



# VISION HAVERHILL 2035



City of Haverhill Master Plan Update  
January 2020

# Acknowledgments

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*Many thanks to the Haverhill residents for participating in the outreach events. While we could not include all of the commentary in this document, we have included several quotes that capture the spirit of what you shared with us. These anonymous quotes are in gold highlighted call-outs distributed throughout the plan.*



City of Haverhill

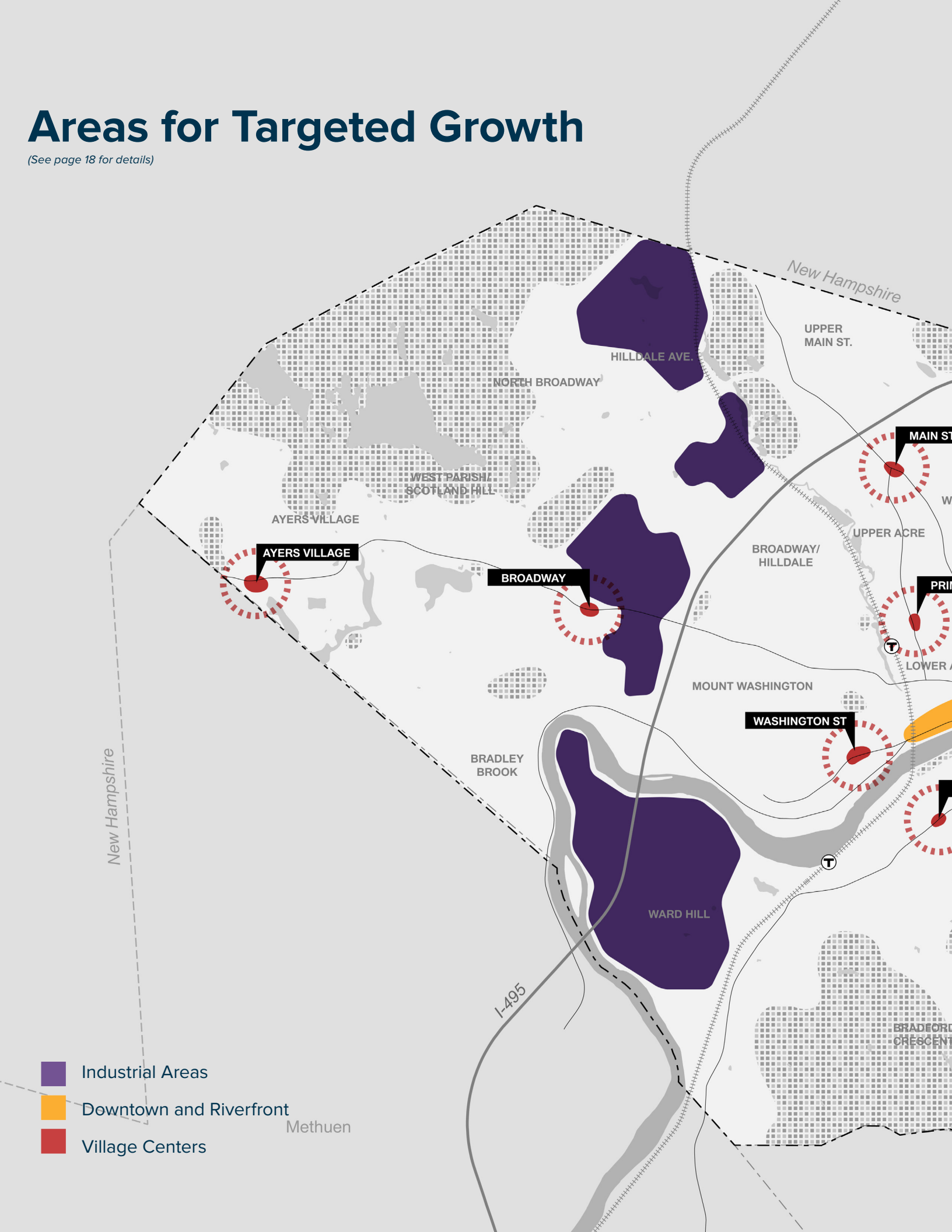


# Contents

<b>09</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Opportunities for Targeted Growth</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Areas for Targeted Growth</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Scenarios for Future Growth</b>
21	Industrial Areas
28	Downtown and the Riverfront
32	Village Centers
<b>38</b>	<b>Plan Recommendations</b>
40	Economy
44	Open Space, Farmland, Natural Resources, and the Environment
51	Housing
56	Transportation and Mobility
62	Cultural and Historic Resources
<b>66</b>	<b>Community Outreach</b>
72	Summary and Feedback from November 7 Public Workshop
<b>77</b>	<b>Appendix</b>
78	Summary of Past Plans
80	Copies of Surveys 1 and 2

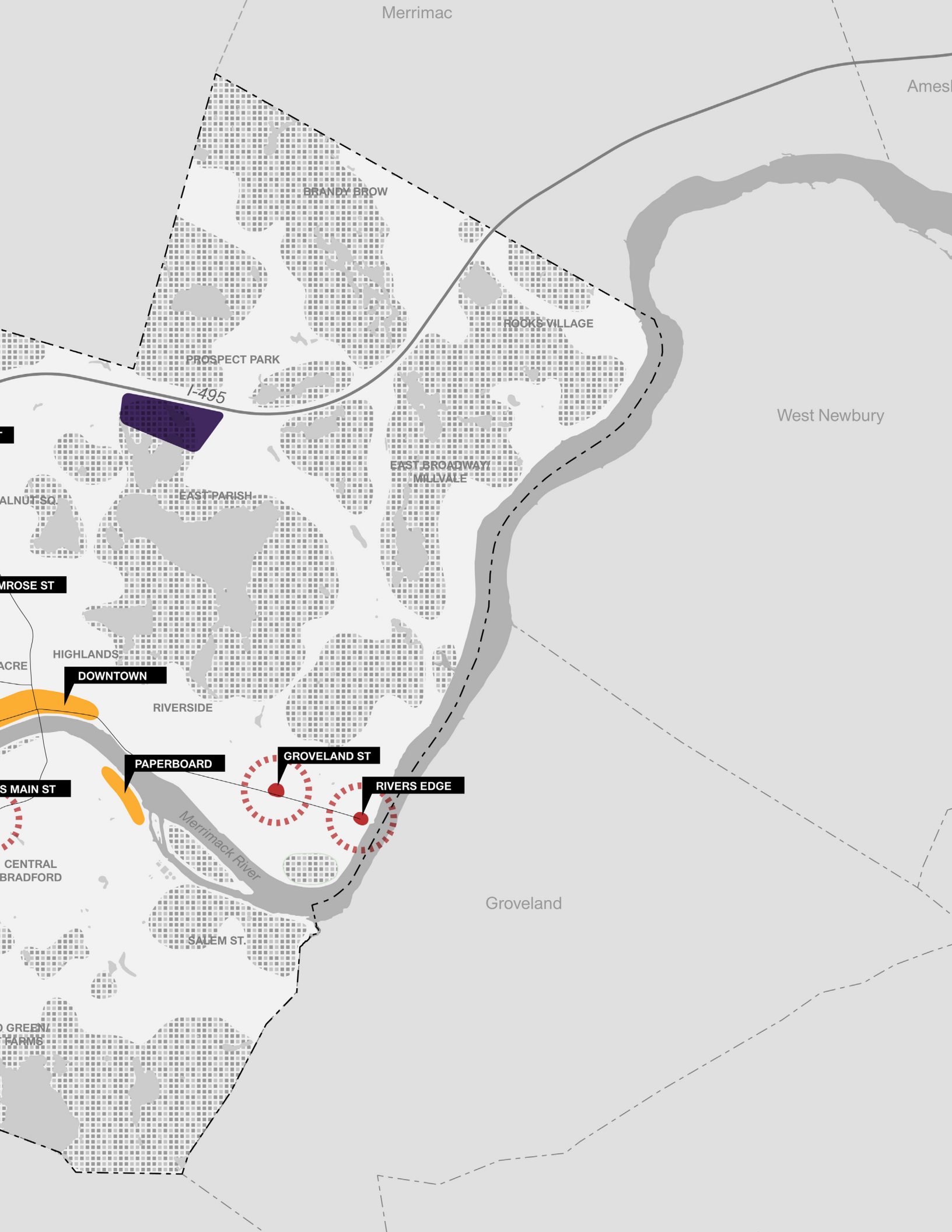
# Areas for Targeted Growth

(See page 18 for details)



- Industrial Areas
- Downtown and Riverfront
- Village Centers





Merrimac

Amesbury

BRANDY BROW

ROCKS VILLAGE

PROSPECT PARK

I-495

West Newbury

EAST BROADWAY  
MILLVALE

EAST PARISH

WALNUT ST

ROSE ST

HIGHLANDS

DOWNTOWN

RIVERSIDE

PAPERBOARD

GROVELAND ST

RIVERS EDGE

MAIN ST

CENTRAL  
BRADFORD

Merrimack River

Groveland

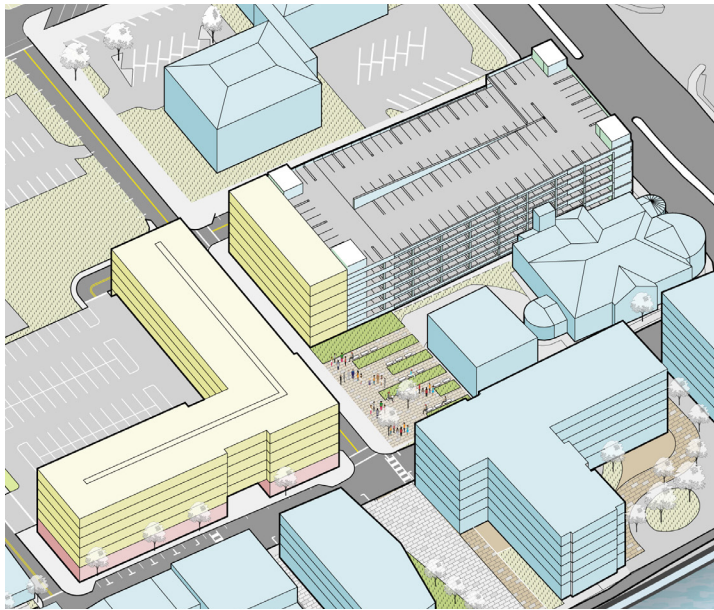
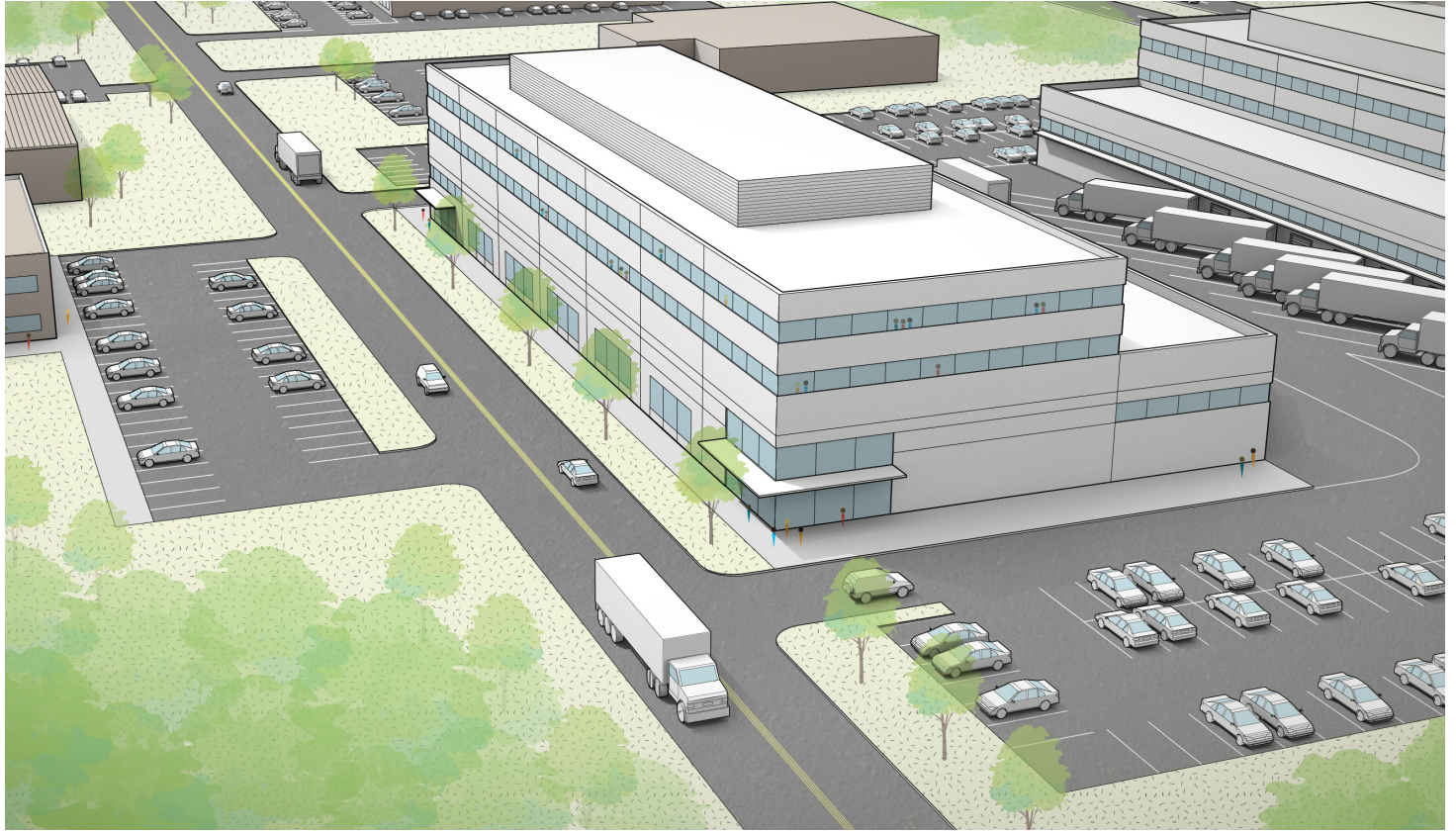
SALEM ST

GREEN  
FARMS



# Industrial Areas

(See page 21 for details)



# Downtown

(See page 27 for details)





# Riverfront

(See page 27 for details)



## Village Centers

(See page 31 for details)







# Introduction

Vision Haverhill 2035 is an initiative to update the City of Haverhill's master plan. Sponsored by the City of Haverhill and the Mayor's office, this plan creates a vision for the future of Haverhill as we address the issues and seize the opportunities presented to us in this century. It is shaped by the community's needs and embraces the community's values.

## What is a master plan?

A master plan, also known as a comprehensive plan, general plan, or land-use plan, is a document that provides a road map for the future of a city. It includes an analysis of existing conditions, a community vision for the future, and a set of policy recommendations to guide public policy. Most comprehensive plans address the physical, social, and cultural aspects of a community across a range of topics. In Massachusetts, a master plan is defined as a comprehensive plan addresses the following "elements," or topic areas: Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Public Facilities and Services, Natural and Cultural Resources, Open Space and Recreation, Transportation, and Implementation.

In addition, this plan ties together recommendations and frameworks from extensive studies over the years including plans for housing, transportation, open space, and economic development (as outlined on the following pages) and builds on these efforts considering changing local and regional trends, and the progress that is already underway.

## Why plan now?

The planning team has heard, through its outreach efforts, substantial concern in Haverhill around suburban sprawl, need for improved city services, preparing for an aging population, and the importance of protecting open space and physical character of Haverhill.

Growth is an essential component of Haverhill's future to expand the City's financial resources and provide for the needs of its residents (schools, etc.). Residents love the town and country character of Haverhill. This will be preserved because of existing land use regulations that protect natural assets and farmland in perpetuity. Therefore there are few areas where the city can grow.

In these targeted areas, existing zoning and other regulations are barriers to achieving this objective. They restrict the kind of growth that is needed to meet the needs of Haverhill's residents. These restrictions include:

- large minimum lot sizes which limit the number of housing units that can be built,
- unnecessarily high numbers of parking spaces required for new commercial and industrial uses which no longer reflect the realities of modern businesses and employment needs,
- and expecting most new projects to go through extensive special permit review processes to get relief from existing zoning rules, lengthening the time to market for businesses increasingly under pressure to find new spaces in a timely manner.

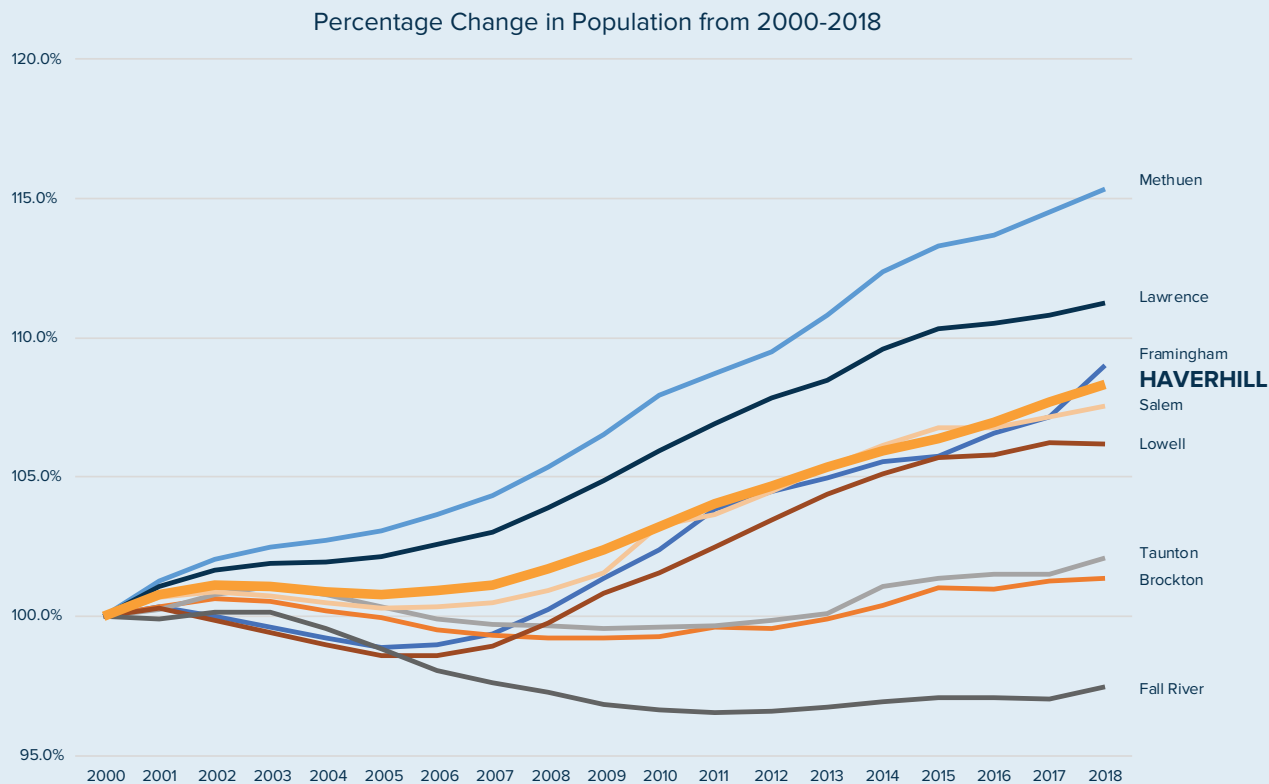
Targeted residential and commercial growth in specific areas of the city will increase the city's future capacity, protect the city's balance between town and country, and expand city revenue to allow for improved city services.

## What can a citywide plan provide?

By planning now for this growth, Haverhill can avoid the sprawl which would otherwise come with a citywide planning strategy that is de facto determined on a case-by-case basis. Planning for growth will allow Haverhill to create a framework that lets the city capture the most benefit from growth's upsides while also mitigating growth's potential downsides.

Finally, given the broader socioeconomic and demographic changes that both Haverhill and New England are facing, a citywide plan provides context about challenges which are both long-term and pressing.

Since the year 2000, Haverhill's growth has averaged less than one-half of one percent (0.4%) per year. While the population dipped slightly leading up to the Great Recession, its recovery since has been slow.



Source: US Decennial Census, 2000 and 2010; Census Bureau Population Estimates Program for all other years.

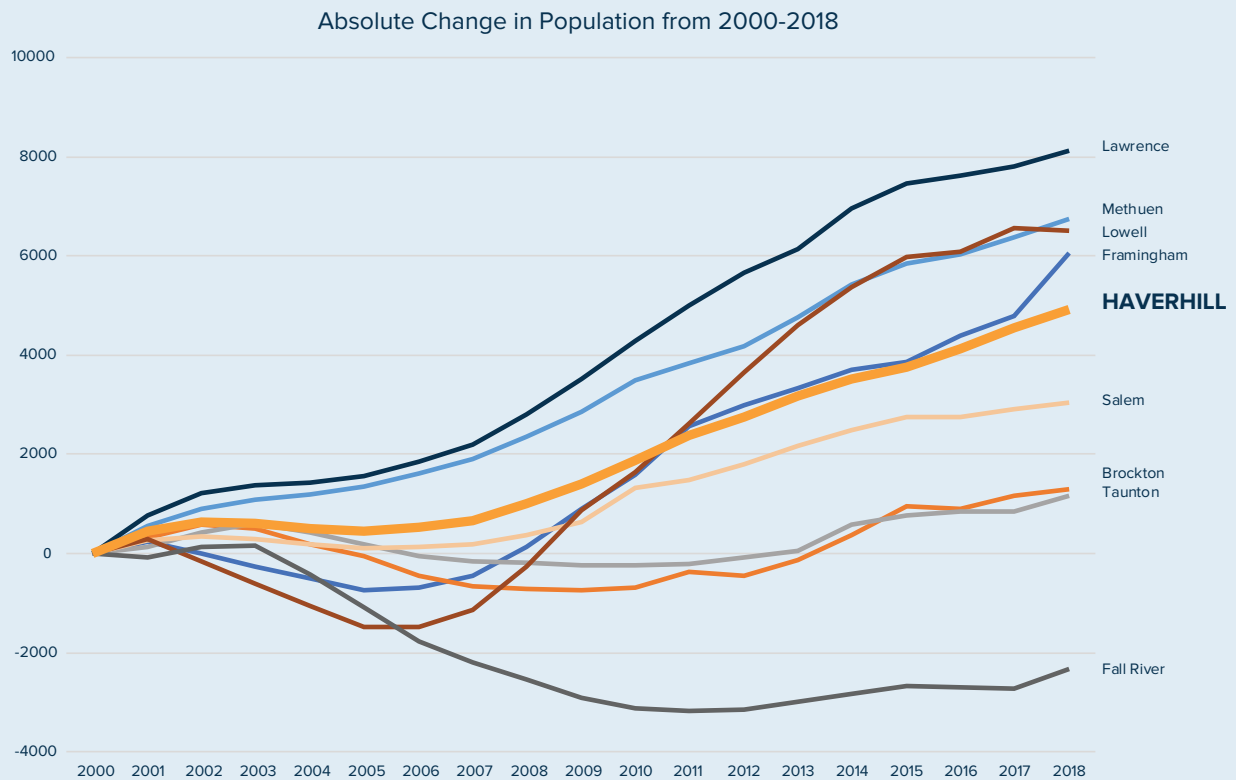
### The need for growth

In terms of value, 85% of the Haverhill's property is residential, 7% is commercial, and 4% is industrial. For this reason, the bulk of Haverhill's taxes come from residential properties. The only way to encourage a more balanced split of this cost burden is to encourage new development that tilts more towards commercial and industrial development, while still allowing for new residential growth as well to offset the rise in housing prices that is occurring across the metropolitan region.

Given the rising cost of city services and the need for additional revenue to better assist with infrastructure and public works improvements, the time for addressing this plan for growth is now. For example, the Goecke downtown parking deck is well beyond its useful life, and its deferred maintenance costs are rising. Linking redevelopment of that deck with a thoughtful plan to encourage new job creation downtown and near the riverfront is the most viable plan for getting the deck built without an unrealistically large cost to city government.



**Haverhill is lagging behind its neighbors in population growth.** Between 2000 and 2018, the City saw a population increase of 4,930 whereas Lawrence and Methuen grew by 8,116 and 6,745 residents, respectively.



Source: US Decennial Census, 2000 and 2010; Census Bureau Population Estimates Program for all other years.

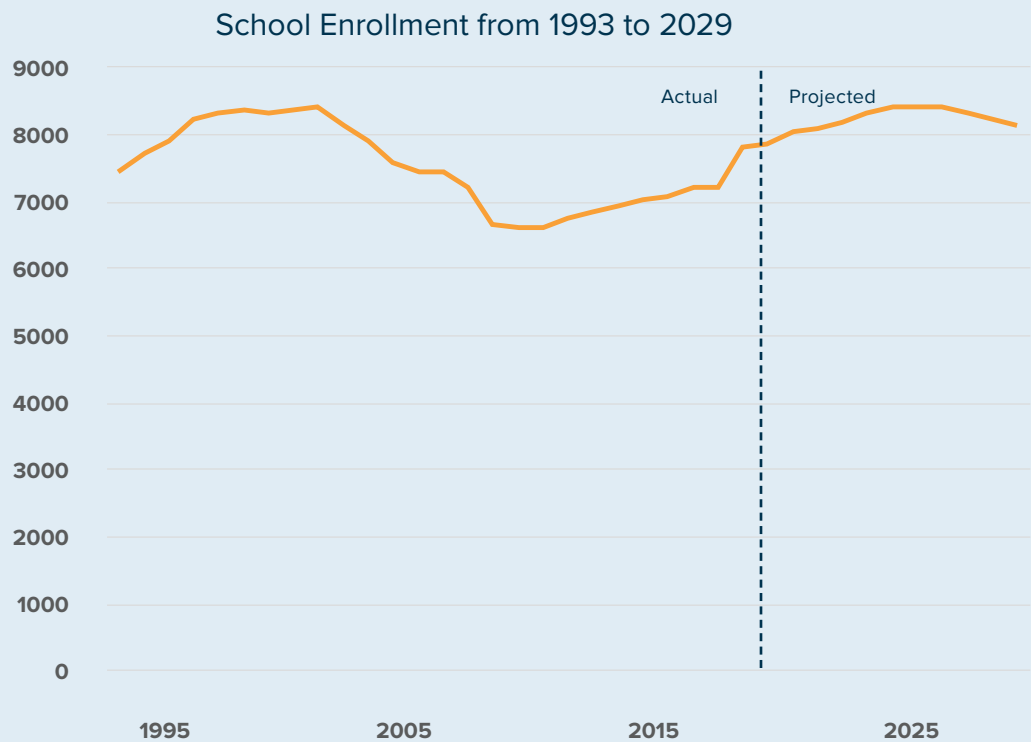
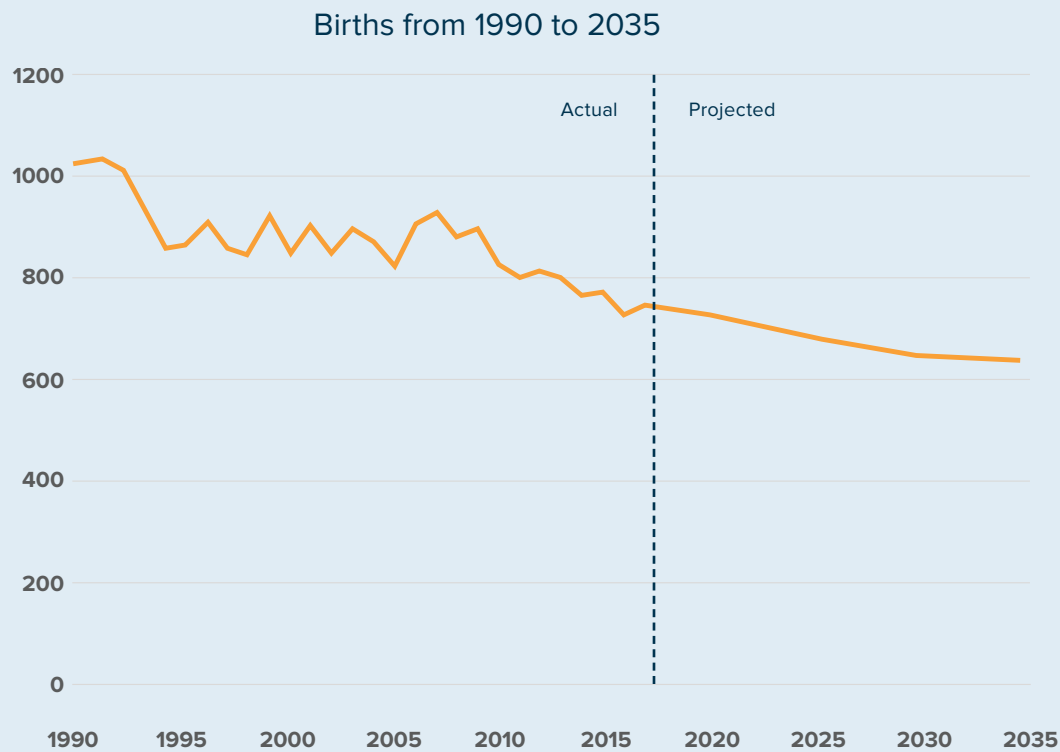
That said, this master plan is not simply a recommendation for growth, no matter the consequences. Much of the outreach and surveying conducted through the master plan's community process involved talking to residents, many of whom had concerns around the specific areas where growth occurs. There are many aspects about Haverhill that people like, and above all, this process clarified that residents want to make sure that this master plan preserves those qualities and finds the right places for growth to happen.

### Projected population growth and infrastructure need

There has been much discussion across the city around the relationship between future growth and its effects on infrastructure capacity. In its recommendation for four new elementary schools, the 1990 master plan relied on an analysis conducted by the School Department. Without a similar specialized study, this master plan will only make general recommendations.

In November of 2019, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) created a set

**Haverhill birthrates have been steadily declining over the past decade.** As a result, school enrollment is experiencing a slight increase, but will start declining by 2026.



Source: Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Enrollment Projections—Haverhill, November 2019

of population and school enrollment projections for the next ten years (through 2029), based on historic birth rates and population projections from the UMass Donahue Institute. For the purposes of this master plan, there are two main findings to underscore.

First, the birth rate in Haverhill has steadily declined since 1990, and the MSBA projects that it will continue to decline in the next decade. This suggests that even as the population of Haverhill continues to increase, the City does not need to focus heavily on preparing for a large influx of new children.

Additionally, the MSBA anticipated the effects of population projections on school enrollment: while there will be a temporary increase in total enrollment over the next five years (in large part due to momentum from students who are already entering the system), total enrollment is projected to start decreasing in 2026. Moreover, projected enrollment in 2026 would only equal Haverhill's historic enrollment peak in 2001. For these reasons, this master plan does not recommend immediate planning for new schools at this present time, since the current capacity appears to be sufficient. A balance must be struck between adding capacity for the future and burdening the municipality with debt and maintenance costs.

This master plan also recognizes that projections are, on some level, estimates about the future. A range of factors may affect these projections. First, the growth scenarios this master plan proposes may become more successful and easy to implement than predicted. Similarly, if future birth rate predictions are incorrect, then the assumptions about school enrollment may underestimate or overestimate future need.

This plan suggests that the Planning Department, the School Department, and the Planning Board and City Council should monitor the relationship between actual population and school enrollment numbers and these projections from 2019. If the predictions underestimate the trajectory of demographic changes, then this recommendation may need to be revisited.

## Millennials and empty nesters

Many recent urban planning and socioeconomic analyses are looking at broader generational shifts across the United States. When it comes to thinking about growth in Haverhill, this master plan suggests that the City look more closely at the requirements of future generational trends:

*"Growing appreciation for urban lifestyles within these two cohorts [of millennials and empty nesters], which constitute a sizable majority of all households, is a long-term trend, not a short-term fad... [longer lifespans] have reduced the dominance of that demographic mainstay—the household made up of a married couple with a school-aged child or two (and likely a pet). Early in the twentieth century, that description would have fit more than half of all households. It now represents less than 25 percent, and by some accounts less than a fifth of all households."*<sup>1</sup>

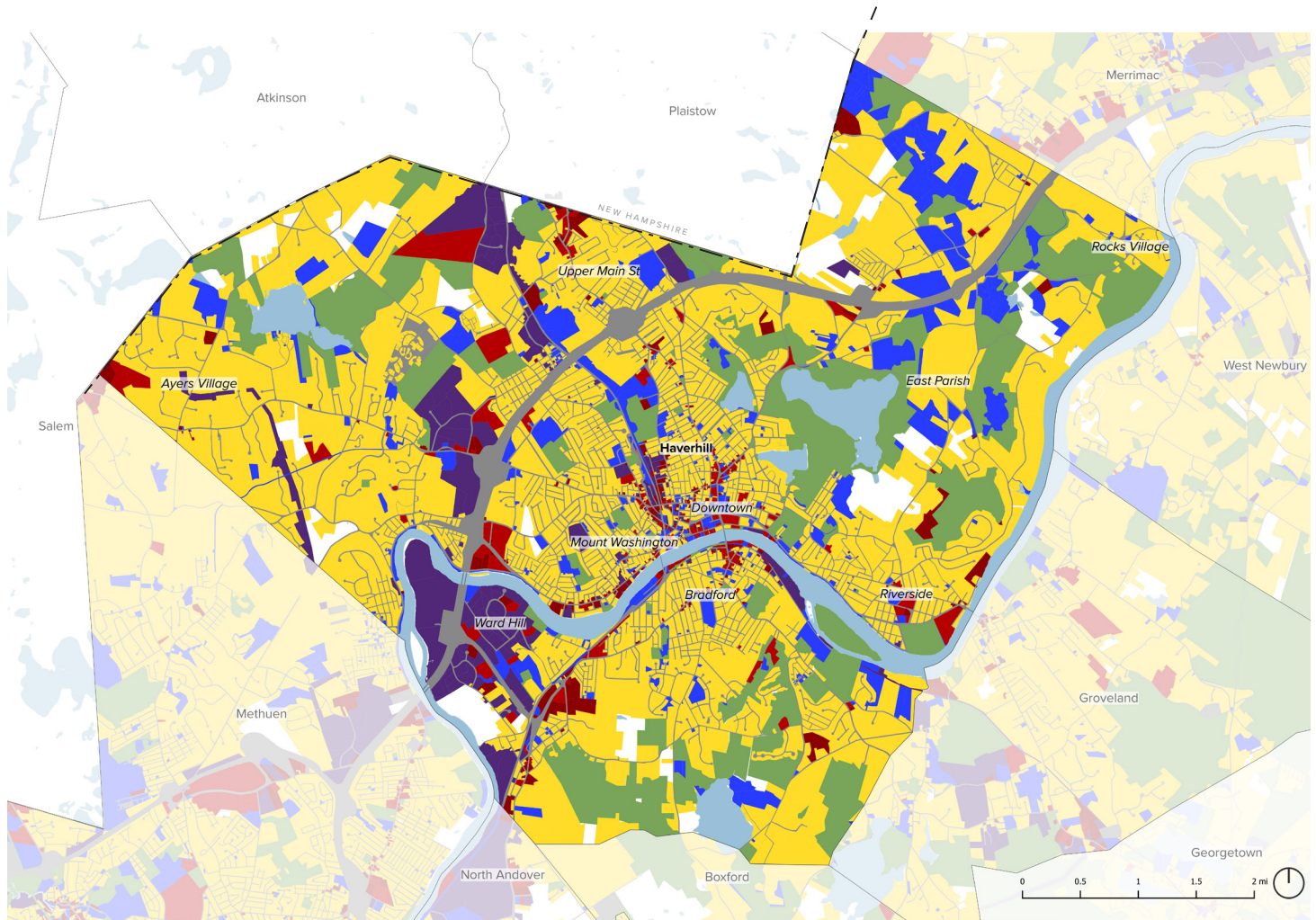
Put a different way, the primary growth in American households are not families with multiple children looking for low-density housing in suburbs. Instead, millennials are continuing to seek employment in urban centers and delaying starting families. In addition, baby boomers are becoming increasingly free to enjoy a lifestyle without the constraints of needing the space for a large house with a yard. The typologies of housing proposed in this master plan will meet the needs of this majority portion of the population: smaller, denser, and more affordable.

**Young people are the lifeblood of our community, and it is essential that Haverhill encourage growth in this demographic.**

This master plan believes that preparing Haverhill successfully for the future begins with preparing Haverhill for the success of its younger generations. It just so happens that doing so lines up quite well with preparing Haverhill for its older generations too.

<sup>1</sup> Alex Krieger. *City on a Hill: Urban Idealism in America from the Puritans to the Present*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 339-340.



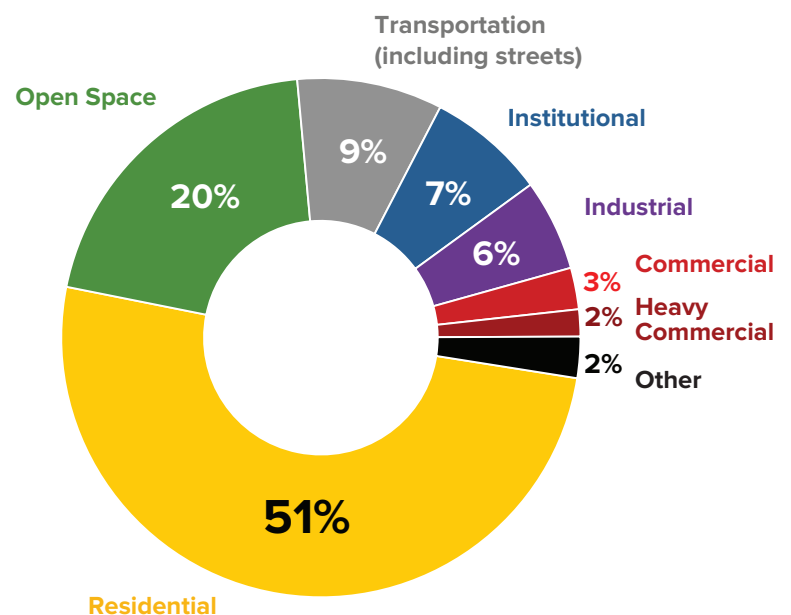


## Benefits of densification

Densification as an aspect of growth has many benefits. It is particularly cost-effective for developers, which encourages development in a real estate environment that has not seen substantial new projects in recent years. Moreover, by building up and not out, new development requires less space, which allows for preserving existing areas, open space, and farmland.

Creating denser places for living and working has additional benefits. By discouraging the increased use of the car, Haverhill can become more environmentally sustainable and mitigate traffic concerns around development. Moreover, the ability to create more jobs and more homes in the same amount of space provides more opportunities for the city to increase its tax base without having to resort to suburban sprawl.

## Distribution of existing land uses



Source: MAPC Land Parcel Database, 2018.





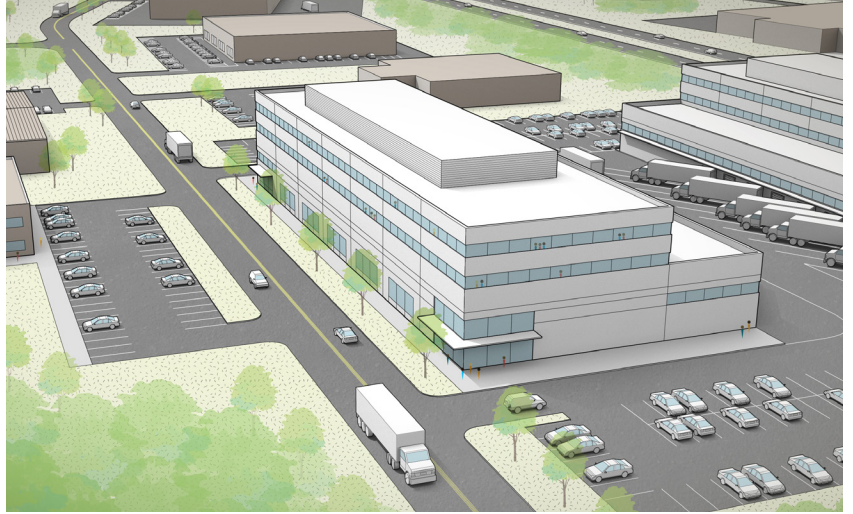


# Opportunities for Targeted Growth

*Please note that the summary diagram on the following two pages provides more geographic detail about where these opportunities should be located.*

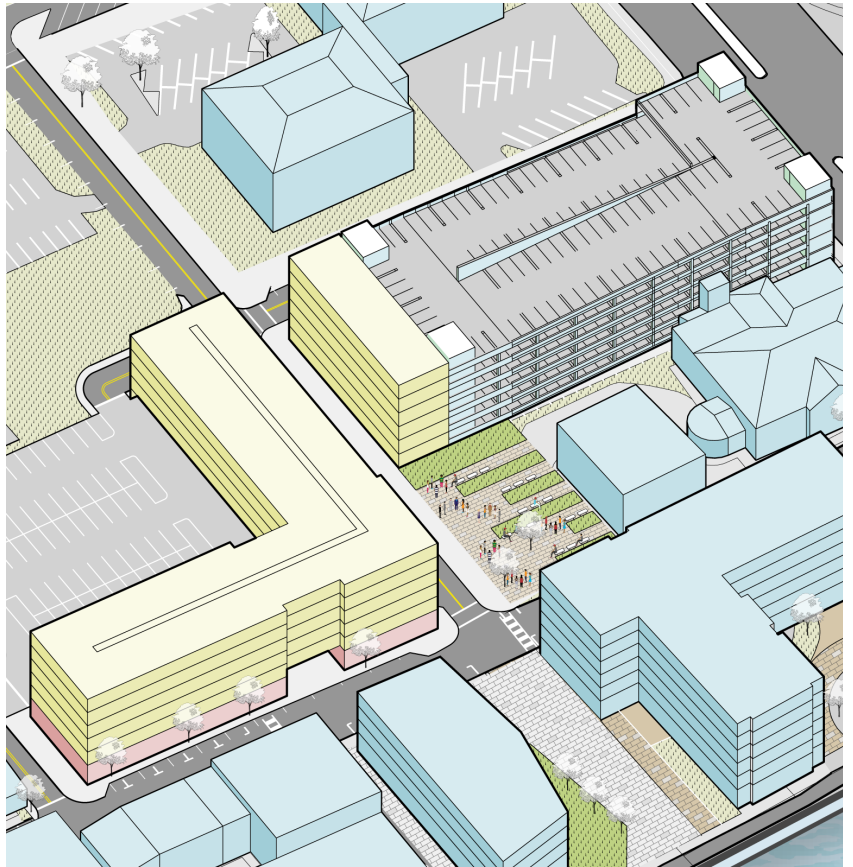
## Development of industrial areas

A proactive approach to these future needs is the best way to ensure that the most effective aspects of Haverhill's economy remain so. Haverhill has the benefit of a robust and growing manufacturing and industrial sector to its economy, but many of its manufacturing facilities are aging or at capacity. Growth is a tool to encourage current property owners to reinvest in their properties both to increase capacity and also to encourage new kinds of industrial uses in existing locations.



## Development of downtown and the riverfront

A vision for Haverhill's downtown and riverfront is, in many ways, a continuation of ideas that the city has been working toward for years. Renewed development downtown will help with the financing of needed infrastructural improvements like the Goecke Deck. Additionally, there are multiple riverfront sites on the southern side of the Merrimack River across from Downtown. One of these, the site formerly owned by the Haverhill Paperboard Corporation, has sat vacant for many years. There are few prime riverfront sites of this size and development viability anywhere else in the Commonwealth, and this plan strongly encourages the City to take advantage of this chance to build needed new housing here, where the city can receive the benefits of growth without the downsides of low-density sprawl. The city has already gone through a process of rezoning Haverhill's riverfront to enable this new development, but linking it to a broader vision of Haverhill's future may help realize this project.



Vision for downtown



## Development of village centers

In many ways, the idea of building small centers within Haverhill's neighborhoods is just a way of getting back to the ways that neighborhoods used to develop. A sense of walkability is just as important for empty nesters—households where children have moved out—as it is for millennials, who all find value in being able to walk from their home to a local cafe or grocery. In addition, the type and scale of townhouse-scale multifamily housing, with some ground-floor retail where appropriate, is much more attractive to developers than low-density single-family homes.

Finally, the best way to encourage a more robust small business and retail sector in Haverhill is to ensure that those businesses have enough nearby households to be their customers, and localized density can provide that baseline customer base.

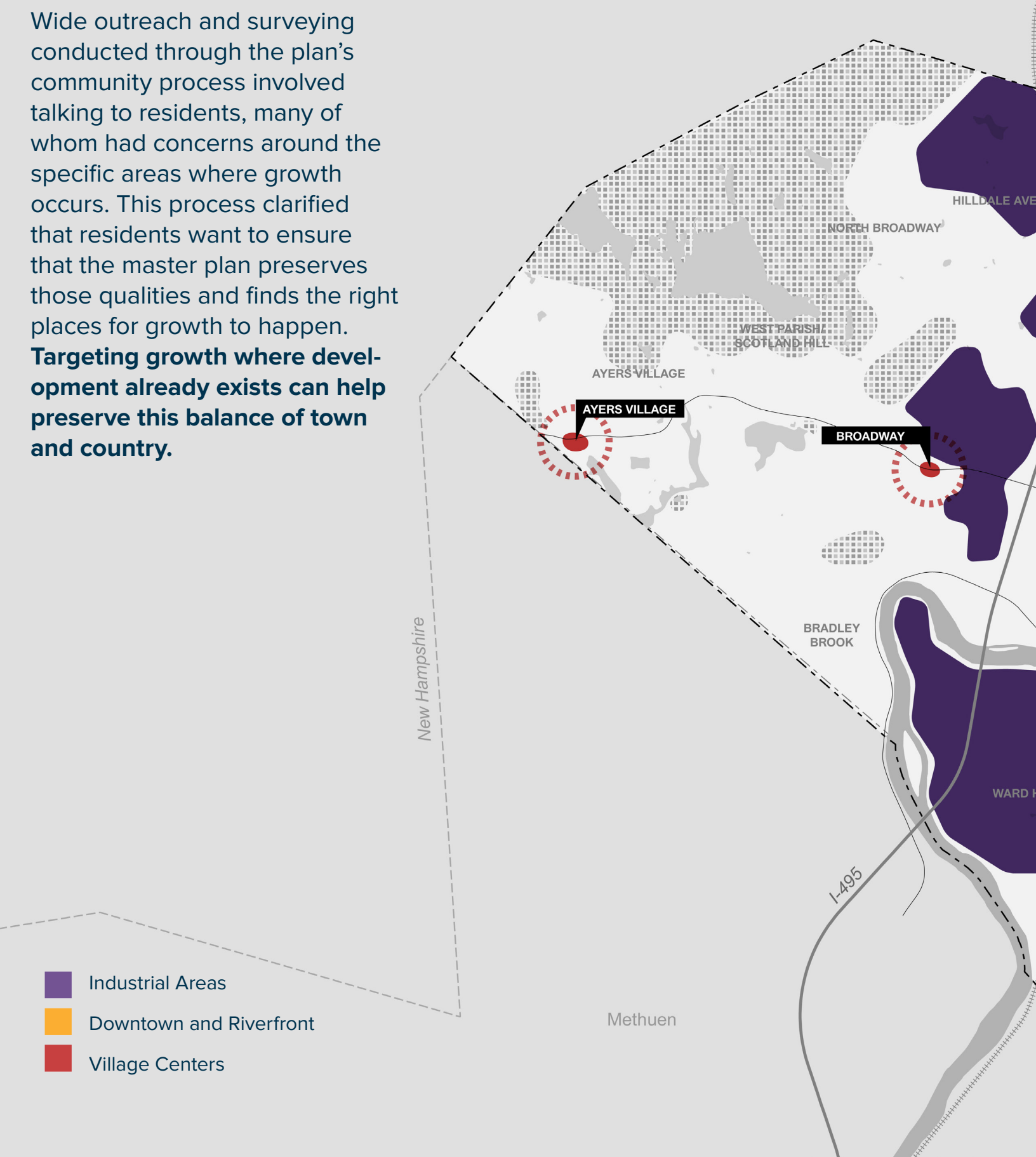


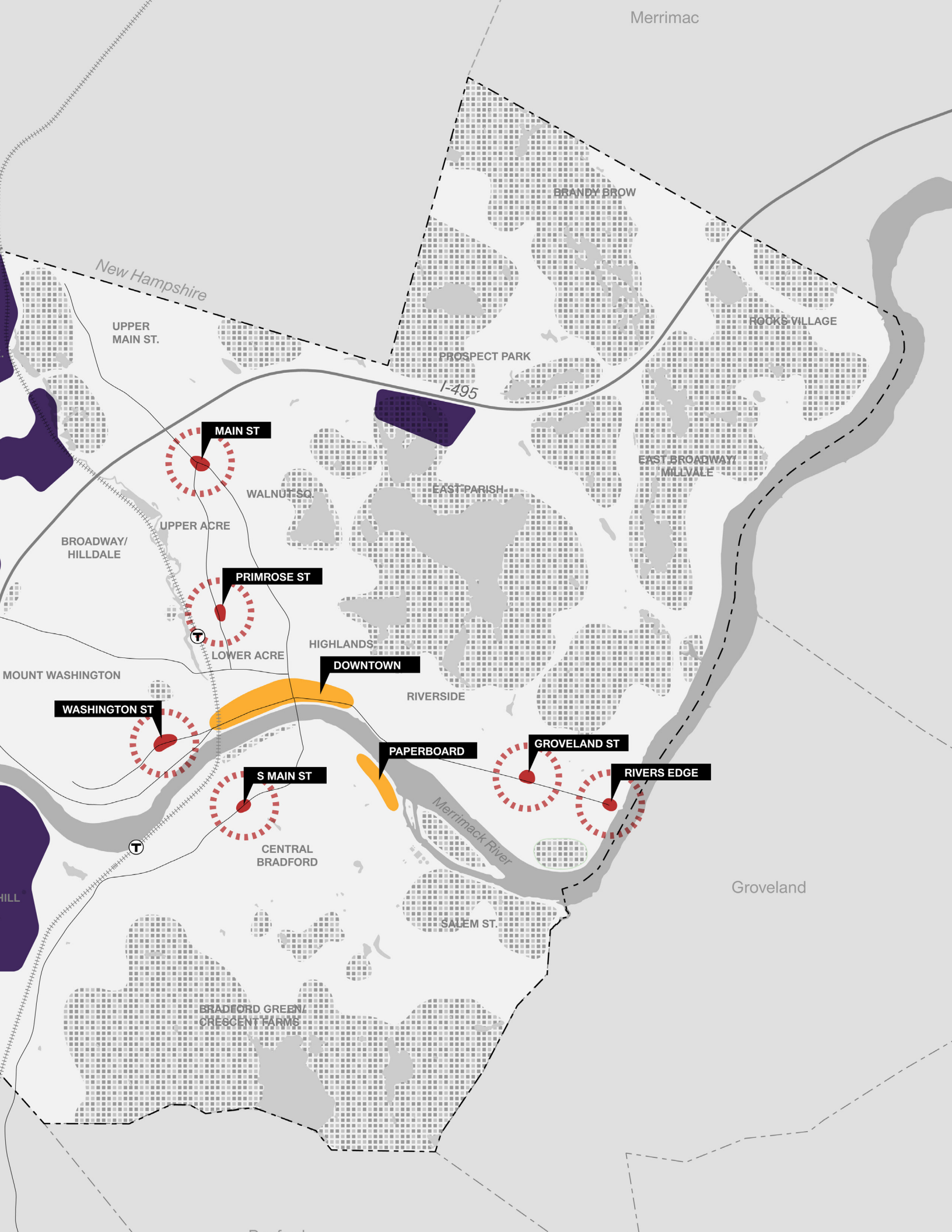
Vision for the riverfront



# Areas for Targeted Growth

Wide outreach and surveying conducted through the plan’s community process involved talking to residents, many of whom had concerns around the specific areas where growth occurs. This process clarified that residents want to ensure that the master plan preserves those qualities and finds the right places for growth to happen. **Targeting growth where development already exists can help preserve this balance of town and country.**





Merrimack

BRANDY BROW

ROCKS VILLAGE

New Hampshire

UPPER  
MAIN ST.

PROSPECT PARK

I-495

MAIN ST

WALNUT SQ.

EAST PARISH

EAST BROADWAY  
MILLVALE

BROADWAY/  
HILLDALE

UPPER ACRE

PRIMROSE ST

LOWER ACRE

HIGHLANDS

DOWNTOWN

RIVERSIDE

WASHINGTON ST

GROVELAND ST

RIVERS EDGE

S MAIN ST

PAPERBOARD

CENTRAL  
BRADFORD

SALEM ST.

BRADFORD GREEN/  
CRESCENT FARMS

Groveland

Merrimack River



# Scenarios for Future Growth

“More diversity, more companies that deal with a variety of tech issues—agriculture, different types of growing tech.”

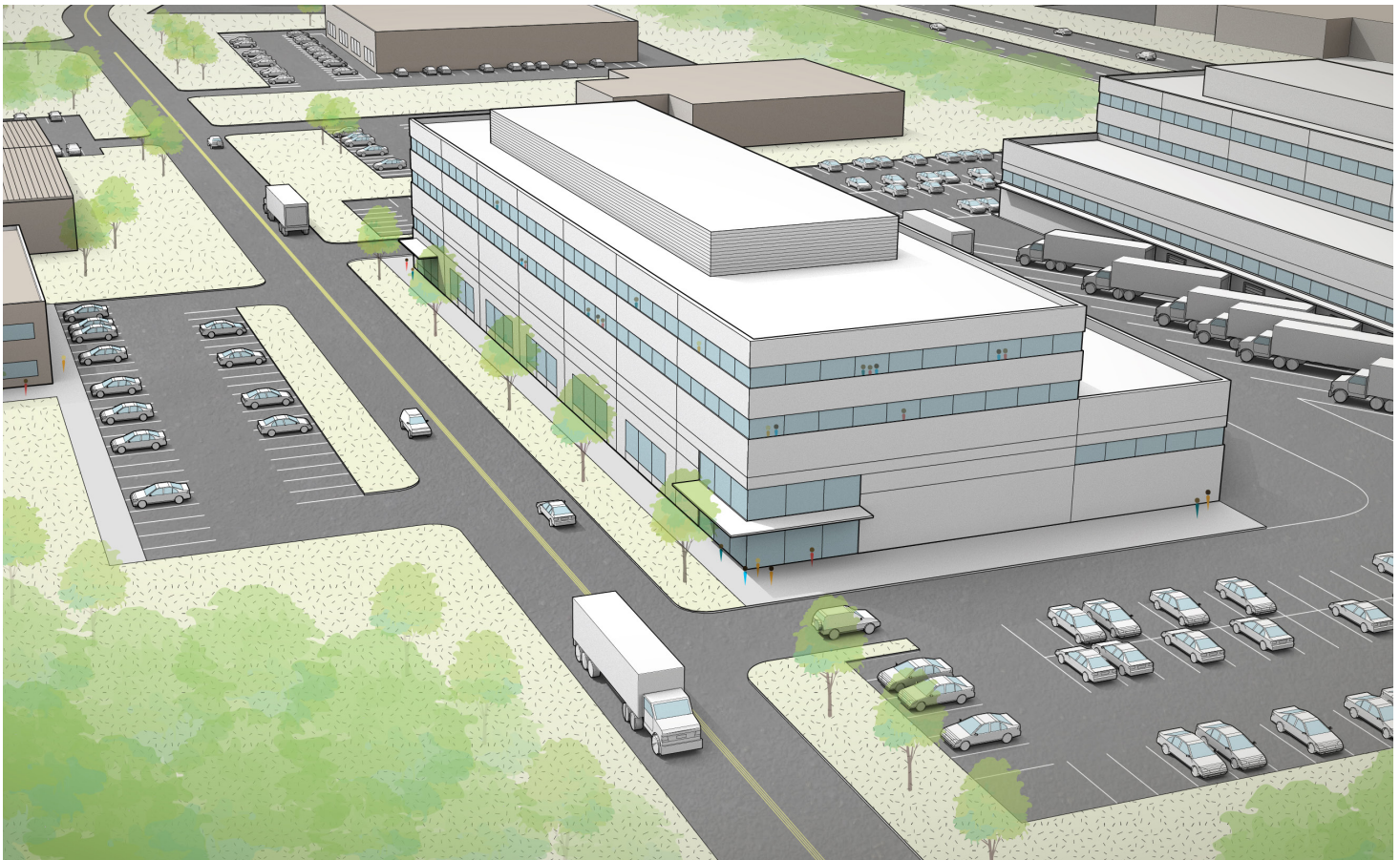
# Industrial areas

## Existing and new industrial areas can integrate commercial and industrial uses to attract jobs and investment in Haverhill’s workforce.

The manufacturing sector has seen the largest surge of new jobs in Haverhill since emerging from the Great Recession. This is unusual compared to other municipalities in the Commonwealth. Given this trend, densification in places where manufacturing uses are already allowed can transform Haverhill into a regional leader for employment in this sector. Proximity to I-495 and ease of access to and from Boston make the industrial locations in Haverhill particularly attractive to companies seeking to grow outside the Boston metropolitan area. Furthermore, industrial uses occupy 6% of land in Haverhill. This is greater than the area occupied by commercial and heavy commercial uses combined. Adding commercial uses that are

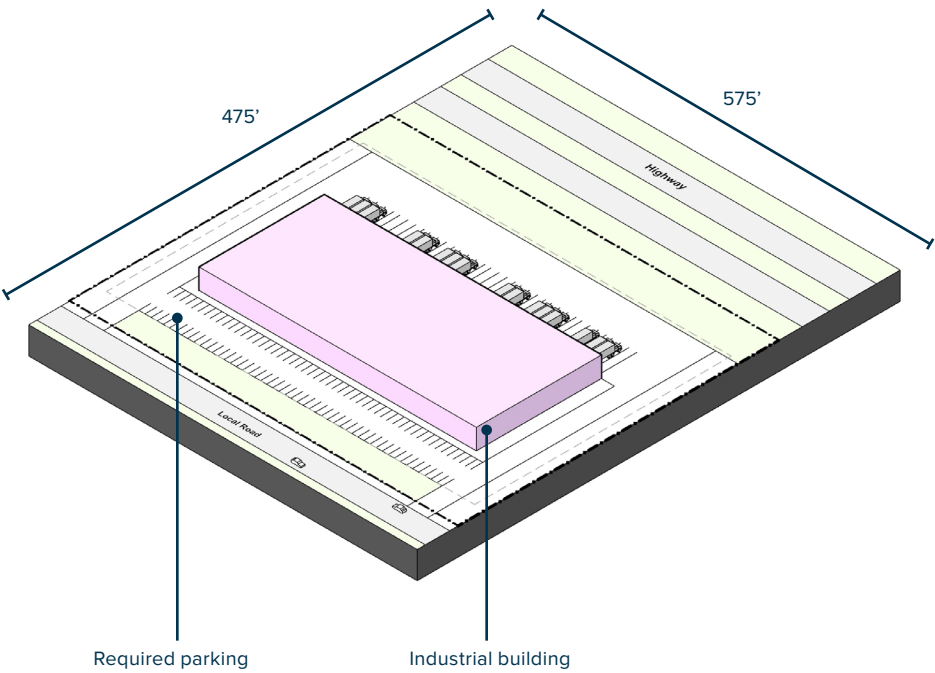
compatible with the industrial nature of these existing sites can provide additional low-barrier-to-entry jobs and expand access to opportunity for Haverhill’s workforce.

The goal of this scenario is to demonstrate the impact of adding commercial use to the City’s existing industrial sites. These areas are already situated along Haverhill’s main thoroughfares making them easily accessible to a broader population as well as attractive employment centers. Bolstering these areas will have several effects: growth in the commercial tax base thereby reducing the tax burden on residents, added jobs and larger daytime populations, and subsequently broader investment and economic development.



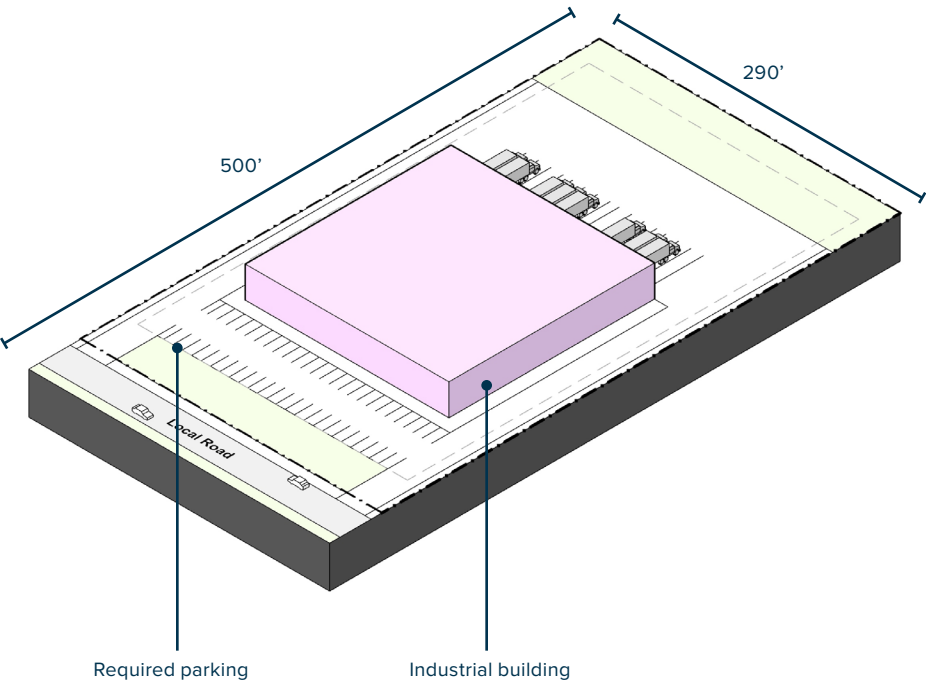


What do industrial areas look like?



Typical large site ≈ 273,000 SF

Height	1 story
Total gross floor area	75,800 GSF
Total parking spaces	95 spaces
Green space	20%
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.28

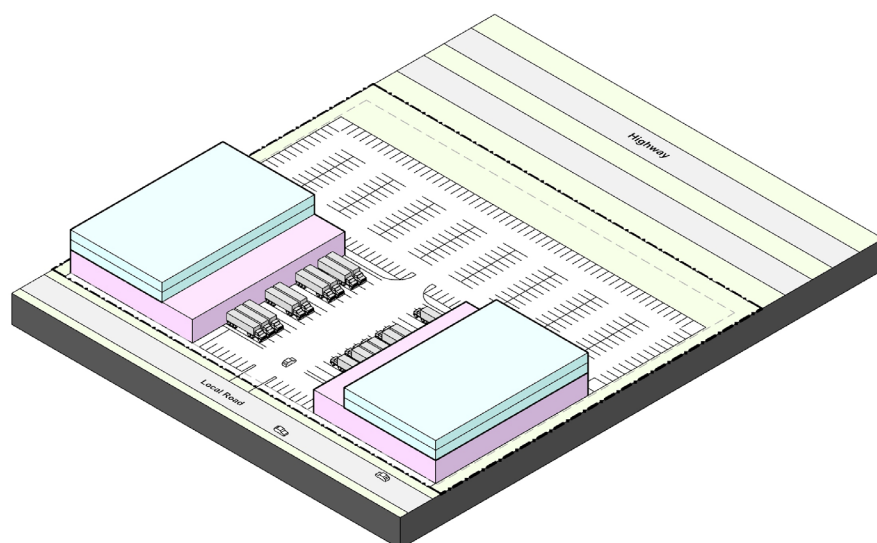


Typical small site ≈ 145,000 SF

Height	1 story
Total gross floor area	38,800 GSF
Total parking spaces	48 spaces
Green space	20%
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.25

“Anything we can do to create an alternative to Boston for professionals including access to high speed connections, desired amenities, and safe, convenient locations.”

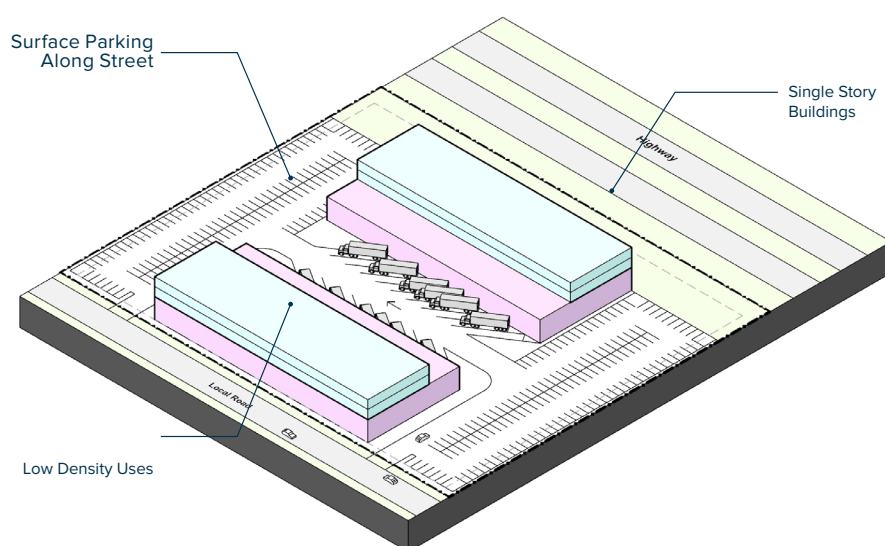
## What could a redeveloped large industrial site look like?



### Large site—A

Two buildings with shared loading on street

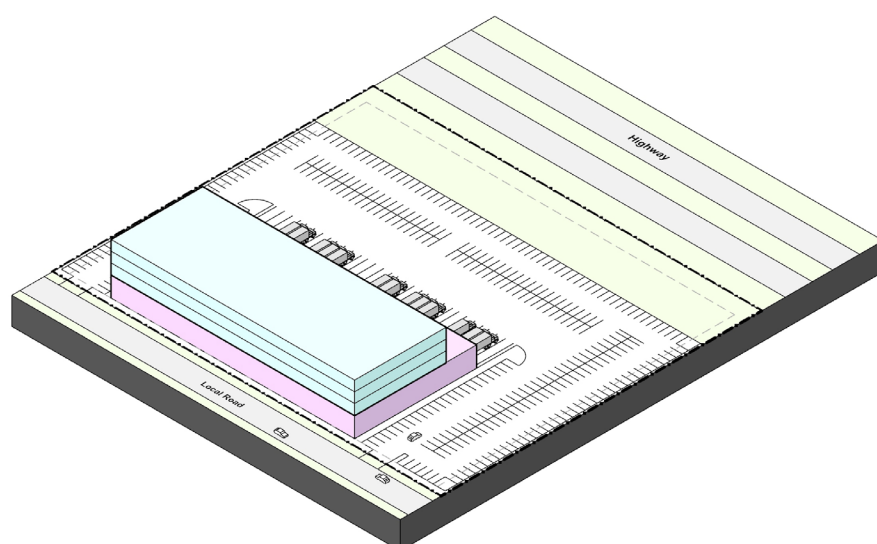
Height	3 stories, 60'
Total gross floor area	202,500 GSF
Total parking spaces	288 spaces
Green space	15%
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.74



### Large site—B

Two buildings with shared loading off street

Height	3 stories, 60'
Total gross floor area	198,450 GSF
Total parking spaces	276 spaces
Green space	15%
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.73



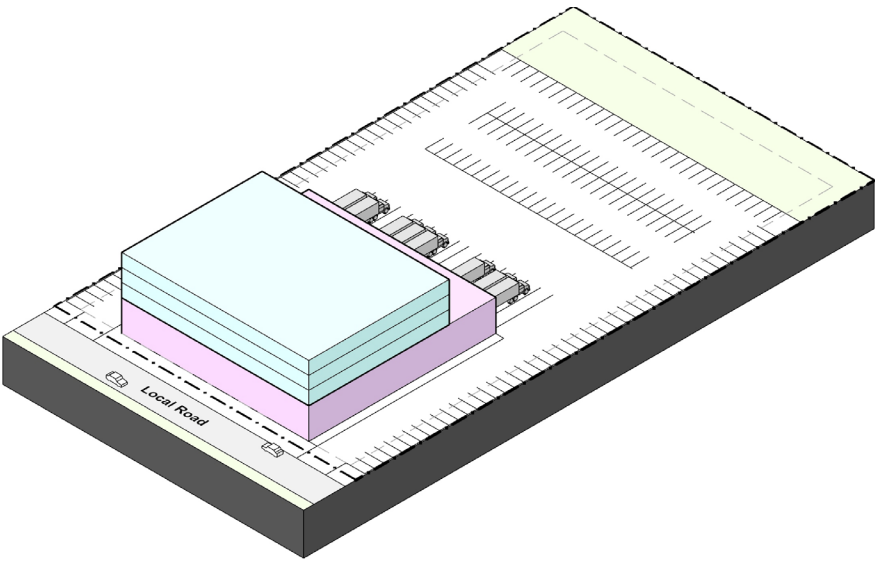
### Large site—C

One building with loading off street

Height	4 stories, 75'
Total gross floor area	210,600 GSF
Total parking spaces	331 spaces
Green space	20%
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.77

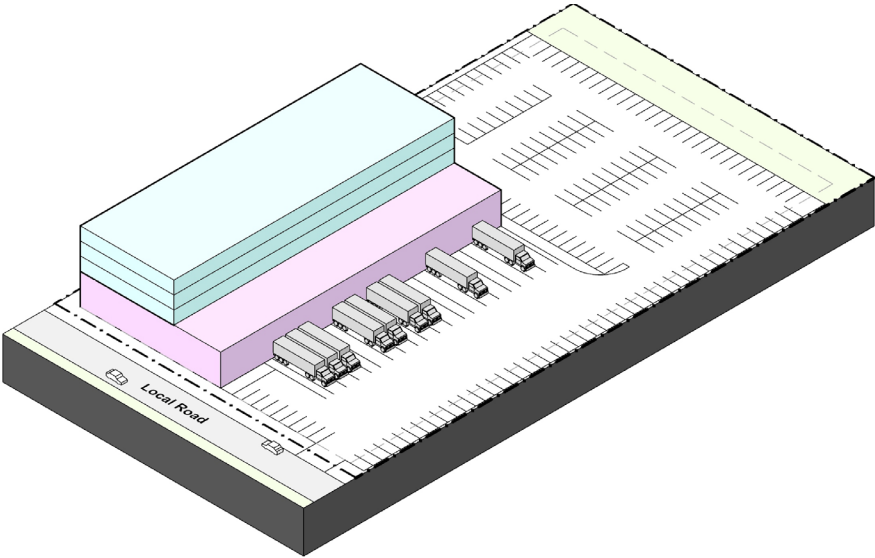


What could a redeveloped small industrial site look like?



Small site—A  
Square building with loading off street

Height	4 stories, 75'
Total gross floor area	105,300 GSF
Total parking spaces	167 spaces
Green space	15%
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.73



Small site—B  
Long building with loading along street

Height	4 stories, 75'
Total gross floor area	109,350 GSF
Total parking spaces	169 spaces
Green space	10%
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.75

How can industrial sites become mixed use job centers?

Currently, industrial sites are underutilized with primarily large one to two-story industrial buildings surrounded by parking and loading zones. These areas have the potential to become mixed-use job centers by increasing density and allowing commercial uses. In addition to industrial use on the ground floors, commercial uses can be stacked on upper floors and buildings can align with the street to create a more consistent streetscape. Both small and large industrial sites

can accommodate this mixed use: commercial and industrial uses can be combined into a single large building or divided among two or more buildings. The former scenario concentrates the building footprint in one area and accommodates more parking spaces. The latter scenario pairs two buildings back-to-back that share a loading apron and creates two building fronts, one facing the local road and the other facing the highway.

## Trends in metropolitan Boston industrial areas

Right now, rents in the areas north of Boston are almost twice that of the areas south of Boston, despite the fact that there are higher vacancy rates. This, among other things, suggests that Haverhill is placed in a more desirable location for industry. Haverhill is close not only to New Hampshire and Maine, but also Boston and the I-495 corridor.

Moreover, the state of the current market suggests other factors. First, the supply of industrial space in the region is relatively tight. When vacancy rates are below 15%, this generally qualifies as “full”, because at that level of vacancy, any remaining spaces tend to be the remnant spaces around other, more desirable locations.

Second, while the amount of vacancy in the area would normally suggest that there are approximately four years of supply remaining, the following considerations matter a great deal:

- The average size of building in the metro north region is approximately 80,000 square feet.
- 40% of the space requirements are for high-bay and flex types of industrial, which generally require building types beyond the existing building stock in Ward Hill. An additional 40% of the space requirements are for warehouses, which sometimes also has the same high-bay and typological requirements of flex spaces.

All of this is to say that the ability of an industrial space to respond to changing market conditions is essential for the building to stay competitive. This means that competitive industrial spaces tend to have higher roof heights and the ability to be expanded.

In addition, the approval process plays a large role. Thinking about the “time to market” in industrial construction and logistics spaces is a major competitive issue. Tenants seeking new locations also want the space to be ready to build as soon as possible, which makes it essential that as much of this new typology be allowable as-of-right, so that getting the space built can happen efficiently and quickly. This reflects new business models and real estate economics in the industrial space.



Raymond Flynn Marine Industrial Park, Boston

## Industrial parks in Haverhill, new and old

Given these trends mentioned above, this master plan recommends a “both and” approach to industrial space development and relocation. On the one hand, it is imperative that Ward Hill and other existing industrial spaces be encouraged to modernize existing facilities and increase capacity with new spaces. On the other hand, it is also imperative that Haverhill prepare for the creation of a second industrial park in addition to Ward Hill. Both upgrading existing spaces and building new spaces is the best plan for capturing new demand while not cannibalizing existing spaces with new ones. All else being equal, from a pure land use perspective it is preferable to densify industrial uses where they already exist, but it is likely easier for prospective large tenants to permit and build a new modern facility in a new location where construction can be as-of-right than it would be to go through the more laborious process of negotiating such a process with existing landowners.



### Modular and flexible industrial types

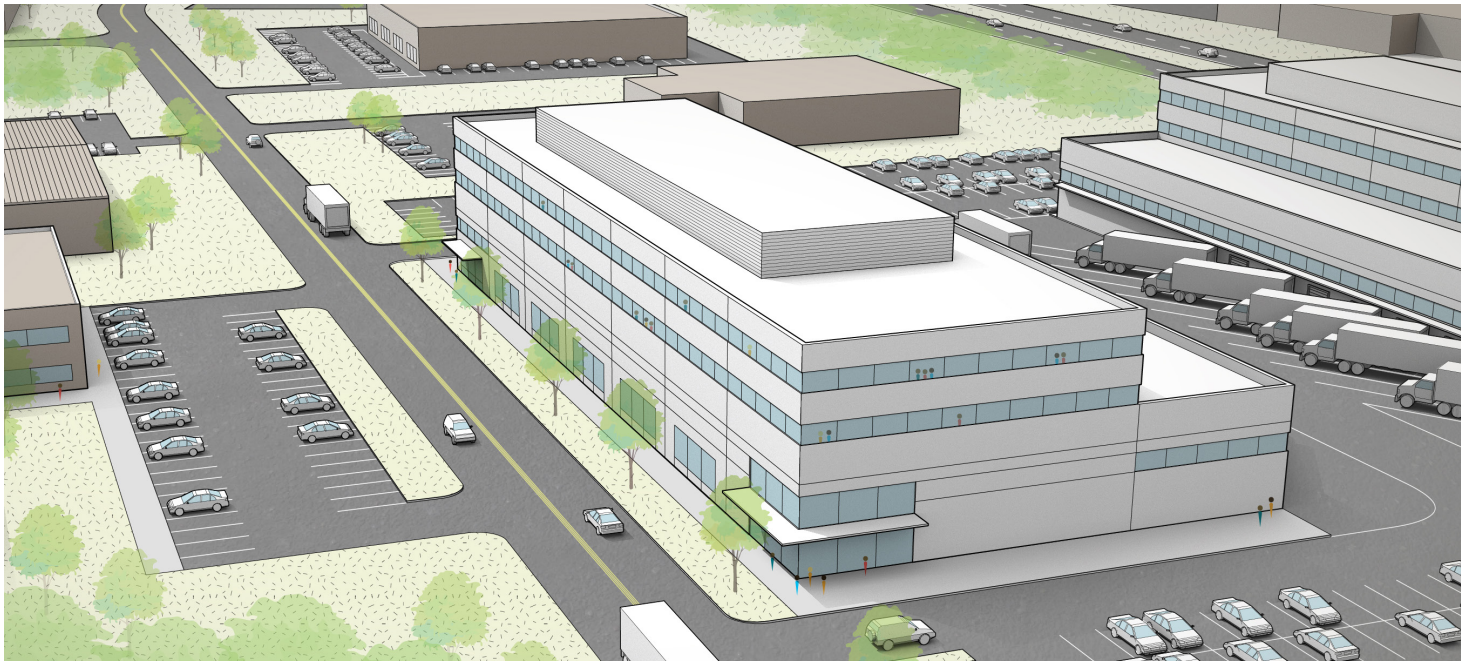
The need for new types of industrial space is driven by several factors including the growing demand for just-in-time warehouse space and “clean” manufacturing space. Most importantly, cutting-edge biotech and manufacturing relies on the ability to quickly substitute components within a manufacturing line quickly, through the use of componentized “modules”, which can be inserted into industrial buildings and removed as needed. This reduces the cost and time involved in fitting out the full occupiable space, but it does require that the space be able to accommodate these modules. This requires that the spaces be high enough to fit a module and its ventilation, and that it be large enough that multiple modules can go into the same place.

Even when the industrial uses do not require the full use of modules in their assembly line, high-bay space is still desirable. Contemporary manufacturing and warehousing tenants prefer spaces that are a minimum of 28 feet clear to the underside of the structure. Some biotech lab

modules require clear space that is 30 feet high and even taller. In fact, it is mostly the lower ceiling height of most of the existing building stock in industrial parks like Ward Hill that makes them less desirable for new generation industrial tenants.

Contemporary trends are also lowering the parking required for industrial space. Automation has dramatically decreased the number of employees in modern warehouse and manufacturing facilities. As a result, the minimum parking ratio (the number of parking spaces per gross square foot of area) has been reduced. Requiring smaller parking lots lowers the cost of development and opens up more of the land for rent and tax revenue-generating real estate.

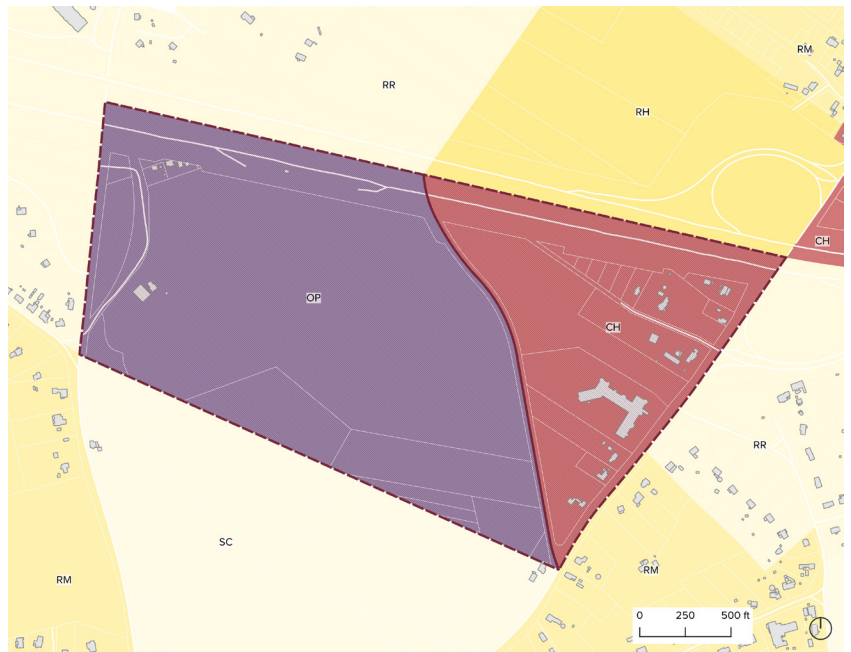
For these reasons, this plan’s recommendations include that industrial zoning’s height limits change to 85’, to allow for high-bay and modular industrial spaces with additional offices or flexible industrial space above. To allow for sufficiently sized industrial facilities,



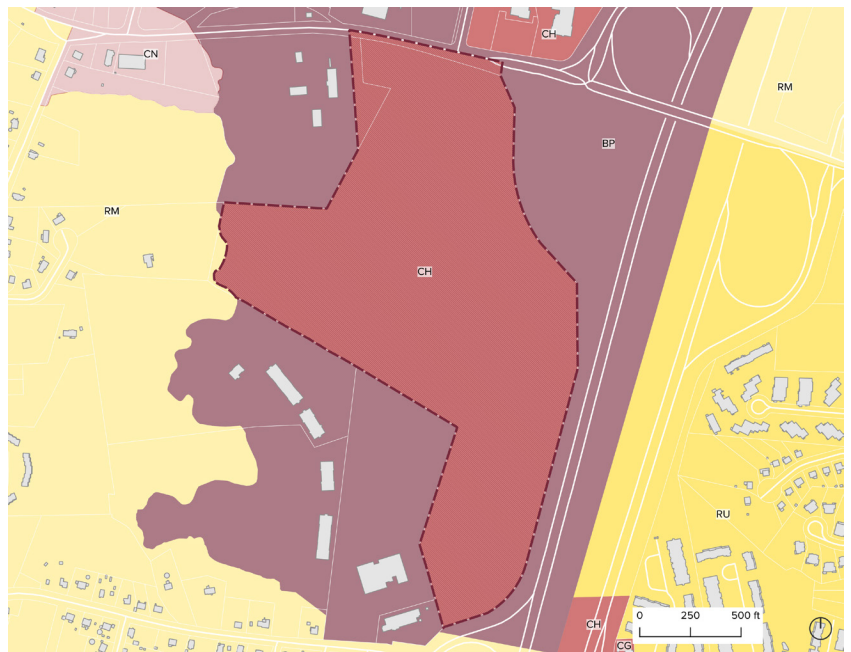
these changes in zoning and parking requirements should be codified as-of-right instead of through special permits. Due to the more rapid turnaround in construction time demanded by modern industrial tenants, requiring a full permitting process for these requirements to change each time delays the development of projects and discourages tenants from pursuing these projects in Haverhill. Moreover, by making this changes as-of-right, Haverhill is effectively sending a message to the industrial marketplace that it both wants new facilities and that it is interested in helping them meet their needs in an increasingly competitive landscape.

### Zoning changes required to improve the usage of industrial areas

- Allow for mixed use industrial and commercial in BP district
- Rezone the CH district opposite Computer Drive along Broadway to BP district
- Rezone OP and CH districts between Newton Road and Amesbury Road south of I-495 to BP districts
- Change parking ratio to 1 space/1600 GSF for industrial use in BP district
- Change parking ratio to 1 space/500 GSF for commercial use in BP district
- Change maximum building height from 50' to 85'
- Change minimum green space requirement from 20% to 10-15% (to accommodate parking for commercial uses)
- Change front setback from 40' minimum to 10' maximum



This master plan recommends rezoning the OP (Office Park) and CH (Commercial Highway) districts between Newton Road and Amesbury Road south of I-495 to be BP (Business Park), to be able to take advantage of the new zoning changes also recommended for the BP zone.



This master plan also recommends rezoning the CH (Commercial Highway) district opposite Computer Drive to be BP (Business Park).



# Downtown and the Riverfront

**Strategic riverfront development concentrates housing and commercial uses in certain areas while protecting others for recreation and open space.**

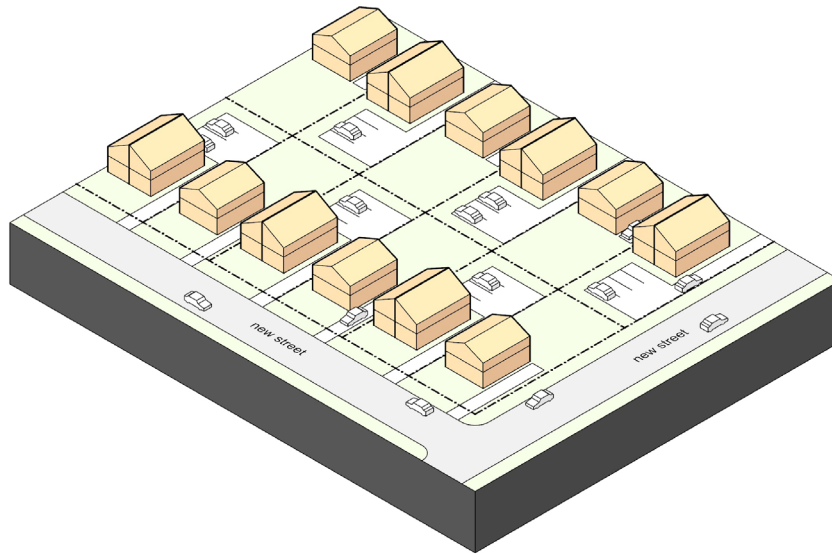
The Merrimack River is a natural resource for the City and development adjacent to the riverfront should be strategic and balanced to protect the river while also providing targeted areas for development and increasing accessibility to adjacent neighborhoods. When considering growth and development relative to the riverfront, a number of approaches can provide residential and commercial uses as well as public realm improvements. A gradient of housing densities can address the City's housing concerns while simultaneously transforming the river into a waterfront destination.

The goal of this scenario is to demonstrate the impact of focusing development at specific sites

along the river. These areas have been previously developed, but they are currently vacant or underutilized despite their desirable locations adjacent to the river. The City has already undergone significant efforts to rezone the waterfront to allow for more density in this area. With this effort, development along the riverfront is poised to have several benefits: increasing the commercial tax base, economic development, and job opportunities, adding much needed housing in desirable locations, increasing access to open space and recreational programming, and through targeted development, preserving the river as a natural resource and public amenity.

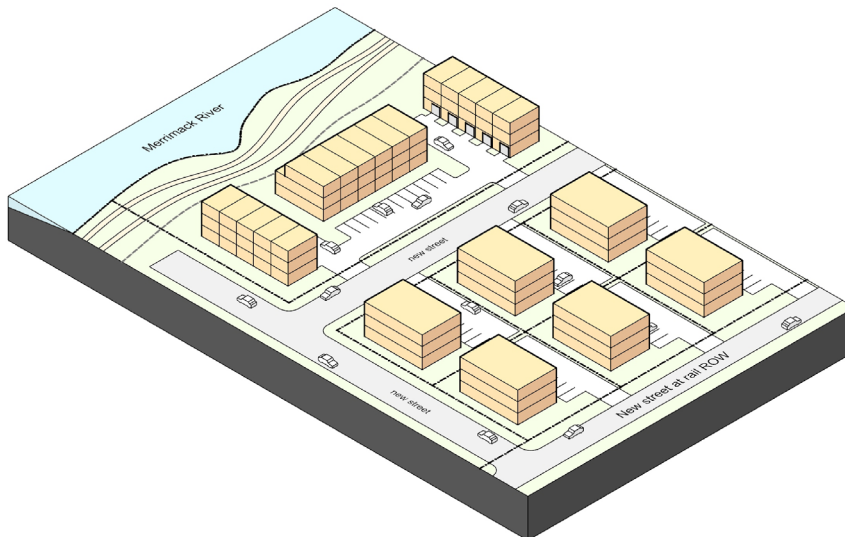


## What kind of development can occur along the river?



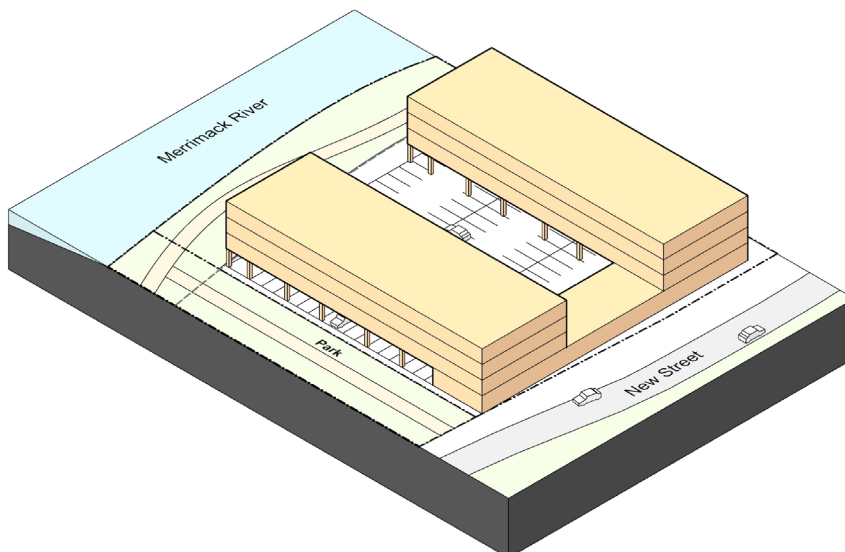
### Low density

Height	3 stories, 32'
Total gross floor area	27,120 GSF
Total units	18 units
Parking ratio	2/3-4 BR units
FAR (district)	0.28
FAR (parcel)	0.40
Density (district)	8.2 units/acre



### Medium density

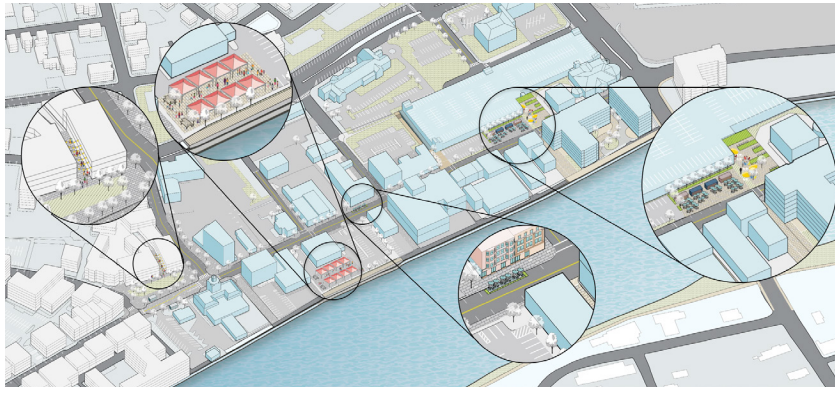
Height	3 stories, 32'
Total gross floor area	71,820 GSF
Total units	52 units
Parking ratio	1.5-2/2-4 BR units
FAR (district)	0.43
FAR (parcel)	0.73
Density (district)	13.5 units/acre



### High density

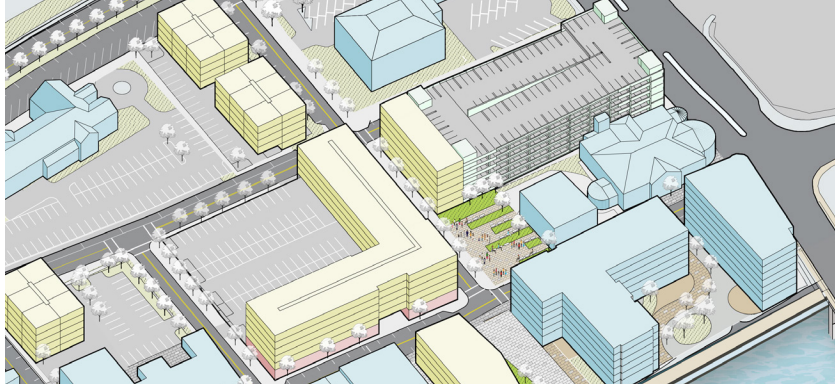
Height	3 stories, 32'
Res. gross floor area	79,000 GSF
Total units	72 units
Parking ratio	1.5/1-2 BR units
FAR (district)	1.13
FAR (parcel)	1.63
Density (district)	44 units/acre





## The riverfront has long been considered for redevelopment

The City has long recognized the potential for riverfront development. In particular, the Haverhill TDI District Planning Study conducted in 2015 outlined a redevelopment strategy to increase downtown residents and businesses while rebuilding a vibrant main street fabric and economy. This study led to rezoning the riverfront and downtown to allow for increased density, minimal setbacks, lower parking ratios, and added building height. While there have been few development projects since rezoning, much of this area is well positioned for growth and density.





### How should the downtown and riverfront develop?

There are several key areas along the river that can be targeted for development. Growth in these areas will not only increase the City's tax base, but also increase jobs and provide opportunities for Haverhill's residents to participate in this economic growth.

Downtown, for example, has many locations such as the Goecke Deck that are ripe for densification. This is a prime site for added mixed use development within the existing, underutilized riverfront district and TDI.

Measuring roughly 50 acres, the vacant Old Paperboard site is another location, situated between the Merrimack River and the Elmwood Cemetery, that could accommodate residential growth as well as added parks and open space. The existing railroad right-of-way is well-situated to become a new street, which would provide a buffer between moderately dense housing along the riverfront and lower-density residential neighborhoods further inland. Throughout,

setbacks from the water's edge would create space for a future riverfront trail.

Development along the riverfront can be conceived as a gradient of densities:

**Higher density:** medium-rise buildings (3 to 4 stories) broken up with parks that provide riverfront access. Units would have 1-2 bedrooms, with an average of 1.5 parking spaces each.

**Moderate density:** medium-scaled residential types, including 6-unit "six-plexes," carriage houses with tuck-under parking, and traditional townhouses. Units would range from 2-4 bedrooms, with at least 1.5 surface parking spaces per unit. Buildings would be limited to 3 stories.

**Low density:** located further inland and resembling single-family districts; block sizes and parcels would be similar to those found in other single family districts, where parcels would be at least 50' wide x 100' deep. Building types would consist of one-and two-family houses with at least 2 parking spaces per unit. Houses would be no taller than 2.5 stories.



### Zoning changes required to encourage riverfront and downtown development

Much of the rezoning work to allow new projects along the riverfront have already been completed. Based on initial test-fits to assess site viability, the master plan suggests small changes to riverfront setbacks to encourage better usage of parcels and more consistent street frontage for larger projects. In addition to these changes, the master plan recommends robust linear parks along the riverfront; in particular, the rail trail should extend along the riverfront to the Paperboard site.

- Change side setback from 20' to 5'
- Change front setback from 25' to 20'

"Consider acquiring and preserving riverfront area as open space. Current development along the river is multistory and private which may ultimately close off access and the view to the river rather than open it up."



# Village Centers

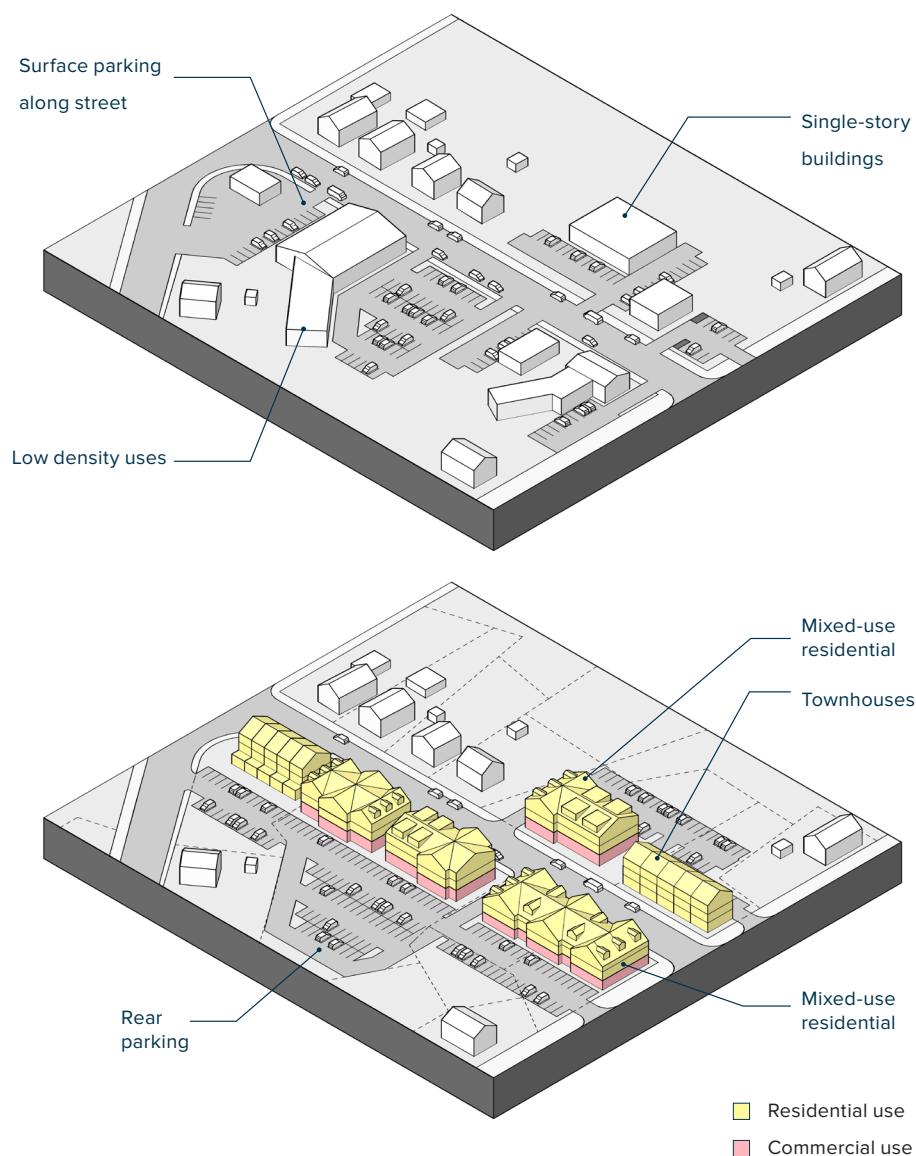
**Village centers enhance mixed-uses and walkability in existing neighborhood hubs while creating a sense of place, supporting local services, and adding significant new housing.**

Haverhill has many centers of existing small commercial uses scattered throughout the city. These naturally occurring commercial centers are located at the borders between neighborhoods and host a variety of amenities such as convenience stores, restaurants, pharmacies, salons, and professional offices. Currently, these areas are underused with small building footprints that are set back from the street for surface parking. This arrangement often detracts from the visual quality of the streetscape and hinders the pedestrian experience. Because of their location, however, these areas can absorb mixed-use development and can contribute significantly to the City's housing needs.

The goal of the village center scenario is to demonstrate the benefits of concentrating and directing development to areas where residential and commercial uses already exist together. Enhancing these centers has several effects: it adds considerable housing while maintaining small-scale character, it promotes the expansion of walkable neighborhood centers to address the City's transportation and mobility goals, and it prevents low-density commercial sprawl into environmentally sensitive areas. Importantly, the village centers also provide an opportunity to create a number of vibrant hubs that provide a sense of place and boost local economy in Haverhill's many distinct neighborhoods.



## What do village centers look like?



### Existing conditions

While existing village centers support commercial uses adjacent to residential uses, they are typically defined by low-density, single story retail buildings, and surface parking lots along the street.

### New village center

Densifying the village center allows a diversity of housing types (including townhouses and small-scale multi-family buildings) and provides for additional ground floor retail space. Shifting parking to the rear and minimizing building setbacks enhances the streetscape and also improves the walkability and experience of the village center.

Height	2.5 stories
Res. gross floor area	70,950 GSF
Retail gross floor area	31,100 GSF
Total units	62 units
Parking ratio	1.5/1-2 BR units
FAR (floor area ratio)	0.649

## Examples from other Massachusetts towns and cities



Acton, MA

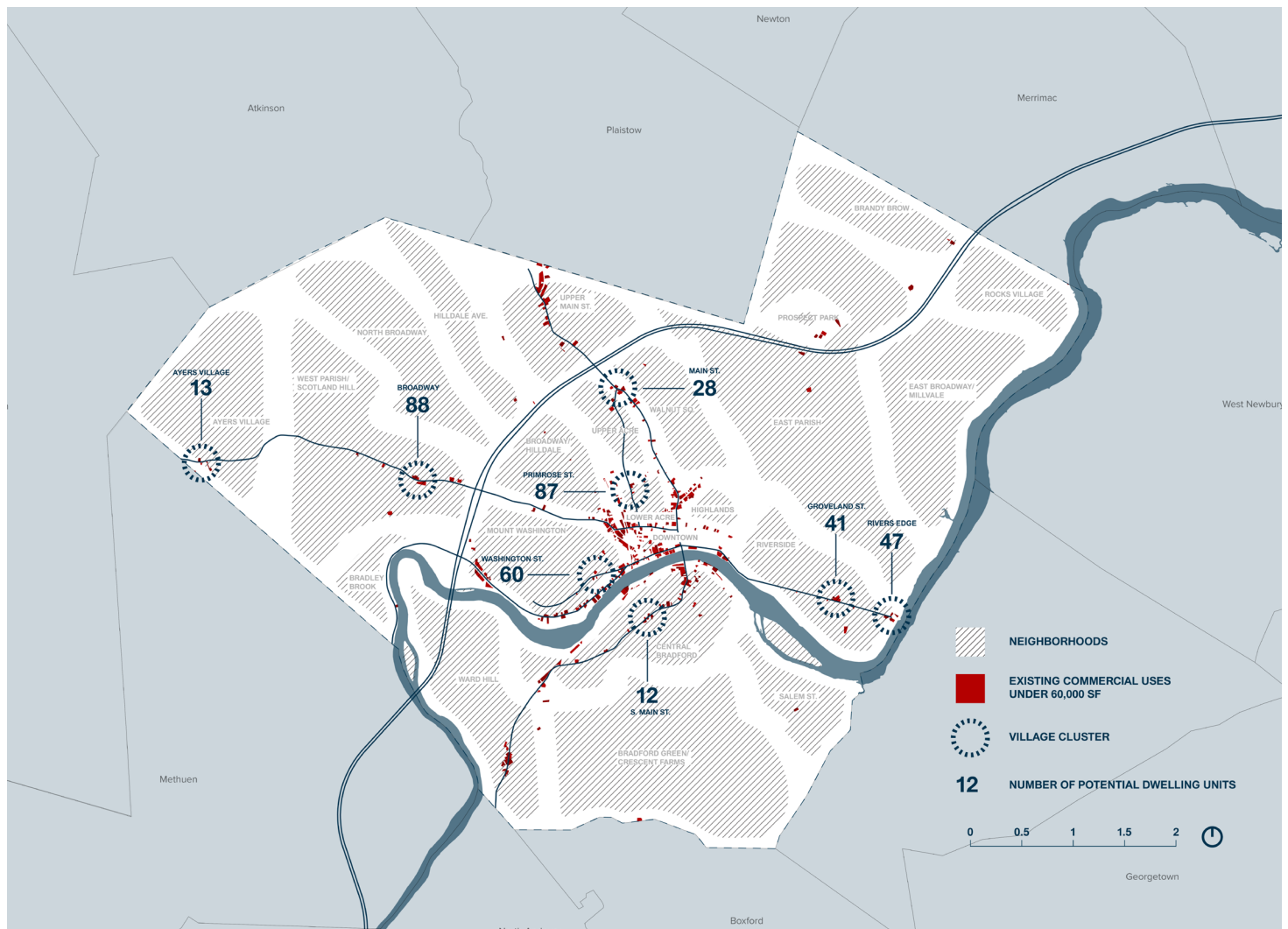


Medfield, MA



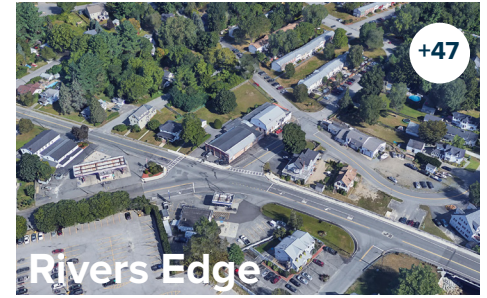
Plymouth, MA





This master plan proposes eight locations across Haverhill where village clusters can be located, each of which has anywhere from 10 to 90 units of housing that could reasonably be built there using the housing types described above.

“Walkability, absolutely, and I would also stress the importance of creating usable outdoor spaces, even tiny ones, along with new housing.”



The existing uses at these Commercial Neighborhood zones lend themselves well to this village cluster idea. Adding more small businesses to the cores of these intersections while also adding more households (and potential customer base) can reduce the need for off-street parking and encourage more of a sense of place across the city.



### How do the village centers address Haverhill's housing needs?

Specifically, village centers offer an opportune place to concentrate housing supply. To counteract sprawl, village centers provide designated areas for development that are conveniently located among Haverhill's neighborhoods and that already evidence mixed residential and commercial uses.

Eight prototypical village centers have been studied for this plan: Ayers Village, Broadway & Forest Street, Groveland & E. Broadway, Main Street & Primrose Street, Primrose Street & Garden Street, Rivers Edge, South Main Street & Bradford Avenue, and Washington Street & High Street. While these sites vary in size and density, across the board, they are already zoned within the "Commercial Neighborhood" district which permits some commercial uses.

In these areas, adding residential uses and encouraging mixed-use development supports local businesses and neighborhood services while providing a variety of housing options from townhouses to small-scale multifamily apartment buildings.

A typical village center provides ground floor retail along the main street, minimal lot setbacks, parking lots located to the rear of buildings, and minimal curb cuts and driveways. Housing on the second and third floors provides a mix of unit types. Throughout, new buildings in Village Centers uphold the neighborhood's character through contextual development, such as pitched roofs and dormers, as well as an enhanced public realm and streetscape.

### Zoning changes required to allow the creation of village clusters

- Expand CN districts (see maps on next page)
- Allow multifamily dwelling units within CN district
- Allow development of multifamily dwelling units to be served by private water and sewer
- Change front setback from 20 feet to 10 feet minimum and 20 feet maximum
- Change side setback from 15 feet to 10 feet
- Change rear setback from 30 feet to 20 feet
- Change allowable number of stories from 2.5 stories to 3 stories
- Change building height from 35 ft to 45 ft
- Increase allowable FAR from 0.5 to 0.85
- Change parking ratio to 1.5 spaces/DU for residential use in CN district
- Change parking ratio to 3 spaces/ 1000 GSF for commercial use in CN district

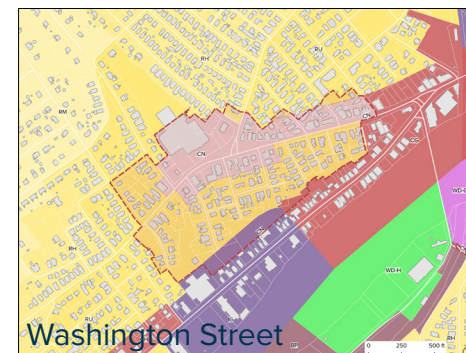
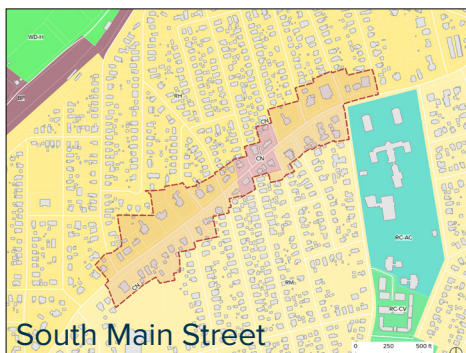
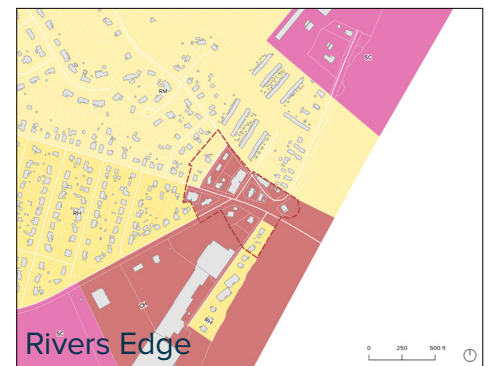
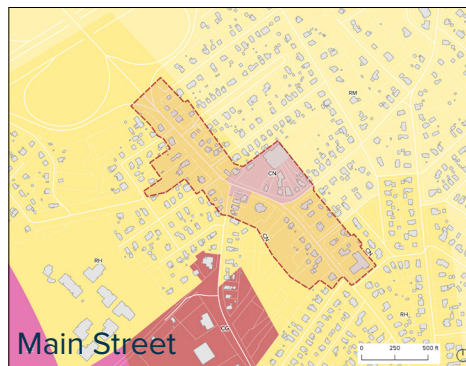
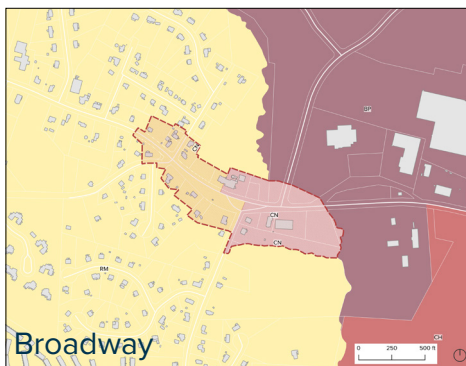
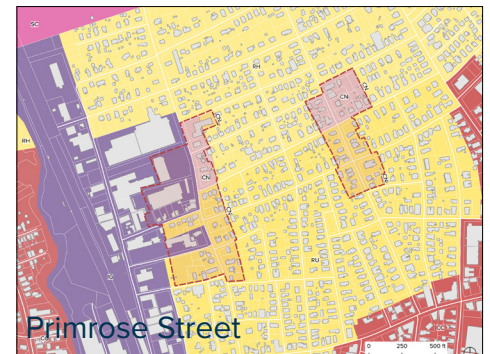
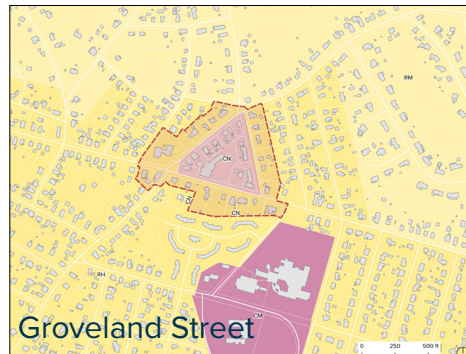
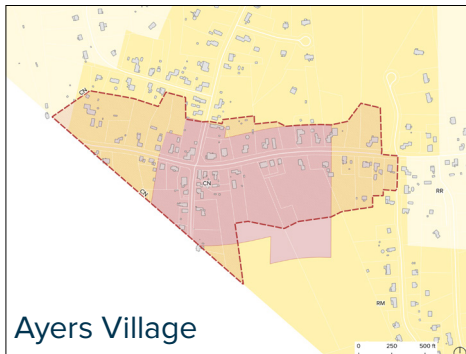
### Additional longer-term considerations to explore

Beyond these recommendations for zoning changes and boundary revisions for the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) zone, a longer-term consideration may be revisiting the zoning in areas that surround these village centers. Allowing for some increased density for some radius around each of these nodes might allow for additional housing production beyond that seen on the previous page without adverse impacts on open space conservation or sense of place in the outlying sections of the city.

Alternatively, other zoning table options like reducing the minimum lot size in Residential Rural (RR) from 80,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet could be considered, along with infrastructure changes relative to allowing private water and sewer.

## Expanding village centers

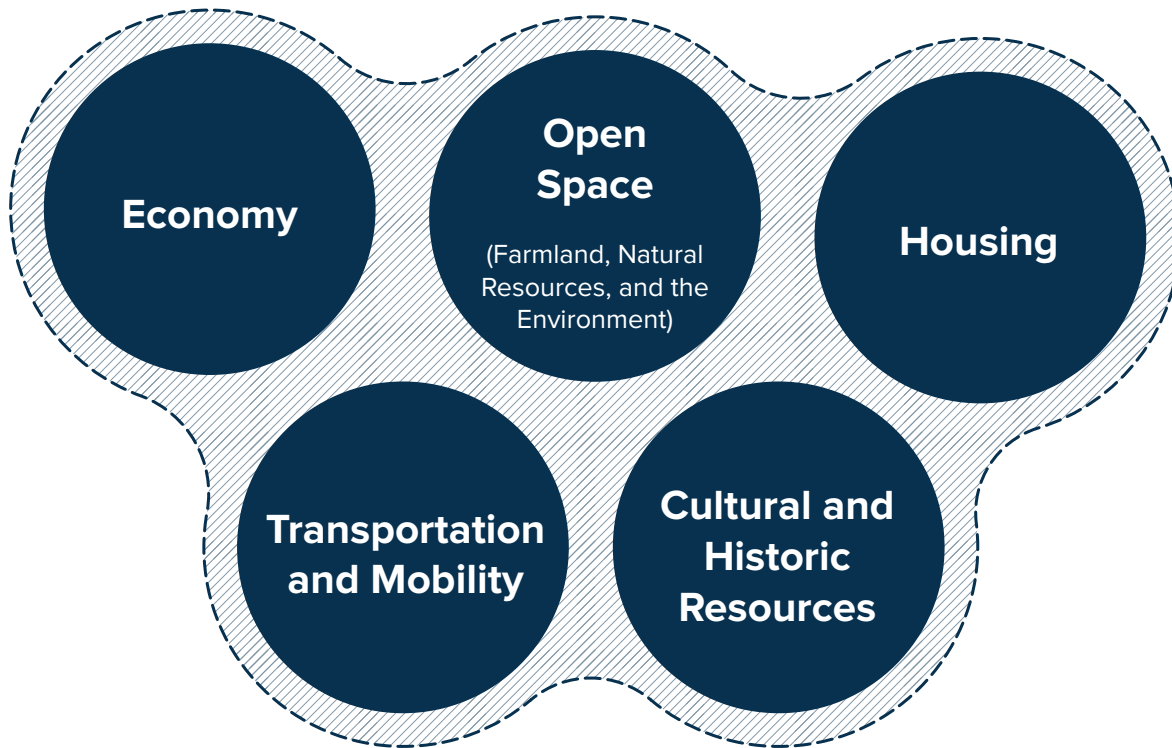
Commercial Neighborhood districts currently exist throughout the city, usually situated at major intersections. In order to achieve the density and development within concentrated areas of village centers, the CN districts should be modified and expanded. This master plan adds one CN district on the east side of the City along Groveland Street near the Merrimack River. This Rivers Edge site is not currently designated CN but is adjacent to both a major commercial center and a residential district. A new designated CN zone in this area would create a buffer between these two uses and allow for mixed use and additional density.





# Plan Recommendations

# Planning topics



## Structure of recommendations

### Goals

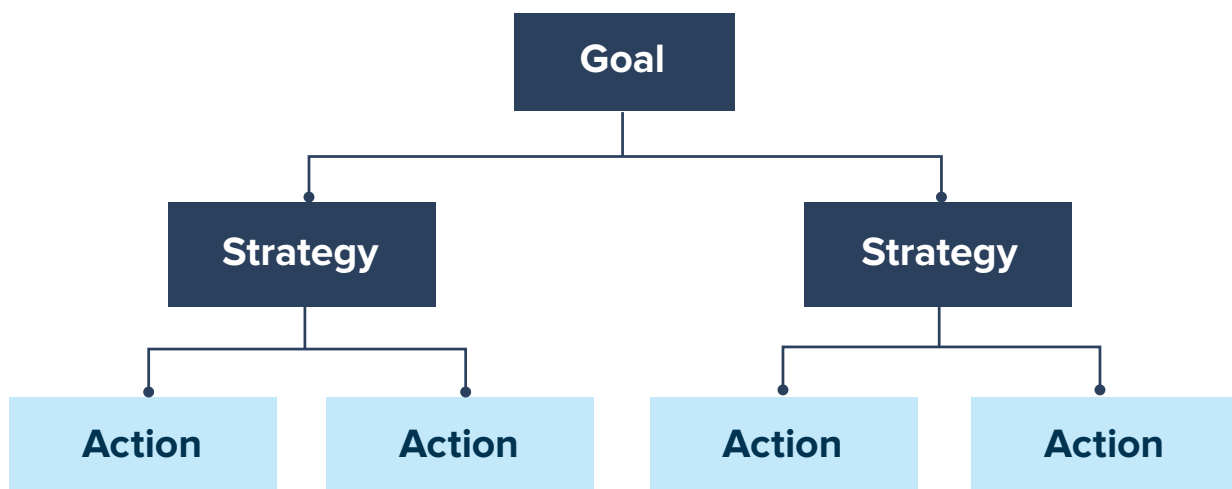
Goals are broad, aspirational statements of what we want to achieve for each planning topic.

### Strategies

Strategies define the general approaches needed to achieve the goals. Strategies can help achieve one or more goals.

### Actions

Actions are the specific policies, programs, studies, capital investments or other tools that City departments use to implement each strategy.





# Economy

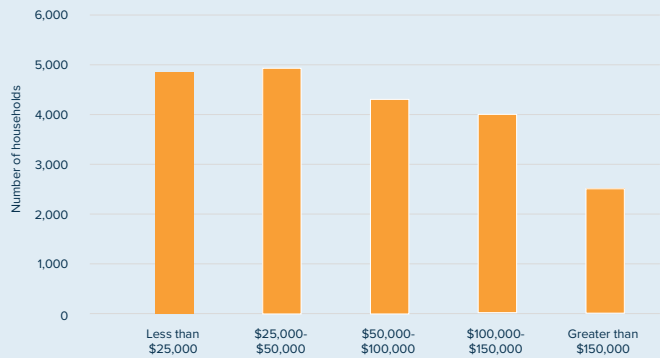
Managed growth is vital to Haverhill’s future. The cost of basic city services is increasing faster than the tax revenues that contribute the biggest share of the city’s budget. As a result, growth in the commercial and residential tax base is essential. Importantly, an increase in the number of commercial and industrial properties can also reduce the tax burden on residents. A larger portfolio of commercial buildings also means more jobs, thus increasing the daytime population who will frequent the city’s shops and restaurants. A diversity of new jobs will also increase property values because of the increase

in local demand. More generally, an increase in jobs as compared to the number of residents creates a more vital and resilient city.

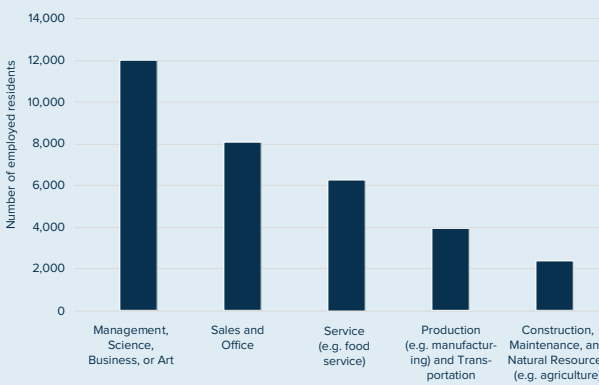
Haverhill can offer both a charming and walkable downtown and Ward Hill, a well-located industrial park. The City also has other tracts of land for ground-use commercial development, that can be included as part of a comprehensive economic development strategy that seeks to bring new investment, development, and jobs to the City.

**Haverhill’s residents are evenly distributed across incomes, including moderate- and middle-income households.** Employed Haverhill residents work a variety of types of jobs, with the largest share working in management, business, scientific, and artistic trades.

Haverhill households by annual income



Haverhill residents by occupation

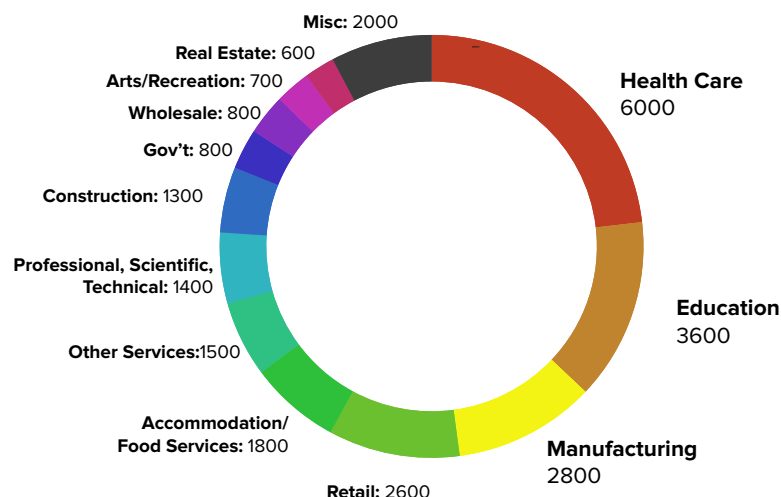


Source: American Community Survey, 2015 1-year estimates

**Health care is Haverhill's top employment sector. Education and manufacturing are the next two largest employers in the city.** While health care and education are commonly top employers in eastern Massachusetts, it is unusual for manufacturing to continue to play such an important role in the local economy.

Source: ReferenceUSA, 2019

**Haverhill employees by sector**



**Manufacturing has seen the largest amount of new jobs in Haverhill since emerging from the Great Recession.** Health care, construction, wholesale trade, and the hospitality industry have also added significant jobs during this period.

**Number of jobs**



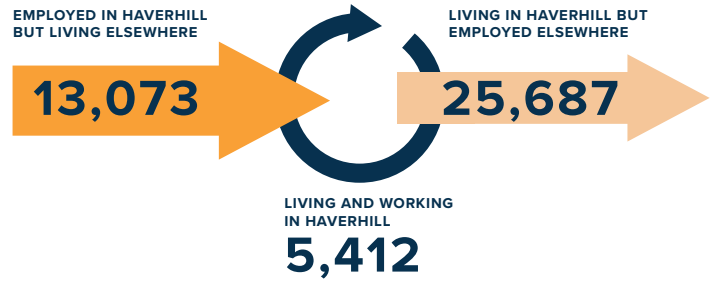
Source: Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



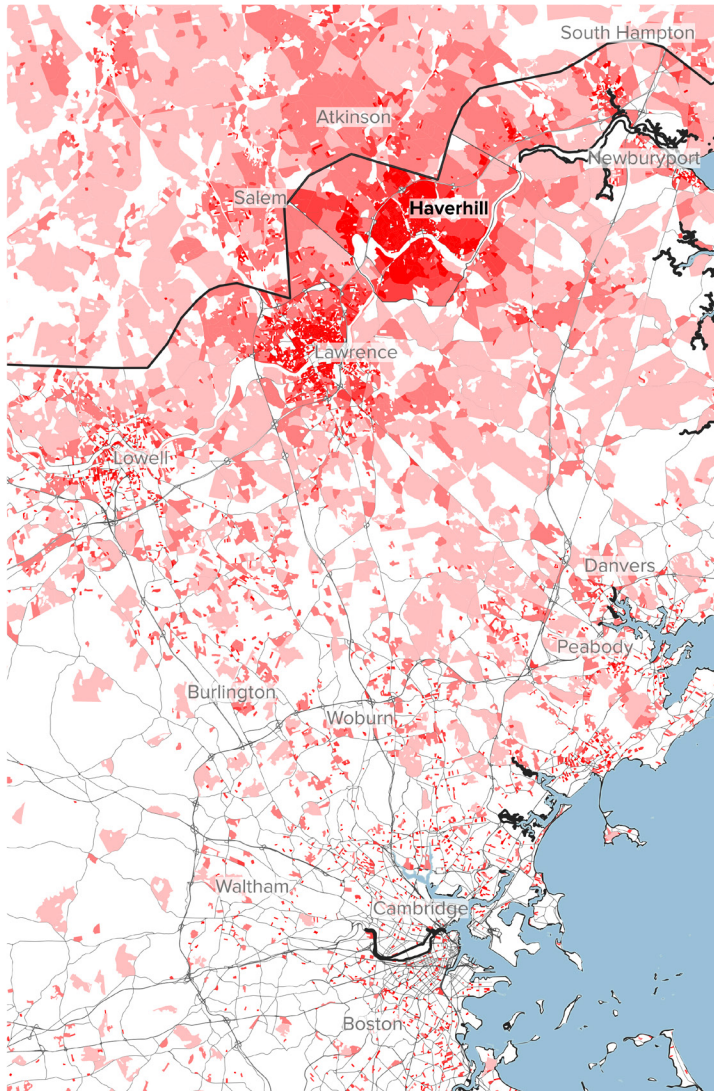
**Of Haverhill's 31,000 workers, only about 5,000 are Haverhill residents. The majority of people working in Haverhill live elsewhere.**

Source: US Census LEHD Database, 2015.

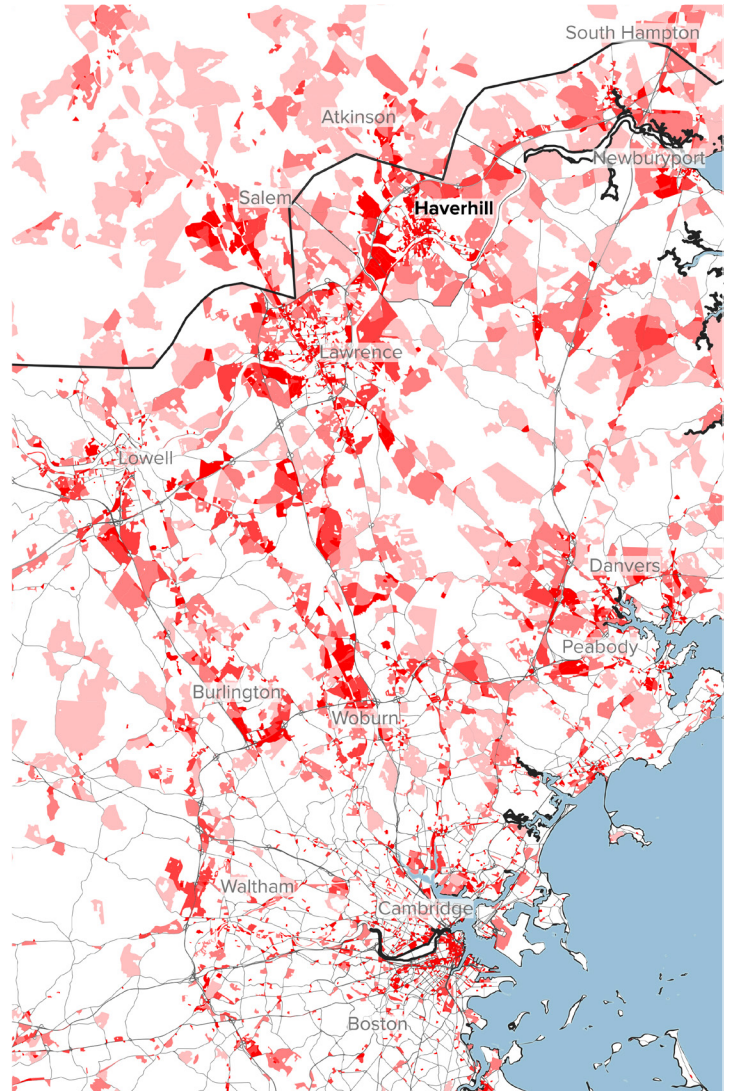
### Haverhill commuting patterns



### Where do Haverhill workers live?

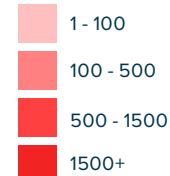


### Where do Haverhill residents work?



Haverhill workers commute in from neighboring municipalities in the Merrimack Valley and beyond. Conversely, a large proportion of Haverhill residents work in the greater Boston metropolitan region or commute to jobs elsewhere in the Merrimack Valley, along the 495 and 128 corridors.

#### Number of workers per sq.mi



Source: US Census LEHD Database, 2015.

## Goals

## Actions to advance the goals

### **Access to opportunity and education:**

Create opportunities that allow Haverhill residents to work near where they live, and ensure that residents can get training and education needed to contribute to the regional economy.

- Partner with NECC and other regional institutions to encourage work opportunities in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) and provide entrepreneurial training.
- Work with regional educational institutions to perform outreach to employers who might relocate here.
- Work with UMass Lowell to better integrate their new waterfront campus downtown with expanded classes and programming.
- Undertake targeted business recruitment efforts to attract companies offering low barrier-to-entry jobs and job training opportunities.

**Job creation:** Expand the city's tax base and promote the creation of jobs in the core sectors of Haverhill's economy, including Haverhill's growing industries.

- Densify the city's existing industrial and business parks to create new employment opportunities and additional tax revenue.
- Revise zoning to allow by-right industrial development that contain a mix of retail and commercial uses on upper floors and the ability to create high-bay and flexible spaces that are well-suited to new industrial needs.
- Create a robust infrastructure to grow Haverhill's innovation economy through active recruiting, local workforce training, shared working spaces, skill-sharing, etc.
- Actively solicit large companies getting priced out of the Boston metro region by marketing the competitive advantages of locating in Haverhill.

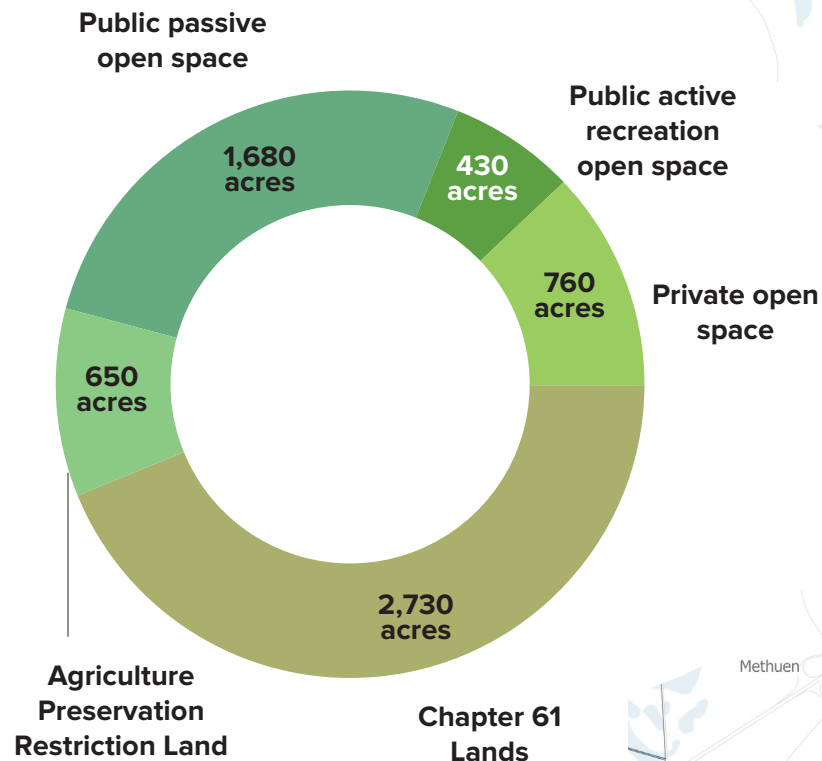
**Location:** In addition to supporting Haverhill's industrial and business parks, encourage the creation and growth of businesses that strengthen Haverhill's neighborhoods.

- Create tools and resources to support homegrown businesses and small businesses choosing to locate in Haverhill, including start-up funding, storefront improvement programs, technical assistance programs, streamlined permitting, etc.
- Implement a vacant storefront tax ordinance to encourage property owners to seek suitable tenants.
- Create affordable retail by requiring large developments downtown to provide spaces of 1,000-1,200 SF on their ground floor
- Invest in the preservation of existing affordable commercial space.
- Continue to support cultural and local initiatives.



# Open Space, Farmland, Natural Resources, and the Environment

Haverhill has a rich variety of memorable urban and natural landscapes, from a charming and walkable historic downtown to scenic byways that wind their way through woodlands and farms. The plan seeks to preserve and enhance this balance by improving the character and walkability of built-up areas while preserving existing tracts of natural and managed open space. The diversity of terrain and habitat from wetlands to wooded hillocks, also perform an important environmental function that is tied to stormwater infrastructure and the functionality of on-site wells and septic system. A changing climate will bring more frequent and extreme precipitation events to the region. As a result, it is especially critical that future actions look at these larger natural systems.

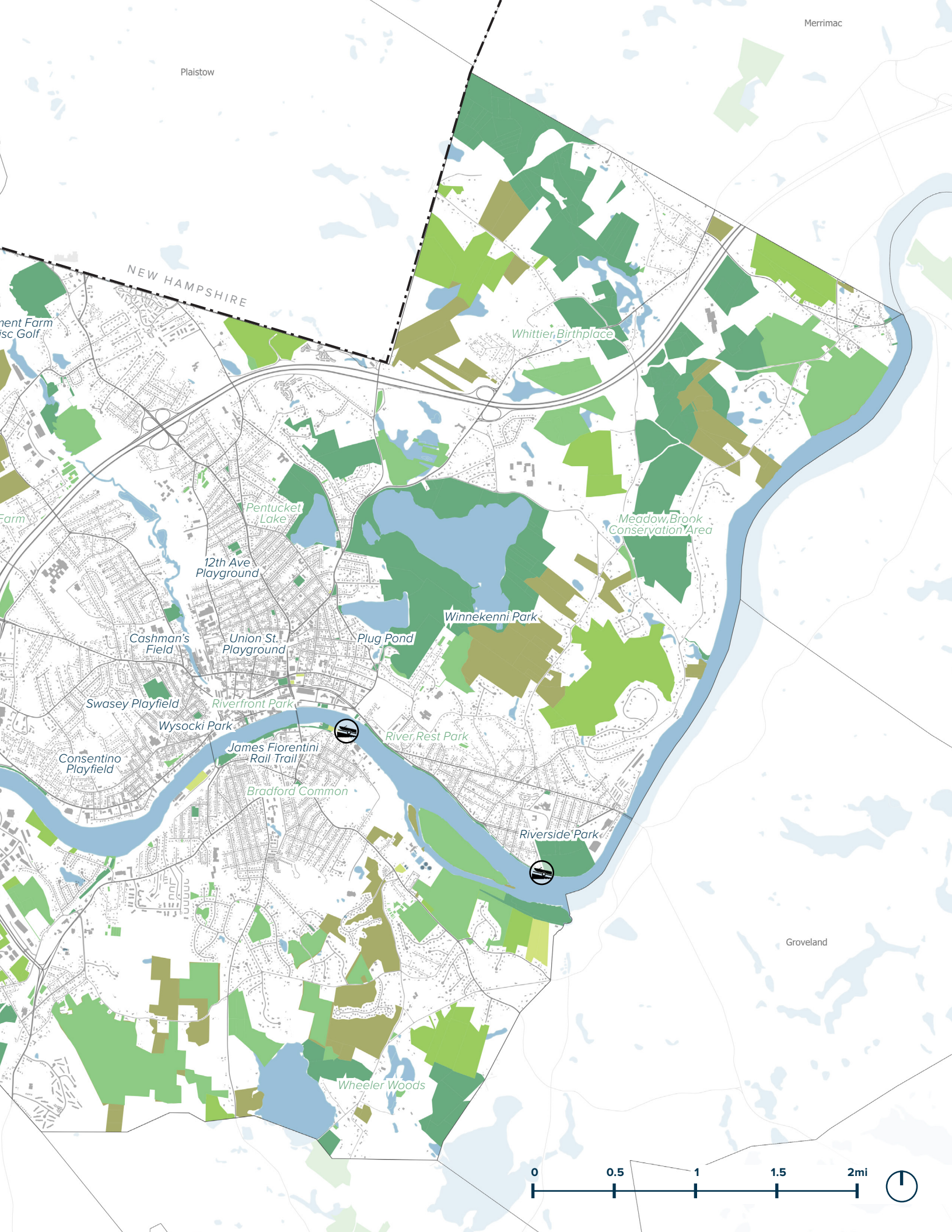


## Open space classification by land area

Source: MassGIS Protected and Recreational Open Space, 2019.



"One of the best things about our city is that we have rural pockets alongside city/downtown."



Merrimac

Plaistow

NEW HAMPSHIRE

ent Farm  
isc Golf

Whittier Birthplace

Meadow Brook  
Conservation Area

Pentucket Lake

12th Ave  
Playground

Winnekenni Park

Plug Pond

Union St.  
Playground

Cashman's  
Field

Swasey Playfield

Riverfront Park

Wysocki Park

River Rest Park

James Fiorentini  
Rail Trail

Consentino  
Playfield

Bradford Common

Riverside Park

Wheeler Woods

Groveland

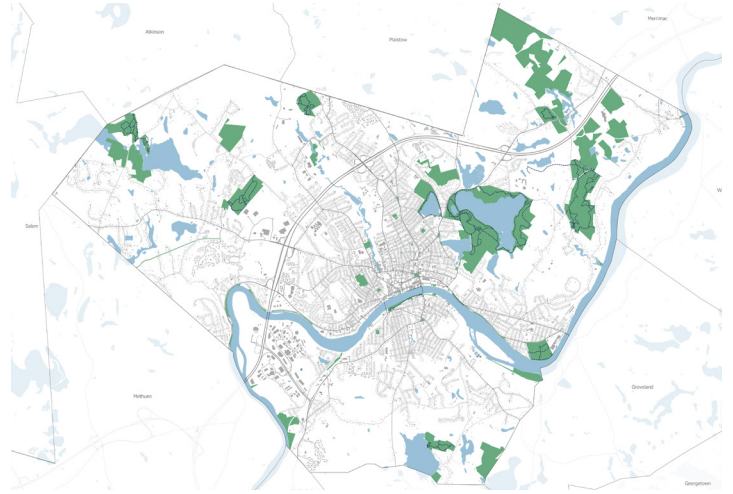




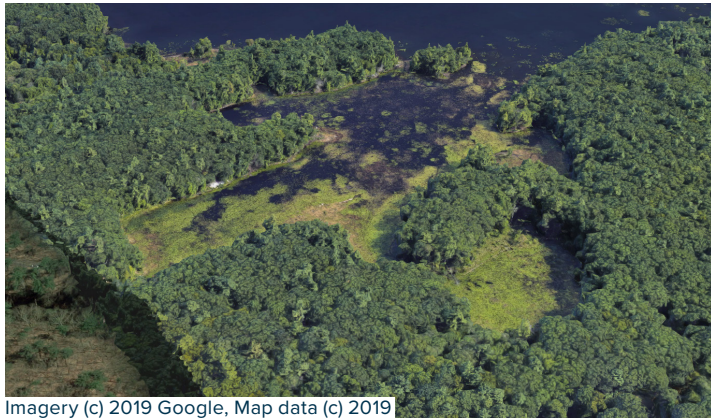
## Open spaces in Haverhill offer opportunities for both passive or active recreation, on the riverfront and inland.

Nearly 3,400 acres are held for agriculture, forestry, and conservation. This includes “Chapter 61” lands, which make up 44% of all open space in Haverhill. These privately held parcels are incentivized to maintain agricultural or conservation uses. While they are not legally restricted from development in perpetuity, a change in use is unlikely given their importance as open space for the city.

## Public open space



Source: City of Haverhill and MassGIS



Imagery (c) 2019 Google, Map data (c) 2019

Crystal Gorge Conservation Area includes 65 acres of publicly accessible land. There are over 2,100 acres of public open space in Haverhill.



Imagery (c) 2019 Google, Map data (c) 2019

Swasey Field, like many of Haverhill's parks offers multiple recreational facilities including a splash pad, playground and multiple ball fields.

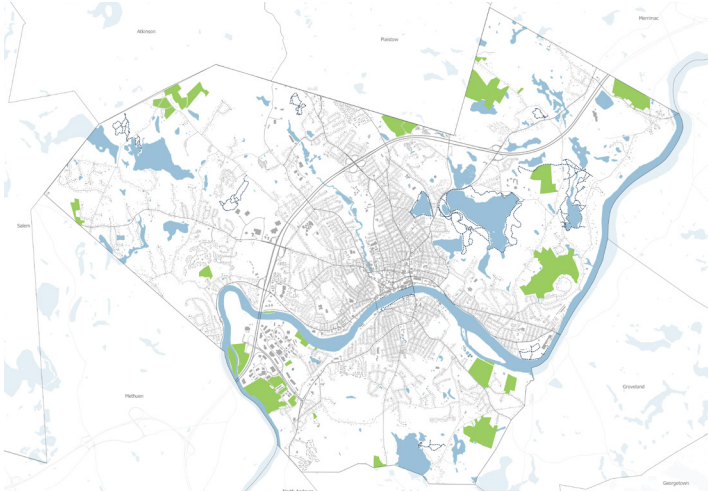


Photo (c) 2008 Doc Searls, <https://flickr.com/photos/docsearls/2538890352>. License CC BY-SA 2.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>)

Plug Pond Recreation Area sits on the edge of Lake Saltonstall. The area includes a beach, picnic and play areas and a publicly accessible boat launch.



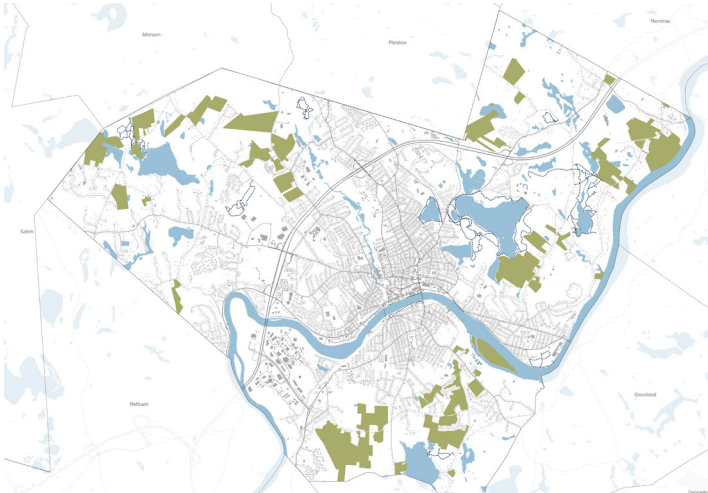
## Private open space



Imagery (c) 2019 Google, Map data (c) 2019

Renaissance Golf Club is a 200 acre private country club very close to Downtown Haverhill.

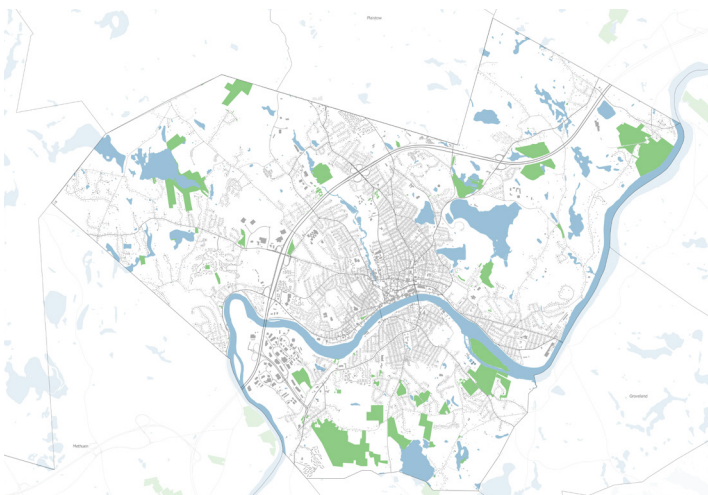
## Chapter 61 lands



Imagery (c) 2019 Google, Imagery (c) 2019 MassGIS, Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOEA, Maxar Technologies, Map data (c) 2019

Roger's Spring Hill Farm & Garden Center is one of 11 active farms in Haverhill. There are more than 2,700 acres of Ch. 61 (agriculture, forestry & recreation) land protected in the city.

## Agricultural preservation restriction



Imagery (c) 2019 Google, Map data (c) 2019

Chris' Farm Stand at Silsby Farm is set on 132 acres of land protected in perpetuity, under an Agricultural Preservation Restriction.

Source: City of Haverhill and MassGIS





Photo (c) 2015 Mass EOEAA, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/masseaa/18773233530>.  
License CC BY-NC 2.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/>)

**Development and watershed protection need not be opposing goals.** By planning for smart growth and density in specific locations in Haverhill, this master plan seeks to minimize the new environmental footprint, encourage sustainable construction, and not impact Haverhill’s existing protected watershed.



Photo (c) 2011 Kevin Smith, <https://flickr.com/photos/kmsmith58/6105417643>.  
License CC BY 2.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>)

Haverhill’s natural resources like the Bradford Trail (top) and Merrimack River (bottom) provide a variety of opportunities for active and passive recreation.

“Support efforts to conserve open space and agricultural land.”

**An estimated 1,000 housing units in Haverhill lie within the 1%-probability, or 100-year, floodplain.** Elsewhere in Haverhill, open spaces placed in the floodplain mitigate flood waters.

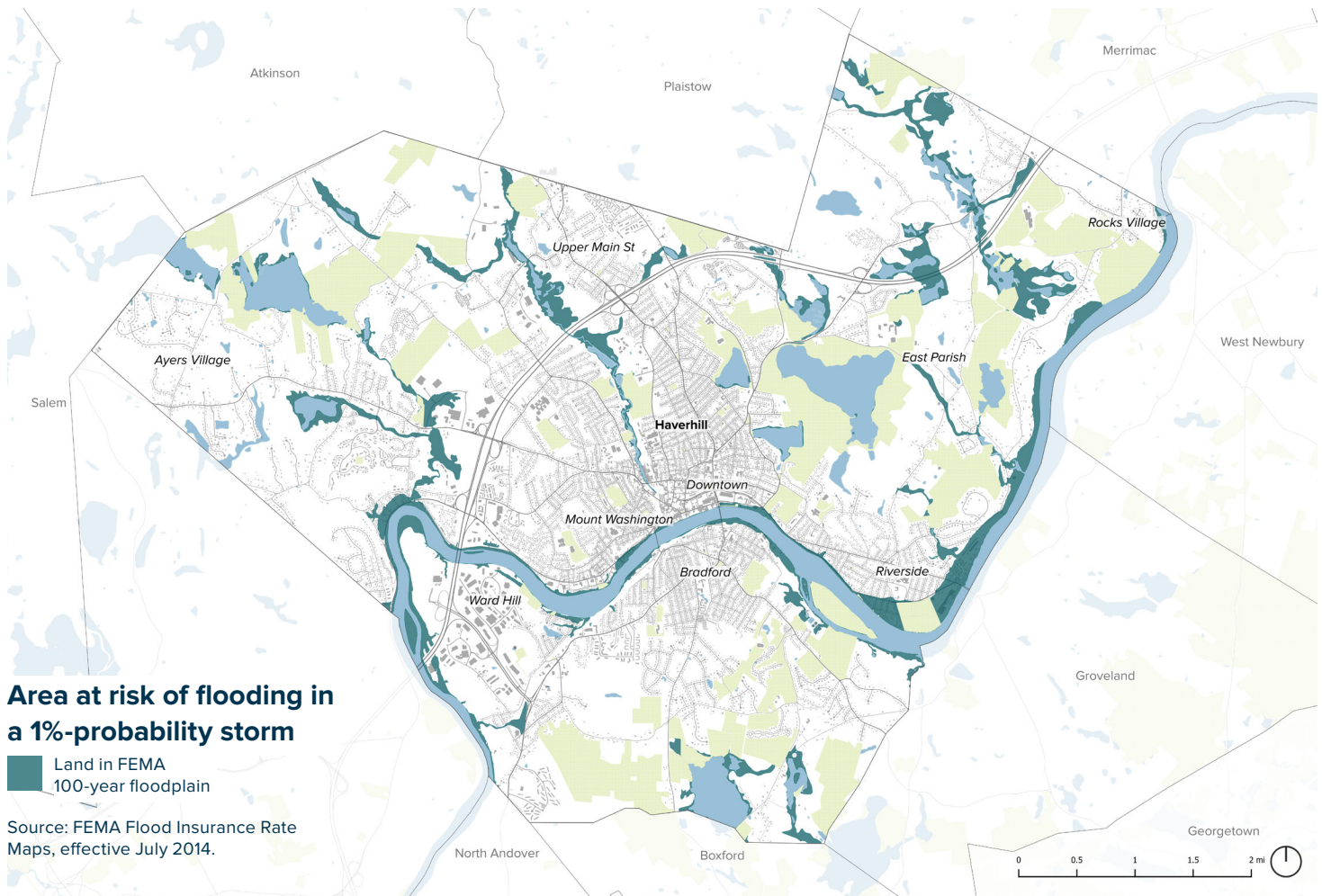
### What is a '1%-probability flood'?

A '1%-Probability flood,' commonly called a '100-year flood,' is a flood that has a 1% chance of taking place in any given year.

Experts prefer not to use the "100-year" term since it gives the impression that a certain level of flooding will only occur once every 100 years. In fact, it has a one percent chance of occurring in any given year and can even occur multiple

times in a single year or decade. Over a 30-year period, there is almost a one in three chance that a one percent annual chance flood will occur at least once.

While properties within the 100-year flood plain are generally required to purchase flood insurance, properties outside this zone can still be subject to the effects of rain and overflow.





## Goals

## Actions to advance the goals

**Riverfront:** Protect the river as a natural resource, and enhance the riverfront for resident use and tourist destination.

- Partner with local organizations, and regional and state agencies to provide new open spaces on the riverfront that reduce stormwater risk and promote cultural activities.
- Support new jobs and housing along the riverfront.
- Build on ongoing efforts to activate both sides of the riverfront to strengthen connections to neighborhoods and the downtown.
- Preserve and protect Haverhill's streams, watersheds, and especially surface pond water resources.
- Comply with EPA and DEP requirements for municipal-based discharges into the Merrimack River.

**Town and country:** Balance the protection of Haverhill's environmental assets and scenic areas with new growth in targeted places, like village centers, industrial parks, and the downtown and riverfront.

- Focus new development along transportation corridors at higher densities.
- Ensure that by-right zoning rules enable high-quality developments in target areas and discourage unplanned sprawl elsewhere.
- Revisit regulations of existing commercial zoning to ensure intended outcomes.

**Sustainability and energy:** Achieve citywide carbon neutrality by 2050 and adapt city infrastructure to prepare for climate change.

- Adopt a community choice energy program to more quickly transition to the use of greenhouse-gas-free electricity.
- Transition to zero-net carbon new construction by 2030.
- Explore options for retrofitting and electrifying existing buildings by 2050.
- Revise parking requirements to reduce the minimums for new development and renovations.
- Investigate and test innovative septic systems that can support the creation of new housing.
- Using updated technology, assess the location of wetlands and critical aquifer recharge areas.
- Increase tree canopy on both public and private property.
- Conduct a resilience vulnerability assessment to understand the risks posed to Haverhill neighborhoods.

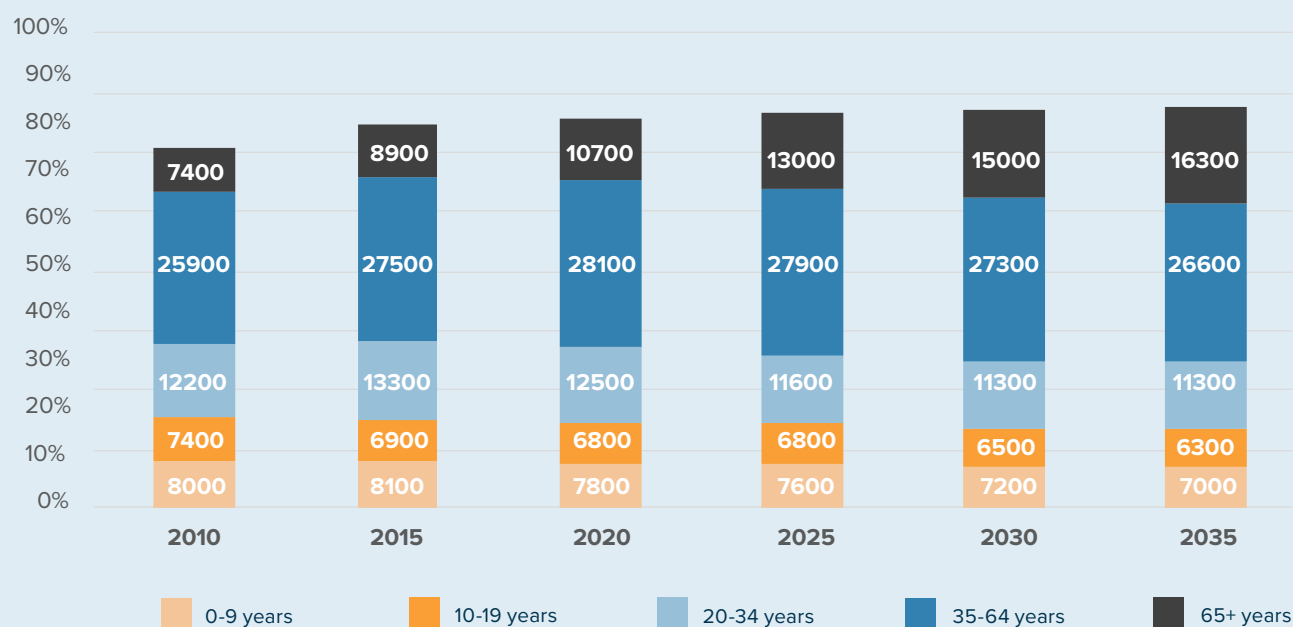
# Housing

The existing housing stock in Haverhill mostly consists of single family homes and downtown loft apartments. While real estate developers have been responsive to demand by continuing to convert historic buildings and delving into downtown ground-up construction, the market is not meeting demand for new units in the neighborhoods. This lack of supply is exacerbated by the housing decisions of empty nesters. They are holding onto their homes rather than downsizing because there are few housing options.

Given this confluence of factors, the plan recommends focusing on the “missing middle” housing development: including townhomes, side-by-side houses, and small multi-family buildings designed to support the City’s changing demographics. A greater diversity of price points, unit size, and design configurations will better meet the needs and preferences of the full bandwidth of current and future residents. The plan includes actions that address the housing needs of all tiers of the socioeconomic ladder in order to ensure that everyone who works in Haverhill can also live in the City.

**The number of seniors in Haverhill is projected to almost double between 2010 and 2035, and the number of children in Haverhill is projected to decrease by almost 15%.** This will require that Haverhill look for ways to house young new couples who may not have children, and better accommodate households that seek to age in place.

**Age structure**

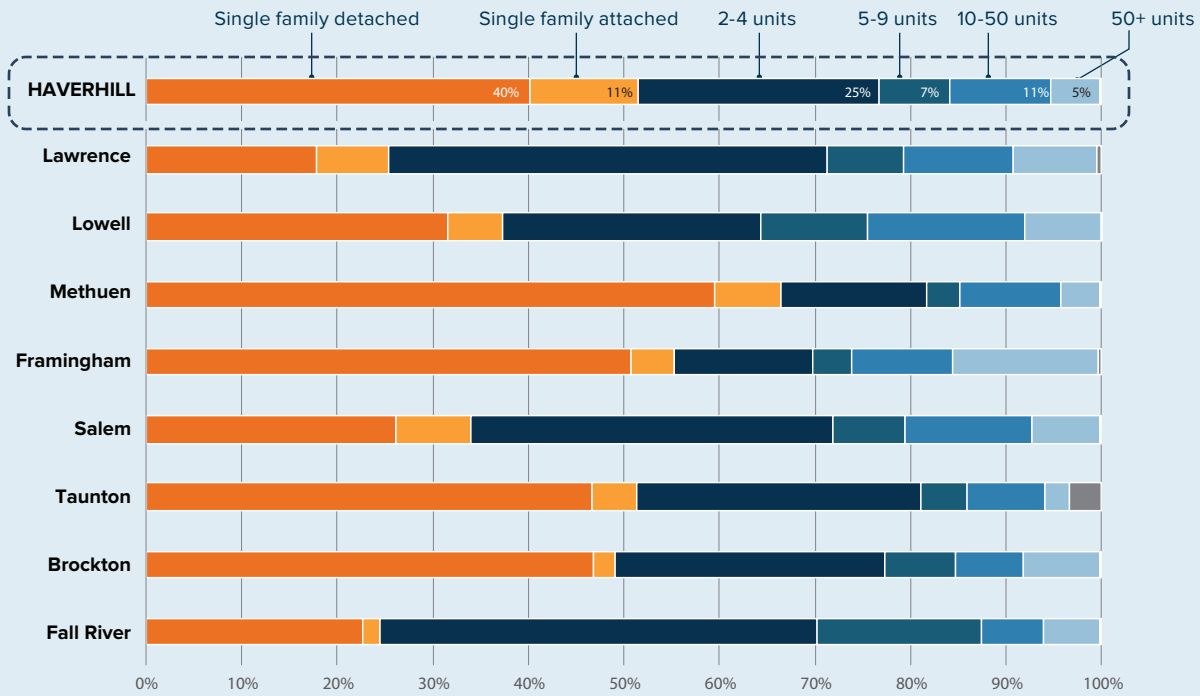


Source: US Decennial Census, 2010; American Community Survey, 2011–2015 5-year estimates; UMass. Donahue Institute, 2013.

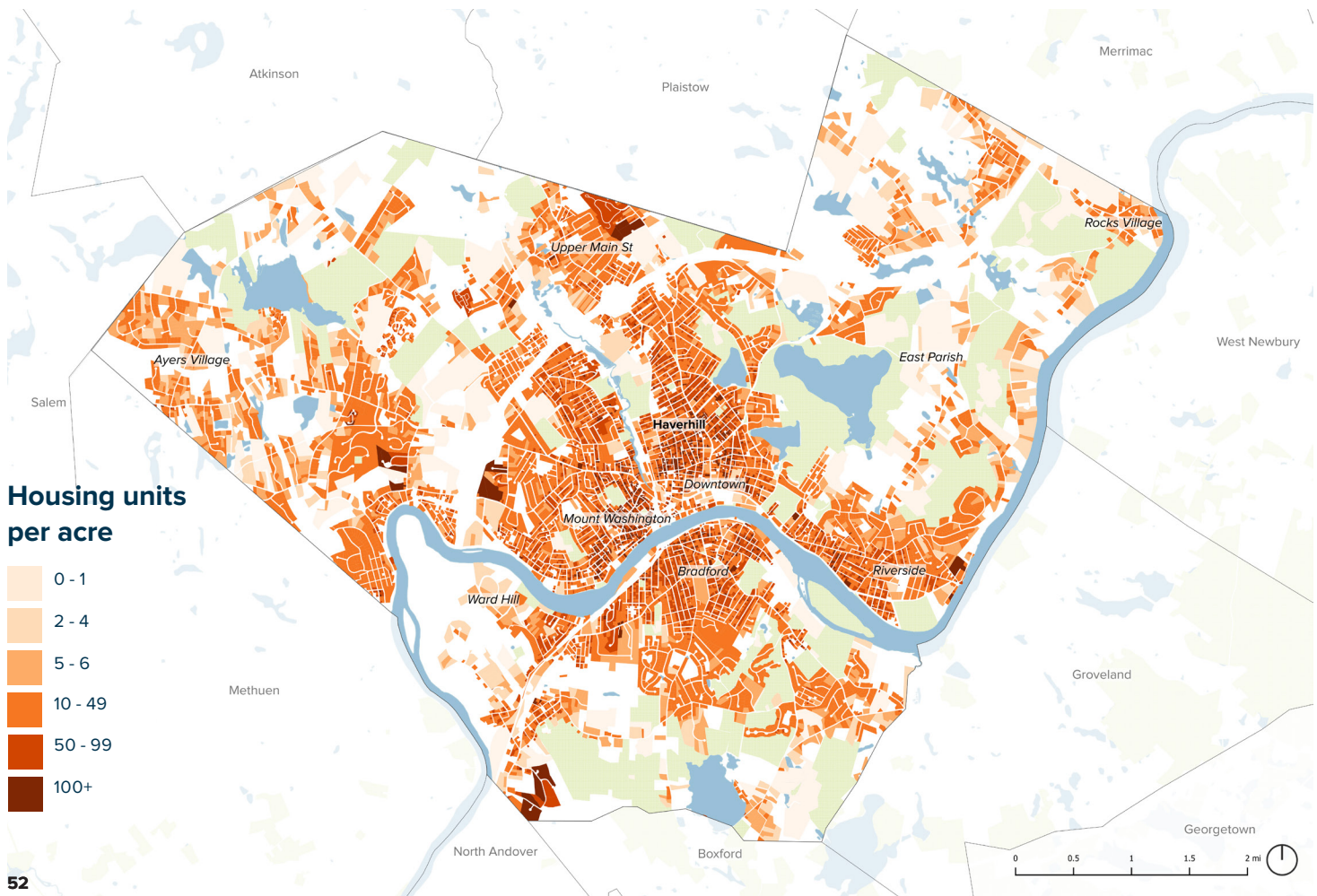


**51% of the housing stock in Haverhill, i.e. 13,300 homes, are single-family and detached.**

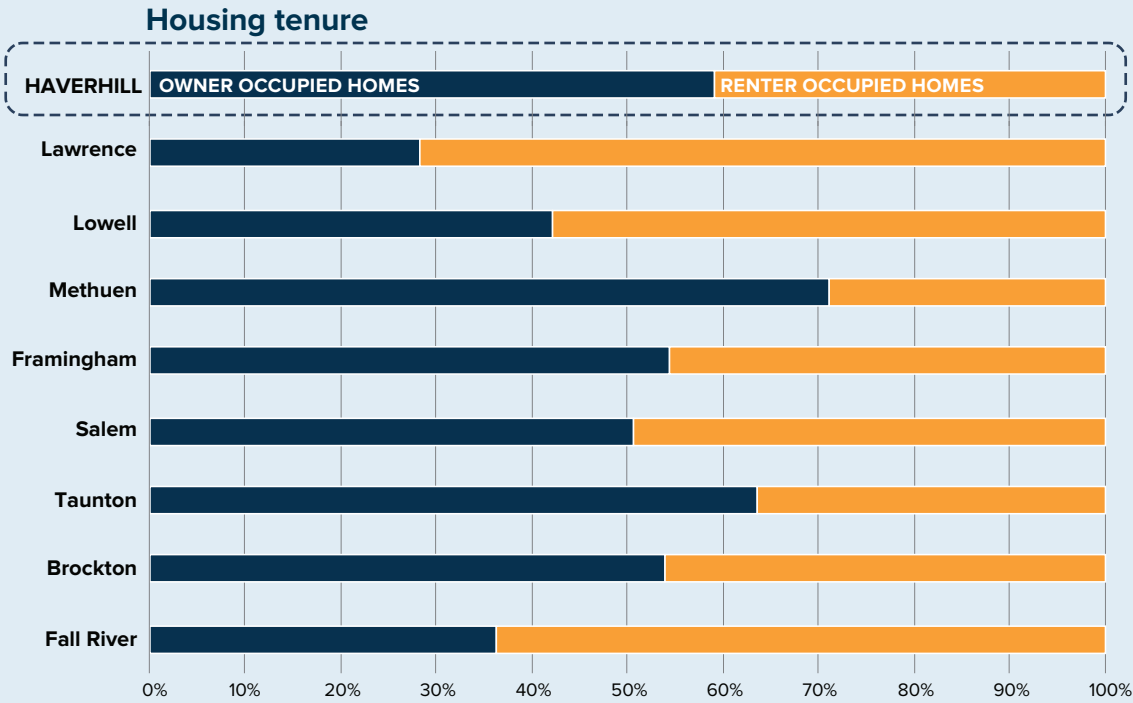
### Number of housing units in building



Source: American Community Survey, 2012–2017 5-year estimates. These categories are self-identified and follow Census Bureau definitions.



**39% of Haverhill’s households rent while 59% own their homes.**  
Except for households containing only one person, the majority share of other household sizes own their homes.

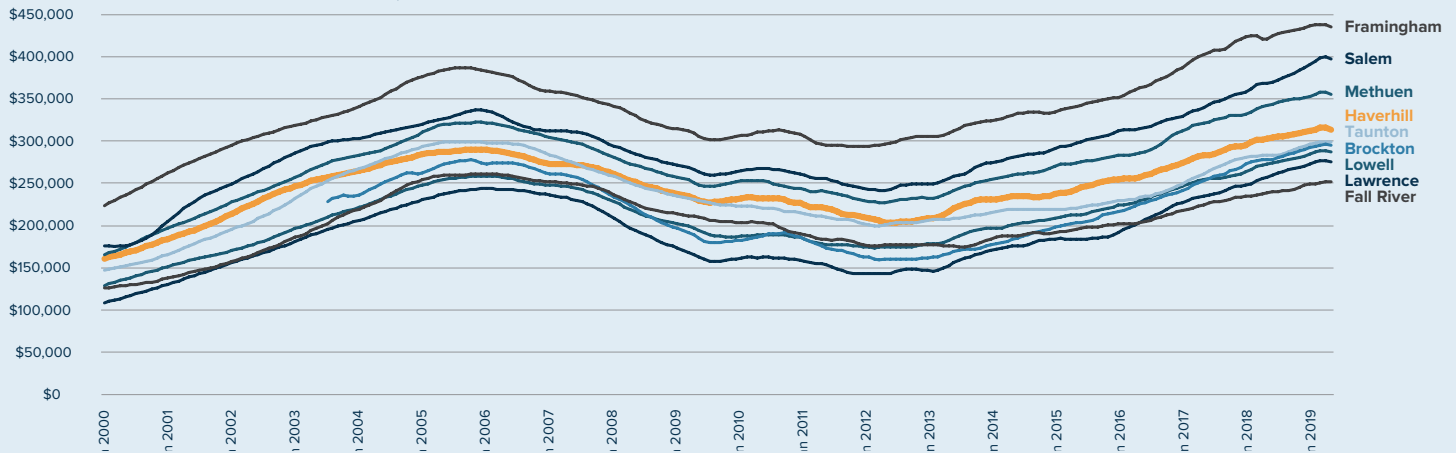


Over three-quarters of Haverhill’s housing stock is similar to the examples above, i.e. it is single-family or has 2-4 units per building.



**Like many cities and towns in Massachusetts, home values and rents in Haverhill have trended upward in recent years.** In January 2019, the median home value in Haverhill was \$314,000. Home values have increased an average of 7% each year since 2014.

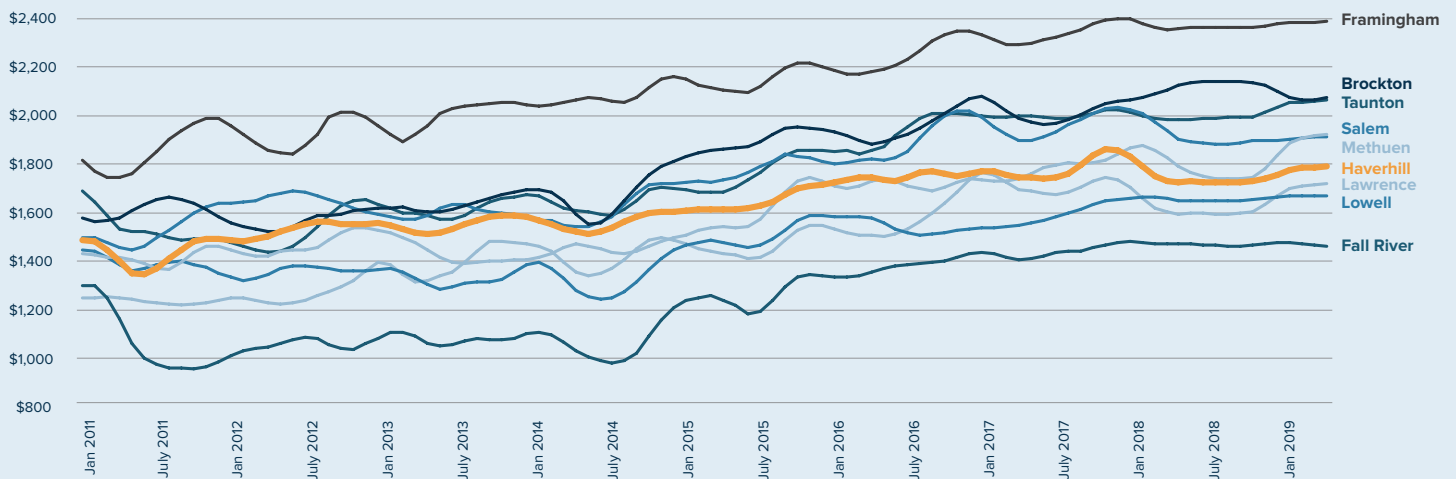
### Median home values, 2000–2019



Source: Zillow Home Value Index, 2019. Data is for all homes. The Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) is a smoothed, seasonally adjusted measure of the median estimated home value. ZHVI is similar to a median sale price, but it is less affected by the changing mix of homes sold.

The estimated median rent for all housing units in Haverhill is nearly \$1,800. Rents have remained fairly stable since 2017 after a period of rapid rent increases exiting the Great Recession.

### Median rents, 2011–2019



Source: Zillow Home Value Index, 2019. Data is for all homes. The Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) is a smoothed, seasonally adjusted measure of the median estimated home value. ZHVI is similar to a median sale price, but it is less affected by the changing mix of homes sold.

Note: Analyzing Haverhill's housing and population data relative to other Massachusetts cities allows for a nuanced understanding of these existing conditions. This is possible because of the wealth of statewide data available to make these comparisons. While this is desirable across all topic areas of the plan, the available data for other topics is not as reliable or directly comparable, and detailed comparisons would not be accurate.

## Goals

## Actions to advance the goals

**Supply:** Increase the amount of housing to encourage walkability and embed civic and commercial activity within neighborhoods across the city.

- Incentivize production of housing within ten-minute walking distance of commuter rail.
- To enable the development of village centers, modify zoning to enable mixed-use townhouse-level multifamily in commercial neighborhood (CN) zones.
- Identify locations and incentive strategies to create more senior housing.
- Explore the possibility of encouraging one additional level of housing density around the village centers, if there is more desire to create housing supply.
- Leverage State resources (such as Housing Development Incentive Program) to increase the production of market rate multifamily housing.
- Create a mid-level density pilot program or zoning district to assess the feasibility and demand for new residential types that are right-sized for Haverhill's changing demographic.
- Work with city departments to address the need for increased infrastructure, including schools, water, sewers, health, and safety.

**Affordability:** Ensure that housing is accessible to all who want to live in Haverhill, through existing as well as income-restricted affordable units.

- Encourage the development of middle- and moderate-income housing for those between 60 and 120 percent of the area median income.
- Grow the City's first time homebuyer assistance program and expand it to be citywide.
- Develop additional senior housing units to meet the needs of the growing senior population.

**Diversity:** Provide a variety of housing options for individuals, families, and seniors at different socioeconomic levels.

- Explore options to address the unmet need for middle income housing.
- Incentivize multifamily housing with a mix of unit sizes.
- Invest in resources that help the elderly to age in place, such as public transportation subsidies, real estate tax abatements, programs for retrofitting existing units, etc.
- Create and maintain an inventory of publicly owned land and assess its suitability for new affordable housing.
- Ensure that all new housing is built to meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and Universal Design standards to accommodate people of all ages and abilities.

“For affordable housing, I think greater flexibility in zoning and variances, including eased requirements for minimum lot areas, accessory dwelling units, etc. should be considered to increase housing supply within the existing footprint of developed housing.”



# Transportation and Mobility

Haverhill is well-served by transit and the interstate highway system, but these assets could be better integrated with economic development priorities and the actions of the plan that seek to make Haverhill a more livable and walkable community. These include an increased prioritization of pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility and an acknowledgement that public works projects should also consider place-making opportunities. The location and level of service of Haverhill's two rail stations has influenced several plan recommendations, including the identification of priority growth areas.

Likewise, the automobile-focused corridors that connect I-495 to downtown should be the focus of future planning efforts, to both improve their visual appeal and increase their appeal to people walking from adjacent neighborhoods.

**The commuter rail is a valuable but underutilized asset in Haverhill.** Enhancing access to this resource has the potential to unlock employment and recreational opportunities for residents throughout the Greater Boston region.

## Commuter rail walksheds, bike routes, and trails

— MBTA Commuter Line / Amtrak



MBTA Commuter Line Station

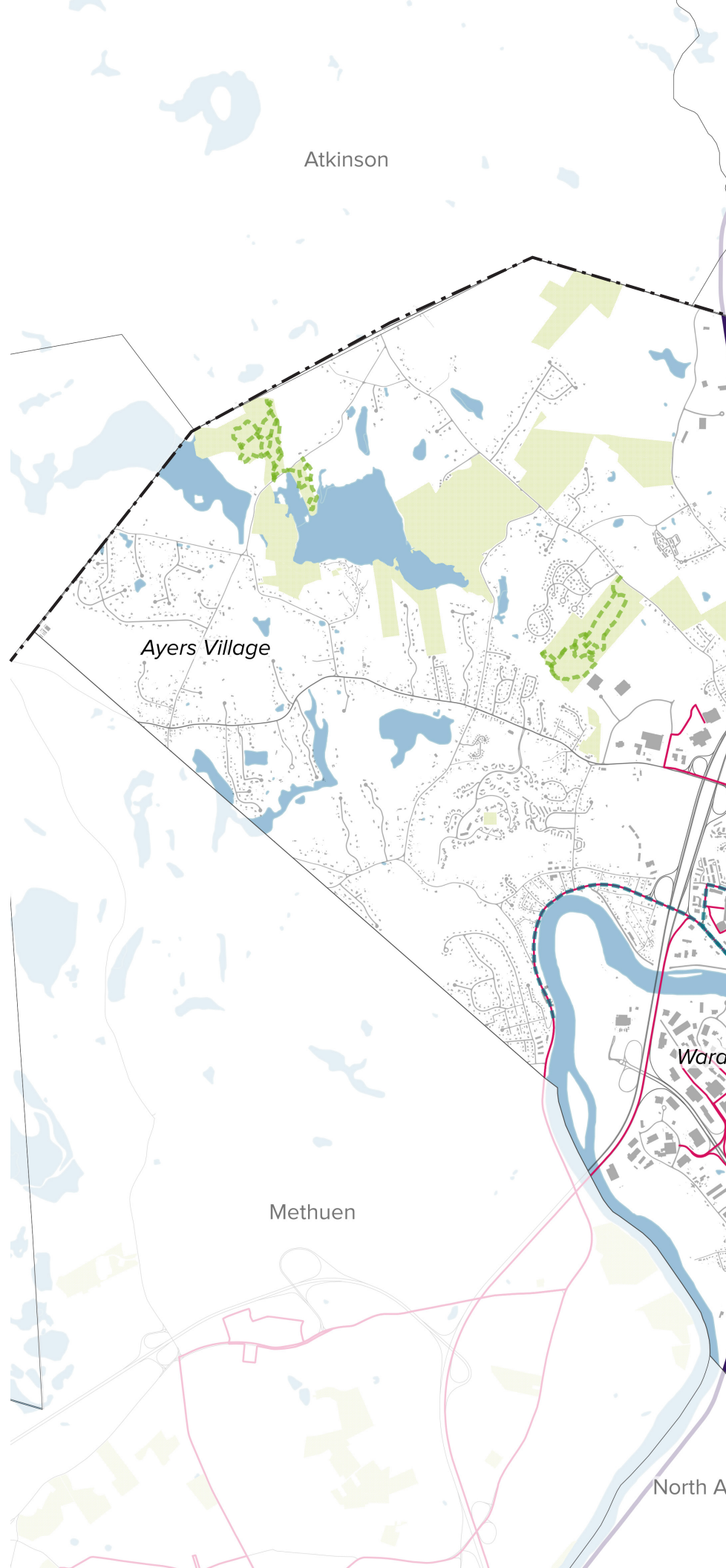
5-min, 10-min, and 15-min  
train station walksheds

— MVRTA Bus Routes

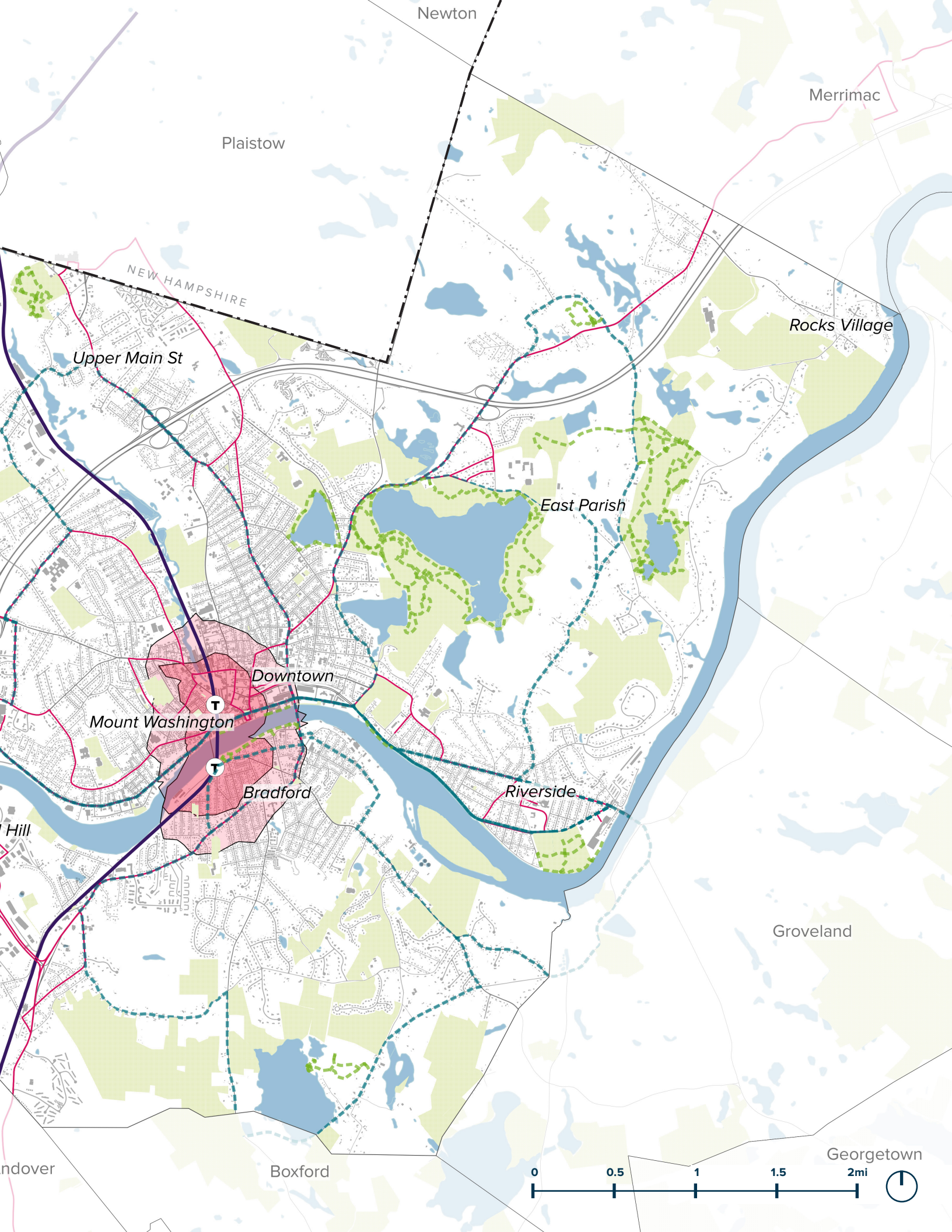
— Designated Bicycle Route

— Walking Trail or Bike/Pedestrian  
Path (not all trails are mapped)

Source: MAPC, MassGIS, OpenStreetMap, OpenTripPlanner





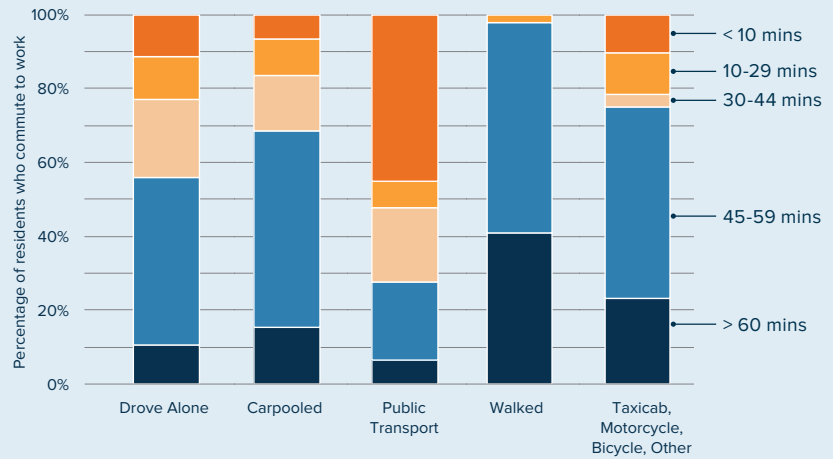




## The average commute time for Haverhill residents is about 30 minutes.

Most Haverhill residents who commute by driving have commutes less than 30 minutes long. However, nearly half of public transit commuters have commutes of greater than an hour, largely reflecting commuter rail trips to Boston, or to a lesser extent, difficult bus-based commutes.

**Amount of time spent commuting, by commute type**



Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2017 5-year estimates.



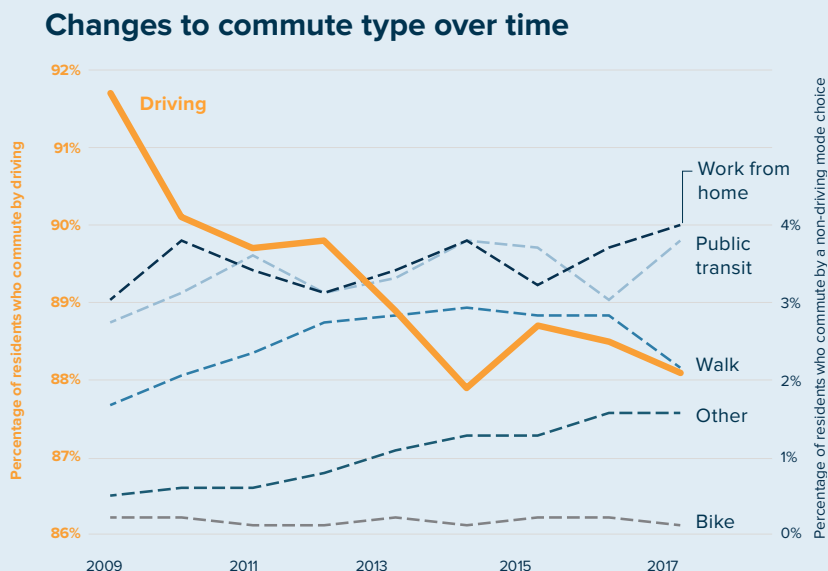
The MBTA Commuter Rail and MVRTA are the only two public transit options available to the Haverhill community.



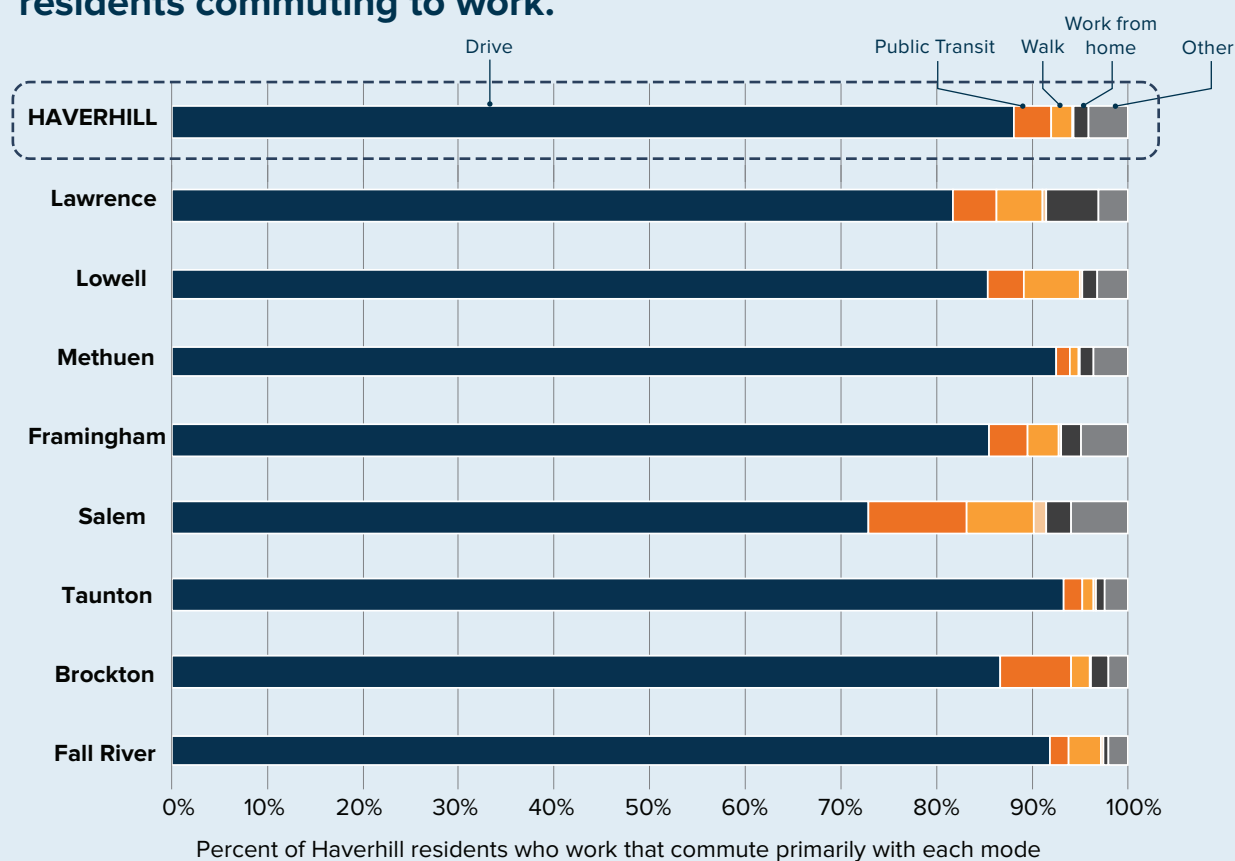
**Nearly all Haverhill residents commute to work by driving. However, the proportion of residents driving to work is going down.**

Sustainable transportation choices—transit, walking, and biking—have not been growing in use, while the miscellaneous “Other” transportation choice has, perhaps reflecting the growing use of ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft.

Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2017 5-year estimates.



**Walking, biking, and public transit, the most sustainable forms of transportation, only account for 6% of the mode share for Haverhill residents commuting to work.**



Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2017 5-year estimates.



## Goals

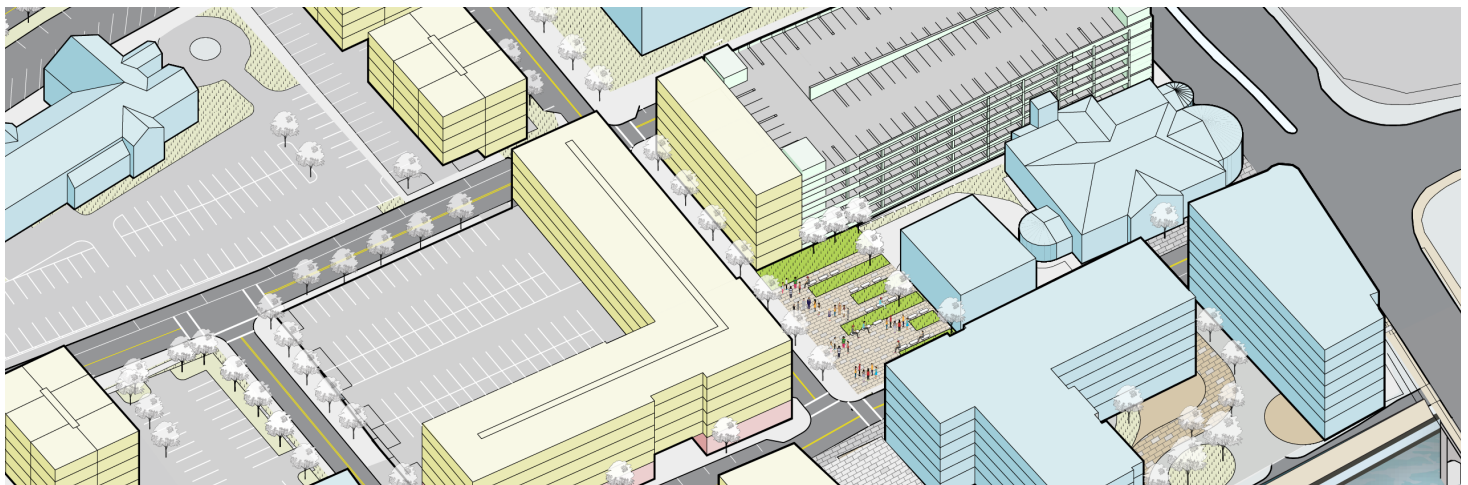
**Walkability:** Shape the design and use of streets and buildings to support an active public realm, which is accessible by community members of all ages.

**Rail:** Maximize the potential of the commuter rail's connections to the metropolitan region.

**Transit and multimodality:** Expand access to non-vehicular transportation options to enable residents to walk and bike safely and to mitigate traffic.

## Actions to advance the goals

- Support pedestrian and bike-friendly streetscape design.
- Create signage and storefront regulations on commercial corridors to enhance their district identity.
- Develop a city wide transportation network easily accessible to seniors.
- Facilitate increased housing and job centers within walking distance of the commuter rail and other public transit options.
- Develop a systemic solution for parking and establish a clear plan for the future use and replacement of the existing Goecke Parking Deck.
- Ensure that walking, biking, and car access to the commuter rail can meet Haverhill's projected needs.
- Improve street and sidewalk infrastructure to improve reliability of bus service and access to stops, encourage development of housing and small business options around bus stops, and work with MVRTA to explore increased or expanded bus services to Haverhill.
- Explore implementation of bicycle share, car share, and shuttle services as well as other emerging transportation technologies to improve options for residents to travel throughout the city.
- Connect sections of regional bicycle routes and develop a robust bicycle lane network.



Beyond addressing specific parking and development needs, linking a redesigned Goecke Deck with density downtown will promote pedestrian-based use of the commuter rail (from new jobs and households living near the station) and car-based use (by enabling Haverhill households commuting to Boston to more easily park and ride).





MAGNAVOX

Haverhill  
TV & APPLIANCE INC.  
EST. 1921

Bank of America

HAVERHILL  
Riverfront  
Cultural  
District

110 WEST  
MAIN STREET

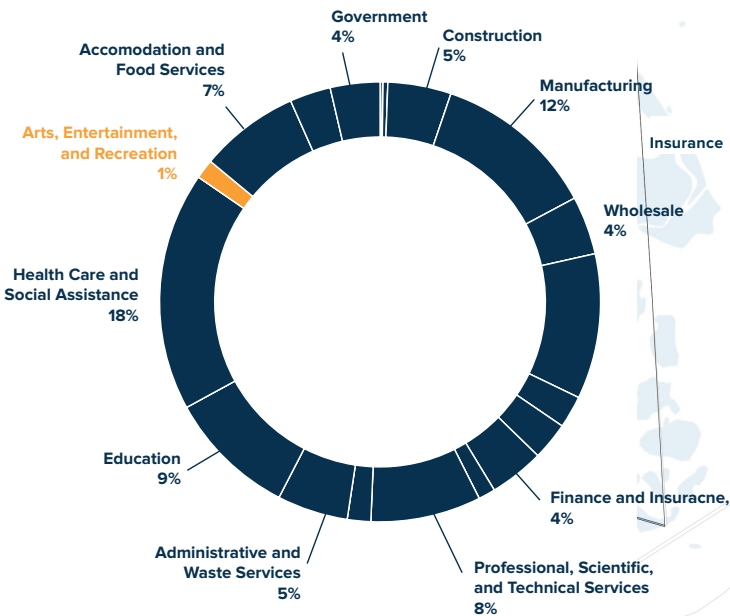


# Cultural and Historic Resources

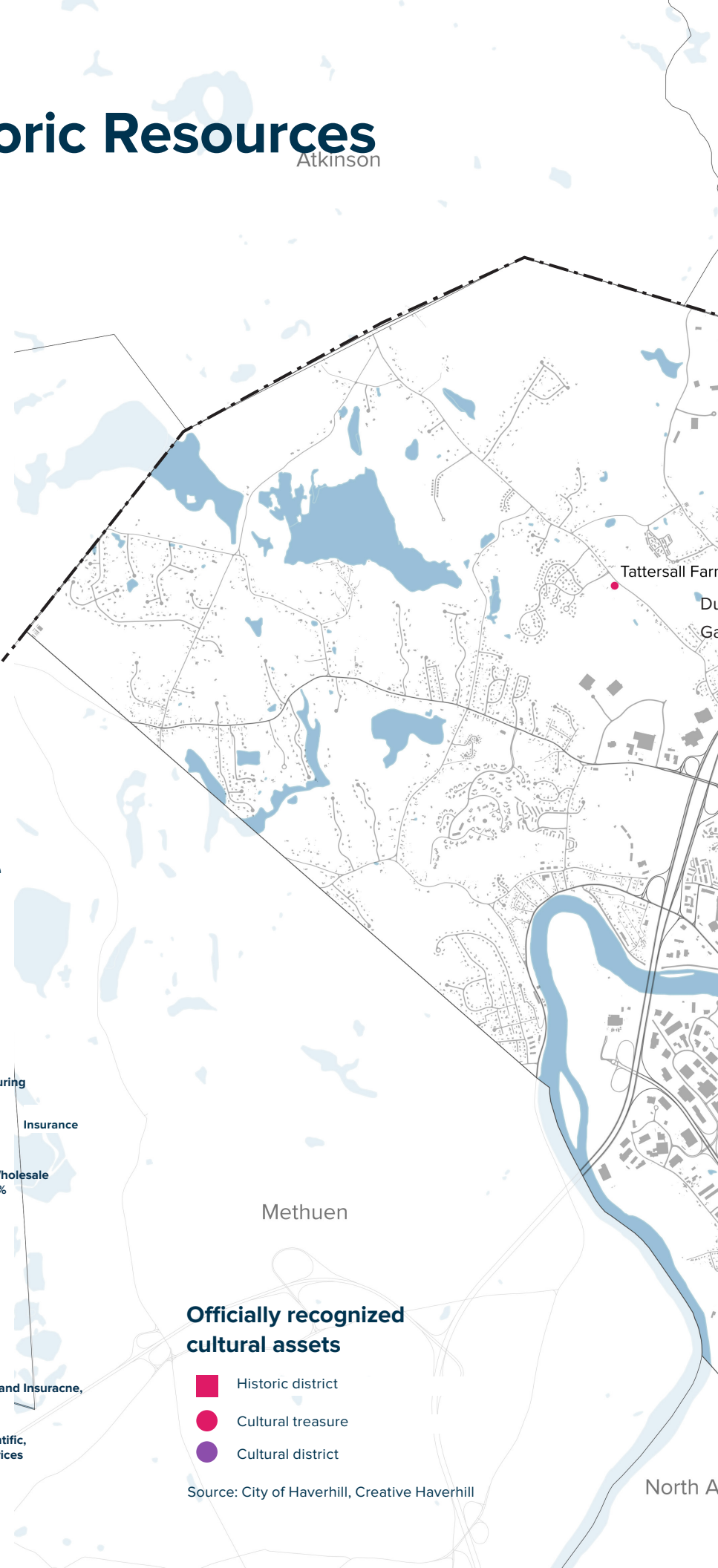
Atkinson

Haverhill supports a rich cultural and civic life both downtown and in the neighborhoods, through the leadership of City officials and as a result of the fundraising and programming by countless non-profit and religious organizations. Long-standing annual events like River Ruckus and recent improvements to the farmers' market are only two examples. The City can continue to do its part by making strategic improvements to parks, urban spaces, and sidewalks that encourage these kinds of activities.

Despite the success of the Riverfront Cultural District and the city's cultural institutions, fewer than 2% of Haverhill residents are employed in arts and recreation.



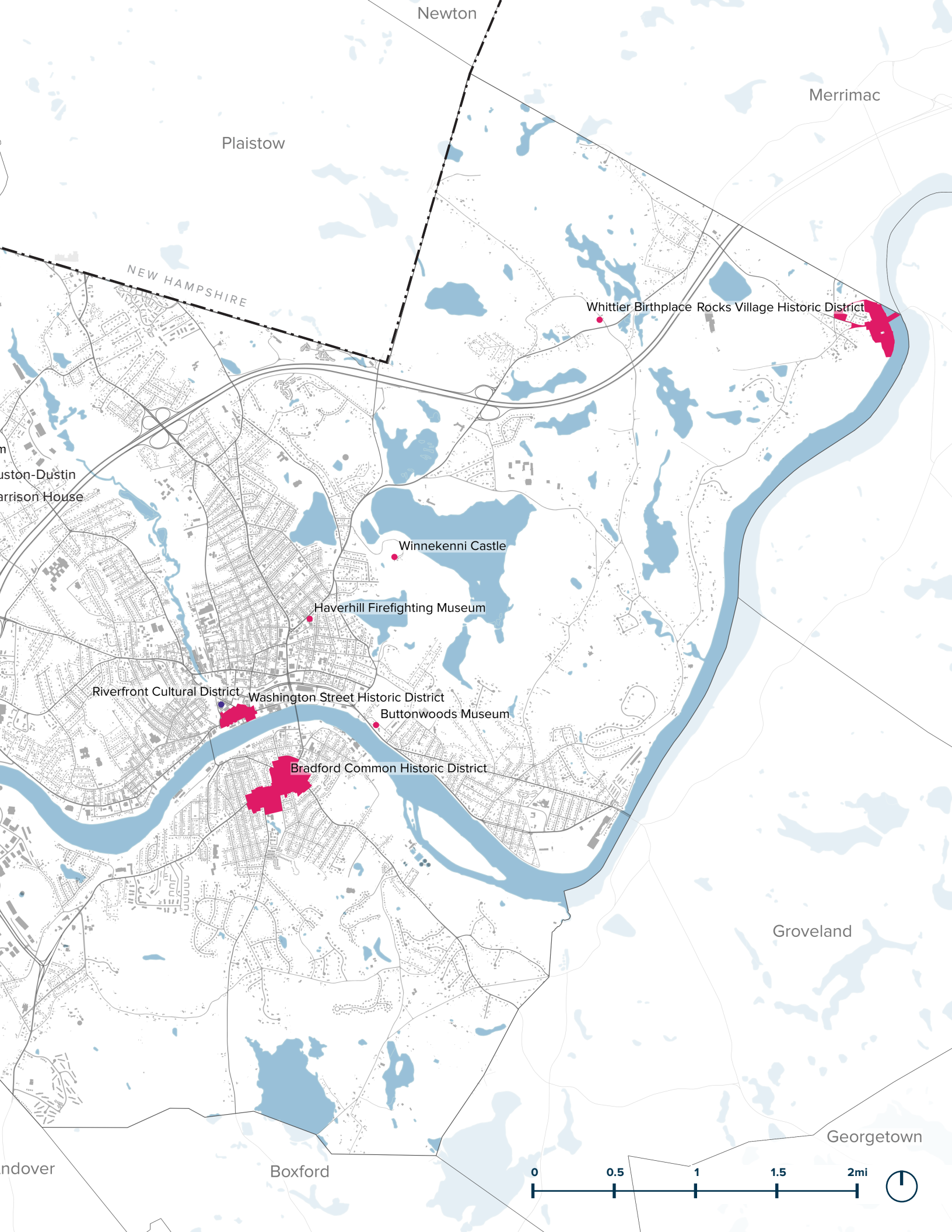
Source: US Census LEHD Database, 2015.



Officially recognized cultural assets

- Historic district
- Cultural treasure
- Cultural district

Source: City of Haverhill, Creative Haverhill



Newton

Merrimac

Plaistow

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Whittier Birthplace Rocks Village Historic District

uston-Dustin  
arrison House

Winnekenni Castle

Haverhill Firefighting Museum

Riverfront Cultural District

Washington Street Historic District

Buttonwoods Museum

Bradford Common Historic District

Groveland

Georgetown

ndover

Boxford





Goals	Actions to advance the goals
<b>Downtown:</b> Capitalize on the vibrance of downtown and create opportunities for events, programming, and public art.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to preserve and rehabilitate historic assets.</li><li>• Encourage the temporary use of underused parking lots as spaces for events and performances.</li><li>• Invest in streetscape improvements, crosswalk, and way-finding solutions.</li></ul>
<b>Recreation and leisure:</b> Create places where residents and visitors can not only live and work, but also play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to improve parks with public features and opportunities for programming.</li><li>• Locate new open spaces in areas where new housing and job growth are occurring.</li><li>• Create tax incentives to attract businesses that provide the goods and services needed to support a 24/7 community.</li></ul>
<b>Infrastructure:</b> Ensure that city services have the capacity to meet the needs of Haverhill’s growing population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prioritize sidewalk repair in communities that have historically received less capital investment.</li><li>• Prioritize retrofits in buildings that serve public purposes.</li><li>• When feasible and aligned with best practices across the state, modify city regulations to allow for multifamily developments in new village centers to reduce the burden on existing infrastructure by using private water and sewer.</li></ul>

“The city should allocate a line item in the annual budget to invest in cultural and civic resources. These resources can then have the ability to create the events, programming, and public art that the city so desperately needs.”

“With all the amazing parks and open space in Haverhill, we could have many more festivals, fairs, etc. to both help unify the city and bring in tourists.”



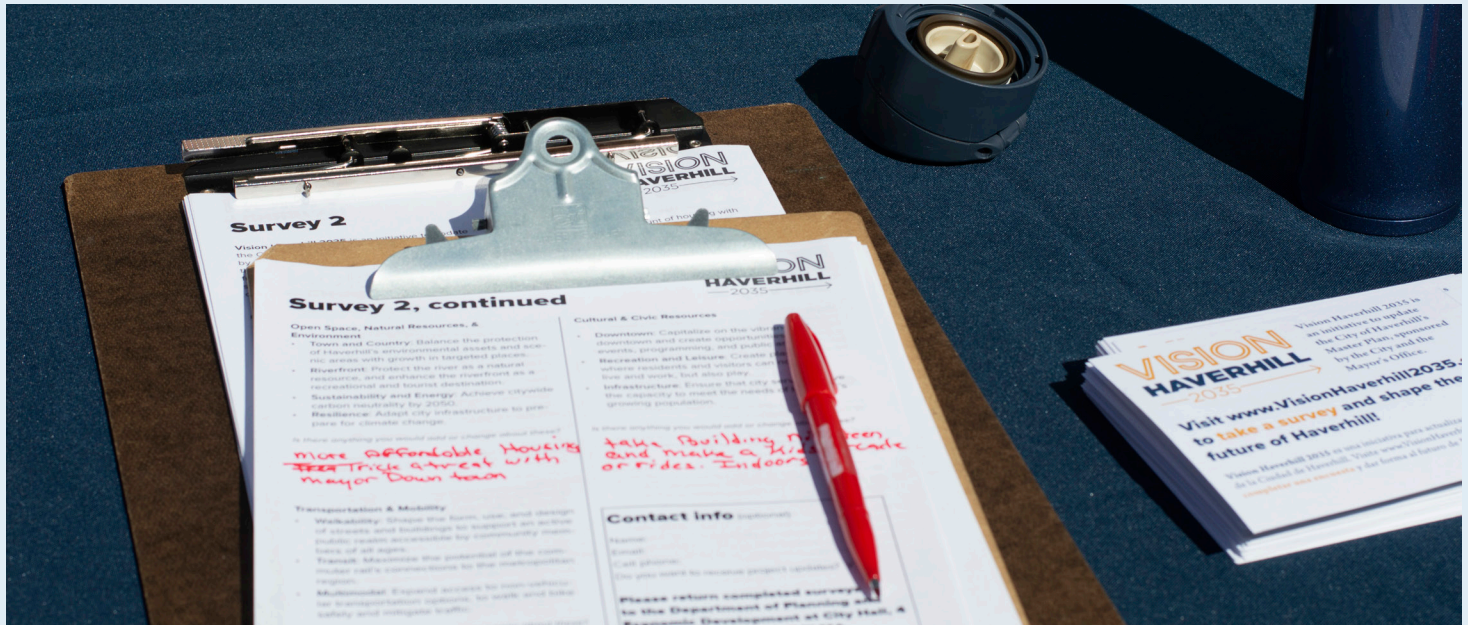


COMMUNITY CORNER



# Community Outreach

**Vision Haverhill 2035** has been a collaborative process with meaningful involvement from many in the Haverhill community. It has been an essential component of creating a meaningful, long-term plan, building strong public support, and providing an accurate representation of the kind of city that Haverhill wants to become.



The recommendations in this plan have been thoughtfully shaped by the Steering Committee, City leadership, planning staff, and the people of Haverhill, all who participated in these meetings:

**Apr 3:** Kick-off meeting with City  
**Apr 24:** Steering Committee  
**May 22:** Steering Committee  
**May 29:** Public kick-off Workshop  
**Jun 21:** Outreach at Market Basket  
**Jul 17:** Steering Committee  
**Jul 31:** Steering Committee  
**Aug 6:** National Night Out  
**Aug 12:** Team Haverhill  
**Aug 14:** Steering Committee  
**Aug 17:** Farmer's Market  
**Aug 19:** Mt. Washington Neighbor Nights  
**Aug 28:** Steering Committee

**Sep 11:** Steering Committee  
**Sep 15:** East Parish / Rocks Village  
**Sep 21:** River Ruckus  
**Sep 24:** Historic Highlands Neighborhood Association  
**Sep 25:** Steering Committee  
**Oct 9:** Steering Committee  
**Oct 23:** Steering Committee  
**Nov 6:** Steering Committee  
**Nov 7:** Scenarios/Recommendations Workshop  
**Nov 13:** Planning Board  
**Nov 20:** Steering Committee  
**Dec 4:** Steering Committee  
**Dec 11:** Planning Board



## Housing

**Affordability:** Ensure that housing is accessible to all income levels, including those with existing as well as income.

• Encourage the development of affordable housing units, including those with existing as well as income.

• Encourage the development of affordable housing units, including those with existing as well as income.

**Supply:** Increase the amount of housing stock, including those with existing as well as income.

• Encourage the development of affordable housing units, including those with existing as well as income.

**Diversity:** Encourage the development of affordable housing units, including those with existing as well as income.

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## Additional Questions or Comments

It is difficult to be on board with more housing without having a plan for new schools and public safety. As a teacher in Haverhill, this is concerning.

Need to see a plan in place for a 20-year horizon.

• 2017 housing strategy for the city of Haverhill.

On the other side of the street, we have a lot of open space/farms in the city. This is a good thing.

• 2017 housing strategy for the city of Haverhill.

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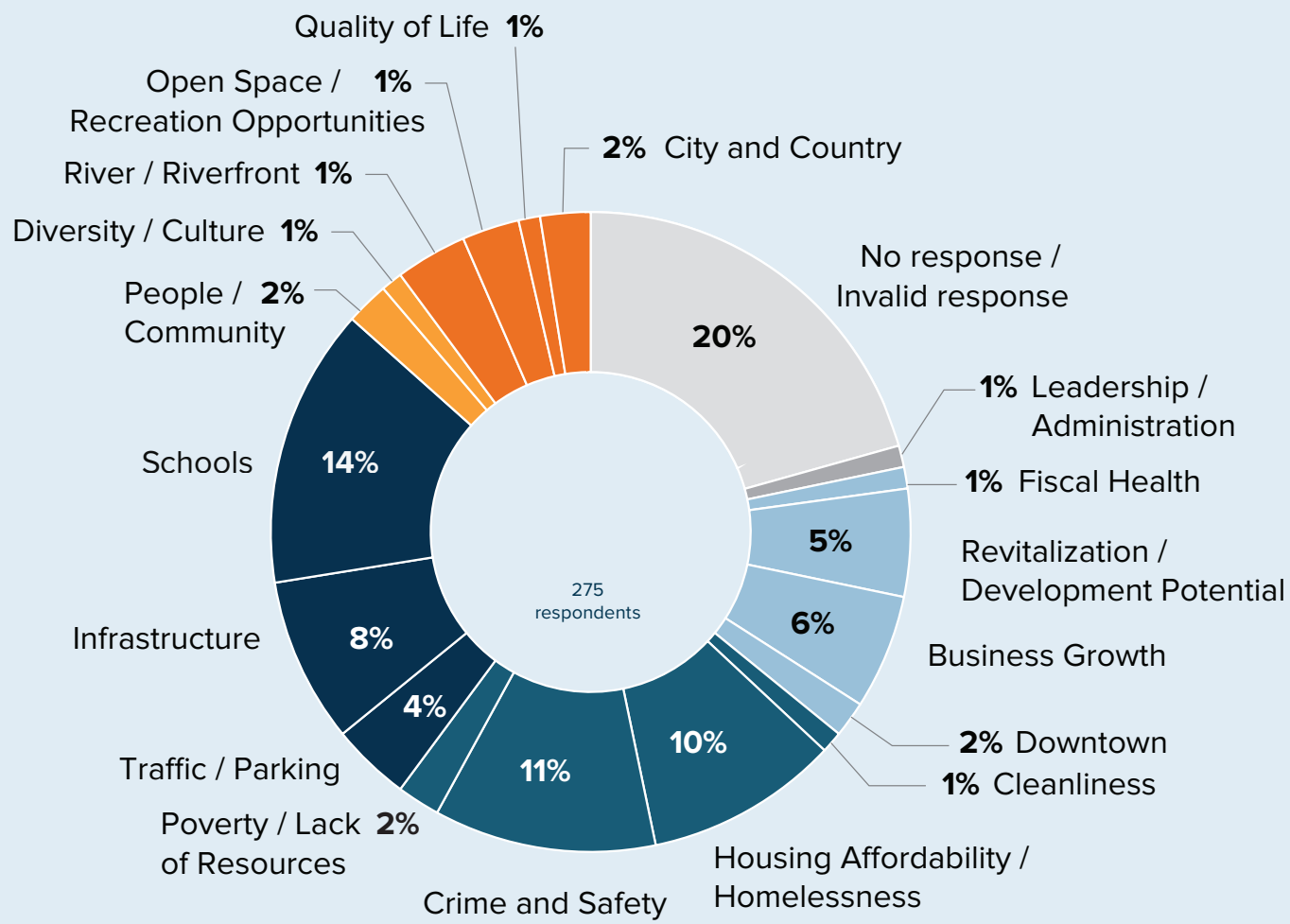
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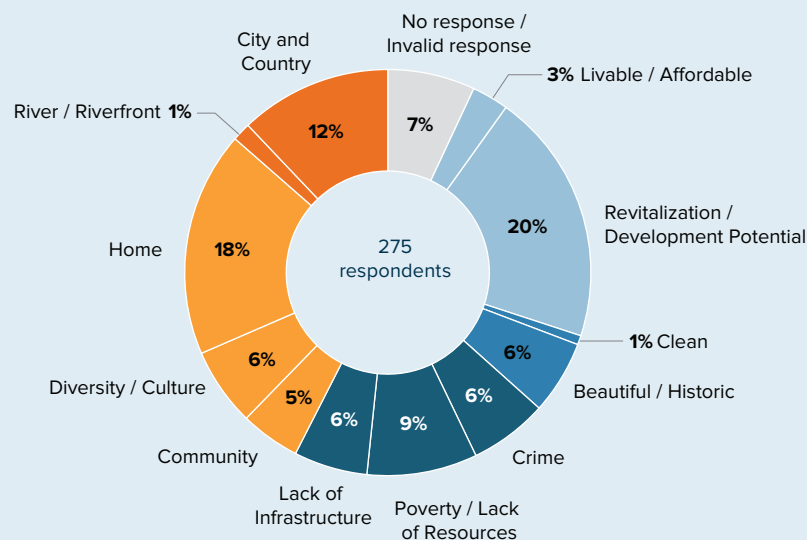


# What we Heard

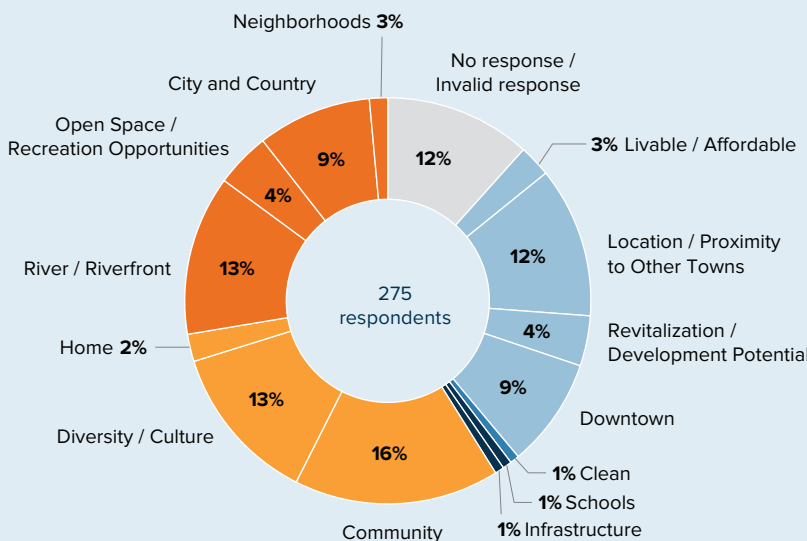
What do you hope this plan will address?



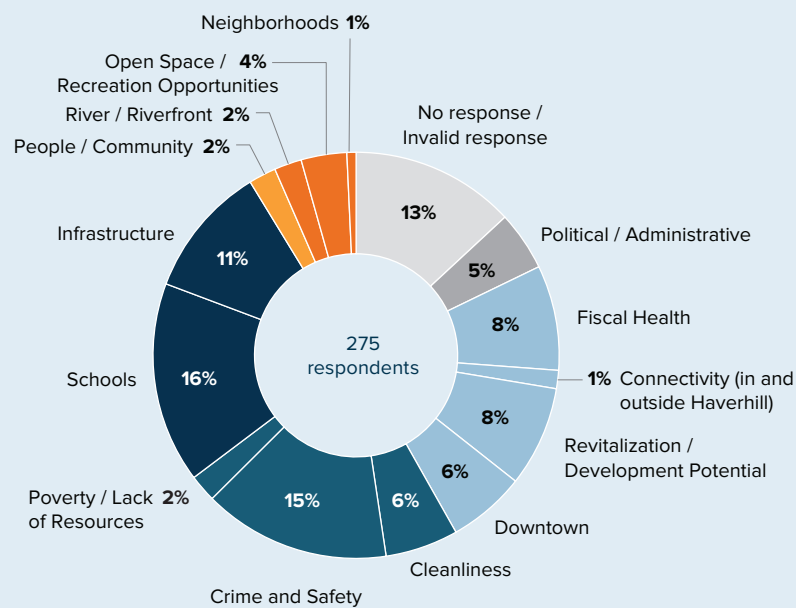
When you think of Haverhill, what words or phrases come to mind?



What do you love about Haverhill?



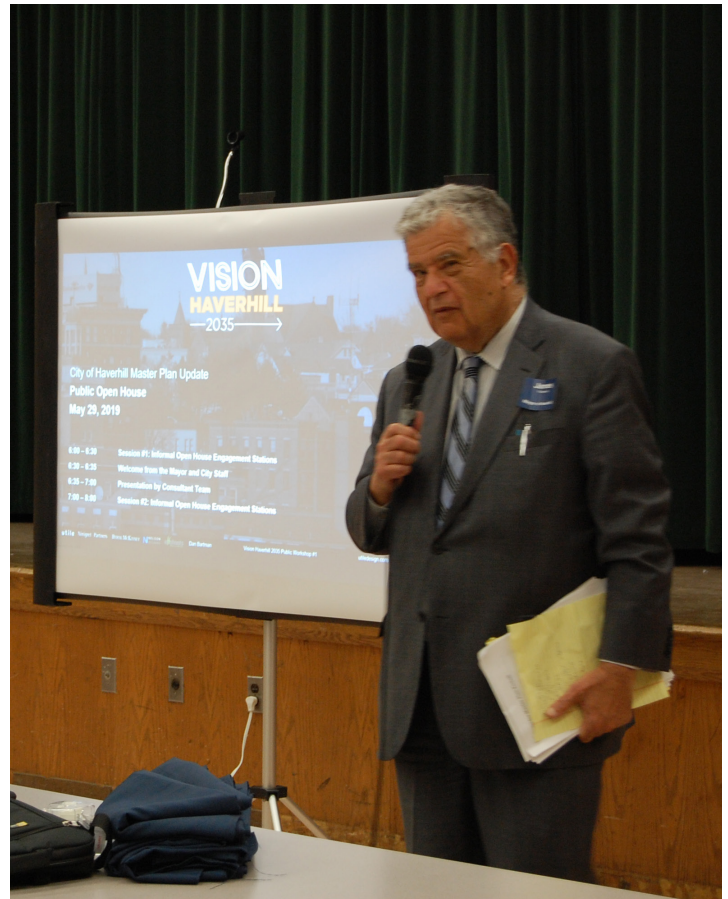
What would you change about Haverhill?



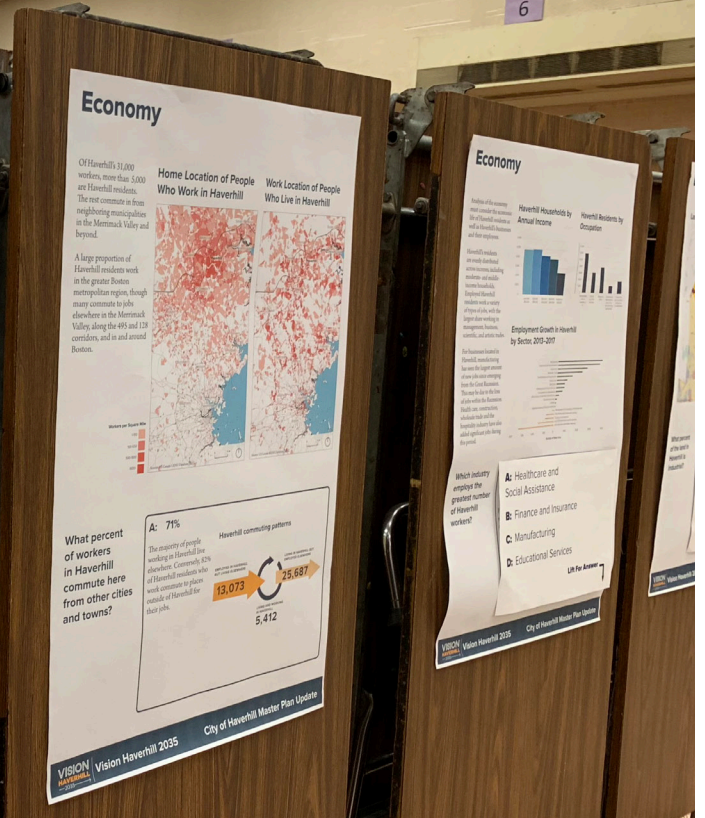
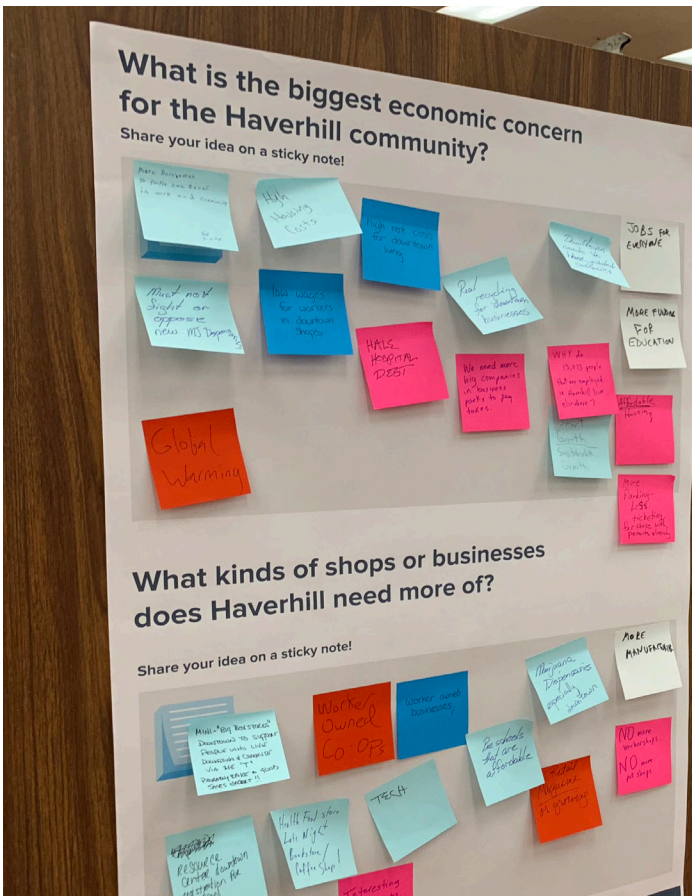
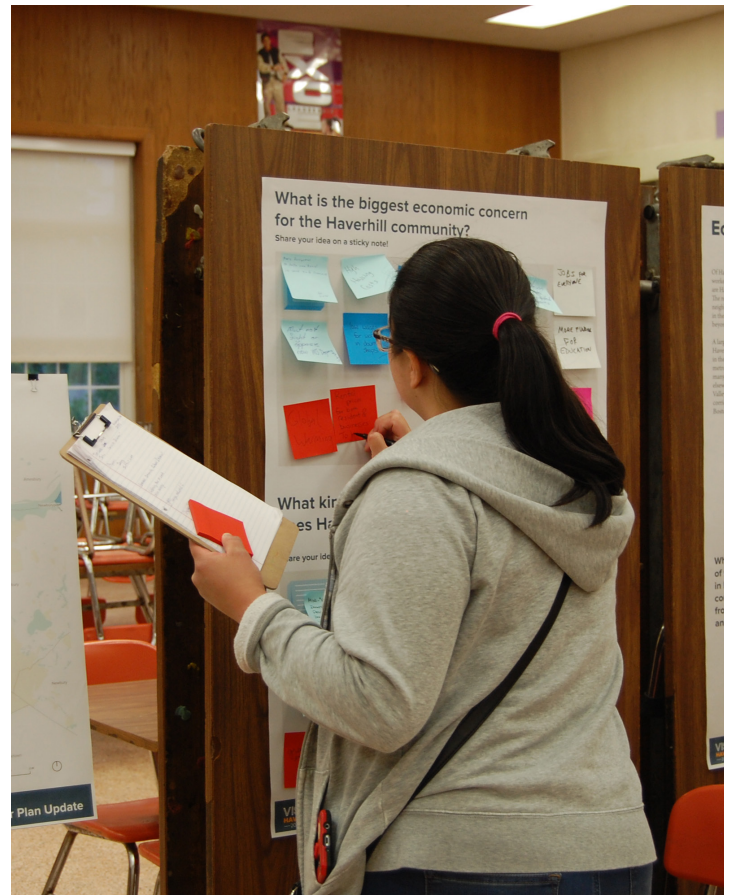
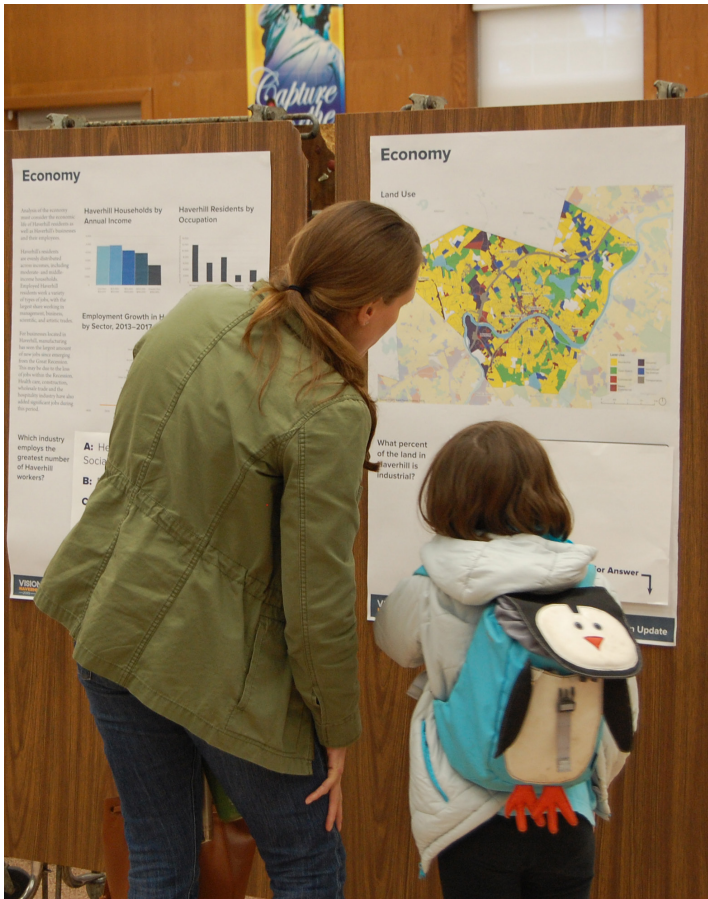


# Visioning Workshop

May 29, 2019









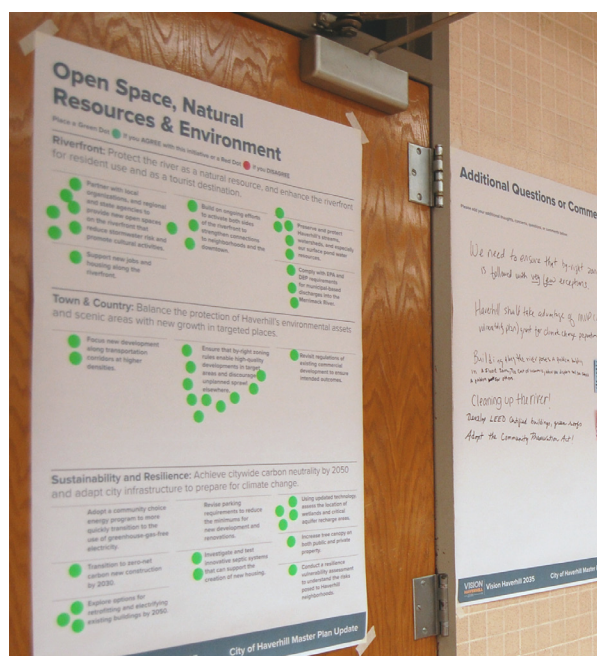
# Scenarios and Recommendations Workshop

November 7, 2019





The second public workshop confirmed that the community overwhelmingly appreciates the balance of town and country that Haverhill provides, and their priority for future growth is to maintain that balance. Through written and verbal feedback, attendees showed strong support for scenarios and recommendations that helped achieve this goal.



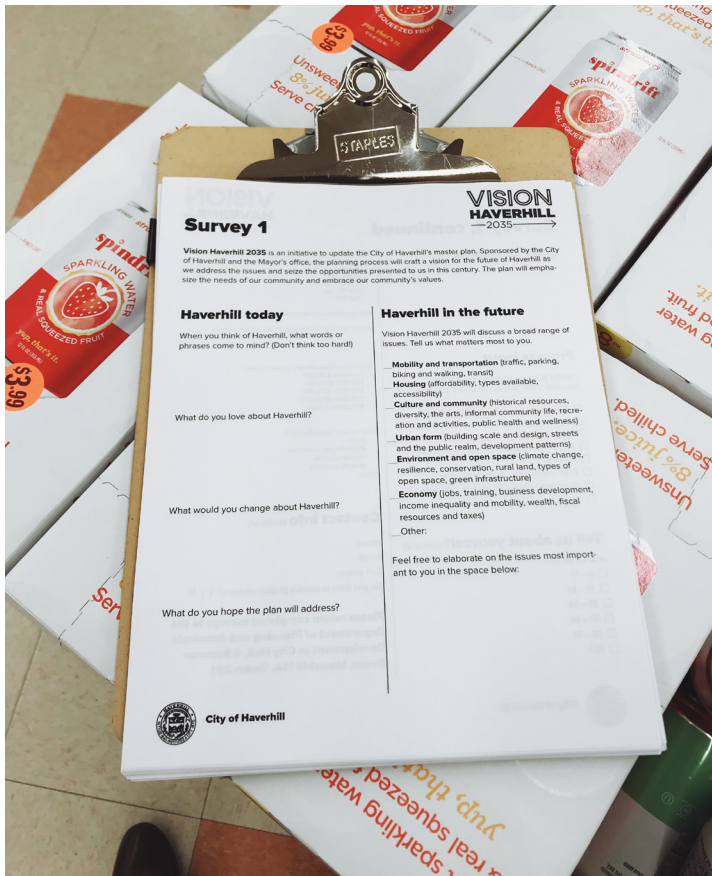
The second public workshop involved a presentation of scenarios for targeted growth along with recommendations that enable these scenarios to happen, organized by plan topics. Each member was handed a fixed number of “votes” to indicate the recommendations that they most strongly agreed or disagreed with.

- On **economy**, attendees expressed support for a majority of the recommendations. They particularly voted in favor of densifying Haverhill’s industrial parks as a way to provide low barrier-to-entry jobs, attract businesses getting priced out of the Greater Boston region, and offer an alternative location for homegrown businesses moving out of downtown. Written comments called out the desire for mixed-use buildings with neighborhood amenities and retail nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Thoughtful preservation of existing natural resources emerged as a top priority among the **open space and natural resources** recommendations. Attendees voted in favor of by-right zoning that targets growth in specific areas in order to discourage sprawl, linking back to the recurring town-and-country theme. In addition, the riverfront was a particular area of focus with attendees expressing support for new open space that can enhance the recreational quality of the riverfront while reducing risk from stormwater and riverine flooding. Written comments pointed the planning team to additional resources for sustainability and resilience planning and implementation, such as the Municipal Vulnerability Grants, enacting the Community Preservation Act, and adopting a LEED standard for new construction.
- The **housing** recommendations were split between strong support and strong disagreement from attendees. While there was clear support for the need to grow, attendees disagreed how this should be achieved. There was some opposition to allowing low-density multi-family housing in existing low-density zones, along with allowing higher densities by right. Further in-person discussions clarified that by-right zoning would be acceptable as long as it was in areas outside of the low-density residential zones and limited to a small and specific portion of the City. There was some concern about providing schools and other city services for new families as well as housing accessibility for seniors in new developments that would be proposed as a result of the plan.





# Outreach Events



Market Basket Community Survey, Jun 21, 2019



National Night Out, Aug 6, 2019 (above and below)







Haverhill Farmer's Market, Aug 17, 2019 (above and below)



Team Haverhill, Aug 12, 2019





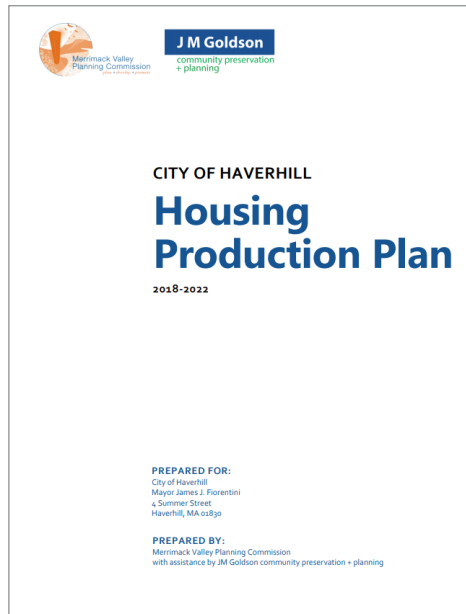
River Ruckus, Sep 21, 2019



# Appendix



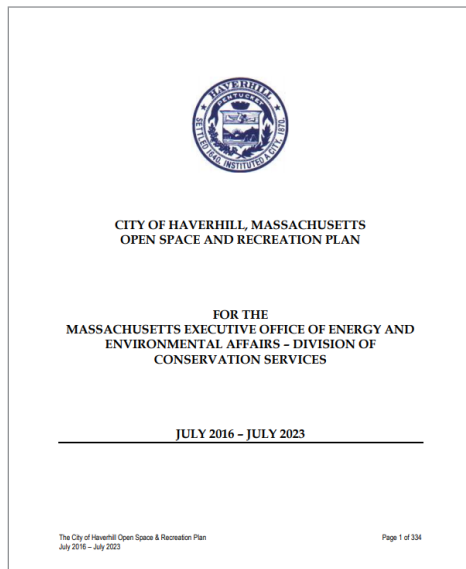
## Summary of past plans



### Housing Production Plan (2018)

In 2018, the City of Haverhill adopted a housing production plan for 2018–2021. The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission prepared the plan as part of a regional effort. The primary goal set out in the plan is to maintain and grow Haverhill’s housing stock at a pace consistent with projected population growth and to grow the deed-restricted affordable housing stock so that affordable housing is at or above 10% of the total housing in the City. (Haverhill just barely meets the minimum requirement of 10% affordable housing under MGL 40B. The plan states concern that Haverhill may drop below the 10% threshold after the 2020 US Census results are released.) Though not explicitly stated as goals, the plan also identifies housing needs that emerge from the analysis, including a rapidly growing senior citizen population and decreasing affordability of unrestricted (market rate) units.

The housing production plan provides 26 strategies for addressing these needs, broadly grouped under “Planning and Policies,” “Production,” and “Preservation.” Strategies included both broad mandates and specific measures. Broad strategies include encouraging market rate housing units, units affordable to low- and moderate-income households, and accessible units. Specific strategies included measures such as establishing Host Community Agreements, studying the conversion of municipal buildings into affordable housing, converting large single-family homes into small multifamily buildings, and offering supportive services for targeted demographics. Because this plan was adopted less than a year ago, implementation of the earliest actions is still underway.



### Open Space and Recreation Plan (2016)

The City is currently implementing a 2016–2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The plan report provides existing conditions analysis, survey results, goals, objectives set to achieve those goals, and action items to advance those objectives. The plan is concerned not only with parks and recreational activities, but also private open spaces and agricultural land, some of which is preserved. The plan’s ten goals cover improved governance, partnerships, and education to support open space; improving existing open spaces, acquiring land for new open spaces; protecting and promoting historic resources; promoting agriculture preservation; and promoting sustainable development.

Now several years into the plan’s implementation, Haverhill must assess its progress on the plan. Many action items were slated for completion before Summer 2019. If those have not been completed, the City should identify roadblocks to their completion and reassess priorities and implementation schedules in light of those roadblocks.

## Lower Acre Revitalization Strategy (2009)

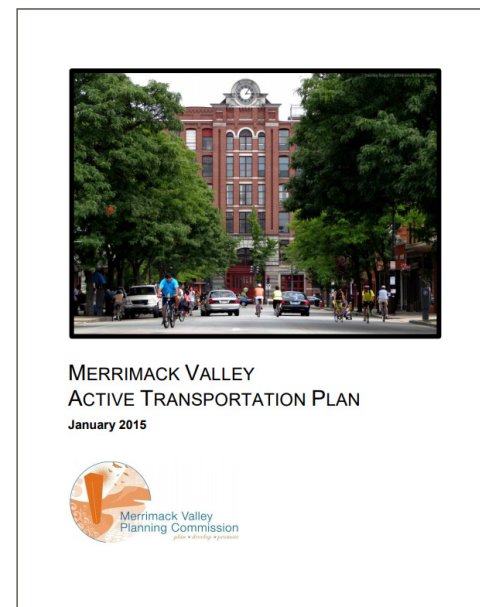
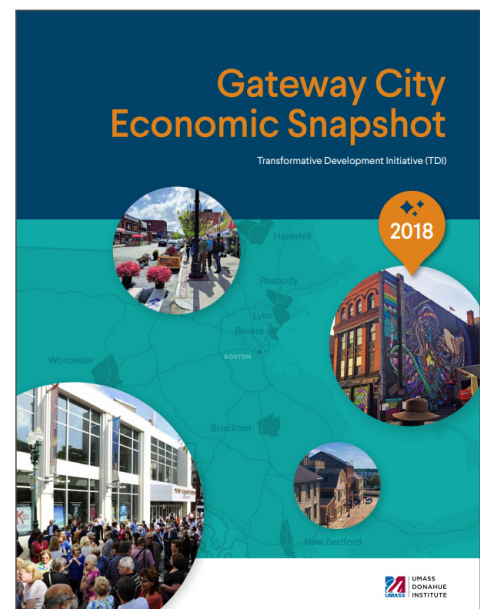
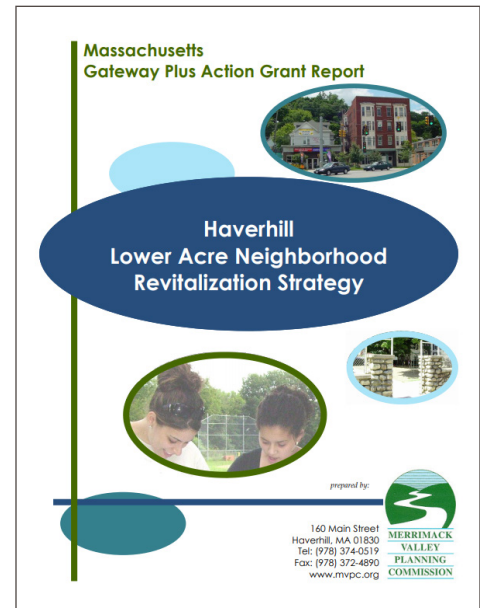
In 2009, the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission prepared this report with funding from the Gateway Plus Action Grant program. The plan made detailed recommendations across several topics, including public transportation, housing, parks & recreation, crime & safety, streets & sidewalk, and career development. The plan's biggest recommendations were for Lower Acre residents to form a neighborhood organization, for the City to create a "one stop" informational resource for residents, increase federal and state funding, concentrate the City's revitalization on targeted areas within Lower Acre (similar to its focused efforts to improve Downtown), and revitalize the Winter Street corridor.

## Gateway City\* Economic Snapshot (2018)

MassDevelopment published this study, which included analysis of Gateway City economies in general, as well as targeted analyses of Transformative Development Initiative districts, such as the Merrimack Street TDI district in Haverhill. The study noted the large amount of investment in the district from 2014–2016 (\$51.5 million in public funds and \$22.5 million in private funds). Nearly half of all built area in the TDI district is devoted to office space, and rents are low compared to those in Haverhill overall for both retail and residential uses. Commercial vacancies in the district are high.

## Merrimack Valley Active Transportation Plan (2015)

The MVPC published this plan in 2015, laying out a regional approach to developing an Active Transportation Network in the Merrimack Valley. The report notes the development of the Riverwalk and Bradford Rail Trail and bike lanes on Water Street. The report also identifies pedestrian and bicycle safety concerns of the time, including Merrimack Street, Winter Street, Lafayette Square, and Washington Street. It also highlights the city's wider streets, developed to accommodate trolleys, and gives examples of how those rights-of-way could be allocated to support active transportation. Active transportation priorities identified during the plan's engagement process include an on-road bicycle network, sidewalks around Ward Hill, the Riverwalk and rail trails, bicycle parking downtown, safety concerns, and bike/ped improvements on Route 110.



\* Massachusetts Gateway Cities are midsize urban centers that anchor regional economies around the state. They often face stubborn social and economic challenges while retaining many assets with unrealized potential.



# Survey 1

**Vision Haverhill 2035** is an initiative to update the City of Haverhill's master plan. Sponsored by the City of Haverhill and the Mayor's office, the planning process will craft a vision for the future of Haverhill as we address the issues and seize the opportunities presented to us in this century. The plan will emphasize the needs of our community and embrace our community's values.

## Haverhill today

When you think of Haverhill, what words or phrases come to mind? (Don't think too hard!)

What do you love about Haverhill?

What would you change about Haverhill?

What do you hope the plan will address?

## Haverhill in the future

Vision Haverhill 2035 will discuss a broad range of issues. Tell us what matters most to you.

\_\_\_ **Mobility and transportation** (traffic, parking, biking and walking, transit)

\_\_\_ **Housing** (affordability, types available, accessibility)

\_\_\_ **Culture and community** (historical resources, diversity, the arts, informal community life, recreation and activities, public health and wellness)

\_\_\_ **Urban form** (building scale and design, streets and the public realm, development patterns)

\_\_\_ **Environment and open space** (climate change, resilience, conservation, rural land, types of open space, green infrastructure)

\_\_\_ **Economy** (jobs, training, business development, income inequality and mobility, wealth, fiscal resources and taxes)

\_\_\_ Other:

Feel free to elaborate on the issues most important to you in the space below:



**City of Haverhill**

# Survey 1, continued

## Other comments

## Process input

I prefer to be engaged during the Vision Haverhill 2035 process by (check all that apply):

- ☐ Webpages where I can add a comment
- ☐ Occasional email, text, or social media posts
- ☐ Neighborhood meetings and get-togethers
- ☐ Public workshops and larger gatherings
- ☐ Surveys
- ☐ Draft documents, maps, and plans
- ☐ Short fact sheets and easy-to-use materials
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Tell us about yourself (optional)

How old are you?

- ☐ 0 – 17
- ☐ 18 – 24
- ☐ 25 – 34
- ☐ 35 – 54
- ☐ 55 – 64
- ☐ 65+

How many members of your household are within each of the following age ranges?

- \_\_\_ Age 4 or younger
- \_\_\_ Age 5 – 12
- \_\_\_ Age 13 – 18
- \_\_\_ Age 19 – 64
- \_\_\_ Age 65+

Are you a Haverhill resident? Y / N

Which neighborhood(s) do you live and/or work in?

What is your household's annual income?

- \_\_\_ Less than \$25,000
- \_\_\_ \$25,000-\$50,000
- \_\_\_ \$50,000 - \$75,000
- \_\_\_ \$75,000 - \$100,000
- \_\_\_ \$100,000 or more

What is your race/ethnicity?

- \_\_\_ Asian
- \_\_\_ Black/African-American
- \_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino
- \_\_\_ White/Caucasian

Other:

## Contact info (optional)

Name:

Email:

Cell phone:

Do you want to receive project updates? Y / N

**Please return completed surveys to the  
Department of Planning and Economic  
Development at City Hall, 4 Summer  
Street, Haverhill MA, Room 201**



**City of Haverhill**



# Survey 2

**Vision Haverhill 2035** is an initiative to update the City of Haverhill's master plan. Sponsored by the City of Haverhill and the Mayor's office, the planning process will craft a vision for the future of Haverhill as we address the issues and seize the opportunities presented to us in this century.

## Goal statements

Our team has drafted goal statements for each of Vision Haverhill's topics.

For each of these topic areas, we want to know what you would **add or change about these goals**.

We want these goals to be comprehensive, but we also want the goals to be straightforward and clear enough that they provide direction.

These high-level **goal** statements will frame the next steps of the planning process, where the planning team develops **strategies** (approaches we take to achieve the goals) and **actions** (specific policies, programs, or tools we use to achieve the strategies).



**City of Haverhill**

### Housing

- **Supply:** Increase the amount of housing with an urban form that encourages walkability and embeds civic and commercial activity within neighborhoods across the city.
- **Affordability:** Ensure that housing remains accessible to all who want to live in Haverhill, through existing as well as income-restricted affordable units.
- **Diversity:** Provide a variety of housing options for individuals, families, and seniors at different socioeconomic levels.

*Is there anything you would add or change about these?*

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### Economy

- **Location:** In addition to supporting Haverhill's business parks, encourage the creation and growth of businesses that strengthen Haverhill's neighborhoods.
- **City Revenue and Jobs:** Expand the city's tax base and promote the creation of jobs in the core sectors of Haverhill's economy, including Haverhill's growing industries.
- **Access:** Create opportunities that allow Haverhill residents to work near where they live, and ensure that residents can get the training needed to contribute to the regional economy.
- **Education:** Encourage the creation of talent by enhancing Haverhill's educational resources.

*Is there anything you would add or change about these?*

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## Survey 2, continued

### Open Space, Natural Resources, & Environment

- **Town and Country:** Balance the protection of Haverhill's environmental assets and scenic areas with growth in targeted places.
- **Riverfront:** Protect the river as a natural resource, and enhance the riverfront as a recreational and tourist destination.
- **Sustainability and Energy:** Achieve citywide carbon neutrality by 2050.
- **Resilience:** Adapt city infrastructure to prepare for climate change.

*Is there anything you would add or change about these?*

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### Transportation & Mobility

- **Walkability:** Shape the form, use, and design of streets and buildings to support an active public realm accessible by community members of all ages.
- **Transit:** Maximize the potential of the commuter rail's connections to the metropolitan region.
- **Multimodal:** Expand access to non-vehicular transportation options, to walk and bike safely and mitigate traffic.

*Is there anything you would add or change about these?*

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### Cultural & Civic Resources

- **Downtown:** Capitalize on the vibrancy of downtown and create opportunities for events, programming, and public art.
- **Recreation and Leisure:** Create places where residents and visitors can not only live and work, but also play.
- **Infrastructure:** Ensure that city services have the capacity to meet the needs of Haverhill's growing population.

*Is there anything you would add or change about these?*

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### Contact info (optional)

Name:

Email:

Cell phone:

Do you want to receive project updates? Y / N

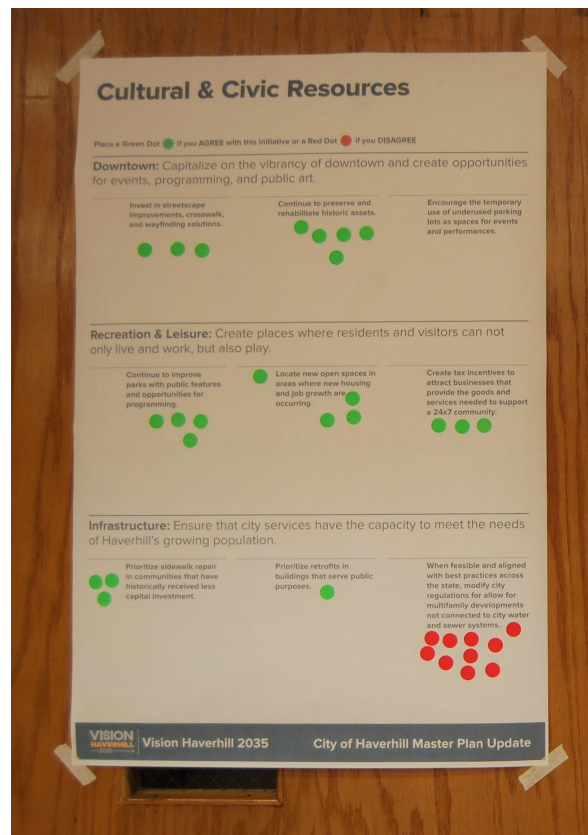
**Please return completed surveys to the Department of Planning and Economic Development at City Hall, 4 Summer Street, Haverhill MA, Room 201.**



**City of Haverhill**

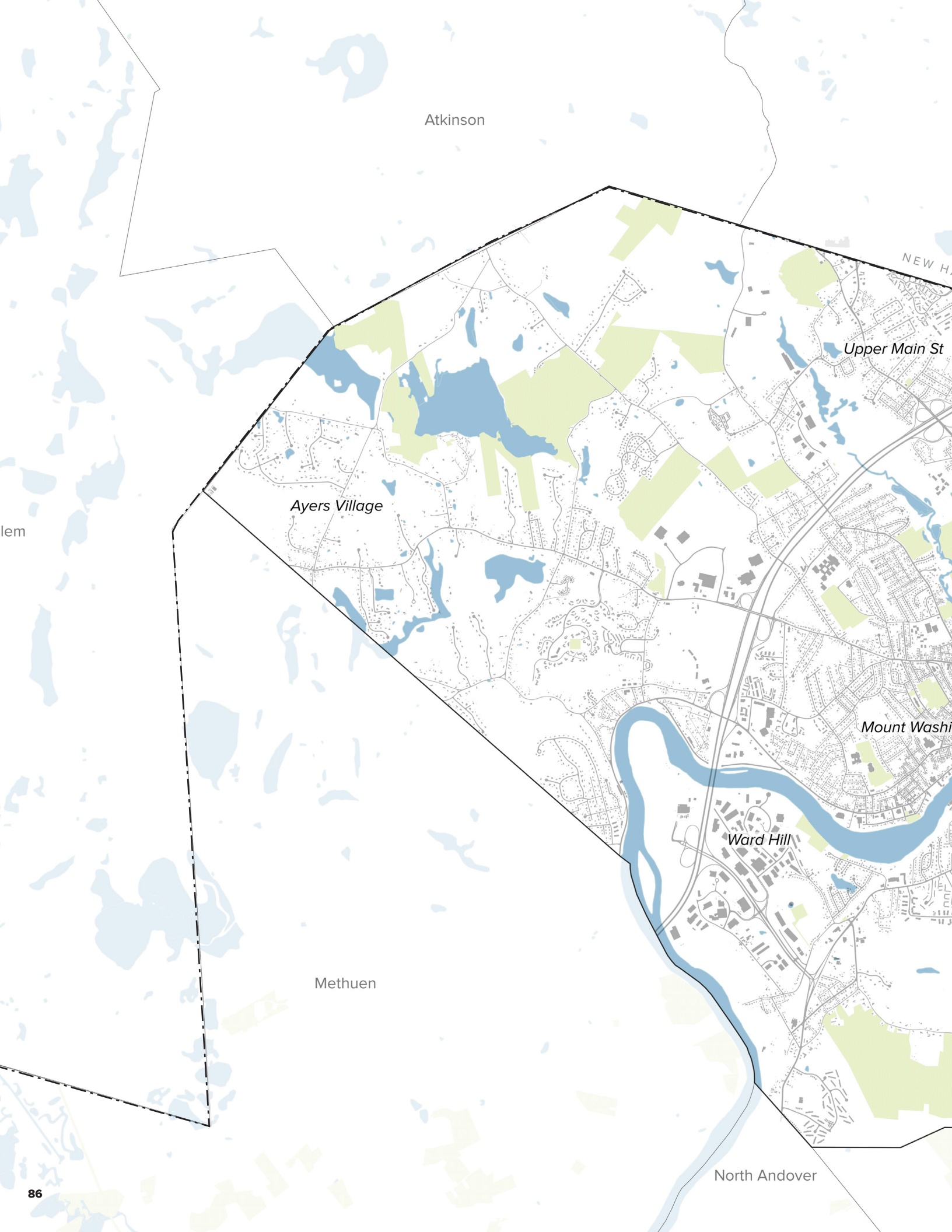


- Attendees agreed on recommendations that preserve and enhance existing **cultural and civic resources**. Particularly, they agreed with maintaining infrastructure and city services to keep up with the growing population. However there was some disagreement on allowing multi-family developments outside of the water and sewer service areas. Written feedback contained specific ideas for enhancing cultural resources such as creating a pop up open space on the Paperboard site (similar to Lawn on D in Boston), linking cultural programming to existing farms, and converting more open spaces to areas for play.
- Recommendations related to enhancing walkability received the strongest support in the **mobility** section, as well as rethinking parking for transit oriented development around the MBTA commuter rail. Attendees also voted heavily in favor of enhancing recreational mobility options, particularly, the trail network and biking infrastructure along the river. Recognizing the link between new development and sustainable transportation, attendees supported the development of new housing and job centers within walking distance of transit. Written comments expressed an interest in rethinking the Goecke parking deck in relation to an overall parking strategy for downtown.









Atkinson

NEW H.

Upper Main St

Ayers Village

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Mount Washi

Ward Hill

Methuen

North Andover

