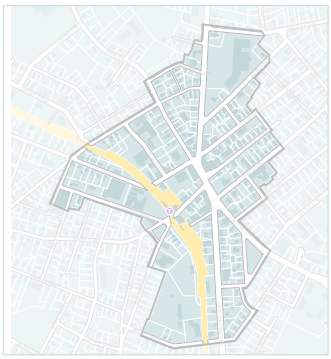
STOUGHTON DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Volume III: Existing Conditions Memorandum

Stoughton, Massachusetts April 2015





THE CECIL GROUP AND **STANTEC**

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INC. 1726
OWN HALL

STOUGHTON DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY FINDINGS

STOUGHTON DOWNTOWN IS A **DECADENT AREA**

What does this mean for Stoughton?

It means the Stoughton Redevelopment Authority (SRA) has the legislative authority to prepare a redevelopment plan that guides their roles and responsibilities in the revitalization of the Stoughton Downtown.

The SRA can have a significant role in changes to the Downtown. Among other actions, a redevelopment plan can authorize the SRA to acquire, lease, and dispose of property, conduct design review of development projects, develop properties itself, and undertake infrastructure improvements within the Downtown.

The SRA and an approved Redevelopment Plan are a valuable set of tools the Town can use to encourage future development in the Stoughton Downtown.

But what is a Decadent Area?

No, it does not mean that everyone is drinking champagne in tuxedos and evening gowns! A Decadent Area is one that is in a state of decay. Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 121B, a Decadent Area must meet one or more of the following conditions:

Stoughton	M.G.L. Requirements
✓	Existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, unfit for human habitation, or obsolete, or in need of major maintenance or repair
	Much of the real estate in recent years has been sold or taken for nonpayment of taxes or foreclosure of mortgages
	Buildings have been torn down and not replaced and under existing conditions it is improbable that the buildings will be replaced
	A substantial change in business or economic conditions
	Inadequate light, air, or open space
✓	Excessive land coverage
✓	Diversity of ownership, irregular lot sizes, or obsolete street patterns make it improbable that the area will be redeveloped by the ordinary operations of private enterprise
✓	Other conditions which are detrimental to the health, safety, morals, welfare and sound growth of the area

Stoughton meets four of these conditions and thus qualifies as a **Decadent Area.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Other factors affect the ability of the Stoughton Downtown to change over time. These factors provide opportunities for the private market to invest in buildings and land in the Downtown – or they may be constraints that prevent future investment. Opportunities and constraints fall into four categories, and each category below contains some of the elements that affect Stoughton's Downtown.

Land Use

OPPORTUNITIES

- Historic buildings
- Lower land and building values
- Vacant buildings and lots

CONSTRAINTS

- Off-Street parking:
  - High requirements for residential uses under current zoning regulations
  - Few spaces available to non-commuters
  - Poor paving conditions
- Potential for incompatible adjacent uses
- Diverse property ownership
- Small lots and/or buildings

Traffic and Circulation

OPPORTUNITIES

- Convergence of three major roads bringing people downtown
- Turning drivers into pedestrians who shop and eat

CONSTRAINTS

- Traffic congestion at peak periods in Stoughton Square
- Through traffic prevents Downtown from being a destination

Infrastructure

CONSTRAINTS

- Possible inadequacy of sewer system at points outside the Study Area with development of new or redevelopment of existing buildings

Real Estate Market

OPPORTUNITIES

- Demand for space within existing buildings if renovated
- Demand for additional residential units near commuter rail
- Demand for walkable conveniences

CONSTRAINTS

- Competition from "Big Box" stores
- Lack of updated store fronts
- Fewer walkable conveniences than other towns
- Few day-to-evening active uses
- Price sensitivity to existing and future rents
- Low demand for new non-residential buildings

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of the Study

The Stoughton Redevelopment Authority (SRA) is undertaking the creation of the Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Plan and will focus on the downtown area identified in Figures 1 and 2. The purpose of this planning process is to identify specific actions needed to encourage the redevelopment and revitalization of the Downtown area according to the goals outlined in Phase I of the Master Plan: **the Stoughton Downtown should be the municipal, social, and cultural heart of the community, with a strong sense of place and belonging for residents, employees, and business owners**.[1]

The SRA is guiding this process and has engaged a professional consultant team, led by the planning and urban design firm The Cecil Group and including Stantec, to assist with the creation of a redevelopment plan under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 121B.

As part of this process, the consultant team will seek significant and varied input from the community to better understand the issues and opportunities in the Stoughton Downtown and to help shape strategies that can be implemented by the SRA. The consultant team will reach out to a broad range of stakeholders, including town officials, area businesses and property owners, residents, and local nonprofit organizations. The consultant team will facilitate a series of public workshops and will work with a Citizens Advisory Group, appointed by the SRA.

The Town of Stoughton is sponsoring other studies which are running concurrently with this effort:

- Brown Walker Planners, Inc. is the lead consultant for the Town of Stoughton Master Plan. The report can be found at http://stoughton.brownwalkerplanners.com
- Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc. is the lead consultant for the Stoughton Town Square Traffic Improvements Project and held joint public forums with The Cecil Group Team
- Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. is evaluating short-term traffic improvements to the Stoughton Town Square
- McCabe Enterprises LLC is the lead consultant for the preparation of the *Economic Development Master Plan* and the *Economic Development Master Plan: Downtown Stoughton*. Both reports were made available to the Cecil Group Team in draft form.

Purpose of the Existing Conditions Memorandum

The purpose of this existing conditions memorandum is to document the existing conditions related to the built environment and the physical infrastructure within the Study Area for the Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), and the regulatory and market conditions affecting the SDRP Study Area.

The analysis and understanding of these existing conditions serve two purposes related to the eventual creation of a redevelopment plan for the Stoughton Downtown:

- **To determine the existence and type of blighted, substandard or decadent conditions that exist within the SDRP Study Area. This determination provides the basis for granting the Stoughton Redevelopment Authority the ability to undertake certain activities within the redevelopment area under M.G.L. Chapter 121B.**
- **To provide a base for considering the opportunities and constraints that impact the potential for redevelopment and rehabilitation of the SDRP Study Area.**

These technical studies will be supplemented throughout the process with a series of public workshops and individual stakeholder interviews. The input received from

[1] *Stoughton Master Plan: Implementation Plan*, Brown Walker Planners, Inc., http://stoughton.brownwalkerplanners.com/updates, last accessed January 20, 2015.

Figure 1: Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) Study Area: Aerial View

these sources will be documented within both the draft and final Redevelopment Plan and will be used to inform the following:

- Recommendations for actions to be undertaken by the SRA
- Suggested regulatory changes
- Recommended design guidelines and a design review process
- Potential projects to be implemented
- Strategies for addressing redevelopment over time

Relationship to the Stoughton Master Plan

The final Redevelopment Plan that will result from this study process must be consistent with the Town's new comprehensive Master Plan. The Town of Stoughton is wrapping up a multi-year update of its comprehensive Master Plan. Sue Brown of Brown Walker Planners, Inc. is leading the team for this project.

One of the major goals identified by the master planning process is to revitalize the Town Center (Strategy L-2[1]). The full range of draft recommendations from Brown Walker for the Town Center, which falls within the SDRP Study Area, are summarized in Appendix A. Relevant recommendations will be incorporated into the planning process for the Redevelopment Plan.

Summary of Findings

This technical report contains the following findings, supplemented by the data in *Section 2. Evidence of Decadent Conditions* and *Section 3. Opportunities and Constraints*.

EVIDENCE OF BLIGHTED OPEN AREA, DECADENT AREA AND/OR SUBSTANDARD AREA

Under Chapter 121B of the Massachusetts General Laws, the conditions that define a Decadent Area, Substandard Area or Blighted Open Area must be present within the Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Area before an urban renewal plan can be approved. **Based on the analysis in *Section 2. Blighted Conditions*, the SDRP Study Area would qualify as a Decadent Area as defined by Chapter 121B.**

The conditions that contribute to this definition are as follows:

- EXISTENCE OF BUILDINGS WHICH ARE OUT OF REPAIR, PHYSICALLY DETERIORATED, UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION, OR OBSOLETE, OR IN NEED OF MAJOR MAINTENANCE OR REPAIR – Certain buildings and lots are in poor condition and appear to represent safety hazards to the general population.
- EXCESSIVE LAND COVERAGE – The amount of land dedicated to parking is out of proportion to the amount of land devoted to residential and commercial uses.
- IRREGULAR LOT SIZES – Parcelization includes undersized and irregular lots and an irregular block structure.
- DIVERSITY OF OWNERSHIP — While some lots are in common ownership, many of the smaller lots are in individual ownership, preventing easy assembly of undersized lots.
- OBSOLETE STREET PATTERNS – The Town of Stoughton is conducing a parallel study – the Stoughton Town Square Traffic Improvements Project – for which Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc. is the lead consultant. This study is evaluating mid-term to long-term changes to the existing traffic patterns which create significant congestion in the SDRP Study Area. The presence of the rail lines and the configuration of Routes 27 and 138 created the pattern of irregular parcels and blocks described above.
- OTHER CONDITIONS WHICH ARE DETRIMENTAL TO THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SOUND GROWTH OF THE AREA – There are a number of conditions under this category that contribute to the definition of the SDRP Study Area as a Decadent Area. These conditions are health and safety hazards for members of the Stoughton community:
  * Certain industrial and automobile-related uses may have environmental repercussions based on the presence of chemical spills.
  * A review of the street infrastructure indicates that much of it is not compliant with the Americans

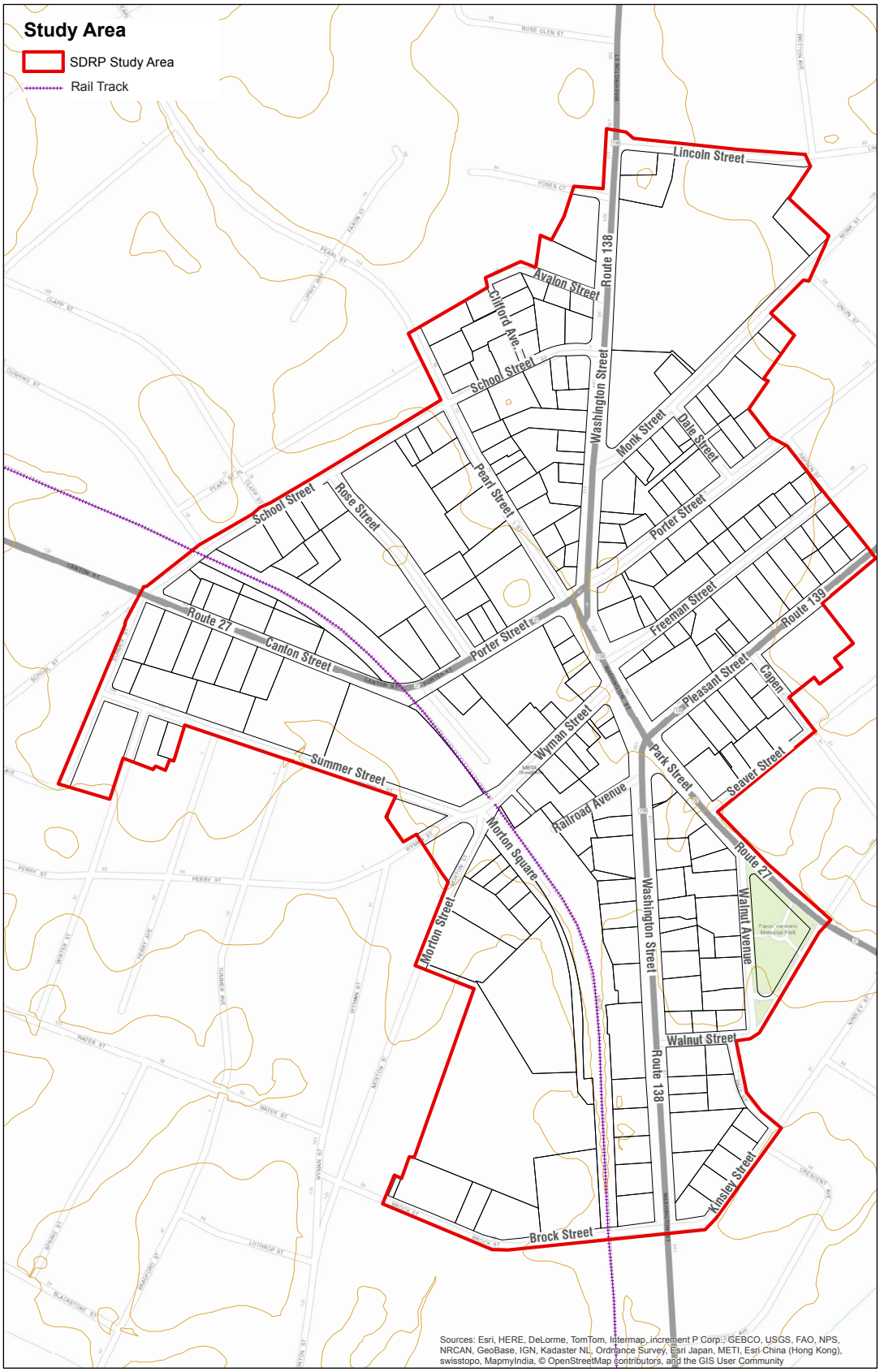

Figure 2: Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) Study Area: Boundary, Parcels, and Topography

with Disabilities Act or the requirements of the Architectural Access Board.

* Right-of-way conditions are inadequate for both vehicles and pedestrians and include roadway pavement cracking, inadequate sidewalks, and inadequate curbing.
* Underground water, sewer, and drainage infrastructure is in poor to fair condition, although additional testing would be needed to confirm the extent of the poor conditions.

The evaluation of these conditions came from the following primary sources:

- Site visits in December 2014
- The Town's zoning regulations as provided on the Town's website.[1]
- Data from the Town of Stoughton's Geographic Information System (GIS) database
- Data from the Town of Stoughton's Assessors' Office
- Data from the Department of Public Works
- Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS)
- Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs (MassDEP)
- Review of existing plans and reports from the Town of Stoughton

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Land Use

The conditions contributing to the definition of the SDRP Study Area as a Decadent Area affect the possibilities for redevelopment, these conditions are not the only contributing factors. Zoning, current land uses, current valuations, conditions of vacancy, and design characteristics will have impacts on future development. The effect of these conditions on opportunities and constraints in the SDRP Study Area and implications for the Redevelopment Plan are summarized below:

- ZONING – The relatively new Stoughton Center Mixed Use Overlay District (SCMUOD) provides opportunities for new uses, reduced parking requirements, and a design review process to guide redevelopment within the SDRP Study Area. Some constraints may remain for parcels within the SDRP Study Area but outside of the SCMUOD.
- LAND USES – The SDRP Study Area contains a mix of existing uses. While the precedent has been established to allow mixed-use development in this area, some uses may be incompatible with neighboring existing uses or with the possibility of redevelopment.
- VALUATIONS – The majority of land and buildings in the SDRP Study Area is undervalued relative to the average assessed value of the Study Area as a whole. Such undervaluation may present opportunities for change in the downtown.
- CONDITIONS OF VACANCY – Vacant parcels and buildings also offer opportunities for change provided that the underlying conditions contributing to vacancy can be addressed. Market factors and the condition of the building and/or land may cause challenges to the redevelopment of certain parcels.
- DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS – Windows, entrances, architectural ornaments, building or paving materials, fence types, street furniture such as benches and planters, and the style and placement of signs are design elements that can contribute to or detract from the visual appreciation of an area. New buildings should reflect the context of their surroundings to reinforce the Stoughton Downtown as a unique place and its retain culture and history. Current paving conditions present challenges to the vision for the area as a safe area for pedestrians to walk from home to retail, services, and transit, and should be addressed in order to attract new development to the area.

Real Estate Market

The real estate market analysis describes market conditions for a range of potential reuses in the Downtown while outlining opportunities that lend potential to downtown redevelopment along with constraints that stand in the way of revitalization.

[1]The zoning regulations on the Town's website are not always the most recent version. The most recent version is available for purchase at Town Hall. The Town has retained a consultant to rewrite the Town's zoning bylaw; this process is expected to be completed in 2016.

Major Findings

- OFFICE USE – *Constraints*: The bulk of the market wants to occupy modern, larger floor plate buildings along the major highways. *Opportunities:* Downtown, far from the regional highways, has the potential to serve a much smaller and price-sensitive market that can take advantage of local access and a mixed-use environment.
- RETAIL AND RESTAURANT USE – *Constraints*: Widespread property ownership, small buildings, irregular lot sizes present a challenge for larger retailers while a recent increase in shopping centers with big box retail detract from downtown activity. *Opportunities:* Potential for a critical mass to be developed and leased in order to create an exciting alternative to convenience retail depending on retail/restaurant mix, potential anchors, relationship to design character and historic "charm."
- RESIDENTIAL USE – *Constraints*: Limited local conveniences such as pharmacies, grocers, ground floor commercial activity and an active mixed use environment. *Opportunities:* Already strong residential demand in the Metro South and Greater Boston Metro areas coupled with multi-family housing benefits of the expanded MBTA service brought by potential South Coast Rail expansion for tenants that commute to New Bedford or Boston and other points north of Stoughton.
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND FLEX SPACE USE – *Constraints*: Rents are too low to justify new construction and very little vacancy exists in appropriate existing structures. *Opportunities:* There are a limited amount of light industrial users that steadily occupy existing buildings at high occupancy rates.
- CREATIVE ECONOMY USE – *Constraints*: This is a limited market and there are limited buildings that are suitable. New space can't be supported by rents that artists can afford to pay. *Opportunities:* Creative use tenants might find a revitalized downtown attractive and some of the older buildings might lend themselves to conversion to the flexible, raw and inexpensive space that artists want.
- SOUTH COAST RAIL EXPANSION – *Constraints:* South Coast Rail service does little to increase the attractiveness of other potential uses other than residential because the schedule will be established to provide convenient service into Boston for the commute in the morning and return service in the evening. It won't be convenient to travel back and forth to other towns on South Coast Rail. *Opportunities:* A potential for a greater morning and evening customer base and a larger multi-family residential unit inventory, providing the base for an enhanced mixed-use environment.

Analysis

Office use has significant potential in the region. However the bulk of the market wants to occupy modern, larger floor plate buildings along the major highways. Downtown, far from the regional highways, has the potential to serve a much smaller and price-sensitive market that can take advantage of local access and a mixed-use environment.

Residential uses, primarily multi-family housing is the only potential use that can benefit from the improvement of service brought by the construction of the South Coast Rail. A location in the downtown or relatively near the station would be a strong attraction for residential tenants that commute to Boston or other points north of Stoughton. South Coast Rail service does little to increase the attractiveness of other potential uses because the schedule will be established to provide convenient service into Boston for the commute in the AM and return service in the evening. It won't be convenient to travel back and forth to other towns on South Coast Rail. However, additional service may also indirectly enhance smart growth because redevelopment opportunities such as office, retail, and recreation often arise from increased residential density. Smart growth is defined as a concentration of development growth in compact urban centers aimed at achieving a walkable, sustainable, and mixed use environment, and is usually located around public transit, which encourages increased residential density to support the other uses.

Artist work space or live/work space might find a revitalized downtown attractive and some of the older buildings might lend themselves to conversion to the flexible, raw and inexpensive space that artists want. However this is a limited market and there are limited buildings that are suitable. New space can't be supported by rents that artists can afford to pay.

Retail and Restaurant uses have some potential if a critical mass can be developed and leased in order to create an exciting alternative to convenience retail. The retail/restaurant mix, potential anchors, location and relationship to design character and amenities are very important.

Industrial or Flex space bear little promise for the downtown. Rents are very low for this kind of space, too low for new construction, and very little vacancy exists in appropriate existing structures.

Creating a mixed-use town center environment is key to re-establishing that special environment that offers office workers, apartment residents, shoppers, and possibly artists a distinct choice of how to shop, live, and work; while at the same time provides a real amenity for the Town as a whole. It will be important to provide the amenities that cater to a pedestrian experience, by making improvements in physical property components as well as surrounding infrastructure, circulation, and parking, diversifying the current retail tenant mix and store front visibility, updating residential units, and reconfiguring parcels to provide the right mix of building types, pedestrian environments, and parking.

It will be difficult to provide this experience with the current configuration and condition of buildings and parcels and their lack of connectivity and suitable size and structures. Some of the buildings do lend themselves to creating a revitalized downtown but many are too small, and/or are on small and oddly-shaped parcels that don't lend themselves to reuse or need to be combined with other parcels for redevelopment. By focusing on the appropriate mix and type of office, retail, residential uses, the downtown area has the accessibility, customer base and historical character to establish itself as a future focal point for entertainment, place making and expansive activity.

But downtown Stoughton does exhibit evidence of potential vitality in its historic buildings, access to transportation, potential downtown charm, diverse use types and mixed use market conditions. Redevelopment opportunities exist to enhance the downtown's vibrancy while preserving the historic nature of the downtown environment. By implementing physical and design improvements to buildings and infrastructure, encouraging pedestrian flow and alternative mobility access, and instituting redevelopment strategies to increase and create synergy between office, retail and multi-family residential uses, Downtown Stoughton can capitalize on its existing features to become a vibrant town center and community focal point for its patrons.

It must be noted that despite showing evidence of potential vitality, downtown market conditions have also contributed to its definition as a Decadent Area. As office parks, big box stores, full service grocers, large destination and specialty retailers and outdoor shopping centers have expanded throughout Stoughton, taking advantage of highway visibility and access; the downtown area has dissipated as a perceived town focal point for retail and mixed use activity. Retail vacancies in place of former uses such as that of the State Theatre and Train Depot, uneconomic building and parcel sizes, and diverse patterns of ownership have contributed to the difficulty of promoting redevelopment in order to restore and enhance the downtown without intervention and hence a finding of the SDRP Study Area as a Decadent Area must be made.

Traffic and Circulation

During peak periods Stoughton Square is significantly congested due to a lack of redundancy in the roadway network and high travel demands for through traffic. The through traffic demands and associated congestion have an impact on those looking to access destinations in downtown Stoughton including the town offices, the post office, police and fire departments, the commuter rail station and the retail shops in the Square. The traffic congestion and lack of well functioning crosswalks also inhibits pedestrian circulation within the SDRP Study Area.

Infrastructure

While the capacity of local sewers are likely adequate for any additional flows from proposed or redeveloped buildings, it is possible the sewer collection system could become inadequate outside of the SDRP Study Area where existing capacity restrictions already exist. Rehabilitation and/or replacement of VC sewers in the SDRP Study Area can mitigate these downstream capacity issues by eliminating wet weather inflows and infiltration. But further study would be required to determine whether mitigation

within the study area or an adequate redesign of the downstream area(s) is more cost effective.


U.S. LAWNS

STOUGHTON DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
Existing Conditions Memorandum

2. EVIDENCE OF DECADENT CONDITIONS

2. EVIDENCE OF DECADENT CONDITIONS

Definitions

The purpose of this section is to determine whether the SDRP Study Area meets the definition of a Blighted Open Area, Decadent Area, or Substandard Area.

EVIDENCE OF BLIGHTED OPEN AREA

Under the definition for a Blighted Open Area, the area must be predominantly open – in other words, undeveloped. The SDRP Study Area is mostly developed, with a few, relatively small, vacant lots. There is a single parcel, of approximately six acres, which is partially developed. That parcel might qualify on its own as a Blighted Open Area, but would require further study to evaluate the physical and environmental conditions on the site.

EVIDENCE OF DECADENT CONDITIONS

The SDRP Study Area does qualify as a Decadent Area under the Chapter 121B definition. A Decadent Area must include one or more of the following conditions:

- Existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, unfit for human habitation, or obsolete, or in need of major maintenance or repair
- Excessive land coverage
- Irregular lot sizes
- Diversity of ownership
- Obsolete street patterns
- Other conditions that are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of the community in which it is situated

The specific evidence that supports the determination of the SDRP Study Area as a Decadent Area will be presented within this *Section 2. Evidence of Decadent Conditions*. This analysis includes an evaluation of the following conditions:

- Contributing Buildings and Lots
- Land Coverage
- Parcelization
- Ownership
- Infrastructure

While an understanding of current traffic and market conditions is important for evaluating the potential for and implications of redevelopment in the SDRP Study Area, these conditions do not contribute toward the evaluation of blight and will be considered in *Section 3. Opportunities and Constraints on Development*.

The full legislative definition of Decadent Area is on the page to the right.

EVIDENCE OF SUBSTANDARD CONDITIONS

There is no evidence of substandard conditions within the SDRP Study Area. Substandard conditions refer specifically to residential buildings and include, among other conditions, overcrowding, dilapidated structures, and lack of ventilation, light, or sanitation facilities.

DECADENT AREA: an area which is detrimental to safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of a community because of the existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, unfit for human habitation, or obsolete, or in need of major maintenance or repair, or because much of the real estate in recent years has been sold or taken for nonpayment of taxes or upon foreclosure of mortgages, or because buildings have been torn down and not replaced and under existing conditions it is improbable that the buildings will be replaced, or because of a substantial change in business or economic conditions, or because of inadequate light, air, or open space, or because of excessive land coverage or because diversity of ownership, irregular lot sizes or obsolete street patterns make it improbable that the area will be redeveloped by the ordinary operations of private enterprise, or by reason of any combination of the foregoing conditions.

M.G.L. Chapter 121B, Section 1

Land Use

BUILDINGS AND LOTS CONTRIBUTING TO DECADENT CONDITIONS

Figure 3 identifies parcels on which the condition of the building and/or lot is a contributing factor to the existence of decadent conditions in the SDRP Study Area as noted in site visits in December 2014. The interiors of the buildings were not inspected, and sites were judged based on visibility from a public way. The numbers on Figure 3 (and the following figures) correspond to the numbers on the building inventory provided in Appendix F. This building inventory includes all parcels within the SDRP Study Area and provides a picture of the parcel, the most recent assessors' data, and notes on the condition of the building and lot.

Buildings are identified on Figure 4 if the building or portions of the building need significant repair or appears to be abandoned, as seen from a site walk in December 2014. Some examples include the following:

- Parcels 5 and 27 are old mills in poor condition and appear to be partially occupied.
- Parcel 17 is a relay building for electrical services. All of its windows are covered in plywood boards, some of which are peeling away from the frame. Neither the building nor the lot has been maintained.
- Parcel 31 is the former Stoughton Train Depot building which has been vacant for some time. Some of the windows are covered in plywood.
- Parcel 148 is the site of a fire. The Planning Board held a continued public hearing on February 26, 2015 for 21 residential dwelling units located over mixed-use retail/office/restaurant space located at 760-770 Washington Street (Assessors Plan No. 54, Lot 285). The Applicant is the Freeman Street Trust.
- Parcel 225 contains a vacant building with doors, windows, and a red "X" sign which may indicate that firefighters are not to enter the building.
- Parcel 221 contains the historic State Theatre. Although a nonprofit organization is attempting to rehabilitate the building, it is currently vacant and needs significant interior repairs.

Lots have been identified on Figure 4 if there are known or suspected environmental contaminants based on a visual inspection of the use or if the parcel is vacant. Some examples include the following:

- The building on parcels 243 has been removed; building materials were left on the site.
- Parcels 9, 81, 82, 85 and 236 are vacant and overgrown. No information exists in the database on previous uses on these lots. Parcel 9 has a heap of building stones in a depression on the site.

The Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs (MassDEP) maintains an online lookup of sites that have been identified as waste sites or sites with reportable releases of chemicals. The following sites within the SDRP Study Area are listed on MassDEP's system (see Figure 5):

PARCEL #	LOCATION	SITE STATUS
5	25R Brock Street	Closed
	Canton and School Street	Closed
40	2 Canton Street	Closed with Use Limitation/Closed
242	46 Morton Street	Closed
38	31 Porter Street	Closed
142	105 Porter Street	Closed
76	26 Rose Street	Tier 1D
86	49 Rose Street	Closed with Use Limitation
99	20 School Street	Closed
263	645 Washington Street	Closed
254	663 Washington Street	Closed
129	724 Washington Street	Closed
222	793 Washington Street	Closed
219	815 Washington Street	Closed
218	825 Washington Street	Open/Closed

See also Appendix B: MassDEP Summaries

In addition to these sites, parcels 7, 25, and 253 are among those that have auto service, fuel, or repair on the site and may have contaminants from those uses and are identified on Figure 4.

Decadent Conditions: Contributing Buildings and Lots

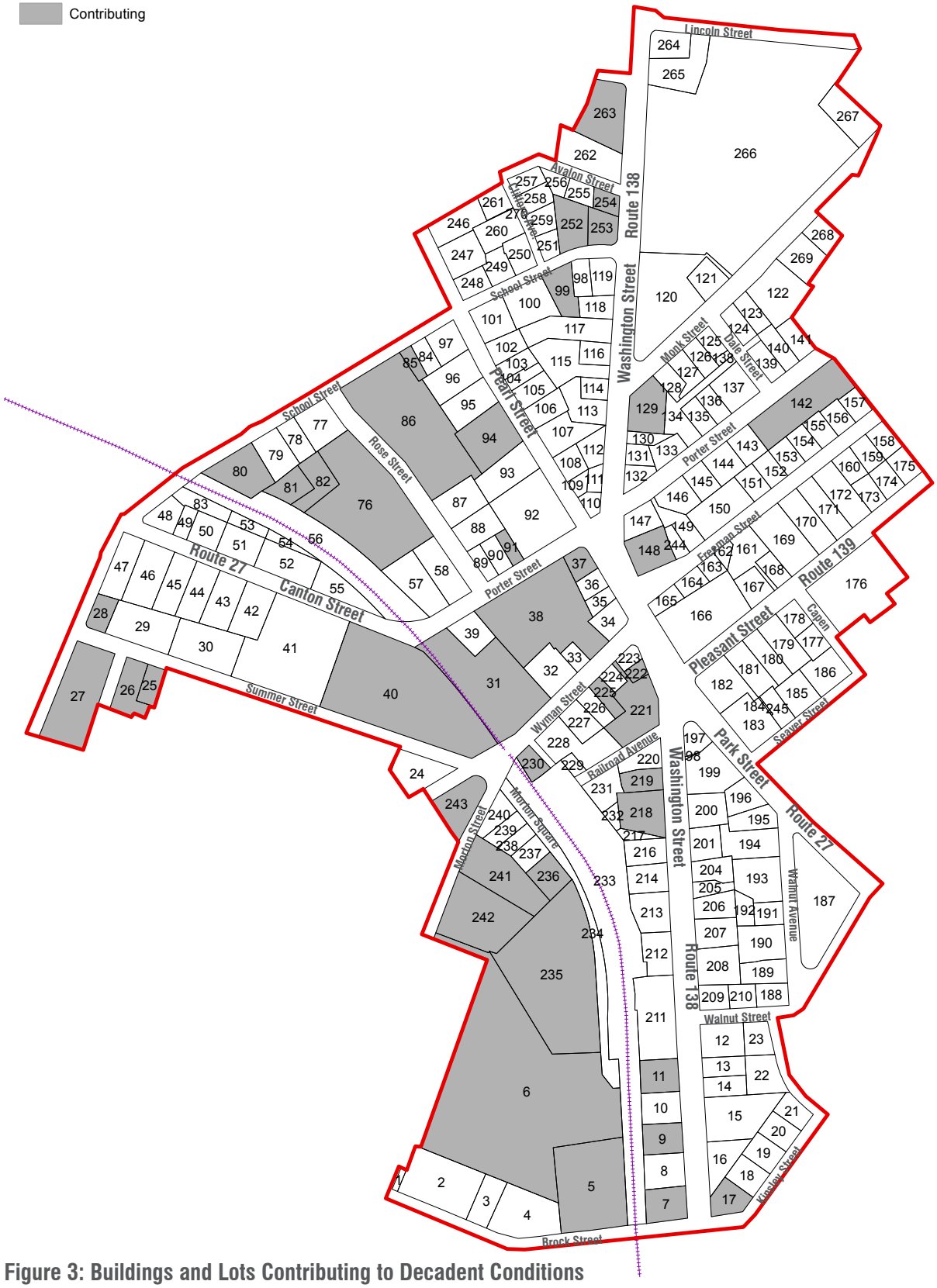

Figure 3: Buildings and Lots Contributing to Decadent Conditions

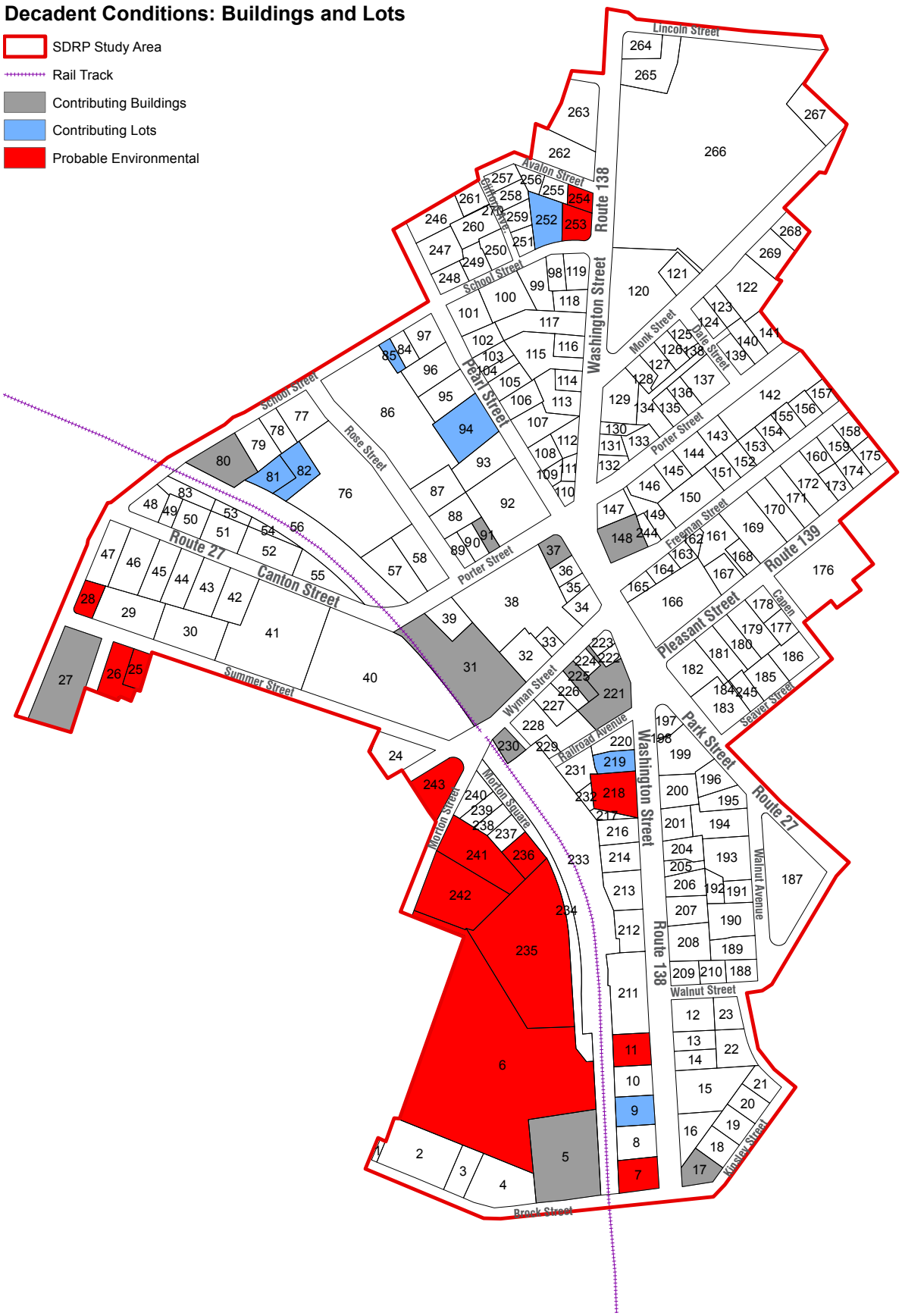

Figure 4: Buildings and Lots Contributing to Decadent Conditions - Visual Survey

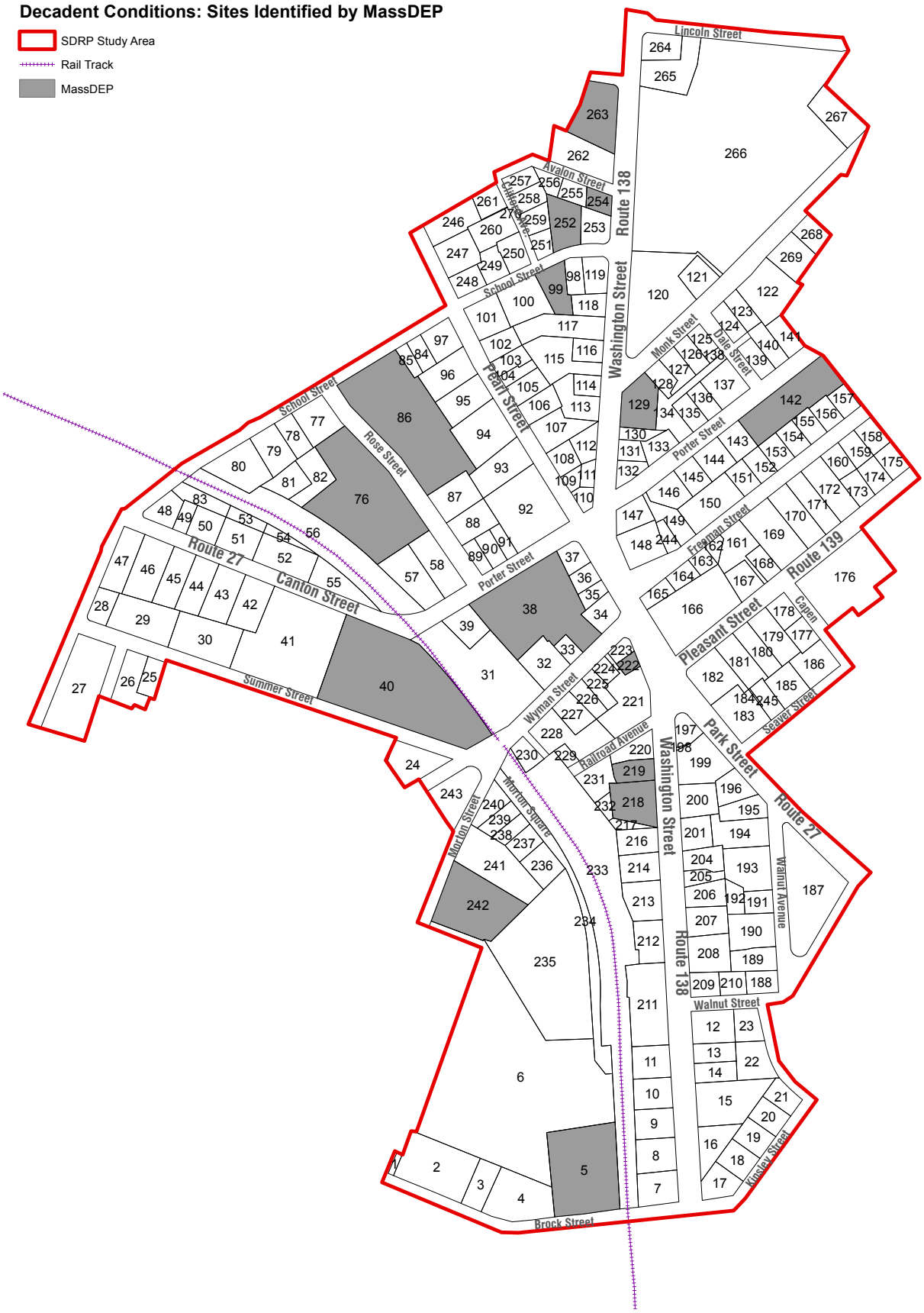

Figure 5: Buildings and Lots Contributing to Decadent Conditions: MassDEP

- Parcels 6, 11, 235, and 241 have industrial uses on the site and may have contaminants from those uses.
- Parcel 28 is used for parking but is unpaved and may have some fuel or oil spills.

Lead Paint and Other Hazards

Figure 6 identifies buildings built prior to 1978, according to the data provided by the Assessor's office. 1978 is the date after which lead paint was banned from sale due to demonstrated hazards to both children and adults. Although lead paint abatement programs are available for homeowners, not all have taken advantage of these programs.

It is likely that significant portions of the buildings on this graphic continue to have lead paint on the interior or exterior. Other substances, such as asbestos, may also be present as it was used in insulation, paint and patching compounds, plumbing, and floor materials.[1] Asbestos is generally safe unless damaged in some way, for example, by a homeowner making repairs, a significant renovation, or a fire.

The presence of buildings in poor condition and sites that have not been maintained is a condition of the definition of an area as a Decadent Area. These condition are detrimental to the safety of the community. **A material number of buildings and lots within the SDRP meet the requirement for a Decadent Area based on both visual examination and known and suspected conditions.**

[1]http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Safety-Education/Safety-Guides/Home/Asbestos-In-The-Home/, United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, accessed April 6, 2015.

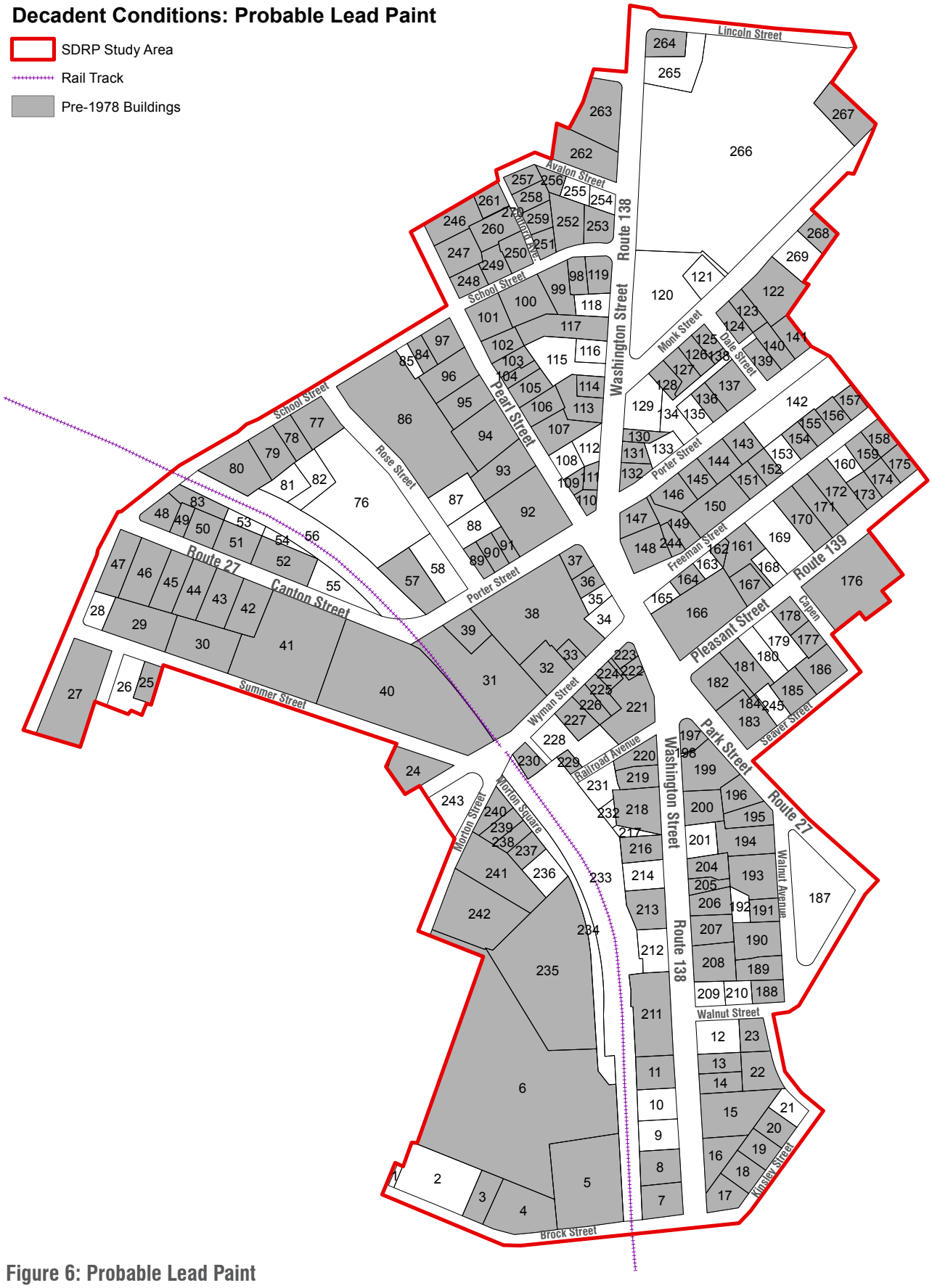

Figure 6: Probable Lead Paint

LAND COVERAGE

Although the definition of a Decadent Area identifies excessive land coverage as a contributing factor to the determination of an area as a Decadent Area, land coverage by itself does not necessarily indicate that the private market would have difficulty in redeveloping the area without public assistance. An urban area may have lots or even blocks with 100% lot coverage.

The analysis to support or rule out a finding of a Decadent Area evaluates the land coverage in Stoughton based on both the current physical conditions and the regulatory environment. The current physical conditions are shown in Figure 7, which is based on the GIS data provided by the Town of Stoughton. This figure shows the extent of lot coverage in the SDRP Study Area.

Two elements contribute to lot coverage – buildings and impervious surfaces (paved surfaces). Impervious surfaces are subdivided by the Town's GIS into parking and driveways. Roadways are also paved, but have been excluded from these calculations so as to focus on the total area of the parcels within the SDRP.

A significant amount of lot coverage exists in the SDRP Study Area, as shown in the table below:

	ACRES	% OF SDRP STUDY AREA
SDRP Study Area	78.43	
Building Footprints	18.47	24%
Driveways	3.67	5%
Parking Areas	26.68	34%
Total Land Coverage of Parcels*	48.83	62%

* The difference between the SDRP Study Area and Total Land Coverage of Parcels includes the public rights-of-way and land that is not covered by buildings or paving (lawn, open space, gardens, etc.).

By themselves, these numbers are not useful. The next step is to compare the numbers to the Town's current zoning requirements for lot coverage. There are four zoning districts: Residential Urban (RU), Central Business District (CBD), General Business (GB), and Industrial (I). (The Stoughton Center Mixed-Use Overlay District (SCMUOD) which covers most of the SDRP Study Area, refers to the building coverage of the underlying zoning district.) The Town's zoning identifies the maximum building coverage and minimum open space requirements; from those two it is possible to calculate the maximum paved surface and maximum lot coverage.

	PER TABLE OF DIMENSIONAL AND DENSITY REGULATIONS		CALCULATED MAXIMUMS	
DISTRICT	A MAXIMUM BUILDING COVERAGE	B MINIMUM OPEN SPACE	C PAVED SURFACE 100% - (A+B)	D LOT COVERAGE A+C
RU	30%	50%	20%	50%
CBD	90%	0%	10%	100%
GB	70%	10%	20%	90%
I	50%	25%	25%	75%

If the regulations have been enforced, the existing lot coverage in each district should not exceed the maximum lot coverage for that district. Figure 8 and the table below compare these two:

DISTRICT	MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE	ACTUAL LOT COVERAGE	OVER/ (UNDER)
RU	50%	38%	(12%)
CBD	100%	86%	(14%)
GB	90%	65%	(25%)
I	75%	42%	(33%)

Within each zoning district, the total lot coverage is lower than the total percentage allowed by zoning for that district. By this calculation, the SDRP Study Area does not appear to have excessive land coverage and would not qualify as a Decadent Area under the statutory definition.

However, there is another layer of analysis that should be considered. Figure 7 shows a clear differentiation between the amount of land dedicated to buildings versus the amount of land dedicated to parking and driveways. The tables on the next page compare the maximum building coverage under the Town's zoning regulations to existing conditions.

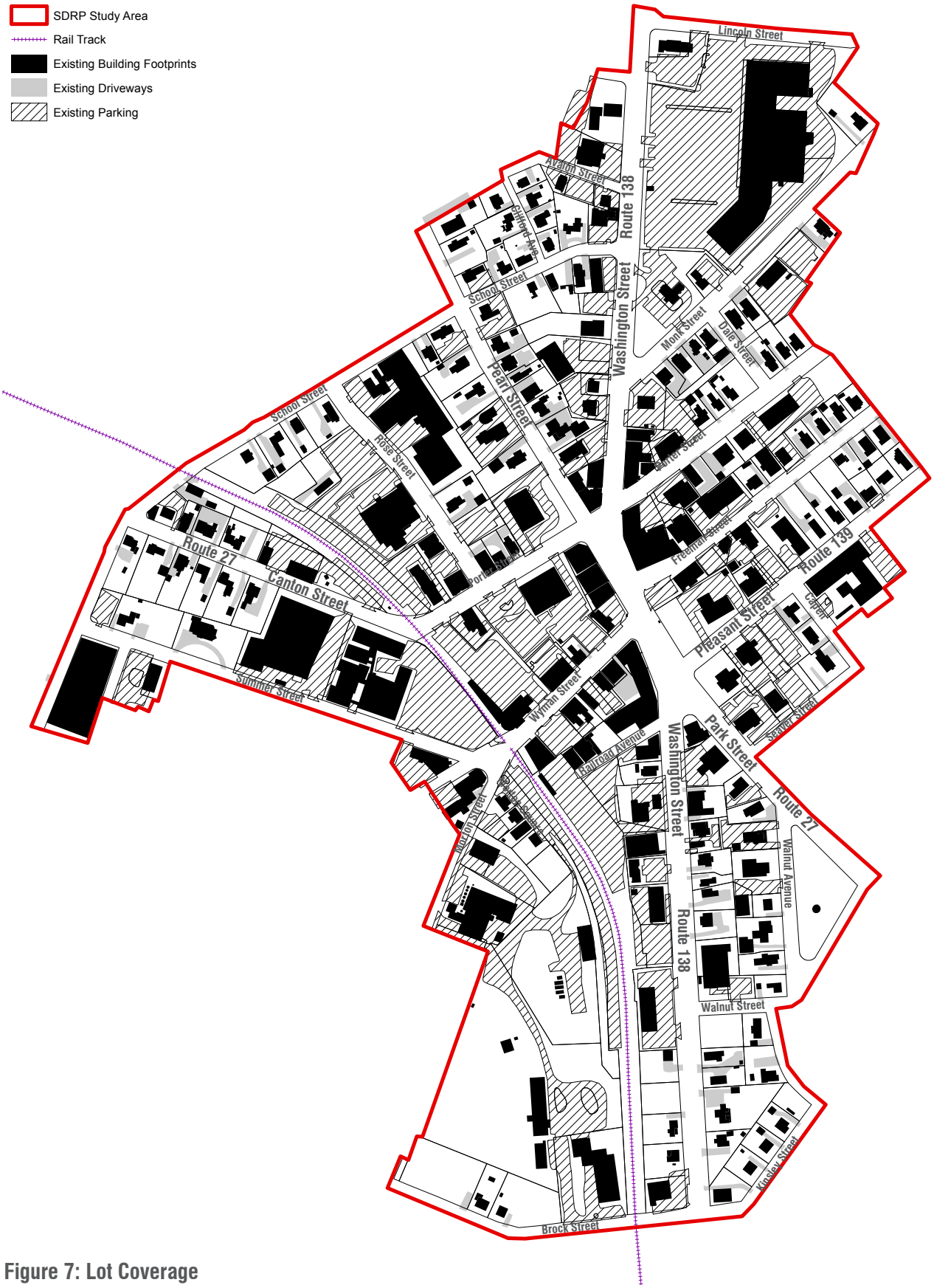

Figure 7: Lot Coverage

DISTRICT	MAXIMUM BUILDING COVERAGE	ACTUAL BUILDING COVERAGE	OVER/ (UNDER) BUILT
RU	30%	16%	(14%)
CBD	90%	35%	(55%)
GB	70%	22%	(48%)
I	50%	18%	(32%)

In all four zoning districts, the parcels are underbuilt in comparison to the allowable building coverage for each district.

The table below compares the maximum allowable paved surfaces with the existing amount of paved surfaces in the SDRP.

DISTRICT	MAXIMUM PAVED SURFACE	ACTUAL PAVED SURFACE	OVER/ (UNDER) PAVED
RU	20%	22%	2%
CBD	10%	52%	42%
GB	20%	43%	23%
I	25%	24%	-1%

Two zoning districts – CBD and GB – are significantly over paved relative to the allowable amount of coverage allowed by the Town's zoning. These two districts are the primary commercial zones of the SDRP and the amount of paved land decreases the amount of land that is available for new development.

The Town, the state, and the federal government collectively own about four acres of paved land within the SDRP Study Area:

- 2.4 acres are used for commuter parking (2.1 acres owned by the MBTA and just under a quarter-acre by the Town).
- The U.S. Post Office owns about 1.38 acres, of which roughly a quarter-acre is the post office itself.
- The Town also owns an additional acre of land which is divided into a separate parking lot for the Town Hall a municipal lot next to the Police Station, and a public lot on Freeman Street.

Another four acres is parking for the former Shaw's Plaza shopping area (recently renamed Town Center) to the north of the SDRP Study Area. The remainder is divided among various landowners.

A review of parking requirements within the Town's zoning bylaw shows a high requirement for parking – three spaces per single-family or two-family dwelling unit, one space per dwelling unit in a lodging house, and in a multifamily building, two spaces per one-bedroom unit, three spaces per two-bedroom unit and four spaces per unit with three or more bedrooms. These parking requirements are very high as shown in the Table below.

USE	STOUGHTON ZONING	RECOMMENDED[1]
Single-family and Two-family	3 per dwelling unit	2 per dwelling unit
Multifamily		
Single Bedroom Unit	2	1.5
Two Bedroom Unit	3	2
Three Bedrooms or More	4	2

Residents who use the commuter rail to travel to their jobs will still need cars, but developments for multi-family and mixed residential/commercial uses near public transit tend to need fewer parking spaces per dwelling unit than the amounts under "Recommended" in the table above.

While parking is needed to support retail, office, residential and transit uses, **the amount of land dedicated to parking and driveways (about 30 acres) is excessive with respect to both the amount of land dedicated to buildings (about 18.5 acres) and the amount of land coverage allowed by the zoning regulations. For this reason, the SDRP Study Area qualifies as a Decadent Area under the statutory definition.**

[1] *Planning and Urban Design Standards*, American Planning Association, John Wiley & sons, Inc. (2006) 246.

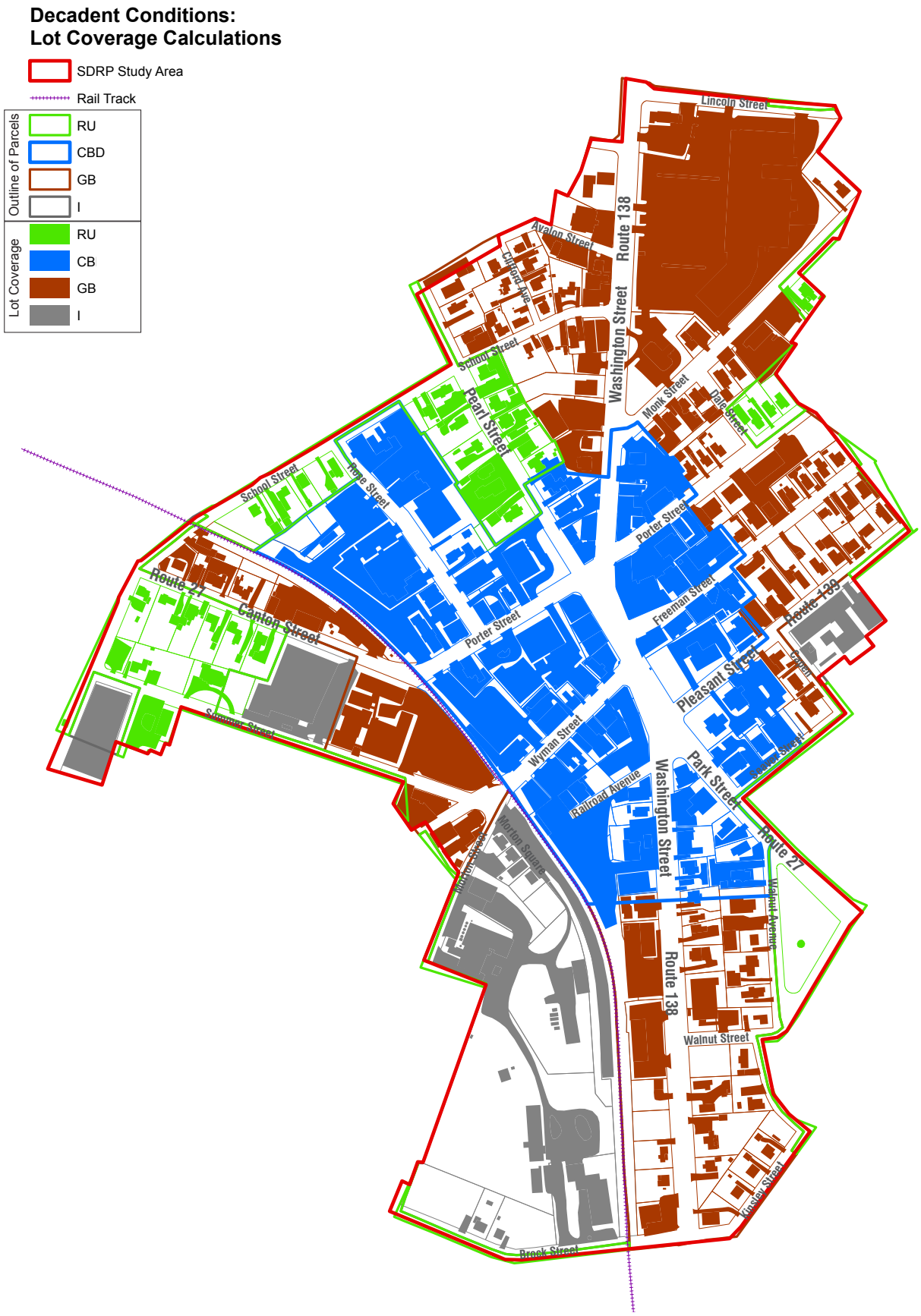

Figure 8: Basis for Lot Coverage Calculations

PARCELIZATION

Another condition that must be met before defining an area as either a blighted open area or a Decadent Area is whether the subdivision of land into parcels is faulty, irregular or obsolete. There are several ways to consider whether the subdivisions of land is faulty or irregular:

- Are the parcels in a regular shape that is easily developable?
- Do all of the parcels front onto a public way?
- Are the parcels large enough to be easily developed or redeveloped in ways that are appropriate to the area?

Irregular Shape

An examination of Figure 9 shows a number of irregularly shaped parcels. Although an irregular parcel may be built upon, the arrangement of structure(s) and related parking tends to be inefficient. For example, the triangular lots, such as 24, 132, 110, 197, 223, and 243 must consider how to address each street and how to incorporate parking. The building on 197 faces the square with parking behind; the building on 24 is L-shaped; the building on 110 does not have its own parking.

The block sizes and shapes are also irregular in nature and are a result of the configuration of Routes 27, 138 and 139 and the footprint of the rail line and associated rights-of-way.

Frontage

Figure 10 shows parcels which do not have frontage on a public way. Parcels 81, 82, 53, and 54 front onto a parking lot, not a public way. 53 and 54 have common ownership with the parking lot; 81 and 82 do not. Parcels 192, 231, 232, and 235 are only accessible from adjacent properties; they do not have frontage on a public way. Lots 233 and 234 have access to the street and provide access to other parcels but also include the rail right-of-way and track. Parcels 6 and 217 have minimal access to a public way, but not frontage. The lack of frontage means that the parcels cannot be developed in their present configuration under the Subdivision Control Act; they would have to be assembled with parcels that do have access on a public way. Parcels 6 and 235 are among the ten parcels in the SDRP Study Area that are over an acre in size.

Size

Several parcels are unbuildable due to their size, including 1, 184, 196, 217, and 270. Some of these are paved and used as parking for uses on adjacent lots.

The minimum lot sizes in the SCMUOD are 10,000 square feet in Area A and 7,000 square feet in Area B. For those parcels within the SDRP Study Area that fall outside the SCMUOD, the CBD district allows parcels with a minimum size of 2,500 square feet; the GB district allows parcels of 10,000 square feet; and the I district has a minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet. The minimum lot size for RU depends on the use and ranges from 25,000 square feet (single-family dwelling) to 35,000 square feet (any other use). Some of the parcels within the SDRP Study Area are non-conforming under existing zoning. These parcels identified in white on Figures 11-15 do not meet the minimum requirements for the zoning districts listed on each figure.

The presence of parcels and blocks of an irregular shape, a lack of frontage, and smaller sizes of the parcels relative to the minimum lot sizes required by zoning contribute to defining the SDRP Study Area as a Decadent Area.

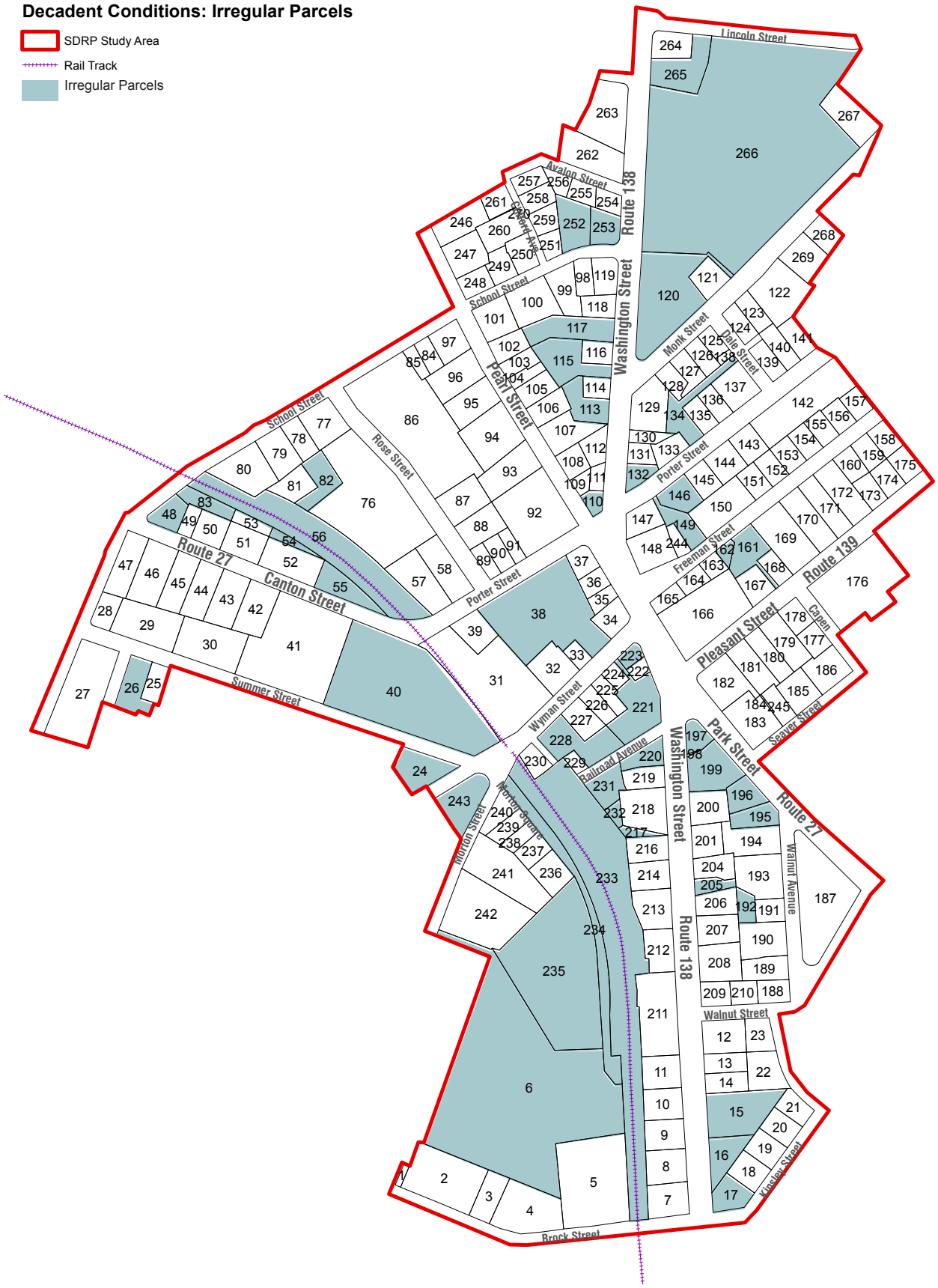

Figure 9: Irregular Parcels

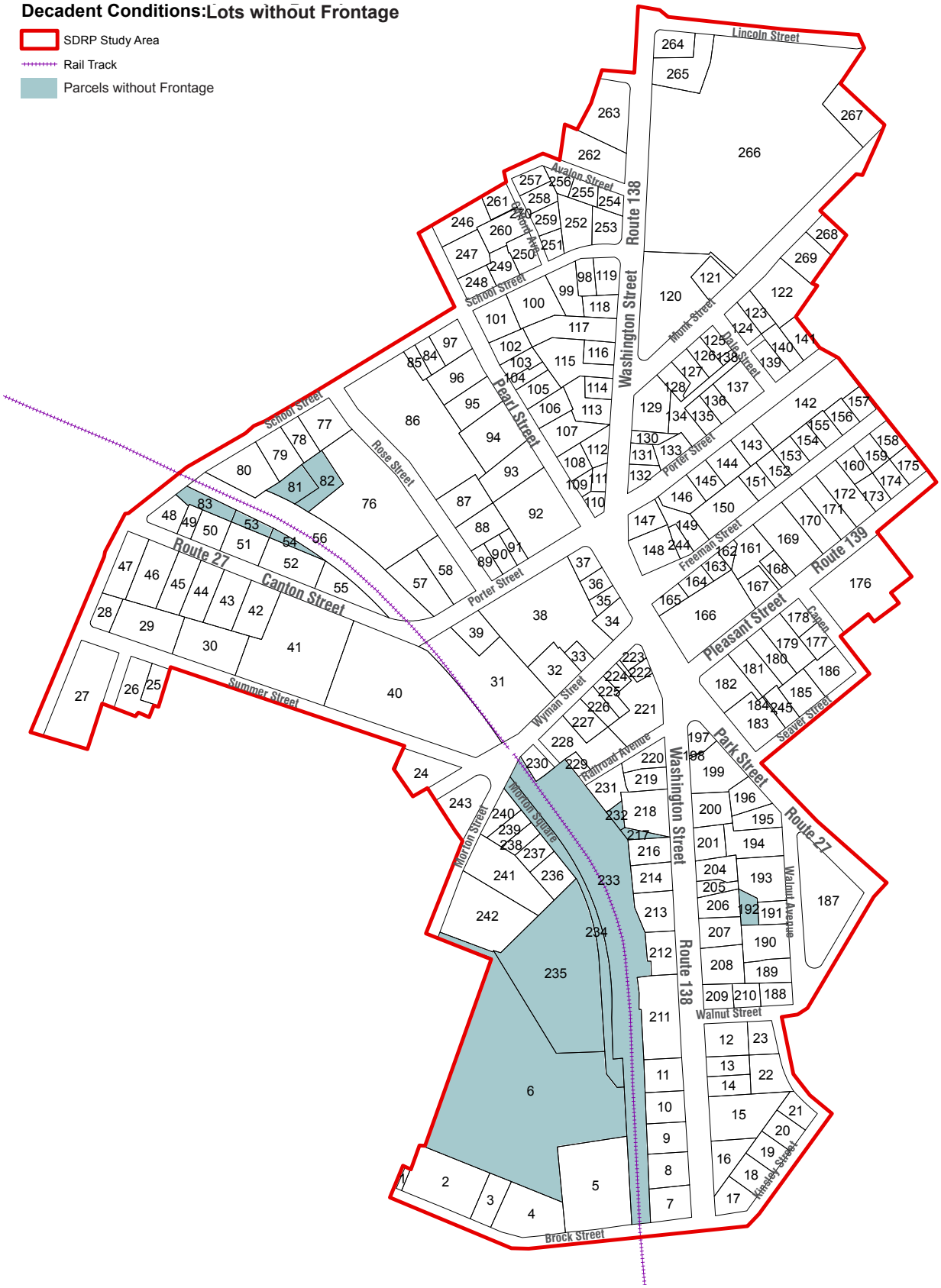

Figure 10: Lots without Frontage

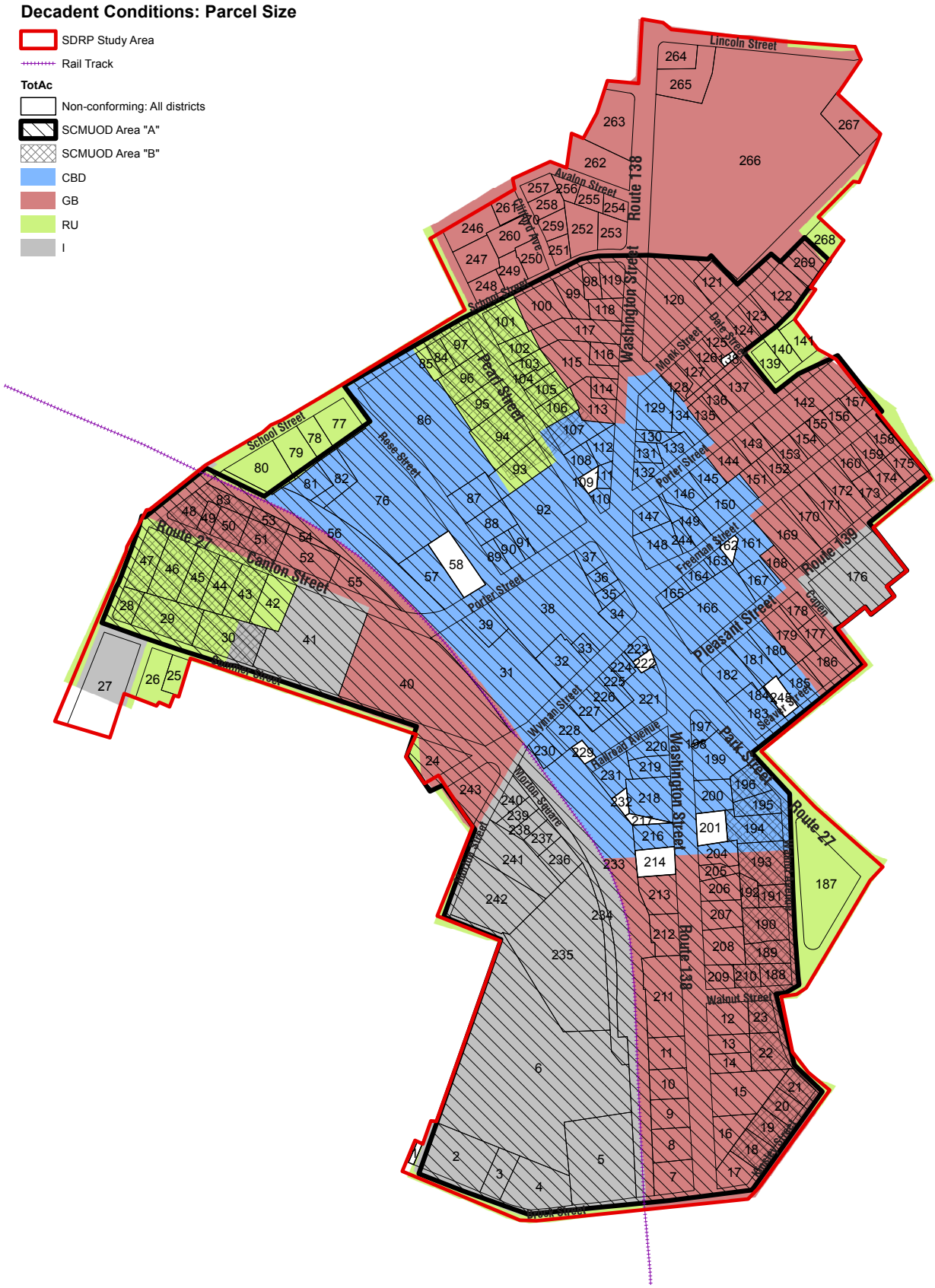

Figure 11: Non-conforming Lots in all Districts: Under 2,500 Square Feet

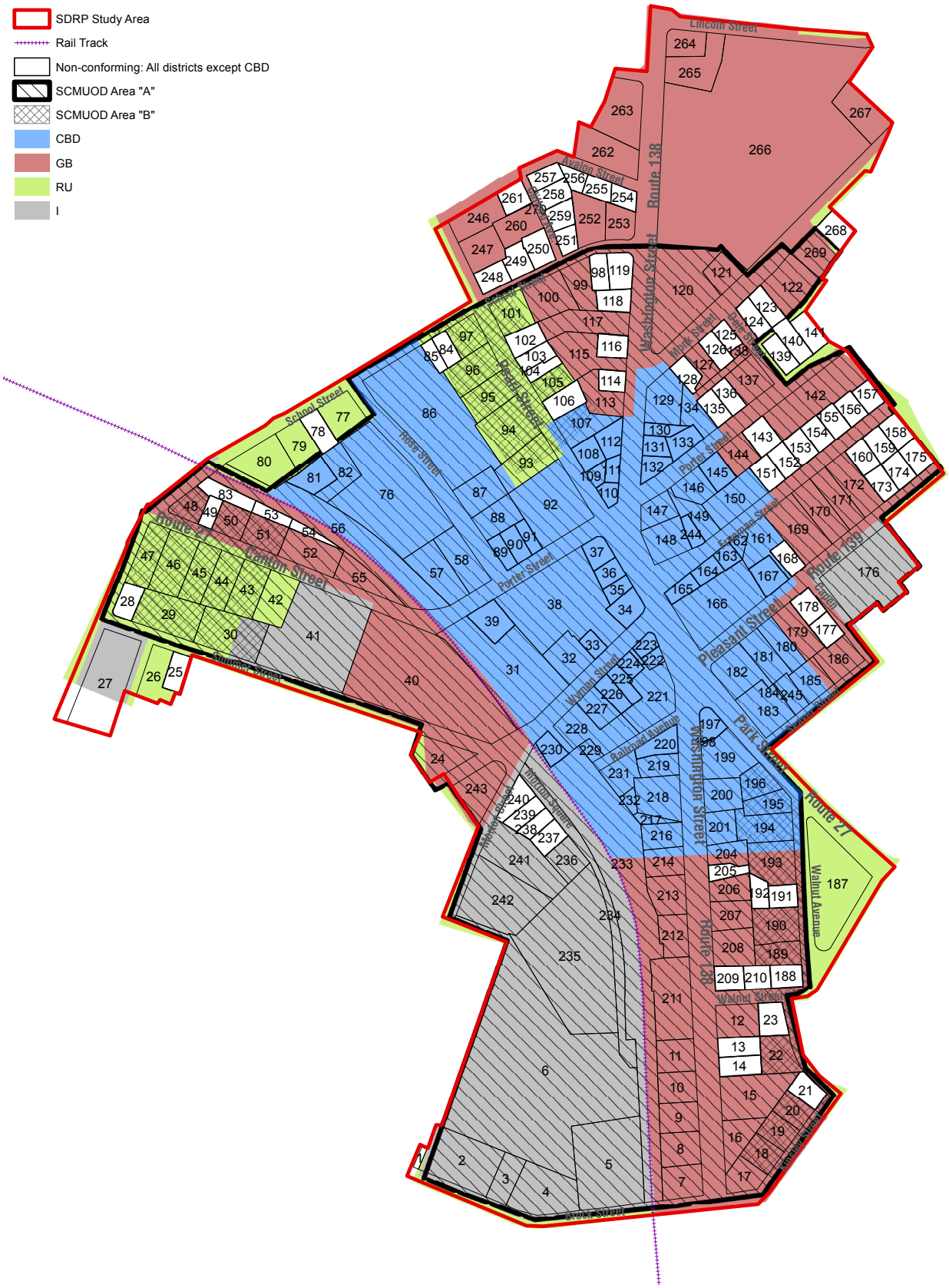

Figure 12: Non-conforming Lots in SCMUOD A and B and the RU, GB, and I Districts: Under 7,000 Square Feet

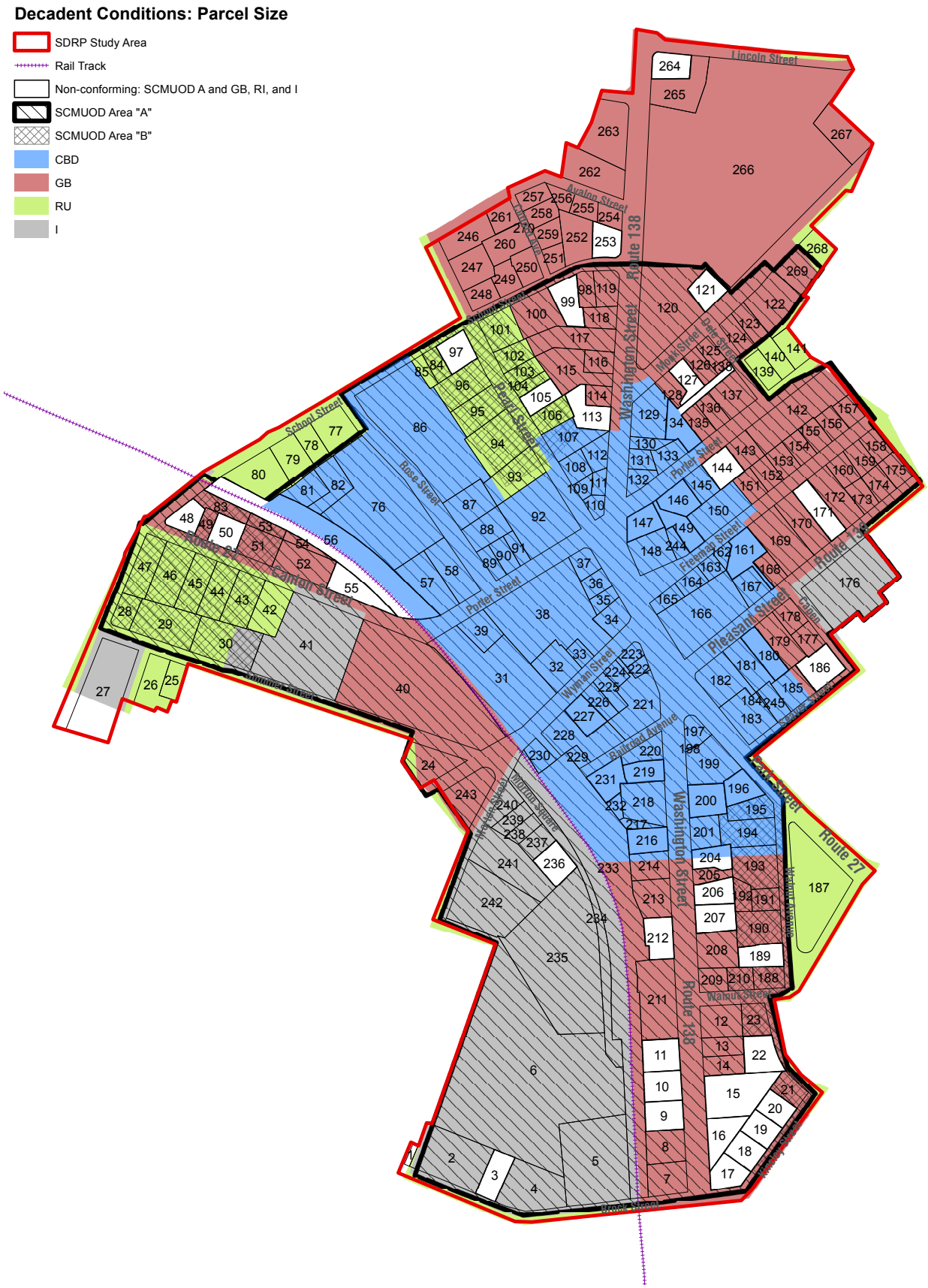

Figure 13: Non-conforming Lots in SCMUOD A and the RU, GB, and I Districts: Under 10,000 Square Feet

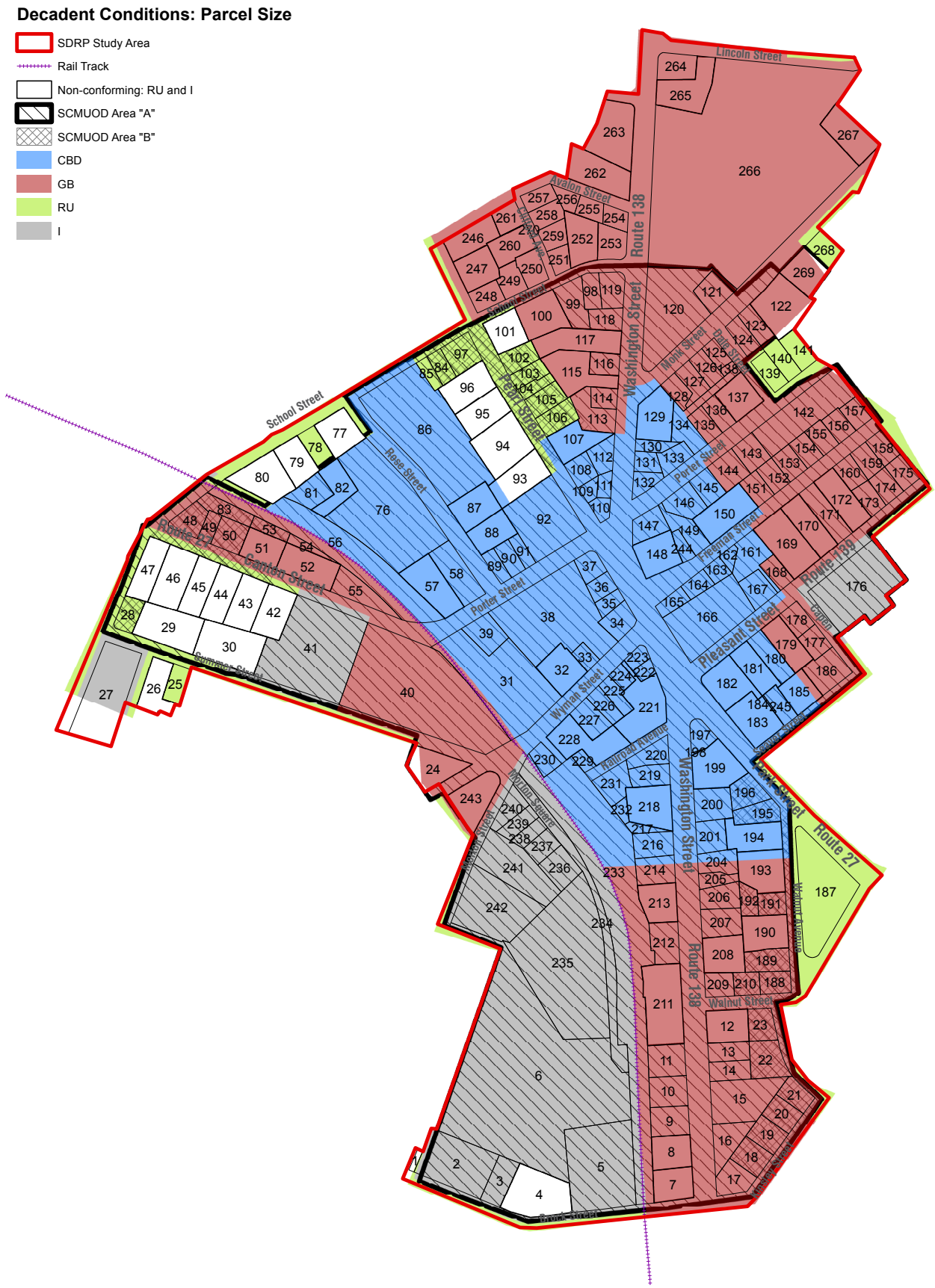

Figure 14:Non-conforming Lots in the RU and I Districts: Under 25,000 Square Feet

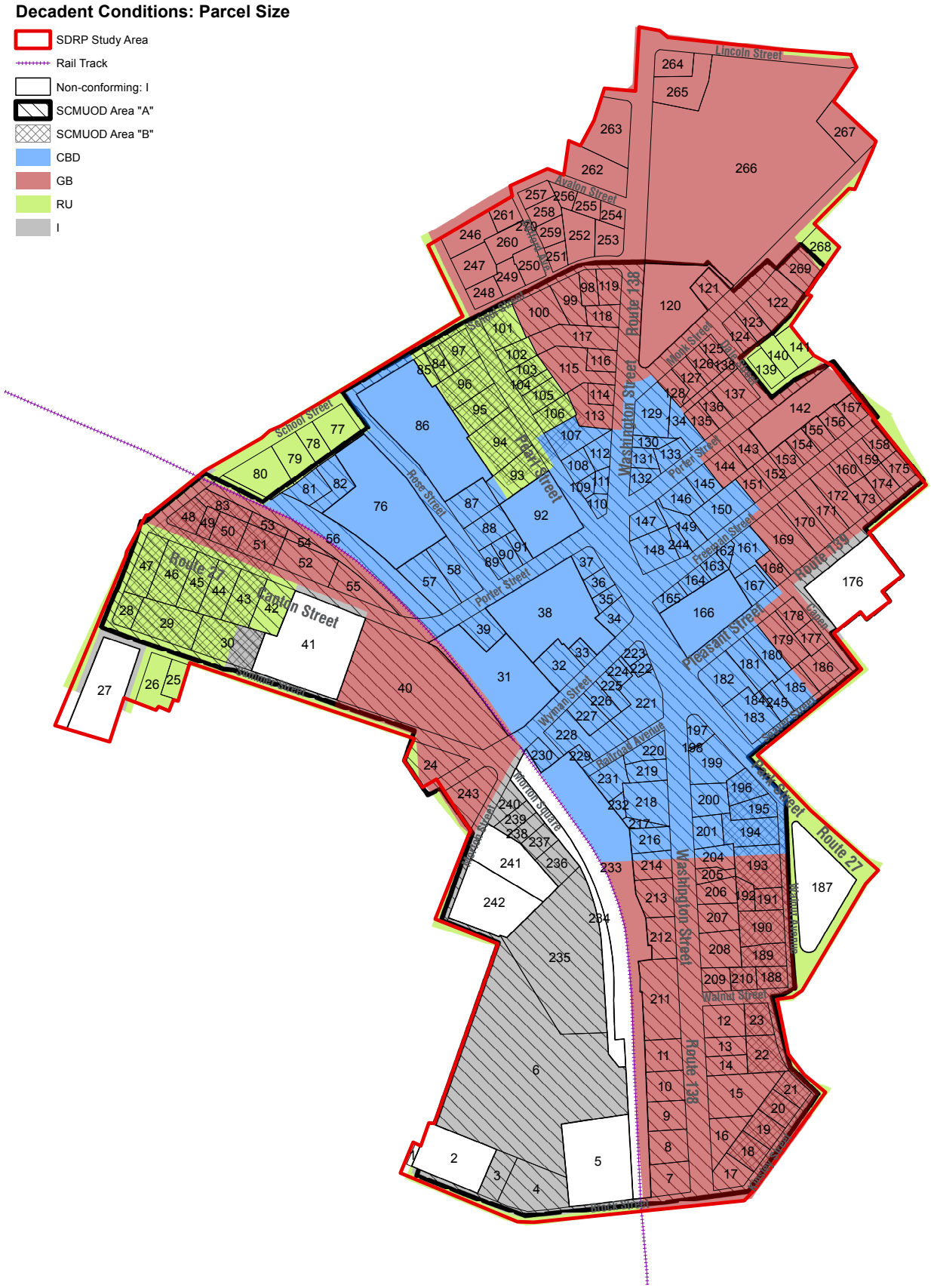

Figure 15: Non-conforming Lots in the I District: Under 80,000 Square Feet

OWNERSHIP

Diversity of ownership is the final criterion in the land use evaluation of this report used for determination of whether the SDRP Study Area is a Decadent Area.

In the SDRP Study Area, a number of parcels are owned in common ownership. Figure 16 to the right is based on information from the database maintained by the Assessor's Office of the Town of Stoughton. Some of the parcels are held in trust; but have similarities in the names of the owners and/or trustees. Some of the parcels may have changed in ownership since this data was collected.

The purpose of Figure 16 is to provide a sense of where ownership clusters are located. The majority of the parcels within the SDRP Study Area are held in individual ownership; that is, the owner(s) of one parcel do not appear to own another parcel. Some parcels are in common ownership for the purposes of providing parking on one parcel for a use on the adjacent parcel. Parcels 212 and 213, parcels 133, 134 and 135, and parcels 115 and 116 are examples of this.

In some cases, the clusters of land are fully built out or are unlikely to change in the near term – Town Hall, the Stoughton Housing Authority, the various cultural and fraternal clubs, and NYNEX are under such ownership. Other parcels, such as 5, 6, 235, 241, 242 and the commuter parking owned by the MBTA may shift in ownership and land use as conditions in the SDRP Study Area change. For example, the proposed South Coast Rail expansion may create a demand for certain types of transit-oriented development; in turn, this demand may be an incentive for property owners to explore other uses and densities on their properties. This proposed expansion may also reduce the number of commuter parking spaces required for the Stoughton stop as additional stations will be added to the south; existing parking areas may be consolidated and some of that land may be available for new development.

However, the present diversity of ownership makes effective redevelopment more difficult – such a condition is a component of a Decadent Area.

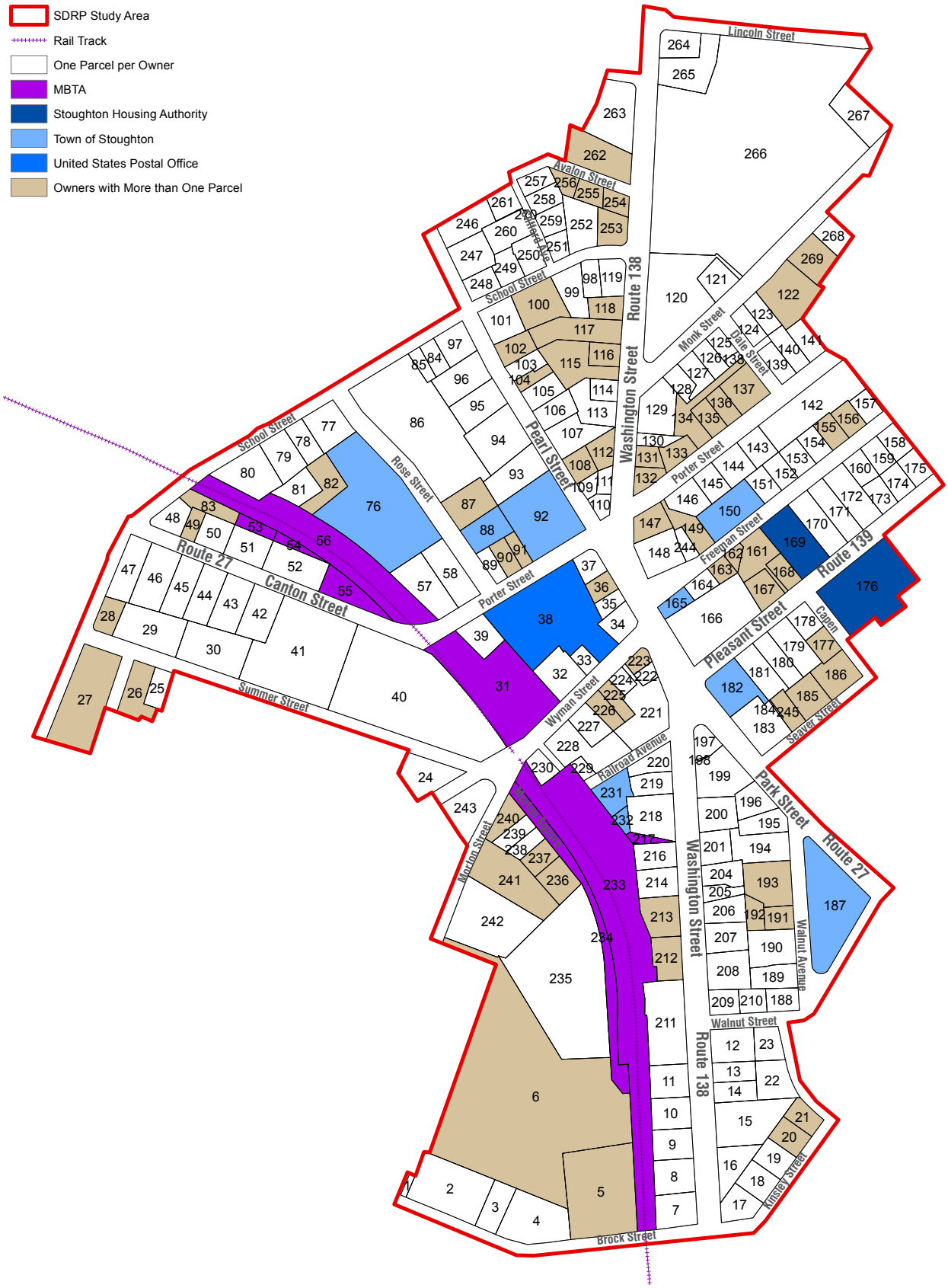

Figure 16: Clusters of Ownership

Infrastructure

Infrastructure conditions in the SDRP Study Area vary significantly between surficial components (pavement, curbing, sidewalks, etc.) and underground components (water, sewer, drainage, gas). Surficial elements were generally in fair to good condition including the main thoroughfares (Route 138, Route 27). Poor conditions, including roadway pavement cracking, inadequate sidewalks and inadequate curbing, were observed on eight secondary roads and were considered to be in blighted condition due to the inadequacy of the infrastructure for pedestrian and or vehicular circulation. The condition of underground water, sewer and drainage infrastructure was largely found to be in poor to fair condition. Poor condition of water and sewer infrastructure is due to the age of pipes and the corresponding materials of construction.

Additional information is required to determine if the aged underground infrastructure constitutes blighted conditions. The adequacy of water system fire flows and the reliability of sewer collection pipes can be more accurately determined through additional field testing and investigations as described in the following sections. The condition of the drainage system is also largely unknown and would require field investigation to determine any blighted conditions.

ROADWAYS

Surficial infrastructure elements including roadway pavement, roadway shoulders, sidewalks, curbing and drainage castings within the SDRP Study Area public rights of way were **generally found to be in fair to good condition.** Streets in fair to good condition had minor to moderate pavement cracking, curbing with adequate reveal, adequate sidewalks, and sufficient drainage inlets.

Primary roads including Routes 27, 138 and 139 were generally in good condition with minor to moderate cracking and minor stormwater runoff ponding along the gutter lines on Park Street (Route 27) and the central portion of Washington Street (Route 138).

Approximately 20% of the observed surficial infrastructure was perceived to be inadequate for pedestrian and vehicular traffic circulation and considered to be in blighted conditions. These blighted conditions were generally located on secondary roads. Major deficiencies including severe cracking and significant patching of pavement, ineffective curbing (berms, inadequate reveal or absence of curbing), severe stormwater runoff ponding caused by lack of drainage inlet structures, broken drainage castings, and lack of any sidewalk. Blighted conditions were observed on Summer Street, School Avenue, Avalon Street. Clifford Avenue, Dale Street, Freeman Street, Morton Square and Voses Court. **Sidewalks on several streets in this area do not comply with the requirements of the Architectural Access Board (AAB).**

Moderate Cracking on Washington Street (Route 138)

Dale Street - Significant cracking/ patching, no sidewalk, ponding

Additionally, although the sidewalk surfaces on several streets were in fair or good physical condition, driveway aprons and wheelchair ramps are, for the most part, noncompliant with current AAB standards. These streets include Canton Street, Kinsley Street, Park Street, Pearl Street, Railroad Avenue, Walnut Avenue, Washington Street, and Wyman Street.

UNDERGROUND INFRASTRUCTURE

Water[1]

Water in the SDRP Study Area is supplied by the Town of Stoughton Water Department groundwater wells with backup supplies from the MWRA. The SDRP Study Area water infrastructure consists of water distribution mains ranging in size from 2-inch diameter to 16-inch diameter. Pipe materials include unlined cast iron (CI), cement lined cast iron (CICL) and ductile iron (DI). **The water infrastructure is generally in poor condition throughout the SDRP Study Area due to the pipe age, size and material.**

Water main design life varies based on installation conditions, soils and other environmental factors but is commonly in the range of 50 to 75 years. Approximately 70% of the water mains in the SDRP Study Area were installed in the 1920s and are considered to be beyond their design life and therefore prone to maintenance issues such as repair of breaks or leaks. Additionally, all pipe beyond its useful design life is constructed of unlined cast iron which is a material prone to build up of tuberculation inside the pipe which limits the pipe flow capacity.

Approximately 60% of the water mains in the SDRP Study Area are 2-inch through 6-inch diameter which may be inadequate for fire flow requirements. As a recent fire flow study for this areas is not available, flow tests should be performed and compared to required flows prior to any determination of fire flow adequacy. Hydrant fire flow requirements should be determined at a minimum by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) and the Stoughton Fire Department. Flow and pressure requirements for fire protection systems within specific buildings should be determined by registered fire protection engineers.

Water mains on Canton Street, Porter Street, Park Street and the northern half of Washington Street were installed between 1970 and 2001 and were considered in fair to good condition. These more recently installed water mains are constructed of cement lined cast iron or ductile iron which are less susceptible to tuberculation.

Sewer[1]

Sewer infrastructure in the SDRP Study Area consists of gravity mains ranging in size from 8-inch to 15-inch. Pipe materials included vitrified clay (VC) and Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC). T**he sewer infrastructure was generally in fair to poor condition due to the age and material of the sewer pipes.**

Sewer pipe design life varies, but similarly to water pipes is generally in the range of 50 to 75 years. Approximately 40% of the gravity sewer mains in the SDRP Study Area were constructed in the 1930s and are likely beyond their intended design life. VC sewer pipes in this age range are prone to degradation including cracking, holes, offset joints, root intrusion, and other structural issues. These issues can continue to exacerbate and may eventually cause a sewer collapse requiring immediate repair. They also likely contribute to infiltration of groundwater into the sewer system during wet weather or high groundwater.

Drainage[2]

The drainage infrastructure condition is largely unknown within the SDRP Study Area and the Town is currently undertaking a drainage mapping and analysis effort. There are no Low Impact Development (LID) drainage system components currently and high intensity rain events have frequently caused ponding and street flooding in the past. Based on the age of drainage castings, lack of available data, historical street flooding during high intensity rains events, and lack of LID components, it is reasonable to

[1]Based on Stoughton GIS shapefiles provided by Stoughton Engineering Department on 1/7/2015

[2]Based on 12/17/14 meeting with Stoughton DPW Director John Batchelder

conclude that **the drainage infrastructure within the SDRP Study Area is overall in poor condition.**

Gas

Natural gas is supplied to the SDRP Study Area by Columbia Gas Company. There are no known cast iron gas mains in the SDRP Study Area and the gas infrastructure is considered to be in good condition.

Cable/Fiber Optic

High speed cable/internet provided by Comcast and fiber optic communications (FiOS) provided by Verizon is available throughout the SDRP Study Area.

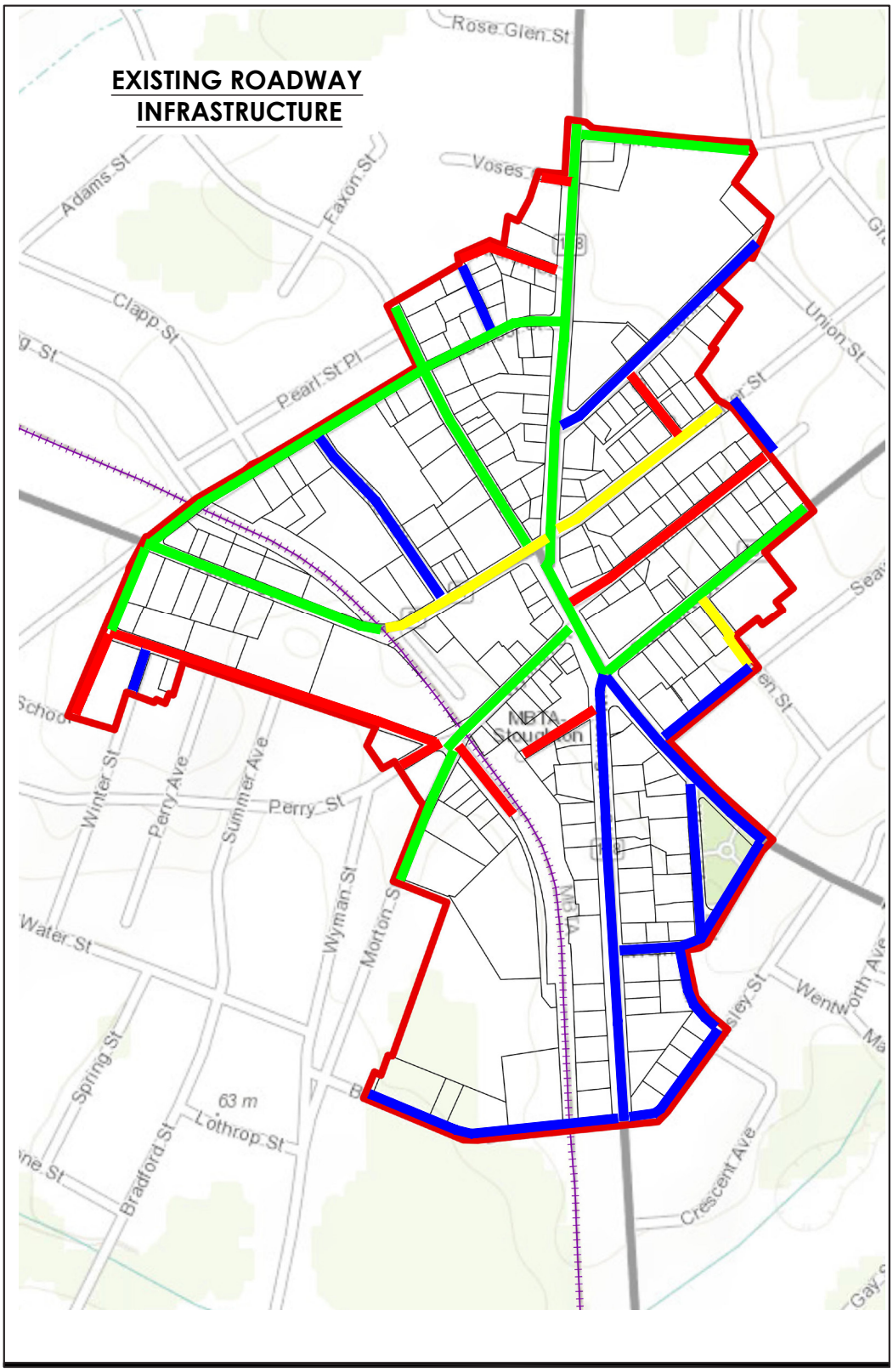

Figure 17: Roadways

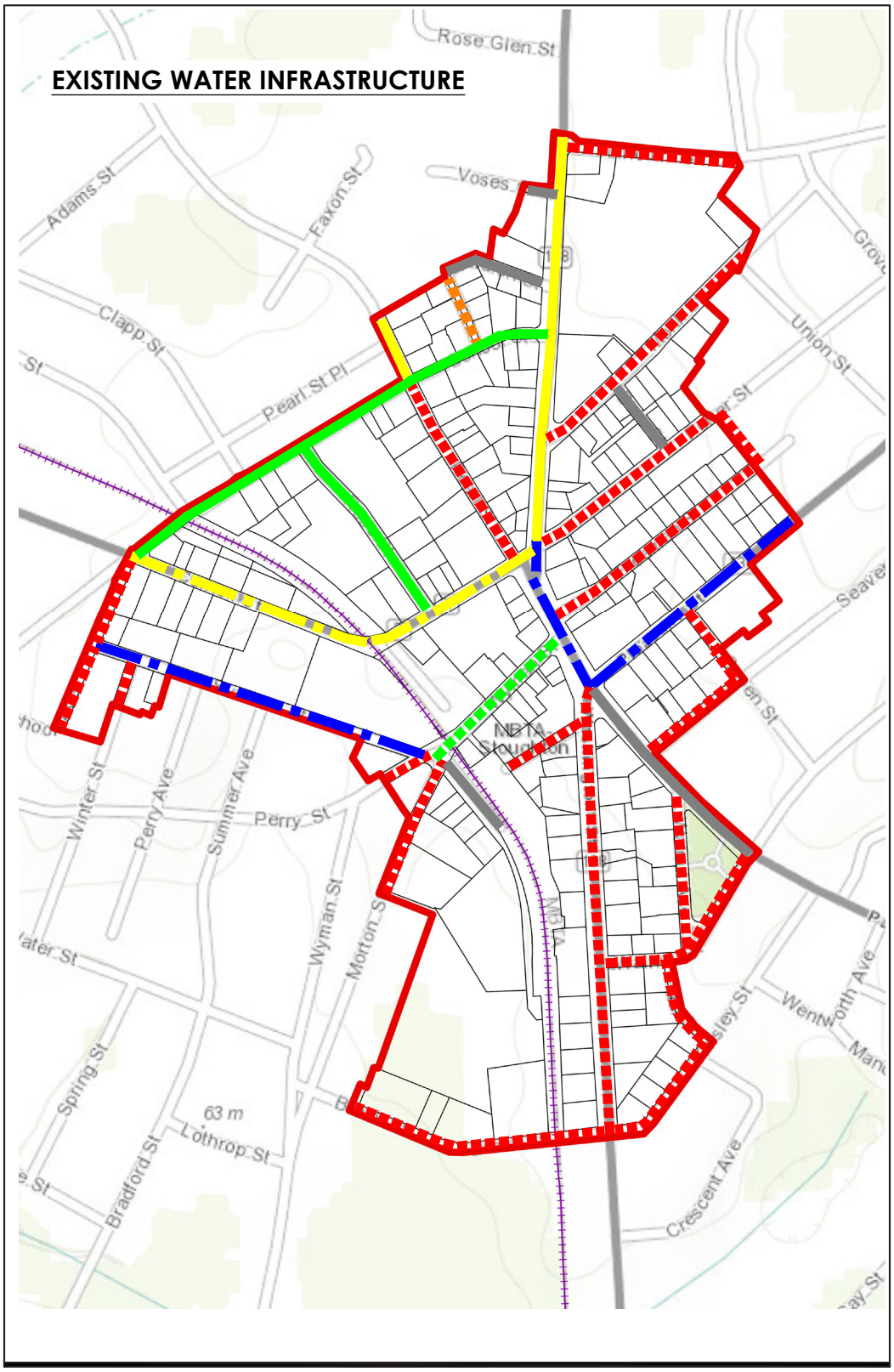

Figure 18: Water

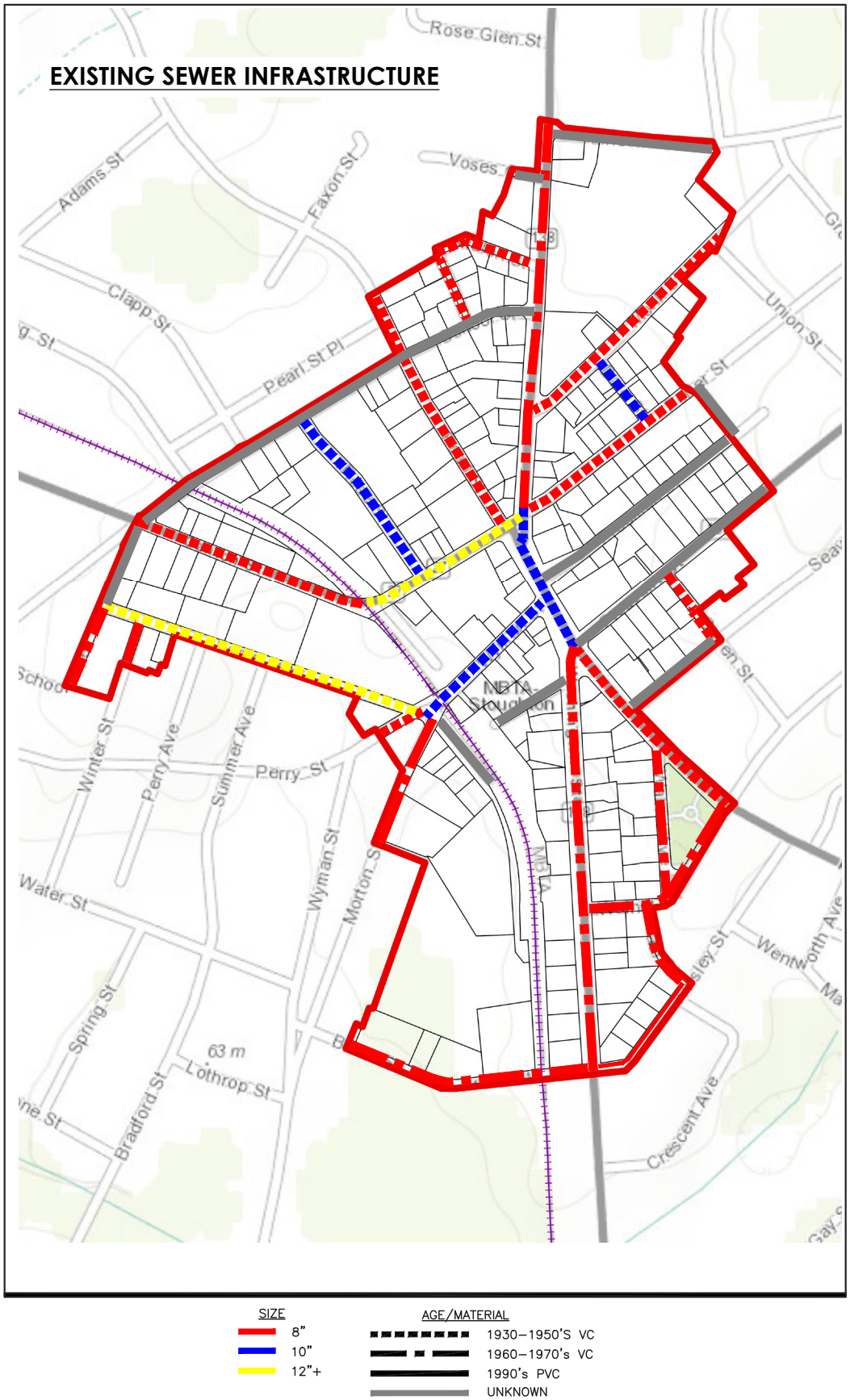

Figure 19: Sewer

STOUGHTON DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
Existing Conditions Memorandum

3. OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND CONSTRAINTS ON DEVELOPMENT

3. OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND CONSTRAINTS ON DEVELOPMENT

Land Use: Opportunities and Constraints

The opportunities and constraints on development within the SDRP Study Area are affected by existing regulatory requirements, current land uses, valuations and vacancies, and the design characteristics of the buildings and land. In some cases, the existing conditions also have implications for elements of the Redevelopment Plan, including recommendations for zoning changes and the draft design guidelines and design review process.

ZONING

The SDRP Study Area contains four zoning districts and one overlay district (which is divided into two parts) as shown on Figure 20:

- Residential Urban (RU)
- Central Business District (CBD)
- General Business (GB)
- Industrial (I)
- Stoughton Center Mixed-Use Overlay District (SCMUOD) A and B

While all of the SCMUOD is within the SDRP Study Area, not all of the parcels within the SDRP Study Area are within the SCMUOD. The SCMUOD regulations refer to the underlying zoning – for building coverage, for example – and thus it is important to be aware of the requirements of both the SCMUOD and the underlying zoning district. This can create some confusion for property and business owners, or future developers.

The uses and dimensional standards for all five zoning districts are provided in Appendix B. A few differences among the dimensional standards, uses, and other zoning regulations that may affect redevelopment within the SCMUOD are noted here.

Dimensional Standards

Understanding the variation in dimensional standards is important because building height, setbacks from property lines, and lot coverage requirements affect the density of the area and thus what can and cannot be developed on a lot.

- MAXIMUM HEIGHT – The height requirements are consistent at a maximum height of 40 feet for all but the RU District, which has a slightly lower maximum of 35 feet.
- MINIMUM LOT AREA – The SCMUOD controls the lot area in most of the district with a minimum of 10,000 square feet in Area A and 7,000 square feet in Area B.
    * New development under these standards would increase density in the I and RU Districts, which currently have minimum lot areas of 80,000 square feet and 35,000 square feet, respectively. (RU has a lower minimum of 25,000 Square feet for single-family homes only).
    * The GB District is consistent with the SCMUOD "A" minimum of 10,000 square feet.
    * The CBD district only requires 2,500 square feet; more than one parcel would need to be assembled to allow new development under the requirements of the SCMUOD.
        - Parcels 198, 217, 222, 229, and 232 are non-conforming under CBD as they are smaller than 2,500 square feet.
        - Parcels that do conform under CBD do not conform under the SCMUOD if they are smaller than 10,000 square feet. Parcels 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 89, 90, 91, 109, 110, 111, 130, 131, 132, 147, 165, 197, 220, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, and 230 – in summary, most of the parcels within the core of the current business district are non-conforming under the SCMUOD.

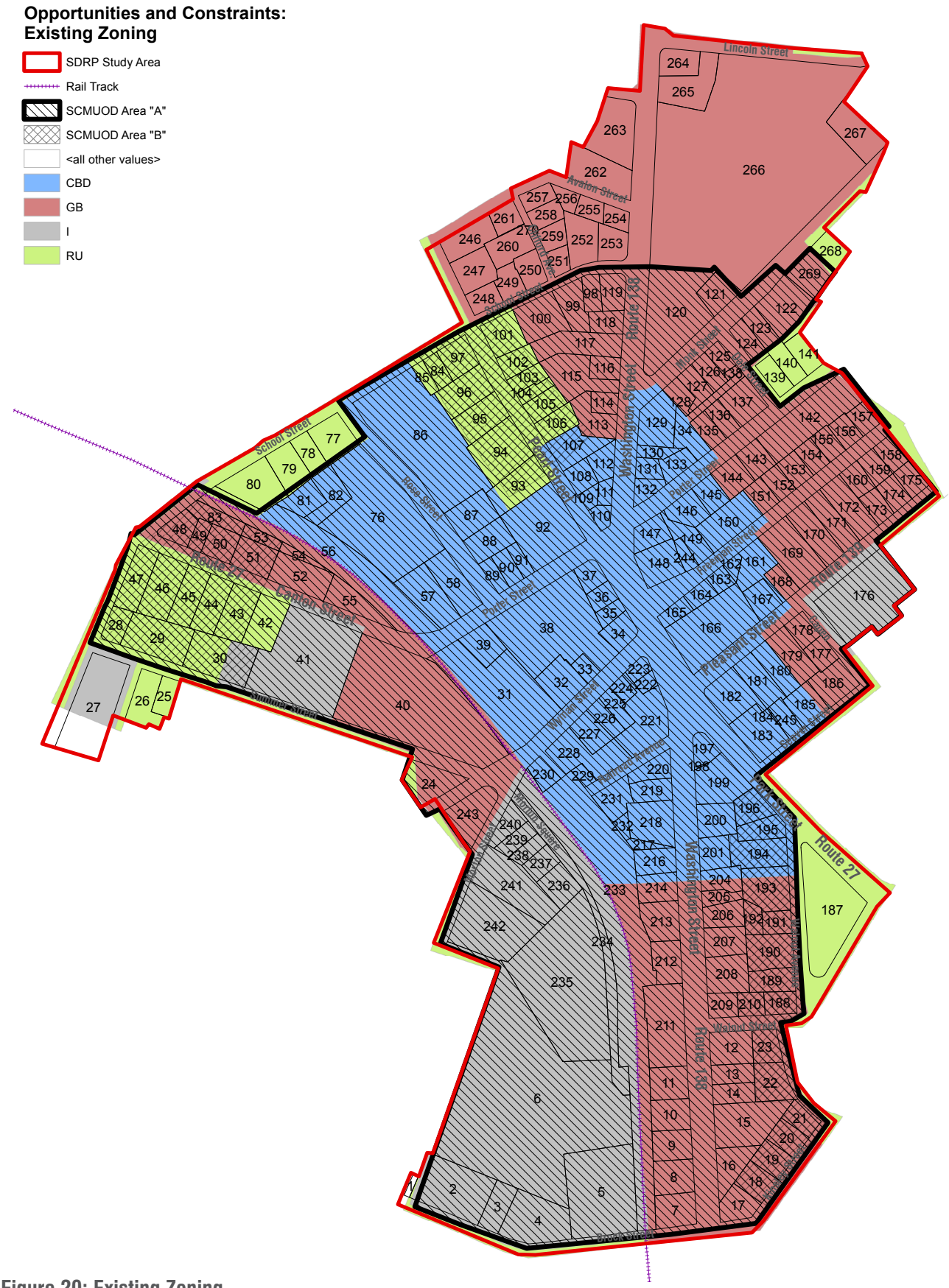

Figure 20: Existing Zoning

    - The minimum lot size requirements for CBD, GB, and SCMUOD A and B are all smaller than one-third of an acre or about 14,375 square feet. This is important, because fit studies preformed by The Cecil Group for other projects suggest that the minimum number of square feet needed for a parcel for a mixed use project would be one-third of an acre. A lot of this size would allow a building with retail on the ground floor, a story or two of residential above, and sufficient parking on-site to meet the needs of those uses.
- MAXIMUM BUILDING COVERAGE AND MINIMUM OPEN SPACE – The building coverage and open space requirements are discussed in detail in *Section 2. Evidence of Decadent Conditions*. The limits of the underlying zone apply; the SCMUOD does not have a separate requirement that would replace the standards of the underlying zoning. The implications for future development include whether these underlying requirements work with the SCMUOD restrictions on setbacks to allow for new development with sufficient on-site parking, especially given the odd lot sizes and shapes found throughout the SDRP Study Area.
- MINIMUM YARDS – The setbacks from front, side, and rear lot lines vary within the SCMUOD depending on the underlying district and the proximity of the lot to residential zoning districts or uses. The intent is to protect residential uses from adjacent uses that may not be fully compatible; however, this requirement should be reviewed with respect to plans to introduce mixed-use residential and to develop better curb appeal and convivial space for a higher urban residential density throughout the SDRP Study Area.

Uses

Although the SCMUOD includes all uses that are allowable in the underlying districts, it has some specific prohibitions and special use provisions for ground floor uses not found in the other districts. These include the following, taken directly from the Town's zoning regulations:

- Ground floors of buildings fronting streets or public access ways shall be reserved for commercial uses except as specified below
- Dwelling units may be on the ground floor of buildings where
    - The building is set behind another building which has commercial uses on the ground floor
    - The residential portion of the first floor of a building is set behind street-front retail/office/restaurant uses within the same building
    - At the discretion of the Planning Board if the residential use will not have an adverse effect on the continuity of other commercial street front uses
- Ground floor uses in Area B are limited to professional offices

The purpose of these ground floor use regulations, and of the specific prohibitions listed in Appendix B, are to encourage commercial uses at the ground floor, or pedestrian, level. Commercial uses on the ground floor create active spaces – pedestrians walk through and out of the front entrances, look in windows, and engage with each other as they walk through the downtown.

Not all of the uses allowable in the four underlying zoning districts may be appropriate for the SDRP Study Area, including the following:

- Town Cemetery
- Power plan and sewage treatment plant
- Municipal refuse transfer station
- Construction industry
- Open storage of raw materials

Most of the uses that are less appropriate for a downtown area that is oriented towards mixed-use residential, retail and office are those that are appropriate for industrial land, and a large portion of the SDRP is zoned for industrial use. Further discussion of existing land uses begins on page 50; but part of any proposed zoning change should be to review the current and allowable land uses to ensure consistency with the goals and strategies of the Redevelopment Plan.

Affordable Housing Requirements

The SCMUOD requires 20% of the units in a development of more than five dwelling units to be affordable to moderate income households. The definition of "moderate income" is defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is adopted by the Department of Housing and Community

Development (DHCD) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The affordable units must be part of a program that allows them to be counted towards the statutory requirement for Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws.

HUD defines a low income family as one whose income is less than 80 percent of the median family income and moderate income as "households whose incomes are between 81 percent and 95 percent of the median income for the area, as defined by HUD." Median income is adjusted for family size. Stoughton is in the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH MSA (metropolitan statistical area). the Fiscal Year 2015 median income for this area, as defined by HUD, is $98,500[1]. The income for a low-income, two-person family would be $55,800[1] and for a four-person family it would be $69,700[1]. A moderate income household would have a household income between $78,800 and $93,575.

Of the 10,742 dwelling units in Stoughton counted during the 2010 Census, 1,535 were listed on the Subsidized Housing Inventory maintained by DHCD. This means that 11.2% of the housing stock qualifies as affordable[2], above the State's recommended goal of 10%.

The development of affordable housing is of critical importance in Massachusetts, and particularly in the Greater Boston metropolitan area. However, the requirement for a provision of 20% of units as affordable units may be difficult for a developer to meet given other conditions – for example, irregular parcel size – that are present in the SDRP Study Area. Restrictions, whether physical or regulatory, that increase the cost of development reduce the attractiveness of a particular site to a developer.

The other four zoning districts do not have requirements for affordable housing.

[1] *FY2015 Section 8 Income Limits*, Department of Housing and Urban Development, www.huduser.org/datasets/il.html, accessed April 7, 2015.

[2] *Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SGI)*, Department of Housing and Community Development, December 5, 2014.

Off-Street Parking

Off-street parking requirements include the ability to combine parking for two or more buildings and uses on a single lot or to locate spaces on a separate lot as long as the lot is within 200 feet of the use. The SCMUOD allows shared parking among uses with different use times and a distance of 500 feet between parking and use; the distance must be measured using pedestrian crossings.

The number of parking spaces required varies by use and zoning district. All four of the underlying zoning districts require the following:

USE	SPACES
Single-family and Two-family	3 per dwelling unit
Multifamily	
Single Bedroom Unit	2
Two Bedroom Unit	3
Three Bedrooms or More	4
Lodging House	1 per unit
Theatre, restaurant, church, or similar	1 per each 3 seats

Because of the commuter rail line to Boston, developing multifamily residential within walking distance of the train station is an appropriate redevelopment strategy to consider. Development within a quarter-mile to half-mile walking radius of public transit is often known as Transit-Oriented Development, or TOD. Multi-family developments within these radii typically require fewer parking spaces because residents can travel to work using bus, subway, or commuter rail. The SCMUOD takes into account the commuter rail stop in the Downtown and reduces the parking requirement for one bedroom and studio units to one space per dwelling unit and for two or more bedrooms to 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit. Both require an additional space per ten units for guest parking.

The CBD Zone does not require off-street parking for commercial uses but the other districts do and the SCMUOD refers to the underlying district to determine how much parking should be provided. In general, retail and services require one parking space per 300 gross square feet. **Parking requirements for both residential**

and commercial uses should be reviewed for consistency with the recommendations of the Stoughton Master Plan and the strategies for the Redevelopment Plan.

Design Review/Design Criteria

Design guidelines are an important component of the tools available to the SRA to guide and encourage redevelopment within the SDRP Study Area. The current regulatory requirements include design review and design guidelines for the SCMUOD only.

The Planning Board is responsible for design review of applications for site plan approval within the SCMUOD. The procedures for site plan approval must be followed, with the additional set of design review standards that are used to guide the Planning Board's review. These standards are grouped as follows:

- Scale
- Entrances
- Architectural Details – Existing Historic Buildings
- External Materials and Appearance
- Roof Form
- Signs
- Service Areas, Utilities and Equipment
- Parking Structures
- Sustainable Building Design
- Sustainable Site Design

Implications for future development include evaluating the current design review process. In some municipalities, the Redevelopment Authority has the authority for design review in the redevelopment area, in others, the authority is shared between the Planning Board and the Redevelopment Authority. **These options should be discussed and the roles related to design review clarified.**

The current design standards should be reviewed to see if additional standards are needed and to define the appropriate areas for application. The final redevelopment area could be divided into subareas to preserve or encourage different types of uses.

LAND USES

The current land uses as tracked by the Board of Assessors's office is shown on Figure 21. The codes on the associated list are the Massachusetts state land use codes.

The following are the key colors for reviewing Figure 21 as the use indicated by each color relates to other discussions within this existing conditions report:

- ORANGE – Office and other services
- PINK – Retail, restaurant, and theatre
- GREY – Parking
- WHITE – Undeveloped land
- DEEP PURPLE – MBTA
- BRIGHT BLUE – Municipal
- RED – Auto-oriented
- LIGHT PURPLE – Industrial

The SDRP Study Area is interesting from a land use perspective because it contains a mix of uses. Where a more suburban environment would segregate residential from other uses, and a more urban commercial area would be less likely to have the significant amount of industrial land, Stoughton's downtown provides both a challenge and an opportunity. The precedent for mixed-use development already exists in the SDRP Study Area both horizontally (differing uses that are adjacent to each other) and vertically (different uses in the same building). The challenge is to integrate new development with the existing uses while recognizing that not all of the existing uses are fully compatible with each other. For example, the residential uses on parcels 237, 238, 239, 240 abut industrial uses on parcel 241. Commercial uses are intertwined with residential on Monk, Porter, and Freemen Streets and to a lesser extent on Pleasant Street. In addition, some uses do not conform to current zoning regulations - parcels 6, 218, 235, 242, 253, and 263 may fall into this category.

The location of existing land uses has implications for how the design guidelines in the Redevelopment Plan address the incorporation of mixed-use into the downtown and how development within this area transitions to the single-family neighborhoods that surround the SDRP Study Area.

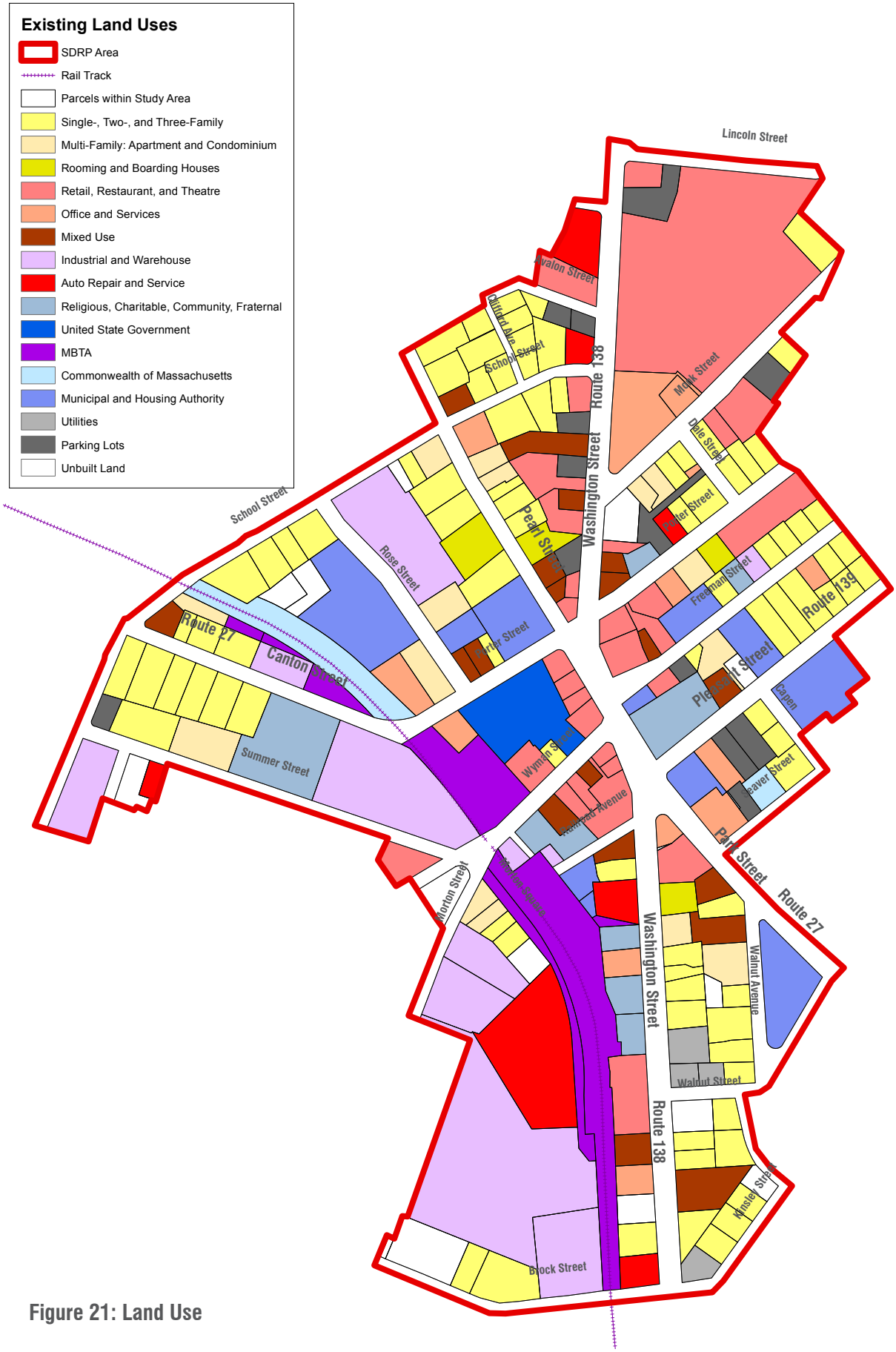

Figure 21: Land Use

VALUATION

The basis for the valuation of properties as shown in Figure 22 begins with data from the Town of Stoughton's Assessors' Office. Assessors' valuations are calculated for the purpose of real estate taxes, and typically lag the market valuations, depending on how often the database is updated.

The average valuation per square foot for buildings and for land within the SDRP Study Area were each calculated. The value per square foot for each building was compared to the average value per square foot for all buildings; the same calculation was made for the land value of each lot. Note that the majority of land is undervalued and the majority of buildings are undervalued.

	AVERAGE ASSESSED VALUE PER SQUARE FOOT	NUMBER OF UNDERVALUED PROPERTIES	PERCENT OF TOTAL PROPERTIES
Land	$13.97	134	54%
Buildings	$48.71	148	66%

Figure 22 shows parcels on which both the building value and the land value are lower than the average for the entre SDRP Study Area.

The larger parcels in the SDRP Study Area are among these undervalued parcels, as is typical, and the mill buildings and other industrial buildings fall into this category. Clusters of other parcels show a lower valuation than average – there is no single land use type that is consistent with lower valuations nor is vacancy an indicator of value.

The purpose of Figure 22 is to show parcels which may be underutilized relative to other parcels in the SDRP Study Area. This data is useful to help identify which land uses are likely to change over time and where possible investment could be concentrated based on market, economic, and regulatory factors.

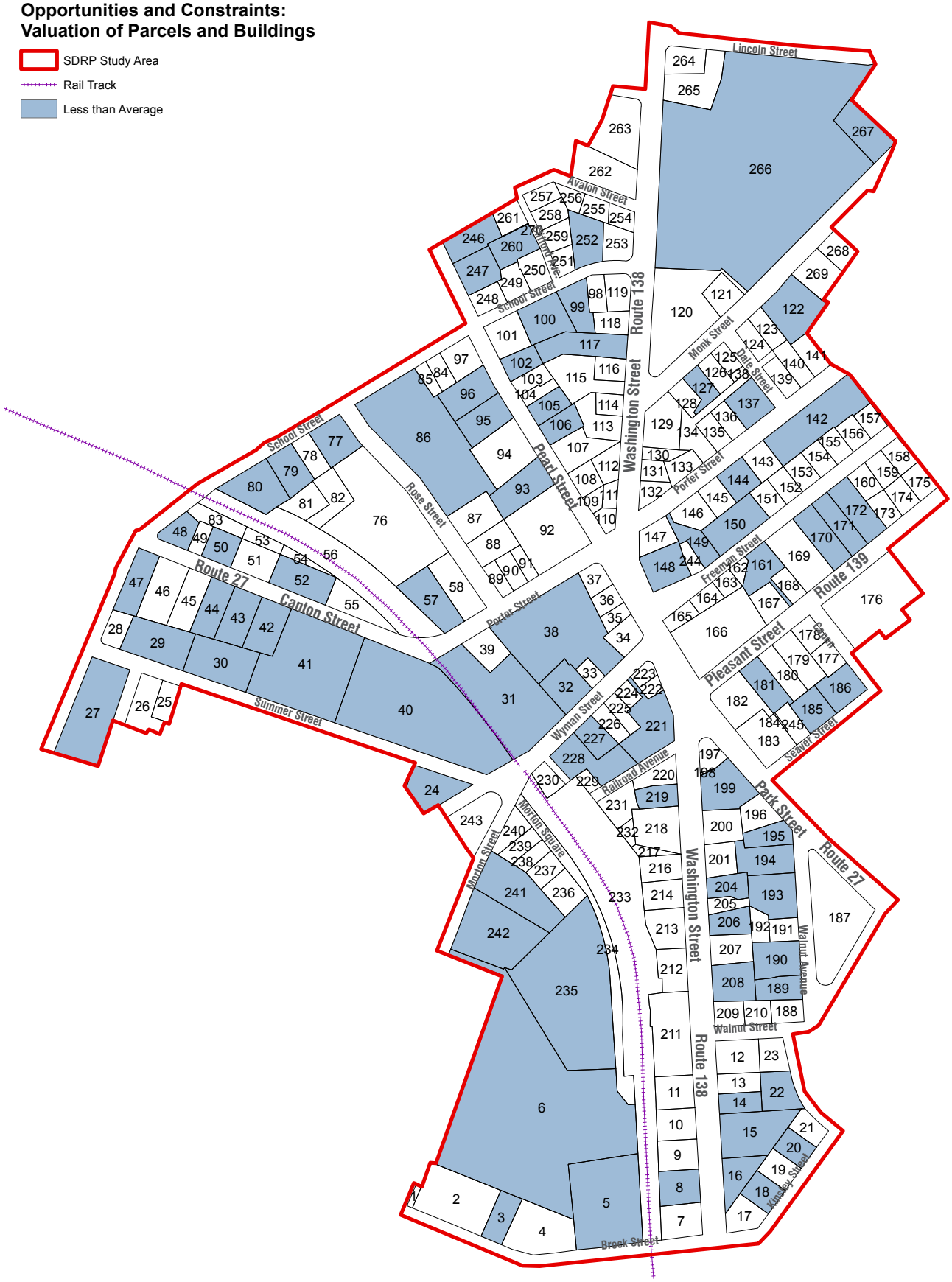

Figure 22: Valuation

VACANCIES

As with undervalued properties, vacant buildings and lots provide an opportunity for investment, provided that the reasons for such vacancies are understood and that market, economic, and regulatory conditions allow for appropriate reinvestment.

A series of site walks in late December 2014 provided the data for Figure 23. The buildings and lots were checked to see whether they were fully or partially vacant, and, for vacant lots, whether the use was parking or some other use.

Many parcels are used for parking – both for commuters using the rail line to Boston or for uses on adjacent properties. One question that will need to be explored is whether the amount of parking is used in the most efficient manner and whether reorganizing available parking could free up space for redevelopment to another use. A very few parcels – 12 and 21 are examples – are used as side yards to the adjacent properties.

From a visual inspection, a significant number of buildings and lots are partially or fully vacant. In the core area of downtown, some buildings with ground floor tenants do not appear to have tenants on the upper floors. Some buildings – 8, 24, and 30 – have for sale signs and appear to be vacant. Three vacancies that have a significant impact on the SDRP Study Area are the State Theatre (on parcel 221), parcel 243, which is now an empty lot, and parcel 230, a former auto parts store. Parcel 129 and 117 are under construction – 129 is a new mixed use building and 117 is a rehabilitation of an existing building. Parcel 148 includes a building that is partly burned down. The Planning Board held a continued public hearing on February 26, 2015 for 21 residential dwelling units located over mixed-use retail/office/restaurant space located at 760-770 Washington Street (Assessors Plan No. 54, Lot 285). The Applicant is the Freeman Street Trust.

Vacancies may be caused by one or more circumstances:

- The economic downturn experienced by the whole country in recent years
- Specific conditions within Stoughton itself that discourage reinvestment, which could include one or more of the following:
    * Regulatory restrictions, such as zoning
    * Public infrastructure in poor condition
    * Lack of parking for non-commuter uses
- Environmental hazards that may require remediation or public intervention
- Property values that are too high to allow lot assembly for larger projects, but too low to encourage reinvestment in an existing building at the current level of demand

The Redevelopment Plan will provide strategies to allow the Town to address these conditions.

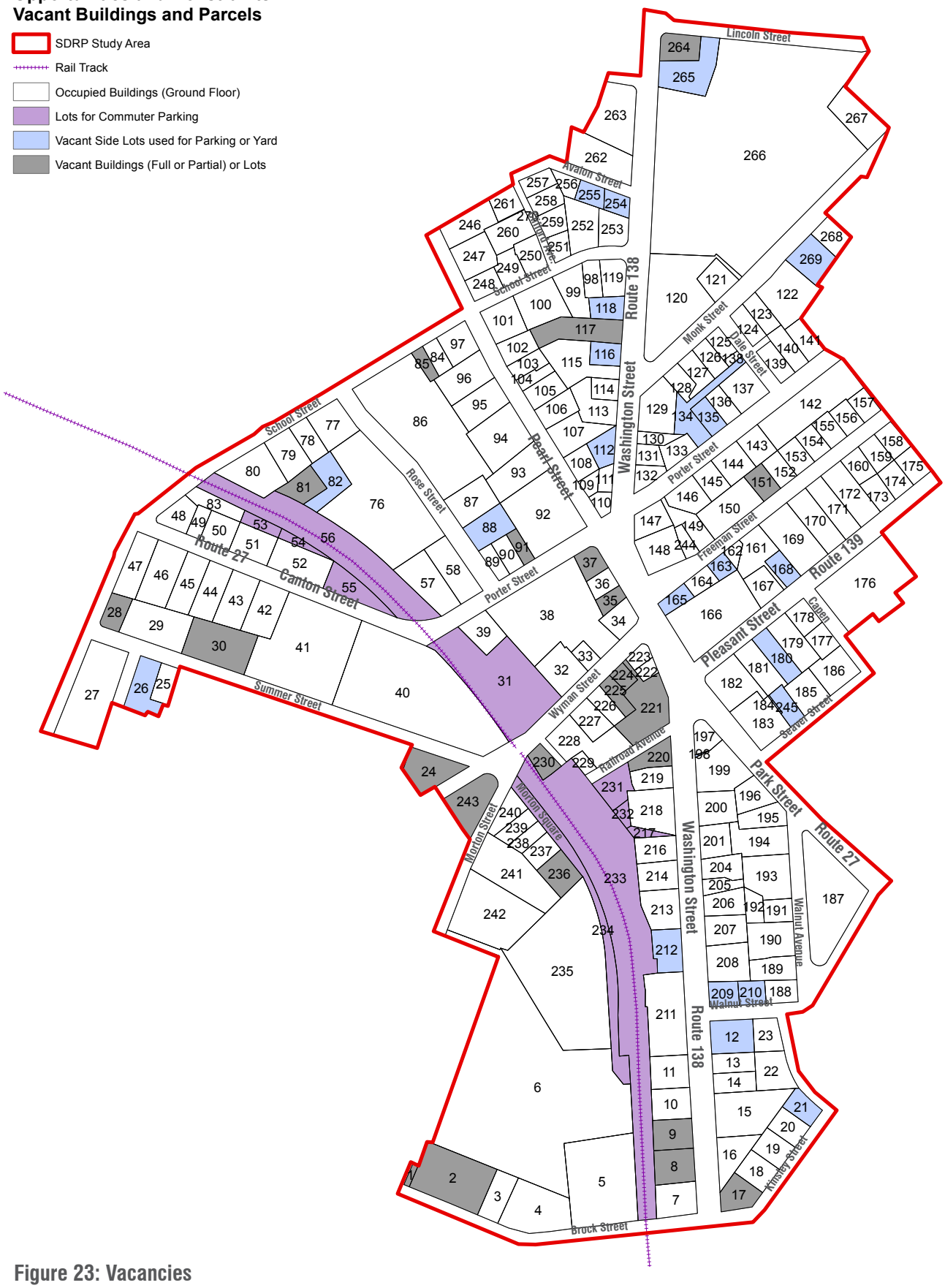

Figure 23: Vacancies

DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

The enabling legislation, M.G.L. Chapter 121B allows a Redevelopment Authority to have a regulatory role within a redevelopment area. This role may include design review, and the design criteria and guidelines for that review would be included in the Redevelopment Plan.

The Redevelopment Plan for the Stoughton Downtown may include recommendations for one or more design characteristics, including, but not limited to, building height, architectural details, and/or treatment of front yard setbacks that are appropriate for the relevant subareas within the final Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Area.

Current design characteristics of the buildings and lots within the SDRP Study Area will be important considerations for these design guidelines. The purpose of design guidelines is to provide a clear set of rules for both the Town and the applicant for a project within the Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Area relative to the design elements required of any new development or redevelopment project. The consistency of application is beneficial to both those who live and work in the SDRP Study Area, those who visit it, and those investors who seek to complete redevelopment projects.

Building Type

Other design characteristics within the SDRP Study Area include the type of existing buildings. The building type is not the same as building use – a building that looks like a single family residence may be a store or office. The SDRP Study Area contains a mix of building types, as shown in Figure 24. This data is from the Town of Stoughton's GIS database.

Buildings that are predominantly retail and services are located in the downtown core area along with government buildings such as Town Hall and the Post Office. While many of these buildings date from the earlier part of the twentieth century, there are a few more recent buildings, both public (the U.S. Post Office, the Police Department) and private (the mixed use buildings on Porter and Rose Streets). The majority of these buildings are more urban: a front yard setback at or close to the property line, taller building heights, and/or urban materials such as brick.

Retail and services type buildings also line the major corridors – Washington Street, Pearl Street, and Park Street. These buildings tend to be newer and more suburban in style: set back further from the front property line, parking in the front yard setback, lower building heights, and composite materials.

Residential and mixed use buildings are scattered throughout the remainder of the area, with a heavy concentration of industrial building types in parcels to the west of the rail line. The majority of these buildings date from 1900 to the 1950's. Most of the industrial buildings are former mill buildings constructed of brick.

Existing building types provide the context for redevelopment of underutilized buildings or new development, either as infill on vacant parcels, or on smaller parcels that have been assembled to create a site for a larger development. Redevelopment or new development should respect this context, and design guidelines would provide a guide as to how to address differences in height, massing, and other design characteristics between the existing buildings and new ones.

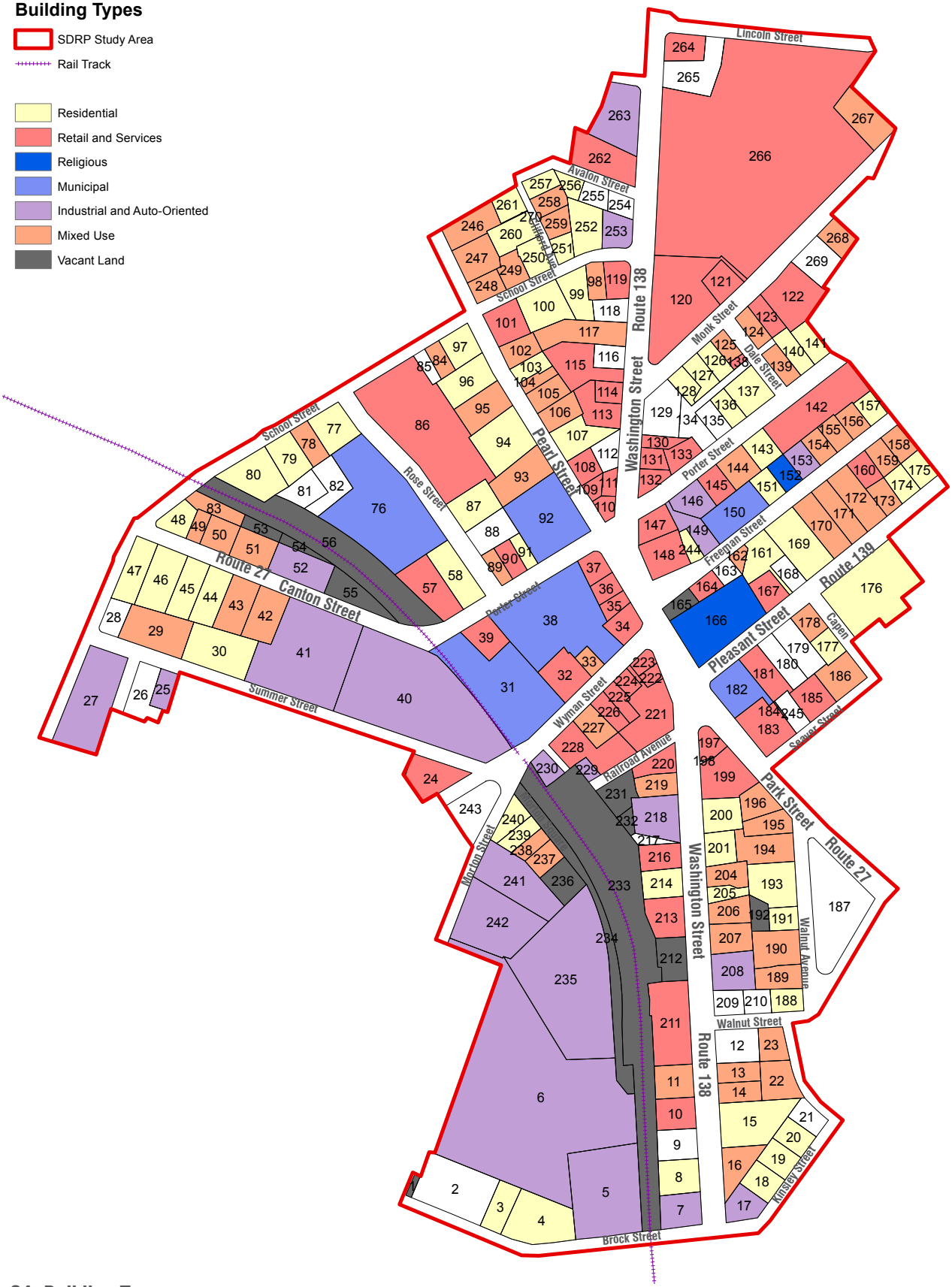

Figure 24: Building Type

Historic Resources

Buildings that are historic can contribute to a unique sense of place in an area – if they are identified and their heritage respected. The Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) database provides specific information about those buildings which qualify for inclusion in their system. The Stoughton Railroad Station and the Lucius Memorial Clapp Library are both listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

The following buildings or areas are listed in the MACRIS database and the inventories held by MACRIS are provided in Appendix B. The location of each is shown on Figure 25.

MACRIS #	NAME	ADDRESS	YEAR	INVENTORY #
STG.A	Stoughton Center			
STG.1	Meade Rubber Company	25 Brock Street	1916	5
STG.2	Mystic Rubber Company	2 Canton Street	1877	40
STG.5	International Order of Odd Fellows Hall	7 Freeman Street	1892	164
STG.6	Stoughton Fire Station	30 Freeman Street	1927	150
STG.7	Trinity Episcopal Church	34 Freeman Street	1898	152
STG.9	First Stoughton Public Library	Morton Square	c 1854	240
STG.11	Lucius Clapp Memorial Library	6 Park Street	1903	182
STG.12	Stoughton Town Hall	10 Pearl Street	1881	92
STG.13	Daniel French House	64 Pearl Street	r. 1847	97
STG.23	P.M. Withington Furniture and Undertaker	Porter Street	1860	57
STG.24	Webster Smith and Company	Porter Street	1880	89
STG.25	J.W. Wood Elastic Web Company	Rose Street	1936	86
STG.26	Chicataubut Club Barn	14 Seaver Street	1876	185, 245
STG.31	S.C. and J.G. Phinney Boot Counter Manufacturing Co.	Winter Street	1848	27
STG.32	W.O. Faxon House	15 Walnut Street	1854	23
STG.37	Britton Block	Pearl Street	1899	110
STG.38	Dr. Swan Block	752-770 Washington Street	1904	147
STG.39	Monks Block	Washington Street	1886	37
STG.40	State Theatre	807 Washington Street	1927	221
STG.41	Stoughton Trust Company	810 Washington Street	1917	197
STG.42	Porter Coal and Wood Company	893 Washington Street	1876	11
STG.43	Parker House	17 Wyman Street	1854	33
STG.44	Stoughton Railroad Station	33 Wyman Street	1888	31
STG.900	First School Marker	6 Park Street		

These historic buildings have implications for the development of design guidelines – which heights, architectural details, setbacks, and other elements provide that sense of unique character and should be protected and addressed in new development in the area. Certainly new development should be sensitive to both historic architecture and character within the final Stoughton Downtown Redevelopment Area and along its border – Seaver Street, for example, has historic buildings on both sides of the street but only one side of the street is in the SDRP Study Area.

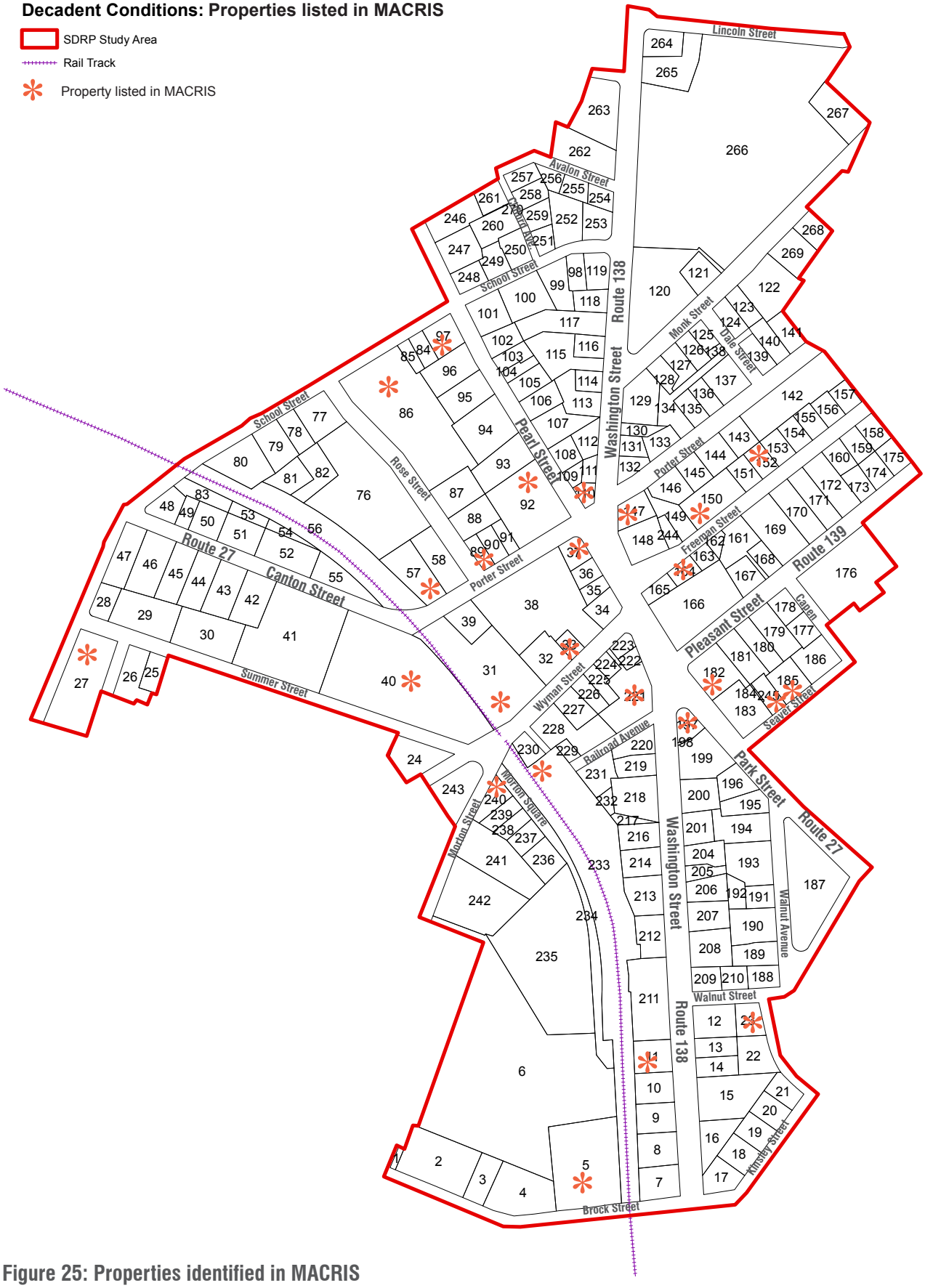

Figure 25: Properties identified in MACRIS

Architectural Elements

In addition to front setbacks, building types and the prevalence of historic structures, certain architectural elements are recurring within the SDRP Study Area. Some of the elements that will have an impact on recommended design guidelines and possible zoning changes include the following:

- ROOFLINES – Buildings in the SDRP Study Area have both flat and pitched rooflines. Flat roofs are typical for older commercial buildings; pitched roofs are present on both residential and commercial buildings.
- HEIGHT – Certain buildings within the SDRP Study Area are prominent in part because their height or the height of certain building elements is greater than that of other buildings in the SDRP Study Area. These include the Town Hall, the State Theatre, the Stoughton Rail Depot, the Lucius Clapp Memorial, the Stoughton Trust Building, and the First Parish Unitarian Church.
- MATERIALS – In common with many New England towns, the traditional materials tend to be brick and wood, with the stone of the Stoughton Train Depot as a notable exception. Newer buildings include more modern materials such as vinyl and aluminum siding and concrete.
- STOREFRONTS – Traditional commercial buildings have large ground floor windows, although many of those windows are now blocked by paint, paper or window treatments. The principal door into the business tends to be recessed from the front façade, although this rule is not always followed. Some buildings are unified blocks with several storefronts under a common façade and decorative treatment. Some building have awnings that stretch the length of the building while others have awnings for an individual business.
- SIGNAGE – Signage is inconsistent throughout the area. Some are intended to be readable by drivers travelling through the center, others are geared towards pedestrians. Signage is not consistent in material, size, or illumination technique and is not always placed within the traditional signage band on the building.
- ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS – Some of the older buildings downtown have details on the façades that contribute to the unique character of the downtown and reflect the history of the built environment.

Rooflines and Height: Traditional Flat-Roof Commercial

Rooflines and Height: Traditional Pitched Residential

Storefronts: Traditional commercial building with ground-floor windows blocked by paint or paper

Materials: Stone

Materials: Brick

Building Signage: Example of Current Blade Sign

Example of Current Projecting and Awning Signs

Architectural Details

Architectural Details

Figure 26: Architectural Elements in the Stoughton Downtown

Off-Street Paving Conditions

Paving conditions have implications for both the determination of the SDRP Study Area as a Decadent Area and for the eventual strategies for the Redevelopment Plan. Figure 27 shows the extensive lot coverage in the area separated by buildings, parking, and driveways. Figure 27 is based on visual observations from site walks in December 2014, and indicates three paving conditions:

- NORMAL PAVING CONDITIONS – These conditions include a driveway and parking for the uses on the site. The parking is located to the side or rear of the lot and does not cover the entire lot.
- MAJORITY OF LOT PAVED – Except for the building on the site, and possibly some minor landscaping, the rest of the lot is paved. If the parcel is vacant and in this category then it is fully paved. The exceptions to this category are Parcels 6 and 235. Both have paved areas not captured in the GIS information, areas that are not formally paved but appear to be hard-packed, and unpaved areas that may be contaminated from runoff or other activities. Parcels in this category may contribute to environmental contamination, stormwater management problems, and unsafe pedestrian conditions.
- FRONT YARD SETBACK PAVED – The setback between the street or sidewalk and the principal façade of the building is paved. There may also be some paving to the side or rear, but the parcel is not fully paved. This condition rarely includes a separation between the paved setback and the sidewalk or street. Parcels in this category may contribute to stormwater management problems and unsafe pedestrian conditions.

As noted under *Section 2. Evidence of Decadent Conditions*, the parking requirements are high for an area that has significant public transit. These zoning requirements may also be contributing to the front-yard paving in the area. The smaller lot sizes, particularly in the CBD, mean that a higher percentage of the lot must be paved to meet the parking requirements for the use. For example, a two-family must have six parking spaces; a multi-family with two two-bedroom units and two single-bedroom units must have ten parking spaces. The SCMUOD would allow lower parking ratios, but existing conditions are based upon the requirements of the older zoning districts.

In addition to supporting evidence for the determination of the SDRP Study Area as a Decadent Area, these paving conditions create additional problems:

- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT – Paving creates an impervious surface that forces water to run off the property rather than draining into the ground on site. This may create drainage problems that lead to localized flooding – stormwater ponding is noted as an existing condition in *Section 2. Evidence of Decadent Conditions* under infrastructure. Improper stormwater management can also lead to contamination from oil and fuel spills from cars parked on the paved surfaces.
- UNSAFE PEDESTRIAN CONDITIONS – The lack of differentiation between street, sidewalk, and front yard setback creates an unsafe condition for pedestrians who may not be fully aware of their position within the right-of-way relative to the movement of vehicles in and out of the parking areas. The Redevelopment Plan will address this condition and propose strategies which may include changes to the zoning regulations, enforcement actions, or design guidelines that would include the treatment of the front yard setback.

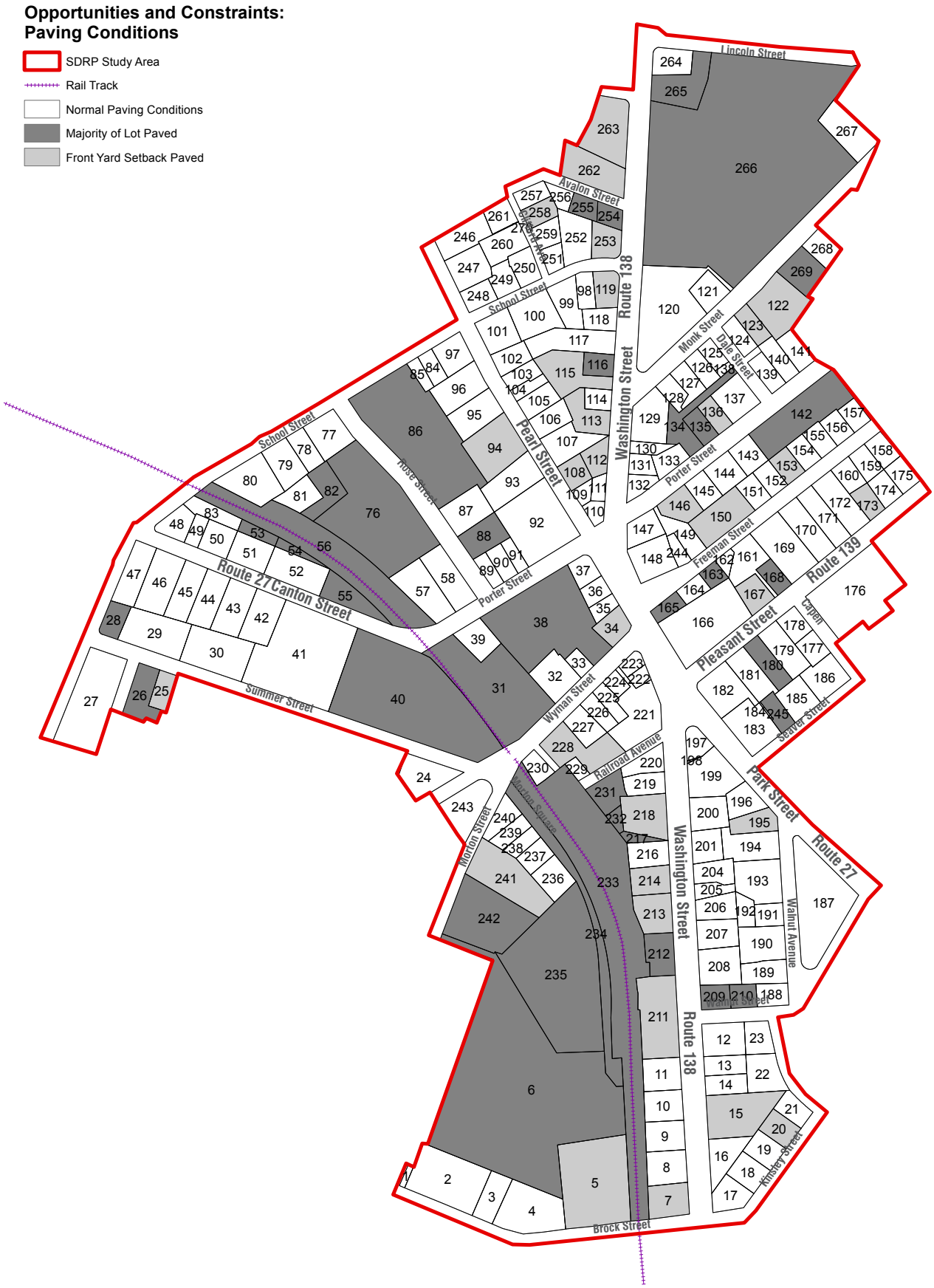

Figure 27: Paving Conditions

Market Conditions

OVERVIEW

Downtown was once the vital commercial and civic core of Stoughton. It was the core of a significant highway hub with Routes 27, 138 and 139 intersecting at its heart. The rail station and train depot served both the industrial and commercial center since their inception in the late 1880's, providing convenient access to Boston. By the 1920's, major civic institutions (the Town Hall, Public, Library, Public Safety and Post Office) and banking institutions followed suit along with the State Theatre, the town's entertainment venue. With increased automobile use and post-world war two building development in the 1940's through the 1970's when the State Theatre closed its doors, came the advent of modern offices building along the major regional highways (Routes 128/I-95, and I-495). This allowed for more convenient access for companies who needed modern facilities with larger spaces that could serve an employment base stretching far beyond the local area, making much of the downtown office space obsolete. The downtown also provided retail services with a sense of community before shoppers opted for the convenience of the strip center, regional malls, and the big box wonders of Home Depot, IKEA, Best Buy etc. Now the luster of the downtown has faded, and retail shops struggle, and it is no longer the civic core that it once was.

The analysis that follows this overview attempts to a) describe market conditions for a range of potential reuses in the downtown, b) outline opportunities that lend potential to downtown redevelopment and c) highlight constraints that stand in the way of revitalization.

MARKET ANALYSES

The following sections analyze the market conditions of the SDRP Study Area and the Stoughton Downtown sub market with regard to its economic, social and demographic characteristics. The information obtained from market research on primary and secondary trade areas as defined by the draft *Stoughton Economic Development Master Plan* and the draft *Economic Development Master Plan: Downtown Stoughton* written by the McCabe Enterprise Team (both drafts were provided to use for review), stakeholder interviews, feedback from community forums and conversations with market experts help to define the opportunities and constraints in redeveloping the SDRP Study Area.

Understanding these components along with the real estate conditions, limitations and trends of the SDRP Study Area, and the surrounding Stoughton sub markets, including adjacent and similar towns, is instrumental in evaluating opportunities and constraints for the SDRP Study Area in order to make recommendations that help to achieve the goals of the Master Plan.

This assessment specifically emphasizes the following with regard to existing conditions:

- Key demographic and economic trends within a half, one and three mile radius of Downtown Stoughton
- Market activity and demand for five major property use type categories:
  - Office
  - Retail/Restaurant
  - Residential (multi-family)
  - Light Industrial and Flex Space
  - Creative economy (live/work loft space, artist colony potential)
- Primary strengths and weaknesses affecting development potential in the SDRP Study Area including the effect of the proposed South Coast Rail extension and development plans
- Immediate and phased recommendations in improving Downtown Stoughton as a viable hub of activity for its residents, employees, and visitors, independent of its successful big box retail corridors

Office Market Analysis

Future absorption potential, defined as the amount of time it will likely take office space within a particular location to become re-leased or occupied, is dependent not only on redevelopment changes and Stoughton's employment growth but also on that of surrounding areas and the economy as a whole. Much of the analysis of the Stoughton office market is based upon data provided by Costar Properties, a provider of retail, office and industrial commercial real estate data including space available for lease and sale, comparable sales information, tenant informa-

Total Office Market Statistics

Third Quarter 2014

Market	Existing Inventory		Vacancy			YTD Net Absorption	YTD Deliveries	Under Const SF	Quoted Rates
	# Blds	Total RBA	Direct SF	Total SF	Vac %				
Boston/Suffolk County	1,526	109,345,879	8,413,680	8,825,378	8.1%	270,677	500,000	2,202,251	$31.73
Cambridge	439	27,716,359	1,738,856	2,393,294	8.6%	390,327	850,733	1,773,264	$48.76
Close-In Suburbs North	387	7,769,370	582,347	636,421	8.2%	22,266	0	133,920	$21.72
Route 128 North	1,196	33,041,032	2,792,649	3,095,472	9.4%	360,883	394,110	176,000	$20.00
Route 128 South	1,334	29,212,372	2,949,423	2,972,997	10.2%	175,642	10,500	19,588	$18.06
Route 128 West	1,078	36,252,058	3,188,319	3,454,042	9.5%	311,186	0	932,898	$27.88
Route 3 North	506	19,465,459	2,631,851	2,728,382	14.0%	102,260	0	0	$17.54
Route 495 North East	575	13,982,619	1,740,875	1,791,260	12.8%	(55,028)	148,187	0	$16.99
Route 495 South	1,743	20,911,827	1,384,081	1,384,281	6.6%	421,063	46,468	0	$16.68
Route 495/Mass Pike West	756	25,769,004	3,237,455	3,476,802	13.5%	167,829	0	0	$18.66
Route 495/Route 2 West	540	13,965,516	1,402,625	1,673,685	12.0%	206,373	0	36,000	$16.70
Southern New Hampshire	2,151	32,728,375	2,691,641	2,748,336	8.4%	197,376	167,980	70,674	$17.52
Worcester	1,015	16,669,183	1,019,992	1,061,071	6.4%	45,964	0	25,000	$16.13
Totals	13,246	386,829,053	33,773,794	36,241,421	9.4%	2,616,818	2,117,978	5,369,595	$20.95

Source: Costar Properties

DEFINITION OF TERMS	
Total Rentable Area (RBA)	All space in a building that may be leased and occupied
Net Absorption	Total square feet occupied, indicated as a move-in, less the total space vacated, indicated as a move-out, over a given period of time
YTD Deliveries	The recorded percentage of vacant space measured from beginning of year to present within a given location, based on properties surveyed and available data

tion, and analytical capabilities. The regional market is broken up into a number of submarkets and clusters of submarkets. Stoughton is best categorized by reviewing both the Route 128 South and Route 495 South submarket clusters. The following table shows 2014 third quarter results for Stoughton and the towns surrounding it. This captures a wider inventory of office square footage in the region than the Stoughton-only numbers cited further below and shows the potential for Stoughton to attract companies in the larger market. Vacancy in the 495 South cluster is relatively low at a 6.6% rate but average quoted rents are modest at $16.68 per square foot. The 128 South Market is weaker from an occupancy perspective with a 10.2% vacancy rate but average rents are higher at $18.06. Also, the average building size in the 128 South Market is much larger than in the 495 South market which may partially explain the rent differential as larger tenants tend to demand a higher quality building and are able to pay higher rents.

The current, comprehensive inventory of office space in Stoughton listed in Costar Properties reports includes just over 1.1 million square feet of space with a building age average of 56 years and a net absorption rate of 43,120 square feet. These buildings belong to one of three office sub markets within the Town of Stoughton, which are all part of the larger Route 128 South and Route 495 South markets listed in the table above: I-95 Corridor South, Route 24 or Route 1 South. Gross rents averaged $7 - $14 per square foot for older Class B and C space, but $14.49 overall when Class A was included. Vacancy for office use in Stoughton is 23% based on leased rentable square feet.

Indicators based on Stoughton Office Buildings Surveyed:

AVAILABILITY, RENT AND SALES FIGURES	2014 AVERAGES
Gross Rent Per SF	$14.49
Vacancy Rate	23.0%
Vacant SF	265,287
Availability Rate	29.6%
Available SF (includes sub lease space)	341,998
Months on Market	20.4
12 Mo. Absorption SF	42,819
Sale Price Per SF	$69
Asking Price Per SF	$82
Sales Volume (Mil.)	$3.8

Source: Costar Properties

There has been increased development in recent years in areas with high visibility and access off major roadways such as Turnpike Street and Technology Center Drive in the Route 24 sub market. Space in these and similar office parks is newer, accommodates larger floor plates, has increased parking and highway accessibility, averages $19.50 per rentable square foot rents and holds vacancy rates as low as 12.5%. Absorption for larger office parks is greater than the Stoughton average.

In the downtown area, there is approximately 182,000 rentable square feet of office space spread over 32 buildings which typically range from 1- 4 stories and have adequate parking. These buildings are small, none exceeding 12,500 rentable square feet with most in the 1,850-5,000 square foot range and with typical floor plates and availability less than 5,000 square feet. For downtown office space, net absorption was approximately 4,900 square feet in 2014. Vacancy rates are lower downtown than throughout Stoughton overall at 3.9%, as just under 9,000 square feet of total inventory is currently available (Source: CoStar Properties 2014 year-end report of downtown office buildings surveyed). These buildings are generally in fair to poor condition, offering Class B and C space, and rents average approximately $14 per rentable square feet on a gross basis. While this vacancy is low, there is concern that rents are insufficient to maintain suitable building conditions over time. Since tenant demand would be limited at higher rents, the downtown is therefore at risk of deteriorating further.

Downtown Stoughton is currently limited in its ability to attract users that will achieve Class A rents as those requiring sophisticated space, amenities and larger floor plates are more likely to relocate to areas near the highway system with greater accessibility. The newer office parks in Stoughton's non-downtown areas offer a very different product from the downtown and currently, the downtown is rarely competing with these office parks for tenants. The downtown is not perceived as the core area of office activity in Stoughton anymore.

Another challenge is that the diverse ownership of generally small parcels limits redevelopment possibilities that could provide an updated and more competitive office product. Small and irregularly shaped parcels would need to be combined in order to meet the current market standards of most office users. A 2014 Costar Properties market share study of downtown office buildings shows market share distribution may contribute to decadence as it pertains to current market conditions. Ten different owners control approximately half the downtown buildings at a share of approximately 5% each. That represents only 8,000-10,000 square feet per owner and not all of this multiple building ownership is contiguous. The other half of the property is owned by a variety of owners who hold even smaller shares. Finally, the buildings on small, irregularly shaped parcels are in relatively poor condition, and with relatively low rents in the downtown there is concern whether rents are sufficient to support the improvement costs needed to continue to attract tenants.

Although larger businesses may prefer to locate elsewhere, Downtown Stoughton has potential as an office location for smaller professional services firms with a convergence of three major auto routes (Routes 27, 138, and 139) in the Downtown and the potential of attractive downtown character. Major employers in downtown include the financial institutions, service offices and agencies, and the public sector – postal workers, Town Hall and Library employees, police and fire department staff. Stoughton's historical presence along a rail line and main street may appeal to these medium and smaller office space users looking for a charming and pedestrian-friendly ambience. Current rents make it difficult to provide more than modestly renovated space within the existing downtown context. However, there may be the potential to increase rents and bring in additional office tenants if the downtown can

be updated to an attractive, walkable, mixed-use environment by making infrastructure changes, increasing active ground floor uses in the downtown, and upgrading building conditions to meet tenant space needs and technical requirements, and redeveloping or renovating certain contiguous parcels.

If this could be accomplished, it might potentially allow development of a mid-sized office building for small to medium-sized professional tenants or possibly a medical office building, both on the order of 20-25,000 square feet with fairly sophisticated building systems and utility and technological requirements, and larger floor plates on consolidated land parcels. Such a building would likely require rents in excess of $30 per square foot and preleasing.

Some larger existing buildings might be rehabilitated for use by price-sensitive professionals and might include shared or collaborative work space offerings, which are increasingly finding receptivity in the inner suburban and downtown areas. This might be successfully accommodated with relatively small renovation costs but would probably not result in large increases of office use.

Retail and Restaurant Analysis

Over the past five years, Stoughton's retail inventory has had modest growth and has increased approximately 200,000 (10%) from just over 1.9 million square feet of retail to 2.1 million square feet today. Of this total, approximately 722,000 square feet is attributable to larger stand alone big-box and shopping center stores. Per a Costar Properties 2014 Retail Availability and Vacancy Report for the town of Stoughton, the average for rents and availability exclusive of big box, large specialty stores or outdoor shopping centers, yielded was $18.30 per rentable square foot on a triple net rent basis, defined as base rent exclusive of all operating costs which are paid separately by the tenant, and a 12% vacancy rate.

Big box retail, particularly stores like IKEA and Jordan's Furniture on the Stoughton/Avon border, and shopping centers provide a very different retail experience compared to the Downtown and attract a different shopper, based on the product they offer and the larger trade area they draw from. Although residents typically prefer to drive to one of several stand-alone shopping centers or retail strips with convenient parking, there is a place for downtown retail and restaurants to provide a more intimate and specialized experience. The downtown retail can also provide some convenience retail and serve the needs of local residents and businesses. Consumers, which include residents, employees and visitors, shop in downtown areas, because they sometimes prefer independent and unique retail and restaurant experiences and walkable character over strip centers, large specialty or destination merchandise, and big box retail. The Town could apply for grants to support the unique and varied retailers and restaurant that already exist in the downtown by helping them improve their physical appearance. Supporting expanded retail and restaurant offerings could also enhance the downtown while preserving its charm.

As downtown retail is smaller scale retail, properties under 20,000 square feet were analyzed within Stoughton in its entirety. While this scale of property is conceivably competitive with downtown retailers it still includes some properties that are "pad" sites which are freestanding parcel of commercial real estate located adjacent to shopping centers, and include accessibility, visibility and ease of drive through or parking.

Smaller Retail properties	92
Total Square Feet	449,346
Vacancy	44,640
Average Rental Rate/SF	$20.65 NNN
Vacancy Rate	7.4%

Vacancy rates were moderate to high at 7.4% but with strong average rents. However, properties with high rental rates that are driving up the average are the larger properties adjacent to shopping center and not in the downtown. Rents for on average within those analyzed in Stoughton were $20.65 NNN[1]; however, rents for the downtown are more typically $14 – 17 NNN. Likewise, it is expected that downtown retail vacancy is higher than the 7.4% average.

[1]Triple Net Lease (NNN): A lease under which the tenant is responsible for both the rental cost and the net cost of real estate taxes, building insurance, and common area maintenance.

For Stoughton to fill the retail vacancies in the downtown and further increase its retail square footage, it must take a more comprehensive approach to create the kind of special environment that provides an attractive alternative to the strip retail. It is difficult to compete with the convenience of the larger stores and parking at the front door. Downtown needs to offer something different and attractive in other ways, preserving and building on Stoughton's charm as a walkable town center, diversifying its retail portfolio, establishing the downtown area as an entertainment and independent retail focal and gathering point, and creating a more active transition and number of day to evening uses.

In order to expand retail, there may be a need to develop some larger retail offerings and retail in locations that activate and reinforce the walkability. But as noted in the office discussion above, the downtown, for the most part has diverse property ownership, small buildings and small lots. Like office development, this may contribute to decadence in that there are limits to redeveloping parcels that would accommodate larger retail users as they currently stand.

Over half (54.4%) of downtown shoppers[1] live in the Downtown area yet they have fewer walkable conveniences and restaurants than those of surrounding towns, and Massachusetts and county averages[2], per a retail merchandise study in the *Stoughton Economic Development Master Plan* measuring certain retail establishments such as banks and grocers within a one quarter mile radius. One quarter (25%)of downtown shoppers take the commuter rail[3] and there are over 180,000 visits to the Town's library[4], serving as additional potential customers for the downtown.

Retail Sales leakage statistics referring to purchases made by residents outside of SDRP Study Area's boundaries where the sales are "leaked" out, meaning money is spent on retail purchases within other communities, also suggests there is opportunity to create additional retail use types in downtown. According to the draft *Economic Development Master Plan: Downtown Stoughton*, substantial retail opportunities exist in Downtown Stoughton, mostly in the apparel, limited service restaurants, personal care, jewelry, sporting goods and food and beverage categories.[5] Price points of shoppers within these use types would also need to be considered before determining more specifically which establishments could be supported (and thrive) within these use types. Despite this significant built-in customer base, Stoughton's retail and restaurant establishments do not contribute to a pedestrian experience in store front, seating, ease of parking and evenly distributed active uses between day and evening.

Difficulties and constraints in establishing this mixed-use element based on existing conditions include a lack of updated store fronts, insufficient number of restaurants that contain expanded areas for tables with indoor and outdoor seating, insufficient day to evening active uses, and circulation issues discussed in the traffic section of this report. Store merchants also complain of parking that is either insufficient or poorly labeled. Improving signage and providing sufficient parking are important to revitalizing the downtown.

Incorporating a mixed-use environment to the downtown will increase consumer spending as retail establishments are instituted on ground floors where office and residential uses are above. Including retail on the ground floor of residential and office buildings will also reinforce the vitality of downtown and promote a consistent day through evening destination for consumers. Reactivating historic buildings such as the State Theatre and Train Depot, expanding community uses of currently active buildings such as The Stoughton Historical Society, and improving open space areas with available space for community use will enhance downtown as a focal point. The aesthetic improvement or maintenance of many current stores, while preserving the historical character of their properties, could help to eliminate certain current sub-standard elements. But larger improvements and coordinated effort

[1] *Economic Development Master Plan* (draft), October 2014, McCabe Enterprises Team, page 6)

[2] *Economic Development Master Plan* (draft), October 2014, , McCabe Enterprises Team, pages 20-21)

[3] *Economic Development Master Plan* (draft), October 2014, , McCabe Enterprises Team, page 6)

[4] *Economic Development Master Plan* (draft), October 2014, , McCabe Enterprises Team, page 6)

[5] *Economic Development Master Plan: Downtown Stoughton* (draft), March 2015, McCabe Enterprises Team, page 44)

to create a mixed-use walking environment and retail/restaurant environment are needed to attract more shoppers.

Residential Analysis

Proposed and existing multifamily housing, as an asset class, or investment category, is strong in Stoughton. Multifamily properties surveyed include 1,160 existing units with a 4% vacancy rate and rents averaging $1,430, $1,838 and $1,896 for one, two and three bedrooms, respectively. These properties are likely to have a unit mix of primarily one or two bedrooms, with three bedrooms being the least prevalent, comprising less than 20% of the unit mix within almost all of these properties. This indicates that families are more likely to live in single family homes outside of the downtown area and that the multi-family units are not generally serving families. Only three of the multi-family properties surveyed are considered modern (i.e. competitive with new construction) as they have been built within the last ten years. The majority of buildings in the SDRP Study Area are considered are over 40 years old, and considered to be antiquated. The multi-family properties are generally low-rise or garden style with a couple of mid-rise apartments.

Proposed multi-family developments include two downtown mixed use projects: the expected development of eighteen one- and two-bedroom units at the corner of Washington and Monk Streets containing ground floor retail space, and an additional 21 units containing a one to two bedroom mix planned at 770 Washington Street, which is the Malcolm Parsons Insurance Building. Ground floor commercial space would be typical in this and similar residential developments. 20% of the units at 770 Washington Street will be offered as affordable housing. There is also one luxury 179-unit multi-family apartment complex expected in December 2015 called Woodbridge Crossing which will contain 45 units of affordable housing. Woodbridge Crossing will be in the area bounded by Central, Mill and Island Streets.

Residential demand throughout the Metro South and Greater Boston Metro areas continues to be strong and multifamily housing in downtowns near mass transit has been popular—the proverbial Transit-Oriented Development.[1] Where this housing has been most successful they have also been part of mixed use settings with retail and restaurant uses. Currently, there are some constraints to achieving additional multi-family housing in the SDRP Study Area. Other than a grocer, bank and post office in the SDRP Study Area, other local conveniences are limited such as pharmacies and active ground floor uses within walking distance of the multi-family properties. With the expansion of mixed uses, increased accessibility and infrastructure and related improvements to downtown that focus on pedestrian walkability and conveniences, there is likely to be demand for more multi-family developments. As noted with office and retail uses, parcels will need to be consolidated in order to provide sites for residential/mixed-use buildings at a scale that makes economic sense. Redevelopment of existing sites on the periphery of the SDRP Study Area may also work if they are connected to the downtown and the train station by attractive pathways.

Light Industrial and Flex Space

Opportunities are not likely for flex space in the downtown but there may be some potential for a modest amount of light industrial properties in the downtown. Flex space is typically found in industrial and tech parks, and provides flexible space for light industrial users with significant office components. It is wide open and flexible in configuration and one story so it can provide convenient truck access and convenient parking. With Amazon leasing 330,000 square feet at 1000 Technology Park Drive in 2014, industrial and tech parks in Stoughton continue to support a lot of industrial market activity within the Greater Boston and Metro South regions.[2]

This kind of space, however, is unsuitable in the downtown as a new or expanded use type. Light industrial space that makes use of existing mill or other open, flexible space may be somewhat more suitable for users that can survive without direct truck access in a multistory building, These users are very limited and will be looking for very low rents. Stoughton has one 91,500 square foot building at 49 Rose Street accommodating these kinds of tenants with rents averaging only $3.57. Only 4,000 square feet of

[1] *New England Market Outlook Report 2015* by CBRE/New England. Greater Boston Section, page 26.

[2] *New England Market Outlook Report 2015* by CBRE/New England. Greater Boston Section, page 26

this space is available. This building contains greater floor to ceiling heights than standard commercial space with larger floor plates, and has had consistently low vacancies of 4.4%, with a mix of manufacturing and specialty tenants. There are seven additional buildings considered flex space offered in Stoughton, averaging only $5 per square foot rents and offering higher ceiling heights and larger floor plates (Source: Costar Properties 2014 Stoughton Flex Space Inventory Report). These rents make it difficult to achieve economic feasibility for new flex space and light industrial space.

Creative Economy

Creative economy businesses, including artists are looking for inexpensive, open, flexible space—with the emphasis on inexpensive. Artists can be pioneers but often want to see the potential to be part of a community of artists. Flexible loft like spaces, at approximately $10 per square foot rents or lower, are the desired artist spaces. This use is more appropriate for existing buildings rather than new development. There is a limited amount of space suitable for this use in the downtown and building new space for this purpose would be cost prohibitive given that the users generally require loft like high ceiling heights and unobstructed floor plates. Rents for loft like artist work space can be as small as 400-500 square feet but live/work space might be more in the 1,000-1,200 square foot or more range. There is limited existing downtown space that is suitable.

SOUTH COAST RAIL: EFFECT ON DOWNTOWN STOUGHTON

South Coast Rail is proposing to build an extension of the MBTA Commuter Rail system from Stoughton south to Fall River and New Bedford on discontinued rail lines. The line aims to restore service to Boston through the towns of Easton, Raynham, Taunton, Berkley, Fall River, Freetown, and New Bedford, on the South Coast as part of the Providence/Stoughton Line. (Source: South Coast Rail Corridor Plan). The 75-minute per week ride will include nine new rail stops. According to a South Coast Rail Proposal study, South Coast Rail does hope to increase capacity and serve approximately 4,570 new daily riders in the South Coast area while eliminating nearly 256,000 vehicle miles traveled on local roads and highways per day, but these riders will substantially be commuting to and from Boston rather than among Stoughton and surrounding towns and thus will have limited impact on the economic activity within the Downtown during the day.

Furthermore, the draft *Economic Development Master Plan* reports that already 25% of downtown shoppers also take the commuter rail[1]. The proximity of the rail station to downtown typically encourages commuter rail patrons to use the downtown services offered. Currently, the MBTA reports 1,035 people board the commuter rail daily in Stoughton. However, ridership at the Stoughton commuter rail station is expected to drop by 15% by 2035 as a result of the South Coast Rail's additional stops at Easton and Raynham[2]. This will cause some who currently board the train and shop in downtown Stoughton to adopt one of the more convenient new stops, which would marginally decrease the number of downtown shoppers. Stoughton could see an increase in activity during peak commuting hours as well as evenings and weekends if the transit oriented environment is established and an increased multifamily residential base follows suit.

The ultimate location of the South Coast Rail station and the decision of whether to depress and cover the tracks through the downtown will have an impact on planning improved retail. It will also be necessary to understand the impact noise and the ability to cross the tracks as a result of the South Coast Rail line will have on residential and office uses. For example, depressing the tracks and relocating the existing station could minimize disruption to potential mixed use activity in the affected area.

It is unlikely that other stops along the proposed South Coast Rail will significantly compete with downtown Stoughton as a shopping and mixed use destination. Expansion of the Roche Brothers retail center and Easton Village, with its historic core, might be the exception.

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[1] *Economic Development Master Plan* (draft), October 2014, , McCabe Enterprises Team, page 6)

[2] *Economic Development Master Plan* (draft), October 2014, , McCabe Enterprises Team, page 37)

Traffic and Circulation: Opportunities and Constraints

The transportation system can support redevelopment and revitalization of the downtown area by providing adequate and convenient parking; safe sidewalks to link parking with stores, restaurants, municipal buildings, cultural activities and transportation; and, streets that operate efficiently for all modes (pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles). This existing conditions analysis defines how this support is being provided today.

EXISTING STOUGHTON SQUARE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Stoughton Square is at the center of the project area and is a crossroads with Route 138, Washington Street, passing north-south through the Square, Route 27 passing northwest to southeast through the Square and Route 139 originating in the Square and leading to the northeast. The MBTA's Providence-Boston Stoughton Branch commuter rail line also passes through the project area just west of Stoughton Square where a rail station and approximately 462 parking spaces are provided. Multiple local streets support circulation within the project area however the connectivity of these streets is limited in the east-west direction by the railroad tracks and in the north-south direction by two large developed parcels, a US Postal Service distribution facility and the train station located east of the railroad tracks. North-south travel demands and east-west travel demands through the project area converge on a two-block section of Washington Street between Canton Street and Pleasant Street where Routes 27 and 138 overlap. This segment of Washington Street provides two travel lanes in each direction, on-street parking on both sides and approximately six-foot wide sidewalks. All other roadways in the SDRP Study Area are two-lane roadways as indicated in Table 1.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The concentration of vehicular traffic in Stoughton Square is a consequence of the regional roadway network configuration. All roads run through Stoughton Square with few, if any, alternative routes nearby. Route 27 links Stoughton to Brockton to the southeast and Canton and Sharon to the northwest. Route 138 to the north connects to the southern communities of Boston and to the south to Taunton. Pearl Street is a north south roadway that effectively terminates in the square and provides connections to Canton.

From a regional perspective the closest alternative north-south roadway is Turnpike Street which is over one mile to the east and there is no continuous north-south roadway west of Stoughton Square. For regional east-west travel there is one roadway in Stoughton, Central Street,that provides a near continuous east-west travel route. Central Street lies about a mile north of Stoughton Square.

In close proximity to the Square there are multiple connections to the east and west for short distance trips. East of the square, Freeman Street, Pleasant Street, Porter Street are parallel east-west oriented streets with direct connections to the Square. Monk Street is parallel to these and connects to Route 138 just north of the square and Seaver Street is parallel to the south and connects to Route 27 just south of the Square. There is no single roadway north-south roadway east of the square that connects these five parallel streets. To the west, Porter Street (Route 27) and Wyman Street connect to Stoughton Square. Both these roadways also cross the MBTA tracks at-grade and are subject to delays during commuter hours when trains are present. There is no direct north-south connection between these two roadways either west of the tracks or east of the tracks. Wyman Street connects Stoughton Square to Morton Square where Summer Street, Perry Street, and Morton Street converge west of the commuter rail station.

At the north end of the project area, School Street provides a possible east-west bypass of Stoughton Square connecting Canton Street (Route 27) and Washington Street (Route 138). At the south end of the SDRP Study Area Brock Street and Kinsley Street provide a continuous roadway connection between Morton Street, Washington Street (Route 138), and Park Street (Route 27).

This offers a potential bypass route for traffic oriented to the roadways entering the Square from the south. Rose Street, oriented in a north-south direction lies west of and parallel to Pearl Street. It connects to School Street and Porter Street. Railroad Avenue provides driveway-type access from Washington Street to some of the commuter rail parking.

Traffic Operations

Traffic flow in Stoughton Square is the subject of an ongoing traffic operations and design study commissioned by the Town. The *Stoughton Town Square Traffic Improvement Study*, being prepared by Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.(HSH) in response to a January 17, 2014 request for proposals issued by the Town, is seeking to define ways to reduce congestion and enhance mobility. Existing conditions analyses completed by HSH indicate that intersections in the Square presently operate at capacity during both AM and PM weekday commuter peak hours. Anecdotally, it is known that Saturday midday conditions are congested as well. Alternative solution strategies being explored in this traffic study include plans to create a new north-south roadway link to the west of Stoughton Square. One of these concepts was proposed for consideration as early as 1970 indicating that the currently reported traffic congestion issues are a long-standing concern in Stoughton.

Exposure to travel delays in the Square is not limited to motor vehicle traffic. Pedestrian circulation in the Square requires crossing Washington Street at the signalized intersections north and south of the Square or at an unsignalized four-lane pedestrian crossing midway between the intersections at Wyman Street. Bicycles are not accommodated with any separate facilities through Stoughton Square. Buses to and from Brockton operate without a designated place for the bus to pull in or out of the traffic lane in either direction within Stoughton Square and without any shelters at the stops. The quality of service for transit riders is affected by traffic congestion and lack of shelters for waiting patrons in Stoughton.

Table 1 Project Area Roadway Elements

ROADWAY	LOCATION TOWN CENTER	TRAVEL LANES	PARKING (SIDES)	SHOULDER (FEET)	SIDEWALK (SIDES)	BICYCLE LANES	TRUCK LIMITS
Washington Street (Rte 138)	Northmost	Three	None	One	Both	None	None
Washington Street (Rte 138)	North	Two	Both	None	Both	None	None
Washington Street (Rte 138)	Center	Four	Both	None	Both	None	None
Washington Street (Rte 138)	South	Two	Both	None	Both	None	None
Canton Street (Rte 27)	North	Two	None	Two	Both	None	None
Porter Street (Rte 27)	North West	Two	Both	None	Both	None	None
Park Street (Rte 27)	South	Two	Both	None	Both	None	None
Park Street (Rte 27)	Southmost	Two	(1)	Five	Both	None	None
Pearl Street	North	Two	One	None	Both	None	None
Monk Street	East	Two	One	None	Both	None	None
Porter Street	East	Two	Both	None	Both	None	None
Freeman Street	East	Two	Both	None	(2)	None	None
Pleasant Street (Rte 139)	East	Two	(3)	Two	Both	None	None
Seaver Street	East	Two	One	None	Both	None	None
Wyman Street	West	Two	Both	None	Both	None	None
School Street	North West	Two	None	None	One	None	None
Brock Street	South	Two	None	One	One	None	None
Kinsley Street	South	(4)	None	None	Both	None	None
Summer Street	West	(4)	None	None	One	None	None
Morton Street	West	Two	None	One	One	None	None

(1) unmarked unrestricted daytime.
(2) narrow mostly unmarked centerline with unmarked unrestricted parking and uncurbed sidewalk;
(3) one side for one block closest to Square (more);
(4) unmarked centerline

Travel Demands

The confluence of vehicular traffic flows in Stoughton Square was recently studied in depth by the Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC).The Old Colony Planning Council conducted a Stoughton Square Origins and Destinations Study completed in August, 2011 which principally involved tracking vehicles passing through the Square. This study, conducted during both the AM and PM commuter peak periods, indicates an unsurprising finding. The study suggests that most of the traffic passing through the Square is not destined to downtown Stoughton. The traffic count program shows that commuter traffic patterns are generally northbound through the Square during the AM peak hour and southbound during the PM peak hour. Tracking surveys summarized in Table 2 show that traffic entering from the south on the two busiest streets, Washington (Route 138) and Park Streets (Route 27), in the AM peak is generally oriented to Washington Street north of the Square. During the PM traffic returning from the north on Washington Street splits south of the Square with some volume remaining on Washington Street and another large share using Park Street as shown in Table 3. **A "cordon line" analysis of all roadways accessing the SDRP Study Area would likely confirm that most peak hour traffic entering the SDRP Study Area is just passing through.** The OCPC study data indicates that presently 4,508 vehicles enter Stoughton Square during the 7 to 9 AM commuter peak and 4,681 vehicles enter during the 4 to 6 PM commuter peak. If all of the AM vehicles were destined to Downtown Stoughton then 4,508 parking spaces would fill in the Downtown between 7 and 9 AM. As described in the next section below, the available parking supply is well below this figure.

Table 2 Stoughton Square Origins and Destinations – AM Peak Period 7-9 AM

EXITING (DESTINATIONS)		NORTH		EAST			SOUTH		WEST	
ENTERING (ORIGINS)		PEARL STREET	WASH. STREET	PORTER STREET	FREEMAN STREET	PLEASANT STREET	PARK STREET	WASH. STREET	WYMAN STREET	PORTER STREET
Pearl Street	355	22	28	0	0	33	**153**	96	8	15
Wash. St. (N)	478	3	51	0	0	25	**178**	**169**	42	10
Porter St (E)	23	0	**12**	5	0	6	0	0	0	0
Freeman Street	80	0	14	14	**44**	4	4	0	0	0
Pleasant Street	303	32	**109**	0	0	46	21	21	7	67
Park Street	1458	192	**747**	5	5	114	130	40	22	203
Wash. St (S)	814	66	**460**	2	0	157	37	31	3	58
Wyman St	224	4	3	0	2	**111**	38	39	18	9
Porter St (W)	773	19	37	3	0	159	**369**	136	15	35
Total	4,508	338	1,461	29	51	655	930	532	115	397

Source: Old Colony Planning Council PowerPoint presentation, May 2011
Note: Principal destination is shown in bold text.

Table 3 Stoughton Square Origins and Destinations - PM Peak Period 4-6 PM

EXITING (DESTINATIONS)		NORTH		EAST			SOUTH		WEST	
ENTERING (ORIGINS)		PEARL STREET	WASH. STREET	PORTER STREET	FREEMAN STREET	PLEASANT STREET	PARK STREET	WASH. STREET	WYMAN STREET	PORTER STREET
Pearl Street	345	7	23	2	0	12	**164**	102	13	22
Wash. St (N)	1045	6	63	3	0	36	**345**	**486**	100	6
Porter St (E)	48	4	16	4	**16**	0	4	0	0	4
Freeman Street	28	0	5	0	**14**	0	9	0	0	0
Pleasant Street	297	17	**102**	0	1	19	28	23	15	92
Park Street	1,183	167	**479**	3	3	84	126	56	8	257
Wash St. (S)	636	64	**300**	2	2	130	40	38	3	57
Wyman Street	287	3	5	2	0	59	**112**	78	11	17
Porter St (W)	812	14	19	2	2	88	**504**	144	7	32
Total	4,681	282	1,012	18	38	428	1,332	927	157	487

Source: Old Colony Planning Council PowerPoint presentation, May 2011
Note: Principal destination is shown in bold text.

PARKING

As noted above, observed origin-destination patterns for vehicle trips in Stoughton Square indicate that most motorists are just passing through; entering on one route and departing on another route. Motorists with a destination in the SDRP Study Area would likely enter by one route and return by the same route, for example, if they were leaving from home to shop in the SDRP Study Area and then returning home after shopping. However, not all visits to the SDRP Study Area are likely completed within the two two-hour windows surveyed by the OCPC.

Presently parking supplies in the SDRP Study Area generally fall into one of four categories. The first would be MBTA commuter parking. The Stoughton MBTA station is served by 462 parking spaces including 55 monthly commuter rail parking spaces. The *Comprehensive Master Plan Phase 1: Vision and Existing Conditions Report* dated July, 2013 (Master Plan) prepared by Brown Walker Planners, Inc. and BETA Group, Inc. states that approximately half of these spaces are used on a typical weekday and half of the usage is by Stoughton residents. The Master Plan also states that 785 passengers board inbound trains from Stoughton Station during the morning peak period and that 596 passengers return during the evening peak period.

The second category of parking would be on-street parking available to the public. The on-street parking supply in much of the SDRP Study Area was inventoried as part of the ongoing Stoughton Town Square Improvements study. This study indicates that 243 on-street spaces are provided in the traffic study area. Table 1 lists geometric characteristics of all of the streets in the SDRP Study Area and notes the presence or absence of on-street parking along these streets.

The Stoughton Center traffic study also documents the supply of the third category of parking, public off-street spaces. Three public off-street lots are identified in Figure 28: a 16-space lot in Stoughton Square on the east side of Washington Street; a 20 space lot adjacent to the railroad tracks north of Canton Street and a 64 space parking permit lot east of the tracks and west of Rose Street.

The fourth category of spaces, dedicated parking for specific private or public land uses, includes a single 17-space lot east of the tracks and north of Canton Street.

Parking Lots

Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.

Figure 28: Parking in Stoughton Downtown (*Town Square Traffic Improvements Project, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.*)

ALTERNATIVE MODES

As noted above, Stoughton residents and workers have two available modes of public transportation to get to or from the SDRP Study Area.

Commuter rail service to Boston is provided by the MBTA and bus service to Brockton is provided by BAT (Brockton Area Transit Authority). The MBTA commuter rail service is on the Providence/ Stoughton branch where the Stoughton Station is a terminal station with service to South Station in Boston. Multiple trains run during peak commuter hours. The one-way fare to Boston is $7.25. BAT provides service on Bus Route #14 between Cobb's Corner (via Stoughton Square) to the BAT center and / or the Westgate Mall in Brockton. This route has ten scheduled buses Monday through Saturday. In the SDRP Study Area southbound buses stop on Washington Street north of Porter Street and on Park Street south of Walnut Street. Northbound bus trips stop on Park Street south of Walnut Street and on Washington Street south of School Street. There are no shelters fro waiting patrons at any of the bus stops.

Pedestrian circulation is accommodated throughout the SDRP Study Area as noted in Table 1 by the presence of sidewalks on both sides of the major streets in the SDRP Study Area and on at least one side of the minor streets. (The quality and condition of the sidewalks are reported in a separate section of this report.) Striped crosswalks are typically provided at intersections. As noted above, the most significant barrier to pedestrian circulation are the Washington Street crossings at its signalized intersections north and south of the Square and at an unsignalized crossing midway between the intersections. During the morning and evening weekday peak periods and Saturday midday peak period high vehicular traffic volumes result in significant congestion and delay to pedestrians. There is also a lack of crosswalks on Washington Street north of the Square. Those looking to avoid walking through Stoughton Square and/or arriving by public transportation can choose to ride by taxi. Taxi-cab stands are located on Freeman Street on the southerly side within the first three parking spaces from Washington Street and on the northerly side within the first two parking spaces from Washington Street. A third alternative mode of transportation is not well accommodated in the SDRP Study Area.

Bicycles, while present, are not accommodated with any separate, dedicated facilities throughout the SDRP Study Area.

Infrastructure: Opportunities and Constraints

WATER AND SEWER

There are several opportunities for improvements of the water and sewer systems in the study area including replacement, size upgrades and rehabilitation.

It is likely that the 2-inch through 6-inch unlined cast iron water mains would not be able to provide adequate flows and pressures to proposed or redeveloped buildings requiring fire sprinklers. All 2-inch through 6-inch cast iron water mains should be systematically replaced with modern pipe materials (Ductile Iron Cement Lined) with a minimum diameter of 8-inch. Theses pipes have gone beyond their design life and replacement will confirm their reliability for the next 75 years. Replacement should be prioritized by comparing available flow to required flows at existing, proposed/redeveloped buildings.

All VC sewer in the study area should be inspected using closed circuit television (CCTV) equipment and pipes suitable for trenchless rehabilitation re-lining or replacement identified. Re-lining pipe methods are a cost effective way to extend the design life of sewer pipe. VC sewer pipes that are in too poor a condition for rehabilitation should be replaced by standard trenching methods in order to maintain a reliable collection system.

While the capacity of local sewers are likely adequate for any additional flows from proposed or redeveloped buildings, it is possible the sewer collection system could become inadequate outside of the study area where existing capacity restrictions already exist. Rehabilitation and/or replacement of VC sewers in the study area can mitigate these downstream capacity issues by eliminating wet weather inflows and infiltration.