

# Upper Main Street Master Plan Workshop

---



**THE SITE:**

32-acre property at 80 and 90 Upper Main Street purchased by the town in Nov. 2023



# Agenda

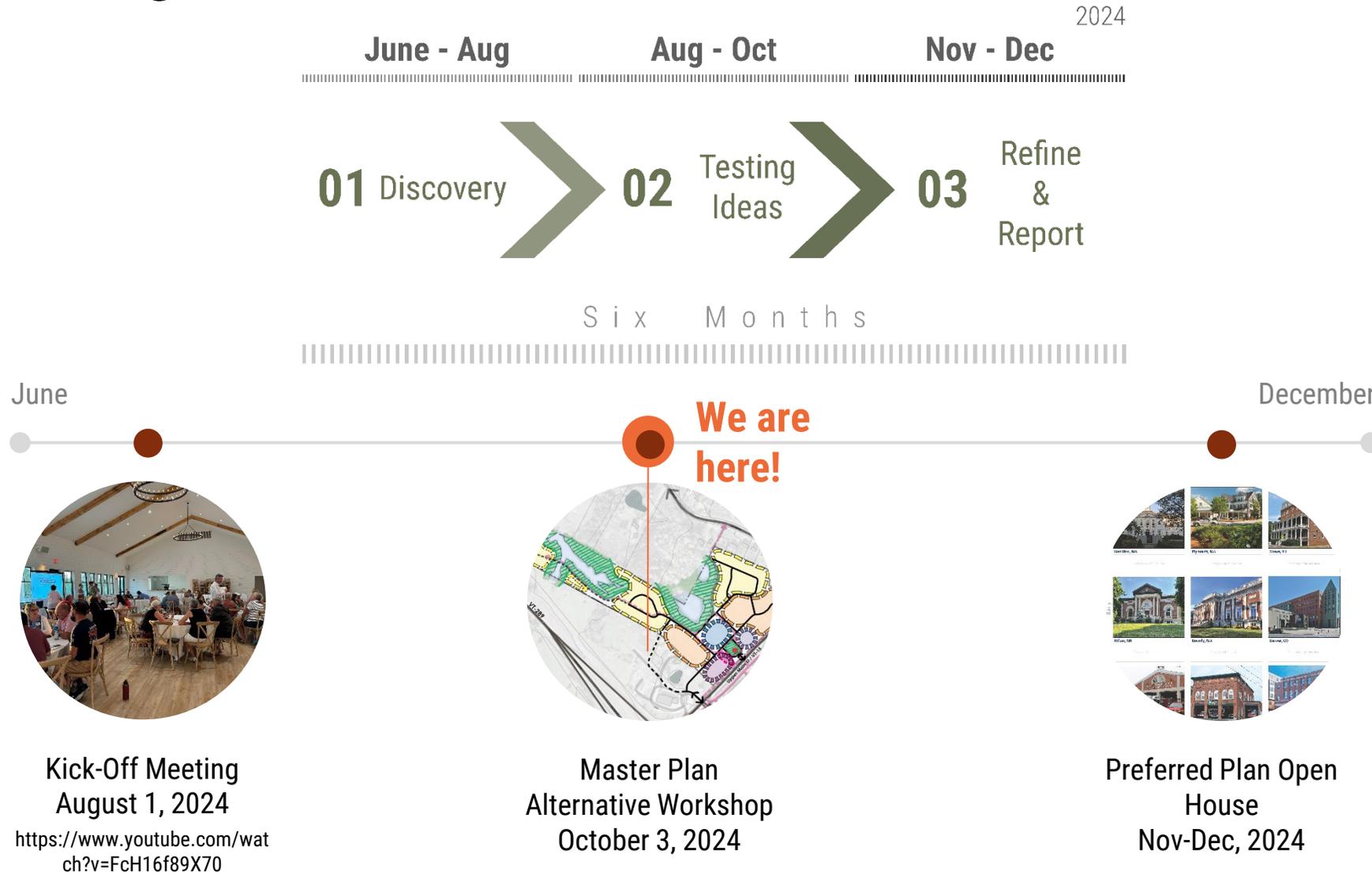
1. Welcome
2. Process and Schedule
3. What we've learned so far
4. What we've been up to this week
5. Feedback Exercise
6. Wrap Up and Next Steps

# Tonight's Goals

1. Share what we've completed and what we've learned
2. Present site planning options
3. Get feedback from attendees about the options
4. Encourage people to stay involved



# Our Planning Process



**Heading towards the mid-phase of the project, which is an iterative process to meet our deliverables by the end of this year**



# Stakeholder Interviews

We held and are continuing to schedule Stakeholder Interviews. These 45-minute to 1-hour long conversations seek to dive deeper into opportunities and concerns that impact Town leadership, Town services, impacted neighbors and businesses, and others. We like to include anyone who might either have crucial information to make this project happen or have unique perspective on the property and its environs.

Stakeholder Group	Attendees
Design Team Meetings	Katherine Sonnicks, Caitlyn Corless, Kent Johnson, Stantec
Site Visit/Library Tour	Katherine Sonnicks, Aaron Martin, Adriane Martin, Caitlyn Corless, Kent Johnson
Planning Commission Representative(s)	Trefor Williams, Georgia Lavigne
Selectboard Representative(s)	Andy Watts, Dawn Hill-Fleury
Commissions	Will Dodge (Energy), Ken Signorelo (Conservation and Trails), Anna Brouillette (Housing), Jean O'sullivan (Economic Development)
Library/Municipal Services	Aaron Martin, Adrian Martin, Caitlyn Corless, Kent Johnson, Sharon Kelley, Janet Watts
Fire/Rescue/Police	Charlie Cole, Peter Mutolo, Colleen Ballard, Ron Hoague
Adjacent Residents	7 Residents (Old Stage Road and Lost Nation Road)
Commercial/Businesses	Deb Holland, Peter Edelman, Al Senecal



# Space Needs Programming

## STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

UPPER MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOP





# Space Needs Programming

## **FIRE STATION**

- Outdated technology and equipment
- Lack of space
- Poor location to service entire community
- No room to expand
- Space can't support paid employees

## **LIBRARY**

- Lack of community and event space
- No space to expand or maintain existing collection
- Poor accessible building access
- Inadequate parking

## **TOWN OFFICES**

- Lack of conference rooms
- Community activities conflict with conference room
- Running out of room for Storage
- Lack of security
- No formal town meeting place

## **COMMUNITY/RECREATION**

- Not enough space for community events
- Lack of town owned recreation field space
- No senior center or location for activities
- No central location for activities and storage

**Collaborative uses across departments**



# Public Engagement

## WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

6 Groups

36 People Signed-In

192 Survey Responses



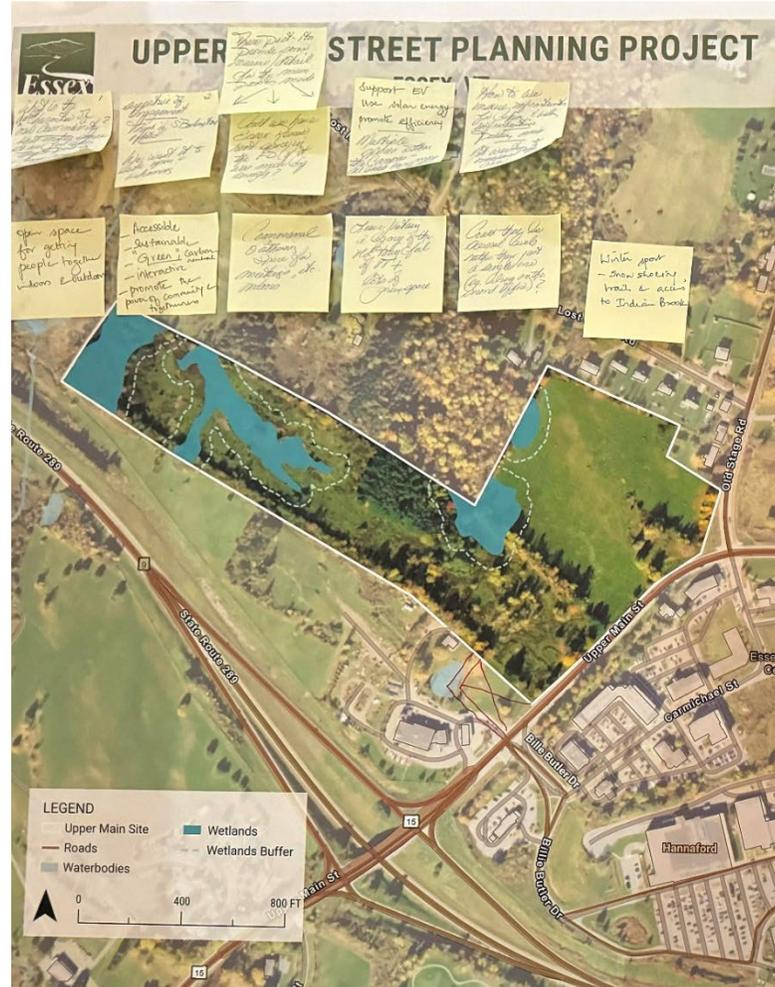
**Decent turn-out so far. Looking forward for more public engagement on follow up events**



# Public Engagement

## GROUP TABLE EXERCISE

UPPER MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOP



Review the discussion guide at each table. Then talk about these prompts as a group and write your answers below.

### Desired Character

What type of place would you like this to become?

WELCOMING, OPEN, SUPPORTIVE  
GATHERING PLACE - TOWN HALL -> CENTER  
PARK-LIKE

What would you like to do here in the future?

- BE SMART ABOUT DEVELOPMENT TO ALLOW THE SPACE TO GROW  
- LEGACY

List 3 goals or outcomes the group most wants to see when this project is complete.

1. SUSTAINABILITY / EFFICIENCY w/ BUILDINGS
2. CENTERING - PLACE TO GATHER - PROMOTES SENSE OF COMMUNITY
3. EFFICIENT USE OF PROPERTY w/ SAFE ACCESS TO - FROM

*Would like to see more sustainability & green space*

### Challenges and Concerns

Does the group have any concerns about the future of the site?

- TRAFFIC / EMERGENCY RESPONSE VS. PUBLIC
- HOW TO FINANCE THIS?
- FILLING IN THE UPPER WETLANDS TO DEVELOP ON
- STATE OF VERMONT REGULATIONS
- DEVELOP SMARTLY

Decent turn-out so far. Looking forward for more public engagement on follow up events



# Online Survey Results

1. What type of place would you like this site to become in the future?

[More Details](#)

Small town center	104
Regional activity hub	57
Other	26



2. What type of physical design character would you like this site to have?

[More Details](#)

More traditional	59
More contemporary	21
A mix of traditional and contemporary	96
Other	11



3. How should visitors experience this site?

[More Details](#)

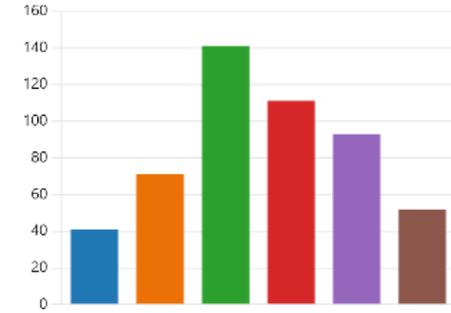
A distinctive gateway to Essex	55
Simply part of the town	115
Other	14



4. What types of things would you like to do here in the future? Select as many as apply

[More Details](#)

Live	41
Shop	71
Attend a community event/festival	141
Go for a nature walk	111
Meet friends for a meal	93
Other	52



5. What is your top goal for the site or outcome you would like to see here when this site is developed as part of the Town Center?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

157 Responses

Latest Responses

*"to develop community relationships"*

*"One location for all town municipal needs (Recreation, meetings, voting, etc.)"*

*"I dont want it developed by the town"*

25 respondents (16%) answered **space** for this question.



**Majority of responses support the area to develop as a small town center with both traditional and contemporary character, prioritizing community facilities, preserving nature, and accommodating diverse uses.**



# Online Survey Results

6. Do you think there are challenges facing the development of 80-90 Upper Main Street site? Do you have any concerns? If so, please share them here. If not, please proceed to the next page.

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

134 Responses

Latest Responses

"fire house noise interfering with other services, traffic, wetlands, connectivity for walkabili..."

"Taxes are too high already"

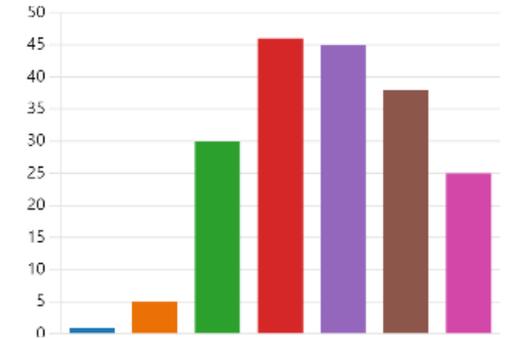
46 respondents (34%) answered **traffic** for this question.



8. What is your age range?

[More Details](#)

18 years old or younger	1
19-30 years old	5
31 to 40 years old	30
41 to 50 years old	46
51 to 60 years old	45
61 to 70 years old	38
71 years old or older	25



7. What is your relationship to Essex?

[More Details](#)

I live here	158
I own a business here	1
I work here	12
I visit Essex	7
Other	13



**Traffic and Noise are the major concerns | Respondents are primarily 30+ age group, residing in Essex**



# Some Themes/Feedback so far...

## Programmatic needs/wants

- Town needs meeting space – both a civic outdoor gathering space as well as an indoor space that can hold about 200 people
- Need for housing, specifically affordable or senior options.
- Trails and natural connections are important and desired
- Community Gardens would be a tremendous asset/complement to the municipal uses
- Sustainability/Efficiency – the buildings and the grounds should be sustainable and consider district power/HVAC and other ways to build responsibly and cost-effectively (long term)
- Opportunity for recreation uses integrated into open space, and maybe even as part of municipal program?
- Potential opportunity for Rescue service to share space with Fire and mutually benefit each other with overlapping facilities/needs

## Concerns/Issues to address in this study

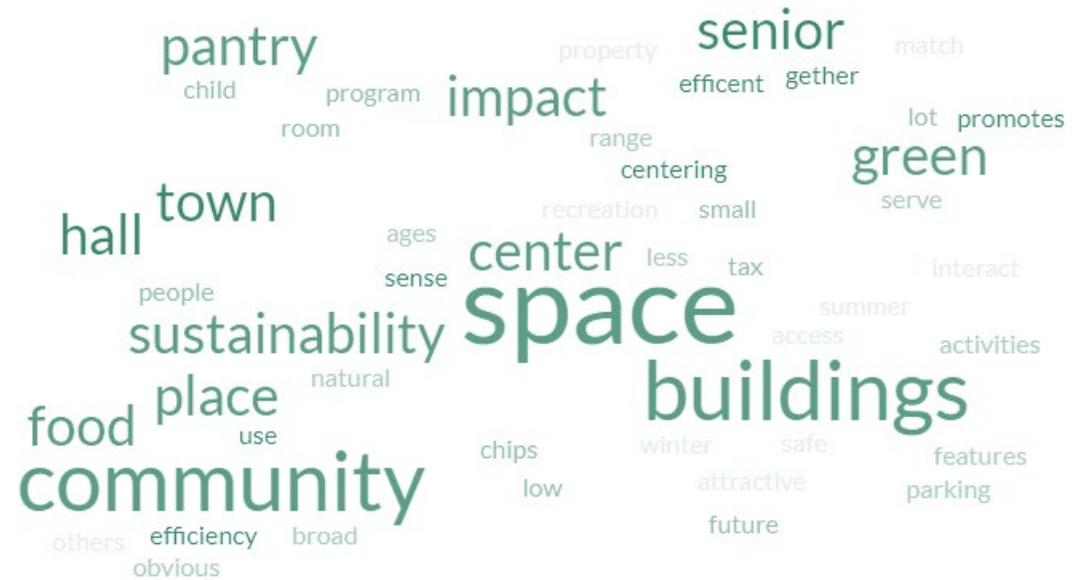
- Traffic/Congestion on Upper Main and on Old Stage – not only an issue for site access, but also a concern for Fire and Rescue ingress and egress.
- Parking or access via other means (trails, bike, ped)
- Need to retain the character of Essex and its agrarian roots (this is NOT South Burlington - and doesn't want to be!)
- How are we going to pay for this? – concern regarding taxes
- Need to carefully site all uses to be sensitive to adjacent neighbors – provide buffers for privacy
- Concern regarding mature trees on site and whether or not they can be retained



# Summary

## GOALS

- 01 Promote Sense of Community with Inclusive Diverse Uses
- 02 Improve Accessibility to Civic Spaces
- 03 Foster Sustainable Low Impact Development
- 04 Feel like a Natural Part of Essex



Shaping up our project goals

# Site Plan

5 mins walking distance to the existing town center and across the site

- LEGEND**
-  Waterbodies
  -  Wetland
  -  Contour
  -  100 Yr Flood Plain
  -  200 Yr Flood Plain
  -  Wetland Buffer

- LEGEND**
-  100 Year Flood Plain
  -  Wetland
  -  Wetland Buffer
  -  Waterbodies
  -  Contour
  -  Site Parcel Lines
  -  Waterline
-  0 200 400 Feet

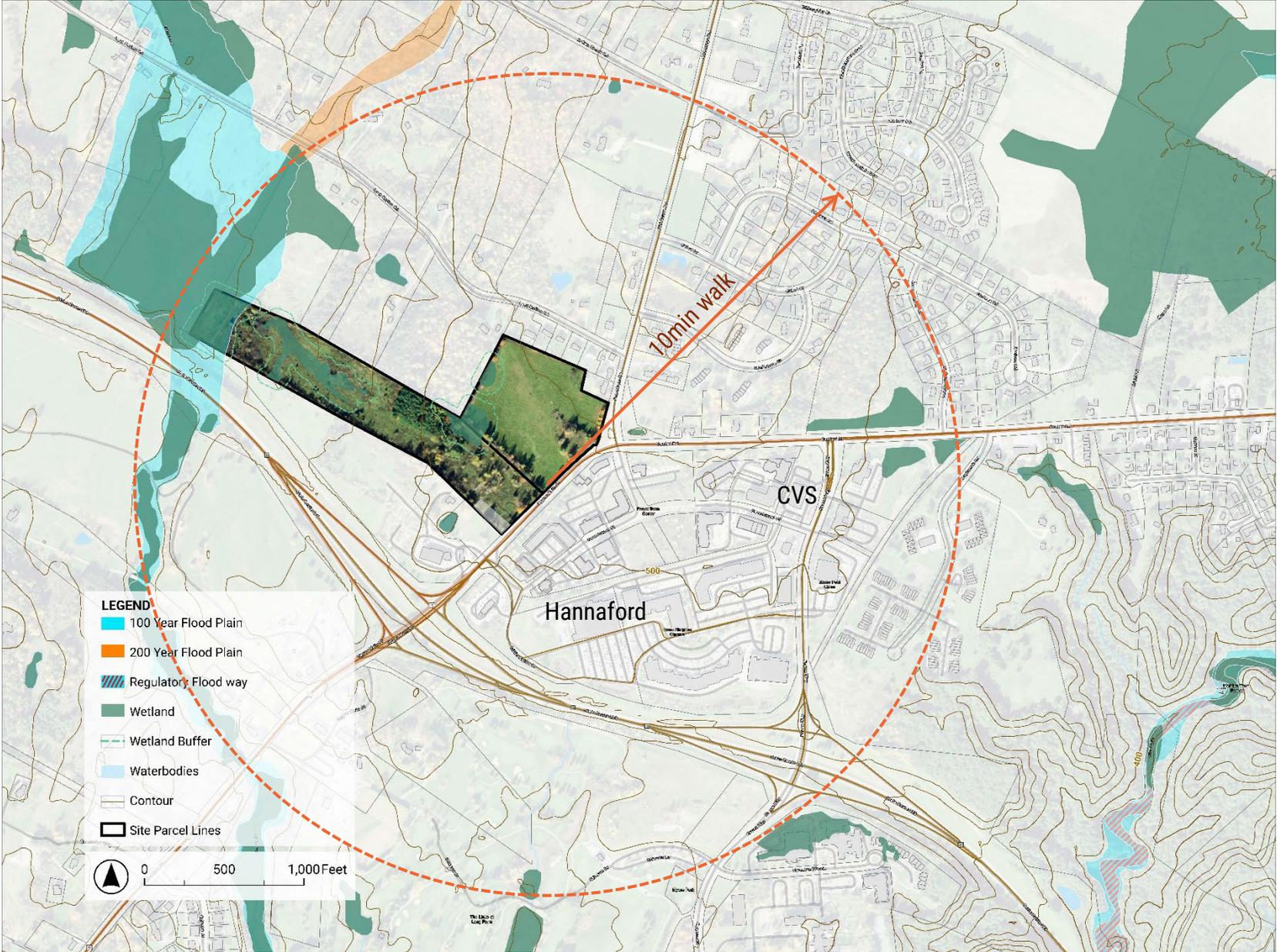


# Site Plan

10 mins walking distance bypass the existing town center and the neighborhood in the West

LEGEND

-  Waterbodies
-  Wetland
-  Contour
-  100 Yr Flood Plain
-  200 Yr Flood Plain
-  Wetland Buffer





# Site Analysis

## SITE BOUNDARIES

Total Site Area: 1,367,700 SF [31.4 Acres]

### LEGEND

MXD-PUD : Mixed Use- Planned Unit

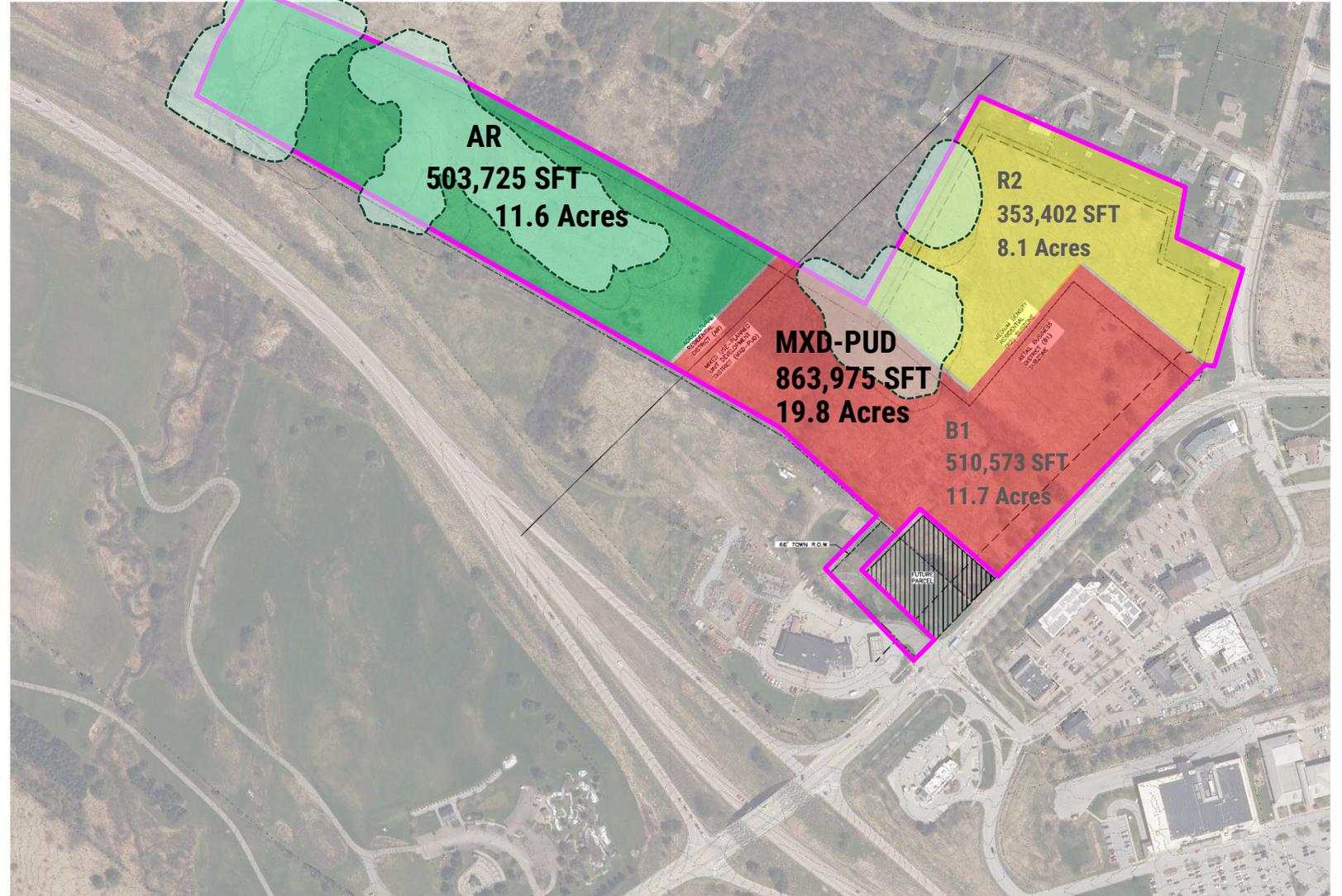
Development

■ B1 : Retail Business District Subzone

■ R2 : Medium Density Residential Subzone

■ AR: Agricultural Residential

### 0.5 acres property line adjustment



The mixed use zone further divided into two subzone B1 and R2- set a base constraint for future development



# Site Analysis

## TOWN CHARACTER

UPPER MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOP





# Site Analysis

## TOWN CHARACTER

UPPER MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOP





# Public Spaces and Services:

- Programable for Events
- Farmers Market
- Community Gardens
- Nature and Walking Trails

**Essex** **VISUAL PREFERENCE | Open Space**  
 We would like to have your valuable feedback by placing a dot sticker in the box below each of your preferred images.

Public Realm	 <p><b>Town Green   Charlotte, VT</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>	 <p><b>Downtown Park   Middlebury, VT</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>	 <p><b>Farmers Market   Woodstock, VT</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>
	 <p><b>Retention Pond   Colchester, VT</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>	 <p><b>Boardwalk   Rochester, NY</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>	 <p><b>Community Gardens   Burlington, VT</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>
	 <p><b>Rainwater Harvesting</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>	 <p><b>Solar Panel   VT</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>	 <p><b>Geothermal Energy</b></p> <p>Place your sticker dots here.</p>



# Municipal Buildings: Town Offices

Town Office



**Shelburne, VT**



**Woodstock, VT**



**Waitsfield, VT**

Town Office



**Middlebury, VT**



**Charlotte, VT**



**Sharon, MA**

# Municipal Buildings: Library

Library



Swanton, VT



Stowe, VT



Manchester, VT

Library



Beverly, MA



Falmouth, ME



Charlotte, VT

# Municipal Buildings: Fire Station/Rescue

Fire Station



Fire Station





# Other Development

- **Opportunity to partner to develop additional uses on site**
- **Diverse housing options, like senior housing or affordable housing**
- **Limited mixed-use or additional town services, like child care, elder care, community outreach and support, etc.**



# VISUAL PREFERENCE | Residential

We would like to have your valuable feedback by placing a dot sticker in the box below each of your preferred images.

Townhomes	 <b>Lexington, MA</b> Place your sticker dots here.	 <b>South Burlington, VT</b> Place your sticker dots here.	 <b>Woodstock, VT</b> Place your sticker dots here.
	 <b>Bourne, VT</b> Place your sticker dots here.	 <b>Vernon, CT</b> Place your sticker dots here.	 <b>Pittsford, NY</b> Place your sticker dots here.
	 <b>Senior Housing   Agawam, MA</b> Place your sticker dots here.	 <b>Senior Housing   South Windsor, CT</b> Place your sticker dots here.	 <b>Live-Work   Stowe, VT</b> Place your sticker dots here.



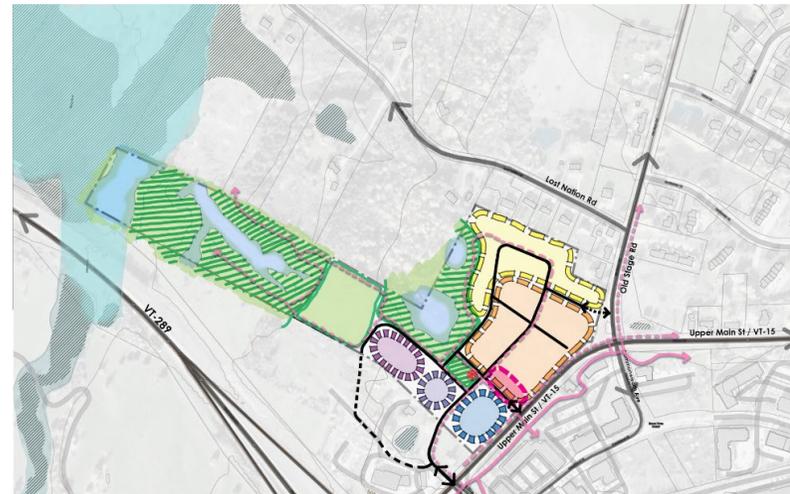
# Conceptual Diagrams



Option 01: "A Classic Town Center"



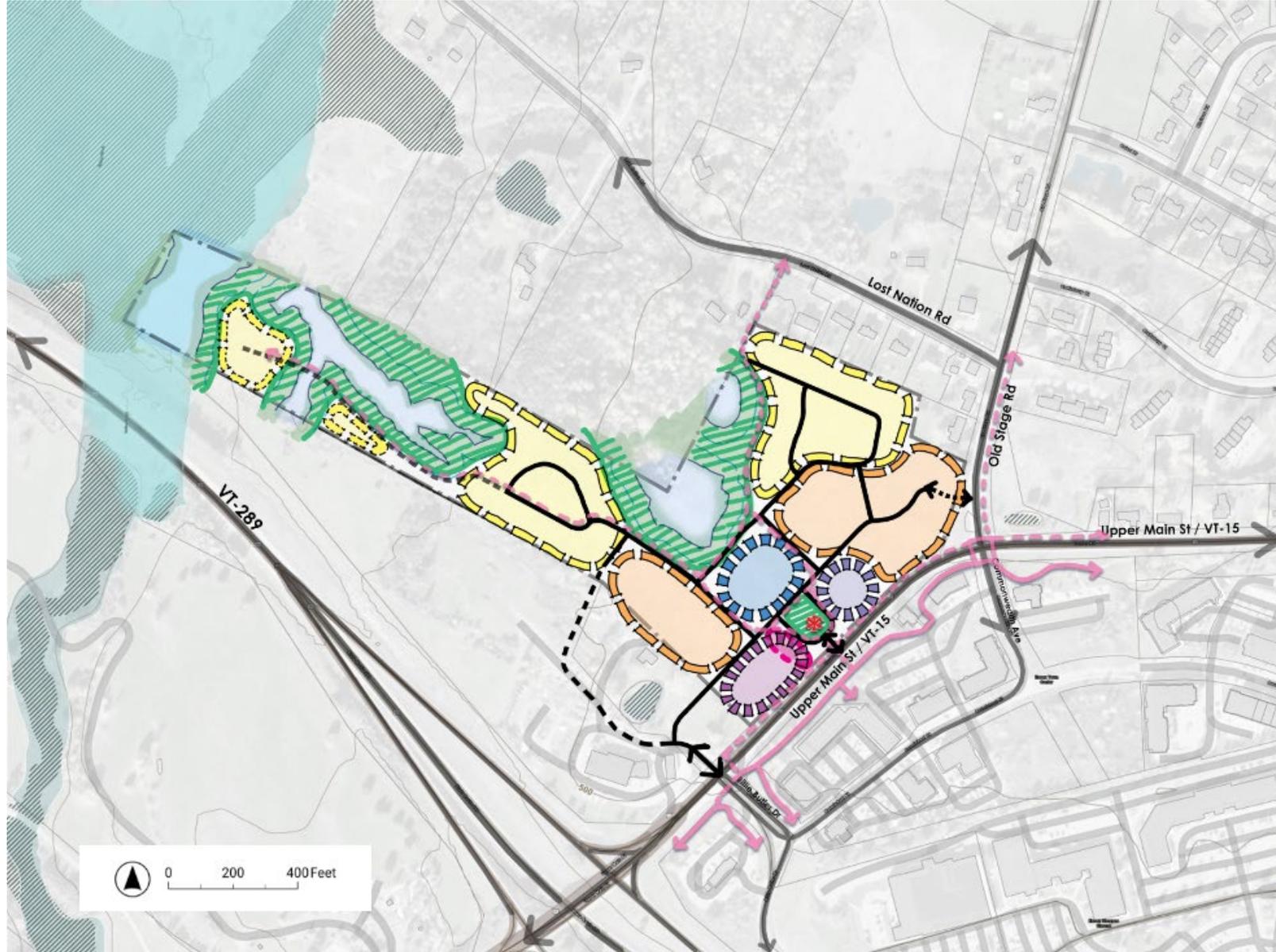
Option 02: "A Green Spine"



Option 03: "A Bridge to Nature"



# Conceptual Diagrams





# Master Plan Alternatives | Option 01: "Classic Town Square"



## LEGEND

-  Waterbodies
-  Wetland / Greenery
-  Residential
-  Town Office
-  Library
-  Fire Station
-  Other (Services/ Mixed Use)



# Master Plan Alternatives | Option 01: "Classic Town Square"







# Conceptual Diagrams





# Master Plan Alternatives | Option 02: "A Green Spine"



## LEGEND

-  Waterbodies
-  Wetland / Greenery
-  Residential
-  Town Office
-  Library
-  Fire Station
-  Other (Services/ Mixed Use)



# Master Plan Alternatives | Option 02: "A Green Spine"

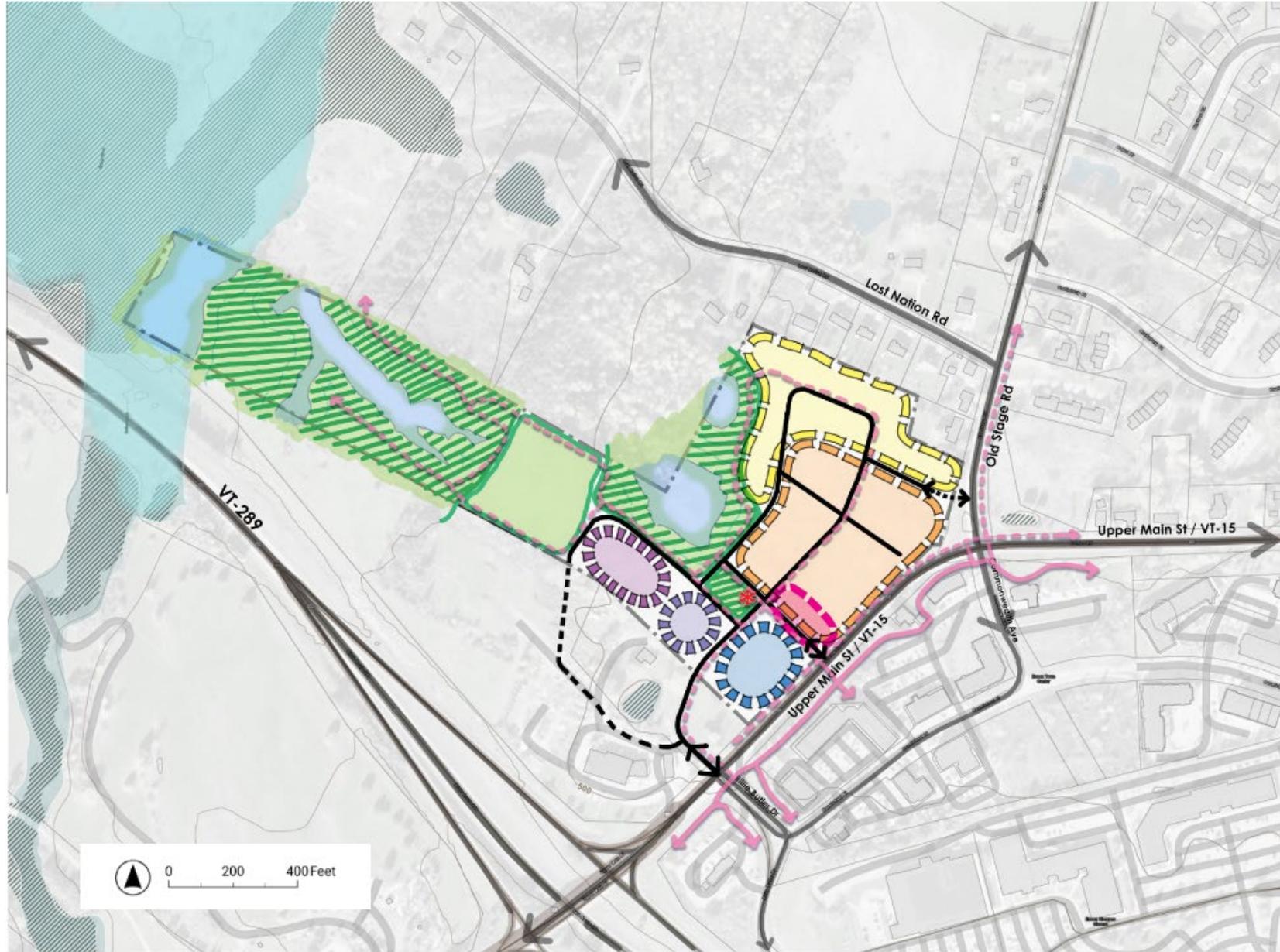
UPPER MAIN STREET PLANNING | Public Meeting | October 3<sup>rd</sup>





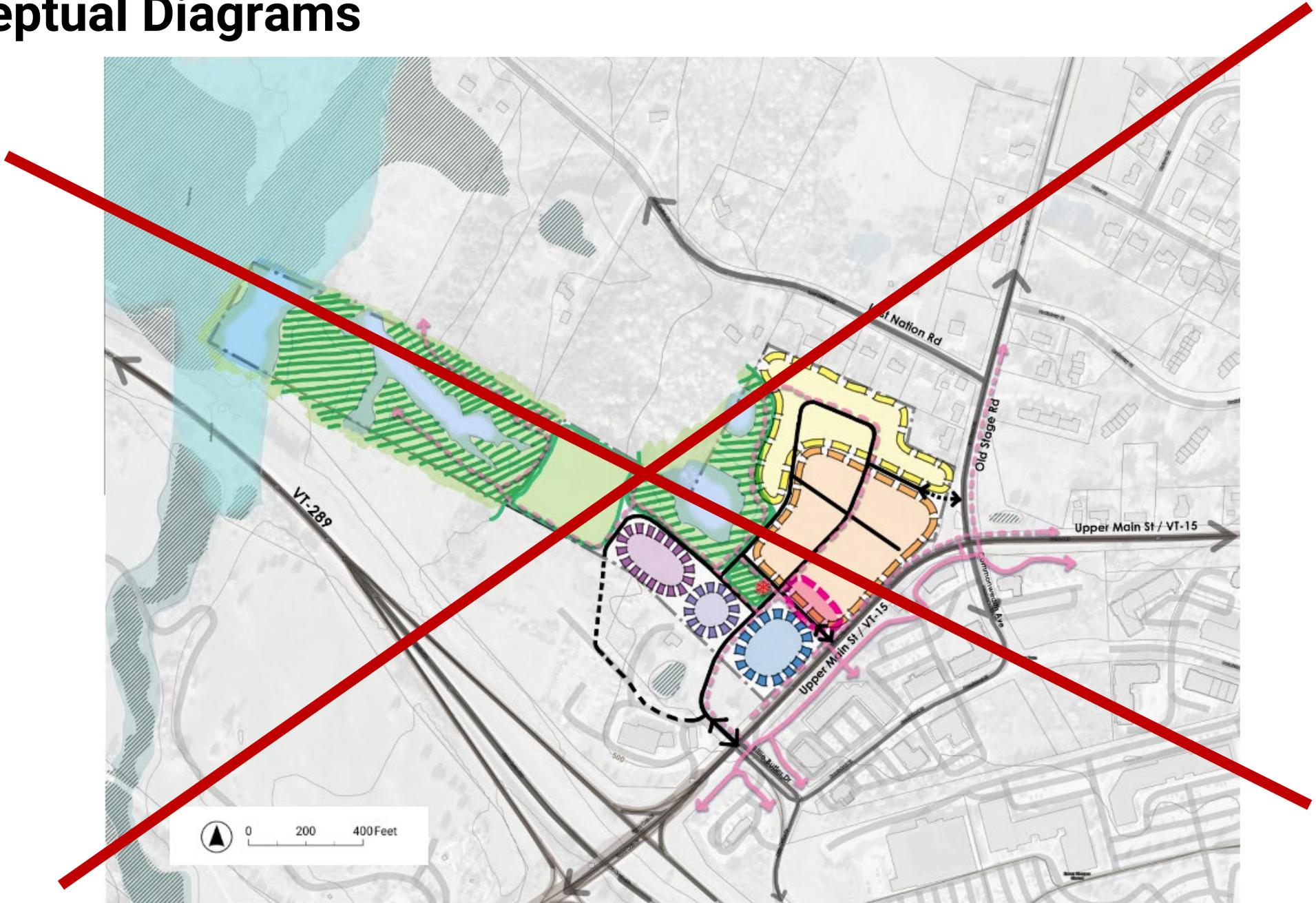


# Conceptual Diagrams





# Conceptual Diagrams





# Conceptual Diagrams





# Master Plan Alternatives | Option 03: "Town Commons"

- LEGEND
- Waterbodies
  - Wetland / Greenery
  - Residential
  - Town Office
  - Library
  - Fire Station
  - Other (Services/ Mixed Use)





# Master Plan Alternatives | Option 03: "Town Commons"







# Thank YOU!

