

Consistency with Smart Growth Goals of M.G.L. Chapter 40R

Designation of Newburyport's Smart Growth District would be consistent with the smart growth goals and principles of land development established in M.G.L. Chapter 40R (Smart Growth Zoning & Housing Production) as follows:

A. increases the availability of affordable housing by creating a range of housing opportunities in neighborhoods:

The proposed District requires that 25% of all units in projects over 10 units in size be deed restricted as "affordable" units pursuant to state regulations, while allowing the remaining 75% to be developed as market-rate units.

B. emphasizes mixing land uses:

The proposed District encourages a mix of land uses, by permitting "as-of-right" multi-family residential projects, with allowances for mixed uses, such as first floor retail and office space.

C. takes advantage of compact design:

The proposed District encourages compact development concentrated around the Newburyport MBTA Commuter Rail Station.

D. fosters distinctive and attractive communities:

The proposed District includes design standards for the construction of high-quality architecture and site design.

E. preserves open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas:

The proposed District encourages compact development concentrated around the Newburyport MBTA Commuter Rail Station, thereby alleviating development pressures on remaining farmland and other undeveloped areas of the City.

F. strengthens existing communities:

The proposed District encourages compact development concentrated around the Newburyport MBTA Commuter Rail Station, thereby alleviating the pressure for infill developments in other areas of the City, including historic neighborhoods within the City's National Register Historic District.

G. provides a variety of transportation choices:

The proposed District encourages compact development concentrated around the Newburyport MBTA Commuter Rail Station with immediate access to the Clipper City Rail Trail and MVRTA bus service.

H. makes development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective:

The proposed District utilizes the M.G.L. 40R to create a streamlined “as-of-right” permitting process, subject to design review by the Newburyport Planning Board under design standards which are fair, clear and predictable for developers.

I. encourages community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions:

Private development within the District will require design review by the Newburyport Planning Board allowing public comment and concerns to be addressed prior to project approval and construction.

Compatibility with Existing/Surrounding Land Uses

The existing land uses in Newburyport surrounding the proposed Smart Growth District are compatible with higher density residential and mixed use development proposed around the Newburyport MBTA Commuter Rail Station. The Newburyport Business & Industry Park, located to the west of the proposed Smart Growth District consists of two industrial zoning districts which allow various industrial, manufacturing, corporate offices and other business related uses. It is the City’s intention to expand business opportunities within the Business Park as part of our current comprehensive zoning update project. Zoning changes which will be proposed for adoption at the completion of this project (sometime in 2016) will allow expansion of existing businesses within the park as well as redevelopment of existing properties to provide a larger non-residential tax-base for the City. Isolated from Newburyport’s historic neighborhoods by the Route One Corridor (to the east), Hale Street (to the west) and Low Street (to the North), expansion of business opportunities in the Business Park will have little (if any) impact on other areas of the City. The proposed Smart Growth District will provide opportunities for the creation of housing units in close proximity to the Business Park with immediate regional access via the Newburyport MBTA Commuter Rail Station and increased (concentrated, viable and economical) service by the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA). As a community which is largely “built out”, Newburyport needs to support infill and redevelopment within the Newburyport Business Park and around the MBTA Commuter Rail Station as a means to generate “new growth” which is an important factor in the City’s long term finances and ability to support city services and the completion of capital improvement projects. New housing units within walking distance of the Business Park will provide a resource in growing demand as communities, businesses and employees seek to live closer to their places of employment, thereby reducing dependence on the automobile for transportation and the associated gas and infrastructure maintenance costs. These new “transit-oriented” housing units will make Newburyport’s Business Park a more desirable location for existing and future businesses, which in turn will provide a solid and enduring tax base for the City for the foreseeable future.

The only other district (neighborhood) adjacent to the proposed Smart Growth District is the so-called “Back Bay” neighborhood, located just north of the District between the Route One corridor and State Street. This Two-Family Residential (R-2) District is already largely built out, with little opportunity for infill under current zoning. This neighborhood will see little change or impact whatsoever from the proposed Smart Growth District since existing buildout conditions and zoning regulations within the area do not allow similar growth or development. Further, although walkable from the Route One Traffic Circle and MBTA Commuter Rail Station, the Route One corridor itself acts as a clear line of division between any development potential within the Smart Growth District and the existing “Back Bay” neighborhood.

Smart Growth & Infrastructure

The existing MBTA Commuter Rail Station, existing and expanded MVRTA bus service and connection to the “Clipper City” Rail Trail will promote smart growth by encouraging non-vehicular transportation and decreased dependency on vehicular transportation. As shown on the map contained in Section 10-1, municipal infrastructure is already available within the proposed District. The only identified infrastructure upgrade required is a replacement of the nearby Graf Road Sewer Lift Station which pumps wastewater from a large portion of the City over the hill to the City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant. As explained in Section 10-1 design for this upgrade (required and planned regardless of the proposed Smart Growth District) is already underway.

As described, depicted and referenced in our Cover Letter and Sections 1-1, 1-3 and 1-5 of this application, the subject area is a highly suitable and appropriate location for a new Smart Growth District, consistent with local, regional and state plans.

Sustainable Development Principles

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts shall care for the built and natural environment by promoting sustainable development through integrated energy and environment, **housing and economic development**, transportation and other policies, programs, investments, and regulations. The Commonwealth will encourage the coordination and cooperation of all agencies, invest public funds wisely in smart growth and equitable development, give priority to investments that will deliver good jobs and good wages, **transit access, housing**, and open space, in accordance with the following sustainable development principles. Furthermore, the

Commonwealth shall seek to advance these principles in partnership with regional and **municipal governments**, non-profit organizations, business, and other stakeholders.



1. Concentrate Development and Mix Uses

Support the revitalization of city and town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that is compact, conserves land, protects historic resources, and integrates uses. Encourage remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure rather than new construction in undeveloped areas. Create pedestrian friendly districts and neighborhoods that mix commercial, civic, cultural, educational, and recreational activities with open spaces and homes.

2. Advance Equity

Promote equitable sharing of the benefits and burdens of development. Provide technical and strategic support for inclusive community planning and decision making to ensure social, economic, and environmental justice. Ensure that the interests of future generations are not compromised by today's decisions.



3. Make Efficient Decisions

Make regulatory and permitting processes for development clear, predictable, coordinated, and timely in accordance with smart growth and environmental stewardship.



4. Protect Land and Ecosystems

Protect and restore environmentally sensitive lands, natural resources, agricultural lands, critical habitats, wetlands and water resources, and cultural and historic landscapes. Increase the quantity, quality and accessibility of open spaces and recreational opportunities.



5. Use Natural Resources Wisely

Construct and promote developments, buildings, and infrastructure that conserve natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, and materials.



6. Expand Housing Opportunities

Support the construction and rehabilitation of homes to meet the needs of people of all abilities, income levels, and household types. Build homes near jobs, transit, and where services are available. Foster the development of housing, particularly multifamily and smaller single-family homes, in a way that is compatible with a community's character and vision and with providing new housing choices for people of all means.



7. Provide Transportation Choice

Maintain and expand transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel and improve air quality. Prioritize rail, bus, boat, rapid and surface transit, shared-vehicle and shared-ride services, bicycling, and walking. Invest strategically in existing and new passenger and freight transportation infrastructure that supports sound economic development consistent with smart growth objectives.

8. Increase Job and Business Opportunities

Attract businesses and jobs to locations near housing, infrastructure, and transportation options. Promote economic development in industry clusters. Expand access to education, training, and entrepreneurial opportunities. Support the growth of local businesses, including sustainable natural resource-based businesses, such as agriculture, forestry, clean energy technology, and fisheries.



9. Promote Clean Energy

Maximize energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities. Support energy conservation strategies, local clean power generation, distributed generation technologies, and innovative industries. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and consumption of fossil fuels.

10. Plan Regionally

Support the development and implementation of local and regional, state and interstate plans that have broad public support and are consistent with these principles. Foster development projects, land and water conservation, transportation and housing that have a regional or multi-community benefit. Consider the long-term costs and benefits to the Commonwealth.

