



Routes 202/33 Corridor Study Town of South Hadley



Virtual Workshop
June 9, 2020
Harriman

Agenda

Purpose of Study

- Study Goals

- Study Process

Existing Conditions

- Implications of Existing Conditions

Initial Recommendations

Questions

Initial Results from Online Questionnaire

Next Steps

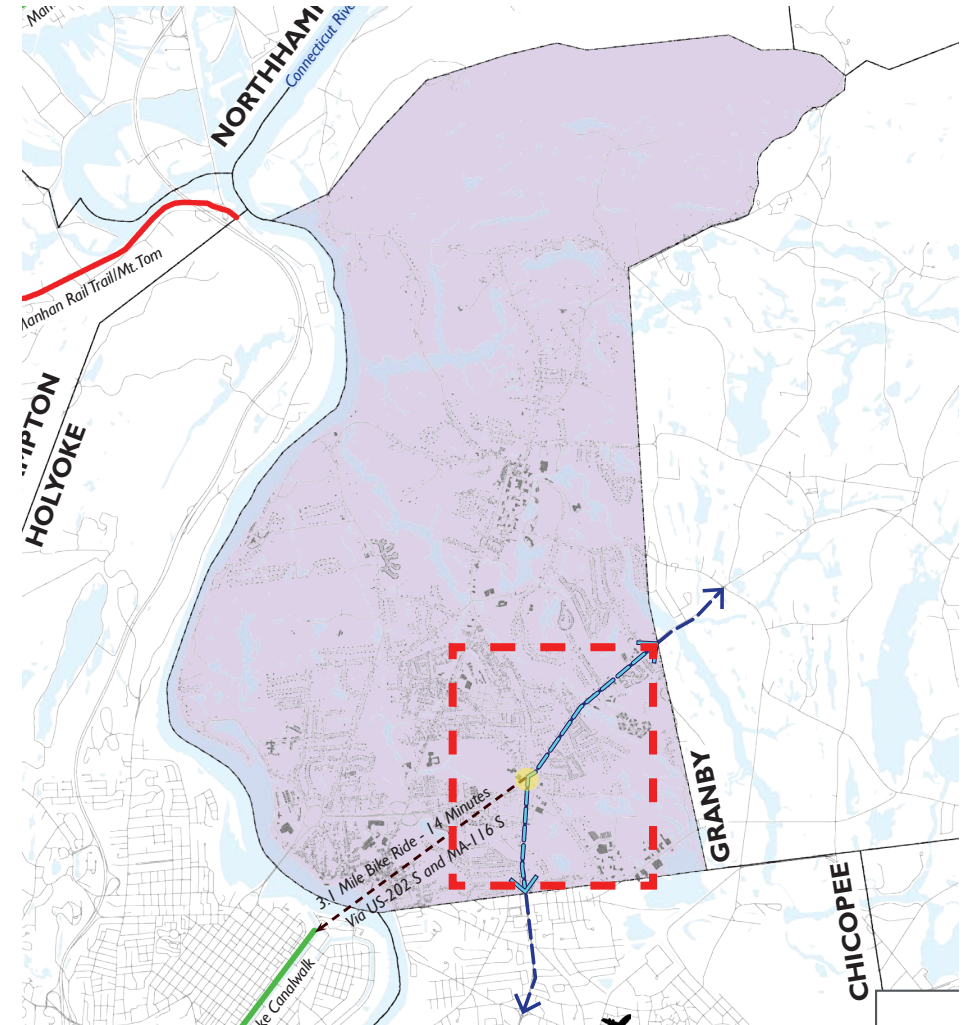
Introductions

Harriman

- Emily Keys Innes, AICP, LEED AP ND
Director of Planning
- 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 vision for the corridor in coordination with the properties which lie close to but beyond the corridor in Granby and Chicopee



Goals for the Planning Process

- Develop a coordinated strategy and tools for achieving the vision for the corridor that is compatible with the natural resources and the existing neighborhoods which abut the corridor.
- Address and mitigate identified incompatibilities within the corridor and between the areas within South Hadley and the neighboring communities of Chicopee and Granby.
- Encourage well-designed and compatible 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.

Study Process

TASK A

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 B

Land Use Analysis

- Natural resources
- Regulatory requirements
- Existing uses

TASK C

Draft/Final Action Plan

- Incorporate the goals from the process for the 2019-2020 Master Plan Update, the results of the community meetings and online questionnaire for this process

TASK D

Draft/Final Implementation Tools

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



Study Process: Status

Task A: 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: January 3, 2020
- Interview with Dan Kost: January 3, 2020
- Planning Board meeting: February 24, 2020
- Interview with representatives of Town of Granby: March 12, 2020

Task B: 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 adjacent communities' staff.

Both analyses will be updated with information from the online questionnaire (closing June 12) and the June 9 public workshop.

Study Process: Status

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

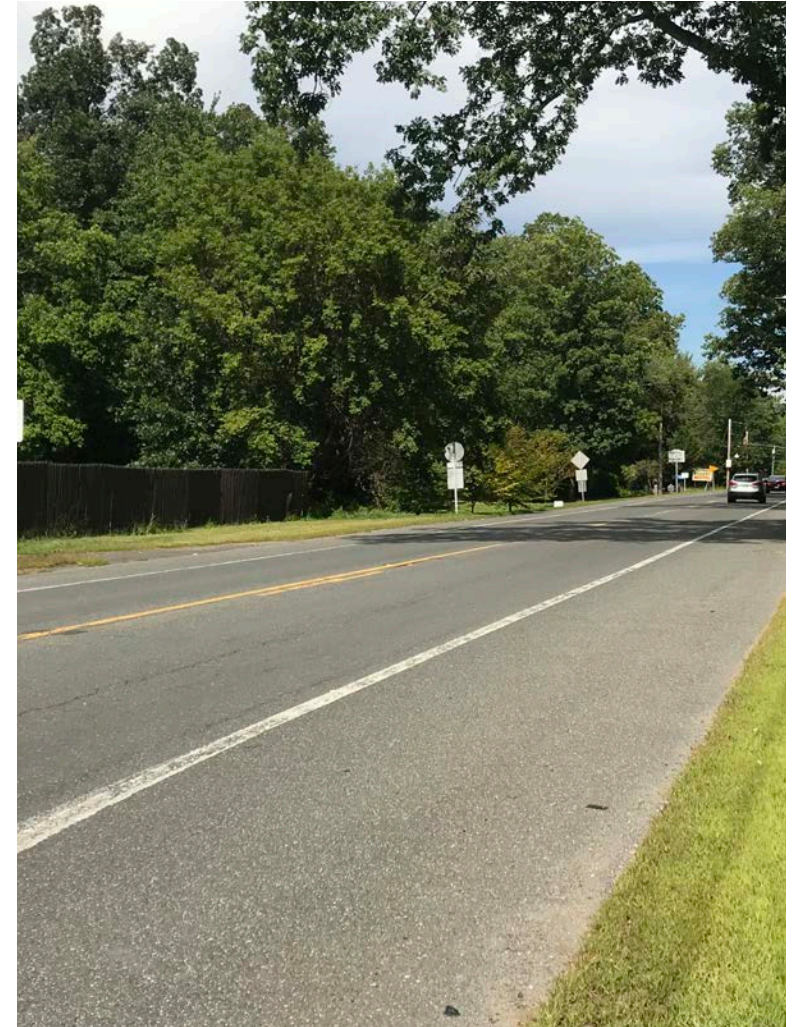
- Modifications based on comments from Planning Board and Town of Granby will be required
- Virtual public meeting on June 9, 2020.
- In-person public meeting to be scheduled at a later date.

Task D: 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: A draft study report study will be completed in summer 2020.

However, the study will not be completed by the Town until a physical community engagement meeting is conducted – when conditions permit – and the Planning Board makes determinations on the final recommendations.



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
- 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

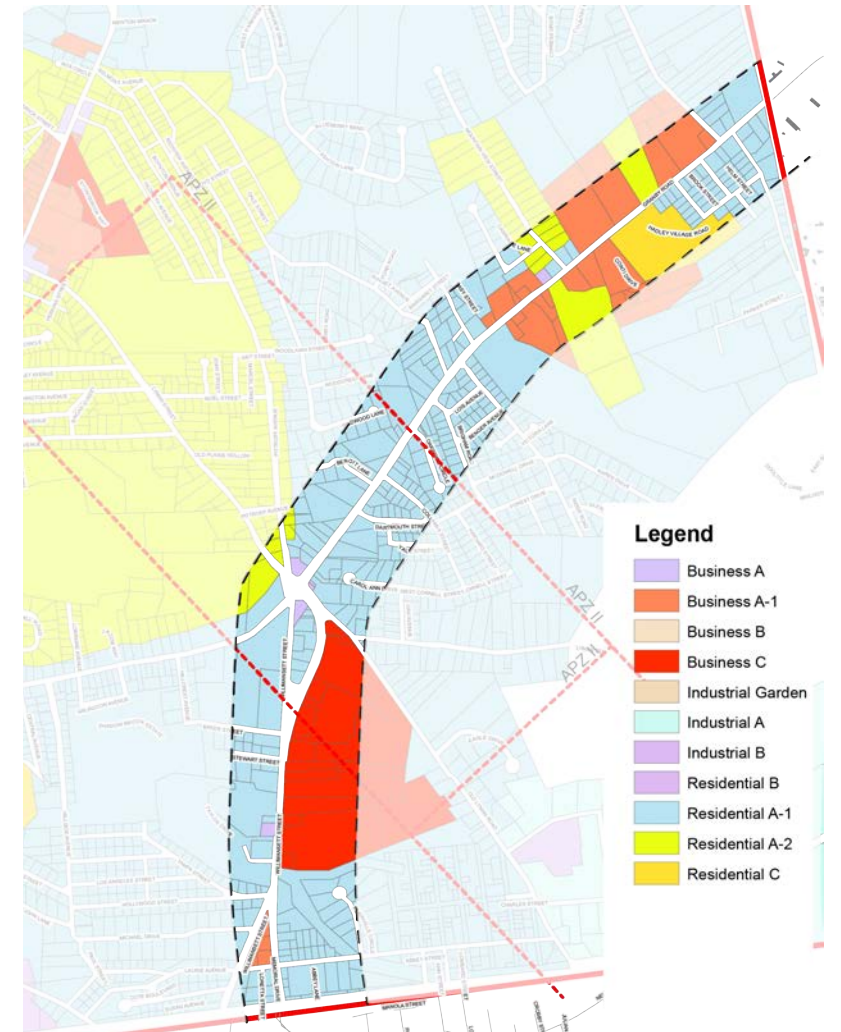
Existing Conditions Analysis: Regulatory

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.

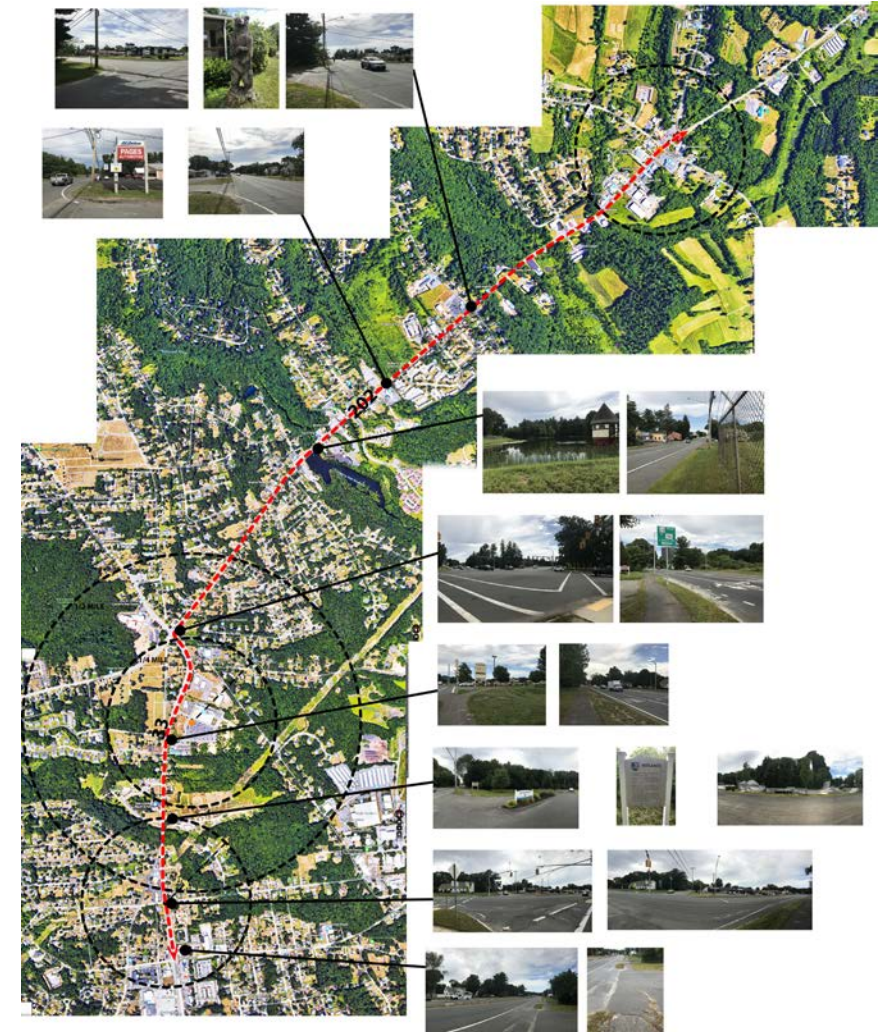
Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) (Accident Potential Zones I and II) recommendations include:

- Residential density should be limited to 1-2 units dwelling per acre.
- Nonresidential-uses (such as trades, businesses, offices, and recreation) are recommended to be low density, low intensity uses.
- Public assembly is not recommended.



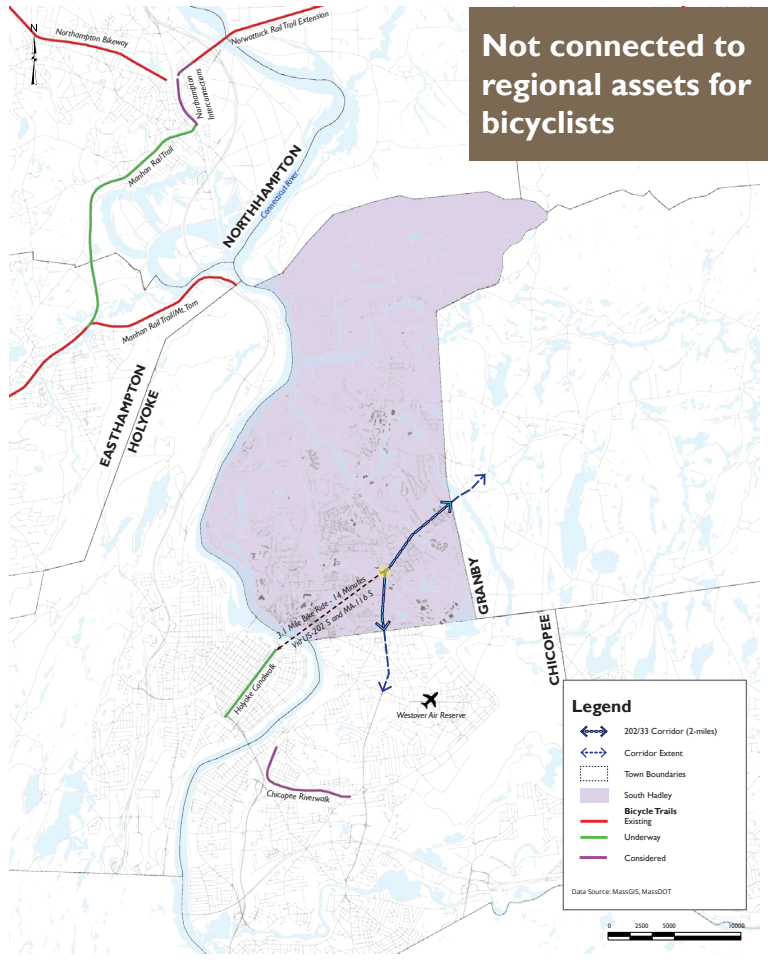
Existing Conditions Analysis: Site Visit

- The team reviewed existing land use, open space, and relationship to the economic centers within South Hadley and nearby.
- The site visit provided more information about the existing physical conditions along the corridor within South Hadley and on either side of the borders with Chicopee and Granby.
- Paired with the maps of existing conditions on the next two slides, the site visit provided a more complete picture of the corridor-specific conditions and how these related to the rest of South Hadley and the region as a whole.
- The team looked at the proximity to recreation, the presence of natural resources, the existing residential and business components, and transportation, including vehicular, public transit, and the amenities (or lack thereof) for pedestrians and bicyclists).

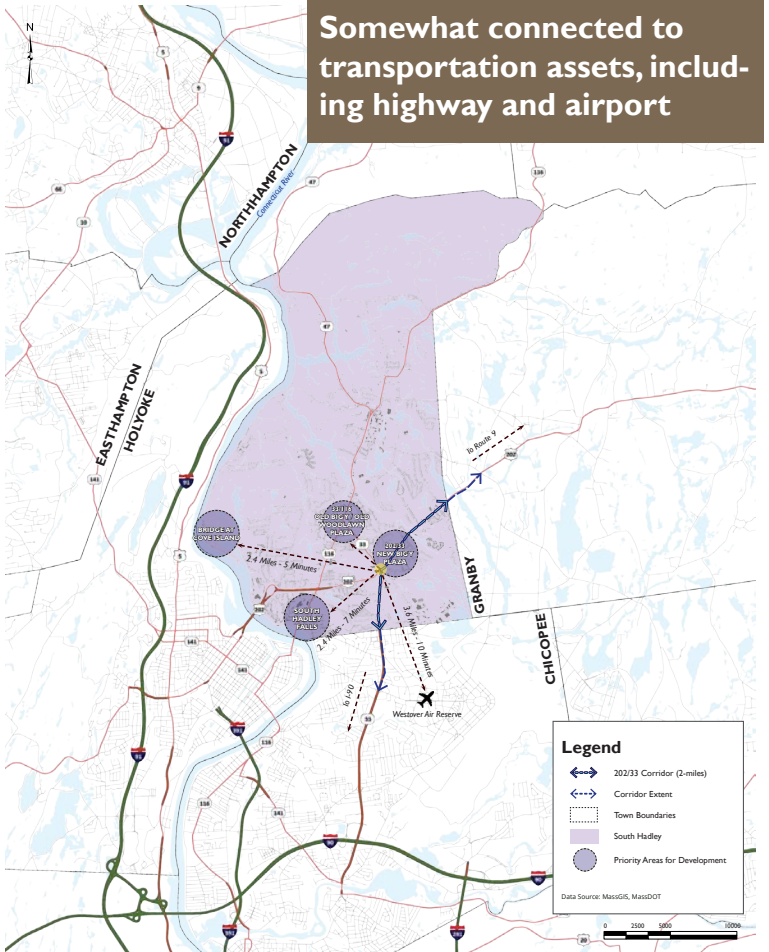


Existing Conditions Analysis

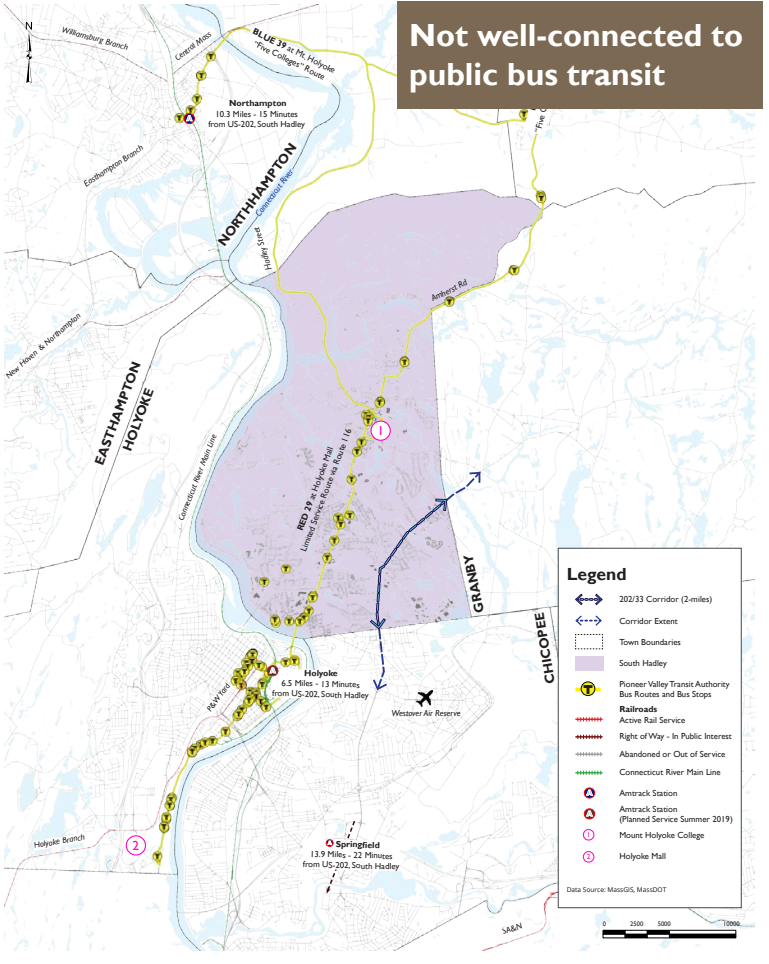
REGIONAL BICYCLE TRAIL SYSTEM



REGIONAL CONTEXT



REGIONAL TRANSIT



Visioning Sessions from Master Plan

Forum 2: preferred uses include the following:

Within 1/4 mile

- Small Park
- Community Garden
- Gym
- Child Care
- Rotary or intersection improvements

Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile

- Bar
- Restaurant

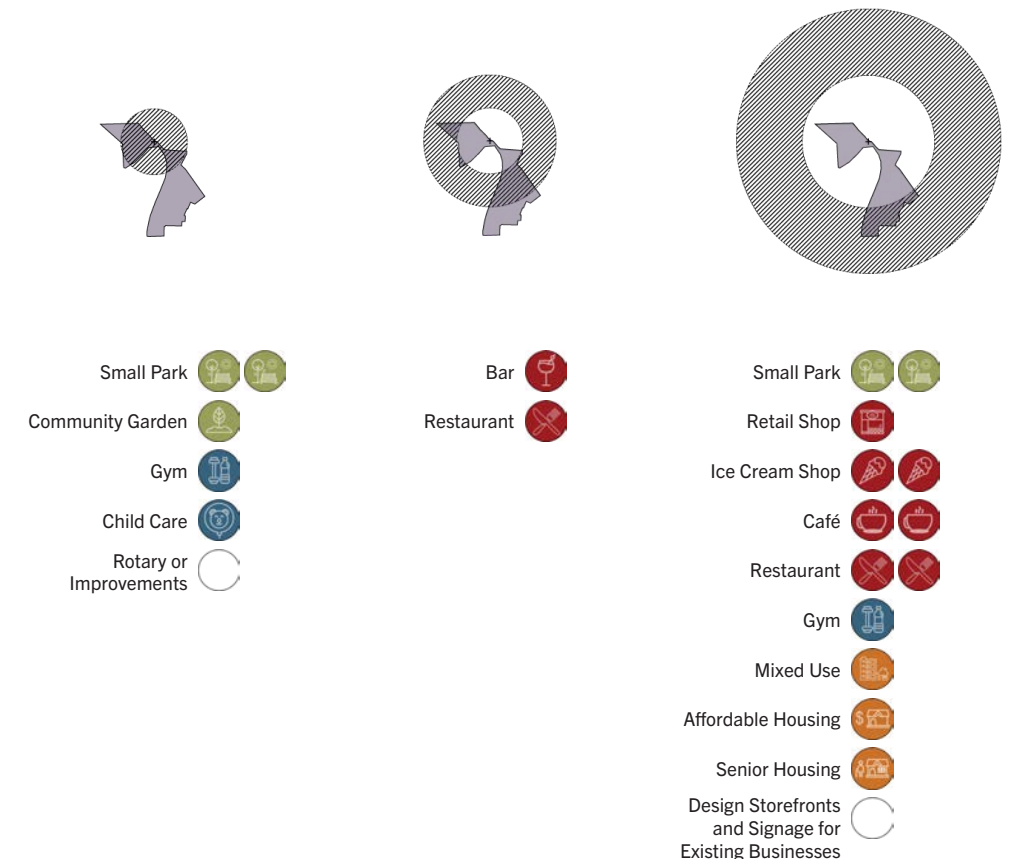
Between 1/2 and 1 mile

- Small Park
- Retail Shop
- Ice Cream Shop
- Cafe
- Restaurant
- Gym
- Mixed Use
- Affordable Housing/Senior Housing
- Design Storefronts and signage for existing businesses

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

COMMUNITY FORUM 2

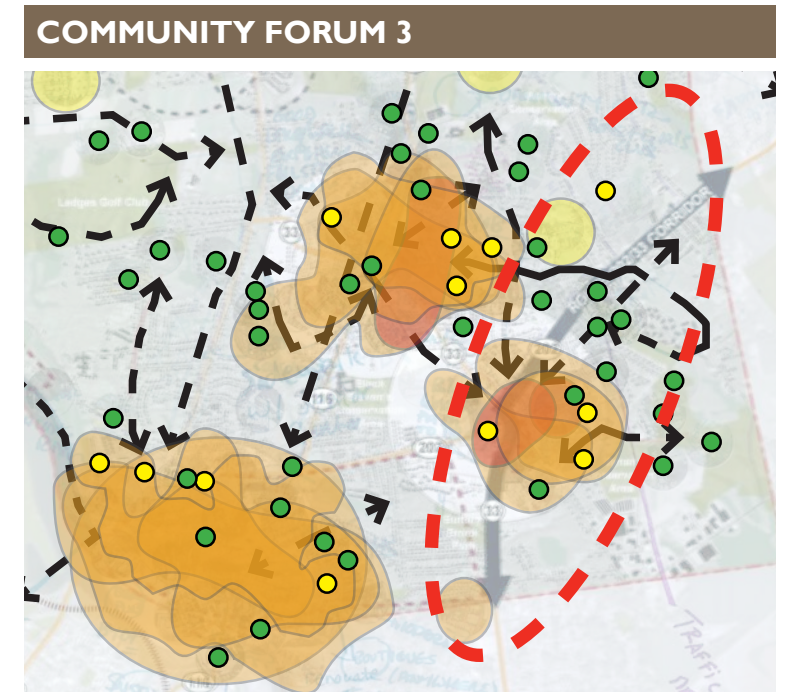
D: Intersection of Route 202 and Route 33



Visioning Sessions from Master Plan

Forum 3

- Development preferences were concentrated on the intersection, which is within the APZ II
- Preferred options included green/open spaces and affordable housing
- Desired connections linked the corridor to other economic centers and green space



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

Discussions with Chicopee and Granby

Chicopee

- Kicked off master plan process in January
 - Will include zoning revisions
- Very interested in working with South Hadley to reconsider the corridor
 - Could include grant applications, wayfinding/branding
 - Could include partnerships with Westover to leverage access to freight/civilian charters
- Potential for connecting old rail trails to Route 33

Granby

- Key limits of further development include small lots, a high watertable, and reliance on septic systems
- The Town has 3-4 community septic systems; the largest is on the Route 202 corridor and is tied into South Hadley through a shared pump.
- Already rezoned area; would like to see small shops, buildings for trades, business diversification
- Route 202 has seen increased traffic/back-ups
- Goals include:
 - Additional sewer/water access, potential to be along Route 202
 - Sidewalk along Route 202 to Amherst Street/ Finns Hill

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

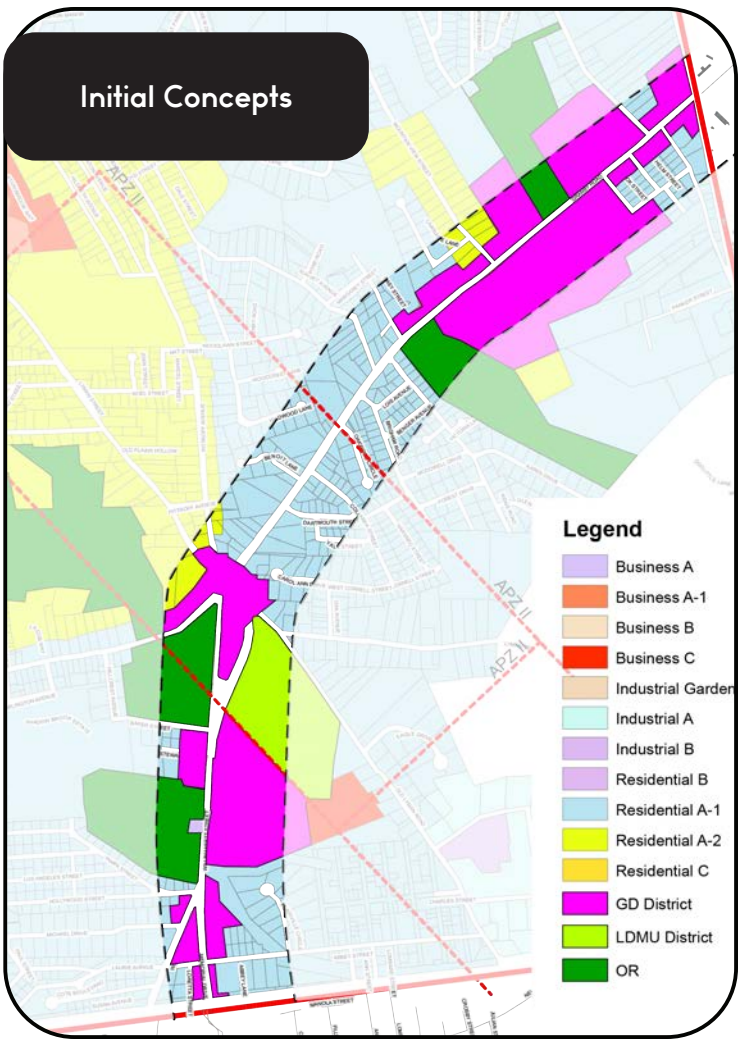
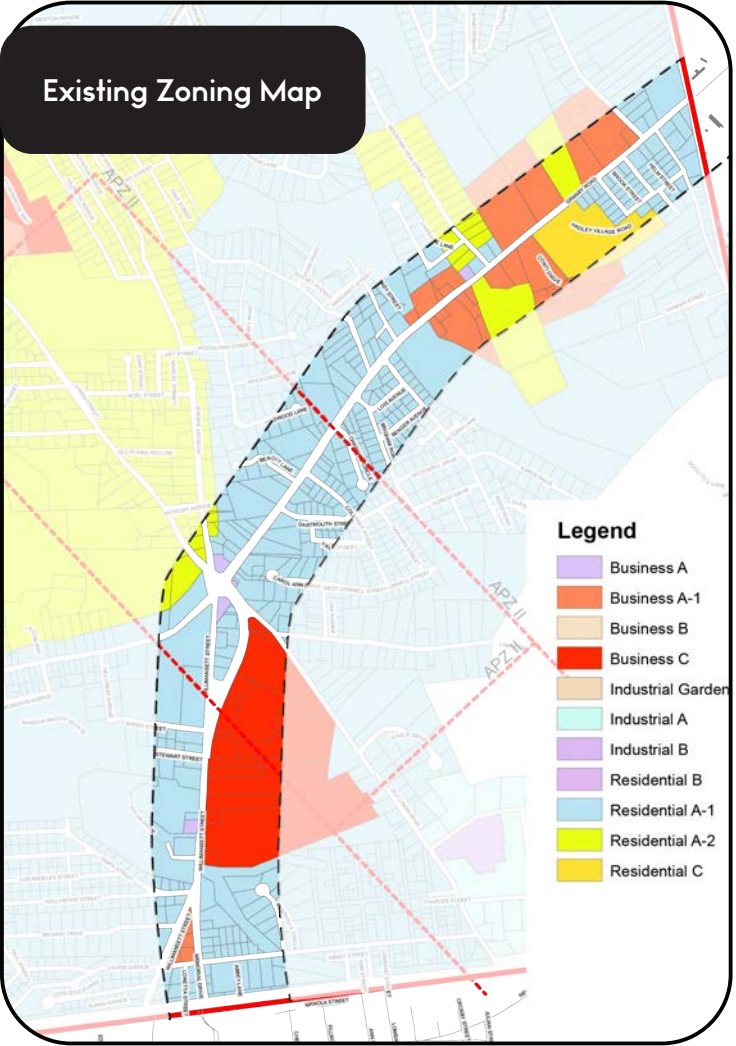
Public Realm

- 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

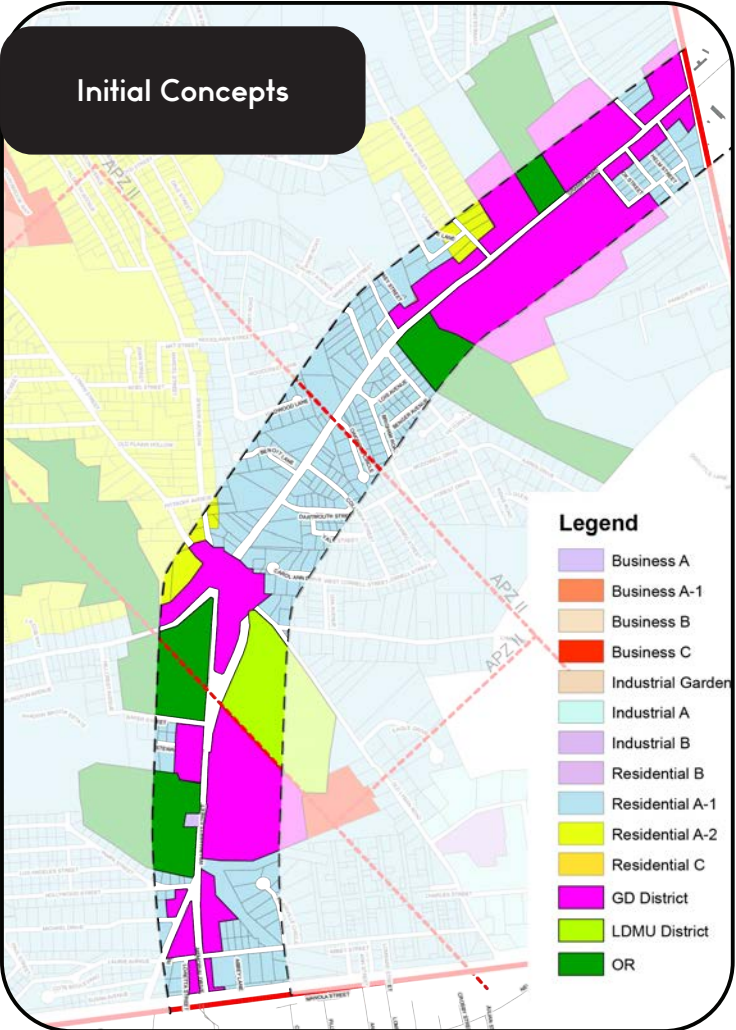
- Establish working relationships at staff level among South Hadley, Chicopee, and Granby to discuss common interests
- Work with Chicopee to link improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists to planned trails
- Discuss water/sewer and streetscape improvements with Granby

Initial Recommendations: Zoning



- Gateway District overlay at Town Boundaries (GD)
- Low-density mixed use district (LDMU)
- Open Space-Recreational (OR)

Initial Recommendations: Zoning



Gateway District (GD)
Will include design review.

Proposed Uses

Retail trade, information, technology, finance, real estate, professional, management, educational services, health care, and arts. Residential use on upper floors will be allowed.

Proposed Building Height

Building height to be consistent with that allowed in the adjoining/underlying residential districts.

New or significantly rehabilitated buildings in this area will be required to have a mix of uses. Conversions from single-family homes to professional offices will be allowed.

Low-density mixed use district (LDMU)

Compatible with those allowed by the Land Use Compatibility by the Westover Air Base. Conversions from single-family homes to professional offices will be allowed.

Building heights within the APZ II shall be limited to those stipulated in the Land Use Compatibility by the Westover Air Base.

Open Space-Recreational (OR)

Restricted to public parks, botanical and zoological gardens, skateboard parks, nature or conservation reserves, and other open space-recreational uses that the Town authorities may determine to be similar in nature

Not applicable.

Initial Recommendations: Design Guidelines

Permitting

- Site plan approval to ensure developments contribute to the quality of urban design that provide a sense of place, scale, and proportion.
- Design Review to ensure that buildings are compatible in scale, intensity with similar residentially developed buildings.

Private to Public Realm

- All commercial buildings shall provide well illuminated, safe protected, and well-marked pedestrian access to connect to street crossings, other buildings, and pedestrian walkways of adjacent sites.
- Landscaping shall be required within all setbacks fronting public streets and shall be integrated into the on-site stormwater management strategies.

Setbacks

- Consistent with underlying zoning.
- One of the side setbacks will be wider to allow for access to parking in the back of building when not sharing parking with adjacent property and to supply adequate landscape.

Initial Recommendations: Design Guidelines

Parking Requirements

- Parking lots shall be located in the back of the building, where the main entrance faces the corridor.
- Additional secured bicycle parking shall be provided for occupants for all allowed uses

Signage

- Signage will be designed for pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular scales to establish an attractive and creative signage strategy.

Auto-oriented uses

- Subject to higher design standards.
- Not allowed within the Gateway District.

Initial Recommendations: Public Realm

Memorial Dr. and Abbey St. Intersection



Questions

Results from the Online Questionnaire

I would like to see less...



Results from the Online Questionnaire

I think we need to add...



Next Steps

June

- Modify recommendations based on public input and produce draft of final plan for the corridor.
- Staff and Planning Board review of draft plan.
- Complete draft of plan in early July.
- Attend public in-person meeting to discuss draft plan at a later date.