



**Fall River Downtown and  
Waterfront Core Vision Plan**

**2011 Sasaki Intern Charrette  
City of Fall River, MA**

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**2011 Summer Intern Charrette  
Sasaki Associates**

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# Executive Summary

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## 2011 Fall River Charrette

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Sitting on the banks of the Taunton River, along the Commonwealth's southern coast, the City of Fall River's historic mills were once the city's source of growth and vitality. Originally powered by the Quequechan River, the city's proud industrial legacy is overshadowed today by a long period of decline over the 20th century. The city's core, stretching from Main Street along the Quequechan River corridor to the Taunton River, is fractured and isolated from the rest of the city by transportation infrastructure and a poorly defined physical environment. However, with historic and cultural assets, a walkable downtown, and a central location, this area represents a major opportunity to focus civic energy and activity in the city's heart.

The Downtown and Waterfront Core Vision Plan establishes a vision for the revitalization of the central core, and is the result of a partnership between the City of Fall River, the Fall River Office of Economic Development (FROED), and Sasaki Associates. Developed over the course of a two-week design charrette in June 2011, the plan synthesizes analysis of relevant planning, design, and programming issues with findings from previous studies. It was completed by the 2011 Sasaki summer intern team, with input from internal reviewers and the partners. The City and FROED charged the interns with developing creative new

ideas to address Fall River's stalled economy, improve and reconnect the downtown with the waterfront, and offer a refreshed vision for the core district of the city.

The Plan seeks to highlight the city's historic and cultural assets, re-envision outdated infrastructure, breathe new life into existing buildings, coordinate and shape cultural and recreational programming, and make new connections beyond the city's borders. It offers detailed proposals for four catalyst sites in the core that, taken together, form a unified master plan that aims to spark new energy for Fall River and help bring investment to the city. The catalyst site proposals offer recommendations to guide the evolution of the core, while the master plan and implementation offer principles for future development, whatever shape it takes.

The challenges Fall River faces are not insignificant, but they offer the opportunity for new discourse and partnerships between the city, entrepreneurs, property owners, and residents alike. While exploring the city and its past, the interns discovered a compelling history and unique assets, and hope that this proposal inspires new interest in collaborative efforts to tell Fall River's story.



## The Charrette Process

### Identifying Issues and Goals

The charrette began with an extensive site analysis phase that identified key issues for engagement in Fall River.

### Defining Opportunities

Moving forward, several opportunity sites were identified within Fall River's urban core, aiming to restore connections between the waterfront and Main Street.

### Developing Actions

Key projects and actions within each opportunity site were identified, with both immediate and long-term timelines in mind.

### Creating a Cohesive Plan

Each opportunity site proposal fits within the larger framework of a site master plan, intended to provide structure and a shared vision for Fall River's core.

### Pursuing Implementation

Finally, the charrette process ended with identification of an implementation strategy and a variety of concrete funding sources.

## The Master Plan

The Master Plan is composed of four major catalyst sites, each with a unique program proposal, but sharing the goal of reconnecting the waterfront with the downtown.

### Marine Center

Create a ferry terminal that can provide transportation to urban centers and leisure destinations.

### Mill District

Create a fully-functional, active community within the core that will bring residents from northern and southern neighborhoods to the center of the city.

### Heritage and Culture Core

Create a district that highlights the city's culture and heritage, providing new vantage points and physical connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

### Main Street Corridor

Re-establish the downtown as a well-defined, high-amenity walkable urban district, and reconnect it with the waterfront.



## Executive Summary

### Week 1

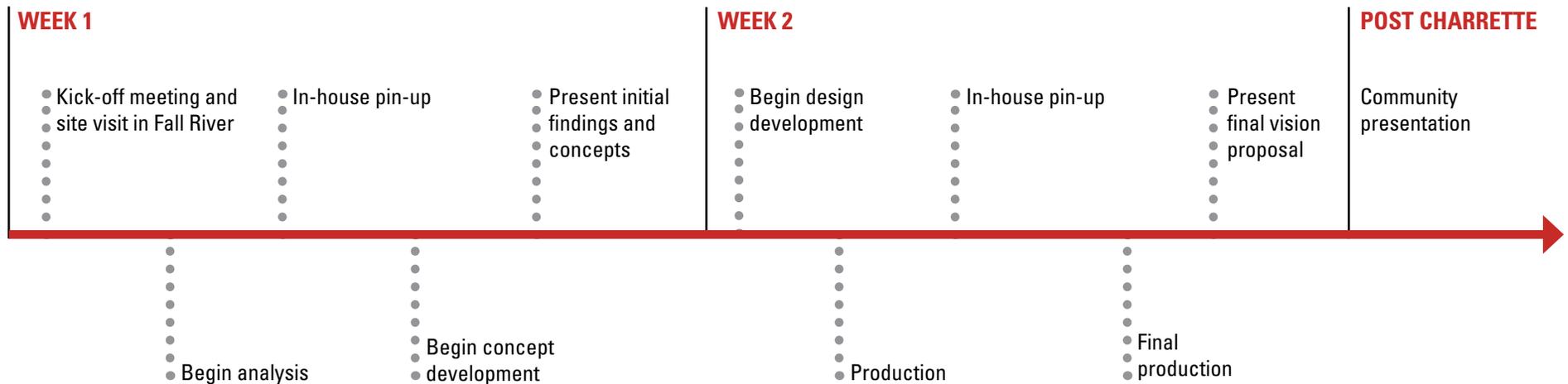
Following a kick-off meeting and site visit in Fall River, the intern cohort worked to develop an understanding of the complexities of the site and its context. Existing conditions and a review of past planning documents contributed to this analysis. Key issues included land use, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, development opportunity sites, program of activities, historic character and cultural context, wayfinding, streetscape, connectivity to open space, and regional connectivity and relationships. The group ended the week with a presentation entitled, “Fall River, MA: Initial Findings and Concepts,” which detailed the initial analysis and overall design concept: weaving together the core and its surroundings.

### Week 2

Using feedback from the critique of the Week 1 presentation, the interns began developing more detailed catalyst site proposals in small groups, while simultaneously contextualizing each site in a cohesive master plan. Proposal development involved not just identifying a holistic program of uses, but also creating appropriate maps and graphics to communicate the new vision. At the end of the second week, the interns presented their final vision concept to Sasaki colleagues and a representative from the Fall River Office of Economic Development.

### Community Presentation

Following the final presentation, the interns will present their work to the Mayor and City Council of Fall River on August 8th, 2011.







United States Library of Congress



***Fall River needs a strategy that re-establishes it as a vibrant regional center by capitalizing on its rich history and present-day assets.***

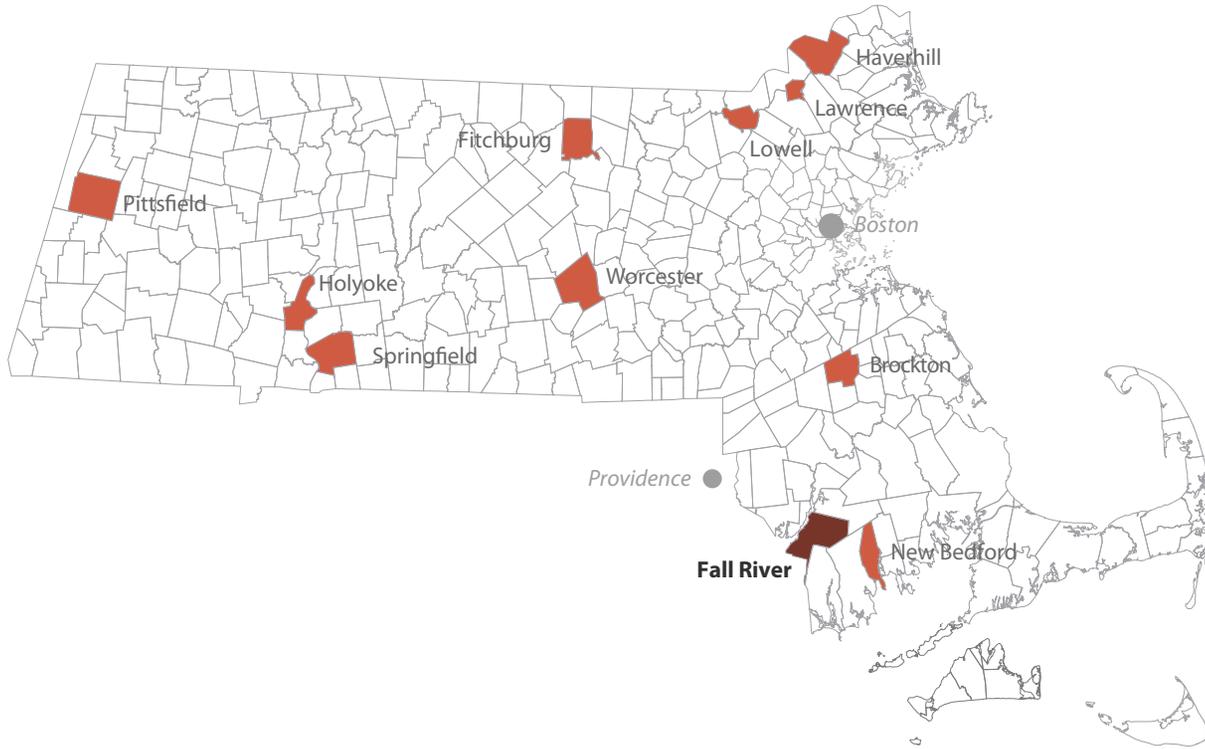
DETROIT PUBLISHING CO.

# Introduction to Fall River

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## Massachusetts' Gateway Cities



## Building on a History of Mills

One of eleven ‘gateway’ cities in Massachusetts, Fall River sits on the banks of the Taunton River in along the Commonwealth’s southern coast and was once home to a booming textiles industry. Powered by the Quequechan River, the mills fueled the city’s growth and vibrancy, particularly during a period of intense growth in the second half of the 19th century. Although much of the industry that once embodied Fall River has since left, the city remains one of the two largest urban areas in southeastern Massachusetts, with nearly 90,000 residents.

This region of the Commonwealth is a high-growth area, but the city has only attracted a modest amount of new economic activity. Even today,

much of the city’s mill space remains vacant. As a result, the city continues to search for an industry that will revive the use of its mills and decrease levels of unemployment. In a global economy, Fall River must do more than simply bolster its current employment sectors, but in fact, attract new industries that will provide opportunities for existing and future city residents.

In order to help spark the next wave of energy and economic development in Fall River, this project details potential visions for four focus areas (‘catalyst sites’) in Fall River’s downtown and waterfront core. Proposals for these sites identify a wide variety of actions and approaches, but all represent an attempt

to weave together the historic downtown, working waterfront, and neighboring residential districts. The proposals were developed over the course of a two week design charrette.

The project aims to create new opportunities for residents and entrepreneurs alike, all while honoring Fall River’s unique and rich heritage. This vision is merely a starting point, however; the authors hope their ideas serve to spark community discussion, engagement, and mobilization. The challenges Fall River faces are significant, but with challenges come new opportunities.



## Moving Fall River Forward

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Revitalizing Fall River's downtown and waterfront core will require concerted incremental effort. It will require a visioning process to identify community assets, the development of a strategic plan, public/private partnerships, revised zoning codes and design controls, and new funding mechanisms. Many excellent guides and resources for accomplishing these tasks exist, but their implementation will require creativity and innovation.

While the revitalization of the core will be a lengthy process that will require ongoing community engagement, long-standing management, the development of financial incentives, and outside assistance, there are several ways in which Fall River can build on existing efforts and achieve nearer-term

improvements for the core that will not only signal progress, but also lead to meaningful improvement in its identity and experience.

For Fall River to attract new 'information' or 'knowledge' economy jobs, it will be increasingly important for the city to create walkable, high amenity urban districts that can attract a young, talented, and vital workforce, while retaining local talent. If Fall River does not provide these amenities, it will continue to lag behind other cities, such as New Bedford, Providence, and Boston. While the city will not challenge larger regional centers like Boston and Providence, it will be at a significant local disadvantage without high quality spaces and activities.



## Key Issues

**Funding:** A difficult economic, funding, and developer and business recruitment environment means that the market for new development is unclear. Exacerbating this, local mill owners have difficulty obtaining funds for development because their mills cannot be used as collateral for loans.

**Mills:** Although the mills have left a strong mark on the city and represent a rich history, a large portion of the ten million square feet of mill space remains vacant today. Still, the mills are home to numerous activities, from performing arts to wind turbine blade manufacturing, but obtaining funds for additional development or retrofits is a challenge.

**Workforce:** As Fall River works to attract new industries, the city's skilled manufacturing workforce will face difficulty taking advantage of new

employment opportunities. Past studies indicate that workforce development organizations in the city and region are strong, but a skills mismatch still looms.

**Identity:** Although Fall River is one of the largest cities in Massachusetts' South Coast region, it does not serve as a regional magnet for cultural and entertainment activities. Although the downtown holds promise, it lacks a regional identity and suffers from a physical environment that would benefit from greater definition.

**Disconnect:** The downtown and the waterfront are bisected by the Route 79 elevated viaduct and a variety of loop ramps for access to I-195. This area separates two residential neighborhoods to the north and south.

**Educational Infrastructure:** Fall River has several established contacts with local higher education institutions, including the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth and Bristol Community College. Expanded partnerships and training could help build local capacity and train residents for new occupations.



## Demographics

Fall River has a population of just under 90,000, making it one of the largest cities in southeast Massachusetts. While the vast majority of residents identify as white or Caucasian, 45% are of Portuguese-speaking descent.

The median household income is \$35,814, which is well below the commonwealth median of \$64,496.

*(Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2005-2009 Blended Estimates)*

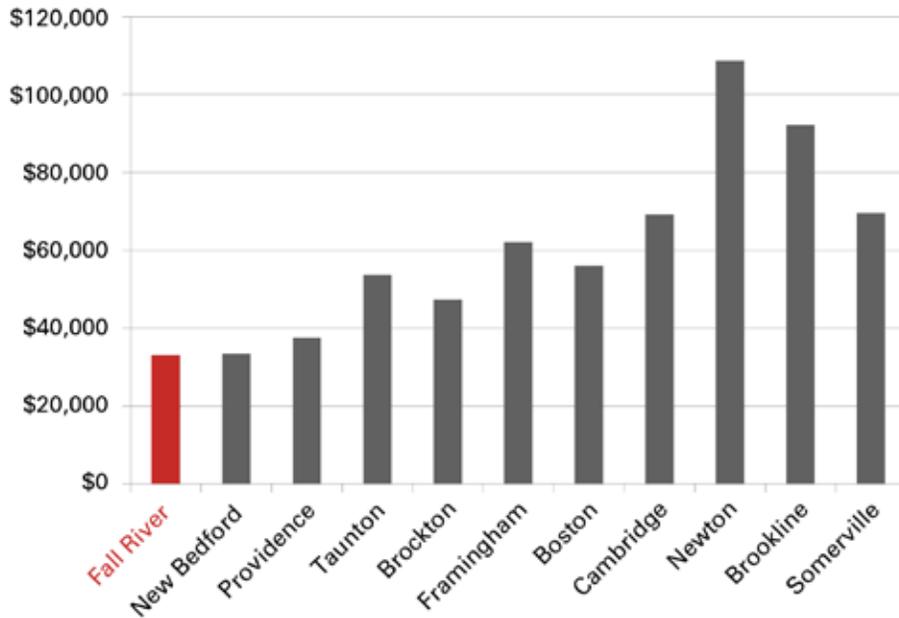
Annual unemployment in 2010 was 14.7 percent, which also compares unfavorably to the commonwealth median, which was 8.5 percent.

*(Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics 2010)*

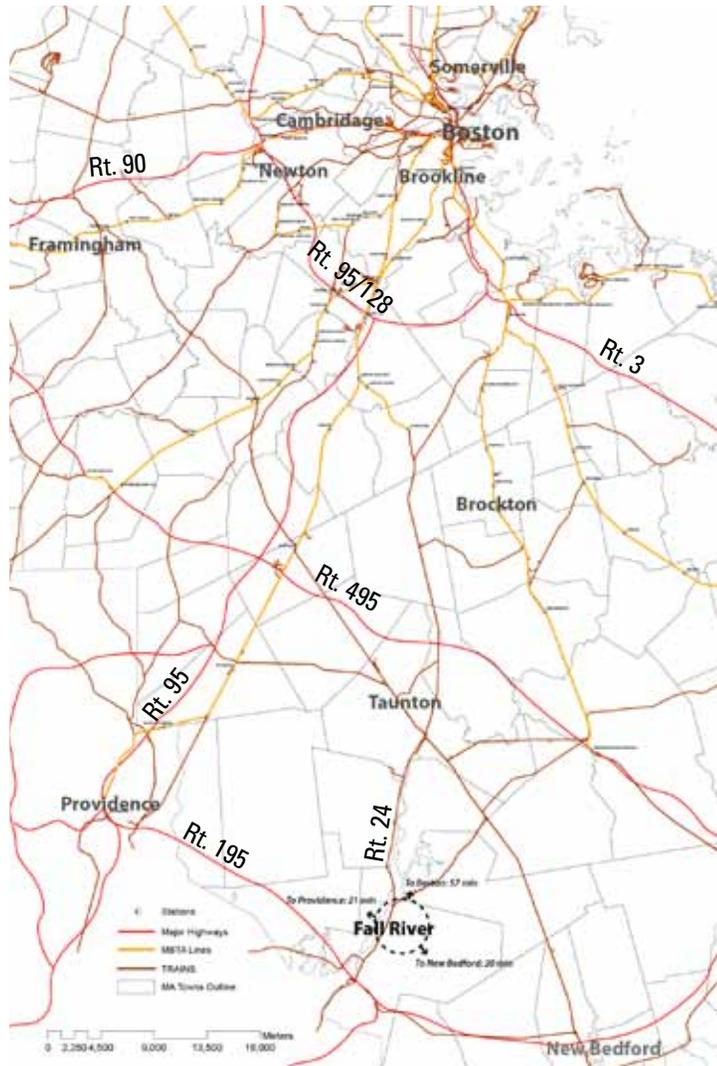
City residents' educational attainment reflects the city's industrial past. A legacy of high-quality jobs that required a low level of academic preparation but offered a high degree of on-the-job training has left the city with education rates that compare poorly with Massachusetts as a whole. Only 32% of residents hold a high school diploma or higher, while only 14% have completed a Bachelor's degree or higher. The vast majority (88%) of Massachusetts residents overall hold a high school diploma or higher, and 38% hold a Bachelor's degree or higher.

*(Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2005-2009 Blended Estimates)*

## Median Incomes

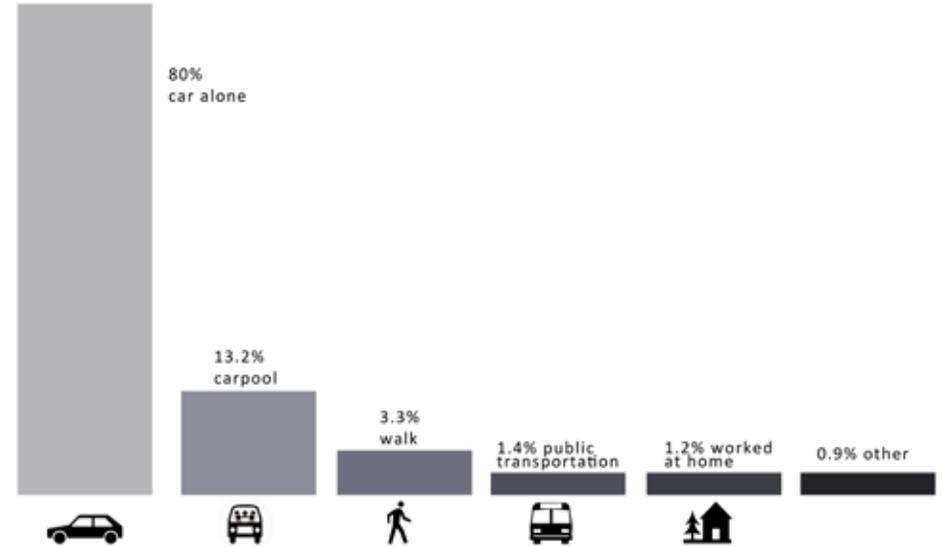


## Introduction



## Regional Location

Fall River is located in Massachusetts' South Coast region. It is well connected regionally by highways 24 and I-195. It is also home to a deep-water port along the Taunton River.



## Transportation Modes

The vast majority of Fall River residents drive alone to work, though 13.2% carpool. Although the city does have a local bus service, only 1.4% of work trips in the city are by public transportation.

## Four Mill Districts

Fall River's historic mills can be grouped into four main districts: the South End, Central Waterfront, the North End, and Flint/Center City. The Central Waterfront and Flint/Center City districts are oriented around the original course of the Quequechan River.

## Travel Times

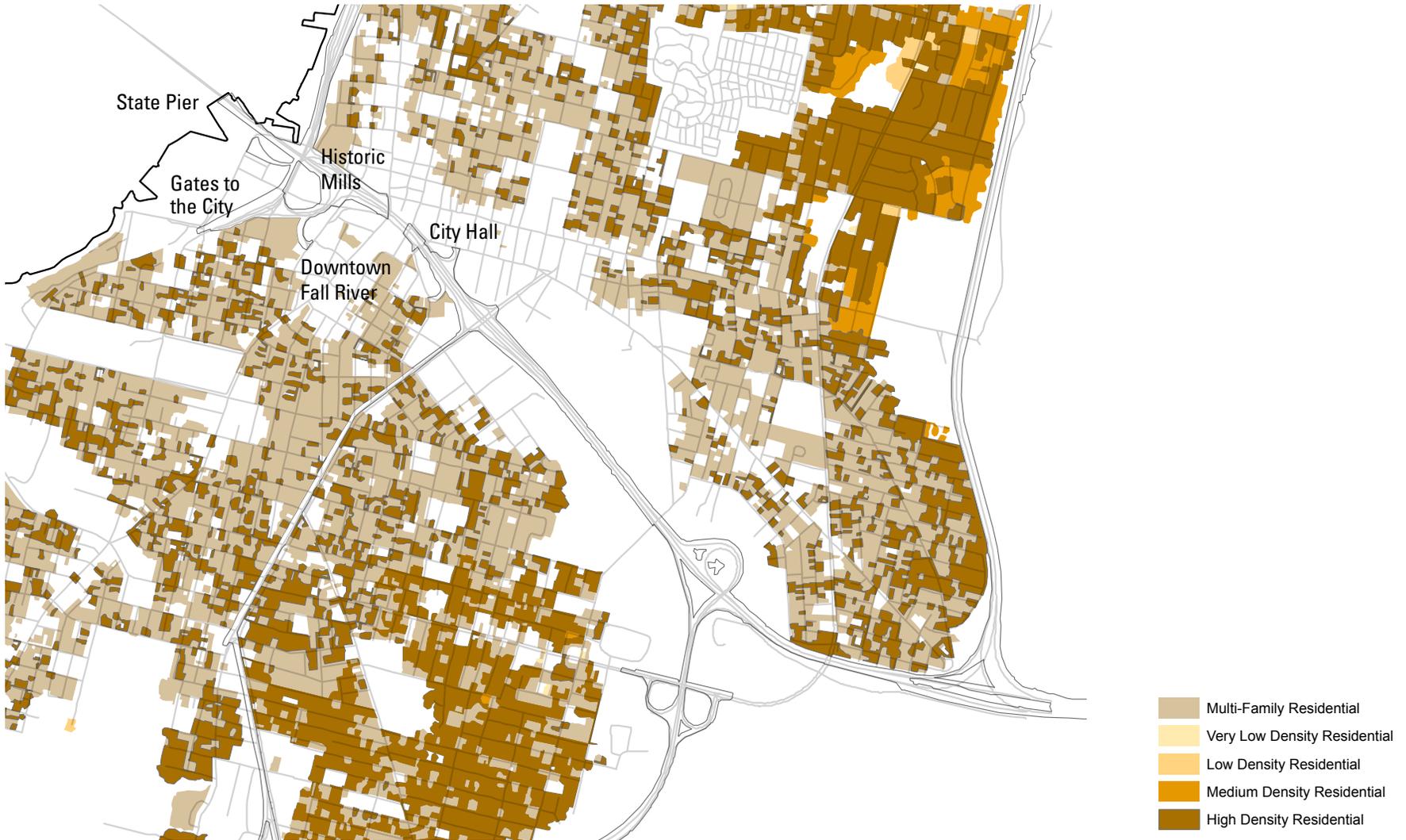
It takes just under an hour to drive to Fall River from Boston, and only about twenty minutes from New Bedford and Providence, Rhode Island.





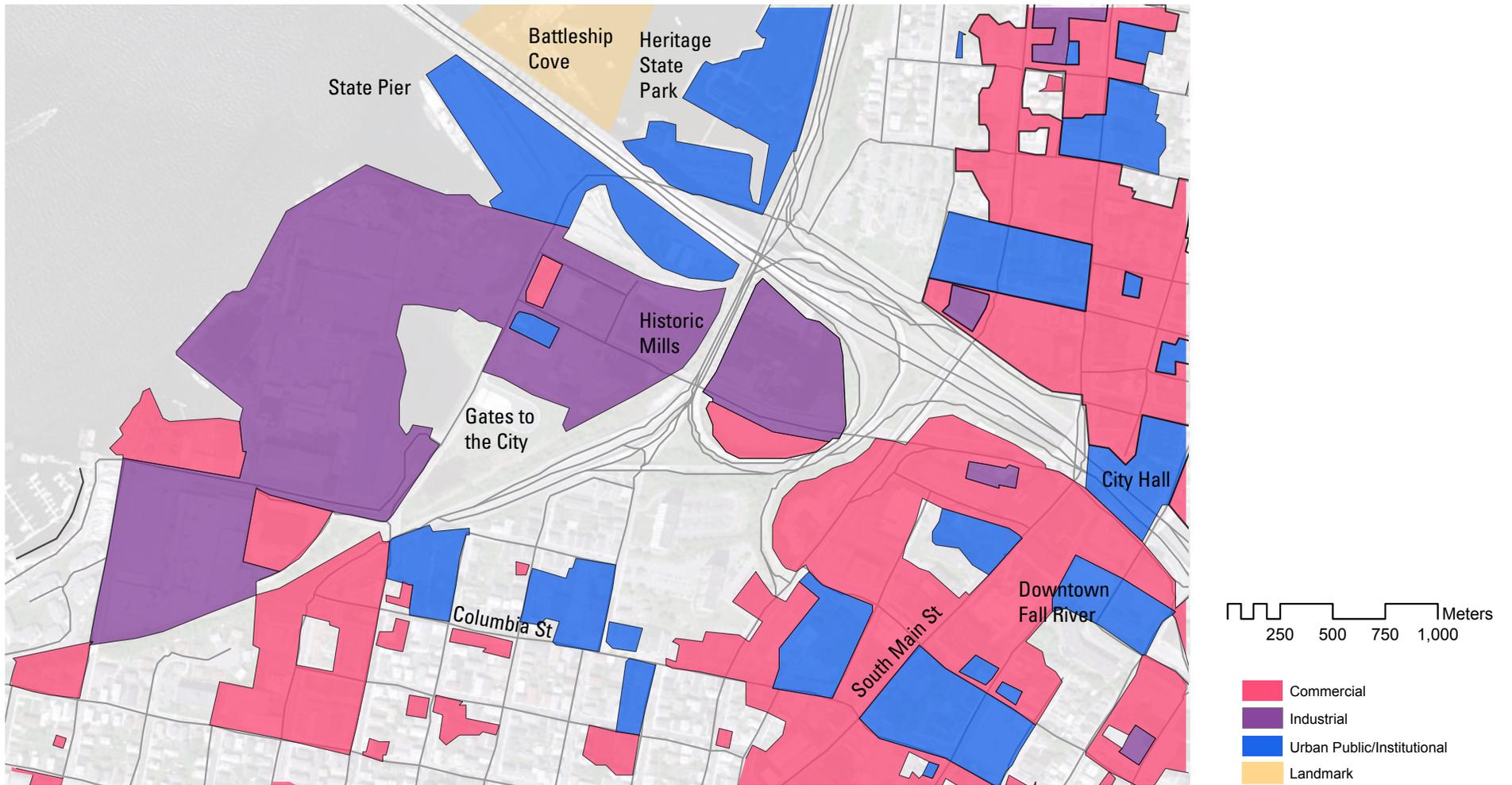
## Site Context

Fall River's core extends from the Braga Bridge to the Main Street district, between Columbia Street and the waterfront. It encompasses numerous activities and key opportunity sites. These include Battleship Cove, the State Pier, the Gates to the City, several mills, elevated highway ramps, downtown retail and office, and governmental functions.



## Residential Uses

Residential land uses surrounding the downtown and waterfront core are predominantly multi-family, but in the core itself, there are few households. Highway I-195 bisects the city, separating the residential neighborhoods on either side.



### Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional Uses

The core has a variety of active industrial and commercial uses. The presence of businesses creates an opportunity to cultivate a diverse, mixed-use district with a variety of programs and users.



## Open Space

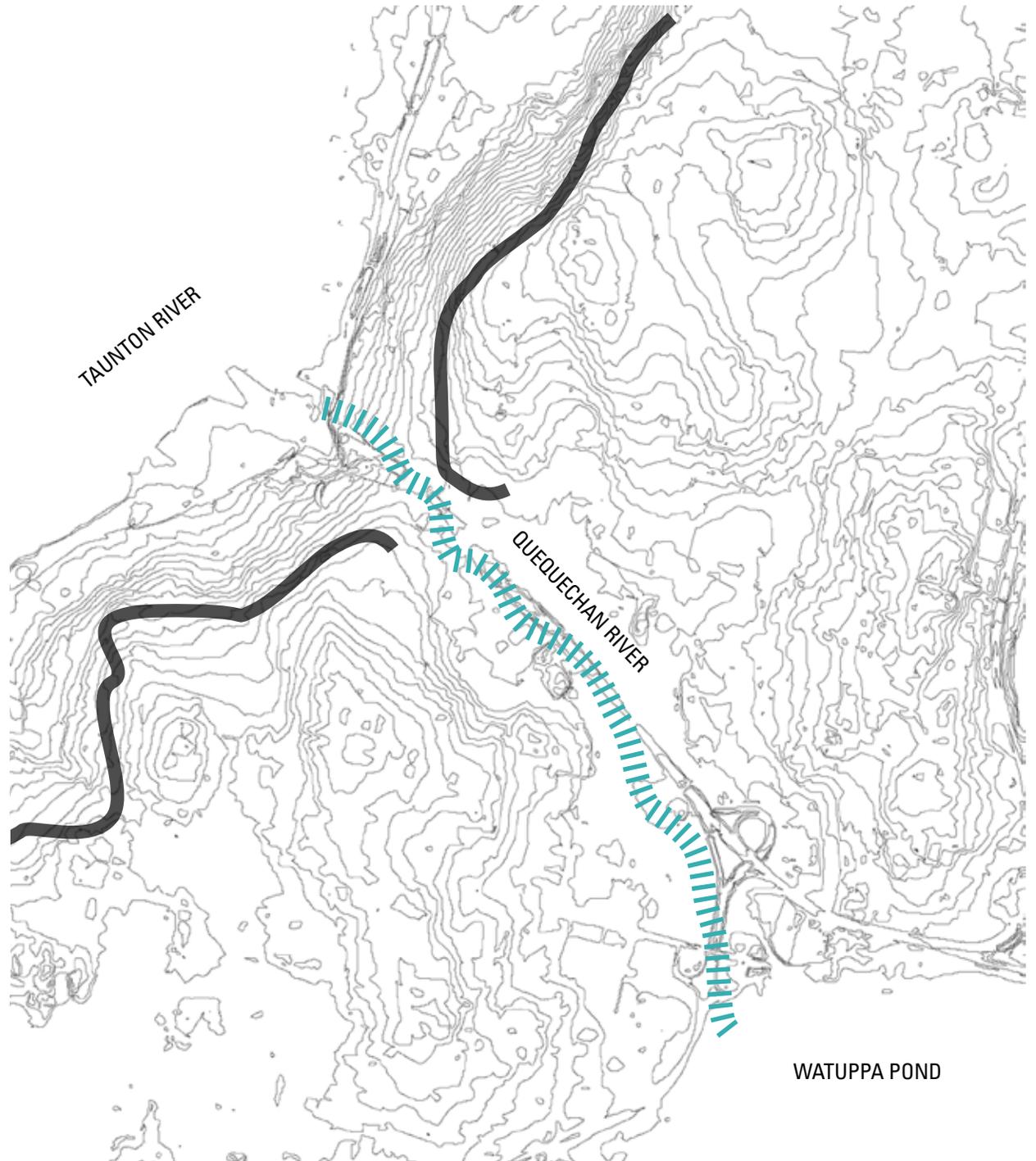
The core suffers a substantial lack of managed, public open space. The most notable spaces include the plaza at the Gates to the City, and Fall River Heritage State Park.

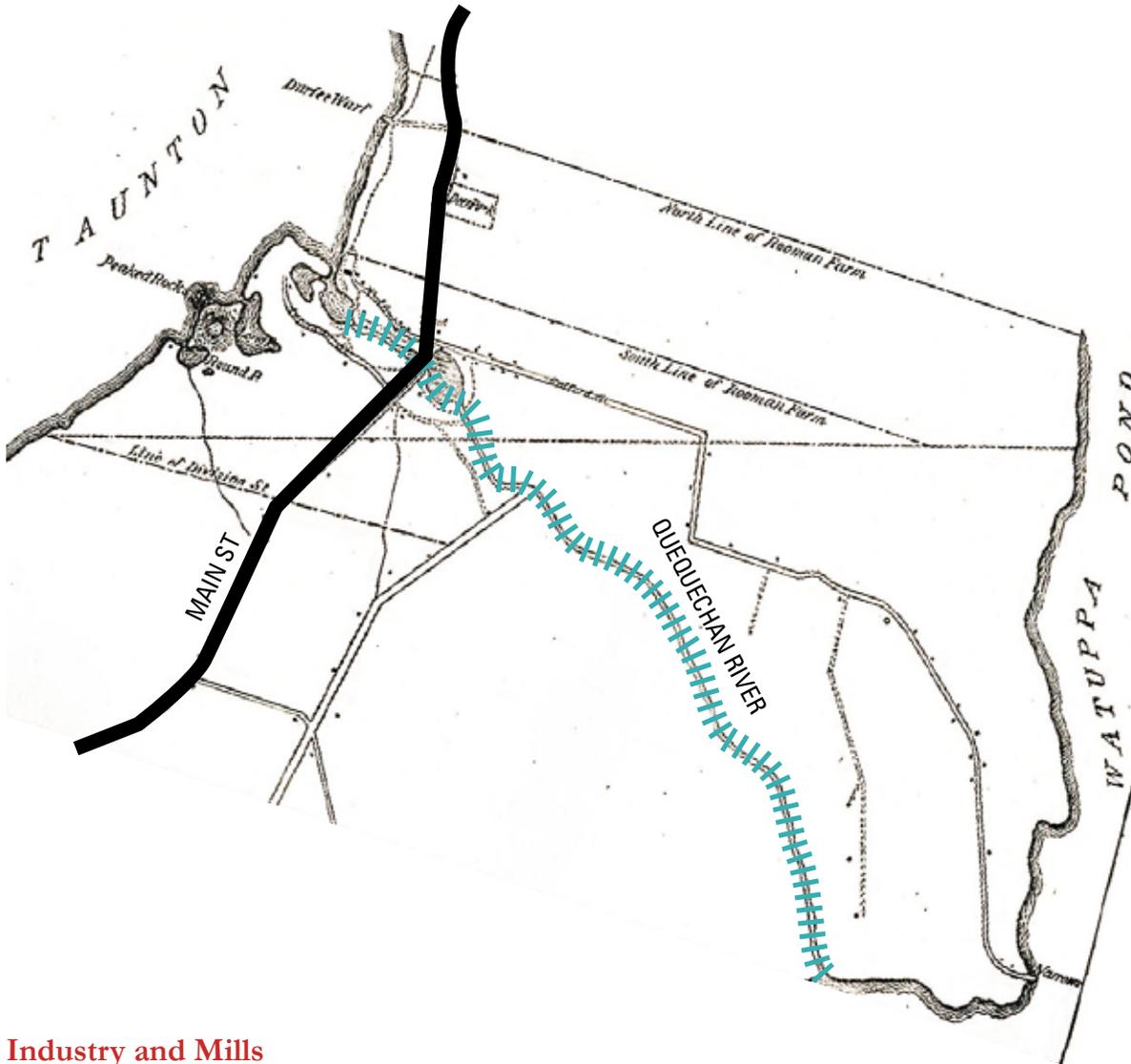


*The "Freeman's Purchase" which, in terms of the Founding Families, started it all.*

### Origins Along the River

Fall River is located on a bluff above the Taunton River, and was historically oriented around the Quequechan River. The Quequechan flowed from Watuppa Pond to a steep waterfall course, then down to the Taunton River, just northwest of where City Hall sits on Main Street today.



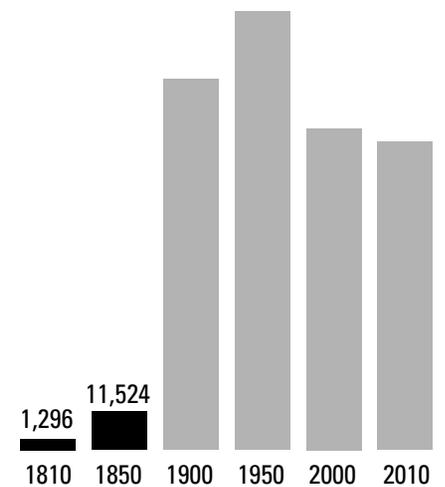


Spinners originally worked in their homes

### Industry and Mills

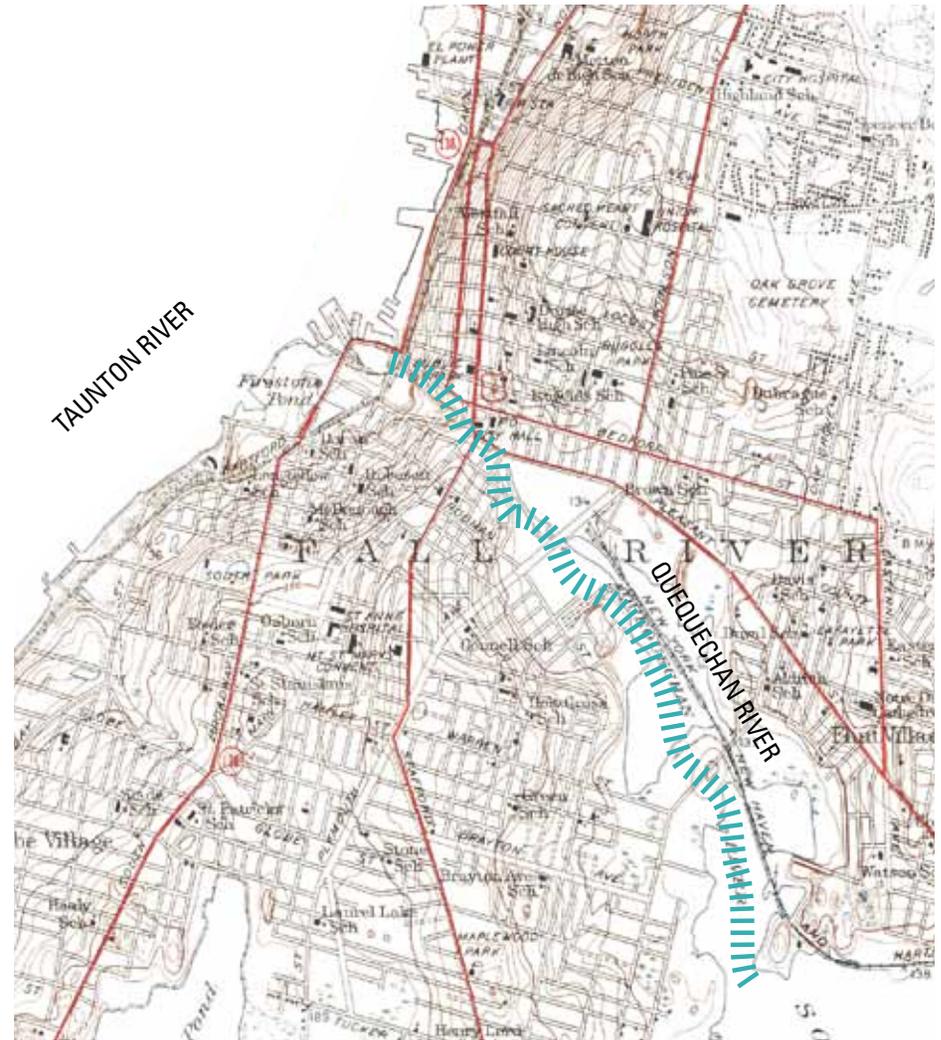
The earliest use of the river for industrial purposes occurred in 1703 when Benjamin Church established a grist mill with a small dam just west of present day South Main Street. By the late 1840s, water power development potential in Fall River had been maximized.

Fall River Population

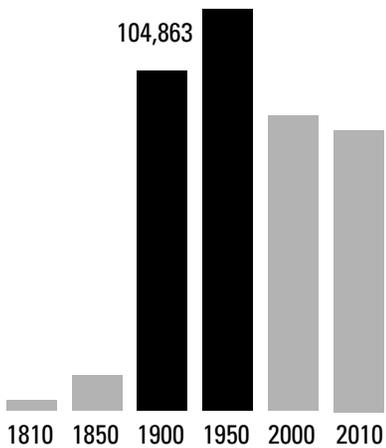


## The “Spindle City”

In the years following Civil War (1861-1865), Fall River experienced a major expansion of the cotton textile industry. Population growth mirrored the city’s impressive industrial activity. Between 1850 and 1900, the city’s population grew at an unprecedented rate, closing the 19th century with over 100,000 residents. However, after this period of astonishing growth, the first part of the 20th century brought the hardship of mill closure.



Fall River Population  
111,963



Industrial use of the river



Workers in textile mills



The “Cotton King” event-1911



### Highway Era to Today

Construction began on what is today's Interstate 195 in the early 1950s. The highway was built over the original course of the Quequechan River, resulting in culvertization. Today, I-195 and the Route 79 elevated highway physically isolate the historic central mill district and Taunton River waterfront from the rest of the city.

A variety of planning efforts have aimed to improve recreational access to what remains of the Quequechan River, including a proposed bike path along a parallel railroad right-of-way. Other plans have speculated about restoring Quequechan Falls and using recreational facilities to reconnect to the waterfront.

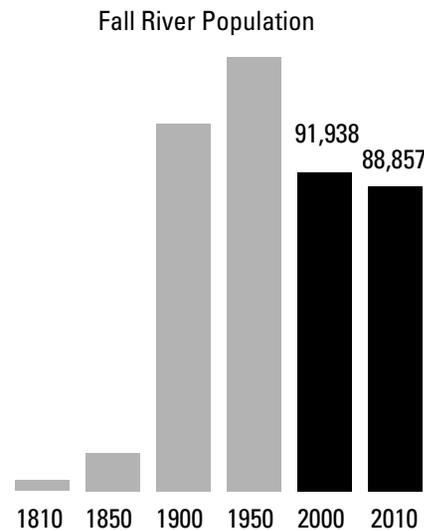
The United States' economy transitioned from a strong industrial focus toward services-based activities over the latter half of the 20th century, and for Fall River, these broad economic shifts had very real implications. As industrial activities left, the city's employment and population bases declined. By 2000, the city's population had fallen to just under 92,000 and today the city has just under 89,000 residents.



*A rare glimpse of the Quequechan*



*Defunct Mill Buildings*



# Fall River: A History

## INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

## CIVIL WAR

City  
Mill

**1703**

Mills are introduced to Fall River

**1733**

The first cotton mill is created

**1800-1850**

Mill industry is booming, hydro power and textile industry support the city

**1813**

First cotton mill in Fall River

**1817**

First power looms



**1830s**

Oil refinery from whaling boom

**1835**

First print works established

**1845**

First steam-powered mill

**1865-1873**

Mill industry continues to grow

**1872**

First bleachery established

**1870-74**

Birth of Flint Village with new mills



**c.1800**

First Dam Established

**1803**

City founded

**1804**

First school built

**1835**

First canal built

**1825**

Fall River Bank opened. North Burial Ground purchased. First church erected stage lines to Providence, Newport, and New Bedford

**1829**

First major church

**1843**

Great fire destroys 200 buildings in a 4 block radius

**1844**

School regulations establish 9-12 attendance hours for children

**1845-1860**

Passenger and cargo to the Pacific. Loading docks open on Davol Street. First steamer to New York.

**1846**

Massasoit Bank nationalized

**1848**

First night or "factory" school opened

**1854**

City incorporated with motto "We'll try"

**1859**

Fire Department Established  
Union Mill Co. the first corporation whose capital was secured by public subscription

**1861-1865**

**1865**

National Union Bank established



## 1870-1876

First sewage lines and water mains established

Post office and custom house established with state recognition of town's importance.

First edition of the Herald in 1872.

**1876**

First bridge to west bank of river built

**1887**

First technical school opened



**1875**

Creation of the Fall River Railroad

**1900**

Fall River has electricity

**1911**

Fall river has 4 national banks. First vocational schools opened

**1914-1918**

**1920s**

**1928**

Fall River Fire destroys 5 blocks of the mill area

**1939-1945**

World War II

**1956**

The Highway is built as well as the Braga Bridge. Quequechan River is placed underground.

**1970s**

Modern apartment high-rise towers

**1978**

New M.M.C. Durfee High School built

**1980s**

Housing development boom

**2010**

Fall River ranks 88th most dangerous city in the United States

## WORLD WAR I

### THE GREAT DEPRESSION

## WORLD WAR II

## GLOBALIZATION

**1887**

First Hat making company

**c. 1900**

First piano-making factory

**1914-1918**

Textile industry thrives during WWI to meet European demand

**1923**

First wave of mill closures

**1934**

American Printing Company closes

**1930s**

Many mills closed and City is bankrupt

**1990s**

End of the textile industry





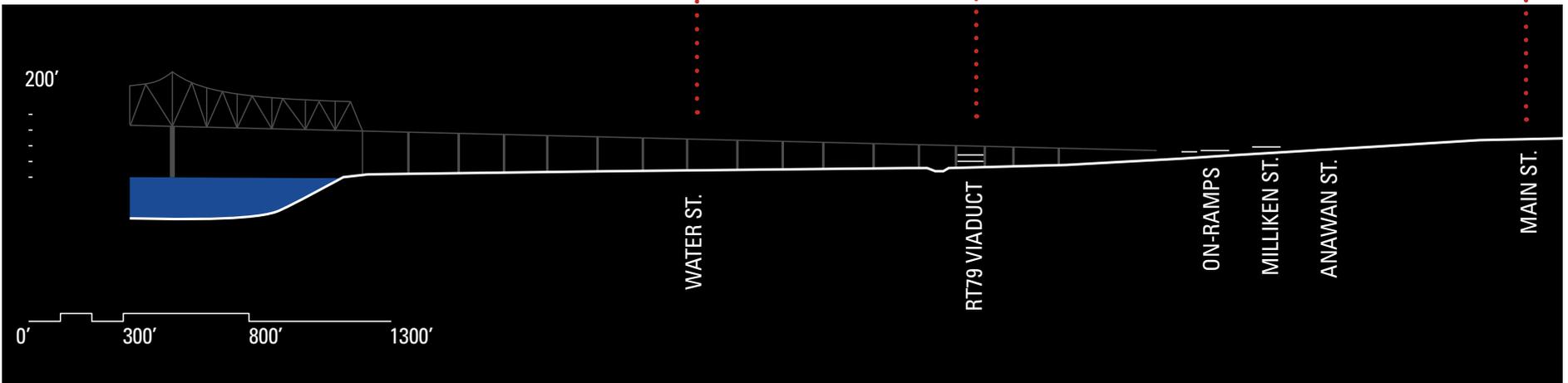
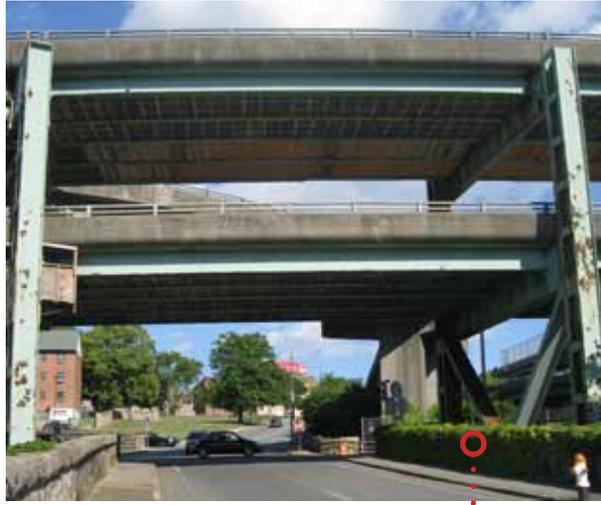
**Character Snapshots:  
Main Street and Highway 79**

—  
The character of Fall River's core varies widely.

**Above:** Main Street's familiar downtown feel is interrupted by City Hall/Highway I-195 corridor.

**Below:** The elevated Highway 79 viaduct not only isolates visitors from the core, but also is a major obstacle to clear, legible navigation on foot or by car.





### Pocasset Street Section

The land profile from Main Street to the waterfront exhibits a substantial elevation change, leading to a noticeable contrast with the ramps leading onto the Braga Bridge (I-195).



## Planning Context

Numerous recent studies have addressed Fall River's core and its connections to other places both within and beyond the city's borders. These include the 2002 Fall River Harbor and Downtown Economic Development Plan by the Cecil Group, the 2007 Strategic Plan by Mt. Auburn Associates, and the 2008 City of Fall River Master Plan.

Despite these efforts, as well as a variety of improvements that have begun, the core continues to languish. Just as Mt. Auburn Associates observed in 2007, the downtown remains disconnected from the waterfront, lacks a regional draw for visitors, and its business mix does not reflect the arts, entertainment, and culture focus that has been successfully employed in numerous other revitalization schemes across the state and country.

Still, there is reason to be hopeful, as various initiatives are working to address these issues. These include the city's arts overlay district, signage, and related cultural programming; rail transportation planning for an extension of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail; open space and recreational linkages; and the efforts of the Fall River Mill Owners' Association and the Fall River Office of Economic Development toward attracting new employers and uses for vacant mills.

# Identifying Fall River

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## Introducing a New Identity

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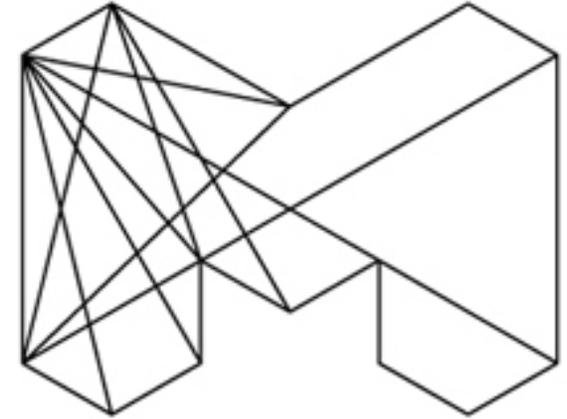
One fundamental problem facing Fall River is the lack of a well-defined, forward-looking identity that will not only help draw residents together, but also attract new interest from outside. As the city explores new employment industries, economic development, and public amenities, it has a number of valuable assets from which to draw, such as its Portuguese heritage. First, however, the city's residents must be proud to identify themselves as the people of Fall River. The city should focus on projecting a positive identity, one that draws on the city's rich industrial history, its cultural resources, and its present-day assets.

### City of Melbourne Identity

The City of Melbourne, Australia, recently unveiled a new graphic identity. The design is highly expandable, but more important is the opportunity it presents for setting the tone for the city's outreach. The logo's design innately communicates an image of the city, of what it is like: a sense of youth and energy. It suggests that Melbourne is not a typical, traditional city, and that one might have new experiences when visiting.



**CITY OF MELBOURNE**



**CITY OF MELBOURNE**

Landor-Sydney

### City of Moscow Identity

A powerful example of the impact that a new identity can have is this concept for the City of Moscow, Russia. Although it is not an implemented identity, it immediately spurs the viewer to reconsider preconceived notions about the city. It suggests a youthful and vibrant location that is full of energy, a potentially sharp contrast to common perceptions of Moscow.



Nicholas Pereslegina and Alexander Pershikova

### Sister City Banners

Although Fall River does not yet have a strong visual identity, there are already excellent examples of iconic identity in the city. Signage for Fall River's sister city, Ponta Delgada, is very successful, despite their limited use. They recognize an important cultural tie for the city and a potential draw for visitors. The identity is important because it is a visible first step, one that demonstrates a willingness to invest in the city's residents and their environment.



Flickr-Dr. Momentum



www.comeo.de

*Ponta Delgada  
Sao Miguel  
Azores*

— Fall River, MA —

# FALL RIVER

The words 'FALL RIVER' are rendered in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a dense, chaotic pattern of thin, overlapping lines in bright yellow and red, resembling a tangled ball of yarn or a complex web. The lines vary in length and direction, creating a textured, three-dimensional effect. The 'F' and 'A' in 'FALL' are particularly dense with lines, while the 'R' in 'RIVER' has a more open, web-like structure.

The Spindle City

— Est. 1803 —



### Formal Identity

Fall River's past is a true inspiration. It was natural to draw upon the city's long history of textile manufacturing when designing a logo. The design has a subtle spindle shape, thread, and weaving. The result is an image that reflects the past, but also highlights the fun and colorful nature that the city is already beginning to pursue. It is a very expandable identity, allowing for the use of different colors and weaves. Variations could be used to identify different departments, for example.



### Logo Type

There are numerous situations in which the full logo is not appropriate. In these instances, a logotype is a better option; it creates a more traditional logo for use on letterheads and banners, for example. When even more simplicity is required for legibility, a standard lettering without the 'strings' is a viable option.

# Signage and Wayfinding

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## Encouraging Movement

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Fall River's new graphic identity primes the city to celebrate its rich heritage in a substantial way. To that end, a Culture and Heritage trail could link significant points of interest across the downtown and waterfront core. Destinations might include mills, visual and performing arts, museums, cultural eating and drinking establishments, the working waterfront, and, of course, homes and buildings of historic value. The trail is a low-cost, visible, and easily implemented project.

The trail should reflect the new graphic identity, which could be accomplished in a variety of ways. A painted trail network and town signage system, for instance, would serve two purposes: first, it would define the trail's path, acting as a guide to the cultural center of the city. Second, it would complement a new wayfinding system in order to help guide pedestrian traffic toward key destinations. These

painted lines would branch off and terminate at desirable destinations and work with physical signage to develop an easily traveled network of public, revenue-generating activity.

The trail system is composed of two colored stripes, with red defining cultural and recreational destinations, while yellow defines heritage destinations. These colors are then reflected on all printed materials, maps, and signage, helping users easily associate the colors with types of destinations. The trail can also indicate the direction of travel. Additionally, information kiosks should be used in high traffic, central locations, and would include a large map and two poster advertisement panes. The kiosks would also offer brochures and maps. Finally, key heritage sites could be designated with small informational plaques.







▲  
**Trail Wayfinding Icon Alternative**

The trail can be expressed in a number of ways. One alternative to striping is a less intrusive trail icon system. Despite being a more subtle option, the icon system provides a very detailed way of navigating the various points of interest.

▶  
**Trail Wayfinding Crest Alternatives**

There are other alternatives that may provide a less invasive alternative. These include small plaques with locational icons, functional wayfinding, classic sidewalk medallions, granite or wooden posts, and stylized signage. There are many aesthetically pleasing alternatives.



www.transportationnation.org

www.thisnext.com

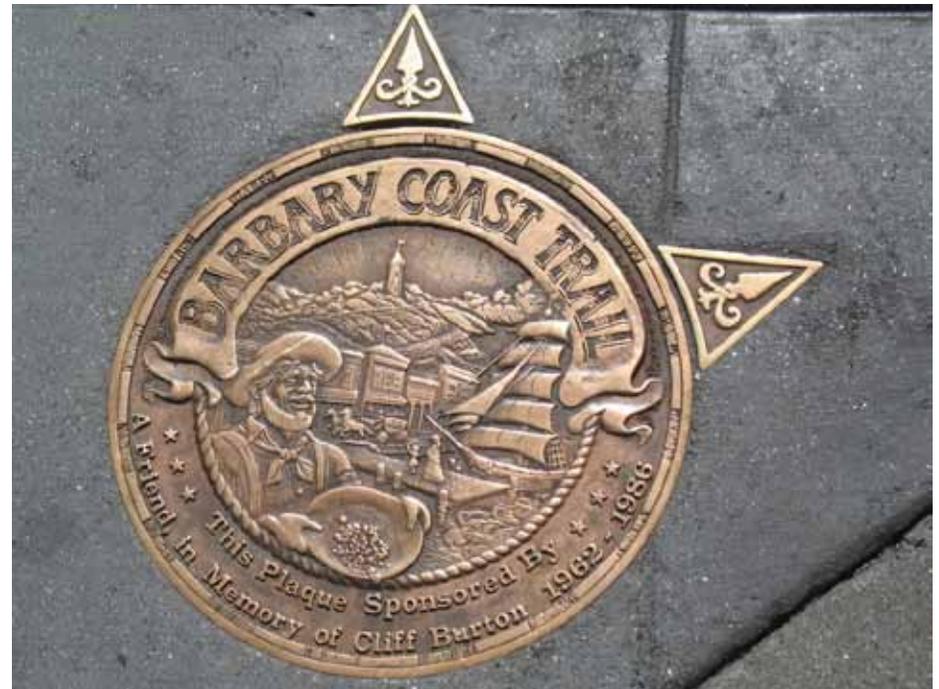


Nora at Metallifukinea.com



Bauer Fabrication

Nora at Metallifukinea.com





## Urban Signage

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Fall River holds a wealth of history, but it is not readily accessible because it is difficult to identify and explore places of interest. Effective wayfinding is extremely important for a person's ability to understand and navigate a place. It opens up spaces that are traditionally complex and are not user friendly. This is important at many scales, and the city is no exception, even for local residents.

Often, spaces are inadequately labeled and there is no indication of direction in place to guide people to them.

A new wayfinding system would include directional signs that would be used for specific instruction within the

Culture and Heritage trail. In high traffic areas, kiosks would be used to display a large destination map, as well as provide advertisement opportunities. In order to highlight some of the amazing sites in Fall River, freestanding plaques at select sites could describe the history and context of the destination. This would highlight these locations and make them more apparent to passersby.

# Master Plan and Catalyst Sites

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**FR**

## Master Plan

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The Downtown and Waterfront Core Master Plan aims to discuss a wide variety of assets and opportunities in Fall River. It seeks to highlight the city's historic and cultural assets, re-envision outdated infrastructure and underutilized buildings, bolster cultural and recreational programming, and make new connections within the city and beyond its borders.

The plan splits the core into four catalyst sites, each with a unique approach to sparking new energy and investment in Fall River. However, while these approaches are distinct, they form a unified plan to guide the evolution of the core. Ultimately, the precise details of the plan may evolve, but the Master Plan can serve as a guide for future development.



Locust Street

Main Street

Broadway

Mulberry Street

Columbia Street

Main Street

2

3

1

4

5

6

11

12

8

7

9

14

10

13



## Master Plan

1. State Pier / Ferry Terminal
2. Battleship Cove
3. Fall River Heritage State Park
4. Tillotson Bleach Plant
5. STEM Magnet School / Opportunity Studio
6. Business Incubator
7. The "Bowl" / Central Open Space
8. Viaduct Park
9. Reconfigured Highway Ramps
10. City Hall
11. The Gates
12. Commuter Rail Station
13. Public Housing Complex Redevelopment
14. Structured Parking



### 1. Marine Center

Create a ferry terminal that can provide transportation to urban centers and leisure destinations.

### 2. Mill District

Create a fully-functional, active community within the core that will bring residents from northern and southern neighborhoods to the center of the city.

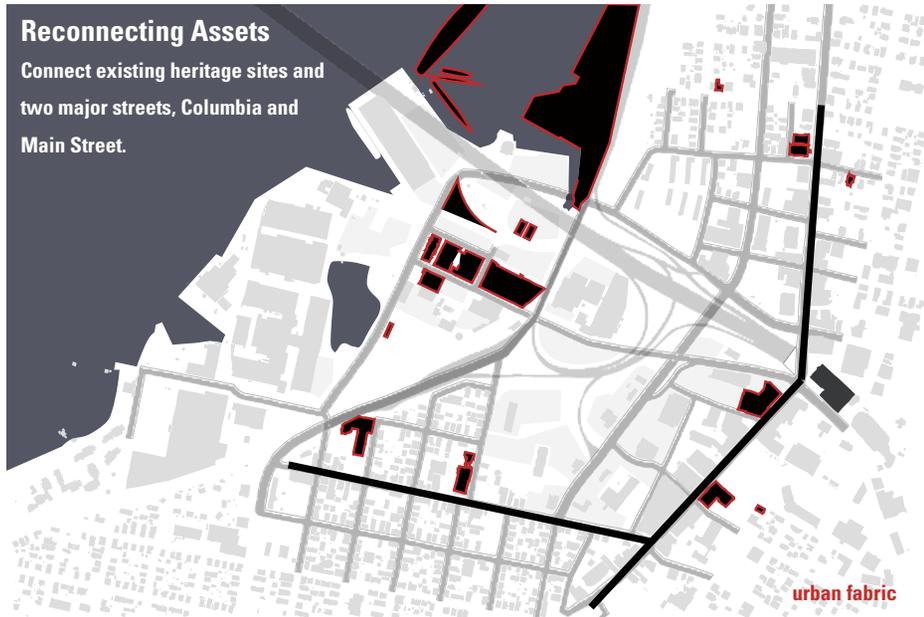
### 3. Heritage and Culture Core

Create a district that highlights the city's culture and heritage, providing new vantage points and physical connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

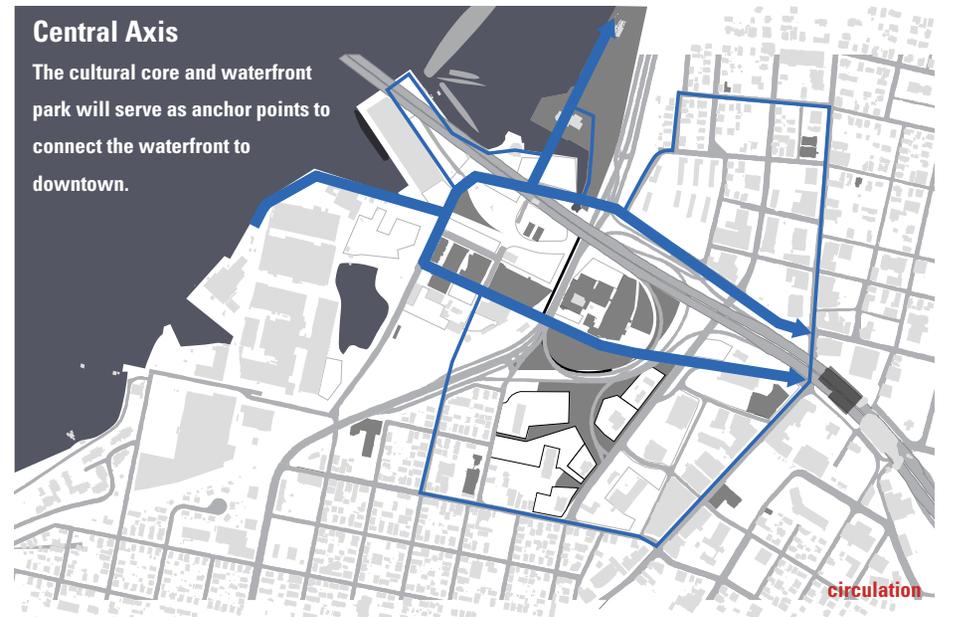
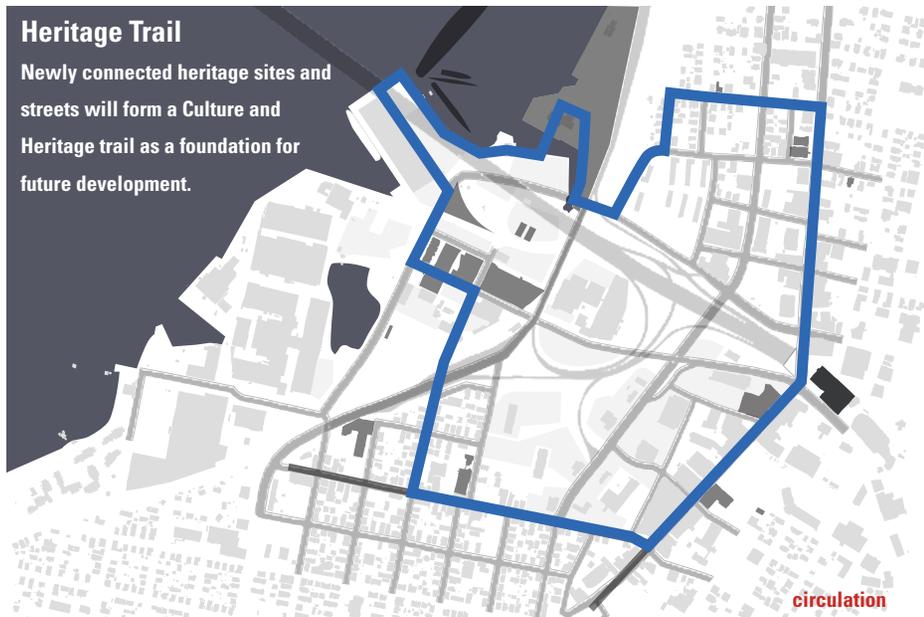
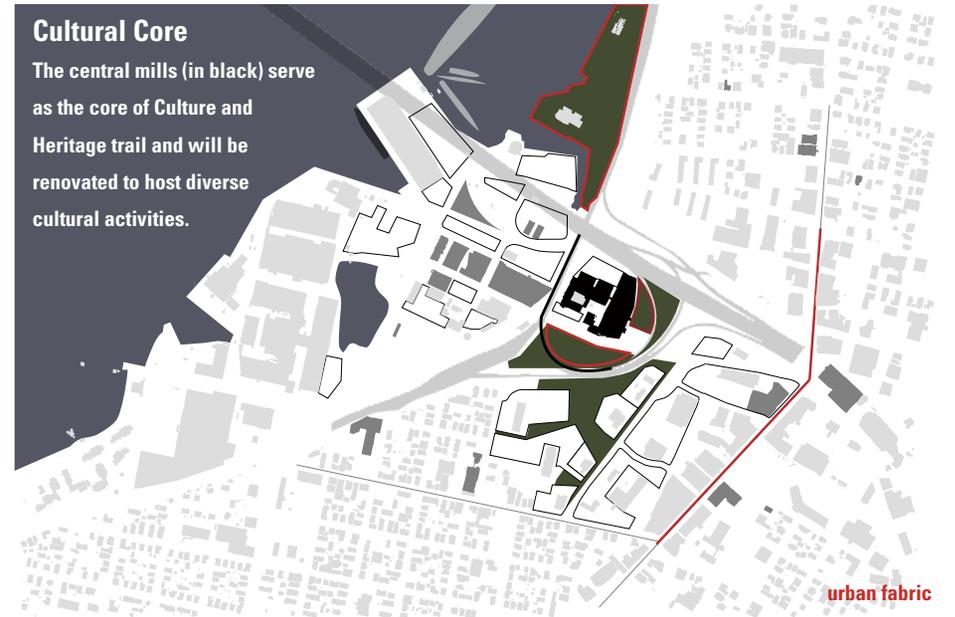
### 4. Main Street Corridor

Re-establish the downtown as a well-defined, high-amenity walkable urban district, and reconnect it with the waterfront.

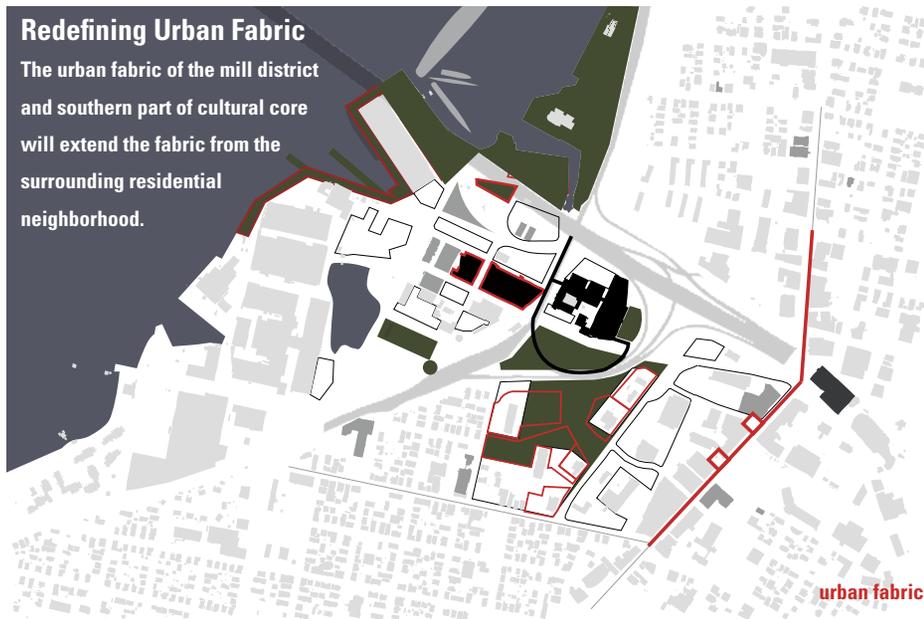
**INITIAL (immediate)**



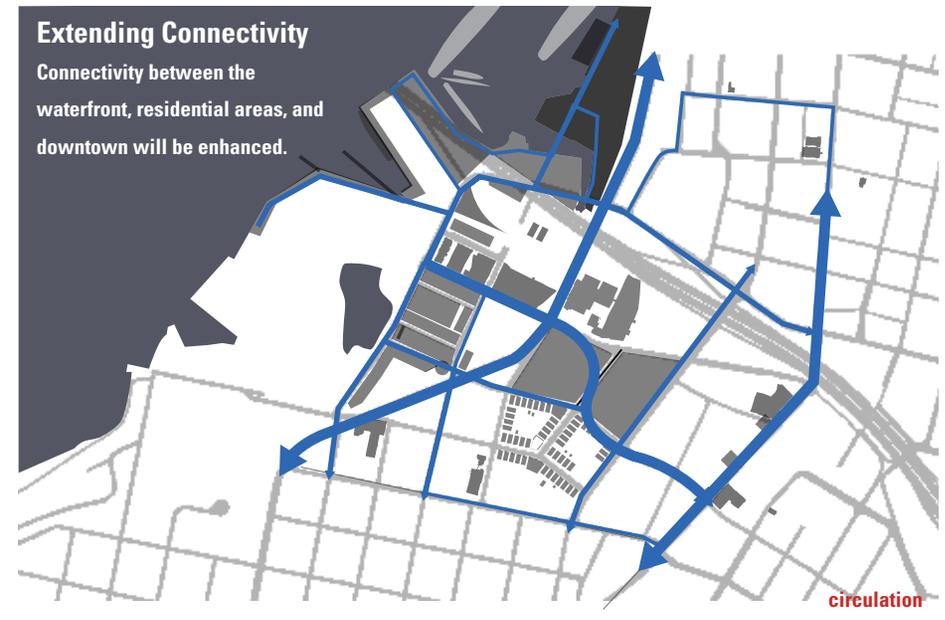
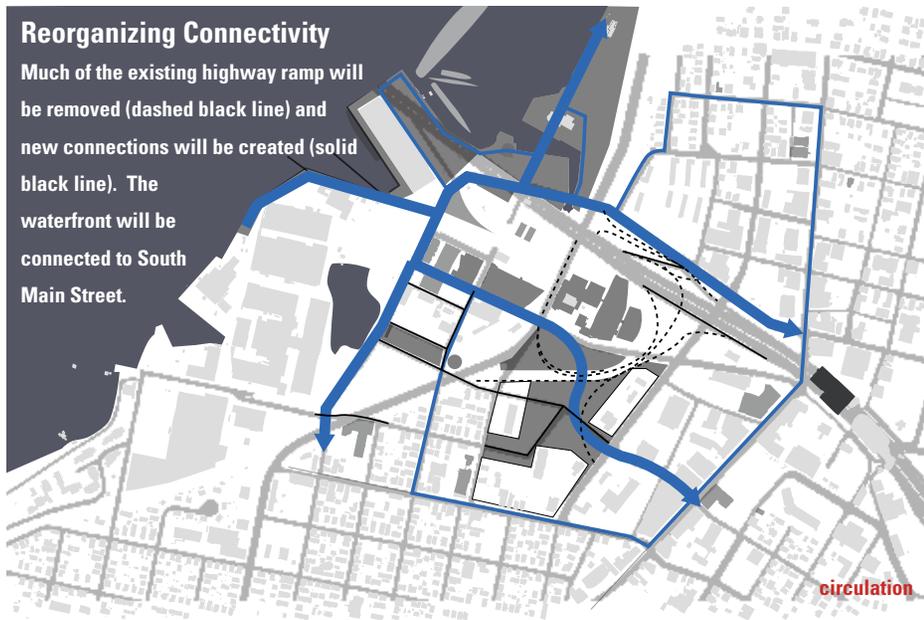
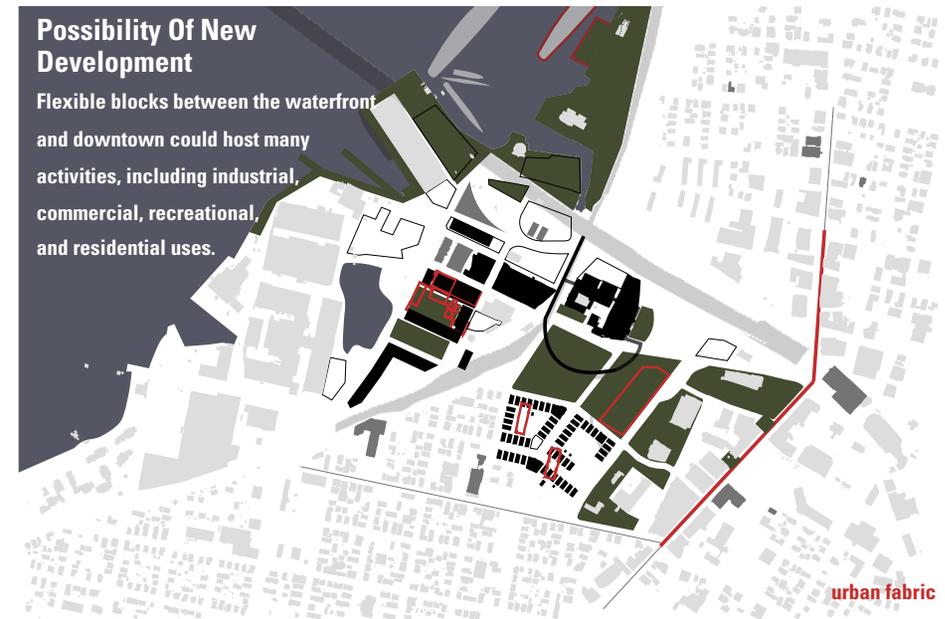
**CORE (near term)**



**NETWORK (mid term)**



**FLEXIBILITY (long term)**



# Heritage and Culture Core

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**FR**

The background of the slide is a stylized, semi-transparent red map of a city. A prominent red outline traces a path through the city, possibly representing a heritage or culture core. Within this red-outlined area, a specific region is highlighted with a blue border and filled with a dark grey color. This highlighted region consists of several interconnected blocks, including a large rectangular block at the bottom and several smaller, more irregular blocks above it. The overall aesthetic is modern and graphic.

## Heritage and Culture Core

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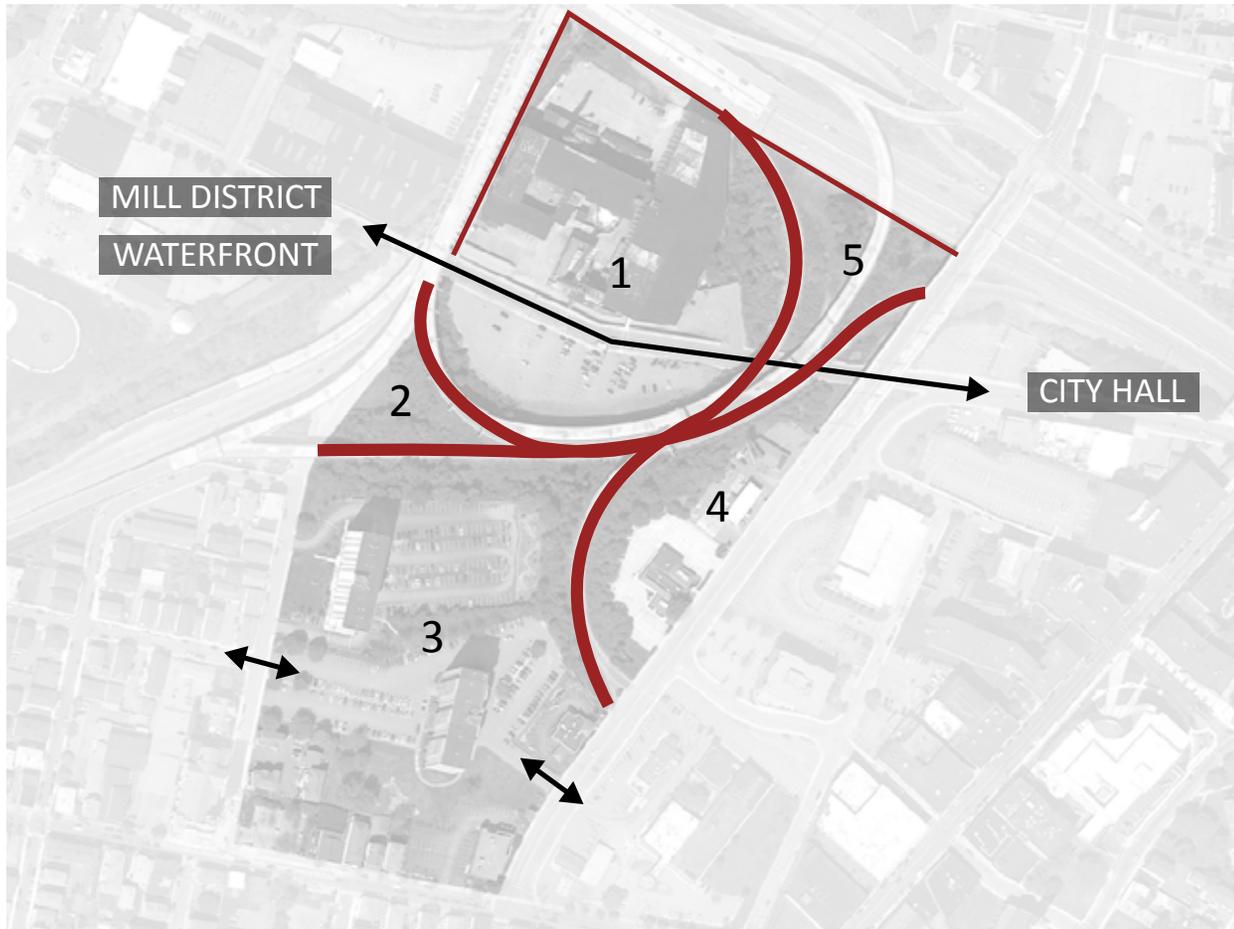
Although currently surrounded by the Route 79 elevated highway infrastructure, this area of the core is soon to undergo major change with the planned removal of the circular off-ramps that in large part define its character. The area's central location along the original path of the Quequechan River makes it an ideal location to highlight the city's manufacturing heritage and create a unique public space. Complementing the historic American Printing Company and Metacomet mills, spaces for public art, recreation, and connections to the water's edge will be key new features.

Rather than wholly remove the elevated highway ramp in this district, this proposal recommends preserving at least a portion of the structure to be reused as a pedestrian outlook, offering expansive views of the waterfront, Battleship Cove, and the Taunton River. The space beneath this infrastructure will be repurposed to create a rich layering of cultural and retail amenities. The highway infrastructure can become part of the Culture and Heritage Trail, highlighting the history of Fall River as users survey the area from an elevated perch.

## Connectivity Challenges

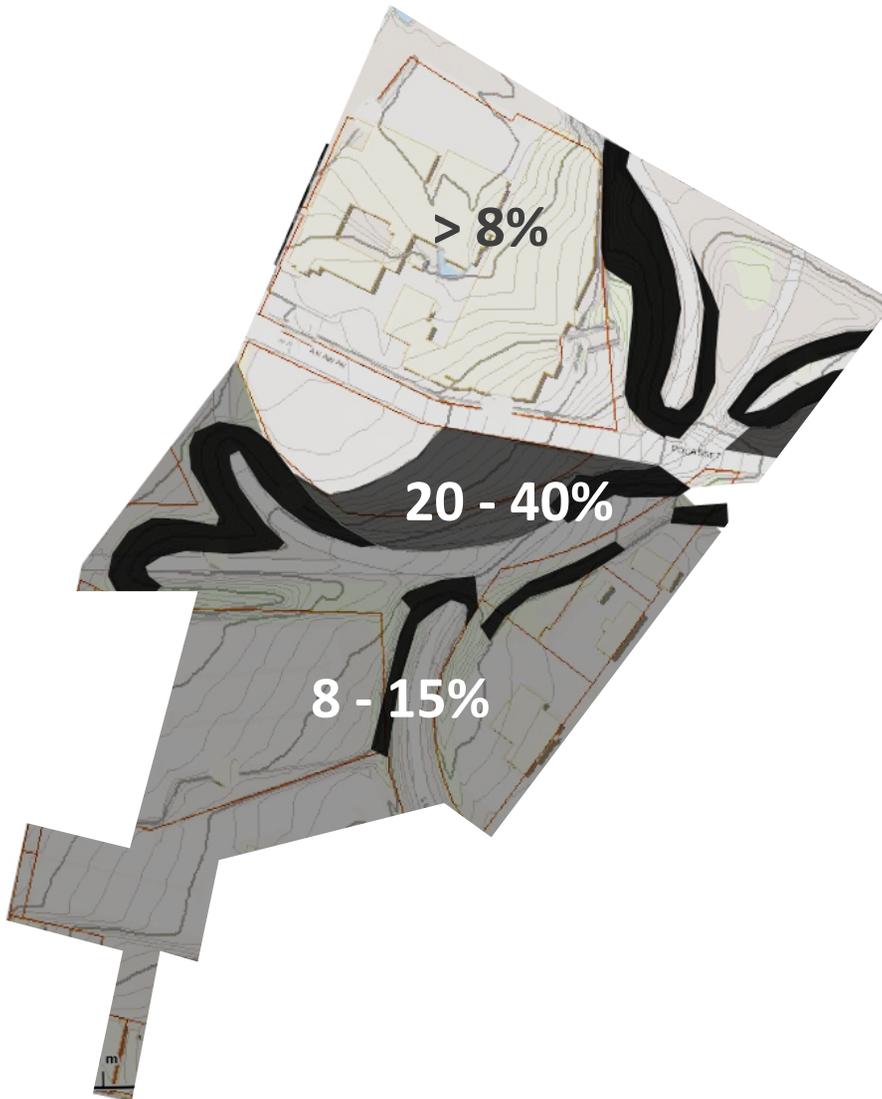
This area comprises a comparatively large block in the urban fabric and is divided into several pieces by highway ramps.

Currently, existing highway ramps, topography, and abandoned green space limit the connectivity between the waterfront, downtown, and residential areas.

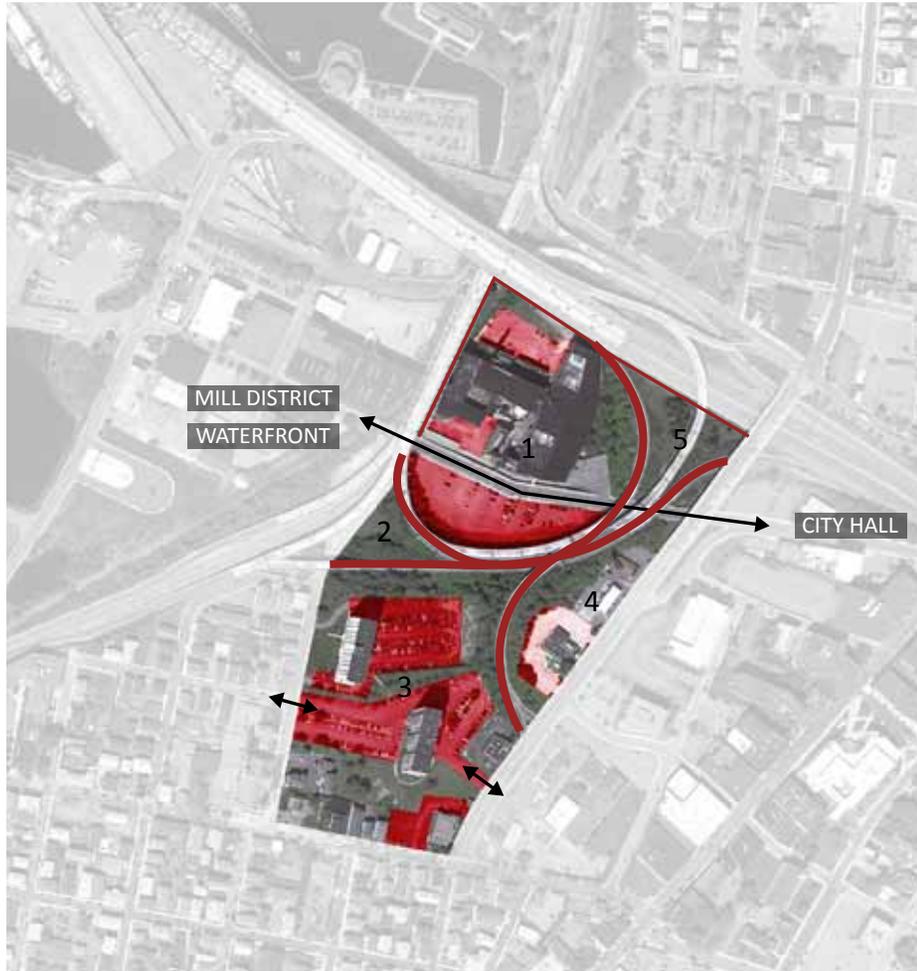


## Topography

The complex topography created by the highway ramps, waterfall, and infrastructure should be redesigned to enhance connectivity and create new programs in the Heritage and Culture Core.



## CULTURAL CORE



### Existing Conditions

Much of the site is used for parking and transportation (shown in red), as well as non-managed green space. Interstate I-195, Route 79, and highway ramps create strongly-defined edges and divide the site. This infrastructure dominates the site and serves as a barrier to pedestrian movement.



### Core of the Culture and Heritage Trail

The Metacomet and the American Printing mills will form a core node on the Culture and Heritage trail. By repurposing underutilized open space, this core can offer various cultural and arts-related activities. Part of the existing highway ramp (shown in black) will be preserved for future use.



### Extension of the Core

The southern area of the site will be reconnected to its surrounding urban fabric, opening new pathways from the waterfront into nearby residential areas and to Main Street. Preserving a portion of the highway will offer a unique experience for visitors with an elevated vista and new programs, while creating a critical connection point from the southern part of the site to northern edge.



### Potential New Development

Enhanced connectivity and a redefined urban fabric will create a more suitable environment for development and an opportunity to better define the neighborhood. The southern edge has great potential to shift from underutilized green space into fine-grained development that merges with the surrounding neighborhood.

http://www.dcfiamenco.com/madrid/d6102005g.jpg



www.superstock.com

## Elevated Highway Elements

(Above left and right) Iconic vertical circulation elements can be added the exterior of a building with minimal impact on the building itself. This type of circulation would be appropriate to provide pedestrian access to the elevated highway walk at a relatively low cost and with minimal permanent change to the existing infrastructure.

(Opposite) New York's High Line park is an excellent example of how repurposing a disused element of the city can provide a successful public amenity and new civic space that offers a unique perspective on the city. An elevated freight rail line built along the west side of Manhattan in the 1930s, service stopped on the line in 1980. It reopened as a park in 2009.

## Phase 1:

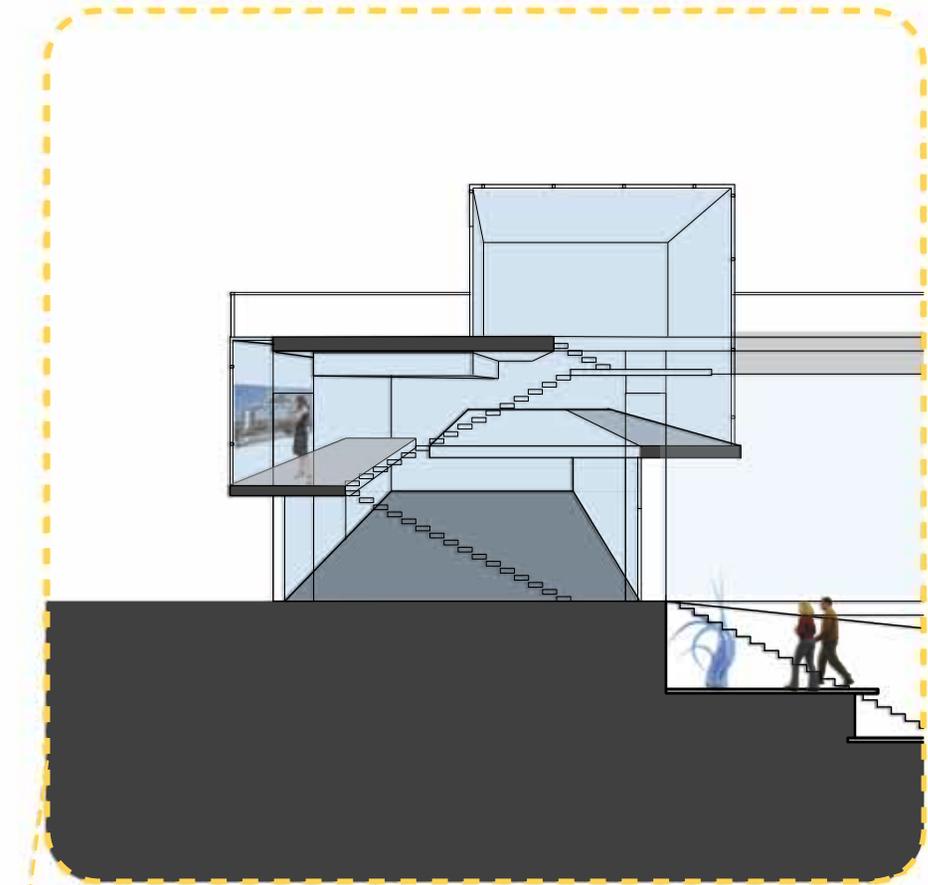
Identify funds to maintain existing highway infrastructure, including safety upgrades, cleaning, and painting. Place greenery on the elevated promenade and create a temporary scaffolding to allow for access. Activate the space below the highway using activities such as temporary food carts.

## Phase 2:

Convert existing parking lots into a green landscape. Start to construct a more permanent exterior amphitheater and storefront under the ramp. Attach scaffolding to existing mills or create a highway/mill roof walking loop.

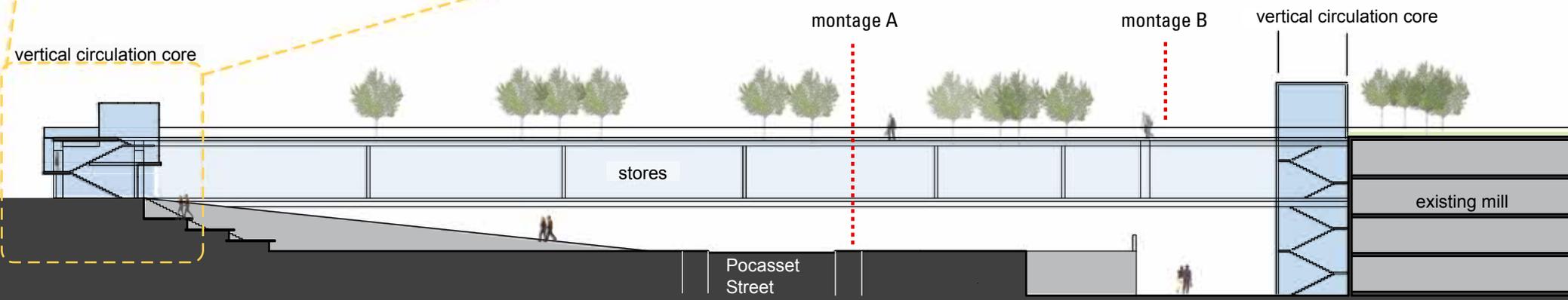


www.dezeen.com



**Phase 3: Section A**

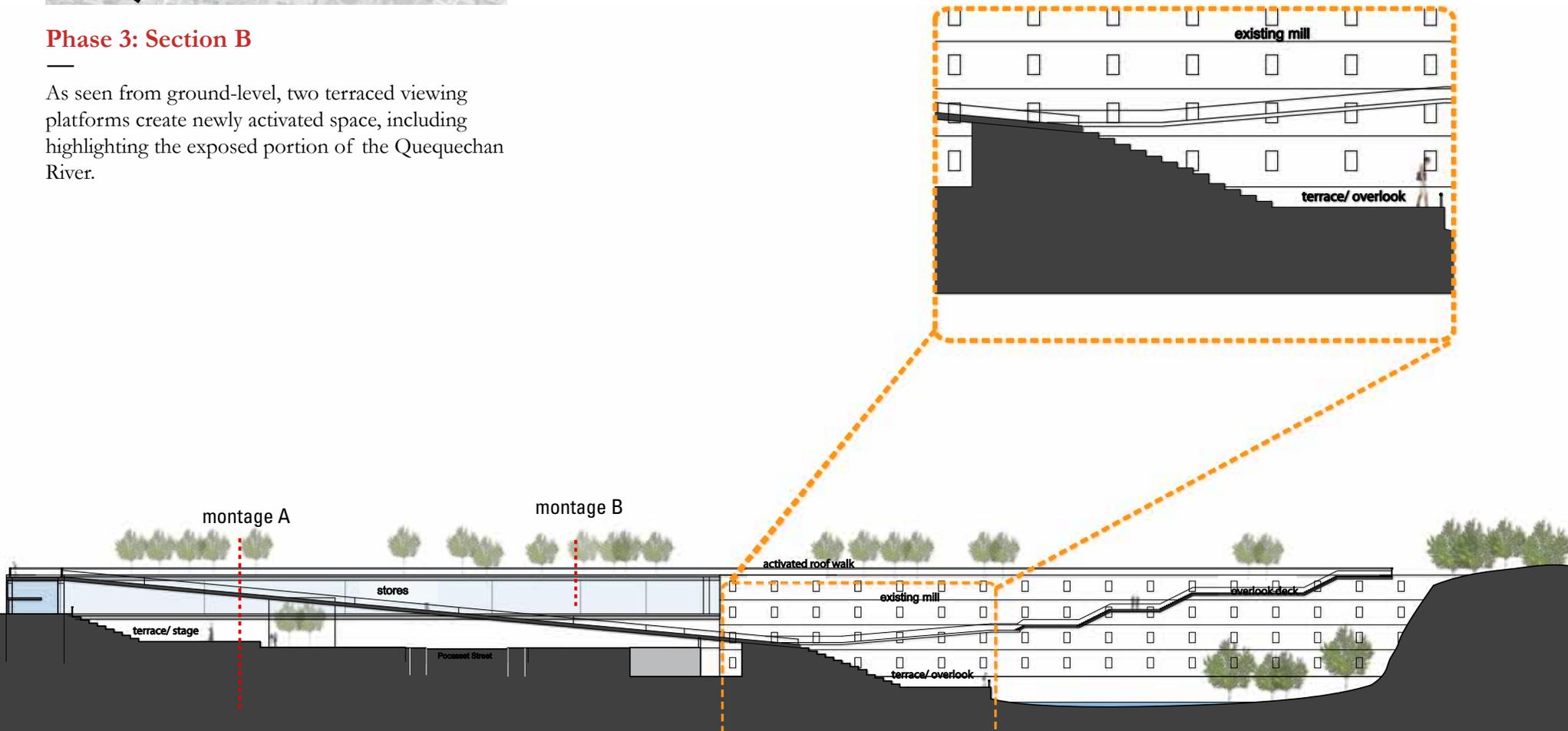
As seen from the highway overlook outside and under the highway ramps, a portion of the highway ramp should be preserved to allow for a unique elevated viewing experience.





### Phase 3: Section B

As seen from ground-level, two terraced viewing platforms create newly activated space, including highlighting the exposed portion of the Quequechan River.





*Current View of Pocasset Street*

### Phase 3: Montage A

Pocasset Street today is dominated by a large hillside parking lot. This area could be reused as a public space, amphitheater, and connection point to Main Street and the elevated ramp viewing platform.



### Phase 3: Montage B

The elevated Highway Walk overlook would provide excellent views of the Taunton River, Battleship Cove, the Mill District, and the Gates to the City. Information would be displayed along the walk, connecting this area to the Culture and Heritage trail.



# Mill District

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**FR**



## Mill District

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The Mill District is well-positioned to become a multi-functional, twenty-four hour neighborhood. It benefits from its proximity to the waterfront and Battleship Cove, Downtown Fall River, and the vibrant Kennedy Park neighborhood. Its building stock is comprised of brick industrial architecture, mainly from the late 19th century. These buildings are architecturally appealing and provide flexible floorplates for a multitude of uses. In the near future, the MBTA will extend commuter rail service to Fall River, with a station in the Mill District. Ferry service to Block Island, Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket will also commence in the future, allowing Bostonians to access several of New England's premier vacation destinations without needing a car or crossing the traffic-ridden highways and bridges.

These assets present an opportunity to develop the Mill District into a complete neighborhood with diverse uses. Proximity to existing centers of activity provide a strong rationale to physically re-knit the urban fabric between the Mill District and its adjacent neighborhoods. The new rail station will support transit-oriented development (TOD), including a high-quality urban experience for Fall River commuters working in Boston. New ferry service will be used to support existing retail, entertainment and tourism sectors, and to develop new businesses in these areas. To be successful, it will be necessary to develop a walking corridor between the future commuter rail station and the ferry terminal.

Continued Page 68

## Mill District Cont'd

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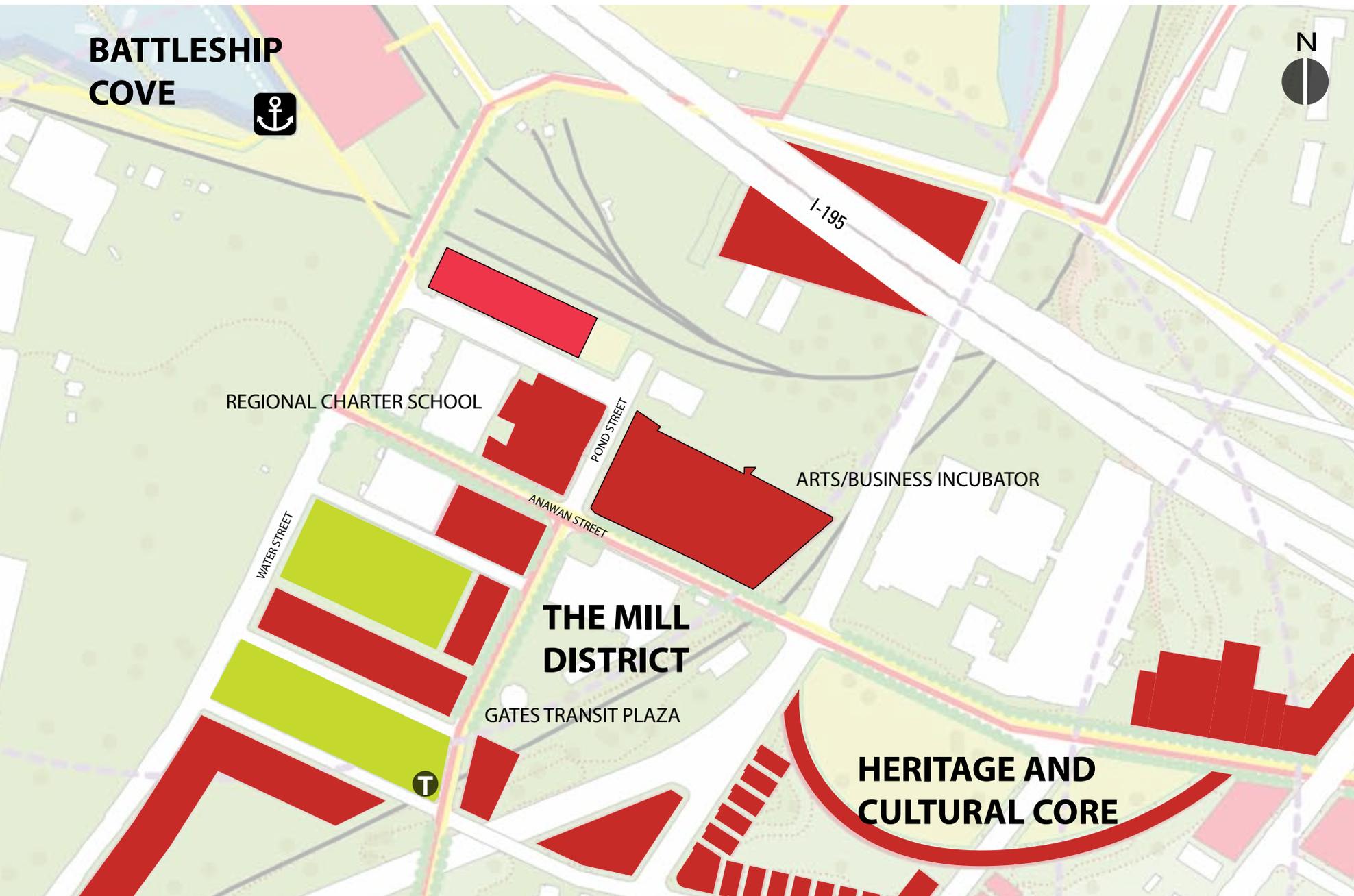
Social and economic opportunities must be enhanced within the Mill District if it is to achieve the critical mass of activity necessary to support a healthy neighborhood. In the interest of sustainability, particular emphasis should be placed on incubating new economic activity and social opportunity. Attracting one large tenant to fill vacant industrial space has proven an ineffective strategy. This suggests that encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity from within Fall River will be vital to the city's future success, particularly in attracting knowledge economy jobs.

The Mill District proposal has two phases. The first aims to develop the existing mill buildings into a business incubator. Building on the mill's existing tenant base, constructing new shared spaces (such as a flexible office space, a professional kitchen, and/or a workshop) will lower overhead costs for startups

and create an atmosphere where the cross-pollination of ideas can take place.

The second phase proposes conversion of vacant space into a magnet school and "opportunity studio." This idea follows a proposal from the City of Fall River's most recent Master Plan which called for a science and technology focused magnet school. Access to a high-quality public school is vital to attracting families to the Mill District and to providing children with the education necessary to open doors later in life. The "opportunity studio" will develop education and social capital among the larger community including immigrant services and job training.

Realizing this proposal will be an incremental transformation, and begins with four catalytic projects.



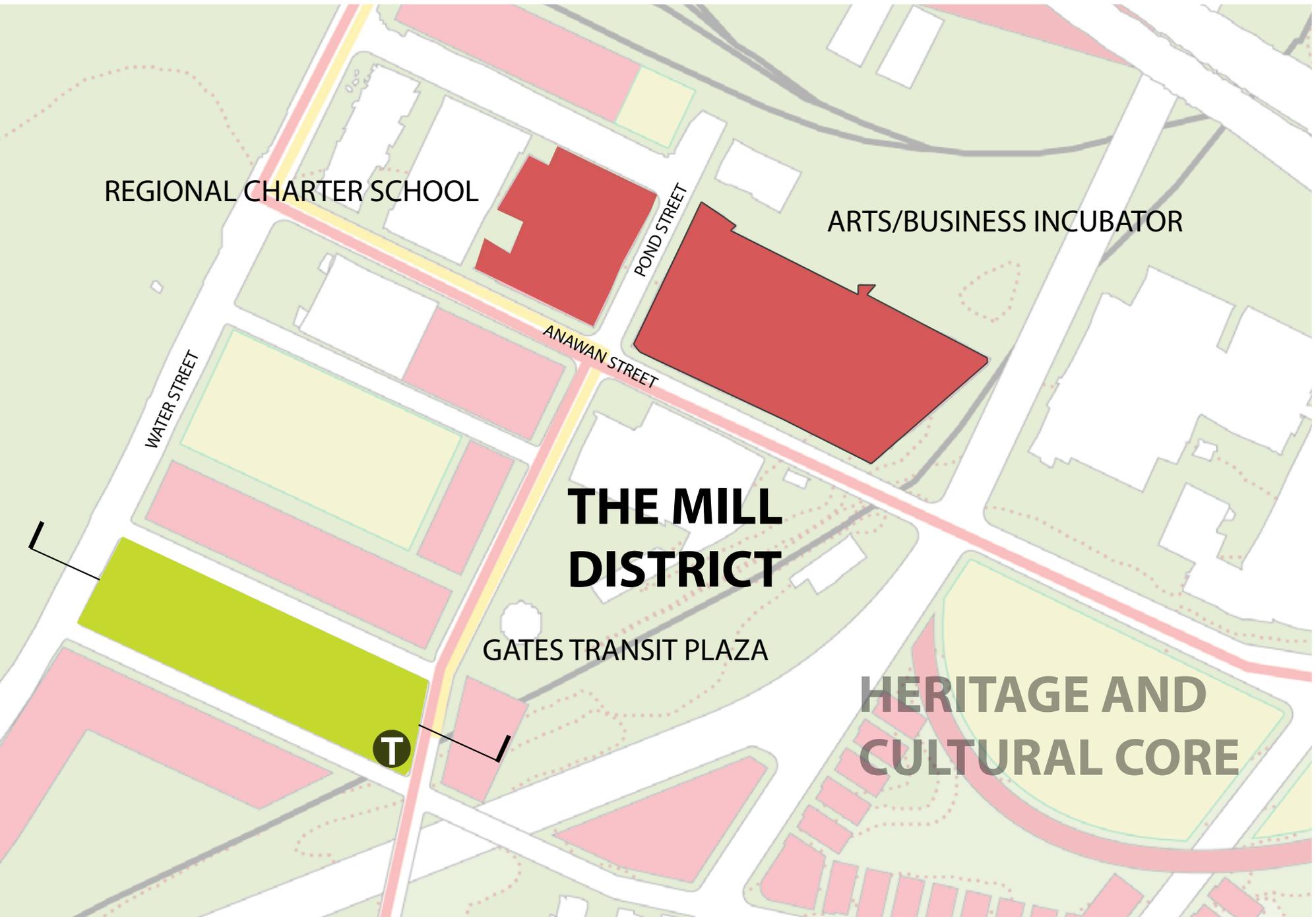
## Transit-Oriented Development

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Directly south of the historic mills, a commuter rail station will be built, giving Fall River an opportunity to capture the benefits of transit-oriented development (TOD). With both the rail line and the addition of ferry connections, this area will become a local and regional transit hub for Fall River. This hub will also provide access to other Fall River neighborhoods, including surrounding residential areas, the Main Street district, and the adjacent arts and culture district. An influx of travelers will provide a consumer base for arts, culture, and entertainment consumption. A connection between

the ferry terminal and the commuter rail station will traverse a vibrant new Fall River neighborhood, thriving with the activity of working, learning, and living.

This transit hub will be activated by the growth of the surrounding neighborhood and strong cultural presence of the Gates of the City and adjoining fountain. One comparatively affordable option for a passenger rail platform is a tensile canopy, which would provide a modern contrast to the historic Gates, while recalling Fall River's textile legacy.







### Tensile Fabric Canopies

As one possible solution for a passenger platform, a fabric structure would provide fantastic night-lighting opportunities, which can help showcase and bring activity to the plaza.



### The Gates Transit Plaza

As one possible solution, the transit plaza could be a celebration of both past and present. This space can be vibrant and busy, especially in the summer, with ample room for street vendors and serving as an ideal meeting place between the commuter rail and ferry terminal, or on route to the surrounding neighborhood.

## Longitudinal Section of the Gates Transit Plaza

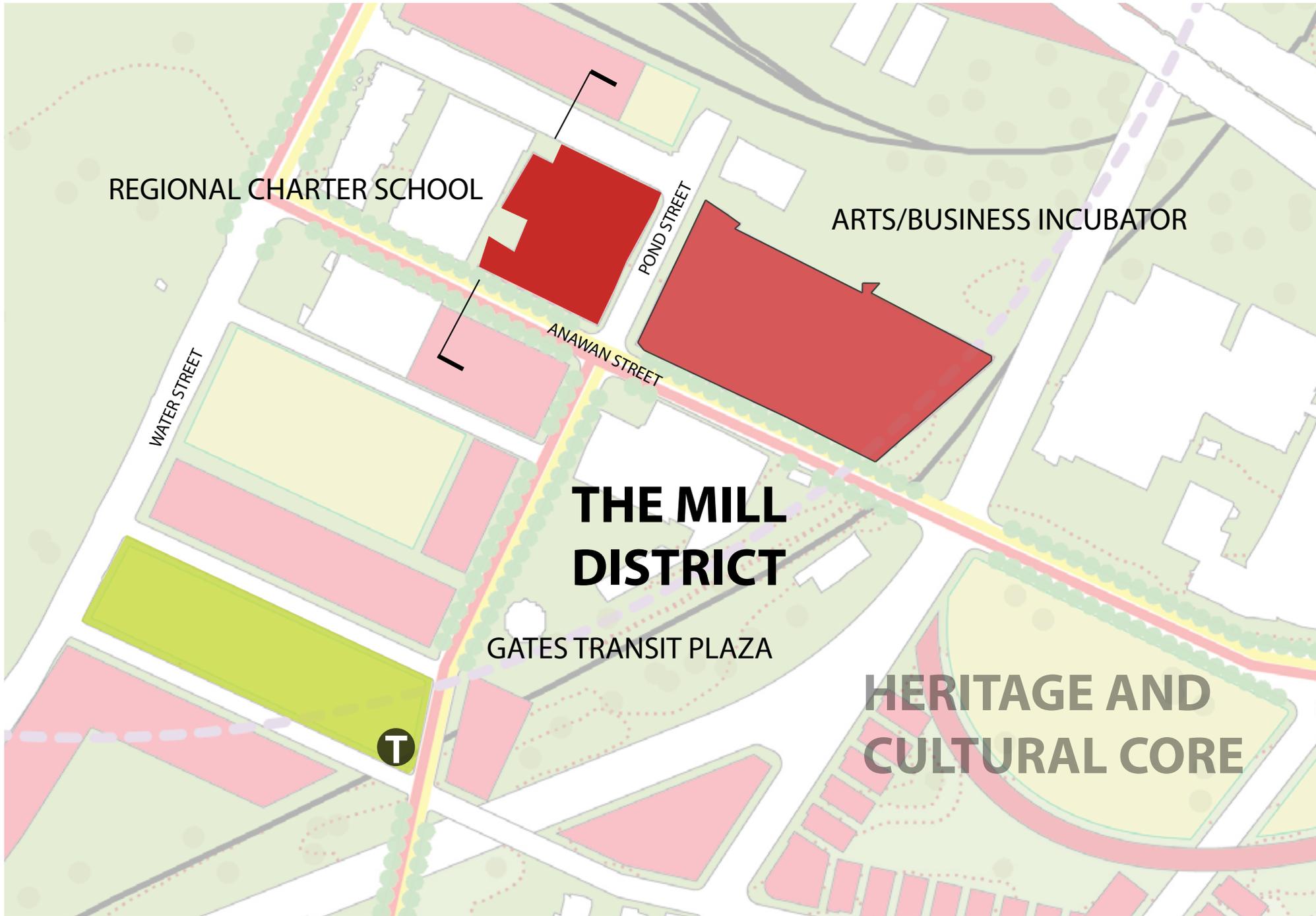
Passengers could emerge from the train platform beneath a light canopy and exit into an expansive plaza. Visitors would be able to stop at an information kiosk, and then proceed to their destinations. A vibrant, mixed-use urban environment would surround the plaza.

10m

5m

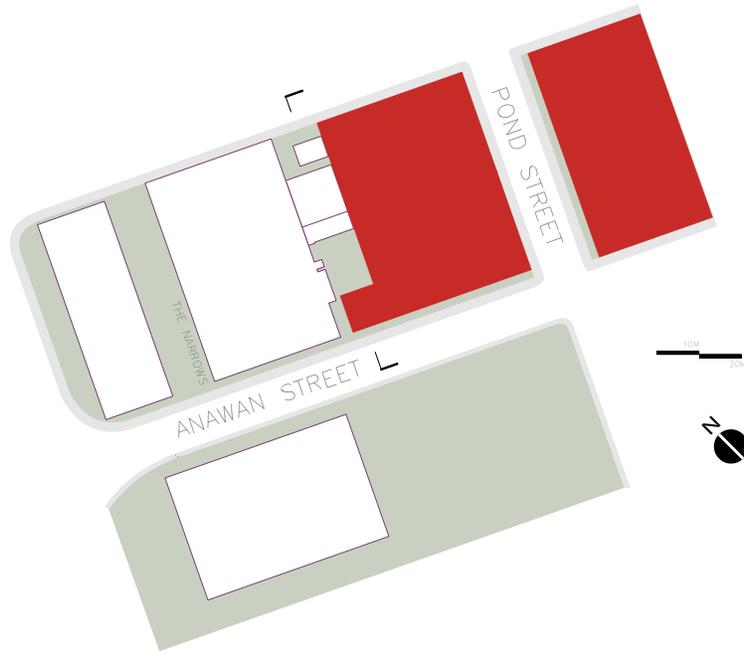






### Regional Charter School

Programming this area as an education hub with different educational opportunities will target multiple age groups, enabling an efficient use of classroom space throughout the day. Children’s education and daycare services would be provided during the day, leaving the space free to host adult education in the evening. Currently unused interstitial space between buildings could be transformed into a courtyard the building’s occupants. The connecting building between the main school space and the existing Narrows Center for the Arts could be used as locker space and corridor to connect the Narrows to the school. This physical connection would foster potential partnerships between residents, artists, and students at the school. Students would also benefit from interaction and partnerships with artists and professionals operating in the business incubator catalyst building across the street at 410 Anawan.



*Section through the Opportunity Studio.*

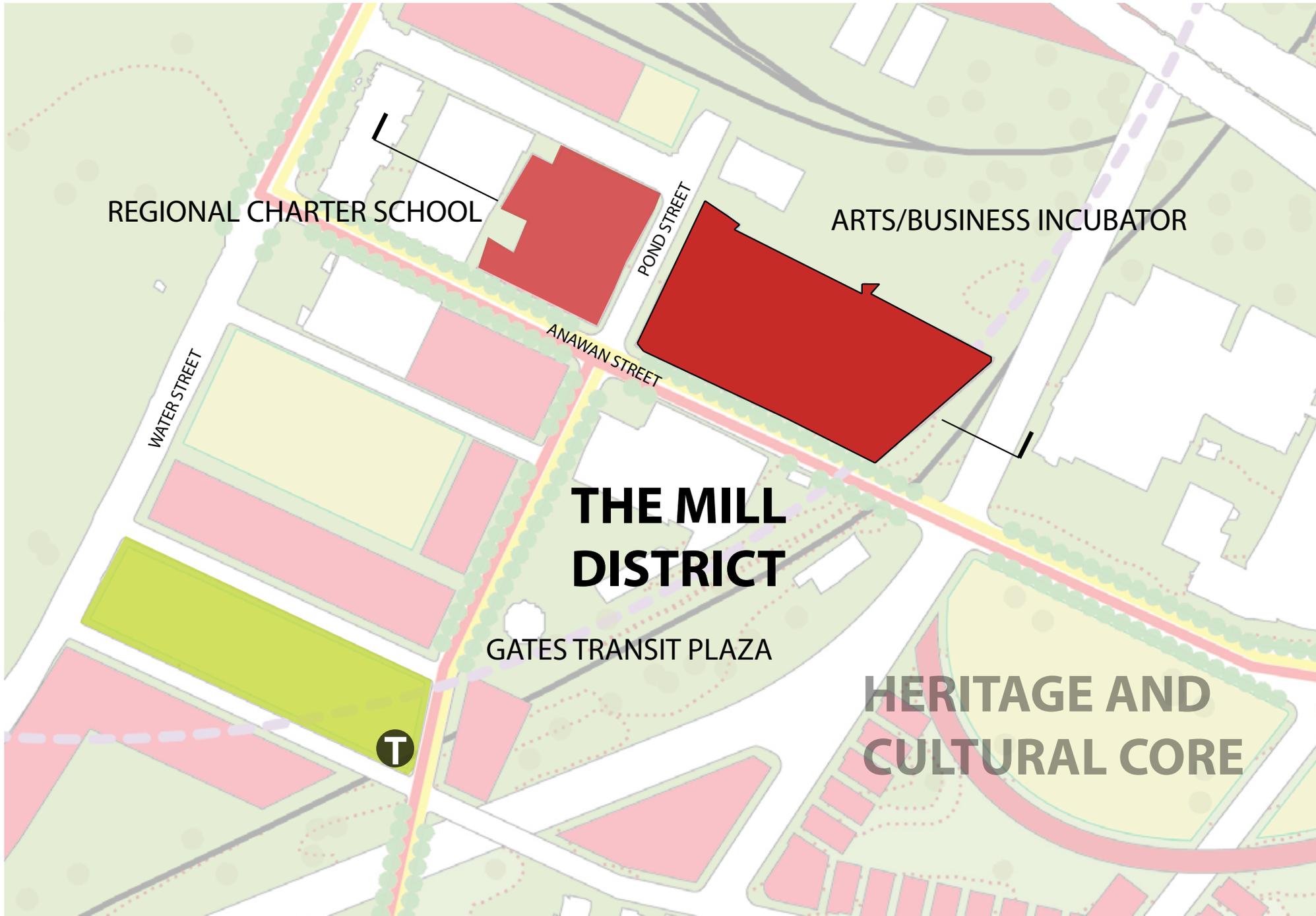




*Current  
Anawan Street*



*Future Rendering  
Looking Down Anawan Street*

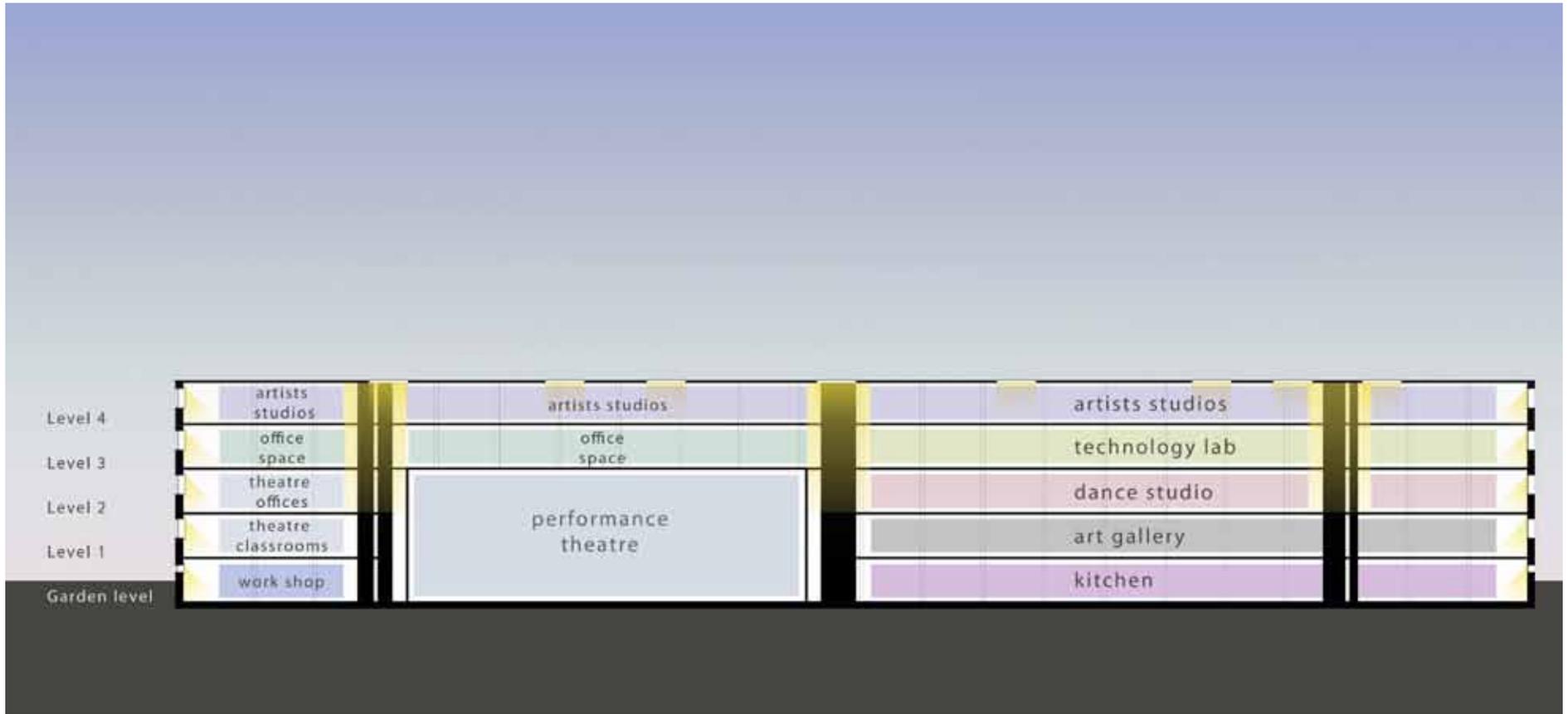


## Mill Reuse

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The last catalytic project is the arts and business incubator utilizing the Anawan Street Mill. The large amount of square footage provided within a single mill building opens up a variety of opportunities to build relationships between a diverse network of programs and businesses. These programs within the Anawan Street Mill will tie together so as to both contribute services to the community of Fall River but also to ensure longevity for the building. Amenities such as a shared kitchen can provide an environment that both promotes interaction between town residents and arranges meals for those in need.

A large black box theatre would not only be a valuable community asset, but could also serve as a meeting hall and reception space. Three separate art galleries, along with expansive sky lit artist studios, would assist the growing number of local artists and help attract other artists in the region to the area. An extensive technology lab and number of open office spaces complete space. The interwoven structure of the building encourages businesses to interact, share resources and expertise, and ultimately create a complex and integrated network.



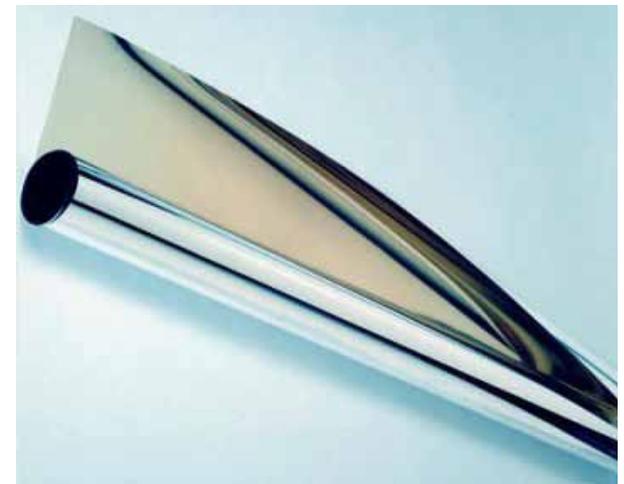
### Augmenting Daylight

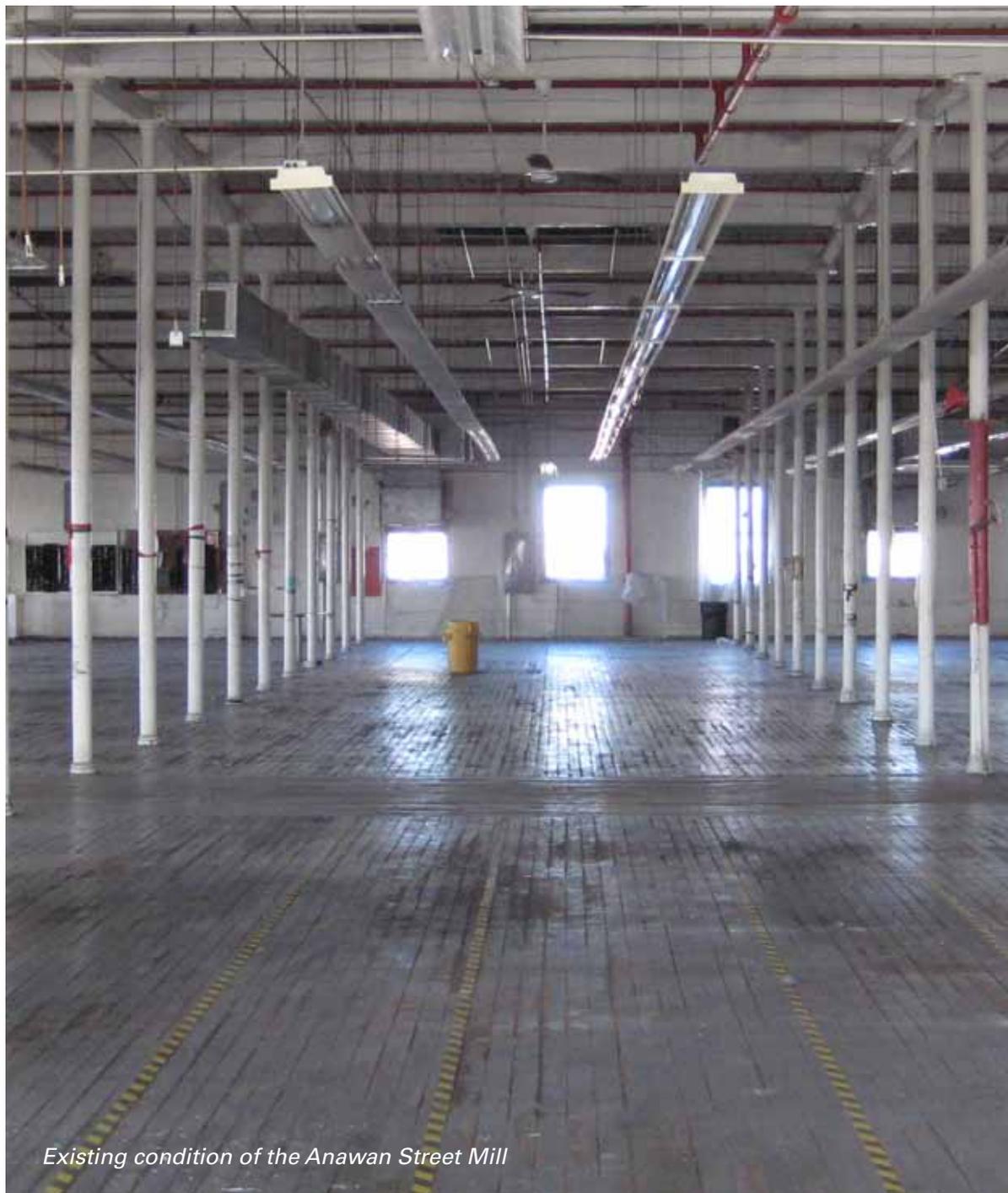
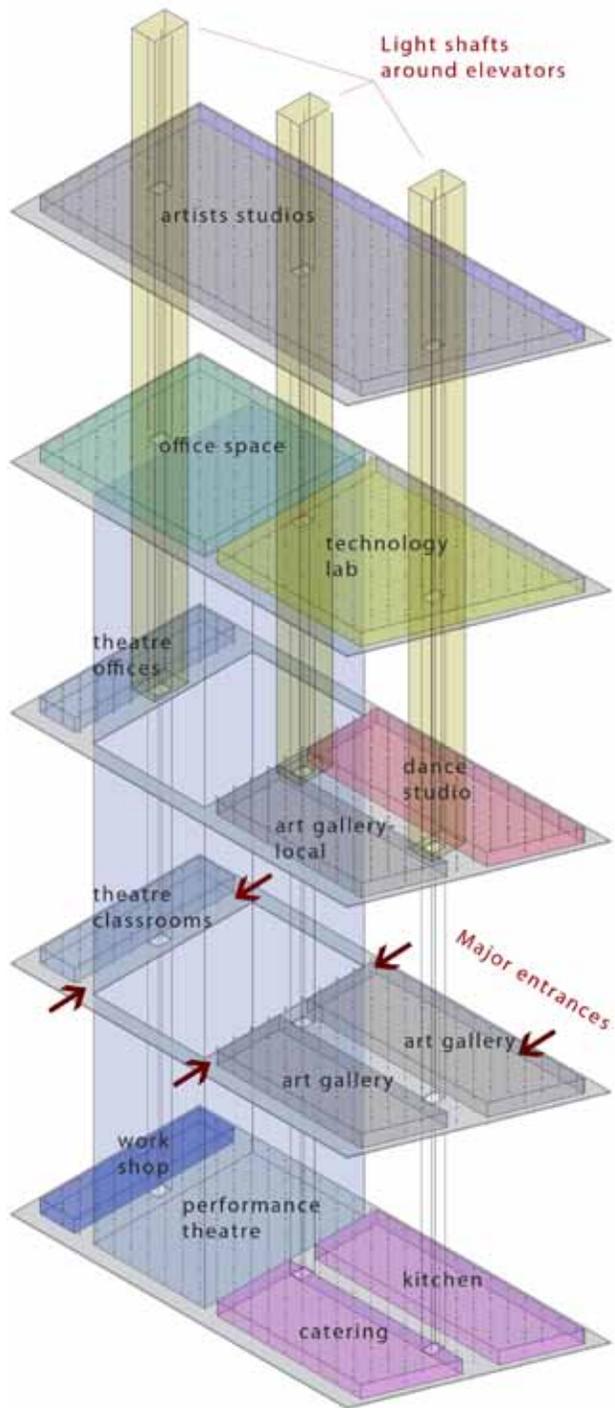
The majority of available daylight is from the building's perimeter windows. Additional light shafts will be created around the existing elevator shafts to increase the amount of natural daylight.

### Reuse Program

The programs within the Anawan Street Mill are located according to the desired amount of natural daylight.

*Materials such as 3m silver film and polished anodized aluminum can be applied to the outside of the elevator shafts to increase the amount of light distributed throughout the space.*

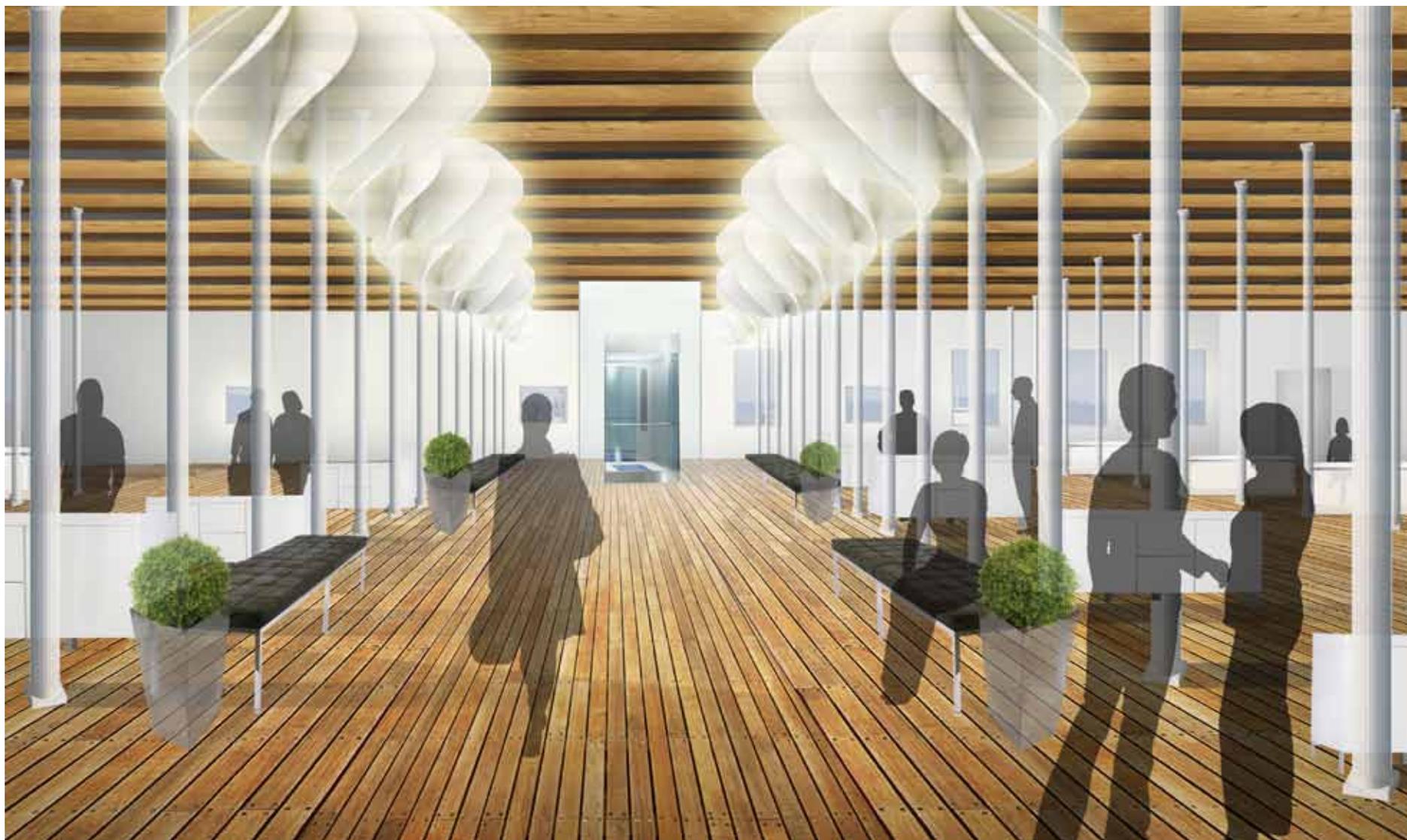




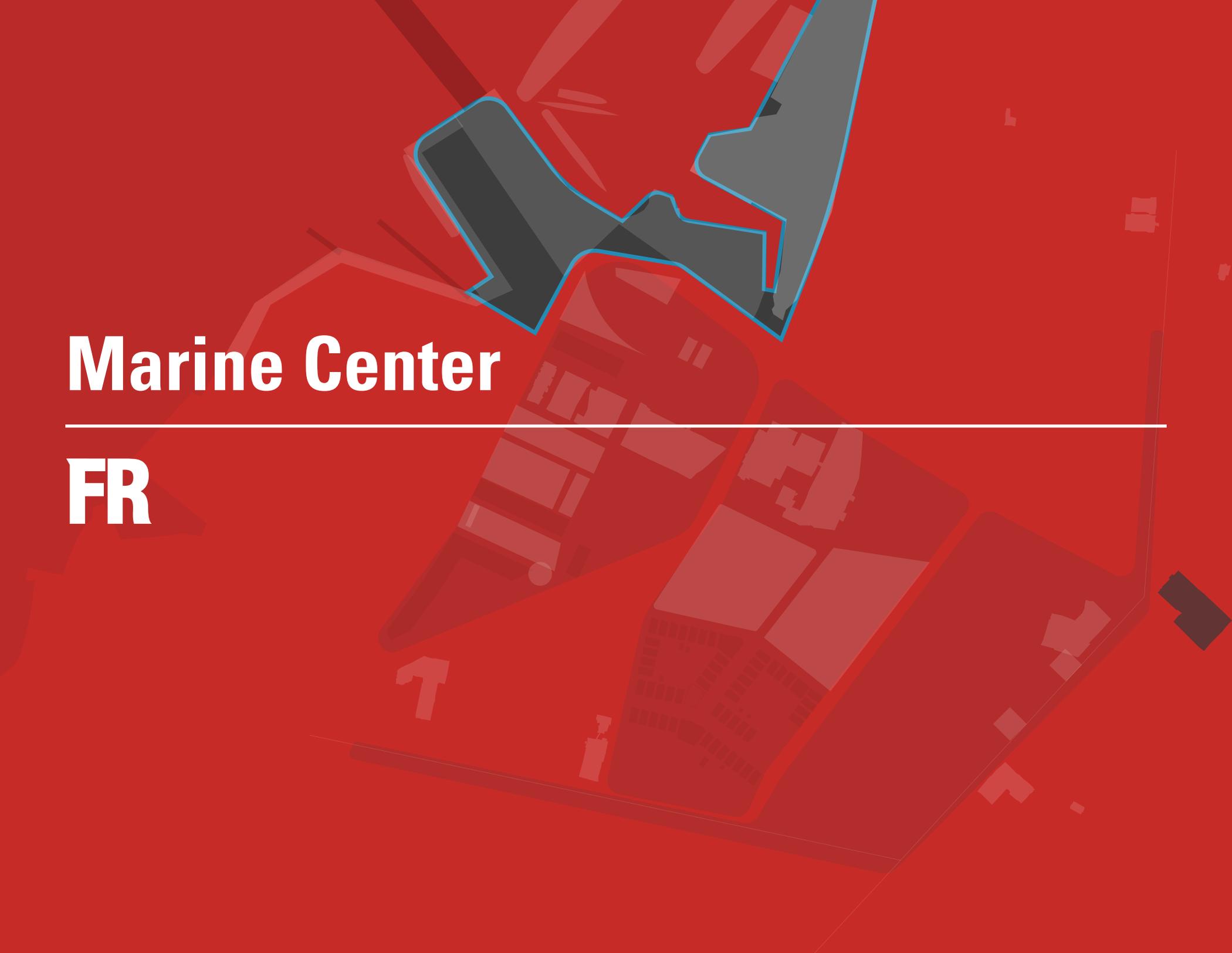
Existing condition of the Anawan Street Mill



*Transformation of Anawan Street Mill, restoring existing structure*



*Rendering of new tenant space and open office workstations*

An aerial photograph of a coastal area, possibly a harbor or marina, with a red outline highlighting a specific region. The background is a solid red color. The highlighted area includes a large building complex and a smaller structure to the right. The text 'Marine Center' is overlaid on the left side of the image, and 'FR' is overlaid below it.

# Marine Center

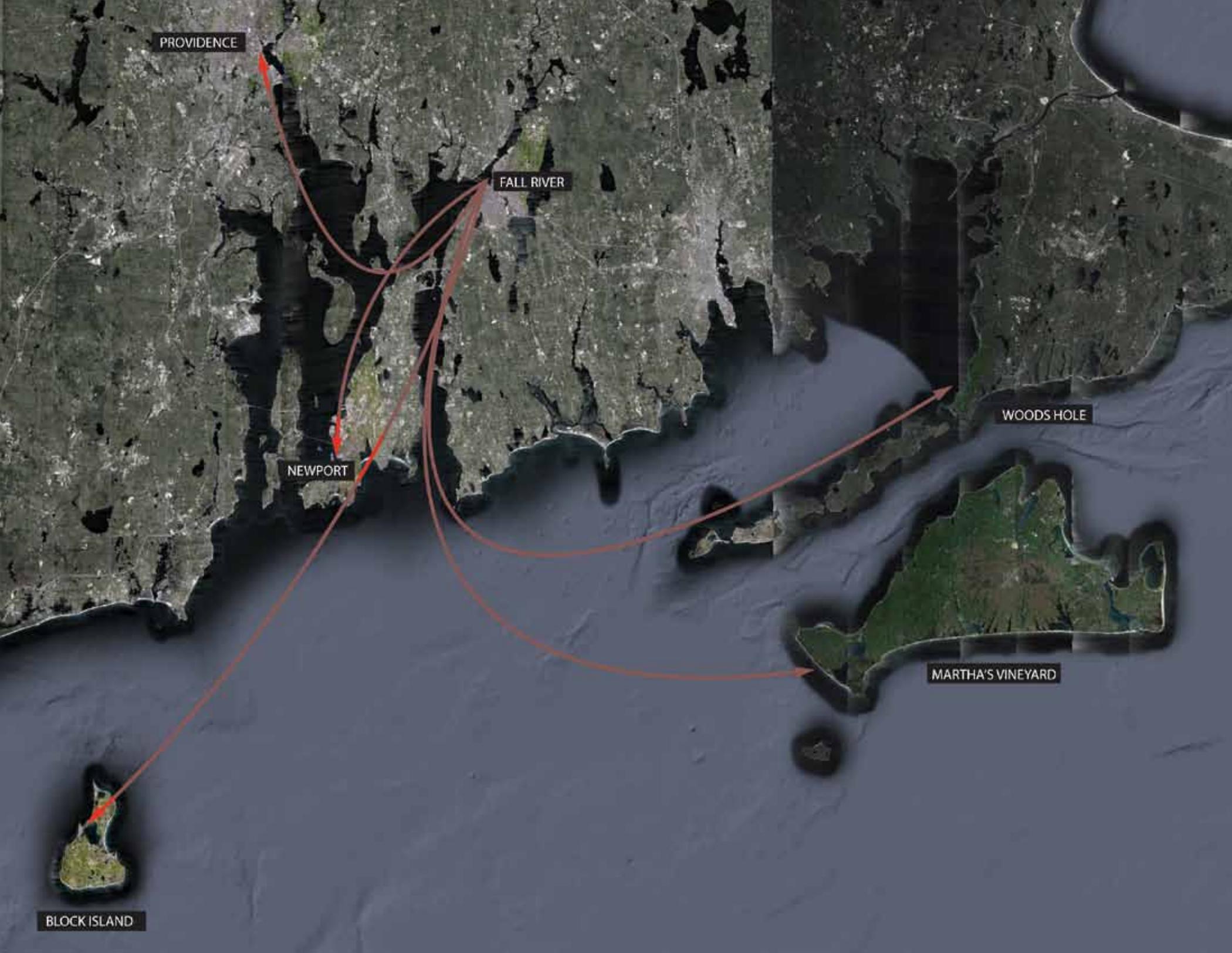
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**FR**

## Marine Center

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The Marine Center provides an opportunity to built on existing attractions and commercial activity by creating a new ferry service to connect Fall River to other coastal cities and leisure destinations. The site is currently home to an important tourist attraction, Battleship Cove, but there is an opportunity to better capitalize on this and other amenities in the area. The new vision for this site will serve a diverse set of users: tourists, commuters, residents and even commercial shipping operators.



PROVIDENCE

FALL RIVER

NEWPORT

WOODS HOLE

MARTHA'S VINEYARD

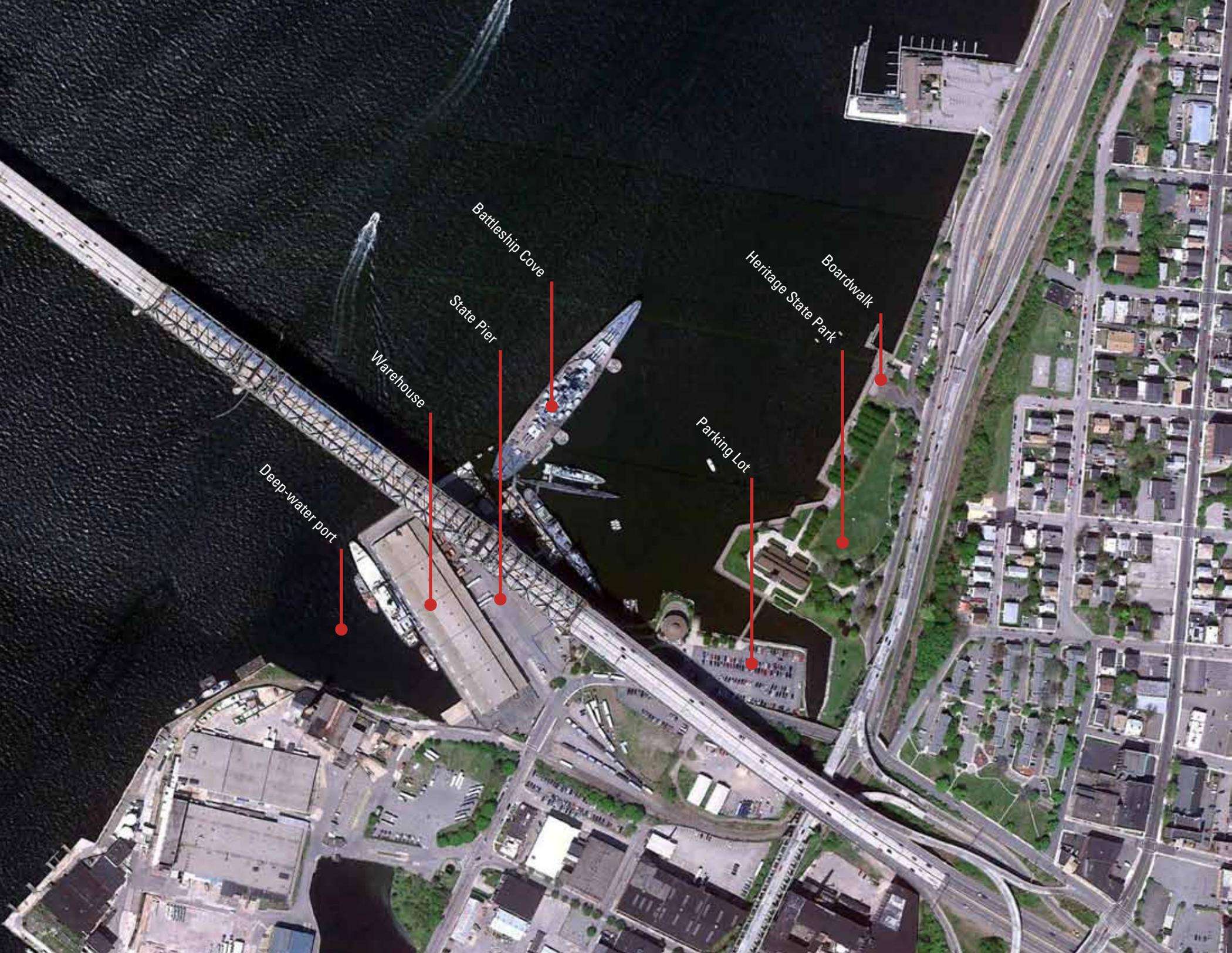
BLOCK ISLAND

## Possible Ferry Routes

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The state pier is a deep-water port and ideally suited to ferry service and shipping. With international trade and domestic shipping rapidly increasing, shipping is one important marine development option for Fall River, and could also reduce congestion. This development will give Boston, Gloucester, Fall River, New Bedford, and Salem an opportunity to re-establish a network of marine highways.

In order to accommodate new ferry service at the State Pier, this proposal recommends moving commercial shipping activity further south to a port between the bleach factory and marina. New ferry routes could connect Fall River to other local ports, Cape Cod, and nearby islands, such as Martha's Vineyard and Block Island. Fall River is well situated to receive traffic from the Boston and Providence regions. A phased approach to growth on the waterfront will help realize these new connections.



Deep-water port

Warehouse

State Pier

Battleship Cove

Parking Lot

Heritage State Park

Boardwalk

## Site Advantages

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### **Deep-Water Port**

The State Pier is a deep-water port and ideally suited to ferry service and shipping.

### **Warehouse**

There is currently a single warehouse sitting on the pier.

### **State Pier**

Currently the pier is used for commercial shipping on the south side and the battleships on the north edge.

### **Battleship Cove**

One of Fall River's largest tourist attractions, Battleship Cove comprises the world's largest floating battleship museum.

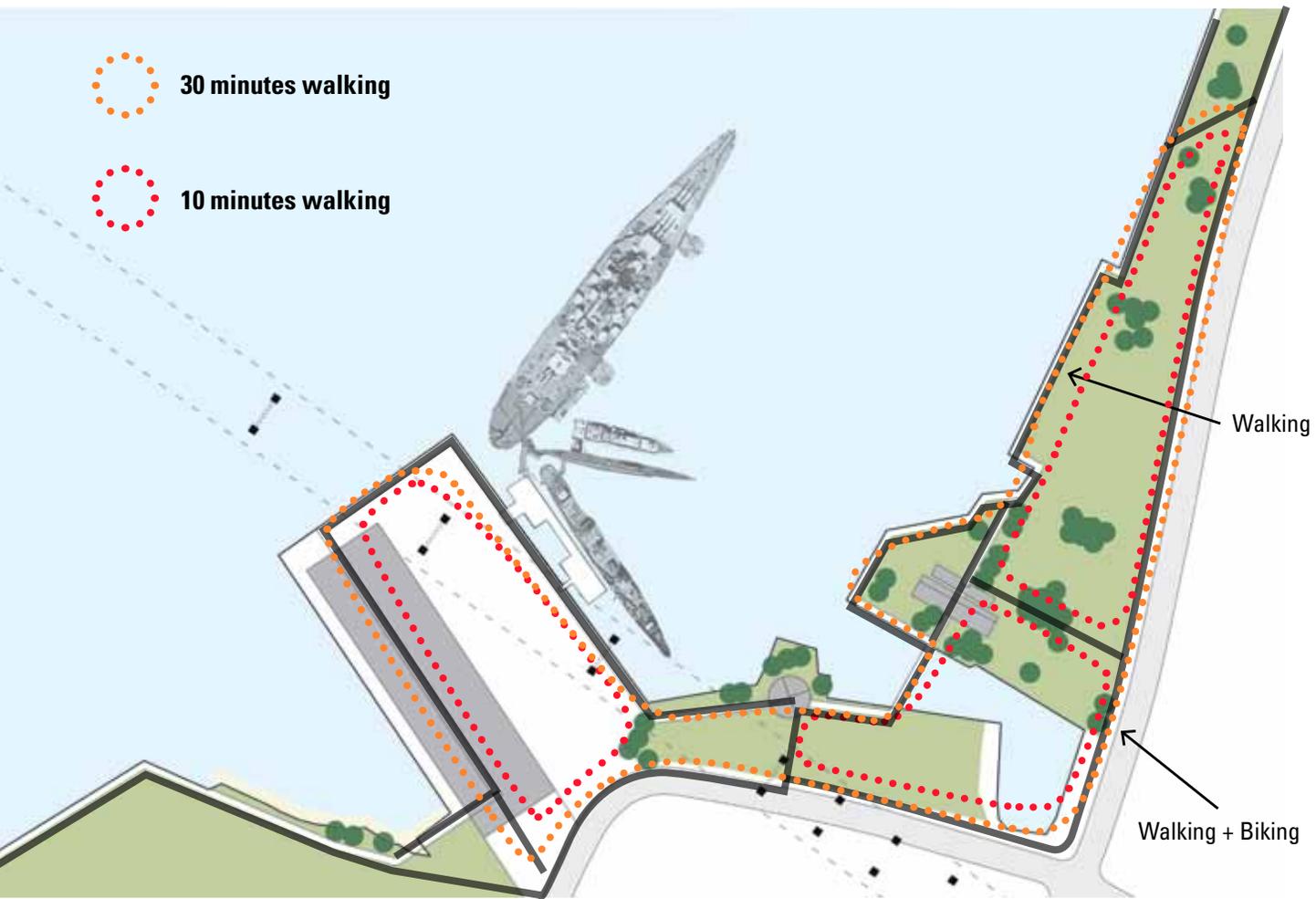
### **Parking Lot**

A large parking lot serves Battleship Cove in the middle of the site. This could be replaced with a higher density parking garage.

## Catalyst Sites: Marine Center

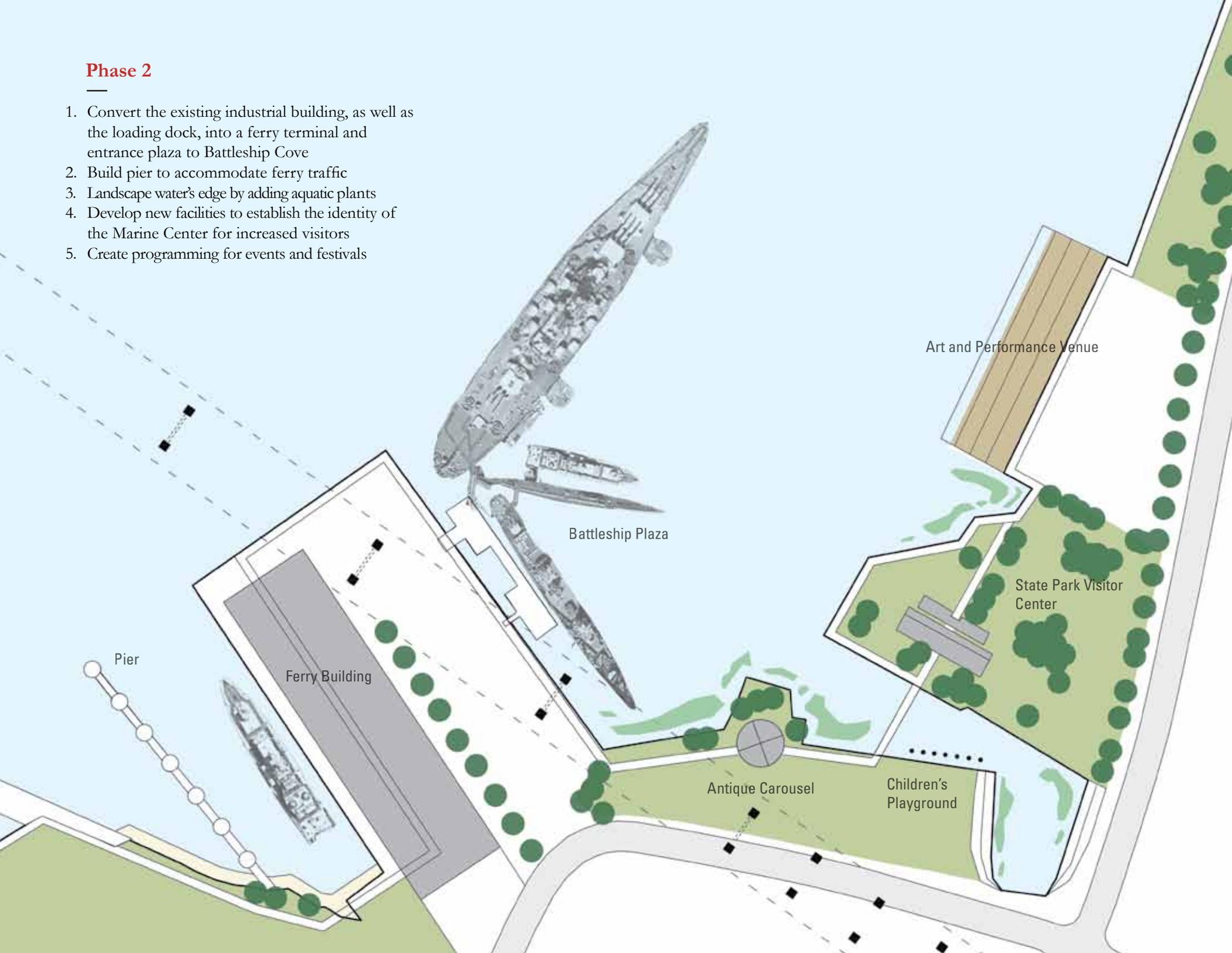
### Phase 1

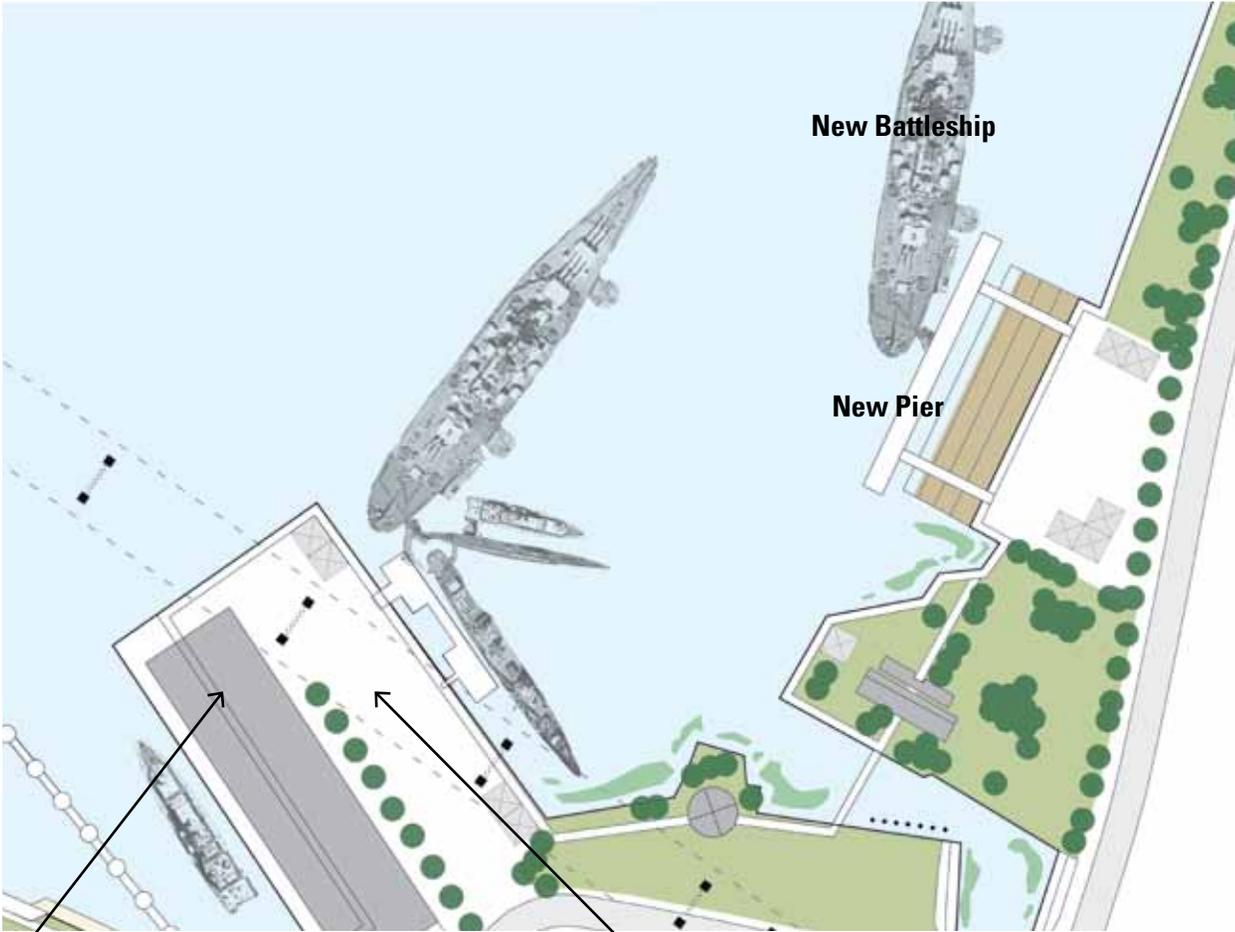
1. Clean site
2. Move commercial shipping
3. Integrate Battleship Cove and Heritage Center into the Culture and Heritage trail to connect the waterfront to other sites
4. Create a waterfront boardwalk
5. Add vegetation



## Phase 2

1. Convert the existing industrial building, as well as the loading dock, into a ferry terminal and entrance plaza to Battleship Cove
2. Build pier to accommodate ferry traffic
3. Landscape water's edge by adding aquatic plants
4. Develop new facilities to establish the identity of the Marine Center for increased visitors
5. Create programming for events and festivals





### Phase 3

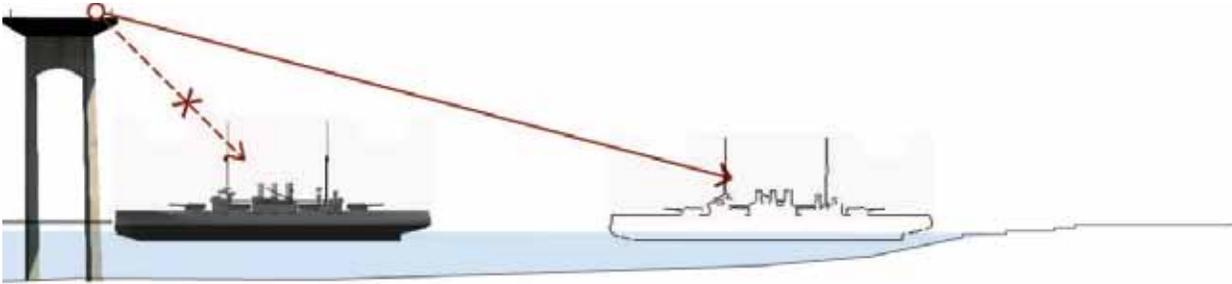
1. Develop additional programs for marine center (café, gift shop, exhibition space, children's center, and small market)
2. Move battleships further north to enable drivers on the Braga Bridge to see them while driving overhead





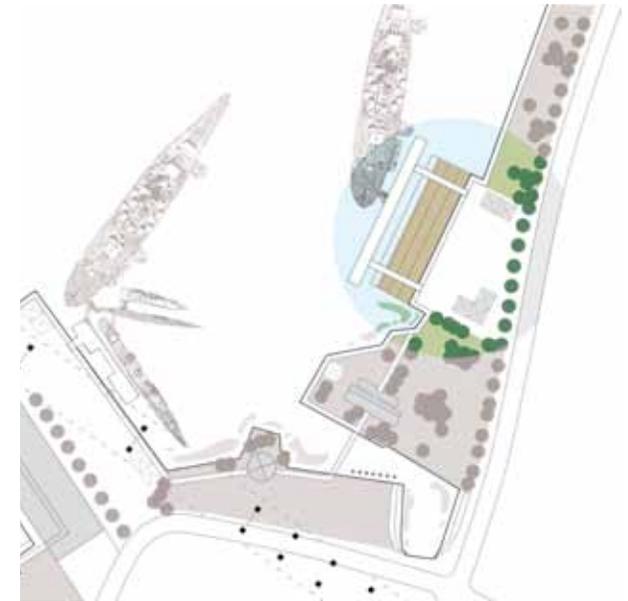
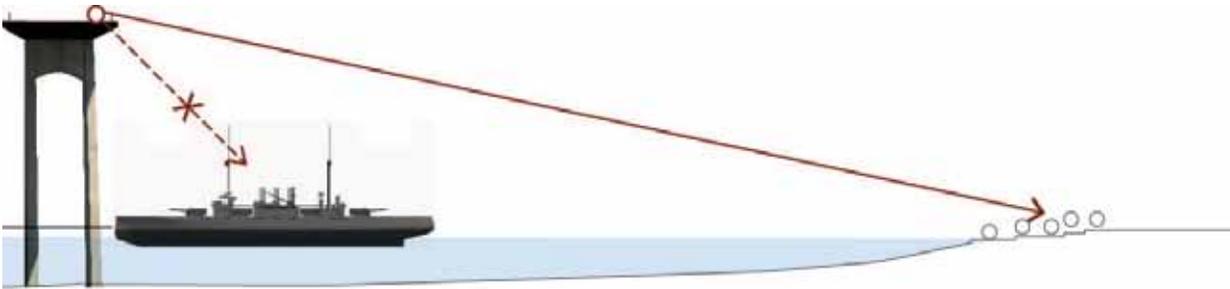
## Battleship Relocation

When driving to Fall River on the Braga Bridge, it is difficult to see Battleship Cove. To highlight this attraction, one or more battleships could be moved toward Heritage State Park in order to provide a better viewing angle from the bridge.



### Activity Programming

With the magnificent background of the water, the bridge and the battleships, the proposed plaza in Heritage State Park is an ideal place to hold large outdoor events, such as carnivals, concerts, and artist exhibits. It could showcase the activities of the city to people on the bridge and across the Taunton River, inviting them to experience Fall River.



*Event Center*



## Long-Term Vision

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Further programming will contribute to a full revival of Fall River's waterfront. Specific events will enhance a sense of local pride along the water's edges the city reclaims its identity.



# Main Street Corridor

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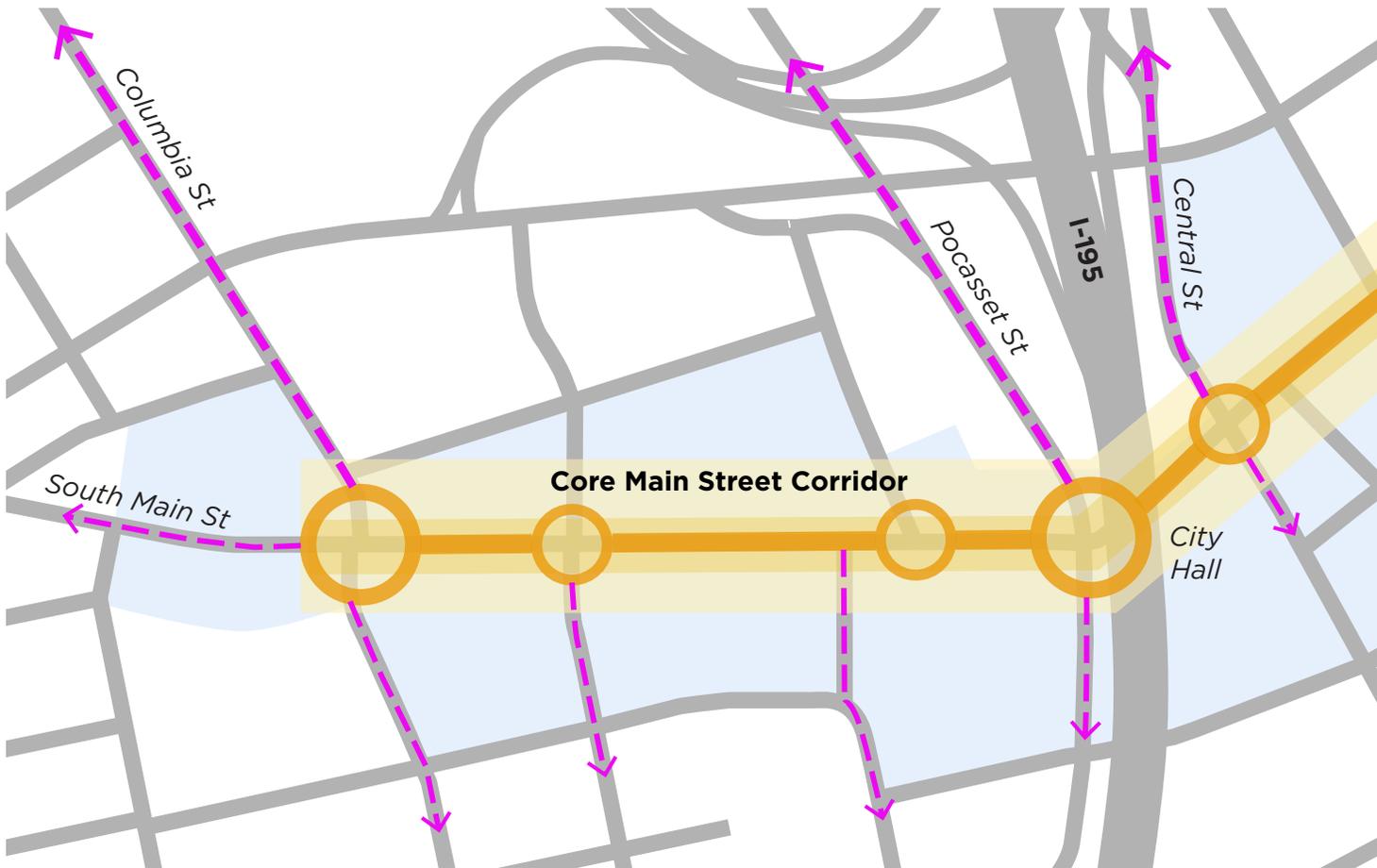
**FR**

The background is a stylized map of a city street grid in shades of red. A prominent red outline highlights a specific corridor that runs diagonally from the top-left towards the bottom-right. In the lower-right portion of this corridor, there is a dark blue shaded area with a light blue border. A white horizontal line is positioned below the main title. The text 'FR' is located to the left of the map.

## **Main Street Corridor**

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As the original civic and commercial heart of Fall River, Main Street has an illustrious past. While the corridor retains clues to its history, many traces have disappeared. Main Street has great potential to be reinvigorated through a series of incremental actions, many of which build on existing programs and trends in the city.



### Context of the Core

Fall River's downtown core occupies several blocks of South and North Main Street, and is home to a variety of retail, office, and civic uses. Main Street crosses the original course of the Quequechan River above the falls, the power source for the city's central mill district. The downtown core has suffered the effects of decades of suburban retail migration. Although some civic functions remain, such as the

courthouse and city hall, much of the downtown today is composed of quick-service restaurants, convenience goods (such as drugstores), daily services, and numerous vacant storefronts. While Main Street was once a center of civic and business activity for Fall River, the construction of Highway I-195 bisected the street, demolishing the historic city hall in the process.



## Character

This corridor forms an important node on the proposed Culture and Heritage Trail, and should be positioned as a walkable, high-amenity cultural core for the city. The physical fabric to support this function is in large part present, including human-scale buildings and density, historic architectural character, and several public open spaces. There are several opportunities to link the Downtown to the waterfront, through both circulation and visual corridors. Just one street northwest of South Main Street, the strong physical fabric of Main Street deteriorates, exchanging excellent pedestrian-friendly character for surface parking that surrounds isolated, low-density buildings.

1. View south along South Main Street
2. The historic Academy Building
3. Gerald Lawton Park
4. Government Center
5. North Main Street
6. View down Pocasset Street from Gov. Center

## Phase 1: Energy, Image, and Identity

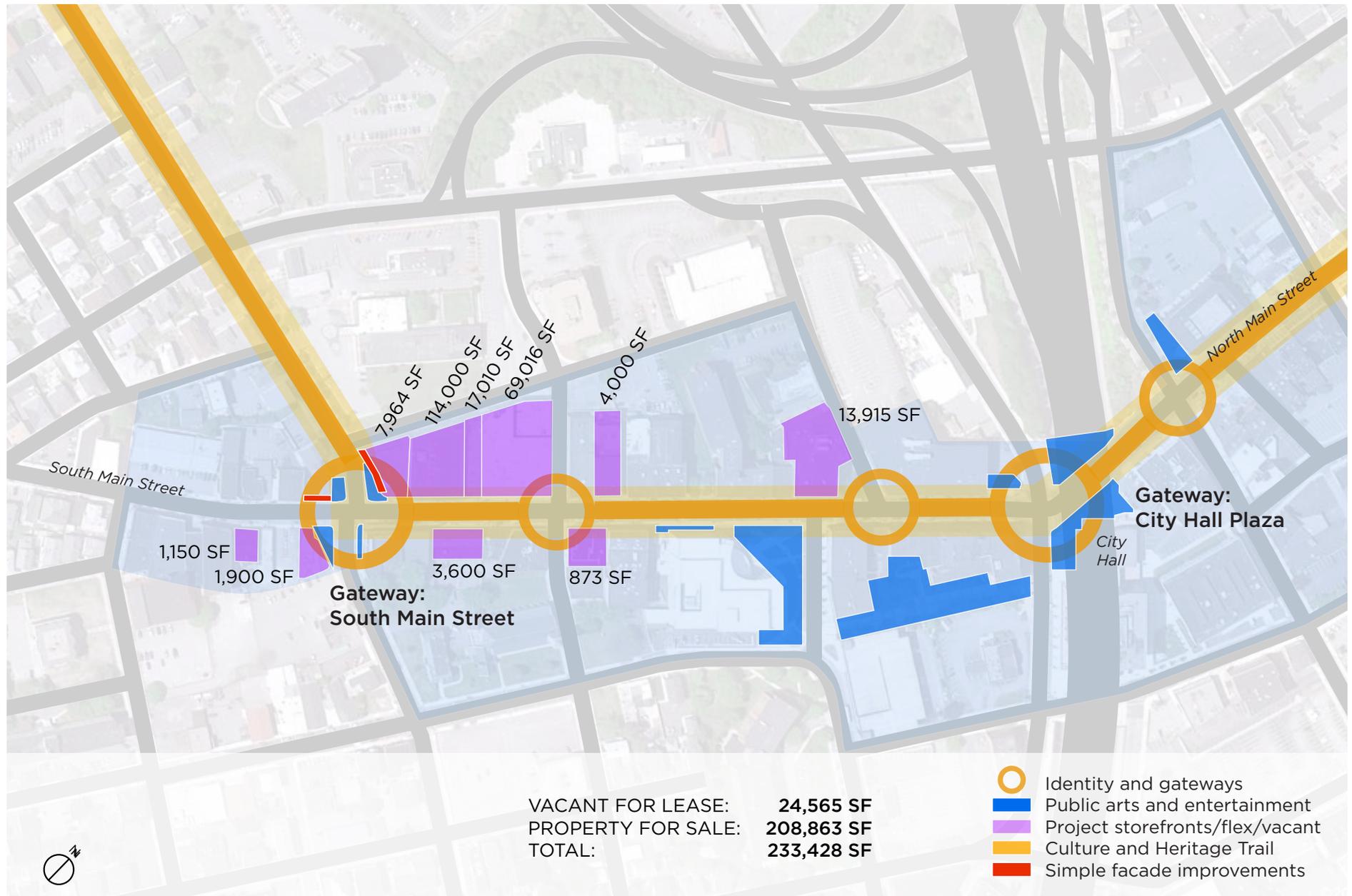
These recommendations are intended to help focus existing programs and start new initiatives that can help lay the foundation for a new identity for a revived Downtown Fall River. Strategies range from basic physical improvements to public art initiatives and policy amendments.

- Build identity and bolster marketing outreach for the Downtown
- Establish a Downtown Visioning Taskforce (from the business, government, landowner, and resident communities)
- Revise district zoning and create design guidelines to promote a unified character for the area
- Create a Downtown Manager position (as detailed in Fall River's Master Plan)
- Explore university partnerships to expand planning and strategy capacities
- Undertake community visioning process
- Support and enhance existing arts and entertainment programs, concentrating activities in Downtown
  - ArtsExpress, Arts United, Storefront Artists, Open Studios
  - Downtown Farmers Market
  - Outdoor events and concerts
  - Continue to pursue grant programs such as Massachusetts Cultural Council
  - Publicize events and programming regionally
  - Create open studios
- Link major attractions (Battleship Cove, Heritage State Park, Lizzie Borden Museum) with promotions
- Create arts and community engagement programs, including interactive events and opportunities for public expression. Use open spaces, plazas, and sidewalks for arts programming
  - Public performances, street performance
  - Sidewalk Art Festival
  - Monthly Evening Downtown Art Walks
  - Traveling museum exhibits
  - Public art
  - Public canvases
  - Arts and recreation centers
- Encourage Project Storefronts, a successful model used nationally to fill vacancies with temporary uses, yielding income for property owners and providing valuable opportunities for artists, small business owners, and entrepreneurs
  - Artist storefronts
  - Entrepreneur storefronts
  - Retail storefronts
  - Other "pop-up" uses
- Implement Culture and Heritage Trail wayfinding and signage program
- Encourage simple and inexpensive facade improvements, such as painting, cleaning, and sign repairs and updates



*Before and after: simple facade improvements, such as covering blank walls with public art, planting additional street trees*

Phase 1: Gateways, arts, programming, and facade improvements



## Phase 2: Building Community

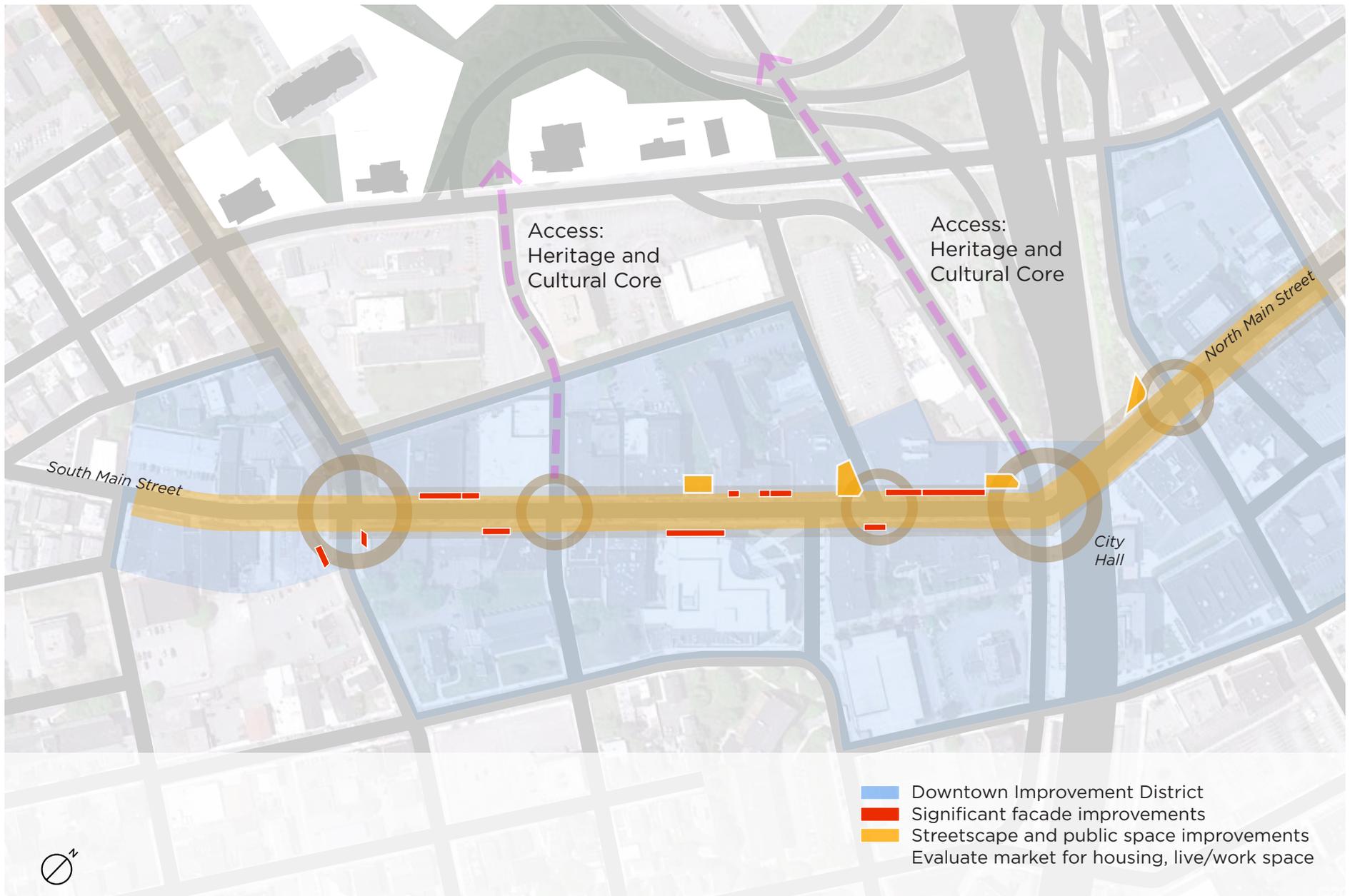
After working to coordinate arts programs, policy adjustments, and physical improvements to the streetscape, Phase 2 recommendations aim to make more substantial investments in the long-term viability of the downtown, helping build a permanent community and anchor activities in the district.

- Establish a Business Improvement District, using Taunton and New Bedford as program precedents.
- Establish nonprofit Downtown Management Team to coordinate district functions and management
- Grow facade improvement funding
- Establish revolving loan fund for Downtown businesses to make improvements
- More extensive facade improvements, addressing blank walls and transparency issues along Main Street
- Plan and implement streetscape upgrades, such as plantings, trees, and furniture
- Upgrade public open spaces, plazas with furniture, plantings, public art, as necessary
- Focused improvements to gateway areas at South Main and Columbia Streets, South Main and Pocasset Streets
- Target new entertainment uses
- Extend or transition Project Storefronts
- Evaluate market for multi-family housing and/or live/work space in downtown
- Consider public sector ‘pioneer’ development and financing programs



*Before and after:  
more significant  
facade improvements,  
including transparent  
displays at ground  
level, updated  
signage and awnings,  
additional street trees  
and furniture*





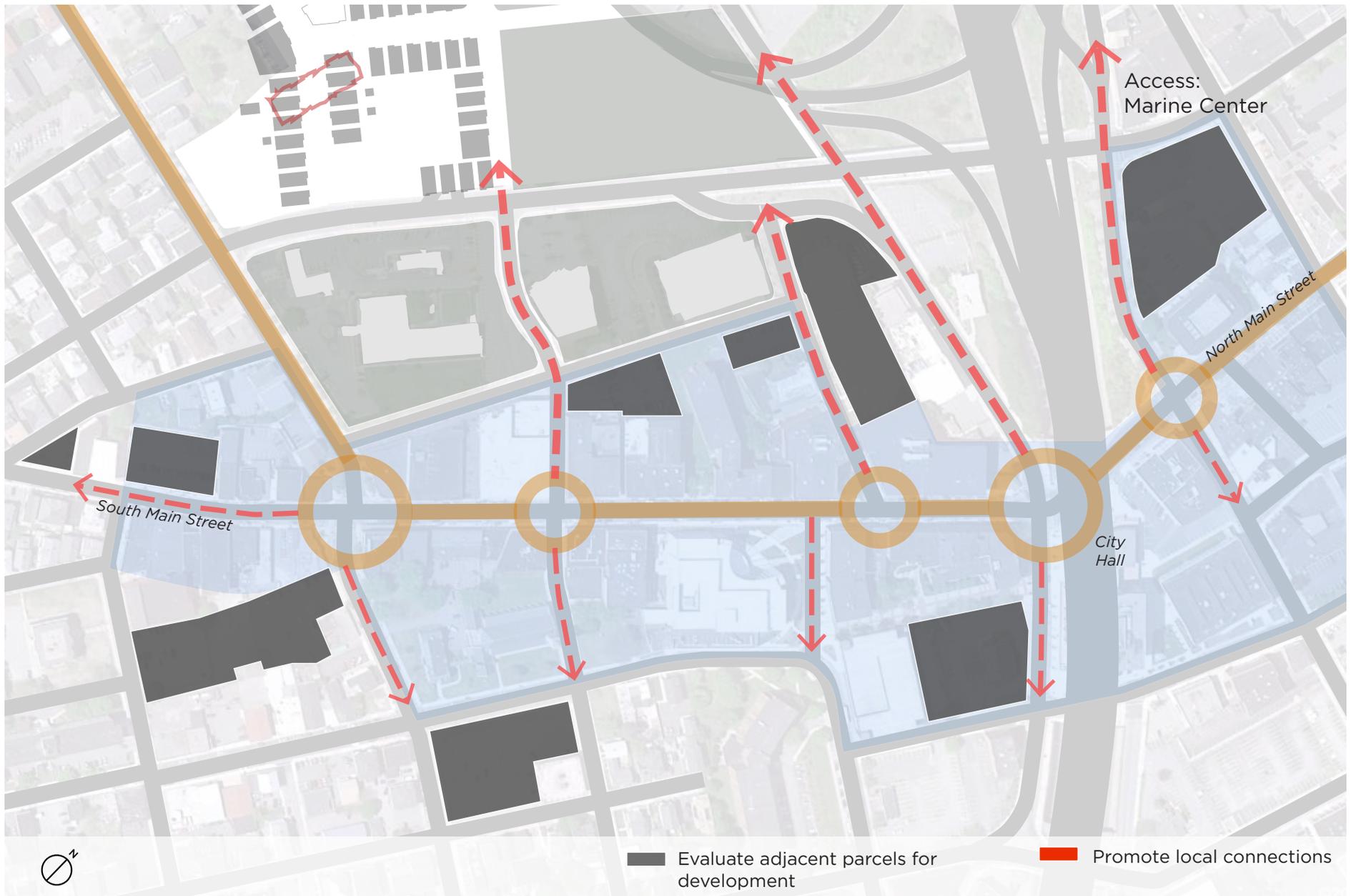
*Phase 2: Downtown district, facade improvements, streetscape and public space*

**Phase 3:  
New Opportunities**

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Once Phases 1 and 2 are under way, this set of longer-term goals is intended to help complete the transition of Downtown to a cultural core and destination for residents and visitors alike.

- Target visitor and local-serving retailers, such as restaurants, permanent arts venues, and nightlife
- Construct parking structures as necessary
- Evaluate the possibility of developing Downtown-adjacent parcels, promoting connection and viewsheds toward the waterfront



*Phase 3: Evaluate adjacent parcels for potential development, promote local connections to waterfront and other neighborhoods*

# Implementation and Funding

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## An Incremental Approach

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Long-term positive change in Fall River will take place incrementally. The Plan provides an implementation strategy, proposes phasing, and identifies potential funding sources to help realize these improvements. Before embarking on major revitalization efforts, the city should work to evaluate community assets and build civic engagement. Only with this knowledge and community participation can the city build a stronger urban core and attract new major new development and employment.

To implement the catalyst site proposals, the Plan proposes three phases: bolstering culture and heritage programming and identity, major physical improvements within and beyond the core, and completing project build out as market demand warrants. The strategy and phasing targets lower-cost investments in the near term in order to generate momentum while funding is secured from local, state, and federal sources.

### Implementation Strategy

#### 1. Evaluate community assets

Before launching a significant planning effort, the city needs a strong grasp of its current economic and demographic conditions, and how each is changing. The city should establish a mechanism to update their economic base and demographic profiles on a regular basis. A further step in building shared understanding is to map community assets (historic, cultural, social, business, and so on). These pieces of information could come together into a regularly-updated clearinghouse: the *Fall River Indicators Project*, akin to the Boston Foundation's *Boston Indicators Project*.

#### 2. Build civic engagement

The second critical element is to build deep community engagement into the planning process. In order to have broader and more meaningful community input than simply a community meeting, the city should use a variety of techniques to engage residents. The city should create advisory committees with diverse membership (including business owners, residents, property owners, and local officials) to manage the downtown and waterfront core districts. The process should include community visioning and participatory planning and design elements.

#### 3. Weave a stronger urban core

With a strong understanding of the current economic and demographic conditions, and substantial citizen participation and guidance, the city can begin major planning efforts. These could include expanding on cultural activities in the core, such as the arts, restaurants, and entertainment; making the downtown and Main Street corridor a memorable, walkable destination; updating the waterfront and downtown plans to reflect current conditions; and creating public and recreational

uses to draw visitors and residents. Based on the proposed vision, the city should evaluate:

- Establishing flexible business incubation and production space, potentially drawing precedents from “Maker” spaces, Fabrication Laboratories, multi-tenant nonprofit centers (MNTCs), and coworking (flexible, short-term office desk rental) facilities.
- Creating a “Culture and Heritage Trail” to link together the core’s unique assets.
- Use highway infrastructure as an opportunity to create unique spaces and vistas.
- Create additional multi-family housing opportunities.

#### 4. Attract new industries

With new assets and activities underway, the city should target new industries/employment sectors based on regional advantages and existing growth areas. To be successful, and to benefit local residents, workforce development and training programs must be aligned with target industries. It is important to promote the core as a prime location for accessibility and amenity, because this will help build critical mass for the area.

### IDEA TOOLKIT

#### Flexible Incubation and Production

##### Maker Spaces:

Many community-oriented shared production equipment facilities exist across the United States. One well-established example is the San Francisco Bay Area’s TechShop: <http://techshop.ws/>

##### Coworking/“Office Hoteling”:

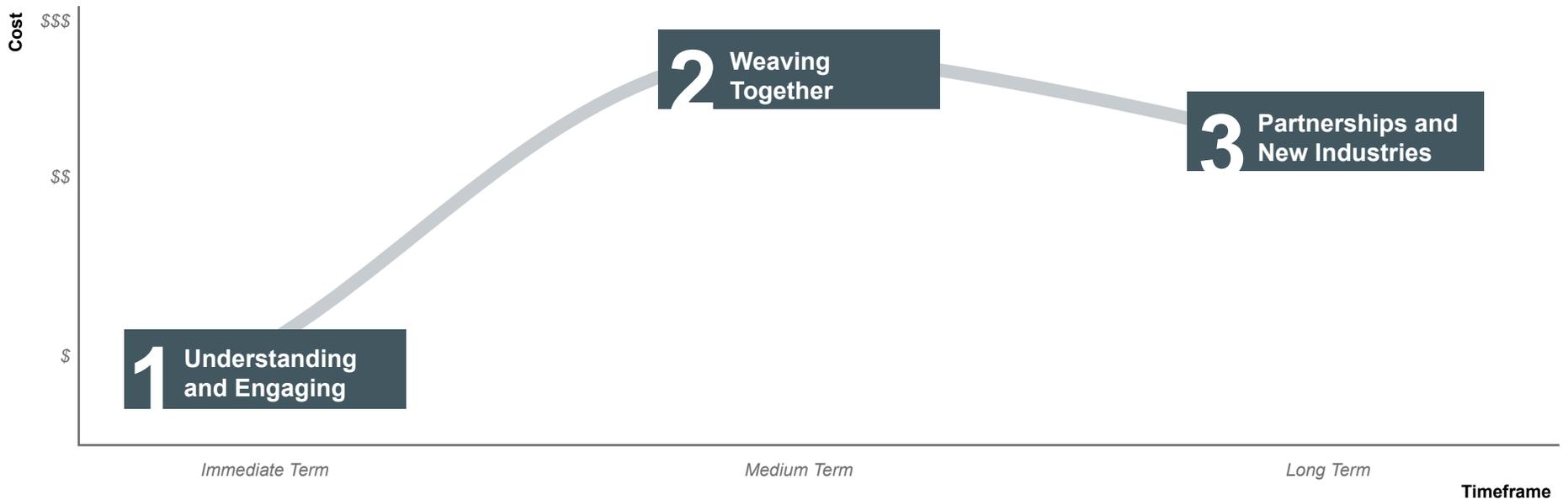
An excellent way to provide independent professionals affordable, high-quality work space with a built-in community. See: <http://www.coworking.com/>

##### Fabrication Laboratories (Fab Labs):

MIT’s Center for Bits and Atoms fosters the development of independent Fab Labs across the world. See: <http://fab.cba.mit.edu/>

##### Multi-Tenant Nonprofit Centers:

The Nonprofit Centers Network, managed by the Tides Foundation, is a nationwide community of shared work spaces for nonprofit organizations. The Network provides extensive advice and guidance. See: <http://www.nonprofitcenters.org/>



1 UNDERSTANDING AND ENGAGING	2 WEAVING TOGETHER	3 PARTNERSHIPS
<b>IDENTITY &amp; FUNDING</b>	<b>DISCONNECT &amp; VACANT MILL SPACE</b>	<b>EDUCATION &amp; WORKFORCE</b>
<p>Community visioning</p> <p><i>Participatory design</i> <i>Capacity Building</i></p> <p>Arts and engagement programs</p> <p>Update Economic base and demographic profile</p> <p>Map community assets</p> <p>Advisory committees to manage waterfront, downtown districts</p> <p>Downtown Coordinator position</p>	<p>Business improvement district</p> <p>Expand cultural activities, make the core a memorable destination</p> <p>Update existing waterfront and downtown plans</p> <p>Create Culture and Heritage Trail to link core's unique assets</p> <p>Add multi-family housing in core</p>	<p>Public/Institutional Partners</p> <p><i>Boston Architectural College</i> <i>Bridgewater State College</i> <i>Bristol Community College</i> <i>FROED</i> <i>Chamber of Commerce</i> <i>MA Department of Education</i> <i>UMass-Dartmouth</i></p> <p>Attract new industry</p> <p>Target new industries based on existing strengths Align workforce programs Promote core as high amenity/accessibility zone</p>

**Phase 1: 0-5 Years  
CULTURE AND HERITAGE**

**EVALUATE COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Economic and demographic analysis  
Map community assets  
Fall River Indicators Project

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Capacity building  
Participatory design  
Create new advisory committees

**IDENTITY AND IMAGE**

Create Culture and Heritage trail  
Simple facade improvements  
Public and interactive art  
Neighborhood Cleanup Days

**MAIN STREET CORRIDOR**

Create Downtown Manager position  
Explore university intern partnership  
Downtown Visioning Task Force  
Fill vacancies with interim, flexible uses

**HERITAGE AND CULTURE CORE**

Create recreational areas and landscape open spaces  
Preserve portion of Route 79 exit ramp as public amenity  
Provide pedestrian access to ramp

**MILL DISTRICT**

Highlight historic identity by lighting landmark buildings

**MARINE CENTER**

Clear site and move commercial shipping  
Integrate Battleship Cove, Heritage State Park with Trail  
Create waterfront boardwalk

**Phase 2: 5-10 Years  
CONNECTION**

**BUSINESS ATTRACTION/SUPPORT**

Target new industries (regional advantages)  
Align workforce development/training  
Promote core as prime location  
Establish revolving loan fund

**WEAVE TOGETHER THE CORE**

Expand cultural activities  
Make core a memorable, walkable destination  
Update waterfront and downtown plans  
Create public amenity to draw users  
Convert disused ramps to unique spaces

**BETTER REGIONAL LINKAGES**

Prepare for new transportation modes  
Prepare for transit-oriented development (TOD)  
Bolster marketing and outreach efforts

**MAIN STREET CORRIDOR**

Improve public image with plantings, street trees, furniture  
Complete more extensive facade improvements  
Build community: evaluate new housing, entertainment uses  
Establish Downtown Improvement District  
Public sector "pioneer" development

**HERITAGE AND CULTURE CORE**

Build permanent ramps for highway infrastructure access  
Encourage retail use under ramps  
Terrace portion of site with plinth  
Attach walkways to historic mills  
Add green roofs and safety provision to mills

**MILL DISTRICT**

Build/rehabilitate catalyst buildings  
Establish business incubator with shared facilities  
Establish commuter rail stop

**MARINE CENTER**

Convert ferry deck, industrial use to marine center use  
Build additional pier  
Shape water edge and add aquatic plants  
New facilities to attract visitors  
Host events and festivals

**Phase 3: 10-20 Years and Beyond  
BUILD OUT**

**NEW TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS**

Build commuter rail station south of Mill District area  
Establish direct and connector ferry service

**MAIN STREET CORRIDOR**

Evaluate market for condominium housing  
Densify by developing adjacent parcels as demand warrants  
Target visitor and local serving retail  
Target office uses  
Assess parking provision

**HERITAGE AND CULTURE CORE**

Expand district to connect to Main and Columbia Streets  
Evaluate demand for commercial space  
Convert portion of recreation areas to other uses as needed

**MILL DISTRICT**

Build mixed-use, infill TOD at rail station  
Create multi-generational, mixed-income housing  
Create community park/recreation facilities

**MARINE CENTER**

Develop additional Marine Center uses (cafe, exhibition, etc)  
Shift battleship locations to be more visible from the road

## Phasing

### Phase 1: 0-5 years

The first phase focuses on strengthening Fall River's culture and heritage resources, as well as better understanding the city's assets and engaging residents. New improvements can be implemented quickly while detailed planning takes place throughout the core. Once planning is complete, preparations for the four catalyst sites can begin.

### Phase 2: 5-10 years

The second phase focuses on building connections within the core and to adjacent neighborhoods. Much of the key catalyst projects would be begun during this time period, including new uses for mill buildings, new marine center programming, transitioning current ramp infrastructure to pedestrian use, and establishing new commuter rail service.

### Phase 3: 10-20+ years

The final phase is characterized by the full build out of the project. This means completing improvements in the Main Street district, including evaluation of new housing opportunities; continued development of the mill district, including transit-oriented development (TOD) at the rail station; and evaluation of new ferry service to Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and other coastal locations.

## IDEA TOOLKIT

### Downtown Revitalization

Re-envisioning and restoring the downtowns of American cities has been a topic of much interest to planners, economic development professionals, developers, and, of course, residents alike. Two resources of interest include:

#### Turning Around Downtown: 12 Steps to Revitalization

Real estate expert and "walkable urbanism" proponent Christopher Leinberger wrote this 2005 Brookings Institution report, outlining a strategy for renewing traditional downtowns. See: [http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2005/03downtownredevelopment\\_leinberger.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2005/03downtownredevelopment_leinberger.aspx)

#### Revitalizing Commerce for American Cities; A Practitioner's Guide to Urban Main Street Programs

This Main Streets Program primer was written by economic development expert Karl Seidman for the Fannie Mae Foundation in 2004; it explains the Main Streets program model and best practices in organization structure, physical design, marketing, services, and implementation.

**Funding**

A wide variety of potential funding sources exist for the proposed vision and can be broken into three scales. These include federal, or country-wide, resources, regional and commonwealth-specific programs, and local foundations and development funds.

Each program has a specific set of requirements and funding criteria, and so may not be appropriate for all initiatives. The table below identifies a number of funding sources and is divided into the three scales.

FEDERAL/COUNTRYWIDE	REGIONAL/COMMONWEALTH	LOCAL
<p>Tax Credit Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historic Preservation Tax Credits</li> <li>New Markets Tax Credits</li> </ul> <p>Housing and Urban Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)</li> </ul> <p>Economic Development Administration Grant program</p> <p>Charter School Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annie E. Casey Foundation</li> <li>Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</li> <li>Home Depot Foundation</li> <li>Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)</li> </ul>	<p>Tax Credit Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit</li> </ul> <p>Transit Oriented Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial Area Transit Node Housing Program</li> <li>MassWorks TOD Infrastructure and Housing Support</li> <li>Housing and Smart Growth Incentives (Ch. 40R)</li> <li>Smart Growth School Cost Reimbursement (Ch. 40S)</li> </ul> <p>Massachusetts Downtown Initiative</p> <p>Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF)</p> <p>Economic Development Fund</p> <p>Commercial Area Revitalization District (CARD)</p> <p>Growth Districts Initiative</p>	<p>Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation</li> <li>Community Foundation of SE Massachusetts</li> <li>Grimshaw Gudewicz Charitable Foundation</li> <li>MassDevelopment Cultural Facilities Fund</li> <li>Thomas A Rodgers Jr Family Foundation</li> </ul> <p>Public/private partnerships</p>



### Conclusion

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Ultimately, this proposal offers no single solution. Instead, it recognizes the complexity of issues facing Fall River and seeks to put forward clear, implementable steps that can progressively move the city toward a vision of a vibrant and renewed waterfront city. The plan addresses a full transect of the city, as identified by four catalytic areas, while defining steps for implementation over time. This incremental approach provides a basis for actions at both a building and city level that can be taken tomorrow, but also identifies steps to be taken thirty years in the future.

As Fall River's mills are reused for new knowledge economy jobs, they will help the city transition to a

better future. This plan proposes the reinvention of the city's core as an innovative district for arts, office, and production, leveraging local assets to move the city to a vibrant new arena. While vacant mill space and a lack of high-quality employment opportunities are persistent challenges in Fall River today, a new vision for a diverse mixed-use core is a first step toward a more vibrant future.

We were fortunate to have worked in Fall River and hope that this proposal contributes to new discussions and ideas within the city, and ultimately a sustained effort to revitalize Fall River.

*Thank you to the Fall River Office of Economic  
Development, The Mill Owners' Association, The City of  
Fall River, our Sasaki project coordinators, and the residents  
of Fall River.*





# Appendix

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## Resources

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*Annual Report.* Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation, 2009.

*Battleship Cove Station Concept Plan.* Cecil Group, 2011.

*City of Fall River Master Plan.* 2008-2030

*Fall River Office of Economic Development Strategic Plan.* Mt. Auburn Associates, July 2007.

*Fall River Station Site Workshop.* Goody Clancy, 2008.

*Master Plan, City of Lowell, Massachusetts.* City of Lowell, 2003.

*MetroMonitor: Providence, RI-MA: Tracking Economic Recovery in the Providence-New Bedford-Fall River, RI-MA Metropolitan Area.* Brookings, 2011.  
<http://www.brookings.edu/>

*Reconnecting Massachusetts Gateway Cities: Lessons Learned and an Agenda for Renewal.* MassInc, 2007.  
<http://www.massinc.org/Research/Gateway-Cities.aspx>

*South Coast Rail Strategic Environmental Permitting Plan.* TRC Environmental Corporation, 2007.

*South Coast Rail Economic Development and Land Use Corridor Plan.* Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, 2009.

*Fall River Local History Slides.* Keeley Library, 2008.  
<http://sailsinc.org/Durfee/fallriver.htm>



<http://sailsinc.org/Durfee/fallriver.htm>



<http://sailsinc.org/Durfee/fallriver.htm>



Fall River Present



*Inspiration for the Fall River of Tomorrow*



*Balkan Coastal Town.  
Using appropriate building heights and a thick  
interspersing of vegetation, hillside villages  
along the eastern European coastline have  
views to the ocean from multiple vantage points.*



Miklos Miklos Pogonyi

*Lowell, MA.  
Local post-industrial town has successfully  
revitalized its urban fabric using and  
showcasing the existing building stock.*



*Richmond, California.  
Colorized 20th Century Renewal.  
An old, 500,000 square foot  
industrial building combines  
corporate offices, with and a new  
state-of-the-art event concert and  
production facility.*



*Istanbul, Turkey.  
Restaurants under the Galata Bridge.*



www.istanbul-pics.com



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