

MBTA Communities Zoning Requirements

Public Forum
July 17, 2023



Milton Department of Planning and Community Development

Meeting Recording

Please note that tonight's meeting will be recorded and posted on the Milton Access Television and Town websites.



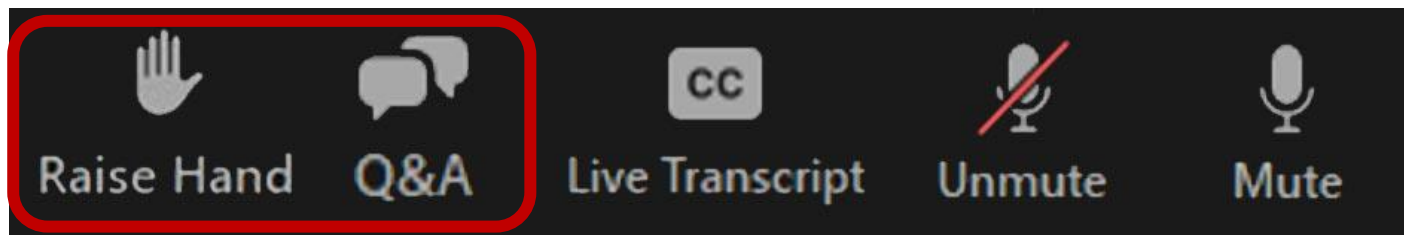
Meeting Agenda

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Recap of MBTA Communities zoning requirements
- 3) Discussion of survey results
- 4) Update on technical assistance
- 5) Follow-up on survey results, public comments
- 6) Question and Comment period
- 7) Next steps



Meeting Format

- This meeting is being held using the Zoom webinar product. Presenters and speakers are on screen, while those watching the meeting are off-screen as “attendees.”
- If you’d like to make a comment or ask a question during the Question and Comment period, there are two options:
 - use the “Q&A” button
 - Use the “Raise Hand” button
 - For attendees on the phone, you can raise your hand by pressing *9, and mute and unmute yourself by pressing *6.



Meeting Format (continued)

- Once the presentation is over and the Question and Comment period begins, the host will invite people to speak in the order they have raised their hands or have asked questions through Q&A.
- In order to give as many attendees an opportunity to speak as possible, comments will be limited to three minutes.



Resources



The screenshot shows the official website of the Town of Milton, Massachusetts. The header features the town's name in a large, stylized font, along with a search bar and a language selector. The navigation bar includes links for 'ABOUT', 'DEPARTMENTS', 'BOARDS & COMMITTEES', and 'REPORT A PROBLEM'. A yellow box on the right side of the navigation bar asks 'Where do I go for?'. The left sidebar contains a list of links, with 'MBTA Communities Multi-Family Zoning Requirement' highlighted. The main content area displays the title 'MBTA Communities Multi-Family Zoning Requirement' and a paragraph explaining the legislative changes in January 2021. A map of Milton is shown on the right side of the main content area.

Milton
MASSACHUSETTS

Select Language Search

Powered by Translate

ABOUT DEPARTMENTS BOARDS & COMMITTEES REPORT A PROBLEM

Where do I go for?

MBTA Communities Multi-Family Zoning Requirement

Master Plan Implementation Committee

Milton Zoning Map

Planning Board

Plans and Studies

Sign Review Documents

Transportation Studies & Resources

Home » Departments » Planning and Community Development

MBTA Communities Multi-Family Zoning Requirement

In January 2021, the Massachusetts Legislature adopted an [Economic Development Bond Bill \(H.5250\)](#) that made changes to the state's Zoning Act. The "Housing Choice" sections of the bill made it easier for municipalities like ours to adopt pro-housing zoning changes and required each municipality in the

MBTA Communities
Community Category
Apartment
Commercial
Mixed-Use
Neighborhood



What is the MBTA Communities law?

Enacted as part of the economic development bill in January 2021, new Section 3A of M.G.L. c. 40A (the Zoning Act) requires that an MBTA community shall have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing (three or more units) is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute:

- Minimum gross density of 15 units per acre
- Not more than ½ miles from a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal or bus station, if applicable.
- No age restrictions
- Suitable for families with children.

Towns that do not comply with the new requirements will be ineligible for **MassWorks**, **Housing Choice**, and **Local Capital Projects** funds.



Options for Compliance

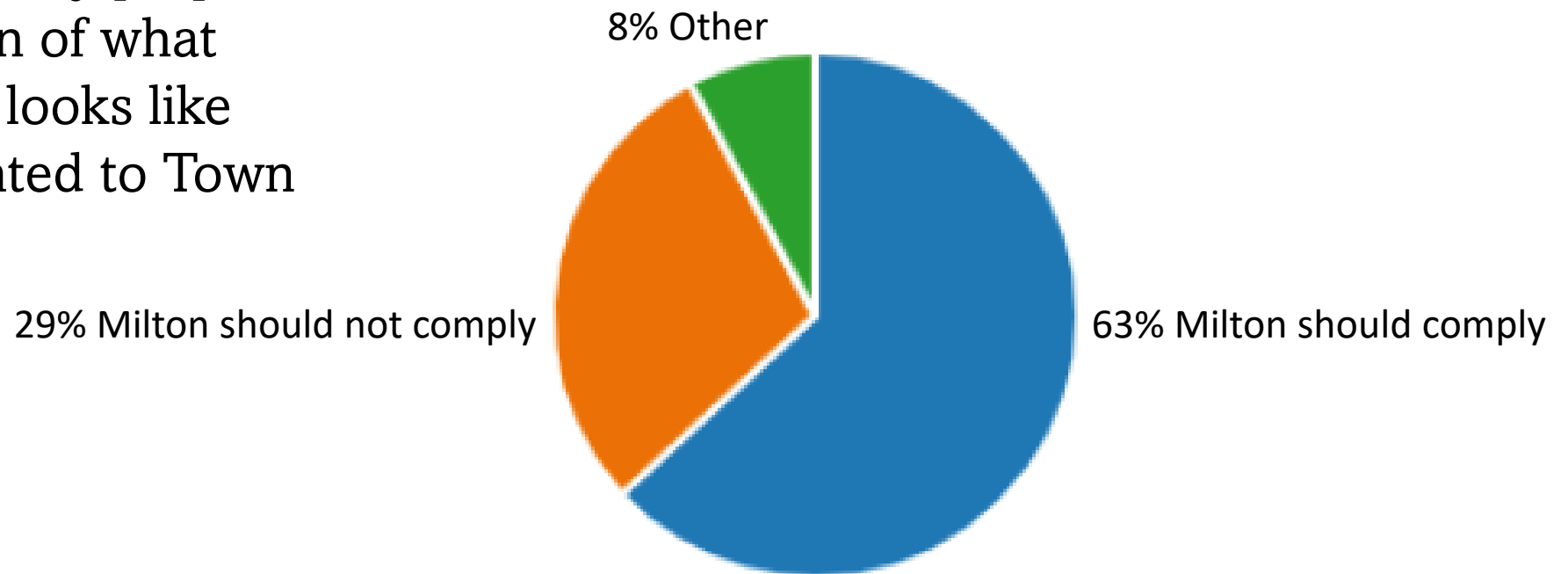
The DHCD guidelines for compliance give towns flexibility in where zoning districts can go, how large they are, and what their dimensional requirements are.



Options for Compliance

Town Meeting is the venue at which compliance will ultimately be decided.

Our job is to collaboratively prepare the best possible version of what complying with the law looks like and have that be presented to Town Meeting



Options for Compliance

Location

- The location and of districts within a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of transit is determined by how much Developable Area exists in that area. Milton's Developable Area is reduced by the fact that the Mattapan Trolley hugs the Neponset River and the border with Boston; a significant fraction of the $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius is either on state property or not in Milton.
 - The DHCD guidelines allow Milton to locate as much as 50 percent of our compliant zoning districts outside of the $\frac{1}{2}$ mile transit radius

Subdistricts

- The Town can create multiple subdistricts in different areas, with the following restrictions
 - At least half of the district needs to be contiguous
 - Subdistricts need to be a minimum of five acres



Options for Compliance

Dimensional Requirements

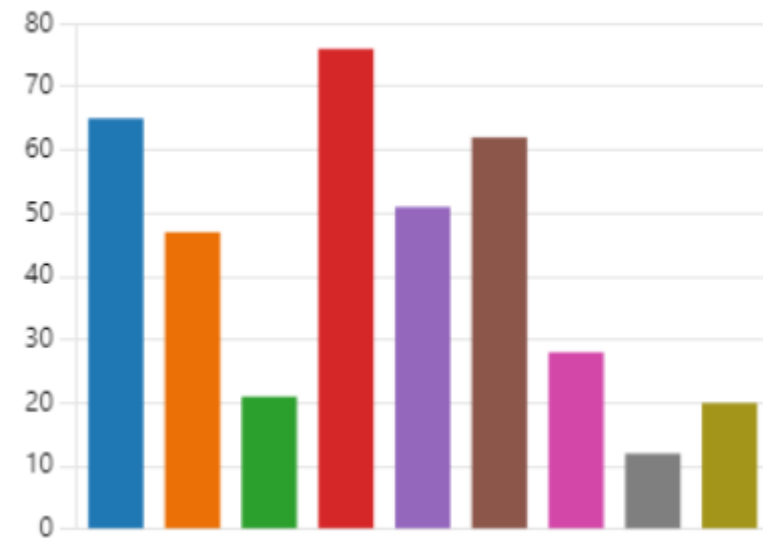
- Dimensional requirements like height, setbacks, and density do not need to be uniform across subdistricts, as long as the average of all the subdistricts meet the law's minimum requirements for density, reasonable size, and by-right permitting.
 - Example: One subdistrict comprising half the total district can have a density of five units per acre, and another district comprising the second half of the total district can have a density of twenty-five units per acre.

The flexibility in DHCD's guidelines can help the Town craft districts that minimize change to the physical character of residential neighborhoods.



MBTA Communities Survey

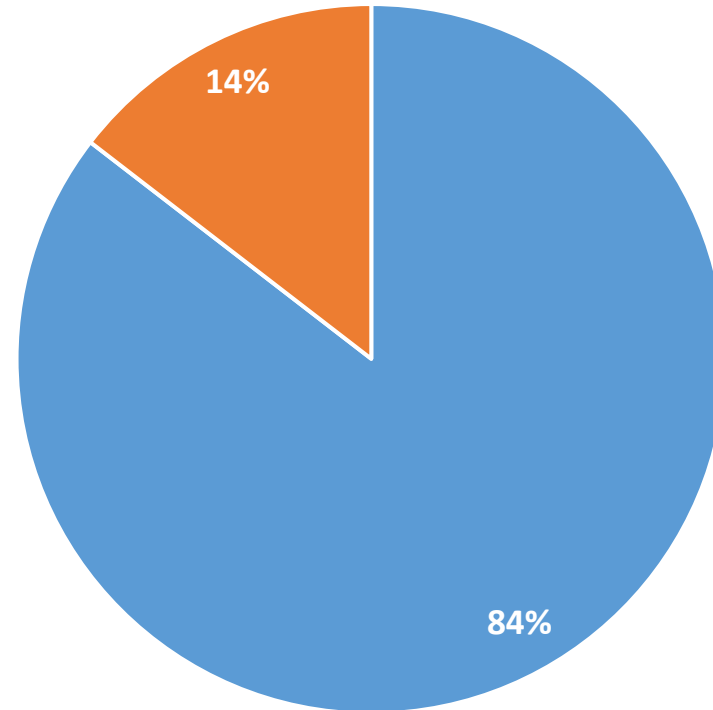
- Survey initially developed in February 2023, with an update in May 2023
- Signs posted physically as well as digitally and announced in public meetings
- Available in English, Spanish, French, and Simplified Chinese
- To date, we've received 192 responses
- Many thanks to the folks at the Milton Times, which has been the best source for getting out information



What are we learning?

Current property owners do not have much in redeveloping their homes if it was rezoned for multifamily use

This indicates that actual development coming out of this zoning change would likely be less than the total potential



- No, I would not be interested in redeveloping my property
- Yes, I would be interested in redeveloping my property

What are we learning?

- In our May update, we asked additional questions about municipal services and community benefits
- Affordable housing and commercial space were the most voted for benefits, with affordable housing being the most popular #1 choice



Update on Technical Assistance

Refining the transit area

- Planners at Utile have proposed adjustments to the transit area district that will increase our overall density

Subdistrict testing

- Planners at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council have tested additional subdistricts throughout Town that will establish a baseline level of compliance

Multiple compliance options

- Both MAPC and Utile have produced pathways that meet all of our compliance requirements. The next step is determining which pathway is preferable, or if some combination of the two needs to be devised.

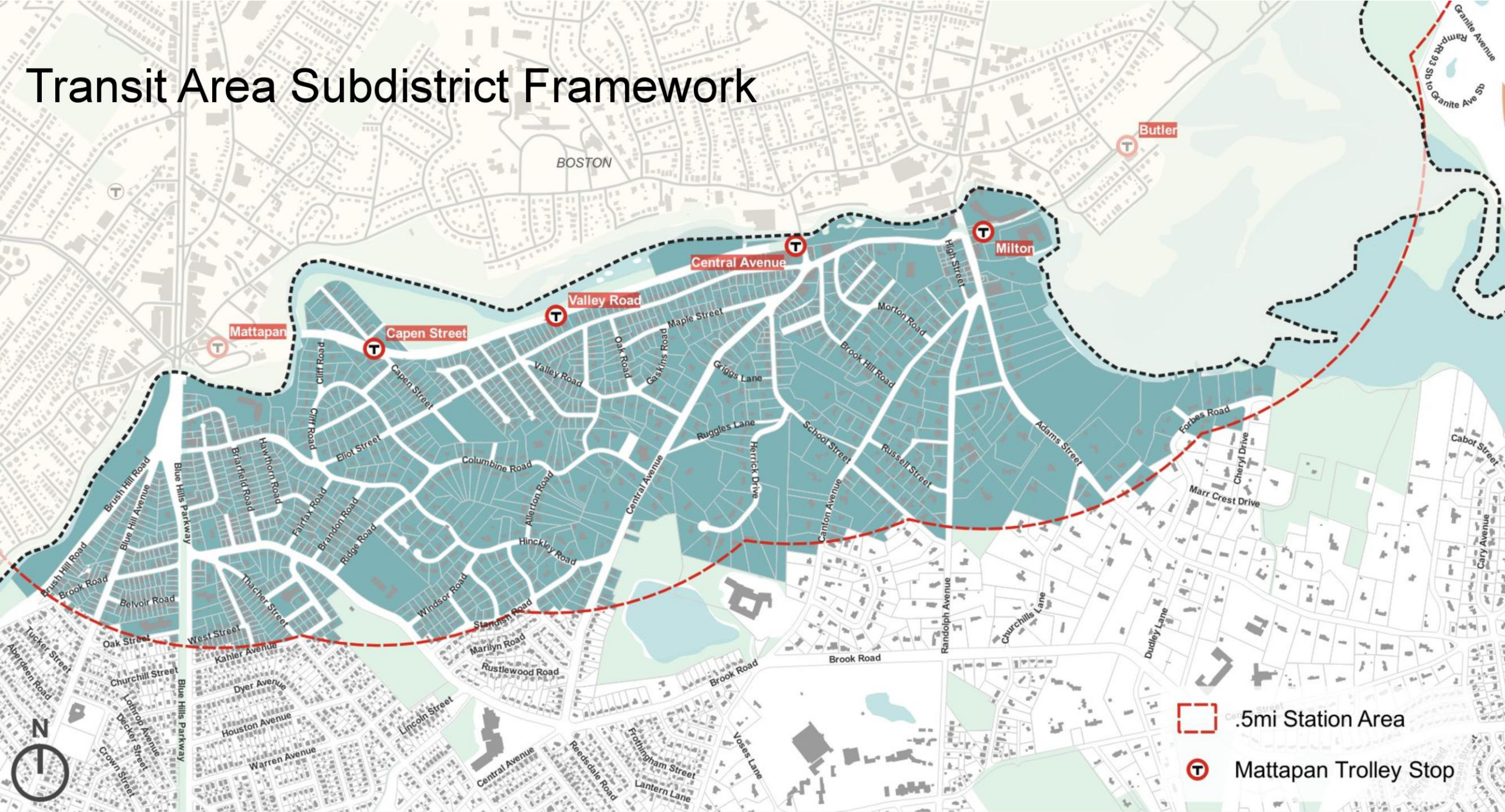


The background is a detailed map of Milton, Massachusetts. A large, irregularly shaped area in the center-right is outlined with a dashed black line and filled with a light green color, representing a specific MBTA service area. Several purple lines with circular 'T' icons represent MBTA transit routes, including the Commuter Rail line running diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right, and other bus rapid transit lines. The map also shows residential streets, parks, and water bodies.

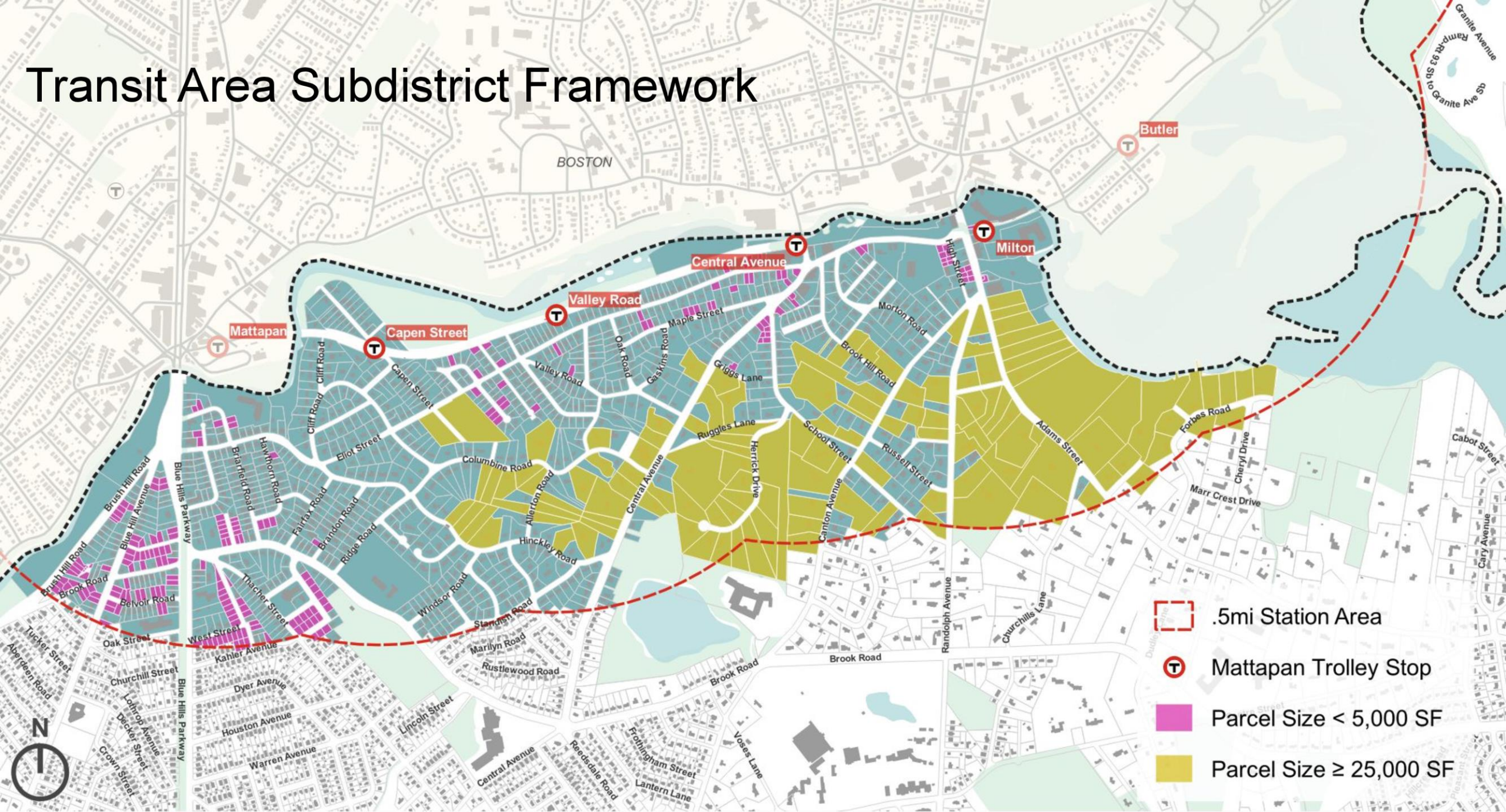
MBTA Communities Compliance

Mass Housing Partnership Technical Assistance
June Update | Town of Milton

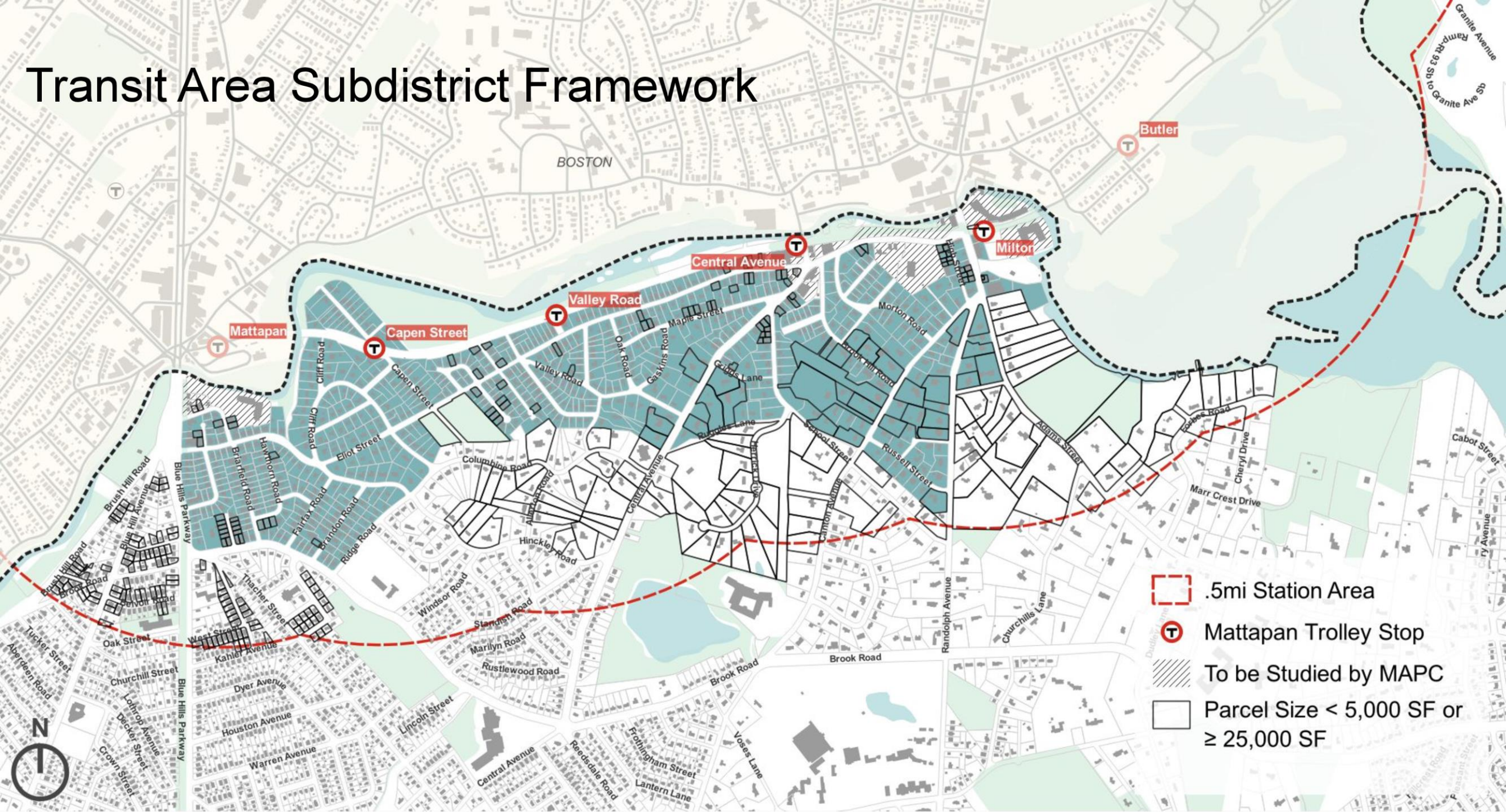
Transit Area Subdistrict Framework



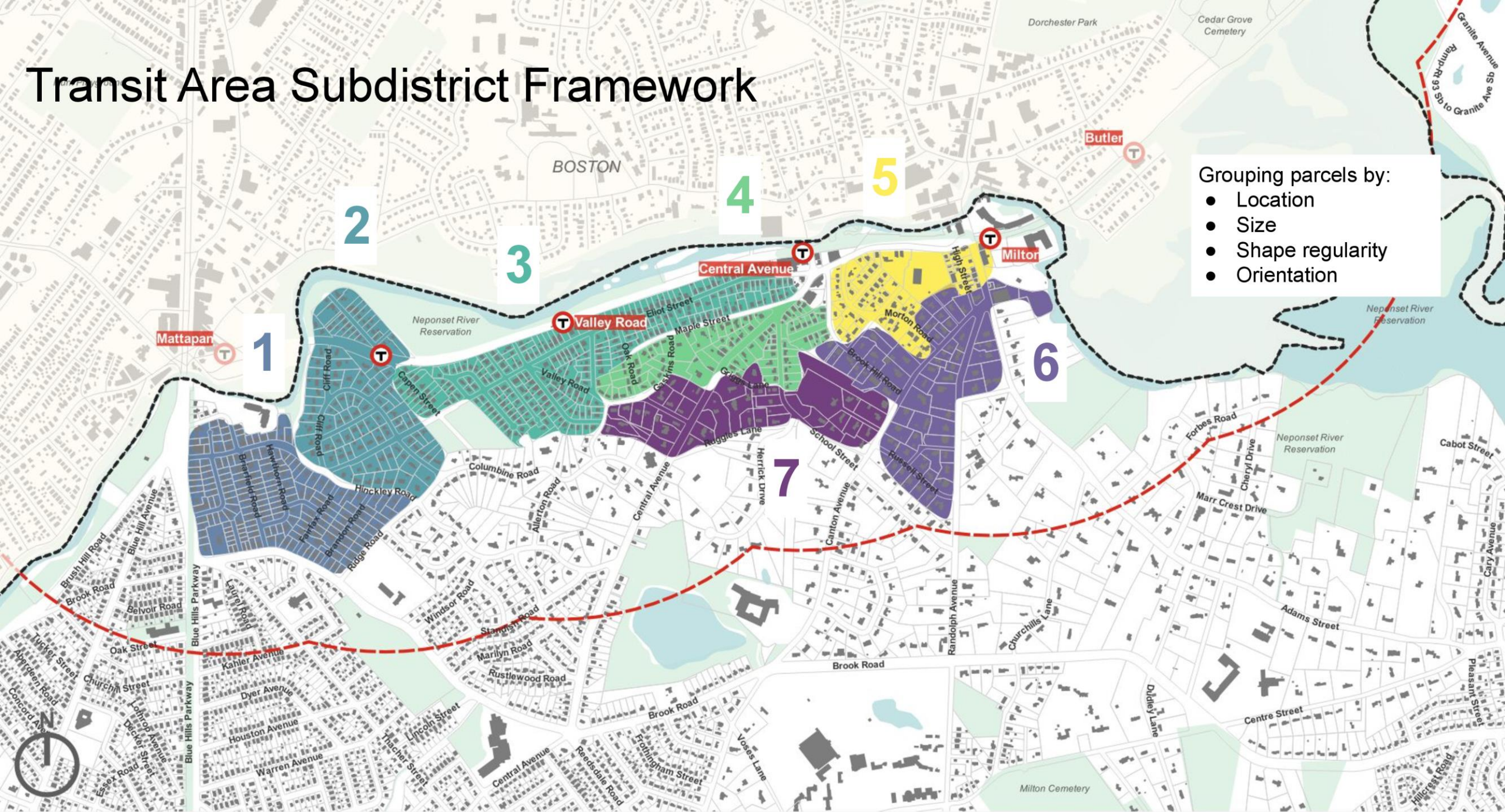
Transit Area Subdistrict Framework



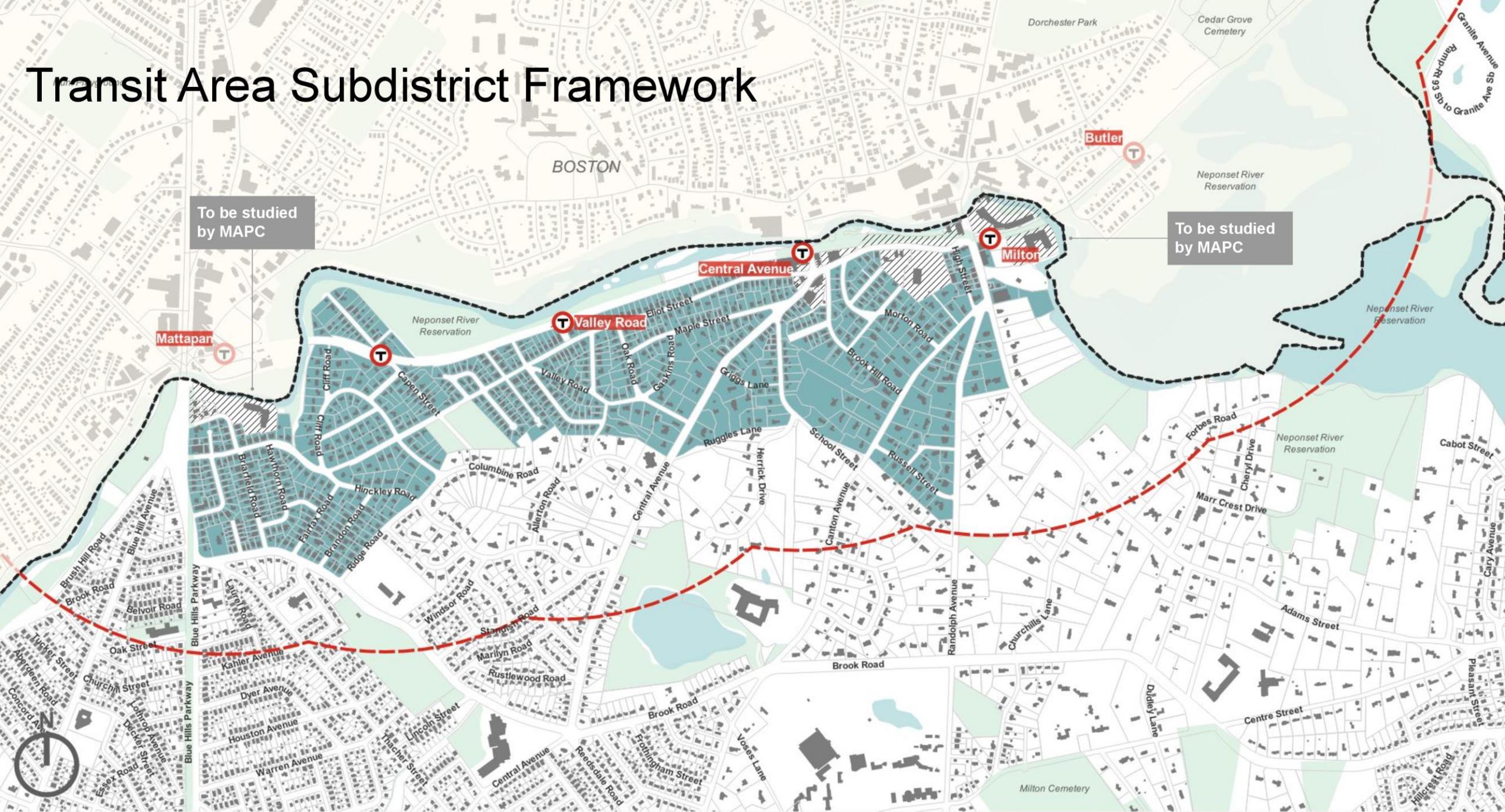
Transit Area Subdistrict Framework



Transit Area Subdistrict Framework

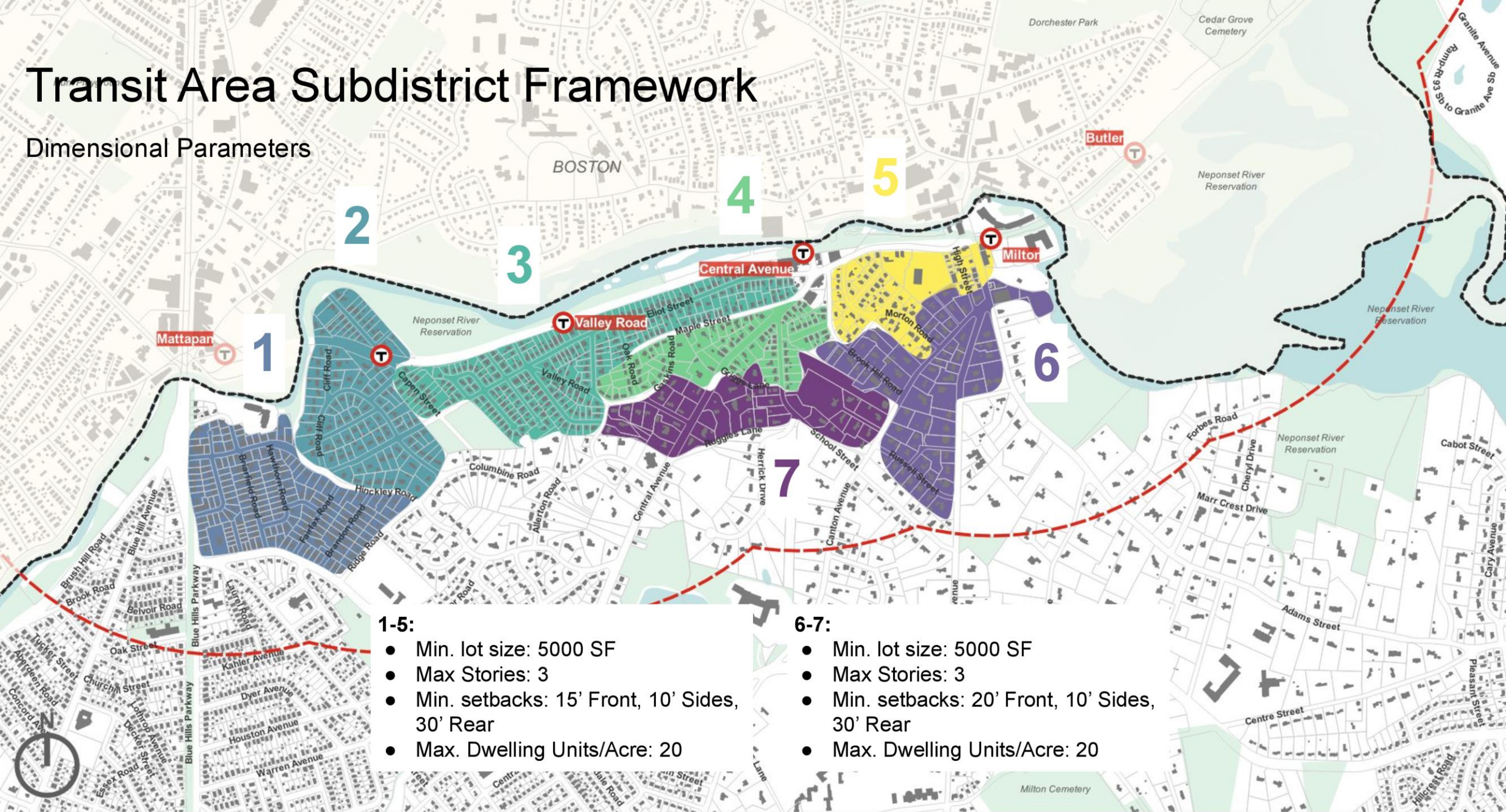


Transit Area Subdistrict Framework



Transit Area Subdistrict Framework

Dimensional Parameters



Transit Area + Granite Ave Subdistricts

Model Outputs

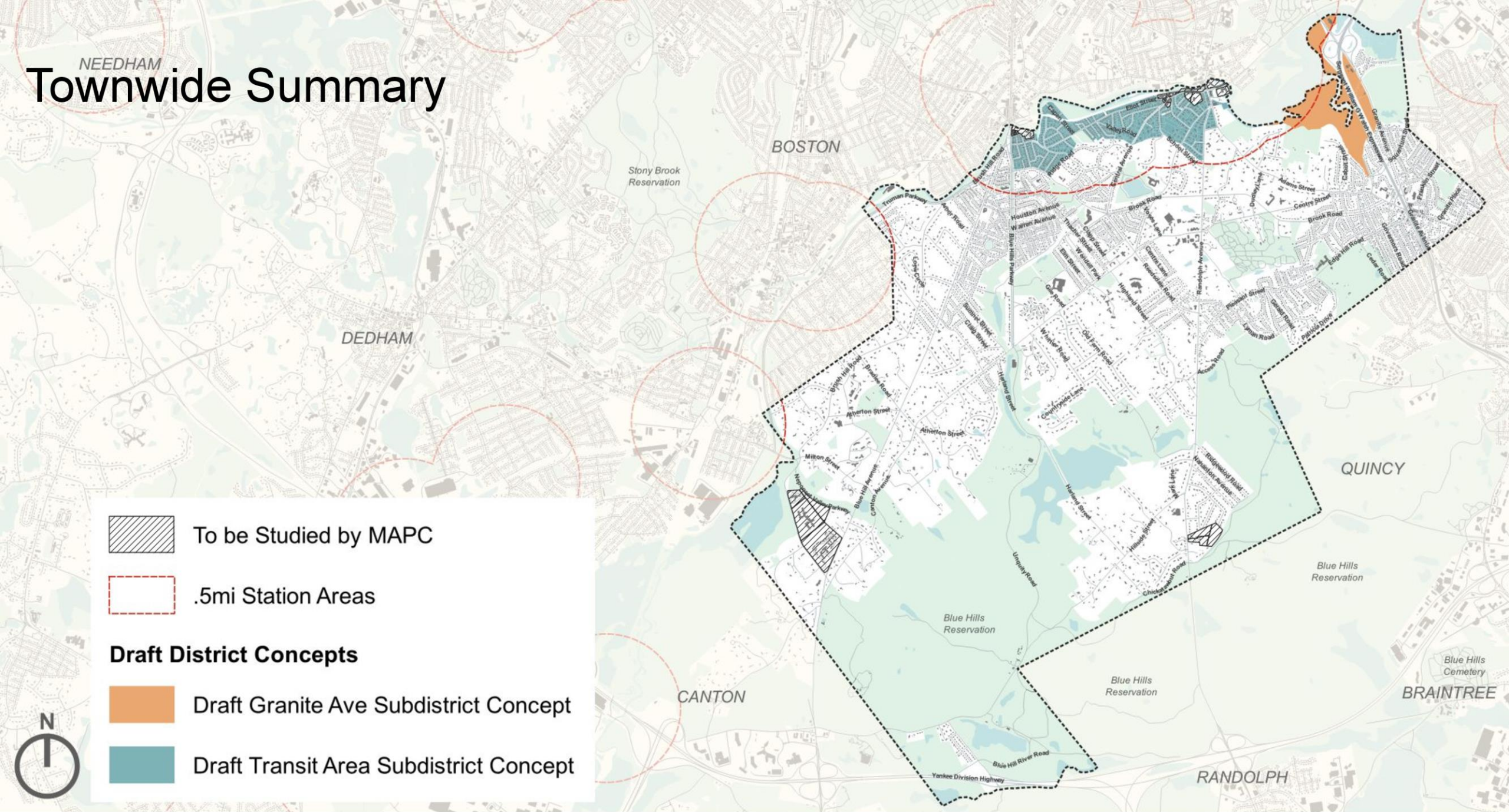
Compliance Model Summary

Model Inputs						Model Outputs			
Draft Subdistrict Name	Max. Stories	Min. Lot Size	Setbacks	Min. Parking Spaces per Unit	Max. Units per Acre	Modeled Multifamily Unit Capacity	District Acreage	Subdistrict Density Denominator*	Modeled Gross Subdistrict Density**
Transit Area Subdistricts 1-5	3 stories	5000 SF	Front: 15' Sides: 10' Rear: 30'	1	20	2472	165 acres	165 acres	15 Units/Acre = <i>2472 units / 165 acres</i>
Transit Area Subdistricts 6-7	3 stories	5000 SF	Front: 20' Sides: 10' Rear: 30'	1	20	1018	56 acres	56 acres	18.2 Units/Acre = <i>1018 units / 56 acres</i>
Granite Ave Subdistrict	6 stories	-	Front: 20' Sides: 10' Rear: 30'	1	45	701	153 acres	43 acres	16.4 Units/Acre = <i>701 units / 43 acres</i>
TOTAL	-		-	-	-	4191	374 acres	264 acres	15.8 Units/Acre = <i>4191 units / 264 acres</i>

Detailed Compliance Model Summary

Data Metric	District 1	District 2	District 3
District Name	Transit Subdistrict 1-5	Transit Subdistricts 6-7	Granite Ave Subdistrict
District Acreage (<i>see note</i>)	165.8	56.5	153.7
District Density Denominator(<i>see note</i>)	165.0	55.8	42.9
Final Unit Capacity per District	2,472	1,018	701
DU/AC	15.0	18.2	16.4
Parcel Acreage	135.7	51.4	132.8
Total Built Square Feet	7,298,802	2,904,344	1,625,942
Total Units in Station Area	2,472	1,018	171
Non-Conforming Parcels	87	0	0
Total Excluded Land (sf)	50,196	30,737	5,511,310
Total Open Space (sf)	1,232,804	478,474	6,311,647
Total Parking Area (sf)	1,990,582	792,094	221,719
Units Forgone due to Unit Cap in Zoning	0.00	0.00	0.00

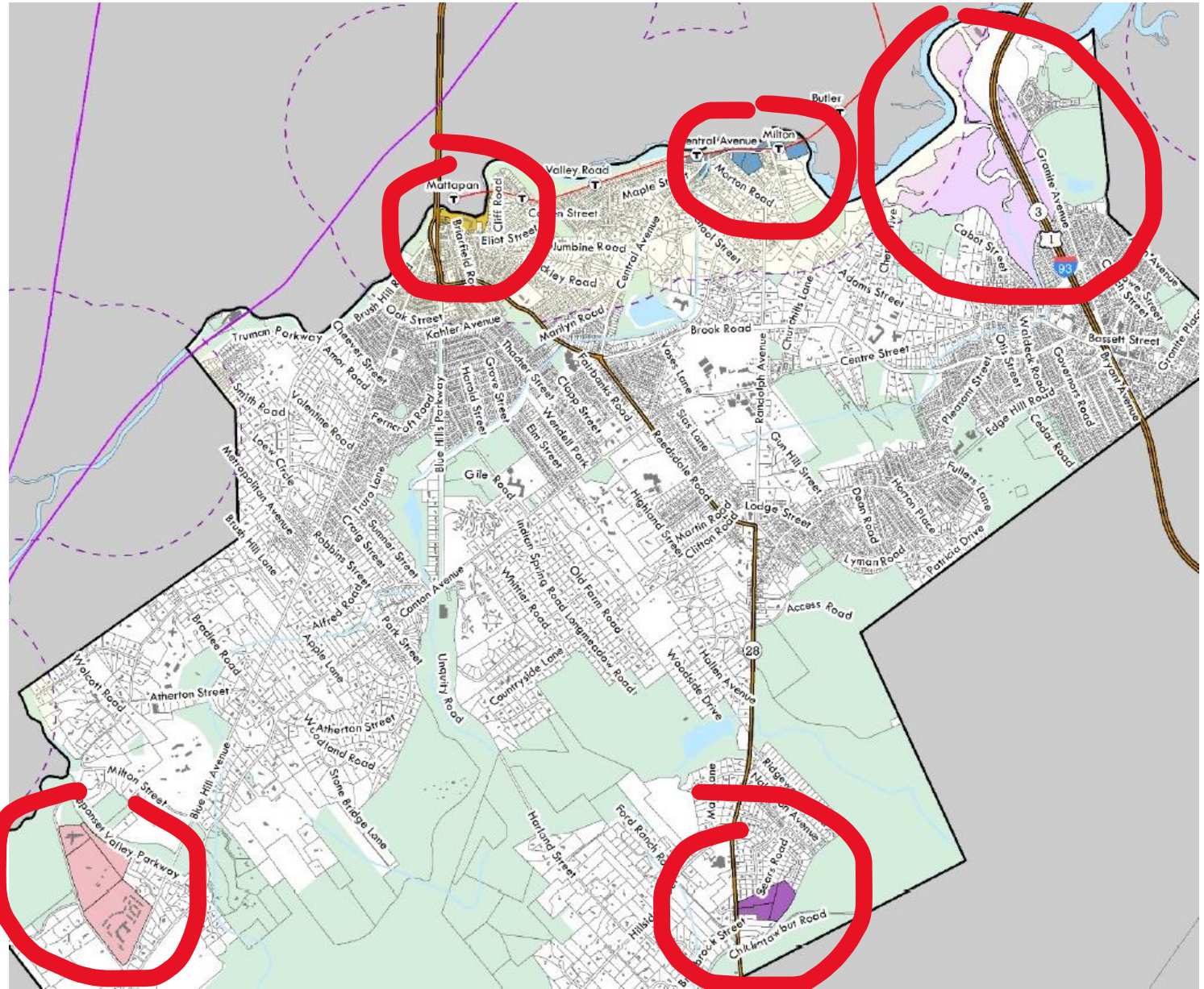
Townwide Summary



Large Parcel Tests

MAPC tested five sets of larger parcels in various locations in Town.

- Milton Village
- Curtis Road
- Brush Hill Road/Neponset Valley Parkway
- Randolph Avenue
- Granite Avenue



Large Parcel Tests

ZONING INPUTS - DISTRICT 1

Transit Subdistrict 3 (Res-C & Bus)

Model Inputs for Calculating Unit Yield	Input
Minimum Lot Size	21,780
Additional Lot Square Feet per Dwelling Unit	0
Open Space %	0%
Excluded Land Counted Toward Open Space	
Parking Spaces per Dwelling Unit	1.00
Building Height	5
Maximum Lot Coverage %	70%
Floor Area Ratio	1.73
Zoning Restrictions that Cap Unit Counts	Input
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	0
Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre	40.00
Cap on Maximum Dwelling Units per District	0.00



District 1 Transit Subdistrict 3 Summary Calculations

Metric	Number	Metric	Number	% of Total
District Acreage	8	Non-Conforming Parcels	2	20.0%
Denominator				
Total Parcels	10	Units within Half-Mile of Transit	597	100.0%
Parcel Acreage	15	Total Excluded Land	114,747	17.0%
Total Built Square Feet	1,148,650	Open Space Removed/Set Aside	249,365	37.0%
Multi-family Unit Capacity	597	Total Parking Area	187,961	27.9%
DU/AC	74.6	Units Forgone due to Unit Cap in Zoning	0.00	0.0%



Large Parcel Tests

ZONING INPUTS - DISTRICT 2

Transit Subdistrict 4 (Res-C)

Model Inputs for Calculating Unit Yield		Input
Minimum Lot Size		21,780
Additional Lot Square Feet per Dwelling Unit		0
Open Space %		0%
Excluded Land Counted Toward Open Space		
Parking Spaces per Dwelling Unit		1.00
Building Height		5
Maximum Lot Coverage %		70%
Floor Area Ratio		1.73
Zoning Restrictions that Cap Unit Counts		Input
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit		0
Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre		40.00
Cap on Maximum Dwelling Units per District		0.00



District 2 Transit Subdistrict 4 Summary Calculations

Metric	Number	Metric	Number	% of Total
District Acreage Denominator	4	Non-Conforming Parcels	6	75.0%
Total Parcels	8	Units within Half-Mile of Transit	161	100.0%
Parcel Acreage	6	Total Excluded Land	111,341	39.6%
Total Built Square Feet	282,504	Open Space Removed/Set Aside	167,602	59.6%
Multi-family Unit Capacity	161	Total Parking Area	46,228	16.4%
DU/AC	38.7	Units Forgone due to Unit Cap in Zoning	0.00	0.0%



Large Parcel Tests

ZONING INPUTS - DISTRICT 3

Brush Hill Road Subdistrict
(Res-D2)

Model Inputs for Calculating Unit Yield		Input
Minimum Lot Size		217,800
Additional Lot Square Feet per Dwelling Unit		0
Open Space %		0%
Excluded Land Counted Toward Open Space		
Parking Spaces per Dwelling Unit		1.00
Building Height		5
Maximum Lot Coverage %		0%
Floor Area Ratio		0.00
Zoning Restrictions that Cap Unit Counts		Input
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit		0
Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre		20.00
Cap on Maximum Dwelling Units per District		0.00



District 3 Brush Hill Road Subdistrict Summary Calculations

Metric	Number	Metric	Number	% of Total
District Acreage Denominator	62	Non-Conforming Parcels	0	0.0%
Total Parcels	3	Units within Half-Mile of Transit	0	0.0%
Parcel Acreage	66	Total Excluded Land	206,647	7.2%
Total Built Square Feet	5,781,896	Open Space Removed/Set Aside	783,936	27.2%
Multi-family Unit Capacity	1,324	Total Parking Area	946,128	32.8%
DU/AC	21.5	Units Forgone due to Unit Cap in Zoning	0.00	0.0%



Large Parcel Tests

ZONING INPUTS - DISTRICT 4 Randolph Avenue Subdistrict (Res-B)

Model Inputs for Calculating Unit Yield		Input
Minimum Lot Size		130,680
Additional Lot Square Feet per Dwelling Unit		0
Open Space %		0%
Excluded Land Counted Toward Open Space		
Parking Spaces per Dwelling Unit		1.00
Building Height		2.5
Maximum Lot Coverage %		0%
Floor Area Ratio		0.00
Zoning Restrictions that Cap Unit Counts		Input
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit		0
Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre		20.00
Cap on Maximum Dwelling Units per District		0.00



District 4 Randolph Avenue Subdistrict Summary Calculations

Metric	Number	Metric	Number	% of Total
District Acreage Denominator	9	Non-Conforming Parcels	0	0.0%
Total Parcels	3	Units within Half-Mile of Transit	0	0.0%
Parcel Acreage	14	Total Excluded Land	32,733	5.4%
Total Built Square Feet	625,125	Open Space Removed/Set Aside	154,575	25.4%
Multi-family Unit Capacity	280	Total Parking Area	204,586	33.6%
DU/AC	32.2	Units Forgone due to Unit Cap in Zoning	0.00	0.0%



Large Parcel Tests

ZONING INPUTS - DISTRICT 5

Granite Avenue Subdistrict (Res-C)

Model Inputs for Calculating Unit Yield		Input
Minimum Lot Size		0
Additional Lot Square Feet per Dwelling Unit		0
Open Space %		0%
Excluded Land Counted Toward Open Space		
Parking Spaces per Dwelling Unit		1.00
Building Height		6
Maximum Lot Coverage %		0%
Floor Area Ratio		1.50
Zoning Restrictions that Cap Unit Counts		Input
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit		0
Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre		0.00
Cap on Maximum Dwelling Units per District		0.00



District 5 Granite Avenue Subdistrict Summary Calculations

Metric	Number	Metric	Number	% of Total
District Acreage Denominator	20	Non-Conforming Parcels	0	0.0%
Total Parcels	5	Units within Half-Mile of Transit	248	51.3%
Parcel Acreage	133	Total Excluded Land	5,511,310	95.3%
Total Built Square Feet	685,440	Open Space Removed/Set Aside	6,667,923	115.3%
Multi-family Unit Capacity	483	Total Parking Area	93,469	1.6%
DU/AC	24.3	Units Forgone due to Unit Cap in Zoning	0.00	0.0%



Large Parcel Tests

Figure 3: Requirement Checks

Requirement Checks Performed:	Result
1. Each non-contiguous area (i.e., each sub-district) of the test district must be at least five acres.	PASSED; smallest non-contiguous portion within the test districts is 6.45 acres large within the Transit Subdistrict 4.
2. At least half the district land area is contiguous. Note that two different districts or sub-districts (with different zoning parameters) are also considered contiguous if they are adjacent to each other and can contribute to the 50% requirement for contiguity.	PASSED; Granite Avenue Subdistrict (Res-C) is considered contiguous which will result in 56.5% (132.76 ac) of total land area (more than 50% of the total test area as required).
3. The total test district area should be greater than the minimum land area requirements (which are community-specific and available in the Compliance Model Excel sheet).	PASSED; test district passed this requirement as the total area of the test districts is 234.9 acres as compared to the required 50 acres.
4. For Rapid Transit and Commuter Rail community categories such as Milton, the percentage of land area within transit station areas should be greater than minimum requirements (which are community-specific and available in the Compliance Model Excel sheet). In Milton's case it is 50%.	PASSED; test districts passed this check as 25% (58.28 ac) of the district is within station area.



Large Parcel Tests

Figure 5: Checking Key Compliance Criteria

Test Subdistrict (Existing Zoning District)	Modeled Multifamily Unit Capacity	District Size (acres)	District Density Denominator* (acres)	Modeled District Density
Transit Subdistrict 3 (Res-C & Bus)	597 units	15.5 acres	8 ac.	74.6 Units/Acre = 597 Units/8 Acres
Transit Subdistrict 4 (Res-C)	161 units	6.5 ac.	4.2 ac.	38.7 Units/Acre = 161 Units/4.2 Acres
Brush Hill Road Subdistrict (Res-D2)	1,324 units	66.3 ac.	61.6 ac.	21.5 Units/Acre = 1,324 Units/61.6 Acres
Randolph Avenue Subdistrict (Res-B)	280 units	14 ac.	8.7 ac.	32.2 Units/Acre = 280 Units/8.7 Acres
Granite Avenue Subdistrict (Res-C)	483 units	132.8 ac.	19.9 ac.	24.3 Units/Acre = 483 Units/19.9 Acres
TOTAL	2,845 units	234.9 ac.	102.3 ac.	23.8 Units/Acre = 2,433 Units/102.3 Acres
Complaint ?	YES. Minimum 2,461 units required.	YES. Minimum 50 acres required	N/A	YES. Minimum 15 Units/Acre required.

* "District Density Denominator" is the district size MINUS any areas containing: wetlands, water bodies, Title V setbacks, Surface Water Protection Zone A, and Wellhead Protection Zone 1.



What Does It All Mean?

Both sets off subdistricts tested by Utile and MAPC could be compliant, but each has pros, cons, and question marks.

- Transit Area Small Lots District
 - Pros
 - Closest area to transit stations; biggest potential for low traffic, infrastructure impacts
 - Supports existing business districts
 - Pace of change would be more gradual
 - Gives more property owners flexibility and property rights
 - From a municipal impact perspective, lowest potential for net new units (redeveloping one house to three units nets two units)



What Does It All Mean?

- Transit Area Small Lots District
 - Cons
 - Largest possible affected geography
 - Least predictable pattern of potential redevelopment; entails hundreds of different property owners making hundreds of individual decisions
 - In order to reach overall density target, requires more significant density in Milton Hill Historic District



What Does It All Mean?

- Large Parcel Subdistricts
 - Pros
 - Opportunity for density levels to support deed-restricted affordable housing
 - Opportunity for mixed-use development
 - Fewer residential abutters than Transit Area Small Lot District
 - Fewer affected parcels
 - Cons
 - Many units further from transit; will require more parking, putting more cars on Milton streets
 - Larger developments mean faster, more acute impacts
 - From a municipal impact perspective, highest potential for net new units (redeveloping nonresidential sites means 100 percent net new units)



What Does It All Mean?

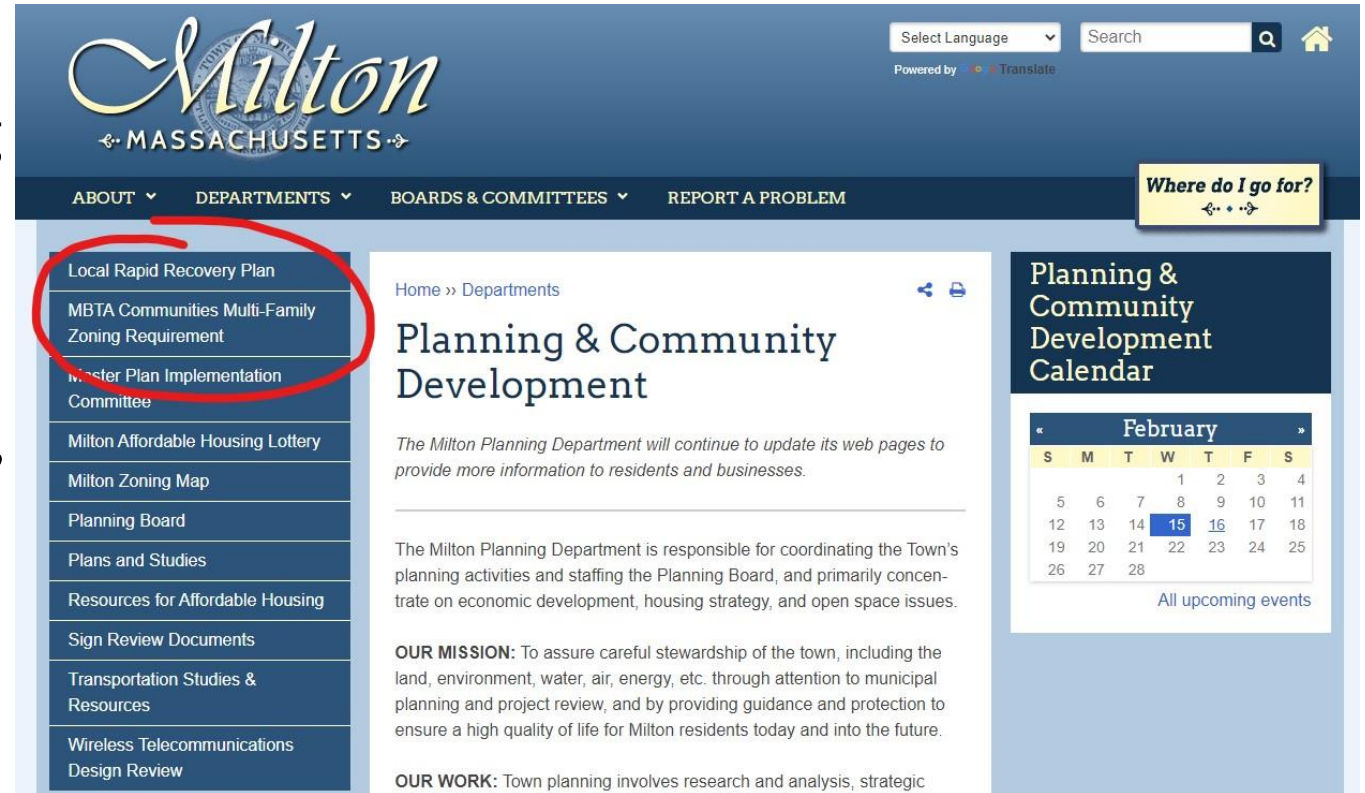
- Question marks
 - Do we want to proceed with one strategy, or a combination of both strategies
 - We may not have a choice
 - Is Brush Hill Road subdistrict too dense at 1,324 potential units?
 - If yes, density will need to be made up elsewhere in order to reach minimum unit capacity threshold.
 - Does Granite Avenue subdistrict actually count as a contiguous geography?
 - If not, we'll need to zone portions of the Transit Area Small Parcel district
 - From an equity perspective, do we want to zone for only certain portions of the Transit Area Small Parcel district?
 - Zoning for a larger area will cause us to exceed the unit capacity minimum threshold



What's Next?

- Working with RKG Associates on a fiscal impact analysis of new zoning
- Procuring consultant assistance for drafting zoning language

Our next public forum will be Monday, August 14. Please monitor the Planning Department's MBTA Communities page for more information



The screenshot shows the official website of the Town of Milton, Massachusetts. The header includes the town's name in a stylized font, a search bar, and a language selection dropdown. The main navigation bar contains links for ABOUT, DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES, and REPORT A PROBLEM. A yellow box on the right side of the navigation bar says "Where do I go for?". The left sidebar lists various town services, with "MBTA Communities Multi-Family Zoning Requirement" highlighted by a red circle. The main content area is titled "Planning & Community Development" and includes a breadcrumb trail "Home » Departments". Below the title, there is a paragraph stating that the Milton Planning Department will continue to update its web pages to provide more information to residents and businesses. Further down, the department's mission and work are described. On the right side of the page, there is a "Planning & Community Development Calendar" for the month of February, showing dates from 1 to 28.

Planning & Community Development

Home » Departments

The Milton Planning Department will continue to update its web pages to provide more information to residents and businesses.

The Milton Planning Department is responsible for coordinating the Town's planning activities and staffing the Planning Board, and primarily concentrate on economic development, housing strategy, and open space issues.

OUR MISSION: To assure careful stewardship of the town, including the land, environment, water, air, energy, etc. through attention to municipal planning and project review, and by providing guidance and protection to ensure a high quality of life for Milton residents today and into the future.

OUR WORK: Town planning involves research and analysis, strategic

February

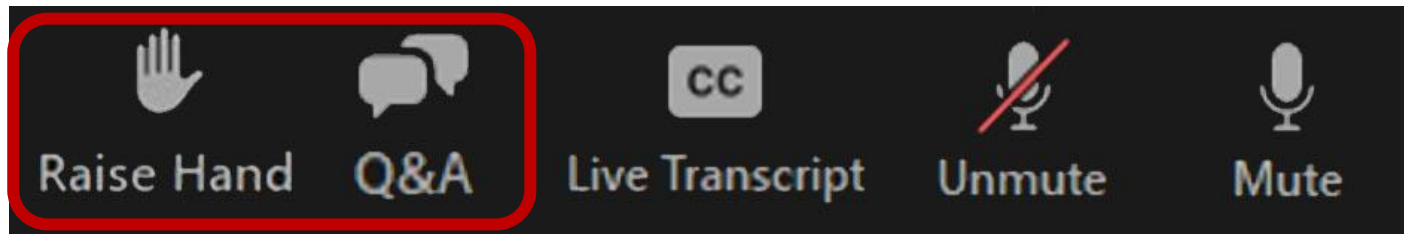
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

All upcoming events



Question and Comment

- If you'd like to make a comment or ask a question during the Question and Comment period, there are two options:
 - use the “Q&A” button
 - Use the “Raise Hand” button
 - For attendees on the phone, you can raise your hand by pressing *9, and mute and unmute yourself by pressing *6.





Thank you!

