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October 19, 2010

Eric Bourassa
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
RE: Technical Assistance Program

Dear Mr. Bourassa,

Recently, Nicholas Zavalas, a member of the Town of Acton's South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee (SATSAC) discussed with you the MBTA's proposed dual-platform redesign and reconstruction of the South Acton Commuter Rail Station. The MBTA recently distributed the station's 60% design plan to the Town of Acton for its review and comments. On behalf of SATSAC, Mr. Zavalas described the need to further study (*South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Planning Study*) the potential transportation and land use impacts associated with the MBTA's new dual-platform station design on local South Acton roadways and neighborhoods.

The South Acton Commuter Rail Station is bordered by Central Street to the north, Maple Street to the south, Main Street (Route 27) to the east and Martin Street to the west. Currently, the only vehicular entrance to the South Acton Commuter Rail Station is located on Central Street and a very short distance west of the Central Street/Main Street (Route 27)/Railroad Street/School Street intersection, a difficult signalized intersection with high traffic volume and delays. The proposed new dual platform station design will establish a second access to the "inbound" platform on Maple Street located a very short distance west of the Maple Street/Main Street (Route 27) intersection, another difficult un-signalized intersection with difficult sight lines, high traffic volume and delays. In addition, the new Bruce Freeman Trail Bikeway will cross at this location, adding commuting and recreational bicycles to the mix. It is anticipated that the new dual-platform station design will result in untold changes to existing and future vehicular and pedestrian traffic conditions on local roadways and neighborhoods surrounding the commuter rail station during peak and non-peak hours.

The Town of Acton is seeking MAPC's transportation and land use expertise and assistance to look at the following issues and concerns:

- to understand how the new dual platform station design may impact existing and future traffic and safety concerns to local area roadways and neighborhoods (including Maple Street, Stow Street, Martin Street, Central Street and Main Street);
- to understand how the new dual platform design may impact existing and future land uses associated with commercially-zoned properties

(Montourri Property, Richards Property) directly abutting the Rail Station's south side "inbound" platform and residential neighborhoods (Maple Street, Martin Street, Stow Street, Central Street) immediately surrounding the station;

- to identify the most appropriate location for siting the Maple Street entrance to the Station's south side "inbound" platform;
- to identify appropriate measures for mitigating the anticipated traffic impacts associated with the dual platform design including the promotion of multiple transportation modes (pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and shuttle) to improve multi-modal access to and from the South Acton MBTA Station; and,
- to better understand how the dual platform design and any proposed multi-modal transportation measures may impact the potential future uses of the commercially-zoned properties abutting the Station's south side "inbound" platform and residential neighborhoods immediately surrounding the Station.

We are requesting help from MAPC to develop recommendations for addressing the potential short term and long term traffic impacts on local roadways surrounding the station associated with the construction of the dual platform station design, and identifying preferred land use alternatives pertaining to the future use of the commercially-zoned properties abutting the station's south "inbound" platform on Maple Street.

We hope MAPC can help us by bringing a fresh perspective to these traffic and land use issues. Please contact me if I can provide you with anything further.

Sincerely,

Steve Ledoux
Town Manager, Town of Acton

South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee (SATSAC) Briefing

Town of Acton's Request for Technical Assistance to MAPC - *South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Planning Study Project*

Briefing Materials:

1. Project Description - *South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Planning Study Project*
2. Overview of Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) Technical Assistance Program
 - *2009 Technical Assistance Program Report - Town of Wrentham*
 - *2009 Technical Assistance Program Report - Town of Sharon*
3. Sample Request Letter - Town of Acton Request for Technical Assistance to MAPC

South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Planning Study Project

Planning for the new South Acton Dual Platform Commuter Rail Station

Recently, a member of the South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee (SATSAC) discussed the MBTA's proposed dual platform redesign and redevelopment of the South Acton Commuter Rail Station with members of the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC). SATSAC identified the need for further study of the potential transportation and land use impacts of the MBTA's new two-platform design on local South Acton roadways and neighborhoods.

Upon further discussion, the need for a *South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Planning Study* emerged as an effective planning tool to:

- learn more about South Acton's existing and potential future traffic and safety concerns;
- to identify opportunities to promote multiple transportation modes including bicycling and walking, ride sharing and public transit to improve multi-modal access (pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and shuttle) to and from the South Acton MBTA Station;
- to better understand how multi-modal transportation decisions may impact land use particularly in the neighborhoods surrounding the South Acton MBTA Commuter Rail Station; and,
- to better understand how to minimize multi-modal traffic conflicts in South Acton and the areas immediately surrounding the South Acton MBTA Commuter Rail Station.

According to MAPC representatives, the South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Planning Study project is a worthwhile candidate for receiving technical assistance from MAPC under the Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program (CTTAP) - a pilot project that provides technical advice on local transportation issues to municipal officials.

MAPC and the Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program (CTTAP)

The Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the group responsible for planning Greater Boston's transportation plan. Under Federal mandate, the the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is responsible for developing a vision for the region, from public transit to pedestrian/bicycle needs and roadway projects, and decides how to allocate federal and state dollars toward such projects. The MPO region coincides with the MAPC region and includes 101 cities and towns in Eastern Massachusetts. MAPC provides planning support to the MPO and works with municipalities to advance transportation projects that encourage smart growth, safety, and regional connections and coordinates several transportation funding programs that are administered through the Boston MPO including the

Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program. Members of MAPC and the Central Transportation Planning Service (CTPS) jointly staff the Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program program.

By way of example, MAPC has pointed to two recently completed 2009 Technical Assistance Program projects with the Towns of Wrentham and Sharon designed to provide technical assistance on local transportation issues and land use and development issues, respectively. These Technical Assistance Program projects resulted in written reports to Wrentham and Sharon municipal officials containing recommendations on possible short- and long-term alternatives to calm traffic speeds, improve pedestrian access, and minimize traffic conflicts in Wrentham, and the identification of priority development and preservation areas in Sharon. (See Attachment: Wrentham and Sharon Technical Assistance Program reports).

Town of Acton - Request for Technical Assistance through the Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program

To receive technical assistance through the 2010 Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program, the Town of Acton, through its Town Manager, must submit a written request for technical assistance for the South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Study Planning Project. In its letter to MAPC, the Town should identify the study area and outlining the existing and potential future transportation and land use issues affecting this area and what the town would like help with.

Upon receipt of the Town of Acton's request for technical assistance, MAPC and CTPS transportation engineers and planners will schedule one or more meetings with Acton officials to learn more about South Acton's existing and future traffic and safety concerns to better understand how the MBTA's new double platform station design may impact local area multi-modal transportation and land use decisions and, in turn, how future growth in Acton may affect the transportation systems in South Acton particularly in the areas surrounding the South Acton MBTA Commuter Rail Station. The South Acton Multi-Modal Transportation Planning Study project work may involve a day-long site visit that will begin in the Acton Town Hall with an initial discussion and overview. Participants then will walk through the focus areas and discussed possible short- and long-term alternatives including the promotion of green transportation modes including bicycling and walking, ride sharing and public transit to improve multi-modal access (pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and shuttle) to and from the South Acton MBTA Station, to calm traffic speeds, and minimize multi-modal traffic conflicts.

In conjunction with the CTPS, MAPC will provide the Town of Acton with technical support and research to consider both transportation and land use issues within a planning process that includes public input and integrates strategies to better manage existing land uses and potential future development while promoting a balance of transportation modes to preserve this area's existing and future capacity. MAPC will work with the Town of Acton to identify actions the Town of Acton can take to implement these transportation and land use strategies.



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

MEMORANDUM

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Jeffrey B. Mullan
MassDOT Secretary and CEO
and MPO Chairman

Arnold J. Soolman
Director, MPO Staff

DATE November 5, 2009
TO Town of Wrentham
FROM MPO Staff
RE Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program:
Town of Wrentham

Background

The Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program is a pilot project that provides technical advice on local transportation issues to municipal officials. Members of the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) jointly staff this program. This Wrentham analysis is the initial study of this program.

Upon the request of the Town of Wrentham, transportation engineers and planners met with Wrentham officials on Friday, October 2, 2009, to learn more about traffic and safety concerns in the downtown and around the Wrentham Common. The site visit began in the Wrentham Town Hall with an initial discussion and overview. Participants then walked through the focus areas and discussed possible short- and long-term alternatives to calm traffic speeds, improve pedestrian access, and minimize traffic conflicts.

Participants: Town of Wrentham – Bill Bauser (MAPC SWAP representative), John McFeeley (Town Administrator), and Irving Priest (DPW Superintendent); MAPC – Jim Gallagher and Mark Racicot; CTPS – Seth Asante and Sean Pfalzer

MPO staff members have analyzed the following Wrentham intersections:

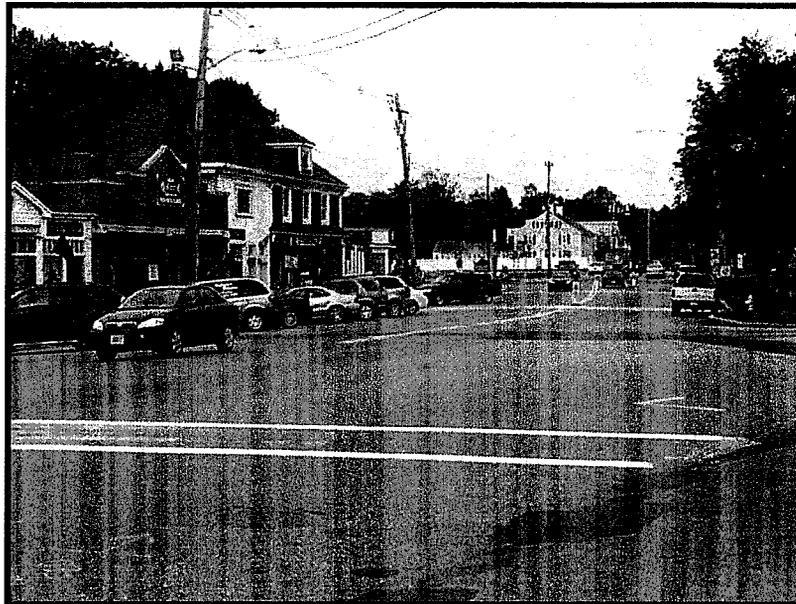
- Route 1A and Common Street
- Routes 1A and 140
- Route 140 and Common Street
- Taunton Street (Route 152), Common Street, and David Brown Way

The staff's findings and its recommendations to the Town of Wrentham for future consideration are presented below.

The Boston Region MPO, the federally designated entity responsible for transportation decision-making for the 101 cities and towns in the MPO region, is composed of:

MassDOT Office of Planning and Programming
City of Boston
City of Newton
City of Somerville
Town of Bedford
Town of Braintree
Town of Framingham
Town of Hopkinton
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Advisory Board
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
MassDOT Highway Division
Massachusetts Port Authority
Regional Transportation Advisory Council (nonvoting)
Federal Highway Administration (nonvoting)
Federal Transit Administration (nonvoting)

Intersection of Route 1A and Common Street



This is a wide intersection in the heart of the downtown. Its configuration brings about unnecessary conflicts among motorists and between motorists and pedestrians.

The wide travel lanes in both directions of Route 1A allow motorists to travel at high speeds through the downtown and require pedestrians to walk longer distances to cross the street. It is also difficult for motorists approaching from Common Street to turn left onto Route 1A. Because they have difficulty finding a gap in traffic, they often inch out into Route 1A, stopping one or both lanes of traffic, in order to complete that turning movement.

In addition, there are unrestricted movements of motor vehicles from business driveways, which leads to unsafe turns. Furthermore, most of the business driveways are too wide. The wide driveways create gaps in the sidewalk and allow motorists to travel at higher speeds, consequently reducing pedestrian safety.

Short-Term Alternatives

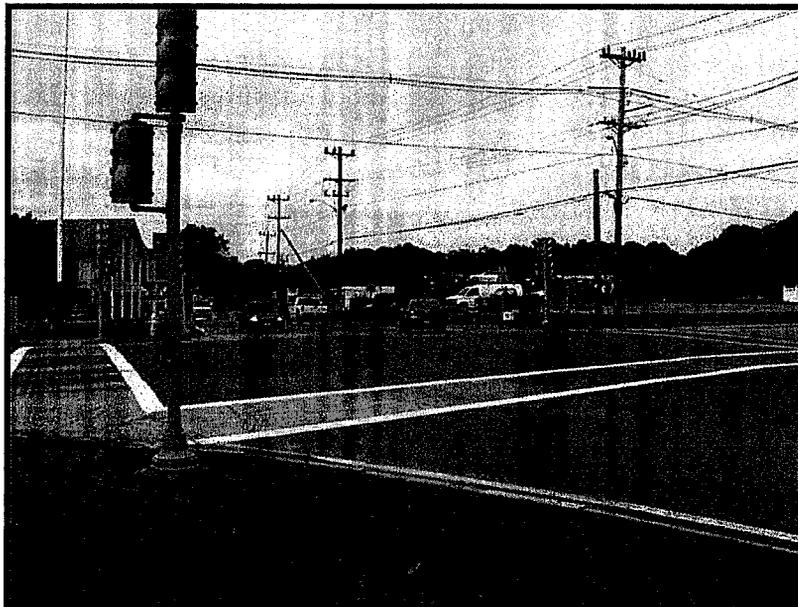
- Shorten the driveway width of the convenience store and relocate the crosswalk at a ninety-degree angle from the street corner of the pizza restaurant to the sidewalk in front of the convenience store to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility. Include a median sign or refuge in the crosswalk to allow pedestrians to cross one lane at a time rather than wait for a gap in both lanes of traffic.
- Stripe crosswalks with median signs or refuges from the corner of the Wrentham Common to the south side of Common Street and to the west side of Route 1A to improve access between downtown businesses and the common.

Long-Term Alternative

This alternative would involve the construction of a small roundabout in the center of the Route 1A and Common Street intersection. The roundabout would slow traffic by inhibiting motorists from speeding through the intersection. In addition, it would allow motorists approaching from Common Street to complete turning movements onto Route 1A southbound without having to cross two travel lanes. The roundabout would improve pedestrian safety by providing shorter crosswalks and median refuges and enhance accommodations by facilitating widened sidewalks, benches and trees where possible.

The construction of a roundabout would require the removal of parking spaces on the west side of Route 1A. Business driveways would have to be consolidated to stop motorists from exiting directly into the roundabout. Parking would be encouraged in the rear of businesses located southeast of the roundabout through two-way driveways before and after the roundabout.

Intersection of Routes 1A and 140



This is a busy intersection that experiences some delays, primarily due to the lack of designated left-turn lanes and left-turn signal phases. The widths of the approaches on Route 140 do not accommodate turning lanes. Motorists on the Route 140 southbound approach to Route 1A can bypass the intersection by using Bank Street as a slip lane.

The use of Bank Street as a slip lane promotes speeding into downtown Wrentham. This is a safety concern both for pedestrians and for motorists reversing out of angled parking spots. Motorists reversing out of angled parking spots are less likely to see pedestrians, bicyclists, or other motorists. In addition, approaching motorists and especially bicyclists, who are usually

closer to the exiting vehicles, cannot see if anyone is in the vehicle until passing it. Lastly, although there is a stop sign at the end of Bank Street, it is positioned beyond the pedestrian crosswalk and too low to be easily noticed. Many motorists do not obey the stop sign.

Short-Term Alternatives

- Reposition the stop sign prior to the pedestrian crosswalk and at a proper height to ensure that it is visible to motorists.
- Remove the crosswalk that traverses Route 1A south of Bank Street to discourage conflict between pedestrian and motorists at this location.
- Change the angle parking on the west side of Route 1A from head-in to back-in to enhance safety for motorists and other roadway users.

(Back-in parking allows greater visibility for the driver to see motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists when pulling out of the parking space, resulting in fewer crashes. This configuration also allows car doors and trunks to open facing the sidewalk, making it safer for drivers and passengers, especially if some passengers are children. While back-in parking has been in use throughout the country for decades, it has recently received renewed attention. Research done by the staff uncovered several instances of municipalities that are using this technique. In addition, planners who were consulted generally indicated that this technique is seen as having clear safety benefits for bicyclists and pedestrians. And while it is seen to be safer for all users, it is particularly desirable for bicyclists who usually are traveling in the lane directly adjacent to angled parkers. Bicyclists not only have the worst view of the drivers backing out, but also are most vulnerable to injury.)

Long-Term Alternative

This alternative would close off Bank Street to traffic and bring the island (with the flag monument) adjacent to the existing sidewalk. A new right-turn lane would be constructed on the Route 140 southbound approach. The reconfiguration of this turning movement would slow the speed of motorists by requiring them to make a proper right-hand turn at the intersection. It would also enhance the driver's ability to see other roadway users in the downtown. The closure of Bank Street would eliminate one street crossing for pedestrians and allow the restriping of a mid-block crosswalk with medians on Route 1A between the intersection of Routes 140 and 1A and the roundabout.

This alternative would remove most of the existing parking on Bank Street.

Intersection of Route 140 and Common Street

Entering Route 140 southbound from Common Street is difficult due to the angle of the intersection, which requires motorists to look back over their left shoulder to check traffic. In addition, northbound traffic on Route 140 turns onto Common Street at high speeds.

Short-Term Alternative

- Convert the yield to a stop. Place a stop sign at the end of Common Street at Route 140, eliminating the high-speed merging of vehicles.

Long-Term Alternatives

There are three alternatives that involve changes to both the intersection of Route 140 and Common Street and the intersection of Taunton Street (Route 152), Common Street, and David Brown Way. The following descriptions of these alternatives focus on the intersection of Route 140 and Common Street.

Alternative 1: Relocate David Brown Way, which currently bisects the Wrentham Common, further east so that it meets square with Route 140 and directs traffic away from the intersection of Routes 140 and 1A. Close off the connection of Common Street and Route 140, preventing motorists from merging at high speeds between Common Street and Route 140. Instead, motorists would be required to make proper turns at the intersection of Route 140 and the relocated David Brown Way, in order to enhance safety.

Alternative 2: Close off David Brown Way and redirect traffic to the intersection of Common Street and Route 140 or to the intersection of Common Street and Route 1A. Bend Common Street into Route 140 so they meet at a 90-degree angle, and require motorists to stop before turning onto Route 140. This alternative would help reunite the Wrentham Common, but redirecting traffic from David Brown Way has the potential to increase traffic in the downtown.

Alternative 3: Narrow David Brown Way and make it one-way, only accessible for motorists heading south to Common Street. Bend Common Street into Route 140 so they meet at a 90-degree-angle, and require motorists to stop before turning onto Route 140. This alternative would redirect northbound traffic on Taunton Street (Route 152) to the intersection of Common Street and Route 140 or to the intersection of Common Street and Route 1A, potentially increasing traffic in the downtown.

Note: Alternatives 2 and 3 must be designed to accommodate school buses approaching Route 140 from Common Street. In addition, all alternatives would need to be coordinated with the Taunton Street (Route 152) project to ensure the proper alignment of the Taunton Street (Route 152), Common Street, and David Brown Way intersection.¹

¹The Taunton Street (Route 152) project consists of roadway reconstruction, widening, and sidewalk installation from Common Street near Route 1A southerly for approximately 0.8 miles. Its design status is 25% submitted, and it is included in the Transportation Improvement Program's Universe of Projects List.

Intersection of Taunton Street (Route 152), Common Street, and David Brown Way



This intersection is wide, with the north and south approaches unaligned, which makes the crossing of Common Street between David Brown Way and Taunton Street (Route 152) difficult.

The crosswalks at this intersection are unnecessarily long and poorly placed in the intersection, increasing the exposure of pedestrians to motor-vehicle traffic.

Short-Term Alternatives

- Relocate the pedestrian crossings so that they are perpendicular to the streets, thereby reducing their lengths.
- Construct a curb extension on the northwest corner and an island by the southeast corner of the intersection to further reduce the length of pedestrian crossings.
- Construct a mid-block crossing on David Brown Way to provide pedestrian access from one part of the Wrentham Common to the other.

Long-Term Alternatives

There are three alternatives that involve changes to both the intersection of Taunton Street (Route 152), Common Street, and David Brown Way and the intersection of Route 140 and Common Street. The following descriptions of these alternatives focus on the former intersection.

Alternative 1: Relocate David Brown Way, which currently bisects the Wrentham Common, further east so that it meets square with Route 140 and directs traffic away from the intersection

of Routes 140 and 1A. Bend Taunton Street (Route 152) into Common Street so they meet at a 90-degree-angle. This alternative would help channel traffic and shorten pedestrian crossings.

Alternative 2: Close off David Brown Way and redirect traffic to the intersection of Common Street and Route 140 or to the intersection of Common Street and Route 1A. Bend Taunton Street (Route 152) into Common Street so they meet at a 90-degree angle. This alternative would eliminate one vehicular approach and shorten pedestrian crossings as well as reunite the Wrentham Common. Redirecting traffic from David Brown Way has the potential to increase traffic in the downtown.

Alternative 3: Narrow David Brown Way and make it one-way, only accessible for motorists heading south to Common Street. This alternative would channel traffic and shorten pedestrian crossings.

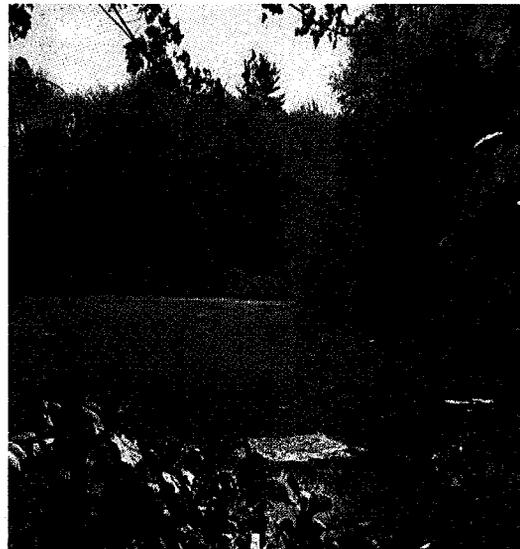
Note: All alternatives would need to be coordinated with the Taunton Street (Route 152) project to ensure the proper alignment of the Taunton Street (Route 152), Common Street, and David Brown Way intersection.²

²The Taunton Street (Route 152) project consists of roadway reconstruction, widening, and sidewalk installation from Common Street near Route 1A southerly for approximately 0.8 miles. Its design status is 25% submitted, and it is included in the Transportation Improvement Program's Universe of Projects List.

Town of Sharon

Massachusetts

Identification of Priority Development Areas and Priority
Preservation Areas to Inform the South Coast Rail Project



Report by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council
For the South Coast Rail Project
Report Date: April 3, 2009

Town of Sharon, Massachusetts
Priority Development and Priority Preservation Areas
Report by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council
For the South Coast Rail Project
Report Date: April 3, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the Priority Development Areas and Priority Preservation Areas in the Town of Sharon, Massachusetts, as identified by the Town through current and past planning processes.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) compiled this report as part of the South Coast Rail project, a sustainable economic development and smart growth initiative of the administration of Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. MAPC held a public meeting in the Town of Sharon on February 19, 2009, during which those who attended the meeting identified high-priority development and preservation sites.

WHAT ARE PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS?

Priority Development Areas (PDAs) are areas within a city or town that are capable of handling more development due to several factors. In general, these factors include good access, available infrastructure (primarily water and sewer), an absence of environmental constraints, and local support. PDAs can range in size from a single lot to many acres. Areas designated under state programs such as Chapter 43D (expedited permitting), Chapter 40R (smart growth zones) or Economic Opportunity Areas can be examples of PDAs. Included in these designations will be the local recommendations for how these sites should be developed.

WHAT ARE PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREAS?

Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) are areas within a city or town that deserve special protection due to the presence of significant environmental factors and natural features, such as endangered species habitats, areas critical to water supply, scenic vistas, or areas of historic significance. Like PDAs, the protection areas can vary greatly in size. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), aquifer recharge areas or designated priority habitats can be examples of PPAs.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PDA/PPA DESIGNATIONS?

This work highlights the most critical smart growth needs of the participating municipalities, and can be useful to communities in making land use and zoning decisions. The sites noted in this report will be integrated into the Smart Growth Corridor Plan for the South Coast Rail project. This PDA and PPA information will be helpful when considering the potential mitigation for the passenger rail project and may be utilized in the event that a regional system of transfer of development rights is used.

SOUTH COAST RAIL

South Coast Rail is an economic development initiative of the Patrick-Murray Administration to restore passenger rail between downtown Boston and the cities of Fall River and New Bedford. The South Coast is one of the fastest growing areas in the Commonwealth, and the cities of Fall River and New Bedford are some of the largest municipalities within a 50-mile radius of Boston without rail transit service, service that will provide a much needed link between job opportunities and affordable housing for the residents of Massachusetts. Implementation of this passenger rail service will provide a viable alternative to the existing highway system and promote sustainable economic growth.

The Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) are in the midst of a comprehensive and transparent planning process to evaluate five transit route alternatives for the South Coast Rail, as well as the residential development, economic development and environmental protection priorities for the municipalities located along each of the possible routes.

Regardless of which route is ultimately chosen, this process will be a vehicle to promote smart growth. The South Coast Rail project includes a Smart Growth Corridor Plan to develop a blueprint for economic and residential development, job creation and environmental preservation.

MAPC'S SCOPE OF WORK

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has been working with South Coast Rail communities within its region using District Local Technical Assistance Funding to update each community's priorities for development areas for housing and economic development, and also their priorities for land preservation areas. The Town of Sharon is one of these communities.

These new priorities can assist in guiding the municipality's implementation efforts; they may also be used by the state when planning for the potential growth, land conservation and mitigation efforts related to the extension of the South Coast Rail.

MAPC worked with the relevant boards and staff in the Town of Sharon to host a public forum at Sharon Town Hall on February 19, 2009. The purpose of this meeting was to gather input from the public regarding priority development and priority preservation areas.

Prior to the event, MAPC prepared a series of maps providing details relating to water resources, biodiversity and habitat, existing land uses, surficial geology and prime agricultural soils, zoning, tax parcels, and the most recent aerial photography for the community. MAPC also worked with the Town to ensure that a brief summary of the most relevant and recent planning efforts in the community were presented at the forum. The essential component of the forum was the establishment of priorities for development and preservation areas.

After the forum, MAPC prepared a map of the priority development and priority preservation areas, along with this report summarizing the features characterizing each of the areas. Copies of the maps and the final report will be provided to the community, as well as to the Executive Office of Transportation in their planning efforts related to the South Coast Rail project.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town of Sharon, Massachusetts is located in between Boston, Massachusetts and Providence, Rhode Island, about 25 miles from each. It is accessible by Interstate 95, US Route 1, and Route 27, as well as by MBTA Commuter Rail and Amtrak. Sharon is a traditional New England town, established as the 2nd Precinct of Stoughton in 1740, incorporated as the Town of Stoughtonham in 1765, and named Sharon in 1783.

Today, the town is a maturing suburb with a population of about 18,000 residents. The Town's population is growing and from 1990-2000 its population increased 12%. Eighty percent of households are family households, with nearly half of the households including at least one resident under age 18. More than half the population is adults 25-64 years-old, about a third of the population is children under 19, and about a tenth of the population is over 65. Sharon is home to people of many faiths and religions. The Town's racial and ethnic composition, based on 2000 US Census data tabulated in the Town's Community Development Plan, is ninety percent White, 3.4 percent is Black or African-American, 4.9 percent is of Asian origin, and about 1.1 percent are Hispanics and Latinos of any race. In 1999, the median household income in Sharon was \$89,256, ranking 24th highest out of the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts. According to the Town's website, over 96% of graduating seniors from Sharon High School go on to institutions of higher learning.

Sharon boasts over 5000 acres of open space, which amounts to over one-third of the Town. Some of these open space resources include Lake Massapoag, the Massachusetts Audubon Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary, more than half of Borderland State Park, the Warner trail, Massapoag Brook trail, and King Philip's Rock trail.

TOWN OF SHARON PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION AREAS

On February 19, 2009, MAPC held a meeting at Sharon Town Hall to get input from Town staff and residents on its development and preservation priorities. One Priority Development Area (PDA) and eight Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) were identified during this meeting.

PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

The Town of Sharon identified the Town Center as its single highest priority for development. Sharon Town Center also features prominently in the Sharon Community Development Plan. Redevelopment of this district, particularly when wastewater treatment is available, would reflect smart growth development standards.

PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREA 1: SHARON TOWN CENTER

In the Town of Sharon Community Development Plan written in 2004, attracting more investment to Sharon's Town Center was considered a key strategy for achieving the Town's vision of balancing economic development and environmental preservation goals. Sharon Town Center is located about a quarter-mile away from Sharon Station, which serves the Providence/Stoughton Line of the MBTA Commuter Rail.

The Community Development Plan recommended undertaking a wastewater management plan and implementing a mixed use development overlay district as crucial steps necessary for redeveloping the Town Center more intensively. Other recommendations from the Community Development Plan for Sharon Town Center include increasing affordable housing, allowing apartments in this district by right, continued use of design guidelines similar to those already in existence for Post Office Square, and improving this district's connections to open space via improved walking and bicycling routes.

At the February 19, 2009 meeting in Sharon held by MAPC, attendees identified Sharon Town Center, and its central business area, Post Office Square, as the Town's current priority for housing and economic development. The Town would like to rebuild its municipal buildings located in the Town Center, including the Town Hall and the Library. Post Office Square is a Chapter 43D Priority Development Site immediate to Sharon Station that includes rental apartments, and, critically, provides approximately 15% of the Town's commercial tax revenue. The Sharon Housing Partnership is also seeking scattered sites in and near the Town Center for creating affordable single family homes for individual ownership. Besides redeveloping municipal buildings, the Town would like to better leverage the Town Center's immediacy to Sharon Station in developing additional housing, increasing the vitality and activity in Post Office Square, and ultimately attracting more and varied businesses to this area.

Adequate wastewater management is essential for sustainable redevelopment of Sharon Town Center. A new wastewater treatment plant could greatly enable achieving the Town's vision for Post Office Square. Currently, according to the Town's Economic Development Committee chair Eli Hauser, Post Office Square supports a wastewater flow of 27,000 gallons per day, mostly into conventional on-site traditional septic systems, as well as with a handful of smaller "shared" systems. The Title 5 rated flow for the total area is 52,000 gallons per day. These current on-site systems present an aggressive constraint to the development of Post Office Square as neither new uses nor expansion of existing buildings to modern dimensions is pragmatically supported. Ultimately, the inherent limits on increasing flows on each individual site dissuade significant investment by the owners into their properties.

A new wastewater treatment plant in the Town Center with a capacity for 75,000 gallons per day would cost about \$5.0 million. A plant with this capacity would only need a small leaching field and would be better equipped than the current distributed individual septic systems to handle new development in the Town Center.

A wastewater treatment plant with a capacity of 150,000 gallons per day would cost about \$6.5 million – about 20% more expensive but with twice the capacity – and could service not only the Town Center, but an estimated 200-250 more homes near the Town Center as well.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREAS

The Town of Sharon identified eight priority preservation areas during the February 19, 2009 held by MAPC. Seven of these eight – Camp Gannett, Massapoag Sportsmen's Club, Crescent Ridge, Pine Woods, the Sreda property, Morse Farm, and the proposed conservation land surrounding the Sharon Hills development project – are featured in the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan* map in Sharon's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan. One priority preservation area, the Cranberry Bogs and Upland at Sharon Commons, is not specified in this map but is mentioned in the text of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Sharon Commons and Sharon Hills are both mixed-use development projects in which the Town required open space preservation. The cranberry bogs at Sharon Commons and the Crescent Ridge dairy have agricultural uses. Most of the priority preservation areas are adjacent to existing open space.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 1: CAMP GANNETT

Camp Gannett is an approximately twenty-acre site located south of Lake Massapoag and west of Lakeview Street, in a high visibility area southwest of the Sharon Community Center. Turk, Tracey, and Larry Architects recommended this site for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in a July 2008 application to the Massachusetts Historical Commission. For decades, Camp Gannett has served as a summer getaway for city children, first as a "Fresh-Air Camp" for Boston-area inner city children in the mid-twentieth century, and now as a summer day camp run by the Elizabeth Peabody House for a diverse group of over one-hundred children from Somerville and surrounding

communities. The site is historically significant for the wood frame buildings built in the 1940s and for its continued use as a camp.

The Town would like to preserve Camp Gannett as a camp through a Conservation Restriction. The site is owned by the Elizabeth Peabody House Association. In the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan in Sharon, MA* map in the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan, this site is noted as targeted parcel 11.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 2: MASSAPOAG SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

Massapoag Sportsmen's Club is privately owned recreation land northeast of the Town Center and adjacent to Crescent Ridge. In the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan in Sharon, MA* map in the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan, this site is noted as targeted parcels 33 and 34, totaling nearly one-hundred acres. The Town is negotiating a land swap with Massapoag Sportsmen's Club for a Conservation Restriction to preserve this land for open space.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 3: CRESCENT RIDGE

Crescent Ridge is a dairy farm known for its fresh rBST-free milk and award-winning ice cream. It has been in operation as a dairy owned and operated by the Parrish Family for three generations, since 1932. The Town hopes for a Conservation Restriction to preserve this land as a dairy farm. In the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan in Sharon, MA* map in the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan, this site is noted as targeted parcel 35 next to the Massapoag Sportsmen's Club. Crescent Ridge covers about 43 acres near the Stoughton town line.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 4: CRANBERRY BOGS AND UPLAND AT SHARON COMMONS

Sharon Commons is a proposed mixed-use development project located just east of the Interstate-95 interchange, with South Walpole Street on its north, South Main Street to its south, and Old Post Road to its east. As part of the Town's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the developer, a significant portion of the site will be conveyed to the Sharon Conservation Commission for continued preservation as open space.

According to the Draft Environmental Impact Report prepared by the developer, 53% of the total project land, or about 73 acres, will be protected open space. This open space includes active cranberry bogs, mixed deciduous-coniferous forest, isolated vegetated wetlands, Eastern Box Turtle habitats, space for passive recreation, and a potential well site.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 5: PINE WOODS

The Town of Sharon and the Massachusetts Audubon Society have proposed that this site, referred to as "Pine Woods" in the February 19, 2009 meeting held by MAPC in the Town of Sharon. Pine

Woods was the name of the Chapter 40B development project proposed for this parcel, but the 40B application was withdrawn in April 2007. The site is about 24 acres and is noted on the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan in Sharon, MA* map in the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan as parcel 36, northwest of the Town Center. It is part of the largest contiguous area of existing open space in Sharon, adjacent to Massachusetts Audubon Society land and in close proximity to Trustees of Reservations land.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 6: SREDA PROPERTY

This ten-acre parcel noted on the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan in Sharon, MA* map in the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan as parcel 2 was conveyed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management to Stanley J. Sreda in 1975. This privately-owned land is surrounded by Town-owned land. It is located at 71R Mansfield Street, close to Borderland State Park and adjacent to King Philip's Rock which is part of King Philip's Rock Trail. The Town would like to ensure that this property be preserved as open space via a Conservation Restriction.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 7: MORSE FARM

The Town would like to annex the Morse Farm, a privately owned 41-acre site adjacent to the Borderland State Park. It identified as Chapter 61 Land on the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan in Sharon, MA* map in the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan, which shows this site as parcel 12.

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA 8: PROPOSED CONSERVATION LAND SURROUNDING SHARON HILLS DEVELOPMENT

Sharon Hills is a proposed large-scale development proposal for a senior living community on a 337-acre parcel near the Stoughton town line. As part of the Town's agreement with Brickstone Properties, the developer, a significant portion of the site will be conveyed to the Sharon Conservation Commission for continued preservation as open space, and much of the remaining site will be subject to a Conservation Restriction.

According to the developer's website, 250 of the 337 acres, including Rattlesnake Hill, will be deeded to the Town for permanent open space. Of the remaining 87 acres, 36 acres will be undisturbed restricted open space, 27 acres will be developed facilities, and 24 acres will be developed green space. This means three-quarters of the site will be conveyed to the Town, and about 85% of the total site will be preserved as undisturbed open space. Sharon Hills is parcel 7 on the *Targeted Parcels for 5 Year Action Plan in Sharon, MA* map in the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Town of Sharon has engaged in several planning processes and has produced many planning documents, including:

- *Town of Sharon Community Development Plan* under Executive Order 418, June 2004
- *Town of Sharon Open Space and Recreation Plan*, 2008
- *Town of Sharon Community Preservation Plan*, Fiscal Years 2009-2013
- *Town of Sharon Housing Production Plan*, November 2005

The primary documents from the above list consulted for this report were the *Community Development Plan* and the *Open Space and Recreation Plan*. Additionally, the following sources were consulted:

- February 19, 2009 notes from meeting held at Sharon Town Hall by MAPC, along with follow-up communication with Town Administrator Benjamin E. Puritz and other Town officials and staff
- South Coast Rail website: <http://www.southcoastrail.com/>
- Town of Sharon website: <http://www.townofsharon.net/>
- *Town of Carver Priority Development & Protection Areas* report for South Coast Rail by SRPEDD (Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District)

Additional Sources for Community Profile:

- About Sharon page on Town website
- Massachusetts Community Types classification system developed by MAPC

Additional Sources about Sharon Town Center and Post Office Square:

- March 31, 2009 email communication with Eli Hauser, Chair of the Town's Economic Development and Commercialization Committee
- March 4, 2009 Post Office Square Phase I Study Results meeting notes, available on Town website
- "Board Takes a Look at Post Office Square Plans" article by Brian Cook in the *Sharon Advocate* dated March 5, 2009 found on wickedlocal.com
- Post Office Square Design Guidelines document by the Town of Sharon Planning Board, approved May 1996

Additional Sources about Camp Gannett:

- Elizabeth Peabody House website
- Documents found on Town of Sharon website by Turk, Tracey, and Larry Architects for the Sharon Historic and Cultural Resources Survey Project including a July 2008 Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory Form A Continuation Sheet and TTL Architects' Study Recommendations for Camp Gannett

- Town of Sharon Conservation Meeting Minutes, January 17, 2008

Additional Sources about Massapoag Sportsmen's Club: Massapoag Sportsmen's Club website

Additional Sources about Crescent Ridge: Crescent Ridge Dairy website

Additional Sources about Sharon Commons:

- *Draft Environmental Impact Report* for Sharon Commons, January 15, 2008, reference number is MEPA 14081

Additional Sources about Pine Woods:

- Inspector General's letter on mass.gov regarding recommendation for MassHousing to withdraw the project eligibility letter for Pine Woods

Additional Sources about the Sreda Property:

- 1975 Act authorizing Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management to convey land in Town of Sharon found on state archives website
- Sharon Friends of Conservation webpage on King Philip's Rock Trail

Additional Sources about Morse Farm: Map of Borderland State Park

Additional Sources about Sharon Hills:

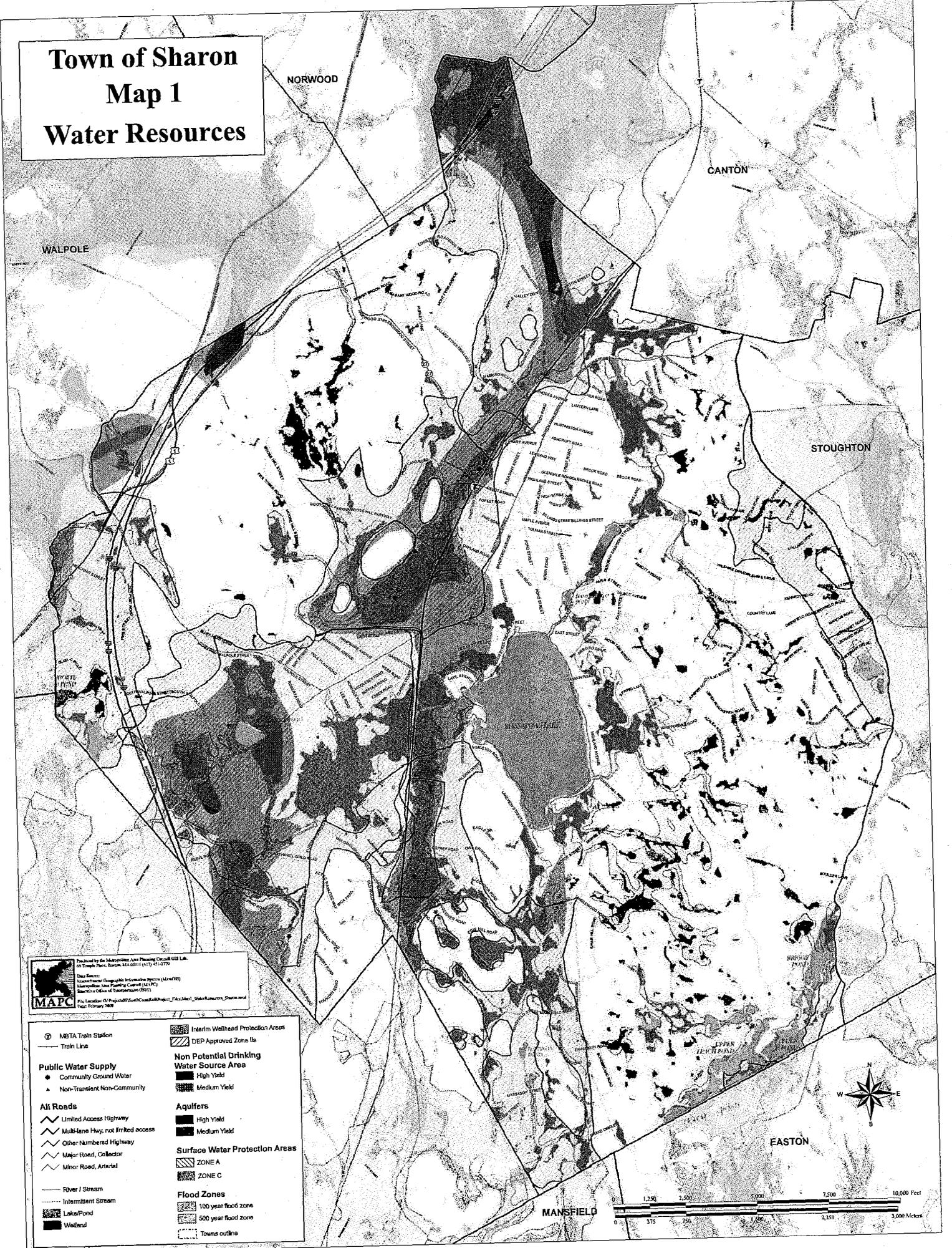
- Brickstone Properties website for Sharon Hills, includes Development Plan and Land Use Plan

MAPS

The following pages include maps used for this analysis. In addition to helping identify PDAs and PPAs, these maps helped the Town of Sharon and MAPC share and compare data. The final maps reflect locally identified priorities and MAPC analysis. The maps include:

1. Water Resources Map
2. Biodiversity and Habitat Map
3. Land Resources Map
4. Surficial Geology Map
5. Prime Farmland Soils Map
6. Town Orthophoto
7. Zoning Map
8. Parcel Map
9. Town of Sharon Priority Development and Preservation Areas
10. MAPC Regional Priority Development and Preservation Areas, South Coast Rail Corridor

Town of Sharon Map 1 Water Resources



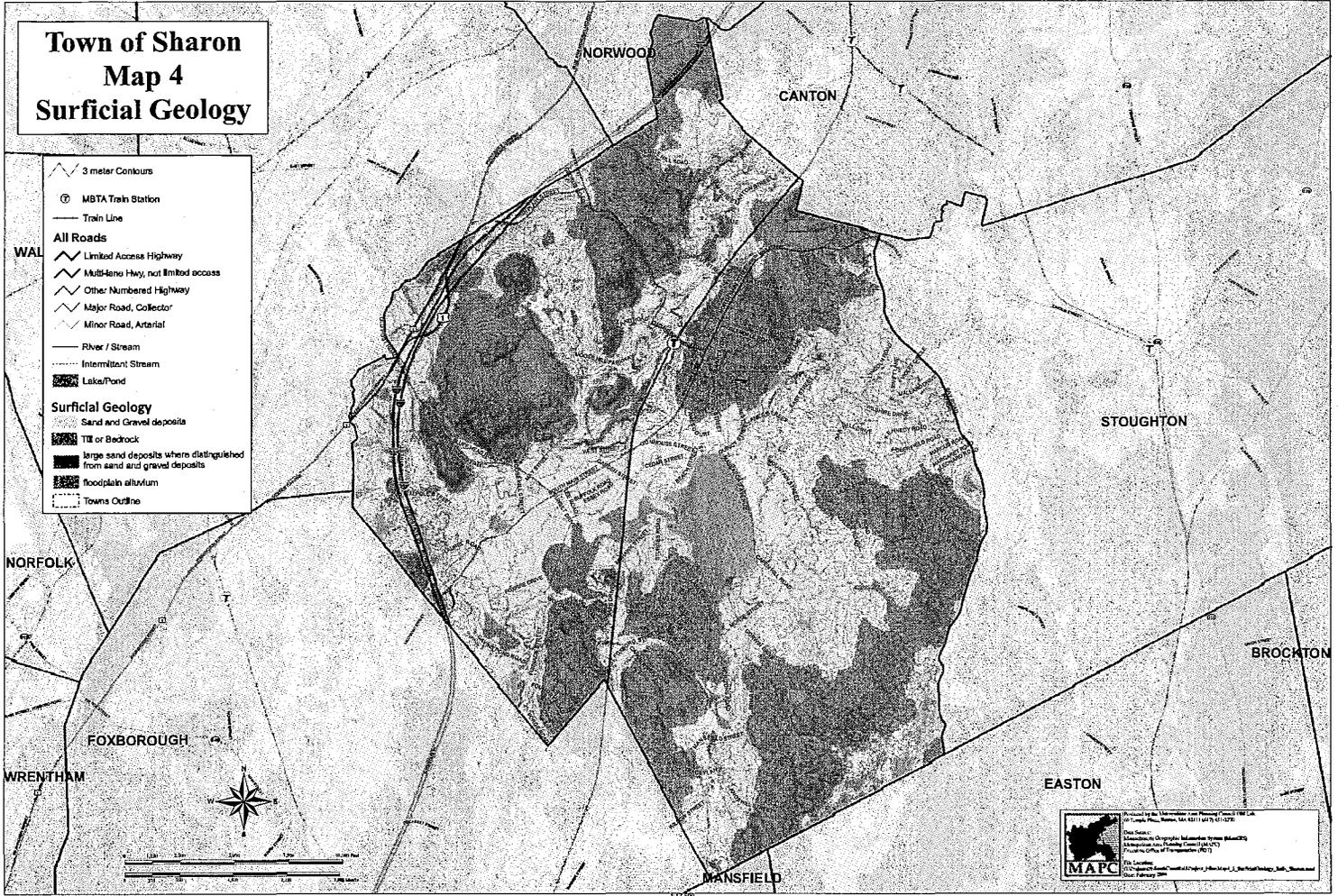
Prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 10 Towns: Sharon, MA 01914 (413) 451-2775
 Map Source:
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MAGIS)
 Massachusetts Planning Council (MAPC)
 State's Office of Transportation (DOT)
 File Location: C:\Program\GIS\Map\Projects\Map1\Map1_SharonResources_Sharon.mxd
 Date: 10/20/09

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ MBTA Train Station — Train Line <p>Public Water Supply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Ground Water ▲ Non-Transient Non-Community <p>All Roads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Limited Access Highway ~ Multi-lane Hwy, not limited access ~ Other Numbered Highway ~ Major Road, Collector ~ Minor Road, Arterial <p>— River / Stream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --- Intermittent Stream ▣ Lake/Pond ■ Wetland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▨ Interim Wellhead Protection Areas ▧ DEP Approved Zone Ii <p>Non Potential Drinking Water Source Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High Yield ■ Medium Yield <p>Aquifers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High Yield ■ Medium Yield <p>Surface Water Protection Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▨ ZONE A ▨ ZONE C <p>Flood Zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▨ 100 year flood zone ▨ 500 year flood zone --- Towns outline |
|--|---|



Town of Sharon Map 4 Surficial Geology

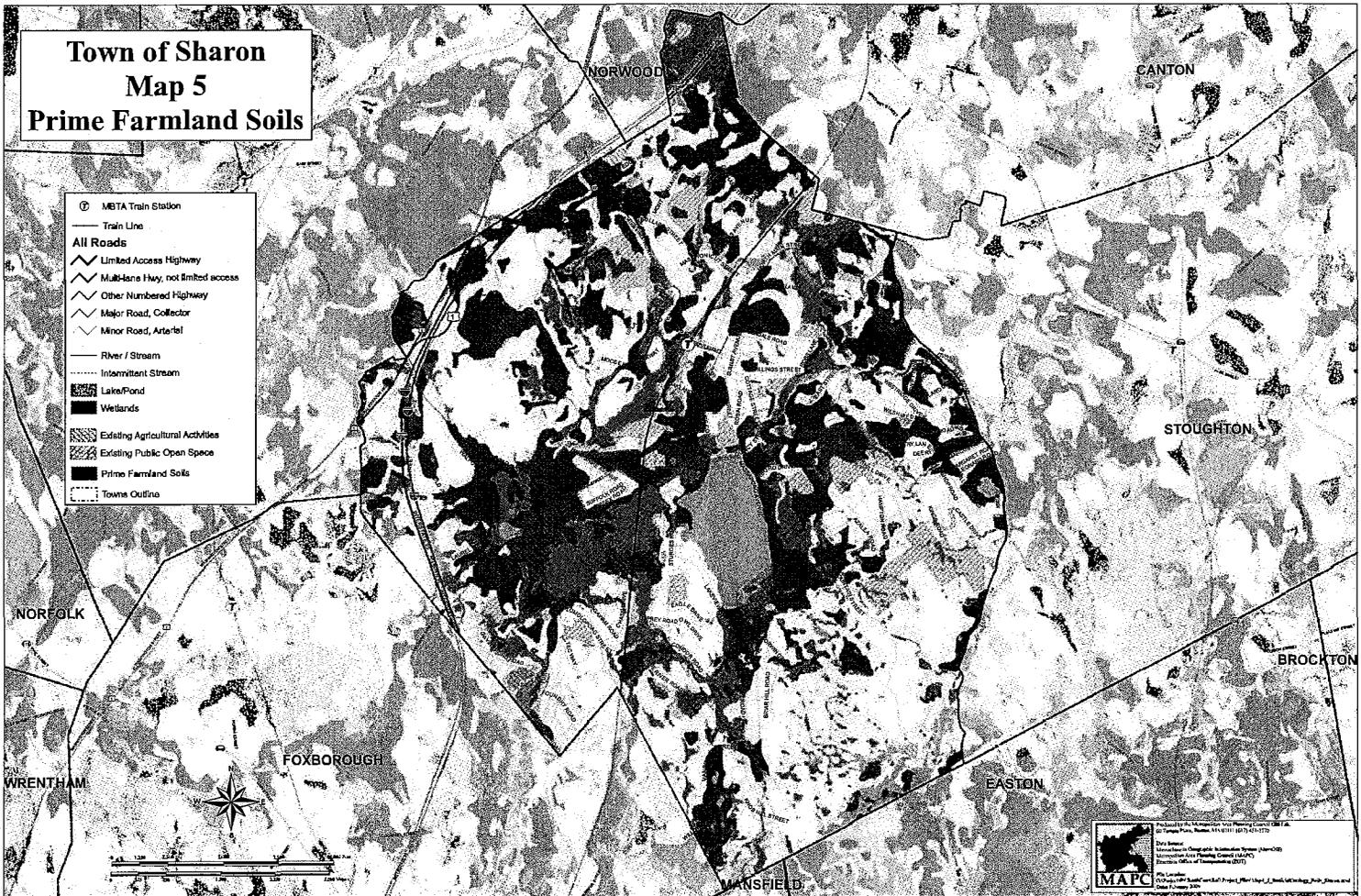
- 3 meter Contours
- MBTA Train Station
- Train Line
- All Roads**
 - Limited Access Highway
 - Multi-Lane Hwy, not limited access
 - Other Numbered Highway
 - Major Road, Collector
 - Minor Road, Arterial
- River / Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Lake/Pond
- Surficial Geology**
 - Sand and Gravel deposits
 - Till or Bedrock
 - Large sand deposits where distinguished from sand and gravel deposits
 - Floodplain alluvium
 - Towns Outline



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 Planning Office of Transportation (POT)
 100 State St., Boston, MA 02109 (617) 552-1270
 Date: 10/2008

Town of Sharon Map 5 Prime Farmland Soils

- MBTA Train Station
- Train Line
- All Roads**
 - Limited Access Highway
 - Multi-Lane Hwy, not limited access
 - Other Numbered Highway
 - Major Road, Collector
 - Minor Road, Arterial
- River / Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Lake/Pond
- Wetlands
- Existing Agricultural Activities
- Existing Public Open Space
- Prime Farmland Soils
- Towns Outline



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 Planning Office of Transportation (POT)
 100 State St., Boston, MA 02109 (617) 552-1270
 Date: 10/2008

Town of Sharon Map 6 Town Orthophoto

NORWOOD

CANTON

WALPOLE

SToughton

Sharon Parcels
 Towns Outline
 MBTA Train Station
 Train Line
 Orthophotos acquired in April 2008

FOXBOROUGH

EASTON

MANSFIELD



Produced by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 451-5770

Data Source:
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Executive Office of Transportation (EOT)

File Location: G:\Projects\07\State\OverRail\Project_Files\Map\TownOrtho_Sharon.mxd
 Date: February 2009



Town of Sharon Map 7 Zoning Map

NORWOOD

CANTON

WALPOLE

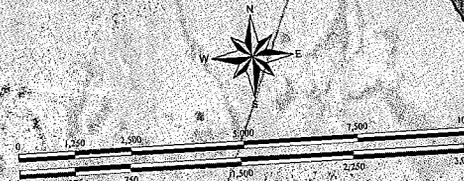
STOUGHTON

FOXBOROUGH

EASTON

MANSFIELD

- Municipal Buildings
 - ⊕ MBTA Train Station
 - Train Line
- All Roads**
- ~ Limited Access Highway
 - ~ Multi-lane Hwy, not limited access
 - ~ Other Numbered Highway
 - ~ Major Road, Collector
 - ~ Minor Road, Arterial
 - River / Stream
 - Intermittent Stream
 - ▨ Lake/Pond
 - Wetland
- Zoning**
- General Business
 - Limited, Central, Hwy Business; Office Park
 - General Industrial
 - Institutional; Health Care
 - Residential: 60K+ sq ft / Agricultural
 - Residential: 40-80K sq ft
 - Residential: 15-40K sq ft
 - Residential: 5-15K sq ft & Multi-Family
 - Towns Outline



Prepared by the Middlesex Area Planning Council GIS Lab
 20 Empire Plaza, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 451-6770

Data Source:
 Universal Geographic Information System (UNGIS)
 Middlesex Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Planning Office of Transportation (POT)

File Location: C:\Program Files\MapInfo\MapInfo\GIS\Zoning_Sharon.mxd
 Date: February 2009

Town of Sharon Map 8 Parcel Map

NORWOOD

CANTON

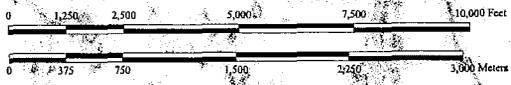
WALPOLE

STOUGHTON

FOXBOROUGH

EASTON

MANSFIELD



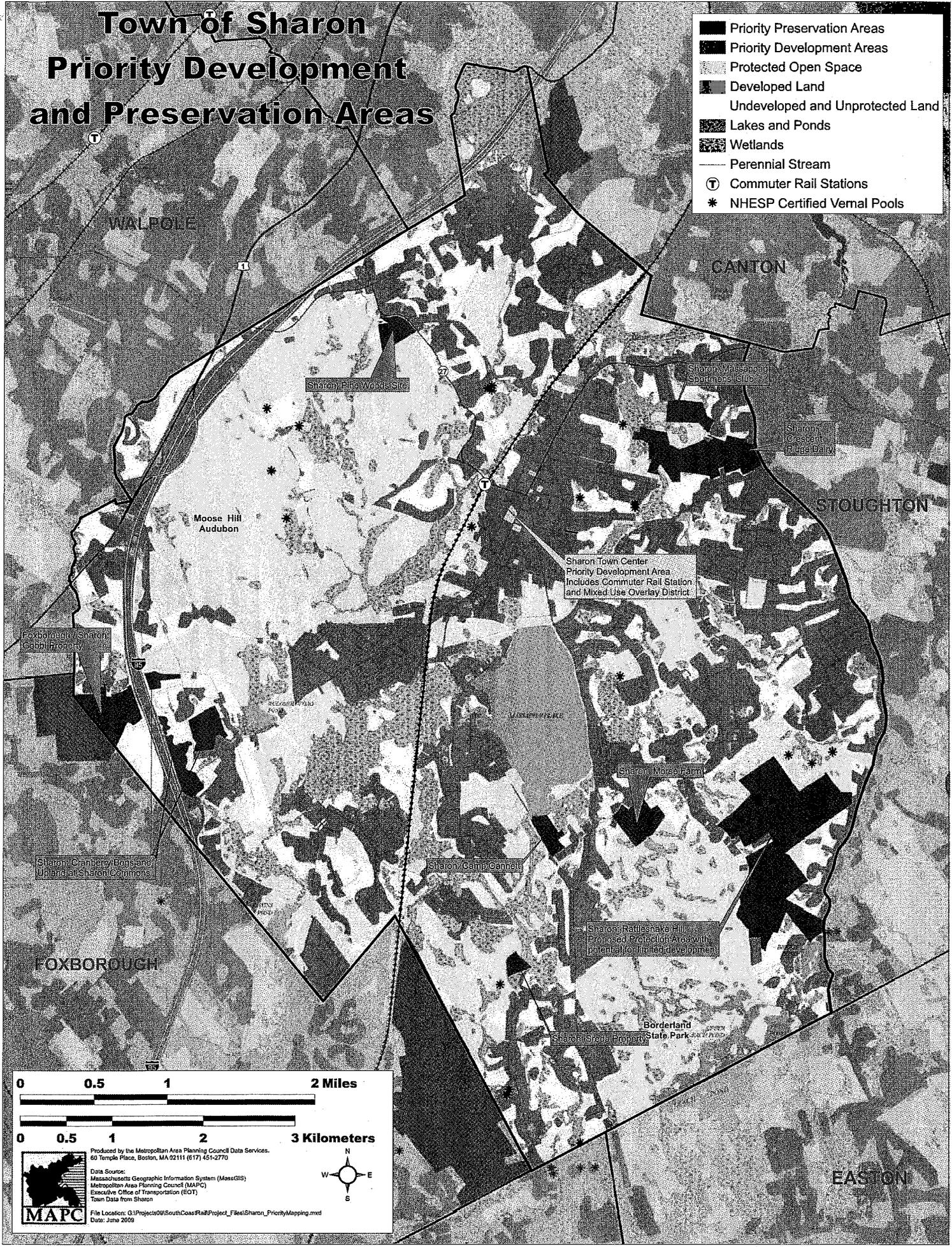
- Municipal Buildings
- Ⓜ MBTA Train Station
- Train Line
- River / Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- ▨ Lot/Lake/Pond
- Wetland
- Canton Parcels
- ⋯ Towns Outline

Prepared by the Massachusetts State Planning Council (MSPC) in
 accordance with the Massachusetts State Planning Council Act
 of 1969, Chapter 90A, Section 10. Date: 1/11/11 (11/11/11)
 Date: 1/11/11
 Massachusetts State Planning Council (MSPC)
 Executive Office of Transportation (EOT)
 File Location: D:\Projects\GIS\Map\Parcel_Map\Map8_Sharon.mxd
 Date: February 2011



Town of Sharon Priority Development and Preservation Areas

-  Priority Preservation Areas
-  Priority Development Areas
-  Protected Open Space
-  Developed Land
-  Undeveloped and Unprotected Land
-  Lakes and Ponds
-  Wetlands
-  Perennial Stream
-  Commuter Rail Stations
-  NHESP Certified Vernal Pools



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

0 0.5 1 2 3 Kilometers

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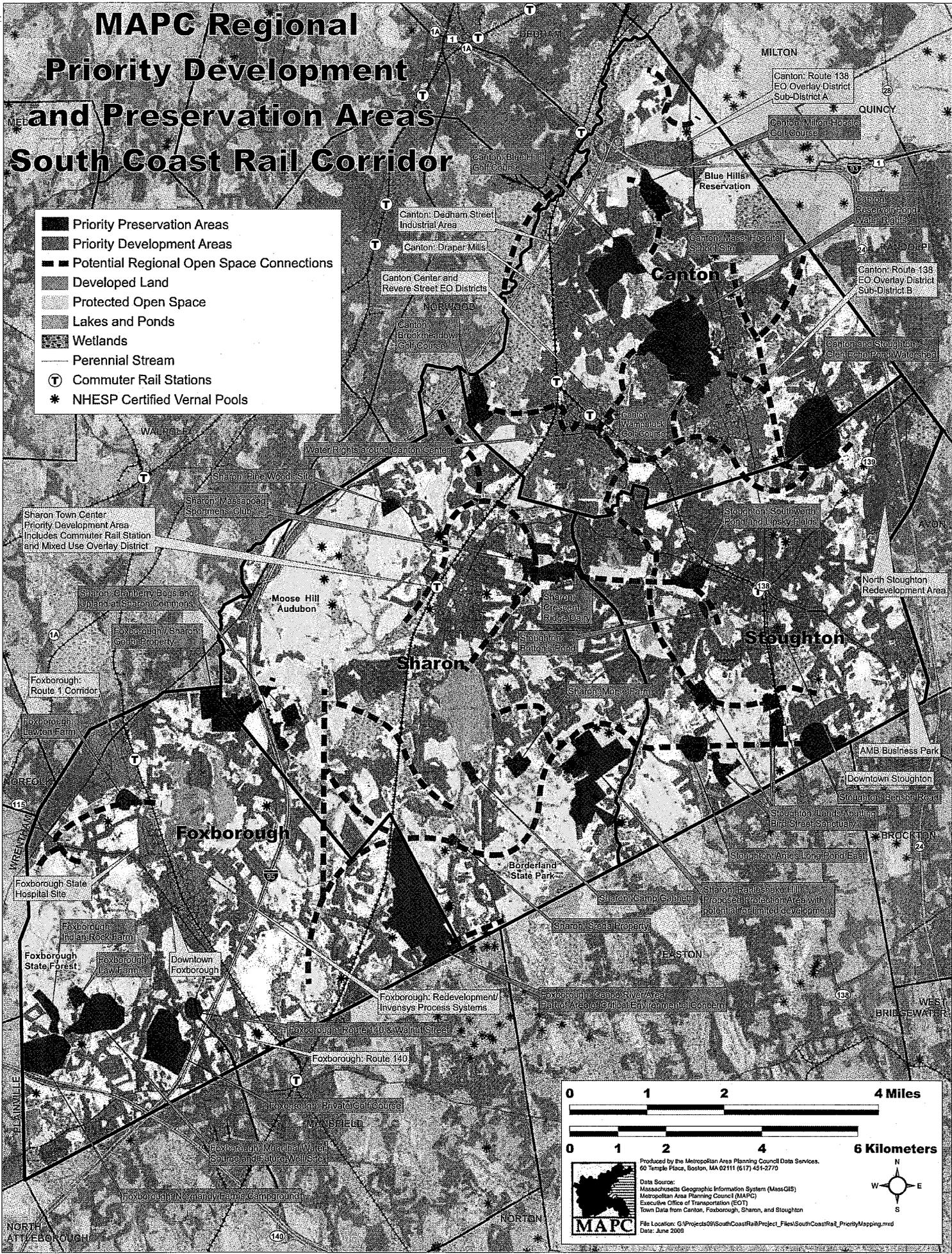
Data Sources:
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Executive Office of Transportation (EOT)
Town Data from Sharon

File Location: G:\Projects\09\SouthCoastRail\Project_Files\Sharon_PriorityMapping.mxd
Date: June 2009




MAPC Regional Priority Development and Preservation Areas South Coast Rail Corridor

- Priority Preservation Areas
- Priority Development Areas
- Potential Regional Open Space Connections
- Developed Land
- Protected Open Space
- Lakes and Ponds
- Wetlands
- Perennial Stream
- Commuter Rail Stations
- NHESP Certified Vernal Pools



0 1 2 4 Miles

0 1 2 4 6 Kilometers

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60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 451-2770

Data Source:
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Executive Office of Transportation (EOT)
Town Data from Canton, Foxborough, Sharon, and Stoughton

File Location: G:\Projects\09\SouthCoastRail\Project_Files\SouthCoastRail_PriorityMapping.mxd
Date: June 2009