



Chapter Land Use and Zoning

Introduction

The land use and growth patterns in Dedham have been influenced by the historic and economic evolution of the Town, the natural features that have always been present, and the supportive infrastructure that has been developed. The historic and economic evolution of the Town was once closely connected to rivers, human-made canals, and mills, resulting in walkable neighborhoods and historic squares. Improvements in rail connectivity contributed to the growth of Dedham Square. Later improvements in vehicular infrastructure lead to the growth of Providence Highway and convenient access to Boston remains a great asset of the Town. Today, these foundational features are strengths of the Town and include historic squares and neighborhood centers, access to transit, access to the highway, and extensive natural resources.

The land use and zoning chapter examines this historic evolution of the use of land and growth patterns of the Town and the present pressures on land in the Town. The chapter provides an overview of the present zoning regulations and highlights areas where zoning could be improved to better guide future investment and growth in Dedham. The land use and zoning chapter looks to the future of Dedham and the need to proactively guide growth and development to align with the community's vision.



Summary

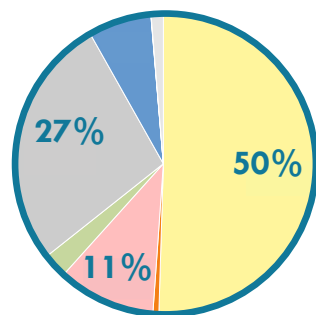
Strengthen and connect the compact and walkable places in Dedham and leverage each investment to improve livability.



Themes Highlights

- The town's transit, walkable neighborhoods, water and wastewater infrastructure, and natural assets provide a strong foundation for livability in Dedham.
- The town is predominantly comprised of residential uses and opportunities for future growth and redevelopment remain.
- Residents have expressed the need to update the current Zoning Bylaw to better align regulations with the community's vision for the town.

Proportion of land use in Dedham



Legend:

- Residential (50%)
- Mixed use (1%)
- Commercial/industrial (11%)
- Private land/open space (3%)
- Public land/open space (27%)
- Institutional (7%)
- Unknown/not classified (1%)

Source: MassGIS



Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Proactively plan for future growth and leverage transformative investment opportunities to improve quality of life and livability for all residents.
- Strengthen the neighborhoods and places where walking, biking, and connecting to transit is safe and attractive.
- Align regulations and approval processes with the town's vision to optimize shared benefits and reduce impacts of new development and redevelopment.

Proportion of zoning districts in Dedham

Zoning District	Gross area (estimated acres)	% of town area
Single Residence A (SRA)	2,413	35%
Single Residence B (SRB)	2,271	34%
General Residence (GR)	915	13%
Senior Campus (SC)	152	2%
Limited Manufacturing (LMA)	382	6%
Limited Manufacturing Type B (LMB)	36	0.5%
Research, Development & Office (RDO)	401	5%
General Business (GB)	29	0.4%
Highway Business (HB)	155	3%
Central Business (CB)	37	1%
Local Business (LB)	32	0.5%

Source: MassGIS, Town of Dedham Zoning

Companion and related plans and studies

- Mixed-Use Development Impact Study (2020)
- Climate Action & Resiliency Plan (2020)
- Providence Highway: Create a Better Corridor (2020)
- Housing Study (2019)

- Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019)
- Dedham Corporate Station: Creating a Connected Neighborhood (2017)
- East Dedham Village Strategic Action Plan (2017)
- Enhancing Creative East Dedham (2014)



Defining land use and zoning terms

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

A second small dwelling on the same property (or attached to) a regular single-family house.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

A measurement of the density of development on a property by comparing a building's floor area in relation to the size of the property where the building is located. Typically, FAR is calculated by dividing the gross floor area of a building by the total land area of the property.

Historic Districts

Dedham is home to three local historic districts. The three districts have been recognized for their historic and architectural significance and include: Franklin Square-Court Street District, Connecticut Corner District, and Federal Hill District. Additional development regulations and review are required within these districts. The Court Street-Franklin Square and Connecticut Corner Historic Districts are within the boundaries of the Dedham Village National Register Historic District established in 2006.

Mixed-use Development

A type of development in which a mix of uses is present. The mix of uses may include residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or other uses. The uses are typically integrated into a single building with uses stacked vertically, floor-by-floor or integrated on a larger property with multiple buildings integrating a number of complementary uses on the property.

Overlay Zone

A zoning district applied over one or more previously established zoning districts. It establishes additional, or stricter standards, or incentives, and criteria for properties beyond those established by the underlying zoning district.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Transit oriented development is land use and zoning policy that encourages growth to occur near existing transit (typically rail, but can include bus) stations. This type of development seeks to bring an increased density of people, uses, activities, amenities, and jobs together near transit to reduce the need to vehicular trips for daily commuting and to leverage infrastructure investments.

Underlying Zone

The basic zoning definition applicable to a property. Every property in the Town is located with a specific underlying zone. The Town of Dedham has eleven underlying zones. Four of the underlying zones are residential and seven are non-residential.

Zoning Bylaws

Land use in Dedham is regulated through zoning. The Building Department is responsible for enforcement of building codes and other codes. They work in cooperation with the Planning & Zoning office and the Planning Board and others to enforce zoning regulations.



Land Use and Zoning In Dedham Today

Land use and zoning themes

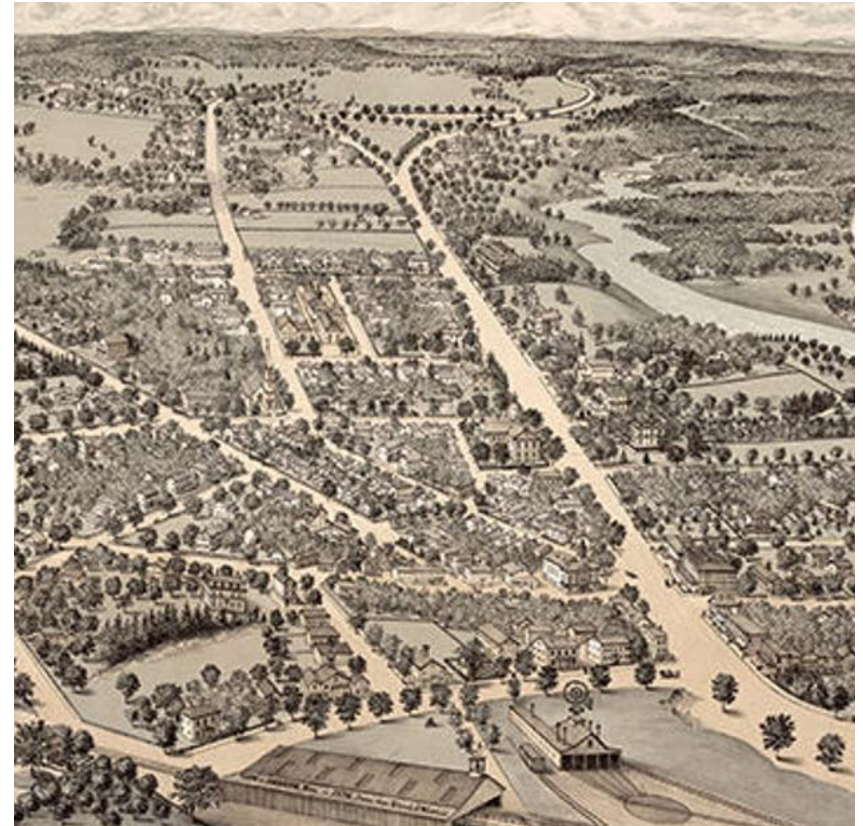
LU1 Multiple transit options and points of access define patterns

Rail lines have shaped Dedham's settlement patterns and Dedham benefits today from two commuter rail stops on the Franklin Line, Endicott and Dedham Corporate. Nearby Readville also provides convenient transit access and although it is in Boston, it is near enough to influence land use in Dedham. Land use patterns have historically responded to these access points and future land use improvements should strengthen orientation to transit and convenient access by all modes of travel.

The transportation infrastructure in and around the Town has been a major organizing feature of the Town's settlement patterns. In 1793 Dedham became the county seat for Norfolk County and in 1803, the Norfolk and Bristol Turnpike, then the Hartford and Dedham Turnpike was built offering stagecoach service to Boston, Providence, and Hartford. Rail service was extended to the Town in the 1830's. The Boston and Providence Railroad included Dedham on a route that connected the Town to the main line at Readville. This infrastructure changed the natural landscape of Dedham with embankments, cuts, fill, bridges and crossing through the countryside.

An early birdseye view map of Dedham shows some of these early transportation features and settlement patterns. In the map,

the Dedham Square area with Dedham Station down toward the bottom of the image about where the Keystone parking lot is today on Eastern Avenue. You can see the courthouse up High Street.





LU2 Strong historic squares and neighborhood centers

The historic settlement patterns of the Town remain largely intact and are defined by mixed-use centers of activity. The centers are compact areas that include a variety of uses, and that provide convenient and walkable access to shops and services from many of the Town's neighborhoods. These include the significant historic squares of Dedham Square and East Dedham Square and smaller neighborhood centers of Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, Sprague Street, and Bussey Street. These mixed-use nodes should be preserved and strengthened as a central feature of enhanced livability and quality of life in Dedham. These areas are distinct from the surrounding residential neighborhoods and typically defined with distinct zoning in the Town's Bylaw. These zoning districts include the Central Business districts, the Local Business districts. This historic development pattern is a major asset and provides a compact and walkable environment that is desirable and attractive today.

Dedham's neighborhoods are also an important organizational feature of the Town. Each neighborhood has a unique history and contributions to the Town. In recent studies, the neighborhoods have been correlated with the US Census Tracts and Block Groups, which are geographic units based on population distribution. The neighborhoods include East Dedham, Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor, Oakdale, Riverdale, Dedham Village/Square, and West Dedham (Precinct 1).

Neighborhood	Land area (acres)	Population	Housing units	Housing density (units/acre)
East Dedham	670	4,891	2,188	3.3
Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor	1,242	5,863	2,171	1.7
Oakdale	1,032	6,077	2,511	2.4
Riverdale	1,064	3,634	1,560	1.5
Dedham Village/Square	315	1,233	590	1.9
West Dedham (Precinct 1)	2,472	3,031	1,171	0.5

LU3 Central commercial corridor and convenient auto access

A critical component of the transportation infrastructure to have a major impact on the settlement patterns of Dedham was the construction of Route 128 between 1947 and 1956, considered the first circumferential highway built around a U.S. city. Improved automobile and truck access brought a wave of new businesses and residents and lead to a boom in new home construction in Dedham. The demand for land reduced the remaining agricultural areas and most developable parcels were developed by the 1980s.

Convenient vehicular access is noted by many residents as a major asset of the Town and for some households is the reason they live in Dedham. The Town has three direct exits from Route 128/

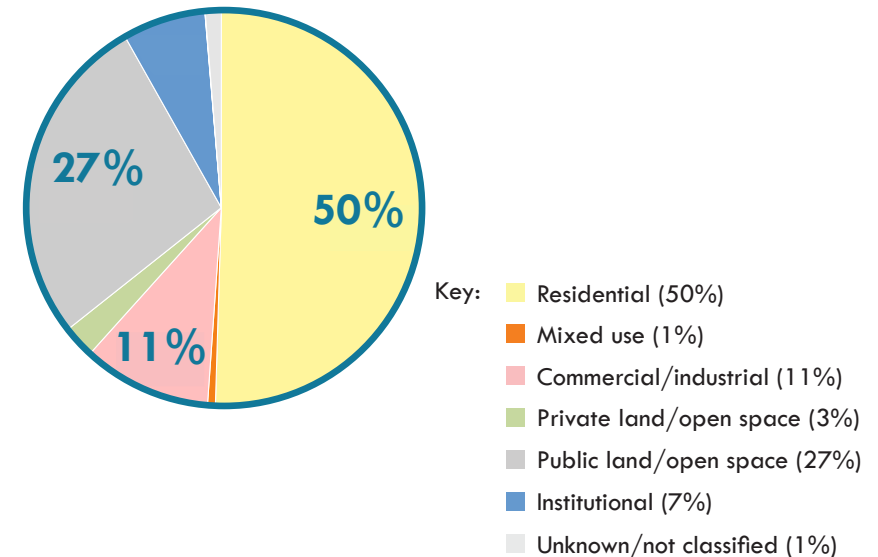


Interstate 95 allowing easy access to the surrounding region. The vehicular convenience provided by the Providence Highway crossing the center of the Town attracts auto-oriented retail, commercial, and hospitality uses.

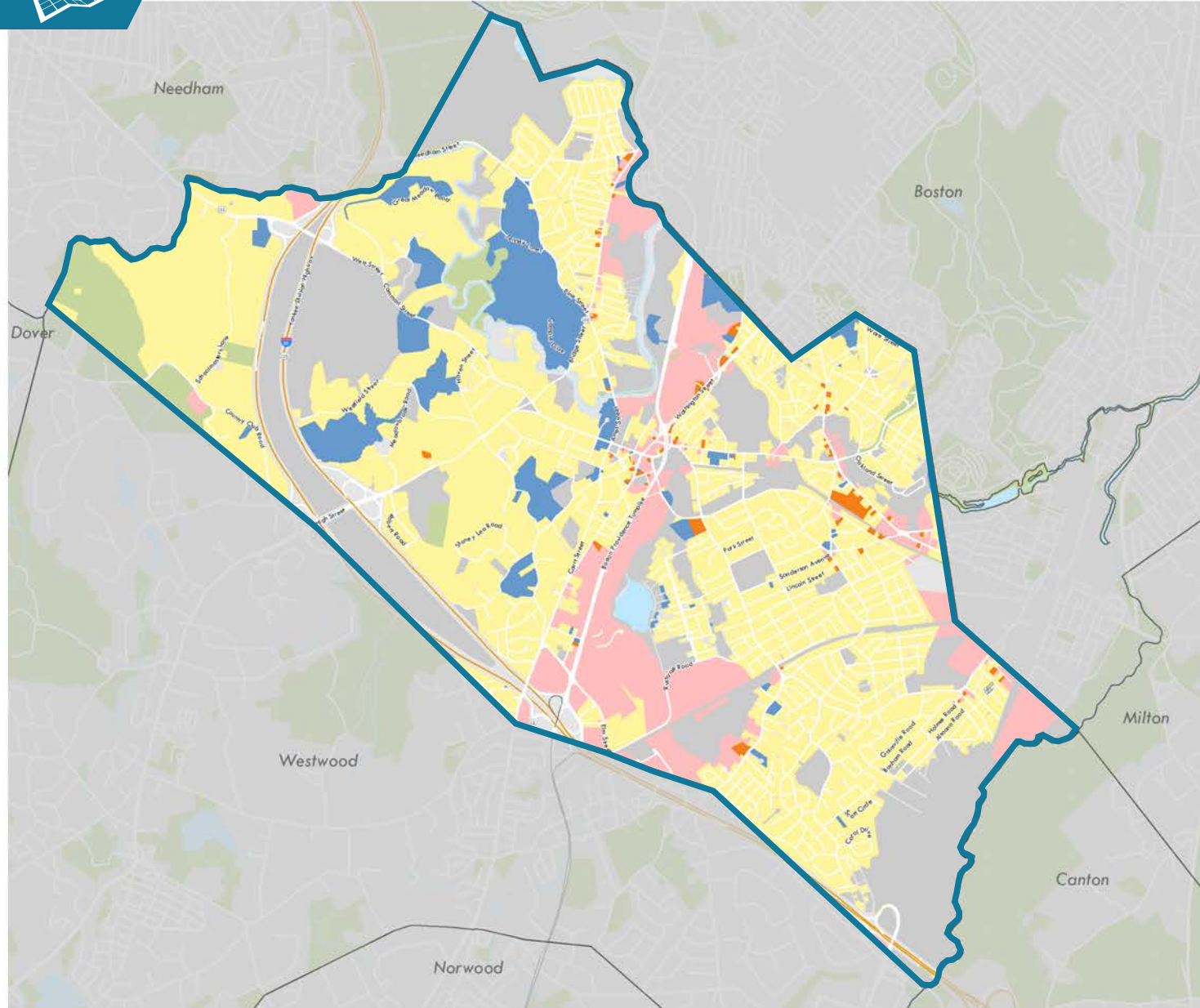
LU4 **Predominantly residential use across the Town**

Although Dedham has a diverse mix of land uses across the Town, residential uses are the predominant proportion of uses. Residential uses are the largest land use by both the number of parcels and total land area in the Town representing. By total land area, residential uses account for about 50% of all uses and land in Dedham. Public land and open space are the second largest land use with about 27% of the total land area in Dedham. Much of the public land and open space is located within a residential zoning district (Single Residence A, Single Residence B, or General Residence). The total land area of the Town that falls within one of the residential zoning districts is even greater than the percent of residential uses at about 82% all land zoned in Dedham. After public land and open space, commercial and industrial uses are the next largest land use with about 11% of total land area. Institutional land is about 7% of the total land area. Private land and open space is about 3% of the total land area. Mixed use is about 1% of the total land area and an additional 1% of the land area is either unknown or not classified. The pie chart shows the land uses in Dedham with the predominant residential uses.

Comparison of Land Uses

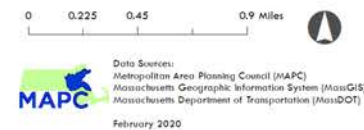


A land use map of Dedham on the following page shows the geographic distribution of the uses. The commercial and industrial areas are concentrated near the Providence Highway and transit stops. The mixed-use areas are found near the historic squares and neighborhood centers. The residential areas occupy most land between these other features. Private schools and health care campuses show up under institutional uses and the unclassified areas are likely to be state- or federally-owned areas near the interstate highway or rivers.



Land Use Dedham, MA

- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial/Industrial
- Open Space
- Public
- Institutional
- Tax Exempt Other
- Unknown
- Rivers and Streams
- Water





LU5 Extensive natural resources and river access

The Town's history is closely connected to the Charles River, Neponset River and the ingenuity of Mother Brook and Long Ditch. They have always been an integral part of the Town's history and economy. The Charles River and Neponset River form portions of the Town's borders and first supported agriculture in the community. The ingenuity of early Dedham residents harnessed the power of the rivers to provide power for mills. In 1639, Mother Brook was dug by hand to connect the Charles and Neponset Rivers and provided power for mills and factories. In



1652, the 4,000 foot Long Ditch was completed to channel water for Charles River flood control and preservation of the riverbank meadows. Dwight's Brook, or the Little River, connected Wigwam Pond with the Charles River.

These waterways and water bodies are key features that have organized the Town from the beginning and are the central features of the open space and conservation areas of the Town today. These natural assets should continue to be treasured features that are the center point of conservation and recreational access. Other natural resources such as Wilson Mountain and Wigwam Pond are frequently mentioned by residents for the most widely used natural asset and asset with the most unmet potential respectively.

LU6 Zoning regulations in need of updates and improvements

All land in the Town of Dedham, and any city or town, is located within a zoning district. Zoning is a local land use control and part of the Town's Bylaws. It divides the Town into zoning districts and each district is associated with characteristics that regulate the use of the land. The Town has established 12 zoning districts. There are four residential zoning districts and eight nonresidential zoning districts. One of the zoning districts is no longer in use so does not show up on the map. These are underlying zoning districts. Every parcel of land in the Town is in one or more underlying zoning district. The Town also has eight overlay districts



that impose additional regulations on land use for a specific purpose. These include Adult Use Overlay, Aquifer Protection Overlay, Arts Overlay, Flood Plain District, Historic Preservation Overlay, Medical Marijuana Overlay, Wireless Communications Services Overlay, and the Providence Highway Development District Overlay.

A zoning map for the Town of Dedham follows in this chapter with the extents of the 12 underlying zoning districts and 5 overlay districts. For the underlying zoning districts there are four types of residential districts – Single Residence A, Single Residence B, General Residence, and Senior Campus. These represent a majority of the land in Dedham. The seven types of nonresidential zoning districts include Central Business, General Business, Highway Business, Local Business, Limiting Manufacturing A, Limiting Manufacturing B, and Research Development and Office. The Town has also created six overlay districts in the Town that provide additional regulations for specific areas. These include the Arts Overlay, Medical Marijuana Overlay, Wireless Overlay, Historic Preservation Overlay, Adult Use Overlay, and Aquifer Protection Overlay.

The need to comprehensively update the zoning bylaw was highlighted in the previous Master Plan and issues remain and have been highlighted by other recent planning efforts. Residents have mentioned zoning issues around tear-downs of neighborhood homes, regulations around accessory dwelling units, the planned residential development regulations, and reconsidering the types of future development for the Providence Highway corridor.

LU7 Continued need for data and transparent processes of communication

Recent processes relating to land use and development including the analysis of the impacts of mixed-use development, consideration of the rail trail connection, recent development projects and review processes, and studying the re-use of the Police Headquarters property in Dedham Square all point to the need for gathering and providing data to inform transparent processes of communication and decision-making. Connecting data and decisions to long-term goals and priorities for the Town can add an effective layer of guidance.





Land Use and Zoning In Dedham Today

Additional context and data

Land Use Change

Land use patterns of a municipality are constantly evolving as parcels change ownership and shift uses. Dedham is no exception to this constant and incremental change. The table that follows shows the land use changes that have occurred through past decades as reported in the 2009 Master Plan, compared to the land use break-down today. Zoning regulates the use and pattern of uses in the town and is oriented toward future changes and the evolution of land use in the town.

It is difficult to make a perfect comparison to the previous calculations, but in general you can observe a growth of land devoted to residential uses, a shrinking of land devoted to agriculture and open land. Institutional, commercial, and industrial uses have also increased. The transportation network and open water resources have remained relatively constant. Some of the broader dynamics influencing evolving land use have been discussed in the other Master Plan topics. They include population growth in the town. After peaking in the 1970s the population of the town shrank, but has been on the rise and is projected to continue this growth. Simultaneously household size is shrinking and projected to continue to shrink. More people with less people per house results in continued demand for more housing and more variation in housing types. The population is aging with the median age projected to increase.

Land Use Change	Year (acres in use)			
	1971 (acres)	1985	1999	2020 (trend)
Use				
Agricultural Uses	86.1	65.0	62.1	▼
Forested Land	1,930.7	1,865.5	1,764.7	▼
Mining	7.9	7.9	7.9	▼
Open Land	177.2	64.7	85.8	▼
Recreation	182.8	168.6	190.4	▲
Multi-Family	28.9	37.0	40.7	▲
Small Lot Residential	660.4	666.0	666.0	▲
Moderate Lot Residential	1,340.5	1,356.2	1,379.5	▲
Larger Lot Residential	522.7	541.3	572.1	▲
Commercial	157.8	191.5	204.7	▲
Industrial	212.6	356.1	399.0	▲
Public or Institutional Land (Tax exempt)	258.8	272.3	230.9	▲
Transportation (Right-of-Way)	328.2	325.3	316.8	unchanged
Waste Disposal	23.0	0.0	0.0	▼
Non-Forested Wetlands (Open land)	693.0	693.0	690.5	▼
Open Water	222.5	222.5	221.8	unchanged
Total	6,832.9	6,823.9	6,823.9	unchanged



Residential Uses

The primary land use in the town is residential. The residential uses are distributed among distinct residential neighborhoods that vary in terms of the density of the housing units and population. While the predominant type of housing developed has been the single-family home, multifamily and mixed-use development has increased in the past decade.

Commercial Uses

Commercial uses are clustered near the center of the town and include commercial uses in the primary historic centers of Dedham Square and East Dedham Square and large-scale commercial development along Providence Highway that bisects the town from north to south near its center. The land devoted to commercial uses has remained relatively constant, but the intensity of the use of that land has been increasing over time.

Industrial Uses

Warehouses, office parks, and light industrial uses are concentrated on the east side of the town with primary concentrations in the southeast of the town.

Institutional Uses

Institutional uses include several private educational institutions, health care facilities, and specialized facilities for institutions of higher education. Some of these institutional uses represent significant land holdings and acreage in the town. Most of these substantial land holdings and institutional uses are located in West Dedham (Precinct 1).

Public Uses

Many of the public uses are clustered near the historic centers of Dedham. The primary concentration of public uses is in and around Dedham Square with some uses in East Dedham. School facilities are distributed throughout the neighborhoods. Public parks and open spaces are distributed throughout the town. Refer to the Community Facilities and Services chapter for more information regarding public uses.

Future Land Use Change

Estimating the future potential for land use change and its scale is a difficult endeavor. There are a few approaches to projecting and anticipating that change. One is a build-out analysis, and another is through growth projections. A build-out analysis examines the land that is vacant and available for development and projects the potential amount of new development that could occur based on current zoning or other constraints. The growth projections look at the demographic and migration patterns of a region and anticipate how much of that change will be allocated to the Town of Dedham. The growth projections could then be connected to the geography of the town and directed to specific locations through regulations and incentives. Neither approach is perfect but offer insights into the type of growth and change Dedham may see over the next 10 years.

Vacant Land

The future potential for new development can be based on the extensive parcel analysis performed in the 2019 Open Space



and Recreation Plan. This analysis identified the current inventory of private undeveloped land. This is not the land that is conserved through Chapter 61 or Conservation Restrictions. The analysis identified 162 parcels with a total combined land area of 218.4 acres. The vacant parcels have an average parcel size of 1.35 acres but vary in size with the largest opportunities on a few parcels that are greater than 20 acres in size.

Redevelopment

The types of build-out projections described above are typically focused on the vacant land and the opportunity for new development. This ignores one of the largest opportunities for change in any municipality, redevelopment. Redevelopment is a process of investing in a property where development has already occurred. This process typically results in additional development density to build more value on the land than was there previously.

Redevelopment is sometimes even more difficult to project than new development because it introduces a few more variables such as the operation of current uses, the value of those uses including businesses, and the financial circumstances of the current building and its ownership.

Many of the same parcels identified in the Open Space and Recreation plan were identified in the 2019 Dedham Housing Study as well. This Housing Study also reviewed the redevelopment potential of parcels by analyzing parcels that

were more than two times the minimum residential lot size and parcels that have a low assessed value of the building compared to the assessed value of the land of the property.

Growth Projections

According to analysis in Dedham's 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan, approximately 38 acres of land have been developed since 2010. The development on this acreage has primarily included single family homes.

Potentially Developable Land

The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified 218.4 acres of private and unprotected vacant land. This land is found in nearly all zoning districts and all neighborhoods across Dedham, but is also concentrated in clusters in the Single Residence A (SRA) zoning district and the West Dedham (Precinct 1) neighborhood.

There are also public (unprotected) lands including 27.42 acres of vacant land owned by the Town that has not been assigned to a management entity and has been transferred to the Select Board for conveyance. Major institutional property holdings also present a potential for future change. The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified 457.75 acres of land held by institutions. One example is the Common Street property of Northeastern University which is about a 20-acre property. Another area of change may be under the category of Private Recreation Properties. The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified 139 acres of this type of land use. One example is the McGolf Driving



Range which is about a 26-acre property. However, each of these categories of properties require an additional process to shift the property from the current use to a development opportunity. Therefore, while they are worth mentioning for potential future. The change, the analysis has focused on the 218.4 acres of currently private and unprotected vacant land.

The table below compares the current inventory of private vacant land that is potentially developable with the inventory from the previous Master Plan.

Development Potential (acres)			
Zoning District	2007 Developable land (acres) Estimate (2009 Master Plan)	2019 Developable land (acres) Estimate	Percent change
Single Residence A	194.1	119.6	-38.4%
Single Residence B	19.7	36.8	+86.8%
General Residence	19.1	17.5	-8.4%
General Business	-	5.4	Not applicable
Central Business	-	0.75	Not applicable
Local Business	0.6	1.55	+258.3%
Limited Manufacturing	-	36.9	Not applicable
Total	233.5	218.4	-6.5%

The opportunities are concentrated in the Single Residence A (SRA) zone. Compared to the 2007 inventory, the SRA zone has also seen the most development over the past decade. The opportunities are also concentrated in the West Dedham (Precinct 1 neighborhood with 53.8% of the opportunity or 117.5 acres in that neighborhood.

A basic build-out projection can be defined, based on this distribution of vacant and potentially developable acres and the current zoning district they are located within. More specific conditions of each parcel that may impact development have not been analyzed including wetlands, topography, or environmental constraints. The total acreage for each zone has been divided by the minimum lot size of that zone to estimate a number of housing units that could potentially result from development of this residential land area.

In the Single Residence A (SRA) zoning district, 119.6 acres have been identified. The minimum lot area required is 40,000 square feet. This would result in 130 housing lots, if all land could support a developable lot. In the Single Residence B (SRB) zoning district, 36.8 acres have been identified. The minimum lot area required is 12,500 square feet. This would result in 128 housing lots, if all land could support a developable lot. In the General Residence (GR) zoning district, 17.5 acres have been identified. The minimum lot area required is 7,500 square feet. This would result in 101 housing lots, if all land could support a developable lot.

If each of these housing lots were developed as single-family



homes, the resulting build-out would be 359 housing units based on the current zoning, not including any other multiple unit housing types, or mixed-use development projections on the non-residential land identified as a development opportunity.

Population Projections

The most recent regional socio-economic projections were prepared for 2020 Regional Transportation Plans. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) led an effort to update population, household, and employment projections for Massachusetts working with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI) and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The projections incorporate birth, death, and migration rates, as well as housing growth into the population change projections and employment trends and changes to the labor force in the employment projections.

The population projections for Dedham show a 2030 population of 26,709 residents and a 2040 population of 27,593 residents. Converted to households the projections show a 2030 household count of 11,029 and a 2040 household count of 11,587. The employment projections for Dedham show a 2030 employment count of 15,280 and a 2040 employment count of 15,413.

The 2020 US Census population data for Dedham shows a 2020 population of 25,364. Therefore the projected population growth over the next 10 years is 1,345 residents or about 555 households. The population growth over the previous 10 years was 635.

The 2020 US Census housing unit data for Dedham shows a 2020 housing unit count of 10,459. The housing unit growth over the previous 10 years was 268 units. To accommodate the projected number of households over the next 10 years the housing unit growth will need to be about twice as much as the preceding 10 year period.

Compared to the hypothetical build-out of the potentially developable land, building new single family housing units on the available land would not accommodate the projected population growth. The new development must be of a higher housing density to produce more housing units on the available land or to concentrate additional housing density on previously developed land through redevelopment. Since the majority of new development opportunities occur in the Single Residence A district, the characteristics of that district are critically important to effectively guide new growth potential. Similarly, the zoning of each of the districts identified with developable land should be closely aligned with the type of growth that would be most beneficial to the neighborhood in which it is located. A review of the characteristics of the current Zoning Bylaw is provided on the following pages.



Zoning Review

The most comprehensive and effective tool the town has to positively shape and guide growth and change is the Town's Zoning Bylaw. The Zoning Bylaw provides the regulations for all property in the town and determines what can be developed and the characteristics of that development. The purpose of the Zoning Bylaw is stated as to "promote the general welfare of the Town of Dedham, to protect the health and safety of its inhabitants, to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the town, to preserve the cultural, historical and agricultural heritage of the community, to increase the amenities of the town, and to reduce the hazard from fire by regulating the location and use of buildings and the open space around them."

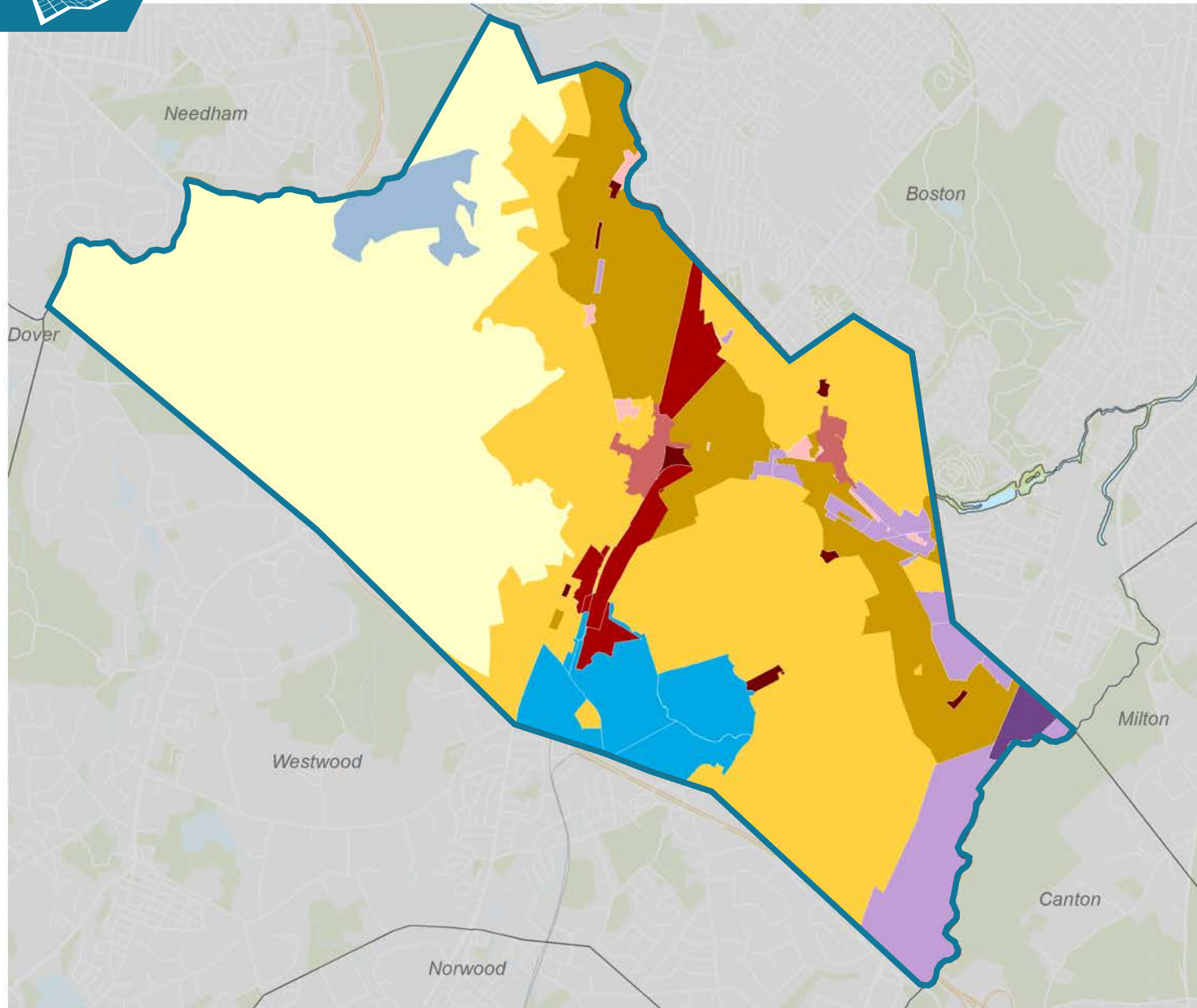
The Zoning Bylaw is a critical tool in the implementation of the Master Plan and provides a direct link between the vision, goals, strategies and priorities expressed by the community through this planning process and the tangible results of investments that will occur. Aligning the Zoning with the priorities of the Master Plan is a high priority and a recurring theme from the community to have aligned and effective policies. This section summarizes the current components of the Zoning Bylaw and summarizes changes that have been recently recommended to the zoning that are consistent with the Master Plan. The town has established 12 underlying zoning districts. There are 4 residential districts and 7 nonresidential districts.

Zoning District	Gross area (estimated acres)	Percent of town area
Residential Districts		
Single Residence A (SRA)	2,413	35%
Single Residence B (SRB)	2,271	34%
General Residence (GR)	915	13%
Senior Campus (SC)	152	2%
Subtotal	5,751	84%
Nonresidential Districts		
Limited Manufacturing (LMA)	382	6%
Limited Manufacturing Type B (LMB)	36	0.5%
Research, Development & Office (RDO)	401	5%
General Business (GB)	29	0.4%
Highway Business (HB)	155	3%
Central Business (CB)	37	1%
Local Business (LB)	32	0.5%
Subtotal	1,072	16%

The above figures are estimates only, the zoning map does not show the zoning boundaries overlapping with rights-of-way or water bodies, so each district area would be less if accounting for these geographies. The overall proportions of the zoning districts reflect the zoning map as shown on the previous page.

Zoning Map

Dedham, MA





Residential Zoning Districts

Most of land in Dedham (about 84%) is within a residential zoning district. There are four primary underlying residential zoning districts, including Single Residence A, Single Residence B, General Residence, and Senior Campus. There are also other residential regulations, such as Planned Residential Development, that are summarized below.

Single Residence A (SRA)

The SRA district includes lower-density areas intended to provide a semi-rural setting for single family dwellings and may also accommodate uses that require large parcels of land such as assisted living residences and public and institutional uses. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet. About 35% of the land in Dedham is located within the SRA district. The majority of the district is located in West Dedham (Precinct 1), with additional areas in the neighborhoods of Riverdale and Dedham Village/Dedham Square.

Single Residence B (SRB)

The SRB district includes medium density areas served by municipal utilities that are intended for single-family homes, subsidiary apartments, some assisted living residences, and public uses. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 12,500 square feet. About 34% of the land in Dedham is located within the SRB district. The district occurs in all of Dedham's neighborhoods.

General Residence (GR)

The GR district includes higher density areas intended for one- or two-family dwellings, assisted living residences, and apartments or row houses. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 7,500 square feet for single family homes and 11,000 square feet for non-single family homes. About 13% of the land in Dedham is located within the GR district. Large portions of Dedham Village/Dedham Square, Oakdale, East Dedham, and Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor are within the GR District.

Senior Campus (SC)

The SC district is intended to promote the well-planned development of large parcels of land to serve the housing and health care needs of senior citizens, serve the educational needs of children, and foster intergenerational relationships. It must be located in the SRA and contain at least 100 acres. About 2% of the land in Dedham is located within the SC district. The SC district is located entirely within West Dedham (Precinct 1)

Other Residential Regulations

In addition to the primary underlying residential zoning districts. The following regulations provide additional options for residential development in Dedham.

Planned Residential Development Standards

Planned Residential Development is intended to be a well-defined area of higher development density than other residential developments. It is intended to accommodate dwelling units for



small households in a variety of dwelling types, all in a planned setting. The provisions allow residential density of up to 1.5 times the base density allowed in applicable zoning district.

Multifamily Residential Complex

Multifamily Residential Complex permits the conversion of existing buildings to multi-family houses on lots with a minimum of 6 acres in the SRA district and 100,000 square feet (2.30 acres) in the SRB district. The requirements limit density to the base minimum number of units for a subdivision per the underlying zoning, or 6 units in SRA and 25 units in SRB.

Mixed Use Developments

The purpose of Mixed Use Developments is primarily to encourage mixture of complementary land uses to create economic and social vitality and to address housing needs. Mixed Use Development is permitted in the RDO, GB, HB, CB, and LB districts. Mixed Use development may also occur in the Limited Manufacturing Districts if part of a Planned Commercial Development. Among the provisions is a requirement that dwelling unit size is between 400-1,500 square feet. The total number of residential units permitted is determined through the Special Permit process by the Planning Board except in the LB district where a maximum of two units are permitted and RDO where a maximum of 30 units are permitted. Any mixed-use development that includes 12 or more units is required to have a maximum lot coverage of 80 percent and maximum floor area ratio of 1.0.

Assisted Living Facilities

Assisted Living Facilities are permitted by special permit in the SRA, SRB, and GR zoning districts on lots with a minimum area of 4 acres. Density is limited to a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet per unit, up to maximum of 115 units.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

An ADU is permitted by special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals in SRA and SRB zoning districts. To be eligible, a lot must have at least 10% greater land area than required by the appropriate zoning district. The provisions require an ADU to be between 350 to 1,000 square feet or 33% of total building size and have an occupancy restriction of no more than two persons. Note that this occupancy restriction may raise fair housing concerns as discriminatory to families with children. The zoning provisions also limit an ADU to existing buildings so that newly constructed single-families could not include an ADU. The special permit is not transferable if the property is sold.

Conversion to Two Family Dwellings

SRA and SRB allow conversions of single-family to two family houses on lots that have an area of at least 50% higher than the minimum lot size for a single-family house in the applicable zoning district.

Group Housing

Permits more than one house on a tract of land is at least 3 acres if authorized by the Board of Appeals where a row house or an apartment house are permitted.



Home Occupations

The use of a room or rooms in a dwelling as an office, studio, or workroom by a resident on the premises under certain conditions.

Inclusionary Zoning

At Fall Town Meeting 2020, the town passed zoning amendment Article 25 to add an affordable housing requirement for any mixed-use or age-restricted development project with 10 or more units. All such projects require the inclusion of 15% of their units for rent to moderate income households at 80% of the area median income (AMI) or payments in lieu of providing on-site affordable housing units where it would be unfeasible.

Nonresidential Zoning Districts

The land not zoned residential is within one of the following non-residential zoning districts in Dedham. About 16% of land in Dedham falls into this category. There are seven primary underlying non-residential zoning districts, including Central Business, Local Business, General Business, Highway Business, Limited Manufacturing, Limited Manufacturing B, and Research Development & Office. One non-residential zone remains listed in the bylaw, but is unused, it is Administrative and Professional.

Central Business (CB)

The CB district was established in order to recognize the special character of the downtown area of Dedham Square and encourages a higher density of small-scale businesses, as well as municipal, institutional, residential, and mixed-use

developments. More recently, Town Meeting changed the zoning of the East Dedham commercial area to CB district as part of the efforts to revitalize East Dedham. It was created based on recommendations from the 1996 Master Plan. About 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the CB district.

Local Business (LB)

The LB District, designed for low-density development, accommodates small establishments that service nearby neighborhoods. The neighborhoods of Riverdale, Dedham Village/Dedham Square, East Dedham, Oakdale, and Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor all have LB Districts. Less than 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the LB district.

General Business (GB)

The GB District is intended for similar retail and service establishments but offers greater dimensional flexibility with no minimum requirements for lot frontage, lot area, lot width, or yard setbacks. Less than 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the GB district.

Highway Business (HB)

The HB District was created to recognize the retail uses along Providence Highway and provides for commercial activities that may require large land areas for retail and service facilities related to highway travel. It was created based on recommendations from the 1996 Master Plan. The zoning district



requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 3% of the land in Dedham is located within the HB district.

Limited Manufacturing (LMA)

The LMA and LMB districts establish requirements for industrial and related uses and are intended to include those uses which serve the immediate needs of the LMA and LMB occupants. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 6% of the land in Dedham is located within the LMA district.

Limited Manufacturing Type B (LMB)

The LMA and LMB districts establish requirements for industrial and related uses and are intended to include those uses which serve the immediate needs of the LMA and LMB occupants. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the LMB district.

Research Development & Office (RDO)

The RDO District provides areas for employment centers for high technology industries and business development. This District is designed to encourage park-like groupings of buildings and facilities with and has requirements to protect against encroachment and any impacts of commercial uses on residential areas. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 5% of the land in Dedham is located within the RDO district.

Other Nonresidential Regulations

In addition to the primary underlying nonresidential zoning districts. The following regulations provide additional options for nonresidential development in Dedham.

Major Nonresidential Project (MNP)

A special permit requirement for all developments with at least 25,000 square feet of gross floor area to review significant impacts on traffic, municipal and public services and utilities, environmental quality, community economics, and community values in the town.

Planned Commercial Development

A Planned Commercial Development is a special permit option for land in the LMA, LMB, HB, GB, CB, or RDO Districts that provides flexibility for commercial or mixed-use development. The standards require that the development include the creation, maintenance, and preservation of natural or landscaped open space, and protection of wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.

Overlay Districts

The town has also established eight overlay districts that impose additional regulations beyond the underlying zoning.

Flood Plain Overlay District (FPOD)



The purpose of the FPOD is primarily to preserve and maintain the ground water table to protect the public health and safety of persons and property against the hazards of flood or ground water inundation, for the protection of the community against the cost which may be incurred when unsuitable development occurs in these areas. About 19% of the total land area of Dedham is within the FPOD, which is defined by the 100-year base flood elevations shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Norfolk County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and further defined by the Norfolk County Flood Insurance Study report dated July 17, 2012. The largest portion of the FPOD is located in the Riverdale neighborhood.

Aquifer Protection Overlay District (APOD)

The purpose of the APOD is to protect the town's water resources by preserving and maintaining the quality and volume of existing and potential groundwater supply and groundwater recharge areas within the town. About 14% of the total land area of Dedham is within the APOD. The largest portion of the APOD is in the Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor neighborhood. The provisions of this district include a maximum 25% impervious surface lot coverage and connection to the public sewer system (with some exceptions for single-family properties).

Wireless Communications Services Overlay District (WC)

The WC is intended to accommodate the necessary infrastructure for wireless communications services while protecting residents from the impacts associated with such facilities. The WC District

includes all land owned by the Town excluding the Town Forest, land owned by the State, land within the RDO and LMB Districts, and portions of the LMA District.

Adult Uses Overlay District (AUOD)

The AUOD was established to accommodate adult uses within the Town of Dedham, as described by the Town's Zoning By-Laws. Adult uses may be permitted in the AUOD upon the granting of a Special Permit by the Board of Appeals. Adult uses are only allowed in the Town's AUOD.

Medical Marijuana (MMOD)

The MMOD provides for the location and placement of registered marijuana dispensaries in locations determined suitable for lawful medical marijuana facilities and to minimize adverse impacts by regulating the siting, design, placement, security, and removal of medical marijuana dispensaries.

Arts Overlay District (AOD)

The AOD was established to encourage the development, preservation, and enhancement of arts-related uses in East Dedham. The district shall preserve and enhance the area as a center for a variety of retail, business services, housing, and office uses, and promote strong pedestrian character and pedestrian scale throughout the district.

Historic Preservation Overlay District (HPOD)

The purpose of the HPOD is to encourage the preservation and continued use of buildings and structures of historic and



architectural significance including adaptive re-use. It applies to properties with buildings or structures that were constructed prior to 1900 on a lot with a minimum of 20,000 square feet and minimum 12,000 square feet building or structure. About 0.3% of the total land area of Dedham is within the HPOD, all of which is in the West Dedham neighborhood.

Providence Highway Development District (PHDD)

The PHDD was established by Town Meeting in May 2019 with the hope of leveraging the economic strength of the Providence Highway corridor into public infrastructure projects that can address the corridor's shortcomings. In Massachusetts, municipalities can create such districts and invest a portion of new growth--future property tax revenue generated by new private development--into public infrastructure within the district.

Administrative and Procedures

Zoning and Permitting processes are administered by Permit Granting and Special Permit Granting authorities in Dedham. Depending on the type of approval required these authorities include the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Health, the Building Commissioner, the Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Select Board, Department of Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, the Design Review Advisory Board, and others. A few of these administrative bodies and terms are defined below.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Board of Appeals is a five-member board that hears and decides applications for Special Permits, variances, appeals, and comprehensive permits.

Special Permits

Dedham's Zoning Bylaw provides several special permit options for certain types of commercial and residential development. These options establish standards regarding landscaping, parking, access, signage, aesthetics and other planning details that are appropriate for the specific type of development.

Site Plan Review

Dedham has adopted a site plan review process, which requires a review of projects meeting specific criteria such as size or number of parking spaces. Site plan review requires review of structures and uses that may have significant impacts on traffic, municipal, and public services and utilities, environmental quality, community economics, and community values in the Town.

Design Review Advisory Board

The Design Review Advisory Board is a five-member board responsible for reviewing new construction, additions, and exterior alterations in the CB, GB, HB, LB, LMA, LMB, and RDO Districts, any project subject to site plan review, and any Major Nonresidential Project. The Board reviews the visual character of the proposed projects and provides an advisory report to the Planning Board to be considered in the permitting and approval process.



Recent Zoning Recommendations

Several recent studies highlighted specific zoning recommendations that are consistent with the goals and strategies of the Master Plan. The recent studies include the 2019 Dedham Housing Study, the 2019 Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), the 2019 Dedham Mixed-Use Development Impact Study, and the 2020 Sustainable Dedham Climate Action & Resiliency Plan. The summary list below shows the specific zoning recommendations from each of these studies. In addition to these recommendations, each neighborhood, and non-residential district should be subject to a district planning study that would be consistent with the goals and strategies of the Master Plan, but provide a more detailed community vision and evaluation of the current zoning. This would be the most effective way to identify needed zoning modifications and build the support in the community for passing the modifications.

Dedham Housing Study (2019)

The Housing Study provides zoning recommendations that have an impact on the creation of housing and housing options in Dedham and include:

- Revisiting and reducing minimum lot sizes to reflect the existing neighborhood character and to address the frequency of nonconforming lots. The study identified 62% of the residential parcels in Dedham are below the minimum lot sizes required by zoning.
- Removing barriers for Accessory Dwelling Units that include expanding beyond the SRA and SRB zoning districts,

permitted them by right, reducing the minimum lot size on which they are allowed, allow the accessory dwelling permit to carry forward past sale of the property, and allow the use of outbuildings (carriage houses, garages, etc.).

- Reducing the minimum lot size required for multifamily houses in SRA and SRB districts.
- Expanding the Historic Preservation Overlay District (HPOD) to other appropriate areas of the community.
- Allowing multifamily or mixed-use developments by-right in appropriate locations under defined circumstances. Currently, under certain circumstances allowances are made for conversion of single-family houses to two-family as well as multifamily and mixed-use developments, but only by Special Permit.
- Allowing greater density of residential units permitted as mixed-use developments.

Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019)

The Goals and Objectives of the recently completed Open Space and Recreation Plan highlight several items that pertain to zoning and permitting processes, including:

- Practice low environmental impact land management techniques including adopting a town-wide policy to reduce water consumption and protect water resources incorporating Best Management Practices and Low Impact Development design standards.
- Promote sustainability initiatives including adopting environmental and energy performance standards for



new development that incorporate the latest model building energy codes and standards (International Energy Conservation Code of the International Code Council and Standard 90.1 of the American Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers), encouraging existing large commercial developments to incorporate “green” improvements to their buildings, developing an Environmental Checklist to assist with Development Review, and developing and promoting conservation of water and energy resources.

- Guide and regulate private development to preserve open areas and protect environmentally sensitive areas including reviewing the Town’s Aquifer Protection regulations to ensure effectiveness, particularly during and after new development.
- Encourage site design techniques that limit point and non-point source pollution to water resources including completing changes to the Stormwater Management regulations to match the local bylaw changes made in 2016 and making changes in the Stormwater bylaw and regulations to conform with MS4 permit rules.
- Collaborate with private landowners to allow responsible public access to private lands or facilities.
- Encourage private land conservation measures including considering adoption of Open Space Design subdivision regulations and working with landowners to set aside portions of their properties as permanent open space, considering a Scenic Road Bylaw and designating a network of scenic roads, and creating a Demolition Delay Bylaw for historic properties.

Dedham Mixed-Use Development Impact Study (2019)

The impact analysis of recent mixed-use development did not recommend overall changes to the mixed-use zoning and permitting process but did recommend specific amendments to the “Mixed Use Developments” section where consistent waivers have been requested by developers. For example, Section 5.2.2.2 Lot Interior Landscaping has been a consistent waiver request. In terms of the permitting process, the study recommends strengthening the role of the Design Review Advisory Board.

Sustainable Dedham Climate Action & Resiliency Plan (2020)

The Climate Action and Resiliency Plan offers recommended actions that relate to zoning and permitting. In general, the recommendation is to review and update Dedham’s Zoning Bylaws to proactively enable increased density, diversity of housing types, and transit-oriented development. More specifically, it is recommended this would include:

- Incentivizing high-density development near transit hubs
- Requiring new development to create/provide access for non-motorized transportation and public transit
- Ensuring zoning and permitting provisions are compatible with sustainability and resiliency goals
- Introducing sustainability guidelines/requirements in site plan applications.



Land Use and Zoning In Dedham Today

Community Priorities

As part of the Master Plan process, a Community Survey was conducted in the spring of 2020 and received over 1,100 responses. A follow up Topic Area Survey received over 750 responses. Responses from both surveys related to land use and zoning are summarized here.

LU1 Manage new growth

45% of survey participants expressed that managing growth in an appropriate and sustainable manner is most important. This placed it as the most important challenge facing the Town of Dedham in terms of land use. A particular interest in reducing the negative impacts of development and focusing on the public benefit was expressed in survey responses.

LU2 Improve existing use patterns

Many survey participants provided comments on the importance of improving what is already developed to make better and more efficient use of the land, with a particular focus on areas that are already developed for commercial uses. Participants expressed the need to update zoning bylaws to better reflect a long term plan for the Town.

LU3 Focus on natural assets

Directly related to the first two community priorities, many participants highlight the need to preserve and maintain the Town's natural assets, to create additional open space where it is needed, and to expand access to natural resources such as Wigwam Pond and Mother Brook.

LU4 Improve walkability

In nearly all master plan topics, the need for improved pedestrian access and safety has been highlighted by participants. The land use patterns are directly related to walkability with the need to have a mix of uses and destinations within a compact area to encourage walking for daily errands. Participants state that the Town should not be so car-centered and that better access for people walking and biking should be considered in all growth and improvements



Land Use and Zoning Goals and Strategies

Summary: Strengthen and connect the compact and walkable places in Dedham and leverage each investment to improve livability in the Town.

LU1 Goal 1: Align Town regulations, boards, and approval processes with the Master Plan vision and cross-cutting themes to implement the Town's priorities.

Comprehensively review Town bylaws to identify potential areas of inconsistency with the Town's vision and goals. Develop proposed corrections and system of procedures to modify bylaws with appropriate solutions.

Strategy 1.1: Update the Dedham Zoning Bylaw to align with the goals and recommendations of this Master Plan with a focus on inclusion, equity, livability, quality of life, and walking and biking

Strategy 1.2: Integrate principles and best practices of sustainable development into Dedham's development regulations and approval processes including new requirements for sustainable and resilient building practices as per Dedham's Climate Action & Resiliency Plan.

Strategy 1.3: Review Town regulations and approval processes to identify and remove barriers to inclusion and equity for future

development and investments. For example, review patterns in zoning variances to assess the effectiveness of regulations compared to intended goals and what is achieved through approvals processes.

Strategy 1.4: Review Town regulations and approval processes to identify appropriate data and requirements to assess municipal fiscal impact of development projects

Strategy 1.5: Strengthen coordination and communication between development review and permit granting authorities. Align boards and departments to instill Town priorities into the regulations. Cultivate a collaboration and learning culture for Town boards and committees involved in the development process

Strategy 1.6: Promote public understanding of the zoning bylaws, development processes, and relevant Town boards.



LU2 **Goal 2: Direct and manage growth more proactively in existing economic activity centers with specific plans for each area and neighborhood.**

Focus investment and growth activity in areas which have been previously developed to strengthen the patterns of use, economic vitality, and access and circulation patterns. Strengthen each district with investments aligned with the community vision for that district.

Strategy 2.1: Undertake district planning processes for each area to define the specific vision and needed changes with the community. Define and designate the areas of study. Perform a community-based process and data-driven study to support recommendations. Check recommendations against goals and strategies of the Master Plan. Document the results of this process and define changes to the zoning bylaw that would be consistent with each study performed.

Strategy 2.2: Modify zoning so that each neighborhood has regulations, requirements, and incentives specific to the needs of the area. Approach the revisions through an equity lens so that each area is contributing to the unmet needs of the Town

Strategy 2.3: Leverage Town-owned properties to catalyze the desired changes defined through district planning processes. Explore potential public private partnerships and long-term land leases to proactively advance priorities

Strategy 2.4: Develop additional data sources and tools to identify land use patterns and trends in the Town. For example, track vacancies and trends in vacancies (location, type, size) or analyze the zoning variances granted to explore patterns that may indicate necessary zoning changes or refinements to project approval processes.

Strategy 2.5: Proactively identify future infrastructure needs associated with growth and development to support future growth and respond to climate change, require analysis to support projection of future needs by developers through development review.



LU3 Goal 3: Advance preservation of natural and historic assets and elevate them as integral Town features with improved access and amenities.

The conservation, preservation and access goals for natural and historic assets should be integrated into the overall land use regulations, incentives, and policies for Town properties and assets. All tools available to support these efforts should be explored and considered by the Town.

Strategy 3.1: Explore new incentives and regulations to advance preservation and conservation of private assets and to balance private investment with public access and amenities

Strategy 3.2: Leverage Town-owned assets and properties to advance preservation and offer welcoming and inclusive amenities

Strategy 3.3: Pilot and prioritize improved access and amenities at Town-owned natural and historic assets. Expand access and amenity beyond Town-owned assets including all Town natural water features

Strategy 3.4: Strengthen use of preservation and conservation tools available to the Town. Support these efforts with consistent budgeting and strengthen Town resources such as passing Community Preservation Act (CPA).



LU4 Goal 4: Leverage private development investments to advance the Master Plan vision, uphold equal access, and optimize shared benefits while reducing impacts.

As part of bylaw review and modifications, regulations, standards and guidelines should be adopted to better match private investments with Town needs and priorities that have been articulated. This may include guidelines for connecting properties to improve access and walkability, providing access to an adjacent natural resource, providing a modest outdoor space where a need has been identified, or providing an amenity or improvement to the neighborhood where the development is located.

Strategy 4.1: Fiscal responsibility and sustainability of private development are important priorities for the Town. Any impacts identified should be mitigated and updates to surrounding infrastructure and amenities should be integrated with the development project. For example, develop consistent guidelines for evaluating impact of a project and calculated the related mitigation for impacts to environment, infrastructure, school enrollment, traffic, Town services, or others.

Strategy 4.2: Public and private partnerships should be explored to address future challenges that may be facing the Town including supporting aging in the community and investing in new amenities such as an intergenerational community center

Strategy 4.3: Establish future desired vision and improvements in each neighborhood, local business district, and economic activity center and communicate these needs with the development community and offer incentives to align development projects with the vision

Strategy 4.4: Refine the review and approvals processes to define more clearly what is required of development in the Town. The requirements may vary based on location and scale of the project, but would consistently mitigate impacts and support community amenities



LU5 Goal 5: Strengthen compact neighborhoods and local business districts to enhance livability and walkability.

Target new development and investment in locations that would benefit from added vitality and density of uses. Provide support and programs to strengthen local business districts such as district management and small business assistance to support neighborhood centers along with sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure improvements to improve non-vehicular access from surrounding neighborhoods.

Strategy 5.1: Encourage development in locations where walkable, mixed-use, transit-oriented, and bicycle-oriented investment can reduce dependence on the automobile, reduce parking, increase density, and contribute more to pedestrian and bicycle amenities

Strategy 5.2: Identify opportunities to add density in locations that would support local business districts, local amenities, and pedestrian and bicycle connections. This may include mixed-use development, townhouses, multifamily housing, or accessory dwelling units, all in locations consistent with the vision and needs of specific neighborhoods or districts

Strategy 5.3: Proactively invest in community amenities, housing, and uses that support all life stages and that contribute to livability for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. For example, invest in housing types that support aging in place; create a network of parks that are within a 10-minute walk of any resident in Town, and add activities and amenities that will attract people of all ages

Strategy 5.4: Support small businesses and economic development processes by encouraging investment and with analyses, data, and community input. For example, perform a market analysis to help identify needs for nonresidential ground floor uses, or help small businesses to align goods and services with the needs of the surrounding residents



LU6 **Goal 6: Focus growth and improvements strategically to support safe and convenient non-vehicular connections.**

Locations with commuter rail and bus access should be strengthened with transit-oriented development that builds up the activity, density, and walkability of places with transit as a central asset. Encourage the evolution of land use patterns to support safe and convenient access with or without a car to reduce the population dependent on the car to reduce congestion. A network of paths that connect across the Town to destinations, transit access, activity centers, and natural assets would be a transformative infrastructure investment for the Town.

Strategy 6.1: Leverage development projects to improve the characteristics of the surrounding public realm for pedestrians and bicyclists (provide generous and continuous sidewalks, provide streets with bike lanes, orient buildings to the street, conceal parking areas, and reduce curb cuts)

Strategy 6.2: Improve roadway configuration, regulation, and enforcement to equitably allocate infrastructure for all modes of transportation. Increase the likelihood that walking and biking feel safe and accepted, by reducing impediments such as vehicles parking on sidewalks

Strategy 6.3: Increase the public and private investments in non-vehicular infrastructure to improve and support multimodal access, create continuous connections for bicycle routes to transit and other destinations, add strategic and convenient locations for bicycle storage and shelter, provide benches, lighting, and trash receptacles to support walking, and leverage Town-owned land to add more walking paths in strategic locations

Strategy 6.4: Explore complementary transportation options that may be supported by the Town including a shuttle, bike share, scooter share, or other options to reduce dependence on the automobile

Strategy 6.5: Advance public outreach efforts to influence travel choices and local transportation behavior to help residents rethink how they travel in Town



Land Use and Zoning Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for land use and zoning.

LUZ1 Initiate an SRA zoning district study

This action would set the stage for proactive zoning changes to set a vision and plan for change where the largest opportunities of vacant land exist in the town. The SRA district includes over half of the vacant land in the town, about 120 acres. The planning process may examine if there are benefits to separating the SRA into smaller zones with distinct characteristics. The lead responsibility would be the Planning & Zoning Department and Planning Board. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC.

LUZ2 Initiate a Site Plan Review and Special Permit requirement study

This action would set the stage for updating standards and requirements associated with development review including the potential to require additional data and analysis to review development impact and additional requirements for mitigation and community benefits clearly defined in the Zoning Bylaw. The lead responsibility would be the Planning & Zoning Department and Planning Board in close coordination with the Zoning Board of Appeals, Engineering Department, and Building Commissioner. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include Community Compact funds.

LUZ3 Initiate local business district and neighborhood plan studies to inform zoning updates

This action would set the stage for updating zoning regulations and design guidelines specific to each neighborhood center, similar to past efforts in Dedham Square and East Dedham. The community-based studies would define a more specific district vision for Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, and East and Sprague Street areas, among others. The lead responsibility would be the Planning & Zoning Department and Planning Board. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC.