

NEWTON RIVERSIDE SITE VISION PLAN

Public Meeting #2
March 28, 2019



RIVERSIDE VISION PLANNING TEAM

- City of Newton,
Department of Planning
and Development
- CivicMoxie
- Urban Focus



TONIGHT'S AGENDA

- **Welcome**
- **Site Analysis**
- **Draft Vision Plan Principles**
- **Next Steps**
- **Q & A**

WHY CREATE THIS VISION PLAN?

- To gain community input and perspective in the development of a future vision for the site
- To produce a plan with development principles for the site that can be provided to the City Council Land Use Committee
- To develop principles and desired community benefits for future development of the Riverside site



HOW WILL THIS VISION PLAN BE USED?

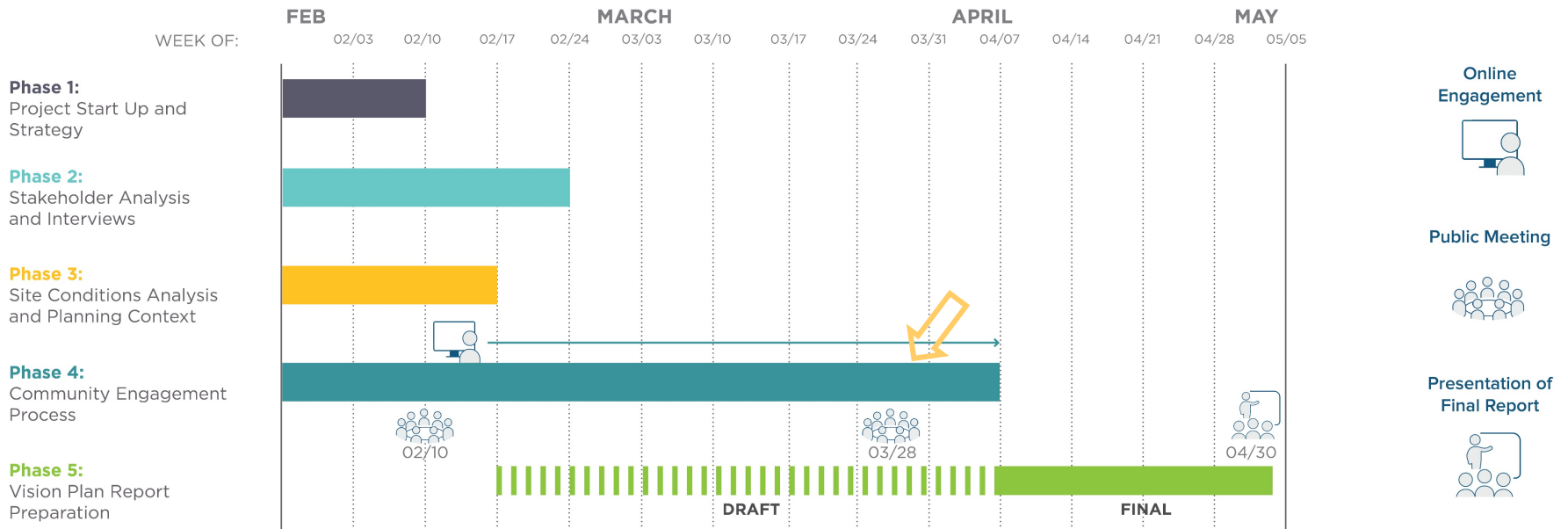
The Planning Department will present the vision plan to the Land Use Committee of City Council at the culmination of the planning process.

The goal is for the vision plan to be used as a reference to guide decision-making for the Riverside site.



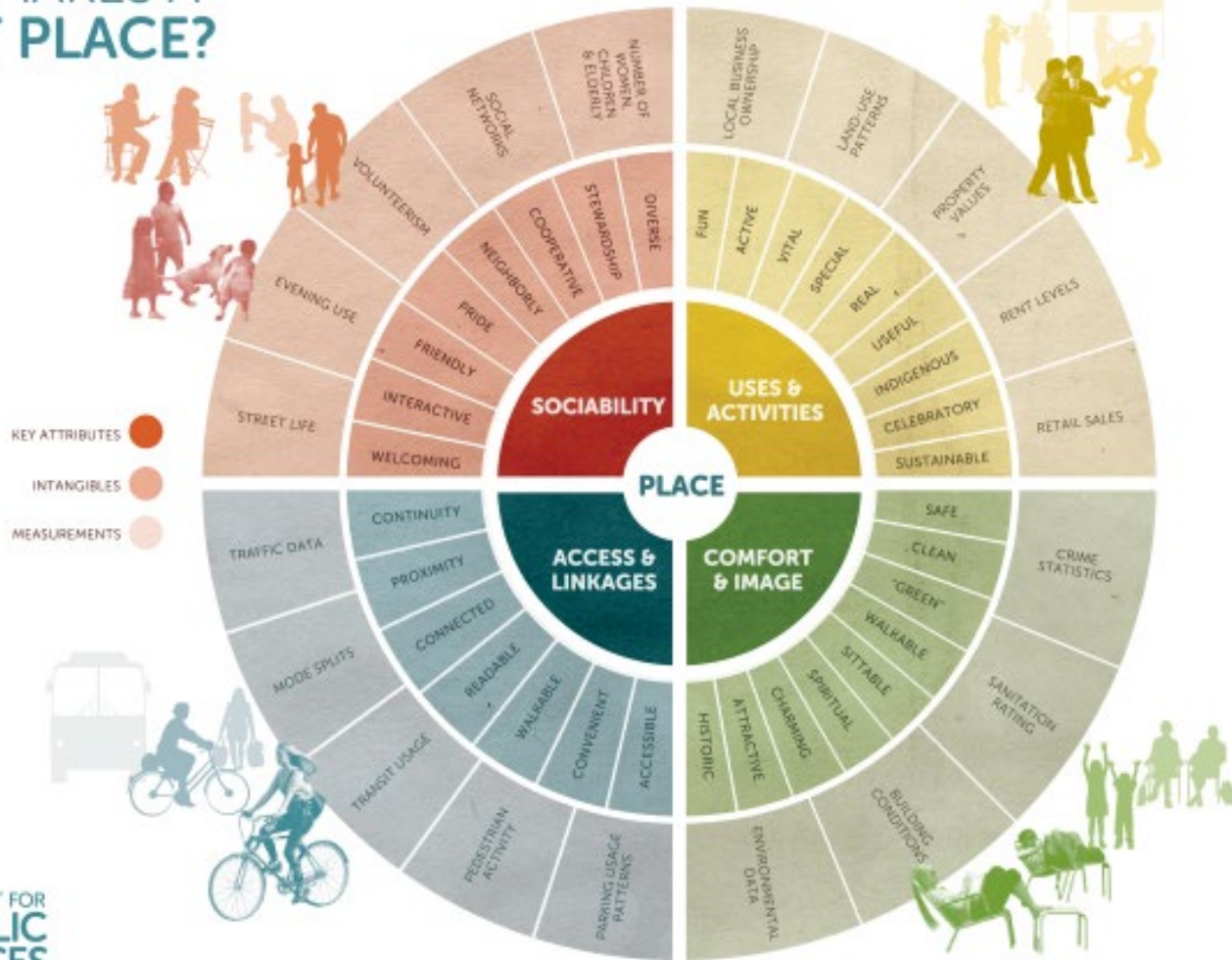
TIMELINE + SCOPE OF WORK

VISIONING PROCESS TIMELINE



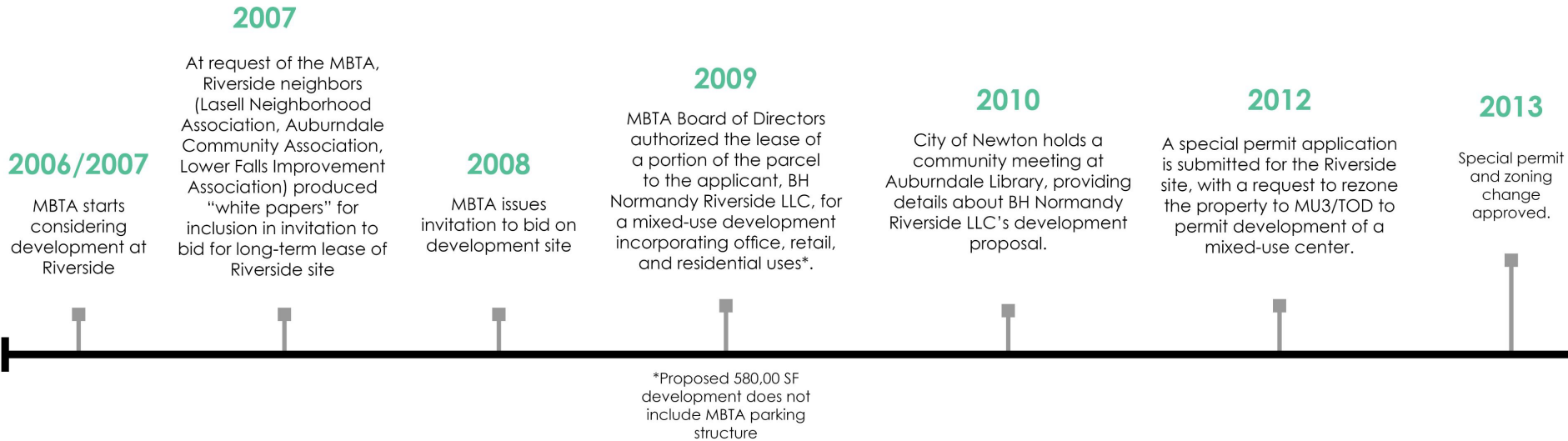
ASPIRING TO GREATNESS

WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE?

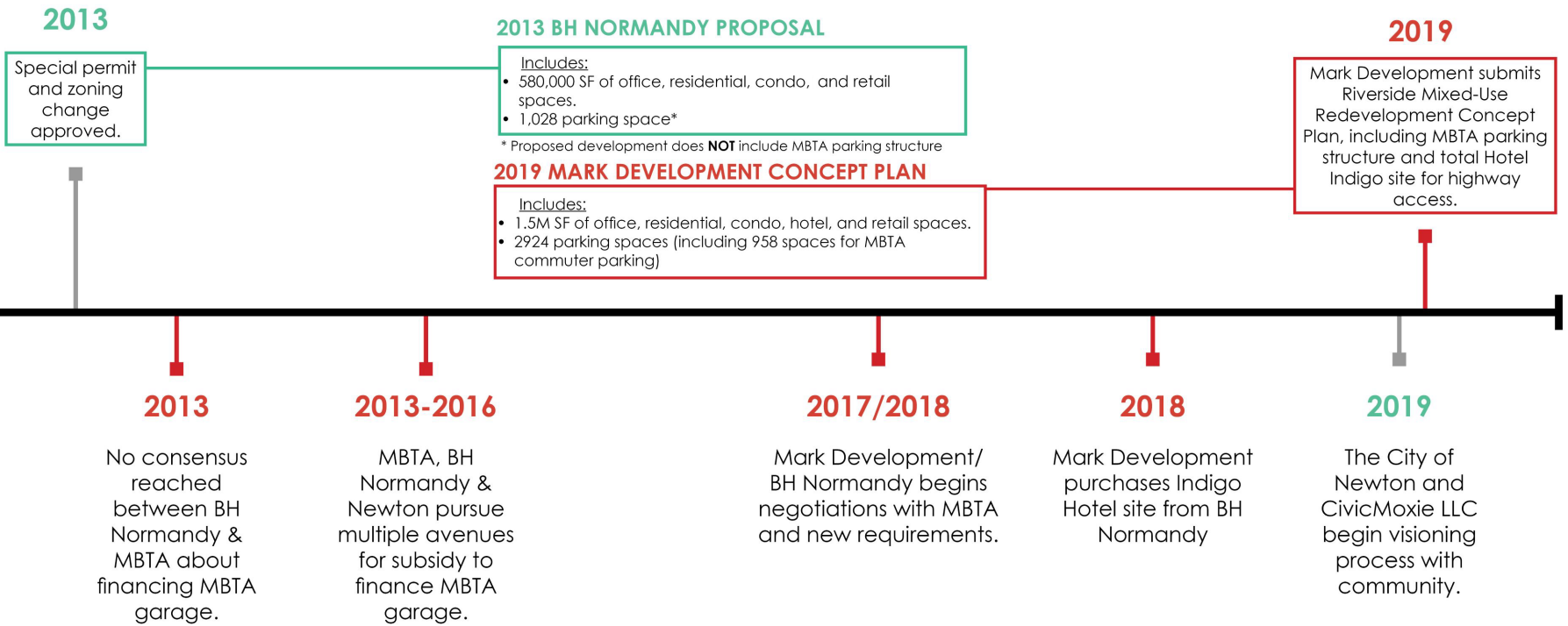


Source: Project for Public Spaces

RIVERSIDE RECENT PLANNING HISTORY

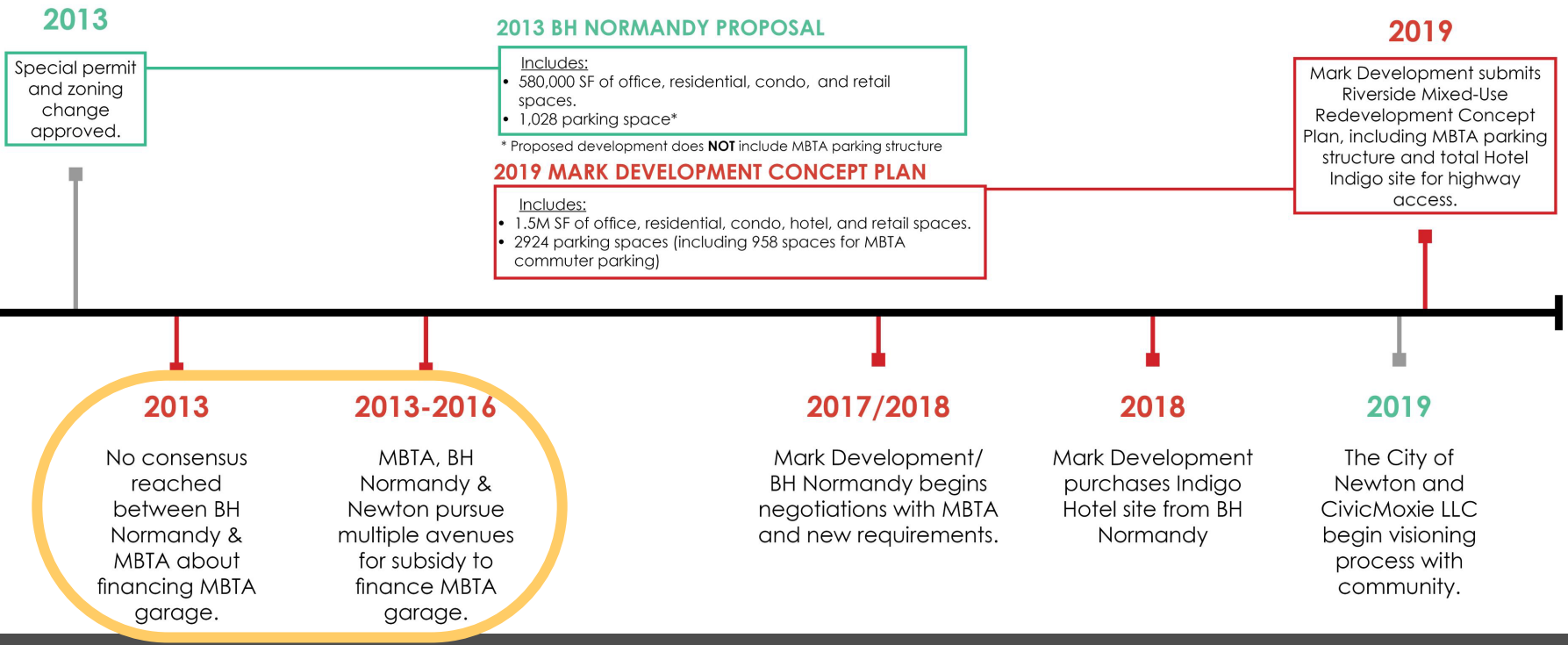


RIVERSIDE RECENT PLANNING HISTORY



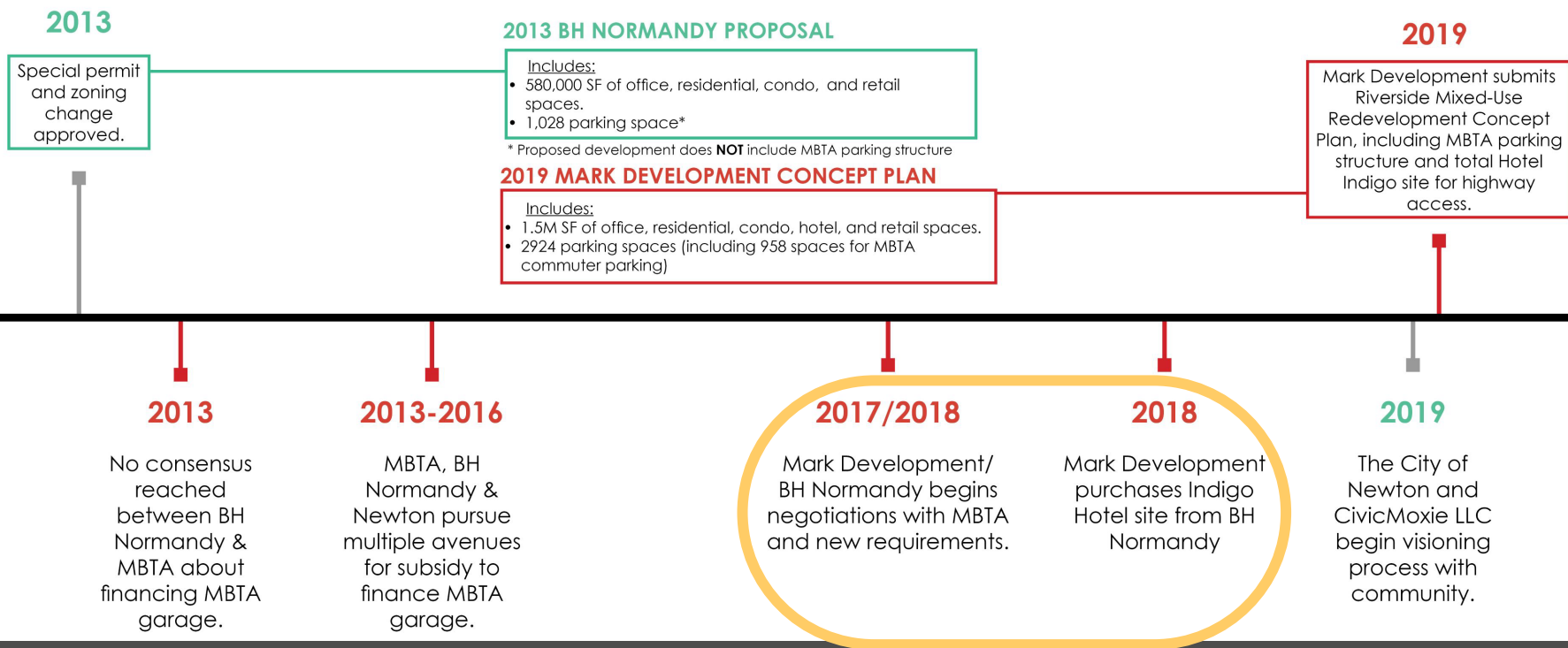
Looking back, but going forward

RIVERSIDE RECENT PLANNING HISTORY



Looking back, but going forward:
 • PARKING

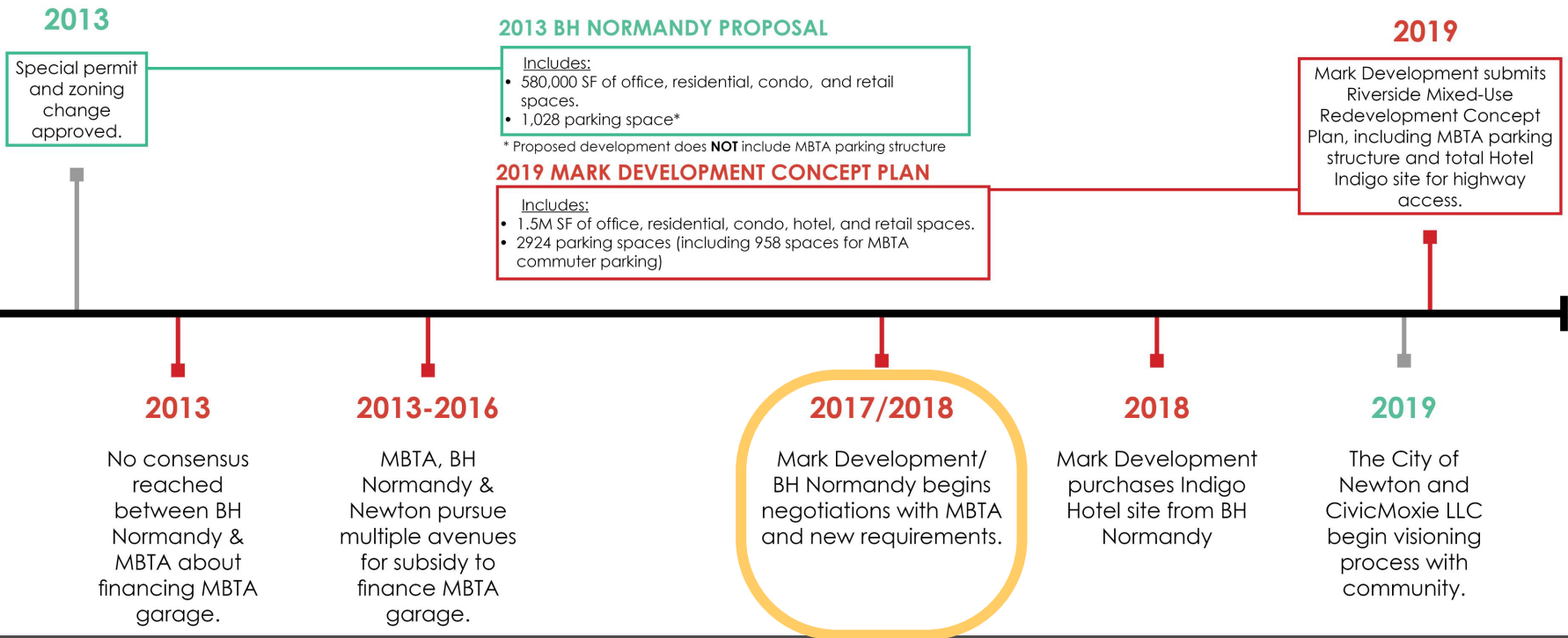
RIVERSIDE RECENT PLANNING HISTORY



Looking back, but going forward:

- PARKING
- A NEW PARTNERSHIP

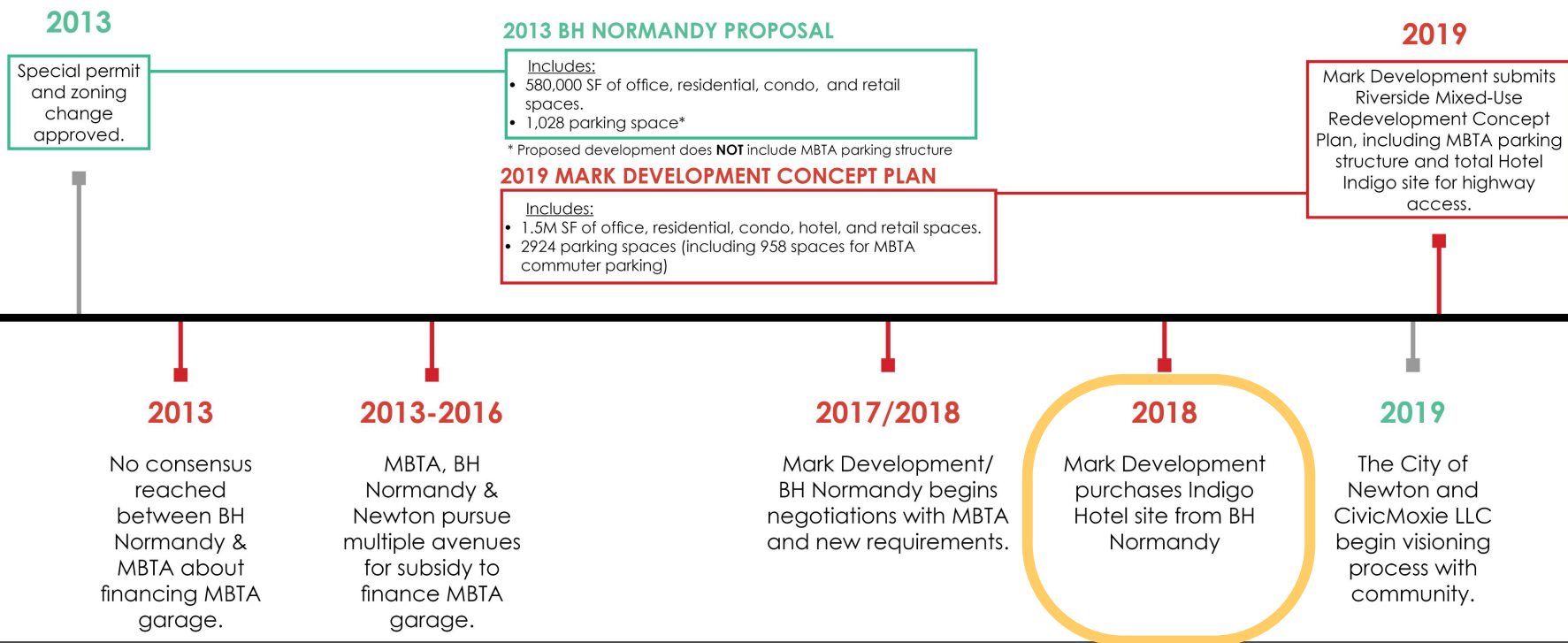
RIVERSIDE RECENT PLANNING HISTORY



Looking back, but going forward:

- PARKING
- A NEW PARTNERSHIP
- NEW REQUIREMENTS FROM THE MBTA

RIVERSIDE RECENT PLANNING HISTORY



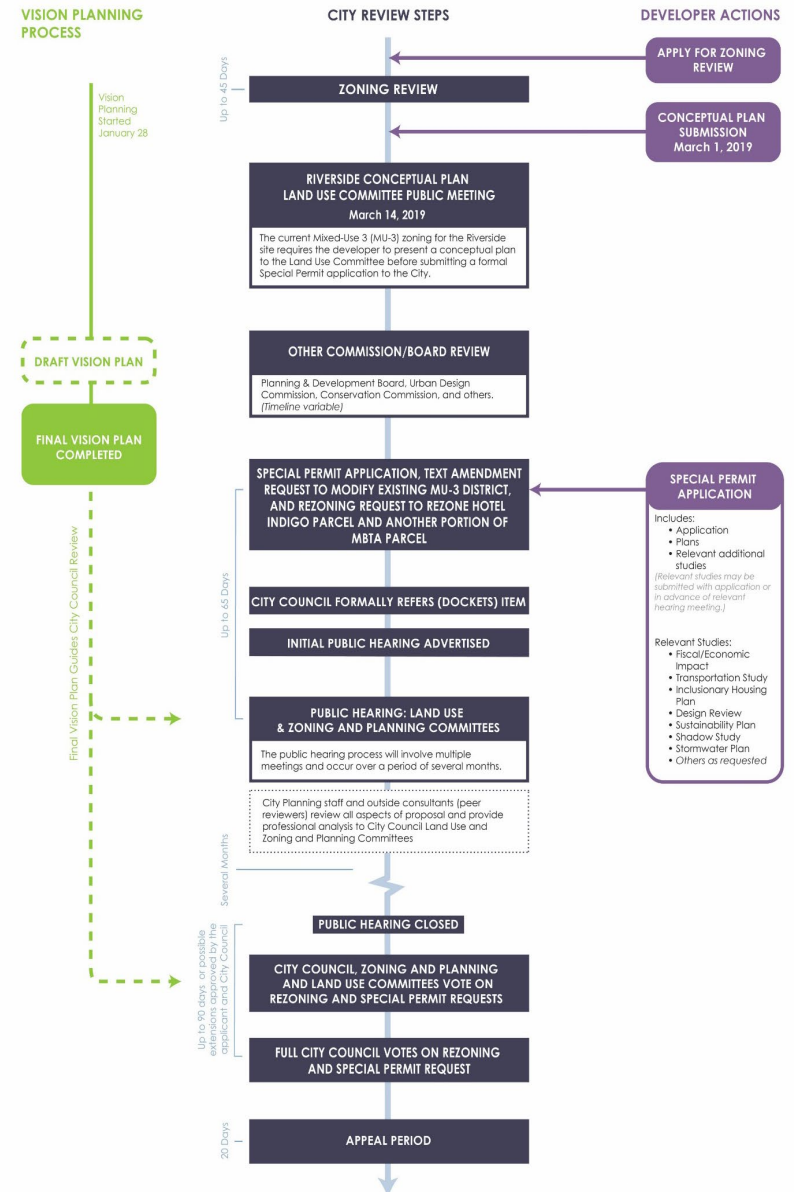
Looking back, but going forward:

- PARKING
- A NEW PARTNERSHIP
- NEW REQUIREMENTS FROM THE MBTA
- DIRECT HIGHWAY ACCESS

VISION PLAN & SPECIAL PERMIT PROCESSES

- How will the Vision Plan be used?
- How does the Vision Plan fit in with the Special Permit Process?

ANTICIPATED RIVERSIDE SPECIAL PERMIT PROCESS



VISION PLAN & SPECIAL PERMIT PROCESSES

ANTICIPATED RIVERSIDE SPECIAL PERMIT PROCESS

VISION PLANNING PROCESS



CITY REVIEW STEPS



DEVELOPER ACTIONS



Site Analysis



RIVERSIDE SITE



Grove Street

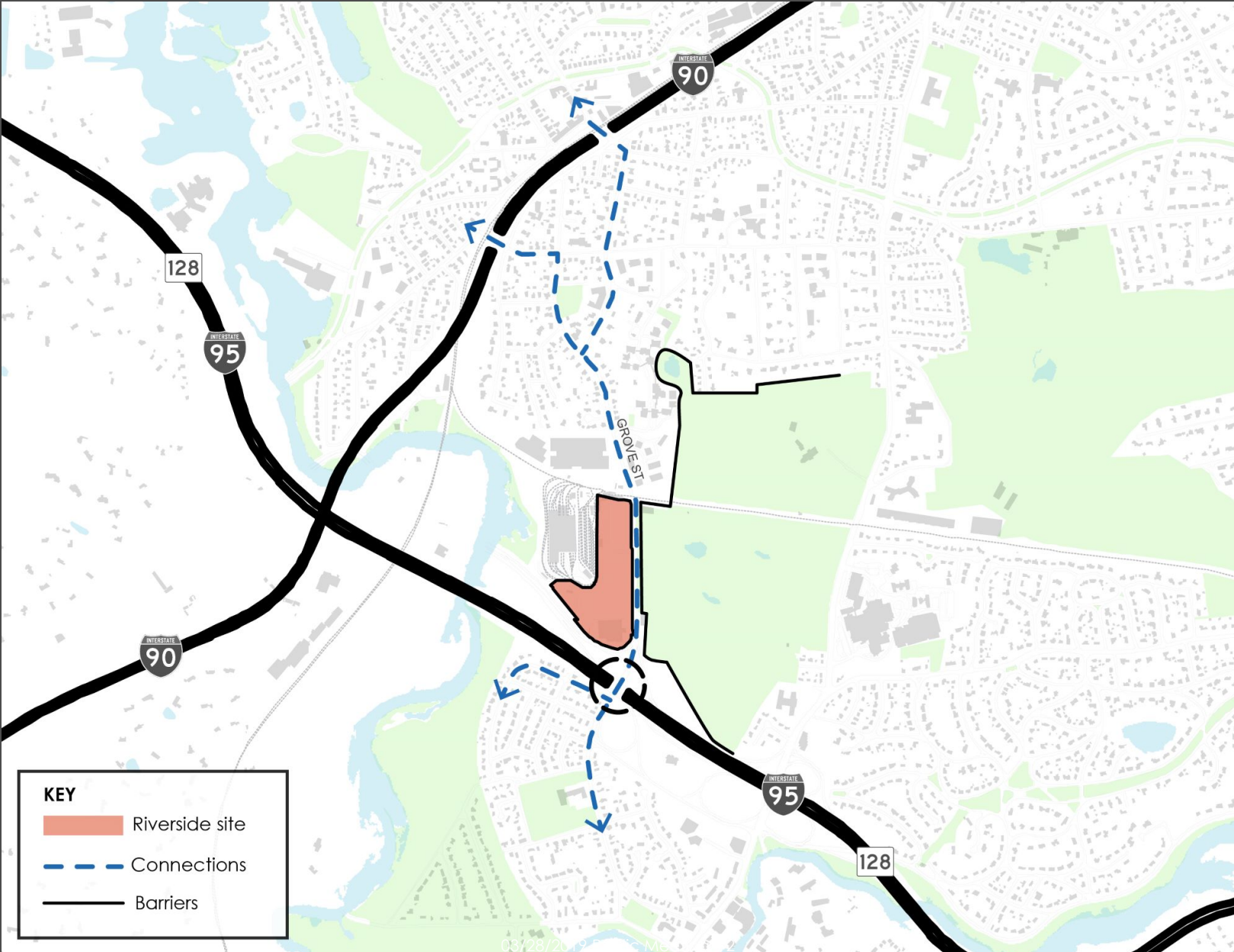
I-95/ Rte 128

Charles River

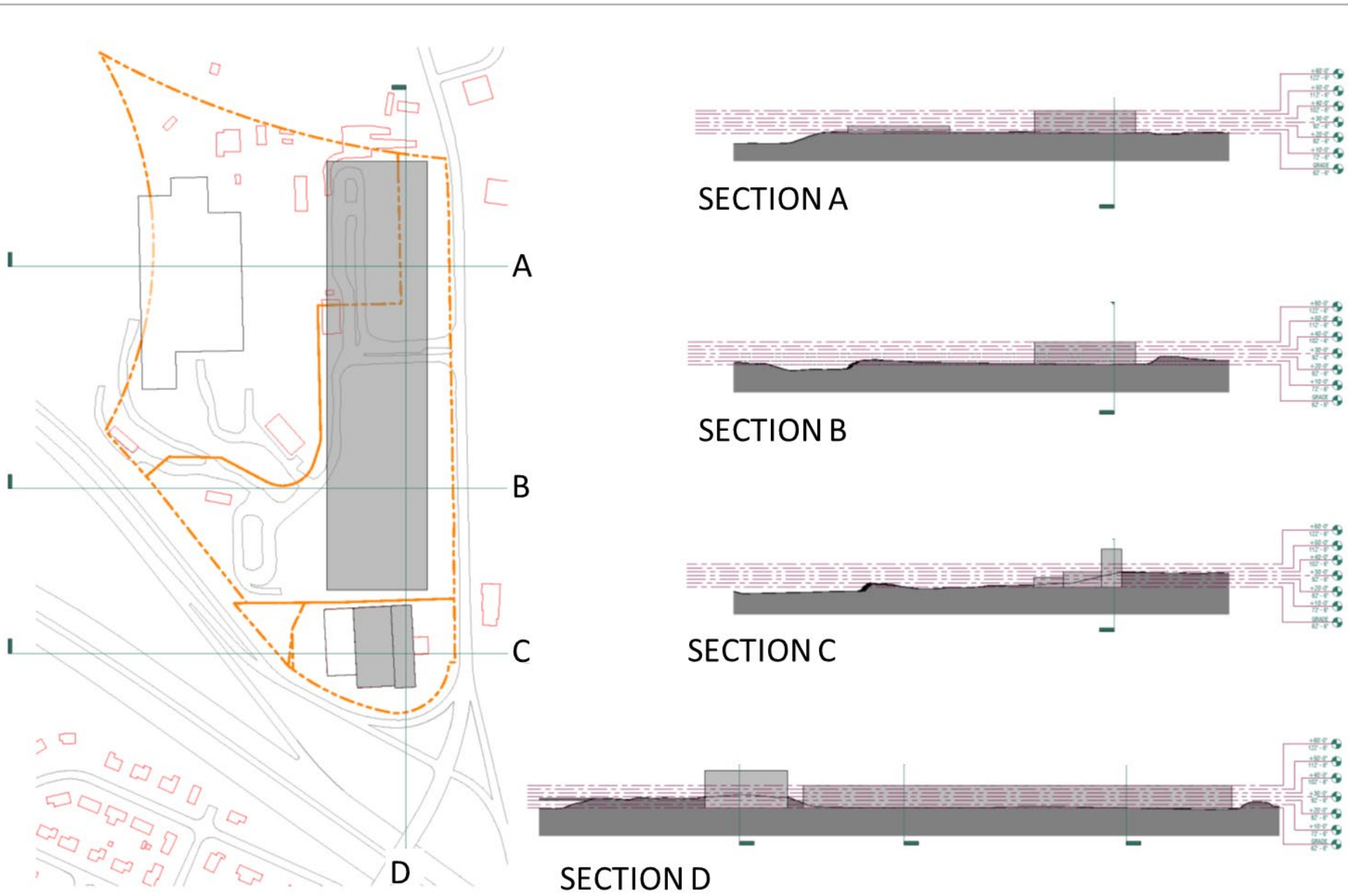
COMMUNITY CONTEXT



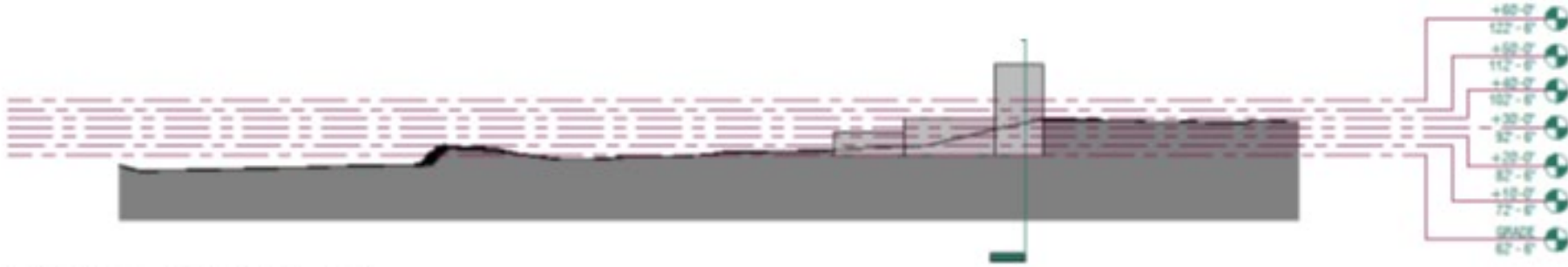
CONNECTIONS AND BARRIERS



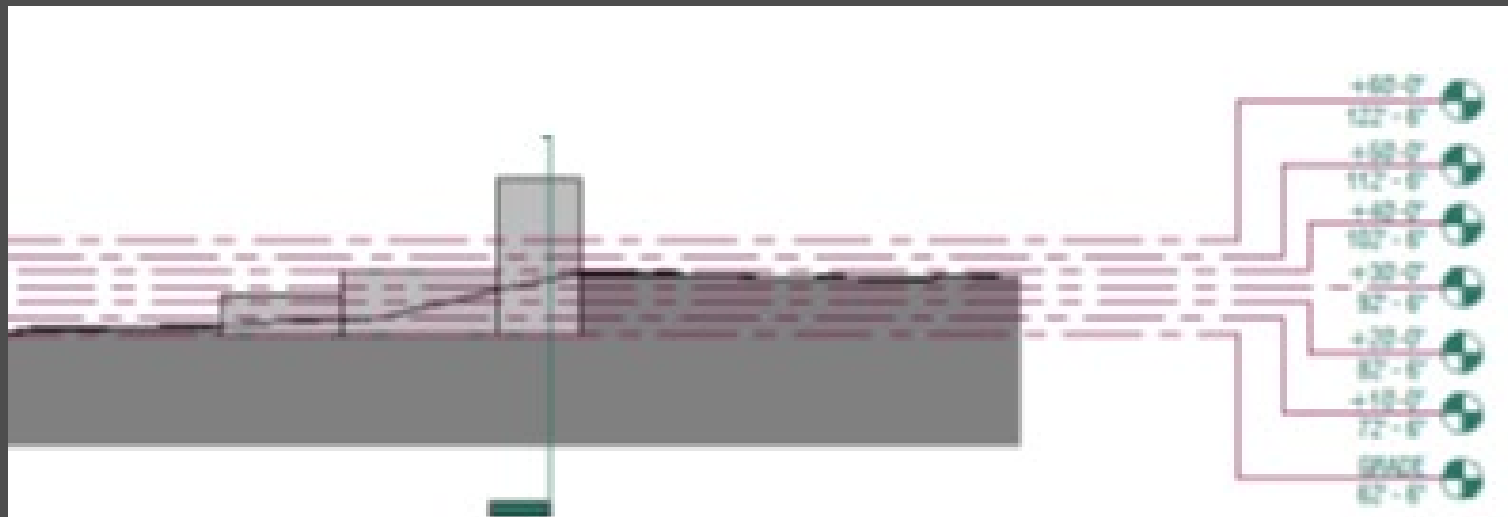
TOPOGRAPHY



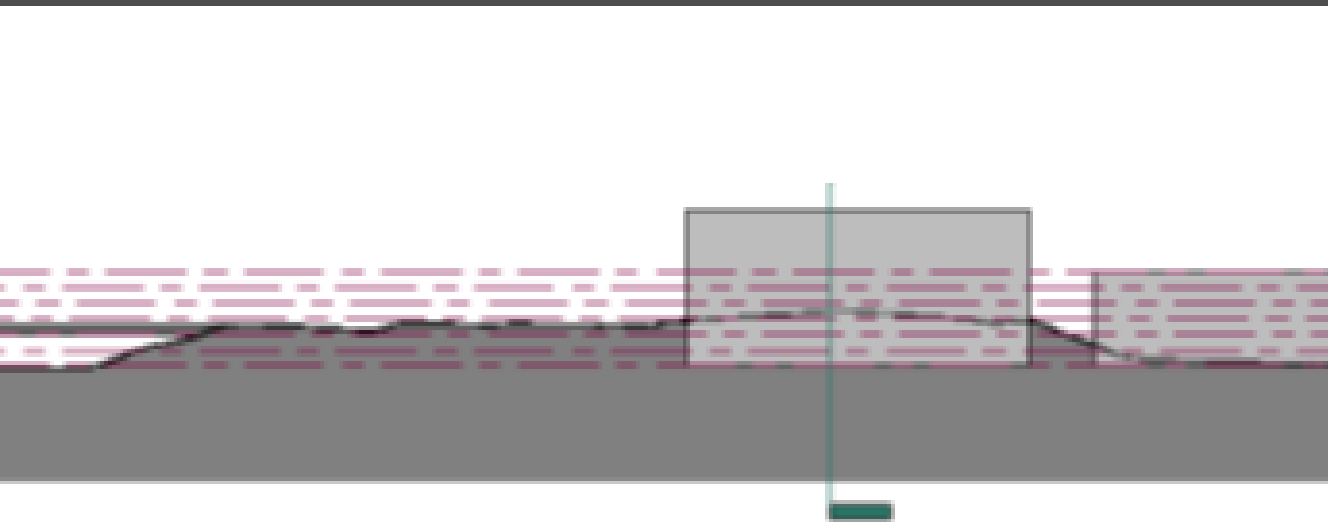
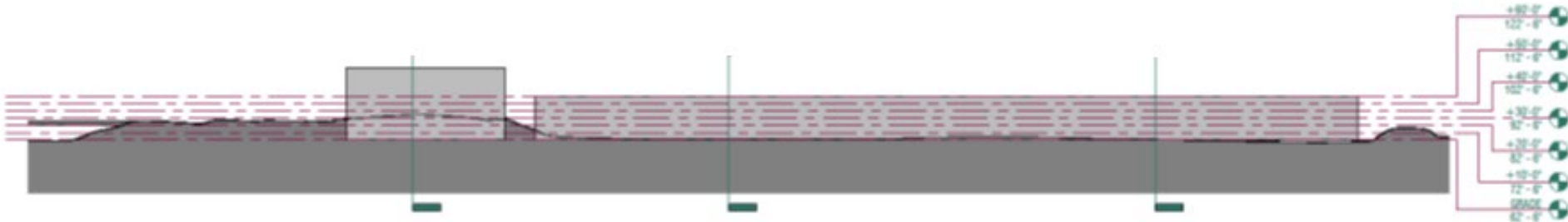
TOPOGRAPHY



SECTION C

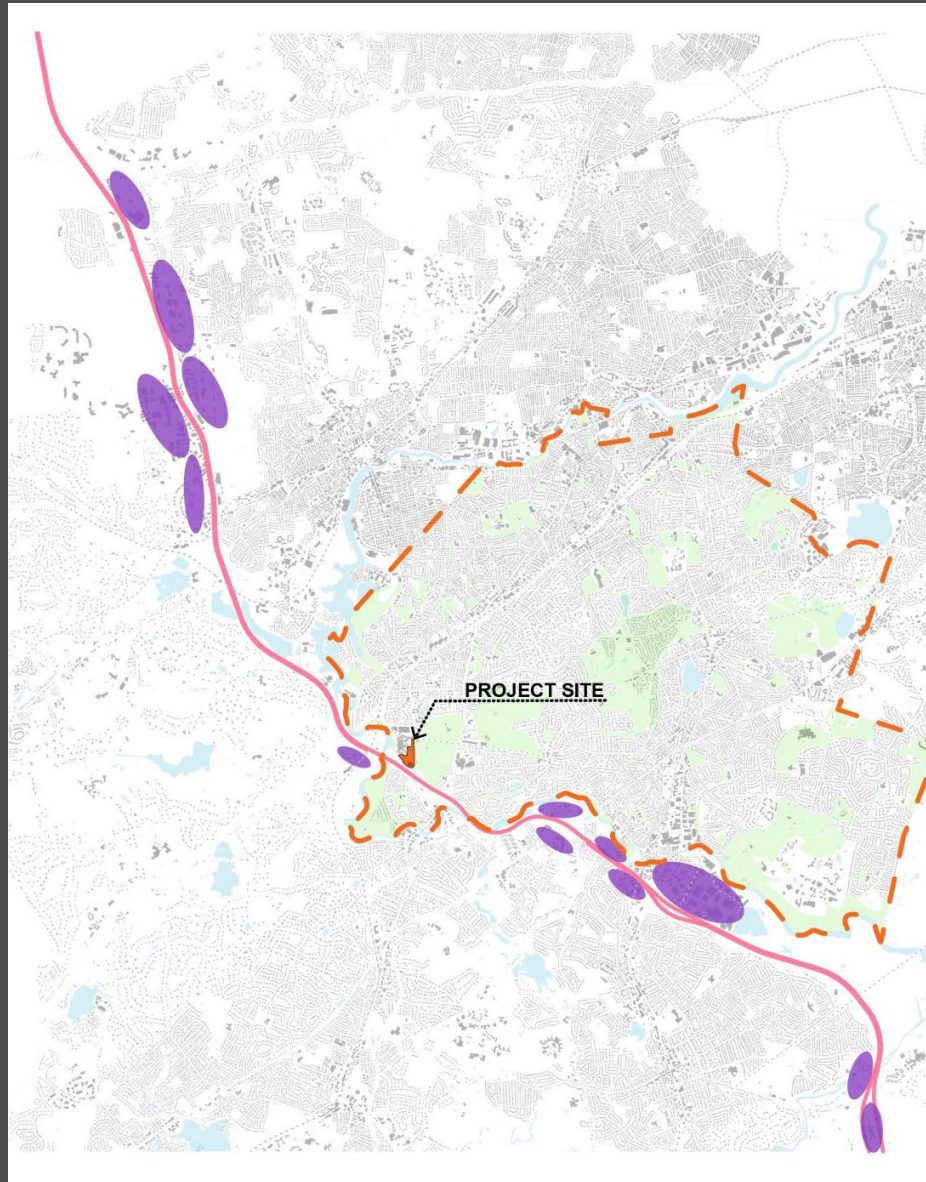


TOPOGRAPHY

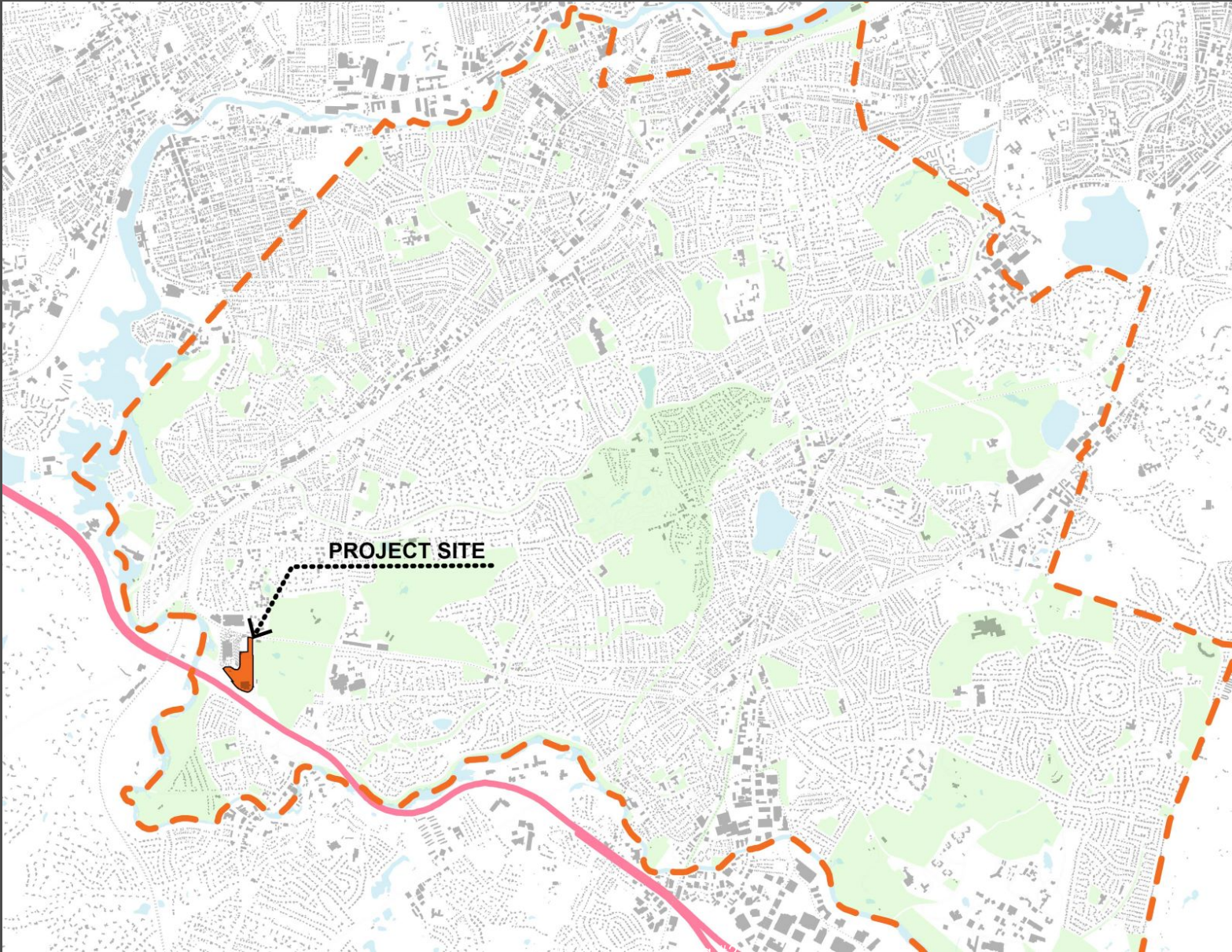


SECTION D

RTE 128 AS A TECH/OFFICE CORRIDOR



GATEWAY TO NEWTON



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Outreach Summary

- ~275 1st Public Meeting
- 440+ Visitors on project website
- 100 Followers on project website
- ~145 comments on project website
- Over 15 interviews



CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET OVERVIEW

RIVERSIDE SITE IS CONSIDERED A TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT SITE

Office (Commercial):

- Market is strong along Mass Pike and Route 128 Corridor
- Newton and Needham are seen as competitive to Waltham
- Office tenants are looking for amenity-rich, walkable, and accessible locations with access to Boston and Cambridge



Clark's headquarters. Waltham, MA

Image Source: [businesswire.com](https://www.businesswire.com)

CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET OVERVIEW

RIVERSIDE SITE IS CONSIDERED A TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT SITE

Hotel:

- Location next to highway with direct MBTA access to downtown Boston is attractive
- As the office market strengthens, the hotel demand for client, consultants and employees will increase.
- Adjacency to walkability and other uses makes hotel an attractive use



Gibson Hotel, Dublin Point Village, Dublin Ireland

Image Source: IrishTimes.com

CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET OVERVIEW

RIVERSIDE SITE IS CONSIDERED A TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT SITE

Residential:

- Strong market, particularly because of direct MBTA access and highway
- Cost of living closer in to Boston makes living along the T very attractive
- Mix of uses and walkability on a TOD site make residential appealing



Safari Drive Condominiums, Scottsdale, AZ, Miller Hull Architects
Image Source: millerhull.com



TOD in Portland, Oregon's Pearl District
Image Source: smartgrowthamerica.org

CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET OVERVIEW

RIVERSIDE SITE IS CONSIDERED A TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT SITE

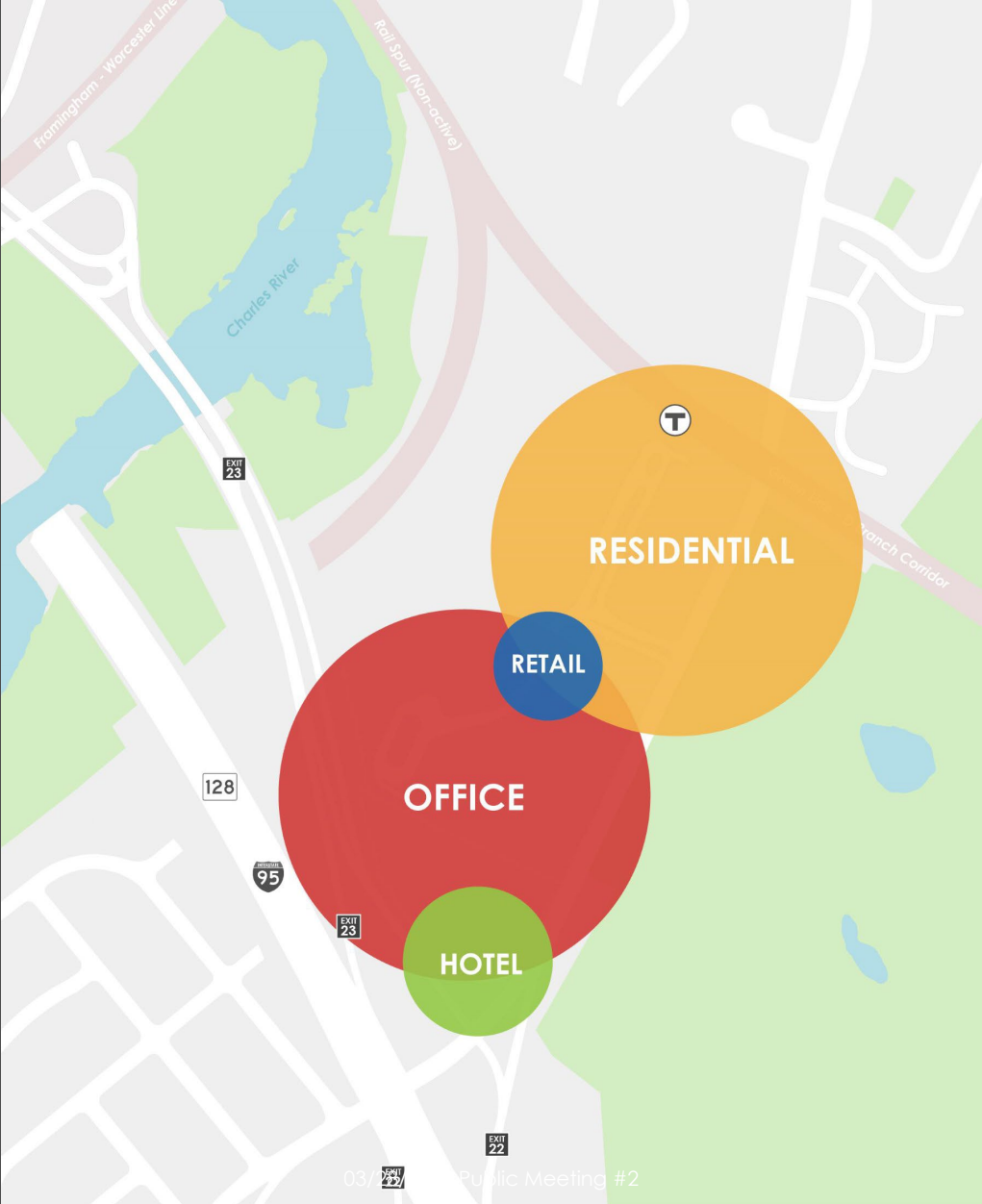
Retail (Commercial):

- Considered accessory and support to the other uses rather than large-scale destination
- Provides amenities to the community, residents, commuters, and office workers.



A New Eco-Village and Creative Center, St Louis Park, MN
Image Source: metroplains.com

POTENTIAL MIX OF USES



Draft Vision Plan

DRAFT PRINCIPLES
DRAFT CONSIDERATIONS

SIX OVERARCHING CATEGORIES - DRAFT



C – Newton Community Connections



H – Housing for Newton



S – Model of Sustainability



D – Quality Design



E – Robust Newton Economy



T – Transportation Hub

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NEWTON COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



DRAFT VISION:

The Riverside site should create social connections and physical spaces that benefit site residents and workers, nearby communities, and all of Newton.



WHAT WE HEARD

"Access to the Charles River. Pedestrian, bike, boater with secure bike parking."

"Community Center with indoor and outdoor space to accommodate community meetings and events, and community education and classes."

"Coffee shops and public restrooms!"

"Bike paths and green space along the river."

"Consider creating a variety of spaces and activities that are available year-round and accessible to all community members and a site that is easily reachable by a host of transportation options."

"Small concerts, group bike rides, village picnic, free exercise classes"

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Desire to see a mixture of active and passive recreational opportunities on-site**
- **Strong interest in improved access to Charles River with additional programming and conservation**
- **Ambition to see dedicated space for community activities included in overall program of the site**

NEWTON COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

C1

Establish a safe, healthy community that embodies Newton's values



Spaces for active living and exercise

Image Source: Uplifting Mobility



Activities, retail/dining hours, and programming during the entire day and evening. Image Source: shutterstock

NEWTON COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

C2

Provide a variety of usable open spaces



While serving a larger regional role, the Chestnut Hill Reservoir serves as a valuable resource to nearby communities

Image Source: Wild Newton



Publicly-accessible rooftop garden – Kendall Square

Image Source: Common Boston

NEWTON COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

C3

Energize the site with vibrant ground-floor retail, art, and activity



Food Trucks help to activate Dewey Square and attract commuters, residents, and visitors

Image Source: NBC Boston



Sidewalk cafes help to energize and bring life to otherwise unoccupied streets

Image Source: seattle.gov

NEWTON COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

C4

Include dedicated community space and active management and oversight

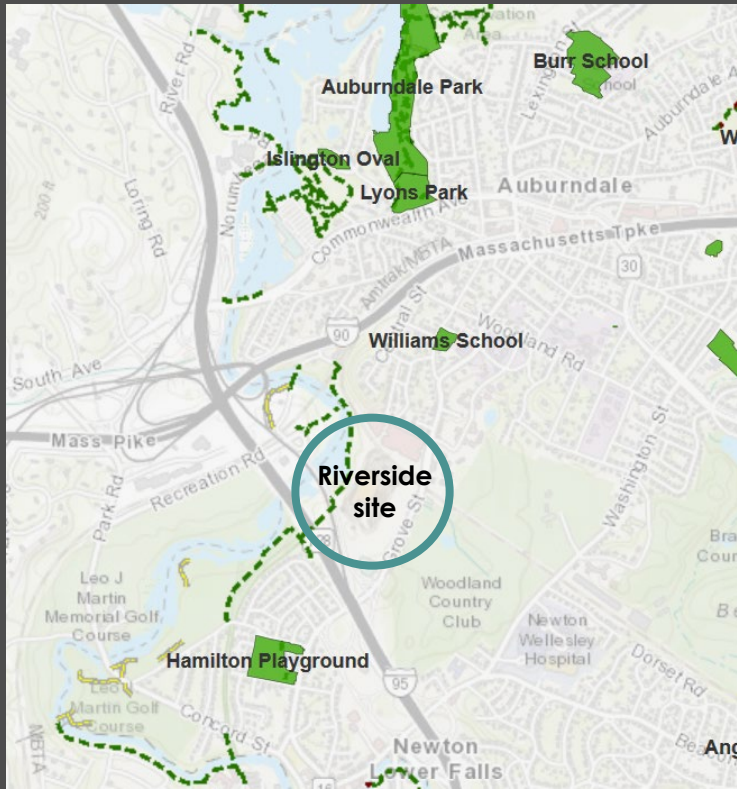


Image Source: Newton Parks and Recreation



Music on the Square, Winter Park, CO

Image Source: coopercreeksquare.com

NEWTON COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

C5

Provide activities and businesses for all ages



While not specifically designed as a play space, the multi-levels in this public space naturally invites climbing, walking perimeters, and encourages relaxing contemplation in a cross-generational space. (Ira Keller Fountain, Portland, OR)

Image Source: The Cultural Landscape Foundation

SIX OVERARCHING CATEGORIES - DRAFT



C – Newton Community Connections



H – Housing for Newton



S – Model of Sustainability



D – Quality Design

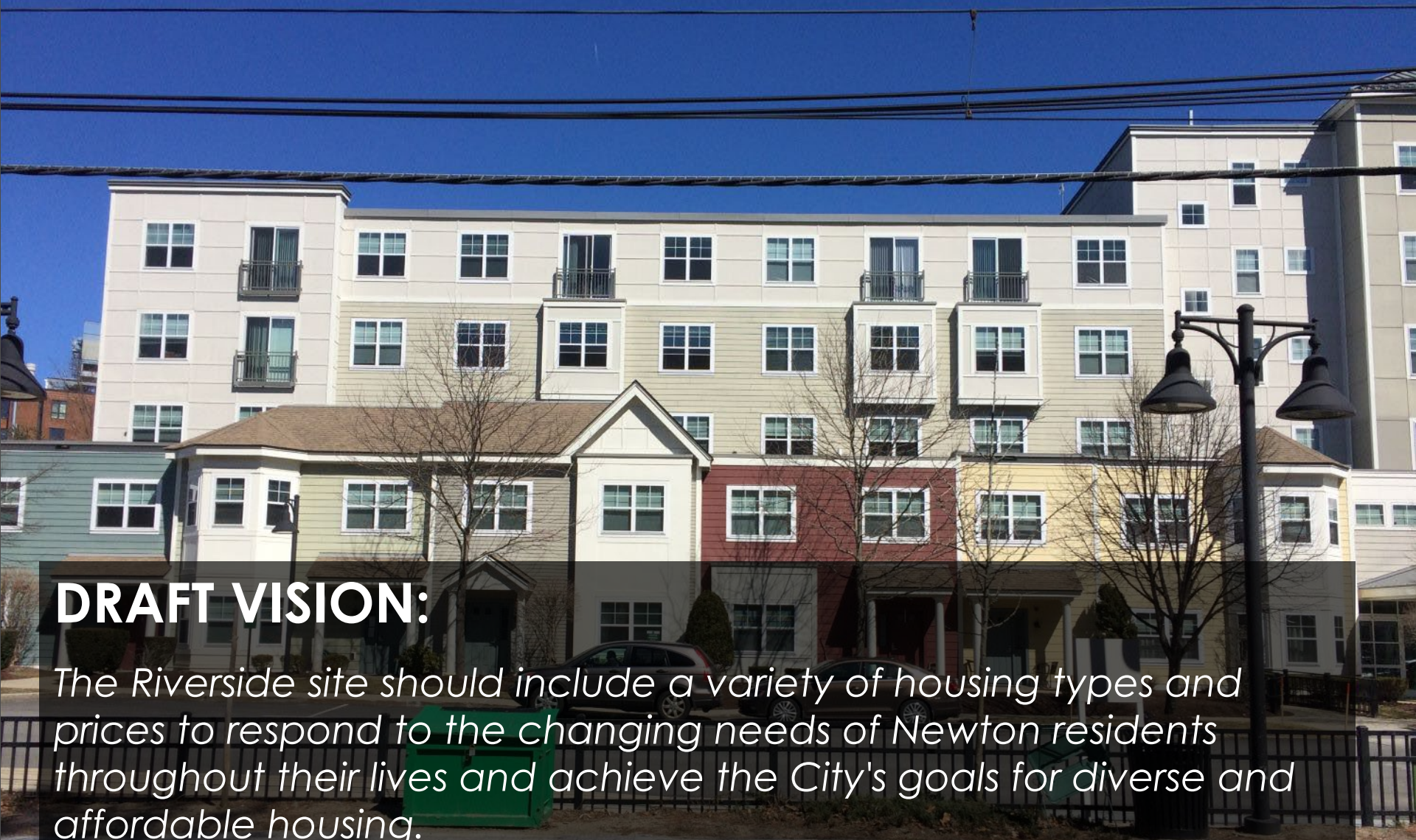


E – Robust Newton Economy



T – Transportation Hub

HOUSING FOR NEWTON



DRAFT VISION:

The Riverside site should include a variety of housing types and prices to respond to the changing needs of Newton residents throughout their lives and achieve the City's goals for diverse and affordable housing.



WHAT WE HEARD

"More housing, as much affordable housing as possible given financing constraints."

*"Perfect site for dense housing development!
A true TOD opportunity!"*

"Condos not apartment buildings."

"Attractive affordable housing [to create] options for seniors, millennials, and families."

"...The city could really use more mid-market condos and/or apartments."

"A community where our seniors can comfortably age in place, with easy access to shops, transportation, and outdoor recreation."

"We need more housing stock especially affordable housing, to keep young professional and the elderly in Newton."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Desire for variety of housing types to address demand for housing that accommodates a range of populations and incomes
- Potential to increase needed affordable housing
- Differing opinions on types and quantity of housing desired on-site
- Concerns about impact of potential housing contributing to Newton's school system capacity issue

HOUSING FOR NEWTON



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

H1 Help address Newton's current and shifting housing needs



Paseo Verde in Philadelphia, PA is a LEED Platinum mixed-use transit oriented development with 120 units of mixed-income housing (1-3 bedroom units; 53 units or 44% are subsidized).

Image Source: wrtdesign.com

Newton's age distribution differs from state and region

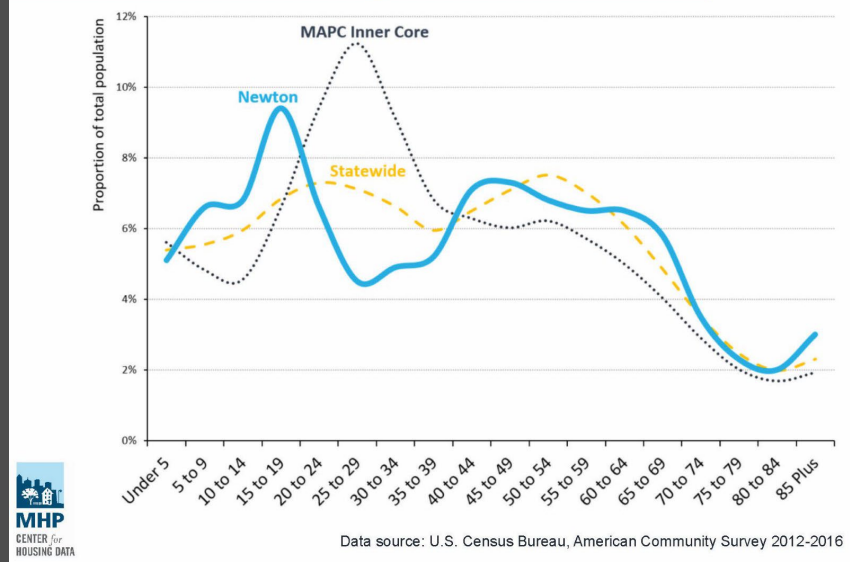


Image Source: Massachusetts Housing Partnership Center for Housing Data, 1/25/2018 U-CHAN Meeting presentation

HOUSING FOR NEWTON

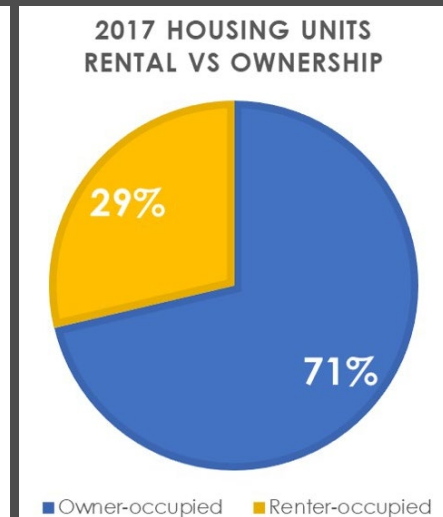
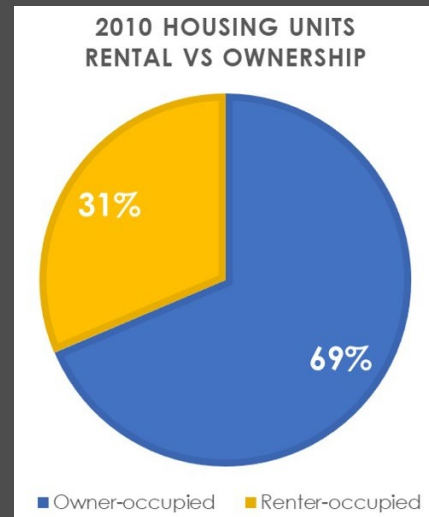


DRAFT PRINCIPLE

H2

Provide a significant number of permanently affordable housing units

Data Source: 2010 US Census Data; 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



HUD calculates Newton's Area Median Income for a family of four as \$107,800

Income Qualifications for Newton HUD Rental Assistance in Newton

| Income | 1 Person | 2 Person | 3 Person | 4 Person | 5 Person | 6 Person | 7 Person | 8 Person |
|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 30% of Median | \$22,650 | \$25,900 | \$29,150 | \$32,350 | \$34,950 | \$37,550 | \$40,150 | \$42,750 |
| 50% of Median | \$37,750 | \$43,150 | \$48,550 | \$53,900 | \$58,250 | \$62,550 | \$66,850 | \$71,150 |
| 80% of Median | \$56,800 | \$64,900 | \$73,000 | \$81,100 | \$87,600 | \$94,100 | \$100,600 | \$107,100 |

HOUSING FOR NEWTON



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

H3

Prepare for implications of housing on all City services



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MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY



DRAFT VISION:

The Riverside site will exemplify Newton's commitment to sustainable development standards, improve the city's climate resiliency, and enhance ecological health and connections to nature.

*Zero Carbon Building, Hong Kong
Image Source: archdaily.com*



WHAT WE HEARD

"Buildings that are very energy efficient (passive house, heat pumps, low embodied carbon)."

"Transit-oriented development, Not Traffic-oriented development."

"Stormwater infiltration, green space, open areas, play areas, shade"

"...preserve the Charles River Watershed and nature trails and the river."

"Recreation space, connecting to trails and paths, river."

"I think that the Riverside site gives Newton an opportunity to be a model for the future of development by having Riverside be a Zero Energy District."

"We have a housing crisis and a climate crisis. We need a lot of energy-efficient units at this smart growth site."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Desire to see buildings and development meet specific green building standards
- Immense interest in better pedestrian and trail connections to the Charles River and nearby parks and conservation lands.
- Recognition that the Riverside site is ideal for transit-oriented development and smart growth, but concern about adequate public transit capacity
- Desire for recreation areas and green space on the Riverside site

MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

S1

Provide options for residents to live low-carbon lifestyles



Image Sources: MBTA, Boston Globe, commuter.com

MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY



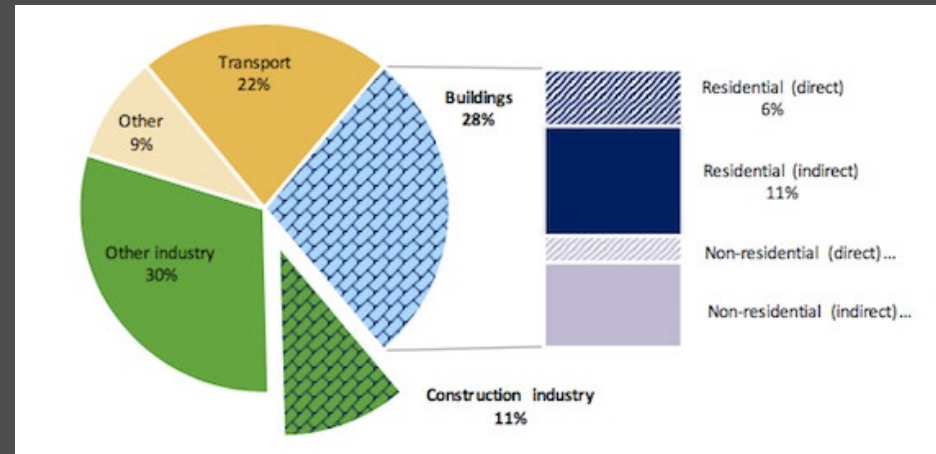
DRAFT PRINCIPLE

S2 Prioritize energy-efficient building principles



Boulder Commons is a multi-building net-zero energy development that is part of the Boulder Junction transit oriented development in Boulder, CO.

Image Source: coburnpartners.com



Share of global energy-related emissions by sector (2015).

Image Source: Greenbuilding.com (graphic) and IEA (2017)

MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

S3

Protect and improve the Charles River through site design



Riverside Park

Image Source: Newton Conservators



Stormwater planters in Columbus Square, Philadelphia PA

Image Source: PhillyWatersheds.org

MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

S4 Improve Newton's climate resiliency

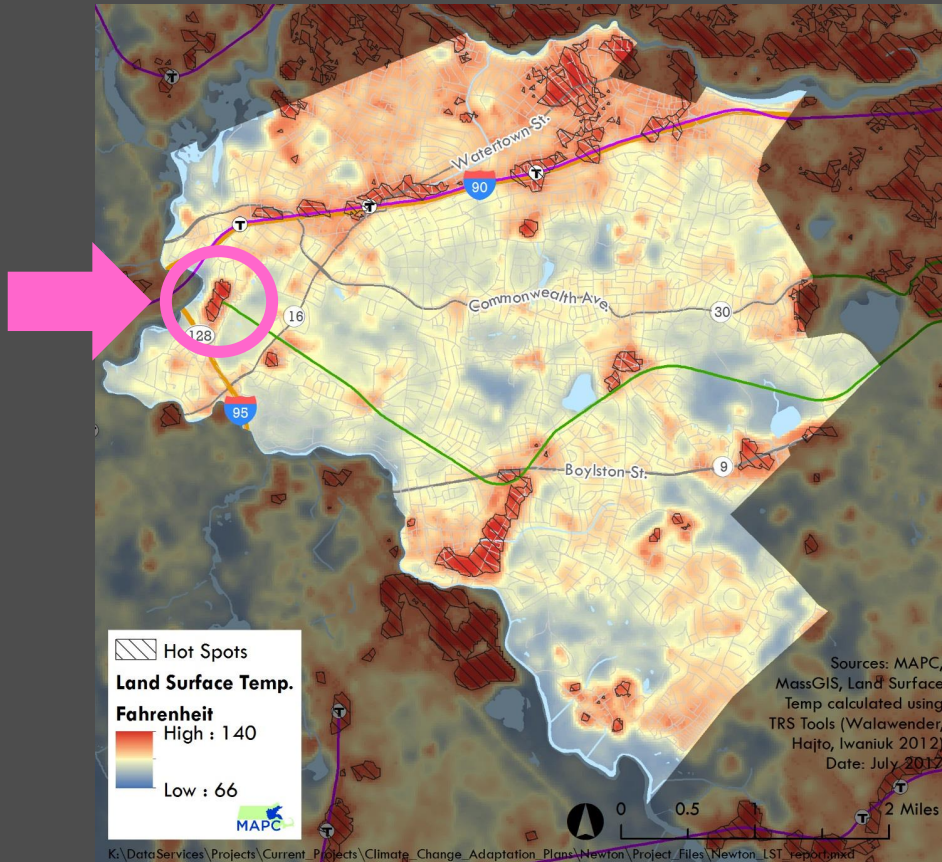


Image Source: Newton Climate Change VAP

MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

S5 Reinforce connections to nature



Riverside Park in January



Riverside Greenway Committee Tour with Planning Team in March

SIX OVERARCHING CATEGORIES - DRAFT



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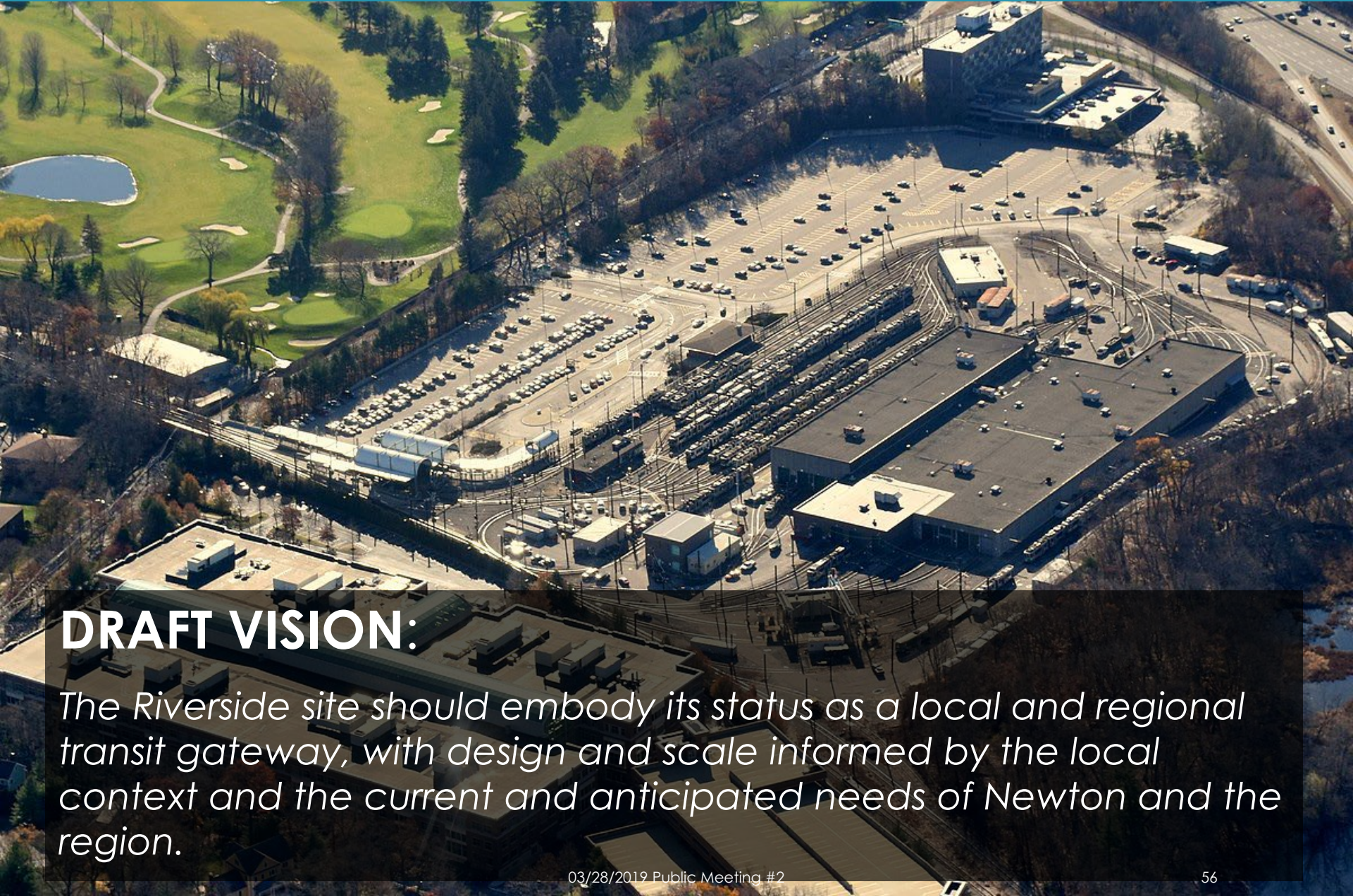
D – Quality Design



E – Robust Newton Economy



T – Transportation Hub



DRAFT VISION:

The Riverside site should embody its status as a local and regional transit gateway, with design and scale informed by the local context and the current and anticipated needs of Newton and the region.



WHAT WE HEARD

"Want a development that meshes with [surrounding] neighborhoods."

"Turn an eyesore of asphalt into a vibrant place - but one that fits within the scale of the neighborhood."

"Large scale please!"

"Smaller scale!"

"High towers with mixed income housing... Housing for millennials!"

"Make sure there isn't a wall of buildings along Grove St. Any development should be set back... and stepped back..."

"If buildings are too large, they will isolate the abutting neighborhoods. Building size needs to reflect the community the buildings exist within, not the highway that bisects the community."

"A true village-scale; small buildings with 3-4 stories, parks, and open space with reduced density and impact on its surroundings."

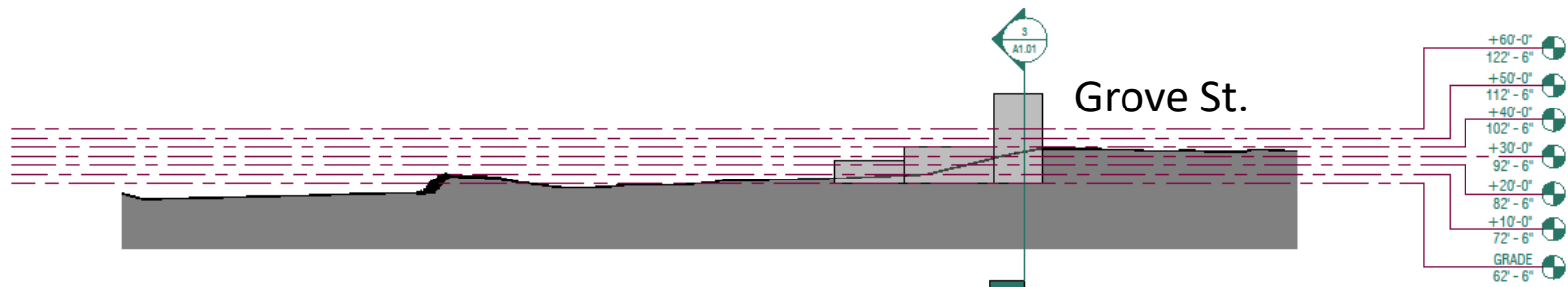
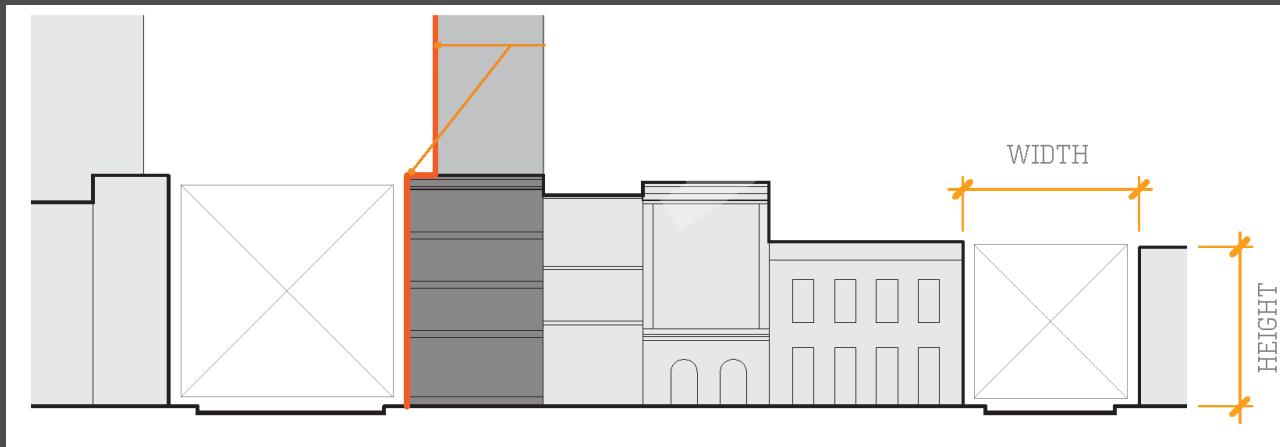
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Desire for development to complement and integrate within context of adjacent neighborhoods
- Possible location for quality design and larger scale because of location
- Range of opinions about scale and nature of possible development
- Desire for aesthetically pleasing design and scale that respects Newton's villages
- Need for thoughtful approach especially along Grove Street



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

D1 Utilize existing site topography for creative and contextual site planning



Section of at Indigo Hotel area

QUALITY DESIGN



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

D2

Require high-quality architectural design and construction



Current view of the Indigo from I-95 Southbound



Clarks Headquarters in Waltham, MA is prominent and identifiable from I-95.

Image Source: [businesswire.com](https://www.businesswire.com)



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

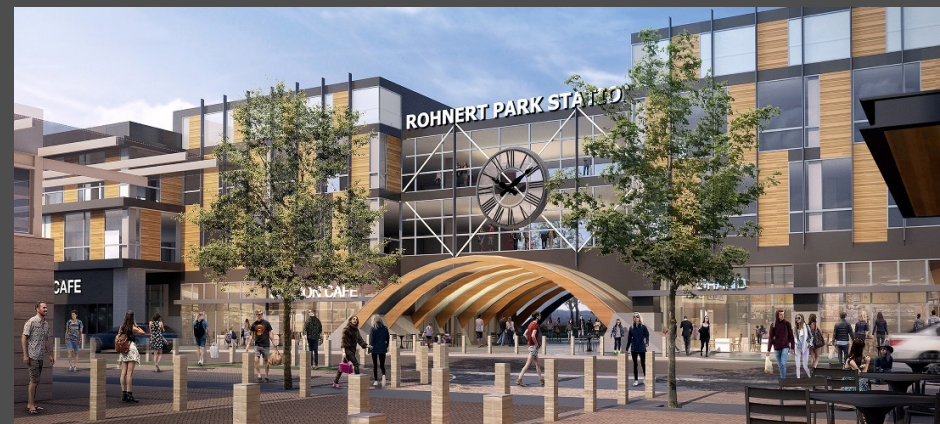
D3

Highlight the Riverside MBTA Station



Government Center Station in downtown Boston strikes the balance of being highly identifiable without overwhelming the aesthetic of the surrounding context.

Image Source: Wikipedia



Plans for Rohnert Park Station in Sonoma County, CA elevate the importance of the station through prominent signage, architectural detail, and prominent positioning within a larger plaza.

Image Source: Lulima Development



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

D4

Create human-scale, walkable blocks

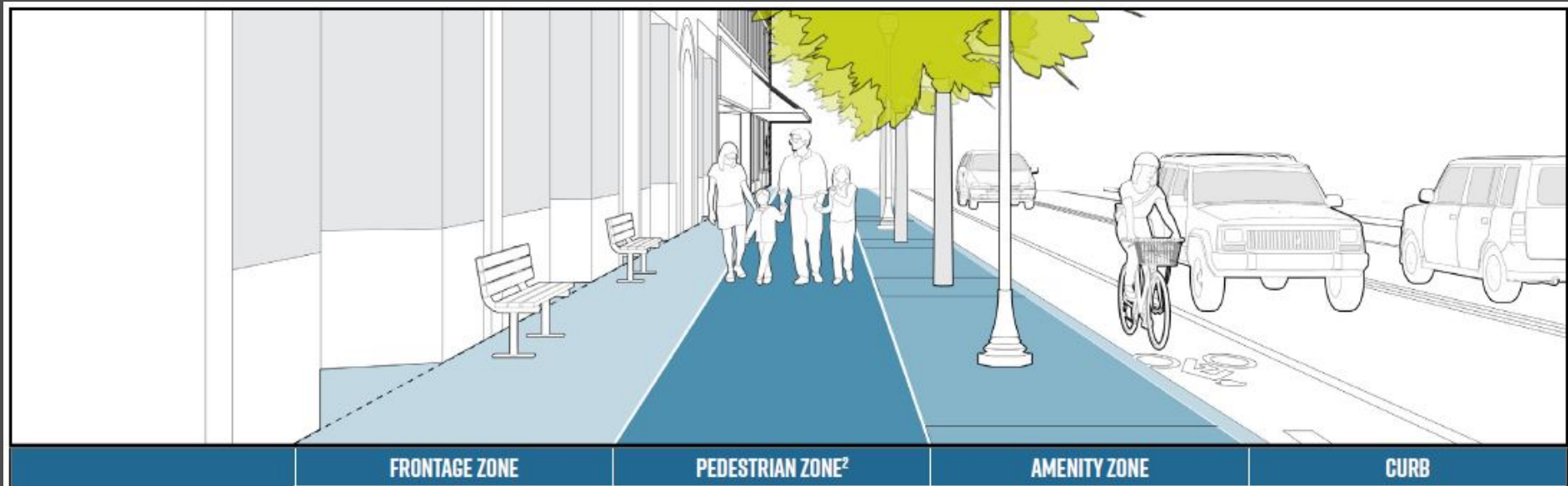


Image Source: Newton Street Design Guide

QUALITY DESIGN



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

D5

Embody the Garden City through street-side landscape design within the site and along Grove St



Source: Google Streetview (2018)

Source: Kendall Square Association



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

D6

Celebrate the Charles River and recreation opportunities



Watertown Riverfront Park in Watertown, MA features a combination of public art and universally-accessible educational and wayfinding infrastructure.

Source: Next City



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

D7 Develop design guidelines



Design public open space as an extension of the streetscape and maximize comfort and visual access



Express neighborhood character in public open space



Create a defined and active streetwall, render facades with texture and depth



Recognize and enhance unique conditions, historic and natural features



Modulate buildings vertically and horizontally



Shape the roofs of buildings

PUBLIC REALM

SITE DESIGN

BUILT FORM

SIX OVERARCHING CATEGORIES - DRAFT



C – Newton Community Connections



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T – Transportation Hub

ROBUST NEWTON ECONOMY



DRAFT VISION:

The Riverside site should contain a viable mix of commercial businesses that brings positive tax revenue and jobs to the city, while also offering local retail and services that complement existing commercial offerings in the nearby village centers.



WHAT WE HEARD

"Riverside should take advantage of its location for commercial development, specifically office, medical and research facilities..."

"Must be strongly net revenue positive considering full cost impact on city services. Not many opportunities left to add significant commercial space."

"Many small businesses."

"Ground floor retail including restaurants and community serving services."

"What kind of retail or office/lab space would serve Riverside and the abutting neighborhood best? Can we plan for commercial that reduces traffic by car?"

"No need for retail (coffee shop is good) or office space. Low income housing - 100%"

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Differing opinions about scale of commercial development that would be beneficial at the site
- Strong desire to see local, small businesses represented on-site
- Desire to see mix of uses that serve surrounding communities without negatively affecting existing village centers
- Interest in generating tax revenue for the City through commercial development

ROBUST NEWTON ECONOMY



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

E1 Pursue best-fit of local retail and services



Ensuring a complementary mix of uses will reduce turnover and promote longevity.

Location: Station Landing in Medford, MA



Local needs take the form of a mixture of smaller-scale restaurants and retail options.

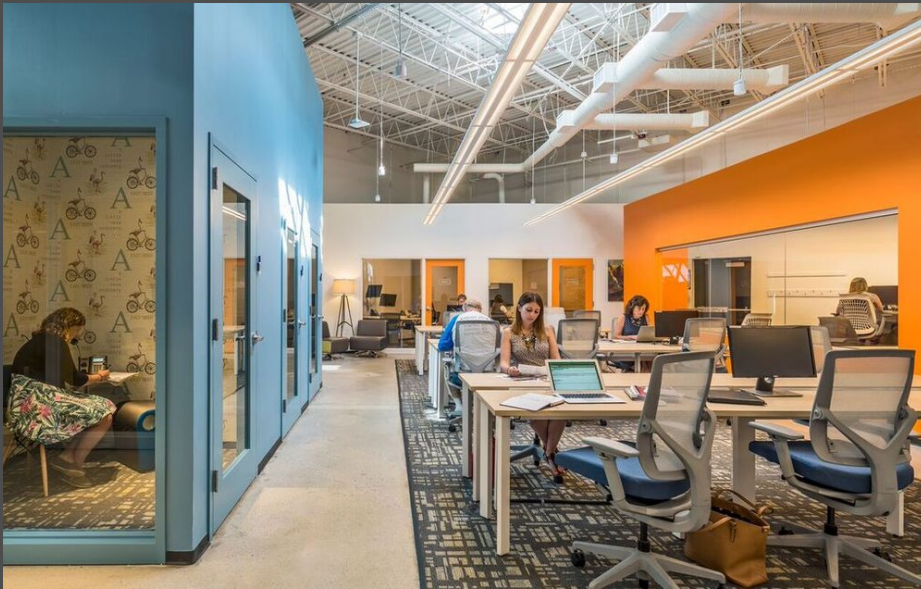
Image Source: CookNewton.com

ROBUST NEWTON ECONOMY



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

E2 Provide an array of commercial space types



Coworking spaces can provide flexible options to those who work remotely or from home.

Image Source: Workbar Brighton



Harvard lab space.

Image Source: Glassdoor

ROBUST NEWTON ECONOMY



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

E3 Support new and existing locally-owned businesses



Lower Falls



Newton Centre



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

E4 Ensure development supplies substantial fiscal benefit to the City

| Fiscal Year 2018 Tax Rates* | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Residential | \$10.82 |
| Commercial | \$20.62 |

*Per \$1,000 assessed

Source: City of Newton

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TRANSPORTATION HUB



DRAFT VISION:

The Riverside site is an innovative multimodal transit center that draws on best practices to improve local and regional mobility for Newton residents and all those who utilize the station.



WHAT WE HEARD

"Minimize traffic: Grove Street is already too busy."

"...the connection between... Newton Lower Falls and Auburndale strengthened..."

"New recreational connections and new commuter connections."

"Direct site access to nearby highways."

"Make accessible options possible to adjacent parks/trails."

"Entrances to Riverside are currently inadequate and increase backup of traffic on Grove St. Ways to handle traffic volume and speed of cars are needed to maintain neighborhood safety."

"Very careful traffic/transportation planning. A traffic glut will kill surrounding neighborhood livability."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Concern about impact of any development on traffic, particularly Grove Street
- Questions and concerns about current MBTA service and potential future expansion of services and facilities
- Preference for direct highway access to/from site
- Desire for site to be a true multimodal destination with pedestrian and bike access and trails and transit (bus and rail)
- Parking – too much/ too little

TRANSPORTATION HUB



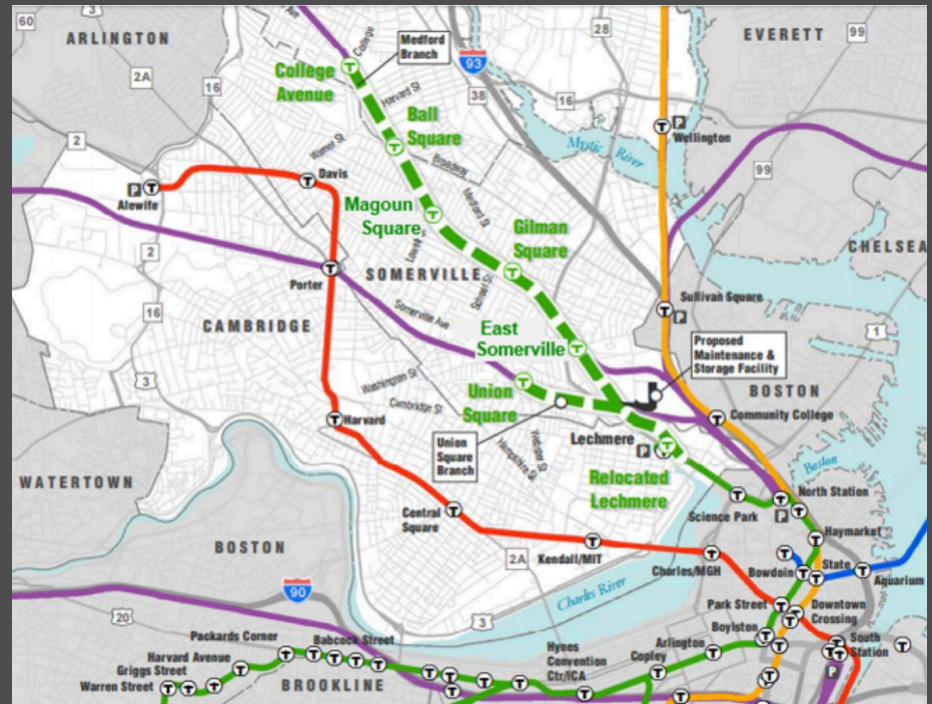
DRAFT PRINCIPLE

T1

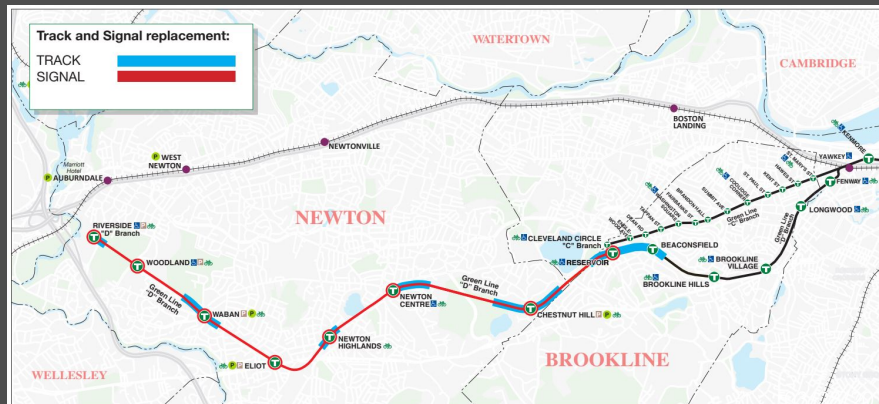
Advocate for improvements to the Green Line and Riverside MBTA Station to support increased ridership



Source: MBTA



Source: City of Somerville



TRANSPORTATION HUB



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

T2 Support potential expansion or connection of the commuter rail to Riverside



The Rail Spur in March 2019



TRANSPORTATION HUB



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

T3

Enhance neighbor experience and safety along Grove Street



Image Source: Google Earth

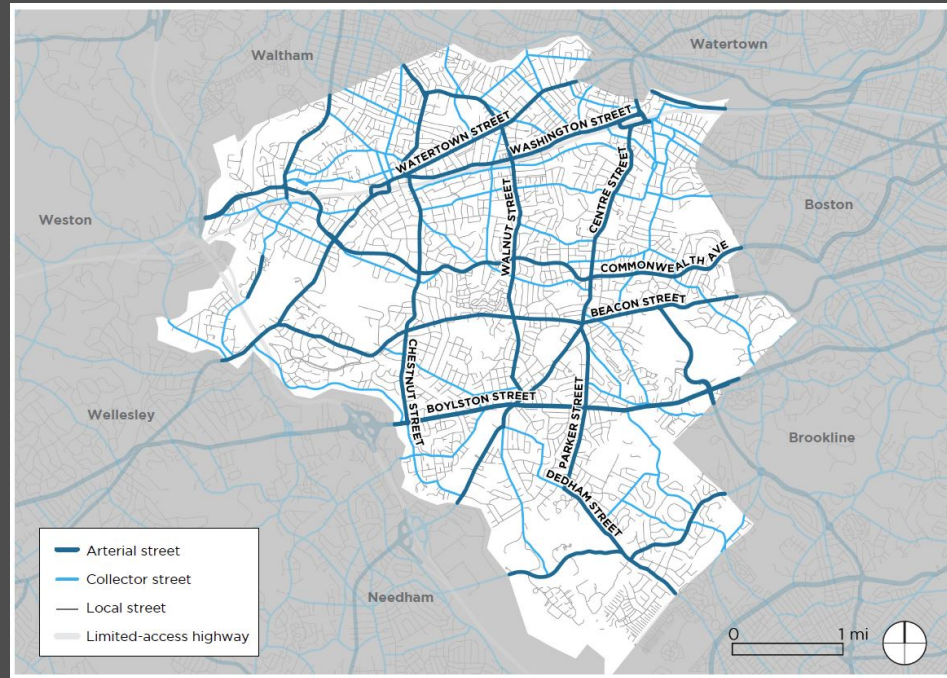
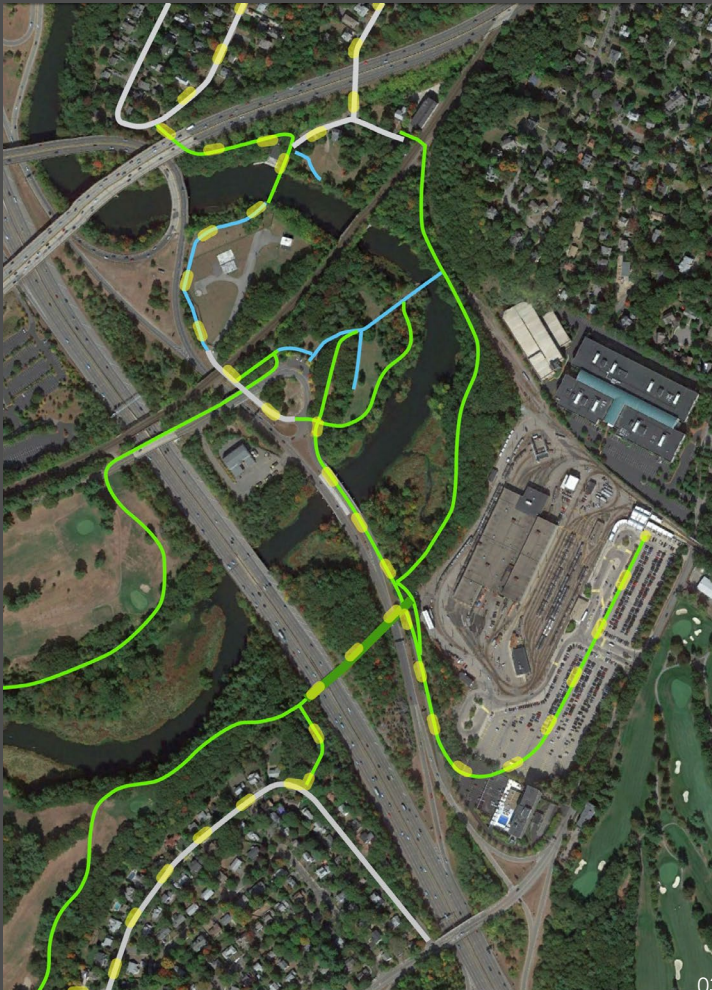


Image Source: Newton Street Design Guide

DRAFT PRINCIPLE

T4 Link to and expand the trail network



One of two former rail bridges over I-95

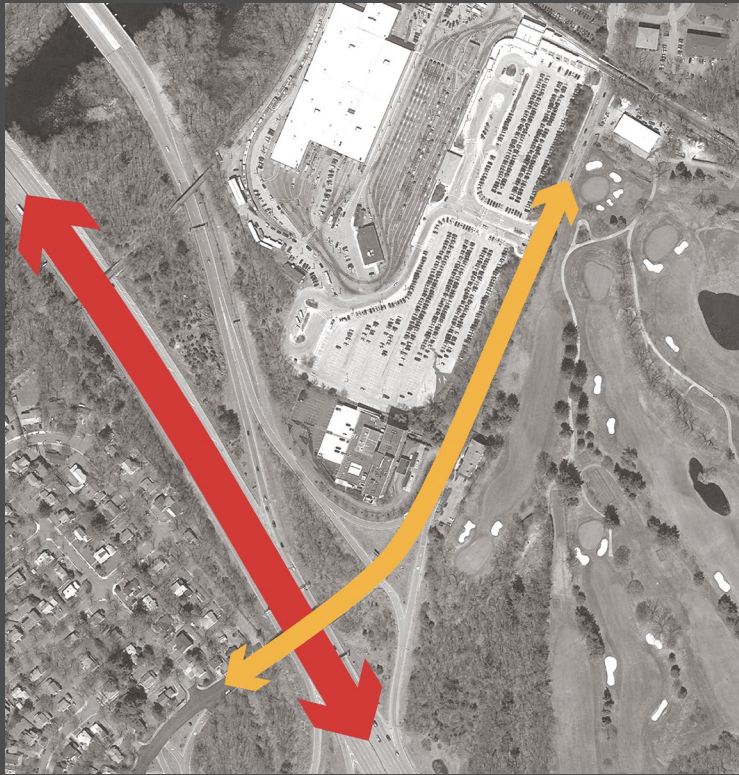
TRANSPORTATION HUB



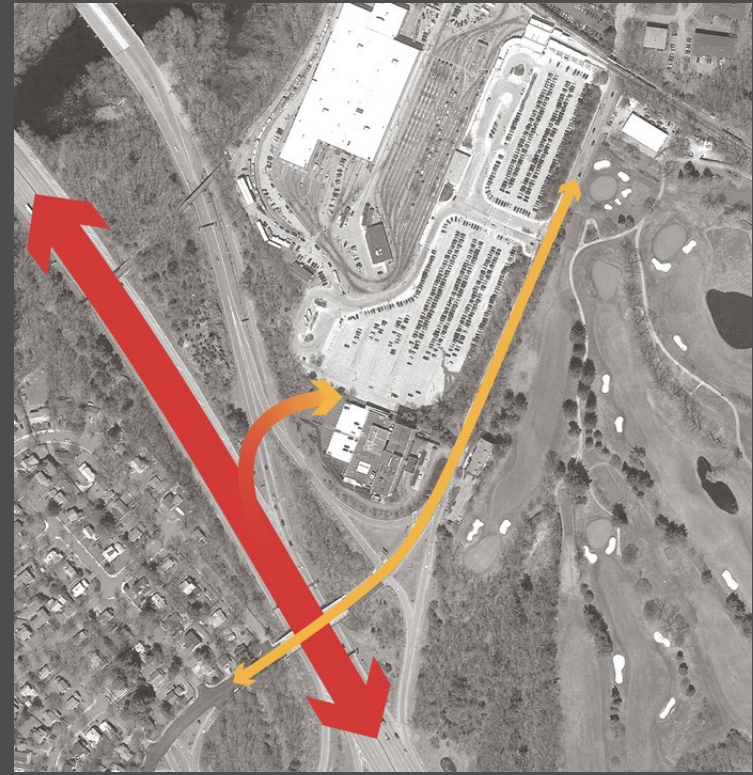
DRAFT PRINCIPLE

T5

Improve and manage traffic flow to and from Riverside



Current access

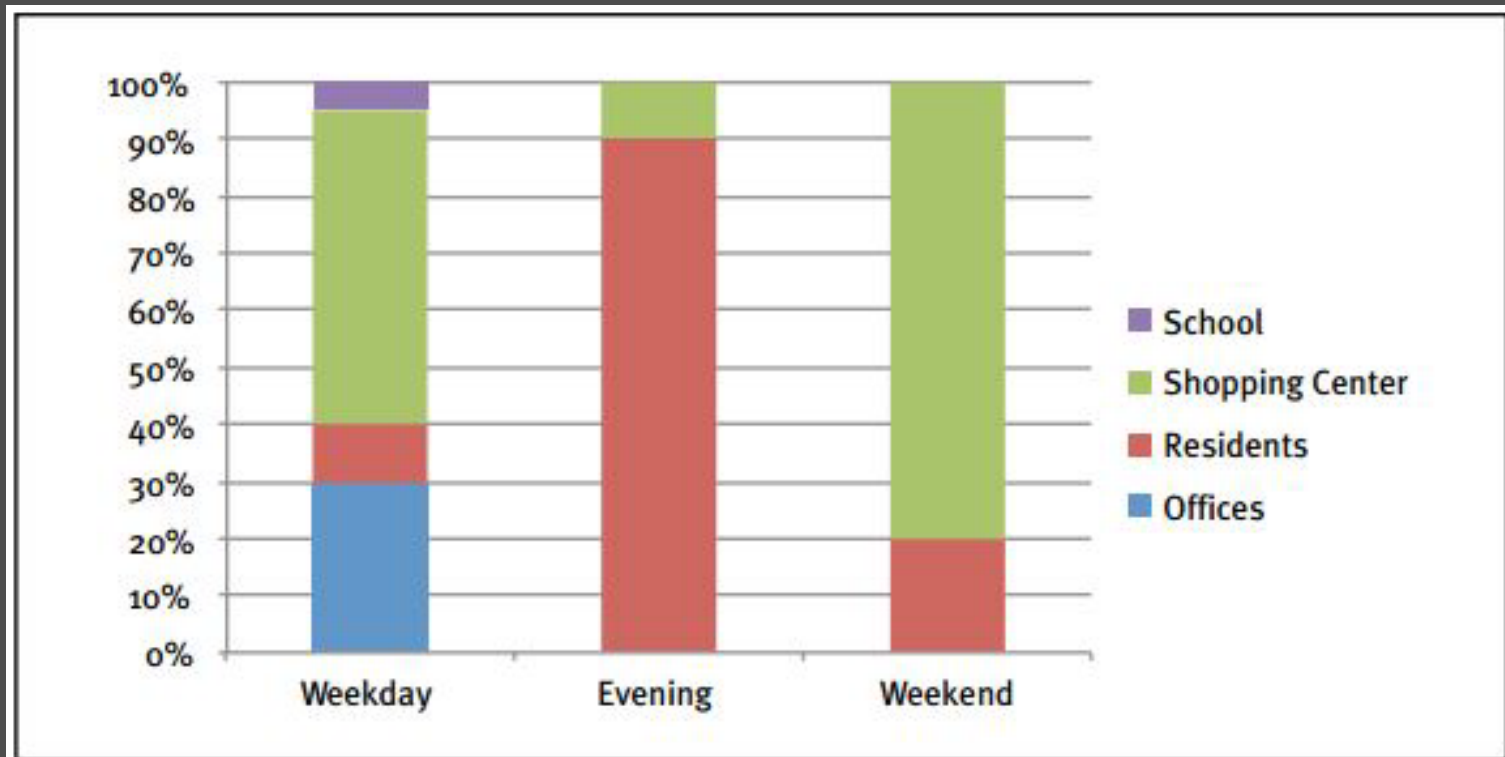


Desired access



DRAFT PRINCIPLE

T6 Maximize efficiency of on-site parking and minimize neighborhood parking overflow



The table illustrates how 100 parking spaces in a mixed-use district can be distributed based on usage at different times.

Source: Institute for Transportation and Development Policy
https://www.itdp.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Shared-Parking_ITDP.pdf

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T7

Prepare for future transportation trends and technology



Image Source: AP News



Image Source: PluginCars.com

All Draft Principles are displayed on walls tonight

Please take time to walk around and leave comments (comment areas will also be up on the project website until April 12th)

Let's Talk!

Questions and Answers

RULES FOR CIVIC DISCOURSE

This vision planning process provides a space for an exchange of information and is a forum for input and discussion.

With these goals in mind, the following guidelines are presented for civic discourse:

The Riverside Vision Planning Team pledges to:

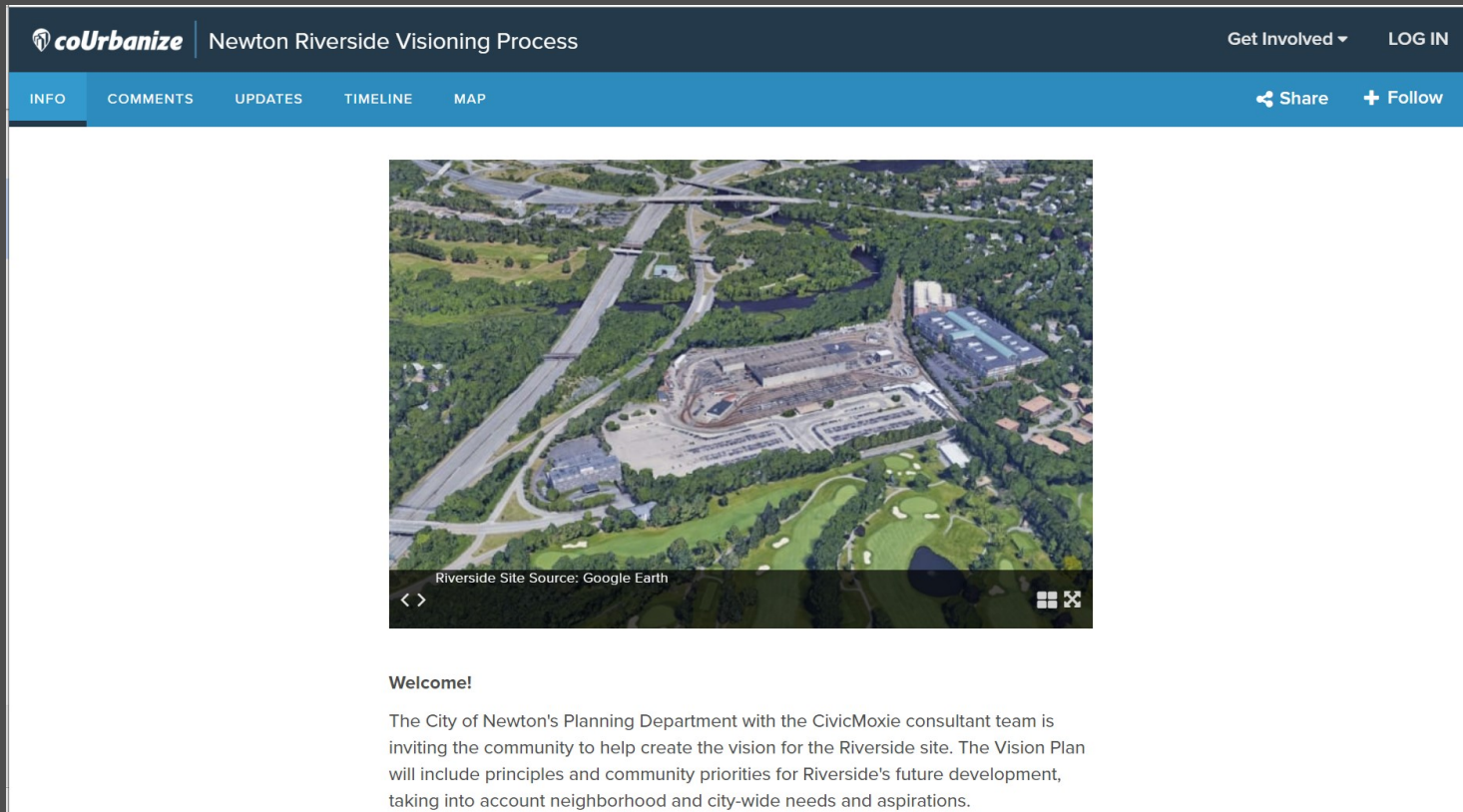
- Listen to a wide range of ideas from all who participate.
- Read all comments.
- Explain how community input is being incorporated in the planning process.

We ask of you:

- Be respectful.
- Be concise.
- Be creative.
- Be constructive.

THE VISION PLAN WEBSITE

Please sign up on the Vision Plan website at www.courb.co/riverside to offer feedback on draft principles through April 12th and to receive notices of the planning process.



coUrbanize | Newton Riverside Visioning Process Get Involved ▾ LOG IN

[INFO](#) [COMMENTS](#) [UPDATES](#) [TIMELINE](#) [MAP](#) Share + Follow

Riverside Site Source: Google Earth

Welcome!

The City of Newton's Planning Department with the CivicMoxie consultant team is inviting the community to help create the vision for the Riverside site. The Vision Plan will include principles and community priorities for Riverside's future development, taking into account neighborhood and city-wide needs and aspirations.

FINAL MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2019

6:30 PM

Location TBD