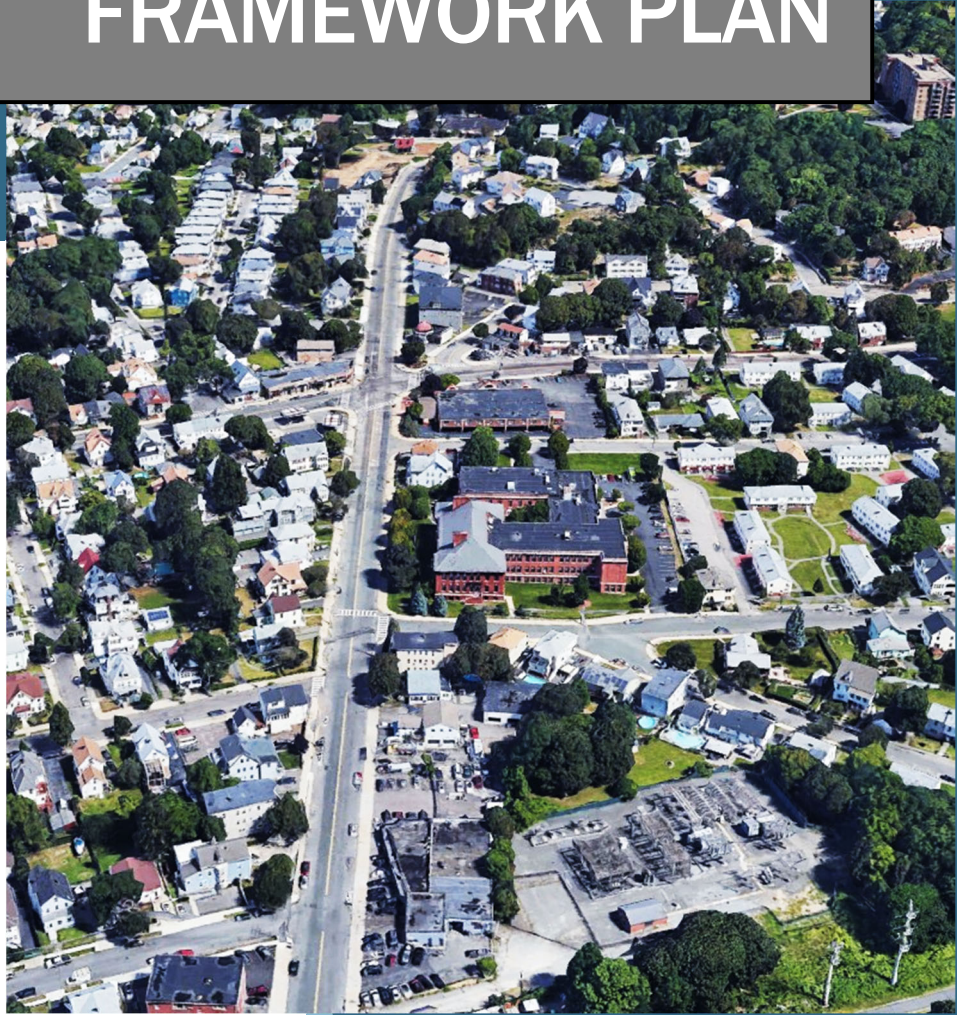
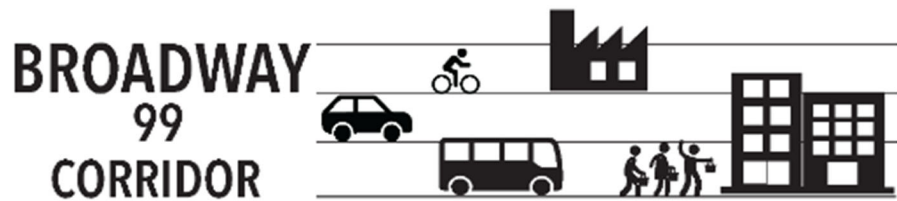


# BROADWAY (ROUTE 99) CORRIDOR FRAMEWORK PLAN



Prepared for the City of Malden and  
the Malden Redevelopment Authority

October 2020



## **SPONSORSHIP**

The City of Malden and the Malden Redevelopment Authority (MRA), with funding provided by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, were assisted by a consultant team to develop a land use and economic development plan for the Broadway (Route 99) Corridor. The grant funding for this project was used to evaluate certain conditions along the corridor and provide the City of Malden and MRA with a clear and action-oriented plan to protect important uses, prepare for and regulate new development along the Corridor, and utilize Encore Boston Harbor-driven economic opportunities to grow Malden's business community and prevent Corridor erosion.

The consultant team was comprised of BSC Group and RKG Associates.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

### **CITY OF MALDEN**

Mayor Gary Christenson

Kevin Duffy, Strategy & Business Development Officer

Michelle A. Romero, City Planner

### **MALDEN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Deborah Burke, Executive Director

Evan Spetrini, Senior Planner and Policy Manager

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

The project team would like to thank the property owners, business owners, and residents who took the time out of their busy schedules to discuss their thoughts on this key transportation corridor through one-on-one conversations, community meetings, or via an online survey.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

The Route 99/Broadway Corridor (“the Corridor”) is an approximately 74-acre area in Malden that extends from the border of the City of Everett in the south to the border of the City of Melrose in the north. The project boundaries encompass both sides of the Rt. 99/Broadway Corridor for a length of approximately 1.7 miles. More suburban than urban in nature, the Corridor in Malden contains a mix of uses including retail, residential, strip malls, industrial, commercial, and entertainment. This *Corridor Framework Plan* consists of detailed analysis and specific recommendations that are intended to complement prior planning efforts completed by the City of Malden.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF WORK

This *Corridor Framework Plan* seeks to:

- Define the community’s vision and desires for the character of this important Corridor;
- Understand physical conditions, existing uses, parcel characteristics and economic conditions along the Corridor;
- Conduct and integrate market analysis to formulate a practical economic vision;
- Identify an appropriate balance of uses (hotel/retail/office/industrial/residential) along the Corridor;
- Balance community desires with market realities to create an actionable plan;
- Define diversified strategies for job retention and creation;
- Identify the infrastructure needs of the Corridor to better support existing and proposed land uses;
- Consider how proposed development scenarios mitigate or intensify existing traffic patterns and identify circulation improvements to balance the needs of truck traffic serving the businesses with other modes of transportation (vehicular, bicycle, mass transit, and pedestrian);
- Identify new means to enhance public access and physical connections to the Northern Strand Community Trail;
- Include elements for project area sustainability and address any limitations associated with site contamination;
- Evaluate the impact of development scenarios on existing zoning and regulatory challenges, and provide recommendations for zoning changes; and
- Provide an implementation plan with short-term and longer-term elements and identify funding strategies for those elements.



ROUTE 99/BROADWAY CORRIDOR

Funding for this report was provided by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to develop an action-oriented plan to protect important uses, prepare for and regulate new development along the Corridor, and utilize Encore Boston Harbor-driven economic opportunities to grow Malden's business community and prevent Corridor erosion. Since the Encore Boston Harbor Casino opened in June 2019 and was shut down during its first year of operation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, initial documentation and analysis is not available to report the amount and types of services and goods procured locally.

---

*...the [Casino] Project will bring economic development to Malden, create new jobs for Malden residents and new sources of revenue for the Malden business community, and as such, Malden desires to enter into this Agreement with Wynn to address the anticipated impact on Malden businesses, residents, infrastructure, public safety, transportation and roadway needs.*

*Surrounding Community Agreement between City of Malden and Wynn MA, LLC*

---

## FINDINGS

The findings address the four categories of goals and implementation actions: Land Use/Zoning, Transportation, Economic Development, and Public Realm.

- **Land Use/Zoning** – The Corridor is generally built out and occupied with a mix of uses, including commercial, office, residential, entertainment, and auto-repair/sales. However, there is no consistent density along the corridor, which ranges from low-intensity, low-rise commercial development with large surface parking lots to more compact, mixed-use development. The five (5) zoning districts that are interspersed throughout the corridor generally coincide with the variations in density and uses. Amending the zoning would help promote a conducive environment for vibrant, mixed-use development within the Corridor.
- **Transportation** – Traffic congestion, speeding, and a lack of general upkeep contribute to a perceived poor quality of life in the Corridor. Efforts to make the transportation network more efficient for all modes of travel – vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit – would increase economic opportunities and socio-economic benefits.
- **Economic Development** – Economic development spans economic, political and social policy, and is a process to create jobs and wealth and improve quality of life. By infusing the area with public improvements to encourage private investment, the City of Malden would improve the vitality within the Corridor. In addition, by fostering a business-friendly environment, the City of Malden would provide opportunities for additional commercial development and job creation along the Corridor.
- **Public Realm** – The public realm refers to urban spaces that are publicly accessible. As part of the built environment, the public realm reinforces an area's sense of place and identity. An improved streetscape with expanded pedestrian, bicycle, and bus accommodations, as well as public open space, would create a better atmosphere for businesses to grow and thrive.

More detailed information regarding the current conditions in the Corridor is provided in *Existing Conditions Overview*.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

As a Corridor in transition, Broadway/Route 99 will evolve into a true mixed-use destination for local independently owned retail, shops, and restaurants to grow and thrive in Malden. This growth will attract industry and encourage mixed-use development incentivizing residents with a prime location within a neighborhood commercial node but also affording an excellent proximity to greater Boston.

The northern subarea will primarily consist of commercial uses – office, manufacturing, and large-scale retail. A mixed-use commercial and residential transition area will stretch from Elwell Street/Central Avenue south to Bowman Street. The middle subarea will remain primarily residential, extending from Bowman Street to Webster Street, with neighborhood mixed-use development at the intersection of Broadway and Salem Street/Hunting Street. A second mixed-use transition area will extend from Webster Street south through to the southern end of the cemetery. The southern subarea will consist of larger scale commercial uses, as well as mixed-use commercial and residential. The transition areas will serve as great opportunities for smaller-scale, locally owned retail and commercial uses that will complement the surrounding residential density.

Broadway Plaza will become a lifestyle center – dining, entertainment, and shopping will be complemented by attractive landscaping, community gathering areas, and integrated residential/hotel and office space. The implementation of a greener and safer streetscape will be enhanced by pedestrian, bicycle, and bus accommodations. Traffic calming measures will result in reduced traffic congestion and better traffic circulation. With a defined streetscape design, Broadway will be recognized as a unified urban, compact, mixed-use commercial corridor filled with character and a sense of place.

## **GOALS**

Major goals for this framework plan include:

1. To use zoning as a tool to guide sound land use and economic growth, leading to the Corridor's transition from a suburban highway landscape to a dense, mixed-use neighborhood center.
2. To make transportation improvements that create a true multi-modal corridor, calming traffic and increasing walkability and safety for all users.
3. To increase the use of public transportation by offering better connections and service along the Corridor.
4. To create an enjoyable, walkable, corridor for residents to shop locally by providing green public gathering spaces and implementing an aesthetically pleasing streetscape.
5. To foster a business-friendly environment that provides opportunities for additional commercial development along the Corridor.
6. To forge a relationship with Encore Boston Harbor that enhances business opportunities for Malden-based vendors, particularly those within proximity of Broadway.

The Corridor would benefit from additional actions by the City and the MRA, as well as through collaborative efforts involving relevant state agencies and private entities such as Encore Boston Harbor, to support the goals identified during this planning process.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The actions to implement the goals of this *Corridor Framework Plan* are the result of the research and analyses of current economic and physical conditions, as well as feedback from the community members, property owners and business owners who participated in a community meeting, an online survey, and interviews. The implementation actions are grouped into the categories described below:

- **Land Use/Zoning** – The recommended actions are intended to use zoning as a tool to promote mixed-use, higher density development and uses that are more complementary to adjacent residential neighborhoods and consistent with the vision for the Corridor. Mixed-use developments blend two or more uses and envisions ground floor commercial (retail/restaurant) with upper floor residential or office. Amending the zoning ordinance to reduce the number of zoning districts to one with three sub districts, prohibit uses that conflict with the vision for the Corridor, revising dimensional regulations for the new Broadway Corridor District, and implementing design guidelines would facilitate the longer-term change needed for the Corridor to evolve into a true mixed-use destination.
- **Transportation** – The transportation recommendations are part of a holistic approach to achieving the vision for the Corridor by creating a true multi-modal corridor, calming traffic and increasing walkability and safety for all users. Transportation elements include the street network, pedestrian environment, bicycle travel, transit enhancements, and intersection improvements. Conducting a thorough transportation analysis of the Corridor would help create a fuller understanding of the gaps in the transportation network and generate a plan to address these gaps. Specific actions include implementing a road diet in certain areas including the southern subarea near Broadway Plaza, near the Strata Apartments, and in the northern subarea to provide space for other uses such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes. Traffic safety would be addressed through intersection upgrades, installation of new sidewalks, implementation of Complete Street recommendations, and upgrades to the Northern Strand Community Trail (Bike-to-the-Sea) crossing. By creating a dialogue with and engaging the MBTA, the City of Malden/MRA would enhance bus service within and along the Corridor.
- **Economic Development** – The economic development findings and recommended actions are intended to provide a better environment for small-scale, independent businesses to grow and thrive within the Corridor. In addition, opportunities exist for large-scale office users and hospitality at select sites along the Corridor. Business attraction, retention, and expansion would be supported by collaborating with businesses and property managers within the Corridor, the regional workforce board, and the Malden Chamber of Commerce. In addition, the City of Malden should designate a department or organization to provide ongoing outreach and education to local businesses about the process required to become established as a vendor for Encore Boston Harbor.
- **Public Realm** – The recommended actions are intended to create a safe, accessible, and attractive public realm within the Corridor that encourages residents to be more active and

engaged in the community and to frequent more local businesses, which will in turn foster a higher quality of life and area identity. Creating a more attractive public realm that is designed to balance pedestrians and bicyclists with motor vehicles should be a top priority for the City of Malden. Key recommended actions include making sidewalk improvements, constructing new sidewalks where they are presently missing, and enhancing crosswalks at key locations. Corridor lighting, both in the public realm and on private property throughout the Corridor, could be assessed and any gaps addressed.

The recommended actions outlined in this summary are detailed in *Goals* and presented in an easily readable format with a timeframe for implementation in *Implementation Strategy*.

## PROPOSED CONCEPTS

The corridor was broken down into three smaller sections, and proposed concept plans were generated for each section to illustrate the Corridor vision and recommendations included in this report. More detailed proposed concept plans are included in *Development Scenarios*.

