Dedham Square Design Guidelines

Dedham, MA

Dedham Square, ca. 1890

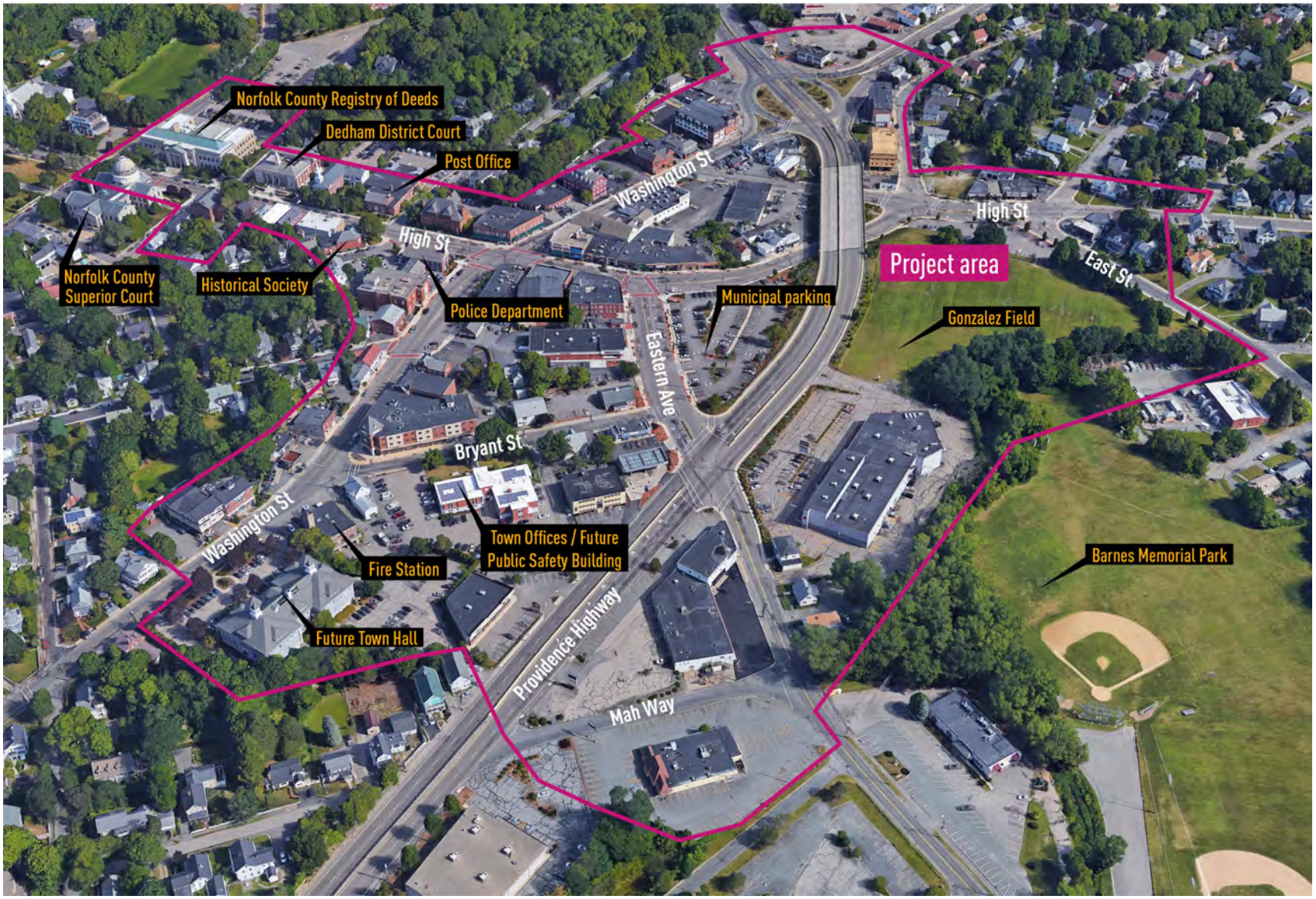
architecture
urban design
GAMBLE ASSOCIATES

Public meeting

January 30, 2018

01 This is Dedham!

Project area



This is Dedham!

Well-kept open space

This is Dedham!

This is Dedham!

Historic structures in good condition

This is Dedham!

Historic structures in good condition

This is Dedham!

Attractive amenities

This is Dedham!

Appropriate singage

This is Dedham!

Active ground floor uses

This is Dedham!

Infill development activity

This is Dedham!

Attractive Main Street

This is also Dedham!

Car-centered public realm

This is also Dedham!

First impression of downtown

This is also Dedham!

Town divided by Providence Highway

This is also Dedham!

Wide, undefined street scape

This is also Dedham!

This is also Dedham!

This is also Dedham!

This is also Dedham!

Inappropriate floor heights

02 Urban Design analysis

Prior planning efforts

The best planning endeavors build from prior efforts

2009 Dedham Master Plan Report - Community Opportunities Group, Inc.

2012 Design Bulletin - Brown & Keener

2012 Design Manual for Building Improvements - Brown & Keener

2013 Demographic Trends and Housing in the Town of Dedham - Northeastern University

2013 East Dedham Village Charrette - Metropolitan Area Planning Council

2014 Enhancing Creative East Dedham - Northeastern University

2015 Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study - Metropolitan Area Planning Council

2016 Dedham Heritage Rail Trail Feasibility Study - Weston & Sampson

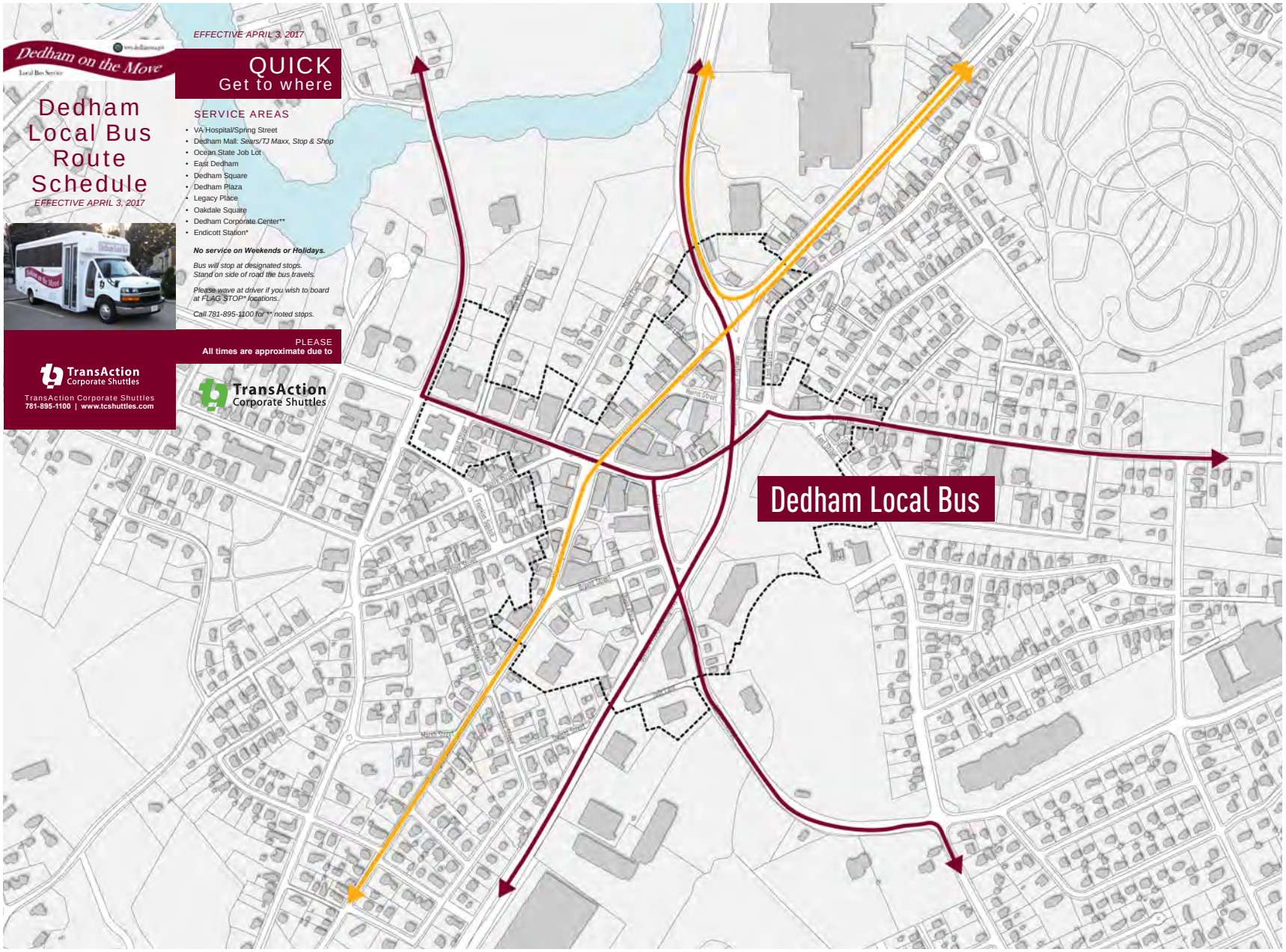
2016 Dedham Technical Assistance Panel - Urban Land Institute

2017 East Dedham Design Guidelines - Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Transit

1" = 8000"

Transit


Dedham on the Move
Local Bus Service
Dedham Local Bus Route Schedule
EFFECTIVE APRIL 3, 2017
EFFECTIVE APRIL 3, 2017
QUICK
Get to where
SERVICE AREAS
• VA Hospital/Spring Street
• Dedham Mall: Sears/TJ Maxx, Stop & Shop
• Ocean State Job Lot
• East Dedham
• Dedham Square
• Dedham Plaza
• Legacy Place
• Oakdale Square
• Dedham Corporate Center**
• Endicott Station*
No service on Weekends or Holidays.
Bus will stop at designated stops.
Stand on side of road the bus travels.
Please wave at driver if you wish to board at FLAG STOP* locations.
Call 781-895-1100 for ** noted stops.
PLEASE
All times are approximate due to
TransAction Corporate Shuttles
TransAction Corporate Shuttles
781-895-1100 | www.tcshuttles.com
TransAction Corporate Shuttles
Dedham Local Bus
1" = 8000"

Transit

Local bus runs only seven times a day

Route 1										Route 2											Route 3								
Dedham Sq Municipal Lot	Ames St*	Doggett Circle/ Community Room	Bridge St*	Spring St Café*	VA Hospital/Spring St Entrance by Shelter	Sears/TJ Maxx (by MBTA Bus Stop)	Stop & Shop	Ocean State Job Lot	Dedham Sq Municipal Lot	Mt Vernon/Walnut*	Depot/Endicott Station*	Sprague St*	Dedham Manor	Tower/Paul Turner*	Oakdale Common/ Cobbler Lane	Veterans Road/Oakland*	Parkway Court	Sawmill/Delapa Plaza*	Motherbrook Community Ctr*	O'Neil Senior Housing	Dedham Sq Municipal Lot	Town Hall*	Dedham Plaza/Food Pantry*	Dedham Plaza/Star Market	Dedham Corporate Center/ Commuter Rail**	Legacy Place Guest Services by Cinema	Sears/TJ Maxx (by MBTA Bus Stop)	Stop & Shop	Ocean State Job Lot	Dedham Sq Municipal Lot
7:30		7:35			7:40	7:45	7:46	7:47	7:53				8:01		8:07		8:11			8:16	8:18			8:21		8:27	8:33	8:35	8:37	8:42
8:42	*(Flag Only Stop)	8:47	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	8:52	8:55	8:58	8:59	9:03	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	9:12	*(Flag Only Stop)	9:16	*(Flag Only Stop)	9:19	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	9:24	9:27	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	9:29	** Call 781-895-1100	9:36	9:42	9:45	9:46	9:52
9:52		9:57			10:00	10:05	10:07	10:08	10:11				10:22		10:26		10:29			10:33	10:36			10:41		10:47	10:52	10:55	10:56	11:04
11:04		11:08			11:12	11:16	11:17	11:18	11:19				11:30		11:34		11:37			11:41	11:44			11:49		11:55	NO SERVICE			
NO SERVICE																								1:00		1:06	1:11	1:14	1:15	1:20
1:20	*(Flag Only Stop)	1:25	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	1:30	1:35	1:36	1:37	1:42	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	1:52	*(Flag Only Stop)	1:56	*(Flag Only Stop)	1:59	*(Flag Only Stop)	*(Flag Only Stop)	2:03	2:06			2:11		2:17	2:22	2:25	2:26	2:31
2:31		2:36			2:40	2:45	2:46	2:47	2:52				3:02		3:06		3:09			3:13	3:16			3:21		3:27	3:33	3:36	3:37	3:42
3:42		3:47			3:52	3:57	3:58	3:59	4:04				4:12		4:16		4:19			4:23	4:26									

TransAction Corporate Shuttles
Vehicles operated by TransAction Corporate Shuttles
5 Wheeling Avenue, Woburn, MA 01801
781-895-1100 (phone) | 781-895-1122 (fax)

FLAG STOPS

FLAG ONLY STOP. The bus will not stop at this location unless a passenger is there to flag down the driver.
*****Call 781-895-1100 for pick up***

BUS FARES

Adults $1.50
Seniors, Students, Disabled $1.00
all fares require exact change

NEW
All Day Pass $1.50

Download the Ride Systems App - Live Shuttle Tracker
www.dedhamlocal.com

EFFECTIVE APRIL 3, 2017

Open space network

1" = 8000"

Open space network

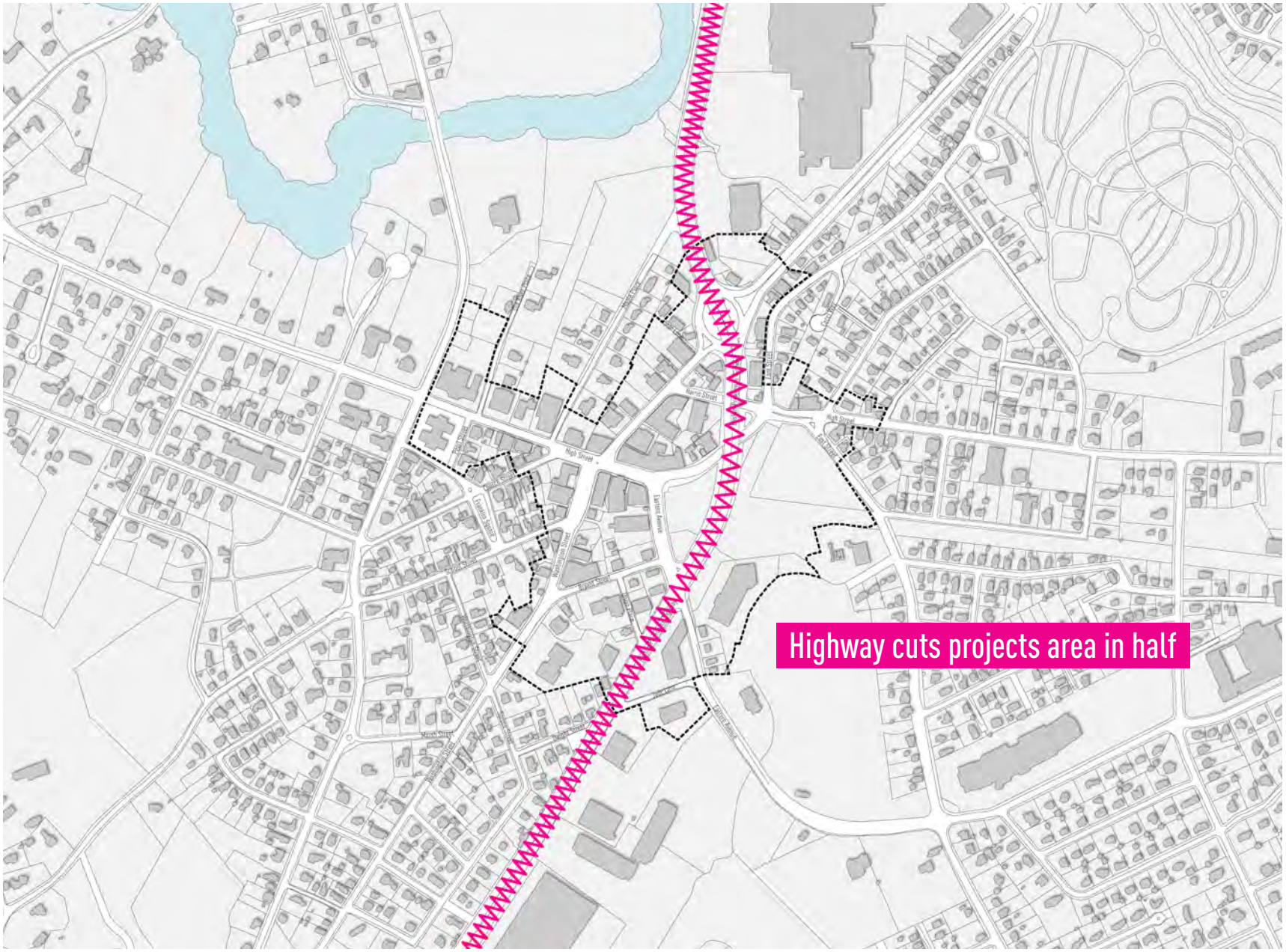
Image: Courtesy of the Dedham Historical Society & Museum

Former Dedham Boat Club with Ames Street Bridge in the background

Open space network

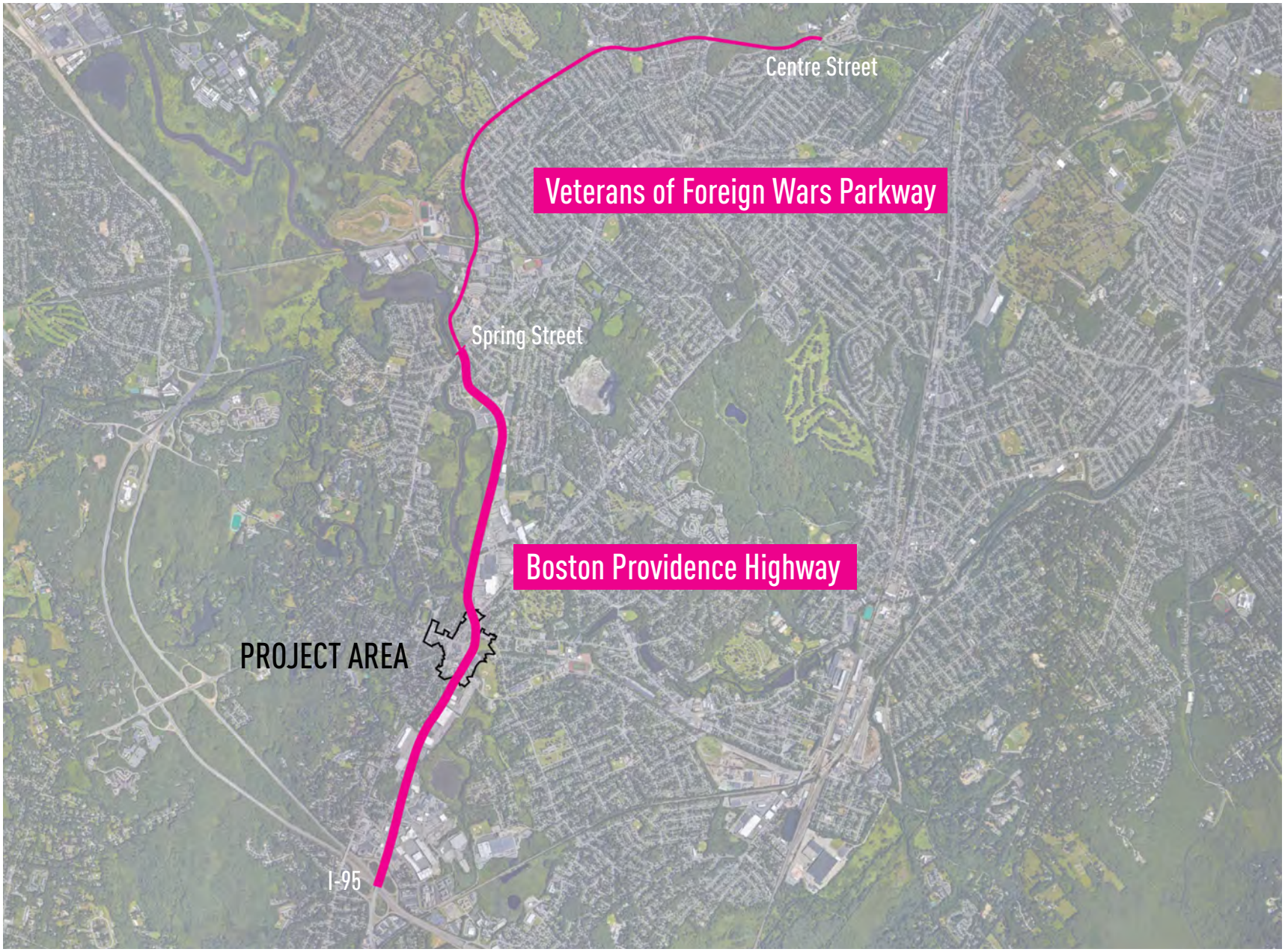
Charles River opposite Spring Street Park

Boston Providence Highway



1" = 8000"

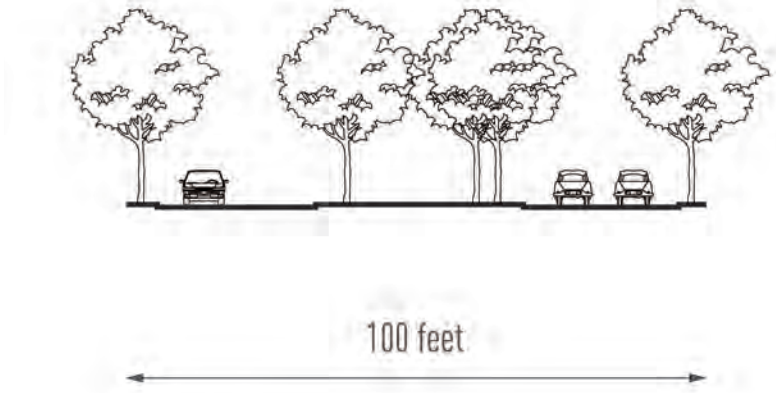
Boston Providence Highway

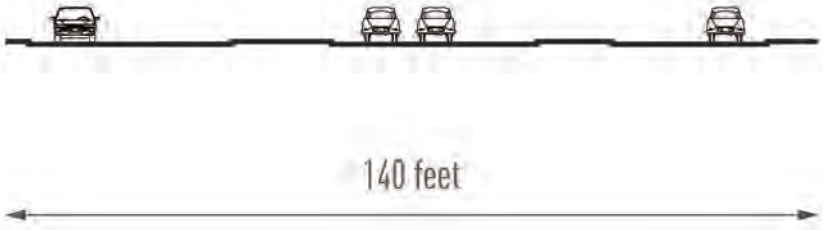


Boston Providence Highway

Veterans of Foreign Wars Parkway

Boston Providence Highway





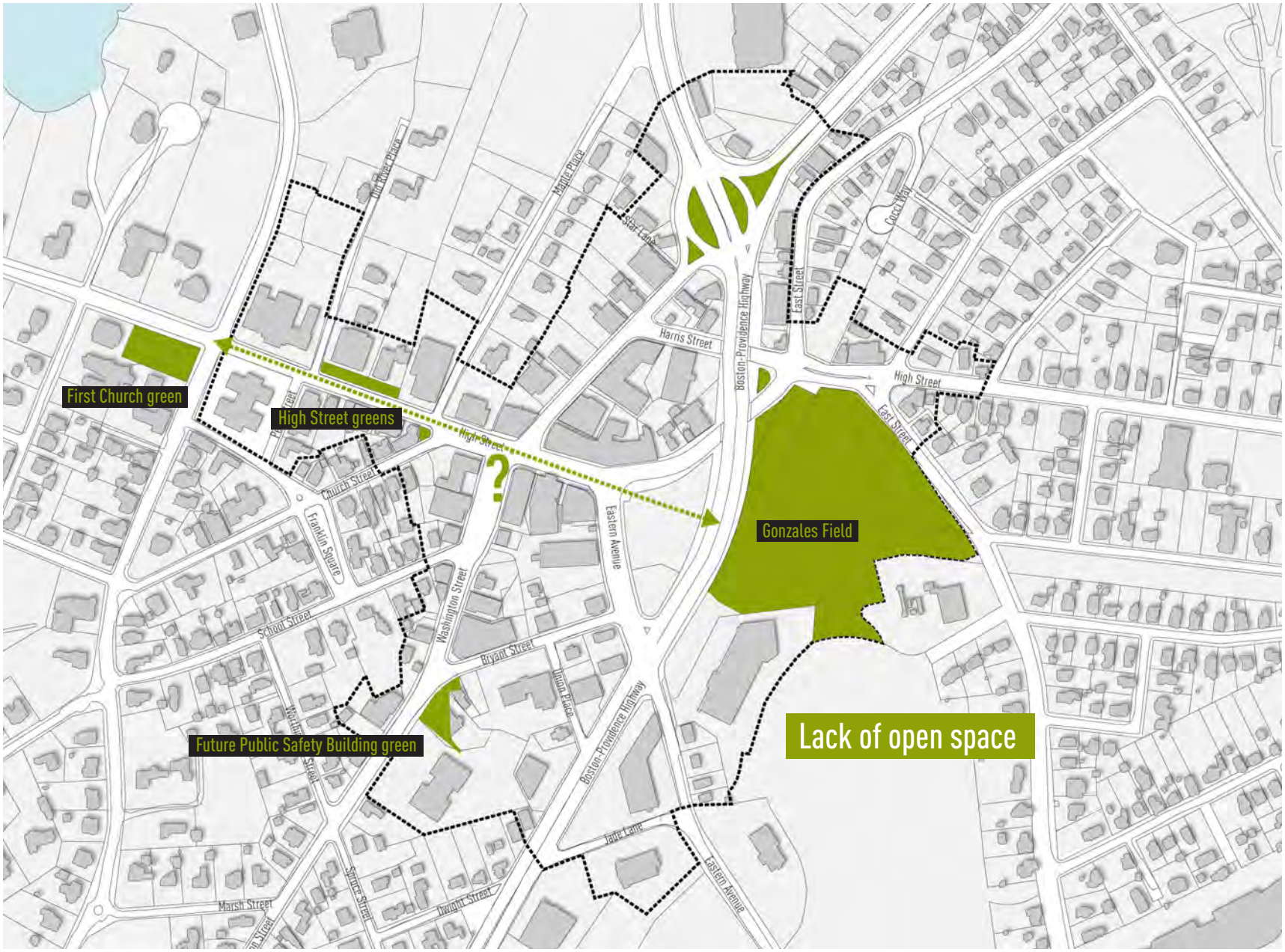
Boston Providence Highway

Construction of High St overpass in 1932

Open space


First Church green
High Street greens
Gonzales Field
Barnes Memorial Park

Open space

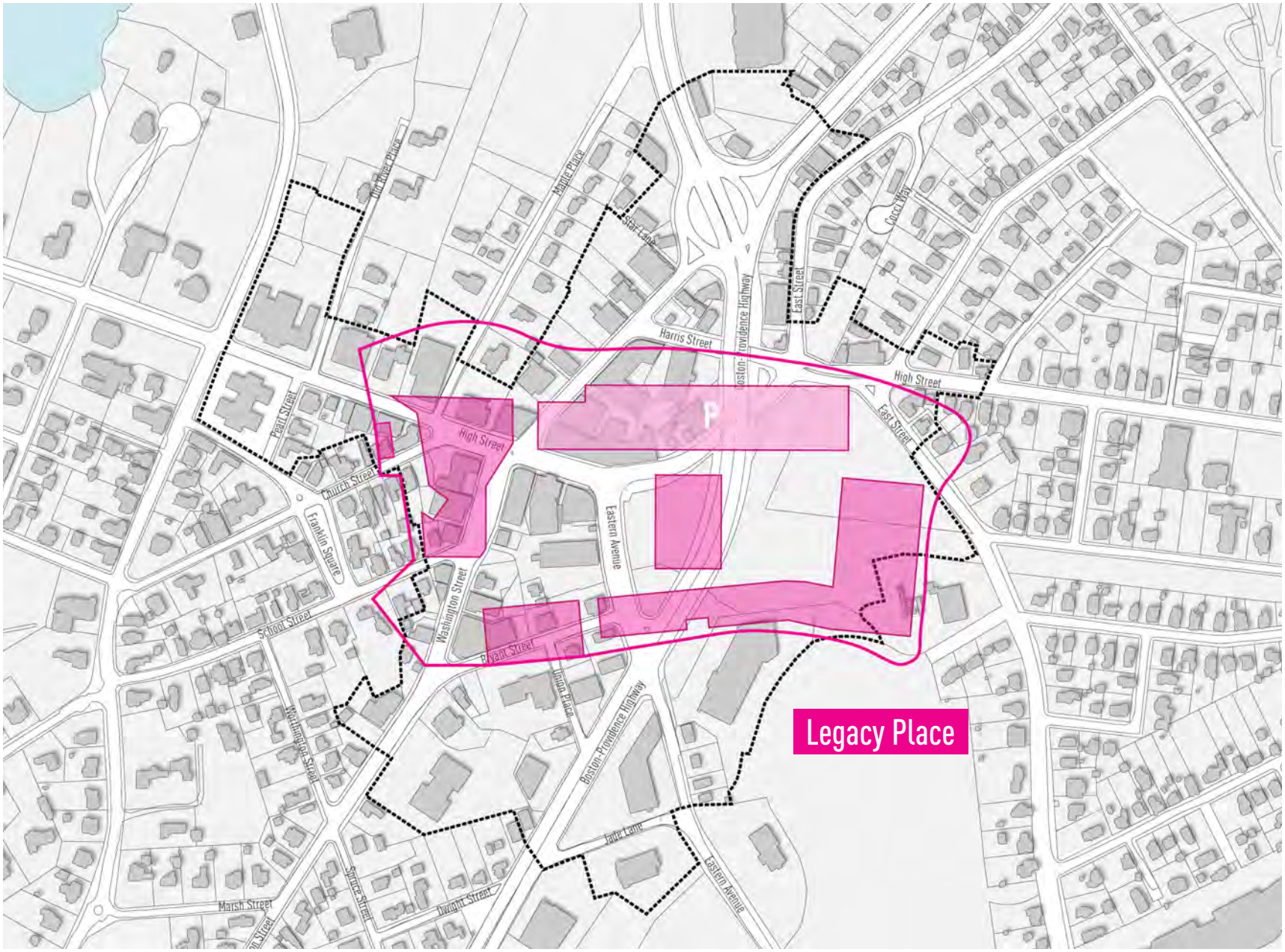

First Church green
High Street greens
Future Public Safety Building green
Gonzales Field
Lack of open space
?
High Street
Church Street
School Street
Washington Street
Bryant Street
Eastern Avenue
Boston-Providence Highway
Harris Street
East Street
Maple Place
Star Lane
Cocci Way
Old River Place
Franklin Square
Union Place
Lake Lane
Marsh Street
Spruce Street
Dwight Street
1" = 400'

Open space

Walkability

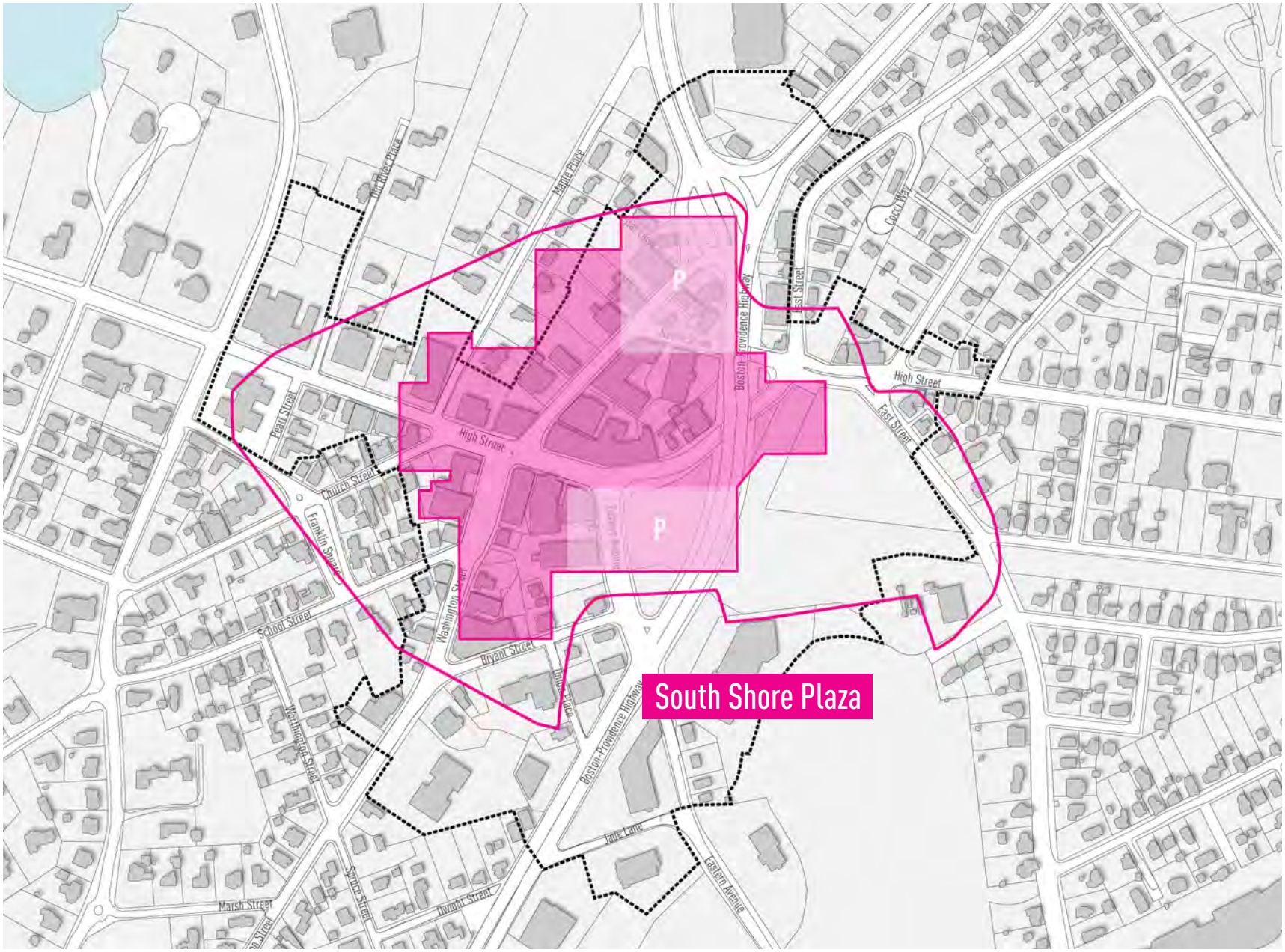
1" = 400'

Walkability / Scale comparison



1" = 400'

Walkability / Scale comparison

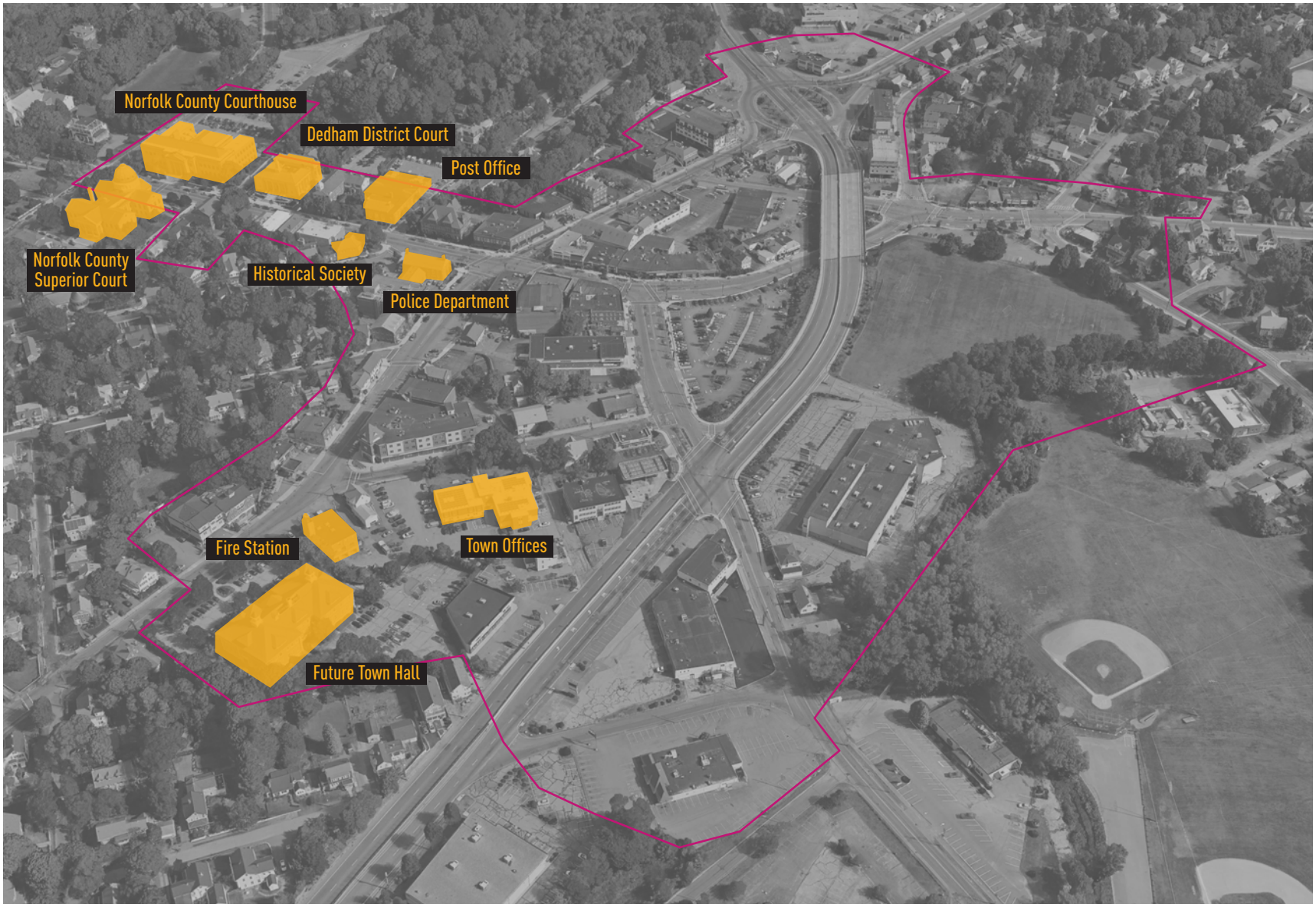


1" = 400'

Public buildings

1" = 400'

Public buildings



Recent development projects (2004 - 17)

1" = 400'

Future Public Safety Building

Future Public Safety Building

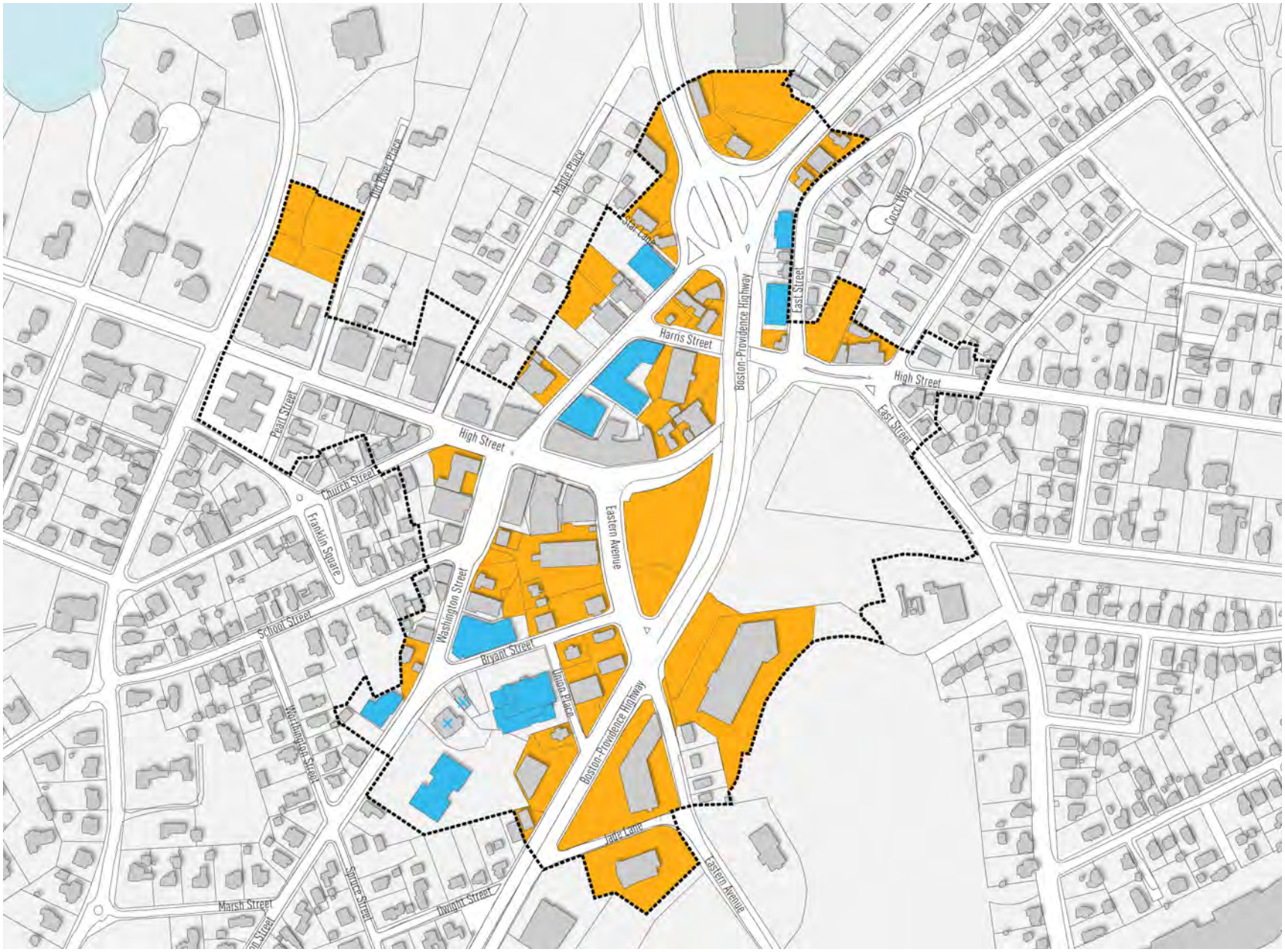
'Soft sites'


287 Washington St
395 Providence Hwy
320 - 326 Washington St
21 + 25 Harris Ave
22 Harris Ave
531 High St
10 Eastern Ave
5 Bryant St
31 Eastern Ave
456 Providence Hwy
525 Providence Hwy
530 Providence Hwy
22 Mah Way

'Soft sites'

1" = 400'

Recent development projects / 'Soft sites'



1" = 400'

Parking

1" = 400'

Impervious surfaces

1" = 400'

Impervious surfaces

1947 Master Plan

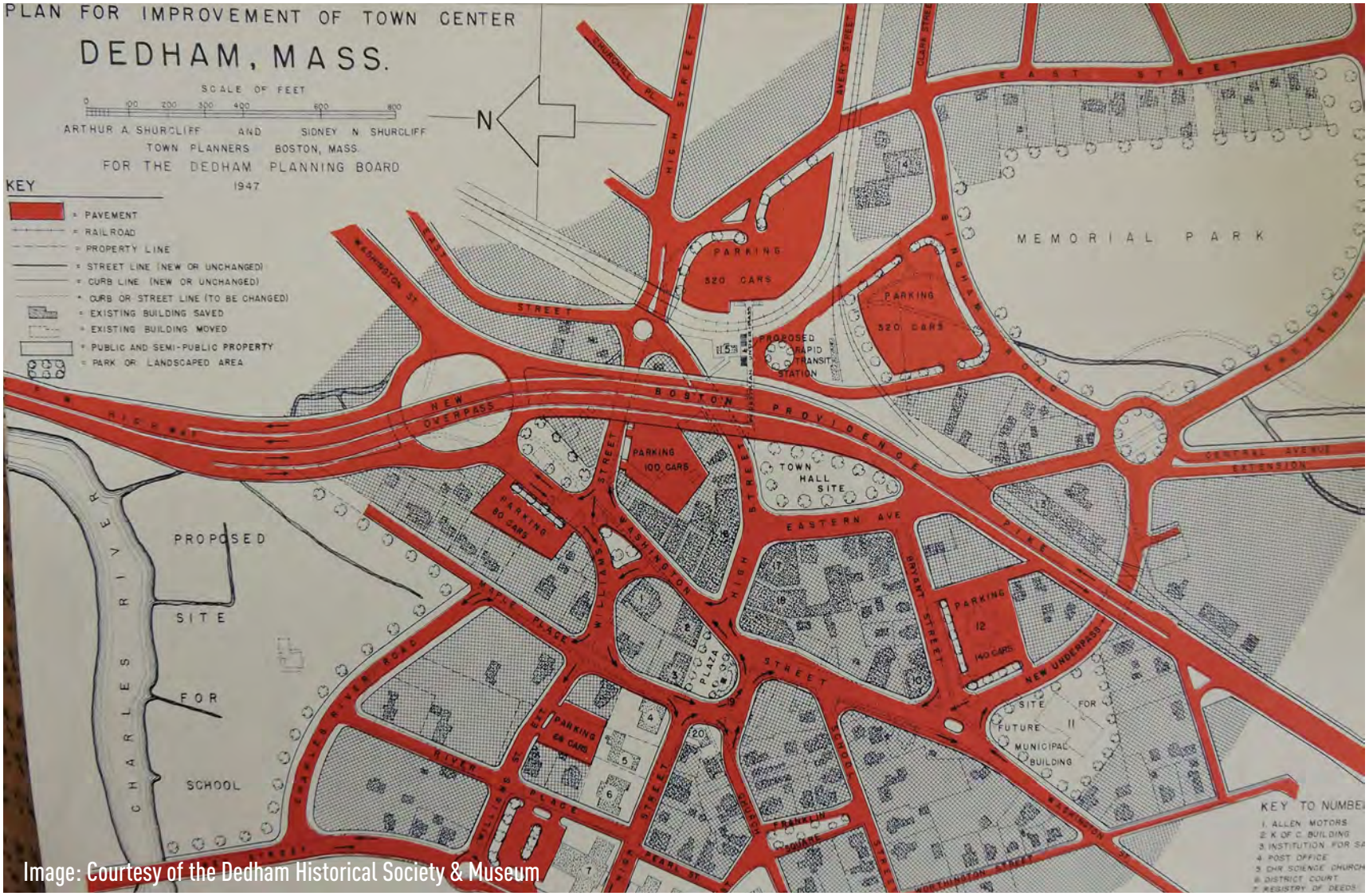
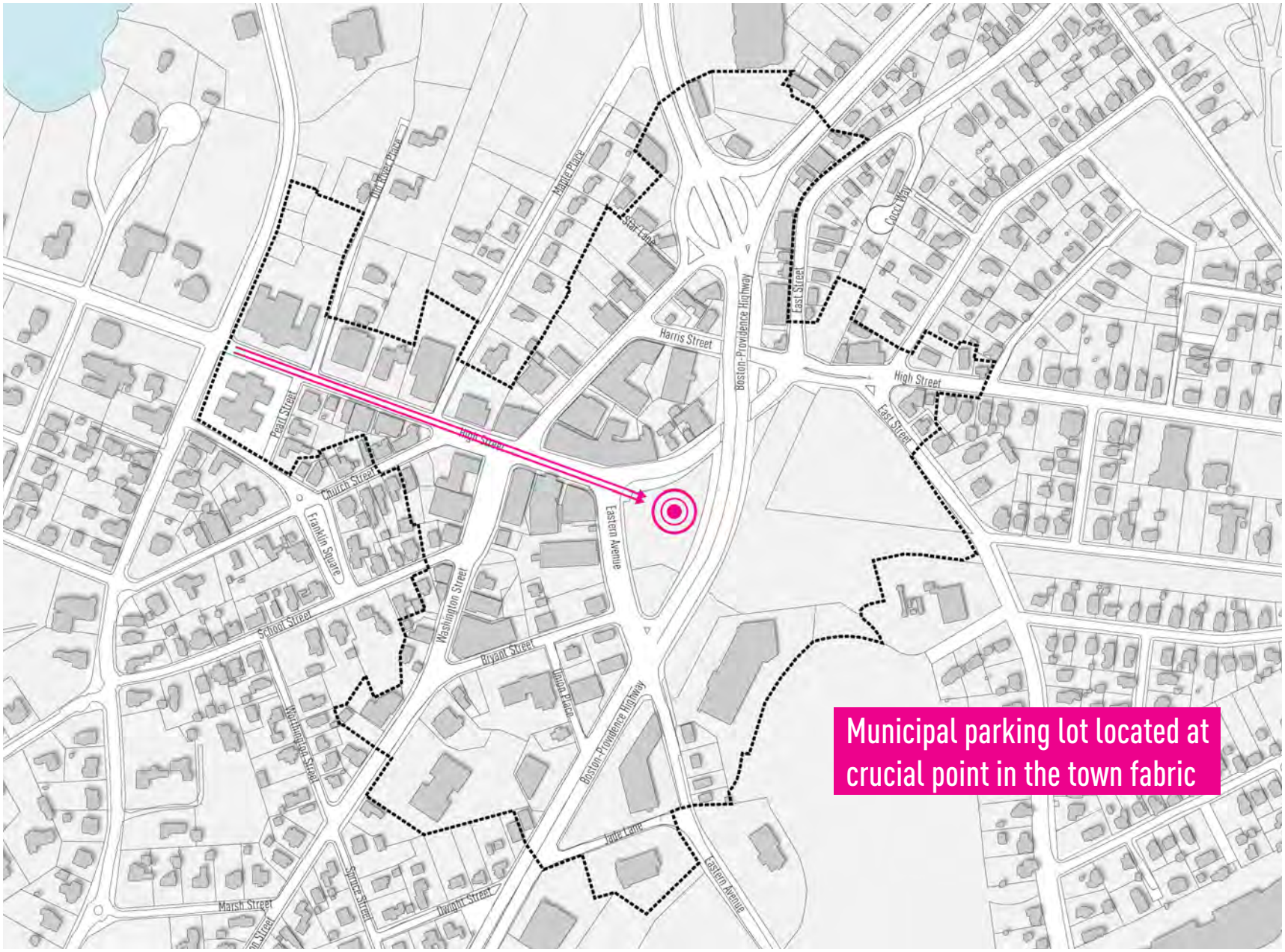


Image: Courtesy of the Dedham Historical Society & Museum

High Street terminus



1" = 400'

High Street terminus

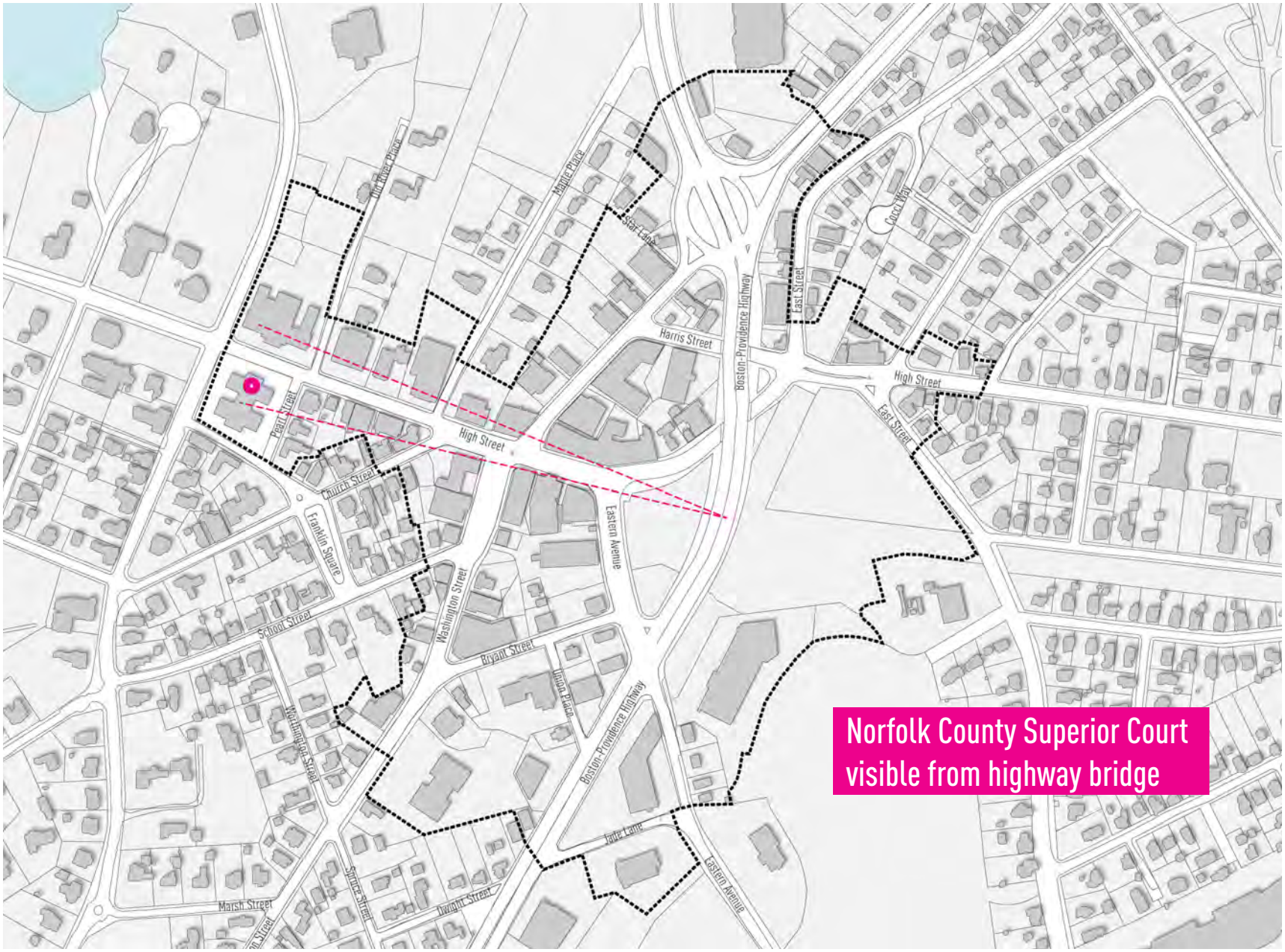
Historic view corridor towards train station

High Street terminus

Image: Courtesy of the Dedham Historical Society & Museum

Historic Train Station built at the end of the 19th century

High Street view corridor



1" = 400'

High Street view corridor

High Street view corridor

Image: Courtesy of the Dedham Historical Society & Museum

03 Urban Design recommendations !

1. Enhance the Gateways

1" = 400'

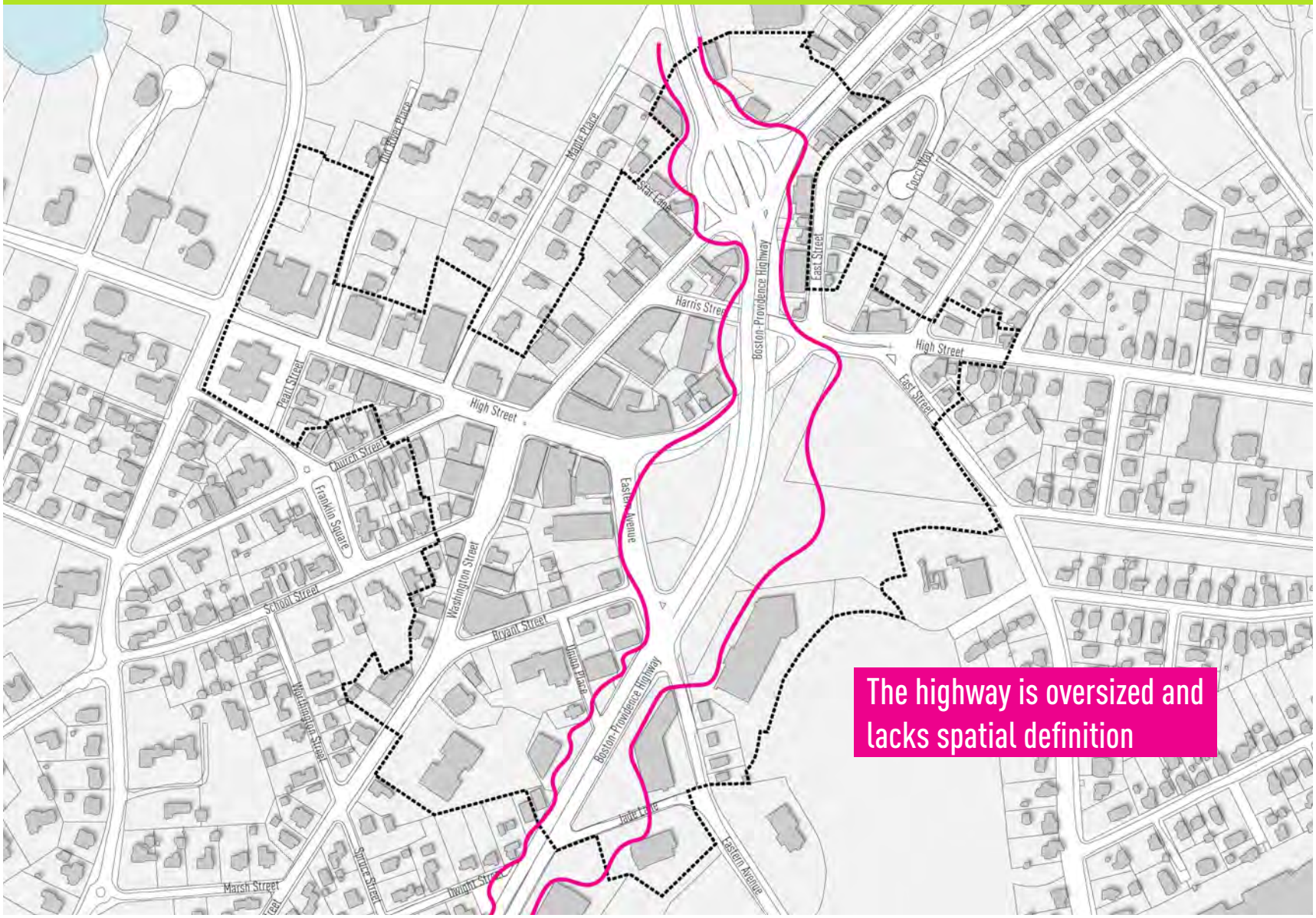
1. Enhance the Gateways

Washington Street rotary

RECOMMENDATION

The primary two intersections at Eastern Avenue and at the Washington Street roundabout are opportunities to reinforce a sense of place, optimize existing road alignments and enhance the experience of entering or exiting Dedham Square.

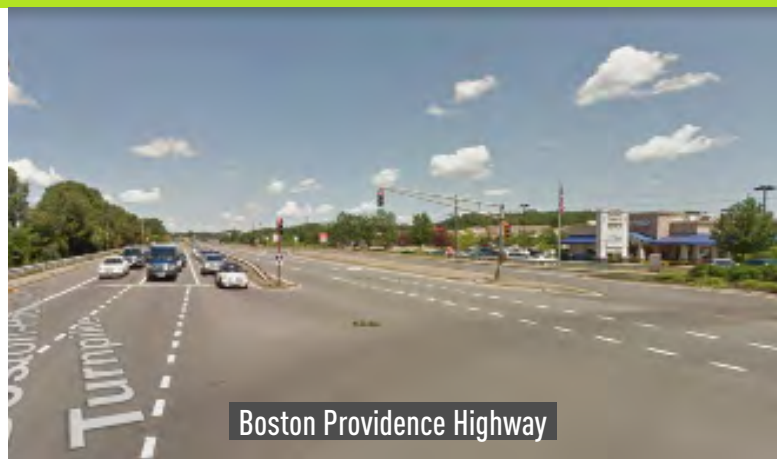
2. Transition from Highway to Parkway

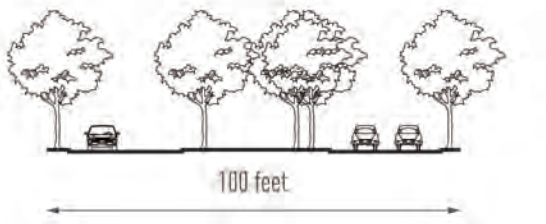


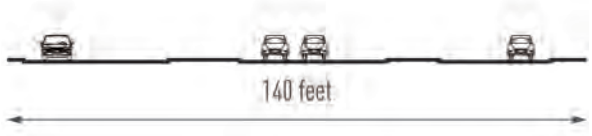
1" = 400'

2. Transition from Highway to Parkway


Veterans of Foreign Wars Parkway


Boston Providence Highway

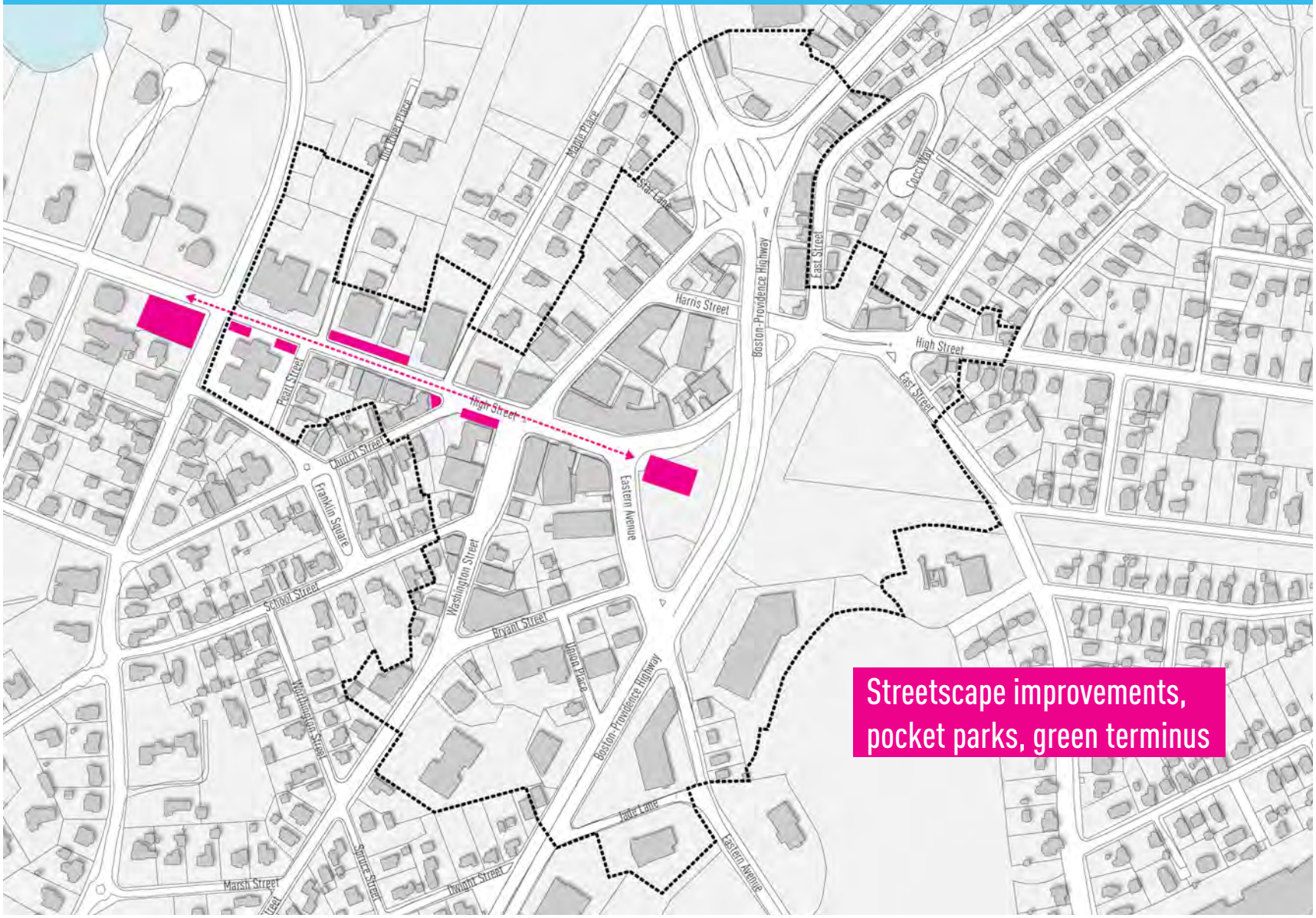




RECOMMENDATION

Efforts to address this character need to be made in terms of the introduction of landscaping features, street trees and lighting that extend the parkway character further into downtown.

3. Nurture new open spaces downtown



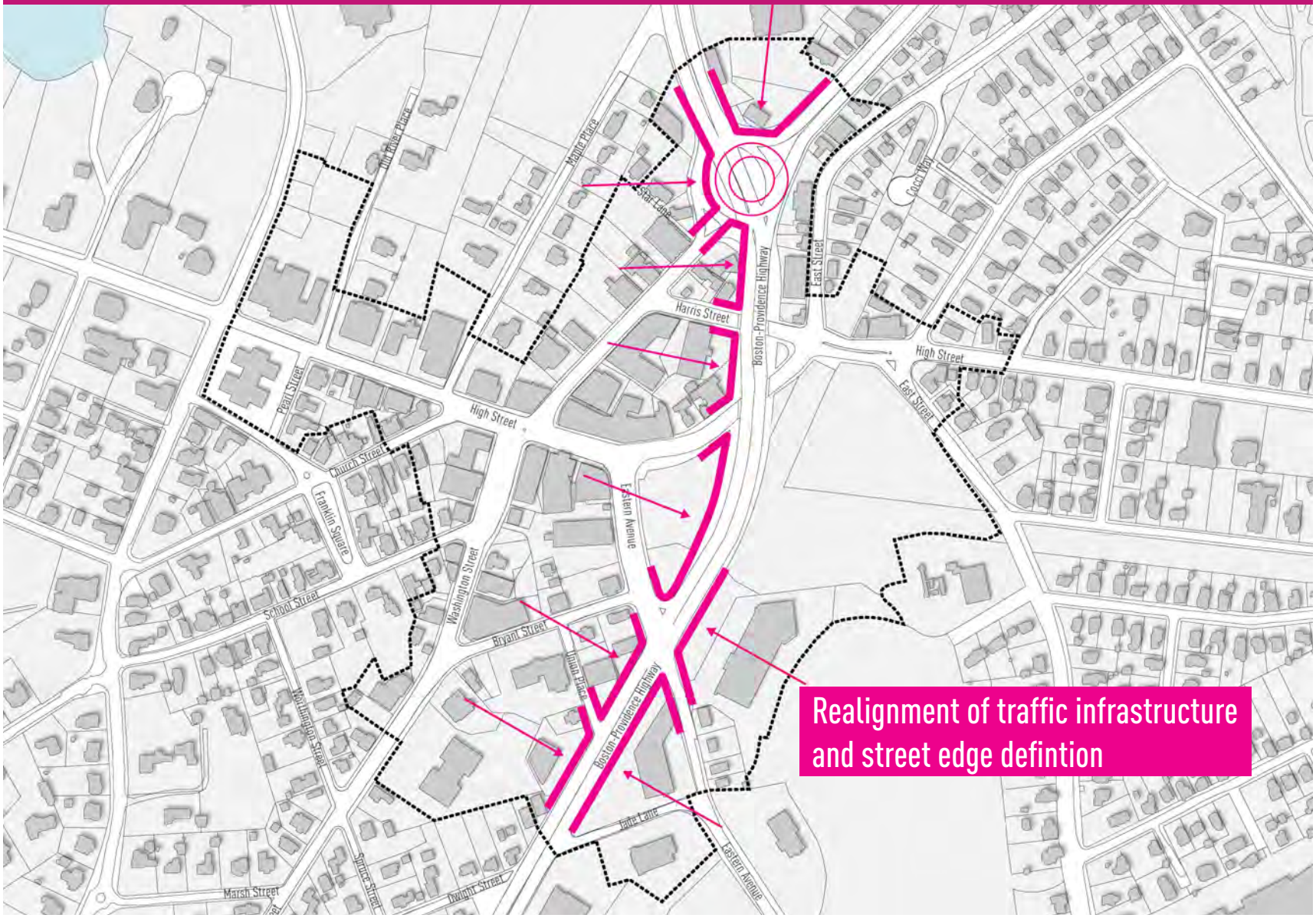
1" = 400'

3. Nurture new open spaces downtown

RECOMMENDATION

Investments need to be made to grow the open space system and forge a variety of places that are sustainable and resilient. Ded-ham should also forge a stronger relationship to the Charles River which is barely visible or accessible today.

4. Build a Better Block



1" = 400'

4. Build a Better Block

19 Eastern Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

Opportunities should be sought that transcend individual property lines and help to create stronger blocks that grow the downtown without overwhelming the historic structures surrounding them.

5. Enhance pedestrian links

5. Enhance pedestrian links

Providence Highway

RECOMMENDATION

Future development should anticipate pedestrian circulation and integrate mid-block connections wherever possible.

04 What Design Guidelines CAN and CAN'T do

What Design guidelines CAN do

Pearl District // San Antonio, TX

1 Improve the CHARACTER of new development

What Design guidelines CAN do

Shaw Neighborhood // St. Louis, MO

2 Articulate STANDARDS of quality

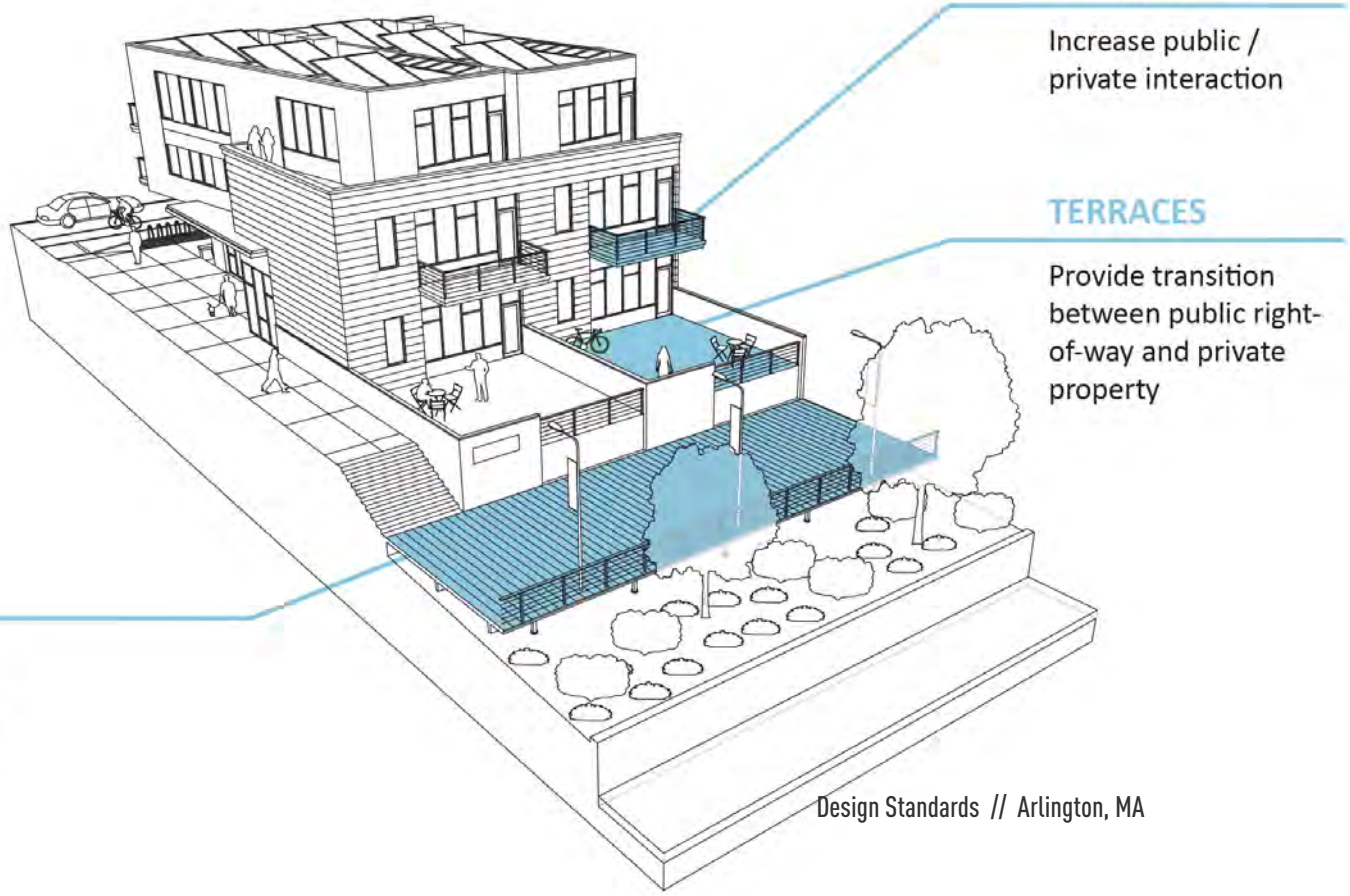
What Design guidelines CAN do

Cambridge, MA

Pearl District // San Antonio, TX

3 Provide EXAMPLES

What Design guidelines CAN do



Design Standards // Arlington, MA

4 Represent spatial and dimensional criteria GRAPHICALLY

What Design guidelines CAN do

PUBLIC REALM INTERFACE

The relationship of the building to the street (in the form of setbacks or build-to lines) plays a key role in the ability of a development to enhance or detract from the experience of a place. Commercial corridors are most successful when **the street edge is defined with active ground floor uses with a high degree of transparency.** A vibrant public realm interface is essential for a successful community. How a building relates to the public realm makes an enormous difference in the quality of the development and the degree to which the building contributes to public life.

While the massing of a building and its height, scale, profile and orientation have a significant impact on one's impression of a place, the manner in which it meets the ground is the most critical. Entrances and ground floor windows should be at grade, easily accessible and they should aid in pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation.

ENCOURAGE:

- First floor uses that draw walk-in traffic and enhance pedestrian interest
- Appropriately scaled sidewalks for the density of development and street type
- Greater connectivity to existing neighborhood parks, the river and bike paths
- The incorporation of bike paths and large caliper tree plantings in planting strips
- Appealing outdoor spaces around buildings that are publicly-accessible
- Public art opportunities
- Universal Design

DISCOURAGE:

- Residual, privately-owned public spaces that lack connectivity
- Wide building setbacks along commercial corridors
- Projects that preference the use of the automobile over walking or biking
- Multiple curb cuts on a single property

PARKING + ACCESS

Parking is always a primary consideration and its location on the site can be varied. When parking is located in front of buildings, it often requires multiple curb-cuts for the property it serves. As a result, the relationship of the building to the street favors vehicles, not pedestrians. Surface parking lots located in front of commercial establishments facilitate access for patrons but do little to improve the character of the street or public realm.

Consideration should be given to shared parking opportunities where day and night uses do not overlap. **Opportunities for shared parking** must be pursued to increase development potential wherever possible and diminish the impact of the automobile. This has the added benefit of encouraging alternate modes of transportation and enhanced transit ridership. Regardless of where they are located, existing and future parking lots must be visually buffered by trees and native grasses. Development should consider the pedestrian first, then bicyclists, then transit and then the automobile.

ENCOURAGE:

- A reduction of parking requirements required by zoning
- More underground and or under building parking
- Well landscaped surface lots with and visual landscape buffers
- Surface parking to the rear or middle of the block
- The incorporation of car sharing, electric charging stations and transit shuttles
- Parking design which anticipates winter limitations
- Greater emphasis on bicycle, pedestrian access and public transit

DISCOURAGE:

- Surface parking in front of buildings
- Projects which preference cars over pedestrians and bicyclists
- Parking garages that contain large blank walls

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

"Sustainable" is one of the most widely used but increasingly ambiguous and misunderstood terms in design vocabulary. The term is used here to describe projects that are connected with the environment in which they reside. A development that is sustainable utilizes alternative and renewable energy sources for energy generation and retention. Sustainable buildings use less energy through the use of solar panels, wind turbines and geothermal fields. Projects that have rainwater harvesting, green roofs, energy responsive facades, sun-shading devices, natural daylighting, recycled content and low embodied energy materials are sustainable. **A sustainable design approach effectively balances environmental and aesthetic concerns.**

A building's use, massing, orientation, and design character influence a great deal how a building relates to its context. Deploying sustainable design and construction strategies ensures that these decisions are made in the service of a greater objective which acknowledges the impact that construction has on our environment. A sustainable design approach is one where environmental responsibility is an integral part of the design, and the negative impacts associated with development are minimized. A sustainable ethic involves making careful, ecologically conscious decisions at every point in the planning, design and construction process. A sustainable building treads lightly on the earth.

ENCOURAGE:

- Low impact development and maximum LEED requirements*
- Renewable energy sources: solar, wind and geothermal
- The incorporation of green roofs, garden spaces and healthy tree growth
- Landscape strategies that address stormwater with rain gardens and permeable pavers
- State-of-the-art energy efficiency and the use of green infrastructure

DISCOURAGE:

- Single use buildings accessible solely by car
- Large expanses of asphalt and surface parking areas
- Developments that do little to work with existing topography

*LEED: Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, US Green Building Council

BUILDING MASSING

Building massing has to do with the overall proportion of a structure, including the dimensions of the building footprint and its relationship to the context where it resides. As Watertown's density increases and previously vacant or low density sites fill in with new buildings, figuring out how to manage massing becomes increasingly important.

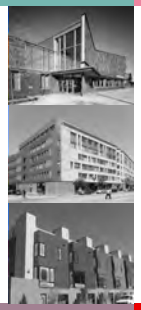
Larger building masses are most appropriate for Watertown Square, the historical commercial center of the Town. Greater building height and mass is recommended in this area. The commercial corridors of Mt. Auburn Street and Arsenal Street - with their traditional mixed-use fabric - are also viable candidates for larger building masses as are portions of Pleasant Street and Main Street. As new development sites get closer to existing residential areas, **a building's mass should taper to relate more closely with the character of established neighborhoods.**

ENCOURAGE:

- Breaking a buildings mass into smaller forms
- Variation in building massing for large projects
- Pass-throughs and breaks which diminish super-blocks
- Emphasizing corners and other important alignments
- Public open spaces commensurate with a project's scale
- Lower massing in areas abutting residential areas and near the river

DISCOURAGE:

- Big boxes with monotonous and repetitive building elevations
- Large blocks with few connections between buildings
- Building clusters that have the same look and design
- Large building footprints along narrow right-of-ways
- Inwardly focused enclaves with few connections to the surroundings



BUILDING HEIGHT

Height constitutes just one aspect of a building's massing, but it is undoubtedly the most conspicuous. Historical building heights in Watertown vary, with greater height generally reserved for civic buildings, institutions, places of worship, and older manufacturing facilities. The vast majority of the buildings, however, are just one or two stories along the primary commercial corridors. Heights are impacted by a variety of factors including the individual floor to floor dimensions, the type of construction, the contours of a site, use and the scale of the surroundings.

Greater height in certain locations can be beneficial, and increasing heights in some areas can offset the need for building in other places. The impact of height can be diminished when offset by the inclusion of open space or a building setback. A taller building will appear less tall when setback from the street edge. When concerns about density arise as a result of a building's height, the relationship of the building façade to the public-right-of-way can have a greater impact than any other dimension. At the same time, what is deemed an appropriate height for a building is relative to the urban context.

ENCOURAGE:

- A range of three (3) to five (5) stories in the primary commercial areas
- Upper story step-backs to diminish the visual impact of the building
- Referencing the heights and setbacks of adjacent buildings
- A range of building heights to create visual interest on a project
- Transition zones tapering heights to adjacent residential areas
- Modest height allowances in lieu of incorporating public amenities

DISCOURAGE:

- Large scale height discrepancies between new buildings and existing neighborhoods
- The "canyon effect" created by a series of buildings close to one another
- Significant shadow impacts created by tall buildings

BUILDING SETBACKS

The dimension from a building to the street edge has everything to do with how a space feels. In urban areas with a lot of commercial activity, it is important to maintain a continuous street wall with modest or few building setbacks. **Setbacks that do occur should be used for pocket parks, plazas, seating areas or landscape zones.** What constitutes an appropriate building setback is impacted by the character and scale of the street it fronts, the type of uses on the ground floor of the building and the concentration of pedestrian activity. Urban corridors are most vibrant when they help to define a streetwall.

While aligning an elevation to the property line is most often the appropriate response for a building in an urban setting, there are instances, where some spatial relief is necessary and a building setback should be included as part of a property's development. Along Watertown's commercial corridors, modest setbacks function best for residential buildings and areas of high traffic. Setbacks are also beneficial in mature neighborhoods where the street width is narrow.

ENCOURAGE:

- Building setbacks on upper floors above three or four stories
- Areas for active programming in setbacks for shops and cafes
- Appropriate landscaping in areas of generous setbacks
- Wide planting areas for large shade trees and rain gardens

DISCOURAGE:

- The "canyon effect" with large buildings in close proximity to the street
- Buildings close to sidewalks in residential areas
- Surface parking in setback zones
- Oversized setbacks that disconnect the building from the sidewalk and public realm

FACADE TREATMENT

The façade is the primary public or streetside of the building in its entirety from the sidewalk or grade level to the uppermost portion of the roofline. Corner buildings have two primary facades. The character of an elevation depends on a number of factors: the proportion and orientation of openings, the composition of the fenestration, the color and patterning of the exterior skin and the relationship between the various parts of the exterior. **Durable, high quality materials** will add a level of sophistication to a large and/or minimally-detailed façade, whereas inexpensive materials make a nicely-proportioned building look cheap. A building's elevation or facade says a lot about the quality and character of a building.

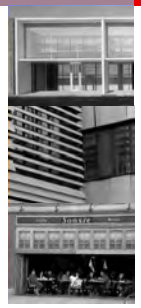
While the overall composition of a façade is important, the greatest amount of detail needs to be reserved for the ground floor. This is the area which garners the most attention and view for pedestrians. However, the roofline is also important, and mechanical equipment and rooftop vents should be minimized from view with parapet walls or screens. **Style is subjective.** Some people prefer classic over contemporary or historical over modern. What matters most in a building's elevation is quality and consistency.

ENCOURAGE:

- High quality and natural materials
- Greater transparency at the ground level
- The use of balconies of terraces to expand space and provide depth
- Outdoor seating areas within stepback zones of the elevation
- Breaking up vertical and horizontal building lines

DISCOURAGE:

- Cheap exterior building finishes
- Monolithic façade treatments
- Excessively long and uninterrupted building elevations
- Flat, blank walls along street facing elevations



MATERIAL SELECTION

There is a direct connection between material choice and environmental stewardship. Buildings account for half of all the world's greenhouse gases and consume 50% of its raw materials.* **Products and materials that are specified for construction should be selected with respect to their performative and sustainable qualities rather than just trends or aesthetics.** With this in mind, materials should be chosen based on their durability, maintenance and recyclability characteristics, energy use, and consumption profile. In other words, projects should be built with natural and sustainable materials.

Whenever possible, materials should be selected that are locally harvested, have a low embodied energy content and are recyclable. Using local materials reduces the transportation and distribution costs of the product. Products that reduce raw material use should be chosen because of their resource conservation. Zero or low-emission building products should be specified to improve air quality.

ENCOURAGE:

- The use of high quality materials that are locally sourced
- Green materials with low embodied energy and are recyclable
- Materials that are environmentally and historically appropriate for Watertown
- The incorporation of texture to add variation and tactility to facades

DISCOURAGE:

- Flat repetitive facades that lack texture and depth
- The use of vinyl, large panels or other inexpensive materials
- Faux historical facades or those that mimic other materials

* *Green Architecture*, Osman Attmann (2010)

SIGNAGE

Commercial establishments need to advertise. However, advertising signs should be effective and appropriate to Watertown's historic areas without contributing to visual clutter. A balance needs to be struck between the desire to call attention to individual businesses and the desire for a **positive collective image for Watertown.** Signs can either complement or detract from that image a depending on their design, placement, quantity, size, materials, colors and condition.

Certain types of signs are more appropriate to specific areas than others. What is appropriate for a suburban strip mall is inappropriate for a downtown setting. These sign guidelines relate to the commercial corridors.

ENCOURAGE:

- Attractive signs that are proportional to the building where they are located
- Traditional sign materials such as wood or raised metal letters
- Projecting signs (shingle signs) oriented to a pedestrian scale of modest size
- More decorative or handmade signs that are understated and not overwhelming
- Signs that are located above the storefront (frieze or transom)
- Colors that complement the materials and color schemes of the building

DISCOURAGE:

- Stand-alone signs that are not designed as an integral part of the building
- Internally lit plastic molded signs
- Neon and fluorescent or beacon signs
- Inconsistency amongst signs in the business district
- Rooftop

Design Guidelines // Watertown, MA

5 Bring CLARITY to the review process

What Design guidelines CAN do

Seaside, FL

6 Go TOO FAR

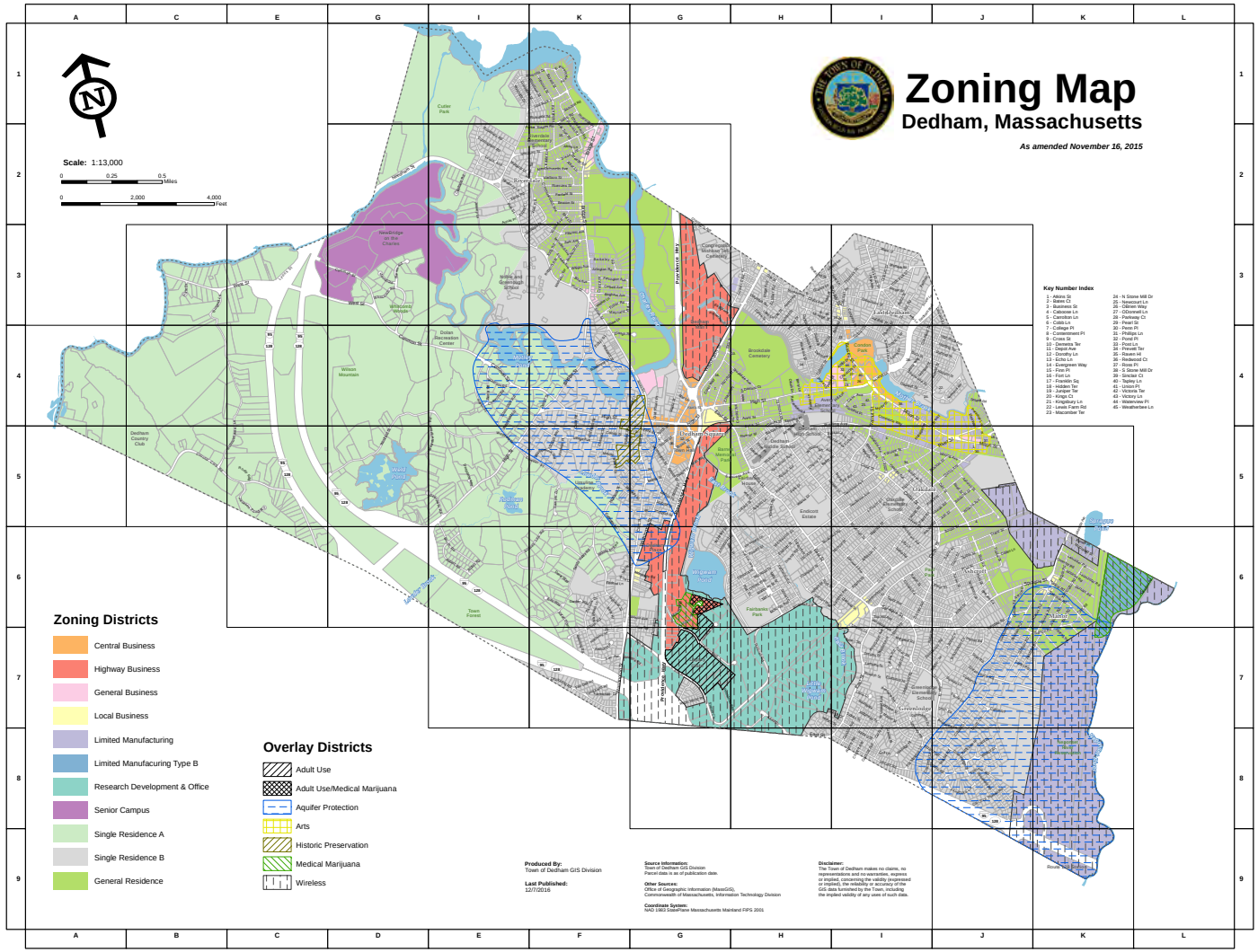
What Design guidelines CAN'T do

©Mariko Reed/Proxy

Proxy project // San Francisco, CA

1 Regulate building USE

What Design guidelines CAN'T do



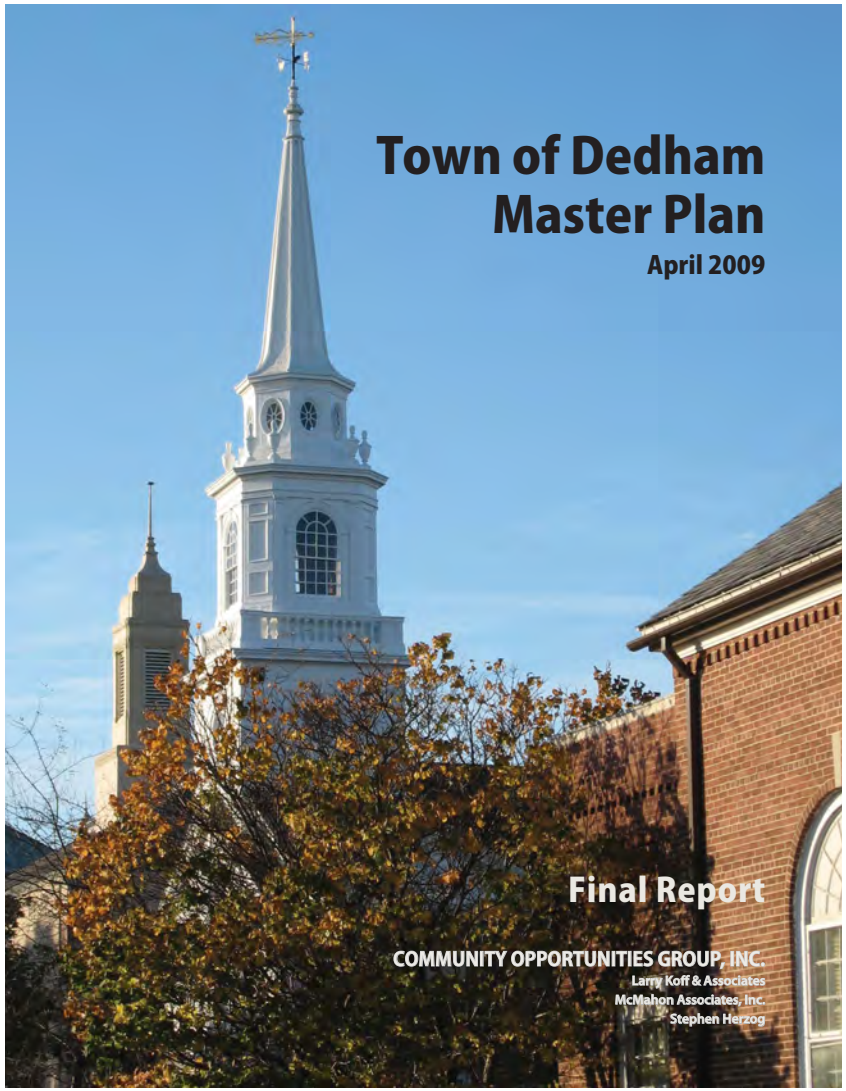
2 Replace ZONING or codes

What Design guidelines CAN'T do

Wester Avenue // Cambridge, MA

3 Redesign STREETS

What Design guidelines CAN'T do

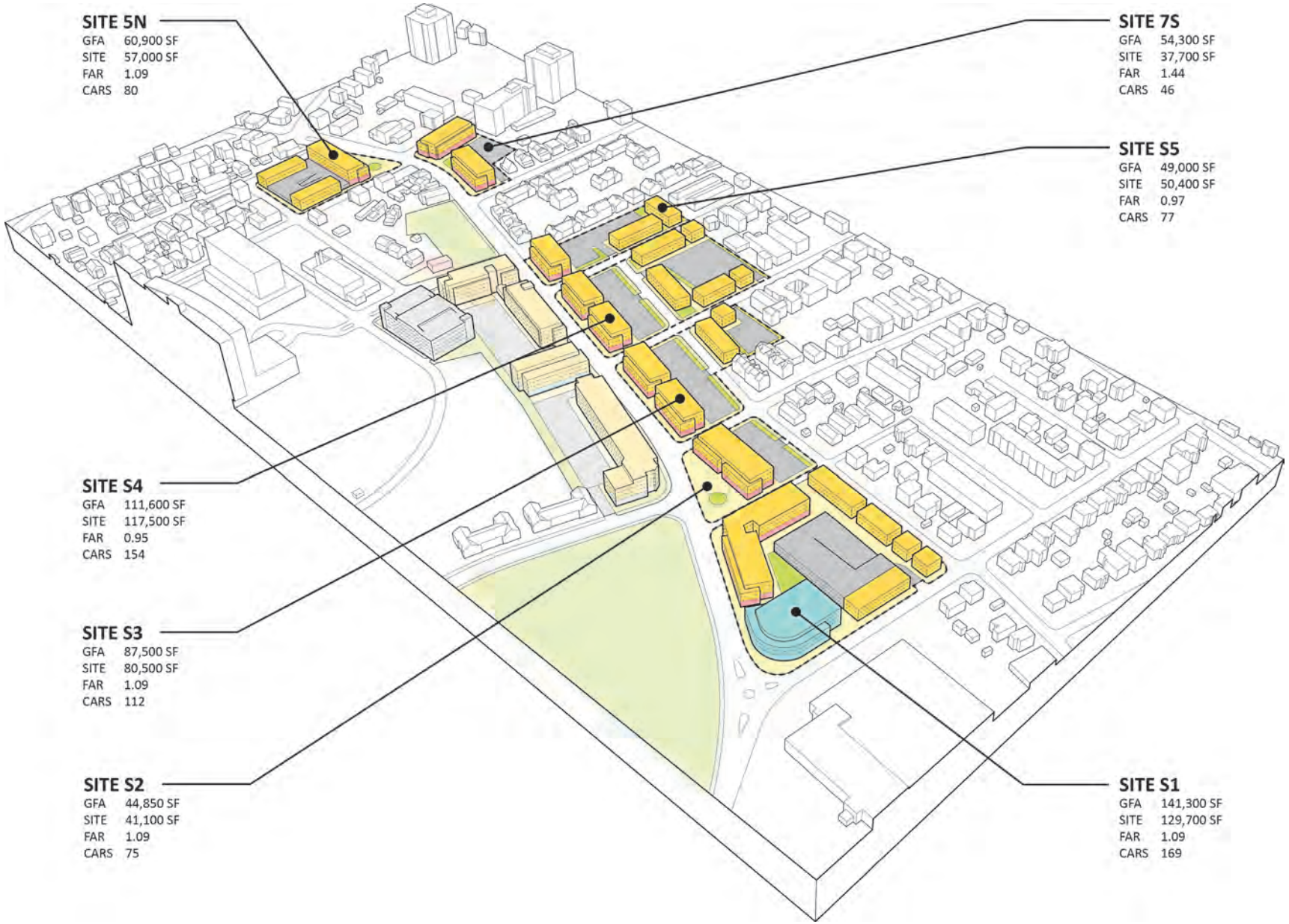


4 MASTER PLAN areas

05 How can Design Guidelines be successful?

Ensure a productive community process

Shepherd forward effective implementation



Illustrative Guide for Redevelopment // Stamford, CT

Establish clarity in product and representation

Design Guidelines // Watertown, MA

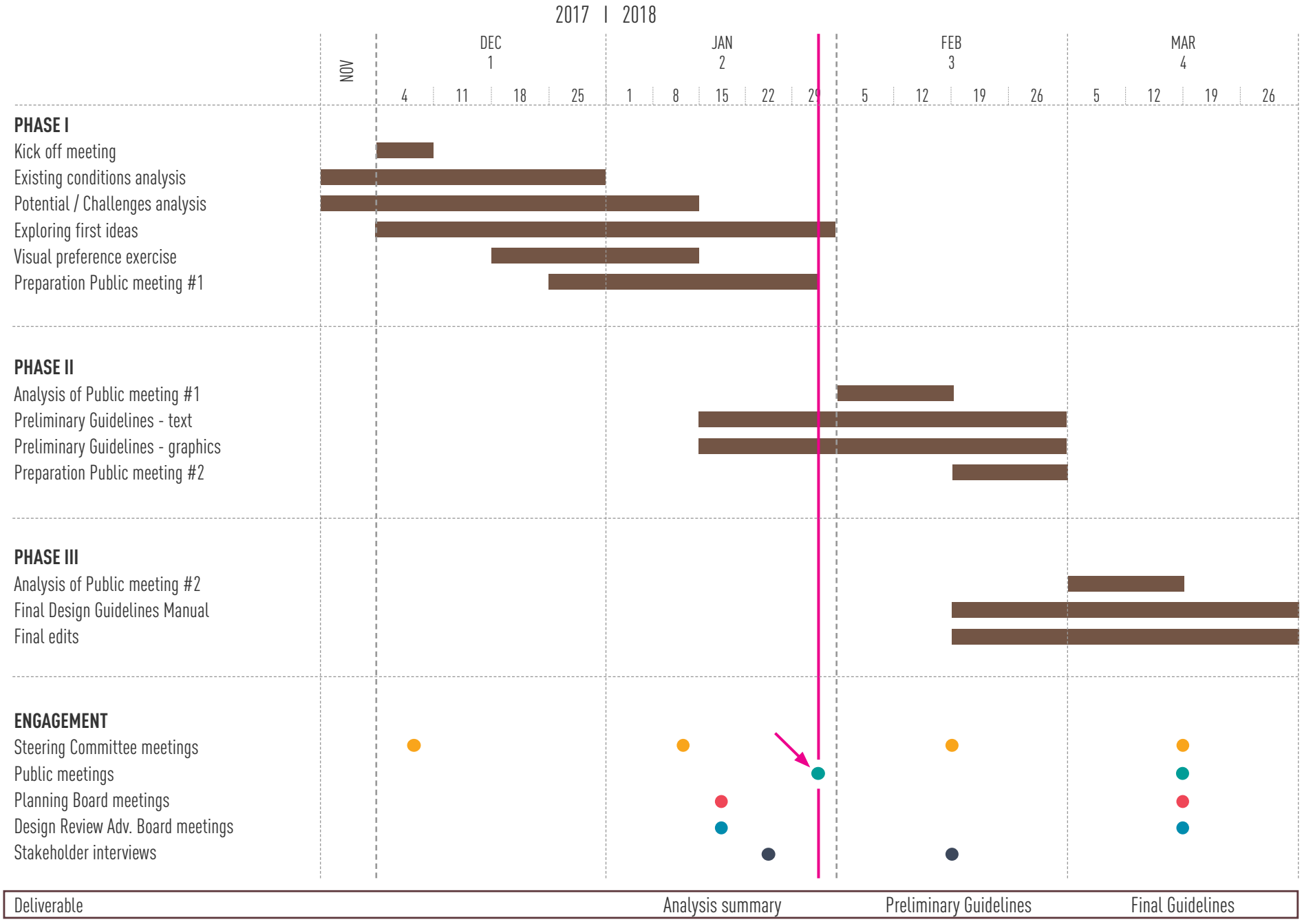
Establish clarity in product and representation

Design Guidelines // Andover, MA

06 Questions for discussion

Please use your response devices

Schedule


2017 | 2018
NOV
DEC
1
JAN
2
FEB
3
MAR
4
4 11 18 25 1 8 15 22 29 5 12 19 26 5 12 19 26
PHASE I
Kick off meeting
Existing conditions analysis
Potential / Challenges analysis
Exploring first ideas
Visual preference exercise
Preparation Public meeting #1
PHASE II
Analysis of Public meeting #1
Preliminary Guidelines - text
Preliminary Guidelines - graphics
Preparation Public meeting #2
PHASE III
Analysis of Public meeting #2
Final Design Guidelines Manual
Final edits
ENGAGEMENT
Steering Committee meetings
Public meetings
Planning Board meetings
Design Review Adv. Board meetings
Stakeholder interviews
Deliverable
Analysis summary
Preliminary Guidelines
Final Guidelines

Dedham Square Steering Committee members

Michael Podolski, *chair*	Planning Board
Peter Smith, *vice-chair*	At-large member
Mike Butler	Board of Selectman
Amy Haelsen	Dedham Square Circle
Ryan McDermott	Master Plan Implementation Committee
George Panagopoulos	Business owner
Giorgio Petruzziello	Developer
Jessica Porter	Zoning Board of Appeals
Michelle Persson Reilly	Dedham Community House

Dedham Square Design Guidelines

Dedham, MA

architecture
urban design
GAMBLE ASSOCIATES

Thank you for your attention