

Planners seek ways to control growth along Route 9

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Rendering courtesy of Jeanette Lin, Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council depiction of what Shoppers World in Framingham could look like if developers replaced acres of parking lots with apartments, green space, small retail, public transit and pedestrian-friendly walkways.

If regional planners get their way, Route 9 could get a lot greener with fewer cars.

The MetroWest Regional Collaborative is developing a plan that would transform Route 9 between Wellesley and Southborough from a sea of shopping centers and parking lots to a pedestrian-friendly mix of retail, offices, housing and parks with transit service.

Under the plan still in the formative stages, shops, office space, restaurants and housing would be built in a single complex, so that some suburbanites wouldn't have to get in their cars every time they wanted to go someplace.

"We wanted to see if you could create a different pattern for Route 9 than the sprawl that's been developing there for many years," said MetroWest Regional Collaborative director Bruce Leish. "The idea is to enable people to park once and walk or even live in one of these developments."

For more and to get landlord's views, read "Real Estate: Sprawl busters for Route 9 corridor" (premium content).