

Introduction

Most people do not use the term “land use” when they try to explain what a town looks like. Often, they refer to locally important landmarks and images that can be seen from the road or sidewalk. Describing Arlington Center as a linear district composed of several sub-districts, with an impressive civic block and low-rise commercial buildings, or its adjacent neighborhoods as moderately dense housing on tree-lined streets, is to characterize these areas by their land use patterns.

As an element of the Master Plan, Land Use connects all the other elements because land use planning incorporates all the land in Town, and the Town’s vision for it. Land use refers to the location, type, and intensity of a community’s residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional development, along with roads, open land, and water. Patterns of development vary by the land and water resources that support them, the eras in which growth occurred, and the evolution of a town’s transportation infrastructure. The ages of buildings in each part of a town usually correlate with changes in land use patterns. Similarly, the placement of buildings in relation to the street and to each other tends to be inseparable from their age and whether they were constructed before or after the adoption of zoning. Furthermore, a town’s development pattern and shape sometimes hint at its annexation history, or exchanges of land with adjacent cities and towns.

Most of the boundaries of Arlington’s 5.2 square mile (sq. mi) land area¹ were formed while it was part of the original, much larger colonial settlement of Cambridge. In 1807, the newly incorporated Town of West Cambridge (the area west of Alewife Brook) separated from Cambridge. A section of the town was carved out to join the new Town of Belmont in 1859, leaving in place the final boundaries of Arlington, which was renamed in 1867. Arlington’s present development patterns hint at the connections that once existed with neighboring communities, particularly along Massachusetts Avenue and Pleasant Street. Once seamless ties that transcend-

¹ Arlington’s total area is 5.6 sq. mi., according to data from Arlington GIS and MassGIS. The federal Census Bureau reports Arlington’s total area as 5.5 sq. mi.



master plan goals for land use

- Balance housing growth with other land uses that support residential services and amenities.
- Encourage development that enhances the quality of Arlington’s natural resources and built environment.
- Attract development that supports and expands the economic, cultural, and civic purposes of Arlington’s commercial areas.

ed geopolitical divisions created commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods.

Zoning was introduced to cities and towns in the early twentieth century. This method of regulating land use is intended to define and manage the growth and character of communities, preserving and protecting open space, and guiding future capacity. As a result of Ar-

lington's history, its land use patterns are reflected in both organic and regulated forms. Arlington needs to evaluate, restructure, and update its zoning to help form the Arlington of tomorrow while preserving its historic past. Arlington residents understand that the pressure for development is high, and that impending change is inevitable. Planning for such change will result in healthy neighborhoods, a strong local economy, enhanced civic amenities, and a better quality of life for current and future residents.



Arlington's many faces. Collage from June 2014 Visual Preference Survey by David Gamble Associates and RKG Associates.

Existing Conditions

Arlington is a predominantly residential suburb of Boston, bounded by the towns of Belmont, Lexington, and Winchester and the cities of Medford, Somerville, and Cambridge. Most of Arlington is maturely developed. The commercial centers along Massachusetts Avenue are surrounded by dense, largely walkable neighborhoods. The most concentrated center of activity in Arlington lies between Massachusetts Avenue and Summer Street, Mystic/Pleasant Streets and Grove Street. This quadrant lies in the center of a valley that crosses the town, and it is the historic cradle of transportation routes. In addition to the main roads, the Boston and Maine railroad used to provide some passenger service, but mostly freight service up to the late 1970s. The Mill Brook also runs through the valley, though mostly channelized or in an underground conduit. Importantly, the former rail line and waterway once supported many industries that lined this district. In 2014, only remnants of industrial land use remain west of Grove Street and near Arlington Heights. The rail line was converted to a recreational trail in 1992 and is part of the regional Minuteman Bikeway.

Land Use Patterns

Land use can be quantified, that is, measured by the amount of land used for various purposes. However, a more enlightening method of analyzing a community is by looking at its land use patterns. In Arlington, especially in some dense central sections, there are sever-

al eclectic spaces; areas with seemingly random mixes of uses, variable lot sizes, building types and orientations. In many cases, these mixed-use areas pre-date the adoption of zoning and contribute to the "organic" feel of Arlington's older neighborhoods. **Map 3.1** illustrates Arlington's current (2014) land use patterns.

Massachusetts Avenue has played a critical role in Arlington's evolution. As the physical and figurative lifeline of Arlington, Massachusetts Avenue spans the town from Cambridge in the east to Lexington in the west. It lies in the flatlands of the town, and as the primary commercial corridor it draws people from the residential neighborhoods nestled in the hills that surround it. Although one almost continuous commercial corridor, Massachusetts Avenue supports many nodes with their own identity, including the town's three primary commercial centers: Arlington Heights, Arlington Center, and East Arlington.

Over the years, development extended from Massachusetts Avenue south along Jason Street and Academy Street, north along Medford Street and Mystic Street, and east along Broadway and Warren Street. There is also evidence of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century housing development in Arlington Heights and around Park Avenue, and in East Arlington as well. Streetcars once operated along Massachusetts Avenue, Mystic and Medford Streets, and Broadway, and were perhaps the greatest catalyst for housing development

in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The urban street grid that characterizes much of East Arlington coincides with a significant concentration of densely developed worker housing: mostly two-family houses, and sometimes larger, most likely responding to the industrial growth that occurred in Arlington after the mid-nineteenth century.

Arlington grew dramatically during the interwar years (1920-1945) and again during the “Baby Boom” era (1946-1964). Neighborhoods filled in throughout the southern part of town, with single-family home subdivisions around Park Circle and Menotomy Rocks Park and small-scale multifamily housing in East Arlington. The largest post-WW-2 single family development occurred in the north and west parts of Arlington, around Bishop, Stratton, and Dallin Schools. These neighborhoods have the classic curved streets and car-oriented road layouts which typified suburban subdivisions at the time.

Zoning in Arlington

An important component of any master plan is an assessment of local zoning requirements, especially for consistency or conflicts with the community’s goals and aspirations for the future. Zoning should express a community’s development blueprint: the “where, what, and how much” of land uses, intensity of uses, and the relationship between abutting land uses and the roads that serve them. Ideally, one can open a zoning ordinance or bylaw and understand what the community wants to achieve. Unfortunately, this is not always the case in Massachusetts cities and towns, and Arlington is no exception.²

USE DISTRICTS

Arlington adopted its first Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) in 1924, but the version currently in use (2014) was adopted in 1975 and amended many times since then. The ZBL divides the town into nineteen use districts (**Map 3.2**), i.e., areas zoned for residential, commercial, industrial, or other purposes. There is nothing inherently wrong with a large number of zoning districts as long as the regulations make sense on the ground. In many cases, especially along Massachusetts Avenue, the zoning was probably relevant for what existed some time ago, but it is no longer suitable. In addition, many zoning districts are haphazardly divided,

again based on past decisions that fit a different time and place.

In addition to the prescribed zoning districts in Table 3.1, there is also a wetlands protection overlay district that appears only in part of the zoning map. Like many towns in Massachusetts, Arlington has an Inland Wetland District that pre-dates the adoption of the state Wetlands Protection Act. The ZBL relies on a text description for some covered wetlands that are not specifically mapped, e.g., twenty five feet from the centerline of rivers, brooks, and streams, despite a requirement of the state Zoning Act (Chapter 40A) that all districts be mapped.³

The name of a zoning district is not always a good indicator of how land within the district can be used. For example, much of Arlington’s industrially zoned land is no longer used for industrial purposes. While the town has zoned about 49 acres for industrial development, a comparison of the zoning map and assessor’s records shows that only fourteen acres (about 29 percent) of the Industrial District is actually used for manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, storage, and other industrial types of activity. Arlington allows some non-industrial uses in the industrial districts, and other non-industrial uses are probably “grandfathered” because they pre-date current zoning requirements. According to the assessor’s data, the largest individual users of industrial land in Arlington are municipal (e.g., the Department of Public Works compound on Grove Street) or commercial, including auto repair. In fact, auto-related businesses account for most of the Industrial District’s commercial uses, though there is a separate district devoted to Vehicular Oriented Businesses, B4.

Similarly, the six business districts have been developed with many uses in addition to the commercial uses for which they are principally intended. Information reported in the assessor’s database shows that 20 percent of land in the business districts is used for residential purposes, including single-family homes and apartment units. Unlike its policies in the industrial district, Arlington allows multifamily housing by special permit in most of the business districts, and some of the apartments and townhouses located on business-zoned land came about because of this provision. The belief that commercial properties have been

² A more detailed review of Arlington’s zoning has been prepared in conjunction with this master plan and filed separately with the Planning Department.

³ G.L. c. 40A, § 4.

rezoned as residential is a common misperception in Arlington.

Many residents say mixed-use development should be explored along Massachusetts Avenue. Mixed use generally refers to ground floor retail with residential units on the upper floors. The first floor retail helps to build an interesting, walkable business district while upper story residential units can provide street vibrancy and support for businesses, and users of public transit (thereby reducing parking demands). Arlington's zoning does not specifically address mixed-use buildings, although mixed uses occupy several historic buildings in the Industrial district and the business districts.⁴ Past plans promote the inclusion of mixed-use buildings in the commercial centers,⁵ and comments at the public meetings for this plan indicate that many residents would like to see mixed-use development as well.

USE REGULATIONS

The Table of Use Regulations (Section 5.04 of the Arlington ZBL) identifies a variety of land uses that are allowed by right or special permit in each zoning district. In general, Arlington's use regulations are quite restrictive because most uses are allowed only by special permit (SP) from the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) or Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). That Arlington has so many special permit options makes it nearly impossible to develop a plausible forecast of the town's so-called build-out potential, i.e., the difference between the amount of development that exists now and that which could still be built under existing zoning.

Residential. These uses include a broad range of residential building types, from single-family detached

homes to various multi-family types, dormitories, assisted living facilities, and hotels. Single-family detached units are allowed in all districts except MU, I, T, and OS; two-family dwellings are also not allowed in these districts or the single family RO and RI districts. Allowing single-family homes and duplexes in nearly all districts is sometimes referred to as cumulative zoning, which can result in incompatible uses (e.g., single family dwellings in a central business district may not be appropriate). All other residential uses are allowed only by special permit in Arlington's other zoning districts, which is highly restrictive.

Institutional and Educational. These uses include community centers and related civic uses, hospitals, schools, daycare facilities, and cemeteries and similar types of uses. All uses in this category are allowed only by special permit in each zoning district except that private schools and institutions are allowed by right in Business Districts B2 through B5.

Agricultural. Agricultural uses include a range of farming (except livestock), sale of garden and agricultural supplies, and greenhouse uses. They are allowed by right in all zoning districts as is common in Massachusetts. However, some forms of urban agriculture should be considered as being appropriate in more urban settings such as the village centers and central business districts.

Public, Recreational, and Entertainment. The uses include a variety of public and civic services as well as recreational uses, which are allowed by right in most zoning districts. Other uses such as a post office, private recreational business, construction yards, theaters, and outdoor amusement are allowed only by special permit and in specific districts.

Utility, Transportation, and Communications. These uses include bus, rail, and freight facilities, public and private parking facilities, and telephone utilities. All uses are allowed only by special permit in a limited number of districts except overhead utility poles which are allowed in all districts.

Commercial and Storage. These are auto-related sales and service businesses which are restricted by special permit only in B4, PUD and I zoning districts.

Personal, Consumer, and Business Services. These uses include print shops, financial institutions, various personal services, laundry services, consumer service establishments, funeral homes, veterinary clinic. These

⁴ On this point, the Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) is ambiguous. For example, in ZBL Section 3.02, the Village Business District (B3) description provides, in part: "Multi-use development is encouraged, such as retail with office or business and residential," yet multi-use development is not specifically listed as permitted or allowed by special permit in the Table of Use Regulations. However, in Section 5.02, Permitted Uses, the ZBL provides: "A lot or structure located in the R6, R7, B1, B2, B2A, B3, B4, B5, PUD, I, MU, and T districts may contain more than one principal use as listed in Section 5.04 'Table of Use Regulation.' For the purposes of interpretation of this Bylaw, the use containing the largest floor area shall be deemed the principal use and all other uses shall be classified as accessory uses. In the case of existing commercial uses, the addition or expansion of residential use within the existing building footprint shall not require adherence to setback regulations for residential uses even if the residential use becomes the principal use of the property."

⁵ See, for example, Larry Koff Associates, *A Vision and Action Plan for Commercial Revitalization* (July 2010).

uses are allowed by right or by special permit in selected business districts as well as the PUD and I districts. Only funeral homes are allowed in residential districts R5-R7 by special permit. There are performance standards related to size for financial institutions (more than 2,000 gross sq. ft. requires a special permit) and laundry and consumer services (more than five employees requires a special permit in some districts).

Eating and Drinking. This category includes traditional restaurants, fast-food establishments, drive-in establishments, and catering services which are allowed by right primarily in the business districts. There are performance standards related to the size of the restaurants requiring a special permit for those larger than 2,000 gross sq. ft. and on lots greater than 10,000 sq. ft., which is a fairly low standard for a typical restaurant. There are no specific “drinking” establishments identified such as bars, pubs, or taverns, which are not permitted in Arlington. This sector has been growing rapidly over the past decade or more since Arlington started allowing beer and wine, and then liquor to be served in restaurants.

Retail. Retail uses have performance standards related to size so that stores of 3,000 gross sq. ft. or more require special permits in business districts B2-B5 under the assumption that they are serving more than just the needs of “the residents of the vicinity”. This is a fairly low size threshold for local businesses that may in fact be serving a primary market of customers in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Office Uses. This category includes professional, business, medical, and technical offices allowed by right and special permit in the higher density residential districts, business districts, and MU, PUD and I districts. General office uses also have performance standards related to size requiring special permits for those 3,000 gross sq. ft. or more, which is also a fairly low threshold.

Wholesale Business and Storage. These uses all require special permits and are limited in the B2A, B4, and the industrial district.

Light Industry. These types of uses are mostly allowed by right in the industrial district but restricted by special permit in the B4 district. Only research and development facilities are allowed by right or special permit in high density residential, business and industrial districts.

Accessory Uses. This category includes a diverse range of uses from private garages, home occupations, accessory dwellings, nursery schools, auxiliary retail, and storage. They are allowed by right and special permit in a broad range of zoning districts, as is appropriate.

Mixed Uses. The only Mixed Use district in Arlington is located on the former Symmes property. Mixed-use development per se – such as ground-floor retail with upper-story residential – is not specifically provided for in Arlington’s zoning, but the ZBL is unclear.

DENSITY AND DESIGN

Arlington has adopted a fairly prescriptive, traditional approach to regulating the amount of development that can occur on a lot (or adjoining lots in common ownership). The Town’s basic dimensional requirements cover several pages in the ZBL, including some twenty footnotes that explain or provide exceptions to the Table of Dimensional and Density Regulations. In addition to minimum lot area requirements, Arlington regulates maximum floor area ratios (FAR), lot coverage, front, side, and rear yards, building height, parking requirements and minimum open space. In most districts, the maximum building height is 35 feet and 2 ½ stories – traditional height limits for single-family and two-family homes but challenging for commercial buildings. Apartment buildings in some of the business-zoned areas can be as tall as 60 or 75 feet, and possibly higher with an Environmental Design Review (EDR) special permit from the ARB (Section 11.06 of the bylaw).⁶

The ZBL lacks urban design requirements such as building placement on a lot and building orientation, or tools that could help to regulate form in a coherent way. Due to the prevalence of one-parcel districts along Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington essentially requires variable building setbacks from lot to lot, though most of these properties have some zoning protection for pre-existing conditions. Still, a project involving parcel assembly and new construction might be in more than one zoning district and have to contend with varying zoning requirements. It might not be harmonious with adjacent uses, too.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Lot Area Requirements. The minimum lot size for residential uses ranges from 5,000 to 9,000 square

⁶ The Planning Department notes that since cellars do not count toward the calculation of maximum building height, they can effectively cause structures to be taller than 35 feet.

feet (sq. ft.), which seems consistent with prevailing neighborhood development patterns. Large lot sizes are required for multi-family buildings, as expected. The minimum frontage requirements are also generally consistent with prevailing development patterns in the neighborhoods and underlying zoning districts. One exception is that townhouse structures require 20,000 sq. ft. and 100 feet of frontage, yet townhouses are typically attached single-family homes on separate lots. They typically have frontage widths of 16 to 30 feet and lot sizes as small as 2,000 square feet. The standards should be revised to clarify the number of attached townhouses that are permitted without a break (such as nine to twelve).

Other Requirements. Standards that affect intensity of use, such as maximum floor area ratio (FAR), lot coverage maximum percent, setbacks (front, side, rear), open space ratios, and minimum lot area/D.U., seem reasonable and consistent with prevailing development patterns in the neighborhoods. One exception is that townhouses typically have a higher FAR than 0.75. These building forms should be considered separately from apartment houses and office structures in the dimensional requirements.

The maximum residential height, typically 35 feet and 2½ stories in the lower intensity residential districts and 40 feet and 3 stories in the higher density districts, is largely consistent with prevailing development patterns in the neighborhoods and commercial corridors. However, if Arlington wants to provide for a broader range of housing types and mixed uses, taller buildings and a reduction in square feet per dwelling unit may be desirable in selected areas. These kinds of incentives can be augmented with an increase in the percentage of usable open space on a site with access to the surrounding area.

BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Lot Requirements. The minimum lot size and minimum frontage are reasonable and consistent with prevailing development patterns and the context of the different districts. For example, no minimum lot size and 50 feet of frontage for most uses in the village centers is a context-based dimensional standard.

Other Requirements. Several standards affect intensity of use and design. The maximum FAR of 1.0 to 1.4 is reasonable and can be adjusted with a special permit. However, Arlington also has a minimum lot area per dwelling unit that is unnecessary and could discourage

mixed-use development. The amount of area needed for commercial lots will always be driven by the amount of parking either required by zoning or demanded by the market. Adding artificial standards that increase lot size without a particular benefit to the inhabitants is not advised. Requirements for landscaped and usable open space are more important in mixed use areas and can help attract residents to live in village centers.

The minimum front, side, and rear yard requirements, coupled with the landscaping and screening standards where necessary, are consistent with existing development. For example, in the B3 and B5 districts which cover the vast majority of land in the village centers, there are no front or side setback requirements. This allows buildings to be placed at the edge of the sidewalk, thereby enhancing the pedestrian environment by moving parking lots to the side or rear. However, this does not guarantee that buildings will be close to the street. They could still be set back, diminishing walkability and street activation, because Arlington does not have building placement and occupation standards in areas that cater to pedestrians.

The maximum height regulations provide some incentives for new infill development, but not redevelopment. In areas with many 2- or 3-story structures, a building of 5 stories and 60 feet could appear out of context and scale, but this type of impact can be mitigated with additional setback or building step backs, or a combination of thereof.

Finally, Arlington's open space requirements (percentage of total gross floor area) seem reasonable, but could be more specific in some districts. Landscaping should be primarily focused on streetscape enhancements (street trees, planters, and hardscapes such as plazas and seating areas), shading of parking lots, and screening from abutting uses where necessary. Usable open space in the village centers is critical. This can take place on individual lots (such as dining terraces, forecourts, etc.) and collective spaces such as plazas, commons, greens, and pocket parks. These usable open spaces are a significant draw to the districts and can be publically or privately owned, with property owners contributing to their establishment and maintenance in lieu of on-site requirements.

MU, PUD, I, T AND OS DISTRICTS

Requirements for lot size, yards, building heights, intensity of development, and open space in the MU, PUD, I and T districts are fairly minimal and flexible,

providing additional incentives for redevelopment. Regulations for the Open Space district (OS) are very strict, for this district includes public parks, conservation lands, and open spaces.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Environmental Design Review (EDR).

Arlington's EDR process blends an enhanced form of site plan review with authority for the ARB to grant special permits. EDR applies to most uses over a certain size that abut important thoroughfares—Massachusetts Avenue, Pleasant Street, Broadway, the Minuteman Bikeway, and parts of Mystic and Medford Streets within Arlington Center. The Town requires an EDR special permit for any residential development of six or more units, and all nonresidential uses that exceed specified floor area thresholds. The ARB conducts design review as part of the EDR process under Section 11.06, but the Town has not formally adopted design guidelines for the commercial areas. It would be difficult for property owners and developers to know what the Town actually wants and to plan their projects accordingly.

Off-Street Parking. Arlington requires all land uses to provide off-street parking. In many ways, the Town's off-street parking requirements are quite thoughtful. For example, requirements such as one space per 300 sq. ft. of retail development and one space per 500 sq. ft. of office development are fairly reasonable compared with the rules that apply in many towns. Arlington also provides for off-street parking on premises other than the lot served (i.e., off-site parking), if the permitting authority finds that it is impractical to construct the required parking on the same lot and the property owners have a long-term agreement to secure the parking. In addition, Arlington allows substitution of public parking in lieu of off-street parking if the public lot is within 1,000 feet of the proposed use. Consistent with the purpose statement of Section 8.01 (Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations), Arlington prohibits front yard parking in residential areas in order to promote aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods, preserve property values, and avoid undue congestion. Arlington has adopted bicycle parking requirements for lots with eight or more vehicular parking spaces, too.



Capitol Theatre, East Arlington.

Despite (or perhaps because of) the Town's generally reasonable parking standards, complaints about inadequate parking abound in Arlington. Property owners and merchants say the situation in East Arlington is most troublesome and that the area's development potential is capped by the lack of parking. Meanwhile, residents complain that the two-hour parking limits in East Arlington are enforced only in the business districts, not in the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Moreover, Arlington does not have an abundance of on-street or public parking, so the seemingly flexible provisions of the ZBL may not have much practical benefit. Even in districts where maximum height limits would not impede redevelopment, the off-street parking regulations could do just that – making parking regulations a form of dimensional and density control. It should be noted that many admired older buildings in the commercial districts do not meet parking requirements and would therefore be forbidden today. Parking supply management is not a land use issue per se, but it has an undeniable impact on the public's receptivity to more intensive development – which in turn has an impact on a special permit granting authority's approach to development review and permitting.

NONCONFORMING USES AND STRUCTURES

Arlington's zoning makes a remarkably clear statement about nonconforming uses and structures: they cannot be extended (increased). While the Town gives the ZBA some latitude to approve a change of one nonconforming use to another nonconforming use that is

reasonably similar, the overall message of the ZBL is that nonconformities should be eliminated over time. Still, according to the Planning Department, the Town has given “wide latitude” to nonconforming structures, sometimes granting them greater expansion than conforming structures.

Under both state law and the Town’s zoning, the standards for expanding or altering nonconforming single-family and two-family homes are less demanding than for other land uses. Single-family and two-family homes may be altered and extended if a proposed project does not create new nonconformities and is not detrimental to the neighborhood. (Changes to nonconforming structures may also trigger Arlington’s demolition delay bylaw). Arlington’s zoning does not allow use variances.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH STATE LAW

Arlington’s present zoning is sometimes inconsistent with the state Zoning Act (Chapter 40A) and case law. For example, Arlington requires a special permit for churches and other religious uses, day care and kindergarten programs, and public and private non-profit schools, yet Chapter 40A plainly exempts these uses from local control, other than “reasonable” dimensional regulations. Libraries, which usually qualify as an educational use, also require a special permit in Arlington. Ironically, non-exempt schools such as trade schools conducted as a private business are allowed as of right in Arlington’s business districts, yet public and non-profit schools require a special permit. “Rehabilitation residence,” which Arlington defines as a “group residence” licensed or operated by the state, also requires a special permit, but Chapter 40A forbids imposing special permit requirements on housing for people with disabilities.

In addition, the Town’s approach to regulating farms does not square with state law, which specifically protects farming in all of its varieties (including agriculture, horticulture, and permaculture) on five or more acres of land. As a practical matter, Arlington’s compliance or lack thereof with the state’s agricultural protections may be a moot point because the Town does not have five-acre parcels in agricultural use. Nevertheless, the bylaw’s attempt to block livestock or poultry even on larger parcels is incompatible with state law.

Issues and Opportunities

Managing Growth and Change

Concerns about Change. From the beginning of the master plan process, residents have stated what we treasure about Arlington and the qualities that attract residents. This plan intends to preserve and protect the treasured, attractive qualities that make Arlington great, even when private and public land and development decisions are made in the coming decades. In fact, the plan intends to improve Arlington’s fiscal stability by leveraging reasonable development that enhances and improves what we value and desire for our future, and steering change away from the buildings, neighborhoods, outdoor places, and facilities that we seek to preserve or conserve. The plan anticipates that we will designate specific areas in town where we do not want development, so called priority preservation areas, and areas where we think redevelopment is appropriate, so called priority development areas.

In public meetings for this plan, residents said they want to maintain Arlington’s historic character, and curb – or at least exercise greater control over – new development. Residents seem concerned that additional development will be out of scale or character with the qualities they value in their community. One purpose of a master plan is to identify and strive to preserve the community character that residents cherish. Another purpose is to identify areas that might benefit from reinvestment, and to enable the community to take an active role in encouraging redevelopment in strategic areas to meet community needs. When development is directed toward underutilized sites, these sites can be put to greater use, while also lessening development pressures elsewhere.

Mixed Use. People want to live in Arlington. Residential demand and residential property values held strong during the economic downturn, and have increased rapidly since the economy improved. This market pressure threatens to convert the scarce land available for Arlington’s limited commercial tax base into more residential development.⁷ The traditional form of Arlington’s commercial districts is mixed use-style buildings that have commercial uses usually at the street level and living units on upper floors above. By harnessing the market’s drive toward residential uses, policies that

⁷ See Comparative Data, pages 15-17 of the Town Manager’s FY15 Budget & Financial Plan on impact of decline in Arlington’s commercial tax base



"In terms of building style, I prefer this (1) or that (2) ... Visual Preference Survey, 2014.

promote higher-value Mixed Use redevelopments (instead of apartment-only or condominium-only buildings) could reinforce and increase commercial uses in, and business tax revenue from, our business districts. At the same time, policies that promote Mixed Use could be crafted to produce the smaller residential units desired by young adults and older Arlingtonians who want to stay here, or other combinations of live-work residential and commercial uses. Arlington's zoning bylaw states that Mixed Uses are allowed, however few Mixed Use buildings have been constructed under the requirements of the current bylaw.

Density and Design. Arlington residents took part in a live and online visual preference survey (VPS) in June 2014. The study, entitled "Do you like this or that" asked respondents to compare or rate images of buildings and streetscapes. The results provide an interesting gauge of aesthetic and urban forms including material, use, density, and height. The results indicate great acceptance of mixed use development along Massachusetts Avenue and Broadway, and of building heights up to five stories. Greater massing and height without setbacks began to raise some concern. Further analysis reveals a preference for unique and eclectic design, albeit within balanced and symmetrical forms. (See Appendix for survey summary).

Development and Sustainability. There is a general sentiment among Arlington residents that the town is already built out. However, a closer urban design examination reveals that Arlington has considerable potential for change. In some areas, redevelopment could enhance characteristics the community cherishes and simultaneously contribute to a tax base that needs expansion and diversification. Existing buildings need ways to evolve when they become unmarketable or

obsolete for their original intended use, e.g., the redevelopment of the former Symmes Hospital site. Growth does not have to occur at the expense of open space. On the contrary, creating incentives and establishing a favorable development climate for density in certain locations can offset pressures where open space and parks are in greatest need. Wherever possible, Arlington should seek to direct new development to locations with or adjacent to existing assets, near transit in order to reduce auto dependency, and near existing services and infrastructure.

Alternatives to the Special Permit. Arlington uses the special permit as a tool to control the scale and design of development, which may be necessary for large complex proposals. However, it may not be necessary for small projects and uses that are more typical in a given zoning district. An alternative to controlling nearly all uses by special permit would be to allow more uses by right with specific performance standards that address the potential impacts on surrounding land uses. Performance standards may include limits not only on business size, but on building scale and massing, placement on the lot, height, screening and landscaping buffers, parking requirements, light and noise limitations, and other particulars such as limitations on drive-thru establishments.

Opportunity Areas MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

While market demands and individual development decisions will continue to occur on a town-wide scale, the geography most advantageous for redevelopment is that which is proximate to the primary commercial corridor, Massachusetts Avenue. Arlington Heights, Arlington Center, and Capitol Square in East Arlington each benefit from their relationship to the town's prima-

ry transit corridor, but each one manages to maintain its own identity and character. Arlington's commercial areas are made up of distinct sub-districts. For example, Arlington Heights has one of the last remaining industrial areas. It is also bounded by two major arteries, Park Avenue and Lowell Street. As the Minuteman Bikeway continues to emerge as a viable commuting and recreational corridor between Massachusetts Avenue and Summer Street, additional development pressures will place greater burdens on this underutilized swath of land. Arlington Center lies at the confluence of the town's commerce and civic uses. It is the undeniable center of town. How can it grow in ways that do not burden an already congested roadway network during the peak travel periods? East Arlington's Capitol Square area continues to build a reputation for new restaurants and shops. In what ways can this area grow and become more of a destination?

Though outside the scope of a town-wide master plan to "design" individual buildings, there are fundamental design principles that can mitigate the effects of increased height or greater lot coverage on adjoining properties. To a large degree, the alignment, form, and massing of a project can make the difference between a development that ignores its context and one that contributes to the character of the town. Arlington, like any town, needs to evolve and grow in order to thrive in the twenty-first century.

UNIQUE MIXED-USE NODES

Arlington has opportunities to develop unique mixed use activity centers in strategic locations along its primary corridors, including Massachusetts Avenue, Broadway, and Summer Street, the Mill Brook district, and the Minuteman Bikeway. The presence of activity centers should enhance economic vitality and promote social interaction and community building. These evolving centers, where appropriate, could include a mix of uses and activities located close together, providing people with new options for places to live, work, shop, and participate in civic life. Centers should vary in scale, use, and intensity. They should fill voids in Arlington's hierarchy of village centers, corridors, and neighbor-

hoods such as with new walkable neighborhood centers and commons. They should be targeted to vacant, obsolete and underutilized properties. Potential opportunity areas could include land along the Mill Brook corridor, Broadway, the Battle Road Scenic Byway, Mirak Car Dealership and Theodore Schwamb Mill, Gold's Gym, and Schouler Court.

MILL BROOK

The revitalization of former industrial sites along the Mill Brook will have a significant and ongoing economic impact on the town. This area and the legacy it represents can provide the building blocks for new economic development in Arlington. An April 2010 study by the Mill Brook Linear Park Study Group (a subcommittee of the Arlington Open Space Committee) recognized the potential environmental, economic, flood control, recreational, historic, and transportation benefits of the Mill Brook. After a joint meeting of the Redevelopment Board, Open Space Committee and Master Plan Advisory Committee in 2013, the Redevelopment Board voted in July 2014 to define a Mill Brook Study Area (**Map 3.3**).

By focusing attention and resources on this corridor, Arlington would be directing its resources to areas with the greatest need and potential. Resuscitating some of the large sites and underutilized buildings in this area should be a high priority if Arlington wants to preserve the character of other districts. In addition, Arlington has a strong trail network that in many places abuts the Mill Brook. Properties that are currently oriented away



Mill Brook (2014)

from the Mill Brook could be compelled to change their orientation and recognize both the brook and the Minuteman Bikeway as assets. The ability to craft and implement a successful redevelopment program for this underutilized area depends partly on the desirability of Arlington as a business location, the economics of the individual properties, and on the Town's ability to foster incremental changes.

ARLINGTON CENTER (RUSSELL COMMON) PARKING LOT

The Town parking lot in Arlington Center slopes in a way that could allow an additional deck of parking to be constructed if future demand warrants. The potential to meet multiple community needs, and possibly generate lease revenue on this site should not be overlooked. A design could incorporate shared work spaces, commercial uses on the perimeter, community gathering spaces, deed-restricted affordable small housing units, a location for tour buses, as well as additional parking, if needed. The Town should creatively consider designs that meet a range of community needs on any land it owns, but especially on this comparatively large, unbuilt Town-owned parcel.

COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS

Within each of Arlington's neighborhoods, consideration should be given to providing more "complete" neighborhoods that provide for a limited mix of uses and diverse housing types, close to schools, open spaces, and other activity centers. Methods may be considered such as corner stores and live-work units at designated intersections, co-operative or co-housing, and others.

Arlington's Primary Commercial Centers

In 2009, Arlington retained Larry Koff & Associates to address concerns about the existing and future vitality of the three primary commercial centers: Arlington Heights, Arlington Center, and East Arlington. Koff & Associates built on an earlier study by ICON Architecture (1994) that supported creation of a "string of three villages along the Mass Ave. boulevard." In their 2010 plan, *A Vision and Action Plan for Commercial Area Redevelopment*, Koff & Associates identified three primary findings and outline methods for addressing them in Arlington's commercial districts:

1. Arlington Center should be the focus of a comprehensive revitalization initiative
2. A range of actions should take place in each of the districts involving physical improvements, revised

regulations, enhanced tenant mix, and organizational support.

3. Public/private partnership is necessary to be successful in the revitalization process.

The following summary from Koff's study captures issues that need to be addressed in the implementation program for this master plan.

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS

Arlington Heights provides a mix of retail shops, personal and professional services, and restaurants primarily supporting the needs of surrounding neighborhoods, but also including some "destination" retail that serves a broader customer base. In terms of public and civic amenities, the Minuteman Bikeway crosses the



district on Park Avenue north of the intersection. The Post Office is located on Massachusetts Avenue, and there are a number of religious institutions in the area. The Locke School Condominiums and playground are located in this area, and the Mt Gilboa conservation area and Hurd Field are a few blocks away. The Mill Brook also bisects the district and provides future opportunities for passive recreation and attractive redevelopment.

Generally, Arlington Heights is in the best physical condition of the three village centers. Streetscape enhancements coupled with façade and sign upgrades have improved the aesthetic qualities and vibrancy of the district. The local businesses are also well organized and involved in promotional activities including their own website (Shopintheheights.com).

The Gold's Gym site is located in Arlington Heights on Park Avenue, with access from Park Avenue, and frontage on Lowell Street, and bordering the Minuteman Bikeway. It is bisected by the Mill Brook. Higher density mixed uses in this location could increase the draw to the Arlington Heights commercial center, add new customers to the trade area, expand housing options for local residents, provide new businesses, enhance access to the Minuteman Bikeway and Mill Brook, and create a positive transition between the business districts and neighborhoods to the north. A project of this

type and form would require rezoning to allow for a mixed use development in this location.

EAST ARLINGTON

East Arlington is a thriving business district, entertainment destination, and center for creative arts and crafts. Capitol Square is the focal point of the district, centered on the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Lake Street, and it includes the surrounding blocks along Massachusetts



Avenue between Oxford Street and Orvis Road to the west and Melrose Street to the east. The district is anchored by the Capitol Theater, which has attracted other complementary businesses including a series of arts and crafts boutiques, and eating and drinking establishments. Its proximity to the Minuteman Bikeway and Alewife MBTA station are important assets. While East Arlington is a town-wide and visitor destination, it has a number of personal and professional services, religious institutions, and the Fox Library, all providing for the regular needs of surrounding neighborhoods. Nearby public and civic amenities include the Crosby School and playground on Winter Street, and Hardy School and playground on Lake Street and the Minuteman Bikeway.

East Arlington Village Center will continue to grow as a local and regional destination for food, art, and entertainment. The East Arlington Massachusetts Avenue Rebuild Project will upgrade the corridor between the Cambridge city line and Pond Lane, and include improvements in the East Arlington Business District to revitalize the streetscape and enhance mobility and safety for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists with new bicycle lanes and pedestrian crossings.

One of the main issues in East Arlington is the amount, distribution and use of parking in and around Capitol Square. It is constrained by the lack of a publicly owned parking facility. Parking was originally studied as part of the Koff Commercial Revitalization Plan (2009). Recommended strategies included a cooperative initiative involving the Town, Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), and local business owners to consider the following:

- Shared-parking agreements between property owners to maximize the supply of short-term parking spaces most convenient to customers.
- Collaboration with local businesses, property owners, and residents to assess the need for changes to parking management to improve parking turnover and provide revenue for parking improvements and revitalization in the district.

ARLINGTON CENTER

Arlington Center is the “downtown” and historic center of the town. Its axis is on the Massachusetts Avenue intersection with Mystic Street/Pleasant Street. Arlington Center includes two sub-districts east and west of this intersection: Arlington Center East (ACE) and Arlington Center West (ACW). ACE includes the area centered on Massachusetts Avenue between Mystic Street and Franklin Street.



Within the ACE sub-district, there are six focus areas:

- Jefferson-Cutter House and Park
- Russell Common/Mystic Street Corridor
- Massachusetts Avenue Corridor Core Area
- Medford Street Corridor
- Broadway Plaza (at confluence of Mass. Ave., Broadway and Medford Street)
- Monument Square (the triangle of land between Massachusetts Avenue, Broadway and Franklin Street)

The ACW sub-district is centered on Massachusetts Avenue between Pleasant Street and Academy Street. This is the historic and civic core. It includes Arlington Town Hall, the Robbins Library, the Central School containing the Senior Center, the main Post Office, the Whittemore-Robbins House, and several social and religious institutions.

Arlington Center includes several public open spaces such as the Winfield-Robbins Memorial Garden (be-

tween the library and Town Hall), Whittemore Robbins House Park and Old Burying Ground (both off Peg Spengler Way), Whittemore Park and Jefferson Cutter House (at the corner of Mystic Street), Uncle Sam Park (at the northwest corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Mystic Street) and Broadway Plaza. The district is also bisected by the Minuteman Bikeway. Many formal and informal community activities are held on these grounds throughout the year. Other nearby public and institutional facilities include several active churches, the Central Fire Station, Jason Russell House, Spy Pond recreational fields and Spy Pond Park, Arlington High School, and Arlington Catholic High School and St. Agnes Elementary School, and Arlington Boys' and Girls' Club; as well as Town Hall as a seat of town government and a social venue.

Arlington Center needs improvements to walkability, connectivity, and access between and within the Arlington Center sub-districts. This includes a more uniform streetscape across the district that ties it together and supports business activity, enhances public amenities and opportunities for civic gatherings, and is friendly and easy to use for different modes of travel (vehicles, bus transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists). There are other needs as well:

1. Enhance and maintain the district's appearance and physical character with physical improvements and renovations to deteriorated sites, buildings, street furniture and rights of way.
2. Attention should be focused on rebuilding Broadway Plaza to make it more inviting, attractive and useful to shoppers, pedestrians, diners and other users.
3. Revise regulations to support desired and appropriate building placement, form, scale, density and mix of uses.
4. Address parking needs in the district including shared parking, on-street parking additions, new facilities, adjusted time limits, better management of existing parking supply, and consistent enforcement. Critically examine options for building structured parking on the Russell Common parking site.
5. Make walkability and street activation enhancements such as sidewalk areas for outdoor dining and entertainment, gateway treatments and wayfinding signage.
6. Encourage storefront façade and sign enhancements where needed, window signs and treat-

ments, blade signs, lighting, and other enhancements.

7. Facilitate building façade restorations where needed.
8. Revise regulations to support mixed use development with first floor retail and upper story residential to support local businesses.

PUBLIC/PRIVATE COOPERATION AND COMMITMENT TO THE VILLAGE CENTERS

Good public/private cooperation is based on an understanding of the interdependence of buildings and the "public realm" in traditional village centers, e.g., streets, sidewalks, parking, and open space. Creating a good pedestrian environment requires attention to civic gathering spaces, sidewalks, and street activation which in turn encourages private investment and a mix of business types.

Public/private cooperation in the revitalization of Arlington's village centers needs to include a broad range of municipal departments, boards and committees. On the private side, property owners, residents, business owners, potential developers, and local business organizations such as the Friends of Broadway Plaza, Capitol Square Business Association, and the Arlington Heights merchants group need to be committed to the revitalization process and to working with the Town toward common goals.

URBAN DESIGN

Traditional village centers and neighborhoods, whether established and historic, or new and emerging, often have common settlement and design characteristics as identified below:

1. Tight settlement patterns
2. Building functional and architectural compatibility
3. Moderate block size with lengths and widths that are at comfortable pedestrian scale
4. Street wall/street enclosure (the ratio of building height to street width) that provides a comfortable pedestrian environment
5. Strong terminal vistas.

Arlington is fortunate to have these elements already in place in many areas. These design indicators should be considered baseline criteria for revitalization initiatives in the village centers, and other commercial areas along Arlington's primary corridors including Massachusetts Avenue, Broadway, and Summer Street.

Tight Settlement Patterns. Tight settlement patterns provide good walkability and support diverse retail in traditional village and neighborhood centers where pedestrians have an opportunity to view more storefronts in a shorter distance. Tight settlements can generally be determined by key building placement and dimensions such as:

1. Zero or short building setbacks;
2. High frontage occupation by the primary buildings;
3. Narrow frontages and storefront widths; and
4. High ratios of building coverage to land area and floor area ratios (density indicators).

Arlington Center, East Arlington and Arlington Heights all share these traditional settlement patterns which provide an urban form that supports walkability. Arlington Center in particular illustrates the traditional patterns with the orderly row of commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings lining the sidewalk along Massachusetts Avenue with intermittent public open spaces. Most of the historic settlement patterns in the three village centers remain intact and should be retained. These patterns are typically different from other corridor segments along Mass. Ave. where larger and wider buildings may be pushed back from the street with parking in front of the buildings.

Functional and Architectural Building Compatibility. Building compatibility can be determined by their use, placement, size, scale, height, forms, and general architectural styles. For the most part, buildings in Arlington Center, East Arlington and Arlington Heights were constructed before the automobile was commonplace, and designed to be an excellent pedestrian environment which was often the primary mode of transportation. Residences, businesses and workplaces were meant to be accessible on a pedestrian scale, and the architecture supported both density and mixed use. The majority of buildings in the three village center core areas are one to three stories. This is somewhat shorter than commercial districts in Cambridge and Somerville, likely because of the more linear development pattern created by the streetcar and being in the rural fringe at a time of significant growth. Many buildings are partitioned into shop fronts of 20 to 40 feet facing Massachusetts Avenue. These buildings are typically placed along front lot line at the sidewalk edge. Most buildings have high ground floor plates allowing for taller shop front facades and windows. Tall windows and transoms

allowed natural light to reach the back of the store providing energy efficiency.

Block Size. Moderate block size is an important factor in creating walkable streets and a comfortable pedestrian environment. In a traditional village center, an ideal block width is about 250 feet and a maximum of 600 feet. (Traditional neighborhoods can have longer blocks). If blocks are too long (greater distances between intersections), vehicle travel speeds tend to increase which can diminish the pedestrian environment. Shorter blocks break up the building spaces and provide depths to the business district, which may improve access to parking and interest to the pedestrian. The additional street frontage can also create new business development opportunities. Arlington Center, East Arlington and Arlington Heights all have short blocks, typically 250 to 350 feet between intersecting streets. However, because the Town witnessed significant growth along Mass. Ave with the addition of the streetcar, the commercial development is more linear in form than most communities and the depth of the three village centers is limited to one block by the well-established residential neighborhoods that abut the districts.

Street Enclosure. This urban design feature is the ratio of building height to the width between buildings across a street, and typically includes the street, sidewalk, and front yards of buildings. Street enclosure contributes to a comfortable pedestrian environment. In a traditional village center, good street enclosure ratios would generally be around 1:2. If the ratio is too low, the buildings across the street feel distant and disconnected. If the ratio is too high the buildings may appear too large creating a canyon effect along the street and shadowing during long stretches of the day. As street enclosure is an important walkability indicator, it was measured in several locations along Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington Center, East Arlington and Arlington Heights as illustrated in the figures below. Where street enclosure is less than desirable, in cases of excess parking frontage or under-developed properties, there may be opportunities for infill development to build up the street wall. If this is not possible, than various streetscape enhancements can help improve the pedestrian environment. These principles apply to established as well as emerging centers as well as targeted redevelopment sites where improved walkability is a design objective.

Transitions. Transitions or “Like Facing Like” refers to the way different building types are situated on a street. Ideally, the same building types should be across the

street from each other. In many places including Arlington with conventional zoning regulations, blocks are built so that the same or similar building types are built along the same side of the street with different building types located across the street. For example, Arlington Center has Village Business District (B3) on the north side of Massachusetts Avenue facing a Central Business District (B5) on the south side of street, east of Mystic Avenue; and a Central Business District (B5) and Village Business District (B3) on the north side of Massachusetts Avenue are facing a Single Family Residential District (R1) on the south side, west of Pleasant Street. This checkerboard zoning pattern is even more prevalent on other segments of Massachusetts Avenue, as well as Broadway and Summer Street. This approach can be unpredictable, generate incompatible uses, impact access and walkability, and potentially result in lower property values. As an alternative, similar building types should be facing each other because this arrangement protects the character of the streetscape by ensuring that buildings with similar densities are facing one another. The official zoning district map should be examined to identify where potential conflicts exist now and may occur in the future. Opportunities to create more compatible “transitions” should be considered and zoning districts amended accordingly.

Vertical and Horizontal Mixed Uses. Mixed use (commercial and residential) in the three village centers is generally limited. Possible reasons for this may be the size of the buildings and current zoning restrictions. Most buildings in the core areas are one or two stories in height, and this limits opportunities for upper-floor residential. Additionally, the current zoning regulations do not favor vertical mixed use. On the other hand, there is a fair amount of horizontal mixed use activity in and around the village centers. Larger multifamily structures (apartments and condominiums) are typically at the edge of the core commercial areas. While vertical mixed use with residential over commercial can be highly beneficial to a village center (residential use provides built-in customers and security for the businesses), horizontal mixed use can be detrimental if improperly located. For example, if creating clusters of desirable and complementary businesses is a goal for Arlington Center, East Arlington, and Arlington Heights, placing a large residential building on the same frontage with commercial uses can create a void and disrupt vibrancy of the district. Requiring retail uses on the first floor of buildings in the three village centers and emerging commercial centers will

help strengthen the business districts’ walkability and other design objectives.

Recommendations

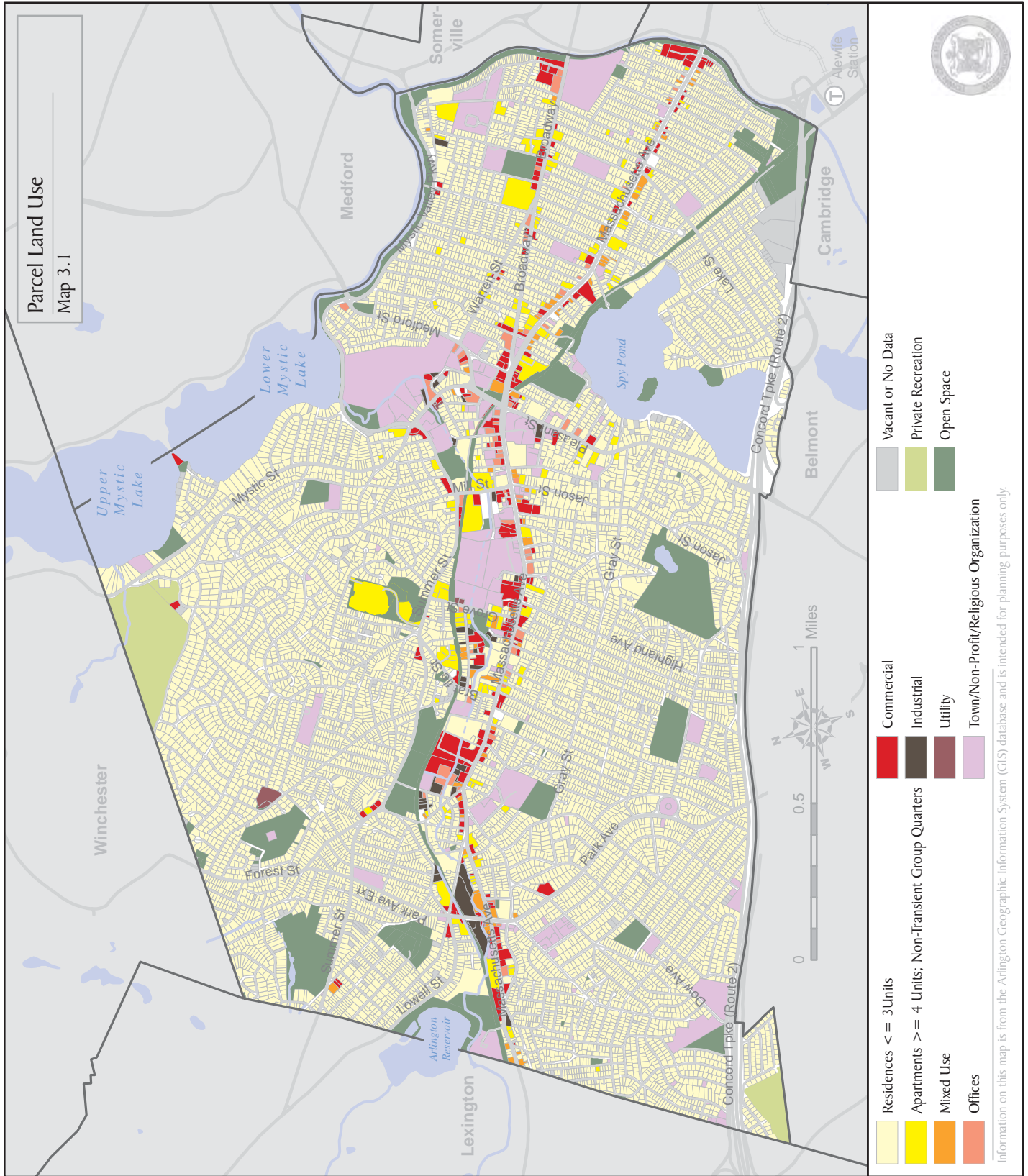
5. **Recodify and update the Zoning Bylaw (ZBL).** The text of the ZBL is not always clear, and some of the language is out of date and inconsistent. As a first step in any zoning revisions following a new master plan, communities should focus on instituting a good regulatory foundation: structure, format, ease of navigation, updated language and definitions, and statutory and case law consistency.
6. **Adopt design guidelines** for new and redeveloped commercial and industrial sites.
7. **Reorganize and consolidate the business zoning districts** on Massachusetts Avenue. Zoning along the length of Massachusetts Avenue includes six business zones (B1, B2, B2A, B3, B4, B5) interspersed with six residential zoning districts. Encouraging continuity of development and the cohesion of the streetscape, is difficult. It is difficult to connect the zoning on a given site with the district’s stated purposes in the ZBL. As part of updating and recodifying the ZBL, the Town should consider options for consolidating some of the business districts to better reflect its goals for flexible business zones that allow property owners to adapt their commercial properties to rapidly changing market trends and conditions..
8. **Promote development of higher value mixed use buildings by providing redevelopment incentives in all or selected portions of the business districts on Massachusetts Avenue, Broadway, and Medford Street,** Arlington needs to unlock the development potential of business-zoned land, especially around the center of town. Slightly increasing the maximum building height in and near existing business districts, and reducing off-street parking requirements would go a long way toward incentivizing redevelopment, as would a clear set of design guidelines. Applicants should be able to anticipate what the Town wants to see in the business districts and plan their projects accordingly.
9. **Support vibrant commercial areas by encouraging new mixed use redevelopment** that includes residential and commercial uses in and near

commercial centers, served by transit and infrastructure. Clarify that mixed-use development is permitted and reconcile inconsistent requirements.

The B3 Village Business district and B5 Central Business district are described as encouraging mixed use development, but other business and residential districts along Massachusetts Avenue do not. The ZBL is vague regarding uses that are allowed in mixed-use projects, and dimensional requirements can conflict. As part of the recodification and update process, the Table of Use Regulations should be clarified, and the ZBL should have specific standards for design and construction of mixed use redevelopment projects.

10. **Boost industrial and commercial revitalization by allowing multiple uses** within structures, parcels, and districts without losing commercial and industrial uses. This will help enhance the suitability of Arlington's commercial property for businesses in emerging growth sectors and make them more agile in the face of shifting business trends and market conditions.
11. **Establish parking ratios that reflect actual need for parking.** Consideration should be given to use, location and access to transit.
12. **Amend on-site open space requirements** for certain uses in business districts to promote high value redevelopment and alternative green areas such as roof gardens.
13. **Reduce the number of uses that require a special permit.** Excessive special permit zoning can create land use conflicts and hinder successful planning initiatives. Special permits are a discretionary approval process; the board with authority to grant or deny has considerable power. Developers yearn for predictability. If the Town wants to encourage certain outcomes that are consistent with this Master Plan, some special permits should be replaced with by-right zoning, subject to performance standards and conditions, wherever possible. Performance standards might include design guidelines and other requirements that reflect community goals.
14. **Establish areas that are a priority for preservation, and areas that are a priority for redevelopment.** The Mugar land between Alewife Station

and Thorndike Field is a high priority for preservation. In addition, the three village centers and Broadway are priorities for redevelopment. The Mill Brook study area provides opportunities both for preservation and redevelopment.



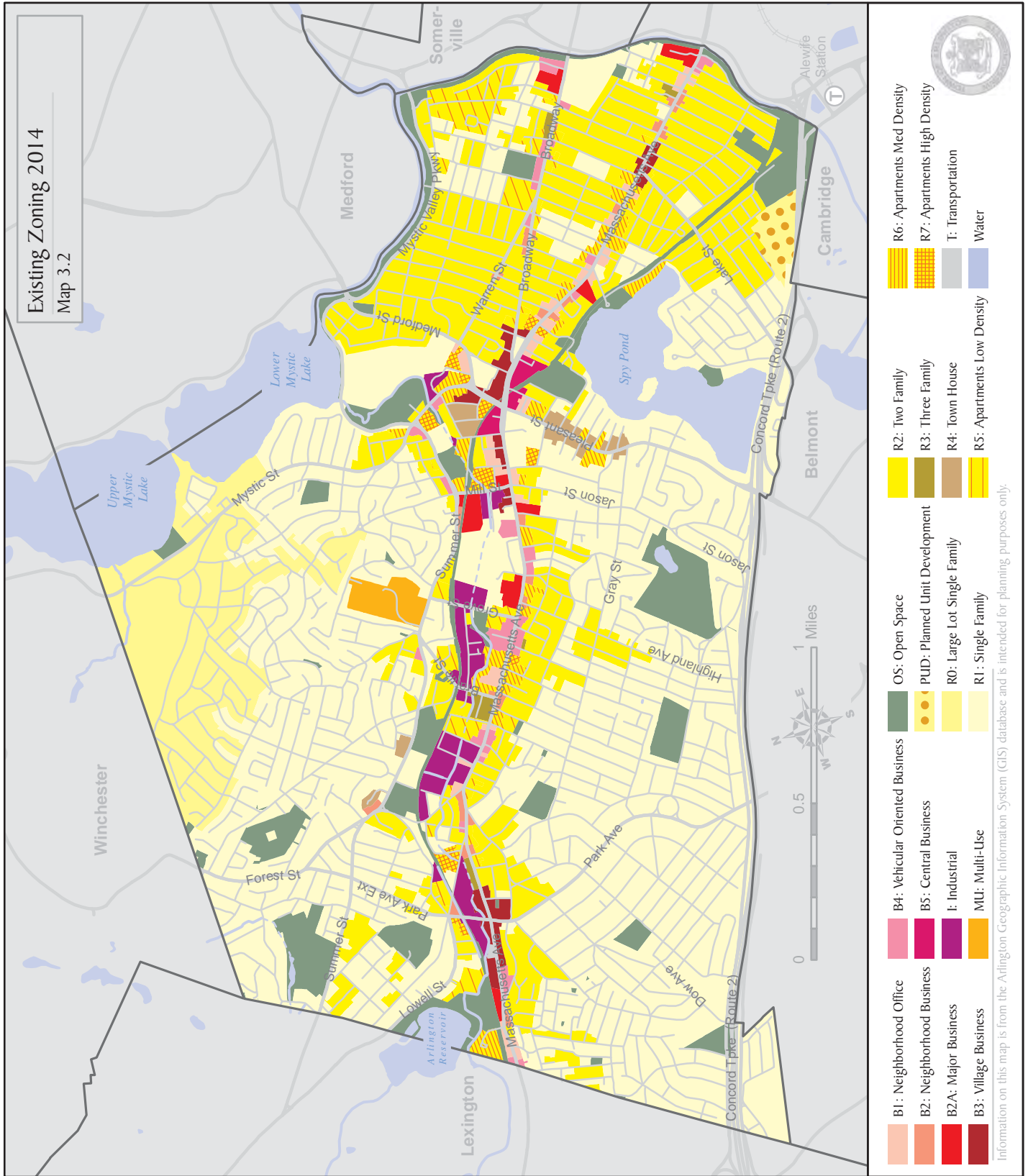
Parcel Land Use
Map 3.1



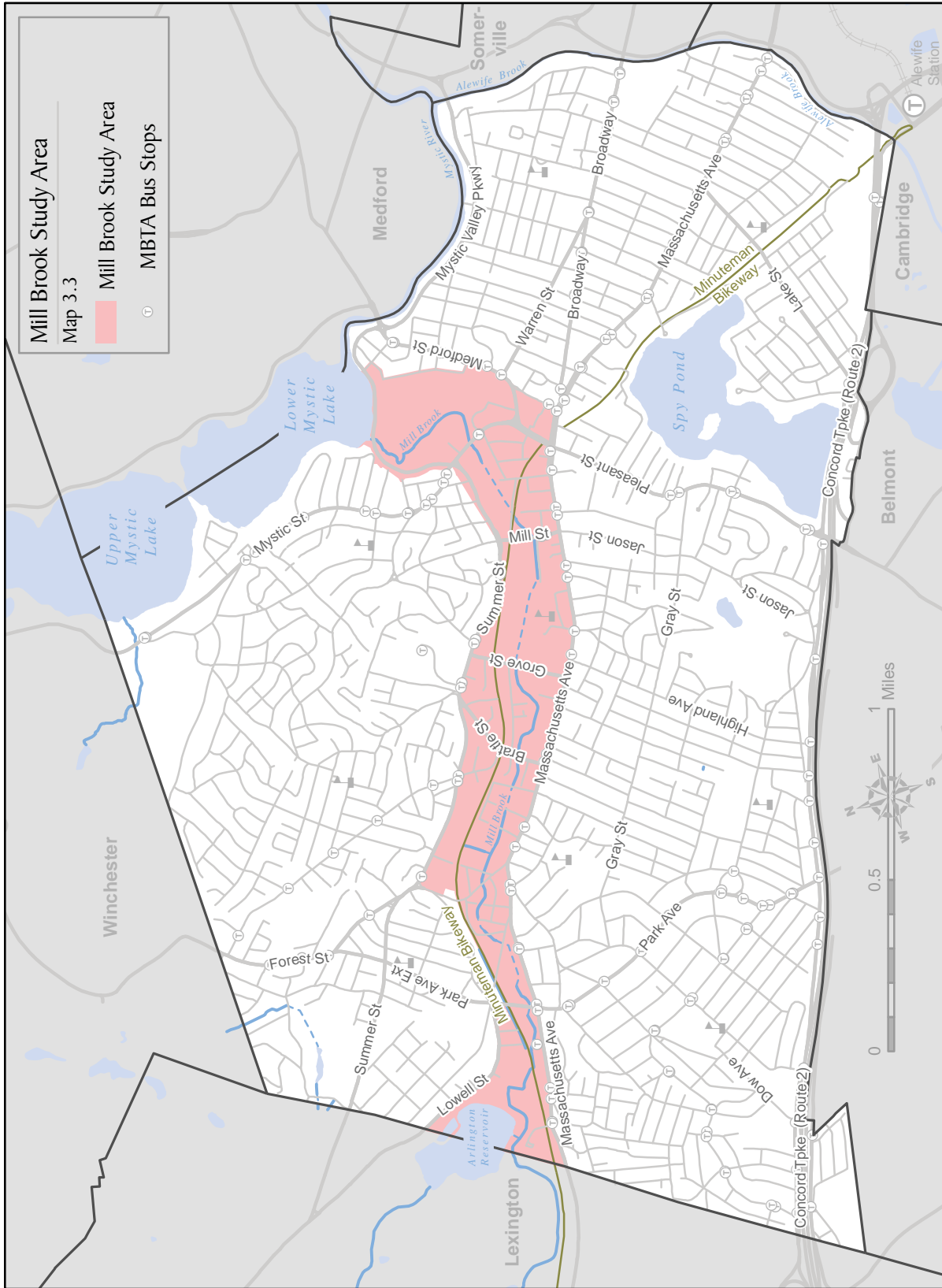
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Existing Zoning 2014

Map 3.2



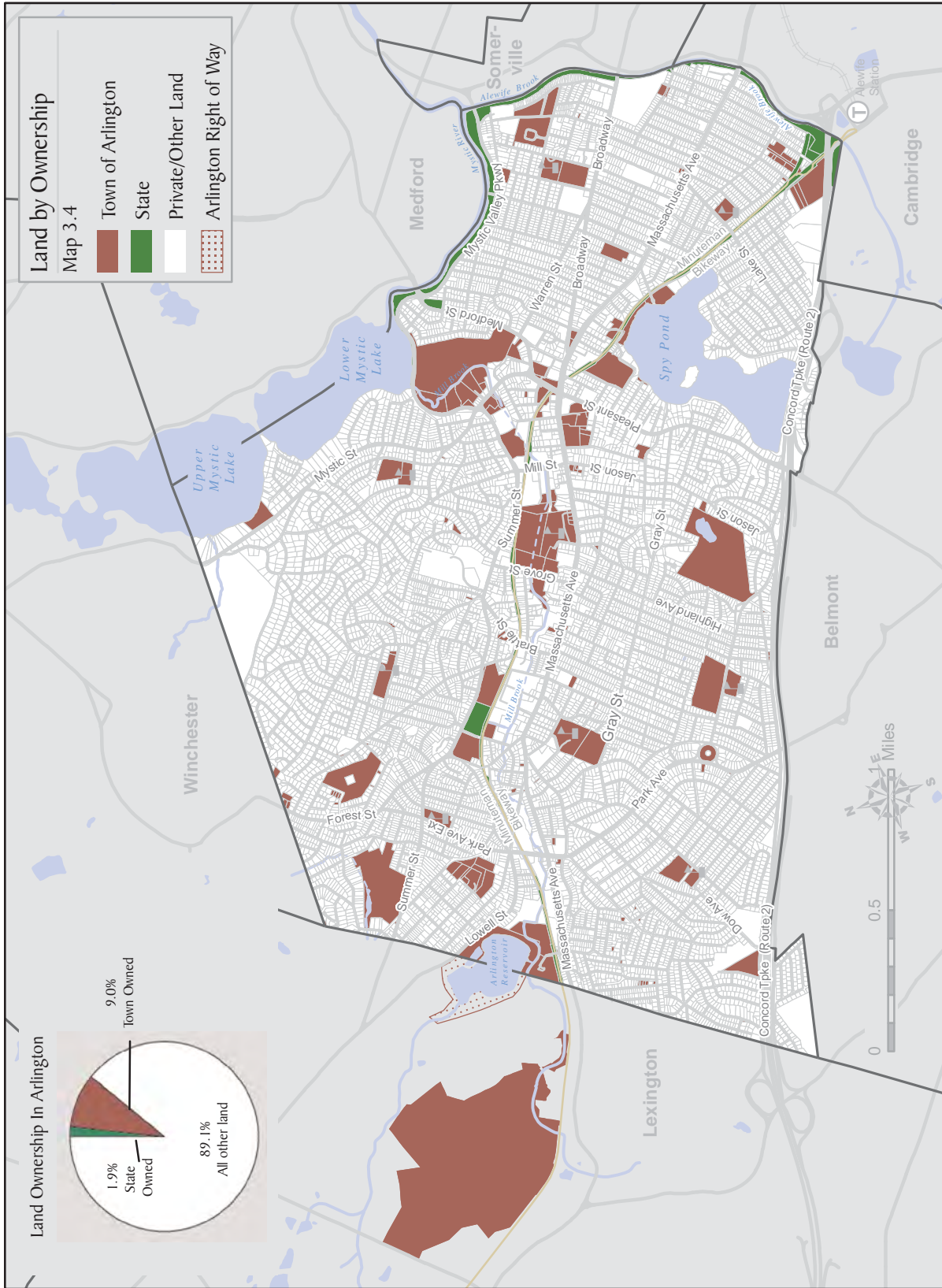
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The Mill Brook Linear Park Report was produced by a task group of the Open Space Committee in April 2010. The Arlington Redevelopment Board voted on the boundaries of the Mill Brook Study Area on July 21, 2014.



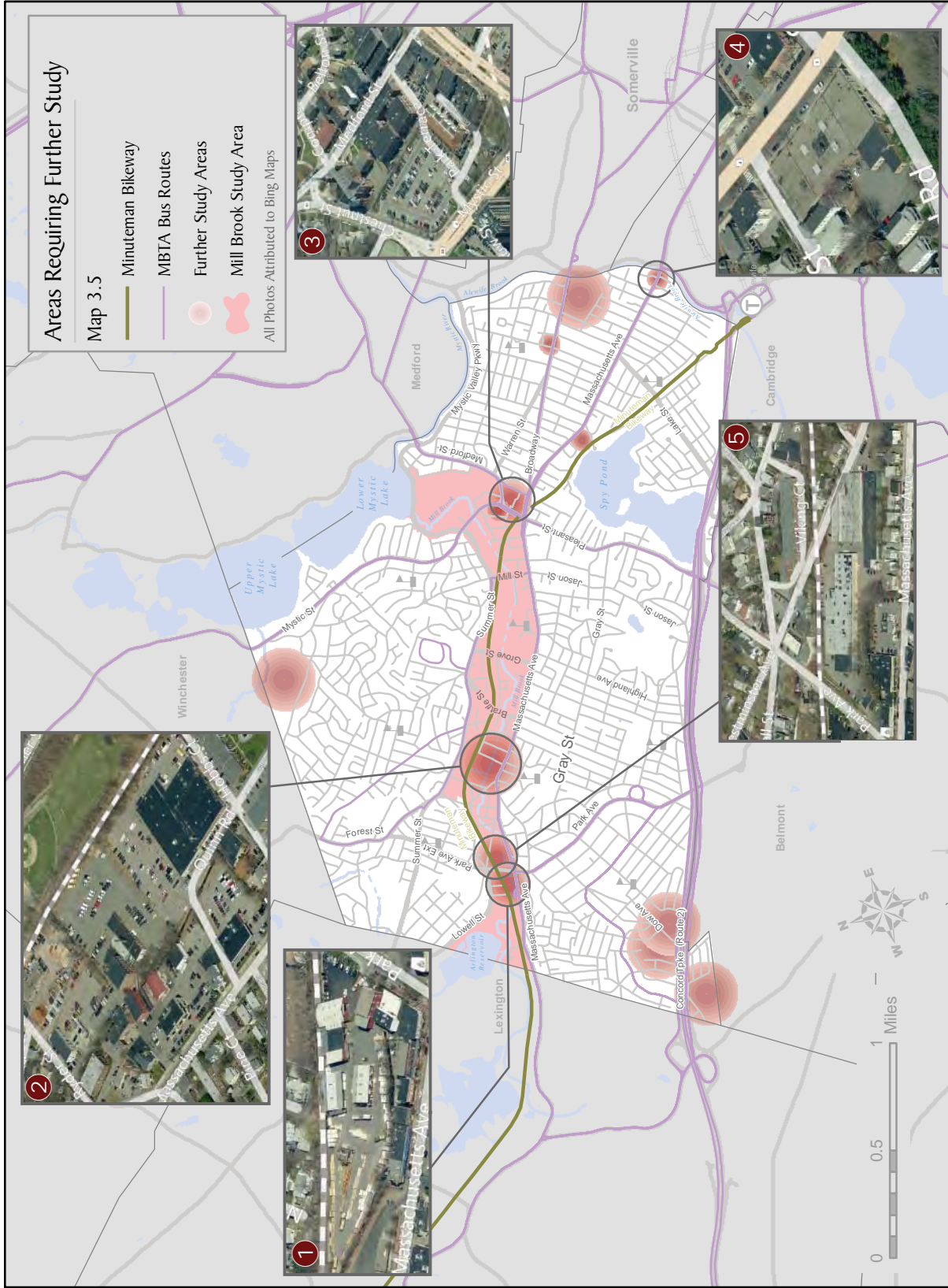
Information on this map is from the Arlington Geographic Information System (GIS) database and is intended for planning purposes only.



Approximately 9% of the 3,500 acres of land in Arlington is owned by the Town. These properties include schools, administrative buildings, parks, cemetery, and tax possession land. Arlington also owns land in neighboring Lexington totaling approximately 205 acres, which is comprised of Arlington's Great Meadows and surrounding Arlington Reservoir.



Information on this map is from the Arlington Geographic Information System (GIS) database and is intended for planning purposes only.



This map was designed to show general areas in need of further study. The Bing Map images are provided to give the reader a visual of individual sites to better understand the conditions on the ground.

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