



CITY OF SALEM
BRIDGE STREET NECK NEIGHBORHOOD
VISION UPDATE STUDY

Winter 2020



Thank you to the many community members that have participated in the planning process, including those who began this work over a decade ago, as well as the newer residents and business owners who have contributed.

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- Rob Liani, owner, business owner
- Helen Sides, Planning Board and Design Review Board member
- Bob Mitnik, Salem Redevelopment Authority and business owner
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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Salem Bridge Street Neck

What kind of neighborhood do we want?

As part of a neighborhood planning effort, the City, local residents, business owners, and other stakeholders of the historic Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood have come together to develop a future vision for the area. The work builds upon previous planning efforts and incorporates analyses of existing conditions, opportunities and challenges the neighborhood faces. But it also brings a fresh lens to an area that continues to grow and change.

Through this public engagement process, an updated vision and associated principles were developed that emphasizes:

- A family-friendly area that is both welcoming and affordable across a range of incomes.
- A neighborhood that is safe and comfortable for all ages and abilities to walk and bike.
- A thriving Bridge Street filled with local businesses in commercial and mixed-use developments.
- A distinct sense of place that builds upon the neighborhood’s history as the location of the original settlement of Salem and existing assets related to its later commercial and residential history.
- Development that has high quality design and is appropriate for the scale and context of the neighborhood.
- Connections to non-vehicular travel, not only within the neighborhood but to other parts of Salem, as well.

This Vision Update plan describes in further detail the vision, process, and recommendations to help achieve the future the community wants for its neighborhood.

The plan begins with a discussion of relevant planning efforts, both past and present. It then provides existing conditions, which help frame the context and also helped inform community input. Understanding the existing conditions, in particular the existing regulatory framework (i.e., zoning) was also critical in developing the report’s recommendations and associated draft zoning ordinance.

A detailed description of the process, primarily an interactive community forum, provides further details and nuance to the vision. This process developed:

- The vision statement and associated principles.
- Preferred visual imagery for buildings, open spaces, and streets appropriate to the neighborhood, especially Bridge Street itself.
- High level conceptual plans.
- An example of a future mixed-use development node that would be consistent with the vision, principles, visual imagery, and conceptual plan.

The Implementation section provides a holistic set of recommendations to help achieve the vision. Zoning is one of the most important tools a city has at its disposal to help shape future development. Unfortunately, much of

this corridor has zoning that is not conducive to achieving the vision. As such, a focus of the recommendations is on developing appropriate zoning, primarily for Bridge Street.

There are numerous ways that the area could potentially be rezoned. Currently, the preferred method is to develop an overlay district, whereby the existing uses under the existing base zoning would remain intact. The overlay district would provide an alternative means for development for landowners who wish to utilize it. The pros and cons of the alternative zoning methods are included for the City to ultimately decide on the best path forward.

The overlay district provides an opportunity for mixed-use development, i.e., ground-floor commercial space with residences above. It also puts a strong emphasis on the built form and the development's relationship to the street and public realm.

Some of these elements are fairly standard in typical zoning ordinances, such as ensuring minimal setbacks so that the building is close to the sidewalk with parking in the rear. But zoning often offers only cursory guidance to controlling the actual form of the building (e.g., heights) and can result in low quality design or design that is not harmonious with the existing context. Therefore, the zoning recommendations and draft overlay district go a step beyond typical zoning by providing additional standards and requirements that help to regulate the form, while allowing for a variety in design and flexibility to meet specific site conditions.

While zoning is one of the most important tools to achieving the vision, it is not the only one. After the zoning recommendations section are additional sections that, taken together, are critical to help achieve the vision. The Managing Neighborhood Change section

provides a set of recommendations for the City to consider to mitigate the negative effects often associated with growth and gentrification.

Connectivity, in particular pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation, was one of the areas most emphasized by the community members taking part in the visioning effort. The recommendations in this section put a strong focus on "traffic calming," to slow vehicular speeds and improve pedestrian safety. There are also bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure recommendations. Ensuring a walkable neighborhood goes beyond safety, however, to being a place where people *want* to walk. This section, therefore, includes recommendations for improving the public realm.

The economic development recommendations provide some examples of ways to help further improve the retail and office environment along Bridge Street.

The report includes a number of design guidelines elements that can help guide future development in a way that enhances the neighborhood and is sensitive to the existing context.

Finally, the report includes recommendations focused on preservation of the built environment as a tool for meeting the neighborhood's vision.

2.0 INTRODUCTION



2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Study Background and Goals

As Salem continues to grow and change, the city has been proactive in planning and implementing appropriate changes to continually address the community's needs. Some of these planning efforts are city-wide, such as the development of the City's master plan, preservation plan, bicycle plan, inclusionary zoning ordinance, etc. The City has also invested its time and resources into neighborhood-level planning efforts. These plans allow for greater specificity and tailoring to help meet the needs of various areas of the City. This memorandum summarizes one such recent planning effort for the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood.

Study Purpose

This study seeks to establish a community-supported vision and to make recommendations that support the vision. Recommendations include regulatory changes (e.g., zoning and other ordinances), as well as priorities for public investments. Through this process the City and MAPC seek to create community-supported tools that addresses the several key questions:

- How should the overall community vision translate into redevelopment opportunities and improvements?
- What are the characteristics of new buildings that would properly integrate into the existing neighborhood?
- What are the public realm improvements that will contribute to a safe, walkable neighborhood?

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.2 Study Area Context

The diagram on the following page identifies the Bridge Street Neck neighborhood within the

City's context. The area shaded in red is the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood and study area for this visioning effort. The neighborhood is located to the north of the downtown and commuter rail station. A bridge connects the area to Beverly, located to its north.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.3 Previous Studies and Relevant Information

In 2009, the City worked with the Cecil Group to develop the Salem Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. The revitalization plan compiled key findings, planning concepts, and recommendations for the neighborhood. It was envisioned that the recommendations and strategies would help to shape the future of the community through 2019.

In 2012, the City worked with MAPC to develop new zoning for the neighborhood. The 2012 effort was intended to help implement the 2009 Bridge Street revitalization plan. A neighborhood vision emerged throughout that 2009 planning process that was aimed at maintaining the residential character and scale of the neighborhood, while attracting more business and visitors to its commercial areas.

At that time, rents were too low on the Bridge Street Neck to support new development. The revitalization plan considered redevelopment of some of the large commercial properties, currently used for automotive repair businesses and boat storage, into new townhomes and moderate-scale residential development that would increase home buying and rental opportunities for young families and smaller households. A key recommendation of that plan was to change the neighborhood's zoning from its current mix of residential, automotive, and other commercial zoning to a more uniform zoning that would allow for mixed-use development with residential and small-scale businesses.

Since that time, numerous changes have occurred. Market demand has shifted, with a stronger demand for mixed-use and residential development. For example, Bridge Street Neck has seen several new private market residential developments. The zoning, however, is often not supporting the type of development that the neighborhood wants.

Demographics have changed, as new residents have moved to the City to take advantage of its high quality of life. Home prices have risen dramatically, putting new pressures on meeting the needs of the cost-burdened community members. And the neighborhood itself has changed, with the construction of the Bridge Street bypass road, as well as new development throughout the neighborhood.

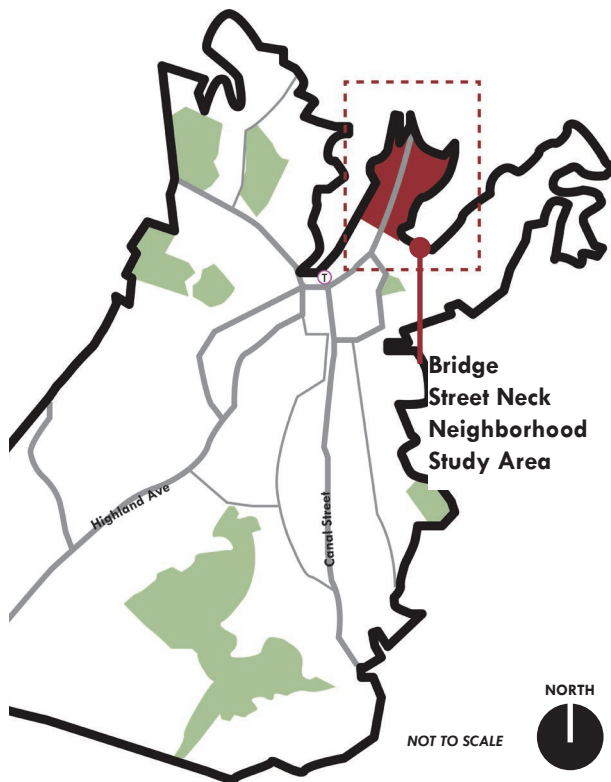
In the fall of 2018, MAPC and City staff convened a Community Forum with Bridge Street Neck (BSN) residents. The Bridge Street Neck Community Forum was held on October

23, 2018 at the Carlton Elementary School in Salem. The meeting was designed around a review of the 2012 Bridge Street Neck Zoning study and community residents were asked to indicate their support for the ideas and uses expressed in the 2012 plan. During the meeting, attendees asked many questions about the scope and impact of the 2012 report and its recommendations for allowing mixed-use buildings along the Bridge Street Neck corridor. Following the meeting, City planning staff established a Bridge Street Neck Working Group to gain feedback and understanding on the questions and concerns expressed at the October forum meeting, to gain a sense of what Working Group members saw as the future of the neighborhood, and to elicit support for moving forward with zoning changes in the corridor.

Subsequent discussions between city planning staff, Working Group members and MAPC have made it clear that future changes to the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood must come from an updated, unified vision created by the community. This work will act as a springboard for development of actual zoning language to help achieve the vision.

Other City documents that were consulted and incorporated include:

- Imagine Salem: Community Visioning for 2026 (Master Plan)
- 2010-2020 Historic Preservation Plan
- Salem Bicycle Master Plan
- Sample Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Preservation District Design Guidelines
- Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Association Traffic Calming Program Petition
- Salem for All Ages Action Plan
- Commercial Design Guidelines
- The Harbor Connector Path



Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood in context

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.4 Study Area Location and Diagram

The diagram below provides a bird's eye view massing model of the neighborhood. This three-dimensional digital model is a depiction of the existing building massings, streets, and property lines in the Study Area. The three-dimensional depiction of the study area was used to explore the current conditions and to help communicate the future vision for the neighborhood. (Note the north axis has been rotated.)

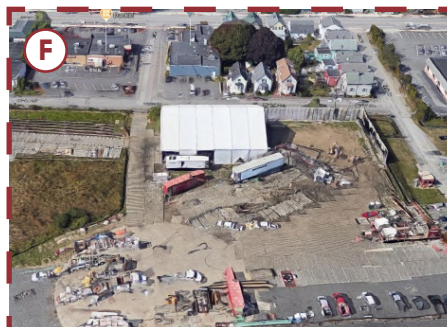
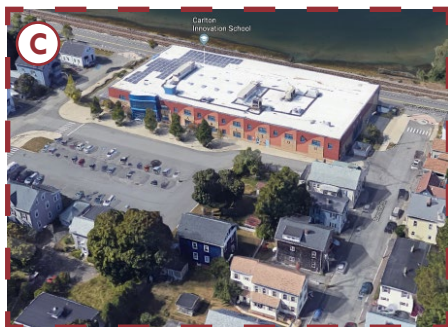
Bridge Street forms the spine of the neighborhood. An analysis of the existing conditions in the district is presented in Section 3.0 of the report. The diagram to the right provides details of various parts of the neighborhood to provide a better sense of the neighborhood, including density and range of building types.



Study Area Boundary

NOT TO SCALE





These thumbnail aerial photos provide a sense for the area's diversity, all close together in a compact, historic neighborhood. Single, two-family, and three-family homes sit on small lots (A). Auto-centric businesses, large parcels, and industrial sites comprise portions of the neighborhood, adjacent to these homes (B, D, F). The Carlton School is an important asset for the neighborhood (C). Small-scale businesses line portions of Bridge Street (E).

Study Area Selected Details

3.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS



3.0 Existing Conditions

This report section briefly summarizes the current conditions of the historic Bridge Street Neck neighborhood. This information identifies patterns in the uses and the built environment that are part of the neighborhood today. The primary vehicle for developing the future vision of the neighborhood came from members of the community itself. The existing conditions analysis provided context to help inform community members' thoughts. This information can also provide an additional perspective to the neighborhood's issues and opportunities and to inform strategies that could advance the district toward the community vision.

3.1 Study Area

Located on a narrow peninsula of land between Salem's downtown, the Danvers River and Beverly Harbor, Bridge Street Neck was one of the earliest areas to be settled in Salem with Bridge Street serving as the primary transportation route from Salem to communities to the north. The neighborhood is now a densely settled neighborhood of 19th and early 20th century residences surrounding the commercial corridor of Bridge Street, which contains a diverse collection of historic commercial buildings and converted residences.

The study area for this planning effort was bounded on the south by Webb Street and comprised all land to the north, up to the bridge to Beverly. This area contains approximately 450 parcels, comprising approximately 86 acres, excluding rights of way. The median parcel size is only 0.1 acre or 4,300 square feet. (Average parcel size is a bit larger at 0.2 acre, due to a few large industrial spaces on the northeast corner of the neighborhood.)

The average floor-area ratio, a measure of density, is 0.8, which generally considered a moderately dense environment considering

the location and context. Dwelling units per acre, a measure of residential density, is approximately 8 units per acre, also generally considered a moderately dense area.

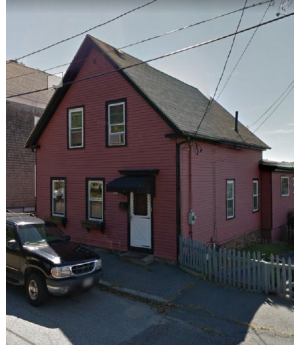
The physical character of the neighborhood itself is diverse. The neighborhood is filled with homes of various sizes, from modest capes to stately Greek Revivals. Utilitarian, auto-centric businesses line Bridge Street alongside small-scale retail and mixed-use buildings. The neighborhood has both independent businesses, as well as chains.

Bridge Street Neck is a historic neighborhood, and one of the earliest neighborhoods established in Salem. Bridge Street, originally called Ferry Lane, was created in 1743. In 2002 the neighborhood was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The city has also nominated it for inclusion as a National Register. The 382 buildings listed on the nomination form span ca. 1780-1952 and include a mix of Georgian, Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne styles.

The neighborhood contains a well-preserved collection of Federal, Greek Revival, and Victorian-era homes, as well as unique examples of mid-20th century commercial buildings. Many of the buildings throughout the neighborhood are historic: more than 450 properties are documented in the MA historic resource inventory.

The neighborhood also has a number of public open spaces, including pocket parks, sports fields, and beaches.

Many of the above elements, as well as the Carlton Innovation School, suggest a neighborhood well-suited to households of all types, especially families.



Selection of neighborhood photos

3.0 Existing Conditions

3.2 Zoning

Zoning is one of the most important tools a municipality has to help achieve the vision. Communities are divided into various zoning districts. Zoning regulates a number of aspects within each district that are critical to a neighborhood's character, including:

- Allowable uses, such as residential, office, retail, industrial, etc. and whether the use is allowed by-right or through a special permit;
- Dimensional regulations, such as heights, density, minimum lot size, building setbacks from the property lines, etc.;
- Requirements for affordable housing, if applicable;
- The amount of parking required;
- The amount of open space required; and,
- Other requirements that are intended to ensure that a development integrates harmoniously into the neighborhood.

While zoning can be a tool to help achieve a community's goals, unfortunately it is often a hindrance, especially in diverse, mixed-use neighborhoods. As such, a key aspect in developing the recommendations that will help implement the vision is an understanding of the existing zoning.

Bridge Street Neck contains a number of zoning districts. The Residential Two-Family District comprises much of the neighborhood. As its name suggests, this district allows both single family and two-family homes. A much smaller portion of the study area, the Residential One-Family District allows single family homes. These two residential districts also allow various other uses, either by right or through a special permit that are deemed compatible. These

uses include, among others, child care facilities, hospitals, municipal facilities, farmstand, etc.

Along Bridge Street itself are several business-oriented districts. These districts each have slightly different allowed uses, as well as different dimensional standards, depending upon their intended purpose. The southern end of the study area contains the Business Neighborhood District (B1), which allows for smaller scale businesses in keeping with the walkable nature of much of the neighborhood. Importantly, this district allows mixed-use development, defined in the Salem Zoning Ordinance's Table of Uses as a "dwelling unit above first floor retail, personal service, or office use." Examples of other allowed uses include banks, offices, restaurants, breweries, and single/two-family residences.

Further north is the Business Wholesale + Automotive District (B4). This district allows for larger buildings (e.g., 45 foot height) and additional uses such as wholesale, warehouse, and distribution (residential uses, including mixed-use, are prohibited) as compared to the B1 District.

The Business Highway District (B2) allows for many of the same uses as the B4, as well as other uses, such as supermarkets. This district has larger minimum lot sizes than the other business districts (12,000 SF vs 6,000) and lower maximum lot coverage (25% vs 40% for B1 and 80% for B4).

Finally, a portion of the site is part of the Industrial district. This district has the largest minimum lot size (40,000 SF) and allows uses expected as part of an Industrial district, including light manufacturing, manufacturing, research, etc.



| District | Min Front Setback (FT) | Min Side Setback (FT) | Min Rear Setback (FT) | Max Height (FT) | Min Distance b/n Buildings (FT) | Min Lot Area (SF) | Max Lot coverage (%) |
|----------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| R1 | 15 | 10 | 30 | 35 | 40 | 15,000 | 30 |
| R2 | 15 | 10 | 30 | 35 | 30 | 15,000 | 35 |
| B1 | 15 | 10 | 30 | 30 | 0 | 12,000 | 25 |
| B4 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 45 | 0 | 6,000 | 80 |
| B2 | 30 | 10 | 30 | 30 | 0 | 12,000 | 25 |
| I | 30 | 30 | 30 | 45 | - | 40,000 | 45 |

Study Area Zoning Districts and Selected Dimensional Standards

3.0 Existing Conditions

3.3 Land Use and Development Patterns

Whereas understanding a neighborhood's zoning helps one understand what may be built in the future, understanding the land use provides a snapshot of what is in the neighborhood today. This snapshot helps inform whether the types of uses and balance among uses should generally remain or evolve over time.

A comparison between land use patterns and zoning regulations can also provide insight into how properties could change in the future. Uses that do not conform with the underlying zoning could be redeveloped into a new use that conforms, or it could be redeveloped into another, less detrimental non-conforming use through a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Since 2014, seven properties have received special permits to be converted into a less detrimental non-conforming use.

The Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood contains a diverse mix of uses. The majority of the land area is residential, comprised of mainly single and two-family homes in the districts zoned primarily for residential uses on the many streets radiating off of Bridge Street.

Bridge Street itself is the neighborhood's commercial corridor. As the diagram on the following page indicates, many of parcels along the street are residential, especially on the southern end of the corridor. This is reflective of the fact that a portion of the zoning along Bridge Street is residential, as well as the Neighborhood Business District allowing residential uses.

The southern half also contains several mixed-use developments, where commercial uses (retail, food, or office) are on the ground floor with residential uses above. These types of mixed-use developments are generally

considered critical to the success of ensuring a walkable, vibrant commercial corridor.

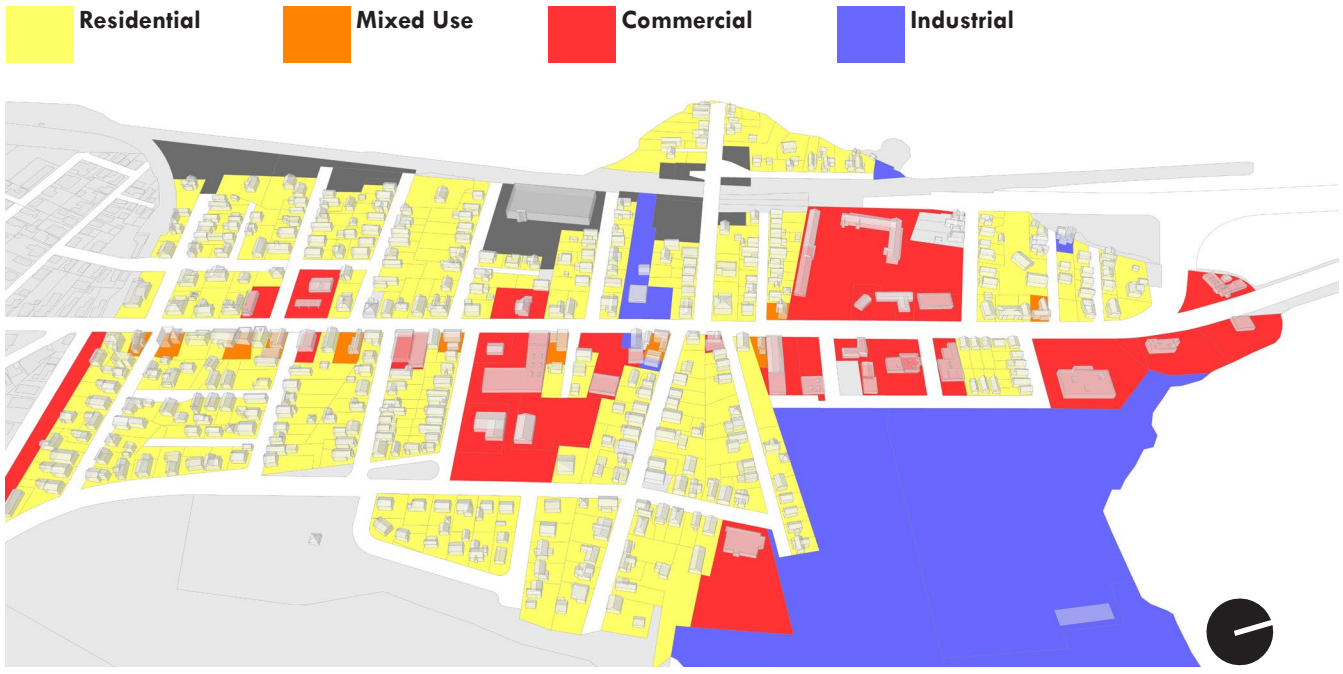
The commercial properties in the neighborhood range considerably. There are restaurants, both independent and chains; auto-oriented services such as a gas station, service uses, such as a gas station, repair services shops, etc; offices; and a variety of other businesses, such as a yoga studio and hair salon.

Additionally, properties located in the northeast quadrant of the neighborhood have industrial uses, primarily a large National Grid facility. This area abuts both residential and commercial uses.

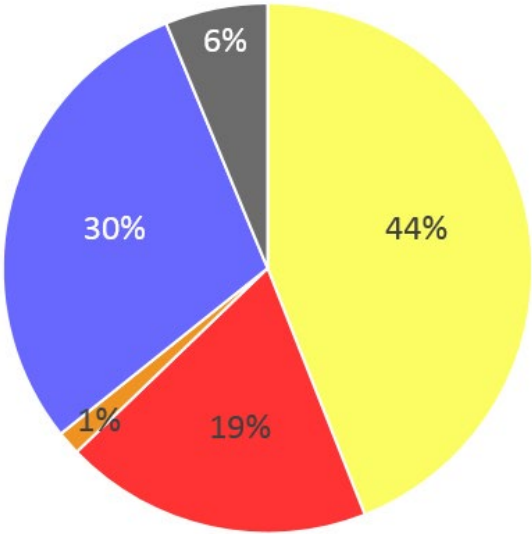
The Carlton Innovation School is a public elementary school located to the west of Bridge Street, off of Skerry Street.

The diverse range of land uses in the district is a benefit to the economic vitality and flexibility of the properties and has been a part of the support for local businesses and services in the neighborhood. An illustration of these patterns of current land use are shown in the diagram on the following page.

South of the study area the uses along Bridge Street are primarily residential, which then becomes commercial, civic, multifamily, and mixed-use as the roadway flows into the downtown. Continuing north over the bridge to Beverly is that city's downtown, primarily along Cabot Street and Rantoul Street.



Land Use



Residential Commercial Mixed Use Industrial Exempt / Other

Breakdown of Land Use by Area

3.0 CURRENT PATTERNS

3.4 Circulation and Mobility Patterns

Roadways represent a key element of the public realm and, therefore, one of the prime opportunities to effect change in a community.

Bridge Street, part of the Essex Heritage Scenic Byway system, forms the spine of the neighborhood. This arterial provides access to the bridge to Beverly on the north and Salem's downtown to south. Approximately a decade ago, a bypass road was constructed. The bypass road is located adjacent to the train tracks on one side and what is in effect the back of the neighborhood. Because of this the roadway can provide an unfettered higher speed connection through the study area. Off of Bridge Street are "local streets," which are classified for providing access from the parcels along them to arterials.

Bridge Street functions in two ways: it still functions as an arterial, meaning its purpose is to provide connections for vehicles to other areas. But it also functions as a mixed-use corridor with a rich mix of businesses catering to the neighborhood itself. The needs of a neighborhood corridor differ from a traditional arterial, such as the bypass road. Since the land use pattern and the scale of the neighborhood makes the area very walkable, maintaining a safe and inviting pedestrian environment will be a critical component to sustain the corridor's vitality. The types of land uses and urban design characteristics help promote walkability and the vibrancy that residents often want for these neighborhood corridors.

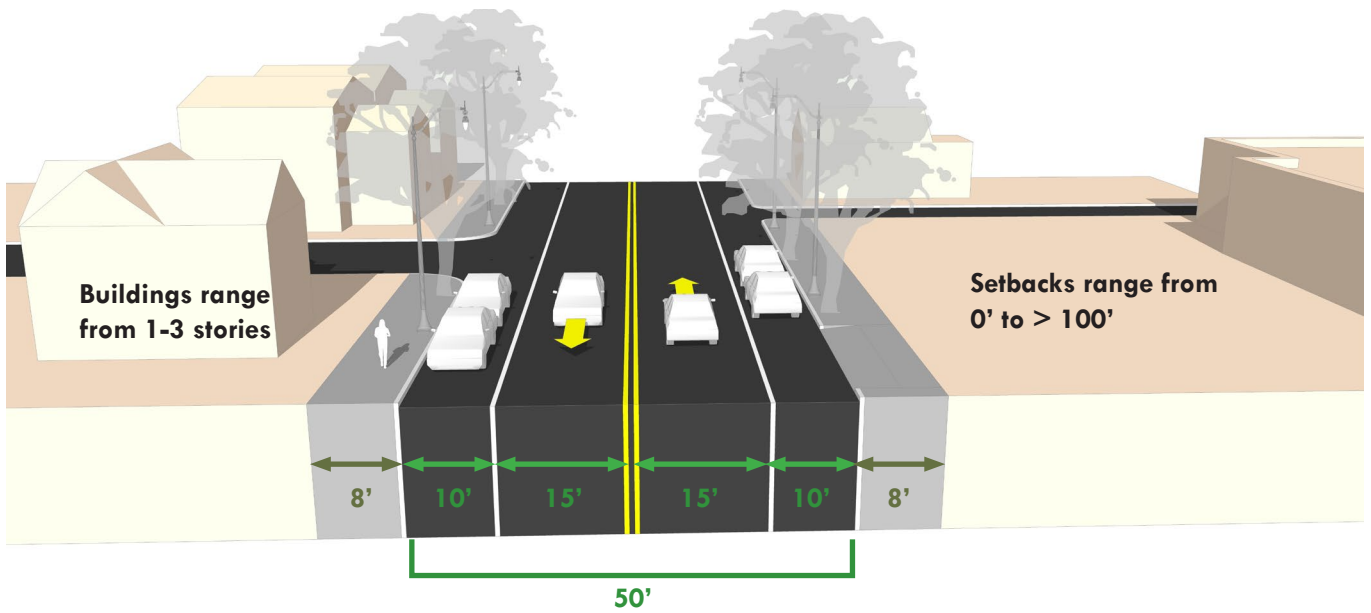
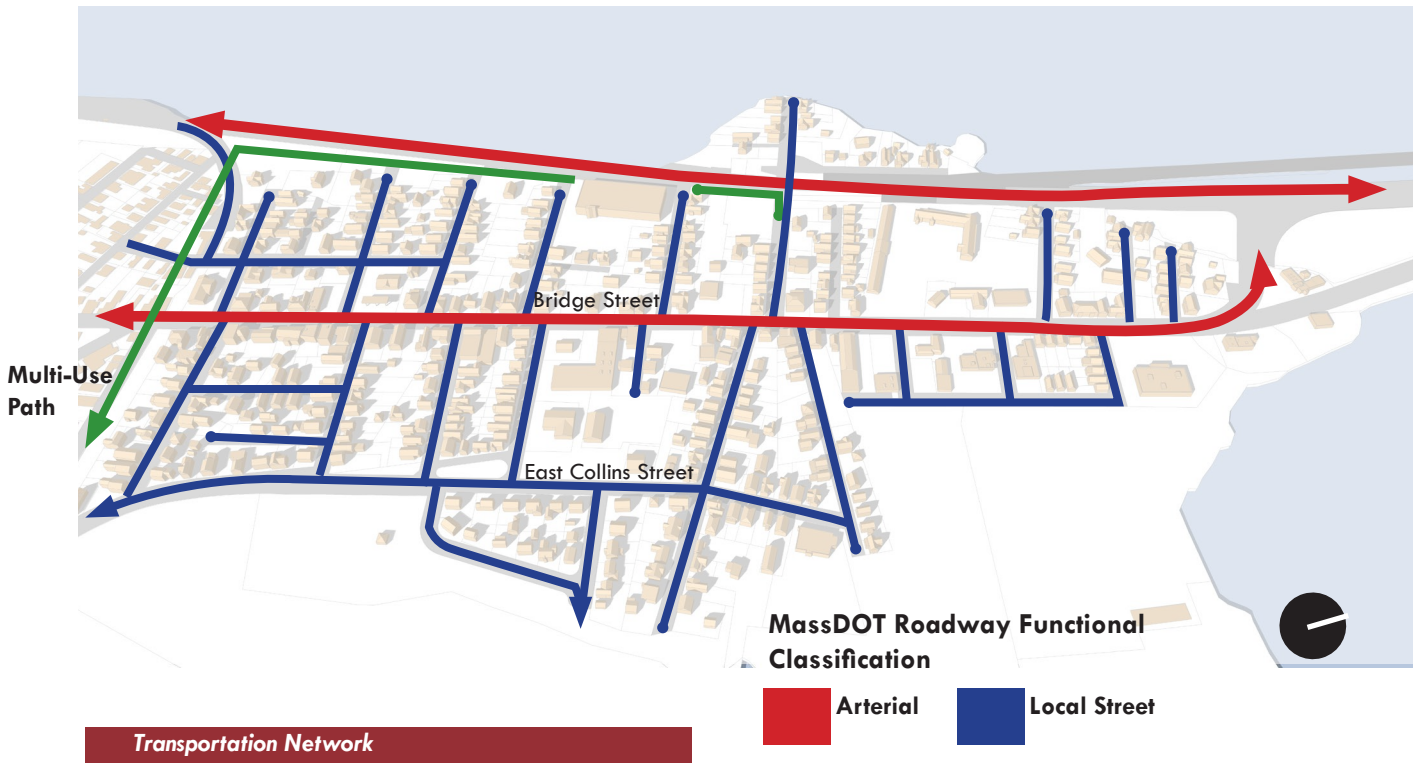
The diagram on the right depicts as a typical cross section for Bridge Street. The street within the study area is generally a single lane in each direction with on-street parking along either side. The vehicular travel lanes are approximately 15 feet wide and the parking is 10 feet, totaling 50 from curb to curb. Sidewalks run along both sides of the street and are around 8 feet wide.

As noted previously, the location of the building in relation to the lot line, as well as the location of parking, has a tremendous effect on a street's character. Setbacks vary widely along Bridge Street. In some cases the building meets the lot line, providing the effect of a walkable, downtown street, and in other locations buildings are set back more than 100 feet with rows of parking (or storage) in front.

The mass of the buildings is another factor affecting a street's character. Buildings of a similar size and mass can provide a harmonious effect on a street. Conversely, dramatic changes in the heights and widths of buildings can provide a jarring effect on the street's character. Buildings on Bridge Street are generally two to three stories, with some single story structures throughout.

There are several takeaways regarding the neighborhoods roadway network:

- Given the bypass road's purpose of diverting high speed traffic away from Bridge Street, Bridge Street itself should serve as a local neighborhood road with lower speeds and safer conditions for pedestrians.
- There appears to be an opportunity for on-road bicycle facilities, i.e., buffered bicycle lanes, which was identified as a high priority project in the City's Bicycle Master Plan.
- Sidewalk quality and amenities vary throughout the corridor.
- Street parking provides a buffer for pedestrians from traffic but can also reduce visibility when crossing
- Large front setbacks with parking in front of buildings in some locations diminishes walkability
- Single story buildings with frontage on Bridge Street indicate that the corridor's full economic potential may not be fully realized.¹



*Measurements are approximate, based on visual imagery

Typical Cross Section of Bridge Street

¹In some cases (e.g., Brake & Clutch storefront, single story buildings should be preserved for their contribution to the historic character of the neighborhood.

3.0 Existing Conditions

3.5 Composite Mapping of Challenges and Opportunities

The list below and diagrams on the right summarize a number of the strengths and challenges that currently exist in the neighborhood.

Strengths

- A. Sidewalks.** Sidewalks extend consistently along Bridge Street
- B. Multi-use path.** The multi-use path provides off-road bike and pedestrian mobility
- C. MBTA bus.** The MBTA Rt 451 bus runs along Bridge Street, providing access to north Beverly
- D. Proximity to downtown.** A large portion of the study area is a relatively short walk to the downtown and MBTA commuter rail station.
- E. Building scale.** Portions along Bridge Street, especially in the southern half, have a “fine grain” scale that promotes walkability.
- F. Ground-floor retail.** Several developments along Bridge Street have ground-floor retail meeting the edge of the sidewalk, improving the pedestrian realm.
- G. Diversity of businesses.** The neighborhood has a wide variety of businesses and services to meet the needs of the neighborhood and city at large.
- H. Beach and parks.** There are numerous open spaces and beach access in the neighborhood.
- I. Elementary School.** The Carlton Innovation School underscores the family-friendly nature of the neighborhood and serves as a hub of social activity.

Challenges

- A. Location of Parking.** Parking is the dominant visual feature along portions of Bridge Street.
- B. Lack of full multi-use path network.** Currently, there are gaps in both the multi-use path itself, as well as connections to other local multi-modal networks.
- C. Lack of bicycle facilities.** Bridge Street lacks bike facilities and bike parking.
- D. Wide curb cuts.** Portions of Bridge Street have wide and frequent curb cuts, hindering pedestrian safety.
- E. Potentially unsafe crossings.** Many intersections along Bridge Street may provide a danger to pedestrians attempting to cross the street.
- F. Relatively long distance to downtown.** Portions of the neighborhood are relatively far for pedestrians to access the downtown and commuter rail station. (For example, the 99 Restaurant is more than a mile from the downtown.)
- G. Lack of cohesive built form.** The character and quality of building design along Bridge Street varies considerably, particularly post 1950s commercial developments on larger parcels.
- H. Existing non-conforming uses.** Salem’s ordinance allows for redevelopment of an existing non-conforming use to another, less detrimental non-conforming use, which may not necessarily be in keeping with the neighborhood’s vision.



Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Strengths



Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Challenges

4.0 COMMUNITY VISION



4.0 COMMUNITY VISION

4.1 Vision Statement

What kind of Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood do we want?

A critical aspect of the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood visioning effort was hearing from local residents and business owners to understand how they want their neighborhood to function, look, and feel. Through an interactive forum (described more fully in the following chapter), residents communicated their vision for the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood's future. The following is a vision statement that will serve to help guide future decisions and investments.

The Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Vision:

The Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood is a historic, family-friendly neighborhood an proud part of Salem, welcoming to residents of all ages and affordable across a range of incomes. The neighborhood celebrates a strong identity, based upon its history and coastal location. Building on its historical commercial strengths, local and small businesses thrive along Bridge Street, supported by both neighborhood residents, as well as visitors. Clusters of retail and mixed-use development are interspersed with residential development, helping to maintain the neighborhood's character. The neighborhood is resilient, seeking to minimize its contributions to climate change, while also adapting to changes taking place.

Sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and paths create a safe network for pedestrians and cyclists within the neighborhood and to other parts of the City. The appropriately scaled blend of retail, restaurants, services, residences, and smaller-scale office spaces attract business, jobs and increased consumer spending along Bridge Street, while the neighborhood itself is safe and attractive with a robust tree canopy, plantings, benches, lighting, and other amenities.

4.2 Principles Supporting the Vision

The vision statement is supported by a series of principles. These principles provide greater detail for how the vision will be achieved in the future.

A strong sense of identity. The neighborhood should take advantage of its location, unique assets, history, and architecture to position itself as a distinct neighborhood within Salem. This includes everything from the types of buildings retained and developed to wayfinding that showcases the neighborhood's history to programming of arts/culture activities.

Active commercial uses along Bridge Street. Uses, such as restaurants, cafes, and retail along Bridge Street, especially where the building meets the sidewalk and parking is located in the rear, help create a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood. Both regulations and initiatives should support all commercial enterprises.

Development at appropriate scale and of high quality design. Regulations should ensure that the existing scale and height of the neighborhood's buildings is maintained. While development should not seek to mimic previous architectural styles, it should incorporate be compatible in style and materials with existing buildings along the corridor.

Maintain housing affordability. As Salem becomes an increasingly popular place for people to live, rising housing prices threaten to displace existing residents and limit who is able to afford to move to the community. A number of efforts can help ensure Bridge Street Neck remains affordable.

Traffic calming and other pedestrian safety improvements. The streets of Bridge Street Neck, including Bridge Street itself, should be safe for all pedestrians.

Enhanced sidewalks and amenities. Being "walkable" goes beyond simply being safe for pedestrians. Walkable areas are places that people want to walk and are comfortable doing so. Widened sidewalks, an increased shade canopy, trash receptacles, benches, parklets, and other amenities are also important, as is urban design based on human-scaled principles.

A network for cyclists. Shared multi-use paths should be extended and connected throughout the neighborhood and connect seamlessly to other neighborhoods, supplemented by safe on-road travel opportunities.

Invest in public spaces. Open spaces such as parks and beaches should be well-maintained and, where needed, access should be improved. Programming and events can help make these spaces more vibrant and well-used.

5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

000170
Coffee
bake shop
Time

REAL HOT CHOCOLATE MILK
APPLE CIDER DONUTS
BREAKFAST SANDWICHES

Free Wi-Fi



coffee time Bake



5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

The community vision was developed in three parts that together form the basis for guiding the future of the Bridge Street Neck neighborhood. The primary activity to develop the community vision was an interactive forum held in September 2019. After a brief presentation, community members -- including residents, business owners, and City officials -- worked together in groups on three facilitated exercises. Supplementing the work from this forum was input from the Bridge Street Neck Steering Committee, as well as City staff.

The first part is the Vision Statement and accompanying principles, which articulate the community's vision. (See Section 4.) Groups worked to develop their statements, which were then synthesized and refined. The Vision Statement is intended to provide the general character, open space characteristics, transportation elements, types of development, and other goals. The principles provide a degree of greater specificity that support achieving the vision. Taken together, the Vision Statement and Principles should guide the development of the various recommendations that will be applied to the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood.

The second aspect are a range of images that help depict aspects of the vision. Each group was asked to choose six images based on three categories (described below). The groups had the flexibility to have slightly more or less for any of the categories. These visual images help communicate the desired look and feel of the neighborhood. The results of this aspect can help inform zoning, design guidelines, aspects of site plan review, and priorities of public investments.

The images were based upon three categories that will help shape the future of Bridge

Street Neck. The first are **BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS**. These images help communicate desired elements such as scale, height, architectural style, architectural details, materials, and uses. Generally, the images are not intended to advocate for the replication of a specific building or building type; rather, these images help distill the key elements that the community desires to help shape the vision and associated recommendations.

The second category are **STREET/SIDEWALK CHARACTERISTICS**. These images help communicate priorities related to sidewalk characteristics, pedestrian needs, bicycle infrastructure, and how private development interacts with the public domain.

The final category is **OPEN SPACE/PLAZA CHARACTERISTICS**. The images communicate the types of open spaces, both public and private, that are needed in Bridge Street Neck. Images include the types of amenities, intended users, and the general feel of the open spaces (e.g., natural state vs. manicured, softscape vs. hardscape).

The third aspect is a concept plan that illustrates both broad, neighborhood-level desires, as well as specific, location-based elements. Participants were provided with cut-out "game pieces" representing various uses, open space needs, street improvements, etc. and worked together to place them on an aerial map of the neighborhood. The land use pieces were intended as "bubbles" that provide general desires for an area of the neighborhood, rather than for a specific parcel. Participants were encouraged to use an iterative approach, "testing" an idea, reflecting on it, and refining as needed. The results of the concept plan help visually communicate the vision at the neighborhood scale.



Photos from the community forum

5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

5.1 Community Forum

Among each of the groups there was a fair amount of overlap for the vision statement, images, and concept plan. But each group also had its own focus and distinctions from the others.

Community Forum Group 1

The first group focused on building images of 2.5 to three stories. Two of the images were of single family homes on small lots. The other four images were all of mixed-use buildings with residences above ground-floor retail. This group showed a clear preference for traditional, moderately-scaled buildings. The building faces have either narrow masses or are articulated often. The buildings contain peaked roofs, which further reduces structures' mass. (The one example of contemporary architecture was annotated to explicitly say the group liked the mixed-use characteristics but not the architecture itself.)

The street characteristics continued the theme of ground-floor retail to activate the space, as

well as wide sidewalks with street trees and other landscaping to buffer from the roadway. The open space photos included plazas with shade and seating, as well as a playground for children.

The concept plan called for enhanced streetscape along Bridge Street, as well as a need for safe crossings at several intersections, including at Skerry Street (which leads to the Carlton School), March Street, and Ames Street (before joining the bridge).

This group also saw a need to improve all of the existing public open spaces, as well as to create public access to the beach area behind the 99 Restaurant.

The south part of the neighborhood would largely stay the same. The group did see the opportunity for more multi-family units on the east side of the neighborhood in what is currently the residential single family district. This group would like to see additional mixed-use development towards the north end of the site.



Group 1 Composite Plan and Visual Imagery Choices (Opposite)



5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

5.1 Community Forum

Community Forum Group 2

The second group chose a greater variety of residential building types, ranging from smaller single family to townhomes to triple deckers. They also chose a slightly larger-scale mixed-use building that was four stories (although sloped roofs to reduce the building's bulk). This group also wanted a focus on retaining the existing Victorian and Greek Revival buildings.

The street characteristics focused on safe crossings, bicycle parking, and landscaping. The open spaces focused on active spaces, such as a playground, community garden, fitness areas, splash pads, food trucks, and seating.

The district plan was focused on retaining the positive aspects, including businesses, the school, and unique buildings, and enhancing them with mixed-use development along Bridge Street. The group envisioned a new, updated hotel to replace the existing Clipper Ship Inn that would have mixed-use development along the frontage.

The group believed that numerous intersections along Bridge Street must be improved to enhance safety. They also saw the need for bicycle facilities along Collins Street to connect with the playground and beach.



Group 2 Composite Plan and Visual Imagery Choices (Opposite)



Authentic Historic Victorian
and Greek Revival
[write-in note]



5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

5.1 Community Forum

Community Forum Group 3

This group chose building images similar to the previous one, except choosing a different mixed-use example (potentially focusing on the scale more than the architecture). This group also chose a three-story multi-family building.

The images for street characteristics were also similar to the previous group, with a focus on plantings and buffering the pedestrian experience from the roadway. In addition, this group chose photos depicting bicycle lanes and bike racks.

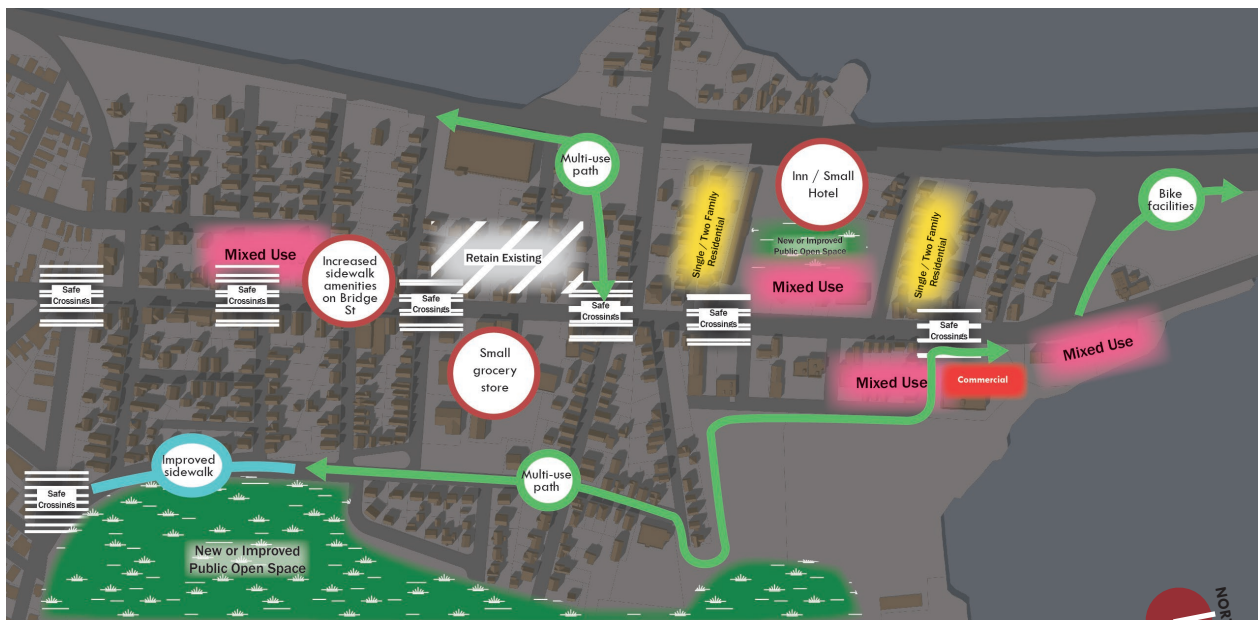
Finally, the open spaces put a focus on both active uses and passive uses. Active use images included two with playgrounds, underscoring the need for high quality spaces for children. Passive use images were quieter spaces for sitting or passing through.

This group's concept plan was the most holistic and detailed. The group envisioned a number of mixed-use nodes along Bridge Street,

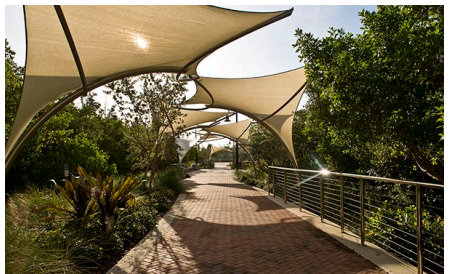
specifically noting a desire for a small grocery store and new hotel.

For multimodal transportation, the group would like to see a continuation of the existing shared-use path behind the Carlton School. They would also like to see a new path or on-road bike facilities that would connect from the Collins Cove Playground through East Collins Street and connecting to the bridge to Beverly.

Finally, the group cited the need for improved crossing for pedestrians all throughout Bridge Street, as well as the need to improve sidewalk amenities along Bridge Street and a portion of Collins Street.



Group 3 Composite Plan and Visual Imagery Choices (Opposite)



5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

5.1 Community Forum

Community Forum Group 4

The final group chose images that focused primarily on smaller scale residential. These included modest-sized story homes, larger single family homes, and triple deckers. All of these residential uses are on smaller lots, in keeping with the existing characteristics of Bridge Street Neck’s residential areas. The members of the group also chose a mixed-use example, noting that they like the materials, building articulation, and general character; however, they would want this type of building modified to be three rather than four stories. This brick building is the closest approximation to Salem’s downtown and is a departure from the buildings along Bridge Street in the neighborhood today. This was the only group that chose fewer than six building characteristics images.

For sidewalk characteristics, planters, seating, and shade were key characteristics of the pictures chosen. They also showed a desire for ground-floor retail, wide sidewalks, and

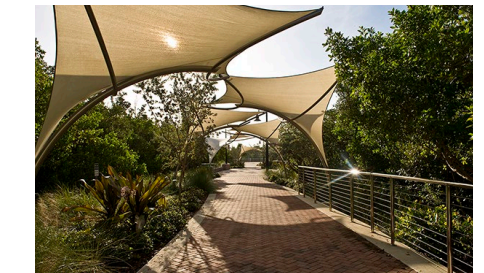
bicycle parking. Preferred open space characteristics continued the desire for shade, plantings, and seating. The group chose pictures showing both park-like open spaces, as well as more modern, hardscape plazas.

The concept plan was the “lightest touch” among the groups. That is, there were the fewest interventions and the most bubbles to retain existing uses. The group saw the opportunity for a couple of mixed-use nodes along Bridge Street, one towards the south end of the neighborhood and a second one at the north end.

As with a previous group, this table saw an opportunity for an updated hotel development at the existing Clipper Ship Inn. The group saw a need to improve the safety of the intersection at Skerry Street. Finally, they felt that the Charles Curtis Memorial Park could be improved.



Group 4 Composite Plan and Visual Imagery Choices (Opposite)



5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

5.1 Community Forum

Community Forum -- Synthesis

Despite differences among the groups, especially for the concept plans, the similarities tended to outweigh these differences. Furthermore, the groups' various preferences did not generally conflict with each other; rather, they tended to reflect differences in focus rather than in overall vision.

Some of the takeaways:

Retain the positive elements. The groups viewed the future of Bridge Street neck as an “evolution, rather than revolution” of the existing neighborhood. Unique buildings such as the Brake & Clutch building, cherished businesses such as Coffee Time, community focal points such as the Carlton Innovation School, and the existing residential neighborhoods, are all important to retain for the future of the neighborhood.

Improve pedestrian comfort and safety along Bridge Street. All groups cited numerous locations where intersections should be improved to enhance pedestrian safety, especially along Bridge Street. In addition to safety, the groups saw opportunity to improve the amenities along Bridge Street Neck.

Improve pedestrian/cyclist realm throughout the neighborhood. The groups found potential opportunities for additional on- and off-road paths to build upon Salem's already strong network of multi-use paths.

Increase mixed-use buildings. Ultimately the amount of commercial uses that can be supported in the neighborhood is a function of market demand. Nevertheless, all groups would like to see the amount of mixed-use buildings along Bridge Street increase to the extent that there is, in fact, market demand.

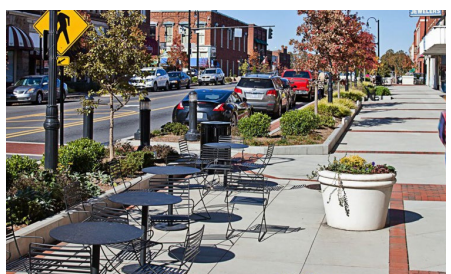
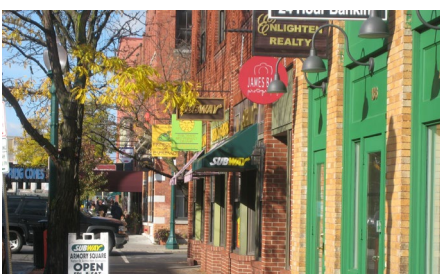
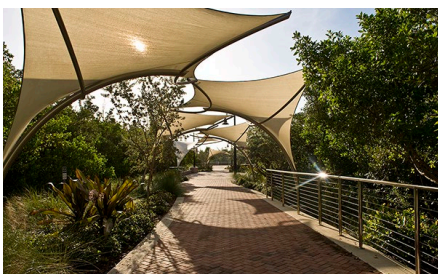
These mixed-use buildings provide ground-level activation, which enhance the vibrancy of Bridge Street and provide more amenities for area residents.

Retain scale of neighborhood. With very few exceptions, groups wanted to maintain three-story maximums for buildings. In addition, the tables chose buildings that either had relatively narrow building faces along the street frontage or were articulated often to provide the visual effect of reduced masses.

Retain character of residential areas. Groups wanted to generally keep the types of residential buildings currently in place throughout Bridge Street Neck.

Support local businesses. Through both the vision statement and visual imagery exercises, participants value the presence of businesses that are complementary to the neighborhood.

Improve public open spaces. Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood is fortunate to have a number of public open spaces, including multiple playgrounds and beach access. The forum participants, however, felt that most of these spaces could be improved.



Top photos among tables at Community Forum

5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

5.2 Concept Plan

The final component of the Vision is a Concept Plan. The concept plan provides a neighborhood-level view of the future land uses and public realm improvements. Because it is a high-level summary, accompanying the concept map is a “zoomed-in” view that provides an on-the-ground example of the concept plan’s vision. This example, of one of the mixed-use nodes envisioned in the plan, is provided in the next section and further utilized in the Implementation chapter.

Taken together, the Vision Statement, Visual Imagery, and Concept Plan, guide the recommendations outlined in the next section. They should also help inform the various decisions stakeholders make that will affect the future of the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood. As such, all stakeholders -- including City staff, City officials, land use boards, developers, neighborhood advocates, etc. -- should refer to this document to consider whether their actions will advance the neighborhood vision.

The diagram on the top right provides a “bubble diagram” illustrating one way the vision could be realized from a land use perspective. Generally speaking, forum participants favored retaining the existing uses throughout most of the neighborhood, especially the residential areas. They also envision Bridge Street continuing its evolution with pockets of mixed-use development, along with commercial and residential.

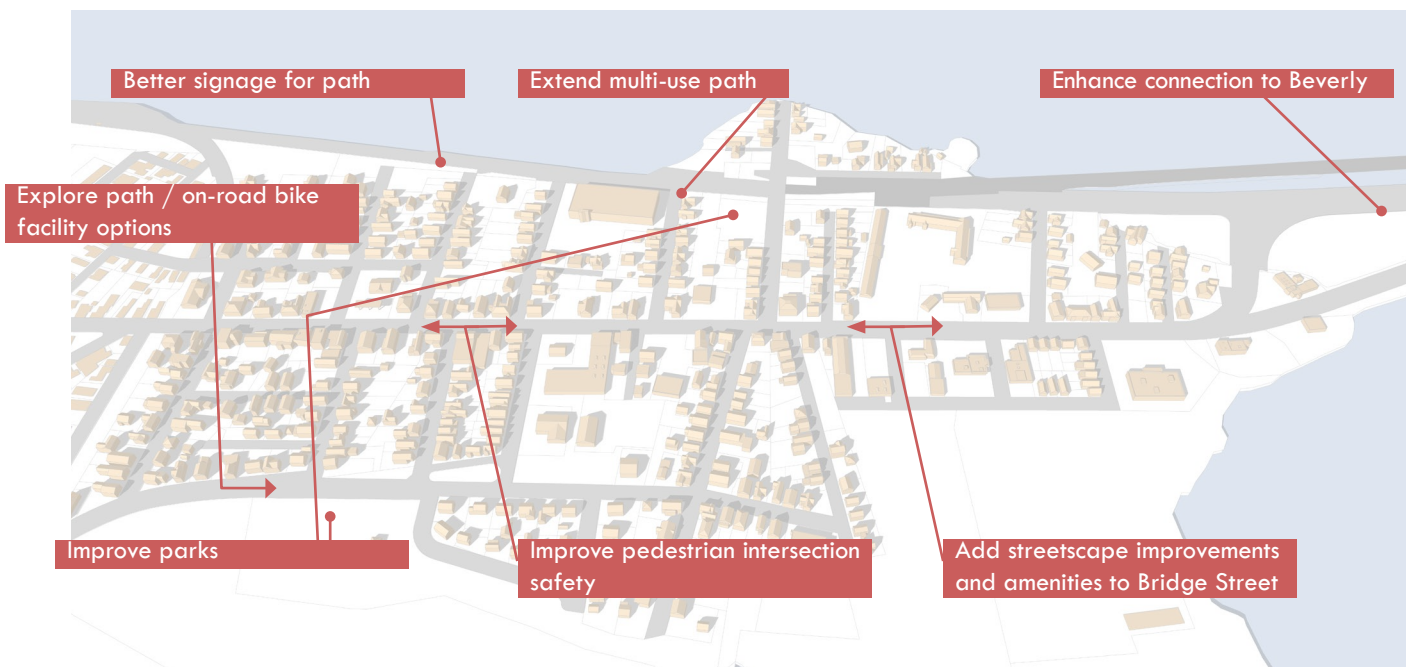
While this vision should be pursued at a high level, it is important to note that, especially along Bridge Street, the actual land uses could develop in numerous ways and still largely comport with the vision. The bubble diagram depicts a nodal approach, where mixed-use development is concentrated along several points of Bridge Street. Under

current circumstances, it is unlikely there is market demand for groundfloor commercial along the entire stretch of Bridge Street in the neighborhood. Furthermore, the timing of if/when redevelopment occurs can vary based on a multitude of factors. The neighborhood’s and City’s role is to develop the framework and set the conditions for redevelopment to occur, described in the next section. The framework, i.e., the zoning, should be flexible enough to allow market conditions and land-owner preferences to guide any future redevelopment.

The diagram on the bottom right illustrates other elements of the concept plan related to connectivity and public realm improvements.



*Coffee Time Bake Shop, the Brake & Clutch building, and the Carlton School were identified as important neighborhood assets.



Concept plans

5.0 DEVELOPING THE VISION

5.3 Mixed-Use Node Example

The accompanying diagram represents an example of a “mixed-use node” that could be developed along Bridge Street. It depicts a section on the west side of the street at 34, 28, and 40 Bridge Street. **Note**, this diagram is hypothetical and intended to demonstrate how future development and public realm improvements can comport with the neighborhood vision. It is *not* a recommendation to redevelop these specific properties.

The diagram includes a number of elements that incorporate the neighborhood vision, principles, and associated recommendations. These include:

- **Mixed-use buildings.** Mixed-use buildings typically have commercial space on the ground floor and, generally, residential above. The upper floor(s) could also contain office space.
- **A reimagining of the Clipper Ship Inn into a more traditional, New England-style inn.** Multiple groups at the forum expressed a desire to keep the lodging use but in an updated development that would better define the street edge.
- **Context-sensitive scale.** The heights and massing of the buildings reinforce the pedestrian-focused nature found along portions of Bridge Street’s. Larger buildings are articulated to avoid the feeling of an overly massive structure.
- **Parking location.** Parking for new development is located in the rear of the building. Screening through landscaping or other means can minimize the negative visual impacts of existing parking lots, and create a more desirable street edge that

has more visual interest at the pedestrian level and fosters a welcoming environment for pedestrians.

- **Minimal setbacks.** Buildings generally meet the lot line at the sidewalk, creating a walkable environment. Where setbacks occur, they are generally to activate the space with outdoor seating.
- **Intersection improvements.** Pedestrian-safety elements are included, such as curb bulb-outs and crosswalks.
- **Bicycle facilities.** Bicycle infrastructure provides a safer, on-road way for bicyclists to travel than the existing sharrows.
- **Sidewalk amenities.** Improving the sidewalks along Bridge Street further enhances pedestrian comfort and can help stimulate economic development.

This mixed-use example will be used in the following section, Implementing the Vision, to further explain the various recommendations.



Hypothetical example representing a mixed-use node along Bridge Street*

Note, this diagram is hypothetical and intended to demonstrate how future development and public realm improvements can comport with the neighborhood vision. It is *not* a recommendation to redevelop these specific properties.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS



6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- ZONING

Because zoning regulates many aspects of private development, it is one of the most important tools the community has to help implement the vision. Zoning creates the framework for how land is developed or redeveloped in the future.

Zoning ordinances can be complex and have a number of unintended consequences. Furthermore, there are often multiple ways an area's zoning could be crafted, each of which could achieve the vision but also could have various drawbacks. The recommendations and an initial draft ordinance (included as an appendix) are intended to be a starting point for developing zoning appropriate to help achieve the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood's vision. It is expected that the City will work with the Bridge Street Neck Steering Committee to refine the zoning.

It is also important to note that while zoning is a critical element, it is not the only element needed to achieve the vision. The sections following this contain recommendations by other topic areas to create achieve the vision, i.e., creating a vibrant, affordable, family-friendly neighborhood filled with local businesses and easy to get around.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- ZONING

6.1 Location and Boundaries of Zoning Changes

Location and Boundaries of Zoning Changes

Regarding zoning, an aspect that was unanimous among all participants in the community forum was that the majority of the neighborhood should retain its existing uses and character. That is, the residential areas, which comprise the majority of the neighborhood, should remain so. The area is primarily zoned

as Residential Two-Family (R2), and based on community input MAPC recommends no change to these areas.

The primary focus for zoning changes should be along Bridge Street itself. The previous planning effort from 2012 proposed an overlay district that would capture the Business Highway (B2), Wholesale + Automotive (B4), and Business Neighborhood (B1) districts. In this updated planning effort, MAPC recommends consideration to expand the parcels under consideration to include all parcels along Bridge Street, including those zoned as R2. Several of these parcels already contain businesses or dwelling units in excess of two units and including them in the district would make them conforming.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- ZONING

6.2 Options for Rezoning along Bridge Street

Based upon the previous planning efforts, input from City staff, and other considerations, MAPC recommends drafting of an overlay district for Bridge Street. With this approach, the existing "base zoning" remains in place. Landowners have the choice of developing under the existing base zoning or choosing to develop under the overlay district. The choice, therefore, maximizes flexibility and options.

In making this recommendation, MAPC considered alternatives. This section provides a brief summary of each, as several of them are viable options that, if the City and working group agree, could be alternatives to an overlay district approach.

Other Options Considered: No Changes to Zoning

The base option is to make no changes to the zoning. This is the default and would not require any additional work. The existing zoning, however, does not support the neighborhood vision. As noted earlier,

Summary of Zoning Options Considered for Bridge Street Neck

| Option | Recommendation | Summary | Comments |
|-------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Overlay District | Preferred option | A new district crafted to fit the Vision | An overlay district retains the existing base zoning, retaining existing rights and providing maximum flexibility. |
| New Base Zoning | Potential option | A new district crafted to fit the Vision | This would replace the existing base zoning districts. Landowners would no longer be able to develop under the existing base zoning. |
| Expand and Modify B1 District | Not a preferred option, but better than making no changes | Expand the B1 district and make modifications to better reflect the Vision | The B1 District allows for mixed-use development, which is part of the Vision. Dimensional standards can be modified to better reflect the Vision than the existing B1 standards. Because this alters the base zoning, a number of businesses will no longer be conforming. Modifications to the B1 standards would also affect B1 districts throughout the City, not only Bridge Street Neck. |
| Expand B1 District | Not a preferred option, but better than making no changes | Expand the Neighborhood Business District (B1) to replace the existing B2 and B4 districts along the corridor | This is an easier approach than making modifications to the B1 District, but a number of the existing B1 dimensional standards are not aligned with the Vision. |
| Amend B2 and B4 Districts | Not recommended | Modify to the Wholesale + Automotive and Business Highway Districts to better reflect the Vision | Modifications to the B2 and B4 districts would affect these districts throughout the City, not only in Bridge Street Neck. Because they are by nature auto-centric, the existing uses and standards are appropriate for these districts. |
| No Change to Zoning | Not recommended | Maintain existing zoning | The existing zoning does not always meet the neighborhood's needs and development could occur that is not in keeping with neighborhood character. |

change is occurring in the neighborhood, as developers can apply for a Special Permit to redevelop properties that are out of context with the neighborhood; therefore, new zoning is important to ensure future development meets the needs of the neighborhood.

Other Options Considered: Expand B1 (Neighborhood Business) District

One option, and potentially the simplest to administer, would be to expand the B1 district north, substituting the B2 and B4 districts with the B1 zoning (and potentially the R2 parcels along Bridge Street). This was a consideration in the previous planning effort. Critically, since that time, B1 now allows for mixed-use development.

While simplest to implement, expanding the B1 has two issues. First, it provides non-conformity issues related to a number of the existing properties in B2 and B4. It may be difficult, especially politically, to rezone an area where the existing uses would not be conforming under the new zoning.

Furthermore, the dimensional standards of the B1 are not fully reflective of the community's vision for development. In particular, the current height limit of 30 feet may lead to buildings that do not add to Bridge Street's character. The building height maximums for the R1 and R2 are 35 feet. Allowing this extra height allows for 3 stories with peaked roofs, which is in keeping with the character. Thirty-foot, three-story buildings would likely result in flat roofs.

In addition, front setbacks in B1 are 15 feet. The buildings from the visual imagery exercise generally had buildings that met the sidewalk directly with no setback. Indeed, many of the buildings today have minimal setbacks.

Other Options Considered: Expand and Modify B1

A second option would be both to expand the B1 district and amend the dimensional requirements to accommodate the issues outlined above. This would more fully allow the regulations of the B1 to comport with the vision. The drawback to this approach is 1) there are still the non-conformance issues described above and 2) these changes will affect the B1 throughout the City. If the City chooses this approach it should, therefore, consider the impacts on the City's other B1 districts.

Other Options Considered: Create a New Base Zoning District

Another alternative is to develop a new base zoning district. New base zoning would allow for something tailored to Bridge Street and would not affect other districts in the City. New base zoning has some advantages over an overlay district approach. For example, it ensures that only those uses that are compatible with the vision are allowed if redevelopment takes place. With an overlay district, the hope is generally that the market conditions will be enough incentive for redevelopment to use the overlay versus base zoning, but that may not necessarily be the case. As such, some communities have recently been eliminating the use of overlay districts and relying on base zoning instead.

The drawback, as with expansion of the B1 district, is that many parcels may no longer be conforming. Pre-existing, non-conforming uses would be grandfathered in under a new zoning district; however, a variance would be needed if that business wished, for example, to expand its property.

Perhaps more importantly, changing the base zoning can be the most difficult to implement

because of political considerations. For example, landowners may not want to operate under conditions where it will no longer be conforming to the allowable uses.

An option that may satisfy the concerns of existing non-conforming uses and structures would be to make specific provisions for existing uses to not only continue but expand if desired. Example language to serve as a starting point is:

I. Nonconformance

A. Nonconforming Structures and Uses

a. Nonconforming structures lawfully in existence prior to [date of new zoning adoption] may be modified in conformance with the provisions of this Article.

b. The [Special Permit Granting Authority] may, by special permit, allow a modification to a preexisting nonconforming structure that extends or increases an existing nonconformity, with the following restrictions:

i. The gross floor area may not be increased by more than twenty-five percent (25%) from the gross floor area in existence prior to [date], as identified by the City Assessing Department.

ii. The building must be occupied or intended to be occupied by either a conforming use or an existing use as of [date].

Other Options Considered: Modify Existing Base Zoning Districts

Another option is to simply amend the B2 and B4 to allow for mixed-use development, in the way that B1 was amended. This raises the same issues of amending the B1 district

but more significantly. Rather than relatively minor changes to building heights and setbacks, this would now allow mixed-use development on all sites zoned B2 and B4. Because B1 is developed as a district for small-scale commercial businesses, allowing residences above these businesses makes intuitive sense. B2 and B4, however, are by their nature auto-centric. While it may make sense to allow for mixed-use for these parcels along Bridge Street, it likely would not be appropriate for B2 and B4 districts in other parts of the City. As such, MAPC does not recommend this approach unless careful consideration is given to these concerns and the implications of allowing mixed-use in these districts.

Preferred Option: Create an Overlay District

The final option, therefore, is development of an overlay district. As with new base zoning, overlay districts allow for uses and development styles that can be crafted to the specific area. They also have the advantage of allowing existing uses to remain in conformity. The drawback to an overlay district is that it allows land owners the option of choosing to redevelop under the overlay district or the base zoning. This could allow landowners to choose the zoning option that does not help realize the vision. It could also allow future development that is in conflict with the desires of abutters (e.g., a new automotive center being constructed next to existing residences).

Despite these drawbacks, an overlay district is a good approach where a community, either for political reasons and/or where the underlying uses are acceptable, wants to retain its base zoning. Furthermore, the overlay district can include incentives to encourage its use.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- ZONING

6.3 Proposed Bridge Street Neck Corridor Overlay District

These recommendations can provide a starting point for a new zoning district that will help achieve the vision. Furthermore, the recommendations would still apply if the City in the future decides to create a new base district rather than overlay district. (In this case, the recommendations would still apply but the draft text may be more appropriate for an overlay district. For example, in the case of new base zoning the table of uses and table of dimensions would need to be amended.)

As an appendix to this Vision Update Plan, a draft overlay zoning for Bridge Street is provided. The draft includes elements and inspiration from the previous 2012 zoning effort, information from this current vision planning, and other bylaws/ordinances in the metropolitan Boston region.

This draft overlay district is intended to be a starting point for the City and the Bridge Street Neck Steering Committee to use to help achieve the neighborhood vision. The City can amend, add, and delete to this draft to refine the zoning to best meet its needs.

The following summarizes aspects of the zoning.

Purpose. The zoning begins by summarizing elements of the vision and principles from this Vision Update that are relevant to zoning.

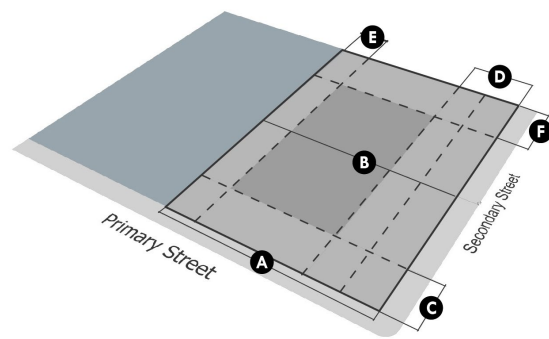
Uses. The October 2018 forum sought feedback on proposed uses and found strong support for a variety of uses, including residential and mixed-use. Overall, the Vision Update did not put a deep focus on the numerous and detailed options for specific uses. The draft provides a starting point that allow for a variety of retail, office, residential, and other uses that may be compatible with

the vision for future development along Bridge Street. Because this is an overlay district, existing auto-centric types of uses were omitted from the draft. This section should be discussed in detail and both the types of uses and whether allowable by right or special permit should be amended as needed.

Lot requirements. One of the key takeaways from the community forum was a preference for minimal front setbacks of new buildings along Bridge Street. Where setbacks do exist they should serve to activate the space, such as with restaurant seating. Parking should be placed in the rear or side of the building. The lot requirements section sets these standards.

The lot requirements are also intended to be flexible for the existing parcels, many of which are relatively small, and to utilize this overlay district in a way that allows development to occur in conformance with the standards. Minimum lot size, therefore, is set to 5,000 SF, which would encompass most parcels in the potential overlay district.

Building standards (general). Preference at the community forum was for a maximum of three story buildings. Building coverage maximum was set at 75%, which is intended to provide flexibility for creating a feasible



DRAFT overlay district: Lot standards diagram

development, especially on smaller parcels. Other requirements, such as an introduction of required open space for residential uses, residential density limits, and parking requirements would ultimately dictate the amount of lot coverage possible.

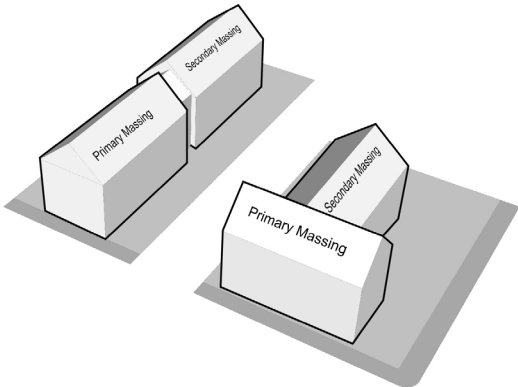
Residential dwelling unit maximum is proposed at 16 units per acre, which is often considered a moderate density. As an example, this would allow a 5,450 SF site (typical of the district), to have ground-floor retail and two units above it.

Building standards (additional). The draft overlay district goes a step beyond typical zoning districts by providing greater specificity of various standards. The purpose is to guide development to more closely to fit into the existing and historical context of Bridge Street. The draft design guidelines emphasize the importance of windows on the ground floor. The draft overlay district, therefore, sets a requirement for the amount of glazing required on the front facade of the ground floor (60% for commercial uses between 2 and 12 feet of the first-floor facade).

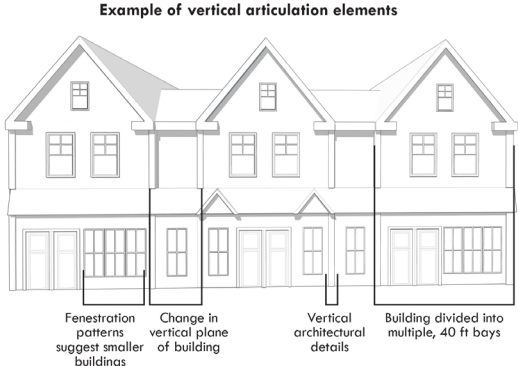
There is not a single architectural style of buildings along Bridge Street. The draft overlay district, therefore, does not dictate specific building styles or types. It does,

however, set standards for the overall form of the building beyond height that will integrate into the neighborhood context. The general mass that would be appropriate for buildings is provided, and, equally important, a requirement for vertical facade modulation of large buildings is set at every 40 ft. This helps to visually reduce the bulk of any larger buildings that may be built and fits with both the existing context and the visual preference exercise from the community forum. In addition, because most buildings have pitched roofs, the appropriate roof types are specified as part of the standards. As some existing buildings do have flat roofs, these are allowed through a special permit.

Building standards (components). While buildings’ architectural style varies along Bridge Street, there are a set number of “building components” common among a number of buildings along the corridor and which would be desirable to integrate into future redevelopment. These building components are accessory elements integrated into the buildings’ massing to increase building usefulness and provide a variety and individuality of design. Common components along Bridge Street include bay windows, dormers, and shed dormers.



DRAFT overlay district: building massing options diagram



DRAFT overlay district: Vertical articulation diagram

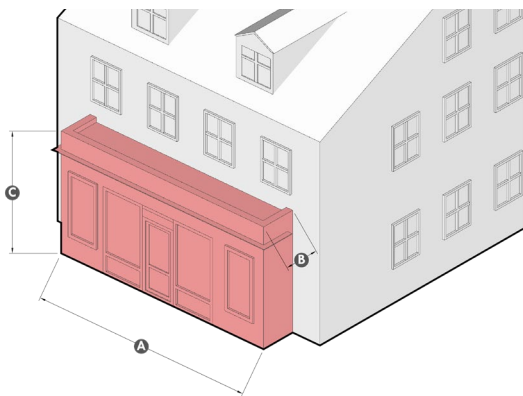
The draft overlay district, therefore, creates a set of permissible building components which are either found today along the corridor or would be consistent with meeting the future vision. Each component provides a description and associated standards to help ensure high quality design.

Parking standards. As noted, parking is required to be at the rear or side of a building, where possible. These standards also require that where parking is visible from the street (e.g., if placed on the side of a building), that they are adequately screened from pedestrians along Bridge Street.

The parking ratios were set based on generally accepted best practices for the context similar to Bridge Street Neck. As the vision process did not specifically seek input on parking ratios, this should be discussed closely among the City staff and BSN Steering Committee.

In addition to the standards set, the overlay district also provides the opportunity for a landowner to reduce the parking requirements through a special permit based on several options, including:

- Availability of on-street parking
- Shared parking arrangements between properties



DRAFT overlay district: Building components diagram example

- Shared parking based on a mixed-use development
- Presence of a car-sharing program
- Availability of off-site parking

Screening requirements. To further enhance the experience in the public realm, the overlay provides requirements for screening loading facilities, service areas, and mechanical equipment.

Process. The overlay district uses language from the current zoning ordinance, which requires a site plan review for new commercial construction of 2,000 square feet or more as well as site plan review for 6 or more new residential units. Since Bridge Street Neck is an Entrance Corridor, the Design Review Board will need to provide a recommendation to the Planning Board on all site plan reviews.

Taken together, this draft overlay district seeks to allow existing thriving businesses to continue and to shape future development in a way that is compatible with the existing context and achieves the vision.

The City may wish to consider adding additional controls for ensuring development utilizing the underlying zoning districts include historic preservation elements. This could include requiring requiring Salem Historical Commission approval for any building alterations in the underlying zoning; requiring that any structure 50 years or older in the overlay district would need such approval; and/or, recommending Local Historic District designation concurrent with the zoning changes and specifically addressing this under the process section.

Summary of Proposed Bridge Street Neck Corridor Overlay District

| | Proposed District |
|--|---|
| Zoning format | Overlay District |
| Height | 3 stories, 35 ft |
| Setbacks | Front setback: 0-15 ft. Where front setbacks do exist the space should be used for seating or landscaping, not parking. Side setback: 10 ft. Rear setback: 20 ft |
| Minimum frontage | 60 ft |
| Min. Lot Size | 5,000 SF |
| Max. Lot Coverage | 75%. Open space and parking requirements will help drive the effective maximum lot coverage. |
| Selected Uses | To be determined. Generally, should allow for a variety of retail, office, residential, and other uses that may be compatible with the vision for future development along Bridge Street. |
| Ground Floor Glazing | 60% commercial; 30% other |
| Max. Building Length | 175 ft |
| Min. Vertical Facade Modulation | 40 ft |
| Open Space | 15% if containing residential uses; 0% otherwise |
| Parking | 1.25 spaces per Residential Unit, 4 spaces per 1,000 SF for Commercial Uses; 3 spaces per 1,000 SF for other uses. Inclusion of options to reduce required parking. |
| Design Standards | Potential inclusion of standards to better ensure high quality design and architectural components that are compatible with existing Bridge Street Neck development and the Vision |
| Site Plan Review | Required |

7.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS



MARLTON
SCHOOL

Zoning, however important, is not the only tool needed to help achieve the Bridge Street Neck vision. The following sections provide recommendations related to managing neighborhood change (i.e., equity considerations), pedestrian/bike improvements, economic development considerations, potential design guidelines, and establishing a historic district.

7.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Managing Neighborhood Change

One of the elements of the vision is ensuring that Bridge Street Neck remains affordable and family-friendly. One of the concerns facing the City of Salem is addressing the effects of gentrification. Gentrification usually coincides with one of two changes in housing occupancy:

- **Replacement:** Replacement occurs when the number and composition of out-migrants does not change, but the people who move in have different demographics from those who move out. With this pattern, current residents do not face pressure to leave, but those who choose to are replaced by residents with a different demographic profile.
- **Displacement:** Displacement occurs when the rate of outmigration is higher than it otherwise would be because lower-income residents move due to increases in housing costs and a lack of affordable options. In-migrants can afford a higher cost of living and tend to have a different demographic profile from those who move out.

The differences between these kinds of

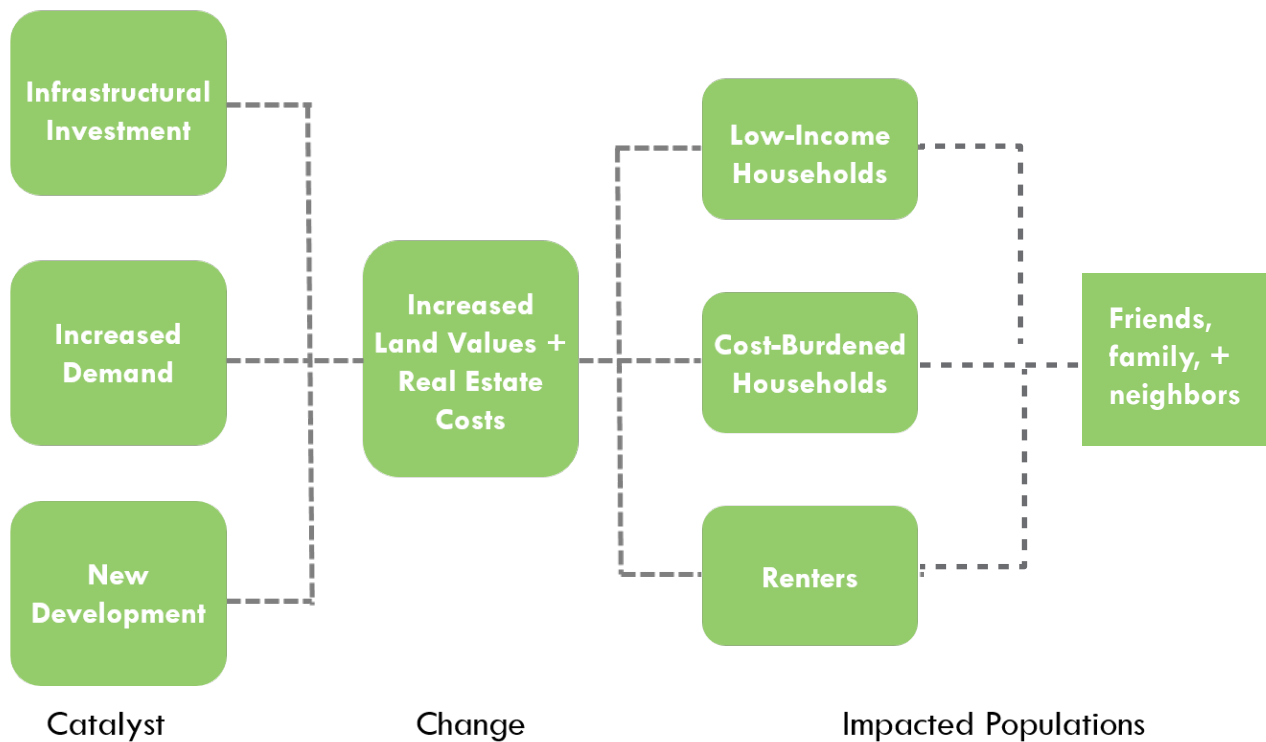
housing occupancy changes can be subtle, but meaningful. Importantly, either of them—not just displacement—result in profound changes in the demographic composition and social cohesion of a community. It is vital, then, that the City and community leaders take action to manage the market inflation that results from reinvestment and can prompt the relocation of low- and moderate-income residents, either by choice or displacement, to less accessible areas where housing is more affordable.

One of the most powerful actions a Community may have at its disposal is the adoption of an inclusionary zoning ordinance. At the time of writing of this report, the City has been working on drafting and refining this important tool to ensure that new market-rate residential development includes a minimum percentage of affordable units for various income levels.

Inclusionary zoning typically applies for developments that would be larger than what is likely in the Bridge Street Neck neighborhood. The following are additional measures that should be considered to help ensure the neighborhood remains affordable.

Facilitate a Robust Housing Production and Preservation Strategy

The City should demonstrate a commitment to maintain and increase the diversity of housing types and price points. Given that 41% of Salem's 2,465 Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) units could expire between now and 2035, it is vital that the City work with owners of expiring-use properties and subsidy providers to renegotiate terms. The MA Department of Housing and Community Development regularly updates the SHI. The City can monitor those properties approaching



Pathways of Neighborhood Change

expiration and conduct outreach to their owners so that they’re aware of their option to maintain affordability and how to do so.

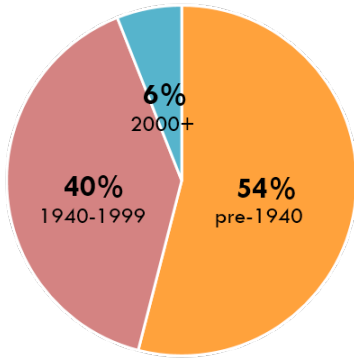
At the same time, the City can work with the development community to attract market-rate residential projects that range in scale, housing type, and unit size. Creative re-use to large-scale development to smaller townhouse or rowhouse projects, and rental projects in particular, should all be considered. In addition, the City can support the efforts of the local community development corporation and other affordable housing developers to increase the supply of deed-restricted housing.

Adopt a Condominium Conversion Ordinance

In strong housing markets composed mainly of rental housing stock, demand from higher-income populations for ownership housing

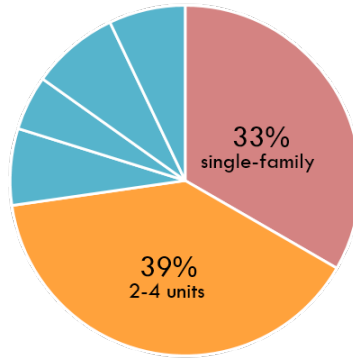
incentivizes landlords to convert their units from the former to the latter. Because Salem’s housing is particularly vulnerable to conversion, given not just its tenure but also its age and scale, the City should adopt a condominium conversion ordinance to protect tenants of rental housing when the property owner proposes to convert units to condominium or cooperative ownership, or to gut or demolish the structure.

The ordinance provides for various tenant rights and landlord duties and obligations. First and foremost, the ordinance stipulates the percentage of units that may be converted city-wide within a calendar year. Rental units cannot be removed from the market without a removal permit, typically issued by the Planning Board after an application process. The Board



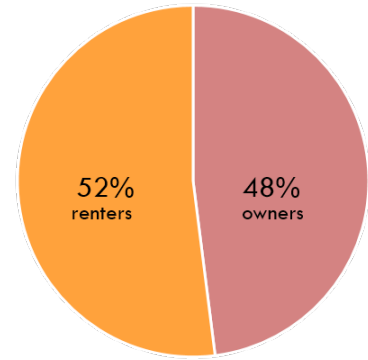
Housing Age

More than half of Salem's housing was built before WWII



Housing Scale

More than one-third of Salem's housing units are in smaller multifamily buildings



Housing Tenure

More than half of Salem's housing is renter occupied

Summary of Vulnerable Housing Stock, Salem

often considers the benefits to the citizens of the city issuing the permit, the hardships imposed on the tenant, the potential for relocating the tenant to comparable housing in the city, amongst other factors. The ordinance also governs tenant notification of a conversion with a given timeline. It provides the tenant with the right to purchase the unit after conversion. Should the tenant decide instead to relocate, the ordinance requires the landlord to provide reimbursement for moving costs.

Raise Funding for Affordable Housing

There are several strategies the City can implement in order to raise resources to support affordable housing production and preservation. Salem should consider raising the Community Preservation Act (CPA) surcharge on property taxes. Salem voters adopted CPA in 2012 in order to raise revenue for historic preservation, open space and outdoor recreation, and affordable housing through a surcharge of 1%. This surcharge can be

as high as 3%. Salem should consider a slight increase to 2% in order to raise additional funds for CPA-allowed activities.

Use Developer Agreements and Community Benefits Agreements

As markets heat up, municipalities find themselves in a position to negotiate with the development community for the public good. Towards that end, Salem should adopt a standard articulating City values for negotiating with developers to generate resources and amenities that advance equity, specifically affordable housing. There are two primary ways to do this. The first tool is the developer's agreement. This is a contract entered into between a municipality and a property owner, typically the developer, that provides the latter with certainty that their project will be immune from zoning changes over the course of development in exchange for benefits to the city, such as infrastructure improvement or monetary payments.

The second tool is a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA). This is a contract signed by a community group or a coalition of community groups and a real estate developer that stipulates the latter will provide specific benefits and/or mitigations to the community in which new development is occurring. It is a tool intended to empower those traditionally left out of the planning process for their own communities. Benefits could include green building requirements, public space, and, as is recommended here, inclusion of affordable housing.

Consider Adopting Just Cause Eviction Controls

Increased housing demand from a higher-earning demographic can incentivize landlords to raise rents or even evict current tenants in order to replace them with new ones that can afford higher housing costs. Just Cause Eviction Controls (JCEC) deter landlords motivated to evict tenants to raise rents by requiring them to identify a proper reason like failure to pay rent or destruction of property.

Salem has significant populations of those typically most prone to eviction: low-income and fixed-income households, people of color, and the elderly. JCEC can protect these tenants from discrimination while also curbing rapid rent increases by preventing high rates of turnover -- an important strategy for preserving affordable housing in emerging housing markets. This stabilization of the community during periods of growth ensures that existing tenants benefit alongside developers, landlords, and newcomers.

Salem should first assess and, if needed, foster community and political support for JCEC. In order to implement and enforce such a policy, the City will need both local and

state approval. In Massachusetts, landlord-tenant relationships are usually regulated by the State, so the City must submit a Home Rule Petition to the State legislature to secure regulation authority over the JCEC. The policy must also be adopted by City Council.

Monitor impacts of neighborhood change on vulnerable populations

The City of Salem should identify and monitor benchmark indicators on demographics and housing in order to evaluate the efficacy of managing neighborhood change strategies recommended herein, and revise as needed in response to shifting trends. If it is determined that unfavorable changes are occurring within the City's population composition, the regulations recommended above can be strengthened.

7.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

7.2 Connectivity Improvements

Improving multi-modal connectivity is one of the most important elements of the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood. This recommendation has two broad categories:

1. Safety improvements for both pedestrians and bicyclists
2. Public realm improvements within the public rights-of-way

Bike-Ped Safety Improvements

The Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood should be safe to travel for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities. Particular emphasis should be placed at intersections along Bridge Street, which were pointed out as an issue by all groups at the forum.

A critical aspect of improving bike-ped safety is “traffic calming,” which seeks to slow vehicular travel speeds. The presence of the relatively high-speed bypass road provides an opportunity for Bridge Street itself to have slower travel speeds. Slowing vehicular travel speeds can dramatically improve safety, as motorists have more time to react. Additionally, studies show that if a conflict does occur with a pedestrian or cyclist, they tend to be far less severe at speeds below 25 miles per hour.

There are numerous traffic calming strategies, ranging from lower cost, near-term solutions to more expensive infrastructure investments. The Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Association recently petitioned the City for a traffic calming program, which contained a number of potential elements. A transportation planning

firm, focused on bike-ped issues can assist the City with prioritizing the neighborhood’s needs in a holistic manner, using a wide range of solutions. The Urban Street Design Guide from the National Association of City Transportation Officials also provides guidance for a number of conditions along city streets. Focus should be along Bridge Street, as well as entry from Beverly, as vehicles may be traveling at high speeds from the bridge.

The accompanying diagrams provides an example of an intersection improvement.

A) Curb bump outs reduce crossing distance and increase the visibility of pedestrian crossing the street. Flashing crossing beacons can also be installed at key intersections.

B) Crosswalks should be in the continental or ladder style, which are more highly visible than other styles. Although more expensive, thermoplastic is a highly visible, more durable material than paint. Raised crosswalks which force cars to reduce speed and further raise pedestrian visibility could also be considered.

C) Sidewalks run the length of Bridge Street. They should remain in good repair. Brick, if maintained properly, can be an attractive alternative that suits the historic character of the neighborhood; however, if not properly maintained can become uneven, providing a hazard for people with disabilities.

D) Sidewalks should remain free and clear for at least three feet from shrubs and other potential impediments for people with disabilities.

E) Reduce curb cuts. The more pedestrians

have to cross the paths of cars, the more chances for conflict that arise. Curb cuts should be minimized to the extent possible.

For bicyclists, the vision calls for an extension of the multi-use path, as well exploration of new connections. The City has also recently completed a Bicycle Master Plan. The relevant recommendation is:

F) Install buffered bicycle lanes along Bridge Street. Buffered lanes provide increased comfort and safety from traditional bicycle lanes by increasing the distance between the cyclist and vehicles. The design should follow the latest guidance from MassDOT (see its [Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide](#)).



Examples of bike-ped safety improvements on Bridge Street

Public Realm Improvements

Ensuring pedestrian and bicyclist safety is a minimum step towards achieving the neighborhood vision. The neighborhood must also be comfortable to walk and bike through the implementation of public realm improvements.

Public investment in the street network should be combined with private investment in property redevelopment and improvement. Public investment in the streets is a viable technique to encourage private investment in a district and can be used to strengthen walkability and bikability.

Elements include:

- A)** Sidewalk amenities. Amenities include trash receptacles located in convenient locations. Seating is another important amenity.
- B)** Pedestrian-scale lighting. Adequate lighting improves both comfort and feelings of safety. Not only along Bridge Street, but the multi-use path, near parks, and other locations should be adequately lit.
- C)** Street trees. Street trees can improve the visual character of the street. They can also provide shade during the summer months and various of environmental benefits.
- D)** Al fresco dining. Allow outdoor dining to increase liveliness along Bridge Street (potentially with City approval).
- E)** Parklets. The City should also consider installing “parklets” in areas with potentially large numbers of pedestrians. A parklet is a sidewalk extension that provides more space for people using the street. They generally extend out from the sidewalk and often occupy one of more on-street parking spaces. The parklets can provide seating for people

frequenting nearby cafes and restaurants. With an almost limitless potential of various designs, they can help the neighborhood create a sense of place.

- F)** Bike parking. Finally, bicycle parking should be provided at convenient locations along Bridge Street, using high quality bike racks.

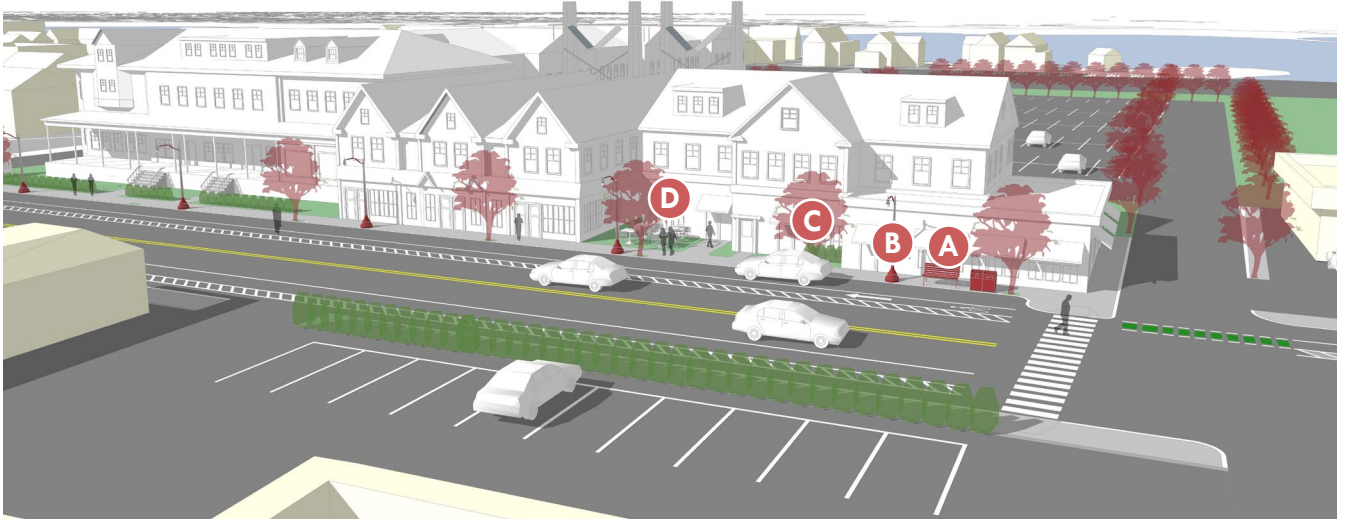
7.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

7.3 Economic Development

The neighborhood envisions thriving small and independent businesses along Bridge Street. The following recommendations provide strategies for positively impacting economic development, especially for retailers. Supplementing these recommendations, the City should consider relevant recommendations from the Salem Downtown Retail Action Plan (December 2017). Note that all of the recommendations in this report, from pedestrian improvements to zoning changes play a role in economic development.

Work with Existing Property Owners to Improve Properties

- **Implement Façade and Sign Improvement Programs.** This can be done through the City or through organizations working to revitalize downtown Bridge Street Neck. Grants to business owners can be reimbursable and can set signage guidelines. Many communities have employed local artists to work on signs. This could help further the neighborhood’s



Examples of public realm improvements on Bridge Street

arts + culture reputation. These programs can also be applied block by block as was done by Beverly Main Streets.

- **Sponsor Workshops and Provide Resources to Existing Property Owners.** Working with existing property owners can help determine why certain property owners may not be re-developing or improving their properties. Identifying these issues can help the City and neighborhood partners to think through how to best address these issues. There are many potential issues that might come up in these conversations including parking, the cost of renovation versus the market rents that property owners can charge, etc.

Support Existing Local Businesses

- **Work with Current Retailers to Implement Retail Best Practices.** There are many resources available that can help individual retailers to employ best practices related to different aspects of their business, including window displays, colors, lighting, and arranging space. The Massachusetts Downtown Initiative often awards technical assistance related to working with individual retailers.
- **Collaborate to Plan Additional Events That Attract New Customers to the neighborhood.** Programming through various events can be a critical element in both placemaking and positively impacting economic development. Bridge Street Neck stakeholders should plan events that attract people to the neighborhood and help to boost the customer base for existing local businesses.
- **Utilize Revolving Loan Fund.** A small loan

fund (e.g., the existing Bridge Street Neck Commercial Corridor fund) can be used to support local businesses in a variety of manners.

- **Encourage Businesses to Take Advantage of Existing Resources.** There are many state programs, such as the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, as well as nationwide marketing campaigns, such as Small Business Saturdays, that can provide technical assistance to small businesses.

Market Bridge Street Neck to Attract Interest from Developers, Commercial Establishments, and Potential Customers

- **Create Cohesive Brand and Marketing Materials for Bridge Street.** Emphasizing the neighborhood's assets can help create a place close to but distinct from Salem's downtown.
- **Identify and Recruit Retail Stores That May Be Interested in Opening on Bridge Street.** Steps include:
 - The Chamber of Commerce or similar group can hold networking events for existing and prospective neighborhood business owners.
 - Maintain a list of interested/prospective retailers that can be matched up with space on Bridge Street once it becomes available.
 - Focus on recruiting restaurants as they are often a top attractor to an area, consistently cited in studies as a top reason why people want to visit a new place. Restaurants also tend to do better when there are many of them located in one place as they create

more of a dining destination that can draw people in.

- Another focus should be on arts-related businesses and entertainment options that can help to boost the neighborhood's cultural assets.
- **Provide Retail Incentives Programs to Attract Retailers.** Incentive programs that offer grants or seed money to new retailers can be an effective way to bring in new business. In Beverly, the Main Streets program granted new retailers a small amount of money for first year rent assistance and also offered free/discounted services (legal, printing, website, light pole banners, etc.). Tenants had to agree to certain terms including a longer term lease and applications for the program were based on business type, impact on the downtown, experience of the owner, as well as a number of other factors. This could be a model for groups working in Bridge Street Neck to explore.
- **Work with Real Estate Brokers.** It is important for real estate brokers to understand the vision and the advantages of attracting particular types of tenants to difference spaces on Bridge Street. They are the ones who are showing space to potential tenants. Communicating the benefits of a thriving corridor with quality tenants can help them to more efficiently fill up additional space and attract future tenants. Brokers are a critical partner in helping to revitalize a mixed-use corridor.
- **Utilize City Website to Post Economic Development Resources.** The City is currently working on developing a new, improved economic development website,

which can be a resource for businesses, including those in Bridge Street Neck. The City should also consider working with or supporting organizations in the community that maintain databases of available commercial properties and/or vacant properties that may be available for redevelopment. A copy of the [Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Vision Update](#) plan should also be available for developers and potential tenants to easily access.

Expand the Market

- **Increase Residences in the Study Area.** In order to increase the market opportunities for additional retail establishments, it is important to consider ensuring adequate housing supply remains in the neighborhood. Creating additional housing, including along Bridge Street with pockets of slightly higher density residential, can increase the customer base for businesses. Retailers often look for locations that have a higher number of residences because it promises a better customer base and the opportunity for higher sales.

7.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

7.4 Design Guidelines

The physical character of development in the neighborhood is another important aspect of the community vision. Traditional zoning ordinances include aspects that affect the physical form of structures, such as heights, setbacks, etc. But these can be “blunt instruments” for guiding the look and feel of future development. The Zoning Recommendations section and accompanying draft overlay district seek to incorporate additional elements that can help ensure high quality design.

An alternative or supplement to the design elements included in the overlay draft would be to develop and adopt neighborhood design guidelines. While advisory in nature, this document would communicate the neighborhood’s expectations for ensuring high quality design and assist with site plan review. They could also extend beyond the proposed overlay district boundaries and apply neighborhood-wide.

The elements described below can provide a starting point. In addition, the City previously commissioned a document called Sample Bridge Street Neighborhood Preservation District Design Guidelines. Although not officially adopted, much of the guidance remains relevant and could be incorporated into an updated design guidelines document. The City also has commercial design guidelines for commercial development meeting a certain size threshold in its entrance corridors, including Bridge Street Neck.

An alternative to developing an entire design guidelines document would be to reference

this document for the Design Review Board to reference in formulating their recommendation to the Planning Board for site plan review.

Site + Building Design

Building investments should strengthen the neighborhood, reinforce its intimate and historic scale, and contribute to the vitality, activity, and continuity of a walkable place.

A) Building Orientation. Buildings should be located and oriented towards the street.

B) Building Mass. The historic context of the neighborhood should be respected. Large buildings should be visually reduced by changes in the massing, architectural elements, and other articulations. Generally, larger buildings should be articulated into bays of 40 feet or less.

C) Setbacks. Historically, buildings had minimal front setbacks along Bridge Street. New development should generally have minimal setbacks, as well. Setbacks are appropriate to provide outdoor seating. Setbacks may also be used strategically to set apart signature buildings.

D) Reduce Visual Impact of Parking. Parking should generally be located in the rear of buildings. Where possible, driveways should be consolidated.

E) Sensitive Building Height. The building height of future development should be sensitive to its context, such as through stepping down a portion of the building of nearby, lower buildings.

F) Interesting Rooflines. No one roof type characterizes the neighborhood’s buildings, although the front gable is most common. Roofs of new buildings should respect the styles that currently exist.



Example of appropriate alteration where bay window is an appropriate scale to existing structure. (Source: Bridge Street Preservation Design Guidelines)



Example of inappropriate development with features such as pyramidal-shaped corner pavilion that is not compatible with context. (Source: Bridge Street Preservation Design Guidelines)



Site and Building Design Elements

G) Strategic Modifications. The draft Preservation District Guidelines provides extensive guidance for alterations to existing buildings. These should be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate into updated Design Guidelines.

H) Appropriate Building Design. Bridge Street Neck has experienced almost continuous development over its three centuries of existence, resulting in a number of historic styles. While new development does not need to mimic previous styles, it should be designed in a way that is compatible with the character of nearby existing properties.

Facade Design

Building investments should improve character and quality by elevating design, using high quality materials, and increasing visibility of vibrant activity. The following are primarily applicable to commercial and mixed-use buildings.

A) Facade Organization. Often, facades can be divided vertically into a base, middle, and top with distinct visual cues for each section. The base provides the anchor for the structure, while displaying ground-floor activity. The middle portion reflects uses on upper floors, often with smaller, regularly spaced windows on and different facade materials. The top of the building transitions and integrates with the roof.

B) Active Ground-floor Uses. Activity on the ground floor, facing the street, strengthens the vibrancy of the neighborhood. This activity traditionally includes shops, restaurants, and

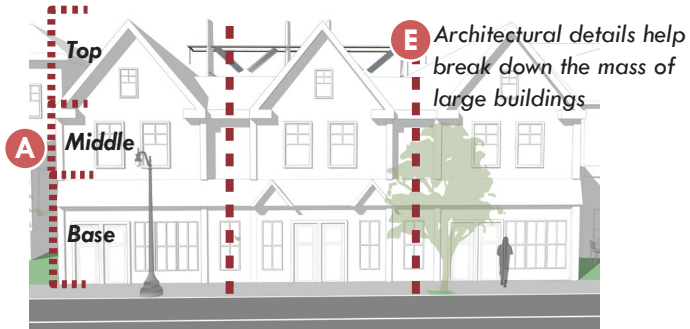
other businesses. It may also include residential lobbies, community rooms, exercise rooms, cafes, or gallery spaces.

C) Ground-floor Windows. The ground floor of buildings should generally include a higher percentage of windows compared to the rest of the building (60% is often a target). Glass should be clear, as opposed to tinted or reflective.

D) Canopies and Awnings. Canopies and awnings can be used to provide a human-scaled element to the ground-floor of buildings by reducing the building's appearance of bulk and mass. They also provide protection from the elements.

E) Architectural Details. Architectural details characterized by simple facade details help reinforce the neighborhood's character. Facade details can draw attention to the doors, windows, ground floor levels, cornices, and eaves of buildings. They can also help modulate the mass of large buildings by dividing them into a pattern of smaller bays.

F) High Quality Materials. Authentic and natural materials, such as clapboard (wood or composite), stone, and brick, should be used where possible. Vinyl siding and similar synthetic materials should generally be avoided.



Facade Design Elements

Landscape + Open Space Design

Open spaces and landscape elements, especially facing the right-of-way, should strengthen the vibrancy of the neighborhood.

A) Plazas and Seating. Front setbacks can be used to strengthen the area's pedestrian focus by using the space for seating. Seating could be associated with ground-floor uses, such as for restaurants or cafes. It could also be open to the general public, such as small plazas.

B) Front Setback Landscape. Where front setback areas exist for reasons other than seating, high quality landscaping with native species can enhance the public realm.

C) Screening Parking. Where parking lots do abut Bridge Street, for example, at existing uses, shrubs, fences, and trees can help create a buffer between the sidewalk and lot.

D) Connections. Pedestrian walkways and paths should provide connections throughout the site and, where applicable, should form connections to adjacent areas. Potential connections could include multi-use paths, parks, and neighboring properties. (Note, this element is not depicted.)

E) Public Art. Public art should be used to define and punctuate spaces available to the general public. Art installations should maintain clearances from pedestrian areas and be constructed in materials that are durable, easily maintained, and do not present safety hazards. (Note, this element is not depicted.)

Other Design Guideline Elements to Consider

The elements described in this section can provide a strong starting point for guiding development in a manner consistent with the Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Vision. Design Guidelines can build upon each of the categories listed above. They can also provide guidance on additional categories, such as signage, lighting, and street design (in cases

where new roadways may be constructed). The [Sample Bridge Street Neighborhood Preservation District Design Guidelines](#) also provides language regarding demolition of structures more than 50 years old, which can be reviewed and incorporated.

7.0 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION -- OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

7.4 Historic Preservation Tools

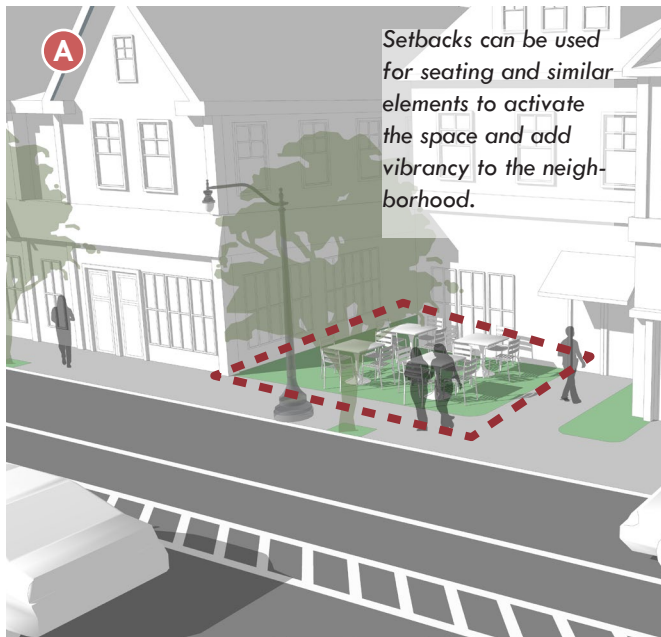
Many neighborhoods' historic assets are not well-protected from demolitions and insensitive alterations. There are several historic preservation tools available for the neighborhood to consider as a way to preserve the character of the Neck's historic buildings. The strongest form of protection is a local historic district (or, alternatively, a neighborhood preservation district). Salem currently has four local historic districts, protecting approximately 600 buildings.

The establishment of these districts has numerous benefits, and it is critical that they are established with neighborhood support. They are not intended to create museums or freeze a streetscape in time; instead, they are designed to guide changes and alterations to historic buildings in a manner that will respect a building's architectural heritage and a streetscape's overall scale. Salem's local historic districts, such as the Derby Street Historic District, continue to be thriving neighborhoods.

Other strategies, including changes in local zoning and development policy, the implementation of facade, home improvement or other preservation incentive programs, targeted planning efforts, preservation

restrictions, demolition delay bylaws, neighborhood conservation districts, technical and design assistance, public investments, etc. can contribute to the goal of furthering historic preservation and preserving community character.

The Salem Historical Commission provides a number of services to help communities navigate the process (salem.com/historical-commission).



**CITY OF SALEM
BRIDGE STREET NECK NEIGHBORHOOD
VISION UPDATE**

