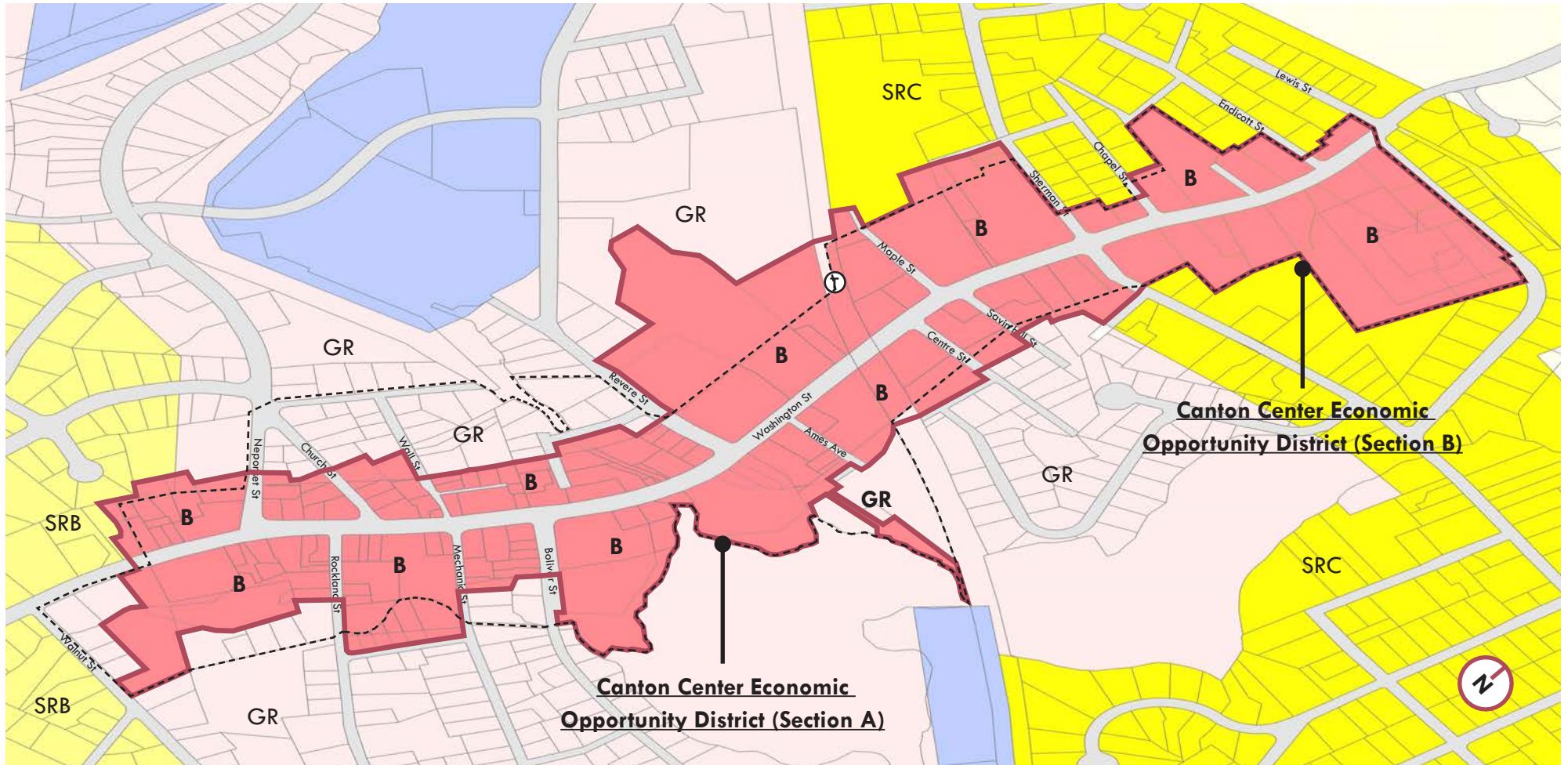


Figure 21. Proposed Downtown Canton Overlay (DCO) district boundary

Legend

Current Underlying Zoning Districts

- Business (B)
- Industrial (I)
- General Residence (GR)
- Single Residence B (SRB)
- Single Residence C (SRC)

Overlay Zoning Districts

- Current Overlay Boundary
- Proposed Overlay Boundary

Use Regulations

Zoning defines the uses that are allowed on a property. In Downtown, it is desired to have a mix of uses. Most typically this includes residential uses above a non-residential ground floor. Generally speaking, unless there is a specific reason to exclude a specific use, it is best practice to allow a high degree of flexibility with a wide range of non-residential uses including various retail, service, and office uses. One potential area of confusion and unintended consequences is that each zoning district has a different set of uses that are permitted by right, permitted by special permit, or not permitted.

The following list organizes uses that should not be allowed, allowed by special permit, or allowed by right in the Downtown. The recommendation is to use the updated Downtown Overlay Zoning District to modify the use regulations by focusing uses to be consistent with those beneficial to Downtown adding vitality and reasons to visit.

Reduce currently allowed uses that are inconsistent with Downtown (change to prohibited or special permit) including:

- Single family dwelling;
- Two-family dwelling;
- Assisted living facility;
- Boarding or lodging house;
- Multi-family dwelling (special permit);

- Philanthropic, educational;
- Commercial agriculture;
- Orchard, market garden, nursery;
- Farm stand, exempt;
- Kennel or veterinary facility;
- Funeral parlor or undertaking; educational use, nonexempt (special permit);
- Parking area with no fee (special permit);
- Showroom for building supplies; salesroom for boats, trailers; (special permit)
- Wholesale office or showroom;
- Salesroom for motor vehicles;
- Motor vehicle repair garage;
- Accessory apartment, drive-in or drive through facilities
- Automobile parking lot (special permit)

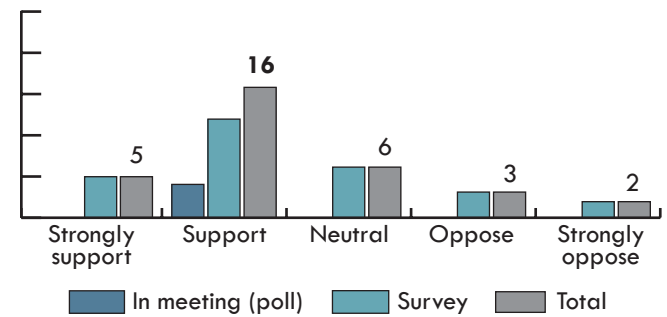
Increase allowed uses that are consistent with Downtown (change to special permit or allowed) including:

- Cultural use
- Parkland open space or recreational uses;
- Limited industrial recreational use;
- Restaurant or similar place for food (allowed by-right)
- Hotel or motel (allowed by-right)
- Scientific or research laboratory

Introduce new allowed uses that are consistent with Downtown (introduce as special permit or allowed) including:

- Microbrewery
- Mixed use (allowed by right)
- Places of assembly (special permit)
- Conference centers (special permit)
- Research and development
- Co-working space
- Artist studio
- Live/work space
- Maker space

Participants in the second community meeting and survey were asked: **What is your reaction to this approach to zoning uses?**



Dimensional Regulations

Dimensional regulations determine the scale and configuration of the uses allowed on a property. Under the current zoning configuration, several sets of dimensional regulations are present.

The following table shows the current dimensional regulations. The district requires a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. The underlying

business district has no minimum lot size required, whereas the industrial district has a minimum of 1.5 acres. Over 100 properties, or 55% are below the minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. Maximum building height is 40 feet or 3 stories. The maximum height in the Industrial District is up to 52 feet with a number of restrictions.

The final zoning characteristic is density. In the Canton Center overlay, buildings may not cover more than 50% of the buildable lot area. In addition, dwelling units have minimum lot area requirements. Increased density is often an important aspect of financial feasibility for redevelopment. All dimensional regulations have an impact on the achievable density.

The recommendation is to use the updated Downtown Overlay Zoning District to modify the dimensional regulations to strengthen the likelihood of redevelopment in the Downtown. This would be achieved through a few modifications including building height, development density, and parking requirements primarily.

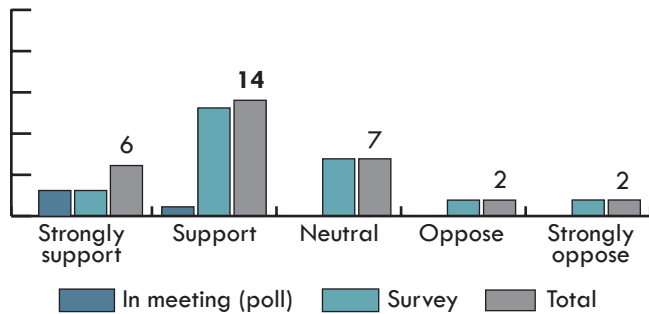
In summary, the dimensional regulation recommendations are to:

- Define a minimum front setback that is closer to the street and a maximum front setback to consistently align a building at the lot frontage
- Reduce minimum rear setbacks to increase flexibility of the site layout

Characteristic	Current Underlying Zoning					Current Overlay Zoning	Proposed Overlay Zoning
	B	GR	I	SRA	SRC	CCEOD (A/B)	
Minimum Lot Size (sq. ft.)	-	10,000	-	30,000	10,000	10,000 (buildable area)	10,000
Min. Non-wetland Area (sq. ft.)	-	7,500	-	20,000	7,500	-	-
Lot Width (principal dwelling)	-	100	-	150	100	100 (B)	-
Frontage and Lot Width (ft.)	-	100	100	100	100	75 (B)	-
Lot Coverage (%) (building)	90	30	50	25	25	50 (A), 30 (B)	50
Front Yard Setbacks	25	30	60	40	30	15 (A), 30 (B)	5 min/15 max
Rear Yard Setbacks	6	35	10	35	35	25 (A), 35 (B)	15
Side Yard Setbacks	6	10	20	20	15	N/A (A), 10 (B)	N/A
Accessory Rear Yard Setbacks	3	3	3	6	3	-	-
Accessory Side Yard Setbacks	3	3	3	6	3	-	-
Max. Height of Buildings (ft./story)	40	25	52/4	25	25	40/3 (A), 36 (B)	40/3; bonus 52/4
Density	-	-	-	-	-	10k for first dwelling, 2/4k each added; 3k/2k/10,000 GSF	No density requirement

- Retain the same base building height as exists
- Provide an incentive for increased building height for mixed-use development with non-residential ground floor
- Remove the density limitations to increase flexibility and financial feasibility

Participants in the second community meeting and survey were asked: **What is your reaction to this approach to dimensional regulations?**



Parking Requirements

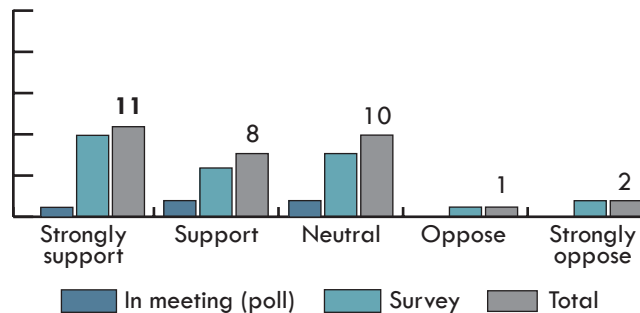
The parking requirements define the amount of parking that is required as a minimum with each use that is part of a proposed development project. Parking requirements have a major impact on the feasibility of a development project. Parking requires space on the property and it can be difficult to physically fit the required amount of parking on a property with the proposed building. Building parking is a

construction cost that may not provide a return on investment in the same way as building space. Requiring less parking in downtown settings has been a best practice and is consistent with the vision for Downtown Canton.

In summary the parking requirement recommendations are to:

- Reduce minimum parking requirements
- Allow shared parking reductions for uses which would have peak parking demand different days of the week or different times of the day
- Allow shared parking across properties in the district to optimize the use of all parking spaces
- Promote a model shared parking agreement to address liability or other concerns

Participants in the second community meeting and survey were asked: **What is your reaction to this approach to parking regulations?**



Principal Use	Current Underlying Zoning	Current Overlay Zoning	Proposed Overlay Zoning
	B, GR, I, SRA, SRC	CCEOD (A/B)	
Detached dwelling unit	2 per unit	1 per bedroom	1 per unit
Multifamily dwelling unit	2 per unit	1 per bedroom	1 per unit
Assisted living facilities	0.5/1,000 GSF + employees	-	-
Boarding/lodging, hotels, motels	1 per room, or 1 per 2 beds	-	-
In-patient medical facilities	2.5/1,000 GSF	-	-
Places of public assembly	4.0/1,000 GSF	-	-
Recreational uses	1 per 2 seats	-	-
Retail stores and offices	1 per 250 GSF	1 per 250 GSF	1 per 500 GSF
Restaurants	Determined by BoA	1 per 6 seats	1 per 8 seats
All other business uses	Determined by BoA	-	-
Storage, distribution, manufacturing	1 per 250 GSF	-	-

Other Requirements

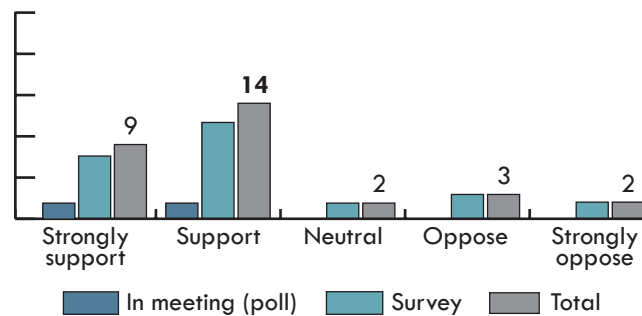
The analyses shared in this report highlight the need to focus on the Washington Street frontage, strengthen the consistency and continuity of the Downtown development, and improve the pedestrian environment.

At the time of the second community forum and survey, the Town of Canton was exploring potential approaches to compliance with the Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities (Section 3A of MGL c. 40A). The requirements include:

- At least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right
- Minimum gross density of 15 units per acre
- Located not more than 0.5 miles from commuter rail station
- No age restrictions and suitable for families with children
- Cannot require more than 10% of the units in a project to be affordable units
- Cannot require mixed use development

The Downtown district was being considered as part of Canton’s compliance along with the Canton Junction area. Since that time the Town’s approach to the Multi-Family Zoning Requirement evolved to not include the Downtown.

At the time, participants in the second community meeting and survey were asked: **What is your reaction to this approach to Section 3A?**



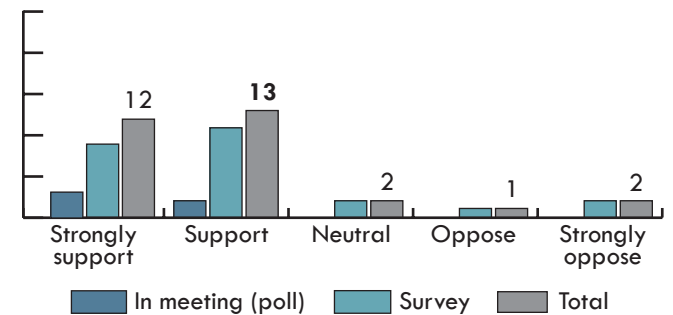
Another requirement for consideration in the Downtown zoning is affordable housing. In order for Canton to remain compliant with at least 10% of its housing stock comprised of affordable housing, affordability requirements should be a part of the updated zoning. In Downtown, whenever housing is part of a development, a portion of the housing should be deed-restricted affordable housing.

Consideration should be given to balance the needs to ensure the affordable housing requirement does not impact the economic feasibility of development, while also ensuring that it is a high enough percentage to be meaningful. In Downtown where the construction of a non-residential ground floor may also

impact economic feasibility, MAPC recommends requiring 10% of the total housing units must be deed-restricted affordable housing for any development of 8 or more units.

Overall Initial Recommendations

Participants in the second community meeting and survey were asked: **What is your overall reaction to the initial recommendations?**



EXAMPLE LOT DIAGRAM

A simple diagram is helpful in order to illustrate the existing zoning requirements. One example property at 569 Washington Street has been selected in downtown to illustrate the current zoning requirements. This property is used for illustrative purposes only and no diagram is an indication of future considerations for the property by the property owner or any other party.

The building was built in 1978, about 45 years ago. The existing building provides about 2,300 square feet of retail, a convenience store, with about 12 parking spaces on a lot that is about 8,000 square feet. This lot size is smaller than the minimum of 10,000 square feet. It would require a variance or need to be combined with another property to be redeveloped.

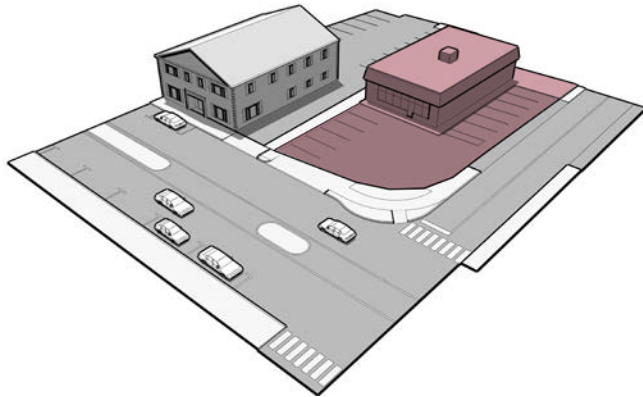


Figure 22. Example property at 569 Washington Street illustrating existing zoning characteristics

The setbacks required for how close a building can be placed to the lot lines vary for each underlying and overlay district. In a downtown district it is best practice to keep the front setbacks relatively consistent and to reduce the amount a building is pushed away from the street. Using the example property, the range of setbacks in the underlying and overlay districts are illustrated. For example, between 15 to 30 feet are required for the front setback. The allowed lot coverage varies between 30 to 50% of the lot. The diagram shows that it would be advantageous to reduce the front setback to allow a building that can be balanced with the required parking to the rear of the building.

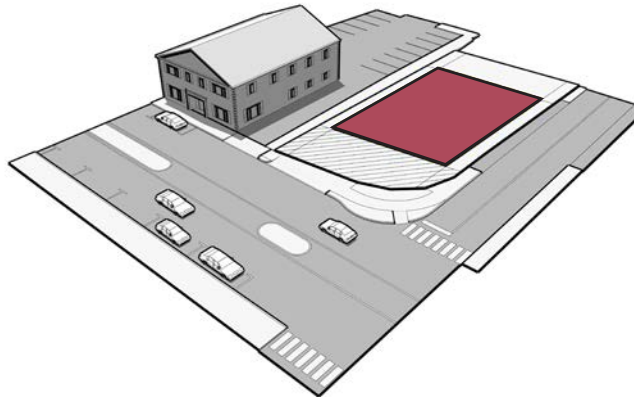


Figure 23. Example property at 569 Washington Street illustrating existing zoning setbacks with deep front setback between 15 and 30 feet

The next characteristic illustrated is building height. Currently, in the overlay district a maximum height of 40 feet or 3 stories in Subdistrict A or 36 feet or 3 stories in Subdistrict B is allowed. The example diagram shows the maximum building envelope that would be created by the maximum building height and required setbacks of the current zoning. The diagram shows that the current zoning requirements define the placement of the building in a way that does not strengthen the sense of place as a downtown environment.

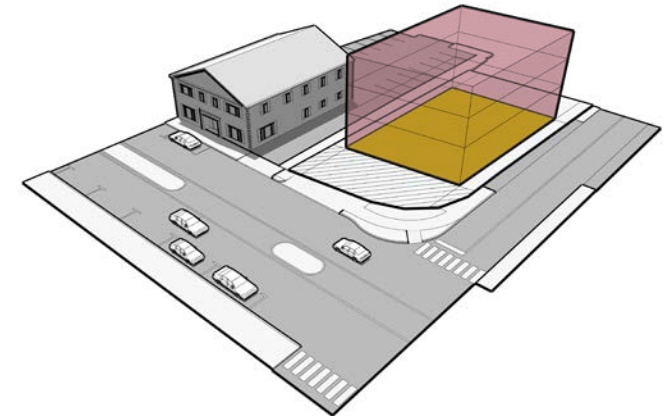


Figure 24. Example property at 569 Washington Street illustrating the maximum building envelope which is defined by the existing zoning setbacks and maximum building height

Using the example property and the maximum building envelope established in the previous diagram, the amount of parking can be calculated based on the area of the building. The building area allowed by current zoning based on applying required setbacks, lot coverage, and maximum height would require about 24 parking spaces under current parking requirements. That number of spaces wouldn't fit on the property with the building. This diagram shows the required number of parking spaces combined with the maximum building envelope. This simple diagram indicates that the parking requirements are impacting the feasibility of redevelopment and may be a deterrent to investment in the downtown.

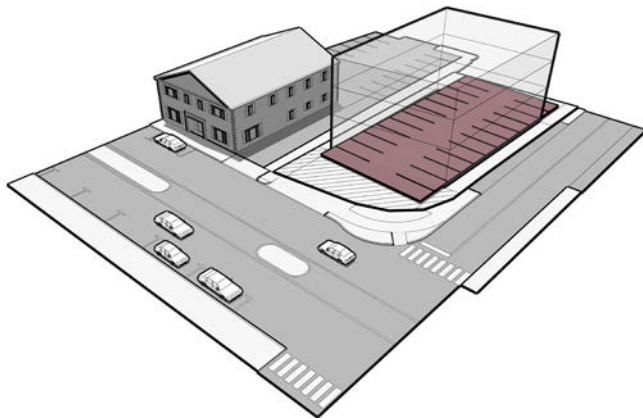


Figure 25. Example property at 569 Washington Street illustrating the parking required by current zoning to support the maximum building envelope

The following diagram uses the example property, but transitions from current zoning characteristics to recommended zoning characteristics. The front setback is adjusted to move buildings closer to the street requiring buildings between 5 and 15 feet from the front property line. The parking requirements are right-sized so that parking can be balanced on the property with the building.

In addition to the amount of parking, the location of the parking is also critically important. Parking in front of buildings is very disruptive to the sense of place and the pedestrian environment. Parking is located to the rear of the building. The building is aligned with the front of the property.

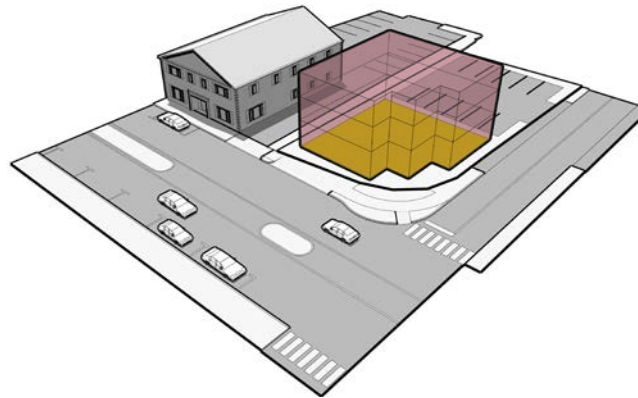


Figure 26. Example property at 569 Washington Street illustrating the parking required by current zoning to support the maximum building envelope

DESIGN STANDARD AND GUIDELINE RECOMMENDATIONS

The general areas where design guidance can be articulated through the zoning or companion design guidelines are defined below. These are broken into eight categories and are accompanied by diagrams. The community preference is to have design standards and guidelines that address all of these topic areas.

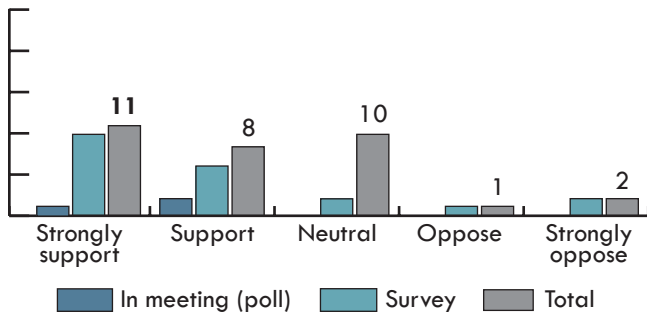
Design guidelines are not requirements and design standards are required. Often a combination of both guidelines and standards is used to encourage the right fit for a project. The community expressed a preference for using both standards and guidelines.

Potential design standards and guidelines include:

- Standard: Parking required to be located to the rear or underground beneath the building.
- Standard: If the bonus height is used, the fourth floor must step back 10 feet from the front and sides of the third floor.
- Standard: The ground floor must place active uses with transparent windows (60% of ground floor) toward the primary frontage.
- Standard: The space between the building and the street must be an extension of the sidewalk and public realm.

- Guideline: The space between the building and street should include amenities such as outdoor seating, benches, street trees, landscaping, lighting, or areas to lock bicycles.

Participants in the second community meeting and survey were asked: **What is your reaction to this approach to design standards and guidelines?**



CATEGORIES OF DESIGN GUIDANCE

Site

Design standards and guidelines regarding the site focus on the placement and configuration of the building on the property, the location and configuration of parking on the property, the location and configuration of access, relationship of the property to adjacent public realm or private properties, and the treatment of ground surfaces.

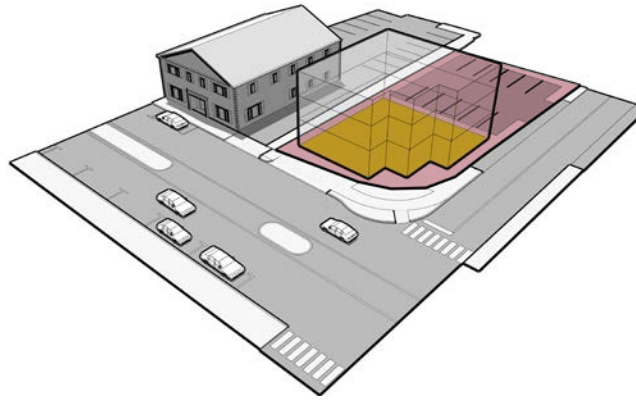


Figure 27. Diagram highlighting the focus of site design guidance

Potential specific site design standards and guidelines include:

- Standard: The building shall be placed at the front of the property to be the most prominent feature of the property and define the primary and secondary street frontages.
- Standard: Parking is required to be located to the rear of the building or underground integrating the footprint of the building.
- Standard: All access drives shall be designed to be secondary to the sidewalk. Sidewalks shall be continuous and not interrupted by driveways.
- Standard: Use materials and products that are already found in Downtown Canton and expand their use into the private property to integrate with the Downtown and create a cohesive sense of place.

- Guideline: Access should be provided connecting to a side street or adjacent property whenever possible. Access directly to Washington Street should be minimized.
- Guideline: Where the property is adjacent to a public sidewalk or plaza, the private property shall treat the adjacent area as a continuation of the public sidewalk or plaza with materials to match and extend the public amenities.
- Guideline: Where the property is adjacent to a private property with an outdoor amenity, consider ways to connect to or extend this amenity to strengthen or complement it.

Frontage

Design standards and guidelines regarding the frontage of the property are focused on the

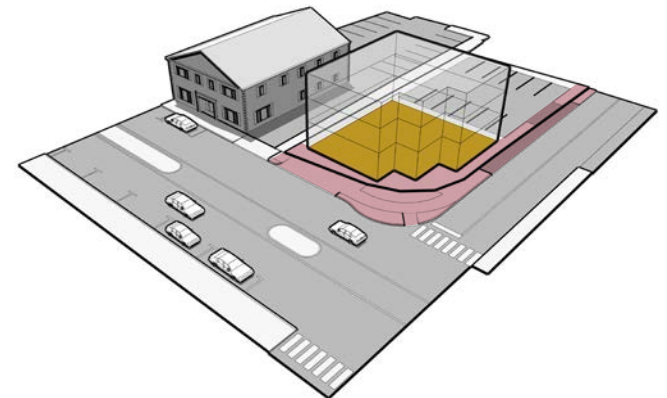


Figure 28. Highlighting the area of focus for frontage guidance

characteristics of the space between the front of the building and the sidewalk.

- Standard: The private property between the front lot line and the building shall be integrated and indistinguishable from the adjacent public realm.
- Standard: The surface treatments of sidewalks and plazas on the private property shall extend the materials, details, and design features of the adjacent public realm.
- Guideline: The extended frontage area should be used to extend the streetscape and landscape of the public realm into the property and increase the number of shade trees in Downtown Canton.
- Guideline: Where possible, the frontage area should expand into modest plazas with seating or other amenities that are available for general use in the Downtown or to serve the ground floor uses on the property.

Building

Design standards and guidelines regarding the building are focused on the building shape and form, treatment of ground floor, upper floors, entries, windows, architectural character, roof pitch.

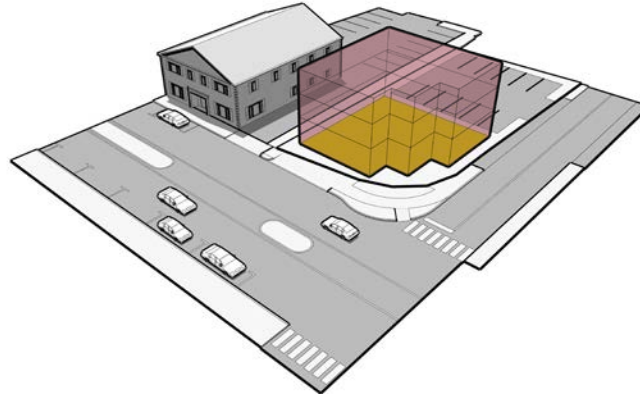


Figure 29. Diagram highlighting the focus of building design guidance

- Standard: The building massing and form shall be designed to respond to and complement the surrounding context of Downtown Canton.
- Standard: The building massing and form shall be designed to reduce the scale of the building by breaking the horizontal building mass into smaller “bays.” No bay shall be wider than 40 feet.
- Standard: The building massing and form shall be designed to reduce the scale of the building by breaking the vertical building mass to reduce the perceived height of the building. For example, a setback at the top floor reduces the visual impact of the height of that floor.
- Standard: The ground floor shall be more transparent with glass storefronts showing

active uses within the building. The upper levels shall be less transparent and shift from a storefront system to punched window openings.

- Guideline: When possible, buildings should have a sloped roof. The sloped roof should be interrupted by dormers, gable ends, sheds, or other roof features that reduce the sense of scale of the roof.

Parking

Design standards and guidelines regarding parking are focused on configuration of parking, access, screening, and the integration of landscape.

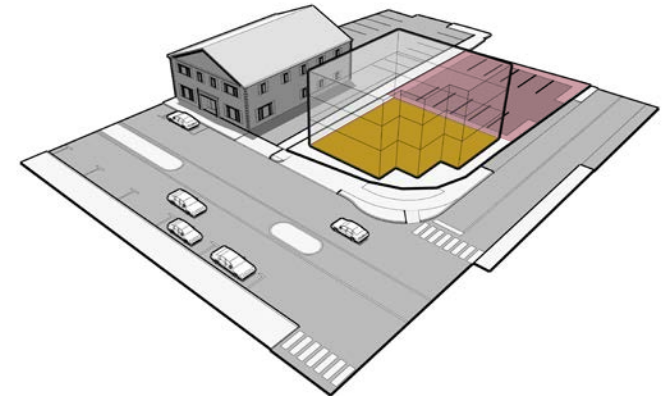


Figure 30. Diagram highlighting the focus of parking design guidance

- Standard: All parking shall be to the rear of the building.
- Standard: Access to parking shall be as efficient as possible and reduce conflict with sidewalks.
- Standard: Driveways and curb cuts shall be no more than 22 feet wide, with a preference for as narrow a width as possible.
- Guideline: Parking lots should be designed as an outdoor plaza whenever possible, integrating plaza materials, landscape and shade trees.
- Guideline: When possible, parking access should be from the side of the property either directly connecting to a side street in the Downtown, or connecting to an adjacent private property for access.
- Guideline: Parking layouts should be as efficient as possible with a preference for a double loaded parking pay with 90 degree parking where it will fit. This configuration requires a width of 60 feet not including adjacent sidewalks or landscape.
- Guideline: Multiple properties should be connect rear parking area as much as possible.
- Guideline: Provide an attractive and accessible pedestrian connection from the parking area to the front entry of the building.

Signage

Design standards and guidelines regarding signage are focused on the location and design of signs.

- Standard: In order to strengthen the downtown environment, signage shall be attached to the building at a consistent height above the ground floor storefront system in a “sign band” area.
- Guideline: Sign types preferred for ground floor storefronts include wall signs and blade signs.
- Guideline: Signs should be of a size that is consistent among multiple signs and sized to complement the building scale.

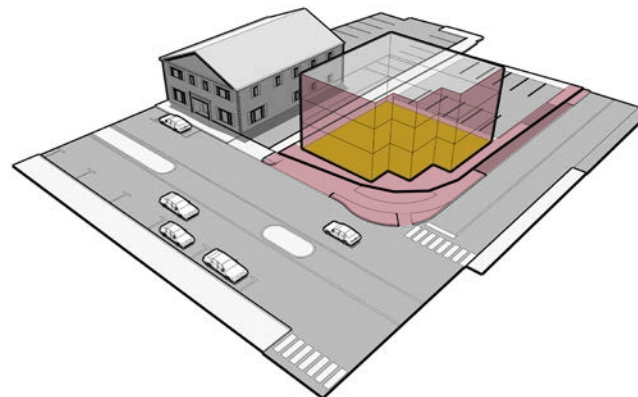


Figure 31. Diagram highlighting the focus of signage design guidance

Landscape

Design standards and guidelines regarding landscape are focused on the location and purpose of landscape treatments, buffers, and screening.

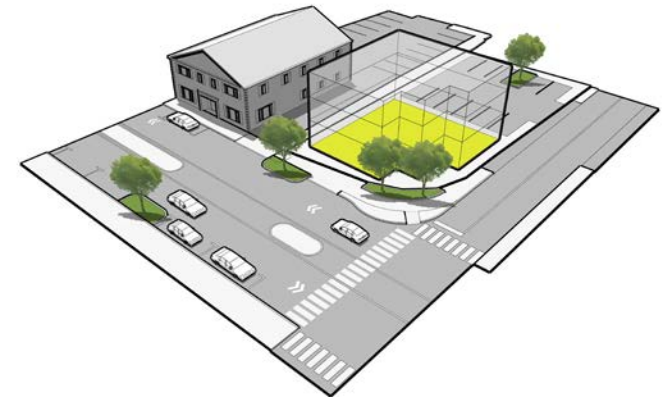


Figure 32. Diagram highlighting the focus of landscape design guidance

- Standard: A lush and enhanced landscape should be viewed as one of the common characteristics of Downtown Canton. An increase in the amount of landscaping and its enhanced maintenance and care should be a noticeable feature of the district.
- Guideline: In addition to street trees, properties should enhance landscape features

with small planting areas, planters, plant features attached to buildings, green walls, or other living features designed as part of the building.

- Guideline: Street trees should occur in the downtown at a minimum of every 40 feet of street frontage on Washington Street and increase to as much as one every 25 feet as possible.

Bicycle and pedestrian improvements

Design standards and guidelines regarding bicycle and pedestrian improvements are focused on the bicycle storage, pedestrian plazas, sidewalk amenities, and outdoor seating.

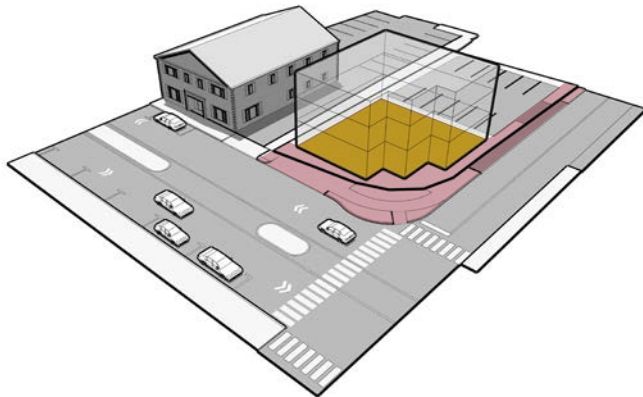


Figure 33. Diagram highlighting the focus of bicycle and pedestrian design guidance

- Standard: Parking for bicycles shall be integrated into the site design for the property providing convenient locations to securely lock bicycles on the property.
- Guideline: Bicycle storage for residents should be provided in a space at the interior of the building that is secure and convenient for bicycle access. Bicycle storage should be viewed as a method to reduce vehicular parking on the property.
- Guideline: Pedestrian amenities shall include outdoor seating areas or benches, trash receptacles.
- Standard: All loading and access areas shall be located to the rear of the building.
- Standard: All dumpsters or other service areas shall be completely visually enclosed with a screening wall or fence and integrated with the overall site layout.
- Standard: Loading dock and service areas that are part of the building shall be located on the rear facade and shall be integrated with the design of the ground floor.
- Guideline: Service and loading areas and circulation shall be integrated with and coordinated with parking and vehicular circulation on the property and pedestrian circulation on the property.

Other

Design standards and guidelines regarding other characteristics are focused on the loading and service areas.

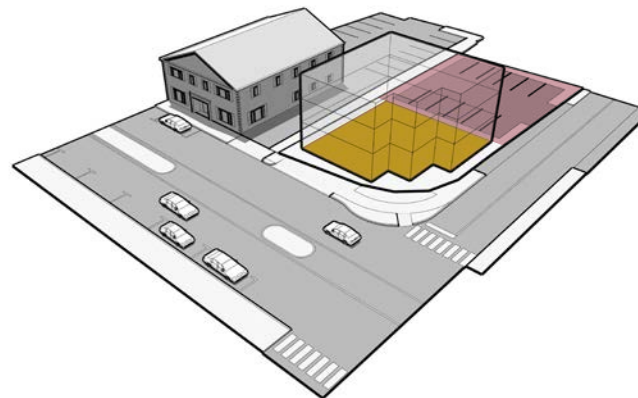


Figure 34. Diagram highlighting the focus of other design guidance

DRAFT FOR REVIEW



DOWNTOWN CANTON SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Zoning changes can seem relatively inaccessible in terms of how the specific characteristics translate to the built form of a proposed development project. For the Downtown Canton zoning and design standards and guidelines the purpose of the recommendations is to both encourage future mixed-use redevelopment and to guide it to strengthen a downtown with a strong identity and sense of place. This chapter includes a series of hypothetical diagrams to illustrate how the specific characteristics of the zoning are intended to impact future development proposals in Downtown Canton. It is important to highlight that the diagrams that follow are hypothetical. They show two actual properties in Downtown Canton, but do not reflect actual development plans or proposals for those properties. The properties were selected for illustrative purposes only and do not reflect the intentions of property owners, the Town of Canton, or any other party.

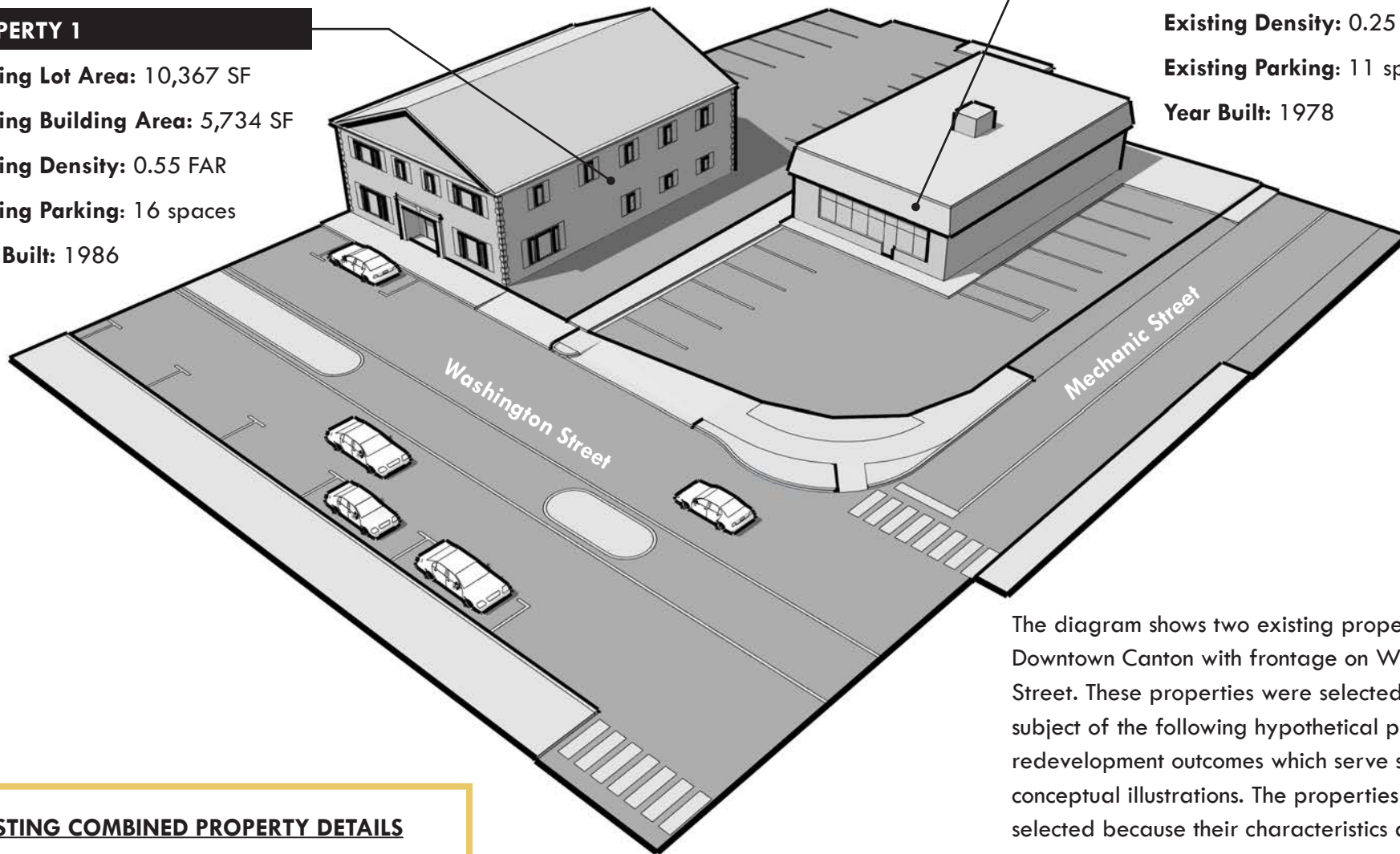
Figure 35. Downtown Canton properties subject of the hypothetical potential outcomes

PROPERTY 1

- Existing Lot Area:** 10,367 SF
- Existing Building Area:** 5,734 SF
- Existing Density:** 0.55 FAR
- Existing Parking:** 16 spaces
- Year Built:** 1986

PROPERTY 2

- Existing Lot Area:** 8,494 SF
- Existing Building Area:** 2,160 SF
- Existing Density:** 0.25 FAR
- Existing Parking:** 11 spaces
- Year Built:** 1978



EXISTING COMBINED PROPERTY DETAILS

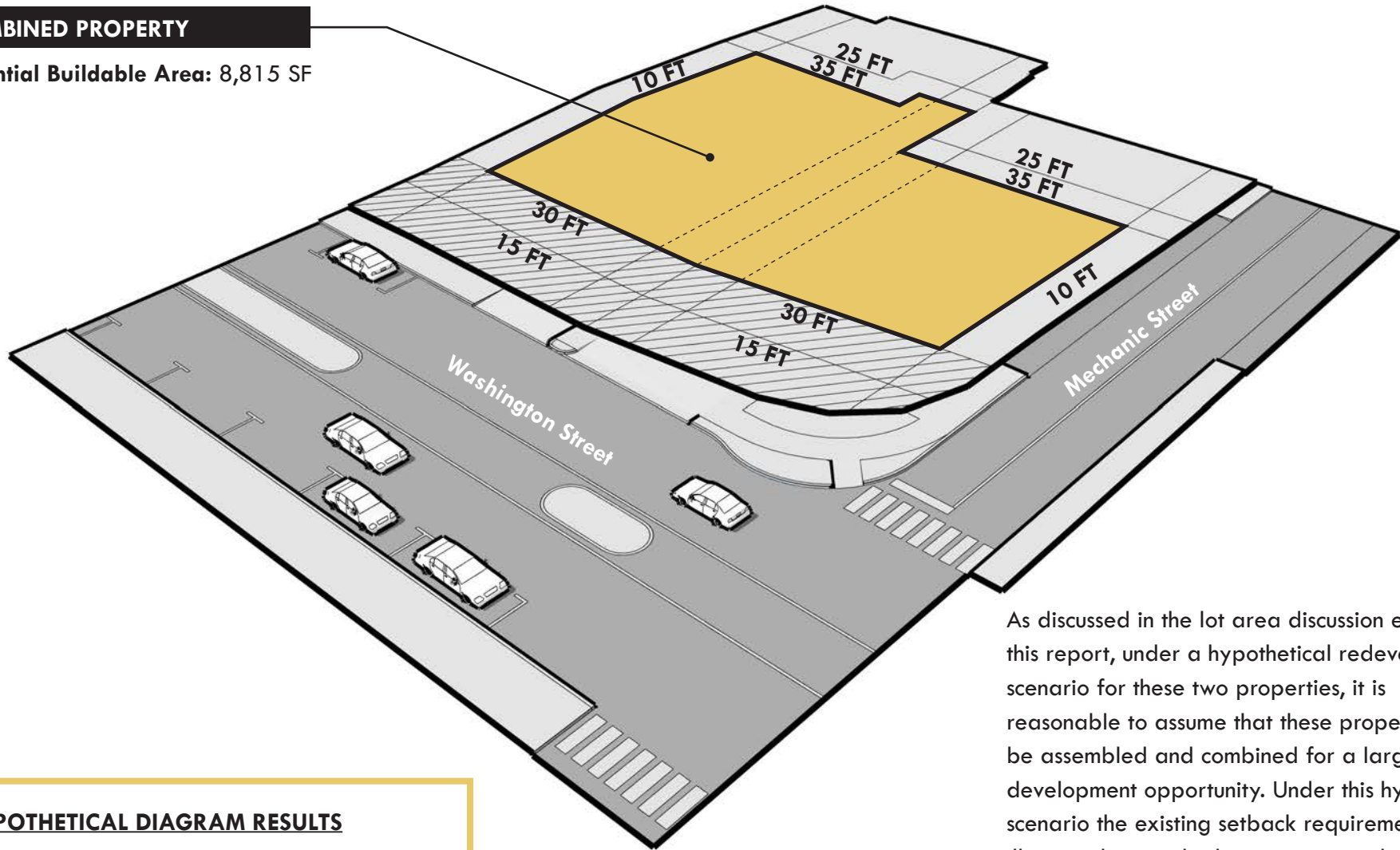
- Existing Lot Area:** 18,861 SF (square feet)
- Existing Building Area:** 7,894 SF (square feet)
- Existing Density:** 0.42 FAR (floor area ratio)
- Existing Parking:** 27 total parking spaces

The diagram shows two existing properties in Downtown Canton with frontage on Washington Street. These properties were selected to be the subject of the following hypothetical potential redevelopment outcomes which serve solely as conceptual illustrations. The properties were selected because their characteristics are generally representative of other properties in the Downtown. The properties have not been selected due to any known development plans. The diagrams are hypothetical in nature only and are intended to explore and depict the potential zoning changes.

Figure 36. Downtown Canton properties illustrating the current setback requirements of the downtown zoning

COMBINED PROPERTY

Potential Buildable Area: 8,815 SF



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

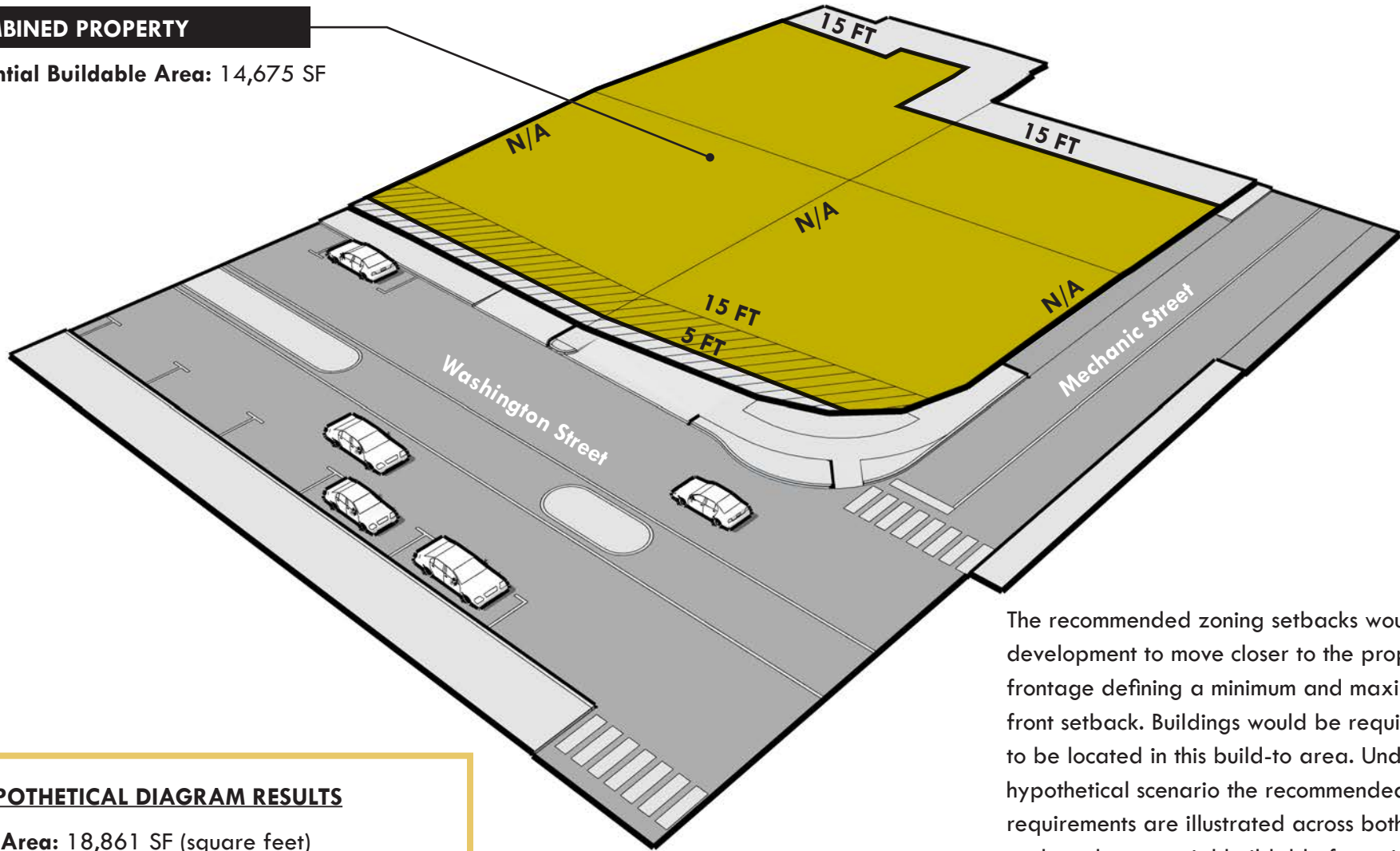
Potential Buildable Area: 8,815 SF

As discussed in the lot area discussion earlier in this report, under a hypothetical redevelopment scenario for these two properties, it is reasonable to assume that these properties will be assembled and combined for a larger development opportunity. Under this hypothetical scenario the existing setback requirements are illustrated across both properties to show the potential buildable footprint of this hypothetical redevelopment scenario. The hypothetical buildable area of 8,815 SF is larger than the 5,027 of existing building footprints on the properties.

Figure 37. Downtown Canton properties illustrating the recommended setback requirements of the downtown zoning

COMBINED PROPERTY

Potential Buildable Area: 14,675 SF



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

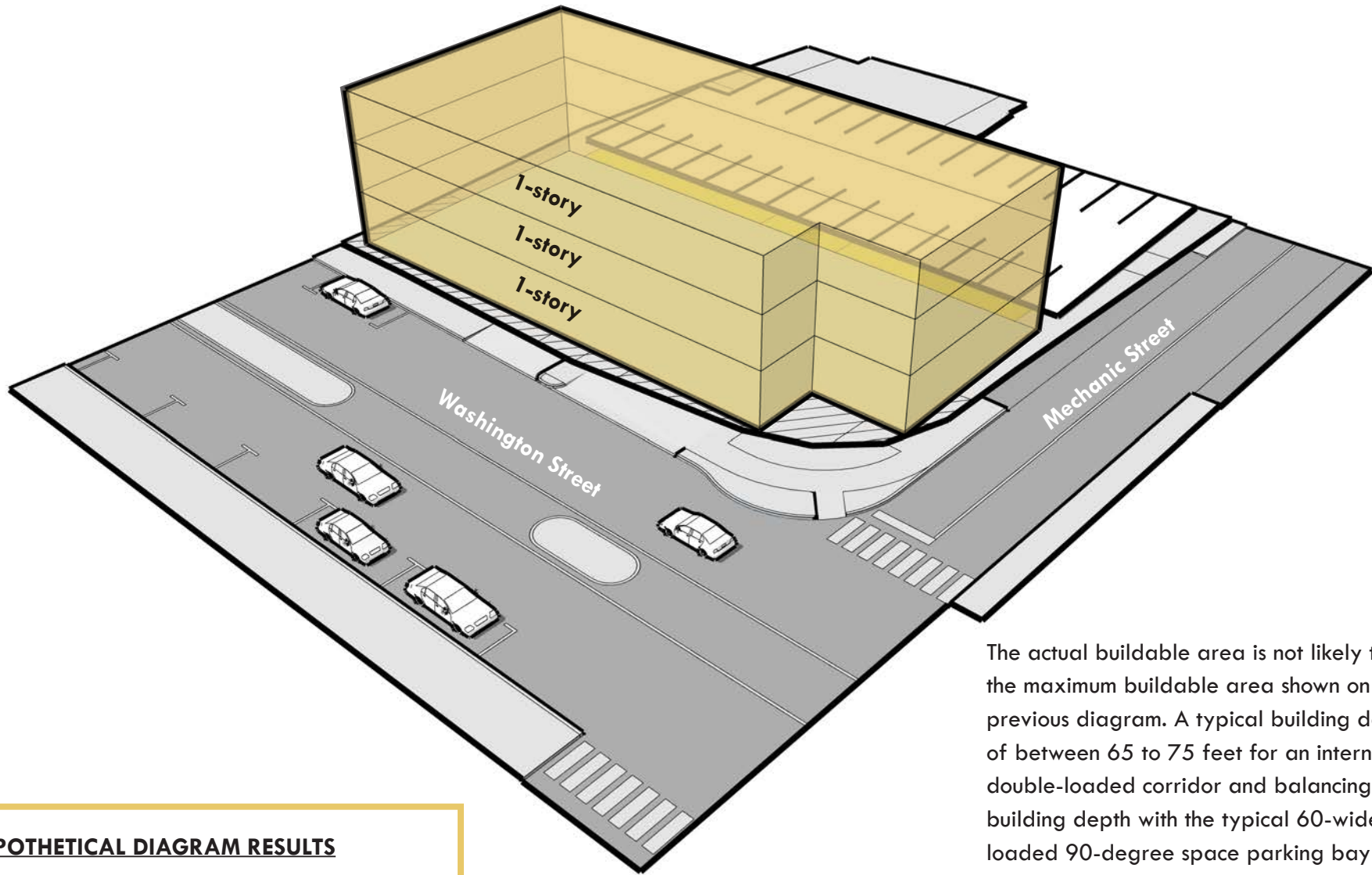
Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

Potential Buildable Area: 14,675 SF
(area shown in yellow)

Potential Buildable Area with Allowed Lot Coverage (50%): 9,430 SF

The recommended zoning setbacks would allow development to move closer to the property frontage defining a minimum and maximum front setback. Buildings would be required to be located in this build-to area. Under this hypothetical scenario the recommended setback requirements are illustrated across both properties to show the potential buildable footprint of this hypothetical redevelopment scenario. The hypothetical buildable area of 9,430 SF is larger and more flexible than the 8,815 buildable area of current zoning and larger than the 5,027 of existing building footprints on the properties.

Figure 38. Downtown Canton properties illustrating the resulting building volume based on recommended zoning for downtown



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

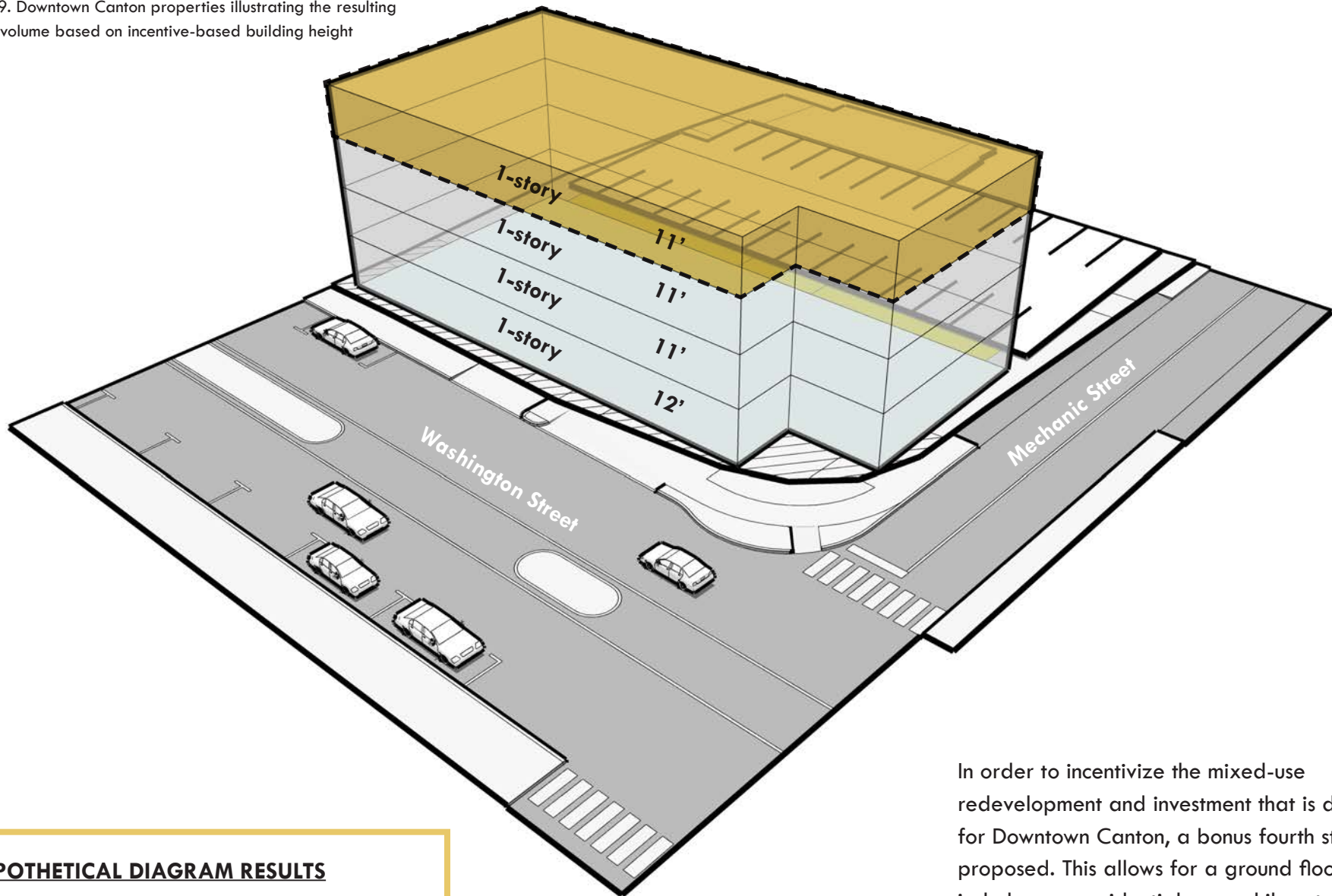
Building Area: 21,600 SF

Density: 1.15 FAR (floor area ratio)

Parking: 27 total parking spaces

The actual buildable area is not likely to match the maximum buildable area shown on the previous diagram. A typical building depth of between 65 to 75 feet for an internal double-loaded corridor and balancing the building depth with the typical 60-wide double loaded 90-degree space parking bay will drive the buildable area and building and site configuration. In this case, the resulting building footprint is 7,200 square feet and the total building area is 21,600 square feet. This configuration allows for about 27 surface parking spaces on the property.

Figure 39. Downtown Canton properties illustrating the resulting building volume based on incentive-based building height



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

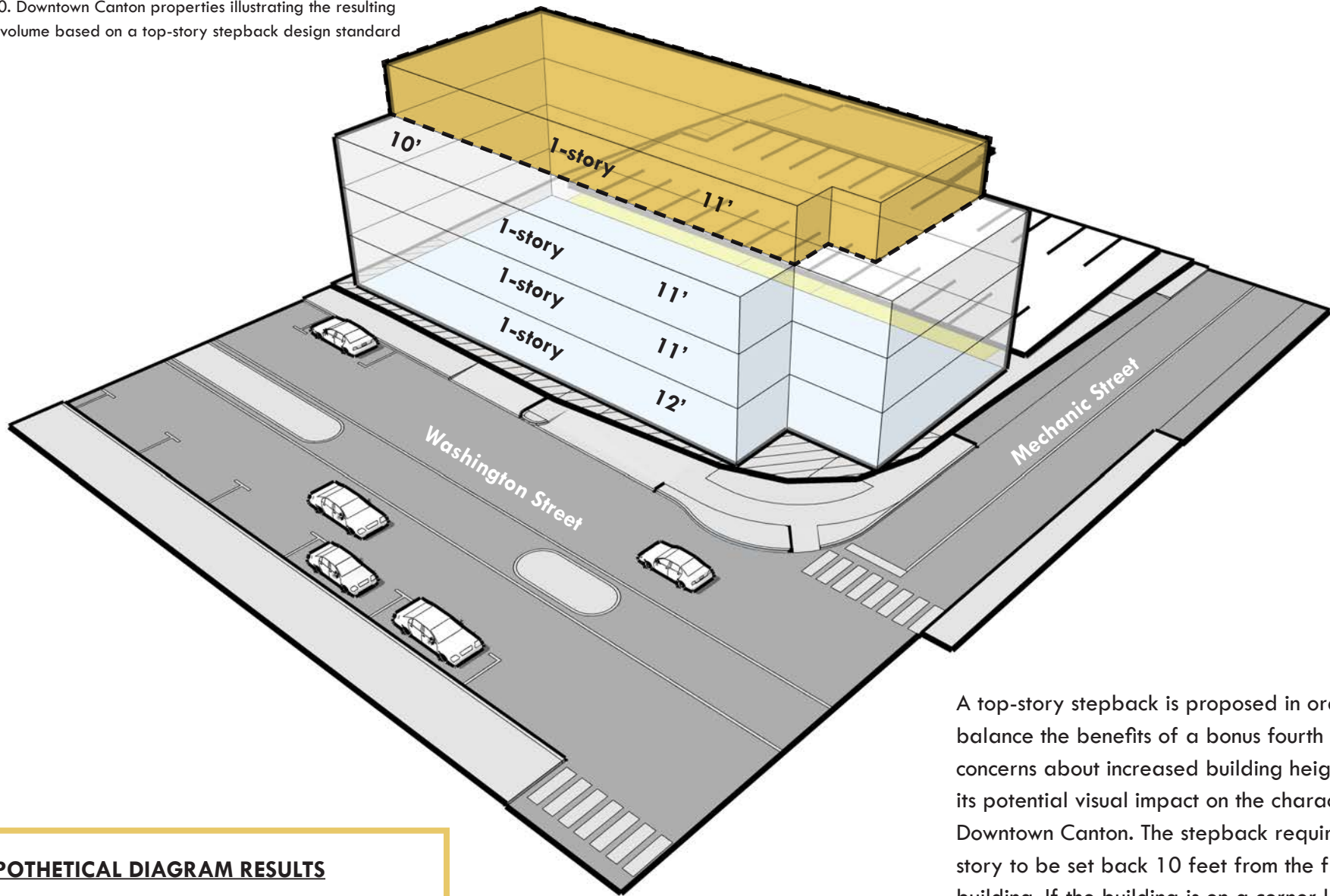
Building Area: 28,000 SF

Density: 1.48 FAR (floor area ratio)

Parking: 27 total parking spaces

In order to incentivize the mixed-use redevelopment and investment that is desired for Downtown Canton, a bonus fourth story is proposed. This allows for a ground floor that includes non-residential uses, while retaining the same amount of residential that would be allowed in a residential-only building. This would increase the maximum building area and increase the likelihood of financial feasibility for redevelopment downtown.

Figure 40. Downtown Canton properties illustrating the resulting building volume based on a top-story stepback design standard



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

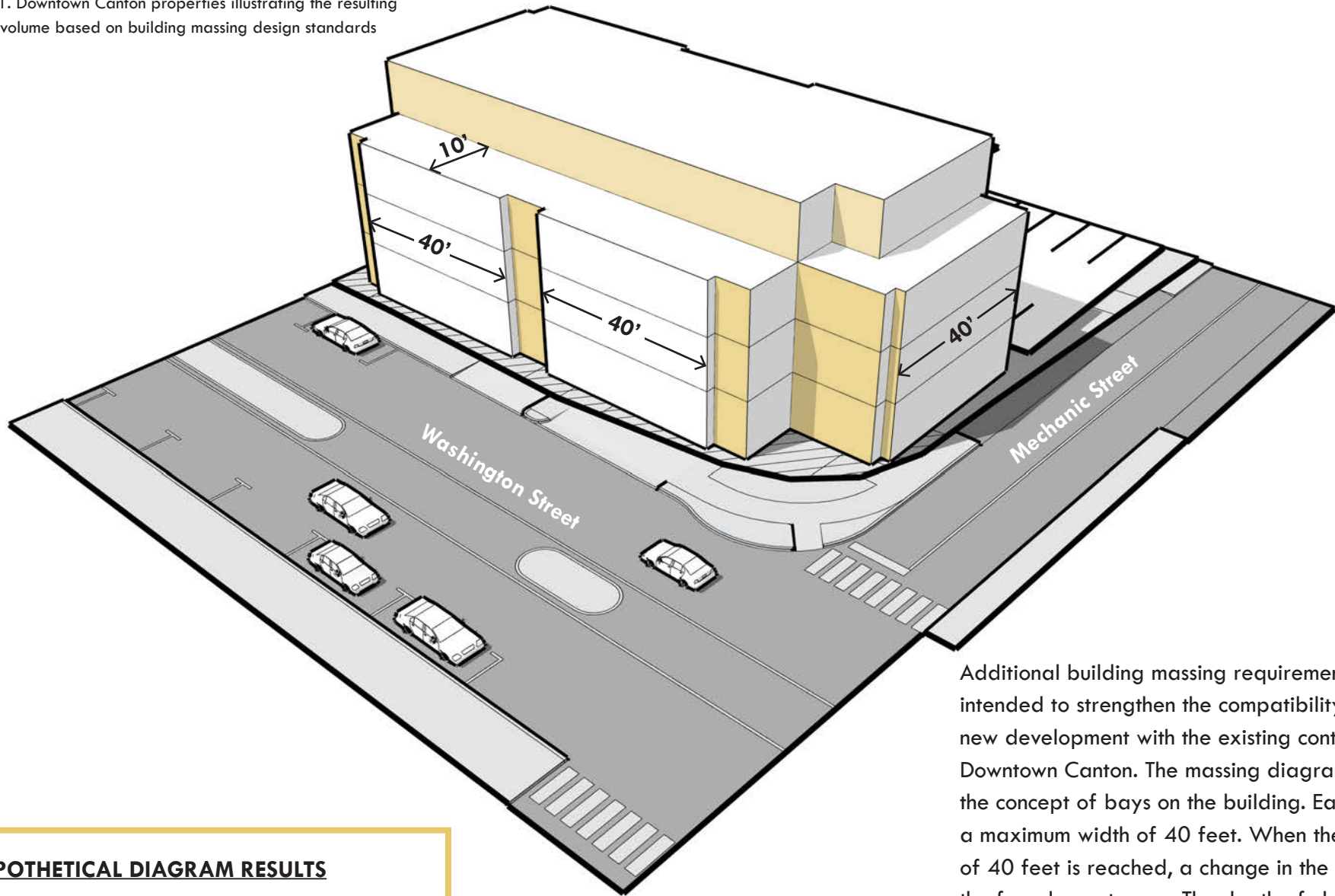
Building Area: 28,000 SF

Density: 1.48 FAR (floor area ratio)

Parking: 27 total parking spaces

A top-story stepback is proposed in order to balance the benefits of a bonus fourth story with concerns about increased building height and its potential visual impact on the character of Downtown Canton. The stepback requires the top story to be set back 10 feet from the front of the building. If the building is on a corner lot, the front and the side at the streets would be required to be set back 10 feet from the front and side of the building. This top-story stepback reduces the visual impact of the top story, particularly when viewed from the sidewalk on the street.

Figure 41. Downtown Canton properties illustrating the resulting building volume based on building massing design standards



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

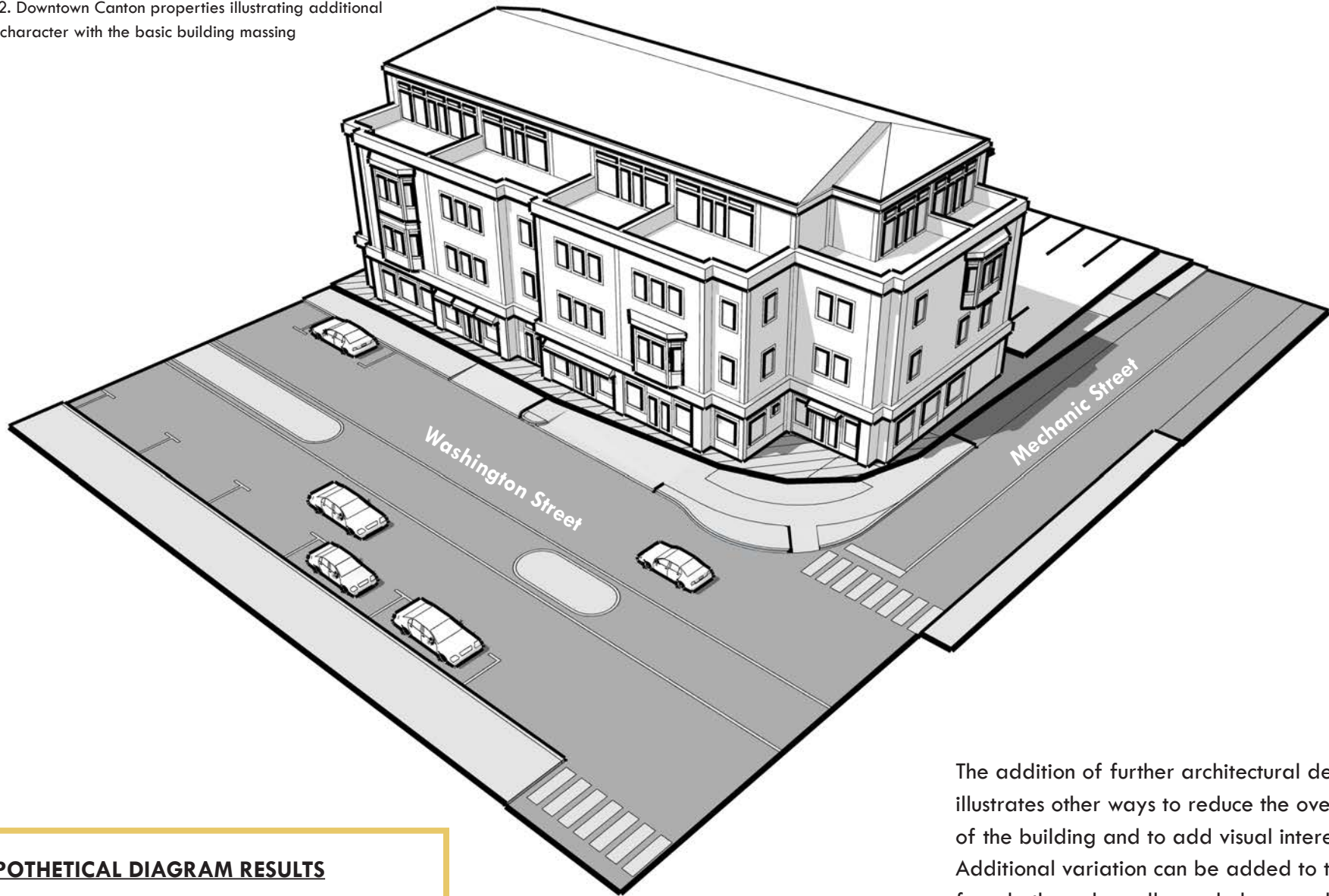
Building Area: 28,000 SF

Density: 1.48 FAR (floor area ratio)

Parking: 27 total parking spaces

Additional building massing requirements are intended to strengthen the compatibility of new development with the existing context of Downtown Canton. The massing diagram illustrates the concept of bays on the building. Each bay has a maximum width of 40 feet. When the maximum of 40 feet is reached, a change in the depth of the facade must occur. The depth of change must be a minimum of 2 feet and must have a width of at least 10 feet. The articulation of these building bays helps to reduce the overall scale of new buildings to better match the smaller scale of more historic structures in downtown.

Figure 42. Downtown Canton properties illustrating additional building character with the basic building massing



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

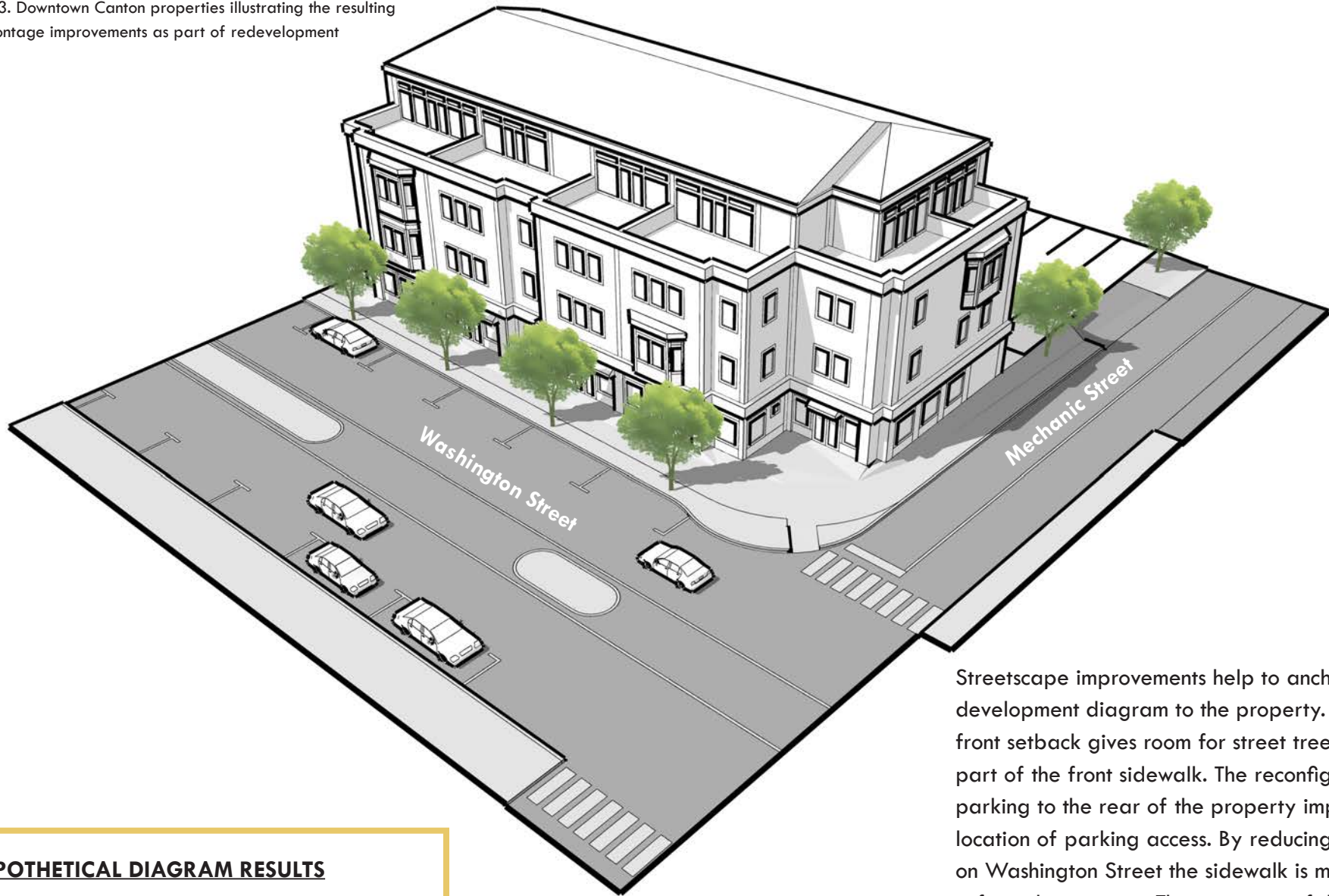
Building Area: 28,000 SF

Density: 1.48 FAR (floor area ratio)

Parking: 27 total parking spaces

The addition of further architectural detail illustrates other ways to reduce the overall scale of the building and to add visual interest to it. Additional variation can be added to the building facade through smaller scale bays and awnings above the ground floor storefront windows. The ground floor is more transparent than upper levels with additional glass storefront areas. The roof is pitched and shown at a total height of 52 feet in the diagram.

Figure 43. Downtown Canton properties illustrating the resulting street frontage improvements as part of redevelopment



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

Building Area: 28,000 SF

Density: 1.48 FAR (floor area ratio)

Parking: 27 total parking spaces

Streetscape improvements help to anchor the development diagram to the property. The modest front setback gives room for street trees as a part of the front sidewalk. The reconfiguration of parking to the rear of the property impacts the location of parking access. By reducing driveways on Washington Street the sidewalk is made more safe and continuous. This continuity of the frontage also creates an opportunity for additional on-street parking on Washington Street where demand for parking is the highest. In this diagram 4 additional on-street spaces have been created due to this reconfiguration.

Figure 44. Downtown Canton properties illustrating additional building character with the basic building massing from the street perspective



HYPOTHETICAL DIAGRAM RESULTS

Lot Area: 18,861 SF (square feet)

Building Area: 28,000 SF

Density: 1.48 FAR (floor area ratio)

Parking: 27 total parking spaces

The same hypothetical building diagram that has been illustrated from an overhead perspective is shown here as viewed from eye level at the sidewalk on the other side of Washington Street. From this perspective the impact of the techniques and guidance used to reduce the overall scale of the building is evident.

DRAFT FOR REVIEW



DOWNTOWN CANTON IMPLEMENTATION

The recommendations defined in this report are translated into draft zoning language and draft design standards and guidelines in this chapter. The draft zoning language is intended to replace Section 9.8 of the Canton Zoning By-Law. The draft design standards and guidelines are intended to be a stand-alone document that complements the Zoning By-Law and that is used by reviewing authorities for development proposed in Downtown.

The recommended approach is to replace Section 9.8 “Canton Center Economic Opportunity District (CCEOD)” of the Canton Zoning By-laws in its entirety with Section 9.8 “Downtown Canton Overlay (DCO)” as drafted below.

In addition to this section change, other references to the “Canton Center Economic Opportunity District” or “CCEOD” will need to be replaced throughout the Canton Zoning By-laws with “Downtown Canton Overlay” and “DCO” respectively.

The Zoning Map will need to be updated with the new overlay district boundary and underlying zoning changes shown in the diagram on page 49 of this report.

9.8 Downtown Canton Overlay District (DCO)

9.8.1 Sub-districts. The Downtown Canton Overlay District (DCO) is divided into two separate and distinct sub-districts in Downtown Canton as follows:

1. Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B “Washington Street”: The area of Downtown that runs along Washington Street from Neponset Street to Lewis Street, a distance of approximately three thousand (3000) linear feet.
2. Downtown Canton Subdistrict C “Paul Revere Heritage Site”: The area of Downtown that runs along Revere Street from the boundary of Downtown Subdistrict A/B to the intersection of the railroad bridge/tracks and Revere Street, a distance of approximately 2,300 linear feet.
3. Downtown Canton Sub-districts A/B and C are shown on the updated zoning map dated [insert date]. This map is incorporated by reference in this Section 9.8.
4. Certain activities in the Downtown Canton Sub-districts A/B and C are subject to Design Review as set forth in Section 10.7.

9.8.2 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Purpose. Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B

is established for the accomplishment of the following purposes:

1. To promote the economic health and stability of the Town by encouraging development and economic investment that will generate employment and tax revenue.
2. To provide additional planning flexibility for projects located in Downtown Canton, including enhancing the coordination of the project with the surrounding Downtown context.
3. To encourage mixed-use development with a non-residential ground floor that is vibrant with activity and supports a broad range of uses.
4. To permit the use of new Downtown Canton Design Standards and Guidelines, which will promote the desired changes in Downtown Canton to strengthen a sense of place.
5. To encourage the development of open spaces, plazas, and expanded sidewalk areas that would be available for use by the general public and enhance walkability.
6. To provide information for review as part of the approvals process on the potential impacts of a proposed development.
7. To enable the Special Permit Granting Authority (SGPA) to require adherence to

“Development and Use Plans” in the granting of a special permit.

8. To provide for development in a manner that creates harmony between residential and non-residential districts, protects existing abutting neighborhoods, and minimizes development impact on abutting properties, while conserving and enhancing environmental features, open spaces, and areas of scenic views, beauty, and vistas.

9. To enhance and strengthen connections to nearby destinations and amenities.

9.8.3 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Definitions. For the special purposes of Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B only, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings hereinafter indicated.

Applicant: The person or legal entity that applies for issuance of a special permit for permission to construct a Project that conforms to the requirements of this By-Law for Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B. The Applicant must own or be the beneficial owner of all the land included in the proposed site, or have written authorization from the owner(s) to act on the owner’s behalf or must hold an option or contract duly executed by the owner(s) giving the Applicant the right to acquire the land to be included in the site.

Buffer Area: An area within the Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B adjacent to the boundaries, streams, rivers, ponds, which may not be developed except in accordance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and its implementing regulations (MGL Chapter 131, Sections 40 and 40A, and 310 CMR 10.00) and other requirements herein.

Building Height: Building height shall be measured as set forth in this section 9.8 and measured as set forth in the State Building Code 780 CMR 101.0 et seq. Height shall be subject to the provisions of Section 4.3 of the By-Law except as otherwise provided in this Section 9.8.

Buildable Lot Area: The area of a Lot excluding any land defined as a Resource Area.

Common Open Land: An area of land containing no building, structure, parking areas, driveways or roadways other than those structures and/or facilities which are used for recreational and/or community use by the occupants of a Development Parcel or members of the public.

Development Agreement: A written agreement executed by the Board of Selectmen and the Applicant concerning the Project containing, without limitation, actions

to be taken by the Applicant to mitigate potential adverse effects of the Project.

Development Parcel: One or more Lots within Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B which together are designated as a Development Parcel on a Lot Development and Use Plan. The Lots comprising a Development Parcel need not be in the same ownership. Where the Development Parcel consists of more than a single Lot, the Lots, in combination, shall be treated as the Development Parcel, may be contiguous or non-contiguous, and shall be considered one ‘Development Parcel’.

Development Schedule: A schedule showing the anticipated order and timing of construction and the sequence of the improvements to be built on the Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B Development Parcel, separated into stages where applicable.

Gross Floor Area: Total floor area contained within exterior walls, excluding basement space, attic space and spaces used for heating and utilities and other mechanical apparatus, storage and/or automobile parking.

Lot: A single contiguous tract of land including at least the minimum amount of Buildable Lot Area required herein and located entirely within the Development Parcel and Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B, which may be shown

on an approved definitive subdivision plan under G.L. c. 41, Section 81K or an endorsed “approval not required” plan under G.L. c. 41, Section 81P. More than one building may be located on a Lot, subject to compliance with all applicable dimensional requirements of this Section 9.8.

Lot Development and Use Plan: A plan approved by the SPGA for the development and use of a particular Lot within a Development Parcel pursuant to the special permit process for the Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B. A Lot Development and Use Plan shall comply with the plan contents requirements of Section 10.5.2 of the Zoning By-Law. The Special Permit process and the Site Plan Review process under Section 10.5.1 may occur contemporaneously.

Mixed-Use Development: A development that contains both residential and non-residential uses.

Professional Office: The office of one skilled in an occupation that primarily services clients or patients rather than customers including, but not limited to, the office of a lawyer, doctor, dentist, architect, engineer, landscape architect, real estate agent, insurance agent, or the studio of an artist, musician, teacher, or the workroom of a dressmaker, milliner,

or photographer in which retail sales are incidental to office use.

Project: A residential, non-residential or mixed-use development for which a Special Permit or Special Permits is sought pursuant to Section 9.8, the Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B overlay provisions. The Project may be developed and constructed in multiple phases, subject to conditions to be set forth in the Special Permit(s).

Regulations: The applicable rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Appeals relative to special permits pursuant to M.G.L. c.40A, Section 9.

Resource Area: All land subject to jurisdiction under 310 CMR 10.02(1)(a) and (b) (which shall not include land subject to flooding or riverfront area).

Small Scale Retail: Retail stores with a gross floor area of 10,000 square feet or less.

Upland Acres: Land area not in a Resource Area.

9.8.4 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Scope of Authority. Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B shall be an overlay district and shall not restrict the landowner’s rights relative to the underlying zoning districts. However, if the landowner elects to apply for approval under the provisions of

this Section 9.8 applicable to Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B, the development shall conform to the requirements of this section 9.8 for Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B and shall not be required to conform to the requirements of the underlying zoning districts to the extent the Project is built pursuant to an approval under the requirements of the overlay.

9.8.5 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Special Permit Granting Authority. The Board of Appeals is hereby designated as the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) for all purposes with respect to Projects within the Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B pursued under this Section 9.8.

All special permit applications shall conform to the provisions, of this Section 9.8 with respect to Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B and the Board of Appeals’ Rules and Regulations adopted pursuant to M.G.L. c.40A, Section 9 governing the administration of applications for special permits.

In determining whether the criteria for grant of a special permit stated in this Zoning By-Law have been satisfied, the SPGA may grant a special permit applicable to a Project in Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B only if the SPGA finds that the adverse impacts of the Project will be outweighed by the benefits of the project to the Town, including without limitation any mitigation and/or other benefits to be provided to the Town by the Applicant pursuant to any Development

Agreement between the Applicant and the Town. Notwithstanding, the foregoing, any mitigation required under the Performance Standards contained in Section 6.7 of this Zoning By-Law may be found by the SPGA to be satisfied by the terms of a Development Agreement between the Town and the Applicant.

The SPGA may in its discretion waive any of the Standards and Criteria stated in Section 9.8.8, any of the Setbacks and Yard Regulations stated in Section 9.8.9, and any of the Building Height Regulations stated in 9.8.10 if the SPGA finds that such waiver satisfies the criteria stated in Section 10.4.2 of this Zoning By-Law for grant of a special permit and the general conditions stated in Section 10.5.5 of this Zoning By-Law for approval of a site plan.

9.8.6 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B;

Applicability. In Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B, no building shall be constructed or externally enlarged, and no use shall be expanded in ground area, or established in an existing building except in conformity with an approval issued by the Board of Appeals and a Lot Development and Use Plan that bears the endorsement of approval by the Board of Appeals. Requirements and Procedures for approval of such Site Development and Use Plan shall be in accordance with Section 10.5 and this Section.

In the event of damage or destruction to any buildings or structures originally constructed pursuant to a Special Permit and Lot Development and Use Plan issued hereunder, such buildings and structures may be rebuilt and restored consistent with the original Special Permit and such Lot Development and Use Plan without the requirement of obtaining a new Special Permit or Lot Development and Use Plan from the SPGA.

9.8.7 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B;

Allowed Uses. Within Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B, the SPGA may issue a approve an allowed use with site plan review, or issue a special permit authorizing the following uses. No building or structure shall be designed, arranged or constructed and no building, structure, or land shall be used, in whole or in part, for any purpose other than for one or more of the uses herein set forth as permissible or permissible by special permit.

A. Allowed Uses:

1. Artist studio
2. Co-working space
3. Cultural use
4. Hotel or motel
5. Limited industrial recreational use
6. Live/work space
7. Maker space

8. Microbrewery

9. Mixed use with non-residential use(s) on the ground floor and residential uses(s) on the upper floors.

10. Parkland open space or recreational uses

11. Research and development

12. Restaurants with or without the service of alcoholic beverages (provided that if alcoholic beverages are served any bar area does not comprise more than thirty-five percent (35%) of the floor area of the restaurant), including both indoor and outdoor seating.

13. Scientific or research laboratory

14. Small-scale Retail stores.

B. Uses by Special Permit:

1. Accessory structures (whether at, below, or above grade) and surface parking, driveways and roadways, serving any uses within the Development Parcel.

2. All other residential uses allowed by right or by special permit in the underlying zoning district.

3. All uses allowed by right or by special permit in the underlying zoning district.

4. Automobile parking lot

- 5. Banks or similar financial institution, including drive-through facilities.
- 6. Child Care Centers, Pre-Schools and Kindergartens.
- 7. Conference centers
- 8. Fifty-Five Years of Age or Older Housing and ancillary facilities and amenities.
- 9. Funeral parlor or undertaking
- 10. Multi-family Dwellings, including, without limitation, Townhouse style dwellings, Mid-rise style units, and ancillary facilities and amenities.
- 11. Municipal uses.
- 12. Offices, including salesrooms and showrooms, consumer service establishments, business and professional offices, executive and administrative offices, banks and other institutions.
- 13. Parking area with no fee
Places of assembly
- 14. Private and public open spaces
- 15. Recreational facilities.

C. The following uses are specifically prohibited within Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B:

- 1. Accessory apartment

- 2. Assisted living facility
- 3. Automobile Filling Stations
- 4. Automobile, marina, or other dealership
- 5. Boarding or lodging house
- 6. Commercial agriculture
- 7. Drive-through for the sale of food. Any other drive-through, with the exception of banks and financial institutions noted above, may be authorized by the SPGA as part of a special permit for a Downtown Canton Subdistrict C Project.
- 8. Farm stand, exempt
- 9. Fast food establishments
- 10. Kennel or veterinary facility
- 11. Motor vehicle repair garage
- 12. Orchard, market garden, nursery
- 13. Salesroom for motor vehicles
- 14. Showroom for building supplies; salesroom for boats, trailers
- 15. Single family dwelling
- 16. Two-family dwelling.
- 17. Wholesale office or showroom

9.8.8 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Standards and Criteria.

A. In addition to the specific criteria contained

within Section 10.4, the SPGA shall issue a site plan approval or special permit for development within Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B only after consideration of the project’s compliance with the following additional criteria:

- 1. Adequacy and suitability of the site for the proposed use(s);
- 2. Adequacy of the provision of open space, its accessibility to the general public, and/or its association with adjacent or proximate open space areas;
- 3. Impact on pedestrian flow and safety;
- 4. Impact on the visual character of the Downtown;
- 5. Adequacy of utilities, including sewage disposal, water supply and storm water drainage; and
- 6. Degree to which the proposed project complies with the Downtown Canton Design Guidelines and the provisions of this Section 9.8 including:
 - a. Specific Site Design Standards:
 - i. Building Placement: The building shall be placed at the front of the property and oriented along the street to be the most prominent feature of the property and define the primary

and secondary street frontages.

ii. **Parking Placement:** Parking is required to be located to the rear of the building or underground integrating with the foundation of the building.

iii. **Integrated Access Drives:** All access drives shall be designed to be secondary to the sidewalk. Sidewalks shall be continuous and uninterrupted in materials, elevation, and grading.

iv. **Compatible with Context:** The site design including the selection of materials and products shall contribute to a cohesive Downtown environment and strengthen the sense of place.

b. Specific Frontage Design Standards:

i. **Integrated with Public Realm:** The private property between the front lot line and the building shall be integrated and indistinguishable from the adjacent public realm.

ii. **Coordinated Materials:** The surface treatments of sidewalks and plazas on the private property shall extend the materials, details, and design features of the adjacent public realm.

iii. **Extended Sidewalk Area:** The space

between the building and the street shall be an extension of the sidewalk and public realm.

c. Specific Building Design Standards:

i. **Building Scale Horizontally:** The building massing and form shall be designed to reduce the scale of the building by breaking the horizontal building mass into smaller “bays.” No bay shall be wider than 40 feet.

ii. **Building Scale Vertically:** The building massing and form shall be designed to reduce the scale of the building by breaking the vertical building mass to reduce the perceived height of the building. For example, a stepback at the top floor reduces the visual impact of the height of that floor.

iii. **Step Back:** If the bonus height is used, the fourth floor must step back 10 feet from the front and sides of the third floor.

iv. **Relationship to Context:** Building height and massing should respond to and complement the abutting context by responding to the height of surrounding buildings with a change in building massing, a step back or

feature of the architectural design or building materials.

d. Specific Facades, Windows and Doors Design Standards:

i. **Active Ground Floor:** The ground floor must place active uses with transparent windows toward the primary frontage. The ground floor facade must be a minimum of 60% transparent glass (including window trim, sills, spacers, and mullions).

ii. **Facade Transparency:** The ground floor shall be more transparent with glass storefronts showing active uses within the building. The upper levels shall be less transparent and shift from a storefront system to punched window openings.

iii. **Facade Visual Interest:** Any side of the building that is visible from a street or sidewalk shall have windows. Blank walls do not contribute to a vibrant downtown environment. Where a blank wall length greater than 40 feet is unavoidable it shall be location of an art installation or mural.

e. Specific Parking Design Standards:

i. **Parking Location:** All parking shall be

located to the rear of the building or in some circumstances designed to be integrated with the foundation of the building with integrated ramp access to parking below grade.

ii. Efficient Parking Access: Access to parking shall be as efficient as possible and reduce conflict with sidewalks.

iii. Minimize Sidewalk Disruption: Minimize the width of curb cuts and driveways, with a preference for the narrowest width possible.

f. Specific Signage Design Standards:

i. Consistent Sign Band: In order to strengthen the downtown environment, signage shall be attached to the building at a consistent height above the ground floor storefront system in a “sign band” area.

g. Specific Landscape and Open Space Design Standards:

i. Landscape as a Feature of Downtown: A lush and enhanced landscape should be viewed as one of the common characteristics of Downtown Canton. An increase in the amount of landscaping and

its enhanced maintenance and care should be a noticeable feature of the district.

ii. Preserve Existing Trees: Existing trees shall be preserved on the property with a particular focus on preservation and protection of established street trees, shade trees, and mature trees providing buffers to adjacent properties. It is less costly to preserve and enhance existing trees and shrubs. When undertaking construction or improvements, ensure that existing trees are well-protected. Consult with the landscape professional as to accepted arbor care standards for tree and plant protection.

h. Specific Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement Design Standards:

i. Integrate Secure Bicycle Parking Areas: Parking for bicycles shall be integrated into the site design for the property providing convenient locations to securely lock bicycles on the property.

i. Specific Site Service and Utilities Design Standards:

i. Locate Behind the Building: All

loading, service, and access areas shall be located to the rear of the building.

ii. Screening Requirements: All dumpsters or other service areas shall be completely visually enclosed with a screening wall or fence and integrated with the overall site layout.

iii. Integrate with the Rear Ground Floor Facade: Loading dock and service areas that are part of the building shall be located on the rear facade and shall be integrated with the design of the ground floor.

B. Minimum Development Size:

1. Development Parcel Area Requirement:

a. The minimum Development Parcel area is 10,000 square feet of Buildable Lot Area determined as of the time of approval and endorsement of the application for the first Lot Development and Use Plan.

b. No portion of a public way or public street, as defined by this Zoning By-Law may be included in computing minimum required Buildable Lot Area.

C. Building Coverage:

1. Development Parcel Requirement: No

building on the Development Parcel shall be constructed so as to cover, together with any other buildings on the Development Parcel, more than fifty percent (50%) of the Buildable Lot Area of the Development Parcel.

D. Minimum Frontage and Access:

1. Development Parcel Requirement:

a. Each Development Parcel shall have a minimum frontage of seventy-five (75) feet on a street or way and at least two means of ingress/egress.

b. Each means of required ingress/egress shall have a paved width of no less than twenty (20) feet.

E. Transition Area: Where a portion of the Development Parcel abuts another parcel which is zoned for residential purposes, a “Transition Area” of fifteen (15) feet or a screen wall of adequate height shall be provided at the perimeter of the Development Parcel along the border with such abutting parcel. The Applicant shall file a landscape plan, prepared by a Massachusetts Registered Landscape Architect that demonstrates in the opinion of the Board of Appeals sufficient plantings to provide adequate screening within such Transition Area. Buildable Lot Areas or portions thereof

that area also designated as Transition Areas shall be included in the calculation of “Common Open Land”.

a. The SPGA may reduce the width of the required “Transition Area” and modify other landscape requirements where the SPGA finds that suitable screening will be provided by other means such as fencing or topography, and that such reduction will not have material adverse impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

9.8.9 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Setbacks and Yard Regulations for Buildings. No building shall be constructed so as to be nearer to the line of any street than the required setback distance or nearer to the sidelines of its lot than the required side yard width or nearer to the rear line of its lot than the required rear yard depth specified below.

A. Development Parcel

1. Each Development Parcel along Washington Street shall have a front setback of no less than five (5) feet and no more than fifteen (15) feet maximum. There shall be no front yard setback requirement for any internal subdivision road within any Development Parcel.

2. Each Development Parcel shall have a rear

yard setback of not less than fifteen (15) feet.

3. A side yard setback is not required.

B. Additional Setback Requirements

1. The SPGA may waive the setback distance where it finds such a waiver appropriate because of specific physical circumstances, such as irregular lot lines or other natural features that create open space or buffers in any portion of the Development Parcel.

2. No Lot on which a building is located shall be reduced or changed in size of shape so that the building or Lot fails to comply with the Lot Area, frontage, building coverage, yard setback, or other dimensional provisions, of this Section.

9.8.10 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Height Regulations. Buildings shall be constructed to not exceed the height of (a) forty feet (40’); or (b) a total of three (3) stories inclusive of enclosed parking, whichever is lower.

If a building is proposed as mixed-use with non-residential uses on the ground floor, it shall be constructed to not exceed the height of (a) fifty-two feet (52’); or (b) a total of four (4) stories inclusive of enclosed parking, whichever is lower.

9.8.11 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Common Open Land and Public Access.

A. Common Open Land:

1. Each Project shall have a minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the Development Parcel designated as Common Open Land for use by the occupants of the Development Parcel.
2. Calculating the required Common Open Land shall include the area of balconies and roof decks.
3. Calculating the required Common Open Land shall include expanded frontage areas, outdoor seating or dining, and outdoor plazas.

B. Public Access:

1. A Project shall provide public access to Common Open Land consistent with its location and use. For example, expanded frontage areas shall be open and accessible to the public without restriction. Whereas, roof decks may have calendar or time of day restrictions on public access.
2. A Project shall provide pedestrian access walkways to and from natural resource areas within the Development Parcel within an area or areas shown on a Lot Development and Use Plan.

9.8.12 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Parking and Loading Requirements. For each Project there shall be provided and maintained

improved off-street automobile parking in connection with the erection, establishment or increase in units or dimensions of buildings, structures and uses, in the following amounts:

- A. For dwelling units: 1.0 parking spaces per each dwelling unit.
- B. For restaurants and other on premises eating and drinking establishments: one (1) parking space for every eight (8) seats, plus one (1) parking space for every four (4) employees on the largest shift, subject to the discretion of the SPGA to allow fewer parking spaces where the SPGA finds that fewer parking spaces are needed.
- C. For retail stores and offices including salesrooms and showrooms, consumer service establishments, public administration buildings, business and professional offices, executive and administrative offices, banks and other financial institutions: one (1) parking space for each five hundred (500) square feet of Gross Floor Area.
- D. Uses not listed in this Section 9.8.45 Parking Requirements, Subsections (A), (B), (C) or (D) shall comply with the parking space requirements of the Zoning By-Law Section 6.1 Off Street Parking.
- E. In the case of mixed-use projects, the parking spaces required shall be the sum of

the requirements for the various individual uses, computed separately in accordance with this Section 9.8.45. Parking spaces for one use shall not provide the required parking spaces for any other use unless the SPGA agrees with justification of a parking reduction, including identifying the need for parking occurs at different times for different uses, the establishment of shared parking agreements between properties, presence of a car-sharing program, or the availability of off-site parking.

F. Off-street automobile parking spaces, to the extent required in this section, may be provided either on the same lot or premises with the parking generator or on any lot or premises associated therewith a substantial portion of which, at least, is within three hundred (300) feet of such generator.

Off-street parking facilities and connecting drives between such facilities and the street shall be designed to insure the safety and convenience of persons traveling within or through the parking area, and between the parking facility and the street. The provisions of Section 6.1.6 of this Zoning By-Law as to General Design shall be considered the minimum criteria for evaluating such design.

Below grade automobile parking may be

permitted within the basements of buildings provided that such structured basement automobile parking is exclusively reserved the motor vehicles of residents or employees of the Project.

G. In addition to the requirements for automobile parking spaces there shall also be provided for each building or group of buildings sufficient off-street loading space to insure that all loading operations take place off of the public way. Loading spaces and access drives leading to loading spaces shall be so designed that vehicles to be loaded or unloaded are not required to maneuver in the public way to enter or leave the designated loading area. The provisions of Section 6.2, Loading Areas, shall be considered minimum criteria for evaluating such design.

9.8.13 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Signs and Advertising Devices. The provisions of Section 6.3 of this Zoning By-Law (Signs) is hereby adopted for the regulation and restriction of billboards, signs and other advertising devices within Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B.

9.8.15 Downtown Canton Subdistrict A/B; Moderate Income Units. As a condition for the grant of approval as-of-right or by special permit pursuant to this Section authorizing an increase in the otherwise permissible density or population

or intensity of a particular use in a proposed development pursuant to the requirements of this Section, at least ten percent (10%) of the dwelling units shall be deed restricted in perpetuity for occupancy by persons earning not more than eighty percent (80%) of the area median income as defined and regulated by the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC). The Special Permit requires that such moderate income housing units be integrated into the overall development so as to prevent the physical segregation of such units and otherwise shall be indistinguishable from market rate units.

Copies of said plans are available for public review at the offices of the Planning Board, Town Clerk, the Board of Selectmen, all in Memorial Hall, and at the research desk of the Canton Public Library and on the town web site, or take any other action in relation thereto.

NOTE: Aside from renumbering the language and content for Subdistrict C has not been modified.

9.8.16 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Purpose. Downtown Canton Subdistrict C is established for the accomplishment of the following purposes:

1. To promote the economic health and stability of the Town by encouraging development and economic investment that will generate employment and tax revenue.
2. To provide additional planning flexibility for projects located in and near Downtown Canton, including enhancing the coordination of the project with the environmental and natural features of the development site.
3. To permit and encourage mixed-use development, including but not limited to, Multi-family Dwellings, Fifty-Five Years of Age or Older Housing, offices, kindergarten and pre-schools, municipal uses, historic preservation, recreational uses, retail shops, and industrial uses.
4. To permit the use of new development standards, which will promote the desired changes in and near Downtown Canton.
5. To permit and encourage the development of open spaces which would be available for use by the general public.
6. To provide information on the potential impacts of a proposed development.
7. To enable the Special Permit Granting Authority (SGPA) to require adherence to "Development and Use Plans" in the granting of a special permit.

8. To provide for development in a manner that creates harmony between residential and non-residential neighborhoods, protects existing abutting neighborhoods, and minimizes the development impact on nearby neighborhoods, while conserving and enhancing environmental features, woodlands, wet areas, the Canton River, open spaces and areas of scenic views, beauty, and vistas such as, for example, the Viaduct.

9.8.17 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Definitions. For the special purposes of Downtown Canton Subdistrict C only, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings hereinafter indicated.

Applicant: The person or legal entity that applies for issuance of a special permit for permission to construct a Project that conforms to the requirements of this By-Law for Downtown Canton Subdistrict C. The Applicant must own or be the beneficial owner of all the land included in the proposed site, or have written authorization from the owner(s) to act on the owner's behalf or must hold an option or contract duly executed by the owner(s) giving the Applicant the right to acquire the land to be included in the site.

Buffer Area: An area within the Downtown Canton Subdistrict C adjacent to the

boundaries, streams, rivers, ponds, which may not be developed except in accordance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and its implementing regulations (MGL Chapter 131, Sections 40 and 40A, and 310 CMR 10.00) and other requirements herein.

Building Height: Building height shall be measured as set forth in this section 9.8 and measured as set forth in the State Building Code 780 CMR 101.0 et seq. Height shall be subject to the provisions of Section 4.3 of the By-Law except as otherwise provided in this Section 9.8.

Buildable Lot Area: The area of a Lot excluding any land defined as a Resource Area.

Common Open Land: An area of land containing no building, structure, parking areas, driveways or roadways other than those structures and/or facilities which are used for recreational and/or community use by the occupants of a Development Parcel or members of the public.

Development Agreement: A written agreement executed by the Board of Selectmen and the Applicant concerning the Project containing, without limitation, actions to be taken by the Applicant to mitigate potential adverse effects of the Project.

Development Parcel: One or more Lots within Downtown Canton Subdistrict C which together are designated as a Development Parcel on a Lot Development and Use Plan. The Lots comprising a Development Parcel need not be in the same ownership. Where the Development Parcel consists of more than a single Lot, the Lots, in combination, shall be treated as the Development Parcel, may be contiguous or non-contiguous, and shall be considered one 'Development Parcel'.

Development Schedule: A schedule showing the anticipated order and timing of construction and the sequence of the improvements to be built on the Downtown Canton Subdistrict C site, separated into stages where applicable.

Fifty-Five Years of Age or Older Housing: Housing facilities (including, without limitation, in independent or congregate facilities) for individuals fifty-five (55) years of age or older as allowed under Massachusetts General Laws c.151B, Section 4.

Gross Floor Area: Total floor area contained within exterior walls, excluding basement space, attic space and spaces used for heating and utilities and other mechanical apparatus, storage and/or automobile parking.

Lot: A single contiguous tract of land including at least the minimum amount of Buildable Lot Area required herein and located entirely within the Development Parcel and Downtown Canton Subdistrict C, which may be shown on an approved definitive subdivision plan under G.L. c. 41, Section 81K or an endorsed “approval not required” plan under G.L. c. 41, Section 81P. More than one building may be located on a Lot, subject to compliance with all applicable dimensional requirements of this Section 9.8.

Lot Development and Use Plan: A plan approved by the SPGA for the development and use of a particular Lot within a Development Parcel pursuant to the special permit process for the Downtown Canton Subdistrict C. A Lot Development and Use Plan shall comply with the plan contents requirements of Section 10.5.2 of the Zoning By-Law. The Special Permit process and the Site Plan Review process under Section 10.5.1 may occur contemporaneously.

Mixed-Use Development: A development that contains both residential and non-residential uses.

Professional Office: The office of one skilled in an occupation that primarily services clients or patients rather than customers including,

but not limited to, the office of a lawyer, doctor, dentist, architect, engineer, landscape architect, real estate agent, insurance agent, or the studio of an artist, musician, teacher, or the workroom of a dressmaker, milliner, or photographer in which retail sales are incidental to office use.

Project: A residential, non-residential or mixed-use development for which a Special Permit or Special Permits is sought pursuant to Section 9.8, the Downtown Canton Subdistrict C overlay provisions. The Project may be developed and constructed in multiple phases, subject to conditions to be set forth in the Special Permit(s).

Regulations: The applicable rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Appeals relative to special permits pursuant to M.G.L. c.40A, Section 9.

Resource Area: All land subject to jurisdiction under 310 CMR 10.02(1)(a) and (b) (which shall not include land subject to flooding or riverfront area).

Small Scale Retail: Retail stores with a gross floor area of 10,000 square feet or less.

Upland Acres: Land area not in a Resource Area.

All terms not defined in the provisions of this

Zoning By-Law related to the Downtown Canton Subdistrict C shall have the meanings ascribed to them in Section 11 of this Zoning By-Law.

9.8.18 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Scope of Authority. Downtown Canton Subdistrict C shall be an overlay district and shall not restrict the landowner’s rights relative to the underlying zoning districts. However, if the landowner elects to apply for a special permit under the provisions of this Section 9.8 applicable to Downtown Canton Subdistrict C, the development shall conform to the requirements of this section 9.8 for Downtown Canton Subdistrict C and shall not be required to conform to the requirements of the underlying zoning districts to the extent the Project is built pursuant to a Special Permit(s).

9.8.19 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Special Permit Granting Authority. The Board of Appeals is hereby designated as the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) for all purposes with respect to Projects within the Downtown Canton Subdistrict C pursued under this Section 9.8. All special permit applications shall conform to the provisions, of this Section 9.8 with respect to Downtown Canton Subdistrict C and the Board of Appeals’ Rules and Regulations adopted pursuant to M.G.L. c.40A, Section 9 governing the administration of applications for special permits. In determining whether the criteria for grant of a

special permit stated in this Zoning By-Law have been satisfied, the SPGA may grant a special permit applicable to a Project in Downtown Canton Subdistrict C only if the SPGA finds that the adverse impacts of the Project will be outweighed by the benefits of the project to the Town, including without limitation any mitigation and/or other benefits to be provided to the Town by the Applicant pursuant to any Development Agreement between the Applicant and the Town. Notwithstanding, the foregoing, any mitigation required under the Performance Standards contained in Section 6.7 of this Zoning By-Law may be found by the SPGA to be satisfied by the terms of a Development Agreement between the Town and the Applicant.

The SPGA may in its discretion waive any of the Standards and Criteria stated in Section 9.8.40, any of the Densities stated in Section 9.8.41 and any of the Setbacks and Yard Regulations stated in Section 9.8.42 if the SPGA finds that such waiver satisfies the criteria stated in Section 10.4.2 of this Zoning By-Law for grant of a special permit and the general conditions stated in Section 10.5.5 of this Zoning By-Law for approval of a site plan.

9.8.20 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Applicability. In Downtown Canton Subdistrict C, no building shall be constructed or externally

enlarged, and no use shall be expanded in ground area, or established in an existing building except in conformity with a special permit issued by the Board of Appeals and a Lot Development and Use Plan that bears the endorsement of approval by the Board of Appeals. Requirements and Procedures for approval of such Site Development and Use Plan shall be in accordance with Section 10.5 and this Section.

In the event of damage or destruction to any buildings or structures originally constructed pursuant to a Special Permit and Lot Development and Use Plan issued hereunder, such buildings and structures may be rebuilt and restored consistent with the original Special Permit and such Lot Development and Use Plan without the requirement of obtaining a new Special Permit or Lot Development and Use Plan from the SPGA.

9.8.21 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Uses Permitted by Special Permit. Within Downtown Canton Subdistrict C, the SPGA may issue a special permit authorizing the following uses. No building or structure shall be designed, arranged or constructed and no building, structure, or land shall be used, in whole or in part, for any purpose other than for one or more of the uses herein set forth as permissible by special permit.

A. Residential Uses:

1. Multi-family Dwellings, including, without

limitation, Townhouse style dwellings, Mid-rise style units, and ancillary facilities and amenities.

2. Fifty-Five Years of Age or Older Housing and ancillary facilities and amenities.

3. Accessory structures (whether at, below, or above grade) and surface parking, driveways and roadways, serving any uses within the Development Parcel.

4. All other residential uses allowed by right or by special permit in the underlying zoning district.

B. Non-Residential Uses:

1. Small-scale Retail stores.

2. Offices, including salesrooms and showrooms, consumer service establishments, business and professional offices, executive and administrative offices, banks and other institutions.

3. Restaurants with or without the service of alcoholic beverages (provided that if alcoholic beverages are served any bar area does not comprise more than thirty-five percent (35%) of the floor area of the restaurant), including both indoor and outdoor seating.

4. Banks or similar financial institution, including drive-through facilities.

5. Child Care Centers, Pre-Schools and Kindergartens.

6. Recreational facilities.

7. Private and public open spaces.

8. Municipal uses.

9. Accessory structures (whether at, below, or above grade) and surface parking, driveways and roadways, serving any uses within the Development Parcel.

10. All uses allowed by right or by special permit in the underlying zoning district.

C. The following uses are specifically prohibited within Downtown Canton Subdistrict C:

1. Fast food establishments.

2. Drive-through for the sale of food. Any other drive-through, with the exception of banks and financial institutions noted above, may be authorized by the SPGA as part of a special permit for a Downtown Canton Subdistrict C Project.

D. For Projects permitted in the Downtown Canton Subdistrict C there shall be no non-resident deliveries or shipments between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday; and there shall be no non-resident deliveries or shipments between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on weekends.

9.8.22 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Standards and Criteria.

A. In addition to the specific criteria contained within Section 10.4, the SPGA shall issue a special permit for development within Downtown Canton Subdistrict C only after consideration of the project's compliance with the following additional criteria:

1. Adequacy of the site in terms of the size of the proposed use(s);
2. Adequacy of the provision of open space, its accessibility to the general public, and/or its association with adjacent or proximate open space areas;
3. Suitability of the site for the proposed use(s);
4. Impact on traffic and pedestrian flow and safety;
5. Impact on the visual character of the neighborhood;
6. Adequacy of utilities, including sewage disposal, water supply and storm water drainage; and
7. Degree to which the proposed project complies with the Downtown Canton Design Guidelines and the provisions of this Section 9.8.

B. Minimum Development Size:

1. Development Parcel Area Requirement:

a. The minimum Development Parcel area is twenty-five acres of Buildable Lot Area determined as of the time of approval and endorsement of the application for the first Lot Development and Use Plan.

b. No portion of a public way or public street, as defined by this Zoning By-Law may be included in computing minimum required Buildable Lot Area.

2. Lot Area Requirement:

a. The minimum lot area is 10,000 sq. ft. of Buildable Lot Area.

b. No portion of a public way or public street, as defined by this Zoning By-Law may be included in computing the minimum required Buildable Lot Area.

C. Building Coverage:

1. Development Parcel Requirement: No building on the Development Parcel shall be constructed so as to cover, together with any other buildings on the Development Parcel, more than thirty percent (30%) of the Buildable Lot Area of the Development Parcel.

2. Lot Requirement: No building on a Lot shall be constructed so as to cover, together

with any other building on the Lot, more than fifty percent (50%) of the Buildable Lot Area.

D. Minimum Frontage and Access:

1. Development Parcel Requirement:

- a. Each Development Parcel shall have a minimum frontage of two hundred fifty (250) feet on a street or way and at least two means of ingress/egress.
- b. Each means of required ingress/egress shall have a paved width of no less than twenty-four (24) feet.
- c. Lot Requirement: Each Lot shall have a minimum frontage of fifty (50) feet on a street or way.

E. Transition Area: Where a portion of the Development Parcel abuts another parcel which is zoned for residential purposes, a "Transition Area" of fifteen (15) feet or a screen wall of adequate height shall be provided at the perimeter of the Development Parcel along the border with such abutting parcel. The Applicant shall file a landscape plan, prepared by a Massachusetts Registered Landscape Architect that demonstrates in the opinion of the Board of Appeals sufficient plantings to provide adequate screening within such Transition Area. Buildable Lot Areas or portions thereof that area also designated as Transition Areas shall be included in the calculation of

"Common Open Land".

- a. The SPGA may reduce the width of the required "Transition Area" and modify other landscape requirements where the SPGA finds that suitable screening will be provided by other means such as fencing or topography, and that such reduction will not have material adverse impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

9.8.23 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Density.

No building or structure shall be designed, arranged or constructed and no building, structure, or land shall be used, in whole or in part, which exceeds the densities specified below for residential and non-residential uses.

A. Residential Uses

Maximum permissible densities are as follows:

- 1. Multi-family Dwellings including, without limitation, Townhouse and Mid-rise style dwellings and ancillary facilities and amenities:
One dwelling unit per 2,600 square feet of Buildable Lot Area in a Development Parcel.
- 2. Fifty-Five Years of Age or Older Housing and ancillary facilities and amenities:
One dwelling unit per 2,600 square feet of Buildable Lot Area in a Development Parcel.

B. Non-Residential Uses

Maximum permissible density is as follows:

Two thousand (2,000) square feet of Gross Floor Area per 10,000 square feet of Buildable Lot Area in the Development Parcel.

9.8.24 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Setbacks and Yard Regulations for Buildings.

No building shall be constructed so as to be nearer to the line of any street than the required setback distance or nearer to the sidelines of its lot than the required side yard width or nearer to the rear line of its lot than the required rear yard depth specified below. The required setback distance shall be measured from the nearest exterior line of the street in question.

A. Development Parcel

Each Development Parcel shall have a side yard setback of not less than ten (10) feet; except that if the side yard abuts land owned by the Town, or the East Branch of the Neponset River dam or diversion channel, of the Plymouth Rubber triple drainage culvert, such side yard shall be not less than five (5) feet. There shall be a front yard setback for any Development Parcel along Revere Street of no less than five (5) feet but there shall be no front yard setback requirement for any internal subdivision road within any Development Parcel.

- 1. Each Development Parcel shall have a

rear yard setback of not less than five (5) feet.

B. Lot

Each lot shall have a minimum side and rear yard of fifteen (15) feet except that if a side or rear yard abuts land owned by the Town, or the Canton River dam diversion channel, or the Plymouth Rubber triple drainage culvert, such side or rear yard shall be not less than five (5) feet. There shall be no front yard setback requirement for a Lot.

C. Additional Setback Requirements

1. The SPGA may waive the setback distance where it finds such a waiver appropriate because of specific physical circumstances, such as irregular lot lines or other natural features that create open space or buffers.

2. No commercial storage or display of goods, products, materials or equipment, vending machines or similar commercial devices shall be allowed within the required front, side, or rear yard setback; provided however, that the foregoing shall not be interpreted so as to prohibit the placement in any such yards of HVAC, mechanical, plumbing, and fire protection equipment, transformers or similar equipment utilized in connection with the operation of any buildings in any portion of the Development Parcel.

3. No Lot on which a building is located shall be reduced or changed in size of shape so that the building or Lot fails to comply with the Lot Area, frontage, building coverage, yard setback, or other dimensional provisions, of this Section.

9.8.25 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Height Regulations. No building shall be constructed to exceed the height of (a) forty-eight feet (48'); or (b) a total of four (4) stories inclusive of enclosed parking, whichever is lower.

9.8.26 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Common Open Land and Public Access.

A. Common Open Land:

Each Project shall have a minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the Development Parcel designated as Common Open Land for use by the occupants of the Development Parcel.

B. Public Access:

A Project shall provide pedestrian access walkways to and from natural resource areas within the Development Parcel within an area or areas shown on a Lot Development and Use Plan.

9.8.27 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Parking and Loading Requirements. For each Project there shall be provided and maintained improved off-street automobile parking in connection with the erection, establishment or increase in units or dimensions of buildings, structures and uses, in the

following amounts:

A. For dwelling units: 1.5 parking spaces per each dwelling unit, except for Fifty-Five Years of Age or Older Housing units which shall require 1 parking space per unit.

B. For restaurants and other on premises eating and drinking establishments: one (1) parking space for each (3) seats, plus one (1) parking space for every three (3) employees on the largest shift, subject to the discretion of the SPGA to allow fewer parking spaces where the SPGA finds that fewer parking spaces are needed.

C. For retail stores and offices including salesrooms and showrooms, consumer service establishments, public administration buildings, business and professional offices, executive and administrative offices, banks and other financial institutions: one (1) parking space for each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of Gross Floor Area.

D. Uses not listed in this Section 9.8.45 Parking Requirements, Subsections (A), (B), (C) or (D) shall comply with the parking space requirements of the Zoning By-Law Section 6.1 Off Street Parking.

E. In the case of mixed-use projects, the parking spaces required shall be the sum of the requirements for the various individual uses, computed separately in accordance with this Section 9.8.45. Parking spaces for one use

shall not provide the required parking spaces for any other use unless the SPGA finds that the need for parking occurs at different times.

F. Off-street automobile parking spaces, to the extent required in this section, may be provided either on the same lot or premises with the parking generator or on any lot or premises associated therewith a substantial portion of which, at least, is within three hundred (300) feet of such generator.

Off-street parking facilities and connecting drives between such facilities and the street shall be designed to insure the safety and convenience of persons traveling within or through the parking area, and between the parking facility and the street. The provisions of Section 6.1.6 of this Zoning By-Law as to General Design shall be considered the minimum criteria for evaluating such design.

Below grade automobile parking may be permitted within the basements of buildings provided that such structured basement automobile parking is exclusively reserved the motor vehicles of residents or employees of the Project.

G. In addition to the requirements for automobile parking spaces there shall also be provided for each building or group of buildings sufficient off-street loading space to insure that all loading operations take place off of the public way. Loading spaces and

access drives leading to loading spaces shall be so designed that vehicles to be loaded or unloaded are not required to maneuver in the public way to enter or leave the designated loading area. The provisions of Section 6.2, Loading Areas, shall be considered minimum criteria for evaluating such design.

9.8.28 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Signs and Advertising Devices. The provisions of Section 6.3 of this Zoning By-Law (Signs) is hereby adopted for the regulation and restriction of billboards, signs and other advertising devices within Downtown Canton Subdistrict C.

9.8.29 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Certified Acoustical Barriers. Except for demolition, infrastructure construction, renovation or repair of existing buildings and structures and construction of new buildings and structures, no activity or use shall be allowed which causes exterior noise levels to exceed a day-night average sound level of 65 decibels (65 L dn) at the Lot line; no dwelling unit shall be located where exterior noise levels exceed a day-night average sound level of 65 decibels (65 L dn); and no dwelling unit shall be constructed which allows interior noise levels to exceed a day-night average sound level of 45 decibels (45 L dn). The day-night average sound level (L dn) is the 24-hour average sound level, in decibels, resulting from the accumulation of noise from all sources contributing to the external noise environment of the site with 10 decibels added to sound

levels occurring from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The day-night average sound level (L dn) shall be determined in accordance with The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 24-Housing and Urban Development, Part 51 Environmental Criteria and Standards (24 CFR 51.100-51.106).

9.8.30 Downtown Canton Subdistrict C; Moderate Income Units. As a condition for the grant of a special permit pursuant to this Section authorizing an increase in the otherwise permissible density or population or intensity of a particular use in a proposed development pursuant to the requirements of this Section, at least ten percent (10%) of the dwelling units shall be deed restricted in perpetuity for occupancy by persons earning not more than eighty percent (80%) of the area median income as defined and regulated by the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC). The Special Permit may require that such moderate income housing units be integrated into the overall development so as to prevent the physical segregation of such units and otherwise shall be indistinguishable from market rate units.

Copies of said plans are available for public review at the offices of the Planning Board, Town Clerk, the Board of Selectmen, all in Memorial Hall, and at the research desk of the Canton Public Library and on the town web site, or take any other action in relation thereto.

Downtown Canton

Design Standards and Guidelines

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
June 2023



Downtown Canton Design Standards and Guidelines

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Background

The original Town of Canton Design Review Guidelines were adopted by the Planning Board on July 8, 2003. A Town Meeting vote in March 2002 created the Canton Center Design Review Board under a new Zoning Bylaw. The purpose of review by the Design Review Board is to preserve and enhance Downtown Canton's cultural, economic and historical resources by providing a detailed design review of the exterior appearance of buildings and sites located within the boundaries of the Canton Center Economic Opportunity District.

The guidelines provide advice for building owners, tenants, and developers and provide guidance for the Design Review Board when reviewing applications.



Process for Design Review

Any project that meets the following conditions is required for submission for design review:

- A sign permit;
- Site plan approval;
- A special permit in the Canton Center Economic Opportunity District; or
- Any construction, alteration, demolition, or removal of a structure or site.

The first step for any project is to review the design review guidelines and the Town of Canton Zoning Bylaw to understand applicable zoning requirements and design guidelines. Working with a professional architect, landscape architect, civil engineer, and signage designer, among other professionals will help develop projects in compliance with all applicable regulations.

A pre-application meeting with the Planning Department is recommended prior to officially submitting the project application for review.

The timeline for review is based upon when a project application is submitted to the Town of Canton. In accordance with the Zoning Bylaw, the Design Review Board shall file its Findings and Recommendations Report with the Board of Appeals within 30 days following the date of materials distribution.

The following materials may be required with your application, these items will be confirmed at the pre-application meeting:

- A site plan
- A landscape plan
- Building elevation drawings
- Photos of the current site
- Photos of the surrounding properties
- Renderings of the project in context

It is best to consult with the Planning Department as early in the process as possible.

The Design Review Board will review the plans during its public meetings and then will forward its recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Design Review Board strives to follow the Design Guidelines, but the guidelines cannot anticipate every circumstance. The Design Review Board may waive compliance with a guideline or encourage creativity to address an issue beyond recommendations of the guidelines, or to address unanticipated circumstances. Nonetheless, the burden remains on the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed design would enhance Downtown Canton.

Compliance with the Canton Zoning Bylaw/Other Regulations

These guidelines do not supersede the Zoning Bylaw or other applicable town or state regulations. Recommendations contained in these guidelines are in addition to all applicable rules and regulations.

Purpose of Canton's Downtown Zoning

Canton's Zoning Bylaw states the Downtown Canton zoning is established for the accomplishment of the following purposes:

1. To promote the economic health and stability of the Town by encouraging development and economic investment that will generate employment and tax revenue.
2. To provide additional planning flexibility for projects located in Downtown Canton, including enhancing the coordination of the project with the surrounding Downtown context.
3. To encourage mixed-use development with a non-residential ground floor that is vibrant with activity and supports a broad range of uses.

4. To permit the use of new development standards and design guidelines, which will promote the desired changes in Downtown Canton to strengthen a sense of place.
5. To encourage the development of open spaces, plazas, and expanded sidewalk areas that would be available for use by the general public and enhance walkability.
6. To provide information on the potential impacts of a proposed development.
7. To enable the Special Permit Granting Authority (SGPA) to require adherence to "Development and Use Plans" in the granting of a special permit.
8. To provide for development in a manner that creates harmony between residential and non-residential neighborhoods, protects existing abutting neighborhoods, and minimizes development impact on abutting properties, while conserving and enhancing environmental features, open spaces, and areas of scenic views, beauty, and vistas.
9. To enhance and strengthen connections to nearby destinations and amenities.

Purpose of Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines

The design guidelines provide additional and specific guidance beyond the zoning bylaw that is applicable to any new investment in the Downtown. The design guidelines are intended to strengthen the compatibility of new investments in Downtown with to best contribute to the overall vision and goals for the Downtown including:

- Downtown Canton will have a strong sense of place.
- It will be walkable, vibrant with activity, have a broad range of uses, and connect to nearby destinations.
- Strengthen convenient and safe access to Downtown including parking.



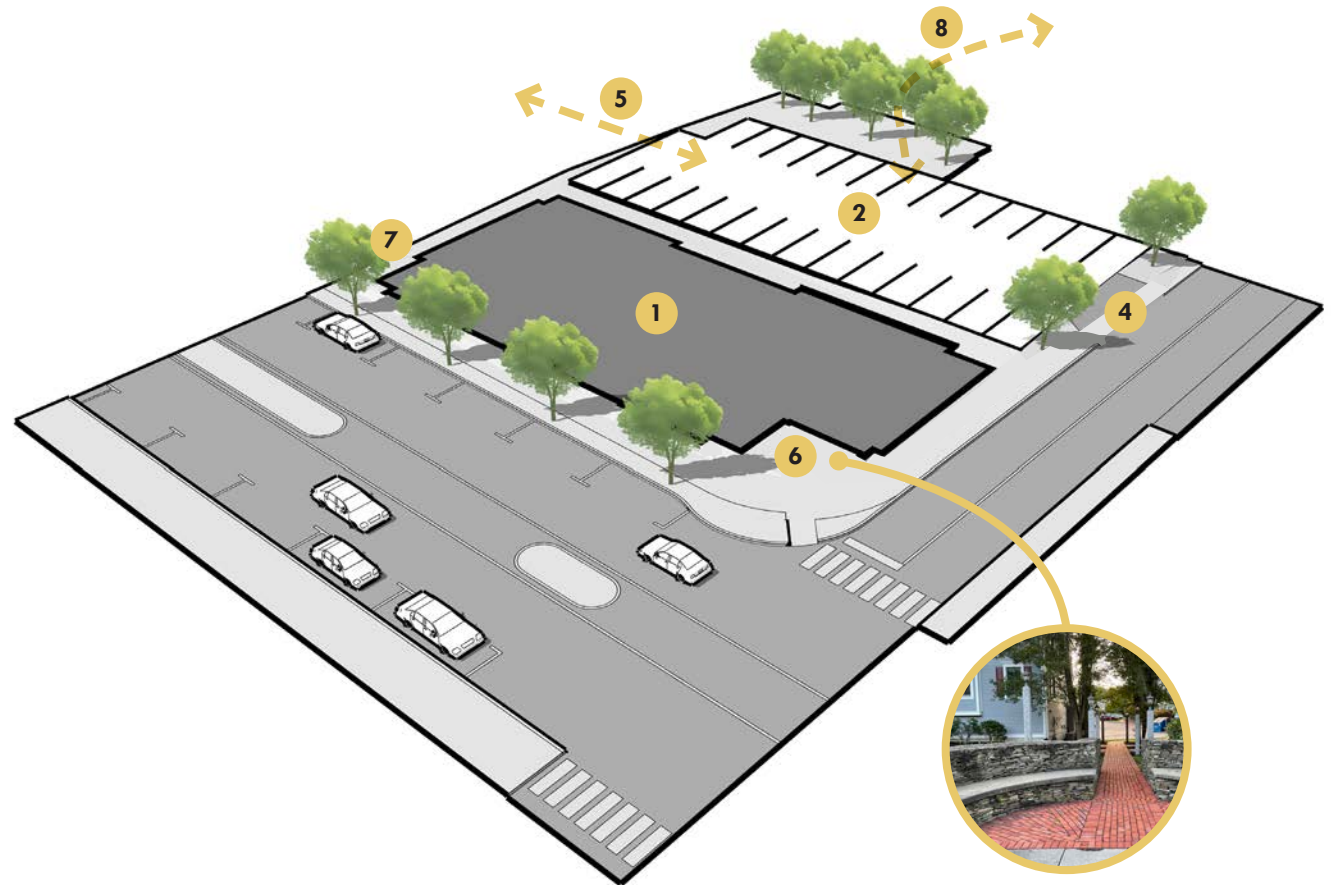
Downtown Canton Design Standards and Guidelines

Site Design

Design standards and guidelines regarding the site focus on the placement and configuration of the building on the property, the location and configuration of parking on the property, the location and configuration of access, relationship of the property to adjacent public realm or private properties, and the treatment of ground surfaces.

Specific Site Design Standards:

- 1 Building Placement:** The building shall be placed at the front of the property and oriented along the street to be the most prominent feature of the property and define the primary and secondary street frontages.
- 2 Parking Placement:** Parking is required to be located to the rear of the building or underground integrating with the foundation of the building.
- 3 Integrated Access Drives:** All access drives shall be designed to be secondary to the sidewalk. Sidewalks shall be continuous and uninterrupted in materials, elevation, and grading.
- 4 Compatible with Context:** The site design including the selection of materials and products shall contribute to a cohesive Downtown environment and strengthen the sense of place.



Specific Site Design Guidelines:

- 5 Create Shared Access:** Site access that creates connections to an adjacent side street or property should be provided whenever possible. Access directly to Washington Street should be minimized.
- 6 Expand the Public Realm:** Where the property is adjacent to a public sidewalk or plaza, the private property shall treat the adjacent area as a continuation of the public sidewalk or plaza with materials and amenities and extend the public realm.
- 7 Complement Adjacent Properties:** Where the property is adjacent to a private property with an outdoor amenity, consider ways to connect to or extend this amenity to strengthen or complement it.
- 8 Extend Connections:** Create paths through the property where helpful connections can be made to trails, features, parking, or other destinations.

Frontage

Design standards and guidelines regarding the frontage of the property are focused on the characteristics of the space between the front of the building and the sidewalk.

Specific Frontage Design Standards:

- 1 **Integrated with Public Realm:** The private property between the front lot line and the building shall be integrated and indistinguishable from the adjacent public realm.
- 2 **Coordinated Materials:** The surface treatments of sidewalks and plazas on the private property shall extend the materials, details, and design features of the adjacent public realm.
- 3 **Extended Sidewalk Area:** The space between the building and the street shall be an extension of the sidewalk and public realm.

Specific Frontage Design Guidelines:

- 4 **Extended Landscape:** The extended frontage area should be used to extend the streetscape and landscape of the public realm into the property and specifically to increase the number of shade trees in Downtown Canton.
- 5 **Expand Plazas and Outdoor Spaces:** Where possible, the frontage area should expand into modest plazas and outdoor spaces that may offer seating or other amenities that are available for general use in the Downtown or to serve the ground floor uses on the property.
- 6 **Expand Outdoor Amenities:** The space between the building and street should include expanded amenities such as outdoor seating, benches, street trees, landscaping, lighting, or areas to lock bicycles

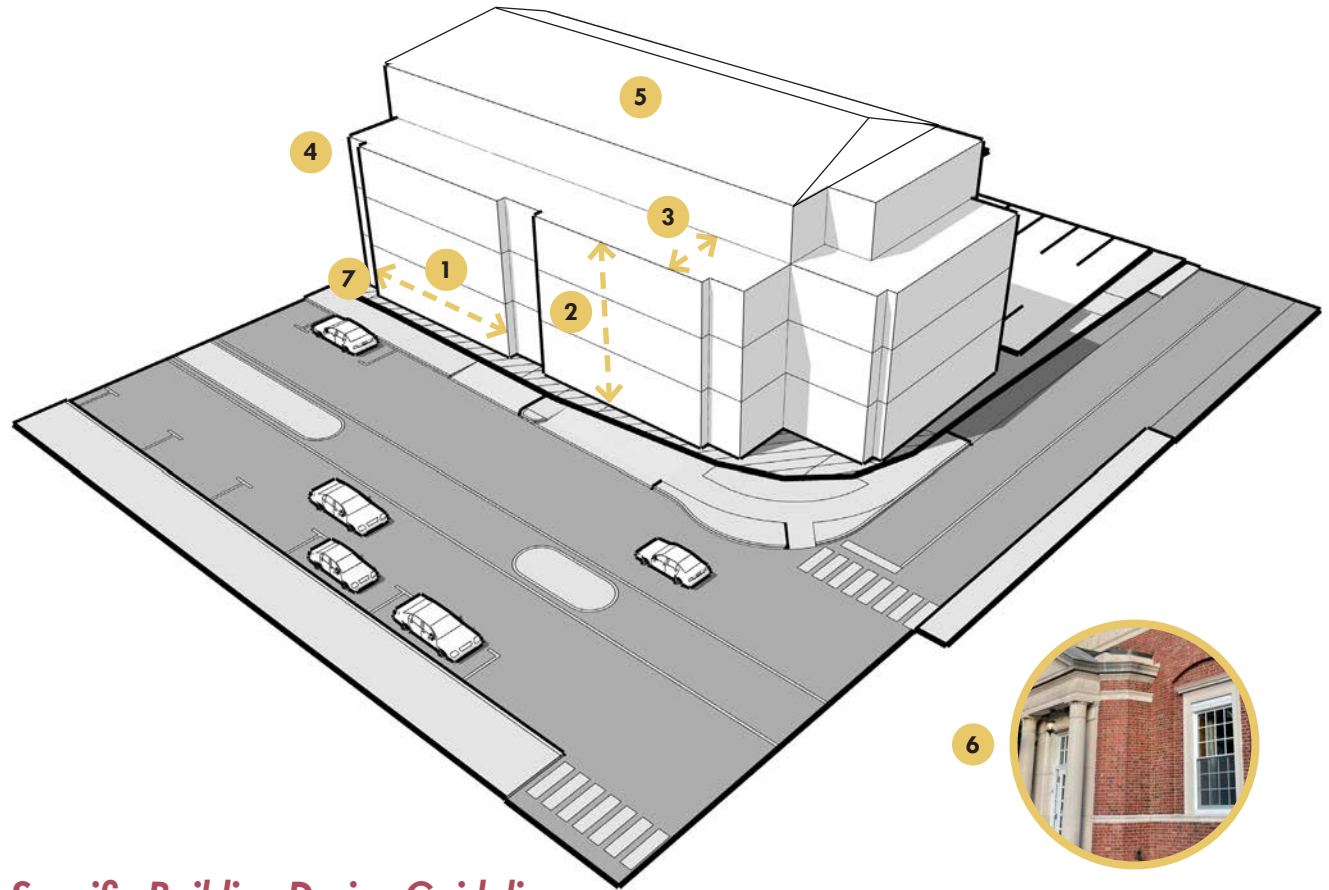


Building

Design standards and guidelines regarding the building are focused on the building shape and form, treatment of ground floor, upper floors, entries, windows, architectural character, roof pitch.

Specific Building Design Standards:

- 1 **Building Scale Horizontally:** The building massing and form shall be designed to reduce the scale of the building by breaking the horizontal building mass into smaller “bays.” No bay shall be wider than 40 feet.
- 2 **Building Scale Vertically:** The building massing and form shall be designed to reduce the scale of the building by breaking the vertical building mass to reduce the perceived height of the building. For example, a stepback at the top floor reduces the visual impact of the height of that floor.
- 3 **Step Back:** If the bonus height is used, the fourth floor must step back 10 feet from the front and sides of the third floor.
- 4 **Relationship to Context:** Building height and massing should respond to and complement the abutting context by responding to the height of surrounding buildings with a change in building massing, a step back or feature of the architectural design or building materials.



Specific Building Design Guidelines:

- 5 **Sloped Roof:** When possible, buildings should have a sloped roof. The sloped roof should be interrupted by dormers, gable ends, sheds, or other roof features that reduce the sense of scale of the roof.
- 6 **Complement Historic Context:** Consider the design features and proportions of historic commercial facades in the district. Respect the scale and proportion of traditional storefronts with storefronts occurring within a structural building frame. Storefront units should include

well proportioned elements that are consistent between bays in the building frame. These elements should include display windows, sign bands, cornice lines, columns, solid window bases, doors, and optional features such as awnings.

- 7 **Building Setbacks:** Building setbacks should reflect or complement the adjacent building context either by providing the same setback seamlessly between properties or by designing the difference in setbacks as a feature of the property.

Facades, Windows and Doorways

Design standards and guidelines regarding the facades, windows and doors are focused on the treatment of ground floor, upper floors, entries, windows, and architectural character.

Specific Facades, Windows and Doors Design Standards:

- 1 Active Ground Floor:** The ground floor must place active uses with transparent windows toward the primary frontage. The ground floor facade must be a minimum of 60% transparent glass (including window trim, sills, spacers, and mullions).
- 2 Facade Transparency:** The ground floor shall be more transparent with glass storefronts showing active uses within the building. The upper levels shall be less transparent and shift from a storefront system to punched window openings.
- 3 Facade Visual Interest:** Any side of the building that is visible from a street or sidewalk shall have windows. Blank walls do not contribute to a vibrant downtown environment. Where a blank wall length greater than 40 feet is unavoidable it shall be location of an art installation or mural.



Specific Facades, Windows and Doors Design Guidelines:

- 4 Division of Facades:** Break up facades with column lines and bays. This helps to distinguish tenants and storefronts. Give similar attention to the side facade on corner properties.
- 5 Distinct Ground Floor:** Maintain the distinction between upper and lower floors for multi-story buildings. In traditional downtowns, storefronts with large windows were on the first floor and residences with smaller windows were on the second floor.
- 6 Window Proportions:** In general, all windows should be taller than they are wide. This is true of windows on the first as well as second floor. This mimics human proportions and provides a sense of balance to the proportions of the facade.
- 7 Window Relationships:** Windows on top floors should not be larger than windows on the first floor. Windows on the top and bottom floors should align and be consistent.

in proportion, shape, and style overall. Use traditional small panes or “divided light” windows on upper levels only.

- 8 Recessed Doorways:** Recessed doorways are preferred. A recessed doorway helps to break up the building façade, provides a welcoming space, provides protection from sun and rain, and reduces the amount of sidewalk interruption for an out swinging door. Where a recessed doorway is not possible, an awning can have a similar effect. Provide adequate lighting at night for the doorway.
- 9 Coordinated Entrances:** Entrances to upper floors should be separated from street-level shop entries. A doorway to upper floors should not break up the cohesiveness of the ground floor façade with a well-designed storefront.
- 10 Integrated Garage Doors:** If a garage door is a part of the front or side facade it shall be integrated into the design of the ground floor with garage door materials that are of a high quality and complementary to the materials of the building.
- 11 Coordinated Address Numbers:** Address numbers should be prominently displayed and integrated into the design of the facade.



Specific Storefront Design Guidelines:

- 12 Storefront Design:** Provide large display windows on the first floor to contribute to interest and vitality. Sill heights for street windows should not be higher than two feet above street level. Tops of windows should be at least eight feet above grade. Include transom windows above doors where possible. At least 50 percent of the area of entrance doors should also be clear glass.
- 13 Active Ground Floor Uses:** Orient interior uses and activity to place visually interesting or active uses near the storefront windows.

Materials and Color

Design guidelines regarding the materials and color are intended to encourage complementing the context of the Downtown and strengthening the cohesiveness of the district.

Specific Materials and Color Design Guidelines:

- 1 Traditional Material Selection:** Use traditional materials - Wood, brick, and cast concrete are all traditional materials in downtown Canton. Historically, buildings in Canton used copper, bronze and cast-iron for flashing, door hardware, lighting hardware, and other details. Colored and striped canvas awnings, bearing the store name, were common in downtown at the turn of the century. At the edges of downtown Canton, where residences predominate, wood and brick work best.
- 2 Traditional Color Selection:** Select colors from a traditional palette of Colonial and Victorian colors. Victorian styles used many colors, generally with a dark body (olive green, maroon, navy blue) and decorative trim. The Colonial style used lighter colors with lighter trims. Colonial colors include white, ivory, yellow and light grays. For additional assistance in color selection, refer to historical color paint palettes such as Benjamin Moore's palettes.



- 3 Consistent and Coordinated Theme:** Use a single color scheme across all stores within a building. Use color to set off decorative details from the base tone of the building. Bright colors should only be used as accents.

- 4 Legacy and Durability:** Construct buildings to last. Durable materials and high quality craftsmanship is the best investment.

Residential Character Buildings

Design guidelines regarding residential character buildings are intended to guide the integration of existing and historic residential structures into the Downtown through a change of use to commercial or through the renovation of the structure to accommodate a mix of uses including commercial uses.

Specific Residential Character Buildings Design Guidelines:

- 1 Compatible Conversion:** When renovating or reusing a residential building for commercial use, maintain the building's residential characteristics. These buildings provide a transition from the more commercial/urban downtown to the residential areas.
- 2 Sensitive to Residential Context:** New buildings outside of the immediate downtown should contain characteristics of residential structures, with wood siding, sloped roofs, and well-landscaped lawns.
- 3 Complementary Signage:** Install a free-standing sign. This is preferred over a sign on the building, if space permits in the front yard.
- 4 Distinct Frontage:** When the building is set back from the sidewalk, the setback should be nicely landscaped and kept green or contribute additional seating areas or modest exterior plazas.



- 5 Complementary Landscape:** If little or no setback from the sidewalk exists, provide window boxes and other residential-style treatments.
- 6 Screen Parking:** Existing parking should be removed from in front of the building and

reduced to the side of the building to screen the parking from the property frontage. Integrate landscape with the parking area and reduce the driveway width and interruption of the sidewalk.

Parking

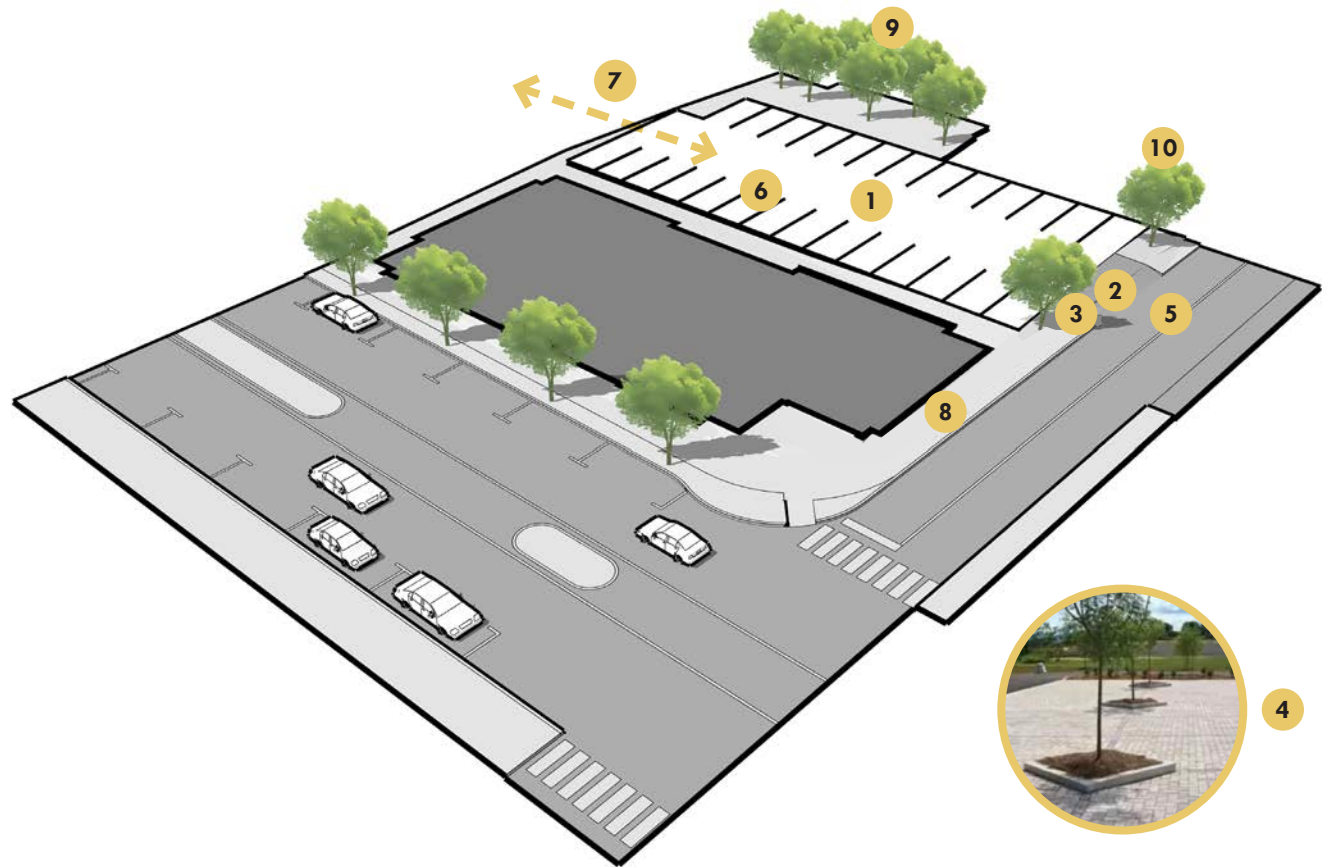
Design standards and guidelines regarding parking are focused on configuration of parking, access, screening, and the integration of landscape.

Specific Parking Design Standards:

- 1 **Parking Location:** All parking shall be located to the rear of the building or in some circumstances designed to be integrated with the foundation of the building with integrated ramp access to parking below grade.
- 2 **Efficient Parking Access:** Access to parking shall be as efficient as possible and reduce conflict with sidewalks.
- 3 **Minimize Sidewalk Disruption:** Minimize the width of curb cuts and driveways, with a preference for the narrowest width possible.

Specific Parking Design Guidelines:

- 4 **Improved Parking Design:** Parking lots should be designed as an outdoor plaza integrating plaza materials, landscape and shade trees.
- 5 **Side Street/Property Access:** Parking access should be from the side of the property either directly connecting to a side street, or connecting to an adjacent private property.
- 6 **Efficient Parking Layout:** Parking layouts should be as efficient as possible with a preference for a double loaded parking bay with 90 degree parking where it will fit.



- 7 **Connected Access:** Multiple properties should connect rear parking areas as possible.
- 8 **Pedestrian Connections:** Provide an attractive and accessible pedestrian connection from the parking area to the building's front entry.
- 9 **Screen Parking:** The visibility of parking should be minimized by appropriate landscaping and screening including fences, stone walls, plantings or an earth berm. Screening should be at least 3 feet high.
- 10 **Enhance Parking Landscape:** Parking areas should be landscaped beyond the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw. All rows

of parking spaces should be divided by landscaped bays and/or interrupted by a landscape island.

- 11 **Focus Parking Lighting:** Direct light downward in the parking area and direct and shield it to prevent spill-over onto other properties or upward to the night sky.
- 12 **Planned Snow Removal:** Downtown parking, sidewalk, and hardscape surface areas should be viewed as valuable year-round assets. A snow removal plan should be developed for each area. Ideally these plans would involve removing snow to off-site locations or melting it.

Automobile Services

Downtown Center has several gas stations and service garages. As Downtown Canton continues to evolve and strengthen, these properties should be improved to better support a walkable and active Downtown environment.

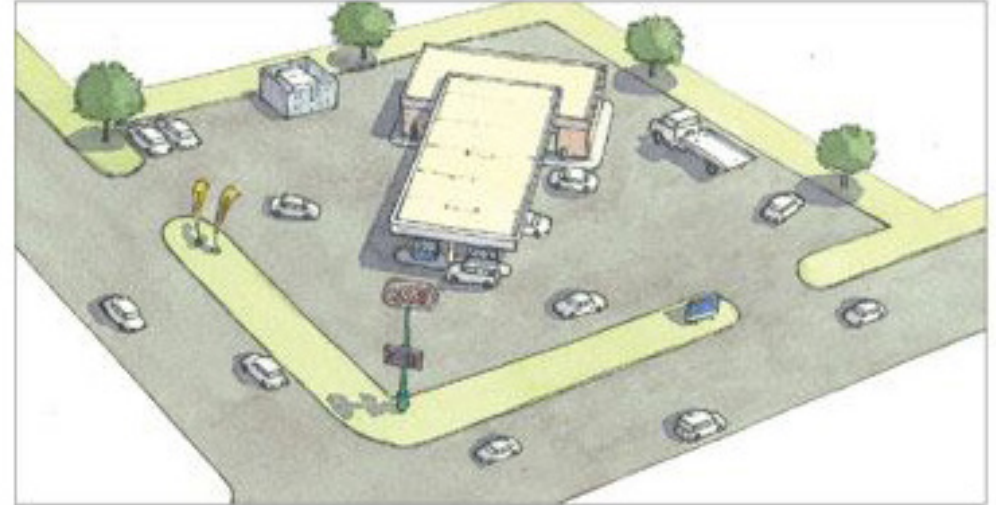
Specific Automobile Services Design Guidelines:

- 1 **Redevelopment for Downtown:** If a full redevelopment of a gas station or auto service property occurs, it would be best to reconstruct it in a “gas backward” configuration. In this configuration the building is located at the frontage of the property as any other building would be in the downtown. Access to the rear of the property occurs on either side of the building to create efficient vehicular circulation to gas pumps or service garages located to the rear.
- 2 **Compatible Canopy:** The canopy should relate architecturally to the building and should not overpower the building.
- 3 **Compatible Themes:** Building and signage colors should complement, not contrast with, adjacent buildings. The use of bright colors on the building, canopy or on the pumps is discouraged.
- 4 **Sensitive Lighting:** Site lighting should be directed downward and shielded.

BEFORE



Existing Gas Station



AFTER



Proposed Addition



Mixed-use addition with corner store

Source: Urban Sprawl Repair Kit by Galina Tahchieva

Signage

Design standards and guidelines regarding signage are focused on the location and design of signs. Compelling and legible signs are not necessarily the biggest or brightest, but the clearest and most legible. Good sign design considers all of the following factors: scale, layout, composition, materials, color, letter size, graphics and logos, typeface, borders, installation, placement, lighting, and context.

Specific Signage Design Standards:

- 1 Consistent Sign Band:** In order to strengthen the downtown environment, signage shall be attached to the building at a consistent height above the ground floor storefront system in a “sign band” area.

Specific Signage Design Guidelines:

- 2 Preferred Sign Types:** Sign types preferred for ground floor storefronts include wall signs and blade signs.
- 3 Preferred Sign Location:** Place the sign in an area that will not conflict with building details such as cornices, arches, lintels, pediments, windows, pilasters, etc. Preferable locations are the sign band, above a doorway, or centered above a storefront.
- 4 Complementary Sign Scale:** Signs should be of a size that is consistent among multiple

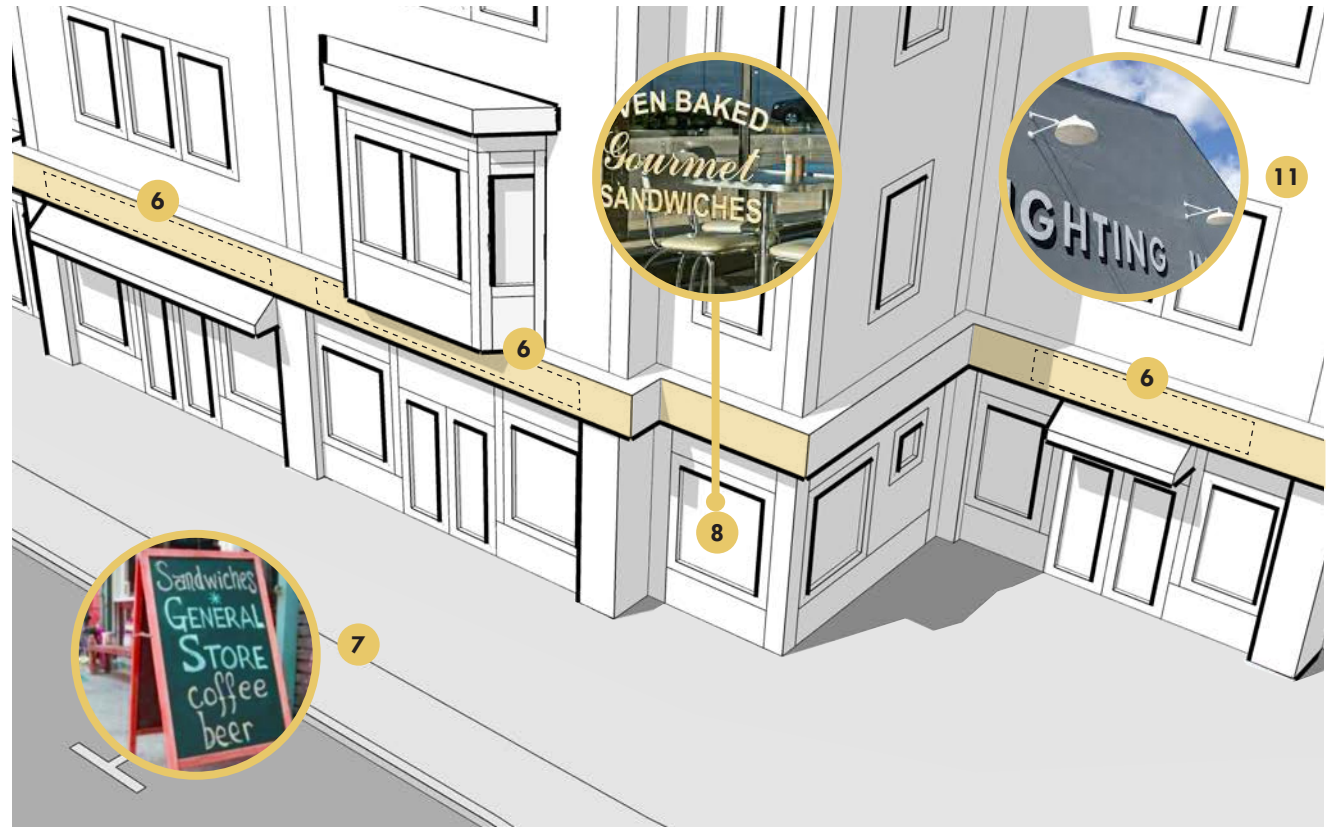


signs and sized to complement the building scale. Scale the sign to best fit the building. The size of a sign should not overpower the building. The maximum allowed sign size in the Zoning Bylaw may be too large for the proportions of some smaller buildings.

- 5 Preferred Sign Materials:** Sign materials and colors should be traditional and natural materials. Letters affixed directly onto a building are not recommended in most instances. Wood signs are encouraged.

Wood signs can be painted, carved, or have raised wood letters. Other options include metal (copper, bronze, brass, stainless steel) for backing or lettering. Plastic signs are not recommended. Colors should be muted, with the background and lettering contrasting. A sign with a dark background and lighter color lettering is preferred and is generally easier to read. Limit the number of colors to two to three per sign.

- 6 Consistency with Multiple Signs:** Signage should be cohesive along a facade. While all signs on a building do not have to be identical, they should be of similar size, placement, and shape.
- 7 Potential Freestanding Sign:** Depending on the front setback and frontage conditions, a freestanding sign may be appropriate. The same guidance for style, color, materials, and lighting applies.
- 8 Signs on Windows:** Lettering or logos can also be painted onto windows. This adds interest at the street level. However, do not block views, do not use solid window signs, and do not cover more than 15 percent of the glass area with lettering or logos.
- 9 Simple and Legible:** Keep the sign simple and clear. Keep wording to a minimum and use logos when possible.
- 10 Typography and Fonts:** Use fonts that are easy to read: avoid all uppercase letters, elaborate fonts, or script lettering. Type styles should be limited to no more than two per sign. Letter height should be 18 to 24 inches, depending upon the size of the building. Letters of this height are visible from 750 to 1,000 feet. Larger letter heights may be necessary if the building is set back from the street. The name of the business should be the largest lettering on the sign, with secondary messages smaller.



- 11 Sign Lighting:** Lighting should be carefully selected. Lighting is important for signage. Exterior lighting that is directed onto the sign is encouraged. The fixtures should either be decorative (such as goose-neck lights), or hidden to reduce in visual impact. Wiring should be concealed within building molding and lines. Lighting fixtures should be mounted to eliminate glare. In some instances, back lit letters may be favorable. This will depend upon the building's location, the character of

nearby buildings and signs, and provided that only the name of the business is back lit, not including any secondary wording. Color lights should not be used for back lighting.

- 12 Lighting Multiple Signs:** The lighting scheme for multiple signs on a building should be coordinated and use the same approach and type of lighting fixture.

Specific Awning Design Guidelines:

- 1 **Integration of Awnings:** Awnings are encouraged and should be integrated with the ground floor facade, following the divisions of the storefront windows and/or facade bays. Awnings should not span numerous bays, windows or store fronts. When determining where an awning should end, look for clues on the building. The awnings should delineate storefronts on a multi-tenant building.
- 2 **Complementary Awning Design:** The size, color, material and shape of an awning should be compatible with and complementary to the building design. “Bullnose” or “dome” awnings are not the best fit for Downtown Canton and should be avoided.
- 3 **Respect Building Design and Details:** An awning should not obscure, detract or hide architectural features. Awnings should not be attached to the building trim; they should be placed within building lines. Awning hardware should be hidden or painted to blend with the facade.
- 4 **Coordination with Signage:** If an awning is used for signage, additional sign band signage should not be used. If sign band signage is used, the awning should not include signage.



- 5 **Awning Materials:** Fabric awnings are preferred. Metal and plastic/vinyl awnings are not appropriate for Canton Center. Translucent awnings should be avoided.

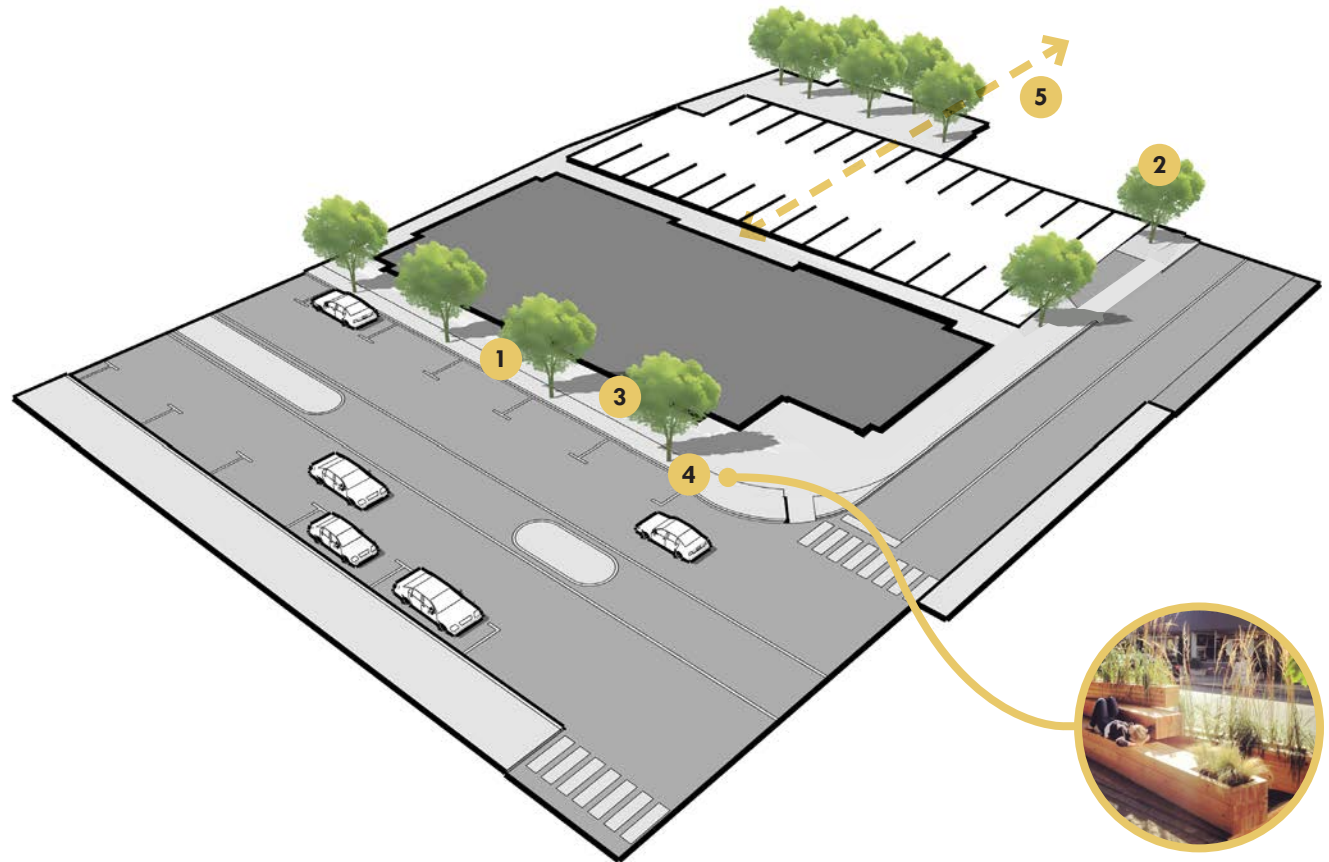
- 6 **Plan for Awning Maintenance:** Do not install an awning if maintenance is anticipated to be difficult. Awnings can become weathered from wind, rain, snow, and sun. It is preferable to not install an awning rather than installing a less attractive, though durable, awning or an awning that will not be maintained.

Landscape and Open Space

Design standards and guidelines regarding landscape are focused on the location and purpose of landscape treatments, buffers, and screening. Landscaping should be used to enhance continuity and cohesion in Downtown Canton. Refer to landscaping and screening requirements in the Zoning Bylaw for minimum standards.

Specific Landscape and Open Space Design Standards:

- 1 Landscape as a Feature of Downtown:** A lush and enhanced landscape should be viewed as one of the common characteristics of Downtown Canton. An increase in the amount of landscaping and its enhanced maintenance and care should be a noticeable feature of the district.
- 2 Preserve Existing Trees:** Existing trees shall be preserved on the property with a particular focus on preservation and protection of established street trees, shade trees, and mature trees providing buffers to adjacent properties. It is less costly to preserve and enhance existing trees and shrubs. When undertaking construction or improvements, ensure that existing trees are well-protected. Consult with the landscape professional as to accepted arbor care standards for tree and plant protection.



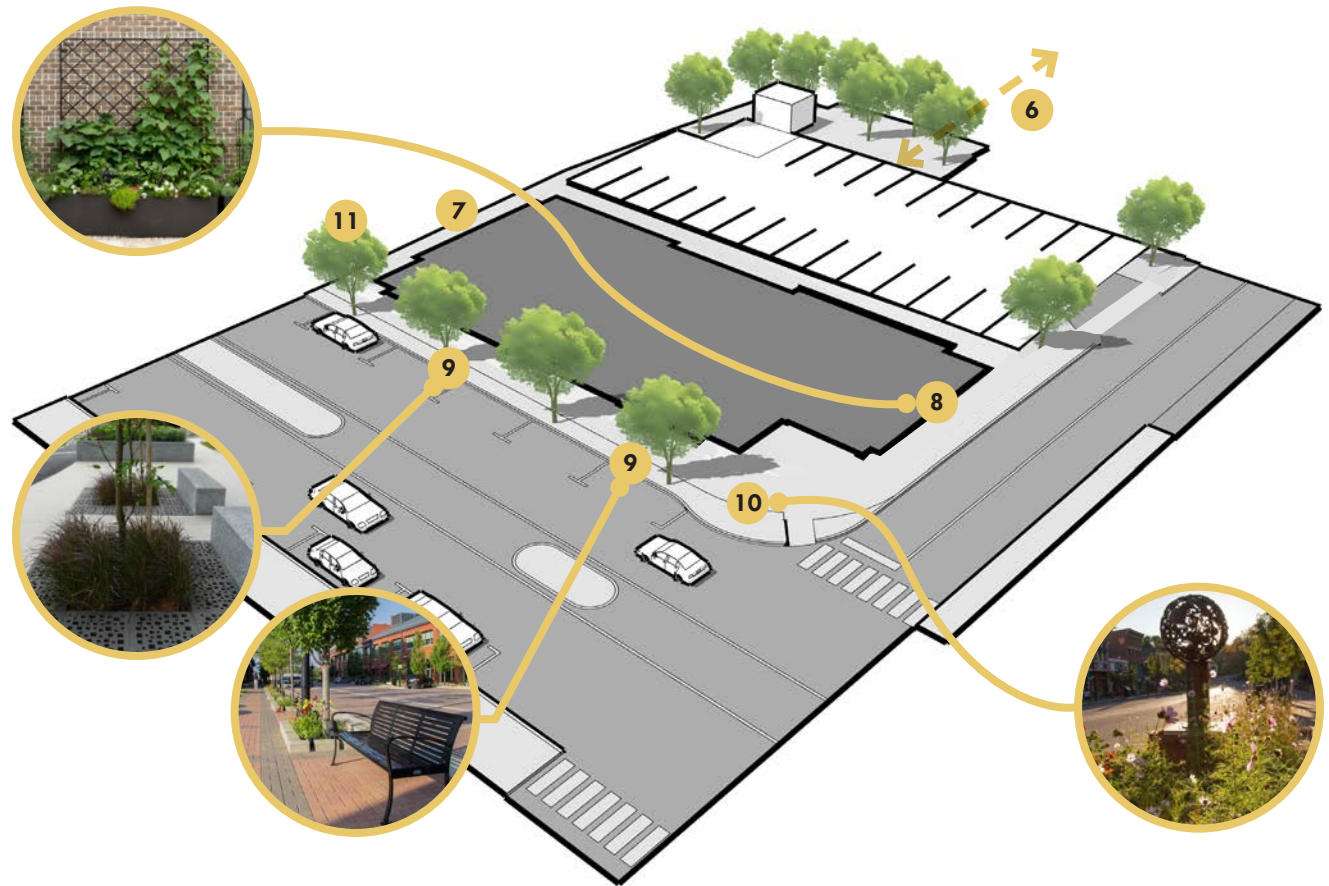
Specific Landscape and Open Space Design Guidelines:

- 3 Contribute to Consistent Street Trees:** Street trees should occur in the downtown at a minimum of every 40 feet of street frontage on Washington Street and increase to as much as one every 25 feet as possible.
- 4 Contribute to Public Realm:** The property should contribute to the overall streetscape of Downtown Canton. Plant additional street trees and landscape public areas when projects impact the public streetscape. Provide seasonal decorations, benches, etc. If limited landscape opportunity exists on the property, consider contributing enhancements a nearby public green space.
- 5 Integrate Walkways and Connections:** Where appropriate, site walkways should complement the site's landscaping. Install a durable and attractive walkway such as brick, slate, stone, and texture concrete. Avoid asphalt.

Specific Landscape and Open Space Design Guidelines (Continued):

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

- 6 Expand Access to Natural Resources:** If your property is located near Forge Pond or Canton River, provide public access and carefully plan how the property will relate to and enhance the visual features of these waterways. Do not block views to the water bodies. Provide public amenities near the water bodies, such as benches and walkways. Do not place services, such as dumpsters, in view of the water.
- 7 Relate to Neighbors:** Relate landscaping to neighboring properties. Try to connect walkways, continue pavement types, fence types, etc.
- 8 Creatively Integrate Landscape:** In addition to street trees, properties should enhance landscape features with small planting areas, planters, plant features attached to buildings, green walls, or other living features designed as part of the building.
- 9 Creatively Integrate Features:** Take advantage of all landscaping opportunities. A large area is not required to enhance landscape. Be creative with smaller plantings, window boxes, a bench, a sculpture, or any other small scale amenity that will enhance the site and building.



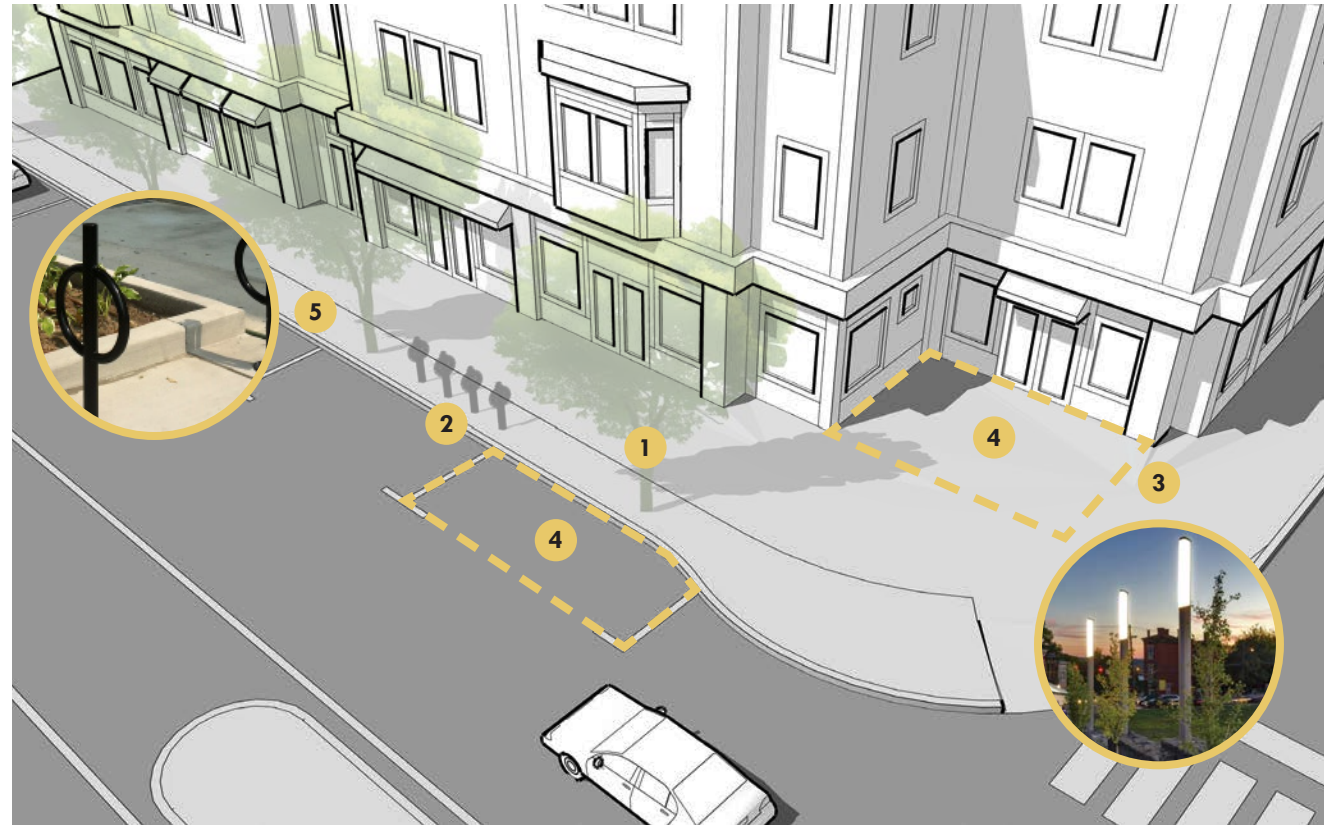
- 10 Outdoor Amenities:** Landscaping improvements should include amenities such as street furniture, artwork, fences, stone walls, fountains, and courtyards. Wood picket fences, decorative iron fences and stonewalls are encouraged. Stockade fences, concrete walls, and chain link fences should not be used. Aluminum fences that are decorative may be acceptable.

- 11 Landscape Selection:** Select trees, shrubs and ground cover noted for longevity, low maintenance requirements, attractive appearance, ability to survive, lack of “messiness”, and screening ability. Plant native species. Plants should be well adapted to the climate (zone 6) and site conditions. Plants located near roadways, driveways, or parking lots must be salt tolerant. Do not plant fruit-bearing or pod-bearing trees that will hang over sidewalks and streets.

Public Realm Improvement

Private investment in Downtown Canton should also contribute to investment and improvement in the district’s public realm. The public realm includes the areas of right of way adjacent to the private property with sidewalks, on-street parking, and streets. Public investment in the public realm is also needed and is a viable approach to encourage private investment in the district while strengthening a sense of place and walkability.

Specific Public Realm Improvement Design Guidelines:



- 1 Strengthen Street trees:** Street trees improve the visual character of the street, provide shade during the summer months, and provide environmental benefits. New street trees should be added at the property frontages or existing trees that are unhealthy should be replaced.
- 2 Expand Sidewalk Amenities:** Additional street furnishings and outdoor amenities can help to fill the gap in existing amenities including adding trash receptacles located in convenient locations, bike racks, benches, or other types of outdoor seating.
- 3 Enhance Pedestrian-scale Lighting:** Adequate lighting improves both comfort and a sense

of safety. Pedestrian scale lighting can also create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere that emphasizes the needs of people walking over motorists.

- 4 Integrate Parklets and Plazas:** The Town may wish to consider installing “parklets” in areas with potentially large numbers of pedestrians or to expand outdoor dining options. A parklet is a sidewalk extension that provides more space for people using the street. They

generally extend out from the sidewalk and often occupy one or more on-street parking spaces. A network of small plazas already exist in Downtown Canton.

- 5 Expand Bike Parking:** Convenient bicycle parking should be provided at locations along Washington Street, using high quality bike racks. More visible and frequent secure bike parking encourages patrons to visit Downtown by bike.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement

Design standards and guidelines regarding bicycle and pedestrian improvements are focused on the bicycle storage, pedestrian plazas, sidewalk amenities, and outdoor seating.

Specific Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement Design Standards:

- 1 Integrate Secure Bicycle Parking Areas:** Parking for bicycles shall be integrated into the site design for the property providing convenient locations to securely lock bicycles on the property.

Specific Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement Design Guidelines:

- 2 Resident Bicycle Storage:** Bicycle storage for residents should be provided in a space at the interior of the building that is secure and convenient for bicycle access. Bicycle storage should be viewed as a method to reduce vehicular parking on the property.
- 3 Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety:** Contribute to roadway and safety improvements such as enhanced crosswalks at intersections, additional mid-block crossings, neck-downs at intersections or other traffic calming approaches. Narrower vehicular lanes resulting from the inclusion of bicycle lanes



have the added benefit of slowing traffic, which greatly improves the safety of both pedestrians and cyclists with minimal effect on motorists' travel times. Studies show that if a crash does occur with a vehicle involving a pedestrian or cyclist, the risk for severe injury is lower at speeds below 25 miles per hour.

- 4 Strengthen Connectivity:** Improving multi-modal connectivity is an important elements of strengthening Downtown Canton. Focus on improving walking and biking connections to destination near downtown, connections to surrounding neighborhoods, and connections to nearby natural features and amenities. Where possible, create new connections through a property or connecting between to private properties.

Site Service and Utilities

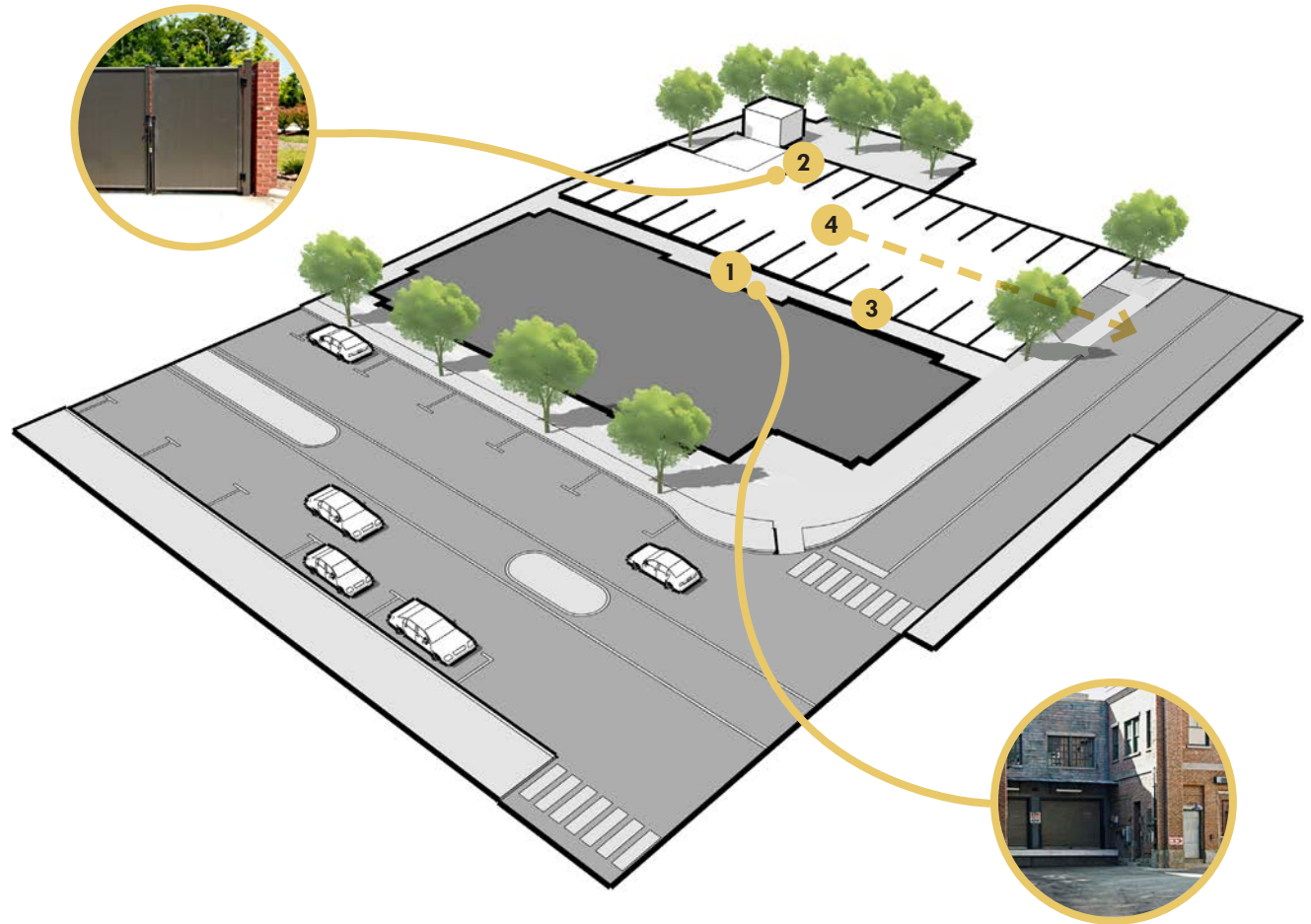
Design standards and guidelines regarding utilitarian aspects of the site characteristics with a focus on the loading and service areas.

Specific Site Service and Utilities Design Standards:

- 1 Locate Behind the Building:** All loading, service, and access areas shall be located to the rear of the building.
- 2 Screening Requirements:** All dumpsters or other service areas shall be completely visually enclosed with a screening wall or fence and integrated with the overall site layout.
- 3 Integrate with the Rear Ground Floor Facade:** Loading dock and service areas that are part of the building shall be located on the rear facade and shall be integrated with the design of the ground floor.

Specific Site Service and Utilities Design Guidelines:

- 4 Integrate Service and Loading:** Service and loading areas, circulation, and routines shall be integrated with and coordinated with parking, vehicular circulation, and pedestrian circulation on the property.

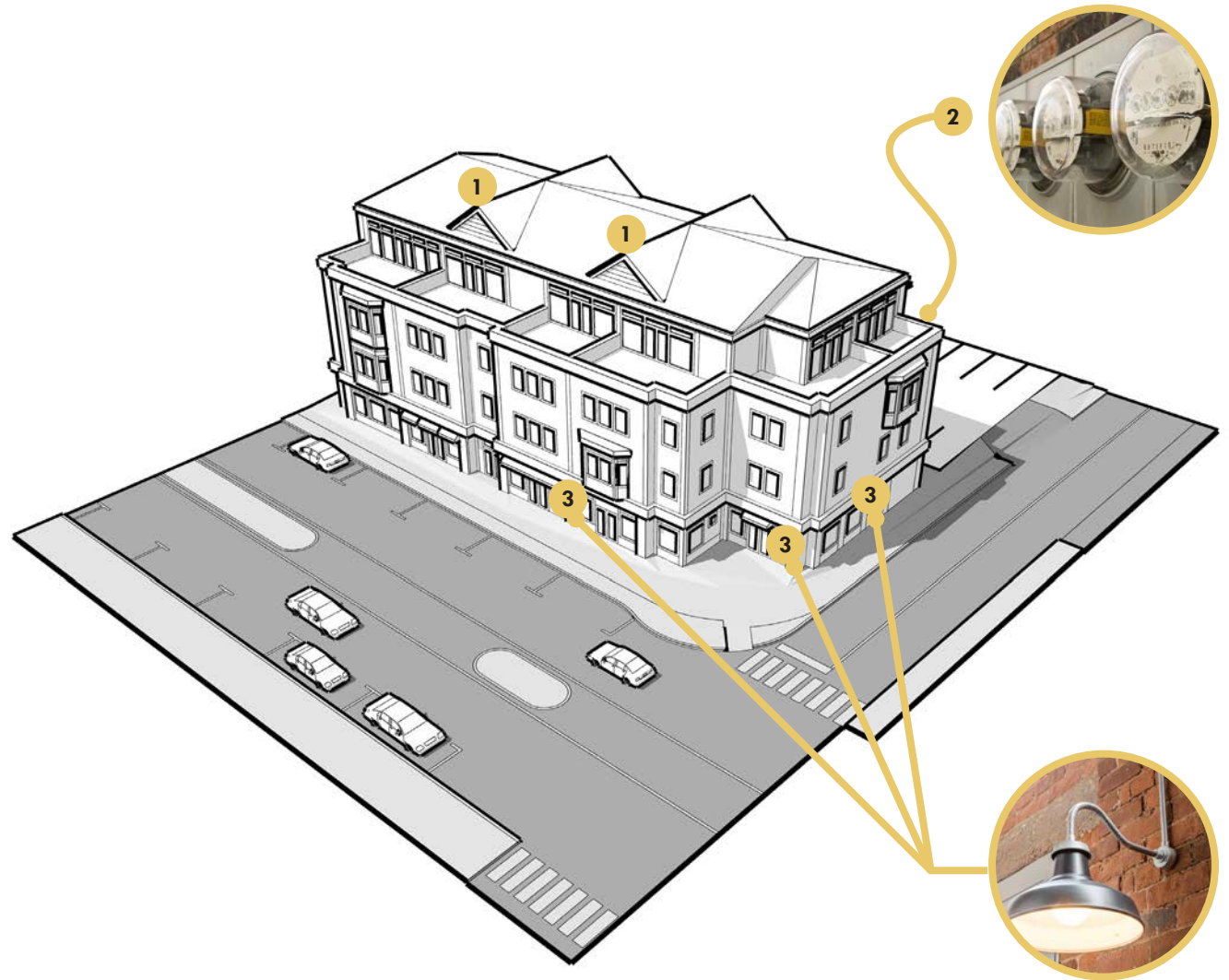


Building Service and Utilities

Design standards and guidelines regarding utilitarian aspects of the building characteristics with a focus on the mechanical and service areas.

Specific Building Service and Utilities Design Guidelines:

- 1 Screening Guidelines:** Screen utility and mechanical structures. Screen HVAC, machinery, transformers, etc. Air conditioners should not be on the façade of the building, unless it is flush with the building wall or hidden appropriately. Conceal roof-top equipment by integrating mechanical space with the roof form, coloring the structures and screening the same color as the roof, or by using screening that blends with the architecture.
- 2 Minimize Utilities at Street Frontages:** Minimize visibility of utility connections. Place utility connections and meters toward the rear of the building, hide with landscaping, or hide in decorative enclosures.
- 3 Conceal Connections:** Wiring and conduit for lighting or outdoor electrical should be concealed as much as possible or designed and installed as a well-composed feature of the facade.



A view of the hypothetical design guideline diagram from the Washington Street sidewalk.



Downtown Canton

Zoning and Design Guideline Updates

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
June 2023

