

3.0 DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

3.1 Preliminary Downtown Framingham Building Program

A preliminary building program for Downtown Framingham was developed for the purposes of advancing the urban design and development strategies and testing the economic market observations. This preliminary building program was based upon workshops, economic development analyses and initial site assessments conducted during Phase 1. The building program projects a **50% increase** in building program square feet in Downtown Framingham over a twenty year period. **Figure 3-1** details the Building Program.

This preliminary building program was revisited during the process of constructing the Development Plan to incorporate the utilization analysis, the development potential associated with the CSX Corporation properties in the Downtown and an increased focus on transit oriented development opportunities. Together, these factors created significant influences on the building program potential in Downtown Framingham. The building program for the preferred urban design and development direction is detailed in **Section 4.6**.

3.2 Potential Rail Yard & Rail Alignment Changes

A significant factor in the revision of the preliminary building program for the Downtown is the emergence of potential development opportunities associated with the properties owned and controlled by CSX Corporation. CSX owns and operates the railroad lines and yards throughout most of the northeastern United States, including a significant quantity of infrastructure in the Town of Framingham. These include several rail lines and one rail yard, the North Yard, within the study area, as shown on **Figure 3-2**.

The CSX Corporation properties located within the study area occupy significant quantities of land and in central locations. The North Yard is located between Downtown Framingham and Farm Pond preventing access and creating a barrier between the Town center and a natural resource and asset. The CSX Triangle, the property located north of Route 135, south of Park Street and west of Franklin Street is undeveloped despite its extremely close proximity to the MBTA commuter rail station, Routes 135 and 126 and the central core of Downtown Framingham.

At the time of this report, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and CSX Corporation are engaged in an ongoing evaluation of CSX properties and services in eastern Massachusetts. As part of those discussions, the CSX properties located in the Downtown, have arisen as potential development opportunities. Development of these locations would require the physical relocation and rail realignment of the existing infrastructure. If relocation and realignment can be accomplished, then substantial new development opportunities would be available to Downtown Framingham. At the time of this report, the Town of Framingham is actively supporting the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in its discussions and evaluations with CSX with the goal of enabling the relocation and realignment required to develop these key properties in Downtown Framingham.

Framingham Downtown Study
Preliminary Building Program Calculations

										OPTIONS ASSUMING 50% GROWTH IN THE DOWNTOWN (STUDY AREA)							
Use	Building Area Based on Res. Units/ Employment	Percent	New/ Proposed Building Area ⁽¹⁾	Estimated Total Building Area ⁽²⁾	Percent	Square Feet/Unit or Employee	Units	Employment ⁽³⁾	Residential District	Change/ Program 6/30/09	Percent	Institutional/ Educational Center	Change/ Program 6/30/09	Percent	Mixed Use Multicultural Center	Change/ Program 6/30/09	Percent
Housing																	
Low ownership rental	552,000	22.0%		552,000	21.0%	800	690		552,300	300	14.0%	552,300	300	14.0%	552,300	300	14.0%
Moderate ownership rental	163,200	6.5%		163,200	6.2%	1200	136		394,500	231,300	10.0%	236,700	73,500	6.0%	394,500	231,300	10.0%
High ownership rental			90,000	90,000	3.4%				394,500	304,500	10.0%	315,600	225,600	8.0%	394,500	304,500	10.0%
High rental			102,000	102,000	3.9%				433,950	331,950	11.0%	236,700	134,700	6.0%	433,950	331,950	11.0%
Subtotal housing	715,200	28.4%	192,000	896,324	34.1%		826		1,933,050	1,036,726	49.0%	1,459,650	563,326	37.0%	1,933,050	1,036,726	49.0%
Commercial (Business services) ⁽⁵⁾	516,800	20.6%	80,000	428,863	16.3%	400	1292		552,300	123,437	14.0%	591,750	162,887	15.0%	552,300	123,437	14.0%
Social Services ⁽⁶⁾	144,250	5.7%		123,714	4.7%	125	1154		78,900	-44,814	2.0%	118,350	-5,364	3.0%	78,900	-44,814	2.0%
Health Services ⁽⁷⁾	61,750	2.5%		32,673	1.2%	250	247		78,900	46,227	2.0%	157,800	125,127	4.0%	78,900	46,227	2.0%
Retail																	
Restaurant	48,400	1.9%		17,204	0.7%	200	242		78,900	61,696	2.0%	59,175	41,971	1.5%	98,625	81,421	2.5%
Automotive/gas stations	87,000	3.5%		95,060	3.6%	1000	87		39,450	-55,610	1.0%	59,175	-35,885	1.5%	39,450	-55,610	1.0%
General retail	249,750	9.9%		418,356	15.9%	750	333		532,575	114,219	13.5%	552,300	133,944	14.0%	552,300	133,944	14.0%
Government and other Services ⁽⁸⁾	354,400	14.1%		243,723	9.3%	400	886		256,425	12,702	6.5%	295,875	52,152	7.5%	256,425	12,702	6.5%
Cultural/Institutional ⁽⁹⁾		0.0%		208,842	7.9%				256,425	47,583	6.5%	473,400	264,558	12.0%	236,700	27,858	6.0%
Light industrial/wholesale ⁽¹⁰⁾	298,000	11.8%		149,213	5.7%	2000	149		59,175	-90,038	1.5%	59,175	-90,038	1.5%	78,900	-70,313	2.0%
Underutilized Space/ Other Use ⁽¹¹⁾	39,250	1.6%		13,400	0.5%	125	314		78,900	65,500	2.0%	118,350	104,950	3.0%	39,450	26,050	1.0%
Subtotals of Use Categories	2,514,800	100%	272,000	2,627,372	100.0%		4704		3,945,000	2,343,478	100.0%	3,945,000	1,870,078	100.0%	3,945,000	2,343,478	100.0%

Totals (Rounded) 2,630,000 3,945,000 2,343,478 3,945,000 1,870,078 3,945,000 2,343,478
 Total Land Area 167 acres

Residential units	864	469	864
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NOTES:

- (1) Includes recent and proposed development at Dennison Triangle
- (2) Estimated total building area includes existing building area based on assessors data plus recent development (Dennison Triangle)
- (3) From FXM economic and market analysis data (source: Claritas)
- (4) Square footage identified in assessors data as mixed use is counted as part of residential, institutional (religious) and retail in the Assumed Building Area column
- (5) Assessors data for commercial (business services) has been adjusted to include general office, banks and hotels; employment includes all services, except by health, educational and social services
- (6) Assessors and employment data include non-profits and charitable organizations
- (7) Assessors data for health services includes nursing home and medical office
- (8) Includes public administration and educational services, including the public library
- (9) Includes assessors data for religious and fraternal institutions plus the Danforth Museum
- (10) Includes wholesale and manufacturing
- (11) Assessors data includes electric substation; employment data includes transportation, utilities and construction



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Framingham, MA

Figure 3-1
Preliminary Downtown Building Program



Development on the two noted CSX properties represents a significant and unique opportunity for Downtown Framingham. The properties are large enough in size that they could support significant development and, due to the proximity of the MBTA commuter rail station, developments in this location can be transit oriented to reduce the negative impacts commonly incurred by large scale developments. However, despite the positive affects associated with transit oriented development on the CSX properties, it is unlikely that development in these locations alone will revitalize Downtown Framingham. Any development on the CSX properties needs to occur in concert with other redevelopment efforts dispersed throughout the Downtown area in order to realize full potential.

3.3 Observations of Key Opportunities in the Downtown

Determining a building program for Downtown Framingham based on occupancy rates of existing buildings and market analysis provides the parameters for development, but not the details of where and how development is likely and most appropriate to occur. A parcel by parcel examination was conducted to determine the locations most susceptible to and best suited for development. The general locations of the properties identified through this process are incorporated into the urban design and development directions adopted by this study. Once a preferred Urban Design/Development direction is identified, the location, context and size of each property that has been identified as a key development opportunity, can be assessed to determine the building program for each specific location and ultimately for all of Downtown Framingham.

3.4 Identification of Key Properties

Properties which contain development potential and represent urban design opportunities were identified through a parcel by parcel assessment based on information gathered and determinations made during the Phase 1 Susceptibility to Change Analysis, supplemental Assessor's Department research, current site usage, site observations, previous studies, and impacts of the considered Transportation Alternatives. In many parcels, opportunities for in-fill development (i.e., building and developing in vacant downtown areas) were identified. The properties, parcels and areas identified below are those which, due to a combination of factors based on this research process, are not only susceptible to development but could be redeveloped in a manner that would improve Downtown Framingham. **Figure 3-3** identifies the key properties, parcels and areas considered by this study.

This same process was used to identify properties and parcels, where retention was deemed to be critical to the success of urban design and development efforts in Downtown Framingham. Those properties are primarily the Town's cultural and civic institutions and the historical commercial buildings located along Concord Street. These buildings represent the core of the downtown urban fabric and should be maintained to preserve the context of the downtown area. **Figure 3-4** identifies the key properties, which should remain through preservation and restoration efforts.



■ Areas for potential redevelopment
■ Project Area Boundary
LEGEND

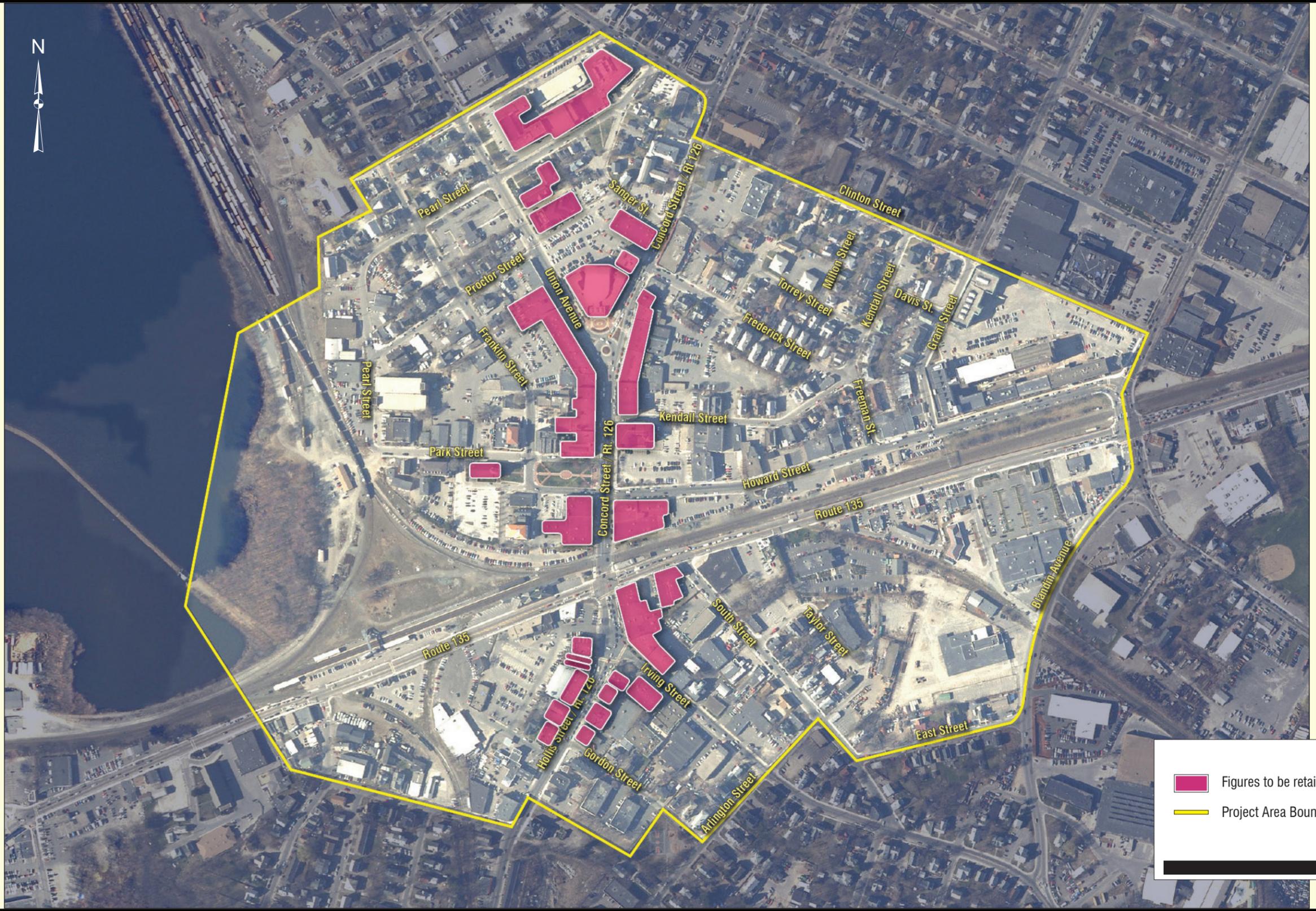
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 Planning and Design

FM ASSOCIATES
 ECONOMIC PLANNING AND RESEARCH

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Figure 3-3
 Areas For Potential Redevelopment



Figures to be retained
 Project Area Boundary

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A list and description of the key properties, parcels and areas, which are susceptible to development follows:

- Hollis Court Triangle – The property is located south of Route 135, north of Claflin Street, west of Route 126 and east of Cedar Street, directly across Route 135 from the MBTA commuter rail station. This area's current primary use is surface parking. Surface parking lot is not the best utilization of this site, particularly given its extremely close proximity to the MBTA commuter rail station. If the Route 135 Underpass Transportation Alternative is constructed, then the surface parking lots and some of the surrounding buildings will be affected, creating more area for potential development opportunities. Due to its extremely close proximity to the MBTA commuter rail station, the most likely development option for this parcel is a residential/commercial mixed-use transit oriented development.
- Proctor/Franklin Street Intersection – This area includes the properties on all four corners of the Franklin Street and Proctor Street intersection. These properties currently contain various uses including parking lots, and residential and commercial businesses. The parcels in this area are currently underutilized and once revitalization in the Downtown area begins, these parcels would become even more underutilized and more susceptible to change and development, especially given their proximity to the MBTA Commuter Rail Station. These properties could be developed as a combination of institutional, residential and commercial uses. Not all parcels are envisioned to contain mixed use developments, but in combination a mix of uses could exist. These properties are the most likely location for institutional use integration into Downtown Framingham due to their proximity to both Massachusetts Bay Community College and Framingham Union Hospital.
- Arcade Development – The property is located directly behind the Arcade building on Concord Street and in between Fredrick and Kendall Streets. This area is currently used as surface parking to support the businesses in the Arcade building. There have been recent development proposals for this parcel, but none have come to fruition. This parcel could become a mixed use or residential development or the Arcade building is renovated and an independent parking structure is constructed in place of the existing surface parking.
- Concord/Howard Street Intersection – This property is located on the northwest corner of Concord and Howard Streets, directly across from the Town Green. The site is currently used as a series of surface parking lots, which for a property of this size and in this central and prominent location is not obtaining its fullest potential. This site could be utilized as a mixed-use or residential development.
- Blandin Avenue Development – This property is located west of Blandin Avenue, east of Taylor Street, north of East Street and south of Route 126. It is currently used for light industrial purposes. Residential use is the most likely development alternative, due to the site's proximity to established residential neighborhoods and uses located to the south and west. Additionally the site is currently owned by South Middlesex Non-Profit Housing Corporation, which develops affordable housing alternatives.

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- South Street Infill – The properties that are susceptible to infill development on South Street are located on the west side, south of Route 135 and north of Arlington Street, but not fronting on Irving Street. The current uses located in this area included commercial, residential and surface parking. The parcels in this area are currently underutilized and once revitalization in the Downtown area begins these parcels would become even more underutilized and more susceptible to change and development, especially given their proximity to the MBTA Commuter Rail Station. These properties are most likely to become infill development that could include residential, mixed-use or independent structured parking.
- Irving Street Infill – The properties that are susceptible to infill development on Irving Street are the properties located on the north and west corners of the Irving Street and Arlington Street intersection and the interior properties of the block bordered by Irving, Hollis, Arlington and Gordon Streets. The current uses located in this area included commercial, residential and surface parking. The parcels in this area are currently underutilized and once revitalization in the downtown area begins these parcels will become even more underutilized and more susceptible to change and development, especially given their proximity to the MBTA Commuter Rail station. These properties are most likely to become infill residential or mixed-use development.
- CSX Triangle – This property is located north of Route 135, south of Park Street, west of Franklin Street and east of Farm Pond. The property is currently underutilized and cut off from the Downtown and from development opportunities by a single CSX rail line. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is currently engaged in ongoing negotiations with CSX regarding a series of service and property issues. If, in conjunction with the Town of Framingham, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can negotiate both the removal of this single rail line and the allowance of development on this property, then the likelihood of a commercial transit oriented development occurring at this location increases dramatically.
- North Yard – This property is located east of Farm Pond, west of Pearl and Franklin Streets, north of Park Street and south of Brewster Road. It is currently used as a CSX rail yard. For this site to change uses the existing rail yard would have to be relocated and the existing rail lines would have to be realigned and condensed to one line running north along Farm Pond. The potential for this site to change uses is connected with ongoing rail service and land use agreements between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and CSX Corporation rail lines. The most likely development use for this property is new residential development, capitalizing on the views of along Farm Pond and remaining consistent with the residential neighborhoods located to the north of Downtown Framingham.

The assessment of these properties was used to guide the Urban Design and Development Directions, Building Program and Development Plan.