

WATERTOWN, MA EXISTING

- Single Family
- Double Family
- Residential
- Industrial
- Central Business
- Limited Business
- Open Space

Submitted by
Grace Wu

Watertown, a city situated in Middlesex County, eastern Massachusetts, lies just west of Boston, along Charles River. As one of the four earliest Massachusetts Bay settlements, Watertown has a rich history dating back to 1630. It was the first inland farming town and is believed to have been named after its abundant water supply and plentiful fish. Over time, the city has transformed from a small farming town into a bustling urban center with a growing population.

Given its location near the Charles River, Watertown has been a hub of industry since its inception. More recently, Arsenal Yards has emerged as a prime example of smart growth redevelopment in the heart of the city.

By integrating walkability, accessibility, and sustainability into its design, Arsenal Yards is helping to transform Watertown into a more livable, inclusive, and thriving community.

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WATERTOWN, MA PROPOSED

- Mixed Use, Residential
- Mixed Use, Industrial
- Bus Stop
- Parking Garage
- Central Business
- Limited Business
- Open Space

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The Watertown neighborhood boasts of densely packed single-family homes and is adorned by high tree coverage. These single family houses diminishes the area's walkability and social connectedness. This situation necessitates a strategic plan to optimize the use of land and improve the community's social and economic developments.

To that end, I recommend a combination of measures, including

increasing mixed-use buildings, introducing accessory dwelling units (ADUs), reducing street parking, and expanding public transit.

These interventions will focus on the central location of the Watertown Public Schools and are designed to make the area more pedestrian-friendly and foster social interactions. By adopting these measures, we can make Watertown a more vibrant and inclusive community.

2

SPRAWL REPAIR MANIFESTO

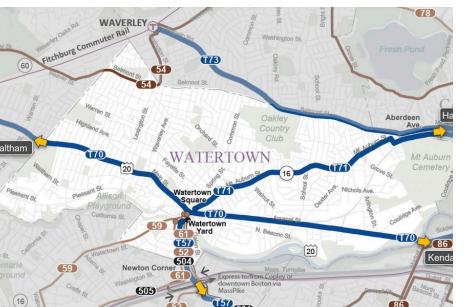
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Tom Schifanella Photography.



Louisa Van Leer Architecture.



MBTA.

1. More Density

To improve walkability and foster social connections, increasing residential density and allowing for more mixed-use buildings are essential.

Currently, the population is spread out, which hinders walkability and social interactions. One way to increase residential density is by adding **accessory dwelling units** either horizontally or vertically.

Furthermore, having **mixed-use** buildings, with retail areas on the ground floor and residential areas on upper floors, would provide residents with more opportunities to engage with their neighbors. This design would encourage social connections while promoting walkability in the area.

2. Less Street Parkings

Watertown has a residential land use of 50.3%, but its high auto-dependency presents a challenge to its walkability. One of the reasons for this is the presence of street parking, which makes the streets less walkable.

A potential solution to this issue is constructing **parking garages** adjacent to homes, thus providing a space for cars to be safely parked off the street and enhancing walkability.

3. Expand Public Transit

The Watertown Comprehensive Plan (2015) reveals that 25% of Watertown residents commute to Boston for work. In contrast, 17% work in town, 12% in Cambridge, 8% in Waltham, 6% in Newton, and 6% work in Lexington, Burlington, and Belmont combined. The remaining 26% work elsewhere.

Interestingly, while 17% of Watertown residents work in town, only 4% choose to walk or bike to work. Despite the town's proximity to downtown Boston, it has a high auto dependency rate of 68%. To mitigate this issue, increasing **public transit options** could prove beneficial. One solution could be to increase the number of bus or T stations in Watertown, making it easier for residents to commute to work without relying on their cars.

METRICS & REFERENCES

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WATERTOWN EXISTING

Landuse Mix 1999:

Agriculture (1.1%), Open Undeveloped Land (0.2%), Natural Land (1.2%), Water (3.1%), Industrial/Transportation/Mining (11.8%), Open Space (22.4%), Commercial (9.9%), Residential (50.3%)

Demographic Mix:

Population 2021: 35,149
Pop Change 2020-2021: -0.6%
Household 2017-2021: 16,027
Owner-Occupied Housing Unit Rate 2017-2021: 49.5%
Median Household Income 2017-2021: \$101,402
Median Housing Cost 2017-2021: \$641,500
Person Under 18 Years: 14.4%
Persons 65 Years and Over: 17.4%

Transit Mix:

Single-Occupant Automobile (68%), Multiple-Occupant Automobile (8%), Transit (15%), Walk/Bike/Other (4%), Work at Home (5%)

Unit Mix:

Central Business, Limited Business, Neighborhood Business, Industrial, Mixed Use, Residential, Cluster Residential, Open Space

WATERTOWN PROPOSED

Landuse Mix:

Agriculture (1.1%), Open Undeveloped Land (0.2%), Natural Land (1.2%), Water (3.1%), Industrial/Transportation/Mining (11.8%), Open Space (22.4%), Commercial (5%), Residential (40%), Mixed Use (15%)

Transit Mix:

Single-Occupant Automobile (50%), Multiple-Occupant Automobile (8%), Transit (27%), Walk/Bike/Other (10%), Work at Home (5%)

Unit Mix:

Central Business, Limited Business, Neighborhood Business, Industrial, Mixed Use, Residential, Cluster Residential, Open Space

REFERENCES

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CONCEPTUAL SKETCH

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