

Powder Mill Road Corridor Initiative



Community Forum

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

Hosted by Acton and Maynard Planning Boards



Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Recap: Phase I - Powder Mill Road Redevelopment Strategy
- Phase II Project Overview
- Overlay Zoning District
 - Purpose
 - What do you want to see along the corridor?
- Next Steps

Add questions
or comments
to chat box

Opening Remarks

Project Team

Town of Acton

- Kristen Guichard, Planning Director
- Kaila Sauer, Assistant Planner
- Nora Masler, Assistant Planner

Town of Maynard

- Bill Nemser, Planning Director
- Julia Flanary, Assistant Town Planner & Conservation Agent

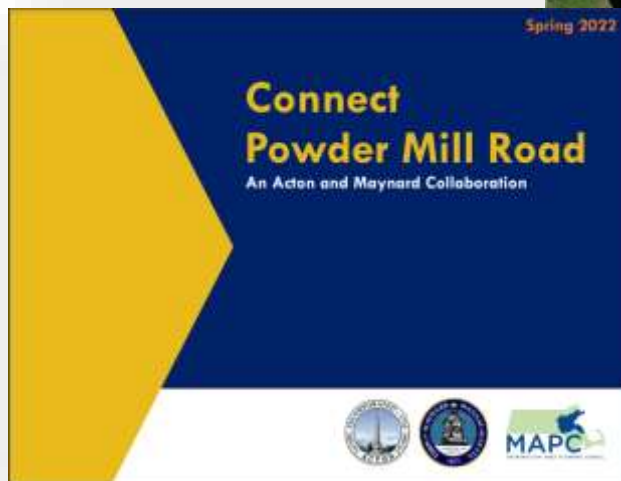
MAPC

- Andrea Harris-Long, Project Manager & Senior Planner
- Emma Battaglia, Senior Housing Planner
- Adi Nochur, Senior Transportation Planner

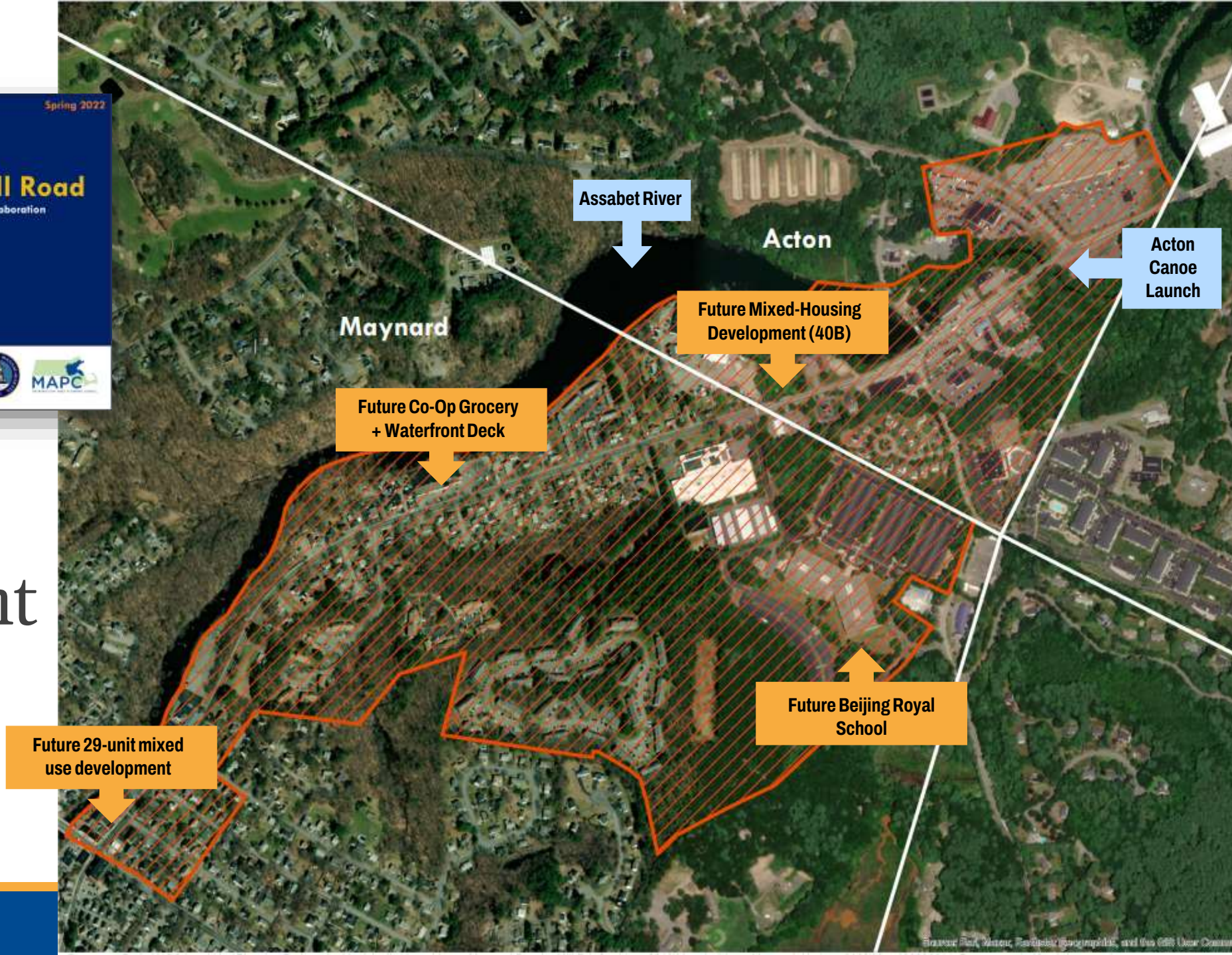
Guided by Acton Planning Board and Maynard Planning Board



Who's in the room?



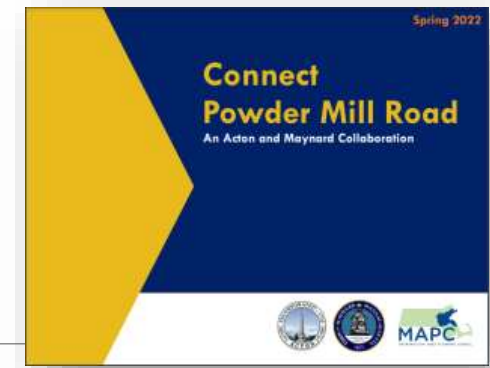
Phase I Redevelopment Strategy





Who participated in Phase I?

Findings from Phase I: Redevelopment Strategy



Read the full plan and see
Phase I materials here:
mapc.ma/powdermillcorridor

Market Analysis

- Slightly lower retail & industrial market rents, but higher office rents
- High commercial vacancy rates (35% retail and 73% office) but very low industrial vacancy rate
- Retail Opportunity Gap Analysis

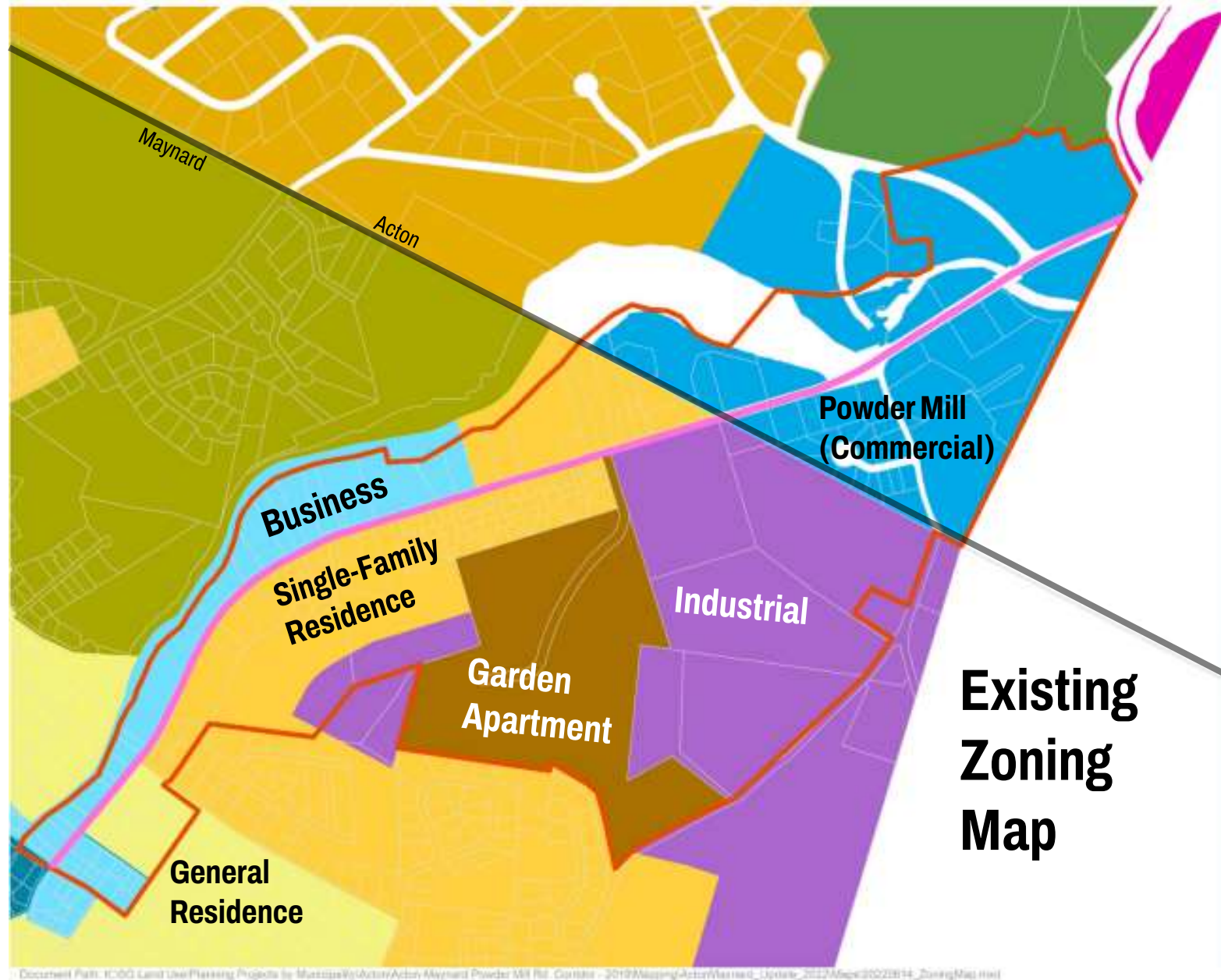
Zoning Analysis

- Multiple districts with different intents result in lacking sense of place
- Limited housing types are allowed
- Parking and other zoning requirements encourage auto-oriented development
- Non-conforming parcels

Community Engagement

- More access to Assabet River
- Safety improvements (crosswalks, sidewalks, bike lanes)
- Affordable housing options
- Support for new and existing businesses

What does
zoning currently
allow?





Existing Housing



Existing Businesses



Sidewalks



Assabet River (behind Victory Plaza)

Future site of Apartments at Powder Mill Place



Future Mixed-Use Development at 6 Powder Mill Road



Opportunity Sites

Recommendations



Create an **overlay zoning district** to shape future development



Improve access to and environmental quality of the **Assabet River**

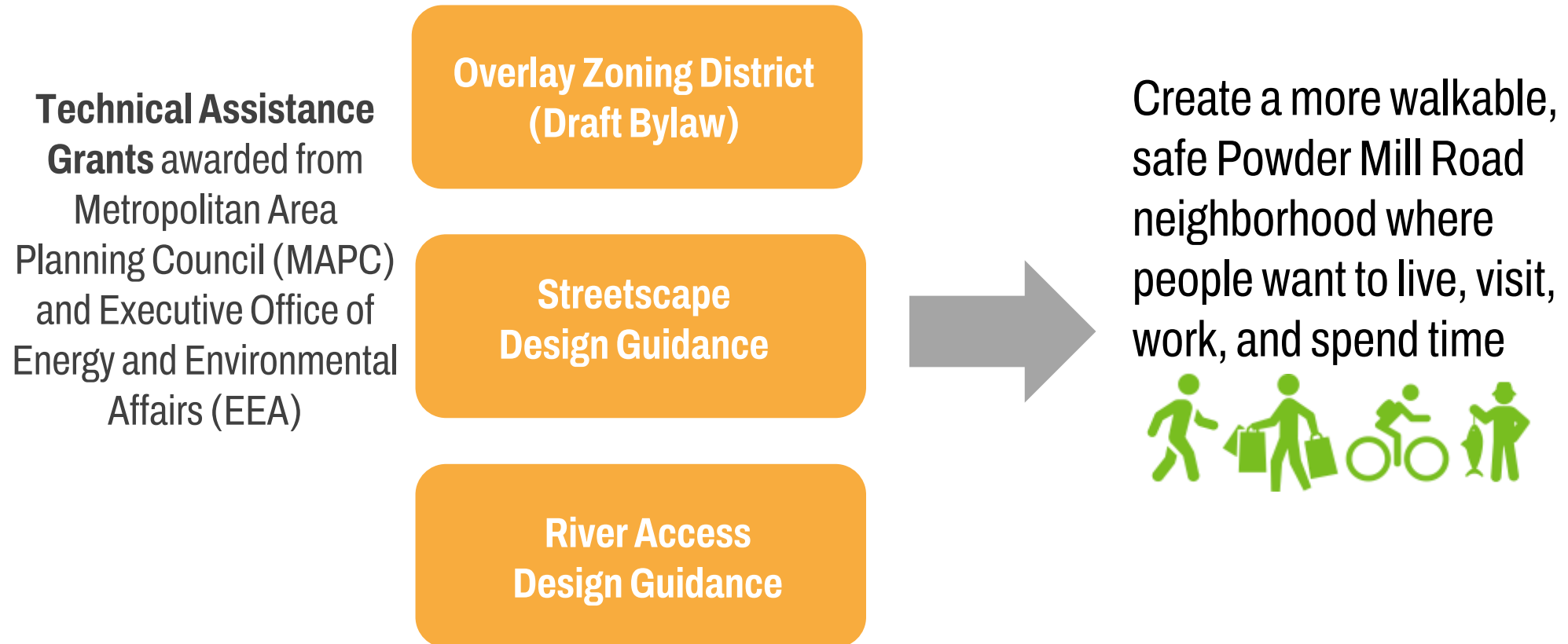


Incorporate “**Complete Streets**” features to make Powder Mill Road safer

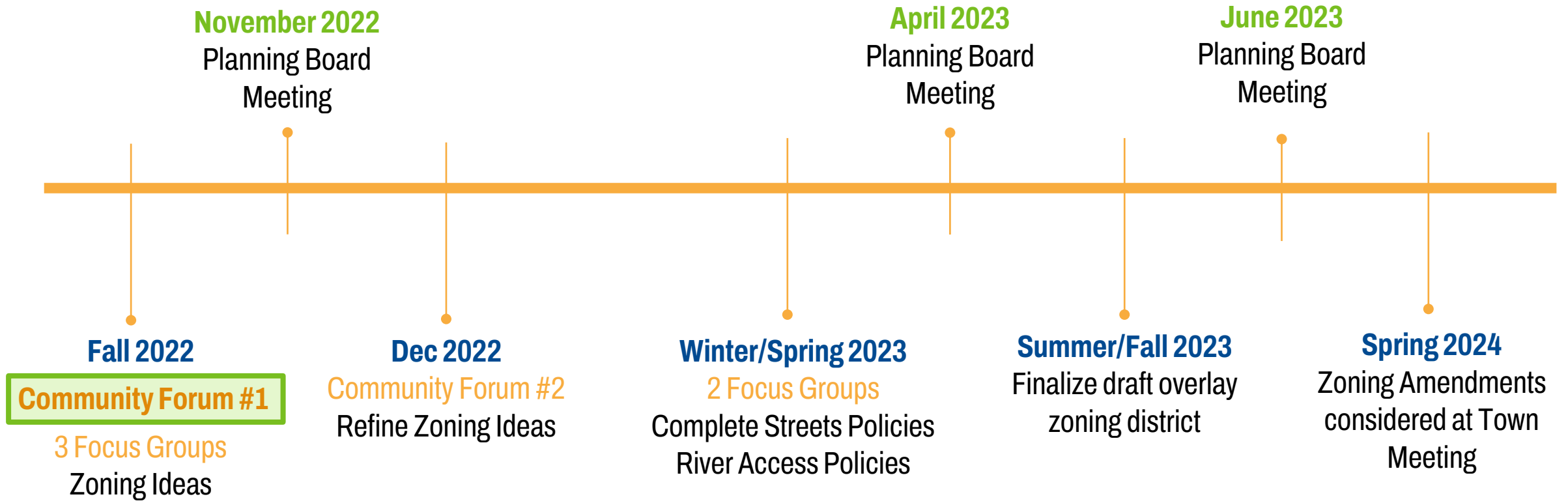


Design **future transportation projects** to advance safety and environmental goals

Phase II - Implementation



Project Overview



Overlay Zoning District

- Type of zoning district that **"lies" on top of the existing zoning** and **tailors zoning** to unique neighborhood needs
- Requirements **supersede underlying zoning** where standards differ
- Opportunity to build in incentives for developments that provide **community benefits**
- May include **mandatory and/or optional** requirements



Tool to implement
master plans, housing
production plans, and
climate action plans

Overlay Zoning District



Use Regulations



Dimensional Standards



Housing



Design Guidelines



Parking

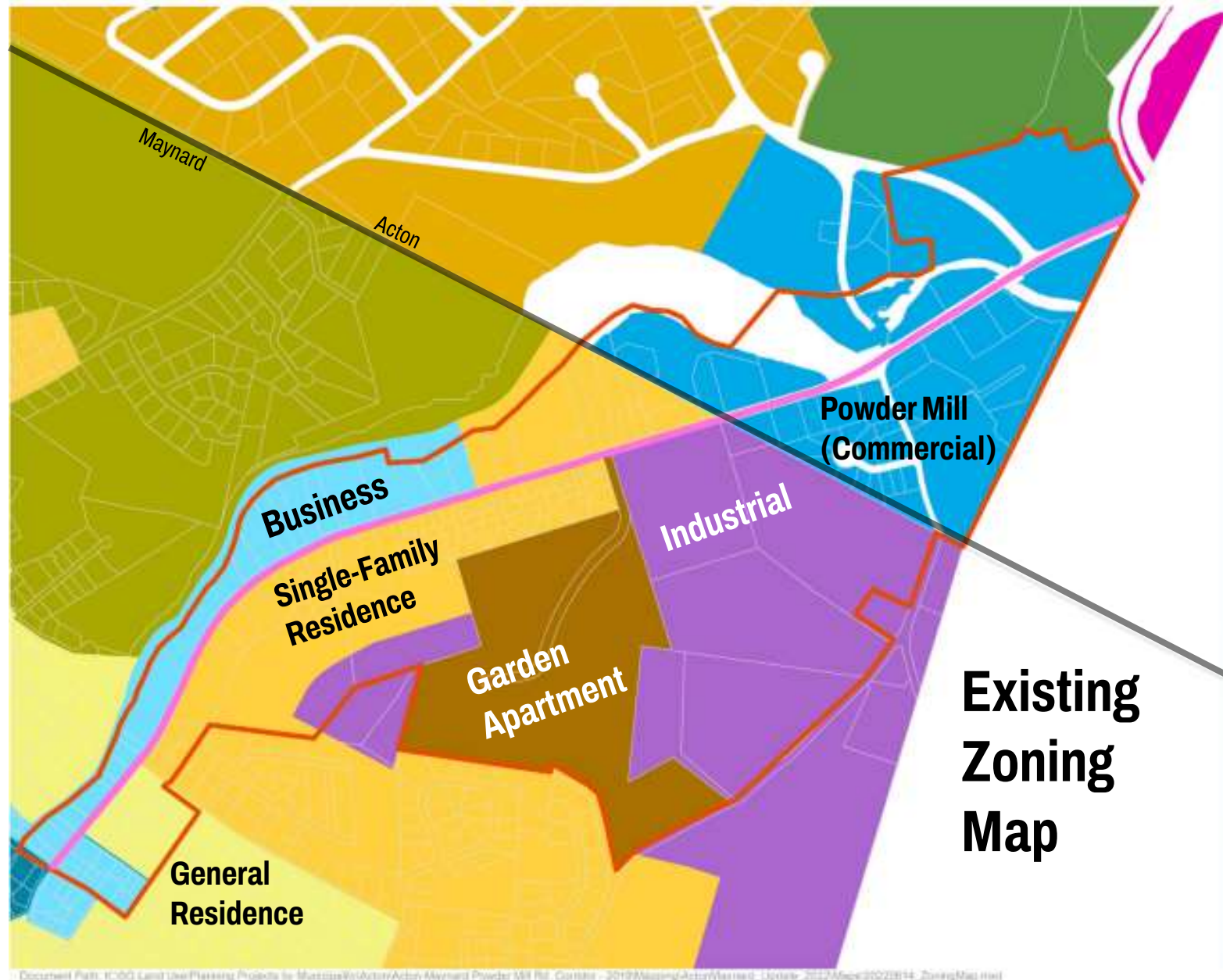


Landscaping, buffers, and screening



Use Regulations

- 7 different districts that each allow very specific uses
- Review what is allowed By-Right vs. by Special Permit
- Consider incentivizing pedestrian-oriented uses





What kinds of uses would you like to see along Powder Mill Road?

If you don't see something in the list, add it to the chat box.



Housing

- Inclusionary zoning + additional incentives to **increase Affordable housing**
- More housing options can **expand affordability** and **create a built-in customer base** to support businesses along Powder Mill Road
- Updated zoning can provide certainty in the permitting process and flexibility in site design



Photo credit: Nolan Sheehan Patton LLP

Photo credit: BCD Network





Who has housing needs in Acton and Maynard?

If you don't see something in the list, add it to the chat box.

Housing Production Plan Findings

Acton's Housing Production Plan showed a need for:

- More deed-restricted Affordable Housing for:
 - Seniors
 - Families
 - People with disabilities
- Affordable group housing for people with disabilities
- Better mix of housing choices (rental and for purchase) to people at all income levels

Maynard's Housing Production Plan showed a need for:

- More deed-restricted Affordable Housing for seniors and people with extremely low incomes
- Smaller housing types for seniors and first-time homebuyers
- Affordable rental options to alleviate cost burden (spending more than 30% of income on housing)



What new housing options would you like to see?

Mixed Use



Cottage cluster



2-Family



Townhouse



Multi-family





Parking

- Review parking ratios and minimums
- Require parking alongside or in the rear of buildings
 - Limit parking adjacent to Assabet River
- Require landscaping buffers, especially when adjacent to sidewalks or bike lanes
- Address stormwater mitigation (e.g., permeable pavement, bioswales, tree canopies, etc.) and incentivize green infrastructure

Eco-friendly



People-friendly

Walking conditions on Powder Mill Road





What would make Powder Mill Road safer to walk or bike along?

If you don't see something in the list, add it to the chat box.

Opportunities to improve walkability



Walkability improvements in downtown Franklin, MA



Acton and Maynard have both adopted "Complete Streets" policies to accommodate roadway users of all ages, abilities, and travel modes (walking, biking, transit, driving)

Acton has received state funding to create Complete Streets designs on Powder Mill Road – potential to replicate this in Maynard

Zoning regulations and incentives can help create sidewalks on private property



What are your priorities for
transportation improvements along
Powder Mill Road?



Dimensional Standards



Design Guidelines



Landscaping, buffers, and screening

- **Consistent standards** across Acton and Maynard
- Should reflect the types of development **you want to see** along Powder Mill
- **Build on successful neighborhood and development** characteristics along Powder Mill Road and in other parts of Maynard and Acton



Would this fit in along a future Powder Mill Road?





Would this fit in along a future Powder Mill Road?





Would this fit in along a future Powder Mill Road?





Would this fit in along a future Powder Mill Road?





Would this fit in along a future Powder Mill Road?





Would this fit in along a future Powder Mill Road?





What are your thoughts about **existing development patterns** along the Powder Mill Road corridor?

Next Steps

- Focus Groups in October
- Determine zoning ideas with Planning Boards
- December Community Forum
 - Share feedback from forum and focus groups
 - Review proposed zoning ideas discussed by Planning Boards

Powder Mill Road Corridor Initiative

Stay informed by
visiting the
project webpage:

mapc.ma/powdermillcorridor



POWDER MILL ROAD CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

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MAPC >> RESOURCES >> TRANSPORTATION >> POWDER MILL
ROAD CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

Powder Mill Road Corridor Initiative

A Collaboration between the Towns of Acton and Maynard

About the Project

Connecting Maynard, Acton, and West Concord, the Powder Mill Road Corridor consists of approximately one mile in Maynard and a half mile in Acton. For the past two years, MAPC, the Town of Acton, and the Town of Maynard have worked together to create a long-term community-oriented strategy for the corridor to guide how future growth occurs. The strategy recommended that the Towns work together to create an overlay zoning district that supports walkable, mixed-use developments, advances complete streets transportation options, and expands access to the Assabet River. This zoning initiative, Phase II of the project, seeks to make Powder Mill Road a more welcoming place for people to live, visit, and spend time.

GET INVOLVED!

Stay up to date with the project by
signing up for our email list.

✉ Sign Up to the Email List

Read the Powder Mill Road Redevelopment Strategy

Thank you!

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