

# New Bedford Waterfront Redevelopment Plan

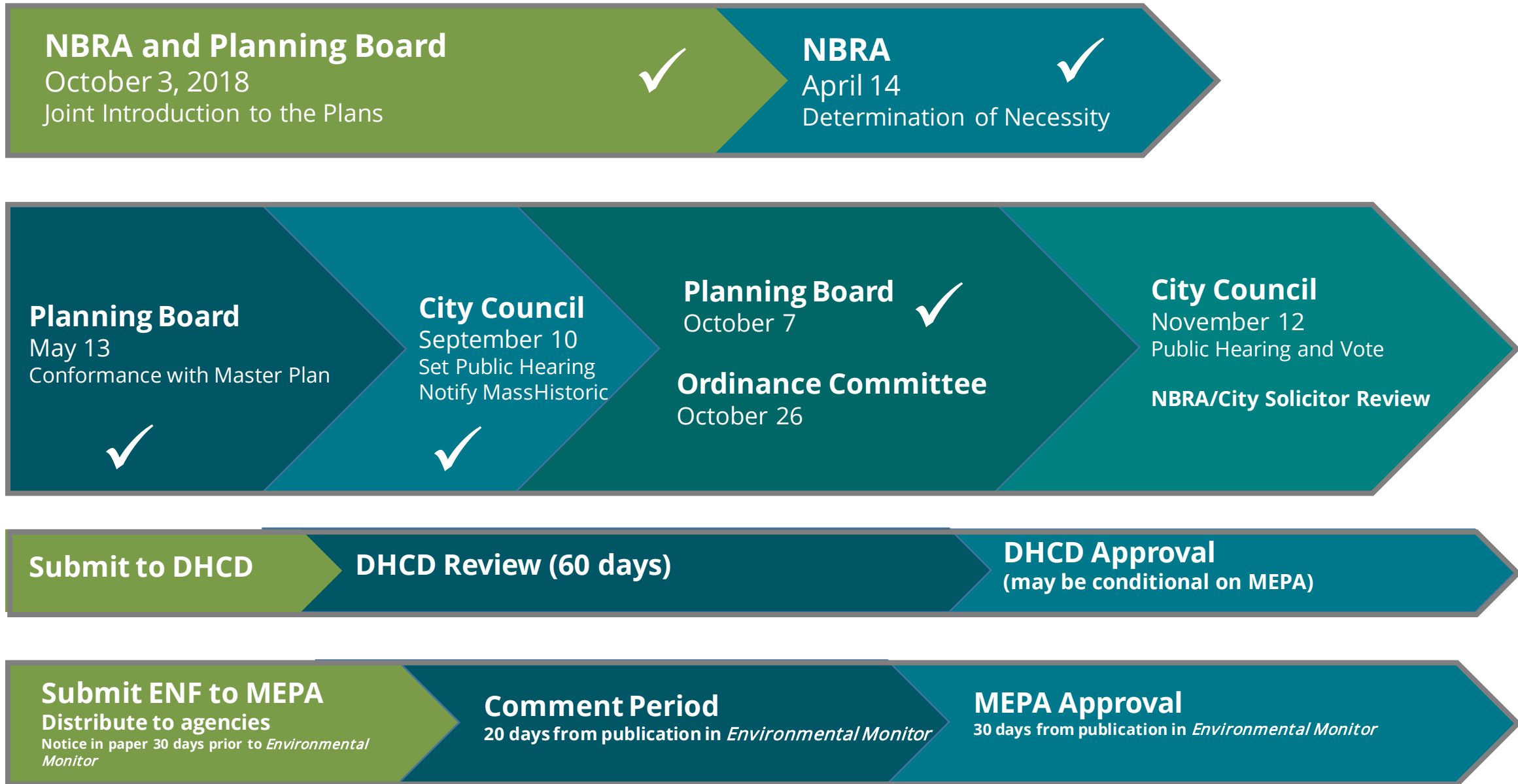
New Bedford Ordinance Committee  
October 26, 2020



- Responsibilities and Timeline
- History of the Planning Process
  - Purpose of the Plans
  - Chapter 91 and the DPA
  - Evolution
- The Plans
- Role of NBRA and Others
- Development Implications
- Existing and Proposed Zoning



# Responsibilities and Timeline



- The planning for the waterfront was divided into three parts:
- Phase I: New Bedford Waterfront Framework Plan
  - This planning effort, led by Sasaki, looked at the entire waterfront.
- Phase II: New Bedford Waterfront Redevelopment Plans: Focus Area North and Focus Area South
  - This planning effort, led by Harriman, looked at the two areas that were not economically vibrant and that qualified to be included as part of a redevelopment plan under M.G.L. Chapter 121B.
  - Phase II also included the development of zoning and design guidelines to implement these plans.
- Phase III: Municipal Harbor Plan
  - This planning effort would need to include the Town of Fairhaven and would be conducted under the requirements of Chapter 91, The Waterways Act and 301 CMR 23 (Municipal Harbor Plans).

# Phase I

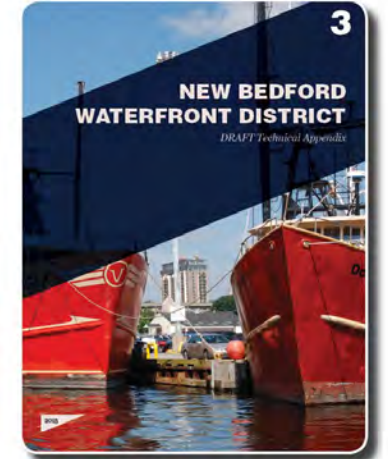
Waterfront Plan

# Phase II

Redevelopment Plan



1. Land Use Framework Plan
2. Redevelopment Plan
3. Technical Appendices

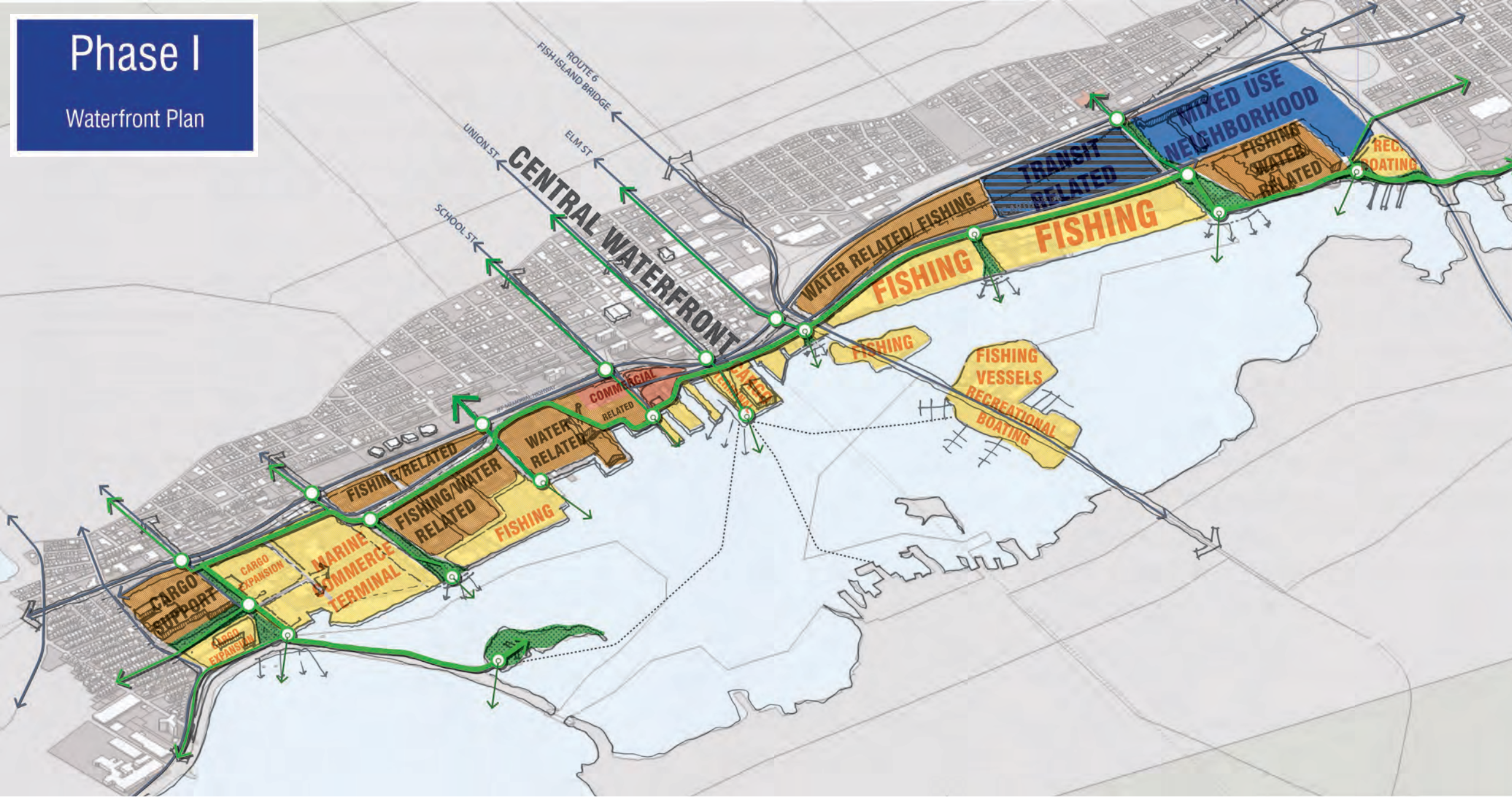


New Bedford's **WATERFRONT VISION** links its **HISTORY** with the continued success of **EXISTING AND FUTURE WATERFRONT INDUSTRIES** and increased public access, anchoring the City's role as the **ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL HUB** for the greater South Coast region.



# Phase I

## Waterfront Plan

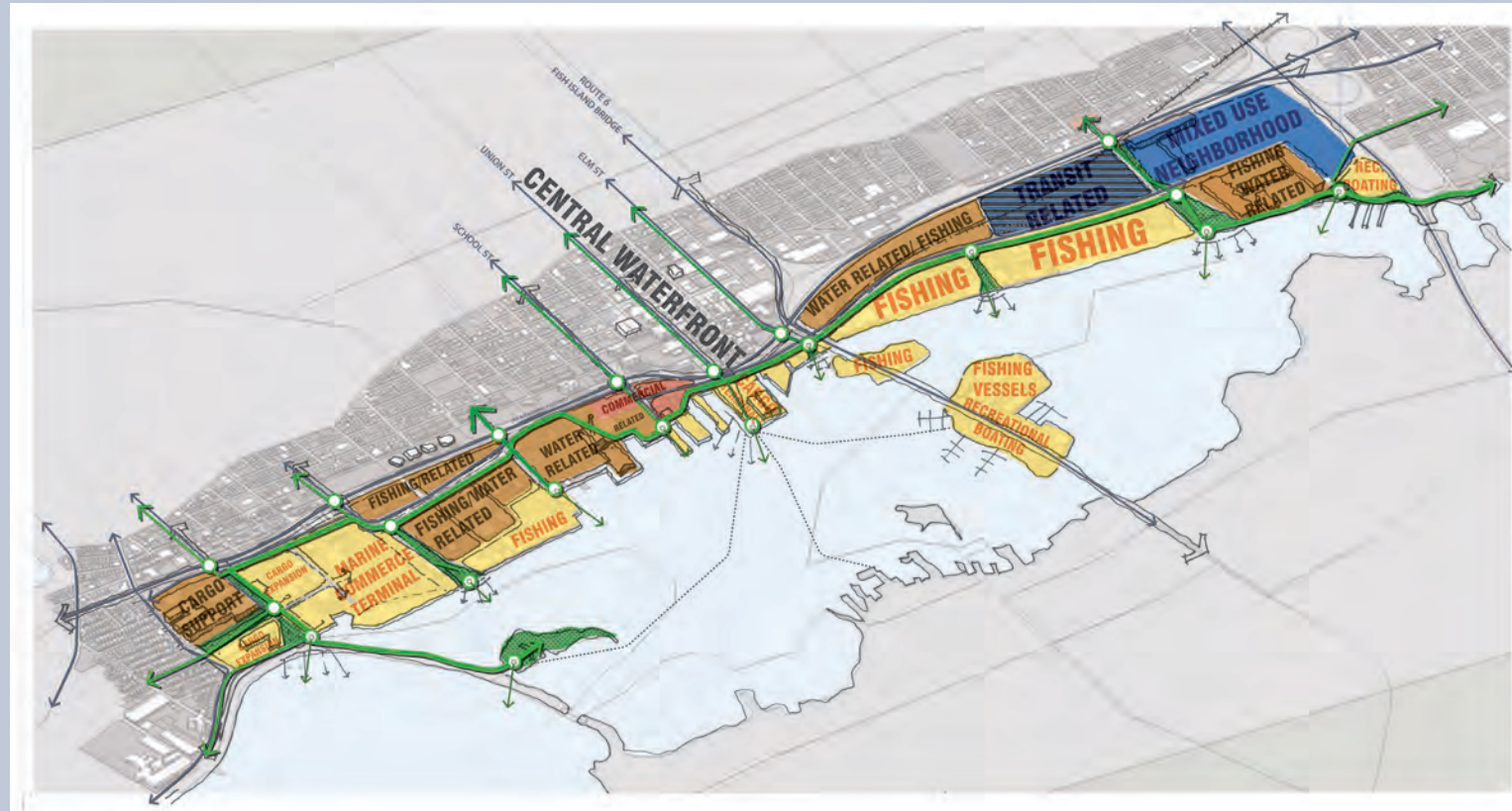




# Phase I

## Waterfront Plan

- Support commercial fishing and marine support facilities.
- Support existing cargo operations, via infrastructure or expansion to additional sites.
- Continue recreational boating, ferries, and excursion boats at State Pier and at new marinas.
- Ensure related businesses maintain needed water access, share knowledge and skills, and have “softer” infrastructure needs met.
- Create a flexible land use framework and implementation strategy that supports new and expands existing industries, maximizing economic development and flexibility for the future.
- Promote, reinforce, and educate the community about New Bedford’s historic working waterfront.
- Balance the needs of existing users with new industries and public access.
- Strategically incorporate public access proximate to downtown and at key points along the Waterfront.



# Phase I

## Waterfront Plan

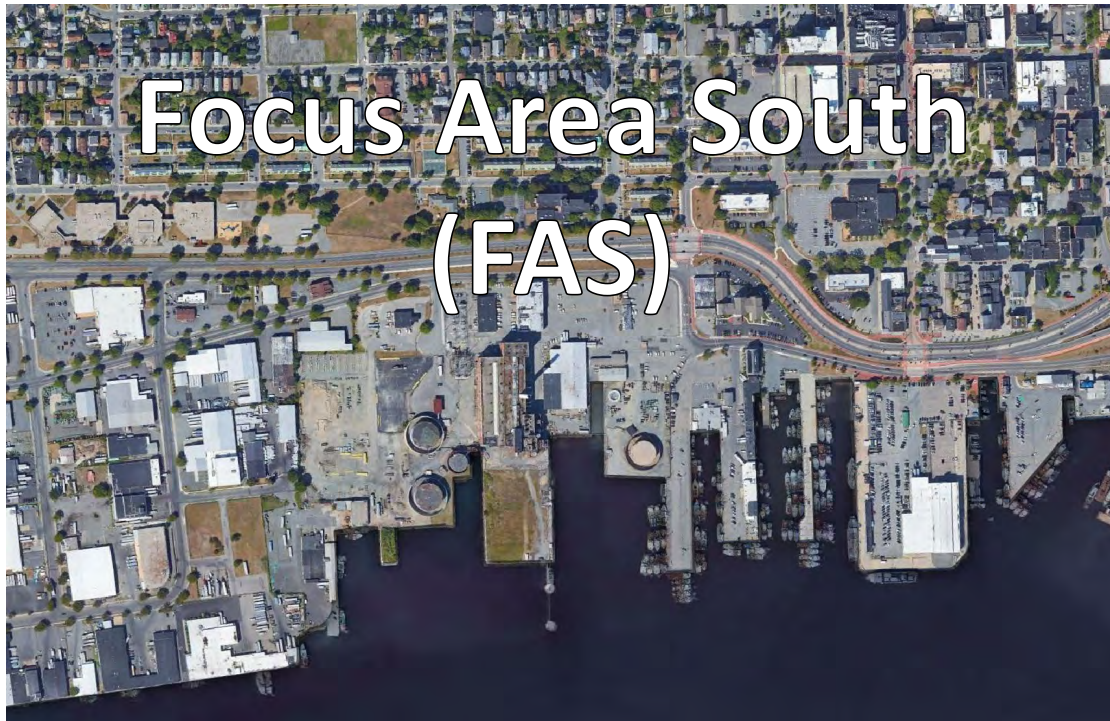
- Redevelopment Plans
  - Enabled by Chapter 121B of the Massachusetts General Laws.
  - Allow certain actions by a Redevelopment Authority.
  - Create and support conditions that promote private investment within a redevelopment area.
- Draft Redevelopment Strategy:
  - Was an implementation step for the New Bedford Waterfront District Master Plan.
  - Will act as a guide for the Redevelopment Authority during Phase II.
  - Phase II is the creation of two complete Redevelopment Plans.





Focus of this phase is on the two subareas that are less vibrant than the overall waterfront and that meet the definition of blighted area.

The purpose of each plan is to revitalize underutilized areas within an otherwise economically vibrant waterfront area.



## Chapter 91: Waterways Act

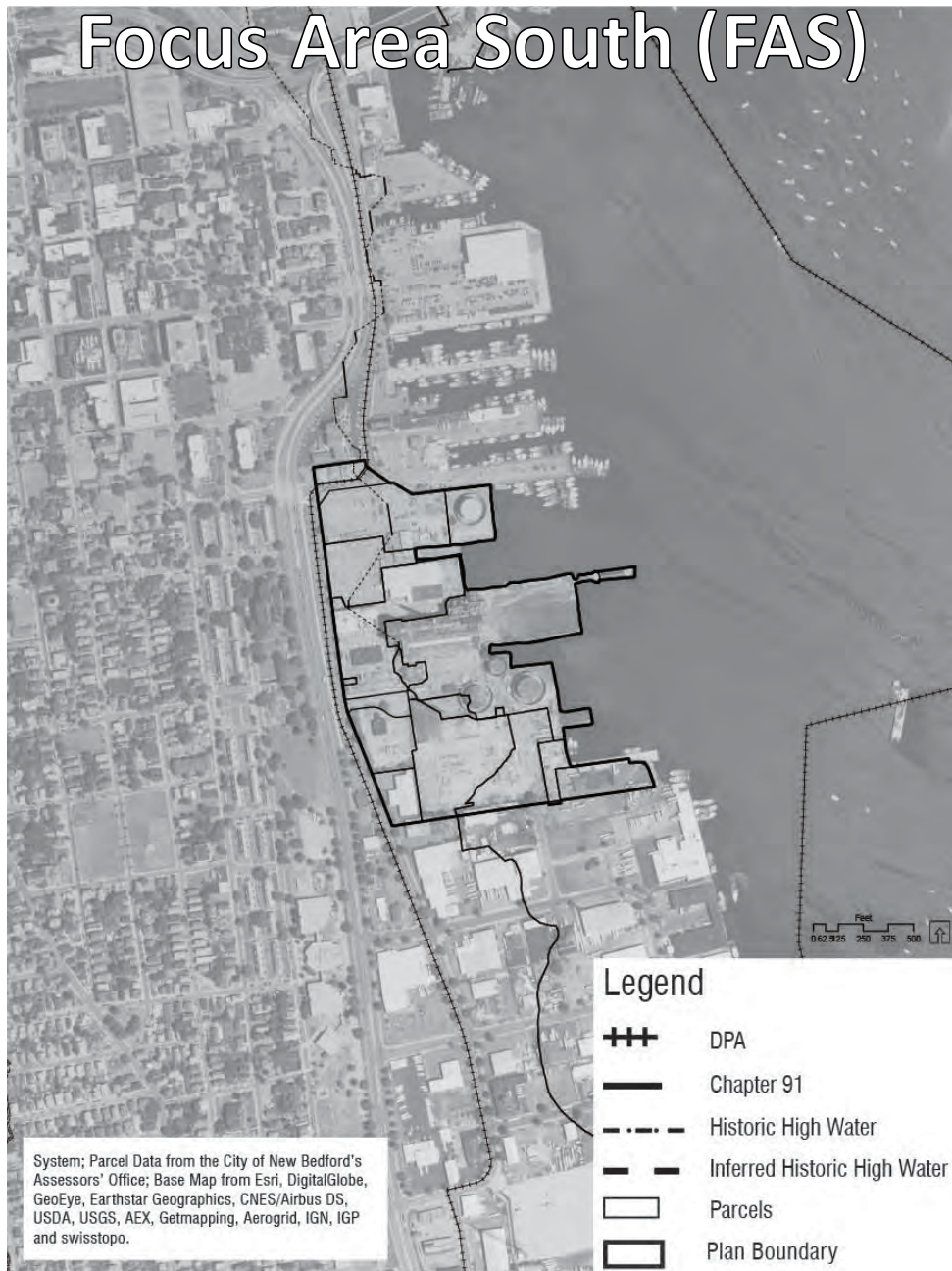
- Public access along the waterfront is required by Chapter 91. The NBRA will work with property owners to ensure that the required public access is implemented in ways that meet the vision of this plan. This would mean working with property owners/developers prior to a formal application to the City to discuss the goals and suggested options for public access in both plans.
- Property owners must apply for a license for structures and uses within the jurisdiction of Chapter 91 from MassDEP.
- Some requirements may be modified by a state-approved Municipal Harbor Plan.

## Designated Port Area (DPA)

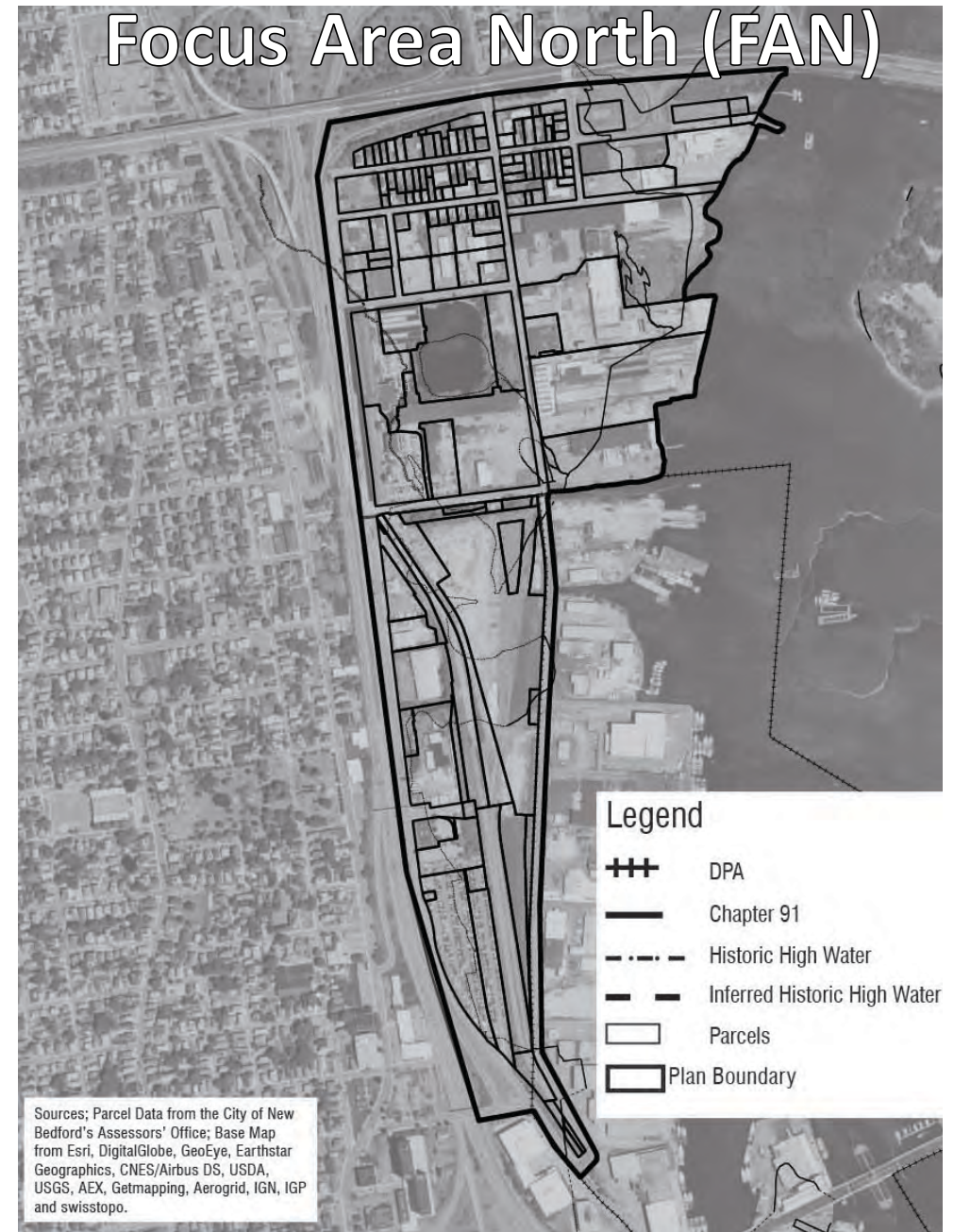
- Public access and connection to the community is encouraged, as long as it does not interfere with the purposes of the DPA.
- Within the DPA boundary, certain uses are “presumptively compatible,” such as storefront retail, small-scale administrative offices, and eating and drinking establishments; while other uses are not allowed, including residential, new office buildings, and large-scale recreational boating facilities.
- New Bedford had a mechanism for transferring development rights – the Supporting DPA Use Eligibility Credit Program – but it was eliminated in the *New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor Plan* (2010).
- MassDEP licenses structures and uses in a DPA.



## Focus Area South (FAS)



## Focus Area North (FAN)



- The plans themselves have not changed substantially from the fall of 2018.
- The City and Harriman have been developing zoning for both focus areas.
  - During the drafting process for the zoning, several minor changes have been identified for the plans in terms of the locations and types of future land uses.
    - For Focus Area North, Revere Copper will no longer be identified as an acquisition site.
    - The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for the Commonwealth has also requested some minor changes to the format and content of the plans.
- The plans have been updated with the final proposed zoning for the areas.
- The plans are receiving further technical updates to ensure that data is as current as possible.



The vision for this redevelopment area is to develop, over time, a vibrant mixed-use district that allows water-dependent uses along the water's edge, higher density residential further inland, neighborhood goods and services to support the residential uses, and public access to the waterfront. Proposed rail service to Boston from the expansion of the South Coast Rail commuter service will support additional residential development.

Improvements to the existing circulation system will allow residents to travel from abutting neighborhoods to waterfront jobs as pedestrians, cyclists, or by bus, while trucks and cars can travel efficiently between the businesses along the waterfront, and connect to other local destinations and Routes 18 and Interstate-195 (I-195). Additional freight rail service will support industrial uses in both this area and further south, and access to the rail spur north of Hervey Tichon Avenue must be considered along with other uses.

In this redevelopment area, a vibrant mix of uses will support public access and enjoyment of the water's edge, except for the small portion to the southeast located in the DPA. Those uses will support the overall mix of uses in the entire redevelopment area. These uses should include those on the watershed itself – access to slips for boats visiting for a few hours or a few days could support additional activity. The area close to Kyler's Seafood could also support kayaks or other small boats to allow direct access to the water without interfering with the fishing fleet and other industrial uses further south.

# Vision and Goals: FAN

1. Support a mix of land uses including water-dependent and supporting uses that also require excellent highway access, higher density residential, and neighborhood retail and services.
2. Implement infrastructure improvements that support multimodal users – trucks, cars, pedestrians, bicyclists, and the rail spur to the waterfront.
3. Provide amenities to support private development such as recreational areas and restoration of the fire pond.
4. Provide public access to the waterfront, link that access back to the street network, and establish areas for public access to the watershed.
5. Establish design guidelines for new construction to reinforce public access to the waterfront, create an active streetscape to reinforce walkability within the redevelopment area, and create a clear identity for this redevelopment areas in contrast to rest of the New Bedford waterfront.



This slide shows the existing conditions of Focus Area North and its surrounding context.

The following two slides illustrate how development could change over time, particularly with respect to the public access along the water.

Each scenario shows the illustrative plan with the regulatory boundary of the DPA and the Chapter 91 jurisdiction line.





# Illustration: FAN Scenario I

with regulatory boundaries





# Illustration: FAN Scenario II

with regulatory boundaries

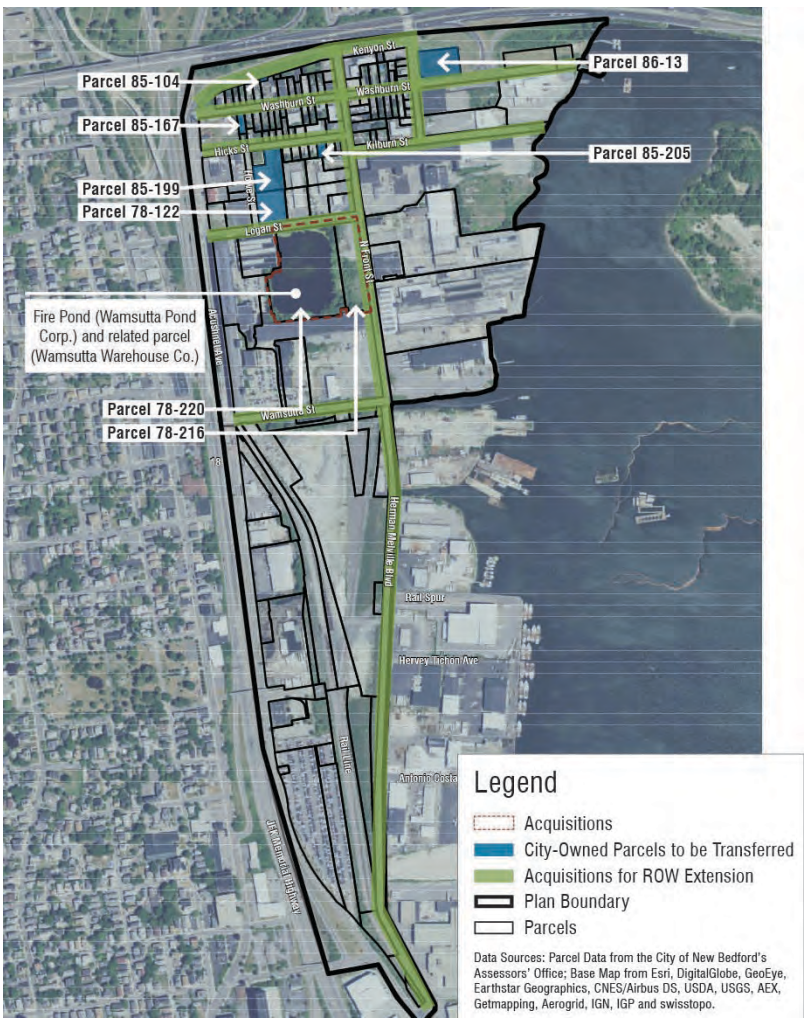
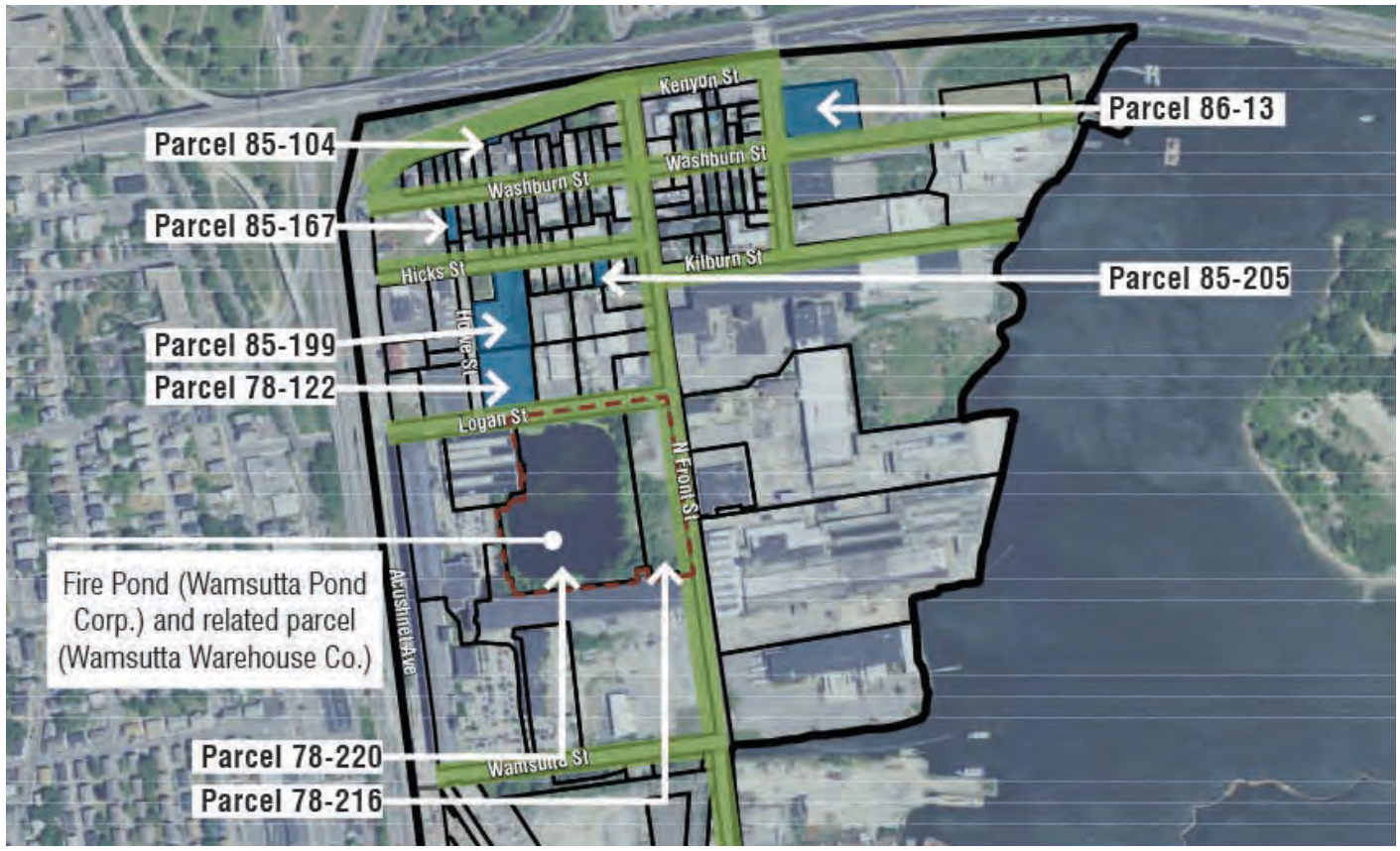


For illustrative purposes only.





Proposed acquisitions under this plan include City-owned land for redevelopment and land along the existing rights-of-way for infrastructure improvements.



**Legend**

- Acquisitions
- City-Owned Parcels to be Transferred
- Acquisitions for ROW Extension
- Plan Boundary
- Parcels

Data Sources: Parcel Data from the City of New Bedford's Assessors' Office; Base Map from Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP and swisstopo.



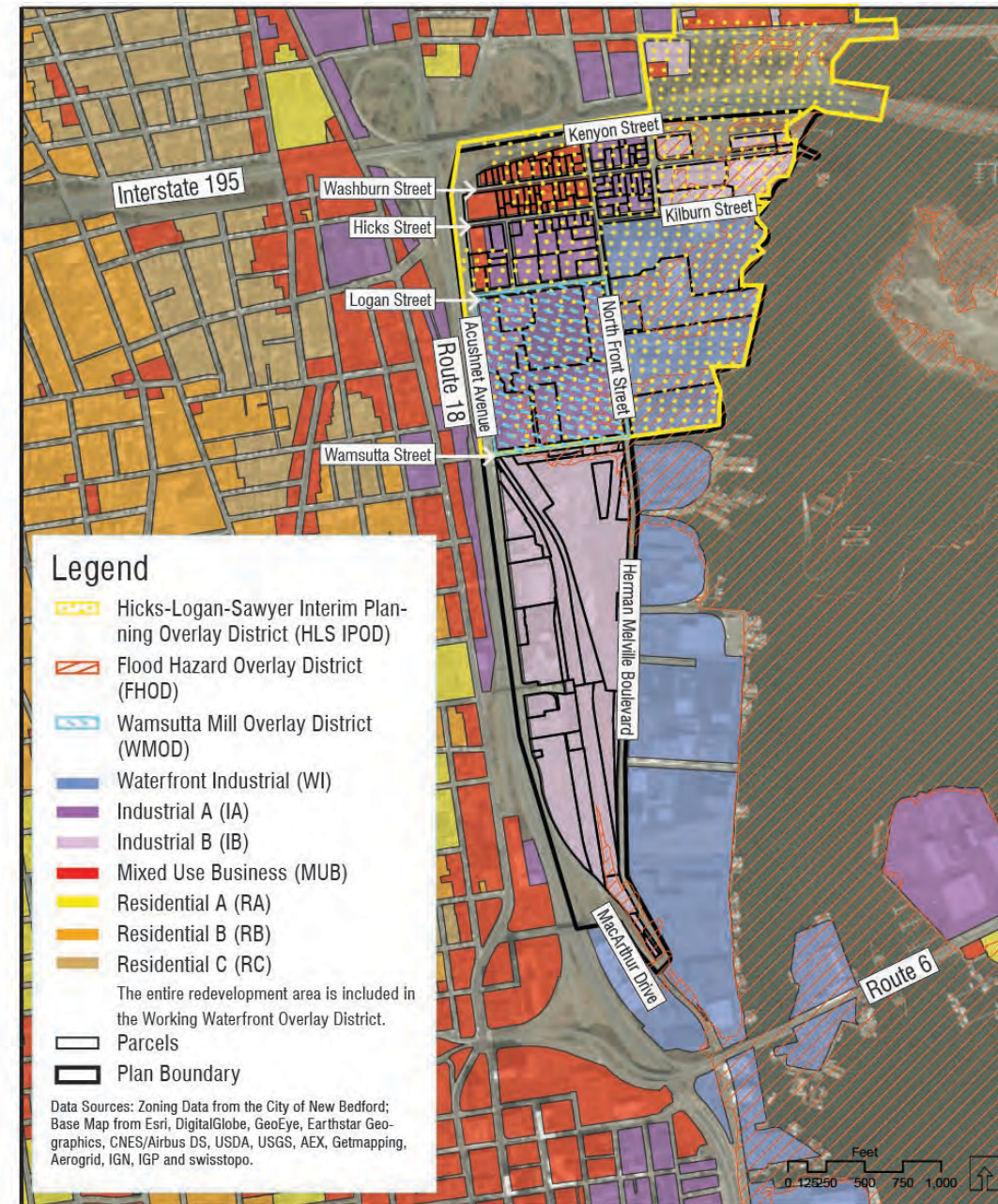
## Proposed infrastructure improvements include:

- Remediating the fire pond and turning it and the adjacent vacant land into public green space to support future mixed-use development.
- Improving the streetscape throughout the area to make travel safe for trucks, cars, pedestrians, and bicyclists.





Existing zoning in FAN is a mix of underlying districts and overlay districts, including the interim Hicks-Logan-Sawyer Overlay district (HLS-IPOD) and the Wamsutta Mills Overlay District (WMOD).

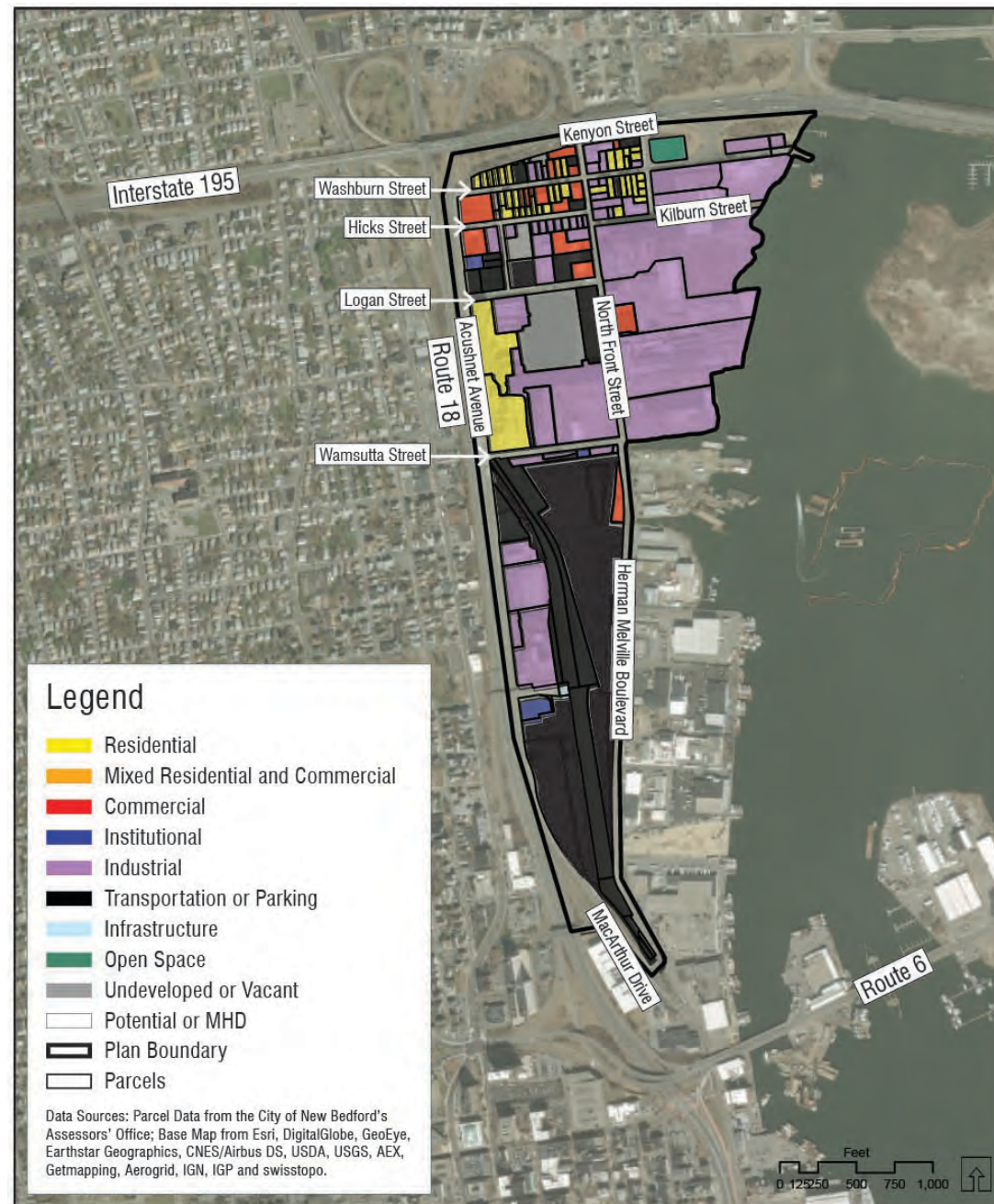




The existing land uses (taken from the City's Assessors' database) is equally a mix of uses but primarily industrial with a mix of low-density residential in the Hicks-Logan-Sawyer area and multifamily at the Wamsutta Mill development.

Certain uses are not consistent with existing zoning, including the tire shredding operation on Washburn Street.

Land use south of Wamsutta Street is unlikely to change and has not been included in the proposed zoning changes.

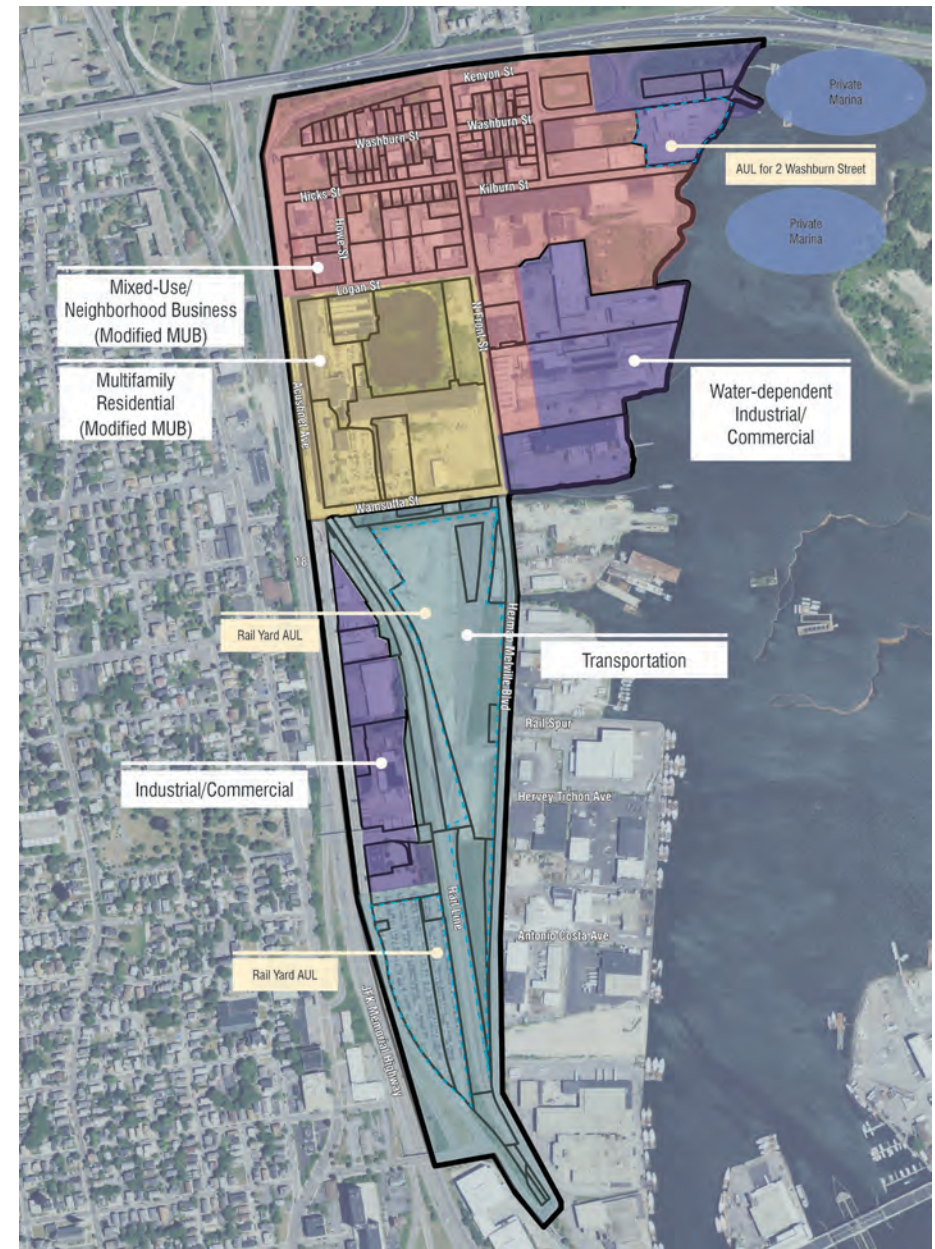
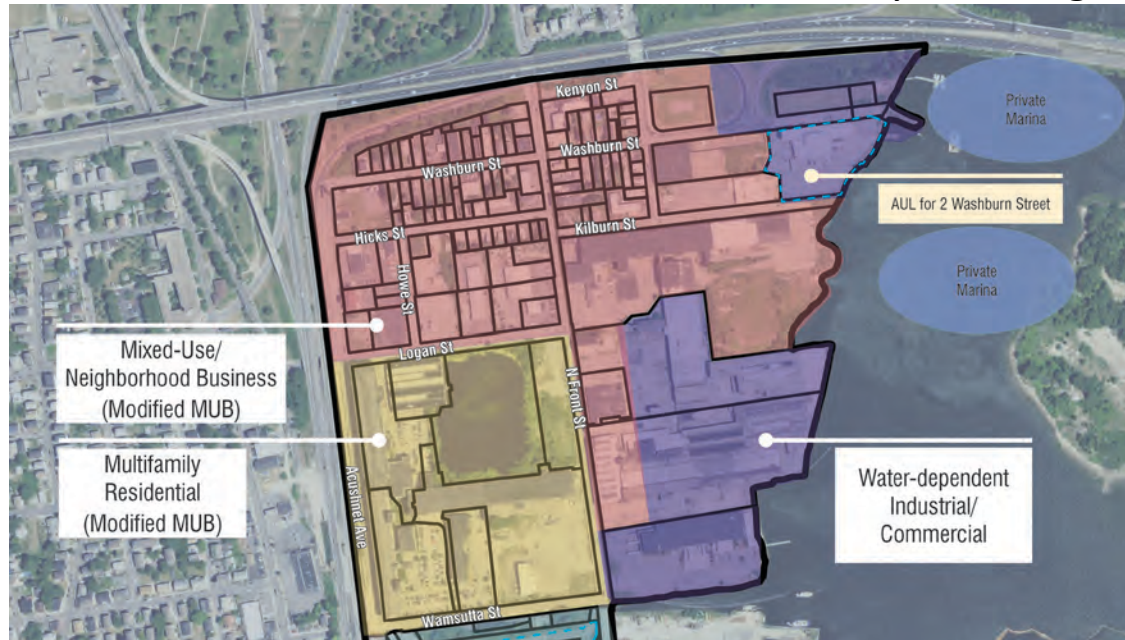




Public access along the waterfront is required by Chapter 91. The plan offers recommendations for how this public access should be achieved and the NBRA should discuss those options with property owners contemplating development on their properties prior to a formal application to the City.

Zoning changes are required to extend MUB into the areas shaded in red and yellow.

Land uses below Wamsutta Street are unlikely to change.



# Vision and Goals: FAS

This redevelopment area, centered on the Sprague/Eversource parcels, will support the existing water-dependent commercial and industrial businesses that form the backbone of New Bedford's waterfront economy. These businesses include traditional business, such as fishing, cargo handling, and boat repair, and emerging industries, such as off-shore wind.

In addition to providing room for existing businesses to expand and new businesses to establish themselves, this redevelopment area will provide a critical connection between New Bedford's historic downtown and the vibrant working waterfront. Members of the public will have a designated access to the working waterfront, on municipal piers, including a new public walkway adjacent to the southern edge of Leonard's Wharf, that will allow them to appreciate the fishing industry that defines the New Bedford waterfront, while experiencing the new industries, such as off-shore wind and marine sciences, that coexist with the traditional water-dependent uses. A new seafood offloading facility or other active use will act as a draw to visitors, providing additional services to the fishing industry while supporting New Bedford's tourism industry.

An area contiguous with the Fairfield Inn and Suites will be designed as a gateway area to continue the transition from New Bedford's downtown to the waterfront. Restaurants, retail, parking, and other services will provide amenities for those working in the area and support additional tourism opportunities in specific locations within the area.



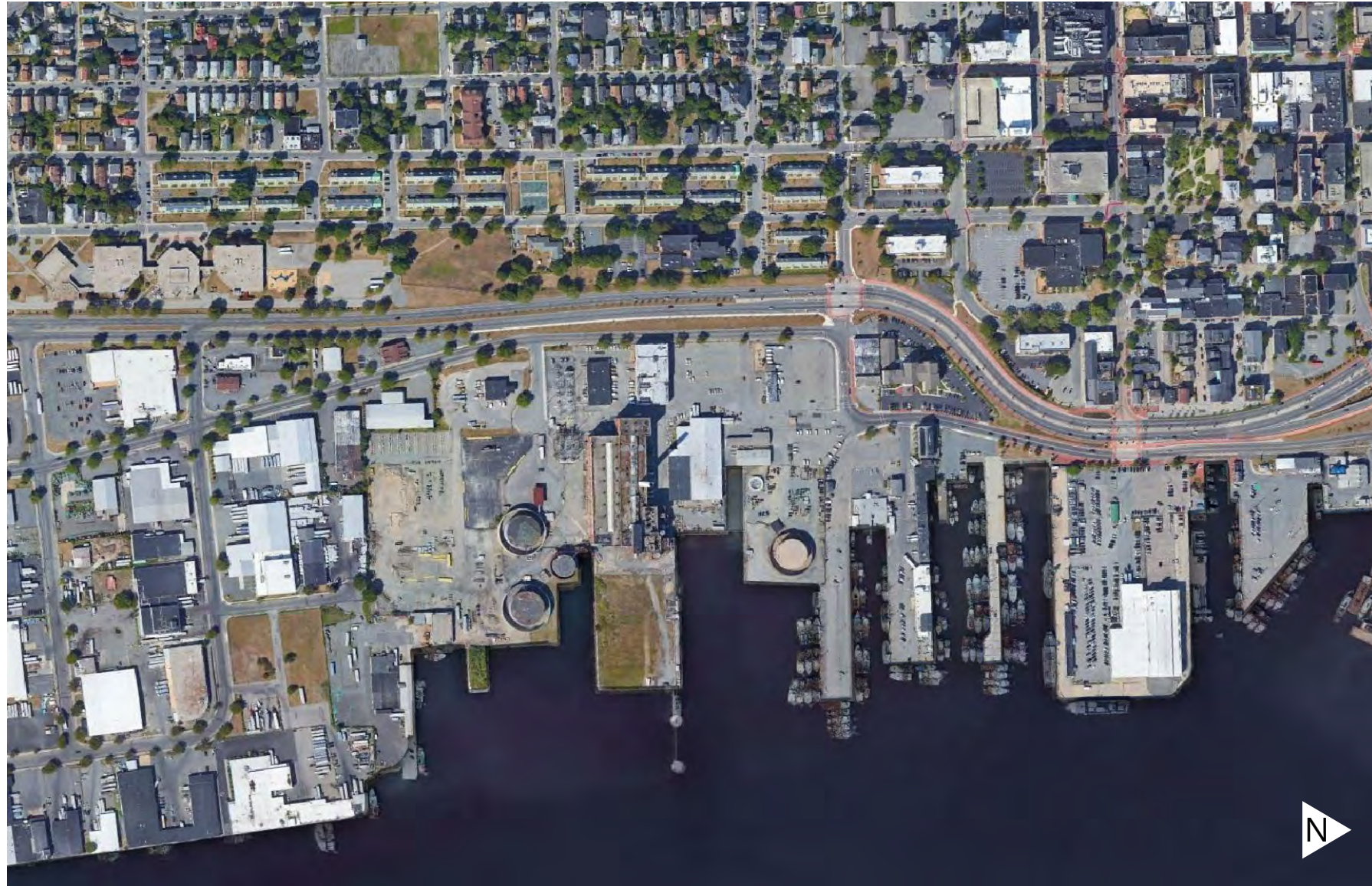
# Vision and Goals: FAS

1. Support water-dependent, industrial uses within the DPA boundary, integrating them with the existing waterfront economy.
2. Identify and support activities that draw people to experience and support the waterfront, such as the seafood off-loading facility and restaurants that serve locally caught seafood.
3. Create public access to the waterfront to promote greater understanding of the traditional working waterfront and the new marine-related industries.
4. Establish a gateway area outside of the DPA that provides a transition to the downtown and parking for both waterfront businesses and the public. The zoning will be more flexible in the area outside the DPA.
5. Establish design guidelines for new construction to reinforce the public access to the waterfront and create a clear identify for those public areas in contrast to the industrial areas.

This slide shows the existing conditions of Focus Area South and its surrounding context.

The following slides show two concepts. Each scenario illustrates how development could change over time, particularly with respect to the mixed-use area.

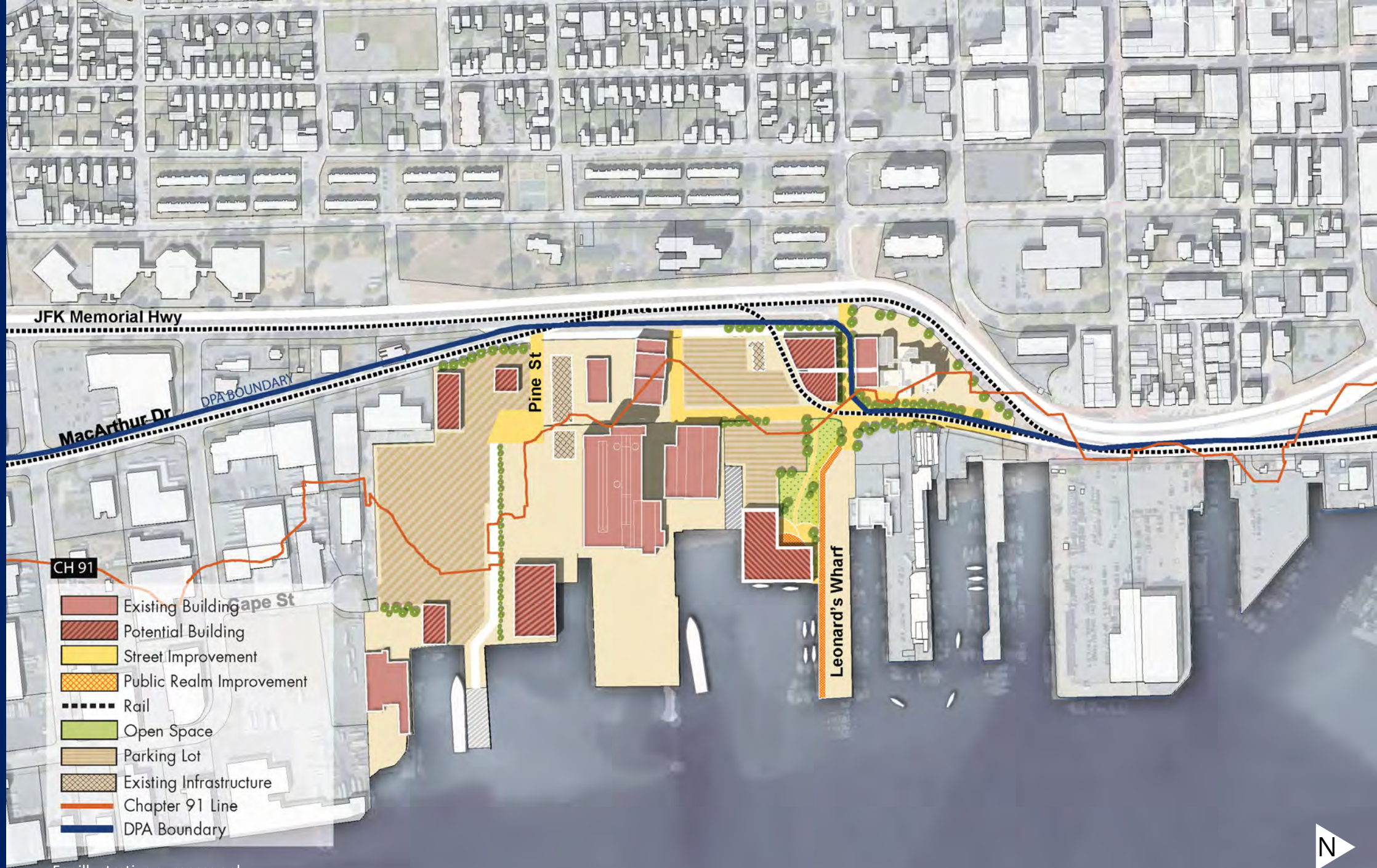
Each scenario shows the illustrative plan with the regulatory boundary of the DPA and the Chapter 91 jurisdiction line.





# Illustration: FAS Scenario I

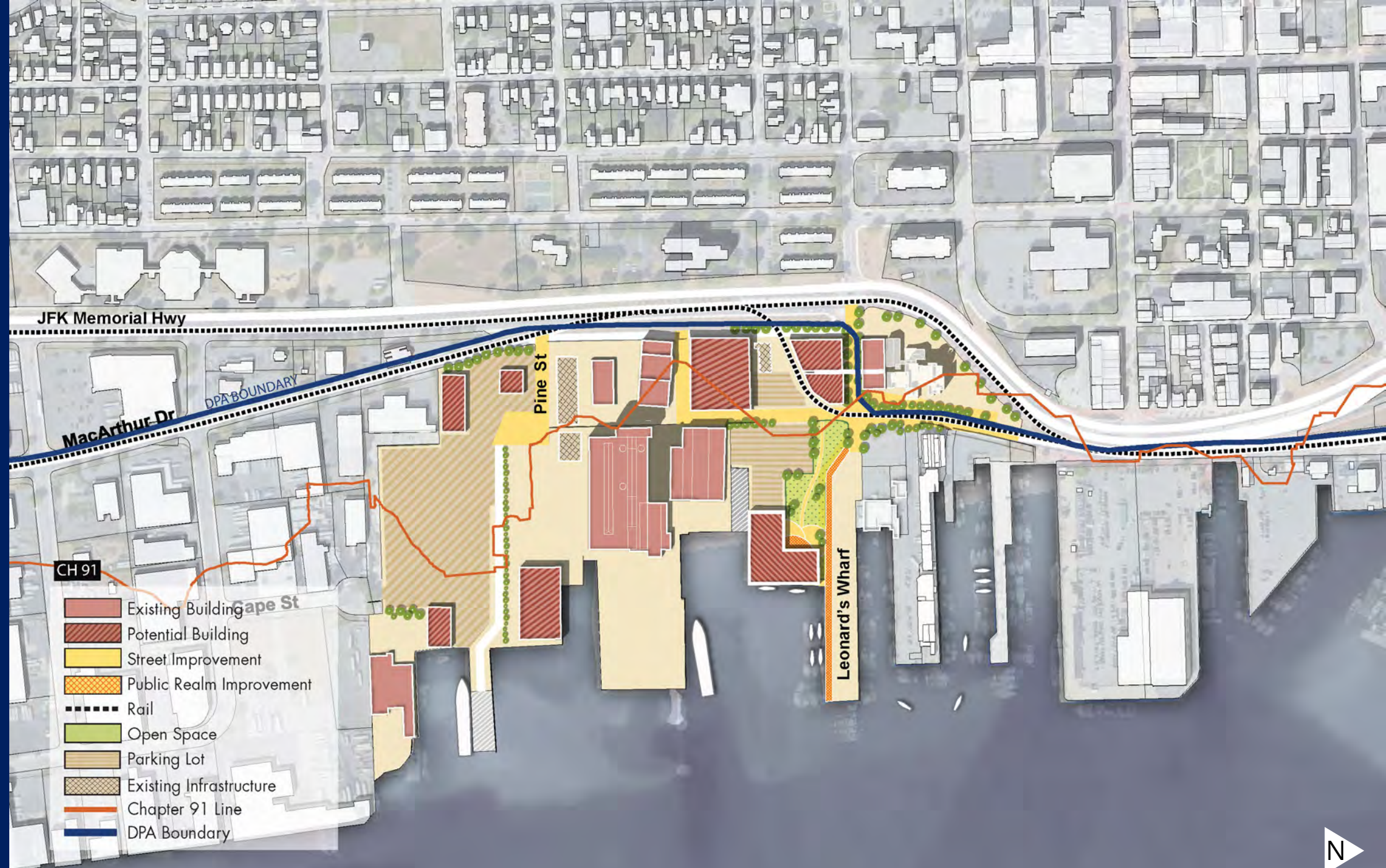
with regulatory boundaries





# Illustration: FAS Scenario II

with regulatory boundaries

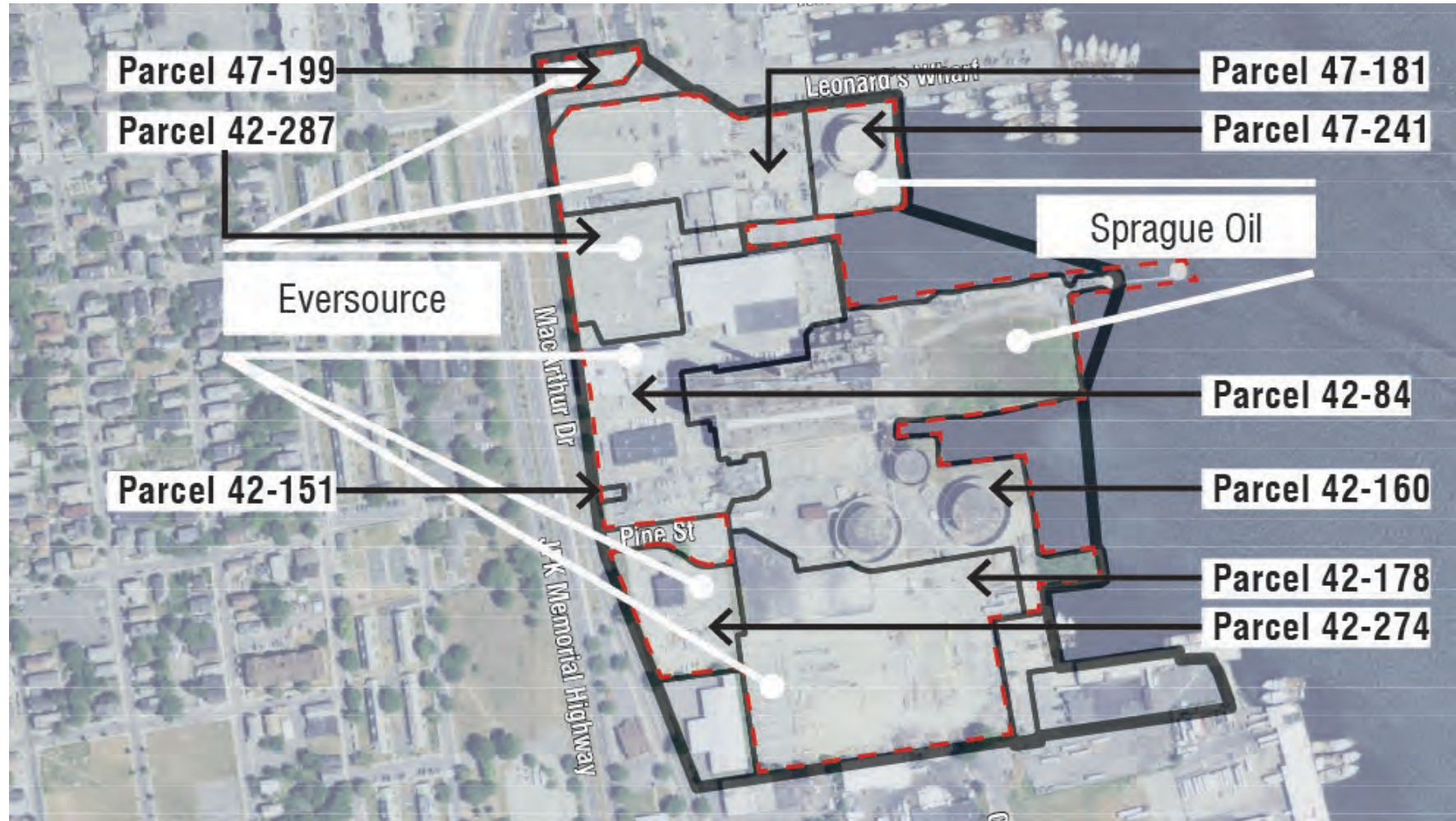


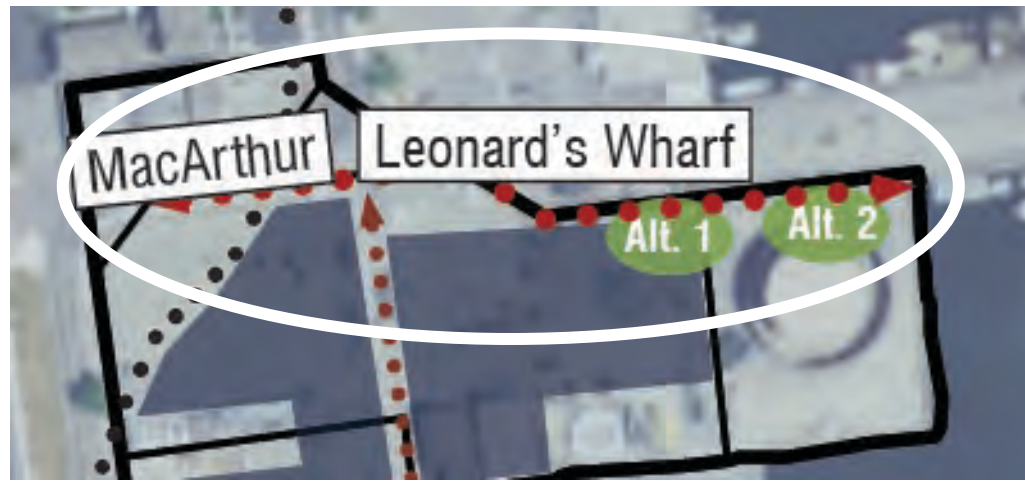
For illustrative purposes only.





Potential acquisitions under this plan are the parcels owned by Eversource and Sprague.





Two alternatives are shown for the waterfront park. Alternative 1 is shown in the two illustrative concepts in the Executive Summary (Figures 1-2 and 1-3); Alternative 2 is shown in the diagram in Figure 4-3 of the plan.

Waterfront access connects the waterfront edge to MacArthur Drive, running along the border of the redevelopment area, south of Leonard's Wharf.

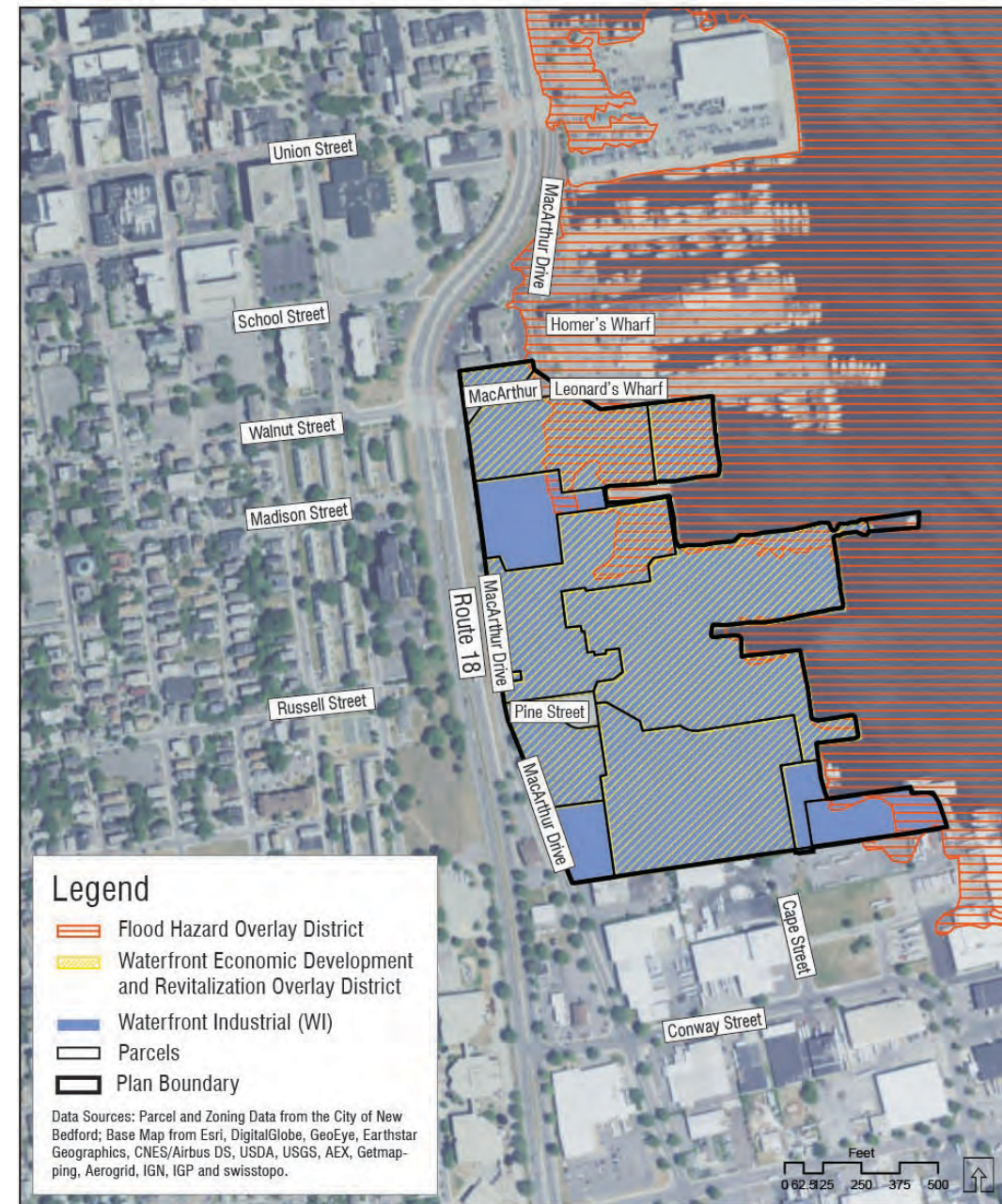
Street extensions will depend on whether and how the larger parcels are reparcelized. The extension of Pine Street and Cape Street are anticipated in *Section 12. Financial Plan*.



The entire FAS is within the Waterfront Industrial District and the Waterfront Economic Development and Revitalization Overlay District (WEDROD).

Much of FAS is within the Flood Hazard Overlay District.

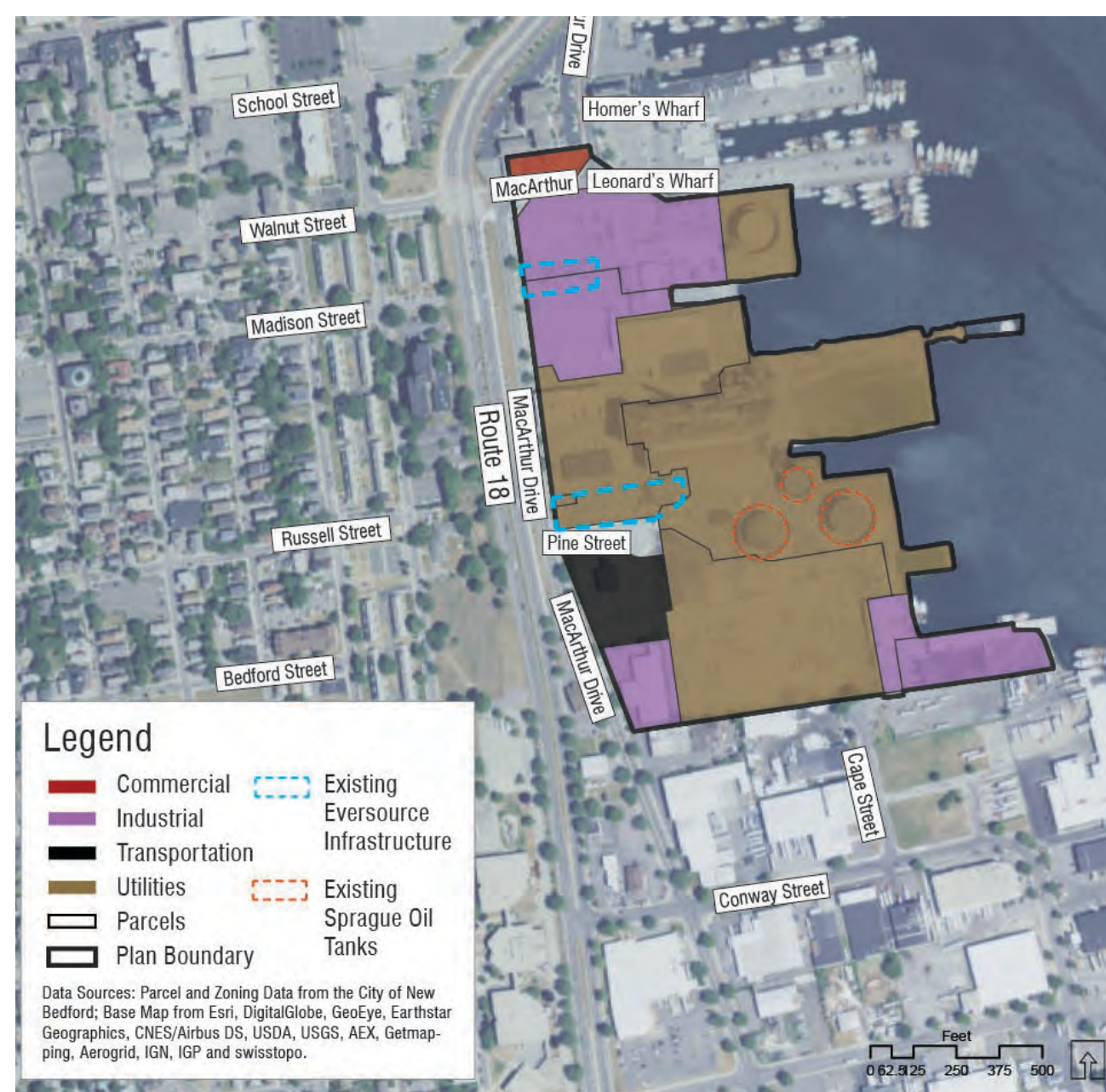
In addition to the local zoning regulations, the state-wide regulations for Designated Port Area also apply to FAS. This limits the land uses to water-dependent industrial and supporting uses.





Unlike FAN, existing land uses in FAS are consistent with the current zoning.

However, the purpose of the Waterfront Economic Development & Revitalization Overlay District (WEDROD) is no longer viable.





Primary use is water-dependent industrial and supporting uses, consistent with the requirements of the DPA.

Secondary use is mixed-use (commercial and retail) allowing for a connection between safe public access to the working waterfront and the downtown. This is reflected in the proposed Subareas (C and D).

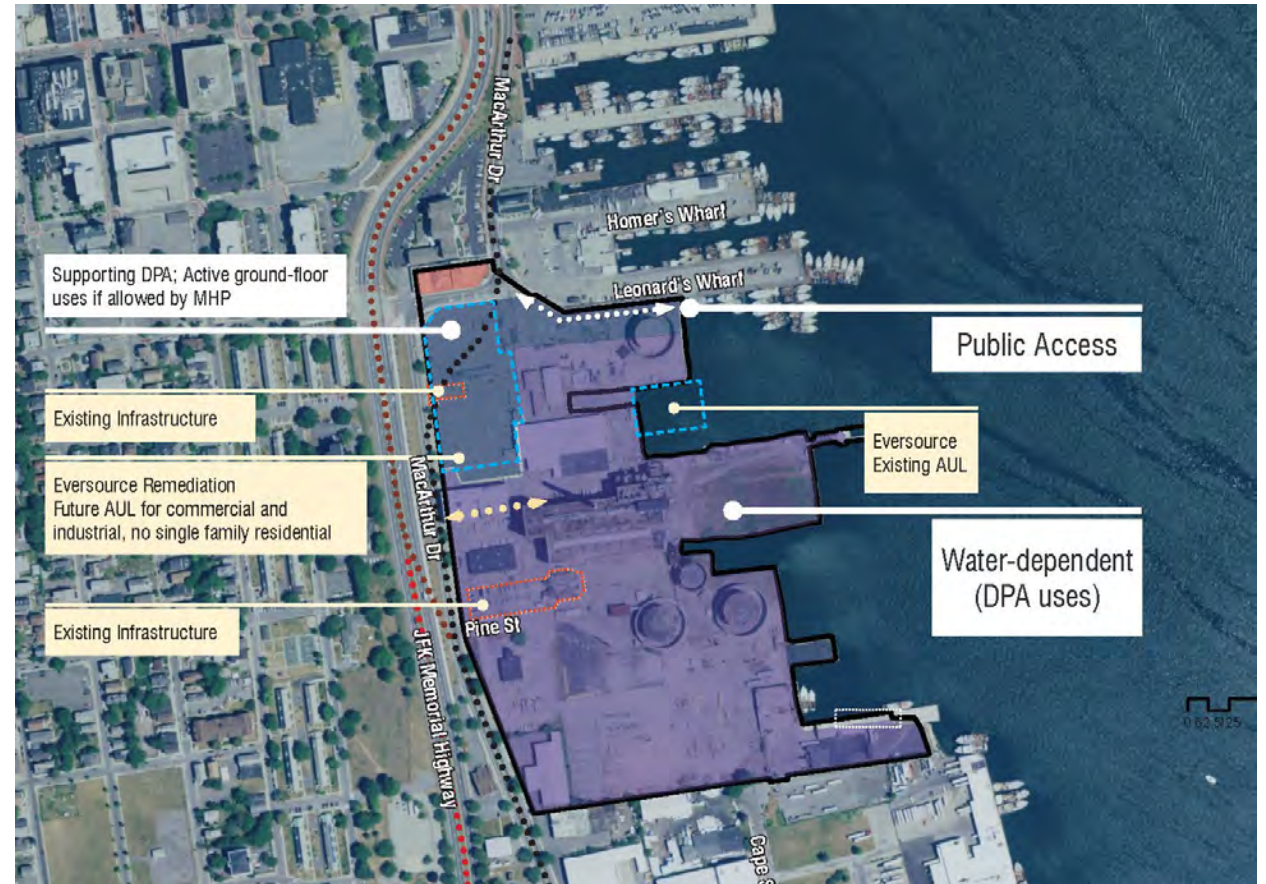
AULs and existing infrastructure restrict proposed uses. The AULs require mitigation of existing environmental conditions. The level of mitigation depends on the proposed use.

Existing gas and electric infrastructure cannot be moved.

### Legend

- Retail/Commercial/Office
- Marine Commercial/Industrial
- Plan Boundary
- Parcels

Data Sources: Parcel Data from the City of New Bedford's Assessors' Office; Base Map from Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP and swisstopo.



## Role of the NBRA

- Acquisition and subsequent disposition of land by the NBRA for redevelopment activities consistent with the vision for the area. See *Section 5. Acquisitions* and *Section 9. Dispositions* for additional detail.
  - Acquisitions can be by purchase or grant.
  - The NBRA can acquire these properties by eminent domain. The use of eminent domain is a use of last resort. It requires a public process and relocation of businesses (or, when applicable, residents).
  - At this point in the process, the NBRA does not expect to use eminent domain to acquire properties.
  - Properties may be acquired at any point during the twenty-year life of the plan, based on the goals of the plan and the underlying market conditions. No acquisitions are anticipated in the immediate future.
- Regulatory controls that include prohibiting and allowing uses specific to the redevelopment area. This Plan also establishes design guidelines for all projects within the redevelopment area.
  - Zoning changes accompany these two redevelopment plans and will create incentives for future private investment within FAN and FAS.



## Role of the Planning Board/ZBA/Department of Planning

- Determination that the plans are consistent with the Master Plan for the community (Planning Board only).
- Applying the zoning changes that accompany these two redevelopment plans (once approved) to applications for site plan approval and, in some cases, special permits, in these two areas.

## Role of the Mayor/City Council

- Approval of the plans.
- Approval of the zoning.
- Ensuring that future policies are consistent with the goals and recommendations of the two redevelopment plans.

## Role of DHCD (Commonwealth of Massachusetts)

- Final approval of the redevelopment plans.

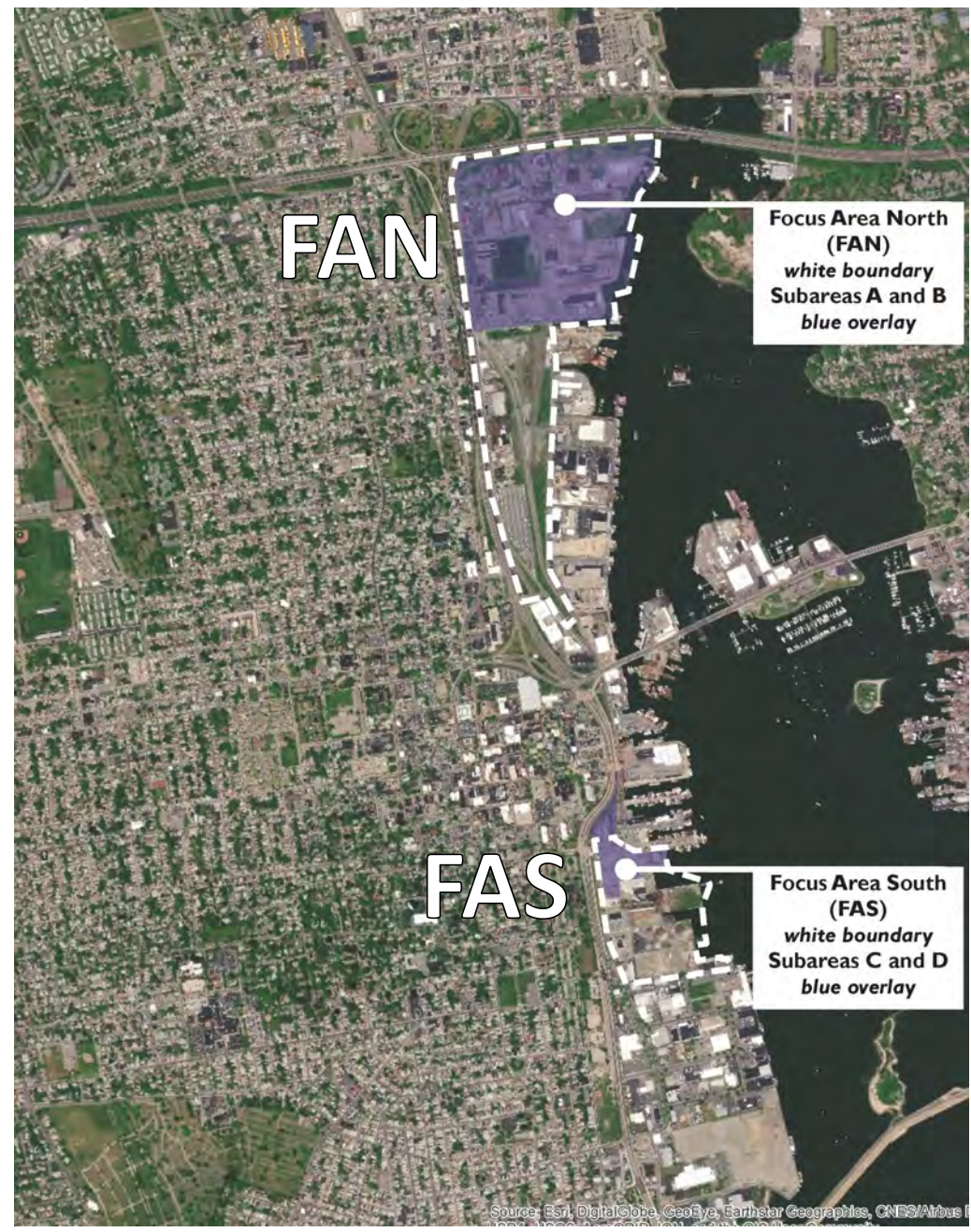
- The plan and proposed zoning create incentives for the desired development in both FAN and FAS areas by:
  - Identifying the goals for future development within the two areas, sending a signal to future developers that certain types of development will be welcomed by the City.
  - Defining areas for public infrastructure improvements that will enhance the value of the area to future developers, residents, and businesses.
  - (FAN) Improving the streetscape, requiring expanded public access to the harbor, and creating a significant public amenity around the fire pond.
  - (FAS) Reparcelizing large areas of land into smaller, more marketable lots that will support the existing, thriving water-dependent commercial/industrial uses and by creating a mixed-use link to the Downtown that will support safe and specific public access to an area of the waterfront that would otherwise be inaccessible.
- Adoption of the plan will allow:
  - The NBRA to acquire parcels or easements for public infrastructure and public realm improvements to support private development.
  - The City to control the quality of the public realm through design guidelines and standards for future development.
  - Developers to move through the permitting process more easily through more as-of-right uses and standards for review.



## Waterfront Mixed Use District

- New zoning district:
  - Four subareas (A, B, C and D); defined geographically.
  - Replaces all underlying zoning in FAN
  - Replaces all overlay districts in FAN except FHOD
  - Replaces underlying zoning in FAS for Subarea D (except FHOD) but not south of that subarea.
- Changes to dimensional standards allowed; provides well-defined flexibility for Planning Board and incentives for developers to provide or contribute to public amenities.
- Includes design principles, standards, and guidelines; compliance alternative.
- For Subarea D, the primary focus of the change is the application of the design guidelines.
  - Subarea D is within the DPA.
  - The design guidelines require a focus on creating a pedestrian-focused public realm which will enhance connections to Subarea C and the links to State Pier and the Downtown.
  - Subarea D will have the same uses as Subarea C if the New Bedford-Fairhaven Municipal Harbor Plan is updated and/or if a boundary review of the DPA leads to an altered DPA boundary.

# Waterfront Mixed Use District



**FAN**

**Focus Area North (FAN)**  
*white boundary*  
**Subareas A and B**  
*blue overlay*

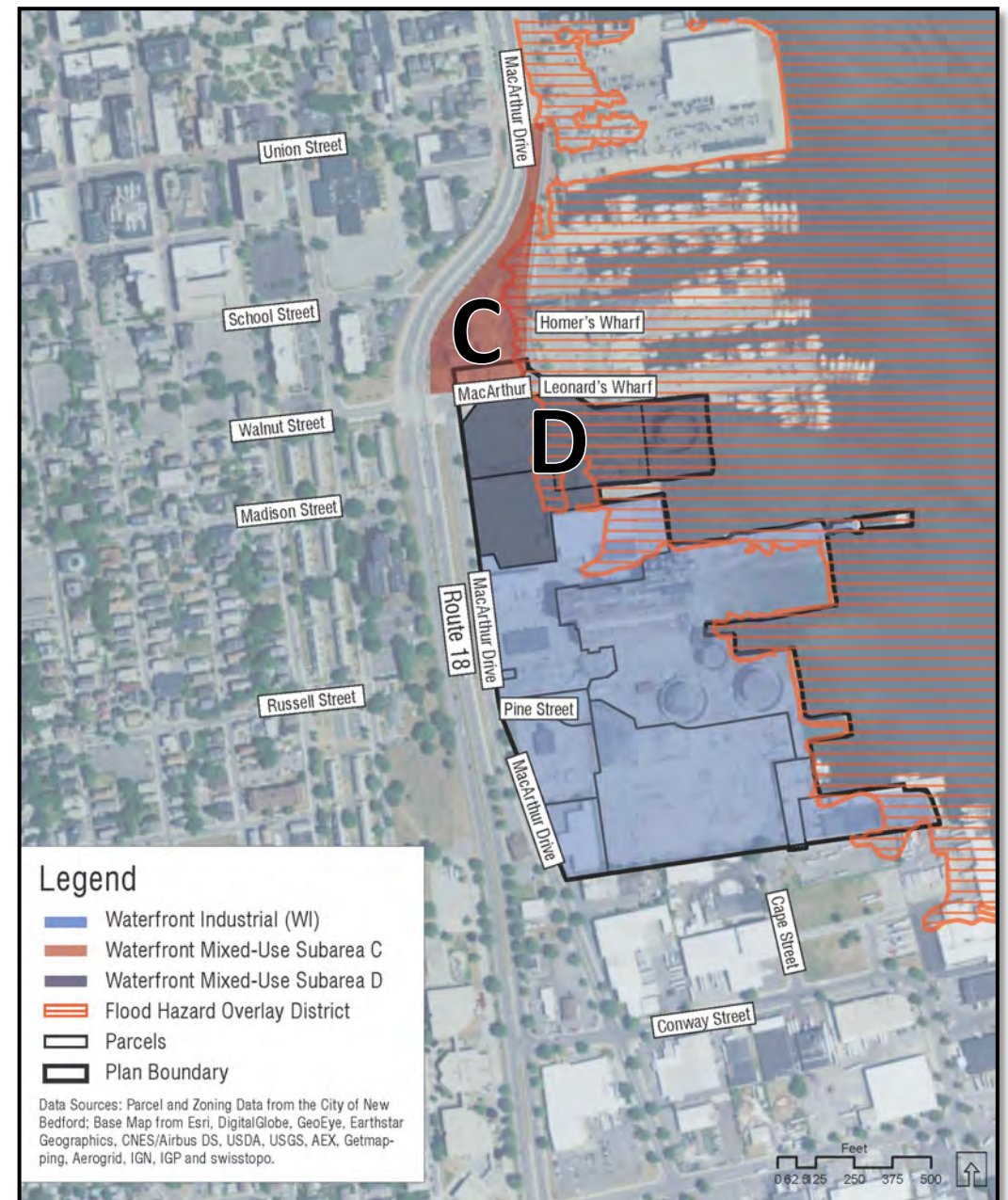
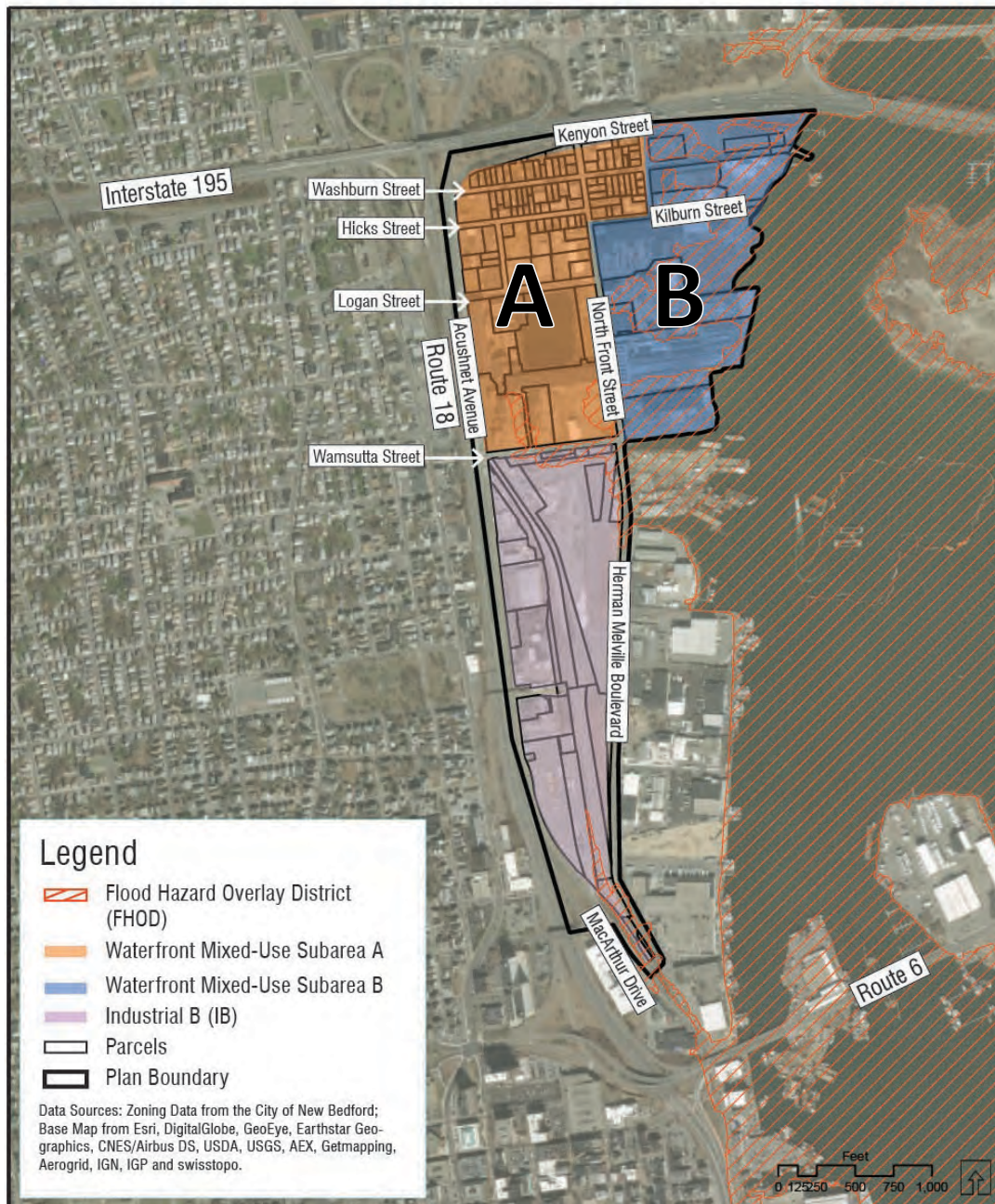
**FAS**

**Focus Area South (FAS)**  
*white boundary*  
**Subareas C and D**  
*blue overlay*

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus



# Proposed Zoning





# New Bedford Waterfront Redevelopment Plan

New Bedford Ordinance Committee  
October 26, 2020

