

Re-imagining Suburban Development

Established towns can balance compact new growth with community character.



Many communities find it challenging to envision positive new growth in already developed areas. Yet the region's future depends on innovative, attractive, and functional growth in town centers and commercial districts, for many reasons. Reuse of vacant industrial and commercial land redirects development pressure away from valuable open spaces. New growth in developed areas leverages existing infrastructure investments and can create new transit opportunities. The demand for attractive mixed-use developments in town centers will grow as more baby-boomers seek to downsize from single family homes to a place in their own town where they can walk to shops and services.

MAPC is building a toolbox for communities looking to revitalize their commercial areas and town centers. This page shows examples of visualizations created by MAPC to educate residents and build support for smart growth options. Based on local surveys of aesthetic and use preferences, we modified photos of existing streetscapes to show what might occur under different zoning controls. MAPC also helps communities to develop zoning bylaws and design standards that integrate new development into the community.



Replace excess parking with mixed-use development. A varied façade makes this larger building less imposing.



Porches and street-front entrances make this new building pedestrian-friendly and visually appealing.



Classic roofline and New England architectural detail help this building fit in.

