



Medford Square Master Plan

An Economic Revitalization Strategy

Final Report
December 2017



Acknowledgments

Prepared for
City of Medford

With support from
Mayor's Office
Mayor Stephanie M. Burke

Office of Community Development
Lauren DiLorenzo, Director
Clodagh Stoker-Long, Economic Development Planner
David Fields, Land Use Planner

Prepared by
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

With funding from
District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)
Planning for MetroFuture Technical Assistance (PMTA)
Barr Foundation



Study Description

Medford Square is positioned to leverage new investment in mixed-use and walkable districts to invigorate vitality, expand access to health and cultural resources, and activate a revitalized downtown that offers a concentration of opportunities for live, work, and play in Medford and the surrounding area.

The City of Medford's Office of Community Development partnered with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to prepare the Medford Square Master Plan to guide economic development and physical improvements. The Master Plan effort is part of the Community Compact signed with Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito in 2016.

The Master Plan defines coordinated strategies and actions that focus on immediate improvements and positioning of Medford Square for long term success. The major areas of focus include economic development and vitality, land use and sense of place, transportation and connectivity, and open space and quality of life.



Master Plan Contents

Introduction	... 5
Community Vision	... 17
Open Space and Quality of Life	... 25
Land Use and Sense of Place	... 47
Economic Development and Vitality	... 77
Transportation and Connectivity	... 113
Actions and Implementation	... 137
Conclusions	... 149

Appendix 1:
Existing Conditions and Community Vision
Memorandum

Appendix 2:
Market Analysis Memorandum



Introduction



Study Goals

Medford Square is positioned to leverage a surge of interest in new growth and targeted economic development to invigorate vitality, integrate redevelopment, to expand access to health and cultural resources and to activate a walkable and revitalized city center that provides a concentration of living, working and playing for the city and the surrounding area. The City's Office of Community Development is working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to prepare a Master Plan for Medford Square to guide economic development and physical improvements in the Square.

The Medford Square Master Plan includes a set of goals and strategies that are focused on immediate revitalization actions. The major areas of focus will include economic development and vitality, land use and sense of place, transportation and connectivity and open space and quality of life. The study, which is scheduled for completion in summer of 2017, is funded through District Local Technical Assistance in addition to funding from the Barr Foundation. This effort is part of the Community Compact signed earlier this year with Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. The estimated cost of the study is \$90,000.

The specific goals of the Medford Square Master Plan use the previous efforts as a foundation and starting point. The 2005 Medford Square Master Plan, prepared by Sasaki, included the following goals. They remain relevant today and resonate with much of analyses and community feedback that follows as part of the current planning effort. These goals include:

- Create a single identity for the Square by physically and visually uniting the eastern, western, and southern subareas, referred to as City Hall Subarea, High Street Subarea, and Main Street Subarea, respectively
- Encourage mixed use vibrancy with culture, retail, office and housing
- Enhance connections between the river, the retail streets, the surrounding neighborhoods, and regional open space
- Develop the pedestrian character of the Square by balancing transportation modes
- Achieve a higher and better use of land and create value for real estate

Previous Studies

As part of this Master Plan, the previous relevant studies have been reviewed to create a firm foundation for the current plan and to also highlight previous recommendations that remain relevant or that were not accomplished through previous implementation efforts. The previous relevant studies include:

- **Shaping Medford: Community Conversations to Guide our Economic Future**, Mayor Stephanie Burke's Business and Economic Development Committee (BEDC), July 2016
- **Bicycle Infrastructure Master Plan: Guidelines and Recommendations for Medford, Massachusetts**, Medford Bicycle Advisory Commission, March 2016
- **Mayor's Transition Team – Cultural Affairs and Recreation Report and Priority Recommendations**, Mayor Stephanie Burke's Transition Team, 2016
- **Envision Medford**, Medford Community Coalition, 2016
- **City of Medford Open Space & Recreation Plan Update**, Weston & Sampson, 2011
- **Medford Square Garage Feasibility Study**, MassDevelopment, Utile, Nelson\Nygaard, October 2010
- **Mystic River Master Plan**, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), November 2009
- **The Lower Mystic River Corridor Strategy: Working Together to Achieve the Full Potential of the Lower Mystic**, BRA, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Somerville, MAPC, June 2009
- **Medford Square and the Mystic River: Reconnection, Revitalization, Redevelopment**, MIT DUSP, Fall 2006
- **The Mystic River Greenway**, MIT DUSP, November 2006
- **Medford Square Master Plan**, Sasaki, June 2005

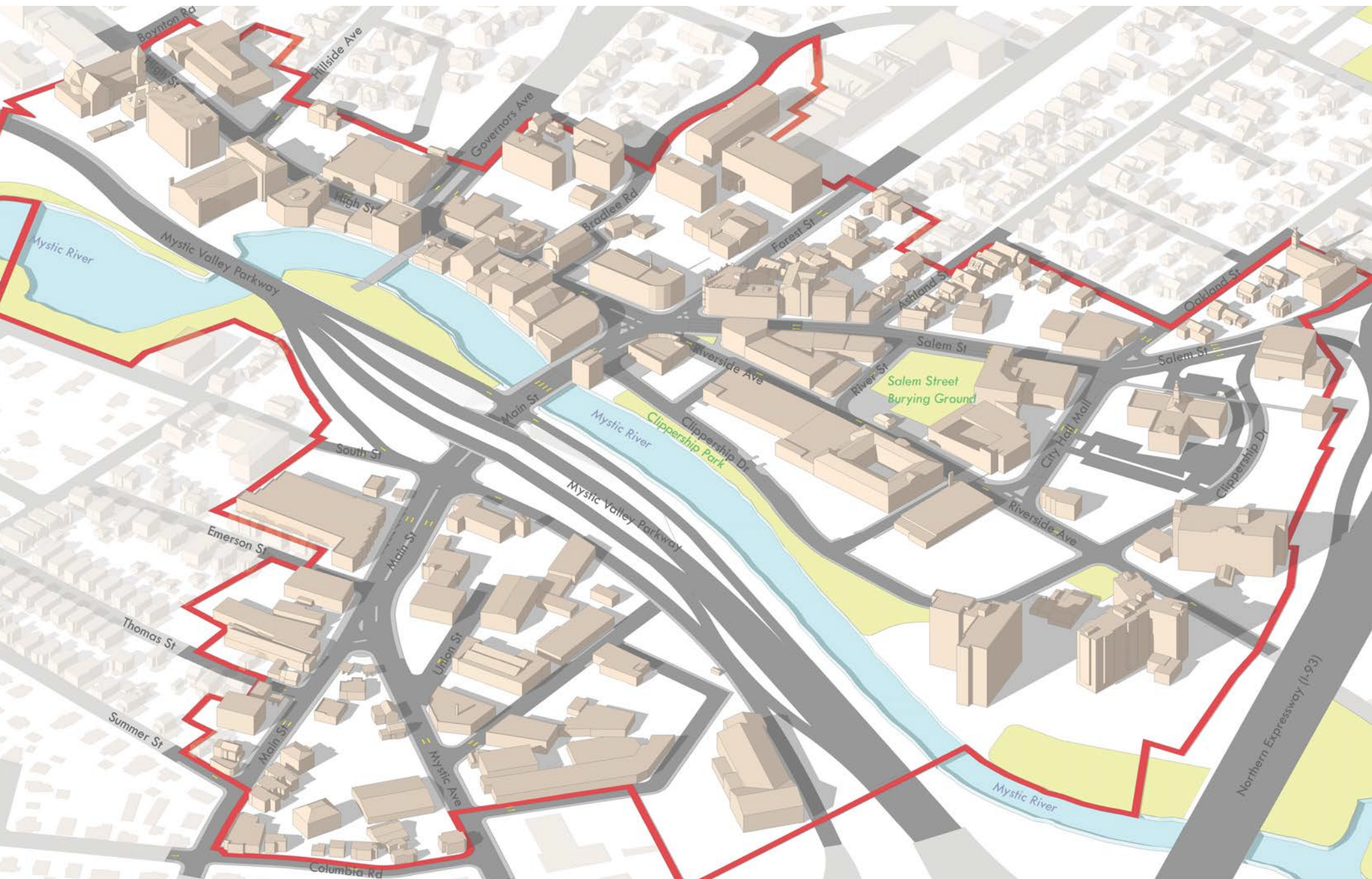
Study Boundary

The geographic area that has been identified for Medford Square to be part of this study and Master Plan is shown in the diagram below. The area within the red outline includes the “City Hall Subarea” adjacent to Interstate 93, the “High Street Subarea” along High Street west to Boynton Road, and the “Main Street Subarea” south of the Mystic River. The Main Street Subarea extends south along Main Street and Mystic Avenue to Columbia Road. This area south of the Mystic Valley Parkway (Route 16) is an extended area of Medford Square and is included to explore the long term relationship this area may have with the subareas more traditionally considered a part of Medford Square.



Historic image of the center of Medford Square

The geographic area of Medford Square, as identified for this study and Master Plan, is shown on the following page. This area has been the subject of a community based planning process and in-depth analysis that resulted in the following Community Vision.



Medford Square Study Area

Community Engagement

The study process included well-attended community forums, presentations to the City Council, and individual interviews that engaged community members and stakeholders in the Medford Square Master Plan. Results of several of the forum exercises are shown and reflect the community input.

Your future vision for Medford Square:

Attendees were asked to “use a few words to describe your ideal future version of medford square” The **top 50** most frequently used words in recorded ideal future versions, the larger the word the more frequently repeated:



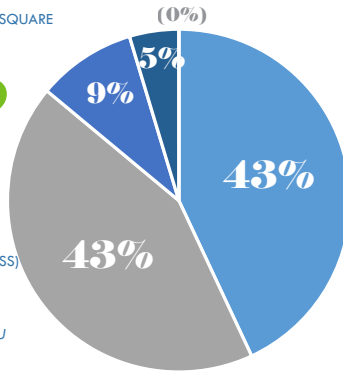
How frequent do you visit Medford Square?:

ATTENDEES THAT VISIT THE SQUARE
AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK:

64%

■ ALMOST EVERYDAY
■ ONCE PER WEEK
■ ONCE PER MONTH
■ ONCE IN A WHILE
■ ONCE A YEAR (OR LESS)

ATTENDEES WERE ASKED:
HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU
VISIT MEDFORD SQUARE?



Attendees of the first community meeting

Your top destinations in Medford Square:

Attendees were asked “what
was the destination of your
last visit to Medford Square?”

VISITS TO DESTINATIONS BY SUBAREA:

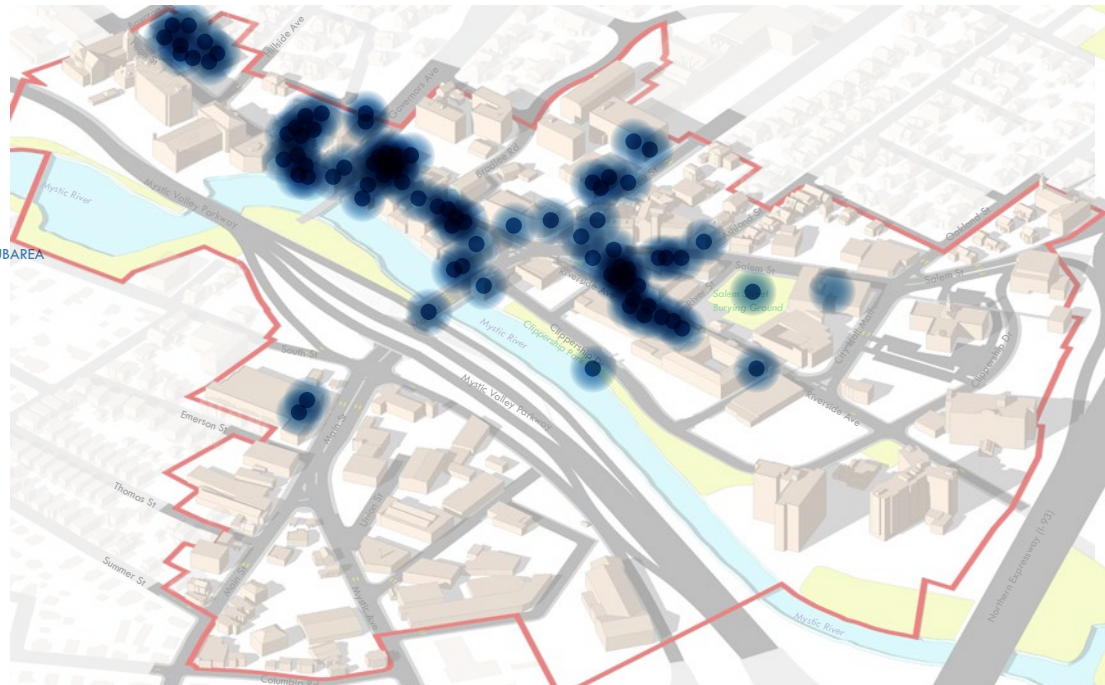
CITY HALL SUBAREA HIGH STREET SUBAREA MAIN STREET SUBAREA

48.5% **49.5%** **1.9%**

TOP 6 RECORDED DESTINATIONS:

- 1 MEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY
- 2 MEDFORD CITY HALL
- 3 CVS (HIGH STREET)
- 4 SALVATORE'S
- 5 TENOCH
- 6 FARMER'S MARKET

ATTENDEES WERE ASKED: WHAT WAS THE DESTINATION OF
YOUR LAST VISIT TO MEDFORD SQUARE?



Community Feedback

During the second community forum, a preliminary draft of Master Plan strategies was presented for feedback from the community. Community members were asked to prioritize the draft strategies. The Master Plan reflects the feedback and priorities resulting from this meeting and exercise. Below is the set of strategies as presented at the second forum in the priority order assigned by the community. Each strategy was ranked as a high, moderate, or low priority.

Enhance and expand plazas, improve key corridors



PRIORITY	
HIGH	100%
MODERATE	0%
LOW	0%

Create concentration of active River edges



PRIORITY	
HIGH	100%
MODERATE	0%
LOW	0%

Embrace arts activity, design, and events



PRIORITY	
HIGH	95%
MODERATE	5%
LOW	0%

Redefine block structure and circulation



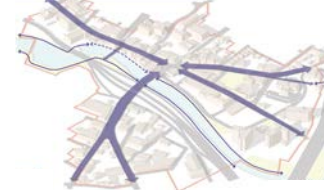
PRIORITY	
HIGH	94%
MODERATE	6%
LOW	0%

Strengthen anchors, recruit restaurants



PRIORITY	
HIGH	83%
MODERATE	17%
LOW	0%

Reallocate road space, promote transit



PRIORITY	
HIGH	79%
MODERATE	16%
LOW	5%

Redefine central intersection for walking



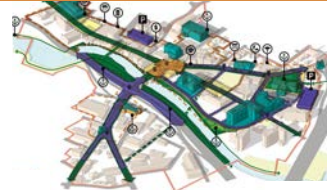
PRIORITY	
HIGH	87%
MODERATE	13%
LOW	0%

Attract and incentivize mixed-use development



PRIORITY	
HIGH	77%
MODERATE	15%
LOW	8%

Facilitate district coordination and dialogue



PRIORITY	
HIGH	63%
MODERATE	25%
LOW	12%

Create historic district, preserve and interpret



PRIORITY	
HIGH	53%
MODERATE	47%
LOW	0%

Provide design resources and assistance



PRIORITY	
HIGH	53%
MODERATE	37%
LOW	10%

Enhance efficient parking and neighborhood access



PRIORITY	
HIGH	50%
MODERATE	30%
LOW	20%

Reconfigure Route 16, add gateway art



PRIORITY	
HIGH	38%
MODERATE	52%
LOW	10%

Form and authorize Downtown Association



PRIORITY	
HIGH	30%
MODERATE	35%
LOW	35%

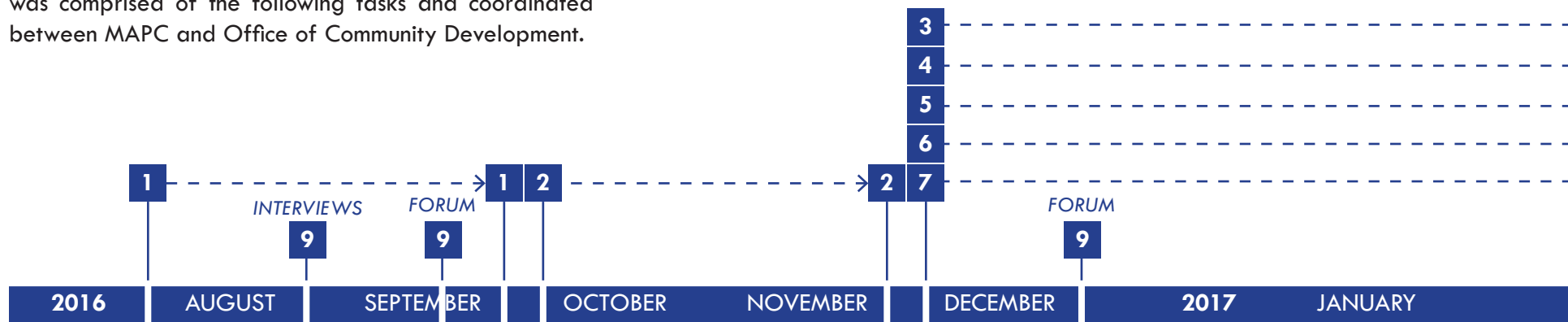
Overall reaction to the draft strategies:

Meeting attendees were asked gauge their reaction to the draft strategies for Medford Square:



Master Plan Process and Tasks

The community based planning process and analyses used to develop the Medford Square Master Plan was comprised of the following tasks and coordinated between MAPC and Office of Community Development.

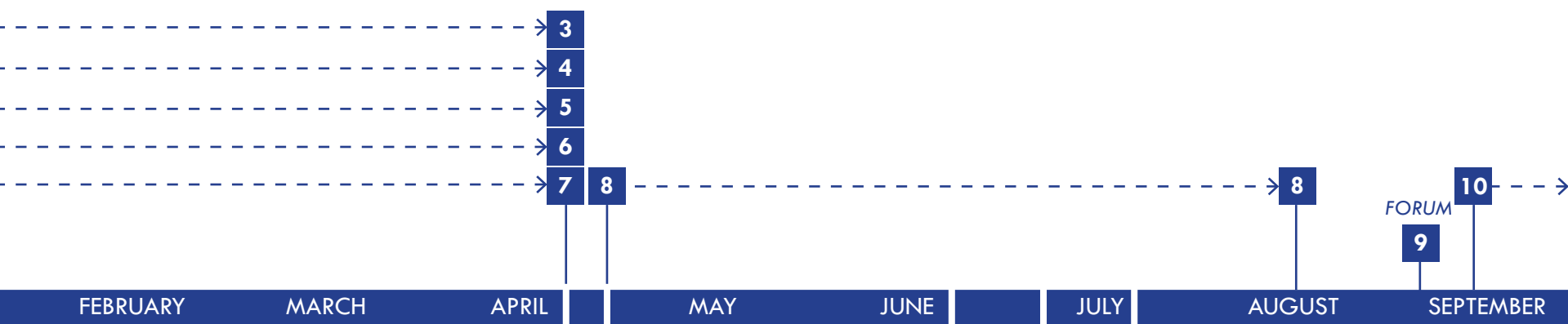


1 Task 1. Study Foundations and Current Conditions - previous studies formed the core of resources to begin this planning effort and included the 2005 Medford Square Master Plan and 2010 Medford Square Parking Analysis.

2 Task 2. Market Analysis and Strategies - an evaluation of the commercial, retail, and housing markets in the trade areas around Medford Square was performed.

3 Task 3. Redevelopment Analysis and Strategies - an analysis of the susceptibility of Medford Square parcels to future redevelopment and an evaluation of the potential characteristics of future redevelopment in Medford Square was performed.

4 Task 4. Zoning and Parking Analysis and Strategies - an analysis of the current zoning characteristics and parking utilization in Medford Square was undertaken.



- 5 Task 5. Civic Realm Analysis and Strategies** - an analysis of the components of the public realm and public facilities that comprise the civic realm including streets, sidewalks, plazas, and City buildings was performed.
- 6 Task 6. Multi-modal Access and Circulation** - an analysis of access and circulation for pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, and vehicles in Medford Square was completed.
- 7 Task 7. Health and Quality of Life Evaluation and Strategies** - an analysis of community health, open space, art, culture, and other quality of life components in Medford Square was undertaken.
- 8 Task 8. Final Report and Action Plan** - compilation of all analyses and planning work into an Executive Summary and Master Plan document was completed and presented to the community.
- 9 Task 9. Public Outreach and Community Engagement** - community meetings, stakeholder interviews, Medford Square district and site visits, and coordination meetings with City staff to inform the analyses and resulting Master Plan were completed throughout this process.
- 10 Finalizing the Master Plan** based on feedback from the final Community Forum and public comment period/**Initial Implementation Activity**

Community Vision



Community Vision

The Community Vision has been framed by community conversations and feedback and builds upon previous studies and plans for Medford Square. The Community Vision establishes the Vision Statement and Goals which frame the Master Plan strategies and actions. All Master Plan elements, including the Community Vision, were articulated and supported by the community over a

series of three well-attended Community Forums. The Final Community Forum was attended by over 175 enthusiastic community members that expressed support for the vision, community goals, priorities, and strategies. Actions consistent with the vision statement should be supported and carry the weight of a well-informed community conversations that has expressed support for these concepts.

Vision Statement

Medford Square builds on its legacy and centrality as a historic center and energizes the community as a vibrant concentration of activity. At the heart of the City, Medford Square is an attractive district that mixes restaurants, shops, businesses, and services, while also being a great place to live.

Medford Square is a safe and attractive place to walk and bike and provides a unique pedestrian-oriented downtown experience that embraces the Mystic River as an opportunity for mobility, recreation, and special events. It is a well-connected transit hub that offers carfree convenience.

Medford Square embraces its architectural and historic heritage and is a civic, art, and cultural center hosting events that couldn't happen anywhere else in the City.

Community Goals

The following goals were identified in the previous Medford Square Master Plan and reconfirmed with the community through this Study. The goals are identified to further define the community vision and vision statement and to frame the Medford Square Master Plan strategies and actions. The goals for the future of Medford Square include:



- ***Create a single identity for Medford Square by physically and visually uniting the eastern, western, and southern parts of the Square***
- ***Encourage mixed use vibrancy with culture, retail, office, and housing in Medford Square***
- ***Enhance connections between the Mystic River, vibrant streets of Medford Square, surrounding neighborhoods, and regional open space networks***
- ***Develop the pedestrian character of Medford Square by balancing transportation modes***
- ***Achieve a higher and better use of the land and create value for real estate in and around Medford Square***

8 Key Priorities for Medford Square

At the heart of the Master Plan strategies and actions are these **8 Key Priorities for Medford Square**. Each priority responds directly to major themes often repeated by community members and stakeholders. These priorities were presented to the community at the Final Community Forum and support was expressed for each of the key priorities and actions. The most frequently heard feedback from the community was

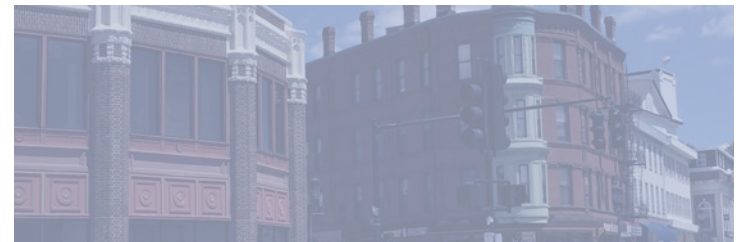
to take action on these priorities, and to not delay implementation. The most frequently highlighted priority by the community was to improve the street network and optimize the traffic patterns in the Square. This top priority was closely followed by improving the walkability and bikability in the Square. These two priorities should be pursued immediately with improvements that simultaneously address both.



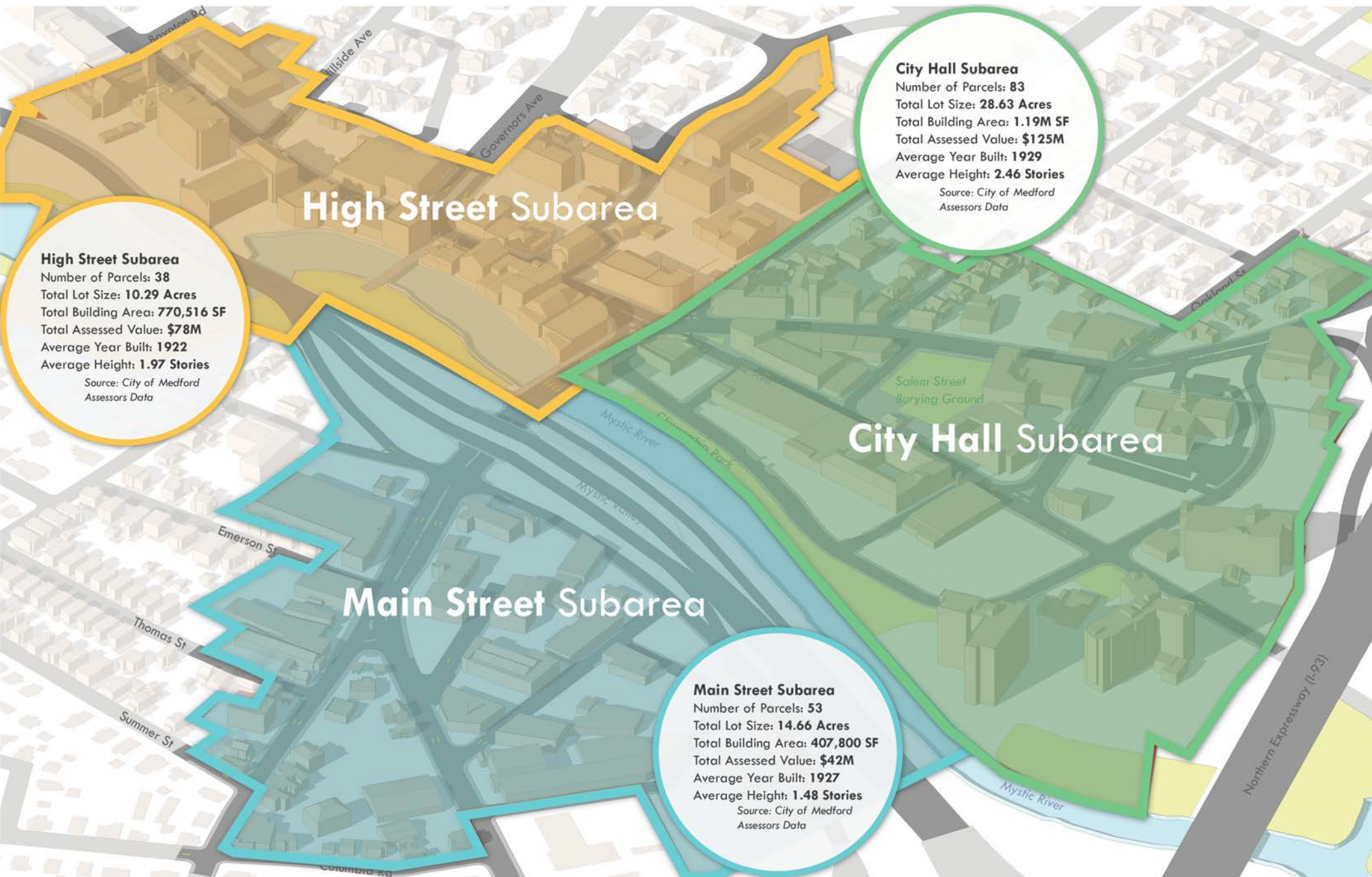
Design images preferred by the community that reflect the key priorities

- 1 *Invite investment in new uses and improved vitality in the Square.***
Improved vitality in Medford Square will be accomplished through more efficient use of underutilized parking areas, buildings, and properties. Strategies and actions are outlined to welcome investments in these locations.
- 2 *Improve walking and biking to be attractive in Medford Square.***
Part of the attraction of the Square must be that it is a great place to walk and bike. Short term and long term strategies and actions are intended to enhance the safety and experience of walking and biking in the Square.
- 3 *Enhance the Square as a center of creative economy activity.***
The Square is well-suited to adding mutually beneficial creative enterprises, restaurants, and attractions to grow a concentration of active ground floor uses and positive community events.

- 4** ***Highlight the Mystic River as a central feature.***
The Square should leverage its position on the Mystic with active riverfront edges, recreational paths, new or improved open spaces, and creative ways to engage or interpret the historical relationship to the river.
- 5** ***Optimize street network efficiency and capacity.***
The street network must be optimized to accommodate future investment and increased activity in Medford Square. New approaches to the street grid in the City Hall Subarea provide the best opportunity for improvement.
- 6** ***Improve the Square's parks and plazas as an attraction.***
Every park and plaza is an opportunity to strengthen the experience in Medford Square and add to the reasons to visit. Investments in district open spaces should add flexibility, variety, landscape and art in the Square.
- 7** ***Protect the character and history of the district.***
The historic buildings and street character, particularly along High and Forest Streets, are a defining feature of Medford Square. Improvements and investments should complement these assets, not replace them.
- 8** ***Enhance district coordination and communication.***
Much of the success of Medford Square depends on coordinating and functioning as a unified district. A new district-level management entity is the best tool to directly address many issues that have been identified in the Square.



Design images preferred by the community that reflect the key priorities



Medford Square Subareas

Medford Square Subarea Priorities

While the overall vision for Medford Square supports a unified district, the current conditions are not uniform across the entire Study Area. The following three subareas, highlight how strategy priorities may shift depending on location.

City Hall Subarea

The largest of the three subareas, the City Hall Subarea is also the focus of many near term improvements. Today, large surface parking lots and highway-oriented traffic patterns disrupt the continuity of the subarea's pedestrian experience and visual attractiveness.

Investments in the subarea have the potential to be transformative, but will require coordinated and concentrated efforts to:

- Optimize parking, vehicular circulation, and street grid connections
- Structure and implement processes to redevelop large City-owned properties
- Update zoning to encourage mixed-use redevelopment investment
- Enhance open spaces and Mystic River connections

High Street Subarea

The most historically intact of the three subareas, the High Street Subarea, is in need of strategic and concentrated improvements that balance historic preservation. Historic buildings form a consistent and attractive frontage along High Street and define much of the character of Medford Square.

Improvements in the subarea should leverage historic assets and reinforce creative opportunities through coordinated efforts to:

- Establish a Medford Square historic district
- Expand outdoor sidewalk activity and modest plazas
- Enhance direct Mystic River connections through existing bridges and plazas and future boardwalk connections
- Encourage adaptive reuse to welcome new restaurants and creative economy businesses

Main Street Subarea

The Main Street Subarea has not typically been considered as part of Medford Square. However, improved Mystic River connections and activation of river edges highlight the long term potential for improvements in the Main Street Subarea as a vibrant continuation of Medford Square.

Improvements in the Main Street Subarea should set the stage for a longer term transformation that will require coordinated efforts to:

- Expand proposed mixed-use zoning to the Main Street Subarea, when appropriate
- Strengthen the safety and experience of walking and biking
- Expand pedestrian-oriented sidewalk activity and modest plazas
- Enhance Mystic River connections and open spaces



Open Space and Quality of Life



1 Open Space and Quality of Life Introduction

During the community process used to create this Master Plan, community members highlighted open space and quality of life issues among the highest priorities. As such, this topic area leads the sections that define and discuss the Master Plan strategies. Medford Square currently offers an array of open space and quality of life assets and offers opportunities for health services and access to open space and recreation. The district also functions as a center of cultural, community, and civic activity. Medford Square uniquely plays this role due to its central location, walkability, and transit access.

Quality of life is a broad term that can be used to describe many different aspects of community or personal life. In the context of this study, quality of life includes aspects of Medford Square that contribute to the perceptions, experience, and comfort of all visitors to the Square, whether residents, workers, or patrons. The specific aspects of quality of life under consideration here include access to public open space and natural amenities, a sense of community, and district stewardship.

Access to public open space is outlined in the inventory of existing open spaces in and around Medford Square. The inventory identifies a network of critical open space resources that are central features in Medford Square and a center point in the quality of life assets of the district. As a percent of district land area, the publicly accessible open space is about 5% of the total area in Medford Square. As a comparison, overall in the

City of Medford, city-owned open space accounts for about 8 percent of the total land area. In addition, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) owns about 1,200 acres of open space in the City for a total of 30.8% of the total area of the City devoted to open space (Source: Medford Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2011). Quality of life in the Square would benefit if the percent of open space in the district could increase over time.

A sense of community is another aspect of quality of life that can be supported through events, arts and culture activity, and the associated sense of connectedness and creativity. This may be connectedness through organized events or informal connections between neighbors, or business owners, or patrons of the Square. The sense of community brings a sense of pride and strengthens many of the other approaches and strategies outlined in the Master Plan by reinforcing community involvement.

Quality of life is also dependent on the general attractiveness, appearance, safety, and perception of the district. This component relates to district stewardship and highlights the importance of creating an entity that can care for the district and proactively address issues and direct improvements.

Several strategies are outlined to strengthen the existing open space assets of Medford Square and to enhance the quality of life offered in the district. The first strategy is to leverage the presence of the Mystic

River by creating a concentration of active Mystic River edges in Medford Square. Many community comments throughout this process have highlighted the importance of the Mystic River for Medford Square. The second strategy is focused on the enhancement and expansion of Medford Square plazas and civic spaces. The third strategy is focused on embracing culture and arts activity in Medford Square to enhance the quality of life. The fourth strategy is to strengthen district management to assist local businesses to service residents and patrons and promote a consistent and positive experience in Medford Square.

Open Space Inventory

Sizable open spaces are near, but not located within Medford Square, including McNally Park, Brooks Park, Royall Park, and Barry Park. The City of Medford's open space resources are more concentrated in the north of the City, with the largest open space resource of the Middlesex Fells Reservation about 1 mile north. The largest natural asset that is part of Medford Square is the Mystic River and its riverfront open spaces.

The Medford Square portion of the Mystic River is roughly 27% of the riverfront in the City of Medford (about 0.71 miles of 2.59 miles fully within City limits). The riverfront open spaces represent about a 3.4 acre (147,628 square feet) opportunity for open space in the heart of the City. Highlighting the Mystic River and taking advantage of it as a natural amenity in Medford Square was elevated as a top priority for the community through multiple engagement and community feedback exercises.

Veterans Memorial Park is the largest open space resource today on the banks of the Mystic River and is located adjacent to the western edge of Medford Square. East of Veterans Memorial Park is the open space surrounding the Condon Shell with a boat launch and parking area on the northern bank of the Mystic. The Condon Shell is an outdoor concert venue owned by DCR. The other riverfront edges within the Medford Square study area include segments of multi-use paths, a footbridge, and small plaza spaces.

Medford Square includes several public plazas and open spaces distributed across its three subareas. The locations of current plazas and open spaces are most concentrated in the City Hall Subarea.

In the City Hall Subarea, Riverside Avenue includes a hardscape plaza with an old bus shelter that is the focus of current investment in a redesign to enhance the Riverside Plaza as a multi-functional community space that can better support Medford Square events. Adjacent to it is the historic Salem Street Burying Ground. It is a historic cemetery that is publicly accessible. The central intersection between Salem Street and Riverside Avenue includes a small hardscape plaza with seating areas, the Rose M. Sloane Garden adjacent to Century Bank.

Also in the City Hall Subarea, the southeast corner of Clippership Drive and Riverside Avenue is the new Krystle Campbell Peace Garden with landscaped areas for reflection and seating. The City Hall lawns at the north and west of the building are publicly accessible open spaces and used for community events. The

1 Open Space and Quality of Life

northwest corner of Clippership Drive and Riverside Avenue is an open space that has been used for the seasonal Medford Farmer's Market (spring through fall). Clippership Drive includes a small plaza, Clippership Park, among landscape on the northern bank of the Mystic River. At the Mystic River frontage of the housing towers adjacent to I-93 are open spaces for private use for the residents of the buildings.

In the High Street Subarea, a hardscape plaza is located at the landing of the footbridge across the Mystic River and connecting to High Street. Governor's Avenue includes a generous central median with street trees, but it is not publicly accessible open space with any other use. Several private properties have landscape or hardscape plazas that are part of the building frontage and entries, but they are not used as publicly accessible open space. The library also has a small open space to its east at the corner of High Street and Hillside Avenue that includes signage, a lawn and trees, but it is not used as an open space.

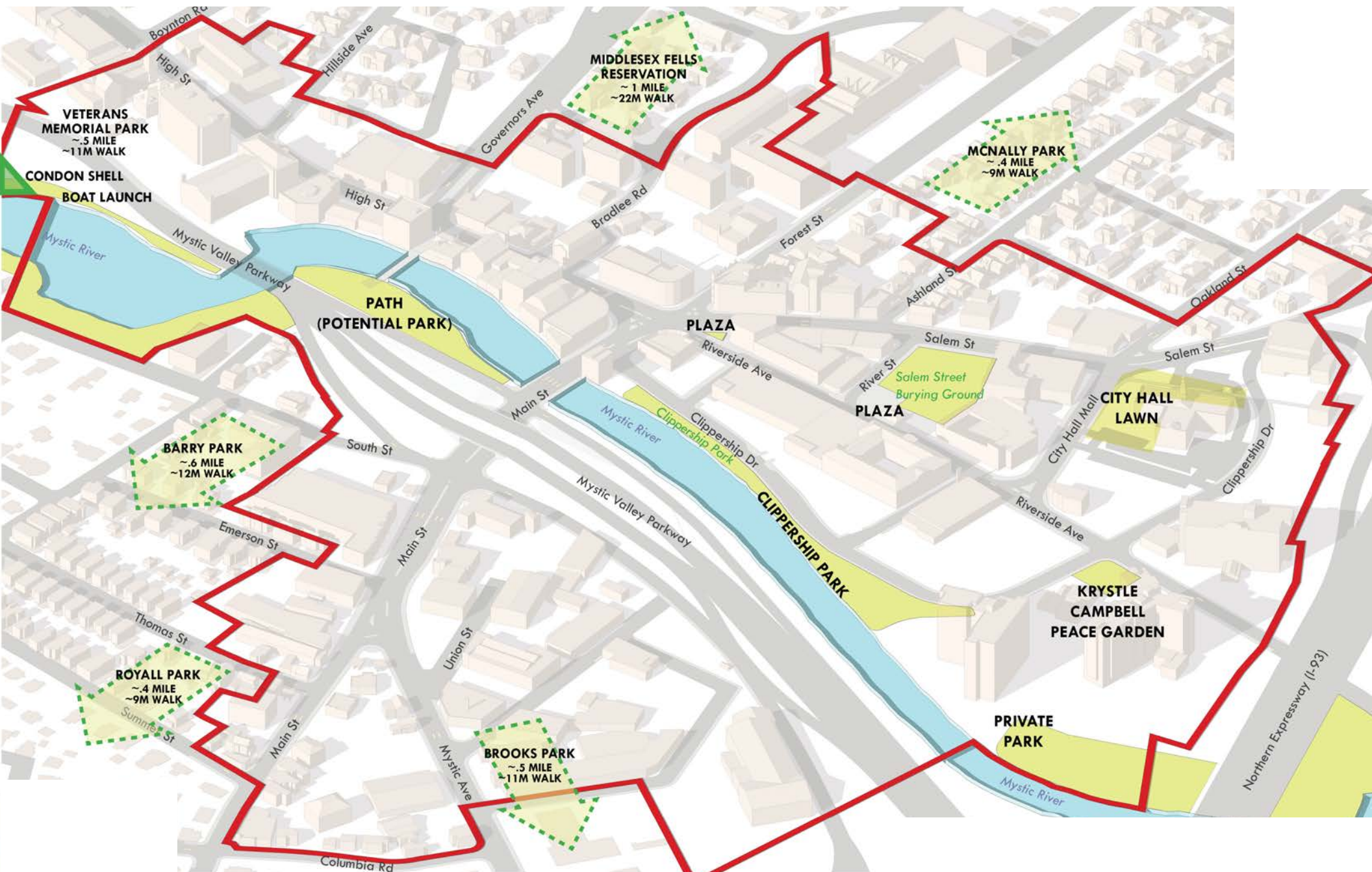
Aside from the Mystic River edges, the Main Street Subarea does not include any active or publicly accessible open space. However, the south riverfront edges of the Mystic River present an excellent opportunity for expanded open space resources in the subarea. A sizable area of potential open space exists at the landing of the footbridge over the Mystic. Other small open spaces are nearby, but not within the

Medford Square boundary, such as Barry Park, Royall Park, and Brooks Park.

Publicly accessible open spaces occupy a total of about 5% (about 5 acres or 217,300 square feet) of the area within the Medford Square Study Area (about 100 acres or 4,398,796 square feet). According to the Medford Open Space and Recreation Plan (2011), there are 8.22 square miles of land in Medford. Twenty-six percent of the land in the City is owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) with extensive open space areas that are part of the Middlesex Fells Reservation and the Mystic River Reservation. City-owned open space accounts for 8% of the total land area in the City. When the DCR open space is added to this total, open space is about 30% of the total land area in the City.

By this comparison, Medford Square could benefit from additional open spaces. These may be integrated with future redevelopment or involve the conversion of underused properties or areas into publicly accessible open space. Expansion of the Mystic River open space system could also dramatically increase open space resources in the district.

The existing open space network is shown on the diagram to the right and sets the context for the open space and quality of life strategies.



Current open spaces in Medford Square

Open Space and Quality of Life

Create Concentration of Active Mystic River Edges

The Mystic River is connected to the origins of Medford and a unique asset of Medford Square. Few downtown districts in the Boston metro area have a riverfront resource similar to Medford Square's relationship with the Mystic River. The Mystic River should be the focal point of open space, recreational, and resilience activity and become a central attraction of the Square. The district's relationship to the Mystic River should be incrementally transformed to leverage and enhance access this natural amenity.

This transformation may include enhanced and expanded riverfront plazas, outdoor seating areas, continuous multi-use paths, interpretive art installations, boardwalk connections, playgrounds, water access, a water taxi station, and flood protection measures. All of these improvements would be consistent with and support the goals for Medford Square, the *Medford Open Space and Recreation Plan* (2011), and the regional goals for the Mystic River corridor consistent with *Mystic River Master Plan* (2009).

All of the Mystic River edges in Medford Square could be better utilized to create a distinct and attractive riverfront environment. The incremental enhancement of riverfront edges will enhance multi-modal connections, expand district destinations, increase locally accessible open space, expand recreational opportunities, and improve flood protection and district resilience.



Multi-use path connections

Enhanced Multi-modal Connections

The Mystic River provides an open space corridor that is a critical link in recreational connections between Medford, Somerville, Boston, Malden, Everett and Arlington. As was highlighted in the *Medford Open Space and Recreation Plan* (2011), building a continuous pathway system along the Mystic and Malden Rivers is an important open space and connectivity goal. The network of multi-use paths associated with the Mystic River currently has a gap in the Medford Square portion of the Mystic River Corridor. Closing this gap would allow direct and connected circulation from the Harbor walk in Boston to the Minuteman Trail in Arlington and beyond.

In Medford Square, the first local segment of the multi-use path is on the north side of the Mystic at the western edge of Medford Square, starting from Veterans Memorial Park at Winthrop Street and includes the Mystic River Path which is a paved path about 8 feet wide with benches. This path runs past the Condon Shell and connects to a boat launch before traveling east to Route 16 and running along the shoulder of Route 16 to a crosswalk just east of the bridge over the Mystic. The crosswalk at Route 16 connects to the footbridge over the Mystic to Medford Square near Governor's Avenue on High Street. The path continues on the south side of the Mystic east to the Craddock Bridge at Main Street.

No connecting path is present on the north bank of the Mystic from the Route 16 bridge to the Main Street bridge. If the gap in access along the north bank of the Mystic is to be closed from Route 16 east to Main Street it would require elevated walkways supported by the rear of buildings along the Mystic. The connection continues by crossing the Craddock Bridge at Main Street to the north side of the Mystic and continuing east along Clippership Drive. This connection continues north along Clippership Drive to Riverside Avenue, but stops along the Mystic at the Riverside Towers. A pathway connection on the north side of the Mystic does not occur again until the Andrews Middle School property and Riverbend Park.

A connecting path between these two points requires easements on private and public property, clearing of vegetation, and creating a level path. Progress is being made in this effort and the work is referred to as the

"Clippership Connector". The "Clippership Connector" should continue to be pursued as part of this strategy for the Medford Square Master Plan. Additionally, no connecting path is present east of Main Street on the south bank of the Mystic River, this area would require clearing vegetation and creating a level path between the river and Route 16 and could connect as a commuter-friendly multi-use path.

Expand District Destinations

The history of Medford Square is uniquely associated with the Mystic River from the location of early settlement around a Mystic River crossing to the Clippership industry on the riverfront. This relationship to the river is also evident in the historic structures on High Street that directly abut the river's edge. Today, Medford Square should highlight this legacy of river connections and narratives by offering unique ways to engage and interact with the Mystic River.

Unique opportunities exist for riverfront experiences in the Square that would also address connecting multi-modal links. One opportunity for a unique Medford Square and Mystic River attraction would be a boardwalk connection that would occur in the High Street Subarea on the north bank of the Mystic between the footbridge and Craddock Bridge. The boardwalk structure would likely need to engage or be supported by the historic structures and would require study, design, and engineering, but could provide a unique feature to more directly connect Medford Square with the Mystic River.



Access and art highlighting the River

Integrating public art into the river's edge or water would be a unique approach to highlighting historical narratives of Medford Square and the River. The installations could be temporary and designed to minimize impact on the environment. Art installations could be used to celebrate events or as part of incremental transformations of the riverfront.

Increase Locally Accessible Open Space

All riverfront edges of the Mystic within Medford Square could be expanded as publicly accessible open spaces. In addition to completing the gaps in the multi-use path network along the Mystic, river edges with more substantial portions of land should be strengthened as riverfront parks. These areas include the park area around the Condon Shell, the area around the southern landing of the footbridge over the Mystic, and the open space area along Clippership Drive. At Clippership



An expanded plaza node as part of a linear path

Drive riverfront open space could be expanded, if closing Clippership Drive is determined to be part of the most effective approach to optimizing the street network in the City Hall subarea. This particular strategy is outlined in more detail in the *Transportation and Connectivity* section of the *Medford Square Master Plan*.

Linear paths along the river can be expanded occasionally as larger plaza nodes that may include shade features, seating, fountains, or other attractive amenities. This type of open space would build on the multi-modal connections and provide new recreational opportunities in the Square. Where larger riverfront space does exist, such as the area south of the footbridge, a larger park and playground would add a Medford Square destination that does not currently exist. This park could be designed to highlight shipbuilding on the Mystic.



A dynamic playground could add a riverfront destination

Lastly, new opportunities for water access should be integrated with improvements to supplement the existing boat ramp adjacent to the Condon Shell. This would support recreational access and use of the river and add another dimension to the attraction of Medford Square and the Mystic River. This may include agreements with private canoe or kayak rental operators to provide water access and recreation as an activity available in or near Medford Square.

Improve Flood Protection and District Resilience

All improvements to the parklands on the riverfront should integrate flood protection, bank stabilization and erosion prevention, stormwater management, water quality enhancement, and resilience strategies into strengthening a river's edge that can help Medford Square to adapt to changing climate and flood considerations. Much of Medford Square from the river

north to High Street and Salem Street and South of the river to Main Street is located in Flood Zone X of the National Flood Insurance Program's Flood Insurance Rate Map. This flood area indicates a 0.2% annual chance of flood. The immediate river's edge on the north side are in Flood Zone AE indicating a 1% annual chance of flood. The frequency and intensity of flooding would increase in these areas with sea level rise projections.

In these areas of flood risk, pervious surfaces and strategically located earth berms or low height walls could be used to reduce flood risk or mitigate impacts. These types of improvements on the Mystic River in Medford Square are consistent with the *Mystic River Master Plan* prepared by the Department of Conservation and Recreation in 2009. District resilience would also benefit from new multi-modal connections. The general location of potential future Medford water taxi dock in the Medford Square portion of the Mystic River Corridor, potentially near the end of an extended River Street would provide another concentration of activity on the river's edge. This water taxi service has been discussed in past planning efforts as a connection from Medford Square to Station Landing and beyond in either direction. A project that would contribute to improving the overall connectivity and vitality of Medford's riverfront.

All investments along the Mystic River will be subject to Chapter 91, The Massachusetts Public Waterfront Act and the Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act, among other regulations. Generally, all investments will need to provide for public access and benefit, as well as improve current environmental conditions.

Open Space and Quality of Life

Enhance and Expand Medford Square Plazas

In addition to the more substantial and contiguous Medford Square open spaces that can be strengthened as a concentration on the Mystic River, a network of modest, but well-designed plazas should be a distinction of Medford Square. As described in the open space inventory, today a series of modest plazas exist in the Square, including Riverside Plaza, City Hall Lawn, Krystle Campbell Plaza, Century Bank Plaza, and Footbridge Plaza. While relatively small, each plaza offers a place to sit, gather, or host an event. Each plaza provides landscape features, benches, shade, amenities, and small open spaces.

This network of small open spaces and plazas should be amended and enhanced over time as part of Medford Square improvements. Each plaza is an important contributor to quality of life in the Square and should be viewed as an opportunity to enrich and engage residents and visitors in the district. Each plaza is a community gathering space that can provide the setting for chance encounters, programmed events, or daily routines. The enhancement and expansion of Medford Square plazas is already underway with the planned renovation of the Riverside Plaza and the recent addition of the Krystle Campbell Peace Garden.

Future enhancements and expansions to plaza space in Medford Square should use investments to increase the flexibility of use, level of quality, and shared amenity

of civic spaces in the center of Medford. Each plaza in Medford Square is an opportunity to provide unique experiences, create attractive places to sit, relax, and gather, or reinforce indoor-outdoor connections to adjacent building activities. In a compact and active downtown district, every opportunity for publicly accessible open space should be efficiently used to expand amenities for residents, patrons, and visitors.

In order to accommodate the many different types of uses that may occur, each open space needs to be flexible and adaptable. The layout of landscape, amenities, or other fixed components should provide space that can be reconfigured to a variety of types of uses and configurations, based on the event needs. As with the process recently completed to install the Krystle Campbell Plaza and currently underway with the Riverside Plaza, each of these designated plaza spaces in the Square should be locations of investment to enhance the flexibility of their use and increase the level of quality and amenity that is provided in the Square.

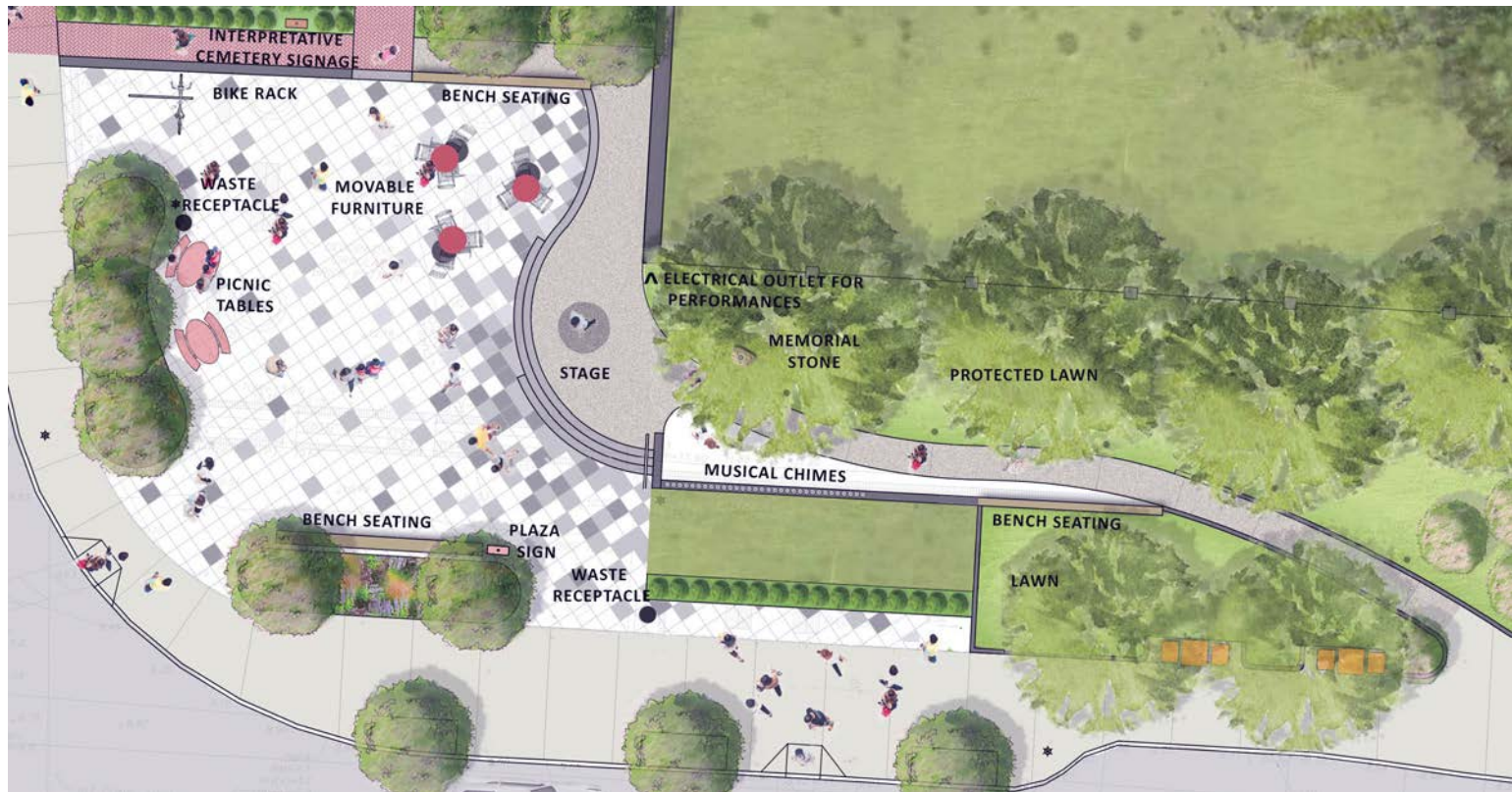
The planned renovation of the Riverside Plaza is an example of the type of improvements that are outlined as part of this strategy. The plaza today is characterized by previous improvements that don't fully coordinate from one part of the plaza to another and that do not fully take advantage of this central location. Additionally, grade changes that are part of the plaza make the area feel smaller and less flexible than if it were designed differently and provided a larger flat

and level area.

The planned Riverside Plaza improvements correct these issues and provide an upgrade to this central location that efficiently uses the open space and is attractive in its design. It provides opportunities for sitting, gathering, conversation, events, performances, recreation, and relaxation. The plaza enhancements also increase the

number of trees included in the open space. The specific design of this project could be used as a model for improvements to other locations in Medford Square. A diagram of the improvements planned for Riverside Plaza is shown below.

A similar type of treatment of publicly accessible open spaces would benefit several of the other existing plaza



Proposed improvements to Riverside Plaza (Image: Crosby Schlessinger Smallridge)

areas highlighted in the analysis. Clippership Park could be expanded from its current modest overlook and seating area to the east to fully occupy the lawn at the corner near the Riverside Tower with a flexible plaza and landscape design that provides opportunities for sitting, gathering, events, recreation, and relaxation with views and connections to the Mystic River.

The City Hall Lawns could be upgraded in design to more proactively frame the events that already occur there with expanded hardscape plaza areas, defined lawn panels and more seating at the edges of the open space. The City Hall Lawns are also competing with and negatively impacted by the surrounding parking lots that serve City Hall. Particularly, the parking to the north of City Hall interrupts the front plaza and detracts from the civic building as a gateway into the Square.

In the High Street Subarea, new seating would enhance the High Street Footbridge Plaza as a more flexible gathering space that would invite more use along High Street near the Mystic River. The Library Lawn would benefit from a similar approach as the City Hall Lawns to provide a more direct connection between the library and its activities to the exterior space around the library. This could expand the hardscape at the corner, add additional seating and landscape features, use the slope of the land in interesting ways with a terraced seat wall, and preserve the old growth trees.



Flexible plaza space with multiple amenities

This existing network of plazas should also be expanded to include additional locations of respite. This may include the corner of an existing parking lot, a small unused alleyway between buildings, a front building entry plaza or front yard setback. Particularly important are the addition of new plazas in the High Street Subarea and Main Street Subarea to expand the reach of this network of modest plaza spaces. For example, the High Street Subarea could make better use of the small open lawn at the east side of the library at the corner of High Street and Hillside Avenue. The Main Street Subarea could make better use of the street frontage on Main Street and Mystic Avenue at

the Police and Fire Headquarters buildings to create welcoming and inviting plaza spaces that provide modest community-oriented plaza space where none exists today.

The elderly population highlighted in Medford Square reinforces the need for enhancing access improvements for all existing and new open spaces for both elderly and people with disabilities. Each of the improvements must both comply with Americans with Disabilities regulations, but also be particularly sensitive to those with special needs so that Medford Square can be enjoyed as a citywide destination by everyone.

These modest plaza areas also provide excellent opportunities to address the lack of tree canopy cover in the Square and to reduce the heat island effect by increasing the landscape and shade trees present in each plaza. The addition of new trees in Medford Square is an important part of enhancement and expansion of plazas in the district.

The amount of tree cover in Medford Square was estimated using a peer-reviewed tool developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service called i-Tree. It uses aerial photography to randomly select and analyze 300 points in the Study Area to identify whether it is “tree” or “non-tree”. The random sampling of this analysis provides a reliable estimate with a margin of error of +/- 2%. This analysis revealed that nearly 88% of Medford Square’s surface

area does not include trees and that only 12% is covered by tree canopy.

Shade trees should be integrated into each plaza improvement and planted in current trees pits or plazas that are missing trees. Shade trees should also be planted as part of streetscape improvements and curb extensions to improve and expand sidewalks. Each of the plaza and open space improvements described could be part of a concerted effort to employ Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to focus park and plaza improvements in Medford Square.



Landscape improvements enhance a civic building

1 Open Space and Quality of Life

C Embrace Culture and Arts Activity

Medford Square benefits from strong and established cultural and art activities and events that feature the district as a central destination in Medford. These events and activities can be a driver of local economic development, strengthen Medford Square as an attractive destination, and strongly contribute to a positive sense of community.

Cultural and arts activity can be a driver of local economic development in Medford Square and should be viewed as an important part of the district assets. In order to better understand the economic potential for arts and culture, it is important to highlight the broader aspects of the creative economy that must be present to fully leverage and embrace this activity.

The term creative economy was defined by the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) in a 2007 study called *The Creative Economy: A New Definition*. The creative economy was described as having three interrelated components: the creative cluster, referring to creative industries; the creative workforce, referring to people in creative occupations; and creative communities, referring to geographies. In order for a creative economy to thrive, it must have assets within each of these components.

Medford Square includes assets within each component with creative businesses and organizations, including

web designers, architects, and others, the creative workforce that are part of these organizations and individuals involved in the existing arts organizations, and the geography already includes a creative community with a concentration of arts installations, performance arts facilities, and arts event activity.

The active promotion of the creative economy yields many benefits for both regions and localities. For example, in a long-range, nationwide study of the economic impact of the arts conducted by Americans for the Arts, research showed that places with a thriving creative economy have a competitive economic advantage because they improve the area's quality of life and create vibrant areas that attract additional economic activity. The study cited that arts promote true prosperity by fostering creativity, allowing people to build bridges between cultures, and express community values. Arts have also proven to improve academic performance, spark innovation, drive tourism, and support a wide range of industries.

Culture and arts events can also be used as an approach to support local businesses and spending. According to Americans for the Arts, studies on consumer behavior show that tourists that seek out arts and authentic cultural experiences such as festivals and performances, are more likely to stay longer at their destinations and spend more at local businesses. Moreover, attendees of arts events spend an average of \$24.60 per person beyond the cost of admission

for their event on items such as meals, retail, childcare, transportation, and parking . While this may not be the primary driver of economic development, it is another form of support for a vibrant local economy in Medford Square.

Culture and arts activity strengthens Medford Square as an attractive destination by providing unique experiences that engage people in the district. From a practical standpoint, events and special activities are an important part of the life of a district because they invite and attract new patrons to visit. The visit that may be associated with a show at the Chevalier, or to enjoy Circle the Square, draws new people to the district and introduces them to the other great things that are happening there. During these events, it is important for the other attractions of the district - small businesses, restaurants, shops, plazas, river paths - to form a great first impression of the district to strengthen the likelihood of a repeat visit. In this regard, shared knowledge and coordination about district events are important.

Lastly, culture and arts activity is a very effective way to strengthen community relationships and connections in the district. The events are not just for attracting new patrons, but celebrating the regular visitors and bringing people together in new and different ways. Special events and celebrations should be inclusive for everyone and should not make any group feel unwelcome or inconvenienced.



Circle the Square, 2016

1 Open Space and Quality of Life

D Enhance District Management

In order to effectively implement a number of the Master Plan strategies and strengthen positive change in Medford Square, direct management and guidance is needed at a district level. Medford Square is competing against other carefully managed centers and should guide improvements with a similar approach to leverage the strengths of the district.

District management can assist in the recruitment and balancing of district businesses, provide supplemental district services, and facilitate sharing of district parking. Two approaches to district management are likely to be most useful for Medford Square, both have disadvantages and advantages. Both approaches are outlined and either could be pursued depending on preferences of the City and business community. The approaches include the creation of a Main Streets District or Business Improvement District for Medford Square.

Either district management structure could be used to promote economic vitality, build community, improve experiences, and facilitate sharing of resources within the district, in Medford Square. During the public review of the draft Master Plan, the community expressed a preference for a Medford Square Main Streets district.

Main Street programs are locally organized, funded and operated. They are typically independent nonprofit

organizations located in the community and usually affiliated with the City in which they operate. Main Street districts are typically initiated by a group of interested partners that will discuss goals, establish the organization, and raise money to hire a full-time Main Street director.

The Main Street district is typically funded by local sources including City, Chamber of Commerce, business, and foundation support. A Main Streets District provides a structure for organizing a group of business and community leaders focused on improving Medford Square. A Main Street district typically drives economic development by creating the support for businesses to thrive and development projects to succeed and be more consistent with the community vision articulated in this Master Plan.

The Main Streets district can also be an organizer of district events and attractions, or coordinate and support events that already exist, and enhance the experience of visitors. It can provide financial incentives for business owners to improve facades and beautify properties, provide guidance and support for starting a business, and work with city officials to modify policies or ordinances as issues are identified with businesses.

The primary disadvantage of a Main Streets district is that it is not integrated with a funding mechanism. The funding is dependent on municipal budgets, voluntary donations, or fundraising.

One example of a very successful downtown Main Street district is in the City of Beverly, the Beverly Main Streets program. Beverly Main Streets has been at the center of substantial progress in revitalizing the downtown in Beverly. Another aspect of the Beverly Main Streets district that could be a unique model to apply to Medford Square is the creation of a complementary arts district, the Beverly Arts District (BAD), to support the creative economy in Beverly. The specific activities that could be supported by a Medford Square Main Street district are discussed below.

Recruit and Curate District Business Mix

The overall business mix in a district is difficult to manage, but business recruitment and support can be used to lead the business mix toward a balance for the district. The market analysis shows opportunities for new businesses within the secondary/regional trade area that are encouraging and could support additional opportunities. Based on this analysis, active district management should focus on recruitment of clothing stores, limited service restaurants, home furnishing stores, electronics stores, and full service restaurants, if vacant spaces become available.

When considering a strategy for attracting new retail establishments to a particular area, the district management entity, City, and Chamber of Commerce should consider factors such as: availability and quality of the retail space, size of the space available, location of the space, amount of pass-by traffic or foot traffic, rent and terms, parking availability and location,

product or service price points, marketing, business plan and acumen, infrastructure capacity, and zoning, regulatory, permitting, and inspection requirements.

Another area of commercial opportunity that would be consistent with the community vision for Medford Square is the addition of co-working or shared office space environments with common office amenities. These types of commercial spaces are ideal for entrepreneurs, startups, freelancers, and others and could add to the diversity and range of activity in Medford Square while adapting commercial space that may become available in the future. This type of commercial use can also increase the number of creative enterprises present in Medford Square and that could complement the arts and cultural events, and growing number of restaurants in the district.

Another overlap with this type of commercial use is the addition of “third place” retail and restaurant establishments. A “third place” is defined as a social setting which is physically separate from the home, “first place,” and the workplace, “second place”. This may be public facilities such as the public library or plazas and parks in Medford Square, but it may also be private establishments such as a café, coffee shop or retail shop. This type of retail or restaurant offering expands on the same notion of the co-working space, that it is an enterprise that can add to the diversity and range of activity in Medford Square while increasing the creative density of uses present there. This type of use may begin to address the loss of the popular Medford Square business, Bestsellers Cafe.

Supplement District Services

Attractiveness, appearance, safety, and perception are part of the basic foundation of creating a place where people feel comfortable and welcomed. These characteristics are also a reflection of community pride and care for a particular place. In addition to the physical characteristics and visual appeal of a place, the general appearance and upkeep of a district send important signals to residents, businesses, patrons, and visitors. The general appearance includes maintenance of buildings, maintenance and upkeep of tenant storefronts and signage, maintenance and upkeep of streets, sidewalks and landscape, trash collection and removal, graffiti removal, and other often day-to-day activities that keep the district in operation.

Many of these maintenance and upkeep functions are the responsibility of City services, others are the responsibility of private property owners, tenants and businesses. In active and busy districts, the frequency of certain maintenance and upkeep needs may outpace the City schedule for providing such services to the district. A district management entity could supplement these services as one very effective way to enhance the appeal of a district. The cleanliness of Medford Square has been mentioned as an issue by community members during community forums.

In Medford Square, the crime and traffic safety concerns were raised by community members as issues. Discussion with the Medford Police Department did not indicate a dramatic increase or pattern in violent or nonviolent crime in Medford Square as compared to other parts



Business improvement district staff and services

of the City. The same discussion also highlighted that the old bus depot is an area that tends to concentrate negative activity and attract recurring calls requiring police attention.

Locations that may consistently attract negative attention tend to have a lasting and expanded negative impact and could negatively influence the perception of an entire district. Such a negative impression can be effectively counteracted by the visual presence of police or members of a district management team in the district. This may include members of the district management team performing routine maintenance in the district or a walking police patrol in the district. In terms of traffic safety and pedestrian incidents, High Street in the High Street Subarea was highlighted as a location where crashes have occurred. This is a

location is also highlighted for streetscape and public realm improvements as described in other Master Plan strategy sections.

Share and Manage District Parking

A more efficient use of Medford Square parking requires district coordination and dialogue across the entire district. The same enhanced district management structure that would benefit business support and recruitment could play an active role in the district-wide management of parking. The district management entity could circulate and promote shared parking agreements between property owners and businesses and track parking utilization in the district. A district-wide approach to parking would allow all businesses to have more parking supply available nearby. District management may also facilitate an employee parking program for reducing employee occupation of high demand parking locations.

Alternative Approach to District Management

If the Main Street District approach preferred by the community faces challenges or barriers. Another district management structure would provide the ability for similar district organization and oversight in Medford Square. It is a Business Improvement District and it could also provide the type of district management that is missing in the Square today. An alternative approach is outlined because it is important to create a management structure of some kind.

A Business Improvement District (BID) can provide similar functions as a Main Street program, but has one significant difference. A Main Street district is funded through voluntary contributions with no guarantees for continued support, whereas a BID is a special assessment district with financial support built into the establishment of the district.

A BID can be established under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40O by petition signed by owners of at least 60% of the real property and at least 51% of the assessed valuation of the real property in the proposed district. The amount of the assessment is decided by participants in the district and is a common area fee levied on property in the district. A BID is authorized to perform a wide variety of management, administrative, marketing and economic development activities including district management, maintenance, promotion and marketing, business services, and capital and physical improvements. This would allow the BID to address the specific needs outlined above for Medford Square.

A Memorandum of Understanding would be outlined in the creation of the BID with the City to define the relationship, involvement, and support of the City as a member and partner in the district. The process to explore, create, and authorize a BID takes anywhere from 18 to 24 months.

1 Open Space and Quality of Life Summary Strategies

A Create Concentration of Active Mystic River Edges

Medford Square's relationship to the Mystic River should be improved to leverage this unique feature for the benefit of the district. The Medford Square riverfront should be incrementally transformed to be a focal point of open space, recreational, and resilience activity. This transformation may include enhanced riverfront plazas, outdoor seating areas, continuous multi-use paths, interpretive art installations, boardwalk connections, playgrounds, water access, a water taxi station, and flood protection measures. All improvements would be consistent with and support the goals for Medford Square, the *Medford Open Space and Recreation Plan* (2011), and *Mystic River Master Plan* (2009).

B Enhance and Expand Medford Square Plazas

The series of small open spaces and plazas that are a part of Medford Square should be amended and enhanced over time. Each plaza is an important component of quality of life in the Square and should be viewed as an opportunity to attract residents and visitors and increase usable community gathering space. Implementation of this strategy is already underway with the recent addition of the Krystle Campbell Peace Garden plaza and planned renovation of the Riverside Plaza. Future enhancements and expansions to plaza space in Medford Square should use investments to increase the flexibility of use, level of quality, and shared amenity of civic spaces in the center of Medford. Opportunities to provide unique experiences, additional tree cover, attractive places to sit, or connections to adjacent building activity should be encouraged.

C Embrace Culture and Arts Activity

Medford Square already benefits from strong and established cultural and arts events and activities that feature the Square as a central destination in Medford. Culture and arts activity can be a driver of local economic development and strengthen Medford Square as an attractive destination. The promotion of Medford Square as a culture and arts center should be combined with the targeted recruitment of creative enterprises in Medford Square. A concentration of creative enterprises, culture, and arts activity would increase the vitality of Medford Square, distinguish the Square among surrounding centers, and provide compatible small businesses that could provide an area of growth for the district.

D Enhance District Management

In order to strengthen positive change in Medford Square, direct guidance and management is necessary. The district is competing against other carefully managed centers and must guide its overall improvement with a similar approach. One such district management approach appears to be well supported by the community, a Medford Square Main Streets District. Another approach is a Medford Square Business Improvement District. An overall management structure that is supported by the community should be pursued. Either management structure should be able to fill the need to promote economic vitality, build community, and improve experiences in Medford Square. Main Streets districts have been a part of the success of many vibrant downtown districts throughout the Commonwealth.



Medford Square Open Space and Quality of Life Strategies



Land Use and Sense of Place



Land Use and Sense of Place Introduction

The land use of Medford Square is the combination of all uses on individual properties in the district including mixed-use, residential, commercial, light industrial, exempt, and vacant properties. For many patrons, these individual uses are the most important part of the district and the reason to visit. This may include a regular patron of the diner or a regular customer of a salon. If these businesses were to close, the pattern of visitation may change. Collectively, the individual uses combine to form a pattern in the district that expands beyond individual uses and forms a sense of place and identity for Medford Square. The current use of all properties in the district is shown on the following page.

The sense of place of a district is an overall feeling, atmosphere, or character of the district. It is difficult to quantify and describe, but it is a sense of what Medford Square is about and what is associated with it. This sense of place is defined by the land uses, but also by other physical components of the district, including the buildings, streets, river, and open spaces. Many of the components that contribute to the sense of place comprise the civic or public realm, including the streets, river, riverfront, parkland, and municipal facilities that are under public control and serving public purposes for transportation, natural assets, or community services. About 46% of the total land area of Medford Square is part of the civic realm.

The design of streets, the look and feel of sidewalks and streetscape and the character of parks and plazas

all form the foundation for the sense of place in a district. The other 54% of property that is not part of the civic realm in the district is the private land uses. This is another major contributor to the sense of place that occurs through the use of private properties, primarily for buildings and parking. Building facades define the edges of the civic realm and therefore define a substantial portion of the sense of place in a district. Conversely, parking areas offer little definition for streets and are typically lacking in character. Building facades may vary in design and quality, but when combined they form an overall impression that defines a district. In Medford Square, the strong presence of historic structures has maintained a consistent impression with landmarks that define the district, such as the Bigelow Block and the Armory Building.

Several strategies are outlined to build on the existing assets and patterns of land use to strengthen a positive sense of place in Medford Square. The first strategy is focused on the preservation of the major historic assets that contribute to the character of the Square. The second strategy is focused on improving the civic realm through strategic investments for the streets and sidewalks. The third strategy focuses on improving the district's sense of place by improving the district's use of parking. The final strategy promotes a sense of place through the integration of public art and the strengthening of gateways into Medford Square.



Current land use in Medford Square

Preserve and Interpret Medford Square Legacy

Medford Square is a historic center with a great strength found in its architectural heritage and direct connections to the historical narratives of Medford's origins on the Mystic River. The district includes a substantial inventory of historic structures with (9) nine buildings currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The district is also comprised of a strong majority of buildings that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places with nearly 100 buildings that are at least 50 years old. The illustration on the following page shows the distribution of these significant historic assets in Medford Square.

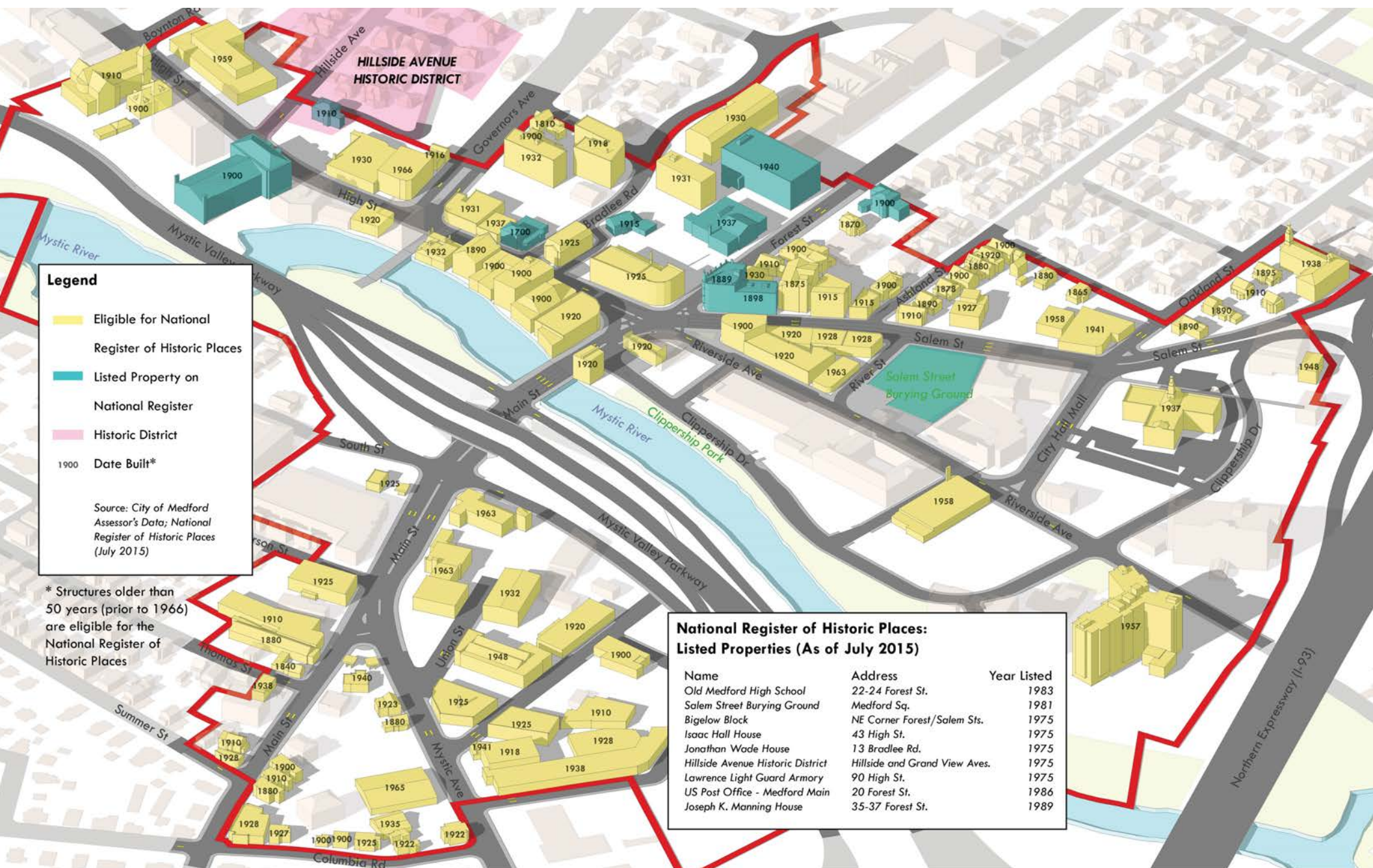
As represented by these historic buildings, Medford Square offers a substantial record of the history of the City. It is this heritage that is a strong part of the character, identity, and sense of place of the city center. In planning for the future of Medford Square it is critically important to preserve this significant record of the past. This heritage cannot be recreated and, it is in part, the historic assets of the Square that will differentiate it as a unique and attractive place relative to other centers of activity such as Station Landing or Assembly Row. Although many would agree with the importance of this heritage, little protection currently exists to encourage preservation in Medford Square.

The listing of a property or district on the National Register of Historic Places is a very effective way to

elevate the importance of historic places, communicate their value, and create eligibility for certain historic tax credits, but they do not offer preservation protection in the same manner as local preservation ordinances. The Medford Historic District Commission is responsible for encouraging preservation of resources and uses tools such as the Demolition Delay Review. In a district with as many historic resources as Medford Square, a local historic district is the most effective approach to strengthening preservation in the district.

An existing local historic district, the Hillside Avenue Historic District, is adjacent to Medford Square on Hillside Avenue north of High Street, but no other local historic district exists in the Square. The scale of the existing Hillside Avenue Historic District is smaller than the likely scale of a Medford Square district, consisting of fifteen well-preserved residential properties dating from between 1875 and 1895. The District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 and made a Local Historic District in 1985. The Hillside Avenue Historic District could be used as a model to enhance historic preservation in Medford Square. As is the case with the Hillside Avenue Historic District a district can be both a National Register District, an honorary designation established by the National Park Service, and a Local Historic District, established by the Medford City Council.

A local historic district for Medford Square would provide additional oversight and stewardship of the



Historic assets in Medford Square

district's history and resources. A local historic district can permanently prevent demolitions and inappropriate alterations to the historic structures in the district and would typically apply to projects involving demolition, exterior renovation, and new construction activities. Local historic districts do not apply to building interiors, building exterior areas not visible from a public way, landscaping, or routine maintenance activities. Applicable projects would require design review and approval by the Historic District Commission.

While preservation of historic resources is an important aspect of the future of Medford Square, inviting economic development is equally as important. Therefore it is necessary for the historic commission to remain flexible and open to innovative preservation and development solutions that encourage investment in the district. It is also important to focus the impact of the local historic district in the most critical locations.

The recommended boundary of a Medford Square Local Historic District is illustrated on the following page. The boundary follows the locations of the most significant historic resources of the Square and is centered on High Street and Forest Street. If other historic resources require protection beyond the boundary recommended, they could be included in a single property local historic district. This boundary focuses the preservation tool where it is needed most and avoids adding an additional level of review to properties that may not include a historic resource today.

For example, the Historic Commission recommended extending the district to the west on High Street to

include 129, 141, and 160 High Street and to the east on Salem Street to include City Hall. This extended area to the west is beyond the Medford Square Master Plan study area and is therefore not included. The extended area to the east to include City Hall is not included as City Hall is considered a historic building and landmark that is not likely to experience future risk and that is well-cared for by the City of Medford.

The creation of a Medford Square Local Historic District would include benefits that link to the other strategies of the Master Plan. Importantly, the historic district would offer a complement to zoning modifications which are intended to encourage development on vacant or underused parcels. The zoning recommendations are not intended to encourage redevelopment of properties that involve demolition of historic buildings. The Local Historic District would provide a new protection to avoid the loss of historic assets in the Square.

The creation of a Medford Square Local Historic District is not an attempt to freeze the district in time. In addition to the unique record of history, Medford Square is also a record of its own evolution and change over time. Investments in historic properties are encouraged. These investments may include adaptive reuse of buildings, or contemporary additions. Many examples can be shown of thoughtful contemporary building design that integrates with and respects the historic structure to which it is connected. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties offers guidance on how to implement investments and additions that are consistent with historic preservation.



Historic buildings viewed from the Mystic River Footbridge

Recommended Local Historic District boundaries

Land Use and Sense of Place

Improve Key Street Corridors and Reallocate Space

The key streets in Medford Square provide local and regional vehicular connections and a critical supply of parking. Currently, much of the space of the street rights-of-way is devoted to driving and parking. In fact, more space than is needed is given to vehicular travel lanes, according to current MassDOT lane width recommendations. In addition to encouraging high travel speeds, the extra lane width could be reallocated to other needs that are also served by the public right-of-way. The public right-of-way is also a key contributor to the character and sense of place of the district. A reconsideration for how this valuable space is used could strengthen the attractiveness of Medford Square.

Generally, roadway space and the rights-of-way in Medford Square are well-used, but a more efficient use of these resources would allow for the strategic reallocation of space on key street corridors for use by pedestrians and bicyclists. This reallocation may take the form of travel lane width reductions, removal of on-street parking spaces on a block, or removal of a single on-street parking space in strategic locations.

Districts that are more automobile-oriented and have more room to accommodate vehicles will always be able to provide a more convenient experience for drivers than Medford Square. For example, a suburban strip mall is designed for convenient use with an automobile. Medford Square should not be approached in the

same manner. Enhancing the pedestrian and bicycle experience in Medford Square highlights its assets with compact walkable blocks, interesting storefronts, and historic character. The strategic reallocation of space on key street corridors for pedestrians, bicyclists, and streetscape would greatly enhance the attractiveness of the district and increase this competitive advantage. Adding more space for trees, amenities, and places for people to sit or dine outdoors, improves the district and the street, while enhancing safety for all patrons of the Square.

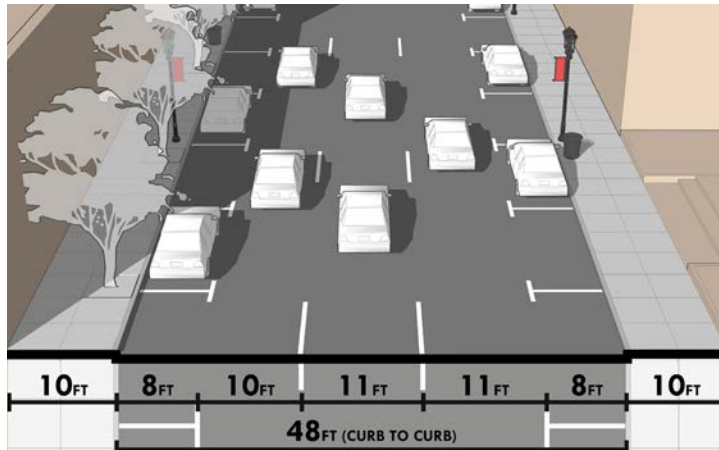
The current sidewalk widths in Medford Square generally provide adequate space for pedestrian circulation, but are not generous enough to support additional sidewalk activity or amenities. Each of the primary streets in the Square would benefit from reallocating more space within the street right-of-way for use by pedestrians and to support bicyclists. The street rights-of-way in Medford Square are constrained in many locations by buildings, often historic, on either side of the sidewalk that do not allow expansion of the width to accommodate additional uses. In this circumstance, two complementary techniques can be used to expand pedestrian civic space within the existing rights-of-way.

The first technique is to reduce the width of travel lanes, sometimes referred to as a lane diet. In many circumstances, lane widths were designed to fill the

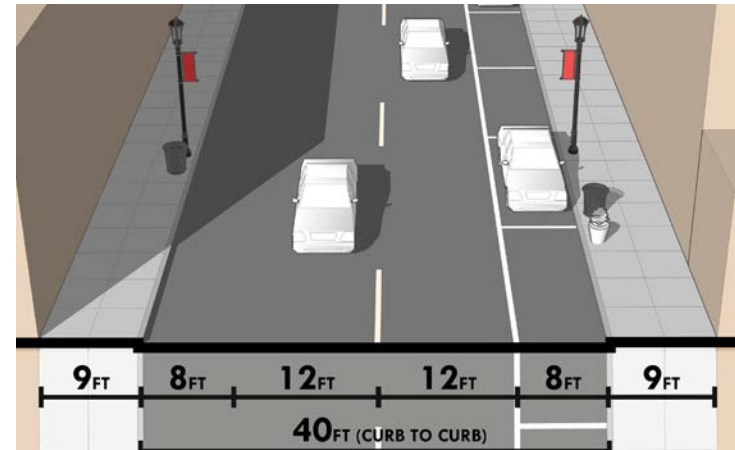
Potential Roadway Improvements

Potential roadway improvements that would enhance the sense of place and pedestrian-oriented character of Medford Square.

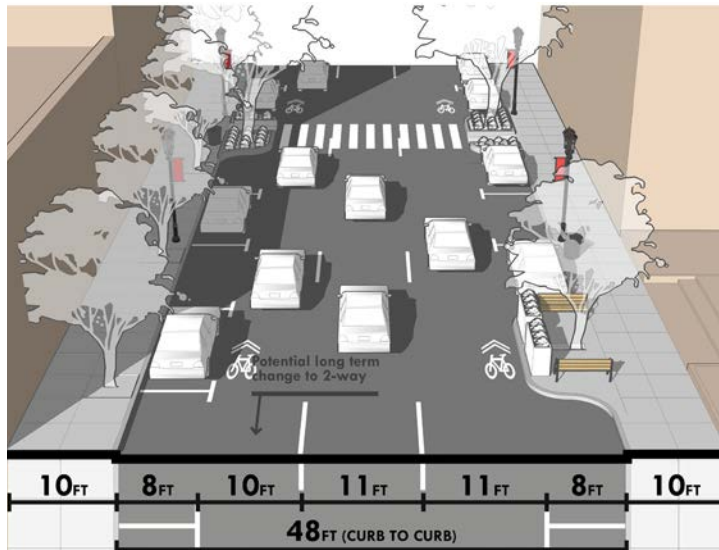
**Dimensions are estimates based on Google Earth measurements, actual dimensions and street conditions may vary*



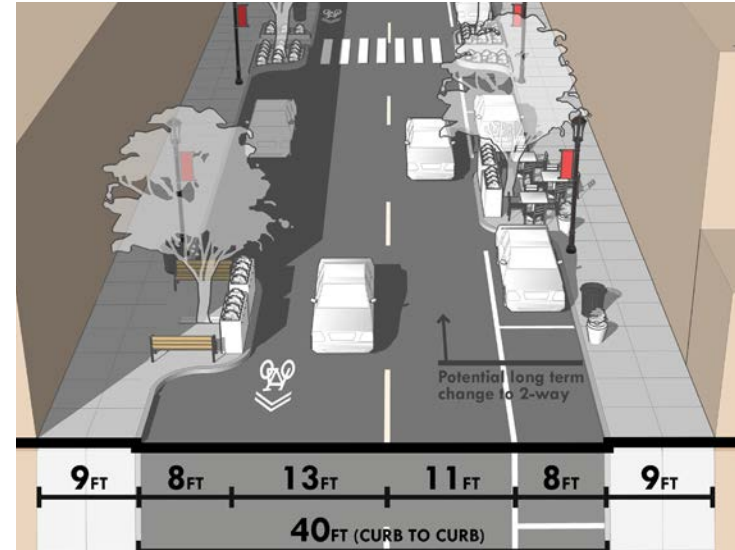
Current Salem conditions



Current Riverside Avenue conditions



Potential Salem Street improvements



Potential Riverside Avenue improvements

available space and are wider than current lane width recommendations of MassDOT. Travel lanes that are greater than 11 feet in width should be reduced to 11 feet and the extra space should be reallocated for use by pedestrians or bicycles. This reallocation could be in the form of sidewalk extensions, bicycle lanes, or sharrows bicycle lane markings.

The second technique is to reduce area used by vehicles, sometimes referred to as a road diet. The road diet could involve reduction of a travel lane or on-street parking lane, but in Medford Square it does not appear that many opportunities for a full reduction of a lane or on-street parking is likely due to the current demand and capacity limitations. Another approach to a road diet is more strategic and involves removal of on-street parking spaces in locations that would benefit from additional sidewalk space.

This approach would result in the loss of one or two on-street parking spaces in a block at the most, as opposed to removing an entire block of on-street parking supply. The space reallocated from on-street parking can then be used to support additional sidewalk activity, amenities, or landscape. Diagrams showing how this approach may be applied to Salem Street, Riverside Avenue, Forest Street, and High Street are shown on the previous and following pages. The diagrams include the strategic removal of parking spaces to expand the sidewalk amenities and landscape, curb extensions to

shorten pedestrian crossing distances to enhance safety, and new bicycle markings to promote lane sharing and bicycle awareness.

The strategic removal of on-street parking to add curb extensions can be implemented incrementally. The incremental implementation can both test the strategy in several pilot locations and begin with a low-cost conversion of the parking space to other uses. Over time additional locations can be added and more permanent investments can be made to add the amenities that are most appropriate for the location.

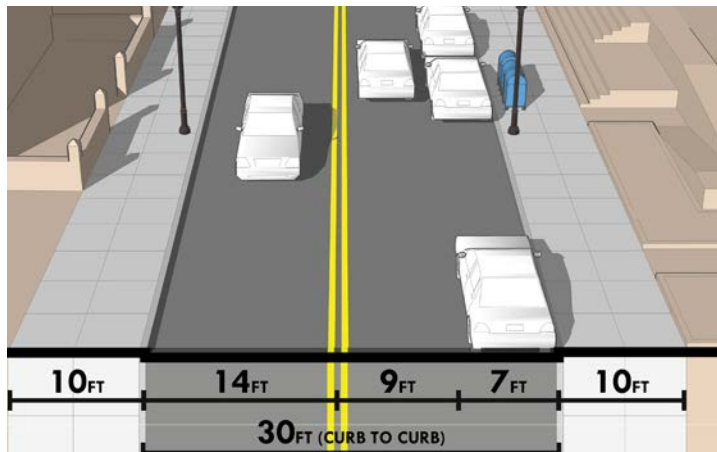
The selected locations for curb extensions should align with two main criteria to positively contribute to the pedestrian experience and amenity in Medford Square and to justify the removal of an on-street parking space. The first criteria is improved pedestrian safety. Curb extensions near intersections, mid-block crossings, or other pedestrian crossings benefit from the removal of on-street parking and the creation of a curb extension. A curb extension in this type of location improves visibility for vehicles and pedestrians at the crossing and reduces the crossing distance for pedestrians.

The second criteria is to add space for useful amenities at the right locations. For example, if a section of a block does not have the space for a street tree, a curb extension placed to appropriately space a street tree in the context of other existing trees would contribute to

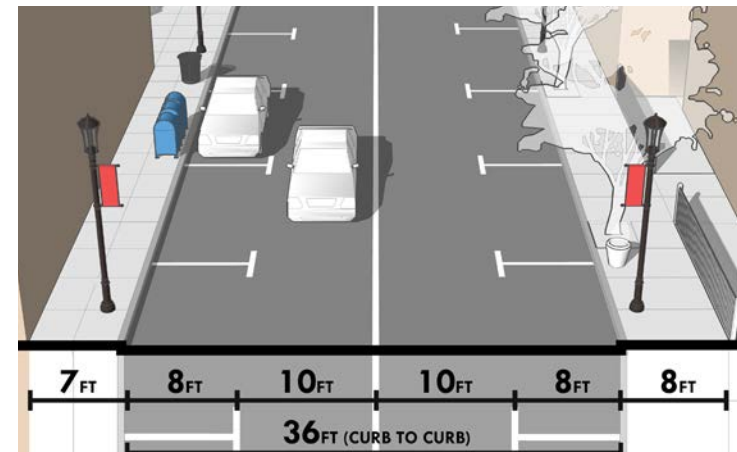
Potential Roadway Improvements

Potential roadway improvements that would enhance the sense of place and pedestrian-oriented character of Medford Square.

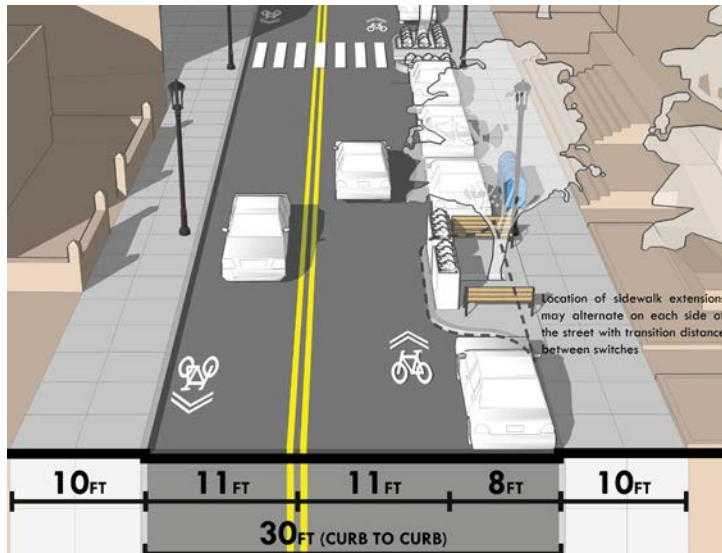
**Dimensions are estimates based on Google Earth measurements, actual dimensions and street conditions may vary*



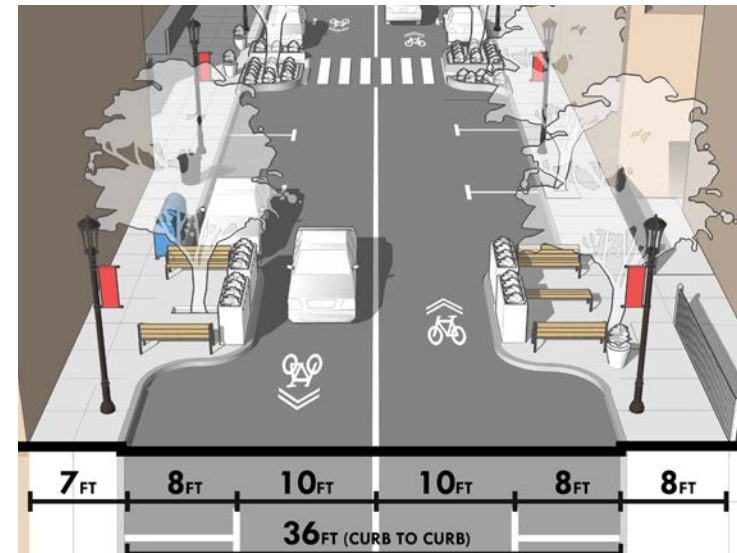
Current Forest Street conditions



Current High Street conditions



Potential Forest Street improvements



Potential High Street improvements

the block. If those location is also a benefit to pedestrian safety as outlined above, it is a great location for a curb extension. Other useful amenities may include additional space for outdoor seating near a restaurant.

One potential location that matches these criteria and that may be a useful pilot for this strategy is on High Street near the Governors Avenue intersection. A pedestrian crossing is located on High Street and is an extension of the Mystic Avenue Footbridge from Shipyard Way. On the north side of the street, the curb could be extended from the corner east to include one existing on-street parking space. This space is an on-street accessible parking space and could be placed immediately adjacent to it. A curb extension in this location would add visibility for pedestrians at the High Street crossing, reduce the crossing distance and add space for landscaping and seating near two restaurants, Colleens and Salvatore's.

Another potential location that matches these criteria and that may be a useful pilot for this strategy is on Riverside Avenue near Roland G. Pothier Way. A pedestrian crossing is located on Riverside Avenue in this location. On the north side of the street, the curb could be extended to include the areas that are currently cross-striped for no parking. A single on-street parking space to the east could also be added to this curb extension. A curb extension in this location would add visibility for the pedestrians at the Riverside Avenue

crossing, reduce the crossing distance and add space for landscaping and seating near two restaurants, Wellington's Pizzeria and Tenoch Mexican Taqueria.

Discussion of the exact locations to pilot this strategy should include adjacent property owners and tenants to better understand the trade-offs and needs that may be associated with a specific location. More generally, two pilot locations, one that occurs on High Street and one that occurs on Riverside Avenue would be best as they will establish a pattern within Medford Square and give the ability to compare and contrast results. Depending on the results of the pilot, adjustments in the approach or exact locations can be made prior to more permanent investments.

Plant Additional Street Trees

The improvement of key corridors with additional landscape, pedestrian, and bicycle amenities enhances the connections between small and large open space resources in and around Medford Square. The techniques highlighted would increase the space available for the addition of street trees in the primary street corridors of Medford Square. This is critical to addressing elevated land surface temperature issues that have been identified for Medford Square. Most of the existing ground surfaces in the Square are highly susceptible to overheating in high temperature conditions due to the prevalence of exposed black

surfaces, typically asphalt or roofing materials. Extreme heat events are projected to become more common with climate change and the expansion of tree cover is an effective way to mitigate high land surface temperature.

As recommended in Medford's *Open Space and Recreation Plan* (2011) a street tree inventory would serve as a baseline mapping to identify locations for future tree planting and enhance maintenance efforts with the City's Tree Warden. The expansion of the urban tree canopy should be part of a coordinated approach that is combined with other roadway and pedestrian safety improvements. For example, the addition of curb extensions at pedestrian crossings can provide the opportunity to integrate new areas dedicated to streetscape, stormwater management areas, and provide space that are large enough to support new street trees that can be further separated from adjacent buildings to increase the likelihood of healthy mature tree growth. The expansions of the sidewalk area can also be used as opportunities to provide benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, or other street furnishings that add to the convenience and amenity of Medford Square.



Potential curb extension pilot location on High Street



Potential curb extension pilot location on Riverside Ave

Enhance Efficient Parking Supply and Access

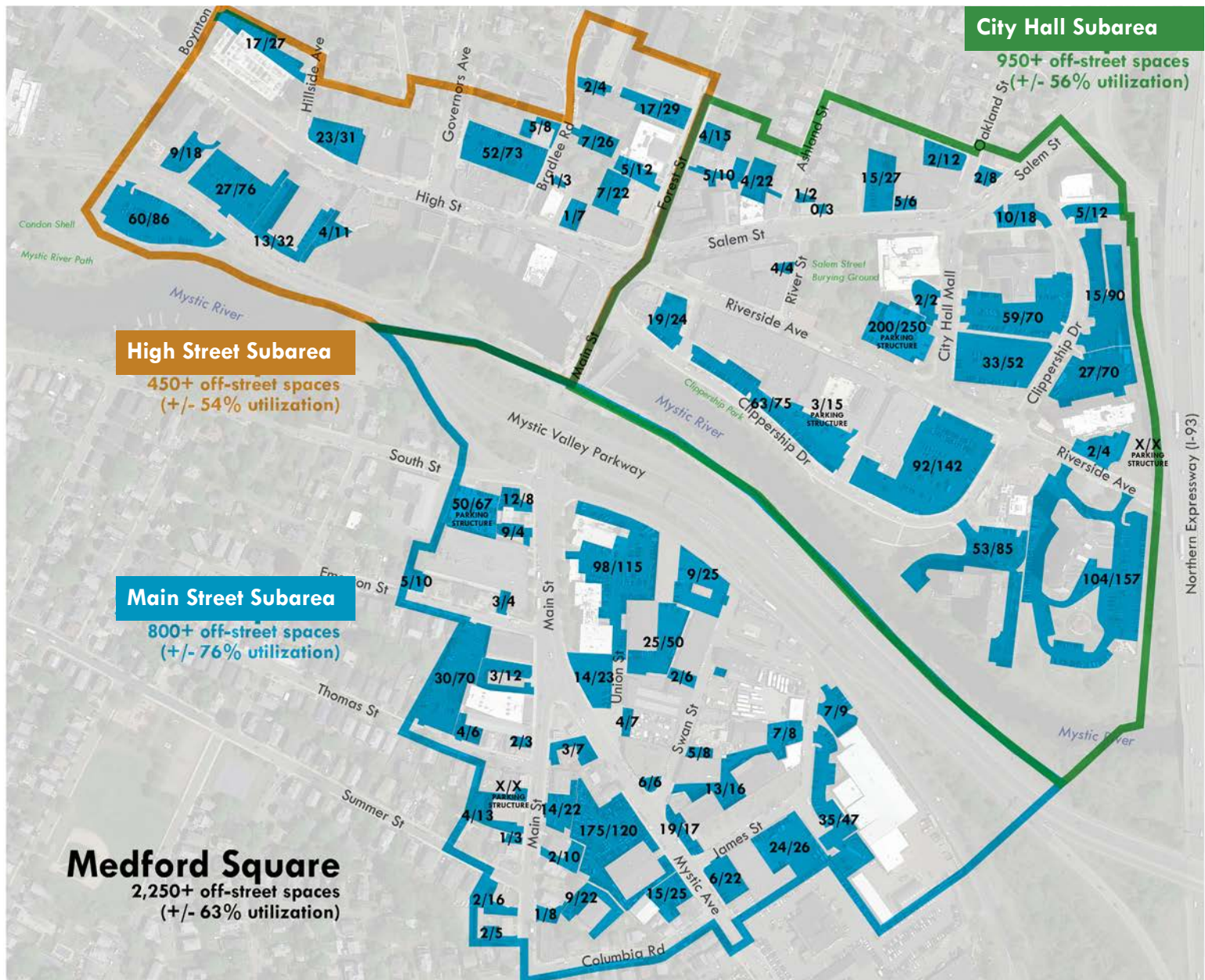
An adequate supply of convenient parking is critical to a downtown district. A district with too little parking may not be able to attract patrons who prefer to drive and park near the destination. The need for parking is well understood and has, over the preceding decades, resulted in the demolition of many buildings to provide parking in downtown districts. However, the availability of parking is not the only factor in attracting patrons. The downtown district must also include destinations and be attractive, parking is a secondary support for those requirements. As such, the parking supply should be provided as unobtrusively and efficiently as possible.

In Medford Square, the parking supply is not as unobtrusive and efficient as possible. The City Hall subarea and Main Street subarea include many large surface parking lots that are the defining features of much of those subareas. Parking efficiency has been improved through the parking management and payment kiosk system for on-street parking, but could be made even more efficient and effective. Minimizing the impact of parking can be achieved through several techniques including managing all parking as a district-wide resource, integrating parking below-grade with building foundations, providing parking efficiently in parking structures, and screening parking behind buildings. All these techniques point to partnerships and collaboration between the private and public sector to fill the need for parking.

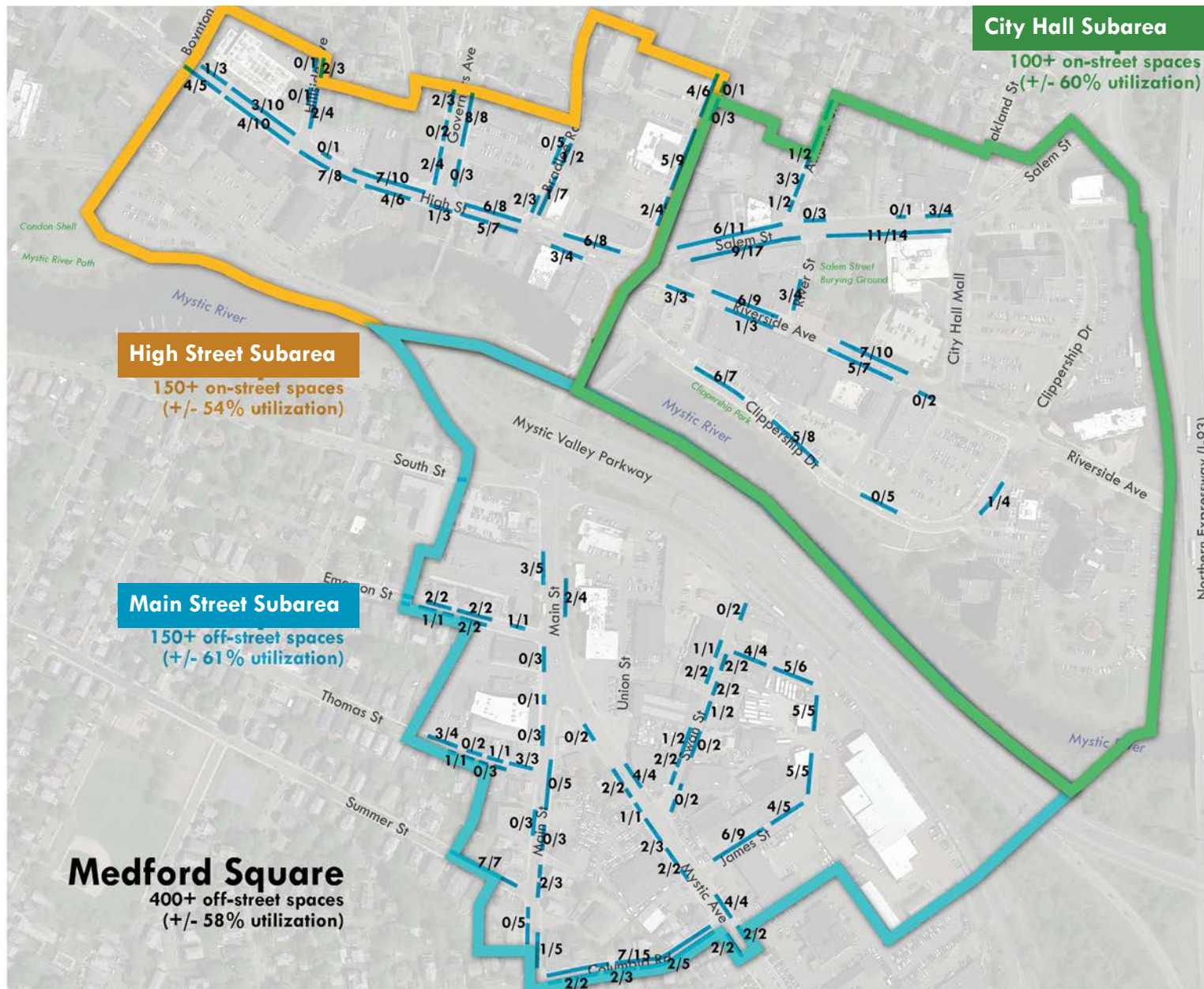
Parking Analysis Update

A parking analysis of Medford Square was performed in 2010 as part of the *Medford Square Garage Feasibility Study*. Since that study, parking management in Medford Square has been implemented with metered on-street parking with parking kiosks located on each block. The efficient use of parking in the Square is critically important, the district should not accommodate more parking than is needed and should balance providing parking with providing other, often more attractive, uses of property in the district. The City Hall Subarea is the least balanced today, and provides many more surface parking spaces than are needed. A snapshot of current parking utilization is provided on the following pages and shows that excess parking capacity is likely to exist in the Square.

The snapshot of current parking utilization provided below uses a recent aerial photograph to provide a snapshot that can be compared to the parking analysis from the 2010 study. The aerial photograph was from Google Maps and is a satellite photograph from 2016. The aerial reflects construction of the Craddock Bridge underway with the northbound temporary bridge connecting to Clippership Drive, but does not reflect the completion of the Krystle Campbell Peace Garden. This places the season of the aerial, supported by the tree and leaf coverage, likely to be in the winter or spring of 2016. The time of day is the morning based on the direction of the shadows. Each of the parking lot's



Off-street parking utilization - 2016 observation



On-street parking utilization - 2016 observation

capacity and number of vehicles present was recorded using this photograph of a morning condition in early 2016.

The off-street parking conditions of the 2016 aerial are shown graphically on the previous pages. Overall, Medford Square includes over 2,250 off-street parking spaces. Based on the aerial photograph, the off-street parking had an overall utilization of 63%. This is well below the target parking utilization of 85% for downtown districts. Both the supply of off-street parking spaces and utilization of those spaces is not equally distributed throughout the Square. The City Hall Subarea has the most off-street parking spaces at over 950 with a utilization of only 56% based on the aerial. The Main Street Subarea has over 800 off-street parking spaces with a relatively high 76% utilization based on the aerial and likely due to the auto-related uses of the subarea. The High Street Subarea has the least amount of off-street parking spaces with over 450 spaces and a utilization of only 54% based on the aerial.

In terms on on-street parking, Medford Square includes over 400 parking spaces overall. Based on the aerial photograph, the on-street parking at that moment had an overall utilization of 58%. This is well below the target parking utilization of 85% for downtown districts. This parking supply of on-street spaces and utilization of those spaces is more evenly distributed than off-street parking throughout the Square. The High Street

Subarea and the Main Street Subarea have about the same amount of on-street parking with over 150 spaces available. The Main Street Subarea has the highest on-street parking utilization of about 61%. The High Street Subarea has a lower on-street parking utilization of about 54% based on the aerial. The City Hall Subarea has fewer on-street parking spaces with over 100 spaces available. The City Hall Subarea's on-street parking utilization is about 60% based on the aerial.

This snapshot is consistent with the utilization rates from the 2010 Parking Study which offered a more detailed analysis. In order to reduce the current parking supply, the community may require additional analysis to feel comfortable with reducing the parking. If desired, such an analysis should measure utilization of the current parking supply district-wide with the ability to compare the subareas. The observations of utilization should be performed on a variety of days and times so that the community feels comfortable that the times of highest parking demand are accounted for in the analysis.

Minimizing the Impact of Parking

Several techniques are appropriate for Medford Square in order to minimize the impact of parking. The first two techniques include more effectively using on-street parking and managing on-street parking efficiently. In terms of on-street parking, the parking management system that has been implemented is critical to sustained management of this important

resource. Increasing the supply of on-street parking that is part of this system would benefit the district. The addition of on-street parking may be possible through the reconfiguration of some of the streets in the City Hall Subarea. For example, on-street parking could be added to City Hall Mall, Clippership Drive north of Riverside Avenue, or both sides of Clippership Drive south of Riverside Avenue. This may be one approach to modestly add to the parking supply in this area, if off-street parking supply is reduced in the future to allow for potential redevelopment or on-street parking spaces are lost due to strategic sidewalk curb extensions.

The second technique would have a much larger impact on using parking efficiently. This technique moves parking in the district from a system of parking that depends on self-sufficiency of each parcel, to a system that depends on sharing parking as a district. The low parking utilization rates of off-street parking in the analysis reflect an oversupply of parking overall in the district, but certain businesses or locations in the district may be under-supplied today.

In the past, parking supply has been designed to accommodate peak or near peak demand on a single parcel. This pattern leaves many parcels with too much parking frequently and leaves whole districts with too much parking most of the time. If parking is shared across properties, the peak demands for multiple uses can be accommodated more easily and with less parking overall. This type of sharing can be promoted

through the use of model shared parking agreements. Shared parking agreements offer property owners and tenants a formal way to define parking circumstances, address liability concerns, and comply with terms of tenant's leases. The City will also need to be involved to allow for shared parking agreements in the district to be used to meet parking requirements for a project. This type of district sharing of parking also benefits from the support and management of a district-wide entity such as a Medford Square Main Streets district.

Another part of district parking management is defining a parking policy for employees of the district. Often employees arrive to a downtown district at the start of the work day and leave the car in its parking space for the majority of the day. Longer term employee parking has the potential to reduce the availability of the most desirable spaces for district patrons and visitors. The district would benefit from identifying parking areas with low utilization that are more remote and dedicating them as employee parking areas and promoting the policy with local businesses. A permit program could offer these spaces at a discounted rate for local employees or providing some other form of incentive could help make this more effective distribution of parking to occur. Increasing the use of valet parking for restaurant, theater, or other patrons in the Square may have a similar benefit of redistributing the location of parking demand to match the supply of parking in the Square.

A specific example illustrates how these techniques could be applied to more efficiently use parking spaces in Medford Square and eventually allow for the removal of parking spaces that are surplus in the district. Portions of the large city-owned surface parking lots south of City Hall are used to park U.S. Postal delivery vehicles and Harvard Vanguard employee vehicles. While

these may be convenient parking spaces for the users of these spaces, this parking could likely occur in other locations. The Harvard Vanguard parking structure across the street was observed to have a relatively low (approximately 60% utilization) on a weekday morning, which would allow for the surface parking lot vehicles to be parked in the structure across the street. This area of



Large underused surface parking lots adjacent to the underused top level of a parking structure

Medford Square is seen in the aerial photograph below with low parking utilization evident adjacent to City Hall to the south and to the east.

Additionally, the Harvard Vanguard parking structure is a centrally located supply of structured parking that is not used 24 hours a day or 7 days a week. It provides a potential opportunity for a shared parking agreement for general use by patrons of the Square or for specific uses such as patrons of the Chevalier Theater during an evening or weekend event. The agreement could be structured as to address the concerns of the owner of the parking and potentially provide benefit in the form of parking fees.

Parking Supply Enhancements

Other techniques to minimizing the impact of parking in the district are associated with investments to enhance the parking supply. Similar to the densification of uses through mixed-use development, the supply of parking in Medford Square can be densified through the use of structured parking or parking combined with building structures or other overlapping uses. While each approach is expensive, the more efficiently parking is provided, the more economically productive the district becomes. Aside from surface parking supplies, parking should be integrated below-grade with new building foundations, provided efficiently in parking structures, or placed to the rear of buildings to be screened from view.

A study for the location and design of a new parking structure was completed for Medford Square in 2010 and determined that the City-owned parking lot at Governor's Avenue would offer the best access and potential supply of parking if reconfigured as a parking structure. This option offers a reasonable approach to adding parking supply in the future, if other surface parking lots are converted through redevelopment. Adding several levels of parking in a parking structure over an existing City-owned surface parking lot is an effective method for strategically adding parking supply in a critical location. This specific design would add approximately 200 spaces to the High Street Subarea near to the Chevalier Theatre. This is not an immediate requirement, as no parking deficit currently exists.

Other locations that may benefit from structured parking investments include properties where a significant grade change occurs. Several properties on Forest Street and High Street have a substantial difference in grade from the front of the property to the rear of the property. This provides an opportunity to place a second level of parking over an existing surface parking lot. The lower level would be accessed by the street at the lower elevation, and the upper level would be accessed by the street at the upper elevation. Costly ramps and circulation between the two levels is not necessary which reduces the investment in adding more parking.

Parking structures and parking areas should be designed to be adaptable and flexible to accommodate future needs. For example, a parking structure could be designed to easily convert a portion of the ground floor or other levels to other uses, if parking needs were to be reduced in the future. Surface parking lots should also be considered for improvements that enhance flexibility and integration into the district. A parking landscape improvement program could be used to add tree cover and pervious surface to parking lots in coordination with the City of Medford Tree Warden. Parking lots can also be used as event spaces and transformed for a festival event, art show, or farmer's market, much as

the Medford Farmer's Market has done in the past. The images below show more intensive investments of a parking lot structure or surface paint treatment that elevates the parking area into a civic and celebratory public space.



Adaptable and Flexible Parking Areas Used for District Events

Land Use and Sense of Place

D

Enhance District Character and Integrate Public Art

The sense of character and attractiveness of an entire district is strengthened through incremental improvements in the design, quality, and vibrancy of the civic realm. These incremental improvements may include district gateway enhancements, the integration of public art, strengthened wayfinding, building facade improvements, and enhanced streetscape. Public art and a focus on design are important contributors to strengthening Medford Square as a center of culture and creative economy. Specific approaches to integrating public art in the district may include unique district signage, district information kiosks, stand-alone public art installations, art installations, murals, or super-graphics on district buildings or infrastructure, and integration of art with bus shelters, streetscape or other sidewalk amenities. District events are also important contributors to strengthening Medford Square as a center of culture and creative economy.

District gateway enhancements

The entry points into a distinct and identifiable district should be announced by the presence of public art, district signs, and a noticeable difference in the character and quality of the civic realm and streetscape. The entry points into the district are important for orientation and present a wayfinding opportunity. Several gateways into Medford Square are roadway overpasses at Salem Street, Riverside Avenue and Main Street.

Connecting district gateways with art installations would be an effective approach for Medford Square to announce the importance of art in the district. Unique lighting installations, sculptures, or murals are all effective approaches to redefining the existing roadway infrastructure as a district gateway, as shown in the example below.



Public art integrated with an overpass

Buildings located near district gateways are also important opportunities to identify arrival in the district. City Hall is an example of a building with a great street presence on Salem Street near gateway into Medford Square. Adjacent to City Hall, the former SpringStep building is also an opportunity to celebrate a district

gateway. In the case of prominent buildings, public art may take the form of lighting or other artistic displays that are projected or installed onto the building.

Integration of public art

The integration of public art into district gateway treatments is one effective approach to art in Medford Square. Stand-alone public art installations could be integrated within the civic realm of the district anywhere and site specific art could be adapted to many sites and circumstances. Public art integrated throughout the district can provide moments of surprise and intrigue that add a layer of depth to experiences in the Square. Locations that may benefit from public art installations include blank building facades, infrastructure buildings or structures, alleyways, service areas, parking lots, plazas, or bus shelters. Ideally, public art in Medford Square would connect to a narrative about the Square and highlight aspects of its origins, history, or significance.

For publicly funded projects, a small portion of the budget could be dedicated for the integration of public art in the project. A common amount is to use 1% of the project budget for art that is to be designed and installed as part of the project. Another method to increase the integration of public art is to commission public art pieces through a grant-funded request for proposals that solicits responses from artists with specific criteria for the requested project.



Public art integrated with an overpass

The integration of public art is a way to draw together the sense of place and district identity for Medford Square. If over time a diverse district collection of forms of art, installations, and locations forms, it can be coupled with a consistent plaque, logo, or color, to reinforce a sense of continuity and district-wide branding. Similar simple district branding elements can be used to help festivals and events reinforce the district, such as a small logo or coordinated color-scheme for brochures and signage for Medford Square.

Strengthened wayfinding

The district branding described can also be expanded and consistently applied to a district wayfinding program. A wayfinding program provides a series of consistently themed and strategically placed signs that direct visitors and call attention to district destinations, attractions, or significance. The signs also provide an opportunity to integrate public art. A wayfinding program might begin with district branded signs that are located at the district gateways and that direct visitors to the four primary civic anchors that have been

identified - City Hall, Public Library, Chevalier Theatre, and Police and Fire Headquarters.

Another component of a district wayfinding system could be integrated with a mobility hub for the busiest bus stop locations in Medford Square. In addition to offering easy transfers between buses, ride sharing, and biking, these locations could also offer district information kiosks that provide visitors with information for businesses in the Square, locations of destinations, open spaces, or other points of interest.

Building facade improvements

Building facades and ground level storefronts are major contributors to the character and sense of place of a district. Ground level storefronts should be transparent, active, and engaging to strongly contribute to the civic realm of the district and to support district vitality. Storefront transparency is achieved through generous proportions of clear glass as part of the ground level facade. That proportion is typically a minimum of 60% of the ground level facade should be clear glass. A facade is active when the interior function of the space behind the clear glass is an interesting and active use - a restaurant or cafe seating area, an office lobby, a retail shop, or other active uses designed to be viewed from the adjacent sidewalk. A facade is engaging when it includes other components to communicate about the business occupying the storefront, including signs, awnings, displays, or other techniques to communicate.

The design of each of these facade components should be integrated with the overall building and respect and relate to abutting patterns of storefronts. Storefront improvements can be incentivized in the district by offering design assistance for business owners, offering a revolving low interest loan fund for improvements, or offering a grant for qualifying improvements.

Enhanced Streetscape

The civic realm of Medford Square should represent a concentration and consistency of amenities that support walkability and district vibrancy. The consistent amenities should include ornamental street lights, banners, street trees, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, areas for sidewalk seating, special sidewalk treatments and accents, and special crosswalk treatments.

The ornamental street lights with banners already exist in Medford Square and contribute to an enhanced



Design preference images for streetscape selected by the community

streetscape. In 2016, the Medford Arts Council and City of Medford installed banners as part of the inaugural Medford Art Banners series. Banners were hung in Medford Square along Salem Street, High Street, and Riverside Avenue and featured the work of local artists.

A renewed effort to plant street trees in Medford Square should be undertaken to both benefit the district character and strengthen the tree canopy to reduce heat retention and elevated surface temperatures. The City's tree planting program under supervision of the Tree Warden should target annual planting efforts on the increase and improvement of tree cover in Medford Square.

Benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks should be of a uniform design that is consistently applied throughout the district. In constrained locations that cannot support the placement of addition objects, curb extensions should be considered to expand the sidewalk. A similar



Design preference images for streetscape selected by the community

approach could be used to provide additional sidewalk space adjacent to restaurants that may desire outdoor seating for patrons.

Special sidewalk treatments, accents and crosswalk treatments should be integrated into the district, but also approached with caution. These treatments can be attractive and contribute to the sense of character of the district, but can also pose accessibility, maintenance, and life cycle concerns. Any paving materials should be carefully considered to provide performance characteristics that are at least as good as standard asphalt in these areas of concern. In terms of streetscape character, the community expressed a preference for brick materials, or similar substitute materials, to provide an enhanced character to the crosswalks and intersections of the district.

Embrace Design And Events

In addition to physical improvements to enhance the civic realm and attract creative enterprises to Medford Square, less permanent aspects of the cultural landscape of the Square, such as arts and culture events, should also continue to be embraced. Medford Square already benefits from strong and established event traditions such as Circle the Square, Mystic River Celebration, and Medford Farmer's Market. These events help to feature Medford Square as a central destination within the City of Medford and elevate the profile of the Square. Special events also have a unique

capacity to bring communities together and reinforce a sense of community pride while deepening knowledge of the history and narratives of Medford Square.

Events are also an opportunity to bring about temporary change and to test options for how streets, sidewalks, plazas, or other physical environments and configurations may function. An event can be used to create the temporary moment of disruption and tolerance that is needed to test two way circulation on certain street segments, or temporarily reduce parking areas while accommodating other uses and activities. This type of low cost, temporary change to the built environment is sometimes referred to as “tactical urbanism” and is typically focused on testing interventions that are under consideration to improve



Medford Square arts activity as part of Circle the Square

walkability, safety, or vibrancy of a district. This approach provides an opportunity for testing some of the strategies that are outlined as part of the Multi-modal Access and Circulation improvements.

Medford Square benefits from arts and cultural activity that is already present. These existing assets need to be leveraged and elevated to be a central part of the identity of the Square and used as core features that attract residents, patrons and visitors to enhance other economic development drivers. The current resources in the Square include facilities such as the Chevalier Theatre and the former Springstep facility, which provide venues for arts and culture activity.

The Chevalier Theatre is the sixth largest stage theater in the Boston area, it should be a destination within Medford Square that drives activity throughout the week and calendar year. One successful theatre operation model for increased activity is to connect a theater company with the theater to be a steward and operator of the facility. This creates a baseline of theater activity and programming to build the prominence of this resource as a destination in the Square. Another model is to allow the theater to function more as a multi-purpose community space that can be used for a variety of arts and culture events and needs, while accommodating occasional larger performances.

Arts and culture needs can also be accommodated and expanded with practical use of other district assets.

Vacant storefronts can be used for benefit of arts and culture activity, even temporarily, with great impact on the district. The City could promote a vacant storefront art program that includes agreements with owners to reduce liabilities and address other owner concerns. Art and culture can also be integrated into each new investment in district streetscape and plazas, or by providing dedicated building program components to arts and culture in future investments into municipal facilities. This dedicated building space may include galleries, multi-purpose rooms, community rooms, artist studios, or artist live/work units.

Other resources include community facilities, such as the Medford Public Library and the Medford Senior Center, which provide anchor institutions that may support or offer arts and cultural programming in the district. Additional resources include institutional connections, such as the City's connection to Tufts University or Bunker Hill Community College, relationships that could be explored for more direct arts and cultural links to Medford Square including public art installations, performances, or involvement in community events. The current resources also include arts organizations and events, such as the Medford Arts Council, Coalition for Arts, Culture and a Healthy Economy in Medford (CACHE), the Medford Arts Center Inc. (MACI), and the Medford Historical Society.



Public art integrated into Cleveland's Detroit Shoreway Neighborhood

Land Use and Sense of Place Summary Strategies

A

Preserve and Interpret Medford Square Legacy

The value of the historic and architectural assets of Medford Square should not be underestimated. The character and history of the Square is much of what distinguishes it from other places and makes it a unique and attractive setting for community and economic activity. The most effective way to promote preservation in the Square is through the creation of a local historic district. As is the case with the nearby Hillside Avenue Historic District, a district can be both a National Register District and a Local Historic District, established by the Medford City Council. The proposed district boundary would complement future redevelopment in other parts of the Square while providing additional oversight and stewardship where it is needed to embrace preservation of the Square's history.

B

Improve Key Street Corridors and Reallocate Space

The key streets in Medford Square provide local and regional vehicular connections and a critical supply of parking. Today, much of the space of the public right-of-way is devoted to driving and parking. However, the Square will never out-compete other nearby places for convenience of driving and parking. The streets should also provide safe and attractive routes for walking and biking. The strategic reallocation of space on key street corridors for pedestrians, bicyclists, and streetscape would greatly enhance the attractiveness of the district and strengthen the sense of place. Reconfiguration to add more space for trees, amenities, and places for people to sit or dine outdoors improves the district and the streets while enhancing safety for all patrons.

C

Enhance Efficient Parking Supply and Access

An adequate supply of convenient parking is critical to a downtown district. However, this parking supply should be provided as unobtrusively as possible through on-street parking, parking integrated with building foundations, parking structures, and placement behind buildings. The space requirements and visual impact of parking lots are disruptive to the vitality of a district and need to be minimized through the efficient use of parking and the integration of landscape and screening into surface parking lots. The utilization of parking is most efficient when shared across properties and used as a district-wide resource that encourages parking once and walking between multiple destinations. When parking is efficiently used and enhanced as an integrated district component, it can be reduced with surplus parking redeveloped for more active and vital uses that better contribute to a vibrant Medford Square.

D

Enhance District Character and Integrate Public Art

The sense of character and attractiveness of an entire district is strengthened through incremental improvements in the design, quality, and vibrancy of the civic realm. These incremental improvements may include district gateway enhancements, the integration of public art, strengthened wayfinding, building facade improvements, and enhanced streetscape. Public art and a focus on design are important contributors to strengthening Medford Square as a center of culture and creative economy. It is important that every investment elevate the sense of place and character of Medford Square, particularly in the City Hall and Main Street subareas.



Medford Square Land Use and Sense of Place Strategies

Economic Development and Vitality



Economic Development and Vitality Introduction

It is a time to be optimistic about the future of Medford Square. While no district is perfect and all districts are constantly evolving, Medford Square has a strong foundation of small businesses, local services, restaurants, creative enterprises, and medical office uses from which to build. Medford Square is currently a center of economic activity and business vitality in Medford and several strategies have been identified to strengthen it through public and private actions and investments. These efforts will improve Medford Square's position as an attractive district for businesses and patrons that is at the heart of Medford.

Among Medford Square's assets are four significant civic anchors and city facilities, including City Hall, the Medford Public Library, the Police and Fire Headquarters, and the Chevalier Theater. The locations of these city facilities are perfectly distributed in Medford Square to the east, west, south, and north respectively. Each facility has a civic presence and draws visitors and businesses to the Square. The location of these facilities is not likely to change and can be leveraged to draw patrons and businesses to the other activities in the district. Investing in these civic facilities and district anchors is one approach to attracting other positive investments in the Square.

Real estate development activity is another approach to strengthen the economic competitiveness and vitality of Medford Square. Many factors contribute to whether or not a district is receiving redevelopment attention and

investment. In Medford Square, several impediments to redevelopment have been identified and include a low inventory of viable redevelopment sites, development restrictions imposed through existing zoning limitations, and an inefficient supply of parking.

A parcel-by-parcel analysis of Medford Square, with a focus on near term redevelopment opportunities in the City Hall Subarea and High Street Subarea, reveals that very few privately-owned properties are currently development ready. The most prominent private redevelopment opportunity is the property at 8 Forest Street where existing buildings have been removed from the vacant site. Other potential opportunities exist at privately owned parking lots in the district, but would require a reconsideration of parking supply in the district.

The most significant opportunities for redevelopment are found on City-owned property. This presents a barrier to redevelopment as the properties would be subject to a property disposition process that must precede redevelopment. It is also an opportunity for the City to invite and lead a redevelopment effort that is a catalyst for positive change in the district.

Existing zoning limitations present another impediment to redevelopment investment in the district. In order to invite economic development a financially viable level of density must be achievable with a redevelopment project. Currently, density limitations of the Commercial

1 district and generous minimum parking requirements are limiting the scale of development that can occur in Medford Square and reducing the likelihood of investments. Design guidelines should be considered as outlined to ensure that investment in Medford Square is consistent with the Medford Square Master Plan and community vision for the future of the district.

In addition to physical investments, economic development can also be strengthened in Medford Square by focusing on the small businesses and commercial enterprises that choose to locate there. The market analysis for Medford Square highlights two areas in which attracting new businesses would strengthen the business mix while reinforcing the community vision for the Square. These two areas include restaurant uses and creative economy uses. Redevelopment in Medford Square could create new spaces for both of these uses. Aligned with the

community vision, new restaurant uses in the Square would add ground floor activity and destinations for the district. The increase in creative economy enterprises builds on uses already in the Square and strengthens the presence of arts and culture activity.

When combined with other strategies for enhancing the sense of place, strengthening walkability, and integrating public art, these strategies have the potential to drive positive change in the next evolution of Medford Square. Medford Square has so many of the characteristics and attributes of a great downtown center. A catalyst project resulting from zoning changes and public land disposition can model the type of investment that the City, community, and market would support. This type of project can be used to promote other positive investments in private properties. These strategies can enhance the attractiveness of Medford Square as a proven investment that is broadly supported by the City and community.



One of the restaurants of Medford Square

Strengthen Community and Civic Anchors

Although it may seem obvious, it is important to not overlook the fact that Medford Square is the civic center of Medford and that it includes several significant municipal facilities that are community anchors in the district and the City. These significant community anchors include the Medford City Hall, the Medford Public Library, the Medford Police and Fire Headquarters, and the Chevalier Theatre.

These four community anchors are perfectly geographically distributed in Medford Square to provide a prominent anchor in each cardinal direction with City Hall to the east, Police and Fire Headquarters to the south, Medford Public Library to the west, and Chevalier Theatre to the north. Several attributes of these facilities create a unique opportunity to benefit Medford Square. The distribution and location of these facilities allows them to act as gateways into the district. The facilities are City-owned and can be improved to align with City goals, including this community vision and Master Plan. The facilities are public and provide an opportunity to provide spaces for community uses, district programming, and public amenities. The facilities offer a unique opportunity for branding of the City and Medford Square.

Each of the four community anchors also provides a destination for a variety of City services and represent another reason for residents and business owners to

visit Medford Square. Each visit to these facilities should be viewed as an opportunity to convince all visitors to come back as patrons of the Square. Investing in each of these community anchor facilities should be viewed as a way to reinforce positive activity and destinations in Medford Square.

Improvements at the civic anchors should not be limited to the building only, but should include improvements to the grounds and exterior spaces to enhance the connection between interior and exterior spaces around each of the community anchors. Improving the plaza spaces around building entries provides opportunities to bring engaging activities outside the building and provides additional community gathering areas. Enhanced plaza spaces and landscape should be used to promote extended visits from patrons of these anchors and enhance perceptions of Medford Square.



Location of community anchors



- 1 **Medford City Hall** is a primary destination for public services in Medford. The facility has a strong civic presence and acts as a gateway to the City and Medford Square on Salem Street. It is a strong visual landmark and a historic building that was built in 1937. The facility includes city departments and services that residents may need to visit throughout the course of living in and doing business in the City. The interior features public spaces such as the central rotunda that are used for display and gallery space for items and art of local interest. The building is nearly surrounded by parking, roadways and service areas that diminish its presence and prominence as a gateway in the Square. Its surrounding lawns and plazas are used for events.



- 2 **Medford Police and Fire Headquarters** is a primary destination for public services in Medford. The facility has a modest presence on Main Street south of the Mystic River. The buildings were built in 1963 and are reflect the minimalist and modern architectural style of that time period. The headquarters buildings define the street frontage along Main Street and Mystic Avenue. The building frontage includes a small seating area near the building's flag pole and landscape between the building and sidewalk. The building and community spaces or amenities provided could offer a more inviting and welcoming appeal that may be part of future investments in the facilities. The facility could better define the frontage along Main St and Mystic Ave.



- 3 Medford Public Library** is a primary destination for public services in Medford. The building defines the frontage on High Street for the block between Boynton Road and Hillside Avenue. It was built in 1959 and reflects a modernist style of that time period. The building provides an attractive view into the interior activity and book stacks with generous transparent windows on the front façade. The front entry plaza includes a small landscape area, access ramp, book drop-off, and bike rack, but no place for sitting or gathering. The prominent building corner near Hillside Avenue does not have any transparent windows into the active interior and that corner could be used better as an exterior space. Increasing the transparency and visibility of community activity on High Street and a reinvention of the open space at the corner of Hillside Avenue would benefit the community anchor.



- 4 Chevalier Theatre** is a major community and cultural destination in Medford. The theater facility is an arts and culture asset with the potential to distinguish Medford Square within the surrounding region. The facility is the sixth largest stage theatre in the Boston metro area with over 1,800 seats for programs and events. Below the theatre space is another civic resource, the Gene Mack Gymnasium and youth center operated by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Medford and Somerville. These two attractions are distinguishing features for promoting Medford Square as a civic, arts, and culture center. The building was built in 1940 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Chevalier Theatre would benefit from an expansion of the sidewalk area in front of the building and strong pedestrian connections in the directions of the major parking resources in the area.

The civic anchors of Medford Square are a distinct feature and part of what makes the district unique as compared to other commercial, retail, or mixed-use centers. The civic anchors affirm that Medford Square is a center of activity, community, and civic life. As much as possible, each civic anchor should provide attractions, space, and uses that fulfill community needs and draw people together in Medford Square.

For example, one need that is often unmet is the need for community rooms or gathering space for community groups and meetings. If a combination of rooms at City Hall, the Police and Fire Headquarters, Library, and Chevalier Theatre could provide space for these needs, that would be another approach to promote activity in the Square that would draw people downtown. This type of visit may include stopping at a local business. If renovations or additions to these facilities occur, they should build into the new program publicly accessible community meeting rooms that, ideally, are visible from the street and contribute to an active street frontage as part of the community anchor.

Medford City Hall is a community anchor and a gateway facility for Medford Square and the City. The City Hall Building is a historic and stately structure that has a strong and visible presence in the Square. However, the area surrounding City Hall is almost entirely surface parking lots. While convenient vehicular access to City Hall is an important component of its functionality, the areas around the building could be better organized and reconsidered to better connect this community anchor to the Square's vibrant public spaces.

The Police and Fire Headquarters would benefit from a substantial investment and reinvention as public safety facility that provides a transparent and visible presence on Main Street. The integration of community gathering spaces and other community resources in this reinvented facility would greatly benefit the Square. In early 2017, Mayor Burke announced a plan for a new 35,000 square foot, three-story Police Training facility adjacent to the Police Headquarters. This facility should provide enhance the contributions and presence of the public safety facilities as anchors in Medford Square.

Investing in each of these community anchors should be a priority strategy to both reinforce positive activity in the Square, but also to help reinforce the importance of Medford Square as a place for public and private investment. Investments in public facilities should be aligned with the design guidelines that are outlined for redevelopment in Medford Square. The opportunity to invest in the Library is immediate, with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners recently awarding a provisional construction grant of approximately \$12 million to allow the City to advance toward the goal of constructing a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified library building.

The potential for a fifth community anchor can be found adjacent to City Hall in the former Springstep building. This is a unique facility that should be an active contributor as an anchor destination in the Square. The City should assist in finding a new use for this facility. Potential improvements for each of the community anchors should leverage these strategic facilities to positively impact other activity in Medford Square.

Economic Development and Vitality

Refine Medford Square Zoning and Design Guidelines

The Medford Square Master Plan study area includes seven current zoning districts: Commercial 1 (C-1), Commercial 2 (C-2), Industrial (I), General Residence (GR), Apartment 1 (APT-1), Apartment 2 (APT-2), and Single Family 1 (SF-1). The largest of these zones in Medford Square is the Commercial 1 (C-1) zoning district including a majority of the property in the City Hall and High Street Subareas. The second largest area is within the Commercial 2 (C-2) zoning district including a majority of the properties in the Main Street Subarea of the study area.

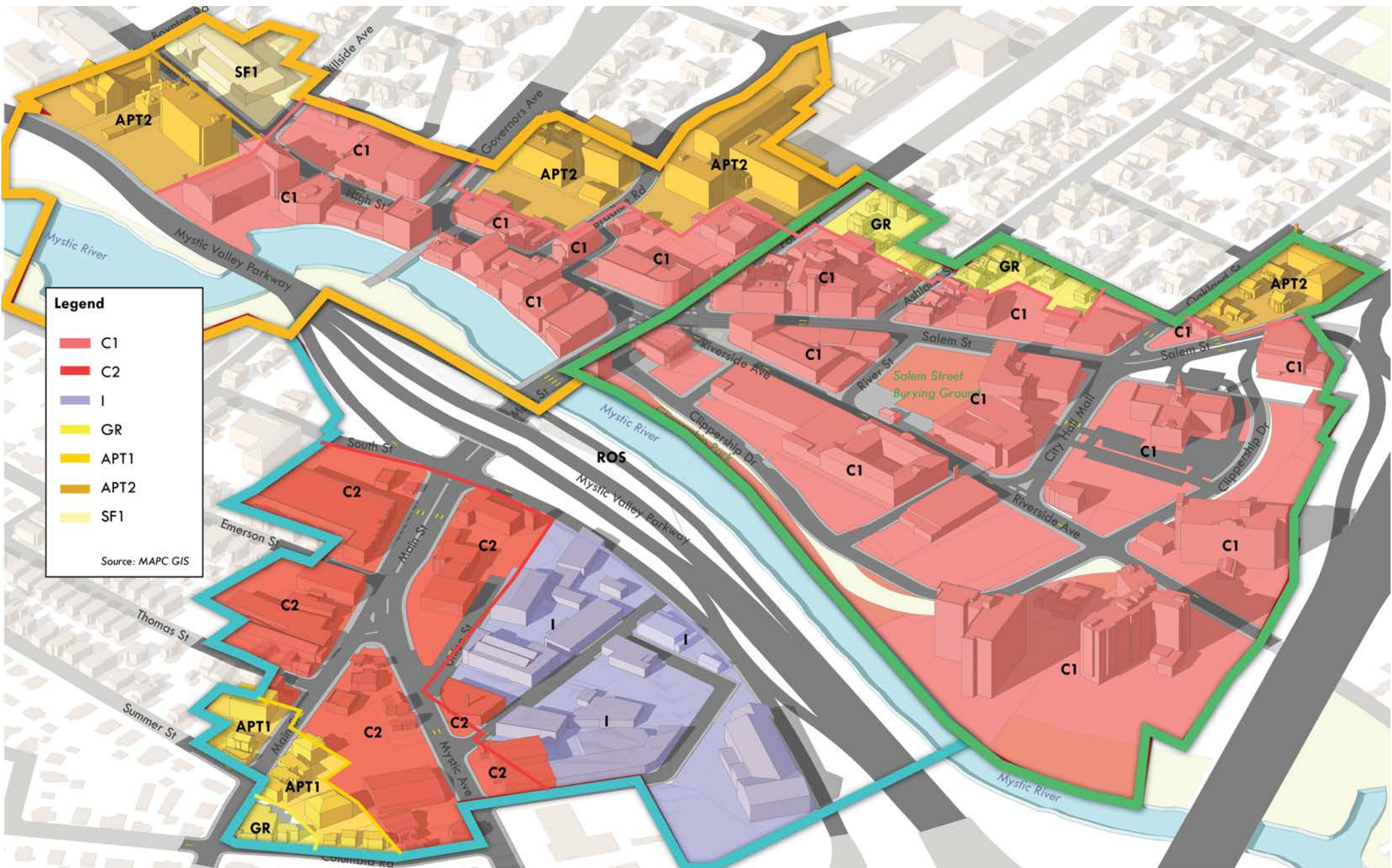
All current zoning district boundaries in the Medford Square study area are illustrated in the diagram to the right. The existing residential zones that are included in the study area are shown to provide a complete understanding of the zoning, but zoning changes for these districts is not under consideration.

It is important to note that both the C-1 and C-2 zoning districts apply to other areas within the City of Medford beyond Medford Square. Any modifications to the underlying zoning districts would also impact these areas of the City. The C-1 zoning district applies to West Medford, Boston Avenue at Winthrop Street, Main Street at Harvard Street, Salem Street near Haines Square, Wellington Circle/Fellsway Plaza, and a portion of Middlesex Avenue near the Malden town line. The C-2 zoning district continues south along the frontage

of Mystic Avenue to the municipal boundary with Somerville. The appropriateness for zoning modifications to other areas within the City has not been studied and modifications to zoning are intended for Medford Square only.

The short term and long approach to zoning in Medford Square varies, with an initial focus on the City Hall Subarea. In the City Hall Subarea, the mixed-use redevelopment opportunities are near term and should be leveraged as catalysts for broader improvements in Medford Square. New zoning in Medford Square should first be created in the area of the current C-1 district in this subarea. Eventually the recommended district could be expanded west to the High Street Subarea and south across the Mystic to replace portions of the current C-2 district in the Main Street Subarea.

The characteristics of the primary zoning district considered for near term redevelopment opportunities, Commercial 1 (C-1) have been analyzed relative to the community vision, goals, and strategies that have been identified for Medford Square. The analysis of current zoning has included the use regulations, dimensional requirements, and parking regulations of the existing zoning district. The analysis and zoning recommendations are outlined on the following pages and provide an approach to making the zoning more consistent with the community vision for Medford Square.



Current zoning districts in Medford Square

Allowable Uses

The mix of uses in Medford Square is critically important to strengthening the walkability and vitality of the downtown district as articulated in the community vision. As that vision relates to zoning, use regulations of the allowed, special permit, or prohibited uses in the district are an opportunity to concretely reinforce the community vision for Medford Square.

Generally, uses that are consistent with the community vision should be allowed by right in Medford Square to both encourage this type of activity and provide predictability for its approval. Uses that are clearly not consistent with the community vision should be prohibited. Uses that may require additional considerations or that could be appropriate under certain circumstances should be allowed by special permit.

Several uses that are currently allowed or allowed by special permit are inconsistent with reinforcing a walkable district, including uses that specifically cater to automobiles, such as gasoline service stations. These uses should be modified to be prohibited in Medford Square. While the district currently includes service stations, allowing additional service stations would not strengthen the district to be consistent with the community vision. Any non-conformances in existing uses that may be created by proposed zoning changes would be “grandfathered” into the new zoning district and continue operation.

Uses that would not fully leverage the opportunity for redevelopment in Medford Square should be prohibited.

The following uses are currently allowed by right and would be in the category of a use that does not match the scale of the opportunity in Medford Square - multiple dwelling not over three stories in height; hotel or motel not over 50 feet in height; mortuary, undertaking, or funeral establishment; swimming pool; noncommercial greenhouse, tool shed, or other similar accessory office.

Similarly, the following uses are currently allowed by special permit from the City Council (SPC) in the table of use regulations) and would not fully leverage the opportunity for redevelopment in Medford Square - body art establishment; assisted living residences not to exceed 35 feet or 2 ½ stories; gasoline service station; sale or rental of motor vehicles exclusive of used car sales; and accessory storage conducted entirely within an enclosed structure; paranormal service and sales; drive-through retail sales and consumer service; drive-through takeout; keno; outdoor automobile sales and storage for sale.

In addition to these modifications to current uses allowed or prohibited, the encouragement of mixed use development should be clearly promoted. Mixed-Use Development should be added as a new use definition and allowed by right in Medford Square. This is consistent with the recommendations of the 2005 Medford Square Master Plan and should include combining the following uses - multi-family and attached dwellings; artist studios and live/work units; business, professional, medical and government offices; bank, restaurant, retail store and personal service store; hotel and motel; place of worship; community center;

theaters, museums, arts and cultural centers; educational institution; child-care facility; public and private recreational uses; and parking facility. Mixed-use development should be associated with a standard to place active uses on the ground floor to contribute to a vibrant district.

Dimensional Requirements

The current zoning, including allowable dimensions for development in Medford Square's Commercial 1 (C-1) district place too many limitations on the scale and density of buildings. This limitation impacts potential investment in Medford Square by reducing the achievable density of development and reducing the predictability of development approval. An increase in the allowable density of potential development is both consistent with the community vision for Medford Square and would increase the likelihood that the district will receive future redevelopment investment.

Under the current zoning, for Multiple Dwellings, the maximum permitted height is 75 feet or 6 stories. The usable open space requirement is 20% of the gross floor area and maximum lot coverage is 30%. Under current zoning, lot area requirements established per dwelling unit create a density restriction that does not allow for multi-family dwellings greater than about 4 stories. This is limiting the economic viability of redevelopment and economic activity in the district.

The allowable height and density limitations of other uses vary. Under the current zoning, for a Hotel in a C-1 district the usable open space requirement is 25%

and landscaped open space requirement is 10%, the maximum lot coverage is not applicable, and the maximum permitted height is 140 feet or 15 stories. The same variation in allowable height is in place for an assisted living residence, the maximum permitted lot coverage is 35%, and the maximum permitted height is 75 feet or 6 stories. For Other permitted principal structures in C-1, the allowable height and buildable envelope is even more restrictive, the maximum permitted lot coverage is not applicable, and the maximum permitted height is 50 feet or 4 stories.

The variation of dimensional requirements by specific uses may not be as important or necessary for a modified zoning district in Medford Square. The overall intention to allow, attract, and incentivize mixed-use development would promote multiple uses within the same building. A more consistent building scale across the district would reinforce a cohesive district identity and reinforce relationships across properties, while remaining sensitive to the surrounding context. A consistent maximum permitted height, open space requirement, and maximum lot coverage would expand the potential for mixed-use redevelopment in Medford Square.

Specifically, a more permissible density could encourage more development to reach the current maximum height of 6 stories or 75 feet in Medford Square. By removing density limitations, taller and more dense buildings are allowed without having to increase the maximum allowable height that is in place today.

Parking Requirements

In addition to the uses and dimensional requirements, the other zoning characteristic that has been identified as a potential barrier for redevelopment is the parking requirements. Balancing the supply and demand for parking in an active and walkable district is critically important to improving the pedestrian environment and increasing the density of uses.

Several overarching trends must be considered as context for this rebalancing of requirements. First, high parking requirements simultaneously increase the cost of development and reduce the amount of development that can occur in Medford Square, reducing the likelihood of investments. Second, the supply of parking in the form of surface parking lots is very disruptive to the continuity of an attractive pedestrian environment in Medford Square.

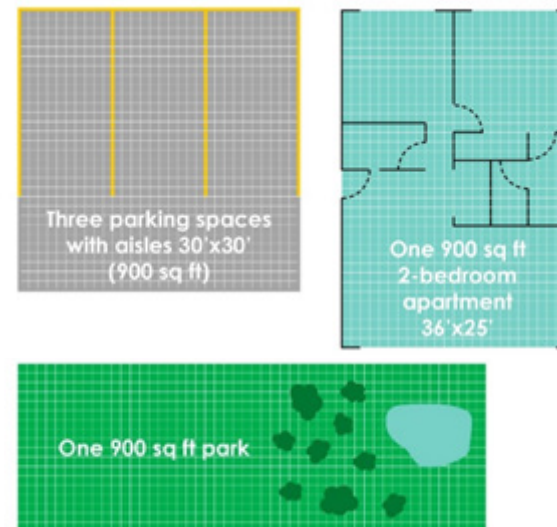
Currently, it is not the resident's, visitor's, or developer's choice to prioritize parking above a more walkable and active district, it is a requirement of the zoning. The current parking requirements make it impossible to achieve the density of development that is desired for Medford Square. Currently, for multiple dwelling units, the requirement is 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit and 1 additional visitor parking space per every 10 units. For commercial, retail, and restaurant uses the parking requirement is 1 space per 350 square feet (approximately 2.85 spaces per 1000 square feet).

Given Medford Square's walkability and excellent access to multiple bus lines, not every trip in or around

the Square is required to occur by automobile. At minimum, a parking requirement reduction similar to that provided in the Wellington Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) district or for affordable or subsidized housing should be considered. In both circumstances, the parking required is 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit, regardless of building height, and inclusive of visitor parking. As available in the MUZ district, the requirement for commercial, retail, and restaurant uses could be reduced to one space per 400 square feet.

Other sources may justify a further reduction of minimum parking requirements. For example, MAPC's recently released "Perfect Fit Parking Study" assessed 80 residential developments in five municipalities (Arlington, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, and Melrose) and found that

900 square feet of space could be used for:



The opportunity cost of parking

out-of-date parking requirements are resulting in excess parking being constructed. The study found that on average each housing unit has 1.15 spaces available, already a reduction from the current requirement of 2 spaces per unit for Medford Square, but that only 0.85 spaces per unit were utilized. According to this research, based on actual parking use in local communities, a parking requirement of 0.85 spaces per unit may be appropriate.

The diagram below provides a simple illustration of the opportunity cost represented by space devoted to parking, particularly surface parking which could be devoted to other more productive uses. The image is from the MAPC “Perfect Fit Parking Study”, the full report is available at www.perfectfitparking.mapc.org.

Proposed Zoning Characteristics

Based on the Master Plan process and analysis, zoning changes are recommended for Medford Square. These include the current regulatory impediments to density and predictability, as outlined above in the allowable uses, dimensional requirements, and parking requirements. The recommended approach to these zoning modifications is outlined for consideration and implementation below.

The boundaries of the current Commercial 1 (C-1) district in the City Hall Subarea of Medford Square are the most appropriate geography to receive zoning modifications. Zoning modifications are most necessary in the near term to unlock development potential in the City Hall Subarea, particularly on the large city-owned

surface parking lots that are identified for disposition by the City for redevelopment. The High Street Subarea has a few redevelopment opportunities to complement historic preservation strategies outlined earlier in the report and may be added to the district in the future.

The Main Street Subarea could benefit in the long term by an expansion of mixed-use zoning modifications into a portion of the C-2 district, after an initial implementation in the C-1 district north of the Mystic. This would allow the continued reinvestment in the Square to expand south and unite both sides of the Mystic in a more cohesive district over the long term.

Creating a new zoning district to replace the current C-1 district appears to be the most effective zoning strategy. A new zoning district creates the ability to customize zoning to the community vision, avoid unintended consequences in other C-1 districts around the City, and creates the opportunity to redefine allowable uses. The new district could be named the Medford Square Mixed-use district (MSMU) and would replace the C-1 district using its current boundary as per the diagram on the following page.

A new district is preferable to an overlay district in this circumstance due to the nature of the zoning changes recommended. An overlay zone would allow the underlying zoning to remain in effect and continue to allow future investments that may be inconsistent with the community vision for Medford Square. This disadvantage of the overlay district would also be the disadvantage of employing a Chapter 40R Smart Growth Overlay District in this circumstance.

The new Medford Square Mixed-use district (MSMU) should include the following zoning characteristics:

- **Allowed Uses** - clarify language for allowing and encouraging mixed-use development to add vitality and diversity of activity in the district
- **Allowed Uses** - remove allowable uses that are auto-oriented or not of an appropriate scale to strengthen walkability in the district
- **Allowed Uses** - include inclusionary requirement for affordable housing units to maintain the diversity of residents across income and age ranges in a district that provides transit options for residents
- **Dimensional Requirements** - allowable height up to 75 feet or 6 stories by right for all uses, the current allowable height for multiple dwellings in C-1. This height would accommodate the maximum height of a wood framed building on a concrete podium allowed by the building code. It is therefore a practical height that would support the economic feasibility of development.

The building code may be adjusted in the future to allow a 7-story building up to 85' in height which includes a wood framed building on a two-story concrete podium. If this change were to occur, increasing the allowable zoning height could further support economic feasibility.

- **Dimensional Requirements:** Remove dwelling unit lot area requirements, to allow for higher density

development

- **Dimensional Requirements:** Remove minimum yard setbacks, except for properties adjacent to residential zoning districts, to allow for more flexibility in site planning and for a higher density of development to occur
- **Dimensional Requirements:** Remove maximum lot coverage of 30%, to allow for more flexibility in site planning and higher density development
- **Parking Requirements:** 1.1 spaces per dwelling unit. Spaces for commercial, retail, or restaurant space are shared with supply of residential spaces. 1.1 spaces per dwelling unit represents a point between the MAPC Perfect Fit Parking Study and the MUZ district requirements. If no dwelling units are present, the requirement for commercial, retail, and restaurant uses is 1 space per 400 square feet
- **Parking Requirements:** Car share spaces and bicycle parking should be provided to further reduce the need for personal car parking

Detailed use and dimensional tables are shown on the following pages and illustrate the recommended zoning changes compared to the current C-1 district.

Recommended Medford Square Mixed-use (MSMU) District Use Table
Compared to Use Table of current Commercial 1 (C-1) District:

Principle Uses	C-1	MSMU	Note:
<i>Recreational, Institutional, Religious and Educational Uses</i>			
1. Private open recreational uses, available to the public	SPC	SPC	Depending on type of uses and location
2. Public open recreational uses	Yes	SPC	
3. Private entertainment and recreational facilities except adult motion picture theaters/adult video stores	SPC	SPC	
4. Public entertainment and recreation facilities	Yes	SPC	Depending on type of uses and location; encouraging active and engaging ground floor uses
5. Private recreational club or lodge, not operated as a gainful business and for members only	Yes	SPC	
6. Hospital, not operated as a gainful business	No	No	
7. Other institution	SPC	SPC	Encouraging active and engaging ground floor uses
8. Place of worship	Yes	Yes	
9. Community center or adult educational center not conducted as a gainful business	Yes	Yes	
10. School, college or university not conducted as a gainful business	Yes	Yes	
11. Day nursery, nursery school, kindergarten, or other agency giving day care to children	Yes	Yes	
12. Trade, professional or other school operated as a gainful business	Yes	Yes	
13. Museum, available to the public and not operated as a gainful business	Yes	Yes	
14. Public library	Yes	Yes	
14A. Body art establishment	SPC	No	
15. Detached single-family dwelling	No	No	
16. Detached two-family dwelling	No	No	

Principle Uses	C-1	MSMU	Note:
17. Attached single-family dwelling			
a. Two dwelling structure	No	No	Encouraging more dense development
b. Three or more dwelling structure	No	No	
18. Multiple dwelling not over three stories in height	Yes	No	
19. Multiple dwelling not over 75 feet or six stories in height	Yes	Yes	Encouraging more dense development
19A. Mixed use building not over 75 feet or six stories in height	[NEW]	Yes	
20. Dormitory, fraternity or sorority house	No	No	
21. Lodginghouse or boardinghouse	No	No	Encouraging more dense development
22. Hotel or motel not over 50 feet in height	Yes	No	
22A. Mobile homes	No	No	
22B. Hotel not over 140 feet in height	Yes	Yes	Encouraging more dense development
22C. Assisted living residences not to exceed 35 feet or 2 1/2 stories	SPC	No	
22D. Assisted living residences not to exceed 50 feet or four stories	SPC	No	
22E. Assisted living residences not to exceed 75 feet or six (6) stories	SPC	SPC	Encouraging more dense development
23. Medical office	Yes	Yes	
24. Business, professional, or governmental office	Yes	Yes	
24A. Business, professional, or governmental office not over 125 feet in height	No	No	Depending on scale, design, and location
<i>Automotive Uses:</i>			
25. Parking area or garage not accessory to a permitted principal use			
a. Residential	Yes	SPC	Depending on scale, design, and location
b. Nonresidential	Yes	SPC	

**Recommended Medford Square Mixed-use (MSMU) District Use Table
Compared to Use Table of current Commercial 1 (C-1) District:**

Principle Uses	C-1	MSMU
26. Gasoline service station	SPC	No
27. Sale or rental of motor vehicles exclusive of used car sales, and accessory storage conducted entirely within an enclosed structure	SPC	No
27A. Class II second hand motor vehicle sales	No	No
28. Outdoor automobile sales and storage	No	No
29. Car washing facilities within an enclosed structure	No	No
30. Retail sales	Yes	Yes
31. Eating place other than a drive-in eating place	Yes	Yes
32. Drive-in eating place	No	No
33. Consumer service business	Yes	Yes
33A. Paranormal service and sales	SPC	No
34. Mortuary, undertaking, or funeral establishment	Yes	No
34A. Adult book store	No	No
34B. Adult motion picture theater	No	No
34C. Adult video store	No	No
35. Manufacturing, including assembly, fabrication and processing and reprocessing of materials	No	No
35A. Accessory day care center	Yes	Yes
36. Research and testing laboratory	No	No
37. Automotive repair establishments	No	No
38. Plumbing shop, carpentry shop, and other similar service or repair establishments	No	No
39. Wholesale laundries, cleaners, dyers and similar uses	No	No
40. Wholesale bakery or food processing plant	No	No

Note:
Discouraging auto-oriented uses to promote walkability

Encouraging active and engaging ground floor uses

Principle Uses	C-1	MSMU
41. Fuel and ice sales and storage and any other storage or wholesaling	No	No
42. Printing and publishing	No	No
43. Motor freight terminal	No	No
44. Open storage	No	No
45. Railroad right-of-way	Yes	Yes
Other Principal Uses:		
46. Public fire station	Yes	Yes
47. Production of crops, horticulture and floriculture	Yes	SPC
48. Keeping or raising of livestock, including animal stables or kennels	No	No
49. Moving of land	SPA	SPA
49A. Radio and television towers	SPC	SPC
50. Substitution of a nonconforming use	SPA	SPA
Accessory Uses:		
51. A parking garage or parking area accessory to a principal use which is:		
a. On the same lot as a conforming principal use	Yes	Yes
b. Within 200 feet of a conforming principal use but not necessarily in the same district	Yes	Yes
c. On the same lot as a nonconforming principal use	SPA	SPA
d. A parking garage or parking area accessory to a principal use, the closest point of which garage or area is within 500 feet of the closest point of a structure containing a conforming principal use and within the same MUZ district, such distance to be measured within public ways or private driveways	No	No

Note:

Encouraging active and engaging ground floor uses

**Recommended Medford Square Mixed-use (MSMU) District Use Table
Compared to Use Table of current Commercial 1 (C-1) District:**

Principle Uses	C-1	MSMU	Note:
52. The renting of rooms without separate cooking facilities to lodgers within a dwelling unit occupied by a family:			
a. One or two rooms to one or two lodgers	Yes	Yes	
b. Three or four lodgers	No	No	
53. Accessory office	Yes	Yes	
54. Swimming pool on lot of:			
a. Less than 4,500 square feet	Yes	No	Encouraging more dense development
b. Over 4,500 square feet	Yes	No	
55. Noncommercial greenhouse, tool shed, or other similar accessory structure	Yes	No	
56. Retail sales and consumer service	Yes	Yes	
56A. Drive through eating establishments	SPC	No	Discouraging auto-oriented uses to promote walkability
56A-1. Drive through retail sales and consumer service	SPC	No	
56A-2. Drive-Through Takeout	SPC	No	
56B. Keno	SPC	No	
57. Heavy repair operations	No	No	
58. Outdoor automobile sales and storage for sale accessory to Use No. 27	SPC	No	
59. Open storage	No	No	
60. Other uses accessory to a principal use:			
a. Permitted by right	Yes	Yes	
b. Permitted by special permit from the city council	SPC	SPC	
c. Permitted by special permit from board of appeals	SPA	SPA	
d. Which is nonconforming	SPA	SPA	
61. Solar energy systems	Yes	Yes	

[NEW] Definition

Mixed use building means a building designed for multiple uses that may include a combination of residential and commercial uses within a single principle building or multiple principle buildings on a lot. Residential uses may include multiple dwelling units, affordable housing, artist studios and live/work units. Commercial uses may include business, professional, medical, and government offices, eating place, consumer service, and retail sales. Active uses in the mixed-use building shall be placed at ground level along the frontage of the primary street abutting the lot.

In addition to the recommended Medford Square Mixed-use district, the permitting and approvals process should be streamlined as much as possible for projects that are consistent with the community vision and Medford Square Master Plan. By allowing desired uses by right, the outcome of approval is predictable and larger projects should be subjected to an administrative site plan and design review. Design Guidelines can provide confidence that a streamlined review will still result in development that is desirable and compatible with the community's goals. Combining meetings and hearings with multiple City departments, boards, and City Council can reduce the timeline for approval. A streamlined approval process is a competitive advantage in attracting redevelopment investment to a specific district.

**Recommended Medford Square Mixed-use (MSMU) Dimensional Table
Compared to Dimensional Table of current Commercial 1 (C-1) District:**

	Minimum Permitted										Maximum Permitted		
	Lot Area (Square Feet)		Lot Characteristics			Open Space (% of GFA)		Yards (Feet)			Lot Coverage	Height	Height
	Per Dwelling Unit	Total	Front- age (Feet)	Width (Feet)	Depth (Feet)	Land- scaped	Usable	Front	Side	Rear	(Percent)	(Feet)	(Stories)
MSMU District	N/A	10,000	50	100	100	10%	25%	N/A	N/A	15	N/A	75	6
C-1 District													
Multiple Dwelling		10,000	50	100	100	10%		15	15	15	30%		
a. 1st and 2nd	4,500						25%					35	3
b. each additional													
1. on 1st 3 floors	1,000						25%					35	3
2. on/above 4th	600						20%					75	6
Hotel in a C-1 District	N/A		50	100	100	10%	25%	N/A	N/A	15	N/A	140	15
Other permitted Principal structures	N/A	N/A	20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	N/A	50	4

Note:

The zoning analysis is based on the existing use and dimensional table as presented in the current zoning for the Commercial 1 district in Medford. This study presents recommendations within the context and framework of the existing zoning. This effort has not included a more comprehensive study of the current zoning to identify potential conflicts, required clarifications, or idiosyncrasies that may exist. The framework for uses and dimensions presented is a reflection of the current zoning code.

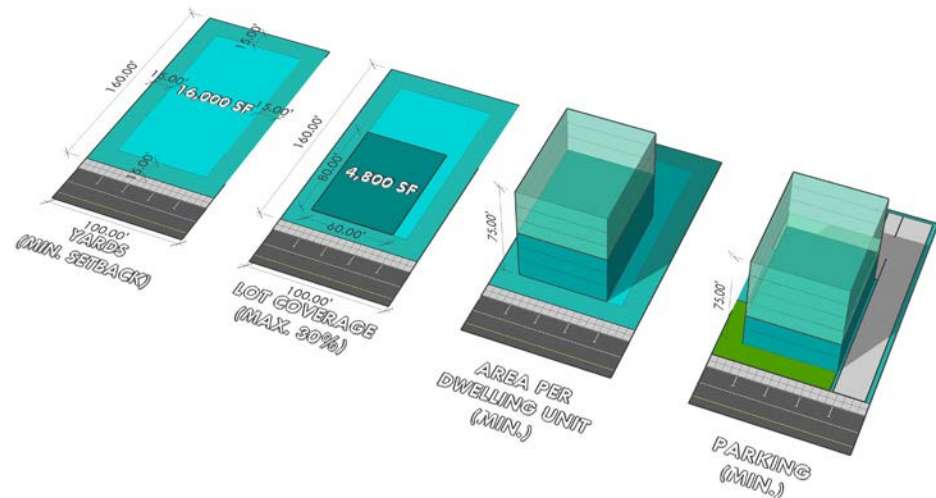


Illustration of the density limitations imposed by the current C-1 district

Economic Development and Vitality

C Attract and Incentivize Mixed Use Redevelopment

A fundamental aspect of the community vision for Medford Square is increasing the number of attractive uses and diversifying the small businesses and activities that contribute to vibrancy in Medford Square. The most effective way to directly address these fundamental needs is through mixed-use redevelopment, specifically redevelopment that combines active ground floors with retail and restaurant uses and upper floors with residential uses that can support the economic sustainability of small businesses in Medford Square.

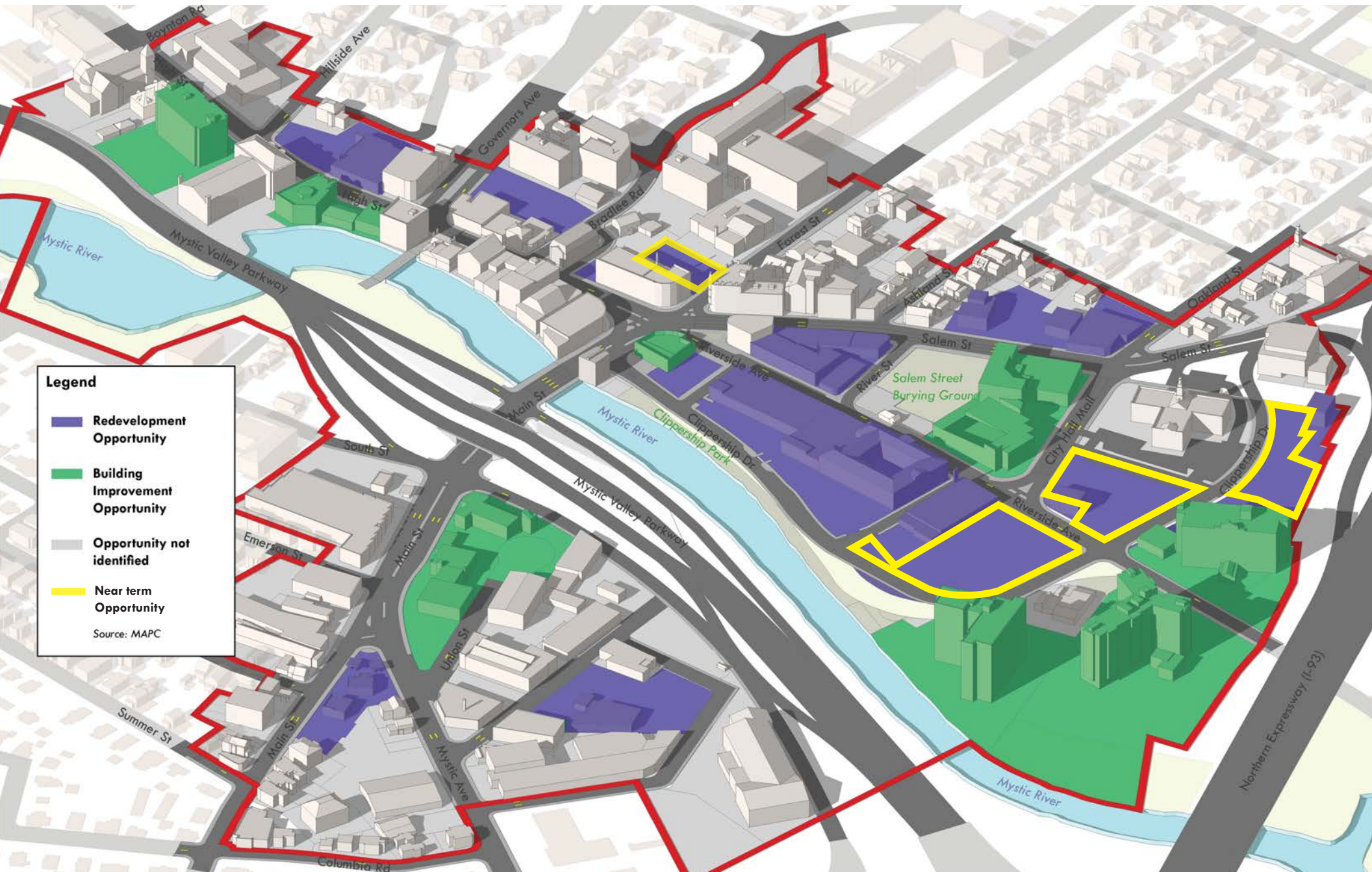
The addition of new active ground floor storefronts and businesses will strengthen the walkability of the district and strengthen the district as a destination. The addition of upper floor residential uses provides the greatest potential for local household spending to support shops, restaurants, and services, while contributing to activity on sidewalks and in open spaces. This type of development has been identified as generally supportable through review of the retail and housing market in Medford Square.

The Medford Square Study Area has been examined across several characteristics to identify the properties which may have a higher likelihood for future change through reinvestment. These characteristics include a calculation of property utilization using assessed values for land and buildings, measuring the density of current uses by floor area ratio, identifying properties with

local ownership, and owners with control of multiple properties in Medford Square. Each of these parcel characteristics were analyzed and compiled into the composite mapping of redevelopment opportunities in Medford Square (image on the following page). Based on the parcels that were identified through this analysis as the most susceptible to change, the City-owned properties in Medford Square have a potentially critical role to play as catalysts for positive change and future investment.

The City-owned parcels around City Hall are currently surface parking lots that are underused. Under current utilization, it appears one of these parking areas could be removed and the parking demand could redistribute into the surrounding lots. This reorganization of parking would allow the City to dispose of an initial property that could be the first step in an incremental approach to add vitality, residents, and employment to the Square.

While nearly all properties hold potential to be redeveloped, the scale, density, and characteristics of the current land uses determine the likelihood of that redevelopment. In Medford Square, the likely redevelopment opportunities are relatively limited, due to the scale of current development on many of the properties. The most fundamental reason for this limitation is the historic nature of the development patterns in Medford Square.



Parcels shown in blue present the best opportunities for redevelopment investment

The continuity of historic buildings both lend additional value to many of the existing structures, but also provide a relatively dense building fabric that was often erected prior to the need for these properties to accommodate parking. The increased value of the historic structure, combined with its relatively high density, create a high threshold for redevelopment of the property in such a way that would economically surpass the performance of the existing building assets.

The parcels that have been identified as susceptible to change are generally underused and could provide stronger returns to the property and the district through investment in redevelopment. The properties highlighted in green are identified as an opportunity for building improvements. This may not be a full redevelopment of the property, but could entail a building renovation or building expansion to improve the contribution of these buildings to the district.

In addition to the Medford Square Mixed-use Zoning (MSMU) district recommendations, the following redevelopment characteristics should be considered for the properties that have been identified. The City-owned properties require a public disposition process to enable redevelopment. This process should be outlined in conjunction with legal advice from the City of Medford Law Department.

An initial step of preparing and releasing a Request for Interest (RFI) from development parties with information about the properties, outlining of the property goals, context for Medford Square, relevant

documents (including this Master Plan), and proposed Medford Square Mixed-use Zoning would invite potential interest and feedback from the development community. Subsequently, the City could prepare and release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for development proposals related to the parcels. Finally, a negotiated development agreement could be created between the successful RFP respondent and the City of Medford.

Redevelopment investments near the Mystic River may be subject to Chapter 91, The Massachusetts Public Waterfront Act and the Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act, among other regulations. Generally, all investments will need to provide for public access and benefit, as well as improve current environmental conditions.

Community Design Preferences

In regard to community redevelopment and design preferences, the images shown above scored most highly at the second Master Plan Community Meeting on December 7th, 2016. They were associated with community member comments such as “charming”, “welcoming”, and “vibrant”.

The type of redevelopment reflected in the images, mixed-use buildings that are 4-6 stories in height is supported by the market analysis and incorporated into the zoning recommendations and design guidelines. The common characteristics in the images are an active and transparent ground floor with storefronts including retail and restaurant activity with relatively dense and well-designed upper floor residential units that may extend three or more stories above the active ground floor.



Images reflecting community design preferences

Potential Design Guidelines

As part of the redevelopment considerations, several design principles that are important to highlight and to reinforce in future Medford Square investments. Future redevelopment in the Square should be consistent with these principles in order to leverage each investment to advance Medford Square toward the community vision.

Define Frontage

The continuity of historic buildings in Medford Square establishes a clear pattern of building placement on a lot with the building front positioned at, or near, the back of the sidewalk with little to no front setback. This defined building frontage forms a “street wall” which consists of building facades of similar heights that are setback a similar distance from the street. This street wall helps to create a pedestrian-friendly environment

that has a sense of place and feeling of enclosure, like an outdoor room. The areas of Medford Square that feel less attractive today have lost continuity of this defined building frontage. Redevelopment of properties should define lot frontage and strengthen this continuity by placing continuous building frontages at the primary property edges at or near the rear of the sidewalk.

Increase Density

Increasing the vitality and economic viability of active small businesses in Medford Square is dependent on increasing the density of uses and the number of households nearby. New investments must create new opportunities for additional upper story residential or commercial activity that provides support for an active and vital ground floor. Thriving city centers have historically been characterized by a concentration of uses, unfortunately this concentration of uses has been



reduced through decades of prioritizing automobile access and parking. In order to allow this important recalibration of density to occur, the parking that is provided in the center must be reduced or reconfigured.

Active Ground Floor

Although, the addition of new residential uses in Medford Square are an important source of activity and economic viability, it is also critical to maintain and expand active ground floor uses. If future redevelopment were to focus only on residential redevelopment, then the vitality of the Square would suffer. The ground floor must provide active and inviting uses that are visible along the frontages of the primary streets in Medford Square. This ground floor should be of a human scale, it is the portion of the building that pedestrians will interact with. It should be of a generous height, historically ground floor shops have been 15



to 18 feet in height. It should also be transparent with transparent windows and doorways that comprise no less than 60 percent of the ground floor façade at the primary street frontage.

Enhance The Block Structure

In the City Hall Subarea, redevelopment opportunities have the potential to integrate new street connections into the reconfiguration of the lot. This type of enhancement to the existing street grid and block structure can often only occur in coordination with a redevelopment effort. Where this type of opportunity exists, the City should coordinate with the owner and development team to integrate new street connections. The two locations identified are an extension of City Hall Mall south from Riverside Avenue to Clippership Drive and an extension of River Street south from Riverside Avenue to Clippership Drive. Additional street



Images reflecting community design preferences

connections in Medford Square enhance mobility for all modes and increase opportunities for more efficient use of the street network, including reconsideration of street directionality. This discussion is outlined in greater detail in the Transportation and Connectivity section of the Master Plan.

Context Sensitive Building Height

Medford Square includes a diverse range of building scales and heights. The range of building heights in portions of Medford Square and the immediate surrounding neighborhoods transitions from one location to another, with variations between 1-story and 12-stories in height. Redevelopment heights and building massing should be responsive and sensitive to this varying context. One reflection of sensitivity is the overall building height, which as recommended in the zoning changes remains at 6-stories or 75 feet.

Context Sensitive Step-backs

Where the existing context varies, the building massing should be designed to transition from higher to lower contexts in the layout and design of the building. Building stepbacks should be used to respect the heights of shorter existing buildings. A stepback of at least 10 feet within one-story of the existing building height context should be used. After this stepback of 10 feet, the building massing may continue higher, while respecting the height of neighboring structures.

Context Sensitive River Orientation

Building and site layouts should take advantage of the sites orientation to the Mystic River. If a property is adjacent to the Mystic River, the site layout should provide pedestrian connections to the river through the site with a widened public park on the river side of the building. Parking should be concealed from the street

and the river.

Visual Interest and Building Massing

New buildings in Medford Square should enhance the vitality, character, and pedestrian orientation of the district. Buildings should use the building massing to reduce the overall scale of the building by providing variation through the addition of bays or recesses in the facade. Terraces and balconies also add visual interest to the building and should be used to capitalize on river views.

Building Facades and Materials

Building materials should be durable and high quality with the intention of elevating the character and quality of Medford Square as a district. Building materials selected should be natural and sustainable with a preference for materials that are durable and easy to maintain.

Conceal Parking

Large surface parking lots that are directly adjacent to primary streets in Medford Square are reducing the continuity of a walkable center. In the future, parking resources should be concealed from these high profile frontages. Where parking is provided in surface parking lots, the parking should be placed behind the building such that it cannot be seen from the primary street frontage. The surface parking should be screened from other street frontages with landscape, fencing, and public art.

If parking is provided in a structure above grade it should be designed with a building façade that will

contribute to the continuity of the street wall. The above grade parking structure should include active ground floor uses for the first 25 feet of depth into the building from the primary street frontage. The parking structure should be designed with floor to floor heights, floor slopes, and structural systems that are adaptable to other uses in the future.

If parking is provided in a structure below grade it should be designed to be integrated with the building foundations and provide access that coordinates with the surrounding street and sidewalk network. Parking access should not disrupt the continuity of the street wall on the primary street and should provide visible and safe interaction with pedestrian areas that the path of vehicles may cross to enter the structure.

Parking should also take advantage of grade changes across a property. If more than one level of parking could be provided that is accessed from different parts of the site it should be considered for inclusion in the site plan to maximize parking efficiency.

Reduce Parking

Parking demand should be reduced in each development project through the innovative use of pricing, car sharing, and ride sharing. Incentives for reduced occupant auto-ownership should be provided. For example, the cost of a parking space could be uncoupled from the cost of renting or buying a residential unit. Shared parking could be provided in the parking supply to allow residents to feel comfortable owning fewer cars per household. Ride share spaces may be provided as a curb-side or on-street loading

space adjacent to building entries.

Affordable Housing Units

The addition of new housing units to Medford Square has the potential to support economic development while directly addressing affordability and access to a walkable and transit rich district. Strategically, from a City-wide housing perspective, adding vital housing stock for moderate and low-income residents could help meet the 10% affordable housing goal the state has set as a percent goal of each community's total housing stock.

The 2010 year-round Census establishes that there are 23,968 year-round housing units in the City of Medford. Of those, 1,695 are deed-restricted affordable housing units listed on the MA Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). This represents 7.07% of the overall housing stock, leaving 2.93%, or about 702 units of the housing needed as affordable units. Mixed-use redevelopment in Medford Square could make a sizable contribution toward closing this gap in affordable housing in a location that would also offer excellent access to transportation choices and civic amenities.

Low Impact Development

As part of redevelopment near the Mystic River, already disturbed sites should be improved by reducing impervious cover relative to the existing conditions, adding vegetated buffers, pollutant treatment and source reduction to improve water quality in the Mystic River. The impacts of development near the Mystic River should be mitigated by employing stormwater

management, green building, and other low-impact development (LID) techniques. Also, as part of other strategies redevelopment should encourage transportation alternatives including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and water options.

Resilient, Sustainable and Healthy Buildings

New buildings as part of redevelopment near high volume roadways should be designed to provide healthy interior environments for occupants. In addition to best practices for indoor air quality, the exterior building envelope should be designed to mitigate the impact of fine particulate matter associated with vehicle emissions. Sustainable features such as white roofs, green roofs and reduction of impervious coverage on sites should be integrated to reduce elevated surface temperatures in the district. Development should be designed to be resilient in anticipation of rising sea levels and future district flooding with utilities on the roof and a strategic approach to building flood proofing including potentially floodable below-grade parking garages.

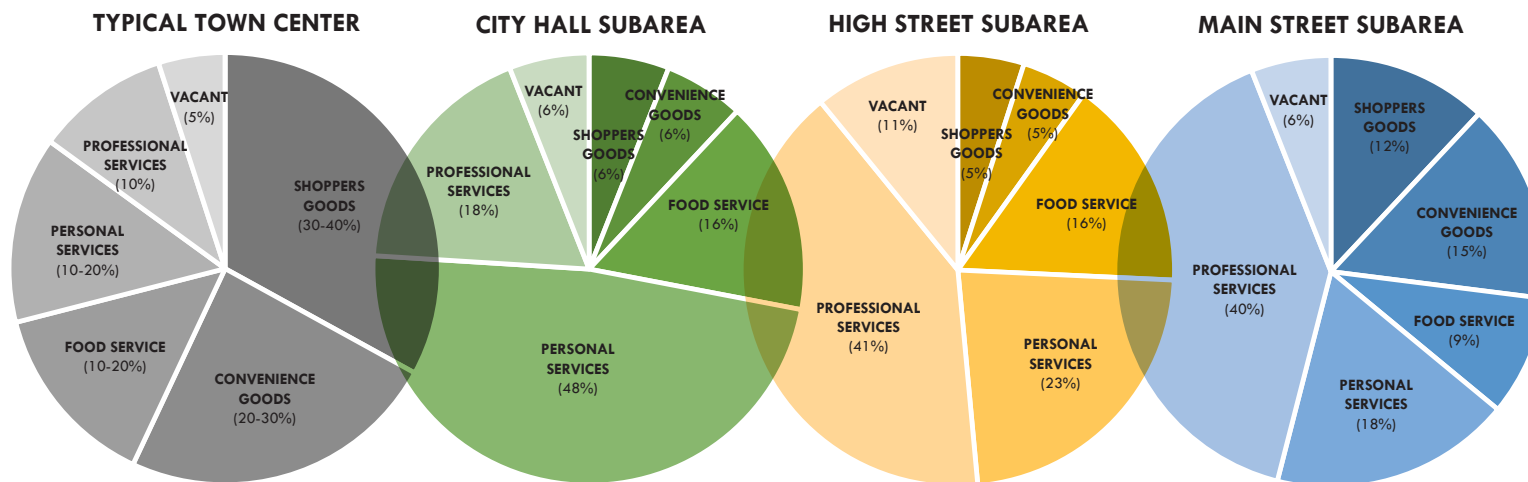
Economic Development and Vitality

D Recruit Restaurants and Embrace the Creative Economy

As with the strategic redevelopment of underused property in Medford Square, the strategic addition of attractive uses, small businesses, and economic activity will contribute to the vibrancy and strength of the Square as a destination. Medford Square is already a center of economic activity and is home to many small businesses that contribute to the City and the vibrancy of the Square. When combined and analyzed collectively, the existing mix of businesses is imbalanced relative to a mix of businesses typically found in an active center. Categories of businesses include shoppers goods, convenience goods, food services, personal services, professional services, and vacancies. The current business mix in Medford Square is overrepresented in the categories of personal and professional services.

This imbalance reflects community feedback that the Square is not seen as a destination or that people have no reason to visit. The strategic recruitment of new businesses is the most effective approach to improving the balance of uses in the Square. This approach is not intended to diminish the importance of existing businesses, their contribution to the Square, or their support. Recruitment of new businesses should occur when an existing space becomes available, or when a new space is created as part of redevelopment investments.

A retail gap analysis was performed as part of the Master Plan process. This analysis examined the difference between actual retail sales figures and estimated spending of local households to provide a snapshot of the market demand for specific types



Diagrams comparing the current mix of businesses in Medford Square

of retail establishments and the identification of the type and number of new businesses that may have the greatest opportunity for success in Medford Square.

Based on this analysis, the types of new businesses that would have the best opportunity for new supportable retail in Medford Square were identified. They include clothing stores, furnishing stores, electronics stores, and full service and limited service restaurants. All of these types of businesses would help to correct the current

Potential Supportable Retail Square Footage			
Trade Area	Supportable Square Footage	Total Average Number of Establishments	Types of Establishments
Hyper-Local (5 min. walk)	4,000	1	Retail (non-food/beverage)
Primary Local (15 min. walk)	34,000	8	Clothing Stores, Full Service Restaurant, Limited Service Restaurant, Home Furnishings Store, Electronics Store
Secondary Regional (10 min. drive)	10,000	5	Limited Service Restaurants
Resident Total	48,000	14	See above
Primary Local (10 min. walk)	4,000	1	Food and Convenience Stores
Secondary Local (5 min. drive)	1,000	1	Food and Convenience Stores
Worker Total	5,000	2	See above
Total	53,000	16	See above

imbalances in mix of businesses in the Square. The table shows the details of the potential number and type of establishments that could be supported by a number of local trade areas for local spending.

Among these opportunities, the addition of new restaurants brings the potential for other benefits to the district. For example, adding to the concentration of restaurants in Medford Square would strengthen the district as a destination for dining that would complement other arts and culture events in the Square. A larger selection of quality restaurants would also complement the recruitment of creative economy enterprises in the Square. Lastly, a district that includes several attractive restaurants can become a destination for dining with patrons visiting the district to dine at any number of locations. The restaurants also benefit with spillover from one restaurant adding patrons to another.

Recruit Tenants Strategically

The existing core of businesses in Medford Square are a great asset and should be supported as the foundation of what the Square is today. While existing businesses should be supported and no business should be displaced, future district vacancies will occur. Each vacancy that occurs in Medford Square should be viewed as an opportunity to strategically rebalance the mix of establishments. The window of opportunity may be small and should involve direct outreach and coordination with building owners and landlords when

vacancies do occur. This coordination can serve to better understand the availability, quality, and size of the retail space, and rents and terms. While often the intent is to fill vacant spaces as quickly as possible, this coordination could open a dialogue about the community vision for Medford Square and the type of establishments that would build on that vision. The City, Chamber of Commerce, and others could assist in an effort to match available spaces with prospective Medford Square businesses that would help to rebalance the overall business mix in the district. The process of identifying local businesses that would be a great match for Medford Square should occur before spaces become available.

For example, a local business such as the Medford Brewing Company is based in Medford, but does not have a physical store or taproom in the City. The founders of the brewery have expressed an interest in having a local taproom that is uniquely Medford in its experience and the brewery uses an image of a historic clippership on its logo and labels. This would be a perfect match for an existing or new space in Medford Square and would align with many of the strategies of the Master Plan.

This type of establishment is also very well aligned with the goals of strengthening destinations in Medford Square and complementing the community anchors, such as the Chevalier Theatre, and embracing the arts and event activity in the Square by providing venues

that support Medford Square as an entertainment destination. While the market analysis for mixed-use redevelopment with retail and residential uses appears optimistic, the scale of the opportunity in Medford Square is relatively modest. The number of available sites for redevelopment and the potential amount of new development is limited by the number of historic buildings that should not be removed as part of reinvestments. This leaves relatively few opportunities for retail and residential mixed use development. This is not an issue.

Private redevelopment investment in a few key locations would have a significant impact in boosting the attractiveness, vitality, and destination activities in the Square. The other exciting aspect of this strategy is that the key locations are controlled by the City of Medford and mostly occupy the area around City Hall. A focused mixed use development strategy could also be used to better balance the six categories of establishments that are currently skewed toward personal and professional services.

As part of redevelopment, new upper level residential uses would further support the existing and new retail establishments and enhance the opportunities that have already been identified. The unmet housing demand city-wide for Medford is approximately 1,400 units projected out to 2020. Not all of this demand would be met within Medford Square, but the projection indicates a strong demand for new housing, particularly



Ground level retail and upper level residential uses

if Medford Square is prioritized as a location for redevelopment attention.

In regard to commercial activity, two areas represent a continued opportunity for Medford Square. One area in which Medford Square does have a distinct concentration of viable commercial uses is Medical Office uses. The Square includes the Harvard Vanguard offices, the Winchester Hospital Clinic, and other medical office and dental office uses distributed throughout the East, West and South subareas of the Square. Expansion of these uses on the sites they currently occupy would provide additional activity to the Square and better utilize the properties, many of which are currently 1 or 2-story buildings. This type of

concentration of uses is already occurring in Medford Square and can be a commercial concentration that differentiates it from other nearby commercial centers.

Another area of commercial opportunity that would be consistent with the vision for Medford Square is the addition of co-working, or shared office space environments with common office amenities. These types of commercial spaces are ideal for entrepreneurs, startups, freelancers, and others and could add to the diversity and range of activity in Medford Square while adapting commercial space that may become available in the future. This type of commercial use can also increase the creative density that is present in Medford Square and that could embrace and add to the arts and cultural events, and growing number of restaurants.

Another overlap with this type of commercial use is the addition of “third place” retail and restaurant establishments. In a community, the “third place” is a social setting which is physically separate from the home, “first place” and the workplace, “second place”. This may be public facilities such as the public library or plazas and parks in Medford Square, but it may also be private establishments such as a café, coffee shop or club. This type of retail or restaurant offering expands on the same notion of the co-working space, that it is an enterprise that can add to the diversity and range of activity in Medford Square while increasing the creative density of uses present there.

Targeted recruitment and promotion of Medford Square as a location for creative enterprises supports the overall arts and culture activity of the Square. In general, many of the types of enterprises in the creative industries can adapt to historical or nontraditional commercial spaces. A characteristic that makes them a good match for commercial spaces in the historic buildings in Medford Square. Growing the concentration of creative industries in Medford Square would help to create synergies with other attractive uses, such as recruiting additional restaurants and promoting the cultural assets of the Square. A concentration of creative industries provides a way to differentiate the Square from other retail centers in the surrounding area.

Creative industries, as defined by the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA), consist of core and peripheral creative enterprises that produce or distribute cultural goods and intellectual property. These core industries that encompass creative enterprises are identified using four digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes and fall into 3 main groups.

These groups are described below with examples of creative enterprises that fall within each category.

Group 1 is “Cultural Goods Production” and includes creative enterprises such as printing, manufacturing, custom architectural manufacturing, jewelry, and media reproduction.

Group 2 is “Cultural Goods Distribution” and includes creative enterprises such as photographic equipment, wholesalers, electronics, jewelry, hobby, sporting goods, musical instruments, and book stores.

Group 3 is “Intellectual Property Production and Distribution” it includes creative enterprises such as publishers, video production, movie theaters, recording studios, architectural and landscape architectural services, interior design, industrial design, graphic design, advertising agencies, media representatives, photography studios, performing arts companies, independent artists, writers, performers, museums, and historical sites.

Medford Square currently includes about (6) such creative enterprises in the City Hall Subarea (World Furniture Center, Pure Hockey, Art Classes, Medford Electronics, GS Music Center, and Massachusetts Broadcasters Association), about (7) in the High Street Subarea (Trellis, Teks Electronics, Scky Art Photography, DCA Architects, Bytes by Design, Traincroft, and Medford Community Cablevision), and about (4) in the Main Street Subarea (Broadway Piano, FA.Mar, Carli Fence, and Adicep Technologies). The presence of these enterprises indicate the foundation of a creative industries cluster in Medford Square.



Creative enterprises and facilities in Medford Square

Economic Development and Vitality Summary Strategies

A

Strengthen Community and Civic Anchors

Medford Square is the civic center of the City and includes several significant community anchors - City Hall, Medford Public Library, Police and Fire Headquarters, and Chevalier Theater. These four anchors are geographically distributed in the subareas of the Square and each provide a community destination and outlet for an array of city services. Investing in each of these community anchors should be viewed as a way to reinforce positive activity and destinations in the Square. The exterior spaces around these anchors should be targeted for investment to improve flexible exterior plazas, landscape, and amenities to promote extended visits to these destinations and enhance the perception of the Square.

B

Refine Medford Square Zoning and Design Guidelines

The language of the “Commercial 1” zoning district, the most predominant district in the Square, is not clearly aligned with the community vision. A new base zone for a “Medford Square Mixed-use” district should be created to clarify the desired characteristics of development. The zone should allow context sensitive mixed-use development by right (75 feet/6-story maximum height) and discourage low density auto-oriented development. Parking requirements should be reduced to encourage dense development (1.1 space per dwelling unit or 1 per 400 commercial square feet). Design Guidelines should be used to align investments with the vision and to ensure that each new investment advances the top priorities of the Master Plan.

C

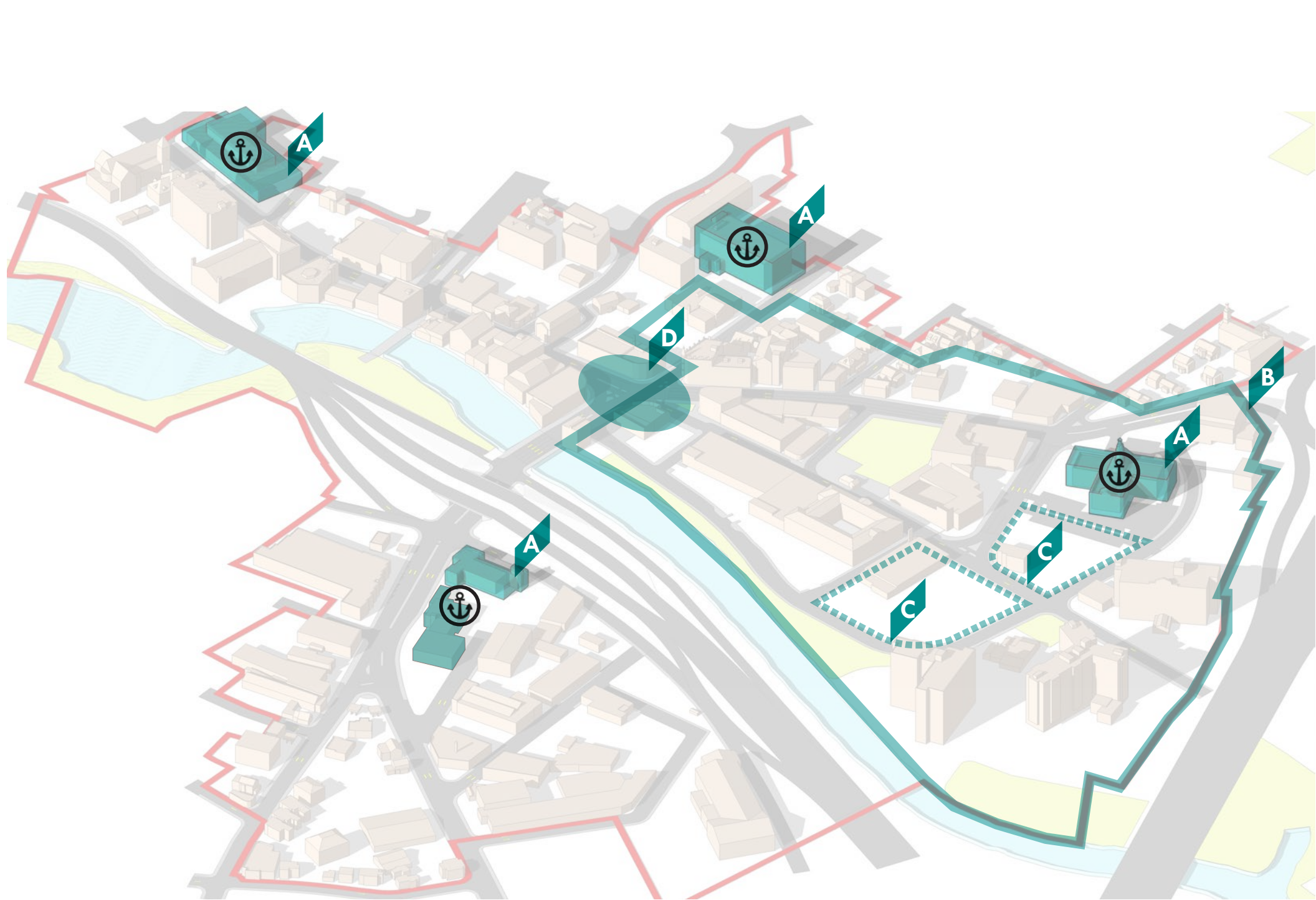
Attract and Incentivize Mixed Use Redevelopment

The properties in Medford Square with the most immediate potential for redevelopment are under the control of the City of Medford and located near City Hall. This is an area of the Square that has a surplus of parking today. Redevelopment of these properties would increase the vitality and attractiveness of the Square and could increase the likelihood that other private Medford Square properties would also be redeveloped. In order to redevelop the properties, the City should proceed with a land disposition process that would review the City’s need for the properties, invite developer interest through a request for interest and request for proposals, and result in a development agreement between the City and a developer to invest in Medford Square according to the community vision.

D

Recruit Restaurants and Embrace Creative Economy

In addition to the small businesses present in Medford Square, other business opportunities have been identified as part of a market analysis for the district. The most predominant types of supportable retail in Medford Square – clothing, furnishing, electronics stores, and full and limited service restaurants – would all help to alleviate current imbalances in the mix of businesses. Adding to the concentration of restaurants in the Square would strengthen the district as a destination for dining that would complement other arts and culture events and community anchors. A larger selection of quality restaurants would also complement the recruitment of creative economy enterprises in the Square.



Medford Square Economic Development and Vitality Strategies



Transportation and Connectivity



Transportation and Connectivity Introduction

Medford Square is a historic and compact center that originated at the confluence of the Mystic River and important transportation routes to the north from Boston. Today, transportation routes continue to play a key role in Medford Square as locations that provide a variety of mobility choices are viewed as attractive places to work and do business. Medford Square benefits from attractive choices to travel by bus, car, bicycle, or on foot. The current condition of each of these options in Medford Square are discussed below and have been the subject of analysis to determine the most appropriate and effective strategies to provide improved connectivity and mobility in the Square.

Pedestrian Access

Walkability and pedestrian circulation are critical to the vitality of Medford Square. Pedestrian access and circulation is comprised of a continuous and uninterrupted network of sidewalks, marked pedestrian crossings, paths, plazas and footbridges. Typically, walking is a part of every trip and combines with other modes of travel, walking to a bus stop for example, or walking from a parking lot to a destination. Safe and attractive pedestrian access to Medford Square from surrounding neighborhoods is also critical to the health of the district. Pedestrian injuries in the City of Medford have increased over the last 10 year period, including a total of 27 pedestrian crashes resulted in 23 pedestrian injuries in 2014. (Source: CTPS: State of Boston Region, RMV Crash Data System, data 2014).

Bicycle Access

Bicycle access and infrastructure is an important mobility option in a downtown context such as Medford Square. Each bicycle represents one less car contributing to traffic or occupying a parking space. Bicycle infrastructure does not exist in the Square today, but must be a part of the future street network including bike lanes, sharrows, and “bicycles may use full lane” signs. Medford Square’s designation as a central business district prohibits bicycle riding on the sidewalk. This prohibition of sidewalk riding underlines the need to accommodate bicycles within the roadway with safe infrastructure. The historic nature of Medford Square’s streets presents dimensional constraints in accommodating the width required to support full bike lanes, particularly while retaining the existing supply of on-street parking. The 2016 *Bicycle Infrastructure Master Plan* identifies Medford Square as an important location to improve the bicycle network and access within the City and region. Salem St, High St, Riverside Ave, Main St, Mystic Ave, Forest St, Governors Ave, and City Hall Mall have all been identified for improved bicycle infrastructure or “Complete Streets” reconfigurations.

Bus Access

Medford Square is well served by MBTA bus routes, including eight routes with service to the Square. These bus routes include routes 94, 95, 96, 101, 134, 325/326, and 354. The bus services conveniently connect to the surrounding rail access. Of particular note, is the Route 325/326 express bus with direct service to Haymarket in Boston. This express bus route

uses I-93 and has no stops between Medford Square and Boston. This direct bus connection is a unique service that many other centers that lack subway service do not have and should be promoted as having similar benefits as fixed-rail access to leverage transit-oriented development. Of the bus routes provided, Route 101 has the highest ridership and connects the Malden Center Orange Line Station with the Sullivan Square Orange Line Station via Medford Square.

Aside from the Route 325/326 express bus, Medford Square is not the terminal destination for any of the bus routes that travel through the Square. The pass-through nature of the routes would make it difficult to consolidate Medford Square bus stops in a central location or to create a transit hub for bus transfers. These types of improvements are more easily accommodated at terminal stations due to the flexibility of local routing and potential schedule adjustments that a location at the end of a route can provide.

Vehicular Access

Vehicular access to Medford Square is a dominant physical feature of the Study Area. The eastern edge of the Study Area includes the elevated overpasses of Interstate 93. The southern edge of the Mystic River includes the elevated overpass of the Mystic Valley Parkway (Route 16). A high percentage of commuters in Medford Square (32%) and the City of Medford (64%), generally, commute to work by driving alone. The primary streets in Medford Square that connect to I-93 and Route 16 include Salem Street (Route 60), High Street (Route 60) Riverside Avenue (Route 60),

Clippership Drive, Forest Street, Main Street, and Mystic Avenue (Route 38). The vehicular access of the City Hall Subarea and the Main Street Subarea connect directly to Interstate 93 and Route 16, respectively.

Rail Access

Medford Square was historically served by direct rail access with a rail spur and terminal off of the Boston and Maine Railroad. Historically, rail access in Medford Square also included the streetcar network that connected most of the greater Boston metro area. Today, that streetcar network, as in most other locations has been converted to buses. Today, no rail access exists within a one-half mile walking distance of any portion of Medford Square, the distance typically assumed to provide rail access for nearby pedestrians. However, the bus routes that frequent Medford Square offer direct connections to the nearest rail access to the Orange Line (Wellington, Sullivan Square, Malden Center), Red Line (Davis Square), and Commuter Rail (Malden Center, West Medford, Winchester Center). Future rail access provided through the Green Line Extension project will provide rail access closer to Medford Square at a new station named College Avenue at the intersection of College Avenue and Boston Avenue near Tufts University.

Water Access

Water taxi service on the Mystic River has been discussed in past planning efforts as a mode of access that could connect Medford Square to Station landing and beyond in either direction. The service should be located to provide convenient transfers to other modes of travel and attractive connections into Medford Square.

Promote Mobility Choices and Transit

The origins of Medford Square are linked to its positioning in the colonial transportation network of rivers, bridges, roads, and later rail and street trolley connections. Today, the Square offers a variety of mobility options, beyond driving a car. Those options can be made more attractive by increasing their convenience and efficiency. While driving is an important part of the mobility system in Medford Square, other options must be strengthened to increase the number of patrons who can regularly visit businesses of the Square without the need to drive and park a car. Promoting mobility choices and transit is a strategy that focuses on making alternatives to driving more attractive in Medford Square.

Potential Bus Improvements

Medford Square has a wide variety of route options for bus transit. A number of improvements could be made to the physical infrastructure in Medford Square to increase the attractiveness of riding the bus there. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is the gold standard of bus operation practices to improve capacity and reliability for travel by bus. Bus rapid transit has several components that help to make bus travel more attractive, while not all of them could be applied in Medford Square, several strategies are worth considering. For example, the width of existing roadways and right-of-way constraints in Medford Square would make it difficult to dedicate

lanes for bus transit use only, a component of bus rapid transit. However, another component, signal priority for buses could be tested and applied. Signal priority could be given to buses with sensors upon approach to Medford Square intersections to allow buses to pass through the signal cycle more efficiently, this would benefit efficient circulation of the bus routes and help buses to minimize wait time due to congestion.

Stop amenities could be enhanced as well by adding a bus shelter, next bus arrival digital signs, and payment kiosks to add value to T passes. If sidewalk area for these amenities is not currently available, a curb extension adjacent to the bus stop could provide additional space for the amenities and landscape. As much as possible, bus stop locations across multiple routes should be consolidated at locations that can be designed to include expanded amenities as outlined above.

Expansion of stop amenities could be combined with another component of bus rapid transit, off-board fare collection and boarding through all doors. This practice increases the efficiency at stops and could translate to more efficient operation of the bus routes and reduce station dwell times. A potential consolidation of stops could also enhance the efficiency of bus routes and the efficiency of transfer between routes. Stops that have low utilization should be considered for consolidation with other nearby stops with as many routes as possible combined in single stop locations.

Biking Improvements

Medford Square would benefit from an increase in the bicycle infrastructure that is provided to promote bike trips by patrons, residents, and employees that frequent Medford Square. Often, a bicycle trip replaces a vehicle trip and should be viewed as a reduction in the number of vehicles that are contributing to roadway congestion and occupying parking in the district. Safe and practical routes to ride and places to store bikes are critical to encouraging less automobile use in Medford Square while increasing economic activity.

Today, the bicycle infrastructure in Medford Square is notably absent. Any additional lane markings or signs would be an improvement and are recommended for each of the primary streets in Medford Square including Salem St, Riverside Ave, Clippership Dr, City Hall Mall, River St, Forest St, Main St, Mystic Ave, High St, and Governors Ave. Many of these improvements can be done cost effectively and involve painted roadway markings and street signs.

Unfortunately, constrained right-of-ways throughout much of the Square and competing priorities of sidewalks, on-street parking, and vehicular travel lanes appear to make dedicated bike lanes difficult to accommodate. Therefore sharrows and “share the road” signage is recommended for all primary streets in Medford Square. Bicycle racks should also be integrated with other street amenities as part of the recommended sidewalk extensions and plaza improvements.

Bike sharing should also be integrated into future Medford Square improvements, including considerations for dockless bike share programs that may become available in the future. Bike sharing in Medford Square should facilitate convenient transfers between biking, walking, and transfers. Bike storage should be accommodated as to not compromise other uses of sidewalks, open spaces, and plazas.

Walking Improvements

Walkability is a fundamental aspect of the present and future success of Medford Square. Most trips involve walking some distance regardless of other modes of travel used for the trip. The district will experience success in part because it is an attractive and pleasant place to walk. Many residents and business owners will review a location's Walk Score as part of understanding the walkability of a district. Medford Square's Walk Score is currently 77 out of 100 which makes it “very walkable”. This means that most errands can be accomplished on foot and estimates that people can walk to an average of 7 restaurants, bars, and coffee shops in 5 minutes. This metric is based on walking routes to destinations such as grocery stores, schools, parks, restaurants, and retail.

Walking should be improved by reconsidering the priority that pedestrians are given in the design of the streets and street network of Medford Square. Existing sidewalks in Medford Square are not very generous for the amount of activity and street amenities to accommodate. The existing sidewalk widths typically range from 6 to 10 feet in Medford Square. Sidewalk

widths are not likely to be expanded uniformly due to other demands for space within the street right-of-way (on-street parking, bike lanes, travel lanes).

However, two techniques can be used to expand the usable sidewalk area in specific locations. Curb extensions are one recommended approach to expanding sidewalk space for streetscape, street furniture, bike amenities, or outdoor seating for restaurants. This type of curb extension would typically replace one or more on-street parking spaces. Due to the associated loss of on-street parking, the locations of curb extensions should be placed strategically. Other potential mobility enhancing improvements to Main Street and Mystic Avenue are shown on the following page with reduced lane widths and proposed bicycle lanes.

The second technique to expand sidewalk width is at the edge of the right-of-way shared with the private lot lines. Buildings that may not be set directly at the back of the sidewalk, or front property line, should integrate property frontage with the sidewalk to expand the active area that can be used by pedestrians and sidewalk amenities. All private setbacks should be coordinated with the public realm of the sidewalk and the adjacent uses to leverage areas near the sidewalk for the greatest benefit of the district. This could include integrating more outdoor seating, share private space for public use, or other techniques to strengthen the attractiveness of walking in the Square. One of the zoning recommendations is to remove the required front setback to allow for flexibility in future development, providing an expansion of the sidewalk width at the

frontage of a new building could be beneficial to activating the sidewalk in front of the property.

Pedestrian crossings and signal timing at intersections are also an important part of district walkability. Curb extensions at crosswalks also help with pedestrian visibility and safety from vehicles. Traffic signals should be designed to minimize pedestrian wait time and to provide adequate crossing intervals. Leading pedestrian intervals, where pedestrians are given a green signal before vehicles is another signal improvement that would benefit walking and safety in the district. Walkability should be elevated as a core characteristic of the district and all improvements should strengthen an attractive and safe experience for pedestrians.

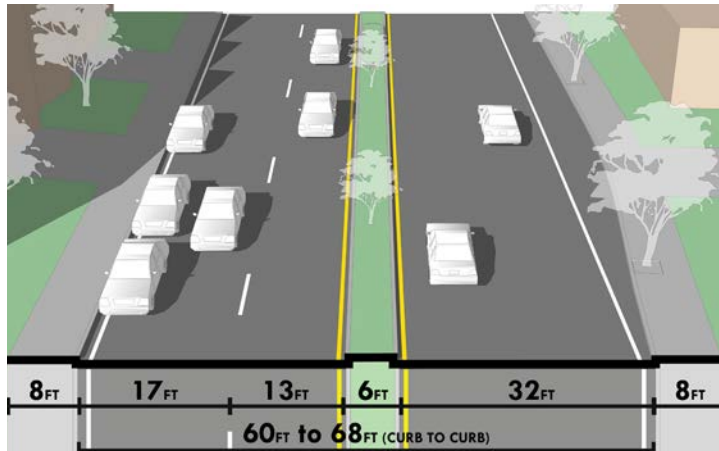
Potential Mobility Improvements

Mobility choices and transit use can also be expanded and encouraged through the creation of mobility hubs. A mobility hub location should be centrally located in Medford Square and near as many of the primary bus routes in the Square as possible. A location directly south of City Hall may provide the necessary space and connections to create a mobility hub. The mobility hub is intended to enhance access and connections between multiple modes of travel and provide convenient transfers between modes at a central location with amenities. It should include bike parking, pick-up, drop-off areas for vehicle access, car-share spaces, bike-share stations, pedestrian connections, and transit information and ticket kiosks. All of these mobility options should be combined in a well-designed plaza featuring seating, shelters, landscape, and public art.

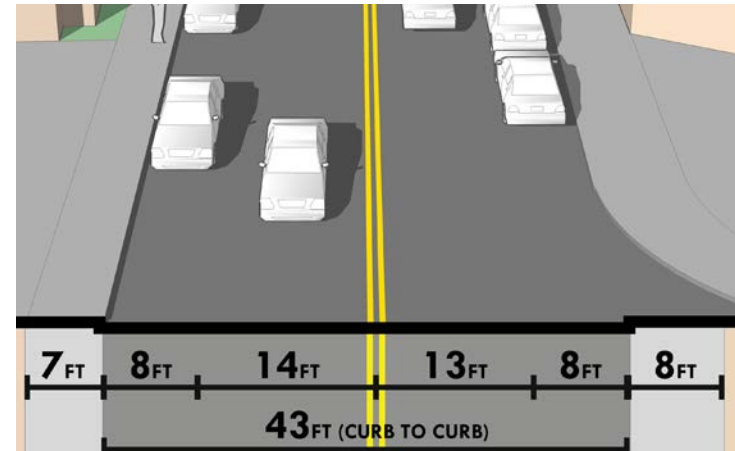
Potential Roadway Improvements

Potential roadway improvements that would enhance alternative mobility options for walking, biking, or riding the bus illustrated on Main Street and Mystic Avenue.

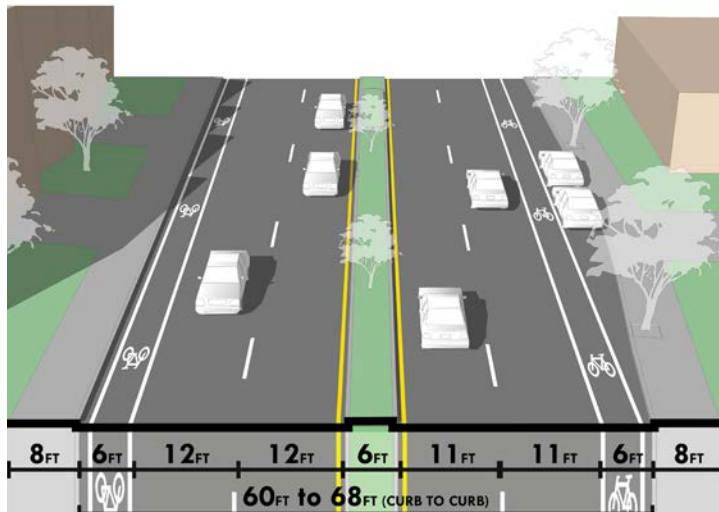
**Dimensions are estimates based on Google Earth measurements, actual dimensions and street conditions may vary*



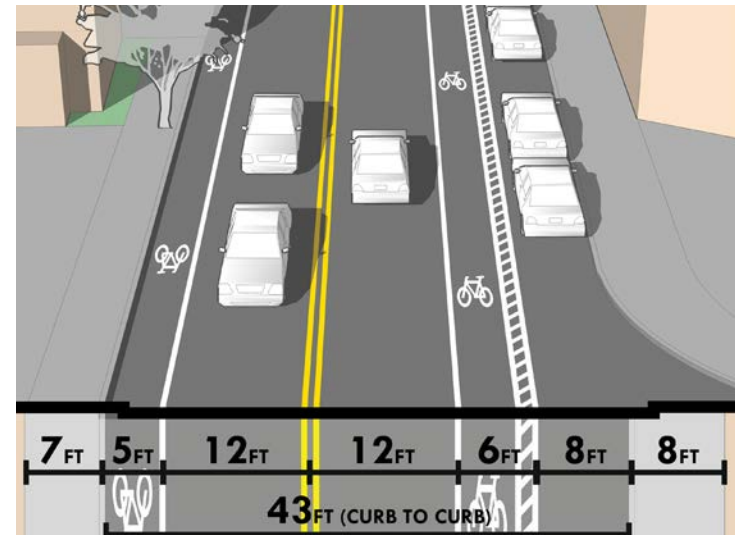
Current Main Street conditions



Current Mystic Avenue conditions



Potential Main Street improvements



Potential Mystic Avenue improvements

Transportation and Connectivity

B

Improve Circulation and Connect the Street Grid

Each of the subareas of Medford Square include important regional connections and roadways that can experience traffic congestion, particularly in peak hours. Local traffic volumes are the highest in the City Hall Subarea with Salem St, Riverside Ave, and Clippership Drive combining for over 38,000 average daily trips (as measured by CTPS in 2009).

The City Hall Subarea also offers the most opportunity for improving circulation patterns in the Square to accommodate this high volume of traffic due to the configuration of the streets. In the City Hall Subarea, three streets travel east-west and two streets travel north-south. As compared to the High Street Subarea, with one street traveling east-west and one street traveling north-south, or the Main Street Subarea with one street traveling east-west and two streets traveling north south.

Although the City Hall Subarea includes many more streets than the other subareas, the streets are potentially not functioning as efficiently as possible as a connected street grid. Discontinuity in the current street grid exists due to the one-way street network and streets that do not fully connect across all blocks. This discontinuity reduces the circulation benefits and flexibility that are associated with a well-connected street network. Exploring approaches to increasing the continuity of the City Hall Subarea street grid should

improve circulation and walkability in Medford Square.

Reconsidering Street Directionality

The City Hall Subarea street network is comprised of a combination of one-way streets that are intended to more efficiently move traffic through Medford Square. The one way streets in the City Hall Subarea include Salem Street (west bound travel), Riverside Avenue (east bound travel for the segment between Salem Street and City Hall Mall), Clippership Drive (east and north bound travel), City Hall Mall (north bound travel), and River Street (south bound travel).

These one way streets function as pairs to allow circulation in any direction around the Square. The community has noted several issues directly related to this design of the circulation, that it is confusing for visitors, and that it is biased toward the throughput of traffic, and that no one actually stops in the Square as a patron.

The one-way street configuration also includes another consequence, to make local circulation work, circulation connections are made through parking lots and drives that are part of public and private property. For example, circulation around City Hall and the Harvard Vanguard parking structure is supported by circulation in the parking areas around City Hall that connect City Hall Mall and Clippership Drive. Similarly, the parking lots along Clippership Drive provide circulation options

counter to the flow of Clippership Drive.

The existing one way street network would not work as well for local access if it did not have these counter flow circulation options available in surface parking lots. This dependence reinforces a relatively inefficient use of land in the City Hall Subarea by making it difficult to remove the existing surface parking lots to avoid other circulation impacts.

Creating New Block Connections

Another aspect of the City Hall Subarea street network are blocks that do not allow street segments to complete connections. This discontinuity of the street network limits the flexibility of the City Hall Subarea street grid and may contribute to inefficient circulation in the Square. The discontinuity is focused on two north-south street connections, River Street and City Hall Mall. Both of these streets provide circulation between Salem Street and Riverside Avenue, but neither street continues south to connect with Clippership Drive.

Under current conditions, existing parking lots and buildings prevent the connection from being made. Today, a single story building at the end of River Street and surface parking lot at the end of City Hall Mall disrupt this portion of the street grid. If redevelopment of all or a portion of this block is considered in the future, it should integrate extended rights-of-way for River Street and City Hall Mall.

In a downtown environment, additional street grid connections allow for better access to local businesses and on-street parking. More options and street connections also allow the opportunity for traffic to distribute more uniformly through the district. This continuity also enhances the ability to explore and redefine patterns of circulation in the City Hall Subarea.

Alternative Circulation Patterns

As illustrated with available traffic data and well understood in daily commuting experiences, congestion in Medford Square is unevenly distributed and places a very strong emphasis and burden on Salem Street. Compared to Riverside Avenue (11,000 daily trips) and Clippership Drive (6,200 daily trips), Salem Street (21,700 daily trips) experiences nearly twice the traffic volume of the other east-west streets in the network (as measured by CTPS in 2009).

Alternative circulation patterns in Medford Square should be explored, studied, and analyzed for benefits that could improve traffic flow, convenience, and walkability in the Square. This effort is primarily focused on the City Hall Subarea and should consider circulation and street directionality on Salem Street, Clippership Drive, Riverside Avenue, City Hall Mall, and River Street. Two primary problems have been identified and are linked together – circulation through the central intersection and uneven distribution of traffic in the City Hall Subarea.

Regardless of the configuration and directionality of streets in the City Hall Subarea, all of the streets converge at the central intersection and high volumes of traffic must negotiate crossing paths at that location. The design of the central intersection is the focus of the next Master Plan strategy. The central intersection also plays an important role in the ability to modify circulation patterns to improve circulation for all modes of travel in Medford Square. The circulation improvements begin with a different approach to the central intersection at Salem Street, Riverside Avenue, Main Street, High Street and Forest Street.

In order to simplify the central intersection, the high volume traffic of left turning movements across the intersection must be reduced. The high volume of left turns is from Salem Street south onto Main Street. These movements could be relocated south to the intersection of Main Street at Clippership Drive. This would require introducing two-way travel on Clippership Drive and City Hall Mall and completing the connection between City Hall Mall and Clippership Drive.

This type of change would allow the flow of vehicles west and south through the Square while also allowing travel to occur simultaneously from east to west on High Street Salem Street and Riverside Avenue. Two way directionality could be considered for Riverside Avenue, Salem Street, and River Street with a redesign of the central intersection. Each of the street reconfigurations could be integrated with pedestrian and bicycle

infrastructure improvements.

Another alternative that is made possible by creating two-way traffic flow on Salem Street and Riverside Avenue is the removal of Clippership Drive. This is another street network configuration alternative that is worth exploring. One of the major community issues with traffic flow is regional cut-through traffic. Clippership Drive is designed to facilitate cut-through traffic and optimize access to the Interstate 93 interchange at Salem Street.

The removal of Clippership Drive would create new opportunities for redevelopment and recreational uses along Mystic River frontage. The removal of the street right-of-way could offer new opportunities and enhanced flexibility to attract redevelopment investment in the Square.



*One possible central intersection solution from the 2010
Medford Square Garage Feasibility Study*



Potential roadway, circulation, and street grid improvements

Additional Technical Study

Any roadway and circulation redesign of this magnitude will require much more detailed analysis, design, engineering, and community discussion. If the concept and potential benefits are considered worthwhile by the City and community, further study should be pursued. If the project gains momentum with further study it could be submitted for addition to the Universe of Projects of the State's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Inclusion on the list would be helpful to raise awareness of the potential project. For the project to be contemplated and scored for funding it must go through a process initiated through MassDOT Highway's "Project Need Form" and "Project Initiation Form" and eventually be submitted for consideration with a "25% Design Submittal" provided by the City, including more detailed analysis, design, engineering, and community discussion. An interim step may be of value in this case, where the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) could undertake a project to explore the concepts with traffic counts, conceptual design and modeling through a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) study.

The local and regional need to facilitate the flow of traffic through Medford Square will not change. The River, highway access points, and large open space reserves, such as the Fells Reservation, all contribute to the regional flow of traffic through Medford Square. The traffic demand may not change, but its impact and distribution in the Square can be modified and

leveraging the throughput of patrons for the benefit of the Square can be strengthened.

Clippership Drive was intended to reduce the traffic impact, but it may not be contributing as much as it could to the Square. According to the average daily traffic figures, the major demand for throughput of vehicles is from the City Hall Subarea toward the west and south. Clippership Drive is one way traveling east and north. Riverside Avenue is one way traveling east. Salem Street is the only roadway to support the major demand lines for the throughput of vehicles in the Square and is subject to regular congestion and travel delays. A reconsideration of circulation may help to more directly address these issues.

All roadway alternatives should consider the regional flow of truck traffic and reducing the negative impacts of truck routes on Medford Square. The community has observed that under current conditions truck travel through Medford Square occurs at a high volume and impacts the walkability and pedestrian safety in the Square.

Exploration of street network alternatives in Medford Square should include:

- **Exploring alternatives in street directionality**
 - Salem Street is currently one-way westbound, consider two-way for some or all segments

- Riverside is currently one-way eastbound, consider two-way
- River Street is currently one-way southbound, consider two-way
- City Hall Mall is currently one-way northbound, consider two-way
- Clippership Drive is currently one-way eastbound, consider two-way

- **Exploring alternatives in configuration at central intersection**

- Signal timing and phasing improvements to improve pedestrian safety, crossing and wait times
- Alternatives to facilitate large volume of through traffic – For example, relocation double left from Salem Street to Main Street southbound south to Clippership Drive with reconfigured street directionality

- **Exploring alternatives to create or extend street segments combined with future redevelopment**

- Extend River Street south to Clippership Drive
- Extend City Hall Mall south to Clippership Drive

- **Explore alternatives involving closing roadways to enable redevelopment and open space**

- Clippership Drive was introduced as a Medford Square bypass, but is underused, alternatives that do not include this roadway could be explored
- Exit ramps from Mystic Valley Parkway westbound onto Main Street have been closed during Craddock Bridge construction and could remain closed with benefits to Mystic River open space

- **Explore alternatives to improve high volume roadway interchanges**

- Interstate 93 Exit 32 could be explored as an alternative to a rotary to better regulate safety, traffic flow, and congestion entering Medford Square
- Mystic Valley Parkway alternatives to grade separation at Main Street could be explored to reduce visual and perceived barriers to Medford Square and the Mystic River from the south

Redefine the Central Intersection for Walking

In order to strengthen walkability in Medford Square, the central intersection at Salem Street, Riverside Avenue, Main Street, High Street, and Forest Street must be improved for pedestrians. The intersection is geometrically complicated with six named streets intersecting at acute angles. The intersection is also complicated from a traffic flow and traffic signal operation standpoint. Due to these complicated aspects of the intersection, any reconfiguration is likely to result in unintended consequences in either the local or regional flow of traffic. However, the intersection is not likely operating in its most optimal configuration for traffic flows today and negatively impacts walkability as currently configured.

In terms of sub-optimal configuration, the current configuration of the central intersection and one-way streets may be amplifying the concentrations of traffic in high demand locations, particularly on Salem Street in the City Hall Subarea. Currently, traffic traveling north from Main Street to Forest Street, must turn right onto Riverside Avenue and then circulate through the City Hall Subarea, north on City Hall Mall and then back west on Salem Street to turn right and continue north on Forest Street. Additionally, west bound travel on Riverside Avenue is diverted north on City Hall Mall and west onto Salem Street to then reconnect with High Street through the central intersection in the Square.

These two broken connections may contribute more than 1,000 average daily trips to the volume of traffic on Salem Street. This is the difference in average daily traffic count between Salem Street just after the I-93 interchange rotary (20,600) and average daily traffic count west of City Hall Mall (21,700), where these two streams of travel would join Salem Street. A more straight-forward and direct connection north-south and east-west would benefit local circulation patterns and could reduce congestion in the Square.

In the short term, different approaches to the traffic signal phases and timing could be explored for changes that would benefit pedestrian circulation. Under the current programming of signal phases and timing, it is difficult for a pedestrian to cross the entire width of a street in one cycle. This either leaves a pedestrian stranded at the central medians for an entire signal cycle or forces them to complete the crossing the signal and against traffic.

At complicated and high traffic intersections, an exclusive pedestrian phase can be employed to allow pedestrians to cross the intersection in every direction at the same time, including diagonal crossings, with enough time programmed to make the crossing. This type of signal adjustment would require traffic in all directions to stop and prohibit turning on the red light during this pedestrian-only phase. This change could be made in the near term with relatively minor signal modifications and amendments.



Current configuration of the central intersection

Another walkability and pedestrian safety improvement that could be applied to the signal timing is the use of a leading pedestrian interval. A leading pedestrian interval (LPI) typically gives pedestrians a green signal three to seven seconds before vehicles are given a green signal in the same direction. This allows pedestrians to enter the crosswalk ahead of vehicles and forces turning traffic to yield to the pedestrians already safely in the crosswalk. This approach would help pedestrians to complete the entire street width crossing without getting stranded at the center medians and pedestrian refuges.

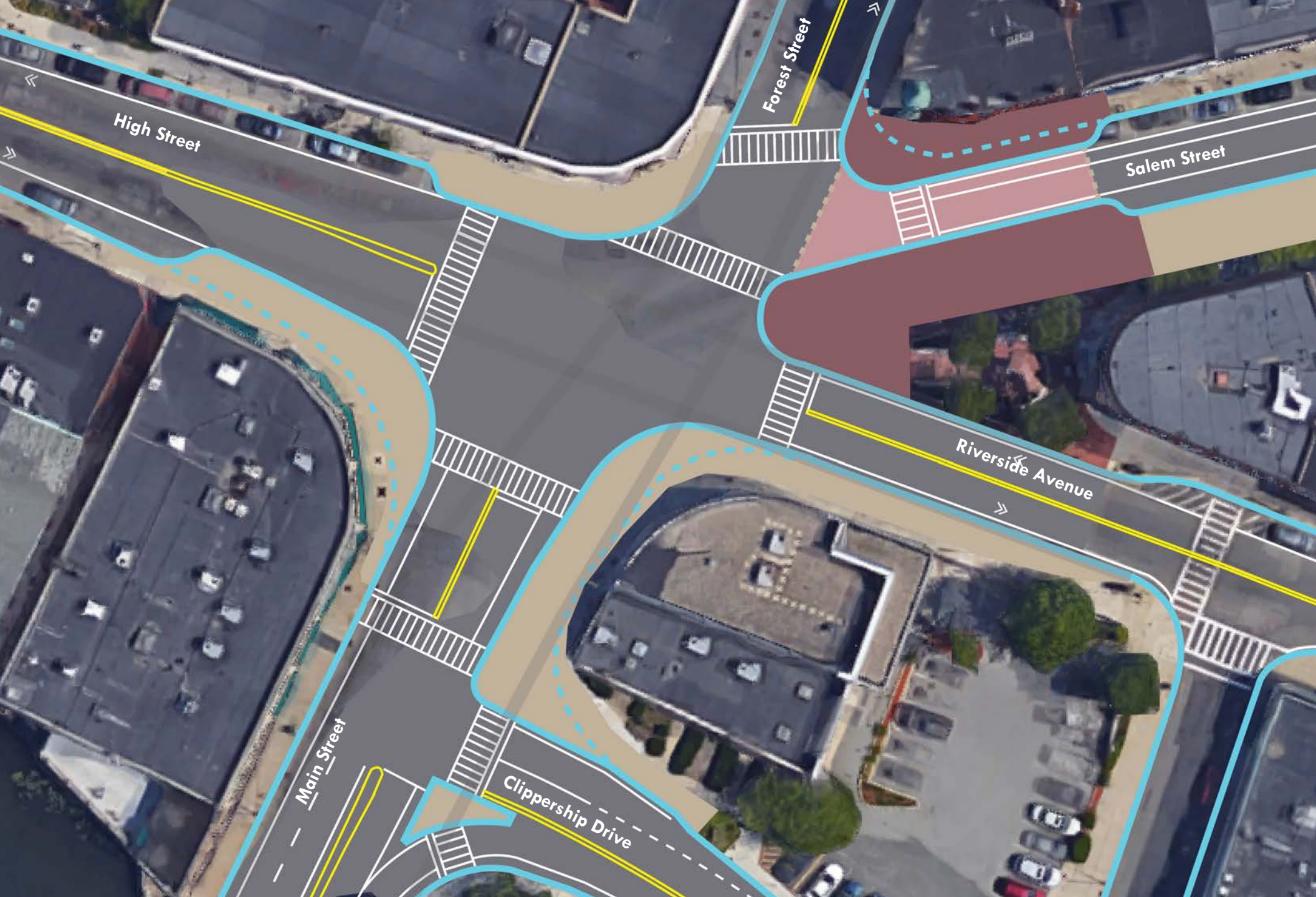
The signal modifications would help prioritize walking at the central intersection, but a more comprehensive redesign of the intersection would more effectively address walkability at the center of Medford Square. This type of redesign and reconfiguration is a longer term solution and more intensive modification that would improve the intersection geometry to reduce crossing distances for pedestrians and to slow traffic through the intersection. The design of the central intersection will be impacted by the exploration, study, and further analysis of circulation concepts in the City Hall Subarea to improve traffic flow and walkability.

The streets at the intersection are very wide from curb to curb. The current intersection design reduces this width and defines travel lanes with central median islands that include traffic signals and landscaping. These areas remain in the center of busy streets, are difficult to maintain, and don't provide an attractive pedestrian

experience. A more comprehensive modification would improve the intersection geometry to reduce crossing distances for pedestrians and to slow traffic through the intersection. This type of modification would remove the center islands and physically narrow the roadway by extending the sidewalk curbs and reducing vehicular turning radii.

This creates safer and shorter crossing distances for pedestrians and reduces travel speeds of vehicles through the intersection. It also increases the sidewalk space available for pedestrian amenities or landscape. Curb extensions could be designed to improve the intersection geometry for pedestrians on Salem Street, Riverside Avenue, High Street, and Forest Street as shown in the illustrative diagram on the following page.

The most comprehensive modifications to the central intersection involve reconsidering travel directions and lane configurations with implications for the street network throughout the City Hall Subarea. At the central intersection this could include reducing the number of lanes entering the intersection at Salem Street, adding two way directionality at Riverside Avenue, and expanding the number of lanes and directionality at Clippership Drive. This would require coordination between two traffic signals, with one signal controlling Salem Street, Riverside Avenue, Main Street, High Street and Forest Street and one signal controlling Clippership Drive and Main Street. Further study and analysis of these type of changes is required.



Concept illustration of a more walkable central intersection

Transportation and Connectivity

D

Mitigate Highway and Elevated Infrastructure

Medford Square is well positioned for highway access with direct connections to Interstate 93 and the Mystic Valley Parkway (Route 16). Both Interstate 93 and the Mystic Valley Parkway (Route 16) will continue to function as primary regional connectors in the future and will continue to carry high volumes of traffic. The section of Interstate 93 adjacent to Medford Square has an estimated average daily traffic volumes of 40,000 vehicles or more. The Mystic Valley Parkway has an estimated average daily traffic volume in excess of 30,000 vehicles per day. In addition to providing excellent vehicular access, both highways are directly adjacent to Medford Square and present physical barriers and challenges. The highway infrastructure should continue to be mitigated in the Square to reduce the impact and adapt these structures into district gateways.

At the time of the design of these roadways, during the 1950-1960's, it was an era that placed highway access and high speed single occupancy vehicle travel above all other considerations. Historic centers, such as Medford Square, had to adapt to this infrastructure and have tried a variety of methods to mitigate the impact of close proximity to high speed vehicle access over the intervening years. It is reasonable to reconsider the heavy vehicular infrastructure that interacts with Medford Square at Route 16 and I-93, particularly when considering long term strategies and improvements

for the Square. Both roadway systems have been subject of investments for maintenance and improvements and those investments will be required again at some point in the future. When investments are made they should include direct improvements that will benefit Medford Square access, safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, mitigation of sound and pollution, and placemaking enhancements.

Interstate 93

The heavy roadway infrastructure edges should be mitigated so that they do not negatively impact the civic realm that may be adjacent to or pass through them. These infrastructure edges require several mitigation approaches including circulation and safety, visual, and noise reduction. The Interstate 93 overpasses are nearly 200 feet wide and, even though sidewalks are currently provided under the overpass at Riverside Avenue and at the Salem Street Rotary, they may create a perceived barrier for pedestrians traveling to or from Medford Square. At the Riverside Avenue overpass additional lighting or art installations under the highway could help to leverage the highway infrastructure for placemaking at these district gateways.

The pedestrian and bicycle circulation at the Salem Street rotary could also be strengthened by additional yield signage or a rapid flashing beacon, as well as wayfinding and directional signage for pedestrians and bicycles. A relatively consistent and densely wooded

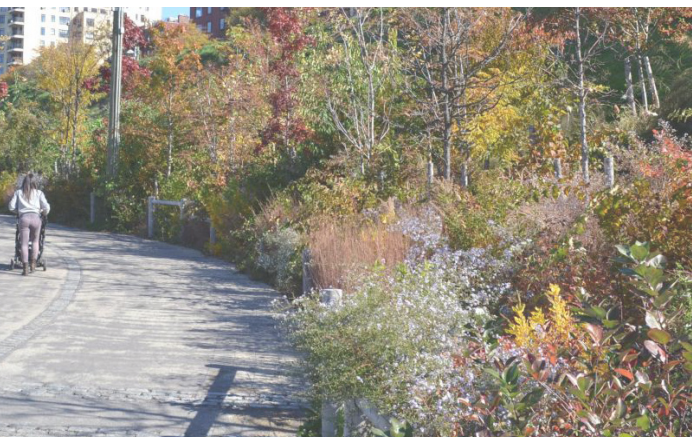
buffer exists on the western edge of the highway which helps with mitigation of visual and noise related impacts of the highway on the City Hall Subarea.

The Interstate 93 interchange at Salem Street could be reconsidered in the future to enhance and prioritize local roadways around Medford Square over the regional highway infrastructure. The rotary at the Salem Street interchange facilitates high speed travel for vehicles entering and exiting the highway. For vehicles that may travel from the highway into the rotary unimpeded, they may carry this speed onto Salem Street and directly into Medford Square creating traffic and pedestrian safety conflicts with local and slower moving traffic. A future reconsideration of this rotary as signalized exit ramps or smaller scale roundabouts may help to transition vehicle travel to slower speeds and provide a safer and more predictable entry into Medford Square.

Mystic Valley Parkway (Route 16)

At its intersection with Main Street, the Mystic Valley Parkway (Route 16) is an elevated and divided limited access highway with on and off ramps in a diamond pattern that connect to Main Street for north and south bound connections. The Mystic Valley Parkway overpass is nearly 300 feet wide at this location and creates a perceived barrier for pedestrians, even though sidewalks are currently provided under the overpass at Main Street.

Pedestrian circulation and the continuity of the civic realm would benefit from improved lane markings for pedestrian crossings and traffic signals for the on and off ramps connecting to Main Street and across Main Street itself. At the overpass additional lighting or art installations could help to leverage the highway



Highway infrastructure mitigation and placemaking techniques

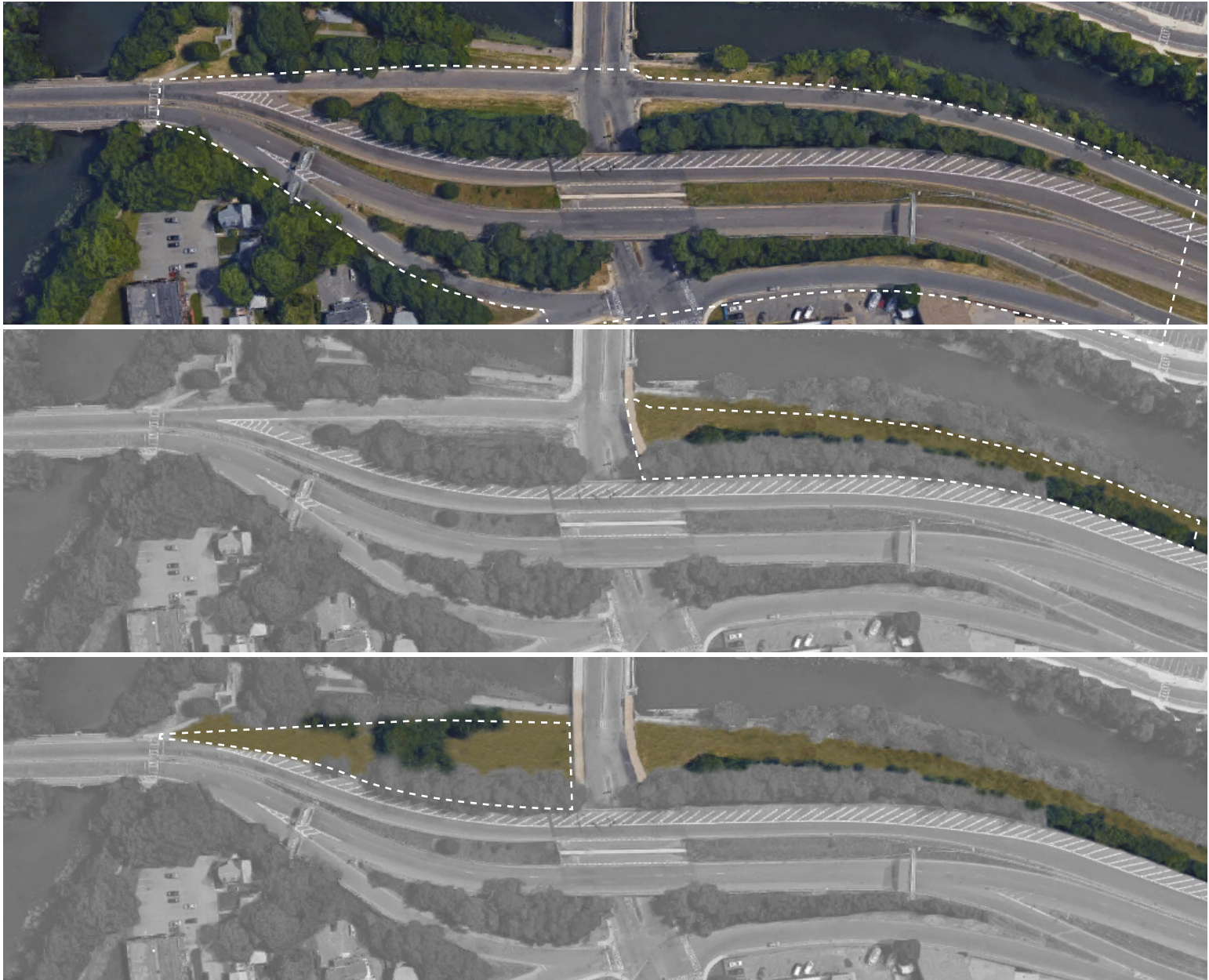
infrastructure for placemaking at this district gateway. The central overpass of Route 16, not including its on and off ramp segments, includes a relatively consistent and densely wooded buffer that helps with mitigation of visual and noise related impacts of the highway on the Main Street Subarea.

To the west of the Main Street overpass, the Mystic Valley Parkway becomes an at-grade arterial and to the east it connects with I-93 through a series of ramps and fly-overs. Reconfigurations of the on and off ramps at Main Street could be considered to create additional parkland on the southern edge of the Mystic River. During the current reconstruction of the Craddock Bridge, the westbound exit ramp that connects to Main Street has been closed and local traffic access to Medford Square has adapted to this change.

If this exit were to remain closed in the future, or be considered for closure in the future it would create a riverfront edge of more than 100 feet in width that could be part of expanded Mystic River access and multi-use path connections. It could also improve pedestrian safety on Main Street in this location. Route 16 travel directly to Medford Square could either connect south of the Square to Mystic Avenue or by way of Winthrop Street and High Street west of the Square. This type of change is illustrated on the following page, showing the potential expansion of the Mystic River parkland along the southern edges of the river.

A future direct ramp connection between westbound Route 16 and northbound I-93 just south of the Mystic River could facilitate a more efficient connection for this traffic movement, than may be currently facilitated by connecting Main Street and Clippership Drive.

Another long term redesign that would likely have positive implications for district walkability, open space, improved connections to the Mystic, and enhanced future development potential of the Main Street Subarea, would be exploring an at-grade design solution for the Mystic Valley Parkway at the Main Street intersection. This would provide the ability to dramatically reduce the footprint of the roadway and accommodate traffic flow with a signal controlled intersection. It would also continue eastward the character of the Mystic Valley Parkway just west of Medford Square as a signal controlled surface roadway at its intersection with Winthrop Street. The signal at this new intersection would require coordination with the signal at the central intersection on the north side of the Mystic River. This type of exploration of redesign options should prioritize the local character and conditions of Medford Square over the insertion of regional highway infrastructure.



Concept illustrations of Route 16 Mystic River improvements

Transportation and Connectivity Summary Strategies

A

Promote Mobility Choices and Transit

The origins of Medford Square are linked to its positioning in the colonial transportation network of rivers, bridges, roads, and later rail and street trolley connections. Today, the Square offers a variety of mobility options, beyond driving a car. Those options can be made more attractive by increasing their convenience and efficiency. A mobility hub is one way to do this, while providing physical improvements in the Square. A mobility hub is a centrally located place of connection between complementary modes of transportation. It could link multiple bus routes, bike share, bike storage, car share, and pedestrian wayfinding for example. The mobility hub is intended to enhance access, reinforce transit-oriented development, and combine multi-modal transfers with plaza features and amenities.

B

Improve Circulation and Connect the Street Grid

In the City Hall Subarea, the streets and blocks nearly form a well-connected and flexible grid. However, discontinuity in that grid currently exists due to the one-way street network and streets that do not fully connect across all blocks. This discontinuity reduces the circulation benefits and flexibility that are associated with a well-connected grid. Alternative circulation patterns in the City Hall Subarea should be explored, studied, and analyzed for benefits that could improve traffic flow and walkability in the Square. These patterns should be explored with potential extensions of River Street and City Hall Mall to Clippership Drive that could be combined with redevelopment or other reconfiguration options that may include closing Clippership Drive.

C

Redefine the Central Intersection for Walking

In order to strengthen walkability in Medford Square, the central intersection at Salem Street, Riverside Avenue, Main Street, High Street, and Forest Street must be improved for pedestrians. In the short term, different approaches to the traffic signal phases and timing could be explored for changes that would benefit pedestrian circulation. A longer term solution and more intensive modification would improve the intersection geometry to reduce crossing distances for pedestrians and to slow traffic through the intersection. The design of the central intersection will be impacted by the exploration, study, and further analysis of circulation concepts in the City Hall Subarea to improve traffic flow and walkability.

D

Mitigate Highway and Elevated Infrastructure

Historic centers, such as Medford Square, have had to adapt to highway infrastructure and have experimented with a variety of methods to mitigate the impact of the close proximity to high speed vehicle access. Route 16 and Interstate 93 have been subject of investments for maintenance and improvements. Future roadway improvements and investments required for maintenance or other purposes should take into account this community vision for Medford Square. All improvements should reduce the impact of high speed vehicular travel and truck routes, on the local roads and accommodate regional traffic flows while not diminishing the safety and walkability of the Square. Large amounts of land dedicated to vehicular infrastructure should be considered for additional overlapping uses that more directly benefit the Square.



Medford Square Transportation and Connectivity Strategies

Actions and Implementation



Actions and Implementation Summary Table

Topic	Strategy
1 Open Space/Quality of Life	• Create Concentration of Active Mystic River Edges
	• Enhance and Expand Medford Square Plazas
	• Embrace Culture and Arts Activity
	• Enhance District Management
2 Land Use/Sense of Place	• Preserve and Interpret Medford Square Legacy
	• Improve Key Street Corridors and Reallocate Space
	• Enhance Efficient Parking Supply and Access
	• Enhance District Character and Integrate Public Art
3 Economic Development/Vitality	• Strengthen Community and Civic Anchors
	• Refine Medford Square Zoning and Design Guidelines
	• Attract and Incentivize Mixed Use Redevelopment
	• Recruit Restaurants and Embrace the Creative Economy
4 Transportation Connectivity	• Promote Mobility Choices and Transit
	• Improve Circulation and Connect the Street Grid
	• Redefine the Central Intersection for Walking
	• Mitigate Highway and Elevated Infrastructure

Short Term Action (1-2 years)	Mid Term Action (2-5 years)	Long Term Action (5-10 years)	Potential Lead/Partner
Support “Clippership Connector”	Design and pursue riverfront parks	Maintain expanded river parks	P and E&E/DCR
Improve Riverside Plaza	Expand tree planting program	Create new plazas in the Square	P/CD
Support Medford Square events	Create culture and arts district	Integrate arts policies in district	MO/MAC
Create Management Task Force	Form and authorize district manager	Sustain management organization	CD/MCC
Create local historic district	Increase historic interpretation	Create incentives for adaptive reuse	CC and CD/MHS
Test temporary pilot conversions	Key streetscape improvements	Expand streetscape improvements	E and P/CD
Promote shared parking agreements	Improve walk/bike to Square routes	Reduce parking in the Square	CC and CD/E and MCC
Maintain district banner program	Integrate district wayfinding	Expand public art installations	MO/MAC
Promote library programming	Sustain/improve Chevalier Theatre	Leverage each facility investment	MO/CC
Draft Zoning Ordinance	Adopt zoning and design guidelines	Expand zoning/guidelines to South	MO and CD/CC
Explore disposition process/partners	Dispose of property and develop	Encourage private redevelopment	MO and CD/CC
Identify and recruit restaurateurs	Explore/pilot incentives and tools	Explore restaurant convert program	MO and CD/CC
Add sharrows, bike lanes, bike signs	Create and enhance a transit hub	Improve routes and stop locations	MO and E/MBTA
Pursue CTPS Technical Study	Test circulation enhancement pilot	Create new street connections	MO and E/CD
Test temporary curb extensions	Implement signal improvements	Redesign integrating new circulation	E/CD
Traffic enforcement of speed	Improve landscape, art, barriers	Invest in reduced footprints/impacts	MO and E/CD

LEGEND:

MO = Mayor’s Office, **CC** = City Council, **CD** = Community Development, **E** = Engineering, **P** = Park, **E&E** = Energy and Environment, **MCC** = Chamber of Commerce, **MHS** = Medford Historical Society, **MAC** = Medford Arts Council, **DCR** = Department of Conservation and Recreation, **MBTA** = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Actions and Implementation

Create Concentration of Active Mystic River Edges

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Parks Division and City of Medford Energy & Environment Department/Department of Conservation and Recreation

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Support “Clippership Connector” - The “Clippership Connector” provides an improvement in access and activity along the Mystic River, while providing enhanced walking and biking connections to Medford Square for the surrounding areas. Continued planning, design, advocacy, coordination with abutters, and construction efforts should be supported as part of the Master Plan implementation.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Design and pursue riverfront parks - Schematic design studies and initial cost estimates should be pursued for the river frontage at the south landing of the footbridge and frontage along Clippership Drive to more fully utilize these areas and provide city-wide river amenities. This information should be used to pursue funding.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Maintain and link expanded river parks - Expand park maintenance programs to focus on new riverfront amenities and plan investments in additional long term links between active river edges - north side boardwalk between the footbridge and Craddock bridge.

Enhance and Expand Medford Square Plazas

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Parks Division/City of Medford Office of Community Development

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Improve Riverside Plaza - The improvements designed for Riverside Plaza are representative of the type of plaza improvements needed to provide flexible, multi-functional, and attractive public spaces that will be a central feature and contributor to vitality in the Square.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Expand tree planting program - In existing plazas and sidewalks, new shade trees should be added to as many locations as possible. Several locations for new landscape curb extensions should be identified and implemented to add street trees where space may not currently be available.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Create new plazas in the Square - All open space between buildings, along street edges, or adjacent to parking lots, should be improved as a public open space and integrate a palette of materials that relates to the Riverside Plaza improvements. Each open space should be enhanced with simple paths to access amenities and could include features such as tables, benches, bicycle racks, wayfinding signs, or information signs.

Embrace Culture and Arts Activity

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office/Medford Arts Council

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Support Medford Square events - The presence of a calendar of events is critically important to the centrality of Medford Square as a city-wide destination and introducing new visitors to the Square. Circle the Square, Clippership Day, Chevalier Theatre events, Condon Shell events, and other Medford Square events require continued support and stewardship.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Create culture and arts district - The creation of a Massachusetts Cultural District and designation through the Massachusetts Cultural Council is a way to draw attention to Medford Square and improve the quality and range of public programs.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Integrate arts policies in district - Develop policies and programs for Medford Square to grow the presence of arts and artists in the district, potentially including a vacant storefront art program, an artist space or residential program associated with new development, and a public art program that would integrate art into public or private investments.

Enhance District Management

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Office of Community Development/
Medford Chamber of Commerce

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Create Management Task Force - A formal district management entity and its role should be discussed in detail with Medford Square businesses. Based on this discussion, the type of organization should be identified and supported by the City, Chamber of Commerce, and Medford Square community. The Master Plan has identified either a Main Streets District or Business Improvement District as the most beneficial.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Form and authorize district manager - The management entity should be formed, initiated, and authorized as per its role and mission in Medford Square. This program may be initially started as a pilot and will require support by the City, Chamber of Commerce, and Medford Square community.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Sustain management organization - A sustainable funding source for the district management entity should be identified and established to support the coordinated management of Medford Square. Downtown Beverly, MA and Downtown Amherst, MA both provide relevant examples of continued support for district management.

Actions and Implementation

Preserve and Interpret Medford Square Legacy

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Office of Community Development and City Council/Medford Historical Society and Historic District Commission

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Create local historic district - Follow the procedures of the Historic Districts Act (MGL, Chapter 40C) to establish a local historic district in Medford Square, beginning with a vote to establish a Local Historic District Study Committee. The materials of the Master Plan can be used in the initiation of this process for identification of district resources and potential district boundary.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Increase historic interpretation - Leveraging the historic assets of the district includes sharing the historic narratives of Medford Square. Signage or public arts programs that highlight the stories of Medford Square should be expanded and implemented.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Create incentives for adaptive reuse - Providing access to resources, potentially through Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, for preservation, facade improvement, and adaptive reuse activities would support the Local Historic District and allow historic properties to evolve with the district.

Improve Key Street Corridors and Reallocate Space

Potential Lead/Partner

Potential Lead/Partner - City of Medford Department of Engineering and Parks Division/City of Medford Office of Community Development

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Test temporary pilot conversions - Short term, temporary, and inexpensive improvements can be used to build community support and test permanent improvements. Curb extension areas that remove an on-street parking space can be tested temporarily with movable furnishings and low-cost paint and landscaping.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Key streetscape improvements - Long term and permanent improvements can be implemented to improve attractiveness of streetscape and pedestrian safety and walkability in Medford Square. Mid-term improvements should set the stage for larger circulatory improvements and include further design study and engineering to explore long-term solutions.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Expand streetscape improvements - Finalize long-term design and engineering study of circulation and walkability improvements, expand streetscape investments as funding is available according to the overall district-wide street network improvements.

Enhance Efficient Parking Supply and Access

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Office of Community Development and City Council/City of Medford Department of Engineering and Medford Chamber of Commerce

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Promote shared parking agreements - A program of shared parking should be established and promoted among owners of parking in Medford Square. A model shared parking agreement can serve as method to reduce concerns over insurance and liability. Sharing parking resources will benefit all uses in the Square.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Improve walk/bike to Square routes - All sidewalk, street crossing, bicycle, and path improvements that connect surrounding residents to Medford Square represent a way to reduce parking demand. Nearby residents should not feel it is necessary to drive to the Square.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Reduce surface parking in the Square - Update the parking management policies and rates based on new use patterns. Reduce the amount of new parking required with new buildings. The more land that is converted from parking into other uses, the more vital and economically productive Medford Square will become.

Integrate Public Art and Enhance District Gateways

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office/Medford Arts Council

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Maintain district banner program - The Medford Square Art Banners Series should continue to provide attractive streetscape features that highlight local artists and historic narratives. The banner program could also be linked to other annual events, artistic themes, or historic narratives of the Square.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Integrate district wayfinding - The establishment and design of simple district wayfinding is an effective way to reinforce the identity of Medford Square. The district anchors could be highlighted along with historic attractions and routes and connections to nearby landmarks.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Expand public art installations - As part of future plaza and streetscape improvements, public art installations should be integrated into investments. The public art should be commissioned from local artists and provide a direct connection to one of the historic or cultural narratives of Medford Square.

Actions and Implementation

Strengthen Community and Civic Anchors

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office/City Council

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Promote library programming - Each anchor facility provides programming or activities that draw people to Medford Square. The library programming, particularly community, culture, and arts related activity should be promoted as part of the Medford Square attractions.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Sustain/improve Chevalier Theatre - A community theater is a unique asset for a downtown district. Sustaining and improving the physical facility and programming of the Chevalier Theatre should be viewed as part of a larger district strategy. This arts and culture anchor has the ability to draw together many of the arts and culture assets and creative economy.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Leverage each facility investment - Each community anchor (City Hall, Library, Chevalier, Police/Fire Headquarters) will require future investment in the short or long term. Each facility investment should be leveraged to better position these buildings as civic anchors of a downtown district, by better connecting interior activity to exterior street frontage, adding community amenities, such as meeting rooms or accessible lobbies, featuring public art, and plazas.

Refine Medford Square Zoning and Design Review

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office and Office of Community Development/City Council

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Draft Zoning Ordinance - Use the zoning recommendations outlined in the Master Plan to guide a process to draft and adopt new zoning in Medford Square.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Adopt zoning and design guidelines - Adopt zoning and design guidelines to better align future investments with the community vision and Master Plan, including design guidelines that can be based on the information provided in the Master Plan. Use zoning modifications in the Medford Square C-1 District to test modifications to zoning with the specific intention of redeveloping City-owned parcels in the City Hall Subarea.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Expand zoning/guidelines to South - Based on the use of the updated zoning, with the potential to amend as needed to better align with investments that may have occurred, zoning modifications and design guidelines should be expanded to the C-2 District in the Main Street Subarea.

Attract and Incentivize Mixed Use Redevelopment

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office and Office of Community Development/City Council

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Explore disposition process/partners - The City should explore the best approach and possible partners (for example, MassDevelopment) to dispose of surplus property in the City Hall Subarea for mixed-use redevelopment. Further assessment of the opportunity for disposition of property could recommend action by the City Council (as per MGL Ch. 30B Section 16).

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Dispose of property and develop - The City Council declares the identified parcels surplus and specifies reuse restrictions consistent with the Master Plan and Community Vision. The City assesses current property values, develops a Request for Interest (RFI), Request For Proposals (RFP), and evaluates proposals received. A development agreement is executed between the proposer and the City.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Encourage private redevelopment - Based on the results of the RFP process, adjust project requirements to respond to develop opportunities and encourage private investment that would advance the Master Plan and community vision.

Recruit Restaurants/Embrace the Creative Economy

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office and Office of Community Development/City Council

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Identify and recruit restaurateurs - Use the Master Plan market analysis to present the opportunity for new restaurants in Medford Square, identify potential restaurants, and recruit specific restaurants when new or existing space becomes available.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Explore/pilot incentives and tools - Explore programs to assist in the recruitment and retention of new restaurants in Medford Square - subsidies to hold vacant spaces open until the match with the right tenant is made, subsidies to reduce rent to new restaurants or others as the business is established, expanded allowable outdoor seating regulations to add capacity to smaller interior restaurant spaces.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Explore restaurant convert program - Explore programs to assist in the conversion of ground floor spaces for use as restaurants - low interest construction loans or grants, subsidies for certain types of construction, streamlined permitting, building department liaison program, infrastructure and utilities assistance (electrical, sewer, drainage, grease traps, etc.)

Actions and Implementation

Promote Mobility Choices and Transit

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office and Department of Public Works, Engineering Division/MBTA

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Add sharrows, bike lanes, bike signs - All Medford Square streets should include "sharrow" road markings and "share the lane" signs as a short-term improvement to communicate a welcoming of bicycles in Medford Square. The only road that could accommodate bicycle lanes without changes to curb locations or on-street parking is Mystic Avenue in the Main Street Subarea. Therefore bicycle lanes could be added to Mystic Avenue in the short term.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Create and enhance a transit hub - South of City Hall, a transit hub should be incrementally built up near the current bus stop including bicycle storage, car-share parking, bus shelter, pick-up/drop-off, small plaza with seating and landscape.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Improve routes and stop locations - Improvements to the Medford Square public realm and street network may create new opportunities for improved bus routes and bus stop locations in Medford Square. Wherever possible, multiple routes should be combined at stops and the stops enhanced as a transit hub.

Improve Circulation and Connect the Street Grid

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office and Department of Public Works, Engineering Division/Office of Community Development

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Pursue CTPS Technical Study - Further study and detailed traffic modeling needs to be part of the continued study of circulation improvements in Medford Square. Street directionality, additional signalized intersections, and new street connections should all be studied to optimize vehicular circulation in the Square.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Test circulation enhancement pilot - An improved circulation plan will result from the detailed technical study. A series of incremental investments could be planned and designed to move Medford Square toward this plan. Circulation enhancements could be tested temporarily to gain community support and to refine design solutions.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Create new street connections - Determine the benefit of new street connections, perform design studies and engineering to determine physical and cost requirements, work with property owners to create right-of-way agreements or easements.

Redefine the Central Intersection for Walking

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Department of Public Works,
Engineering Division/Office of Community Development

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Test temporary curb extensions - Test pedestrian improvements to the central intersection with temporary and low cost solutions. This may include painted curb extensions, temporary bollards, landscape planters, or painted street murals.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Implement signal improvements - At minimum, pedestrian crossing time should be lengthened to allow a full street crossing in one interval, provide a leading pedestrian interval, or scramble pedestrian crossing. Signal coordination would also be required for potential circulation improvements to be studied further.

Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Redesign integrating new circulation - Based on an improved circulation plan for Medford Square, resulting from detailed technical study, a new central intersection design should be designed, engineered, and constructed to integrate with pedestrian, landscape, and plaza improvements at the central intersection.

Mitigate Highway and Elevated Infrastructure

Potential Lead/Partner

City of Medford Mayor's Office and Department of
Public Works, Engineering Division/Office of Community
Development

Short Term Action (1-2 years)

Traffic enforcement of speed - The highway interchanges offer limited transition between highway travel speeds and slower speeds of walkable downtown district. Traffic enforcement of speeding on Salem Street and Main Street would mitigate the impact of highway connections and enhance pedestrian safety.

Mid Term Action (2-5 years)

Improve landscape, art, barriers - Plant additional landscape along bermed edges of Interstate 93 and Route 16, use public art and lighting to reinvent overpasses as district gateways, strengthen pedestrian and bicycle crossings at interchanges and underpasses.

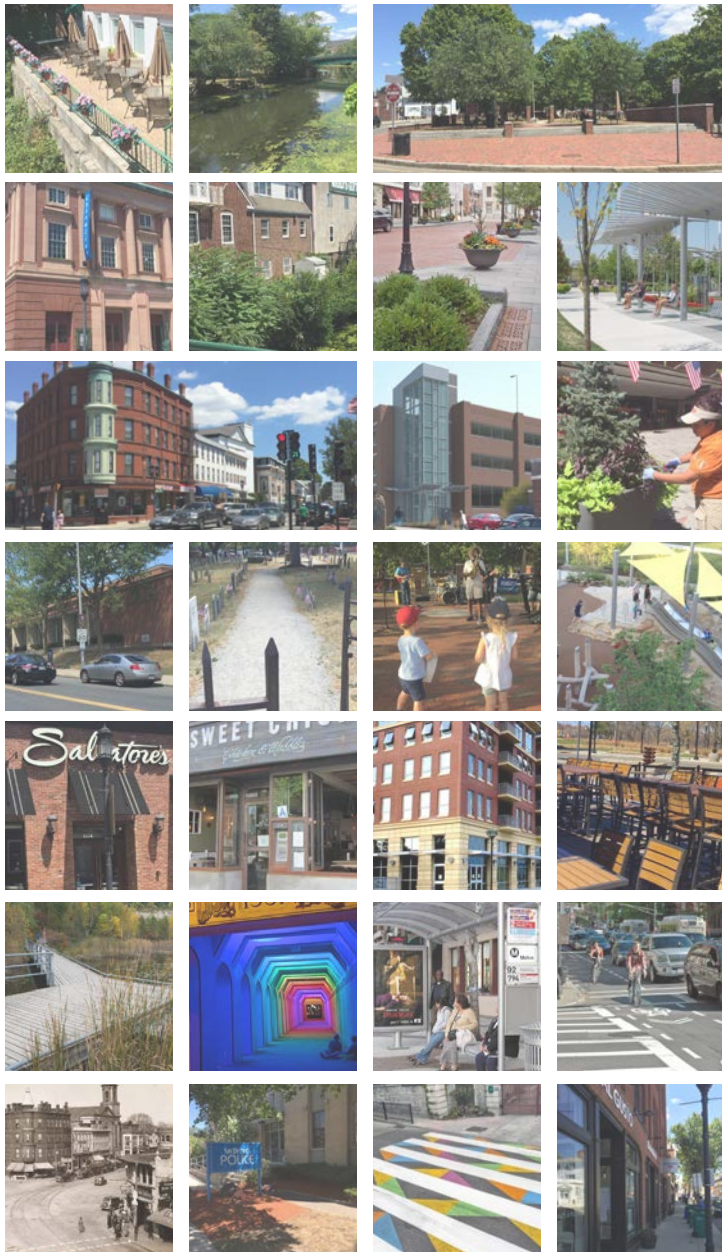
Long Term Action (5-10 years)

Invest in reduced footprints/impacts - Initiate a design study to reduce the footprint and impact of the roadway infrastructure for Route 16 by reconsidering its generous median and ramp configurations at Main Street creating new open space opportunities on the Mystic River. Similarly, a study of the reduced footprint and impacts of the Interstate 93 interchange.



Conclusions





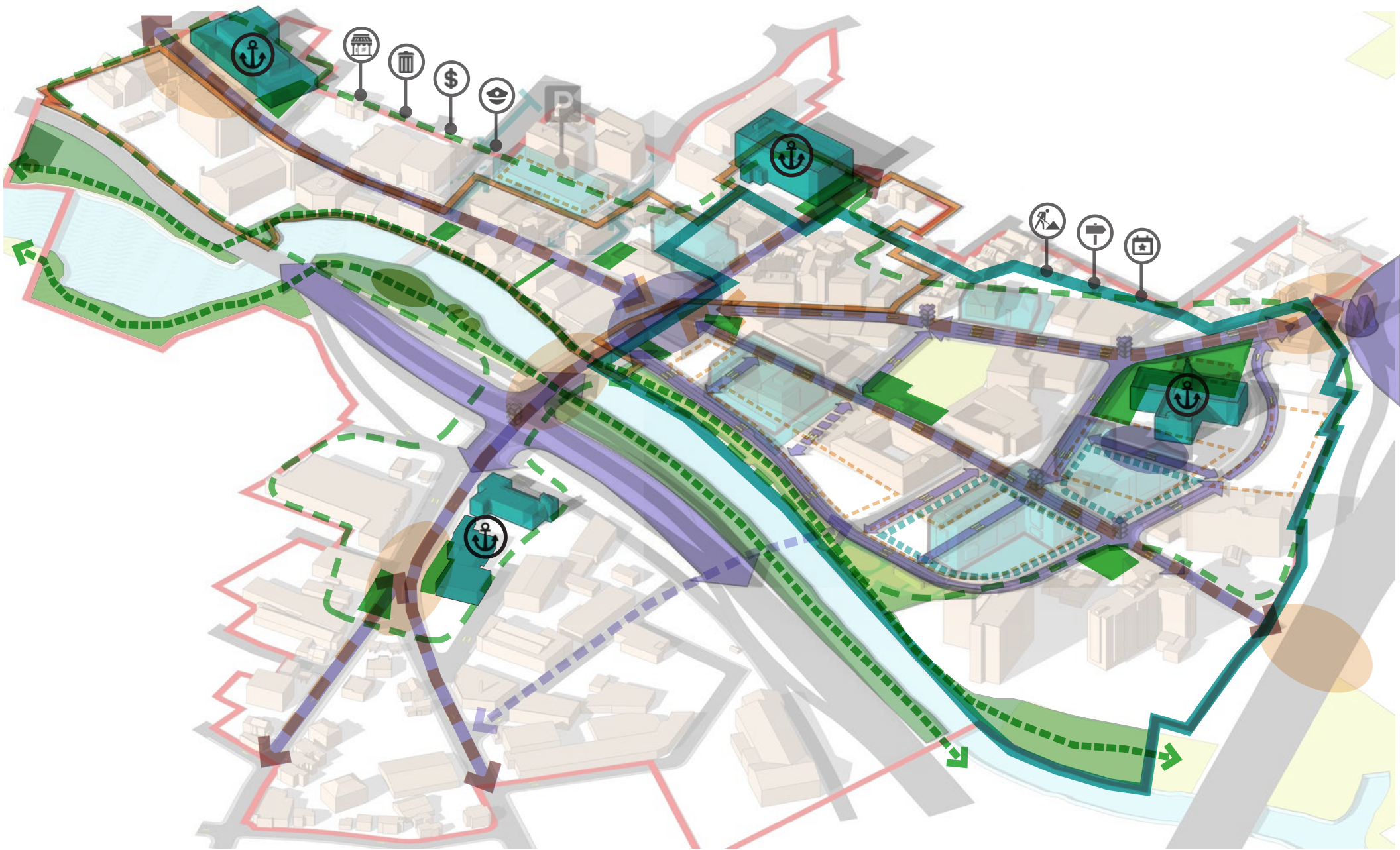
The unique potential of Medford Square

Medford Square Master Plan Looking Ahead

The Medford Square Master Plan strategies and actions are intended to position the Square for a thriving future that leverages its assets. The uniqueness of the history, architecture, relationship to the Mystic River, and convenience to Boston provide a strong foundation to advance multiple strategic efforts to strengthen the district as a place of pride for the City of Medford and the region.

For each strategy and action, persistence and effectiveness is critical in building and maintaining positive momentum for Medford Square. Each strategy and action is intended to respond to one or more of the goals confirmed by the community. The strategies and actions include both physical investments in Medford Square and improvements to the management, activities, and policies of the Square. Progress in both categories is required to advance Medford Square toward the community vision articulated in the Vision Statement.

The diagram on the following page depicts the general location of all Medford Square Master Plan strategies, which are distributed to have a positive impact on the entire district. The images to the left reflect the unique character of Medford Square today, combined with examples of the type of enhancements that could result from the implementation of the Master Plan.



Medford Square Master Plan strategies diagram



Medford Square Master Plan

An Economic Revitalization Strategy

Final Report

December 2017

