

ADOPTED 12/12/2023

BRAINTREE MASTER PLAN

2023 - 2033



Braintree City Hall
Source: John Phelan, 2009



Office of the Mayor

One JFK Memorial Drive
Braintree, Massachusetts 02184

Charles C. Kokoros
Mayor

781-794-8100

November 27, 2023

Dear Members of the Braintree Community,

I am delighted to introduce the Braintree 2023-2033 Master Plan, a comprehensive roadmap that will lead us into 2033, fostering unity within our community and charting a robust, shared future for our beloved town. The visions presented in this plan have been crafted through a diverse array of perspectives from within Braintree, each with a commitment to the well-being and aspirations of our community.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Braintree community for generously sharing their visions and insights. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Planning Board, the Master Plan Steering Committee, and all the dedicated community representatives who actively participated in this collaborative process. Braintree is the best community and offers a wealth of opportunities for its residents, businesses, and workforce.

This master plan thoughtfully identifies and prioritizes core themes such as building a sustainable community with strong connections to the natural world and its historical roots, pursuing local strategic economic development initiatives, consolidating a safe and connected transportation network, creating a reasonable supply of diverse housing, and modernizing Town facilities and services.

We have identified several goals and actionable strategies. These strategies will be further developed through community input and engagement, relying on your invaluable involvement and support. These policy decisions will define the plan's priorities.

We eagerly anticipate collaborating with the Master Plan Implementation Committee and all of you, the active and engaged members of our community, as we work together to transform these visions into reality and continue shaping a bright, united future for Braintree.

Sincerely,

Charles C. Kokoros
Mayor





TOWN HALL

PLEASE USE
CENTER DOOR

PLEASE
MUST BE
WORK
AT ALL
TIMES
IN THIS
BUILDING

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*The Engagement Summary Appendix was used in the development of this Master Plan. Please refer to the Engagement Summary Appendix Braintree Master Plan 2023–2033 for details.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Braintree, Massachusetts, a vibrant suburban community located south of Boston, combines historical charm with modern amenities. Since 1640, Braintree offers a unique blend of cultural history and natural beauty. As its population grows and diversifies, the town faces the challenges of urbanization while maintaining its small-town feel. A hub of economic activity, Braintree strategically positions itself to take advantage of regional trends such as a burgeoning commercial and industrial sectors. With a commitment to sustainability, a proactive approach to planning, and a focus on community well-being, Braintree is a town poised for a dynamic and inclusive future.

When the Town's last Master Plan was completed in 1998 just under 34,000 people were living in Braintree (U.S. Census Bureau). Since that time, the town's population has grown roughly 16 percent—adding about 5,000 residents. One key change in the structure and functioning of the Town of Braintree has been the change from a representative town meeting to a mayor-council government, with a “strong mayor” approach, in 2008. Although the Town adopted a city form of government, it is still characterized as a town.

What forces have shaped the community over time? What makes Braintree unique? How should the Town move forward into the next ten years?

The Town's Master Plan seeks to answer key questions like these. It provides local policy-makers with a rational path to prepare for and shape future development and preservation of the community—paying particular attention to areas experiencing development pressure.

A master plan is a way to respond to change over time. It is a long-term (10 year) visionary plan for the community's physical evolution. Only by first imagining where we want to go, can we figure out how to get there.

A master plan is only meaningful if it is implemented. That is why it is vital to develop a realistic plan that is thoroughly vetted and, ultimately, embraced by residents, town officials, and other community members.





CHAPTER 2

PLANNING PROCESS

Phase I **02/2022 - 06/2022**

The Braintree Master Plan process started with a study of the community’s crucial challenges and opportunities through an existing conditions analysis. The Town’s consultant team, led by JM Goldson LLC, reviewed relevant plans, studies, and current data. They also held focus groups with key stakeholders to understand the community better, and held a Community Forum so that Braintree residents could provide their insight. This information was used to identify the community sentiment, values, and priorities - and to set the direction for a community vision and goals developed during Phase II.

Phase II **07/2022 - 12/2022**

Phase II included four community engagement opportunities: a community survey, Meeting-in-a-Box, a Crowdfmap, and a Community Forum. Braintree residents weighed in on the community’s key assets, concerns, and challenges—and how they envision the future of Braintree over the next ten years. After collecting the insight of more than 2,400 points of engagement, the project team developed a draft vision statement and core themes.

Phase III **01/2023 - 07/2023**

During Phase III, the project team consulted Department heads, community groups, and local-subject matter experts to weigh in on a selection of strategies and get their feedback. As a result, a revised vision statement, core themes, goals, and strategies were defined. This interaction provided almost 100 new points of engagement, bringing the total to over 2,500 touch points. In addition, the team designed the Future Land Use map to graphically visualize the community vision.

Phase IV **08/2023 - 11/2023**

A draft Master Plan was released for public comment in 10/06/23. The plan was locally approved by the Planning Board on 12/12/2023, and filed with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities.



PHASE II

July - December 2022



1 Community Survey
1,741 respondents



1 Crowdmap
178 respondents



16 Meetings-in-a-Box
211 participants



1 Community Forum
87 participants

PHASE I

February - June 2022



6 Focus Groups
37 stakeholders



1 Community Forum
123 participants



1 Naming Survey
50 participants



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

We had over **2,500** touch points with the Braintree community throughout this process.



PHASE III

January - July 2023

-  4 Department Head Meetings
24 participants
-  15 Roadshows
15 Community Groups
-  5 Technical Working Sessions
59 participants



CHAPTER 3

BRAINTREE IN CONTEXT

Braintree is a suburban community just south of Boston, covering 14.56 square miles and housing 39,143 residents. It's situated near the southern end of Interstate 93 and is bisected by State Route 3. The Red Line's southern terminus, Braintree Station, offers transit connections to Boston, Quincy, and Cambridge. The Town has commuter rail stops for access to Boston and nearby regions. Braintree borders Quincy, Randolph, Holbrook, and Weymouth.

Braintree's development was driven by its proximity to Boston, with the arrival of the railroad in the mid-1800s sparking suburban growth. Despite being a mature suburb, it benefits from close ties to the Boston metropolitan area, attracting commuters.

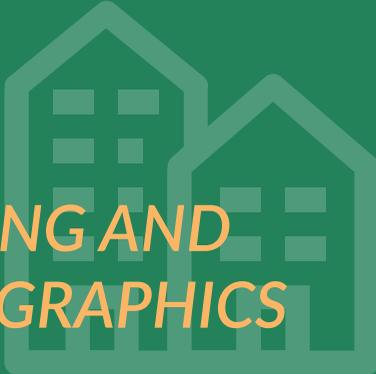
Key activity hubs include South Braintree Square, Braintree Square, and the Braintree/Weymouth Landing area, offering walkable spaces with diverse uses.



LAND USE

Approximately 58.1 percent of Braintree's land is used for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional purposes, showing little change over the years. Open space, making up over 22 percent of the land, is mostly protected from development. The Residence C zoning district, which represents only 2 percent of Braintree's land, is the only one that allows for apartment buildings and two-family homes by right. Single-family homes are allowed in about 47 percent of the land and form around 64 percent of the housing stock.

Braintree's Zoning Bylaw has seen multiple amendments since 1987. Almost every section of the Bylaw has been altered at least once, resulting in a lack of clarity that can make interpretation challenging. Additionally, several properties span multiple zoning districts, creating issues for property owners and discouraging property improvements.



HOUSING AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Braintree's population is projected to reach between 42,000 and 50,000 residents by 2040. Population growth from 2010 to 2020 outpaced housing unit growth, with a 9.51 percent increase in population compared to a 5.42 percent increase in housing units, according to the Census 2020.

The percentage of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) populations has doubled from 15 percent in 2010 to nearly 30 percent in 2020, driven mainly by an increase in the Asian population. Around 23 percent of Braintree residents speak a language other than English at home, with Chinese and Vietnamese being the most common.

Most of Braintree's housing (64 percent) is single-family detached units, and about 74 percent of housing units are owner-occupied. However, there's a mismatch between household size and the number of bedrooms available. While 56 percent of households have one or two members, only 12 percent of housing units are studios or one-bedroom, and 25 percent are studio, one-, or two-bedroom units.

Median household income in Braintree has risen by 7.41 percent since 2000. Average residents could afford to purchase a \$405,300 home, but the median home sales price in 2020 was \$615,250. Seventy-three percent of low- and moderate-income households are considered cost-burdened, paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing, which is not unique to Braintree and is common throughout the Boston area.

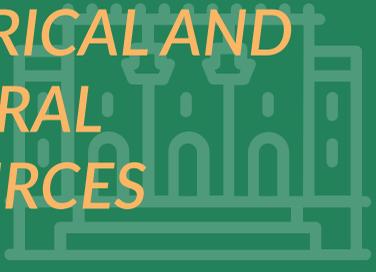


ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Despite the fastest-growing population group is the 65-74 age group, there are young people coming to Braintree which is making the population wealthier and more educated. In addition, an influx of workers increases the town's daytime population by over 7,000.

Braintree is strategically positioned to benefit from regional economic trends and transit-accessible development due to its proximity to the Red Line and commuter rail. The Town's relatively low property tax rates make it appealing for residents and businesses. Braintree has opportunities for redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and infill development. Industrial lands, office parks, and locally-oriented developments hold the potential to accommodate growth and enhance amenities and services for residents.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



The land upon which Braintree is located was previously inhabited by indigenous groups such as the Massachusett, Wampanoag, Pokanoket, and Pawtucket nations. The Town has fourteen historic buildings that exhibit local history and preserve artifacts.

Braintree was founded in 1625 and incorporated in 1640. Immediately, it was established as a mill town, farming community, and industrial hub during the 18th and 19th centuries. In addition, the Town has been the birthplace of John Adams, second President of the US, and John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the US.

The Braintree Town Center Historic District, established in 1980, encompasses and safeguards 19 historical structures regulated by the Historical Commission. The Blue Hills Reservation Parkways, designed in the 1890s to access the Blue Hills Reservation, is a National Register Historic District partially within Braintree.

The Braintree Historical Society is also part of the historic district with six structures in its campus, including the 1720 house where General Sylvanus Thayer, the “Father of West Point”, was born.

Cultural enrichment is promoted by the Braintree Cultural Council and Braintree Community Arts Center through funding raised by the Community Preservation Act, adopted in 2002.

OPEN SPACE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND RECREATION



Braintree has about 25 percent of its total land dedicated to protected open spaces. The Cranberry Pond Conservation Area holds significant environmental importance as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, Priority Habitat of Rare Species, Critical Natural Landscape, and Core Natural Habitat. In addition, other important open spaces are Pond Meadow Park, Town Forest, Monatiquot River, Eaton’s Pond, Sunset Lake, and Blue Hills Reservation.

Drinking water in Braintree is sourced from various reservoirs, but while there’s adequate water for additional development, some non-essential water uses are restricted.

Sports, including baseball and hockey, are strong aspects of Braintree’s identity. The Braintree Parks and Recreation Department provides diverse programs, ranging from art classes to sports clinics and group trips. Despite having many playgrounds for children, limited on-site parking and inadequate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure make alternative transportation challenging and unsafe.

TRANSPORTATION



Braintree currently has 150 miles of roads, with 64 percent of those classified as small local roads meant for local access and lower traffic volumes. The Town operates half of its traffic signals and related equipment on the local road network. Most people who are employed in Braintree live outside of the Town (90 percent), and most residents work outside of Braintree (87.4 percent).

Nearly 70 percent of Braintree residents commute to work by driving alone or carpooling. Housing and transportation costs consume around 48 percent of the average resident's income, surpassing affordability thresholds.

Braintree Station's Red Line saw an average of 3,512 daily boardings in 2019. Though ridership dropped to 1,202 boarding during the COVID-19 pandemic (a 66 percent decrease), it has since partially rebounded to 1,483 boardings showing a 23 percent increase between 2020 and 2022.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE



In the coming years and decades, Braintree will face challenges due to rising temperatures, sea levels, increased precipitation, and more frequent extreme weather events. Braintree's local greenhouse gas emissions stem from factors including the electricity plant, gas leaks, and heavy highway traffic, particularly in areas populated by low-income and BIPOC communities.

Braintree is proactive in planning, with a semi-regularly updated Hazard Mitigation Plan. It achieved Green Community designation in 2021, it follows a Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan, and has a 2020 Energy Reduction Plan.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES



Braintree's town-owned buildings are aging, requiring future upgrades or replacements, and several departments have expressed this need. The Town needs more comprehensive facility assessments for building maintenance planning aligned with a five-year capital plan.

In 2018, East Middle School underwent renovations to add a new wing and in 2023, the brand new state of the art South Middle School opened. However, most educational buildings are outdated and in need of modernization and newer technologies.

Despite the Department of Veterans Services provides assistance for senior veterans, the growing population of older adults poses space, staffing, and funding challenges for the Department of Elder Affairs. Housing costs and limited transportation options affect the quality of life for older adults and veterans. Also, the Police Department requires a new facility and the Department of Public Works needs a modernized facility.

Braintree Electric Light Department (BELD) provides an excellent service to the Town, particularly related to IT services.

CHAPTER 4

IN 2033, BRAINTREE...

will be a well-run, picturesque, welcoming, family-centered suburban community. People will be attracted to Braintree because they aspire to put down roots, raise a family, and belong to a **supportive and inclusive community** as they age. The Town has prioritized and protected its residential neighborhoods as well as historic and natural resources. The Town has promoted and invested in high-quality and competitive public schools, superior recreational facilities, thriving squares and business districts, and community events that instill local pride.

Braintree will have abundant natural open space suitable for active and passive outdoor recreation, as well as a strong program to reduce the town's municipal carbon footprint. Town officials will encourage and **value collaborative engagement** and input from residents who will take part in planning initiatives that guide **economic growth and development** and help ensure fiscal health.

COMMUNITY VISION



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

MILTON

QUINCY

RANDOLPH

-  **Monatiquot River Trail**
-  **Investment and Beautification Areas**
-  **Multimodal Improvement Area - South Shore Plaza to Braintree Station**
-  **Transformation Areas**
-  **Lands of Interest/Protection Areas**
-  **Bike/Pedestrian Improvement Areas**
-  **Neighborhood Preservation Areas**
-  **River Trail Access Points**

Furnace Brook

Bouncing Brook

Blue Hill River

Narrowway Brook

Glovers Broo

28

28

24

28

93

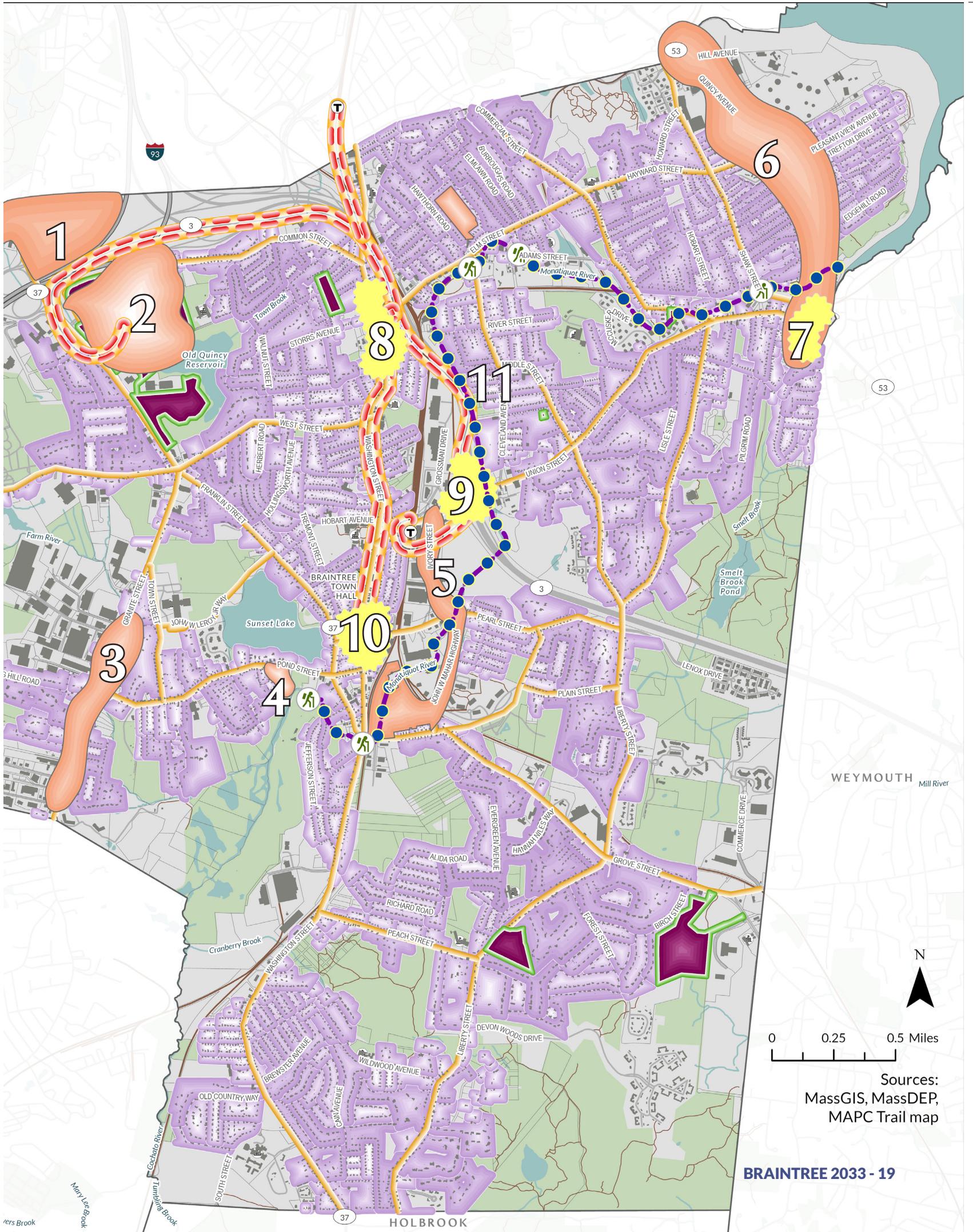
WOOD ROAD

TOBBES ROAD

JACK O'CONNOR

WEST STREET

KING HILL RO



WEYMOUTH Mill River



Sources:
MassGIS, MassDEP,
MAPC Trail map

BRAINTREE 2033 - 19

ers Brook
Mary Lee Brook
Turnpike Brook

37 HOLBROOK

TRANSFORMATION AREAS

1

Wood Road offers the opportunity to promote more commercial uses and mixed-use developments. This area has the potential to become a vibrant area that attracts visitors.

2

South Shore Plaza is one of the Town's key economic assets and represents opportunities for redevelopment.

3

Granite/Pond Street Corridor presents redevelopment and public investment opportunities to promote economic vibrancy, walkability, traffic safety, and aesthetic enhancements.

4

90 Pond Street offers the opportunity for mixed-use development that incorporates commercial and residential uses.

5

Ivory Street Corridor also offers great opportunities to increase redevelopment and the Town's tax base.

6

Quincy Avenue provides opportunities for contextual infill and redevelopment for commercial, office, and mixed-use, coupled with streetscape and walking and biking safety improvements.

INVESTMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION AREAS

7

The Landing features opportunities for mixed-use developments that can include a range of retail shops, restaurants, and residential areas contributing to the Town's economic growth and revitalization efforts.

8

Braintree Square represents a unique set of opportunities for both development and preservation. It offers opportunities for revitalization while maintaining the Town's cherished small-town character.

9

Union Street Rotary presents significant opportunities for traffic management and redevelopment by optimizing its design and surrounding infrastructure, promoting economic growth and community well-being.

10

South Braintree Square offers a unique set of opportunities for both local businesses and community development as it has accessible location and a mix of retail spaces, fostering economic growth and enhancing the quality of life of residents.

MONATIQUOT RIVER TRAIL

The trail offers residents and visitors a serene escape into nature's beauty and showcases the Town's commitment to preserving its natural heritage. Investment in this trail enhances the quality of life for Braintree's community members.

MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENT AREA

Areas aimed at improving the Town's transportation infrastructure to serve various modes of travel to promote sustainable mobility solutions and improve connectivity between neighborhoods, employment centers and recreational areas.

LANDS OF INTEREST/PROTECTION AREAS

These are open space areas and key landmarks that are irreplaceable, shape the beloved character of Braintree, and tie the community to its roots. These places call for stronger preservation protections.

BIKE/PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT AREAS

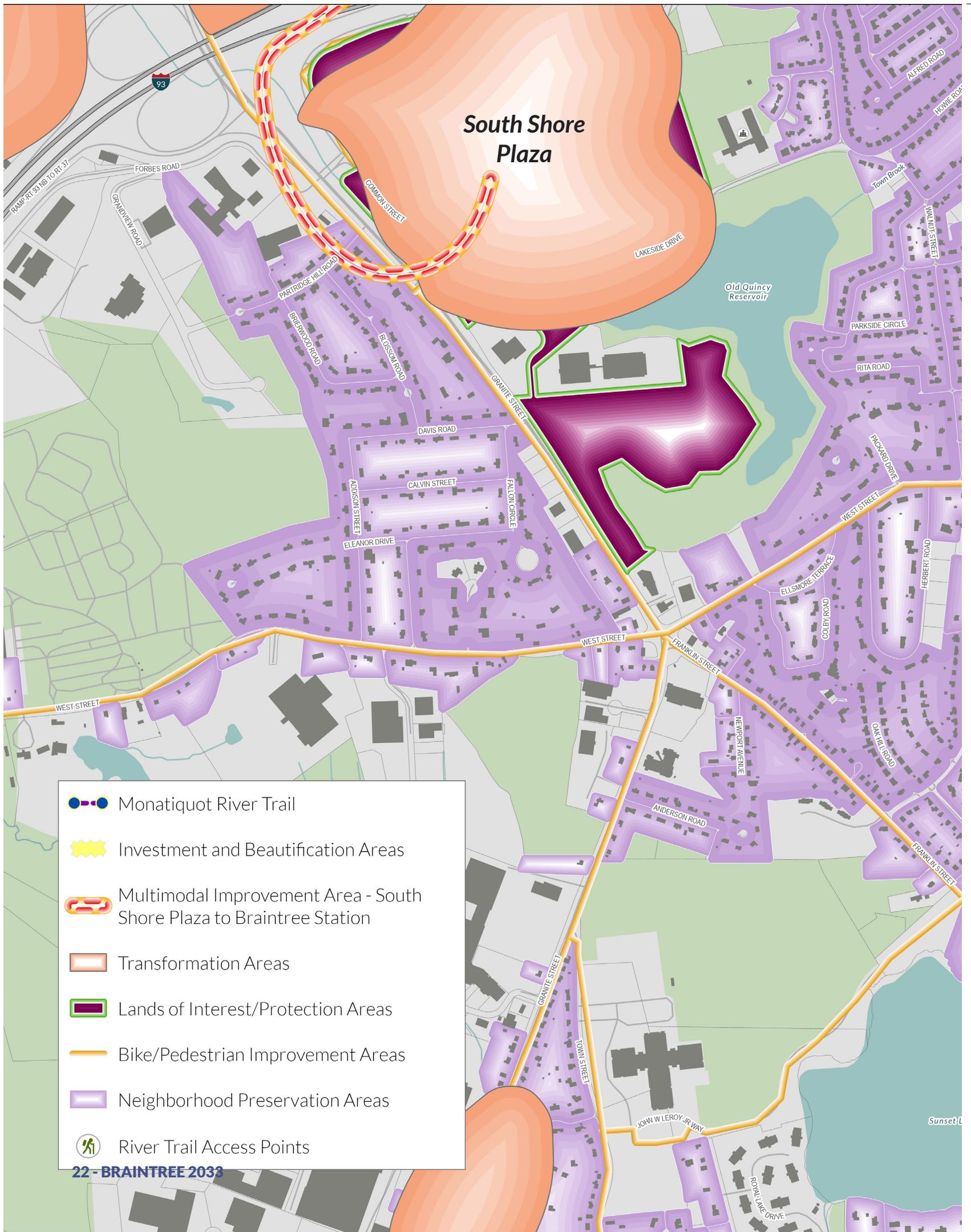
These are bike and pedestrian routes that run along Braintree's arterials and main streets and help connect residents and employees to key destinations in and out of town.

NEIGHBORHOODS PRESERVATION AREAS

All neighborhood areas in Braintree will be protected from potential impacts of nearby development. Through sensitive design and site planning, impacts can be minimized to protect these neighborhoods.

RIVER TRAIL ACCESS POINTS

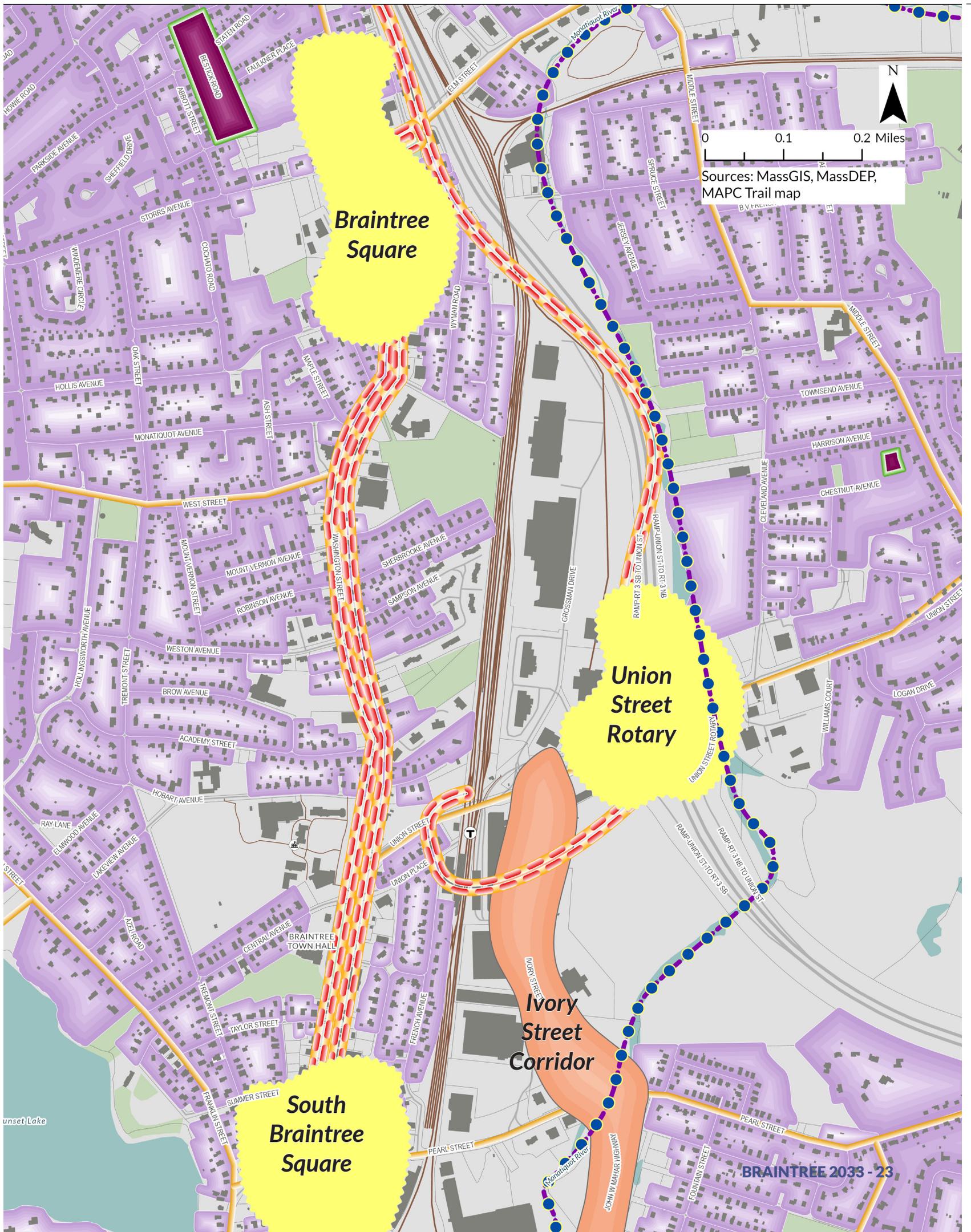
The river trail will have access points conveniently situated throughout the Town, providing easy entry for outdoor enthusiasts.



South Shore Plaza

Old Quincy Reservoir

-  Monatiquot River Trail
-  Investment and Beautification Areas
-  Multimodal Improvement Area - South Shore Plaza to Braintree Station
-  Transformation Areas
-  Lands of Interest/Protection Areas
-  Bike/Pedestrian Improvement Areas
-  Neighborhood Preservation Areas
-  River Trail Access Points



Braintree Square

Union Street Rotary

South Braintree Square

Ivory Street Corridor



Sources: MassGIS, MassDEP, MAPC Trail map

CHAPTER 5

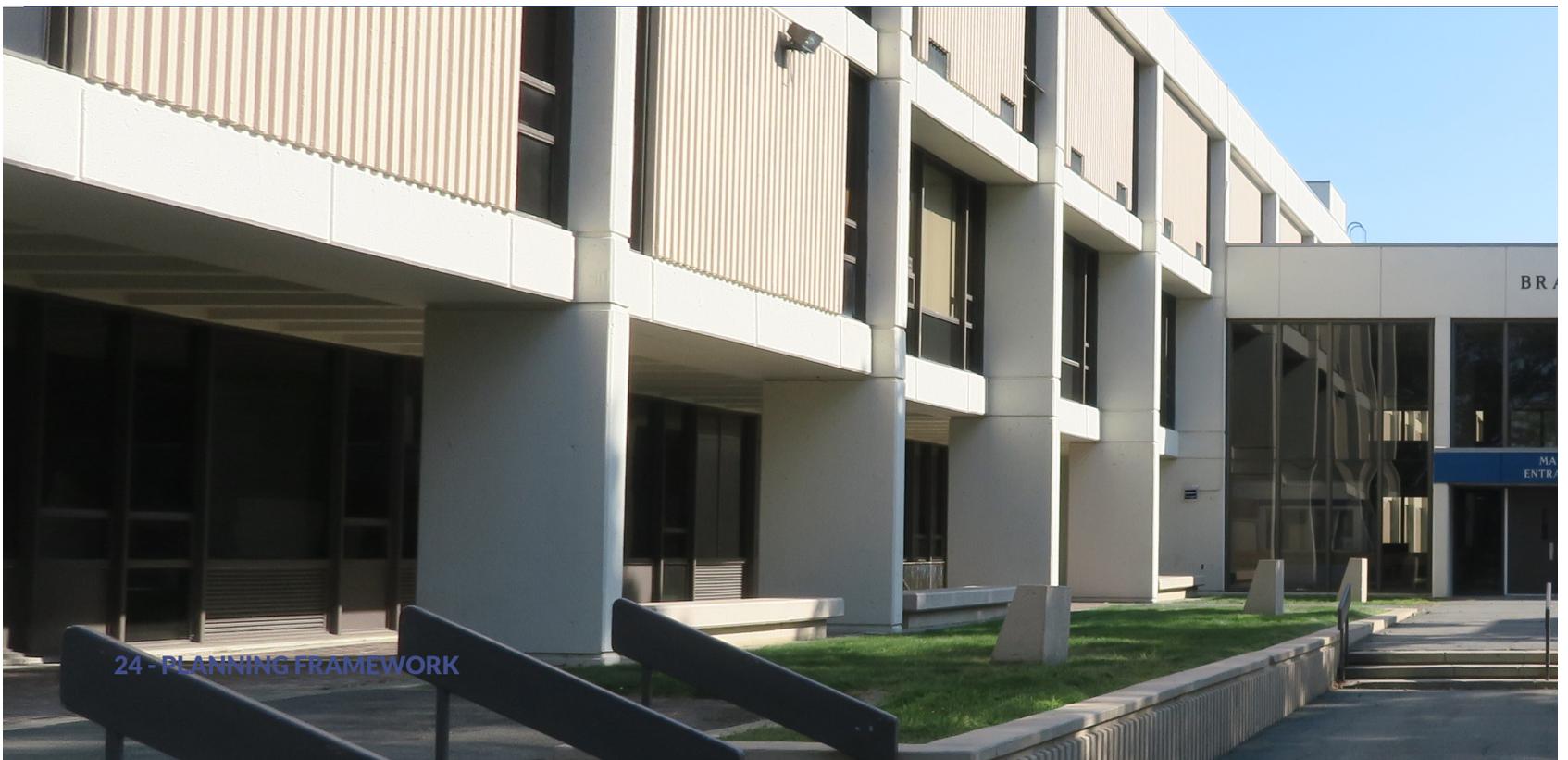
PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Vision

An aspirational view of what residents hope Braintree will be like in the future, at its very best. Before a meaningful plan can be created, the community needs to imagine the future it is aiming for. The vision statement then becomes the driving force behind the plan. An overarching vision statement is shown on p. 16, while the core themes of the vision are shown on the following pages.

Core Themes

Five core themes emerged through the planning process based on the community's values and priority issues that the community is facing: 1) A sustainable community with strong connections; 2) Strategic economic development and vibrant local businesses; 3) A safe and connected transportation network; 4) Residential neighborhoods and housing options; and 5) Expanding and modernizing town facilities, services, and infrastructure.



Statutory Elements

Massachusetts municipal master plans, per MGL c.41 s.81D, require seven statutory elements to be included. In addition to these seven, the project team included an eighth element—sustainability and resilience—to recognize Braintree’s recent commitment to sustainability through its Energy Reduction Plan. Unlike traditional master plans, this plan is not organized by the statutory elements so as to better reflect the community values and priorities that emerged from the planning process and to highlight the synergies and connections between the elements. However, all elements are covered in the substance of the plan and the report includes icons to indicate where they are addressed.

Goals

Goals are conditions to aim for that help the community achieve its vision over time. Goals must be measurable. This plan includes metrics so that the town can measure its progress towards achieving the goals.

Strategies

Strategies are ways that the Town will work to achieve one or more of the goals. They are actionable and will involve funding, regulations, programs, and/or use of other town resources, such as staff or volunteer time. The report includes icons to indicate strategy types.

Statutory Elements Icons



Housing and Demographics



Land Use



Economic Development



Historical and Cultural Resources



Open Space, Natural Resources, and Recreation



Transportation



Public Facilities and Services



Sustainability and Resilience

Strategy Types Icons



Physical/ Design/ Acquisition



Regulatory/ Policy



Programmatic



Capacity Building

(below)

Braintree High School

Source: John Phelan, 2017





CORE THEMES

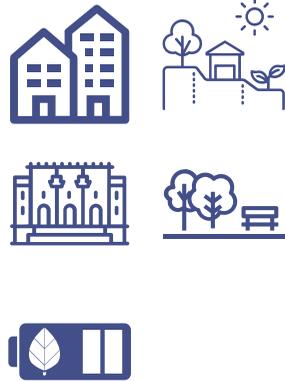
**STATUTORY
ELEMENTS**

GOALS

STRATEGIES

Core Theme 1

A Sustainable
Community with Strong
Connections



4

22

Core Theme 2

Strategic Economic
Development
and Vibrant Local
Businesses



4

13

Core Theme 3

A Safe and Connected
Transportation Network



5

18

Core Theme 4

Residential
Neighborhoods and
Housing Options



4

13

Core Theme 5

Expanding and
Modernizing Town
Facilities, Services, and
Infrastructure



4

21

CHAPTER 6

A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY WITH STRONG CONNECTIONS



Theme Vision

In 2033, Braintree will be a sustainable community with strong connections to the natural world and its historical roots. The Town has prioritized the conservation of water and other natural resources, expanded protected open space, strengthened climate resilience, preserved historic resources, and promoted the community's social vitality.

Braintree will be a sustainable community and a good steward to protect and enhance its natural areas, including wooded areas within residential neighborhoods that help provide a natural habitat and buffer residents from incompatible nearby land uses.

Goal 1

Open Space,
Natural Resources,
and Neighborhood
Preservation

Goal 2

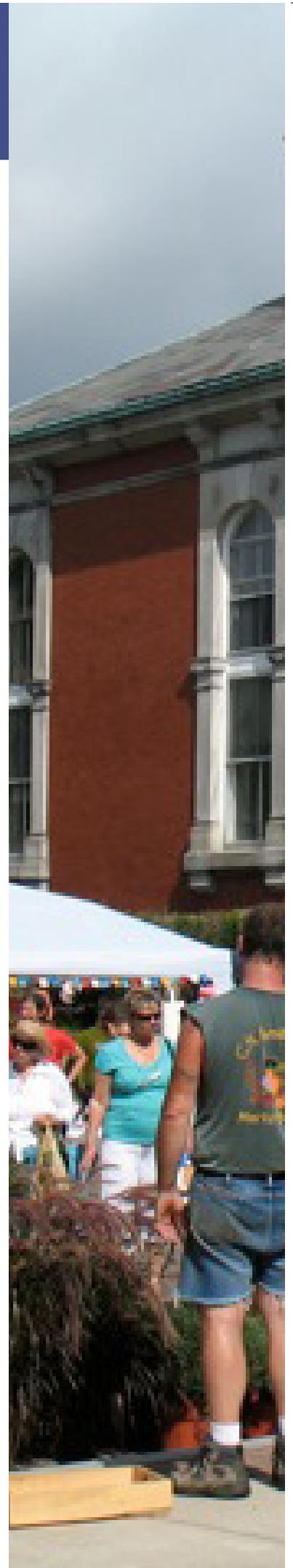
Resiliency and
Sustainability

Goal 3

Social Vitality,
Recreation, and
Preservation

Goal 4

Capacity





Goal 1 - Open Space, Natural Resources, and Neighborhood Preservation: Protect, restore, and enhance water resources, natural landscapes, biodiversity, and wildlife habitat. Preserve and protect residential neighborhoods. Work to conserve 30 percent of the Town's total land area as permanently protected open space.



Strategy 1A: Pursue land acquisition to increase conservation land area.



Strategy 1B: Explore opportunities to preserve open space and invest in pedestrian infrastructure.



Strategy 1C: Explore the creation of a private entity of "Friends Of" private non-profit organization to hold open space restrictions for town-acquired conservation areas and organize volunteer efforts to maintain acquired properties.



Strategy 1D: Explore acquiring wooded areas in residential neighborhoods to preserve buffers from incompatible uses.



Strategy 1E: Consider a zoning amendment to apply a Dark Sky Ordinance to non-residential zones to reduce light pollution without compromising safety.

Goal 2 - Resiliency and Sustainability: Support the implementation of successful resilience and sustainability initiatives to reduce and address the impacts of climate change. Strive to achieve Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040.



Strategy 2A: Plan for and invest in public Green Infrastructure Configurations.



Strategy 2B: Prioritize LEED, Passive House, or other green building certifications as funds are appropriated for new municipal facilities.



Strategy 2C: Adopt and implement a Climate Change Plan.



Strategy 2D: Update the 2020 Energy Reduction Plan for town and school facilities.



Strategy 2E: Work with Braintree Electric Light Department (BELD) to develop and implement a marketing strategy to increase public awareness of BELD's Community Solar, Braintree Drives Electric, and Braintree Re-Leaf programs.



Strategy 2F: Create incentives for rainwater harvesting.

Goal 3 - Social Vitality, Recreation and

Preservation: Enhance community pride, attractiveness, and social vitality, as well as investment in cultural events, celebrations, and public art. Promote the preservation of public and private historic resources and educational opportunities about local history.



Strategy 3A: Support added public amenities and recreation opportunities at existing public open spaces.



Strategy 3B: Identify locations and opportunities to increase public art in Town and increase resident access to arts and music programming, and sponsoring tickets to local and regional professional concerts.



Strategy 3C: Conduct and implement a Public Space Accessibility & Maintenance Plan to enhance accessibility, neighborhood access, and age-friendliness of public open spaces, parks, and facilities, and coordinate enhanced resident volunteer support to assist the town with regularly maintaining these resources.



Strategy 3D: Identify funding and support all-inclusive recreation programs for residents.



Strategy 3E: Develop a Braintree Arts & Culture landing page on the Town Website, brochure, social media content, or other materials to provide information about community organizations, programs, and initiatives.



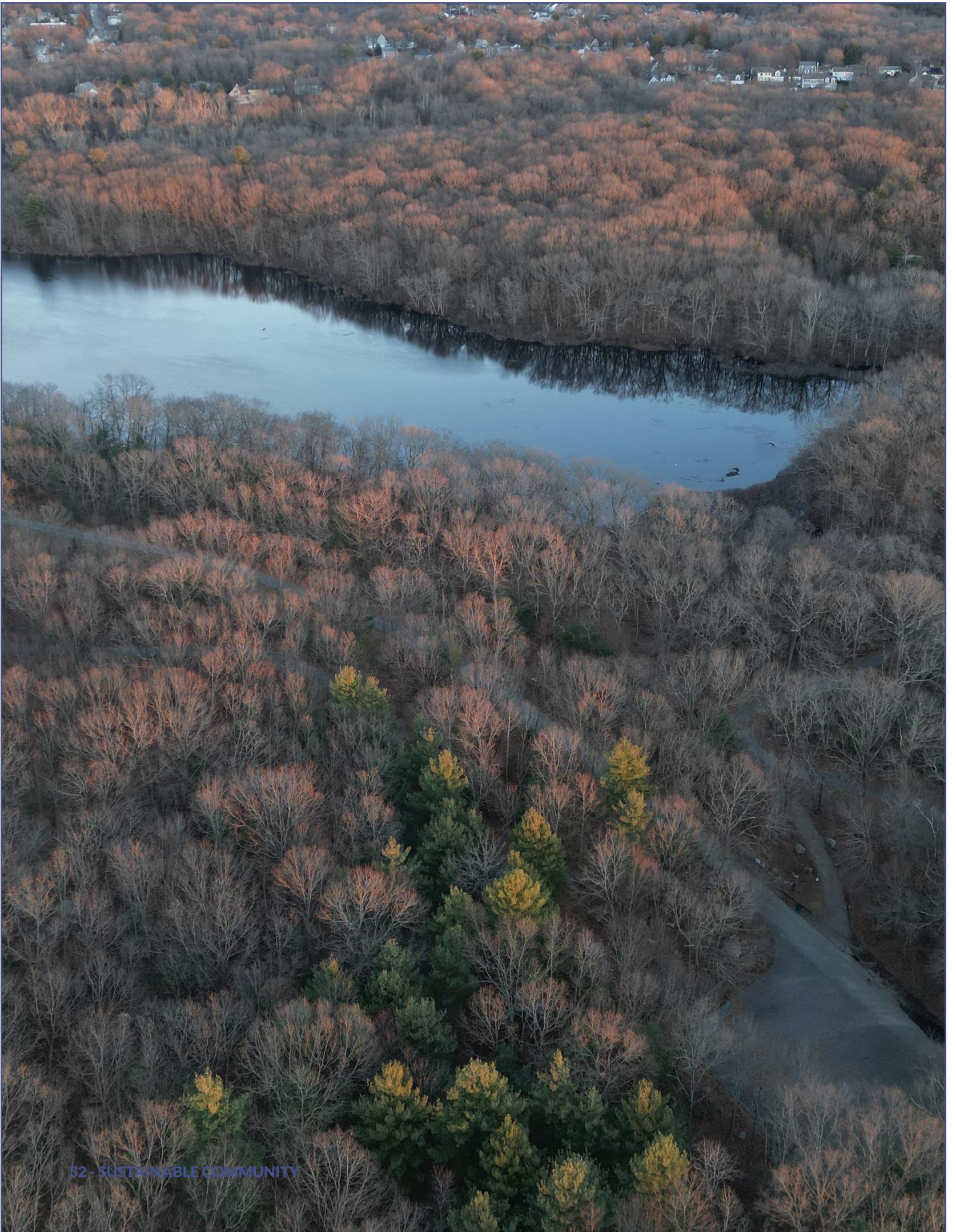
Strategy 3F: Consider options to incentivize neighborhood-supported public placemaking and other public benefits from private developers.



Strategy 3G: Enhance youth and teen spaces and programs that are multi-ethnic in nature for the promotion of mental and emotional wellness for marginalized youth and increase publicity of these programs.



Strategy 3H: Work with the Braintree Historical Society to incorporate Braintree's local history into the community through events and programming, including multi-lingual options for learning about Braintree's history.



Goal 4 - Capacity: Expand local capacity to support environmental conservation, historic preservation, sustainability and resilience initiatives, and improvements to reinforce social vitality.



Strategy 4A: Create and maintain an updated Community Preservation Plan that identifies local goals and priorities for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding, support broader community education on how CPA funds can be used, and consider increasing the CPA surcharge.



Strategy 4B: Evaluate the need for and consider increasing the capacity of the Planning and Community Development Department.



Strategy 4C: Provide adequate resources for DPW to ensure regular maintenance and beautification of public open spaces, parks, and playgrounds.

Metrics to measure progress:

Percentage/Acres of conserved/preserved area in environmental buffer zones.

Carbon footprint per capita.

Annual acres of tree canopy coverage per neighborhood.

Monthly public events per neighborhood or community wide.

CHAPTER 7

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND VIBRANT LOCAL BUSINESSES



Theme Vision

In 2033, Braintree’s commercial squares and business areas will be vibrant. The Town has pursued strategic economic development that is respectful of surrounding land uses, promotes local business, repurposes developed sites that are blighted or underutilized, supports vibrant commercial squares, protects existing neighborhoods, and revitalizes business areas.

Goal 1

Industry and Town Revenue Needs

Goal 2

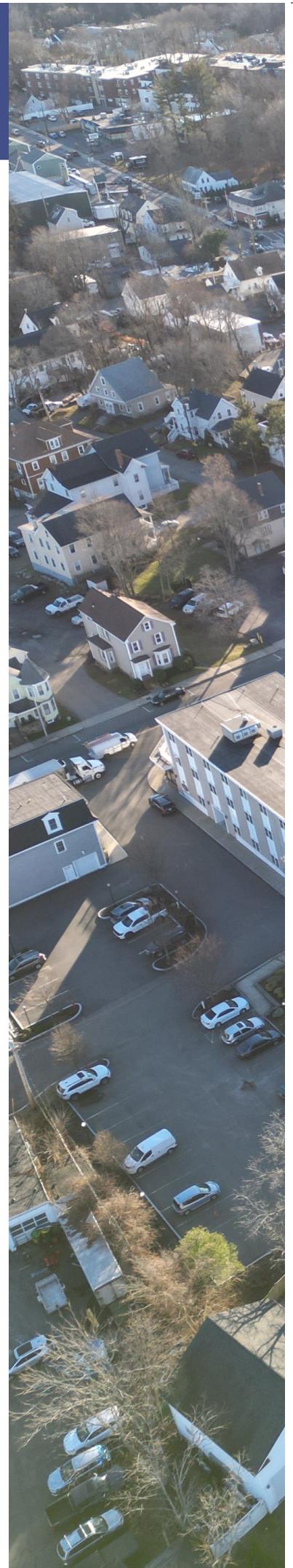
Planning for Economic Development and Repurposing Properties

Goal 3

Local Businesses and Commercial Squares

Goal 4

Capacity





Goal 1 - Industry & Town Revenue Needs:

Capitalize on the regional boom in the professional, scientific, and technical industries and proximity to Boston to create job opportunities in the region and enhance the Town's ability to attract new business trends. Striving to fulfill its revenue needs with a balanced effort to foster strategic commercial growth to help keep the base tax rate low.



Strategy 1A: Hire a consultant to complete an Economic Development Strategic Plan that identifies business targets to increase the commercial tax base.



Strategy 1B: Amend the use table in the Town's Zoning Bylaw to include and attract unique business models or industry sectors.



Strategy 1C: Proactively market the Town's resources to desired industry sectors. Target businesses being priced out of Boston/Cambridge/Somerville.



Strategy 1D: Conduct a study to explore the fiscal impact of removing the transfer station and the potential for leasing to different users. Consider non-renewal of the Town's lease to the transfer station and partner with the private sector to redevelop the site.

Goal 2 - Planning for Economic Development & Repurposing Properties:

Develop strategic community-supported economic growth plans for any area of the Town that is appropriate for increased development. Repurpose key blighted and underutilized properties and areas of interest carefully and strategically based on comprehensive community-supported plans.



Strategy 2A: Create a community-supported plan envisioning the transformation of South Shore Plaza site.



Strategy 2B: Track underutilized and/or vacant properties for economic development opportunities.



Strategy 2C: Attract commercial tenants to underutilized commercial properties through workforce development programs, flexible lab and Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) zoning and becoming a Platinum BioReady community by 2027.



Strategy 2D: Eliminate instances of split zoning that occur on individual parcels with the resulting zone equivalent to all abutting and/or a majority of the abutting zones with input from direct abutters through the current process of planning and zoning review.



Strategy 2E: Incentivize redevelopment of underutilized properties to become more vibrant.

Goal 3 - Local Businesses and Commercial

Squares: Beautify and activate Braintree Square, South Braintree Square, and The Landing to promote local businesses and expand the range of business types. Promoting and helping to sustain various sizes of businesses, as well as artists and entrepreneurs, to ensure a healthy mix of restaurants and retail, including locally owned, in new buildings, renovated or redeveloped structures, and preserved historic buildings.



Strategy 3A: Invest in public and incentivize private streetscape improvements, landscaping upgrades, and beautification that enhance and increase the functionality of Braintree Square, South Braintree Square, as well as East Braintree Square/the Landing.



Strategy 3B: Pursue data-driven solutions to address the parking needs in our business areas. Develop an On-Street Parking Plan for public roads with considerations for revenue generation.



Strategy 3C: Conduct outreach to local business owners to provide information about existing public programs.

Goal 4 - Capacity: Expand the Town's capacity to implement and coordinate economic development initiatives, support local businesses, and reinforce the vibrancy of commercial areas.



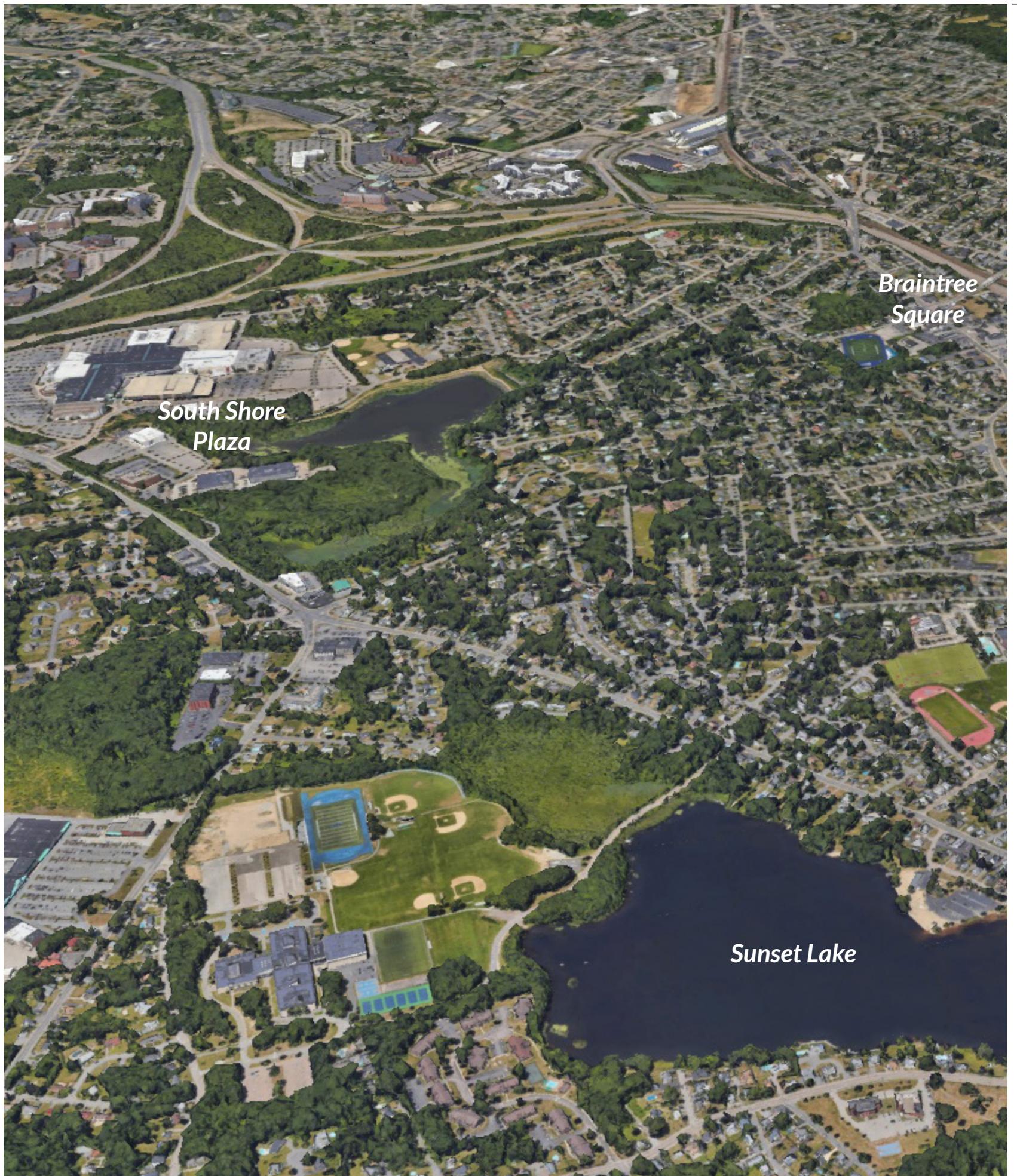
Strategy 4A: Hire dedicated economic development staff to advance the Town's economic development goals including marketing, recruiting, and grant writing and management.

Metrics to measure progress:

Total annual tax revenue generated from commercial and industrial uses.

Annual square feet of redeveloped/reused former vacant properties.

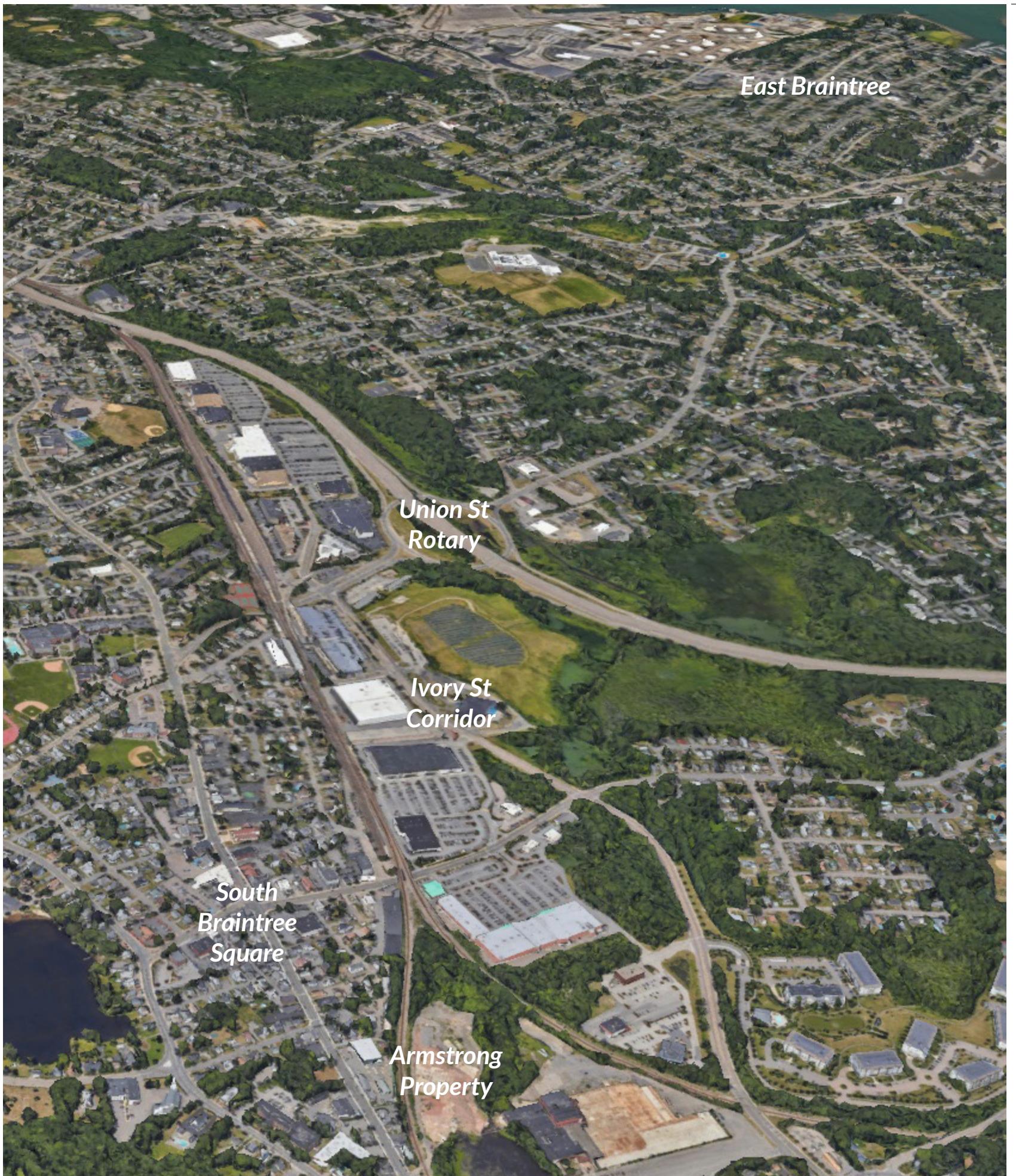
Percentage of types of commercial uses opened during the most recent year.



*South Shore
Plaza*

*Braintree
Square*

Sunset Lake



East Braintree

*Union St
Rotary*

*Ivory St
Corridor*

*South
Braintree
Square*

*Armstrong
Property*

CHAPTER 8

A SAFE AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



Theme Vision

In 2033, Braintree's transportation infrastructure will be safe for all users with prioritized pedestrian access and convenient alternative modes of transportation including bicycling and local shuttles. The Town has invested in upgraded roadways and transportation infrastructure which has improved safety for all users and reduced neighborhood cut-through traffic, while producing better connectivity to help people get safely around the Town and region.

Goal 1

Traffic Calming and Safety

Goal 2

Maintenance and Design

Goal 3

Pedestrian and Bicycling Infrastructure

Goal 4

Corridors and Collaboration

Goal 5

Transportation Options

(right)
Weymouth Landing/East Braintree station
Source: Pottewa, 2007





Goal 1 - Traffic Calming & Safety: Improve safety of local roads with traffic calming measures through physical design, increasing enforcement to reduce speeding, reducing cut-through traffic, and restricting commercial trucks in residential neighborhoods.



Strategy 1A: Amend Town Traffic Ordinance Article XIV to ensure that the size, scale, and level of impact to the entire community introduced by a project are fully considered and utilize the development review process to require developers to make improvements to impacted intersection.



Strategy 1B: Implement community-wide wayfinding signage to direct traffic to key destinations without routing through residential neighborhoods.



Strategy 1C: Undertake traffic studies to analyze cut-through traffic patterns on residential streets and identify appropriate mitigation strategies. Develop an associated traffic calming toolkit that identifies traffic calming measures to implement based on the street type and context.



Strategy 1D: Create a local Traffic Enforcement Division in the Police Department and allocate a budget for programs that support education about and compliance with traffic regulations and establish a process for enforcing parking violations.



Strategy 1E: Designate truck routes to reduce truck traffic through residential neighborhoods.



Strategy 1F: Develop Safety Action Plan to support a Safe System Approach to capital investments and position the Town for federal grant funding through grant programs such as Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A).

Goal 2 - Maintenance and Design: Promote regular maintenance and a unified design of roads and sidewalks to improve road condition and safety including timely sidewalk plowing along school routes.



Strategy 2A: Expand and reinvigorate the “100-roads” program to include annual street and sidewalk maintenance.



Strategy 2B: Prioritize design changes consistent with the Town’s ADA Transition Plan to improve accessibility and safety on sidewalks, at pedestrian crossings, and in public parking facilities and develop a Town-wide guide for sidewalk materials and construction.



Strategy 2C: Revise sidewalk clearing policy in Town Code to require property owners remove snow from all sidewalks adjacent to public streets.



Strategy 2D: Continue regular evaluations of all signalized intersections to identify level of service failures and to prioritize needed improvements. Update a signal maintenance plan annually to identify targeted funding.

Goal 3 - Pedestrian and Bicycling Infrastructure:

Upgrade pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure including crossings that are ADA-compliant to promote safety; provide convenient walking and biking commuting alternatives to train stations and bus stops; and enhance options for getting safely around Town.



Strategy 3A: Develop criteria for prioritizing capital investments for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.



Strategy 3B: Develop a Safe Routes to School Action Plan to expand on and support Town Schools that are SRTS Partners and increase awareness and learning opportunities.



Strategy 3C: Invest in streetscape projects that improve walkability and bikeability from neighborhoods to commercial centers.



Goal 4 - Corridors and Collaboration: Collaborate regionally and with the State to improve road safety and redesign traffic flow. Improve commercial corridors connecting surrounding municipalities with improved transportation systems.



Strategy 4A: Work with state and federal agencies to address critical traffic congestion and safety issues at “Braintree Split” and the Union Street traffic rotary.



Strategy 4B: Consider participating in regional transit collaborations.



Strategy 4C: Track when state streets are slated for repaving, restriping, and restoration or reconstruction projects, and collaborate with MassDOT to achieve the Town’s desired street upgrades.

Goal 5 - Transportation Options: Expand the variety of transportation options for local and regional commuters and visitors to the Town’s commercial squares, business districts, and other locally frequented areas.



Strategy 5A: Consider feasible options for expanding local public transit connections.



Strategy 5B: Explore private partnerships with business owners for shuttle service throughout the Town from the Braintree T Station.

Metrics to measure progress:

Monthly transportation complaints and incidents per neighborhood.

Monthly traffic calming measures per neighborhood.

Annual resources allocated to street, accessibility, sidewalk and transportation infrastructure per unit length.

Increase in the number of vehicles on roads with new developments during peak hours.

CHAPTER 9

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING OPTIONS



Theme Vision

In 2033, Braintree will have a reasonable supply of diverse housing, including affordable housing options, that are compatibly scaled and well-designed to harmonize with the context of the surrounding neighborhood. The Town has carefully and strategically established growth policies that preserve, protect, and improve existing residential neighborhoods.

Goal 1

Protecting
Neighborhoods and
Enhance Community
Engagement

Goal 2

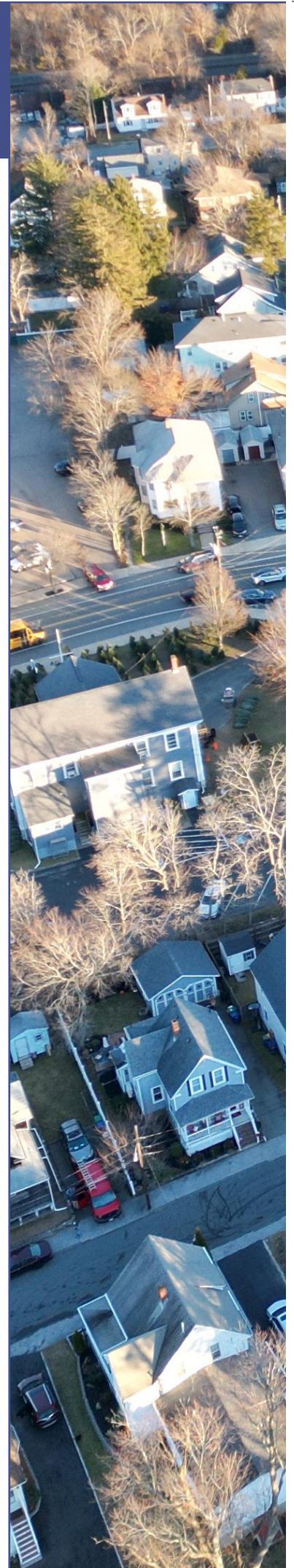
Diverse Housing
Options

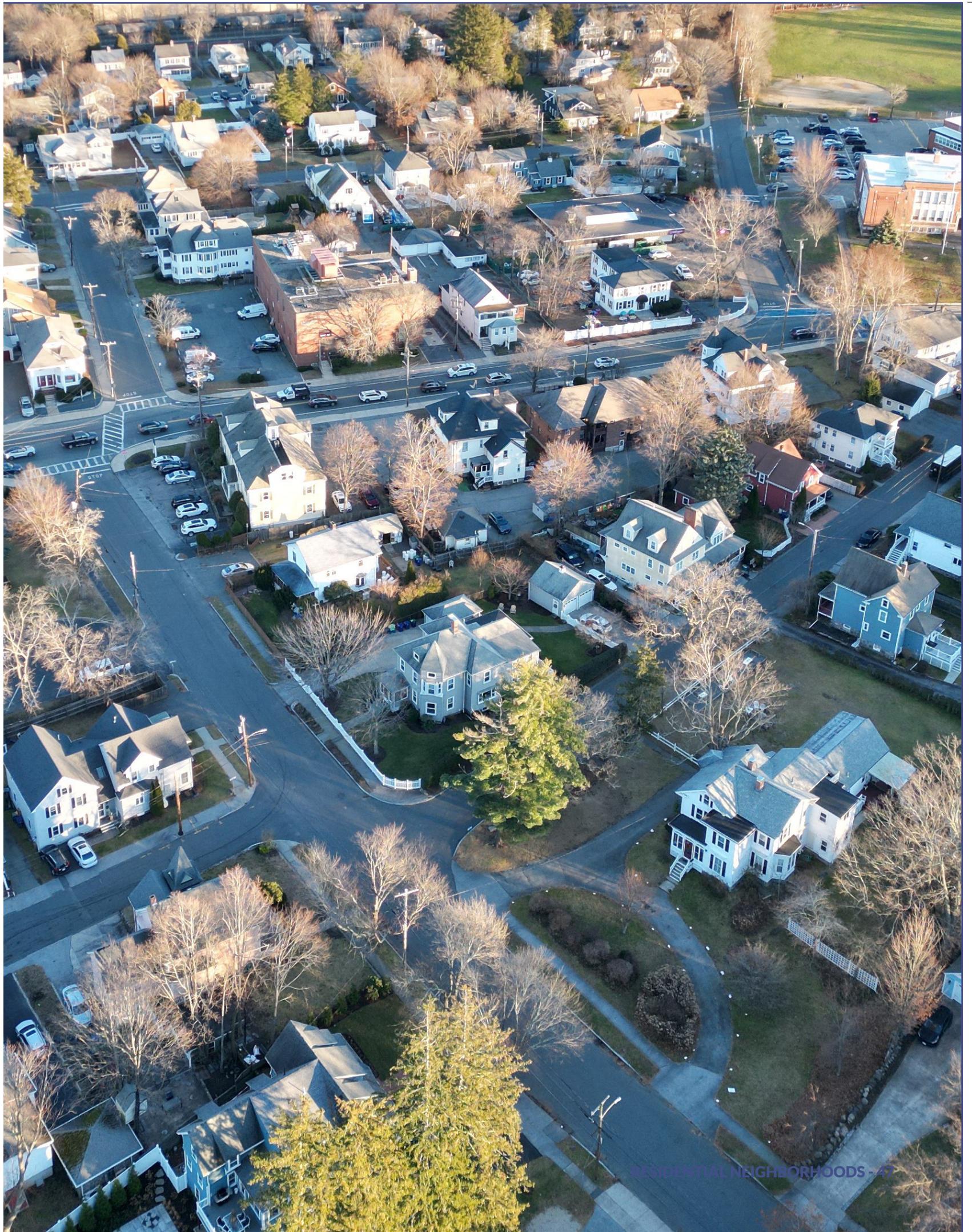
Goal 3

Locations Accessible to
Transit

Goal 4

Maintain State's Current
Housing Goals





Goal 1 - Protecting Neighborhoods & Enhance Community Engagement: Create and enhance land use policies that protect neighborhoods, community members, and the environment from the impacts of commercial and other incongruent land uses.



Strategy 1A: When developing housing regulations, policies, or programs, include a broader representation of community members.



Strategy 1B: Amend zoning requirements to strengthen protections for neighborhoods that abut potential developments, decreasing height allowances as development transitions closer to smaller-scale residential neighborhoods.



Strategy 1C: Consider zoning amendment to include provisions for regulating accessory structures.

Goal 2 - Diverse Housing Options: Carefully consider a diverse range of well-designed and compatibly scaled housing options that are supported by the community.



Strategy 2A: Consider community-supported refinements to the Zoning Bylaw to promote residential and mixed-use zoning.



Strategy 2B: Work with non-profit, mission-based developers, and/or service agencies focused on veteran needs.



Strategy 2C: Identify and consider amendments to the Zoning Bylaw that facilitate continuing care retirement communities and senior assisted living developments.



Strategy 2D: Encourage more small-scale housing options and create opportunities for multi-generational housing.



Strategy 2E: Study potential benefits of revising residential dimensional standards to match historical development patterns of existing neighborhoods to encourage appropriately scaled new homes on vacant lots.

Goal 3 - Locations Accessible to Transit: Carefully consider options for housing that are accessible to mass transit.



Strategy 3A: Update the neighborhood/corridor plan for Ivory St/Grossman Dr and rezone the area to facilitate its redevelopment for mixed-use and mixed-income housing.



Strategy 3B: Through zoning amendments, encourage development of new housing options within walking distance of new commercial and industrial uses and/or areas with employment opportunities.

Metrics to measure progress:

Annual change of housing units by type, location, age restriction, affordability, and population type.

Annual zoning amendments, policies, and local decision-making that promote residential neighborhood protection, preservation and enhancement through dimensional and buffer revisions.

Goal 4 - Maintain State's Current Housing Goals:

Increase the affordable housing stock to reach the current State's housing goals. As of October 2023, the goal is for 10 percent of the year-round housing stock to be included in the Subsidized Housing Inventory.



Strategy 4A: Continue tracking affordable units that might be coming to the end of their affordability period and work with the Housing Authority and housing developers to identify strategies/funding sources to preserve affordable units.



Strategy 4B: Continue to support the adoption of an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.



Strategy 4C: Encourage using Community Preservation Funds for Community Housing projects to achieve and maintain the state's current affordable housing goals.





CHAPTER 10

EXPANDING AND MODERNIZING TOWN FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Theme Vision

In 2033, Braintree will have new, expanded, and modernized Town facilities, services, and infrastructure that residents feel proud of. Residents will feel respected and welcome to share their ideas and perspectives to take a more active role in designing and establishing the policies and investments to promote the community where they wish to live. The Town has prioritized fiscal planning and investment, especially in public schools and sound maintenance of town and school facilities, as well as expanded ways for community members to participate in local decision-making.

Goal 1

Facilities and Services

Goal 2

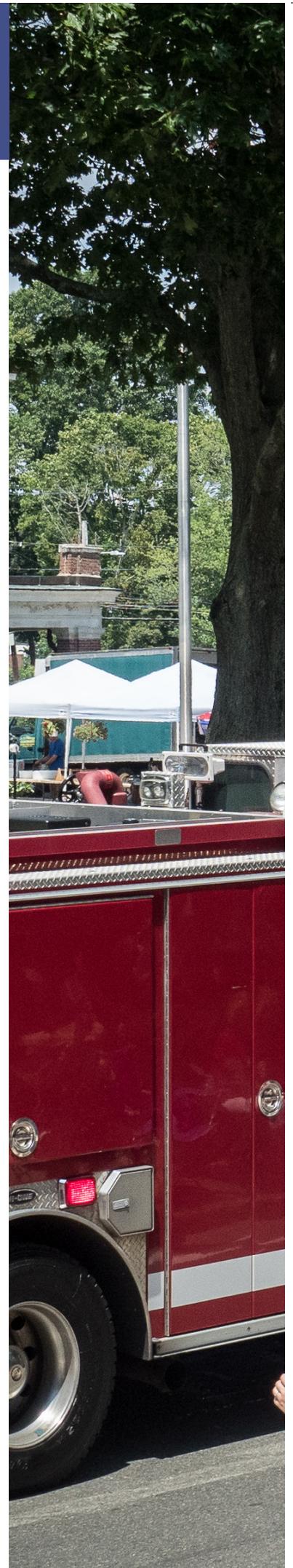
Infrastructure

Goal 3

Engagement and
Transparency

Goal 4

Public Safety and
Capacity





Goal 1 - Facilities and Services: Foster well-maintained, modern, and accessible Town buildings.



Strategy 1A: Conduct facility needs assessments for all applicable town-owned buildings to identify all capital needs.



Strategy 1B: Complete a library space needs study.



Strategy 1C: Continue and expand programs that reduce language and technology barriers for older adults and other residents.



Strategy 1D: Identify and implement the preferred solutions for addressing the deficiencies at Braintree High School.



Strategy 1E: Conduct a space needs analysis for Elder Affairs to explore the feasibility of greatly improving the existing Senior Center.



Strategy 1F: Fund the construction of a new consolidated DPW facility as envisioned by the feasibility study developed for the department.



Strategy 1G: Implement a fleet management/replacement plan for vehicles as part of the CIP/annual budget process.



Strategy 1H: Create a plan to digitize and archive all Town documents to ensure consistency in methods, storage, and security.



Strategy 1I: Evaluate the impacts of consolidating neighborhood schools on budgets, capacity, facilities, and educational outcomes.



Strategy 1J: Designate Braintree as an age-friendly community. Consider participating in the AARP Age-Friendly Community program to access technical assistance and support.

Metrics to measure progress:

Annual investment in land, buildings, vehicles and infrastructure by location.

Annual change of crimes per neighborhood.

Monthly attendees to Town meetings.

Goal 2 - Infrastructure: Improve and maintain public drinking water, sewer, stormwater, and electric infrastructure and increase efforts to ensure resilience and reliance on renewable energy.



Strategy 2A: Continue to invest in public infrastructure improvements to address infiltration and inflow (I/I) issues across the sewer system.



Strategy 2B: Support investment in the proposed Tri-Town Water Treatment Plan and expand capacity as water needs increase.

Goal 3 - Engagement and Transparency: Ensure that Town officials, including elected and appointed board and committee members and Town employees, are results-oriented, practice transparency, and respect community input.



Strategy 3A: Explore opportunities to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion services.



Strategy 3B: Enhance town communications with residents and to ensure regular updates, issue a quarterly town newsletter, and increase overall public community input.



Strategy 3C: Create a Diversity Empowerment Task Force to identify and plan for the needs of residents of color.



Strategy 3D: Encourage community public service involvement and education.

Goal 4 - Public Safety and Capacity: Improve public safety facilities, services, and equipment to ensure community safety, strengthen human resources through best employment practices and appropriate compensation for town personnel, and expand town capacity to leverage town investments with other private and public funding.



Strategy 4A: Identify funding and expand police department staff including full-time officers.



Strategy 4B: Identify funding opportunities and continue to fund the mental health clinician co-responder model with the police department.



Strategy 4C: Aggressively pursue federal and state funding to assist the Town in funding its capital needs, potentially through hiring a grant writer.



Strategy 4D: Fund a Personnel Plan to evaluate department staffing capacity, priorities, salaries, and benefits for staff positions across different departments to ensure competitiveness with similar-sized and resourced communities in Massachusetts and evaluate department budgets with the potential to restore funding to pre-Pandemic levels.



Strategy 4E: Update the emergency management process and system and streamline communications through a single platform.





CHAPTER 11

IMPLEMENTATION

The Braintree Master Plan Action Plan outlines a wide range of strategies to achieve the Master Plan’s vision and goals. The Master plan is comprised of 21 goals and 87 actionable strategies. Each strategy identifies a Town board, committee, or department as a recommended lead party responsible for that strategy. Other supporting parties to be involved are also suggested.

To coordinate and oversee these varied actions, the Town could consider creating a Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC). If appointed, the MPIC shall work with these various parties in a supportive and collaborative role to:

- Track the implementation of the Town’s Master Plan through 2033.
- Create tracking metrics to measure progress toward achieving the Master Plan goals.
- Assist with implementation by liaising with town boards and commissions to ensure commitments to implementing the plan alongside their annual strategic and work plan activities.
- Provide regular updates to the Town Council and prepare annual reports documenting progress.
- Maintain an updated live Action Plan spreadsheet to track implementation progress in a way that provides a high level of public transparency.







THANK YOU!

Thank you to the more than 2,500 Braintree community members who gave their time and insights to this project by participating in-person and online in our focus groups, community survey, meetings-in-a-box, master plan steering committee meetings, and technical working sessions.

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Daniel Hickey – Assistant to the Mayor

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Louise Quinlan, Office Manager

Planning Board

Kim Kroha, Vice-Chair
Darryl K. Mikami, Clerk
William J. Grove, Member
Thomas M. Kent, Member
David Storlazzi, Member
Jennifer Connolly, Alternate

Master Plan Steering Committee

Jennifer Wadland (Chair), Braintree Resident
Amy Holmes (Vice-Chair), Owner - The Casual Cup Café
Peter C. Herbst Jr., Owner - Herbst Law Group, LLC
Shelley North, Owner - Glow Beauty Boutique
Thomas M. Kent, Planning Board Member
David Cunningham, Braintree Resident
Justine Huang, Braintree Resident
Liz Page, Braintree Resident
Rayna Rubin, Braintree Resident
Councilor Julia Flaherty, Town Councilor
Councilor Joseph Reynolds, Town Councilor
(Former) Erin V. Joyce, Planning Board Member
(Former) Kay Young Owner - Kay's Cans and Bottles

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Charles B. Ryan, Vice President
Shannon L. Hume, Councilor at Large
David M. Ringius, Jr., Councilor at Large
Julia Flaherty, District 1
Joseph Reynolds, District 2
Elizabeth Maglio, District 3
Stephen C. O'Brien, District 4
Lawrence Mackin, Jr., District 6

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Bill Bottiggi, General Manager
Jeff Kunz – Solid Waste Manager
Jim Lee - Superintendent of Schools
Mike McGourty - Facilities Director
James M. Casey – Town Clerk
Sharmila Biswas – Director of Elder Affairs
Chief Timothy Cohoon - Police Department
Chief James O'Brien – Fire Department
Marybeth McGrath – Director of Municipal Licenses
Russ Forsberg – Building Inspector
Crystal Huff – Town Solicitor
Terri Stano – Library Director
John Thompson – Assistant Director of Public Works Engineering
Ben Hulke – Assistant Director of Public Works Highway
Christopher Griffin – Interim Director of Recreation
Lou Dutton - Water and Sewer Superintendent
James Arsenaault – Director of Public Works

Community Boards, Commissions and Civic Groups

Community Preservation Committee
School Committee
Elder Affairs/Senior Center
Tri-Town Board of Water Commissioners
Board of Health
Sustainable Braintree
Zoning Board of Appeals

Braintree Chamber of Commerce
Board of Assessors
North Braintree Civic Association
East Braintree Civic Association
Conservation Commission
Historical Commission
Commission on Disabilities
Technical Committees
Natural Resources/ Conservation/ Sustainability
Public Facilities
Economic Growth
Traffic and Transportation
Housing

BCAM TV

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Gerry Commack
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