

South Hadley Design Assessment

Report completed by University of Massachusetts, Amherst

**Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning
and the Architecture and Design Program**

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South Hadley Design Assessment Report
Completed by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Project Team,
Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning (LARP)
and the Architecture and Design Program (A+D)

Mark Hamin (LARP), Project Manager and Final Report Author and Editor
Elizabeth Brabec (LARP) and Stephen Schreiber (A+D), Research Supervisors
Kathryn Ostermeir (LARP) and Peter Webster (A+D), Research Assistants and Draft Report Authors

Presented to the Town of South Hadley, Massachusetts
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Executive Summary

In 2011, the Town of South Hadley expressed interest in securing the assistance of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, specifically from the Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning (LARP) Department and the Architecture and Design (A+D) Program, in support of its efforts to implement key recommendations of its 2010 Master Plan. To this end, the Town identified a series of projects that it planned to undertake over the four years following the approval of the Master Plan. The Town believed that two of the projects could benefit from the knowledge, technical skills and professional experience of LARP/A+D faculty and students. A scope of service document specified the terms of the proposed collaboration regarding one project, a design assessment toolkit framework and typology/inventory for South Hadley initiated in Summer 2011 (and presented here). This design assessment report was also written to be complementary with a second project, a planning and design charrette process in Fall 2011 (please see South Hadley Falls public participation and studio charrette reports, submitted separately).

This report was undertaken with assistance from two graduate students supervised by two faculty members, one from each of the respective UMass programs (LARP and A+D). The Town's Master Plan, particularly the sections on Community Design and Land Use and Economic Development, served to provide insight into the purpose of this study and potential priority focus areas of importance in undertaking this project.

The town requested a design assessment study of priority focus areas as a prelude to the development of building and streetscape design guidelines. This project involved creating typologies and inventories of significant area structures, streets and sites to be evaluated according to well-documented and delineated design criteria, as well as assessed relative to existing and potential land-use and development regulations. This project would also allow the town to consider implementation of more detailed design review in the future. Our major goal was to create a modular toolkit framework that a potential or proposed town design review board or committee would be able to use as a reference.

This comprehensive report on the critical design elements that are considered to be most important 'best practices' (relative to identifying, evaluating, preserving, and enhancing the character and identity of the community) includes the following deliverables:

- a series of design guidelines and evaluation recommendations
- a toolkit framework of design assessment criteria
- identification of priority focus areas in consultation with the town
- a documentation of our research and review process (GIS, case studies, etc.)
- a typology and inventory of relevant and significant structures and streets
- appendices including other examples of background assessment materials

The report to follow represents an overview and summary of the work undertaken by the UMass Design Assessment Team in the Summer and Winter of 2011 for the Town of South Hadley, MA, and aims to incorporate the comments and questions raised by town officials and residents in their review and response

to the draft document over subsequent months. The introductory Section 1 provides definitions, rationales, and explanations for what design assessment can do, for what purposes, and in what forms. We describe our research process and methods in the second section. Sections 3 and 4 present the general results of our analytic process on a town-wide scale: GIS mapping and spatial classification in the third section, comparative case studies of communities similar to South Hadley in the fourth section. The spatial analysis and case study criteria are applied more specifically to focus areas in South Hadley in Section 5 (Architectural Typologies and Inventories) as well as 6 (Street Typologies and Inventories). Section 7 concludes with suggestions and recommendations regarding how the various design assessment criteria might be implemented from the perspective of planning and development guidelines. Specific guidelines and criteria for design assessment are presented as a toolkit framework in Section 8. In the appendices, we list our information sources and references, including links to web-based resources.

1. Introduction

What are the significant architectural and landscape design features that help to define a distinctive character and quality of life for South Hadley? Is it the view of the Holyoke Range, the agricultural setting, the country roads, the New England town settlement pattern, the abundant variety of built forms in terms of structures and sites, the juxtaposition of architectural styles, the legacy of the region's colonial past, the spirit of industrial reinvention, or a new kind of character still emerging from the convergence and overlaying of these aspects? Or is it some special mix or juxtaposition of these elements? The Town of South Hadley, through the development and implementation of its Master Plan, and the subsequent potential for adoption of community-based design assessment standards, strives to sustain, enhance, and build on its present spatial quality and special setting in the region.

What

The Design assessment framework presented in this report provides an analysis of South Hadley and contains suggestions for the Town as it considers implementing a design review process. This framework is intended not as a mandate for what South Hadley must or should do, but rather as an integrated toolkit of information resources and techniques indicating what the town might or could do, with options derived from analyses of the physical and cultural characteristics of South Hadley. Data provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Town of South Hadley have been used to inform and create:

- Analytic maps of various town-wide characteristics relevant to design assessment
- Best practices 'lessons learned' and assessment criteria from case study precedents
- Matrices examining architectural and landscape/streetscape typologies that help define the character of the town

In the event that the town decides that a design review board (or some other form of design assessment process) may be established, these analytic maps and matrices can provide a foundation for the development of a set of design review guidelines specifically suited to the conditions, needs, and long-term goals of South Hadley. This report will also discuss the various advantages, limitations, opportunities, and challenges involved

in design assessment processes.

Design review guidelines are generally an organized collection of standards and design ‘best practices’ indicators that towns compile to promote complementary development and to enhance town character, overall community health, and economic viability. They offer tools and techniques that can help to implement the community’s vision for how new development or redevelopment may fit more appropriately and compatibly into the existing fabric of the town.

These guidelines are formulated by a town based on the unique or distinctive qualities of its natural and built environments. In addition to architectural features, such guidelines can help with the coordinated siting of buildings, parking, and green space; streetscaping and building frontages; and multi-modal accessibility. Depending on the town’s preferences and the particular locations in potential need of design assessment, the criteria may be relatively more stringent, flexible, or some combination, and may be custom-crafted to the needs of the town in which they are implemented. Because these guidelines are generated by the town for the town, they are fully in keeping with the autonomy of local government and with the important participatory role of its residents.

Why

In undertaking this project to create a design assessment toolkit, the research team consulted the Town of South Hadley Master Plan, completed in 2010, as a guide for understanding what the town’s character has been throughout its history, is today in response to past trends and present conditions, and hopes to be in the future:

Implementation of a design review process can function both as a means of preserving community character, and a way to ensure that new development reflects an appropriate and complementary addition to the Town’s character. Such a process is critical to the Town’s land use and design outcomes – both to have standards for architectural treatment, landscaping, and site planning, and also to have a process for review that works with applicants to improve their aesthetics. The combination of a clear vision statement for the Town’s land use and community design, strong planning and zoning foundation, and implementation of a design review process can help guide development in the Town for many generations. (Master Plan)

The design guideline goals as stated in the Master Plan are for the town to maintain its various aspects of community character without hindering future development: i.e., not overly bound by the preservation of its past, but honoring and building on its history while also looking to the future for new opportunities complementary to its long-standing character. The importance of design review guidelines has been noted in other communities as well:

Design review throughout the country has protected and enhanced property values, promoted economic development, and reinforced community identity. (Blackstone River Valley, Design Review Guidelines, 2003)

Commercial districts that are well planned are an asset to any town. Their attractiveness can also help

sustain their economic well being. (Town of Lexington, Design Guidelines for Commercial Districts, 1990)

Design review guidelines promote and encourage building alterations, new structures, site layouts, and landscape features that are compatible with the existing environment, suitably located, and appropriate relative to broader town goals. Every building and property in South Hadley can play an integral role in fostering the overall image and character of the town. Development can vary in scale and type, from the siting and construction of housing and commercial developments to municipal streetscape improvements and neighborhood façade or beautification projects such as street plantings, lighting, and other amenities.

Building on the current attractiveness of South Hadley to reinforce its appeal as a place to live, work, visit, and shop can further enhance and extend the social and economic viability of the town. A well-planned and well-designed business district or neighborhood fabric creates a stronger sense of place, becoming a desirable destination for town residents, rather than just a corridor to pass through. This attention to good planning and design helps encourage personal connections, and residents can choose to spend more of their time, attention, and resources in South Hadley, further reinforcing the economic health and vitality of the town. Additionally, a well-designed neighborhood or district corridor can serve to increase property values and return on investment, creating a virtuous cycle of community attachment and local identity, whether in a residential, commercial, or other context.

Understanding and respecting the relationship between individual buildings, landscape and streetscape features, and their community-defining characteristics are the keys to creating a strong sense of town identity. By taking into consideration areas highlighted in the Town Comprehensive Plan that have been developed and are a priority for revitalization, and examining other areas that the town hopes to further develop in the future, this design assessment aims to provide a toolkit that will allow the town, if it so chooses, to proceed in the establishment of design guidelines and a more robust but readily manageable design assessment/review process.

2. Documentation of Research Process and Methods

The design assessment framework presented in this report begins to articulate the specific types of features and aspects that contribute significantly to the Town's character, and provides opportunities for the Town to establish and implement a set of design guidelines, along with a suitable review process, to further maintain and strengthen the unique character of South Hadley.

The intention of the Research Team is to provide the town of South Hadley with the tools to develop a set of design guidelines. The Master Plan of 2010 is a key document in this, calling for the consideration of regional and town character in future development and redevelopment efforts. The first step in compiling this toolkit was a thorough review of the Master Plan document.

The next step in this process was to undertake an initial town-wide analysis of South Hadley as well as a more focused look at key priority areas. The analysis (Section 3), the best practices case studies (Section 4), and the matrices of building as well as street typologies (Section 5 and 6) are all town-wide in scope, and intended to be transferable and applicable to the full spectrum of architectural and landscape/streetscape characteristics found throughout South Hadley. The more focused look at specific areas is not intended to indicate that they have any greater importance, but rather to serve as a demonstration to illustrate how the general criteria can be applied more specifically in a range of particular neighborhood settings, in response to identified town priority focus areas.

Following the spatial and design analysis of the town and its current physical and cultural features, the research team formulated a series of recommendations intended to highlight the unique and significant features of South Hadley and how best to sustain and enhance them. When asked what South Hadley should look like, one town respondent said, "We want it to look like South Hadley." The aim of this report is to give more concrete, specific basis to what it means for a development to appropriately 'look like South Hadley.'

According to the Master Plan, "[t]he greatest threats (to South Hadley's historic village and rural character) are conversion of agricultural lands to suburban-style housing, and the loss of both historic structures, and historic architectural elements on the buildings in the neighborhoods and centers that define this historical land use pattern." (Plan, 6-2) In order to be able to articulate what this character is – which aspects of South Hadley most serve to define and give value to the Town – we completed a thorough town-wide analysis using GIS, observation and photographic documentation, Town data, case studies, and conversations with community leaders.

GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis

These maps are meant to represent a conditional analytic separation of various town-scale characteristics by attribute layers. By temporarily separating and isolating them from one another, one can better understand the significant patterns relative to each attribute. Once these attribute layers have been identified and mapped,

the layers can be put together again, superimposed over one another, and the data combined and reintegrated as composite maps to see (and understand) how physical and developmental town systems intersect, overlap, and affect one another.

With clearly articulated areas of focus and concern as identified in the Town's Master Plan, the next step in the research process was to gain an understanding of the physical attributes of the town with a town-wide map analysis. Using data sets provided by the Town and by the Massachusetts Geographic Information Office (Mass GIS), the team created a series of maps that examine various key aspects of the built and natural systems that give South Hadley its unique character. Once the research team had acquired an understanding of South Hadley's physical characteristics, the next step was to identify and characterize priority focus areas of major concern and of redevelopment potential, as articulated in the Master Plan for further study and analysis.

Before continuing with the focused assessment of priority areas, the team had researched various techniques and strategies by which other towns of comparable size and geographic/demographic/economic circumstances to those of South Hadley have developed and implemented design review and assessment guidelines. Precedent studies considered towns in the New England region with similar types of rural and urban landscapes, as well as towns outside the region with completely different characteristics, where some of their 'best practices' nevertheless seemed potentially adaptable to South Hadley. These precedent studies indicated not only that town-scale design guidelines are becoming more commonplace, but also provided guidance for methods of identifying character-defining landscape and built features, even when the case study communities seem quite different from South Hadley in architectural, landscape, and planning context. These case studies also informed the assessment process as the project team began to identify priority focus areas to further analyze more closely as part of the toolkit framework.

South Hadley Falls was identified as a priority focus area for adaptive reuse, infill development, and redevelopment in the Master Plan. For this report, a more focused look was intended solely as a demonstration of how these criteria could be applied to a particular neighborhood or district, allowing South Hadley to use this process for other areas of potential in the town. Based on comments from town leaders, the Falls area was subsequently considered to be an unrepresentative case for a town-wide demonstration. We have therefore also provided a demonstration study of another area of the town, a neighborhood at the intersection of Route 116 (Newton St.) and Route 33 (Lyman St.), in the corridor between South Hadley Falls to the south and Mount Holyoke College/Town Center to the north, to illustrate the adaptability and versatility of the assessment toolkit. We chose this second case because of the heterogeneity of the development pattern and the lack of a clear architectural or landscape 'character' compared to the Falls area or the Town Center area. Other neighborhoods in South Hadley, while also amenable to assessment with the town-wide design criteria and framework of this project, were considered by the research team to be less suitable as demonstrations, either because of a more homogeneous pattern of development; a more dispersed, low-density spatial distribution (where design improvements would likely be less cost-effective); or a situation of property title and tenure less favorable to effective design integration (e.g., absentee landlords, seasonal renters, etc.).

Further architectural and landscape analysis included identification of various South Hadley structures registered in MACRIS (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System). Informed by the precedent studies, the research team identified and mapped those unique built and natural features of South Hadley Falls and the Newton/Lyman neighborhood corridor, and completed a series of site visits. Site visits allowed the team to identify and catalogue more detailed characteristics of the neighborhood.

This on-the-ground investigation yielded two typology/inventory matrices (one for building structures and one for streetscape features) that can readily be applied to other areas of interest in South Hadley. The first is a structural matrix, developed with the results of an architectural inventory of styles and details in the neighborhood. The second is a street typology matrix, based on the characteristics of different types of roads within the network and their varied landscape/hardscape features.

These two matrices (Sections 5 and 6), combined with the map analysis (Section 3) and precedent case studies (Section 4), provide the process and method for the potential development of future South Hadley design guidelines.

3. Town-Wide Spatial Analysis

This design assessment provides attribute layer separations and visualizations of the various systems that inform and influence physical as well as cultural characteristics of South Hadley. These features contribute to its distinctive character and built form, and the following maps articulate this information for the town should it choose to establish and implement a set of design guidelines. Natural processes shape the land and the way residents can and do use it, lending specific siting and building characteristics to different places. Examples include fertile soil ideal for farming and agricultural lands (an important cultural landscape in South Hadley) and higher ground, ideal for building structures with dry basements (more densely built areas of South Hadley Falls). By clearly understanding the processes by which the town was built and settled, the research team was able to lay the groundwork for clear identification of features that make South Hadley unique and contribute to its character. Issues such as proximity to steep or geologically vulnerable slopes, to floodplains, to areas of rich natural or scenic variety, or to major traffic corridors will often have significant impact on development decisions and changes in property values.

The Town of South Hadley Planning Department and the Massachusetts Office of Geographic Information provided the data for the following maps. These town-wide mapping analysis helped to inform the identification of design assessment priority focus areas (please see Section 7, pp 46-50).

The analytic maps to follow below provide the topographic, hydrological, developmental, and infrastructural context that may help to inform design assessment criteria. For example, the maps presenting building footprint ‘ramps’ of development intensity (Figure 6, page 17 at town-wide scale; Figure 10, page 20 for the South Hadley Falls area; and Figure 15, page 22 for the Rte. 116 Newton/Rte. 33 Lyman St. corridors focus areas) may inform Phase One (dimensional) design criteria of scale and massing to be discussed in Section 8 below, and the maps presenting parcel size density (Figure 5, page 16 at town-wide scale; Figure 9, page 20 for the South Hadley Falls area; and Figure 14, page 22 for the Rte. 116 Newton/Rte. 33 Lyman corridors focus areas) may inform the dimensional criteria of density, frontage, lot size, etc. to be discussed in Section 8 below.

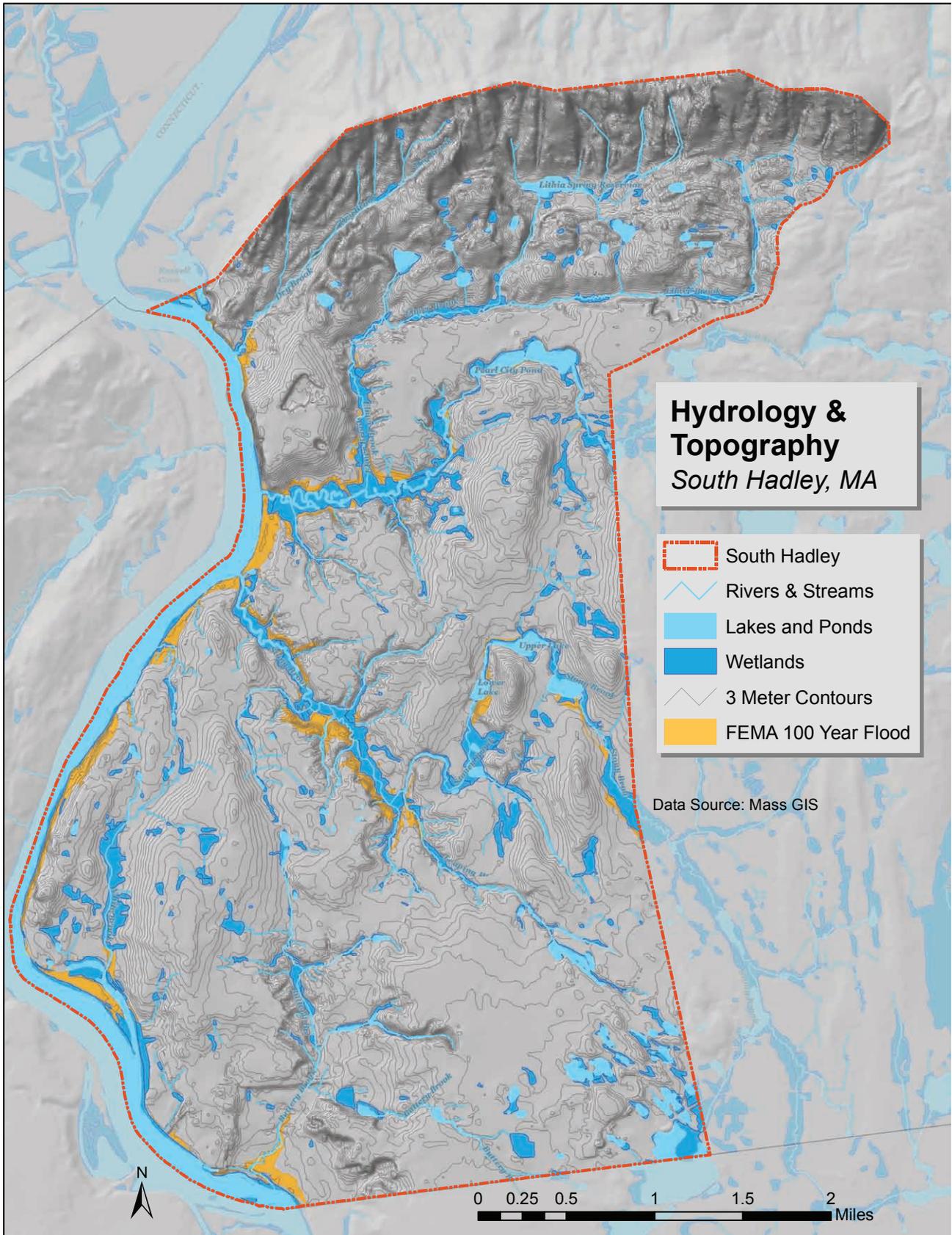


Figure 1. Hydrology and Topography. South Hadley is bordered to the West/Southwest by the Connecticut River and to the North by the Holyoke Range. These features form and influence the resultant landform and water systems in South Hadley, e.g., encouraging particular corridors, forms and patterns of agricultural settlement and industrial development. This map provides the basic frame in which all the other natural and built systems have taken shape over time.

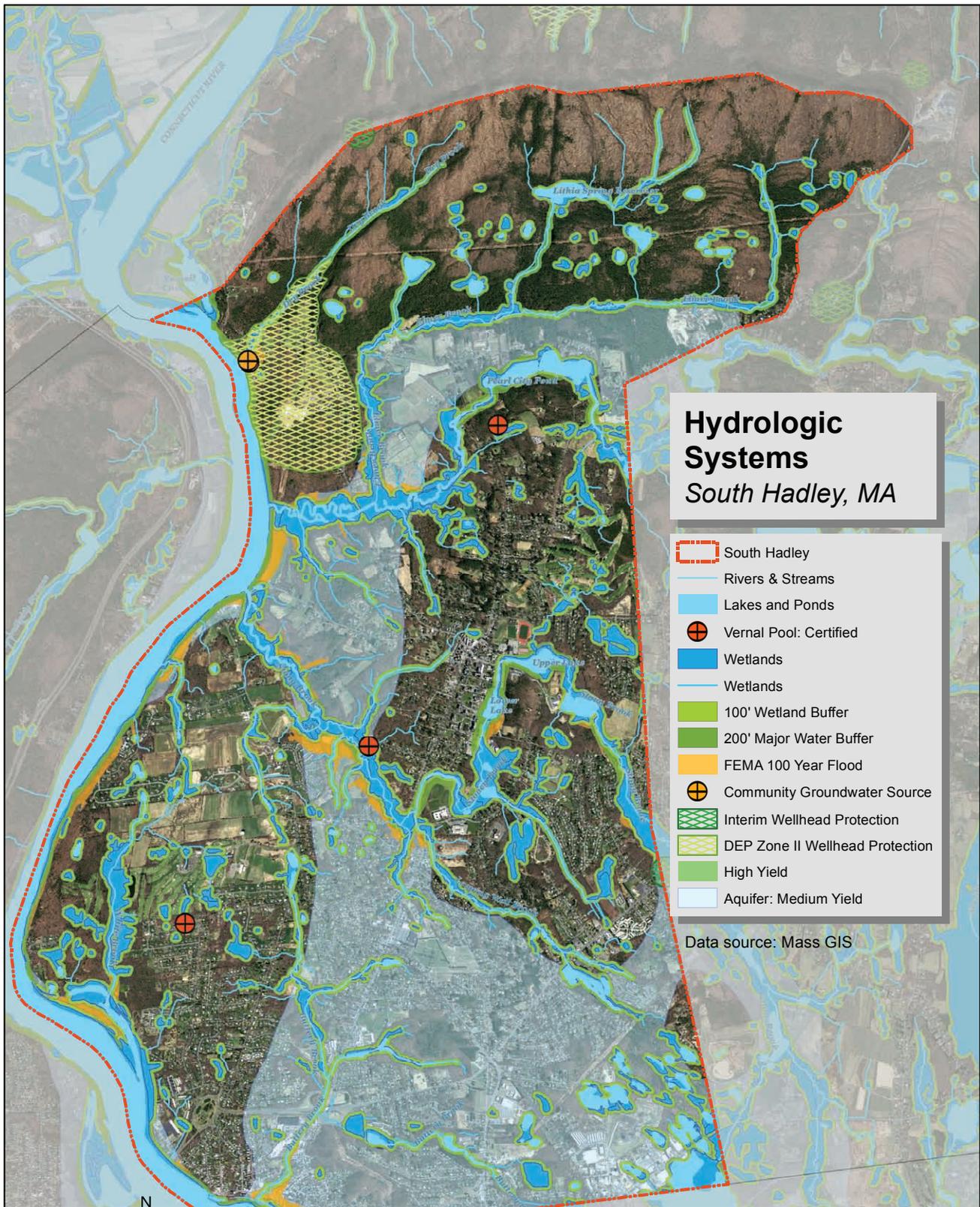


Figure 2. Hydrological Systems. In addition to the importance of maintaining water quality in the Town’s hydrological system, there are protected ecological features including certified vernal pools and key wetland/water body buffers. This Systems map overlays these features to gain clearer understanding of the existing development patterns of the town, and provides a foundation for identifying potential opportunities, challenges and issues in the siting of new development and identification of those areas that contribute to the character of South Hadley. Given the importance of the Connecticut River and streams such as Buttery Brook in defining the character of early Town settlement (transport and power), hydrology is critical to effective design assessment.

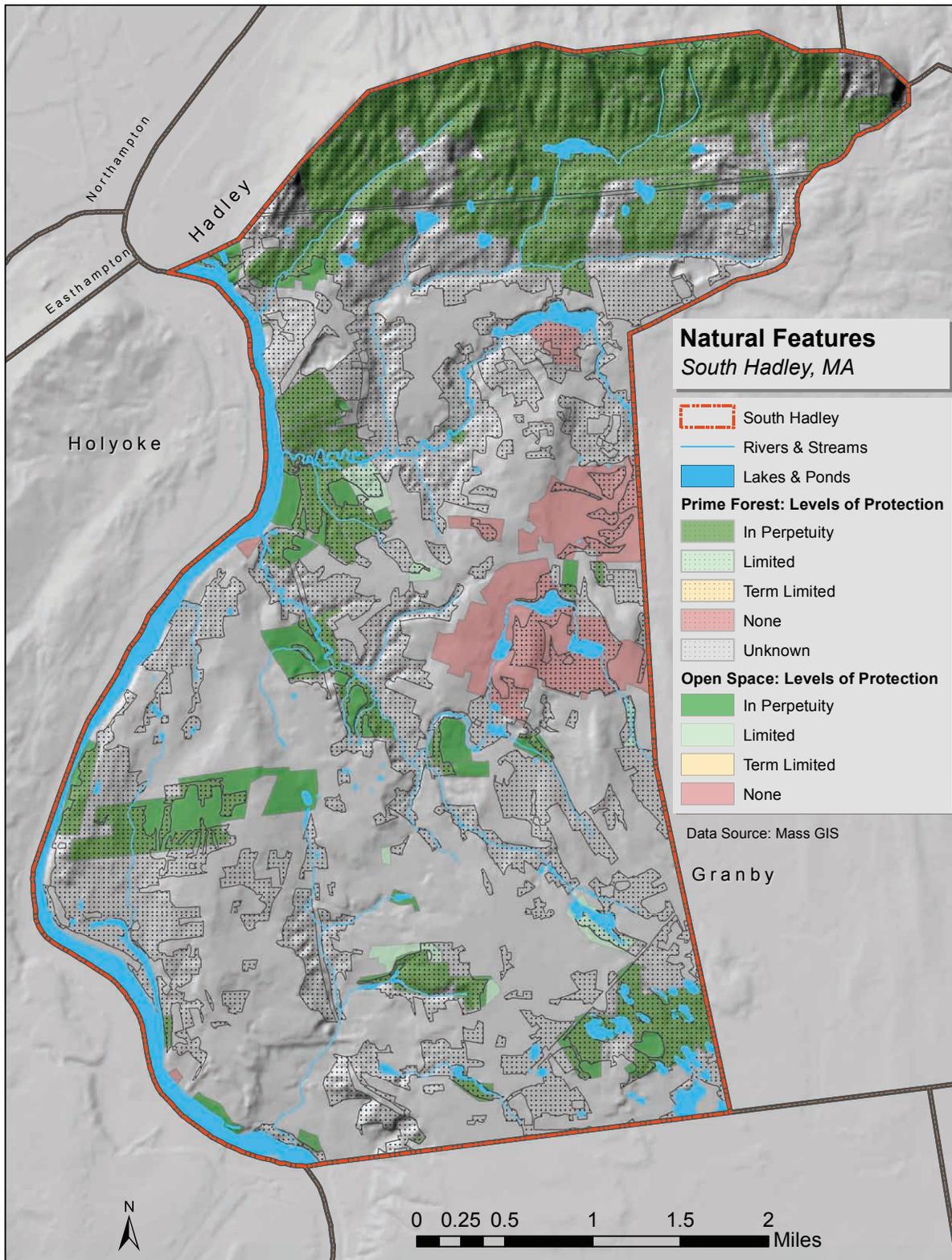


Figure 3. Natural Features - Prime Forest, Open Space, and Protected Lands. The Comprehensive Plan of 2010 indicates that residents value the protected and open space of South Hadley, and the quality of life and recreational benefits these places afford residents and visitors. In mapping those areas of DEP-established prime forest, open space, and the varying levels of protection, the research team gained a better understanding of those lands and their contribution to the character of South Hadley. This knowledge will be important in thinking about preserving and enhancing by linking green and open space into area, town-wide and regional greenway systems, and how built structures can best relate to and take advantage of those spaces as recreational or scenic amenities.

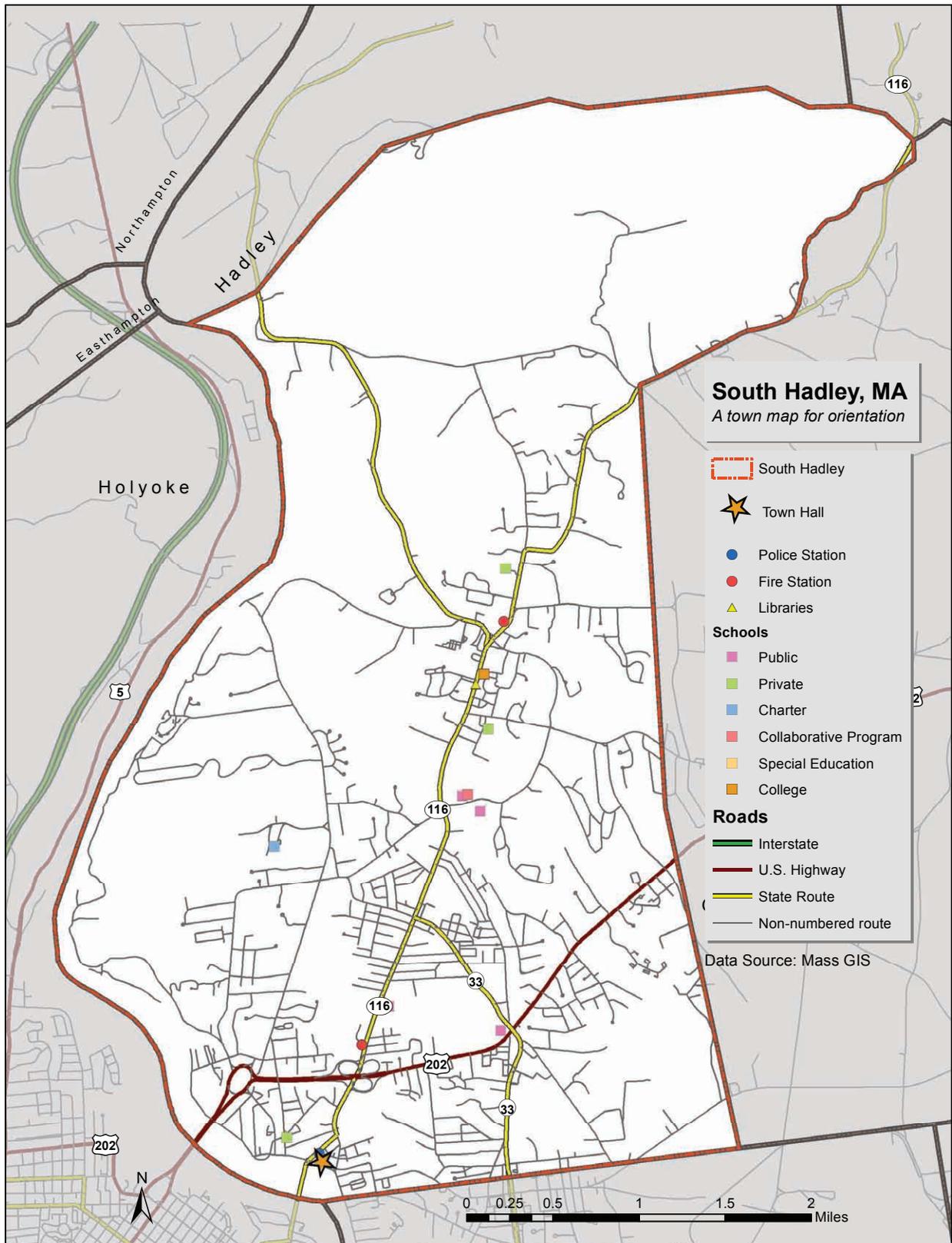


Figure 4. Roads, Municipal, and Public Services. This map provides the research team with an understanding of how and where people move within South Hadley, the clusters and locations of key public services, and South Hadley's connection to the regional road network. The pattern of the roads also gives indications as to the development pattern and neighborhood structures of South Hadley. Analysis of the infrastructure as well as service networks also provides a strong indication of town population distribution, relative neighborhood density, and development opportunities and challenges. Design assessment criteria need to address actual as well as potential traffic volumes and their local impacts in proposing guidelines for scale, density, setbacks, etc.

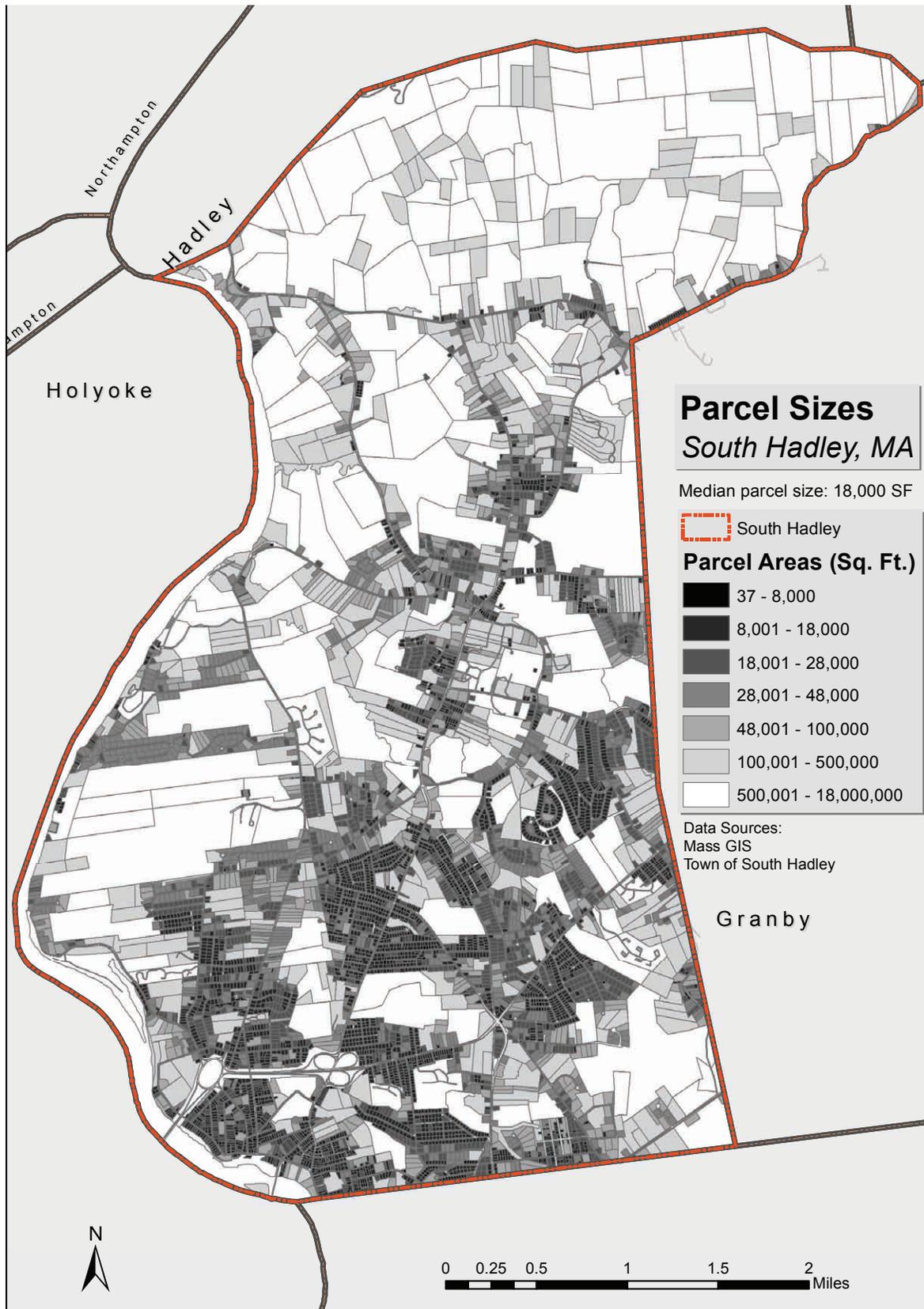


Figure 5. Parcel Sizes. The median parcel size in South Hadley is 18,000 SF. By understanding the patterns of settlement and development and being able to see clusters of smaller or larger parcel sizes that may have aggregate value for redevelopment, the UMASS Research Team was able to infer those areas of relative open space abundance or scarcity and of potentially higher or lower development density and diversity patterns. Formulating appropriate design criteria in relation to parcel proximity, contiguity, size and status is essential for identifying the landscape and built-form dimensional ‘character’ of neighborhoods and districts.

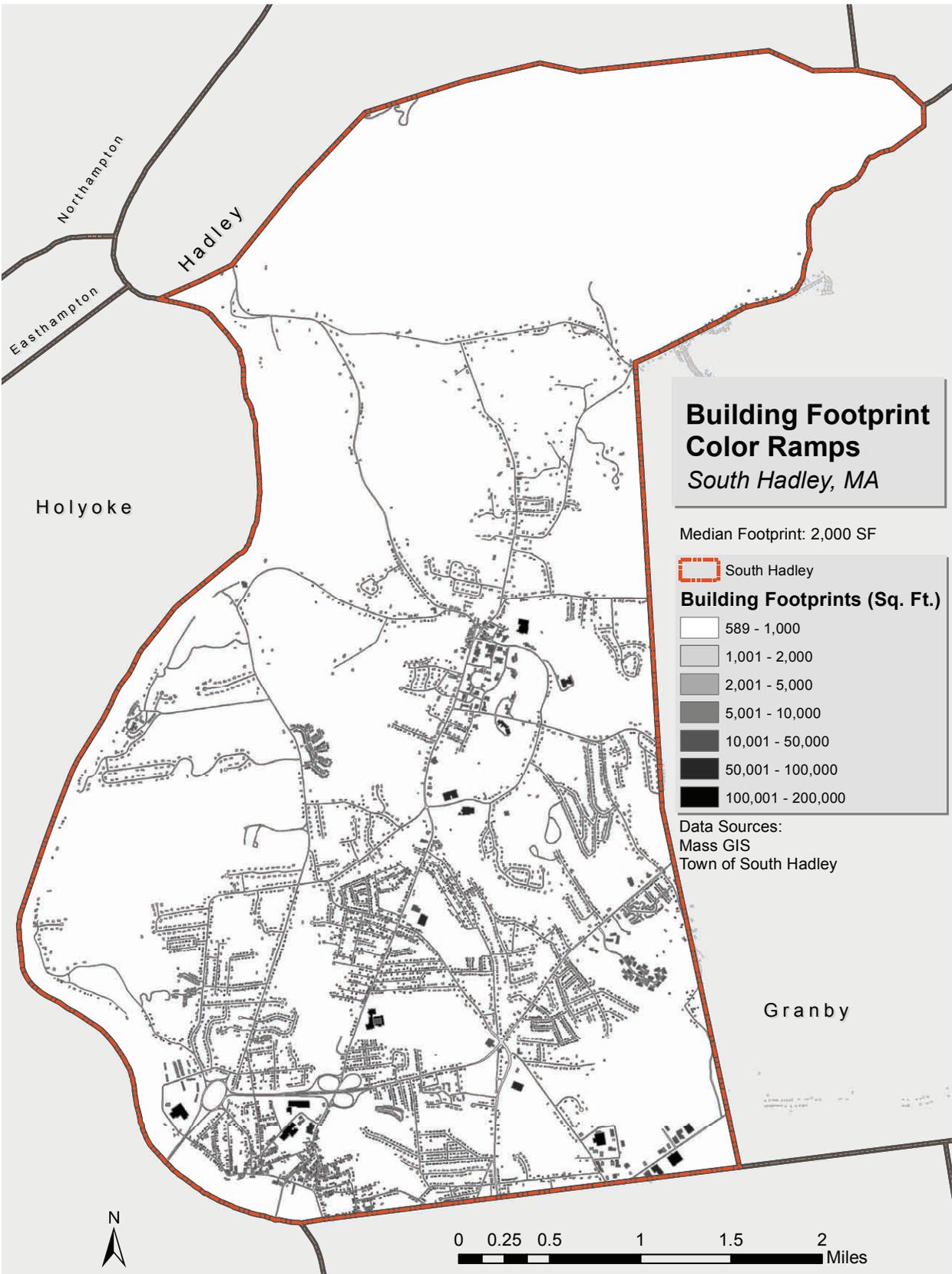


Figure 6. Building Footprint Size. Mapping the variation and concentration of building footprints provided the UMass Research Team with information on the density, scale and massing of the built environment and the relative development intensity (build out/infill) of various neighborhoods throughout South Hadley. This layer of analysis helps to identify the degree to which there may be a fairly compatible, harmonious district 'fabric'.

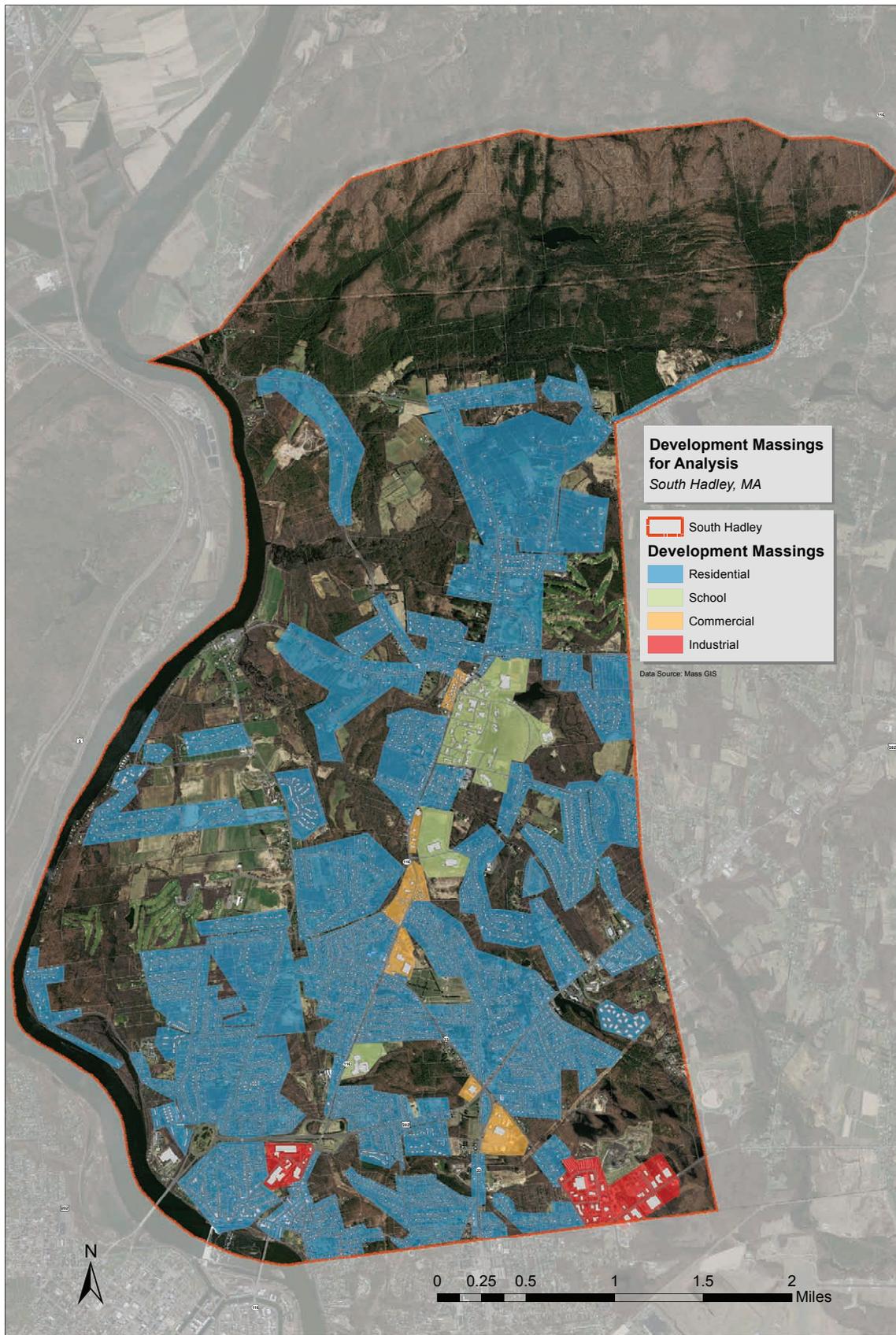


Figure 7. Massing Pattern. Based on spatial data on development pattern, road system, and natural features, as well as information from the Master Plan document, the UMass Research Team identified significant massing and development mix patterns for further study. Two examples are provided within this report: the South Hadley Falls neighborhood and the Newton - 116 / Lyman - 33 intersection, which will be presented in the following subsection. Please see section 7, pp 47-50 for Identification of priority focus areas.

South Hadley Falls and Newton / Lyman Analytic Maps

Using datasets provided by the Town of South Hadley and the Massachusetts Office of Geographic Information, the research team was able to create layer separations and more area-focused maps that could help inform finer analysis of the significant and character-defining features of those areas. This more detailed examination includes street patterns in those areas as well as architectural features that inform the analysis.

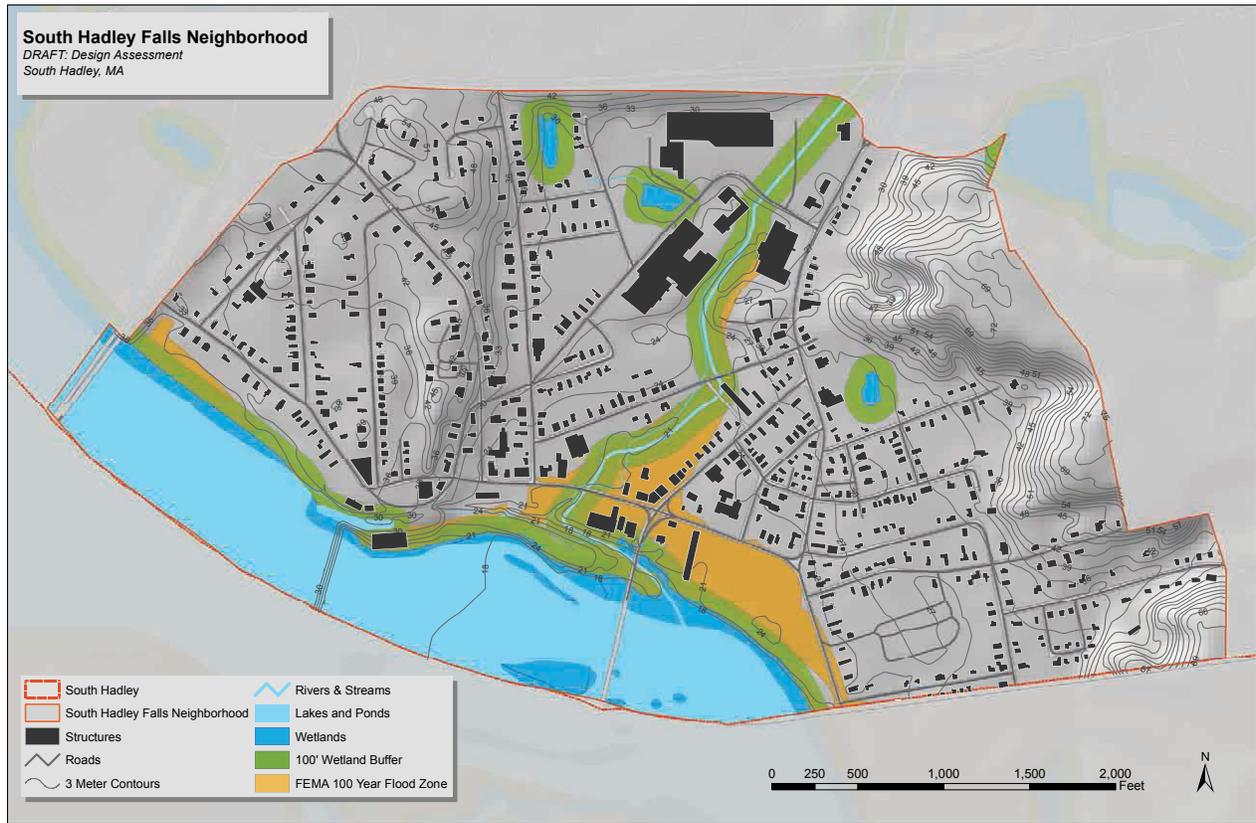


Figure 8. Topography and Hydrology of South Hadley Falls. Here the research team was able to identify significant areas of water, as well as the high and low points of topographic features that can and do affect development patterns. The FEMA 100-year flood zone is an additional consideration in any redevelopment efforts for the area. Floodplain, riparian and stream corridor buffer, and slope constraints may limit design.

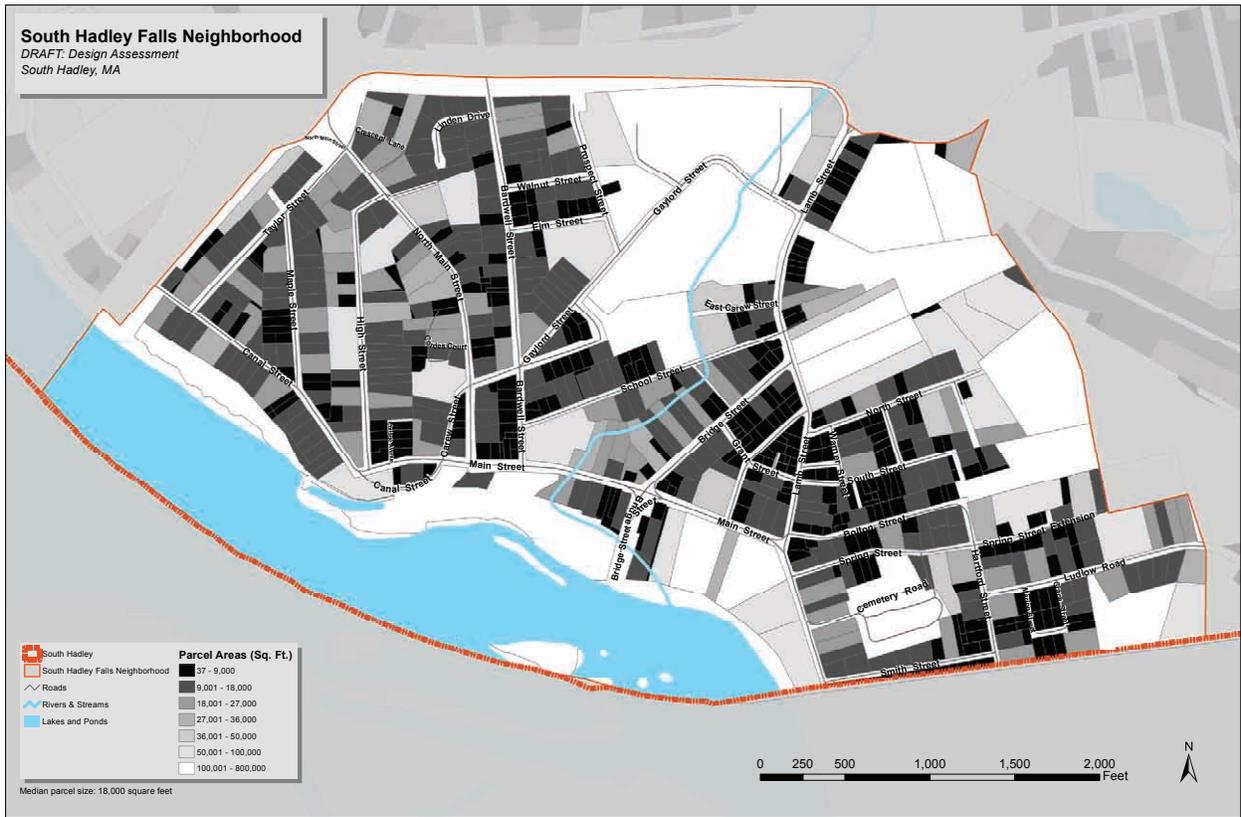


Figure 9. Property Parcel Size in South Hadley Falls. South Hadley Falls has a much higher top level and overall gradient of development massing, diversity and density compared to most other areas in the Town, and so was partly for that reason deemed an unrepresentative demonstration case. Nevertheless, understanding the relation between landscape features and parcel size, status, and use makes the Falls worth study in any event.

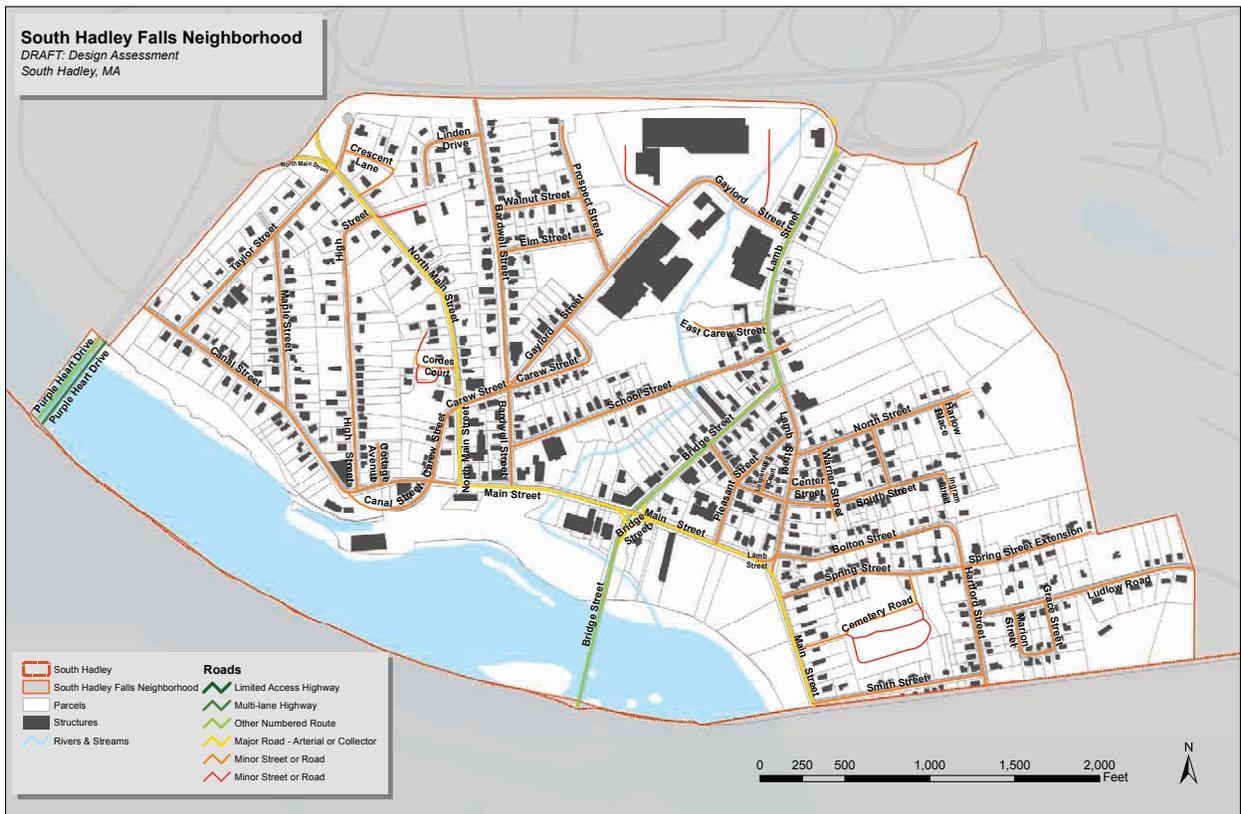


Figure 10. Road categories and building footprints form the built environment in South Hadley Falls

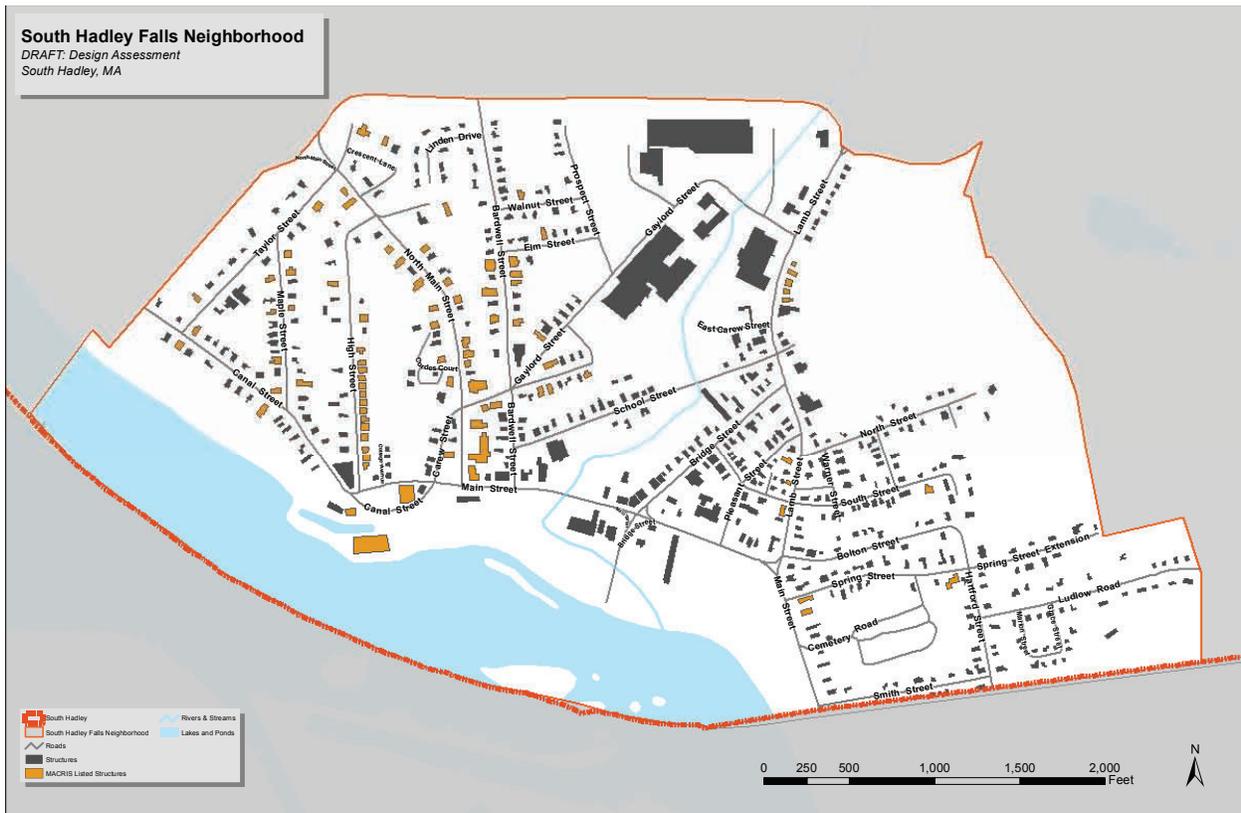


Figure 11. MACRIS Registered Structures in South Hadley Falls. Structures registered with the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System allowed the research team to identify potential historic and character-enhancing structures. Determining the number, relative quality, longevity and distribution of these potentially significant structures can help the Town to formulate a design vocabulary in terms of location of the structure on the site, proportion, relationship to vegetation and street features, etc.

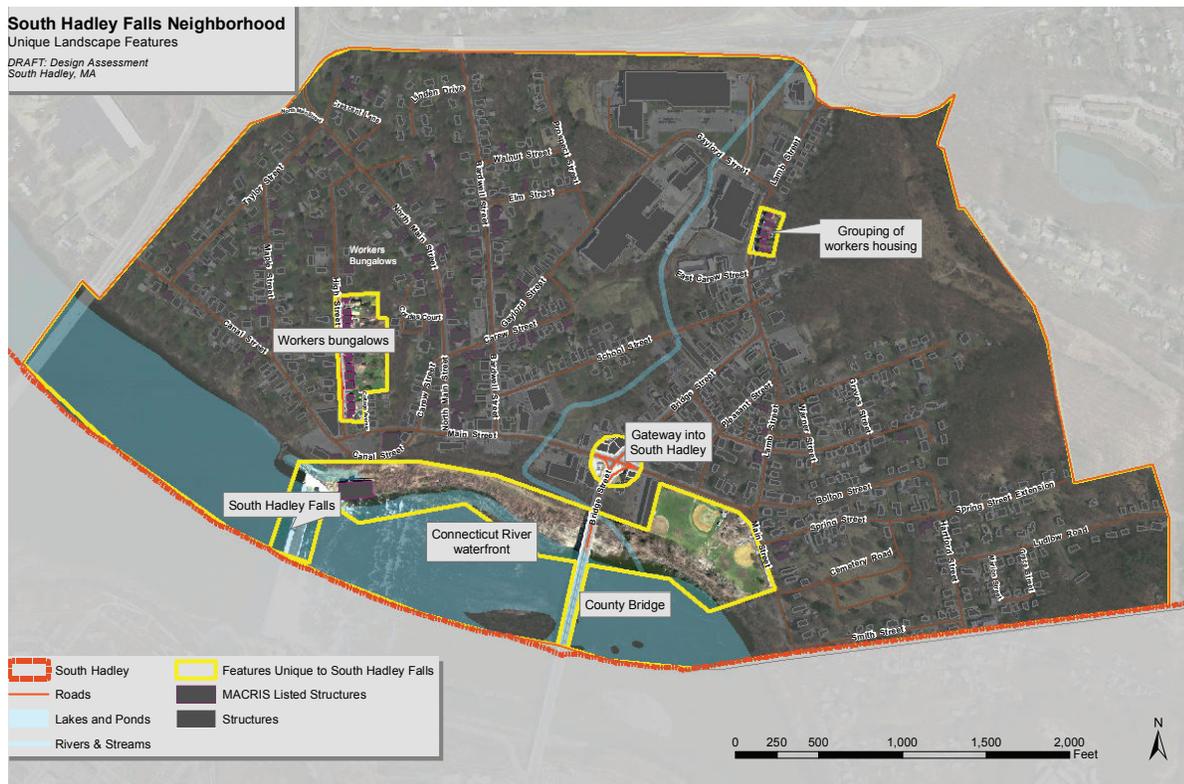


Figure 12. Composite Analytic Map. Figures 12 - 15 allowed the research team to synthesize information and identify significant landscape 'zones' or 'districts' that help constitute the character of South Hadley Falls

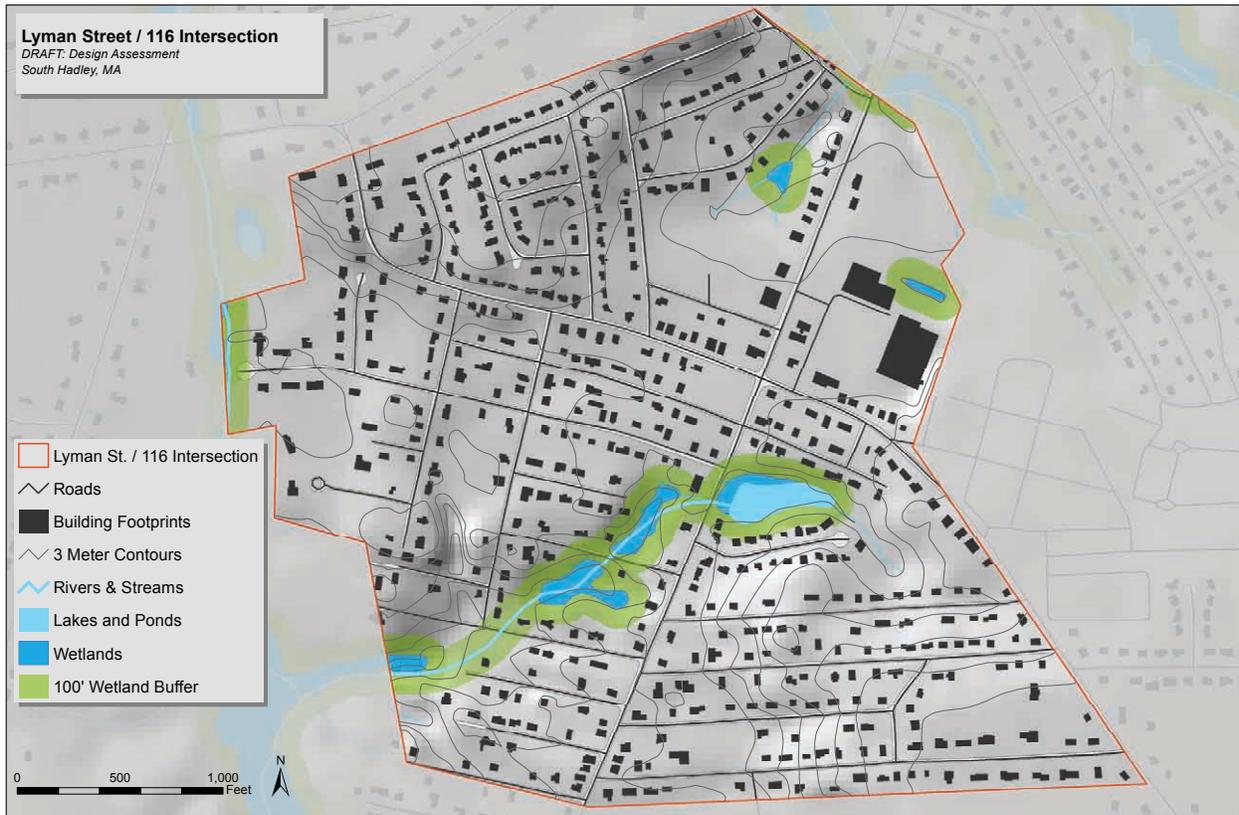


Figure 13. Here the research team was able to identify significant areas of water, as well as the high and low points of topographic features that have affected development patterns and contribute to unique characteristics of the Lyman/Newton 116/33 corridor neighborhoods.



Figure 14. This parcel size map provides the research team with information on the density pattern of the neighborhood, and is an indicator of land use - in this case, large commercial parcels with smaller, denser residential patterning as well in the Lyman/Newton 116/33 corridor.

4. Case Study Precedents

Design review procedures in other towns and cities run the gamut from precise, detailed instructions for building elements to reliance on the broad discretion and judgment of a design review board with trained professionals. Some are city- or town-wide, while others may pertain to a small historic or landscape district. Many have ideas on how to preserve historic homes and traditional landforms, and others are intended only for review of new construction aesthetic impacts or oversight of low-impact development. The UMass Research Team examined a broad spectrum of case studies regarding communities that have adopted various types and levels of design assessment into the planning, design and development review process. Some are communities very similar to South Hadley in terms of history, culture, population, etc.; others are similar in terms of dealing with significant disparities among areas or neighborhoods of their respective towns. Still others are quite different in context, but may nevertheless offer relevant ‘best practices’ tools and techniques that may be adapted to South Hadley’s specific circumstances.

The South Hadley Master Plan looks to design review as a means for the Town to preserve its mixed small-town New England character. While no other town has the quite the same geographic, demographic, economic, and cultural conditions as South Hadley, certain aspects of other communities that are similar in various respects may speak to the same kinds of design challenges and opportunities. Below is a list of ‘best practices’ well-suited to South Hadley:

- The whole town does not typically share the same ‘character’ or design ‘fabric’. Town leaders should attempt to impose a single visual order or style. Overarching guidelines can and should be established to ensure general design quality and integrity for throughout area the entire town, while specific key districts/corridors can additionally have more specialized criteria applicable to their needs.
- Design review areas are usually geographically connected and clustered but not necessarily fully unified by particular styles, uses, or activities. Rarely do priority areas fully match zoning or development regulatory guidelines. The overlaying of design district designation can help to further and more fully integrate the areas despite divergent uses and styles.
- Designing for the ways in which people experience, use, and move through space is the key. South Hadley is and should remain human-scaled. Many towns may have lost this perspective because of a too-narrow focus on economic growth. Keeping gateways, corridors, and walkways people-oriented and suitably-scaled/massed influences the character and vitality of the whole area. Sidewalks, benches and landscaping encourage a more pedestrian-friendly lifestyle and local environment.
- While official historic districts typically follow the strictest guidelines, unique cultural and natural forms (such as vernacular architecture or preserved but working open spaces) can also guide potentially design more flexibly toward adaptive reuse and retrofit.
- Within a more general town-wide design review framework, the town may then further decide its own higher priority areas to implement more specific or special design review procedures (e.g., overlay districts, form-based codes).

- Concentration on formal elements of relative mass, scale, frontage, setback, and proportion affects perception of architectural/landscape character much more strongly than smaller stylistic details.
- Design review can be used as a conditional step to permitting zoning variance by use. Variance granted upon the condition of design review gives more flexibility and stronger influence on the neighborhood character than as-by-right or approval not required (ANR) codes. Use of incentives such as prioritized or expedited permitting, density bonuses, favorable transfer of development rights, or tax increment financing can reduce the uncertainty for property owners and developers of pursuing design review in priority areas rather than as-by-right permission elsewhere.

Please see Section 8 pp. 51-57 below for a framework incorporating these design assessment guideline/criteria ‘best practices’. Please see Appendices for a listing of case studies and model guidelines/ criteria.

As an Example of Design Review Impact: This is simply an illustration of before/after design review regarding the building of a corporate bank branch, showing visual improvement and integration, not necessarily a recommendation that this style does or does not suit the character South Hadley. It illustrates that basic adjustments can be made without major alterations to the scope of the project.

Corporate Client: New Construction
Existing Site Conditions



DRB 2009

Figure 16.

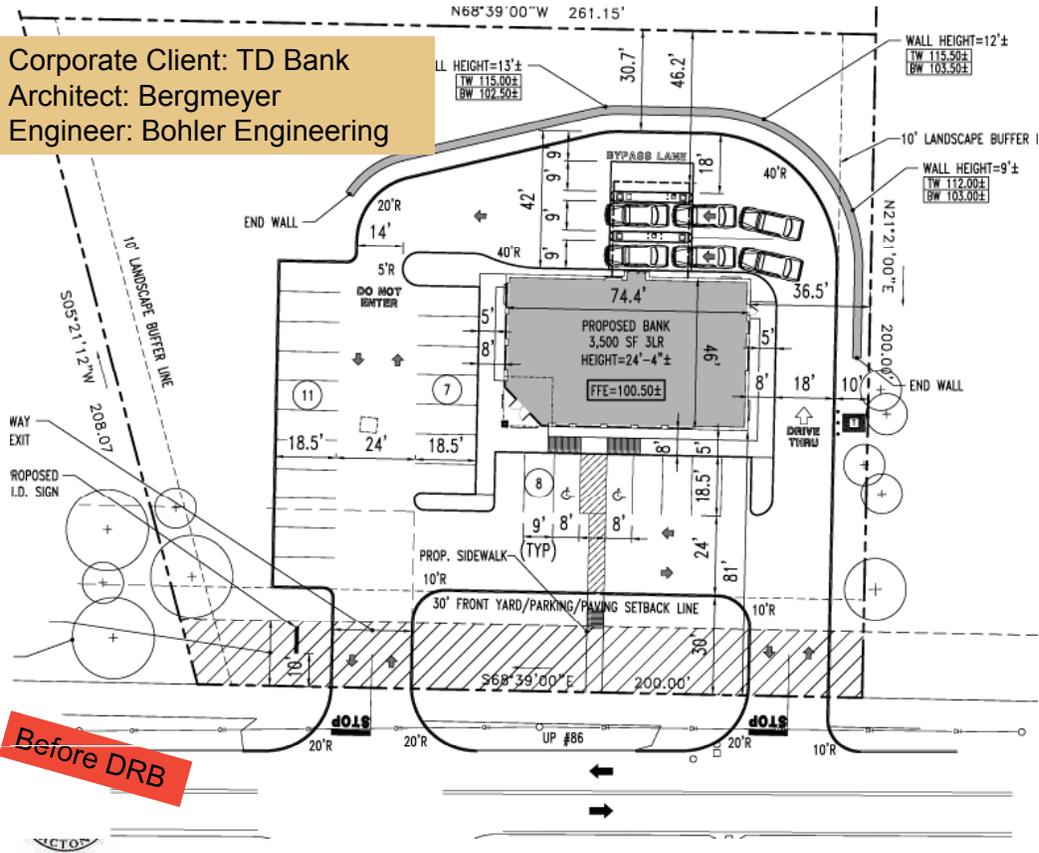


Figure 17.

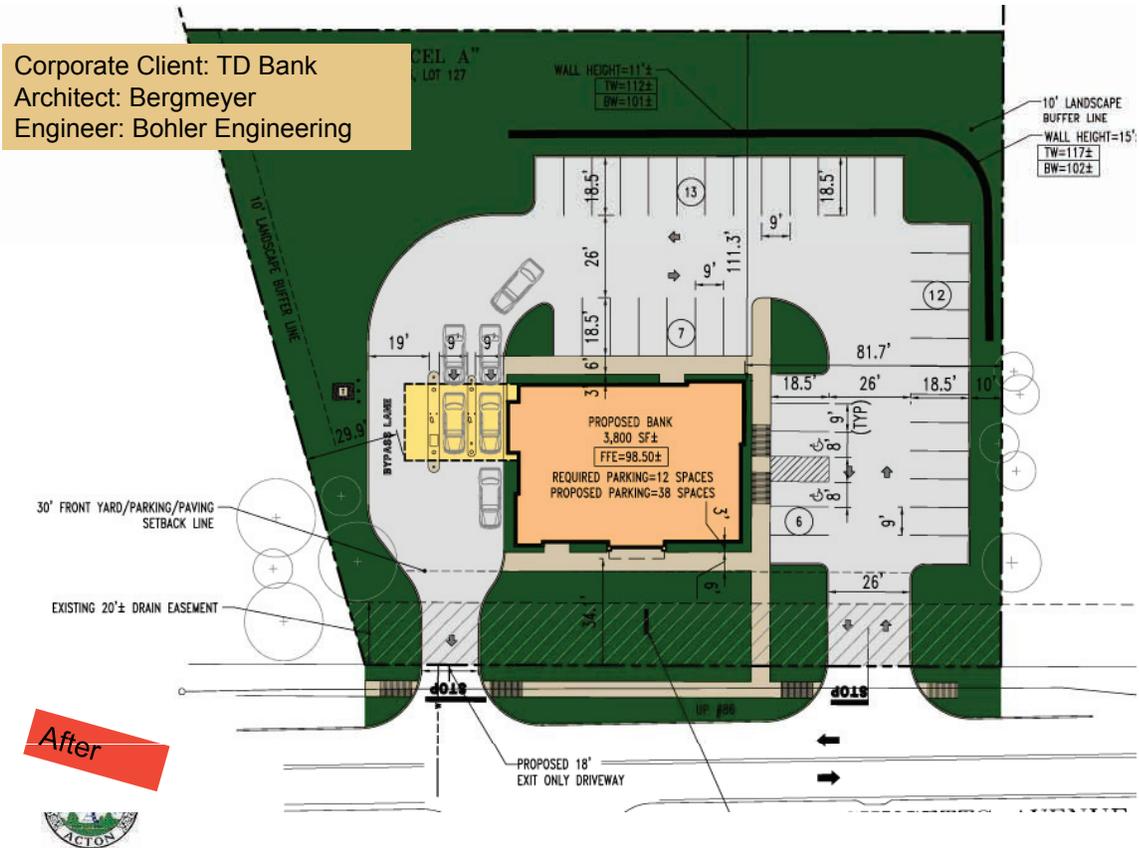


Figure 18.

Corporate Client: TD Bank
Architect: Bergmeyer
Engineer: Bohler Engineering



Before DRB

Figure 19.

Corporate Client: TD Bank
Architect: Bergmeyer
Engineer: Bohler Engineering



After



Figure 20.

5. Architectural Typologies and Inventories

South Hadley has some small areas with a consistent pattern of building types and styles (such as High St., Ferry St., Woodbridge St., Mt. Holyoke College). Yet more often, along major roads, there is a remarkable diversity and sometimes disparity of structures. This often serves to make diversity a more dominant feature of architectural and landscape character in neighborhoods rather than consistency. It raises questions about how to guide development, which typically happens one parcel at a time, toward more integrated, compatible diversity. Different areas of South Hadley may also have different mixes of buildings and streetscapes within its own diversity (e.g., similar styles but different sizes or uses of buildings, variation in street characteristics along the same designated road). That being said, most areas do have a pronounced ‘character’ within their mix: development has generally not been exceptionally haphazard. One leading goal of the town also includes trying to enhance character in areas with less distinctive pattern of building and landform. The Town has also made clear, as consistent with Master Plan goals, that the desired application of design assessment is not for residential neighborhoods (or other, strictly single-use zones) but for the main centers, districts, and corridors in the Town, most especially those that have not hitherto had any significant planning or design intervention in the development pattern.

One way to identify the character of an area is to look at the underlying form or pattern (vs. style or type). South Hadley has ‘good bones’. By comparing a building’s form to that of others in the immediate area, assessment as to how closely and well it ‘fits’ with its neighbors could help to determine need for potential improvements or protections. To help assess a structure’s compatibility, the research team has created a chart of South Hadley Historical Building Types. This chart can be used to help define and describe existing structures and as a generative tool toward the design and assessment of upcoming projects. Using fourteen types of architectural style found in South Hadley (see Figure 21), we have identified and described twelve common architectural features within each. This de-emphasizes the style category of the structure, focusing instead on underlying form. These features are direct indicators for mass, scale, proportion, shape, directional expression, and architectural detailing. Comparing each type using the same criteria highlights their similarities and differences. While many buildings have characteristics of more than one style, reflecting the times in which they were constructed and the individuality of the owners, the character and context of a building can be discerned by recognizing these basic forms. If these historical types are inadequate to characterize a particular anomalous building or neighborhood, then these formal details can nevertheless still be used to help evaluate a new visual context as well.

Assessing buildings in this way not only provides concrete determinants for design recommendations, but also forges an affirmative design and development path for priority focus areas in town. Having such assessment tools publicly available gives developers the opportunity to incorporate South Hadley’s design interests into their plans from the beginning of a project. This can help facilitate the entire review and approval process, which may help keep the cost of development down for the property owner and for the town. In the case where a proposal does not fit the form of the area, the board can refer a designer to these features as a path toward better alignment. In this way, South Hadley is able to exert greater influence on its development pattern and developers can then use the transparency to expedite the municipal review, permitting, and implementation process. Please see Section 8, pp. 51-57 below for further discussion.

Architectural Building Styles and Related Architectural Expression in South Hadley
as registered in MACRIS

Style	Year	Example in South Hadley Falls	entry	porch	porch support	windows		
						type	alignment	proportion □□□□□□□□
Colonial	1600-1820		simple	rare		sash	symmetrical rows	low
Federal	1780-1820		accentuated	some portico	simple columns	sash	symmetrical rows	larger lower
Bungalow	1890-1940		simple	full & partial	simple or integrated	sash	symmetrical balance	balanced
Greek Revival	1820-1860		Transom & side light	entry or full	classical column	sash & frieze band	symmetrical rows	balanced
Classic Revival	1820-1880		dominant portico	portico	simple columns	sash	symmetrical rows	balanced
Italianate	1840-1885		paired & single door, some largely glazed	entry or full	square post	tall, narrow, rounded	symmetrical balance	balanced
Second Empire	1855-1885		paired & single door, some largely glazed	portico or partial	square post	sash & bay	pairs & symmetrical balance	balanced
Stick	1855-1890		simple	extensive	square post w/braces	sash	varied	balanced
Victorian Eclectic	1860-1900		simple	portico or partial	ornamented balustrades	sash & bay	varied	balanced
Shingle	1880-1905		varied	extensive	simple or cladded mass	sash & bay	varied	less dominant
Queen Anne	1880-1910		simple	extensive	ornamented balustrades	sash & bay	varied	balanced
Four Square	1880-1930		simple	full	simple balustrade	sash	pairs & symmetrical balance	balanced
Colonial Revival	1880-1940		pedimented	front	pilasters	sash	pairs & symmetrical balance	balanced
Craftsman	1900-1930		integrated	full or partial	tapered column; dominant	sash & casement	varied	balanced
commercial composite			simple	portico or recessed		sash & picture at street	symmetrical rows	balanced

Figure 21.

Architectural Building Styles and Related Architectural Expression in South Hadley Falls as registered in MACRIS

Style	Year	Example in South Hadley Falls	Ornamentation		chimney	roof		
						eave	gable	pitch
Colonial	1600-1820		minimal	simple	minimal	side	moderate	
Federal	1780-1820		entry & simple cornice	simple	minimal	side	low	
Bungalow	1890-1940		rustic, textured	simple	deep	varies	low	
Greek Revival	1820-1860		simple w/strong cornice & door	simple	minimal	front	low	
Classic Revival	1820-1880		simple	simple	minimal	side	moderate	
Italianate	1840-1885		elaborate cornices, door and window crowns, some cupolas	ornamented	deep w/decorative brackets	hipped	flat	
Second Empire	1855-1885		molded cornices, eave brackets, dormers	simple	bracketed (not deep)	mansard	dual w/dormer	
Stick	1855-1890		decorative gable trusses, raised stick work on walls	simple	deep w/exposed rafters	front	steep	
Victorian Eclectic	1860-1900		varying spindle work	some ornamented	varied	front, complex	steep	
Shingle	1880-1905		simple - shingled walls	simple	multi level	high variation	steep	
Queen Anne	1880-1910		elaborate - spindlework, free classic, half-timbered, patterned	some ornamented	ornamented	front, complex	steep	
Four Square	1880-1930		simple	simple	wide & exposed rafter	hipped	low	
Colonial Revival	1880-1940		simple	simple	minimal	side & hipped	moderate	
Craftsman	1900-1930		rustic, textured	rustic	wide & exposed rafter	front & cross	low	
commercial composite			simple, some raised brick Italianate	none	minimal	(front)	mostly flat	

Figure 22.

As an example using the building type matrix, we looked at two sites. One is on Bardwell Street in South Hadley Falls and the other is along the Route 116 corridor toward the center of town. Because we have not analyzed a particular development, we will look at the structures as they exist to show how the matrix focuses attention on their differences and similarities. In a development process, we would be comparing proposed elevations and renderings to the actual surroundings.

The intersection of Bardwell, Gaylord, and Carew Streets is heavily residential with the one exception of the South Hadley Public Library. Each building was analyzed using the form categories in the matrix. The resultant table is found below. (Figure 23&24)

Architectural Expression of buildings surrounding the Library

Neighbor building	Image	windows			entry	porch	porch support
		type	alignment	proportion to □□□□□			
1		sash	pairs & balance	balanced	gabled & side light	none	na
2		sash & bay	varied	balanced	simple	full (enclosed)	(covered)
3		sash & bay	symmetrical balanced	balanced	paired door	full	square post, some ornament
4		sash & bay	symmetrical rows	balanced	simple & recessed	half porch	square post, some ornament
5		sash & bay	symmetrical rows	balanced	simple	full	simple columns
6		sash	symmetrical rows	balanced	dominant portico	portico	simple column
library		sash & bay & transom	row	balanced	portico	portico	na
library addition		casement	row	less dominant	commercial & recessed	portico	na

Figure 23.

Architectural Expression of buildings surrounding the Library

Neighbor building	Image	ornamentation	chimney	roof		
				eave	gable	pitch
1		simple	simple	minimal	side	moderate
2		simple	simple	minimal	front	moderate
3		elaborate cornices, door, and window crowns	simple	deep with decorative brackets	front	moderate
4		simple	simple	minimal	front	steep
5		simple	none	minimal	front	moderate
6		simple w/ dental cornice & strong entry	simple	minimal	side	low
library		simple w/ strong windows	simple	minimal	side	steep
library addition		simple	none	minimal	mansard	double pitch (steep & flat)

Figure 24.

These six residences have many stylistic features of their own like porch size, window details, column details, dormers, or decorative roof bracketing. And, they also share many form elements like roof pitch, gable presence, window type and balance. It is these shapes, forms, and proportions that allow these structures to appear very similar. When examining to the library, we see a split. The library has its main building and its later addition. Photographing the addition from Bardwell Street, as if it were a separate building, shows that it appears quite different from its neighbors. If we suppose this addition came to design review today, we would want to describe how it stands out in the neighborhood and what would be more congruent. Charting the original building and the addition independently aids our investigation. We have highlighted the characteristics that match the existing residential buildings. Clearly, the addition has less in common with the neighborhood than the main library. A redesigning of the addition could target the unmatched categories to quickly gain traction.

The intersection of Lyman Street and Newton Street (Route 33/Route 116) is a very different part of town. Both roads are major throughways in the town, and there is a mix of residential and commercial interests. With a continued interest in how to bring residential and commercial properties in alignment, we chose six residences and four commercial buildings near the intersection. The Woodlawn Shopping Center with its acreage of parking presents a powerful force and will not be tied to this demonstration due to its uniqueness. It is worthy of a study of its own. The ten buildings are included in the chart below.

Architectural Expression of buildings around Lyman St. Intersection

Neighbor building	Image	windows			entry	porch	porch support
		type	alignment	proportion □□□□□□□□			
1		sash	varied	balanced	simple	full	simple balustrade
2		sash	symetrical rows	dominant	simple	portico	cantalever
3		sash, bay, highly paned	varied	balanced	simple	full	simple column
4		sash and bay	rows	balanced	simple	none	na
5		sash	row	balanced	simple	none	na
6		sash	asymetrical	balanced	heavy trim	none	na
Bank 1		sash, highly paned	rows, balanced	balanced	single door, huge side light	portico	simple column
Bank 2		casement	full height, asymetrical	heavy	full glaze, simple	none	na
Professional Building		casement	symetrical rows	balanced	full glaze double	none	na
Retail		sash	symetrical	balanced	simple	recessed portico	na

Figure 25.

Architectural Expression of buildings around Lyman St. Intersection

Neighbor building	Image	ornamentation	chimney	roof		
				eave	gable	pitch
1		simple	simple	minimal	hipped	steep
2		simple	simple	minimal	hipped	moderate
3		simple	simple	minimal	front with side	moderate
4		simple	simple	minimal	side	steep
5		simple	simple	minimal	side	moderate
6		simple	simple	minimal	front with side	steep
Bank 1		simple	cupola	minimal	side	moderate
Bank 2		simple	none	deep	mansard	steep
Professional Building		simple	none	minimal	hipped	moderate
Retail		simple	simple	minimal	hipped	moderate

Figure 26.

The residences here are not as historic as the ones around the Library. Again, they have unique detail and share commonness in form. The residences do not suggest the busy commercial zone that they frame. The commercial buildings run the range from very dissimilar to residential conversion. If each of these was a proposal, the matrix gives a direction toward integration to guide design. The Professional building picture also shows how the mass of this structure looks even larger due to the smaller vegetation. All of the other buildings have trees over the roofs.

6. Street Typologies and Inventories

Streets in a town or neighborhood not only allow movement through the road network, but they can also contribute to the ‘landscape’ character of that particular place. Choices made in width, pavement, curbing, tree plantings, street furniture (e.g., benches, lampposts, signs), etc. – all contribute to the character of the place. These linear features not only connect places and people, but they also serve as transitions through and borders between. Streetscape hierarchy and definition can serve not only as navigation and orientation tools, but also contribute to the streetscape quality of a resident’s or visitor’s experience within the neighborhood.

The following data and photo analysis of South Hadley Falls streets has allowed the Research Team to establish certain streetscape typologies and inventories. We have identified existing characteristics within the neighborhood roads that, if replicated in the appropriate context, can create a more unified streetscape experience, enhancing the existing spatial character of the neighborhood. An analysis of the Newton/Lyman intersection involved the identification of that area’s own street typologies. Distinct from the South Hadley Falls study area and other areas within South Hadley, the Newton/Lyman intersection consists of a commercial corridor along a numbered route and minor residential roads leading to and from the corridor.

This analysis of the streets of South Hadley Falls and of the Newton/Lyman corridor focus areas can inform future guidelines for the neighborhoods – it can also be applied with appropriate modification to other areas in South Hadley to create an experience of unique character and street unity for the user, whether automobile, pedestrian, or cyclist. It is important to note that these recommendations apply primarily to major road corridor and district streetscape design, and are not intended to be applicable to single-use, single types residential or other zones. Please see Section 8, p. 51 for more specific recommendations.

Street Typology Summary

The table below breaks down the roads of South Hadley Falls into four categories established by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation: multi-lane highways, numbered routes, arterial or collector roads, and minor roads.

The majority of roads in South Hadley Falls are minor roads, with a median road width of 22’. To provide further delineation of road typologies, the minor roads were further categorized as:

- Single lane
- Double lane (18’-22’)
- Double lane (24’-28’)
- Double lane (30’-32’)

South Hadley Falls Street Typology Matrix

Class	Street	Surface Width	Lanes	Right of Way	Curbs	RT Sidewalk	LT Sidewalk
-------	--------	---------------	-------	--------------	-------	-------------	-------------

Multi-Lane Hwy

2	Purple Heart Drive	24	2	300	Bath	0	0
2	Route 202	34	2	50	Bath	0	0

Numbered Route

3	Bridge Street	34	2	60	Bath		
3	Lamb Street	36	2	60	Bath	6	6
3	Lamb Street	48	2	60	Bath	0	0

Arterial or Collector

4	Main Street	32	2	60	Bath	8	8
4	North Main Street	24	2	45	Bath	0	0

Minor Street: Median street width is 22'

Single Lane

5	Cardes Court	8	1	20	0	0	0
5	Cottage Avenue	8	1	12	0	0	0
5	Crescent Lane	8	1	20	0	0	0
5	Marion Street	8	1	20	0	0	0
5	Grace Street	10	1	20	0	0	0
5	Lesperance Court	11	1	0	0	0	0
5	Cemetery Road	12	1	30	0	0	0
5	East School Street	12	1	20	0	0	0

Double Lane

18' - 22'

5	Canal Street	18	2	40	0	0	0
5	Ingram Street	18	2	40	0	0	0
5	East Canew Street	20	2	40	0	0	0
5	Graves Street	20	2	40	Bath	4	4
5	Smith Street	20	2	40	One	6	4
5	Canal Street	22	2	50	0	5	5
5	Center Street	22	2	40	0	3	3
5	Harlow Place	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Hartford Street	22	2	50	One	5	5
5	Linden Drive	22	2	40	Bath	0	0
5	Pleasant Street	22	2	40	Bath	4	4
5	Ralph Street	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Spring Street	22	2	40	Bath	0	3
5	Warner Street	22	2	40	One	4	0

Double Lane

24' - 28'

5	Bolton Street	24	2	60	0	4	0
5	Elm Street	24	2	60	Bath	5	5
5	North Street	24	2	50	Bath	4	4
5	Prospect Street	24	2	50	0	0	5

	Class	Street	Surface Width	Lanes	Right of Way	Curbs	RT Sidewalk	LT Sidewalk
Double Lane								
24' - 28'	5	School Street	24	2	50	Both	5	0
	5	South Street	24	2	50	Both	4	4
	5	Grant Street	26	2	40	Both	5	5
	5	Lamb Street	26	2	60	Both	6	6
	5	Maple Street	26	2	50	Both	5	5
	5	Taylor Street	26	2	40	0	5	5
	5	Canal Street	28	2	50	One	5	5
	5	Gaylord Street	28	2	60	Both	0	5
	5	Main Street	28	2	60	0	6	0
	5	Walnut Street	28	2	60	Both	5	5
Double Lane								
30' - 32'	5	Bardwell Street	30	2	50	Both		
	5	Carew Street	32	2	40	Both	5	5
	5	High Street	32	2	65	Both	5	5
	5	Ludlow Road	32	2	60	Both	0	4

The above table articulates the basic physical attributes of each road in South Hadley Falls. To better understand other factors that contribute to the spatial qualities of the road (e.g., street furniture, vegetated strips and their widths, tree types and plantings, and setbacks of buildings), a closer area analysis is necessary. The following photo tour inventories the different types of roads in the South Hadley Falls neighborhood, and contributes spatial information for the road categories, allowing for the definition of a road typology. Note that residential road types are presented as case examples but not as focus areas for design assessment.

Below is a comparison of two major roads in South Hadley Falls: in the matrix, Lamb Street is classified as a numbered route and Main Street is a collector. They have similar characteristics: both are two-lane main roads with 60' rights of way. But the treatment of these otherwise similar roads is different: their traits lend them their character and affect the experience of both the driver and the pedestrian.

Lamb Street looking towards Route 202



Unprotected sidewalk with no tree cover

On street parking with no buffer or tree strip

Large scale / Industrial lighting

Main Street between Bridge and Canal

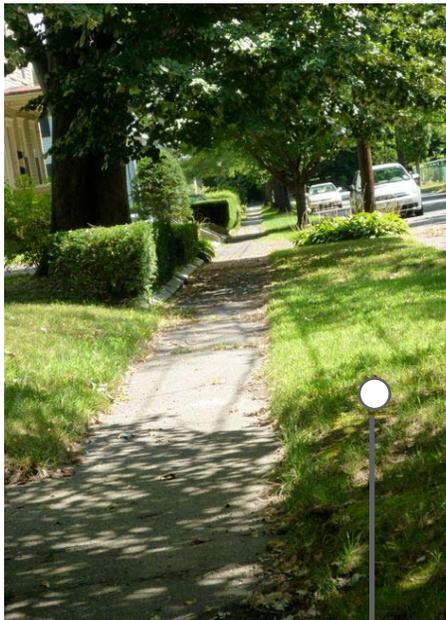


Sidewalk recessed from streetside

Planted tree strip buffers pedestrian traffic from street

Lighting and flag are both human scale and ornamental

In addition to numbered routes and collectors, South Hadley Falls has a network of minor roads: smaller residential sidestreets. Elm Street and High Street are two examples of these minor roads. While not the focus of design assessment, by comparing these two streets and their features, a Design Review Board might decide on certain features that are key in establishing character on larger streets. In the future, such preferred characteristics can be adapted for major roads to create a more walkable, intimate identity for the corridors.

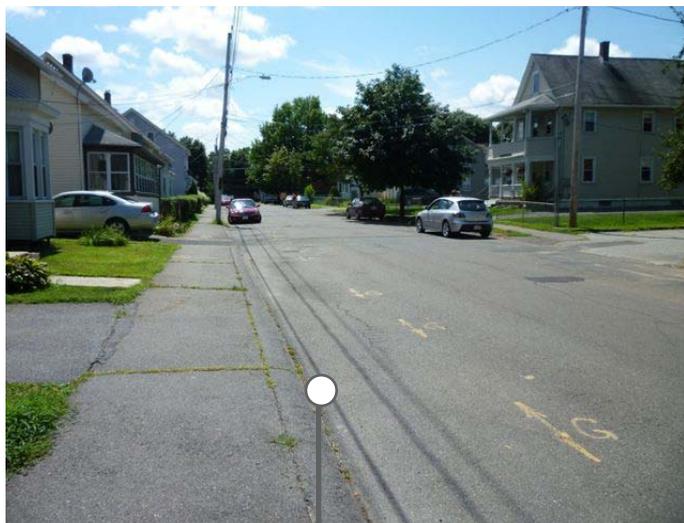


Elm Street

Planted tree strip borders 5' sidewalk with mature trees on bordering properties.

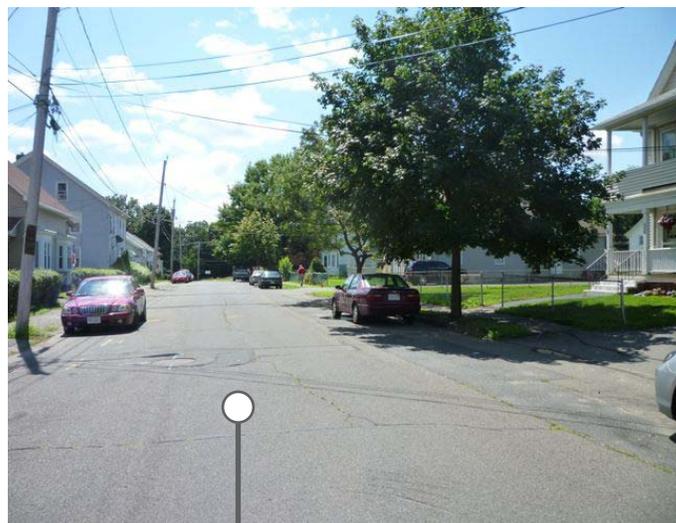


Trees on either side of the street slow traffic and provide canopy coverage. There is parking on one side of the street.



High Street

5' sidewalks with curbs and no planting strips directly abut the road. Few mature trees on bordering properties.



32' wide road with parking on either side and little canopy coverage

Newton / Lyman Street Typology Matrix

Class	Street	Surface Width	Lanes	Right of Way	Curbs	RT Sidewalk	LT Sidewalk
-------	--------	---------------	-------	--------------	-------	-------------	-------------

Numbered Route

3	Newton Street / 116	40	2	70	Both	4	4
3	Lyman Street / 33	30	2	60	Both	5	4

Minor Street: Median street width is 22'

Double Lane

18' - 21'

5	Overlook Road	16	2	30	0	0	0
5	Fairview Street	18	2	50	0	0	0
5	Berwyn Street	20	2	40	0	0	0
5	Broad Street	20	2	40	0	0	0
5	Fairlawn Street	20	2	40	0	0	0
5	Joffre Avenue	20	2	40	0	0	0
5	Mountain Avenue	20	2	40	0	0	0
5	Perkins Street	20	2	35	0	0	0
5	Taylor Way	21	2	40	0	0	0

Double Lane

22'

5	Berwyn Street Extension	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Bunker Hill Street	22	2	50	0	4	4
5	Camden Street	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Camden Street	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Dayton Street	22	2	45	Both	5	0
5	Enterprise Street	22	2	50	0	4	4
5	Foch Avenue	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Fulton Street	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Fulton Street	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Garden Street	22	2	40	0	0	0

Double Lane

22'

5	Haig Avenue	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Lansing Street	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Lexington Street	22	2	50	0	3	3
5	Viviani Street	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Washington Avenue	22	2	40	0	0	0
5	Wood Avenue	22	2	40	0	0	0

Double Lane

24' - 28'

5	Elbow Street	24	2	40	0	0	0
5	Kendrick Street	24	2	40	0	0	0
5	Lawn Street	24	2	40	0	0	0
5	Maria Drive	24	2	50	Both	4	0
5	Mckinley Avenue	24	2	40	0	0	0
5	Midway Street	24	2	50	0	4	4
5	Park Avenue	24	2	40	0	0	0
5	Queen Circle	24	2	60	0	3	3
5	Roosevelt Avenue	24	2	50	0	0	0
5	Lincoln Avenue	28	2	50	0	0	0

Figure 28.

The above table articulates the basic physical attributes of each road type in the Newton/Lyman neighborhood. Newton/Lyman contains two types: numbered routes and minor streets. Different from the South Hadley Falls neighborhood with its many different road classes, Newton/Lyman has opportunities to further incorporate commercial development into the fabric and use that development to contribute to its unique identity within South Hadley. The major road corridors are the primary focus of design assessment.

Newton/Route 116

Newton / Route 116 is a major numbered route connecting South Hadley with other towns in the area: the Town Master Plan highlights this area as a key site for future commercial development. In considering potential use of design guidelines, the below examples from this intersection help to highlight what is there now, what contributes to the character of this area, and highlights characteristics whose addition might benefit the town in creating a more cohesive and pedestrian-friendly area.



4' Sidewalks along this major road through the Newton/Lyman neighborhood are the site of many commercial uses. There is no buffer between the sidewalk and the street, and few mature tree plantings along Route 116 to provide shade for pedestrians.



Pedestrian sidewalks along Route 116 are not clearly distinguishable from driveways in places. Although there is a strip of grass between the sidewalk and road on the east side of the road, it is populated by utility poles and advertisements for businesses. Drivers moving through this area see a barrage of signs as they pass, offering less of a coherent sense of distinctive place or identity.

The west side of the road has little tree cover and no buffer between the sidewalk and the busy road, offering the pedestrian virtually no protection from traffic or the elements.

Lyman/Route 33

Lyman / Route 33 has a similar road layout to Newton / 116, but with a different character. The treatment of the road itself is noticeably different because of the treatment of sidewalks, tree strips, and surrounding plantings. A design review board might consider some of the elements that contribute this difference in character and incorporate those into Newton / 116 to create a more cohesive neighborhood.



A row of trees along the north side of the street provides pedestrian cover, despite the lack of a tree strip to buffer pedestrians from traffic. On the south side, a tree strip provides opportunity for enhanced plantings and pedestrian-scale lighting alongside the utility poles and street signs.



The north and south sides of Route 33 looking towards Route 116 present a contrast in treatment: a Design Review Board might consider the effects that these have on the desirability and character of the neighborhood. On the left is a length of relatively undefined sidewalk with little planting; on the right is a clearly defined sidewalk with more robust vegetation.

Minor Streets: Berwyn, Washington, Dayton, Fulton, Viviani



Viviani



Fulton



Berwyn



Washington



Dayton

The residential roads in the neighborhood are all minor streets: they tend to have no sidewalks or curbs. There are many mature trees that line the streets, and there is generally parking on both sides. Washington Street is an exception to that, with a similar road layout but fewer mature trees: the change in character is apparent in comparing the above photo with other streets within the neighborhood.

For any future development or maintenance projects, a Design Review Board might consider continuing with this pattern as it lends a strong character to the neighborhood: because of this road layout and the surrounding features, there is a strong sense of character in these minor streets. Note that the town is not considering design review for residential areas. This is provided as an example of the town's character rather than as a potential location for redevelopment.

If South Hadley were to establish design assessment guidelines, the characteristics of each street typology would be helpful in creating those standards. Future municipal improvement projects or redevelopment would benefit from these standards, allowing various Town neighborhoods to better achieve a cohesive yet distinctive streetscape that would enhance its already existing character.

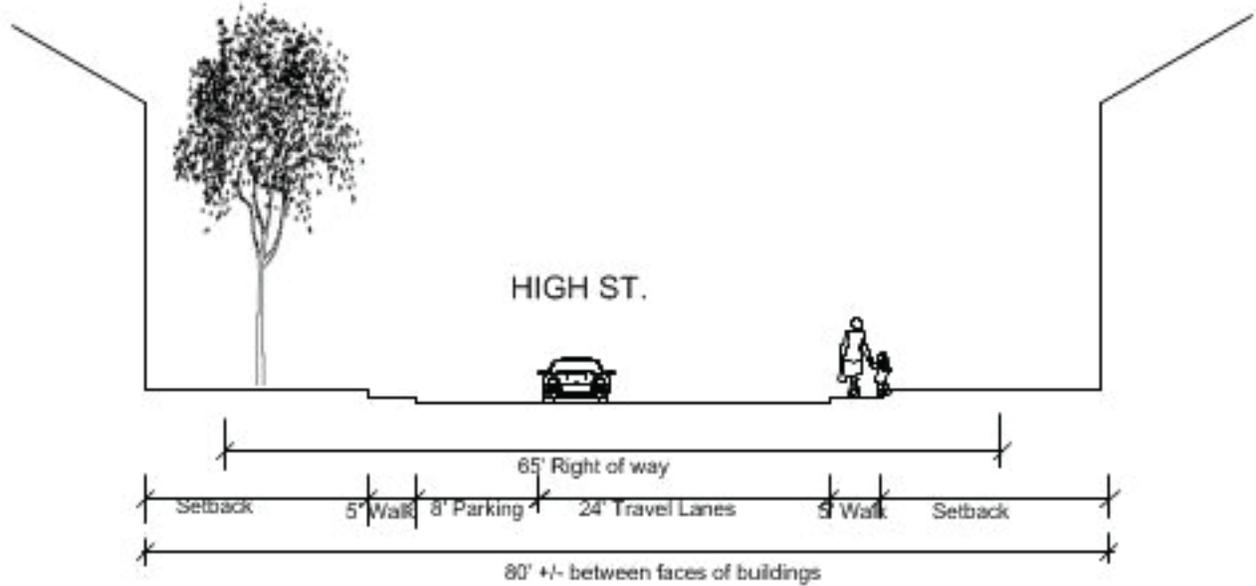


Figure 29.

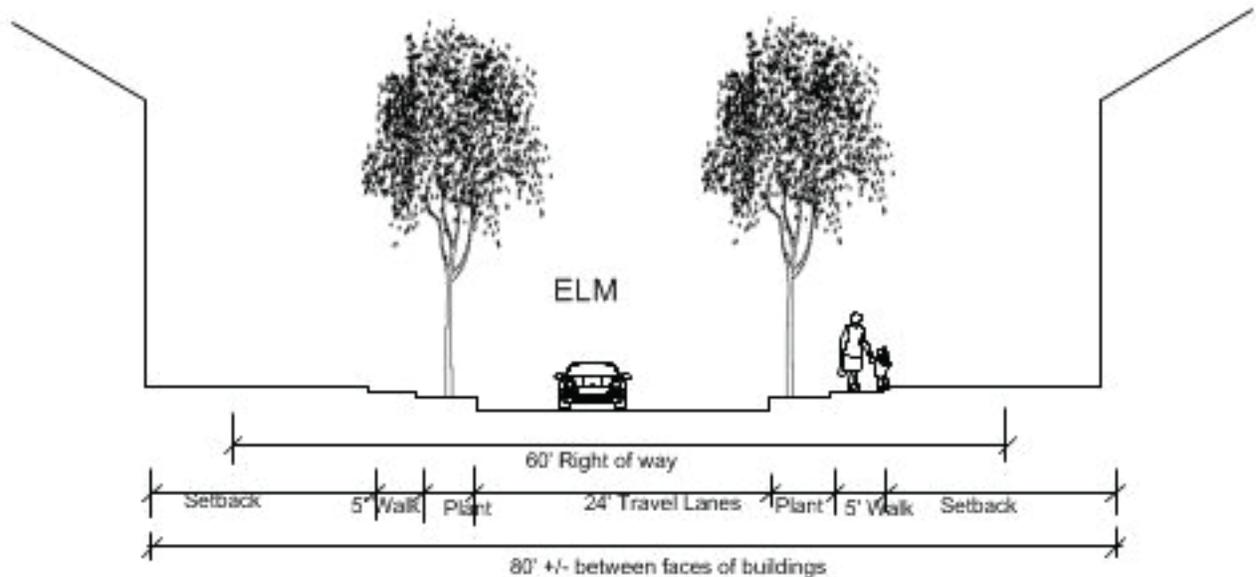


Figure 30.

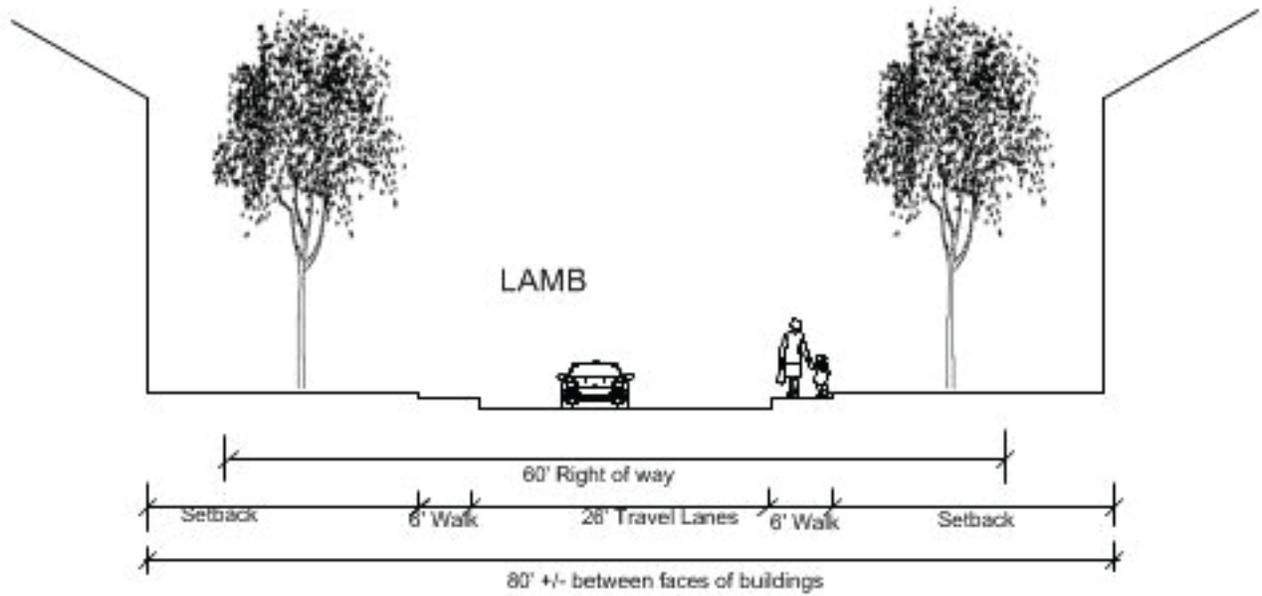


Figure 31.

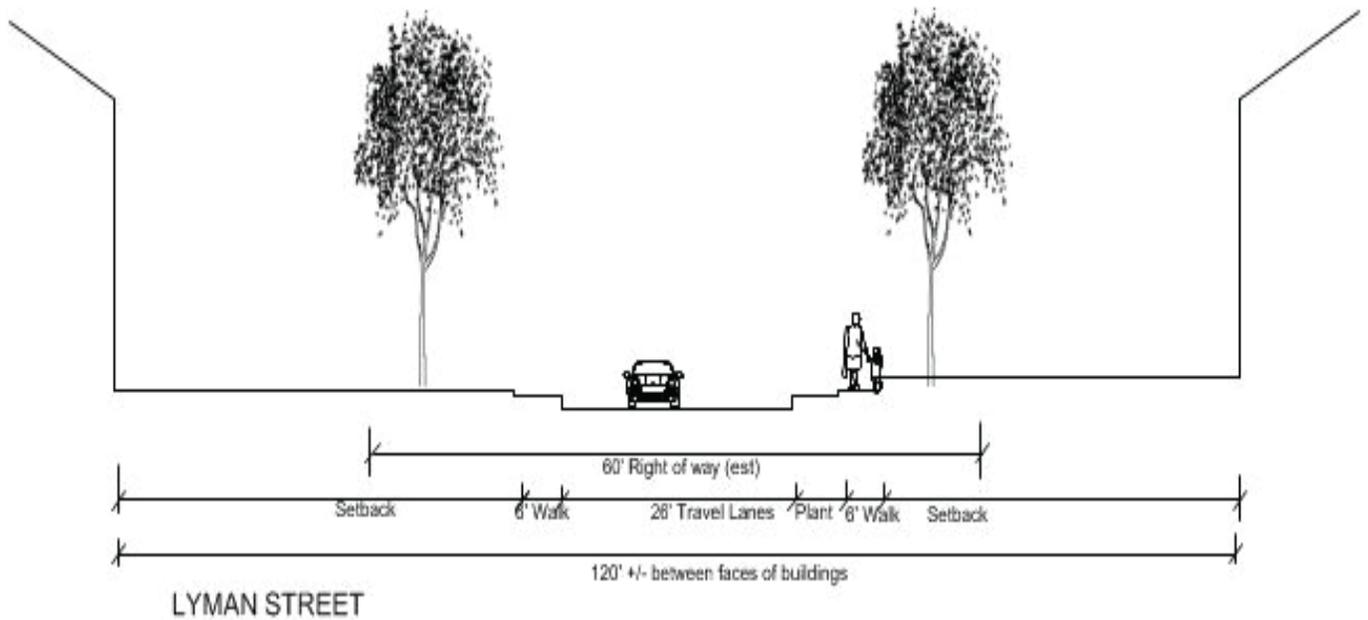


Figure 32.

These previous two Sections (5 and 6) on architectural typology and street typology are intended to illustrate the core criteria and techniques of design classification and evaluation identified as ‘best practices’ in the preceding comparative case study Section (4). The penultimate Section to follow next (7) will offer concluding remarks as well as more practical guidance in terms of what the Town of South Hadley may do with the formal typologies described above.

7. Conclusions and Evaluation Recommendations

The Town of South Hadley has already determined, through its Master Plan Process and the work of its Implementation and Design Assessment Committees, that integrating some form of design *assessment* is a definite goal for future planning and redevelopment in the town. With that starting point, the UMass Design Assessment Team provides further guidance in this section to help town committees and boards to decide whether a more institutional form of design review is desirable for South Hadley's priority development areas. If it is so decided, the next decision involves establishing what type of design-oriented strategy the town may wish to pursue. Options include incorporating aspects of design assessment into existing building or public works codes; incorporating some form of design assessment criteria into existing development regulations that require a site plan review process; incorporating design assessment criteria into existing special permit review and approval processes as another category of building 'performance'; or creating special design review zones or districts (overlay or floating). Based on these decisions regarding types of strategy, town leaders needs to consider in which department(s)/board(s)/ committee(s) would design assessment responsibility reside: in existing department(s)/board(s)/committee(s) or with a new Design Review Board or other agency? Should the criteria be precisely and strictly delineated to allow standard by-right development with limited review, or should they be broader and more flexible, more reliant on the discretion and judgment of a review board? What kinds of post-development monitoring and evaluation may be involved?

South Hadley enjoys an advantageous situation in that its design assessment goals derive from a Master Plan process, go forward through ongoing work of an implementation committee as well as a sustainable design assessment committee, and so build toward future redevelopment and revitalization strategies. This means that the assessment criteria and processes will be 'road tested' with town residents and stakeholders, and therefore less vulnerable to political opposition and legal challenge. While small in size compared to many other communities that have adopted Master Plan-based design assessment criteria, South Hadley's community capacity, collaboration with Mt. Holyoke College, and proximity to other resources in the region (e.g., PVPC) give it a strong foundation for refining and using this framework created by the UMass research team. In addition, however, there are a number of Massachusetts communities smaller than South Hadley that have also implemented some degree of design assessment or review, either in guideline form or as bylaws complementing master plans and special districts (historic, town/village center, etc.) already in place. We present a general overview of advantages, limitations, opportunities, and challenges here, and will elaborate on the specific assessment methods, criteria and techniques in the sections to follow. Please see Sections 1 and 2, pp. 4-9, for an introductory overview of our scope of project work as well as our process and methods.

Advantages of design assessment:

- Does not replace, supplant, or override existing town zoning and development regulation (though it may involve some minor amendment or revision)
- Can be made compatible with and complementary to existing use, bulk, and area requirements, as well

as with existing building and public works codes

- Focuses on relative formal characteristics (scale, density, massing, orientation) rather than on any particular design type or style

Limitations of design assessment:

- Less applicable in areas of:
- highly homogeneous and restrictive development (e.g., subdivisions that already have covenants or association agreements)
- dispersed, low-density development (often cost-prohibitive to significantly improve streetscape)
- disparate range of property title and tenure status (owning vs. renting, occupied vs. absentee, permanent vs. temporary residence)
- Design assessment process would require significant time, personnel and resource commitment from the Town

Opportunities for design assessment:

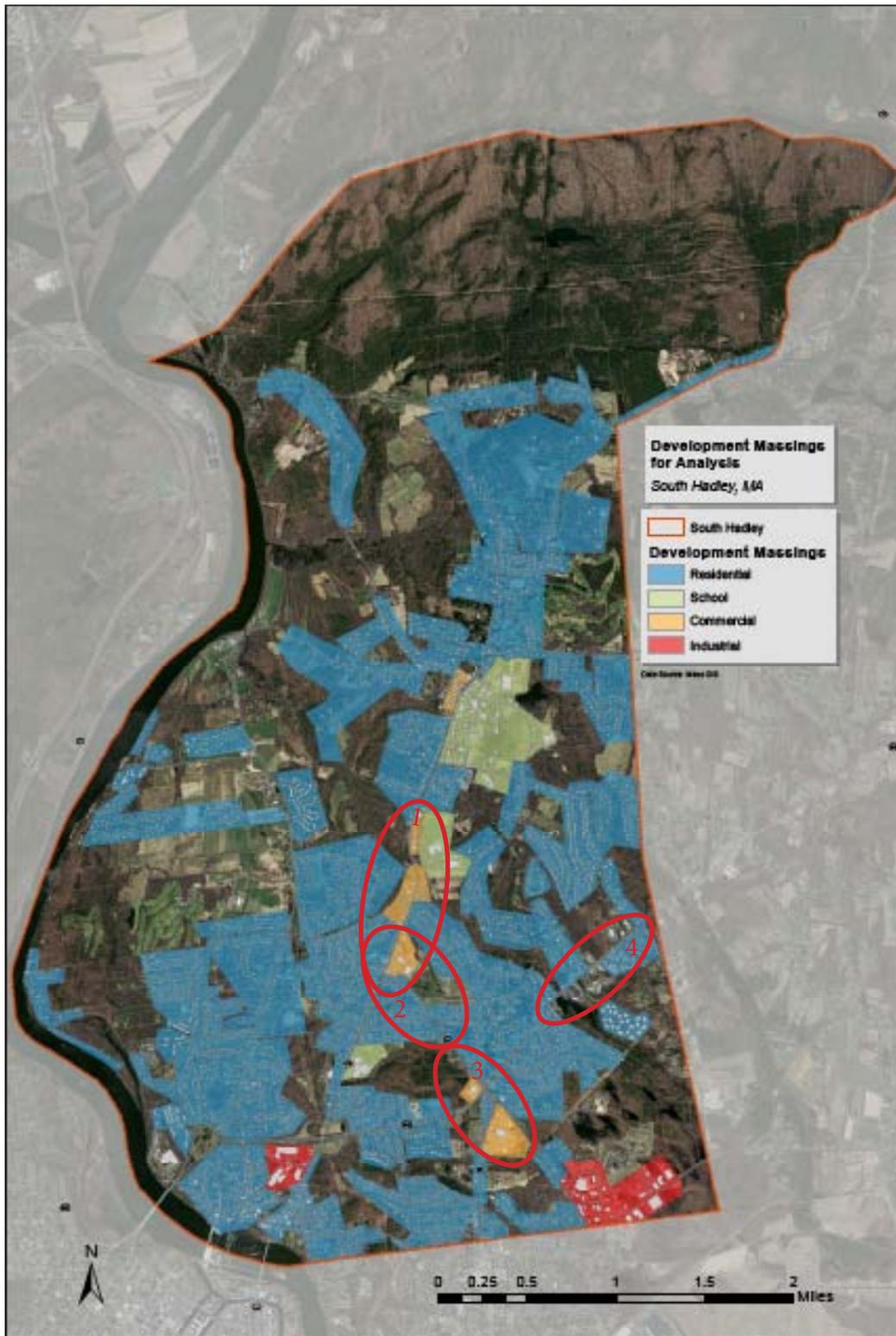
- General design assessment criteria applicable for all special permit (non-ANR) development
- Special Design Review Districts (overlay for priority areas)
- Form-based codes
- Sustainable codes (e.g. LEED, Sustainable Sites, Stretch Code) complementary with design assessment
- Incentives for developers to accept design assessment (e.g., prioritized and expedited permitting, density bonuses, Transfer of Development Rights, Business Improvement Districts, Tax Increment Financing, etc.)

Challenges to design assessment:

- Resistance by private property rights and anti-regulatory groups
- Achieving stable long-term consensus on desirable formal criteria defining Town or neighborhood ‘character’
- Achieving district integration without uniformity or monotony; ensure sufficient variety and flexibility in development pattern without formlessness
- Securing long-term commitment to providing the resources to sustain design assessment

Identification of Design Assessment Priority Focus Areas

Based on the town-wide spatial analysis presented earlier in this report (see Section 3, pp. 10-22), along with comments from public forums and meetings with town leadership, we have identified the following focus areas as being the priority corridor districts for design assessment relative to redevelopment, based on their mixed-use zoning, orientation to major road corridors, concentration of commercial activity, and need for design attention (please see map on the next page):



- 1. Newton St./Rte. 116 Corridor.
- 2. Upper Lyman St./Rte. 33 Corridor
- 3. Lower Lyman St./Rte. 33 Corridor
- 4. Granby Rd./Rte. 202 Corridor

Figure 33. Priority Focus Areas related to Massing Pattern. Based on spatial data on development pattern, road system, and natural features, as well as information from the Master Plan document, the UMass Research Team identified significant massing and development mix patterns for further study.

The Upper Lyman St./Route 33 corridor is bounded by Newton St./Route 116 to the northwest, Lincoln Ave. to the southeast. The Lower Lyman St./Route 33 district is around the intersection with Granby Rd. 202, bounded by the start of Old Lyman Rd. to the southeast and Baker/Stewart St. to the south. Between these two mixed-use residential and commercial areas, the Route 33 corridor is less amenable to redesign and redevelopment, because defined by the protected land of Notre Dame Cemetery and the Black Stevens Conservation Area. The Route 202 corridor near the intersection with 33 is likewise partly circumscribed by St. Rose Cemetery to the south and west edge. The Newton St. and Woodlawn Shopping Centers are located at the northeast corner of the Route 116 and 33 intersection, and are by consensus prime areas for design focus.

The Newton St./Route 116 corridor is bounded by Brainerd/Mosier Streets to the North and by Lincoln and Wood Avenues to the South; north of that area, 116 is identified as College St., and consists of a much more heterogeneous, dispersed pattern of development (e.g., Smith Middle School, Leaping Well North, and the gateway to Mt. Holyoke College and Town Center); south of that area, 116 is defined by South Hadley High School, Black Stevens Conservation Area, farm and open space, and a residential area before the major cloverleaf intersection with Granby Rd./ Route 202) and so is likewise not amenable to a viable coherent design assessment process (please see the next-to-last paragraph in this section for a more detailed explanation).

The Granby Rd./Route 202 corridor is bounded by Lyman St./Route 33 to the west and East St. to the east, especially the segment between Private Way/Mountainview and East St. Elsewhere, the corridor is defined either by significant protected open space or by relatively sparse, uniform residential rather than mixed-use development. As mentioned above, St. Rose Cemetery and Leaping Well Reservoir, along with conserved land for the waterway corridor, circumscribe the focus areas. Sections of corridors dominated by large parcels of protected open space are usually less-well-suited for design assessment, because they lack a critical mass of density and diversity that would benefit from design ‘harmonization’ to maintain or restore or enhance area character.

Our review and comparison of design assessment frameworks developed by other towns or cities similar to South Hadley indicate that most of them focus on local areas that represent significant clusters of buildings with desired ‘character’ or potential for aesthetically compatible mixed-use redevelopment (e.g., town or village centers, major road corridors or nodes). In addition, various conversations with planners, officials, and committee members in South Hadley indicated that the town was less interested in design assessment relative to more isolated residential areas or to areas with more dispersed, heterogeneous uses. Areas that already receive significant attention and protection (Town Center/Mt. Holyoke area, rural historic districts to the north) were also not part of our work scope, by agreement with the town. Most design assessment criteria are flexible enough to be adapted to any location within a town, but we chose our focus areas in consultation with the town during the ongoing process of public meetings and comments on our research.

As shown in Figure 7, page 18 (yellow massings), these identified corridors or crossroad districts are entirely or predominantly located in the town’s A1 and C commercial zones, e.g., proximate to the intersections of 116 and 33 and of 33 and 202, or along the Newton St. and Granby Rd. corridors. These priority areas are characterized by complementary mixed use, i.e., neither too uniform/single-zone nor too disparately heterogeneous (dispersed, protected land, development constraints, etc.) in their formal pattern. Earlier sections of the Design Assessment Report above presented architectural (please see Section 5, pp. 28-34) and street

network (Section 6, pp. 35-45) typologies for these corridor crossroads; please refer to those sections for the specific inventories and dimensional metrics. The section to follow below illustrates the various ways in which those inventories of formal and dimensional types may best be applied in accordance with a range of design criteria appropriate to and compatible with the existing 'typical' character of each area (please see the summary of case study 'best practices' in Section 4, pp. 24-27, with source lists and links in the Appendices).

8. Framework of Design Assessment Guidelines and Criteria

This toolkit presented below will provide a set of design assessment guidelines to ensure that building rehabilitation and new construction contribute either to preserving, enhancing, or fostering the pedestrian-scale, historical, and architectural character of the focus areas identified above. For many development and redevelopment projects, there may be alternative designs that would contribute to the character of the corridor or district. This toolkit contains guidelines only. Any applicable regulations in the form of bylaws, ordinances or codes, including exemptions and legal requirements, could be identified and reviewed by the Town Planner, Town Counsel, Town Building Inspector, etc. prior to approving any construction in the district. The techniques listed here provide the starting point for a prospective Design Review Board (or other town agency) to formulate more specific regulatory language that meets the concurrent goals of planning, public works, economic development, and community preservation stakeholders.

Guidelines for Classification of Building Types

A first step in the process of design assessment is to undertake an inventory of various existing and proposed buildings in the principal focus areas, to determine their relative status and degree of importance or priority in terms of redevelopment strategy. Section 5 in this report has provided a detailed typological matrix of architectural forms and elements, as the foundation on which the town can refine, revise, update, expand, or exclude inventories of specific structures. Categories may include but are not limited to:

- Theme Buildings (structures that represent the typical or desired ‘character’ of the area)
- Landmark Buildings (structures with prominent, distinctive character and significance)
- Transitional Residential Buildings (structures that contribute to area’s ‘mixed’ character)
- Anomaly Buildings (non-conforming structures that preceded development regulation but are nevertheless considered valuable or desirable)

Guidelines for Determination of Applicability

Another critically important step in the assessment process is to make a determination of which individual structures/sites or types of structures/sites will fall under the purview of design assessment process, and what kinds of considerations will apply under what kinds of conditions. Categories may include but are not limited to:

- Justification for demolition of buildings (e.g., as incompatible with or disruptive to area aesthetic character or quality), beyond standard health, safety, structural integrity issues
- Preferred and recommended additions to or renovations of existing buildings to ensure that they become more compatible with or complementary to neighboring structures
- Preferred and recommended strategies for non-conforming buildings to ensure that they become more conforming, compatible with or complementary to neighboring structures
- Guidelines governing new buildings to ensure that they are built to be more compatible with or complementary to neighboring structures
- Delineation of corridor or district boundaries (fixed or floating); all buildings within such special zones or districts would be subject to design assessment and potential requirement to make design modifications
- Ensuring balanced distribution of building types and uses; here the goal may be to ensure design quality and integrity but with visual diversity rather than homogeneity/uniformity

Types of Design Assessment Criteria

This description and discussion of design criteria represents a synthesis of ‘best practice’ recommendations from a spectrum of Massachusetts city and town design assessment guidelines (e.g., Acton, Amherst, Bolton, Bourne, Boxborough, Dennisport, Littleton, and Northampton, MA among others), and provides more detailed guidance for the general principles described in Section 4. The criteria have been sorted into three categories of phase one, two, and three design characteristics related to dimensional, aesthetic, and functional aspects. Our conclusion from the case studies is that dimensional criteria (i.e., compatible and appropriate building scale, density, massing, clustering, frontages, setbacks, etc.) tend to predominate, in part because they are the most ‘objective’/least ‘subjective’ criteria; are easier to make compatible with planning, zoning, and development regulatory goals; and are thus amenable to more consensus or less controversy. That is why we identify them as phase one. Aesthetic criteria are no less important, but we label them phase two because the element of subjective judgment involved may more typically result in potential debate or dispute. The phase three criteria of functional elements with design impact (e.g., infrastructure and utilities), while they are relatively objective like phase one criteria, tend to be less within the exclusive purview of town planning agencies and more inclusive of agencies such as building inspection, public works, highway supervision, etc. as well; therefore design assessment may often be more constrained by technical or performance standard considerations. The designation of phase one, two, and three criteria may also guide a process of implementation in the town: starting with the ‘low-hanging fruit’ of objective dimensional characteristics, then building public confidence and support for the more complex issues of subjective aesthetic and potentially incompatible technical-functional regulation going forward.

Rather than specify a ‘one size fits all’ framework, we recommend that the town could create its own customized matrix specifically oriented to town priorities, with design assessment criteria (described below) as rows, and guidelines of purpose, type classification, applicability, implementation strategy, and responsible agents (described above) as columns.

Phase One Design Criteria

(Dimensional: scale, density, massing; may be most amenable to adoption compatible with existing planning regulations and responsibilities)

Building Scale

The size and detailing of buildings should reflect a general town preference for moderate-scale structures that are similar in size to neighboring houses or businesses, rather than ‘big box’ or ‘commercial strip’ shopping centers. This would not entirely rule out building smaller or larger structures, or always mandate moderate size; the primary consideration is compatibility relative to prevailing scale and density in the area. New buildings or substantial alterations to existing buildings should aim to incorporate an area’s visual features to reduce the appearance of bulk or mass. The appropriate scale of a structure or landscape alteration should be compatible with the architectural or landscape style and character of the surrounding area. The scale of ground-level design elements, e.g., building entryways, windows, porches, plazas, parks, pedestrian furniture, plantings and other street and site elements should primarily be determined by and directed toward the uses, experiences, and activities of pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with restricted mobility. The town already has dimensional regulations in terms of minimum and maximum lot and building size relative to the designated zone, but this criterion would apply more broadly to the compatibility and complementarity of buildings within mixed districts. (Please see Figure 6, page 17 for town-wide analysis; Figure 9, page 20 for South Hadley Falls; and Figure 13, page 22 for Lyman St./116 of building footprint ramps as guidance on how to assess scale density, and massing in priority areas.)

Building Setbacks and Frontages

The relation of a structure to open space between it and to adjoining structures should aim to be compatible with the general pattern of such relations in the surrounding area. At the outset in developing its guidelines, the design assessment consultant or committee could confer with the Town Assessor and Building Inspector to determine what the average or typical footprint of sites and structures may be within the designated corridor or district as a baseline for specifying the dimensional requirements. The goal would be to determine a range of acceptable minimum and maximum setbacks and frontages. To be clear: this conferring would not be ongoing and case-by-case; it would be at the time of drafting or of major revising and updating design assessment guidelines. (Please see Figure 5, page 16 for town-wide analysis; Figure 10, page 20 for South Hadley Falls; and Figure 14, page 21 for Lyman St./116 as guidance on how to assess parcel size relative to frontage, setback, etc.) The goal would be to bring buildings closer to the sidewalk and street and to locate parking to the rear (see Phase Three criteria discussion below).

Building Height and Width

The proportions and relationships of height to width between windows, doors, signs and other architectural elements should be compatible with the existing architectural style and character of the surrounding area. The height of a new building or proposed alteration should be compatible with the style and character of the existing structures or sites in the surrounding area. The shape of roofs, windows, doors and other design elements should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the building or site, and that of its surroundings. At the outset of drafting specific guidelines, the design assessment consultant or committee could confer with the Town Assessor and Building Inspector to determine what the average or typical heights and widths of sites and structures may be within the designated corridor or district as a baseline for a range of acceptable minimum and maximum heights and widths, i.e., not conferring on an individual case-by-case basis. The goal would be to keep buildings and sites at a more human proportion for pedestrians and people with more limited mobility (very young and very old, disabled, non-drivers, etc.)

Renovations to Anomaly Buildings

Wherever and whenever possible, existing structures on the site should be preferably preserved and renovated for use as part of the redevelopment. Any alteration to an existing structure should aim to employ materials, colors and textures as well as massing, size, scale and architectural features that complement the original structure. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques that characterize a typical area property should be preserved. Any addition or new construction adjacent to existing structures need not be merely a formulaic duplication of the structure. Other key features of an area or nearby sites/structures, such as fences, walls, etc. with landscape character should, to the maximum extent feasible, be preserved and reflected in the proposed development. Preferred and recommended renovations should encourage greater compatible or complementary form, e.g., building additions as infill with respect to desired patterns of setback, height, width, etc.

Buildings on Corner Lots

Because these priority focus areas in the town are located primarily at key crossroads of major road corridors, structures and sites at the corners of those intersections take on a special level of importance as they can serve to anchor the district as a gateway. Moreover, such corner lots and buildings provide the greatest degree of visual aspect down major roads corridors, and thus have a significant role in ‘setting the tone’ for the entire area. As such, these corner locations require even more careful attention in terms of the criteria described in this section,

because dimensional characteristics have impact along two axes rather than one, three cross-street adjacencies (lateral as well as diagonal) rather than one. Please see also secondary aesthetic criteria below regarding view aspect, obstruction, etc.

Roof Forms and Lines

New construction, including new development atop existing buildings or substantial alterations, should incorporate gables or other traditional pitched roof forms to be more consistent with the existing architecture of the town. Flat roofs are discouraged. Mechanical equipment located on roofs should be screened, organized and designed as a component of the roof design, and not as a leftover or add-on element.

Building Articulation and Rhythm

The directional expression of building facades and other architectural and landscape design elements should be compatible with those of others in the surrounding area with regard to the dominant vertical or horizontal expression or orientation related to use and area character, as appropriate. There should be a sense of connected building pattern and circulatory street flow. This criterion will encourage a stronger sense of place legibility and wayfinding.

Phase Two Design Criteria

(aesthetic features: view aspect, lines of sight, harmony; may require designating a new town board or committee of members with relevant design experience or expertise)

General definition: Such aesthetic features would include varied but harmonious facades, similar roof forms and styles (e.g., roof overhangs and pitched roofs); common construction materials or finishes; canopies and awnings; street entrances; dormers or other window features. Buildings should relate to the pedestrian scale by: including appropriate design features to add increased visual interest along the street level of all facades that face sidewalks, public squares and parks, pedestrian pathways, parking areas, or other significant walking areas; differentiating the bottom, mid-range, and roof of the facade by means of design details; avoiding continuous patterns of monotonous, uniform walls adjacent to public squares and parks, pedestrian pathways, or other walking areas. Specific examples of such phase two criteria are listed below:

First Floor Facades and Entrances

For all priority business or residential structures fronting on a public way, building entrances should be readily visible from the right-of-way and sidewalk, and directly accessible from the sidewalk; front entrances should be well defined and face the main street. To further increase accessibility, structures may also have entrances that provide more direct access to the parking areas beside or behind the structure. Doorways should extend minimally beyond the exterior facade to avoid disturbing pedestrian pathways.

Facade Materials and Detailing

Predominant wall materials should have the natural appearance of surrounding longer-term area buildings; if (re) painted, walls should be painted or coated in non-reflective finishes. Cladding materials should be consistent on all facades, or should at least involve an appropriate mix found in characteristic architecture within the area (e.g., clapboard, shingles, brick, stonework or more contemporary materials as appropriate), with the exception of special design elements such as roof gables or dormers. Awnings and canopies over windows and doors should be as compatible as possible with the predominant architectural styles of the area. Colors and patterns used for awnings and canopies should be muted and compatible with/complementary to existing features on

adjacent buildings. Except for minor trim, buildings should avoid the appearance of reflective materials. Town building codes may already include specifications for facades, windows, etc., but the focus of this criterion is on promoting greater consistency across adjacent but mixed uses.

Window Arrangements and Design

Window panes should be non-reflective and non-tinted unless necessary for business operations. Ground-floor commercial building facades facing public streets, squares, or other pedestrian ways should contain transparent windows and other appropriate window details to add visual interest; the amount of windows may vary according to the architectural style of the area but should be appropriate to the building style and the intended use, with a general goal of at least 20% fenestration of the first-floor facade surface. This figure is an architectural convention that is found in a number of design guidelines, but of course is subject to assessment of characteristic fenestration percentages in the area; it typically applies to commercial and institutional buildings more than to private residential structures.

Signs

The size, form, and style of signs should be proportionate and appropriate to the visible scale and character of the structure or site and its surrounding area. Signs should serve to identify specific individual establishments, buildings, locations and uses, as simply and clearly as possible, while remaining subordinate and non-obtrusive to the architecture and larger streetscape. The choice of materials, color, size, method of illumination and character of symbolic representation on signs should be compatible with the architectural or landscape design style of the structure or site, and those of other signs in the surroundings. Design assessment criteria would in the case of South Hadley further refine and complement already existing sign bylaws in the town.

Landscape, Streetscape and Street Furniture

Architectural and site details may include signs, building/lot/street lighting, pedestrian furniture, planting and paving, along with material, color, texture and landform grading should be treated so as to be compatible with the original architectural and landscape design style of neighboring structures and so to preserve and enhance the character of the surrounding area. In the identified focus area districts, these details should relate to their surroundings to create a diverse, functional and unified streetscape. Any proposed landscape design should be compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Landscape and streetscape elements, including planting and paving patterns, should provide continuity and definition to the street, pedestrian areas and surrounding landscape. To the maximum extent possible, projects should provide pedestrian-friendly amenities, such as public gathering/sitting areas, designated on-site sidewalks/pathways, sidewalks along the public road frontage of the parcel, and appropriate walkways. Town boards and committees may adopt additional landscaping guidelines beyond these as part of the design assessment process to advance these goals and to provide detailed examples and metrics for the reference of prospective developers. For example, indicating specific types of planting that may be required or encouraged (evergreen vs. deciduous trees, non-invasive species, heritage species, etc.) or others that may be limited or discouraged (species that produce allergens, rotting fruit, attract nuisance insects or other animals). Street furniture decisions may take into account risks of local vandalism, abuse by the homeless, or other health and safety concerns.

Phase Three

(functional: utilities and infrastructure with design impact; more likely to involve multiple local bodies to jointly balance technical performance criteria with design impact criteria)

Exterior Mechanical Equipment and Service Areas

Service and loading areas as well as large-scale (i.e., more highly visible/visually incompatible) mechanical equipment and utilities should be located as unobtrusively or sufficiently screened as possible (by a screening wall that ‘blends’ with the adjacent building, or by a vegetated trellis or lattice, for example) so that they are not visible from streets, neighboring residential districts or primary public open spaces, and should incorporate effective techniques for visual, noise, and fume buffering (using ‘absorptive’ or ‘shielding’ materials) from nearby low-impact uses.

Drive-Through Commercial Services

Exclusively automobile-oriented design features should be discouraged to the extent that they may unduly interrupt or disturb the pedestrian circulation of the area. For that reason, drive-through windows should be kept to a minimum unless there is an essential business need for that kind of service. In any event, maintaining line of sight is critical for preventing conflict between drivers and pedestrians. No wall, fence, structure, planting or other obstruction to driver’s vision may be permitted at eye level, generally defined as three (3) to eight (8) feet above street grade, within twenty five (25) feet from the intersection of street side lines, unless the town has already adopted a line-of-sight bylaw, which would supersede these recommendations.

Fencing and Screening

Parking areas, dumpsters and ground-level mechanical equipment should be screened from view from all neighboring residential areas by vegetative screening or fencing that is appropriate to the character of the area. Suitable landscaping and vegetative screening are preferable to fencing. Parking areas shall be reasonably screened and landscaped to minimize the adverse view, noise, and fume impacts on nearby public ways.

Lighting

Building or area lighting for any business, commercial, industrial or other nonresidential private use should be so arranged as to direct the light away from any street and from any premises residentially used or zoned. The applicant should coordinate lighting fixture assembly with the surrounding architecture. Such exterior lights should be mounted and shielded, such that light sources and lenses should not be visible from any residential district. Luminaries should be cutoff (downlight) type, with the mounting height not to exceed twenty (20) feet. Light overspill should not create discernible shadowing on any residentially zoned premises. With the exception of limited security or safety lighting, all lighting should aim to be shut off during times outside of business operations. This criterion may also allow for some exceptions, e.g., reasonable seasonal holiday or other lighting displays that would only be in place for a relatively short period of time.

Parking for Vehicles and Bicycles

To the maximum extent feasible, parking areas should be located behind (best) or to the side (if behind is not possible) of structures, generally discouraged between structure and public right-of-way; screened with appropriate landscaping; and designed to minimize local heat-island effect by including appropriate landscaping, with a minimum 1 tree per 10 parking spaces, with associated shrubs and other plantings that could be incorporated into Low Impact Development stormwater infiltration facilities. Bicycle parking should be encouraged for all new development, at least 50 percent sheltered from the elements, and located as close as possible to the building entrance(s). Any property may establish a shared bicycle parking facility with another property owner within a range of 150 feet.

Traffic Improvements

There are a number of urban (re)design techniques that pertain to enhancing and encouraging a greater degree of pedestrian and cyclist activity, and public transportation in some instances. As phase three criteria, there may be more regulatory constraints to achieving these kinds of design goals. In consultation with the appropriate state and town highway officials, and as allowed by current road engineering requirements, the town should investigate options for re-designing area street networks. Existing rights of way along the major road corridors could be ample enough to perhaps allow expansion or extension of existing sidewalks to allow additional sidewalk activity (e.g., café or patio seating) or to allow a vegetative buffer between sidewalk and road. Subject to requirements for emergency vehicles access and turnaround, designated and dedicated bicycle lanes may be expanded or extended. In some locations, on-street parking may be one possible way to reduce parking lots in front of structures. Traffic calming strategies such as bump-outs, raised crossings, or alternative pavers might be considered appropriate in areas encouraging a greater volume of pedestrian and bike traffic. Sidewalks designed to connect parking areas with adjacent developments are encouraged to further the goal of providing safe pedestrian access to businesses within town. These changes potentially could be made time-specific (e.g., off-peak on-street parking allowed). Please see Section 6 for guidance on priority-area road typologies.

Sustainable Building and Site Design

This functional phase three criterion, while not as fundamental as dimensional or even aesthetic criteria in terms of preserving, restoring, or enhancing complementary ‘character’, nevertheless is perhaps one of the most important criteria for the town to consider for the long-range future in terms of building life-cycle longevity while reducing energy/maintenance costs and development impacts. We advocate that it is desirable that all new buildings (and suitable existing buildings), especially publicly-funded or subsidized construction in the design assessment corridor/district, aim to meet current Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria, as issued by the U.S. Green Building Council, to the maximum extent feasible. All site and street designs should follow, to the maximum extent feasible, the Low Impact Development (LID) techniques issued by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), which defines LID as landscaping and design techniques to maintain pre-development capacity sites and streets to manage stormwater. More mature trees, rain gardens, bioswales, infiltration strips, etc. should be encouraged and incentivized to provide shade, reduce heat-island effect, and handle stormwater on site. Only native regional species should be used in landscape design; invasive species should be discouraged. The town may require that trees removed as part of new development be replaced on-site or off-site. All vegetation included in a site plan should have a maintenance schedule and if necessary replaced from time to time to maintain the overall quality and integrity of landscape design as reviewed and approved by the responsible town agencies.

Identifying these design assessment criteria as phase one, two, and three does not imply greater or lesser relative importance, priority, or value. They imply relative simplicity and compatibility of implementation under current conditions; phase one criteria may require little or no additional new board/committee responsibility or cross-agency coordination; phase two criteria may call for expansion or re-delegation of assessment responsibility; and phase three criteria may involve not only expansion or re-delegation but also more complex coordination by town agencies as well as by state agencies. For example, the phase three sustainability criteria are last but by no means least in terms of importance. Implementing them, however, will require greater effort and political will compared to the dimensional criteria.

Appendices

Town of Amherst, MA (Design Review Guidelines for Town Districts)

<http://www.amherstma.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1123>

The Design Review Board consists of five members appointed by the Select Board for three-year terms:

- Two members must be design professionals such as architects, landscape architects, and interior designers;
- One member must be a business proprietor or owner in the downtown area; and
- Two of the five members are nominated by and represent the Planning Board and Historical Commission, respectively.

The DRB reviews applications for:

- Building renovations or additions
- Façade alterations
- Landscape, site and streetscape improvements
- New construction
- New sites
- Accessory structures such as signs

The Design Review Principles and Standards set forth in Sections 3.204, 3.2040 and 3.2401 of the Amherst Zoning Bylaw are the principle design guidelines used by the Design Review Board during review of all applications, including changes in signs, site layout, and building renovations or façade improvements. The guidelines help individual development proposals for buildings, facades and landscapes become part of a well-designed, aesthetically pleasing urban fabric for downtown Amherst. Section 3.2401 of the Amherst Zoning Bylaw, Design Review Standards, sets forth nine specific design elements, listed below, that the Design Review Board refers to when reviewing new applications. The Board determines whether or not these nine elements in the proposed design meet the standard of being compatible with the same elements in the surrounding buildings and landscapes.

Town of Bolton, MA (Design Review Guidelines for Town Center)

http://www.townofbolton.com/pages/BoltonMA_Planning/DesignReviewGuidelines.pdf

TOWN OF BOLTON DESIGN REVIEW CRITERIA SECTION 2.5.5.7

The Planning Board shall consider the following additional design criteria in conducting Special Permit Review for all developments of business or mixed use properties subject to Special Permit Review under the Town of Bolton Zoning Bylaw. The Board of Selectmen may also use these criteria in undertaking Site Plan Review for all business projects in the Town of Bolton subject to Site Plan Review. The Board of Appeals shall also consider these criteria in review of special permits and variances for all business and industrial uses. The Planning Board, from time to time, may adopt additional Design Review Guidelines Regulations to advance the goals of this section...

Design Goals:

Buildings and renovations shall be of a design similar to or compatible with traditional architecture in the

Town of Bolton in terms of scale, massing, roof shape, spacing and exterior materials. The design standards are intended to promote quality development consistent with the Town's sense of history, human scale and pedestrian-oriented village character...

The DRC shall transmit its recommendations in writing to the Applicant and the appropriate reviewing Board within 40 days of the receipt of the application.

Failure by the Design Review Committee to transmit its recommendations within the 40 day period allocated shall be considered a recommendation of approval of the application submitted, unless the applicant has granted an extension in a public meeting or in writing.

ii. Upon receipt of an application for a sign permit, the Inspector of Buildings shall immediately forward a copy thereof to the DRC. Within fourteen (14) days the DRC shall hold a public meeting. Within seven (7) days of the public meeting, the DRC shall notify the Inspector of Buildings, in writing, of its determination. Upon receipt of such notice, or upon the expiration of seven (7) days from the date of the public meeting, without having received any notification from the DRC, the Building Inspector may, subject to the requirements of the DTD sign regulations, issue the sign permit.

Town of Bourne, MA (Sample of Proposed Town Meeting Design Review Article)

<http://www.townofbourne.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=5P1gQE89eDE%3D&tabid=177&mid=1621>

Sample Annual Town Meeting Zoning Bylaw Article

ARTICLE ____: To see if the town will vote to add to the Town Zoning Bylaw a new Section ___ Design Review Committee under Section ___ Design Review District, for the purposes of advancing the revitalization of major commercial and mixed-use corridors, by adding the following, or take any other action relative thereto.

ZONING BYLAW SECTION ____ – DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT

1. New Section – Design Review Committee (DRC)

a. A Design Review Committee is hereby established to review development and sign applications in the Downtown District. The Design Review Committee shall make recommendations to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Board of Selectmen on matters of architectural and design concerns in the review of applications for special permits/site plan review within the Design Review District. Architectural and design concerns shall include but not be limited to site design, building size and placement, design compatibility, exterior appearance, construction materials, finishes, landscaping, sign design and placement. The Design Review Committee shall also review and approve all sign applications and forward their recommendation to the Inspector of Buildings before a sign permit is issued.

b. Committee Composition:

- i. The DRC membership shall consist of five members and one alternate, preference shall be given so that the membership of the committee will include an architect, a landscape or civil engineer, a Design Review District property or business owner, a member of the SDAT Committee, and a citizen at large.
- ii. The term of all members of the Design Review Committee shall be three years, except that when the Committee is established, the Board of Selectmen shall make two of their appointments for a two year term

and the remaining appointments shall be for a one year term.

c. Applicability:

- i. The DRC shall be an advisory to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Board of Selectmen for the purposes of site development.
- ii. The DRC shall approve all sign applications before a sign permit is issued by the Inspector of Buildings.

d. Procedure:

- i. Development applications in the Design Review District shall be submitted to the Design Review Committee simultaneously with any application submitted to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, or Board of Selectmen. Within 20 days of the receipt of the application the DRC shall respond to applicant in terms of scheduling a meeting.

Other Resources:

Town of Acton, MA (Design Review Board -- Visioning '08)

http://www.actonoutreach.com/pdfs/OutreachSteeringCommitteeFinalRecs_06_28_08.pdf

Town of Boxborough, MA (Design Review Board Guidelines)

<http://www.town.boxborough.ma.us/DRBGuide.pdf>

Town of Dennisport, MA (Architectural Design Guidelines)

http://www.umass.edu/massctc/pdfs/Dennisport%20architectural_guidelines.pdf

Town of Franklin, MA (Design Review Board Design Guidelines)

http://www.town.franklin.ma.us/Pages/FranklinMA_Planning/designdocuments/guidelines.PDF

Town of Littleton, MA (Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines)

<http://www.littletongov.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=92>

City of Northampton, MA (Central Business District Architecture Design Guidelines)

<http://www.northamptonma.gov/opd/uploads/listWidget/2543/Central%20Business%20Architecture%20Design%20Guidelines.pdf>

Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Handbook: Approach to Chapter 40B Design Reviews)

<http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/handbook-ch40b/handbook-approachtoch40b-designreview.pdf>

Town of Shelburne, VT (Sustainable Design Assessment)

<http://www.shelburnevt.org/departments/1265.html>

Resources

Design Guidelines for other towns:

New England:

Acton, MA

http://www.actonoutreach.com/pdfs/OutreachSteeringCommitteeFinalRecs_06_28_08.pdf

Amherst, MA

<http://www.amherstma.gov/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1123>

Canton, MA

http://www.town.canton.ma.us/Design_Review/CANTON%20CENTER%20DESIGN%20GUIDELINES.pdf

Franklin, MA

http://www.town.franklin.ma.us/Pages/FranklinMA_Planning/designdocuments/guidelines.PDF

Littleton, MA

<http://www.littletongov.org/comdev/dntnDesignStds.asp>

Mass. State ch40b

<http://www.mass.gov/Ehed/docs/dhcd/cd/handbook-ch40b/handbook-approachtoch40b-designreview.pdf>

Newton, MA

http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/cdbg/Historic/aub_guidelinespdf.pdf

Northampton, MA

<http://city.northampton.ma.us:8080/WebLink8/ElectronicFile.aspx?docid=122591&&dbid=0>

Sanford, ME

<http://www.sanfordmaine.org/vertical/Sites/%7B9A3D3C8D-76EE-4CC5-B86E-C19FDBF5E473%7D/uploads/%7B9BFF4534-E408-46A6-B2DD-5F42FA16736B%7D.PDF>

Torrington, CT

http://www.torringtonct.org/Public_Documents/TorringtonCT_Planning/design.pdf

Other Areas:

Gig Harbor, WA

<http://www.codepublishing.com/WA/GigHarbor/GigHarbor17/GigHarbor1799.html#17.99>

Puget Sound Regional Council

<http://www.psrc.org/assets/254/designmanual.pdf>

Ashton Heights, Arlington, VA

<http://ashtonheights.org/content/ashton-heights-style-guide>

Ripon, WI

[http://www.riponmainst.com/riponmainst/Renovation/Ripon%20Downtown%20Design%20Guidelines%20\(March%202008\).pdf](http://www.riponmainst.com/riponmainst/Renovation/Ripon%20Downtown%20Design%20Guidelines%20(March%202008).pdf)

Black Diamond, WA

<http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/planning/FINAL%20Rev%20MPD%20Framework%20Design.pdf>

San Mateo, CA

<http://www.ci.sanmateo.ca.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1854>

Edmonds, WA

<http://www.mrsc.org/mc/edmonds/edmonds20/edmonds2011.html>

Snohomish, WA

<http://www.ci.snohomish.wa.us/PDFs/DesignStandardsHistoricDistrict.PDF>

Geneva, NY

[http://www.genevanrc.org/r/00 coverhowto.pdf](http://www.genevanrc.org/r/00%20coverhowto.pdf)

Monroe, WA

<http://www.ci.monroe.wa.us/citygov/depts./comdev/planning/downtownmstrplan/designguidelines.pdf>

Livermore, CA

<http://www.ci.livermore.ca.us/dsp/dsp.html>

Austin, TX

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/downtown/designguidelines.html>

Chapel Hill, NC

<http://www.townofchapelhill.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=269>

Hopkins, MN

<http://www.hopkinsmn.com/planning/design.html>

Northfield, MN

<http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/business/planningandzoning/designguidelines>

Augusta, GA

http://www.augustaga.gov/departments/planning_zoning/docs/pdf/hpc/downtown%20design%20guidelines.pdf

Boulder, CO

<http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/files/PDS/boards/Downtown%20Design/ddguidelines.pdf>

Seattle, WA

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Applicant_s_Toolbox/Design_Guidelines/DPD_001540.asp

St. Louis, MO

<http://stlouis.missouri.org/development/downtown-now/reports/streetscape.html>
<http://www.eustis.org/property/dtguidelines.htm>

San Carlos, CA

http://www.cityofsancarlos.org/gov/depts/planning/downtown/guidelines/download_the_design_guidelines.asp

Hamilton, ON

<http://www.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/F7AE9C2D-2574-43AF-9F53-2BB438D43E81/0/DtwnHertCharZoneGuidelines.pdf>

Burlington, ON

<http://cms.burlington.ca/PageFactory.aspx?PageID=507>

Berkley, CA

<http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=14260>

Stoughton, WI

http://www.ci.stoughton.wi.us/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7B6149F38E-40A7-4C81-BE81-58E5EA211B0F%7D

St. Joseph, MN

http://stjoseph.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7B57C958C9-560B-482B-AEBB-2519EAE0B8AB%7D

Davis, CA

<http://www.cityofdavis.org/cdd/design/>
<http://downtownlakeville.com/d4.shtml>

Scottsdale, AZ

<http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/Assets/documents/projects/downtown/Workbook-Pt3.pdf>

Newnan, GA

<http://www.ci.newnan.ga.us/content/view/168/66/>

Laramie, WY

<http://www.ci.laramie.wy.us/cityservices/planning/documents/DesignGuidelinesadoptedCC8-21-07.pdf>

Palm Springs, CA

http://www.ci.palm-springs.ca.us/city_clerk/Palm%20Springs%20Interim%20Downtown%20Urban%20Design%20Guidelines%207-25-05.pdf

Comprehensive Plan

Images of the History of South Hadley

Field Book of Architectural Style