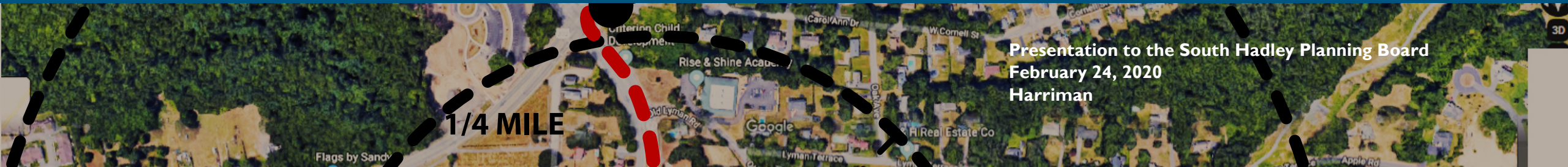




Routes 202/33 Corridor Study Town of South Hadley



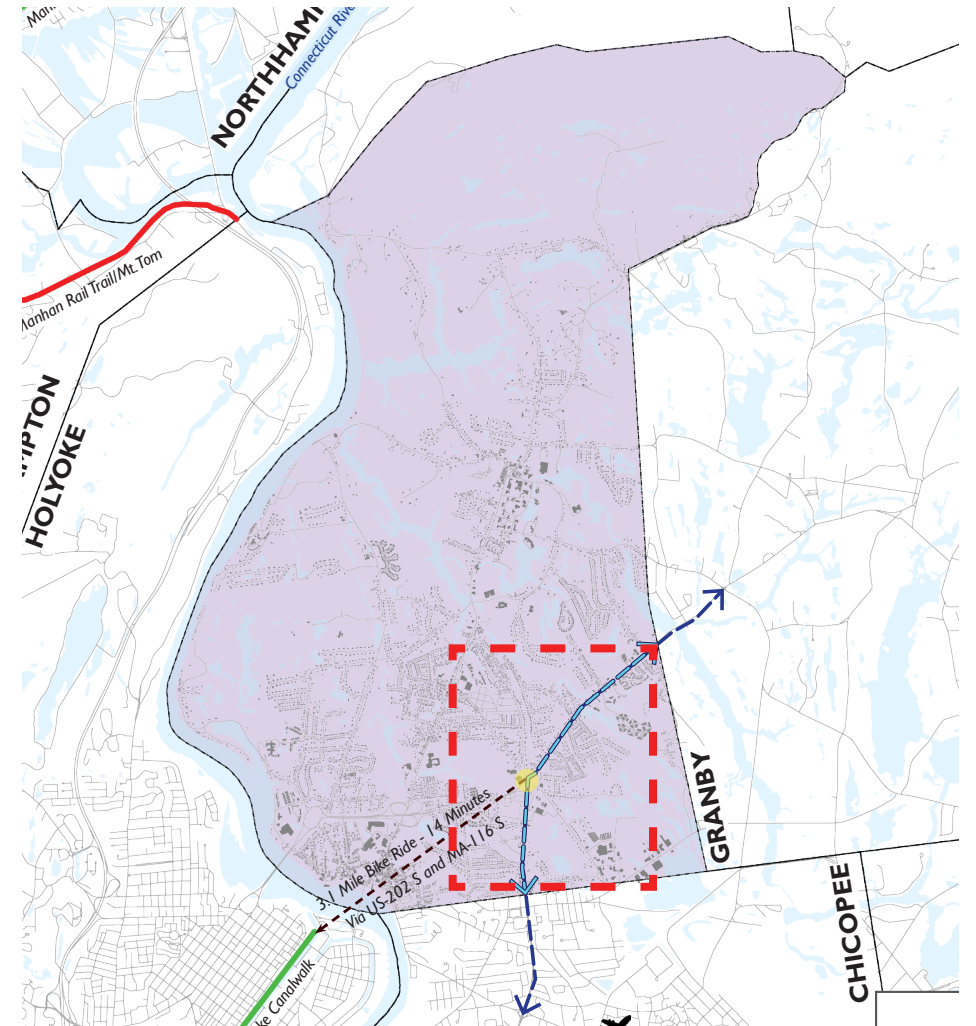
Agenda

- Purpose of Study
- Study Goals
- Study Process
- Existing Conditions
- Implications of Existing Conditions
- Initial Recommendations
- Next Steps

Introductions

Harriman

- Camilo Espitia
Urban Designer/Planner
- Jess Wilson
Urban Designer/Planner



Purpose of the Planning Study

- Implement some of the 2010 Master Plan's basic recommendations for this corridor
- Develop a framework for successful development of the corridor in coordination with the properties which lie close to but beyond the corridor in Granby and Chicopee

Planning Goals

- Develop a coordinated strategy and tools for development in this corridor compatible with the natural resources and the existing neighborhoods which abut the corridor.
- Address identified incompatibilities within the corridor and between the areas within South Hadley and the neighboring communities of Chicopee and Granby.
- Encourage planned growth and development within the commercial focus areas and the corridors.
- Increase opportunities for well-planned developments (including mixed use developments) which implement recommendations in the Housing Production Plan and 2010 Master Plan.

Components of Planning Process

Zoning

- Create development standards to guide future changes to the corridor, including the South Hadley Square Shopping Center (Big Y complex on Willimansett Street). These standards should focus on pedestrian-friendly improvements that increase landscaping and pedestrian safety.
- Require all new development be subject to a design review process that encouraged improved and creative design, landscaping, layouts, façade treatments, and signage that promotes walking and create common green space.
- Improve the development standards of land uses that rely on quick trips (including, but not limited to drive-thru windows). The infrastructure required for such businesses decreases pedestrian safety if not laid out in ways that benefit both the flow of traffic in the area and a more pleasant pedestrian experience.
- Properties along the corridor should follow the same practice as described above. Over time, these properties should be beautified, restored, landscaped and made more walkable with attractive signage and more discreet parking. A design review process should be employed.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of the existing structures when converting residential properties to a professional business, other nonresidential use, or mixed use.
- Encourage development to provide denser mixed use opportunities for further commercial and housing development (perhaps as a 40R district or similar approach) complimentary to the character and existing uses in the area.
- Encourage conversion by right of the single-family structures or parcels to professional business or a mixed use structure of professional business/residential use - subject to clear and defined design standards.

Components of Planning Process

Public Investment

- Improve the pedestrian network that links the South Hadley Square Shopping Center with the Shadowbrook Estates development and Buttery Brook Park.
- The site of the state highway maintenance facility located near the Big Y shopping complex is considered a key site in the community's economic development strategy. However, the facility will very unlikely be relocated and its location within the APZ zone limits its development capacity. Given its aesthetic challenges, this site could be improved with buffer strategies by means of enhanced landscaping and screening from the street.
- Improve the entryway from Chicopee and Granby with new signage, landscaping, lighting, and streetscape treatments to make it more welcoming, identify the transition from these adjacent communities to South Hadley, and reflect a more specific identity for the corridor.
- This Corridor Study is the strategic planning process for two of the five commercial focus areas identified in the 2010 Master Plan.

Study Process

TASK 2

SWOT Analysis

- Input from meetings with public officials from South Hadley, Granby, and Chicopee
- Input from public meeting (included in meetings for comprehensive plan)

TASK 3

Land Use Analysis

- Natural resources
- Regulatory requirements
- Existing uses

TASK 4

Draft/Final Action Plan

- Incorporate the goals of the 2010 Master Plan, the results of the community meetings for this process, and the comprehensive plan update

TASK 5

Draft/Final Implementation Tools

- Include recommended zoning changes, and changes to the zoning map
- Other tools as appropriate



Study Process: Status

Task 2: SWOT Analysis: **In Progress**

Visioning for corridor was included as part of the planning process for the Town of South Hadley Master Plan Update

- Interview with the City of Chicopee took place on January 3, 2020
- Interview with Dan Kost took place on January 3, 2020
- Planning Board meeting: February 24, 2020
- Interview with representatives of Town of Granby: March 12, 2020
- Proposed interview with Westover Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority
- Interviews with Granby have been difficult to set up

Task 3: Land Use Analysis: **In Progress**

- Land use analysis for corridor was included as part of the planning process for the comprehensive plan, supplemented by analysis specific to the corridor, and augmented by the interview with
- Modifications based on comments from Planning Board and Town of Granby may be required

Study Process: Status

Task 4: Draft/Final Action Plan: **In Progress**

- Modifications based on comments from Planning Board and Town of Granby will be required
- Public meeting should be scheduled for last March/April

Task 5: Draft/Final Implementation Tools: **In Progress**

- Recommendations for the zoning changes are in process but will need to be evaluated at the public meeting and placed in final form after Task 4

Note: This study must be complete by **June 30, 2020**



SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES



Current and Internal Conditions

- Location within town and regionally
- Local demographics
- Existing land uses
- Existing regulatory structure

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS



Future Conditions/ External Pressures

- Demographic trends
- Economic cycles and market trends
- Changes in state and/or federal regulations

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Proximity to Westover Airport as an economic development driver (however, it may limit development opportunities due to certain restrictions)
- High awareness of natural assets and the need to preserve them
- Big Y Plaza location as a major commercial point
- Significant open spaces/green areas along corridor
- Mixed-use areas along existing infrastructure

WEAKNESSES

- Inadequate public realm
- Non-cohesive zoning and land use along the corridor
- A car-oriented corridor without proper development and design standards that deters other alternatives of mobility that could otherwise be improved to coexist with vehicular traffic in a safe way and improve the flow in the corridor
- Inconsistent visual and physical experience throughout
- Lack of gateway character at corridor entrances into South Hadley
- Proximity to wetlands surrounding the nursing home on Route 202 is a limitation for development
- Lack of gateway character at corridor entrances into South Hadley
- The use of the Special Permit process for Professional Business and the prohibition of converting the Residence A-1 single family to two or three family discourages investment and retains the low density which hampers creation of more pedestrian oriented development

SWOT Analysis

OPPORTUNITIES

- Define gateways (municipal borders) to the corridor to differentiate South Hadley from Chicopee and Granby
- Update zoning to allow for sustainable development along existing infrastructure
- Update zoning to increase economic opportunities
- Define the Big Y Plaza as a major focal point for future development
- Improve pedestrian amenities and increase options for bicyclists

- Improve the public realm (physical and visual elements accessible to the public) Connect corridor to Pioneer Valley Transit System to reduce car use
- Connect pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure to other areas of Town and region
- Improve the experience of the car-oriented nature of the corridor to make it safe for other modes of mobility, organize traffic, and leverage its economic driving opportunities

THREATS

- Lack of coordinated planning with Chicopee and Granby
- Even though the Accident Potential Zone for Westover Airport is not a regulatory entity for the corridor, it does limit development potential in its recommendations. Furthermore, some Federal and State funding resources would not be available
- Shortage of affordable housing and lack of variety in housing types which prevents sustainable growth

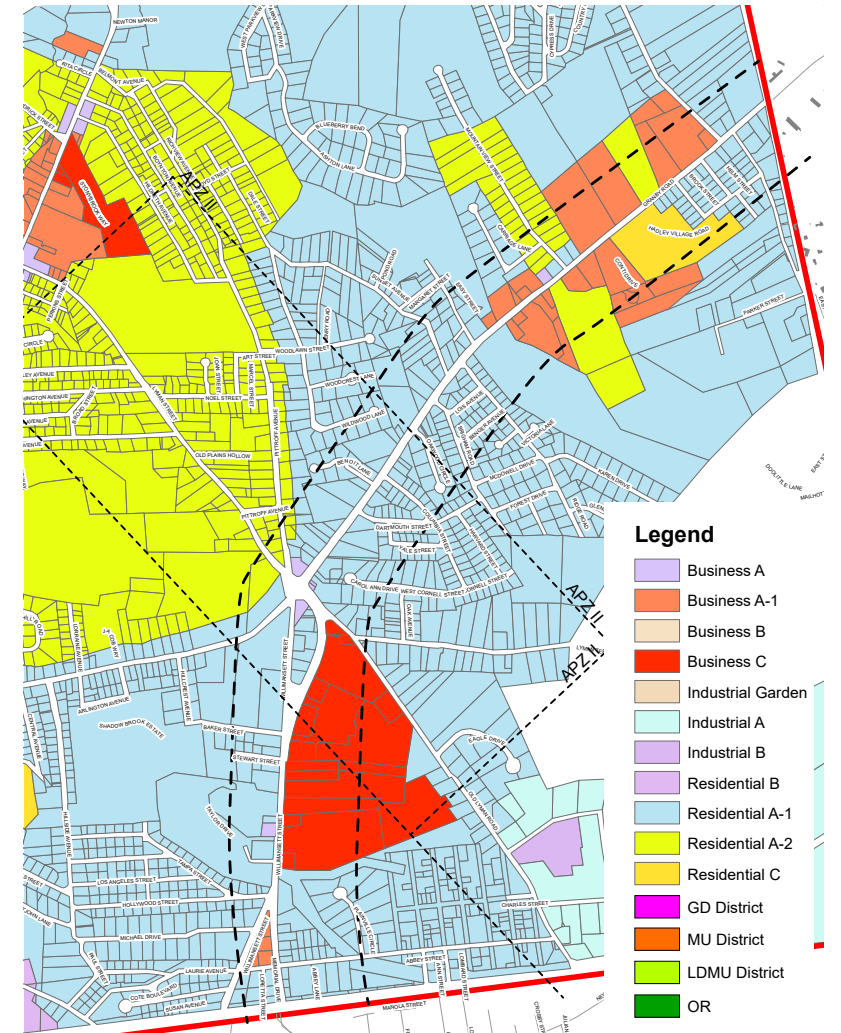
Existing Conditions Analysis: Regulatory

Zoning

- The zoning is primarily Residential A-1 along the corridor
- Business C is clustered around the Big Y
- Pockets of mixed use are located near the borders with Chicopee (small) and Granby (larger)
- Higher-level residential density has occurred closer to Granby; some of the multifamily developments are not easily visible from Routes 202 or 33

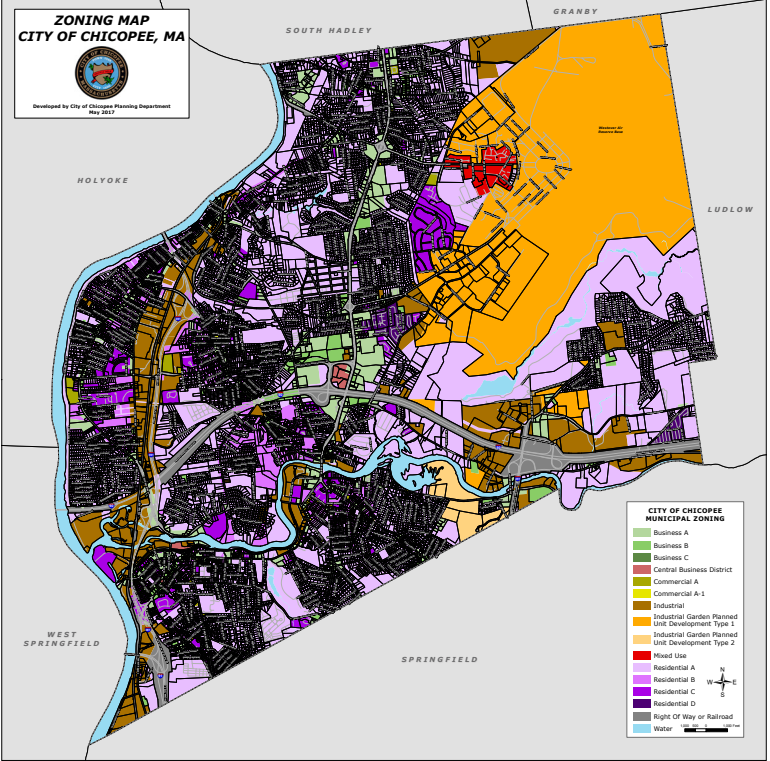
Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ): Accident Potential Zones I and II

- A part of the Corridor around the intersection of Routes 202 and 33 is within APZ II
- The recommended residential density is 1-2 units dwelling per acre
- For all other uses, low density, low intensity uses are recommended. This applies to trades, businesses, offices, and recreation
- Public assembly is not allowed

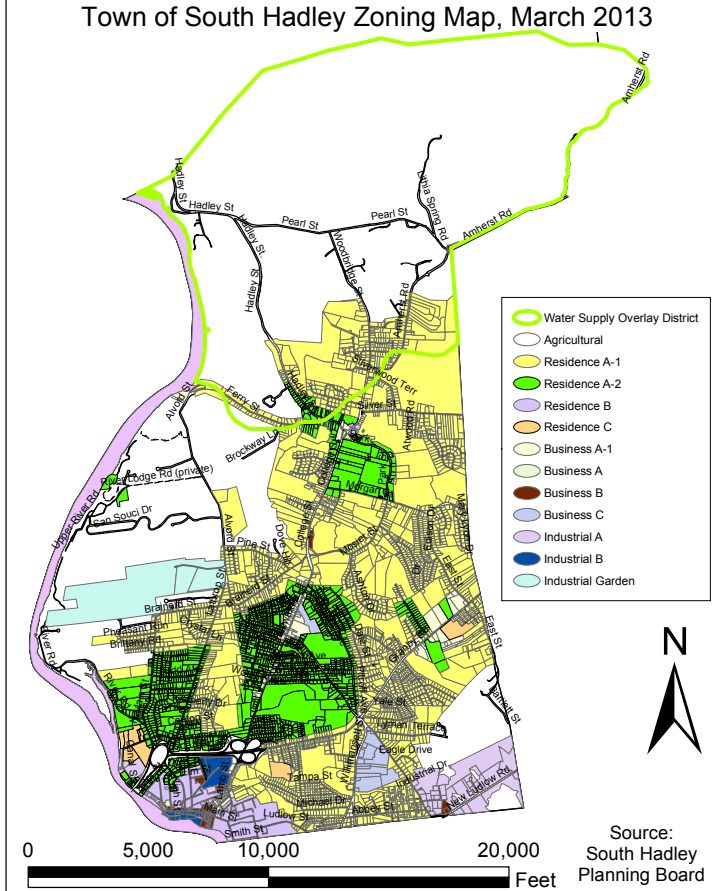


Existing Conditions Analysis: Zoning

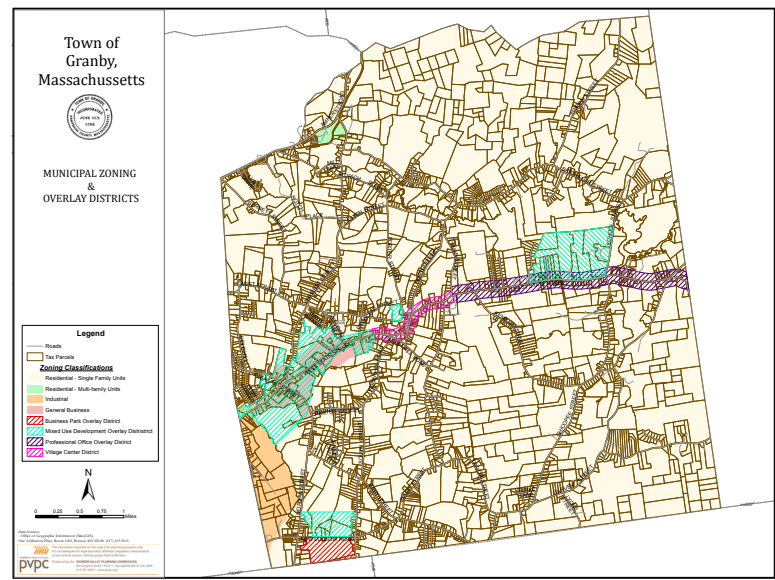
Zoning Map, City of Chicopee



Zoning Map, Town of South Hadley



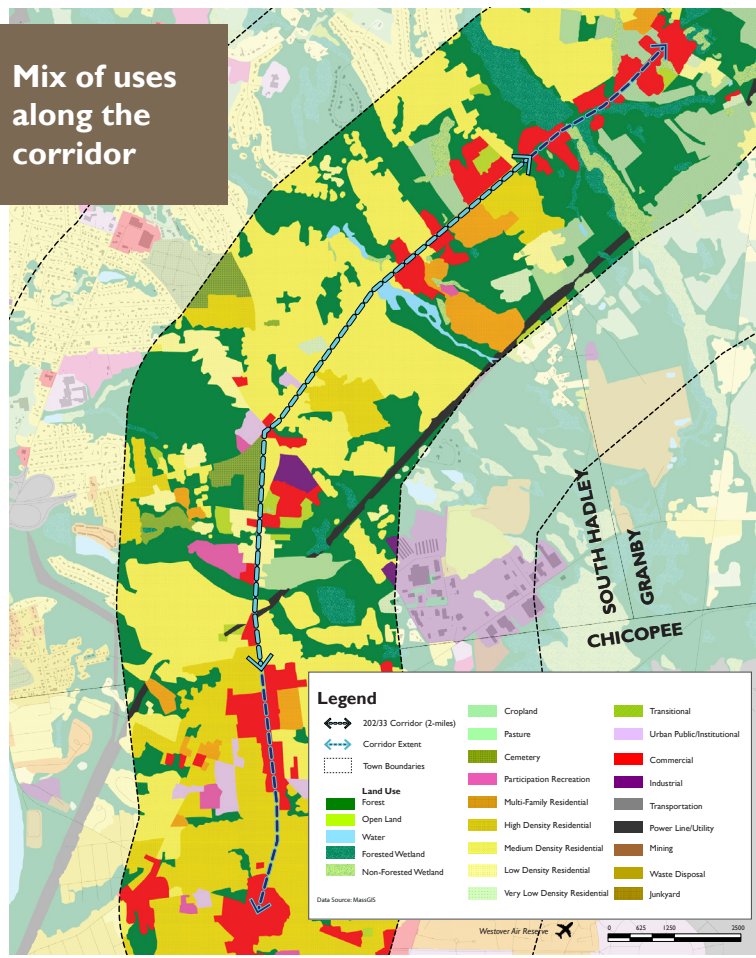
Zoning Map, Town of Granby



Existing Conditions Analysis

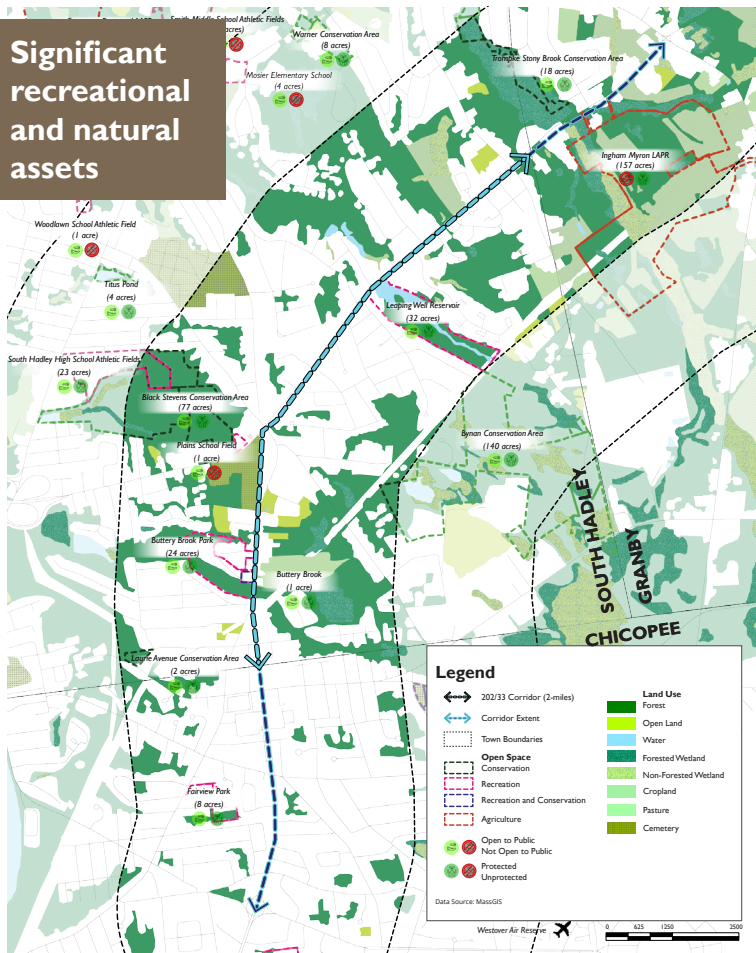
LAND USE

Mix of uses along the corridor



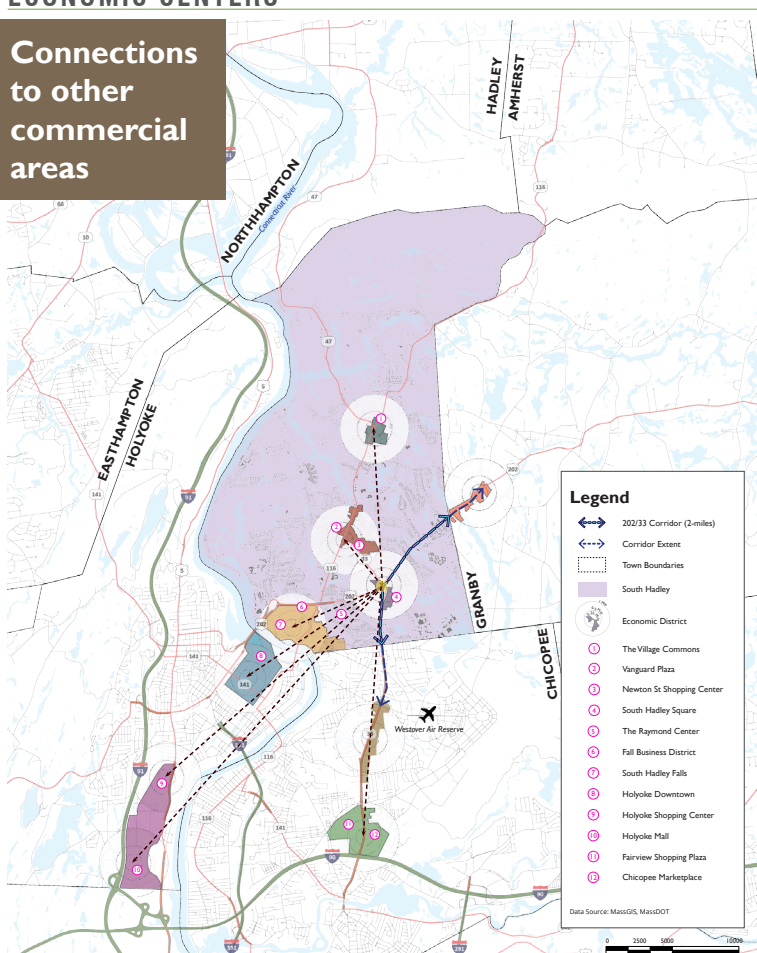
OPEN SPACE

Significant recreational and natural assets



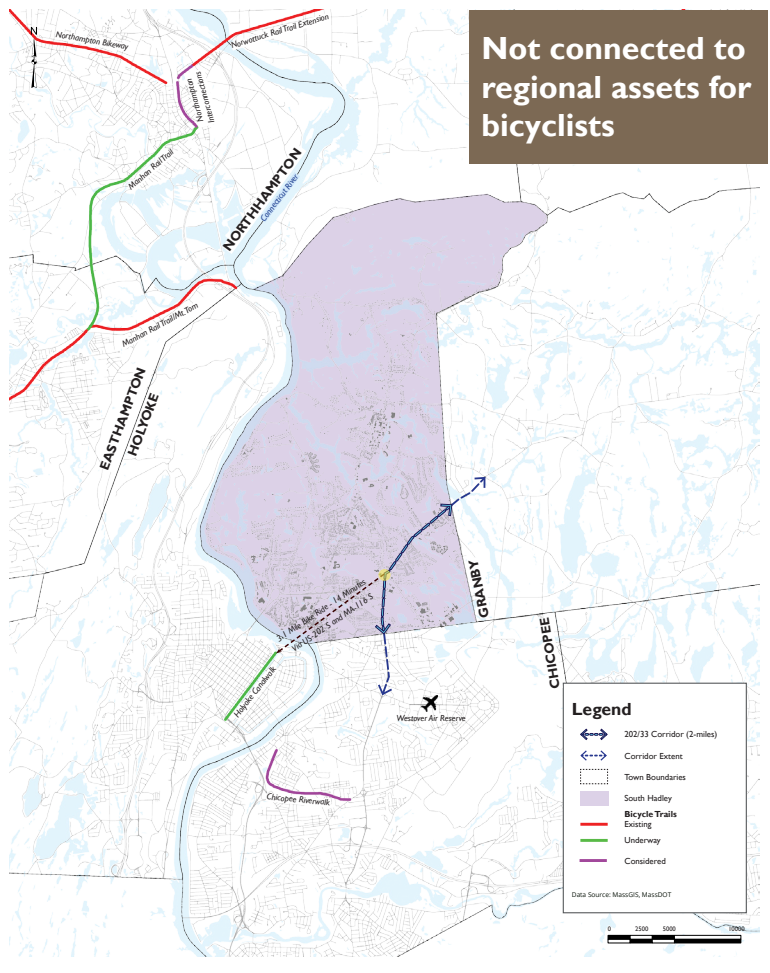
ECONOMIC CENTERS

Connections to other commercial areas

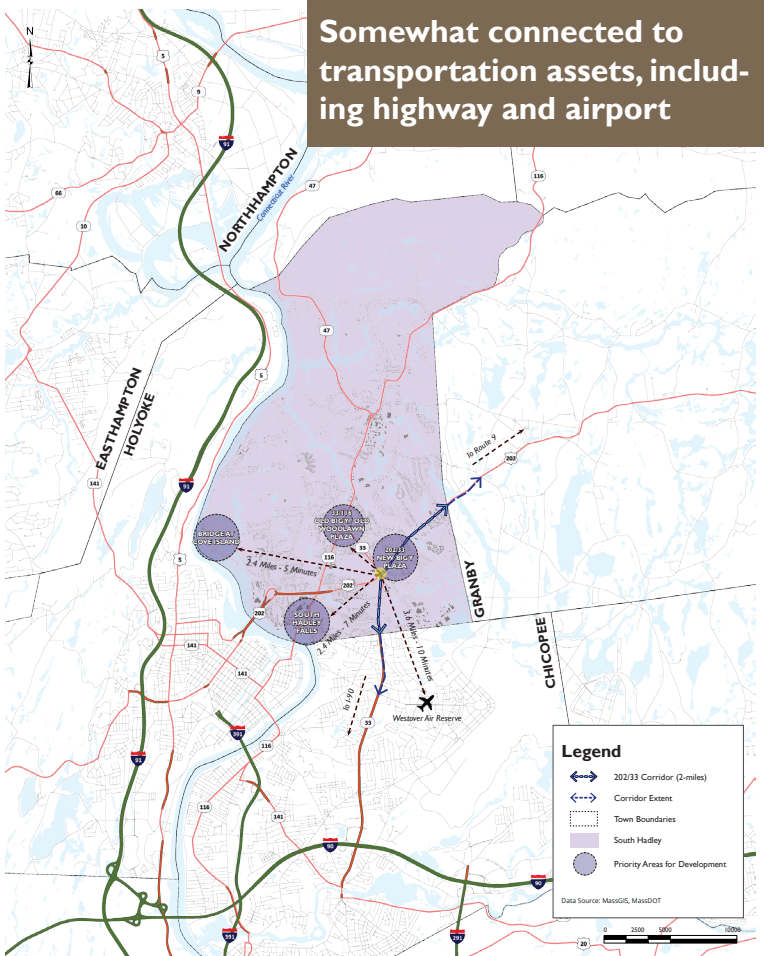


Existing Conditions Analysis

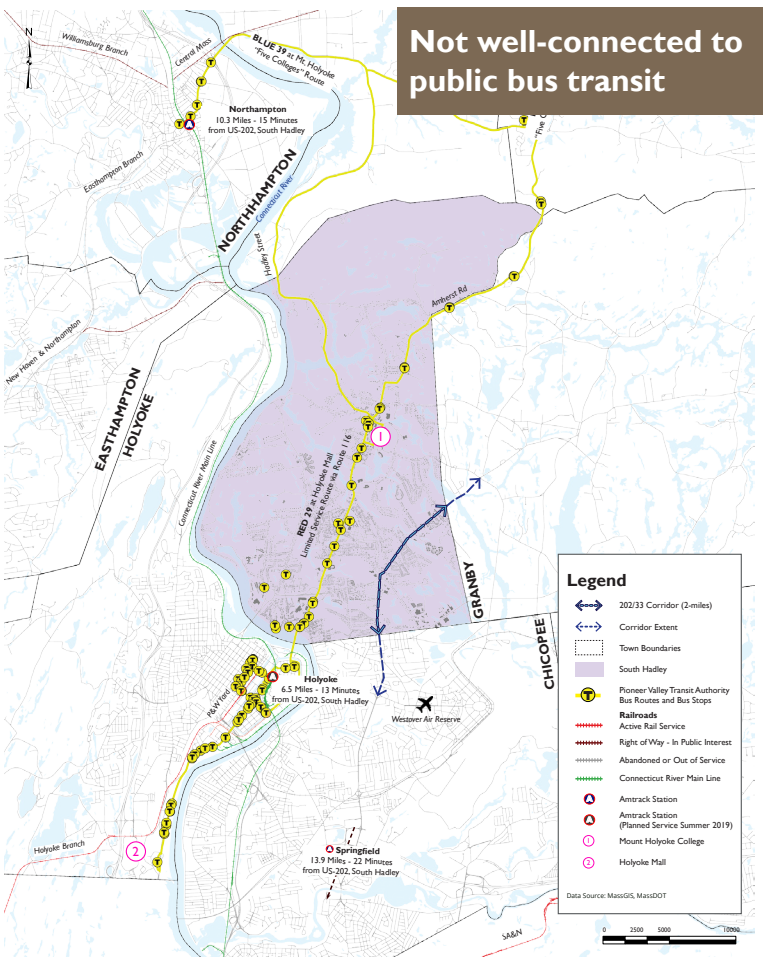
REGIONAL BICYCLE TRAIL SYSTEM



REGIONAL CONTEXT



REGIONAL TRANSIT



Visioning Sessions from Master Plan

Forum 2

- Preferred uses include community amenities, a mix of retail, restaurant, and services, and housing
- Preferred housing options included mixed use, affordable housing, and senior housing

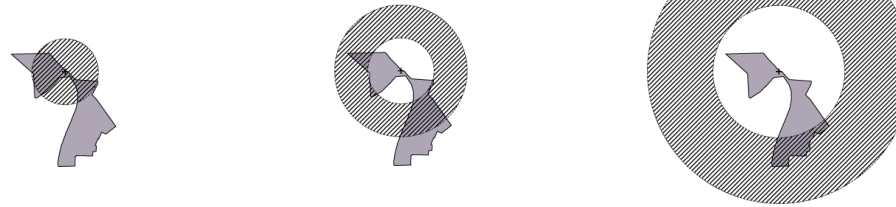
Forum 3

- Development preferences were concentrated on the intersection, which is within the APZ II
- Both green areas and affordable housing were preferred options
- Connections between other centers and green space identified

The APZ II was not discussed at either forum and may limit the applicability of some of the preferences indicated.

COMMUNITY FORUM 2

D: Intersection of Route 202 and Route 33



COMMUNITY FORUM 3



Initial Recommendations

Zoning

- Divide corridor into sections by appropriate land use and development density
- Establish zoning regulations and design guidelines for each sector
- Establish appropriate review process for new zoning

Public Realm

- Define gateways at Chicopee and Granby borders to establish new identity for corridor within South Hadley
- Establish consistent streetscape improvements to encourage use by pedestrians and bicyclists along street or connected through Buttery Brook Park

Policy

- Establish working relationships at staff level among South Hadley, Chicopee, and Granby to discuss common interests
- Work with Chicopee to link improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists to planned trails

Next Steps

March

- Finish interviews with Granby and Westover Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority
- Incorporate information from all interviews into recommended strategy

April

- Schedule public meeting sponsored by Planning Board to discuss draft recommendations, including implications of new zoning and design guidelines

May

- Modify recommendations based on public input and produce draft of final plan for the corridor
- Staff and Planning Board review of draft plan

June

- Complete final plan by June 30