

# SOUTH HUNTINGTON AVENUE

## Framework for Future Development Review



CITY OF BOSTON  
Thomas M. Menino  
*Mayor*



Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority



S. HUNTINGTON AVE. CORRIDOR AERIAL VIEW LOOKING EAST



S. HUNTINGTON AVE. CORRIDOR AERIAL VIEW LOOKING WEST



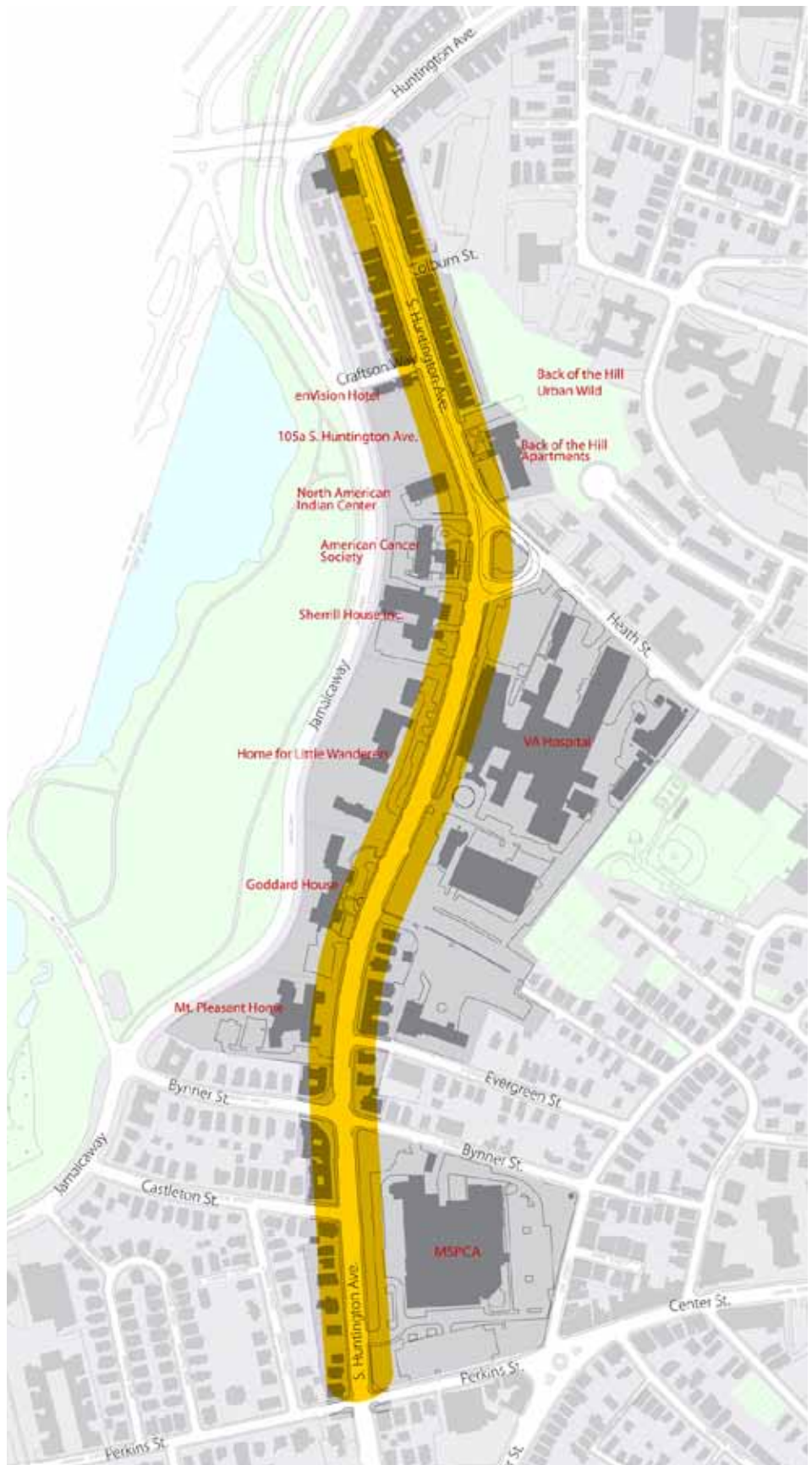
AERIAL VIEW LOOKING EAST



AERIAL VIEW LOOKING WEST

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Corridor Boundary

# I. PURPOSE & PROCESS

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the South Huntington Avenue corridor (“Corridor”) study was to develop a set of guidelines for new development. In recognition of multiple recent development projects, and the individualized manner in which each of these projects are reviewed, the corridor study establishes a comprehensive vision and unified set of guidelines for the review of projects, and the guidance of future growth.

BRA Staff grouped feedback from stakeholders into three categories: preferred use mix, physical characteristics of the Corridor, and transportation needs.



## PROCESS

Early on in the public process, the BRA set out to understand key priorities and issues from community stakeholders that included residents, business owners, property owners and developers.

After several listening sessions, the feedback was used to inform a collective framework (“Framework”) of development guidelines for the future feel and physical character of the Corridor.

The Framework also recommends action items and specific timeframes to improve the public realm, address transportation needs, and to manage future growth. The Framework is intended to provide guidance to public agencies and private developers who wish to invest in and improve the Corridor. The Framework is not an amendment to the underlying zoning, but is a set of development and design guidelines intended to shape future projects according to the vision of neighborhood stakeholders.

# II. CORRIDOR CHARACTER

## CORRIDOR HISTORY



1884: Prior to South Huntington Avenue

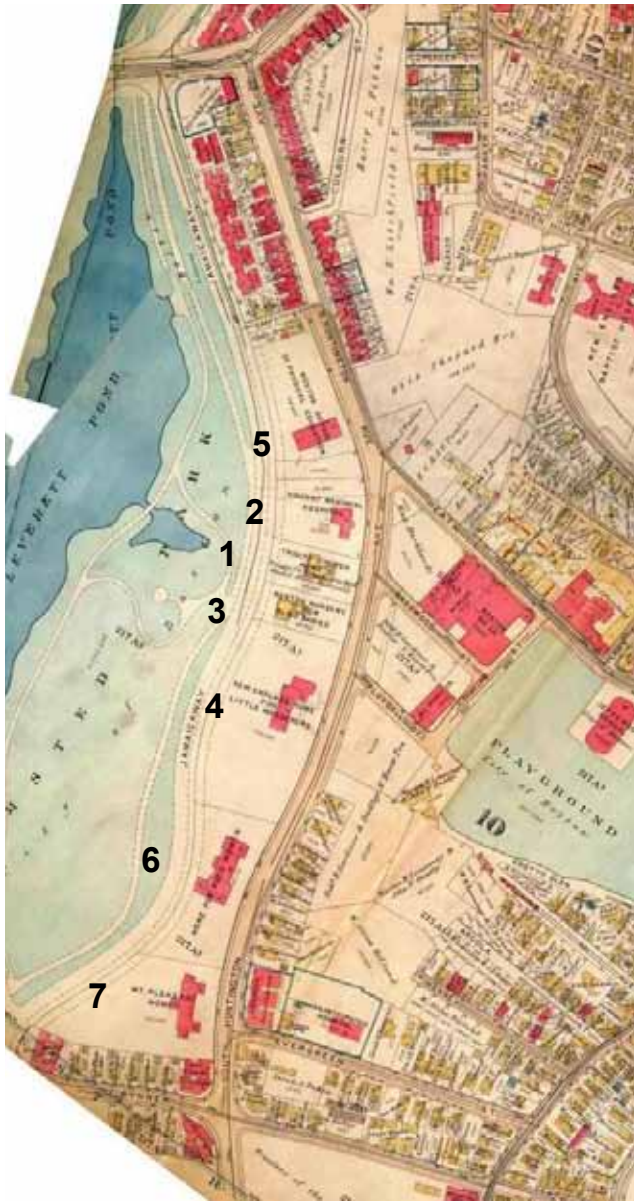
In 1857 Streetcar service began along Huntington Avenue and Heath Street and the electric streetcar was introduced in 1891.

Between 1860 - 1880 there was major development and population growth in and around Jamaica Plain and the Parker Hill area (today known as Mission Hill) with the extension of the streetcar and sewage service. More streets were developed on lower Parker Hill, lined by brick single-family rowhouses. Streets on the upper part of the hill were laid out in the 1880s. Triple-deckers were added in the 1890s, as were apartment blocks built along Tremont Street and brick bowfront apartments lining Huntington Avenue.

In 1896 there was planning for a road to connect Heath Street to Castleton Street. This new road became South Huntington Avenue. In 1901, the construction of South Huntington Avenue began and in 1906, new transit service was added along South Huntington Avenue, connecting Huntington Avenue to Centre Street. During the early 1900 thru the 1920s, this new corridor began to fill with Institutions. Many institutions were relocated from the dense Downtown to this area because of low-priced vacant land and public transit accessibility.



## II. CORRIDOR CHARACTER



1931: Major Institutional Developments along the Corridor

There was also substantial residential development along the Corridor as many two-family houses filled in vacant areas. During the 1940s and 50s public housing complexes became a part of the neighborhood fabric; and in the 1960s high-rise buildings were introduced. In 1953 the Veterans Affairs Hospital opened, and in 1985 the streetcar service ended beyond Heath Street Station, and was replaced with the 39 bus providing service to Arborway/Forest Hills Station.

1. 1907, Trinity Church Home
2. 1908, Vincent Memorial Hospital
3. 1910, Boston Nursery for Blind Babies
4. 1914, New England Home for Little Wanderers
5. 1917, Boston School of Physical Education
6. 1925, Goddard House
7. 1926, Mount Pleasant Home



1914: New England Home for Little Wanderers



1917: Boston School of Physical Education

## THREE PRECINCTS

The Corridor consists of the length of South Huntington Avenue from the intersection with Huntington Avenue to the intersection with Perkins Street. After several site visits and public meetings in the community, BRA Staff determined that the results of a study might be better organized if the Corridor were broken into three distinct areas or precincts (“Precincts”). In addition to Corridor-wide recommendations, this Framework also includes recommendations that are tailored to each Precinct, as each Precinct is unique in use mix and character.

Precinct 1 begins at the Huntington Avenue intersection and extends approximately to Heath Street.

Precinct 2 begins approximately at Heath Street, and extends to the Goddard House (201 S. Huntington Avenue).

Precinct 3 begins approximately at the Goddard House, and extends to the southern terminus of the Corridor at Perkins Street.

II. CORRIDOR CHARACTER

Precinct -1



Precinct -2



Precinct -3



# EXISTING STREETScape CHARACTER



Precinct -1: Row-Houses

## PRECINCT 1

Precinct 1 has the most urban feel of all three Precincts, and is generally characterized by three-story brick rowhouses built to the sidewalk edge, with pockets of ground-floor commercial uses. The Back of the Hill Apartments, the Envision Hotel and the North American Indian Center are also located within Precinct 1.



Precinct -2: Institutional Use

## PRECINCT 2

It is generally characterized by institutional uses on large lots with large setbacks from the sidewalk edge for landscaping and parking areas. Properties include the VA Hospital, Sherrill House, and the Astra Zeneca Lodge.



Precinct -3: Residential & Institutional Uses

## PRECINCT 3

This Precinct is characterized by handsome three and four-story multi-family brick dwellings. Nearly the entire eastern side of Precinct 3 is occupied by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA) Angell Memorial Hospital campus. Closer to Perkins Street, there is increased pedestrian activity, due to the transition into the aforementioned residential uses, as well as adjacent retail, restaurants, and services in the vicinity of Hyde Square.

## II. CORRIDOR CHARACTER

### Precinct - 1: Streetscape Character

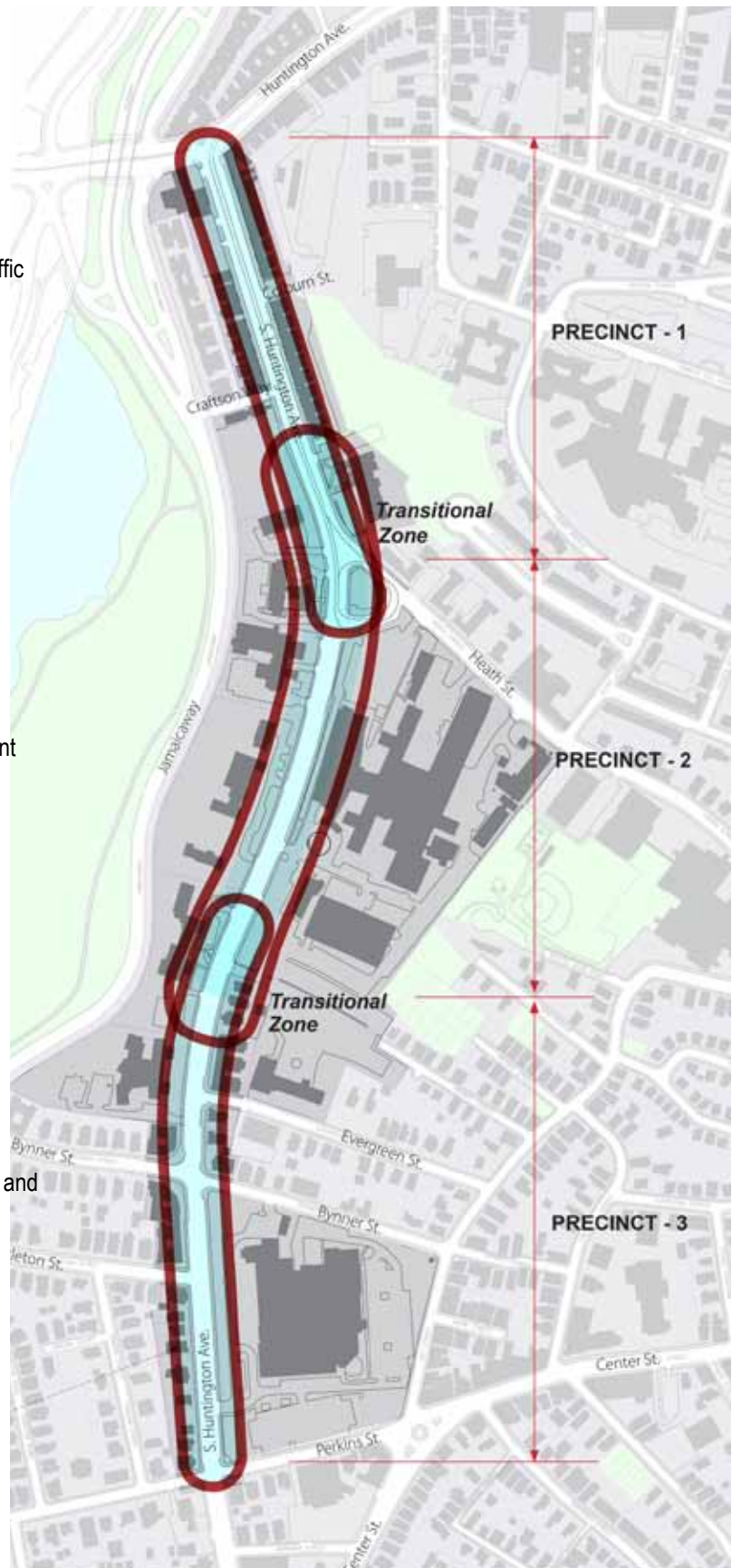
- 3-story brick row houses/mixed use
- No setback
- Continuous street wall
- Trees along the curb
- E line service that operates in mixed traffic
- Two vehicular lanes in each direction
- Curb side parking
- “Shared the Road” bicycle marking

### Precinct - 2: Streetscape Character

- Mid rise(5-6-story) except the VA
- Institutional setback (20' – 60')
- Much more permeable street wall
- Landscaped / parking frontage
- Intermittent trees and landscaping in front yard
- One vehicular lane in each direction
- Curb side parking
- Full bike lane

### Precinct - 3: Streetscape Character

- Mixed of mid rise(5-6-story) and 3-story residential
- Mixed of Institutional setback (20' – 60') and residential setback(10')
- Consistent street wall
- Landscaped/parking frontage
- One vehicular lane in each direction
- Curb side parking
- Full bike lane



Precinct Map

# III. PREFERRED USE MIX

## EXISTING USE MIX

At present, the Corridor is predominantly characterized by institutional and residential uses, which are complemented by some ground-floor commercial uses in Precinct 1. The non-profit institutional uses that once characterized the Corridor are slowly being replaced.

## COMMERCIAL

Stakeholders mentioned the need for additional ground-floor commercial uses that would activate the Corridor and make it a livelier place especially for the pedestrian. With even just a few businesses operating on the ground floor of Precinct 1, it is a very different feel than walking along the street edge in Precinct 3. Desired commercial uses suggested through the community process were those that promote local business, those that ease the task of daily errands (e.g., home goods store, hardware store, dry cleaner) and are not necessarily big box retail. While there is no policy in place for affordable retail space, this could be a public benefit from a large development proposal that might exceed the dimensional guidelines found in this document. This idea, which was well received by stakeholders during this Study, is derived from Boston's existing policy on affordable housing.

## RESIDENTIAL

The non-profit institutional uses that once characterized the Corridor are slowly being replaced. At the time of writing, the replacement use is predominantly multi-family residential development. While stakeholder input suggested that multi-family developments do not necessarily present a negative impact to the community, the importance of maintaining compatibility with the existing character, heights, densities and materials was repeatedly emphasized.

The topic of affordable housing was popular among some stakeholders. At present, all new development must adhere to Boston's Inclusionary Development Policy ("IDP"), which requires 15% affordable units in projects that are 10 units or greater. An assortment of comments were received which included requests to exceed the City's current IDP requirements. In recognition of such requests, the following benefits shall be sought in cases where the provision of affordable housing is a desired public benefit:

- Increased supply of workforce housing (80-120% AMI) and affordable housing (<80% AMI)
- Creation of homeownership opportunities (affordable and market rate)
- Maximize and extend length of deed restrictions on deed-restricted affordable units

## IV. DIMENSIONAL GUIDELINES

The South Huntington Avenue Corridor Study examined the existing conditions of the area and found the current built context largely exceeds the underlying zoning dimensional regulations. The following dimensional guidelines were structured by recognition of prevailing heights and FARs in the Corridor today. New development that is within the ranges of the recommended dimensional guidelines will thus be contextually appropriate for the area.

The dimensional guidelines shall be applied holistically. For example, the height and development footprint guidelines, when applied together, compliment each other in order to facilitate both greater setbacks and wider spacing between buildings replicating the park-like setting and visual transparency currently found in Precinct 2.

These dimensional guidelines are neither a substitute, nor an amendment to the underlying zoning regulations of the South Huntington Avenue Corridor (Article 55 for Jamaica Plain; Article 59 for Mission Hill), but will aid the BRA in administering the Article 80 development review process and will also be the basis for the City to consider zoning variances for specific development proposals.



## IV. DIMENSIONAL GUIDELINES

Generally, the dimensional guidelines exceed the limits of current zoning. Therefore, all new projects complying with the dimensional guidelines will be expected to provide additional public benefits if they exceed the underlying zoning for FAR and height maximums and are within the range of the recommended dimensional guidelines. The level of additional public benefits will be commensurate with the level above underlying zoning proposed by the project. The study also identified four “opportunity sites” where projects can exceed the guidelines if the project provides exceptional public benefits. (see Place-making Opportunity Site section) Examples of additional and exceptional public benefits are provided in the Conclusion and Implementation chapter of this document.

The Framework dimensional guidelines address the following sections:

- Development Footprint
- Floor Area Ratio
- Height

# DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

Development footprint is the ratio of the development area (including: building footprint, surface parking, structured parking footprint, vehicular access ways, service areas and mechanical/utility areas) to the overall lot area. See Goddard House example. The development area does not include: open space, landscaped setbacks, or any hard-scaped open space areas (that are not used for vehicular access/parking).

The recommended development footprint guidelines shown below closely reflect the prevailing development footprint of properties along the Corridor today. The development footprint ratio is a useful tool for discussing the height and FAR guidelines which follow this section. A high development footprint ratio could result from several scenarios: it could reflect a low-density development with large surface parking and service areas (e.g. VA Hospital – Precinct 2 and MSPCA – Precinct 3), or

a large building footprint (e.g. 3-story rowhouses with little to no setbacks – Precinct 1). A lower development footprint ratio could also indicate several scenarios: a building, or buildings, with larger setbacks and landscaping due to natural features (generally western side of Precinct 2), or a taller building that extends its square footage vertically instead of horizontally (Back of the Hill Apartments – Precinct 1).

## Development Footprint Guidelines

New development in the Corridor should maintain a development footprint that follows the guidelines below. Note the lower development footprint guideline on the western portion of Precinct 2, where several sites have larger front, side, and rear setbacks to account for grade change and proximity to the Emerald Necklace.

Precinct 1: 80%

Precinct 2: Western Side- 60% and VA side- 80%

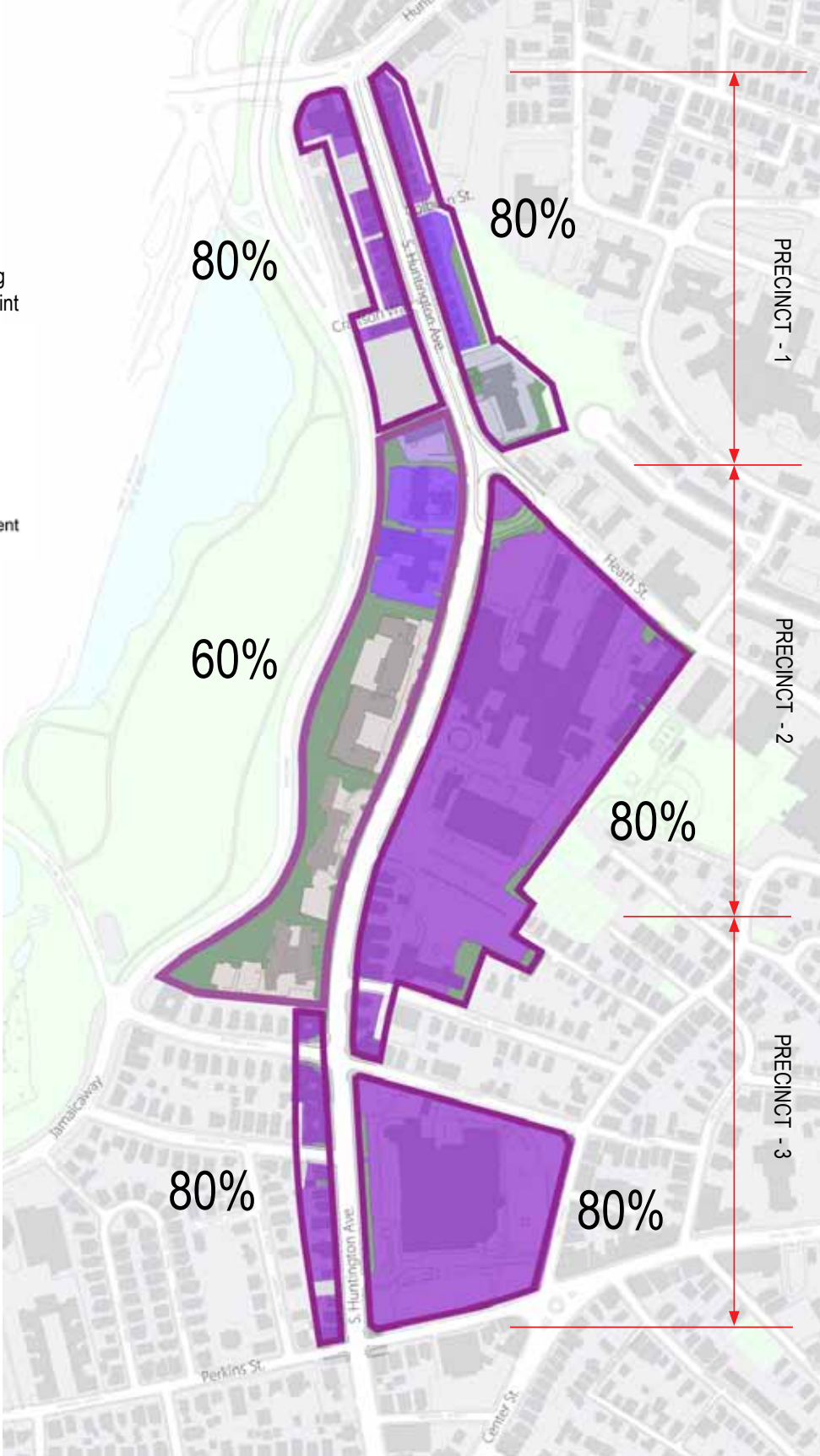
Precinct 3: 80%



Existing Goddard House Development Footprint

Range of the existing  
Development Footprint

- 91-100%
- 81-90%
- 71-80%
- 61-70%
- 51-60%
- Non-Development Footprint



Development Footprint Guideline

# FLOOR AREA RATIO

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the ratio between the lot size and the building floor area contained on all floors. The primary guide for determination of FAR guidelines in the South Huntington Avenue Corridor shall be the allowed FAR in the underlying zoning regulations found in Articles 55 and 59 of the Boston Zoning Code, as well as the existing conditions, prevailing FAR, and character of the three Precincts.

## Existing Conditions

The current range of FARs along the South Huntington Avenue Corridor is a result of the varied building types found. For example, the row houses in Precinct 1 are built to the sidewalk edge, occupy most of their site and have a greater FAR, while the institutional buildings in Precinct 2 are set back from the sidewalk edge with generous side yards and have a lower FAR. The dia-

gram to the right shows the range of the existing FARs found in each Precinct.

## Underlying Zoning Regulations

Precinct 1 lies primarily in the Mission Hill Neighborhood District with a small portion within the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood District. The applicable zoning sub-district allowable FAR for as-of-right development ranges from 1.0 to 2.0.

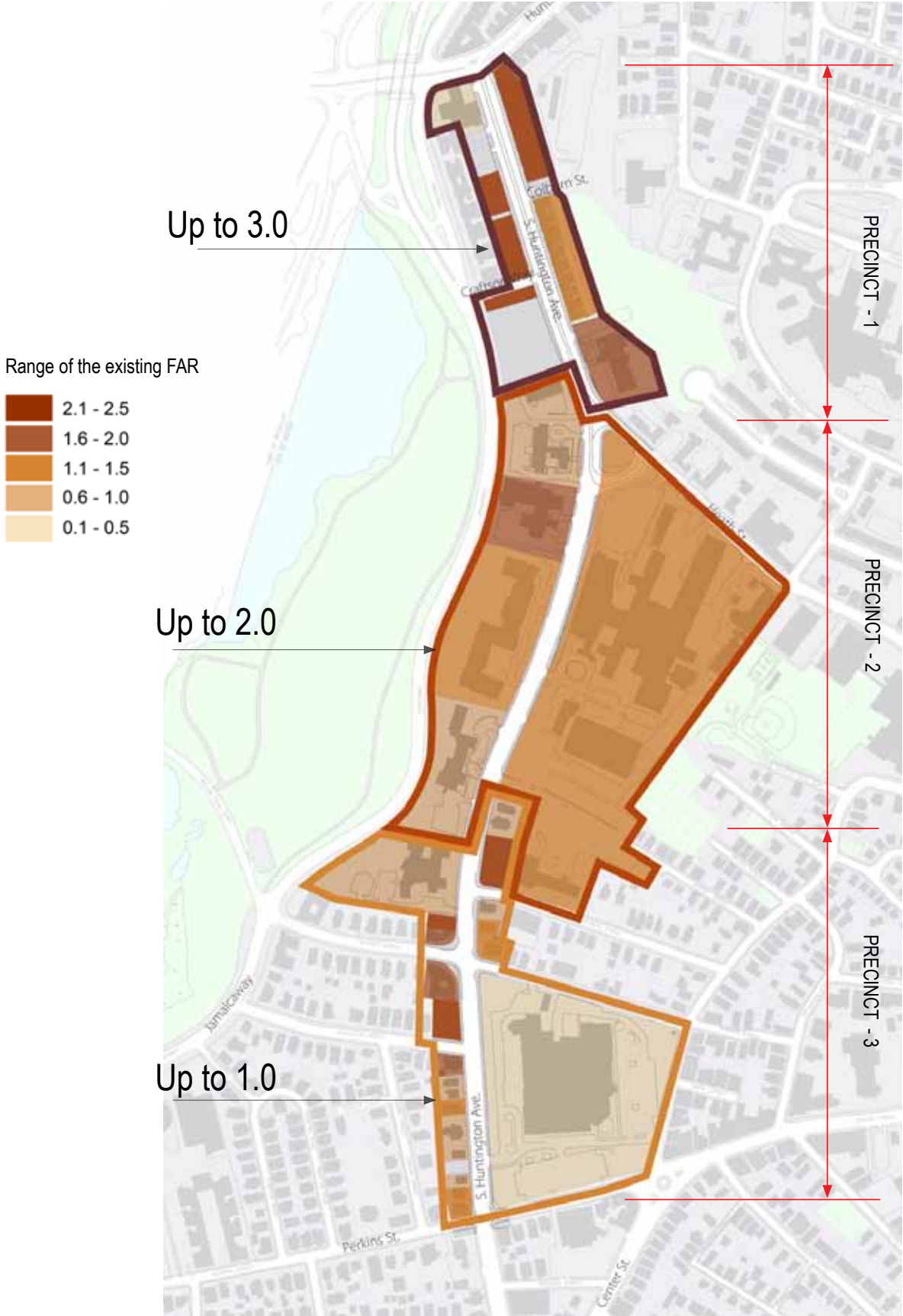
Precinct 2 lies within the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood District. The applicable zoning sub-district allowable FAR for as-of-right development is 1.0.

Precinct 3 lies within the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood District. The applicable zoning sub-district allowable FAR for as-of-right development ranges from 0.5 to 1.0.

## FAR Guidelines

The following FAR guidelines are based on the prevailing FAR, existing conditions and the overall character of the three Precincts. In addition, since two of the Precincts contain 3 or more zoning sub-districts, each with their own recommended FAR, the guidelines provide a unified FAR that is more contextually appropriate for the Precinct.

	Existing Ranges (BRA Study)	Underlying Zoning	BRA Guidelines
Precinct 1	0.5 - 2.5	NS	2.0
		RH	1.0
		MFR-2	2.0
		NI (VA)	1.0
Precinct 2	0.7 - 1.7	NI (VA)	1.0
Precinct 3	0.4 - 2.4	NI (VA)	1.0
		NI (MSPCA)	0.5
		2F-5000	0.6



FAR Guidelines

# HEIGHT

The distinct character of the South Huntington Avenue Corridor is defined by the development pattern (building type, setbacks) and physical conditions (height, massing) found in each of the 3 Precincts. The development pattern and physical conditions work together to soften the impacts of development along South Huntington Avenue. For example, buildings with lower heights (3 story townhouses) come to the sidewalk edge creating a friendly pedestrian scale environment while the taller buildings (6 to 14 stories) have a generous set back from the sidewalk edge which lessens the physical and visual impacts of the height.

New development must acknowledge these patterns and conditions by having the proper setbacks, height and massing found within the corresponding Precinct and recommended in these dimensional guidelines.

The height guidelines are designed to ensure that new development enhances and closely maintains the distinct character of the Corridor while allowing for economic activity.

## Existing Conditions

The current range of heights along South Huntington Avenue is a result of the Corridor's varied development types. Rowhouse, two and three family houses are typically 3 stories while the institutional buildings generally range from 5 to 14 stories (VA Hospital). The diagram to the right shows the range of heights found in each Precinct.

## Underlying Zoning Regulations

In Precinct 1, the applicable zoning sub-district height limits for as-of-right development range from 35' to 55'.

In Precinct 2, the applicable zoning sub-district height limit for as-of-right development is 45'.

In Precinct 3, the applicable zoning sub-district height limits for as-of-right development range from 35' to 45'.

### Development Pattern

#### Precinct - 1

3 - story row houses with no setback

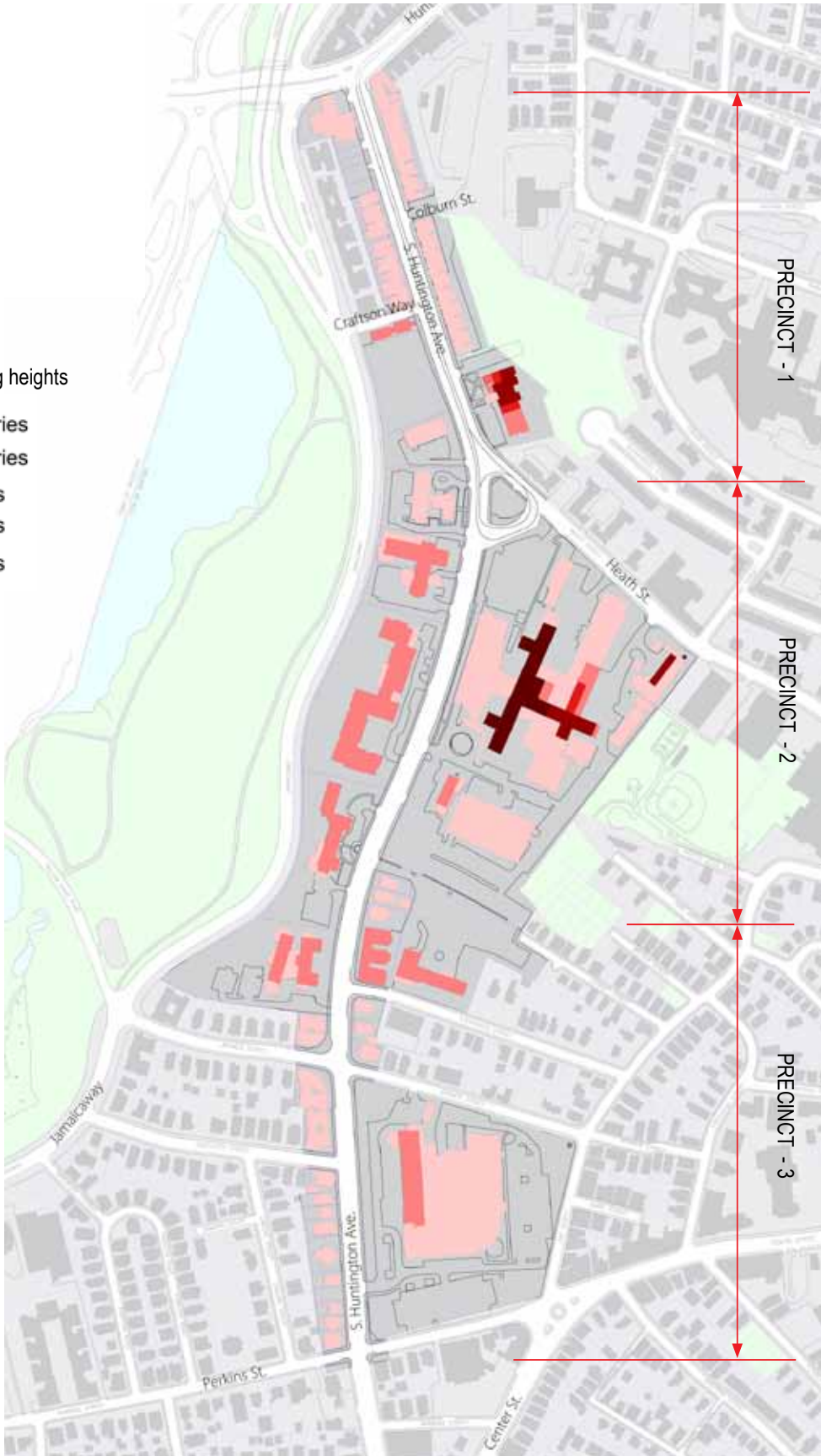


10 - story residential with 55 ft. setback



Range of the existing heights

- 13 - 15 Stories
- 10 - 12 Stories
- 7 - 9 Stories
- 4 - 6 Stories
- 1 - 3 Stories



Existing Heights

### **Place-Making Opportunity Site**

The South Huntington Avenue Corridor Study has identified four sites that have the potential of being unique and special places reinforcing the overall character of the whole corridor. These places would have interesting architectural expression, development with active ground floor use, and an attractive public realm that encourages pedestrian traffic and gathering spaces.

The four sites are located where views terminate and streets coverage providing opportunities for: a gateway to the Corridor, a transition between the scale and building types found in neighboring precincts, a buffer between the taller buildings on the VA Hospital site and providing a strong visual terminus.

Below are the locations identified as Place-Making Opportunity Sites (See Map):

**A. Huntington Ave. and South Huntington Ave.**

This location has the potential to form a gateway into the South Huntington Avenue Corridor. A gateway could be an iconic piece of architecture to include a taller building with multiple uses and enhanced context-appropriate signage and way-finding.

**B. Heath Street and South Huntington Ave.**

This location is the terminus of Heath Street, on the westerly side of the South Huntington Avenue Corridor. This is a transitional zone from the townhouse scale in Precinct 1 to the institutional building scale in Precinct 2.

**C. South Huntington Ave. and Heath Street**




This location is where Heath St and South Huntington meet and split from each other. The MBTA turnaround for the Green Line provides a forecourt for a potential development site that would be lower in scale and would mitigate the height of the 14 story VA tower in the background.

**D. South Huntington Ave. and Heath Street**

This location is the terminus of Heath Street on the easterly side the South Huntington Ave Corridor. The Back of the Hill Apartments has already utilized its location as a place-making opportunity site by creating a strong visual terminus. Two key factors soften the height and massing of the building: the steep grade at the rear of the property and the generous setback of the building from the street/sidewalk edge.



IV. DIMENSIONAL GUIDELINES

-  View
-  View Terminus
-  Place-making Opportunity Site



A. Huntington Ave. View - Gas Station



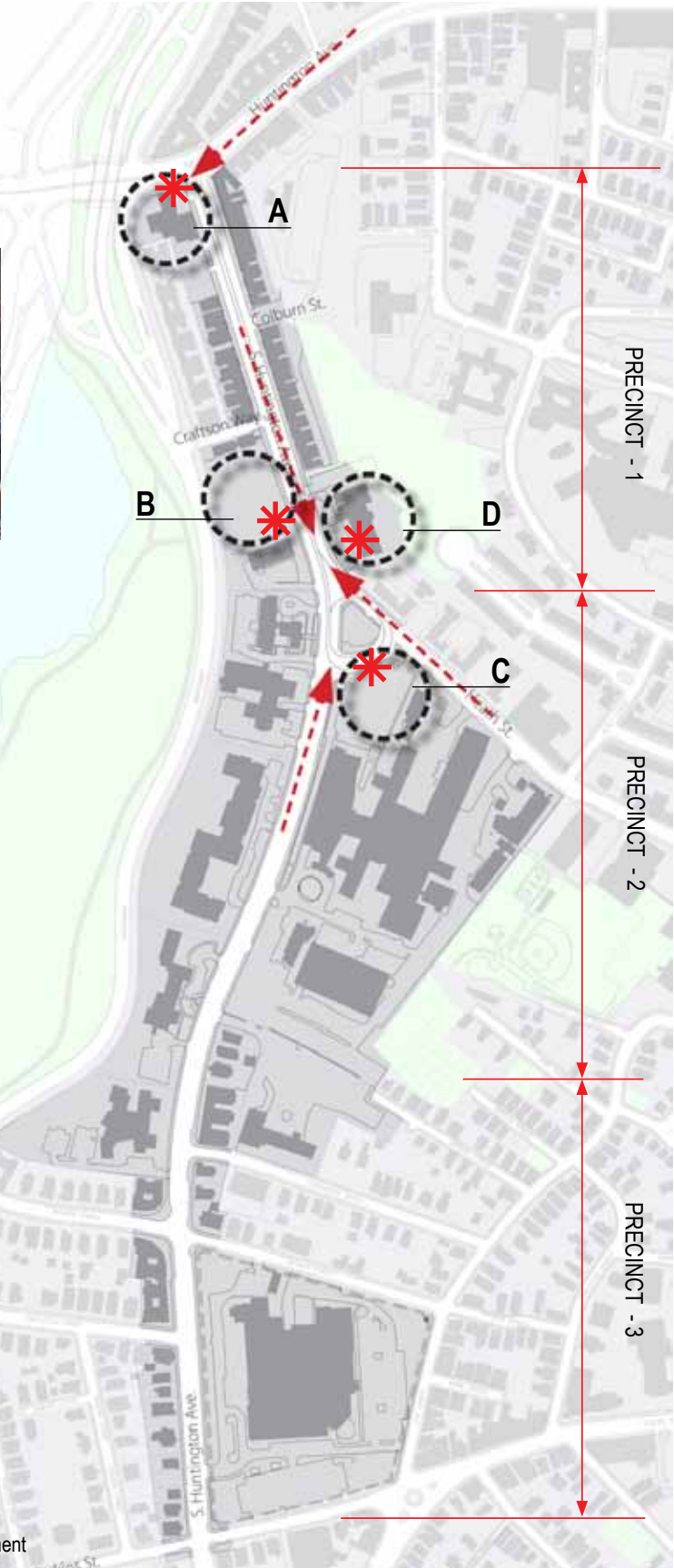
B. Heath St. View - 105A South Huntington Ave.



C. South Huntington Ave. View - VA Hospital



D. South Huntington Ave. View - Back of the Hill Apartment



Special Place-making Opportunity Zones

**Exceptional Public Benefits**

Projects within a Place-making Opportunity Site that exceed the recommended FAR and height guidelines found in this Study will be required to provide exceptional public benefits such as increased affordable housing units above the Inclusionary Development Policy requirement of 15%, pedestrian and or bike access through a larger site, preservation of historic resources, affordable commercial space, mobility hub or traffic study/analysis for troublesome intersections.

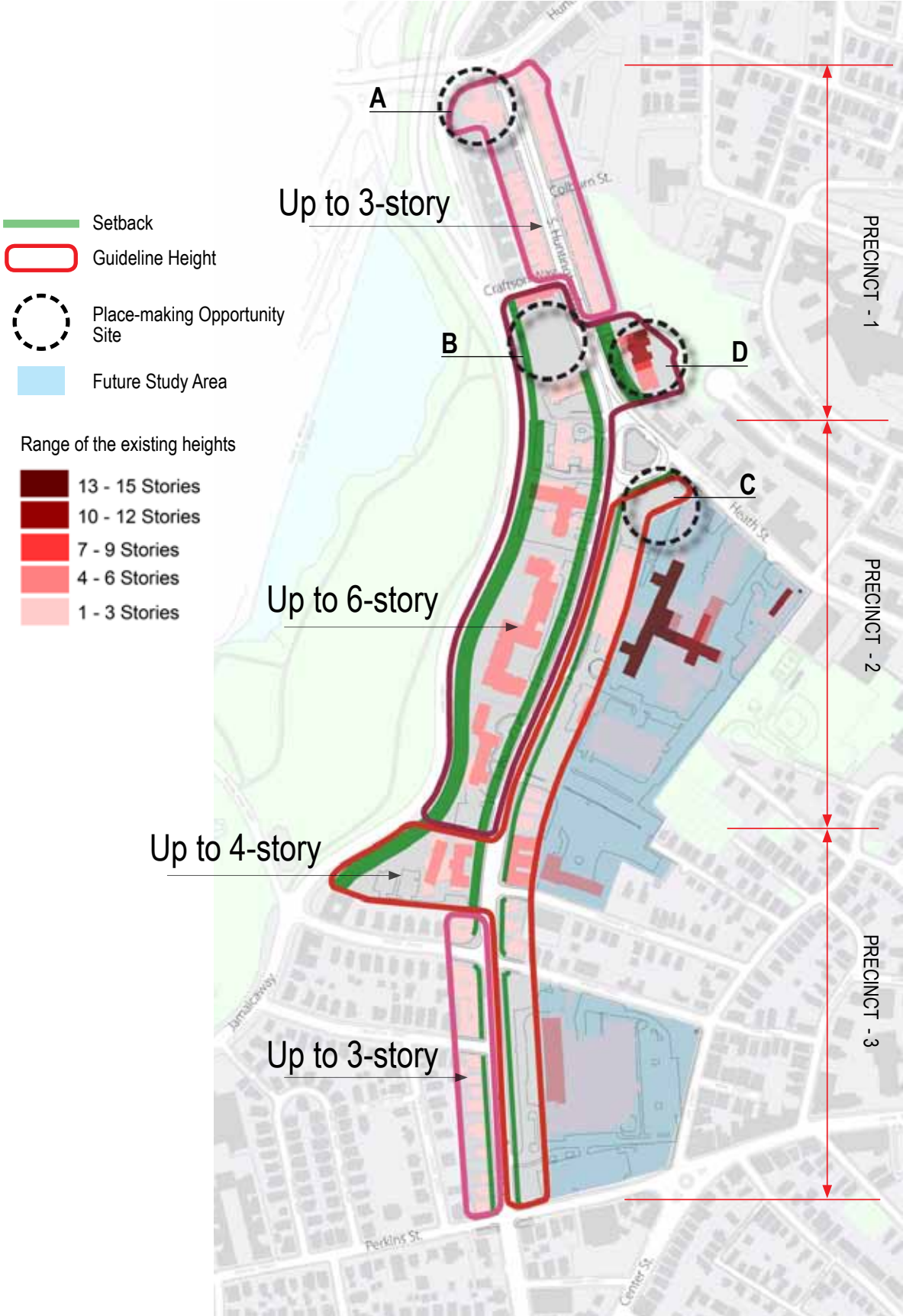
Precise heights and densities for projects within the Place-Making Opportunity Sites would be determined

through the Article 80 development review process. The standard Article 80 development review process encompasses a thorough examination of the development impacts on the immediate neighborhood and the City as a whole. Depending upon the project size, location and use, the review may address project impacts in a variety of areas: transportation and environmental impacts; design; historic preservation; and infrastructure systems. All projects in Place-Making Opportunity Sites will undergo this very thorough and public review process.

**Recommended Height and Setback Guidelines**

The following height guidelines are based on the prevailing heights, existing conditions and the overall character of the three Precincts. They represent contextually appropriate development.

Existing Ranges - Stories (BRA Study)		Underlying Zoning		BRA Guidelines	
				Height	Setbacks
Precinct 1	1 (gas station) - 10 (Back of the Hill)	NS	45'	Up to 3 stories	No front yard setback
		RH	35' / 3 stories	Place-making Opportunity Site A Place-making Opportunity Site B Place-making Opportunity Site D	Rear yard setback 25'
		NI (VA)	45'		
		MFR-2	55'		
Precinct 2	3 (Astra Zeneca) - 14 (VA campus)	NI (VA)	45'	Western side: Up to 6 stories No Place-making Opportunity Site	Western side: Front yard setback 30' Rear yard setback 45'
				Eastern side: Up to 4 stories for first 60' Place-making Opportunity Site C	Eastern side: Front yard setback 10'
Precinct 3	2 (residential) - 5 (MSPCA main bldg)	NI (VA)	45'	Western side: Up to 3 stories Front yard setback 10'	Western side: Front yard setback 10'
		NI (MSPCA)	45'	No Place-making Opportunity Site	Eastern side: Front yard setback (MSPCA) 10'
		2F-5000	35' / 2 <sup>1/2</sup> stories		



Height and Setback Guidelines

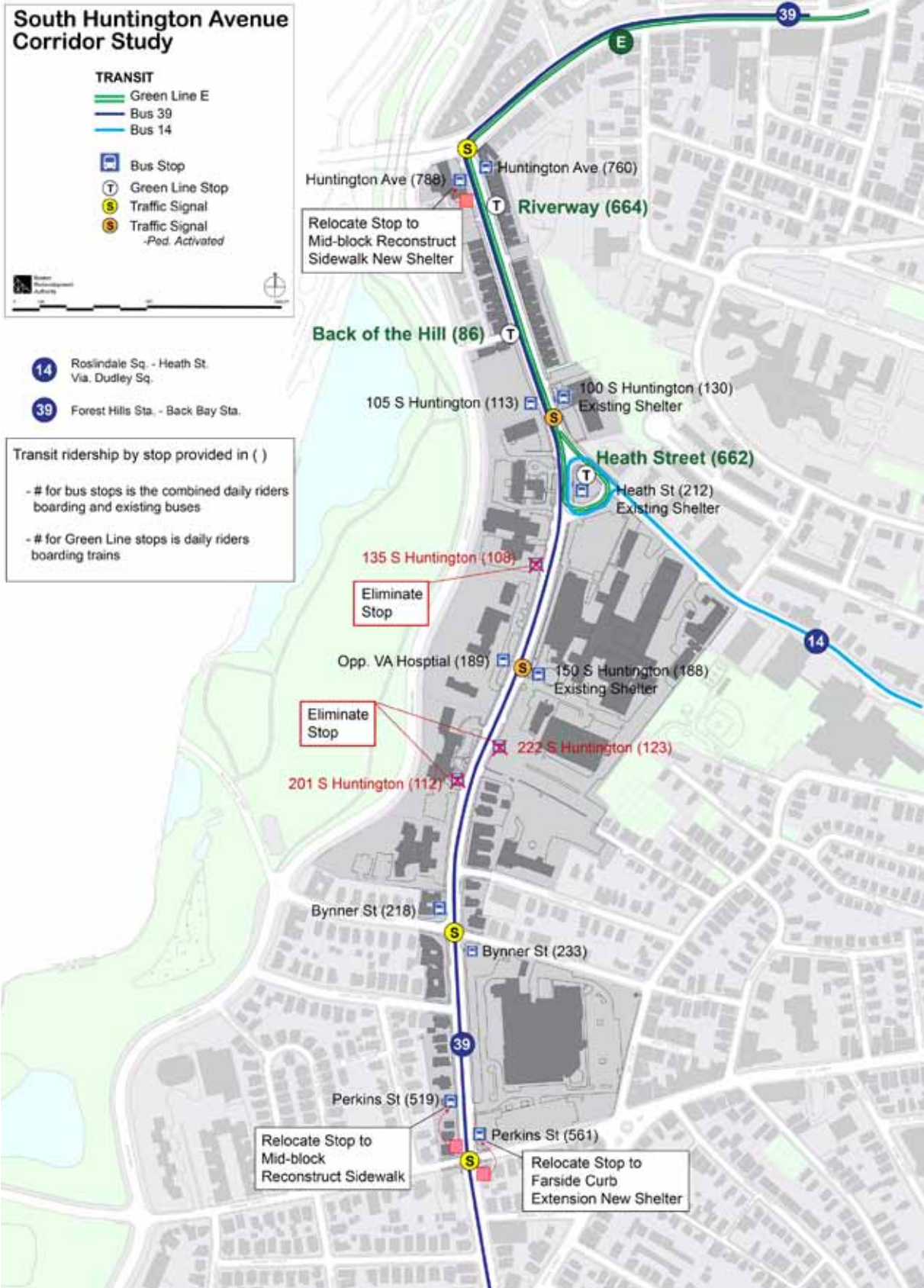
# V. TRANSPORTATION / PUBLIC REALM

## EXISTING TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS

### Public Transit

The South Huntington Avenue Corridor is fortunate to have good MBTA public transit services (see transit map). The Green Line E Branch operates in mixed traffic in Precinct 1 (northern 1/3 of the corridor), from Huntington Avenue to its terminus at Heath Street. Service connects to downtown via Huntington Avenue with service continuing on to the Green Line's other terminus in Cambridge (Lechmere). Trains operate 7 days a week from 5:30 AM to 12:45 AM, with trains operating 6 minutes apart during the weekday peak periods (aka morning and evening "rush hours"). There are approximately 1,400 daily boardings at the three stations in the corridor (Riverway, Back of the Hill and Heath Street).

Bus service is provided between Forest Hills (the MBTA's Orange Line terminus) and the Back Bay via the Route #39 bus, while the Route #14 bus that terminates at South Huntington Avenue and Heath Street, connects to Roxbury and points south to its other terminus at Roslindale Square via Heath Street. The #39 operates 7 days a week from 5:30 AM to 12:45 AM with buses 6 minutes apart during the weekday peak periods. The #14 operates from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday through Saturday, with buses 38 minutes apart



Existing Public Transit

\*Sources : MBTA

during the weekday peak periods. For bus stops where data was available (see transit map), there are approximately 4,200 daily riders boarding and exiting buses at these stops. The MBTA's "Key Routes" program will be providing physical improvements to the Route #39 in the spring of 2013 at several stops in the Corridor (see locations on transit map), by installing new shelters, streetscape amenities and sidewalk improvements. This program will also improve operating speeds by eliminating underutilized bus stops and improving the efficiency of traffic signal operations along the length of the route.

### **Roadway Conditions**

South Huntington Avenue, from a traffic network perspective, can be categorized as a neighborhood arterial that provides connectivity mainly for adjacent residents and businesses that connects to the regional arterial network, such as Huntington Avenue (Route 9) and The Jamaica way. As such, it experiences peak period congestion at its main signalized intersections, with the majority of congestion experienced at the intersection with Huntington Avenue. The most popular way to estimate traffic congestion at an intersection is through its "level of service" (LOS). LOS determines the delay experienced in getting through an intersection by assigning it a letter grade from A to F, with F meaning the intersection is not able to process all the traffic trying to get through an intersection within one traffic light cycle. In an urban condition such as South Huntington Avenue, a grade of D or better is considered acceptable and is often the case for most major intersections in the city. As can be seen on the following map, the intersection with Huntington Avenue has a LOS of D in the AM peak period, and a LOS of C in the PM peak period. The intersection with Perkins Street also experiences peak congestion since this roadway provides regional connectivity between The Jamaica way and Tremont Street. In particular, in the AM peak, the Perkins Street intersection is failing

### South Huntington Avenue Corridor Study

#### TRANSPORTATION MODAL ANALYSIS

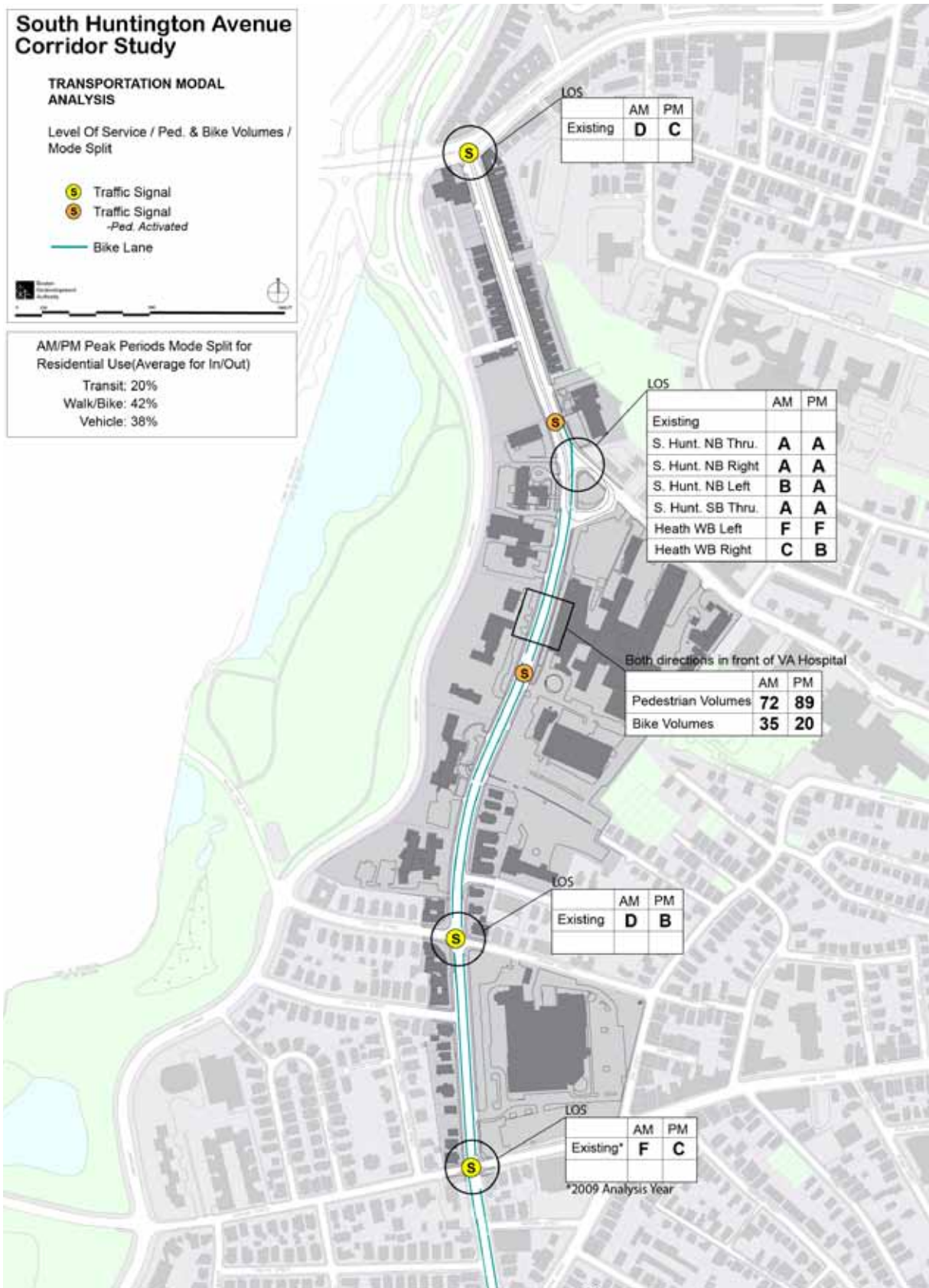
Level Of Service / Ped. & Bike Volumes / Mode Split

- S Traffic Signal
- S Traffic Signal -Ped. Activated
- Bike Lane



#### AM/PM Peak Periods Mode Split for Residential Use(Average for In/Out)

Transit: 20%  
Walk/Bike: 42%  
Vehicle: 38%



Existing Roadway Conditions

\*Sources: BRA/BTD Article 80 Filings

due to added regional traffic looking to connect to Tremont Street to the east which is a major arterial connection to downtown Boston.

Bicycle accommodations are provided by standard bike lanes on the street between Centre and Heath, and then via “sharrow” (share the road) pavement markings north of Heath Street - when Huntington Avenue widens to two lane in each direction to accommodate the Green Line. Bicycle volume data shows that approximately 20 – 35 cyclists are on South Huntington Avenue in the AM and PM peak hours.

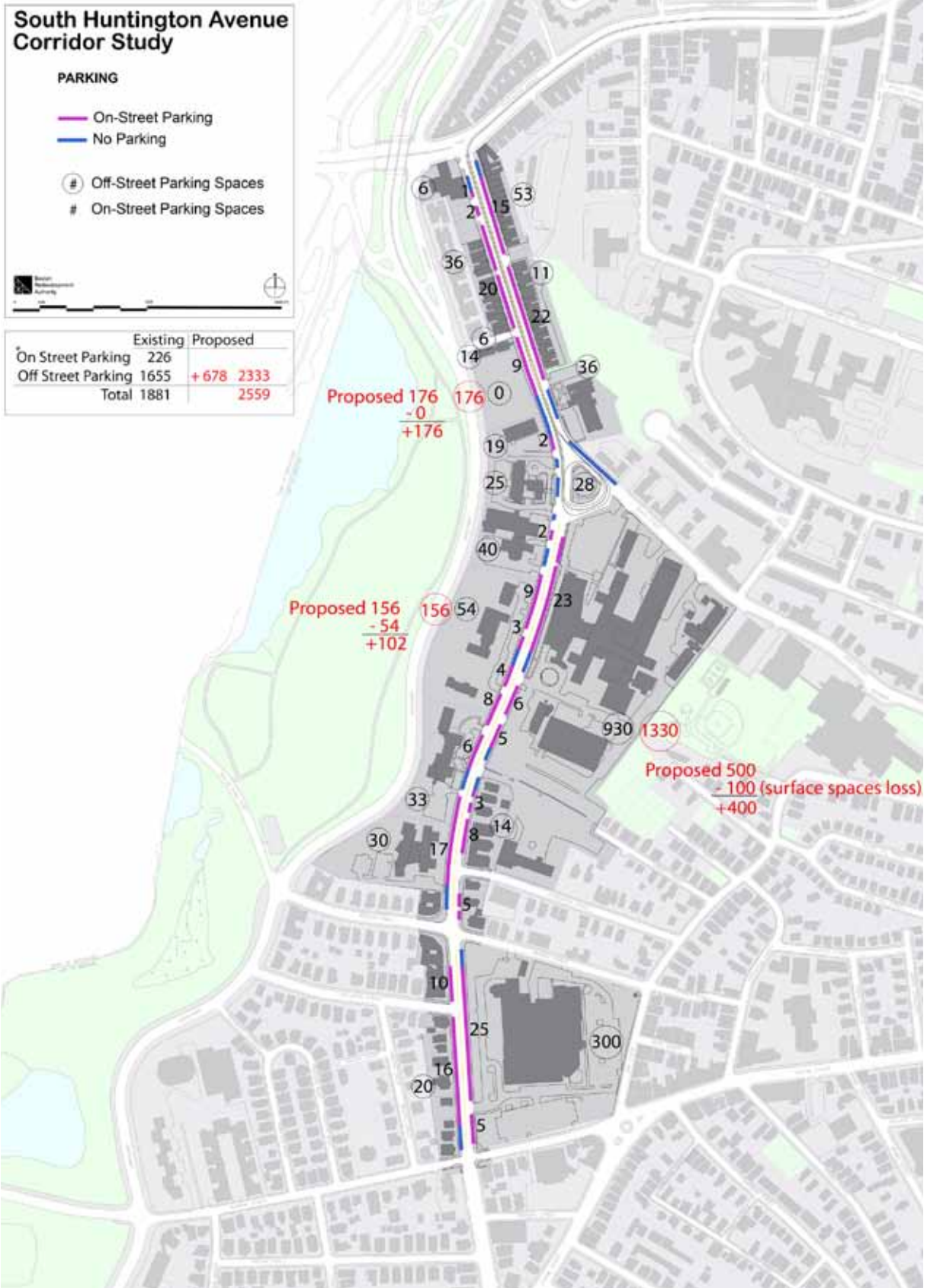
Sidewalk widths on both sides of the street range from 7’ to 10’ throughout the Corridor. Pedestrian volume data shows that approximately 70 – 90 pedestrians are on South Huntington Avenue in the AM and PM peak hours in the vicinity of the VA Hospital.

The average mode of travel (or “mode split”) for residents in the area is estimated at 20% transit, 42% walk and cycle, and 38% for vehicles.

### **Parking**

BRA staff gathered data on parking from various sources, including multiple field surveys. As can be seen on the parking map, there are approximately 226 parking spaces on South Huntington Avenue that are unregulated (i.e., no time limit restrictions or meters) and are available to the general public. There are also approximately 1,679 off-street parking spaces for site-specific users located in surface parking lots, with the exception of the VA Hospital that has a multiple level parking garage. An additional 178 spaces will be built by the two proposed development projects in the Corridor, in addition to the recently completed 500-space parking garage (with 400 net new spaces) built by the VA.





Existing Parking Supply \* The parking numbers are collected from various sources - aerial photo, inquiry, survey, and development proposals.

# TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

## **Connectivity**

- Pursue logical locations for new physical connections between South Huntington and both the Emerald Necklace to the west and to the neighborhoods to the east
- Pursue new through site connections

## **Pedestrian**

- Provide additional dimension to widen sidewalk and/or accommodate a landscaped buffer at the front edge of development sites
- Site frontages should minimize auto-oriented needs (curb-cuts, parking, loading, drop off, vehicular circulation)
- Provide safe and clear on-site connections for pedestrians (especially through parking and vehicular circulation areas)
- Pursue new through site connections

## **Cycling**

- Provide safe and clear on-site connections for cyclists (especially through parking and vehicular circulation areas)
- Meet current BTM bicycle parking ratios:
  - Retail: 1/3,000 sf (employees); 1/5,000 sf (for general public)
  - Residential: 1/unit (for residents); 1/5-units (for general public)

## **Public Transit**

- All new projects should include a “transit impact analysis” to determine new ridership demand relative to remaining transit capacity
- Improve passenger waiting areas (i.e. shelters) for projects adjacent to a transit stops
- Businesses should provide transit fare subsidies for employees

- Retail spaces should be willing to accommodate MBTA “retail sales terminals” (RSTs) to allow passenger pre-paid fare purchases
- Provide real-time bus & train arrival information in lobby areas
- Contribute to future corridor wide transportation improvements (see following section on future improvements)

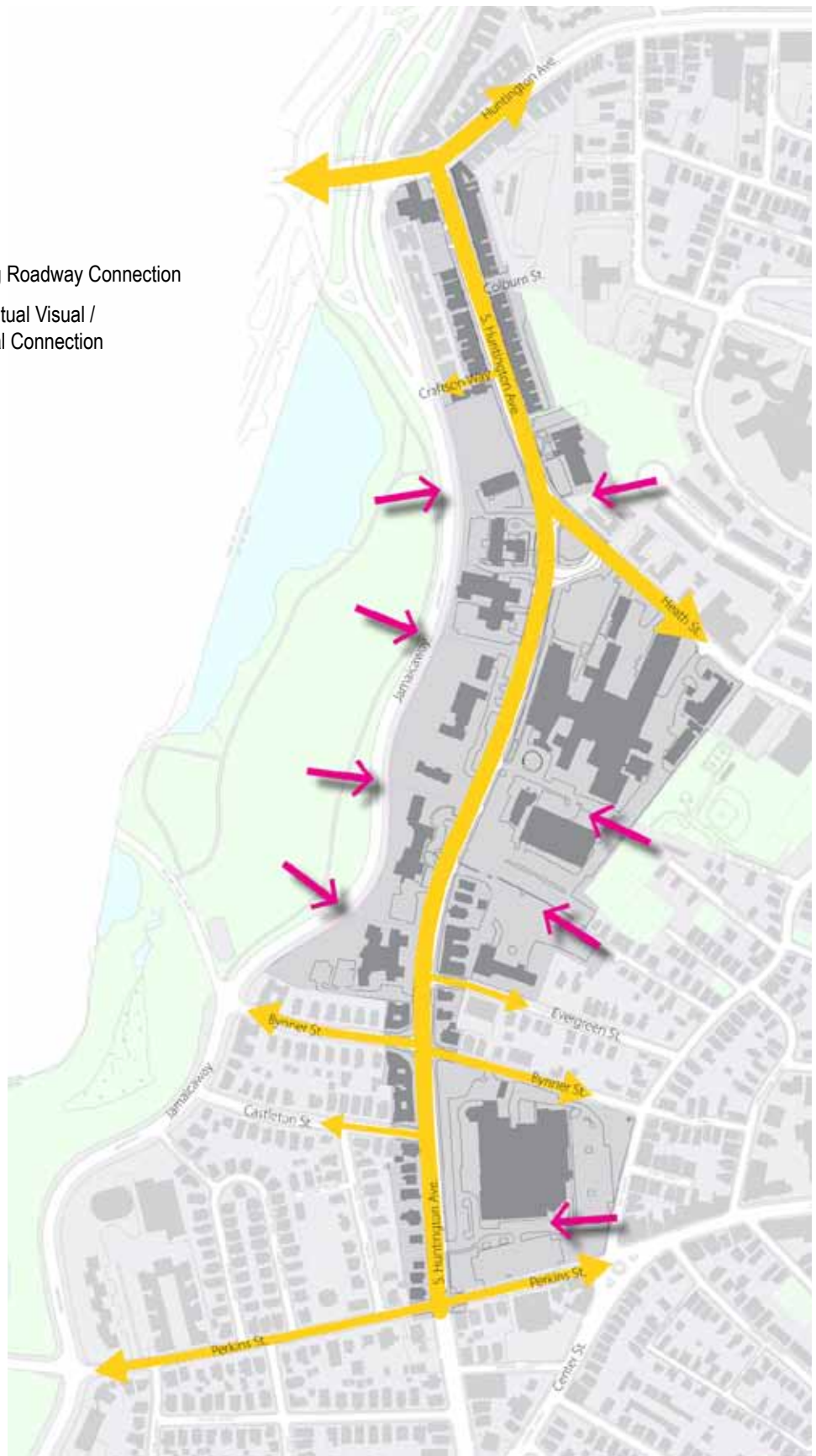
## **Traffic Management**

- Traffic studies must include a more comprehensive network, and at a minimum, the entire Corridor (Huntington Avenue to Centre Street)
- Minimize site traffic demand by:
  - Making provisions for car sharing services on site
  - Promotion of alternative modes of travel (transit, cycling, walking)
  - Reducing parking supply through efficient sharing of spaces and drawing on underutilized off-site existing supply
- Improve capacity at intersections through re-timing signals & upgrading signal equipment (provide optimum accommodations for pedestrian crossings)
- Contribute to future corridor wide transportation improvements (see following section on future improvements)

## **Parking**

- Preserve curb-side spaces for public use
- Minimize parking on-site and at a minimum, meet BTM maximum parking ratios for the neighborhood:
  - Retail: 0.75/1,000 sf
  - Residential: 1.0/unit
- Aggressively pursue shared parking opportunities both on-site (between uses) and off-site

- ← Existing Roadway Connection
- ← Conceptual Visual / Physical Connection



Conceptual Connections

# COMPLETE STREETS



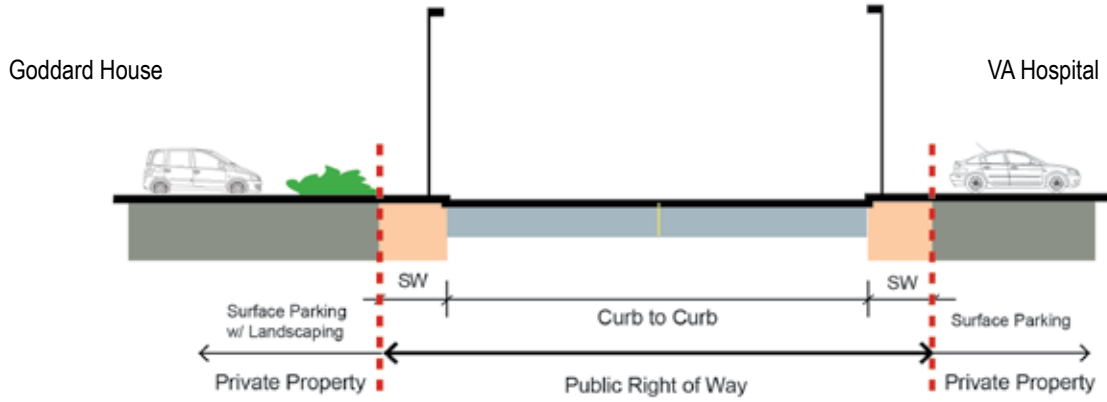
## **Complete Streets Application on South Huntington Avenue**

The City of Boston, under the leadership of its Transportation Department (BTD), has recently adopted a “Complete Streets” approach to designing all new and reconstructed transportation infrastructure. The Complete Streets Guidelines require equitable and state-of-the-art accommodations for all modes of travel that incorporate the latest in “green” and “smart” components (to review the guidelines and for the latest information visit <http://www.bostoncompletestreets.org>).

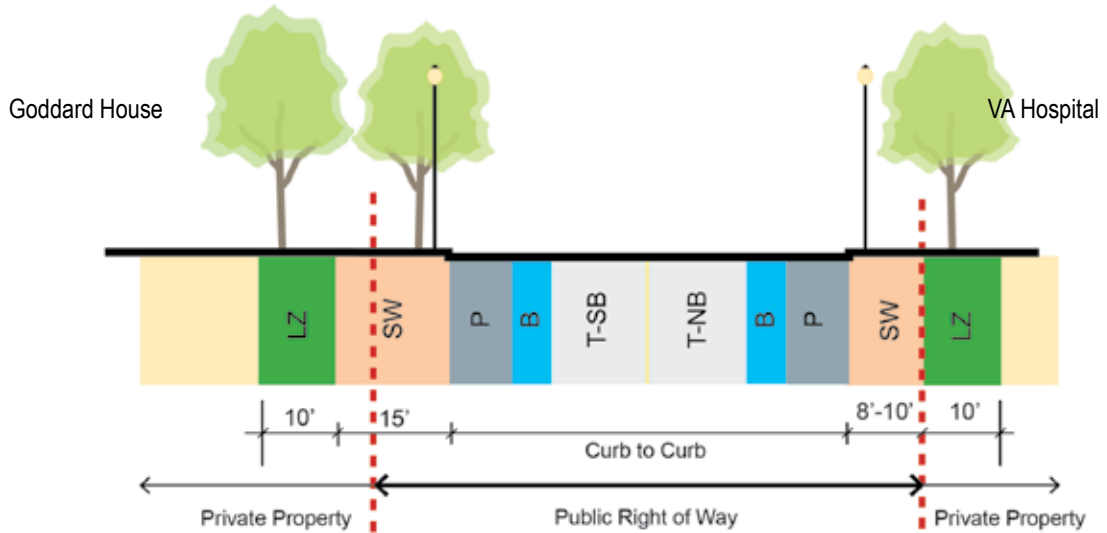
Currently, South Huntington Avenue is fortunate to have bicycle accommodations, strong transit services, and impending improvements to be completed by the MBTA through its “key routes” program. One way to make improvements in the context of redevelopment as recommended above would be for new developments to provide additional space at the front edge of their property to expand the existing sidewalk and/or provide a landscaped buffer. The need for a consistent row of trees and landscaping is particularly needed in Precincts 2 and 3 where public street trees are not in abundance. The graphics below provide an indication of how this concept could be applied in the future.

- Development of a consistent tree/landscaping zone at back of sidewalk
- Protect/improve on-road bike lanes
- Provide widened sidewalks where desired
- Enhance transit stops to improve conditions for waiting passengers (i.e. shelters)
- Upgrade light fixtures
- Minimize/consolidate curb-cuts for driveways

**Existing Condition**



**Potential Improvements**



- B** - Bike Lane
- LZ** - Landscape Zone
- P** - Curb-Side Parking
- SW** - Sidewalk
- T** - Travel Lane
  - NB** - Northbound
  - SB** - Southbound

# FUTURE TRANSPORTATION / PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Through this planning process, larger transportation improvement needs were identified that are beyond the scope of any one specific development project. These improvements require more time for design development with appropriate public agencies, and will require significant public financing. Contributions from development teams can help advance these concepts that will need consistent public involvement and input to further refine and advance towards implementation.

**Conduct a Corridor-wide transportation study** – This study is needed for defining existing and projected transportation challenges in the corridor. Working closely with the community and the other appropriate public agencies, priorities can be agreed upon, and a path towards implementing improvements can be charted.

## **Corridor-wide Public Transit Improvements**

- Explore options for reducing encroachment on the Green Line tracks to improve operating speed and accommodate 3-car train operations
- Explore possibilities for better Green Line waiting areas (trade-offs for creating “stations”)
- Advocate for extending the Green Line the rest of the way down South Huntington Avenue to Hyde Square and continuing the design and public involvement process
- Maintain at a minimum existing Green Line service level and advocate for additional service as demand rises
- Advocate for additional bus service as demand rises

V. TRANSPORTATION / PUBLIC REALM



Examples of Placemaking / Public Realm Improvements



Examples of Potential Transportation Improvements

## SOUTH HUNTINGTON AVENUE & HEATH STREET

Preliminary improvements identified and discussed through this planning process include:

Heath Street/South Huntington Avenue (see graphic)

### **Public Realm Improvements**

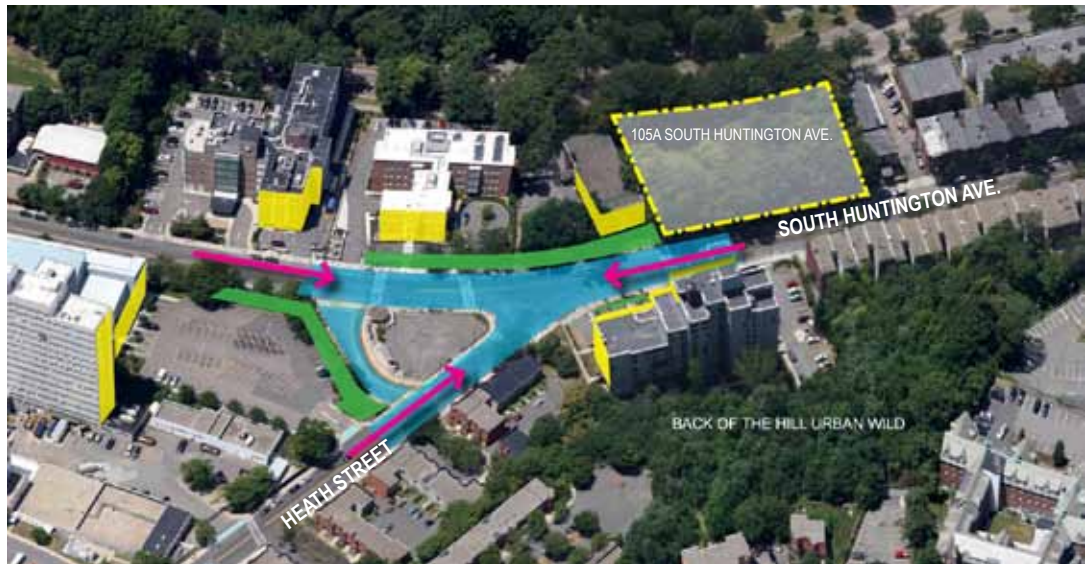
- Improve accommodations for transit riders
- Work with VA to explore opportunities for landscaping, place making and other public realm improvements and at Green Line turn-around “triangle” space
- Improved accommodations for cyclists - explore opportunity to create full bike lanes in “Precinct 1”
- Improve accommodations for pedestrians

### **Longer Term Transportation System Improvements**

- Explore ways to improve Green Line operations and accommodate 3-car train operations
- Improve safety for vehicles (in particular left turns that need to cross both directions of the Green Line)
- Analyze options for improved traffic flow and signalization



SOUTH HUNTINGTON AVE. & HEATH STREET



Public Realm Improvement Opportunities



Potential Transportation System Improvements

## HUNTINGTON AVE. & SOUTH HUNTINGTON AVE.

Huntington Avenue/South Huntington Avenue (see graphic)

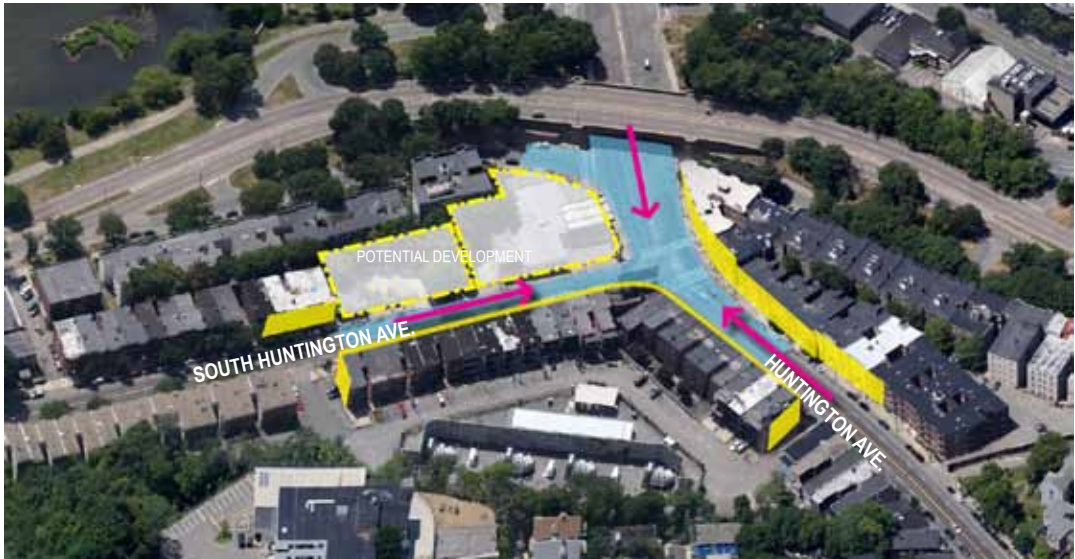
### **Public Realm Improvements**

- Improve accommodations for transit riders
- Explore opportunities for public realm improvements, gateway signage, place-making and enhanced landscaping within the sidewalk
- Improved accommodations for pedestrians
- Improved accommodations for bicycles – explore opportunity to create full bike lanes in “Precinct 1”

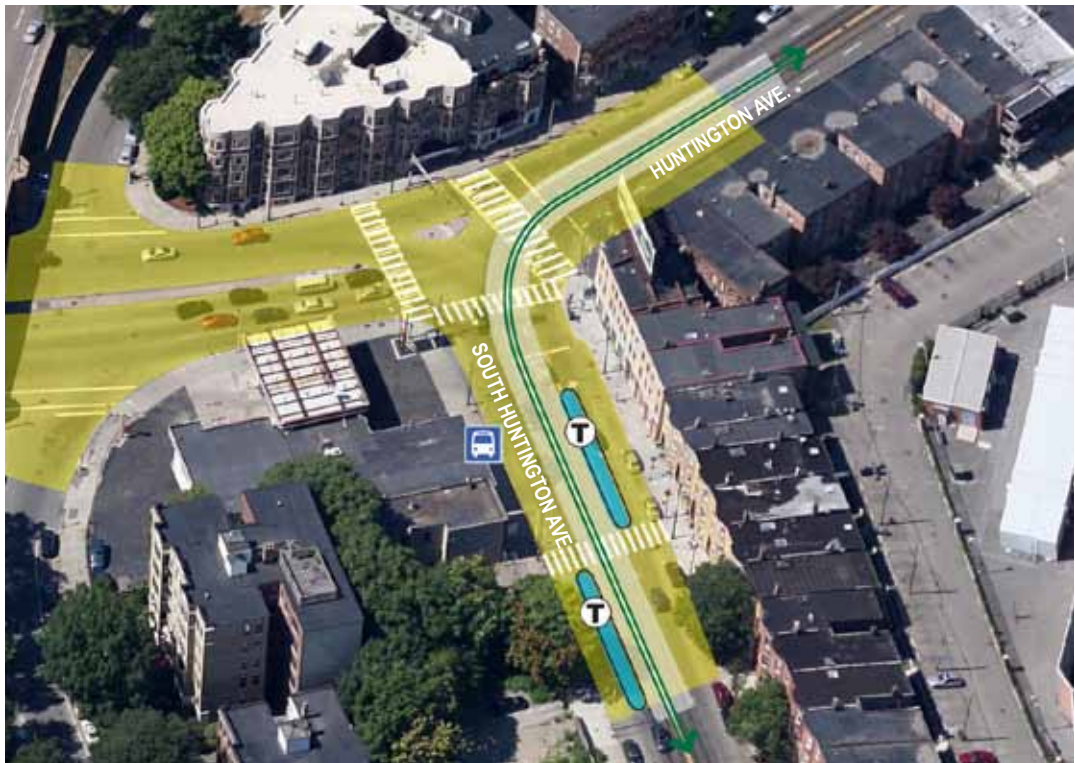
### **Longer Term Transportation System Improvements**

- Explore ways to improve Green Line operations and accommodate 3-car train operations
- Improve safety for vehicles
- Upgrade traffic signal equipment and analyze options for improved traffic flow
- Improved accommodations for cyclists (trade-offs for a full bike lane)

HUNTINGTON AVE. & SOUTH HUNTINGTON AVE.



Public Realm Improvement Opportunities



Potential Transportation System Improvements

# VI. CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION

## CONCLUSION

Through the Corridor Study process, Stakeholders established a community vision for the future of the Corridor. A key component of this vision is the agreement that additional growth in the Corridor is appropriate, provided that it follows the guidelines established by this document. However, in order to achieve the full vision for the Corridor, public efforts need to be aggregated with the contributions of private landowners and developers.

While rezoning may be undertaken in the future, to help realize the Corridor vision in the interim, this document provides a guide for the development review process. The guidelines identified four locations (Place-making Opportunity Site) in the Corridor where enhanced private development may be acceptable and desirable, if such developments can deliver exceptional public benefits to the community.

## BENEFIT CATEGORIES

The study has identified four specific categories of public benefits:

### **Housing**

Provision of affordable housing, beyond the minimum requirements of the Inclusionary Development Policy, including: a higher proportion of workforce housing and affordable housing units, extending length of deed-restrictions, and the creation of

opportunities for both market-rate and affordable homeownership. Development scenarios that exceed the existing Inclusionary Development Policy for affordable units will be viewed as providing an exceptional development benefit.

### **Public Realm**

Beyond typical reconstruction of the adjoining sidewalks and street, public realm benefits on behalf of the proponent include additional open spaces, pedestrian connections, and landscaping to significantly expand the public realm, and improve the overall Corridor-wide public experience.

### **Transportation**

Similar to public realm benefits, transportation benefits include partnerships with public agencies to realize both intersection and Corridor-wide improvements that could not otherwise be achieved by each party alone. Additionally, within the development program itself, benefits could be realized through the reduction of traffic impacts resulting from lower parking ratios/parking management, and better accommodations for cycling, walking, connectivity, transit and car sharing.

### **Historic Resources**

A great benefit to the community is the retention of historic assets that help to define the history and physical character of the neighborhood. These guidelines recognize the cost and complexity in preserving an existing historic structure. Therefore, development scenarios that retain existing historic structures, in particular the Goddard House, will be viewed as providing an exceptional development benefit deserving of greater development enhancement.

# METHOD FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The types of public benefits that can be delivered along the Corridor, and at each development site, are dependent on the context of each site. Working with stakeholders through the Article 80 Large Project Review process, the BRA will tailor a package of benefits, above and beyond typical mitigation measures, that is both proportionate to impacts of the proposed project, and is consistent with local and Corridor-wide needs.

This set of guidelines is neither a substitute nor an amendment to the underlying zoning. It may serve as the planning context and reference for future zoning changes. In the meantime, it will serve as a guide for the BRA in administering the Article 80 Large Project Review process, and also as the basis for the City to consider zoning variances that may be required to implement specific development projects.

Implementation of the recommendations from this Framework will be an ongoing process dependent on the pace of large-scale development in the area over the next 10 to 15 years. The first table includes a menu of recommended interventions and benefits that can be realized through the Article 80 Development Review process. In contrast, the second table lists action items not contingent upon new development review with the potential to be executed in the near term.

The tables indicate parties involved and the timeframe in which implementation is expected to occur. Short-term is defined as up to four years from the present (2017), mid-term is defined as five to eight years (2018-2021), and long-term is defined as more than eight years.

## VI. CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION

Key:

BRA = Boston Redevelopment Authority

Parks = City of Boston's Department of Parks and Recreation

BTD = City of Boston's Department of Transportation

PWD = City of Boston's Department of Public Works

MASSDOT = Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

PIC = Public Improvement Commission

ISD = Inspectional Service Department

<b>DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINE</b>	<b>Supervisory Agency for Implementation of Development Benefit</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>PHYSICAL CHARACTER</b>		
Any new use should follow Corridor Study guidelines for height, development footprint and FAR	BRA	Ongoing / Development Specific
The Article 80 Large Project review process shall take into account Corridor Study development guidelines for community benefits and public realm improvements for any development project that exceeds baseline zoning requirements	BRA	Ongoing / Development Specific
In Precinct 2, the height and development footprint guidelines are intended to be used together to facilitate greater setbacks between buildings along the east-west property lines that run between S. Huntington Avenue and the Emerald Necklace. Consideration shall be given to creating open space in these setbacks for use as a view corridor or public access easement	BRA	Ongoing / Development Specific
Through Article 80 Large Project Review process, all dimensional guidelines shall be followed together, i.e., height guidelines shall be implemented in concert with development footprint and FAR guidelines	BRA	Ongoing / Development Specific
<b>PUBLIC REALM / OPEN SPACE</b>		
Creation of visual or safe pedestrian/bicycle connections to the Emerald Necklace off of S. Huntington either as part of the Article 80 review process	BRA, BTD	Development Specific
Planting of new street trees in specified areas of sidewalk zone (based on Precinct location)	PARKS	Short-term / Development Specific
Shadow studies for future projects undergoing Article 80 Large Project Review	BRA	Ongoing
Encourage and introduce public art within existing infrastructure (e.g. disused MBTA catenary poles), in public rights of way, and in areas of privately-owned parcels that are accessible for public use	PWD, PIC, BRA, MBTA	Ongoing

Installation of informational signage for wayfinding, as well as significant cultural and historical assets of the Corridor	PWD, PIC, BRA	Ongoing
<b>LAND USE</b>		
Recommended uses: Institutional, residential, commercial, mixed-use (ground-floor commercial with residential above)	BRA	Development Specific
Increase supply of workforce housing (80-120% AMI) and affordable housing (<80% AMI)	BRA	Development Specific
Encourage and extend homeownership opportunities	BRA	Development Specific
Maximize and extend length of deed restrictions on deed-restricted affordable units	BRA	Development Specific
As part of the Article 80 Development Review process, investigate opportunities to facilitate the development of new affordable and market rate housing opportunities through the regulation of off-campus undergraduate student housing	BRA	Development Specific
Attract new local businesses to the Corridor and discourage big box retail	BRA	Ongoing / Development Specific
Consider future (adaptive) re-use of ground floor space when reviewing future projects and designs	BRA	Development Specific
Encourage affordable commercial space in new development	BRA	Development Specific
<b>URBAN DESIGN</b>		
Create ground-floor retail and amenities that are accessible to the general public	BRA	Development Specific
Gateways and place-making nodes (e.g., squares, plazas, parks, active ground-floor use, streetscape) planned through the Article 80 Large Project development review process (locations noted in Framework material)	BRA	Development Specific
LEED-certifiable buildings $\leq$ 50,000 SF	BRA	Ongoing
Materials to match existing and historic buildings (i.e., brick vs. metal)	BRA	Ongoing
Building steps back from maximum allowed height from street edge	BRA	Development Specific
Encourage building design that simulates separation along the streetwall and varying materials	BRA	Development Specific
Retain and integrate important historic assets with any new redevelopment proposal	BRA	Development Specific
Building designs with strong ground-floor streetwall (in contrast to suburban-scale development)	BRA	Development Specific
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>		
Shared parking between conducive uses and developments	BRA, BTB	Ongoing
Conduct a corridor-wide transportation study	BRA, BTB, MBTA	Short-term
Side or rear location for surface parking; should not front S. Huntington Avenue, and should be adequately landscaped	BRA, BTB	Development Specific



## VI. CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION

Redesign Heath Street turn-around (include in corridor-wide transportation study)	BRA, MBTA	Short-term
Incorporate BTB's Complete Streets guidelines for new development	BRA, BTB, MBTA	Ongoing/ Development Specific
Break up large parcels with vehicular and/or pedestrian connections, where appropriate, as negotiated through the Article 80 Large Project development review process	BRA, BTB	Development Specific
Traffic study (for better flow and safety for all modes of transportation) for intersection of Huntington Avenue and S. Huntington Avenue	BTB, BRA, MBTA	Mid-term
Traffic study (for better flow and safety for all modes of transportation) for intersection of S. Huntington Avenue and Heath Street	BTB, BRA, MBTA	Mid-term
Future Article 80 Large Project review process should incorporate a comprehensive analysis of all traffic impacts, as outlined in the transportation chapter of this report	BRA, BTB, MBTA	Development Specific
Recommend installation of rubber trolley track flange fillers to facilitate safe cycling over MBTA tracks	BRA, MBTA, BTB, PWD	Ongoing
Require future projects include a "transit impact analysis"	BRA, BTB, MBTA	Development Specific
Require future projects to include areas for bicycle parking	BRA, BTB	Development Specific

<b>ACTION ITEMS NOT CONTINGENT UPON NEW DEVELOPMENT REVIEW</b>		
Study the potential to eliminate curbside on-street parking for public use (bicycle lane, MBTA boarding area, larger sidewalk with street trees and furniture) – especially in Precinct 1	MBTA, BTB	Mid-term
Replacement of current traditional lighting to LED lighting to improve lighting quality and conserve energy	PWD	Short-term
Replacement of shoebox style lighting fixtures to acorn lighting fixtures	PWD	Mid-term
Promote clean up and improvements to private property	BRA, ISD	Ongoing
Recommend 8 foot wall surrounding MSPCA property be removed	BRA	Long-term
Investigate extension of Green Line to Hyde Square	BRA, MBTA	Ongoing
Consider resident parking permit program for side streets off of S. Huntington Avenue	Neighbor Petition to BTB	Short-term
Improve signage and pavement markings for wayfinding and definition of space	BRA, BTB, PWD	Ongoing
Recommend parking maximums in the Corridor	BRA, BTB	Ongoing
Recommend no further service cuts to the E Line beyond Brigham Circle to Heath Street, and recommend retention of weekend and evening service	MBTA	Ongoing
Begin process to determine and agree upon new regulations for on-street parking on S. Huntington Avenue (meters 2-hour limit with residential exemption)	BTB	Short-term
Work with BTB to consider pedestrian and bike-only signal accommodations (especially at S. Huntington Avenue and Huntington Avenue intersection)	BRA, MBTA, BTB	Short-term
Bike safety: study and implement improvements to "sharrows" and bike lanes	BTB, DPW	Ongoing