



PERSPECTIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BROOKLINE'S COMMERCIAL AREAS





Town of Brookline

Major Commercial Areas

- Major Commercial Areas**
- Brookline Village
 - Chestnut Hill
 - Coolidge Corner/North Brookline
 - Route 9
 - Washington Square
 - Ⓣ MBTA Stations

- All Roads**
- Interstate
 - U.S. Highway
 - State Route
 - Non-numbered route
 - Open Space

The information depicted on this map is for planning purposes only. It is not adequate for legal boundary definition, regulatory interpretation, or parcel-level analyses.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	1
Executive Summary	2
Demographic Context	4
Community Engagement	5
Town-wide Feedback	8
Commercial Areas Vision	12
Recommended Next Steps	34
Terms and Definitions	39
Stay Connected	41

Appendices

Detailed Maps	I
Market Conditions	II
Survey Results	III
Focus Group Notes	IV
Open House Presentation	V
Open House Results	VI
Potential Development Sites	VII
Detailed Economic Conditions	VIII
2014 EDAB Vibrancy Study	IX

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Vision for Brookline's Commercial Areas is a ten-month community engagement and visioning process that aims to capture the challenges, desires, and aspirations for those who live, work, play, or do business in Brookline's commercial areas. The results of this visioning process are intended to provide input, along with other Town planning initiatives (including *Planning for a Changing Brookline*, *Brookline's Housing Production Plan*, and *Bringing Back Boylston*), to assist the Brookline Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) and other involved Town Boards and Officials in their work to support and enhance the economic vitality of Brookline's commercial areas.

EDAB is a twelve-member advisory board whose members are residents with backgrounds in economic development and real estate. EDAB is charged with fostering appropriate economic growth and seeks to expand the tax base to offset costs that support town programs and services. EDAB pursues these objectives within a framework that recognizes town values with respect to preserving and enhancing the character of neighborhoods, appreciating diversity, affordable housing, historic preservation, open space, high quality schools, and other town services.

In consultation with EDAB, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has conducted this outreach and visioning process to gather and compile broad community feedback on mixed-use development in Brookline's commercial areas.

GOALS FOR THE PROJECT

1. Propose a vision statement for Brookline's commercial areas based on results of community outreach
2. Recommend priority geographic areas for the town to consider for future development
3. Identify commercial uses within priority areas that community members view as appropriate in the town
4. Identify other important topics community members would like the town to consider during the planning process for new development

Over 900 Brookline residents were engaged throughout this visioning process. The commercial areas included in this report are:

- Brookline Village
- Coolidge Corner / North Brookline
- Route 9 East and Route 9 Reservoir Road Area
- Chestnut Hill Area
- Washington Square
- Putterham Circle

Planning to carry out this vision should consider the following principles

- Brookline is committed to strengthening existing businesses and diversifying its business types.
- Planning should take into account a mix of uses, especially affordable housing for millennials, families and our aging population.
- Live/work space, arts and culture destinations, and retaining basic service businesses will be a focus.
- Public infrastructure to support development should be planned at the same time, especially public transit facilities, schools, complete streets, and addition of open space.
- Infrastructure and transportation enhancements shall be forward-looking: sustainable, environmentally friendly and endeavor to activate the streetscape.

PROPOSED VISION STATEMENT BASED ON RESULTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Planning for our commercial areas is an inclusive process that is specific to each unique neighborhood commercial district. This planning should be flexible in density while compatible with the existing scale of residential neighborhoods and should focus on quality of life as a primary consideration.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

POPULATION

- Brookline's total population of 59,100 is increasing, with anticipated growth estimates to near 65,951 by 2030 (MAPC Municipal Population Projections).
- The ethnic composition of Brookline is 71% White, 17% Asian, 6% Latino, 3% Black, 2% mixed race.
- Most common foreign languages in Brookline are Chinese, Spanish, and Russian.
- Among people at least five year old living in Brookline, 30 percent spoke a language other than English at home.
- More than one in four of the people living in Brookline were foreign born.
- Brookline has a highly-educated population with about 97 percent of the population age 25 years and over holding a high school diploma; 81 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher, and more than half of adult residents hold a graduate degree or higher (American Community Survey, 2011-2015).

WORKFORCE AND EMPLOYMENT DATA

- An average of 64% of the population (age 16 and over) is employed; 32 percent are not currently in the labor force, with the remaining 4% were in the labor force but not employed. (American Community Survey, 2011-2015).
- The largest industries in Brookline are Healthcare & Social Assistance (6,652), Educational Services (6,520), and Professional, Scientific, Tech Services (6,234).

COMMUTING TO WORK

- Over 90% of workers living in Brookline worked in other communities, such as Boston, Cambridge, and other communities within the Boston Metro area (according to survey respondents, Appendix III).
- 89% of those who work in Brookline live outside of town. Out of the 21,106 people employed in Brookline and 29,943 living in Brookline, only 2,311 people both live and work in Brookline.
- Although about 75% of Brookline households have at least one vehicle, 24% have no vehicles indicated that a significant number of residents rely on other modes of transportation (mainly walking and public transit) to get to work (American Community Survey, 2011-2015).
- About 5% of Brookline workers carpool to work, whereas 37% drive to work alone. Among those who commute to work, driving times average 29 minutes. Almost half of workers commute either by walking or taking public transit.

INCOME/POVERTY

- The median income of households in Brookline (\$95,518).
- An estimated 12% of households had income below \$15,000 a year, which is slightly lower than the official poverty rate for the United States of 12.7 percent.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

- 46% of housing is owner-occupied, 46% are renter-occupied, and 8% are vacant.
- Of the total housing units, 25% were single-unit structures, 75% were in multi-unit structures, and less than 0.5% were mobile homes.
- Almost 75% of homeowners have lived in their residence before 2009, and 75% of renters have lived in their home since 2010.
- The median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners was \$2,962, non-mortgaged owners \$1,215, and renters \$1,897.
- An estimated 51% of renters in Brookline spent 30% or more of household income on housing, significantly higher than homeowners.
- Currently, 9.4% of housing units qualify as affordable under the Chapter 40B statutory minimum.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WHY ENGAGE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

Economic development helps to create and maintain a strong, vibrant local economy. Increased personal income and wealth increase the tax base, allowing a community and municipality to provide the level of services residents expect. Community engagement allows a community to determine its future direction and guide appropriate types of development according to its own values.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Town of Brookline engaged the services of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to lead the visioning process in consultation with the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB). MAPC worked closely with EDAB to conduct extensive research and community engagement.

The proposed vision and recommendations outlined in this document were developed using public feedback provided by over 900 Brookline residents and workers. Varying engagement methods included a community survey, focus groups, open house and other public events.

KEY MEETINGS (2017)

- June 21 - MAPC meets EDAB board to discuss engagement strategy
- Oct. 2 - MAPC consultants meet with EDAB board
- Oct. 17 - Commercial property owners focus group
- Oct. 17 - Large institutions focus group
- Nov. 6 - EDAB meets with MAPC to discuss Open House
- March 19 - EDAB meets with MAPC to finalize recommendations and report

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACHES

In order to provide a comprehensive community engagement process, the team developed a multi-pronged approach to reaching stakeholders including a community survey, on-line engagement and in person meetings.

Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB)

EDAB members and supporting staff were instrumental in engaging community members throughout this process. They distributed cards with information on the town's website, survey, and project as well as ensured attendance and participation from the community at public events.

Focus Groups

The Town of Brookline, EDAB, and MAPC hosted two focus groups on October 17, 2017 to engage key stakeholders in this visioning process. The focus groups were divided by sectors including a commercial property owners focus group and large institutions focus group. Combined, 22 individuals participated in these focus groups with various industries, backgrounds, or interest including developers, residents, and non-profit leaders.

Press

The Boston Globe featured a short article on October 4, 2017 to encourage community members to respond to the on-line survey.

BROOKLINE
Brookline seeks input on economic development
By John Hilliard | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT | OCTOBER 04, 2017

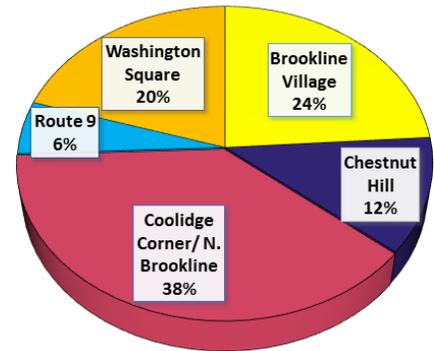
Top 10 Trending Articles
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Senator Dianne Feinstein may be provoking a constitutional conflict
Rob Gronkowski's contract runs counter to the Patriots' needs
Russia barred from 2018 Olympics, but some athletes will be allowed to compete



Community Survey

A community survey was developed to gather community input for this report. A total of 658 surveys were completed. 26 questions covered a range of topics from community values to geographic priorities for development as well as industry types. It is important to note that not all respondents answered all the questions which is reflected in the recommendations section.

- The survey respondents were generally older and had a higher median household income than the total population.
- A majority of respondents had a household income of over \$150,000 and three fourths were over the age of 40.
- A majority were homeowners and have lived in Brookline for more than 10 years.
- The majority had three or more individuals living in their households.
- 60 were business owners.
- 68% of households had someone under age 18
- 35% of households had someone over age of 65.
- Over 197 emails and 123 phone numbers were collected for additional engagement.



Closest commercial area for survey respondents

Online Engagement

A variety of on-line community engagement practices supported the visioning process and public participation. The Town worked to share information about the Open House and other relevant topics related to the vision using on-line tools. Online engagement included using the town website and town Facebook page to keep the community up to date with the latest information. EDAB members also shared information about the project on Brookline specific Facebook groups.



Print Materials

Print materials included engagement cards, flyers, and the community engagement kit that was distributed to board members to help support their outreach process.



See Appendix for full size.

Oct. 17, 2017

Oct. 30, 2017

Nov. 8, 2017

Commercial Property owners and Organizations focus groups

Survey closes

Open House

EVENTS

Brookline Day and Pierce FitFest

On September 24, members of EDAB, the Town of Brookline, and MAPC attended the Brookline Day event at Larz Anderson Park. We provided a “Brookline Values Game”, in which residents voted with poker chips on the values they felt were most important for the town to promote and enhance. There was also a crown-making station and coloring for kids. More than 100 people stopped by to chat with the team throughout the day. EDAB members also attended the Pierce FitFest on September 11 and gave members of the community information about the visioning process.



November 8 Open House

MAPC co-hosted *A Vision for Brookline’s Commercial Areas* Open House on Wednesday November 8, 2017 with the Town of Brookline’s Economic Development Advisory Board and Economic Development Planning Department. 84 community residents, parents with school-aged children, business owners, and property owners met at Brookline Town Hall to hear about the project and provide feedback. MAPC presented findings from the survey and focus groups.



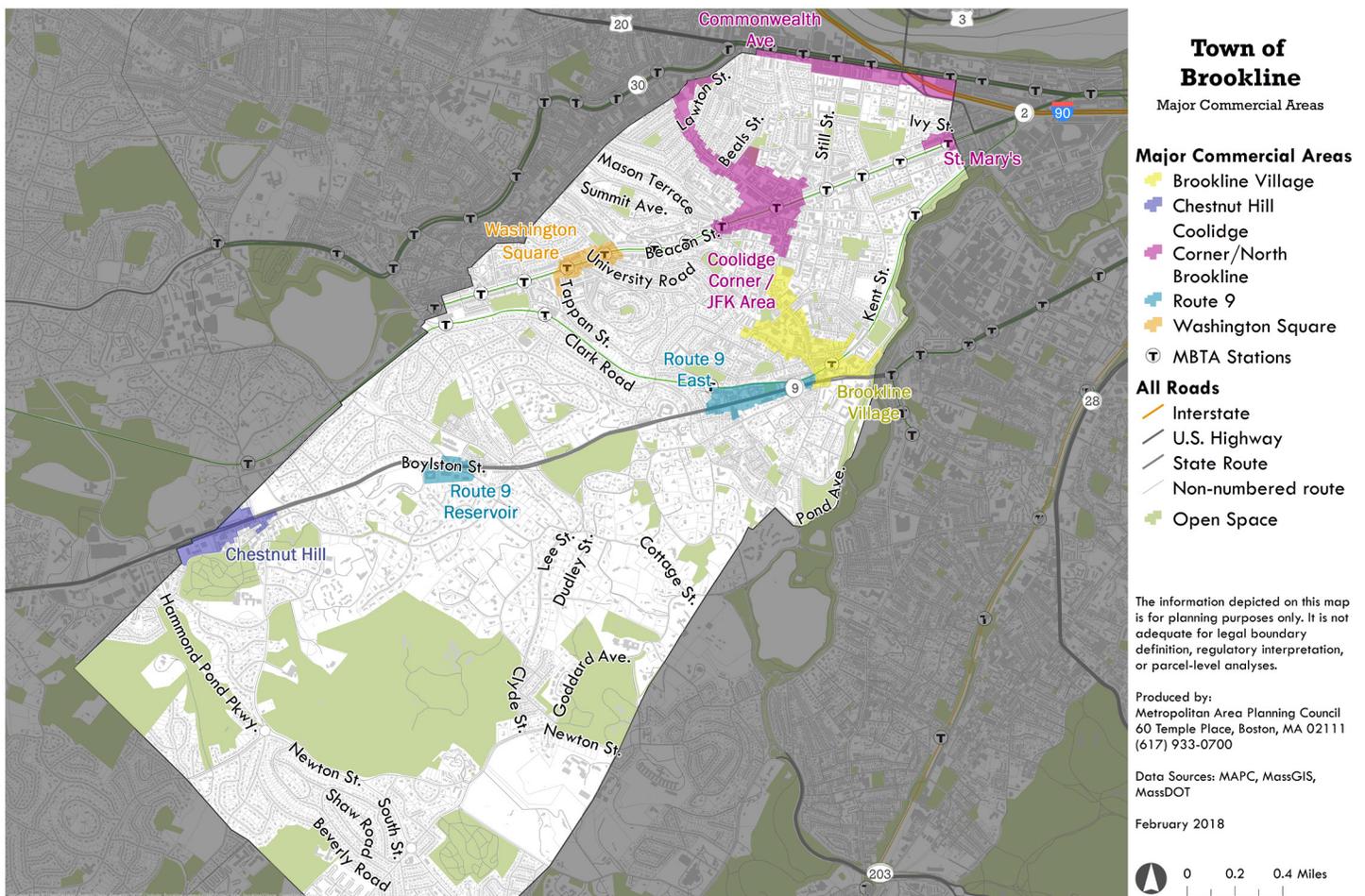
TOWN-WIDE FEEDBACK

OVERALL TOWN-WIDE SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

The overall town-wide feedback summarizes all of the public engagement comments and input that have been collected in this process. This includes information collected from the survey, the focus groups, Brookline Day, Pierce FitFest and the November 8 Open House.

The information is organized into large themes or categories that encompass the comments. The comments are a synopsis of what we heard and are grouped into overarching desires and needs for the town. They are not specific to any particular geographic area in Brookline and do not assume that all areas need these changes.

Themes include: scale and density, business, office, food establishments, mixed-use, property owners, housing, institutions, developers, design, walkability/transit, vehicle use, open space, bicycle use, communication, arts and culture, policy, and “land uses to reduce”.



PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED AND GROUPED BY MAJOR THEME:

In the final section of this report, all of the following comments were taken into account in synthesizing recommendations for next steps.

SCALE & DENSITY

- Preserve character of town
- Keep appropriate scale for neighborhoods
- Low-to mid-rise buildings
- Maintain neighborhood identity

BUSINESS

- Small, local, independent businesses
- Variety: diversity of businesses to meet needs of diverse citizens
- Reduce commercial rents
- Technical assistance for businesses should be prevalent and advertised
- Reduce empty storefronts
- Concern for retail viability
- Service oriented specialties
- Create loading zones for businesses in order to avoid taking up bus lanes.
- Advertise technical assistance to businesses

OFFICE

- Tech industry accelerators
- Start-ups

RETAIL / COMMERCIAL

- Specialty Stores: boutique, crafts/arts, jewelry, sporting goods bookstores, toys, bike stores
- Mixed perspectives on hotel development

FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

- Independently owned markets
- Gourmet food options
- Variety of grocery stores
- Affordable options for food
- Mid-range prices to serve different populations
- Restaurants, cafes bakeries, and coffee shops

MIXED-USE

- Stimulating foot traffic and walkability
- Mixed-use creates vitality and viability and improves the streetscape
- Commercial space should be on the ground floor and residential units should be above
- Retail businesses should be mixed with outdoor spaces such as cafes and restaurants
- Multi-family rental housing should be understood as part of the commercial mixed-used portfolio

PROPERTY OWNERS

- Zoning changes to improve the town for commercial use
- Create environment that allows property owners to invest in the process
- Incentivize property owners to develop
- Increase density to attract more diversity of businesses
- Beautification: lights, flowers, wayfinding to identify each commercial area

HOUSING

- Options for older adults and young adults
- Affordable housing for low to middle income
- Consider school density and housing needs together
- 40Bs seen as sometimes the only viable path and it would be helpful if there were a commercial analog

INSTITUTIONS

- There are concerns about commercial land used by tax exempt properties

DEVELOPERS

- Incentivize developers to work together
- Community spaces in private development

DESIGN

- District branding
- Signage
- Increase town marketing budget
- Wayfinding signage
- Business directory
- Characteristic street furniture
- Flower pots and hanging baskets

WALKABILITY/TRANSIT

- Safety for pedestrians
- Better connection between parcels
- Improvements in public transit (particularly 66 bus)

PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED AND GROUPED BY MAJOR THEME:

In the final section of this report, all of the following comments were taken into account in synthesizing recommendations for next steps.

VEHICLE USE

- Traffic congestion and use of cars (both too much parking and too little)
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Overnight parking options for guests

OPEN SPACE

- Protection and care of green space
- Creation of a new park space over the Massachusetts turnpike in Brookline
- Maintain trees
- Open space to gather

BICYCLE USE

- Safety for bicyclists
- Protected bike lanes
- More Hubway

COMMUNICATION

- Town-wide accessible events calendar
- Electronic kiosks with town information

POLICY

- Additional sit-down liquor licenses , potentially in all commercial areas

DEVELOPMENT TYPES TO

REDUCE

- Reduce banks, nail salons, cell phone stores, and liquor stores
- No clear reaction to marijuana retail outlets

ARTS AND CULTURE

- Artist spaces – i.e. work spaces, maker-spaces
- Invest in a performing arts center on B Line
- Live performance venues for music, performance, live theatre
- Museums, art exhibition spaces
- Incubator spaces, non-profit spaces
- Activities for youth
- Consider a local cultural district designation
- Create a performance arts district
- Public art
- Create outdoor stage, for public use and large arts center
- Support the performing arts of Brookline
- More open space events such as music, dance and movies
- Commission street art

COMMERCIAL AREAS VISION

Brookline is a town with distinct characteristics and commercial areas. Each area has different levels of infrastructure and commercial development. This section will provide a general overview of the commercial areas as well as challenges, opportunities, and suggestions for priority sites of future development that were identified by community members and town staff during this visioning process.

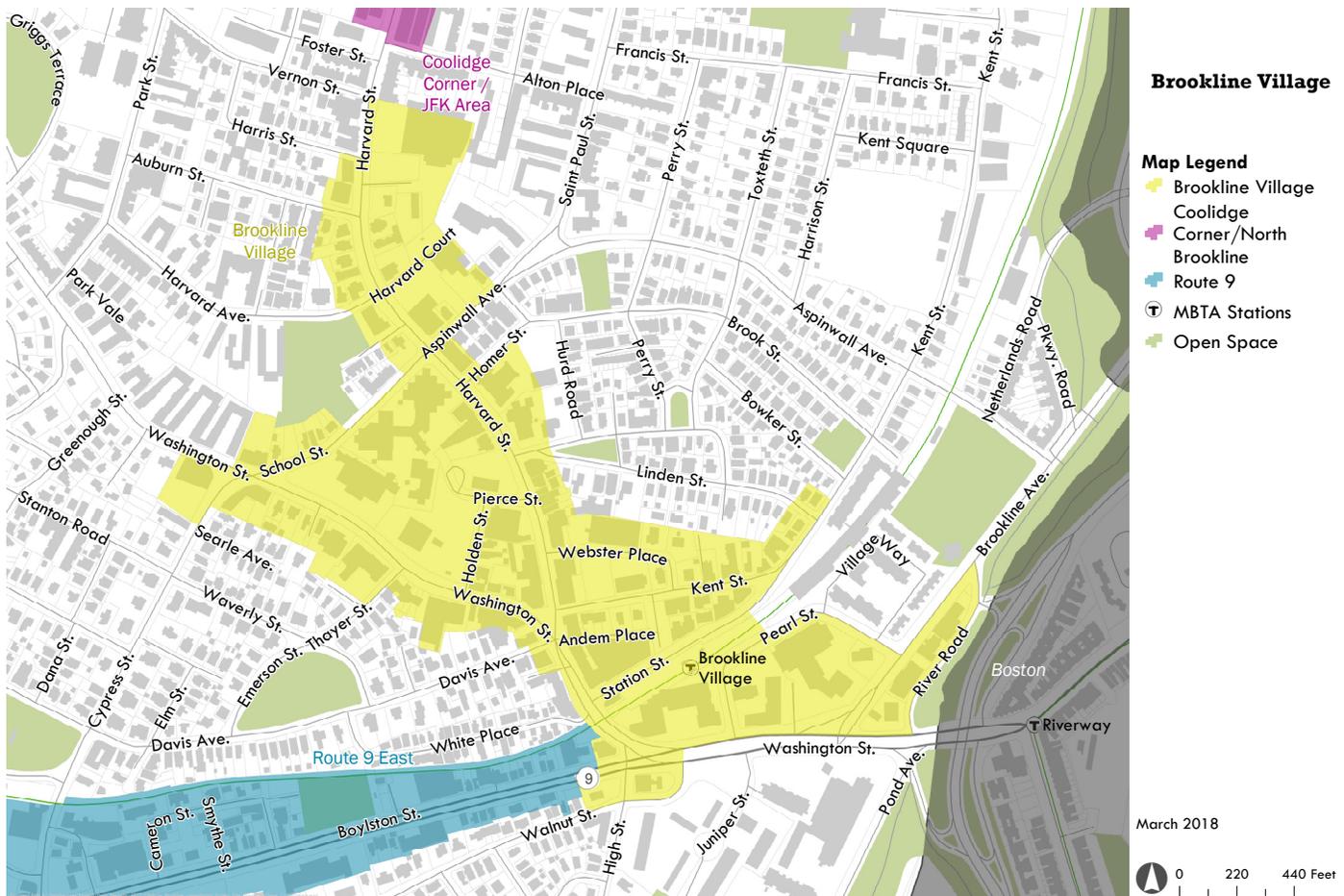
The areas covered include:

- Brookline Village
- Coolidge Corner/ North Brookline
- Chestnut Hill
- Route 9 East and Route 9 Reservoir Road Area
- Washington Square
- Putterham Circle

The focus of this report is the five main commercial areas in Brookline identified by the town; other commercial areas, such as Putterham Circle, are also considered.

BROOKLINE VILLAGE

Brookline Village is located in the eastern part of Brookline, stretching from the intersection of Harvard and Vernon Streets near Coolidge Corner, adjoining the Route 9 East corridor, and bordering the Mission Hill and Jamaica Plain neighborhoods of Boston. With the Brookline Village Station of the MBTA Green Line (D-line) and location at the junction of Route 9, Washington Street, and Brookline Avenue, Brookline Village provides residents



with convenient access to Boston, Newton, and regional job centers.

Major streets in Brookline Village include Route 9, Washington Street, and Brookline Avenue, as well as School Street, Kent Street, and a small portion of High Street. According to the 2014 Vibrancy study conducted by the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB), Brookline Village's major employers include Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Partners Affiliated. With health care employment up and the anticipation of the 2 Brookline Place Boston Children's Hospital development, it is important to plan for this growth to encourage employees to shop and use services in the area (Vibrancy Appendix IX, 26-17). Other employers in Brookline Village include the Stop & Shop supermarket, several doctors and dentist offices, and multiple full-service style restaurants.

Desired Business Types

The following business types were identified as desirable in Brookline Village (Open House, Appendix VI, 10):

- Independent cafes with good food and comfortable seating
- Independent ice cream shop, bagel shop, or diner
- More restaurants and a bakery

Challenges and considerations

Brookline Village is adjacent to Route 9, which is one of the main thoroughfares connecting commuters from Brookline to the City of Boston. Based on the multiple engagement opportunities during this outreach process, transit concerns were noted as relevant topics, including bus reliability and bicycle infrastructure. The Town of Brookline should take the following challenges and considerations into account when developing new parcels and seek to address these concerns.

Transit reliability

There were multiple instances during the visioning process where residents shared their concern for bus reliability in this area of town. The 66 MBTA bus line runs north and south

on Harvard Street and is a main connector between multiple transit lines including the MBTA Green Lines E, B, and C lines. During the Open House, attendees noted that the 66 bus is one of the primary ways people access this area of town and travel between commercial areas. They specifically mentioned that when the bus is not on schedule or runs late due to traffic, it is unreliable and it becomes difficult to shop in the area. Residents noted they would support improvements for the 66 bus (Open House, Appendix VI, pg. 10). Individuals also noted that the transit issue could be linked to poor loading zones for businesses where parked trucks may be dangerous and slow buses down (Open House, Appendix VI, 10).

Bicycle infrastructure

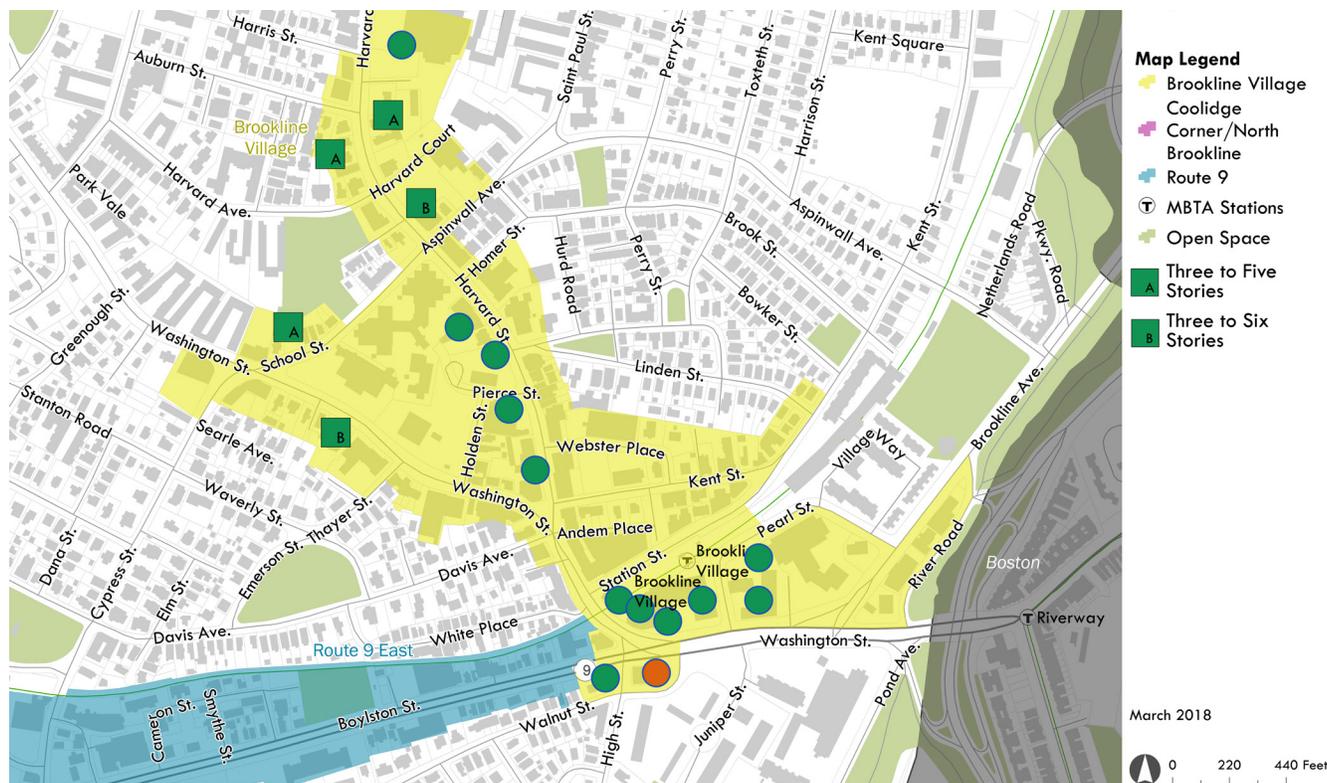
Bicycle infrastructure includes bike parking, bike storage, and bike lanes. Based on the community survey, approximately 55% of respondents noted that bike parking was very poor, poor, or fair in Brookline Village (Appendix V, 44). In recent years, the Town has partnered with Hubway, a private company that provides customers access to short-term bicycle rentals, to expand access to bicycles. There is one Hubway station located in front of Town Hall, which is .3 miles away from the Brookline Village train station stop of the MBTA Green Line (D-Line) along Station street. Attendees at the Open House stated there should be additional Hubway stations in the area as access to Station Street from Washington Street can be challenging when riding on a bike (Open House, Appendix VI, 10).

Development support and growth nodes

Support for development in Brookline Village varied. In the community survey, participants were asked to rate six development options in order of importance for each commercial area including hotel development, institutional development (hospitals, educational facilities), office space, mixed-use development (retail and office), mixed-use development (retail and housing) and housing. Brookline Village had the most support for

mixed-use development retail and office, and retail and housing. Hotel development in the area had the least support (Appendix III, 7).

During the Open House participants were asked to place green dots on parcels where they would support development and red dots on places they felt development should not be undertaken in Brookline Village. From the activities during the Open House, support for growth areas in the Brookline Village area concentrated on either side of Pearl Street, and further up Harvard St. Additionally Open House participants noted support for additional development between Kent Street and Linden street where a cluster of businesses are already



established (Open House, Appendix VI, pg. 10). The map also indicates areas where there was support for three to five story buildings (A) and three to six story buildings (B). Between Aspinwall Avenue and Vernon Street there was development support for three to five story buildings and three to six story buildings at different locations. Additional support for three to six stories was also noted on Washington Street across from the Town Library (Open House, Appendix VI, 10).

Brookline Village priority sites

Support for development at 20 Boylston Street and 155 Harvard Street aligns with the community survey, feedback gathered during the Open House, and materials provided by the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) (Appendix VII, 13 and 15).

20 Boylston Street

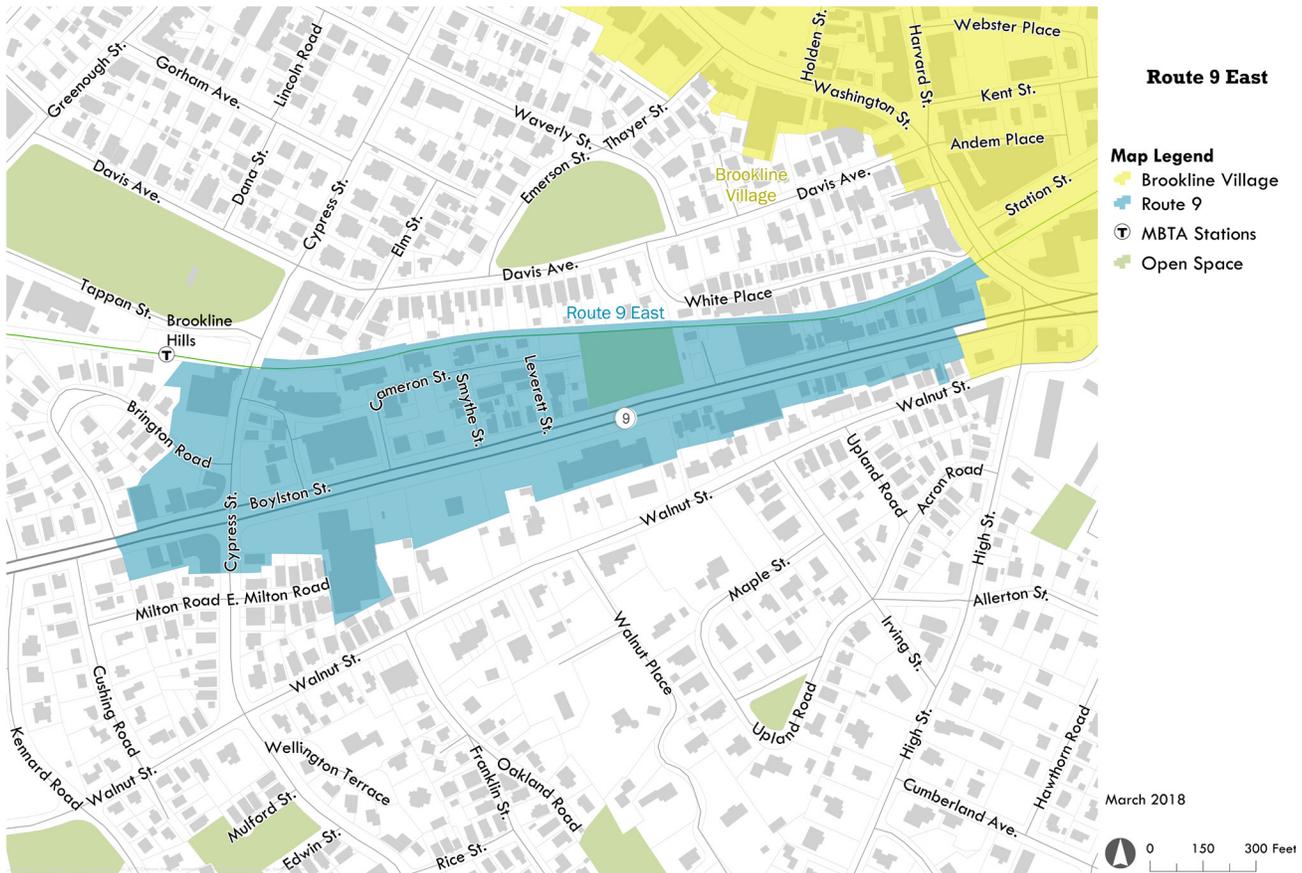
At the time of this report, developers of 20 Boylston Street were seeking special permits to redevelop the building to include a mixed-use of commercial and residential space. Based on the information collected during the outreach process, a developer could consider a local independent coffee establishment with seating, a restaurant, or a bakery as part of this mixed-use development. With allowable building heights to be as tall as three-to-seven stories and allowable building area maximum of 28,803 square feet, no zoning change would be needed (Appendix VII, 1). During the Open House, participants posted green dots for three-to-five story parcels near 20 Boylston Street, indicating there may be general support for this development.

155 Harvard Street (currently occupied by Stop and Shop)

Based on the Open house feedback, there was support for development along Harvard Street, particularly between Aspinwall Avenue and Vernon Street, to include parcels at 155 Harvard Street. With allowable building heights to be as tall as three-to-four stories and allowable building area of over 93,000 square feet, additional development at 155 Harvard Street is consistent with the feedback gathered throughout the outreach process (Appendix VII, 11).

ROUTE 9 EAST AND ROUTE 9 RESERVOIR ROAD STUDY AREAS

The Route 9 East and Route 9 Reservoir Road study areas are key to vehicular travel in the Boston metropolitan area. Several businesses are clustered within the Route 9 East study area, including a hotel and a variety of food establishments, and some of the largest employers in this area including Brigham and Women’s Physicians Organization and the Brookline Audi dealership. Major streets within the Route 9 East study area are Cypress Street, Washington Street, and Boylston Street. The western portion of Route 9 East is near the Brookline Hills station on the MBTA Green Line (D-line).



The Route 9 Reservoir Road study area is farther west and includes a cluster of health care-related facilities. The largest employers within the Route 9 Reservoir study area are Hammond Residential Real Estate and Brigham & Women’s Orthopedic. Major streets within the Route 9 Reservoir study area are Boylston Street and Reservoir Road.

Challenges and considerations

Walkability

The ability to walk around in an area greatly determines whether the area will be used by pedestrians. During the engagement process, 92% of community survey respondents agreed that the walkability of Route 9 was overall very poor, poor or fair. This was the biggest concern for survey respondents above all other factors (Appendix III, 7). During the focus group with commercial property owners, there were mixed reviews on whether



or not it was feasible to make the area more walkable since the layout of Route 9 may not allow this to happen. They mentioned that if there was to be additional development in this area there needs to be connection between the two sides of Route 9 (Appendix IV, 3). Additionally, pedestrian intersections were perceived as underutilized even though almost 84% of survey respondents answered that they walk regularly in town and view walkability as important to their quality of life (Appendix V, 24). There was even a suggestion to have police enforce traffic rules to reduce cars running red lights (Appendix VI, 8). It appears that people do not walk around Route 9 East or Route 9 Reservoir Road study area as much as other commercial areas in Brookline.

Streetscape

The quality and design of streets and sidewalks is closely tied to the walkability of an area. 84% of the community survey participants noted that the streetscape, including the design and quality of streets and sidewalks, was very poor, poor, or fair in these areas (Appendix III, 11). About 60% respondents said that well-maintained public infrastructure (water, sewer, storm water, roads, and sidewalks) is one of the most important community values to them. Out of the fifteen values that were surveyed, public infrastructure was the second highest value reported after a high quality school system (Appendix V, 21).

In order to improve the streetscape on Route 9, several suggestions were made during the Open House event. Pedestrian scale lighting, widening sidewalks, narrowing car lanes, safe sidewalks after snowfall, and planting trees were all suggestions provided on how to improve the vibrancy and increase potential for economic growth



(Appendix VI, 3, 5, 8). From the *Bringing Back Boylston* plan published in 2015, wider sidewalks, new crosswalks and increased cross times and curb bump-outs were all suggested as way to improve the streetscape (*Bringing Back Boylston*, 38).

Bicycle infrastructure

75% of survey respondents noted that bicycle infrastructure was very poor, poor, or fair along Route 9 (Appendix III, 11). Since the ability to get around using different modes of transportation (walkable, bikeable community) was ranked as the third most important value for residents in the community survey, this could be a priority for action by the town (Appendix V, 21).

Density and scale

During the focus group discussions, developers suggested that an incentive for development would be to rezone parcels in these study areas to allow for an increase in density and scale. One of the developers noted that it was likely that this area in particular could support mid-rise to high-rise buildings since it is adjacent to the highway. Participants also noted that rezoning should be considered in order to increase tax revenue (Appendix IV, 1).

Development support

Based on the community survey, the top three most cited location preferences for development along Route 9 East and Route 9 Reservoir Road study areas include institutional development, hotel development, and office space, respectively (Appendix III, 7).

Institutions

43% of survey respondents said they would support institutional development along the Route 9 study areas. Based on the six commercial types, this was the area that received the most support for institutional development like hospitals and educational facilities.

Hotel

Respondents to the community survey were asked to identify the best commercial district that could support hotel development. Out of all the commercial areas, Route 9 received the most approval for hotel development. (Appendix III, 7). 67.2% of community survey respondents were supportive of hotel development in Brookline overall (Appendix V, 27).

Office space

There was more support for office space along Route 9 than in any other commercial area studied. 146 people selected the Route 9 study areas as an opportune location to construct office space (Appendix III, 11). 68.5% of Brookline survey respondents supported office space development in Brookline overall (Appendix V, 27).

Route 9 Priority Sites

During the Open House, participants were presented with a map of the Route 9 study area and asked to place green dots on areas where they would support development and red dots on areas where they would not support development. There was significantly more support for development (41 green dots) than opposition (four red dots) in the Route 9 study area. The map on the previous page shows these results.

Participants in the Open House did not want to see development at the Boylston Street Playground and at a few residential areas between Upland Road and High Street (Appendix VI, 8). North of Boylston Street and along Cameron Street there was support for three to six stories. There was support for three-to-five stories on Cypress Street North of Boylston Street (Appendix VI, 10).

Cypress Street and Boylston Intersection

Support for growth areas on Route 9 was highly concentrated at the intersection of Cypress Street and Boylston Street (Appendix VI, 8). This is not a newly identified area of town for development. In the 2015 Vision and Action plan for Route 9 East, *Bringing Back Boylston*, "Cypress Junction" was identified as a key priority site ripe for development. This area is envisioned to be an active neighborhood center with mixed-use development, and there is agreement by EDAB for support of potential development.

Cypress Junction A, 116 and 120 Cypress Street had support for three-to-five stories in the parcel. With zoning at five to seven allowed stories at the site, it may be a potential place for development (Appendix VII, 4). Junction B also had support for development. With the current one story building, it would be expanded to have three-to-four stories (Appendix VII, 5).

361-375 Cypress Street, located in Cypress Junction C, was also identified by many during the Open House as

Route 9 is the most common survey response for following development types:

Institutions (hospitals, educational facilities)

Hotels

Office Space

(Appendix VI, pg. 7)

Desired business types on Route 9

Restaurants with liquor licenses

(Appendix VI, pg. 7)

a site they would like to be developed. The *Bringing Back Boylston* study referenced the desire to incorporate additional retail such as restaurants, small grocery stores and fitness centers in order to capitalize on the high volume of traffic (*Bringing Back Boylston*, 40). In order to obtain this diversity in restaurants a suggestion was made to allocate more liquor licenses to encourage variety (*Appendix VI*, 7).

120 & 128 Boylston Street

Liner Tire at 120 and 128 Boylston Street was recently sold. The space is directly across the street from the Hilton Homewood Suites and could be suitable for development. There were three green dots from the Open House in support of development in these parcels (*Appendix VI*, 8), but there were also some concerns raised about the sites. Property owners from the focus group mentioned that the sites are shallow in depth. Currently the area is zoned for three to four stories with a total buildable area of 7,814 square feet (*Appendix VII*, 2). Based on the surrounding support for three-to-six stories, it would be advantageous to explore whether the zoning for these sites should be increased.

Additionally one suggestion that was made was to work with property owners to develop structured parking for combined parcels. The Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) has expressed concern about the feasibility of redeveloping these sites if parking demand must be accommodated for each parcel at current zoning requirements for parking ratios (*Appendix VII*, 2).

270 and 308 Boylston Street

Based on the information provided by EDAB, the property owners at 270 and 308 Boylston Street are interested in renovating, but not significantly changing those properties. There was general support for development in the area based on the Open House findings (*Appendix VII*, 3).

Route 9 Reservoir Road Area

The Route 9 Reservoir Road study area is near Chestnut Hill and has a number of potential opportunities for development. Many of the property owners from the focus groups provided feedback regarding how this area of town could be improved. Some suggested upzoning the area in order to enable denser mixed-use development. Residents also felt it was important to make sure scale was important to control traffic (*Appendix IV*, 3-4). It should be noted that no green or red dots were placed on this map during the Open House.

CHESTNUT HILL

The Chestnut Hill commercial area is located in the southwest corner of Brookline. Train service connecting to Boston and Newton is available on the Green Line (D) approximately 1/4 mile north of Boylston on Hammond Street. Major streets in Chestnut Hill include Boylston and Hammond Streets. Other important streets for mobility are Holly Lane and Tully Street, as well as the Frontage Road to the north of Route 9 that provides access to



many of the businesses in The Street shopping center. Some of the largest employers are Frontier Science and Technology, Wingate Residences, and Samet & Company. This area of Brookline is nestled next to Chestnut Hill in Newton, MA.

Chestnut Hill area challenges and considerations

Walkability and bicycle infrastructure

Walkability was a big concern in the Chestnut Hill area for survey respondents. About 83% of survey respondents perceived walkability as very poor, poor or fair (Appendix III, 9). Although there is a good sidewalk network on the south side of Route 9 and along the Frontage Road north of Route 9, the high-speed nature of Route 9, combined with the limited number of Route 9 crossings, contributes to the limited walkability.

Additionally, 64% of survey respondents thought bike infrastructure was either very poor, poor, or fair (Appendix II, 9). This should be one of the major considerations as planning is underway for redevelopment of this area.

Sense of place and identity

An array of views were expressed in regards to the feel and character of Chestnut Hill contributing to a lack of identity or sense of place. During the community outreach process, a number of participants commented they wanted this commercial area to feel more cohesive (Open House, Appendix VI, 7). Approximately 54% of participants that completed the community survey commented there was a very poor, poor, or fair sense of place and identity in the area (Appendix III, 9). Additionally, 59% felt this area lacked historical character (Appendix III, 10). A suggestion was made to have the north side of Boylston Street mimic the Chestnut Hill side, also known as The Street shopping center. The Street shopping center is a 406,000 square foot development along Route 9 that includes shopping, dining, and entertainment destinations (Appendix VI, 7).

Parking infrastructure

Participants in the community survey responded mostly positively when talking about the parking availability in the Chestnut Hill area in Brookline. 66% of survey respondents either thought it was good or very good (Appendix III, 9). With the shops in Chestnut Hill, office space and The Street nearby, the survey respondents generally viewed the area's parking infrastructure as adequate.

Chestnut Hill area development support

Hotel Development

Out of the six development types included in the community survey, hotel development was reported as the top desired type in Chestnut Hill. This area was reported as the second most desired location for hotel development in all of Brookline after the Route 9 area further to the east (Appendix III, 7).

Housing

29% of survey respondents were unsure where it would be best to build housing town-wide. However, the Chestnut Hill commercial area ranked as the second-most desired area to develop housing in Brookline based on individuals that responded to the survey. 17% of survey respondents thought it would be best to build housing in Chestnut Hill. One suggestion was made to redevelop the Brookline side of Route 9 as mid-rise or high-rise multi-unit residential (Appendix IV, 2). Additional residential development could be desirable in this area because of its proximity to already existing commercial areas in Chestnut Hill, where businesses such as The Container Store, Shake Shack, Pottery Barn, Showcase SuperLux, and other retailers are located and provide a variety of amenities to residents and visitors. Considering a mid-rise mixed-use development is already located east of Tully Street (to the south of the retail fronting on Route 9), additional upper-story residential units could likely be supported in this area.

Desired Business Types

Specialty shops

Variety of businesses

(Appendix VI, 7)

Overall 79% of survey participants thought the business variety in the area was either good or very good.

(Appendix III, 9)



Chestnut Hill area priority sites

During the Open House, participants were asked to place green dots on where they would support development and red dots on places they felt development should not be undertaken in the Chestnut Hill area of Brookline (see map above). There were eight dots that were put on the map indicating support for additional development at locations such as the CVS, parking lots, Century Bank, Brookline Bank, and Charles Schwab (Appendix VI, 7).

Tully Street West

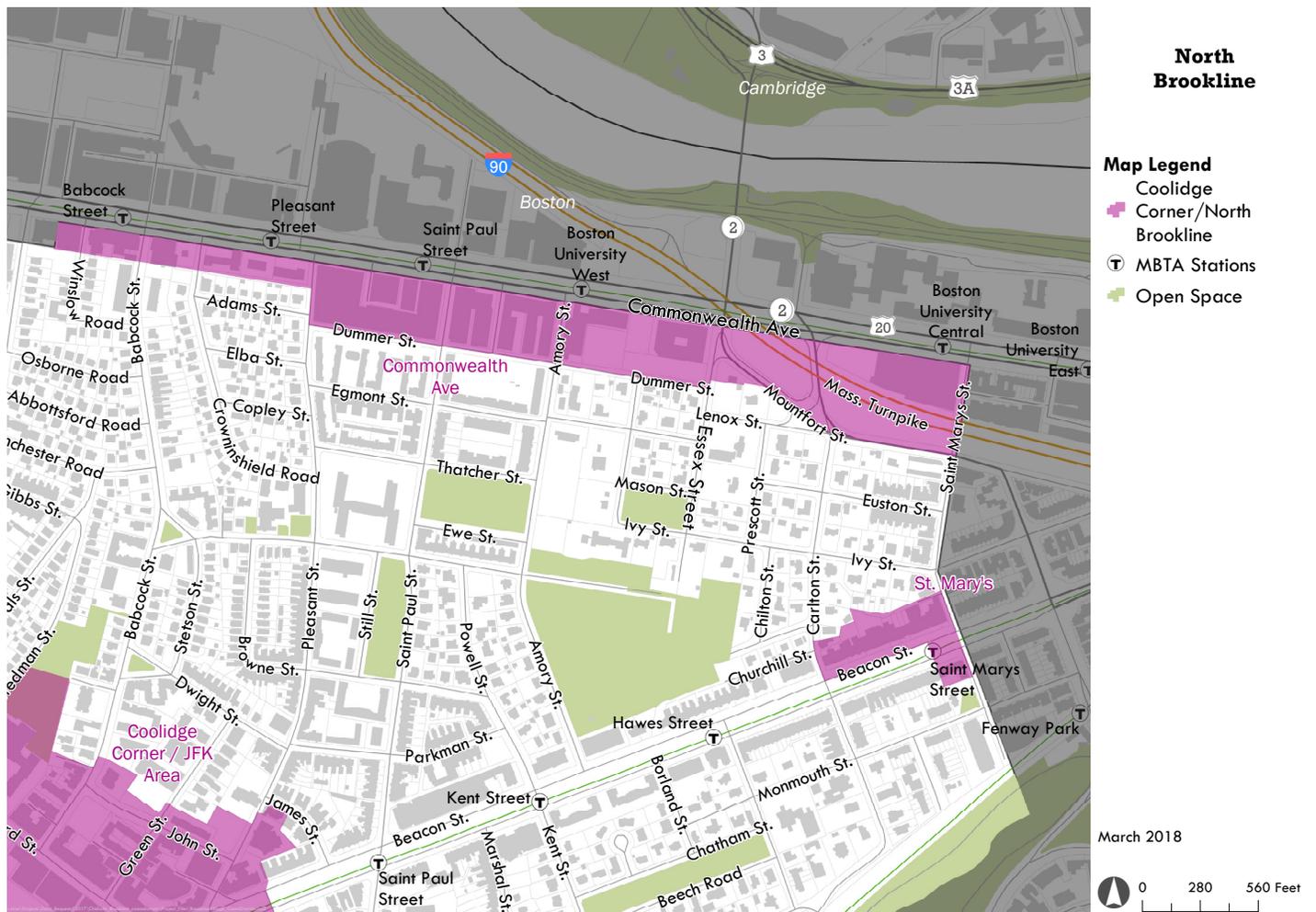
One of the major development parcels that has been identified by EDAB is 1280-1330 Boylston Street in the Chestnut Hill Office Park. Conveniently located along Route 9, near the Tully Street intersection, this development has access to many areas in Brookline and Newton. This site is in an Office Zoning District and does not allow for retail use. Based on the survey responses and feedback received during the Open House, it may be beneficial to change the zoning to include mixed-use retail, office, or housing. With 533,713 square feet of allowable building area and an allowable building height of four-to-ten stories, this could be a suitable area for development given current structures in the area are only two-to-six stories tall (Appendix VII, 8).

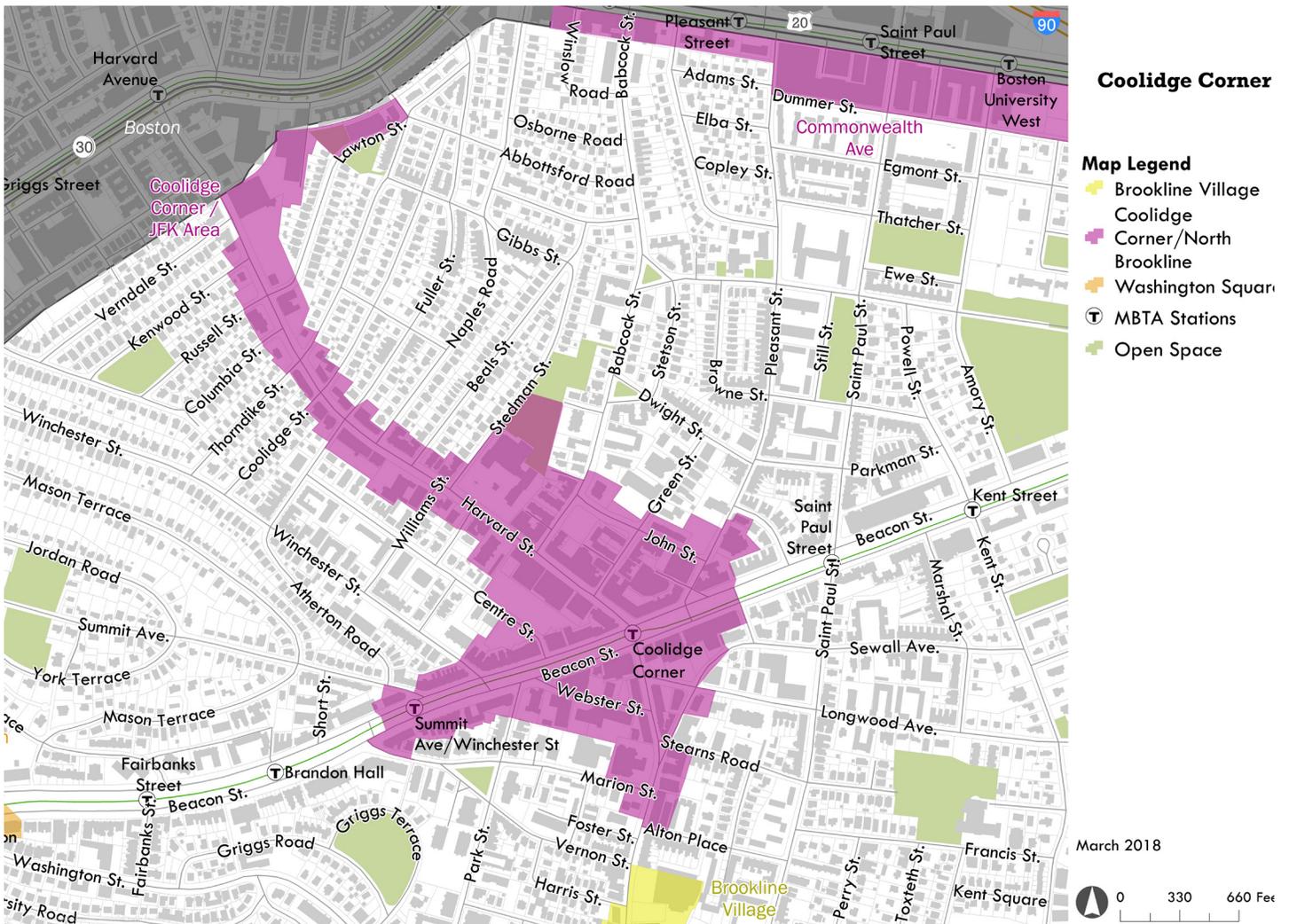
NORTH BROOKLINE & COOLIDGE CORNER

North Brookline

Major streets in North Brookline are Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street. The Massachusetts Turnpike intersects this area briefly in its northeast corner. The MBTA Green Line (B-line) is located on Commonwealth Avenue, providing transit access to the area. The largest employers along Commonwealth Avenue include Boston University, Harvard Clinical Research Institute, and the National Ministry of Design. In the St. Mary's sub-area, located at the intersection of Beacon Street and St. Mary's Street, the largest employers include Whole Foods and Down Under Yoga, Inc.

Many restaurants, doctor's offices, and Boston University-related businesses are on Commonwealth Avenue. The Accommodation and Food Services sector and the Healthcare and Social Assistance sector account for 20% of businesses located on Commonwealth Ave (Infogroup Business Level Data, 2016). Within the third largest sector, automotive repair, beauty salons, and personal care services were the largest types of businesses.





Coolidge Corner

Major streets in Coolidge Corner are Beacon Street and Harvard Street. The Green Line (C line) runs through this district along Beacon Street with stops at Coolidge Corner (at Harvard Street and Summit Ave/ Winchester Street). Some of the largest employers in Coolidge Corner are Trader Joe's, Edward Devotion School, and Healthworks Fitness. According to the 2016 Infogroup Business Level Data, there are a total of 1,355 businesses in Brookline's commercial districts, with 41.9% of these businesses located in Coolidge Corner (Appendix II, 1). That is more than any other commercial district in Brookline. Due to the high concentration of businesses in Coolidge Corner, it is generally known as a central business district of Brookline.

Challenges and considerations

North Brookline and Coolidge Corner are walkable urban districts with many amenities and transit access. Overall, North Brookline and Coolidge Corner had positive ratings and responses in the community survey as compared to the other commercial areas in Brookline. Their proximity to jobs, schools, adjacent residential neighborhoods, parks, and cultural institutions was reported as good or very good by 75% of respondents.

Sense of identity and historical character

The streetscape and design of streets, historical character, and sense of place and identity were all rated highly by survey participants. 90% of survey respondents felt that Coolidge Corner and North Brookline had either a good or very good sense of identity (Appendix III, 10). However, some focus group participants noted that it may not be understood where Coolidge Corner begins and where it ends (Appendix IV, 4).

Parking availability

Parking availability in Coolidge Corner and North Brookline is a difficult subject to address since there are conflicting views on whether or not the town should invest in increasing or decreasing the amount of available parking. Similarly, parking demand can continue to be managed through measures such as higher parking rates, as long as individual businesses are not affected as a whole. Of the community survey participants, 63% felt that parking availability in North Brookline and Coolidge Corner was either very poor, poor, or fair. This was the highest point of dissatisfaction from the community survey respondents (Appendix II, 10). Individuals at the Open House event mentioned that there was a desire for overnight parking, employee parking options, parking for visitors, as well as additional parking at Trader Joe's (Appendix VI, 12).

In the *Coolidge Corner District Plan*, one of the main action steps was the use of incentives and restrictions to provide Coolidge Corner employee parking in order to increase the number of spaces available for Coolidge Corner customers. Another recommendation looked at using management techniques to increase the usage of available parking (Coolidge Corner District Plan, 74). Both of these recommendations have been completed, but the community survey points to a desire for additional options for employee parking as well as management techniques.

In contrast, some community members wanted less parking in Coolidge Corner, emphasizing that visitors should use trains and bus services instead. Some want more bus routes into Coolidge Corner similar to route service provided by the MBTA 66 bus (Appendix VI, 12). In the *Coolidge Corner District Plan*, there was an action item that sought to reduce parking requirements for new development, therefore limiting the amount of parking availability in the area (Coolidge Corner District Plan, 67). Recent rezoning has resulted in smaller residential parking ratios for areas near transit stations, but commercial parking requirements have only been reduced via individual rezoning articles for each commercial development.

Centre Street Parking Lot

During stakeholder interviews, the Coolidge Corner Merchants' Association mentioned their interest in putting the Centre Street Parking lot to higher and better use, rather than just single use surface parking (Appendix IV, 4). One suggestion was made to include transforming the current parking into a garage to solve some parking issues. (Appendix IV, 3). Others suggested that the town should put out a Request For Proposals and sell the lot for development to shift the burden of development to a developer (Appendix IV, 3). Another suggestion was to make the Centre Street lot into a town square with underground parking and a three-to-four story building around the square. In the *Coolidge Corner District Plan*, an action step was to explore options for potential parking redevelopment (Coolidge Corner District Plan, 74). Support from Town Meeting Members in this neighborhood would be a political prerequisite for any of these ideas; to date, Town Meeting Members have been clear that there should not be any additional above-ground structure on this lot nor net new municipally-owned parking space.

Bicycle infrastructure

53% of community survey respondents felt that bicycle infrastructure in North Brookline and Coolidge Corner was either very poor, poor, or fair (Appendix III, pg. 10). There were comments from the Open House that included a desire for more bike lanes on Harvard Street that were parking protected, as well as additional Hubway options (Appendix VI, 12).

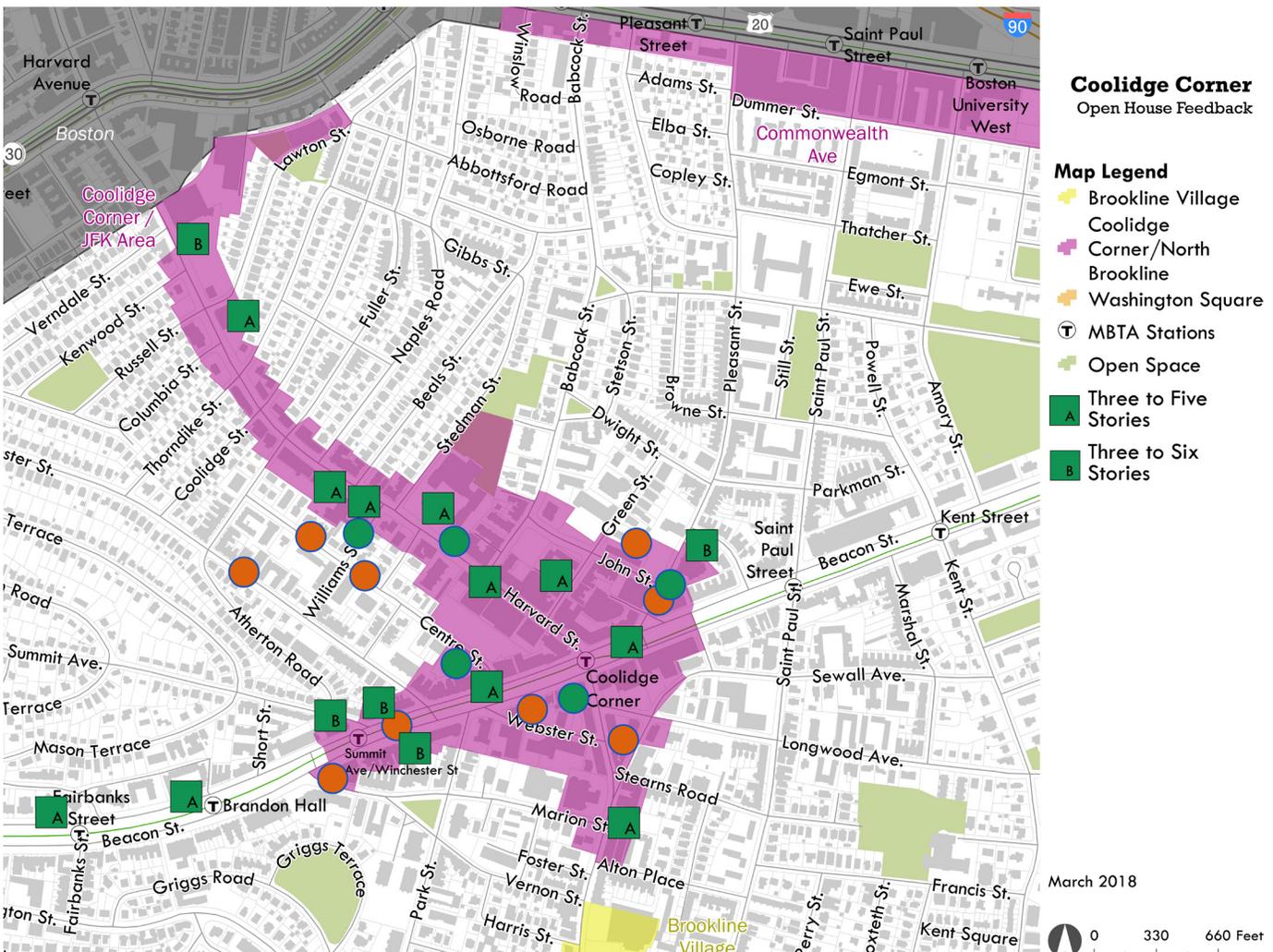
Arts and culture in Coolidge Corner

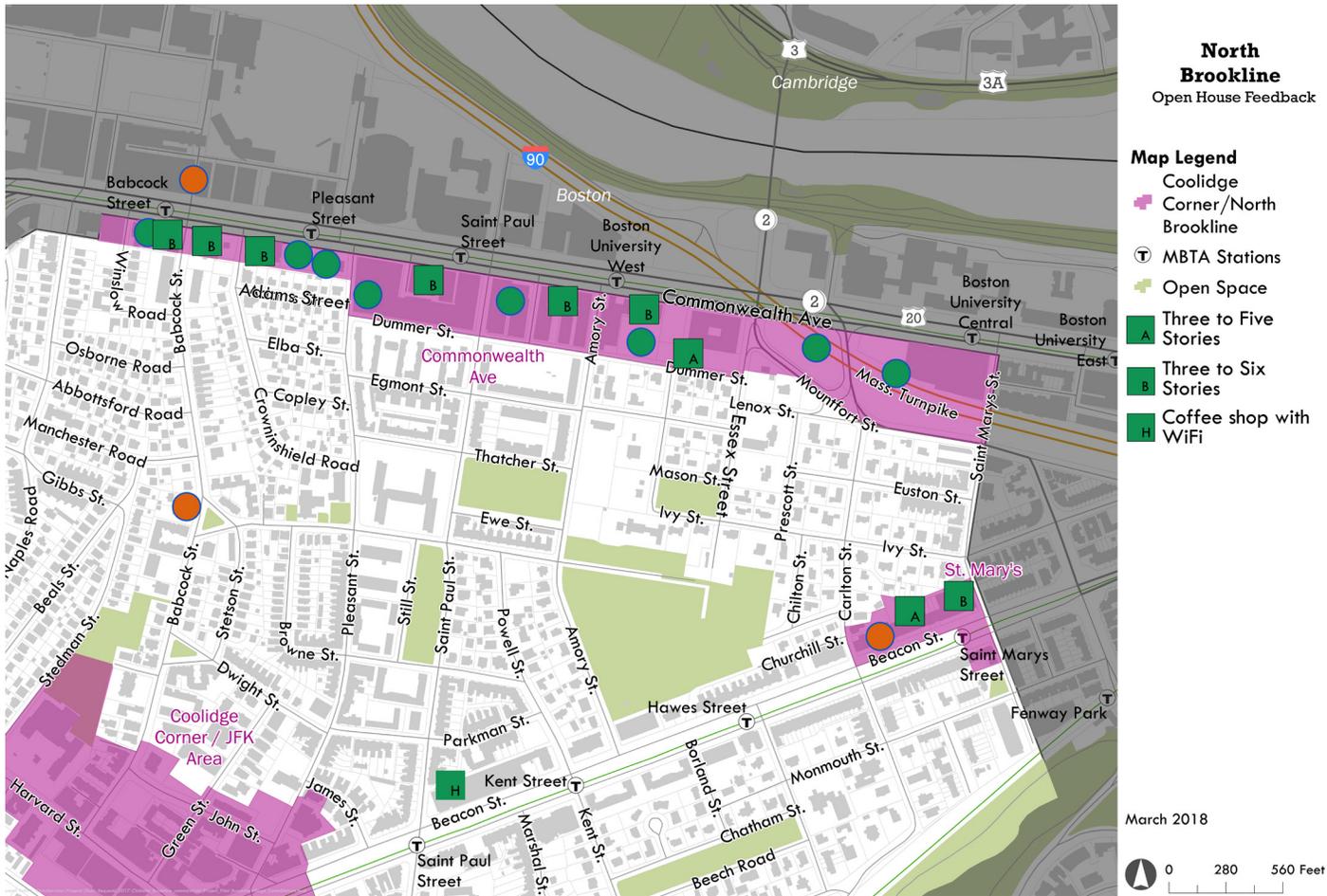
In the *Coolidge Corner District Plan*, action step four promoted the creation of community arts and cultural space in order to enhance Coolidge Corner as a cultural destination (*Coolidge Corner District Plan*, 75). Respondents to the community survey expressed their desire to include street art and a building dedicated to performing arts, live theatre, and concerts. Some participants even mentioned the desire to make Coolidge Corner a mecca for public art (Appendix, 12). The Brookline Commission for the Arts is currently studying the potential for designating this and other areas as cultural districts with the Mass Cultural Council.

Development support and growth nodes

Mixed-Use Developments

Out of the six types of commercial development that were options in the community survey, mixed-use retail and office was the first choice for Coolidge Corner and North Brookline; followed by mixed-use retail and housing; and housing was the third most desired development type in both Coolidge Corner and North Brookline. Some focus group participants noted that the recent Coolidge Corner district planning effort was ineffective when it became dominated by groups opposing any residential development (Appendix IV, 4). Focus group participants mentioned wanting to advocate for development at nodes and not development that was spread out. The least





amount of support was for institutional development, such as hospitals and educational institutions (Appendix II, 7).

Scale and density

Scale and density were recurring topic areas that were important to residents and individuals that participated in the community survey, focus groups, and Open House. The biggest concern with scale and density was keeping the current character of the town while still remaining competitive. Some mentioned the desire to be able to compete with The Street (a 406,000 square foot property along Route 9 that includes shopping, dining, and entertainment destinations), while others mentioned the height limits on buildings helped to maintain the character of the town. Others suggested five-to-six story buildings in the Coolidge Corner area were more desirable, noting that zoning permitting three-to-four stories does not meet the demand (Appendix IV, 3). One suggestion for how to balance these competing interests was to sequence development so that projects are not all under construction at the same time. (Appendix VI, 12).

Maps on page 29 and 30 were populated with green dots, squares, or red dots during the Open House. Participants were asked to place green dots where they would support development and red dots where they would not support development. The map also indicates areas where there was support for three-to-five story buildings (A) and three-to-six story buildings (B).

Support in Coolidge Corner

There were 22 green dots and 9 red dots placed in and around the Coolidge Corner area. Most support for three-to-five story buildings was located on Harvard Street between Russell Street and Marion Street. In terms of three-to-six story development, most support was concentrated on Beacon Street, west of the Harvard Street intersection. There was also a suggestion to have a three-to-six story development on Harvard Street, where there is currently a parking lot. The “H” square indicates where there was a specific request to have a cafe with Wi-Fi. Red dots were placed primarily on one-story commercial parcels and in residential areas (Appendix VI, 11).

Desired commercial types in North Brookline

Coffee shop with Wi-Fi
Workforce Housing
Housing and retail along Commonwealth Avenue
Air rights development over Massachusetts Turnpike parcels

(Appendix VI, 6)

(Appendix VI, 6)

Support in North Brookline

Support for development in North Brookline was unique to this area of town. During the Open House, 17 green dots were placed in support of development and one red dot was placed opposing development in the study area. The map also indicated support for taller buildings, with seven out of the eight suggestions for structures three-to-six stories in height (Appendix VI, 6).

In the St. Marys sub-area, there were multiple responses indicating an interest in enlarging the Whole Foods (at 1028 Beacon Street) and providing more variety of foods for customers. There was support for a building of three-to-five stories where the current Whole Foods is located.

Desired commercial types on Coolidge Corner

Independent coffee shops in the Beacon Street /Harvard Street area
Live music venue and theatre space
Fine dining restaurants and more brunch options
Full sit-down Italian Restaurant
Bakeries
Pubs and Bars
Women’s clothing stores
Specialty retail: independent, mid-size, regional/national
Low-moderate-priced carry out food options
Variety of shops

(Appendix VI, 4 and 12)

Limit these types of commercial

Daycares, nail salons, banks, & cell phone stores
Too many chains
Chain pizza establishments

(Appendix VI, 4 and 12)

Coolidge Corner priority sites

Retail

The purple boxes on the previous page summarize the types of retail that focus group participants suggested promoting and limiting in Coolidge Corner. Survey respondents commented on the numerous chain businesses along Harvard Street, which they perceived to result from high rents in the area. According to the retail opportunity gap analysis, within a ten minute walk of Coolidge Corner, demand exceeds supply by more than \$101 million for total retail (Appendix II, 6)*, meaning that there is an opportunity to capture some local spending within a ten minute walking distance to support potential new retail investment. However, when considering the area within a fifteen minute drive time, there are fewer opportunities for retail, highlighting the potential to cater to a more localized population. There are exceptions to this, with supply stores, food and beverage stores, and general merchandise stores in particular that show potential opportunities for this type of retail within a fifteen minute driving distance.

The Economic Development Division identified 15 potential sites (Blocks A-O) in the JFK corridor (predominantly consisting of parcels along Harvard Street) in Coolidge Corner for development prior to this community outreach process. Out of the sites identified, Block A, Block B, and Block G aligned well with community feedback. Additional information about all the blocks is provided in Appendix VII, pages 16 - 27.

Block A - 487 - 523 Harvard Street

Participants of the Open House and focus group had commented that property at 487-523 Harvard Street (currently occupied by TJ Maxx) site was underutilized. Developers and residents were both interested in prioritizing this property for redevelopment (Appendix VI, 12). This site was previously considered for an additional elementary school, but that plan did not move forward. During the Open House, participants suggested that there should be a building of three-to-six stories on the site (Appendix VI, 11). The permitted height for this site is three-to-seven stories with an allotted 135,200 square feet of buildable area; this density would not need a zoning change to implement. As such, this could be a potential priority site in the Coolidge Corner area (Appendix VII, 16). However, the property owner has made very clear that it does not wish to change or develop its land.

Block B - 473 - 481 Harvard Street and 455 Harvard Street

This block has many existing businesses including Starbucks, Massage Envy, Wings, Glo Studios, and Basil Rise. During the Open House, participants supported three-to-five story buildings on this site (Appendix VI, 11). Currently there is a one-story building at this location. The permitted height for this site is three-to-four stories with an allotted 36,034 square feet of buildable floor area. Thus, a zoning change would be needed to implement developments taller than four stories.

Block G - 367- 369, 375, and 371 Harvard Street & 4-6 Steadman Street

During the Open House, participants supported development of three-to-five stories on this site (Appendix VI, 11). Such a building height would be permitted under the existing zoning and so this could be a potential priority site for development in the Coolidge Corner area.

* However this does not take Internet sales into account

WASHINGTON SQUARE

The main roads in Washington Square are Beacon Street and Washington Street. The Tappan Street and Washington Square stations on the Green Line (C line) are located within the district. The largest employers are Star Market, The Publick House, and Sunshine Academy. Of all the commercial areas in Brookline, Washington Square ranked third in total number of businesses, behind Coolidge Corner and Brookline Village. 8.5% of businesses town-wide are located in Washington Square, according to the 2016 Infogroup Business Level data (Appendix II, 1).

Challenges and considerations

Walkability

Walkability was the highest rated feature of Washington Square. Since the commercial district has two stops on the MBTA Green Line (C-line, Washington Square and Tappan Street), it provides ample opportunities for pedestrian traffic. 89% of community survey participants reported that pedestrian infrastructure in Washington Square was either good or very good. Additionally, 84% of survey respondents felt that the location of Washington Square had good or very good proximity to jobs, schools, parks, and cultural institutions (Appendix III, 11). Several respondents suggested ways to improve Washington Square, including a better walking route to the Runkle School and widening the sidewalk on the corner of Beacon Street and Washington Street.



Parking Availability

Parking availability was noted as a potential area for improvement in Washington Square. Over 60% of survey respondents felt that the parking in Washington Square was either very poor, poor, or fair. Similarly, almost half of survey respondents felt that bicycle infrastructure could also be improved (Appendix III, 11). One suggestion was made to create protected bike lanes in both directions on Beacon Street in order to provide safety for bicycle users.



Business Variety

Although the business quality in Washington Square was viewed positively by survey respondents, there is room for improvement with respect to the variety of businesses. According to the community survey, almost 80% of respondents thought the quality of businesses in the area was either very good or good. This may contribute to the positive sense of identity and place in Washington Square. To improve the area, it may be helpful to assess the variety of businesses to determine what gaps might exist in their offerings. Almost half of survey respondents felt there could be more variety in the types of businesses in this area size (Appendix III, 11). It was also suggested by some respondents that the Town find ways to be more explicit about the boundaries of the Washington Square district in order to help draw shoppers to the area. Developing additional wayfinding about available amenities would help support this effort (Appendix IV, 4). The box on the left indicates commercial types for Washington Square that were mentioned.

Desired commercial types in Washington Square

A restaurant district with outdoor dining
Ice cream shop
Dance studio
Workforce housing

(Appendix VI, 9)

Development support

Mixed-Use and Housing

Mixed-use buildings were the most preferred development type in Washington Square out of the six commercial options listed in the community survey. In the community survey, respondents were asked to identify which commercial areas would be best-suited for mixed-use retail and housing, and Washington Square was the second most popular location in Brookline with over 22% of respondents indicating support for such development. Non mixed-use housing was

the second most popular development type indicated by respondents. The least amount of support was for institutional development in Washington Square.

Washington Square priority sites

Beacon Street sites

Potential growth areas in Brookline were identified by the Open House participants with Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) members. During the Open House, participants identified 1638 - 1648 Beacon Street as a potential site for mixed-use housing, specifically residential with retail uses on the ground floor. Currently there is a one-story commercial building housing food establishments and other retail facilities. There was also support for increasing the height and density of the commercial area along Beacon Street between University Road and Winthrop Road, which is currently occupied by several one-story commercial buildings.

PUTTERHAM CIRCLE

Putterham Circle is included in the commercial areas summary as a result of feedback from the Open House. It is located in south Brookline and is adjacent to a roundabout at the intersection of West Roxbury Parkway and Grove Street. Some of the shops in Putterham Circle include a real estate office, grocery store, clothing stores, and a Starbucks. Participants from the Open House expressed concern that there is limited access to this area. Although the 51 bus is available, at both the South Street and Grove Street, and the Grove Street and Bellingham Road, there was interest to connect additional transit options. The survey respondents also mentioned that Putterham Circle is one of the few areas in South Brookline that is walkable. Participants felt the stores could be expanded to two stories to create more opportunities to shop and a better variety of shops in Putterham Circle (Appendix VI, 2).

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Recommended next steps are not in any particular order or priority listing.

TOWN-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Update the Economic Development 5-Year Action Plan to coordinate recent planning efforts, such as the *Bringing Back Boylston: A Vision and Action Plan for Route 9 East*, the Housing Production Plan, the Major Parcel Study, and *Perspectives and Opportunities for Brookline's Commercial Areas*.
2. Undertake a municipal parking study for the commercial areas. The study would be a parking-focused to update to the 2008 Traffic Study and 2007 Coolidge Corner Transportation Analysis. The study should include:
 - o Inventory of all available parking spaces
 - o Parking activity data, including capacity, demand, peak use, turnover, and duration
 - o Parking supply and demand analysis, including commuter parking and commercial district parking
 - o Analysis of current parking regulations, comparison of parking prices, and list of recommendations
 - o Best practices for effective parking management from other municipalities within the region
3. Explore methods to encourage property owners to invest in their properties, diversify the types of commercial and residential tenants, and encourage redevelopment of underutilized parcels.
4. Explore incentives to promote and develop mixed-used infill development through adaptive reuse or expansion of existing buildings, particularly encourage first-floor retail with housing/offices on higher floors.
5. Encourage mixed-use development with housing and retail/office for mixed-income residents. This could include:
 - o Options for seniors as well as young adults and families
 - o Affordable housing for low and middle-income earners
 - o Increased residential density to support local businesses
6. Enhance business relationships through outreach, marketing, round-table discussions, and events.
7. Respond to desire for more arts and culture representation as noted in the survey

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Recommended next steps are not in any particular order or priority listing.

<p>TOWN-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	<p>and during the Open House by developing an Arts and Culture action plan, which could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A review of options for artist work/live spaces o Strategies to identify and connect artisans working out of their homes o Identification of performance spaces o Research on Cultural District Designation options through the Massachusetts Cultural Council. This designation can result in increased marketing and priority funding when the state allocates funding to the arts o Tools to promote and incentivize the creation and retention of community arts and cultural spaces – especially through the Coolidge Corner Theatre, regarded by survey respondents as a cornerstone of arts and culture in Brookline <p>8. Given the demographic disparity between survey respondents and the general population, engage underrepresented groups in the economic development planning processes to bolster opportunities and ideas for the town. Some strategies could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Engage student populations, low-income households and individuals, those requiring accommodations, low-literacy and limited English proficiency populations o Host meetings at rotating locations on different days/times of the week and accessible by various transportation modes o Include members of underrepresented communities in planning/advisory committees o Maintain up-to-date communication on town-wide opportunities, including town website, email marketing, and events <p>9. As redevelopment occurs, incentivize and increase open space, plazas, parklets and community arts spaces.</p> <p>10. Reinforce and enhance a sense of place and identity for each commercial area and other prominent areas, locations, and amenities in Brookline.</p>
<p>BROOKLINE VILLAGE</p>	<p>1. Conduct a market analysis to understand and capitalize on residential and commercial market conditions in Brookline Village, particularly in response to the anticipated growth within the Health Care sector.</p> <p>2. Review the feasibility of business types identified as desirable through the community survey, such as restaurants and other food service industry businesses (Page 13).</p>

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Recommended next steps are not in any particular order or priority listing.

<p>BROOKLINE VILLAGE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Work with MBTA and Brookline Police Department on efforts to improve operations of Route 66 buses (Page 13). 4. Increase number of commercial loading/unloading zones and reduce double parking (Page 13). 5. Work with Hubway to incorporate more stations near the Brookline Village T stop as well as near the Muddy River Trail on the Emerald Necklace, as there is only one station located near Town Hall (Page 13). 6. Allow Special Permits to increase allowable maximum building height for select groups of parcels on Harvard Street between Aspinwall Avenue and Vernon Street, provided that the maximum height shall not exceed 70 feet (Page 15).
<p>ROUTE 9 EAST AND ROUTE 9 RESERVOIR ROAD AREA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore adding traffic calming measures, such as crosswalks, signage, flashing lights, safety islands, pedestrian scale lighting, widened sidewalks, and narrower car lanes, along Route 9, and increase police presence and plowing of sidewalks after snowstorms (Page 17). 2. Focus on attracting retail, restaurants, grocery stores, and fitness centers to capitalize on the high volume of traffic on the Cypress Street corridor. Concurrently, work with developers to create a more pedestrian-friendly area (Page 19). 3. In response to focus group feedback, increase maximum height restrictions between properties 120 and 128 Boylston Street to 70 feet, so long as parking demand is accommodated on the site (Page 20). 4. Allow denser mixed-use development with a focus on first-floor commercial and multifamily residential in Route 9 Reservoir Road area (Page 20).
<p>CHESTNUT HILL AREA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase traffic-calming measures in Chestnut Hill area by Frontage Road north of Route 9 (Page 21). 2. Work with the city of Newton to connect Hammond Street to the Chestnut Hill walk/bike path in the Brighton neighborhood of Boston to help increase access to potential customers from Boston College and the Chestnut Hill T stop.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Recommended next steps are not in any particular order or priority listing.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Encourage facade improvements reflecting similar design elements as The Street shopping center. Explore expanding the Town’s facade improvement program to allow additional businesses to beautify their storefronts. 4. Change zoning on Route 9 to allow mixed-use retail/housing, retail/office, mid-rise residential units, or hotel development (Page 22).
<p>NORTH BROOKLINE / COOLIDGE CORNER AREA</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In addition to the market conditions study (see appendix), conduct a full market analysis for Coolidge Corner to understand and capitalize on the residential and commercial conditions. 2. Rezone to encourage mixed-use development in which retail businesses would be located on the first floor with either offices or housing on upper stories. 3. As a part of a parking study, review the potential of turning the Centre Street parking lot to a lower level parking garage along with greenery on surface (Page 26). 4. Add Hubway kiosks to Saint Paul Street T station and increase number of bikes at JFK crossing location on Harvard Street. 5. Widen bike lanes on Harvard Street and complete trail from Harvard Street to Commonwealth Avenue (Page 26). 6. Prioritize development parcels in Coolidge Corner (Centre Street Parking Lot, Beacon Street west of Coolidge Corner Green Line station, and along Harvard Street). Limit height requirements and allow facade alterations in these locations. 7. Create Special Permit to allow increases to maximum permitted building height along Commonwealth Ave (up to 70 feet), and at 455 and 473-481 Harvard Street (up to 60 feet) (Page 29). 8. Work with Coolidge Corner Merchants’ Association to improve local shopping within Coolidge Corner. This would include increasing walkability and bikeability to Coolidge Corner by conducting walking and biking audits, pursuing sidewalk and intersection improvements, and by improving multi-modal connectivity.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Recommended next steps are not in any particular order or priority listing.

NORTH BROOKLINE / COOLIDGE CORNER AREA	9. As opportunities arise, continue discussions with owner of the TJ Maxx site to explore redevelopment of the site and JFK Block G.
WASHINGTON SQUARE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Widen sidewalks at the Beacon Street and Washington Street intersection and increase pedestrian connectivity near the Runkle School from Washington Square (Page 31).2. Develop changes to zoning in order to permit higher density retail-housing mixed-use development, especially for properties at 1638-1678 Beacon Street (Page 33).3. Develop changes to zoning in order to allow for an increase in permitted zoning height and density for commercial areas between University Road and Winthrop Road on Beacon Street (Page 33).

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

These terms and definitions provide additional information on community development.

Business Climate - Business climate indicates how states, regional and local policies, relationships and local communities support business development. Ultimately, a good business climate allows businesses to conduct their affairs with minimal interference while accessing quality high inputs and customers at low costs³.

Business Retention and Expansion - BRE is the one of the main priorities of state and local development professionals. Local businesses have strong community ties, reducing the risk of leaving and BRE programs are often less expensive than business attraction, yielding more jobs on average³.

Cluster Development - Clusters are geographic concentrations of interdependent, complementary and/or competing businesses in related industries that trade with each other. Clusters develop and change over time, stemming from the long-term economic history, companies and demand for products, and services locally³.

Community Development - Community development activities build stronger and more resilient communities through an ongoing process of identifying and addressing needs, assets, and priority investments. Community development activities may support infrastructure, economic development projects, installation of public facilities, community centers, housing rehabilitation, public services, clearance/acquisition, micro-enterprise assistance, code enforcement, homeowner assistance, public health, and many other identified needs⁴.

Creative Industries - A set of service enterprises that engage in economic activities originating in individual skill, creativity, and talent that have the potential for wealth and job creation¹.

Cultural District - Cultural districts are areas designated or certified by state governments that aim to foster a thriving arts and cultural sector through what can be viewed as a primarily economic development lens².

Economic Development - There is not just one definition that encompasses all of economic development. These are most commonly described as the creation of jobs and wealth, and the improvement of quality of life. Economic development can also be described as a process that influences growth and restructuring of an economy to enhance the economic well-being of a community. In the broadest sense, economic development encompasses three major areas:

- Policies that government undertakes to meet broad economic objectives including inflation control, high employment, and sustainable growth.
- Policies and programs to provide services including building highways, managing parks, and providing medical access to the disadvantaged.
- Policies and programs explicitly directed at improving the business climate through specific efforts, business finance, marketing, neighborhood development, business retention and expansion, technology transfer, real estate development and others³.

The main goal of economic development is improving the economic wellbeing of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life. As there is no single definition for economic development, there is no single strategy, policy, or program for achieving successful economic development. Communities differ in their geographic and political strengths and weaknesses. Each community, therefore, will have a unique set of challenges for economic development³.

E commerce - E commerce allows commercial business transactions with the assistance of electronic-based tools. Today the majority of e-commerce takes place over the Internet, however it also includes fax and telephone transactions³.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

These terms and definitions provide additional information on community development.

Mixed-Use - The practice of having more than one type of use in a structure or area. In urban planning terms, this means a combination of residential, commercial, office, institutional, industrial and/or other uses. In artist space development terms, this means a combination of any or all of the following uses: living, working, presentation, commerce, etc.¹

Planning - Planning enables civic leaders, businesses, and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives. Good planning helps create communities that offer better choices for where and how people live. Planning helps communities to envision their future. It helps them find the right balance of new development and essential services, environmental protection, and innovative change. (American Planning Association, 2016)

Quality of Life - Quality of Life is the economic wellbeing, life style, and environment that an area offers. Improving the quality of life is the ultimate aim of economic development programs and initiatives. A balance has to be maintained between encouraging the growth of the local economy, while limiting impacts upon the quality of life³.

Technology Led Development - Technology-led economic development fosters the development of new technology-based products and encourages the deployment of technologies to the private sector. Technology businesses have distinct needs which include:

- Creating a business climate attractive to technology industries with technology infrastructure, skilled workers, research institutions, and economic development financing.
- Supporting entrepreneurship and the emergence of locally generated technology business
- The presence of other technology firms.
- A strong local research and development base that transfers technology into the marketplace.
- Policies and programs that deploy technology to traditional and small businesses³.

Walkability - The extent to which the built environment is friendly to the presence of people living, shopping, visiting, enjoying or spending time in an area. Factors influencing walkability include the presence or absence and quality of footpaths, sidewalks or other pedestrian right-of-ways, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, building accessibility, and safety¹.

Zoning – Zoning is a system of land use regulation used by municipalities and counties that separates different uses from each other and regulates the height, lot coverage, density, and uses permitted in a defined geographic area².

Sources:

1. Glossary of Terms – Cultural Districts. Massachusetts Cultural Council website (Accessed January 2016.) Source: http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/services/cultural_districts_glossary.asp
2. Arts and Planning – (Accessed Nov. 2017) Source: <http://www.artsandplanning.org/>
3. Economic Development Reference Guide: (Accessed Nov. 2017) Source: http://www.iedconline.org/clientuploads/Downloads/IEDC_ED_Reference_Guide.pdf
4. Community Development. United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (Accessed June 2016.) Source: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment



This document is just one step towards creating a unified vision for Brookline's commercial areas. It is part of a long-term effort to ensure that all voices in the community are heard. We hope that you will stay in touch and continue to provide feedback following this visioning process. Thank you for your continued support and for being a part of this valuable process.

We hope to hear from you soon!

#PLANBROOKLINE

PLEASE REACH OUT TO CONNECT

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