

ANDOVER

Downtown: Designated a State PDA

Land Use: Downtown Andover (171.61 acres) is the Town's traditional central business district. It consists of offices, shops, restaurants, civic and institutional uses; some residences cluster along its western slope toward the Shawsheen River. Historic properties are interspersed throughout. The Town's Department of Public Works and the MBTA's Line Andover Station are prominent nodes at the district's western boundary. Downtown Andover is zoned General Business (GB), which allows for single family residences, religious and municipal, banks and retail, lodging establishments, select medical uses, motor vehicle sales/rental and indoor commercial recreation. Special permits from the Board of Appeals are required for convenience stores, laundries, and motor vehicle repair. Special permits from the Planning Board are required for 'major' non-residential projects and certain eldercare facilities. Multifamily residential, cluster developments, certain elder facilities, manufacturing and industrial uses are prohibited. Dimensional and density regulations vary according to proposed use; however, a four-story or 50' building height maximum applies. The Town further regulates development in downtown Andover through a local Design Review Board that has jurisdiction over building permit requests in the GB zone.

Infrastructure: All major utilities serve Andover Center including Columbia Gas and National Grid Gas. Comcast and Verizon provide cable; DSL and fiber optic service to the premises.

Access: Route 28 (Main Street) is the principal roadway access. The MBTA Haverhill Line Commuter Rail stops at Andover Station, ¼ mile west of Main Street. MVRTA Routes 21 (Andover Shuttle) and 32 (Andover) offer hourly peak weekday bus service. Trucks provide local freight service; bicyclists and pedestrians share local roads.

Environmental: Urban land. .51 acre wet (.30%); 1.01 acres/.59% within a 100 year floodplain; no other environmental indicators limit development.

Recommended Strategies: MVPC supports the Town's efforts to maintain its vibrant traditional Town center, which remains competitive by offering a diverse, unique inventory of local services and attractions. MVPC also supports the Town's desire for more housing and mixed-use development in the downtown and the Town's proposed Department of Public Works' relocation project presents a rare opportunity with potential for transit-oriented development. The Main Street Streetscape Improvements Project recently constructed offers improved pedestrian and open spaces. MVPC is particularly supportive of the Town's efforts to develop the Shawsheen River Trail; this project will if constructed provide local and regional intermodal transportation benefits. It will link Downtown with Shawsheen Village and Ballardvale; provide access to the MBTA Ballardvale and Andover Commuter Rail Stations, and generate significant recreational benefits as well. Finally, the Town's review of municipal sites around North Main Street, Railroad Street and Essex Street may benefit future development directly adjacent to downtown.

Rolling Green: Designated a Regional PDA

Land Use: A 35.79-acre mixed-use area anchored by a large apartment complex; the Boston Sports Club, a small highway-business strip development, and the Internal Revenue Service processing facility. This PDA is surrounded by the Rolling Green Golf Club (north); single-family residences (east) and woods on Lovejoy Road (south), and I-93 on the west. Its character is appropriate for a suburban office park. Zoning is Limited Service (LS); single-family residential, municipal and religious uses are permitted. Special permits from the Board of Appeals are required for philanthropic institutions, banks, medical clinics, certain educational institutions; dine in restaurant, commercial recreation, business and professional uses, certain motor vehicle

uses, and hotels/motels. Special permits from the Planning Board are required for cluster developments and ‘major’ non-residential uses. Hospitals, boarding houses, multiple dwellings, manufacturing and industrial uses are prohibited.

Infrastructure: All major utilities serve the site. Columbia Gas; National Grid, Comcast and Verizon provide cable; DSL and fiber optic service to the premises.

Access: Route 133 (Lowell Street) serves as the principal roadway access. The site abuts the I-495/Route 133 intersection. MVRTA Routes 73 (Haverhill Employment Service) and 75 (Lawrence Employment Service) operate to serve employers west of I-93/Route 133, Route 75 can make local stops along Route 133. Trucks provide local freight service. Bicyclists and pedestrians generally share local roads.

Environmental: .27 acre or .74% is classified as rare species habitat. No other environmental indicators are documented.

Recommended Strategies: The site’s proximity to a major interstate interchange and the Town’s policies favor continuation of existing uses. MVRTA fixed route service could be adjusted if warranted. Connections to local neighborhoods east of the site, along Route 133, could be improved for bicyclists and pedestrian

Brickstone Square: Designated a State PDA

Land Use: The Brickstone Square complex is located in the historic Shawsheen Village section of Andover at the intersection of route 28 and 133. The 26-acre site is comprised of three multi-storied buildings offering nearly 1,040,000 square feet of commercial office space. There is parking on site totaling approximately 3,000 spaces. The Brickstone campus combines modern conveniences with architecturally significant, beautifully renovated, historic brick industrial buildings built in 1920. The owners of the complex have discussed possible expansion of the commercial space, as well as adding a residential component. The residential piece has the potential to be a 40R smart growth district.

Infrastructure: Brickstone Square is an existing office complex with adequate water, sewer, broadband, and other services to the site. The service was upgraded when these buildings were first redeveloped in the 1990’s.

Access: The Brickstone Square complex is within one-half mile from Route 495 and accessed from Route 28 (North Main Street) and Route 133 (Haverhill Street). Public transportation (bus) is available and runs on both route 28 and route 133. Downtown Andover and the Andover stop on the MBTA commuter train (Haverhill line) are located within 1.5 miles. The MBTA commuter rail tracks abut the Brickstone Square property, and the owners have discussed the possibility of a stop at the site (especially if the high density housing were to be built), but the likelihood of creating a station here is low due to the close proximity to the Lawrence and Andover stations. The MVRTA also operates a Commuter Bus service between Methuen and Boston with a stop at Shawsheen Square.

Shawsheen Village is one of the gateways to Andover with Route 28 leading drivers directly to the downtown district from the highway. Brickstone Square is impacted by the heavy congestion at the Route 28/133 intersection (Shawsheen Square), which also experiences a high number of accidents.

For the most part, sidewalks line the streets however, many of the sidewalks are in need of repair and the community has identified a need to increase pedestrian amenities and safety. Currently, there are no off-road options in this area, though Andover does have plans to build a multi-use trail along the Shawsheen River from Shawsheen Square down to Lowell Junction.

Recommended Strategies: Brickstone Square has the capability of becoming a “smart growth center” if the dense housing the owners have expressed an interest in building was to move forward, and if the zoning was opened up to some retail and more personal service establishments. Brickstone Square is only 1.5 miles from downtown Andover and a commuter rail stop, but if a rail stop were to be located at Brickstone Square, it would only add to its attractiveness and accessibility.

I-93/Osgood Street: Designated a State PDA

Land Use: The I-93/Osgood Landing Priority Development Area is an area of approximately 340 acres to the west of I-93, east of Osgood Street, and south of Route 133. This area is occupied by the Raytheon Missile Defense System facility, a major regional employer for many years at this site. Raytheon occupies over 20% of this area, which is in Andover’s industrial-A zoning district, an industrial office park zone with over 3 million square feet of building space. The zoning allows for professional business and office type uses, housing is not allowed and retail uses are generally not allowed. Limited sit down restaurants, hotels, and personal service establishments are allowed by special permit.

Infrastructure: Water, sewer, and broadband are all available in this area of Andover.

Access: This development area is located along Route 133 to the west of the I-93 interchange. This area is fully developed and has adequate road access to I-93 at the Route 133 interchange in the north, as well as, at the Dascomb Road/Frontage Road interchange to the south. Access to I-495 is two miles west along Route 133. Unavoidable congestion occurs during peak traffic hours when the thousands of workers employed in the area travel to and from work on the I-93 Interstate. The MVRTA operates two routes (72 and 73) that originate at either the Buckley Station in Lawrence or the Washington Square station in Haverhill and go to the IRS and Raytheon business sites. Pedestrian access is limited.

Recommended Strategies: This PDA has been a major regional employment center for many decades; and the Town has encouraged and assisted in its growth and expansion by assuring that infrastructure was upgraded accordingly. They have designated the area as a 43D site and an Economic Development Target Area, which qualifies the area for tax relief benefits. This policy should continue the industrial expansion as long as there are no harmful effects in nearby residential neighborhoods. A traffic Study of Route 133 and the impact of the I 93 interchange may offer some improvements to the congestion.

Lowell Junction: Designated a Regional PDA

Land Use: The Lowell Junction/ I-93 Priority Development Area (PDA) in Andover is part of a 700-acre development area located in portions of Andover, Tewksbury, and Wilmington. It presently represents one of the highest concentrations of employment and economic activity in the Merrimack Valley with notable employers such as Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Procter and Gamble, and Charles River Labs. These companies, and hundreds of others, currently employ more than 6,000 people in a wide variety of industries and occupy almost 3.5 million square feet of building space. The three communities have been working together in an attempt to develop a Unified Development Vision to guide the development of the available land in this area in a highly coordinated manner consistent with Smart Growth principles and practices. All three communities have jointly applied and have been approved for a 43D Priority Development Sites within this development area.

Build out of the Junction PDA, subject to the construction of a new interchange off I-93, is estimated to be in excess of 3 million square feet of industrial, commercial, and retail space. It is also estimated that this development could support as many as 11,000 new jobs if fully developed.

Infrastructure: All major utilities are provided on the east side of I-93 in the developed area of this PDA, but they do not exist on the west side of I-93 in the mostly vacant land areas. Water, sewer, and broadband are all available in this area of Andover.

Access: Currently, the local transportation network hampers expansion of existing businesses in the Junction area. Access to this area is primarily from exit 41 or exit 42 off of I-93, but congestion sends traffic through a maze of residential streets. Traffic conditions have been a key factor in resistance to new development from both area residents and business owners. Vacant land to the west of I-93 is virtually landlocked.

In order for the Lowell Junction PDA to reach its' full economic potential, a full access north-south interchange off of I-93 between exit 41 and 42 must be realized. This interchange concept will provide direct interstate access to growing businesses and vacant in fill development parcels on the east side, as well as the undeveloped parcels on the west side of I-93.

The MVRTA operates a Call & Commute on-demand service that is paid for by members of the Junction Transportation Management Organization. The van service provides door-to-door service for residents of Andover, North Andover, Lawrence and Methuen as well as for those people who take the commuter rail to Ballardvale Station and require a shuttle to their jobs in the Lowell Junction Area. The Lowell Junction Area does not currently have bicycle and pedestrian access.

Environmental: The undeveloped Lowell Junction areas to the west of Route 93 have some environmental constraints including wetlands and rare species habitats, which have been well publicized. Environmental impact studies have been published and environmental organizations are involved in the process of master planning this area including approving a design for the potential new interchange off of Route 93.

Recommended Strategies: The Lowell Junction area is currently one of the major economic development districts in the Merrimack Valley. The area has the potential to grow and expand, but access to the vacant land to the east of Route 93 is needed. There has been a concentrated effort by the towns of Andover, Tewksbury, and Wilmington, and by state officials to make Lowell Junction development ready and the next major job producing area in the state. However this effort has struggled as of late with limited funding for transportation expansion projects and a less than favorable market analysis of the "form-based zoning code" proposed for the area. Because the undeveloped area crosses town borders, it becomes more complex, but there are now models of other such developments that cut across town boundaries, and we must learn from these models and develop new zoning and a master plan for the area that works to the benefit and economic development goals of the three communities.

As part of this planning process the communities should reconsider dense residential as one of the mix of uses that would be allowed. In addition, protecting, enhancing and incorporating the land adjacent to the Shawsheen River into the development scenario for a multi-use recreation and transportation trail should be encouraged. Pedestrian access and enhanced transit use should also be incorporated. While there has been some interest in constructing a commuter rail station as part of the development plan care should be taken to ensure that locating an additional station to the Haverhill commuter rail branch dose not degrade the overall service.

River Road: Designated a State PDA

Land Use: The River Road PDA is predominately a linear development of high end office and professional buildings located on River Road on both the east and west sides of I-93 in the Industrial A and Industrial D and the Industrial D-2 zoning districts. The area covers approximately 1,084 acres, of which 24 acres is developed and contains over 1 million square feet of building space. Total lot coverage in these zoning districts allows for 30%, 25%, and 30% respectively, with height limitations of 50 ft. in Industrial D and Industrial D-2, and 60 ft. in the Industrial A district. By right uses are limited to professional office and business uses, and retail, fast food, drive-through restaurants and convenience stores are allowed by special permit in the ID-2 district. Housing is not allowed in either the Industrial A or Industrial D or D-2 zoning districts.

Infrastructure: The businesses located along River Road have access to water, sewer, gas and broadband.

Access: The River Road area, characterized as a large upscale office park, is nestled around I-93 and the Merrimack River and is largely accessible by car. I-93 northbound north of I-495 heading toward the River Road interchange and beyond going north over the Merrimack River has a high volume-to-capacity ratio and is extremely congested in the late afternoon and early evening. Two intersections along River Road east of I-93 at North and Federal Streets have experienced higher crash rates. The MVRTA operates one bus route (37) to a portion of the River Road PDA east of I-93, which provides access for those attending the Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational School. There is no transit service to the west of the interstate. The Merrimack Valley Transportation Management Association, which focuses primarily on the River Road area, promotes cycling to and from this PDA. Interested cyclists may find a variety of on-road commuting routes on their web site (www.merrimackvalleytma.org). Rubel maps consider High Plain Road and Pleasant St to be primary bicycle routes. In addition, the Bay Circuit Trail, a pedestrian path, crosses through this area.

Environmental: Approximately 80 acres or 7.4% of this PDA are wetlands, and 82 acres are located in the 100-year floodplain.

Recommended Strategies: The River Road PDA is a very linear, automobile oriented series of upscale office parks. MVPC agrees with the upgraded zoning approved in 2013 which allows for a wider range of uses such as retail stores, banks, convenience stores, and restaurants in portions of the area. Traffic can become very congested on both I-93 in this area as well as River Road itself during commuting times. Improvements to River Road to increase mobility were made in recent years, which improved conditions, but it remains a very high traffic and congestion area. Any further development that is allowed in this area should limit the number of curb cuts to River Road and use existing roadways and entrances. Widening of I-93 to four lanes will relieve some of the congestion on the main line and eliminate the “bottle neck”, which will be created when I-93 is expanded to four lanes in New Hampshire and south of I-495.