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Town of North Reading  
Massachusetts

Community Planning

TOWN CLERK  
NORTH READING, MA

## MINUTES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Mr. Warren Pearce, Chairperson called the Tuesday, June 5, 2018 meeting of the Community Planning Commission to order at 6:30p.m. in Room 14 of the North Reading Town Hall, 235 North Street, North Reading, MA.

### MEMBERS

PRESENT: Warren Pearce, Chairperson  
William Bellavance, Vice Chairperson  
Ryan Carroll

### STAFF

PRESENT: Danielle McKnight, AICP  
Town Planner/Community Planning Administrator

### OTHERS

PRESENT: Wil Birkmaier, Kathleen Roy, Rich Wallner, Dan Mills, Diane Downing,  
Chris Herrick, Suresh Rao, Art DiNatalie (members of Advisory Group for  
Master Plan)

Carlos Montanez of MAPC and Danielle McKnight gave introductions. Mr. Montanez passed out handout materials meant to spark discussion about concerns/wants/important focus areas for the town and the master planning process. He also asked attendees to mark up the sheets with comments for him to read and compile after the meeting.

- Main concerns and topics of discussion expressed at the meeting: high housing costs/living costs, planning for our aging demographic, providing housing options/types, lack of public transportation, possible loss of young professionals
- Significant focus on the lack of affordable housing for aging residents – cited Lynnfield LIFE as an example of an option for seniors that North Reading doesn't offer
- Having some smaller apartments and other housing options would be desirable. Few condos available.
- Public transportation would be a good goal
- Lack of a vibrant town center
- Our zoning contributes to high housing costs (large lot sizes and subdivision requirements)
- Sewerage will be important (Main St., Concord St., etc. Most of the town should stay rural – residential areas not to be sewerred). Possibilities for the town center (connection to High School package plant)
- Could Peabody Court senior housing be renovated? More senior housing is needed.
- Mixed use is common in other towns.
- What brought residents here? Do they expect to move out? Why? What keeps people here?
- Important considerations: security, staying in the community quality of life
- For commercial development, a lot of people like Lynnfield's Market Street
- Lexington a great example of a community center. Consider combining Peabody Court and Town Hall with a community center? What about the 235 North St. property? Consider moving town hall services to a more central area?
- Some want to see a town center that's more developed, such as a mini downtown Reading with small scale commercial (example of areas for this: Nan's Café, gas station)
- Town Center makes more sense for development, but Rt. 28 is more practical.
- Could have more density on Rt. 62 and 28, cooperate with Stop and Shop, use a shared parking arrangement, civic center, town events, etc. Work with private property owners to make something like this happen.
- Bike path potential from Stop & Shop to Town Center along railroad bed would be desirable
- Sewer should be a real focus.

### Minutes

Mr. Bellavance moved, seconded by Mr. Carroll and voted 3-0: (Mr. Hayden & Mr. Cody absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to approve the minutes of May 15, 2018 as written.

Mr. Bellavance moved, seconded by Mr. Carroll and voted 3-0: (Mr. Hayden & Mr. Cody absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to approve the minutes of May 21, 2018 as written.

Mr. Bellavance moved, seconded by Mr. Carroll and voted 3-0: (Mr. Hayden & Mr. Cody absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to approve the minutes of May 22, 2018 as written.

### **3 Main Street/Lobster Claw – minor modification**


Mrs. McKnight informed the board that the applicant was not ready to attend the meeting. He told her that they would be requesting time in July.

### **Planning Administrator Updates**

- May 17 (this thurs) at 6 p.m., room 14: Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness draft plan public meeting/listening session. Draft plan:  
[https://www.northreadingma.gov/sites/northreadingma/files/uploads/draft\\_nr\\_mvp\\_plan\\_043018.pdf](https://www.northreadingma.gov/sites/northreadingma/files/uploads/draft_nr_mvp_plan_043018.pdf)
- May 17 at 7:30, room 14: Swan Pond Road neighborhood meeting
- May 21, 6:30, room 14: Board of Selectmen's meeting:
  - Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness draft plan
  - Swan Pond Road hearing – Citizen's Petition to fund paving
  - Informational hearings on June Town Meeting Warrant Articles
  - Metro North Regional Housing Services – renewal of Inter-municipal Agreement (Reading, Saugus, Wilmington and North Reading). No significant changes to terms, minor adjustment to fee, already included in CPC budget for FY19
- May 22, 7:00 p.m., High School, Distance Learning Lab: Housing Production Plan, final community meeting, presentation of draft plan
- June 14 – ZBA meeting to hear appeal of CPC decision on 197 Main St. (will not be heard at May meeting)

Adjournment at 9:00PM

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jonathan Cody, Clerk



## AGENDA

### Advisory Group Working Session North Reading Master Plan 2018-2028

Tuesday, June 5, 2018 – 6:30pm to 8pm  
Town Hall – Room 14 – North Reading, MA

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#### 6:30pm INTRODUCTIONS & OVERVIEW

- ✓ purpose & overview
- ✓ what is a master plan? why master plan?
- ✓ process outline

#### 6:50pm VISIONING EXERCISE

- ✓ “what’s in your vision?” guided discussion exercise
- ✓ brainstorming ideas for drafting of preliminary vision statement
- ✓ to be subsequently revised during public workshops and advisory group discussions

#### 7:20pm GUIDED DISCUSSION QUESTIONNAIRE

- ✓ “how to influence growth, enhancement and preservation?” guided discussion exercise
- ✓ obtain feedback from Advisory Group
- ✓ generate survey question ideas for online community polling

#### 8:00pm MEETING ADJOURNED

ABOUT MAPC

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is the regional planning agency for greater Boston and is committed to smart growth and equity for all. MAPC is assisting the Town of North Reading in creating a master plan to serve as its decision-making guide for land use, development, and preservation over the ten year period ending in 2028. The master plan will build upon nine pertinent, recently-completed planning studies<sup>1</sup> in order to propose a multi-pronged short-term and mid-term strategy for the Town achieving its own community development goals. The master plan will recommend implementation actions to help the Town invest in and work toward its own goals to influence its own future.

TENTATIVE REVISED PLANNING PROCESS



- June
- **First Advisory Group working session**
  - **Online Community Survey** – live throughout summer 2018
- July – mid/late
- **First Public Workshop** – date TBD
- August – mid/late
- **Second Advisory Group working session** – date TBD
- September – mid/late
- **Second Public Workshop** – date TBD
- October
- **Drafting master plan document**
  - **Draft plan circulation** – two-week comment period for Town Planner, Advisory Group and Planning Board members before online posting for general public 3-4 week comment period
- November
- **Public online comment period**
- December
- **Planning Board presentation**

MORE INFORMATION

- Danielle McKnight, AICP, North Reading Town Planner/Community Planning Administrator at [dmcknight@northreadingma.gov](mailto:dmcknight@northreadingma.gov)
- Carlos Javier Montañez, MAPC Senior Regional Planner at [cmontanez@mapc.org](mailto:cmontanez@mapc.org)

### Why Master Plan?

- ✓ **IDENTIFY** preservation, enhancement & growth areas
- ✓ **LEAVE A LEGACY** for the next generation
- ✓ **INFORM DECISIONS** on policies, **BY-LAWS & ZONING**
- ✓ **PROVIDE** mutual **CERTAINTY** for residents & businesses alike
- ✓ **PROVIDE CONTEXT** for town **DECISIONS**



<sup>1</sup> Housing Production Plan 2018; Hazard Mitigation Plan 2016; Town Facilities/Buildings Plan (underway 2017-2018); Sewer/Tax Revenue Study; Complete Streets Prioritization Plan; Main Street Streetscape Concept Plan; Paratransit Study 2017; Suburban Mobility Study; and Priority Mapping Study.

*vision statement exercise*  
**WHAT'S IN YOUR VISION?**

**ADVISORY GROUP DISCUSSION - 5 JUNE 2018** - *please complete and return to MAPC at end of meeting.*



vision statements

Are aspirational, brief, general summary statements that set the tone for community master plans. The community visioning process helps a community evaluate its historic and present-day assets, and imagine how and where it should grow in order to leave a legacy for the next generation. Visioning helps residents and business owners identify overarching priorities for the preservation, enhancement, and growth of different areas, and sets the tone for a wider array of more specific master plan elements and goals. Ideally, these goals and strategies help frame more specific zoning amendments, and review and approval of future development projects.

please provide some insight into the following

THINGS ABOUT OR AREAS OF NORTH READING THAT ARE SPECIAL AND SHOULD BE PRESERVED

THINGS ABOUT OR AREAS OF NORTH READING THAT SHOULD CHANGE, GROW OR BE ENHANCED

IN THE FUTURE, HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN NORTH READING WILL...

affordable/workforce options?



townhouses/multifamily?



two-family duplexes?



pocket neighborhoods?



senior/aging-in-place options?



small lot single family dwellings?



clustered open space subdivisions?



mixed-use?



accessory dwelling units?



IN THE FUTURE, BUSINESSES AND SHOPPING IN NORTH READING WILL...

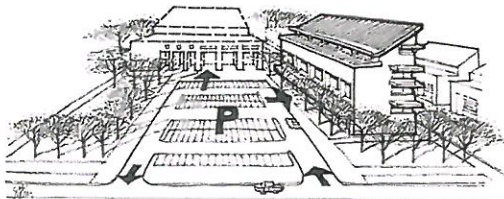
- ☐ *leisure retail & outdoor spaces conducive to socializing?*
- ☐ *reduce residential tax burden?*
- ☐ *create more job opportunities?*



- ☐ *major employers partner for commuting solutions?*



- ☐ *shared parking solutions?*



IN THE FUTURE, THE PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS IN TOWN WILL...

- ☐ *interconnected with trails?*
- ☐ *community events & programming?*
- ☐ *interface with new developments?*



IN THE FUTURE, MY NEIGHBORS,  
PARENTS, AND/OR CHILDREN MIGHT GET  
AROUND TOWN BY...

- ☐ *safe, connected bicycle trails?*
- ☐ *on-demand micro-transit partnerships?*
- ☐ *more connected sidewalks?*



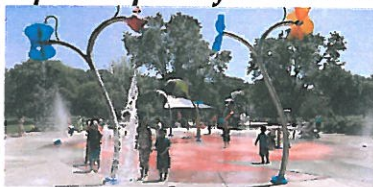
IN THE FUTURE, THE TOWN'S COMMUNITY  
FACILITIES AND TOWN CENTER WILL...

- ☐ *prominent outdoor space along Main St?*
- ☐ *consolidated Town/community center?*
- ☐ *enhanced services & safety?*

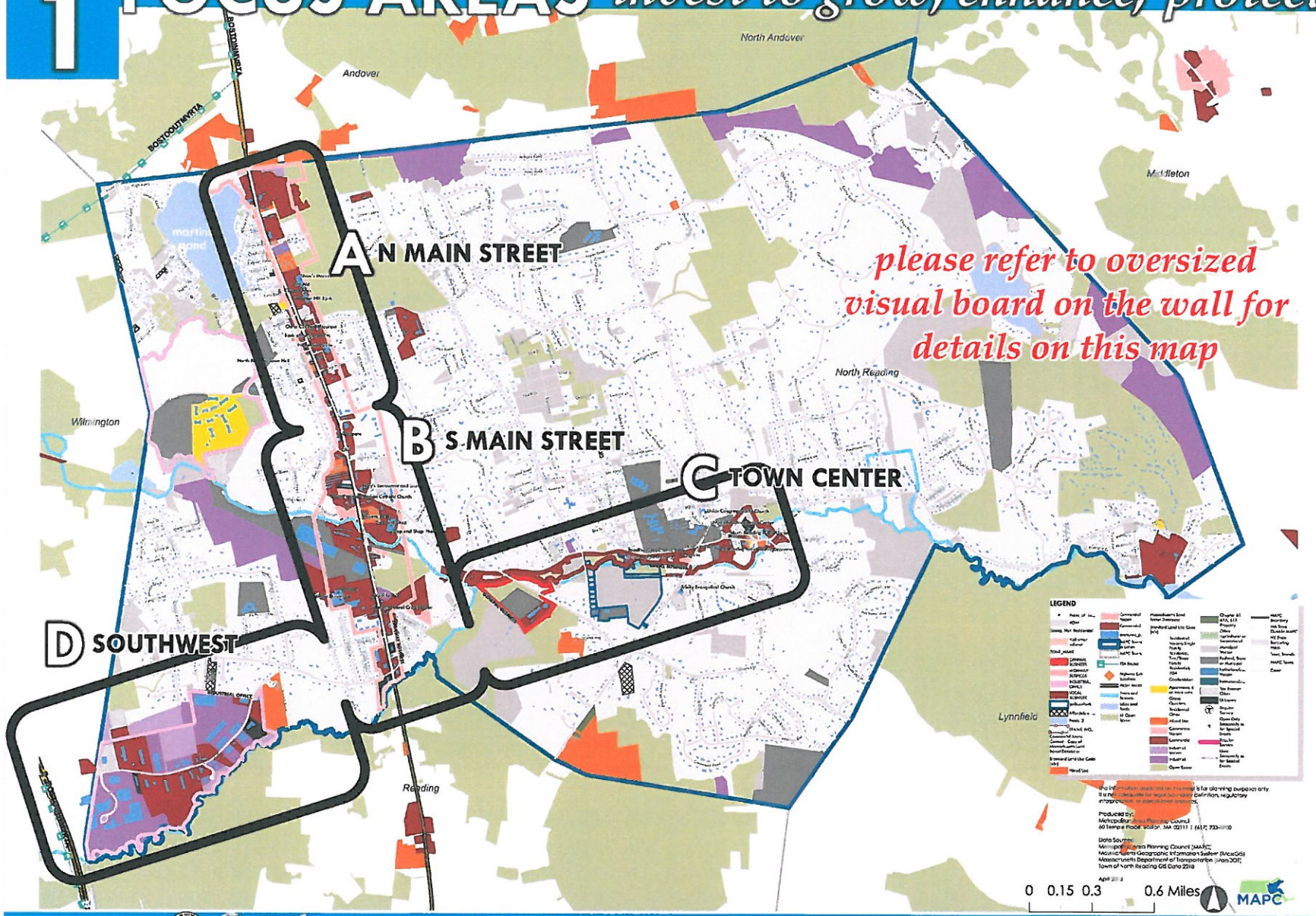


IN THE FUTURE, OUR NEIGHBORS,  
CHILDREN AND/OR GRANDCHILDREN  
WILL ENJOY THE FOLLOWING LEGACY  
PROJECT WE HAVE INVESTED IN  
TODAY...

- ☐ *landmark public sculpture?*
- ☐ *outdoor amphitheater?*
- ☐ *splash park for children?*



# 1 FOCUS AREAS *invest to grow, enhance, protect*



Advisory Group  
North Reading  
5 June 2018



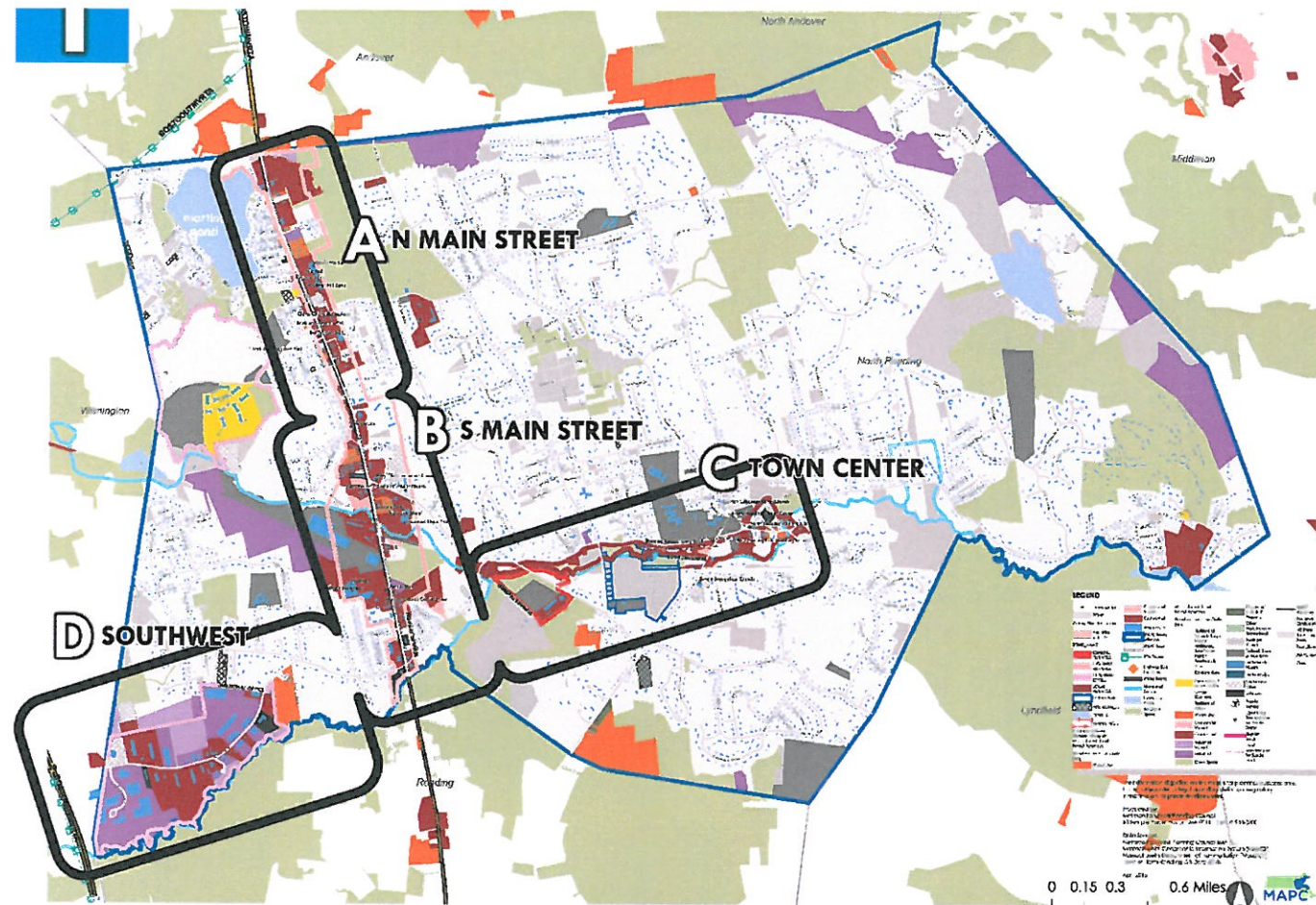
north reading master plan 2018-2028

WORKING MAP - JUNE 2018

*guided discussion questionnaire*  
**HOW TO INFLUENCE AREAS** *for* **GROWTH, ENHANCEMENT & PRESERVATION**

**ADVISORY GROUP DISCUSSION - 5 JUNE 2018** - *please complete and return to MAPC at end of meeting.*

*This master planning effort will build upon feedback, ideas and recommendations from many recently-completed planning studies conducted for the Town.*



# 1 generally, how do you see these areas in the future?

Developing a generalized “macro” aggregated future land use map can be helpful to the Town for making future rezoning decisions, focusing investment for civic/physical improvements, and protecting open spaces.

The corresponding map #1 loosely outlines the Town’s existing retail/business and civic activity areas. The areas outside of the outlined areas are predominantly single-family homes or protected open spaces. Targeting future growth largely within the outlined areas can help to protect the areas outside of it.

## HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THESE AREAS CHANGE (OR NOT) IN THE FUTURE?

|   | A<br>N MAIN STREET  | B<br>S MAIN STREET  | C<br>TOWN CENTER  | D<br>SOUTHWEST   |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Continued growth of existing and/or similar uses?                     | <div><input type="checkbox"/><br/>RETAIL/OFFICE<br/>MIXED/RESIDENTIAL</div> | <div><input type="checkbox"/><br/>RETAIL/OFFICE<br/>MIXED/RESIDENTIAL</div> | <div><input type="checkbox"/><br/>RETAIL/OFFICE<br/>MIXED/RESIDENTIAL</div> | <div><input type="checkbox"/><br/>INDUSTRIAL/COMM.<br/>RETAIL/OFFICE<br/>MIXED/RESIDENTIAL</div> |
| Enhancements mainly such as pocket parks, sidewalks, town facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| COMMENTS?   |   |   |   |  |
| IDEAS FOR TYPES OF USES?  |   |   |   |  |

## BETTER CONNECT THESE AREAS to each other and residential areas through a potential pedestrian/bike trail or new roadway connection?

|  | YES                      | NO                       | MAYBE                    |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Existing underutilized easement that could serve this purpose?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| COMMENTS?  |                          |                          |                          |
| Underutilized Town-owned parcel that could facilitate this?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| COMMENTS?  |                          |                          |                          |
| Underutilized private parcel that could be incentivized to be developed in exchange for providing such a connection? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Desired transit connections? From where to where?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| COMMENTS?  |                          |                          |                          |

**2** *if these areas were to grow or improve, how should they?*

**HOW DO YOU SEE THESE AREAS CHANGING (OR NOT) IN THE FUTURE TO FURTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS?**

## AMEND ZONING WITHIN THE RED BOUNDARY?

### Reduce tax burden on residential properties?

By allowing **additional growth** through more compact development?

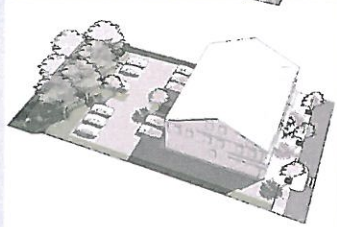
By identifying suitable areas adjacent to red boundary?

**Incentivize “pocket plazas”** for outdoor congregation as part of mixed-use redevelopments?

By requiring the carving of pocket parks and hardscaped plazas framed by the development itself through urban design guidelines and requirements? Existing open space requirements could be “repurposed” for these means.

## Reorient placement of future parking lots?

To allow the buildings to be somewhat closer to the roadway and create streetscapes reminiscent of quintessential New England town centers that shoppers like to visit?



ARE THERE ANY OPPORTUNITY SITES WITHIN THESE AREAS? WHICH?  
PLEASE MARK ON THE MAP AND ELABORATE IF POSSIBLE.

COMMENTS?

[illegible]

HOW DO YOU SEE THESE AREAS CHANGING (OR NOT) IN THE FUTURE?

SHOULD TOWN INVEST IN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS?

To make the area more walkable and pleasant?

To create more outdoor social gathering spaces?  
Such as pocket parks, and/or hardscaped plazas?

COMMENTS?

A

N MAIN STREET

YES

NO

B

S MAIN STREET

YES

NO

C

TOWN CENTER

YES

NO

HOW DO YOU SEE THESE AREAS CHANGING (OR NOT) IN THE FUTURE?

CREATE AN INDOOR/OUTDOOR CIVIC ANCHOR?

On Town-owned land?

Outdoor, visible gathering space?

Indoor consolidated Town facility?

New frontage to attract private investment?

Landmark public art to attract passersby?

COMMENTS? OTHER IDEAS?

A

N MAIN STREET

YES

NO

B

S MAIN STREET

YES

NO



HOW DO YOU SEE THESE AREAS CHANGING (OR NOT) IN THE FUTURE?

DISTRICT INFRASTRUCTURE TO ALLOW DESIRABLE USES THAT DEPEND ON HIGH WATER USAGE?

Invest in compact, modular, district-based wastewater treatment plant?

- To support desirable social/leisure retail uses?
- Costs a fraction of Town-wide sewer
- Can focus growth in targeted areas only

Sewer Package Treatment Plants & Main Street Redevelopment Potential

How Can They Help?

- pre-manufactured facilities for districts or individual properties for treating wastewater
- capacity limitations compared to sewer
- allows greater-amount, potential mixed-use development v. septic
- modular, expandable
- neighbors can enter into associations
- special permit for septic & packaged sewer treatment plants in floodplain zone but outside flood channel or watercourse
- can affect not only how much but development character
- can allow more/ catalyze development since less costly than sewer
- septic has 90-bedroom maximum with unlikely potential for mixed-use, walkable
- gap of multifamily projects between 45-200 units (90-400-bedrooms)



B S MAIN STREET C TOWN CENTER

| YES                      | NO                       | YES                      | NO                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

COMMENTS?

HOW DO YOU SEE THESE AREAS CHANGING (OR NOT) IN THE FUTURE?

INCREMENTAL, MODEST RESIDENTIAL GROWTH & IMPROVEMENTS?

Enhanced, connected sidewalks and bike trails to connect residential neighborhoods to rest of Town and each other?

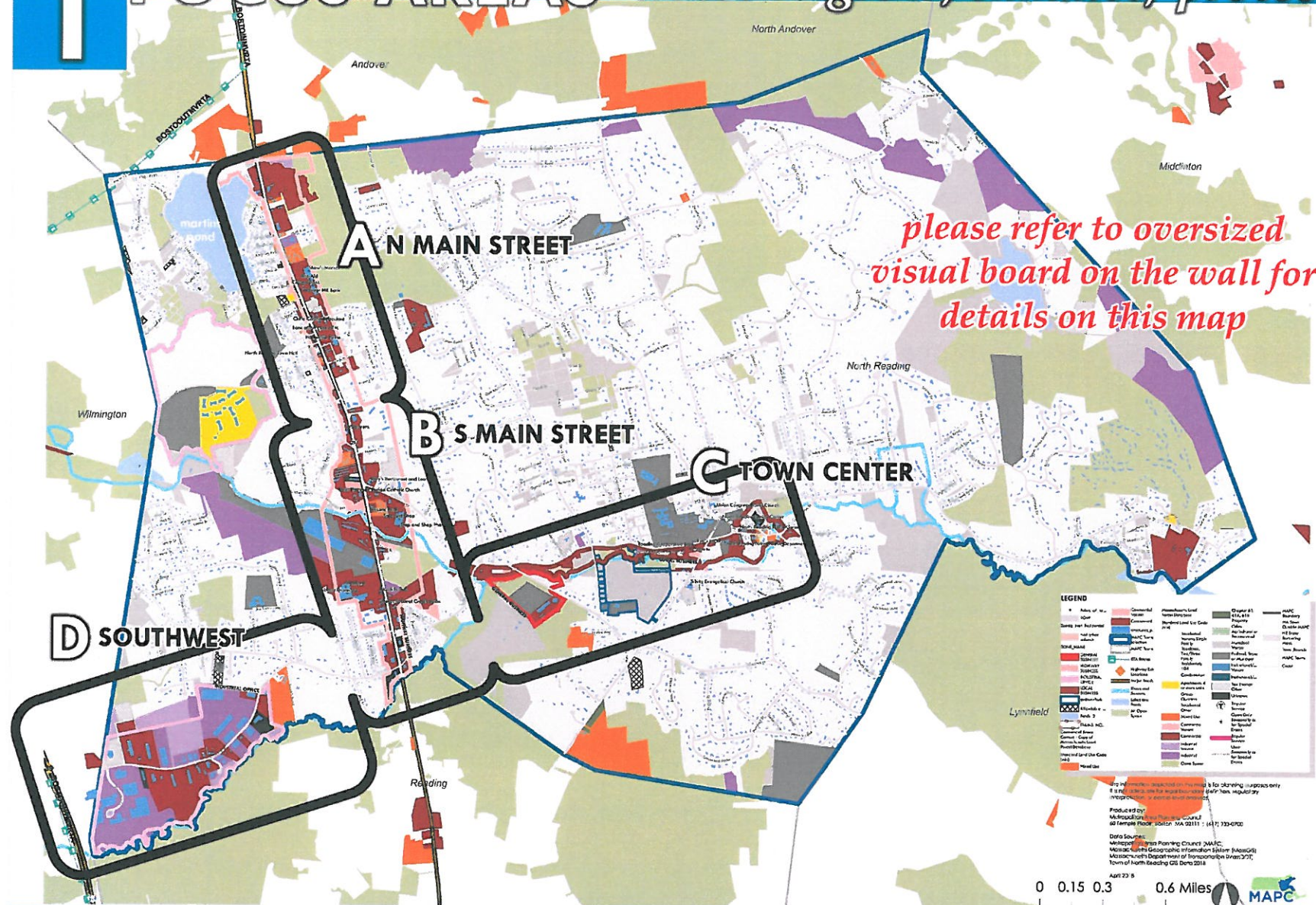
Allow more residential options such as granny-flats, smaller lot sizes, and duplexes near existing single-family districts?

SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS OUTSIDE OUTLINED TARGET AREAS

| YES                      | NO                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

COMMENTS?

# 1 FOCUS AREAS *invest to grow, enhance, protect*





# B S MAIN ST invest to grow, enhance, protect

## streetscape improvements?

- MORE WALKABLE
- CREATE SOCIAL GATHERING SPACES

## district infrastructure for growth?

- INVEST IN COMPACT, MODULAR, DISTRICT-BASED WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT
- TO SUPPORT DESIRED SOCIAL/LEISURE RETAIL USES
- COSTS A FRACTION OF TOWN-WIDE SEWER
- CAN FOCUS GROWTH IN TARGETED AREAS ONLY

## rezone land?

- FOR GROWTH & TO REDUCE RESIDENTIAL TAXES
- INCENTIVIZE CREATION OF "OUTDOOR LIVING ROOMS" AS PART OF MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENTS?
- RE-ORIENT FUTURE PARKING LOTS?

## create civic anchor?

- ON TOWN-OWNED LAND?
- OUTDOOR, VISIBLE GATHERING SPACE +
- INDOOR CONSOLIDATED TOWN FACILITY
- NEW FRONTAGE TO ATTRACT PRIVATE INVESTMENT
- LANDMARK PUBLIC ART TO ATTRACT PASSERSBY

Google Earth

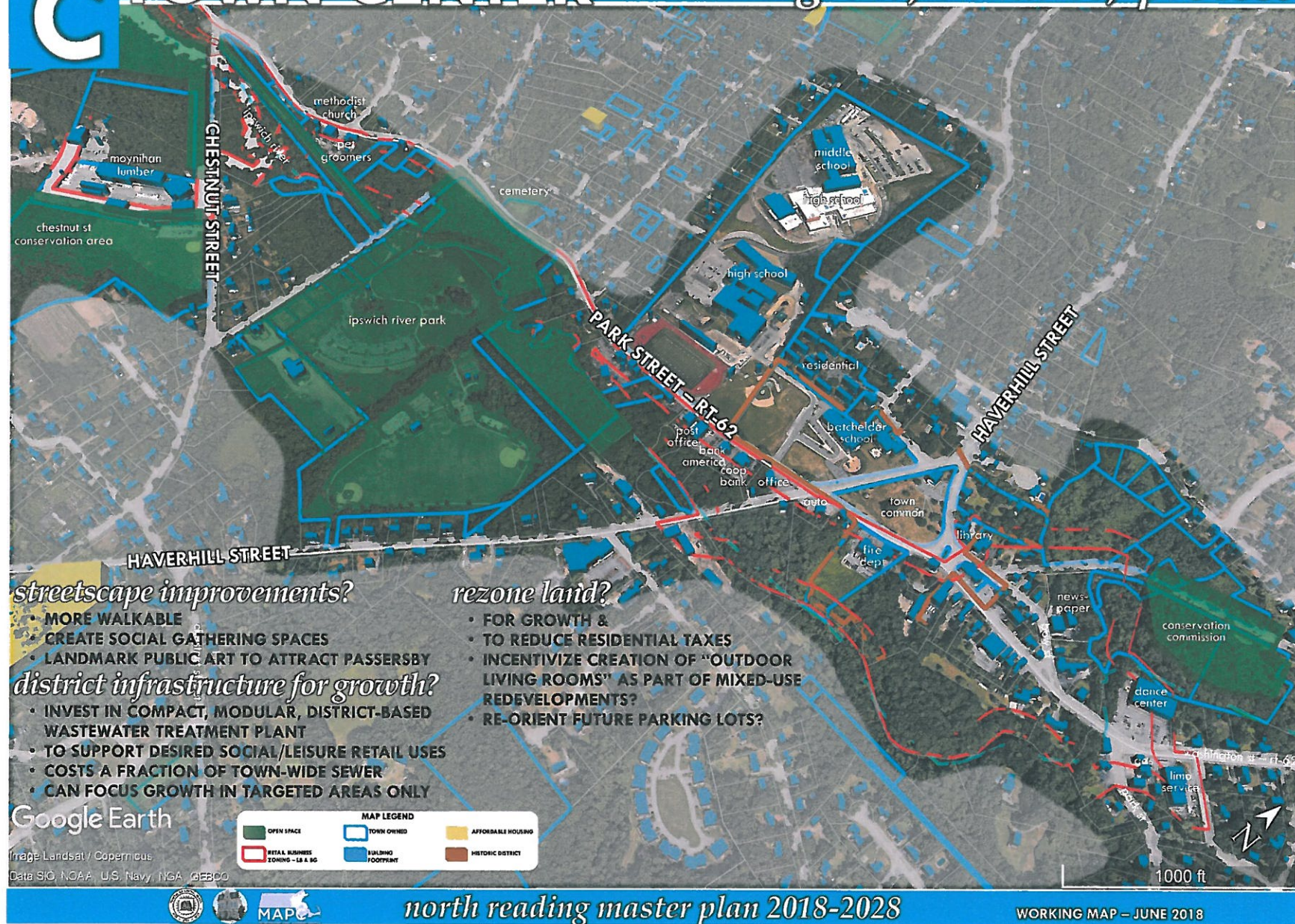
Image Landsat / Copernicus

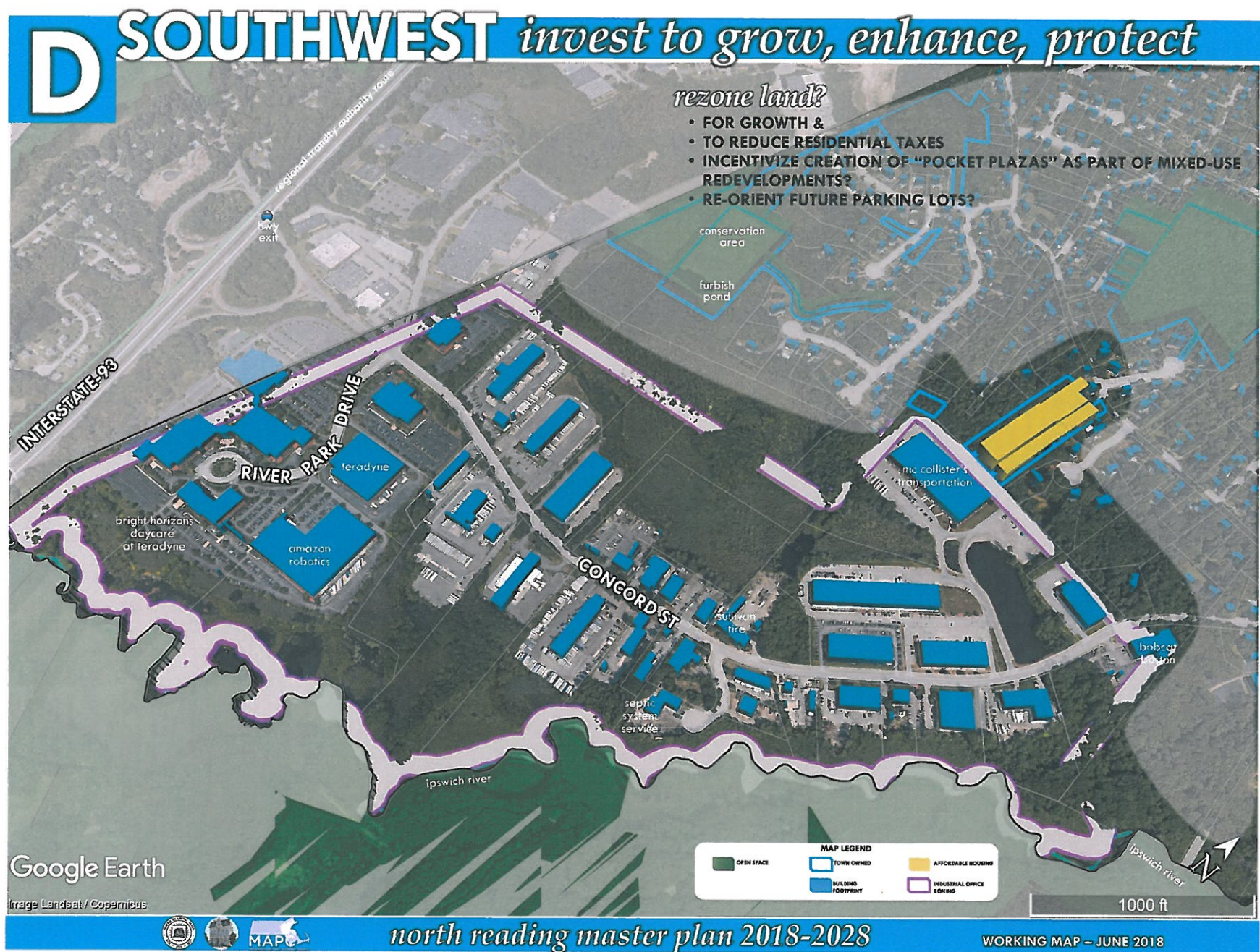


north reading master plan 2018-2028

WORKING MAP - JUNE 2018

**TOWN CENTER** *invest to grow, enhance, protect*





Advisory Group  
North Reading  
5 June 2018