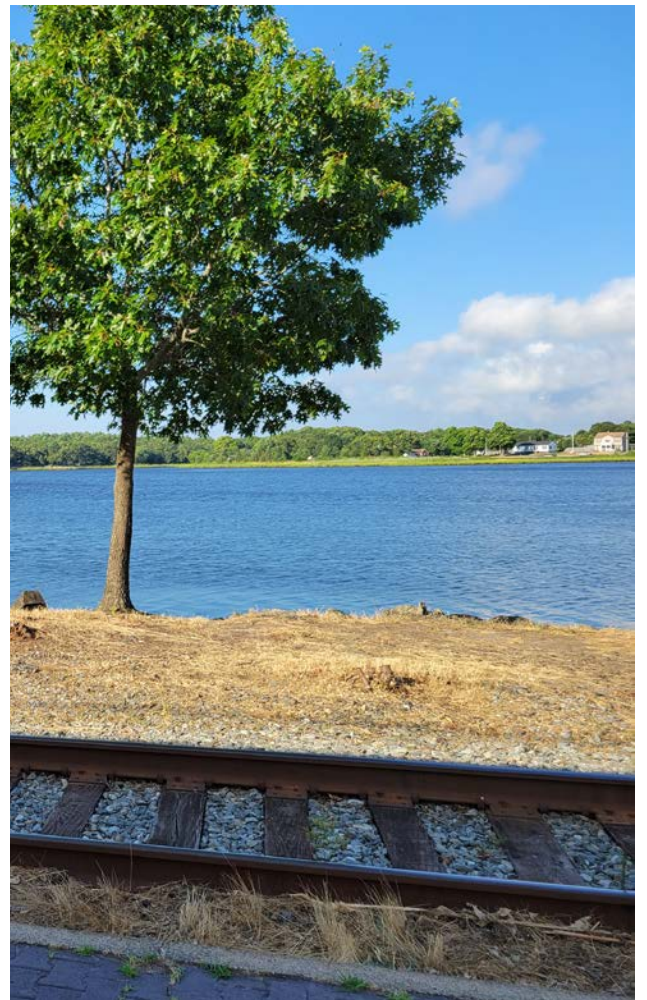


# Wareham Village Redevelopment Plan August 2023

Prepared for the Wareham Redevelopment Authority  
by Innes Associates Ltd.



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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*Prepared for the Wareham Redevelopment Authority  
by Innes Associates Ltd.*



Cover images clockwise from top: SRPEDD, Innes Associates, SRPEDD, Innes Associates, Digital Commonwealth;  
<https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/5q47s7525> (also on page 27).

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**12.01(1) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....5**

**12.02(2) CHARACTERISTICS ..... 10**

**12.02(3) ELIGIBILITY.....27**

**12.02(4) OBJECTIVES .....46**

**12.02(5) ACQUISITIONS .....56**

**12.02(6) RELOCATION.....60**

**12.02(7) SITE PREPARATION.....62**

**12.02(8) PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.....63**

**12.02(9) DISPOSITION.....66**

**12.02(10) REDEVELOPER’S OBLIGATIONS .....68**

**12.01(11) TIME FRAME .....69**

**12.02(12) FINANCIAL PLAN.....70**

**12.02(13) CITIZEN PARTICIPATION.....72**

**12.02(14) REQUISITE MUNICIPAL APPROVALS.....74**

**12.02(15) MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY ACT (MEPA) .....75**

**12.03 PLAN CHANGES.....77**

**Appendix A: Parcel Inventory**

**Appendix B: Municipal Approvals**

**Appendix C: Summary of Public Engagement**

**Appendix D: Funding Sources**

**Appendix E. Design Standards and Guidelines**

## TABLE OF FIGURES AND TABLES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Figure 1. 12.02(2)(a) Boundaries of the project area.....  | 11 |
| Figure 2. 12.02(2)(b) Existing property lines and the footprint of buildings, existing.....          | 12 |
| Figure 3. 12.02(2)(b) Existing property lines and the footprint of buildings, proposed .             | 13 |
| Figure 4. 12.02(2)(c) -1 Existing uses.....  | 14 |
| Figure 5. 12.02(2)(c) - 2a-1 Current zoning.....   | 15 |
| Figure 6. 12.02(2)(c) - 2a-2 FEMA/Flood Plain Overlay District .....                                 | 17 |
| Figure 7. 12.02(2)(c) - 2b Proposed zoning: WV-1R .....  | 18 |
| Figure 8. 12.02(2)(d) Proposed land uses, public improvements, and other activities ..               | 19 |
| Figure 9. 12.02(2)(d) Diagram of Proposed land uses, public improvements, and other activities ..... | 20 |
| Figure 10. 12.02(2)(e) - 1 All thoroughfares, public rights of way and easements, existing .....     | 22 |
| Figure 11. 12.02(2)(e) - 1 All thoroughfares, public rights of way and easements, proposed .....     | 23 |
| Figure 12. 12.02(2)(f) Parcels to be acquired .....  | 24 |
| Figure 13. 12.02(2)(g) Lots to be created for disposition .....                                      | 25 |
| Figure 14. 12.02(2)(h-j) Buildings to be demolished, rehabilitated, and constructed.....             | 26 |
| Figure 15. Slum & Blight Designation: Contributing Buildings.....                                    | 30 |
| Figure 16. Slum & Blight Designation: Contributing Infrastructure.....                               | 31 |
| Table 1: EJ Populations.....   | 34 |
| Figure 17. Environmental Justice Populations.....  | 35 |
| Figure 18. Projections of Building Vulnerability .....   | 38 |
| Figure 19: Conceptual Diagram of Mixed-Use Development and Elevated Boardwalk.                       | 48 |
| Figure 20: Potential Disposition of Air Rights; Potential Location of Boardwalk.....                 | 49 |
| Figure 21: Conceptual Diagrams of Future Conditions on Main and Center Streets .....                 | 55 |
| Table 2: Anticipated Acquisitions.....   | 56 |
| Figure 22: Anticipated Acquisitions .....  | 58 |
| Table 3: Anticipated Relocations from Identified Acquisitions.....                                   | 60 |
| Figure 23: Easy Street Park (floodable), Nantucket.....  | 64 |
| Table 4: Acquisitions for Anticipated Public Improvements.....                                       | 65 |
| Table 5: Anticipated Dispositions.....   | 67 |
| Table 6: Timeline .....  | 69 |
| Table 7A: Financial Plan (First Five Years) .....  | 70 |
| Table 7B: Financial Plan (Six+ Years): Mixed-Use Development .....                                   | 71 |
| Table 7C: Financial Plan (Six+ Years): Sponge Park Acquisition .....                                 | 71 |

## 12.01(1) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wareham Redevelopment Authority (WRA) recognizes that Wareham Village is an underutilized asset for the Wareham community. Like many town centers, its attractiveness to residents declined as a result of changing preferences for shopping based on the convenience of the personal automobile and the ability to drive to places, such as large supermarkets or malls, which offered one-stop shopping.

The physical condition of some of the buildings also declined, as shown in the *2018 Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, conducted by JM Goldson on behalf of the Town of Wareham. At the time of the study, 33% of the buildings and 46% of the infrastructure conditions in Wareham Village contributed to conditions of slum and blight based on the statutory definitions in Massachusetts General Laws 121A and 121B. Since that time, Wareham Village has seen an increase in economic activity, including some physical improvements. However, many of the buildings in poor condition remain unimproved.

In addition, Wareham Village is under threat from flooding due to sea level rise and the likely increase in the occurrence and the intensity of coastal storms. The threat of regular flooding from salt water, which is corrosive, and the possibility of wind damage from storms has the potential for additional damage and deterioration without both public and private action. The Town is working with Fuss & O'Neill and Woods Hole Group on a Resilient Main Street Report to evaluate the vulnerability of buildings over time to this threat, and recommendations from this study are incorporated into this urban renewal plan (this Plan) as established under MGL c. 121B.

To address these conditions, both current and anticipated, the WRA intends to take the following actions:

- Work with the Select Board and the Planning Board to pass zoning that will create incentives for redevelopment while providing flexible regulations to allow buildings to become less vulnerable over time. The proposed WV-1R district is expected to go before Wareham's Town Meeting in April 2023.
- Include development standards in this Plan as part of the Redevelopers' Obligations to encourage a higher quality of development in Wareham Village.

- Acquire buildings identified in this plan for one of two purposes:
  - Disposition of the properties for the reconstruction of flood-resilient mixed-use buildings to support housing and economic activity in Wareham Village.
  - Clearance to allow the construction of a public “sponge park” that will help capture floodwaters and allow them to recede over time.
- Create an option for long-term lease of air rights over Merchant’s Way to support resilient reconstruction or adaptive reuse of the buildings between Main Street and Merchant’s Way.

In addition to the zoning, this plan recommends actions where primary implementation is from entities other than the WRA, such as the Select Board and other boards, committees, and departments. These actions, which support the overall goals of this urban renewal plan and require coordination with the WRA, include the following:

- Complete a Harbor Management Plan or Municipal Harbor Plan to provide flexibility in development standards along the coast to allow new development to be more resilient to sea level rise.
- Conduct a parking study that assumes use of the train platform for commuter rail and establish the projected needs for parking based on anticipated riders per day, new housing units, and an increase in economic activity. Evaluate options for structured parking adjacent to the existing train station to support businesses, commuters, and new residential development.
- Work with MassDOT/MBTA to identify an area to build pedestrian access across the rail tracks.
- Build facilities for public access including a boardwalk and pier for kayaking, fishing, and passive recreation.
- Design and build a boardwalk to connect the Tremont Nail Factory, the waterfront development at the former Greer’s Lumber, and the boatyard across the river.
- Require utilities be placed underground as new development occurs.
- Add high-speed broadband (fiber optic network) to support medical office, commercial, and light industrial uses.

- Investigate options for a barrier (hard or nature-based) to respond to sea-level rise. Combine it with pedestrian passage across the RR track and access to the waterfront.

## PLAN VISION

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With these actions, the WRA intends to encourage the reinvestment of private capital into the redevelopment of the core Main Street properties in a way that creates a livable, workable district of entertainment and enjoyment of the coastal waterfront and the commercial floor space built into the redevelopment plans.

The new development will create a flood-resilient village that includes new residential units built above the car storage areas, and out of the floodplain. New residents will support restaurants and entertainment activities connected to Main Street. A new boardwalk and pier will add passive recreation to the area and better connect people to the water.

The Town will have a role in negotiating the change through the use of air rights over its properties and encouraging the architects to perform at the highest level of design.

The increased density will in turn allow the train to run a regular schedule. This new downtown village core will once again make Wareham Village a town center.



## REQUIREMENTS OF AN URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

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In Massachusetts, an urban renewal plan must define the characteristics of the area (Section 2 of this Plan), establish the conditions of eligibility (Section 3), and state the objectives of the plan (Section 4).

The properties identified for acquisition are listed in Section 5 and those properties likely to be disposed of by sale or lease are listed in Section 9, along with an outline of the requirements for a Relocation Plan (Section 6) and the obligations of redevelopers of the properties (Section 10). The public improvements outlined above are discussed in more detail in Sections 7 and 8. Finally Section 11 establishes the timeline for actions and Section 12 provides the financial plan.

Other requirements include a description of the public process for both the plan and the implementation (Section 13), confirm that the municipal approval process is in accordance with the requirements (Section 14), and address the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) requirements. These requirements have recently changed, and the changes are discussed in Section 15.

Finally, Section 16 outlines the process for changes to this Plan.





## WHAT ARE THE COMMONWEALTH'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES?

1. Concentrate Development and Mix Uses.
2. Advance Equity.
3. Make Efficient Decisions.
4. Protect Land and Ecosystems.
5. Use Natural Resources Wisely.
6. Expand Housing Opportunities.
7. Provide Transportation Choice.
8. Increase Job and Business Opportunities.
9. Promote Clean Energy.
10. Plan Regionally.

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/notice-of-funding-availability-commonwealths-sustainable-development-principles/download>

<sup>1</sup>Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program; Background Commuter Rail expansion in the Buzzards Bay Watershed, <https://buzzardsbay.org/enjoy-buzzards-bay/transportation/commuter-rails/>; last accessed August 8, 2023.

## COMMONWEALTH'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

---

This urban renewal plan conforms to and promotes the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development principles (see sidebar at left) with a **focus on mixed-use development within an existing village center** (1. [Concentrate Development and Mix Uses](#).) The **new housing units** above commercial ground floors will supplement the existing one- and two-family CHECK housing, leading to more choices (6. [Expand Housing Opportunities](#).) More commercial spaces will provide **opportunities for local entrepreneurs** in a village that has few vacancies beyond certain specific buildings, discussed in this plan. (8. [Increase Job and Business Opportunities](#).) The Town already allows on-site solar energy generation. (9. [Promote Clean Energy](#).)

The Wareham Town Meeting approved **updated zoning** in May 2023 that allows for a greater density within the village area and the Planning Board will approve **design guidelines** to support the permitting process. (3. [Make Efficient Decisions](#).)

The urban renewal area includes a **commuter rail platform** that serves the CapeFLYER from Memorial Day to Labor Day. This urban renewal plan anticipates **future restoration of full service** which will connect Wareham to Boston and Buzzards Bay via the Lakeville-Middleborough line.<sup>1</sup> (7. [Provide Transportation Choice](#) and 10. [Plan Regionally](#).)

The urban renewal area includes the shoreline of the Wankinko and Wareham Rivers. This plan recommends the construction of a **sponge park to capture stormwater** from the higher elevations and let it percolate into the soil before reaching the rivers, thus reducing the amount of nonpoint pollution reaching the rivers and improving the water quality over time. (4. [Protect Land and Ecosystems](#).) Plans to add a **walking path, fishing pier, and kayak launch** and conversations with MassDOT to allow a **pedestrian crossing over the rail line** will provide safe access to the rivers for recreation. (5. [Use Natural Resources Wisely](#).)

Finally, a portion of Wareham Village includes one Environmental Justice Community and is adjacent to another. Improvements to the housing, commercial environment, recreation, and resiliency of the urban renewal area will provide benefits to those communities (2. [Advance Equity](#).)

## 12.02(2) CHARACTERISTICS

### INTRODUCTION

---

This section contains the maps required by 760 CMR 12.02(2). The conditions identified in the maps are described in [Section 3. Eligibility](#) and the proposed future conditions are described in [Section 4. Objectives](#), [Section 5. Acquisitions](#), and [Section 8. Public Improvements](#). The maps are as follows:

- 12.02(2)(a) Boundaries of the project area.
- 12.02(2)(b) Existing property lines and the footprint of buildings, existing and proposed.
- 12.02(2)(c) Existing uses, and the current zoning.
- 12.02(2)(d) Proposed land uses, public improvements, and other activities.
- 12.02(2)(e) All thoroughfares, public rights of way and easements, existing and proposed.
- 12.02(2)(f) Parcels to be acquired.
- 12.02(2)(g) Lots to be created for disposition.
- 12.02(2)(h-j) Buildings to be demolished, rehabilitated, and constructed.

The Town of Wareham is a coastal town that is part of Plymouth County, and is connected to the larger region by I-195 and state routes 6, 25, and 28. Route 6 runs through Wareham Village and Main Street carries regional and local traffic. Wareham Village is where the Wankinco River meets the Wareham River, which opens into Buzzard's Bay. The area has had problems with past floods.

Wareham's population was 23,303 in 2020 per the U.S. Census. Of that population, 84% identified as white alone, 2.3% as Black or African American alone, 1.6% as Asian alone, and 0.7% as American Indian and Alaska Native alone. 5.1% identified as two or more races and 2.4% identified as Hispanic or Latino. The Wareham Village Urban Renewal Area includes Environmental Justice populations based both on income and minority status.

Wareham Village was a thriving economic center. The Town determined in 2007 and 2018 that blighted conditions exist within the Village. Since that time, there has been evidence of investment, but the condition of most of the properties identified as blighted in the survey remains unchanged.

The conditions summarized on this page will be presented in more detail in [Chapter 3. Eligibility](#).

Figure 1. 12.02(2)(a) Boundaries of the project area

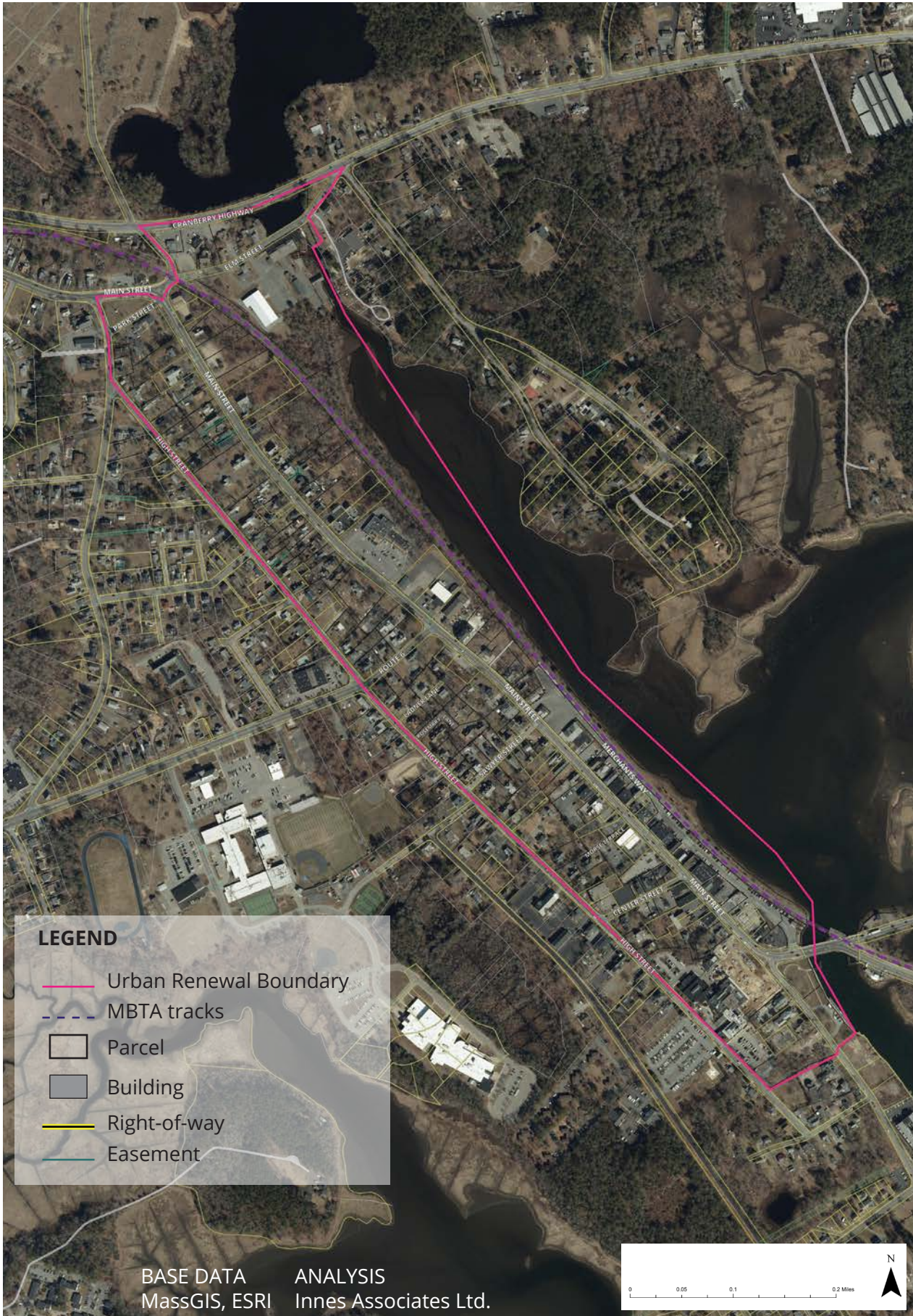


Figure 2. 12.02(2)(b) Existing property lines and the footprint of buildings, existing

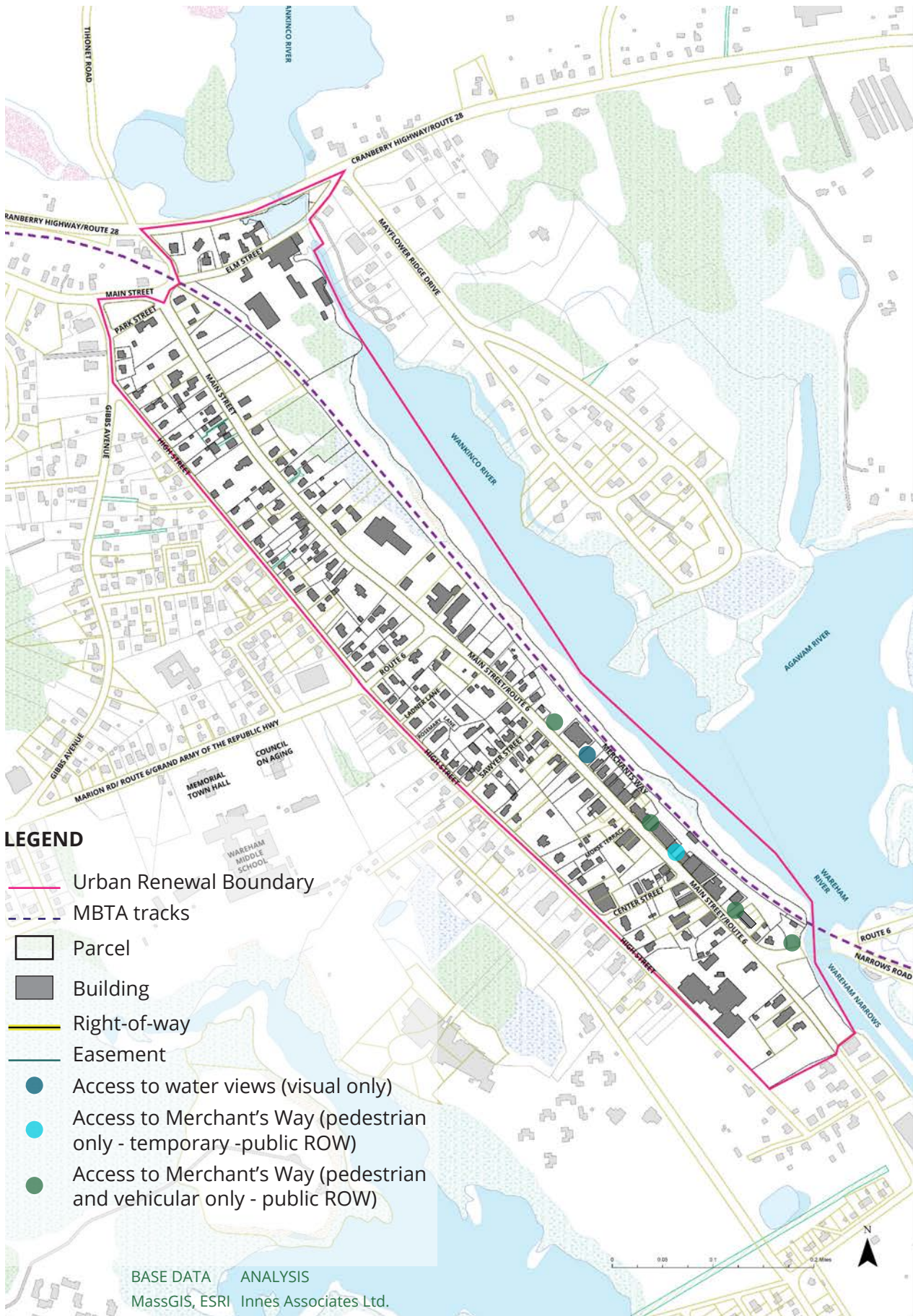


Figure 3. 12.02(2)(b) Existing property lines and the footprint of buildings, proposed

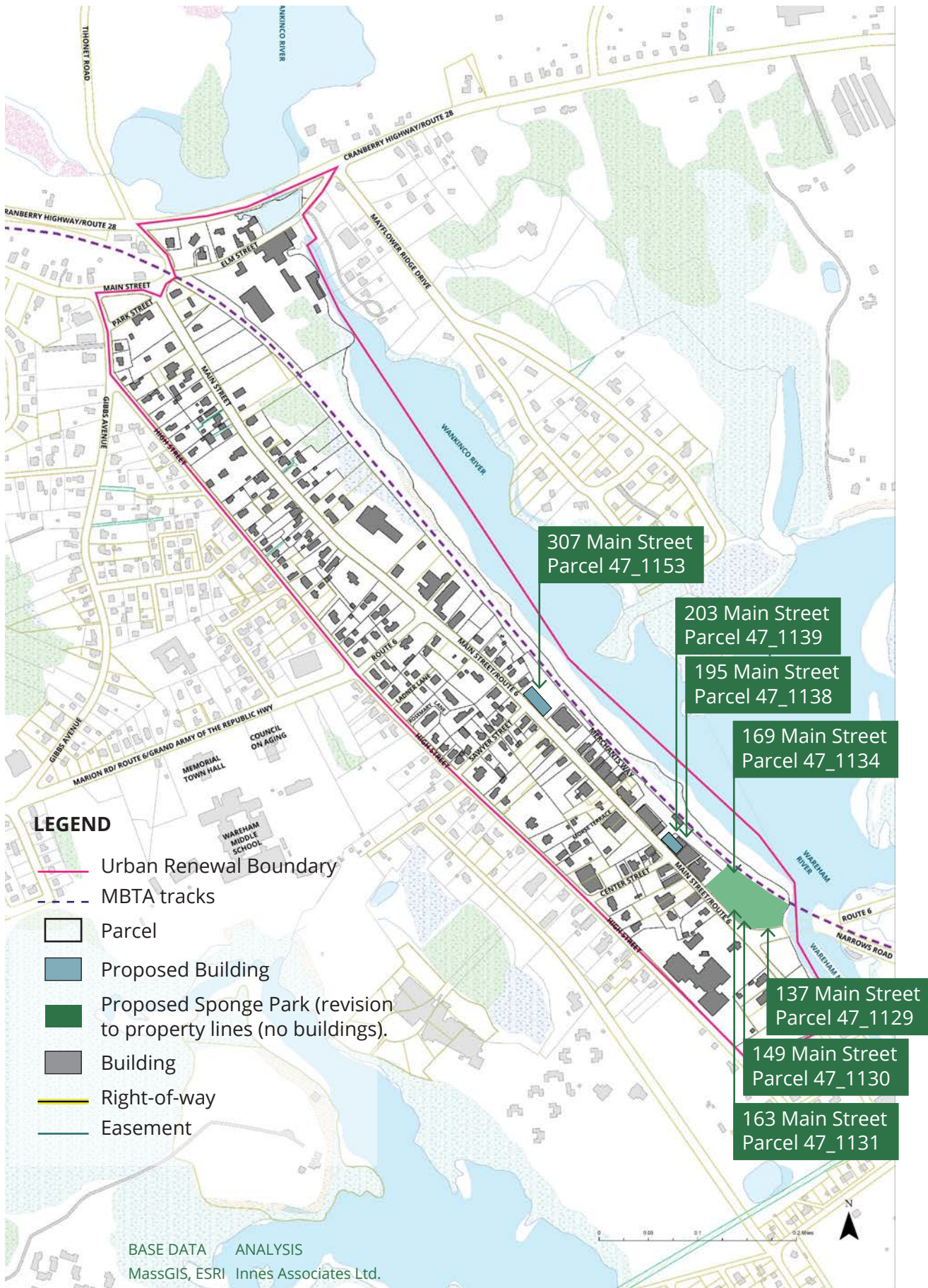


Figure 4. 12.02(2)(c) -1 Existing uses

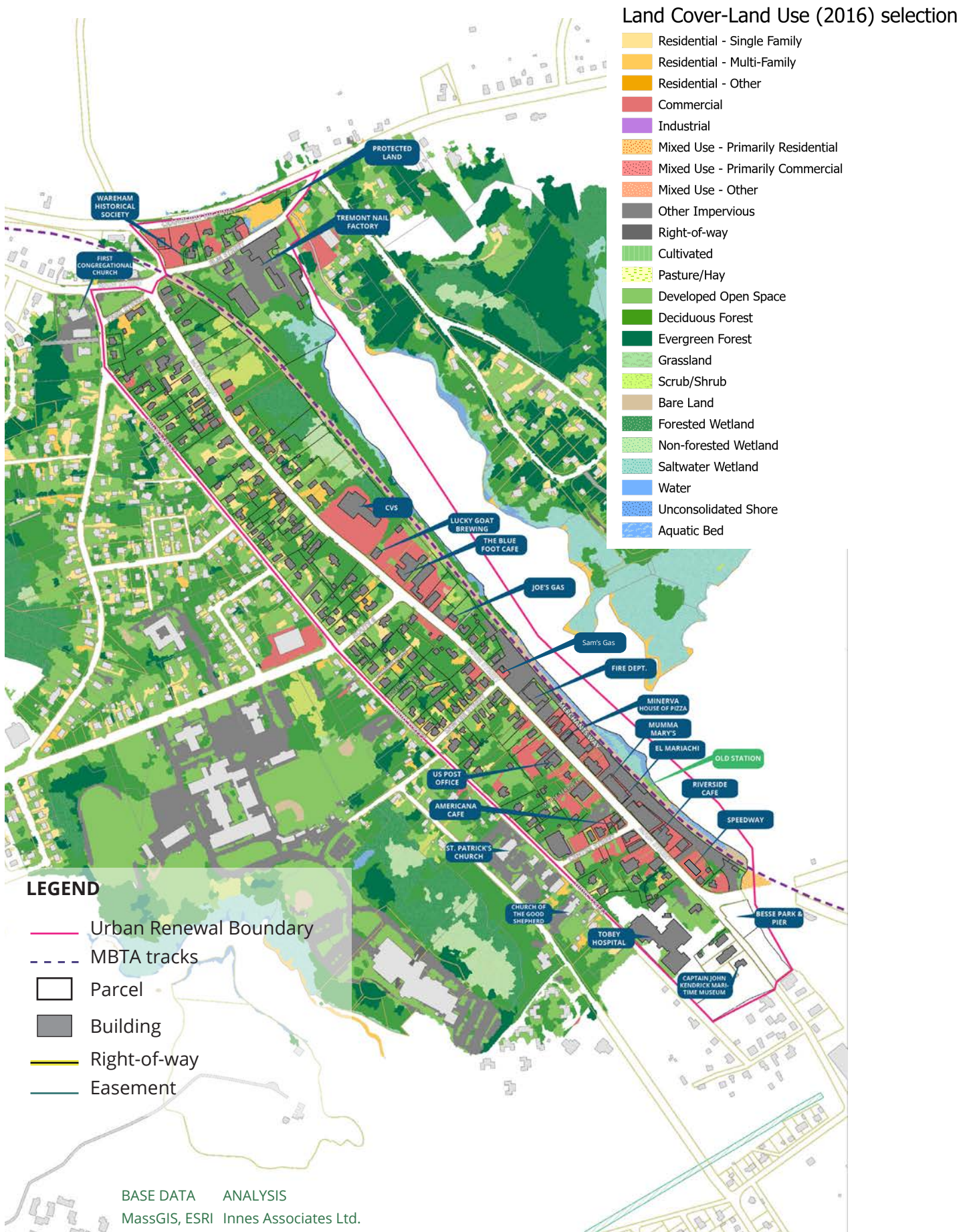
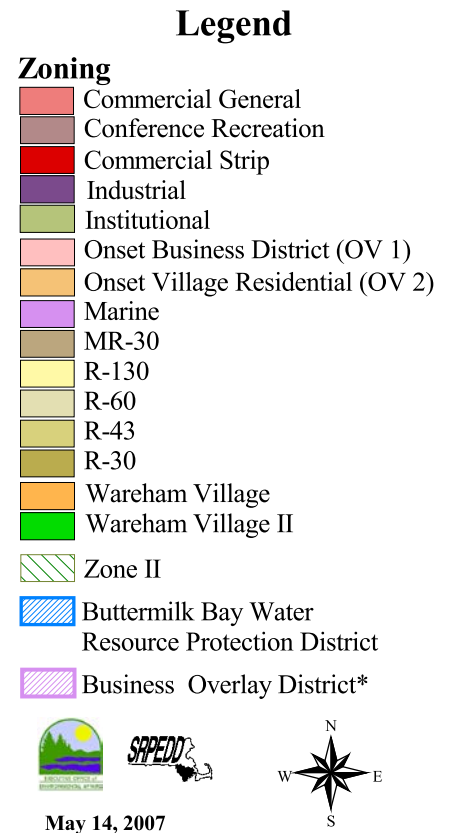
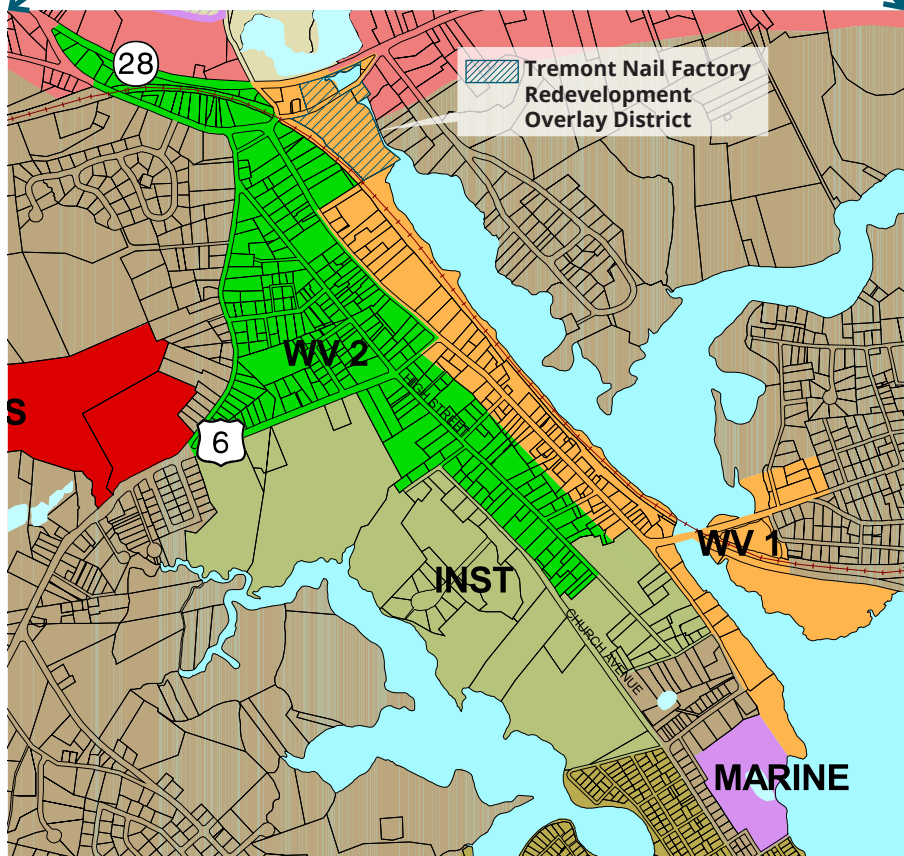
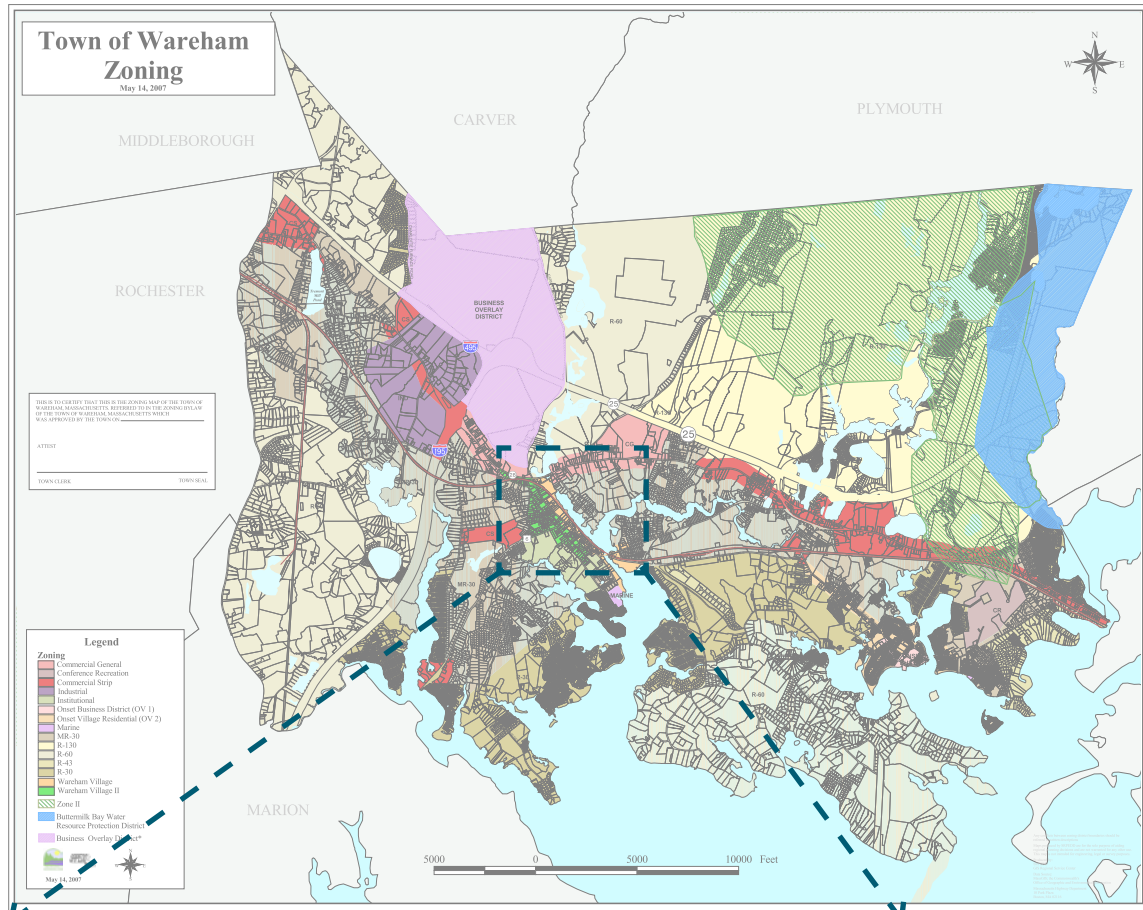


Figure 5. 12.02(2)(c) - 2a-1 Current zoning



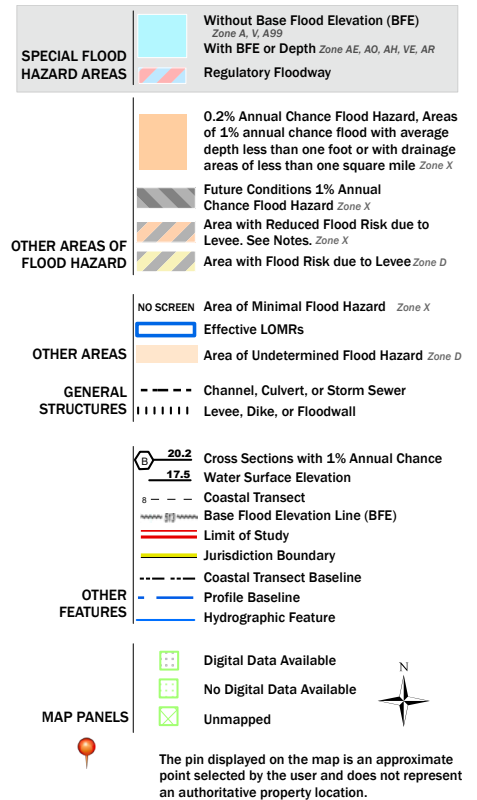
Town of Wareham Zoning Map, Town of Wareham, SRPEDD, Innes Associates

## FLOODPLAIN OVERLAY DISTRICT

The Town of Wareham’s Floodplain Overlay District is in Section 420 of the Zoning Bylaws. The geographic extent of that district is described as follows:

The District includes all special flood hazard areas within Wareham on the Plymouth County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) dated July 6, 2021 issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program. The exact boundaries of the District shall be defined by the 1%-chance base flood elevations shown on the FIRM and further defined by the Plymouth County Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report dated July 6, 2021. (420.2, FEMA FIRM and FIS)

The two FIRMettes (portions of the larger FIRM) show the Flood Hazard areas in the general urban renewal area as of August 5, 2023 when these two FIRMettes were downloaded.



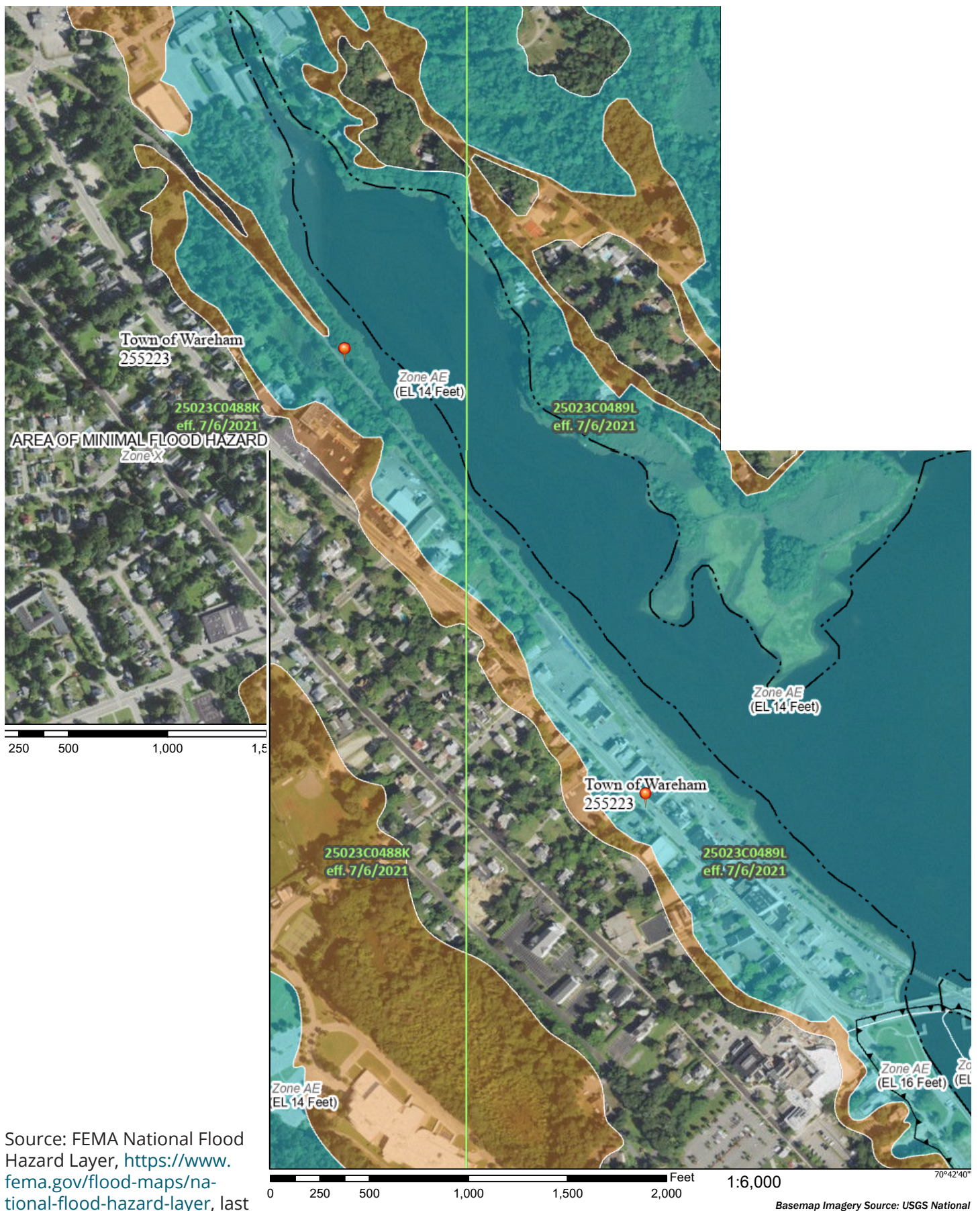
This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on 8/5/2023 at 3:31 PM and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.



Figure 6. 12.02(2)(c) - 2a-2 FEMA/Flood Plain Overlay District



Source: FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer, <https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/national-flood-hazard-layer>, last accessed August 5, 2023

Figure 7. 12.02(2)(c) - 2b Proposed zoning: WV-1R

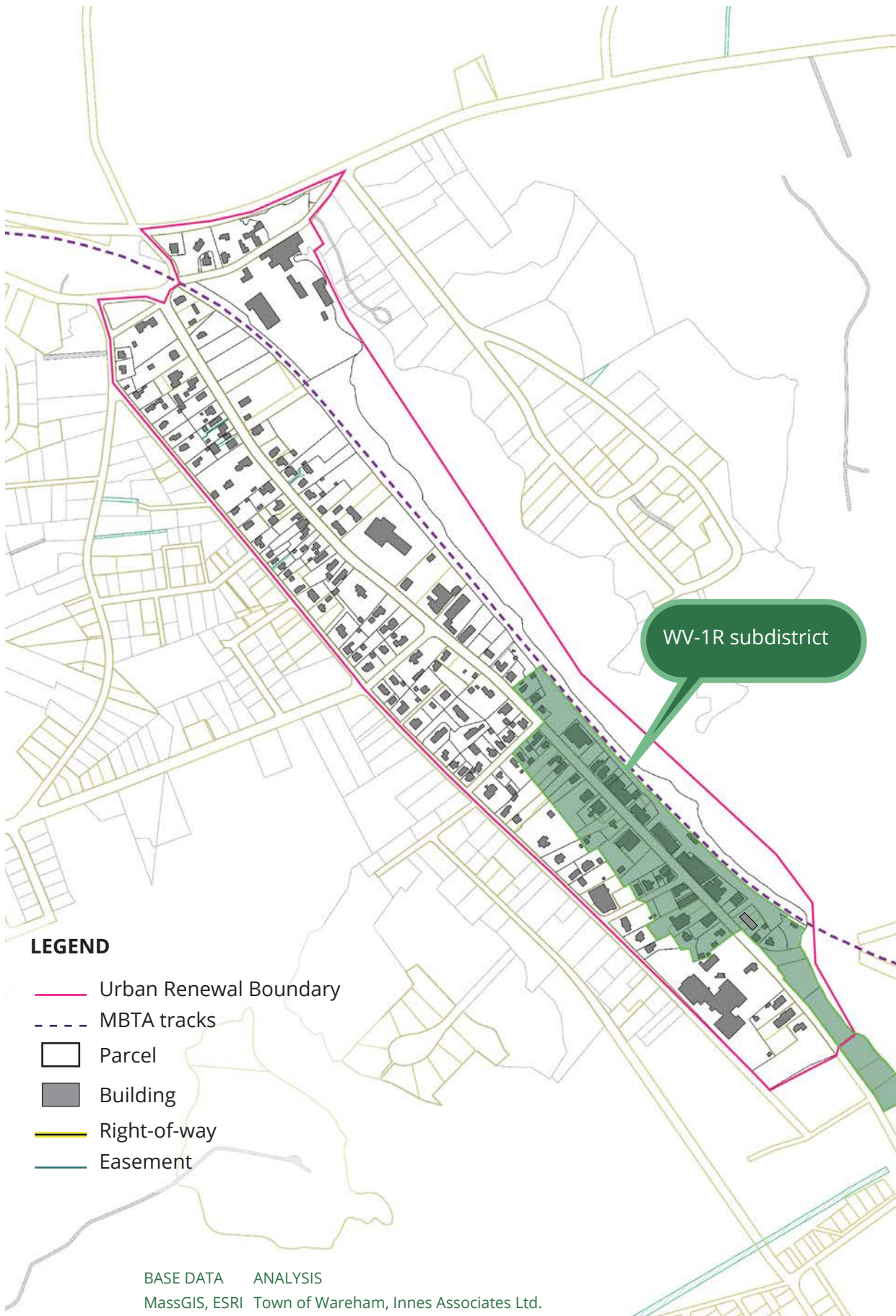


Figure 8. 12.02(2)(d) Proposed land uses, public improvements, and other activities

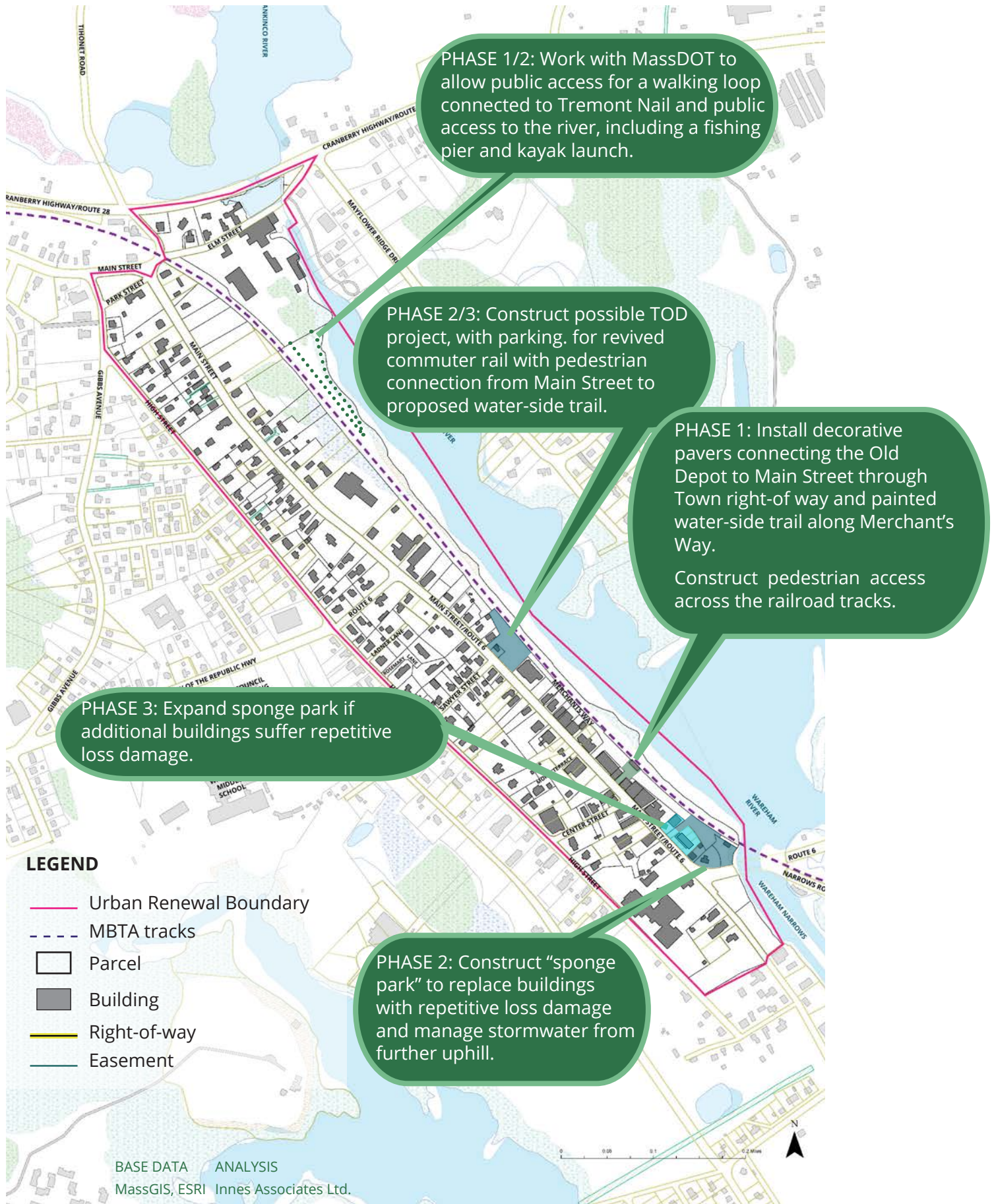


Figure 9. 12.02(2)(d) Diagram of Proposed land uses, public improvements, and other activities



1

Proposed decorative paving in front of the Old Train Depot, which the Town restored for public uses.

4

Southeast end of painted pedestrian/bike trail along Merchant's Way connecting to path between Tremont Nail and 59 Main Street.

2

Proposed permanent plaza, currently used for seasonal outdoor dining with temporary barriers.

5

Northwest end of painted pedestrian/bike trail along Merchant's Way connecting to path between Tremont Nail and 59 Main Street.

3

Residential street connecting High Street to Main Street and with a potential visual connection to the water; no anticipated change to uses or buildings as a result of this plan.

6

Acquisition of one property for mixed-use development and public parking.



7

Anticipated increase in mixed-use development over time on a street that already has a mix of commercial and residential uses.

10

Acquisition of two properties for the second phase of a sponge park to address stormwater runoff and flooding.

8

Acquisition of two properties for redevelopment as mixed-use buildings.

9

Acquisition of two properties for the first phase of a sponge park to address stormwater runoff and flooding.

Figure 10. 12.02(2)(e) - 1 All thoroughfares, public rights of way and easements, existing

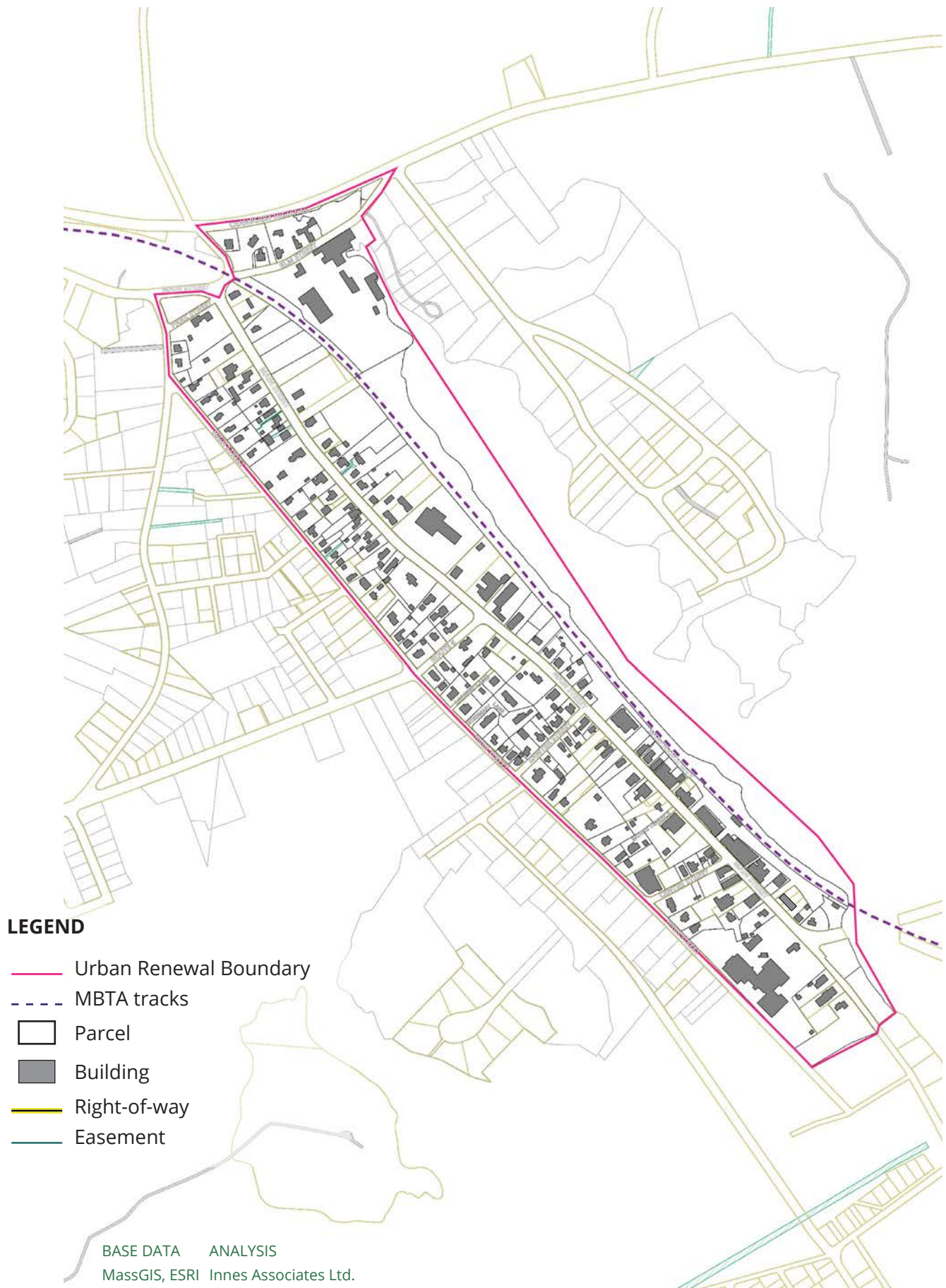


Figure 11. 12.02(2)(e) - 1 All thoroughfares, public rights of way and easements, proposed

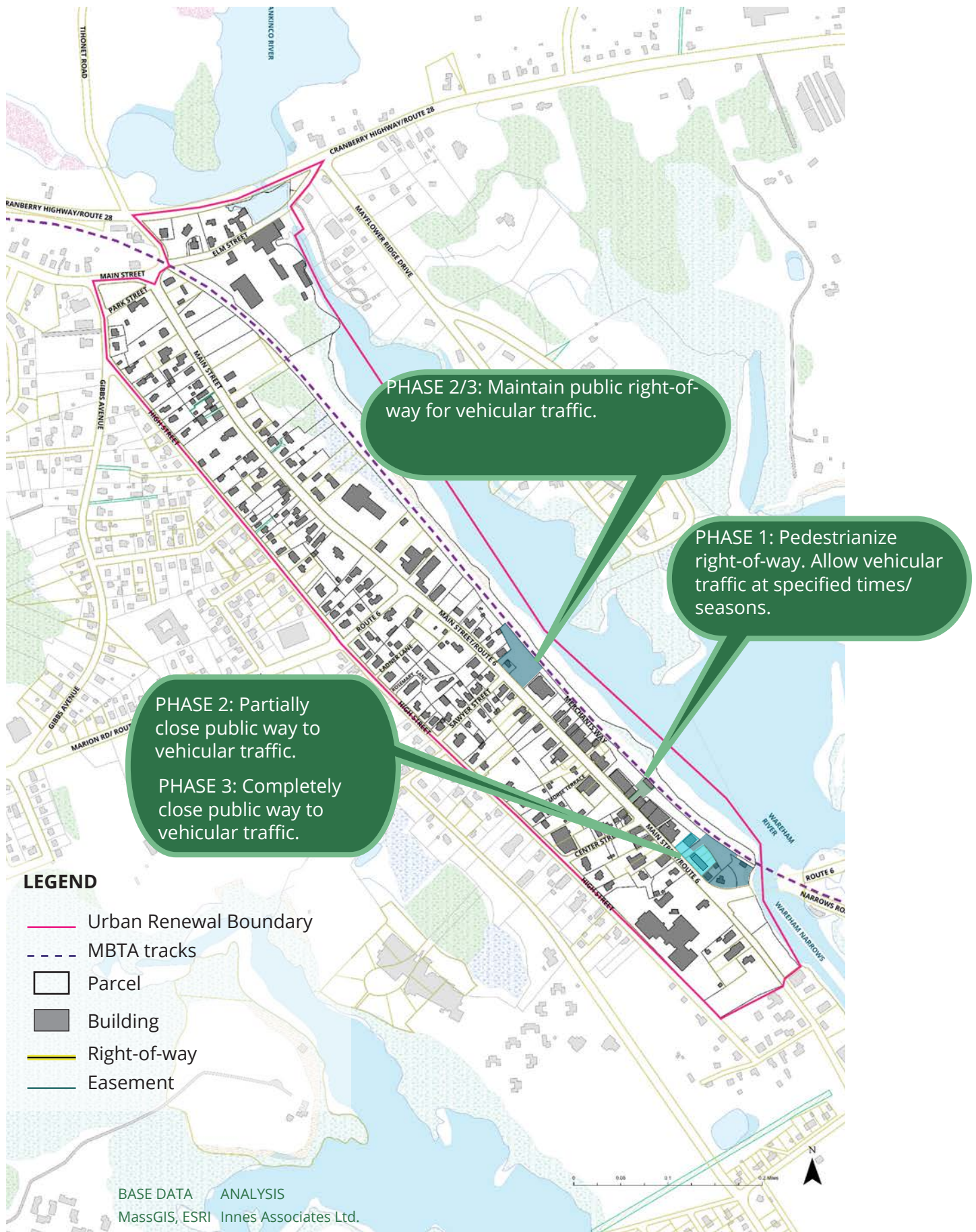


Figure 12. 12.02(2)(f) Parcels to be acquired

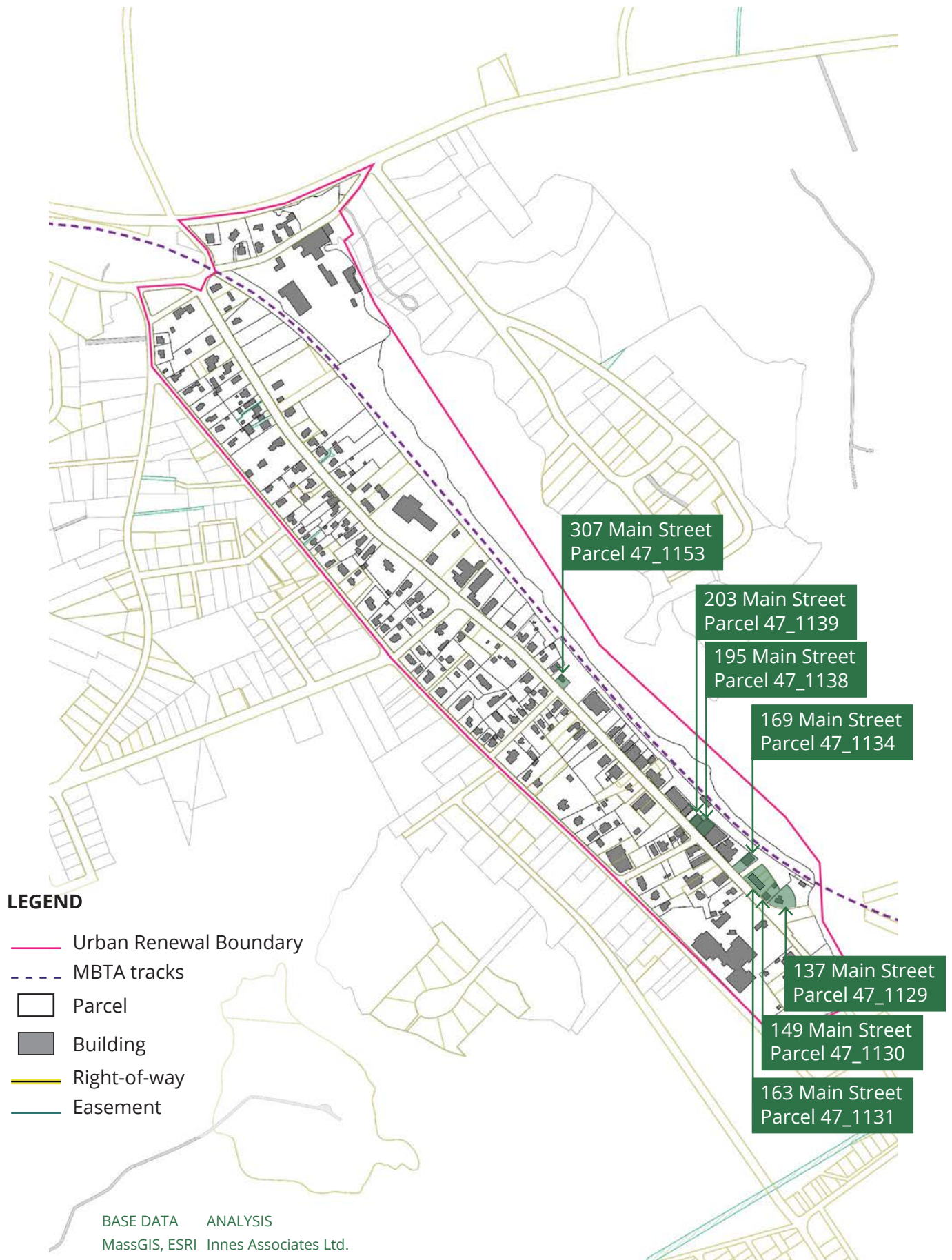




Figure 13. 12.02(2)(g) Lots to be created for disposition

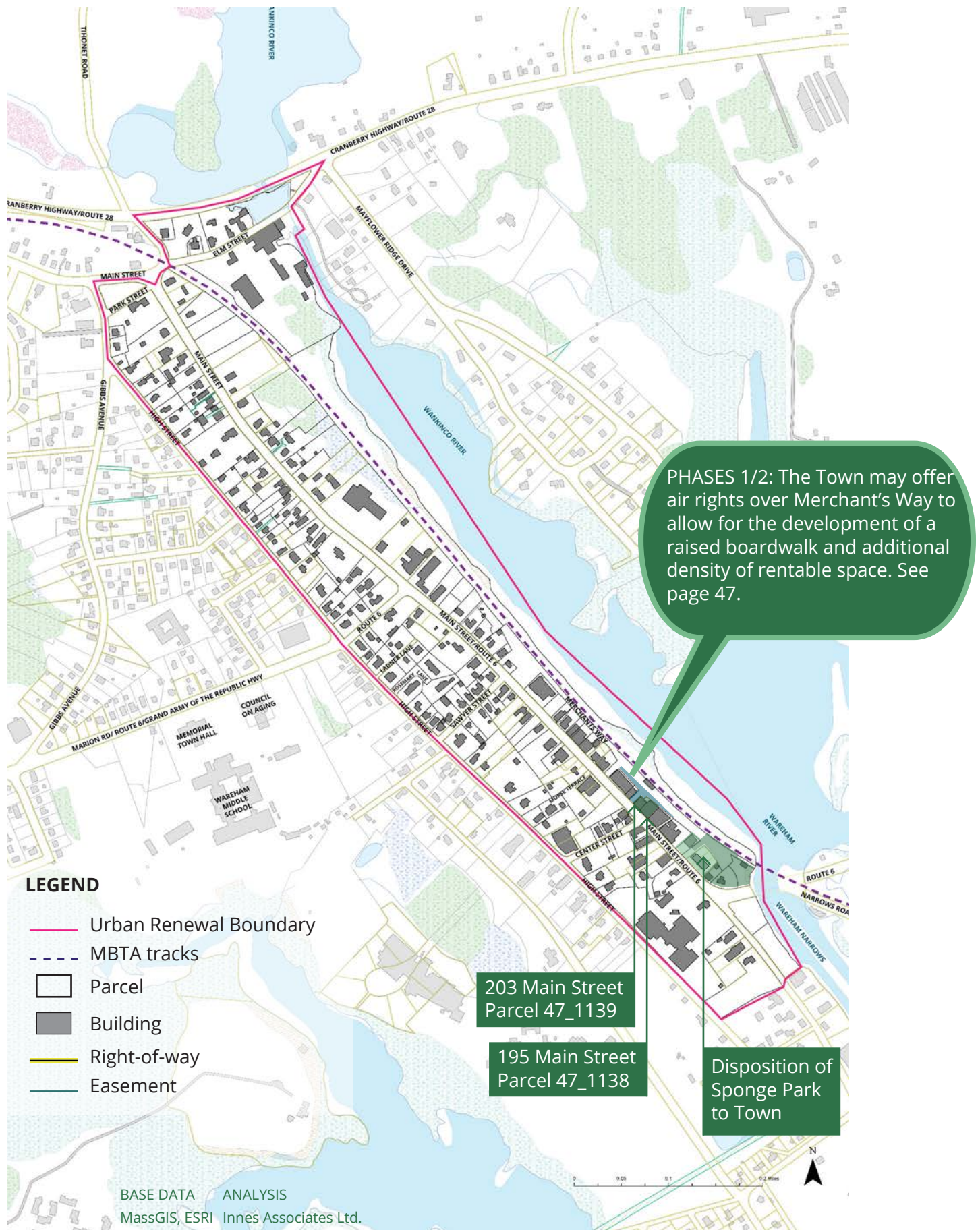
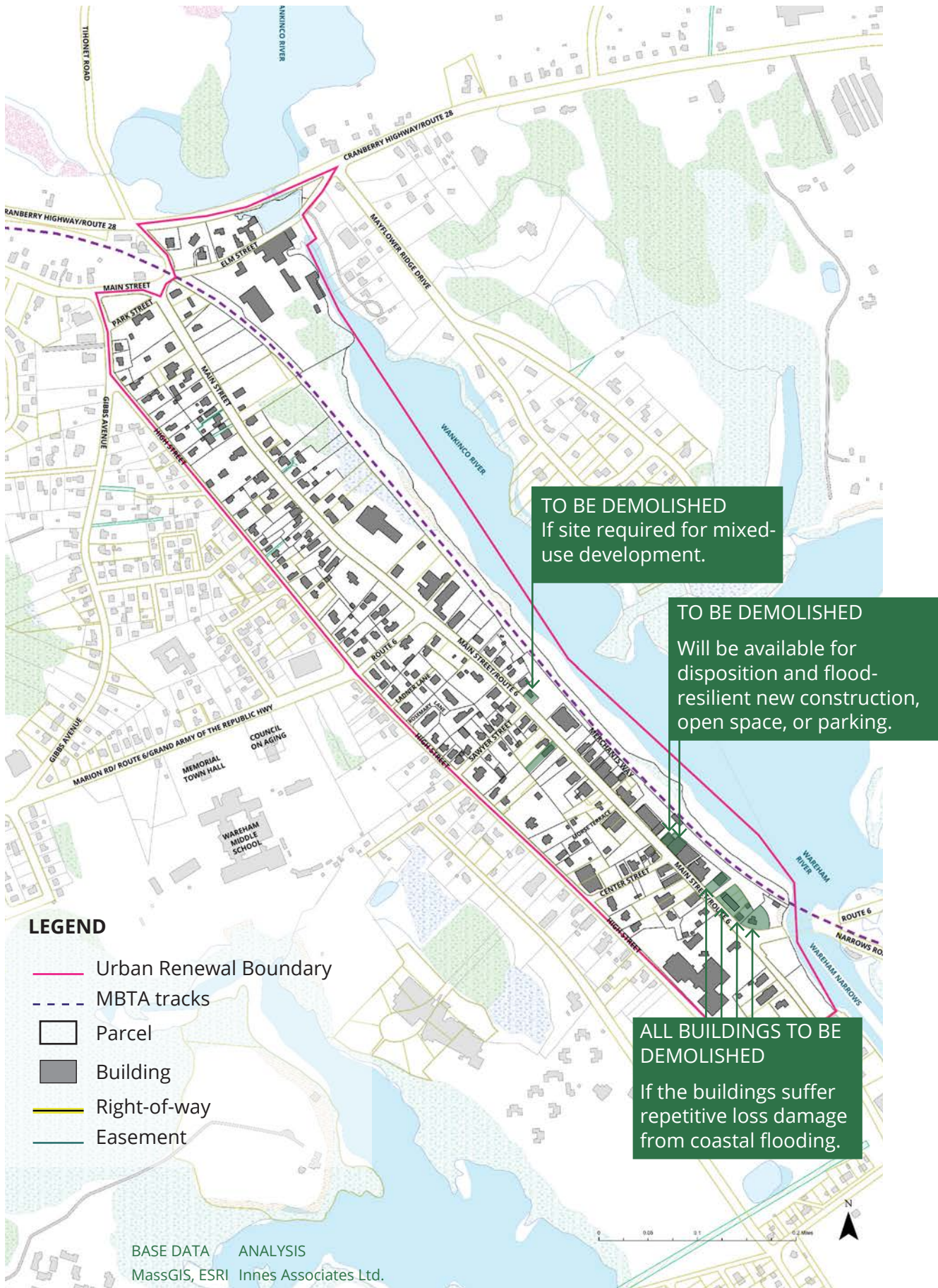


Figure 14. 12.02(2)(h-j) Buildings to be demolished, rehabilitated, and constructed.



## 12.02(3) ELIGIBILITY

### DETERMINATION OF BLIGHTED CONDITIONS

"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.

#### 1964 CAMPAIGN PHOTOS

- <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/g732gz47n>
- <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/cr56qp859>

#### 1965 PHOTOS

- <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/76539w56c>
- <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/dn400v565>

Wareham Village is a decadent area within the definition of M.G.L. Chapter 121B, §1. This definition is provided in the text box to the left.

The image at the bottom of the page (and also on the cover) shows a thriving Main Street between 1930-1945. Not shown is the train; regular service ran from 1848 to 1959. Tobey Hospital, located at Main Street and Sandwich Road, was founded in 1940.

Digital Commonwealth, the source of the postcard, also has photos from Wareham Village in the mid-1960's, showing active businesses. The links to the photos are in the box at bottom left as the copyright does not allow reuse within this document.

The first photo shows the window display for Cornwell's; the second shows the signs for Cornwell's, Florence's Snack Bar, and Pam's Dress Shop. These two photographs show ongoing commercial activity in the area. Two photos from 1965 show active restaurants, retail, and other businesses.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, malls and later big box stores created a significant shift in shopping patterns that drew customers away from traditional, walkable downtowns. Once businesses left, buildings deteriorated and downtowns became less attractive to visit. Tremont Nail Factory, which opened in 1819, closed in 2006.

This is certainly a pattern whose remnants are seen in Wareham today: in 2007, the Town commissioned a Slum and Blight Inventory and updated that inventory in 2018. The purpose of the documentation was to establish whether the baseline physical and economic conditions met the standards for designation as a blighted area.



Source: Digital Commonwealth; <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/5q47s7525>

<sup>1</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, pp. 3 and 249.

<sup>2</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>The approval of the 2007 plan is related to the Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which allows the Town to carry out projects in a designated area using the national objective of prevention or elimination of slums and blight. The Select Board allocates CDBG funding. Projects have been defined through fiscal year 2025; none of those projects are related to this plan.

<sup>4</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, p. 6.

## 2018 SLUM & BLIGHT INVENTORY

On June 26, 2018, Wareham’s Board of Selectmen voted to support the determination that Wareham Village is “in disrepair and has a recognizable pattern of disinvestment.”<sup>1</sup> This vote was supported by the findings of the *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory* (the Inventory) sponsored by the Town of Wareham in 2018 with the assistance of JM Goldson community preservation + planning.

The Inventory describes Wareham Village as the “historic colonial commercial center of Wareham.”<sup>2</sup> The area evaluated by the Inventory contains significant historic resources, including portions of three local historic districts, buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and three building museums.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, the Inventory also noted that the area was poorer than the surrounding areas; see page 33 for a comparison of data.

The Inventory, approved by DHCD<sup>3</sup> (now EOHLIC), evaluated two components of the built environment: private sites and public infrastructure (See Figures 13 and 14) to understand whether the physical condition of the buildings met standards for blighted conditions. To be designated as a slum and blight area, 25% of the buildings must meet the criteria.<sup>4</sup>

### Buildings and Properties

The Inventory states that 29% of the properties, or 33 properties, in the area of the Inventory contribute to conditions of slum and blight in terms of physical deterioration.<sup>5</sup> Of these properties, 9 are either adjacent to or within the Merchant’s Way right-of-way, a major focus of this planning document. Approximately 15 are within the new WV-1R zoning district (Figure 6); a few appear to be slivers left over from earlier subdivisions.

### Infrastructure

Although portions of Main Street, including the roadway and sidewalks, were upgraded prior to the Inventory, some conditions in the area still need to be addressed. According to the Inventory, 46% of the area’s infrastructure components also contribute to conditions of slum and blight conditions.<sup>6</sup>

However, the assessment identified some conditions that still exist and should be addressed in future improvements:

<sup>7</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, p. 245.

<sup>8</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, p. 246.

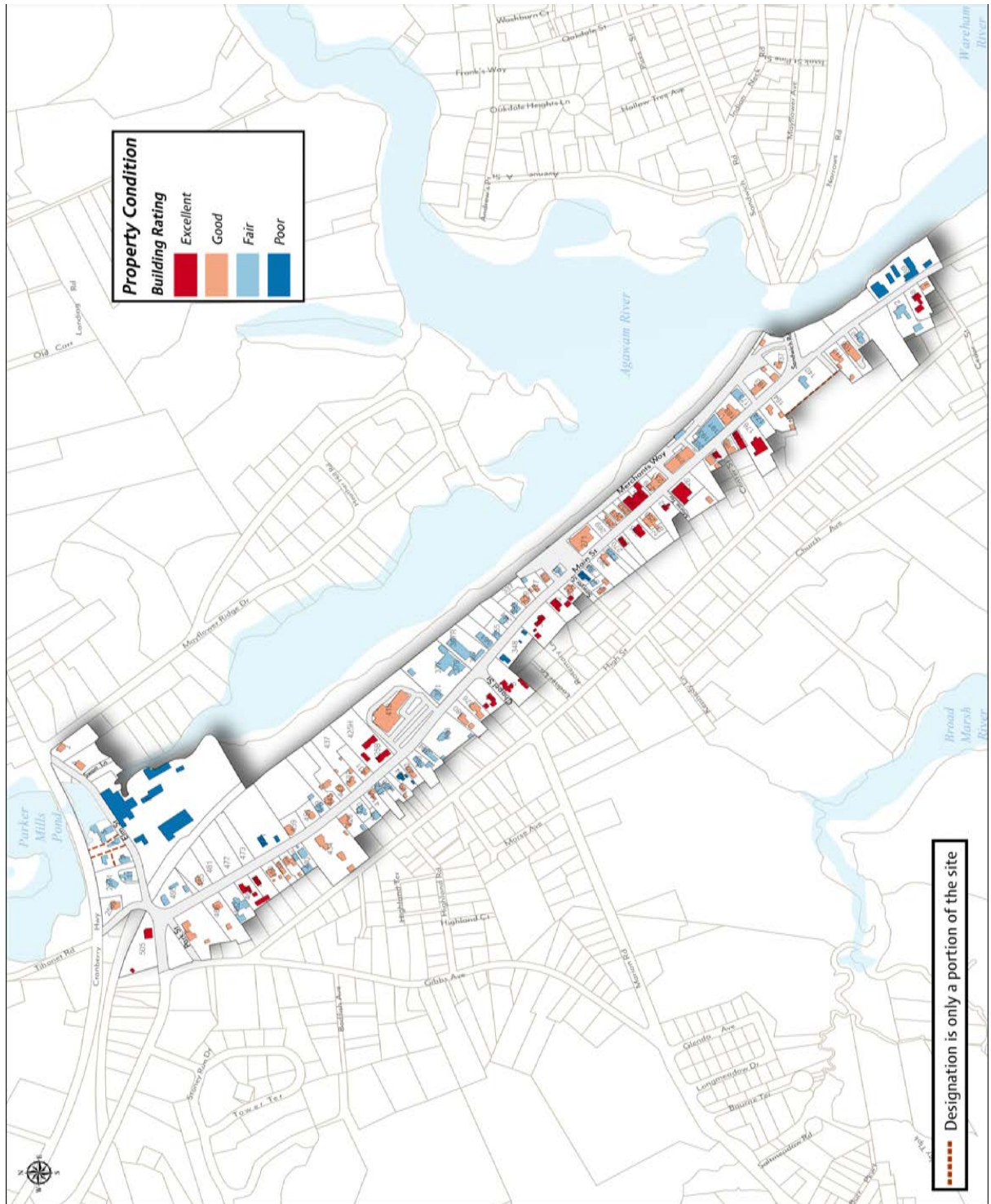
<sup>9</sup>JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, pp. 246-247.

- **Main Street.** Main Street between Chapel Street and Cedar Street is mostly in good to excellent condition because of the recent improvements. Figure 14 shows some points close to Cedar Street that need improvement. Main Street between Chapel Street and Park Street was identified as being in poor condition, often because of the condition of the sidewalks.
- **Merchant's Way.** The Inventory identified the lack of drainage controls, poor lighting, vintage sewer collectors, the poor condition of pavement, guardrails, and benches, and the lack of curbing and sidewalks. The report notes that "[i]nfrastructure upgrades to water, sewer and drainage should be considered prior to any cosmetic improvements in this area."<sup>7</sup> The Inventory identified eight locations along Merchant's Way; seven in fair condition and one in poor condition.
- **Asbestos Concrete Water Mains.** The assessment noted that much of the sewer infrastructure dates to the 1960s with some more recent improvements. Because of this, a "significant amount of asbestos concrete water mains exist in this area"<sup>8</sup> and those will need to be replaced with ductile and C900 PVC piping over time.
- **Drainage discharges.** New stormwater regulations (MS4) will require upgrades to the current stormwater system which discharges to local wetlands and the Wareham River.
- **Other utility upgrades.** The report suggests that improvements to the Tremont Nail Factory site and parks in the area should include utility upgrades as part of the scope.<sup>9</sup>

The discussion of infrastructure improvements in the Inventory did not consider the impact of sea level rise on existing infrastructure or recommended improvements.

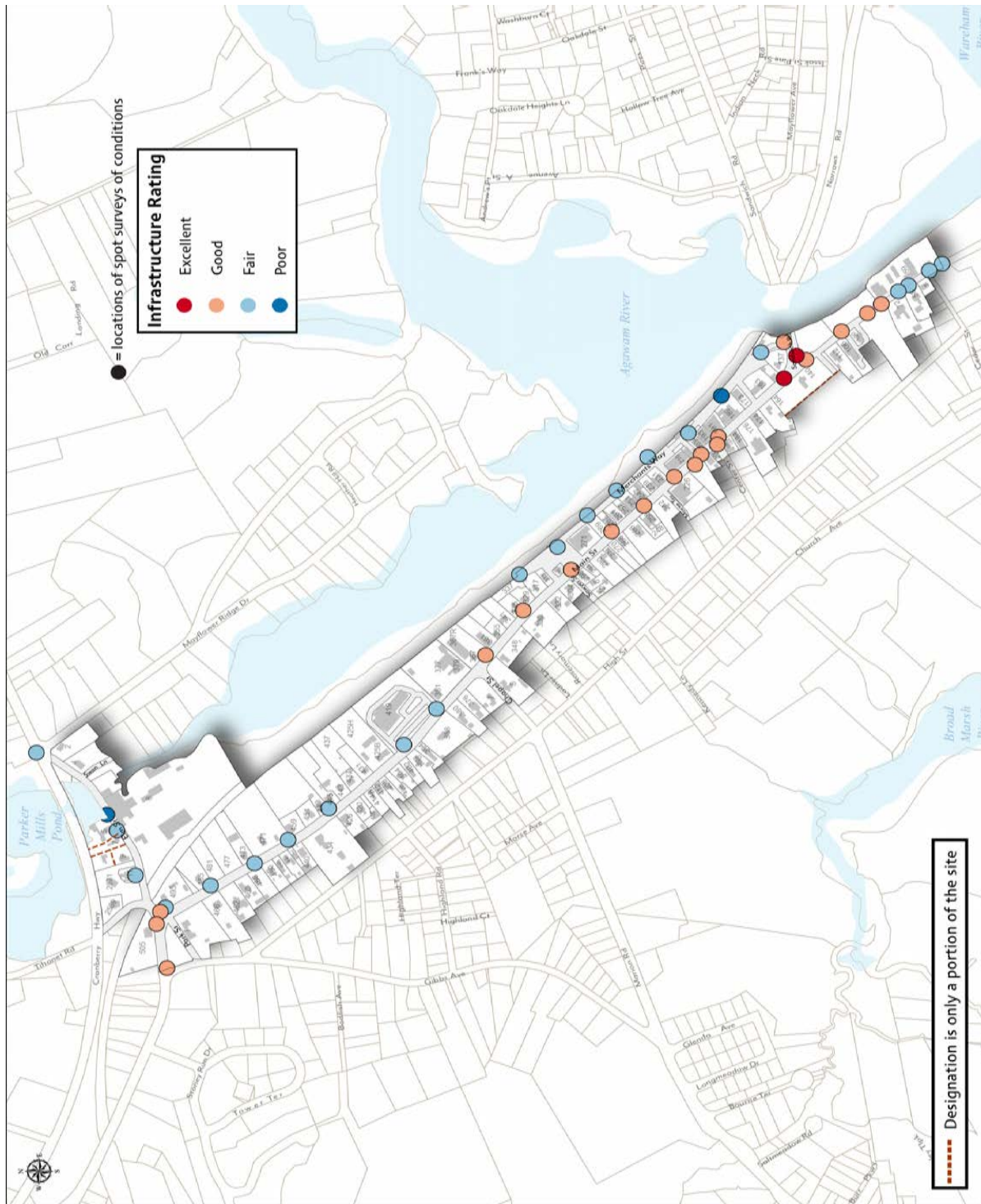
**Figure 15. Slum & Blight Designation: Contributing Buildings**  
 Image Source: JM Goldson, Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory, 2018, p. 12.

**PROPERTY CONDITIONS/RATINGS**



**Figure 16. Slum & Blight Designation: Contributing Infrastructure**  
 Image Source: JM Goldson, Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory, 2018, p. 14.

**INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS/RATINGS**



## **BOUNDARY OF THE URBAN RENEWAL AREA**

The urban renewal area is larger than the study area for the Inventory. The difference is the addition of High Street to the urban renewal area.

The purpose of adding High Street is to provide additional context for the changes to the urban renewal area. Public conversation about the relationship of High Street to the urban renewal area revealed critical concerns from the community.

The first concern was that taller buildings along Main Street, now allowed by the new WV-1R zoning district might block views of the water from currently enjoyed by residents on High Street and the streets connecting High Street and Main Street.

The second concern was that rising sea levels, over time, would force businesses out of Main Street, and that businesses would need to retreat to higher ground, gradually moving up the hill to High Street.

Adding High Street to the urban renewal during the planning process encouraged those views to be aired. This urban renewal plan anticipates a possible move up the existing mixed-use Center Street, over time, through the actions of private investment and not as a result of WRA action. (See Figure 8.) However, to address concerns about views, the plan anticipates that residential streets, such as Sawyer Street, would remain residential.

## **EVIDENCE OF VITALITY**

Wareham Village is showing signs of increased activity. Tobey Hospital added a \$25 million emergency department, with construction beginning in 2019. A marina and events space is proposed for the former Greer's Lumber Yard next to Besse Park. At the other end of Main Street, Lucky Goat Brewing and the Blue Foot Cafe are two popular businesses. Activity has picked up with the adoption of the WV-1R zoning, with staff at Town Hall approached by people interested in new development.

The critical properties are Merchant's Way, owned by the Town, and adjacent properties, some of which are identified as blighted in the 2018 inventory and which continue to deteriorate. An example is 195 Main Street.



## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

An area that is determined to be a Decadent Area or an area with conditions of slum and blight is very likely to include vulnerable populations, including low-income households and Environmental Justice populations. These technical designations can be upsetting to people who live within them, and it is critical that the WRA and Town of Wareham officials be sensitive to the existing residential and business community and their perceptions of this designation.

Urban renewal as a planning and development tool has a negative reputation among many people for the failure of governments to include people in the discussions of the future of the area. The process of developing this plan included public outreach, described in [Section 13. Citizen Participation](#). Additional public outreach is required by the MEPA<sup>10</sup> process, described in [Section 15. Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act \(MEPA\)](#). The requirements for the outreach in the MEPA review process are in part based on the presence of Environmental Justice populations within a 1-mile radius of Wareham Village, as described below.

### Income and Housing Affordability

Populations may be vulnerable because of their income levels. The Inventory noted that approximately 81% of the households in the Wareham Center Census Designated Place had incomes below the then area median income of \$103,400 and about 12% of the area's residents live below the poverty line at the time.<sup>11</sup>

According to the 2021 5-year American Survey, Wareham Center has 1,426 households. The median household income was \$49,360 and the mean household income was \$60,753.<sup>12</sup> Wareham is part of the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HUD Metro Fair Market Rent (FMR) Area. Massachusetts Housing Partnership provides a list of the Area Median Income (AMI) limits for this metro area. 80% AMI for a household of two people is \$80,850 and for four people is \$101,050. 60% AMI is \$64,440 and \$80,250, respectively, and 50% of AMI is \$38,900 and \$48,600, respectively.<sup>13</sup> These AMI levels are common thresholds for funding sources for the provision of affordable housing. Based on the 2021 5-year American Survey, 51% of the households in Wareham Center have an income of less than \$50,000 and would thus require housing affordable at 50% AMI or less. In 2021, the estimated poverty level for all people in Wareham Center was 17.4% and for people in families was 11.7%.<sup>14</sup> However, because of the size of the population, the margin of error is quite high.

<sup>10</sup> MEPA is the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act which is administered by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The MEPA Office requires certain levels of public review of the potential environmental impact of a project or activity which requires action by an agency as defined in the regulations. This definition includes redevelopment authorities.

<sup>11</sup> JM Goldson, *Wareham Village Slum & Blight Inventory*, 2018, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> ACS 2021 DP03.

<sup>13</sup> MHP, 2021 Income Limits for Affordable Units, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> ACS 2021 DP03.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>

## Environmental Justice Populations

Wareham Village is home to several Environmental Justice populations. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), environmental justice is defined as the following:<sup>15</sup>

**Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:**

- The same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and
- Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

In Massachusetts, an environmental justice population is defined as follows:<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>

**In Massachusetts, an environmental justice population is a neighborhood where one or more of the following criteria are true:**

- the annual median household income is 65 percent or less of the statewide annual median household income
- minorities make up 40 percent or more of the population
- 25 percent or more of households identify as speaking English less than “very well”
- minorities make up 25 percent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 percent of the statewide annual median household income.

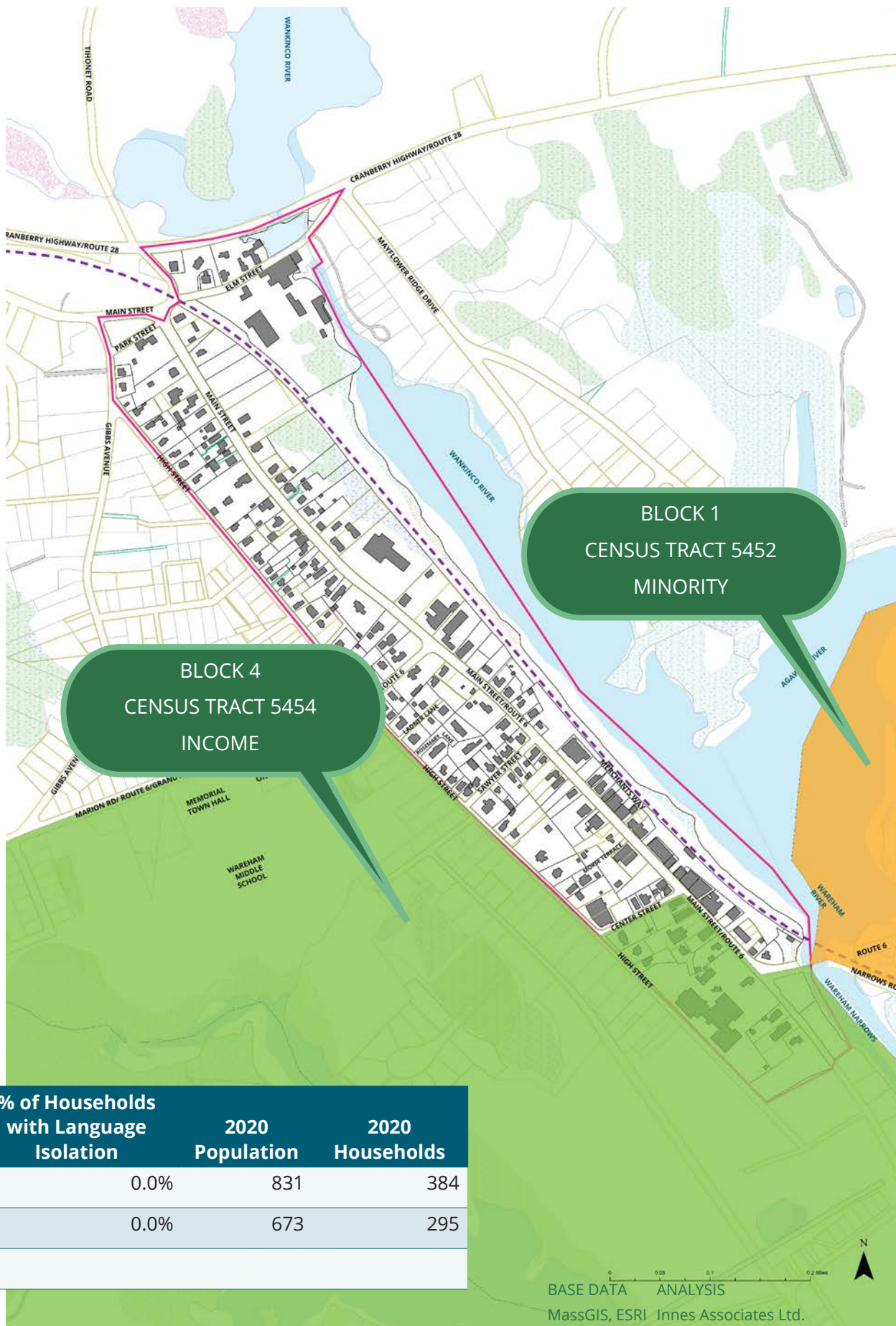
According to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), Wareham Village is adjacent to two census tracts with EJ populations, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 15 based on the 2020 Census and updated as of November 2022.

**Table 1: EJ Populations**

| Area                             | Criteria | % of Population is Minority | Median Household Income | % of MA Median Household Income |
|----------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Block Group 4, Census Tract 5454 | Income   | 21.3%                       | \$45,588                | 54%                             |
| Block Group 1, Census Tract 5452 | Minority | 30.9%                       | \$61,199                | \$72.5%                         |
| Town of Wareham                  |          |                             | \$66,695                | 79.0%                           |

Data source: <https://mass-eoeea.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=dffdbf9c109647fc9601f7524c1fd9f4>

Figure 17. Environmental Justice Populations



## FUTURE POTENTIAL CONDITIONS OF BLIGHT

Understanding vulnerable populations is also critical when planning for the future. Wareham Village is vulnerable to the impacts of flooding from sea level rise and intense storms. Over time, water damage will contribute to deteriorating conditions, especially salt water, which has corrosive effects. The Town of Wareham has undertaken several studies to assess the level of its vulnerability. These studies include the following:

- **The Resilient Main Street Report.** This study was recently completed. The Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) funded the study and the town hired lead consultant Fuss & O'Neill and the Woods Hole Group to assist with this project. The focus of the study is to determine the impacts of projected sea level rise on Main Street and identify projects to help address those impacts. Certain recommendations of this Plan address the findings of this study to date.
- **Wareham Climate Change Flood Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning Report (2019 – DRAFT ) Woods Hole Group.** This report evaluates the vulnerability of the entire Town to sea level rise and is a follow-on from the Town's Municipal Vulnerability Planning Process (2018).

### Wareham Climate Change Flood Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning Report

The planning process included six steering committee meetings, two public presentations and one presentation to the Board of Selectmen over the period from November 2018 to December 2019. The report identifies the methodology for assessing vulnerability and identifies the top 20 buildings and structures vulnerable to flooding. In this Plan Area, the Train Station Parking restrooms (the old train depot) was ranked as the second most vulnerable property and the Tremont Nail properties were ranked third, ninth, eleventh, and twelfth most vulnerable.<sup>14</sup> The rankings change when infrastructure and time horizons are added, but these two are always in the top 20.

The report also evaluated the number of residential parcels that might be at risk from coastal flooding with an estimate of the inundation risk for defined areas of the town. Out of the 296 parcels assigned to the Downtown area, 91% would remain dry under present-day flooding scenarios. This drops slightly to

<sup>14</sup> Woods Hole Group, *Wareham Climate Change Flood Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning: Draft final*, 2019, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup> Woods Hole Group, *Wareham Climate Change Flood Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning: Draft final*, 2019, p. 40-42.

<sup>18</sup> Woods Hole Group, *Wareham Climate Change Flood Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning: Draft final*, 2019, p. 76.

89% in 2030 and 77% in 2070. The corollary is that under 2018 conditions, 9% of downtown parcels would be subject to some form of flooding and in 2070, a projected 23% of parcels, almost a quarter of the parcels in the Downtown, would be subject to some level of inundation.<sup>17</sup>

The report identifies two types of risk from floods for Main Street: the risk from daily inundation (higher tides) and the risk from inundation due to storms. The report recommends considering an area-wide strategy, likely some type of raised flood protection feature, because of the topography of Main Street next to the river (Merchant's Way).<sup>18</sup>

### Resilient Main Street Report

Fuss & O'Neill and Woods Hole Group assisted the Town of Wareham with a more specific analysis of the projections for Merchant's Way and Main Street. This evaluation seeks to understand the vulnerability of buildings and infrastructure based on current projections for 2030, 2050, and 2070 for both daily tides and storm surge.

The use of mapping, illustrative graphics, and three-dimensional images provides a clearer picture of the area's vulnerability than has been available in the past. The team's work also identifies the buildings that are likely to experience repetitive loss damage during this time and assesses whether the building can or should be flood-proofed based on its relative vulnerability and assessed value. (See Figure 16, overleaf.)

The WRA expects that private developers, armed with the information from this study and the proposed new zoning described later in this section, will have an incentive to redevelop these properties to be flood-resilient thus addressing both the existing conditions of blight and preventing future deteriorating conditions.

In [Section 4. Objectives](#), the WRA has identified certain buildings that it may wish to acquire for specific public purposes. This list does not include all the buildings identified as vulnerable to repetitive flood loss as the WRA's resources are limited. Should buildings experience more losses than anticipated within the twenty-year horizon of this plan, or should the anticipated private investment not occur, the WRA could amend this plan to add additional acquisitions, using the process described in [Section 16. Plan Changes](#).

# Figure 18. Projections of Building Vulnerability

Image source: Fuss & O'Neill + Woods Hole Group, Resilient Main Street, Wareham, Ma, presentation to the WRA, February 9, 2023.

## Overview of Existing Conditions Assessment Area



Assessment included:

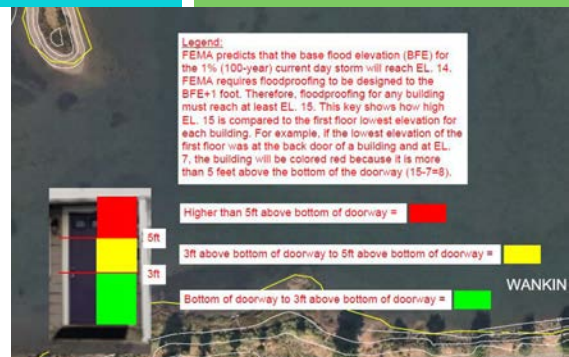
- Review of exterior condition and configuration of each building
- Locating and measuring all openings for the first floor and below
- Review of interior basement spaces where applicable and accessible
- Considered a DFE of 15.0 feet (approximate current BFE + 1 foot)

26

## “Red” Buildings – Cost \$\$\$

Not practical to floodproof because:

- Current and future DFE is too high
- Little remaining useful life for building
- Cost to floodproof is likely prohibitive (more than 50% of current building value)



Identified for acquisition by the WRA for future development.

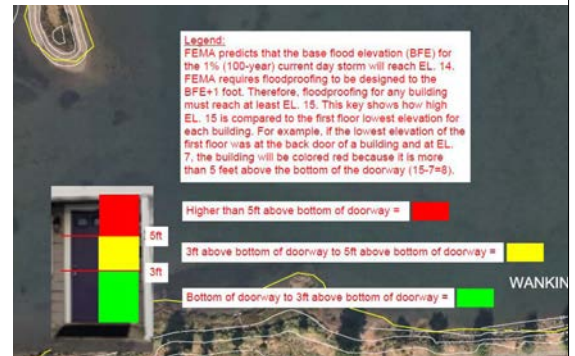
Identified for acquisition by the WRA for future park.

27

## “Yellow” Buildings – Cost \$\$

Possible to floodproof, but must consider:

- Not a long-term solution – future DFE too high
- Moderate cost to floodproof with minor to moderate structural repairs required
- Existing utility/HVAC equipment relocation may be required

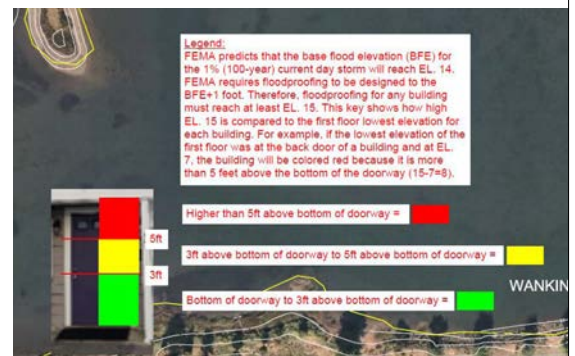


WAREHAM, MA – RESILIENT MAIN STREET

## “Green” Buildings – Cost \$

Possible to floodproof, but must consider:

- Long-term DFE projections may overwhelm floodproofing
- Most floodproofing recommendations will require human intervention
- Buildings include critical public safety infrastructure that must remain operational in severe flood events



Identified for acquisition by the WRA for future TOD and/or parking.

## LOCAL SURVEY AND SUMMARY OF EXISTING PLANS

Pursuant to MGL Chapter 121B, § 48, the Planning Board will make a finding that the urban renewal plan is based on a local survey and conforms to existing planning documents covering the urban renewal area as a whole, including but not limited to, the Town's Master Plan. Because of this requirement, this Plan is based on the studies and reports described above and data hosted by MassGIS. The Town of Wareham does have a stamped survey of Merchant's Way, prepared by Green Seal Environmental and dated November 7, 2013.

The urban renewal area has 192 parcels and is approximately 121 acres.

In addition to the reports discussed above, the Town of Wareham has conducted additional studies with implications for the Wareham Village area, including the following:

### WAREHAM MASTER PLAN (2020) SRPEDD

The Wareham Planning Board is responsible for determining whether this plan is consistent with the recommendations of the 2020 Wareham Master Plan (the 2020 Plan). This Plan addresses three key goals and associated strategies of the 2020 Plan:<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> SRPEDD, *Wareham Master Plan*, 2020, p. 26-31, 41-43.

#### Land Use Goal 1

Focus redevelopment and improvements to Wareham Village and Onset Village.

- **Strategy 1.** Invest the Town's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) resources and other nonprogram redevelopment funds in infrastructure that improves the Villages' appearance and that leads to private investments.
- **Strategy 2.** Implement recommendations of the Town's Vacant and Underutilized Property Survey to improve the maintenance and appearance of "eyesore" properties.
- **Strategy 3.** Explore the legal authority for zoning techniques that allow the town to control derelict commercial properties.
- **Strategy 4.** Consider relocating land intensive municipal activities away from Downtown.
- **Strategy 5.** Promote Tremont Nail Stabilization and Redevelopment.
- **Strategy 6.** Utilize the "Reinvestment Toolbox" – Public-



Private Partnerships (PPPs), District Improvement Financing (DIF), and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to achieve betterment goals in the Villages.

### Land Use Goal 3

Implement the Future Land Use Map.

- **Strategy 3.** Create Design Guidelines for commercial development in certain areas.

### Economic Development Goal 2:

Improve and streamline the town government's interactions with Wareham's existing businesses and institutions.

- **Strategy 2.** Work with Tobey Hospital and other local businesses to reinvigorate Wareham Village.

This Plan is consistent with recommendations for Planning Board actions to implement the 2020 Plan, including the following:<sup>20</sup>

### Housing

- Improve the quality, choice, and condition of housing particularly for seniors and smaller households.
- Understand barriers to affordable housing such as limited water and sewer service, large lot sizes, and lack of incentives.
- Pursue tax-title property for development of affordable housing options.

### Economic Development

- Encourage economic vitality in existing business areas while limiting commercial sprawl.
- Review zoning and regulations for consistency with economic development objectives.
- Utilize programs such as expedited permitting and tax incentives to encourage attractive, appropriate, and well-located commercial growth.

### Open Space and Recreation

- Protect watersheds, wetlands, salt marshes, rivers, bays, and ponds, to improve recreational access to natural water resources, and to provide habitat for plants, wildlife, fish, and marine life.
- Enhance the public's opportunities to enjoy open space

<sup>20</sup> SRPEDD, *Wareham Master Plan*, 2020, p. 15.

and recreational facilities.

- Recognize the need to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources for current and future use for residents and visitors.

## OTHER PLANNING PROCESSES

These other plans provide useful information or inspiration for the planning process for this plan. From the Wareham Village Strategy (2008) to the Wareham TAP (2020), these reports sought to improve access from Main Street to the river with a consistent pedestrian passage from Main Street to the old train depot. Some plans added access to the water on the other side of the rail tracks. Such access would require cooperation with the MBTA and Chapter 91 licenses from MassDEP. However, [Section 4. Objectives](#) offers alternatives that seek to achieve similar goals.

- **Wareham TAP (2020) Urban Land Institute.** This Technical Assistance Panel evaluated assets, opportunities, and challenges in Wareham Village and sought to understand whether an urban renewal plan under MGL Ch. 121B would be an appropriate development tool to address the revitalization needs of the village. Recommendations included increasing the height of buildings along Main Street and adding housing and public open space to support economic activity. This was the first of the reports to address sea level rise with images of floodable parking levels but the panelists did not have access to the level of detail provided by the Resilient Main Street Report,
- **Merchant’s Way Improvements (undated) SRPEDD, GATRA and Waterfield Design Group.** This undated slide deck evaluates potential opportunities for improvements to Wareham Village. These include streetscape and infrastructure improvements, reorganization of parking and access in Merchant’s Way, and opportunities for connections, including from Main Street to the water with a pier opposite the old train depot and a waterside boardwalk.
- **Wareham Village Parking Study (2014) Nelson Nygaard.** This plan evaluated parking usage in Wareham Village and found that there was a significant amount of available parking. Of the 1,350 parking spaces in the area, only 28% were used at peak hours.<sup>21</sup>
- **Wareham Village Strategy: A Plan for Improvement (2008) Cecil Group and FXM Associates.** This plan was

<sup>21</sup>Nelson Nygaard, *Wareham Village Parking Study*, 2014, p. 6-7.

a placemaking and economic study for Wareham Village; some of the recommendations for placemaking and revitalization actions are still valid and could be reviewed by the Town. Other recommendations have either already been implemented, such as street improvements, or will need to be modified based on the Resilient Main Street Report. In 2008, concerns about sea level rise and climate change were not yet routinely incorporated into planning studies.

- **Wareham Preservation Plan (2007) Eric Dray.** The Wareham Historical Commission sponsored this report, which identifies historic assets throughout Wareham, including a number of buildings within the Plan Area.

### **TREMONT NAIL FACTORY**

Established in the year 1819, the Tremont Nail Factory is a wooden industrial building that has survived and until very recently was functioning as an historic nail manufacturer. The nail making has left town (now in Mansfield) but the buildings remain and are considered a very attractive opportunity for mixed use development. The Town put out an RFP and received a proposal from a developer out of Rhode Island who plans on reusing the structures with a commercial and residential mix of uses. The Town meanwhile is advancing the removal of the dam at the site to provide a better experience along the river. The developer is fully behind the dam removal and is considering adding other properties to the development concept. This urban renewal plan supports a proposed coastal path or trail to link the Nail Factory with the Downtown.

### **SPOT CLEARANCE**

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#### **LACK OF CHANGE IN CONDITIONS**

A review of the past planning shows that many of the conditions have not changed over the period from 2008 to the present day. With an evolving understanding of the projected impacts on the area from sea level rise, it is clear that the private market cannot expect to address all the conditions of blight without public intervention; it has had ample opportunity since 2008 to address the existing conditions and has not done so. The need is for strategic public action, in the form of spot clearance of properties the WRA has identified through this process and earlier evaluations, as critical to the revitalization of the area.

Spot clearance is proposed on all properties targeted for acquisition.

- **Clearance and new construction for flood-resilient mixed-use buildings.** 203 and 195 Main Street. The WRA anticipates that such clearance would be undertaken by a developer or developers.
- **Clearance and new mixed-use development, including public parking.** 307 Main Street. The WRA anticipates that it would undertake such clearance and dispose of the property in partnership with Town disposition of part of Merchant's Way to create a mixed-use building with some public parking .
- **Clearance and construction of a public park.** 137, 149, 163, and 169 Main Street. The WRA anticipates that it would undertake such clearance, if and as the buildings are subject to repetitive loss, and either retain ownership of the park or transfer such ownership to the Town of Wareham.





## 12.02(4) OBJECTIVES

The WRA's primary objectives are as follows:

- Invest in infrastructure that supports an active town center in Wareham Village, including great public spaces that connect to the Wareham River.
- Acquire properties that have an insurmountable threshold for private investment and reposition them for redevelopment by private developers.
- Proactively address potential deterioration of Wareham Village as a result of sea level rise and associated flooding.

Through this planning process, the WRA has identified five significant areas of actions that it can take to assist with the revitalization of Wareham Village over the twenty-year life of this Plan.

### PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

#### 1. Acquisition of Properties and Disposition for Flood-Resilient Redevelopment

The WRA has added three properties, two of which were identified as contributing to slum and blight in the *2018 Slum & Blight Survey*, to the acquisition and disposition list. After acquisition, these properties will be disposed of to a developer or developers for one or more flood-resilient mixed-use buildings. Two of these buildings (8) are adjacent to the critical pedestrian link between Main Street and the old depot, which has been proposed by most of the plans since 2008. These properties, therefore, can act as demonstration projects for the Village to provide a proof of concept about the efficacy of resilient mixed-use development. Figure 17 shows one options for this redevelopment.

The third property is a gas station (6) surrounded by Town-owned property adjacent to the commuter rail platform. The Town expects that the Wareham Village station may become an active commuter rail station at some point. During the public process, people expressed concerns that the current parking would not be enough to support active commuter rail use. One opportunity is for a mixed-use development on the combined property to also accommodate additional public parking for the commuter rail and customers of local businesses.



(8) Acquisition of two buildings for redevelopment as mixed-use buildings.



(6) Acquisition of one building for mixed-use development and public parking.

## 2. Disposition of Air Rights to Support Flood-Resilient Development

The example shown in Figures 17 and 18 demonstrates an elevated boardwalk along the “backs” of new buildings fronting Main Street. Such a boardwalk could accomplish three objectives:

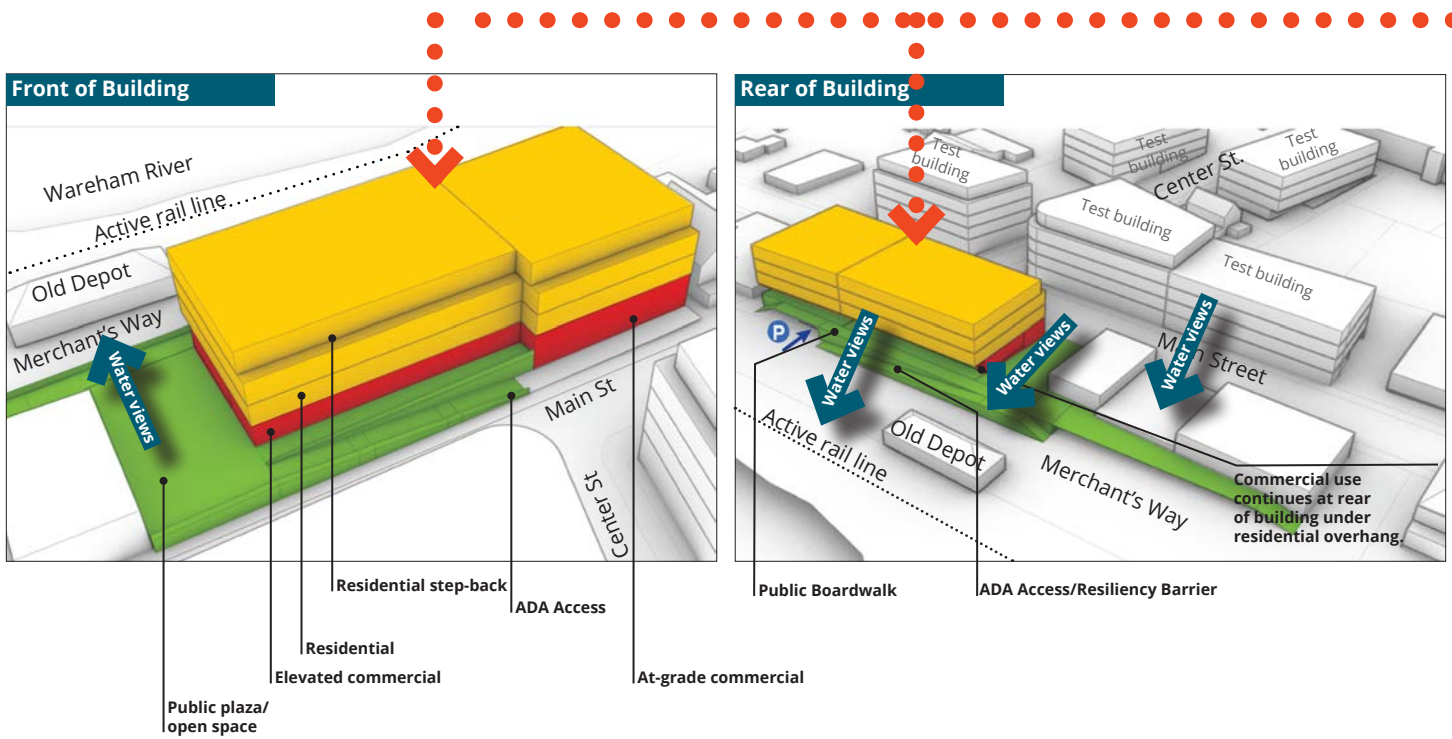
- Create a dual-front building that allows ADA-compliant direct access from Main Street, through a ground-floor retail, restaurant, or other pedestrian-activated space (in red) to a publicly-accessible space overlooking the Wareham River (in green). This space could be used for outdoor dining or simply as a pedestrian promenade.
- Elevate the retail space above projected flood levels and incorporate parking underneath the building and boardwalk (in green). Cars would be moved elsewhere during storms or projected high tides so that the water could enter and recede from the parking area without damage to property. Utilities should be located on the upper floors of the new buildings. The boardwalk also provides safe access for residents during flood events.
- Add residential uses above the ground floor active commercial uses. Adding housing above retail/commercial would support the businesses along Main Street and help pay for the resilient improvements.

The buildings in white that are marked as “Test Buildings” could follow a similar mix of residential and active ground floor commercial uses (these would be restaurant, retail, or other uses that encourage frequent pedestrian activity). These are anticipated to be built under the recently adopted WV-1R District.

By selling or contributing the air rights to Merchant’s Way, the Town can help support this type of development and anticipates adding value that will attract private investment to the area. To support this planned disposition, the WRA will work with the Town to draft an agreement for a long-term lease of air rights for construction over Merchant’s Way that can supplement the Land Disposition agreement referred to in [Section 10. Redeveloper’s Obligations](#). The disposition of the air rights would be contingent upon the developer’s agreement to building the mix of uses and boardwalk as shown.

**Figure 19: Conceptual Diagram of Mixed-Use Development and Elevated Boardwalk.**  
 Image source: SRPEDD

**Potential Development for proposed acquisition sites.**





**Figure 20: Potential Disposition of Air Rights; Potential Location of Boardwalk.**  
 Image source: ESRI, MassGIS, Innes Associates



**LEGEND**

- - - Town-owned land (Merchant's Way)
- Parcel
- Air rights for potential disposition and boardwalk
- Air rights for potential disposition and plaza/connection to boardwalk
- Potential Acquisition by WRA



**(9) and (10) Acquisition of four properties in two stages for the proposed sponge park IF the properties begin experiencing repetitive losses from flooding. The green line indicates a possible outline of the full park, including Town-owned land.**

### 3. Acquisition of Properties and Development of Sponge Park

The WRA has identified four properties that could be acquired over two phases (9 and 10) to create the proposed sponge park (see page 64 for an example) in the lowest part of Merchant's Way. The sponge park has four important roles:

- Replace properties that have suffered repetitive losses from flooding. The properties identified are in the lowest part of the area and are most likely to see significant flooding over time.
- Provide publicly-accessible open space for people to enjoy viewing the shoreline. The proximity of this area to Tobey Hospital provides a draw for hospital staff and families of patients to interact with the downtown.
- Absorb stormwater run-off from higher elevations so that the Wareham River is not directly receiving the initial, and more polluted, run-off from surrounding streets during storm events.
- Provide space to store stormwater from significant high tides and storm events with plants and materials that are resistant to the effects of flooding from salt-water and allow the waters to flood, drain, and recede to prevent damage from the corrosive effects of standing saltwater. This is unlikely to protect all buildings at risk over time because of the topography of the area but may provide some additional support in the earlier years of this plan.

As much needed open space with a direct connection to the River, the sponge park will also provide additional value to future development by providing a public gathering space that will grow over time.

### 4. Other Public Amenities

The WRA will support the Select Board in the following initiatives

- Work with MassDOT/MBTA to identify an area to build pedestrian access across the rail tracks.
- Build facilities for public access including a crosstrack pedestrian connection, and a pier for kayaking, fishing, and passive recreation near the pedestrian link above.



Painted Trail on Merchant's Way leading to Tremont Nail (5) and 59 Main Street (4).



- Build a public trail (4 and 5) to connect to the Tremont Nail Factory (8 Elm Street), the waterfront development at the former Greer's Lumber (59 Main Street) , and the boatyard across the river.
- Add high-speed broadband (fiber optic network) to support additional uses such as medical office, commercial, and light industrial uses.
- Complete a State-approved Harbor Management Plan to obtain allowances for coastline construction.

Should such activities require the acquisition of properties or easements, the WRA will amend this plan in accordance with [Section 16. Plan Changes](#).

## ESTIMATE OF JOBS RETAINED, CREATED, AND ELIMINATED

This Plan does not include the elimination of any jobs. Existing businesses would be relocated as required by [Section 6. Relocation](#).

While 760 CMR 12.02(4) requires an estimate of the number of jobs, by full-time equivalents (FTEs), that would be created through the actions of this plan. The plan does not anticipate the immediate creation of jobs. Over time, the following actions might create 10-50 FTEs.

- Initial planning processes, for example, to design the new fishing pier, trail, and kayak launch, would employ engineering and design firms as consultants.
- The construction of these public improvements would create temporary jobs; without a design plan, these cannot be estimated.
- The proposed sponge park, trails, fishing pier, and kayak launch might require an additional staff member in the Town of Wareham's Municipal Maintenance Department.
- New retail, restaurant, or other commercial space would create new jobs but the timing of such jobs would depend on when the buildings are redeveloped. In the short term, such construction would be undertaken by private industry in response to the recently passed WV-1R zoning district.
- Acquisition of any property by the WRA is not likely to take place within the first five years after plan approval.

## CURRENT AND PROPOSED ZONING

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### CURRENT ZONING DISTRICTS

The Plan area contains three zoning districts: the new Wareham Village Reinvestment Subdistrict (WV-1R), Wareham Village (WV-1), and Wareham Village II (WV-2) as shown on Figure 5. The primary difference between the WV-1 and the W-2 districts is that the WV-1 allows more commercial uses, which is appropriate as it is the district that applies to most of Main Street within the Plan area and all of Merchant's Way.

The WV-1 and the WV-2 districts do not allow multifamily use as-of-right. Some of the existing uses in the Plan area are not allowed; for example, filling stations are not allowed in the WV-1, although three of them exist. Motor vehicle service stations are allowed as are filling stations for marine uses. Light manufacturing is also not allowed in the WV-1.

Dimensional standards in the WV-1 and WV-2 districts are dependent on the use of the lot although in the WV-1 and the WV-2, this only applies to the minimum lot area. For non-residential use in the WV-1, the minimum lot size is 5,000 SF; in the WV-2, 15,000 SF is required. The minimum frontage in both districts is 75 feet. Maximum height in WV-1 is 40 feet and the maximum building coverage is 30%; these restrictions allow a greater building volume than the 35-foot height and 20% maximum building coverage in WV-2. The maximum impervious surface, which limits paved surfaces, is 70% in WV-1 and 50% in WV-2. Front, side, and rear setbacks are the same in both districts.

The zoning establishes minimal design standards for the WV-1 and WV-2 districts which govern rehabilitation and new construction and are primarily concerned with ensuring compatibility with existing buildings.

Parking requirements are based on use. Single- and two-family dwelling units require 2 spaces; multifamily require 1.5 spaces for 1 bedroom units and 2 spaces for 2 or more bedroom units. Retail is one space per 200 SF gross floor area (GFA) for businesses with less than 1,000 SF of GFA and 1 per 300 SF GFA with businesses of 1,000 SF GFA or more. Restaurants require 1 space per 5 seats or 6 spaces for restaurants that do not have seating. Office requires 1 space per 250 SF GFA. Personal services require 1 space per 150 SF GFA. These requirements are consistent with an area that is car-dependent and would be high for an area that is truly walkable.

The Town's sign regulations are within the zoning bylaw. The zoning bylaw also has requirements for landscaping and performance standards for development including lighting and stormwater management.

### Affordable Housing

The Town's zoning bylaws includes a section for the Local Initiative Program to allow units from both existing properties and new construction to be included on the Town's Subsidized Housing Unit. The bylaw becomes automatically inactive when the Town reaches its affordable housing goal of 10% and reactivates when the Town drops below the minimum threshold.

### NEW ZONING DISTRICT

Town Meeting adopted a new WV-1R subdistrict at the May 2023 Town Meeting as shown in Figure 6.

The major differences are as follows:

- Multifamily is allowed as of right (3+ dwelling units per structure)
- Maximum building height is increased to 50 feet with up to 65 feet by special permit.
- Motor vehicle services are prohibited, but filling stations are allowed by special permit.
- Light manufacturing is now allowed as of right as is Brewery and Tap room and Distillery.
- Also allowed as of right is the "manufacturing of products produced on premises the major portion of which are sold on premises from producer to consumer."
- The base minimum lot area is a little complex.
  - 5,000 SF for a single-family or two-family.
  - 5,000 SF for other nonresidential use.
  - Other residential use is 1,000 SF per unit. The interpretation is that this is either a minimum of 6,000 SF for a three-family (5,000 for a two-family and 1,000 for the next unit) or 6,000 SF for a mixed use building with one unit (5,000 for the commercial use plus one for the additional dwelling unit.) This requirement of 1,000 SF of lot area per unit will be a restricting factor on larger multifamily or mixed-use developments.

- The maximum building coverage and impervious surface coverage is 90% for multifamily (3+ units) nonresidential, and mixed-use buildings.
- Site Plan Review is required and the zoning now includes more robust design standards and guidelines.

Parking is reduced to one space per dwelling unit for multifamily and requirements for commercial parking are also relaxed slightly.

### **CURRENT OVERLAY DISTRICTS**

Two overlay districts that apply to the area: the Floodplain Overlay District (See Figure 5. 12.02(2)(c) - 2a-2 FEMA/Flood Plain Overlay District) and the Tremont Nail Factory Redevelopment (TNFR) Overlay District (see Figure 5. 12.02(2)(c) - 2a-3 Tremont Nail Factory Redevelopment (TNFR) Overlay District).

The first is applicable to all properties within the special flood hazard areas defined by the Plymouth County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and the second applies only to those properties that are within the defined district boundaries.

The TNFR Overlay district is a subdistrict of the WV-1 District. It provides additional uses not allowed in the WV-1 and prohibits certain uses that are within the WV-1. The primary purpose of this overlay is to encourage the adaptive reuse of the historic buildings in the Tremont Nail Factory complex ( 43). The district, shown in Figure 5, contains three parcels.

### **OTHER DISTRICTS**

The Town does have a Transfer of Development Rights bylaw, but it is not currently applicable to Wareham Village.

### **FUTURE CHANGES**

As the impacts of sea level rise become clearer, the Town should consider expanding the WV-1R to include Center Street (7) to allow development to move away from flood risk. (See conceptual diagrams in Figure 18, below.) Center Street is identified as a potential mixed use link between Main Street and High Street because it already has some commercial uses. The other side streets, for example, Sawyer’s Street (1), connecting Main Street and High Street are residential or primarily residential.

**Figure 21: Conceptual Diagrams of Future Conditions on Main and Center Streets (7)**  
 Image source: SRPEDD (top); Innes Associates (bottom)



## 12.02(5) ACQUISITIONS

Per 760 CMR 12.04, two independent appraisals must be submitted to EOHLC prior to acquisition of any parcel other than those acquired by gift, transfers from another public entity (including the City), through a tax foreclosure, or through a public auction. Once the Select Board and EOHLC have approved this urban renewal plan and MEPA review is completed, the WRA may begin negotiations for the purchase of one or more of the parcels designated below. EOHLC must approve the negotiated acquisition price.

Condemnation proceedings must be carried out in accordance with M.G.L. c. 79 and the WRA must have attempted to acquire the property through purchase first.

### SITES FOR ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION FOR FLOOD-RESILIENT REDEVELOPMENT

For those sites that are to be redeveloped, the WRA will facilitate the acquisition of those sites and the disposition to a developer or developers for flood-resilient mixed-use development.

The properties identified for acquisition in this category are 307 Main Street, 203 Main Street, and 195 Main Street.

**Table 2: Anticipated Acquisitions**

| Parcel ID    | Address         | Ownership                      | Lot Size (Acres) | Building Size (Square Feet) |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 47_1153      | 307 Main Street | MOHAMED OSSAMA                 | 0.0747           | 1,368                       |
| 47_1139      | 203 Main Street | CORKERY LUIZ MARIA             | 0.0616           | 5,745                       |
| 47_1138      | 195 Main Street | CORNWELL CARL W                | 0.1435           | 14,790                      |
| 47_1134      | 169 Main Street | V S H REALTY INC               | 0.1373           | 6,297                       |
| 47_1131      | 163 Main Street | DIANTONIO GUY F + CARREN L TRS | 0.3461           | 1,706                       |
| 47_1130      | 149 Main Street | SANTOLUCITO SALVATORE A        | 0.1302           | 3,914                       |
| 47_1129      | 137 Main Street | PIERRE LINDA M                 | 0.2836           | 2,691                       |
| <b>Total</b> |                 |                                | <b>1.177</b>     | <b>36,511</b>               |



## SITES FOR FUTURE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

### BOARDWALK


The Town owns Merchant’s Way. The WRA has proposed disposing of air rights through a long-term lease above Merchant’s Way as part of a public-private partnership to create an incentive for new development. The air rights would be used to build an elevated boardwalk integrated with the construction of one or more new mixed-use buildings (see Figure 17 for a conceptual illustration). The WRA would not take possession of the air rights; ownership would remain with the Town of Wareham. The WRA would facilitate discussions between the Town and potential developers and coordinate the drafting of the Request for Proposals and the disposition agreement. This strategy requires the use of MGL Chapter 30B, the Uniform Procurement Act. If the WRA were to take ownership of Merchant’s Way, some of the provisions of 30B would not apply to the disposition of the property.

### SPONGE PARK

Based on current flood levels and projected flooding conditions discussed in [Section 3. Eligibility](#), several properties are at risk from repetitive losses from flooding over the twenty-year life of this plan. The WRA has identified 137 , 149, 163, and 169 Main Street as the most likely to be affected during this period. Should these buildings suffer the anticipated damage, the WRA would acquire them for the purpose of building a public park as discussed in [Section 4. Objectives](#) and [Section 8. Public Improvements](#).

| Building Year      | Assessed Value (\$) | Purpose of Acquisition  |
|--------------------|---------------------|---|
|                    | FY 2022             |   |
| 1940               | \$358,800           | Future mixed-use development and public parking                       |
| 1900               | \$268,200           | Flood-resilient mixed-use redevelopment.                              |
| 1920               | \$275,400           | Flood-resilient mixed-use redevelopment.                              |
| 1950               | \$353,200           | Repetitive loss damage (if such damage materializes) for sponge park. |
| 1970               | \$595,700           |   |
| 1850               | \$275,300           |   |
| 1920               | \$248,000           |   |
| <b>\$2,374,600</b> |                     |   |

**Figure 22: Anticipated Acquisitions**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>195 and 203 Main Street</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>Reason for Acquisition</b><br/>Blighted building; owner of 195 non-responsive.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Timeline for Acquisition</b><br/>3-5 years</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Future Use</b><br/>New mixed-use building.<br/><br/>Pedestrian link between waterfront and Main Street.<br/>Enhance parking.</p> |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>307 Main Street</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>Reason for Acquisition</b><br/>Future parking to support commuter rail, local businesses, and residential development.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Timeline for Acquisition</b><br/>5-15 years; potentially tied to restoration of commuter rail</p>                          |  |
| <p><b>Future Use</b><br/>Clear to provide mixed-use development with residential, retail, and commuter parking.</p>              |  |

**137 and 149 Main Street**

**Reason for Acquisition**  
Potential significant and recurrent loss properties.

**Timeline for Acquisition**  
10-20 years

**Future Use**  
Include in proposed “sponge” park and add parking to support local businesses.



**169 Main Street**

**Reason for Acquisition**  
If affected by future repetitive loss.

**Timeline for Acquisition**  
15-20 years

**Future Use**  
Include in second stage of sponge park if necessary to address flood conditions in 15-20 years.



**163 Main Street**

**Reason for Acquisition**  
If affected by future repetitive loss.

**Timeline for Acquisition**  
15-20 years

**Future Use**  
Include in second stage of sponge park if necessary to address flood conditions in 15-20 years.



## 12.02(6) RELOCATION

For a pre-acquisition relocation, the WRA will prepare a relocation plan for persons and/or businesses that must be relocated and are considered to be a displaced person as set out in Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Chapter 79A, Section I, including a displaced person that must be relocated because of any public acquisition of land to fulfill the public purpose of this Redevelopment Plan. 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 who 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 prior to any acquisitions. The WRA will file a relocation plan with the Bureau of Relocation (part of 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 Plan 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 plan must be approved by the Bureau of Relocation before the displaced person or business

**Table 3: Anticipated Relocations from Identified Acquisitions**

| Parcel ID    | Address         | Ownership                      | Lot Size (Acres) | Building Size (Square Feet) |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 47_1153      | 307 Main Street | MOHAMED OSSAMA                 | 0.0747           | 1,368                       |
| 47_1139      | 203 Main Street | CORKERY LUIZ MARIA             | 0.0616           | 5,745                       |
| 47_1138      | 195 Main Street | CORNWELL CARL W                | 0.1435           | 14,790                      |
| 47_1134      | 169 Main Street | V S H REALTY INC               | 0.1373           | 6,297                       |
| 47_1131      | 163 Main Street | DIANTONIO GUY F + CARREN L TRS | 0.3461           | 1,706                       |
| 47_1130      | 149 Main Street | SANTOLUCITO SALVATORE A        | 0.1302           | 3,914                       |
| 47_1129      | 137 Main Street | PIERRE LINDA M                 | 0.2836           | 2,691                       |
| <b>Total</b> |                 |                                | <b>1.177</b>     | <b>36,511</b>               |

are displaced by the acquisition. All displaced persons 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 the acquisition of the property, along with notification of the affected occupants of their rights and the available relocation assistance and payment prior to the at acquisition of the property.

However, EOHLC recommends filing the relocation plan at least 180 days in advance of the beginning of relocation activities to allow sufficient review of the plan and to accommodate the 120-day Notice to Vacate required for permanent displacement of a displaced person or business.

A summary of the appeals procedures will be 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 be given at least 60 days after 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.

In the relocation plan, the WRA will provide a description of the needs of the displaced occupants eligible for relocation assistance. For residential occupants who rent, this should include necessary unit size, maximum rent, and any specific needs, such as location or accessibility features. For residential occupants, who own, this should include necessary unit size, maximum purchase price and any specific needs. For business occupants, who rent, this should include the needed number of square feet, space layout, maximum rent, and any specific needs. For business occupants, who own, this should include the needed number of square feet, space layout, maximum price, maximum carrying cost, and any specific needs.

As shown in Table 3, it is anticipated that **8** businesses and **1** residential unit will need to be relocated due to anticipated acquisitions. Acquisitions are based on market conditions and whether properties have suffered from repetitive loss due to flooding or storm damage. The WRA does not anticipate acquiring properties before 2028, unless circumstances change.

| Building Year | Assessed Value (\$) |  |
|---------------|---------------------|--|
|               | FY 2022             | Current Occupant Type  |
| 1940          | \$358,800           | Business (Gas station)   |
| 1900          | \$268,200           | Mixed-use commercial (2 salons, 1 church, 1 residential unit)                      |
| 1920          | \$275,400           | Business (office/retail). Apparent vacancy must be confirmed prior to acquisition. |
| 1950          | \$353,200           | Business (convenience store)   |
| 1970          | \$595,700           | Business (gas mart)  |
| 1850          | \$275,300           | Business (store)   |
| 1920          | \$248,000           | Business (office/retail)   |
|               | <b>\$2,374,600</b>  |  |

## 12.02(7) SITE PREPARATION

### SITES FOR ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION FOR FLOOD-RESILIENT REDEVELOPMENT

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For those sites that are to be redeveloped, the WRA does not intend to conduct site preparation activities, but will facilitate the acquisition of those sites and the disposition to a developer or developers who will clear the site, including demolishing buildings as necessary.

### SITES FOR FUTURE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

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#### SPONGE PARK

If the WRA moves forward with the construction of the Sponge Park by acquiring one or more of the properties identified in [Section 5. Acquisitions](#), then the WRA would need to clear the existing buildings and address any environmental concerns that may exist at the time of clearance. No AULs exist on these sites currently. 163 Main Street (RTN 4-0024608) has an Response Outcome Action (RAO) of A-2 which means it can be reused without restrictions. 169 Main Street (RTN-0024542 and RTN 4-0024350) has a Tier 1D compliance status for the first RTN, which means that a response is missing, and a URAM for the second, which means that the abatement was being performed in conjunction with utility work. These are both related to work done in 2013.

#### OTHER PROPERTIES

Within the lifetime of this urban renewal plan, the WRA does not anticipate undertaking additional site improvements. The expectation is that private developers will use the recommendations of the Resilient Main Street Report to floodproof their properties for the flooding levels expected between the approval of this plan and 2043 (this plan will have a life of twenty years).

The Resilient Main Street Report used 2030, 2050, and 2070 for estimates of the impact of sea level rise on Wareham Village. When this plan expires in 2043, the WRA may choose to renew this plan and expand their projected activities based on changed conditions.

## 12.02(8) PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

### SPONGE PARK

The WRA could design the entire sponge park as described in [Section 4. Objectives](#) within the next 1 to 3 years and implement its construction of the park in phases. This plan anticipates two phases of construction, based on the anticipated timing of flood damage over the twenty-year life of the plan.

Or the WRA could design a smaller park now for the properties most likely to flood and expand the design when the probability of loss for the other properties becomes more apparent. In either case, the WRA would seek to use grants specific to park design and construction, resiliency efforts, and place-making to fund this project.

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Two other improvements are anticipated in this plan but are unlikely to require the acquisition of property as most, if not all, of the land involved already belongs to the Town. The first is to create a better sense of place around the Old Train Depot by changing the asphalt surface from the depot to Main Street to pavers (1). This surface is currently painted with two green-and-white crosswalks forming a “v” at the entrance of the Old Depot.

The area in green (2) is now used as seasonal outdoor dining for the adjacent restaurant, but during the rest of the year is available for vehicular access. This plan recommends that this become a plaza to reinforce a visual link from Main Street to the water.

The shoreline is accessible only by crossing the tracks. Tragically, someone was killed in June 2023 while fishing – a popular activity in the area. This plan recommends the following:

- Creating a series of walking trails on the land owned by the MBTA adjacent to the Tremont Nail Factory.
- Continuing this trail, at least in the short term, with a painted path along Merchant’s Way.
- Connecting this trail across Route 6/Sandwich Road to Besse Park & Pier and the new marina at the former Greer Lumber Yard at 50 Main Street.
- Negotiating a safe pedestrian crossing of the rail tracks with the MBA.
- Creating a pier for fishing and public access and a kayak launch. The location would be determined once the pedestrian crossing is negotiated.



(1) Proposed pavers in front of the Old Depot. (2) Seasonal dining on Town-owned property.

**Figure 23: Easy Street Park (floodable), Nantucket**  
Image source: Innes Associates







(3) Sawyer Street has the only possible direct visual connection from High Street to the river (across Merchant's Way).

Merchant's Way currently provides the only public access to the water along Main Street. Figure 2 shows six points of access. One is visual only; the Wareham Fire Department has a raised berm to protect their parking area. One is pedestrian only during the summer season; this area was identified as (2) on page 46. The other four are vehicular access points from Main Street to Merchant's Way that are also used by pedestrians.

High Street, which is at a higher elevation than Main Street, has no direct access to the water. Three streets perpendicular to Merchant's Way connect High Street and Main Street:

- Center Street connects with Main Street almost directly across from two parcels identified for acquisition. This street has a mix of uses already and development could intensify along this street over time.
- Morse Terrace connects with Main Street close to one of the vehicular entrances to Merchant's Way. This street is a narrow paved surface between Main and High and may have only one residential building with frontage on the terrace. Part of the terrace is incorporated into the parking for Eastern Bank.
- Sawyer Street connects with Main Street across from the commuter rail platform. If this area and 307 Main Street become a mixed-use development, Sawyer Street is the only street connecting High Street that would have a direct visual connection across Merchant's Way to the water; the gas station at 307 Main Street currently blocks that view.

Main Street will not be further improved as part of this plan.

**Table 4: Acquisitions for Anticipated Public Improvements**

| Parcel ID    | Address      | Ownership                      | Lot Size (Acres) | Building Size (Square Feet) | Assessed Value (\$) FY 2022 | Purpose of Acquisition  |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 47_1134      | 169 Main St. | V S H REALTY INC               | 0.1373           | 6,297                       | \$353,200                   | Repetitive loss damage (if such damage materializes) for sponge park. |
| 47_1131      | 163 Main St. | DIANTONIO GUY F + CARREN L TRS | 0.3461           | 1,706                       | \$595,700                   |   |
| 47_1130      | 149 Main St. | SANTOLUCITO SALVATORE A        | 0.1302           | 3,914                       | \$275,300                   |   |
| 47_1129      | 137 Main St. | PIERRE LINDA M                 | 0.2836           | 2,691                       | \$248,000                   |   |
| <b>Total</b> |              |                                | <b>0.8972</b>    | <b>14,908</b>               | <b>\$1,472,200</b>          |   |

## 12.02(9) DISPOSITION

The WRA plans to acquire three sites for future disposition to a developer or developers, who would clear the site and redevelop the sites for flood-resilient commercial, residential or mixed-use buildings as discussed above. The three properties identified for disposition are shown in Table 5 below.

The WRA also anticipate acquiring four properties for the creation of a park that would be transferred to the Town. The disposition of the parcels to the Town does not require an appraisal.

Any disposition must meet the relevant requirements of Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Chapter 121B and Chapter 30B. Under these two chapters, the sale, lease, or acquisition of residential, industrial, or commercial real property by a redevelopment authority engaged in the development and disposition of real estate in accordance with an approved plan, is exempt from public disposition procedures required of all other local government bodies.

However, any parcel of land to be sold or otherwise disposed of by the WRA must meet the requirements of 760 CMR 12.05. This includes an independent disposition appraisal of the parcel. The criteria for determination of the disposition price of the parcel are detailed in 760 CMR 12.05. The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) must approve both the disposition price and the Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) between the WRA and the purchaser. Finally, the WRA shall file or record this URP or other appropriate declaration of restrictions with the Plymouth County Registry of Deeds.

At this time, there are no known redevelopers for these parcels. These parcels may be too small for development as individual parcels; the Town may need to dispose of them as part of a project that assembles more than one parcel for development

The Wareham Redevelopment Authority (WRA) may sell or lease land it acquires within the boundary of this Plan to a redeveloper or redevelopers who will undertake a project on the site. Such sale or lease shall be undertaken in accordance with the disposition process outlined in Section 12.02(9) Disposition. The WRA may choose to issue a Request for Interest (RFI) or a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify potential redevelopers. The RFI or RFP will require that any project meet the objectives of this Plan as described in Section 12.02(4) Objectives. Responses must 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 Plan.
- The parties involved (ownership, development team, etc.).
- Any public improvements required for the proposed project.
- The proposed timeline to 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.

As noted in [Section 4. Objectives](#), The WRA is also considering working with the Town to dispose of the air rights above Merchant's Way via long-term lease to support a boardwalk attached to flood resilient properties that would be at the level of Main Street or higher. Such disposition would need to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis and the square footage of air rights would be tied to individual developments that met the goals of this Plan and would be subject to the Redeveloper's Obligations as described in the next section. The WRA would not take ownership of the air rights and therefore Merchant's Way is not listed as a disposition property in Table 5. Anticipated Dispositions.

**Table 5: Anticipated Dispositions**

| Parcel ID    | Address      | Ownership                         | Lot Size (Acres) | Building Size (Square Feet) | Assessed Value (\$)<br>FY 2022 | Purpose                    |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 47_1153      | 307 Main St. | MOHAMED OSSAMA                    | 0.0747           | 1,368                       | \$358,800                      | Mixed-use + Public parking |
| 47_1134      | 169 Main St. | V S H REALTY INC                  | 0.1373           | 0                           | \$0                            | Sponge Park II             |
| 47_1131      | 163 Main St. | DIANTONIO GUY F +<br>CARREN L TRS | 0.3461           | 0                           | \$0                            |                            |
| 47_1130      | 149 Main St. | SANTOLUCITO SALVATORE<br>A        | 0.1302           | 0                           | \$0                            | Sponge Park I              |
| 47_1129      | 137 Main St. | PIERRE LINDA M                    | 0.2836           | 0                           | \$0                            |                            |
| 47_1139      | 203 Main St. | CORKERY LUIZ MARIA                | 0.0616           | 5,745                       | \$268,200                      | Mixed-use                  |
| 47_1138      | 195 Main St. | CORNWELL CARL W                   | 0.1435           | 14,790                      | \$275,400                      | Mixed-use                  |
| <b>Total</b> |              |                                   | <b>1.177</b>     | <b>21,903</b>               | <b>\$902,400</b>               |                            |

## 12.02(10) REDEVELOPER'S OBLIGATIONS

Redevelopers within the redevelopment area will be subject to the Town's zoning ordinance and design guidelines adopted by the Planning Board (see Appendix E). The WRA has no design or permitting review responsibilities.

In accordance with Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities' (EOHLC's) Urban Renewal Regulations at 760 CMR 12.00, **redevelopers who are selected by the WRA as part of a land disposition process** will be subject to a Land Disposition Agreement (LDA). This agreement will define any requirements specific to that property and any requirements the WRA has for the development of property in general, which may include standards recommended by the MEPA process discussed on page 75.

The WRA will establish the following requirements within the LDA:

- All improvements must be completed in accordance with the objectives of this Plan.
- All improvements must be completed within a reasonable timeframe.
- The project will be subject to the Town's relevant project approval process, including the design standards and guidelines in Appendix E.

In addition, the WRA may require performance standards relative to the timing and completion of construction within the LDA. The LDA for each parcel shall insure that the redeveloper conforms to and carries out the requirements of the Redevelopment 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. EOHLC must approve the LDA.

### BOARDWALK AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

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The WRA anticipates assisting the Select Board with the disposition of air rights over Merchant's Way through a long-term lease for the purpose of constructing an elevated boardwalk as shown in the conceptual plans on pages 48-49. This disposition shall be linked to new construction or rehabilitation of an existing building or buildings for a mix of ground-floor activated commercial use and upper story residential use. The expectation is that the developer will use the air rights to design and build a boardwalk that improves the flood resilience of the site and provides public access, including walking and outdoor dining.

## 12.01(11) TIME FRAME

This Plan shall take effect on the date of approval by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) and shall be in effect for 20 years from that date.

The timeline below is focused on the actions in which the WRA takes a direct role or a significant supporting role.

**Table 6: Timeline**

| PHASE 1: 0-3 YEARS   | PHASE 2: 3-5 YEARS   | PHASE 3: 5-20 YEARS   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Complete <i>Resilient Main Street</i> planning process.</p> <p>Work with the Town to install pavers around old depot to establish a pedestrian-friendly connection between Main Street and the depot.</p> <p>Begin conversations with property owners about acquisitions.</p> <p>Continue conversations with MassDOT about shoreline access.</p> <p>Investigate grants for the design of the sponge park.</p> | <p>Begin acquisitions of properties that have environmental hazards or significant repetitive flood losses.</p> <p>Dispose of properties not needed for flood resilience to developers and require them to build flood-resilient structures (either multifamily or mixed-use).</p> <p>Continue conversations with MassDOT about shoreline access.</p> <p>Use design of sponge park as the basis for application for funding the construction of the park.</p> <p>Evaluate need for additional commuter parking if regular commuter rail service is established.</p> <p>Encourage new flood-resilient development and discuss the use of air rights on Merchant's Way to support an elevated boardwalk.</p> | <p>Continue acquisitions of properties that have significant repetitive flood losses.</p> <p>Evaluate need to expand sponge park to address stormwater/specific flood events.</p> <p>Evaluate need to amend the plan to add or remove properties from the list of acquisitions in Chapter 5.</p> <p>Monitor need to modify zoning to allow for flood-resilient development and potential migration of businesses within Wareham Village to less flood-prone areas (for example, Center Street).</p> |

## 12.02(12) FINANCIAL PLAN

The WRA will rely on a mix of funding sources to support the public goals of this plan. The WRA may borrow money and issue bonds or notes; it may also apply for planning grants.

In the first five years, the WRA will undertake additional planning projects to determine the costs for future actions. Most of these project can be funded by grants, as shown below. The Town has already received a grant from the Seaport Economic Council for the design of the fishing pier, kayak launch, and portions of the proposed coastal trail.

As the WRA moves towards acquisition and construction in the next five years, the proposed sponge park offers the greatest opportunity for layering grants as its purpose can be linked to several grant programs for green infrastructure, best practices for stormwater management, and best practices for resiliency from the impact of sea level rise and coastal flooding. The lifespan of the sponge park may be an important component of the funding process; see [Section 4. Objectives](#), for additional discussion.

Some properties may require clean up; the WRA is eligible to receive federal brownfields grants and may be able to support future development through a public-private partnership for clean-up.

A comprehensive list of funding sources is available in Appendix D. Funding Sources.

**Table 7A: Financial Plan (First Five Years)**

| Purpose  | Expenditures     | Source                                  |
|--|------------------|---|
| Design study for the fishing pier, kayak launch, and trail.                                      | \$150,000        | Seaport Economic Council                |
| Undertake legal work to determine the value of the air rights and prepare draft legal documents. | \$50,000         | WRA                                     |
| Initial design study for the sponge park.  | \$150,000        | Seaport Economic Council<br>PARC grants |
| Replace the asphalt surface near the Old Depot with pavers.                                      | \$50,000         | Town of Wareham                         |
| Contingency (20%)  | \$80,000         | Funded by original source               |
| <b>Total First Five Years</b>  | <b>\$480,000</b> |   |

This plan anticipates the first acquisition to take place no earlier than the fifth year after plan approval. Table 7B: Financial Plan (Six + Years) includes acquisition costs based on today's assessed value, and estimate for relocation fees and legal fees, and a contingency fee of 30% to account for increases in land prices.

The WRA expects to dispose of the three properties not associated with the sponge park to developers; the disposition price will cover the acquisition costs. Developers will be responsible for relocation costs as well.

The sponge park is also likely to take at least five years before construction as the extent of the park will be dependent on the cycle of repetitive loss and which buildings are damaged more frequently during this period. The WRA anticipates that the acquisitions will be voluntary as property owners decide to sell. The four properties identified for the sponge park are likely to be transferred to the Town once the park is constructed. The cost to design and construct Easy Street Park on Nantucket, the precedent for this concept, was \$2.2 million; this sum has been used for the estimate in Table 7C, below.

**Table 7B: Financial Plan (Six+ Years): Mixed-Use Development**

| Purpose                               | Expenditures | Source                        |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Property Acquisitions for development | \$902,400    | Developer (disposition price) |
| Allowance for relocation expenses     | \$480,000    | Developer (disposition price) |
| Legal fees                            | \$100,000    | Developer (disposition price) |
| Contingency (30%)                     | \$445,000    | Developer (disposition price) |
| Total First Five Years                | \$1,927,400  |                               |

**Table 7C: Financial Plan (Six+ Years): Sponge Park Acquisition**

| Purpose                               | Expenditures | Source                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Property Acquisitions for sponge park | \$1,472,200  | Resilient infrastructure grants |
| Allowance for relocation expenses     | \$480,000    | Resilient infrastructure grants |
| Legal fees                            | \$100,000    | Resilient infrastructure grants |
| Design and construct sponge park      | \$2,200,000  | Resilient infrastructure grants |
| Contingency (30%)                     | \$1,276,000  | Resilient infrastructure grants |
| Total First Five Years                | \$5,528,200  |                                 |

## 12.02(13) CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

### CITIZENS ADVISORY GROUP

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The WRA appointed a Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) to provide input and feedback to the WRA and the consultant through the process. The members of the CAG are as follows:

- George Barrett, downtown property owner, former Chair of the Planning Board
- Anne Eisenmenger, publisher of the *Wareham Week*, the local paper
- Evangeline Le Blanc, resident
- Marie Oliva, Director, Canal Area Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Mary Ten Eyck Taylor, resident
- Fred Newton, former resident (moved out of town during the process)

The CAG met on April 6, 2022, and June 20, 2022, to discuss the project and the public process. After those meetings, the process shifted to engaging the public, including residents, business owners, and property owners. The WRA sponsored three public workshops: Workshop 1 on April 16, 2022, Workshop 2 on August 4 and 6, 2022, and Workshop 3 on December 1, 2022. Other meetings open to the public were a meeting of the Wareham Redevelopment Authority on August 25, 2022, and a charrette with the Planning Board on September 28, 2022.

**[Add post-draft meetings here]**

Finally, members of the WRA conducted a series of interviews with property and business owners in November and December 2022.

Documentation of the meetings and aggregated reports of the interviews are contained in **Appendix C: Public Engagement**.

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING PROCESS

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The initial public workshop, in April 2022, was a visioning session for Wareham Village. In August 2022, two sessions at the old train depot on Merchants' Way asked participants to evaluate time-based scenarios for different levels of development intensity. The December meeting tested draft recommendations with participants. The final meeting in **XYZ** was a presentation of the draft plan.



## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT EXECUTION**

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The WRA is responsible for the implementation of this Urban Renewal Plan. Their meetings are public and future planning processes will include opportunities to engage members of the public and incorporate their input.



## 12.02(14) REQUISITE MUNICIPAL APPROVALS

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

- Vote of the Wareham Redevelopment Authority (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, 2023].
- Determination of conformance with the *Wareham Master Plan* (2020) by the Wareham Planning Board, at a meeting held on [XYZ, XY, 2023]. See Section 12.02(3) eligibility for a description of the Planning Board's role.
- Opinion of Counsel for the WRA, dated [XYZ, XY, 2023].
- Vote of the Wareham Select Board to approve the Plan for submission to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, at a meeting held on [XYZ, XY, 2023]. This meeting should be a public hearing under MGL c. 121B §48.

The Town of Wareham sent a copy of the draft plan to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) with a notification of the on [XYZ, XY, 2023].

The records of votes, minutes of the public hearing, the notification to MHC, and the opinion of counsel and the letter are provided in **Appendix B: Municipal Approvals** of this report.

## 12.02(15) MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)

A review of this Plan under MEPA (the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act) and implementing regulations is not complete.

No known redevelopment projects have been submitted to MEPA for review.

The Wareham Redevelopment Authority understands that EOHLC's approval will be issued conditional upon completion of MEPA review.

### MEPA REQUIREMENTS

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In January 2022, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs issued the 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 address climate change and projects within Environmental Justice (EJ) communities.

Before the change in regulations, filing an Urban Renewal Plan with EOHLC was the threshold for filing an Environmental Notification Form in the MEPA process.

After this change, under 11.03(1)(b)7, the approval in accordance with M.G.L. c. 121B of a new urban renewal plan or a major modification of an existing urban renewal plan is the threshold for filing an ENF and other MEPA review if the Secretary so requires. (The Secretary is defined as the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs.)

This Plan will therefore trigger the requirement for filing an ENF.

However, there is a new threshold that is applicable to the Wareham Village area. Under 11.06(7)(b), the Secretary shall require an EIR for any Project that is located within a Designated Geographic area around an Environmental Justice Population. A Designated Geographic Area is defined as follows:

**(a) With respect to a Project, the area within one mile of the Project; or, for a Project that meets or exceeds MEPA review thresholds at 301 CMR 11.03(8)(a) and (b) or that generates 150 or more New adt of diesel vehicle traffic over a duration of one year or more, excluding public transit trips, the area within five miles of the Project.**

**(b) With respect to an Environmental Justice Population, the area within one mile of the Environmental Justice Population; or, for a Project that**

**meets or exceeds MEPA review thresholds at 301 CMR 11.03(8)(a) and (b) or that generates 150 or more New adt of diesel vehicle traffic over a duration of one year or more, excluding public transit trips, the area within five miles of the Environmental Justice Population.**

As noted in Section 12.02(3) Eligibility of this Plan, Wareham Village qualifies in terms of the geography relative to an EJ population as portions of is are less than 1 mile from an EJ population. A Project is defined in 11.02 as any work or activity undertaken by an Agency; an Agency includes a redevelopment agency created or acting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 121A pr C. 121B.

Therefore, this Plan will also trigger the requirement for filing an EIR.

As part of those filings, the Redevelopment Authority will be responsible for submitting the results of running the Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool. This is also known as the RMAT Tool. Information about RMAT is available here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/resilient-ma-action-team-rmat>

Information about the Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool and the tool itself is available at [https://resilientma.mass.gov/rmat\\_home/designstandards/](https://resilientma.mass.gov/rmat_home/designstandards/).

The results of this tool will include design standards for future construction in Wareham Village and best practices and guidance for implementing those standards. The WRA should work with MEPA to best understand how to incorporate those standards into the implementation of the URP.

As noted above, MEPA's review of this Plan has not been initiated as the threshold is the approval of the Plan by EOHLC. Because EOHLC's approval is conditional until MEPA review is complete, this plan is not an active plan until the MEPA decision is provided to the WRA. While certain actions, such as modifying Town zoning, can move forward, other actions, such as property acquisition or disposition, may not be undertaken until the MEPA decision is rendered.

## 12.03 PLAN CHANGES

In accordance with 760 CMR 12.03, changes to the Plan may be made any time during implementation, including changes to the property/parcel designations: acquisition, clearance, disposition, rehabilitation, and new construction. Plan changes are divided into two types: a minor plan change and a major plan change.

### MINOR PLAN CHANGE

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The Wareham Redevelopment Authority (WRA) must submit all proposed minor and major plan changes to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) for approval, along with a resolution authorizing the plan change. However, the following minor plan changes do not need EOHLC approval:

- Granting or receiving easements for utilities
- Confirmatory takings for the purpose of title clearing.
- Tax foreclosures
- Conveying non-buildable lots of less than 5,000 square feet to owners of adjacent parcels
- Acquiring an interest in property made available through a discontinuance of a public way.
- Transfer of a property interest to or from another public entity

### MAJOR PLAN CHANGE

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Major plan changes require the same process as the initial preparation of this Plan:

- Evidence of public outreach
- A public hearing
- Determination by the Planning Board that the plan is in conformance with the Town's comprehensive plan.
- Approval by the Select Board

EOHLC must approve a major plan change. A major plan change is defined by EOHLC as a significant change to any of the basic elements of the approved Urban Renewal Plan, including characteristics, objectives, public improvements, redeveloper's obligations, acquisitions, or dispositions. This includes changing the designation of parcels from "not to be acquired" to "to be acquired."

Additional requirements are provided in 760 CMR 12.03.

