

SAXONVILLE

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SAXONVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN



SAXONVILLE VILLAGE

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4 Saxonville

The geographic and historic center of Saxonville is focused on the Saxonville Mills and the Sudbury River. The area investigated in this study is most accurately referred to as the Village Center of Saxonville. It is the walkable mixed-use center that anchors a larger residential area that identifies with Saxonville.

The center of Saxonville is shown in the three-dimensional aerial imagery (source: Bing.com). Saxonville is characterized by its historic mill complex and surrounding historic mill housing as well as the nearby Pinefield Shopping plaza. The Mill, Athenaeum, historic homes, historic churches and the Old Danforth bridge anchor a district that is full of character and heritage.

The village center sits within a larger single-family residential area which includes the residential development of Danforth Green to the northeast of the center.

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Vision Statement

Community Word Association

hour way rush via
home opening Boston
access recreational public parks
beautiful trail central history Nobscot hidden
outdated connecting waterfall space emerging
mill street river walking
connections schools village traffic drive quaint water
historical Saxonville Cochituate nice Freeman
Bruce MWRTA walkable concord
old transit historic school bus



Goals

Transformation of Underperforming Properties

Given the small geographic area of Saxonville, a single underperforming property can have a very large impact on the perception and economic performance of the entire district. The impact of a single property is amplified if it is large and at a prominent gateway location. Saxonville has two underperforming properties that are large and at prominent district gateway locations – the State Lumber site and the Pinefield Plaza. Alternative scenarios for new mixed-use development have been explored that would enable the properties to better contribute to the district. These studies are both a tool to provide the property owners with a potential new direction and are used to inform zoning recommendations for the district.

Alignment of Uses and Services

The Saxonville community and the market analysis have indicated a gap between the types of goods and services provided and the needs of the surrounding residents. The commercial center is a local-serving center that must be supported by the surrounding residents and regular commuters and visitors in the area. The retail gap analysis and community have both indicated that new full service restaurants are needed to better align district uses with the community needs. The identification of existing or potential for new spaces along with the identification of interested restaurant groups would advance this opportunity to align current district businesses with resident needs. Over time the calibration of businesses, services and resident needs should be reassessed to further enhance this alignment to encourage local spending.

Aggressive Expansion of Walkability

Saxonville is a commercial center that provides a center point for the surrounding residential communities. Access to the center by pedestrians should be a primary focus of public realm investments and improvements. Enabling and attracting pedestrian activity has many benefits for the commercial center, business and retail activity and the surrounding residential districts. Relatively simple improvements to the pedestrian network – completing missing segments of sidewalk, adding marked mid-block crossings where appropriate, reducing curb cuts, adding street trees and landscape features – all expand the walkability of the district and leverage the fundamental value of the mixed-use neighborhood center. Historically, Saxonville was a “walking village” and it is a major economic advantage for North Framingham to reinforce walkable nodes where they already exist.

Connection of Recreational Resources

A viable secondary network for pedestrian and bicycle recreation trails exists and is expanding in North Framingham connecting Saxonville and the surrounding communities. The number of trails and potential connections is unique and leveraging the many opportunities for recreational activity is a major advantage for the district. In Saxonville, the Cochituate Rail Trail and Carol Getchell Trail provide opportunities for recreation and secondary systems of bike and pedestrian circulation. The Hultman Aqueduct offers (long term potential) connection between Saxonville and Nobscot and its trail networks and should be reinforced as a viable recreational link that connects across North Framingham.

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STRATEGIES

Illustrative Vision Plan

The diagram to the right is an overall illustration depicting potential short and long term investments in Saxonville by private and public entities showing the location of strategic improvements.



Redevelopment and Urban Design

- 1 Focus on primary street frontages
- 2 Reduce visual impact of parking
- 3 Create consistent district features
- 4 Redevelop key parcels



Marketing and Reinvestment

- 5 Focus on vacant spaces
- 6 Promote community assets
- 7 Encourage reinvestment



Public Realm Improvement

- 8 Identify new central parking resources
- 9 Enhance walkability/bikeability
- 10 Strengthen open spaces/links



Regulatory Strategy

- 11 Align zoning with opportunities
- 12 Develop district design guidelines
- 13 Enhance efficiency of parking

Recommendations illustrated within the Study Area for Saxonville include hypothetical scenarios that will require public and private approvals, actions and investments.

Legend

- Existing Buildings
- Potential Development
- Existing Open Space
- Study Boundary
- Parking Area
- Street
- Improved Streetscape
- New Sidewalk





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REDEVELOPMENT AND URBAN DESIGN

Key Recommendations

Saxonville is rich with iconic and historic buildings and natural features. Simple district-wide signage and wayfinding can be employed to reinforce the historic assets, natural resources, hidden views and recreational trails. A district-wide maintenance and improvement program for building facades, signage and landscaping should be used to incrementally improve existing assets to keep pace with other new investments. A grant program or revolving loan fund to encourage this type of renewal can have a dramatic impact on the level of stewardship and reinvestment that occurs while building community and a positive perception of the district.

Enable Long-Term Investment

Open new opportunities for mixed-use redevelopment that would enable improvements at key properties like the Saxonville Mill. Over the long term allowing a wider range of uses to occur at historic properties, such as the Saxonville Mill, reinforces economic viability of the complex. Conversions of portions of the mill to higher revenue producing uses, such as residential or restaurant use, could provide additional resources for investment in the maintenance and upkeep of the property. Currently, the zoning would prohibit such a long-term conversion and investment in the property. The proposed Village District Zoning would enable this type of opportunity.

Reinforce Unique District

All district improvements, landscape improvements, redevelopment and new building investments should serve to highlight the historic assets of the district including the Saxonville Mill, McGrath Square historic

buildings, Athenaeum and other historic structures. This highlighting should occur through the design and configuration of landscape, lighting, street frontage and signage improvements. A simple and restrained approach to improvements should place the focus back on the unique historic qualities of the district.

Invest in a Civic Center

An active village center would benefit from a community gathering place and improvements to the Athenaeum, Fire Station and Watson Place provide additional district anchors. The reuse and reinvestment in the Athenaeum as a civic center and community gathering place fills a community need and provides another reason for area residents to visit the center of the district. As part of the investment in the Athenaeum, Watson Place becomes an important district center point with access to the community center and the majority of the mill complexes parking. Reinforcing the wayfinding, parking and pedestrian amenities associated with Watson Place would be an effective way to integrate the Athenaeum investment with the surrounding district.



Recommendations illustrated within the Study Area for Saxonville include hypothetical scenarios that will require public and private approvals, actions and investments.



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REDEVELOPMENT AND URBAN DESIGN

Leverage Potential Development

As has been described, Saxonville has many unique assets and is a logical location for continued investment and redevelopment as supported by FXM's Market Analysis. Future investments should be purposefully directed to leverage those improvements to strengthen the overall district characteristics of a walkable, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use center. A new project should not be approved that detracts from the overall character and quality of this historic walking village.

Two district gateway properties in particular possess the ability to leverage investment in the property for the betterment of the district. The Pinefield Shopping Plaza and the State Lumber property. Today, both properties share a common characteristic - a very large surface parking area that dominates a long street frontage in a very visible location.

The Pinefield Shopping Plaza is a functioning strip shopping mall with active retail and local service tenants. The shopping plaza building is set back toward the rear property line with a large surface parking area set in front of the building at the street frontage, as was a best practice at the time of its construction. The surface parking area is grossly oversized for the retail uses it is supporting and presents an opportunity for infill redevelopment at the Water Street frontage.

Through conceptual design investigations it would appear that a mixed-use infill development project could respect the wetland and riverfront setbacks from the Sudbury River and provide a revived Water Street frontage with a building that would address the street and improve the pedestrian environment at a district

gateway location. The concept design explored a new mixed-use building of up to 3-stories in height with residential and retail uses that would complement the surrounding context and offer views of the Sudbury River. Even when accounting for the parking lost to the new building's footprint and the parking that would be required to support the new building, the area of parking that would remain on the Pinefield Plaza site would be more than generous to support all existing and proposed uses. The redevelopment could be accompanied by a facade improvement investment on the existing shopping plaza building. A new Village District Zone with design guidelines would open the opportunity for this type of investment.

The State Lumber site is an equally important gateway site into the district, located at the corner of School Street and Concord Street. The property has recently been improved by the property owner with new streetscape plantings along its frontage to integrate it with the recent intersection and streetscape improvements at the intersection of School and Concord Street. The existing State Lumber property is bordered by rivers on nearly three sides resulting in a substantial portion of the property falling within the Riverfront and Wetland Setback buffers. However, the property as it was previously developed is largely impervious paving surfaces, providing flexibility as to how the property could be redeveloped in the future under this regulatory constraint.

The State Lumber site has an approved site plan for 75,000 square feet of commercial space. The project was stalled in the Great Recession along with many other redevelopment proposals, but has been granted extensions



and opportunities for redevelopment within the context of this approved plan are actively being pursued by the owner. The approved plan places the buildings away from the street and locates parking between the buildings and the street.

If a new redevelopment concept were to emerge or the previously approved plan should need to be reconsidered, the consultant team explored a variation on the configuration of development on the site that placed buildings near the street frontage and parking in the rear of the buildings. This type of site configuration has several advantages. The buildings would strongly anchor the district gateway and street frontages at this important location. The parking area and buildings could likely be configured in such a way as to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces in the Riverfront and Wetland setbacks providing an environmental improvement.

The site layout would encourage natural landscape edges and provide the potential for an integrated community open space or landscape amenity at the Sudbury River and the ability to reinforce the connection with the Cochituate Trail. The conceptual design investigations explored a mixed-use redevelopment program that resulted in ground floor retail space and approximately fifty residential units in 3-story buildings.

Refocus District Center

In addition to the importance of district gateways, the center of the district is also critically important to the overall perception and impression of the character of the district. Public realm and intersection improvements at McGrath Square could be better used to enhance the overall character of the district and to reinforce district

walkability. It is also one of the most critical intersections for vehicular circulation in North Framingham. A combination of intersection improvements with a pedestrian plaza that refocuses pedestrian activity and amenity at the center of Saxonville would combine several objectives into one intersection improvement plan. By tightening the curb radius between Concord and Central streets and removing the center island on Central Street a sizeable area could be recaptured from the street. This area could be given back to the corner in front of the Saxonville Mill and designed as a pedestrian plaza that would include new sidewalks, sitting areas, and landscape areas, while retaining the front parking area of mill complex.



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MARKETING AND REINVESTMENT

Key Recommendations

The historic center of Saxonville is the Saxonville Mill complex. It is both geographically and visually the most prominent feature of the district and is home to many small businesses, entrepreneurs and innovative activities. Opening the door for new opportunities at the Mill through zoning and public realm improvements allows for continued reinvestment and marketing of the Mill as an asset of the district. The wayfinding for the Mill and improved street frontages can reinforce the connections between the district and this asset.

Enhance Resident Connections

Reinforce walking, biking and community connections to new residential areas including the Planned Unit Development at Danforth Green to reinforce area resident use of the village center. Several key pedestrian routes could be improved to enhance walkability from the eastern neighborhoods particularly. Sidewalks should be added on Meadow Street and Hillside Street with marked crossings at intersections to connect to the Old Danforth Bridge. Sidewalks already exist on Derby Street and Danforth Street and should be enhanced with marked pedestrian crossings at intersections. Other approaches to the district have existing sidewalks.

Leverage Community Assets

Continue efforts to reuse Athenaeum Hall for community gathering space, reinforce community connection to the Mill, expand recognition of natural and historic district assets to leverage the fundamental aspects of the district that differentiate it from other places. Build on and expand efforts such as the Friends of Saxonville Historic

Walking Tour to enhance an appreciation of the history and heritage of the district. Keep a focus on the Mill Complex as the historic and literal center of the district and help that asset to continue to adapt and evolve.

Reinforce Local Services

Calibrate uses, businesses and services to match local needs and align with the retail gap analysis. The table to the right shows selected potential retail development opportunities for Saxonville. The type of uses that are currently not fully capturing local spending and that should be able to be supported by the resident population. A purposeful calibration of the type of retail and services provided in the district to reflect both community desire and market opportunities strengthens the potential for business success.

Invite Private Investment

Establish a facade, signage and landscape improvement program that either provides small grants to promote reinvestment or a revolving loan fund to facilitate district reinvestment. The limited number of buildings in the district presents an opportunity to fix up and beautify what exists. Modest facade, signage and landscape improvements can have a dramatic impact on the perception of the district and sense of place. Businesses within the Study Area could qualify for a Town-funded matching grant that contributes to design and construction costs for qualifying exterior improvements. Improvements would include any investment that would positively impact the appearance of a property from the public right-of-way.



Enhance District Wayfinding

Highlight the historic assets, recreational trails and Mill businesses with legible and consistent signage. For example, Mill wayfinding signage should present a clear and consistent hierarchy of signage that includes and clearly communicates - building numbers, business tenants, tenant directories, parking, loading and deliveries, pedestrian access an building entries. Signage should have a distinct, simple and uniform approach.

Selected Potential Retail Development Opportunities For Saxonville

Store Type	Opportunity/Gap	Supportable Square Feet	Number of Stores
full service restaurants	\$7,500,000	10,000	1-2
limited svce eating places	\$5,700,000	8,500	2-3
beer, wine, liquor stores	\$4,000,000	15,000	1-2
jewelry stores	\$5,000,000	8,000	2-3
nursery & garden centers	\$4,000,000	20,000	1-2
office supplies & stationery	\$4,600,000	15,000	1
gifts, novelty, and souvenirs	\$3,000,000	10,000	1
TOTALS	\$33,800,000	86,500	7-10

A.C. Nielsen SiteReports, January 2015, and FXM Associates

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PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT

Key Recommendations

A district-wide focus on walkability should be used to strengthen connections to surrounding neighborhoods and the new Planned Unit Development northeast of the center. Reducing travel lane widths in the district center will both calm traffic and provide space for expanded sidewalks, streetscape amenities and strategically placed on-street parking. Public realm improvements to reinforce connections to district trails and trailheads are equally important to reinforce a strong secondary network of bicycle and pedestrian trails. Connecting the head of the Cochituate Rail Trail north to the Carol Getchell Trail or the Hultman Aqueduct provides new links in the network. The Hultman Aqueduct could provide a secondary route west to Nobscot over time working with the MWRA.

Enhance Walkability/Bikeability

Saxonville is a compact and walkable village center. Historically, it began as a walking village with worker housing closely located to the textile mill operations. Safe and enjoyable bicycle and walking must be a first priority if the commercial center of Saxonville is to be enhanced as a community gathering, recreational, and amenity center. Promoting multiple travel modes of access to and from the center reduces traffic congestion and lowers demand for parking. The sidewalk network today has missing segments that should be filled or that could be made into more enjoyable walking environments.

Fill gaps in pedestrian network with sidewalks and marked crossings, widen sidewalks in key locations, improve public streetscape, add sharrows and share-the-road signs on key bike connections. The biggest missing

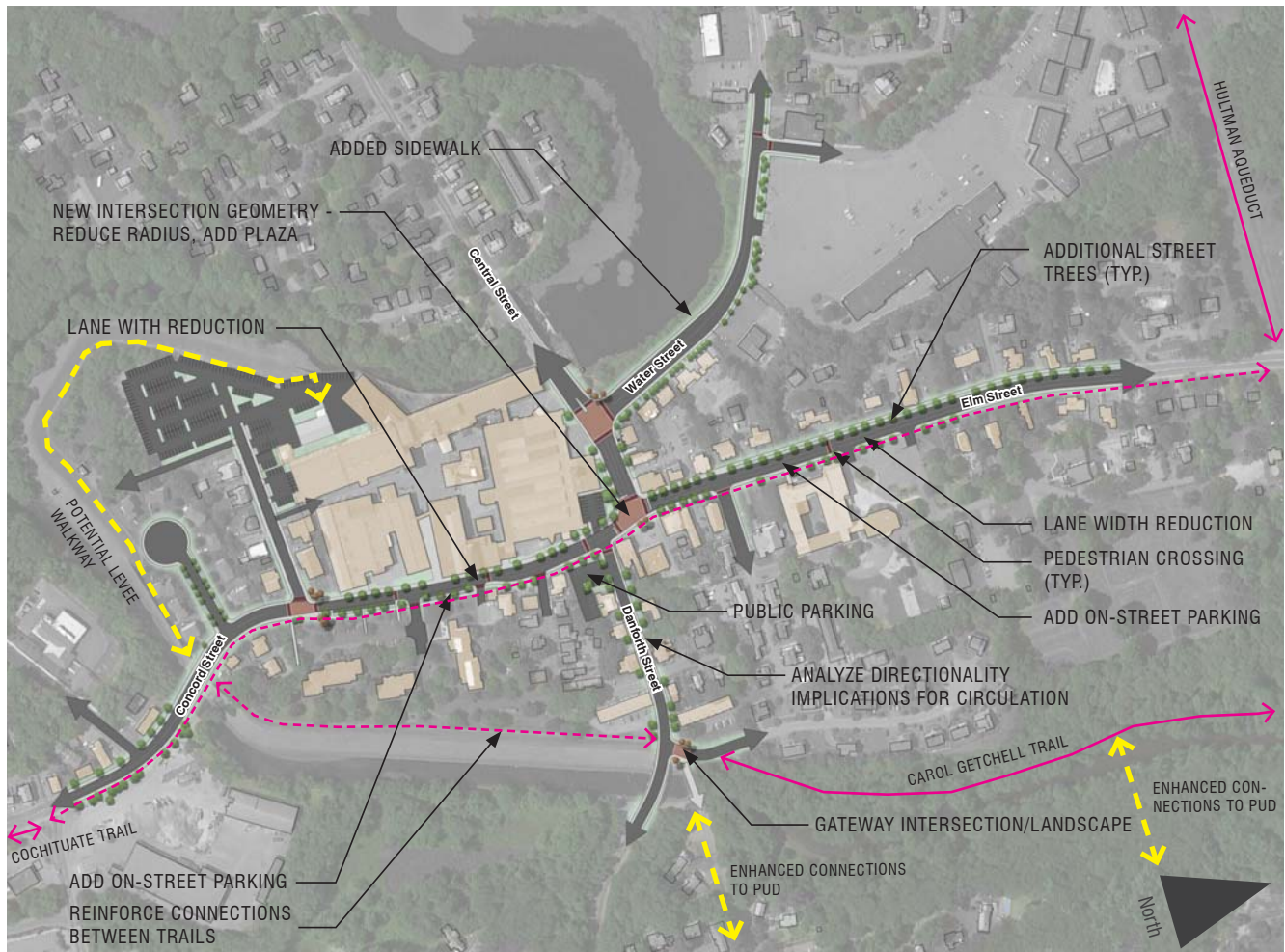
sidewalk is on the Sudbury River side of Water Street and Public Works has plans to add a sidewalk at that location. Marked mid-block pedestrian crossings on Concord Street and Elm Street would greatly enhance pedestrian safety and convenience. Pedestrian crossings are too dispersed today to offer a convenient pedestrian crossing pattern.

Identifying and marking the most direct and widely used bicycle routes would enhance bicycle safety and encourage multi-modal road use. Particularly, adding sharrows and share-the-road signs on Water Street would enhance a key bike connection to the east and strengthen the connection to Nobscot. Promoting bicycle use on Concord Street and Elm Street would provide connectivity to other recreational bicycle trails and routes.

Strengthen Open Space Links

Although major recreational assets exist in and around Saxonville, they are not directly connected. A full and expansive recreational network could be leveraged by reinforcing connections between Cochituate Rail Trail, Carol Getchell Trail, Sudbury Pond and the Aqueducts providing connections and open space links to Nobscot and surrounding communities. The long term potential for regional recreational and open space connections exist through expansion and connection of the Hultman Aqueduct (potential long term), MWRA Aqueduct, Bruce Freeman Trail and other connections and open space links to Saxonville, in addition to multi-modal street connections on Water Street.

In Saxonville, the most important and viable connection is to reinforce pedestrian and bicycle access between



the trailhead of the Cochituate Rail Trail, the Hultman Aqueduct (potential long term access) and the Carol Getchell Trail. It appears two potential routes may be best suited for this purpose. The first would simply provide on-street bicycle amenity in the form of bike lanes or sharrows on Concord Street and Elm Street connecting the Cochituate Trail and Aqueduct crossing. The second would be to provide enhanced access north on Concord Street over the Sudbury River and then east following the River up to Danforth Street to connect to the Carol Getchell Trail near the Old Danforth Bridge. The Carol Getchell Trail could be further improved to enhance bicycle access and provide a direct connection up to the Aqueduct Trail.

Continue Streetscape Improvements

Public Works has recently completed or is in the process of constructing improvements at the intersection of School Street and Concord Street and Central Street and Water Street. This effort of intersection and street reconstruction should continue to add a consistent character and quality of improvements between the current School Street and Central/Water Street improvements to unify the district.

Improvements to the street character and increased landscape plantings would enhance the pedestrian environment and buffer vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Potential street tree locations and spacing are indicated in the diagram above. Reconstruction of

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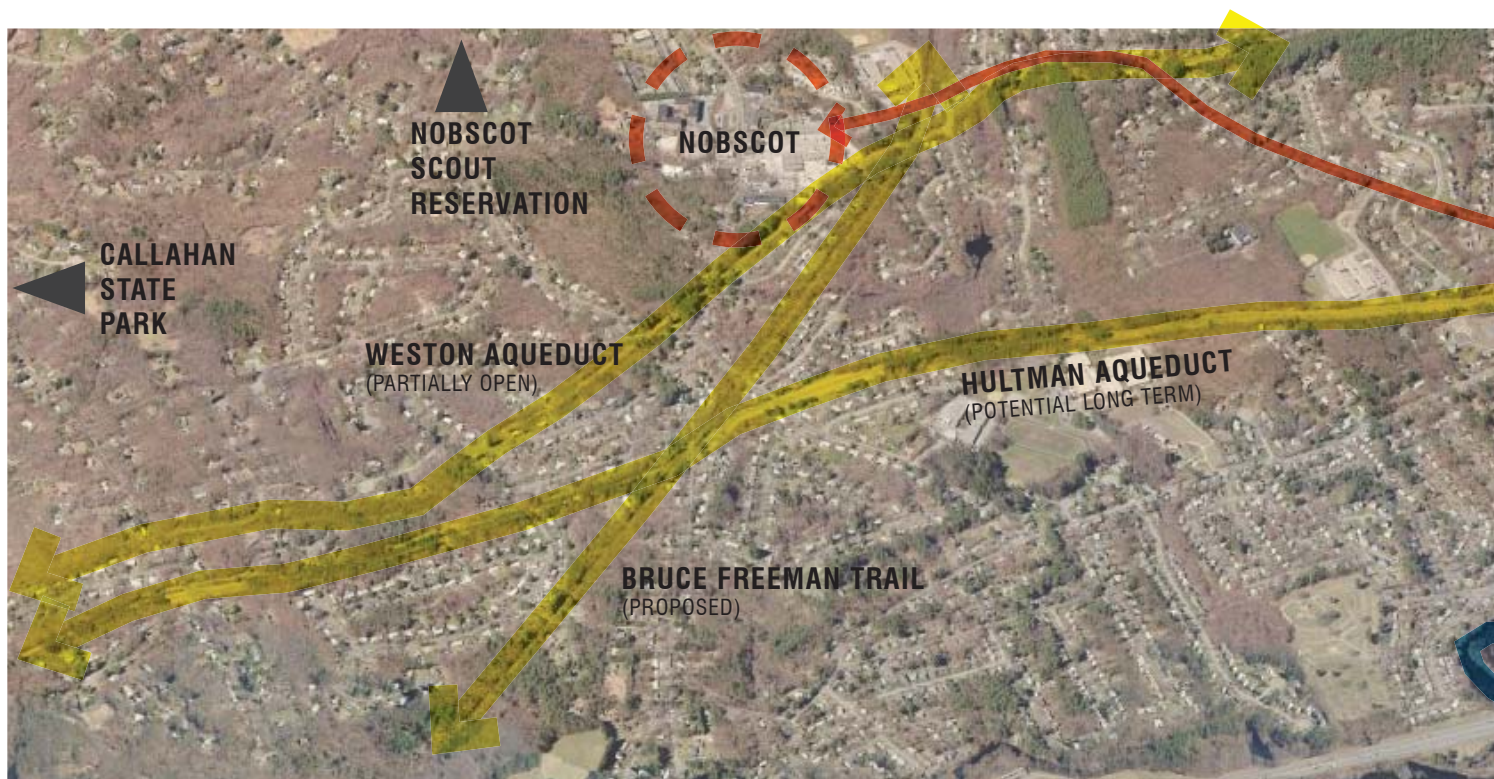
PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT

Concord Street and Elm Street in the study area would allow for an improvement of the pedestrian environment through the use of a road diet to reduce the travel lane widths. The space gained from this lane reduction could be given back to sidewalk and landscape areas to enhance the pedestrian environment. A reconfiguration of the roadway in these segments may also add the ability to create pockets of on-street parking that would provide additional convenient parking spaces in the district. The addition of on-street parking would likely require an expansion of the public right-of-way into private property in some locations, but in most locations this area is currently being used as a landscape buffer and

appears to be physically possible to accommodate. This could result in approximately 40 new on-street parking spaces near the center of the district.

Reinforce Gateway Intersections

Provide gateway landscape and intersection improvements at key intersections at Central/Water Streets, Central/Concord Streets and Watson Place/Concord Street. By providing a consistent and recognizable intersection treatment at district gateways, the sense of arrival and district boundaries are reinforced. This gateway intersection treatment could consist of a special streetprint texture in the crosswalks, stamped asphalt,





stamped concrete, or other colored or textured additives to typical paving materials.

Identify New Parking Resources

Reduce travel lane widths and add on-street parking in central locations. In addition to new on-street parking potential, there appears to be potential for additional parking areas on other public and private property that could support the district-wide parking approach. Particularly, parking resources on and near Watson Place could be expanded by exploring adding parking capacity at underused locations like the old Pump House on Watson Place and the continuation of the Mill's surface

parking area back by the river. These two locations could potentially create an additional 60 parking spaces. When combined with the potential on-street parking spaces, this includes about 100 potential new parking spaces in the district.



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REGULATORY STRATEGY

Key Recommendations

Several important regulatory modifications will enable new opportunities and long-term investment in Saxonville. A district-wide Village Zoning District would provide a more cohesive and tailored approach to zoning in the village center. Currently, five zoning districts (M, B-1, B-2, R-1 and G) exist at the center of Saxonville. The creation of a single Village Zoning District would create a more consistent application of allowable and desirable uses, potential for mixed-uses, tailoring of dimensional requirements and design guidelines regarding building placement and other aspects to reinforce the village center and examination of parking requirements. In regard to parking, other regulatory options to encourage the shared use of parking and to develop an overall district parking strategy would greatly enhance the efficiency and active use of all district properties.

Preserve Historic Assets

Reinforce the preservation of historic assets through both the proposed Village District zoning and design guidelines. The Saxonville Historic District has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1992. Further protection of the historic district would be provided if the National Register District was established as a local historic district. The creation of a local historic district would provide one of the strongest forms of protection to historic structures and oversight by the Framingham Historic District Commission (HDC). The creation of a local historic district would require approval at the Annual Town Meeting.

Provide Guidance for Investments

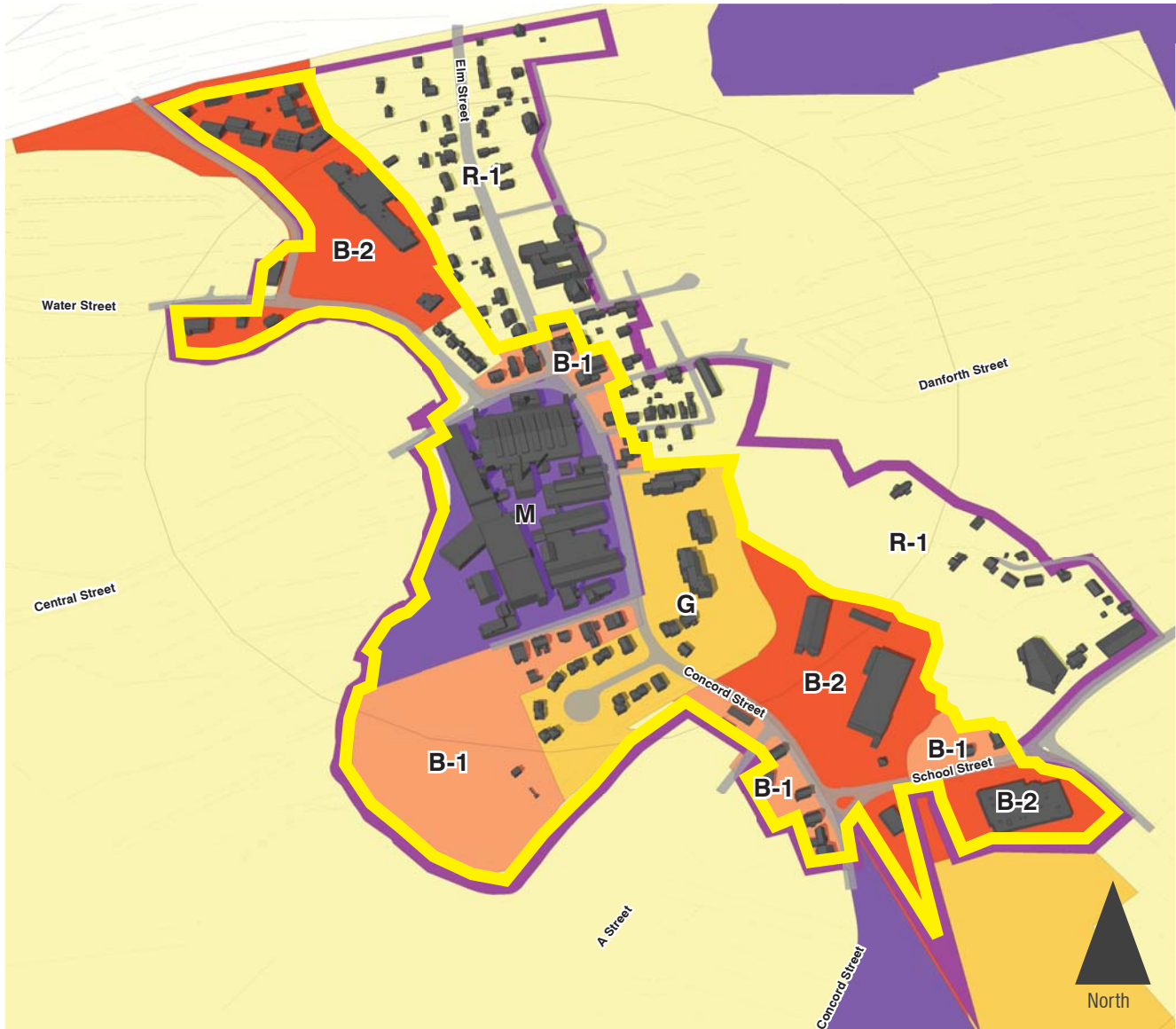
Employ design guidelines to direct future investment to complement and contribute to the overall village character, reinforce a pedestrian friendly environment and screen parking. As part of the new Village District Zone, district design guidelines should be integrated within new regulations to direct future investment to complement and contribute to the overall district character, reinforce a pedestrian-friendly environment and screen parking.

The new Saxonville District Design Guidelines should address the following framework of how buildings and sites are contributing to the sense of place in Saxonville:

Principles of Design should include reinforcing an attractive, safe and active pedestrian environment and strengthening the character of a New England village center.

Historic Preservation should be a fundamental aspect of the district design guidelines encouraging rehabilitation of existing historic assets and integration of the structures with future uses, investment and redevelopment plans. Preservation of historic structures should be consistent with the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Site Improvement Guidelines should include orienting new buildings to frame street frontage and open space, locating parking to the side and rear of buildings, reinforcing a consistent street character and streetscape with landscape components, providing community amenities and small open spaces integrated with the site



<i>Existing Zones</i>	<i>Uses</i>	<i>Lot Area Min.</i>	<i>Frontage Min.</i>	<i>Front Set-back Min.</i>	<i>Side Setback Min.</i>	<i>Landscaped Open Space Ratio Min.</i>	<i>Building Height Max.</i>	<i>Lot Coverage Max.</i>	<i>Floor Area Ratio Max.</i>
Neighborhood Business (B-1)	Mixed-use prohibited	8,000 SF 4,000 SF	65 FT	30 FT	10 FT	30% or 5%	3-stories 40 FT	35% or 33%	-
Community Business (B-2)	Mixed-use prohibited	8,000 SF	65 FT	25-30 FT	15 FT	20% (30% residential)	3-stories 40 FT	35%	0.32
General Residence (G)	Mixed-use prohibited	8,000 SF 43,560 SF	65-150 FT	30 FT	10-30 FT	30-50%	3-stories 40 FT	15% or 35%	-
General Manufacturing (M)	Mixed-use prohibited	6,000 SF 8,000 SF	50 FT 65 FT	50 FT 30 FT	15 FT 10 FT	20% 30%	6/80 FT 3/40 FT	- 35%	0.32 -

<i>Proposed Zones</i>	<i>Uses</i>	<i>Lot Area Min.</i>	<i>Frontage Min.</i>	<i>Front Set-back Min.</i>	<i>Side Setback Min.</i>	<i>Landscaped Open Space Ratio Min.</i>	<i>Building Height Max.</i>	<i>Lot Coverage Max.</i>	
Village Center	Mixed-use allowed, multi-family allowed (not as primary frontage)	8,000 SF	65 FT	20 FT	15 FT	15%	4-stories 45 FT	35%	0.75

plan and concealing loading, service and parking areas from adjacent properties.

Building and Architectural Guidelines should include a simple articulation of building massing to articulate a base, middle and top, reduce the scale of large buildings through the use of stepbacks, respect the context of scale and architectural style, respond to corner sites with the architecture, use facade and roof features to break-down large blank wall and roof surfaces, and generally create an architecture that is compatible with a New England village character.

Signage Guidelines should include site and building signage that is integrated into the overall design and configuration of site circulation, landscape and building design, signage that is coordinated and managed across multiple tenants and uses to reinforce a community feel and avoid unnecessary sign competition and distraction.

Reinforce Mixed-use Village Center

The existing zoning districts prohibit mixed-uses. Additionally, some of the existing zones, such as Manufacturing (M) are prohibiting uses at the Mill Complex that are desired by the community and potentially economically viable. It is a strong recommendation of the study to create a new Village District Zone to integrate many separate existing zones into a single zone with the intent to expand the mix of allowable uses that would reinforce a walkable mixed-use commercial center.

This new zone could replace the existing M, B-1, B-2, R-1 and G zones as shown on the diagram to the right outlined in yellow. No other zoning change would be required and the areas outside of this boundary would remain unchanged.

The intention of the new Village District Zone would be to expand the mix of allowable uses and potentially to expand the allowable building height and density to reinforce a walkable mixed-use commercial center. Defining allowable uses that would permit as-of-right mixed-use and multi-family development would be the

first change. Multi-family only development could be restricted from occurring on major street frontages, which is where mixed-use development would be encouraged.

Another aspect of revised zoning that will require further discussion and exploration with community, potential developers and the Town more generally is the allowable height and density of the new zoning district. Through analysis of the site and potential development programs, the consultant team recommends that a 4-story height limit may offer more flexibility and encourage future reinvestment in the district.

Pursue District-wide Parking Strategy

The Town of Framingham should encourage property owners within the Village District Zone to consider all parking resources as shared parking supply. This type of approach should be promoted within the district through signage and a community outreach campaign. Encourage shared parking, more efficient parking layouts across property lines, shared access and entries, and new locations of on-street parking to provide a district-wide approach to parking encouraging a “park-once” district. Reinforcing walkability within the district is a major component of a park-once district as you are asking people to walk between multiple destinations.

If a district-wide parking approach becomes widely accepted and applied, a more fine grained approach to parking management and regulation within the overall district can begin to occur. Generally, in compact mixed-use districts this type of management encourages parking in less convenient locations by providing those parking areas free of restrictions. Parking locations that are more convenient may have limitations applied, such as a 2 hour limit. Parking locations that are the most convenient should be encouraged to have quick turn-over to provide very convenient parking for quick visits to shops or businesses. This may be managed through a 15 minute parking limit or parking meters. In this type of management of parking, locations of district employee parking are also identified to ensure employees are not occupying the most convenient parking locations, but leaving them for customers.



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ACTION PLAN

Implementation

Critical next steps to advance the plan:

1. Invest in streetscape improvements to improve walkability and enhance sense of place - As part of Capital Improvements budgeting and planning the Town should prioritize a sequence of walkability, bikeability and streetscape improvements that focus on filling the gaps in the infrastructure that have been identified. This effort should be coordinated through Public Works and integrated with their ongoing improvement and implementation efforts. A predictable and known sequence of improvements would help the community to understand discreet projects as part of a larger and holistic plan to improve multi-modal travel and Complete Street policies.

Streetscape improvement should also include the addition of on-street parking spaces wherever possible. This may necessitate expansion of the public right-of-way in several locations, but would be physically possible to accomplish, particularly on Concord Street and Elm Street. A short break following the current construction on Central Street and recently completed improvements at School Street would allow the community to recover from construction activities while new improvements are finalized and allocated in the budget.

Timeframe: Completion of a first collection of improvements within 2 years, follow-up improvements at 2 year increments until completed

Responsibility: Department of Public Works

2. Advance civic reuse of the Athenaeum Hall - The conceptual plans for the rehabilitation of the Athenaeum and current Fire Station as a civic and community center should be used to establish the potential capital and operational costs to establish a budget and explore opportunities for funding. The Town can continue to

support pre-development costs for the investment and may consider the option of performing this work as a capital project. However, this may not be a prioritized project and alternative sources of funding may be necessary. Fundraising for the project through private donations, or the use of Massachusetts Rehabilitation Tax Credits from the Massachusetts Historical Commission may be viable alternative funding sources. Another possible alternative would be to partner with a nonprofit organization to redevelop and operate the property when completed.

Timeframe: Ongoing with more detailed redevelopment plan within 1 year

Responsibility: Town Manager's Office, Community & Economic Development, Saxonville Stewardship Group (to be established, see below)

3. Develop and adopt new Village District zoning promoting mixed-uses at a moderate density - A special committee or steering group should be formed with members of the Town Community & Economic Development department, Planning Board, EDIC, Saxonville residents, businesses and stakeholders or others to further define and build consensus around a new Saxonville Village District Zone. The process to refine and craft the zoning should include additional community meetings similar to the workshops held during this study process to advance the zoning concepts and build consensus based on the framework established through this process. Once appropriate levels of agreement have been reached the new proposed zoning should be advanced for adoption through the Town Meeting process.

Timeframe: Immediate with a completion goal of 1 year

Responsibility: Community & Economic Development, Planning Board, EDIC, Saxonville Stewardship Group (to be established, see below)

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ACTION PLAN

4. Connect recreational assets linking Cochituate Rail Trail to Carol Getchell Trail and Aqueduct -

The Town, residents and other regional trail advocates should continue the conversion of rail beds, aqueducts and other regional networks into bicycle and recreational routes. Town efforts with MWRA, MAPC and others to open access to the Weston Aqueduct, Sudbury Aqueduct and Cochituate Aqueduct should continue to close missing links of public access. Direct routes and connections between the trailhead of the Cochituate Trail north along Concord and Elm Street to the Aqueduct crossing or connecting along the Sudbury River to the Carol Getchell Trail would enhance connectivity in an impressive recreational network. Over time paths, amenities and marked street crossings should be added to enhance these unique recreational links across the Town.

Timeframe: Ongoing effort

Responsibility: Town Manager's Office coordinating with other Town's and utilities, Department of Public Works for roadway intersection improvements at trails

5. Create a district-based facade, landscape and signage improvement program -

As described in the strategies, a Saxonville district-based facade, landscape and signage improvement program would help to beautify and invite positive private investment into the district. The establishment of a matching grant or revolving loan fund program would directly translate the planning strategies into on the ground actions to improve properties. The program and its funding could be established through the EDIC. The amount of the funding would be determined as part of annual budgeting processes, but could range anywhere from \$5,000 to \$15,000. The funding would be available to local property owners or businesses wishing to improve their property.

The program could be set up in any number of ways - it

could be dedicated only to construction costs or provide assistance for design and construction costs. The type of project and improvements would be required meet certain criteria to prove that they will have a positive impact on the visual environment of the district. Funding could be provided as a matching grant to leverage an equal or greater amount of private investment or could be provided as a low or no interest loan that is returned to a pool of funds dedicated to the district upon repayment by the property owner.

Timeframe: Establishing the program and approving a single pilot project as part of the program would be a great accomplishment within 1 year. The program could be refined and expanded based on the feedback from the pilot program experience.

Responsibility: Framingham Economic Development and Industrial Co. (EDIC), a property owner interested in improvement investments

6. Invest in placemaking and intersection improvements at McGrath Square with new plaza -

The center of the historic Saxonville district is important to have a sense of place which includes more of a cohesive character and pedestrian-friendly environment than exists today. A full redesign, reconfiguration and reconstruction of the main intersection of Concord Street, Elm Street, Central Street and Danforth Street provides the opportunity to make a dramatic improvement on the functionality, safety and visual impact of the center of the district.

These improvements have potentially broad implications including resolving accessibility issues on the public sidewalks at the northwest corner of this intersection, the creation of a new public plaza, landscape and seating area in conjunction with a reconfigured private parking area at the southwest corner of the intersection

and consideration for the directionality and circulation implications for Danforth Street and how it should best provide access to the center of the district.

Timeframe: Design and documentation within 5 years, discussion with community as to appropriate construction timing

Responsibility: Department of Public Works with input from Community & Economic Development and Saxonville Stewardship Group (to be established, see below)

7. Share and manage parking district-wide with parking agreements and on-street parking - Due to the configuration of certain properties and the historic layout of the district, parking supply cannot be adequately provided in Saxonville on an individual property basis. A district-wide approach to parking will create new opportunities in the district, add convenience and enhance business viability. As also highlighted in the Framingham Parking Report (June 2014), parking should be optimized as a resource so that can be most efficiently used. Sharing and managing parking through property owner agreements will allow for more convenient parking, combined with on-street and other public parking resources to provide a district-wide approach to parking.

Model Shared Parking Agreements should be provided to owners to work with abutting property owners to join, share and reconfigure parking areas over time. The sharing of parking between uses and across property lines can provide all owners better parking access and resources and provide space for redevelopment opportunities. Each property and parking agreement must begin with an open discussion, be planned negotiated, agreed to and managed and can be assisted through efforts by the Town to get the process started.

Timeframe: Ongoing effort, a pilot program for an easy shared-parking conversion and agreement would show other property owners that it is a worthwhile effort

Responsibility: Facilitation of process by Community & Economic Development, Agreements and actions performed by property owners

8. Formalize stewardship with a district advisory committee to guide next steps - Many of the strategies and actions recommended for Saxonville require some level of district-wide coordination and guidance. The creation of a Town-recognized stewardship group would provide an additional level of community engagement and advisory capacity that is likely to be necessary to leverage each of the efforts into significant progress for Saxonville. The procedure by which the stewardship group is formed should be consistent with the Town advisory committee's that have been formed and should provide the ability for member transitions. The group should include local representation from a diverse collection of residents, business owners, property owners, or other stakeholders. This group could use existing organizations, such as the Friends of Saxonville to report back to and communicate with the broader community.

Timeframe: Seek nominations and establish Stewardship Group within 6 months

Responsibility: Group may be best connected and engaged through the Community & Economic Development department

9. Strategically use McAuliffe Library for betterment of district - When the new McAuliffe Library is completed on Water Street, the old library building on Nichols across from the Pinefield Shopping Plaza will need to be considered for reuse. While a direct need has not been identified, the Town-owned facility should be used strategically to enhance the Saxonville district and community. Its location and potential reuse will have implications for the Pinefield Plaza, where most of the library parking has been located. The Town-owned property could be considered as part of a larger redevelopment of the Pinefield Shopping Plaza frontage on Water Street.

Timeframe: Options for reuse should be considered immediately, building to be vacant in 2016.

Responsibility: Town of Framingham Capital Projects & Facilities Management, and Community & Economic Development