

Orleans Zoning Modernization

Planning Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

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 - a. Cottage Court Development
 - b. Affordable/Attainable Housing Requirements
-

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- 4. Draft Zoning Updates**
 - a. Draft Zoning Approach
 - b. Draft Zoning Test-fits

- 5. Discussion/Q+A**

Draft Zoning Map

Proposed Zones

We propose three zoning districts for Downtown Orleans which allow varying scales of development:

Zone 1: Village Center

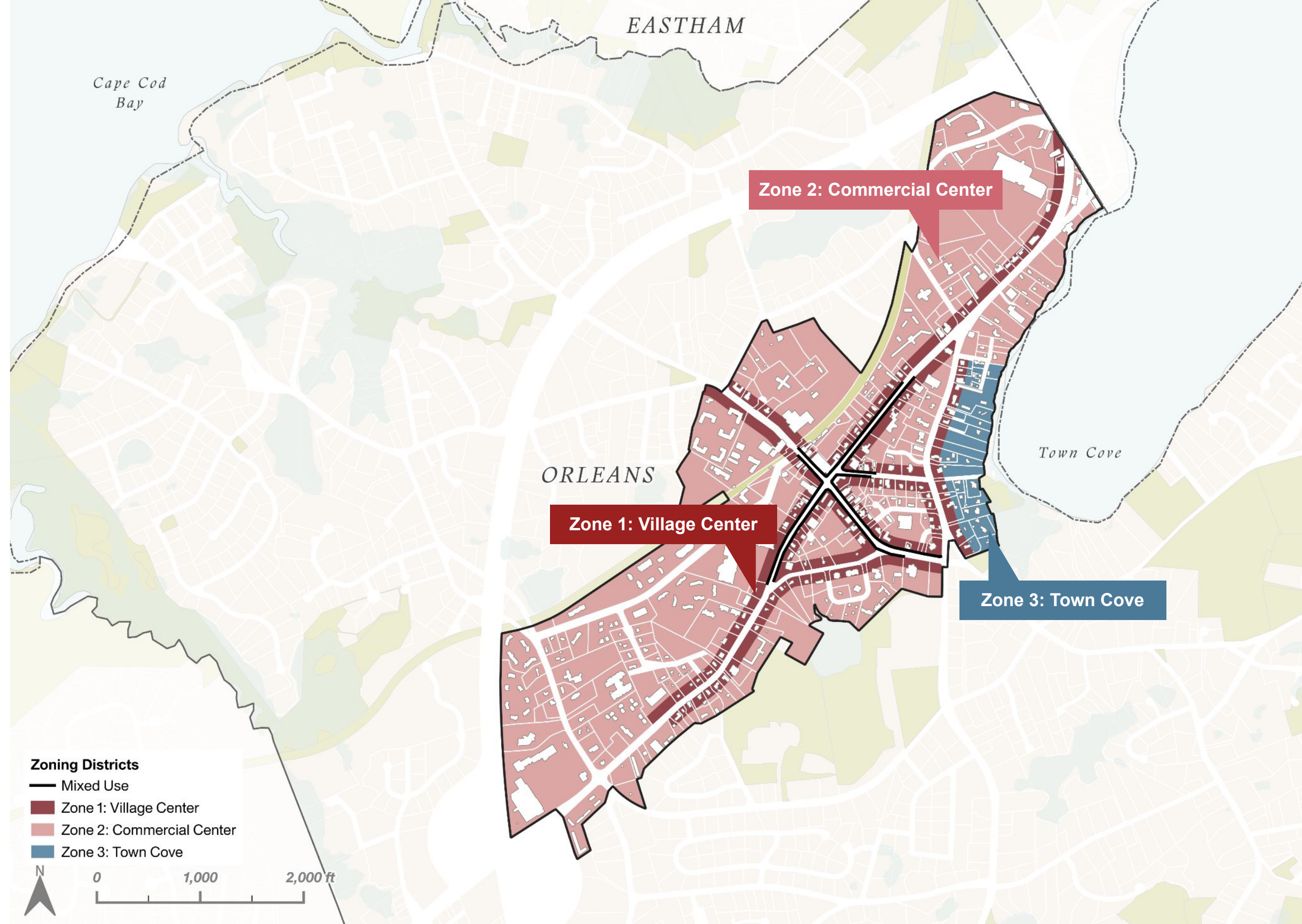
Follows the 100' buffer zone along key streets in Downtown Orleans and promotes village-scale development and mixed uses.

Zone 2: Commercial Center

Allows larger development to occur in less sensitive contexts outside of Orleans' main thoroughfares.

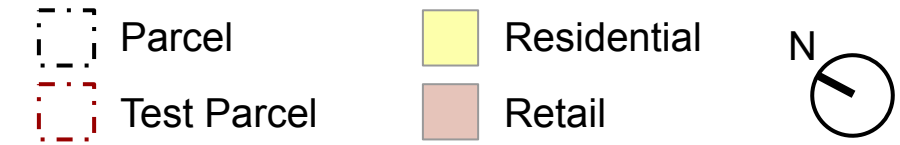
Zone 3: Town Cove

Encourages smaller residential development.

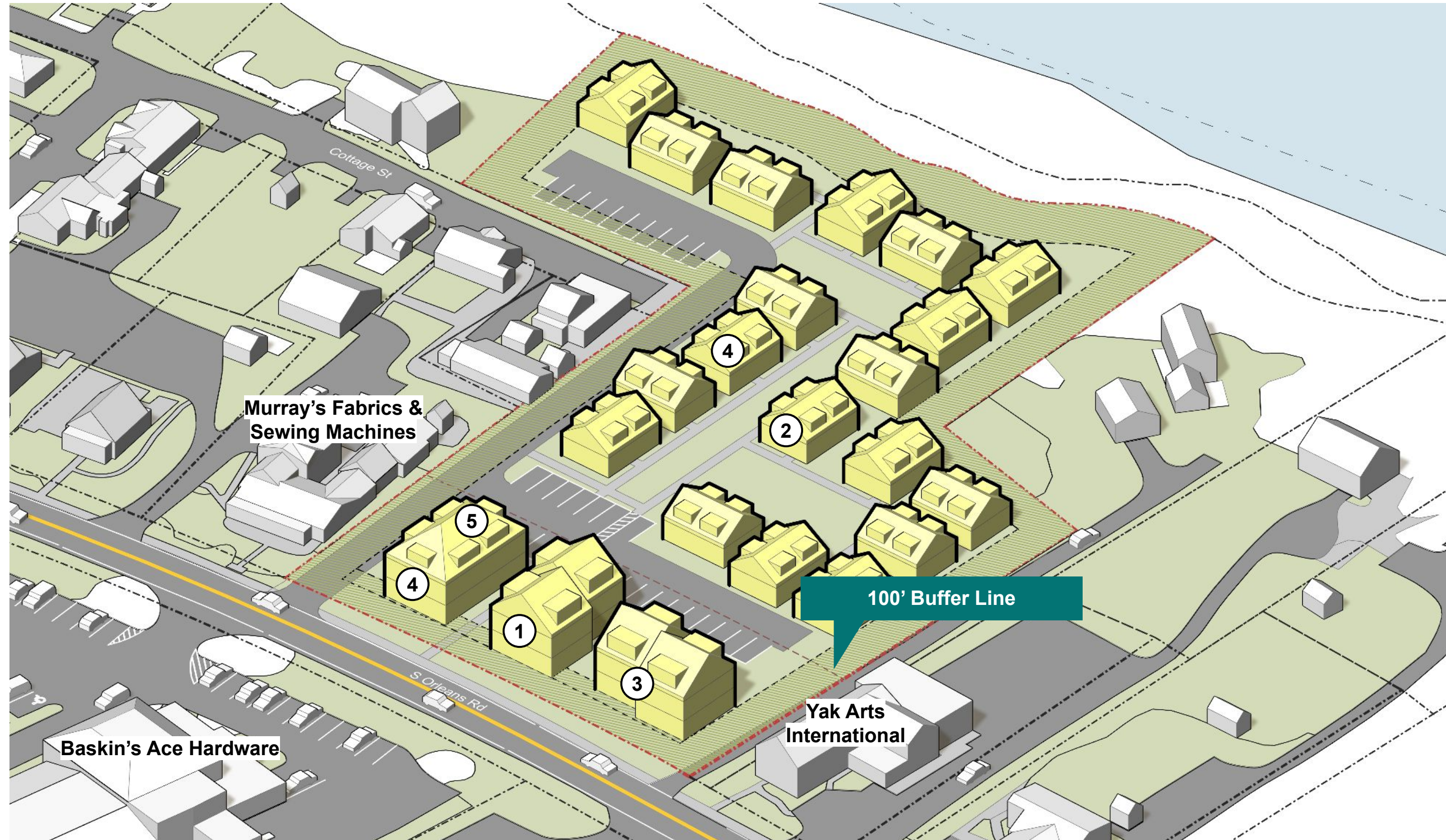


Cove Motel

Draft Zoning Test-fit - Previous Version

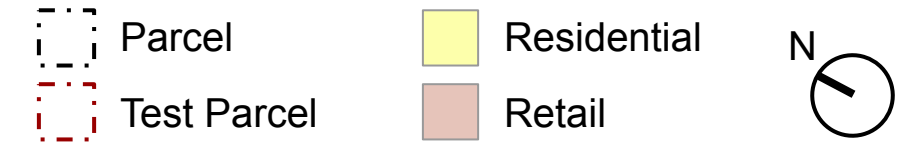


1. **Previous concept of 100' buffer zone:** Primary building has a **max footprint of 2,000 SF**; secondary buildings have **max footprint of 1,000 SF**
2. **Cottage Court Footprints:** Buildings behind the 100' Buffer Zone may be a **maximum of 1,000 SF**
3. **Facade Articulation:** Facing the front lot line may be max 35' before a recess or offset; other facades may be max 60'
4. **Building Height:** Buildings within the buffer zone may be **up to 2.5 stories**, buildings behind the buffer zone may be up to 1.5 stories
5. **Roof Form:** Only pitched roofs allowed in buffer zone

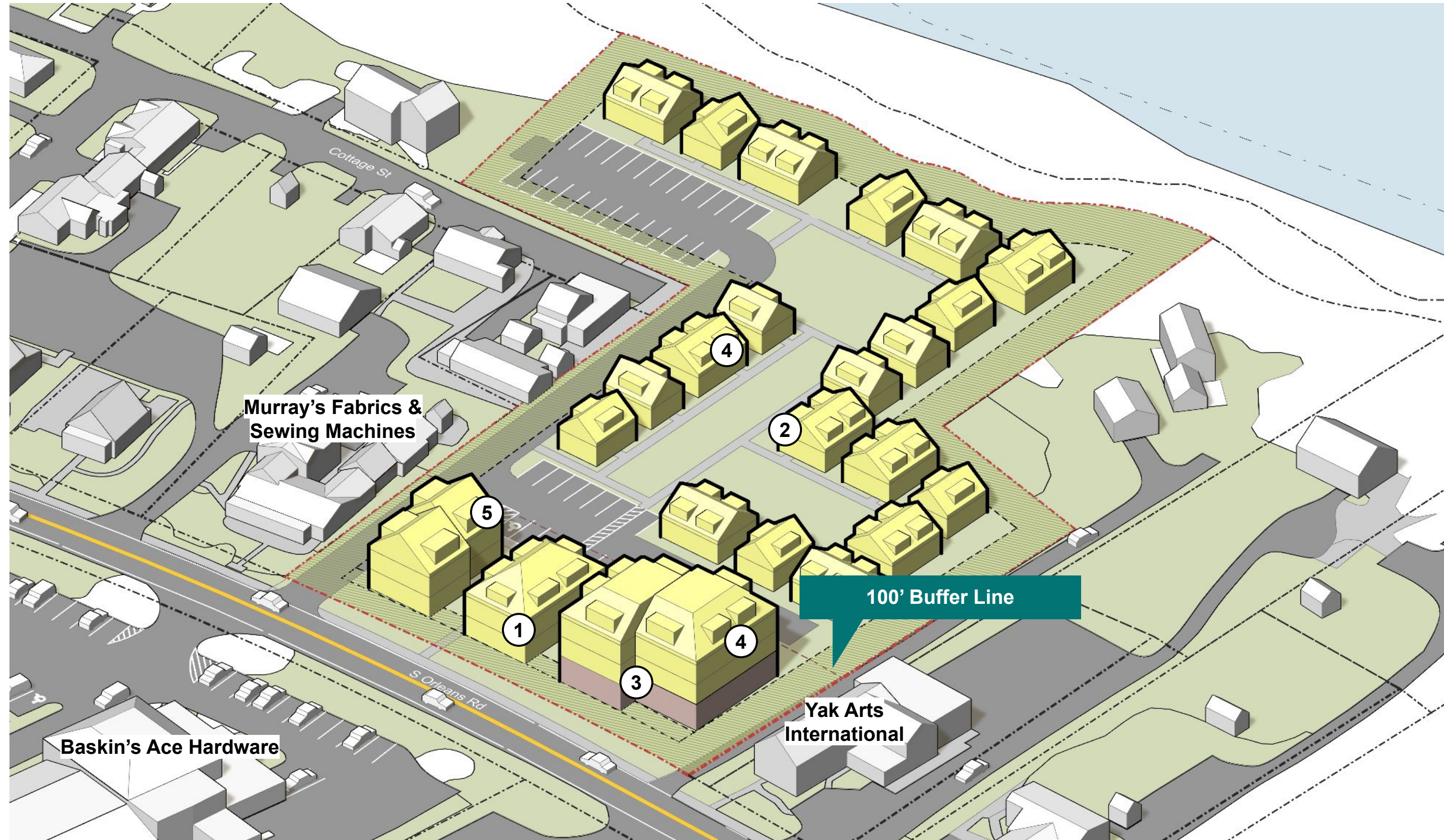


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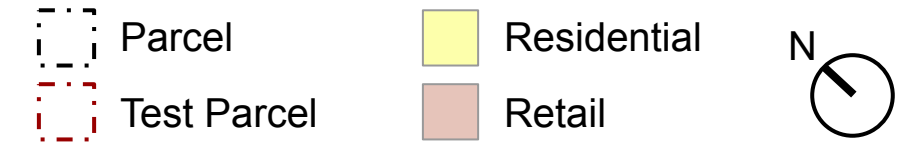


- 1. Alignment with Village Center 100' buffer zone:**
Primary building has a **max footprint of 4,000 SF**; secondary buildings have **max footprint of 2,000 SF**
- 2. Cottage Court Footprints:**
Buildings behind the 100' Buffer Zone must be a **maximum of 50% 900 SF and 50% 600 SF**
- 3. Facade Articulation:** Facing the front lot line may be max 35' before a recess or offset; other facades may be max 60'
- 4. Building Height:** Buildings within the buffer zone may be **up to 3.5 stories**, buildings behind the buffer zone may be up to 1.5 stories
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Post Office Square

Draft Zoning Test-fit: Cottage Court Example



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Primary building has a **max footprint of 4,000 SF**; secondary buildings have **max footprint of 2,000 SF**
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Community Meeting Intro

Recap of Goals
Project Timeline

Project Goals

1. Build the foundation of a **vibrant, walkable place** poised to **attract residents, visitors, and a beneficial mix of businesses** that is identified as the commercial, cultural, and economic center of the Lower Cape.

2. Encourage mixed-use and multi-family reuse, missing-middle infill, and redevelopment that will **reinforce the village's character, pedestrian orientation, and seaside charm.**

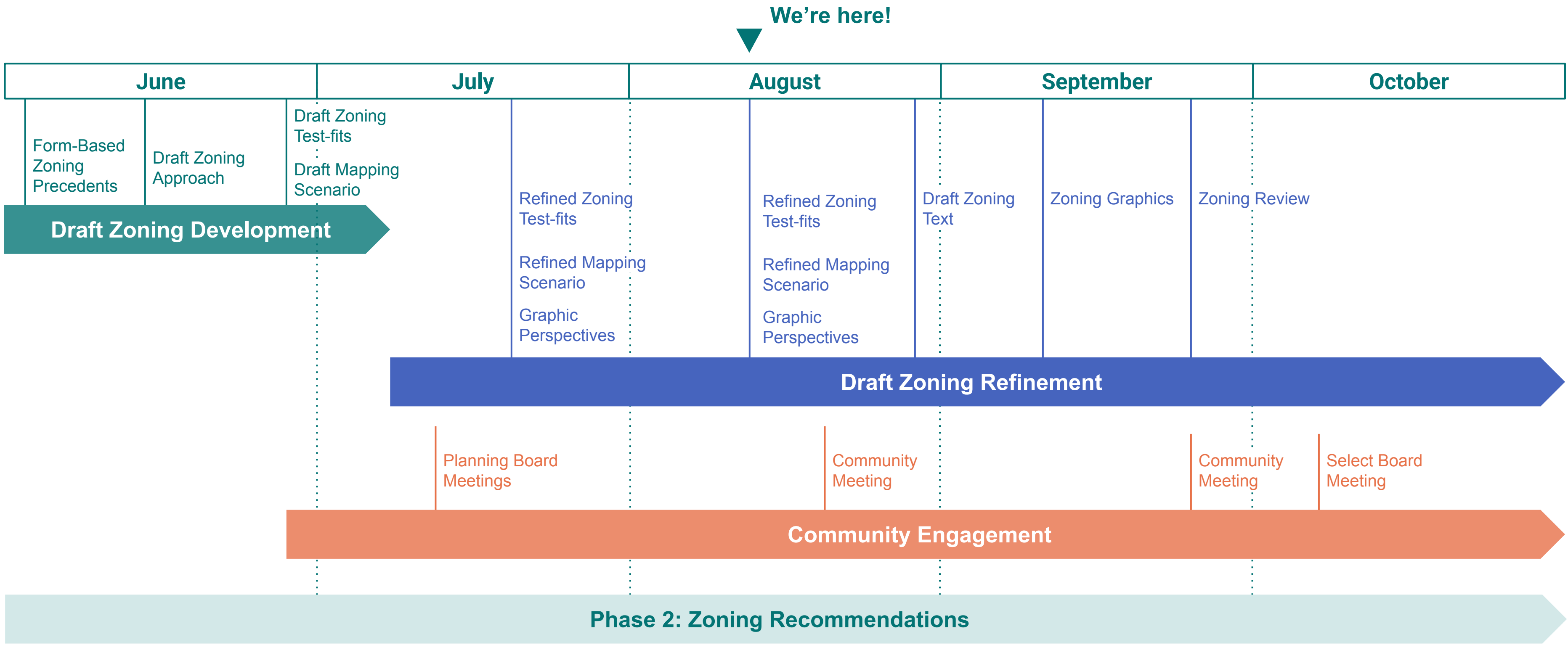
3. Contribute to the future of Orleans Village Center as a diverse and equitable year-round community by **encouraging a variety of types of attainable housing and a strong mix of local businesses,** coupled with safe and welcoming transportation options and public spaces.

4. Prioritize the **immediate and long-term environmental health and resilience** of the area by incorporating climate-informed regulations and incentives.

5. **Promote visual cohesion** up and down the corridor and within the distinct districts, and **physical connectivity** throughout the district, as well as with other nearby commercial areas and destinations.

6. Create clear regulatory standards that **produce predictable outcomes and a streamlined development review process.**

Orleans Zoning Modernization Timeline



Study Area



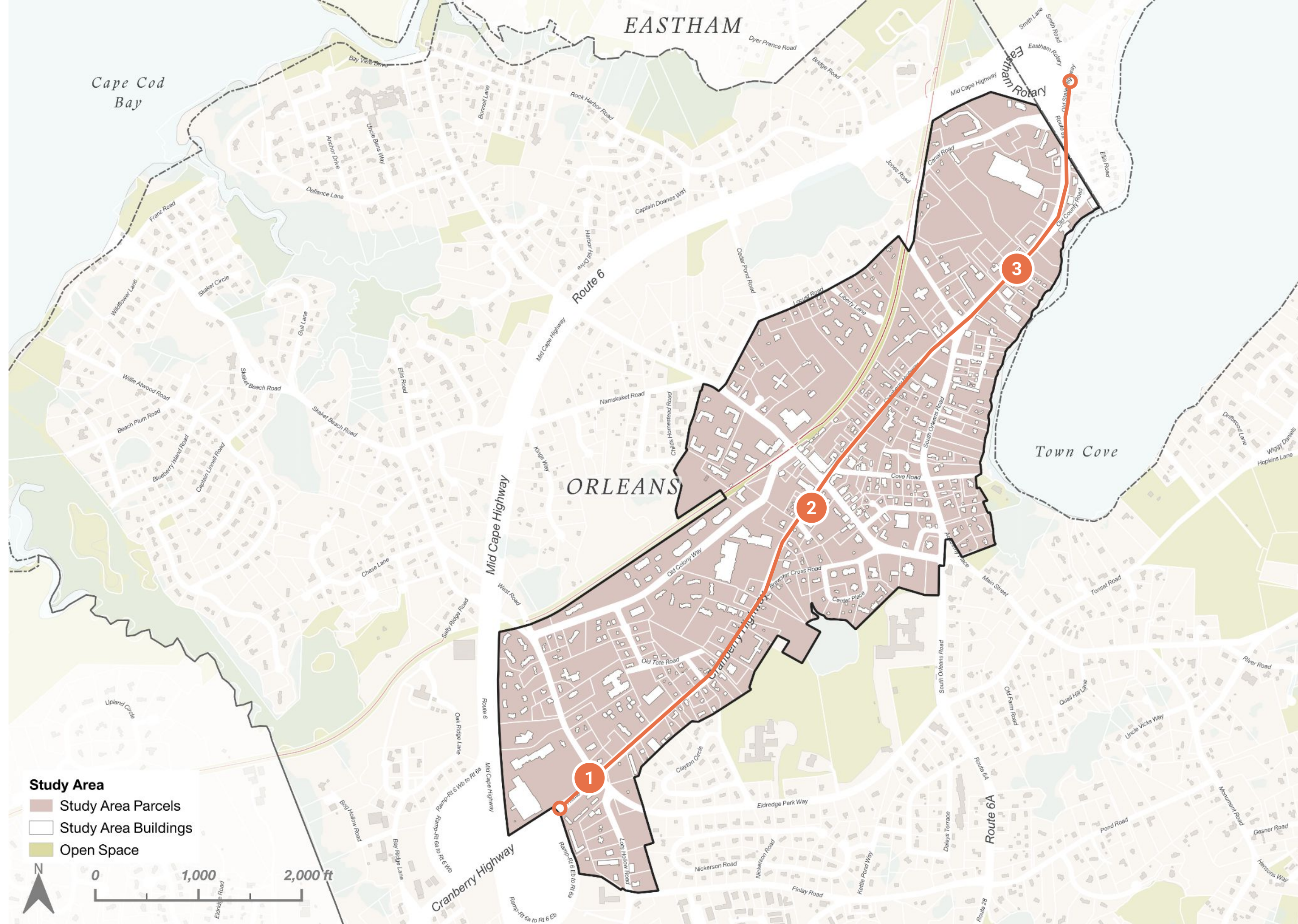
1. Shaws Commercial Development



2. Orleans Village Center



3. North Route 6A General Business District



Engagement Feedback

Pol.is Survey Results
Stakeholder Meetings
Community Meeting

Polis Survey

Snapshot of Results

188

people voted
(based on logins or individual devices)

172

people grouped
(49 in Group A, 123 in Group B)

10,813

votes were cast

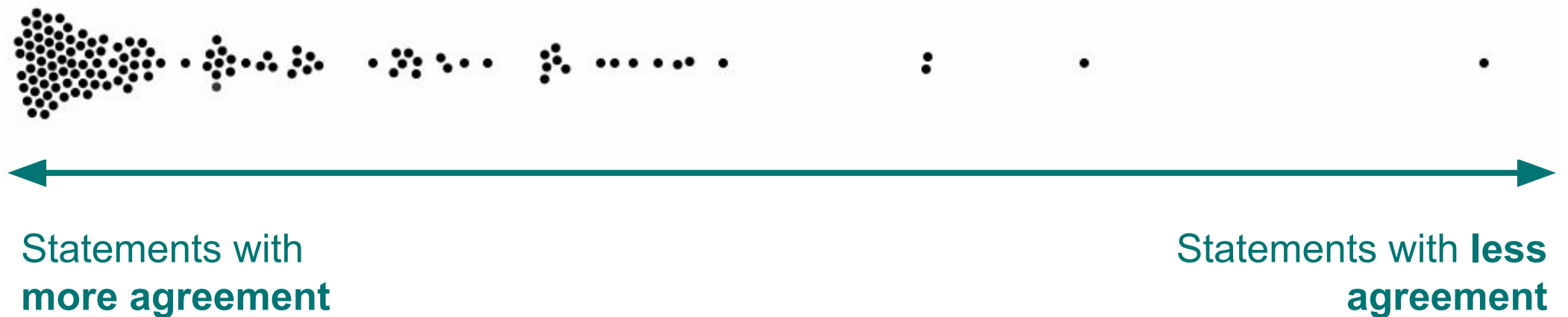
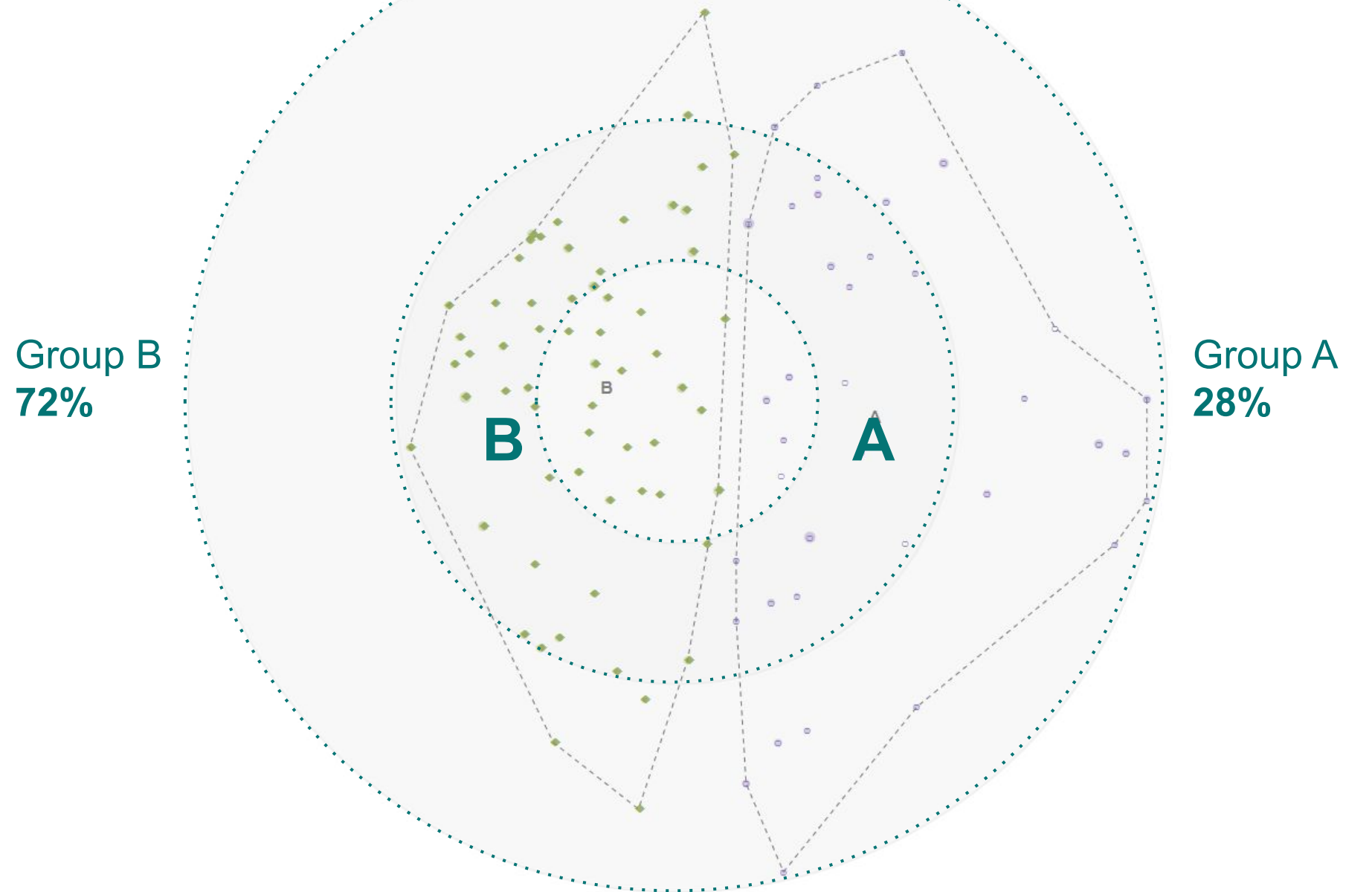
209

statements were submitted

57.52

votes per voter on average

Opinion Groups Diagram



Polis Survey

Major Themes

Environment

- Prioritize low-impact and sustainable development practices
- Add more trees and greenery to make Downtown more welcoming
- Maintain and improve the quality of public spaces
- Increase access to Town Cove and other natural assets

Transportation

- Add sidewalks for easy walkability in the Downtown area
- New construction should provide parking in the rear rather than the front of the property so as not to dominate the streetscape
- Parking is abundant/easy to find Downtown

Economic Development

- Diversify businesses (specialty retail, restaurants, gathering spaces) to contribute to vibrancy and unique Orleans identity
- Create policies that support small, new businesses
- Ensure that commercial business owners can maintain attractive property sites

Arts & Culture

- Create more spaces for outdoor dining, socializing, and lingering
- Add more activities for year round residents
- Foster a vibrant nightlife in Downtown Orleans to attract tourists and residents

Housing

- Increase the density and diversity of residential and mixed-use development (housing above first floor retail)
- Incentivize development of smaller market rate homes
- Provide more options for family and affordable housing for the workforce

Other

- Revitalize empty, dilapidated storefronts along 6A
- Encourage adaptive reuse
- Bolster tourist economy to sustain current businesses and attract more

Stakeholder Meetings

What we heard

Economic Development

- Explore incentives for businesses to relocate to or build in the Downtown
- Expand allowable uses, and define the uses in more general categories
- Consider making auto-oriented uses allowable by special permit only. The Downtown should be oriented toward more pedestrian-friendly uses
- Explore central parking solution for Downtown

Housing

- Measuring residential density by units/acre constricts residential development
- Allow denser housing along Route 6A and encourage mixed-use in the center of the study area
- Densify housing in nodes along 6A, Main Street, Cove Road, and Old Colony Way in order to create a more walkable Downtown.

Zoning

- Lack of clear guidelines on how to convert commercial buildings to residential use
- Architectural review and 40B slow down the permitting process
- Reduce off-street parking req's for businesses. Prohibit parking along street-facing frontage.
- Decrease front setbacks near the street to create a more active street wall

Community Meeting Recap

What we heard

Downtown Orleans Zoning Map Exercise

Orleans Zoning Modernization Community Meeting

Question 1:
Where should mixed-use be prioritized in Downtown Orleans?
Draw a line on the map along portions of streets where walkable retail should go. Write additional comments below.

- Include more ped crossings
- Make large lots mixed use
- Too much parking is ugly

Question 2:
Where should higher density (3 stories and up) residential development be prioritized in Downtown Orleans?
Draw a boundary on the map around the zones where higher density residential development should go. Write additional comments below.

- Town Cove: Include requirement for waterfront access
- Have 3 stories only in the VC district
- Flat roof development is undesirable
- Emphasize pedestrian experience by designing development as 4-sided (vs front-sided)

Considerations for New Zoning

Orleans Zoning Modernization Community Meeting

Question 1:
What mix of uses would you like to see in Downtown Orleans (e.g. day-to-day services, retail shops, restaurants, office space, housing)?

- Allow flexibility in parking ratios (off-site)
- Restaurant, housing, retail, office space, movie theater
- Fewer auto uses; locate auto uses away from Downtown
- Outdoor seating; variety of open spaces (pocket parks)

Question 2:
What form-based issues do you think the new zoning should prioritize to encourage contextual and viable development (e.g. building height, building footprint, density, facade articulation, roof form, parking standards, public realm, etc.)?

- Design for gathering spaces in front of buildings; wider sidewalks
- Facade articulation
- Place parking in the rear
- Architectural review for aesthetics-define contemporary Orleans character for new development

- Good fit for Orleans
- No preference
- Bad fit for Orleans

Draft Zoning

Draft Zoning Approach
Draft Zoning Test-fits

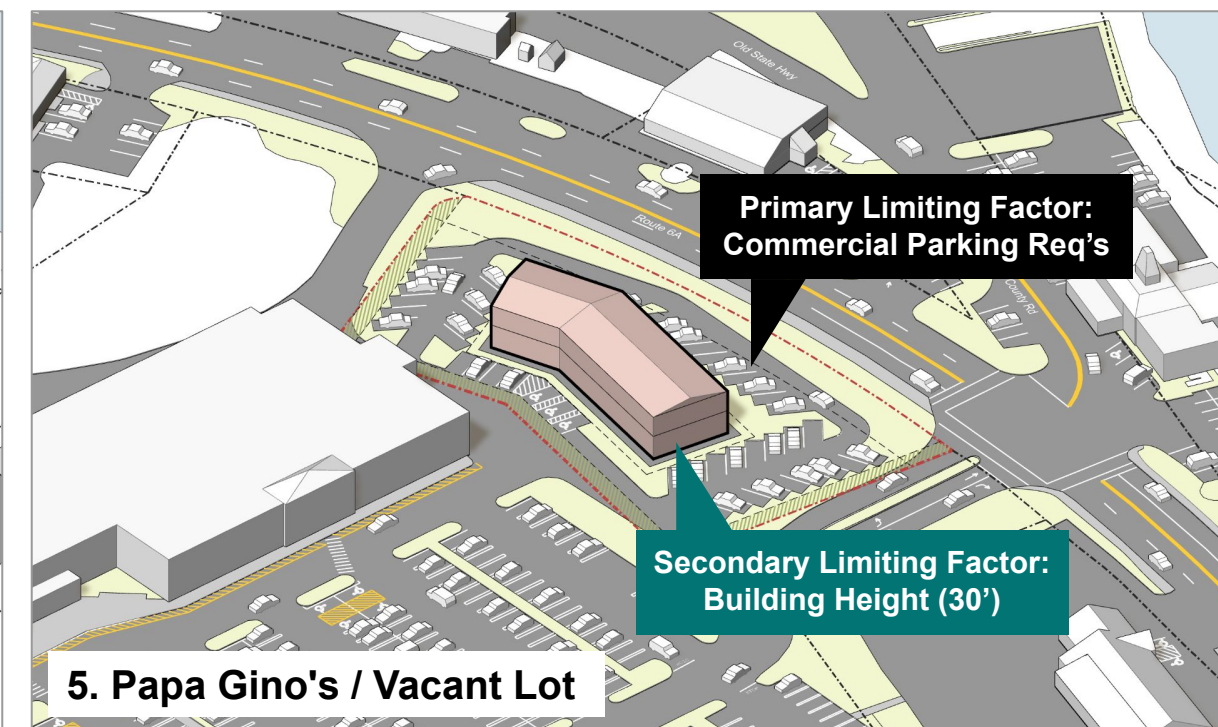
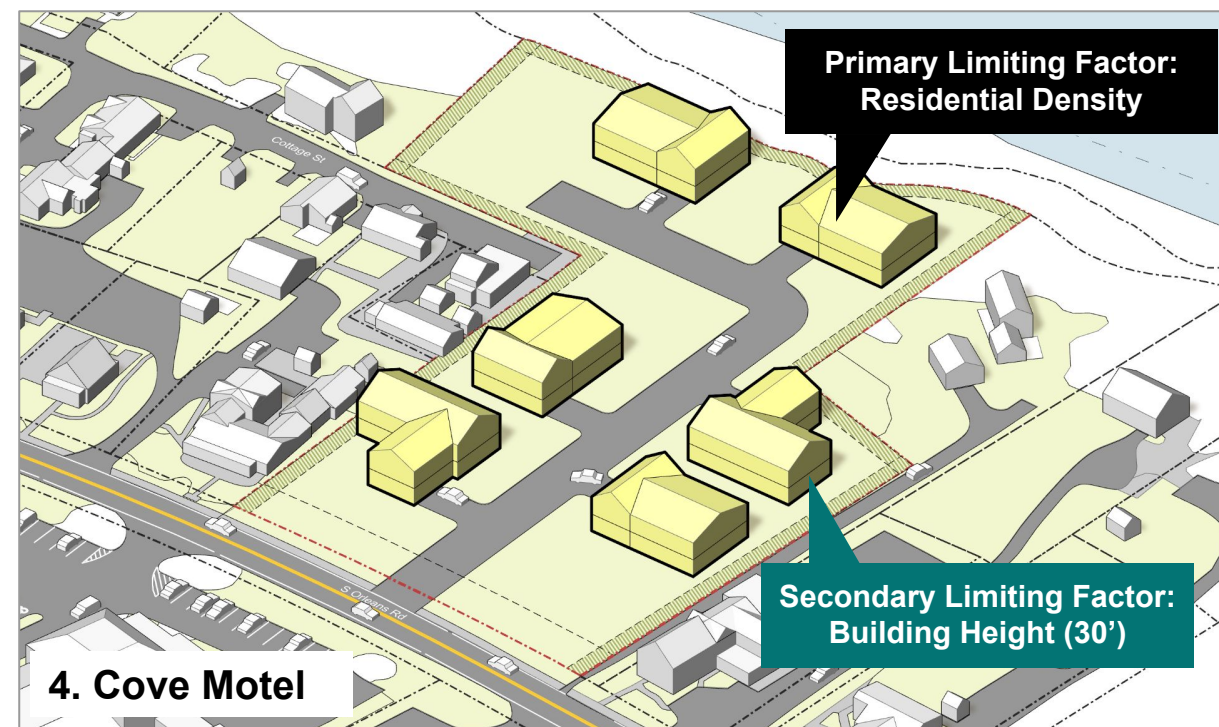
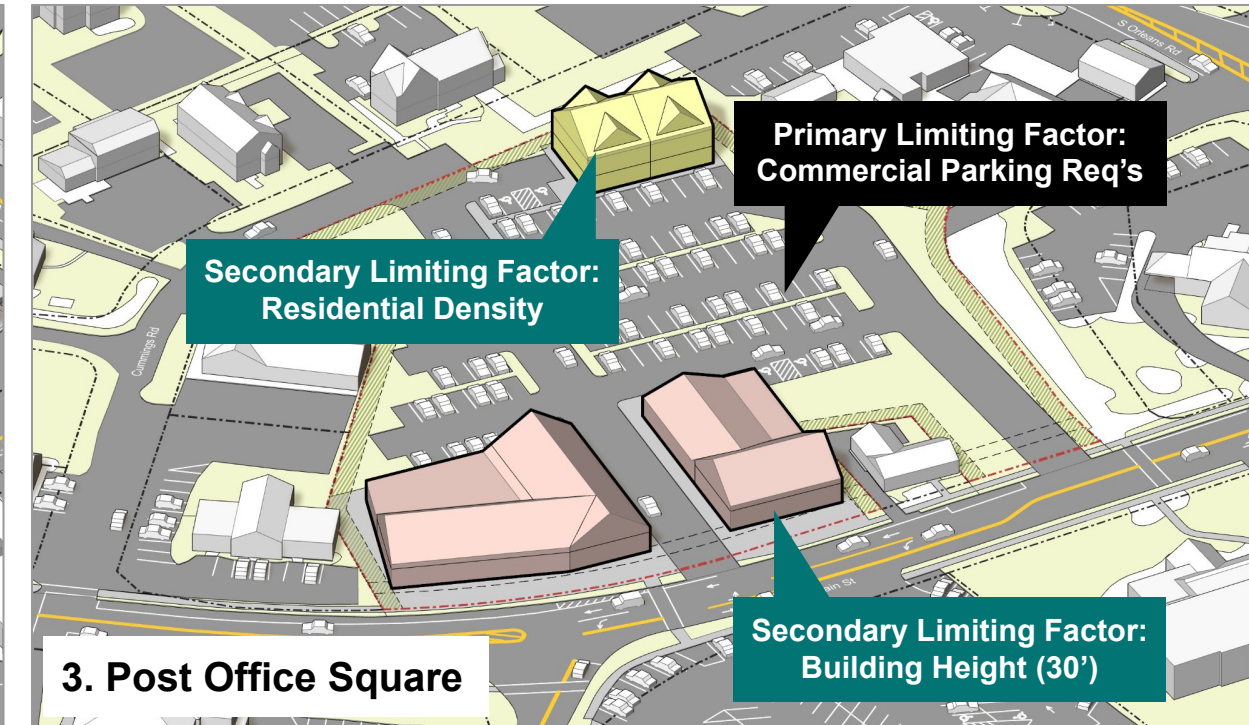
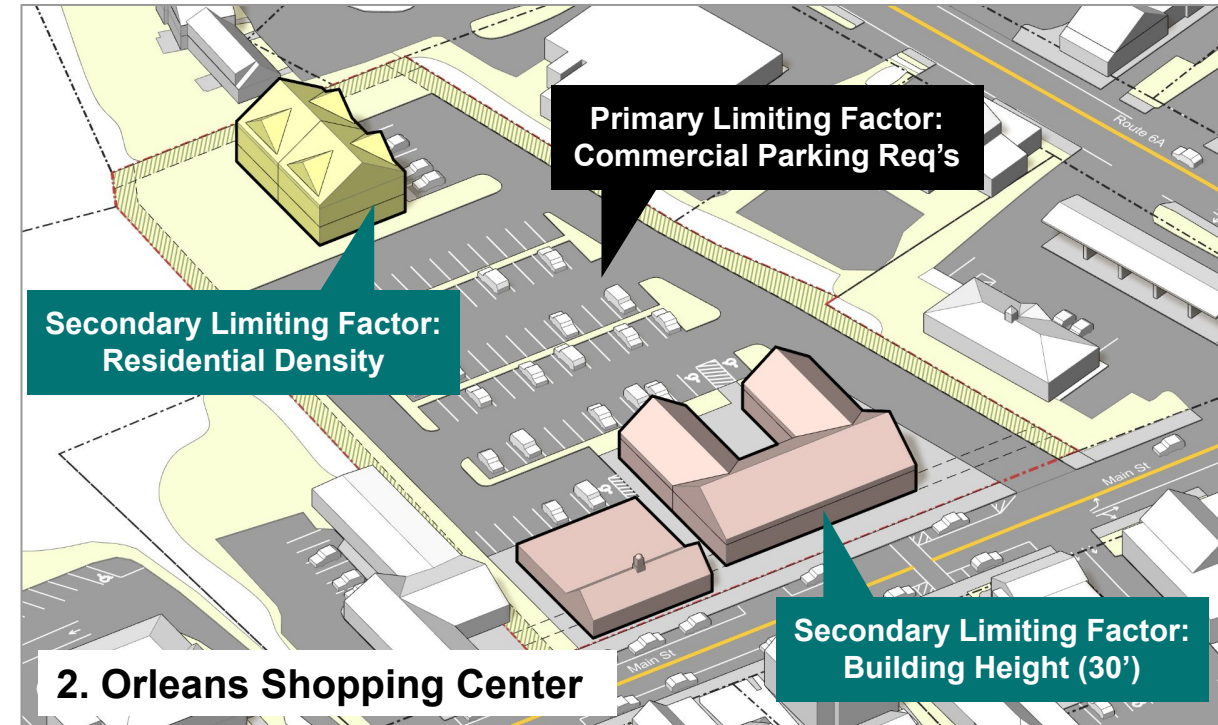
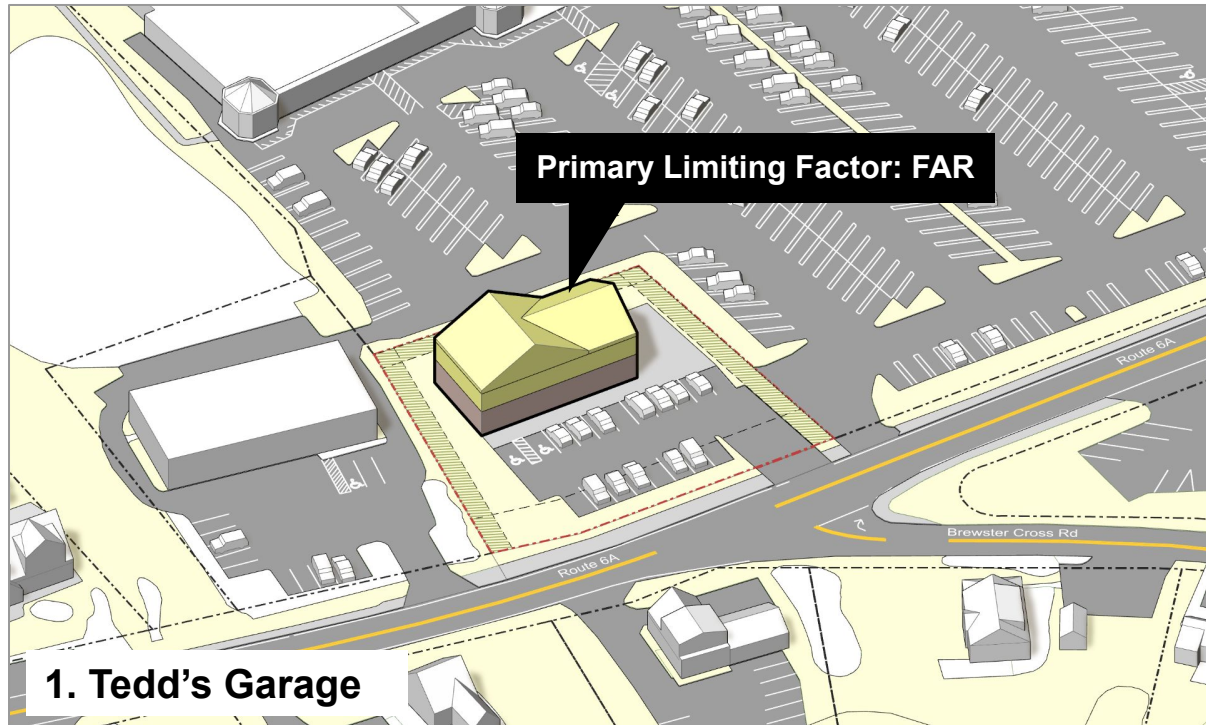
Existing Zoning

What is allowed by-right today

	GB (General Business)	LB (Limited Business)	VC (Village Center)
Lot Standards			
Building Separation	Same as required side yard		
Limiting Factor Residential Density	4 DUs/lot, max. for mixed use; 6 DUs/lot, max. for residential use		
Building Setbacks			
Front	25'	25'	15' or average, min., 25', max.
Side	10'	10'	10', min.
Rear	10'	10'	10', min.
Impervious Surface	75%	75%	N/A
Building Standards			
Limiting Factor Building Height (max)	42' for 3rd floor housing or accessory housing (mixed-use); 30' for commercial or residential use		
Limiting Factor Floor Area Ratio	40%	40%	100%
Parking Requirements			
Residential	1 space/ DU, min.		
Limiting Factor Commercial/Retail	1 space / 250 SF of GFA, min.		

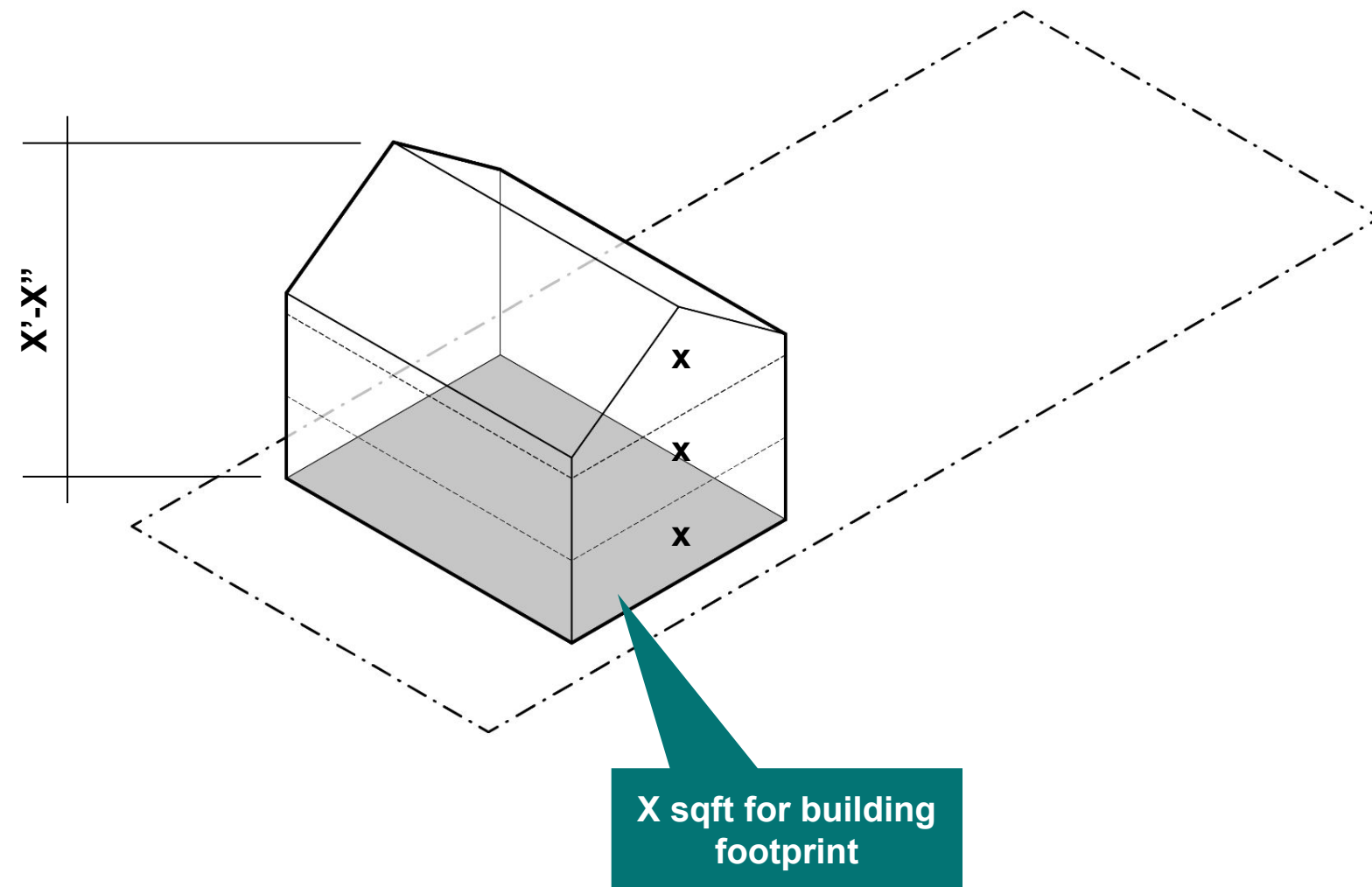
Existing Zoning Analysis

Key Takeaways



Draft Zoning Approach

Tools to Regulate Building Form



1 Building Footprint
Sets the maximum area per story

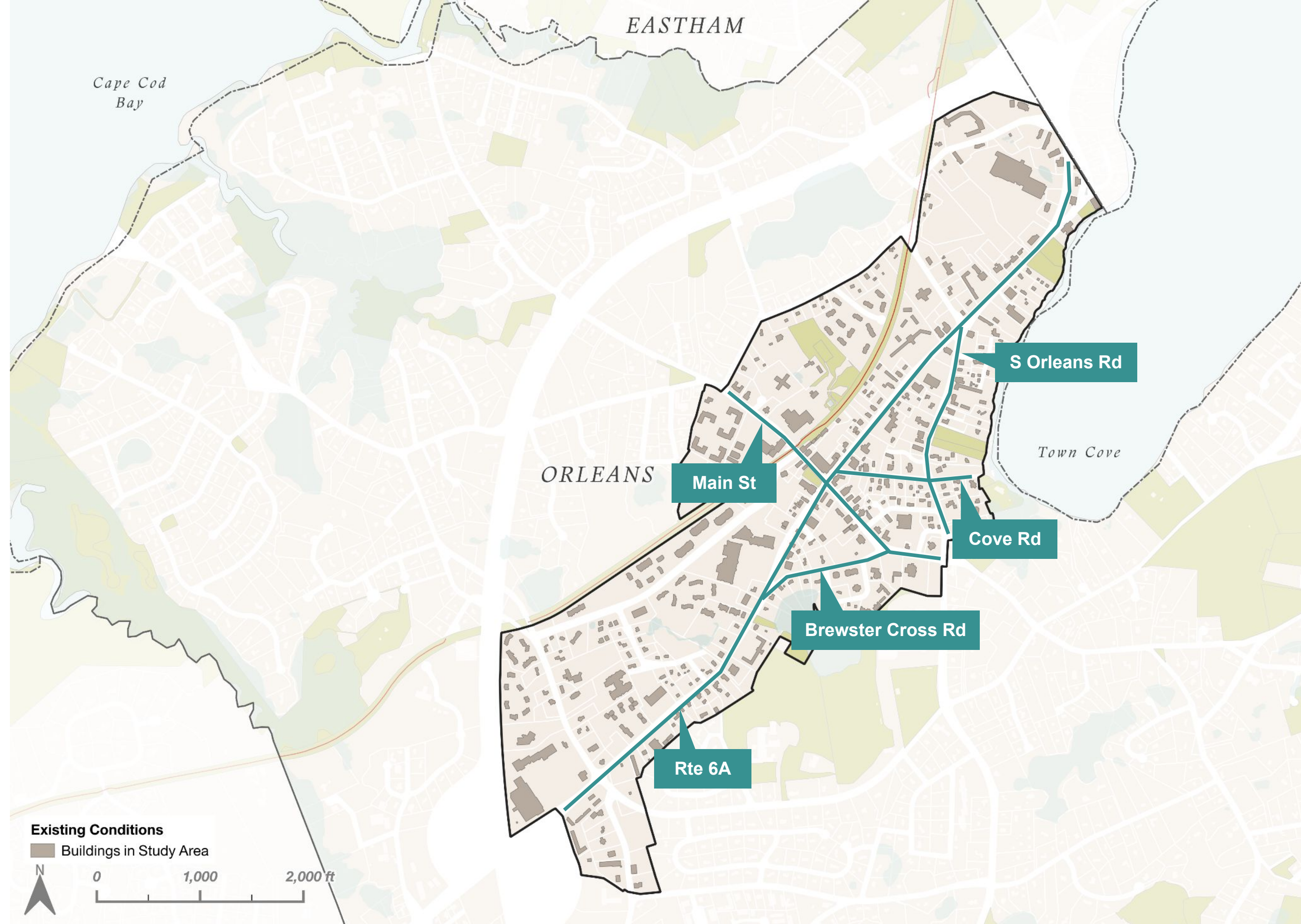
2 Building Height
Sets the maximum height in stories/feet

3 Roof Form
Provides options for a pitched or flat roof half-story

4 Facade Articulation
Provides options to break down building massing and diversify facades

Draft Zoning Approach

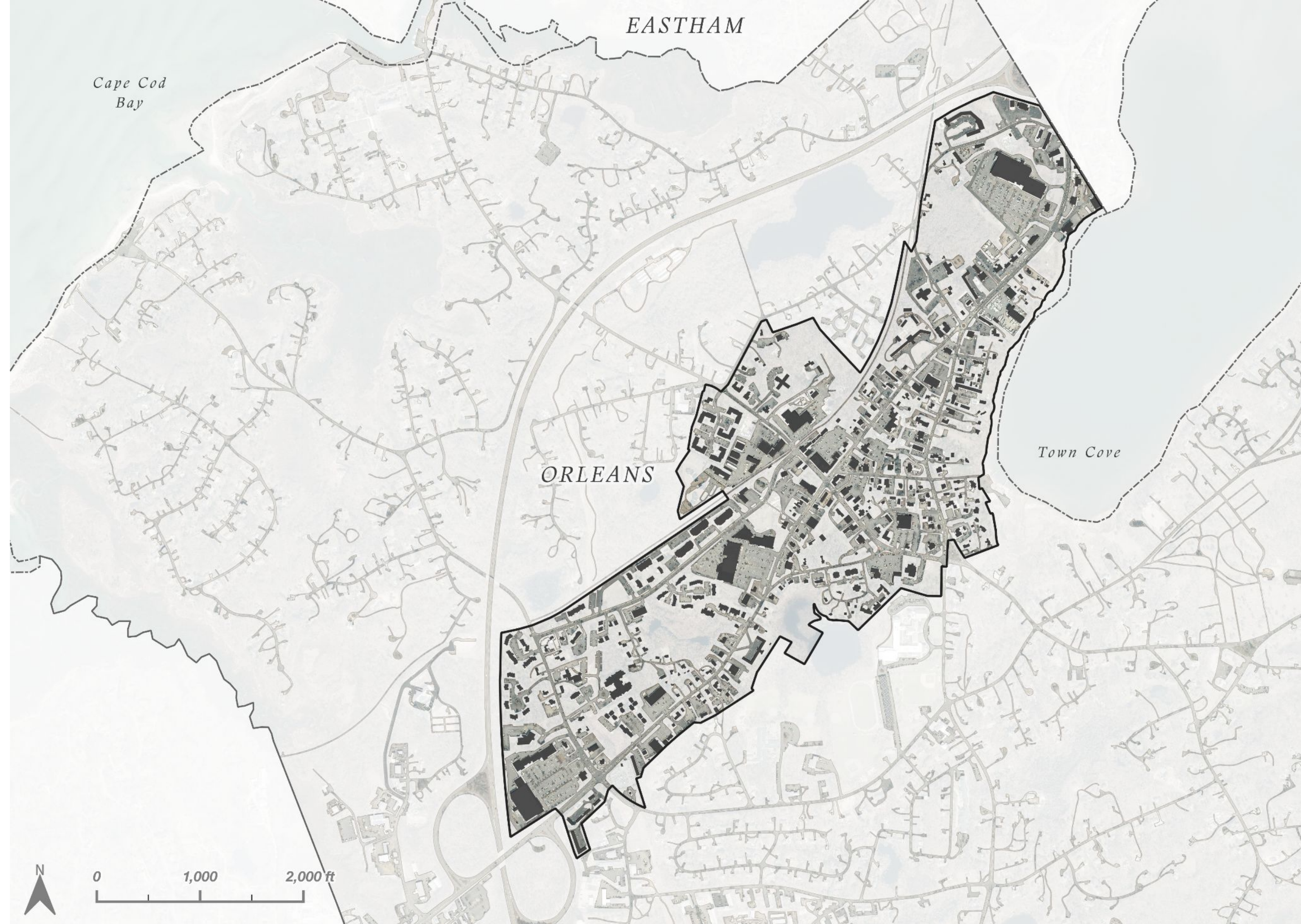
Existing Context



Draft Zoning Map

Impervious Surfaces

Downtown Orleans currently has a lot of impervious surface cover, due to auto-dominant development with large parking lots.

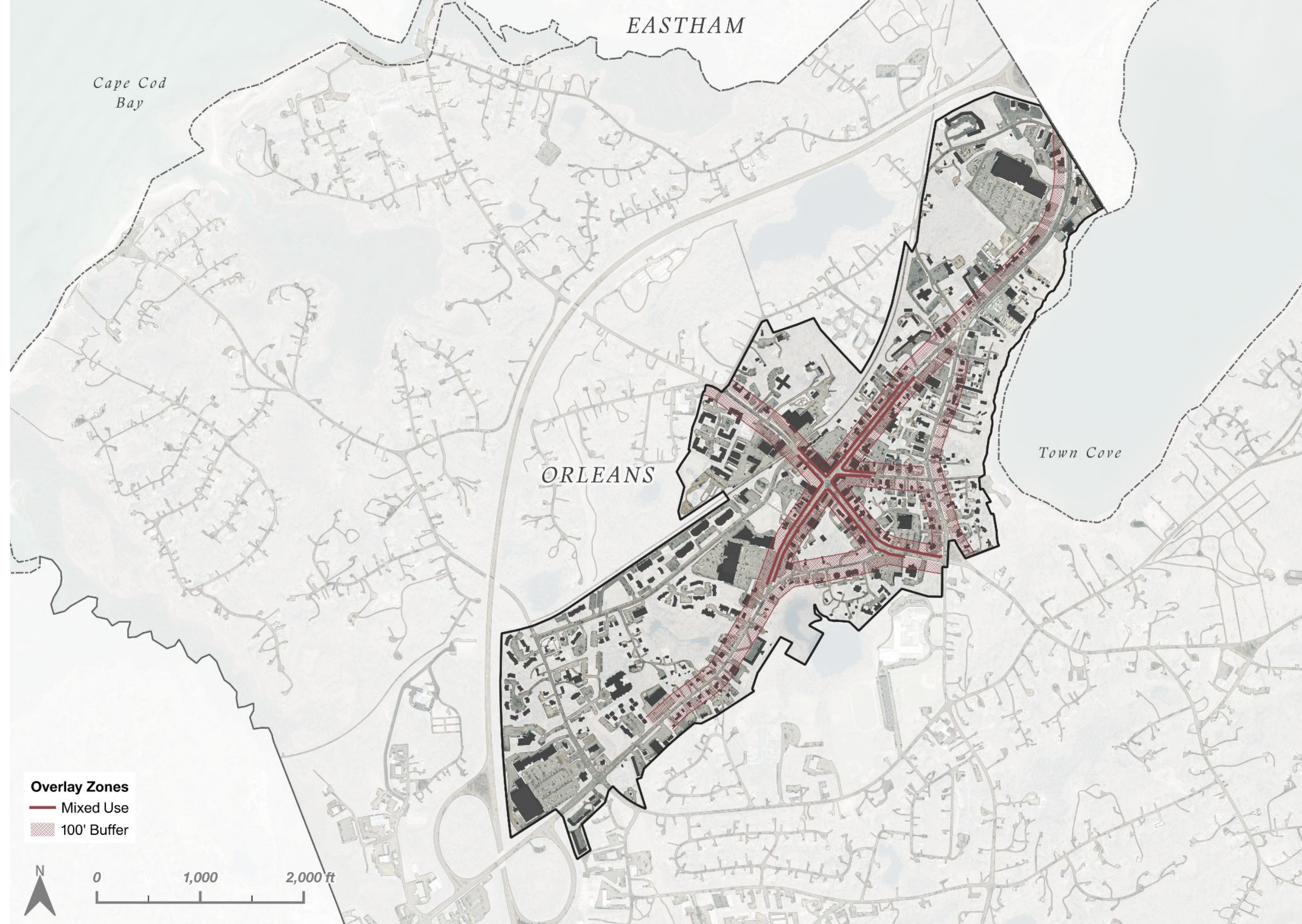


Draft Zoning Map

Buffer Zone

To reinforce “village”- scale character and promote visual cohesion along key streets in Downtown Orleans, we propose a **100’- wide buffer zone to regulate building footprint.**

Additionally, portions of the buffer zone **require a mixed use ground floor** (indicated as a bold line on the map), to promote cohesive vibrancy and pedestrian-oriented uses where desired.

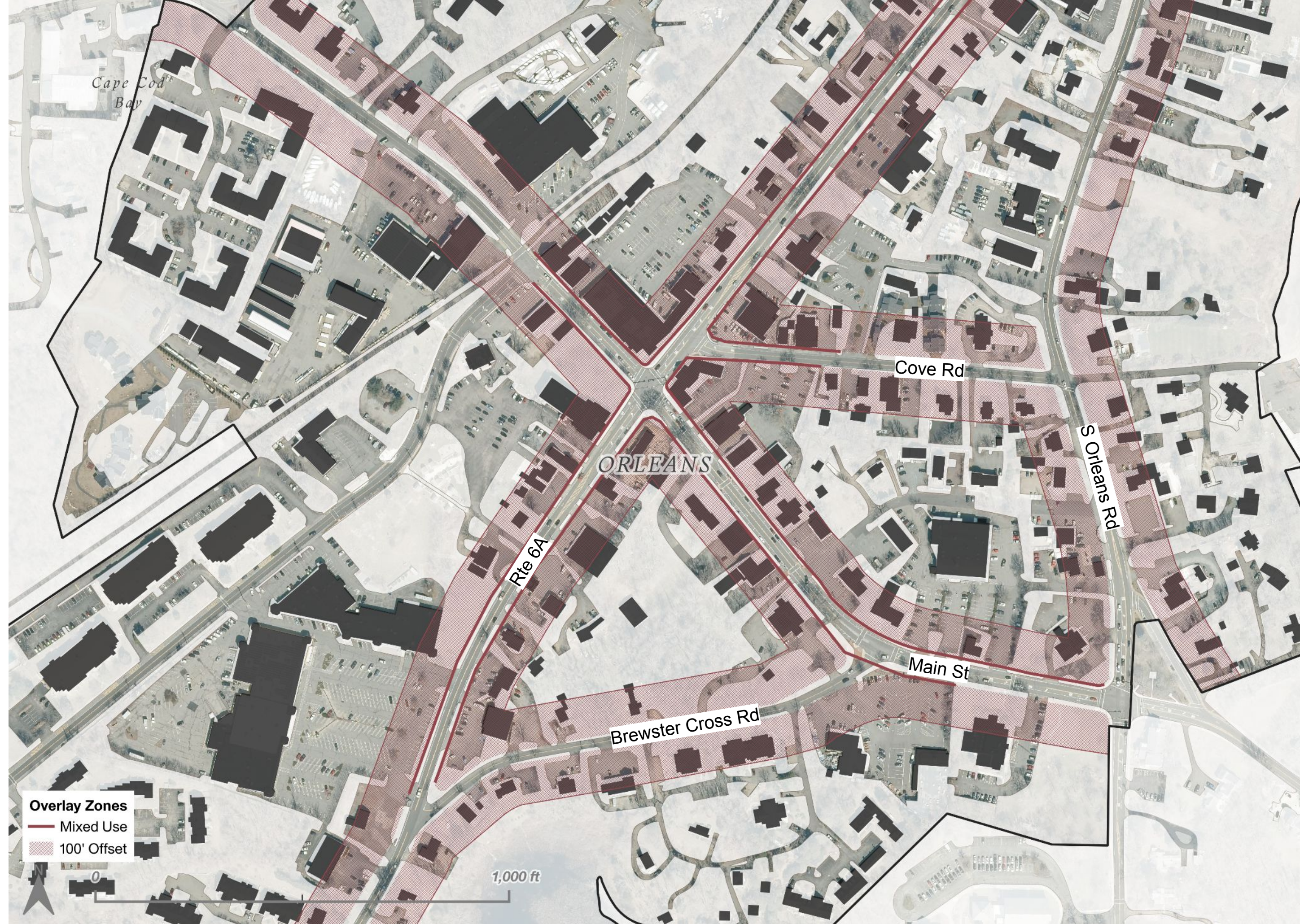


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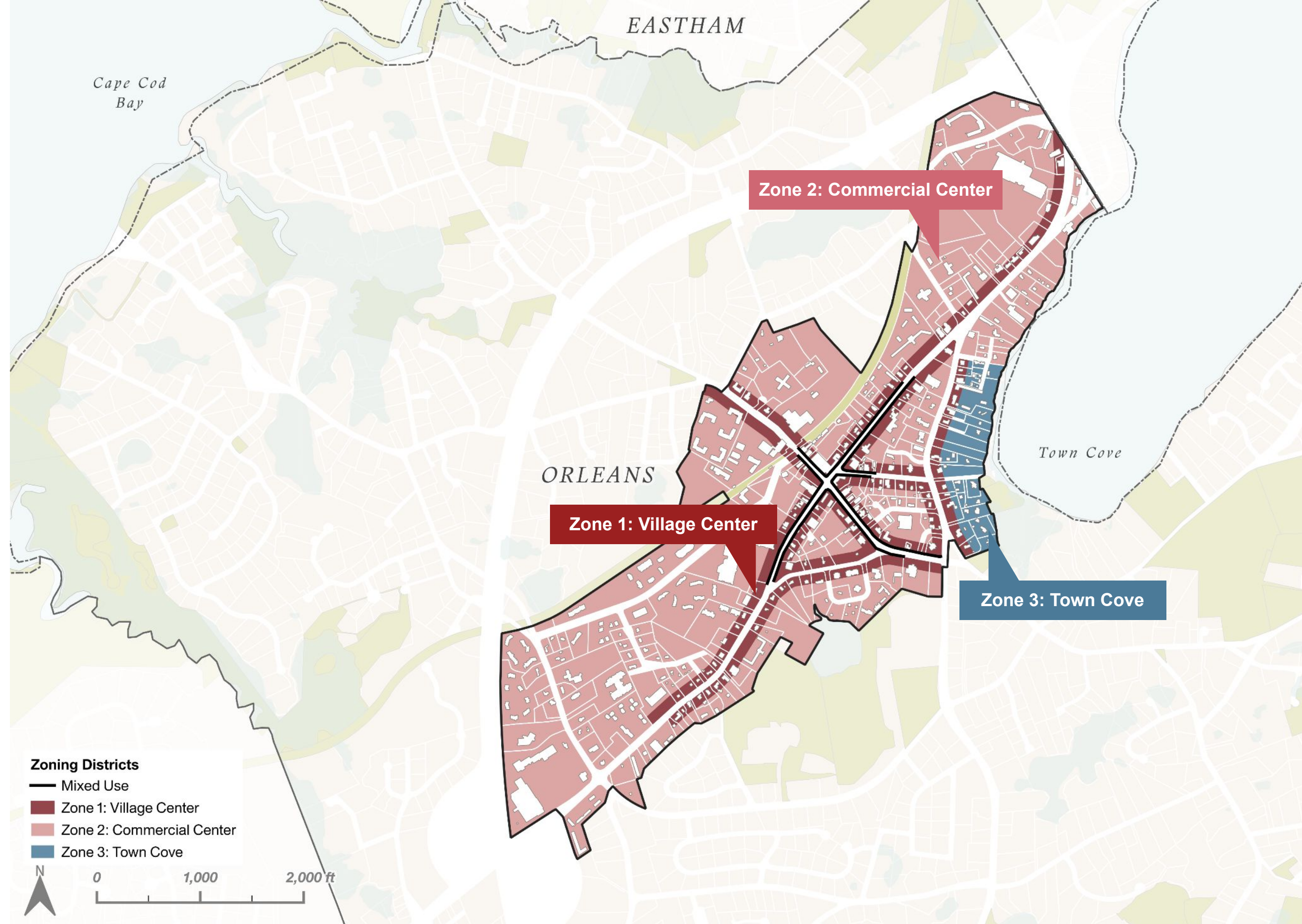
Follows the 100' buffer zone along key streets in Downtown Orleans and promotes village-scale development and mixed uses.

Zone 2: Commercial Center

Allows larger development to occur in less sensitive contexts outside of Orleans' main thoroughfares.

Zone 3: Town Cove

Encourages smaller residential development.



Draft Zoning Map

Proposed Zones

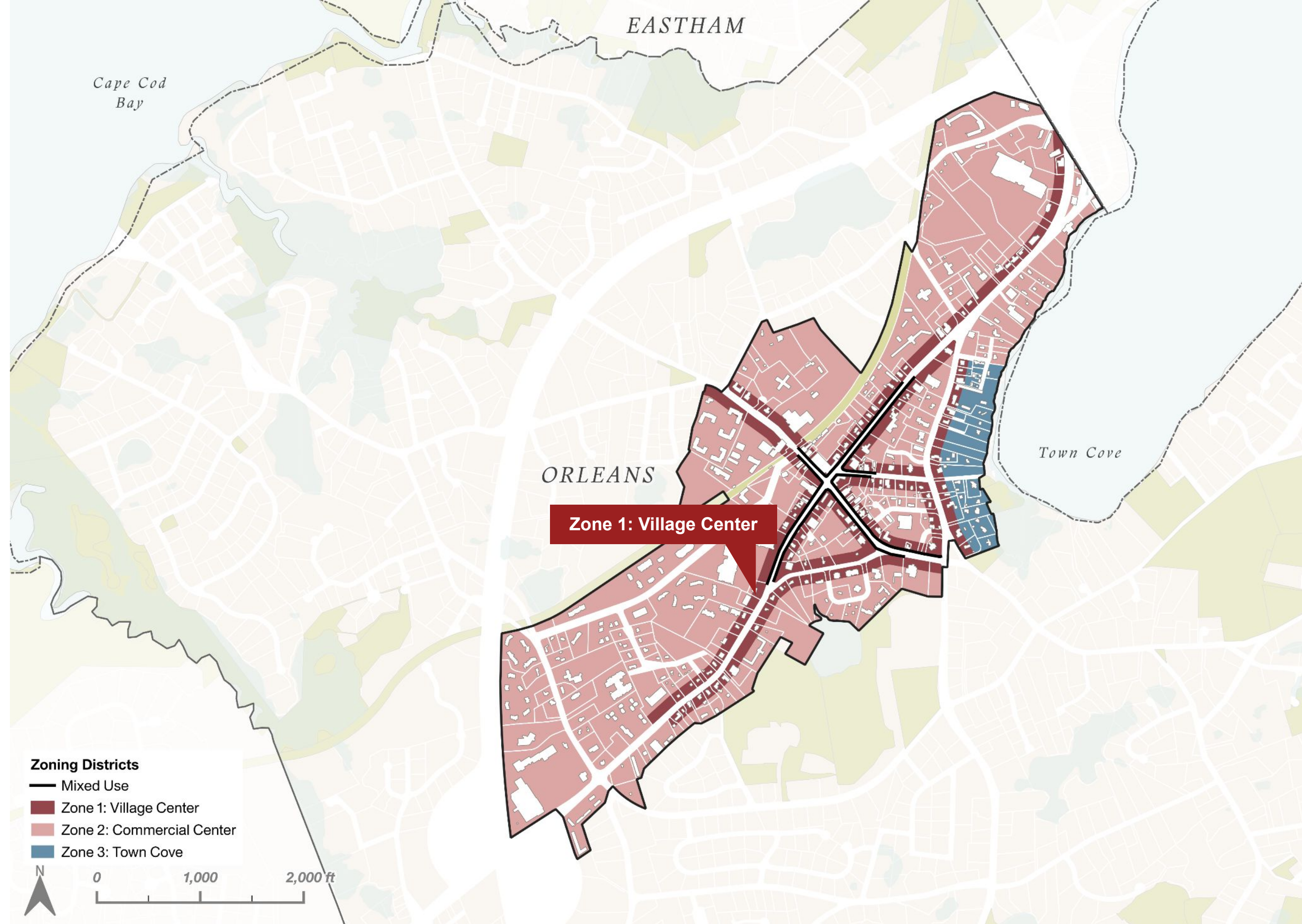
Zone 1: Village Center

Zone 1 reinforces “village”-scale character along key streets in Downtown Orleans.

Within this zone (equal to the first 100’ of select parcel’s front lot line) the max. building footprint is:

4,000 SF (primary building)

2,000 SF (secondary buildings)



Draft Zoning Map

Proposed Zones

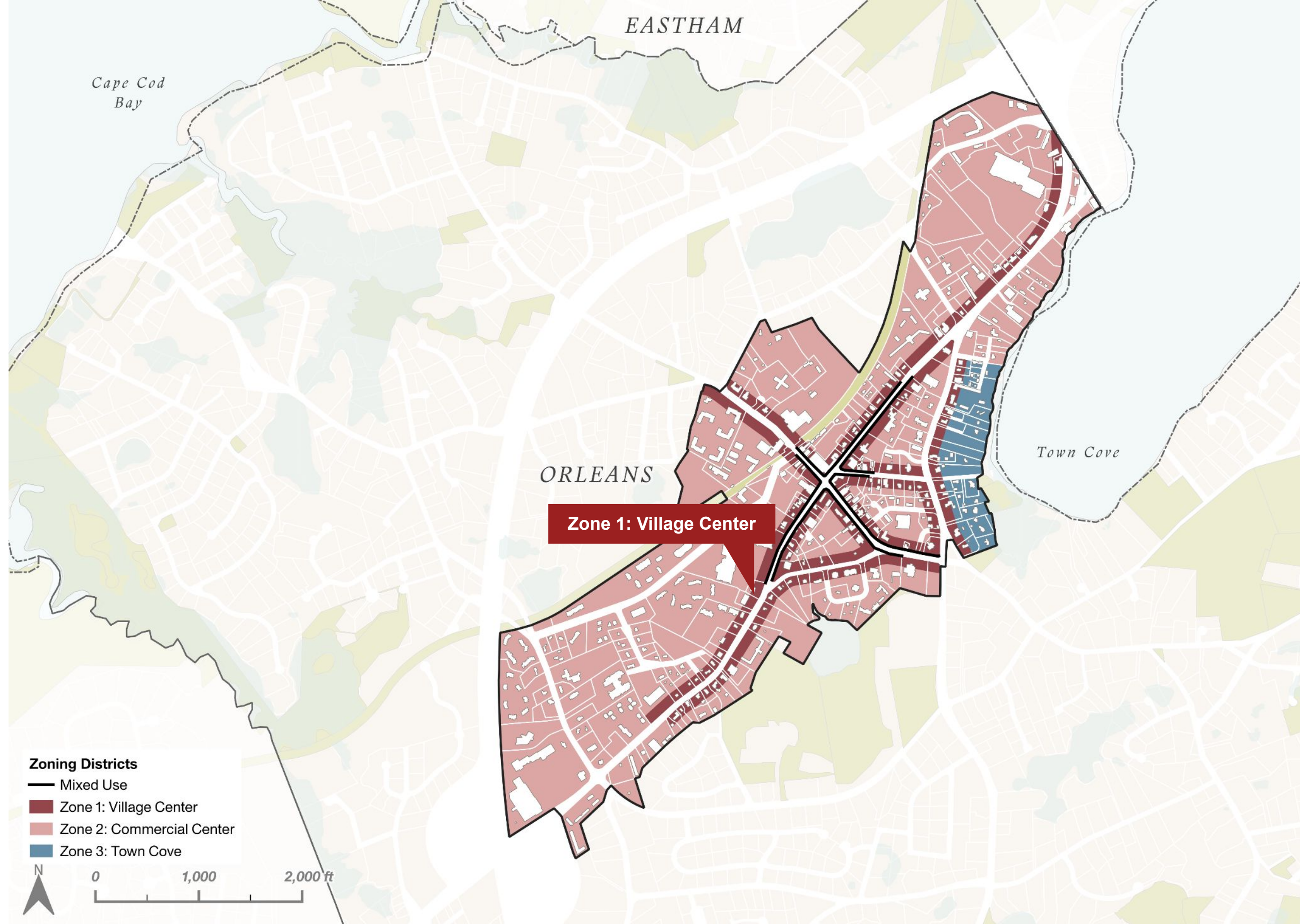
Zone 1: Village Center



Sea Captain's Row, Hyannis
Footprint: 3,100 SF



Tilia, Jamaica Plain
Footprint: 2,100 SF



Draft Zoning Map

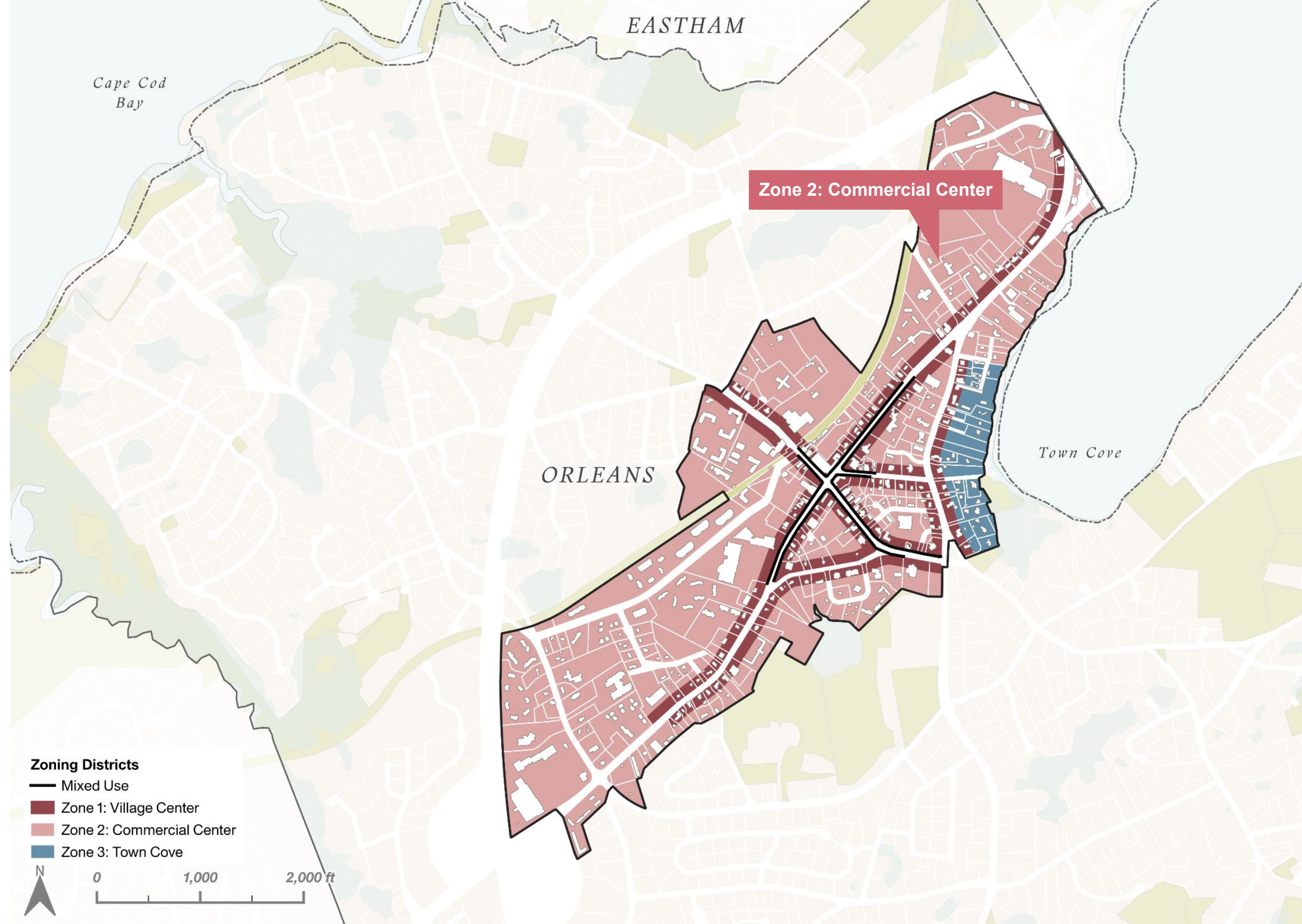
Proposed Zones

Zone 2: Commercial Center

Zone 2 appears behind **Zone 1** for some parcels and independently for others, allowing for larger development in less sensitive areas of Downtown Orleans.

Within this zone the max. building footprint is:

8,000 SF



Draft Zoning Map

Proposed Zones

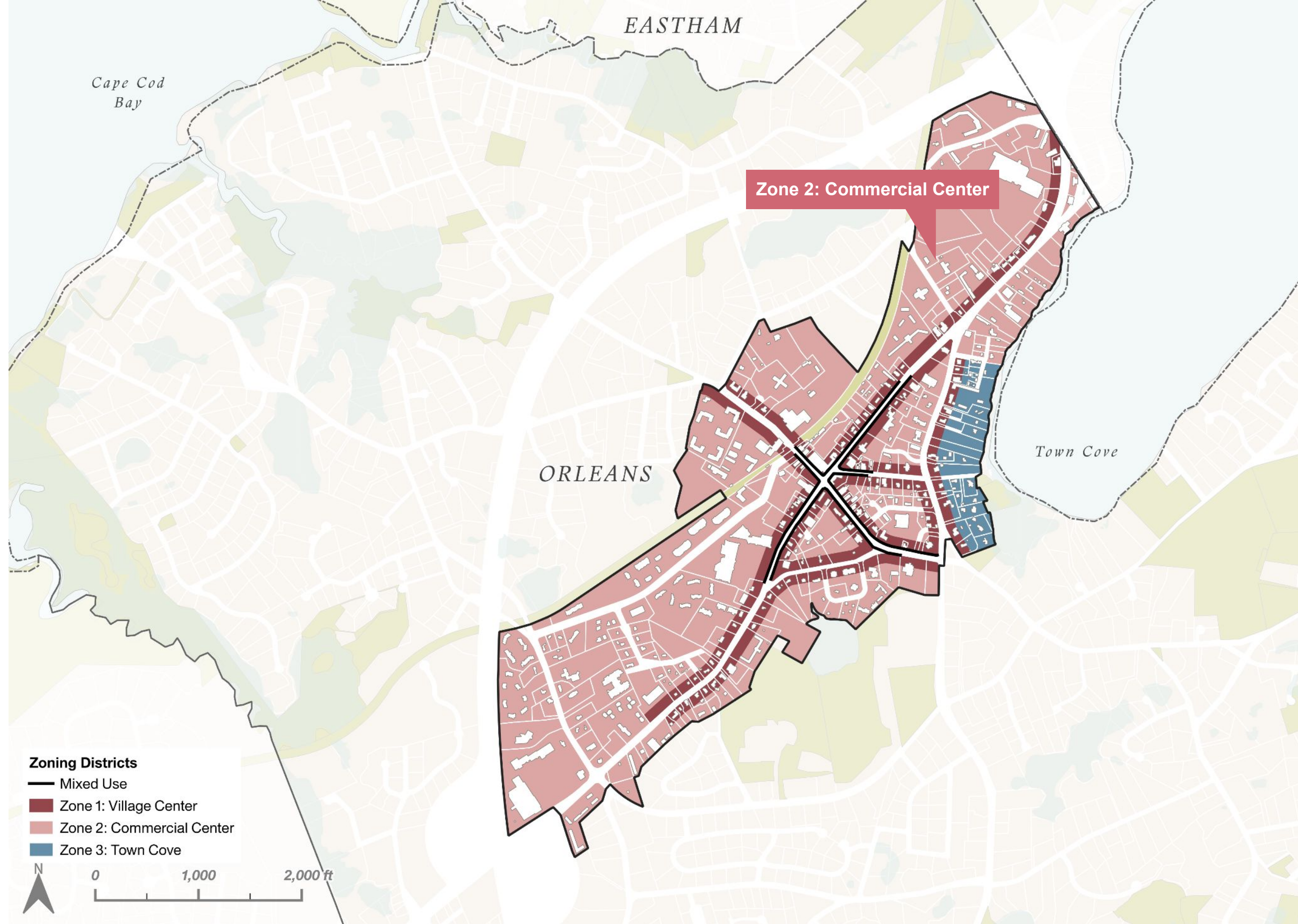
Zone 2: Commercial Center



The Clara, Eagle, IN
Footprint: 8,800 SF



192-194 Worcester St, Wellesley
Footprint: 5,300 SF



Draft Zoning Map

Proposed Zones

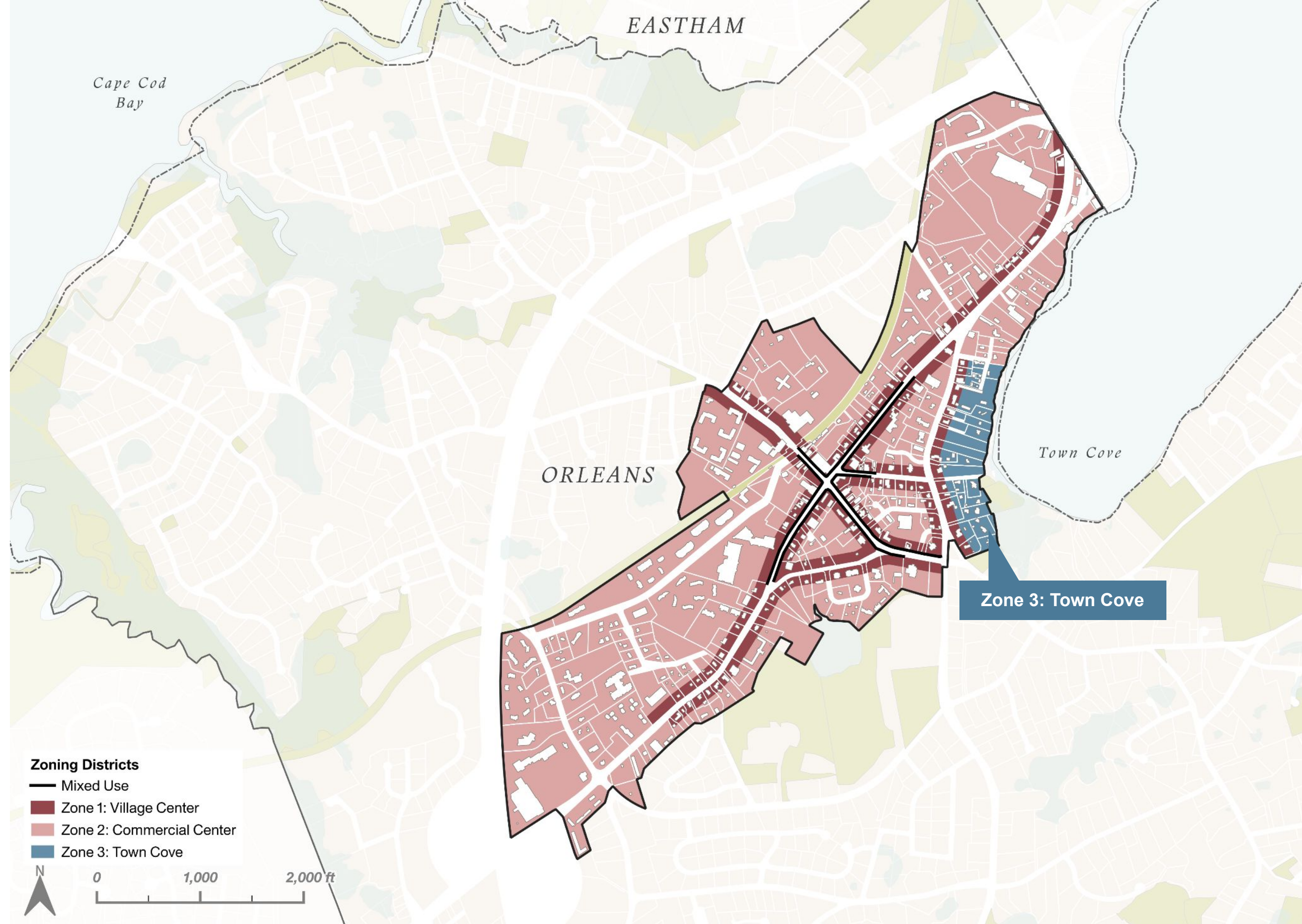
Zone 3: Town Cove

Zone 3 encourages gentle density with cottage court-style development along the Town Cove.

Within this zone the max. building footprint allows a variety of smaller homes:

900 SF (50% of development)

600 SF (50% of development)



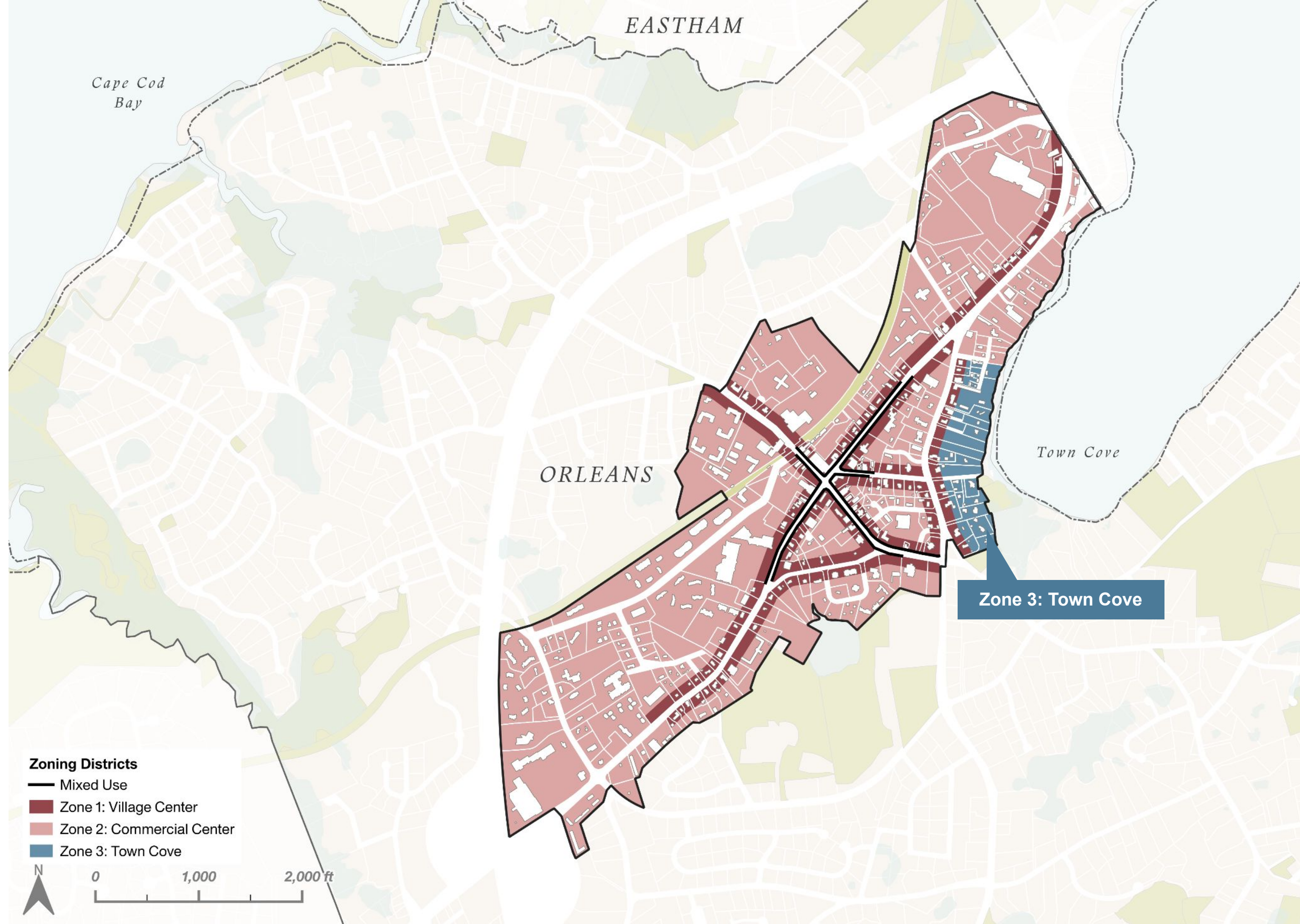
Draft Zoning Map

Proposed Zones

Zone 3: Town Cove



Heritage Sands, Dennis Port
Footprint: 900 - 1,100 SF

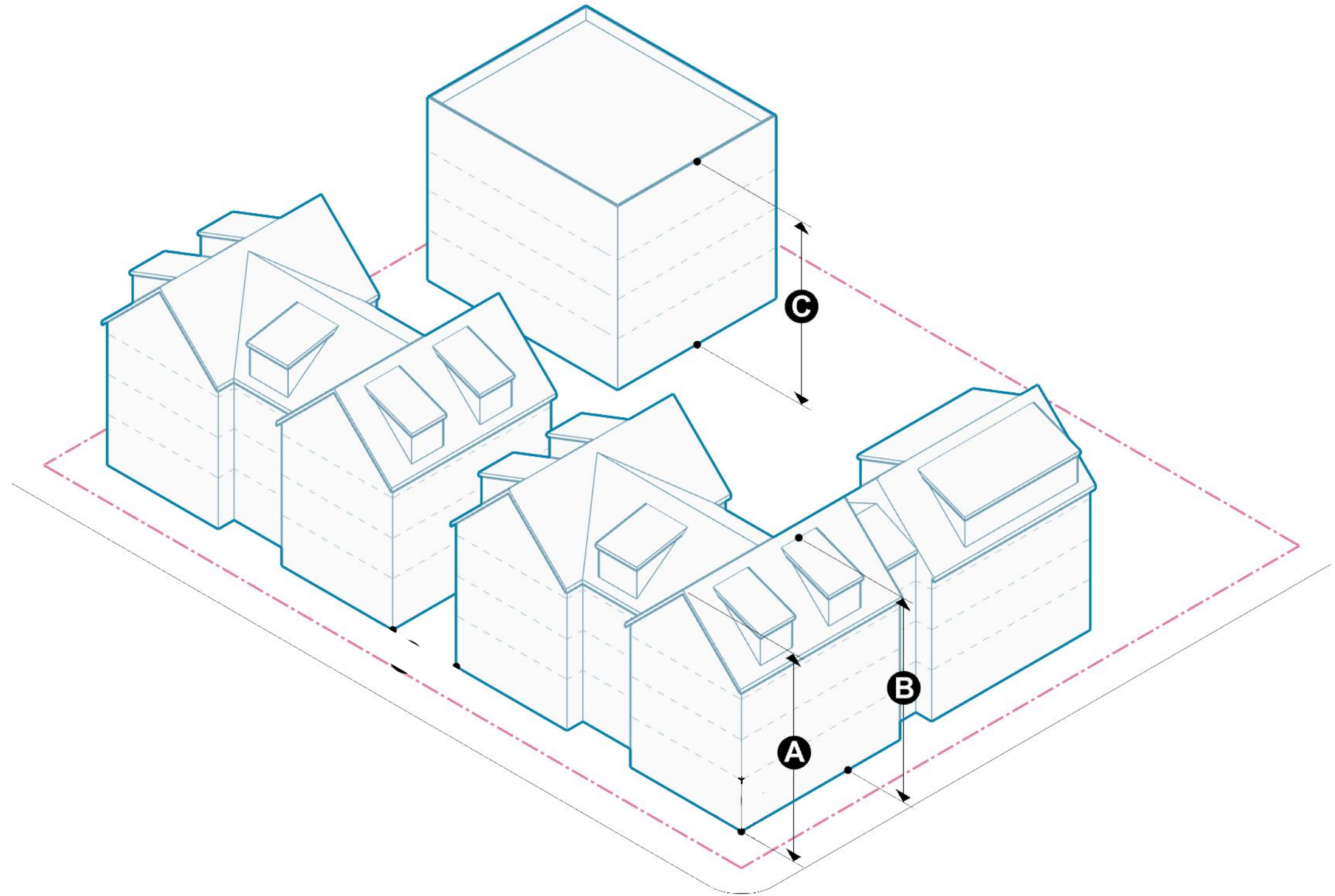


Building Height

Design Standards

Proposed standards will include:

- **Maximum building height in feet and stories**, with separate standards for pitched and flat roof buildings
- **Minimum ground story height**, with separate standards for lots on mixed-use required streets and lots on all other streets.

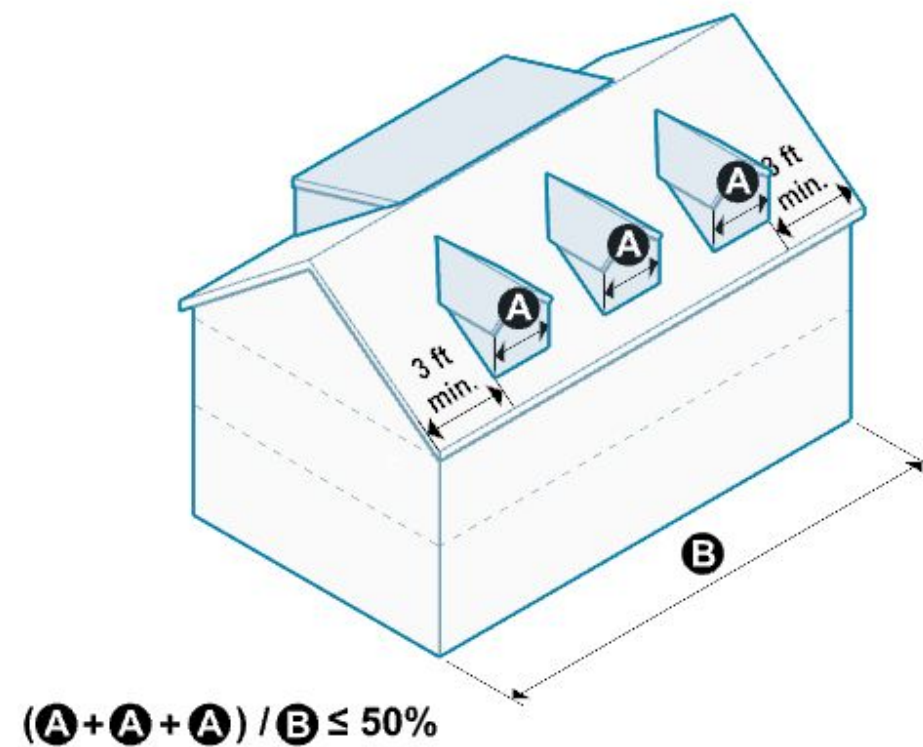


Roof Form

Design Standards

Proposed standards will include:

- **Pitched Roof:**
 - Maximum slope for roof pitch
 - Maximum height for the knee wall
 - Dormer requirements
- **Flat Roof:**
 - Minimum step-back for top floor



X'

max ht. to the highest point of the roof

X'

max ceiling height of setback roof

X'

max height rafter intersect wall

14:12 max. slope

X

7' min. setback

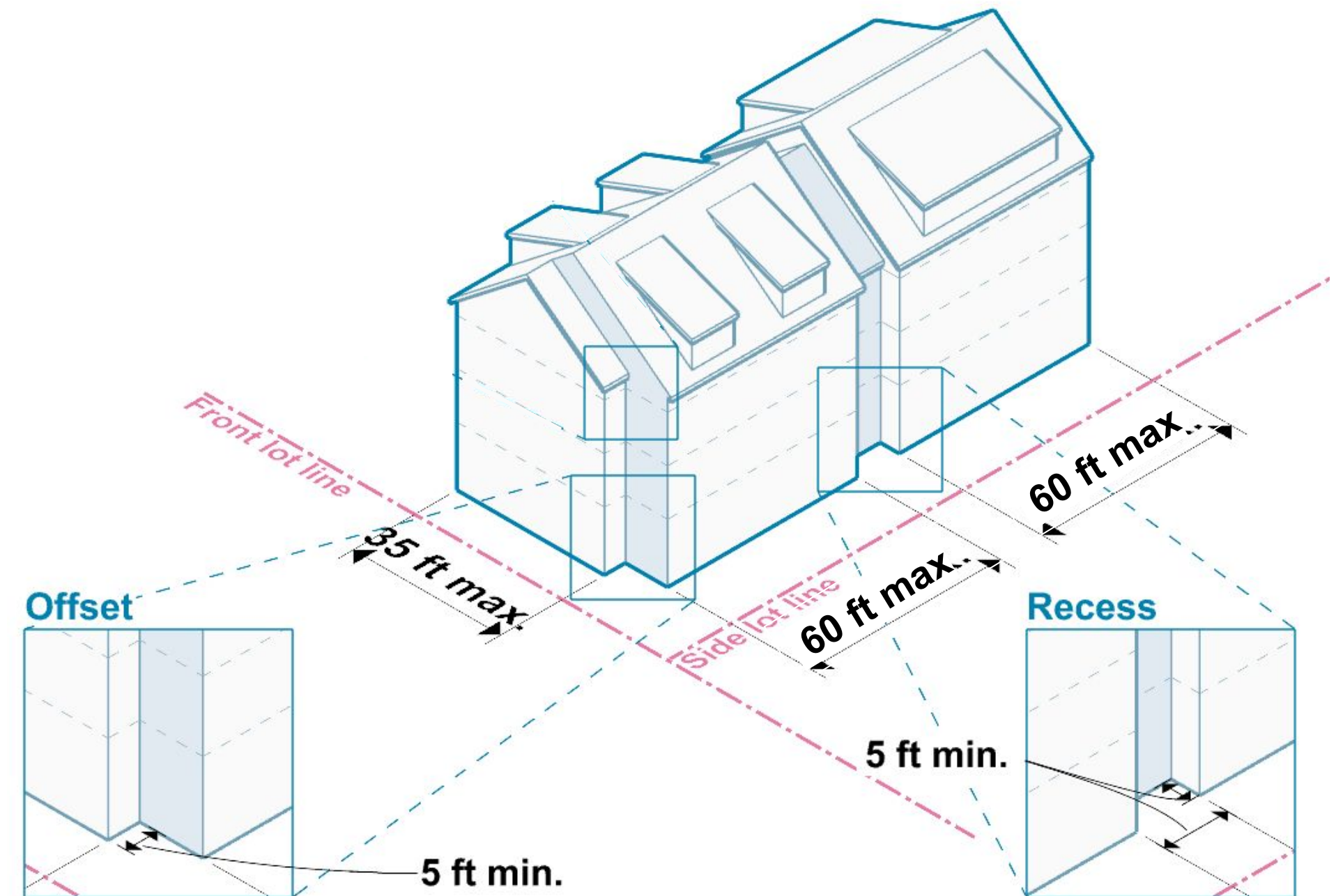
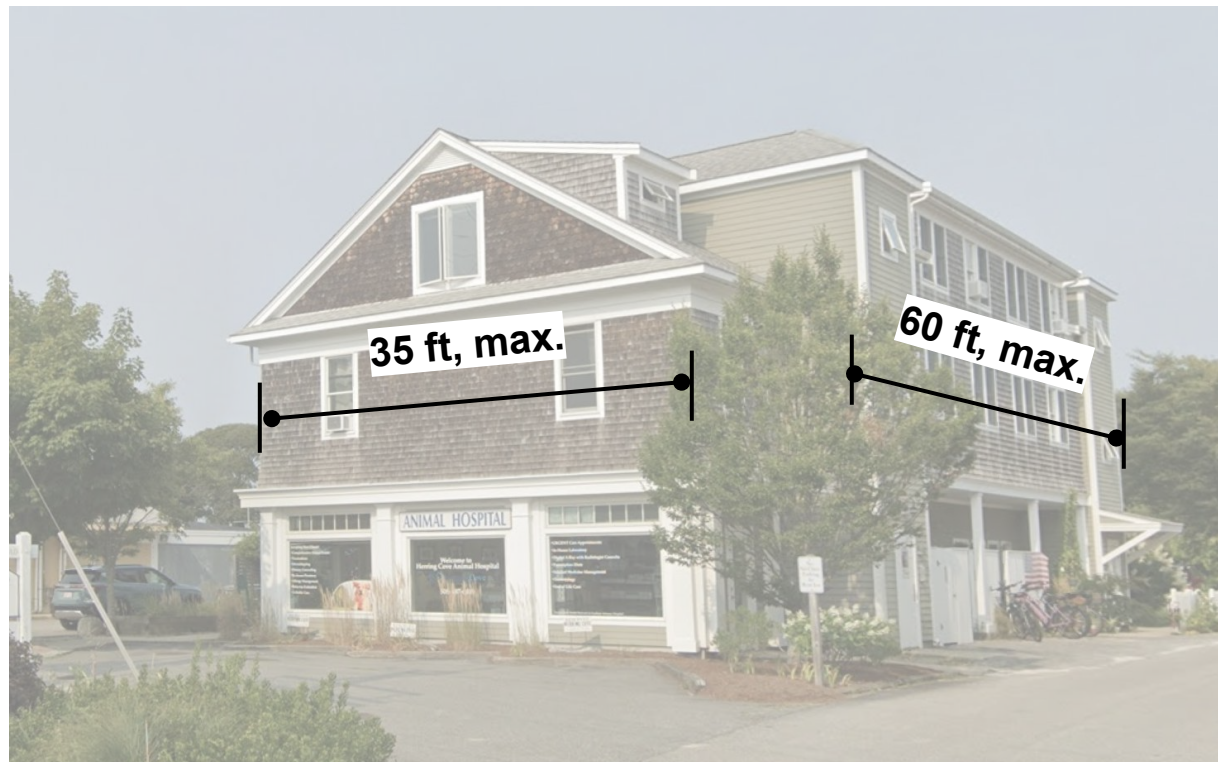
7' min. setback

Facade Articulation

Design Standards

Proposed standards will include the requirement to break up facades with either a facade recess or facade offset.

- **Facades facing a front lot line**
 - Limited to maximum continuous length of 35'
- **All other facades:**
 - Limited to maximum continuous length of 60'



Draft Zoning Standards

Draft Zoning Standards

Zone 1: Village Center

This zone reinforces “village”-scale character along key streets in Downtown Orleans.

Zone 2: Commercial Center

This zone allows for larger development in less sensitive areas of Downtown Orleans.

Zone 3: Town Cove

This zone encourages gentle density with cottage court-style development along the Town Cove.

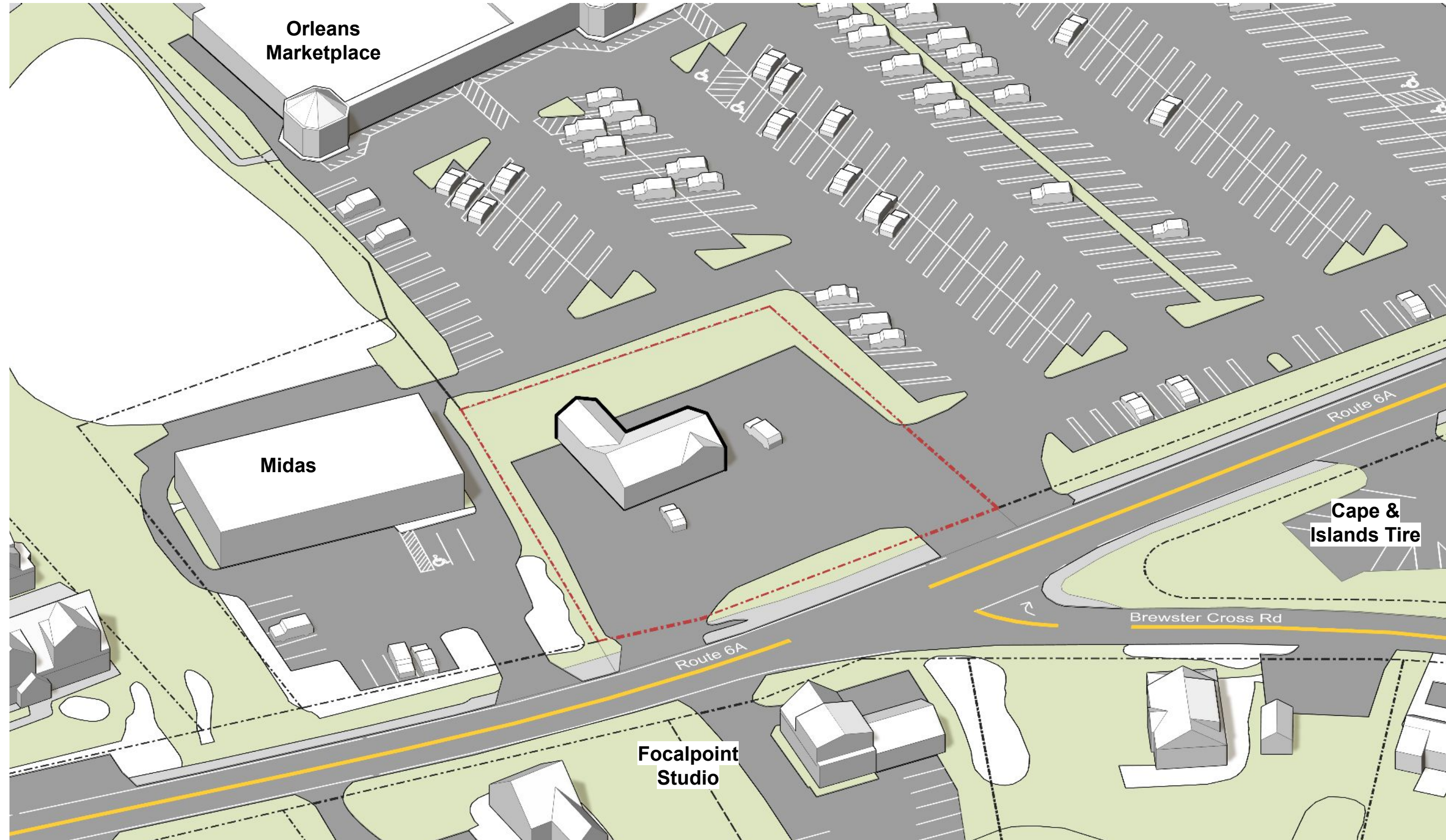
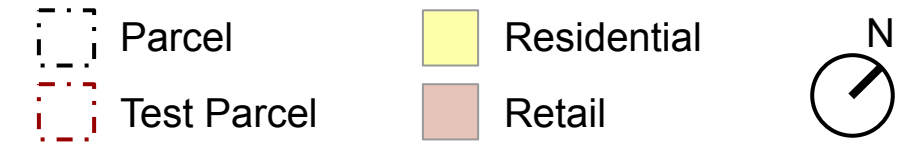
	Zone 1: Village Center	Zone 2: Commercial Center	Zone 3: Town Cove
Building Footprint, Max.			
	4,000 SF primary building; 2,000 SF secondary buildings	8,000 SF	900 SF 50% of development 600 SF 50% of development
Building Height, Max. (Stories)			
	3.5	3.5	1.5
Roof Form			
	Pitched Roofs	Pitched and Flat Roof Buildings Allowed	Pitched Roofs
Facade Articulation			
Facing the Front Lot Line		35' Max. Continuous Facade	
All Other Facades		60' Max. Continuous Facade	

Tedd's Garage

Existing Site



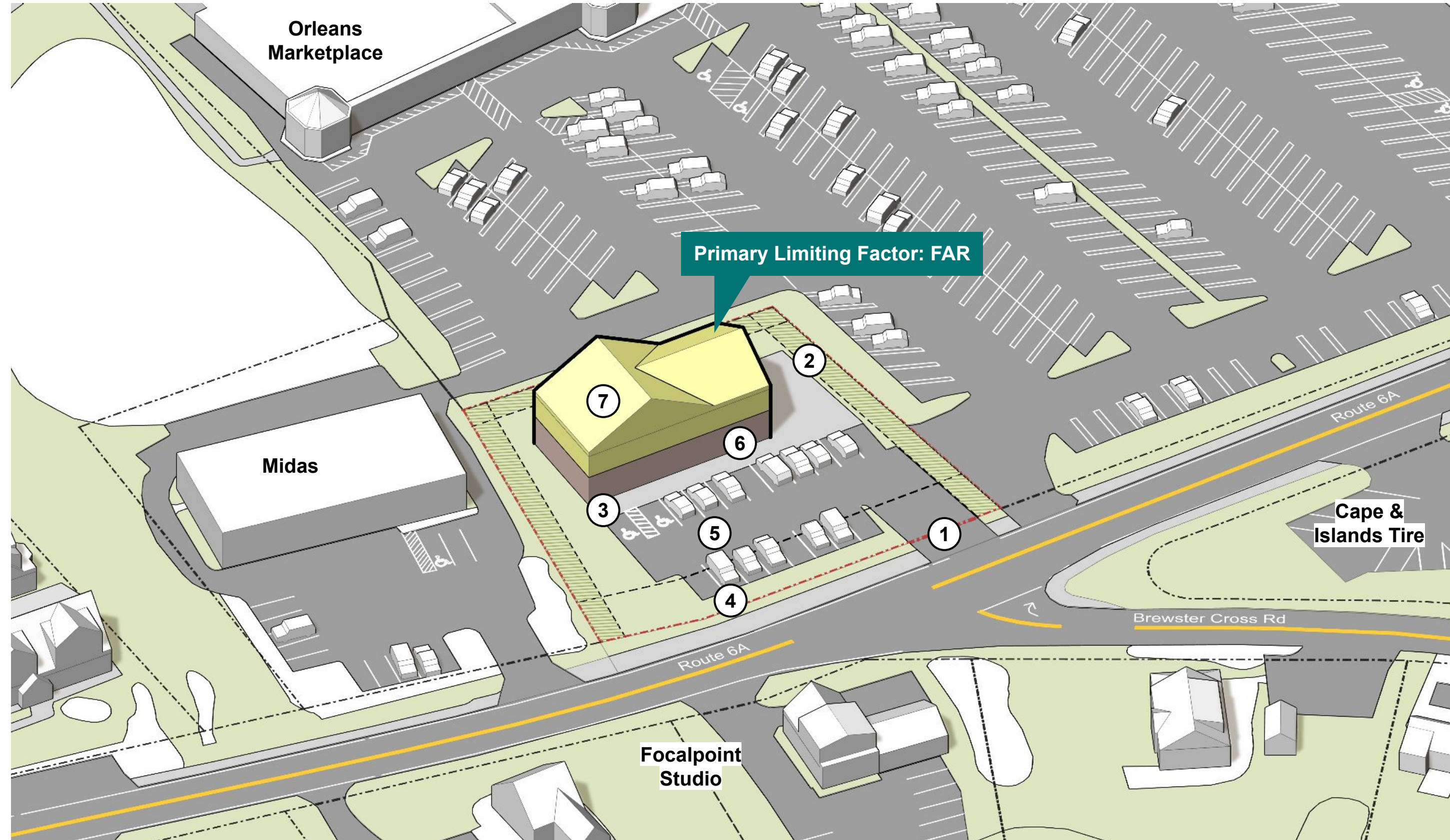
Zoning: Limited Business
Lot Size: 0.52 AC (22,589 SF)
Year Built: 1962
FAR: 0.066



Tedd's Garage

By-Right Test-fit

1. Wide maximum driveway width (30')
2. Parking areas must be min. 10' away from any street or lot line, with a screened green zone
3. Parking areas must be min. 10' away from building, with green area and pedestrian walkway
4. Front yard must be landscaped, 6' min depth.
5. Parking is allowed in the front of the lot
6. Commercial area must be min. 30% of floor area, and be located on the first floor fronting the street
7. Third floor housing has low-pitch roof requirements (8:12)



Tedd's Garage

Draft Zoning Test-fit

1. Within the 100' Buffer Zone, one building is permitted to have a maximum footprint of 4,000 SF
2. Any supplemental buildings within the 100' Buffer Zone may have a maximum footprint of 2,000 SF
3. Buildings behind the 100' Buffer Zone may be a maximum of 8,000 SF
4. Facades facing the front lot line may be max 35' before a recess or offset, facades not facing the street may be max 60' before a recess or offset
5. All buildings may be up to 3.5 stories
6. Both flat and pitched roofs are permitted

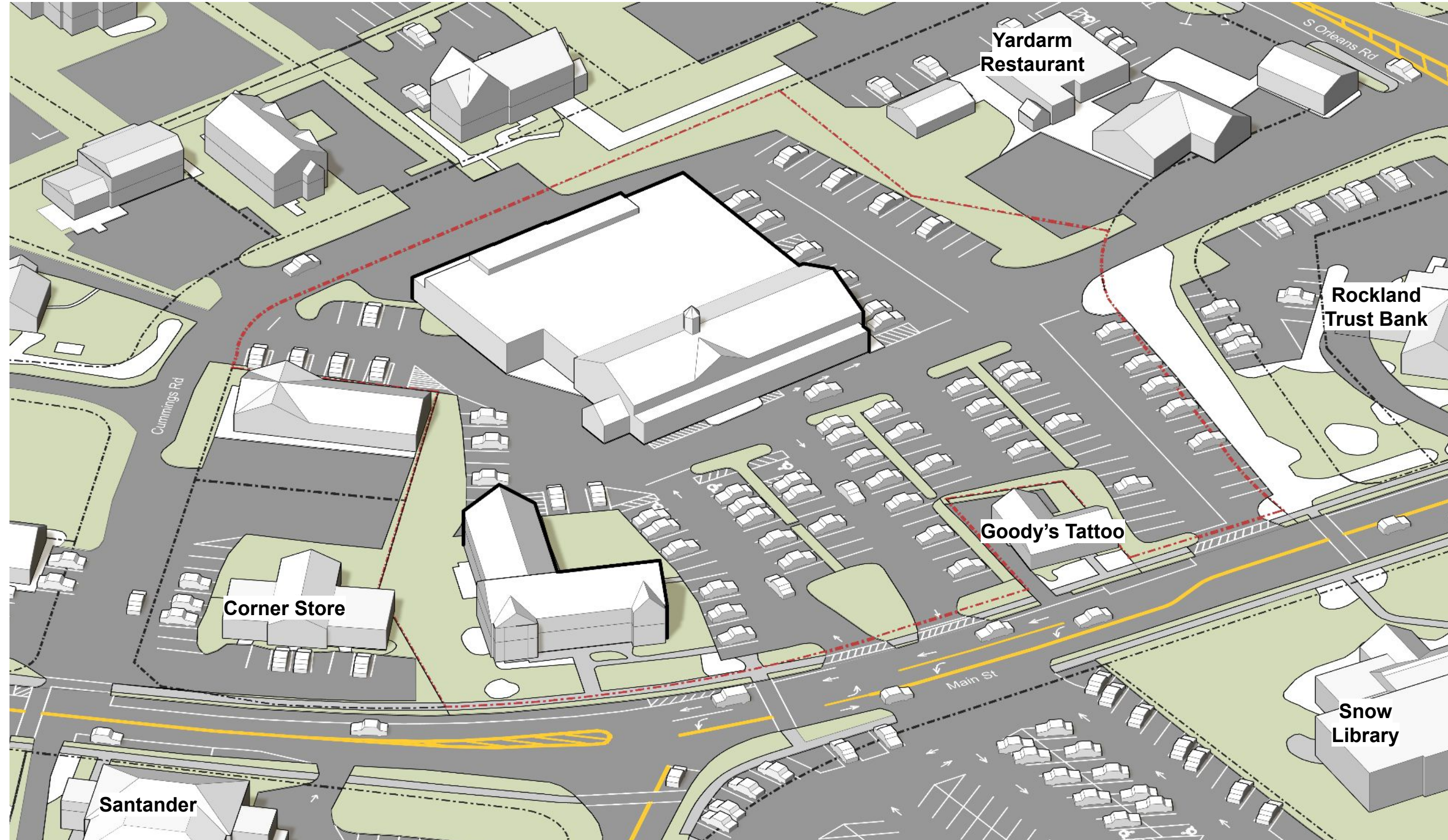
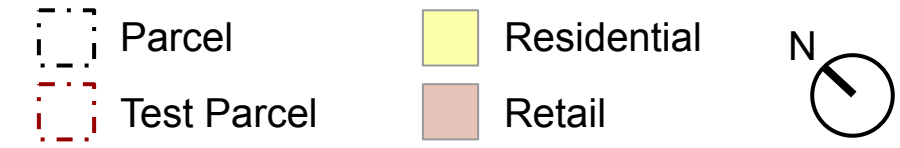


Post Office Square

Existing Site

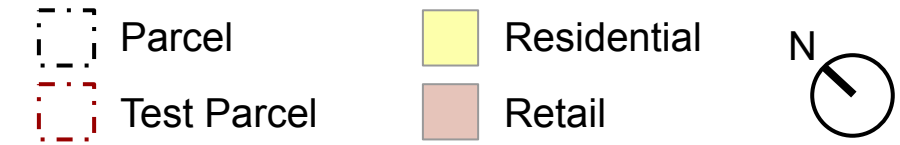


Zoning: Village Center
Lot Size: 2.76 AC (120,050 SF)
Year Built: 1987, c.1960
FAR: 0.23

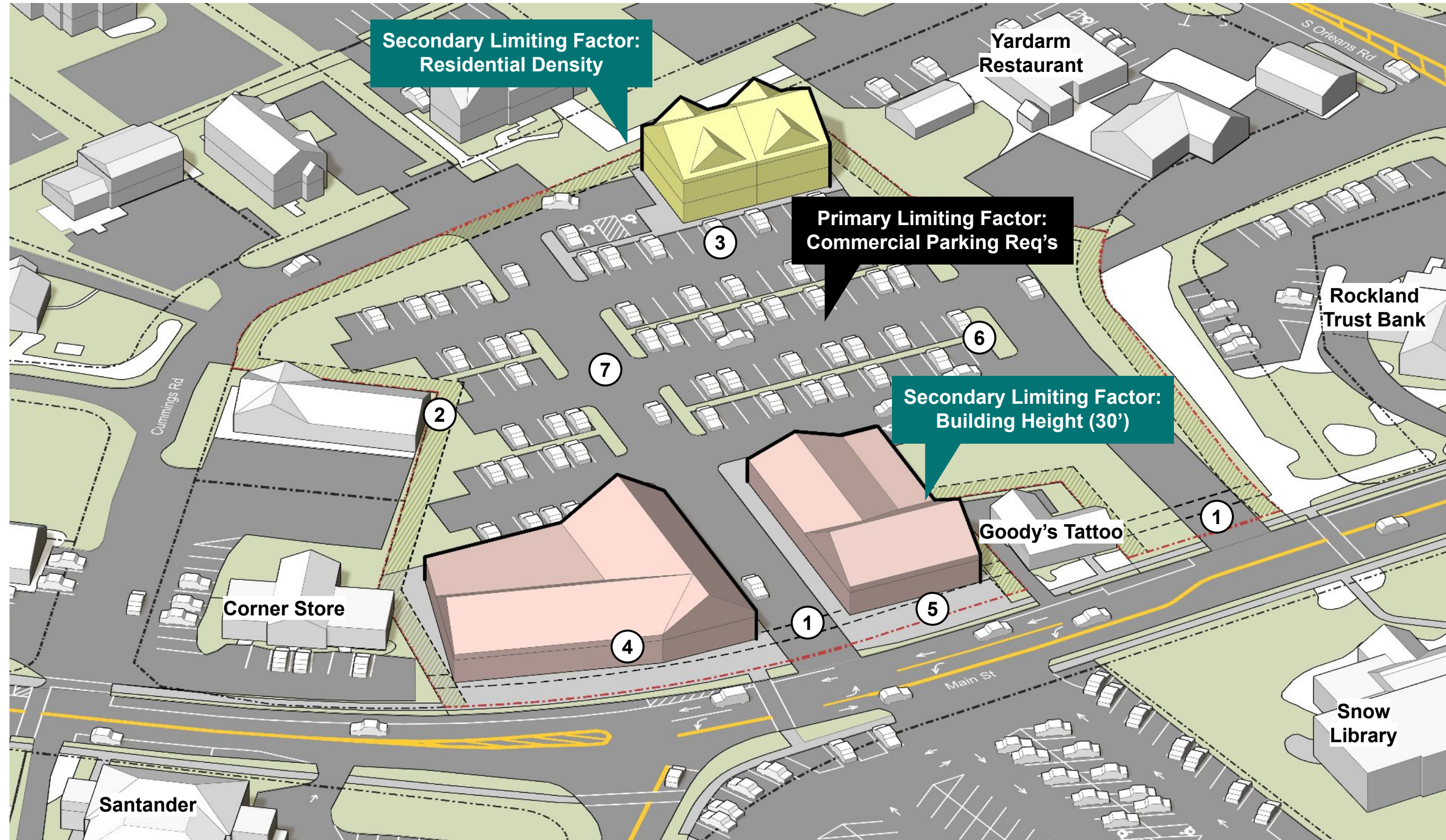


Post Office Square

By-Right Test-fit



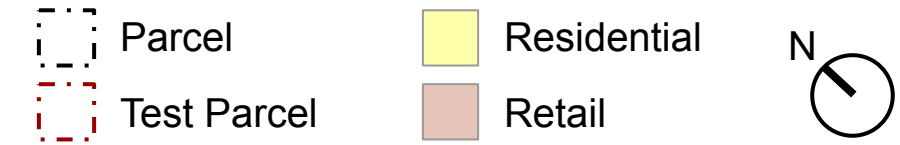
1. Wide maximum driveway width (30'); maximum of 2 driveways onto street, separated by 200'
2. Parking areas must be min. 10' away from any street or lot line, with a green zone
3. Parking areas can abut building
4. Low building transparency req. on 1st floor facing street (30%)
5. Sidewalk and planting area reqs along street frontage
6. Parking lot planting reqs, including trees
7. No limits on impervious surface



Post Office Square

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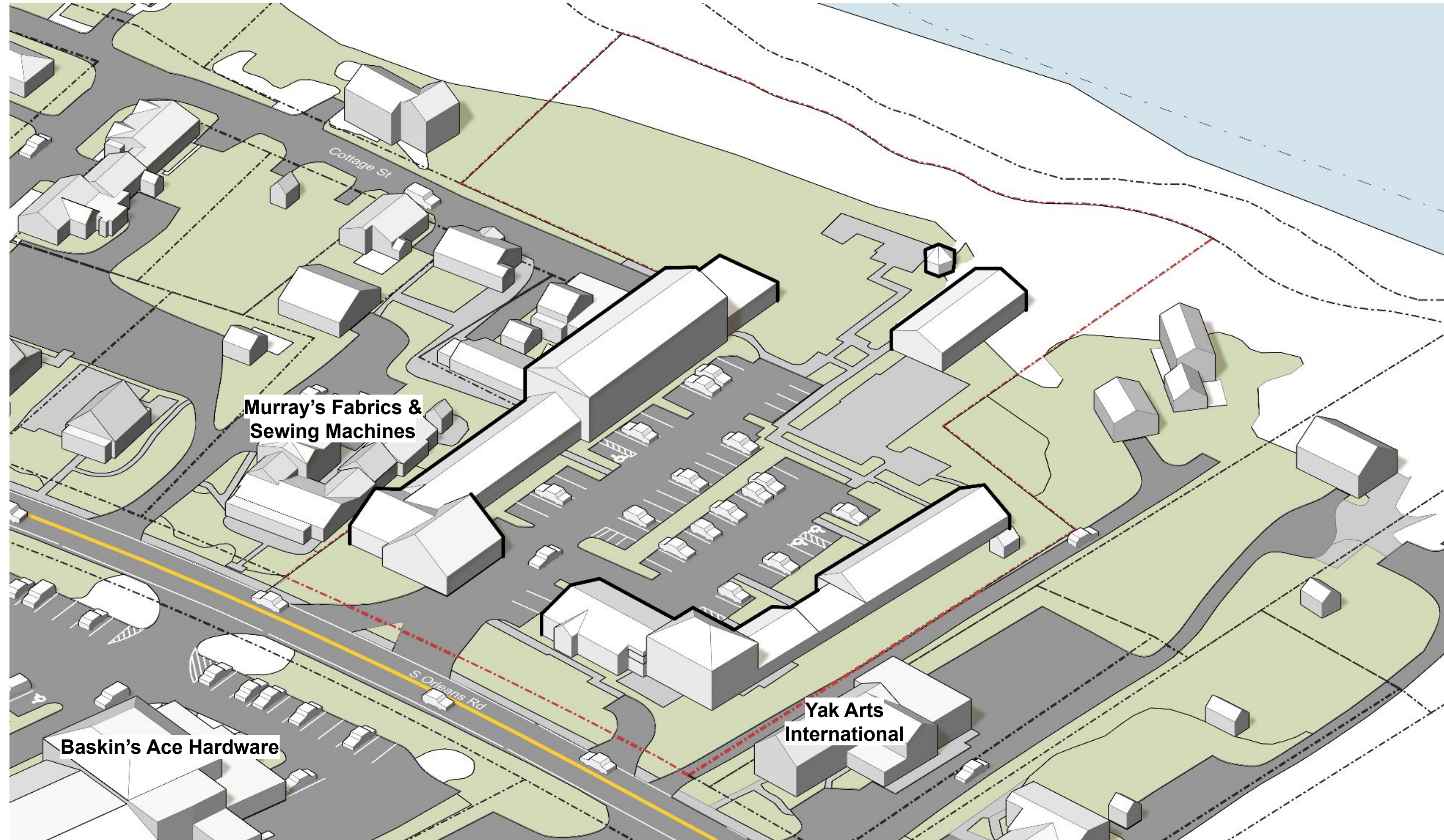
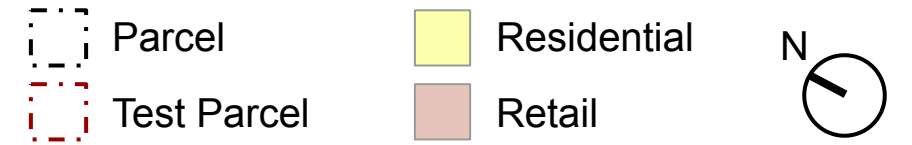


Cove Motel

Existing Site



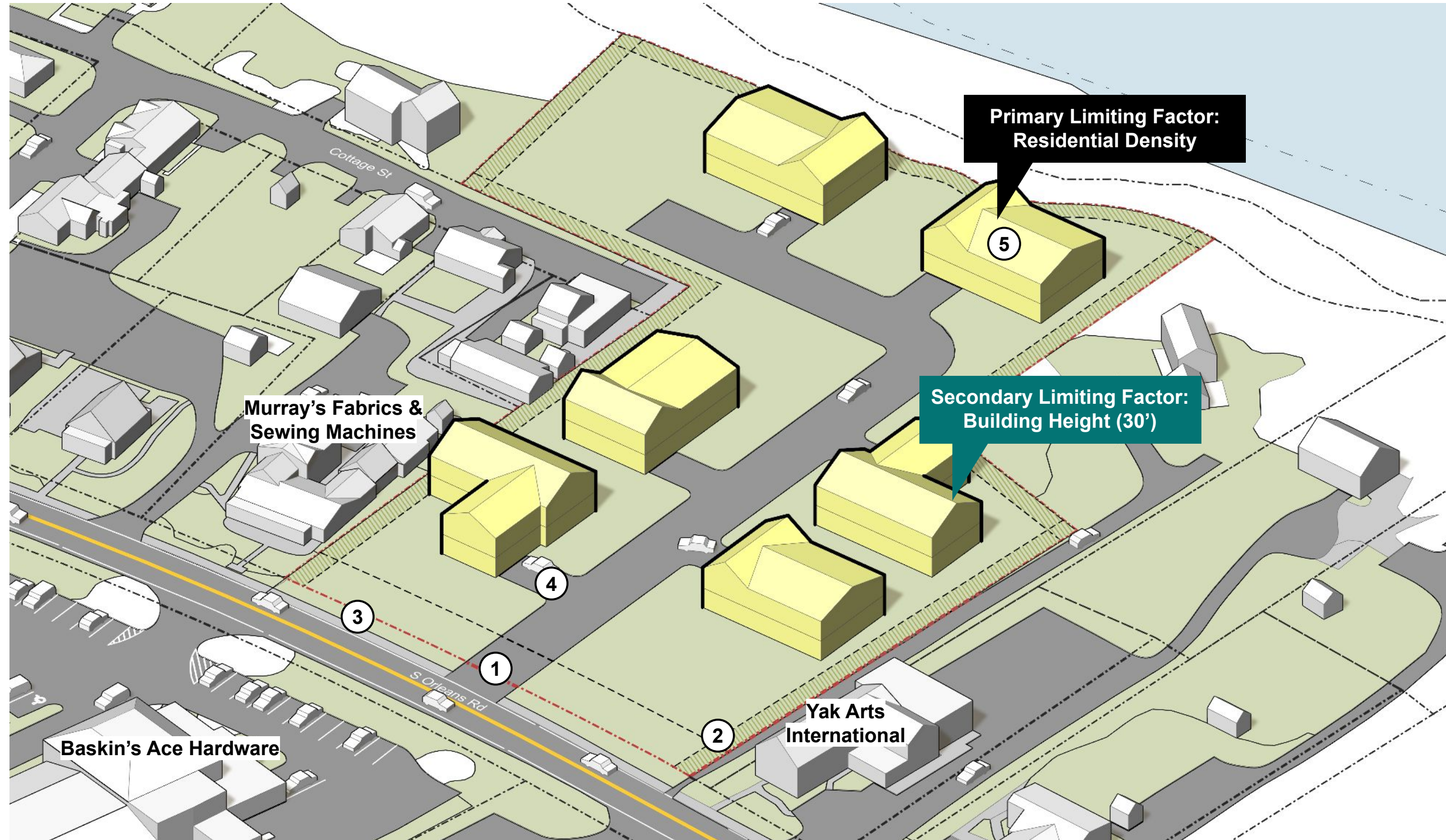
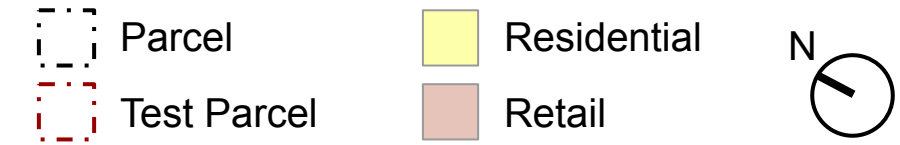
Zoning: Limited Business
Lot Size: 2.50 AC (108,704 SF)
Year Built: 1959
FAR: 0.21



Cove Motel

By-Right Test-fit

1. Wide maximum driveway width (30')
2. Parking areas must be min. 10' away from any street or lot line, with a screened green zone
3. Front yard must be landscaped, 6' min depth.
4. Parking is allowed in the front of the lot
5. Maximum 6 DU's are permitted on single lot



Cove Motel

Draft Zoning Test-fit

1. Within the 100' Buffer Zone, multiple buildings are permitted to have a maximum footprint of 4,000 SF
2. Buildings behind the 100' Buffer Zone must be 50% 900 SF and 50% 600 SF
3. Facades facing the front lot line may be max 35' before a recess or offset, facades not facing the street may be max 60' before a recess or offset
4. Buildings within the 100' buffer zone may be up to 3.5 stories, buildings behind the 100' buffer zone may be up to 1.5 stories
5. Both flat and pitched roofs are permitted



Attainable Housing Bonus

Draft Design Standards

To incentivize a greater supply of attainable housing, the zoning proposes an attainable housing bonus for developments that provide deed-restricted year-round for affordable and workforce housing. To ensure the Village Center core maintains its village-scale character, the bonus will only apply to the Commercial Center zone (which does not have active ground floor use requirements) and not in the Village Center buffer zone.

The bonus proposes a tiered schedule of incentives, and allows the following standards:

- **Footprint**
 - Maximum building footprint increased up to 15,000 SF at the highest tier
- **Other standards to consider**
 - Reduced parking requirement of 0.75 spaces/unit

Number of Affordable Housing Units Required		
	Inclusionary Zoning Units	Max. Floor Plate
Base Zoning	10% @ 80% AMI 15% @ up to 200% AMI	8,000 SF
Incentive Tier 1	10% @ 80% AMI 40% @ up to 200% AMI	10,000 SF
Incentive Tier 2	10% @ 80% AMI 65% @ up to 200% AMI	12,000 SF
Incentive Tier 3	10% @ 80% AMI 90% @ up to 200% AMI	15,000 SF

Draft Zoning Standards

1: Village Center

2: Commercial Center

3: Town Cove

Building Footprint, Max.

4,000 SF
primary building;
2,000 SF
secondary
buildings

8,000 SF

900 SF 50% of
development;
600 SF 50% of
development

Building Height, Max.

3.5

3.5

1.5

Roof Form

Pitched Roofs

Pitched and Flat
Roof Buildings
Allowed

Pitched Roofs

Facade Articulation

Facing the
Front Lot
Line

35' Max. Continuous Facade

All Other
Facades

60' Max. Continuous Facade

