

Major Parcel Study

Executive Summary

The Town of Brookline has contracted Sasaki Associates and RKG Associates to create the Major Parcel Study (MPS) that provides data and analysis of large parcels of public and private land in the Town. The MPS will give Brookline a better understanding of the current conditions, regulatory and physical constraints and development possibilities of these parcels to support planning for the future.

The MPS forecasts potential future changes with information provided by local zoning, a market assessment and feedback from property owners. Ultimately, the MPS will help the Town build relationships with major parcel owners and will support planning for long-term needs. The analysis and options outlined in this report will serve as a toolkit, allowing the Town to respond more quickly, comprehensively and creatively to land opportunities as they arise. In order to remain up-to-date and accessible, the parcel information in this report will be integrated with existing Town databases.

Developed in coordination with the Strategic Asset Plan (SAP), the specific goals of the Major Parcel Study are to:

- 1) Clearly and objectively identify all major public and private parcels that contribute to the character of Brookline;
- 2) Understand the existing and future plans of owners of each major parcel in the context of growth and development trends; and
- 3) Provide a set of potential options that may be beneficial to the community and to property owners in the future, given current public and private objectives and market direction.

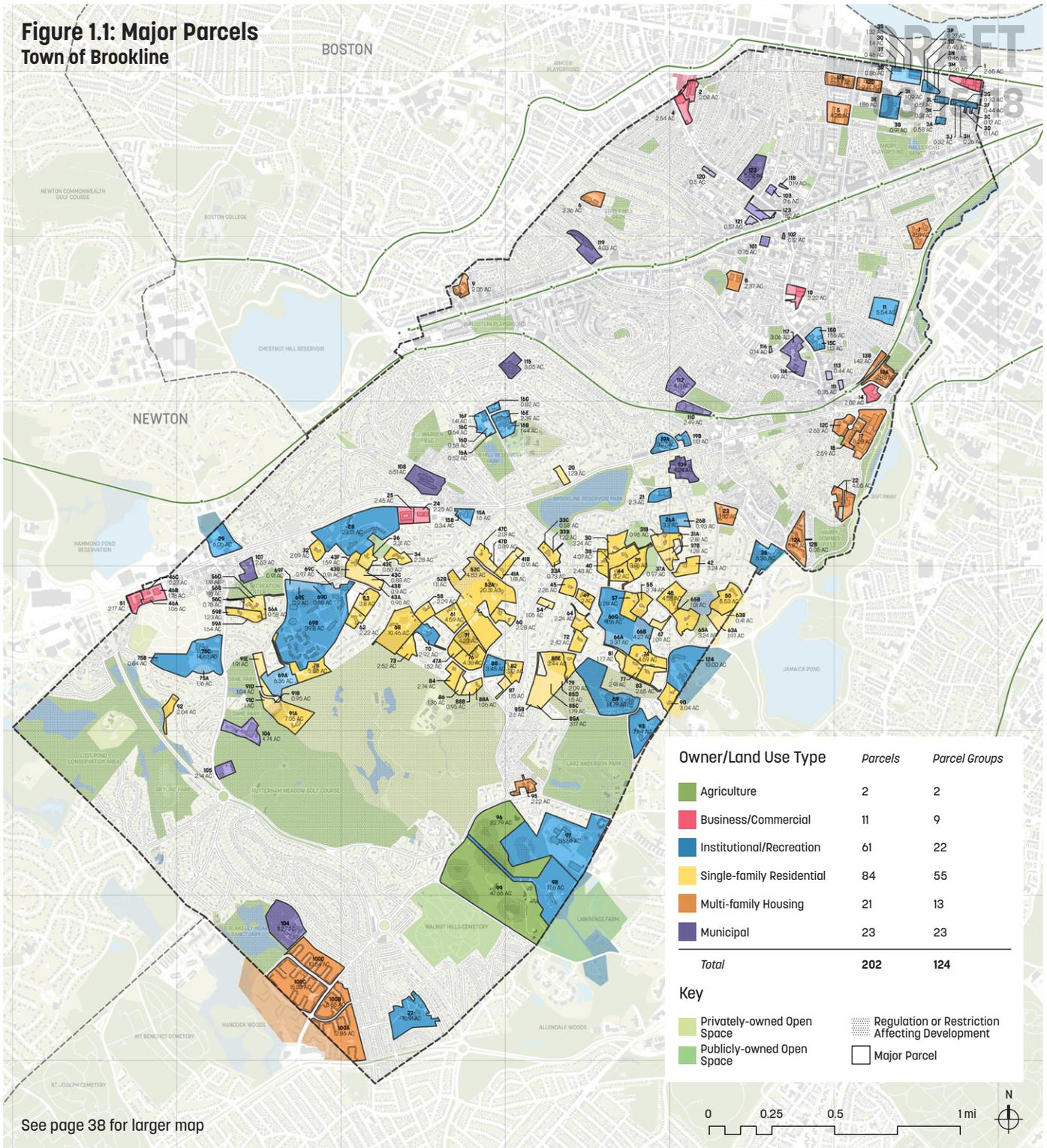
Brookline has a unique character and development pattern defined by a diversity of building types and densities, by its landscape and community amenities, and by the presence of historic institutions. Many large parcels significantly contribute to the character of the Town. The MPS studied large publicly and privately-owned parcels of land, over two acres in size. For the purposes of this study, major parcels also included smaller municipally-

owned properties adjacent to major public parcels; smaller parcels identified for study through other recent planning efforts; and clusters of smaller parcels under the same ownership that together comprise a total area of two or more acres. Users of this report will learn about these “major parcels,” including their existing conservation or other restrictions, development metrics and potential for change under existing zoning.

Key findings of the MPS include:

- A total of 124 major parcel groups, or 202 distinct parcels exist across Brookline. The majority of these sites are located in South Brookline; however, municipal, high-density residential, institutional and commercial sites can also be found in North Brookline.
- A large proportion of Brookline’s land is dedicated to institutional uses. In total, institutional uses currently comprise 556 acres or 15% of the total land area of Brookline. The major parcel list includes 61 institutional parcels and amounts to 52% of all major parcel acreage.
- Discussions with private property owners indicate that few owners have any plans for large-scale changes to their properties. The Town will continue to have ongoing conversations with major parcel property owners to stay apprised of any future changes.

Despite the built-up nature of Brookline, the Town has significant capacity for future development. A zoning analysis indicates that an additional 5,571 residential units can be accommodated under existing zoning in S, SC, T and M zoning districts. Additionally, in commercial zoning district G-2.0, an additional 1,961,978 square feet of commercial space is permitted as-of-right. Investigation into



existing deed and other restrictions indicated that not all restrictions are permanent nor do they protect sites from change. This study will support a more informed response by the Town and property owners to limited restrictions.

The Major Parcel Study includes options that enable the Town to act on land opportunities as they arise. These options include potential zoning changes, new planning initiatives, public-private partnerships, changes

in policy as well as possible programming and financing mechanisms. These options will require further study by the Town in consultation with the community. They offer myriad ways to collaborate with major parcel owners to achieve outcomes that support Brookline’s long-term vision for the future.