



Urban Land Institute Boston/New England



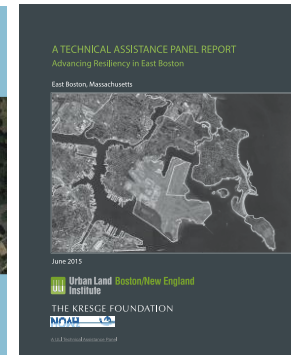
Worcester TAP
January 23, 2022

About ULI – the Urban Land Institute

The Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising nearly 45,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute’s mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide.

ULI at the local level

Boston/New England District Council covers nearly all of New England with over 1,300 Members—developers, architects, planners, public officials, financiers, students, etc.



Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)

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

TAP Impact on Communities:

- **82%** said their behavior and approach to **Municipal Planning and Economic Development Strategies** was affected
- **67%** said there were **increased municipal investments** related to the stated goals and recommendations of their TAP report.
- **62%** said at least **one key developable asset addressed in their TAP report had been redeveloped consistent with ULI Boston/New England recommendations**

Final Deliverable – Written report (10 - 12 weeks) will be available at <http://boston.uli.org>

PANEL SPONSOR:



The Panel

Chair

- **Drew Colbert**, WinnDevelopment

Panelists

- **Doug Manz**, HYM Investments
- **Keri Pyke**, Howard Stein Hudson
- **Amanda Gregoire**, MassDevelopment
- **Aida Diakite**, Trinity Financial
- **Seth Riseman**, Handel Architects
- **Tiffany Gallo**, Timberline Construction
- **Paul Momnie**, Goulston Storrs
- **Abigail Hammett**, BRICK
- **Paul Schlapobersky**, SCB

ULI Staff

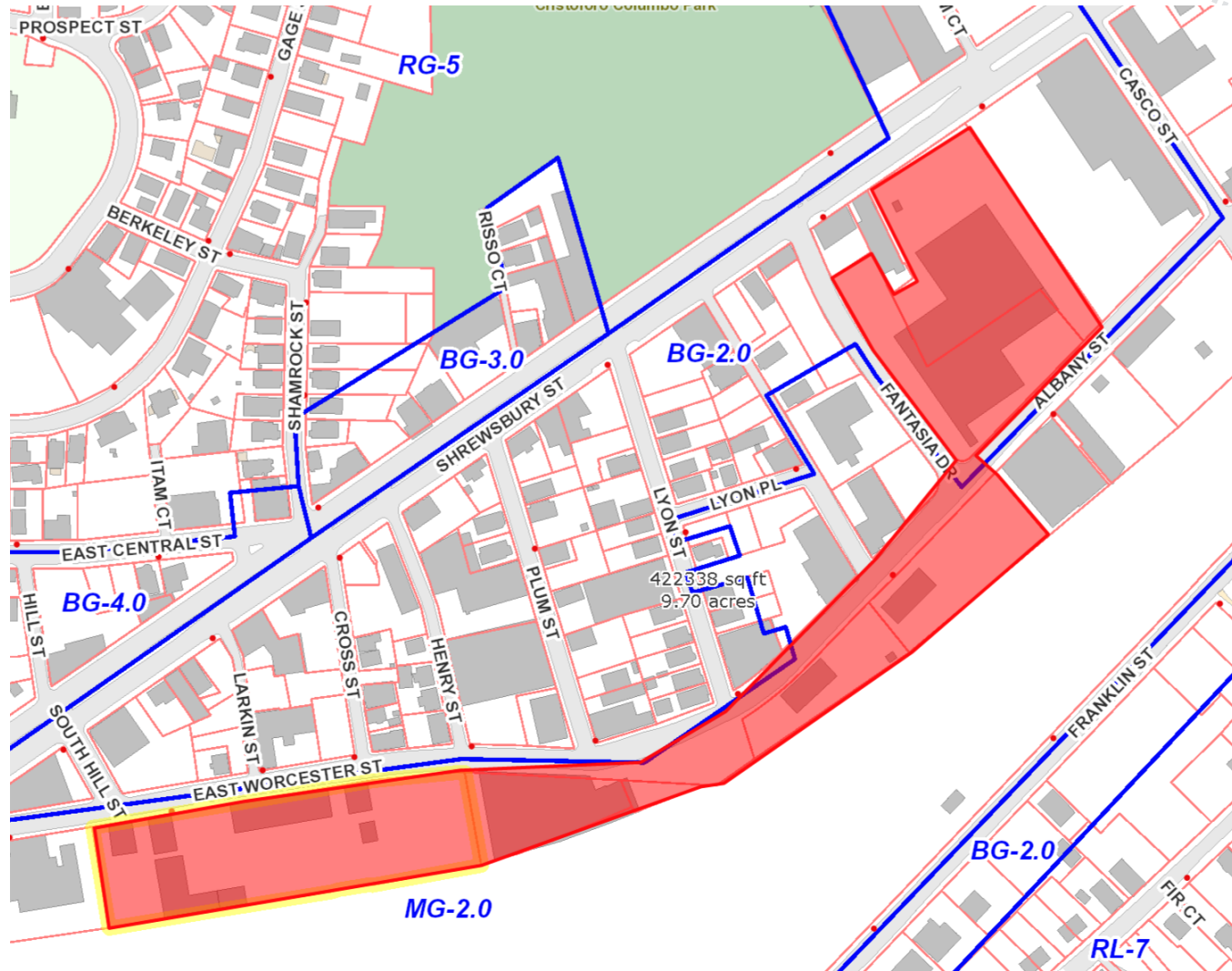
- **Catherine Rollins**, Director
ULI Boston/New England
- **Tim Moore**, Manager
ULI Boston New England

TAP Writer

- **Mike Hoban**



Study Area – East Worcester/Shrewsbury Corridor



Study Area – East Worcester/Shrewsbury Corridor





Panel Assignment: Address These Questions

Key Questions

- Land-use/ Zoning: highest and best-use that also meets the top needs and priorities of the community, including any recommendations relative to the existing zoning in the area.
- Transportation / Infrastructure: considerations relative to parking, traffic flow, and potentially other infrastructure such as water/sewer considerations or other sustainable and resilient design elements.
- Market Feasibility: considerations relative to the proposed vision or land-use and how that relates to current market conditions both in Worcester specifically and beyond. And is the vision consistent with other adopted plans or goals of the City of Worcester at-large.

The Process

Briefing Meeting

Panelists received briefing information from the city regarding the study area including zoning, past studies, current conditions, etc.

Site Visit

Panelists toured the East Worcester Street/Shrewsbury corridor.

Stakeholder Interviews

The panelists interviewed property owners, business owners, and public officials in the DPW Customer Service Operations Office to better understand the needs of district tenants and the community.

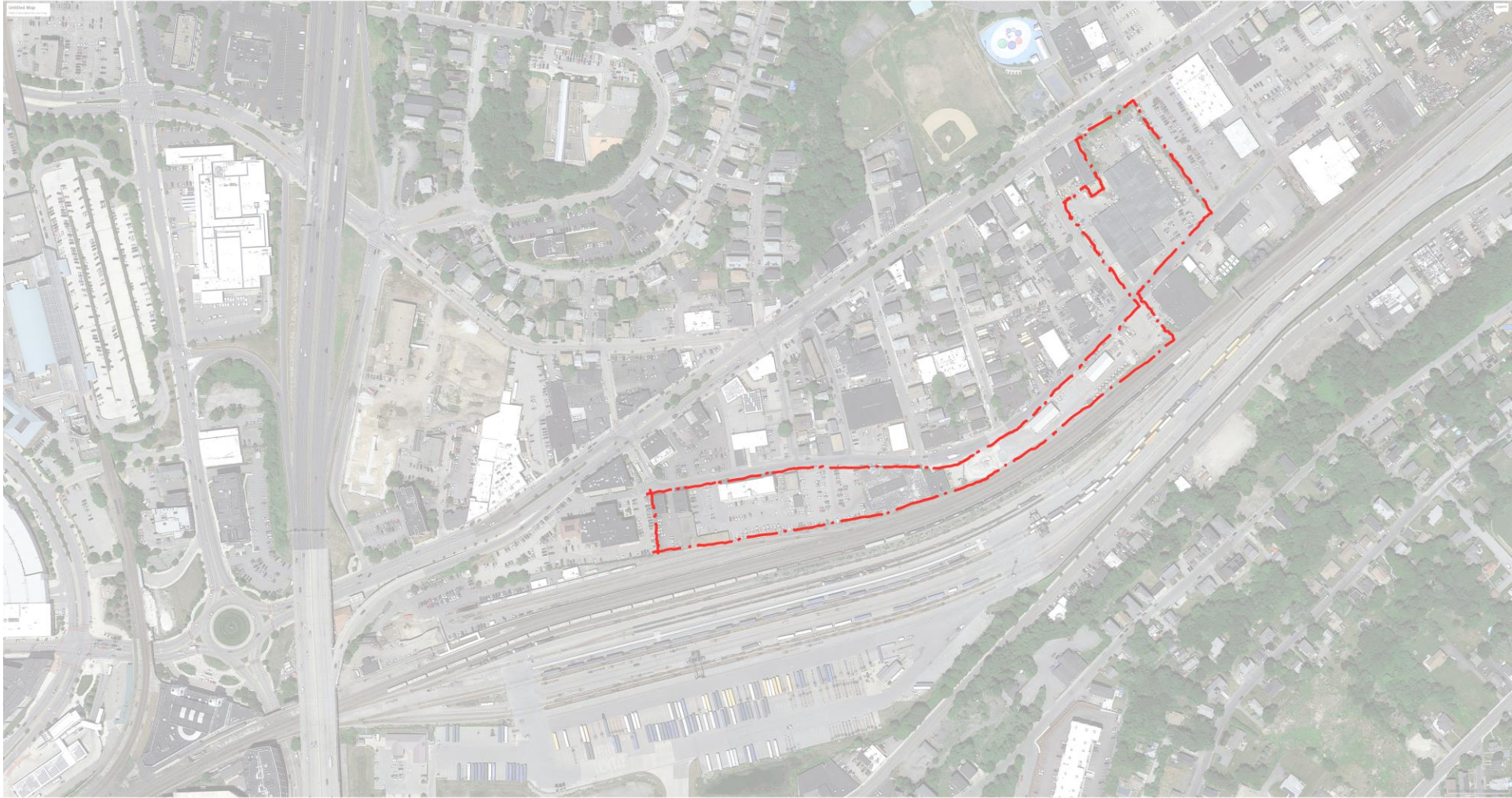


What did we see?

Site Area



DPW Property



Existing Conditions

East Worcester Street



Existing Conditions

Shrewsbury Street





What did we hear?

Stakeholder Themes

- Parking
- Vitality and pedestrian safety
- Importance of land use
- Safety – crime, lighting and proximity
- Connectivity
- Neighborhood character

Assets and Opportunities

- Proximity to job centers
- District connectivity
- Existing park
- Existing neighborhood as mixed-use district
- Existing food & hospitality
- Variety of parcel size
- Width of Shrewsbury
- The nature of the district
- Railway line
- Access to transit
- Street layout (ladder street)
- Secondary street system
- Proven demand

Challenges

- High auto use
- Site dimensions
- Railway line/Rail noise
- Highway off ramp
- Lack of pedestrian protections on Shrewsbury
- Potential contamination/need for remediation
- Possible DPW resistance
- Perceived lack of parking
- Lack of public infrastructure – contributing to safety concerns
- Aggressive pan-handling

Challenges – Current Zoning

- Study area split between two underlying zoning districts (BG-3.0 and MG-2.0)
- New multifamily development not allowed as-of-right in MG-2.0
- Meaningful density requires "active" ground-floor non-residential uses





Recommendations

Suggested Urban Design Framework

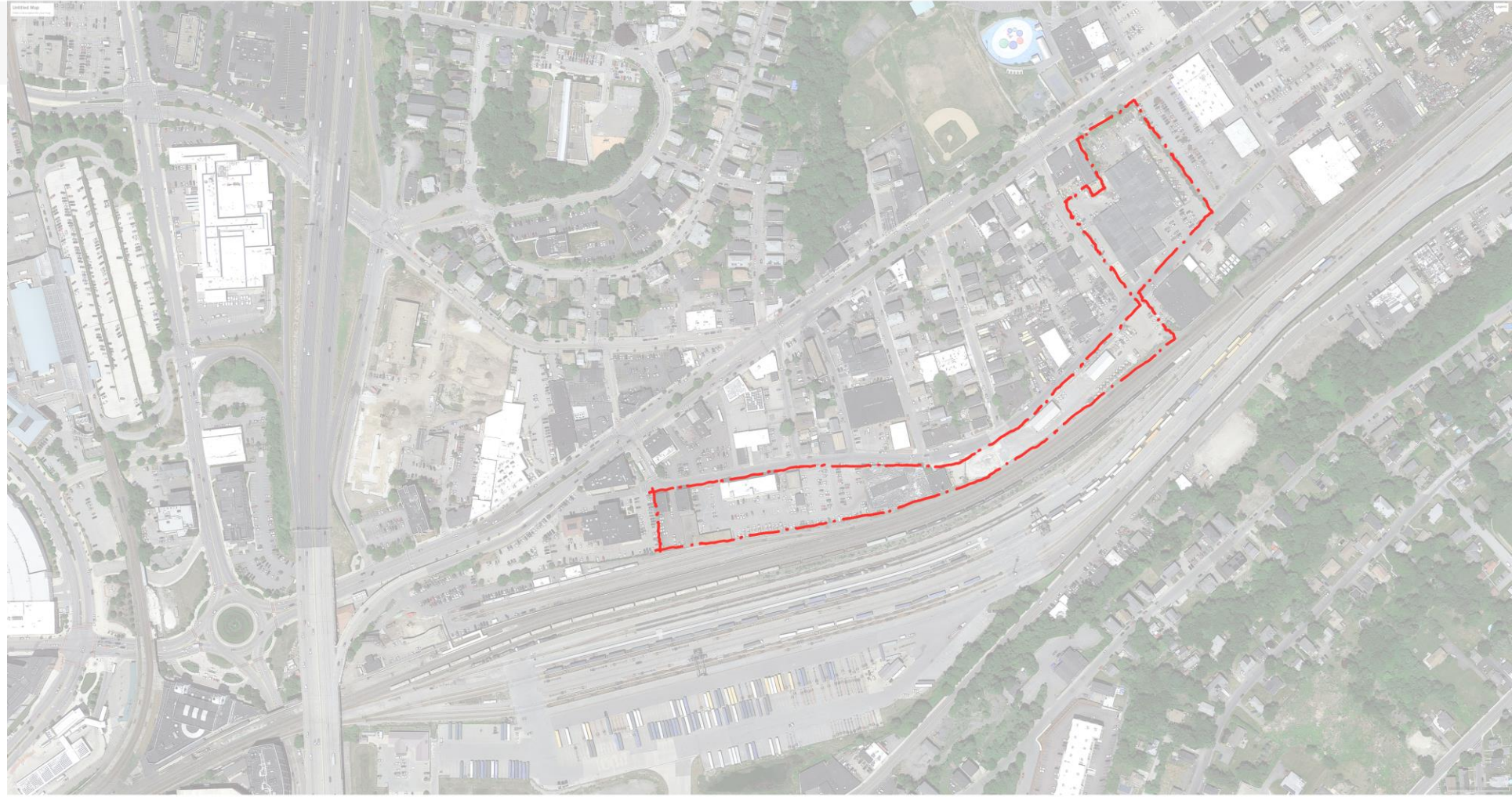
Study Area



Suggested Urban Design Framework

Study Area

DPW Property



Suggested Urban Design Framework

Study Area

DPW Property

Road Network & Crossings



Suggested Urban Design Framework

Study Area

DPW Property

Road Network & Crossings

Create A Green Network



Suggested Urban Design Framework

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Create A Green Network

Calm/Green Shrewsbury Street



Suggested Urban Design Framework

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Calm/Green Shrewsbury Street

Synergize Junctions At Shrewsbury



Suggested Urban Design Framework

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Create A Green Network

Calm/Green Shrewsbury Street

Synergize Junctions At Shrewsbury

Strengthen Pedestrian Routes N-S



Recommendations: Land Use and Zoning

- **Eliminate ground-floor non-commercial requirement (except on Shrewsbury Street)**
 - Supports existing retail/restaurant uses
 - Allows for dense residential along E. Worcester/Albany Street
- **Create height step-back from Shrewsbury Street**
 - Encourages pedestrian scale
 - Avoids impacts to Cristoforo Colombo park

Sculpting of Heights



Suggested Urban Design Framework



Suggested Urban Design Framework



Precedents – Mixed-Use Development & Step-Backs



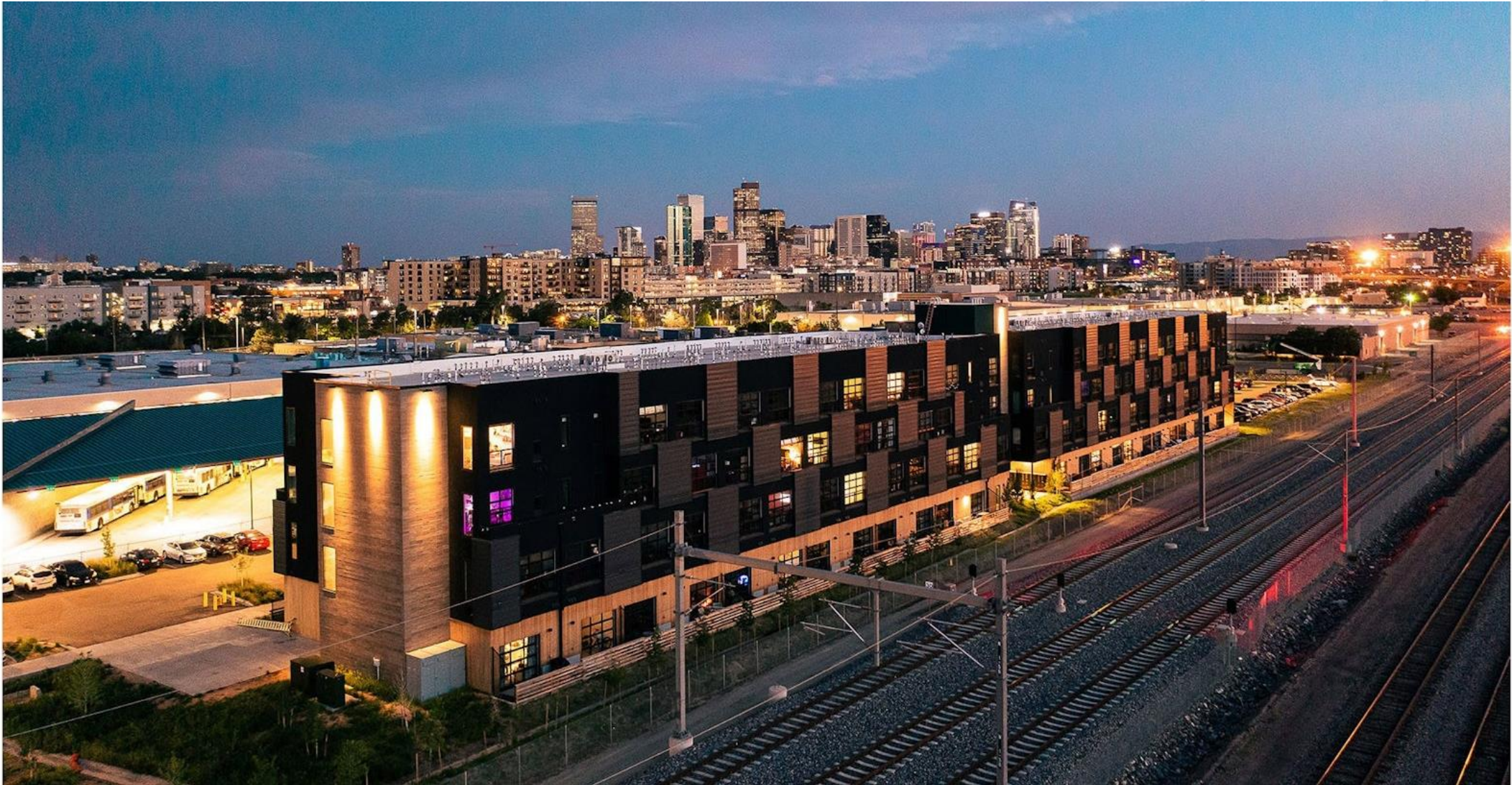
Precedents – Taxi Development, Denver, CO: Interim Site Use “FR8scape”



Precedents – Taxi, Denver, CO



Precedents – Kabin, Denver, CO



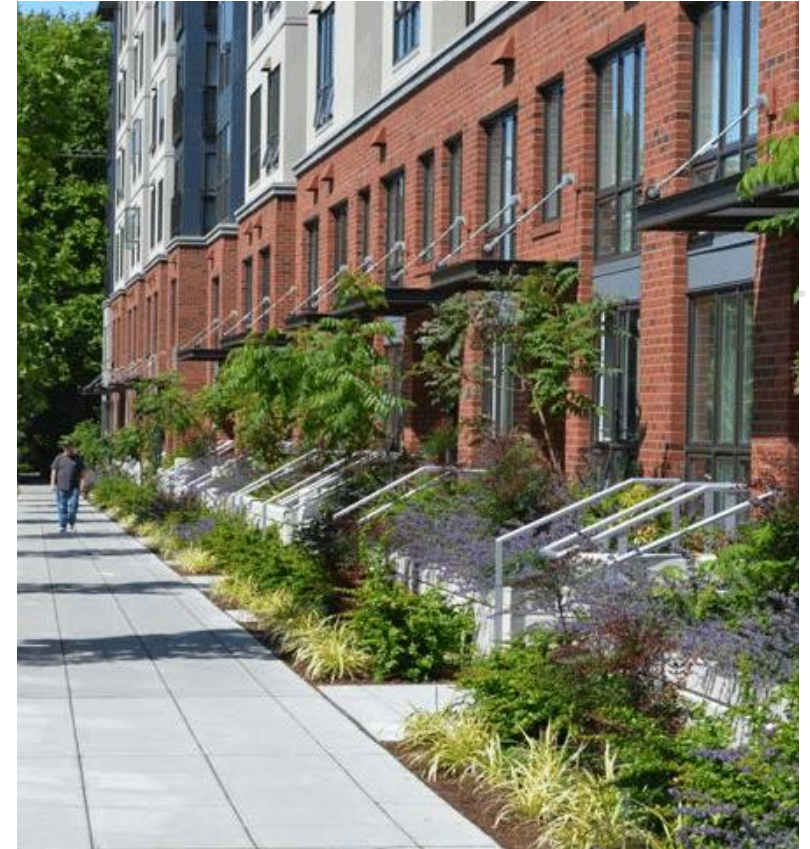
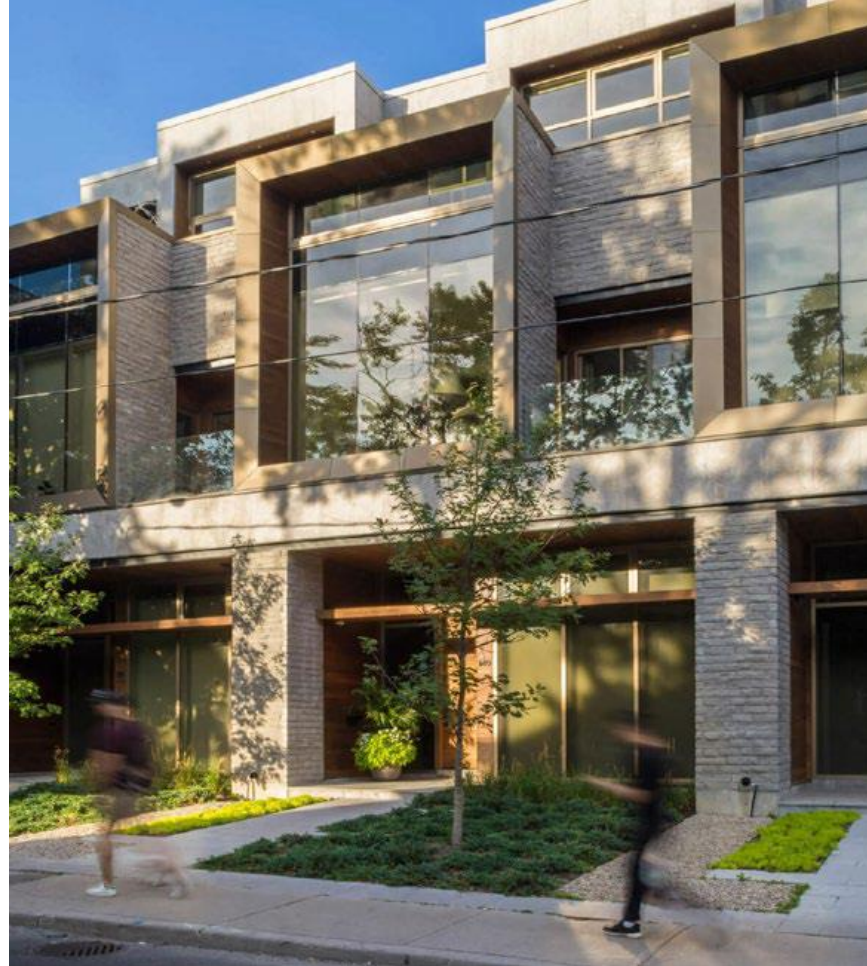
Precedents – Ground Floor Retail



Precedents – Active Residential Ground Floor Uses



Precedents – Low-Rise Resi w/Direct Entry Units



Precedents – Mid- and High-Rise



Transportation and Infrastructure

Assets and Opportunities

- Proximity to job centers
- District connectivity
- Width of Shrewsbury Street
- Access to transit
- Street layout (ladder street)
- Secondary street system

Challenges

- Highway off ramp
- Lack of pedestrian protections on Shrewsbury Street
- Perceived lack of parking
- Lack of public infrastructure – contributing to safety concerns

Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

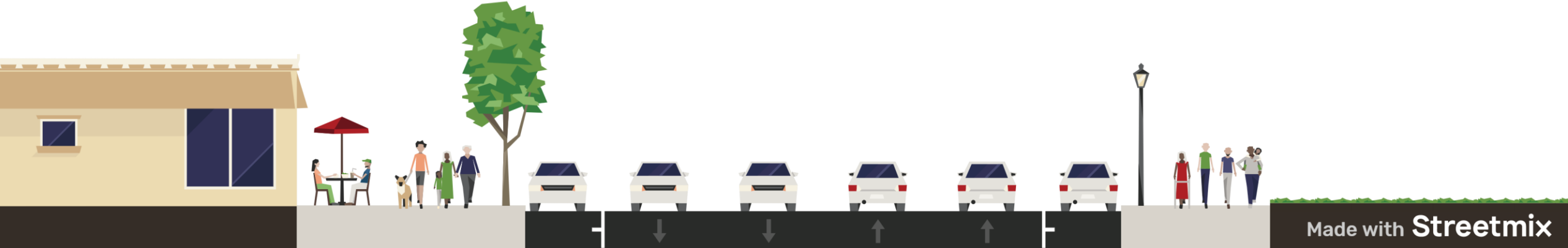
Shrewsbury Street - Existing



Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

Shrewsbury Street - Options

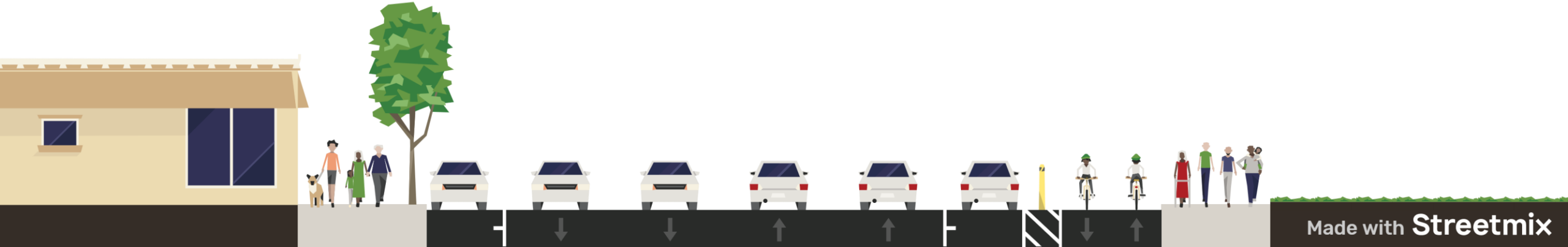
Shrewsbury St - Option 1



Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

Shrewsbury Street - Options

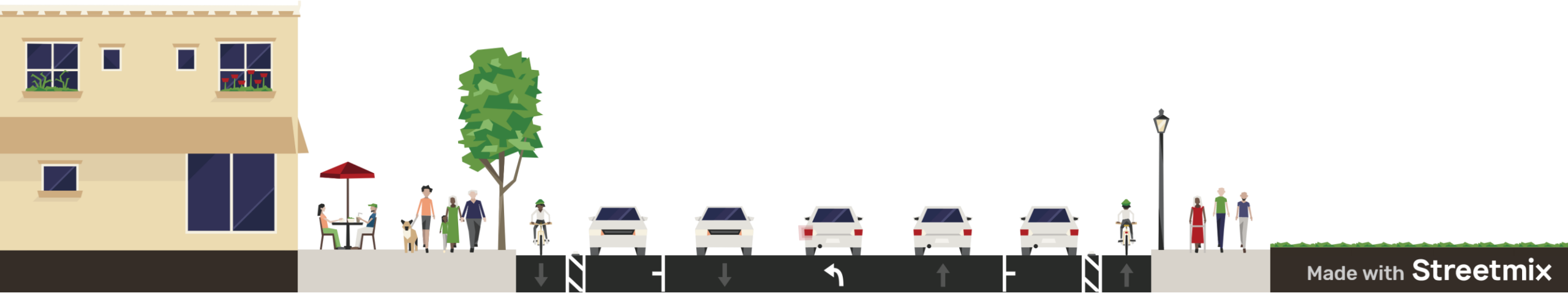
Shrewsbury St - Option 2



Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

Shrewsbury Street - Options

Shrewsbury St - Option 3



Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

Shrewsbury Street - Options

Shrewsbury St - Option 4



Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

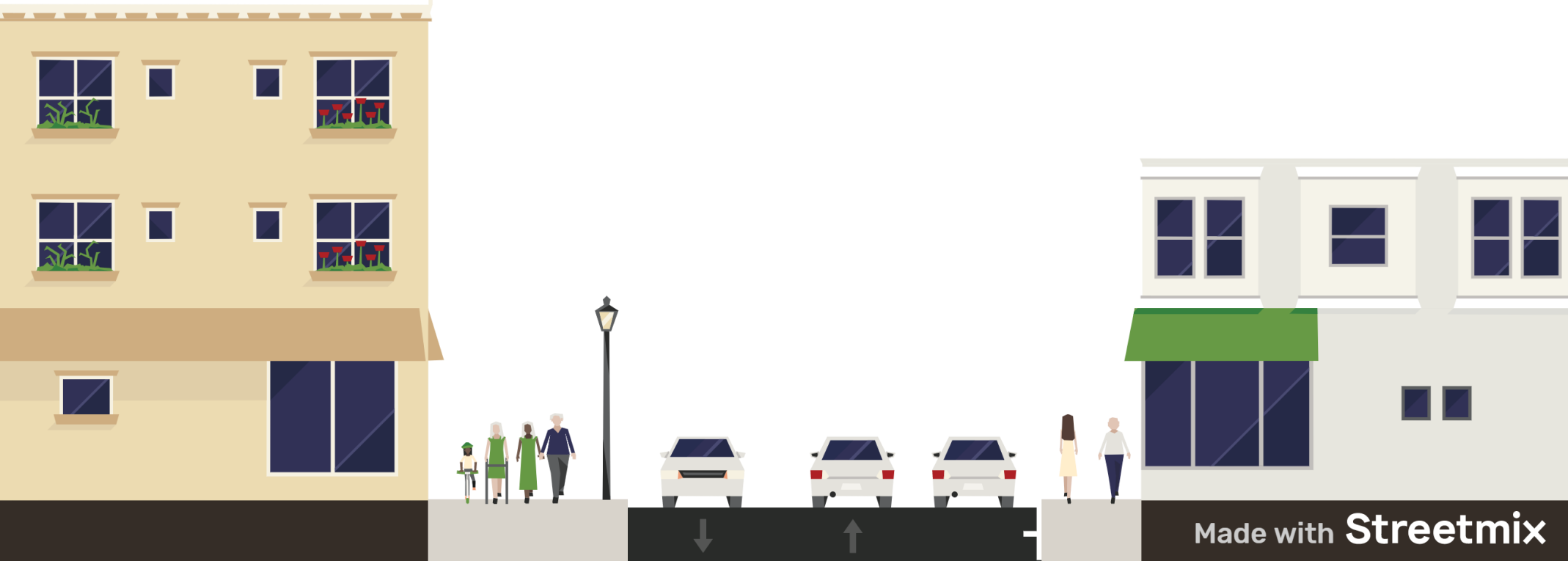
East Worcester/Albany Street – Existing



Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

East Worcester/Albany Street – Options

E. Worcester/Albany St - Option 1



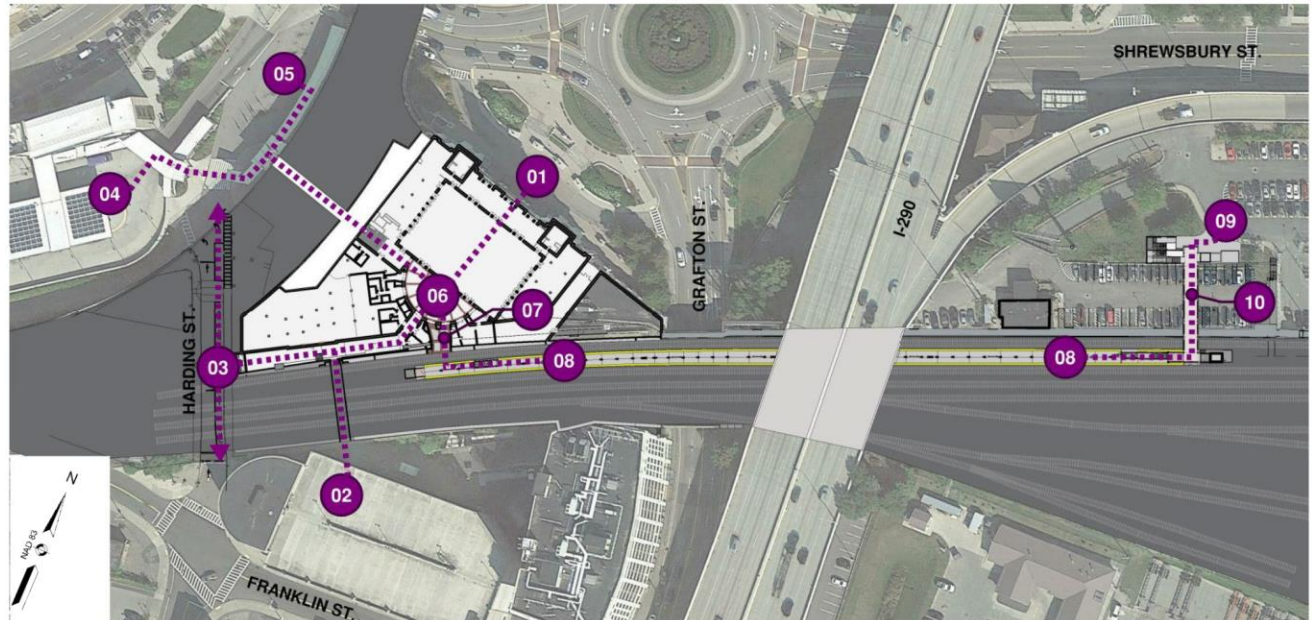
Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

Ladder Streets - Circulation



Recommendations: Transportation and Infrastructure

- District-wide street lighting improvements
 - Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Shrewsbury Street – pedestrian safety/traffic calming improvements
 - Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) or
 - Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
 - Raised crosswalks
- Remove I-290 NB off ramp to Shrewsbury Street
 - Create development parcel or open space opportunity
- MBTA Commuter Rail enhancements
 - Enhance connection to transit, Downtown & Canal District

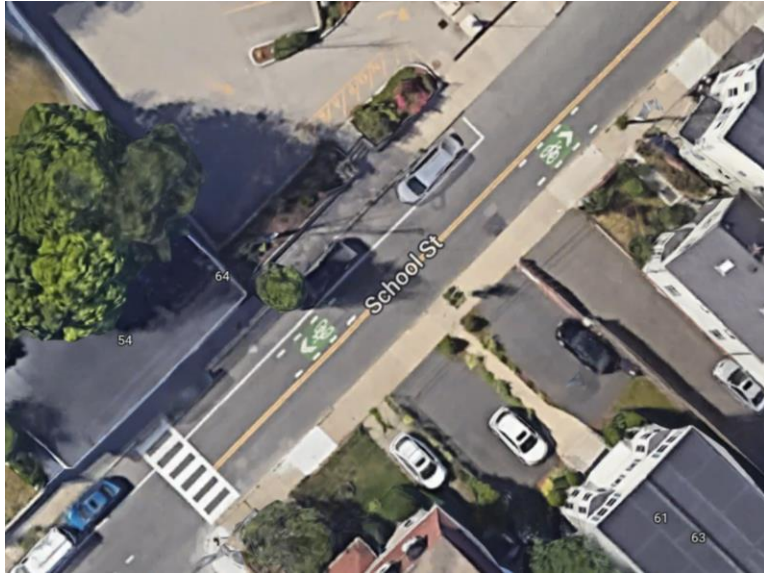


Precedent Examples: Transportation and Infrastructure

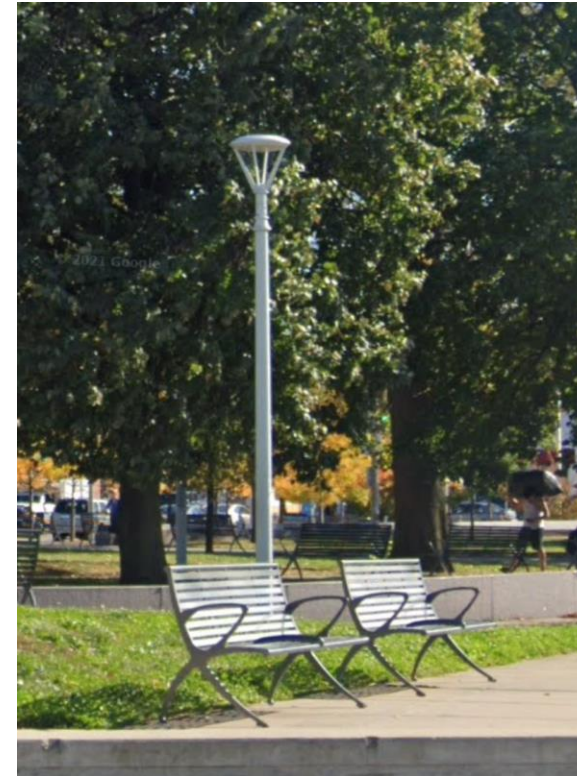


Boylston Street near Fenway Park, Boston MA

Precedent Examples: Transportation and Infrastructure



Priority sharrow, School St, Everett, MA



Pedestrian-scale lighting, Central Square, East Boston, MA



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon, Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA



DPW Parcels

Assets: DPW Site

- Larger scale of parcels
- Variety of financing opportunities
- (E) multi-story historic buildings
- Thriving mixed use neighborhood (especially F&B)
- Opportunity for overflow from other districts
- Quality of street frontage
- Supportive stakeholders

Challenges: DPW Site

- **Parking**
- **Contamination**
- **Relocation 180,000 SF of (E) DWP operations**
- **Condition of infrastructure (roadways and utilities)**
- **Integrate new development with (E) neighborhood**
- **Proximity to rail**

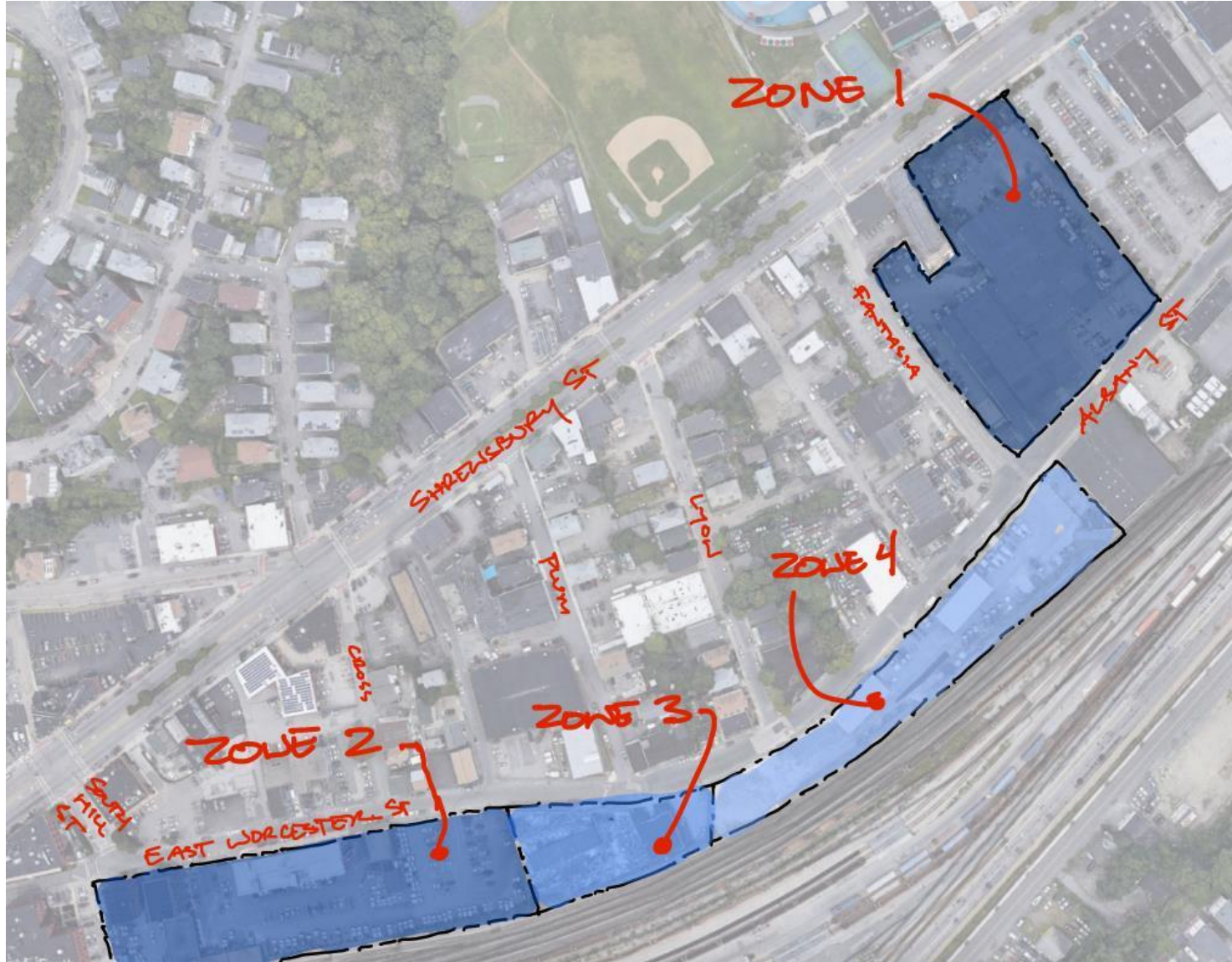
Our Goals for the DPW Site

- Leverage city assets into redevelopment & economic development opportunities
- Create 18/7 activity on the street
- Improved feeling of safety
- Help solve parking and right of way issues
- Maintain and build on existing neighborhood character
- Leverage existing buildings
- Support (E) local businesses
- Neighborhood-wide infrastructure and streetscape improvements
- Thoughtful Phasing of projects

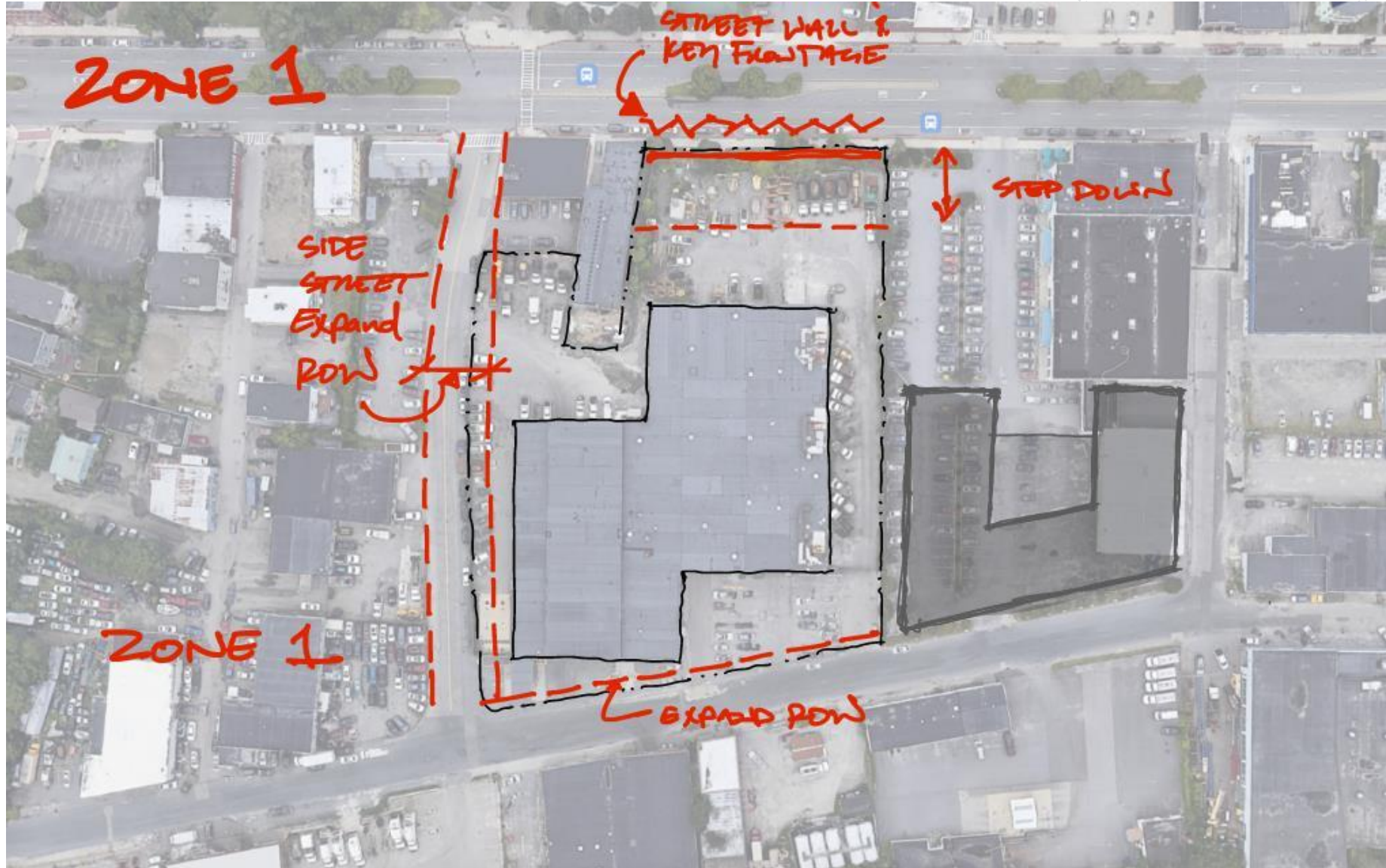


Proposed Project Phasing

Proposed Project Phasing



Zone 1 - 29 Albany Street / Central Garage



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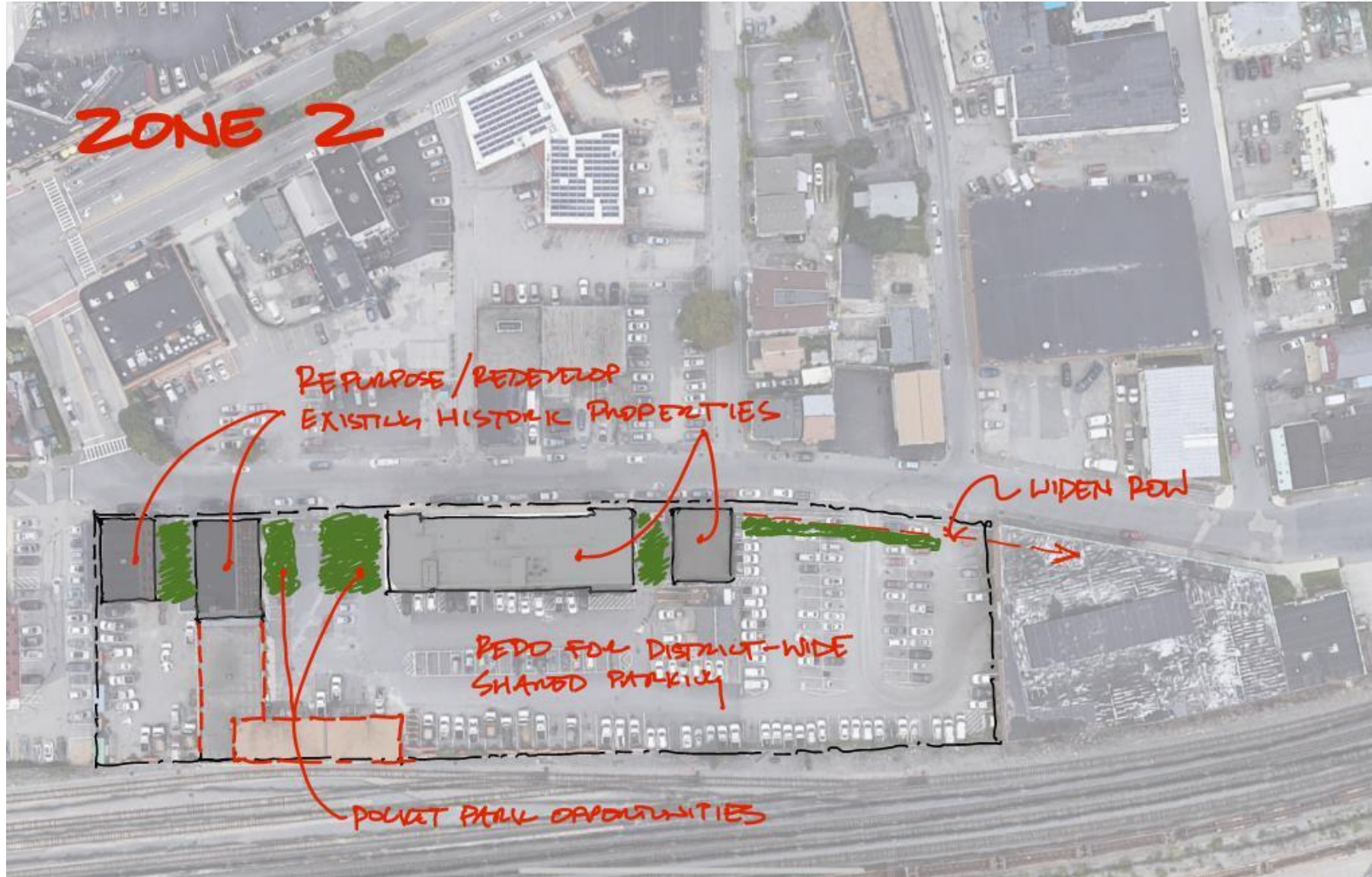
Zone 1 - 29 Albany Street / Central Garage



Zone 1 - 29 Albany Street / Central Garage



Zone 2 – 20 East Worcester



Zone 2 – 20 East Worcester - Adaptive Re-use Opportunities



Small Businesses & Co-Working



Artist Studios



Hotel Conversion



Non-Profit Organizations

Zone 2 – 20 East Worcester - Adaptive Re-use Opportunities



Distillery



Greentown Labs Type Incubators

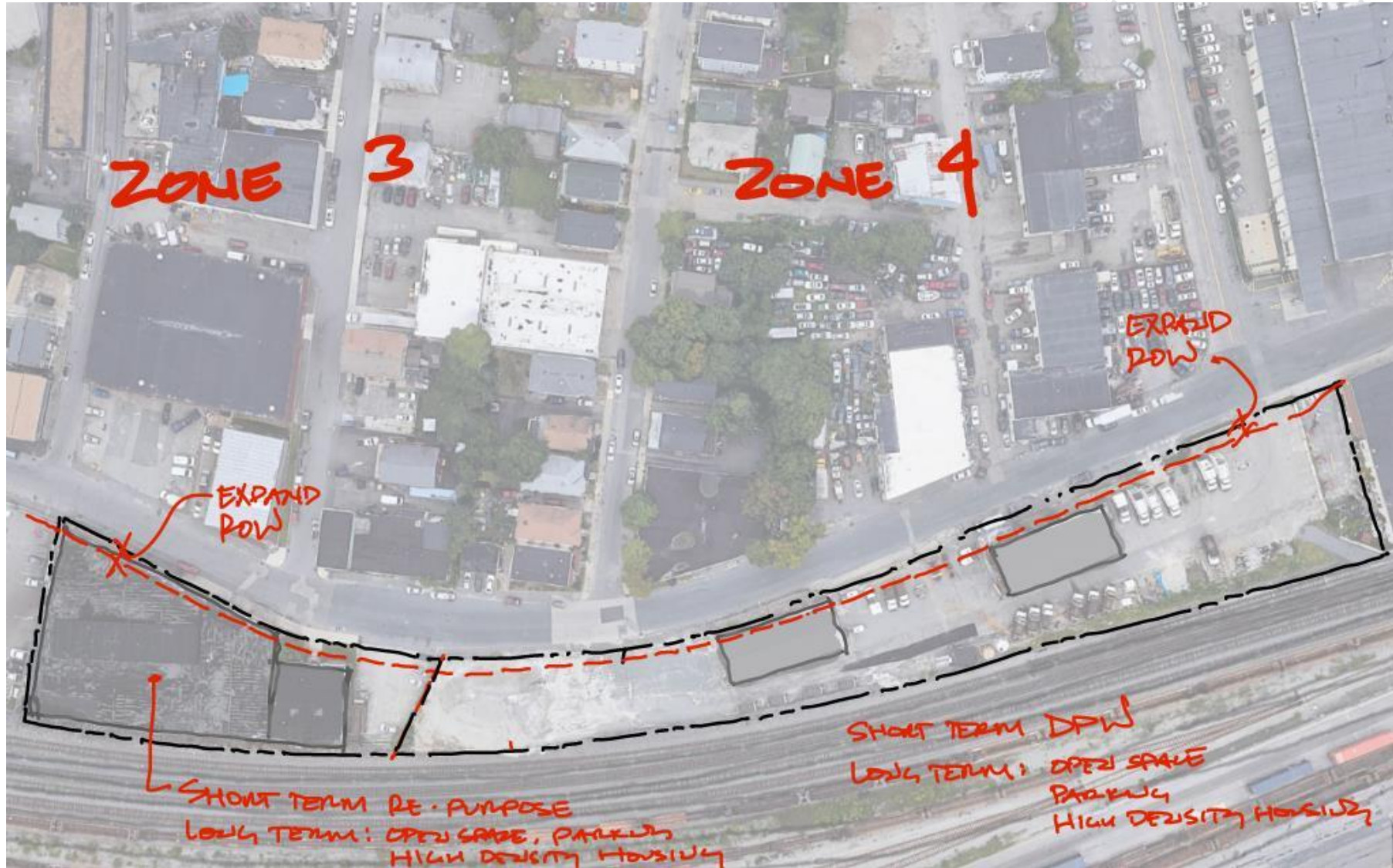


Life Science Incubator & Support Companies

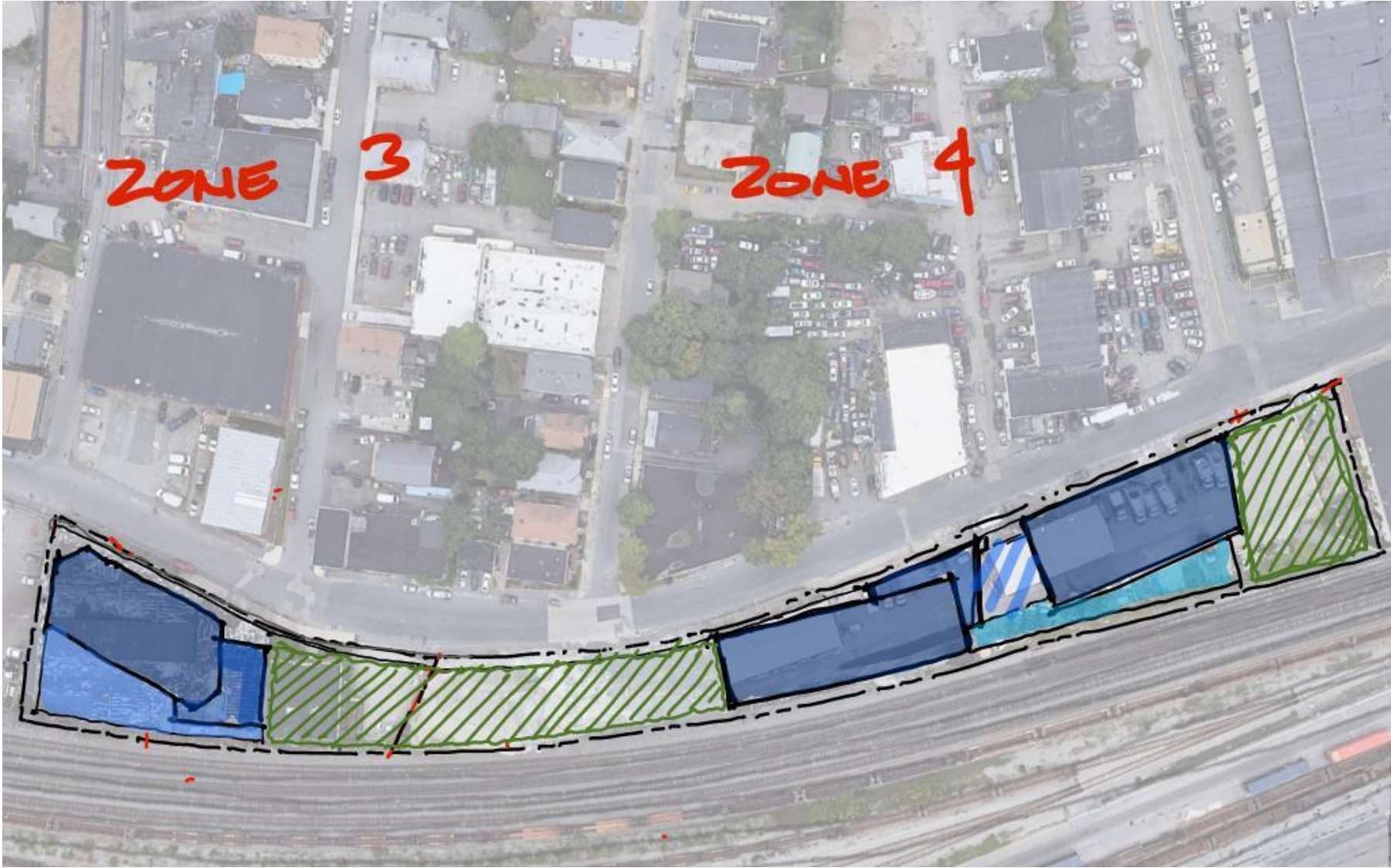


Residential Service Based Retail

Zones 3 & 4 - Interim Uses



Zones 3 & 4 - Full Build-Out



Zones 3 & 4 - Full Build-Out – Parcel Swap



Zones 3 & 4 - Full Build-Out – Many Opportunities



Different Housing Typologies



Open Space



Parking Garages

Infrastructure Improvements



Coordinate with Existing District Signage Standards



Electrical Supply & Vehicle Infrastructure



Place Finding Lighting



New Sidewalks, Safety Lighting, Paving E. Worcester/Albany



Funding & Resources

Supplemental funding and financing resources

- **MassWorks** - Capital funds for public infrastructure projects that support and accelerate housing production, spur private development, and create jobs throughout the Commonwealth.
- **Site Readiness Program** – Funding for site preparation and predevelopment and permitting activities for large scale industrial, commercial, and mixed-use sites.
- **Brownfields Grants** - Finances the environmental assessment and remediation of brownfield sites.
- **Underutilized Properties Program** – Predevelopment and capital funding for projects that will improve, rehabilitate or redevelop blighted, abandoned, vacant or underutilized properties.
- **Real Estate Technical Assistance** – Small grants for re-use of municipally owned properties.
- **Community Planning Grant** – Technical assistance for Community Planning i.e. corridor studies.
- **Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funding** - Helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities.
- **Housing Choice** - Flexible grant for planning, site prep, building, and infrastructure activities.

Supplemental funding and financing resources

- **District Improvement Financing (DIF)** - A locally-enacted tool that enables a municipality to identify and capture incremental tax revenues from new private investment in a specific area and direct them toward public improvement and economic development projects.
- **Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP)** - Tax incentives to developers to undertake new construction or substantial rehabilitation of properties for lease or sale as multi-unit market rate residential housing
- **Brownfields Loans** – Up to \$250,000 for environmental assessment and \$750,000 for environmental clean-up.
- **MA Brownfields Tax Credit (BTC)** - MA tax credit for cleaning up contaminated property.
- **Tax Exempt Bonds** – Tax-exempt financing for 501(c)3 nonprofit real estate and equipment, affordable rental housing, public infrastructure projects etc.
- **The Infrastructure Investment Incentive Program “I-Cubed” Program** – Public-private partnership that allows new state tax revenues generated from private economic development projects to cover the costs of the public infrastructure improvements needed to support the project.

Q&A

Worcester Technical Assistance Program
January 23rd, 2023