

ACTION FRAMEWORK

The Action Plan consists of future projects and initiatives to accomplish key objectives:



1. Support and attract a set of complementary uses that will foster a full and vital Downtown.
2. Retain and reuse historic buildings, so that they contribute to the character and economic success of the district.
3. Provide access, views, amenities, and places along the river as a distinguishing feature of the Downtown.
4. Reorganize streets, intersections, crosswalks and sidewalks, to make the district more convenient, safe and easier to navigate.
5. Create an eminently walkable Downtown that is interesting and pleasant for pedestrians.

NEXT STEPS

Next steps into the future begin with updated zoning that will attract new investment and better support a contemporary mixed-use Downtown. The zoning will include a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District. This district will promote a broader mix of uses and introduce flexible approaches to adding housing to the Downtown. New Design Guidelines will accompany the zoning, to help ensure that new development enhances the character and value of the Downtown. The Historic District Commission will continue to promote high quality design and historic preservation, helping to ensure that the distinctive qualities of our historic center are preserved.

Department of Economic & Community Development



ACTION PLAN for DOWNTOWN METHUEN



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In the Fall of 2014, Mayor Stephen Zanni initiated the Downtown Visioning Committee and tasked the committee to create a new vision for the Downtown, with the goal to establish Downtown Methuen as a thriving destination for commercial, recreational, residential and cultural activities. The mission they created was "To develop and implement bold and innovative strategies to establish Downtown Methuen – with its convenient location and unique historic character – as a vibrant mixed-use district providing exciting opportunities for new and existing dining, shopping, residential and cultural opportunities."

Building upon this mission and the vision that has emerged, this Action Plan outlines the next steps and opportunities for the future of Downtown Methuen. Through new zoning and other steps, the City will help unlock private investment in new development on underutilized land, along with the preservation and adaptive reuse of our historic buildings. The City will focus additional circulation and streetscape improvements to make the City's center a better place to drive, walk, and bike. Through public and coordinated private redevelopment, the City will bring new access and open spaces for everyone's enjoyment along the river that is a distinctive asset. By coordinating new public and private improvements, parking will be provided and managed to support the uses clustered here.



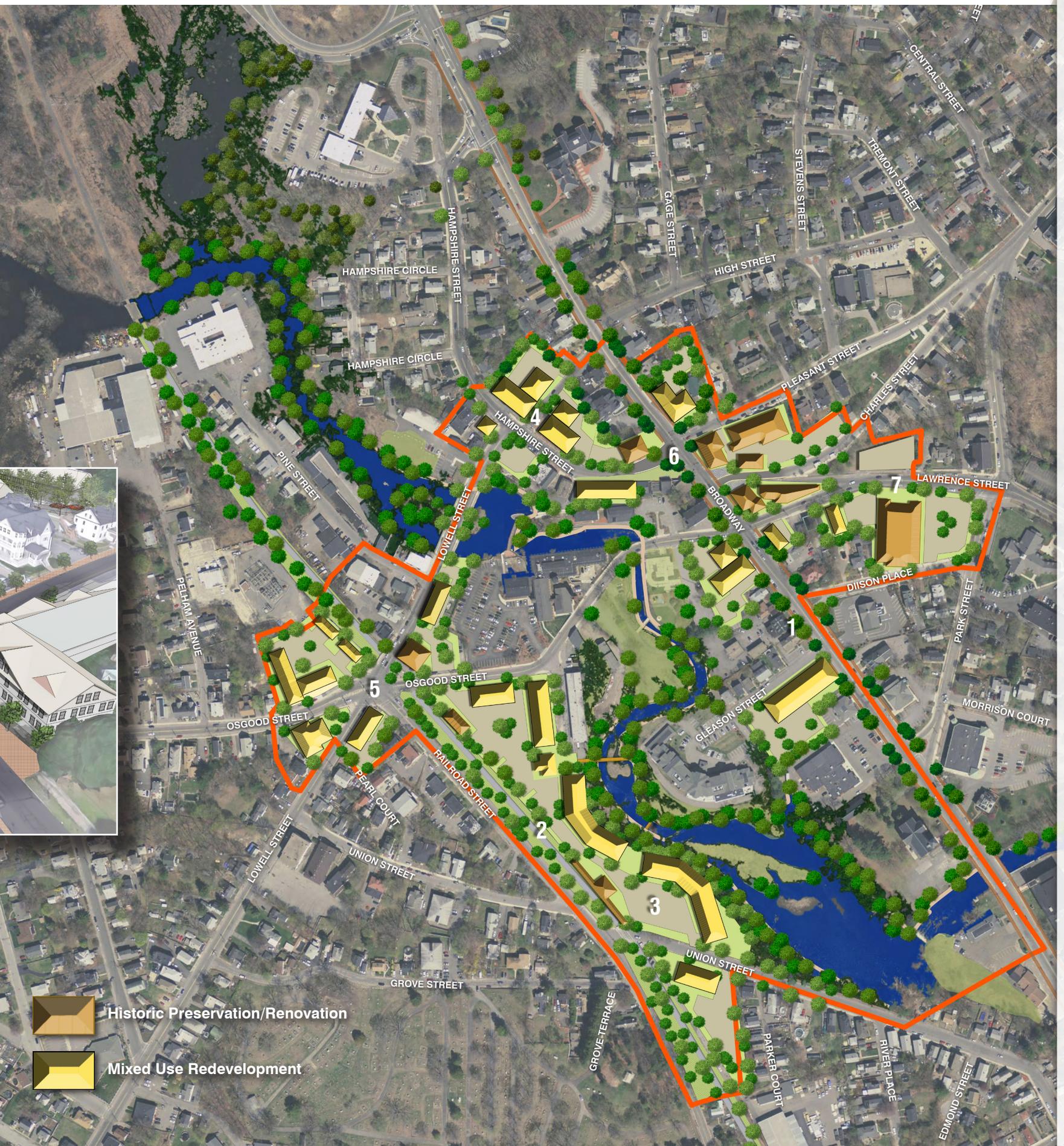
DOWNTOWN ACTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

ILLUSTRATED CONCEPTS

This drawing illustrates some of the redevelopment potential for the Downtown within the proposed 40R Smart Growth Overlay District. This includes a mix of new and renovated buildings in locations which could attract new investment. Streetscape improvements are indicated along key streets, and would include trees, amenities, paving, and lighting. New promenades and spaces would be created along the Spicket River, complementing the rail trail segment that will soon be completed through the Downtown. These will enhance the experience of walking and bicycling, and create new opportunities for recreation just a few steps away from business and residential areas.



This view of Methuen Square illustrates potential redevelopment of vacant parcels, opportunities for historic preservation and adaptive reuse of existing landmark buildings, and streetscape improvements to create a focal point at the center of the Downtown. Hampshire Street could be realigned to meet Pleasant Street, facilitating vehicular crossing of Broadway, and allowing an extension of the sidewalk and landscaping around the existing clock tower. Charles Street could also be realigned at its Broadway intersection to add public open space, facilitate traffic, and reduce congestion.



- Updated Zoning (1)**
New Smart Growth zoning and design guidelines will establish the basis for mixed-use development, and the redevelopment of underutilized properties.
- Street, Circulation, and Placemaking Improvements (MassWorks Funding)**
Changes to the realignment of some street intersections will add public open space, retaining parking, and reducing congestion.
- Riverwalk and Open Space**
Enhanced and expanded waterfront promenades will enhance connectivity within the Downtown and create new opportunities for recreation.
- Methuen Rail Trail (2)**
The new rail trail along Railroad Street will create places for bicycling and walking, along with landscaped areas and supporting services, to be constructed in 2017.
- Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse**
New Smart Growth zoning and design guidelines will support the rehabilitation, renovation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings and resources.
- Mixed-Use Redevelopment**
New Smart Growth zoning and design guidelines will promote mixed-use redevelopment of vacant and underutilized parcels in the Downtown.
- Riverside (3)**
Potential mixed-use redevelopment of vacant sites and adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings can convert underutilized land to frame the river.
- Four Corners (4)**
Potential mixed-use redevelopment of prominent sites and parcels can be envisioned near the intersection of Lowell and Hampshire Streets.
- Five Corners (5)**
There are potential investment opportunities for redeveloping parcels near the intersection of Lowell, Railroad, Osgood, and Pelham Streets.
- Methuen Square (6)**
The edges of the Square have significant opportunities for renovation and adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings, new buildings on underutilized properties, and realignment of the streets to create a broad public space while retaining parking spaces in the center of the Downtown.
- Municipal Properties (7)**
Several municipal properties have long term potential for private sector redevelopment if the City relocates existing uses through its own facility reinvestment.
- Parking Improvements**
There are many opportunities to consolidate and optimize public parking on-street and in public parking lots.