

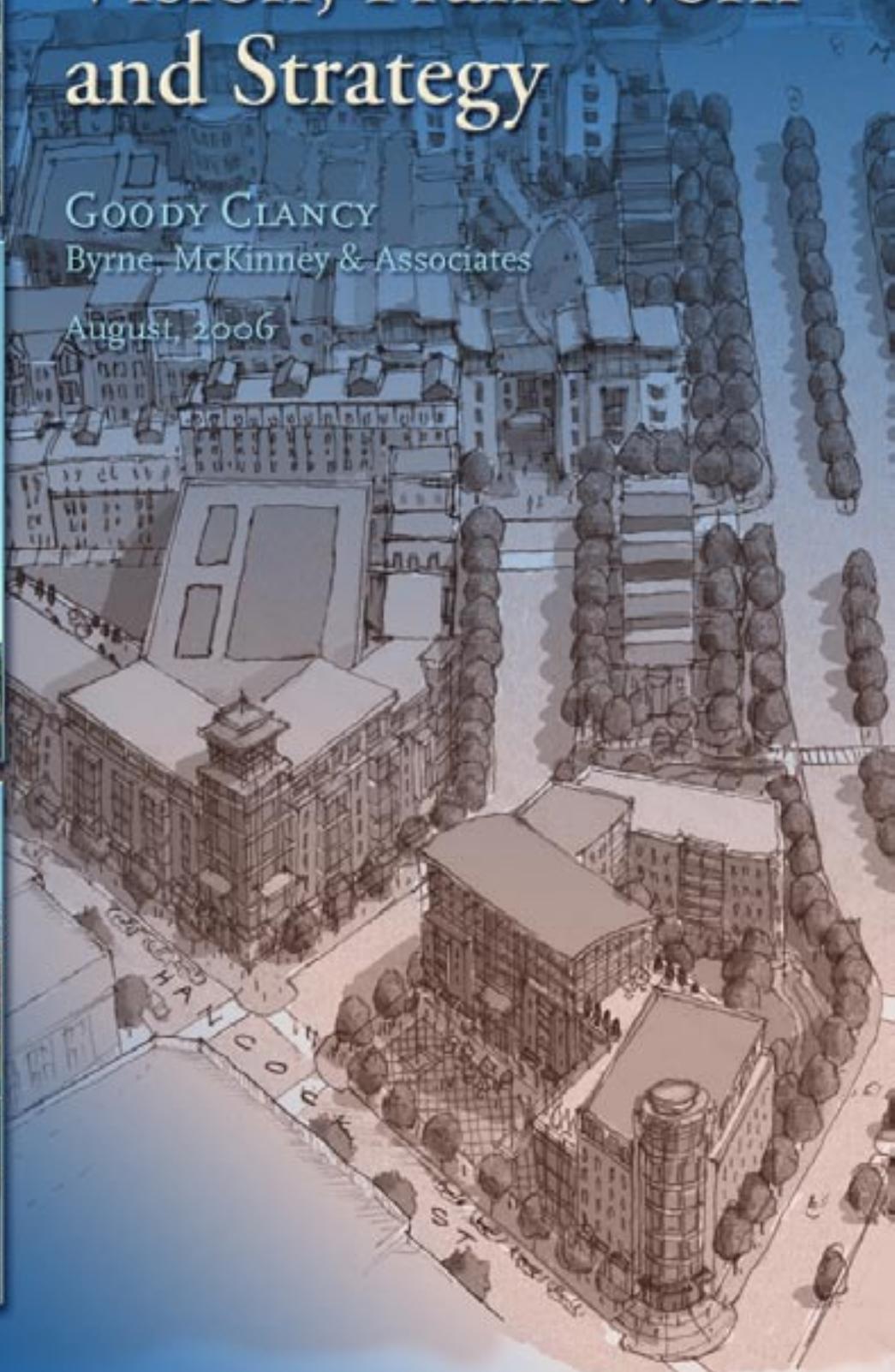
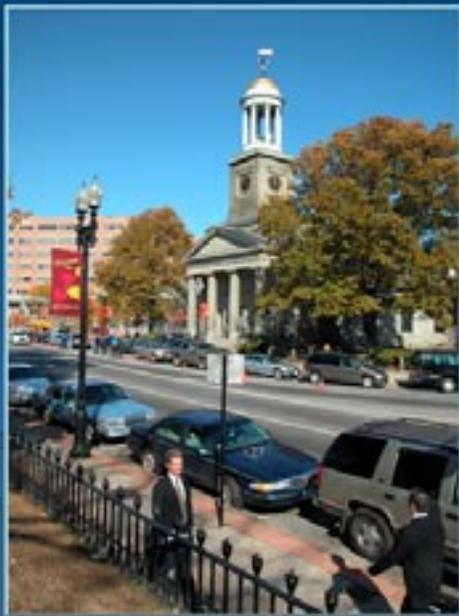
Mayor William J. Phelan  
Downtown Redevelopment Committee

# Quincy Downtown Vision, Framework and Strategy

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Byrne, McKinney & Associates

August, 2006





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Prepared by Goody Clancy  
and Byrne, McKinney & Associates

August 25, 2006





**FROM MAYOR  
WILLIAM J.  
PHELAN**

## To the People of Quincy...

The reimagining, revitalization, and reinvigoration of our city's downtown is an exciting project—and an important one! Proud and historic Quincy Center has weathered decades of decline as retail fled to the suburbs, manufacturing moved offshore, and the families of shipbuilders moved on in search of new jobs.

Once the meeting spot for Quincy's many and varied neighborhoods, Quincy Center today is under-tenanted, under-utilized—and *under-appreciated!* To the thoughtful among us, however, the “bones” of our grand downtown offer an opportunity of unprecedented magnitude. Demographics, economics, and modern urban-planning techniques have converged to position Quincy Center as one of America's premier downtown destinations.

This Vision Statement is the result of an ongoing public process. One of the very first priorities of my administration was to channel the enormous existing public appetite for downtown change into a series of achievable goals. We constituted a Downtown Redevelopment Committee of stakeholders and experts to begin the process of describing and responding to the challenges and opportunities inherent in a project of this scope. We held public meetings with government officials, urban design and transportation experts, and other experienced in large-scale public revitalization projects. We sponsored facilitated charrettes at which the public shared its hopes and ideas for the future of downtown Quincy. And we assembled a team of the very best designers, planners, and other experts in the country to aid us in setting the stage in the best possible way to ensure future success.

We have done exactly that.

From a streamlined permitting process to a comprehensive, forward-thinking zoning scheme, Quincy is ready to encourage and accommodate significant private investment in our downtown.

From the first District Improvement Financing zone approved in the Commonwealth to the construction of a roadway 30 years in the planning—the Concourse—Quincy has signaled its readiness to participate meaningfully in the rebuilding of our great city.

The pieces are in place, the public is firm in its demand for positive change, and the political will exists at both state and local levels. We are on the threshold of the most significant and positive redevelopment of our city in many generations.

I hope you find this Vision Statement a helpful jumping-off point in understanding the direction in which we hope to take the downtown. The public process is ongoing, and I look forward to working with everyone involved as we move this critically important initiative forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William J. Phelan".

Mayor William J. Phelan





## Acknowledgements

The City of Quincy and the Downtown Redevelopment Committee would like to thank the hundreds of members of the community who have devoted their time and effort to working with us in developing the *Quincy Downtown Vision, Framework, and Strategy*. Many of your ideas have been incorporated into this report and will benefit the city for generations to come.

### Mayor William J. Phelan

Downtown Redevelopment Committee

Quincy Planning Department

Dennis E. Harrington, Planning Director

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Robert Harnais, chairman

William Adams

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*Quincy Downtown Vision, Framework, and Strategy*

Prepared by Goody Clancy

*with*

Byrne, McKinney & Associates

August 2006

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Overview

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## INTRODUCTION

Quincy Center is the core of the City of Quincy, an eclectic urban community of just under 90,000 residents. The 152-acre Quincy Center District reflects both the challenges and strengths found in the downtowns of many US cities. The city has seen residents and businesses move away from its urban core and—like so many other city centers across America—has endured gradual economic decline. Yet the “bones” of a great center can still be found in the matrix of pedestrian-friendly streets; historic cultural institutions; a still-lively commercial “Main Street” that lies adjacent to stable residential areas; and in emerging pockets of redevelopment within downtown, including two high-density residential projects close to the United First Parish Church. Quincy Center also contains one of the most beautiful buildings in the country, H.H. Richardson’s Crane Library.

*Quincy Downtown Vision, Framework, and Strategy* (the Framework) paints a picture of the city Quincy can become. The Framework’s urban design recommendations, together with its implementation strategy, build on Quincy Center’s legacy to further strengthen downtown’s position as the city’s heart. It will leverage the city’s considerable assets (location, infrastructure, transit) to attract people to live and work in Quincy Center; they, in turn, will support



Unattractive single-story buildings in Quincy Center are unwelcoming.

a new generation of lively retail and other uses that will restore downtown as the center of the city’s life. Implementation of the Framework also promises to make Quincy Center one of the most significant examples of transit-oriented downtown revitalization in the US.

The Framework—commissioned by Mayor William J. Phelan as part of his comprehensive strategy to reinvigorate downtown Quincy—emerged from an intensive assessment of the challenges and the opportunities that downtown presents. Highlights of the assessment process included two community-wide workshops that focused on the future of downtown redevelopment. The overarching challenge placed before workshop participants was to restore downtown as a place of choice in which to live, work, learn, shop, invest, and play. The community’s priorities expressed during the workshops were illustrated and translated into the Revitalization Vision (the Vision). In November 2005, the Planning Board endorsed this Vision as part of the *Quincy Center District Design Guidelines*.

The Framework moves the planning process to the next phase with an emphasis on implementing the Vision’s central theme: ensuring that Quincy Center becomes the vital center of a 21st-century community and a truly vibrant downtown destination. To meet that goal over a ten-year period, the Framework calls for the invigoration of Hancock Street and the surrounding area by the addition of 150,000–300,000 gross square feet (GSF) of new pedestrian-oriented retail, supported in part by more than 1,000 new housing units with a mix of households at various income levels, more than 1,000,000 GSF of new office space and new parks and civic squares that provide proud gathering places for all residents. Hancock will be a “Main Street” that works. Like the entire downtown, it will be supported by first-class parking facilities, new urban public spaces, enhanced vehicular access, public transit, enhanced

cultural resources, and supportive infrastructure that are critical to creating a world-class, mixed-use commercial center. This exciting initiative will restore the energy and vitality that have been core elements of the city’s character from its earliest days.

### WHY REVITALIZE QUINCY CENTER?

For well over a century, Quincy Center has served as the civic and commercial focus of the historic City of Presidents, birthplace of two American presidents and a community of many distinct neighborhoods. Downtown served as the place where residents shopped, attended church, worked, visited the lawyer and the dentist, went out for Sunday dinner, and in general pursued much of their economic and social lives. In the process, Quincy Center provided a face to the world that represented the city’s economic success, founded on granite quarrying and ship building, and its commercial prosperity. By the 1950s, Quincy had assumed the title of “Shopperstown USA.”

Quincy Center is no longer the proud destination it was in the first half of the 20th century. Decades of struggle to retain downtown business are visible in blighted parking areas, underutilized office space, and blighted storefronts. Between 1960 and 1970 the city’s economy began to sag: a 16% decline in manufacturing jobs meant fewer dollars being spent downtown. At the same time, a growing system of federal and state highways made it possible for retailers to relocate in larger, low-priced formats, drawing customers out of downtown. Automobile travel emerged as the dominant form of transportation, creating congestion around important public resources, such as the United First Parish Church. Despite these challenges, strong business, political, and community leadership in the second half of the 20th century helped Quincy hold on to much of its

downtown fabric and continues to value and preserve its historic resources.

The time to capitalize on Quincy’s inherent assets is now. Downtown contains much undeveloped and underutilized land that can be assembled for significant redevelopment. There is a strong public appetite to see the center restored to its historic prominence. And the political leadership of the city is willing to undertake the critical steps necessary to make the public’s demand a reality. This confluence of positive factors may not last, and failure to act quickly risks the loss of this considerable opportunity.



Lively public spaces and attractive new uses will result in a downtown renaissance.

It is not difficult to imagine a brilliant future for Quincy Center. In fact, downtown holds more promise than at any time since World War II. Quincy Center endured many of the same problems that other urban areas faced in the late 20th century, so it can now capitalize on an urban renaissance taking hold around the US—a rise in mixed-use development; growing residential populations; increasing interest in living and working within transit-oriented developments—that many other cities have experienced over the last five years. Housing preferences are changing because of demographic shifts that include the aging of Baby Boomers, the needs of new immigrants, and the fact that younger adults prefer urban, mixed-used

# Overview

QUINCY CENTER DISTRICT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



environments. Demand for smaller housing choices—apartments, condos, live-work spaces, bungalows—represent a third of all housing demand. Nationally, a study by the advocacy group Reconnecting America showed that roughly 14.6 million households will likely rent or buy housing near transit by 2025, double the rate today. This means that 30% of housing demand will be for the kind of dense, walkable, mixed-use housing found in places like Quincy Center.

## A NEW VISION FOR QUINCY CENTER

Downtown can again play its traditional role in the city's life, but one attuned to today's realities. It can easily become:

- **A high-powered, retail-oriented downtown** that draws shoppers not only from throughout Quincy but from the entire South Shore, Boston, and Cambridge.
- **A mixed-use center of choice:** a district of shopping, services, entertainment, housing, and offices built around Hancock Street as Quincy's "Main Street."
- **A place of celebration and community:** a street that welcomes students, residents, workers, tourists, and others to enjoy the district's public life.
- **A vital, vibrant emblem for the city:** a downtown district that blends old and new, historic and current styles, conveying the district's diverse quality and character.
- **A place of enterprise:** a district that invites investment, provides jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities, and delivers generous financial benefits.

To achieve downtown Quincy's full potential along each of these dimensions, the Framework proposes reinforcing Hancock's "Main Street" feel within an exciting urban district—an enjoyable place to stroll, lined with pedestrian-oriented uses, served by lively public spaces, enriched with a streetscape that



A revitalized Quincy Center will lead to dozens of new businesses and hundreds of new housing units, enhancing the vibrancy and prosperity of downtown.

conveys the district's special character, and supported by the transit access, roadway access, and enhanced public and private parking facilities necessary to being competitive. Downtown will be a showcase for the preservation of historic landmarks, and it will serve—as it did in earlier generations—as a showcase for fresh new design that conveys its vitality. New mixed-use development projects will bring more than a thousand new residents and workers to the district; the millions of dollars in additional retail sales and tax revenues they generate will benefit not only Quincy Center but the city as a whole.

Representing a new generation of 21st-century urban centers, Quincy's downtown will be competitive with other regional destinations—such as Brookline's Coolidge Corner and Harvard Square—and invigorated by a mix of large and small entertainment, housing, service, and retail destinations. Many residents and businesses will be long-established; others will be new to downtown. They will include national and local businesses and draw from the neighborhoods and the regional market. Quincy Center

will be an urban district that is highly functional and supported by the transit, enhanced public and private parking, vehicular access and servicing infrastructure essential to its success. The introduction of high-density housing will bring additional customers to downtown retailers and provide an added level of activity throughout the day and night.

## KEY ACTIONS FOR TRANSFORMING QUINCY CENTER

Six essential elements work together as a single, cohesive strategy for capturing Quincy Center’s vitality and reestablishing its integral role in the lives of the city’s residents. This strategy—based in part on a market study that identifies substantial investment potential downtown—lays the groundwork for an “upward spiral” in which improvements create new opportunities that in turn increase prosperity and set the stage for further improvements. Implemented by private-sector partners, the city, property owners, and the larger community, the six elements are mutually reinforcing. Individually, these elements cannot produce a full revitalization of downtown; they must instead be undertaken together in order to realize the vision.

### I Protect and enhance the urban fabric.

In 2005, new zoning districts for Quincy Center were adopted, with Design Guidelines to ensure that new investments—from signs to buildings—contribute to positive and mutually beneficial change. A new development envelope established by the zoning creates incentives for redevelopment and encourages rebuilding of the urban fabric. A clear vision—illustrated in the Design Guidelines—ensures that new development will enhance the urban fabric where it exists and extend it where it does not.

### II Develop a District-Improvement Financing plan.

A District-Improvement Financing (DIF) district approved by the State Economic Assistance

Coordinating Council follows the boundaries of the new zoning districts. A DIF district helps finance improvements by capturing new tax

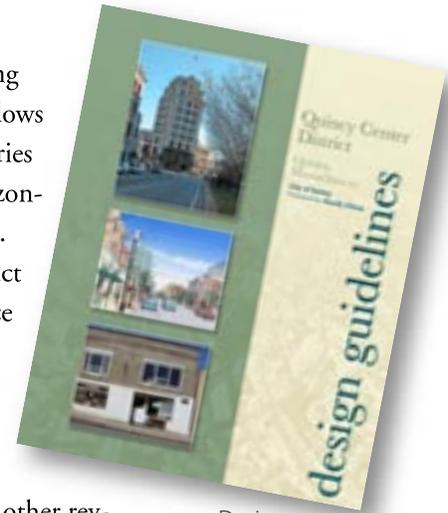
growth and other revenues received from properties within the district. A DIF plan lays out how revenues from the DIF district will be used to improve public parking, sidewalks, plazas, and other public elements as new investment takes place.

### III Improve public infrastructure.

The City will begin upgrading utilities—including cable, electricity, and sewers—and implementing critical traffic circulation measures. The goal of both initiatives will be to ensure that public infrastructure works in tandem with private investment to create a mixed-use district that promotes essential services, security, and marketing to help Quincy Center keep pace with its competitors in a demanding and constantly shifting business climate.

### IV Improve downtown transportation and parking facilities.

While vehicle accessibility downtown will be greatly enhanced with the construction of the Concourse, wayfinding and traffic-diversion strategies need to be implemented to minimize confusion and cut-through traffic on residential streets. An inventory of existing parking, already completed, shows that the existing supply can serve current peak daytime demand. The parking



Design Guidelines for downtown, produced as part of this study, capture the community vision and specify preferred design approaches for new public and private development.

supply will, however, require careful management and systematic expansion in order to serve development and keep pace with the district's growing popularity. This management strategy includes shared parking, so that compatible uses such as housing, retail, and office can make more efficient use of parking resources. Strategies should be developed for upgrading the MBTA's Quincy Center Station and maximizing its use.

#### **V Support strategic redevelopment opportunities.**

Key redevelopment opportunities exist on the strategically located 1400 and 1600 blocks of Hancock as well as at the five-acre surface Hancock Parking Lot and Ross Parking Garage (both owned by the City). A variety of other development opportunities exist throughout the district. Revitalization of the core of Quincy Center where both Granite and Cottage Avenues intersect Hancock Street will transform the downtown's most troubled area into a regional destination with 1,100,000 to 1,500,000 SF of new housing, offices and stores that draw residents, workers, visitors, shoppers, students, and others from the across the city and the region. Secondary redevelopment opportunities—an additional 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 SF of homes, stores, and offices—will be created as infrastructure improvements are completed and new development restores the district's physical fabric.

#### **VI Enhance Quincy Center gateways**

An improved sense of arrival into Quincy Center can be easily created with signature gateways into downtown. These gateways could be public art, architectural elements or landscape features. At multiple locations downtown, any or all of these should be explored. Places where new gateways should be considered include in front of the T station, at the new high school, along the new Concourse, the Granite Street bridge over the MBTA tracks and at the intersection of Dimmock and Hancock Streets.



# 2 Context

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Quincy Center is poised for a broad resurgence. The district's economic resources are vital. Although Hancock Street has lost some of its historic liveliness, it retains its symbolic role as Quincy's "Main Street." Business and community leaders share common perspectives on directions for change. A series of recent studies, including this one, have identified a strong demand for new investment.

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

### The Evolution of Quincy Center and Hancock Street

Quincy's earliest settlement dates to 1625, when it was the northern precinct of neighboring Braintree. In 1792, expressing a desire for home rule, residents separated and incorporated as the Town of Quincy. They chose to honor Colonel John Quincy, a neighbor and "eminent citizen" who lived on Mt. Wollaston. His granddaughter Abigail Smith had married John Adams, also a native, who was then serving as vice president under George Washington and succeeded him in 1797 as president. Abigail herself became known for her chronicle of home-front life during the American Revolution. The Adams connection gave the newly formed town unusual prominence in the early history of the United States, and Quincy is unique in being the birthplace of two U.S. presidents—the Adams's son, John Quincy Adams, served a single term in the 1820s.



Hancock Street and the Adams Building (left) around 1915.

Predominantly agricultural in its early decades, Quincy began a dramatic shift in the 1830s to industrial production, particularly granite quarrying and shipbuilding. The quality of—and demand for—Quincy granite led to construction of the country's first commercial railroad, allowing easy carriage of stone to Boston for waterborne shipment to other states and for incorporation



The landmark Granite Trust building gives downtown a distinctive look and feel.

into such iconic structures as the Bunker Hill Monument and Boston's Quincy Market—named to honor another native (and John Quincy relative) Boston Mayor Josiah Quincy. Granite from Quincy quarries won international acclaim, expanding its market and attracting immigrants from across Europe and elsewhere to work in the quarries. This multicultural quality continues to shape the community's character and neighborhoods. More recently, Asian immigrants have added new vitality and diversity to a community historically enriched by the contributions of successive waves of immigrants.

The rise of shipbuilding, spurred by World War II, counterbalanced a postwar decline in granite quarrying, and Quincy continued as a leading U.S. shipbuilding center through the 1970s. Simultaneously in the 1950s, demand for higher education on the South Shore grew rapidly, leading to the establishment of Quincy College in 1956.

### Rise and Decline of an Urban Main Street

While downtown Quincy continued to thrive in the 1950s—it was known as "Shoppers' Town, USA"—the city began to feel the effects of a downturn in manufacturing and the rise of suburban competition for housing and business development. After decades of growth,



Strategic redevelopment can reinforce Quincy Center's role as the civic and cultural heart of the community.

the citywide population essentially reached a plateau between 1960 and 1990.\* The effect was visible along Hancock Street, downtown's main commercial corridor, as retail and service businesses began to move out, encouraged by a growing system of state- and federal-built highways. Customers were drawn to suburban shopping centers and eventually to "big box" retailers. The road-widening of the postwar period also led to the isolation of such civic resources as the United First Parish Church. In short, downtown Quincy suffered the same effects that emptied the centers of many U.S. communities, an unintended result of federal and state policies that encouraged a shift of investment away from Main Street and public buildings. Other trends magnified the problem: a shortage of parking related to the growing popularity of auto traffic, inadequate or inappropriate building stock for newer, larger-format retail, and an overall decline in downtown's appearance.

## SEEDS OF URBAN RENAISSANCE: Quincy Center's Unrealized Potential

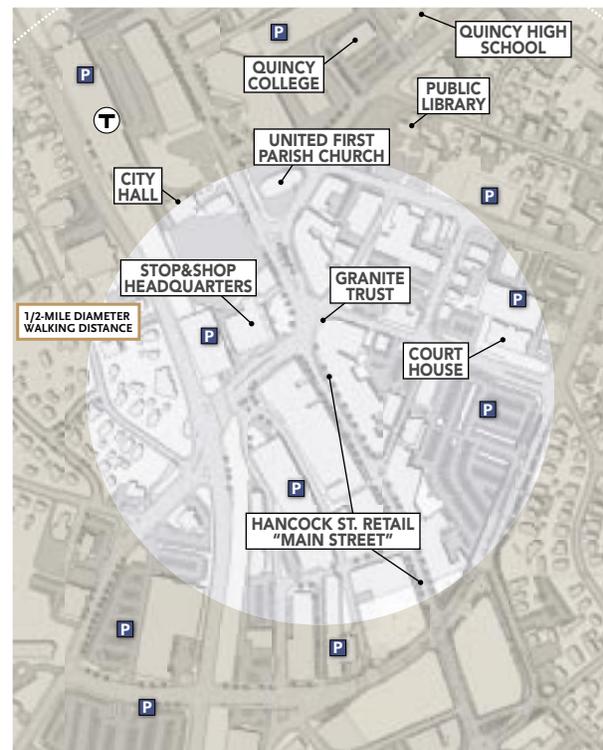
Today Hancock Street stands poised to experience the kind of urban renaissance sweeping nationally across many heretofore-discounted downtowns. The area to the north of the United First Parish Church and proximate to the T station is already experiencing successful mixed-

\*The 2000 U.S. Census showed that Quincy's population had risen slightly above 88,000; estimates for 2004 place the figure close to 90,000.

use development—the Monroe Place and Presidents Place projects—that combines housing with ground-floor retail. The new residents and stores that these developments introduce contribute to the momentum for reviving downtown Quincy. In addition to what is articulated in the Framework, other development plans propose adding 500 to 800 units of housing units, 275,000–300,000 SF of office space, and 200,000–300,000 SF of associated retail. The Framework is designed to harness this renewed interest in downtown to create even more opportunities and encourage a full flowering of Quincy's potential as a major urban and regional center.

Other conditions support revival as well. For instance:

- Community, business, and political leaders agree on the need to improve downtown and have shown a willingness to work together to develop the tools to make downtown an urban district that prospers.
- Significant and strategic land holdings in downtown are publicly owned, including the five-acre Hancock Lot and the Ross Way Garage.
- Major downtown employers, including Stop & Shop, face near-term decisions about their future



The attractions in Quincy Center, including the T, are concentrated within a small and conveniently walkable area.



New retail, residential, and office space is drawing Americans downtown once again.

in Quincy Center and see the benefits of taking part in revitalization efforts.

- New state policies and tools designed to promote smart growth, including district-improvement financing, provide greater opportunities to encourage investment and leverage the benefits of development.

At the same time, a unique confluence of national and local forces has set the stage for the revitalization of downtown:

- Late in 2005, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that the price of the average condo had surpassed the price of the average single-family house, reflecting a strong national trend toward urban housing.
- Retailers—even large discounters like Target—entertainment businesses, and other commercial activities have sought out urban locations nationally to an extent unprecedented in recent decades.
- Words like “urban” and “density” are being reclaimed as desirable characteristics; cities like Chicago, Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver began proclaiming the virtues of neighborhood density in the late 1990s and have seen a major increase in new downtown housing.
- The state has aggressively pursued “smart growth” policies, making hundreds of thousands of dollars available to cities that add housing near existing community centers, especially those with transit.
- Home buyers in Massachusetts purchased 22% more condominiums in September 2005 than during the same month in 2004, reflecting a growing interest in more urban living.
- Quincy can continue to build upon the success of other projects adjacent to the T station. Its access to mass

transit offers significant development opportunities of a kind that other cities are only beginning to identify. Minneapolis, for example, projects the construction of more than 7,000 new housing units and 19,000,000 SF of commercial space, all clustered around the stations of its new light-rail transit line. Similar results have been seen in mid-size cities and towns outside of San Diego, Portland, Oregon, and Washington, D.C.

- For the first time, in 2004 a large majority of Americans—more than 80%—reported in a survey that shortening their commute would be a priority in choosing their next house (*Boston Globe*, October 17, 2004)

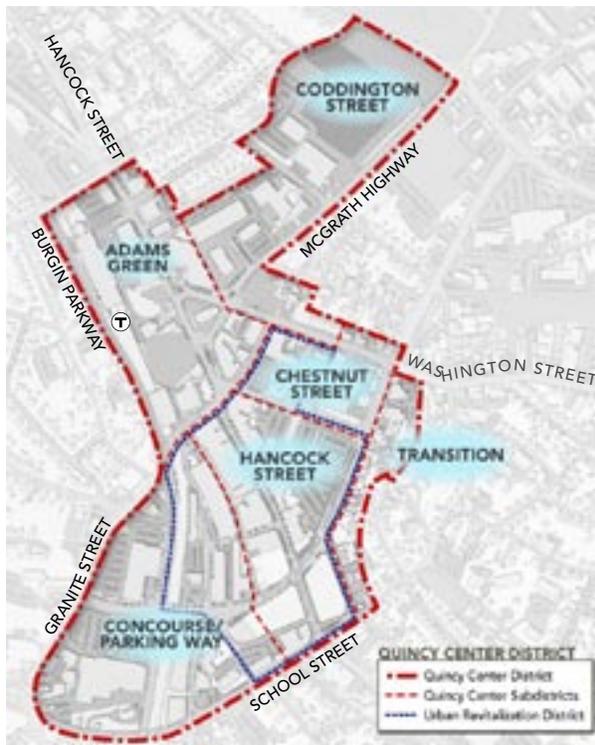
## HANCOCK STREET'S ROLE IN QUINCY CENTER

Comparable districts—among them Reston Town Center in northern Virginia; Silver Spring in Maryland; High Street in Columbus, Ohio; and CityPlace in West Palm Beach, Florida—offer examples of the critical role that revitalized Main Streets can play in making urban neighborhoods competitive as places of choice to live, work, study, celebrate and invest. In addition:

- The return of walkable streets—shops, cafes, entertainment, public spaces, and other active uses along wide, tree-lined sidewalks, all within a short stroll of houses, townhouses, and apartments—has proven a powerful lure for new residents.
- New commercial investment, and the new customers and employees it adds, has helped support creation of handsome streetscapes and new parks, and brought other benefits.

- A mix of uses, including significant housing to help support new retail and ensure that the area is lively both day and night.
- Growing tax bases have enabled local governments to invest more back into reviving districts.
- Existing residents have benefited from new and more diverse job opportunities, including entry-level positions.

Increased commercial densities—achieved by adding new buildings, reusing existing ones, and filling in vacant lots—have been essential to achieving all these benefits. Efforts to create and sustain vibrant commercial districts require development of a critical mass of activities and uses. For example, the rapidly changing nature of retail competition means that a strong, relatively high-density residential population is critical to providing sustained support for retail over the long term. At the same time, greater density reinforces the ability to enhance walkable streets, economic resources, tax bases, and job opportunities.



Each of the six subdistricts has a different character and offers unique revitalization opportunities.

## SUBDISTRICT CONTEXT: The Varied Opportunities for Quincy's Urban Renaissance

Quincy Center's resurgence will play out differently in the study's six sub-areas, each with a distinct personality and each representing different opportunities:

**The Hancock Street sub-area**, beginning at the landmark intersection of Hancock and Granite Streets and extending south to School Street, is downtown's commercial corridor. The street includes a variety of retailers and services—nail salons, coffee shops, bars, video rental, various social services, res-



taurants—that define the sidewalks with contiguous storefronts housed in a mix of significant

multistory buildings and less substantial single-story structures. This subdistrict is characterized by its potential to accommodate a significant amount of new mixed-use development above existing stores and on the five-acre Hancock parking lot while maintaining existing businesses and important parking resources.

**The Concourse/Parking Way sub-area** includes the area behind Hancock Street's shops and extends westward to Granite Street. It is currently identified



as Quincy Center's suburban-style shopping area with auto-oriented stores that include a super-

market, strip shopping centers, the Ross Parking Garage, IHOP, and an A.J. Wright furniture store. The Concourse/Parking Way area acts as the edge of downtown and has

good access to Burgin Parkway, where the new Granite Street Extension bridge crosses the depressed railroad right-of-way. Completion of the Concourse project will enhance access dramatically. This subdistrict is characterized by its potential to accommodate significant new office, residential, or retail development with associated public and private parking along a portion of the future Concourse and the Ross Way area.

**The Chestnut Street sub-area** largely serves Hancock and Washington Street uses and includes essential public resources—the District Courthouse and surface parking lots—along a connector street



between the city center and the future Concourse. This subdistrict is characterized by its potential to

accommodate significant commercial and residential infill development and to integrate the District Courthouse into a civic setting while providing access to structured parking.

**The Adams Green sub-area**, encompassing unique historic resources and the Quincy Center MBTA station, is rich in assets but lacks unity. This subdistrict



is characterized by its role as a link between Quincy Center Station and the community's retail “Main Street”

along Hancock Street. Thousands of commuters, students, residents, and visitors pass through Quincy Center Station to visit the area's historic assets—the town hall, the United First Parish Church, the historic burial ground—the corporate headquarters of Stop & Shop, Quincy College, Quincy High School,

and the Hancock Street commercial district. Rerouting the intrusive, heavily traveled section of Hancock Street in front of the United First Parish Church offers an opportunity to create an iconic community green space that will draw visitors and residents.

**The Coddington Street sub-area**, extending the length of Coddington Street to Faxon Field, is defined by its schools and public buildings. Abundant educa-



tional and cultural resources—Quincy College, the high school, the vocational technical school, the YMCA, Bethany Church

and the public library—line this street leading to Quincy Center Station. This subdistrict is characterized by its potential to evolve further into a thriving cultural and educational district that encourages joint programs and services among its institutions, efficiently utilizing these resources to attract people locally and from throughout the region.

**The Transition sub-area** contains a stable and historic residential neighborhood whose presence will reinforce the introduction of additional housing in Quincy Center. While some residential structures



are occupied by businesses, this area offers striking evidence of the city's residential character.

It also underscores the importance of designing the Concourse as a grand urban boulevard with development on the southern edge of the Hancock Lot designed to unify the street. This subdistrict is characterized by its ability to provide a handsome transition between the Concourse and a nearby downtown neighborhood.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Setting the Stage for Change Along Hancock Street

City and community interest in downtown revitalization has spurred broad participation in a series of planning efforts:

- Quincy 2000 commissioned in 1996 the *Quincy Center Action Plan*, which addressed challenges to the health of downtown and advocated the continuing development of Quincy Center as a vibrant, mixed-use urban district and commercial center. The plan and implementation strategy—a critical early step in responding to the need for change downtown—identified many of the key issues driving Quincy Center planning today. The report recommended: 1) physical improvements and enhancement of retail and commercial activities; 2) recognition of opportunities for development success, including establishing dense residential areas, excellent mass transit, and large sites for potential development; and 3) strategies for reinvestment, such as encouraging private development and targeting public investments.
- In 2003, Mayor William J. Phelan convened the Downtown Redevelopment Committee, taking a significant step toward improving downtown by bringing together business and civic leaders to oversee the evolution of a public planning process and redevelopment plan that could transform the downtown into a commercial and residential zone residents could be proud of.
- In 2004, the Mayor's Office in conjunction with the Department of Planning and Community Development sponsored two public forums at which residents heard from state smart-growth leaders and technical experts on the potential for revitalization in Quincy Center. The *Quincy Patriot Ledger* buttressed the panels with a three-day series on the issues related to downtown redevelopment, which it reported, published, and distributed prior to the forums.
- In a follow-up initiative, the City held two public workshops in 2004 and 2005 in which neighbor-



The community—among them Mayor William J. Phelan—has come together multiple times to discuss the exciting possibilities for downtown Quincy's future.

hood and community stakeholders shared their visions for a revitalized downtown. The first workshop focused on a redevelopment program for the publicly owned Hancock Parking Lot; the second considered possibilities for the entire district. The results of the workshops formed the basis for Goody Clancy's *Quincy Center District Design Guidelines*, published in November 2005, which guide the Planning Board's design review process and illustrate the community's vision of a pedestrian-friendly, retail-intensive, and mixed-use downtown.

## MARKET CONTEXT: POTENTIAL FOR NEW VITALITY

### Market Demand

The market for new housing in Quincy reflects the impact of national and local trends and policies:

- National demographic shifts, such as an aging population and young professionals waiting to have children, are creating a diverse housing market that is today being met by providing multi-family housing in downtown locations that are re-emerging as centers for living, culture and entertainment.
- The Commonwealth has gotten serious about promoting "smart growth." New measures include Chapter 40R, which awards funding of up to \$600,000, plus \$3,000 per home built, to compact

smart-growth districts. The Commonwealth Capital program ranks communities in a dozen categories—including denser housing and parks creations—and a good “grade” raises the community’s priority for part of a \$500 million fund reserved for capital projects and infrastructure upgrades.

These trends are already evident in Quincy Center. In the last year, new residential buildings with more than 300 units have gone up next to Quincy Center Station, one of them on Hancock Street. The first of these, completed less than a year ago, includes first floor units that are fully occupied and residential

units substantially leased at this time. Restaurants such as Terra Brasillis, the Salt Box, and Thai Little Duck have sprung up or expanded along Hancock Street to the south.

Quincy Center is in an excellent position to take further advantage of a strong housing market and reap the commercial benefits of bringing people back to downtown. Downtown’s assets include:

- **The Hancock Parking Lot**—adjacent to Hancock Street, and within walking distance of the MBTA station—is owned by the city and offers tremendous redevelopment opportunities.

### A DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO FOR THE HANCOCK LOT

A 2003 analysis by Byrne McKinney Associates of the Hancock Lot showed that a program of 430 residential units, roughly 15,000 SF of retail, and a 590-space garage would generate enough value for a private developer to redevelop the five-acre lot.

The analysis also evaluated the cost of adding the 550 parking spaces now in the lot to the project’s garage (also referred to as “structured parking”)

The results of the 2003 evaluation reached these conclusions about developing the Hancock Lot:

- Both condominiums and rental apartment are feasible development options for the site, with condos more desirable.
- The market could absorb condos at an estimated rate of 60 units/year, allowing for up to 240 over four years (assuming a development program of this scale might be built over that period).

HANCOCK LOT: DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL*				
POTENTIAL PROGRAM	PROGRAM TYPE	VALUE	DEVELOPMENT COST	VALUE CREATED
170 units	condominiums	\$56,500,000	\$48,400,000	\$ 8,100,000
260 units	apartments above ground-floor retail/office	62,600,000	59,100,000	3,500,000
590 spaces	structured parking	12,100,000	13,800,000	( 1,800,000)
				<b>\$ 9,800,000</b>

*\*Figures reflect 2003 market values*

and building a public plaza in front of the development on Hancock Street. The analysis showed that the program could cover the cost of the replacement spaces, but only if the purchase price for the site were set so low as to be nonexistent. Put another way, the city would give up revenue from the sale of the site in return for the developer’s adding the displaced parking to the new garage.

Although condos would generate greater value, a mix of condos and rental units would be more likely to succeed.

- City ownership of the Hancock Lot can unlock the site’s development potential and assure replacement of all the spaces in a garage. In order for redevelopment to succeed, however, the City would have to forego almost all of the revenue it might otherwise expect from the sale of the site to a developer.

- **The MBTA's Quincy Center Station**, with its extensive subway and bus connections that give Quincy Center residents extraordinary access to downtown Boston jobs and cultural amenities.
- **Multiple privately owned surface lots or underutilized sites** behind the commercial buildings along Hancock Street and within walking distance of the MBTA station.
- **Preliminary state designation for district-improvement financing**, a mechanism that can fund public works, infrastructure, and development projects from increased municipal revenues produced by new development. Quincy was the first city in the Commonwealth to win this designation—a huge step toward encouraging mutually reinforcing high-quality development and public realm improvements.
- **New downtown zoning** opens the door to increased density at a scale that makes new development attractive to private investors. Projects in the 10- to 15-story range are far more economically viable than those that are lower and/or less dense.

In addition to these existing assets, downtown Quincy will be able to benefit from state programs that encourage smart growth and transit-oriented development. One in particular is the Urban Revitalization Development Grant Program that can help the city raise funds for additional planning efforts, acquisition and assembling of land, infrastructure improvements, the issuance of bonds, etc. Many of these authorities are especially important in a historic downtown like Quincy's where many old buildings sit on irregularly-shaped blocks and few contiguous parcels share the same ownership.

Introducing more housing into downtown will revive the district's commercial and retail base. Many retailers thrive when customers are a nearby "captive audience" looking for goods and services within walking distance. Such residential projects are generally more financially secure than other kinds of development and they generate fewer automobile trips than other

development types, adding people to downtown without generating traffic. Development of a new customer base downtown—specifically, residents of proposed new mixed-use buildings—will broaden opportunities for the business community. A study undertaken by Goody Clancy and Byrne McKinney & Associates indicates that, as a rule of thumb, between 1,000 and 2,000 housing units within a 20-minute walk can support a new block of Main Street retail. Such numbers underscore the importance of developing densely in order to realize all the benefits of increasing the downtown population.

It will also be critical to encourage and recruit stores that thrive in smaller urban formats and cater to specialty markets. A study of Quincy retail patterns conducted by the marketing firm Claritas, Inc., in January 2006 showed that Quincy residents spend roughly \$65 million outside the city annually. Some of this demand, now being met outside the city, occurs in retail categories that are particularly suited to a downtown location. Among these "opportunity categories" were specialty foods (residents spent \$19 million outside the city in this category); shoes (\$9 million); jewelry, luggage and leather goods (\$8 million); health and personal care (\$5 million); gifts, novelties, and souvenirs (\$5 million); hobbies, toys, and games (\$5 million); and books, periodicals, and music (\$4 million).

### WHERE SHOULD CHANGE HAPPEN?

Transforming the 1400 block of Hancock into an active "headquarters" office building of 250,000 SF or more would create an ideal anchor for the area. Additional housing on the Hancock Lot, with new retail at street level, should be located within walking distance of this anchor. Both office workers and residents will provide new sources of revenue to encourage more stores to open and broaden the range of retail types operating downtown. An additional retail or office anchor could be located in the Ross



The current street grid within Quincy Center—walkable and connected to transit and Burgin Parkway—creates the framework for a vibrant urban district.

Way/Parking Way area. The new office building and housing would have active uses on the first floors and face the street with pedestrian-oriented retail. The housing market in this area is strongest on the north end of Hancock, within close walking distance to the MBTA station.

Byrne, McKinney Associates' market assessment of the Hancock Lot noted the desirability of developing a major mixed-use project that included a large quantity of housing close to the commercial activity along Hancock Street. This recommendation reflects four key considerations:

- Hancock Street has experienced the most visible disinvestment in Quincy Center and its blighted qualities undermine the entire area's market potential.
- Quincy Center Station provides a strong link to Boston-area jobs and entertainment, real attractions for potential downtown residents.

- Quincy Center can support significant diversification of uses—particularly the addition of housing units, which will benefit existing retail by adding new customers to the downtown market.
- This area offers sites (in particular, the 5-acre municipal lot) large enough to accommodate the critical mass of development and new parking needed to create a regionally competitive urban district.

Additional new housing should be located at strategic points along Chestnut Street—with ground-floor retail or other active uses located at corners. Once completed, the new Concourse—with its excellent local and regional access—will become a particularly strong area for more intense development, which could include stores, offices, and/or housing.

Near Adams Green, development is likely to focus on the MBTA station. In the Coddington area, the focus of improvements will likely be for public building, such as a new high school, and pedestrian improvement, such as improved sidewalks and enhanced landscaping.



The target area for mixed-use development forms the core of downtown Quincy.

# 3

## Consulting the Community: Vision Workshops

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## INTRODUCTION

Creation of the Quincy Downtown Development Plan has, from its earliest stages, been marked by wide-ranging representation from the district’s multiple and diverse communities. The process began in May 2003, when Mayor Phelan brought together business and civic leaders to serve on the Quincy Downtown Redevelopment Committee. Charged by the Mayor to examine how downtown could be transformed into a vibrant economic and residential zone, the committee members—with technical assistance from Goody Clancy—spent seven months applying their collective knowledge and experience to the task of creating a comprehensive, community-based planning process.

As a major component of the planning process’s public information strategy, the *Quincy Patriot Ledger* published “City Smarts,” a special three-part report, in November 2003. As noted in the excerpt from an article that appeared in the *Patriot Ledger* earlier that year (below) the title served to remind readers of the state’s interest in “smart growth” initiatives and the relevance of those initiatives to Quincy

### ‘QUINCY CENTER COMMITTEE ASSEMBLING—Housing, Retail, Traffic Upgrades to be Studied’

“Mayor William Phelan is assembling a committee of developers and community leaders to suggest ways to add housing, stimulate retail, and improve traffic in Quincy Center.... Phelan said plans to revitalize downtown are in keeping with the Governor Mitt Romney’s goal of ‘smart growth’—channeling new development near existing roads and infrastructure, and avoiding the sprawl that comes with paving over woods to make way for homes, offices and stores.”

FROM AN ARTICLE BY KAREN ESCHBACHER  
IN THE QUINCY PATRIOT LEDGER, MAY 2003

In a three-part series that ran November 8–11, 2003, *The Patriot Ledger* explored redevelopment options available to the city.

[www.southofboston.net/specialreports/quincyrehab/pages/index.html](http://www.southofboston.net/specialreports/quincyrehab/pages/index.html)



Center. The report discussed the changes—regulatory, design, uses—that Quincy might want to consider in order to reinvigorate downtown; how other cities have succeeded in reviving their downtowns; which downtown sites would be best suited for redevelopment; and who the key stakeholders are.



Doug Foy and Ben Fierro at the second community forum.

The process continued with two public forums, both held in January 2004 and both designed to engage the wider community in a discussion of downtown Quincy’s potential. The forums included presentations of findings by city and state officials as well as by technical consultants. With copies of the *Patriot Ledger* report distributed ahead of the forums to every Quincy household, community members were equipped to ask questions and comment on what they heard at the events.

## COMMUNITY FORUM I SPEAKERS

- Mayor William J. Phelan, City of Quincy
- Doug Gutro, Ward 5 City Councillor
- Roy Lamotte, Jr, City of Quincy
- David Dixon, Goody Clancy
- Pam McKinney, Byrne McKinney & Associates
- Jeffrey Mullan, Foley Hoag LLP
- Tony Lionetta, Earthtech, Inc.

## COMMUNITY FORUM II SPEAKERS

- Mayor William J. Phelan, City of Quincy
- Douglas Foy, Director of the Office for Commonwealth Development
- Dennis Dizoglio, MBTA Assistant General Manager
- Benjamin Fierro, Lynch & Fierro LLP
- Jeffrey Mullan, Foley Hoag LLP

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 1

Two months after the second forum, in March 2004, a community-wide charrette—a combined information session/workshop—took place at Quincy High School. Led by the City and its consultants, the opening information session set out the planning context for downtown Quincy’s revitalization, including real-estate economics, urban design, and an improved public realm. Discussions covered the opportunities for creating a critical mass of new housing to support a newly revitalized downtown and reviewed options



In two public workshops, community members developed ideas about redevelopment options for the Hancock lot.

for diversifying existing uses by adding housing to Hancock Street. Participants were asked to think about ways to create a more attractive destination while strengthening downtown’s sense of place.

Following this opening session, participants gathered in small groups to focus on the “big picture” for downtown, with an emphasis on the Hancock Lot as a major target of opportunity. (Its status as a pub-



This building sits empty and boarded up on Hancock Street.

licly-held property also contributed to the decision to focus first on this potential trigger for downtown revitalization.)

The workshop elicited consensus across a number of dimensions about the challenges that any revitalization plan would need to address. Overall, these challenges fell into four groupings:

### 1 Lack of diversity among uses has reduced activity levels downtown.

- > There isn’t enough activity downtown. Many businesses, particularly those along the northern spine of Hancock Street, close at 5:00 P.M., with the exception of recently opened restaurants. Both office space and housing are in short supply. New housing especially would help to build an 18-hour, vibrant neighborhood.
- > Although the city has invested in landscaping, new sidewalks, and lighting along Hancock Street, businesses have only responded with minimal investments in their storefronts and building façades.

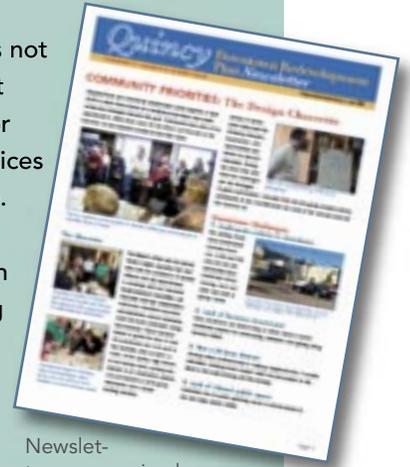
## CONSENSUS FROM THE WORKSHOPS ON CORE ELEMENTS OF REVITALIZATION

Decades of efforts have focused on improving Quincy Center, despite larger economic and political forces that actively worked against this goal. People from throughout the city have contributed to years of planning for improving downtown. For instance, in 2004 and 2005, two community workshops with more than 100 highly diverse participants—residents, business owners, property owners, preservationists, environmentalists, public service providers, senior city planning and traffic staff, and others—developed a remarkable level of agreement around ten core goals for Quincy Center.

- 1 Build on historic assets to reinvigorate downtown.** The second and fourth presidents of the U.S.—John Adams and John Quincy Adams—and their wives are interred in the United First Parish Church, and the historic burial ground across Hancock Street holds graves dating to the 1600s. Downtown contains a host of historically significant architectural treasures, including a library designed by H.H. Richardson and the landmark Granite Trust Building, built in an Art Deco style of Quincy granite. More than 250,000 visitors come to Quincy annually to visit these and other historical sites.
- 2 Foster a lively mixed-use district: add housing, commercial and retail uses.** 90% of existing uses in downtown are commercial, but after five o'clock each day, only a few restaurants keep the area active. New residential buildings by Quincy Center T Station, Monroe Place with 98 units and Residences at Presidents Place with 200 units, have both been substantially leased, demonstrating the vast potential of the housing market in downtown.
- 3 Create a vibrant public realm—promote lively, walkable streets by adding signature parks and expanding retail opportunities.** Hancock Street can again be one of the great walkable retail streets in Massachusetts. Street trees, banners and lighting line its blocks, yet it lacks attractive spaces for people to linger

in—outdoor cafés or a landmark public space. Design quality for buildings and the public realm could be improved while maintaining a diverse character that balances old and new.

- 4 Organize more special events.** Quincy Center is not seen as the destination it once was—the source for essential goods and services and the heart of civic life. That function diminished as residents shifted much of their shopping to “big box” discount stores, suburban malls, or the Internet. Yet there are signs of resurgence—7 of 10 holiday events listed on the Official Quincy Tourism Website “Discover Quincy” are located downtown (including the new Holiday Stroll, featuring Victorian carolers, art exhibits, musical performances and more). Promoting more activities like this and adding full-time residents could redefine Quincy Center’s image and its ability to attract people and their business.
- 5 Encourage transit use and strengthen pedestrian connections.** The MBTA’s Red Line service through Quincy Center offers access to downtown Boston in 20 minutes, central Cambridge in 30, and several other regional centers of high-quality jobs and job growth. This powerful asset will continue to catalyze new residential development in downtown Quincy. Physical improvement at the station, attracting more complementary services, improving landscaping, and streamlining bus operations can all increase the attractiveness of this gateway, already used by more than 7,000 people daily. More attractive parks, sidewalks, and crosswalks throughout downtown would foster a pedestrian environment that contributes to revitalization.



Newsletters summarized the community discussion and points of consensus.

## 2 Lack of public amenities has further contributed to downtown's lack of activity

- > With the exception of the Crane Library grounds, there are no inviting public space that would draw people downtown and increase its vibrancy. More specifically, there are no recreational resources for either young or old residents; existing downtown open space is designed primarily for passive use.
- > Connections to transit are inconvenient and unattractive. Without continued improvements in the pedestrian environment and without alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles—e.g., facilities for bicycles, better transit connections, ride-sharing—it will be difficult to create a vibrant downtown.

- > Parking is not easily accessible. The difficulties of driving and parking in Quincy Center continue to create barriers to visiting and enjoying downtown.
- > Streetscapes tend to be auto-dominated. This makes it hard for pedestrians to cross some major streets or to sit outdoors protected from traffic—a further limitation to downtown activity.

## 3 Quincy's unique character—its history, its walkability, its cultural artifacts and institutions—has not been taken advantage of.

- > The strong collective advantage of the numerous institutions along Coddington Street—and their proximity to each other—remains untapped.

**6 Resolve parking and traffic issues.** Quincy Center parking tends to be unattractive or difficult to find, yet it remains critical to the healthy functioning of downtown. New parking, either underground or in structures, would be welcome. Its importance to existing businesses and new offices or residences is well understood, but it should also add to the attractiveness, safety and functionality of downtown. Quincy Center should be able to accommodate both additional people and better traffic circulation by encouraging downtown living, giving residents the option of walking and/or using transit. Construction of the Concourse will help visitors by simplifying traffic movement, offering better pedestrian amenities, and introducing new greenery. It will make downtown more accessible while it sets the stage for making Hancock and Coddington streets more pedestrian-friendly.

**7 Work with businesses to make physical improvements.** Quincy Center should be a proud mixed-use district—with attractive commercial façades made of quality materials, design elements that enliven adjacent stretches of sidewalk, and attractive signs that match the character of the buildings and the district as a whole. Security grates give the impression of a hostile environment and should be discouraged. Revitalization

should address the needs of existing business owners interested in renovating their buildings as well as encouraging new development.

## 8 Support new entertainment spaces—add a visitor center, arts theater, or cultural center.

Creating a vibrant mixed-use district means focusing on unique assets available downtown that reflect the diversified nature of an urban center. Revitalization should bring new arts and cultural venues that will stimulate additional business activity and excitement in Quincy Center.

## 9 Address environmental issues.

A healthy Town Brook is a high priority for creating a truly enjoyable downtown. Quincy Center should celebrate the waterway, allowing it to regain its ecological balance—which would create conditions conducive to shad repopulation—control flooding and creating an amenity for residents and visitors to enjoy.

## 10 Create new zoning to promote implementation of the community vision.

The rules for developing in Quincy Center must support new kinds of uses and investment while preserving the best aspects of downtown. Planning tools, like zoning, will allow the community to create a vision and put into place an implementation strategy that will attract the right partners and create a community “heart” that inspires residents, business owners, civic leaders and visitors alike.



At the public workshop in October 2005, community members built models to illustrate their preferences for the arrangement of office, retail, and residential uses along Hancock Street.

KEY	
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	OFFICE
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	RESIDENTIAL
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	RETAIL
<span style="color: cyan;">■</span>	PARKING

- > Organizations such as Discover Quincy and Quincy2000 should serve in a more visible way as strategic partners with the City, enhancing its local, regional, and national stature as a business, residential, and tourist destination.

#### 4 Environmental and regulatory issues need to be addressed to help support new investment

- > Problems with the Town Brook, such as flooding and the declining smelt population, are barriers to development. The City has launched a study on the brook's drainage system solely to address this issue. Further work on the environmental conditions in the downtown should be pursued to increase potential investor's confidence in Quincy Center.



Cars, not people, fill many downtown streets.

## BEYOND WORKSHOP I: NEW ZONING

Driven in part by the broad set of challenges assembled in the workshop, the City undertook a major rezoning study for the entire downtown. The City recognized that a truly vital downtown cannot function solely as a commercial district but must add a mix of uses—residential and retail—in order to meet the challenges identified in the workshop. A new zoning ordinance passed in May 2005 established multifamily housing by right; increased overall building height and density throughout the district; refined parking ratios required for new development; and, finally, established a streamlined permitting process that designated the Planning Board as the authority for granting special permits.

Upon approval of the Quincy Center Zoning Districts, Mayor Phelan convened a second workshop whose participants would look at downtown as a whole and offer recommendations for an comprehensive development scenario that would, at the same time, protect the overall character of Quincy Center.

## WORKSHOP 2: A BROAD LOOK AT DOWNTOWN QUINCY

The second community workshop, held in October 2005, began with a review of the results of the 2004 workshop and of the initiatives undertaken since it



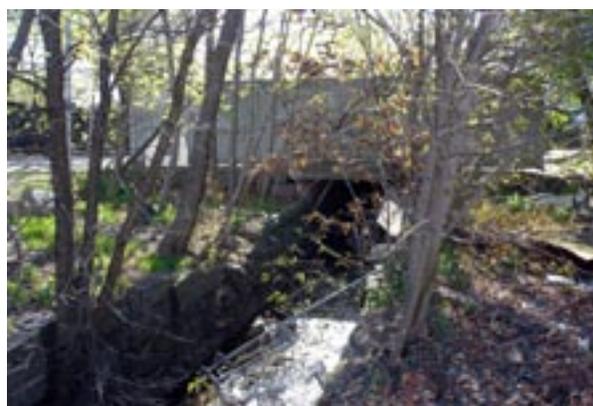
had been held, including the new zoning ordinance, an access and parking study, and a discussion of the importance of design guidelines to the overall quality of downtown's revitalization. A model-building exercise helped elicit new ideas about the physical form of downtown revitalization and recommendations for the specific location of individual projects. The work of the small groups yielded themes that responded to the challenges identified in the first workshop and suggested strategies for confronting those challenges. The themes were:

- **Include a mix of uses.** Downtown should contain housing, offices, and stores. Identify ways to include all three within a single structure and the optimal percentages for each use.
- **Ensure a mix of incomes.** Look for ways to create market-rate development that encourages investment in downtown while maintaining opportunities for lower-income individuals and public services.
- **Design new buildings with compatible heights.** New taller buildings should be concentrated near other tall buildings or located at "gateway" corners. New construction should step down where it approaches smaller-scaled buildings.
- **Shield parking from view while accommodating existing and new development.** Place structured parking at the interior of blocks, shielded from view along public streets, or build it underground.
- **Foster the growth of a cultural district.** Build off Coddington Street's potential as the spine of a cultural district by strengthening programming

and other links among Quincy College, Crane Library, the high school, and other institutions. Use streetscape improvements to reinforce these links.

- **Enhance the area's natural resources.** Include small open public areas in the redevelopment, increase public space around the United First Parish Church, and design a fountain that acknowledges the aesthetic, historic, and environmental importance of the Town Brook.

The workshop results served as the platform for the creation of the November 2005 Design Guidelines and this Framework. Each of these documents will help guide new district zoning and ensure that redevelopment downtown is consistent with community priorities.



Restoration of Town Brook will bring a piece of the natural environment into Quincy Center.



# 4 Civic Vision

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The one-story commercial buildings that line Hancock Street today (photo, above) generate only moderate levels of activity. Housing and offices (rendering, top) will enliven the street, while design guidelines will help assure that they are attractively designed to complement existing historic resources. The character of the new retail will enhance Hancock Street's sidewalk environment (below).



## A VISION FOR A FRAMEWORK: URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR A 21ST-CENTURY "MAIN STREET"

A series of core urban-design principles that address and integrate the many facets of Quincy Center's rich and varied personality provide the structure for a vision of a 21st-century downtown that is reinvigorated physically, socially, and economically. The Framework recognizes that a newly energized downtown requires not only physical intervention, but regulatory intervention as well. This chapter, however, focuses on a set of design principles that address the desire for creating new synergies among existing resources, for higher levels of activity, for an increase in the number and kind of public amenities, and for improvements in the downtown transportation network.

## URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- 1. Foster a lively mixed-use district in ways that redefine downtown in terms of exciting destinations and lively uses, while reflecting Quincy Center's character.**
  - a. Complete the Concourse to remove traffic from the emerging cultural and educational corridor along Coddington Street, improve access to downtown, and create an urban boulevard that provides an exceptional pedestrian environment and functional roadway.
  - b. Locate more housing, commercial, retail, and entertainment uses downtown to attract residents who will bring dollars to spend in local stores; office workers who create activity on the street during the day; visitors drawn by unique entertainment venues in the evening; and businesses that offer a range of new specialty products for the entire community.
  - c. Build in ways that reinforce the city's historic heritage, adhere to smart growth principles, and consider green building features.
- 2. Build a vibrant public realm and a truly superior pedestrian environment that encourages walking and using transit.**
  - a. Create Adams Green and a series of landscaped streets to provide a high-quality public realm and showcase Quincy's historic assets.
  - b. Provide parking that is shielded from public view to enhance the quality of the public realm and improve the way downtown functions.
  - c. Improve the Town Brook and other natural assets in the downtown to create inviting places for people and improve the ecological health of these resources.
  - d. Enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to the MBTA station to increase use of public transit.
- 3. Design downtown revitalization strategies that support current and new businesses and that build on downtown's core strengths and assets—physical, financial, social, and historic.**
  - a. Work with businesses to make physical improvements that generate renewed pride in the area, invite further investment, and signal a commitment to maintaining a presence in Quincy Center.
  - b. Expand tourism for historic sites—and Quincy Center's reputation as a nationally-recognized destination—by enhancing the setting of these sites (such as Adams Green and the First United Parish Church), improving signage, and making tourist information facilities more visible, accessible, and inviting.
  - c. Hold more special events to celebrate downtown and define it as a gathering spot.
- 4. Unlock new development opportunities—residential, office, retail, entertainment—that are consistent with the vision of Quincy Center as the 21st-century heart of the community, a place where people live, work, shop, and play.**
  - a. New Quincy Center zoning, adopted in June 2005 by the City Council, creates incentives for redevelopment consistent with the community vision.
  - b. New design guidelines, adopted by the Planning Board in November 2005, give certainty to private investors that their investments will not be marred by subsequent development projects of poorer quality.
  - c. A new DIF district and DIF plan expands funding sources for public improvements. The City Council adopted the district in May 2005 .



# 5

## Civic Framework

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This study identifies a series of critical redevelopment opportunities throughout Quincy Center, several of them along Hancock Street. The most significant mixed-use sites—the 1400-1600 blocks of Hancock, the municipally owned “Hancock Lot,” sites near Ross Way, and new parcels resulting from the construction of the Concourse—reinforce Quincy Center as a major destination. These sites will go a long way toward meeting the latent demand for housing, retail, and office space in Quincy Center. A public/private partnership will launch some of these projects and ensure that redevelopment realizes the Vision developed by the community during the public workshops held in 2004 and 2005.

The following pages identify six sub-areas where additional redevelopment

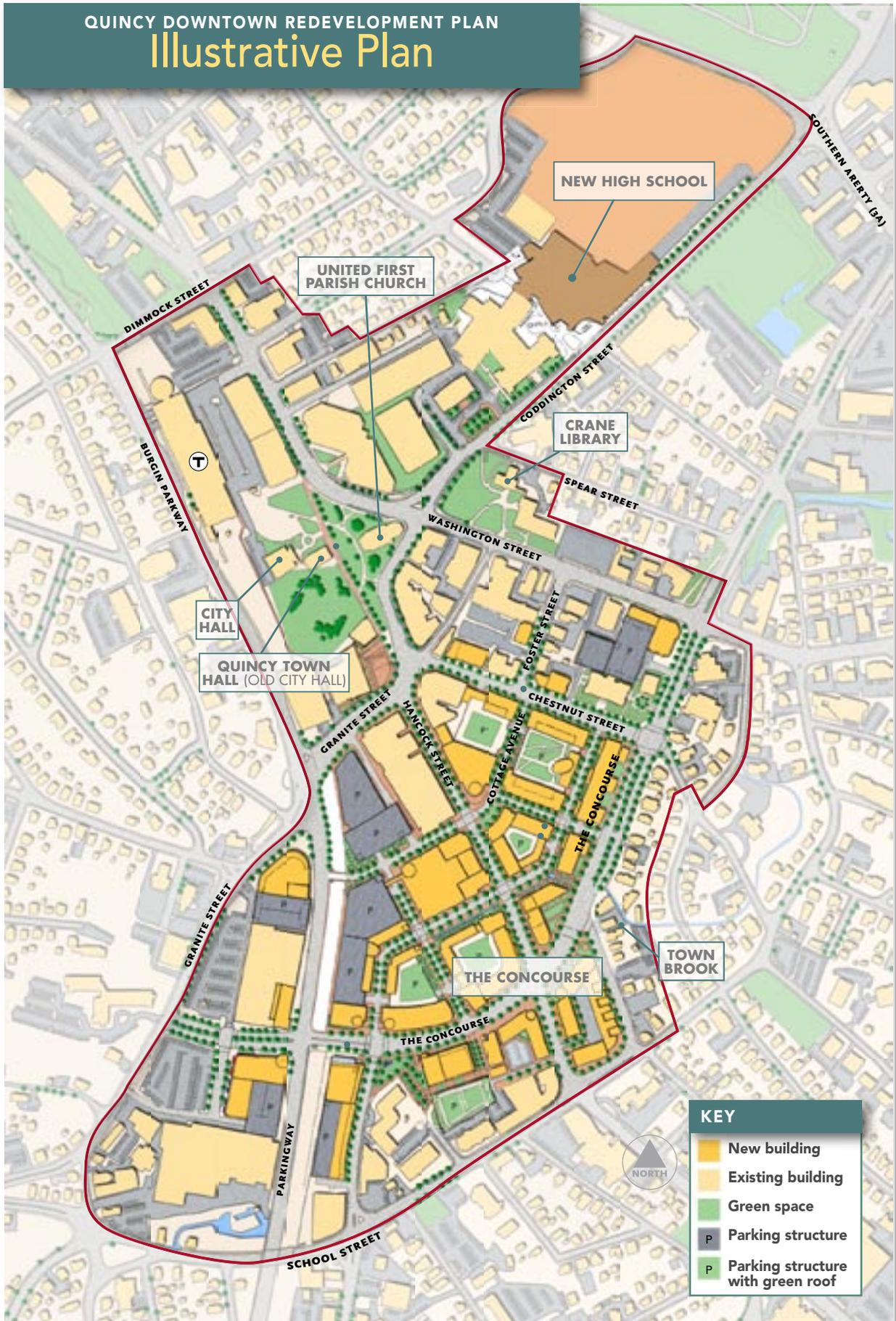
opportunities occur throughout Quincy Center. Many of these are adjacent to the proposed Concourse, the tree-lined, four-lane boulevard that promises to catalyze new development by raising the visibility of these sites and improving vehicle access for new residents, employees, and shoppers. The projects described here will fill gaps in the downtown fabric, restore the essential urban character of a walkable retail street, and enhance Quincy Center’s connection to the MBTA station. They will bring destination retailers as strategically placed “stepping stones” that spread new activity along Hancock Street and—along with hundreds of additional housing units—help create a vibrant, 24-hour downtown. Most of these redevelopment opportunities would replace either surface parking lots or much smaller buildings, providing an incentive for private-sector development.



Small public squares and additional street-level retail will further enliven Hancock Street.

QUINCY DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

# Illustrative Plan



### GRANITE TRUST BUILDING

The former bank building, a handsome and visible symbol of Quincy's downtown, could be reused as offices, with a cultural or visitors center on the ground floor and a 12- to 15-story companion tower with 80 to 120 units of housing. Alternatively, it could serve as a "headquarters" office building with 200,000 to 250,000 SF and associated parking in the existing lot behind the tower. The new complex could provide an economic anchor for downtown, bringing people and vitality back to the core of the district.

### 1400 BLOCK—STORES & OFFICES

The buildings in the rest of the 1400 block could be redeveloped—possibly re-using existing granite façade elements—in concert with redevelopment of the Granite Trust Building. A 12- to 15-story tower of 250,000 to 300,000 SF could define the intersection of Hancock and Cottage streets and create a new node of activity that will enliven a new plaza across the street. Coordinated redevelopment of this block will create maximum benefit for neighboring sites in the heart of downtown.

### HANCOCK WEST SITE

To reinforce the pedestrian-friendly character of Hancock while adding retail diversity, the study considers replacing these four-story buildings with 10- to 15-story residential towers atop a two-story discount retailer with an associated parking garage that projects toward Burgin Parkway. This retail anchor should take extra steps to fit into the urban context by adopting a multilevel format and employing façade design of a quality appropriate for this downtown location.



### PRIMARY REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

## Hancock Street sub-area



#### HANCOCK PARKING LOT

The five-acre Hancock Lot—the largest paved area in the downtown and already owned by the City—could be redeveloped as a network of new residential blocks and neighborhood streets. The site could accommodate an 8- to 10-story building with a 4- to 6-story building on either side containing a combined 400 to 600 residential units, 25% of them owner-occupied. Additional 6- to 8-story buildings with retail space on their ground floors could replace the existing low-rise structures along Hancock and Cottage streets. Parking spaces displaced from the lot could be built and augmented underground or in an above-ground garage built at the center of the new development to shield it from view.

#### HANCOCK TRIANGLE BLOCK

The building on this site will be affected by the alignment and construction of the Concourse and could be re-imagined as a mixed-use program of 100 to 200 residential units with retail on the first floor that adds a vital component of a mixed-use to downtown.

#### CONCOURSE CROSSING EAST SITE

Construction of the Concourse will change the area from a struggling retail street to a major downtown crossroads. Redeveloping the length of the block with approximately 30,000 to 50,000 SF of ground-floor retail below apartments/condos or offices, while maintaining the current setback and street wall, would help to anchor the south end of the Hancock Street retail district. Re-orienting the parking lot toward the rear of the block or, better, replacing it with an underground structure along Hancock connected to 20 to 30 new residential townhouses along Mechanic Street to the east would increase accessible parking near the new development and Hancock while guarding the character and quality of neighboring streetscapes.

#### CONCOURSE CROSSING WEST SITE

Construction of the Concourse will turn this location into a prominent crossroad. A 4- to 6-story building with retail at street level and offices above would replace existing one-story shops and take advantage of the new intersection's high visibility. The new building could signal the importance of the location by incorporating attractive and distinctive architectural elements at the corner.

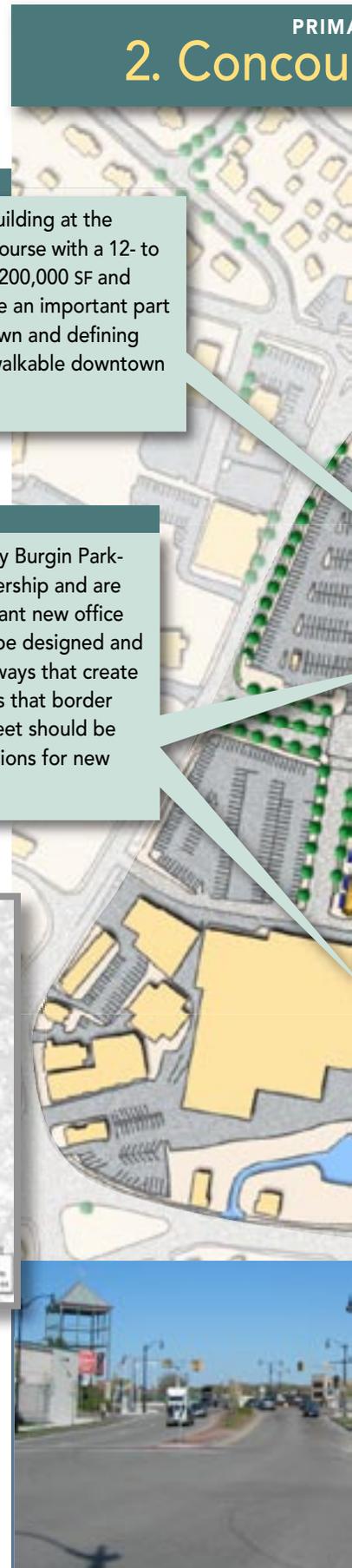
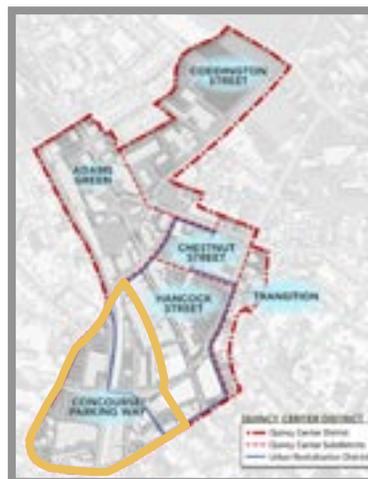
## 2. Concourse

### CONCOURSE BRIDGE SITE

Replacing the existing restaurant building at the corner of Parking Way and the Concourse with a 12- to 15-story office tower of 100,000 to 200,000 SF and associated parking garage would be an important part of marking this gateway to downtown and defining the new roadway as an important walkable downtown street.

### BURGIN PARKWAY BLOCKS

Although separated from downtown by Burgin Parkway, these areas are under single ownership and are large enough to accommodate significant new office and retail uses. New buildings should be designed and placed in these high-visibility areas in ways that create a sense of arrival. The sides of the sites that border the residential areas along Granite Street should be well landscaped or considered as locations for new housing.



# Concourse/Parking Way sub-area



### ROSS GARAGE

An upgraded parking structure of four to six levels could accommodate 700 to 900 spaces, serving new and existing development along Hancock and new development immediately to the south. Circulation, attractive entrances, active ground-floor uses and improved lighting would all be priorities.

### CONCOURSE-ROSS WAY SITE

The furniture store and the two-story parking deck that extends from the Ross garage do not make full use of this immensely strategic site, a site that will become even more central once the Concourse is completed. A new mixed-use block could be built here with a 10- to 12-story office building of 200,000 to 300,000 SF with ground-floor retail along the Concourse, residences facing the residential street, and structured parking in the center. This new program for the site would provide more places for people to live, work and shop downtown.

### CONCOURSE SOUTH SITE

This site will undergo a transformation, and as a result will attract higher levels of activity to the area between Hancock Street and Burgin Parkway. The current buildings could be replaced with either an office or residential building, with retail along the ground floor. Structured parking could be provided behind the building between existing residential towers along School Street and new buildings facing the future boulevard.



View from Granite Street looking east



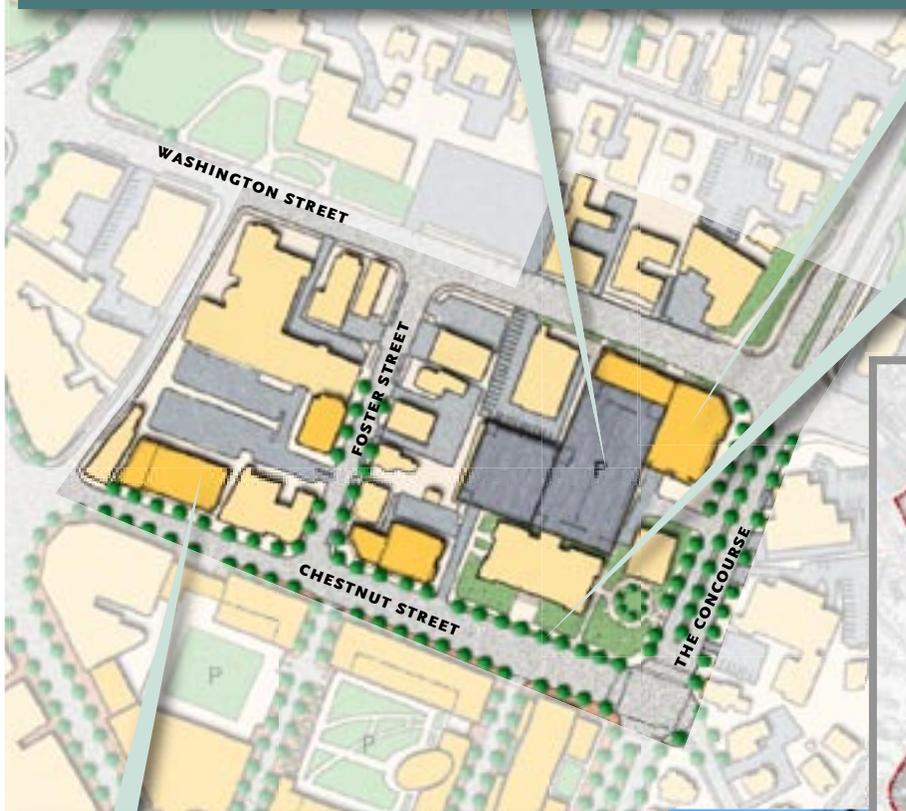
### DISTRICT COURTHOUSE

With potential redevelopment of the adjacent site, the deteriorating parking deck that serves the Courthouse could be rethought to provide additional parking that would be shielded from view by new buildings at the corner and increase parking serving the courthouse. This location could also accommodate potential replacement parking for some of the Hancock Lot spots now used by court visitors.

### CONCOURSE GATEWAY

The existing building on this site does not create a sense of arrival in a vibrant urban district. If the site were redeveloped it could accommodate a larger office building, either including some parking on-site or sharing parking with other nearby buildings.

## RELATED REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES 3. Chestnut Street sub-area



### CHESTNUT STREET

Public space improvements in front of the courthouse



### CHESTNUT STREET LOT SITE

A 3- to 6-story building—with roughly 8,000 SF of retail at street level and housing above—would fill the gap in the storefronts along Chestnut Street where a surface lot currently abuts the sidewalk. Replacement parking for the lot could be provided by a deck built over the remaining parking adjacent to the Quincy Mutual Fire Insurance Building or by negotiating shared-use parking agreements with owners of nearby garages as other sites redevelop.



Looking east along Chestnut Street



### CULTURAL/EDUCATIONAL CORRIDOR

Coddington Street, lined with schools and community buildings, would benefit significantly from calmed traffic. More landscaping along the street edge, highly visible pedestrian crossings with curb bulb-outs, and a clear connection to the MBTA's Quincy Center Station (used by many Quincy schoolchildren), would help to link these important destinations.

### RELATED REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

## 4. Coddington sub-area



### NEW URBAN BOULEVARD & CORRIDOR

Construction of the Concourse will substantially improve the streetscaping and pedestrian amenities adjacent to existing residential areas. Roadway construction will expand front yards and add amenities such as landscaped sidewalks, underground utility lines, and a landscaped median. The new urban boulevard will promote development that reaffirms the existing residential fabric through porches, windows, and other small-scale architectural elements.

### RELATED REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

## 5. Transition sub-area

### A TOWN COMMON

The current configuration of the United First Parish Church and Hancock Street concentrates traffic in front of and around this national historic landmark. Transforming the section of Hancock that passes in front of the church into a well landscaped park with a limited-access roadway would unite the church, the historic burial ground, and Old City Hall while still accommodating celebratory processions and trolleys. The park—a new town common—would also provide a grand connection between the MBTA's Quincy Center Station, surrounded by the city's historic landmarks, and Hancock Street.

### RELATED REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

## 6. Adams Green sub-area



## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Quincy Center District Design Guidelines, issued as a separate document and adopted in 2005, ensure a new level of quality and appropriateness for private investment. Unlike similar guidelines often developed for historic districts, these have a more diverse focus. They:

- preserve and reinforce the district’s important historic heritage;
- encourage economic revitalization; and
- foster new design that expresses the district’s creativity and unique character.

The Design Guidelines address the full spectrum of investments that will shape Quincy Center’s future, and include issues of use as well as design. They:

- Foster design excellence that reinforces Hancock Street’s “Main Street” qualities.
- Promote appropriately intense development and a mix of uses that strengthens Hancock Street—still walkable and largely intact—using traditional urban models to reinforce its character and quality.
- Ensure that the sidewalk edge is lined with stores and other active uses that engage pedestrians.
- Encourage private and public investment to create civic squares, landscaped sidewalks, outdoor dining areas, and other places to gather along the street.
- Blend preservation of historic resources and respect for traditional design qualities with innovative design for buildings, facades, signs and other elements.

Experience underscores the importance of design guidelines. In recent decades, low levels of commercial investment along Hancock Street and in downtown have eaten away at the street’s vibrancy and fragile urban fabric, discouraging people from enjoying downtown. An August 2003 survey of 193 properties on and near Hancock found that 79% showed moderate or severe deterioration. As the City works to reverse this trend, the Design Guidelines represent a new tool applied to this problem, en-

couraging private investment that upholds community priorities. They also provide a level of certainty to private investors that any future neighbor will be a quality building that reinforces the level of activity and enclosure of the street.

The Quincy Planning Board will administer and interpret the Design Guidelines, which, in combination with several other initiatives, form a comprehensive revitalization plan. The City has worked hard to develop new Quincy Center zoning that encourages mixed-use development that will foster street activity throughout the day. The City is also working to make available other tools, such as the Urban Revitalization District plan and district improvement financing, to encourage development that reflects the community vision embodied in the Guidelines.

## PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

According to Rizzo Associates’ Downtown Parking Inventory Analysis Report, the current supply of parking in Quincy Center is sufficient for the existing level of downtown activity, but capacity limitations could pose significant obstacles to revitalization.

- Overall, the approximate total of 8,000 spaces downtown is adequate for existing daytime and peak parking demands.
- Parking is more than adequate to support increased activity generated by dining and cultural events on weekday evenings and on weekends.
- There is a limited amount of excess parking supply in the areas targeted for future growth with the exception of the large retailer parking lots. Additionally, around Quincy College, parking is in especially short supply.

Any new development that could draw more people to Quincy Center—particularly with a mix of residential, retail, and office uses in new downtown buildings—will require several measures to accom-

modate the resulting upsurge in demand for parking. The City should consider pursuing several options:

- Build new municipal parking facilities on the Hancock Lot and refurbish or replace the Ross Garage.
- Introduce new access to the Ross Garage at Cottage Avenue to enhance visibility and access to a potential new facility with greater capacity.
- Place greater emphasis on safety and creating a more secure environment by renovating or replacing the Ross Garage.
- Develop rate structures that support short-term retail parking, provide specifically for long-term employee parking, and discourage auto use for commuting.
- Consider setting *maximum* parking ratios in addition to the minimums currently required by zoning. Both will be enforced by the Planning Board:
  - > 2.0 spaces/1,000 SF for **offices**, with 75–90% of demand accommodated on site;
  - > 1.0 space/**apartment or loft unit** and 2.0 spaces/**townhouse**, with all spaces on-site for projects of ten units or more; and
  - > 2.0 spaces/1,000 SF of new **retail** development, with all spaces on-site for projects exceeding 15,000 SF.

To manage future parking while supporting redevelopment, the City should take the following steps:

- Encourage mixed-use development projects to allow shared parking and encourage shared parking in privately owned and managed facilities.
- Promote residential development because it has lower parking needs. At the same time, work with the MBTA to enhance bus service; expanded service would support new parking without placing excessive traffic demands on downtown streets.
- Encourage transportation demand management (TDM) programs and car-sharing programs for employees and residents in an effort to minimize increases in traffic and parking demands.
- Promote bicycle use and walking in Quincy Center and surrounding neighborhoods.

# Civic Framework

6

Civic Strategy

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The first decades of the 21st century promise to be exciting ones for downtown Quincy. With guidance from Mayor Phelan, the City Council, business leaders, and the citizens of Quincy over the last two years, this plan has taken shape. Like other cities across the country, Quincy Center will soon benefit from the strong latent demand for significant new downtown investment. It will profit from the potent combination of its historic role as a city center that already contains significant retail and cultural attractions and parking, and its new role as a DIF district. Unlocking Hancock Street's potential to spark development throughout downtown will require concerted cooperation among the elected officials, property owners, business people and private developers, along with continued citizen participation throughout every phase of Quincy Center's transformation.

This Framework identifies a series of pivotal initiatives that are the keys to an effective revitalization strategy for Hancock Street and the rest of Quincy Center. To achieve maximum impact, these initiatives need to be undertaken in a comprehensive and carefully coordinated way. This section provides an overview of these recommendations and lays out a civic strategy for implementing them in a timely fashion.

A key to achieving this will be the leveraging of state and federal programs and grants. One statewide program the City can take advantage of is the Urban Redevelopment District initiative, which gives the City additional powers to assemble properties—an important authority in a historic downtown where many old buildings sit on irregularly-shaped blocks and few contiguous parcels share the same ownership. Lowell, Somerville, and Fitchburg have all used urban revitalization districts successfully to stimulate new housing and economic-development investment by both the public and private sectors.

The City should solicit expressions of interest from one or more private developers with significant experience in producing well-designed, mixed-use urban develop-

ment. Potential developers should also have a demonstrated record of creating lively and pedestrian-friendly public realms. Once the City has selected one or more developers, it should work with them to prepare, as quickly as possible, a joint agreement that affirms their respective commitments to the implementation process outlined in this section. This agreement should spell out near-term commitments, clearly establish initial measures of success, and set out expectations for long-term approaches to revitalization. The agreement should also establish a process and time frame for Hancock Street property owners—who suffer from the street's problems today and will benefit significantly from its revitalization—to participate in the redevelopment process. Further strategies are laid out in six additional areas.

## I PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE URBAN FABRIC

### Quincy Center Zoning Districts

Providing opportunities for additional development that brings people downtown, while respecting and celebrating what already exists there, is a critical step toward invigorating Quincy Center. The new zoning recently adopted by the City allows an increase in density, which helps to foster activity on the streets and increase opportunities for people to live, work, play and shop in this dynamic location.

Other elements of the zoning demonstrate a City commitment to creating flexibility for both new and existing development with the aim of promoting a vibrant Quincy Center. For instance, parking ratios are set low to ease the burden that providing parking imposes on smaller development projects. Additionally, minimal lot sizes encourage the introduction of a variety of building sizes and types.

### Design Guidelines and Review

Reinforcing and enhancing the character and quality of Quincy Center's urban fabric moves downtown closer to several core goals for revitalization: a more

lively pedestrian environment, protection of historic character, greater economic viability, maximum public and private fiscal benefits, and strengthening of adjacent neighborhoods.

The primary tool for ensuring that new investment promotes Hancock Street’s “Main Street” character

**PARTNERS**

Downtown Redevelopment Committee; City Council; Planning Board; United First Parish Church; Historic District Commission; State Executive Office of Transportation

**STATUS**

- > Design Guidelines issued November 2005
- > Adams Green CDAG application submitted, 2005
- > The Concourse:
  - PWED grant awarded, 2005
  - \$6,000,000 in federal funds designated, 2005

are the Design Guidelines, adopted and enforced by the Planning Board, which will serve as a guide to private developers and help steer the design review process. The easy-to-use guidelines manual illustrates the redevelopment ideas voiced by the community during stakeholder meetings, forums and commu-

nity workshops. Citizen participation and oversight of this process will further legitimize the guidelines

While the Design Guidelines will address the quality of the public realm created with new development, its concepts for the Concourse and Adams Green are preliminary. These two primary public assets need more detailed recommendations that will increase their attractiveness to people and encourage equivalent levels of private investment.

### Marketing Quincy’s History and Cultural Amenities

Design guidelines can provide many benefits, but a primary reason they are important is the need to protect Quincy Center’s historic and cultural resources. These assets represent a key tool for promoting tourism and a selling point for potential new residents or businesses. To that end, development of a marketing strategy and plan is recommended to further protect the Center’s history and spell out

ways to capitalize on it for economic and aesthetic benefits. Such a study could quantify the loss of dollars to retailers outside of Quincy Center and identify gaps in retail offerings downtown. These results could help city officials persuade prospective businesses to locate in Quincy Center.

## II DEVELOP A DIF PLAN

Providing a set of tools that promotes effective financing for private and public investment can help stimulate significant and immediate improvement in older urban commercial areas. The Commonwealth’s district-improvement financing (DIF) program helps communities fund public works, infrastructure, and development projects by capturing added revenue from development projects. Such new funding

**PARTNERS**

Downtown Redevelopment Committee; City Council; Massachusetts Economic Assistance Coordinating Council; Planning and Community Development Department

**STATUS**

Anticipated in 2006

mechanisms have been created specifically for revitalization efforts and are even more effective when combined with a comprehensive and coordinated set of redevelopment tools and strategies.

Quincy Center has already received designation as a DIF district. The City has recently completed a DIF financial study that will help unlock Quincy Center’s potential.

## III IMPROVE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

To compete for residents and new businesses, Quincy must keep the downtown’s infrastructure up to date. Making available a full range of utilities—including internet service, and high-capacity electrical and telephone lines—should carry the same priority as assuring adequate roadway and sewer capacity. Strategic and periodic improvements to the more visible ele-

ments of the urban environment—such as street trees, parks, public squares and gathering spaces, and traffic signals—need to be considered. The city anticipates coordinating these upgrades with other revitalization efforts.

**PARTNERS**

Downtown Redevelopment Committee; Planning and Community Development Department

**STATUS**

In development

## IV IMPROVE DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING FACILITIES

As other revitalization efforts move forward, the City of Quincy must clarify vehicle access and bus circulation and stops. It must also accommodate the increased parking demand that will result from downtown revitalization. Vehicle circulation and congestion

**PARTNERS**

Downtown Redevelopment Committee, Planning and Community Development Department, Department of Public Works

**STATUS**

Downtown Parking Inventory Analysis, November 2005

will be dramatically improved with the completion of the Concourse; the project will reduce traffic on Hancock, Granite, Washington and Coddington Streets. The Framework’s recommended transit-oriented parking ratios—far lower than those in suburban environments (see page 42)—are carefully calibrated to support successful mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly urban development. To keep demand and supply in balance, new development projects should integrate into their parking programs the spaces lost when surface lots are redeveloped. To maintain and extend the relatively dense pattern of downtown’s existing urban fabric and to support a vibrant commercial district, the City should:

- develop wayfinding strategies to encourage the use of the Concourse and other collector streets to provide access to parking and minimize cut-through traffic on residential streets;

- establish mechanisms that favor residential re-development as a primary use because of its low parking demand;
- encourage shared parking in private facilities;
- work with the MBTA to improve both bus service and the location and appearance of bus stops;
- use traffic-calming and enhanced sidewalks to promote walking and bicycling, not only in Quincy Center but in surrounding neighborhood; and
- institute transportation demand-management (TDM) programs for employees and car-sharing programs that target both employees and residents.

From an urban-design perspective, parking should not be provided on a parcel-by-parcel basis—as in suburban settings—when the possibility exists to create centralized structured or shared parking. In a densely developed urban setting, the suburban approach represents the least efficient way to use valuable land that is needed for new, pedestrian-oriented development, and it can make it harder to rehabilitate significant, older buildings. The extensive parking that results from the parcel-by-parcel approach also would diminish the quality of the pedestrian experience. In short, because parking is so vital to the economic health and liveliness of Quincy Center, its location, pricing, enforcement, and quality must be carefully managed.

In addition to balancing parking supply and demand, fine-tuning pricing for downtown parking will maximize its availability to the users—shoppers, restaurant patrons, employees—needed to keep the district healthy. For example, on-street parking and public garages must be priced high enough to encourage a healthy rate of turnover, yet low enough that people aren’t discouraged from coming downtown. Research undertaken by an urban planner on the University of California-Los Angeles faculty suggests



Bike parking at Alewife Station

that parking rates are optimal when approximately 15% of on-street spaces are typically vacant. If there are consistently no vacancies, parking rates are too low; if vacancies far exceed 15%, rates are too high.

## V SUPPORT STRATEGIC REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Initial Phases, 2006–2016

This study reaffirms and builds on the conclusions of previous consulting efforts: Significant mixed-use redevelopment should be undertaken in Quincy Center. The components of the redevelopment opportunity are now significantly larger, involving the opportunity to locate 1,100,000 to 1,500,000 SF downtown with an increased residential component, a unique “headquarters” office component, and possibly a large-format retailer in addition to traditional smaller retailers. In these first phases, grants and other programs offered by the Commonwealth—such as its Smart Growth grants—should be pursued to offset the costs to Quincy residents. Other projects of significance that may occur in this initial decade of the Framework Plan include development of a new headquarters building for the Stop & Shop Companies and a new high school on Coddington Street. The importance of keeping the community involved and engaged in all proposals cannot be emphasized too strongly. Community involvement will help sustain political support for all public- and private-sector projects.

#### PARTNERS

Downtown Redevelopment Committee; City Council; Planning and Community Development Department; Mayor’s Office

#### STATUS

Strategic Framework Plan issued February 2006

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### Future Potential, 2016–2020

Many of the additional strategic projects identified in this report will likely be undertaken by private developers responding to market demand. Where appropriate, the City of Quincy should participate

in public/private partnerships. On virtually all sites, the recommended redevelopment represents a substantial increase over the existing building area. Most of this development potential can only be unlocked if parking is provided privately within the block or publicly in nearby centralized facilities. In effect, cooperation among property owners, potential developers, and the City will create the ability to achieve significant new value in Quincy Center.

## VI ENHANCE QUINCY CENTER GATEWAYS

Signature gateways can create an inspiring sense of arrival into a vibrant business and cultural district. Beyond signage, these gateways can take the form of enhanced landscape features, significant works of public art, an architectural element of a new building or a public space. Any and all of these should be considered at multiple locations to enhance visitors’ arrival into Quincy Center by foot, car or public transit. Additionally, view corridors to significant buildings—such as the view along Hancock Street to the Granite Trust tower—need to be considered and preserved. Locations where gateway elements should be employed include:

- The **area in front of the T station** would be greatly improved with additional open space amenities and, working in collaboration with the MBTA, new mixed-use development to replace unsightly surface parking and bus-layover areas.
- The redesign of the **high school** offers an opportunity to create a gateway from the north-east along Coddington.
- The boulevard-like design of the new **Concourse** presents the perfect opportunity for a gateway for drivers approaching downtown from the south and west.
- The **intersection of Dimmock and Hancock** Streets can serve as the gateway for people coming from the I-93 exit or other points north
- The **Granite Street bridge over the MBTA tracks** offers an ideal opportunity to enhance entry into Quincy Center from the west.

## CONCLUSION

The Quincy Downtown Vision, Framework and Strategy will advance Quincy Center's position as the most important business district on the South Shore, setting the stage for it to rival Brookline's Coolidge Corner or Harvard Square as a place to shop, eat or establish a business. With continued strong leadership from Mayor Phelan, elected officials, business leaders and, of course, the community itself, downtown

Quincy stands poised to become a prime location for business, shopping, and recreation in the Boston region. At the same time, it will begin to advance as a great place to live, with new residents strengthening downtown businesses, which will in turn contribute to a growing sense that Quincy Center is an exciting place to live and work. This plan sets out the steps for translating this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity into a newer, better, more vibrant downtown.



Hancock Street will soon become a far more active and lively retail thoroughfare.