



Rezoning Franklin Center for economic growth and diverse housing opportunities



Steering Committee Meeting #3

April 6, 2022

Agenda

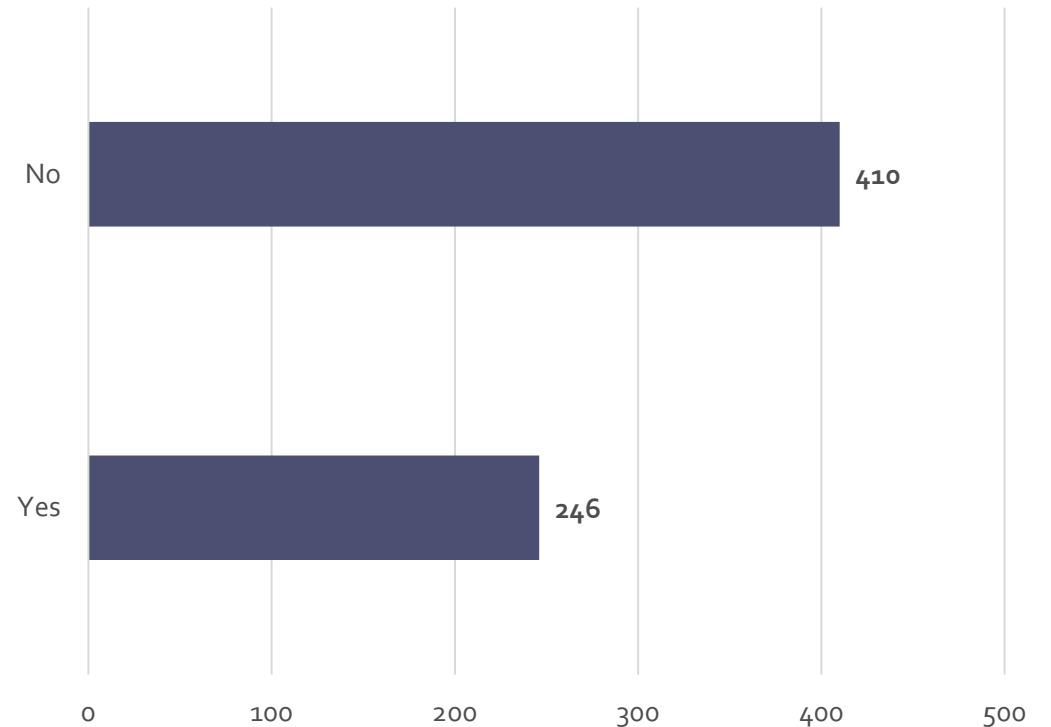
- Online Survey Results
- MBTA Communities Analysis
- Next Steps
- Questions/Comments?

Online Survey Results

Overview

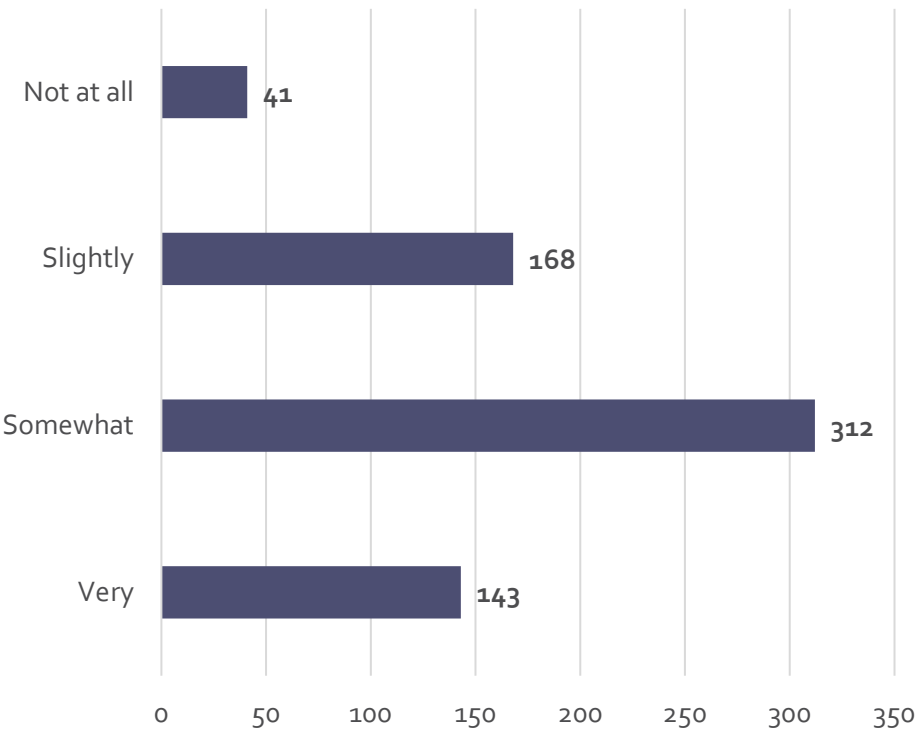
- Online survey was open from Monday, March 7 to Friday, April 1
- Survey was accessed by approximately 800 people
- 682 people submitted results to questions (though not everybody answered every question)

Did you attend the public forum on March 7?

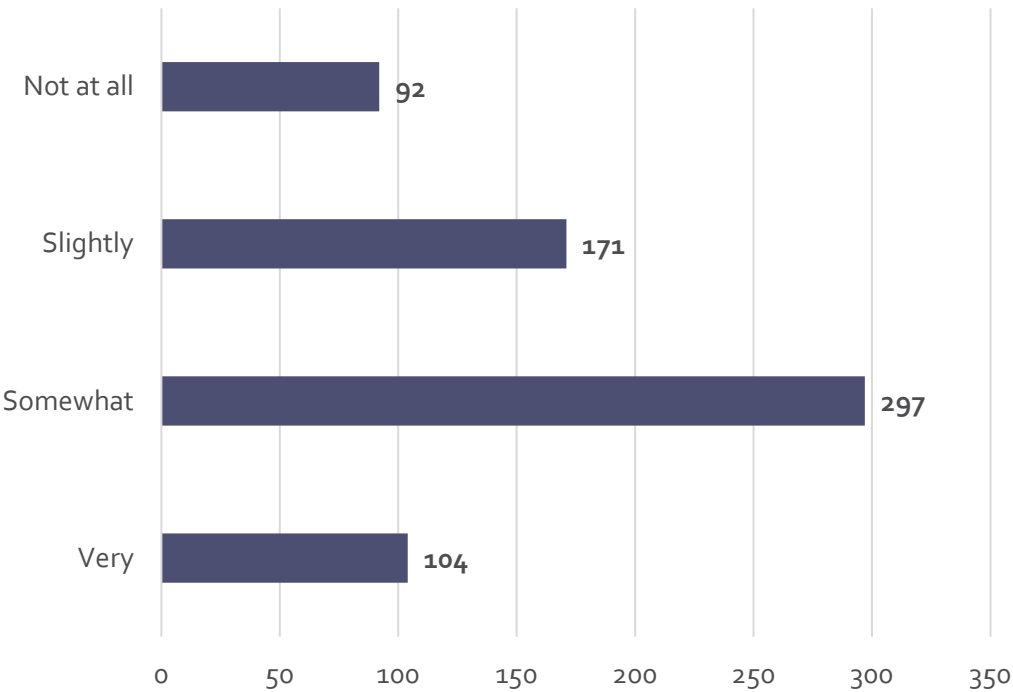


Zoning Background

How familiar are you with zoning as a general concept?

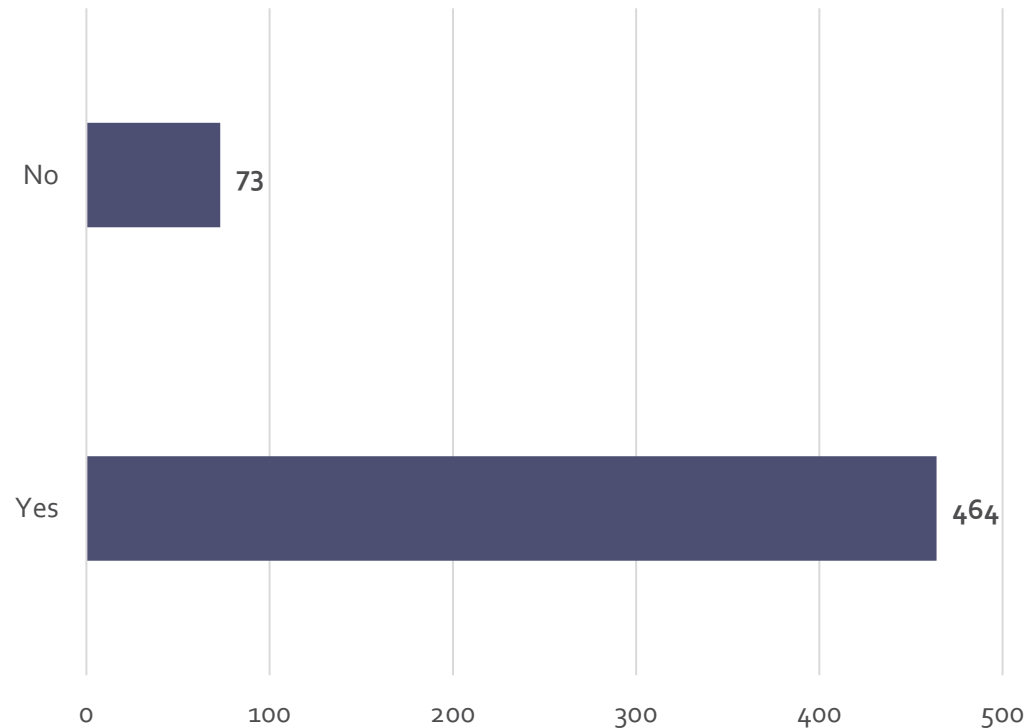


How familiar are you with zoning and its impact on new development in Franklin?



Study Area

Are we capturing the right locations in our study area?



If you answered “no” to the previous question, what would you change? What locations would you want to add or remove from the study area?

- Many of those who selected “no” did not answer the question, rather, they responded about being against anything different changing in the town or promoted misconceptions around the capacity of utilities/services
- Many noted that expanding the area to include East and West Central Street further out would make sense, either to increase density and mixed-use in the commercial districts, or to potentially redevelop strip malls in those areas
- There was a mix of opinions about whether the study area (and eventual zoning changes) should focus entirely on the Downtown Commercial or include the broader area

Franklin Center Vision

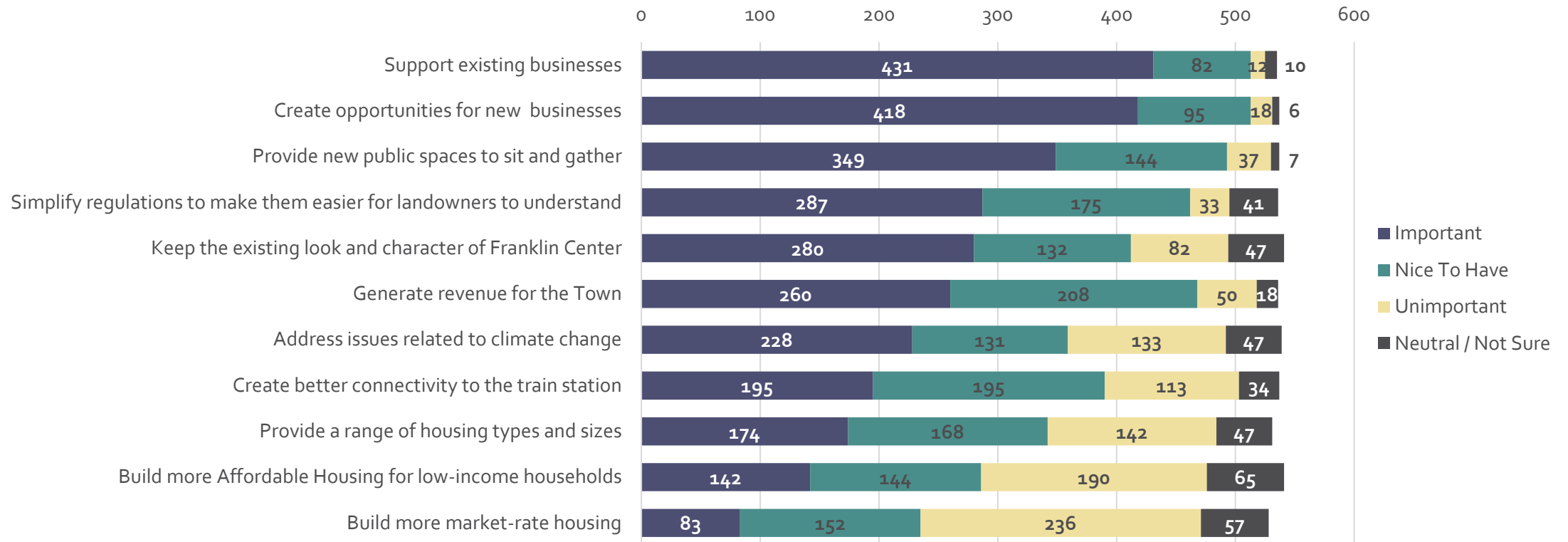
Imagine your ideal version of Franklin Center in the future. Write down five words that describe this future.

- Walkable (143)
- Parking (119)
- Vibrant (101)
- Accessible (76)
- Restaurants (61)
- Diverse (60)
- Safe (56)
- Friendly (47)
- Small (46)
- Shops (42)
- Family (38)
- Clean (37)
- Community (36)
- Inviting (35)



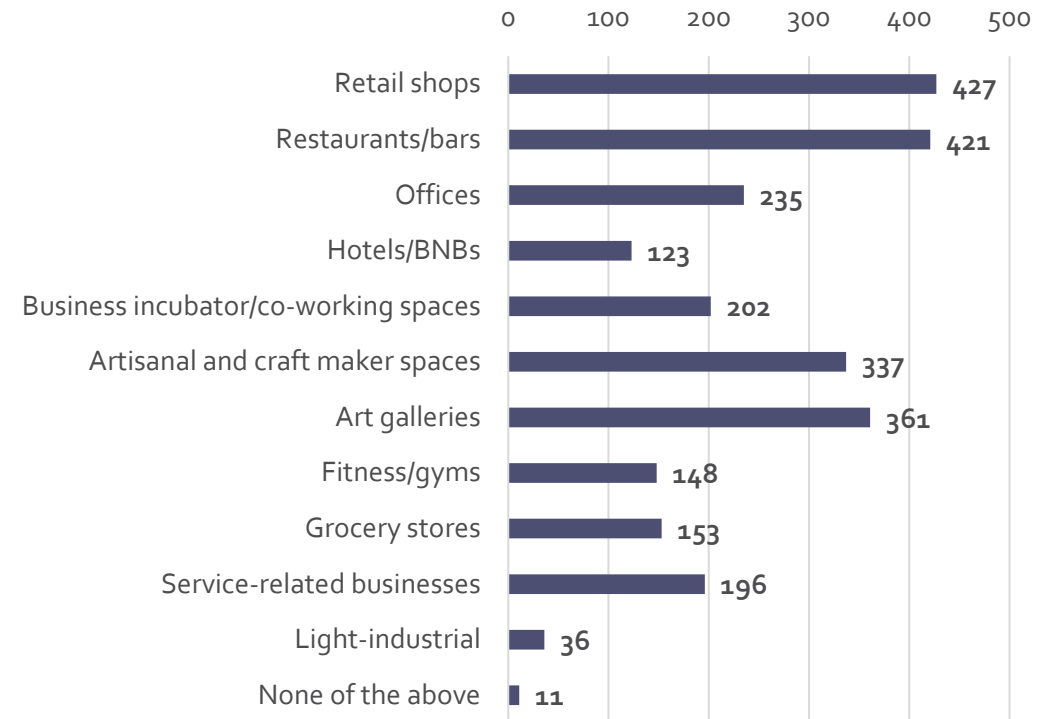
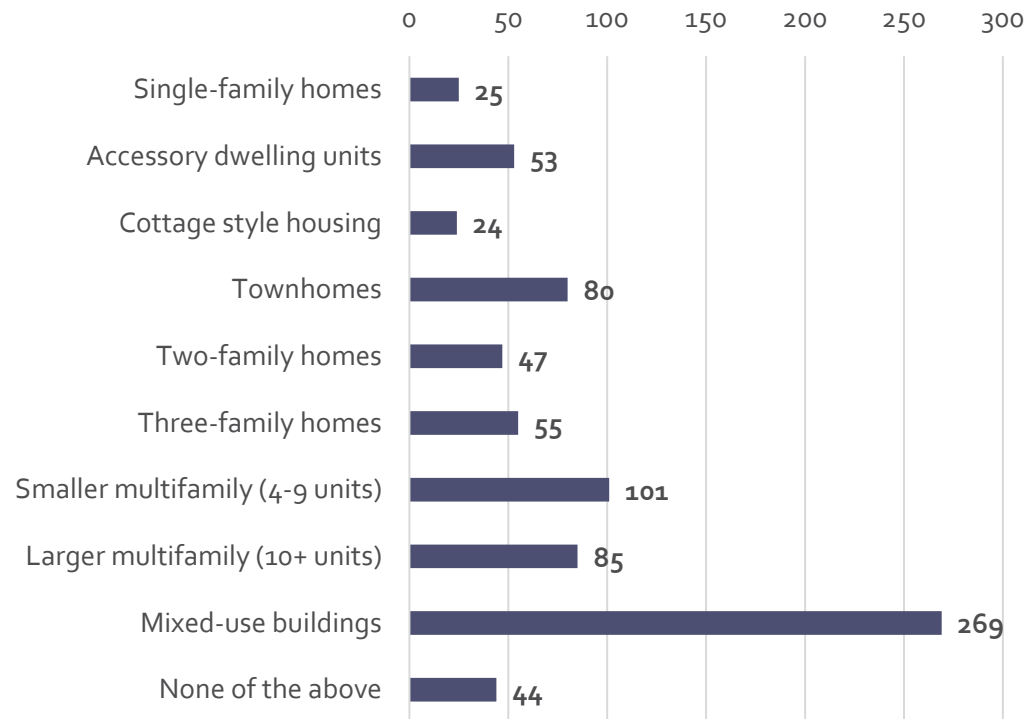
Priorities

Please indicate how important you feel the following priorities are:



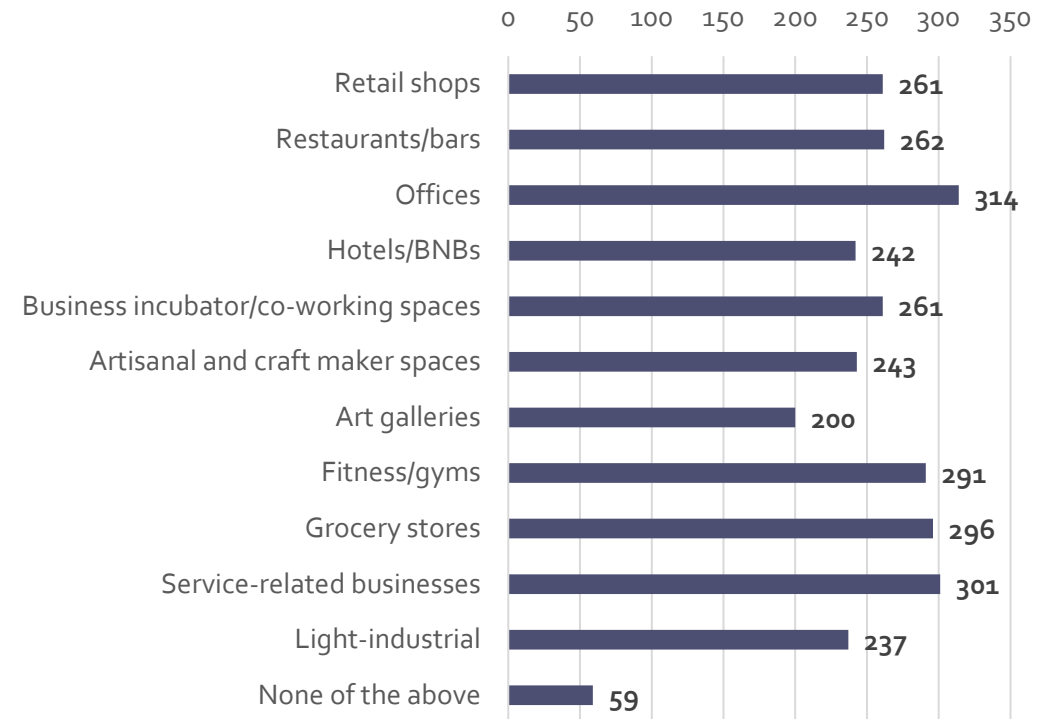
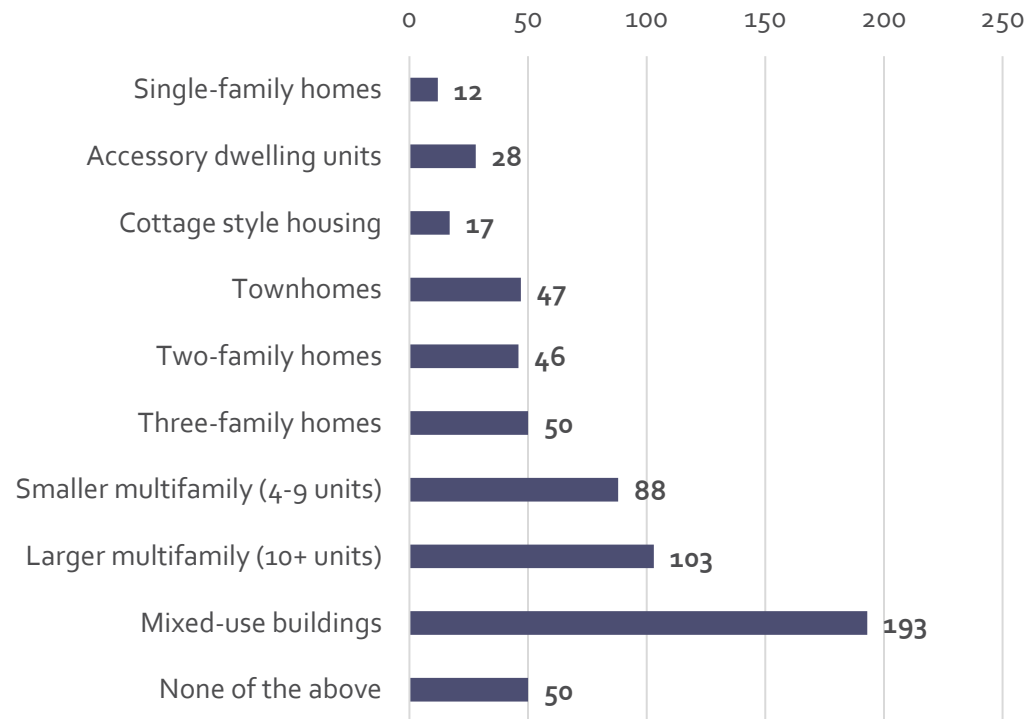
Land Uses – DC District

Which of the following housing types/commercial land uses make the most sense for the **Downtown Commercial** District?



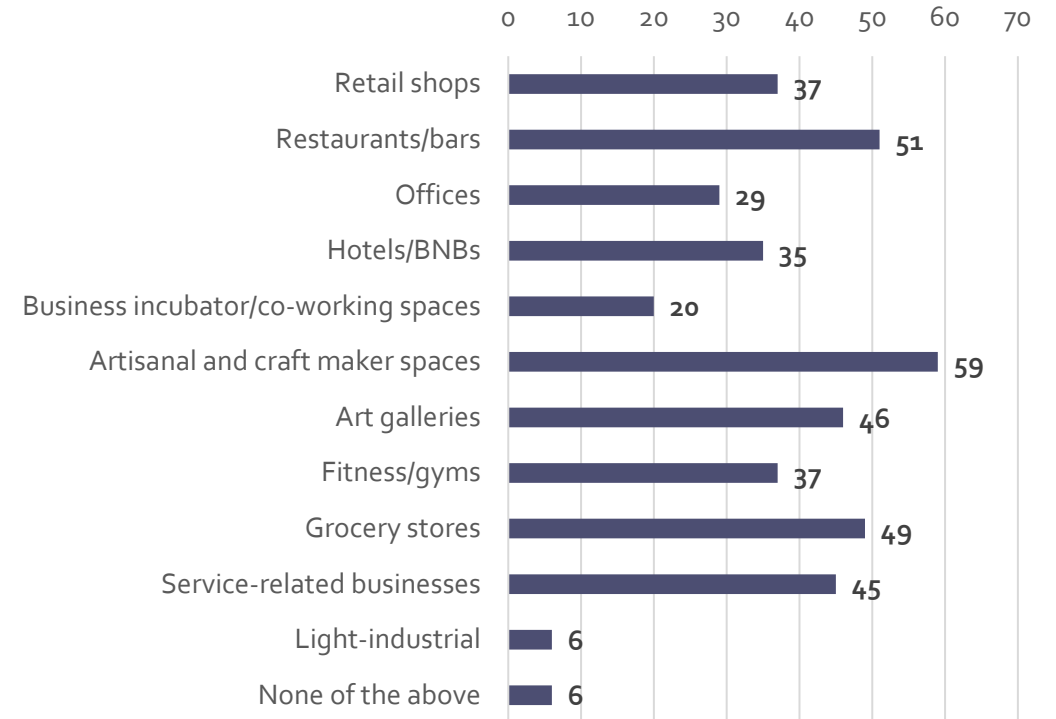
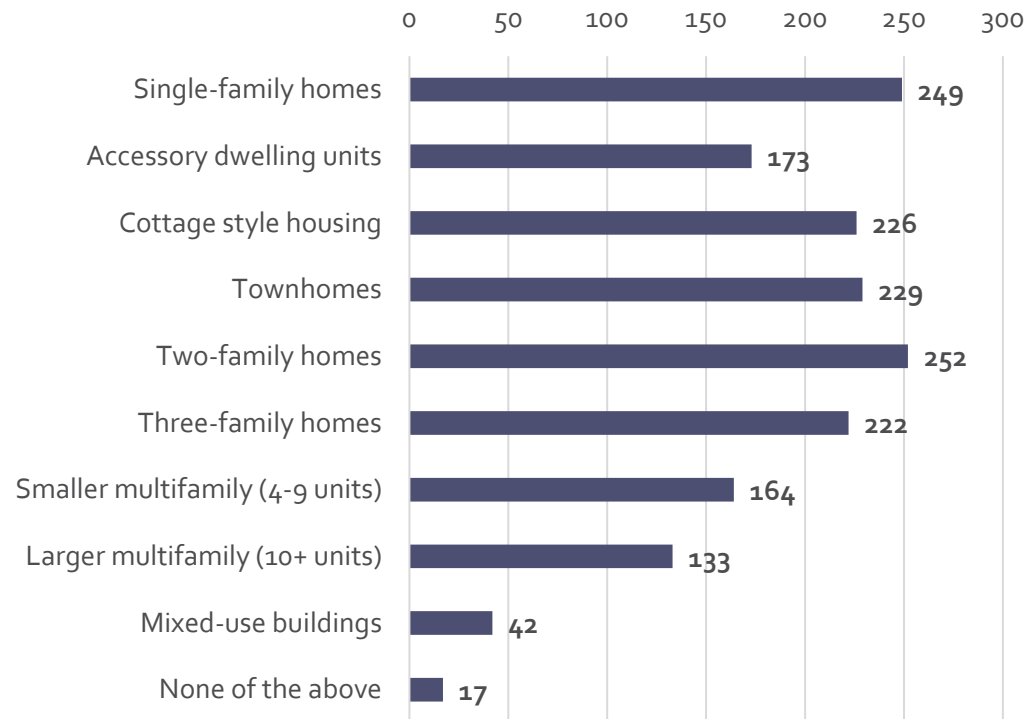
Land Uses – CI District

Which of the following housing types/commercial land uses make the most sense for the **Commercial I** District?



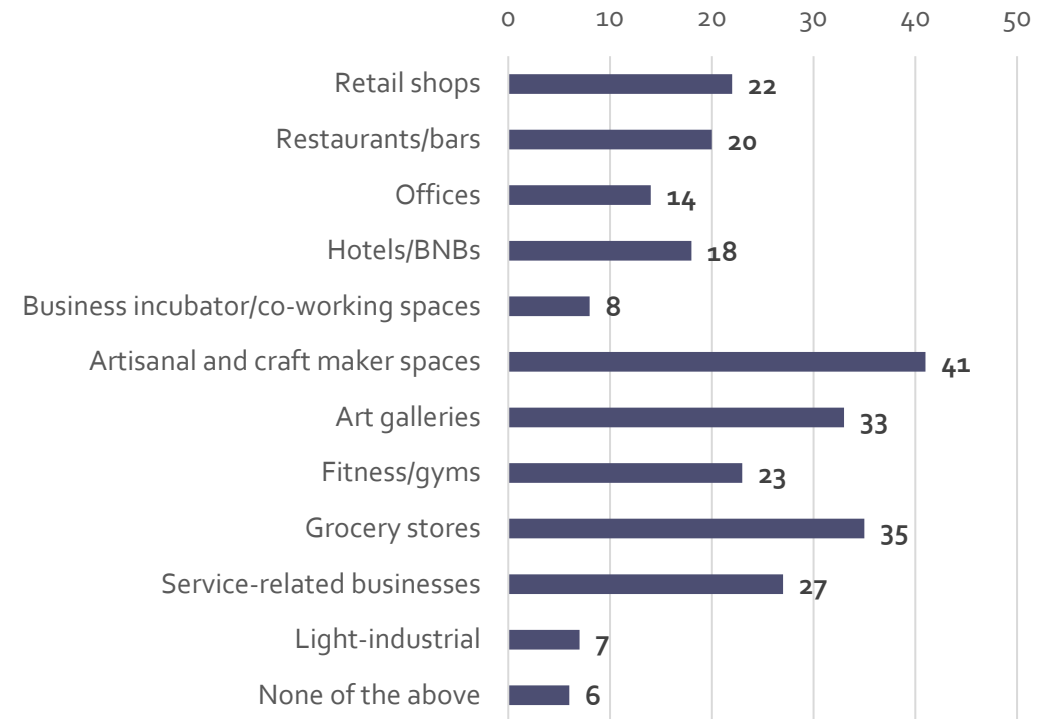
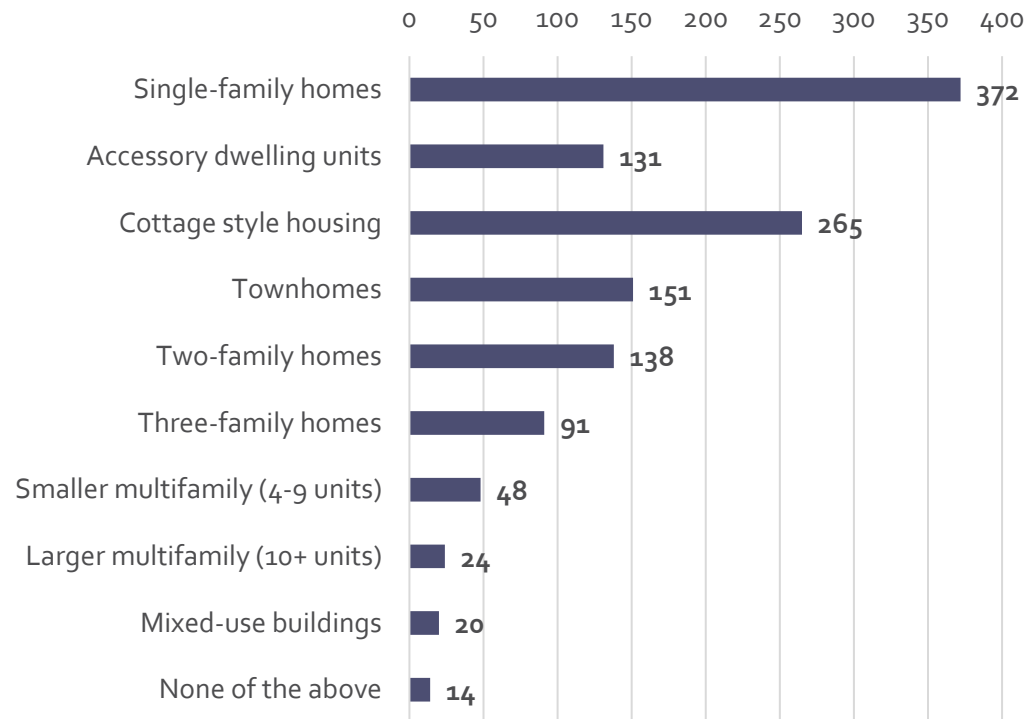
Land Uses – GRV District

Which of the following housing types/commercial land uses make the most sense for the **General Residential V** District?



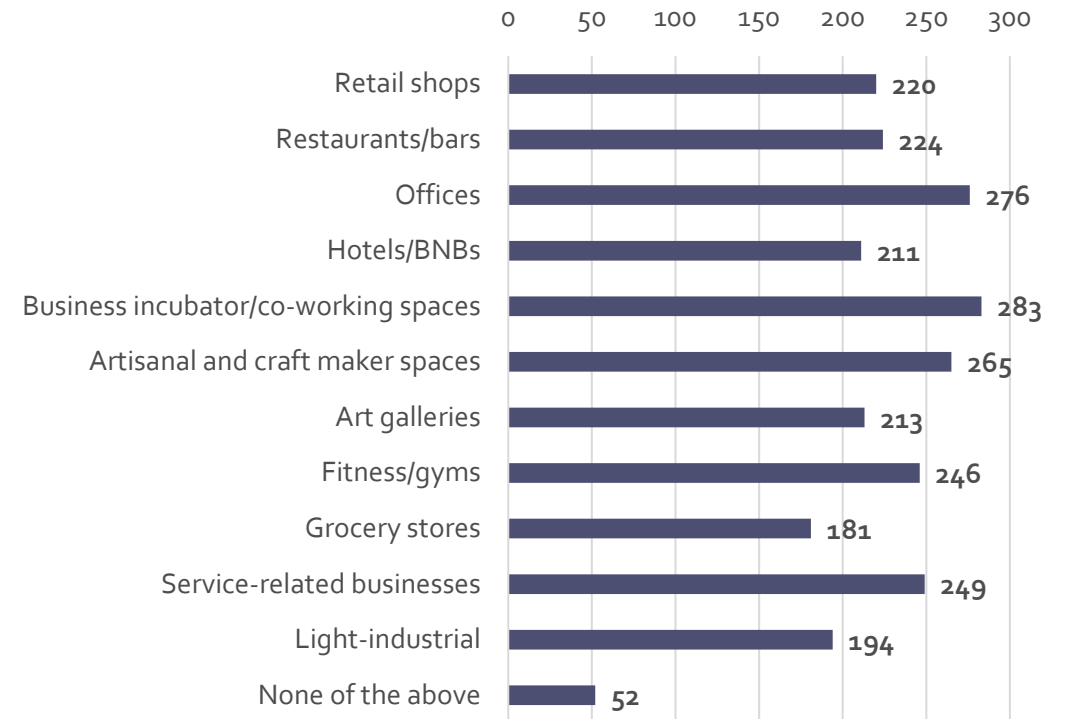
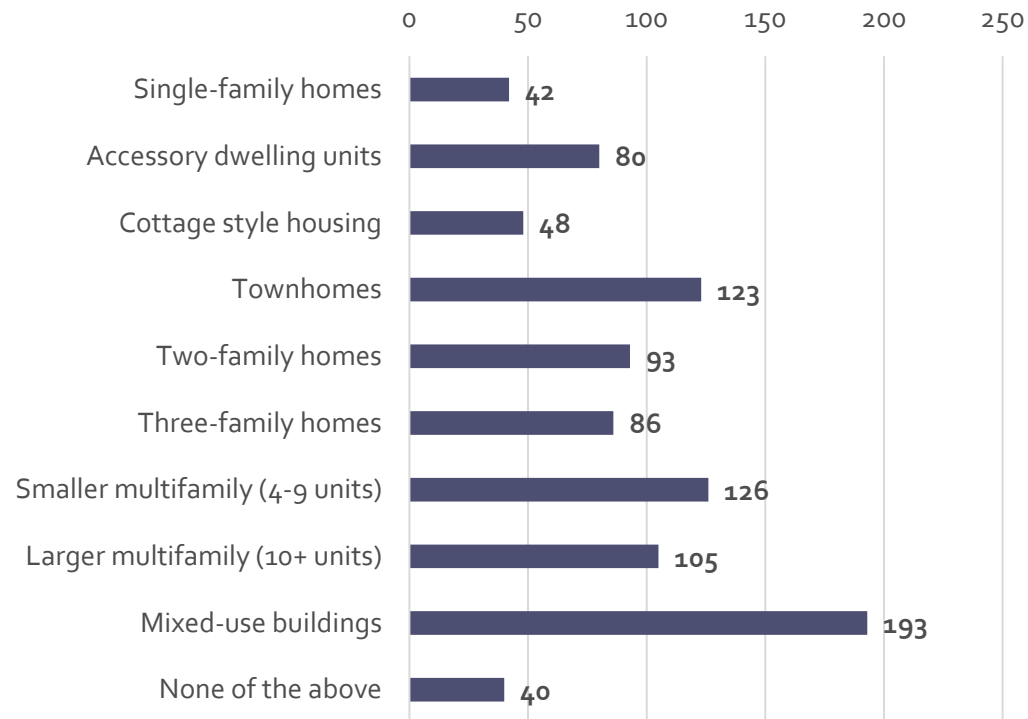
Land Uses – SFRIV District

Which of the following housing types/commercial land uses make the most sense for the **Single-Family Residential IV** District?



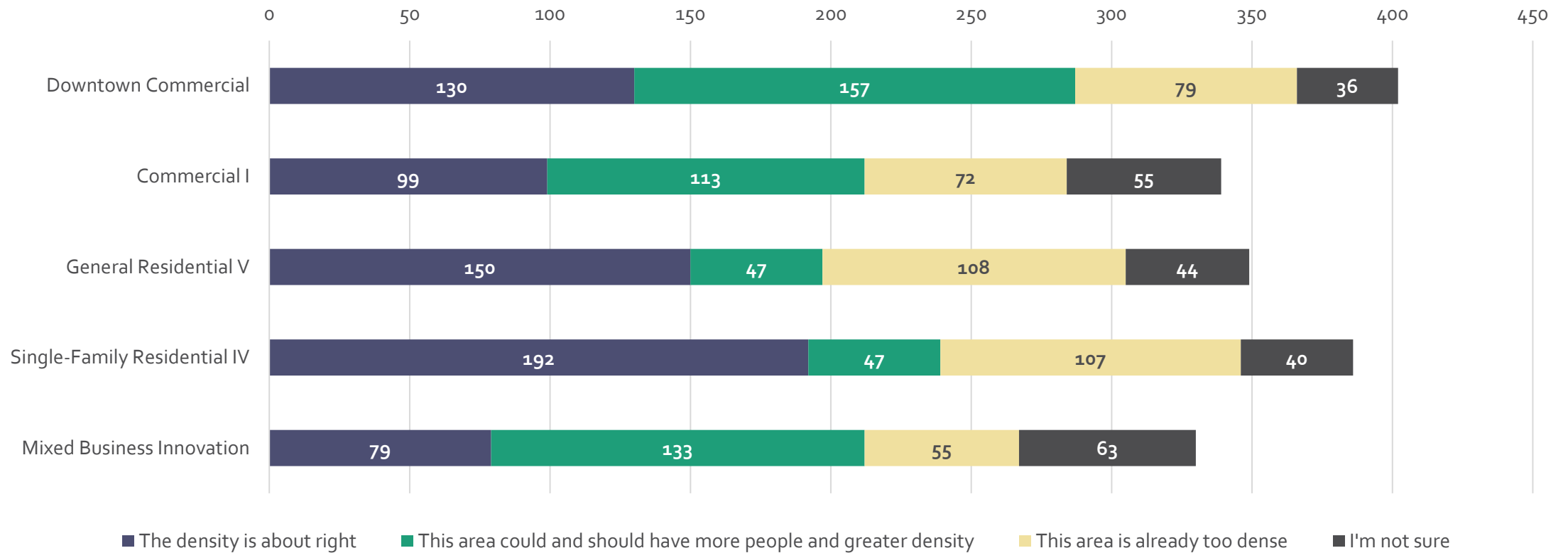
Land Uses – MBI District

Which of the following housing types/commercial land uses make the most sense for the **Mixed Business Innovation District**?



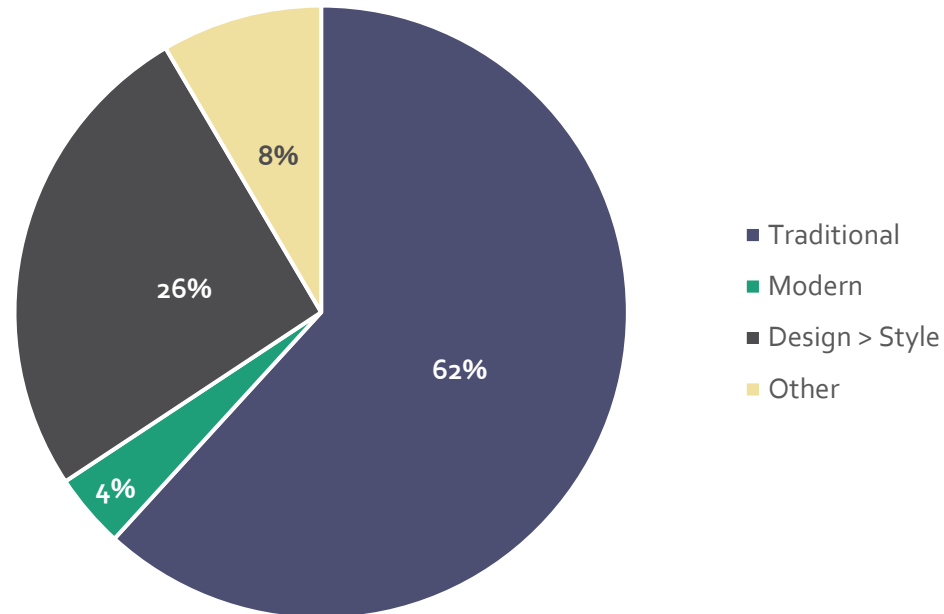
Look and Feel – Density

For each zoning district in the study area, what are your thoughts about density?



Look and Feel – New Buildings

What should new buildings in Franklin Center look like?

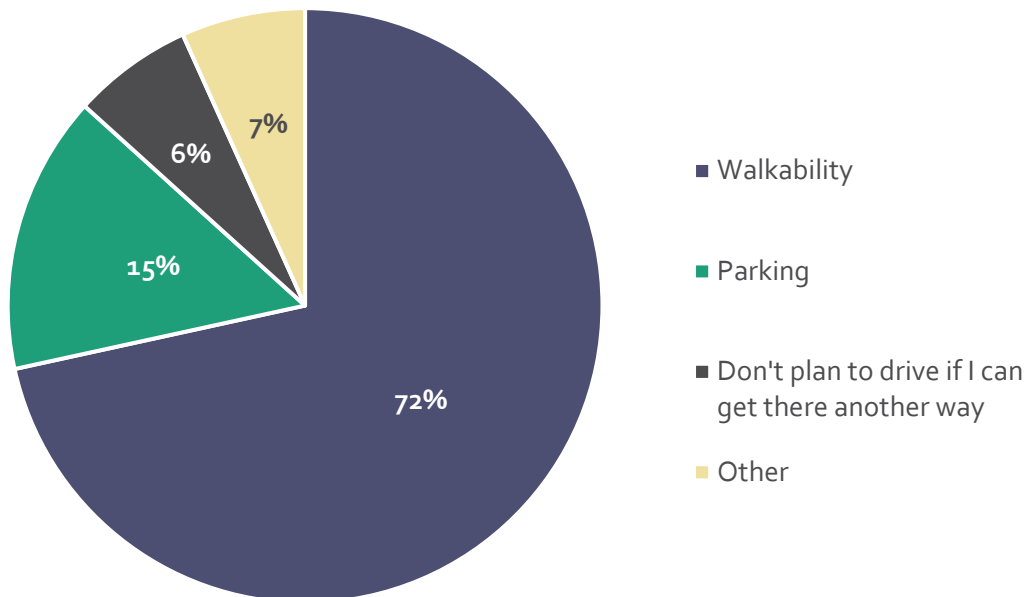


Other Responses:

- Most of the comments were more related to promoting an appropriate form/massing vs. architectural design standards
- Many feel that Franklin has a bit of a mixed architectural style, and would like to see modern and traditional aesthetics blended
- Suggestions included using a mix of setbacks, traditional buildings at the ground level with more modern residential styles above, and new designs that are respectful of the area's historic character and small-town feel
- Comments around the need for sustainability/energy-efficiency to be incorporated into building design

Look and Feel – Parking

What are your priorities when balancing parking and pedestrian experience in Franklin Center?



Other Responses:

- Respondents spoke about their desire to travel freely within the area but feel that there need to be more pedestrian and bike safety improvements
- Many comments about the need for a parking garage in the downtown to support local businesses and allow more people to take the MBTA Commuter Rail
- Comments around the need for ADA accessibility for curbs, parking, and at the MBTA station

Look and Feel – Other

Do you have other comments about the “look and feel” of Franklin Center?

- Many comments reflected responses to other questions
- Prominent theme is a desire for retail/leisure shopping, and dining – residents want to be able to hang out in their downtown and not have to leave the community to participate in these activities
- “People don't often know what they want until they have it! We may not enjoy change but we all enjoy walkable, vibrant places with continuous storefront, interesting buildings, and walk/bike infrastructure.”
- Desire that all new buildings adhere to greener energy standards: entirely electric buildings that hopefully can generate power with solar energy and get rid of oil and gas dependency

Franklin Center Strengths

- Downtown is good size, not too big or small
- Train station
- New England small town feel and historic character
- Cultural events and festivals
- Walkability
- Frequent responses: the Library, Black Box, Irish pub, and Dean College
- Like things the “way they are” and do not want to turn into a “large MetroWest community” or Boston

Franklin Center Challenges

- Lack of parking
- Lack of shops and casual eateries
- Lack of nightlife
- Some describe downtown as run-down and in need of “sprucing up”
- Commercial rents are too high to allow small businesses to move in
- No available affordable housing

Franklin Center Opportunities

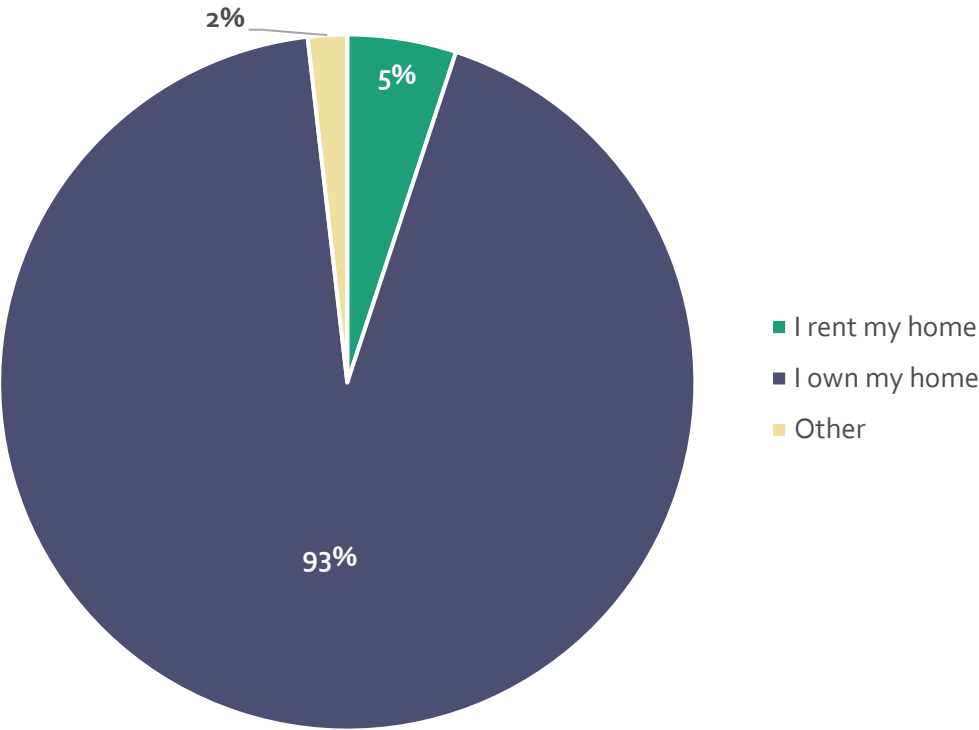
- Dean College – establish greater connectivity with the Town and access to their amenities
- Convert existing downtown businesses to retail and casual dining
- Make use of vacant spaces
- Sustainable features – utilize green infrastructure, bike racks, EV charging stations, etc.
- Diversify business and entertainment options
- Provide greater placemaking options for teens and families

Communities with Great Downtowns

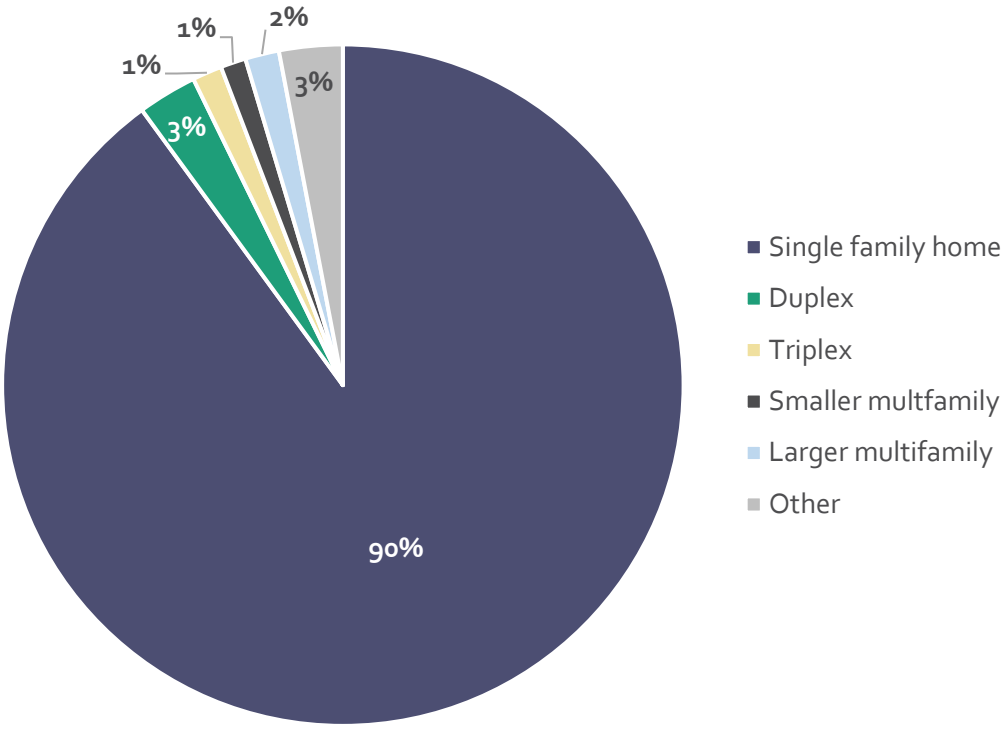
- Hudson, MA (45)
- Wellesley, MA (44)
- Falmouth, MA (28)
- Natick, MA (28)
- Norwood, MA (26)
- Needham, MA (26)
- Concord, MA (25)
- Newburyport, MA (17)
- Medfield, MA (16)
- Salem, MA (16)
- Chatham, MA (15)
- Lexington, MA (12)
- Portsmouth, NH (12)
- Rockport, MA (12)
- Stockbridge, MA (12)
- Holliston, MA (12)
- Hyannis, MA (12)
- Dedham, MA (12)

About You

How would you describe your living situation?

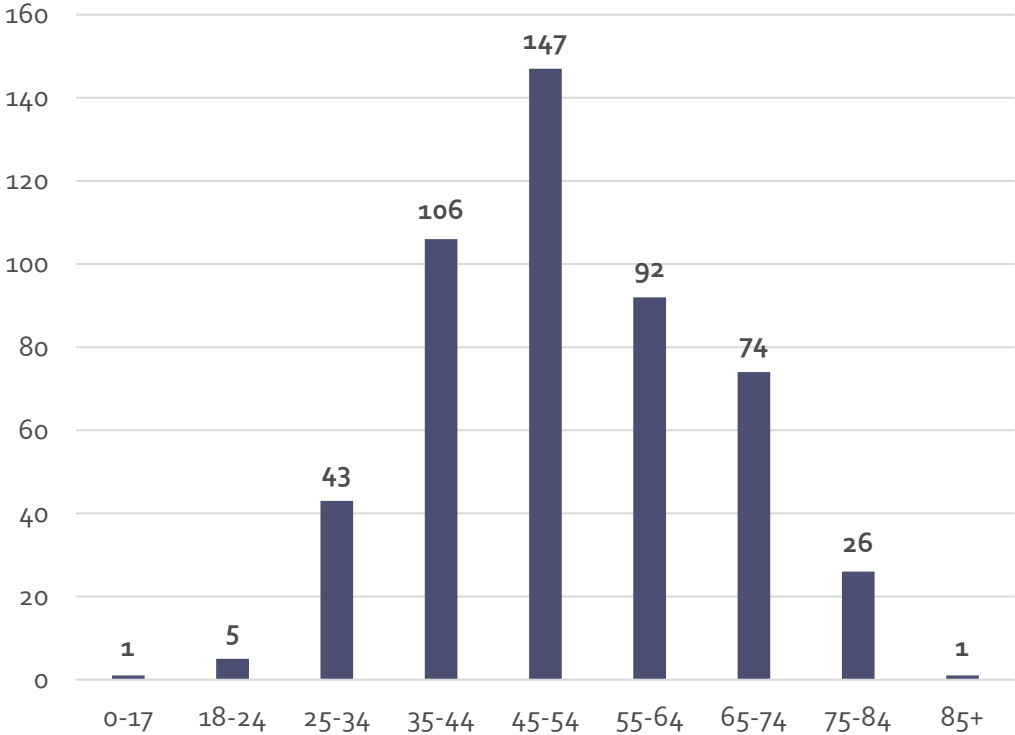


What kind of housing do you live in?

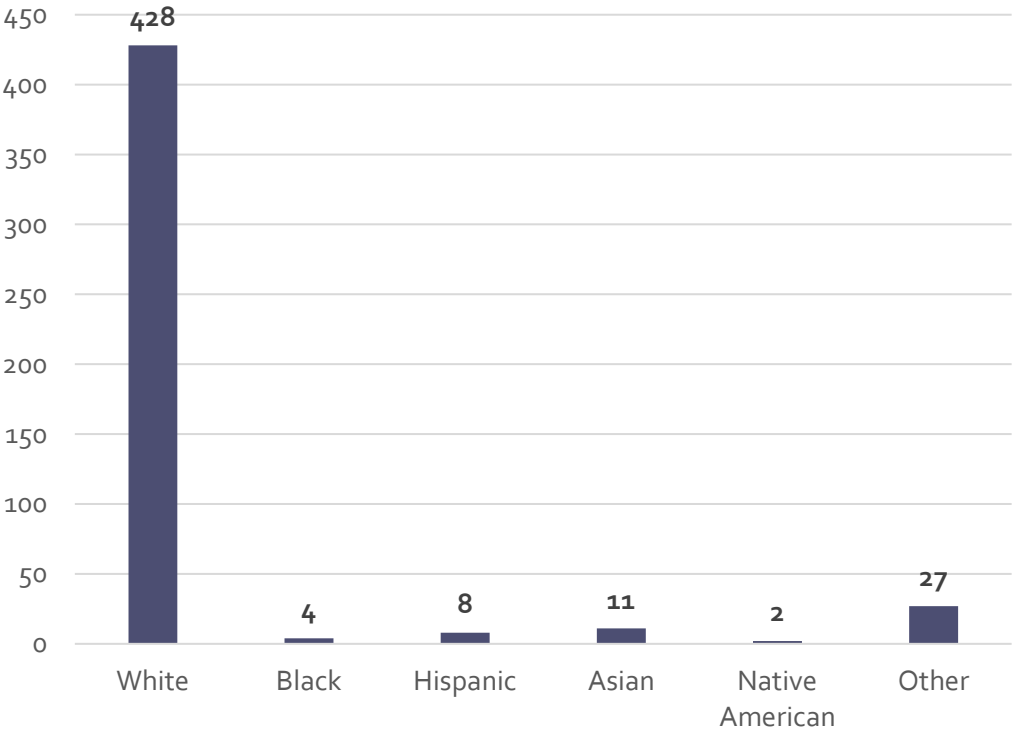


About You

How old are you?

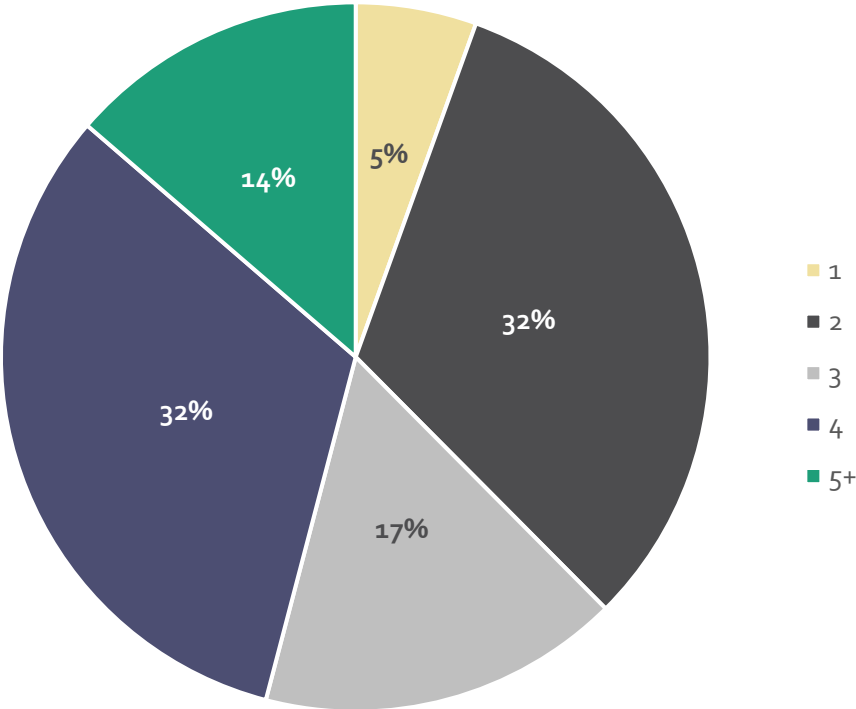


Which categories best describe your racial/ethnic identity?

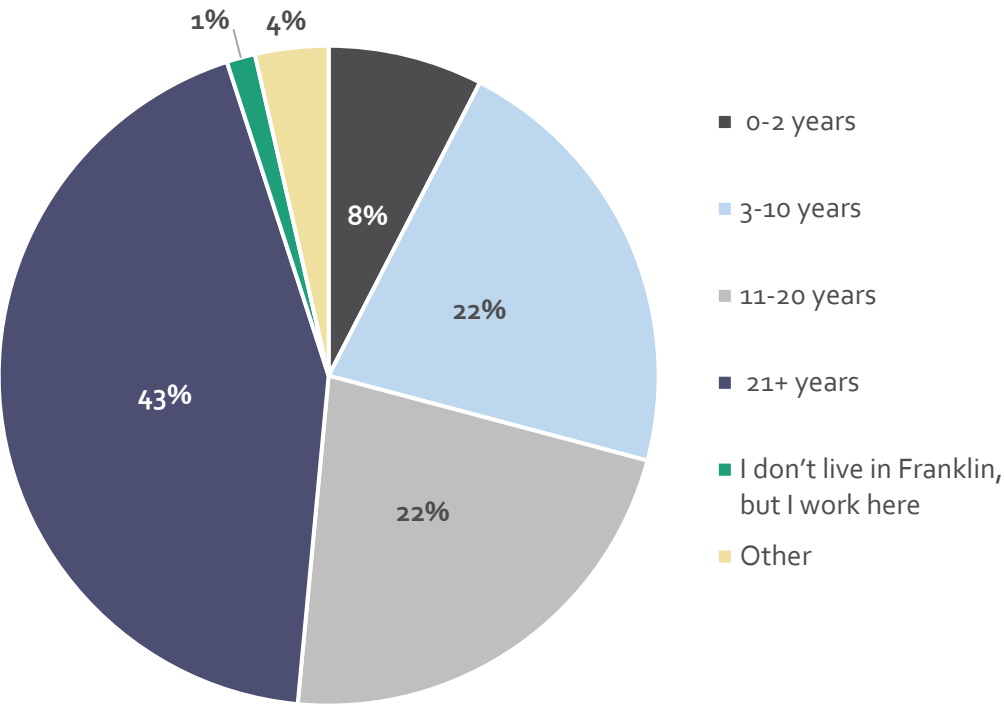


About You

How many people live in your household?

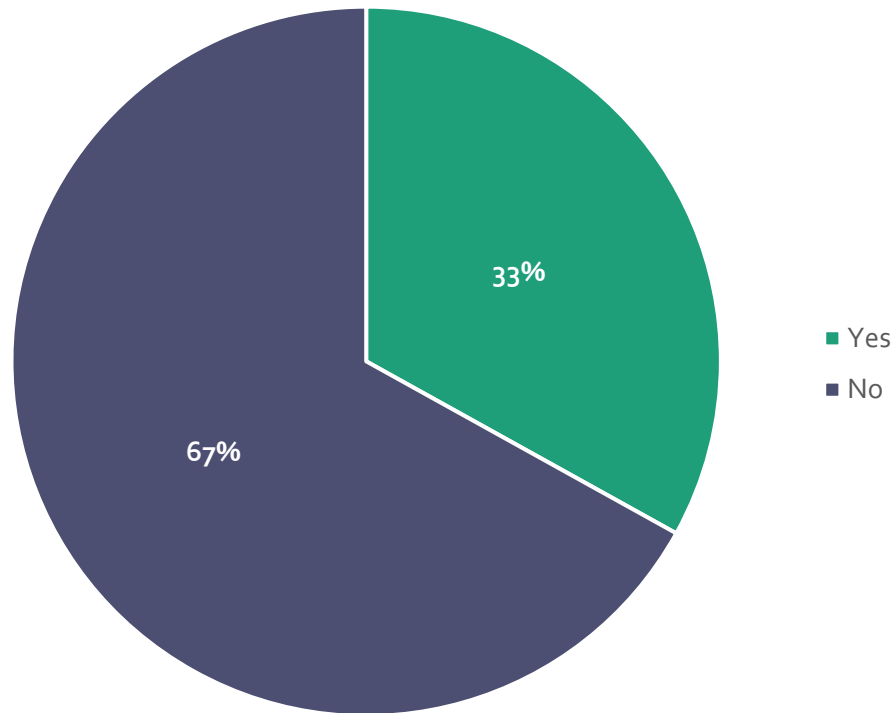


How long have you lived in Franklin?



About You

Do you live in the Franklin Center study area?



MBTA Communities Analysis

Overview

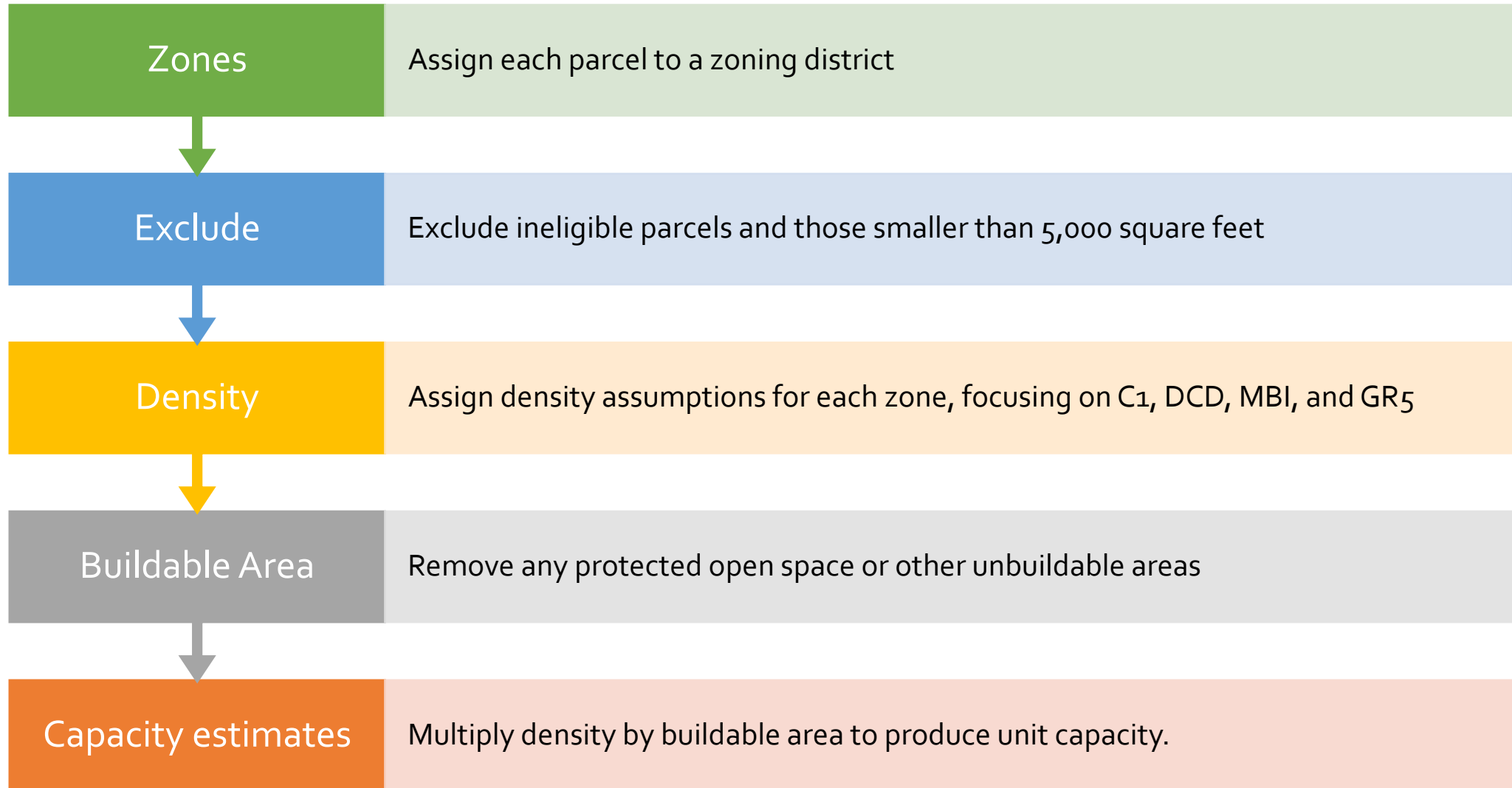
MBTA Communities

Multifamily Zoning Requirement (Section 3A)

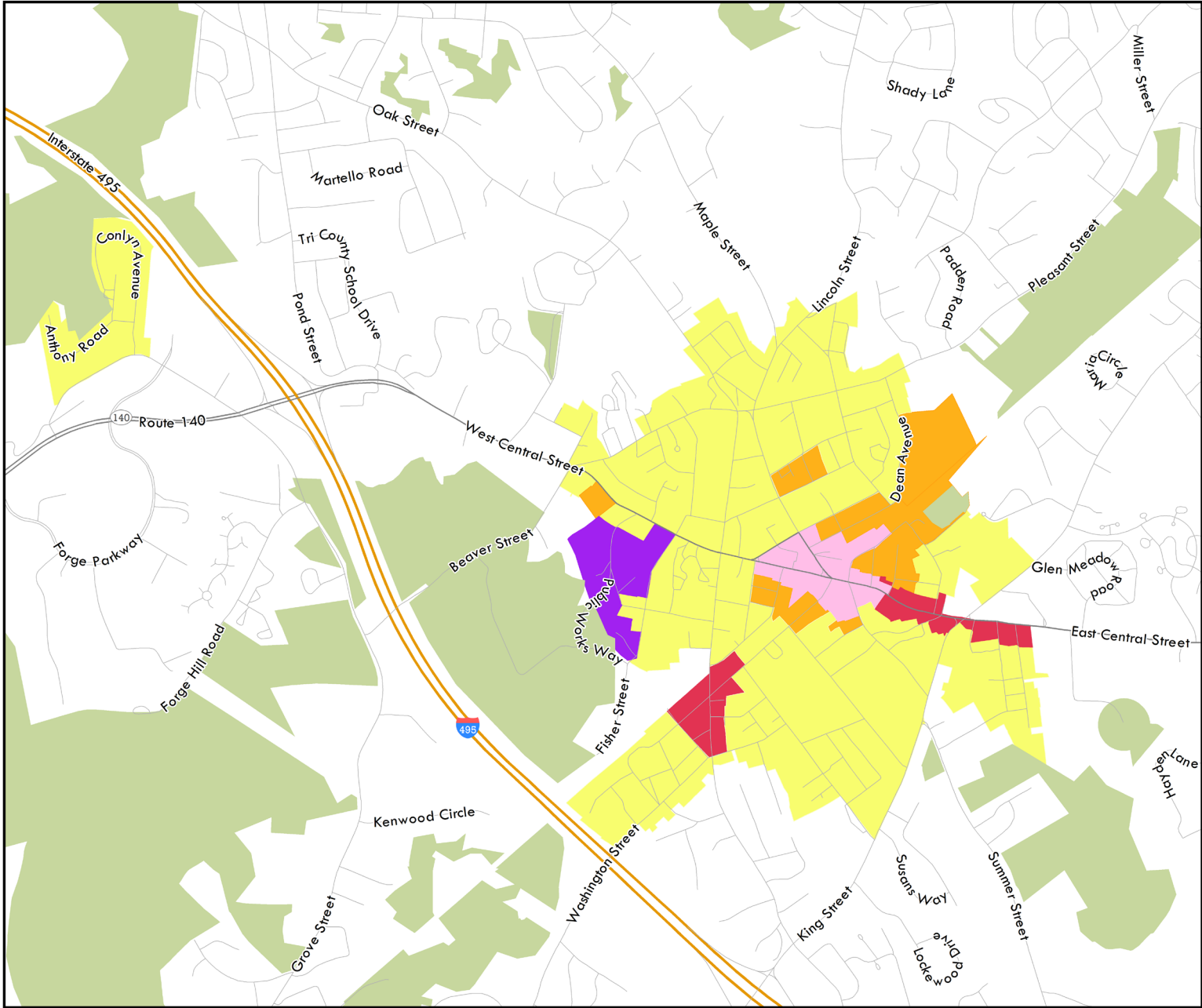
Draft Guidelines*

- Franklin's "Minimum Unit Capacity": 1,883 units (15% of current units)
- Minimum gross density of 15 units/acre
- Gross density is calculated as total units divided by total land area in the district
- Density can vary across subdistricts
- Unit Capacity includes existing units (not net new units possible)
- 50% of district must be within ½ mile of commuter rail stop

Methods for Buildout Estimates



Current Zoning

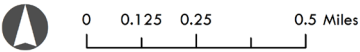
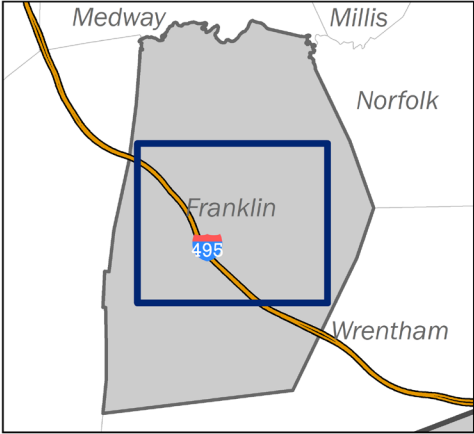


Study Area Zoning

- Commercial I (C1)
- Downtown Commercial District (DCD)
- General Residential V (GR5)
- Mixed Business Innovation (MBI)
- Single Family IV (SF4)
- Franklin Open Space

Roads

- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Route
- Non-numbered route
- Municipalities



Scenario 1:

Equal Density

- Assume same density for all downtown districts

Scenario 2:

Downtown

- Higher density in DCD district, lower densities elsewhere

Scenario 3:

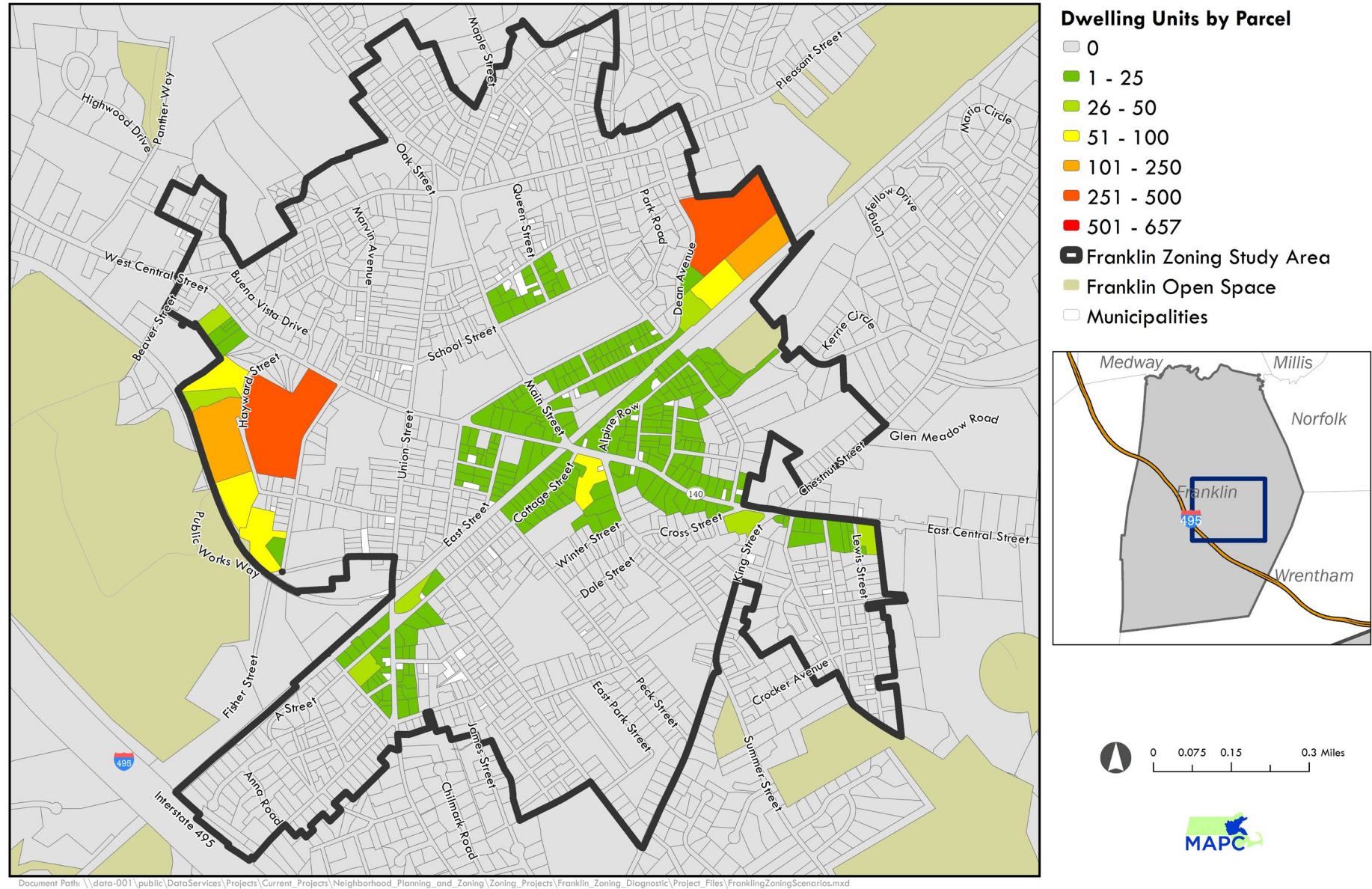
MBI Zone

- Enable transformation of MBI zone for residential/mixed use development

Scenario 1: Equal Density

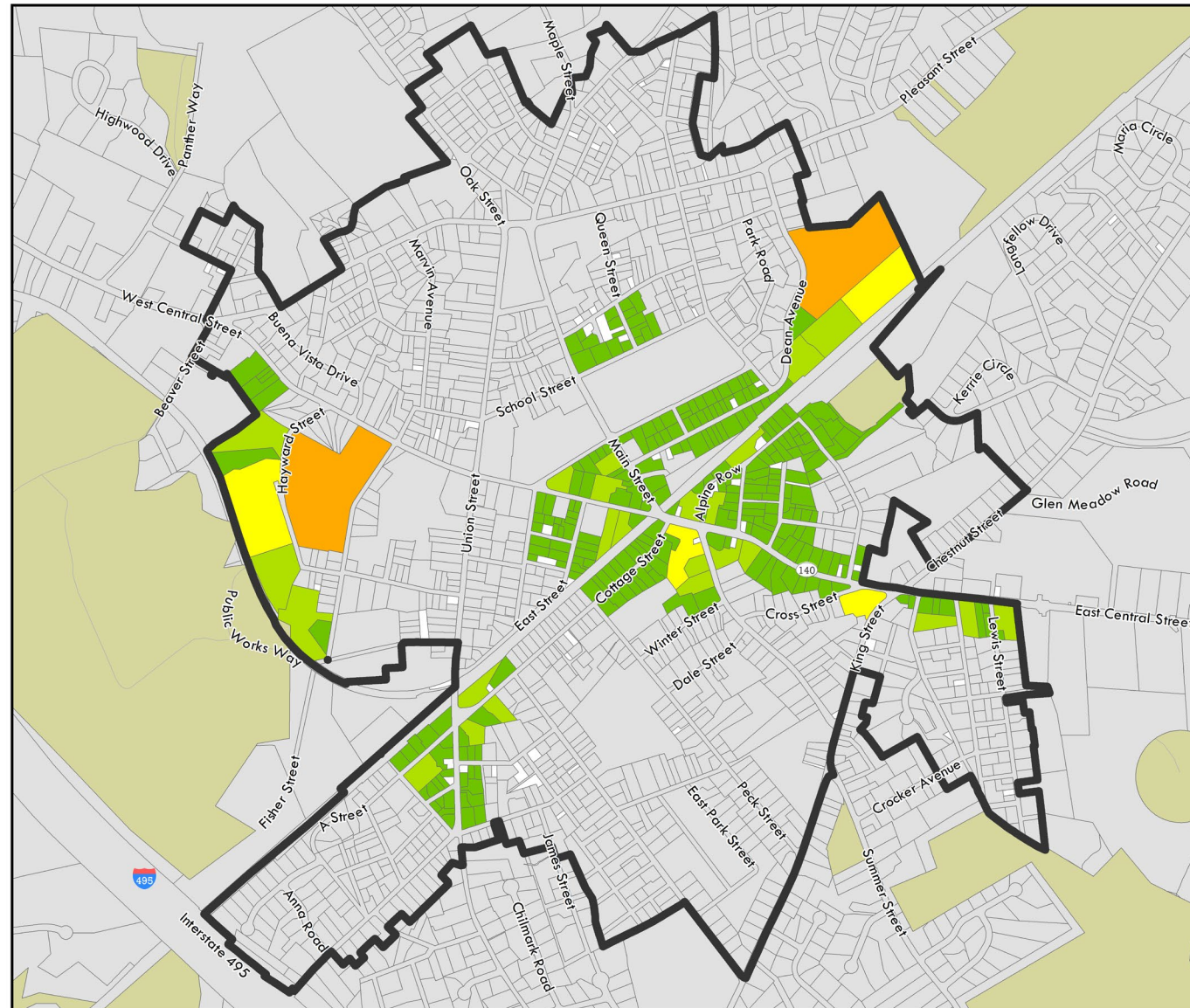
- Assumptions:
 - DCD: 22 DU/acre
 - C1: 22 DU/acre
 - GR5: 22 DU/acre
 - MBI: 22 DU/acre
- Unit capacity: 3,300
- Gross Density: 15.5 units/acre

CI units	594
DC units	531
GRV units	1404
MBI units	768



Scenario 2: Downtown

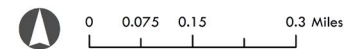
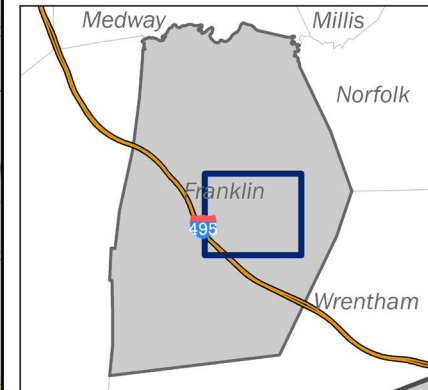
- Assumptions:
 - DCD: 40 DU/acre
 - C1: 35 DU/acre
 - GR5: 15 DU/acre
 - MBI: 10 DU/acre
- Unit capacity: 3,240
- Gross Density: 15.2 units/acre



Dwelling Units by Parcel

- 0
- 1 - 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 657

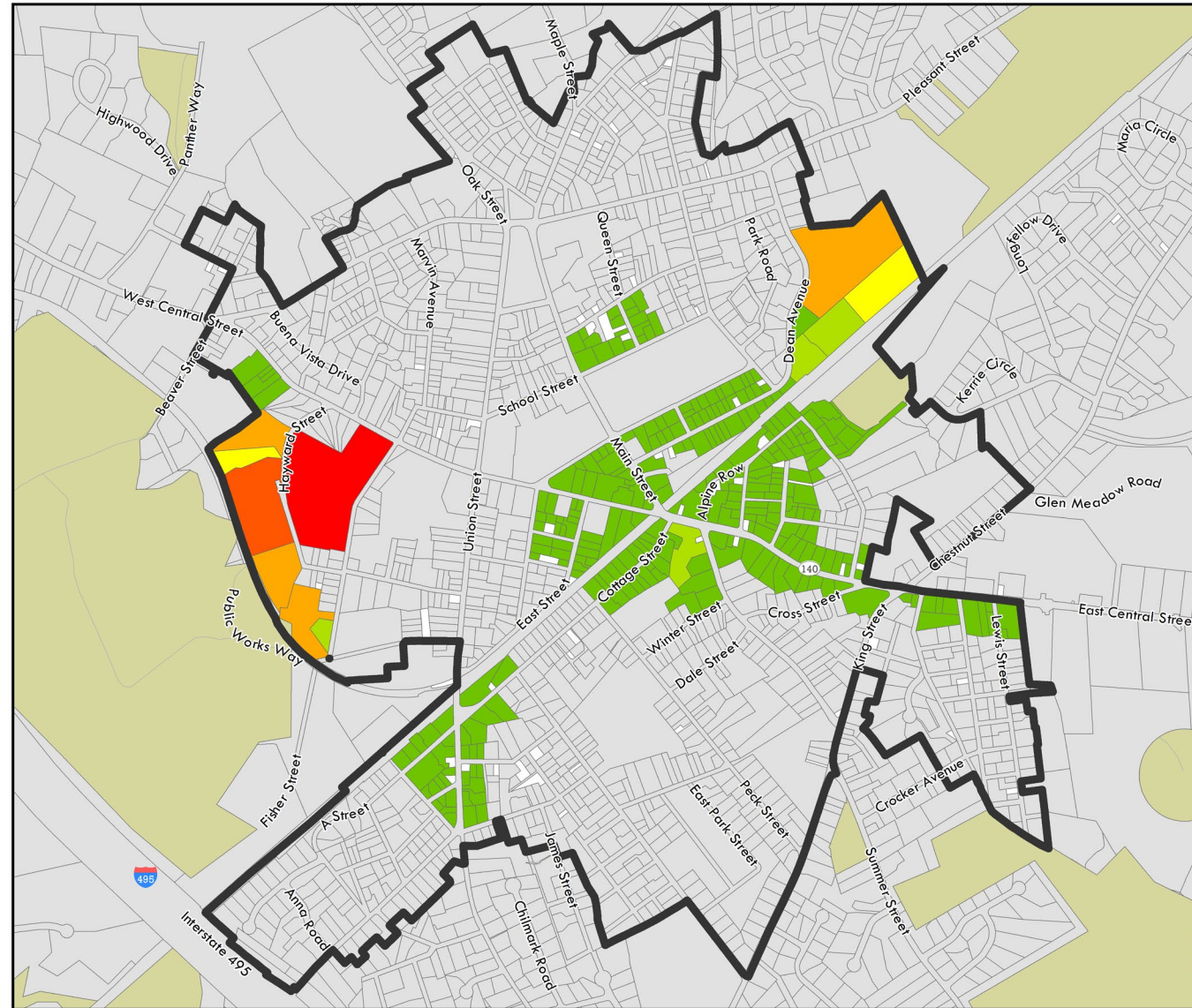
- Franklin Zoning Study Area
- Franklin Open Space
- Municipalities



Document Path: \\data-001\public\DataServices\Projects\Current_Projects\Neighborhood_Planning_and_Zoning\Zoning_Projects\Franklin_Zoning_Diagnostic\Project_Files\FranklinZoningScenarios.mxd

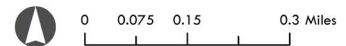
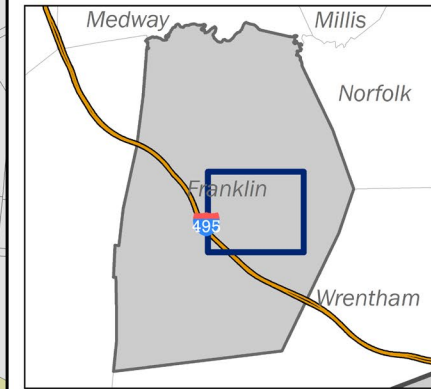
Scenario 3: MBI Zone

- Assumptions:
 - DCD: 15 DU/acre
 - C1: 15 DU/acre
 - GR5: 15 DU/acre
 - MBI: 45 DU/acre
- Initial capacity: 3,255
- Density: 15.3 units/acre



Dwelling Units by Parcel

- 0
- 1 - 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 657
- Franklin Zoning Study Area
- Franklin Open Space
- Municipalities



Document Path: \\data-001\public\DataServices\Projects\Current_Projects\Neighborhood_Planning_and_Zoning\Zoning_Projects\Franklin_Zoning_Diagnostic\Project_Files\FranklinZoningScenarios.mxd

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Working with the project partners, MAPC will:
 - Refine development scenarios and related build-out estimates based on desired dimensional regulations
 - Create massing diagrams for up to three sites in the study area to illustrate build-out scenarios
 - Begin drafting initial zoning recommendations for the public to weigh in
- Next Steering Committee meeting scheduled for May 4
- Next public engagement event planned for mid-May
- Plan to finish up this phase of the project by end of June

Questions/Comments?