



Special City Council Meeting
Monday, August 10, 2026 at 6:00 PM
Watertown Free Public Library - Watertown Savings
Bank Room

City Council Meeting as the Watertown
Redevelopment Authority

Agenda

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. This meeting will be held on August 10, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. Location: Watertown Free Library - 123 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02472 - Watertown Savings Bank Room - First Floor
- B. The in-person meeting will also be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television) on Comcast Channel 22 or RCN Channel 13 and can be streamed online at: <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/watch-now?site=3>
- C. The public may join the in-person meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344>
- D. The public may join the in-person meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 929 9133 1344
- E. Public may comment through email: vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov
- F. Please Visit the City Council Website here: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/350/City-Council>

-
- 1. ROLL CALL
 - 2. DISCUSSION
 - A. Discussion on the Draft Demonstration Project Plan
 - 3. PUBLIC FORUM
 - 4. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

John G. Gannon,
Councilor At Large
Nicole Gardner,
District A Councilor

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President &
District C Councilor
Theophilus Offei
Councilor At Large
Lisa J. Feltner
District B Councilor

Caroline Bays,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large
Emily Izzo,
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Watertown Square Demonstration Project Plan

DRAFT

*prepared for the City of Watertown
prepared by Innes Land Strategies Group | RKG Associates | Tighe & Bond*

Acknowledgments

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List of Abbreviations

ACS.....	<i>US Census, American Community Survey</i>
AOI	<i>Area of Interest</i>
EJ	<i>Environmental Justice</i>
ESA.....	<i>Environmental Site Assessment</i>
LDA.....	<i>Land Disposition (or Development) Agreement</i>
M.G.L.	<i>Massachusetts General Laws</i>
MEPA.....	<i>Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office</i>
REC.....	<i>Recognized Environmental Condition</i>
SP	<i>Special Permit</i>
SR.....	<i>Site Plan Review</i>
VOC	<i>Volatile Organic Compound</i>
WRA.....	<i>Watertown Redevelopment Authority</i>
ZBA.....	<i>Zoning Board of Appeals</i>

1 Executive Summary

The City of Watertown completed the Watertown Square Area Plan in 2024. This plan had two purposes: to integrate the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan to make Watertown Square a vibrant destination and to address the requirement to zone for multifamily housing under M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 3A, known as the MBTA Communities Act.

The first step in the Watertown Square Area Plan was the adoption of both the plan and the related zoning, which the Watertown City Council accomplished in November 2024. This Demonstration Project Plan is the second step in implementing the Watertown Square Area Plan. This document builds on the conceptual plans developed in the Watertown Square Area Plan by focusing on the first recommendation: a public/private partnership to redevelop the City-owned parking lots in the heart of Watertown Square.

This Demonstration Project Plan provides a proof-of-concept for other developers in the area by addressing the Square's need for housing to support local businesses, creating a green gathering space, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, incorporating energy- and water-efficient design, and providing public parking. The complexity of the infrastructure below the City's parking lots makes it infeasible for the private market to develop this project independently, even if the City were to sell one or more parcels directly to a developer. Below-ground infrastructure includes a culverted stream, possible rail lines and associated contamination, the City of Watertown's stormwater collection and distribution infrastructure, and the City of Cambridge's aqueduct for its public water supply. An existing electrical substation on the surface and easements owned by First Parish Church, as well as retail parcel

owners, further complicate the site's conditions. Only some of this infrastructure can be relocated; therefore, any development will need to respond to these conditions.

The remainder of this document provides the justification for a demonstration project to accomplish these goals, introduces the proposed Demonstration Project, and outlines the requirements for the City's private partners. It also includes in-depth research into the existing physical, regulatory, and market conditions that support the need for a Demonstration Project. Finally, this document outlines the process for adopting the plan.

The City Council may negotiate with property owners and developers under Chapter 405 of the Acts of 1987 and M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 49, following the adoption of this plan.

As defined in case law, a demonstration project needs to meet several criteria¹ in order to be considered valid.

1. The project should have the purpose of eliminating blight.
2. The project must show that new methods or techniques are being used (e.g., using innovative technologies to complete construction in a shorter time period).
3. The project should serve as an example for use in the wider area (or in other communities).

This plan document demonstrates that the area meets the State definition of blight (see Section 1.3 below) and proposes buildout scenarios and designs that eliminate this blight, showcasing how

¹ A fuller explanation is included in Section 1.1 below

innovative technologies and methods can be utilized as an exemplar not only in Watertown but also in the broader municipal context.

The project area meets the definition of a blighted area due to its diverse ownership, including the tangle of easements owned by the City and others, excessive land coverage by asphalt from municipal parking lots, and the uncertainty of contaminated soils from prior industrial uses in close conjunction with underground water sources. The project area has been used for parking in one form or another for nearly ninety years. The Board of Assessors considers the buildings in the project area to be in at least 68% good condition. While there is commercial viability, the site's multiple owners and existing physical limitations, including easements for parking and sewer access, as well as underground infrastructure such as the Cambridge aqueduct, limit private enterprise's ability to redevelop the site for a use that supports the community's goals for Watertown Square.

The proposed Demonstration Project includes two buildout scenarios, based on the vision in the Watertown Square Area Plan, that reflect what could be achieved on the physical site, accommodate some immovable infrastructure, and comply with the City's current regulatory structure (i.e., zoning and building codes). The scenarios maximize the available space to increase the supply of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units in the City, with at least 15% of them expected to be affordable.² The City intends to work with a private developer to undertake a project with a similar program to those outlined in these scenarios.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has identified housing as a critical need throughout the state. In addition, many communities in Massachusetts have central, underutilized surface parking areas because the land was low-cost, and the asphalt may cover past uses, such as railyards, livery stables, and old mills, as in historic Watertown Square. This plan demonstrates the possibilities for other

downtowns of replacing the wide expanses of paving, which have detrimental environmental impacts and low tax benefits, with a development that provides significant community benefits and unlocks additional development. Infill development in existing downtowns provides updated housing that can support local businesses and reduce the municipality's costs for building and maintaining additional infrastructure. The complexity of such sites, however, frequently requires a public-private partnership to achieve the goals, and this Demonstration Project Plan provides a model to enhance the functionality and value of areas that have historically been left vacant or underutilized.

Lastly, the demonstration project plan outlines the actions the City will need to take over the next several years. This process begins with the City Council, sitting as the Redevelopment Authority, adopting the plan, followed by a separate approval from the City Council. Once the plan is adopted, the process of creating an RFP and seeking development partners will begin, followed by the acquisition and disposal of the required parcels to implement the plan and the negotiation of a development agreement with the chosen developer(s). The estimated timeline outlined in Section 3.5 would see construction begin in 2029, with the garage and new units set for final operation in 2031.

² Section 5.0.7 of the City Zoning Code defines the Affordable Housing requirements. It should be noted that this section does allow for cash in lieu of units, which would be negotiated during the permitting of the final project design.

1.1 The Legal Basis for Demonstration Projects under Massachusetts Law

Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Chapter 121B is the enabling legislation for Redevelopment Authorities whose purpose is to identify and improve decadent, substandard, and blighted land by addressing the conditions that caused the blight and, in doing so, serve the greater needs of the community at large. This chapter also defines and outlines the scope of an Urban Revitalization Plan³, setting the statutory guidelines for its development. Section 46(f) provides a Redevelopment Authority with the power "to develop, test, and report methods and techniques and carry out demonstrations for the prevention and elimination of slums and urban blight."

However, unlike Urban Renewal Plans, which are defined in Chapter 121B and further detailed in the regulatory requirements for their content in Massachusetts Regulations 760 CMR 12.0, a demonstration project and its requirements are not further defined.

Chapter 405 of the Acts of 1987, under which the City operates (detailed in section 5.3.1 below), is silent on demonstration plans, and so the City authority defaults to the definition in Section 46(f).

In 2021, the Supreme Judicial Court heard the case of Cobble Hill Center LLC vs Somerville Redevelopment Authority.⁴ The case hinged on whether eminent domain powers could be used in a demonstration project under a redevelopment authority's powers. In

their decision, the court determined that those powers were valid and outlined what a demonstration project was, as well as what it was not – i.e., establishing, in case law, what does not exist in the regulatory framework.

As defined in the Cobble Hill case, a demonstration project:

requires the testing or development of a different, new, or improved means or method of accomplishing a specific statutory purpose. In this context, that purpose is the elimination of blight. G. L. c. 121B, § 46 (f). In other professions, this same idea has been expressed as a proof of concept. Simply repeating a previously established practice without varying the means or methods, we conclude, would not be a demonstration.⁵

The Cobble Hill case also clarified that demonstration projects are not bound by the restrictions and oversight of other sections of Chapter 121B (unlike Urban Renewal Plans).⁶

As such, a demonstration project needs to meet several criteria⁷.

1. The project should have the purpose of eliminating blight
2. The project must show that new methods or techniques are being used (e.g., using innovative technologies to complete construction in a shorter time period)
3. The project should serve as an example for use in the wider area (or in other communities)

If these criteria are not met, a demonstration project cannot be used to revitalize a subject area.⁸

³ Both "Urban Renewal Plan" and "Urban Revitalization Plan" are defined in MGL Chapter 121B Section 1 and can be used interchangeably. This document will use the term "Urban Revitalization Plan" throughout.

⁴ <https://law.justia.com/cases/massachusetts/supreme-court/2021/sjc-13028.html>

⁵ Ibid page 15

⁶ Ibid page 12, footnote 6 and page 14, footnote 7

⁷ Ibid pages 15, 20, 23, 25

⁸ Ibid page 22, the decision notes that a municipality "cannot simply circumvent the rigorous urban renewal plan requirements by labeling a plan a demonstration or "innovative.""

As the Cobble Hill decision was related to eminent domain takings of property under a demonstration project, it did not address the applicability of whether the requirements of 760 CMR 12.04 and 12.05, which govern the process of land acquisition and disposition in Urban Renewal Plans (see Sections 6.5 and 6.6), would apply to a demonstration project. It would be prudent, therefore, in terms of mitigating future legal action, to follow the outlined process therein, specifically an independent appraisal of parcels before acquisition and disposition, and to adhere to the specific criteria for determining the disposition price.

1.2 The Demonstration Project Area

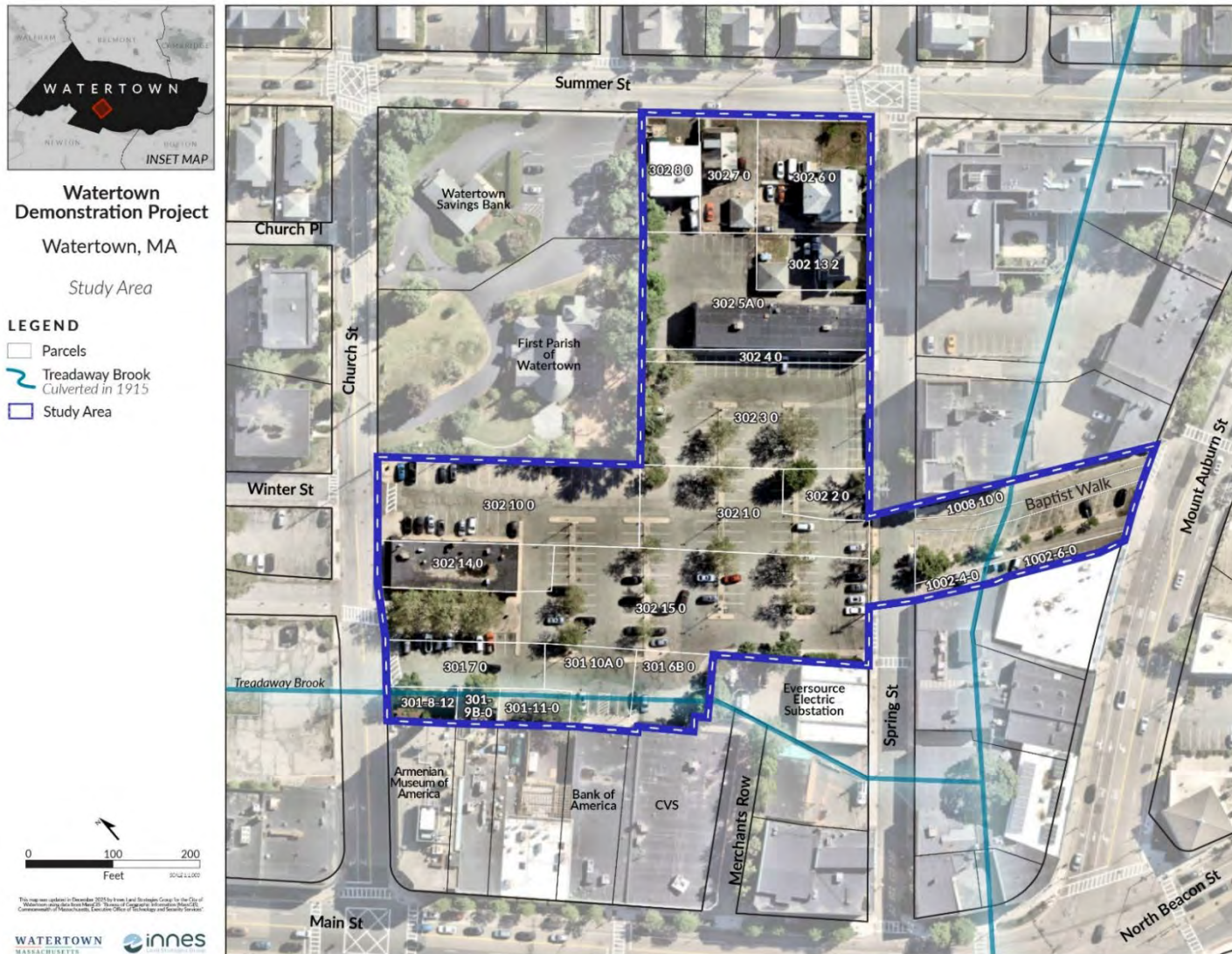
The purpose of this Demonstration Project Plan (the “Plan”) is to serve as a guide for the redevelopment of a portion of the Watertown Square area in Watertown, Massachusetts as a Demonstration Project (the “Project”) under M.G.L. Chapter 121B, which the City of Watertown (the “City”), sitting as the Watertown Redevelopment Authority (the “WRA”), will carry out. The Project represents the opportunity not only to fulfill a compelling community need but also to demonstrate a development technique that could, if successful, be replicated elsewhere in the City and the Commonwealth. The plan was prepared to be consistent with legal precedent for demonstration projects.

The plan area (see Figure 1) is centered around the block enclosed by Church Street on the west, Summer Street on the north, Spring Street on the east, and Main Street (State Route 20) on the south. The area also includes parcels comprising Baptist Walk, which connects Spring Street and Mt. Auburn Street. The area is roughly rectangular, beginning in the upper left at the corner of Church and Summer Streets, excluding two parcels owned by the First Parish Church, both located outside the demonstration project area (outlined in dark blue). Moving clockwise, the first five parcels were all originally

residential until the 1960s and 1970s and are now a mix of residential multi-unit housing and commercial office space. Continuing clockwise, the next set of parcels includes the municipal parking lots, Baptist Walk, and the Eversource electrical substation. The final set of parcels comprises the commercial buildings on Main Street and the commercial building (302-14-0) on Church Street, which backs onto the municipal parking lot.

The area contains three census blocks (2009, 2010, 2013) within census tract 3701.03 and is bordered by census tracts 3701.01, 3701.04, 3702.02, 3704.01, and 3704.03 (see Figure 35).

Figure 1: Demonstration Project Area



1.3 Why a Demonstration Project in Watertown Square?

As discussed above, a demonstration project must satisfy three criteria to be used for revitalizing an area. This section examines each criterion to establish that the project area meets the requirements and is therefore qualified as a demonstration project.

The project should have the purpose of eliminating blight.

While neither “slums” nor “urban blight” is defined in the Acts of 1987, Chapter 405, M.G.L Chapter 121B, or in the Cobble Hill decision, the Massachusetts General Laws do define blight in terms of a “Blighted Open Area” or a “Decadent Area”:

A Decadent Area is defined under M.G.L. c. 121B, § 1 as follows:

Decadent area: An area which is detrimental to safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of a community because of the existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, unfit for human habitation, or obsolete, or in need of major maintenance or repair, or because much of the real estate in recent years has been sold or taken for nonpayment of taxes or upon foreclosure of mortgages, or because buildings have been torn down and not replaced and under existing conditions it is improbable that the buildings will be replaced, or because of a substantial change in business or economic conditions, or because of inadequate light, air, or open space, or because of excessive land coverage or because diversity of ownership, irregular lot sizes or obsolete street patterns make it improbable that the area will be redeveloped by the ordinary operations of private enterprise, or by reason of any combination of the foregoing conditions.

A Blighted Open Area is defined under M.G.L. c. 121B, § 1 as follows:

Blighted Open area: A predominantly open area which is detrimental

to the safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of a community because it is unduly costly to develop it soundly through the ordinary operations of private enterprise by reason of the existence of ledge, rock, unsuitable soil, or other physical conditions, or by reason of the necessity for unduly expensive excavation, fill or grading, or by reason of the need for unduly expensive foundations, retaining walls or unduly expensive measures for waterproofing structures or for draining the area or for the prevention of the flooding thereof or for the protection of adjacent properties and the water table therein or for unduly expensive measures incident to building around or over rights-of-way through the area, or for otherwise making the area appropriate for sound development, or by reason of obsolete, inappropriate or otherwise faulty platting or subdivision, deterioration of site improvements or facilities, division of the area by rights-of-way, diversity of ownership of plots, or inadequacy of transportation facilities or other utilities, or by reason of tax and special assessment delinquencies, or because there has been a substantial change in business or economic conditions or practices, or an abandonment or cessation of a previous use or of work on improvements begun but not feasible to complete without the aids provided by this chapter, or by reason of any combination of the foregoing or other condition; or a predominantly open area which by reason of any condition or combination of conditions which are not being remedied by the ordinary operations of private enterprise is of such a character that in essence it is detrimental to the safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of the community in which it is situated.

The project area meets the definition of a Decadent area due to its diverse ownership, including the tangle of easements owned by the City and others, as well as excessive asphalt coverage from municipal parking lots.

The Board of Assessors estimates that at least 68% of the buildings in the project area are in good condition. However, this Demonstration Project does not address the existing buildings; instead, it focuses on

the land conditions that qualify this plan area as a demonstration project.

While the Downtown area is commercially viable, the plan area is paved because existing buildings were removed and not replaced, as the previous uses, including a paper mill, rail yard, and livery stable, ceased operations. The plan area has been used for parking in one form or another for nearly ninety years.

Over time, various easements have overlaid the parcels' ownership, creating a web of permissions for parking or infrastructure access that adds to the number of ownership interests in the area. This includes the Cambridge aqueduct, which supplies potable water to the City of Cambridge, further complicating redevelopment opportunities in the plan area. Other easements permit tenants of buildings on Main Street to park in certain areas of the lot. A network of stormwater drainage infrastructure lies beneath the parking areas, and part of the network is linked to an underground, culvertized stream. Finally, an existing transformer station is part of the electrical grid serving the Downtown area.

The project area meets the definition of a Blighted Open area due to uncertainty about whether contaminated soils from prior industrial uses exist, as no environmental testing was conducted before the plan area was paved. This soil will need to be excavated, and additionally, the stormwater drainage infrastructure will need to be reorganized. The easement for the Cambridge aqueduct, which cuts through the plan area, cannot be built on or over, and limits the layout options for future buildings.

Redeveloping the plan area would be economically unfeasible for a private developer alone due to rights-of-way, easement restrictions, underground infrastructure, and the diversity of plot ownership. These conditions limit the ability of private enterprise to redevelop the site for a use that supports the community's goals for Watertown Square and therefore require public action to spur such development.

The project must demonstrate that new methods or techniques are being used (e.g., innovative technologies to complete construction in a shorter time).

Demonstration projects are not often used in Massachusetts, but they could provide powerful proof of concept to developers interested in working in downtowns where development is challenging due to historic conditions. The City of Cambridge utilized the demonstration project pathway in 2017; the Cobble Hill decision was rendered in 2021; internal research indicates that no other demonstration project plans have been implemented since then.

This demonstration project offers options for an innovative pathway to streamline development, utilizing the enabling legislation of M.G.L. c. 121B, § 46 (f). Assuming that blighted conditions exist that require public action to address, then the following, which were not specified in the Cobble Hill decision, should also apply to a demonstration project:

Has the community been involved in the planning process for the area in question?

The City engaged the Watertown community in two planning processes: the Watertown Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2023) and the Watertown Square Area Plan (adopted in 2024). Both included significant public outreach (see Section 6.4) to help determine the vision, goals, and specific actions for this area.

Are zoning and other regulatory controls already in place?

The key to a demonstration project is that it can be accomplished quickly, with fewer steps between concept and construction. The City has already adopted zoning that can be used for this project, and thus, the additional approval process required for changes to the zoning is not needed. Multifamily and mixed-use are allowed by right

with Site Plan Review in the Transit-Oriented Development Overlay (TOD) District; the proposed parking garage is a public use and is also allowed by right.

Furthermore, this demonstration project plan can be approved by the City, further reducing the steps to construction. The project itself may require other approvals, for example, from MEPA, but the plan does not.

Is there a need for a public-private partnership?

Yes – as noted above, private enterprise cannot address the conditions of this plan area on its own; however, the City also cannot undertake the project without the resources of a private developer. The City can provide land, a mechanism for land assembly (if necessary), a streamlined permitting process, and access to bonding or grant programs as the applicant. The developer can provide design and construction expertise, additional land (depending on the developer), and access to capital sources that may be unavailable to the City.

Does the project offer an innovative feature beyond the base expectations for a development process?

The answer to this question depends on two components: the proposed vision for Watertown Square and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's current land-use policies.

The Watertown Comprehensive Plan defined the City's vision for Watertown Square as a local and regional destination, rather than its current status as a complex point of connection for drivers on their way from point A to point B. The Watertown Square Area Plan defined the key objectives for creating a walkable center with significant

amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists, access to housing, support for local businesses, and transit links.

The City will undertake an urban revitalization plan for Watertown Square, using the Area Plan as the vision and the Demonstration Project Plan as the template; however, advancing a single project before that plan would serve as a catalyst for the desired objectives. While the plan area is car-focused now, it could serve as a key connector between the Square, the Watertown Linear Park, and the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway. Creating structured parking frees the remaining land for pedestrian/bicyclist connections, creates an open green space in an area mostly covered in asphalt, and supports housing on sites not owned by the City. Completing this demonstration project plan serves as proof of concept for other developers who may be interested in projects within the urban revitalization plan area (once approved), addresses the blighted conditions identified above, and creates the central area to which later improvements can be connected.

The City of Watertown has already begun to plan for the negative impacts of climate change, adopting the Resilient Watertown Plan in 2022. In Watertown Square, the primary impacts will be urban flooding from more frequent and intense storms, as well as the heat-island effect of unshaded asphalt. Both will affect public health, especially air quality, which deteriorates in high-heat conditions. Both will also degrade existing infrastructure over time.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has identified several statewide land use priorities that have not been tested in a single demonstration project. These priorities include the following:

- The demonstrated need for more housing, which was supported by the passage of the MBTA Communities Act, the Housing Bond

Bill, the creation of a new HousingWorks infrastructure program, and other supporting legislative and policy initiatives.

- Housing affordable to a wider range of incomes and household sizes is also a critical need for all communities. However, the specific level of need and the financial feasibility of addressing it vary widely by community.
- The Commonwealth's stated goal to be NetZero (i.e., no greenhouse gas emissions) by 2050 requires energy-efficient buildings, transition to renewable resources, and higher demands on the electrical grid to support replacing cars with electric vehicles, and gas and oil heat with electricity-based sources.

To support the NetZero goal, the Commonwealth created two options for the state building code: the Stretch Energy Code (first available in 2009) and the Specialized Stretch Energy Code (first available in 2022). Watertown adopted the Specialized Stretch Energy Code in 2023.

The feature that this demonstration project seeks to address is two-fold: (1) how to accommodate the program of housing, commercial uses, green space, and parking on a site that is limited by infrastructure that cannot be moved and unknown subsurface conditions, and (2) how to address the financial feasibility of accommodating the public benefits of pedestrian and bicyclist connections, housing, climate resilience, and energy-efficiency on this constrained site. The goal is a public-private partnership that accomplishes this task.

The project should serve as an exemplar for use in the wider area (or in other communities).

Watertown Square is not unique in the Commonwealth for having a former rail track and yards running through its center – indeed, there are over 1,000 miles of abandoned track across the Commonwealth

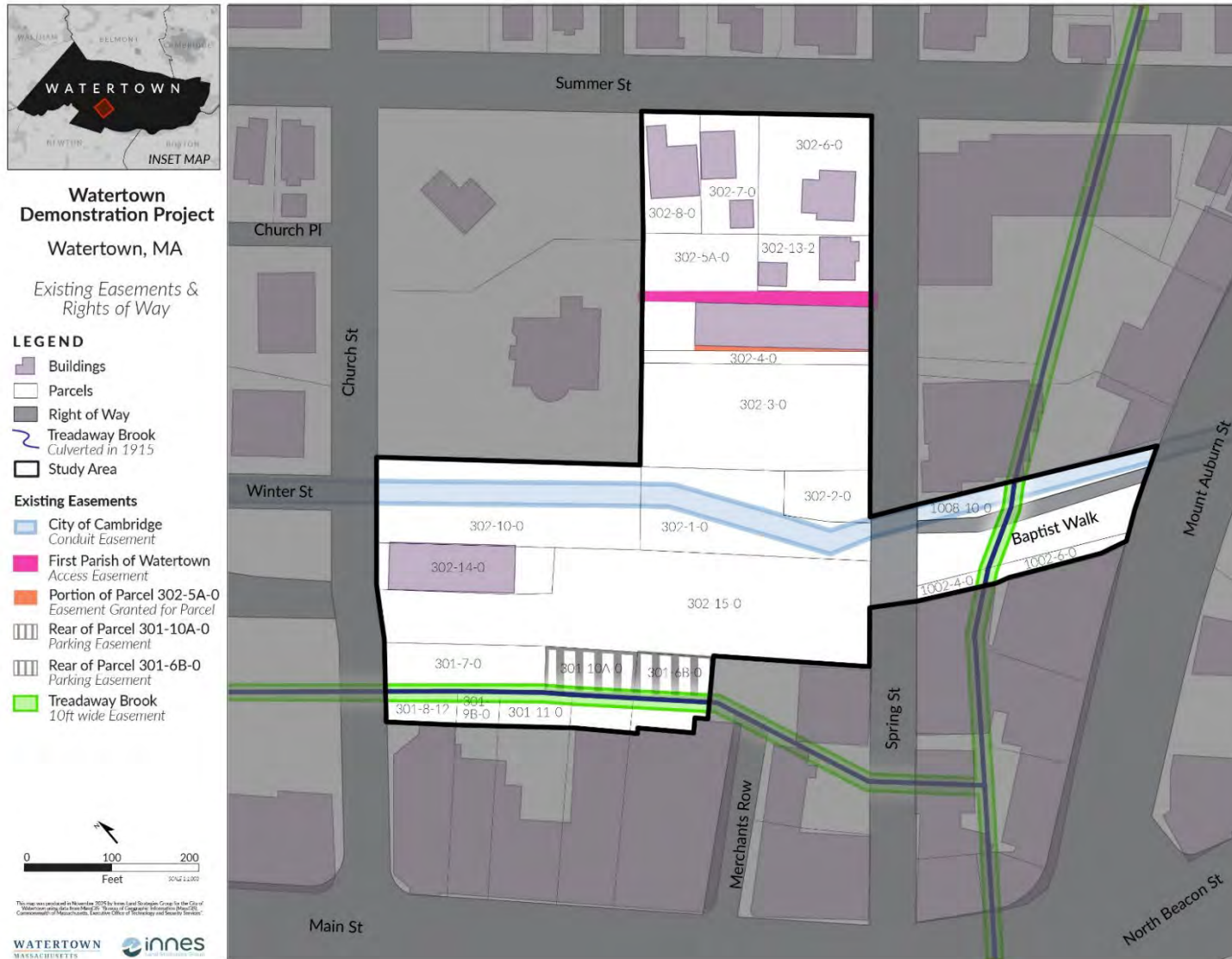
from the peak of 2,106 track miles in 1920 (see Figure 42 and the maps in Section 6.8). Waltham, Lexington, Needham, Newton, Stoughton, and Medford are just a few of the places where similar situations apply, involving former rail parcels in downtown areas that are now used for parking.

As an example, the City of Medford's parking area is a close analogy to the situation in Watertown, with municipal and private lots, as well as commercial areas, all located around City Hall. The City of Medford issued a Request for Proposals in 2025 to dispose of its city-owned properties to a preferred developer and has since selected that developer. However, because it did not utilize the demonstration project option, parcels not owned by the City were excluded from the disposition. This decision may limit future development possibilities; for example, an existing building adjacent to a city-owned property is vacant and marked for demolition. A demonstration project could have included this building and provided more flexibility to connect the downtown with the riverfront.

The challenge is to demonstrate an option that is financially feasible beyond Watertown, as some submarkets are more challenged by construction costs and available rents to support development than others.

By providing a method for public-private partnerships to address similar conditions, this demonstration project can serve as a model for other municipalities to strengthen their downtowns. Replacing surface parking lots with housing and amenities through a single project that meets not only the Specialized Stretch Energy Code but also local requirements for affordable housing, sustainable development practices, and energy-efficient building methods, including alternative energy sources, will demonstrate what can be done in other communities.

Figure 2: Existing property lines and the footprint of buildings, existing and proposed



2 Introduction to the Plan

The project seeks to use the WRA's resources and powers as defined by Chapter 405 of the Acts of 1987 and M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 46(f), and to improve the area and meet the demonstrated need expressed by City officials and residents during the public engagement for the Watertown Square Area Plan in 2024 (see section 5.4.3). In particular, the plan addresses the expressed desire for a public-private partnership to develop the City-owned parking lots, including the creation of structured parking, increased housing production, and the establishment of an east-west connection for the Community Path through the plan area.⁹

This proposed demonstration project was built upon a thorough analysis of local conditions. Spatially, much of this analysis was conducted using ESRI ArcGIS and shapefiles provided by the City of Watertown and MassGIS. Data layers and sources are identified below the map's legend on each map. A site walk and property survey were also conducted as part of the research for this Project and are included in the Appendix.

This document is consistent with the City's existing plans, specifically the Comprehensive Plan and the Watertown Square Area Plan. The Watertown Square Area Plan calls for establishing a public-private partnership to redevelop the city-owned parking lots. It also outlines the need to increase affordable housing availability in the City. The Comprehensive Plan identified several actions, including encouraging more housing, growing and improving the commercial areas, improving walking and biking access through the squares, and improving access to green space and parks. Section 6.1 extracts these actions from the plans for reference.

Throughout this document, the City of Watertown will be referred to as the Town of Watertown when discussing events before 1980, when its charter was changed to a city form of government.

Additionally, all references to the WRA or Watertown Redevelopment Authority reflect the City Council sitting as that body to perform the functions transferred to it by Chapter 405 of the Acts of 1987 (see section 5.3.1 below).

The following sections are adapted from the 2017 City of Cambridge Foundry Building Demonstration Project Plan.¹⁰

Section 3 describes the Demonstration Project Plan in detail, outlining the objectives, build-out scenarios, site development requirements, properties that would need to be acquired and disposed of, and businesses and residents who would need to be relocated during construction. The timeline and development process to be followed as part of a demonstration project are also outlined, including estimates of costs for acquiring parcels and easements, construction, and potential grants to support any municipal construction required.

Section 4 describes the Demonstration Project Area, detailing the existing conditions of the plan area, reviewing its historical and regulatory context, physical characteristics, and demographics. A summary of the market analysis is also included in this section, with the full analysis provided in an appendix. Section 5 contains all the appendices.

⁹ Watertown Square Area Plan, https://watertownsquareimprovements.com/s/Watertown-Square-Area-Plan_Final-Report-website-maal.pdf, pages 52 and 53

¹⁰ https://www.cambridgema.gov/~media/Files/CDD/EconDev/foundrybuilding/foundry_demonstration_amendment_sept2017.pdf

3 The Demonstration Project

3.1 Objectives

The project objectives are twofold: to meet the goals of the Watertown Square Area Plan and to fulfill the criteria defined in the Cobble Hill case for a demonstration project.

Two options are proposed for the demonstration project, both based on the concept shown in the Area Plan. Each involves replacing the existing surface parking with a parking structure and replacing the existing single and two-family units with a mixed-use complex. A bike-and-walking route, a critical final and missing link in the Watertown Community Path¹¹, connects the existing planned bike route in Watertown and follows the unbuildable easement route of the Cambridge Aqueduct. A one-way access road will follow the route of the easement on the south side of the site along the boundary of the National Grid parcel. Baptist Walk is proposed to become a two-way road and a shared bike and pedestrian path, and Spring Street is proposed to become two-way from the junction of Baptist Walk north to Summer Street, allowing the use of the access road by delivery vehicles and cars accessing the garage from Mt. Auburn Street via Baptist Walk.

The options are shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4, and described in more detail below.

3.2 Buildout Scenarios

The build-out scenarios use the parcels shown in Figure 5 as their base and assume that the WRA, working with one or more developers, has acquired all of the underlying parcels. The proposed mixed-use buildings feature ground-floor retail or other active uses, accompanied by upper-floor residential units. The proposed commercial uses in the parking garage include restaurant and retail, with ground-floor and upper-floor units. Office use is not shown, but it is not precluded. Parking for all uses in this scenario is included in either the parking garage or the residential building.

In accordance with the zoning, 15% of the residential units would be affordable, with 5% at 65% of AMI and 10% at 80% of AMI. Both the parking garage and the residential building would have solar on the roof and would include sufficient electric vehicle charging space and bike parking to meet the zoning requirements.¹²

The development program shown in the buildout scenario is as follows:

¹¹ The path, when complete, will connect Watertown Square to the Charles River to the west and to Arsenal St and the Watertown Cambridge Greenway to the east.

¹² See Section 3.3.1.3 above.

3.2.1 Option A:

This option comprises a 113,416 SF, 4-story parking garage with 370 parking spaces (118 more than the current surface parking spaces), 52 bike parking spaces, 6,500 SF of ground-floor retail, and a 10,000 SF, 2-story commercial annex building. A 12,300 SF public green gathering area is sited between Spring Street, the commercial building along the bike path, and the Eversource site. A 293,897 SF mixed-use complex consisting of 7,600 SF of ground-floor commercial facing the bike path and green space, and 215,320 SF of residential space containing 247 residential units (a mix of studio, 1-, and 2-bedroom units), forms the northern section of the site. The 70,977 SF residents' parking garage has two entrances: access to the first floor via Spring Street and access to the second floor via Summer Street. It provides 190 car parking spaces and 256 bike parking spaces, with an immediate connection to the bike path. Within the study area, there are also 25 surface parking spaces, bringing the total parking in Option A to 585 car spaces and 308 bike spaces.

3.2.2 Option B:

This option comprises a 132,550 SF, 5-story parking garage with 434 parking spaces (182 more than the current surface parking spaces), 52 bike parking spaces, 4,900 SF of ground-floor retail, and an 8,800 SF, 2-story commercial annex building. The public green space, as in Option A, is located between Spring Street, the commercial building along the bike path, and the Eversource site, and measures 12,300 SF. In this option, placing logistics and parking on the south side of the area creates an active open space along the bike path, bringing the total open space, including the green area, to 26,500 SF. The northern section of the site features the same 293,897 SF mixed-use complex outlined in Option A. Including the mixed-use complex's 190 car parking spaces and the 25 surface parking spaces, the total car parking in Option B is 649 spaces, with the same 308 bike parking spaces as in Option A.

Figure 3: Option A: Buildout Scenario

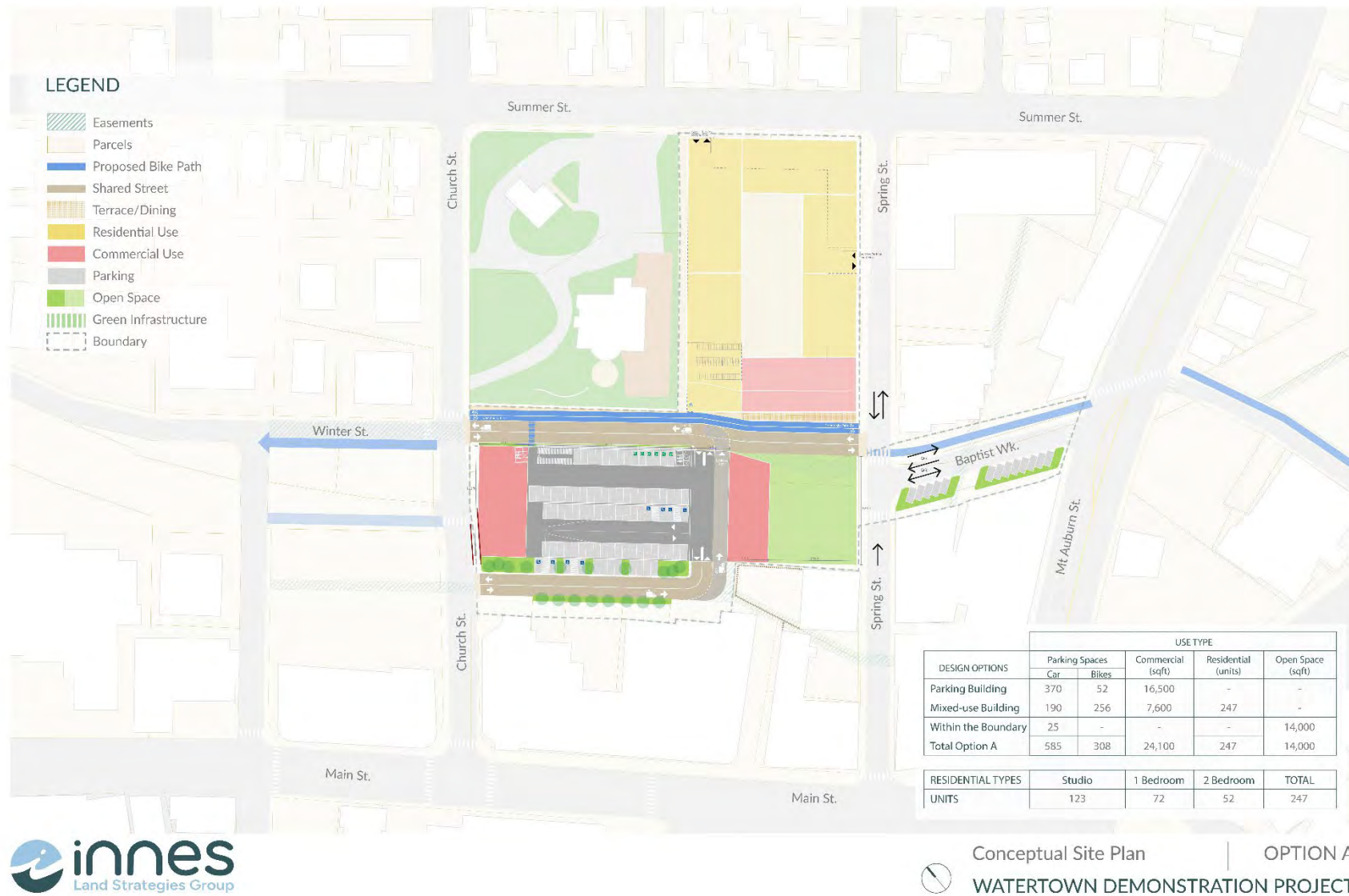
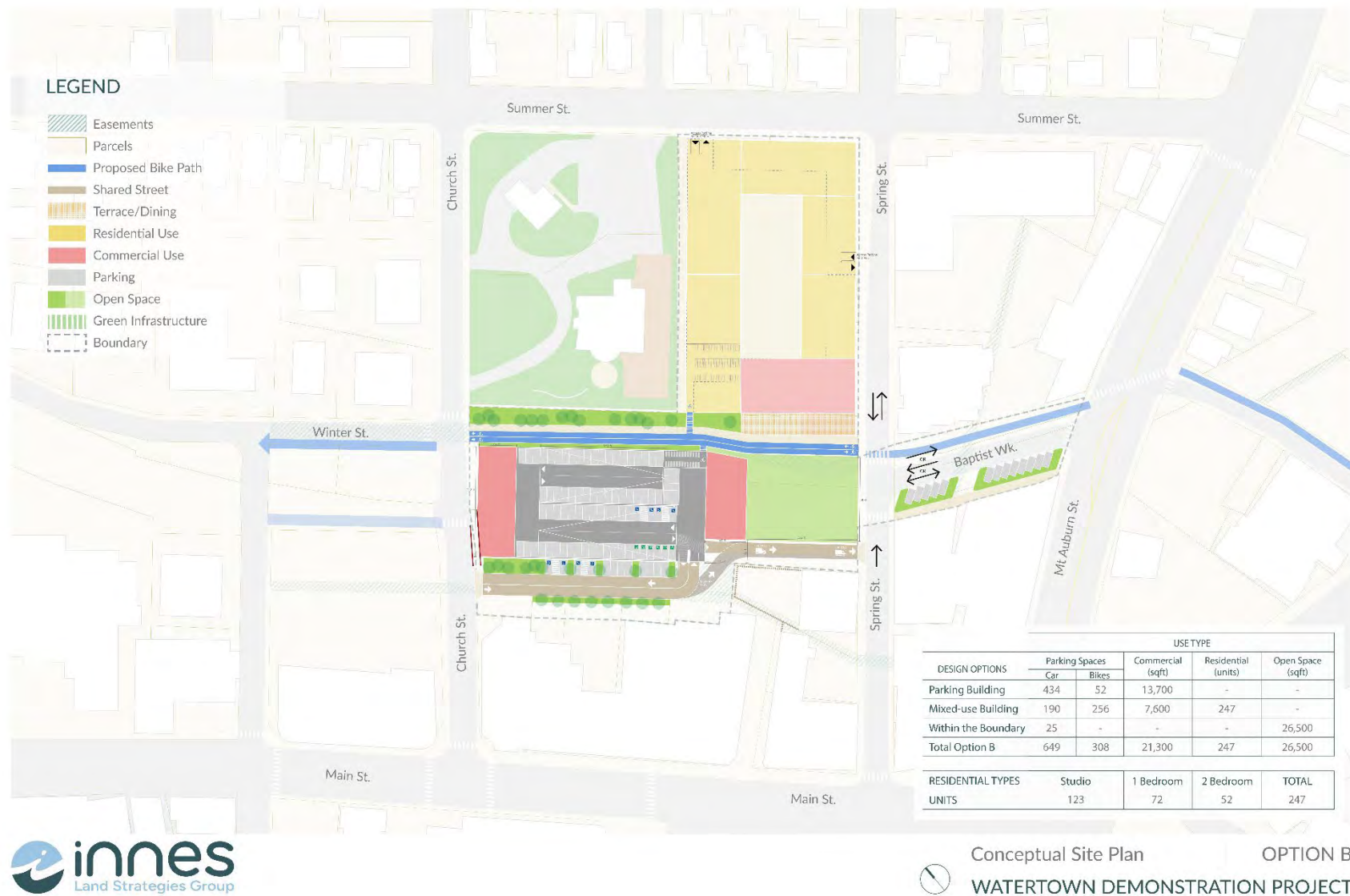


Figure 4: Option B: Buildout Scenario



In all scenarios, parking in the garage exceeds the current condition while reducing the overall footprint of impervious surface. This also allows for increased off-street overnight residential parking during the City's winter on-street parking ban periods. The mixed-use building does not rely on the garage for either its commercial or residential uses.

Table 1 compares the two buildout scenarios to the existing program on the site. Note that existing parking was estimated based on both a physical site count and a visual count from an aerial image of parked vehicles and painted spaces, where such painted spaces exist. The existing commercial and office space square footage was estimated from the Assessor's property records.

Table 2 shows the net new development program on these sites under the various proposed options. This represents the total new development program anticipated by WRA and the private developer and should serve as the basis for any impact analysis required by the MEPA review process.

Although this demonstration project plan is not subject to MEPA review, a final permitted project may still require MEPA approval. The thresholds are defined in 301 CMR 11 MEPA Regulations, Section 11.03 (for further information, see the discussion of the MEPA approval process on page 88).

Table 1: Build-out Scenario Comparison

	Building Use	Existing			Option A				Option B			
		Commercial (SF)	Residential (units)	Parking (spaces)	Commercial (SF)	Residential (units)	Parking (spaces)		Commercial (SF)	Residential (units)	Parking (spaces)	
							Car	Bike			Car	Bike
1	Residential		7	0	7,600	247	190	256	7,600	247	190	256
2	Public Use			252			395	52			459	52
3	Office	11,804		29								
4	Restaurant/Retail	6,310		6	16,500				13,700			
Totals		18,114	7	287	24,100	247	585	308	21,300	247	649	308

Table 2: Build-Out Scenarios: Net New

	Building Use	Option A				Option B			
		Commercial (SF)	Residential (units)	Parking (spaces)		Commercial (SF)	Residential (units)	Parking (spaces)	
				Car	Bike			Car	Bike
1	Residential	7,600	240	190	256	7,600	240	190	256
2	Public Use		0	143	52	0	0	207	52
3	Office	(11,804)	0	(29)		(11,804)	0	(29)	
4	Restaurant/Retail	10,190	0	(6)		7,390	0	(6)	
Totals		5,986	240	298	308	3,186	240	362	308

3.3 Total Projected Impacts

Table 3: Anticipated Impact of WRA Direct Action (Option A)

Category	Projections	Source	Page #
Properties Acquired	22*	Table 6	33
Properties Disposed of	22*	Table 8	41
Lots Created	2-6	Figure 7	43
Buildings Demolished	8	Figure 6	19
Land Area affected by new construction (acres)	3.2	Table 14	90
Land area affected by rehabilitation	0		
Net New Residential Units	240	Table 2	26
Impact of net new units on water/ wastewater usage	26,658 gpd	Table 14	90
Annual impact of net new units on residential waste	257.91 tons	Table 14	90
Gross Commercial SF	24,100	Table 1	26
Net New Commercial SF	5,986	Table 2	26
Net New Parking Spaces	517	Table 2	26
Historic Buildings Altered	0		
Rehabilitated Housing Units	0		
Households relocated	7	Table 7	38
Business relocated	9	Table 7	38

**Note that this includes 7 parcels that are City-owned and small portions of 7 other parcels.*

Table 4: Anticipated Impact of WRA Direct Action (Option B)

Category	Projections	Source	Page #
Properties Acquired	22*	Table 6	33
Properties Disposed of	22*	Table 8	41
Lots Created	2-6	Figure 7	43
Buildings Demolished	8	Figure 6	19
Land Area affected by new construction (acres)		Table 14	90
Land area affected by rehabilitation	0		
Net New Residential Units	240	Table 2	26
Impact of net new units on water/ wastewater usage	26,558 gpd	Table 14	90
Annual impact of net new units on residential waste	257.91 tons	Table 14	90
Gross Commercial SF	21,300	Table 1	26
Net New Commercial SF	3,186	Table 2	26
Net New Parking Spaces	517	Table 2	26
Historic Buildings Altered	0		
Rehabilitated Housing Units	0		
Households relocated	7	Table 7	38
Business relocated	9	Table 7	38

**Note that this includes 7 parcels that are City-owned and small portions of 7 other parcels.*

3.4 Recommended Zoning Changes

Watertown updated its zoning in 2024, which added the new mixed-use districts and the TOD overlay; no additional zoning changes are recommended in this plan. The City should, however, consider expediting the permitting process for projects that have an executed Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) with the City. This could include holding joint public hearings, shortening the review and decision process, or other streamlined processes. The current process¹³ requires community meetings before submitting a proposal to the Planning Board, as well as separate reviews and procedures, including Site Plan Review with the Planning Board and a Special Permit with the Zoning Board of Appeals.

3.5 Site Preparation

The City anticipates that the redeveloper will undertake all site improvements (including moving subsurface stormwater infrastructure) for land subsequently disposed of under an LDA, subject to the environmental mitigation and site preparation requirements in the LDA. At the time of writing, the City plans to retain ownership of the garage parcel(s) only. The city may also retain the open space parcel. Alternatively, the City could have the private partner build the garage and open space parcel and convey them back to the City. The final position will be determined in subsequent discussions of the City Council.

As noted in Section 1.1.1, sites in the area have been identified as either having environmental risks or having had such risks in the past. The redevelopment area is situated within an urban environment with a history of previous commercial and industrial uses, and not all sites have been identified as containing hazardous materials.

¹³ Sections 9.02, 9.03, 9.04 of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance

Buildings built before 1978 may contain lead paint either within the building or in the surrounding soil, and older buildings may also contain asbestos. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is recommended to evaluate the potential for environmental contamination associated with the site's historical railroad and industrial uses. Such an assessment may identify a Recognized Environmental Condition (REC), as typical contaminants from former railroad operations can include coal, coal ash, petroleum products, and pesticides. If contamination is present in on-site soils, Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) air management measures may be required during construction and post-construction. Additionally, if dewatering is necessary for deep excavations, pumped groundwater may require treatment before being discharged to an approved location. Management and off-site disposal of excess or unsuitable soils may also be required.

3.6 Public Improvements

The City will not sponsor any public improvements under this Project. The City's actions are limited under this Project to the acquisition and disposition of property for redevelopment that meets the project objectives. The plan proposes examining circulation on Baptist Walk and Spring St, considering two-way traffic on a portion of Spring St, opening Baptist Walk to two-way traffic, and extending the bike path and pedestrian sidewalks. This portion of the project may be the responsibility of the developer and/or the City, depending upon the final agreed project design. Additionally, the parking garage may be operated by the City (the final operational disposition will be subject to the final design development and LDA)

3.7 Demonstration Project Phases

Given the scale and complexity of the Development Project, it can be divided into approximately five phases, as summarized below (years are approximate). As the City works through the process, some phases may be merged.

3.7.1 Phase 1. Adoption of the Demonstration Project Plan (2026)

This phase establishes the Demonstration Project Plan and conducts an initial feasibility review of the area. This encompasses existing conditions and development restrictions, building concepts and fit studies, and fiscal impact analysis. The outcome of this phase is an approved Demonstration Project Plan from the WRA and the City Council.

3.7.2 Phase 2: Pre-Development (2026–2027)

This phase involves identifying development partners, developing financial strategies, and pre-planning necessary capital improvements. As noted above, during this phase, the City may create an RFP to identify interested developers for this project.

The proposed urban revitalization plan discussed in Section 1 will also occur in this phase.

3.7.3 Phase 3: Transaction (2027–2029)

This phase involves acquiring and disposing of parcels and relocating residents and/or businesses displaced by the demonstration project.

For privately held parcels and easements, the City must obtain them through purchase, gift, grant, or, as a last resort, eminent domain. Once acquired by the City, they would be disposed of along with City-owned parcels through a Land Development Agreement with the chosen developer (or developers).

Per 760 CMR 12.04, EOHLC must approve the acquisition price of parcels under an Urban Renewal Plan. While not required for a Demonstration project, it may be advisable to do so before the acquisition of any parcel in Table 6 by the City to limit subsequent legal challenge. The acquisition price is typically based on the City's review of two independent appraisals; however, parcels acquired by gift, transfers from another public entity (including the City), through a pre-2021 tax foreclosure, or through a public auction do not require appraisals. After EOHLC has approved this project, and any review of the project under MEPA is complete¹⁴, the City may begin negotiations to purchase one or more of the parcels designated below.

Other factors related to the acquisition of parcels:

- Condemnation proceedings must be carried out per M.G.L. c. 79, and the City must have attempted to acquire the property through purchase first.
- The City may be exempt from the requirements of the Uniform Procurement Act when acquiring or disposing of real property in accordance with (M.G.L. c.30B §1(b)(25)). This should be confirmed with the City's legal counsel.

¹⁴ See section 4.3.2 below. As currently proposed MEPA review would not be required.

3.7.4 Phase 4: Design and Construction (2029–2031)

This phase will see the developer(s) go through the design and construction process in accordance with the terms of the LDA. Once the design is finalized and permitted, it may need to undergo a review by MEPA before construction can commence. Oversight of the process will be based on the terms of the LDA but will involve the City. During this phase, the City will be responsible for the permitting approval processes.

3.7.5 Phase 5: Operating (2031– forward)

Once construction is complete, the Garage and Residential property Operators will be expected to manage all aspects of building operations, including property management and leasing within the buildings, in accordance with the terms of the LDA. City oversight would be established within the governance structure as outlined in the LDA Agreement(s). The Agreement(s) will also provide the City and the Watertown community with methods to remain apprised of the properties' ongoing operations. It is anticipated that the commercial tenants will evolve; however, the City will utilize its ability to direct the Operator to ensure that the Vision and Objectives of the Plan and the Project are met throughout the term of the Lease.

3.7.6 Metrics for Success by Phase

Phases 3, 4, and 5 should have agreed-upon metrics determined by the LDA in collaboration with the City and the developer. The City should review the success criteria for each phase as it is completed to ensure compliance with the Plan and the LDA.

3.7.7 Demonstration Project Plan Amendments

Over time, it may be necessary to revise or amend some aspects of the Demonstration Project Plan. While minor plan changes (i.e., changes that do not significantly affect any of the Plan's basic elements) can be handled within City Staff's daily functions, it is recommended that the WRA review and approve such changes. Significant changes to the Plan should be reviewed and approved by the WRA and the City Council.

Since the Plan area is a focal point of City commercial and residential activity, there should be a regular process of assessment and evaluation to provide valuable feedback on its success in meeting the Vision and Objectives of both the Demonstration Project Plan and the Watertown Square Area Plan, or to identify any need for updates. The assessment and evaluation process should be conducted in consultation with the City and the Developer. The evaluation should also consider any Lease agreement or other legal agreements between the City, the WRA, the Developer, and the Operators; actual operations; changing demand or market forces; updates in technology or other innovations; the condition of the buildings; and other outside forces.

3.8 Public/Private Partnership

The City’s actions are limited to the acquisition and disposition of parcels, and may include any associated relocation costs. The amounts shown in Table 5 below are estimates based on the 2025 assessed values of the properties identified in the Acquisitions section above, and the requirements for a relocation plan in the Relocation section above. If an acquisition or other covered activity displaces eligible displaced persons or businesses, and the relocation payments exceed those provided in the budget estimate, the Watertown Redevelopment Authority may be required to cover those costs.

3.8.1 Revenue Sources: First Five Years

The City does not have a funding source for these acquisitions. It plans to work directly with redevelopers and property owners as they fund property acquisition, relocations, and other costs under property-by-property agreements.

For new housing and mixed-use buildings within the Demonstration Project area, the City, working with a development team, may be able to draw upon the significant resources unlocked by the passage of the state Affordable Homes Act in 2024. Programs include the HousingWorks Program, the Commercial Property Conversion Tax Credit, the Municipal Conversion Project Program, the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, the Mixed-Income Housing Fund, the Momentum Fund, the Small Properties State Acquisition Funding Pilot Program, and the Sustainable and Green Housing Initiatives programs.

Table 5: Financial Plan

Purpose	Funds
Revenue	
Property Disposition	\$19,369,407
Total Revenues	\$19,369,407
Expenses	
Property Acquisitions	\$12,807,839
Allowance for relocation, administrative costs, appraisals, and legal fees	\$4,000,000
Contingency (20%)	\$2,561,568
Total Expenditures	\$19,369,407

3.9 Acquisitions

Under Acts 1987 Chapter 405 and M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 48, the City has the authority “to acquire real estate within the location of the project, either by eminent domain or by grant, purchase, lease, gift, exchange or otherwise¹⁵” once the project has been approved through the appropriate municipal approval steps (see 6.1.2.1 Municipal Approval Process below).

The WRA has identified parcels for potential acquisition, as shown in Table 6. This table identifies the current owner, use, assessed value, and street address for each parcel. The two columns labeled Acquisition (Acres) and Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025 (Acquisition) indicate that, for seven parcels, not all of the parcel area will be acquired; rather, only a portion of the land at the rear of the parcel

Table 6: Anticipated Acquisitions

Parcel ID	Address	Ownership	Real Estate Class	Building Year	Building Size (SF)	Lot Size (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025 (Full Lot)	Acquisition (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025 (Acquisition)	Reason
Public Parcels										
301-7-0	Church Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.15	539,700	0.15	539,700	Parking Garage
302-1-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.18	580,400	0.18	580,400	Bike Path
302-2-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.07	446,000	0.07	446,000	Residential /Bike Path
302-3-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.41	937,400	0.41	937,400	Residential

will be acquired. The dollar amount reflects a percentage calculation of the assessed land value of each parcel.

The proposed acquisitions allow for the reparcelization of the area and enable the buildout of the parking, commercial, and residential development, as well as accommodating the bike/walking path above the City of Cambridge easement that transects the area and the opening of Baptist Walk to two-way traffic. By acquiring the parcels and associated easements (and subsequently disposing of them - see Disposition, below), the patchwork of parcels and easement restrictions that currently limit development is resolved.

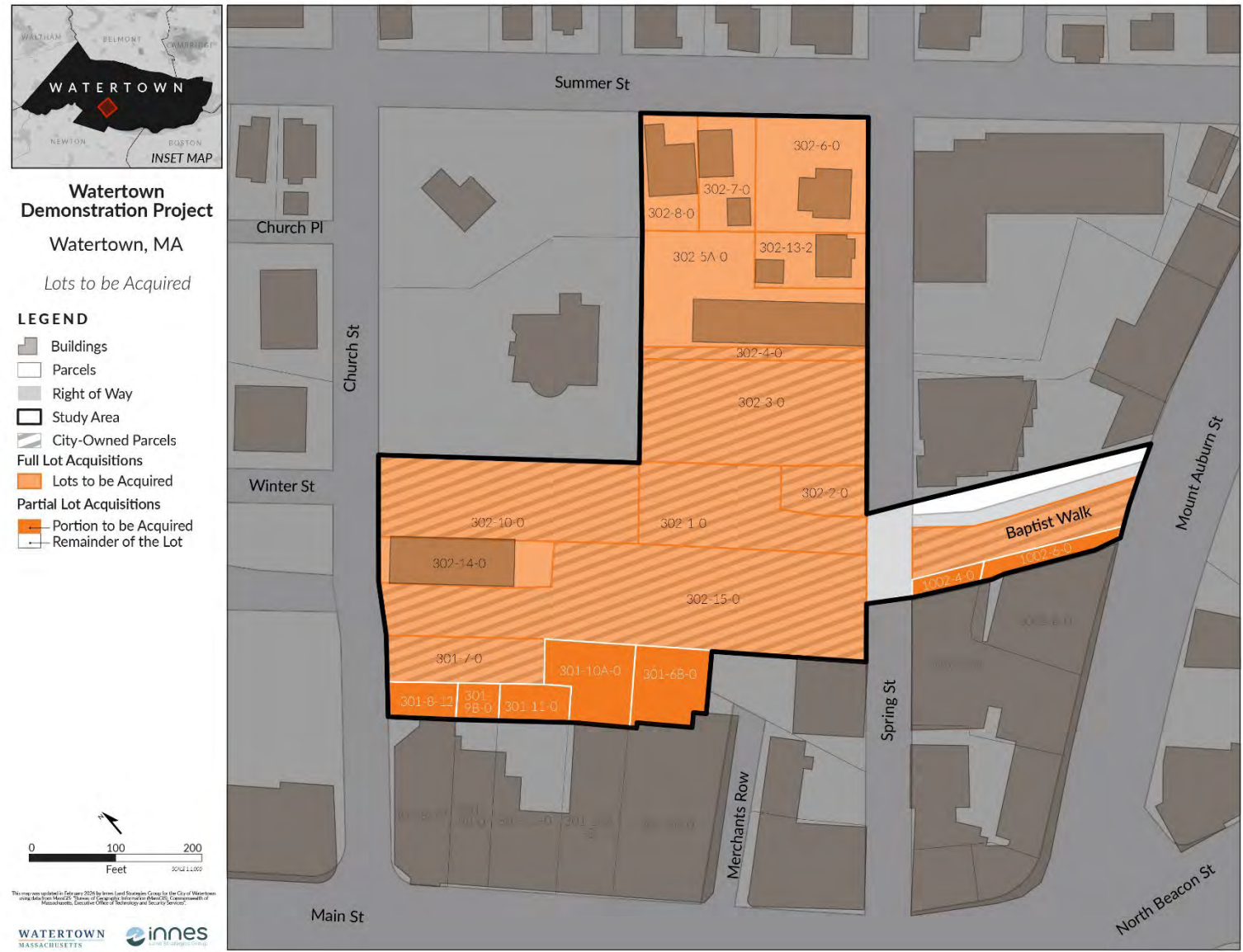
Parcels owned by the City must be listed as an acquisition to ensure that ownership and title are correctly assigned upon later disposition. The values for these parcels assume an assessed value transfer rather than a gift or other transfer.

¹⁵ <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXVII/Chapter121B/Section48>

Parcel ID	Address	Ownership	Real Estate Class	Building Year	Building Size (SF)	Lot Size (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025 (Full Lot)	Acquisition (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025 (Acquisition)	Reason
302-4-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.05	38,500	0.05	38,500	Residential
302-10-0	Church Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.28	741,200	0.28	741,200	Parking Garage
302-15-0	Church Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			1.12	1,744,000	1.12	1,744,000	Parking Garage
Subtotal Public Parcels						2.26	\$5,027,200	2.26	\$5,027,200	
Partial Takings										
301-6B-0	29 Main Street	WATERMAIN REALTY OWNER LLC	325C	1900	25,549	0.41	2,963,400	0.10	245,233	Portion for parking access and loading
301-8-12AZ1	65 Main Street	ARMENIAN LIBRARY + MUSEUM OF AMERICA, INC	9560	1969	13,798	0.22	2,953,500	0.04	52,332	Portion for parking access and loading
301-9B-0	55 Main Street	DANA, MYER & ALAN TRUSTEES DANA FAMILY REALTY TRUST	326C	1930	9,552	0.16	1,439,000	0.03	101,140	Portion for parking access and loading
301-10A-0	41 Main Street	BAYBANK MIDDLESEX	341C	1940	16,392	0.3	2,145,100	0.11	815,138	Portion for parking access and loading
301-11-0	47 Main Street	BCW REALTY INC	326C	1891	8,188	0.24	1,542,400	0.05	277,632	Portion for parking access and loading

Parcel ID	Address	Ownership	Real Estate Class	Building Year	Building Size (SF)	Lot Size (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025 (Full Lot)	Acquisition (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025 (Acquisition)	Reason
1002-4-0	16 Mt Auburn Street	FARESE JOHN K TRUSTEE	325C	1920	29,092	0.35	2,351,300	0.02	56,549	Roadway
1002-6-0	26 Mt Auburn Street	HERMAN DANA FOUNDATION LLC	325C	1920	14,972	0.22	1,438,200	0.04	128,848	Roadway
Subtotal Partial Takings						1.9	\$12,154,900	0.39	\$1,040,939	
Full Takings										
302-5A-0	40 Spring Street	WATERSPRING LLC	340C	1970	11,856	0.36	2,009,200	0.36	2,009,200	Residential
302-6-0	52 Summer Street	WATERSPRING LLC	130	1900	6,587	0.23	1,273,400	0.23	1,273,400	Residential
302-7-0	44 Summer Street	WATERSPRING LLC	1040	1930	3,003	0.12	780,500	0.12	780,500	Residential
302-8-0	48 Summer Street, Unit 1	SONZI 12 LLC	343C	2001	552	0.12	238,500	0.12	710,600	Residential
302-8-0B	48 Summer Street, Unit 2	ANGELCAR 1 LLC	343C	2001	627		270,100			Residential
302-8-0C	48 Summer Street, Unit 3	VELLUCCI NICOLE	343C	2001	465		202,000			Residential
302-13-2	46 Spring Street	WATERSPRING LLC	1040	1900	4,108	0.11	834,000	0.11	834,000	Residential
302-14-0	25 Church Street	CALOIERO LLC	325C	1960	7,063	0.14	1,132,000	0.14	1,132,000	Parking Garage
Subtotal Full Takings						1.08	\$6,739,700	1.08	\$6,739,700	
Total						5.24	\$23,921,800	3.73	\$12,807,839	

Figure 5: Parcels to be acquired



3.10 Relocation

The WRA understands that it must verify a building's vacant status before acquiring the property. Should the acquisition or other covered activity displace a business or residential occupant that meets the definition of a displaced person in M.G.L. Chapter 79A, the occupant would be entitled to relocation assistance and payments, and the WRA must also request the designation of a Relocation Advisory Agency.

The WRA does not anticipate any displacement before **January 1, 2027**, for any property listed in Table 7 below.

The WRA will provide relocation assistance for persons and/or businesses that must be relocated and are considered to be a displaced person as set out in M.G.L. Chapter 79A, Section 1, including a displaced person who must be relocated because of any public acquisition of land to fulfill the public purpose of this Project. The WRA commits to a process that will accomplish the following goals, established by 760 CMR 27.00:

- Establish fair, equitable, and consistent treatment of the businesses that are displaced through the acquisition
- Minimize the adverse impact of displacement on the businesses and their community
- Prevent the closure of business

As required by 760 CMR 27.00, the WRA will establish a Relocation Advisory Agency before any acquisitions. The WRA will file a relocation plan with the Bureau of Relocation (part of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)) for any project that displaces the occupants of more than five dwelling units or business units. This Project recommends a pre-filing consultation with the Bureau of Relocation.

The WRA will comply with the applicable requirements in M.G.L. 79A, the regulations in 760 CMR 27.00, and the related guidelines, and federal laws related to relocation, including 49 CFR Part 24, as applicable. The Bureau of Relocation must approve the project before the acquisition displaces the person(s) or business(es). All displaced people and businesses are entitled to relocation assistance and payments established under M.G.L. C. 79A and 760 CMR 27.00.

The plan must be filed with the Bureau of Relocation at least 45 days before the anticipated date of property acquisition, along with notification to the affected occupants of their rights and the available relocation assistance and payment before the acquisition.

The relocation plan will be filed with sufficient time to allow for review and accommodate any notice requirements that may apply, including the 120-day Notice to Vacate, which is required when a displaced person or business is permanently relocated.

A summary of appeals procedures will be made available to displaced occupants. A displaced person or business has the right to appeal the WRA's decision as to the amount of a relocation payment or eligibility for a relocation payment. The claimant will have at least 60 days from the date of receipt of a written determination to request further review. A hearing will be conducted by an impartial person representing the WRA. Following the hearing and issuance of a written decision, the claimant may request review of the WRA's decision by the Bureau of Relocation. The Bureau will then issue a written determination after a hearing. Both parties have the right to judicial review.

In the relocation plan, the WRA will provide a written description of the needs of the displaced occupants eligible for relocation assistance. For residential renters, this should include the required unit size, maximum rent, and any specific needs, such as location or accessibility features. For residential occupants who own, this should also include the necessary unit size, maximum purchase price, and any specific needs. For business occupants who rent, this should

include the required square footage, space layout, maximum rent, and any specific requirements. For business occupants who own, this should include the required square footage, space layout, maximum price, maximum cost, and any specific needs.

As shown in Table 7, below, it is anticipated that nine businesses on three parcels and seven residential units on three parcels will need to be relocated due to anticipated acquisitions. Acquisitions are based on market conditions. The WRA does not anticipate acquiring properties **before 2028**, unless circumstances change.

Table 7: Potential Relocations

Parcel ID	Address	Ownership	Building Size (Square Feet)	Building Year	Lot Size (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025	Residential Units Affected	Businesses Affected
302-5A-0	40 Spring Street	WATERSPRING LLC	11,856	1970	0.36	\$2,009,200		3
302-6-0	52 Summer Street	WATERSPRING LLC	6,587	1900	0.23	\$1,273,400	3	
302-7-0	44 Summer Street	WATERSPRING LLC	3,003	1930	0.12	\$780,500	2	
302-8-0	48 Summer Street, Unit 1	SONZI 12 LLC	552	2001	0.12	\$238,500		1
302-8-0B	48 Summer Street, Unit 2	ANGELCAR 1 LLC	627	2001		\$270,100		1
302-8-0C	48 Summer Street, Unit 3	VELLUCCI NICOLE	465	2001		\$202,000		1
302-13-2	46 Spring Street	WATERSPRING LLC	4,108	1900	0.11	\$834,000	2	
302-14-0	25 Church Street	CALOIERO LLC	7,063	1960	0.14	\$1,132,000		3
Total					1.08	\$6,739,700	7	9

Figure 6: Buildings to be demolished



3.11 Disposition

Any land disposition by a government body in Massachusetts must meet the relevant requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 30B and, where applicable, Chapter 121B. Redevelopment Authorities (unlike municipalities) are specifically exempt from Chapter 30B land disposition requirements under Section 1(25).

(25) a contract to sell lease or acquire residential, institutional, industrial or commercial real property by a public or quasi-public economic development agency or urban renewal agency engaged in the development and disposition of said real property in accordance with a plan approved by the appropriate authorizing authority;¹⁶

The WRA anticipates that it will dispose of all properties acquired in the Acquisitions Section above, with the expectation that they will be reassembled into multiple parcels for development as part of the project.

Under M.G.L. Chapter 121B Section 49, the WRA may sell or lease land it acquires within the boundary of this Redevelopment Project to a redeveloper or redevelopers who will undertake a project on the site. These purchasing parties must

- devote the land to the use specified
- begin the building of their improvements within a reasonable time
- give preference in the selection of tenants for dwelling units built in the project area to families displaced by clearance and renewal activity
- comply with such other conditions as are deemed necessary

Should the redeveloper default, the WRA would be able to retake title and possession of the properties sold or leased to them.

Such sale or lease should, to mitigate future legal action, be conducted in accordance with the disposition process outlined in the appendix (Land Disposition). The WRA may choose to issue a Request for Interest (RFI) or a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify potential redevelopers. Responses should include a detailed narrative that includes, but is not limited to, the following requirements:

- The proposed development, including proposed land uses
- How the proposed development will meet the objectives of this Urban Renewal Plan.
- The parties involved (ownership, development team, etc.).
- Any public improvements required for the proposed project.
- The proposed timeline for completion of construction
- Pro forma for the project and available financial resources.
- Relevant experience and related references
- Proposed job creation, including temporary and permanent jobs.

Upon selection of a developer, the WRA should negotiate a Land Disposition/Development Agreement (LDA) to define the development requirements (see 3.3.8 Redeveloper's Obligations below).

Note that although Table 8 below lists individual parcels; it would be possible for the WRA, upon disposition, to combine parcels into a newly created lot or lots (see Figure 7 in 4 Eligible Conditions). The lot sizes reflect those acquired above (i.e., partial lots are not listed in their entirety).

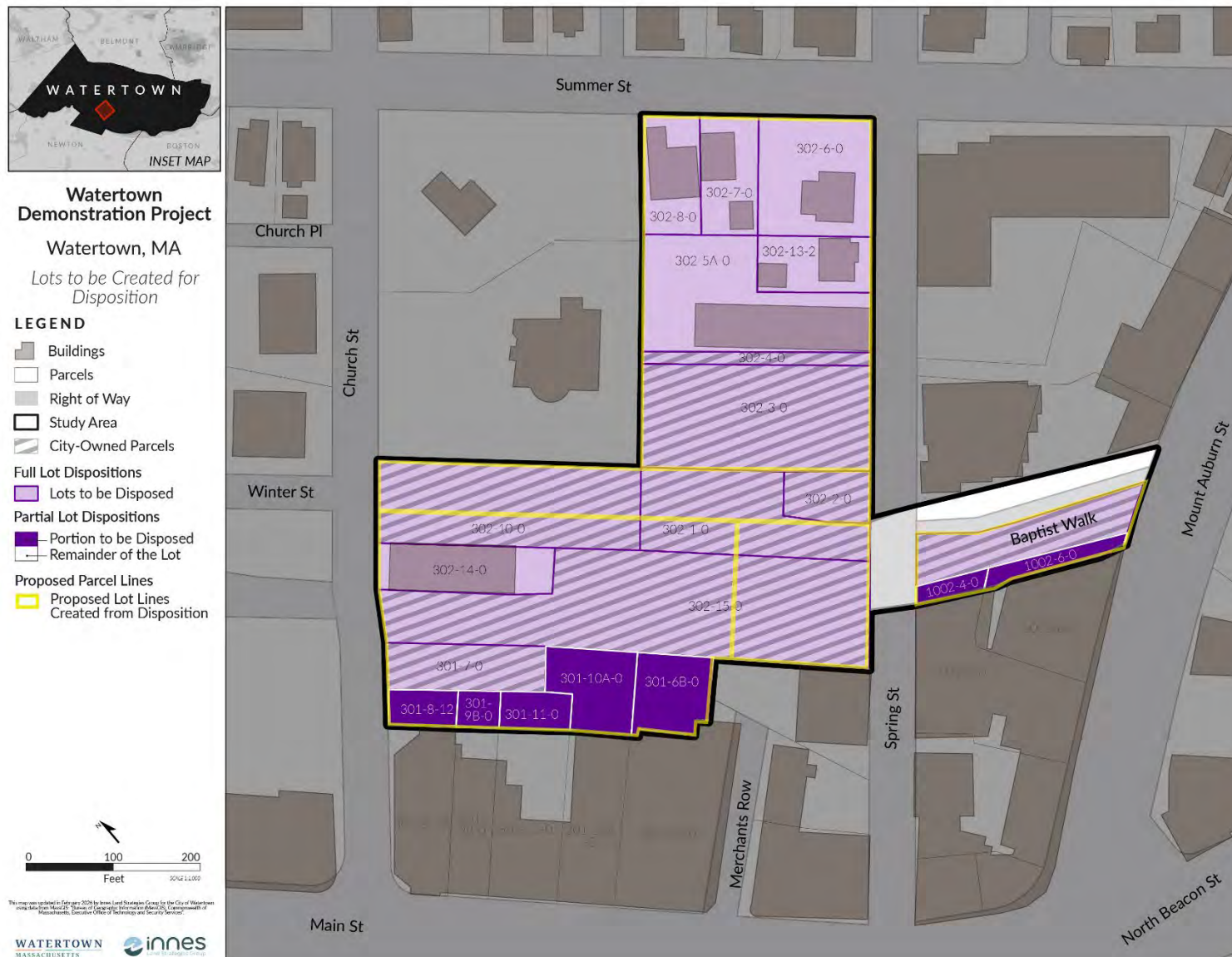
¹⁶ <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleIII/Chapter30B/Section1>

Table 8: Anticipated Dispositions

Parcel ID	Address	Ownership	Real Estate Class	Building Year	Building Size (SF)	Lot Size (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025	Reason for Disposition
Public Parcels								
301-7-0	Church Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.15	539,700	Parking Garage
302-1-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.18	580,400	Bike Path
302-2-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.07	446,000	Residential /Bike Path
302-3-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.41	937,400	Residential
302-4-0	Spring Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.05	38,500	Residential
302-10-0	Church Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			0.28	741,200	Parking Garage
302-15-0	Church Street	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING	930V			1.12	1,744,000	Parking Garage
Subtotal Public Parcels						2.26	\$5,027,200	
Partial Takings								
301-6B-0	29 Main Street	WATERMAIN REALTY OWNER LLC	325C	1900	25,549	0.10	245,233	Portion of rear lot for parking access and loading
301-8-12AZ1	65 Main Street	ARMENIAN LIBRARY + MUSEUM OF AMERICA, INC	9560	1969	13,798	0.04	52,332	Portion of rear lot for parking access and loading
301-9B-0	55 Main Street	DANA, MYER & ALAN TRUSTEES DANA FAMILY REALTY TRUST	326C	1930	9,552	0.03	101,140	Portion of rear lot for parking access and loading

Parcel ID	Address	Ownership	Real Estate Class	Building Year	Building Size (SF)	Lot Size (Acres)	Assessed Value (\$) FY 2025	Reason for Disposition
301-10A-0	41 Main Street	BAYBANK MIDDLESEX	341C	1940	16,392	0.11	306,612	Portion of rear lot for parking access and loading
301-11-0	47 Main Street	BCW REALTY INC	326C	1891	8,188	0.05	150,226	Portion of rear lot for parking access and loading
1002-4-0	16 Mt Auburn Street	FARESE JOHN K TRUSTEE	325C	1920	29,092	0.35	56,549	Two-Way opening of Baptist Walk
1002-6-0	26 Mt Auburn Street	HERMAN DANA FOUNDATION LLC	325C	1920	14,972	0.22	128,848	Two-Way opening of Baptist Walk
Subtotal Partial Takings						0.39	\$1,040,939	
Full Takings								
302-5A-0	40 Spring Street	WATERSPRING LLC	340C	1970	11,856	0.36	2,009,200	Residential
302-6-0	52 Summer Street	WATERSPRING LLC	130	1900	6,587	0.23	1,273,400	Residential
302-7-0	44 Summer Street	WATERSPRING LLC	1040	1930	3,003	0.12	780,500	Residential
302-8-0	48 Summer Street, Unit 1	SONZI 12 LLC	343C	2001	552	0.12	238,500	Residential
302-8-0B	48 Summer Street, Unit 2	ANGELCAR 1 LLC	343C	2001	627		270,100	Residential
302-8-0C	48 Summer Street, Unit 3	VELLUCCI NICOLE	343C	2001	465		202,000	Residential
302-13-2	46 Spring Street	WATERSPRING LLC	1040	1900	4,108	0.11	834,000	Residential
302-14-0	25 Church Street	CALOIERO LLC	325C	1960	7,063	0.14	1,132,000	Parking Garage
Subtotal Full Takings						1.08	\$6,739,700	
Total						3.73	\$12,807,839	

Figure 7: Lots to be created for disposition



3.12 Redeveloper's Obligations

The City has not identified specific redevelopers for the properties listed in the Acquisitions section above and has not drafted a sample Land Disposition Agreement.

As discussed above, while not required (or at least not litigated) in a demonstration project, it is recommended that any redevelopers selected by the City be subject to an LDA. This agreement will outline any requirements specific to the parcels, as well as the general requirements the City has for the development of the property.

The LDA should contain the following:

- A timeframe for completion of the redevelopment
- A statement that the redevelopment will comply with this Plan, Acts of 1987, c. 405, M.G.L. c. 121B, and 760 CMR 12.00
- A clause that the redeveloper, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 151B, will not discriminate.

The City should establish the following additional requirements within the LDA:

- All improvements must be completed in accordance with the objectives of this Plan.
- All improvements must comply with the City of Watertown's zoning ordinance and any related City ordinances, state, and federal laws.
- The project will be subject to the City's relevant project approval process, including any design review process established by the City.

The City may require the redeveloper to pay the following costs, subject to the provisions of the LDA:

- Purchase price of the property and all related legal fees.

- Appraisal cost of the property.
- Relocation costs for any tenants (residential or commercial) displaced by the acquisition (see the Relocation section above; and
- Due diligence, including environmental assessments.

In addition, the City should require performance standards relative to the timing and completion of construction within the LDA, in addition to any required by the City during its approval process. The LDA ensures that the redeveloper complies with and fulfills the requirements of this Plan, thereby safeguarding the project's interests. The time permitted for the performance of each obligation of the redeveloper should also be specified.

4 Conditions of Eligibility

The City of Watertown established the project area's boundaries at the outset of the planning process. The Watertown Square area is centered around the junction of Arsenal St, Mt Auburn St, Main Street (State Route 20), and Pleasant St. The demonstration project plan area is centered around the block enclosed by Church Street on the west, Summer Street on the north, Spring Street on the east and Main Street (State Route 20) on the south (excluding the two parcels owned by the First Parish Church at the corner of Church and Summer streets). The area also includes parcels comprising Baptist Walk, which connects Spring Street and Mt Auburn Street.

As noted in the Cobble Hill decision, a demonstration project plan must show that the area under consideration meets the criteria for blight. The key to the definition of either a Blighted Open area or a Decadent area (both defined in Section 1) is that **the existence of certain conditions precludes the ability of private enterprise to redevelop the area**; in other words, public intervention is necessary. Such intervention may be necessary due to the condition of the buildings, the decline in economic activity, the lack of open space or excessive land coverage, and the area's development pattern.

This section outlines the current state of the Demonstration Project Area, examining the site's historical context, physical and environmental conditions, business conditions, and area demographics.

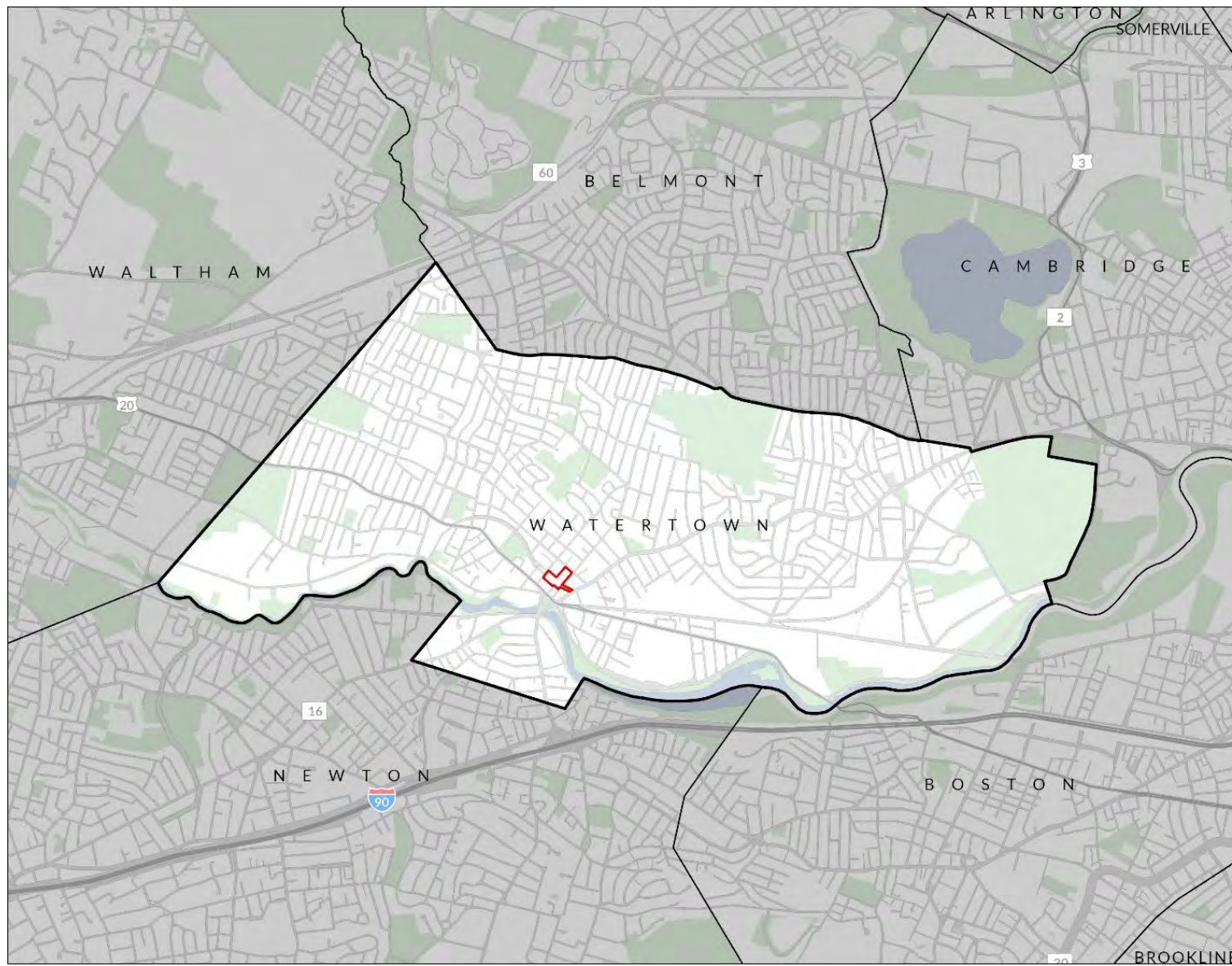
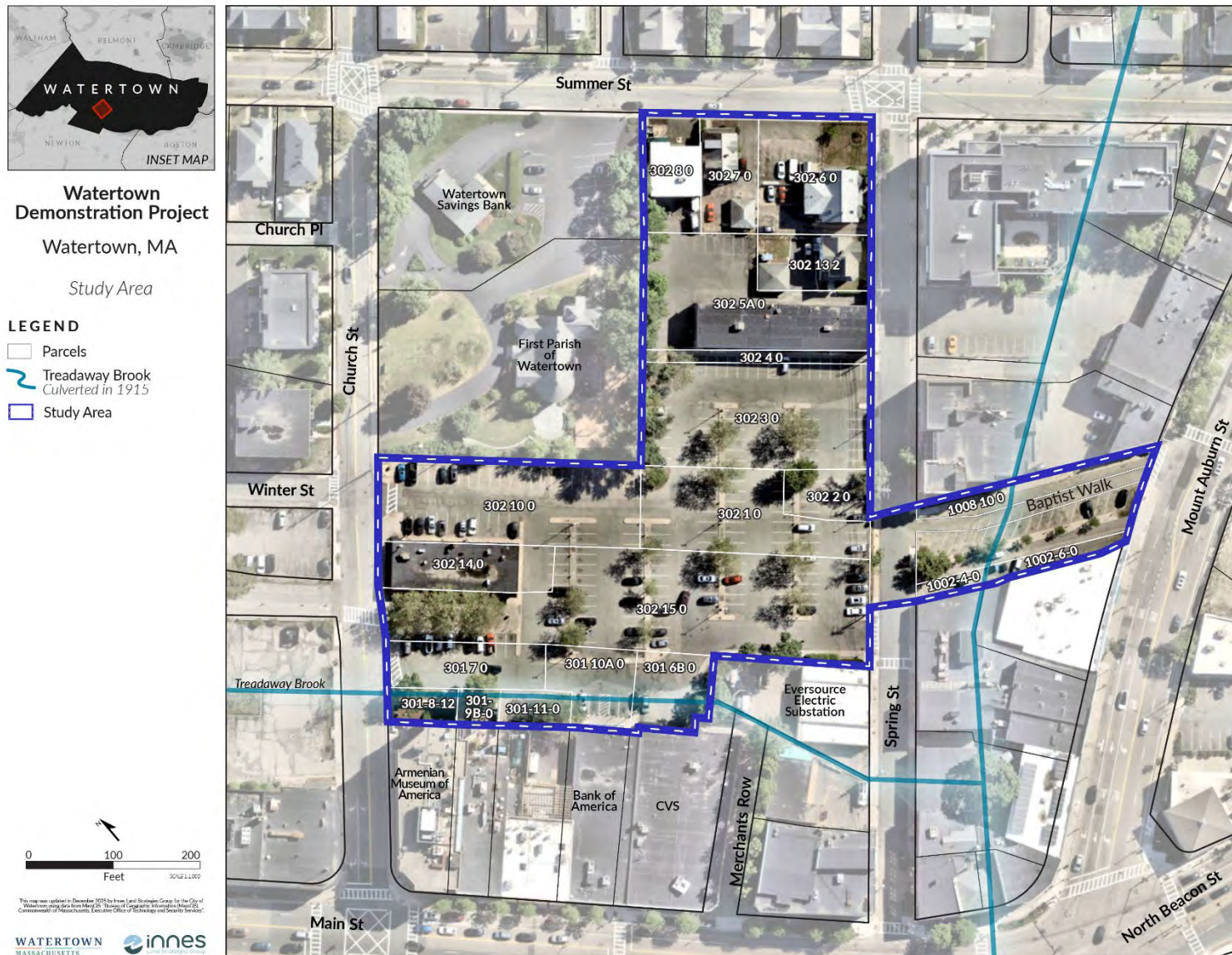
Figure 8: Location of the Project Area

Figure 9: Boundaries of the Project Area



4.1 Historical Context

The project area has historically had commercial, industrial, and residential uses. Commercial uses have existed along Main Street and the junction with Spring Street since the early 1800s. The Watertown Branch Railroad (a branch loop of the Fitchburg Railroad and, from 1900, the Boston and Maine Railroad) ran passenger and freight service through the center of the site beginning in the 1840s. The Watertown station (originally located on parcel 302-14-0) served passengers until around 1938, when it was closed.¹⁷ Freight service continued until 1960, when the station building was demolished and replaced by the current commercial building.

Figure 10 shows the project area in a bird's-eye view from 1879, with the station, rail lines (including a spur track), the original town hall, and commercial buildings.

Figure 12 is an extract from the 1916 Sanborn map series and shows the project area, including the livery stables and coal yard. Figure 13 shows the railroad crossing at Spring Street, looking towards the livery stable on parcel 301-4-0 (which, alongside the sign for McIntosh's coal yard, dates the image to between 1914 and 1922, when the Boston Edison electrical building and substation replaced the livery stable). This picture shows the industrial nature at the time, with the coal yard, rail, livery, and sub-buildings. The commercial

buildings fronting Main Street can also be seen in the upper left (including the historic Otis building at the corner of Spring and Main streets).

As passenger rail service ended and freight service slowly declined along the Boston and Maine line, the extraneous track was removed, and the lots were leased to the town and used for parking (see Figure 18).¹⁸ Between 1946 and 1959, the town leased the parking lots from the railroad, with several attempts to expand the parking area by lease or taking by eminent domain.¹⁹ Following a committee study requested at the 1958 Annual Town Meeting, Article 99 of the 1959 Annual Town Meeting, at the behest of the Retail Board of Trade, appropriated \$25,000 to purchase portions of the lots between the rail line and the rear of the Main Street parcels (Figure 21).²⁰ Ultimately, only the former MacIntosh Coal Company property (parcel 301-7-0) was purchased after negotiations, with the owners of the commercial properties on Main Street granting an easement to allow parking in the rear of their parcels.²¹ In April 1961, the Annual Town Meeting, under Article 66²², appropriated \$63,915 to purchase or take, by eminent domain, the railroad lots it had been leasing and the other lots it didn't already own for off-street parking. Parcels 301-7-0, 302-15-0, 302-1-0, 302-3-0, 302-4-0, and 302-10-0 have thus been parking lots in one form or another for nearly eighty years.

Because industrial uses rapidly transitioned to parking lots (and remediation is unlikely given the era in which the lots were initially paved), the likelihood of contamination in these lots is high. Staff

¹⁷ <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-boston-globe/36820986/>

¹⁸ Articles 8 and 9 Special Town Meeting, October 9, 1945. 1945 Annual Report. <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/5b2c32ce-4fac-43e0-8fa3-055c969bae0e?cache=1800>.

¹⁹ The report of the Chief of Police in the 1946 Annual Report noted that there were 800,000 automobiles registered (he meant statewide) and that they expected significant parking problems in 1947. He also recommended that Baptist Walk become one way to feed traffic from Mt Auburn St to the parking lot. Article 22 of the 1949 November Special Town Meeting postponed the taking of 18,040sqft (or leasing it) of additional land (parcel 302-3-0) from the railroad for parking. Article 33 of the 1950 Annual Town Meeting leased this lot and Article 41 of the 1951 Annual Town Meeting subsequently purchased it.

²⁰ Article 99 1959 Annual Town Meeting <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/37052049-3bdf-45ba-9500-e96e8382e182?cache=1800>.

²¹ Easement: Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Book 9513 page 366. Land Purchase: Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Book 9516 page 131. 1959 Treasurer's Report in the Annual Town Report, <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/37052049-3bdf-45ba-9500-e96e8382e182?cache=1800>,

²² Article 66 <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/9b3bb462-a459-426a-b972-3b6ae208608b?cache=1800>

from the Department of Public Works noted that test pits had been dug in several locations within the parking lot during previous site work, which showed that the rail lines were not removed but were covered with a thick layer of sandy soil before being paved. No check for environmental contaminants was conducted during the test pit work. If this area were used for housing, an evaluation of the underlying soil conditions and contamination checks would be required to determine if Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP) Chapter 21E remediation compliance for the lots in question would be triggered.

The western branch of the Treadaway Brook runs along the path of the rail line (coming above ground at Whites Avenue, traversing the rear of the park and public library, and then running along the rear of the coal yard behind the commercial buildings and across Spring Street before ultimately joining the main branch of the Treadaway Brook at the bottom of Spring Street and then flowing to into the Charles River (see Figure 11). The center line of the brook served as the parcel boundary for all the parcels along its path through the site. In 1915, the town was granted an 8-foot-wide easement²³ across all properties to put the brook into a culvert, through which it still runs today. The culvert also handles stormwater from the parking lots. A twelve-foot outfall drain was installed on Spring Street in 1906 to carry all the water from Treadaway Brook to the Charles River, thereby relieving the flooding of surrounding buildings and streets.

The residential and commercial parcels in the northeast quadrant of the site have had residential buildings on them since at least the mid-1830s.²⁴ The current commercial building on parcel 302-5A-0 replaced

a residence around 1970. The alley that runs between that parcel and parcel 302-13-2 is a 10-foot-wide easement and right-of-way belonging to the First Parish Church (parcel 302-9-1), providing sewer, water, and electrical service from their property to Spring Street, and is subject to a deed restriction preventing it from being built upon.²⁵

In May 1884, the Massachusetts Legislature passed an Act entitled “An Act to provide a further supply of water for the City of Cambridge.”²⁶ This Act authorized Cambridge to take any land in Waltham, Weston, and Watertown along a proposed route from Stony Brook in Waltham to Fresh Pond in Cambridge to allow for the construction of an aqueduct and associated infrastructure. In April 1906, the Cambridge Water Board took parcels in Watertown, including parcels 1008-10-0 along Baptist Walk and an easement through the railroad parcels (302-1-0 and 302-10-0).²⁷ First Parish sold parcel 302-10-0 to the railroad in 1872 with a provision that it would return to them when it ceased to be used for railroad purposes. In 1965, the Boston and Maine Railroad returned the parcel to First Parish, which then sold it to the town.²⁸

No existing building within the demonstration project plan area is listed on the State Register of Historic Places. The following properties are adjacent to the demonstration area (see Figure 27):

- WAT B: The Fayette- Summer Streets Historic Area WAT D: Watertown Square
- WAT 105: Unitarian Parish House (35 Church Street)
- WAT 106: Dana, Benjamin House (1 Dana Terrace)
- WAT 108: Stratton, Elizabeth Hobbs House (69 Summer Street)

²³ Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds Book 4013 Page 22

²⁴ See original sale of land comprising current parcels 302-5A-0, 302-7-0, 302-8-0, 302-13-2 by the Trustees of the Watertown Ministerial Fund, Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book 358 Page 197, Book 340 Page 376, Book 337 Page 296)

²⁵ See Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book 373 Page 340 and Book 8060, Pages 280-284

²⁶ H319 <http://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/732017>. Enacted in the House on May 15, 1884, and the Senate on May 16, 1884, was signed by the Governor on May 21, 1884.

²⁷ Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book 3235 Page 103.

²⁸ Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book 11006 Pages 401-406

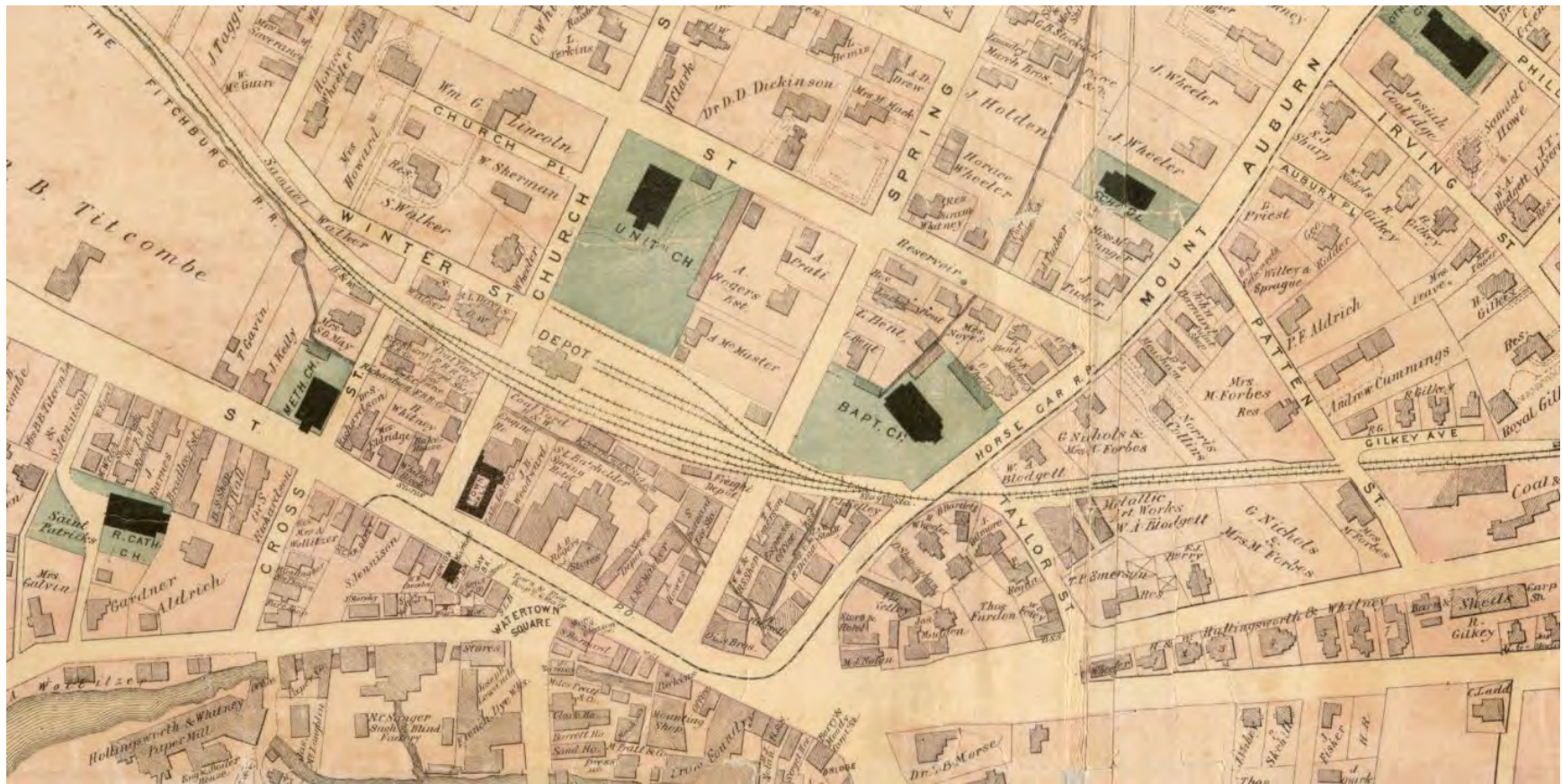
- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WAT 109: Page, Harrison P House (25 Summer Street)• WAT 110: Mark's Spring Street Pub (5 Spring Street, currently Lalibela Ethiopian Restaurant and Bar) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WAT 111: Bergstrom Auto Body Repair Shop (31 Spring St)• WAT 198: The Otis building, (15-25 Main Street) |
|---|---|

Figure 10: 1879 Birds Eye View of Watertown Square



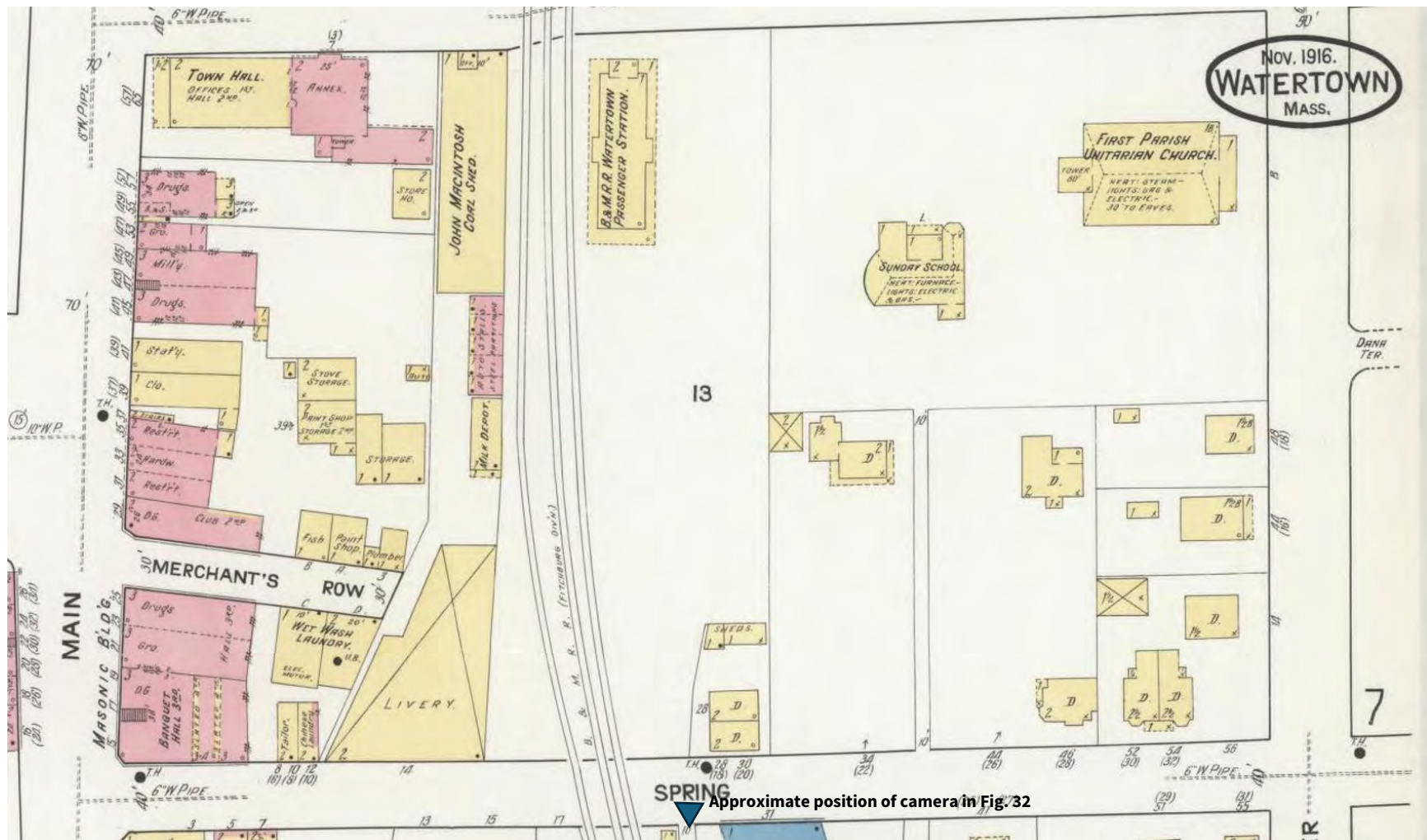
O.H. Bailey & Co. "View of Watertown, Mass." Map. Boston: O.H. Bailey & Co., 1879. Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center, <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:x633fc54w> (accessed August 21, 2025).

Figure 11: View of Watertown Square, 1874



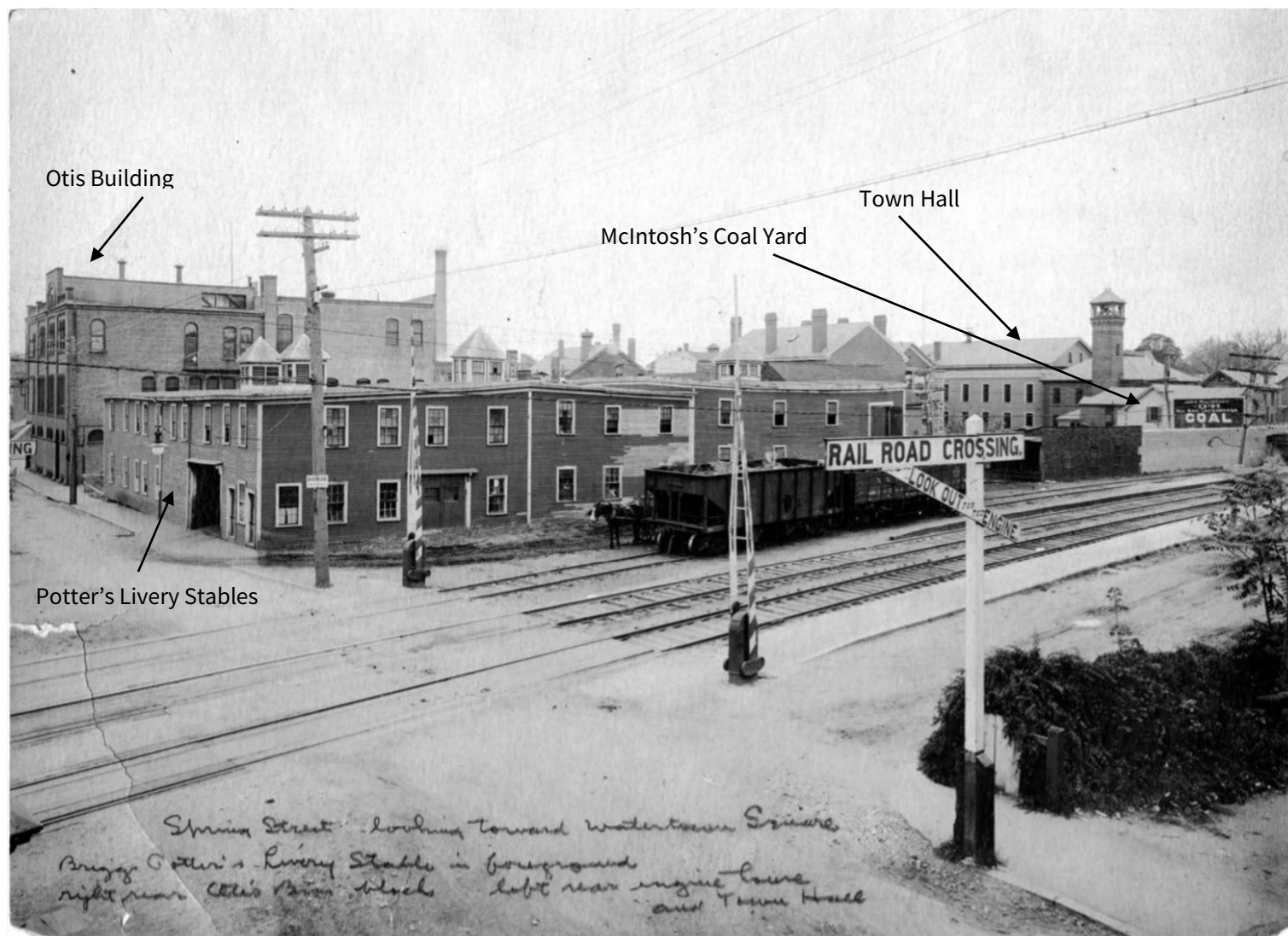
J.B. Beers & Co. "Map of the town of Watertown." Map. New York: J.B. Beers & Co., 1874. Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center, <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:x059c954r> (accessed August 21, 2025).

Figure 12: 1916 Sanborn Fire Map



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Watertown, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Sanborn Map Company, Nov 1916. Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn03877_007/.

Figure 13: Spring Street Railroad Crossing (c.1914-1922)



"Railroad crossing on Spring Street." Watertown Free Public Library. Retrieved from Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/7d278z66h> (accessed August 21, 2025). Labels by Innes Land Strategies Group.

Figure 14: Watertown Station c.1890-1899



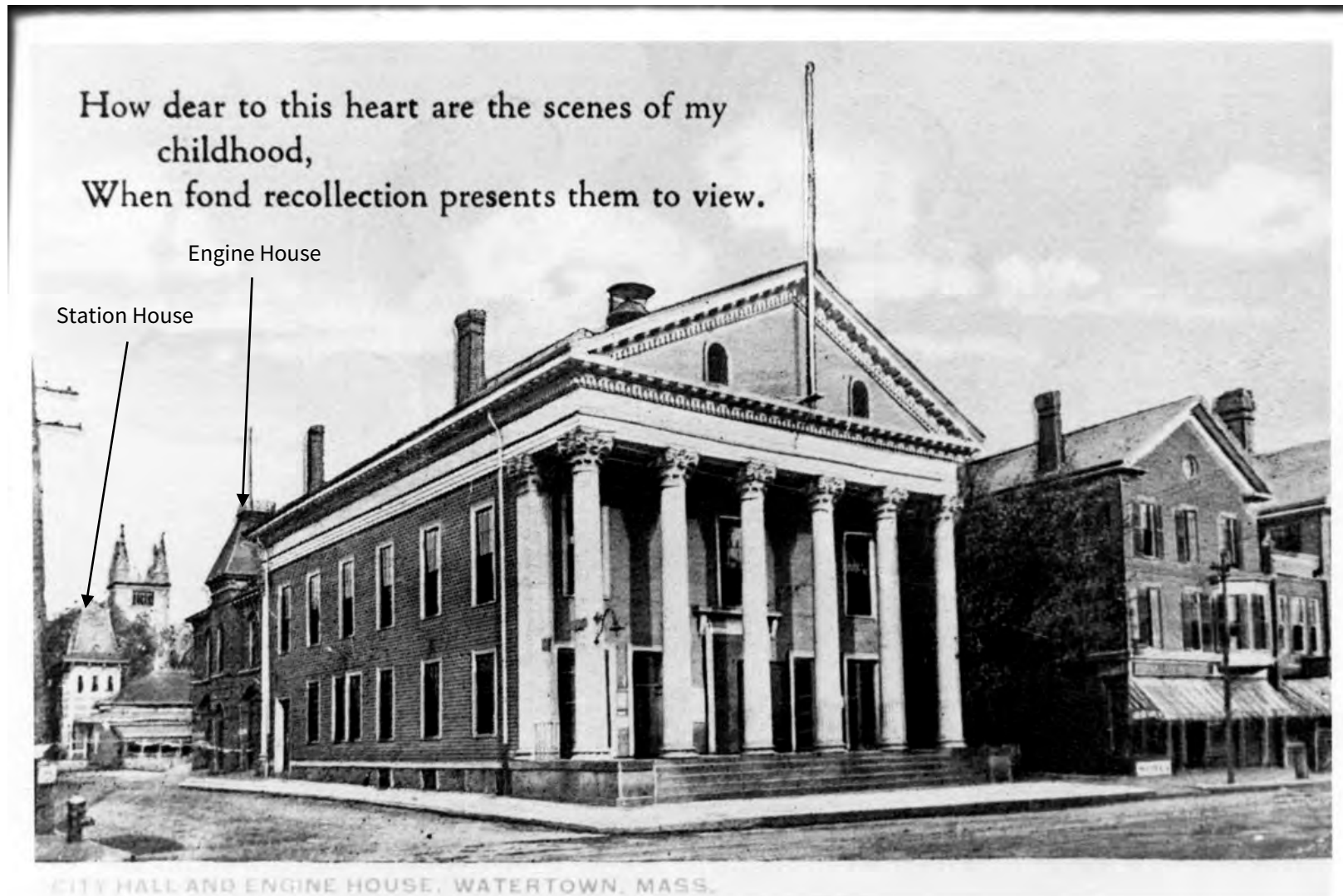
Source: "Watertown Railway Station" Watertown Free Public Library. Retrieved from Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/rv043400c>

Figure 15: Watertown Station (c.1900-1960)



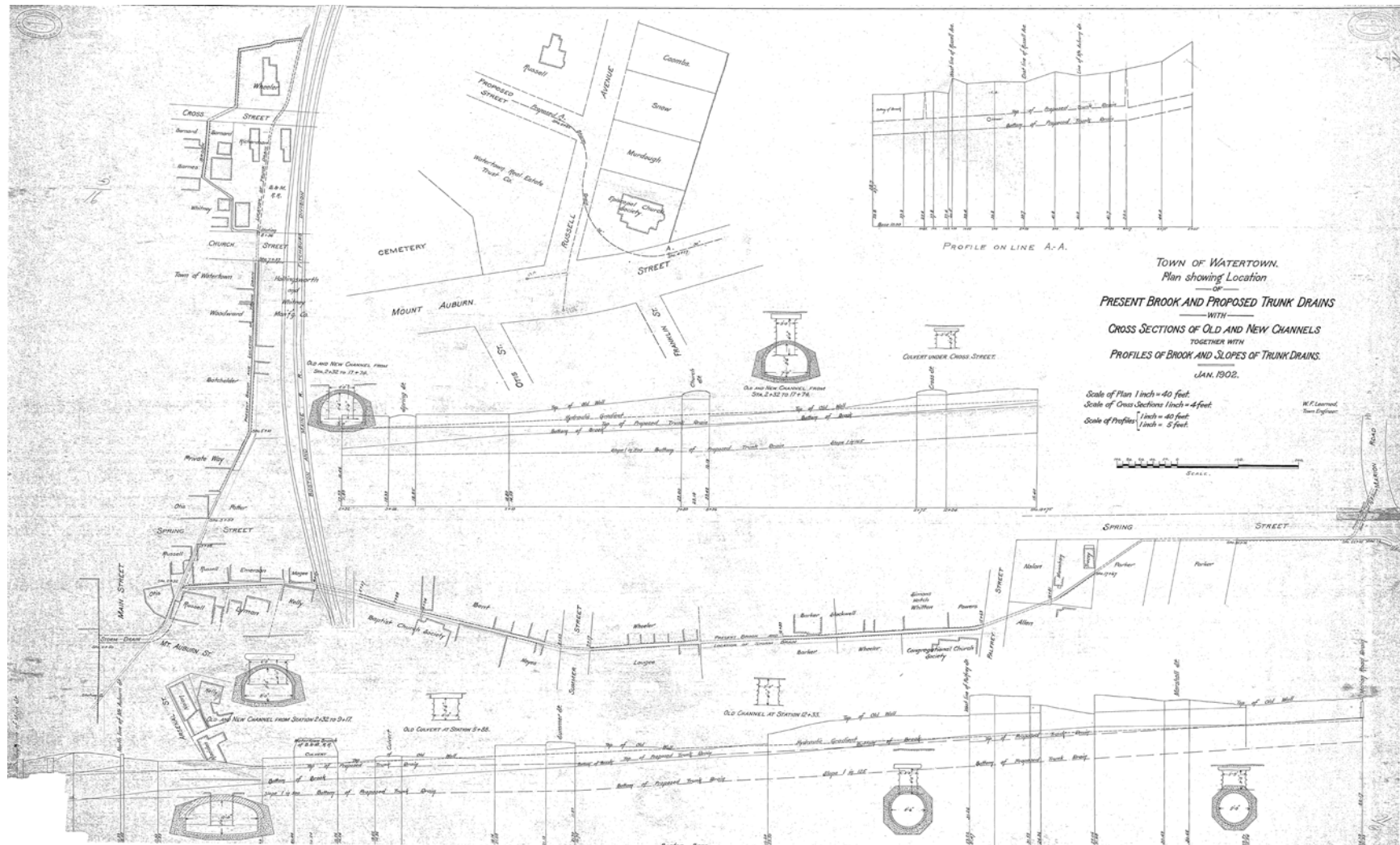
Source: Cole, Jeremy. "Railroad Station." Photograph. [ca. 1900–1980]. Watertown Free Public Library. Retrieved from Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/1j92gj49h>

Figure 16: Town Hall, Engine House, and Station



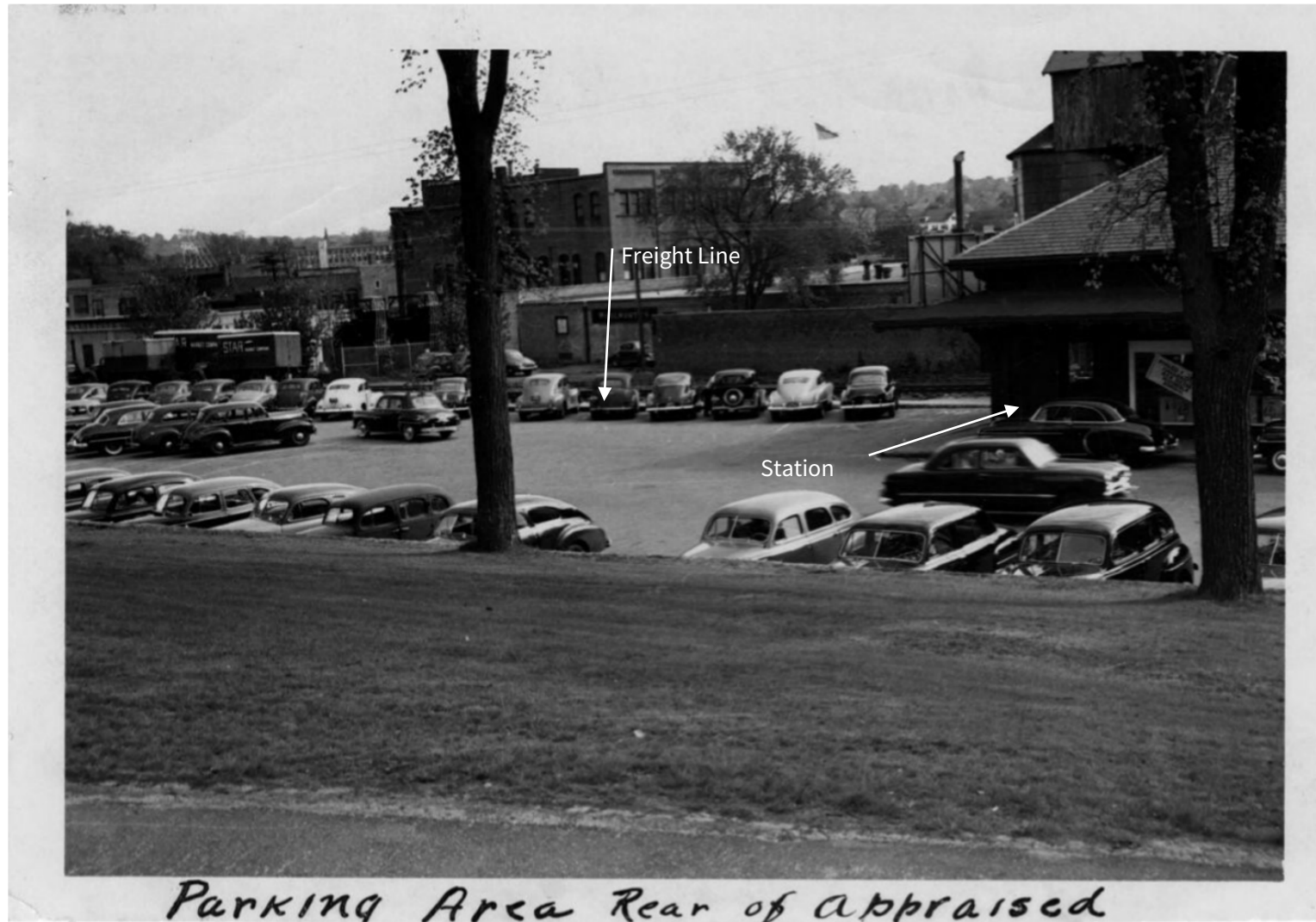
Source: "Town Hall and Engine House." Watertown Free Public Library. Retrieved from Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/zp38wf572> (accessed September 08, 2025). Labels by Innes Land Strategies Group.

Figure 17: Plan of Treadaway Brook and Proposed Culverts c.1902



Source: City of Watertown DPW. Plan# 4-78

Figure 18: Municipal parking lot c. 1947-1949



Source: "Parking area in Watertown Square." [ca. 1947–1949]. Watertown Free Public Library. Retrieved from Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/7d279077d> (accessed August 21, 2025). Labels by Innes Land Strategies Group.

Figure 19: Municipal parking lot c. 1947-1949



Source: "Parking area in Watertown Square." [ca. 1947–1949]. Watertown Free Public Library. Retrieved from Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/7d2790739> (accessed August 21, 2025). Labels by Innes Land Strategies Group.

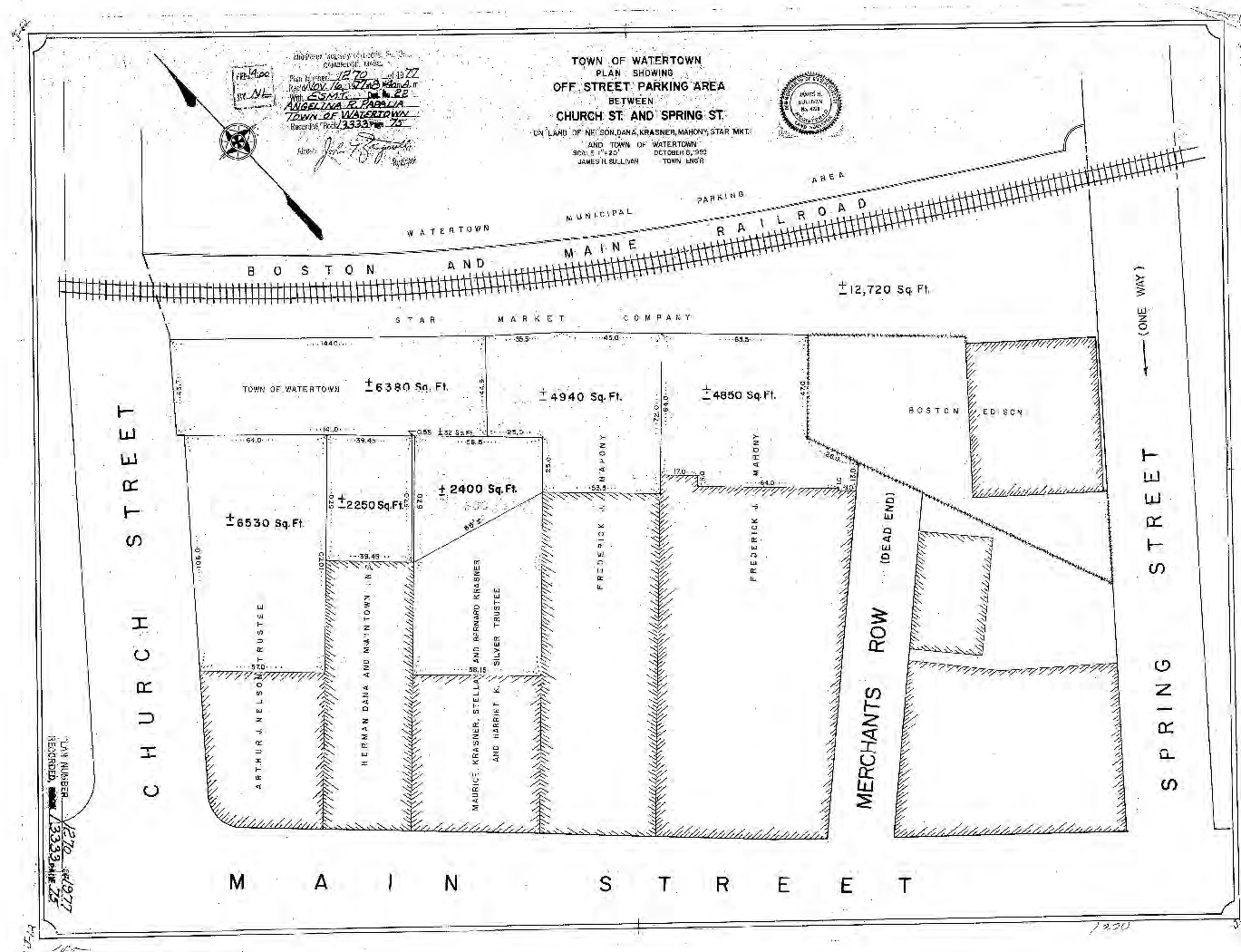
Figure 20: View of Parking Lots c.1975²⁹



Source: "View from the tower of the First Parish Church looking over the roof of the Parish House, with the Grey Block on the left." Watertown Free Public Library. Retrieved from Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/7d279516q>. Labels by Innes Land Strategies Group.

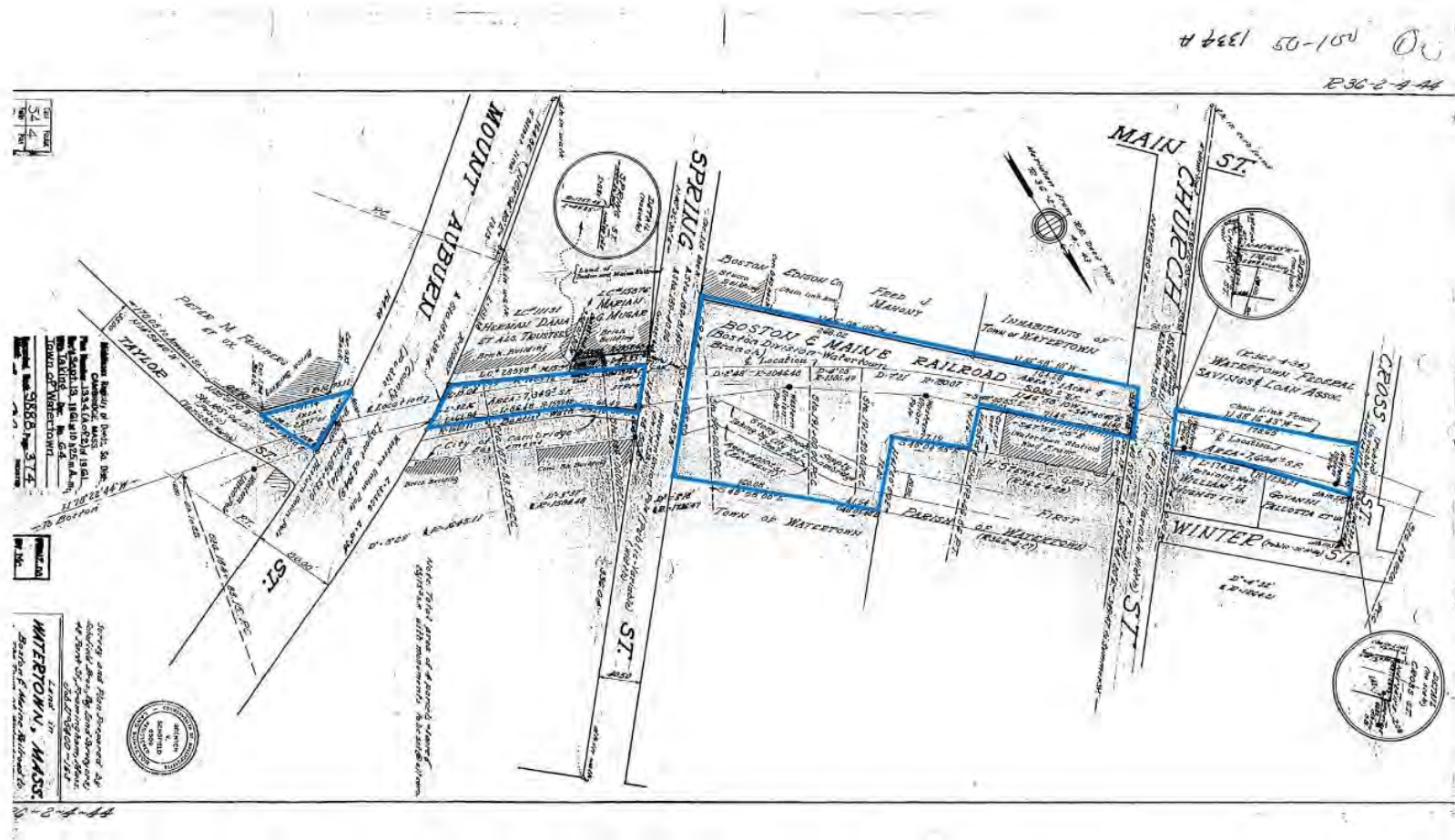
²⁹ Prior to the demolition of the First Parish Church in 1975, several pictures of the surrounding area were made from the tower.

Figure 21: 1959 Proposed Land Purchases for Parking



Source: Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 1977, Page 1270, filed with the 1977 deed (Book 13333 Page 76) assigning the parking easements in the rear of the Main Street commercial properties.

Figure 22: 1961 Article 99: Taking for Parking



Source: Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 1961 Page 1334. Parcels 1-4 in the taking are outlined in blue.

Figure 23: Timeline of Parking Additions

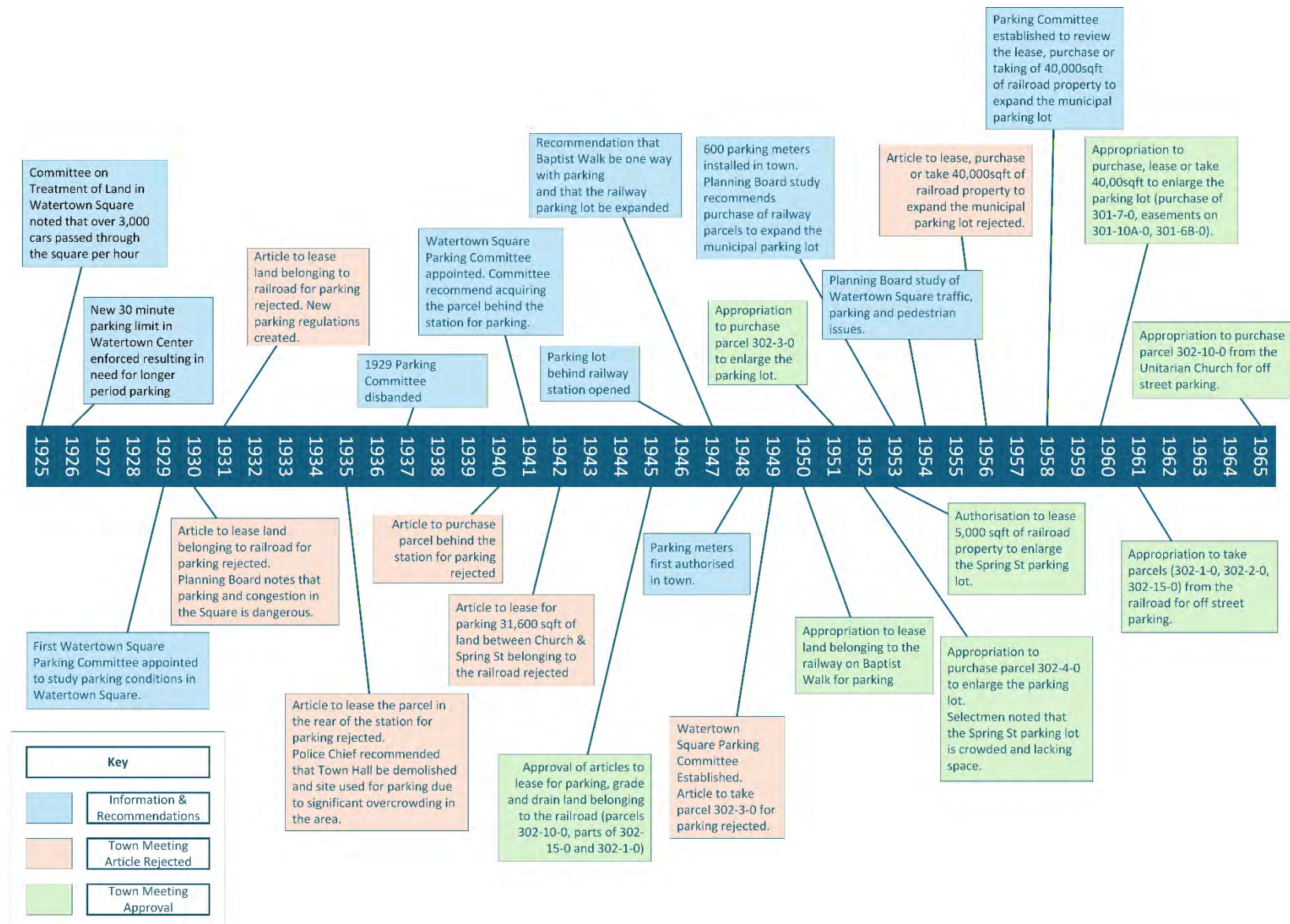


Figure 24: History of Municipal Parking Lots



Figure 25: Landlocked Parcels and Remnants of Rights-of-Way

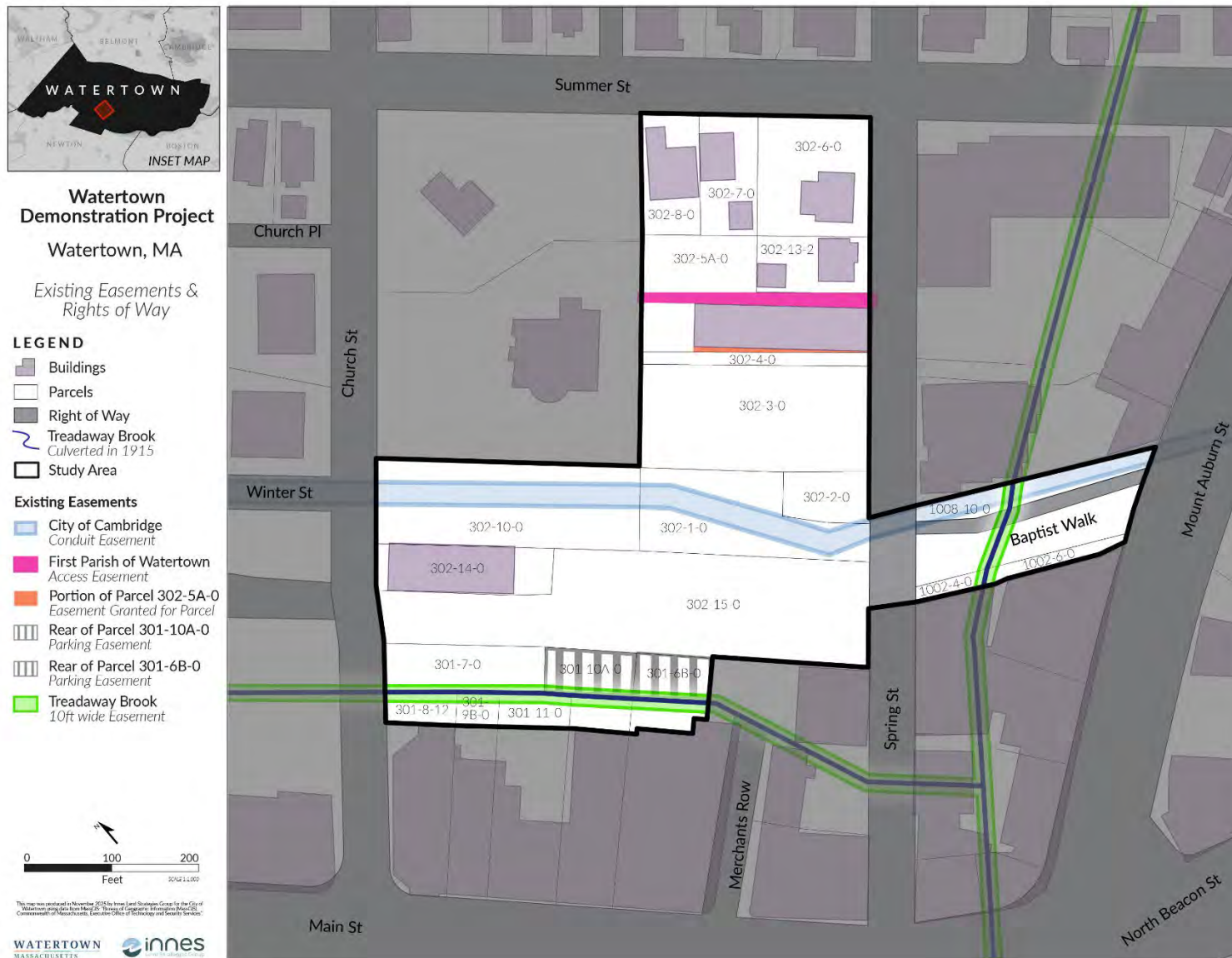


Figure 26: Existing Ownership

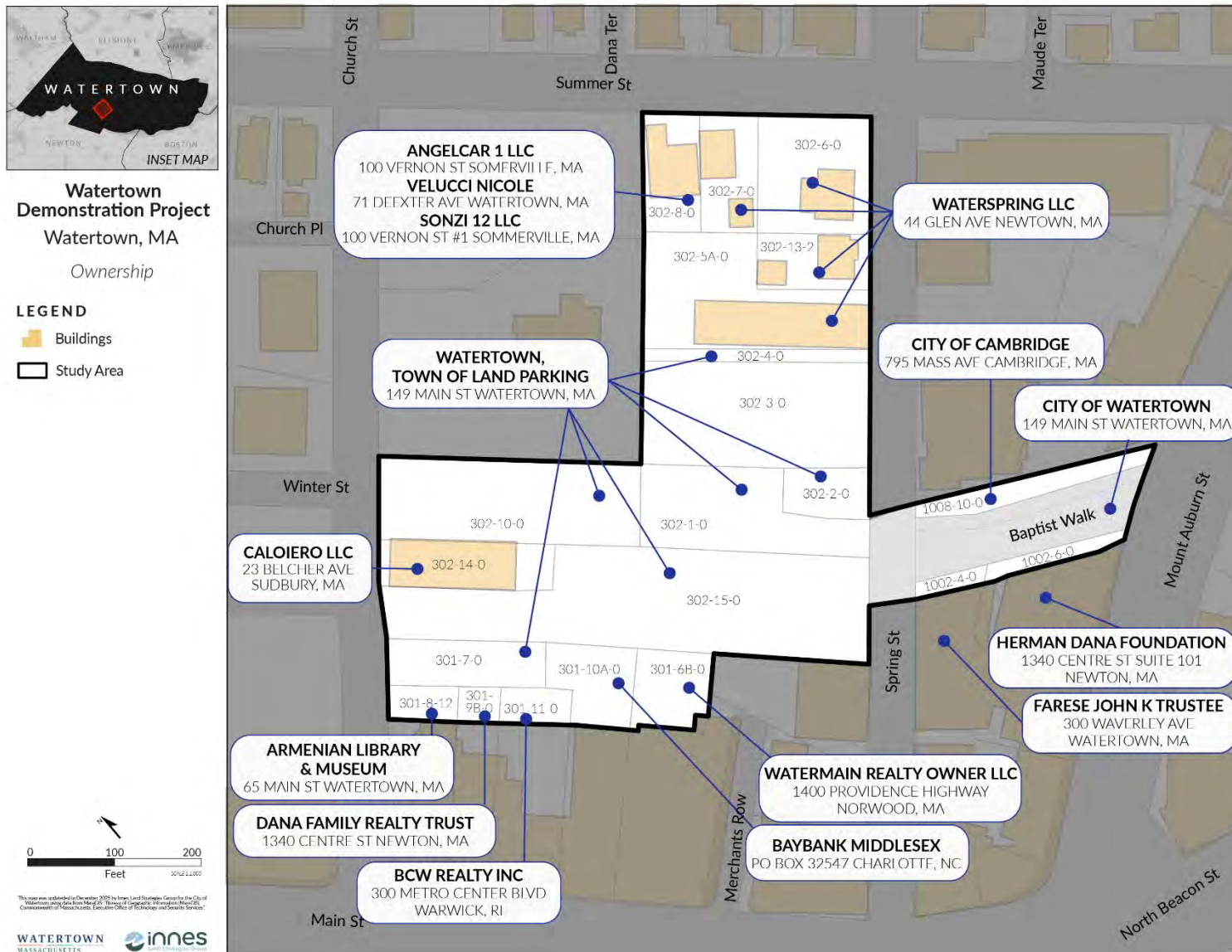
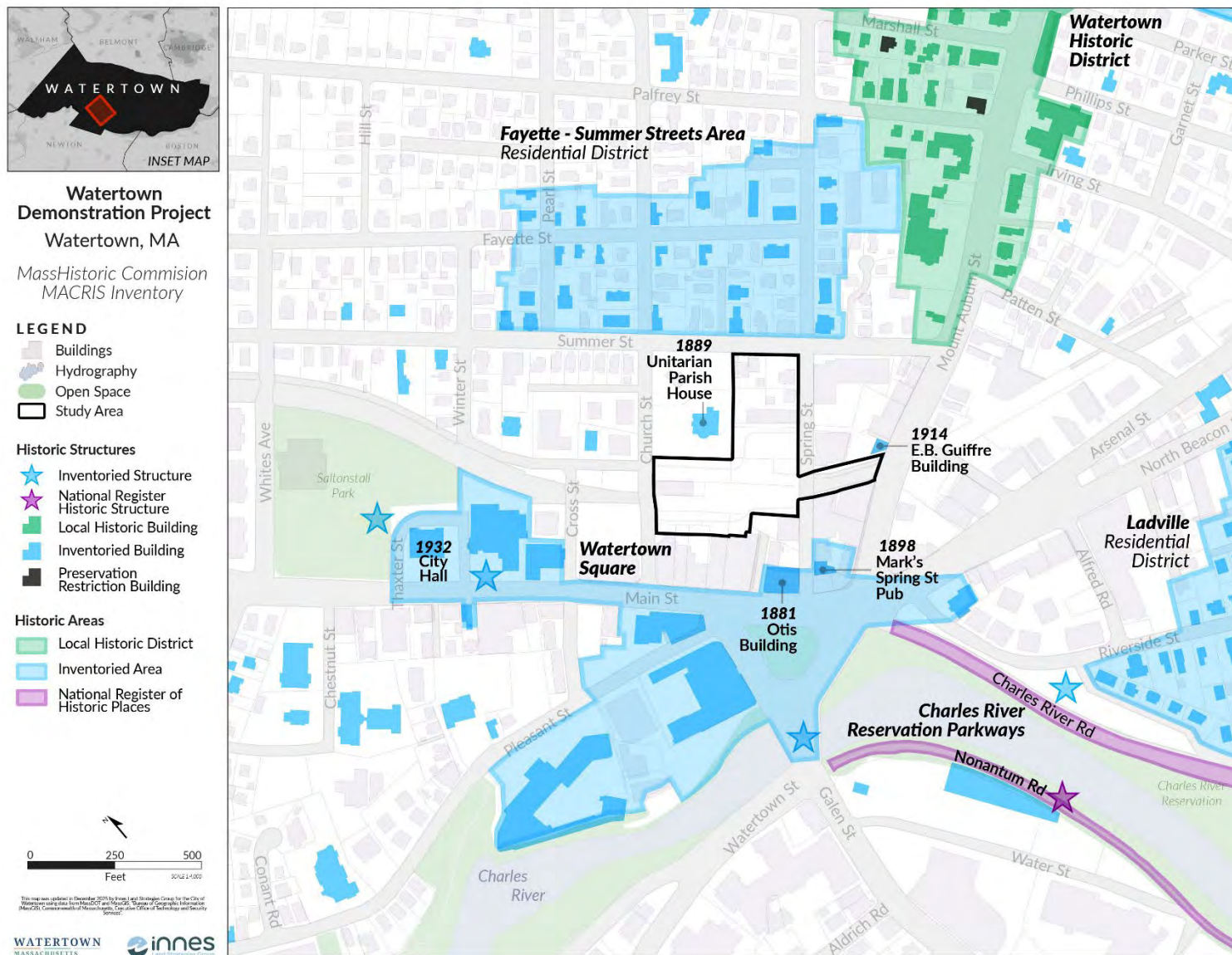


Figure 27: MACRIS Historic District and properties



4.2 Physical Conditions of the Area

4.2.1 Parking

Watertown has on-street and off-street parking in designated areas of the City. In most cases, two-hour on-street parking is enforced between 7 am and 7 pm, while off-street parking is enforced between 8 am and 8 pm.³⁰ Metered parking is available across the city (\$1 per hour / 25¢ per 15 minutes). All meters accept cash, credit cards, or the Passport mobile payment app. All city meters are in the same parking zone (85703). Between the end of November and the beginning of April, overnight (longer than one hour between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m.) on-street parking is prohibited in the city. During this period, residents must park at the municipal lots after 7 p.m.

Watertown residents aged 65 and older can request a permit through the Senior Center for two hours of free parking in the metered municipal lots. Permits are valid for up to two years at a time.

40 business parking passes are available for the Municipal lot (the pass does not guarantee a parking place). These passes are purchased through the Treasurer quarterly and are limited to two permits per business.

The City has 18 restricted-access permit parking spaces on the street and in the municipally owned parcel lot between Church Street and Cross Street (John “Sonny” Whooley Way), which the Fire Department primarily uses.

Municipal Lot

The municipal lot contains 227 parking spaces, of which 213 are metered, eight are un-metered and handicapped accessible only, and six (including one handicapped accessible) are short-term for bank patrons. The lot is in average condition, with some cracked concrete islands and asphalt that needs patching in several areas. The lot has few or no potholes visible. The lot has 10 mature trees, which provide limited shade. The lot has no signage indicating the parking rates and hours of use, except for small print on the meters.

Surrounding Area

An additional 9 on-street one-hour or metered parking spots are available on Spring Street, with a further 18 metered spaces in the on-street parking area on Baptist Walk. Twenty private parking spaces are located in the lot on the corner of Winter and Church Street (owned by the owner of 75-85 Main Street property), and a further 63 private parking spaces are in the main lot behind 75-85 Main Street. There are 23 private spaces behind the commercial property at 40-44 Spring Street used for the building tenants. The commercial condo at 48 Summer Street has six private underground spaces for the owners' use (two per unit).

The available on-street and off-street parking in the area is detailed in Table 9.

³⁰ See sections 73-506 (A) and (E)(2) of the City Traffic Regulations: <https://ecode360.com/39276452#39276452>

Table 9: Area Parking Availability

Location	Parking Spaces										Total
	On-Street					Off-Street					
	Meter	1 Hr.	Handicap	Permit	Private	Meter	1 Hr.	Handicap	Permit	Private	
Municipal Lot, Spring Street	0	0	0	0	0	213	0	8	0	6	227
Baptist Walk	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
Spring Street	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Behind the Public Library	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	6	0	0	28
75-85 Main Street Lot 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	63
75-85 Main Street Lot 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20
Cross Street	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	11	0	18
Behind 40 Spring Street	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	23
48 Summer Street	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Total	23	4	0	7	0	235	0	14	11	118	412

Source: Aerial imagery count and onsite physical count by Innes LSG staff.

4.2.2 Traffic

The proposed mixed-use development at 33 Mount Auburn Street (opposite Baptist Walk) completed a traffic study in November 2025, with inbound traffic volumes from Mount Auburn Street to Baptist Walk, which showed minimal existing morning (25 vehicles) and evening (109) peak traffic counts³¹. At the time of writing, a traffic count project is underway, covering all junctions surrounding

Watertown Square and the Demonstration Project Area. MassDOT traffic data is not granular enough to serve as an accurate analytical reference point.

³¹ Transportation Impact Assessment, Proposed Mixed-Use Development 33 Mount Auburn Street Watertown, Massachusetts, Prepared by Vanesse & Associates Inc, November 2025, pages 19 and 20

4.2.3 Hazardous Materials

The Energy & Environmental Affairs Waste Site & Reportable Releases Map³² lists approximately 198 releases of oil or hazardous materials within one mile of the demonstration project area between 1986 and 2025, six of which were within 1/8 of a mile, with three of these currently still listed with open activity (see Figure 28). All these sites have Activity and Use Limitations. Due to the shallow nature of the impacted soil and groundwater that may be encountered during redevelopment and, based on the volatile nature of the contaminants associated with the releases (gasoline and diesel fuels from leaking underground storage tanks), there is a potential for migration of contaminants to indoor air, which may require mitigation (i.e., a vapor barrier and passive venting systems) and/or remediation to eliminate this potential exposure pathway.

The Demonstration Project Area has no underground storage tanks, and, except for one residential property (parcel 302-7-0), listed on the Assessor's property card as having asbestos siding, there are no known development restrictions due to hazardous materials. Due to extensive surface parking, the area has significant impervious surface coverage.

It is possible that, due to the previous industrial and railroad uses on site and the lack of documentation for any remediation during the conversion from railroad to parking use, contamination may exist, including coal, coal ash, petroleum, and/or pesticides. To identify

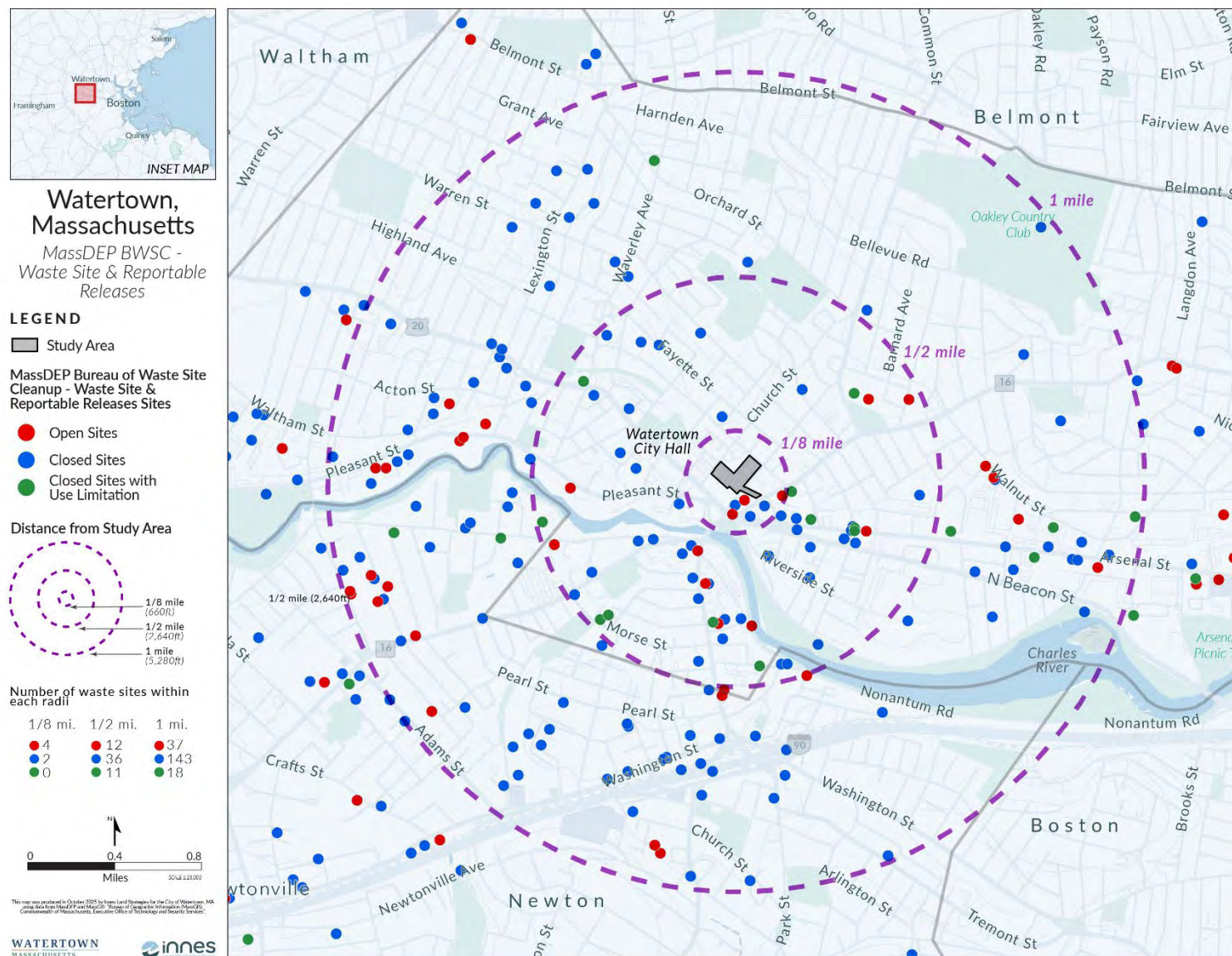
potential on-site environmental contamination, the WRA and/or a developer would need to conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). It is possible that, given prior uses, this study would result in a Recognized Environmental Condition requiring remediation.

While the proposed buildout scenarios do not propose residential units in the area of the former railroad (i.e., above the parking garage), should a subsequent development proposal present that option, having residential units located above an open-air garage could prove to be a benefit in terms of VOC management, as the open-air garage will allow for some level of fresh air exchange to dissipate the VOCs before they reach the upper residential floors.

If dewatering is required during deep excavations on the site, the pumped water may need to be treated before discharging to a safe location. Management of excess/unsuitable soils may also be costly if contamination is present.

³² https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/portal/dep/wastesite/results?queryString=siteType:All%20Sites_townName:WATERTOWN

Figure 28: MassDEP Waste Site and Reportable Releases



4.2.4 Utilities and Infrastructure

There are no known utility improvement projects planned within the demonstration project area. City-owned water, sewer, and stormwater services, as well as privately owned electricity and natural gas services, and telephone and data utilities, are available within the demonstration project area.

Sanitary sewer and water services are city-managed and are gravity-fed, with flows generally moving from north to south down Church and Spring Streets, and corresponding east-west flows along Summer and Main Streets. Storm drainage within the demonstration project area is captured through a combination of closed/open drainage systems, which ultimately discharge into the Treadaway Brook culvert and then out to the Charles River. This drainage infrastructure would need to be relocated where site development conflicts with the existing piping. The City of Watertown confirmed that the existing drainage infrastructure on Main Street could accept rerouted stormwater from the site.

Eversource provides electric service via subsurface and overhead lines, while National Grid provides natural gas service. Watertown Electricity Choice is the city's group purchasing program that offers an alternative to Eversource's basic service. Xfinity, Verizon, and Astound Broadband offer cable/fiber and DSL services.

The City of Watertown Department of Public Works has indicated that they are aware of a large number of disused, unmarked utility cables (primarily telecom) that need to be accounted for during construction. They are not aware of any unmarked, unused gas lines on the site, but have found them elsewhere in the neighbourhood during other excavation work.

For electrical services, Headroom for Load refers to the available unused capacity in the electrical infrastructure that can accommodate additional demand without exceeding thermal, voltage, or operational limits. Hosting Capacity refers to the amount of new distributed energy resources (such as solar) that can be added to a specific part of the electric grid without adversely impacting reliability or requiring significant infrastructure upgrades.

The Eversource headroom capacity map (Figure 30) indicates that there is limited summer headroom capacity in the Demonstration project area, but that most parcels have no headroom capacity. The Eversource hosting capacity map (Figure 31) indicates that there is some summer hosting capacity in the current residential area of the Demonstration project, with none elsewhere. The capacity values by parcel are shown in Table 10.

Using calculations from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory based on the geolocation of the garage in each option to approximate panel tilt and shading requirements, the estimated maximum solar generation for the buildout scenarios is calculated in Table 11. The calculations are based on a maximum scenario, assuming that all required zoning roof space is available for solar panel placement and that commercial 500W panels are installed.

Option A has a maximum solar generation capacity of approximately 820 kW, with an annual maximum potential power output of roughly 2,022 MWh, equivalent to meeting the needs of approximately 267 homes. In Option B, the garage is smaller, and the commercial annex falls below the 10,000 gross square foot zoning requirement for solar, reducing the maximum solar generation capacity to approximately 690 kW and the annual maximum potential power output to roughly 1,707 MWh, equivalent to meeting the needs of approximately 226 homes.

Discussions with Eversource will be necessary during the building design process to determine the infrastructure needed to expand the area's electrical headroom and hosting capacity to support the site's required solar energy generation.

Table 10: Eversource Capacity Information

Parcel ID	Headroom Capacity	Hosting Capacity	Parcel ID	Headroom Capacity	Hosting Capacity
301-6B-0	0W	0 W	302-6-0	0 W	3.09 MW
301-7-0	0 W	50.00 kW	302-7-0	0 W	3.09 MW
301-8-12AZ1	2.96 MW	0 W	302-8-0	0 W	3.09 MW
301-9B-0	0 W	0 W	302-8-0B		
301-10A-0	0 W	0 W	302-8-0C		
301-11-0	0 W	0 W	302-10-0	0 W	50.00 kW
302-1-0	2.82 MW	0 W	302-13-2	0 W	3.09 MW
302-2-0	2.82 MW	0 W	302-14-0	0 W	50.00 kW
302-3-0	0 W	3.09 MW	302-15-0	6.66 MW	0 W
302-4-0	0 W	3.09 MW	1002-4-0	2.96 MW	0 W
302-5A-0	0 W	3.09 MW	1002-6-0	0 W	0 W

Source: <https://navigator.eversource.envelio.com/?lang=en-us#17.59/42.366799/-71.183978>, (Last accessed February 26, 2006, data dated 2/11/2026, 7:00:00 PM)

Table 11: Solar Generation Estimate³³

	Option A			Option B		
	Parking Garage	Residential Building	Commercial Annex	Parking Garage	Residential Building	Commercial Annex
Total Roof Area	33,600	22,600	5,500	29,000	22,600	0
Required Zoning Solar Roof Coverage	90%	50%	50%	90%	50%	50%
Approximate Usable Roof Area	20,400	11,300	2,750	26,100	11,300	0
Solar Panel Size (SF)	27	27	27	27	27	27
Maximum Panels	1,120	418	101	966	418	0
Panel Wattage (W)	500	500	500	500	500	500

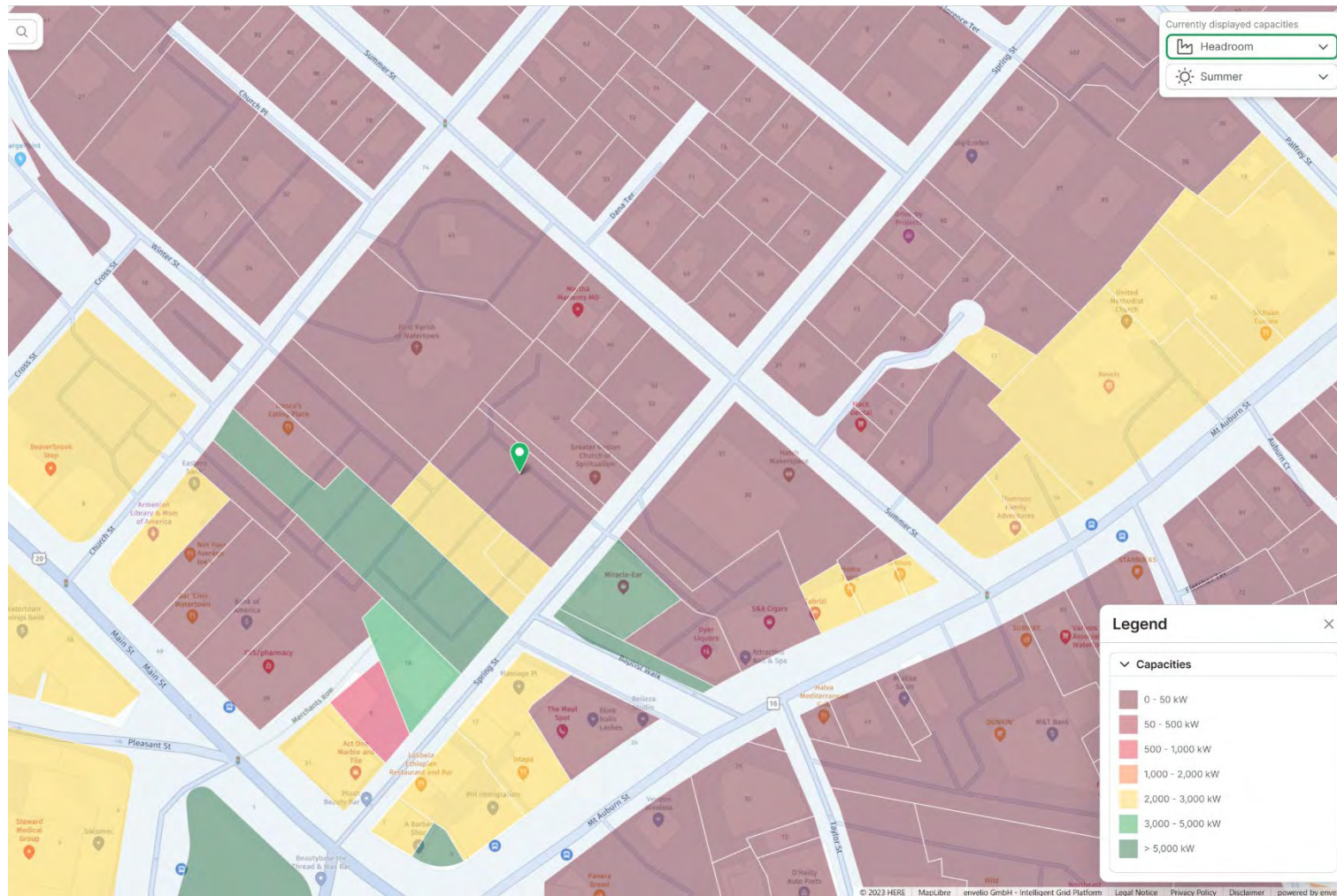
³³ Final solar calculations will be based on the actual designed building(s). The maximum system size (kWdc) is calculated as the Maximum Number of Panels*Panel Wattage, where the Maximum number of panels equals the usable roof area/solar panel size. Estimates were generated using data from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (<https://pvwatts.nrel.gov/index.php>).

	Option A			Option B		
	Parking Garage	Residential Building	Commercial Annex	Parking Garage	Residential Building	Commercial Annex
Maximum DC Capacity (Wdc)	560,000	209,000	50,500	483,000	209,000	0
Maximum DC Capacity (kWdc)	560.00	209.00	50.50	483.00	209.00	
Total Max System Size (kWdc)	819.50			692.00		
Total Max System Size (MWdc)	0.82			0.69		
System Efficiency	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Maximum AC Capacity (kWac)	537.60	200.64	48.48	463.68	200.64	0
Average Annual Sun Hours/Day ³⁴	7.04	7.04	7.04	7.04	7.04	7.04
Total System Output (kWh/Day)	3,785	1,413	341	3,264	1,413	0
Annual System Output (kWh)	1,381,417	515,565	124,574	1,191,472	515,565	0
Annual System Output (MWh)	1,381	516	125	1,191	516	0
Total Annual System Output (MWh)	2,022			1,707		
MA Average Household Consumption(MWh)	7.55			7.55		
Approximate Number of Homes Powered	267.76			226.10		

Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, <https://pvwatts.nrel.gov/index.php>, Solar Energy Industries Association, <https://seia.org/whats-in-a-megawatt>, Last accessed December 14th, 2025.

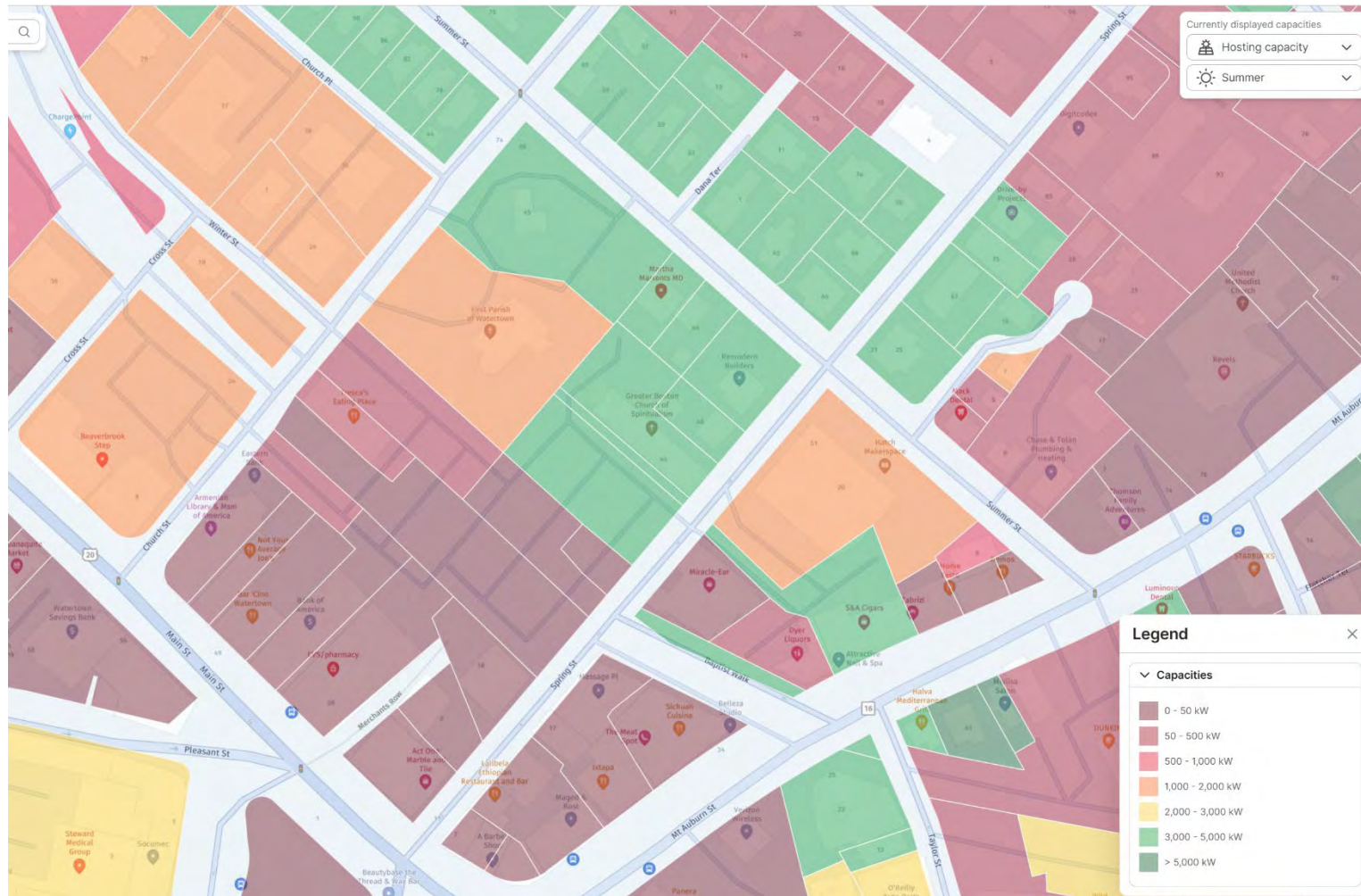
³⁴ The daily average sun for Watertown varies between approximately 4.7 hours in January to 9.9 hours in July. <https://myperfectweather.com/api/cityinfo/25017Wat/degF/Average-Weather-in-Watertown-Town-United-States-Year-Round>.

Figure 29: Eversource Summer Headroom Capacity



Source: <https://navigator.eversource.envelio.com/?lang=en-us#16.91/42.366747/-71.183735> (last accessed February 26, 2026, data dated 2/11/2026, 7:00:00 PM)

Figure 30: Eversource Summer Hosting Capacity



Source: <https://navigator.eversource.envelio.com/?lang=en-us#16.91/42.366747/-71.183735> (last accessed February 26, 2026, data dated 2/11/2026, 7:00:00 PM)

Summary of Existing Utility Context

Drainage Summary

Stormwater within the Area of Interest (AOI) is managed by a network of drainage structures, including a series of offline catchbasins, manholes, and three subsurface infiltration/detention chambers, which can be relocated and reused onsite. The excess stormwater runoff from this site flows via pipe conveyance into a stormwater main on Spring Street, which combines with stormwater from the Treadway Brook culvert south of the AOI and ultimately discharges south to the Charles River. The Treadway Brook culvert was constructed in the early 1920's.

Historical data acquired from the City indicates that offsite stormwater from the Residence at Watertown Square parcel has been rerouted to flow to underground infiltration. The material and condition of stormwater infrastructure within the AOI is unknown.

Drainage infrastructure exists which passes through the site from Church Street to Spring Street. This drainage infrastructure would need to be relocated and reused if any improvements within the AOI conflict with the existing piping. It was confirmed with the City of Watertown that while the existing drainage infrastructure on Main Street could accept the rerouted stormwater from Church Street, upgrades on main Street may be required. The City anticipates that, in the event of the relocation or modification of the subsurface infiltration system, infiltration volumes would be met or exceeded based on the demonstration project plan proposals.

Sanitary Sewer Summary

Existing Sewer within the AOI is collected by gravity lines managed by the City. Size, capacity and serviceability is currently unknown for the structures servicing the AOI. After collection, wastewater is discharged into larger mains on Spring, Church and Main Street.

These services are managed by the MWRA and are sent to a regional facility for treatment.

Water Services Summary

The AOI is serviced by a series of domestic water lines varying in size from 8-10 inches. These lines serve the buildings and fire hydrants on site. It is indicated that some of the existing water lines running along Spring Street are cast iron, however the material of the remaining service lines and condition of all water service lines within the area are unknown. This site is divided by a 63" diameter aqueduct that is to remain and shall not be disturbed during future redevelopment activities.

Electric Summary

Subsurface and overhead electric lines exist surrounding the AOI on Church, Spring and Main Street. Electric service is provided by via the Eversource Arsenal Substation at the southeast corner of the AOI. There are multiple light poles within the AOI, however information regarding their service connections is unknown.

Eversource indicates that there is approximately 50-500 kW of available unused capacity (Headroom Capacity) within the AOI for future connections and 50-500kW of available Hosting Capacity for future distributed energy resources.

Communication Summary

Xfinity, Verizon, and Astound Broadband provide cable/fiber and DSL service to the AOI. Limited information is available for the locations of subsurface communication services within the AOI.

Gas Summary

Gas is provided to the site by National Grid. Existing gas services exist both on the Southwest end of Spring Street, and an isolated service line exists northeast of Baptist Walk. There is also a service

connecting to the existing building on site running along Church Street. Size, material and future serviceability are unknown.

The approximate locations of existing utility services and the aqueduct are shown in Figure 31.

Summary of Existing Environmental Engineering Context

Existing Environmental Considerations

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is recommended to evaluate the potential for environmental contamination associated with the site's historical railroad and industrial uses. Such an assessment may identify a Recognized Environmental Condition (REC), as typical contaminants from former railroad operations can include coal, coal ash, petroleum products, and pesticides. If contamination is present in on-site soils, Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) air management measures may be required during and post-construction. In addition, if dewatering is needed for deep excavations, pumped groundwater may require treatment before discharge to an approved location. Management and off-site disposal of excess or unsuitable soils may also be required.

No oil or hazardous material spills are currently recorded with MassDEP within the AOI; however, several reported releases are located on the opposite side of Spring Street.

4.2.5 Flood Zones

Before being culvertized in 1915, the Treadaway Brook was a significant source of flooding in the area, especially in the early spring

when the ground was still frozen and water runoff from the surrounding area would overflow the brook and travel along the streets ultimately washing them out (the flow would migrate down the rail line to Church Street, then cross over Main Street before ultimately draining into the Charles River).³⁵ The demonstration project area does not otherwise lie in a flood hazard area.

Daylighting the brook is not feasible at this time. The depth of the culvert is 8-11 feet below the current surface and would cut access to the existing Main Street retail properties from the parking lots and Merchant's Row and Main Street.

³⁵ Comments on the flooding due to rainfall overflowing the banks is a regular occurrence in the Town Annual Reports through to 1915. In 1902, the Town Engineer included a detailed review of the brook and the watershed (with some 658 acres of contributory area drained by it) and outlined the plans to redirect the brook into culverts to alleviate the drainage and flooding issues in the area.

Watertown Square Demonstration Project Plan

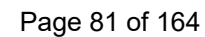
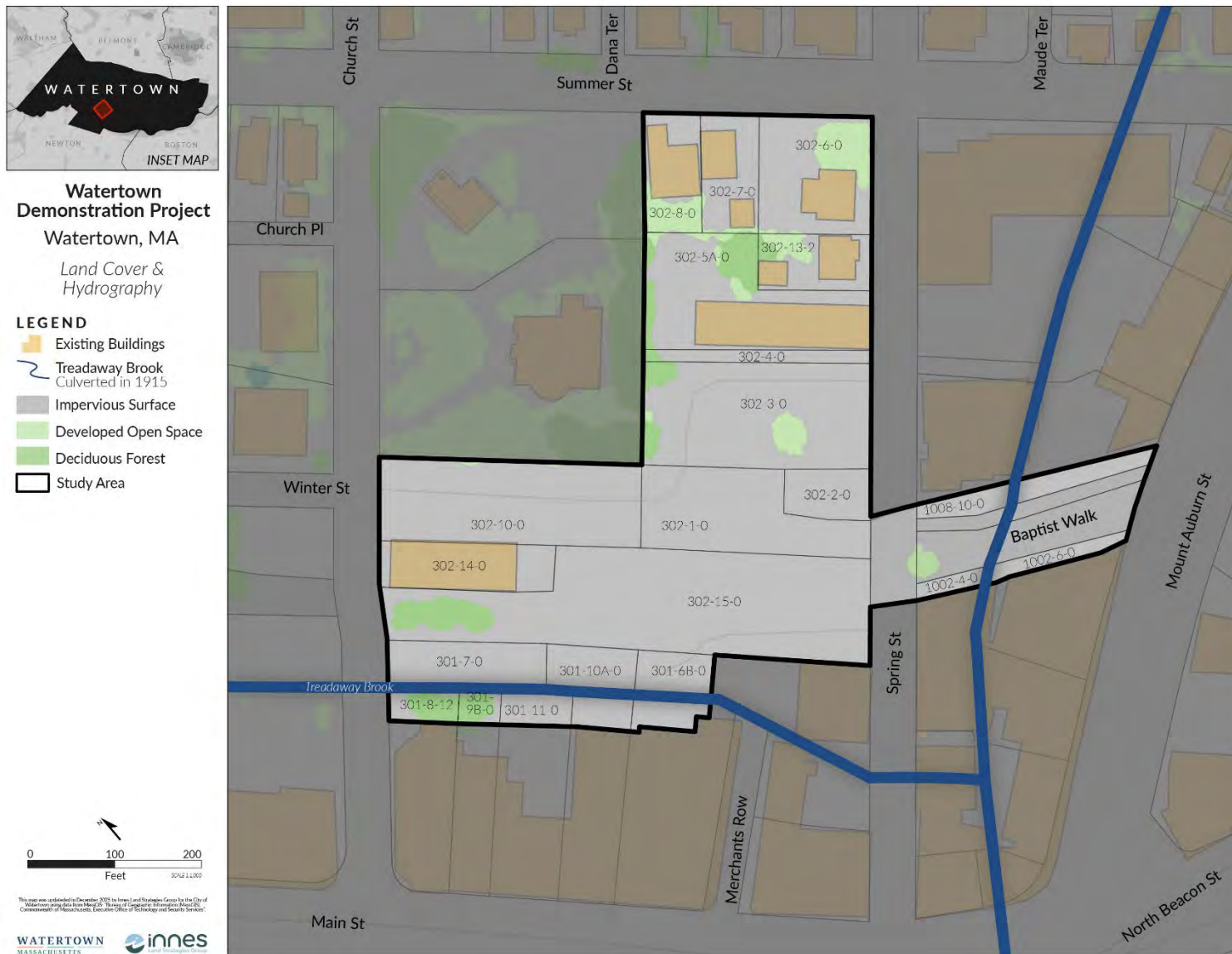


Figure 32: Impervious Land Cover & Hydrography



4.3 Regulatory Context

This section examines the regulatory framework applicable to the Demonstration Project Plan Area (DPA), specifically the zoning and building code criteria that govern the construction and design of any proposed redevelopment.

As part of the Watertown Comprehensive Plan and the Watertown Square Area Plan, new mixed-use zoning was created in 2024. These new districts, WSQ1, WSQ2, WSQ3, and NMU, were designed to serve the goals of those plans as outlined in Section 5.08 (a) of the zoning:

...This zoning is designed to achieve these goals through sound planning and form-based code principles. The goals of these districts include:

- 1) Create lively public spaces.
- 2) Incorporate Universal Design principles to create street design that promotes safe walking, biking, and access to transit.
- 3) Ensure that small businesses can thrive.
- 4) Promote shared public-private open spaces that are activated and expanded, with more access to the Charles River.
- 5) Create expanded housing options.
- 6) Explore more opportunities for public art.
- 7) Reuse, enhance, or preserve the most significant historic structures.
- 8) Make the Square a destination for residents and visitors alike, with attractions for community members to visit and spend time.

The Demonstration Project Plan Area includes parcels within both the WSQ2 and WSQ3 zones.

Additionally, the DPA lies within the City's TOD district, which has the following objectives:

1. To respond to the local and regional need for multi-family housing by facilitating development of such housing.
2. To provide new multi-family housing near public transit, in walkable areas, and near important amenities such as retail, personal service, office, and civic uses.
3. To further the City's climate and sustainability goals by encouraging denser development in areas near transit and in walkable areas; and
4. To encourage residential uses to provide a customer base for local businesses.

Within the TOD overlay district, multi-family development, both in residential-only and mixed-use settings, is allowed as of right, subject to a Site Plan Review by the Planning Board. Where there is 4,000 SF of new construction or a change of use, ground-floor uses in a mixed-use building are also as-of-right.³⁶

4.3.1 Zoning

The City rezoned the Watertown Square area in November 2024, redrawing the zoning map and adding four new districts. Most of the site is zoned WSQ3 (Watertown Square 3) with the three residential/commercial parcels on Summer Street zoned WSQ2 (Watertown Square 2). The area is also within the City's Transit-Oriented Development Overlay district.

As stated in Section 5.08(a) of the Zoning ordinance, the new districts:

were created to fulfill the goals contained in the Watertown Comprehensive Plan and the Watertown Square Area Plan. This zoning is designed to achieve these goals through sound planning and form-based code principles. The goals of these districts include:

- Create lively public spaces.
- Incorporate Universal Design principles to create street design

³⁶ Section 5.09(c)(1) and 5.09(c)(3) of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance.

that promotes safe walking, biking, and access to transit.

- Ensure that small businesses can thrive.
- Promote shared public-private open spaces that are activated and expanded, with more access to the Charles River.
- Create expanded housing options.
- Explore more opportunities for public art.
- Reuse, enhance, or preserve the most significant historic structures.
- Make the Square a destination for residents and visitors alike, with attractions for community members to visit and spend time.

WSQ2 allows up to four stories (72ft) and WSQ3 allows up to five stories (88ft), depending on the roof type, with otherwise similar dimensional standards for setbacks and design characteristics. Section 6 contains a full list of dimensional standards and uses.

Energy Codes, Sustainability, and Solar Regulations

The City of Watertown is a specialized stretch energy code community³⁷. Article VIII of the Zoning Ordinance sets standards for solar, sustainability, and resiliency for all projects that require a Site Plan Review. All new buildings must follow the specialized stretch energy requirements as well as use (where feasible) passive solar, energy-efficient technology, renewable energy, and the maximization of southern exposures. Developments in the WSQ districts must also meet a minimum of LEED Gold level.

Solar installations must cover at least 50% of the roof area of all buildings with more than 10,000 SF or more than 10 residential units. In comparison, parking structures must have a solar energy system

that covers at least 90% of the top level.³⁸ Electric vehicle parking requirements are defined in two sections of the zoning ordinance: Section 6.01(i) and Section 8.00(5). Section 6.01(i) sets a required maximum of six charging stations in the public parking garage and in residential buildings. Section 8.00(5) additionally requires up to 30% of the garage spaces plus 20% of the residential garage to be electric vehicle charging ready (i.e., the supporting electrical conduits run)³⁹.

For bike parking, section 6.07(b)(1) sets a required minimum of 1 bike space per unit for residential, for long-term parking (greater than two hours), plus 1 per 10 units for short-term parking (less than two hours). For commercial uses, this is 1 per 5,000 SF for long-term parking and 1 per 2,000 SF for short-term parking. Long-term storage needs to be off-street, secured, and covered, including facilities for charging electric bikes.

Development and Design Standards

Section 5.08(f) of the zoning for the Watertown Square district outlines specific development and design standards related to parking, building façades, frontage, fenestration, affordable housing bonuses, roof form, and other architectural features.

Table of Use Regulations

The table of use regulations⁴⁰ with allowed uses that apply to the WSQ districts are shown in Table 12 below. Uses not shown are not allowed in the WSQ zoning districts.

³⁷ Section 150.02 of the Watertown Building Regulations.

³⁸ Section 8.01(b) of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance.

³⁹ Defined in contradictory sections 8.00(c)(5) and 6.01(i).

⁴⁰ Section 5.01(c) of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance

Table 12: Table of Use Regulations

Principal Use	WSQ
1. Residence	
c. Dwelling, Multi-Family 3+	SP
d. Work/Live Creative Studios	SR
2. Institutional & Recreational	
a. Public Uses	Y
b. Religious, educational, or licensed day care use as defined by Ch. 40A, § 3	SR
c. Private Club, school, clinic	SP
d. Cultural Center	Y ⁴¹
e. Entertainment Center	Y ⁴¹
f. Recreation Facility	SP/SR
g. Nursing home, rest home, or convalescent home	SP/SR
h. Assisted Living	SP/SR
3. Commercial	
a. Business offices, bank, medical and/or dental	Y ⁴¹
b. Retail stores including liquor stores	Y ⁴¹
c. Retail Services Establishment	Y ⁴¹
d. Restaurant including counter-only	Y ⁴¹
e. Bar	SP
f. Hotel and Motel Use	SP/SR
h. Craft Food or Beverage Production with retail	SR
i. Arts, Sale and Studio/Exhibition Space	Y ⁴¹
j. Adult Use Marijuana Establishment	SP/SR
l. Home Occupation	SP
4. Manufacturing and Industrial	

⁴¹ In the WSQ District, a project with 4,000 square feet of site area or a building gross floor area of 4,000 square feet, whether for a new or change to a new use category, and indicated in the table with a Y (Yes) requires site plan review under Article XI.

⁴² Section 5.08(e) of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance

Principal Use	WSQ
h. Creative/Maker Space	Y ⁴¹

Table of Dimensional Standards

The dimensional standards⁴² that apply to the Demonstration Project Plan area are shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Dimensional Standards

	WSQ2	WSQ3
Site Dimensional Standards		
Open Space (Minimum)		
Minimum Open Space	10%	5%
Publicly Usable Open Space required on 30,000 SF and greater lots	15%	10%
Building Setbacks (minimum)		
Front Setback (ft)	0	
Side With Party Wall (ft)	0	
Side without Party Wall (ft)	10	
Side abutting Residence District (ft)	10	
Rear (ft)	10	
Rear abutting Residence District (ft)	20	
Between Buildings on Lot (ft)	25	
Façade Build Out Ratio (minimum)		
Primary Front Lot Line	75% of lot width	
Secondary Front Lot Line (Corner Lot)	50%	
Surface Parking Setbacks (minimum ft)		
Facing a right-of-way	12	
Not facing a right-of-way	5	
Building Dimensions		

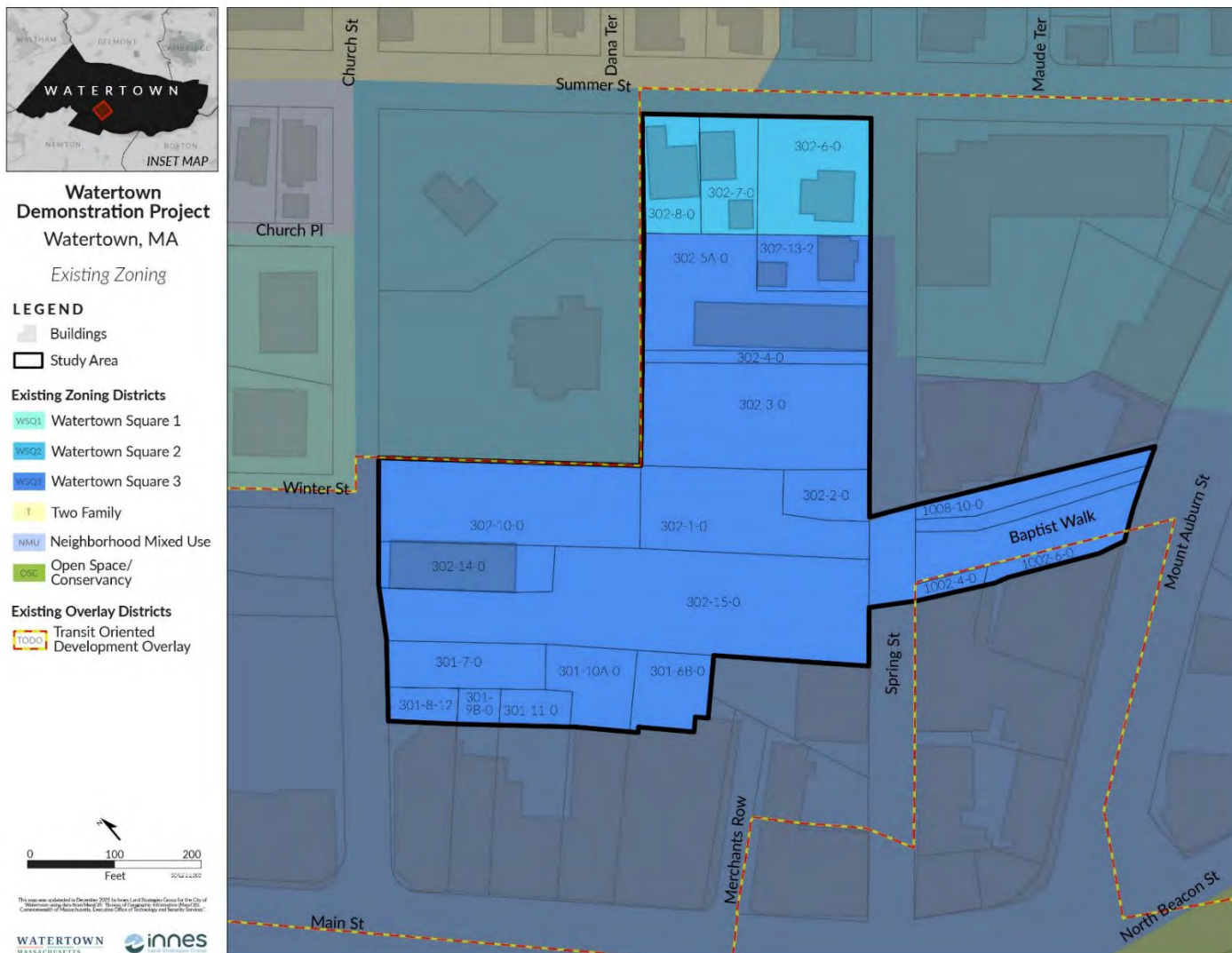
	WSQ2	WSQ3
Max Total Height (Stories/Feet)		
Pitched Roof	4+/72'	5+/88'
Flat Roof	4+/66'	5+/82'
Minimum Ground/First Story Height	13'	15'
Roof Level Height/Step-back for Plus(+) Story		
Pitched Roof Plus(+) Story Height	18' Max	
Flat Roof Plus(+) Story Height	12' Max	
Flat Roof Step-Back	7' Min	
Façade		
Ground Story Fenestration (min)		
Parcels with Active Street Frontage	70%	
All other streets, non-residential uses	50%	
All other streets, residential uses	15%	
Active Street Frontage (min)		
Parcels with Active Street Frontage	100%	
Active Use Depth (ft)	40	
Articulation		
Length of continuous façade (max ft)	100	
Area of façade recess (min SF)	50	Demise Line
Depth of facade offset (min ft)	5	Demise Line

The parcels that front onto Main Street are in the designated Active Frontage area.

Figure 33: Existing land uses



Figure 34: Current zoning



4.3.2 Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office (MEPA)

In January 2023, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs issued revised 301 CMR 11.00 MEPA Regulations to address changes in the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, M.G.L. c. 30, §§ 61 through 62L (MEPA). These revisions incorporated new legislation that addresses climate change and projects within Environmental Justice (EJ) communities. As the demonstration project area is less than 1 mile from an EJ population and the project would be initiated under the auspices of the WRA, MEPA review would apply.

In September 2025, in response to the ongoing housing crisis, Governor Healey announced proposed changes to 301 CMR 11.00⁴³ in order “to streamline MEPA review of qualifying housing projects to align with actions to boost housing production as outlined in the Comprehensive Housing Plan for 2025-29, as well as corresponding recommendations of the Unlocking Housing Production Commission formed in 2024.”

The proposed changes were open to public comment through November 2025 before being finalized and approved, effective as of January 30, 2026⁴⁴.

The key areas that affect MEPA review of any permitted demonstration project are found in the new section 11.01(2)(c). This additional section changes the criteria for projects that must go through the MEPA process (either through an ENF or an EIR). If a permitted project that results from this demonstration project plan

meets **any** of the following criteria, then it will **not** be subject to MEPA review:

1. Project meets all of the following criteria
 - a. devotes 67% or more of the gross floor area of the Project to residential uses, with the remainder devoted to supportive commercial uses.
 - b. achieves density of at least 8 units per acre for single-family, at least 12 units per acre for two and three -family buildings, and at least 15 units per acre for multi-family housing of more than three-family residential uses.
 - c. alters up to 5 acres of previously undeveloped land; or alters up to 10 acres of previously undeveloped land **and** the Project proposes a tree retention and replanting plan that demonstrates measures to minimize tree removal and replace removed trees to the maximum extent practicable.
 - d. the Project site is located outside of highest hazard areas and outside the Special Flood Hazard Area as defined by the Wetlands Protection Act.
 - e. complies with the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code adopted pursuant to Chapter 169 of the Acts of 2008.
 - f. does not require approval of a new interbasin transfer of water or wastewater, and does not require new or expanded gas mains.
 - g. generates fewer than 3,000 New adt of traffic on roadways providing access to a single location; or generates fewer than 6,000 New adt of traffic on roadways providing access to a single location if the Project is located either in a transit-oriented

⁴³ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/proposed-mepa-301-cmr-1100-redline/download>

⁴⁴ <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/301-CMR-1100-current-mepa-regulations>

development district or mixed-use district or less than one-half mile from a public transit stop with an existing or proposed safe and accessible path of travel to the Project site.

2. Project does not meet or exceed any mandatory EIR threshold in 301 CMR 11.03, provided that the project satisfies criteria a, d, e, and either b or c above
3. Project does not meet or exceed any mandatory EIR threshold in 301 CMR 11.03 and seeks to qualify as an Ecological Restoration Limited Project under 310 CMR 10.24(8) and 10.53(4)
4. Any Project that meets or exceeds any review threshold in 301 CMR 11.03(12), provided that the Project does not independently propose any work, project or activity that exceeds any other review threshold in 301 CMR 11.03.

Table 14 below maps the buildout scenarios to the proposed opt-out criteria for MEPA review (meeting any of the criteria 1 through 4 excludes a project from MEPA review). Under the proposed regulations, the buildout scenarios would **not be** subject to MEPA review as they meet criteria 2 and 4 (depending upon agency interpretation, they also meet criterion 1).

If and when an approved project comes forward that does not meet the new thresholds, it would undergo MEPA review under the new regulations.

Table 14: Proposed MEPA Threshold Exclusion Criteria

New Threshold	Buildout Scenarios	Criteria Met?
1. Meets all of the following criteria		Strictly reading No as 1(c) is not applicable. Otherwise, all other criteria are met.
(a) Allocates 67% or more of the gross floor area to residential uses, with the remainder devoted to supportive commercial uses	Allocates ~97.41% to residential uses Comprising 73.26% for residential units, plus 24.15% for residential unit-only parking.	Yes The SF calculations for both concepts equal the gross floor area calculation. The Mixed-use building has a total of 293,897 SF with 286,297 SF devoted to residential uses (comprising unit SF of 215,320 and 70,977 SF for residential parking). The separate municipal parking building and commercial annex in each concept do not count towards this GFA calculation.
(b) Has a density of at least 8 units per acre for single-family, at least 12 units per acre for two and three-family buildings, and at least 15 units per acre for multi-family housing of more than three-family residential uses	It has a density of 71.18 units per acre	Yes
(c) Alters up to 5 acres of previously undeveloped land; or alters up to 10 acres of previously undeveloped land and the Project proposes a tree retention and replanting plan that demonstrates measures to minimize tree removal and replace removed trees to the maximum extent practicable.	Not applicable as the area is currently developed.	Not applicable; not possible for this project to comply with this requirement.
(d) Is located outside of highest hazard areas and outside the Special Flood Hazard Area as defined by the Wetlands Protection Act	Located outside of flood and hazard areas	Yes
(e) Complies with the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code adopted pursuant to Chapter 169 of the Acts of 2008	Watertown is a specialized stretch energy code community, and any development must comply with that code.	Yes
(f) Does not require approval of a new interbasin transfer of water or wastewater, and does not require new or expanded gas mains	No interbasin transfers and no new or expanded gas mains are required	Yes
(g) Generates fewer than 3,000 New adt of traffic on roadways providing access to a single location; or generates fewer than 6,000 New adt of traffic on roadways providing access to a single location if the Project is located either in a transit-oriented development district or mixed-use district or less than one-half mile from a	All scenarios are within a TOD and within half a mile of multiple public transit stops. Expected new adt is less than 6,000.	Yes

New Threshold		Buildout Scenarios	Criteria Met?
public transit stop with an existing or proposed safe and accessible path of travel to the Project site.			
2. Does not meet or exceed any mandatory EIR threshold in 301 CMR 11.03, and meets a, d, e, and either b or c, above.			Yes – meets a, d, e, and b.
Land			Yes
• Does not alter more than 50 acres of land	Does not alter more than 50 acres of land		The total number of acres identified for acquisition is 3.46 acres. Most of these parcels are already built or paved; net new impervious surface will be minimal.
• Does not create more than 10 acres of impervious area	Does not create more than 10 acres of impervious area		
Wetlands, Waterways and Tidelands			Yes
• Does not alter salt marsh or ten acres of wetlands nor requires the construction or alteration of a dam.	Does not alter salt marsh or wetlands and does not require the construction or alteration of a dam.		
Water			Yes The Massachusetts Residential Gallons per Capita Day (RGPD) standard for residential water use is 65 gallons per resident per day (gpd) ⁴⁵ with a 2023 ACS census reported average household size of 2.45 ⁴⁶ . Commercial water usage averages 15-20 gpd per employee. ⁴⁷ For Watertown, the latest RGPD data ⁴⁵ shows a per-resident water usage of only 51 gpd, with a 2023 ACS-reported average household size of 2.16 ⁴⁶ . Option A: With 240 net new units at 2.16 residents per unit, there would be approximately 518.40 new residents. 51 gpd per person equals 26,438.4 gpd for all net new residential units. The buildout scenario shows a net gain of 5,986 SF of commercial space. With an estimate of 11
• Does not require withdrawing 2.5M gpd from surface water sources nor 1.5M gpd from ground water sources.	Does not require drawing more than approximately 25,000 gpd from water sources		
• Does not require interbasin transfers of 1M gpd	Does not require interbasin transfers		
• Does not require new water mains greater than ten miles in length	Does not require new water mains over ten miles in length		
• Does not require water service across municipal boundaries	Does not require water service across municipal boundaries		

⁴⁵ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/rgpcd-and-uaw-spreadsheet-0/download>

⁴⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1101*.

⁴⁷ <https://quench.culligan.com/blog/average-water-usage-per-person-in-offices/>

New Threshold	Buildout Scenarios	Criteria Met?
		net new FTEs added across the new commercial space, commercial usage would increase by 165-220 gpd at full buildout. This would result in a total of 26,603-26,658 gpd of new water use at full buildout. Option B: With 240 net new units at 2.16 residents per unit, there would be approximately 518.40 new residents. 51 gpd per person equals 26,438.4 gpd for all net new residential units. The buildout scenario shows a net gain of 3,186 SF of commercial space. With an estimate of 6 net new FTEs added across the new commercial space, commercial usage would increase by 90-120 gpd at full buildout. This would result in a total of 26,528-26,558 gpd of new water use at full buildout.
Wastewater		Yes Wastewater rates for the MWRA communities are based on the water usage. As noted above, the new water usage is substantially less than the MEPA threshold values. Site Stormwater is currently held in retention basins before ultimately flowing to the Charles River. Both buildout options utilize green infrastructure to manage on-site stormwater before allowing any overflow into the City's stormwater system.
• Does not require construction of wastewater treatment facility with a capacity greater than 2.5M gpd	Does not require a new wastewater treatment facility	
• Does not require wastewater interbasin transfers of more than 1M gpd	Does not require wastewater interbasin transfers	
• Does not require new sewer mains greater than ten miles in length	Does not require new sewer mains greater than 10 miles in length	
• Does not discharge new sewage or untreated stormwater into outstanding water resources	Does not discharge new sewage or stormwater into outstanding water sources	
• Does not add more than 150 tpd of new sewage sludge	Does not add more than 150 tpd of new sewage sludge	
Transportation		Yes Neither option substantially changes the amount of new traffic to the location.
• Does not add more than two miles of new roadway	Does not add more than two miles of roadway	
• Does not widen more than two miles of existing roadway	Does not widen more than two miles of existing roadway	
• Does not generate more than 3,000 new adt on roadways providing access to the location	Does not generate more than 3000 new adt	

New Threshold		Buildout Scenarios	Criteria Met?
Does not add 1,000 or more new parking spaces		Does not add 1,000 or more new parking spaces	As detailed in Table 2 above, Option A adds 298 net new spaces, and Option B adds 362 net new spaces.
Energy			
Does not add 100MW of new generation facility		Does not add 100MW of new generation	Yes
Does not expand existing electrical generation by more than 100 MW		Does not expand the existing generation by more than 100MW	As detailed in Table 11 above, Option A has a total generation capacity of 819.5 kW and Option B has a total generation capacity of 692kW, both significantly below the 100MW MEPA threshold.
Does not add new fuel pipelines		Does not add new fuel lines	
Does not add 230kV or more of transmission lines		Does not add more than 230kV of transmission lines	
Air			
Does not add or modify stationary source of emissions		Does not add or modify any stationary source	Yes
Solid and Hazardous Waste			Yes
Does not add more than 150 tpd of solid waste capacity		Does not add more than 150 tpd of solid waste capacity.	Using data from MassDEP's 2024 survey of municipal waste practices⁴⁸, Watertown reported 8,403 tons of solid waste and 2,396 tons of single-stream recyclables. The report stated that 10,050 households participated in both the municipal trash and recycling programs. Using these numbers, the approximate annual household usage is 0.84 tons of solid waste and 0.24 tons of recycling. Applying this to the 240 net new units calculated in both buildout scenarios would result in 200.69 net new tons of solid waste and 57.22 net new tons of recyclables <u>annually</u>. Both buildout scenarios increase solid waste capacity by a level significantly below the MEPA threshold of 150 tons per day.

⁴⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2024-municipal-solid-waste-recycling-survey-responses/download>. Note that the survey numbers are not subcategorized by the source of solid waste and recycling; these numbers may include commercial and municipal waste and do include school waste. This calculation, therefore, may not accurately state the amount of waste per household.

New Threshold	Buildout Scenarios	Criteria Met?
3. Does not meet or exceed any mandatory EIR threshold in 301 CMR 11.03 and seeks to qualify as an Ecological Restoration Limited Project under 310 CMR 10.24(8) and 10.53(4)	- Does not meet or exceed any mandatory EIR threshold in 301 CMR 11.03 - Does not seek to qualify as an Ecological Restoration Limited Project	Not applicable.
4. Meets or exceeds any review threshold in 301 CMR 11.03(12), provided that the Project does not independently propose any work, project or activity that exceeds any other review threshold in 301 CMR 11.03.	Does not meet any review thresholds under 301 CMR 11.03(12).	Yes.

4.4 Business Characteristics

The project area has a mix of small and large businesses. The Watertown Plaza building (parcel 302-5A-0, located at 40-44 Spring Street) contains a mix of small businesses, including a dermatology practice and a mental health practice. The office condominium on parcel 302-8-0 (48 Summer Street) includes a medical practice and a beauty salon.

On Main Street, a collection of commercial uses is located in the buildings, including a pharmacy, bank, and restaurant. The Armenian Library and Museum of America is located on the former site of the Watertown Town Hall, situated at the corner of Main and Church Streets.

Figure 35: City of Watertown Census Tracts

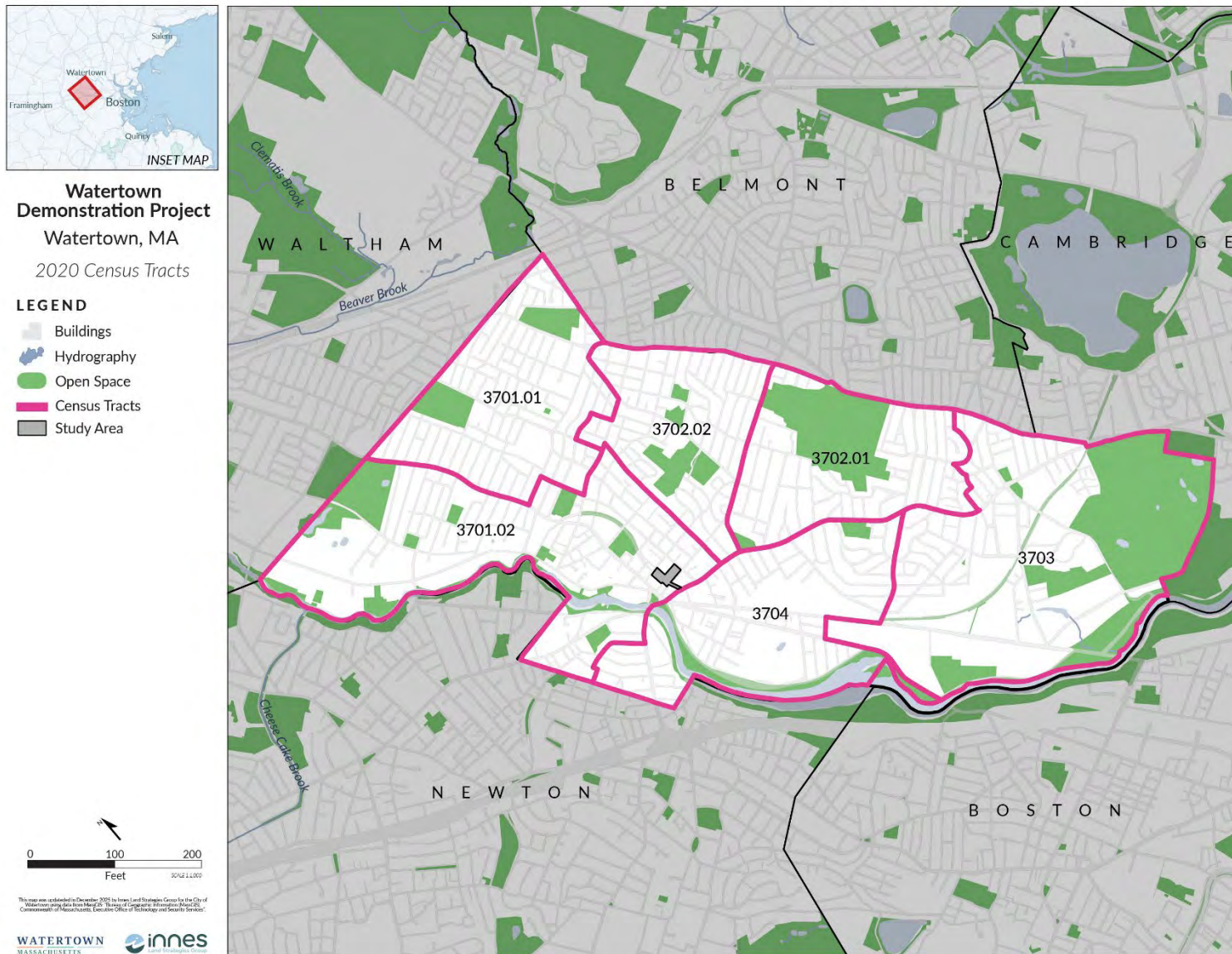
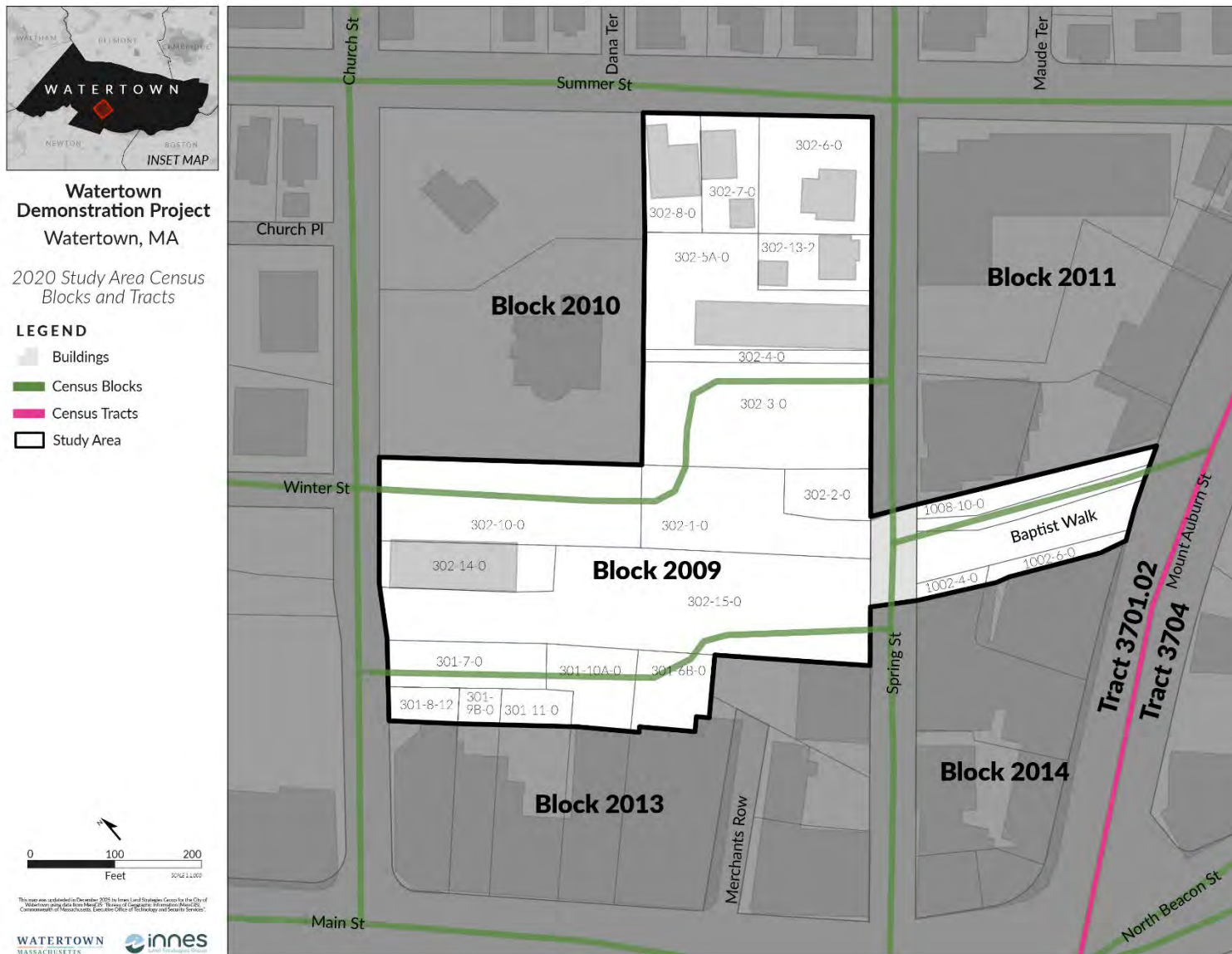


Figure 36: Study Area Census Tract



4.5 Demographic Characteristics

4.5.1 Population and Households

The demonstration project area contains three census blocks within census tract 3701.03. Block 2010 is the only residential block and in 2020 had a population of 21. By comparison, the larger Census tract 3701.03 had a population of 3,544 in 2020.

The census tract that the project area lies within (see Figure 35) changed in 2020, making direct comparison with prior census data challenging. The 2023 ACS estimated the population of census tract 3701.03 (Table 17), which encompasses the URP area, as 3,344, representing approximately 9.5% of the City's population. Watertown is the sixteenth largest municipality in Middlesex County, with around 2.17% of the county's population (Cambridge, Lowell, and Newton are the largest three).

In comparison with the growth experienced in Watertown over the last 20 years, population projections (reflecting status quo conditions) from the UMass Donahue Institute indicate slow to no growth in the total population in future decades. New developments

in the pipeline, however, could see greater increases, particularly among households aged 20 - 35.

The population is forecast to age significantly, with growth driven by the 60- to 69- and 70-and-older cohorts. The working-age population (those aged 20 to 59) is forecast to decline over the period from 2020 to 2050. The pre-working-age population (the 15- to 19-year-old age group) is also predicted to shrink markedly over the period. Without efforts to attract these two populations, this census tract will steadily grow older, with different needs and requiring different services than the working-age population.

Watertown has the forty-eighth-largest minority population in the state,⁴⁹ with an estimated minority population of 30.2% in 2023. It has seen a steady increase in its minority population, which has almost doubled from 2013, when it was estimated at 20.6%. In the 3701.03 census tract, the estimated minority population is higher than the City as a whole at 43.6%. The black population (3.6%) in this census tract is lower than in the rest of Watertown, while the Asian population (25.5%) is nearly double that of Watertown as a whole. Watertown's racial and ethnic profile is substantially similar to that of the surrounding Middlesex County, which has an estimated minority population of 36.0% as of 2023.

⁴⁹ Comparison of the percentage of identified White Only to the percentage of all other race types for all county subdivisions in MA using the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B03002, 2023

Table 15: Projected Population Change By Age Cohort

	2010-2020	2020-2030	2030-2040	2040-2050
Total Population	10.7%	0.7%	-0.5%	1.3%
14 Years and under	7.7%	-10.5%	-12.5%	6.3%
15 to 19 years	-6.3%	-0.9%	-9.2%	-16.7%
20 to 59 years	6.8%	-2.3%	-0.4%	-3.2%
60 to 69 years	32.4%	-2.7%	2.8%	21.4%
70 years and over	23.3%	30.4%	7.4%	3.2%

Source: UMass Donahue Institute V2024 Projections: Population by Age and Sex

Table 16: Population Change by Age

	3701.03 Census Tract 2023	City of Watertown 2023	2013-2023 % Change	Middlesex County 2023	2013-2023 % Change
Total Population	3,344	35,270	9.0%	1,622,896	6.6%
14 Years and under	349	4,415	7.4%	26,1441	-1.1%
15 to 19 years	175	1,417	-4.4%	10,2812	1.9%
20 to 29 years	488	4,777	-10.9%	23,1989	6.4%
30 to 49 years	883	11,697	12.9%	44,8336	2.5%
50 to 69 years	984	8,721	15.5%	40,1976	12.0%
70 years and over	465	4,243	21.6%	17,6342	23.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "SEX BY AGE." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B01001, 2013 and 2023. Due to census tract changes in 2020, no comparison is available for 2013-2023.

Table 17: Population By Race

	3701.03 Census Tract		City of Watertown		Middlesex County	
	2023	2013-2023 % Change	2023	2013-2023 % Change	2023	2013-2023 % Change
Total Population	3,344		35,270	9.0%	1,622,896	6.7%
White Alone	1,885		24,622	-4.2%	1,039,526	-10.5%
Black or African American Alone	120		1,459	40.3%	79,165	19.0%
Asian Alone	854		4,177	85.2%	220,688	50.0%
Hispanic or Latino	101		2,276	0.8%	152,513	46.5%
Two or More Races & All Other	384		2,736	250.1%	132,060	301.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race" American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B03002, 2013 and 2023

The total number of households in Watertown increased by nearly 10 percent from 2010 to 2020, adding 1,425 households. This was approximately 2% above the rate for both Massachusetts and Middlesex County. This has become the trend in communities across the country as financial conditions and personal choices evolve, with younger generations shifting the dynamics, often delaying “household formation” by marrying and/or having children later in life or remaining single, resulting in a growing number of households.

Massachusetts has the most highly educated population in the country and one of the most well-educated populations in the world. Around 1.7% of the population in the project area has less than a 9th-grade education. Only 0.6% completed 12th grade without a diploma. In Watertown as a whole, these populations are 3.4% and 1.8%, respectively. Both Watertown and the project area are below the state levels for high school graduates and associate’s degree holders; however, they outperform the state at higher degree levels.

In the 2025 budget year, Massachusetts made community colleges⁵⁰ free for those aged 25 and under who have a high school diploma (or equivalent) and have been resident in the state for at least a year. The cost of higher education is likely a significant reason for the high percentage of students who started college but did not complete their degree. The opening up of educational opportunities through community colleges should, over time, change the achievement characteristics outlined in Table 18 below.

Over a third of the working-age population in the project area census tract is not in the labor force (35.0%), which is higher than for Watertown as a whole (27.2%). Unemployment in the project area is 2.7% compared to 4.0% in Watertown.

⁵⁰ Watertown is one of the 27 municipalities served by the Massachusetts Bay Community College program, with campuses in Wellesley, Framingham, and Ashland. Other Community Colleges within commuting distance (less than one hour on public transit) include Roxbury Community College and Bunker Hill Community College in Boston, as well as Quincy College in Quincy.

Table 18: Educational Achievement

	3701.03 Census Tract	City of Watertown	Middlesex County	Massachusetts
Less than 9th grade	1.7%	3.4%	3.1%	3.9%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	0.6%	1.8%	3.8%	4.8%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	22.9%	15.1%	18.6%	23.8%
Some college, no degree	8.7%	10.1%	13.9%	17.1%
Associate's degree	6.4%	5.0%	5.3%	6.9%
Bachelor's degree	28.4%	31.1%	28.3%	24.5%
Graduate or professional degree	31.2%	33.4%	27.0%	19.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Sex by Age by Educational Attainment for the Population 18 Years and Over." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B15001, 2023

Table 19: Employment Status

	3701.03 Census Tract	City of Watertown	Middlesex County	Massachusetts
In labor force:	65.0%	72.8%	69.9%	67.2%
Civilian labor force:	65.0%	72.8%	69.8%	67.1%
Employed	62.3%	68.8%	66.9%	63.7%
Unemployed	2.7%	4.0%	3.0%	3.5%
Armed Forces	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Not in labor force	35.0%	27.2%	30.1%	32.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Employment Status for the Population 16 Years and Over." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B23025, 2023.

Table 20 provides information on the current health status of people in census tracts surrounding the project area, compared with the rest of Watertown and Middlesex County. The highest number for each health indicator is highlighted in blue.

Of the twelve indicators, the project area aligns with the surrounding tracts and the city as a whole.

Census Tract 3701.01 has the worst health outcomes across eight indicators (two-thirds of the total). Census tract 3701.04 is marginally the healthiest of the surrounding tracts and healthier than the City of Watertown as a whole.

Table 21 provides information on the various health-related social needs parameters affecting the population in census tracts surrounding the project area, compared to the rest of Watertown and Middlesex County as a whole. The highest number for each health indicator is highlighted in blue.

Table 20: 2022 CDC Places Health Indicators

	3701.03	3701.04	3701.01	3702.02	3704.01	3704.02	3704.03	City of Watertown	Middlesex County
All Teeth Lost	5.0%	5.3%	10.7%	4.9%	12.0%	7.5%	5.1%	7.3%	9.6%
Arthritis	21.4%	18.8%	23.9%	22.4%	19.0%	20.4%	18.7%	21.9%	22.8%
Asthma	10.3%	10.6%	11.1%	10.9%	11.2%	11.4%	10.5%	10.9%	10.8%
Cancer	7.9%	6.8%	8.3%	8.9%	6.4%	7.0%	7.1%	8%	8%
COPD	4.2%	3.6%	5.3%	3.9%	4.4%	4.4%	3.5%	4.6%	4.4%
Depression	22.2%	23.7%	24.0%	24.1%	25.0%	25.4%	23.0%	23.9%	23%
Diabetes	7.3%	6.2%	8.1%	6.6%	6.4%	7.0%	6.2%	7.1%	7.0%
Heart Disease	5.1%	4.0%	5.7%	4.7%	4.5%	4.7%	4.2%	5.2%	5.3%
High Blood Pressure	24.1%	21.8%	26%	23.9%	22.3%	25.5%	22.7%	24.5%	26.5%
High Cholesterol	31.6%	29.7%	33.2%	32.4%	29.0%	31.6%	29.9%	31.9%	33.1%
Obesity	22.0%	22.1%	23.7%	22.2%	22.6%	23.4%	20.7%	22.6%	22%
Stroke	2.3%	1.9%	2.7%	2.1%	2.2%	2.2%	1.9%	2.3%	2.4%

Source: CDC Places Map Health Outcomes, Census Tracts: <https://chronicdata.cdc.gov/dataset/PLACES-Local-Data-for-Better-Health-Census-Tract-D/cwsq-ngmh>, City: <https://chronicdata.cdc.gov/dataset/PLACES-Local-Data-for-Better-Health-Place-Data-202/eav7-hnsx>, County: <https://chronicdata.cdc.gov/dataset/PLACES-Local-Data-for-Better-Health-County-Data-20/swc5-untb> (last accessed August 28th, 2025)

Table 21: CDC Health-Related Social Needs

	3701.03	3701.04	3701.01	3702.02	3704.01	3704.02	3704.03	City of Watertown	Middlesex County
Socially Isolated	32.8%	34%	31.7%	31.5%	33.5%	32.3%	32.5%	32.7%	33.4%
Food Insecurity	8.0%	8.0%	6.2%	5.4%	7.7%	6.4%	5.9%	7.2%	8.9%
Housing Insecurity	8.3%	8.3%	7.2%	6.6%	8.4%	7.1%	6.8%	7.8%	8.8%
Lack of Transportation	5.7%	5.8%	4.9%	4.5%	6%	5.1%	4.7%	5.4%	6.3%
Lack of Social Support	22.6%	22.6%	20.2%	19.4%	21.2%	20.1%	20.7%	21.3%	23.2%
Received Food Stamps	10.1%	8.9%	7.7%	6.3%	9.6%	8.2%	6.5%	8.7%	10.4%
Utility Service Shut off	5.1%	4.9%	4.7%	4.2%	5.4%	4.8%	4.1%	4.9%	5.4%

Source: CDC Places Map Health Outcomes, Census Tracts: <https://chronicdata.cdc.gov/dataset/PLACES-Local-Data-for-Better-Health-Census-Tract-D/cwsq-ngmh>, City: <https://chronicdata.cdc.gov/dataset/PLACES-Local-Data-for-Better-Health-Place-Data-202/eav7-hnsx>, County: <https://chronicdata.cdc.gov/dataset/PLACES-Local-Data-for-Better-Health-County-Data-20/swc5-untb> (last accessed August 28th, 2025)

4.5.2 Environmental Justice Communities

The City of Watertown consists of 30 block groups, of which 20 meet Environmental Justice (EJ) criteria, including Minority, Minority and Income, and Income and English Isolation. The definition of Environmental Justice is as follows:

“The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, culture, national origin, income, and educational levels with response to the development implementation, and enforcement of protective environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

Massachusetts uses four criteria to define an Environmental Justice population:⁵¹

- the annual median household income is not more than 65 per cent of the statewide annual median household income.
- minorities comprise 40 per cent or more of the population.
- 25 per cent or more of households lack English language proficiency; or
- minorities comprise 25 per cent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 per cent of the statewide annual median household income.

Table 22 summarizes the EJ populations in Watertown. The demonstration project area is within Block Group 2 in census tract

3701.03. It has a minority population of 31%, a median household income of \$83,482 (99% of the MA AMHI), and 3% of the population lacks English proficiency.

Table 22: 2022 Environmental Justice Populations

EJ Criteria	Minority (M), Income (I), and English as a Second Language (E)
Number of Block Groups in Watertown	30
Number of EJ Block Groups	20
Percent of EJ Block Groups	66.70%
Population in EJ Block Groups	22,935
Total population in Watertown	35,329
Percent of population in EJ Block Groups	64.90%

Source: 2020 Environmental Justice Populations, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2020-environmental-justice-populations>, last accessed August 28, 2025

⁵¹ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>

Figure 37: Environmental Justice Populations



4.6 Market Analysis

The complete market analysis is attached as an appendix. This section provides a summary of the key information related to this demonstration project plan.

The market analysis comprises a submarket approach (see Figure 38) to look at the market conditions facing the City of Watertown in comparison to those in the Cities of Newton and Waltham and the Towns of Belmont and Arlington. Additionally (and where appropriate), comparisons were also drawn to the Boston Metro market, the state, and regional trends.

As noted above, Watertown has experienced a stable population that has grown gradually over the past decade, with younger adult households aged 25 to 35 driving that growth. RKG forecasts a 2030 population of approximately 36,000, which is in line with the Donahue Institute forecast. RKG notes that any increase in population will be driven by development and how household groupings are formed.

Over the last twenty years, Watertown's population change has been driven by renter rather than owner households. Renter households tend to be smaller and are newcomers to the community (versus those in the community moving to different homes). Since 2018, the number of renter households has exceeded, by a considerable margin, that of homeowners (Figure 47). This reflects both the continued growth of multifamily development in the City and the increasing difficulty of entering the ownership market for younger working-age groups. These trends align with the overall competition

for homeownership across the Boston metro area and with the development and delivery of smaller-unit buildings, which typically achieve higher absorption rates and better returns per square foot for developers.

Watertown's employment base is primarily service-based industries. Post-COVID-19 mini-recession and the move to hybrid and remote work, many employers began consolidating office space (intensifying a pre-existing trend of reduced space per employee). Despite these trends, many of Watertown's office-using sectors have continued to see increased employment.

Based on US Census data, roughly 18,000 workers commute into the city during the work week, while another 1,700 live and work in the city, and an estimated 17,000 commute elsewhere in the local area (primarily to Boston and Cambridge).

Figure 38: Watertown Submarket

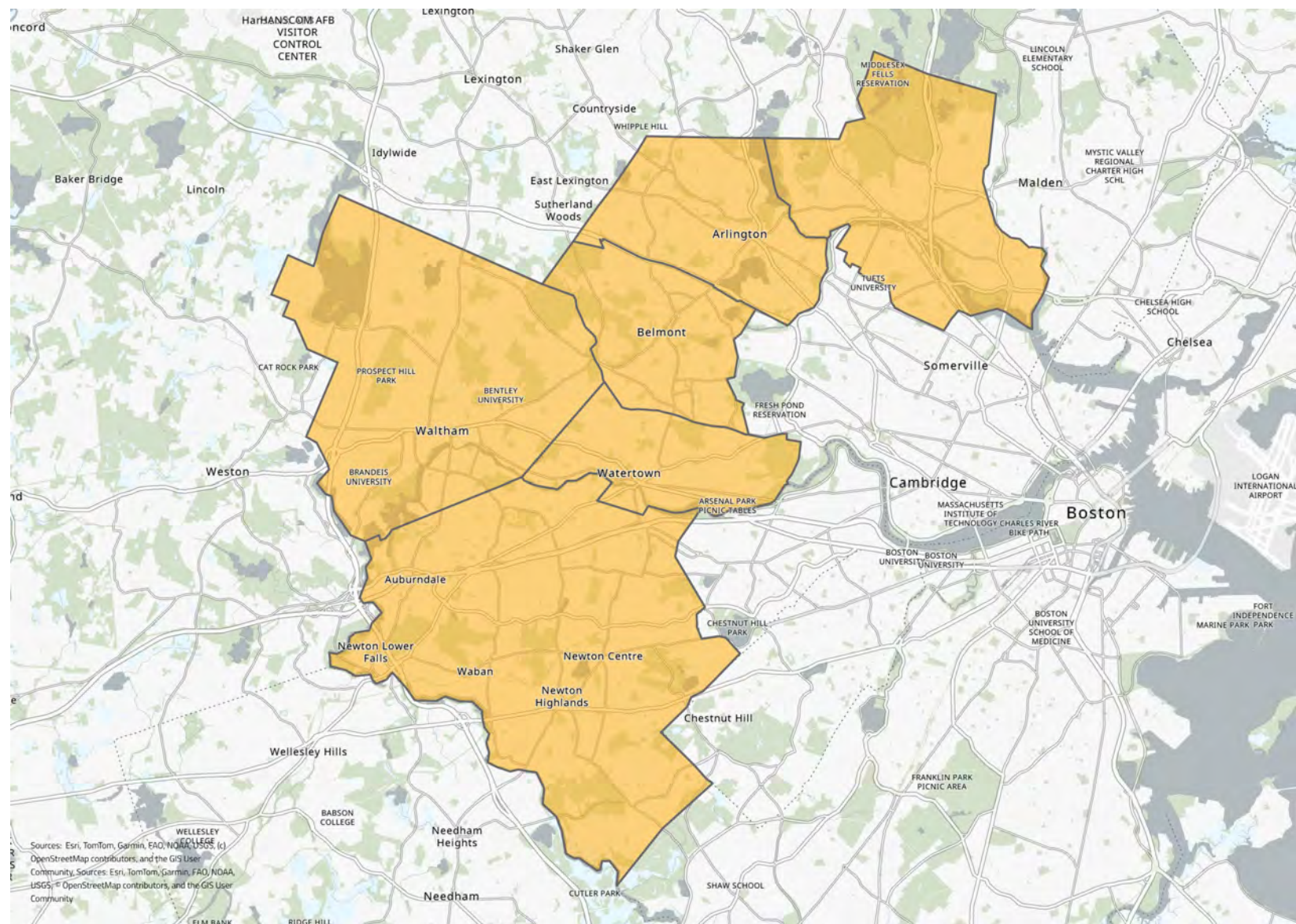
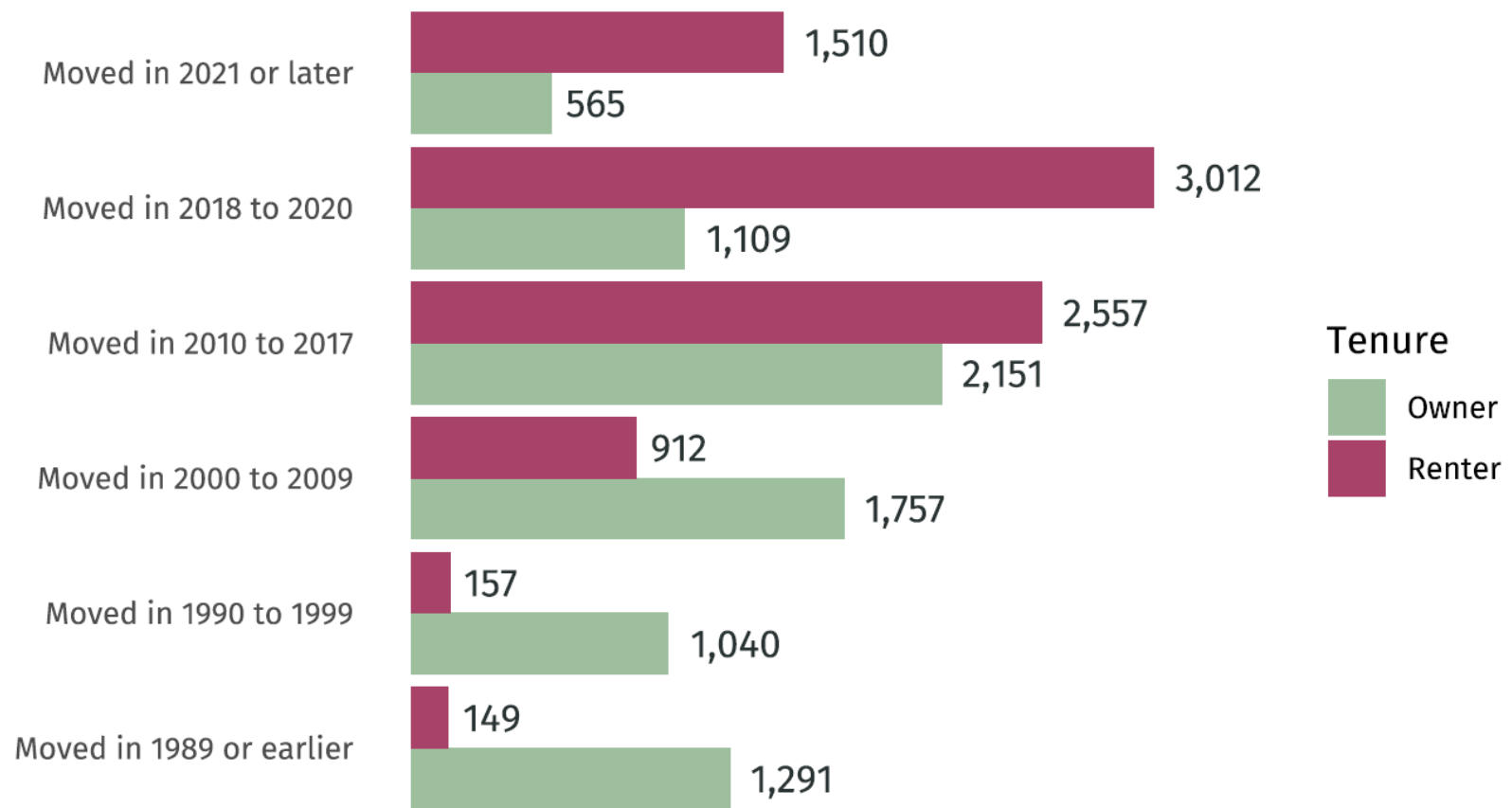


Figure 39: Year Householder Moved In

Year Householder Moved In



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2018 - 2023

4.6.1 Demonstration Project Site Market Analysis

The property comps for potential development in Watertown Square show strong fundamentals relative to the broader market. The sample of property comparables for multifamily development, as defined in the demonstration project buildout scenarios, exhibits effective rent growth that closely tracks that of Class A properties

throughout the submarket and the greater Boston Metro area (see Table 23).

Stabilized vacancy rates for comparable properties also indicate that these properties experience consistent, high occupancy levels, slightly above the submarket and Boston metro averages. Given the strength of demand for units in the market, price points and locational advantages give Watertown a competitive advantage. Property Comps have high occupancy and competitive asking rents compared to the submarket average.

Table 23: Multifamily Comparables

Property Name	City	Year Built/Renovated	% Studios	% 1-Bed	% 2-Bed	% 3-Bed	% 4-Bed	Avg Asking/Unit	Vacancy Rate
1550 on the Charles	Boston	2022	8.1%	60.0%	31.9%	0.0%	0.0%	\$3,263	9.0%
Alder at Allston Yards	Allston	2024	26.2%	44.5%	27.4%	1.8%	0.0%	\$4,017	8.5%
Arthaus	Allston	2021	11.1%	69.4%	18.1%	1.4%	0.0%	\$3,504	
Avalon Brighton	Brighton	2023	58.3%	20.6%	16.1%	5.0%	0.0%	\$3,355	5.0%
Charlesview Residences	Brighton	2012/2020	0.0%	25.8%	25.0%	25.0%	24.2%	\$2,621	
Currents on the Charles	Waltham	2015	12.5%	49.0%	37.0%	1.5%	0.0%	\$2,869	4.5%
Edison on the Charles by Windsor	Waltham	2019	1.5%	69.7%	28.8%	0.0%	0.0%	\$3,377	1.1%
Elan Union Market	Watertown	2018	24.8%	53.2%	20.9%	1.1%	0.0%	\$2,900	6.4%
Modera Newton	Newton	2024	10.2%	47.3%	30.2%	12.2%	0.0%	\$3,551	4.9%
Radius	Brighton	2019	47.7%	38.6%	13.6%	0.0%	0.0%	\$2,935	7.6%
Riverbend on the Charles	Watertown	2013	16.5%	44.7%	38.8%	0.0%	0.0%	\$3,048	1.8%
The Bradford	Belmont	2020	10.7%	45.5%	43.8%	0.0%	0.0%	\$3,683	8.9%
The Charley	Boston	2025	23.3%	40.8%	31.1%	4.9%	0.0%	\$2,894	25.2%
Trio Newton	Newton	2020	9.3%	43.6%	42.9%	4.3%	0.0%	\$4,157	2.9%

Property Name	City	Year Built/Renovated	% Studios	% 1-Bed	% 2-Bed	% 3-Bed	% 4-Bed	Avg Asking/Unit	Vacancy Rate
Watermills	Watertown	2020	0.0%	63.6%	30.3%	6.1%	0.0%	\$2,956	13.1%
Watertown Mews	Watertown	2014	4.4%	40.8%	49.5%	5.3%	0.0%	\$3,581	7.8%

Source: CoStar

4.6.2 Office Market Analysis

Amidst a changing national policy landscape, advances in AI, and rising costs, many professional service and office-based industries have sought to reduce expenses by slowing hiring and leveraging AI for productivity gains.

These trends, as well as hybrid workplace arrangements, have led to a bottoming out in office space demand. Across most major markets, such as Boston, office demand has been concentrated in Class A space, while older product continues to see declining occupancy.

Surveys conducted by Moody's, Cushman Wakefield, and NAIOP have all found that the amount of space per office employee has been shrinking since the early 2000s. This meant that even before the COVID-19 pandemic, many office users were consolidating and demanding smaller footprints as their leases expired. With the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rapid adoption of remote work, this trend accelerated, leaving many office spaces vacant even as lockdowns ended and employers began bringing workers back to the office. With contracting office space demand and flat employment trends, the office market in Watertown is effectively oversaturated.

Office & Lab space has hit record-high vacancy rates in recent quarters, reflective of broader economic and political conditions. Over the past decade, the inner suburban office market, including Watertown, Newton, Waltham, Arlington, Belmont, and Medford, has seen several new deliveries. Many of which, in recent years (2021-

2023), have been new lab deliveries in response to growing demand in Life Sciences and Biotech. These lab deliveries were a speculative response to increasing demand and now sit vacant as a result of industry and investment contraction

4.6.3 Retail Market Analysis

Rising concerns about jobs and income have begun to offset the optimistic views about future business conditions held in 2024. In bouts of high inflation or growing economic uncertainty, consumers shift their spending away from non-essential items and services, focusing their budgets on core goods such as groceries and general merchandise. In the short term, this drives greater demand and strong fundamentals for retail spaces anchored by grocery stores and big-box retailers, such as Walmart and Target.

Retail fundamentals across Watertown and the surrounding inner suburban corridor (Newton, Waltham, Belmont, Arlington, and Medford) remain broadly healthy. However, recent quarters have recorded slightly negative net absorption paired with a reduction in total inventory, signaling demolitions and conversions to alternative uses such as mixed-use and residential redevelopment.

This pattern mirrors regional and national trends where obsolete or underperforming suburban centers are being repositioned rather than replaced, helping maintain tight availability. Greater Boston's overall retail vacancy remains near 2.6%, among the lowest in the nation, supported by limited new supply, less than 0.3% of inventory

under construction, and strong demand for high-traffic, open-air formats.

Despite a softening in consumer sentiment, retailers continue to favor grocery-anchored, convenience-driven, and experiential centers, with grocers and discounters leading expansion. Older enclosed or mall-adjacent properties continue to underperform and are often candidates for redevelopment. Nationally, retail development economics remain challenging due to rising costs outpacing rents and the strong demand for alternative uses, which increases the opportunity costs of developing strictly retail spaces.

Retail conditions in Watertown and the inner suburban corridor remain fundamentally strong, with vacancy holding near 3% and limited new supply added in recent years. CoStar data indicates that deliveries have remained below 0.5% of total inventory annually since 2009, while demolitions and conversions surpassed 100,000 SF in 2025, reflecting the continued repositioning of older, auto-oriented retail centers into mixed-use or residential redevelopment.

In Watertown, the \$72 million sale of The Home Depot property at 615 Arsenal Street underscores continued investor confidence in the area's retail assets. Plans for the redevelopment of the Watertown Mall are currently on hold, as the property was recently sold and the prior developer was unable to develop lab space due to the

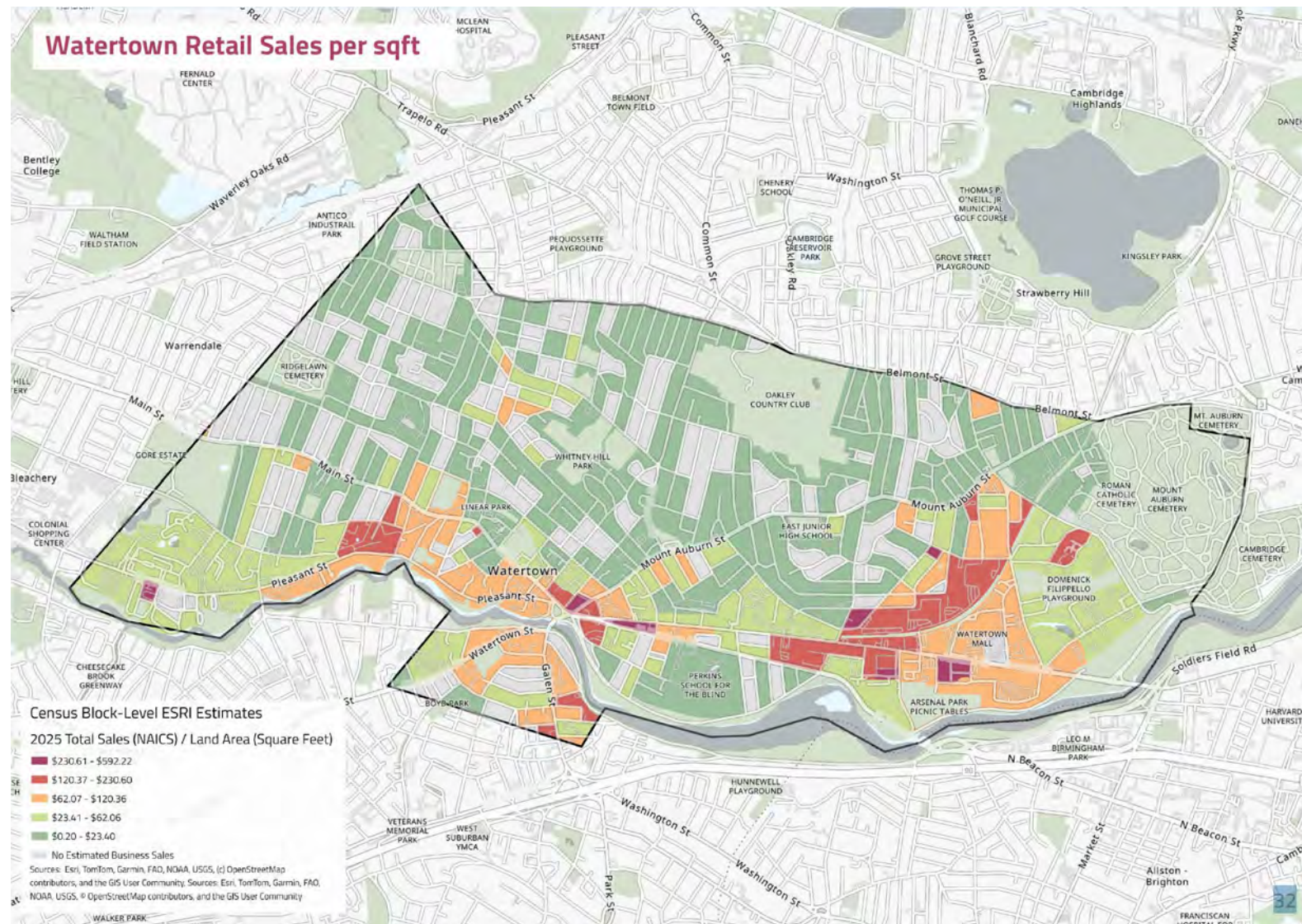
contraction of that market. At the time of writing, the revised plans are unclear. Like many of Boston's suburbs, demand is reshaping, not expanding, the retail footprint, and the removal of outdated space has helped sustain rent growth and stability despite slower absorption.

Retail leasing activity in Watertown and the surrounding submarket has remained modest, with fluctuations driven largely by tenant consolidation and redevelopment rather than expansion. The limited pipeline and constrained inventory in prime corridors have kept median months on market near pre-pandemic levels, signaling steady demand for well-located storefronts even as total leasing volume remains below pre-2020 peaks.

Retail performance in Watertown (Figure 40) is highly concentrated and more productive in Arsenal Yards and Watertown Square, which generate the highest sales per square foot and reflect strong consumer activity

In contrast, the Watertown Mall area shows much lower sales productivity, signaling underutilized space and an opportunity to reposition the site to better align with current retail and mixed-use demand.

Figure 40: Watertown Retail Sales per Square Foot



Source: ESRI

4.6.4 Multifamily Market Analysis

As noted in Section 4.5, Watertown's largest age segment is 25-44, followed by those aged 55+. Over the last three decades, these two key demographic segments have driven population change in the city. New residents aged 25 to 39 who rent have driven population change as they moved into the City. Reflecting trends in the Boston Metro Area, this is also true for the older age segments, where the most significant changes across the decade have been in renter households aged 55 and older (Figure 41).

Despite widely different age cohorts driving household change in Watertown, these changing life stages reflect a convergence in 1- and two-person households, which compose the largest share of residents in the city. It should also be noted that some of this change is also dictated by what is added to the market, and for most new developments (since 2020), the unit mixes tend to skew heavily towards smaller unit sizes.

Non-family households are driving population change in Watertown. The two largest household types in Watertown are single-person households and two-person households. Watertown has seen gains in 3- and 4-person households over the last decade, which can be linked to some of the declines in 2-person households. Notably, Watertown has also seen an increase in 3-person non-family households, which is another indicator of likely renters and roommates.

A comparison of Watertown's (non-inflation-adjusted) household income distribution over the past decade shows a significant decrease in lower-income households (those earning less than \$75,000), from 36.8% in 2018 to 28% in 2023. Those earning between

\$75,000 and \$200,000 remained relatively stable over the same period. However, the number of households earning \$200,000 or more has almost doubled over the decade, from 15.8% to 26.1%⁵². The decline in the number of lower-income households and corresponding growth in high-income households reflect ongoing affordability challenges, as those on lower incomes are priced out of living in Watertown by the entry of dual-earner households and new homeowners with higher incomes into the market.

Over the past decade, the submarket has continued to see new multifamily deliveries and strong absorption, driven by competitive rents, land availability, and proximity to multiple employment centers in Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville. Many communities in the submarket have continued to experience population growth and increased take-up of new residential deliveries, signaling sustained demand for housing across the submarket. Across commercial asset classes, existing multifamily properties continue to perform strongly, driven by the tightness in the housing market and rising incomes since the pandemic.

Watertown has seen little in new unit deliveries since 2021, but an estimated 142 units are currently under construction. Multifamily construction in Watertown and its submarket reached a peak in new deliveries in 2020 and 2021, introducing several hundred new units to the market. Deliveries have since normalized, while absorption has fluctuated modestly, reflecting both strong underlying demand and brief periods of oversupply as new buildings lease up.

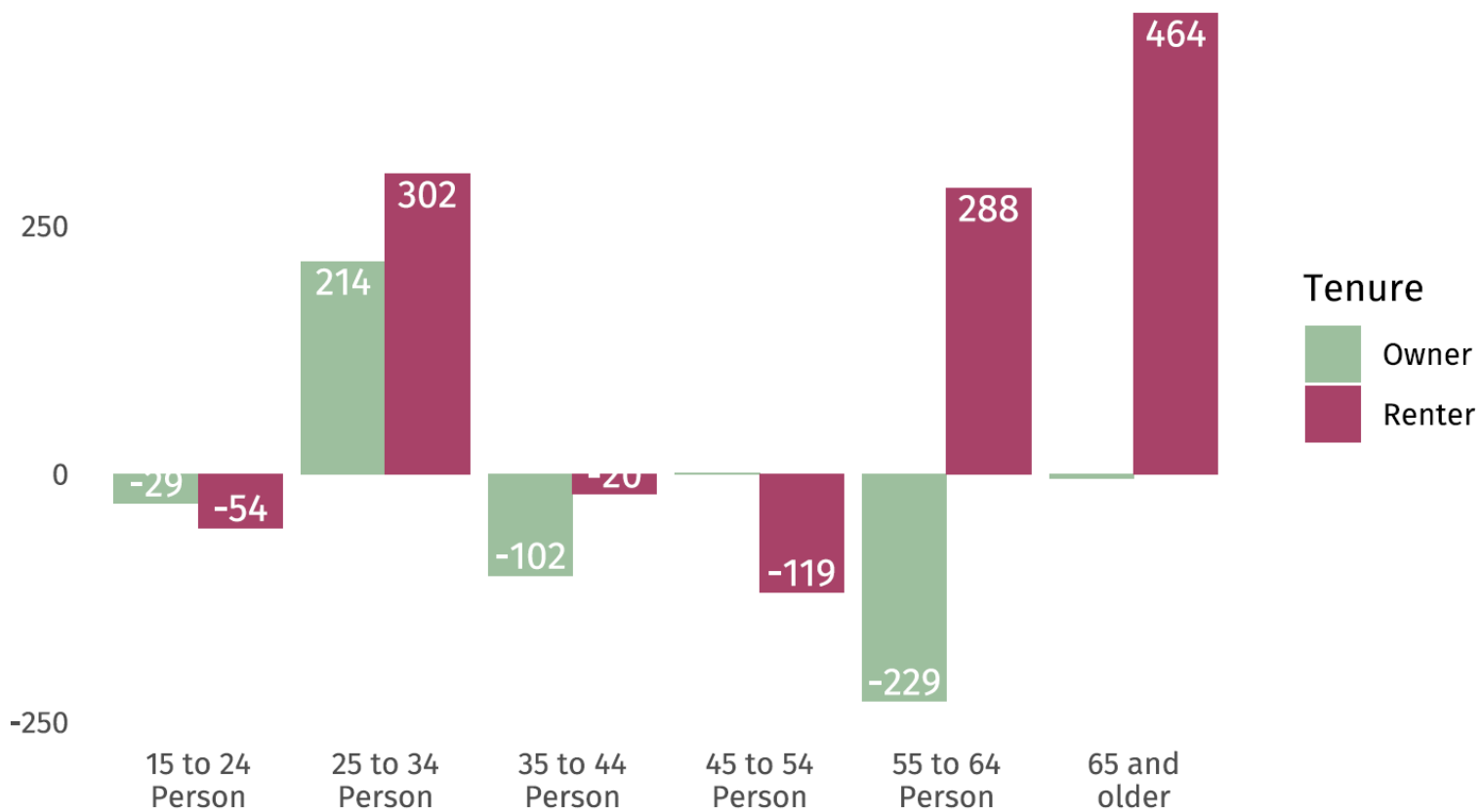
Rents across Watertown and the surrounding submarket have continued to rise steadily, reflecting the dual pressures of strong household incomes and a chronically limited housing supply, with

⁵² U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B19001*, for 2018 and 2023.

average asking rents now exceeding \$3,300 per unit. Watertown is also consistently outpacing the broader submarket due to its location advantages, more recent deliveries (since 2015), and proximity to numerous amenities.

The inventory mix, skewed towards one and two-bedroom units, reflects how developers are responding to high construction costs and tighter financing conditions by pursuing denser, smaller-unit projects that maximize yield. This shift reinforces the market's appeal to younger professionals and smaller households while sustaining premium rents across new and existing multifamily assets.

Multifamily asset performance continues to lead among asset types in the submarket and Boston metro area. Overall, the figures underscore that Watertown's multifamily sector continues to attract strong capital interest and resilient pricing, sustained by durable rent performance, high barriers to new development, and solid local demand.

Figure 41: Change in Households by Age and Tenure

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2018 - 2023

5 Appendices

5.1 Existing City Plans: Vision and Objectives

5.2 Market Analysis

5.3 City Disposition and Governance Structure

5.4 Citizen Participation and Public Approval Process

5.5 Redevelopment Authority Responsibilities

5.6 Land Acquisition

5.7 Land Disposition

5.8 Abandoned Rail Inventory

5.9 Property Inventory

5.1 Existing City Plans: Vision and Objectives

5.1.1 Planning Process

In September 2023, the City of Watertown adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan, prioritizing the improvement and revitalization of the Watertown Square area as both a local and regional destination rather than a pass-through for vehicular traffic. In conjunction with the planning process, the City was also determining how to meet its requirements to comply with the MBTA Communities Act (M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 3A) by the December 31, 2024, deadline. As a result, the City engaged in a community-focused engagement project to develop a plan for the Watertown Square area. The City Council subsequently adopted the Watertown Square Area Plan in November 2024.

During the 2024 planning process, the City and its consultant team held multiple public hearings and events to gather community input. There was a high level of engagement (with attendee numbers in the hundreds for each meeting) and significant feedback to the project team throughout the process.

The plan outlined several areas of focus⁵³:

1. Housing
2. Zoning
3. Public Realm improvements
4. Open Space

and four priority redevelopment opportunities⁵⁴

1. A public/private partnership for the development of the City-owned parking lots
2. The expansion of the library on the former police station site or the adjacent parking area
3. The redevelopment of the Watertown/Belmont Church on Mt. Auburn Street
4. The development of the MBTA Watertown Yard site

The first of these priority redevelopment opportunities is the subject of this Demonstration Project.

Housing

Watertown has limited scope to add the substantial (1,701) housing units required to be zoned for under its 3A obligations, especially if it focuses on single or duplex units on lots. The plan looks to center housing around transportation nodes and provide for more walkable neighborhoods with associated commercial uses.

Zoning

The plan created updated zoning for the Watertown Square area and associated corridors. Key to this was the creation of four new zones: Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU), Watertown Square 1 (WSQ1), Watertown Square 2 (WSQ2), and Watertown Square 3 (WSQ3). These provide a permitted transition from the surrounding residential areas into the Square with increasing heights (2+ in NMU to 5+ in WSQ3).

⁵³ Watertown Square Area Plan pages 12-52

⁵⁴ Watertown Square Area Plan pages 52-58

Public Realm Improvements

A key aspect of the plan was improving the roadways and public spaces into and out of Watertown Square, including realigning roadways, improving pedestrian and bicycle access, and altering signaling.

Open Space

Part and parcel of the public realm improvements were improvements to the square's open space, with cycleways, parklets, and green spaces forming a feature of the recommended zoning and the infrastructure improvements.

Redevelopment Opportunities

The City-owned parking lots behind Main Street and between Church Street and Spring Street form a key area of land in Watertown Square that could be redeveloped. As discussed in section 3.4, the history of the parcels and the nature of the area mean that a public/private partnership would likely be required to carry out that plan due to the significant capital needs. Replacing the existing surface parking with a parking garage and providing housing, commercial space, green space, and cycle routes cannot be done without that partnership in place.

Additionally, the library is looking to expand, and it has several options available: the former police station next door and the parking lot behind the library. The Watertown/Belmont Church on Mt Auburn St has since been sold to another religious organization and is no longer available for redevelopment.

Finally, the MBTA yard across the Charles River is also a prospective site for transit-oriented development with mixed-use residential as the goal.

⁵⁵ Watertown Comprehensive Plan, 2023 pages 32-75

5.1.2 Vision

The 2023 Comprehensive Plan includes the vision of Watertown Square as a destination that builds on its existing anchors and adds complementary new uses, such as restaurants, music and entertainment venues, and other cultural, institutional, and educational organizations.

As Watertown's primary crossroads and downtown, Watertown Square is the neighborhood that belongs to our entire City and serves as a defining feature for the community.

This Demonstration Project Plan builds on that vision and the associated actions to establish a public/private development model that brings together new housing, updated commercial space, and improved parking infrastructure to serve the commercial needs of the whole square.

5.1.3 Objectives and Public Actions

To assist in accomplishing the vision in the 2023 Comprehensive Plan and the 2024 Watertown Square Area Plan, the City/WRA needs to undertake the following relevant actions:

2023 Comprehensive Plan Actions:⁵⁵

- Action 2:** Enhance the character and quality of life in Watertown's neighborhoods, squares, and along the corridors that connect them to help build community.
- B. Encourage more housing in and near Watertown Square to increase the residential population within a short walk of local businesses.
 - C. Support existing squares and growing commercial areas with public improvements that enhance a distinct sense of place and attract customers.

D. Improve convenient walking and biking access and connectivity between the squares, major corridors, and neighborhoods for residents and workers

F. Ensure large-scale development and redevelopment projects provide shared benefits that support the needs of residents and workers and that improve the community.

Action 3: Cultivate a mix of diverse businesses that strengthens our community by providing jobs, services, and support for city infrastructure.

C. Continue to diversify our economic base beyond the robust life science cluster by supporting and attracting other industry clusters, particularly those that require a varying job and building types.

Action 4: Provide safe, efficient multimodal transportation options that provide access to homes, jobs, amenities, and services.

I. Enhance neighborhoods by improving walking and biking connections to retail areas, parks, and other community amenities.

J. Prioritize and implement pedestrian and bicycle network improvements

Action 5: Facilitate a range of housing types and affordability.

B. Focus multifamily housing within walking distance of high-frequency transit stops, major employers, and daily services.

C. Maintain and expand a range of housing types throughout Watertown, such as micro-units, family-size units, and supportive housing.

Action 6: Ensure high-quality parks, recreation, and open spaces that meet the needs of residents and the environment and encourage active and passive use.

B. Increase in the number of the access to parks and open spaces throughout Watertown, especially in areas with limited access to existing resources.

C. Improve accessibility to parks and recreation areas.

F. Incorporate universal design concepts and other considerations to make parks and recreation areas more accessible to a range of ages and abilities.

H. Address climate change threats to open space and recreation resources by adding green infrastructure, native landscaping, and other nature-based solutions.

Action 7: Support community wellness through inclusive programs and events, diverse arts and culture, enhanced natural and historic resources, and livelier public and private spaces.

A. Design and program public open spaces and publicly accessible private open spaces to encourage social interaction.

C. Encourage healthy lifestyles through design of streets and parks, access to food and healthcare, and other means.

H. Celebrate diversity and cultural traditions through public art, community events, format recognition, and other appropriate means.

2024 Watertown Square Area Plan

Most of the Watertown Square Area Plan⁵⁶ discusses specific zoning and design recommendations for Watertown Square. Many of these recommendations have since been codified in the November 2024 update to the City's zoning.

The plan stresses the importance of ground-floor retail.

- Provide opportunities for micro retail for local businesses.
- Retail pavilions in the Delta.
- Ground floor opportunity for civic art

⁵⁶ <https://www.watertownsquareimprovements.com>

The plan specifically calls for a public/private partnership to develop the City-owned parking lots.

- Creation of structured parking
- Development goals for minimum open space and retail mix.
- Improve city infrastructure to accommodate the new housing production
- Create an east-west connection for the Community Path through the site

Section 3 above outlines these objectives and actions in more detail.

5.2 Market Analysis (separate report from RKG)

5.3 City Disposition and Governance Structure

5.3.1 City of Watertown Redevelopment Authority Authorization

Unlike other municipalities in the Commonwealth with a Redevelopment Authority, the City of Watertown does not have a Redevelopment Authority operating under M.G.L. Chapters 121A and 121B; instead, it operates under the terms of a home rule petition approved by the legislature in October 1987.⁵⁷

This Act (the language of which is reproduced below) abolished the existing Redevelopment Authority. It transferred its responsibilities to the City directly – i.e., the City Council now serves as the redevelopment authority.

Additionally, as noted in Section 4 of the Act, M.G.L. Chapters 121A and 121B apply to the City except where there is a conflict with powers transferred to the City by the Act:

All of the provisions of chapters one hundred and twenty-one A and one hundred and twenty-one B of the General Laws which pertain to redevelopment authorities in cities and towns which are not inconsistent with this act shall apply to the town, but in the event that there is a conflict between any provision of this act and said chapters one hundred and twenty-one A and one hundred and twenty-one B, insofar as applicable to redevelopment authorities, the provisions of this act shall govern.

Acts and Resolves of Massachusetts, 1987, Chapter 405.

AN ACT ABOLISHING THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY KNOWN AS THE TOWN OF WATERTOWN AND VESTING ITS POWERS IN SAID TOWN.

Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

SECTION 1. The Watertown Redevelopment Authority established by a vote of the town meeting on February tenth, nineteen hundred and sixty-six, pursuant to the General Laws is hereby abolished.

SECTION 2. The town of Watertown, hereinafter called the town, shall assume all rights, obligations, contracts, title to property, assets, liabilities, including outstanding litigation and responsibilities of the Watertown redevelopment authority, hereinafter called the authority.

All bonded indebtedness of the authority shall become the responsibility of the town and, where necessary, the consent of the secretary of communities and development shall be required to transfer any outstanding bonds.

All petitions, hearings, actions at law or in equity, or other proceedings pending immediately prior to the effective date of this act before any court of law or any administrative tribunal shall

⁵⁷ Chapter 405 of the Acts of 1987, An Act Abolishing the Redevelopment Authority of the City known as the Town of Watertown and Vesting its Powers in said Town, <https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/server/api/core/bitstreams/ed623893-9210-45ed-ae11-f4feac3774b4/content>

continue unabated as if no reorganization has been effected and shall be the responsibility of the town.

All orders, rules, and regulations duly promulgated by the authority prior to the effective date of this act relating to the execution of urban renewal projects shall remain in full force and effect until superseded, revised, or rescinded in accordance with the law.

All contracts and obligations of the authority in connection with the execution of urban renewal projects duly in effect immediately prior to the effective date of this act shall continue in full force and effect and shall be contracts and obligations of the town.

All rights, title and interest in any real property held in the name of the authority shall be transferred to the town.

SECTION 3. It is hereby declared that:

(a) substandard, decadent or blighted open areas exist in the town and that each of such areas constitutes serious and growing menace, injurious to the safety, health, and welfare of the residents of the town;

(b) that the existence of each of such areas necessitates an excessive and disproportionate expenditure of public funds for the preservation of the public health and safety, for crime prevention, for the maintenance of adequate police, fire and accident protection and other public services and facilities, constitutes an economic and social liability, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the town, and retards the provision of housing accommodations;

(c) that each of such areas decreases the value of private investments and threatens the sources of public revenue and the financial stability of the town;

(d) that because of the economic and social interdependence of the town with neighboring communities the redevelopment of land not only in substandard areas but also in decadent and blighted open areas in accordance with a comprehensive plan to promote the sound growth of the town is necessary in order to achieve permanent and comprehensive elimination of substandard conditions and to prevent the recurrence of such conditions or their development in other parts of the town;

(e) that the redevelopment of blighted open areas promotes the clearance of substandard and decadent areas and prevents their creation and occurrence;

(f) that the menace of such substandard, decadent or blighted open areas is beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory process in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids herein provided;

(g) that the acquisition of property for the purpose of eliminating substandard, decadent or blighted open conditions thereon and preventing occurrence of such conditions in the area, the removal of structures and improvement of sites, and disposition of the property for redevelopment incidental to the foregoing, and the exercise of powers by the town and any assistance which may be given by the commonwealth or any other public body in connection therewith, are public uses and purposes for which public money may be expended and the power of eminent domain exercised;

(h) that a public exigency exists which makes the acquisition, planning, clearance, rehabilitation or rebuilding of such substandard, decadent or blighted open areas for residential and appurtenant or incidental facilities a public use and benefit for which private property may be acquired by eminent domain or regulated by wholesome and

reasonable orders, laws and directions; and the necessity in the public interest for the provisions hereinafter enacted is hereby declared as a matter of legislative determination;

(i) that in many areas throughout the town there is a shortage of decent, safe and sanitary dwelling properly planned and related to facilities for governmental, social, business, commercial, cultural and recreational purposes; that this condition is most extreme in areas where substandard, decadent or blighted open areas exist; that the aforesaid conditions cannot be corrected by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids herein provided; and

(j) that the provisions of this act will stimulate the investment of private capital in projects for the assembly and clearance of land in substandard, decadent or blighted open areas, and in the construction, maintenance and operation of such land of needed decent, safe and sanitary dwellings properly planned and related to adequate and convenient appurtenant and incidental facilities; that the construction, maintenance and operation of such facilities on such land in such areas will assist in achieving permanent and comprehensive elimination of substandard conditions and in preventing the recurrence of such conditions not only by reason of the clearance and redevelopment of such land but also by reason of its future utilization for decent, safe and sanitary housing.

SECTION 4. The town shall have the same functions, rights, powers, privileges and immunities and be subject to the same duties and obligations as provided by law in the case of a redevelopment authority and the members thereof in carrying out land assembly and redevelopment projects, community development projects and urban renewal projects and all the provisions of law applicable to redevelopment authorities in cities and towns, except as specifically provided by this act, with respect to land assembly and

redevelopment projects shall be applicable to the town; and the power to initiate and carry out land assembly and redevelopment projects, community development projects and urban renewal projects in the town shall thereafter be vested solely in the town. Further, the town shall have the following powers which are specifically granted to redevelopment authorities:

(a) To conduct investigations and disseminate information relative to housing and living conditions, economic matters and on any other subject which is deemed by it to be material in connection with its powers and duties.

(b) To determine what areas within its jurisdiction constitute substandard, decadent or blighted open areas and to prepare plans for clearance thereon.

(c) To engage in land assembly and redevelopment projects and urban renewal projects.

(d) To take by eminent domain under chapter seventy-nine or chapter eighty A of the General Laws, or to purchase or lease or to acquire by gift, bequest or grant, and hold, any property real or personal, or any interest therein, found by it to be necessary or reasonably required to carry out the purposes of this act, or any of its sections, and to sell, exchange, transfer or assign the same; provided, that in case of taking by eminent domain under said chapter seventy-nine, the provisions of section forty of said chapter seventy-nine shall be applicable, except that the security therein required shall be deposited with the treasurer of the town.

(e) To clear and improve any property so acquired.

(f) To engage in or contract for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, remodeling or repair of any clearance, relocation,

community development urban renewal or rehabilitation project which it is authorized to undertake.

(g) To make relocation payments to persons and businesses displaced as a result of carrying out any such project.

(h) To act as agent of, or to cooperate with the state or federal government in any clearance, land assembly and redevelopment, community development, or urban renewal project or other public improvement involving the demolition of dwelling units whenever such a land assembly and redevelopment, community development or urban renewal project or other public improvement is determined upon and the town finds that there exists in the town an acute shortage of housing and there are no adequate means available for immediate relocation of persons and families displaced from the project area.

(i) In addition to the borrowing authority conferred upon the town by the General Laws, to borrow for the purposes of paying all or any part of the costs incurred pursuant to this act, exclusive of the current maintenance and operating expenses, as from time to time such sums may be necessary, upon the security of its bonds, notes or other evidences of indebtedness and to secure the same by mortgages upon property held or to be held by it or by pledge of its revenue under this act, including without limitation grants and contributions by the federal government, or in any other lawful manner in connection with the incurrence of any indebtedness, to covenant that it shall not thereafter mortgage or pledge the whole or any specified part of its property or its revenues.

(j) To receive loans, grants and annual or other contributions from the federal government or from any other source, public or private.

All of the provisions of chapters one hundred and twenty-one A and one hundred and twenty-one B of the General Laws which pertain to redevelopment authorities in cities and towns which are not inconsistent with this act shall apply to the town, but in the event that there is a conflict between any provision of this act and said chapters one hundred and twenty-one A and one hundred and twenty-one B, insofar as applicable to redevelopment authorities, the provisions of this act shall govern.

SECTION 5. All books, papers, records, documents, plans and personal property of any kind in the custody or possession of the authority immediately prior to the effective date of this act shall be transferred to the custody and control of the town.

SECTION 6. The town shall be deemed an operating agency for the purposes of sections twelve to sixteen, inclusive and section twenty of chapter one hundred and twenty-one B of the General Laws.

SECTION 7. The bonds, notes and certificates of indebtedness issued under clause (i) of section four of this act, in the absence of an express recital to the contrary on the face thereof, shall constitute negotiable instruments for all purposes. They may be payable from a specific part or parts of the income of the town or constitute a general obligation thereof, may be sold at not less than par, at public or private sale, may mature at such time or times, may be secured in such manner, may provide for such rights and remedies upon their default and may contain such other covenants, terms and conditions not inconsistent with law all as may be authorized by order of the town council, and shall be signed by the town manager and by the treasurer and collector.

The bonds, notes and certificates of indebtedness of the town issued under clause (i) of section four of this act and the interest thereon shall be exempt from taxation with respect to principal and income.

Bonds of the town issued under the said clause (i) shall be legal investments for the deposits and the income derived therefrom of savings banks, for the trust funds of trust companies, and for funds over which the commonwealth has exclusive control.

SECTION 8. The town may obligate itself, in any contract with the federal government for a loan or the payment of annual contributions authorized by section four of this act, to convey to the federal government the project to which such contract relates, upon the occurrence of a substantial default with respect to the covenants, terms and conditions of such contract to which the town is subject. Such contract may further provide that, in case of such conveyance, the federal government may complete, operate, manage, lease, convey or otherwise deal with the project in accordance with the terms of such contract; provided that the contract shall require that, as soon as practicable, after the federal government is satisfied that all of the defaults on account of which it acquired the project have been remedied, and that the project will thereafter be operated in compliance with the terms of the contract, the federal government shall reconvey to the city the project in the condition in which it then exists. The obligation of the town under such contract shall be subject to specific enforcement by any court having jurisdiction, and, notwithstanding any other provision of the law, shall not be deemed to constitute a mortgage.

SECTION 9. For the purpose of complying with the condition of federal and state legislation, the town may, upon such terms, and with or without consideration, do or agree to do any or all of the following:

(a) sell, convey, or lease any of its interests in any property, or grant easements, licenses or any other rights or privileges therein to the federal government;

(b) cause parks, playgrounds, or schools, or water, sewer or drainage facilities, or any other public improvements which it is otherwise authorized to undertake, to be laid out, constructed or furnished adjacent to or in connection with a housing, clearance, relocation, urban renewal, rehabilitation or community development project;

(c) lay out and construct, alter, relocate, change the grade of, make specific repairs upon or discontinue, public ways and construct sidewalks, adjacent to or through a housing, clearance, relocation, urban renewal, rehabilitation or community development project;

(d) establish exceptions to existing ordinances regulating the design, construction and use of buildings; annul or modify any action taken or map adopted under sections eighty-one A to eighty-one J, inclusive, of chapter forty-one of the General Laws;

(e) cause public improvements to be made and service facilities to be furnished with respect to a housing, clearance, relocation, urban renewal, rehabilitation or community development project for which betterments or special assessments may be levied or charges made, and assume such betterments, assessments or charges;

(f) cause private ways, sidewalks, footpaths, ways for vehicular travel, playgrounds, or water, sewer or drainage facilities and similar improvements to be constructed or furnished within the site of a project for the particular use of the project or of those dwelling therein; and

(g) do any and all other things necessary or convenient to aid and cooperate in the planning, construction or operation of housing, clearance, relocation, urban renewal, rehabilitation or community development project within its limits.

The entering of a contract under this section between the town and the state or federal government shall not be subject to any provision of law relating to publication or to advertising for bids.

SECTION 10. This act shall take effect on November first, nineteen hundred and eighty-seven.

Approved October 13, 1987.

5.3.2 The Approval Process and Implementation

Unlike an Urban Renewal Plan, a demonstration project does not need to go through EOHLC and (potentially) MEPA approval until after the WRA has completed its municipal approval process, and an actual permitted project is approved and ready for construction.

Table 24: Jurisdictions

Entity	Role	
	Approval	Implementation
Watertown Redevelopment Authority (WRA)	✓	✓
City of Watertown		
Planning Board	✓	
City Council	✓	
City Attorney	✓	
City Planning Staff		✓
Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)		
MEPA		For individual projects that meet the thresholds

5.3.3 Summary of Project Approval Steps

The City's municipal approval process includes the meetings of the WRA, the Planning Board, and the City Council. These meetings are described below.

The following meetings and associated actions (in red) have not yet occurred. Once these actions are complete, this section will be updated to include the dates of each action, and the required documentation will be added to the Appendix.

The following votes and actions are required as part of the public approval process:

Vote of the WRA for a determination of necessity (findings that there are conditions of blight within the urban renewal area), support the Plan and move it into the approval process, at a meeting held on [XYZ, XY, 202X].

Determination of conformance with the *Watertown Comprehensive Plan* (2023) by the Watertown Planning Board, at a meeting held on [XYZ, XY, 202X]. See page 132 for a description of the Planning Board's role.

Vote of the Watertown City Council to approve the Demonstration Project Plan, at a meeting held on [XYZ, XY, 202X]. This meeting should be a public hearing under M.G.L. c. 121B §48.

Opinion of Counsel for the WRA, dated [XYZ, XY, 202X].

5.3.4 Watertown Redevelopment Authority (WRA)

As noted in section 5.3.1 above, Section 4 of the 1987 Act gave the City all the powers of the Redevelopment Authority and stated that M.G.L. Chapters 121A and 121B apply to the City only when there is no conflict with the rights outlined in Section 4; otherwise, the rights in the Act apply. The relevant subsections of Section 4 for this demonstration project plan are noted below:

- (b) To determine what areas within its jurisdiction constitute substandard, decadent or blighted open areas and to prepare plans for clearance thereon.
- (c) To engage in land assembly and redevelopment projects and urban renewal projects.
- (d) To take by eminent domain under chapter seventy-nine or chapter eighty A of the General Laws, or to purchase or lease or to acquire by gift, bequest or grant, and hold, any property real or personal, or any interest therein, found by it to be necessary or reasonably required to carry out the purposes of this act, or any of its sections, and to sell, exchange, transfer or assign the same; provided, that in case of taking by eminent domain under said chapter seventy-nine, the provisions of section forty of said chapter seventy-nine shall be applicable, except that the security therein required shall be deposited with the treasurer of the town.
- (e) To clear and improve any property so acquired.
- (f) To engage in or contract for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, remodeling or repair of any clearance, relocation, community development urban renewal or rehabilitation project which it is authorized to undertake.
- (g) To make relocation payments to persons and businesses displaced as a result of carrying out any such project.
- (h) To act as agent of, or to cooperate with the state or federal government in any clearance, land assembly and redevelopment,

community development, or urban renewal project or other public improvement involving the demolition of dwelling units whenever such a land assembly and redevelopment, community development or urban renewal project or Other public improvement is determined upon and the town finds that there exists in the town an acute shortage of housing and there are no adequate means available for immediate relocation of persons and families displaced from the project area.

Therefore, as an urban renewal agency, the City may undertake the following planning actions.

- Determine which areas meet the definitions of decadent area, substandard area, or blighted open area.
- Create a plan for the clearance, conservation, and rehabilitation of the area.
- Prepare urban renewal and/or demonstration projects or a broad range of other plan types.

This demonstration project is a result of these actions and, once approved, authorizes the City to undertake its roles and responsibilities as an Urban Renewal Agency. Actions authorized by the project include the following:

- Engage in urban renewal projects.
- Enforce restrictions and controls contained in any approved Demonstration Project Plan or any covenant or agreement contained in any contract, deed, or lease, whether or not the urban renewal agency has title to those properties, and
- Receive gifts, loans, grants, contributions, or other financial assistance for the purposes of this section.

Under section 4, the City is also allowed to conduct other plans, investigations, and studies, and make them available to the federal and state governments and the public.

5.3.5 City of Watertown

The City Manager, City Councilors, members of the Planning Board, and City staff have participated in developing this project. In addition to its participation in the planning process, the City plays an important role in approving the project. The City also has primary responsibility for actions not authorized by this Plan, but that support specific recommendations, such as zoning changes. Finally, the City has primary responsibility for infrastructure improvements and other actions that support the goals of this plan but are not subject to approval or action by the Watertown Redevelopment Authority.

Municipal Approval Process

Under M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 48, the following steps must take place before the WRA can move forward with the demonstration project:

- The Watertown Planning Board must find that the Demonstration Project Plan is based upon a local survey and conforms to a comprehensive plan for the locality as a whole.
- The Watertown City Council must hold a public hearing on the Demonstration Project Plan. Under Section 48, the Massachusetts Historical Commission must be notified of the hearing in advance, and the notification must include a map of the urban renewal area.
- Under 760 CMR 12.02(14), the WRA must also provide an opinion of counsel to the urban renewal agency certifying that the proposed Demonstration Project was adopted in accordance with M.G.L. c. 121B, § 48, and complies with applicable laws.

See Summary of Project Approval Steps for the approval process for this Plan.

City Manager

The City Manager leads the executive branch of the City and determines policies, working with the City Council to coordinate changes to City ordinances (including zoning), and allocation of resources (including funding and staff priorities).

City Council

The City Council is responsible for adopting any zoning changes that the City may undertake in response to the recommendations in this Plan. The Council also approves infrastructure improvements throughout the city and is the primary legislative authority. The Council also adopts the City budget.

Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals

The Planning Board is responsible for reviewing all projects undertaken within the city that meet thresholds for Site Plan Review or Special Permit. This includes any project within the

Redevelopment Area identified in this Plan that meets those thresholds.

The Planning Board is also responsible for reviewing any zoning changes the City may undertake in response to the recommendations in this Plan (see Section 4. Objectives). The Planning Board sends its recommendation on the proposed zoning to the City Council.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is responsible for certain Special Permits and variances. For multi-family projects within the TODO district, the project Site Plan Review would be with the Planning Board, but the Special Permit would be with the ZBA.

City Staff

Critical staff members include the Department of Community Development (DCDP) and the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works. DCDP evaluates the zoning recommendations in this Plan and works with the Planning Board to bring zoning change recommendations to the City Council. The Engineering Division completes public infrastructure projects associated with the plan.

5.4 Citizen Participation and Public Approval Process

5.4.1 Community Planning and Outreach through 2025

In September 2023, the City of Watertown adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan, which prioritized improving and revitalizing the Watertown Square area into a destination rather than a pass-through. In conjunction with this, the City was also determining how to meet its requirements under the MBTA Communities Act (3A) by the December 31, 2024, deadline. As a result, the City engaged in a community-focused engagement project to develop a plan for the Watertown Square area. The City Council subsequently adopted the Watertown Square Area Plan in November 2024.

During the 2024 planning process, multiple public hearings and events were held to gather community input. There was high engagement (with attendee numbers in the hundreds for each meeting) and a lot of feedback to the project team throughout the process.

A summary of the community outreach during these two periods is provided below.

5.4.2 2023 Comprehensive Plan⁵⁸

Four interactive public meetings were held during the planning process. The planning process and public meetings were promoted via social media, emails shared with community groups, flyers posted in local businesses and apartment buildings, and individual outreach by PAC members. City staff and members of the planning team were interviewed on WCATV to talk about the purpose of the plan and the

importance of participating. All meetings were offered both in person and online via Zoom, so people could join as they felt comfortable and able. Small-group discussions, topic stations, surveys, and dot-sticker voting were among the tools used to collect feedback from participants.

- **Visioning Forum:** The first public event was held on May 19, 2022, at the newly opened Hosmer School. Participants discussed their vision for the future of Watertown in small groups. They noted opportunities and challenges on a map of the city and identified shared group priorities.
- **Workshops:** Two public events were held on September 20 and 29, 2022. These identical workshops asked for feedback on the draft goals and strategies. Participants visited five topic stations to review draft material and respond to specific questions. This feedback informed the development of the plan strategies.
- **Open House:** A draft plan open house was held on March 9, 2023. Participants learned about key recommendations in the draft comprehensive plan and visited stations to provide feedback on specific elements. This feedback was used to refine the plan before submitting it for formal consideration by the Planning Board and City Council.

5.4.3 2024 Watertown Square Area Plan⁵⁹

The City and consultant team developed the plan during a robust multi-tiered engagement process that included informal conversations in people's homes, multiple surveys, a multi-day public charrette, and well-attended public meetings. These touch points

⁵⁸ <https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/DocView.aspx?id=87541&repo=r-5ece5628>

⁵⁹ <https://watertownsquareimprovements.com/the-plan>

were carefully coordinated with the technical work to ensure that stakeholders and members of the general public were providing advice and feedback at steps in the process when the consultant team had the flexibility to be responsive.

Kitchen Table Meetings: The engagement process began with a series of informal conversations led by the Watertown Community Conversations. This resident-led group had participated productively in the Comprehensive Plan engagement process. Twenty (20) meetings were held with 168 participants.

Online Engagement: An online engagement tool was used to react to the plan at various points. 1,076 unique voters were engaged throughout the plan development.

First Public Meeting/October 17, 2024: The first public meeting aligned with the project kick-off, but after some of the initial feedback from the Kitchen Conversations could be reported back. There were 210 in-person and online attendees.

Three-day Public Charrette: A three-day public design and planning workshop (“charrette”) was at the center of the planning process. The presentations, meetings, and design sessions were carefully timed to coincide with the consultant team’s own technical analysis and initial studies.

The sessions held during the first day of the three-day charrette were designed as teach-ins, with technical experts outlining the issues, followed by robust discussions with attendees. The discussions were fueled by challenging questions and far-ranging suggestions that helped frame next steps. In addition to the consultant team, which included experts in transportation, zoning, urban design, streetscape design, and transportation planning, City of Watertown staff and the MBTA made presentations, fielded questions, and engaged in discussions about alternative solutions.

Day two of the charrette provided opportunities for the planning and design team to sketch through alternative concepts and share and discuss them with small groups of the general public. Their work culminated in a presentation to more than 180 people that evening. After the talk, the consultant team and City staff discussed the alternative concepts in more detail in front of the boards, which were distributed around the room.

Based on feedback during the previous evening, the consultant team zeroed in on two alternative scenarios in more detail. The pros and cons of these schemes and a few initial zoning concepts were presented at the third and final evening of the charrette. The feedback from this and the other meetings held during the three-day workshop provided the consultant team with the necessary fodder to dig into the schemes from a technical standpoint.

There were 604 total signups, with 274 new participants.

Second Public Meeting - February 29, 2024: At the second public meeting, follow-up work done by the consulting team after the charrette was presented. The consultant team also made initial zoning recommendations based on a tiered, form-based zoning approach that stepped down building heights from five stories. There were 181 in-person attendees with an additional 60 participating live online.

Third Public Meeting - April 4, 2024: The April public meeting included a large in-person crowd that asked many questions about the current process. Staff and the consulting team took the time to answer these questions, and the meeting took over three hours. Following the meeting, a feedback form was provided to the 219 participants in the room and the 115 who participated online. The form had 499 responses, providing extensive feedback about the process and outcomes through the April meeting.

5.5 Redevelopment Authority Responsibilities

The following section outlines the responsibilities of a Redevelopment Authority as defined in M.G.L. Chapter 121B. Specific differences apply to the City of Watertown, which are discussed in Section 5.3.1 above.

What is a Redevelopment Authority?

A redevelopment authority is a public body defined in M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 1, and created in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 4. The municipality decides whether a redevelopment authority should engage in urban renewal projects or other work under Chapter 121B. In a city, the municipal officers vote to establish a redevelopment authority; in a town, the vote is by Town Meeting.

M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 54 defines the membership and appointing authorities for a Redevelopment Authority. Membership is set at five members. In a city, the mayor appoints four members subject to confirmation by the city council, and EOHLC appoints one member. In a Town, when the redevelopment authority is established, the four members are appointed by the select board and thereafter elected by the town. EOHLC appoints the fifth member. The terms of the members defined above are staggered.

Members may be removed from office as described in M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 6. Reasons for removal include inefficiency, neglect of duty, or misconduct in office. The member is entitled to a hearing. A member must resign if they are no longer a resident of the municipality in which the redevelopment authority is located.

A redevelopment authority must elect a chair and a vice chair from its members. The treasurer may also be a member. The redevelopment authority may employ counsel, an executive director who is also the ex officio secretary of the authority, and other officers, agents, and employees that it deems necessary to appoint. M.G.L. Chapter 121B,

Section 7 recommends that the redevelopment authority use the services of the agencies, officers, and employees of the municipality in which it is organized “so far as practicable.”

The Redevelopment Authority is a Municipal Agency

Under Section 7, a redevelopment authority is considered a municipal agency. Each member of the authority and any person who performs professional services for the authority shall be regarded as a special municipal employee. This designation would include anyone performing services on a part-time, intermittent, or consultant basis, including an architect, attorney, engineer, planner, or construction, financial, real estate, or traffic expert.

The Redevelopment Authority is an Operating Agency

M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 1 defines a redevelopment authority as an operating agency. The powers of an operating agency are listed in M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 11. They can be grouped into the following categories: the general powers of a corporate body, financing activities related to the acquisition and disposition of real property, development activities, and federal urban renewal activities. Note that a Housing Authority is also an operating agency.

The Redevelopment Authority is an Urban Renewal Agency

M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 9 defines a redevelopment authority as an urban renewal agency. In municipalities without a redevelopment authority, a housing authority may also be an urban renewal agency. In both cases, the municipality must determine that urban renewal is necessary.

The limitations of an urban renewal agency are listed within subsections 45-57 of M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 9. Urban renewal

agencies have additional powers under subsections 58-59, as stated in M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 10, if so stated by the municipal officers.

M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 46 defines the specific powers of an urban renewal agency, and the first five sets of powers in this section are directly related to EOHLC's regulatory guidance: 760 CMR 12.00. EOHLC created these regulations to govern the content of a Demonstration Project and its approval process.

760 CMR 12.00 does not address the ability of a redevelopment authority to "develop, test and report methods and techniques and carry out demonstrations for the prevention and elimination of slums and urban blight," which is established in M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 46, nor does it provide for regulatory guidance or oversight of such a project.

5.6 Land Acquisitions

For the benefit of the Watertown Redevelopment Authority, the text of 760 CMR 12.04 is reproduced below in its entirety. This section is not a required component of a demonstration project, but is provided so that the WRA has a reference to EOHLC's land acquisition guidelines for properties within an urban renewal area in this document.

- (1) Appraisals. Two independent appraisals must be submitted for Department approval prior to the acquisition of any parcel, including parcels acquired by eminent domain, by negotiated sale, or through any other means, except as set out in 760 CMR12.04(3). If deemed necessary, the Department may request an additional appraisal. The urban renewal agency's determination of the proposed acquisition price shall be based on review of the appraisals. The acquisition price shall not be less than the lowest appraisal, nor more than the highest appraisal.
- (2) Negotiations and Condemnation. The urban renewal agency may negotiate for the purchase of one or more parcels after the Urban Renewal Plan has been approved by the Department.

Negotiations may be performed by a member of the urban renewal agency staff experienced in real estate matters or by a licensed broker under contract. The negotiated acquisition price shall be approved by the Department. Approval by the Department of the acquisition price for a parcel shall constitute the Department's concurrence in the institution of condemnation proceedings, provided that the urban renewal agency shall have made every reasonable effort to acquire the property through purchase. All condemnation proceedings shall be authorized by the urban renewal agency's governing body and shall be carried out in accordance with M.G.L. c. 79.

- (3) Donations, Transfers from Another Public Entity, Tax Takings, Public Auction. Property acquired through donation from either a public or private entity, through a transfer from another public entity, through a tax foreclosure or through a public auction does not require an appraisal. However, prior to disposing of the property in accordance with 760 CMR 12.05, urban renewal agencies must obtain disposition appraisals.

5.7 Land Disposition

For the benefit of the Watertown Redevelopment Authority, the text of 760 CMR 12.05 is reproduced below in its entirety. This section is not a required component of a demonstration project, but is provided so that the WRA has a reference to EOHLC's land disposition guidelines for properties within an urban renewal area in this document.

- (1) Each parcel to be sold or otherwise disposed of by the urban renewal agency shall have an independent disposition appraisal. If deemed necessary, the Department may require an additional appraisal of the disposition. In cases where the cost of the appraisal will exceed the estimated value of the parcel, the Department may waive the disposition appraisal. Prior to disposition of any parcel, the urban renewal agency shall file or record the Urban Renewal Plan or an appropriate declaration of restrictions with the appropriate registry of deeds or division of the land court.

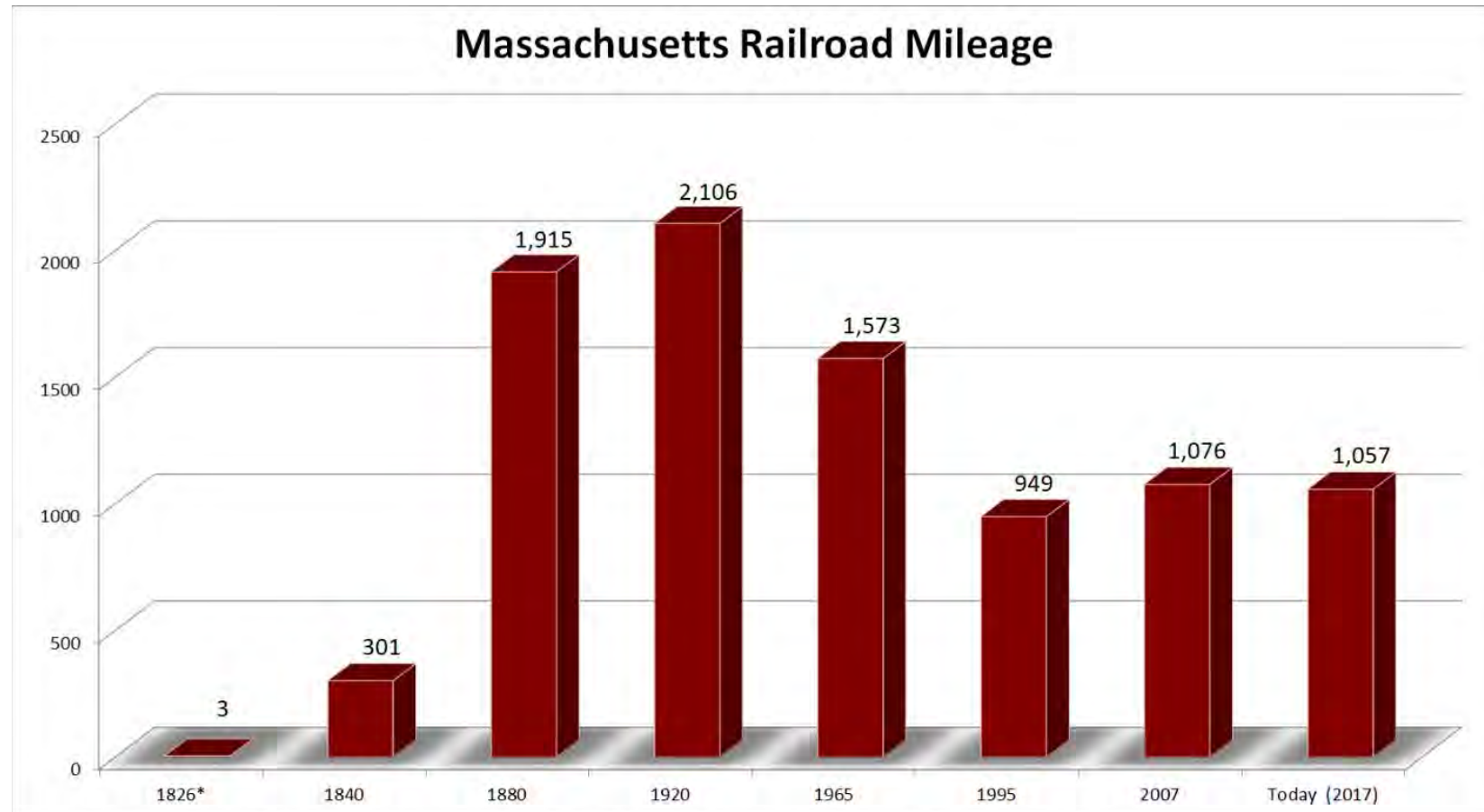
The urban renewal agency shall determine the disposition price for each parcel as follows:

- (a) The disposition price shall be no less than the fair market value of the land for the use specified in the Urban Renewal Plan, as determined by the disposition appraisal.
- (b) The disposition appraisal shall reflect both the advantages created by the project and the requirements and limitations on land uses to be imposed on the redeveloper by the Urban Renewal Plan.
- (c) Disposition of project land may be made by long-term lease. The urban renewal agency shall obtain an opinion from licensed appraiser(s) of the fair market value of the parcel to be leased, the then current rate of rent at which similar long-term land leases are made, and an acceptable annual rent for the property to be leased.

- (d) In instances where the urban renewal agency has demonstrated that a significant public purpose will be served by disposing of the parcel at less than the fair market value, the Department may approve such a disposition at less than fair market value.
- (2) With its request for disposition approval, the urban renewal agency shall submit to the Department the following:
 - (a) Identification of the proposed redeveloper.
 - (b) Evidence that the urban renewal agency has determined the redeveloper possesses significant qualifications and financial resources to acquire and develop the land in accordance with the Urban Renewal Plan. The urban renewal agency shall not enter into a land disposition agreement until this determination has been made.
 - (c) The land disposition agreement (LDA) is an instrument describing the terms of such sale or lease. The LDA for each parcel shall insure that the redeveloper conforms to and carries out the requirements of the Urban Renewal Plan and that the interests of the project are safeguarded. The time permitted for the performance of each obligation of the redeveloper shall be specified.
- (3) The Department must approve the disposition price and the LDA.
- (4) Members of the governing body of the urban renewal agency or municipality and employees of the urban renewal agency or municipality, who, acting in their official capacity, exercise or may exercise responsibility concerning the project, are ineligible to be redevelopers.
- (5) The Department may waive disposition requirements under 760 CMR 12.05 if the transfer of property is between the urban renewal agency and the municipality.

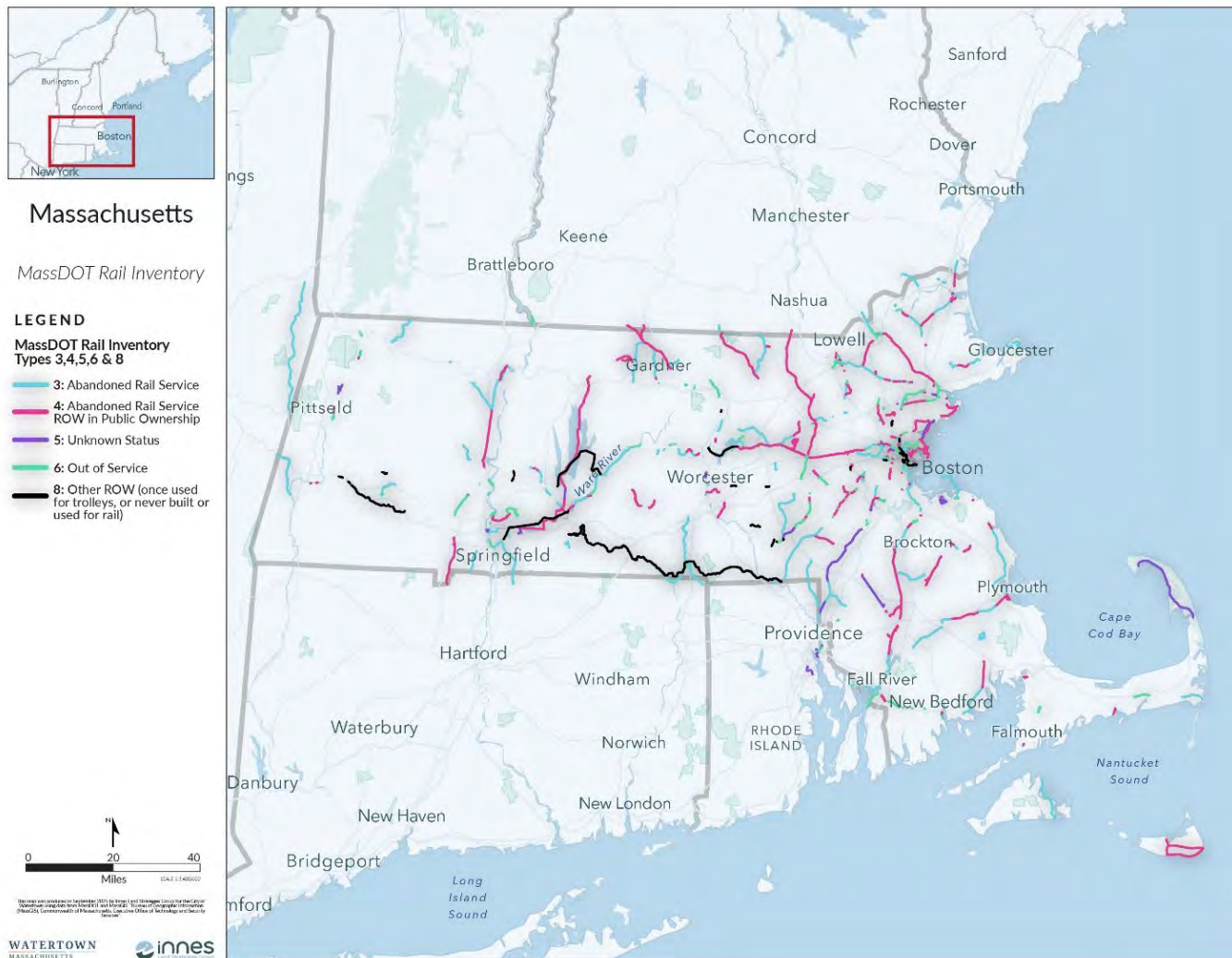
5.8 Abandoned Rail Inventory (MA)

Figure 42: Massachusetts Railroad Mileage 1826-2017

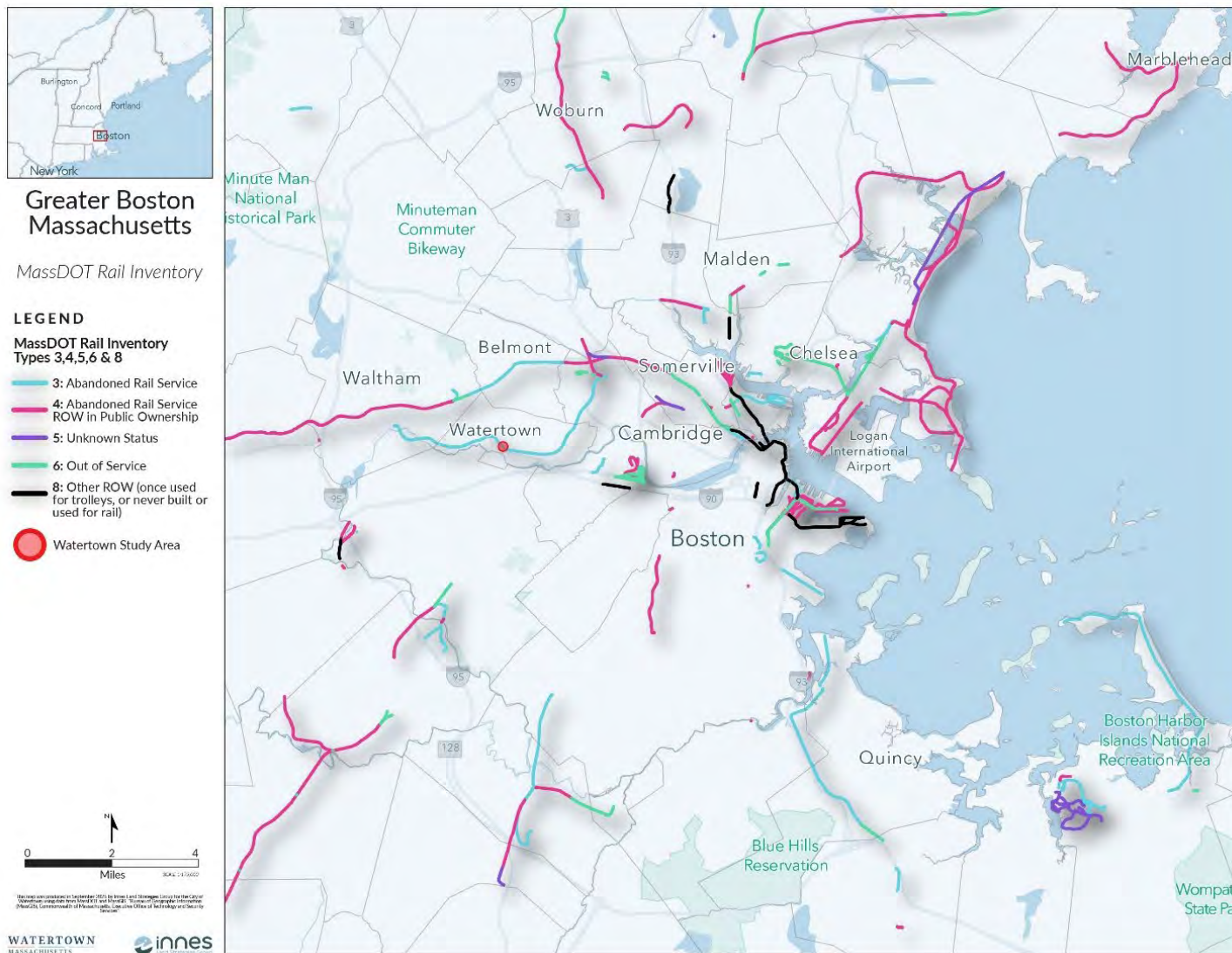


Sources: Stover, John. *Routledge Historical Atlas of the American Railroads, The*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
 Doherty, Tim. "Great Railroad: State-By-State (Massachusetts)." *Trains Magazine*. January 2007. Page 46. Print.
 "Freight Railroads In Massachusetts." *Association Of American Railroads*. January 2019,
<https://www.aar.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/AAR-Massachusetts-State-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.

Source: American Rails - Massachusetts Railroads: State Map, History, Abandoned Lines ([https://www.american-rails.com/ma.html#gallery\[pageGallery\]/0/](https://www.american-rails.com/ma.html#gallery[pageGallery]/0/))

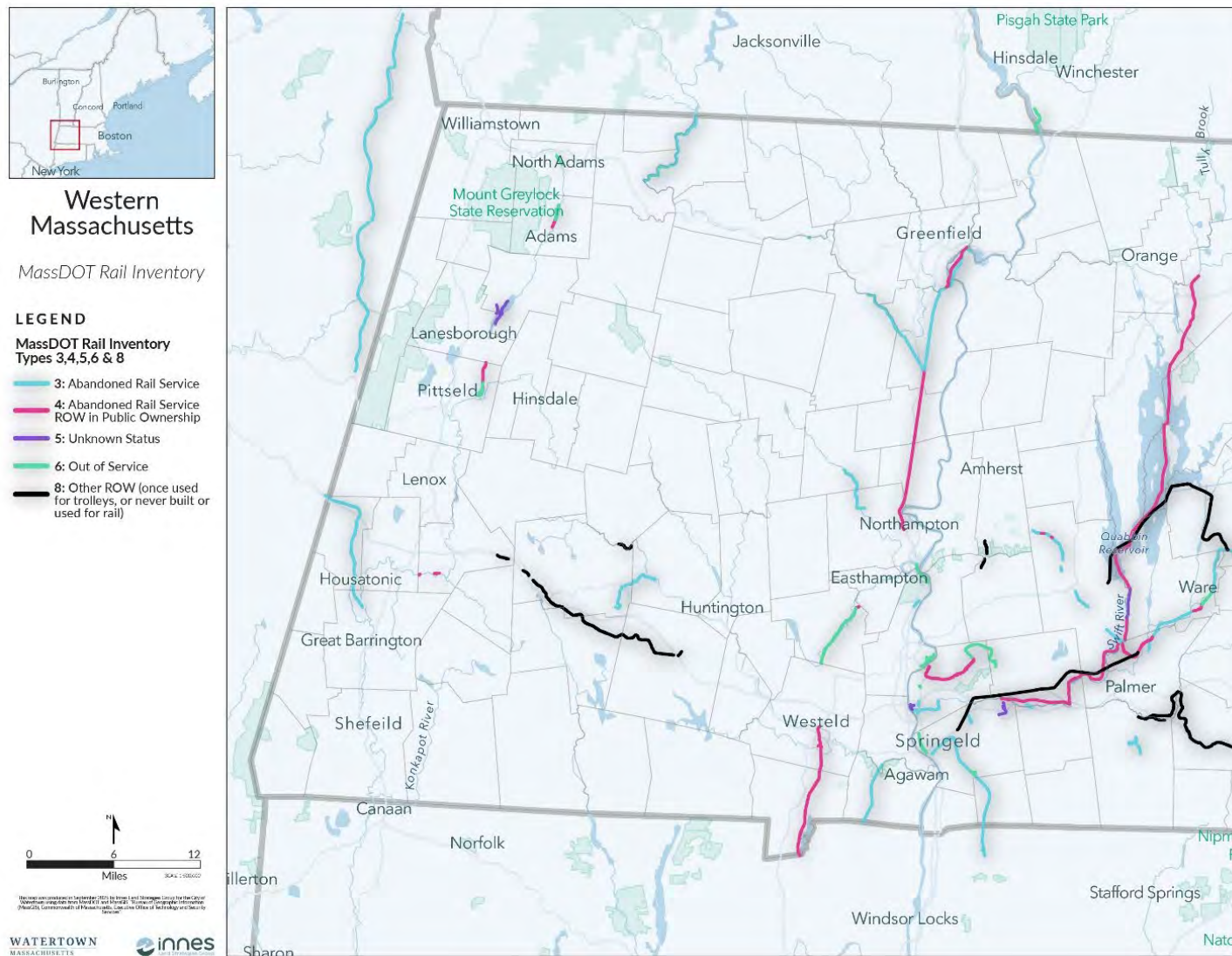
Figure 43: Abandoned Rail Inventory (MA)

Source: MassDOT Rail Inventory: <https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/rail-inventory-3/explore>

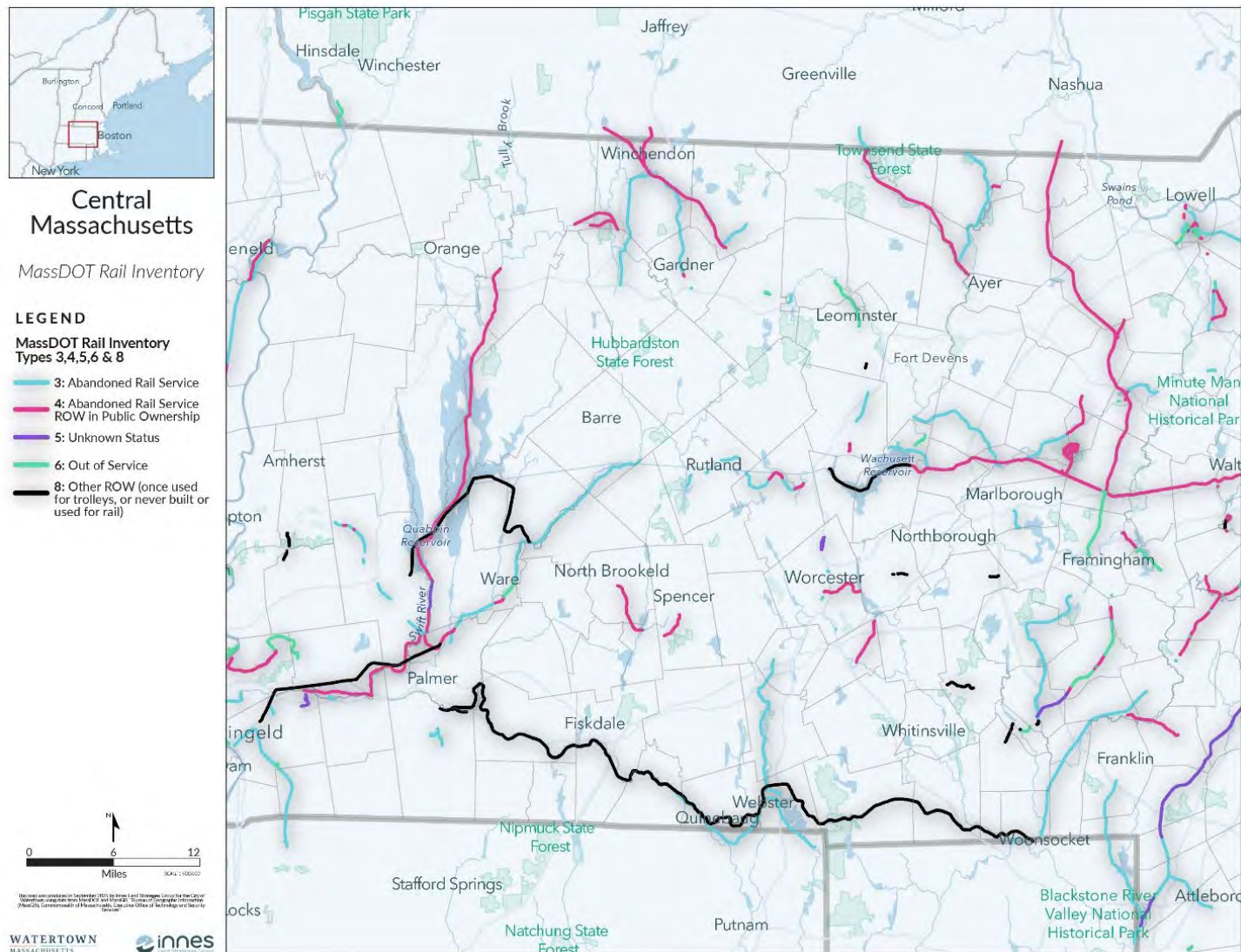
Figure 44: Abandoned Rail Inventory (Greater Boston)

Source: MassDOT Rail Inventory: <https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/rail-inventory-3/explore>

Figure 45: Abandoned Rail Inventory (Western MA)



Source: MassDOT Rail Inventory: <https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/rail-inventory-3/explore>

Figure 46: Abandoned Rail Inventory (Central MA)

Source: MassDOT Rail Inventory: <https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/rail-inventory-3/explore>

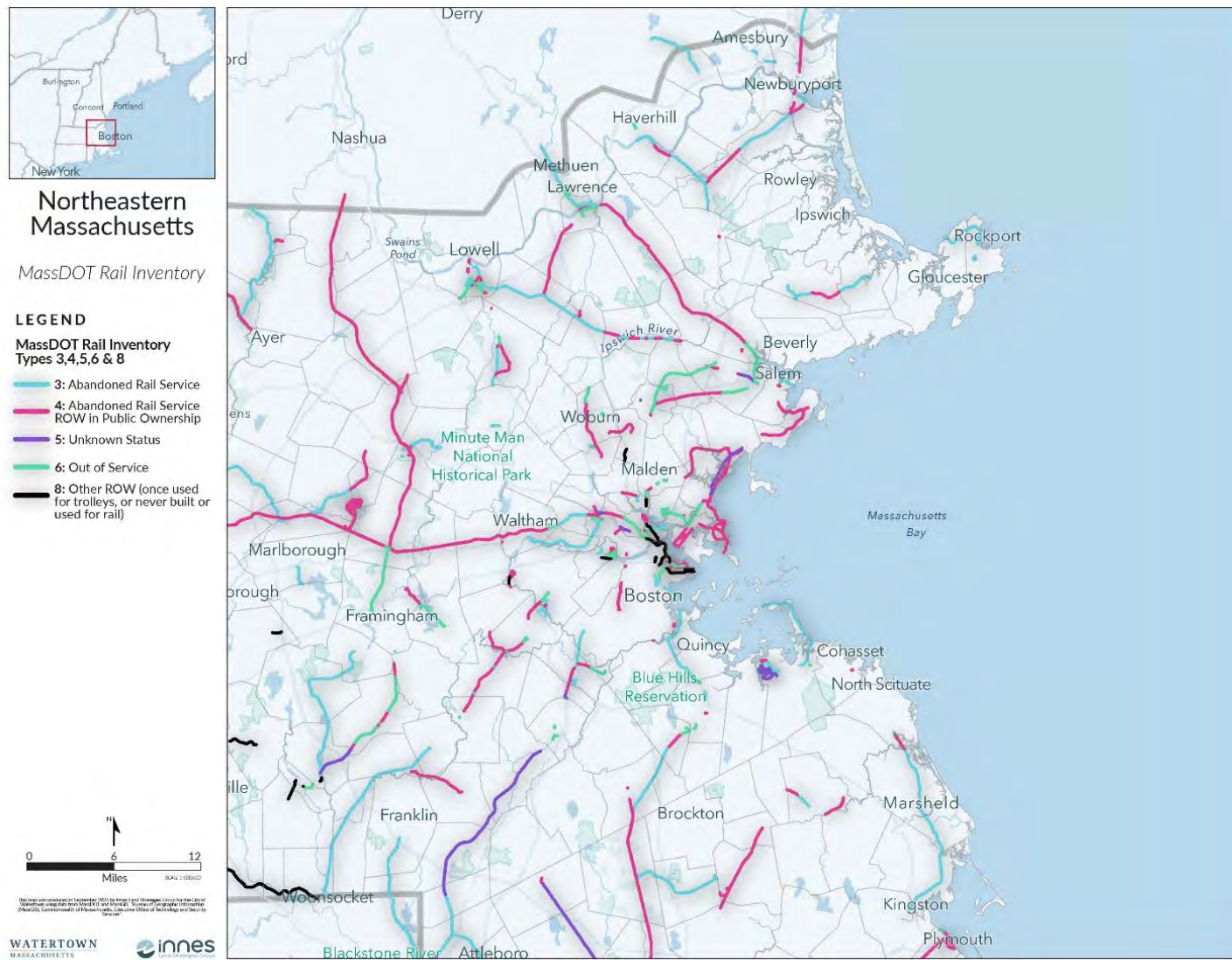
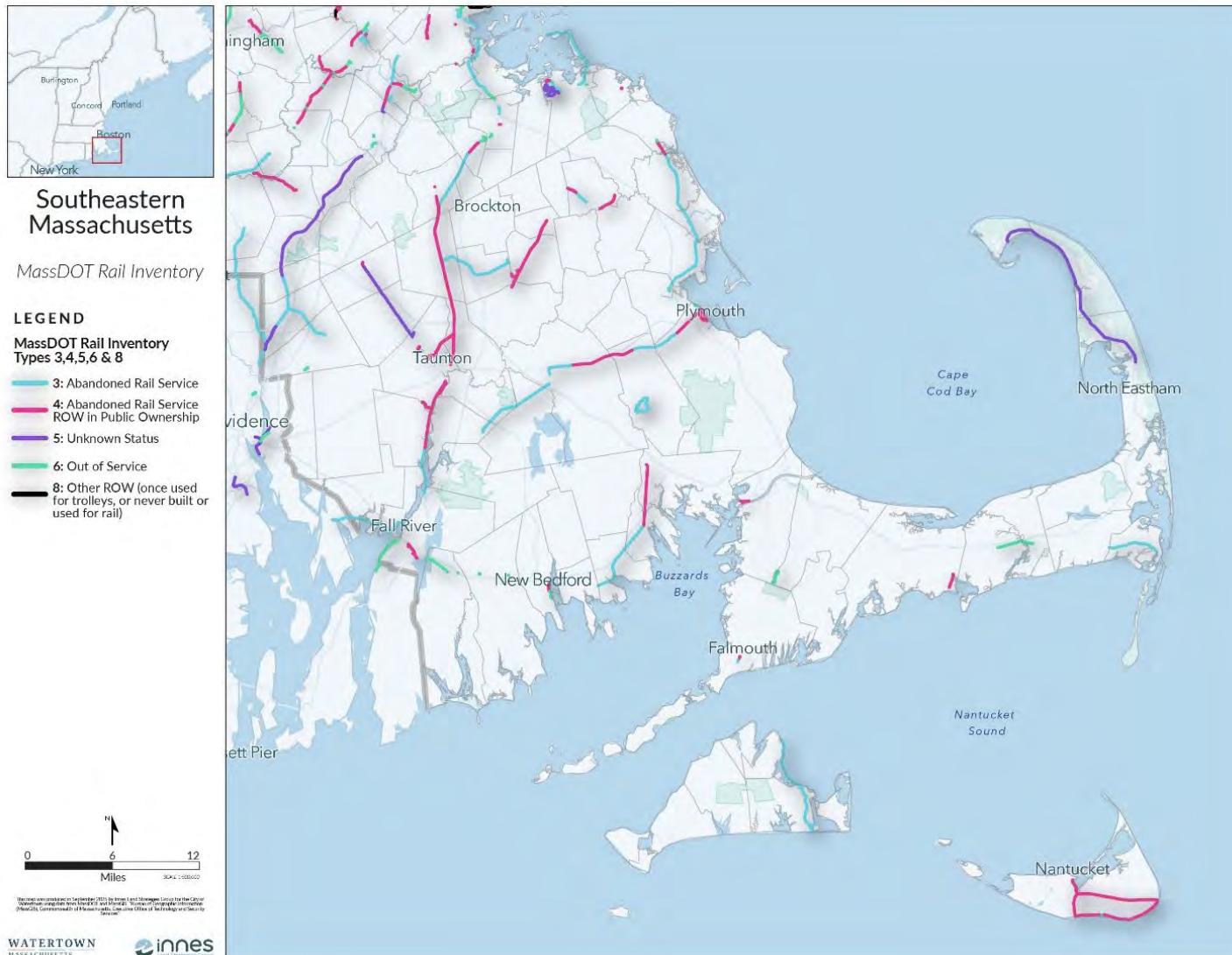
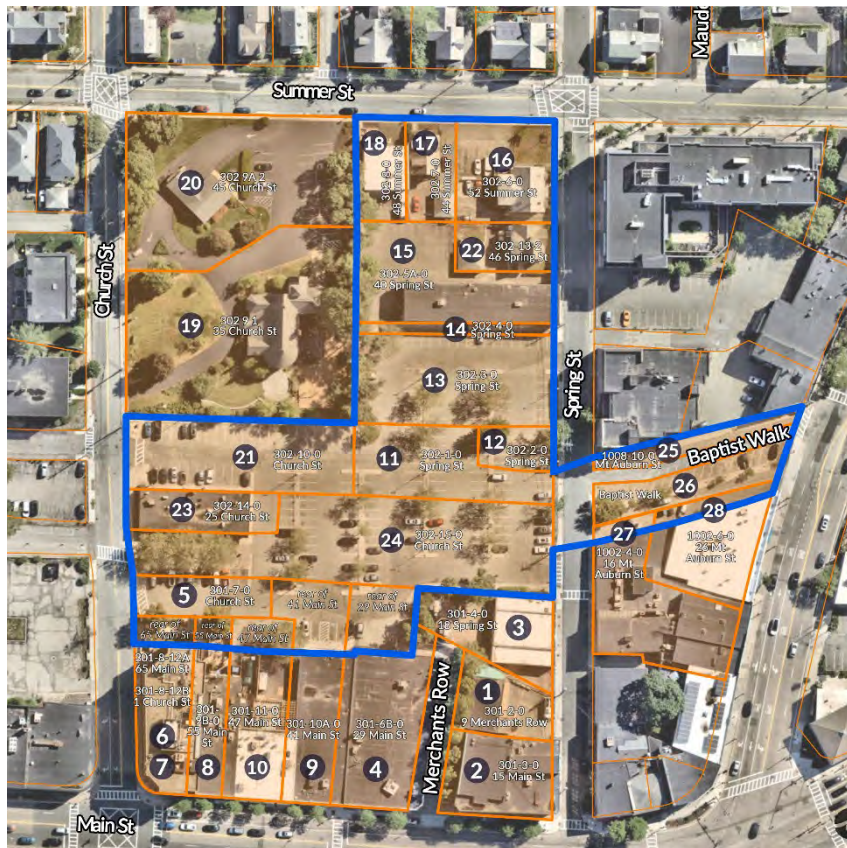
Figure 47: Abandoned Rail Inventory (Northeastern MA)

Figure 48: Abandoned Rail Inventory (Southeastern MA)

Source: MassDOT Rail Inventory: <https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/rail-inventory-3/explore>

5.9 Property Inventory



Key	Map-Block-Parcel	Address
1	301-2-0	9 Merchants Row
2	301-3-0	15 Main Street
3	301-4-0	18 Spring Street
4	301-6B-0	29 Main Street
5	301-7-0	Church Street
6	301-8-12A	65 Main Street
7	301-8-12B	1 Church Street
8	301-9B-0	55 Main Street
9	301-10A-0	41 Main Street
10	301-11-0	47 Main Street
11	302-1-0	Spring Street
12	302-2-0	Spring Street
13	302-3-0	Spring Street
14	302-4-0	Spring Street
15	302-5A-0	40 Spring Street
16	302-6-0	52 Summer Street
17	302-7-0	44 Summer Street
18	302-8-0	48 Summer Street
19	302-9-1	35 Church Street
20	302-9A-2	45 Church Street
21	302-10-0	Church Street
22	302-13-2	46 Spring Street
23	302-14-0	25 Church Street
24	302-15-0	Church Street
25	1008-10-0	Mt Auburn Street
26		Baptist Walk
27	1002-4-0	16 Mt Auburn Street
28	1002-6-0	26 Mt Auburn Street



Map/Parcel ID	301-2-0
Street Address	9 Merchants Row
Owner of Record	HAWES DONALD O TRUSTEE
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	316C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.11
Building Area (SF)	4057
Year Built	1957
Style	Warehouse
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$691,900
Last Sale Date	8/8/1968
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-3-0
Street Address	15 Main Street
Owner of Record	GHASSEMI BAHRAM TRUSTEE
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	325C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.18
Building Area (SF)	30,466
Year Built	1889
Style	Commercial Block
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$2,518,100
Last Sale Date	1/22/2018
Notes	Historic Building - Otis Building MHC ID: WAT.198



Map/Parcel ID	301-4-0
Street Address	18 Spring St
Owner of Record	NSTAR ELECTRIC COMPANY
Owner City and State	Hartford, CT
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	424C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.23
Building Area (SF)	3,944
Year Built	1950
Style	Utility Building
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$778,100
Last Sale Date	5/3/1922
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-6B-0
Street Address	29 Main Street
Owner of Record	WATERMAIN REALTY OWNER LLC
Owner City and State	Norwood, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	325C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.41
Building Area (SF)	25,549
Year Built	1900
Style	Store
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$2,963,400
Last Sale Date	7/5/2006
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-7-0
Street Address	Church Street
Owner of Record	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	930V
Lot Size (Acres)	0.15
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$539,700
Last Sale Date	12/14/1959
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-8-12A
Street Address	65 Main Street
Owner of Record	ARMENIAN LIBRARY + MUSEUM OF AMERICA, INC
Owner City and State	Watertown
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	9560
Lot Size (Acres)	0
Building Area (SF)	13,798
Year Built	1969
Style	CONDO-OFC
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$2,953,500
Last Sale Date	12/15/1988
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-8-12B
Street Address	1 Church Street
Owner of Record	ARMENIAN LIBRARY + MUSEUM OF AMERICA, INC
Owner City and State	Watertown
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	343C
Lot Size (Acres)	0
Building Area (SF)	2,416
Year Built	1969
Style	CONDO-RTL
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$593,700
Last Sale Date	12/15/1988
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-8-12C
Street Address	65 Main Street
Owner of Record	ARMENIAN LIBRARY + MUSEUM OF AMERICA, INC
Owner City and State	Watertown
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	9560
Lot Size (Acres)	0
Building Area (SF)	6,527
Year Built	1969
Style	CONDO-OFC
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$888,900
Last Sale Date	12/15/1988
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-8-12D
Street Address	65 Main Street
Owner of Record	ARMENIAN LIBRARY + MUSEUM OF AMERICA, INC
Owner City and State	Watertown
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	9560
Lot Size (Acres)	0
Building Area (SF)	5,461
Year Built	1969
Style	CONDO-OFC
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$773,400
Last Sale Date	12/15/1988
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-9B-0
Street Address	55 Main Street
Owner of Record	DANA, MYER & ALAN TRUSTEES DANA FAMILY REALTY TRUST
Owner City and State	Newton, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	326C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.16
Building Area (SF)	9,552
Year Built	1930
Style	Restaurant
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$1,439,000
Last Sale Date	1/23/2018
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	301-10A-0
Street Address	41 Main Street
Owner of Record	BAYBANK MIDDLESEX
Owner City and State	Charlotte, NC
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	341C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.3
Building Area (SF)	16,392
Year Built	1940
Style	Bank
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$2,145,100
Last Sale Date	7/15/1976

Notes



Map/Parcel ID	301-11-0
Street Address	47 Main Street
Owner of Record	BCW REALTY INC
Owner City and State	Warwick, RI
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	326C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.24
Building Area (SF)	8,188
Year Built	1891
Style	Restaurant
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$1,542,400
Last Sale Date	11/1/2021

Notes



Map/Parcel ID	302-1-0
Street Address	Spring Street
Owner of Record	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	930V
Lot Size (Acres)	0.18
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$580,400
Last Sale Date	9/26/1961
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-2-0
Street Address	Spring Street
Owner of Record	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	930V
Lot Size (Acres)	0.07
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$446,000
Last Sale Date	9/26/1961
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-3-0
Street Address	Spring Street
Owner of Record	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	930V
Lot Size (Acres)	0.41
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$937,400
Last Sale Date	1/31/1951
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-4-0
Street Address	Spring Street
Owner of Record	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	930V
Lot Size (Acres)	0.05
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$38,500
Last Sale Date	4/17/1953
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-5A-0
Street Address	40 Spring Street
Owner of Record	WATERSPRING LLC
Owner City and State	Newton, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	340C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.36
Building Area (SF)	11,856
Year Built	1970
Style	Office Bldg.
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$2,009,200
Last Sale Date	8/27/2015

Notes

The 10-foot wide alleyway from to the First Parish parcel boundary (along the north side of the building) is deed-restricted (see deed book/pages 373/340 and 8060/280-284) and must remain open as it is a sewer, water, and electrical easement for First Parish.



Map/Parcel ID	302-6-0
Street Address	52 Summer Street
Owner of Record	WATERSPRING, LLC
Owner City and State	Newton, MA
Zoning District	WSQ2
Land Use	0130
Lot Size (Acres)	0.23
Building Area (SF)	6,587
Year Built	1900
Style	3 Multi Unit
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$1,273,400
Last Sale Date	6/8/2022
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-7-0
Street Address	44 Summer Street
Owner of Record	WATERSPRING, LLC
Owner City and State	Newton, MA
Zoning District	WSQ2
Land Use	1040
Lot Size (Acres)	0.12
Building Area (SF)	3,003
Year Built	1930
Style	Two Family
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$780,500
Last Sale Date	6/8/2022
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-8-0
Street Address	48 Summer Street Unit 1
Owner of Record	SONZI 12 LLC
Owner City and State	Somerville, MA
Zoning District	WSQ2
Land Use	343C
Lot Size (Acres)	0
Building Area (SF)	552
Year Built	2001
Style	CONDO-OFC
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$238,500
Last Sale Date	6/21/2021
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-8-0
Street Address	48 Summer Street Unit 2
Owner of Record	ANGELCAR 1 LLC
Owner City and State	Somerville, MA
Zoning District	WSQ2
Land Use	343C
Lot Size (Acres)	0
Building Area (SF)	627
Year Built	2001
Style	CONDO-OFC
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$270,100
Last Sale Date	6/1/2020
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-8-0
Street Address	48 Summer Street Unit 3
Owner of Record	VELLUCCI NICOLE
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ2
Land Use	343C
Lot Size (Acres)	0
Building Area (SF)	465
Year Built	2001
Style	CONDO-OFC
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$202,000
Last Sale Date	12/28/2017
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-9-1
Street Address	35 Church Street
Owner of Record	FIRST PARISH WATERTOWN UU
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ2
Land Use	9600
Lot Size (Acres)	0.90
Building Area (SF)	10,086
Year Built	1889
Style	Temple/Religious
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$2,460,600
Last Sale Date	07/06/1838
Notes	The building was originally built as the parish hall and then converted to the meeting house when the 1842 meeting house was demolished in 1975.



Map/Parcel ID	302-9A-2
Street Address	45 Church Street
Owner of Record	FIRST PARISH CHURCH
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ2
Land Use	341C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.70
Building Area (SF)	2,722
Year Built	1975
Style	Bank
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$1,613,900
Last Sale Date	07/06/1838
Notes	The 1842 meeting house on this parcel was demolished in 1975 and replaced with the bank building.



Map/Parcel ID	302-10-0
Street Address	Church Street
Owner of Record	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	930V
Lot Size (Acres)	0.28
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$741,200
Last Sale Date	12/14/1965
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-13-2
Street Address	46 Spring Street
Owner of Record	WATERSPRING LLC
Owner City and State	Newton, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	1040
Lot Size (Acres)	0.11
Building Area (SF)	4,108
Year Built	1900
Style	Two Family
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$834,000
Last Sale Date	08/28/2014

Notes

The 10-foot-wide alleyway from the First Parish parcel boundary (along the south side of the parcel) is deed-restricted (see deed book/pages 373/340 and 8060/280-284) and must remain open as it is a sewer, water, and electrical easement for First Parish.



Map/Parcel ID	302-14-0
Street Address	25 Church Street
Owner of Record	CALOIERO LLC
Owner City and State	Sudbury, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	325C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.14
Building Area (SF)	7,063
Year Built	1960
Style	Store
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$1,132,000
Last Sale Date	5/2/2014
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	302-15-0
Street Address	Church Street
Owner of Record	WATERTOWN, TOWN OF TOWN LAND PARKING
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	930V
Lot Size (Acres)	1.12
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$1,744,000
Last Sale Date	12/14/1965
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	1008-10-0
Street Address	Mt Auburn St
Owner of Record	CAMBRIDGE CITY OF
Owner City and State	Cambridge, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	980V
Lot Size (Acres)	0.10
Building Area (SF)	N/A
Year Built	N/A
Style	Vacant Land
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$264,600
Last Sale Date	1/1/1900
Notes	



Map/Parcel ID	
Street Address	Baptist Walk
Owner of Record	CITY OF WATERTOWN
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	
Lot Size (Acres)	
Building Area (SF)	
Year Built	
Style	
Total Assessed Value 2025	
Last Sale Date	

Notes

The parcel was taken by Eminent Domain specifically for parking in 1961 (See Book 9888, Page 374, and Plan 1961, Page 1334). The City shows it as a right-of-way with no parcel ID, but it has marked and metered parking.



Map/Parcel ID	1002-4-0
Street Address	16 Mt Auburn St
Owner of Record	FARESE JOHN K TRUSTEE
Owner City and State	Newton, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	325C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.35
Building Area (SF)	29,092
Year Built	1920
Style	Commercial Block
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$2,351,300
Last Sale Date	8/4/1978
Notes	Front of Lot on Mt Auburn Street is in the Active Frontage Overlay District



Map/Parcel ID	1002-6-0
Street Address	26 Mt Auburn Street
Owner of Record	HERMAN DANA FOUNDATION LLC
Owner City and State	Watertown, MA
Zoning District	WSQ3
Land Use	325C
Lot Size (Acres)	0.22
Building Area (SF)	14,972
Year Built	1920
Style	Store
Total Assessed Value 2025	\$1,439,200
Last Sale Date	1/23/2018
Notes	Front of Lot on Mt Auburn Street is in the Active Frontage Overlay District

