



Transformative Development Initiative (“TDI”) Equity Investment Program:
Revitalizing Commercial Spaces

Community One Stop for Growth

Program Information and Guidelines

FY2027

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OVERVIEW

The TDI Equity Investment Program (the “Program”) will make capital improvement grants of up to \$250,000 to real estate projects that activate and improve commercial spaces within and around eligible TDI Districts (see Exhibit A for eligible districts for FY27; please note that Districts selected for the 2026-2029 TDI Cohort will be eligible and maps will be made available after the districts are approved). The Program makes funding available for real estate capital improvements to promote new commercial activity, activate vacant spaces, build community wealth and support the people in our communities—entrepreneurs, community leaders, artists, and small business owners—that are the engines of vibrant commercial corridors in TDI Districts

Successful projects will:

- Prioritize and accelerate the use of ground floor commercial spaces in creative and meaningful ways.
- Align with the TDI partnership's vision for the District and relate to the goals articulated in the TDI workplan.
- Promote equitable economic development
- Deploy resources quickly to create visible change on the ground.

In FY27, grants will be awarded on a competitive basis as part of the [Community One Stop for Growth](#), a single application portal and collaborative review process of community and economic development grant programs that make targeted investments based on a Development Continuum. It is designed to allow applicants to apply for consideration of multiple sources of funding to support multiple phases and facets of a project. For more information, including key dates, frequently asked questions, and instructions on submitting an Expression of Interest and Full Application, please visit <http://www.mass.gov/onestop>.

In order to ensure project eligibility, it is strongly recommended that applicants submit an Expression of Interest (“EOI”). It is also recommended that applicants contact the Program Manager prior to submitting a Full Application to ensure project and program alignment.

OBJECTIVES

TDI provides a flexible set of resources to promote inclusive economic development and allow community partners to advance local priorities based on their unique circumstances. TDI specifically focuses on commercial districts that have experienced significant disinvestment, sometimes over decades and suffer from vacancy, blight, a struggling retail sector, a lack of neighborhood amenities, and loss of local ownership. The Program makes funding available for real estate capital improvements to promote new commercial activity, activate vacant spaces, build community wealth and support the people in our communities—entrepreneurs, community leaders, artists, and small business owners—that are the engines of vibrancy in TDI Districts

Accordingly, the TDI Equity Program aims to invest in real estate capital improvements that:

1. Substantively and significantly revitalize storefront and other public-facing commercial spaces in TDI Districts.

- Ideal projects would confer benefits to both the property and the occupants/users of the

space and help to reposition underperforming real estate by addressing chronic vacancy and blight.

2. Advance the visions of TDI Partnerships and align with priorities outlined in TDI workplans.

The activation of vacant commercial space is a core component of most TDI workplans. This program can be used to jump-start new enterprises that directly serve the immediate needs of a neighborhood, such as childcare facilities, unique markets and grocery stores, and “third places” where people can socialize between home and work. Innovative uses of commercial space with strong community partners, especially those that add to the creative and cultural assets of the neighborhood are encouraged.

Creative and cultural spaces are very broadly defined, including:

- Uses that directly serve the arts community, such as art and design centers, studios, galleries, and performance spaces;
- Collaborative spaces, such as co-work facilities, makerspaces and shared commercial kitchens;
- Group retail, such as multi-tenant markets and retail incubators;
- Culturally relevant food and drink uses, such as restaurants, cafes and bakeries.

Projects that allow TDI Partners to take creative risks, explore new ventures and forge new collaborations are highly encouraged.

3. Result in near-term activations of commercial space, including:
 - Facilitating a new tenant or use
 - A makeover of an existing business or commercial space
 - A temporary activation as part of a broader strategy to redevelop a property or district.

For the purposes of this program a near-term activation is defined as a project that will be complete or show significant progress within approximately one year of award. The program may be combined with other resources including TDI Local and Technical Assistance Programs, other MassDevelopment or state programs such as the Underutilized Property Grant Program, private debt and equity, among others. The more a project can demonstrate additional private investment, the higher it will rank in application evaluations.

This program is not intended to simply bridge a financial gap for larger, multi-use development projects. However, it can be used in complex development scenarios so long as TDI Equity funds specifically support the near-term activation of commercial space. For larger projects that anticipate long gaps between TDI Equity funding and project development, a short-term activation or placemaking component is required.

ELIGIBILITY: APPLICANTS

1. Eligible applicants shall be governmental subdivisions, special authorities, community

development corporations, community action agencies, for-profit entities, private property owners, nonprofit entrepreneur support organizations, commercial tenants, or business operators for design, construction or improvement of real estate.

2. The applicant must have site control of the property (ownership or purchase agreement); or if a business tenant, have a Letter of Interest (LOI) or lease agreement in place at the time of application. An end user, or plan to secure one, must be specified prior to executing a grant agreement, and a lease must be in place prior to any disbursements being made. For the purposes of this grant “end user” refers to the primary occupant. In uses such as shared retail, kitchen or studio spaces, or those requiring subleases and individual memberships, only the managing entity needs to be identified at the time of submission, but details on subtenants and end users, if known, will strengthen an application. All applicants must submit at least two letters of support from members of the local community, including at least one letter of support from a member of the TDI Partnership. For a list of members, please contact the Program Manager.

ELIGIBILITY: PROJECT LOCATION and PROJECT USES

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project shall be:

- Within the designated areas of Gateway Cities that are actively known as “TDI Districts” as shown on the accompanying maps – attached hereto as Exhibit A – in the following cities: Attleboro, Barnstable, Fall River, Holyoke (High Street), Lawrence, Lowell (The Acre), Lynn, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Revere, Springfield, Taunton, and Worcester; or any of the six districts selected for the 2026-2029 TDI cohort, which include Chelsea, Fitchburg, Holyoke (Puerto Rican Cultural District), Lowell (Cambodia Town), Malden, and Peabody. Within close proximity to the TDI District, as long as it can demonstrate an alignment with the local TDI partnership workplan and make a significant direct positive impact on the District itself. If a project is not within a quarter mile of the TDI District boundaries as noted on the attached map, then prior to Step One of the Application Process, the applicant shall contact MassDevelopment to determine program eligibility.

Projects are eligible for up to \$250,000 per project, with a suggested minimum project submission of \$25,000.

PROJECT USES

TDI Equity Investment funds may only be used for capital costs (fixed, one-time expenses for the purchase, construction or renovation of real property). The following is a list of common capital costs:

Property Acquisition

- The purchase of an entire commercial property or a portion of a commercial property.
- The purchase of vacant land is eligible only in cases when the project will provide near-term activation of the property

Core and Shell Costs

- Stabilization and urgent or emergency improvements required for occupancy (within limits)
- Building enclosure – roof, exterior walls, windows and doors
- Building Systems – heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), plumbing, electrical, communications, connection to energy management system (EMS)
- Fire and life safety – sprinkler, alarm systems, means of egress

Tenant fit-out costs

- Walls and trim
- Bathrooms
- Systems and services
- Lighting
- Storefront improvements
- Ceilings and floors

Specialized needs

- Permanent kitchen equipment (vent hoods, grease traps, scrubbers, plumbing)
- Permanent fixtures (built-in shelving, counters, etc)

Grant funds may not be used for site work, landscaping, administrative and operating costs (i.e. staff, insurance, permit fees, legal, rent or mortgage payments) or furniture, fixtures and equipment (FFE). Parking lots and parking infrastructure are also ineligible uses, along with paving, striping, and parking-related fixtures unless approved in advance to convert parking infrastructure into a more active use as part of the proposed project.

Projects that propose to remove, obscure or alter historic building elements or structures or otherwise run counter to best practices in storefront and commercial design may be subject to additional review and may be asked to modify a proposal or design as a condition prior to entering into a Grant Agreement with MassDevelopment. For standards and best practices please refer to the National Park Service's *Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. All projects must conform to local building codes and ordinances.

SPECIFIC PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Project Size: The most competitive applications will be for projects under 20,000 square feet in scale or would address only a portion of a larger property. Commercial projects with a heavy/visible activation component, either in stand-alone commercial properties or as part of larger development, will be prioritized.

Mixed-use Projects: For larger, mixed-use projects, especially those with a significant housing component, the TDI Equity portion of funding must specifically and convincingly address the activation of a commercial component of the property.

Projects under development or recently renovated: Mixed-use and/or commercial projects currently under development or recently completed that contain unoccupied commercial space are eligible uses. As above, limiting an application to only the commercial space being activated is advised. However, no project will be funded that seeks to develop commercial space on a speculative basis unless it is part of a larger district redevelopment strategy in coordination with the municipality and/or other public or quasi-public entity. Otherwise, a feasible and actual use must be a component of the project.

New construction: New construction on vacant land or additions to existing structures that result in new commercial space are eligible uses. In such cases development timelines and construction costs may exceed the scope of this program. However, if a project meets the program objectives and evaluation criteria, applicants should submit an expression of interest for preliminary review.

Property stabilization: Projects that address urgent or emergency needs (e.g., structural deficiencies, roof repair and replacement, window replacement, remediation) are eligible, but must be combined with a plan to occupy and activate commercial space(s). Priority will be given to projects that would not otherwise advance without TDI Equity Investment funding.

Activation Use Type: Successful applications will demonstrate an active end use of the property under consideration. An “active use,” in this context is broadly defined as a use that provides goods, services, exhibits, performances or events to the general public for commercial, educational, or cultural purposes; maintains regular operating hours; is visible from the sidewalk and street; and incorporates established best practices of storefront design. The addition of uses that are currently lacking in a district and complimentary to the pre-existing commercial mix will be given priority. Ineligible use types include general office space, social services, retail liquor sales, adult entertainment, cannabis stores, gun stores.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

MassDevelopment will consider the following criteria when reviewing TDI Equity Investment program applications. A project need not meet every criterion, but it is anticipated that applicants will be able to make a compelling case with respect to at least three of the stated criteria below, including at least one PUBLIC PURPOSE criterion listed below.

1. **ABILITY TO EXECUTE:** Judging from the experience of the project team and the project proposal submitted, the project is likely to succeed as presented in the project details, time frame, and budget provided.
2. **PUBLIC PURPOSE:** The project directly responds to challenges in the TDI District regarding community equity, wealth building, and social inclusion.
3. **PUBLIC PURPOSE:** The proposed project would help the TDI Partnership for the relevant district accomplish a goal (or goals) set forth in its workplan.
4. **PUBLIC PURPOSE:** The proposed project or site is itself prioritized in previous planning or technical assistance for the District, especially with respect to work funded through TDI Technical Assistance.
5. **PUBLIC PURPOSE:** The proposed project will demonstrably lead to permanent, living wage job creation for residents of the district and the surrounding neighborhoods and/or

provide contracting or leasing opportunities to local businesses owned by underrepresented groups.

6. LOCAL IMPACT: The proposed project creatively re-uses historical or legacy infrastructure in forward-looking ways for which the proponent can demonstrate resonance with the current community.
7. LOCAL IMPACT: The proposed project would provide space for new, activating uses within a TDI District—for example retail space for local entrepreneurs, restaurants/cafes, multi-family housing, and/or creative industries.
8. LOCAL IMPACT: The proposed project would attract new users into the TDI District and foster the interaction between people new to the district and long-time residents, workers, and business owners from the broader community.
9. LOCAL IMPACT: The proposed project is likely to catalyze additional investment in the district or otherwise stimulate market demand for additional real estate or small business development.
10. LOCAL IMPACT: Two or more members of the TDI Partnership for the relevant TDI District have indicated their support for the proposed project.

MassDevelopment will also weigh the level of co-investment from project partners and local communities to assess potential for success and local commitment. Projects that can demonstrate greater local commitment and private investment will score higher in the review process.

AWARD DECISIONS

Applicants that are approved for funding will receive a commitment letter outlining the grant amount and any conditions of the award. All awards are subject to annual state budget appropriation and contingent upon full execution of a contract (Grant Agreement). Applicants that are not recommended for funding during the round will also be notified in writing, and invited to request feedback about their proposal, if interested.

ADDITIONAL TERMS

- MassDevelopment reserves the right to use TDI Equity to pursue projects that it initiates through the TDI Program, as a separate process from this grant funding. However, in all cases, projects must meet the eligibility criteria set forth in this RFP.
- The amount, timing and duration of any award will be project specific. MassDevelopment reserves the right to impose additional terms and conditions for each award, and to offer an award in an amount lower than that requested.
- MassDevelopment is not liable for any costs incurred by an applicant in the preparation and production of a response or for any work performed prior to contract execution.
- MassDevelopment reserves the right to reject all proposals, waive any informalities, minor deviations, insignificant mistakes, and matters of form rather than substance and to seek clarification of the responses, which can be waived or corrected without prejudice to other applicants, potential applicants, or MassDevelopment.
- Recipients may be required to host project site visits by MassDevelopment staff and participate in interviews by MassDevelopment or its designees for purposes of evaluation

and monitoring.

- Provision of funding does not obligate MassDevelopment to provide additional funding of any type to the applicant for a proposed project.
- MassDevelopment encourages applicants from all parts of the community in order to encourage diversity in the Commonwealth. Applicants may not discriminate in their projects or staffing and board memberships on the basis of race, gender, religion, creed, color, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or age.
- Recipients will be required to credit MassDevelopment in print, audio, video, internet, and other publicity materials that reference the Program or its funding.

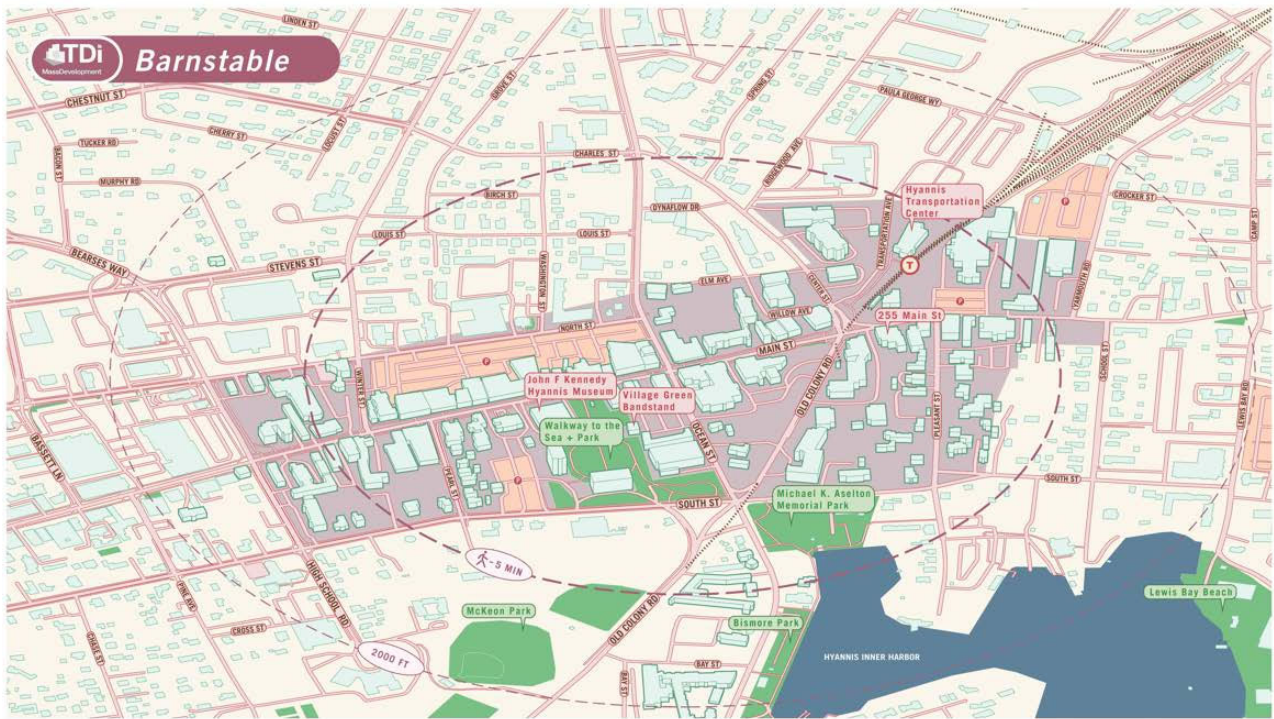
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- For information on the One Stop, including key dates, frequently asked questions, and instructions on submitting an Expression of Interest and Full Application, please visit www.mass.gov/onestop.
- All applications must be submitted electronically. The online application portal, IGX, can be accessed at <https://eohed.intelligrants.com>. An online webinar outlining the use of the system will be available on the site. The application form template and link to the portal will also be available on the One Stop webpage.
- Eligible applicants may submit funding requests for more than one Building project in the same round. However, a separate application is required for each project. Each proposal will be evaluated independently against the criteria and will be competing directly with all other proposals.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to be aware of all requirements and deadlines, and to ensure that their application is complete and submitted on time. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and kept on file as public record. Late submissions will not be considered.
- MassDevelopment reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary in order to complete the application review. MassDevelopment also reserves the right to recommend partial grant awards, as deemed appropriate.

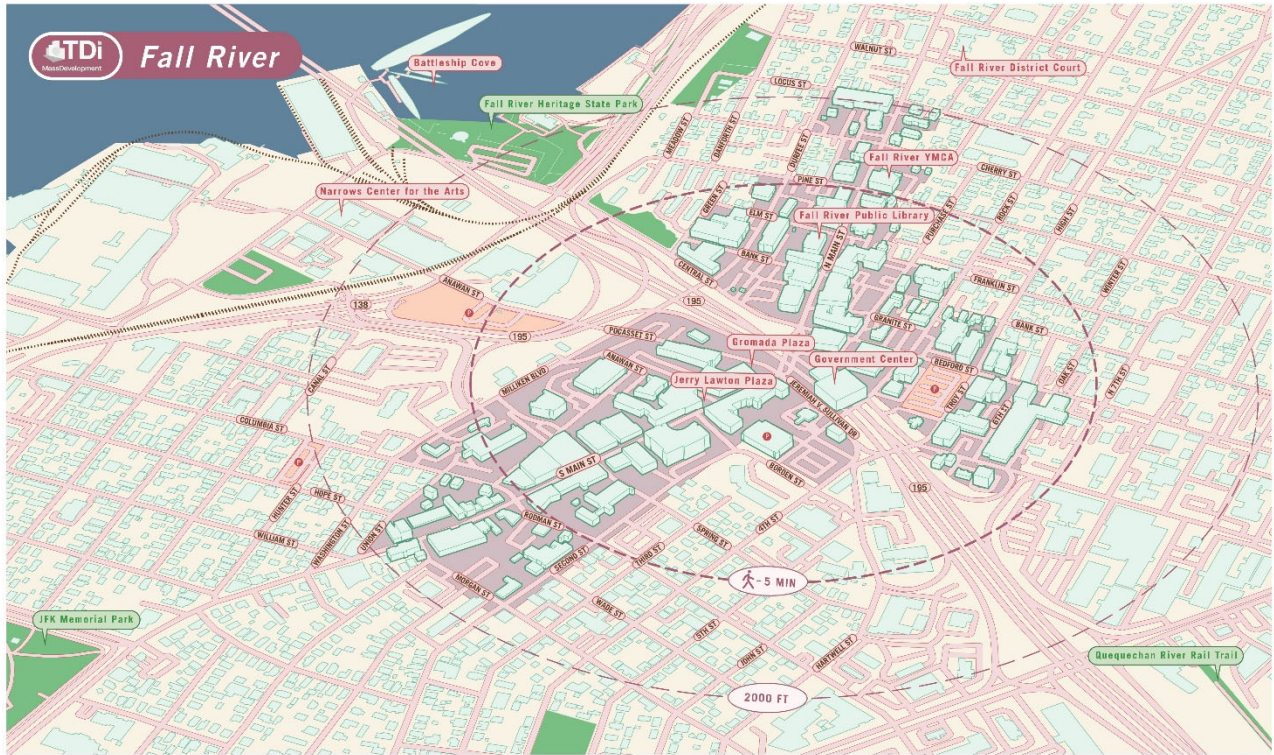
Exhibit A (TDI District Maps)



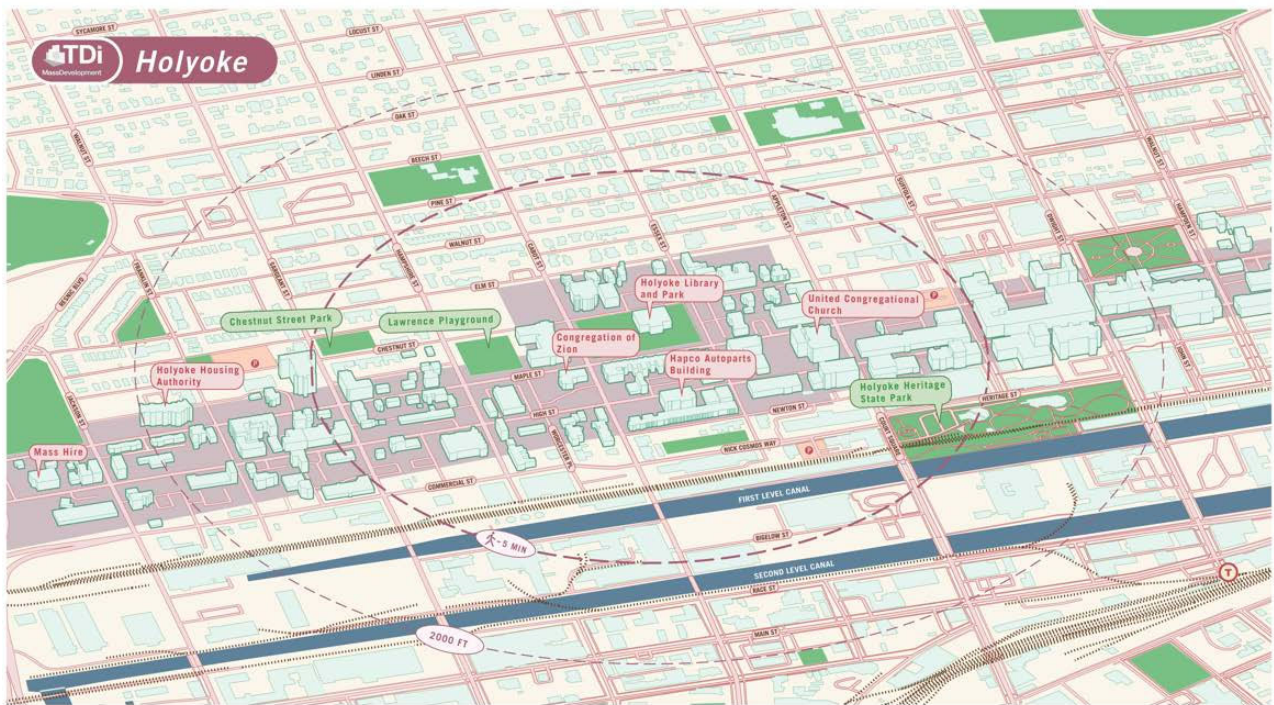
District Overview Map
Attleboro, MA



District Overview Map
Barnstable, MA

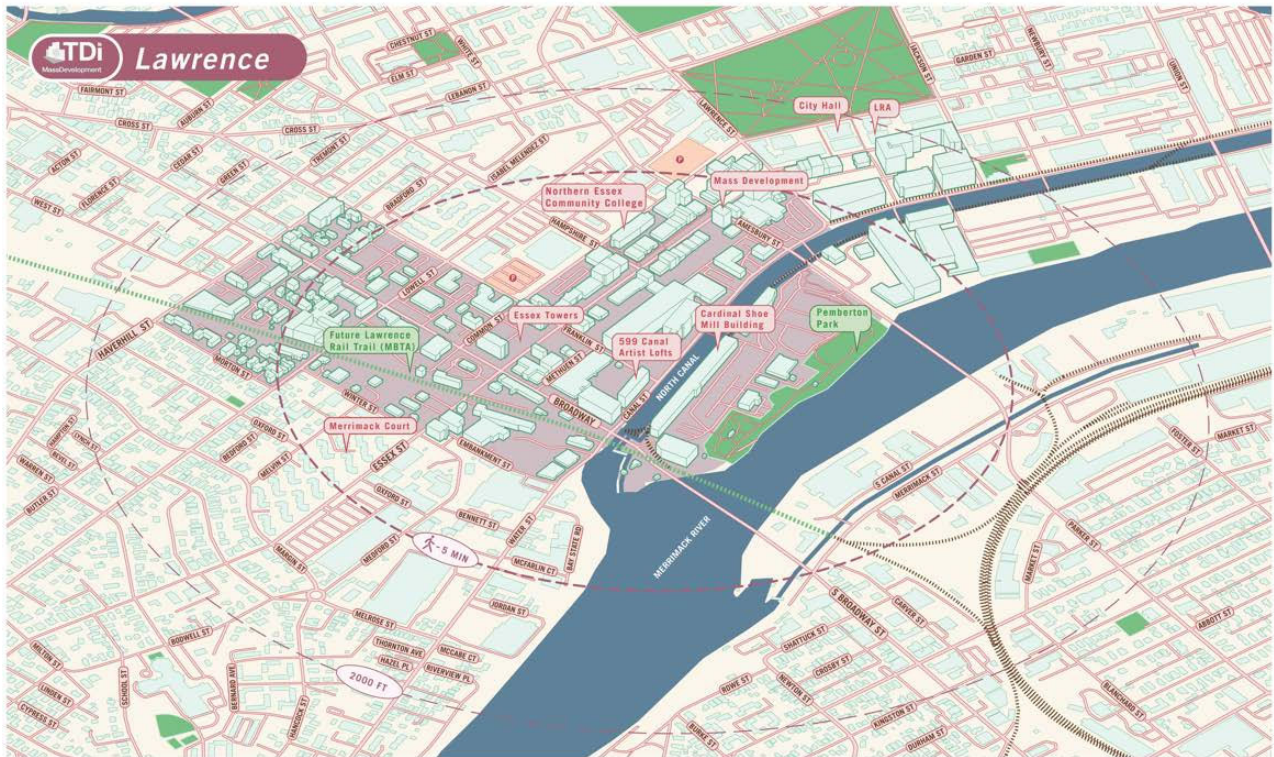


TDi Mapping
Fall River, MA



District Overview Map
Holyoke, MA



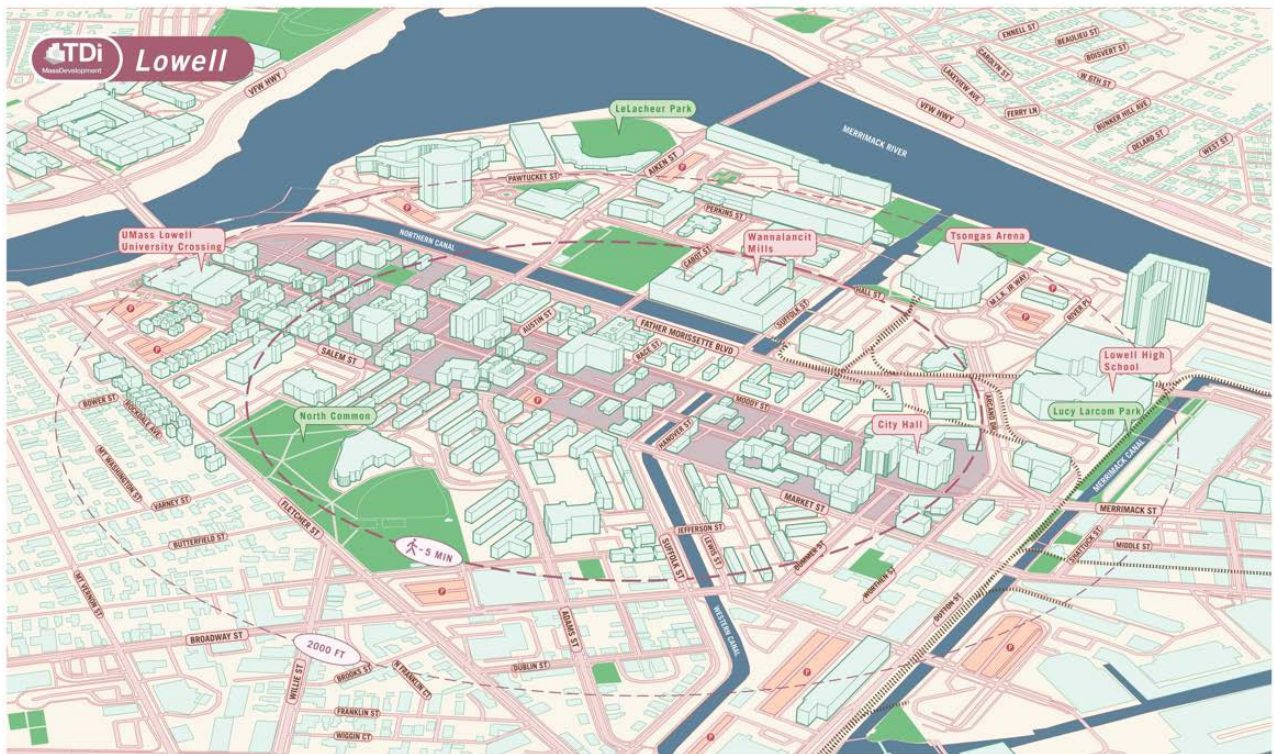


District Overview Map
Lawrence, MA

200 FT 500 FT 750 FT 1000 FT 2000 FT 2009 FT

- Parking Lot
- MBTA Station
- Train Tracks
- Focus Area

TDI STUDIO LUZ
MassDevelopment

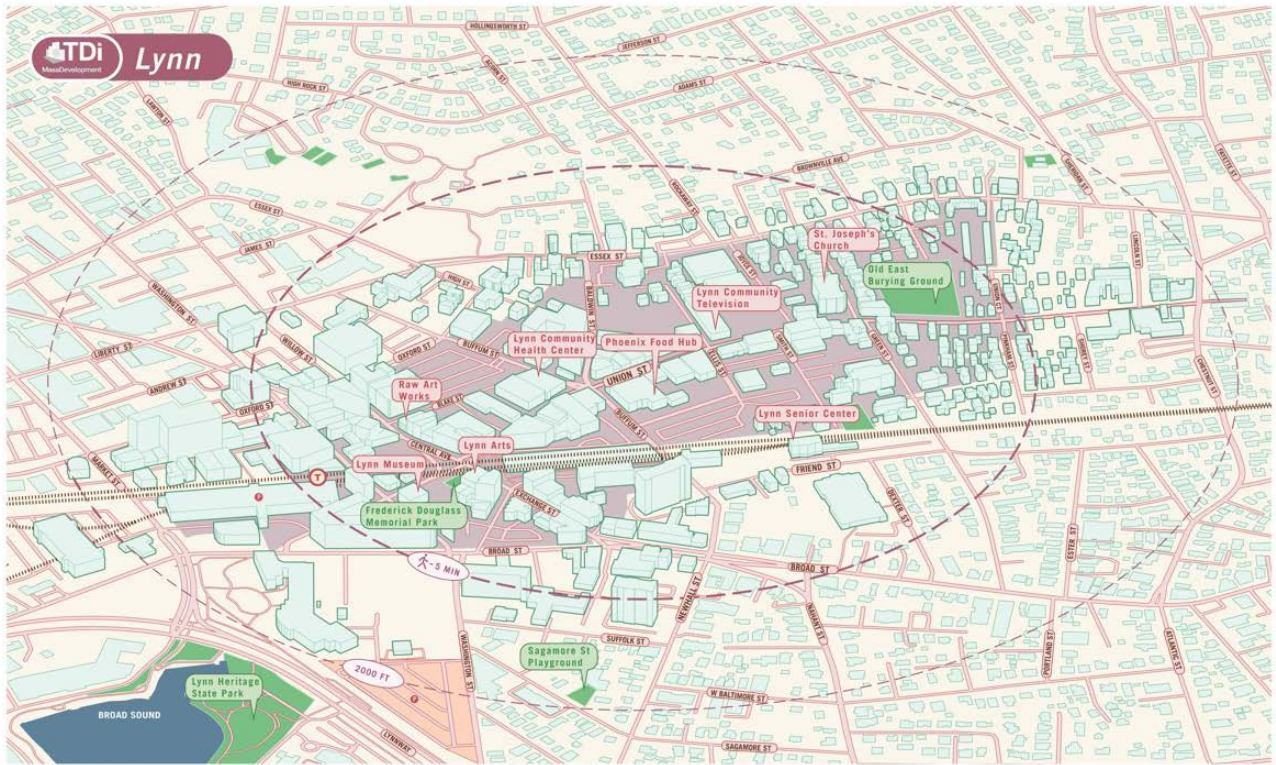


District Overview Map
Lowell, MA

200 FT 500 FT 750 FT 1000 FT 2000 FT 2009 FT

- Parking Lot
- MBTA Station
- Train Tracks
- Focus Area

TDI STUDIO LUZ
MassDevelopment

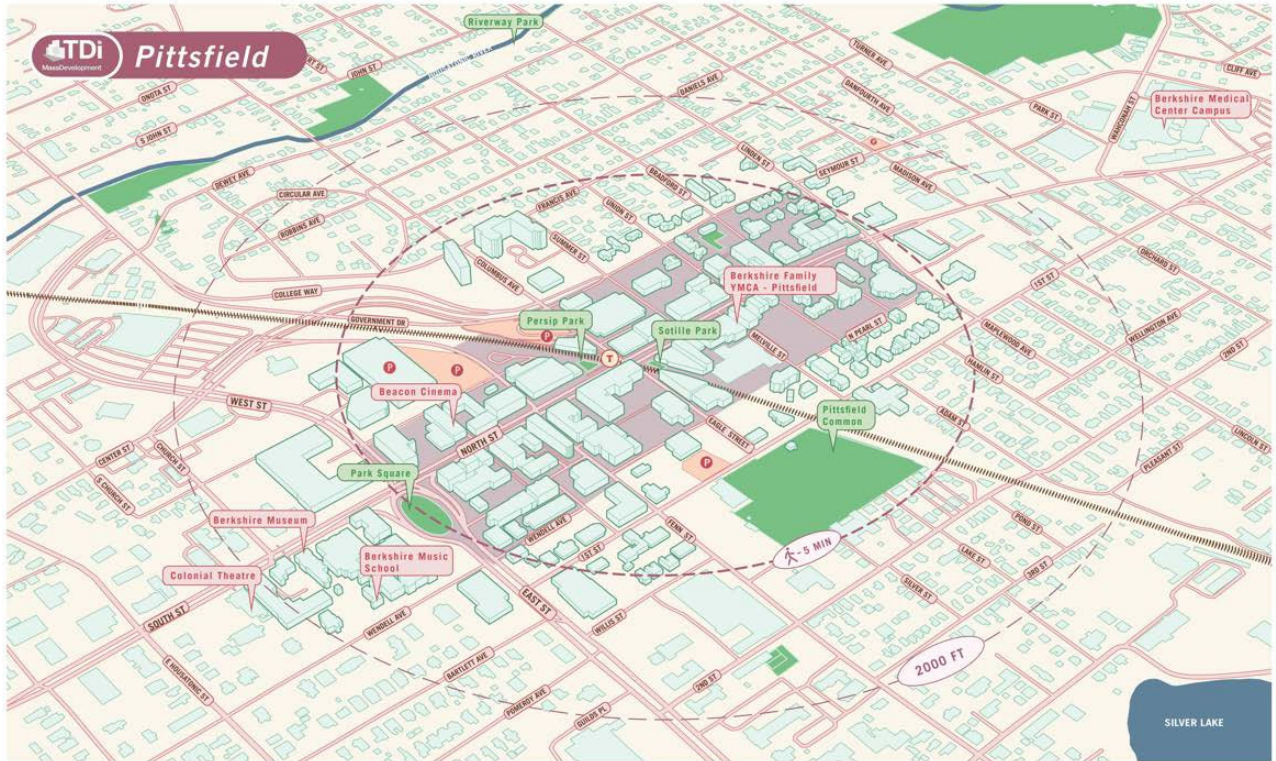


District Overview Map
Lynn, MA



District Overview Map
New Bedford, MA



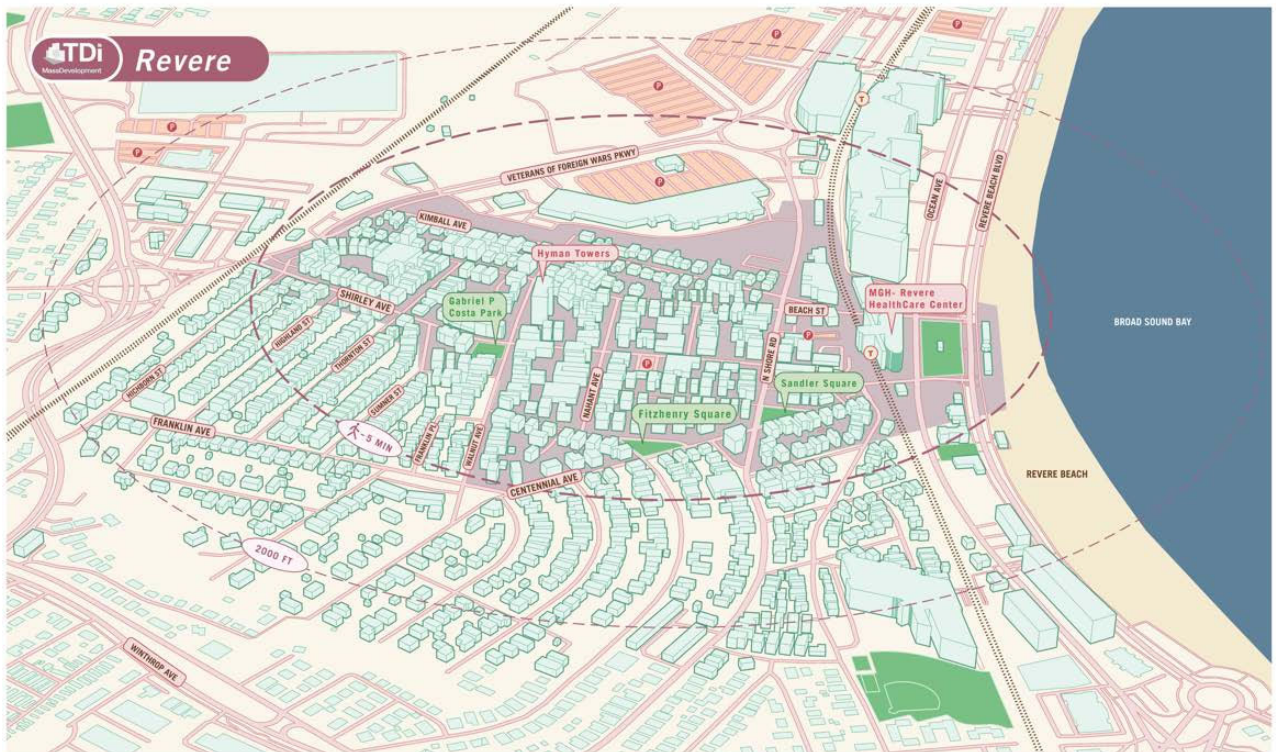


District Overview Map
Pittsfield, MA

200 ft 500 ft 750 ft 1000 ft 2000 ft

- Parking Lot
- MBTA Station
- Train Tracks
- Focus Area

TDI **STU** **DIO** **LUZ**
MassDevelopment

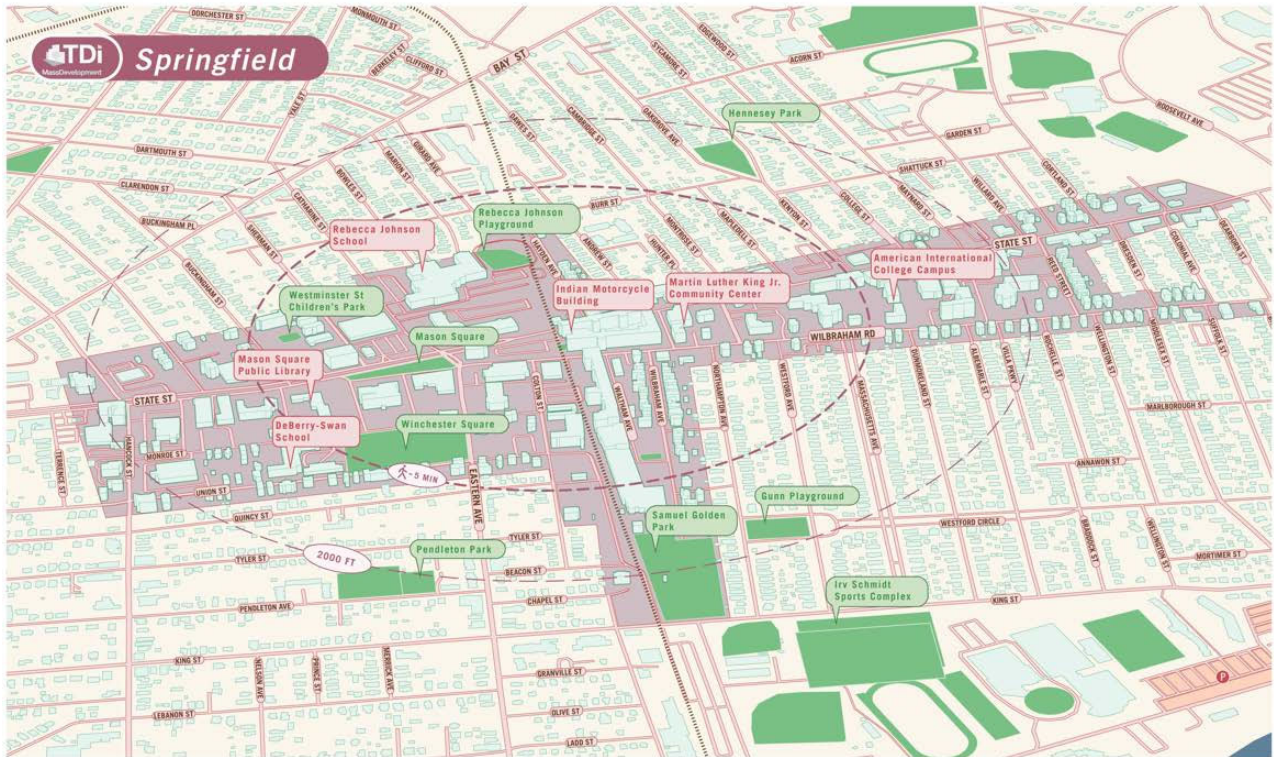


District Overview Map
Revere, MA

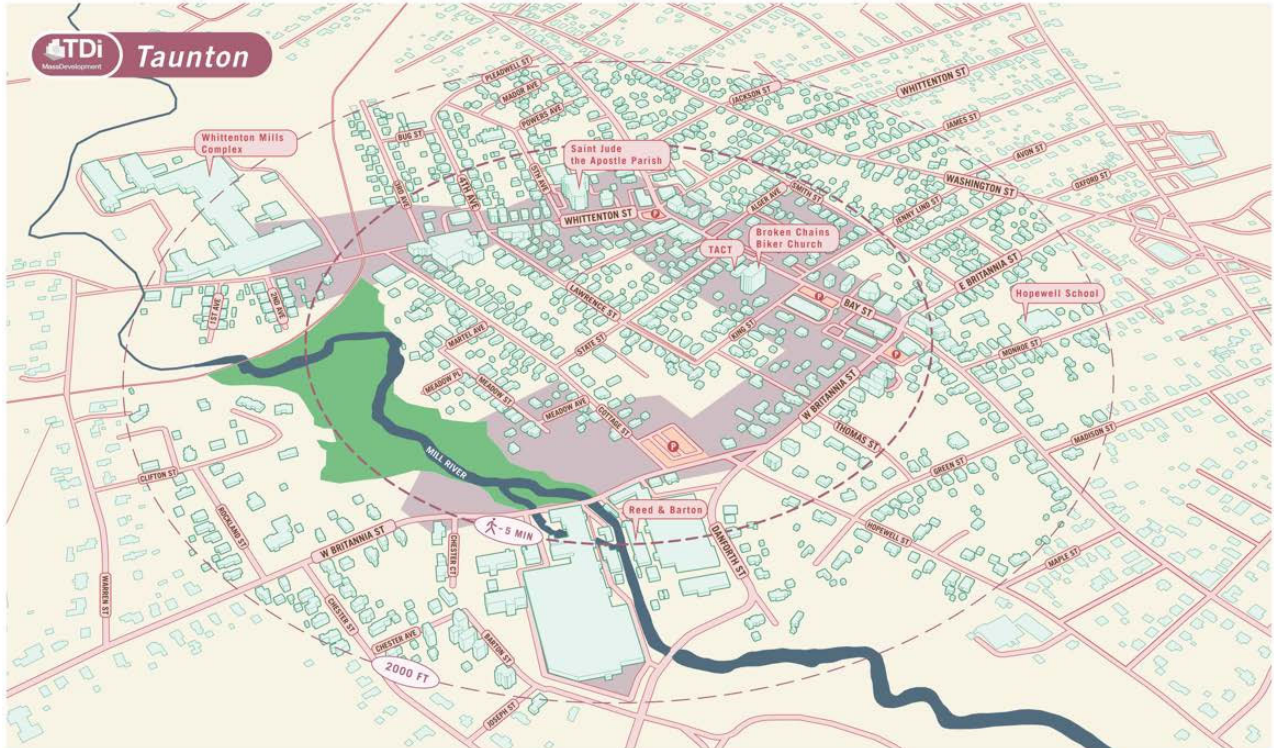
250 ft 500 ft 750 ft 1000 ft 2000 ft

- Parking Lot
- MBTA Station
- Train Tracks
- Focus Area

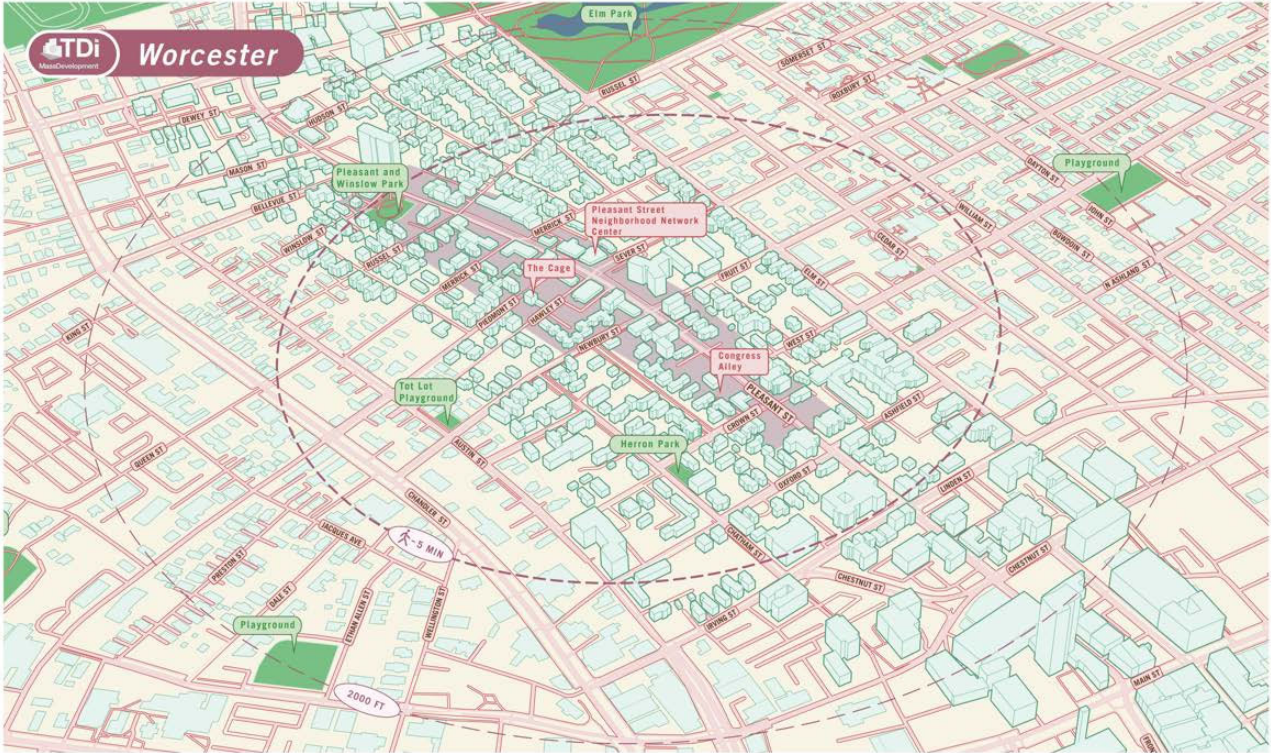
TDI **STU** **DIO** **LUZ**
MassDevelopment



District Overview Map
Springfield, MA



District Overview Map
Taunton, MA



District Overview Map
Worcester, MA

250 ft
500 ft
750 ft
1000 ft
2000 ft

● Parking Lot
● MBTA Station
● Train Tracks
■ Focus Area

TDI STUDIO LUZ
 MassDevelopment ASSOCIATES