



# City of Revere, Massachusetts

# About ULI – the Urban Land Institute

## Mission

To provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI is a research and education institution with nearly 38,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service.

## ULI at the local level

- Boston/New England District Council covers nearly all of New England
- Over 1,200 Members—developers, architects, planners, public officials, financiers, students, etc.



# Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)

## City of Revere, MA

ULI Boston/New England is committed to supporting communities in making sound land use decisions and creating better places. A TAP brings together of a group of ULI members with a range of professional expertise to provide focused, collaborative consultation to a local government or qualifying non-profit organization.



## This TAP

- **Sponsored by the City of Revere and MassDevelopment.**
- This panel looked at the full range of options from an unbiased perspective.
- Panelists include public and private sector experts in the fields of architecture, planning, design and law
- **Panelists have donated their time**
- Final Deliverable – Written report (8 weeks) will be available at <http://boston.uli.org>

## The Panel

**Jason Denoncourt, Co-Chair**  
Economic Development Director  
Office of Congressman Seth Moulton  
Lynn, MA

**Emily Keys Innes, Co-Chair**  
Senior Urban Planner  
The Cecil Group  
Boston, MA

**Dave Cameron**  
Analyst, Architect  
CannonDesign  
Boston, MA

**Fabio Duarte**  
Visiting Scholar  
MIT Senseable Cities Lab  
Cambridge, MA

**Chris Herlich**  
Urban Designer  
NBBJ  
Boston, MA

**Dick Lampman**  
Director of Business Development  
ASCON Construction  
Boston, MA

**Victoria Maguire**  
SVP, Real Estate Operations  
MassDevelopment  
Boston, MA

**Andrew Sutton**  
Associate  
Reimer & Braunstein LLP  
Boston, MA

*ULI Boston/New England Staff*  
**Manikka Bowman**  
Manager, Policy & Outreach

**Ileana Tauscher**  
Associate

*Report Writer*  
**Scott Van Voorhis**  
Boston, MA



## Panel Sponsors



MASSDEVELOPMENT

Build. Create. Innovate.

## Panel Assignment – Address these questions

- 1. Mobility and Connectivity:** How can we better connect the Shirley Ave business district to the surrounding area and planned development – including Revere Beach, those coming to/from the MBTA T station at the end of Shirley Ave, and the residential development on the north side of Revere Beach? What is needed in terms of wayfinding and signage? Are there design elements that can be implemented to improve the pedestrian and traffic patterns along this commercial spine that will enhance connectivity accordingly?
- 2. Strategic Investments along Shirley Ave:** Are there strategic investments that could be made along Shirley Ave that will catalyze revitalization? For instance, are there a few strategic storefront improvements that should be prioritized above others? Are there streetscape and signage improvements that the City should be investing in? It would be great to look at this from an urban design and placemaking perspective.
- 3. Visioning/Marketing/Branding:** The City and its partners would benefit from help understanding the identity of Shirley Ave and how to leverage that identity into a marketing and branding campaign. For instance, what strategies should the City deploy to promote the diversity of the area, attract more businesses to the area, and lure existing residents and newcomers to the district?

# The Process

## Briefing

- Panelists met with sponsor and received briefing materials

## Site Visit:

- Panelists toured Shirley Avenue

## Panel interviewed stakeholders today including:

- Town officials
- Local business leaders
- Private property owners
- Local merchants
- Local residents
- Local developers



## Opportunities

- Cultural diversity and immigrant vitality
- Proximity to Downtown Boston
- Affordable housing compared to region
- Small business opportunities
- Year-round economy
- Positioned to service greater Revere community
- Job creation
- Linkages to master planning of Wonderland and Suffolk Downs
- Parking lots that can be used for temporary uses
- Improve visibility
- Revere Beach





## Challenges

- Revere Beach
- Uninviting
- Potential for gentrification and displacement
- Lack of support for small businesses
- Reputation and perception of neighborhood
- No community spaces
- Resource management
- Façade maintenance
- Absentee landlord
- Balance new development with community preservation
- Underserved area



## Vision and Identity

- Perception 1: Shirley Avenue should serve beach-goers
- Perception 2: Shirley Avenue should serve new Revere residents
- Perception 3: Shirley Avenue is safe for local neighborhood
- Perception 4: Shirley Avenue is dangerous for visitors

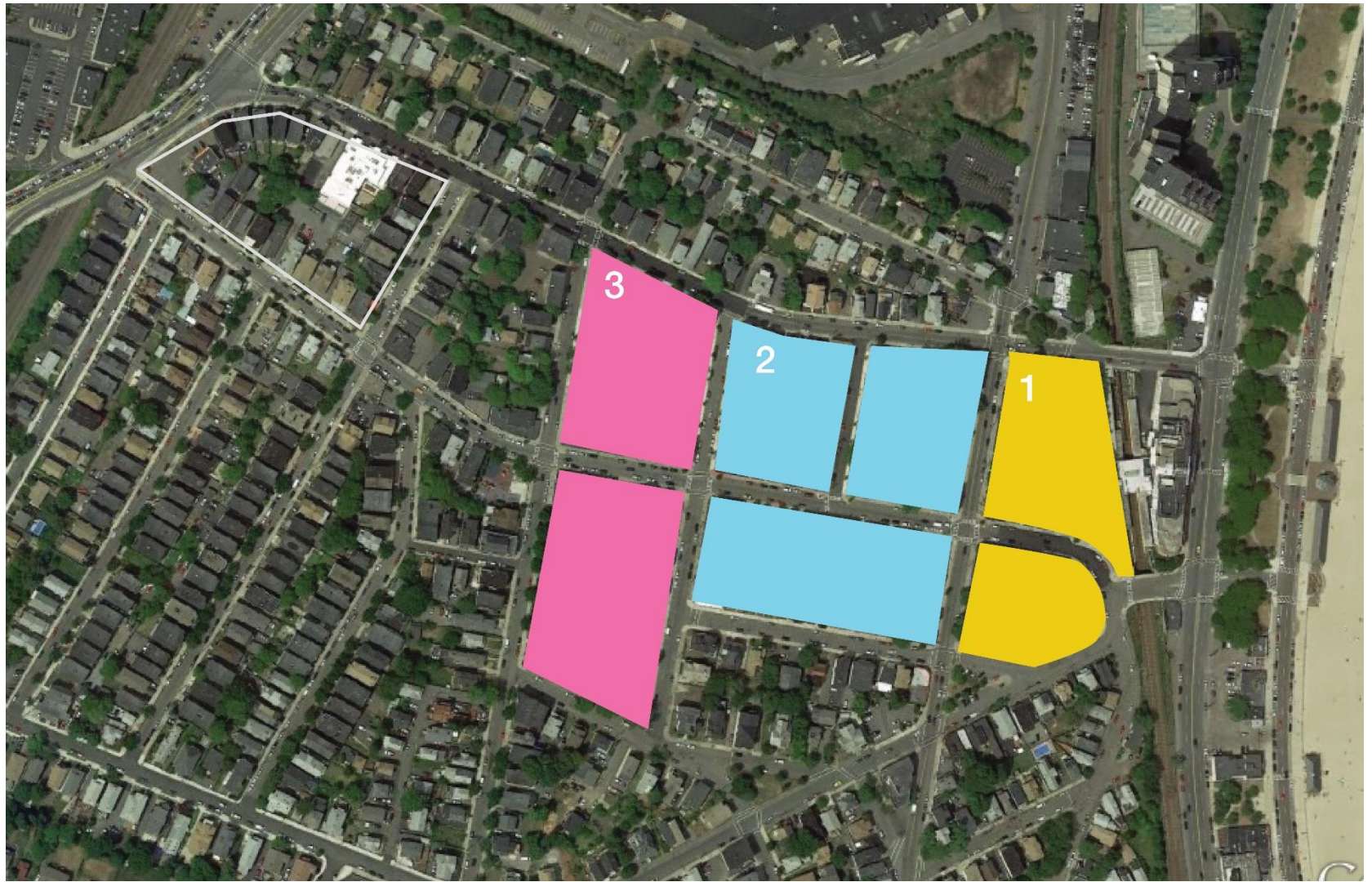
## Our Observations

- Beach activity is seasonal
- Disconnect between what makes Shirley Avenue special versus what beach-goers desire
- Distance prevents Shirley Avenue from being part of new residents' daily routine
- Long-term stigma still affects people's perceptions of the street

## What Should Shirley Avenue be?

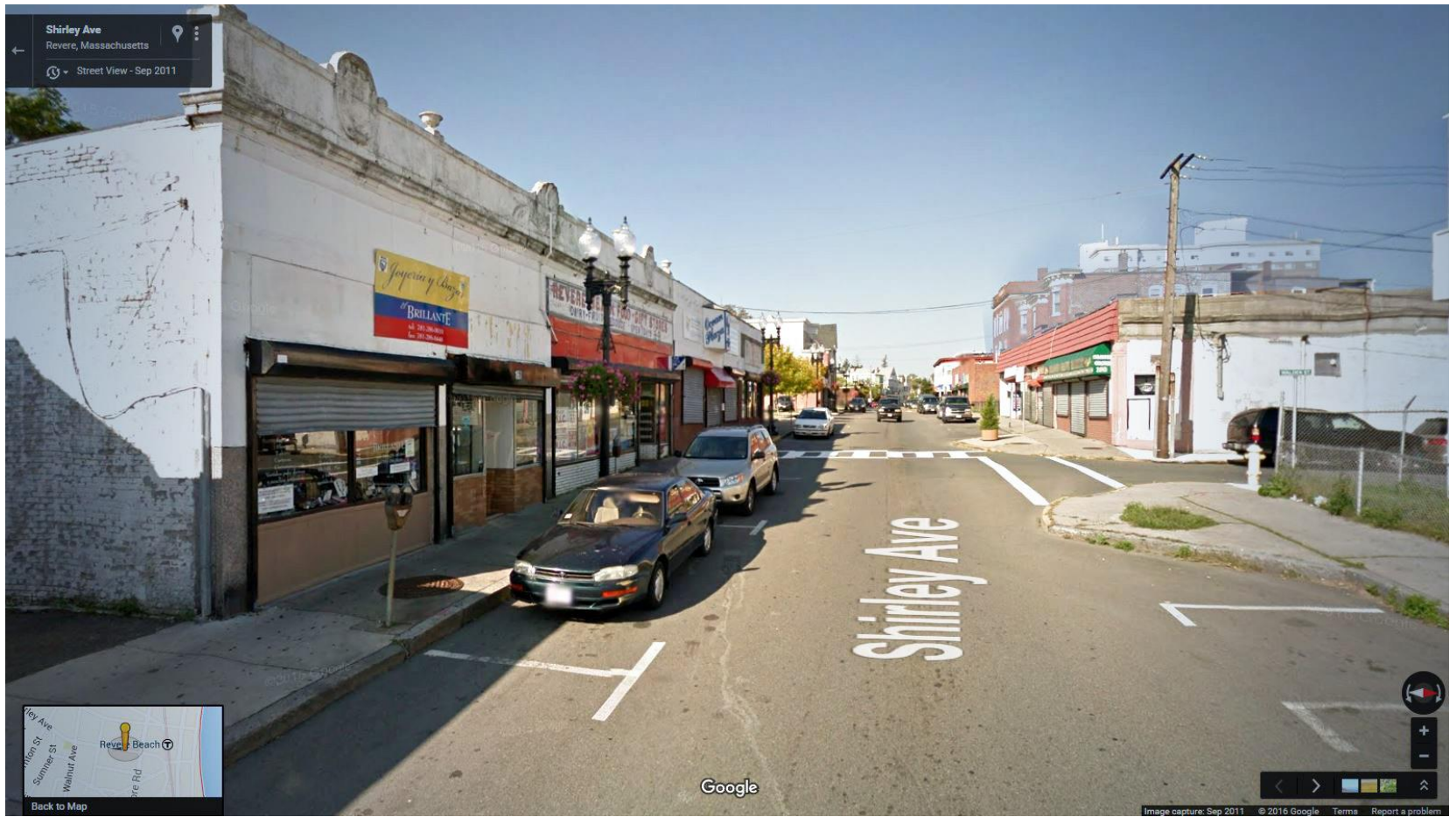
- Business activity should be targeted for the neighborhood
- Improvements to neighborhood should focus on the needs of immediate residents
- Authentic character of the district will become regional draw for specific businesses

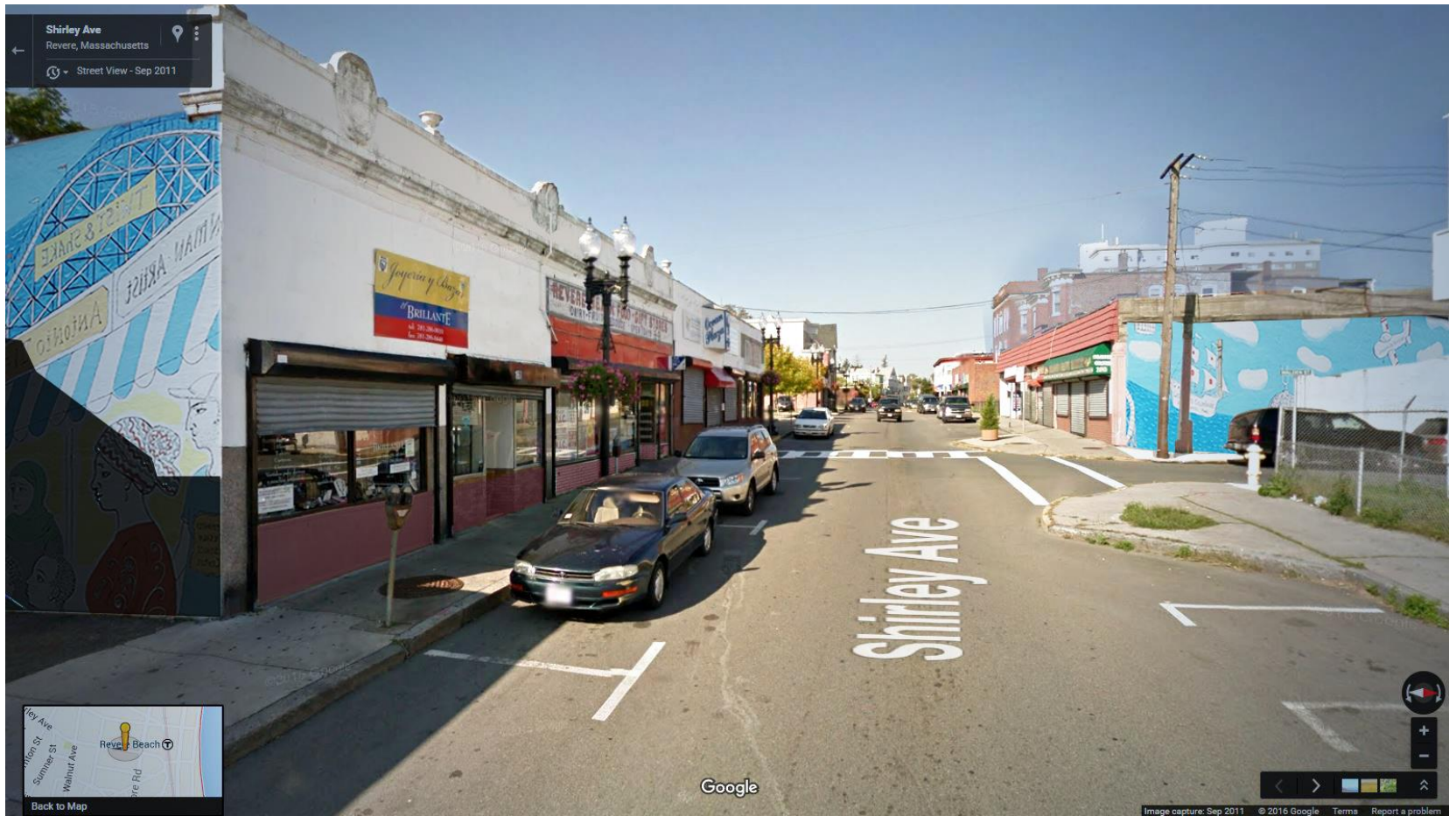
**How do we maintain the neighborhood character while attracting new visitors?**

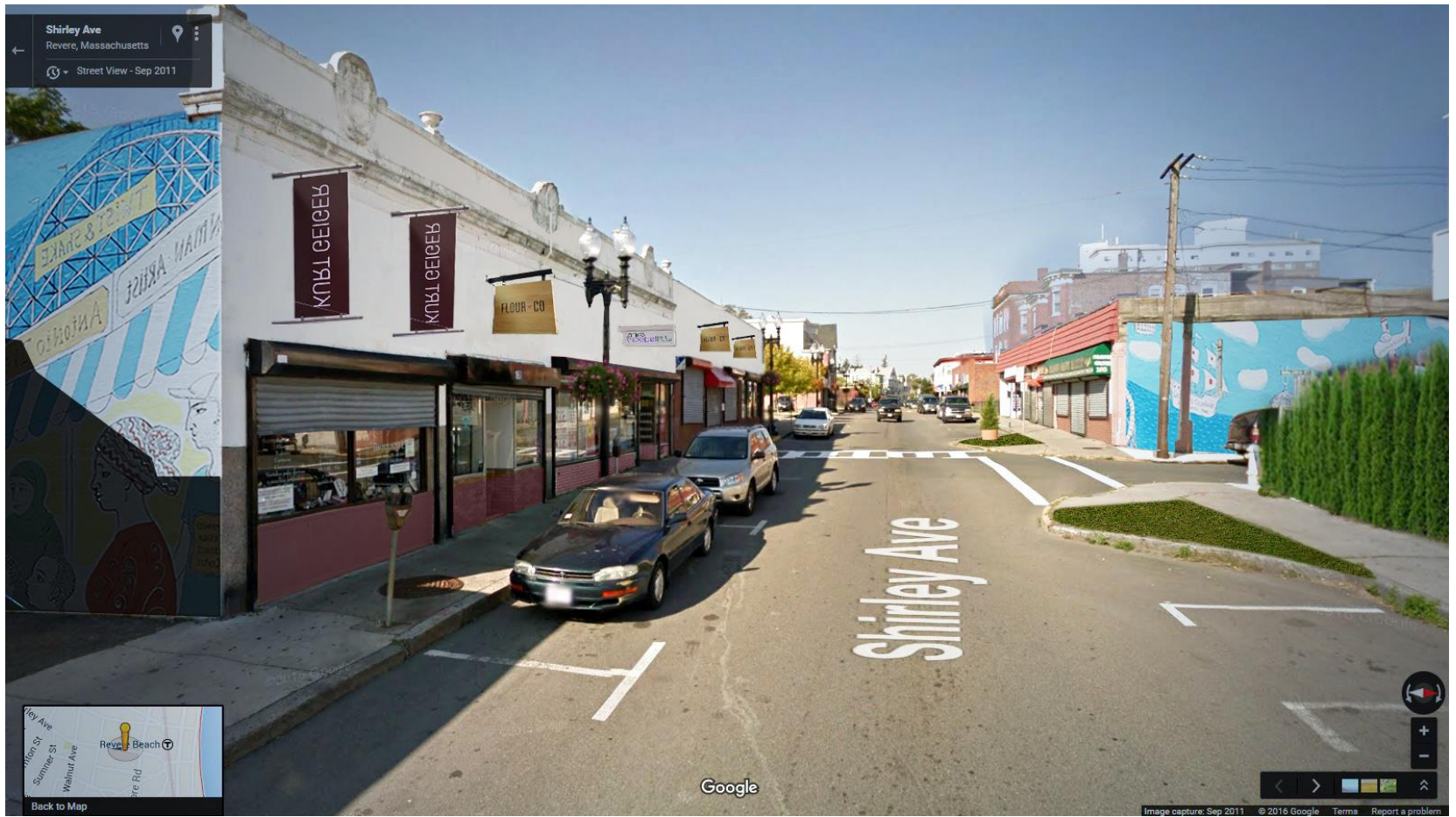


## Recommendations – Building and Blocks

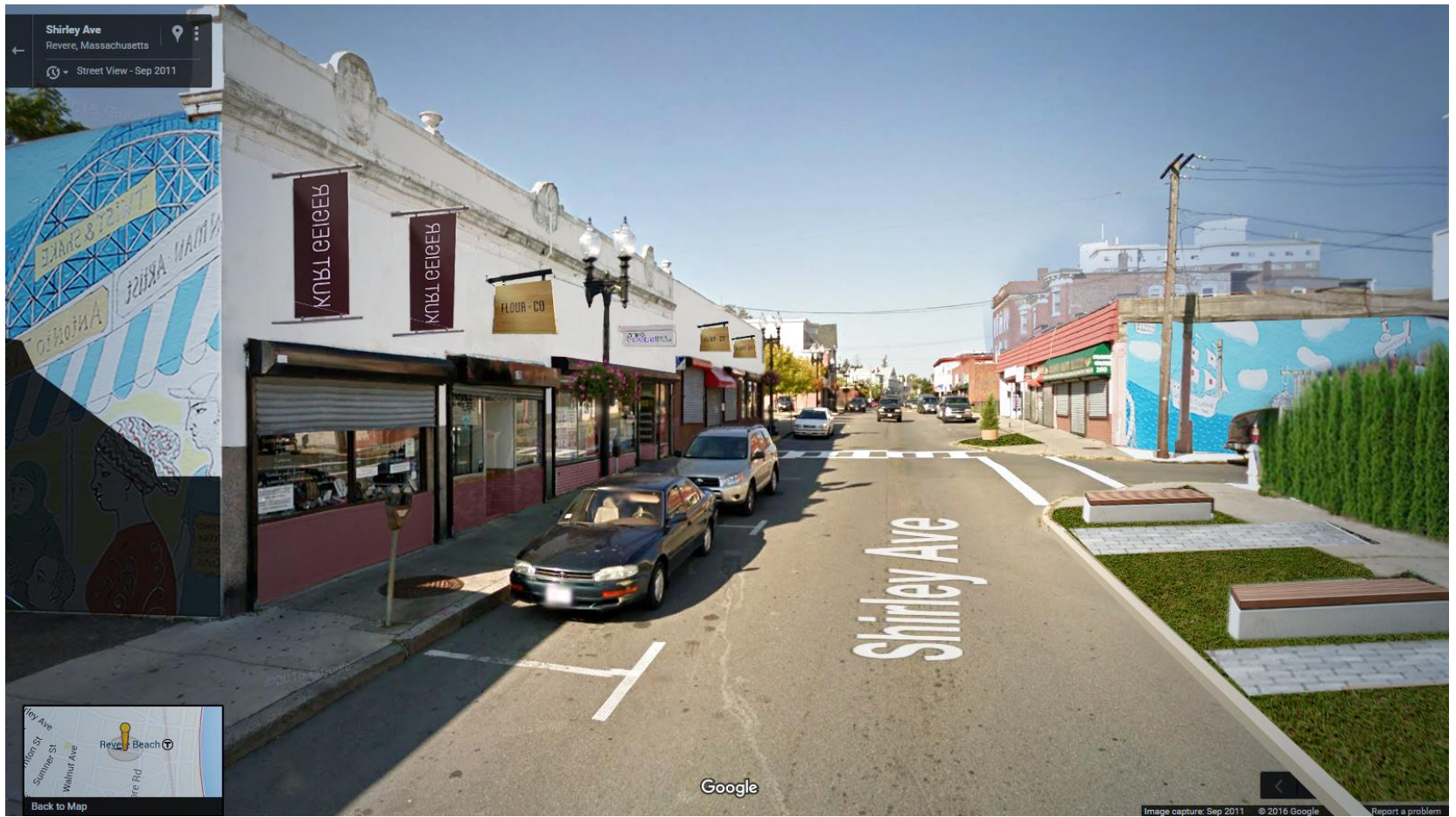
- Block 1 – Ocean Ave to North Shore Road
  - Consider community space/building
  - Add outdoor seating and retail at MGH building
  - Fix curve to make Shirley Ave a two-way street to Thornton Avenue
  - Add signage and arch on Ocean Avenue
  - Identify strategic property investments by the City
- Block 2 – North Shore Road to Walden Street
  - Implement façade improvements
  - If vacancy appears, either:
    - Cluster, i.e., seek additional restaurants
    - Identify and address community retail needs
- Block 3 – Walden Street to Walnut Avenue
  - Consider as restaurant cluster
  - Clarify transition to residential

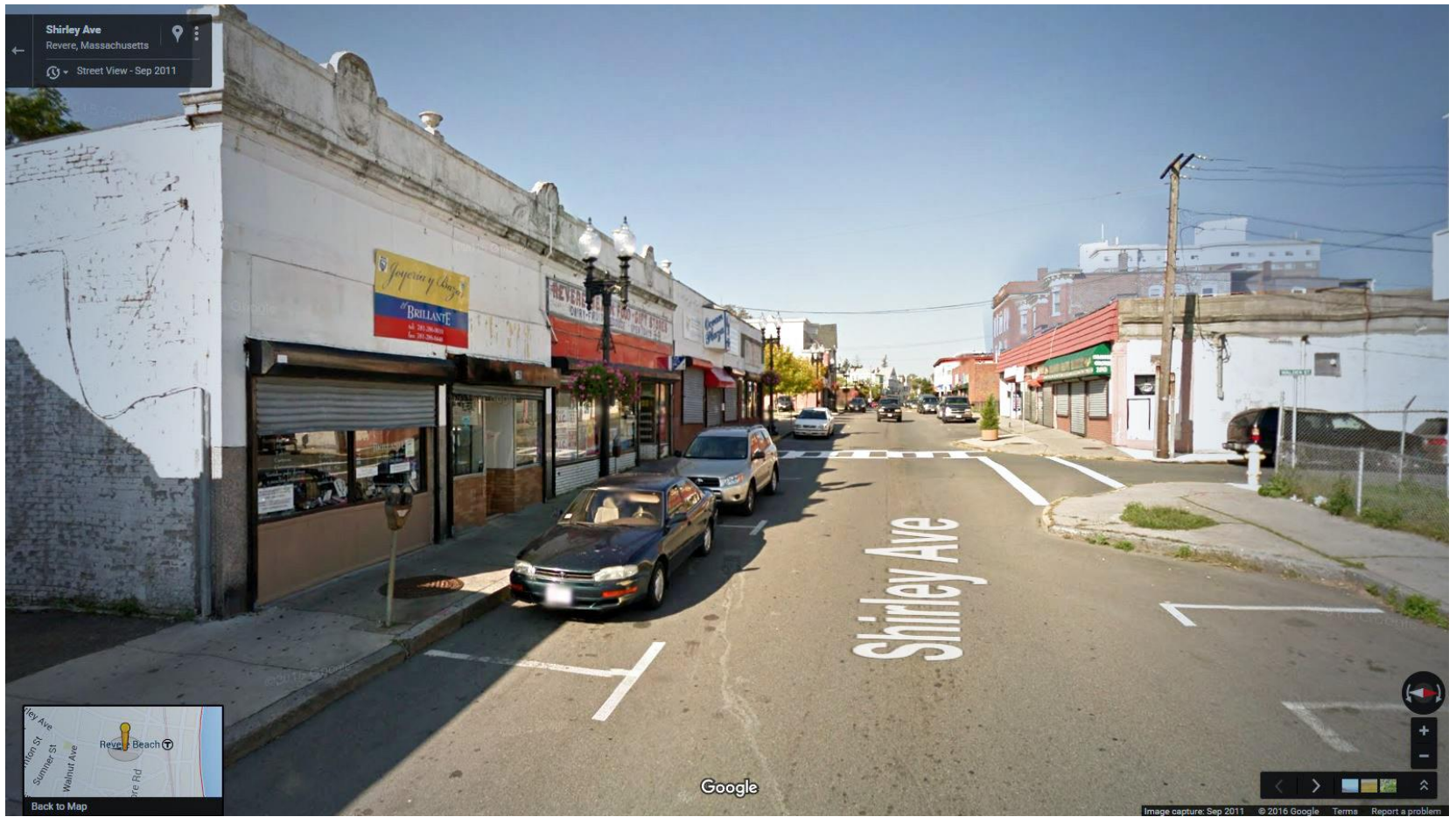








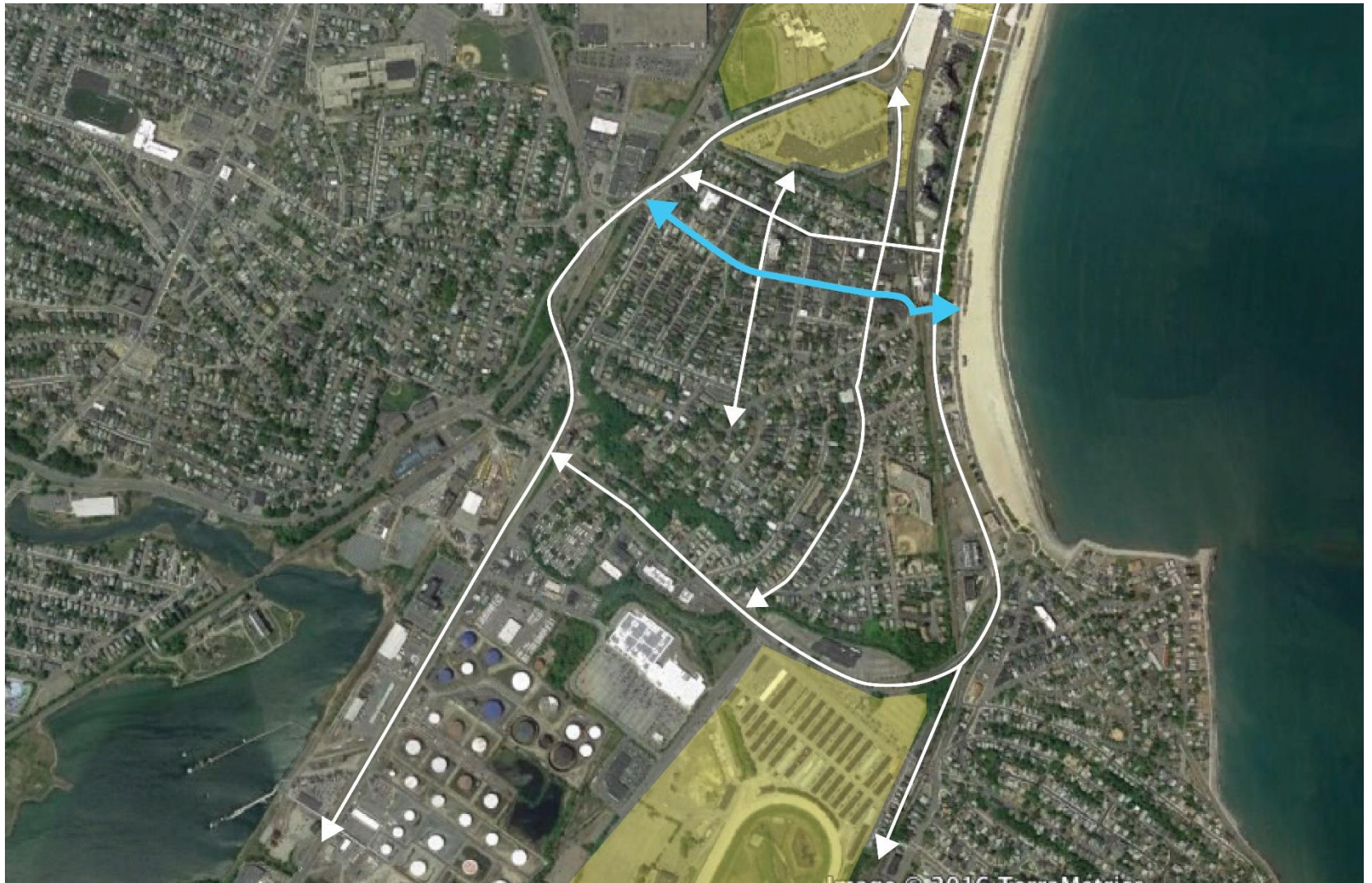


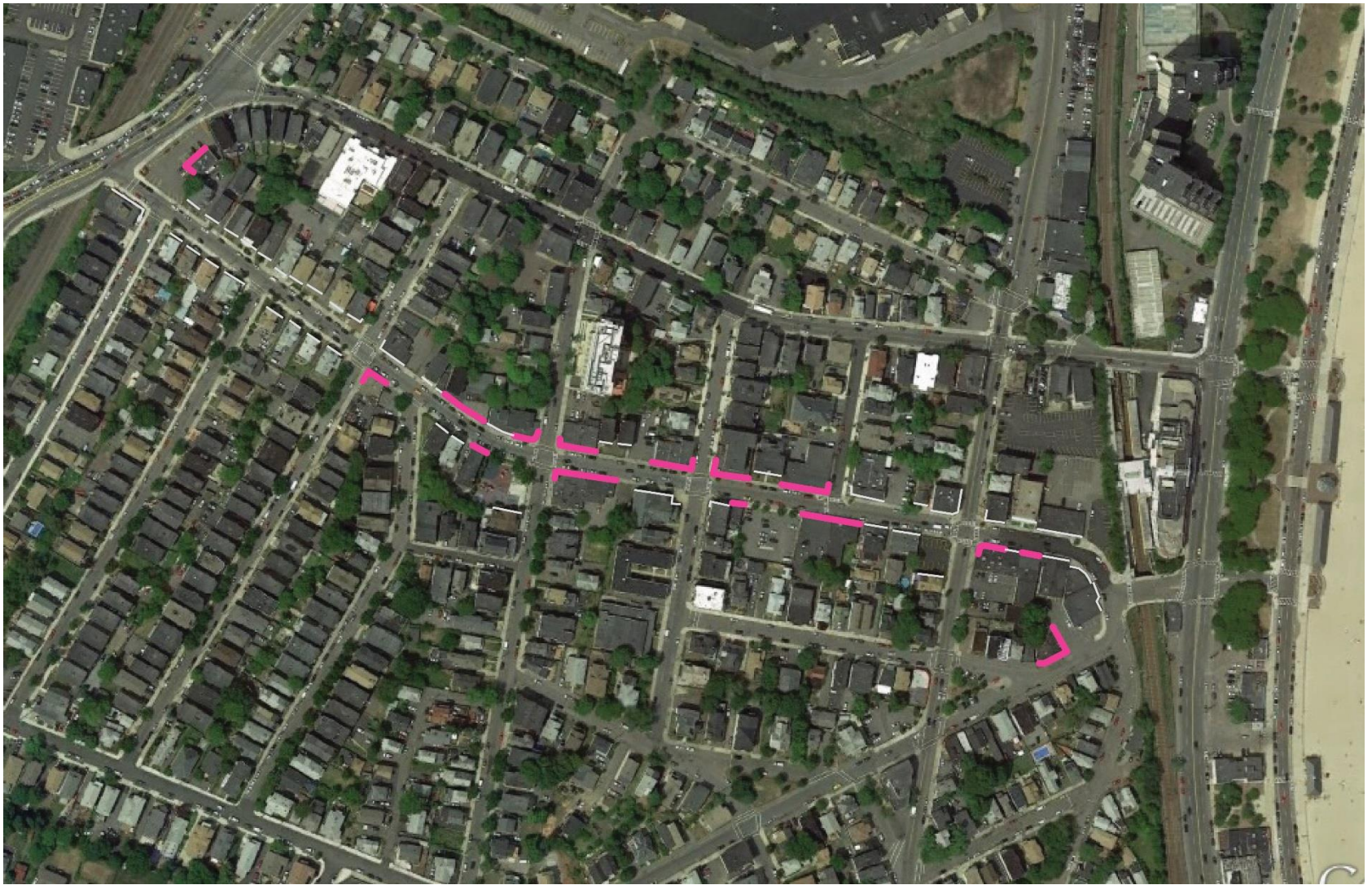


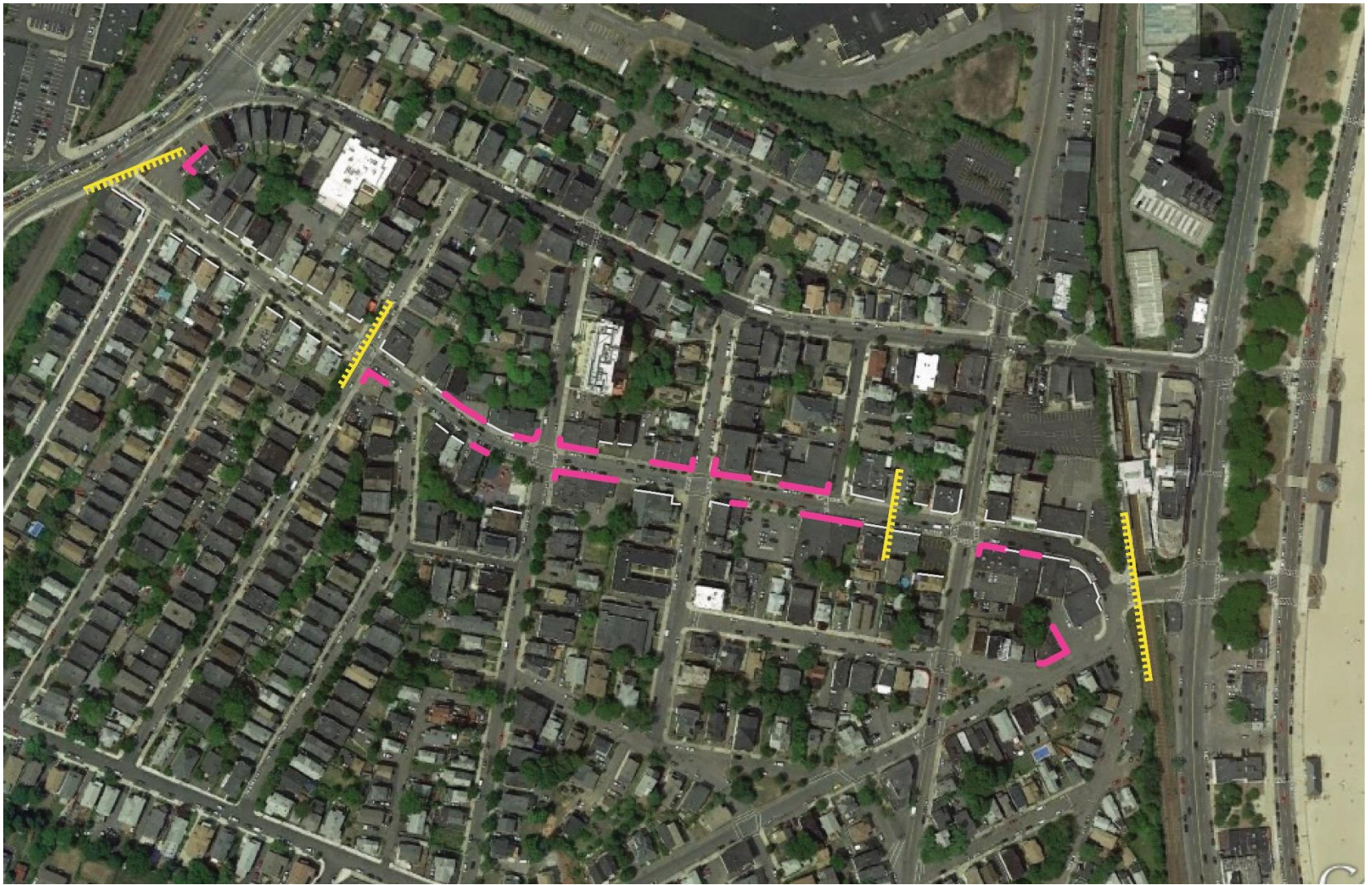
## Recommendations – Connections

- Connect to the neighborhood
  - Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between Shirley Ave and the rest of the neighborhood
  - Consistent streetscape connecting to Ocean Avenue
  - Consistent lighting treatments on both sides of the street
  - Connections to local parks
- Connect to new development
  - Trolley service
  - Seasonal bike share
  - Active connection of business to residents
- Connect to the wider region
  - Marketing connections – maps for distribution, social media, LED screen at Wonderland, media coverage of area
  - Map, historical imagery and “what’s here” at T Revere station













## Recommendations – Short Term

- Hire small business/community liaison
  - Create Shirley Ave Partnership (business association)
  - Revisit previous plans and create prioritization strategy
  - Create multilingual business and permit documents
- Provide more municipal services
  - More trash receptacles and solar recycling bins
  - Active street cleaning
  - Increase community-based policing



## Recommendations – Short Term

- Identity
  - Festivals
  - Murals and banners
  - Test roadway closure during Sandcastle Festival
- Branding
  - Rebrand Shirley Avenue as a multicultural district
  - Signage on the beach at pavilion and at T
  - Destination map



## Recommendations – Implementation

- Funding Strategies
  - Linkage Program between master plan for Wonderland and Suffolk Downs to prevent displacement of businesses and create improvements for Shirley Ave
  - Infrastructure
    - MassDOT Complete Streets funding
    - Chapter 90
    - MassWorks
    - Green community grants
  - Branding
    - MassDevelopment TDI- Technical Assistance
    - MAPC District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)
  - Small businesses assistance
    - Main Streets Partners
    - Small Business Association
    - Free cash to fund city initiatives in Shirley Ave area
  - Property Investments
    - MassDevelopment TDI Equity
    - CDBG Grants



# Questions?