



**PLAN NH**  
Visioning *for* Sustainable Communities



# Nashua Charrette

May 30-31, 2025



# Agenda

- Who is Plan NH?
- What is a Charrette?
- Meet the Team
- Project Area Overview
- What We Saw
- What We Heard
- Recommendations
- Q&A



# Who is Plan NH?



501(c)3 organization founded in 1989

*Vision* of healthy and vibrant communities across the State

*Mission:* to foster excellence in planning, design, and development of New Hampshire's *built environment*

*Strategy:* to share information and inspiration for how community design and the built environment can contribute positively to where we live, work, and play

# What is a Plan NH Charrette?



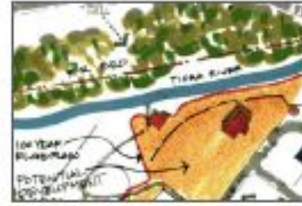
ALLENTOWN 2011



ASHLAND 2011



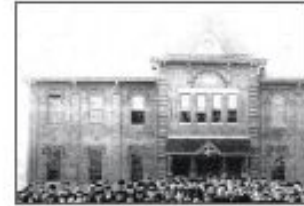
BARNSTEAD 2006



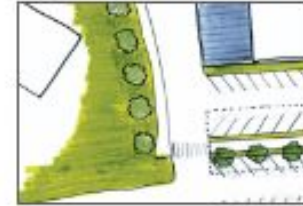
BELMONT 1996



BELMONT 2010



FARMINGTON 1998



FRANKLIN 1997



BERLIN-GORHAM 2002



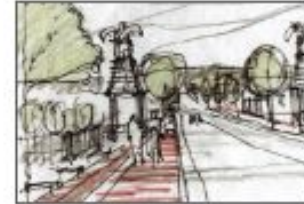
BRADFORD 1998



BRISTOL 2008



BRISTOL 2018



CANAAN 2000



GREENFIELD 1997



GREENFIELD 2014



CANDIA 2003



CHICHESTER 2014



COLEBROOK 2010



DEERFIELD 2000



EXETER 2010



FRANKLIN FALLS 2006



GILMANTON 2000

# What is a Plan NH Charrette?



- Listening and brainstorming session grounded in planning and design and focused on the built environment
- Two-day exercise utilizing an multidisciplinary team of volunteers
- Response to an application from a town or city and their identified design challenge

# What does the Charrette look like?

- Intensive 2-day schedule
- Day 1
  - Tour of the target area
  - Stakeholder meeting
  - Community input session #1
  - Community input session #2
- Day 2
  - Team work session
  - Final report out
- Post-Charrette
  - Final report provided to host community within 10-12 weeks



# Who are our volunteers?

- Designers, planners, engineers, preservationists, and other related professionals
- Individuals passionate about the built environment and giving back to the Granite State
- Teams are built to meet the unique design challenges of the host community



# Meet the Nashua Charrette Team

- Anna Wells, [Plan NH](#)
- Bob White, [Landscape Architect](#)
- Cassie Cashin, [Nashua Regional Planning Commission](#)
- David Bartsch, [Bartsch Landscape Architecture](#)
- Emma Rearick, [Nashua Regional Planning Commission](#)
- Gordon Leedy, [Halverson/Tighe & Bond](#)
- Greg Bakos, [VHB](#)
- Iris Yung-Ching Lin, [Halverson/Tighe & Bond](#)
- Jamie Simchik, [Simchik Planning & Development](#)
- Jason Plourde, [BETA Group](#)
- Jay Hodkinson, [GZA GeoEnvironmental](#)
- Jen Martel, [Copley Wolff Design](#)
- Julia Mistretta, [UNH Community and Environmental Planning Major](#)
- Michael Pritchard, [Bonin Architects](#)
- Morgan Dunson, [Nobis Group](#)
- Sarah Tupper, [UNH Community and Environmental Planning Major](#)
- Sarah Wrightsman, [New Hampshire Housing](#)
- Tiffany Tononi McNamara, [Plan NH](#)

# Why Plan NH came to Nashua

- **February 2025** - The Community Development Division for the City of Nashua submitted an application to Plan NH's Community Design Charrette Program.
- **March 2025** - Plan NH Staff and Charrette Committee members met with the Community Development Division to learn more about their application and goals.
- **May 2025** - Plan NH Charrette Team came to Nashua for our 83rd Community Design Charrette.



# Why Plan NH came to Nashua

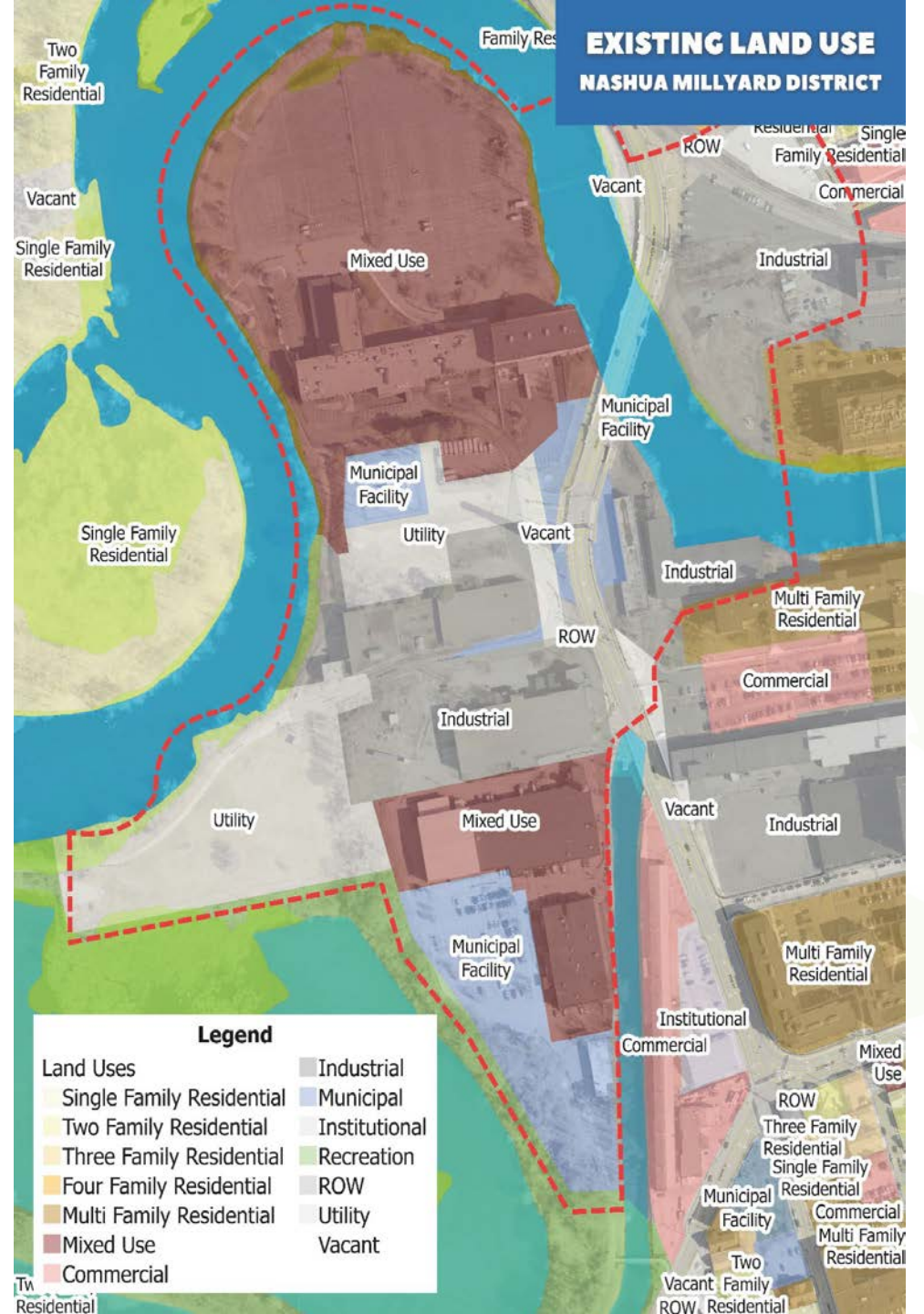
- The application from the City of Nashua requested assistance from Plan NH to aid in the development of a comprehensive vision for the revitalization of the Millyard area.
- Challenges for this area include:
  - Underdeveloped land
  - Circulation and wayfinding
  - Connectivity to recreational and economic hubs
  - Integration of modern and sustainable infrastructure
  - Respecting the area's historical significance



# Project Area



**TARGET AREA**  
NASHUA MILLIARD DISTRICT



# Project Area



# What We Saw





# We Asked: *What do you see?*

- Lack of connectivity
- Mine Falls Park and the river - Recreation!
- Lots of asphalt and pavement, not enough greenery
- Deteriorating, run-down infrastructure
- Unsafe feeling; lack of lighting at night
- Isolation from the Downtown
- Traffic and bike/pedestrian safety issues
- Nice land area and buildings with lots of potential
- **Opportunities to improve the Gateway of Nashua!**



## *We Asked: What do you want to see?*

- Connectivity within the Millyard and to Downtown, for both vehicles and pedestrians, wayfinding and more signage
- A sense of place that preserves the Millyard history
- More green spaces and recreation: playgrounds, fields, and courts, and kayaking in the river
- Where community can come together: community events, restaurants, farmers markets, food trucks, shops
- Increased safety with more lighting and well-maintained sidewalks and roads



## *We Asked: What else do we need to know?*

- Environmental and industrial history of the area
- Opportunities and constraints between public and private ownership of the area
- Currently going through a zoning rewrite
- Need small grocery store and other amenities to support population
- Much of the area is in a floodplain
- Needs a landmark to put Nashua on the map
- People are looking for a stronger sense of community

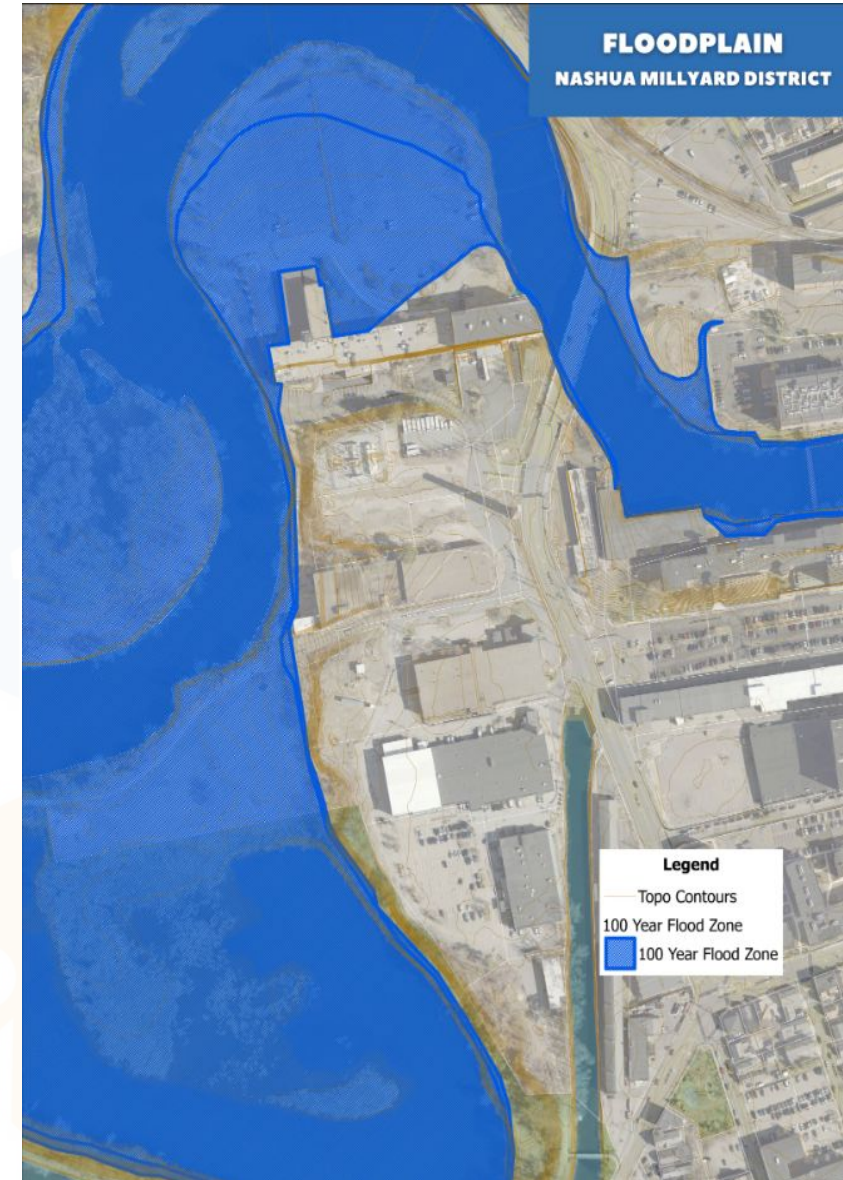


**“We aren't just building housing,  
we are building community”**

*-Charrette Participant*

# Constraints

- Limited Access
- Utilities
  - Substation
  - Radio Antenna
- Contamination
- Private Property
- Natural Features
  - River and Floodplain
  - Steep Slopes



# Recommendations



# Connectivity

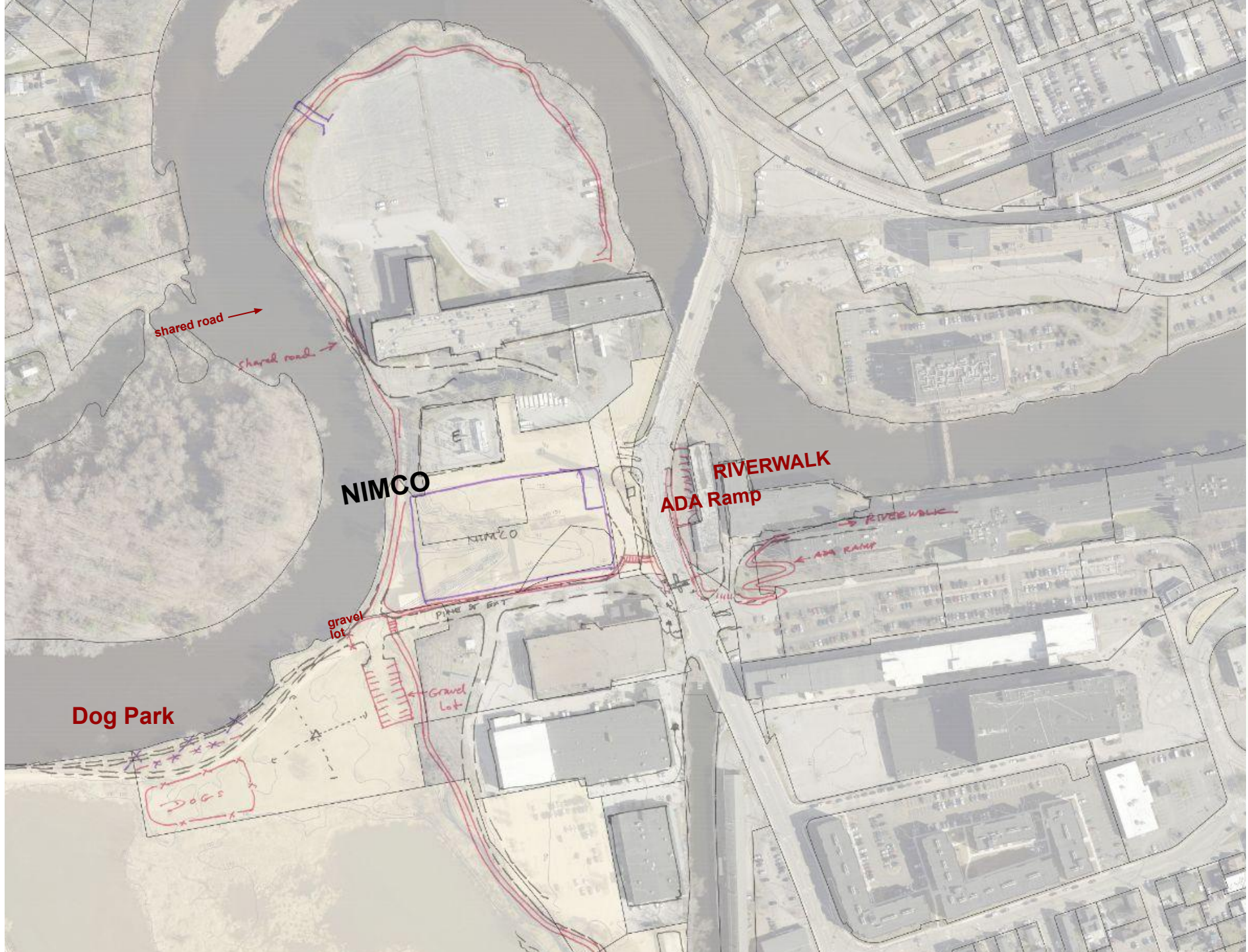


# Connectivity Opportunities

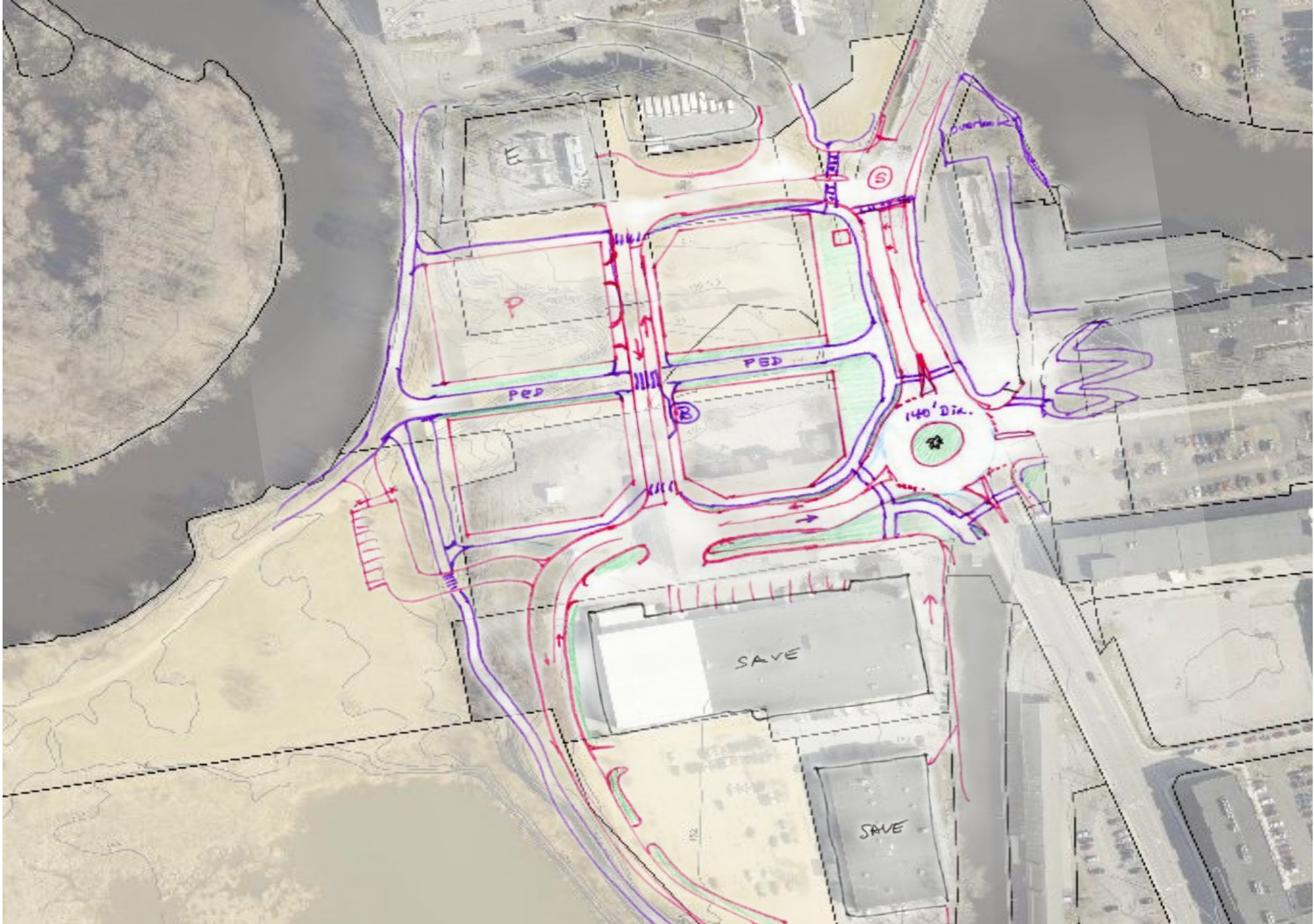
- Easier access to Mine Falls
- Well-defined roads and paths
- Clear entrances



# Connectivity

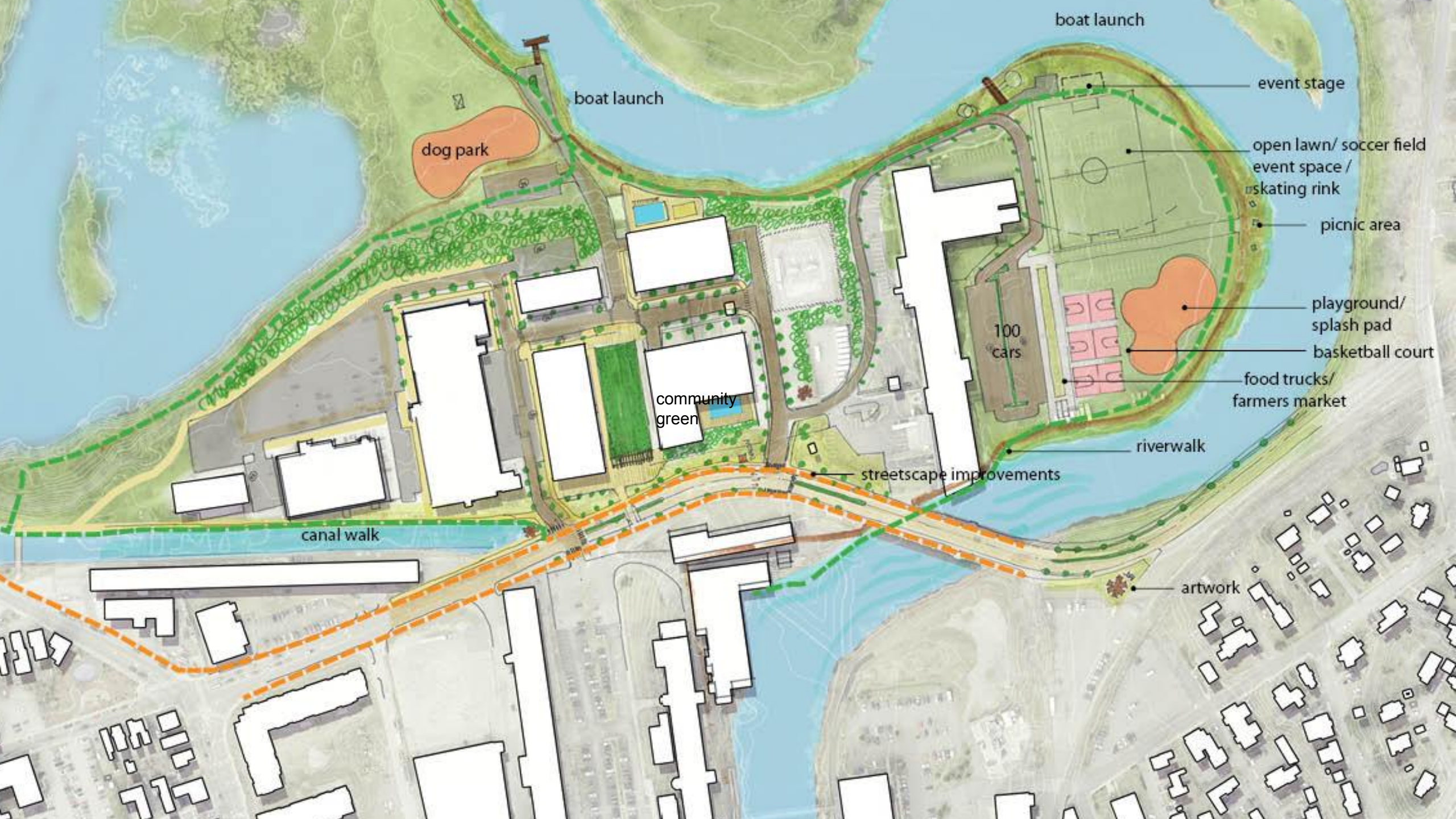


# Connectivity



# Open Space & Recreation Opportunities





boat launch

dog park

community green

canal walk

100 cars

streetscape improvements

riverwalk

boat launch

event stage

open lawn/ soccer field  
event space /  
skating rink

picnic area

playground/  
splash pad

basketball court

food trucks/  
farmers market

artwork

# Gateway Streetscape Improvements

- Signature Lighting at Smokestack
- Planted median on Pine Street
- Street Trees
- Brick Sidewalks



# Community Green

- Millyard pedestrian gateway and open space





# Technology Park Peninsula Precedent: Thompson's Point

- Pavilion
- Concerts
- Skating Rink
- Children's Museum
- Markets and Food Trucks
- Brewery
- Makerspace
- Event Space



# Scenario 1 - Adaptive Reuse Opportunities





100,000 SF  
3 Story

100,000 SF  
3 Story

100,000 SF  
3 Story

100,000 SF  
3 Story

Existing Small  
Business

Transitional  
Housing

Farmers Markets



Carousel



## Ice Skating Trail with Bridges and Underpasses





100,000 SF  
3 Story

100,000 SF  
3 Story

100,000 SF  
3 Story

100,000 SF  
3 Story

Existing Small  
Business

Transitional  
Housing

Garage

12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 46 48 50 52 54 56 58 60 62 64 66 68 70 72 74 76 78 80 82 84 86 88 90 92 94 96 98 100

Basketball Court





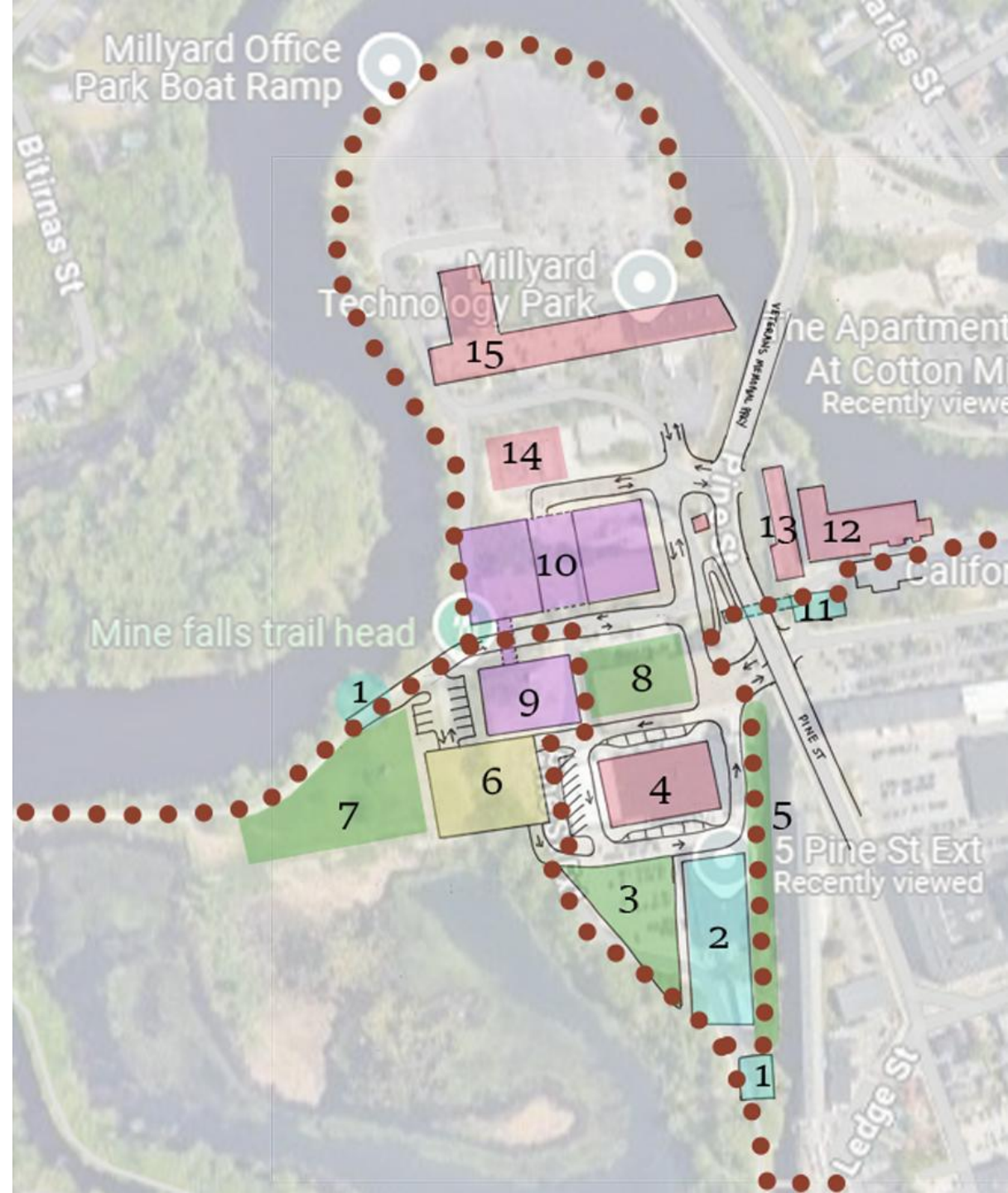




# Scenario 2 - Redevelopment Opportunities



- 1 - Boat Launch
- 2- Incubation Center/ Grocery Store
- 3 - Art Walk/Patio
- 4 - Services - Healthcare, Gym, Childcare, Yoga, Coffee
- 5 - Canal Walk
- 6 - Public Garage
- 7 - Dog Park
- 8 - Playground/ Event Area
- 9 - Mixed Use - Light Commercial  
(Ice Cream/ Sandwiches/ Residential
- 10- Two Tower residential, over parking garage.  
W/ Elevated Green Space & Pool
- 11 - Pedestrian Bridge/ Welcome Center, ADA Ramp
- 12 - Maker Art Space & Artist in Residence
- 13- Museum
- 14 - Electric Service
- 15 - Tech Park





Residential



Commercial



Restaurant



Market



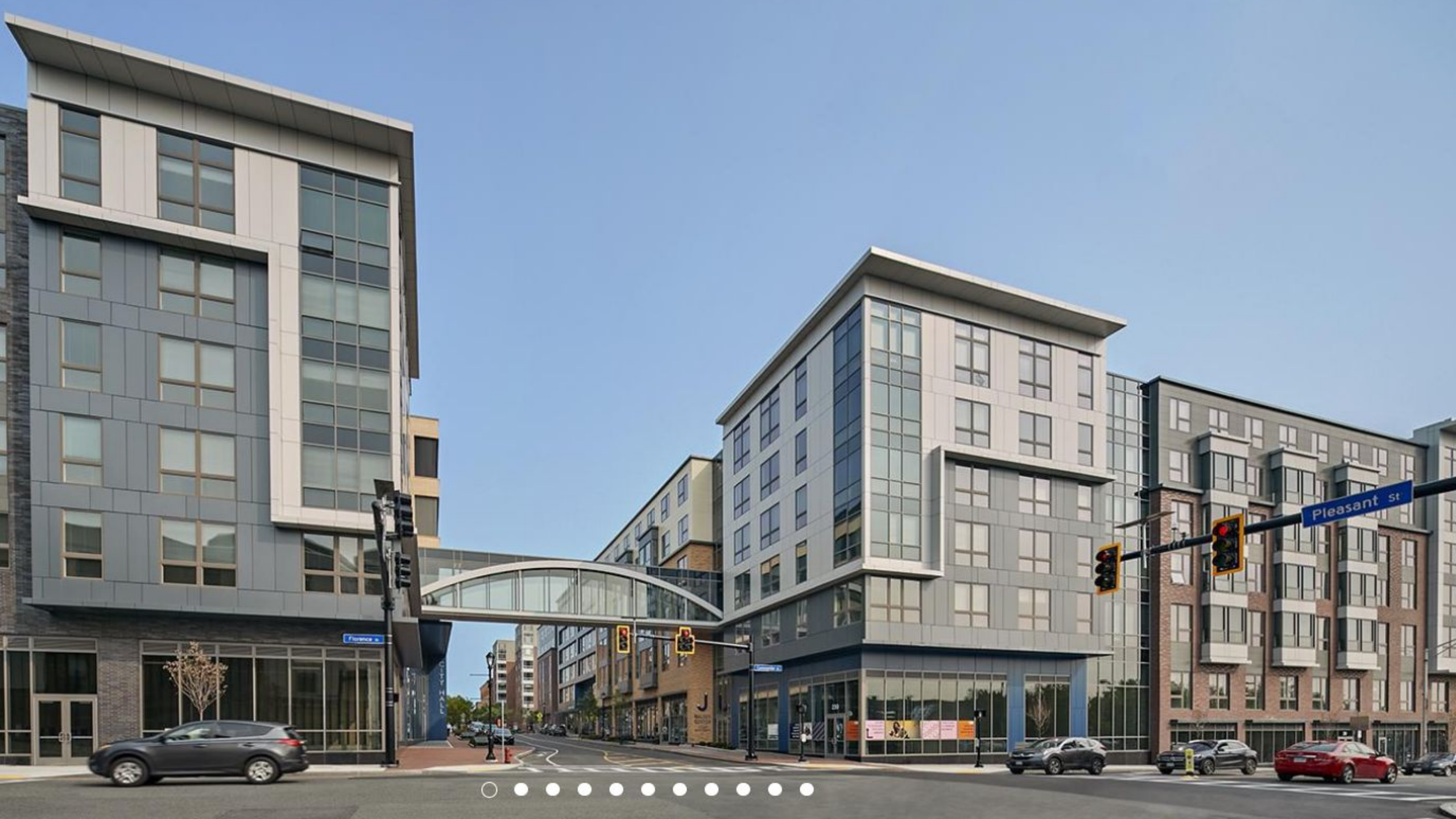
Public Space



Recreation



Midjourney AI Concept Rendering





CITY HALL



GOLDEN CENTER FOR LEARNING







Malden Center  
Fine Wines

J Malden Center

Malden Senior Center











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UMASS



# Housing



# Housing: Keep Up the Good Work!

- Designated a Housing Champion
- Per Unit Grant \$
- Housing Revolving Fund
- Awarded 2 HOP Grants

**City of Nashua**

**Land Use Code Update**



# Supportive Housing & Shelter

- Concerns about displacing the unhoused population
- Shelter, supportive housing with services, transitional housing
- Incentivizing mixed-income (e.g., inclusionary zoning)



# Public Art



# Public Art & Integration

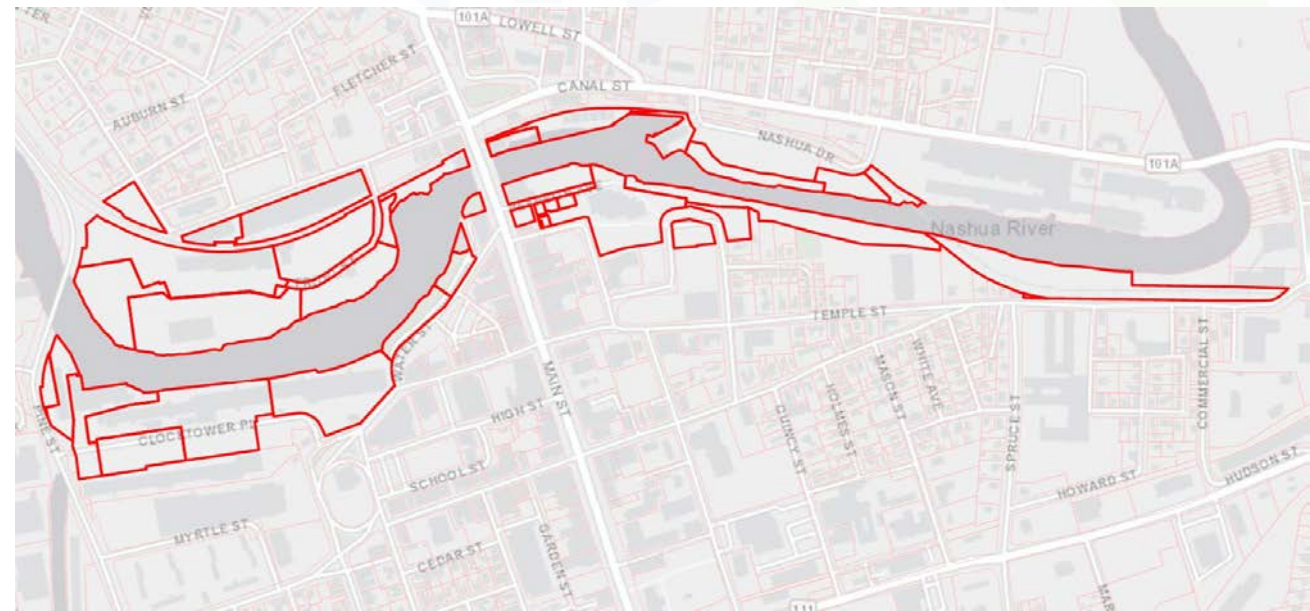
- Integrate the downtown and Millyard
- Support wayfinding
- Create a “grand entrance” into the area
- Increase activity





# Planning Considerations

- Expand the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District to include the Millyard properties to assist with revitalization.
  - New property tax revenue created by proposed development used to offset cost of public improvements (infrastructure, services, life & safety, etc.)
- Master Plan 2021 Goals
  - Equitable & Connected Transportation Networks
  - Redevelopment Opportunity
  - Housing Accessibility
- Current Land Use Code rewrite
  - Design Guidelines
  - Parking Minimums
  - Increase Density
- Cohesive design/branding approach
- Contamination
- Coordinate with all parties/associations



# Closing Thoughts: It's up to Nashua!

Revitalization is possible. It's the visioning, planning, and implementation process that allows the community to shape that change and your future.

- Continue the momentum
- Invite people into the process
- Connect with peers
- Celebrate wins, big and small!
- Revisit and reset
- Keep on keeping on



# Thank you Nashua!

- City of Nashua
- City of Nashua  
Community Development  
Division
- City of Nashua Economic  
Development Office



**Nashua**  
NEW HAMPSHIRE'S GATE CITY



# Community Q&A





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Visioning *for* Sustainable Communities

# *Thank You for Joining Us!*

If you have any questions about this presentation,  
please contact Plan NH at [info@plannh.org](mailto:info@plannh.org).

A final report for Nashua will be available 8-10 weeks after  
the charrette at [www.plannh.org/library](http://www.plannh.org/library).

