

Alewife Zoning Working Group

An aerial architectural rendering of a city block. The scene is filled with multi-story buildings in various shades of orange, red, and white. The buildings are interspersed with lush green trees and grassy areas. In the lower-left quadrant, there is a small, blue pond. The overall style is a detailed, hand-drawn sketch with a focus on urban planning and landscaping.

Meeting #7: Revised Zoning Framework & Recommendations
December 14, 2022

Today's Agenda

- What We Heard
- How We've Revised the Zoning Framework
- Updated Vision Plan
- Healthpeak Presentation
- Working Group Discussion
- Next Steps
- Public comment

What We Heard



What We Heard – November 9, Alewife Zoning Working Group (AZWG)

- Locations of Neighborhood Uses
 - Concentrate near Fawcett and linear open space.
 - Not ideal at Concord Ave and Smith Place
 - Consider a loop from Smith to Fawcett
 - Maintain scattered neighborhood uses throughout the district.
- Residential Heights
 - Increase heights for as-of-right residential uses
- Include 100% affordable housing as a public benefit
 - Target creation of deeply affordable units
- The City should develop, maintain, and own public spaces/public realm.

What We Heard – November 30, City Council NLTP Meeting

- Incentivize residential development
 - Increase heights for as-of-right residential uses
 - Do not require public benefits of residential development
 - Require housing contributions under site special permit
- Priority public benefits include bridge connections over track and a commuter rail station
- Stormwater and resiliency
- New open spaces should be publicly-beneficial
- Prioritize arts and cultural uses
- Concerned about loss of light industrial spaces

What's Changed?

Highlight of zoning framework changes & clarifications based on feedback



Overview – “3 Tiers” of Zoning Standards

Base Requirements

Baseline standards for all development

Requirements:

- Permeable + green open space
- Maximum parking ratios
- Setbacks to match future street network

Allowed development:

- Low-scale commercial
- Low-scale residential
- Neighborhood uses

Advisory review process

Site Special Permit

Increased development on a single building site

Extra requirements:

- Ground-floor neighborhood uses required in priority areas
- Pocket parks, playgrounds
- Transportation, infrastructure, housing contributions (funds or in-kind)

Allowed development:

- Medium-scale commercial
- Higher-scale residential
- Neighborhood uses (incentivized at ground floor)

Planning Board review + approval

PUD Special Permit

Large, phased development across multiple sites

Extra requirements:

- Substantial up-front public infrastructure – bridge, other bike/ped connections, facilities
- Large public open space
- Minimum housing
- Minimum neighborhood uses

Allowed development:

- Higher-scale commercial
- Higher-scale residential
- Neighborhood uses

Extensive Planning Board review + approval process

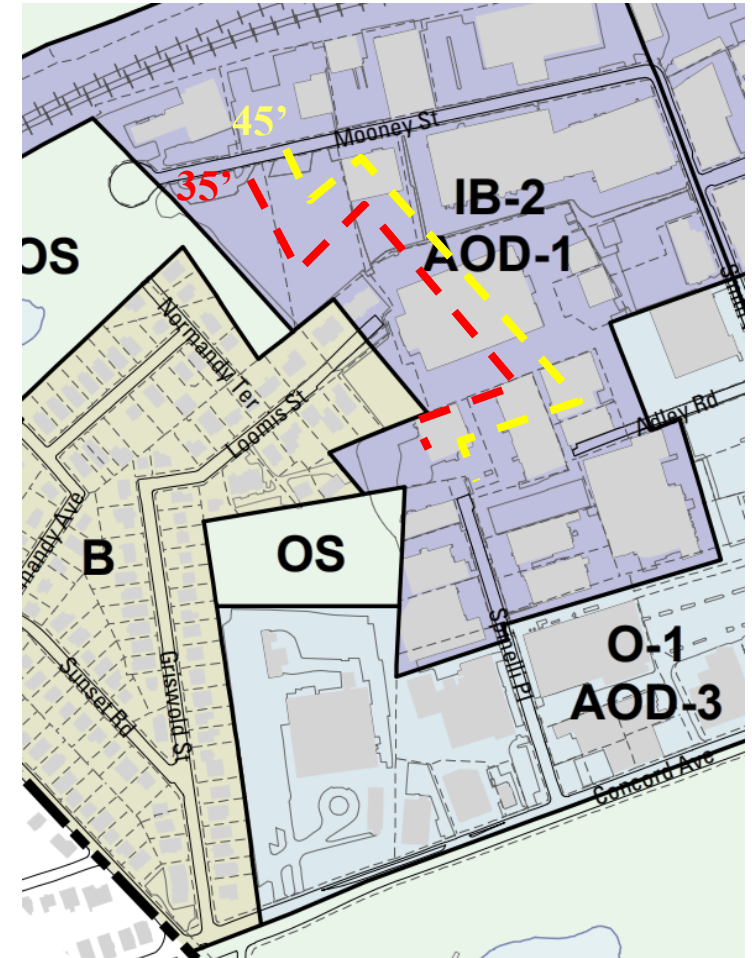
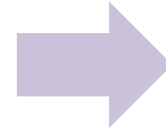
What We Heard: “Boost base/as-of-right development for residential”

- Benefit of the special permit process is that it provides the needed flexibility to help transform area to realize the vision



What We Heard: “Buffer from Highlands”

- Green/open space buffer from Highlands
 - Minimum distance/acreage
- Alewife District Plan recommendation – 35’ within 100’ of Residence district; 45’ within 200’.



Summary of Allowable Heights

	As-of-right	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	3 stories	10-12 stories	10-12 stories
Non-res.	2 stories	4 stories or 5 stories w/ active ground floor use	8 stories

	As-of-right	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	Varies 3-6 stories	18-20 stories	18-20 stories
Non-res.	Varies 2-4 stories	4 stories	5 stories

	As-of-right	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	3 stories	6 stories	6 stories
Non-res.	2 stories	3 stories	3 stories

	As-of-right	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	3 stories	10-12 stories	10-12 stories
Non-res.	2 stories	4 stories or 5 stories w/ active ground floor use	5 stories

Lower Heights Higher Heights

What We Heard: “Expand/Prioritize Development Bonuses”

Biggest Bonus

- Bike/Pedestrian Bridge Connecting to Triangle (could be multiple)
- Commuter Rail Stop
- Terminal Road Connection
- 100% affordable housing or deeply affordable housing

Moderate Bonus

- Land for Additional public open space
- Public/community space
- Land for Civic uses (e.g., schools, libraries, DPW facility)
- Completion of ADP recommended street/path segments
- Green stormwater infrastructure (e.g., constructed wetland)

Smaller Bonus

- Interior community space (e.g., community center)
- Preservation of or creation of Light Industrial Use
- District energy
- District flood protection
- Prioritized neighborhood uses – including arts/culture uses

Red = New Addition Based on Feedback!

What We Heard: “Expand Neighborhood Uses”



**Retail & Consumer
Service establishments
(4.35)**



**Community
gathering spaces
(4.33.e.2)**



**Libraries
(4.33.f.3)**



**Daycare centers
(4.33.b.2)**



**Arts & Cultural
spaces (4.35.q.2)**



**Light industrial/maker
space (4.37 a through d)**



**Dentist/Doctor
office (4.33.b.2)**



**Healthcare facility
(4.33.d)**



**Any other use subject
to PB Review and
Approval**

What We Heard: “Expand Neighborhood Uses”

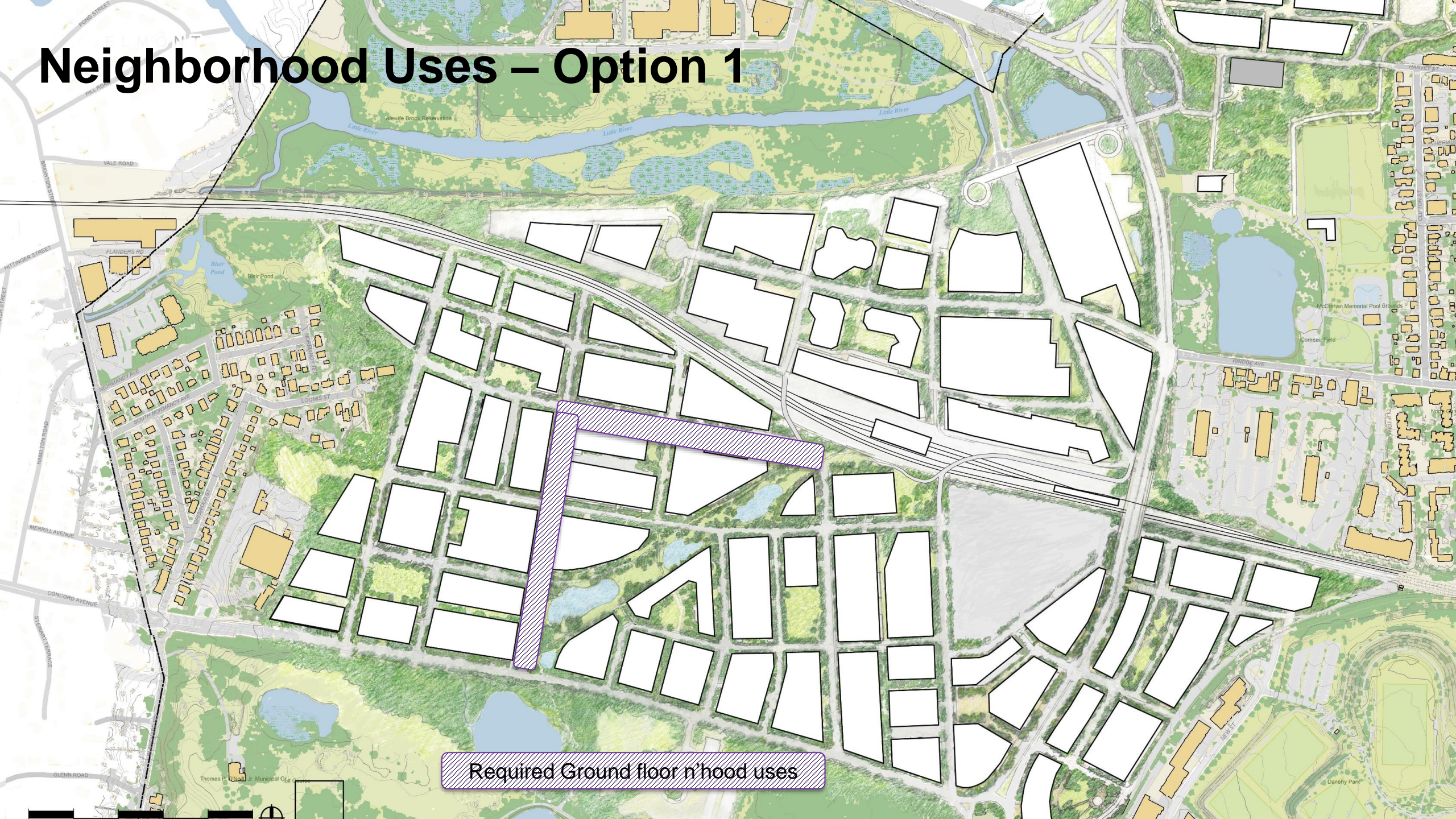


Temporary outdoor retail (4.36.j)



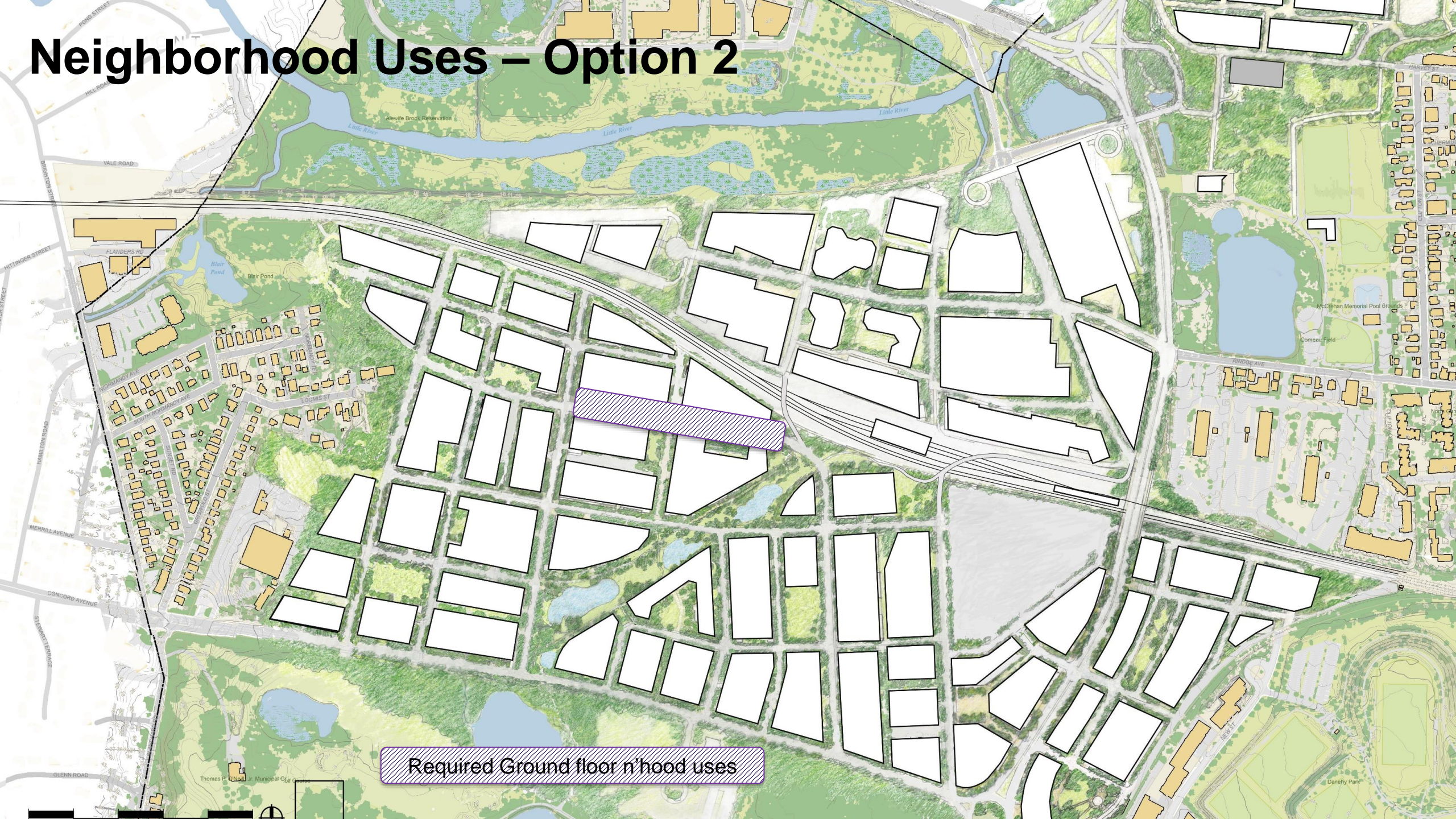
Co-working space (Other retail use, depending on classification)

Neighborhood Uses – Option 1



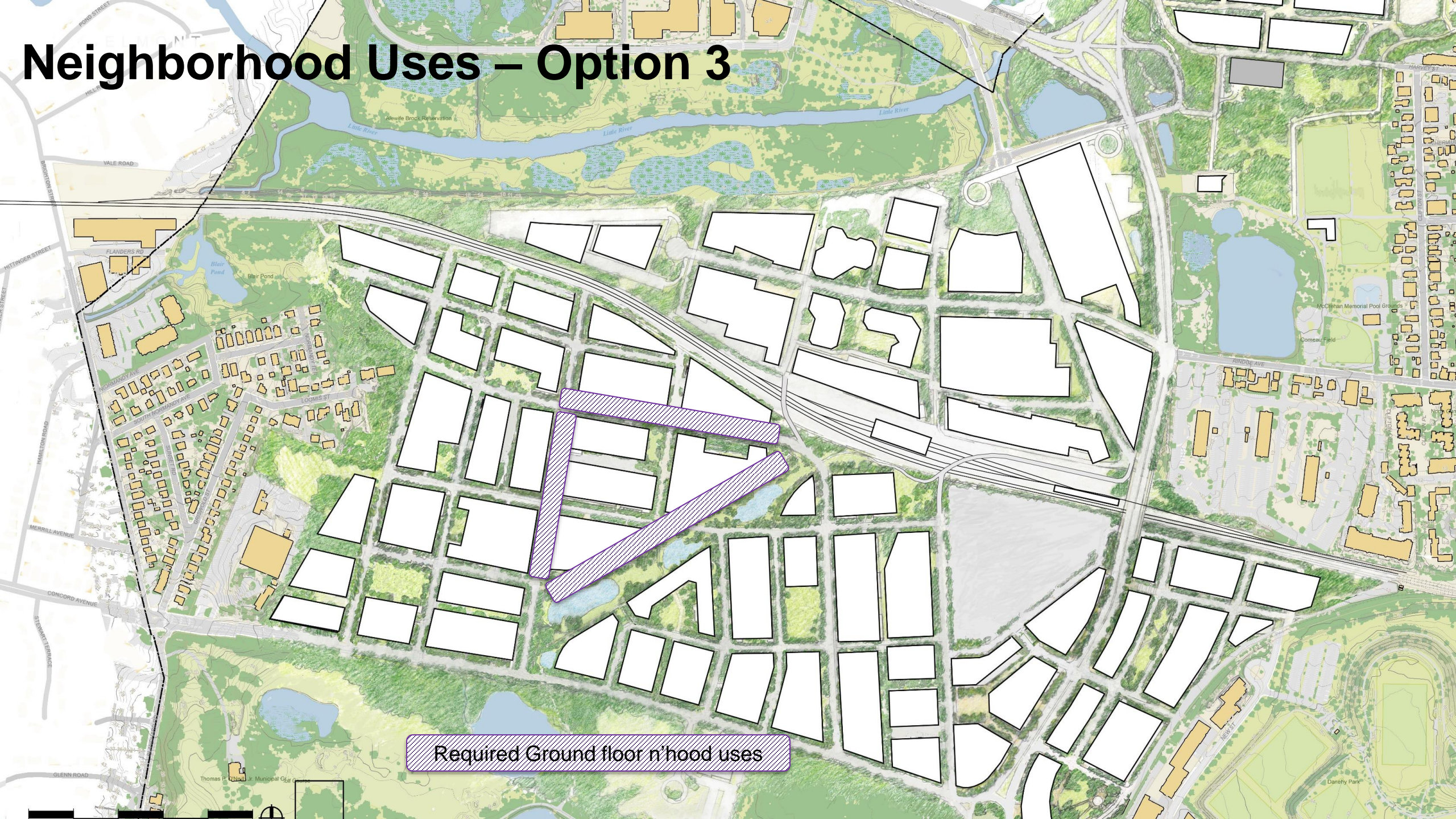
Required Ground floor n'hood uses

Neighborhood Uses – Option 2



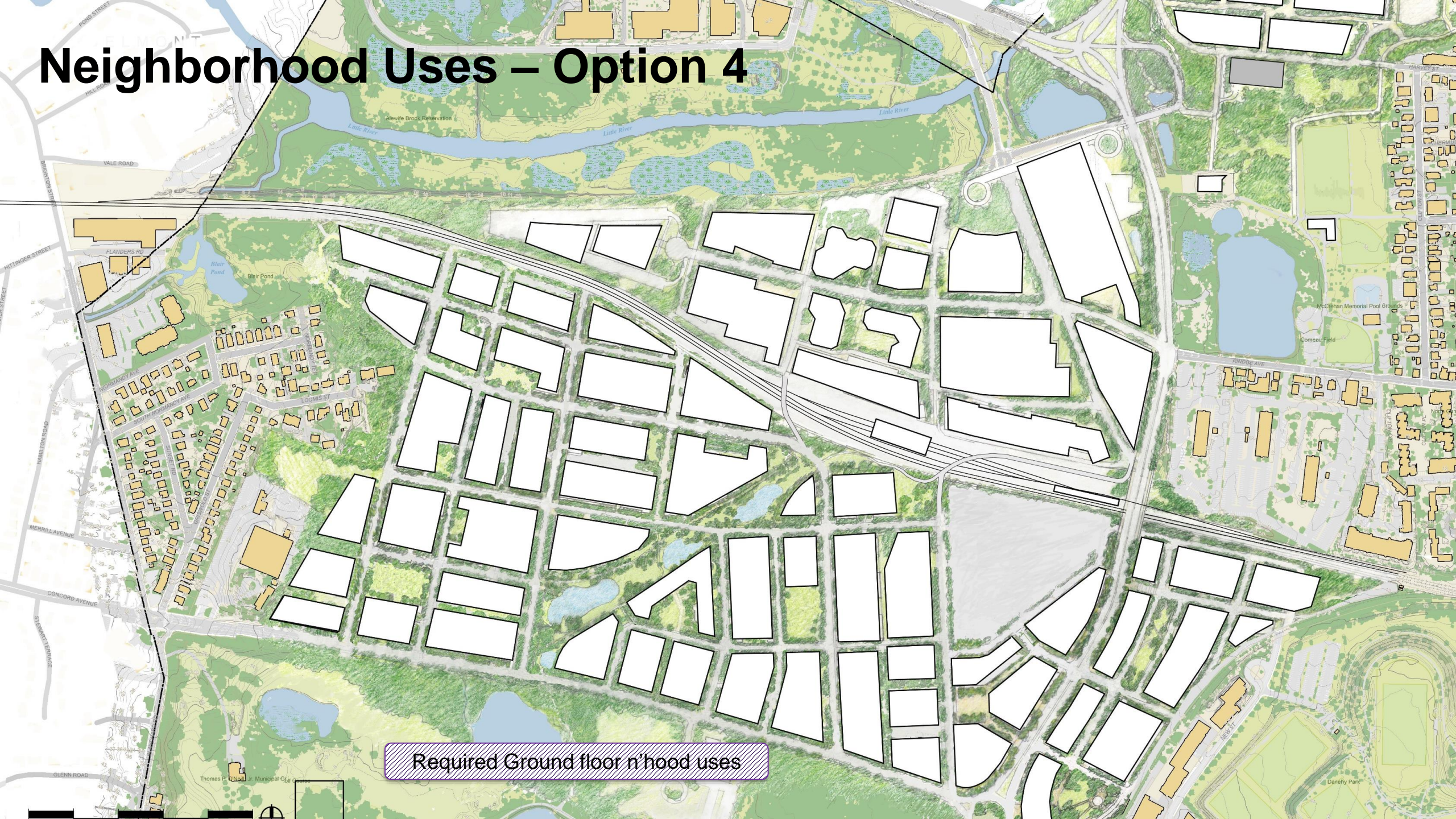
Required Ground floor n'hood uses

Neighborhood Uses – Option 3



Required Ground floor n'hood uses

Neighborhood Uses – Option 4



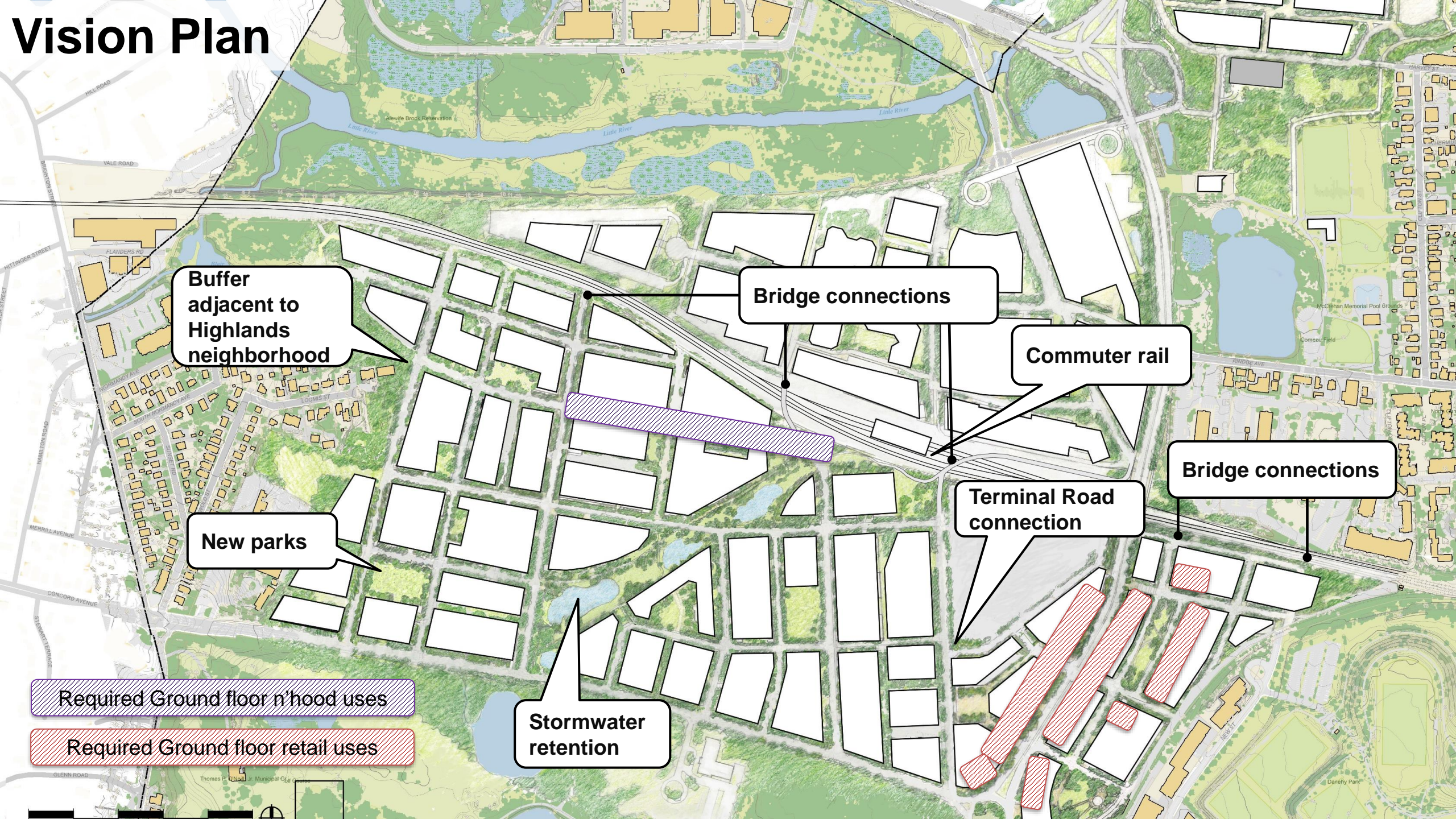
Required Ground floor n'hood uses

What We Heard: “Require Residential in Site Special Permit”

- Overarching approach: incentivize residential development through greater development/density compared to commercial
- Often single buildings – tough to require it be incorporated
- Alternative options
 - Off-setting contribution to CAHT?
 - Identify priority residential locations and require



Vision Plan



Buffer adjacent to Highlands neighborhood

Bridge connections

Commuter rail

Bridge connections

Terminal Road connection

New parks

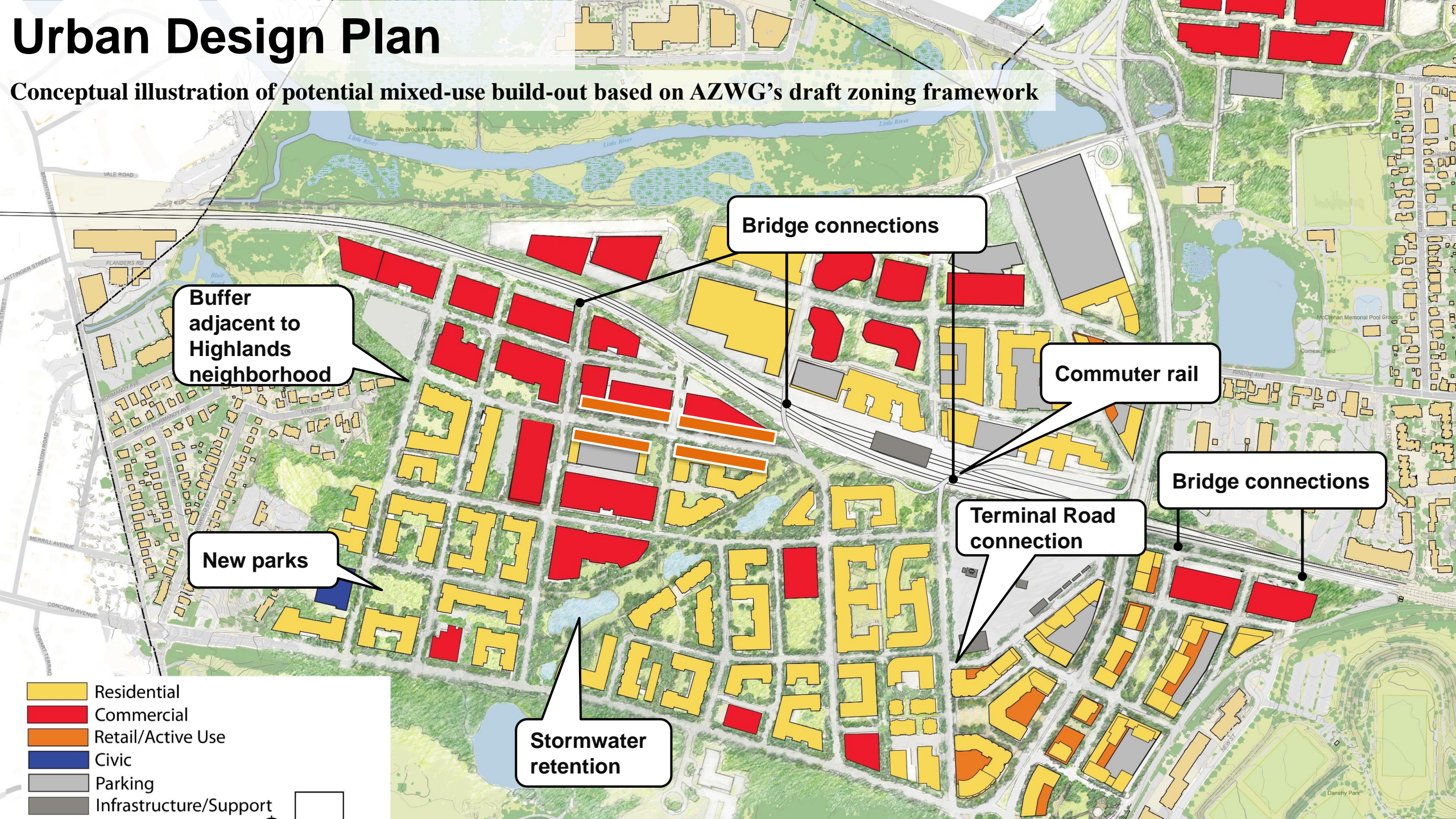
Stormwater retention

Required Ground floor n'hood uses

Required Ground floor retail uses

Urban Design Plan

Conceptual illustration of potential mixed-use build-out based on AZWG's draft zoning framework



Buffer adjacent to Highlands neighborhood

New parks

Stormwater retention

Bridge connections

Commuter rail

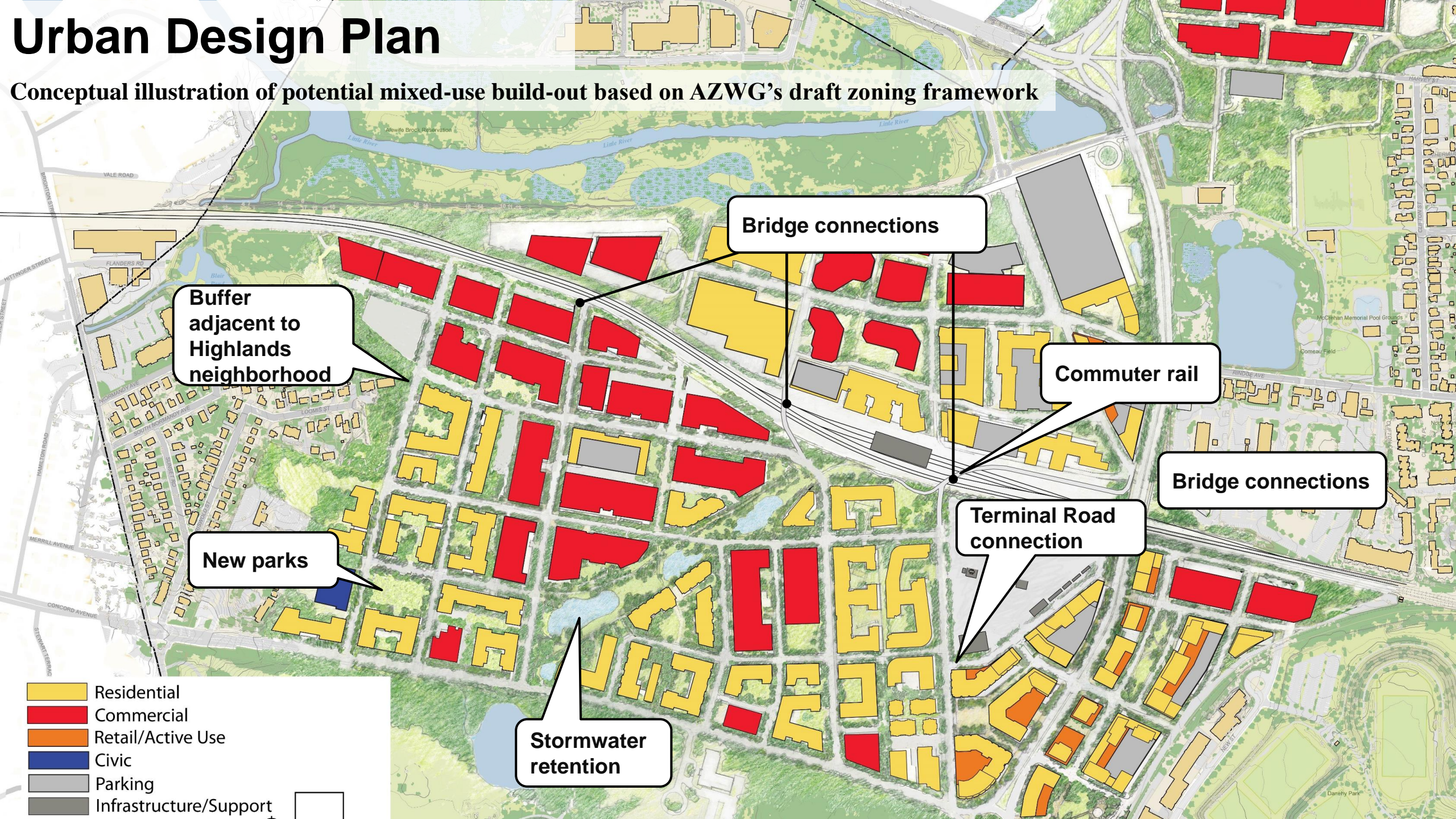
Terminal Road connection

Bridge connections

- Residential
- Commercial
- Retail/Active Use
- Civic
- Parking
- Infrastructure/Support

Urban Design Plan

Conceptual illustration of potential mixed-use build-out based on AZWG's draft zoning framework



Buffer adjacent to Highlands neighborhood

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Commuter rail

Bridge connections

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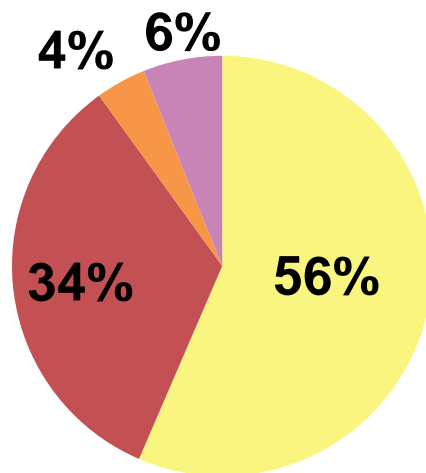
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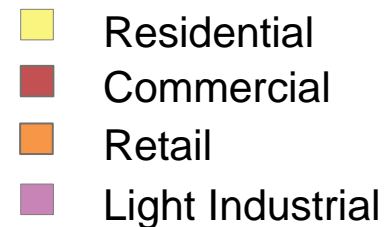
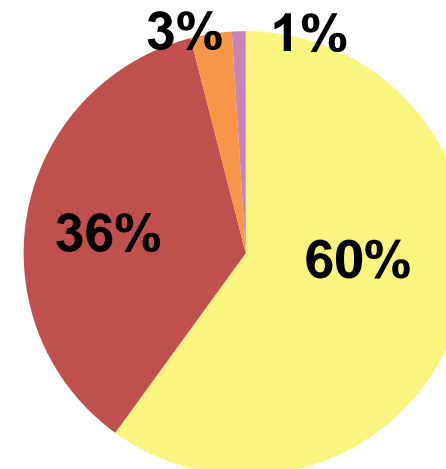
How does the Working Group's proposed zoning framework compare to the Alewife District Plan (2019)?

- Significant increase in residential development
 - 2x as much residential development
- Increase in commercial development in exchange for infrastructure improvements
- Greater proportion of residential to commercial development district-wide

District-wide Use Mix
Under Alewife District Plan's Proposed Zoning



District-wide Use Mix
Under AZWG's Proposed Zoning



Land Use Mix by Subdistrict

Potential use mix under AZWG's proposed zoning

- Residential
- Commercial
- Retail
- Light Industrial

