Setti D. Warren
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

James Freas
Acting Director

## PUBLIC HEARING MEMORANDUM

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| Public Hearing Date: | June 2, 2015 |
| Land Use Action Date: | August 4, 2015 |
| Board of Aldermen Action Date: | August 10, 2015 |
| 90-Day Expiration Date: | September 7, 2015 |

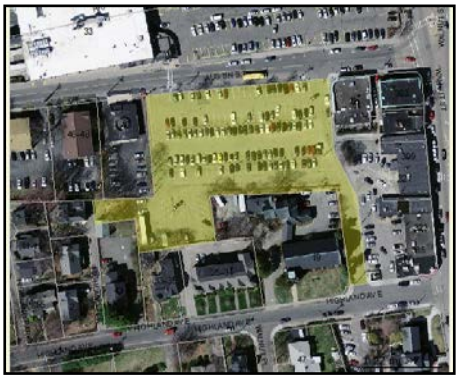
DATE: May 29, 2015

TO: Board of Aldermen

FROM: Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner for Current Planning

SUBJECT: Petition #119-15, AUSTIN STREET PARTNERS, LLC/CITY OF NEWTON petition for a SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVAL to redevelop an existing municipal parking lot declared surplus by the Board of Aldermen on February 6, 2012, into a mixed use residential building providing: 68 units of housing; approximately 5,000 sf of commercial space; approximately 90 underground parking spaces appurtenant to the proposed residences and commercial space; and 127 public parking spaces at grade at 28 AUSTIN STREET, Ward 2, Newtonville, on land known as SBL 24, 9, 15, containing approximately 74,480 sf of land in a district zoned MIXED USE 4. Ref: Sec. 30-24, 30-23, 30-21(b), 30-15(w)(2), (w)(4)b), 30-15 Table 3, 30-13(h), (h)(2) Table B, 30-13(j)(1), (2), and (3), 30-19(d)(2), (10), (11), (12), and (13), 30-19(e), 30-19(h)(1), (2)a) and b), 30-19(i)(1) and (2), 30-19 (j)(1), 30-19 (k); 30-19 (l) Table 3, and 30-19(m) of the City of Newton Rev Zoning Ord, 2012.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Board of Aldermen and the public with technical information and planning analysis which may be useful in the special permit decision making process of the Board of Aldermen. The Planning Department's intention is to provide a balanced view of the issues with the information it has at the time of the public hearing. Additional information may be presented at or after the public hearing that the Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen will want to consider in its discussion at a subsequent public hearings or working sessions.



**28 Austin Street**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed development on Austin Street was submitted jointly by the City of Newton and the City-selected development team and represents the culmination of many years of planning focused on the critical issues of diversifying Newton's housing stock, providing affordable housing choices, and enhancing the quality of life in Newtonville. By locating a project like this in an existing village center close to multiple transit options, the benefits of a walkable, vibrant village center are maximized, and potential impacts are minimized to the greatest extent possible. As submitted, the project is consistent with Newton's adopted *Comprehensive Plan* and the intent of the Mixed Use 4 village zoning district. The following provides a technical analysis of the project and recommendations for consideration in the special permit application review process.

The initial idea for the Austin Street project dates back to the comprehensive planning process in Newton, which was conducted over a five-year period, and was completed in 2007 with the Board of Aldermen's adoption of the *Newton Comprehensive Plan*. The *Comprehensive Plan* calls for moderate residential growth in larger village centers; revising zoning rules that impose constraints on residential uses in village centers and other business areas; and encourages a greater mix of uses in village commercial centers, particularly where public transportation is available. Since its conception, the idea for redevelopment of the municipal parking lot on Austin Street has been consistent with these goals. The Austin Street project is centered on providing additional housing opportunities in Newton in a village center close to services and transit, and implementing housing related goals articulated in the *Comprehensive Plan*. In addition to adding to the diversity of the City's housing stock, the goals of the project include adding to the vitality of this village, the repurposing of underutilized land while retaining important access to public parking, enhancing the attractiveness of the village, and creating an attractive public space.

In response to a Request for Proposals issued by the City in 2013, Austin Street Partners, LLC (the petitioner), was selected as the developer to partner with the City and build a mixed-use development on the municipal parking lot at 28 Austin Street. After a series of community meetings, the petitioner is submitting its proposal for a mixed-use four-story building. The ground floor would consist of approximately 5,000 square feet of commercial space including 3,500 square feet of retail; 1,500 square feet of shared office space; and a lobby for the residences above. The remainder of the site would remain a municipal parking lot with 127 smart-metered surface parking stalls. Three stories of housing with a total of 68 one- and two-bedroom residential units would be located above the ground level retail, with a portion of the parking sheltered by the residential building, which would cantilever over some of the public parking. A below- grade level of parking under the building would contain 90 additional stalls for residents and retail employees.

The existing site is uninviting for pedestrians walking on Austin Street or Philip Bram Way. As public betterments, the petitioner is proposing numerous site amenities and streetscape enhancements consisting of wider sidewalks and new street trees, a public plaza with outdoor seating and a fountain, and pedestrian improvements along Philip Bram Way. These features

will help fill a void along Austin Street and connect the site to the Walnut Street portion of the village.

If this project is approved, the City will retain ownership of the Austin Street parcel. The developer will enter into a 99-year lease, allowing development of the project. The City will continue to set municipal parking rates, enforce its parking regulations, and maintain and repair the Austin Street municipal parking lot and Bram Way as it does currently.

The site is zoned Mixed Use 4 and the purpose of this district is to allow the development of buildings and uses appropriate to Newton's village commercial centers. The Mixed Use 4 zone encourages pedestrian-oriented development with a diverse mix of residences and amenities, allows for projects of sufficient density to promote a lively pedestrian environment, and expands the diversity of housing options available in Newton. Nevertheless, the petitioner must seek a special permit from the Board of Aldermen for some of the proposed uses, such as a restaurant with more than 50 seats, and for street-level office use. The petitioner must also seek a special permit to allow construction of a building in excess of 20,000 square feet. Although the Mixed Use 4 district allows for buildings of up to 60 feet in height, buildings greater than 36 feet require a special permit. The building as proposed is 48 feet in height. A waiver for the west side setbacks is also required. Finally, the petitioner must seek a waiver of 80 parking stalls as well as waivers for various requirements of the dimensional and design controls of the parking section of the Newton Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Department is very supportive of this project, which will add more points of interest to the village and help knit Newtonville together with an improved streetscape and gathering place. Recent housing studies have indicated that while Newton is well served by single-family homes, there is an increasing need for housing that can help retain the existing population as seniors seek accessible single-floor living, younger households seek housing close to jobs and amenities, and smaller households seek more housing that is more diverse in size. Further, the proposed development plan will encourage pedestrian activity in the village, encourage use of alternative modes of transportation, and better utilize the existing site while retaining important access to public parking.

The Planning Department is cognizant of the public's concerns around parking and traffic. In response, the petitioner submitted a Transportation Impact Study **(Attachment A)** to address these concerns. Although the Planning Department does not believe this project will materially affect traffic or parking, we suggest that the petitioner agree to provide a traffic and parking after-study upon completion of the project to substantiate any request for additional parking or traffic mitigation. The Department has additional comments and suggestions in subsequent sections of this memorandum.

## I. SIGNIFICANT ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

When reviewing this request, the Board should consider whether:

- The specific site is an appropriate location for the proposed mix of uses and structure. (§30-24(d)(1))
- The proposed project as developed and operated will not adversely affect the neighborhood. (§30-24(d)(2))
- There will be no nuisance or serious hazard to vehicles or pedestrians. (§30-24(d)(3))
- Access to the site over streets is appropriate for the types and numbers of vehicles involved. (§30-24(d)(4))
- The site planning, building design, construction, maintenance or long-term operation of the premises will contribute significantly to the efficient use and conservation of natural resources and energy. (§30-24(d)(5))
- Literal compliance with the parking requirements of the Newton Zoning Ordinance (NZO) is impracticable due to the nature of the use, or the location, size, width, depth, shape, or grade of the lot, or that such exceptions would be in the public interest or in the interest of safety or protection of environmental features. (§30-19(m))

## II. BACKGROUND

In the early 20th Century, Newtonville, like many other village centers in the City, was densely developed, walkable, and included a mix of uses with shops, residences, workplaces and civic amenities in two- to four-story buildings. In the second half of the century, many of these buildings were replaced by single-story structures served by multiple parking lots, which reduced the density and diversity of uses and made the village center less pedestrian-friendly. Today, best practices in planning, as well as market forces, are swinging back to mixed-use developments to restore the variety of services the village once enjoyed.

As stated above, initial discussions about the reuse of the City's Austin Street municipal parking lot originated during the comprehensive planning process. Over the years since, the Planning Department and residents explored options for redevelopment of the site through design charrettes, community workshops, and public meetings.

In 2010, the planning process specific to the Austin Street lot started to take shape. In 2011, the Board of Aldermen appointed a Joint Advisory Planning Group (JAPG) to identify alternatives for the future reuse of the site. A Request for Interest was issued to gauge developer interest in creating a mixed-use project on the lot while ensuring the retention of public parking for the village. Three written responses were received, which gave the group confidence there was sufficient interest to pursue next steps. The JAPG's

work concluded with a report that called for a mixed-use development attractive to young professionals as well as residents in their senior years looking to downsize. The vision was that a mixed-use project could bring additional vibrancy to the village with particular emphasis on increasing pedestrian and evening activity. The Planning Department agreed with the JAPG's recommendations with only slight variations, primarily related to the zoning of the site. The Board of Aldermen voted to authorize the Mayor to sell or lease the land located at 28 Austin Street through a Request for Proposals with a number of recommended conditions **(Attachment B)**.

In 2012, an amendment to the *Comprehensive Plan* was approved to include a "Mixed-Use Centers" element to further encourage mixed-use development, particularly in village centers adjacent to transit services. This resulted in the crafting and adoption of the Mixed Use 4 village zoning district (Ordinance A-4, dated October 1, 2012); the Board of Aldermen rezoned the site from Public Use to Mixed Use 4 in 2012 **(Attachment C)**.

A Request for Proposals was issued in February of 2013, and six bids were received. An evaluation team with expertise in design, housing, and development was assembled to assess the proposals. The City entered into a Memorandum of Intent with Austin Street Partners in 2014.

Austin Street Partners was selected by the City for the overall package that they were able to provide - 127 public smart-metered parking spaces at grade, 17 permanently affordable housing units, a quality public plaza, an active and attractive streetscape and building design, pedestrian improvements, the ability to efficiently construct the project and minimize disruption to the village, energy efficient green construction, and a density that will not materially affect the village. It should also be noted that the City will retain ownership of the site.

## III. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

### A. Neighborhood and Zoning

The property is located on the south side of Austin Street and was rezoned from Public Use to Mixed Use 4 in 2012. In the immediate area, the lots to the east of the site are zoned Business 1, as are the properties along Walnut Street. Most of these properties are improved with single-story structures with the notable exception of the Masonic Temple along the east side of Walnut Street, which stands four-stories tall. To the west of the site, the lots are zoned Business 5, a little-used district that allows by-right professional uses (i.e. offices and banks) and little else (retail stores and restaurants are not allowed by-right or by special permit). These sites are currently occupied by a bank and an office building. Farther west on Austin Street and to the south of the site, the area is zoned and used for residences. The Star Market, a small liquor store under the Market and associated parking lot are located directly across from the site on the north side of Austin Street. The site is proximately located to the Massachusetts Turnpike and

MBTA Commuter Rail (Newtonville Station) with access into Boston's South Station. Walnut Street, Lowell Avenue and Washington Streets provide good local and regional access including access to multiple bus routes including an express bus into Boston.

B. Site

The subject site totals approximately 1.7 acres and has frontage on the south side of Austin Street in Newtonville and on the east side on Philip Bram Way. The primary use of the property is as a public parking area with 159 spaces. The City acquired the site in 1947 through eminent domain for use as a parking lot. Previously, there were residences in this location. A Goodwill trailer, used to receive donated clothing and other goods, is located in the southwest corner of the site. An additional 32 stalls within the lot are restricted for use for Newton North High School student permit parking. There are 127 metered parking spaces available for public use. The property also includes the area marked as "Philip Bram Way," which is not a City street, but is currently used for vehicular access to the parking lot as well as to the rear of several businesses fronting on Walnut Street. It is anticipated that Philip Bram Way will continue to be used in this manner in the future. The City commissioned a study of the parking supply and occupancy in 2014 which found that the site is well utilized for parking for the village.

## IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

A. Land Use

The petitioner is proposing to keep the municipal parking lot use on the site with 127 at-grade public parking stalls, and to add a mixed-use building to the site with approximately 5,000 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor and 68 units of rental housing above (including 17 permanently restricted affordable units) and accessory parking below grade.

The Planning Department does not have any concerns with the proposed mix of uses on this site, as these types of uses are already present in Newtonville and the introduction of additional housing units is appropriate for this village center. The Department also notes that the addition of storefronts along the streetscape will help to promote the lively pedestrian environment envisioned for Newton's village centers. All of the proposed uses are consistent with a mixed-use development and are allowed either by right or by special permit in a Mixed Use 4 zone, including a multi-family building (allowed by right), restaurants with more than 50 seats (allowed by special permit), street level office uses (allowed by special permit) and a municipal parking lot (existing). The proposed mix of uses and activities, including the public plaza, should help create a vibrant multi-function experience that increases neighborhood synergy and encourages pedestrian activity

on the site and in the village.

B. Building and Site Design

The petitioner is proposing to redevelop the lot into a mixed-use development containing: a residential component (68-units of rental housing); commercial/retail space (approximately 5,000 square feet); a 217-stall parking facility (90 underground stalls for residential and commercial tenants and 127 at-grade stalls for public use); numerous site amenities; and streetscape improvements. Per the proposed development plan, the footprint of the mixed-use building, which is shaped in a partial horseshoe, is concentrated in the northwest corner of the parcel, with the remainder of the site being used for at-grade public parking and open space. The placement of the building maintains an eight-foot setback from Austin Street, a 10-foot setback from the western property line, a 45-foot setback from the rear property line (south), and a setback of approximately 30-feet from the eastern property line (Philip Bram Way). As a result of the building's siting, the proposed project would fill an existing void in the Austin Street streetscape by placing the building on the north end of the site and partially screening the public parking behind.

The building as designed is four stories and 48 feet in height, with a parking structure proposed below the building, where 60 feet is allowed by special permit. The first story of the building will be constructed as either a concrete or steel podium, and contains the approximately 5,000 square feet of commercial/retail space, the residential lobby, and partially covers the at-grade parking facility behind the building. The three residential stories (the fourth floor is set back on certain portions of the building) above will be of wood framed modular construction, utilizing the "GreenStaxx" building system. This building system allows the petitioner to pre-fabricate the residential floors of the building off-site in a controlled environment, shorten the construction window, and reduce disturbance during construction. Once constructed, the building will be delivered to the site in cube segments and craned into place. The ability to construct significant portions of the structure off-site will significantly reduce the amount of construction time it takes to complete this building and minimize disruption to the commercial village.


GARDEN ELEVATION (WEST)


The architecture of the mixed-use building is best described as "transitional," and draws certain design elements and building forms from the architectural styles of structures in the surrounding neighborhood (e.g. The Masonic Temple). The façade of the proposed building is treated with a variety of architectural elements such as raised panels, concrete pilasters and soffits, glazed storefronts, a variety of window arrangements, and balconies to visually disguise the mass and scale of the building. Per the development plans, the petitioner is proposing to clad the building's façade with a mix of cement fiber board (three colors and textures), synthetic wood, and precast concrete (commercial/retail space). The petitioner also incorporates metal architectural elements, such as Juliette balconies, trim, and railings, to further accent and articulate the building's wall planes.

The proposed site layout includes three driveways with two-way vehicular travel patterns (one off of Austin Street and two from Philip Bram way), which will provide access to the 217 parking stalls proposed on the site. The proposed 90-stall underground parking facility is accessed via a ramp internal to the site for use by the building's residential and commercial tenants. The petitioner should clarify how access will be restricted to this parking area. The 127 at-grade public parking stalls are partially covered by the building, which will be an amenity in the winter months. The petitioner has also agreed to meter the at-grade parking facility with smart meter technology, which will maintain the current meter revenues and streamline fee transactions for the public. To mitigate the placement of parking stalls within the setback, the petitioner is proposing to partially screening these stalls with synthetic wood fencing and landscape plantings.

A number of proposed site amenities will enhance the visual appearance and appeal of the site. The foremost feature being proposed is the public plaza at the northeast corner of the site. The plaza would have a partially covered dining area (loggia), benches, a fountain, flexible outdoor seating, and raised landscape planting beds. The footprint of the plaza can be expanded into the tabletop (raised portion of Philip Bram Way) when the bollards along the right-of-way are removed. Other private tenant site enhancements being proposed include the rooftop terrace (accessed via the fourth floor), a garden in the southwest corner of the site, landscape plantings, and shared bicycle and vehicle parking facilities.

Streetscape improvements are also proposed along Austin Street and Philip Bram Way. On Austin Street, the sidewalk will be enlarged and reconstructed with concrete panels, street trees, and concrete paver accents. Along a portion of Philip Bram Way, the petitioner is proposing to construct a 22-foot wide tabletop (raised portion of the drive lane) that can be connected to the adjacent public plaza. Landscaping and pavement enhancements will also be made to the pedestrian passageways that connect to Walnut Street, and new segments of sidewalk will be added. Further, the petitioner plans to install pavement markings and materials in portions of the right-of-way where pedestrian and vehicular interactions are more prevalent, to improve visibility and slow vehicular traffic.

While the building design attempts to use different architectural features and cladding materials to add texture to the building, the design appears a little busy in places. The Department encourages the petitioner to consider different ways to simplify the building's façade, such as: fewer window arrangement variations; removal of the railings along the third floor rooftop; and fewer trim and panel variations. The Department further believes the visual presence of the building's northeast corner, adjacent to the public plaza, needs special treatment beyond what is currently proposed. The petitioner should consider the placement of a sign for public parking behind the building and show additional renderings that illustrate how the partially covered parking will feel for users. The Planning Department notes this type of parking occurs at The Street (under the movie theatre and Star Market) but notes that ceiling heights and lighting are imperative to make these spaces inviting.

The Planning Department would like perspective drawings of the public space as well as of the building in the neighborhood context. The petitioner should also provide perspectives of the building's roof to assess its potential visual effects from various points in the neighborhood such as Washington Street or the Walnut Street Bridge, so it can be decided if a parapet is necessary.

C. Traffic and Parking

The subject property currently serves as a municipal parking lot and is owned by the City. In total the lot has 159 parking stalls, but 32 stalls are restricted for Newton North student parking and unavailable to the general public. The Goodwill trailer also occupies a portion of the parking lot. The effective number of parking stalls is therefore 127. The lot currently has two-way access from two curb cuts on each end of the site on Austin Street, as well as access from Philip Bram Way, a private right-of-way which allows public access to the site. The City will continue to maintain Philip Bram Way as part of the public parking lot.

The petitioner submitted a Transportation Impact Study prepared by Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc., that will be peer reviewed by an independent transportation engineer. In addition, the City commissioned a Parking and Traffic

Engineering Study for Newtonville in 2014, conducted by Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI), which is included in the Transportation Impact Study Appendix. These studies show that the existing parking facility is well used at peak hours and that there are a significant number of underutilized parking stalls within the Newtonville area outside of this parking lot. Existing traffic volumes on all of the streets in the study area are relatively low in comparison with capacity, and all intersections operate at acceptable Levels of Service, with minimal delay and queue lengths. The one exception is the eastbound vehicular movement from Austin Street to Walnut Street, which is un-signalized and vehicles must wait for gaps in traffic to make their turns.

In order to assess how the proposed project will affect existing traffic conditions, trip generation analysis was developed based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Trip Generation Manual, as is customary, and is added to existing conditions. Traffic operations in the future-build scenario show that the overall Level of Service at all study area intersections continue to operate at Level of Service A, with minimal delay and queue lengths. Therefore, even with the added project trips, almost all intersections show no decrease in Level of Service. Once again, the eastbound approach from Austin Street to Walnut Street is the outlier and shows a slight decrease in its Level of Service with increased queuing and delays by approximately 5-14 seconds during peak periods. This intersection has potential for improvement through strategic mitigation, and options are available to avoid travel through this intersection. The petitioner is encouraged to continue to work with the City to determine if any improvements to this intersection are warranted.

Access to the project site will essentially remain the same from Austin Street as well as Philip Bram Way. The Planning Department has no concerns with the proposed access.

The petitioner is proposing to maintain the same number of public parking stalls in the municipal lot as effectively exist now (127), so future parking is not a significant concern at this time. The petitioner is also adding 90 below-grade parking stalls to accommodate the development, which the Planning Department believes to be sufficient. The petitioner is proposing a parking ratio of 1.25 stalls per residential unit, which is consistent with recent utilization studies completed for other large residential projects in Newton. Furthermore, with the site's location relative to transportation and amenities, it is expected that this project will be most attractive to tenants seeking a car-free or car-lite lifestyle. In addition, market pricing of a second parking stall will further narrow the segment of the population that will seek to locate in this building. The site is also planned to have bicycle parking with the potential for a future bike sharing station, electric vehicle charging, a car sharing service such as Zipcar, and underground bike storage for residents.

Although only five parking stalls are currently dedicated to employees and visitors of the proposed retail in this project, it is expected that much of the parking demand

will be complimentary to the residential use which will have available parking during the day. Furthermore, there is expected to be ample parking available in the evening when restaurant demand may be at its peak. Finally, it is noted that the site will continue to supply 127 public parking spaces. Therefore the Planning Department encourages the Board to grant the proposed parking waiver.

The petitioner is proposing a number of parking stalls will be compact stalls that do not meet the dimensional requirements of the Ordinance. The Planning Department acknowledges that many stalls in other municipal lots do not meet the City's dimensional requirements. Nevertheless, the petitioner is encouraged to seek to make all stalls as conforming as possible and to sign any compact stalls accordingly so that parking is efficient and predictable for users. Additionally, accommodation for snow storage should be clarified.

In summary, the potential transportation effects of the proposed project appear to be minimal and will be further evaluated by an independent expert over the summer. Although we do not believe this project will materially affect traffic and parking we suggest that the petitioner agree to provide a traffic and parking after-study upon completion of the project to substantiate any request or need for additional parking or traffic mitigation. Finally it should be noted that there are several options to increase parking and improve traffic flow that can be evaluated if necessary.

D. Lighting Plan

The Planning Department has requested that a Photometric Plan be submitted for this project. It is particularly important to understand how the public parking lot will be lit to ensure safe usage of both at-grade parking and parking spaces located under the building. Although it does not appear that there is a general lighting standard among municipal parking lots, the Planning Department recommends LED fixtures that are appropriate in height, design and durability. Cut-sheets should be submitted and any light spillover onto the public way should be noted on the Photometric Plan. If there are any changes proposed to the lighting on Austin Street this should be noted as well.

E. Landscape Screening

A significant increase in the amount of vegetation is proposed for the site. The petitioner is proposing a row of what appears to be deciduous trees along Austin Street as well as along the rear property line and in an interior parking island. Due to their close proximity to the building, upright growing trees should be used and trees should be no closer than 25 feet apart on center. Flowering trees are also proposed within the public plaza and in the western corner of the lot. These trees should have multi-season interest but not be fruit-bearing. The Planning Department encourages the use of at least two evergreen trees on site for variety, one at the bike parking area and one in the garden area. Three trees are

proposed in an interior island of the parking lot, which the petitioner should consider reducing to two in order to allow more room on the ends of the island for snow removal. Low-maintenance shrubs should also be intermixed with trees in the public plaza and garden areas.

While the plan calls for a significant number of trees to be added to the site, the species and size at installation should be specified to ensure that the trees sufficiently enhance the setting and sense of place this project is trying to create. The Planning Department is also concerned that the garden area is somewhat isolated from the rest of the site and requests more information on the intended programming of this area.

F. Signage

No sing waivers are requested by the petitioner. The Planning Department notes that all signage will be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission prior to the issuance of any sign permits. A comprehensive Sign Package is recommended to provide consistency and visual harmony and prevent visual clutter.

G. Affordable Housing Component

The Request for Proposals specified that 25% of the housing units be affordable to low-and moderate income residents and shall be eligible for inclusion on the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory. The petitioner is proposing that 25% of the units (17 units) be permanently deed restricted as affordable to residents earning up to 80% of the Boston Metro Area Median Income. It should be noted that the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance does not apply to this project because residential is an allowed use and the petitioner is not seeking a density bonus.

The Planning Department also notes that the market rate rents will be targeted to income tiers of approximately 150% of area median income, and that because 25% of the units will be affordable, all of the residential units will be eligible to be added to the City's Subsidized Housing Inventory.

The unit mix includes 29 1-bedroom units, four 1-bedroom + den units, and 35 2-bedroom units. The petitioner is proposing that seven of the 1-bedroom units, one 1-bedroom + den unit, and nine 2-bedroom units will be affordable. This appears to be an appropriate mix.

H. Accessibility

Accessible parking stalls appear to be appropriately located throughout the site. However, the petitioner should verify the required dimensions of all parking access aisles. All units are expected to be adaptable to those with disabilities and all units are built to MSBC / MAAB requirements. This means that 95% of all units are accessible to Group I standards and 5% of units are accessible to Group 2A standards, which complies with all relevant requirements.

I. Project Phasing and Construction Management

The project will be completed in a single phase and construction is projected to take approximately 15 months from start to finish.

Should this project be approved, a robust Construction Management Plan will be required prior to the issuance of any building permits, and will be reviewed and approved by the Commissioners of Inspectional Services, Public Works and the Director of Planning and Development.

A working group has been formed to address potential parking issues during construction. The group includes representatives from the Development Team, the Newtonville Area Council, two Newtonville businesses, and City staff including the Transportation Coordinator, the Economic Development Director, and two Sergeants from the Newton Police Department's Traffic Bureau.

A parking management plan for the phase of construction when the parking lot will not be accessible will be prepared by the working group which will survey Newtonville businesses to collect information on current parking habits of employees, customers and for deliveries.

J. Sustainability and Conservation of Natural Resources

The petitioner submitted a memorandum regarding the sustainability of the project **(Attachment D)**. Highlights include the redevelopment of a currently underutilized site in a village center with proximate transit options and amenities within walking distance. Use of factory-built modular construction will reduce construction waste and speed up the development process. The building will be required to meet energy code requirements and the units will also meet the Energy Star Home standards using efficient appliances, lighting and low-flow water fixtures. Mechanical systems and the building envelope will be energy efficient and appropriately insulated. The site will include bicycle parking spaces for residents and visitors, shared-car facilities (such as Zipcar), and electric vehicle chargers. Stormwater Management will include Best Management Practices and incorporate Low Impact Development design features such as, but not limited to, landscaped storm water treatment. The petitioner is proposing solar panels on the roof, which will help to offset electricity consumption. A roof-top garden area is also proposed as a tenant amenity.

In addition to building and site design measures, the petitioner has submitted a Transportation Demand Management Plan that calls for charging additional fees to park a second vehicle on site. This plan will highlight the cost of car ownership as a deterrent to owning a second vehicle. The proposed project will include a car-sharing service on site so residents and neighbors can avoid car ownership, offer bike parking both inside and outside the building as well as bicycle tools for residents, and will post information on public transportation and other pertinent transportation information.

V. TECHNICAL REVIEW

A. Technical Considerations (Chapter 30, Newton Zoning Ordinance):

The Zoning Review Memorandum **(Attachment E)** provides a complete analysis of the proposal with regard to zoning. The petitioner is seeking the following reliefs:

- Section 30-13(h)(2), Table B, to allow street level office uses
- Section 30-13(h)(2), Table B, to allow a restaurant with more than 50 seats
- Section 30-13(j)(1-3), to allow a building in excess of 20,000 square feet of gross floor area
- Section 30-15(w)(2), 30-15, Table 3, to allow a building height of 48 feet and four stories
- Section 30-15(w)(4)b), 30-15, Table 3, to allow for a waiver of the side setbacks
- Section 30-19(m), to allow for waivers to current parking requirements including a waiver of up to 80 parking stalls, to waive the requirement for a parking plan, to locate parking within a setback and within five feet of a residential structure, to waive the dimensional requirement for some parking stalls, to waive the screening requirements for parking lots, to waive the interior landscaping requirements, to waive the lighting requirements for parking lots, to waive the requirement for bicycle parking facilities, and to waive the off-street loading requirements

B. Engineering Review

As the project is still in the conceptual stages no civil-construction information is available for review, as is typical in this stage of a larger project. Should this project be approved, detailed plans must be submitted to the Engineering Division prior to the issuance of any building permits.

As the site is currently an all-paved parking lot with no water quality treatment system, the applicant will be required to contain and infiltrate all runoff on site for a 100-year storm event, an improvement over existing conditions.

The City will assess a mitigation fee for sewer Infiltration and Inflow removal based on the number of bedrooms in the proposed development. There are no known capacity constraints in this area of the City.

The Associate City Engineer has reviewed preliminary plans **(Attachment F)** and notes a number of additional requirements that must be addressed prior to the issuance of any building permits.

C. Fire Department Review

The Fire Department has met with the petitioner and reviewed the proposed plans. It is expected that the building will be fully sprinkled and that the Fire Department will require a hydrant at the rear of the site. The petitioner must submit a Bus-45 turning plan to the Fire Department, which is expected to submit a written review under separate cover at a later date. Any concerns are expected to be resolved in the next few weeks.

D. Traffic Review

As stated earlier, the petitioner submitted a Transportation Impact Study to the Planning Department and the City will be hiring an independent transportation engineer to review the project and this study. This review is expected to be completed over the summer and the engineer will make a public presentation on their findings at a future public hearing.

E. Newton Housing Partnership Review

The Newton Housing Partnership reviewed the development plan at their May 2015 meeting and unanimously voted to support the proposed project **(Attachment G)**. The NHP has invited the developer back to answer additional questions as plans move forward. The Planning Department will provide an update on any future meetings.

F. Urban Design Commission Review

The Urban Design Commission (UDC) reviewed the development plan at their May meeting and provided a number of comments to the petitioner **(Attachment H)**. The petitioner is encouraged to consider the UDC's comments and to provide supplemental information to the Commission. The Planning Department will provide an update on any future meetings.

## VI. PETITIONER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The petitioner should respond to the issues raised in this memorandum and other questions raised at the public hearings as necessary. Written responses to all significant issues should be provided over the summer for analysis by the Planning Department prior to being scheduled for additional public hearings next fall. The Planning Department will prepare an updated memo next fall prior to any public hearings.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Attachment A:** Transportation Impact Study
**Attachment B:** Reuse Board Order
**Attachment C:** Rezoning Board Order
**Attachment D:** Sustainability
**Attachment E:** Zoning Review Memorandum
**Attachment F:** Engineering Memorandum
**Attachment G:** Newton Housing Partnership Letter
**Attachment H:** Urban Design Commission Letter
**Attachment I:** Zoning Map
**Attachment J:** Land Use Map

Attachment A

NELSON
NYGAARD

# MEMORANDUM

To: Austin Street Partners, LLC

From: Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc.

Date: May 12, 2015

Subject: 28 Austin Street – Transportation Impact Study

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This technical memo is provided in support of the Special Permit Application for 28 Austin Street, and is intended to evaluate the potential transportation and parking impacts of the proposed development in the village of Newtonville. The basis for the transportation evaluation of the Development was coordinated with City of Newton staff and informed by Austin Street Partners LLC's continued conversation with the community and City staff. This memo will describe the general project plan, articulate existing transportation conditions and model the potential future transportation impacts given the site program, proposed uses, and the context of nearby transportation trends and opportunities. While the overall transportation impacts of the Development are minimal, the memorandum further includes a qualitative evaluation of potential area improvements that may be contemplated and completed by the City.

## SUMMARY

In summary, the 28 Austin Street project will:

- Increase retail frontage on Austin Street, extending the street-wall and active environment of Newtonville.
- Widen sidewalks, add pedestrian connectivity and create additional pedestrian plaza areas and outdoor seating for Newtonville.
- Retain the existing public parking (127 spaces) for public use.
- Create additional parking (92 spaces) that will adequately serve the proposed program.
- Contribute to the vital, active, mixed-use, multimodal environment of Newtonville.
- Generate relatively few peak hour vehicle trips (32 AM peak; 46 PM peak).
- Maintains overall operations for all study area intersections as Level of Service (LOS) A in both Existing and Build scenarios.
- All intersection approaches operate below capacity (volume/capacity < 1.0), with minor changes in LOS for only two approaches, which are resulting from small (< 5 seconds) additional delay.
- Identify potential improvements to traffic circulation and operations in Newtonville.
- Evaluate options for additional parking during and post construction.
- Continue to coordinate with the City-led working group on Village-wide issues.

# 1.0 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In response to a Request for Proposals issued by the City of Newton, Austin Street Partners LLC was chosen as the developer to build a mixed-use residential development at 28 Austin Street in the village of Newtonville. The 28 Austin Street site currently serves as a municipal (surface) parking lot owned by the City of Newton and open to the public.

Newtonville is a dense, active, vibrant area of the City of Newton. It has local-serving retail, established adjacent residential neighborhoods, a solid walking environment, a supermarket, and good public transportation access. Its streets are active, and serve many types of transportation users. As proposed, the development will modestly expand the retail frontage in Newtonville along Austin Street, while being attractive to new apartment residents with a desire to take advantage of the amenities in the village. From a streetscape perspective, the proposed Development will add improved sidewalks, provide better pedestrian connections, retain public parking and contribute vitality, activity and amenities to Newtonville. The project will infill an underutilized area of the village fabric but it will also fulfill a need for diverse housing options in Newton, all with walkable access to local services, entertainment and transit. The development would be sited on what currently serves as a municipal-owned parking lot.

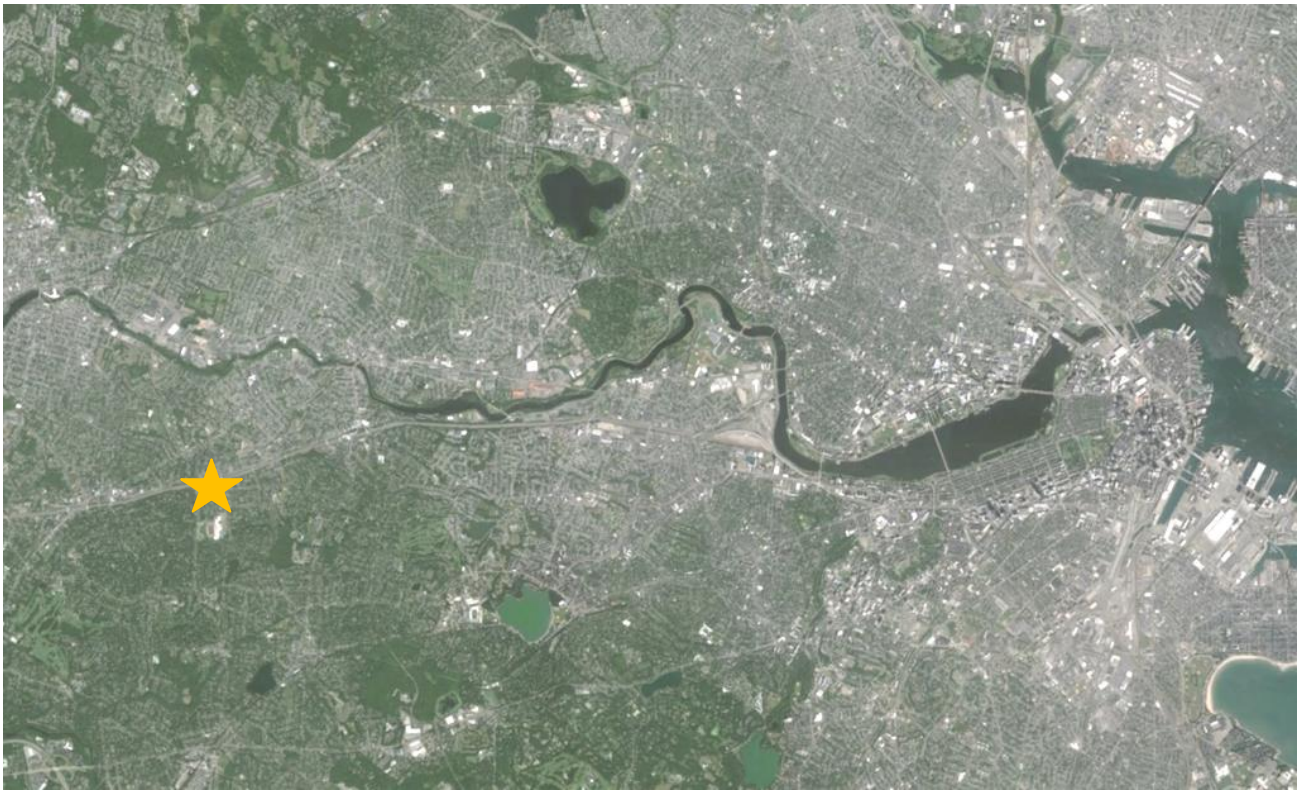
## 1.1 Project Location

The proposed 28 Austin Street development would be sited on the south side of Austin Street, just west of the Walnut Street commercial corridor. The Site, currently a City of Newton municipal parking lot, is bounded on the north side by Austin Street and on the east side by Philip Bram Way. The site is located in the commercial village of Newtonville, which is approximately ten miles west of Boston. Newtonville, and the site, are in close proximity of the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) corridor. Walnut Street, Lowell Avenue and Washington Streets provide good local and regional access. ***Figure 1*** identifies the general location of the proposed site.

Newtonville is a highly walkable environment. A Star Market supermarket is located across Austin Street from the site, with additional adjacent local-serving retail a short, pleasant walk away. The site is currently bounded by a bank on the west side, a church and apartments on the south side, a retail building on the east, and the Star Market across Austin Street.

Public transportation, including four (4) bus routes and the Newtonville MBTA Commuter Rail station are all within a short walk. Newtonville residents already enjoy ready access to all these amenities, and it is expected that project residents will be attracted to and use these as well. In fact, the project will expand local retail and recreational opportunities.

**Figure 1: Project Location**



## 1.2 Existing Use

The 28 Austin Street site currently serves as a municipal (surface) parking lot owned by the City of Newton and open to the public. The proponent, Austin Street Partners LLC, was chosen as the developer in response to a Request for Proposals issued by the City of Newton. In total, the lot provides 127 metered public parking spaces (4 of which are designated handicapped) and an additional thirty-two (32) spots which are restricted for use for Newton North High School "Tiger" student permit parking. The site is well used for access to Newtonville, and a recent study of parking supply and occupancy was completed by the City of Newton and is described in detail further in this memorandum.

Metered spaces in the Austin Street lot are in effect Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Spaces are free on weekends, when incidentally they show higher utilization on Saturdays. Sixty-eight (68) meters have a three (3) hour time limit and are $0.75/hour. Fifty-five (55) meters are 12-hour meters and are $0.50/hour. There are four (4) handicapped spaces, and the additional thirty-two (32) Newton North High School "Tiger" restricted permit spaces located in the lot.

A desire for a new use on the site was first put forth in the City of Newton's 2007 comprehensive plan and, in 2010, the City issued a request for interest to redevelop the site. As envisioned, a redevelopment would transform the existing parking lot into a mixed use development not to exceed five stories. The development would also be required to retain existing public parking on the site, which is shown further in ***Figure 2***.

**Figure 2: 28 Austin Street Site**


## 1.3 Proposed Program and Uses

The development proposes a mixed-use four-story building that will be integrated into the Newtonville area. The project program is comprised of housing, with ground level retail and associated parking. Public parking on the site will also be retained. The project will greatly enhance the streetscape and access along Austin Street, providing wider sidewalks, outdoor seating, and an active, well-managed frontage. The program as proposed includes 68 housing units, to be located on the upper three floors. The ground level will have approximately 1,500 square feet of shared office space and 3,500 square feet of retail. A summary of the building program can be found in ***Table 1***.

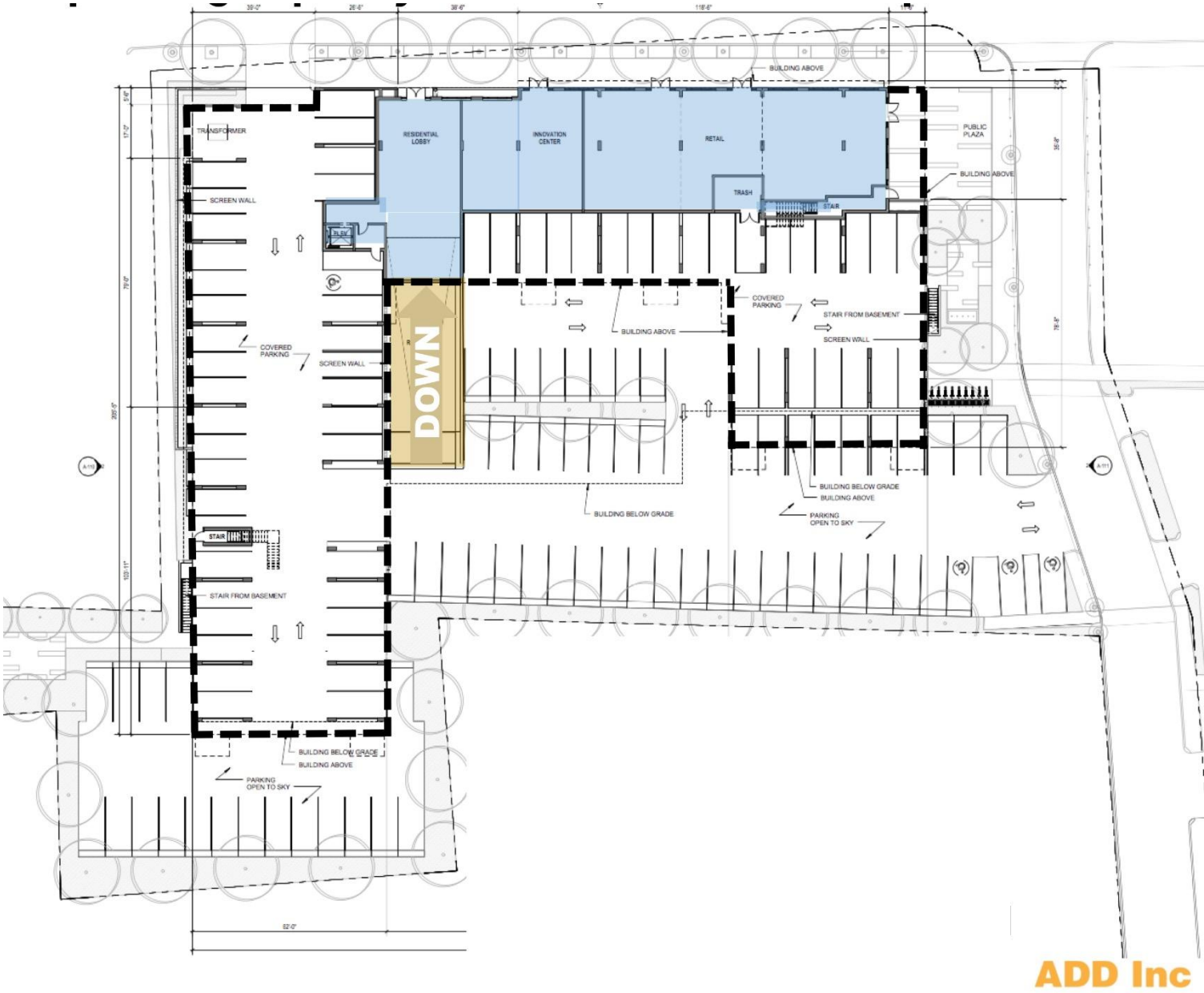
The project will have pedestrian friendly access to grocery, pharmacy, restaurants, and shopping. Vehicular site access is planned via a driveway on Austin Street and another driveway on Philip Bram Way. The site is also planned to allow for a future Hubway station, electric vehicle charging stations, car sharing (Zipcar, if possible), bicycle racks, and market pricing (for residents' second parking space) to minimize car ownership. The plan for parking will retain all of the current 127 public parking spaces at grade and an additional ninety (90) private parking spaces will be provided underground for residents and employees, accessible from the new public parking lot located behind the development.

**Table 1: 28 Austin Street Development Program**

| Project Component | Units/Square Feet |
|---|---|
| Residential | 68 units |
| Retail | 3,500 SF |
| Shared Offices | 1,500 SF |
| Parking - Private | 90 spaces |
| Parking - Public | 127 spaces |

**Figure 3: Current Concept Rendering, Credit: ADD Inc**

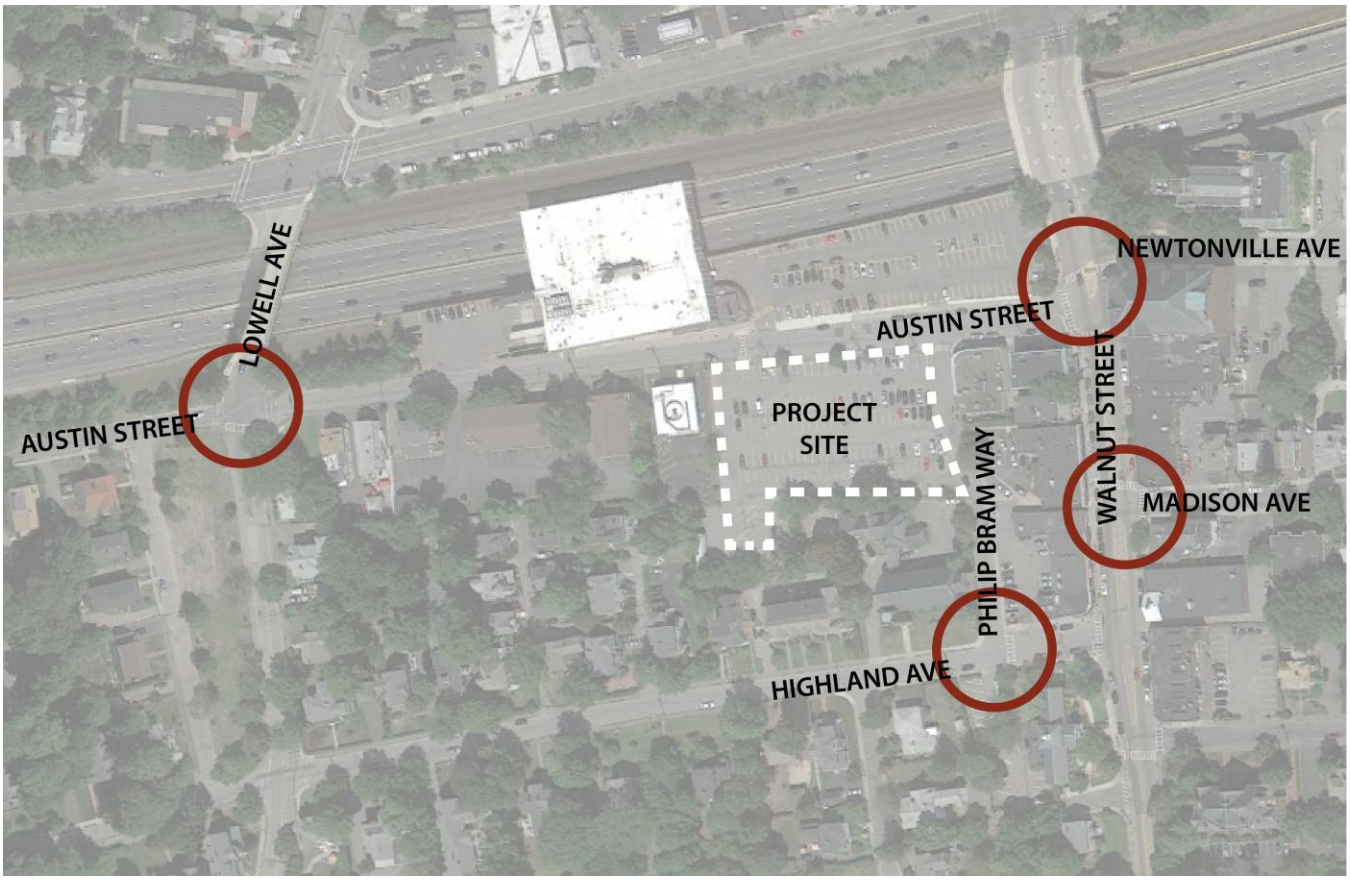
**Figure 4: Ground Level Parking Program**



# 2.0 – EXISTING CONDITIONS

The 28 Austin Street development site is located in the heart of Newtonville with frontage on Austin Street, as shown in ***Figure 5*** below. The project will be situated on the site of the municipal parking lot in Newtonville, just west of the Walnut Street intersection. Newtonville is one of the thirteen villages of Newton and contains a robust, local retail area which extends both on the North and South side of the Massachusetts Turnpike. As in most of Newton, the village area is surrounded by established residential blocks. The Newtonville area is blessed with good connectivity, with both Walnut and Lowell Streets extending across the Massachusetts Turnpike, and many local connecting streets crossing the neighborhood. The commercial area and the surrounding neighborhood are extremely walkable, with well-used sidewalks connecting neighbors to the amenities of village living. The site is well-situated near the commercial, retail and neighboring residential offerings of this part of the city, and is also well-served by multiple public transportation options. The combination of transit access, walkable neighborhood, vibrant retail, and a well-connected roadway network will continue to attract the kind of residents and merchants that seek a range of travel alternatives. A description and analysis of the existing roadways and intersections in the below study area are to follow.

**Figure 5: Project Study Area**




## 2.1 Existing Roadway Network

The current municipal parking lot (and thus the proposed development) site has primary frontage and access from Austin Street. As a mixed-use development, with primarily local serving uses, the project will most directly utilize the sidewalks, roadways and transit immediately surrounding the Site. These streets include a mix of local residential streets along with local collectors that provide connections to other Newton neighborhoods. The

following is a brief description of the principal study area roadways and intersections evaluated as part of this analysis.

*Walnut Street*

The project site is located a half block west of Walnut Street which is a two-way, two-lane urban collector that runs north to south from Crafts Street to Dedham Street. In the vicinity of the site, Walnut Street is a commercial street, lined with retail. Walnut Street also provides a connection across the Massachusetts Turnpike. The curb-to-curb width over the area between Austin Street and Washington Park varies between approximately 40 and 55 feet. On the bridge over the Mass Pike/I-90, Walnut Street is 72' and six lanes wide, with three lanes in each direction. There are 8 foot sidewalks on both sides of the street. One-hour parking is generally allowed between the hours of 7:00 am and 7:00 pm on both sides of the roadway from Austin Street to Washington Park, a stretch which also includes a striped median of varying width.

*Austin Street*

Austin Street is a two-way, two-lane local street that runs east-west, parallel to the Massachusetts Turnpike from Chestnut Street on the west to Walnut Street on the east. The current municipal lot (and development site) have frontage on the section of Austin Street between Lowell Avenue and Philip Bram Way. Across from the Site, Austin Street hosts a Star Market supermarket, with significant parking, while west of the site, Austin Street is primarily two and three-story commercial buildings with office with some residential further west. Parking is allowed on both sides of the street between Philip Bram Way and Walnut Street where the curb to curb width is around 40 feet. There is parking on the North side of the street only between the westerly curb cut to the main Star Market parking lot and Philip Bram Way, a stretch which is only 30' wide. Parking is not allowed between Lowell Avenue and the Star Market's parking lot curb cut. Two-way traffic on Austin Street is divided by a double yellow line. There are 8-foot sidewalks on both sides of the street.

*Philip Bram Way*

Philip Bram Way is a driveway that acts as a two-way local access street that runs north to south between Austin Street and Highland Avenue. Philip Bram Way functions as a public roadway, and is also used by local merchants to access the rear of the several properties fronting Walnut Street and extends along the backs of these properties from Highland Avenue to Austin Street. Prior agreement with the City established a right of way giving abutters rear access to their shops over the right of way. The paved driving way is 30' wide from Austin Street to the southerly edge of the Austin Street parking lot and the paved width varies from 22 to 24' from the Austin Street lot to where Philip Bram Way meets Highland Avenue. There is a six foot sidewalk running along the east side of Philip Bram Way and there is not a sidewalk on the west side. Parking is not currently allowed on either side of Philip Bram Way, which is also not divided by any pavement markings.

*Lowell Avenue*

Lowell Avenue is a two-way local collector that runs north to south from Watertown Street to Commonwealth Avenue. Lowell Avenue runs essentially parallel to Walnut Street and also provides a connection across the Massachusetts Turnpike. Land use along Lowell Avenue is primarily residential. Parking is prohibited on the west side of the street 7:00 am to 10:00 pm from Austin Street southerly to Otis Street. Parking is allowed on the east side of the street between Austin Street and Highland Ave with the exception of between 7:00 am and 9:00 am. The curb-to-curb width is 32' and there are five foot sidewalks on both sides of the road. Traffic on Lowell is divided by a double yellow line.

*Newtonville Avenue*

Newtonville Avenue is a two-way local street that runs west to east from Walnut Street to Centre Street. Newtonville Avenue ends at Walnut Street, offset, and just slightly north from the Austin Street terminus. From Walnut Street to just past Bowers Street, Newtonville Avenue is commercial and provides access to parking facilities for properties that front on Walnut Street. East of Bowers Street, it is primarily residential. Newtonville is

25' wide curb-to-curb and parking is only allowed on the south side of the street. The parking 120 feet easterly of Walnut Street on the south side is metered with a one-hour limit 8:00am to 6:00 pm, while parking between 120 feet east of Walnut Street to Bowers Avenue is free and time-limited to one hour between 8:00 am and 6:00 pm From Bowers Street to Harvard Street, parking has a two-hour limit during the 8:00 am to 6:00 pm period. Two-way travel on Newtonville Avenue is divided by a double yellow line. There are eight foot sidewalks on both sides of the street.

*Madison Avenue*

Madison Avenue is a two-way local street that runs from west to east from Walnut Street to Harvard Street. The curb-to-curb width is 26'. Parking is never allowed on the south side of the street in the study area and parking is only allowed on the north side of the street. On the north side, parking between Walnut Street and a point 95' east has a one-hour time limit from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm and eastward from a point 115' east of Walnut, parking is prohibited during the daytime from 7:00 am to 10:00 am. There are not any pavement markings dividing traffic directions on the Madison Ave. There are seven-foot sidewalks on both sides of the street.

## 2.2 Existing Intersections

Four intersections adjacent to the site have been evaluated as part of the analysis for the proposed Development. ***Figure 5*** identifies the location of the intersections and their relation to the project site.

*Austin Street/Lowell Avenue*

The intersection of Austin Street and Lowell Avenue is an unsignalized four leg intersection with vehicular approaches from all directions. The north and southbound approaches on Lowell Avenue allow for uncontrolled movements. Both the east and westbound movements on Austin Street are controlled by stop signs. Sidewalks are provided along all sides of the intersection. There are two crosswalks across Austin Street and one crosswalk across Lowell Avenue on the south side of the intersection. There are curb ramps on all legs of the intersection.

*Austin Street/Walnut Street/Newtonville Avenue*

The intersection of Austin Street, Walnut Street and Newtonville Avenue is an unsignalized intersection, comprised of two off-set intersections. Walnut Street runs north-south, while the Newtonville Avenue approach is on the east side of Walnut Street, located just north of Austin Street. Austin Street runs east-west and intersects Walnut on the west side. These essentially function as one intersection, with both the Newtonville and Austin components having three approaches and all ways permitting two-way travel.

The northbound approach to Austin Street on Walnut Street has one left turn lane and one through lane. The southbound approach on Walnut Street has one left turn lane to Newtonville Avenue, one through lane, and one right turn lane to Austin Street. Northbound traffic on Walnut Street, north of Newtonville Avenue, is received by three lanes in the northbound direction on the bridge over I-90. North and southbound movements on Walnut Street are uncontrolled. Both the eastbound approach to Walnut Street on Austin Street and the westbound approach to Walnut Street on Newtonville Avenue are stop-controlled and permit two-way travel with one lane in each direction.

There are sidewalks on all legs of the intersection and there are crosswalks across Austin Street and across Newtonville Avenue. There are also crossings of Walnut Street on both the south side of Austin Street and the area between Austin Street and Newtonville Avenue. The crosswalk across Walnut Street on the north side of Austin Street includes an accessible median protected refuge in the center of the street. There are curb ramps wherever there are crosswalks. There is one parking space within the intersection on the right side of Walnut Street.

*Madison Avenue/Walnut Street*

The intersection of Madison Avenue and Walnut Street is an unsignalized T intersection where Madison Avenue terminates at Walnut Street. Both Walnut Street and Madison Avenue permit two-way travel with one lane in each

direction. Madison Avenue is stop controlled at the intersection of Walnut Street. There are 8 foot sidewalks on all legs of the intersections. There is a crosswalk across Madison Ave and across Walnut Street on the north side of the intersection. There are curb ramps where there are crosswalks.

*Highland Avenue/Philip Bram Way*

The intersection of Highland Avenue and Philip Bram Way is an unsignalized T intersection with Philip Bram Way terminating at Highland Avenue. Both Highland Avenue and Philip Bram Way permit two-way travel with one lane in each direction. Both the east and west movements on Highland Avenue are uncontrolled. Philip Bram Way has no stop control, but essentially functions as such, with limited overall volumes. A driveway to the senior center opens on the intersection from the south side of Highland Avenue. There are sidewalks on all legs of the intersection and curb ramps at the northwest and northeast corners. There are not currently any crosswalks at this intersection.

## 2.3 Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

Generally, the public streets directly adjacent and in the vicinity of Newtonville are in good condition. The adjacent, surrounding streets connect the nearby residential neighborhood to Newtonville Village Center. This primarily local serving area works as a "park-once" environment, with many patrons apparently visiting multiple establishments. The area provides well-suited connections that create and enable a safe walking environment for pedestrians. Recognizing the attractiveness, utility and continued vitality of Newtonville, the City of Newton has plans to re-pave and widen sidewalks in a section of Walnut Street through Newtonville in the near future.

Generally, most streets within at least a quarter-mile radius of the Site provide continuous sidewalks on both sides of the road with adequate pedestrian curb ramps and crossings. The pedestrian ramps are in fair condition, but many do not meet current accessibility standards. Currently there is a sidewalk on only one side of Philip Bram Way and the existing municipal parking lot does not provide adequate accommodations for pedestrians or those in wheelchairs. The majority of commercial streets have eight foot wide sidewalks and residential side streets typically have six foot wide sidewalks.

While there are not currently any designated on-street bicycle facilities on the streets directly adjacent to the site, Lowell Ave and Walnut Street are both designated bicycle routes as part of the Newton Bike Network Plan. 1 There is a bicycle rack at Star Market and a bicycle rack in front of the adjacent Starbucks but generally Newtonville is otherwise underserved by bicycle parking options.

The section of Walnut Street that runs through Newtonville is slated to be repaved soon and this work might include a plan for sidewalk and crossing improvements, bicycle facilities and other streetscape improvements.

## 2.4 Existing Public Transportation

Newtonville is well served by public transportation, with local bus service, a commuter rail station, and express service to Downtown Boston all within an easy walk of the Site.

*Newtonville Commuter Rail Station*

The site is within a five minute walk from the MBTA's Newtonville station, which runs parallel to the Massachusetts Turnpike, and has pedestrian access from Walnut Street. Newtonville Station is on the MBTA's Framingham/Worcester Commuter Rail Line, which provides daily and weekend service. Newtonville Station is in Commuter Rail fare Zone 1, and provides a 10 minute ride to Yawkey Station, a 15 minute ride to Back Bay Station and a 20 minute connection to South Station in downtown Boston. Newtonville is served by 26 trains/day, with 10

[1] http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/45917p17

inbound and 16 outbound stops. In the AM and PM peak times, there are five trains each connecting Newtonville to Downtown Boston.

*MBTA Bus Service*

Newtonville is also served by four MBTA bus routes with stops in walking distance to the Site. A map of routes and stops is included as ***Figure 6***. Route 59 is a local route that runs north/south on Walnut Street and has a stop on Walnut Street, less than one block from the proposed development. The bus stop on the northwest corner of Walnut and Austin Streets, has a covered shelter for riders. Route 59 runs throughout Newton, and connects north to Watertown Square. To the south it runs to Needham connecting through Needham Center all the way to the commuter rail station at Needham Junction. It also connects with the MBTA's Green Line "D" branch at Newton Highlands. Route 59 runs on 30-40 minute peak hour headways.

MBTA Routes 553, 554 and 556, run along Washington Street and connect as Express Routes (using the Massachusetts Turnpike) to downtown Boston. These routes have combined stops within a short walk of the Site, over the Walnut Street bridge. Westbound these routes connect to Brandeis/Roberts commuter rail station, Waltham Center, Waltham Highlands and Waverly Station. Combined there are over 15 rush hour buses in each direction on Washington Street near the Site. These buses also operate locally, with local fares allowed for riders who do not travel on the MassPike portion of the trip. The details of the MBTA bus routes are further shown in ***Table 2*** below.

**Figure 6: MBTA Transit Options Near Site**

**Table 2 Newtonville MBTA Bus Routes**

| Bus Route | Origin- Destination | Weekday Peak/ Off Peak | Weekend |
|---|---|---|---|
| Route 59 | Needham Junction – Watertown Square | 30-40 minutes/ 35-45 minutes | 90 minutes |
| Route 553 | Roberts - Downtown Boston | 25-30 minutes/60 minutes | 40-45 minutes |
| Route 554 | Waverley Square – Downtown Boston | 30-40 minutes/ 60 minutes | No weekend service. |
| Route 556 | Waltham Highlands – Downtown Boston | 30 minutes/ 60 minutes | No weekend service. |

## 2.5 Existing Modesplit

Newtonville is a dense, diverse, well-connected village that provides ample opportunities to travel using transit, walking, and biking. To better understand how current residents travel, mode split data was extracted from the U.S. Census in order to provide a baseline from which to evaluate predicted travel patterns. American Community Survey mode split information, from 2013 for a 5-year period, was drawn for Census Tract 3734. While this tract comprises the core of Newtonville, it extends well beyond the heart of the Village to include the larger residential neighborhood. ***Figure 7*** shows the Site in relation to the larger census tract. The proposed development is located within close proximity to both public transportation options, and the local-serving retail of Newtonville.

**Figure 7: Location of Newtonville Census Tract 3734**

**Table 3: Existing Modesplit in Newtonville, Tract 3734, and City of Newton**

Source: 2013 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

| Mode of Travel to Work | Newtonville | City of Newton | State of Massachusetts |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drove Alone | 66.2% | 64.1% | 72.1% |
| Carpooled | 5.8% | 8.6% | 7.9% |
| Public Transportation | 13.0% | 11.5% | 9.3% |
| Walked | 3.4% | 5.5% | 4.7% |
| Bicycle | 0% | 1.3% | 0.7% |
| Taxi, Motorcycle or Other | 0.6% | 0.7% | 0.8% |
| Worked at Home | 11.1% | 8.3% | 4.3% |

The existing mode split for Tract 3734 is similar to that of the City of Newton at large, as seen in ***Table 3***. More people take public transportation and work from home in Newtonville, than the city at large and less people walk, bike, and carpool to get to work as compared to the city. The area also shows a lower driving rate than the State of Massachusetts, and can be expected to have a lower rate than typical developments captured in national analyses by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Additionally, as the development will be located in the heart of the village, with many daily amenities (including a supermarket, drug store and other significant shops) nearby, it can be expected to attract tenants more likely to use non-auto travel than the larger census tract.

## 2.6 Existing Volumes

In order to document existing transportation patterns, vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle turning movement counts (TMC's) were conducted. Following consultation with City of Newton staff, it was determined that counts could be conducted on Thursday, April 16th and Saturday, May 2nd. Turning movement counts were collected between 7:00 am and 9:00 am and 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm on Thursday and between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm on Saturday.[2] Counts included heavy vehicles, buses, cars, pedestrians and bicyclists. The raw counts are included in the Appendix of this memo. The analysis herein documents the patterns in volumes and turning movement counts at the study area intersections near the site. The existing conditions network was then used as a baseline to create the future scenarios also documented in Section 3. Maps of peak vehicular volumes are documented in the graphics to follow.

*Vehicles*

All of the streets in the study area carry relatively low volumes of vehicular traffic. On weekdays, in AM and PM peak periods, Walnut Street and Lowell Avenue carry higher volumes in both directions. It should also be noted that about 60 cars make the offset through movement from Austin Street to Newtonville Avenue in the weekday AM peak. During Saturday peak, Walnut Street and Lowell Avenue still carry the majority of vehicular volumes, though Lowell Avenue carries slightly less traffic than weekday peak. Activity is comparable on weekends and weekdays in other areas with the exception of increased activity on weekends in both directions on Philip Bram Way and around the Senior Center at Philip Bram Way and Highland Avenue.

[2] The peak period times were selected based on a discussion with the transportation staff of the City of Newton as City of Newton Schools were in session on Thursday, April 16th. We note further that Newton North High School classes start at 7:50AM and end between 2:20 and 3:20PM depending on the school day.

*Bicycles*

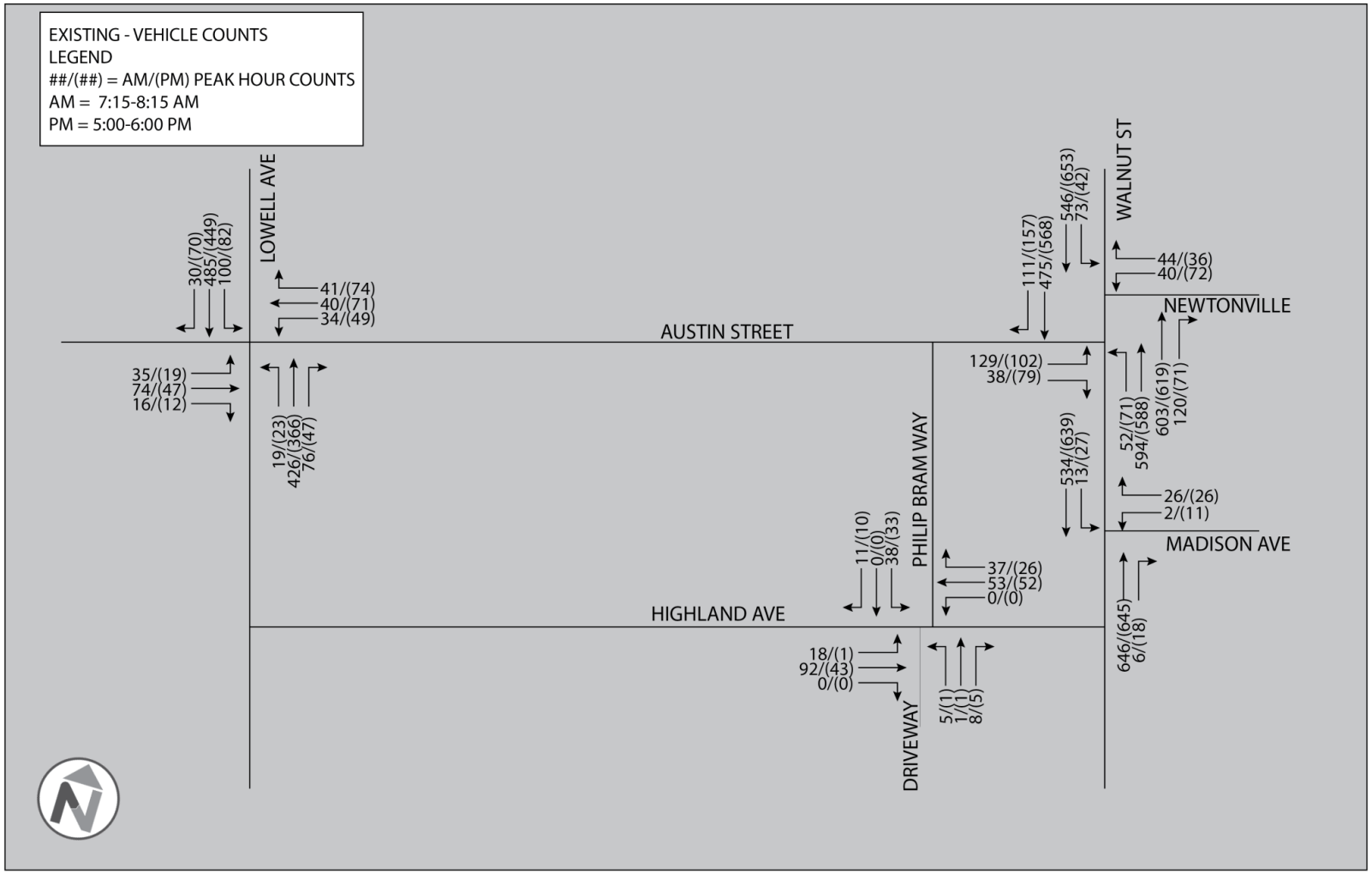
Peak hour bicycle volumes were observed and recorded as described above. The counts showed relatively low overall bicycle activity within the study area. The volume of bicycles is less than 1% of total intersection traffic, even at intersections with the most bicycling activity. The small volume of bicycles is mainly concentrated moving north and south on Walnut Street during the AM and PM peak. Currently there are not any striped on-street bicycle facilities within a ¼ mile walk radius from the site.

*Pedestrians*

Peak hour pedestrian counts were recorded as part of the transportation observations conducted on April 16th and May 2nd. Pedestrian volumes in the areas near the site indicate that PM peak activity is higher than AM peak on weekdays. On weekdays and weekends, the majority of pedestrian activity occurs along Walnut Street at both the intersection of Austin Street, Walnut Street and Newtonville Avenue and at Walnut Street and Madison Avenue.

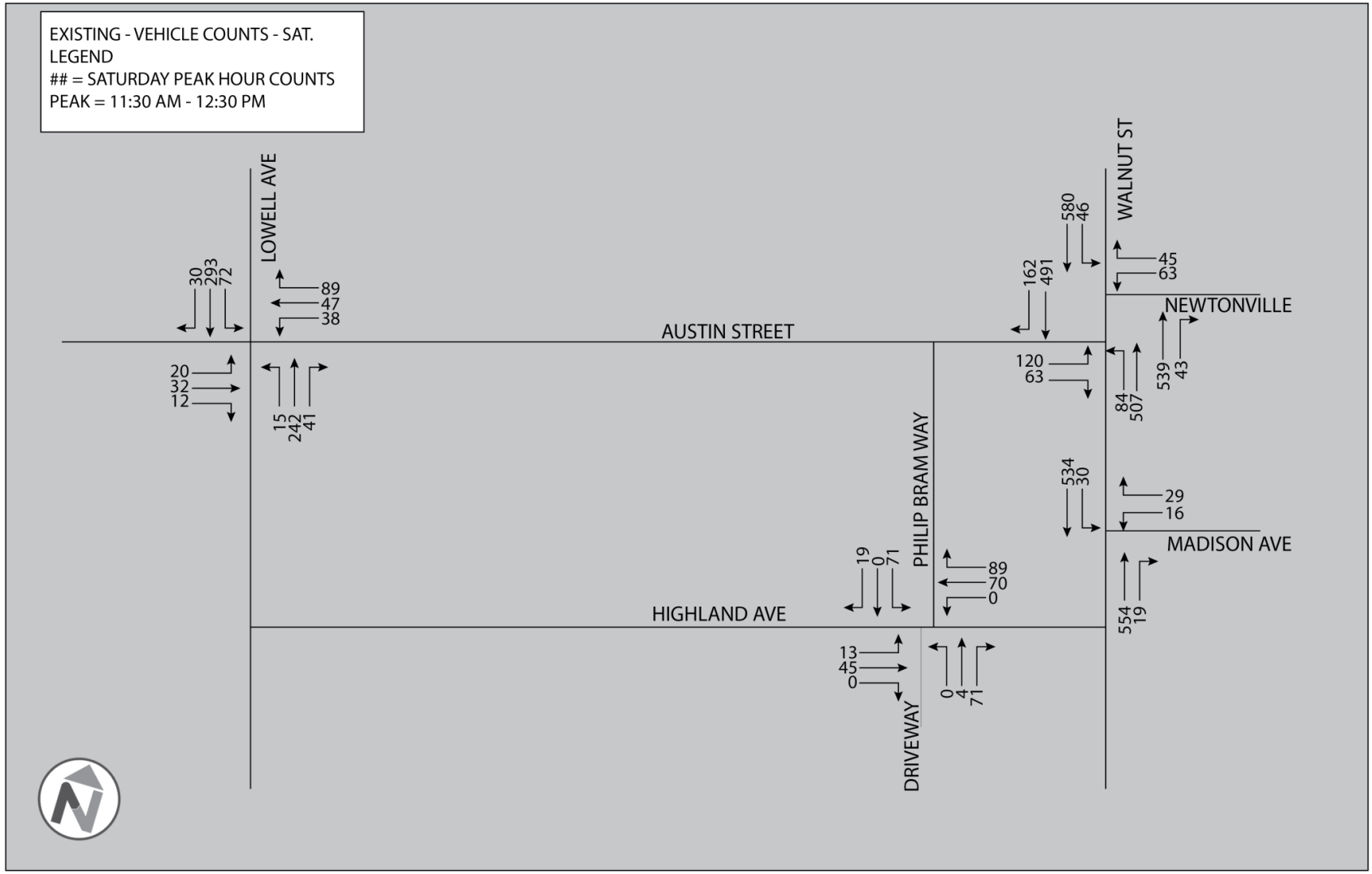
***Figure 8 through Figure 11*** show Vehicle, Bicycle and Pedestrian Turning Movements for the Peak Hour on a Weekday and Saturday respectively

**Figure 8: Existing Peak Hour Vehicle Volumes – Weekday Peak**



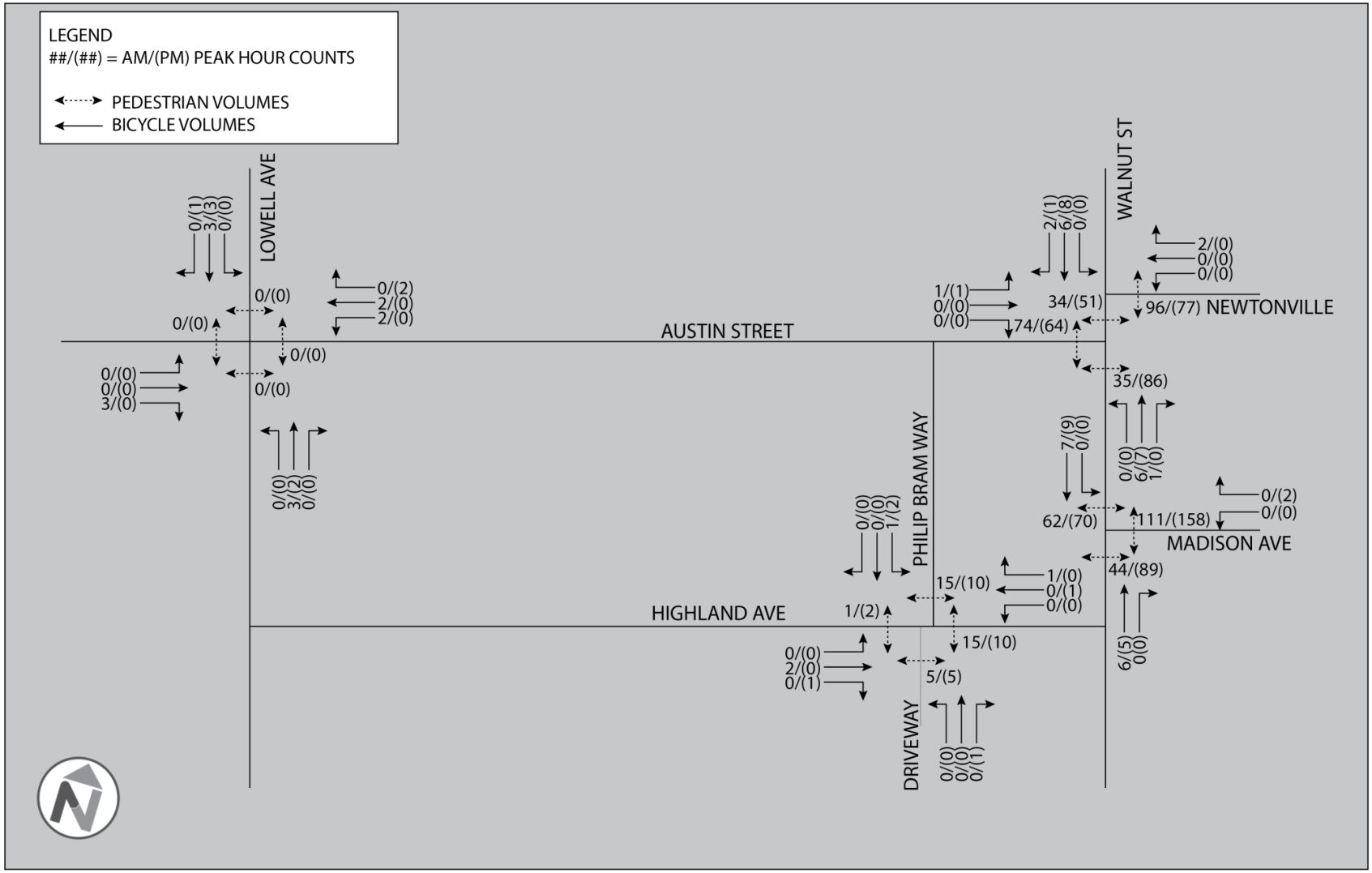

Note: Mapped based on overall study area activity peak.

**Figure 9: Existing Peak Hour Vehicle Volumes – Saturday Peak**



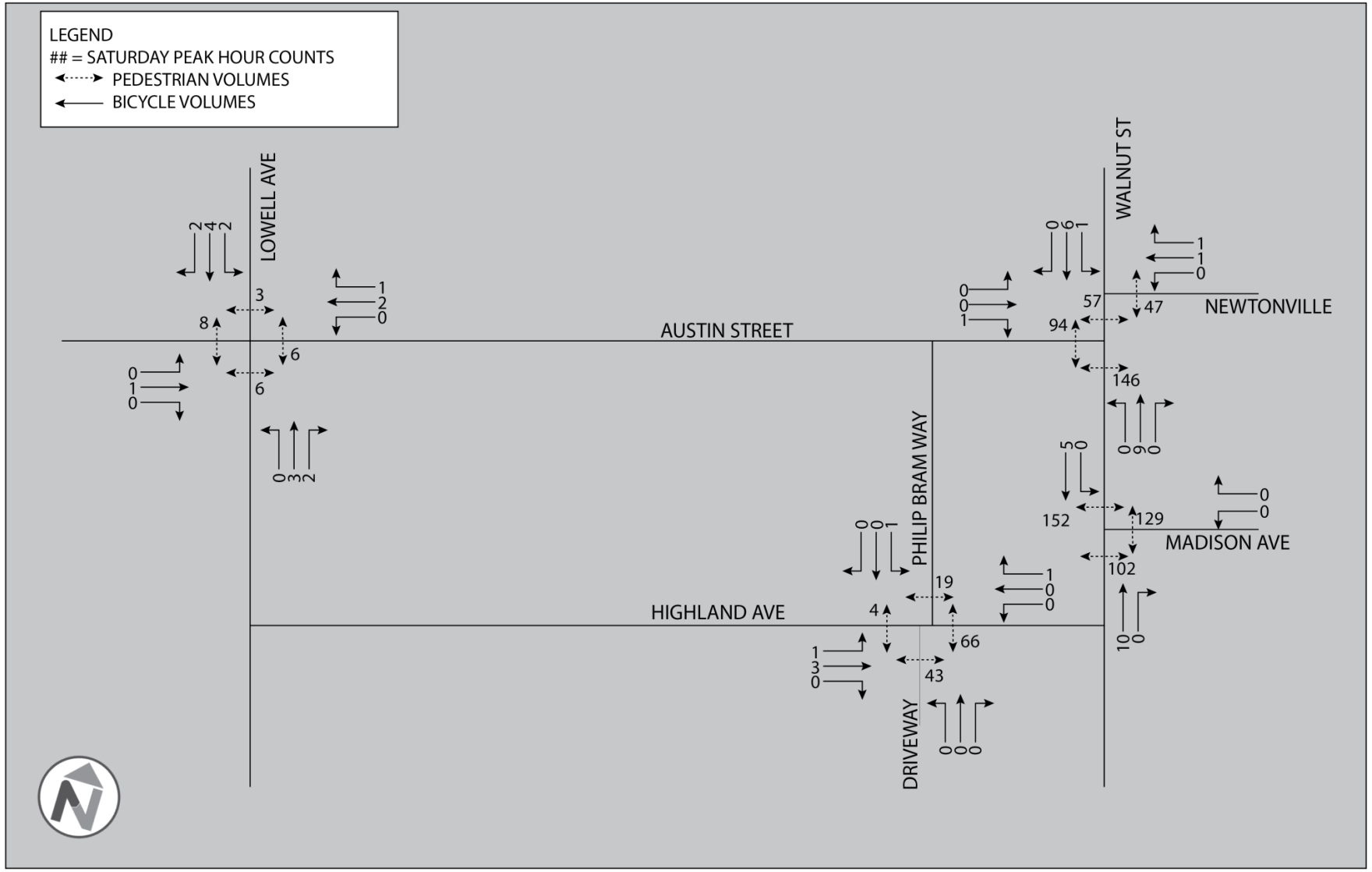

Note: Mapped based on overall study area activity peak.

**Figure 10: Existing Bicycle/Pedestrian Volumes - Weekday**




Note: Mapped based on peak for each intersection, rather than overall activity peak.

**Figure 11: Existing Bicycle/Pedestrian Volumes - Saturday**




Note: Mapped based on peak for each intersection, rather than overall activity peak.

## 2.7 Existing Traffic Capacity

To assess existing traffic operations at intersections, turning movement counts and volumes were compiled and evaluated utilizing the procedures outlined by the 2010 Highway Capacity Manual (HCM). Each intersection within the study area was analyzed for level-of-service (LOS), reporting the vehicular delay with a letter grade A to F, volume to capacity ratio (V/C), the average vehicle stop time delay in seconds and the 95$^{th}$ percentile queue lengths.

The capacity and performance of unsignalized intersections are very sensitive to the values of critical gap (headway) and follow-up headway parameters. In particular, in the case of unsignalized intersections controlled by two-way stops, there is often a need to calibrate these key parameters to suit local driver characteristics and conditions. In the case of Newtonville, it was found that the critical gaps and follow-up headways were shorter than the standard MUTCD definitions. As such, the traffic analysis was adjusted to reflect these findings and subsequently depict the conditions seen in the field.

A summary chart of the results of the existing traffic capacity analysis for weekday and Saturday peaks are in ***Table 4 & Table 5*** respectively. The intersection capacity analysis worksheets are provided in the Appendix of this memo. In the existing conditions, overall level of service at all study area intersections operates at LOS A, with minimal delay and queue lengths. This is largely due to the fact that the higher volumes approaches at these intersections generally operate without stop control. Certain approaches from cross streets to Walnut Street operate acceptably, but with delay due to both stop control and the volumes on Walnut Street. For example, the eastbound movement (left and right) from Austin Street operates at LOS D during both weekday peak hours, and at LOS E on weekends, though at well below capacity. Also, the westbound movement (left and right) from Madison Avenue to Walnut Street operates with delay (LOS C or worse), but at very low V/C ratios (0.29 on Saturday).

**Table 4: Existing Level of Service Summary - Weekday**

| Intersection | Movement | AM Peak Hour | | | | PM Peak Hour | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | LOS | Delay | V/C | Queue(ft) 95th % | LOS | Delay | V/C | Queue(ft) 95th % |
| Lowell Ave at Austin St | EB LTR | C | 23.9 | 0.40 | 48 | C | 18.0 | 0.22 | 21 |
| | WB LTR | C | 19.3 | .32 | 35 | C | 19.7 | 0.44 | 59 |
| | SB LTR | A | 2.4 | 0.09 | 8 | A | 1.9 | 0.07 | 6 |
| | NB LTR | A | 0.5 | 0.02 | 1 | A | 0.7 | 0.02 | 2 |
| | Intersection | A | 5.1 | 0.40 | | A | 5.1 | 0.44 | |
| Highland Ave at Philip Baum Way | | | | | | | | | |
| | EB LT | A | 1.3 | 0.01 | 1 | A | 0.2 | 0 | 0 |
| | WB TR | A | 0 | 0.05 | 0 | A | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | SB LR | B | 10.3 | 0.07 | 5 | A | 9.8 | 0.05 | 4 |
| | NB LTR | A | 9.5 | 0.02 | 1 | A | 9.1 | 0.01 | 1 |
| | Intersection | A | 3.0 | 0.07 | | A | 2.9 | 0.05 | |
| Walnut St at Madison Ave | | | | | | | | | |
| | WB LTR | C | 18.7 | 0.10 | 8 | D | 32.1 | 0.22 | 21 |
| | SB LT | A | 0.5 | 0.02 | 1 | A | 1.0 | 0.04 | 3 |
| | NB TR | A | 0 | 0.38 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.39 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 0.6 | 0.38 | | A | 1.4 | 0.39 | |
| Walnut St at Austin St | | | | | | | | | |
| | EB LR | D | 28.8 | 0.53 | 80 | D | 33.6 | 0.59 | 103 |
| | SB T | A | 0 | 0.28 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.33 | 0 |
| | SB R | A | 0 | 0.07 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.09 | 0 |
| | NB T | A | 0 | 0.35 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.35 | 0 |
| | NB L | A | 9.5 | 0.06 | 5 | B | 10.0 | 0.09 | 7 |
| | Intersection | A | 3.8 | 0.53 | | A | 4.3 | 0.59 | |
| Walnut St at Newtonville Ave | | | | | | | | | |
| | WB LR | C | 16.4 | 0.21 | 20 | C | 20.0 | 0.31 | 33 |
| | SB T | A | 0 | 0.16 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.19 | 0 |
| | SB L | B | 10.4 | 0.10 | 8 | A | 9.8 | 0.05 | 4 |
| | NB TR | A | 0 | 0.24 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.24 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 1.5 | 0.24 | | A | 1.7 | 0.31 | |

**Table 5: Existing Level of Service - Saturday**

| Intersection | Movement | Saturday Existing Peak Hour | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | LOS | Delay | V/C | Queue(ft) 95th % |
| Lowell Ave at Austin St | EB LTR | C | 15.0 | 0.20 | 18 |
| | WB LTR | B | 14.3 | 0.35 | 39 |
| | SB LTR | A | 2.0 | 0.06 | 5 |
| | NB LTR | A | 0.5 | 0.01 | 1 |
| | Intersection | A | 5.0 | 0.35 | |
| Highland Ave at Philip Baum Way | | | | | |
| | EB LT | A | 1.8 | 0.01 | 1 |
| | WB TR | A | 0.0 | 0.11 | 0 |
| | SB LR | B | 14.3 | 0.21 | 20 |
| | NB LTR | B | 10.2 | 0.11 | 9 |
| | Intersection | A | 5.6 | 0.21 | |
| Walnut St at Madison Ave | | | | | |
| | WB LTR | D | 33.4 | 0.29 | 28 |
| | SB LT | A | 1.1 | 0.04 | 3 |
| | NB TR | A | 0.0 | 0.35 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 1.9 | 0.35 | |
| Walnut St at Austin St | | | | | |
| | EB LR | E | 48.6 | 0.74 | 134 |
| | SB T | A | 0.0 | 0.31 | 0 |
| | SB R | A | 0.0 | 0.10 | 0 |
| | NB T | A | 0.0 | 0.31 | 0 |
| | NB L | B | 10.3 | 0.12 | 10 |
| | Intersection | A | 7.0 | 0.74 | |
| Walnut St at Newtonville Ave | | | | | |
| | WB LR | C | 18.8 | 0.31 | 33 |
| | SB T | A | 0 | 0.18 | 0 |
| | SB L | A | 9.2 | 0.05 | 4 |
| | NB TR | A | 0.0 | 0.22 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 1.9 | 0.31 | |

## 2.8 Existing Parking Supply and Utilization

The 2014 Parking and Traffic Engineering Study for Newtonville, commissioned by the City of Newton and conducted by Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI), examined public parking (and parking at the Star Market's grocery parking lot) in an established study area surrounding the Austin Street development site. In the study area examined by GPI, there are 448 public parking spaces, including 172 metered on-street spaces, 117 un-metered on-street parking spaces, and 159 metered surface lot spaces in the Austin Street Lot (including 32 NNHS Tiger permit-only spots).[3]

The location of parking spaces surveyed is mapped in ***Figure 12***. Public on-street meters are priced currently from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm on Monday through Saturday. On-street metered spaces in the study area are free on Sundays and on holidays and the four handicapped on-street spaces are free of charge at all times. Ninety (90) on-street meters have a one (1) hour time limit and are $0.75/hour. Forty (40) on-street meters in the study area are two (2) hour time-limited and are $0.75/hour. Forty-two (42) on-street meters have a twelve (12) hour time limit and are $0.50/hour.

Metered spaces in the Austin Street lot are in effect Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Spaces are free on weekends, when incidentally they show higher utilization. Sixty-eight (68) meters have a three (3) hour time limit and are $0.75/hour. Fifty-five (55) meters are 12-hour meters and are $0.50/hour. There are four (40 handicapped spaces, and an additional thirty-two (32) Newton North High School Tiger Permitted spaces located in the lot.[4]

The Newtonville Parking Study also completed a utilization analysis of these parking spaces between 7:00 am and 8:00 pm on a Tuesday, a Thursday and two typical Saturdays in March of 2014. The utilization counts found that peak parking accumulation occurs from 12:00 noon -1:00 pm on Saturdays. However, even at this time, overall parking is only 78% full, which means that ***there are almost 100 unused spaces*** within the Newtonville Study area. On weekdays, parking utilization peaks between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm and then approaches that peak utilization again only after 5:00 pm.

The Newtonville Parking study further examined the utilization of the 127 public spaces within the Austin Street parking lot itself and found that parking peaked on Saturdays around lunchtime. Based on the data presented in this study, the average utilization of this lot is 37% on weekdays and 45% on Saturdays. Utilization peaked at 66% on a weekday and 94% on a Saturday (this figure was 20% higher than all other Saturday peaks observed).[5]

The 116-space[6] Star Market parking lot, located directly across the street from the proposed development, was also examined as part of the 2014 parking study. The Star Market lot has a peak utilization of 83% on weekdays from 12:00 noon – 1:00 pm and of 75% on Saturdays during that same time period. The study also found that, on average, 39% of the demand is driven by the public (non-Star Market parking) on weekdays and 26% on weekends (when the Austin Street lot is free).[7] Since this study, Star Market has begun a closer monitoring of parking activity through the employment of a lot attendant.

[3] http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/60432, p4.

[4] http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/60432, p42.

[5] http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/59906, p1.

[6] Eastern lot has 106 striped spaces but ten unofficial spaces utilized on a regular basis and thus counted as supply in utilization counts, http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/60432, p25.

[7] http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/60432, p26.

**Figure 12: Existing Parking Regulations in Newtonville, 2014**

Credit: GPI for the City of Newton

# 3.0 – FUTURE BUILD ANALYSIS

## 3.1 Proposed Project

The development proposes a mixed-use, four-story building that will be integrated into the Newtonville area. The existing site is occupied by a public parking lot, making it an uninviting environment for pedestrians to walk down Austin Street or Philip Bram Way. Those who walk will be better accommodated by a shared use walkable accommodation along this street, the designs of which will help blend the development into the fabric of the greater village.

The project program is comprised of housing, with ground level retail and associated parking. Public parking on the site will also be retained. The project will greatly enhance the streetscape and access along Austin Street, providing wider sidewalks, outdoor seating, and an active, well managed frontage. The program as proposed includes 68 housing units, to be located on the upper three floors. The ground level will have approximately 1,500 square feet of shared office space and 3,500 square feet of retail. This program is summarized in ***Table 6***.

The project will have pedestrian-friendly access to grocery, pharmacy, restaurants, and shopping. Vehicular site access is planned via a driveway on Austin Street and another driveway on Philip Bram Way. The site is also planned to have a both outdoor bicycle parking with potential for a future Hubway bike sharing station, electric vehicle charging, a carsharing service like Zipcar, underground bicycle parking for residents, and market vehicle pricing (for residents' second parking space) to minimize car ownership. The plan for parking will retain the 127 public parking spaces and an additional 90 private parking spaces will be provided underground for residents and employees, accessible from the new public parking lot located behind the development.

**Table 6: Austin Street Development Program**

| Project Component | Units/Square Feet |
|---|---|
| Residential | 68 units |
| Retail | 3,500 SF |
| Shared Offices | 1,500 SF |
| Parking - Private | 90 spaces |
| Parking - Public | 127 spaces |

Parking will be accessed from one curb cut on Austin Street just west of the development and one on Philip Bram Way, just south of the development. Exits from the parking lot will be stop-controlled. People who walk will be able to access the building through various entrances on Austin Street and Philip Bram Way. Bicyclists can access the development through the garage and also use various bicycle racks around the development. The proposed access improvements will continue to shift the area towards an environment that is friendly for all modes.

## 3.2 Trip Generation

To estimate the number of individual vehicle, transit, walk, and bicycle trips associated with the proposed development, trip generation analysis and estimates were developed based on the most recent data presented in the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition. Because the project consists of three land use components including 68 residential units, 3,500 square feet of retail, and 1,500 square feet of shared office space, trip estimates were based on ITE trip rates for Land Use 220 (Apartment), Land Use 710 (General Office), and Land use 820

(Shopping Center)[8]. The three ITE land use categories and their corresponding trip rates used for analysis are shown in ***Table 7***.

**Table 7: ITE Trip Generation Rates[9]**

| ITE Class | Apartment (220) | Office (710) | Shopping Center (820) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Trips per Dwelling Unit | Trips per 1000 SF GFA | Trips per 1000 SF GLA |
| Weekday | 6.65 | 11.03 | 42.70 |
| Saturday | 6.39 | 2.46 | 49.97 |
| AM Peak Hour | 0.51* | 1.56 | 0.96* |
| PM Peak Hour | 0.62* | 1.49 | 3.71* |

*Peak hour of adjacent street traffic

Trip generation estimates using ITE analyses, are vehicular-based. In mixed-use neighborhood environments, like Newtonville, trips are made by all modes, with the ability to walk, bicycle or take public transportation as a significant benefit and amenity to living, working or shopping in these neighborhoods. Travel data taken from the US Census bears this out, as the drive alone mode share in Newtonville is comparable to the rest of the City of Newton and shows that about one-third of all trips are non-single occupancy vehicle trips.

Ultimately, the transportation use of the proposed development will be multimodal, and measured in person trips. Thus, the following analysis uses the U.S. Census 2013 5-year mode splits credits to accurately divide person trips amongst the modes of driving, bicycling, and walking. The analysis also uses the 2013 average vehicle occupancy for Newtonville from the 2013 American Community Survey (1.1 vehicle occupancy) to convert vehicle trips to person trips. Finally, the site will have multiple uses and thus generate a certain rate of internal capture, especially since a grocery store, drugstore, and other amenities are in a less than five minute walk from the development. To remain conservative, this analysis does not take a reduction factor internally captured trips, which would otherwise reduce vehicular trips to and from the site slightly from the numbers in ***Table 7***.

As can be seen, the expected trip generation from the project can be seen as similar to the overall patterns exhibited in Newtonville itself. There is little difference between weekday and Saturday overall trip generation expected from the site. PM peak hour trip generation is somewhat higher than during the AM peak hour, largely due to the retail component of the proposal. We would note though that pedestrian trips are likely undercounted, both in census data and thus in the analysis included herein, as the ability to walk to additional retail and village amenities will undoubtedly be higher than the numbers shown in ***Table 7.***

## 3.3 Future Trip Distribution and Trip Assignment

A trip distribution was developed - characterizing the overall split of person trips by mode and then assigning the vehicle trips to the network. As shown in **Table 8**, the majority of site-generated trips for all uses and time periods are shown as person trips. To determine auto trips, person trips by automobile were re-calculated into vehicle trips using the same vehicle occupancy rate (1.1) used to derive overall person trips. The vehicle trip distribution was derived using 2013 Census 5-year mode shares as guidelines and based on assumptions about local traffic distribution based on the patterns in existing counts. These trips are summarized in ***Table 8***. Site generated trips are assumed to use both the Austin Street and Philip Bram Way entrances enter and exit to the site. Auto trips were then assigned to the network using the directional distribution shown in ***Figure 13 &***

[8] Exact retail user and office type user has not been defined. General urban retail and shared space/innovation centers are not classified in ITE. ITE Shopping center (820) and General Office (710) represent accurate approximations for representative trip generations

[9] ITE, Trip Generation, 9th Ed., Apartment (220), Vol. 2, p332-359, General office building (710), Vol. 3, p1250-1265, Shopping Center (820), Vol. 3, p1557-1567

***Figure 14***. Based on a review of the existing vehicle volumes, and area connectivity, it is assumed that a majority of exiting vehicles would be heading north on Walnut Street to head to Washington Street and the I-90 corridor. In the PM, a majority of vehicles would head south on Walnut Street back to the development. A majority of entering vehicles to the site would come from the north heading south on Walnut Street.

**Table 8: Site-Generated Person and Vehicle Trips**

| | ENTERING | | | | EXITING | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Apartment | Shopping | Office | Total Person Trips | Apartment | Shopping | Office | Total Person Trips | TOTAL ENTER + EXIT |
| **AM Peak Hour Mode Shares** | | | | | | | | | |
| Auto | 5 | 2 | 2 | **9** | 22 | 1 | 0 | **23** | **32** |
| Transit | 1 | 0 | 0 | **2** | 4 | 0 | 0 | **4** | **6** |
| Walk | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | **2** |
| **PM Peak Hour Mode Shares** | | | | | | | | | |
| Auto | 22 | 5 | 0 | **27** | 12 | 5 | 1 | **19** | **46** |
| Transit | 4 | 1 | 0 | **5** | 2 | 1 | 0 | **3** | **8** |
| Walk | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | **2** |
| **Daily 24 Hour Mode Shares** | | | | | | | | | |
| Auto | 179 | 60 | 7 | **245** | 179 | 60 | 7 | **245** | **490** |
| Transit | 32 | 11 | 1 | **44** | 32 | 11 | 1 | **44** | **89** |
| Walk | 8 | 3 | 0 | **12** | 8 | 3 | 0 | **12** | **17** |
| **Saturday Peak Hour Mode Shares** | | | | | | | | | |
| Auto | 14 | 7 | 0 | **21** | 14 | 6 | 0 | **21** | **42** |
| Transit | 3 | 1 | 0 | **4** | 3 | 1 | 0 | **4** | **8** |
| Walk | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | **2** |
| **Daily 24 Hour Saturday Mode Shares** | | | | | | | | | |
| Auto | 172 | 69 | 1 | **243** | 172 | 69 | 1 | **243** | **486** |
| Transit | 31 | 13 | 0 | **44** | 31 | 13 | 0 | **44** | **88** |
| Walk | 8 | 3 | 0 | **11** | 8 | 3 | 0 | **11** | **23** |

**Figure 13: Vehicle Trip Distribution – Weekday Peak**

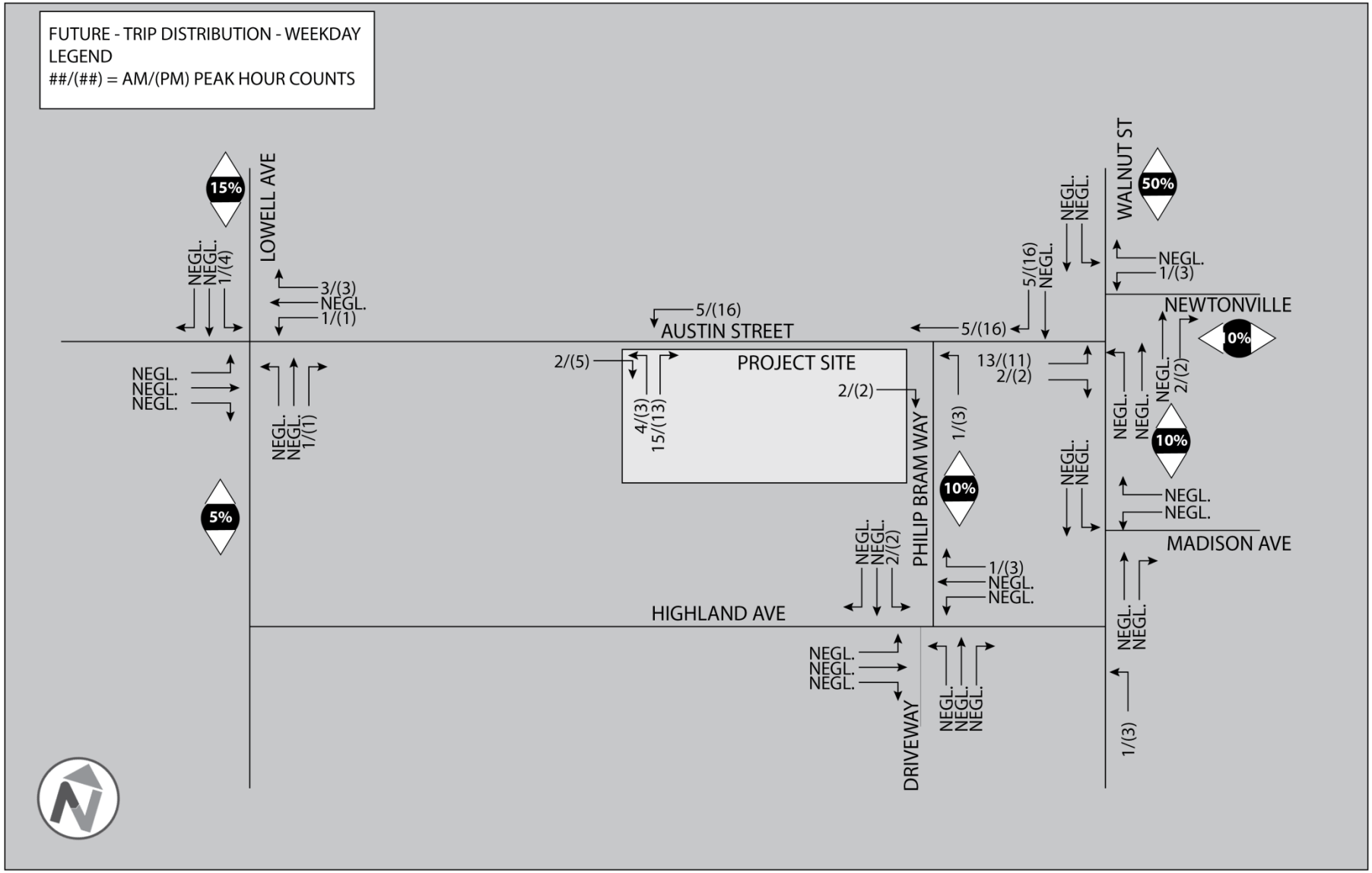
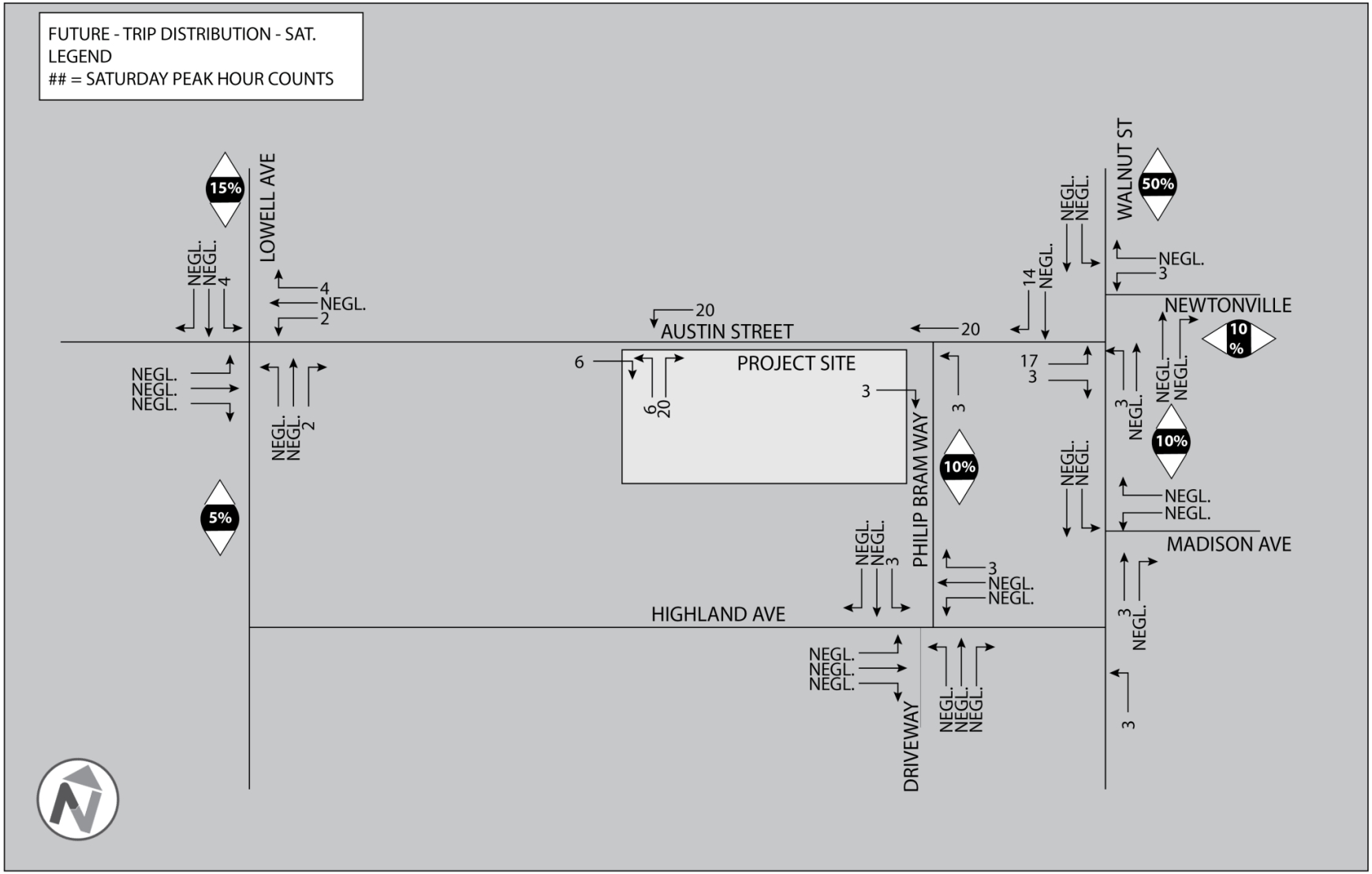


**Figure 14: Vehicle Trip Distribution – Saturday Peak**



## 3.4 Future Build Capacity Analysis

The future build scenario vehicle network was developed by adding the site-generated vehicle trips to the existing network described above. Each intersection within the study area was again analyzed for level-of-service (LOS), reporting the average vehicular delay with a letter grade A to F, volume to capacity ratio (V/C), the average vehicle stop time delay in seconds and the 95$^{th}$ percentile queue lengths. Based on a conversation with city staff, a growth rate was not used in modeling future volumes. And, as noted in the existing conditions analysis, the capacity and performance of unsignalized intersections are very sensitive to the values of critical gap (headway) and follow-up headway parameters. The traffic analysis was adjusted to reflect these findings and subsequently depict the conditions seen in the field. The intersection capacity analysis worksheets are provided in Appendix of this report. Summary charts of the results of this analysis are shown in ***Table 9*** & ***Table 10***. The future build analysis includes the proposed driveways and its intersections with Austin Street.

A review of traffic operations in the future build scenario conditions, shows that overall Level of Service at all study area intersections continue to operate at LOS A, with minimal delay and queue lengths. With the added project trips, almost all approaches at Study Area intersections show no degradation in LOS, with only minimal changes in other measurables. In the future build analysis, only the eastbound approach from Austin Street to Walnut Street shows a slight change in LOS (in both PM and Saturday peak). However, this result comes from a small additional delay in this move that decreases the LOS. The other vehicle measurables show that this approach still operates with acceptable volume/capacity (below 1.0) and experiences small additional queues on the order of five seconds (at the 95$^{th}$ percentile). This approach has potential to be mitigated, with several options presented later in this memorandum. Furthermore, as presently configured and proposed, options to avoid this approach exist, as vehicles could travel west on Austin Street to Lowell Street (which provides similar connectivity to Walnut Street) or south on Philip Bram Way. The westbound left, through, and right lane approach on Austin at Lowell Avenue also shows a slightly lower LOS, but with only a one-second increased delay, on Saturdays.

**Table 9: Future Build Capacity Analysis – Weekday (Change in LOS Highlighted)**

| Intersection | Movement | AM Peak Hour | | | | PM Peak Hour | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | LOS | Delay | V/C | Queue(ft) 95th % | LOS | Delay | V/C | Queue(ft) 95th % |
| Lowell Ave at Austin St | EB LTR | C | 24.1 | 0.40 | 49 | C | 18.3 | 0.22 | 22 |
| | WB LTR | C | 19.8 | 0.33 | 36 | C | 20.1 | 0.46 | 62 |
| | SB LTR | A | 2.4 | 0.09 | 8 | A | 1.9 | 0.07 | 6 |
| | NB LTR | A | 0.5 | 0.02 | 1 | A | 0.7 | 0.02 | 2 |
| | Intersection | A | 5.1 | 0.40 | | A | 5.2 | 0.46 | |
| Highland Ave at Philip Baum Way | | | | | | | | | |
| | EB LT | A | 1.3 | 0.01 | 1 | A | 0.2 | 0 | 0 |
| | WB TR | A | 0 | 0.05 | 0 | A | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | SB LR | B | 10.3 | 0.07 | 5 | A | 9.9 | 0.05 | 5 |
| | NB LTR | A | 9.5 | 0.02 | 1 | A | 9.1 | 0.01 | 1 |
| | Intersection | A | 3.0 | 0.07 | | A | 2.9 | 0.06 | |
| Walnut St at Madison Ave | | | | | | | | | |
| | WB LTR | C | 18.7 | 0.10 | 8 | D | 32.2 | 0.22 | 21 |
| | SB LT | A | 0.5 | 0.02 | 1 | A | 1.0 | 0.04 | 3 |
| | NB TR | A | 0 | 0.38 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.39 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 0.6 | 0.38 | | A | 1.4 | 0.39 | |
| Walnut St at Austin St | | | | | | | | | |
| | EB LR | D | 31.1 | 0.57 | 93 | E | 38.9 | 0.65 | 129 |
| | SB T | A | 0 | 0.28 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.33 | 0 |
| | SB R | A | 0 | 0.07 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.09 | 0 |
| | NB T | A | 0 | 0.35 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.35 | 0 |
| | NB L | A | 9.5 | 0.06 | 5 | B | 10.1 | 0.09 | 8 |
| | Intersection | A | 4.3 | 0.57 | | A | 5.2 | 0.65 | |
| Walnut St at Newtonville Ave | | | | | | | | | |
| | WB LR | C | 16.7 | 0.22 | 21 | C | 20.4 | 0.32 | 34 |
| | SB T | A | 0 | 0.16 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.19 | 0 |
| | SB L | B | 10.4 | 0.10 | 8 | A | 9.8 | 0.05 | 4 |
| | NB TR | A | 0 | 0.24 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.25 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 1.5 | 0.24 | | A | 1.7 | 0.32 | |
| Austin St at Site Access | | | | | | | | | |
| | WB TL | A | 0.3 | 0.00 | 0 | A | 0.7 | 0.01 | 1 |
| | EB TR | A | 0 | 0.15 | 0 | A | 0 | 0.11 | 0 |
| | NB LR | B | 10.1 | 0.03 | 2 | A | 9.6 | 0.03 | 2 |
| | Intersection | A | 0.5 | 0.15 | | A | 0.7 | 0.11 | |

**Table 10: Future Build Capacity Analysis – Saturday (Change in LOS Highlighted)**

| Intersection | Movement | Saturday Future Build Peak Hour | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | LOS | Delay | V/C | Queue(ft) 95th % |
| Lowell Ave at Austin St | EB LTR | C | 16.5 | 0.22 | 21 |
| | WB LTR | C | 15.6 | 0.38 | 45 |
| | SB LTR | A | 2.1 | 0.07 | 5 |
| | NB LTR | A | 1.4 | 0.04 | 3 |
| | Intersection | A | 5.6 | 0.38 | |
| Highland Ave at Philip Baum Way | | | | | |
| | EB LT | A | 1.8 | 0.01 | 1 |
| | WB TR | A | 0.0 | 0.11 | 0 |
| | SB LR | B | 14.5 | 0.22 | 21 |
| | NB LTR | B | 10.2 | 0.11 | 9 |
| | Intersection | A | 5.6 | 0.22 | |
| Walnut St at Madison Ave | | | | | |
| | WB LTR | D | 33.6 | 0.29 | 28 |
| | SB LT | A | 1.1 | 0.04 | 3 |
| | NB TR | A | 0.0 | 0.35 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 1.9 | 0.35 | |
| Walnut St at Austin St | | | | | |
| | EB LR | F | 63.0 | 0.84 | 172 |
| | SB T | A | 0.0 | 0.31 | 0 |
| | SB R | A | 0.0 | 0.11 | 0 |
| | NB T | A | 0.0 | 0.31 | 0 |
| | NB L | B | 10.4 | 0.12 | 10 |
| | Intersection | A | 9.6 | 0.84 | |
| Walnut St at Newtonville Ave | | | | | |
| | WB LR | C | 19.2 | 0.33 | 35 |
| | SB T | A | 0 | 0.18 | 0 |
| | SB L | A | 9.2 | 0.05 | 4 |
| | NB TR | A | 0.0 | 0.22 | 0 |
| | Intersection | A | 2.0 | 0.33 | |
| Austin St at Site Access | | | | | |
| | WB TL | A | 0.9 | 0.02 | 1 |
| | EB TR | A | 0 | 0.10 | 0 |
| | NB LR | A | 9.7 | 0.04 | 3 |
| | Intersection | A | 1.2 | 0.10 | |

## 3.5 Future Parking Supply and Demand

The proposed 28 Austin Street development is mostly residential, providing sixty-eight (68) apartment units, along with ground level retail. Overall, the project will have a total of 217 parking spaces, which both replaces the 127 off-street surface public parking spaces and will provide 90 new spaces -- an additional eighty-five (85) spaces for the residential apartment units and five spaces for employees of the combined 5,000 square feet of retail and shared office space. The garage spaces will be accessible via one secure ramped entrance behind the building.

The Newton Zoning Code allows a minimum parking ratio of 1.25 spaces per residential unit in apartment houses by special permit. Newton zoning also requires 1 space per 300 square feet of retail (with an additional 1 space for the employee with the longest shift) and 1 per 250 square feet of office.[10] As shown in ***Table 11*** below, the proposed development corresponds with the city's special permit ratio for residential apartments but provides less than the recommended parking for retail and office.

In recent studies presented to the City of Newton, residential parking utilization has been shown to be comparable to the ratios proposed for 28 Austin Street. In two other large mixed income apartment communities, parking occupancy counts were taken during expected peak residential hours (9 pm – 12 midnight), and showed an average utilization that translated to 1.24 spaces per unit in larger apartment communities with even less favorable access to transit[11].

Like these other mixed income apartment communities, the project will only provide second parking spaces for residents at market rates –currently $150 per month, which will help to control the demand for parking. In addition, the project is intended to attract tenants for whom the walkable amenities of Newtonville, the easy access to public transportation, and the multimodal options of car-sharing, future bike-sharing and other amenities will encourage car-free living. The site is planned to provide a future Hubway station as well as ample bike parking for residents and visitors. In addition, as office and retail parking demand is complementary with residential demand, additional parking supply is likely to be unused and thus available for employees and other users during weekdays and weekends (i.e., residents go to work and vacate their parking spaces which can be used to satisfy weekday office and retail parking demand).

Moreover, the site will continually provide 127 public parking spaces, which will be available for use of office and retail employees and customers, similar to that of other users in Newtonville. As described in the 2014 Parking and Traffic Engineering Study for Newtonville[12], spaces within the existing municipal lot are never completely full, with typical average utilization of this lot of 37% on weekdays and 45% on Saturdays. Although demand in the Austin Street lot has increased with Star Market's recent enforcement of its shoppers-only policy in its parking lot, recently collected data show that the Austin Street municipal lot still has space available even at the peak hours on weekdays and weekends, which would continue to support existing and new uses. Moreover, average utilization of the lot and surrounding streets still shows general availability of parking at off-peak and on-peak times.

**Table 11: Parking Ratio of Proposed Development**

| Use | Units/KSF | Number of On-Site Parking Spaces Provided | Number of Parking Spaces Required | Effective Project Parking Ratio |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Residential** | 68 | 85 | 85 (by special permit) | 1.25 space/ unit |
| **Retail & Shared** | 5 | 5 | 18 | 1 space/ ksf |

[10] Section 30-19 and 3-24, Newton Zoning Code, http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/44026

[11] http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/62425

[12] http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/60432

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Office** | | | | |

# 4.0 - QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF OTHER SCENARIOS

The City of Newton and the Newtonville neighborhood have been engaged in numerous discussions about the potential for transportation improvements on the streets surrounding the site. These were part of the planning that led to the issuance of the Request for Proposals for the site, have continued through the development of preliminary streetscape plans for Walnut Street, and certainly have been furthered through ongoing community discussions about the potential changes occurring with the Development.

The analysis of both existing and proposed conditions included in this memorandum, along with the previously completed Parking Analysis, provides a strong analytical basis from which those discussions can continue. While the potential transportation impacts of the proposed development are minimal, as shown in this memo, the analysis below includes a qualitative evaluation of several transportation and circulation scenarios that have been raised in previous discussions in light of the information presented herein. This evaluation is neither an endorsement, nor a proposal, nor a commitment of the development, but is included to further community discussion. We note further that though each of these opportunities are evaluated separately, making one change may impact how additional opportunities are evaluated, e.g. converting Austin Street to one-way eastbound may change the thinking about if a signal should be included at its intersection with Walnut Street. Ultimately, any additional changes to the surrounding street network or its operation would be completed at the discretion of the City of Newton.

## 4.1 Austin Street as One-way

Austin Street will already be improved as part of the 28 Austin Street development. At least along the site frontage, the character will change significantly, with retail frontage, wider sidewalks, improved streetscape and active edges. The potential conversion of Austin Street from two-way to one-way would create even further opportunities to enhance the street, and potentially add parking, greenspace or active space. Additionally, such a conversion might make room for improvements at any of the proposed or existing driveway access points. A possible conversion from two-way to one-way could occur along the entire length of the street from Walnut Street to Lowell Street or be established at Philip Bram Way, the Star Market driveway or the proposed Site driveway. The overall impacts described below will be similar regardless, while the opportunities for enhanced streetscape and parking may differ depending on the alternative pursued.

We note that the existing peak hour volumes on Austin Street are fairly balanced. The PM peak volumes are generally higher than AM peak, though AM eastbound from Lowell Street towards Walnut Street is the highest overall volume.

*Austin Street as One-Way in East Direction*

- Reconfiguration of Austin Street to one-way eastbound could enable separate Left Turn and Right Turn lanes at the intersection with Walnut Street, which would likely improve LOS and reduce delay on that eastbound approach
- Area circulation would be altered, possibly resulting in more circulating traffic, higher speeds, and reduced connectivity.
- Additional westbound traffic would likely utilize Lowell Avenue to access Austin Street or Highland Avenue as the alternate westbound movement.
- One-way eastbound would have the potential to significantly increase Austin Street traffic volumes at Walnut Street, potentially increasing the probability of the need for a traffic signal.

- The streetscape and right-of-way on Austin Street could be reconfigured to include additional sidewalk, mixed-use space, turning lanes or up to an additional [25]on-street parking spaces.
- Driveway access to the Site and Star Market could be altered to create efficiencies, improve safety and potentially add more on-site parking.

*Austin Street as One-way in West Direction*

- Reconfiguration of Austin Street to one-way westbound could enable separate Left Turn and Right Turn lanes at the intersection with Lowell Avenue, though this approach already operates effectively.
- Area circulation would be altered, possibly resulting in more circulating traffic, higher speeds, and reduced connectivity.
- Additional traffic would likely utilize Walnut Street to access Austin Street or Highland Avenue and Philip Bram Way as the alternate EB/NB movement.

- One-way westbound would have the potential to significantly increase Austin Street traffic volumes at Lowell Avenue, potentially increasing the probability of the need for a traffic signal at this location.
- The streetscape and right-of-way on Austin Street could be reconfigured to include additional sidewalk, mixed-use space, turning lanes or on-street parking.
- Driveway access to the site and Star Market could be altered to create efficiencies, improve safety and potentially add up to an additional [25]on-street parking spaces.

### 4.2 Philip Bram Way as One-way

The developer has shown that converting Philip Bram Way, which currently serves as a two-way right-of-way, is a possibility. If converted, Philip Bram Way could serve as a one-way "shared use" street, which may allow for different surface treatments, would make room for walking and could possibly add up to seven (7) additional on-street parking spaces. The intersection of Philip Bram Way and Highland Avenue operates well within acceptable Level of Service (LOS) in all directions today, but does carry 50+ vehicles (combined directions) during weekday peak hours and over 150 vehicles during the Saturday peak hour.

*Philip Bram Way as One-Way in North Direction*

- Would limit access to the site and to Highland Avenue.
- Would limit access to the land-uses along Phillip Bram Way.
- Southbound traffic would be forced to utilize Lowell Avenue or Walnut Street, exacerbating conditions at these approaches.
- Continue to provide relief for the Walnut Street northbound left to Austin Street.

*Philip Bram Way as One-way in South Direction*

- Would limit access to the site and to Austin Street.
- Northbound traffic would be forced to utilize Lowell Ave or Walnut Street. and turn on Austin Street.
- Would limit access to the land uses along Phillip Bram Way.
- Would reduce left turns from Walnut Street to Highland Avenue, but increase turns from Walnut Street to Austin Street.

### 4.3 Changes to the Intersection of Austin Street/Walnut Street/Newtonville Avenue

Many community discussions have centered around potential improvements to the off-set intersection of Walnut Street, Austin Street and Newtonville Avenue. Walnut Street runs uncontrolled today, with left and right turn lanes at certain approaches as described earlier. The proposed development adds little vehicular traffic to this intersection, but has now provided baseline data and the opportunity to re-evaluate previous discussions on how best to approach this intersection to the benefit of all users.

*Removing Parking for Left Turn Pocket at Austin and Walnut Streets*

The eastbound approach to Walnut Street experiences some delay in both the existing and build analysis. This is partially due to the fact there is one approach lane, which handles both left and right turning vehicles onto Walnut Street. Assuming Austin Street remains two-way, the potential exists to improve this approach by removing two or three parking spaces on Austin Street at its Walnut Street approach. Enough room could be made to create separate left and right turn lanes, which would minimize delay and potentially improve Level of Service for that maneuver.

*Changes at Intersection of Newtonville Avenue and Walnut Street*

The T-intersection of Newtonville Avenue and Walnut Street could be altered by either making this a right in/right out intersection and/or eliminating the southbound left turn from Walnut Street to Newtonville Avenue.

- Removal of southbound left turn lane would limit access and mobility along Newtonville Avenue.
- Southbound left turn traffic would be redirected via either Harvard Street or Madison Avenue bringing additional traffic to those roadways.
- The southbound Walnut Street left turn lane currently continues from the bridge, removal could enable reconfiguration on the bridge for parking, if permitted by MassDOT.
- Additional infrastructure (with costs) would be required to restrict movements to right-in/right-out.
- The right-in, right-out could be reinforced by a median allowing streetscape improvement potential and improved pedestrian refuge.

### 4.4 Scenarios Under Consideration for Walnut Street

The City and community have held meetings to envision conceptual improvements along the Walnut Street corridor. These activities have generated varied discussion about potential improvements that could include wider sidewalks, curb extensions, bicycle accommodations, and angled parking. The City has not conducted traffic counts, detailed engineering analysis nor full-fledged cost estimates for any of the concepts. Some of these conceptual scenarios result in streetscape improvements that may impact street width to a point where the northbound left turn lane from Walnut Street to Austin Street is not feasible. If this northbound left turn was removed, it could have the following implications:

- Would force the left-turning traffic to turn from a single lane combined with through traffic.
- Would increase the potential for northbound queuing along Walnut Street as through traffic waits for left-turning vehicles.
- Would enable the re-configuration of parking along Walnut Street.

## 5.0 – QUALITATIVE PARKING IMPACT SUMMARY

The current municipal parking facility is an important resource for Newtonville, and serves the shops, restaurants, services, commuters and employees of the village. The recent Parking and Traffic

Engineering Study for Newtonville shows that, even though never fully occupied, the parking lot is used at varying levels throughout the day and on weekends (when it is free). The site currently operates as a 127-space public parking lot with an additional 32 parking spaces being used for Newton North High School "Tiger" student permit parking, as described in the Existing Conditions section of this memorandum. The City of Newton has identified new locations and the Tiger permit parking will be relocated prior to construction. Prior usage levels of the Austin Street lot have increased with Star Market's recent enforcement of non-supermarket parkers but capacity still appears to remain adequate at almost all times.

As part of the City of Newton's Request for Proposals for the site, the need to retain public parking is important and a key consideration in any development. The project, as proposed, will restore the 127 public parking spaces as well as provide adequate parking for the project program. An analysis of the proposed condition is included in Section 3 of this memorandum. However, through the community conversation around the RFP and improvements in Newtonville, concerns around parking have been continually raised. So, even while the City's study showed that even at peak Saturday times (between 11 AM and 1 PM), overall parking was only 78% full and averages significantly less than that – opportunities to add parking in Newtonville exist and should be further explored. In response, the following sections show potential areas where parking could be expanded on either a temporary or permanent basis.

## 5.1 Parking Options during Construction

During the projected 12 months of site preparation and construction, replacements for the 127 current on-site parking spaces could be found within the Newtonville area. A Construction Period Parking Working Group consisting of representatives of Newtonville area merchants, the developer, the Newtonville Area Council, and the City Transportation and Economic Development departments have met regularly during March, April and May 2015 to identify suitable replacement parking during construction.

An initial planning level analysis of the streets around the Site showed numerous locations where parking could be added. Strategies for the temporary (or permanent) addition of parking include:

- Free one hour parking on Walnut Street to encourage quick turnover.
- Temporary one-way Austin Street to add up to 25 parking spaces.
- Temporary one-way Philip Bram Way to add up to 7 parking spaces.
- Relocating 35 commuter parking spaces to West Newton.
- Relocating up to 30 nearby private employee parking spaces to remote permit parking on Washington Street.
- Utilizing up to 100 parking spaces at Newton North High School's Walnut Street lot during the summer and weekends.
- Creating up to 30 spaces on Elm Road for summer and weekend parking.
- Creating 5 to 7 angle parking spaces on Bowkers Street.
- Contracting with private property owners for unused Saturday parking.
- Regulatory changes to convert lightly used one (1) hour parking on side streets near the village to longer term (but metered) parking.
- Physical re-striping to add spaces on nearby streets.
- Temporary installation of spaces on the Walnut Street bridge over the Massachusetts Turnpike, if permitted.
- Adding parking on Walnut Street.

In addition, these figures do not include the potential for alternative parking management strategies like working with Star Market to create a shared parking collaboration during the period of construction. In the Parking and Traffic Engineering Study for Newtonville, the Star Market lot was found to be under-utilized on average.

In addition to the potential changes described above, additional streets were evaluated for their potential to add long-term (employee) parking spaces. These spaces may be farther away from the village as spaces that are accessible to the commercial area of Newtonville, may be more desirable as customer  or short-term parking,

## 5.2 Options for Relocating Tiger Permit Parking Spots

The City of Newton has recently identified locations that Tiger Permit parking spaces can be relocated to prior to construction, reducing the need to find locations for these current 32 spaces. Likewise, the Goodwill trailer (currently on-site) will reportedly be re-located to another location in the City.

Attachment B

#150-09(6)

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

February 6, 2012

That, pursuant to Section 2-7 of the Revised Ordinances of 2007, as amended, after a public hearing and upon recommendation of the Real Property Reuse Committee through its Chairman Susan S. Albright, it is hereby

ORDERED:

That His Honor the Mayor be and is hereby authorized to sell or lease the land commonly known as the Austin Street parking lot property located at 28 Austin Street, containing approximately 74,536 square feet of land, identified as Section 24, Block 9, Lot 15, in Newtonville, Ward 2, located in a Public Use zoned district, and, the property shall be sold or leased, subject to the minimum financial terms and conditions as voted by the Honorable Board of Aldermen as set forth as follows:

TERMS OF SALE OR LEASE

The Board sets the value of the land for sale or lease as nominal, but requiring a monetary bid, to provide flexibility to select a proposal that balances the bid offered in answer to the Request for Proposals with the amenities and public benefits offered which benefit the city as referenced in this board order. The sale or lease price will include a minimum of 85 parking spaces for the City's use at no cost to the City.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the site shall be used for a mixed-use development with no less than 18 housing units and 5,000 square feet of commercial or non-residential space on the first floor that can attract people to and enliven the area.

2. That the property should be rezoned concurrently with the issuance of a Request for Proposals to an appropriate zone that allows a mixed-use project on the site.

3. That 25% of the housing units shall be affordable to low- and moderate-income residents and shall be eligible for inclusion on the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory.

4. That the architectural design should be both appealing and compatible in scale with the surrounding area.

5. That the development should be consistent with the economic development and housing goals established in the *2007 Newton Comprehensive Plan* to promote vibrant attractive village centers through the development of housing above retail and the expansion of retail/commercial services within walking distance of residential neighborhoods.

6. That the development should be physically, financially and legally feasible for the purchaser or lessee.

7. That the City shall provide sufficient information to the developer regarding the existing site conditions including, but not limited to, land surveying, contamination, adequacy of water and sewer services, and traffic data that may help determine the need for additional infrastructure improvements and/or development costs provided that that gathering of such information can be performed in-house and within existing departmental budgets.

8. That the City shall work with the developer to address the infrastructure needs identified on page 5 of the Joint Advisory Planning Group Report.

9. That the Mayor shall appoint a committee comprised of individuals with expertise in fields including but not limited to architecture, development, and housing, and which also shall include representatives from the Board of Aldermen, to consult with the Mayor and evaluate the proposals received by the City.

10. That funds at least equal to the monetary bid received for the sale or lease of the property be used to enhance the redevelopment of the site and improve Newtonville center more generally.

Under Suspension of Rules
Readings Waived and Adopted
16 yeas 6 nays (Aldermen Baker, Ciccone, Fuller, Gentile, Lappin, and Swiston)
2 absent (Aldermen Salvucci and Sangiolo)

(SGD) DAVID A. OLSON
City Clerk

(SGD) SETTI D. WARREN
Mayor

Attachment C

#150-09(8)

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ORDINANCE NO. A-5

October 1, 2012

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE CITY OF NEWTON AS FOLLOWS:

Section 30 of the Revised Ordinances of Newton, 2012, as amended, be and is hereby amended by amending sheets of plans entitled "City of Newton, Massachusetts, Amendments to Zoning Plans, adopted July 21, 1951, as amended from time to time, by changing certain boundaries from the present zoning district as described below:

Change the following described real estate now in a public use to a MIXED USE 4 district.

Land located at 28 Austin Street in Newtonville identified as Section 24, Block 9, Lot 15, known as the Austin Street Municipal Parking Lot.

Approved as to legal form and character:

DONNALYN B. LYNCH KAHN
City Solicitor

Under Suspension of Rules
Readings Waived and Adopted
23 yeas 0 nays 1 absent (Alderman Gentile

(SGD) DAVID A. OLSON
City Clerk

(SGD) SETTI D. WARREN
Mayor

Date _____

Attachment D

**Efficient use and conservation of natural resources and energy**

28 Austin Street's site planning, building design, construction, maintenance and long-term operation will contribute significantly to the efficient use and conservation of natural resources and energy. Moreover, redevelopment of Newtonville's Austin Street Municipal Parking Lot wholly integrates sustainable design into all facets of the Project.

In addition to meeting Newton's local sustainability goals, 28 Austin Street will advance the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' ten Sustainable Development Principles by 1) concentrating development and providing a mix of land uses; 2) advancing social equity; 3) improving site efficiencies; 4) protecting green space and ecosystems; 5) using natural resources wisely; 6) expanding housing opportunities; 7) providing transportation choices; 8) increasing job and business opportunities; 9) promoting clean renewable energy alternatives; and 10) planning regionally.

28 Austin Street will meet the requirements under the Energy Star Home program and be "LEED Certifiable" under the US Green Building Council's LEED-Homes standard or the LEED-H (MID-RISE) building rating system.

Major sustainable design elements of the overall project include:

**GreenStaxx Factory-Built Modular Construction System**

28 Austin Street will utilize GreenStaxx, Oaktree's unique, patented factory-built modular construction system to:

- Enhance architect and general contractor's coordination and communication
- Speed the development process by as much as 20%
- Reduce construction waste
- Create energy efficient dwellings with lower operating costs
- Allow customization to fit the character of the project
- Improve quality and marketability

**Redevelopment of a currently under-utilized site**

The Project is in an infill suburban area, close to regional and local public transportation with commuter rail and numerous bus lines nearby encouraging minimal vehicle use. Efficiency in site development is ensured because the project will connect to existing utility infrastructure.

**Transit Oriented Development (TOD)**

The Project will embody Smart Growth urban principles encouraging public transportation and pedestrian activity. The use of cars at this site is expected to be minimized due the proximity and availability of public transportation and local retail and services that encourages pedestrian trips. Other transportation-related characteristics include:

- shared-car facilities like ZipCar
- bicycle parking spaces for residents and visitors with provision for future implementation of Hubway bicycle sharing
- electric vehicle chargers will be included on site to encourage emission-free use of electric vehicles

**Apartment Homes**

- Energy Star appliances, lighting and low-flow fixtures will be integrated into residential units.
- Individually controlled, cost-saving, energy efficient heating and air conditioning systems
- Water-conserving plumbing fixtures will be installed in each residence, and potable water will be sub-metered so that residents are aware of their own usage
- Operable windows and high-quality insulated glass will allow residents to control air movement and temperature within each apartment home
- Eco-friendly flooring and carpet; low VOC paints

**Mechanical Systems**

- No CFCs or HCFCs will be used in cooling equipment.
- The Project will seek to save energy across systems with energy efficient equipment and appropriate insulation.
- High efficiency lighting with occupancy sensors will be incorporated where suitable.

**Stormwater Management System**

28 Austin Street's stormwater management system will be designed to incorporate Stormwater Best Management Practices and other measures to minimize runoff and improve water quality in accordance with the Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook for both water quality and quantity.

- Current plans for the project will result in a *decrease* in impervious area at the project site from the existing conditions. Although the peak rates of runoff will therefore be less than the existing condition, stormwater detention may be required to meet the City's requirements of peak rate mitigation (the proposed 25-year peak rate of runoff will be at or below the existing 2-year peak rate of runoff).

- As the design of the project progresses, the need for detention will be further assessed. If required, detention would most likely consist of a combination of a subsurface system and/or a rain garden.

- The site stormwater system will include Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality treatment and phosphorus removal. Since the project will include less vehicular impervious area than the existing condition, there will be an overall improvement in water quality prior to treatment by the BMPs.

- 28 Austin Street incorporates Low Impact Development (LID) design features into the overall stormwater management design, including natural, landscape stormwater treatment options working together as part of a stormwater management system to reduce the rate and volume of stormwater runoff.

- Landscaping will primarily be drought tolerant, perennial native plantings.

- Planted roof terraces can hold and attenuate surges from water, lessening the impact of a storm.

**Roof top Garden and Solar Panels**

- Roof-top solar panels will be installed to power common area lighting and minimize electrical usage.

- Residents may avail themselves of a roof top community garden set up by Green City Growers, a Somerville firm that specializes in such installations.

**Transportation Demand Management**

Moreover, to minimize project traffic impacts, 28 Austin Street will implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to encourage preferred non-automobile modes of transportation for residents (walking, bicycle, and transit). Specific TDM measures include:

- Charging additional fees to park a second vehicle to highlight the cost of car ownership.

- Parking for car-sharing (like ZipCar) so residents and neighbors can avoid car ownership.

- Ample bicycle parking as well as air pumps and other bicycle tools, such as a "fix-it" stand in the bicycle storage areas as well as a hose and drainage area for bicyclists to use.

- Information in a visible and accessible area to all residents and visitors regarding:

    - Pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the Project site.
    - MBTA maps, schedules, and fares.
    - Bicycle parking.
    - Ride-matching.
    - Car-sharing.
    - Other pertinent transportation information.

Attachment E

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

James Freas
Acting Director

# ZONING REVIEW MEMORANDUM

Date: May 4, 2015

To: John Lojek, Commissioner of Inspectional Services

From: Jane Santosuosso, Chief Zoning Code Official
Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner for Current Planning

Cc: Alan Schlesinger, attorney
Austin Street Partners, LLC
James Freas, Acting Director of Planning and Development
Ouida Young, Associate City Solicitor

**RE: Request for a mixed-use development consisting of 5,000 square feet of commercial space, 68 dwelling units with parking and 127 public parking spaces**

| **Applicant: Austin Street Partners LLC** | |
|---|---|
| **Site:** 28 Austin Street | **SBL:** 24009 0015 |
| **Zoning:** MU4 | **Lot Area:** 74,536 square feet |
| **Current use:** Public parking lot | **Proposed use:** Residential, commercial, and public and private parking |

**BACKGROUND:**

The property at 28 Austin Street is situated at the corner of Austin and Walnut Streets, with a 30 foot right of way that leads to Highland Ave. The lot consists of 74,480 square feet in a MU4 zone. The property is currently owned by the City of Newton and is used as a public parking lot. The property was declared "surplus" by the Board of Aldermen in 2010 and rezoned to MU4 in 2012 in anticipation of Requests for Proposals for redevelopment. The City entered into a Memorandum of Intent with Austin Street Partners in 2014.

Austin Street Partners proposes to redevelop the property with a mixed-use structure containing 68 dwelling units, including the required affordable units, on the second, third and fourth floors of the four-story, 48-foot tall building. The proposed 85,652 square foot building will include 5,000 square feet of commercial space, including office and/or retail and/or a restaurant, as well as residential parking within the building, and 127 public surface parking stalls. Parking for car-sharing and electric vehicle charging stations, as well as future bike rental are included.

The following review is based on plans and materials submitted to date as noted below.

- Zoning Review Application, prepared by Alan Schlesinger, attorney, dated 4/21/2015
- Existing Conditions Plan, signed and stamped by Verne T. Porter, surveyor, dated 10/22/2014
- Floor Plans, prepared by ADD Inc and Stantec, dated 4/16/2015
    - Basement
    - Ground Floor
    - Second Floor
    - Third Floor
    - Fourth Floor

**ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATIONS:**

1. Section 30-13(h)(2), Table B establishes the allowed uses in the MU4 district. According to this table, the 68 residential units above the first floor are allowed by right.

2. The applicant is proposing 5,000 square feet of street-level commercial space, including the potential for office, retail, service and/or restaurant uses. Per Section 30-13(h)(2), Table B, a special permit is required for street-level office use.

3. Restaurants with less than 50 seats are allowed by-right, those with more than 50 seats require a special permit pursuant to Section 30-13(h)(2), Table B. To ensure that a restaurant with more than 50 seats will be allowed to operate, a special permit is required.

4. There are 127 public surface parking stalls proposed for the property. Section 30-13(h)(2), Table B allows public parking by right.

   The applicant is proposing 90 parking stalls in a below-grade parking garage, with 85 parking stalls proposed for the residential use, as well as an additional five for the commercial space within the ground level of the proposed structure. These below-grade parking stalls are accessory to allowed uses and are allowed by right.

5. The applicant is proposing 85,652 square feet of gross floor area within the proposed structure. Section 30-13(j)(1) requires site plan review and a special permit for proposed buildings which contain 20,000 square feet or more of gross floor area.

6. The applicant is proposing a building height of 48 feet and four stories, which require a special permit per sections 30-15 Table 3, and 30-15(w)(2). This section allows the Board of Aldermen to grant a special permit for up to five stories and 60 feet for Mixed-Use Residential Buildings. The Ordinance requires that any portion of a building greater than 40 feet in height must be setback one foot from the adjacent lot line. The proposed structure meets this requirement.

7. Section 30-15, Table 3, and Section 30-15(w)(4)b) require a 20-foot side and rear setback when a subject property abuts a residential zone. The properties to the south of the subject property are zoned Multi-Residence 1. The applicant is proposing a side setback of 10 feet, which requires a special permit to waive the side setback requirement per Section 30-15(w)(4).

8. Section 30-15(w)(8) requires that parcels greater than one acre in area shall provide beneficial open space totaling no less than 5% of the total lot area. The proposal provides exactly 5% open space, or 3,750 square feet, in the form of a public plaza in the northeast corner, a planted area in the southwest corner, and landscaping along the perimeter.

9. Section 30-24(f)(2) requires that a project requiring a special permit for residential or mixed use development including residential development beyond that allowable as of right or totaling more than two new additional units be subject to the inclusionary housing provisions. The ordinance requires that the project provide no fewer than 15% of the number of dwelling units proposed to be added by the development. The applicant is proposing to provide ten affordable units out of the 68 units, which is 15% of the total, in accordance with the Ordinance. Further, the applicant proposes to set aside seven units as "workforce housing," for persons earning up to 120% of Area Median Income, for a total of 25% deed restricted units.

10. The project proposes 90 below-grade parking stalls for residents and employees of the commercial space, and 127 surface parking stalls for public use. Per Section 30-19(d)(2), two parking stalls are required per each dwelling unit. With 68 residential units proposed, 136 stalls are required.

    Within the proposed 5,000 square feet of commercial space, the applicant assumes 2,000 square feet of retail space, 1,000 square feet for office use, and a 50 seat restaurant.

    Per Section 30-19(d)(10), retail uses require one stall per each 300 square feet of gross floor areas, as well as one stall for every three employees at the busiest shift. The proposed 2,000 square feet, with a presumed six employees requires nine parking stalls.

    Office uses require one stall per each 250 square feet per Section 30-19(d)(11). The proposed use of 1,000 square feet of office space requires four stalls.

    Restaurant uses require one stall per every three seats, as well as one stall for every three employees at the busiest shift per Section 30-19(d)(13). A 50-seat restaurant is proposed with up to six employees at the busiest shift, requiring 19 stalls.

    The total number of parking stalls required for the proposed uses is 168. However, to ensure that the applicant does not need to amend the special permit in the future for a parking waiver, if it is presumed that the 3,000 square feet currently proposed for retail and office is used as medical office, 15 stalls will be required per Section 30-19(d)(12), for a total of 170.

    With 90 stalls proposed for the site, a waiver of 80 stalls is required per Section 30-19(m).

11. Section 30-19(e) requires that a parking plan for any parking facility with more than five stalls shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Inspectional Services for review prior to construction. The applicant seeks a waiver from this provision.

12. Section 30-19(h)(1) requires that no parking stall shall be located in a required setback, or within five feet of a structure containing dwelling units. There is parking proposed within the side and

rear setbacks, as well as within five feet of the proposed building. A special permit per Section 30-19(m) is required.

13. The minimum dimensional requirements for parking stalls is 9 feet wide by 19 feet deep per Section 30-19(h)(2)a) and b). The applicant proposes several compact stalls, which require a waiver per Section 30-19(m).

14. Section 30-19(i)(1) requires that parking facilities be screened from abutting streets and properties with dense plantings and/or fencing. To the extent that the proposed parking plan does not meet these requirements, a waiver is necessary per Section 30-19(m).

15. The submitted plans do not show proposed interior landscaping. To the extent that the proposed parking lot does not meet the interior landscaping requirements of Section 30-19(i)(2), a waiver is required per Section 30-19(m).

16. No lighting is shown on the submitted plans. Section 30-19(j)(1) addresses the requirements for lighting of parking facilities. The applicant shall either comply with the provisions of the Ordinance, or should seek a for a waiver from the requirements of 30-19(j)(1) per Section 30-19(m).

17. Section 30-19(k) requires bicycle parking facilities. There is a 768 square foot bike storage area proposed within the basement level parking garage, however no public bicycle parking is proposed. A waiver from this section is required per Section 30-19(m). It is noted that a future bike-sharing station is proposed within the public plaza on the right of way.

18. Section 30-19, Table of Off-Street Loading Requirements lays out the number of loading bays required for new uses by gross floor area of a structure. Per the Table, two bays would be required for a building with 85,652 square feet. Given that only 5,000 is dedicated to commercial uses, a waiver is requested per Section 30-19(m).

| **MU4 Zone** | **Required** | **Proposed** |
|---|---|---|
| Lot Size | 10,000 square feet | 74,480 square feet |
| Frontage | 80 feet | +/- 300 feet |
| Setbacks*<br>• Front<br>• Side<br>• Rear | <br><10 feet<br>20 feet<br>20 feet | <br>8 feet<br>**10 feet***<br>35 feet |
| Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit | 1,000 square feet | 1,095 square feet |
| Total Gross Floor Area | | 85,652 square feet |
| Building Height (by Special Permit) | 36 feet (60 feet) | 48 feet |
| Max Number of Stories (by Special Permit) | 3 (5) | 4 |
| FAR (by Special Permit) | 1.5 (2.5) | 1.15 |
| Beneficial Open Space | 5% | 5% (3,750 square feet) |
| Transparency | Entrance every 50 feet<br>60% clear windows | Complies<br>Complies |

*Waivable by Special Permit per Section 30-15(w)(4)

19. See “Zoning Relief Summary” below:

| Zoning Relief Required | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Ordinance* | *Required Relief* | *Action Required* |
| §30-13(h)(2), Table B | To allow street-level office uses | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-13(h)(2), Table B | To allow a restaurant with more than 50 seats | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-13(j)(1-3) | To allow a building in excess of 20,000 square feet of gross floor area | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-15(w)(2), §30-15, Table 3 | To allow building height of 48 feet and four stories | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-15(w)(4)b), §30-15, Table 3 | Waiver for a side setback less than 20 feet abutting the MR1 district | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(d)(2), (10), (11), (12) (13), §30-19(m) | Waive 80 parking stalls | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(e), §30-19(m) | Waive requirement for a parking plan | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(h)(1), §30-19(m) | To locate parking within a setback, and within 5 feet of a residential structure | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(h)(2)a) and b), §30-19(m) | To waive the dimensional requirements for parking stalls | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(i)(1), §30-19(m) | To waive the screening requirements for parking lots | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(i)(2), §30-19(m) | To waive the interior landscaping requirements | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(j)(1), §30-19(m) | To waive the lighting requirements for parking lots | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19(k) §30-19(m) | Waive the requirement for bicycle parking facilities | S.P. per §30-24 |
| §30-19, Table of Off-Street Loading, §30-19(m) | To waive the off-street loading requirements | S.P. per §30-24 |

**Attachment F**

# CITY OF NEWTON
# Department of Public Works
# ENGINEERING DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

To: Alderman Mark Laredo, Land Use Committee Chairman

From: John Daghlian, Associate City Engineer

Re: Special Permit – 28 Austin Street

Date: May 22, 2015

CC: Lou Taverna, PE City Engineer
Keith Nastasia, Director of Utilities
Linda Finucane, Associate City Clerk
Alexandria Ananth, Chief Planner

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In reference to the above site, I have the following comments for a plan entitled:

*28 Austin Street*
*Newtonville, MA*
*Prepared by: Nitsch Engineering*
*Dated: May 12, 2015*

*Executive Summary:*

The plans submitted have no civil-construction information therefore this review will be based on general comments that are applicable to all Special Permit applications.

The site is 74,480 square feet or 1.7 acres, that is currently an all paved municipal parking lot with a couple of catch basins that do not provide any water quality treatment which are tied directly into the municipal stormwater collection system. It is assumed that any development will include improvement over the existing condition of stormwater runoff exiting the site.

*Utilities:*

Domestic water and sanitary sewer is available along the frontage of this property. Given the number of units and bedrooms the project has, the City will assess a mitigation fee for sewer Infiltration & Inflow removal. This project is located in sewer area B-029, where sewer improvements have already been completed. Mitigation funds will be used for sewer areas tributary to the project area. The mitigation fee will be calculated based on 110 gallons of sewer flow per bedroom per day, at a minimum ratio of 4:1 (4 gallons removed for every gallon proposed), using $8.40 per gallon for a transportation and treatment cost.

*Construction Management*:

1. A construction management plan is needed for this project. At a minimum, it must address the following: staging site for construction equipment, construction materials, parking of construction worker's vehicles, phasing of the project with anticipated completion dates and milestones, safety precautions, emergency contact personnel of contractor. It shall also address any anticipated dewatering during construction, site safety & stability, and impact to abutting properties.

*Drainage*:

1. A drainage analysis needs to be performed based on the City of Newton's 100-year storm event of 6-inches over a 24-hour period. All runoff from impervious areas need to be infiltrated on site, for the project. The design of the proposed on site drainage system needs to comply with the MassDEP Stormwater Regulations and City Ordinances.

2. An on-site soil evaluation needs to be performed to obtain the seasonal high groundwater elevation, percolation rate in accordance to Title V. This information must be submitted with the drainage study. The locations of these tests need to be shown on the site plan and must be performed within 25-feet of a proposed system.

3. When a connection to the City's drainage system is proposed, prior to approval of the Building Permit a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) inspection shall be performed and witnessed by the Engineering Division, the applicant shall retain a contractor that specializes in CCTV inspection. The applicant shall contact the Engineering Division 48 hours in advance to schedule an appointment. At the end of the inspection the video or CD shall be given to the inspector. Furthermore, upon completion of the

connection to the drainage system a Post – Construction video inspection shall also take place and witnessed as described above. This is required regardless of the connection point, the intent is to ensure that there are no downstream blockages or damaged pipe so that the contractor of record is not held accountable for preexisting conditions.

4. An Operations and Maintenance (O&M) plan for Stormwater Management Facilities needs to drafted and submitted for review. Once approved the O&M must be adopted by applicant, incorporated into the deeds; and recorded at the Middlesex Registry of Deeds. A copy of the recording instrument shall be submitted to the Engineering Division.

5. It is imperative to note that the ownership, operation, and maintenance of the proposed drainage system and all appurtenances including but not limited to the drywells, catch basins, and pipes are the sole responsibility of the property owner(s).

*Environmental*:

1. Has a 21E investigation & report been performed on the site, if so copies of the report should be submitted the Newton Board of Health and the Engineering Division.

**2.** Are there any existing underground oil or fuel tanks, are they to be removed, if they have been evidence should be submitted to the Newton Fire Department, and Newton Board of Health.

**3.** As the total site disturbance is over an acre, a Phase II General Construction (NPDES) Permit will need to be filed with DEP & EPA. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will need to be developed.

*Sewer:*

1. A detailed profile is needed which shows the existing water main, proposed water service(s), sewer main and proposed sewer service(s) with the slopes and inverts labeled to ensure that there are no conflicts between the sewer services and the water service. The minimum slope for a service is 2.0%, with a maximum of 10%. Pipe material shall be 6" diameter SDR 35 PVC pipe within 10' of the dwelling then 4" pipe per Massachusetts State Plumbing Code. In order to verify the slopes and inverts of the proposed service connection, two manholes of the

existing sanitary sewer system need to be identified on the plan with rim & invert elevations. The crown of the service connection & the sewer main need to match.

**2.** The existing water & sewer services to the building shall be cut and capped at the main and be completely removed from the main and the site then properly back filled. The Engineering Division must inspect this work; failure to having this work inspected may result in the delay of issuance of the Utility Connection Permit**.**

**3.** With the exception of natural gas service(s), all utility trenches with the right of way shall be backfilled with Control Density Fill (CDF) Excavatable Type I-E, detail is available in the city of Newton Construction Standards Detail Book.

***4.*** All new sewer service and/or structures shall be pressure tested or videotaped after final installation is complete. Method of final inspection shall be determined solely by the construction inspector from the City Engineering Division. All sewer manholes shall be vacuum tested in accordance to the City's Construction Standards & Specifications. The sewer service will NOT be accepted until one of the two methods stated above is completed. All testing MUST be witnessed by a representative of the Engineering Division. A Certificate of Occupancy will not be recommended until this test is completed and a written report is received by the City Engineer**.** ***This note must be added to the final approved plans.***

5. All sewer manholes shall be vacuum tested in accordance to the City's Construction Standards & Specifications. The sewer service will NOT be accepted until one of the two methods stated above is completed. All testing MUST be witnessed by a representative of the Engineering Division. A Certificate of Occupancy will not be recommended until this test is completed and a written report is received by the City Engineer**.**

*Water:*

1. Fire flow testing is required for the proposed fire suppression system. The applicant must coordinate this test with both the Newton Fire Department and the Utilities Division; representatives of each department shall witness the testing, test results shall be submitted in a write report. Hydraulic calculation shall be submitted to the Newton Fire Department for approval.

2. For water quality issues a fire hydrant will be required at the end of the proposed water main. This hydrant will be utilized for flushing out the main as required.

3. All water connections shall be chlorinated & pressure tested in accordance to AWWA and the City of Newton Construction Standards and Specifications prior to opening the connection to existing pipes.

4. Approval of the final configuration of the water service(s) shall be determined by the Utilities Division, the engineer of record should submit a plan to the Director of Utilities for approval

*General:*

1. Finalized utility connection plan reflecting the above changes that meets the minimal design standards of the City of Newton must be submitted for approval by the contractor of record with appropriate Bonds & Insurance. The Engineering Division makes no representations and assumes no responsibility for the design(s) in terms of suitability for the particular site conditions or of the functionability or performance of any items constructed in accordance with the design(s). The City of Newton assumes no liabilities for design assumption, error or omissions by the Engineer of Record.

2. All trench excavation contractors shall comply with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 82A, Trench Excavation Safety Requirements, to protect the general public from unauthorized access to unattended trenches. Trench Excavation Permit required. This applies to all trenches on public and private property. *This note shall be incorporated onto the plans*

3. All tree removal shall comply with the City's Tree Ordinance.

4. Due to the total square footage of the building, a scale massing model will be needed.

5. The contractor is responsible for contacting the Engineering Division and scheduling an appointment 48 hours prior to the date when the utilities will be made available for an inspection of water services, sewer service, and drainage system installation. The utility is question shall be fully exposed for the inspector to view; backfilling shall only take place when the City's Inspector has given their approval. *This note should be incorporated onto the plans*

***6.*** The applicant will have to apply for Street Opening, Sidewalk Crossing, and Utilities Connecting permits with the Department of Public Works prior to any construction. *This note must be incorporated onto the site plan.*

7. The applicant will have to apply for a Building Permits with the Department of Inspectional Service prior to any construction.

8. Prior to Occupancy Permit being issued, an As-Built Plan shall be submitted to the Engineering Division in both digital format and in hard copy. The plan should show all utilities and final grades, any easements and final grading. *This note must be incorporated onto the site plan.*

***9.*** All site work must be completed before a Certificate of Occupancy can be obtained. *This note must be incorporated onto the site plan.*

Note: If the plans are updated it is the responsibility of the Applicant to provide all City Departments [Conservation Commission, ISD, and Engineering] involved in the permitting and approval process with complete and consistent plans.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me @ 617-796-1023.

Attachment G

# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Newton Housing Partnership


Setti D. Warren
Mayor

James Freas
Acting Director
Planning & Development

Elizabeth Valenta
Housing Development
Planner




May 26, 2015

Alderman Mark Laredo, Chairman
Land Use Committee
Newton Board of Aldermen
Newton City Hall
Newton, MA. 02459

**RE: Support for Austin Street Project**

Dear Alderman Laredo,

The Newton Housing Partnership reviewed the development plans presented by Austin Street Partners for the above-mentioned project at our May 13, 2015 meeting. The seven members present voted unanimously to support the proposed development. The Partnership was pleased to see that 25% of the units at the Austin Street development will be affordable and that the market rate rents are being targeted to income tiers of approximately 150% of area median income. It is specifically important to note that all units will be eligible to be added to the City's Subsidized Housing Inventory.

Given that the plans are still in the preliminary phase, the NHP has some additional detailed questions. We invited the Developer to return when plans are in a more final state to review: (1) the location of affordable units within the development including handicapped accessible units; (2) the marketing plan and tenant selection plan, maximizing local preference as allowable; and (3) the detailed rent structure which would provide further clarification on how the affordability requirements of the Inclusionary provisions of the Zoning ordinance would apply to this project.

Given the great need for affordable housing in Newton, and the limited opportunities to increase the City's supply of affordable housing, the NHP urges you to support the proposal for the development of the Austin Street Project.

Sincerely,

Dan Violi, Chairman

cc: Linda Funicane, Clerk
James Freas, Acting Director of Planning
Scott Oran, Austin Street Partners


1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA 02459
T 617/796-1120
F 617/796-1142

**Attachment H**

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

James Freas
Acting Director

**DATE:** May 28, 2015

**TO:** James Freas, Acting Director of Planning and Development

**FROM:** Urban Design Commission

**RE:** Conceptual Review of the Austin Street Project

**CC:** Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen
Petitioner

At the request of the Department of Planning and Development, the Urban Design Commission has reviewed and provides the following comments to the Department of Planning and Development and the Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen regarding the proposed special permit project at 28 Austin Street. The preceding information is intended to give advice on specific matters affecting urban design and beautification for the project.

**PETITION #119-15** **28 Austin Street**

Request for Special Permit/Site Plan Approval to redevelop an existing municipal parking lot, declared surplus by the Board of Aldermen on February 6, 2012, into a mixed-use residential building providing 68 units of housing, approximately 5,000 square feet of commercial space, and approximately 90 underground parking spaces and 127 public parking spaces at-grade.

The Urban Design Commission (UDC) held a public meeting on May 20, 2015 to review the proposed special permit project at 28 Austin Street (Austin Street). Based on the information and presentation given by the petitioner's architect and legal counsel, the UDC provides the following comments:

**Building:**

- The petitioner should revise the elevation renderings to accurately depict the building's bulk, depth, location, and massing on the site. This can be achieved through shading or shadowing the different façades of the building in each elevation.
- The petitioner should identify the location of exhaust vents, whether roof or sidewall mounted, as the placement of these fixtures can affect the visual composition of the building.
- The building's façade appears to be very busy, especially on the Austin Street elevation. The petitioner should consider different ways that the building's façade can be simplified, such as: using fewer materials; reducing the number of window arrangement variations, standardize

trim and accent panels, and emphasize certain portions of the structure while reducing articulation of the façade elsewhere.

- The petitioner should provide more details or information regarding the building's exterior cladding (i.e. colors, texture, and articulation) to illustrate and understand how the façade will read, and to demonstrate how the architectural styles of building relates to surrounding structures. The building's cladding palette should not use fiber-cement exclusively as a façade treatment, and should include a reference to the brick buildings in the immediate area (i.e. Masonic Temple). Further, the colors chosen for all façade materials should not be too overly muted.
- The petitioner should consider redesigning the northeast corner of the building, specifically the residential floors above the outdoor dining area and the line separating the 3rd and 4th floors. The visual presence of this corner of the building needs special treatment, as it is a focal point for the structure. In addition, the petitioner should examine if the cutout (loggia) at the corner is the best approach or whether a strong retail corner that comes to the building line works better. Further consideration of a fixed canopy (non-fabric) could be considered to add importance to the corner at the pedestrian level and reinforce the commercial/retail datum in the elevation.
- The petitioner should give more thought to the design or cladding of the columns surrounding the outdoor dining area to make this space more welcoming and less institutional.
- The proposed railings shown along the 3rd floor roof, which delineates the edge of the 4th floor terraces and an inaccessible portion of the 3rd floor rooftop, is inappropriate with the rest of the building's design. The petitioner should eliminate the railing and redesigning/replace this architectural element, potentially with a raised parapet or another solution, to better define the rooftop edge.
- The petitioner should consider the visual impact of the proposed building from other portions of the village (i.e. Walnut Street bridge and Washington Street). From these vantage points, it is likely that the proposed rooftop mechanicals will be visible. As such, the petitioner should consider screening the rooftop mounted mechanical equipment. Any screening should also be designed to control noise generated by such equipment.


**View from Walnut Street Bridge**


**View from Washington Street**

- The petitioner should give greater emphasis and clarity to the ground floor commercial/retail portion of the building's façade. While the Masonic Temple was indicated as a basis for the current design, the UDC encouraged the petitioner to re-examine the current approach to determine whether other architectural treatments could be used to better define and express this portion of the structure horizontally at the top of the 1st floor.
- The petitioner should re-examine whether one elevator is sufficient for a structure of this size and the anticipated number of occupants. Further, there is no stair proposed in the main lobby for the building with access to the parking below or the apartments above.
- The petitioner should consider developing a context plan to understand how the architecture, mass, scale, and siting of the proposed building compares to the surrounding development patterns, especially the residential buildings to the southeast.
- The petitioner did not describe the exterior lighting fixtures on the building. The petitioner should provide details regarding these fixtures to understand how they will illuminate the structure or the site at night, and to demonstrate whether there is any light spillage. This information can also illustrate how the project will provide a sense of safety and welcoming.
- The architecture of the building on the Austin Street side, specifically around the driveway entrance, lends itself and could be confused as a private entry. Thus, the petitioner should consider different architectural treatments to clarify this entry as accessible by the public and tenants.

**Landscaping/Open Space:**

- The public plaza will be a great asset to the village and, if designed correctly, function as an extension of the commercial corridor along Walnut Street.
- The petitioner should be cautious about the plaza's programming. The fewer permanent fixtures in the public plaza (i.e. planters, bollard, tables and chairs, etc.) the better. This will allow the plaza to be more flexible and organic. The use of removable bollards and movable tables and chairs should be encouraged.
- The petitioner should provide more information regarding: the raised planting beds; the color, texture, and type of pavement; and exterior lighting fixtures. The petitioner should clarify whether these landscape/streetscape improvements will be extended beyond the project locus along Austin Street and on Walnut Street.
- The petitioner should provide further programming details for the garden/pocket park in the southwest corner of the site. This space appears isolated from the rest of the site, and it is unclear how it will interact with the surrounding commercial and residential parcels.
- The petitioner should provide a more detailed landscape plan.

**Streetscape:**

- The petitioner should clarify whether the depicted streetscape improvements will extend beyond the project locus along Austin Street. Furthermore, the petitioner should explain how the streetscape improvements will link with the proposed Walnut Street improvements.

- The petitioner should provide further details on the proposed raised ('table-top') portion of Philip Bram Way, which appears to function as an extension of the pedestrian plaza when bollards are removed and as a traffic calming measure. This supplemental information should also explain how this site feature will connect to other roadway improvements along Philip Bram Way.
- The petitioner indicated that enhancements to the existing passageways connecting Philip Bram way to Walnut Street are being considered. More information pertaining to these enhancements should be provided to understand how they will improve the functionality and aesthetics of these passageways.

**Signage:**

- The petitioner should explain how way-finding signage on and off the site will be used to guide and inform pedestrian and vehicular traffic. This UDC felt that this type of signage will be important in explaining where the public can and cannot park, especially the parking stalls located under the building.
- The driveway entrance to the public parking from Austin Street could be confused for private entrance without some more visual cues (i.e. blue public parking 'P').
- No comprehensive sign package was provided for review. According to the elevation renderings, the petitioner is depicting a significant number of signs on the Austin Street façade. The petitioner should provide a comprehensive sign package for all signage on the site.

**Recommendation**

At this time, the UDC has chosen not to issue a formal recommendation for the project. The petitioner is encouraged to consider the UDC's comments and suggestions. Prior to the close of the public hearing or scheduling of a working session with the Land Use Committee, the petitioner should address and/or provide supplemental information to the UDC for further consideration and the issuance of a formal advisory recommendation.


# Zoning Map
# 28 Austin St

*City of Newton, Massachusetts*

**Legend**

- Single Residence 1
- Single Residence 2
- Multi-Residence 1
- Business 1
- Business 2
- Business 5
- Public Use

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**ATTACHMENT I**

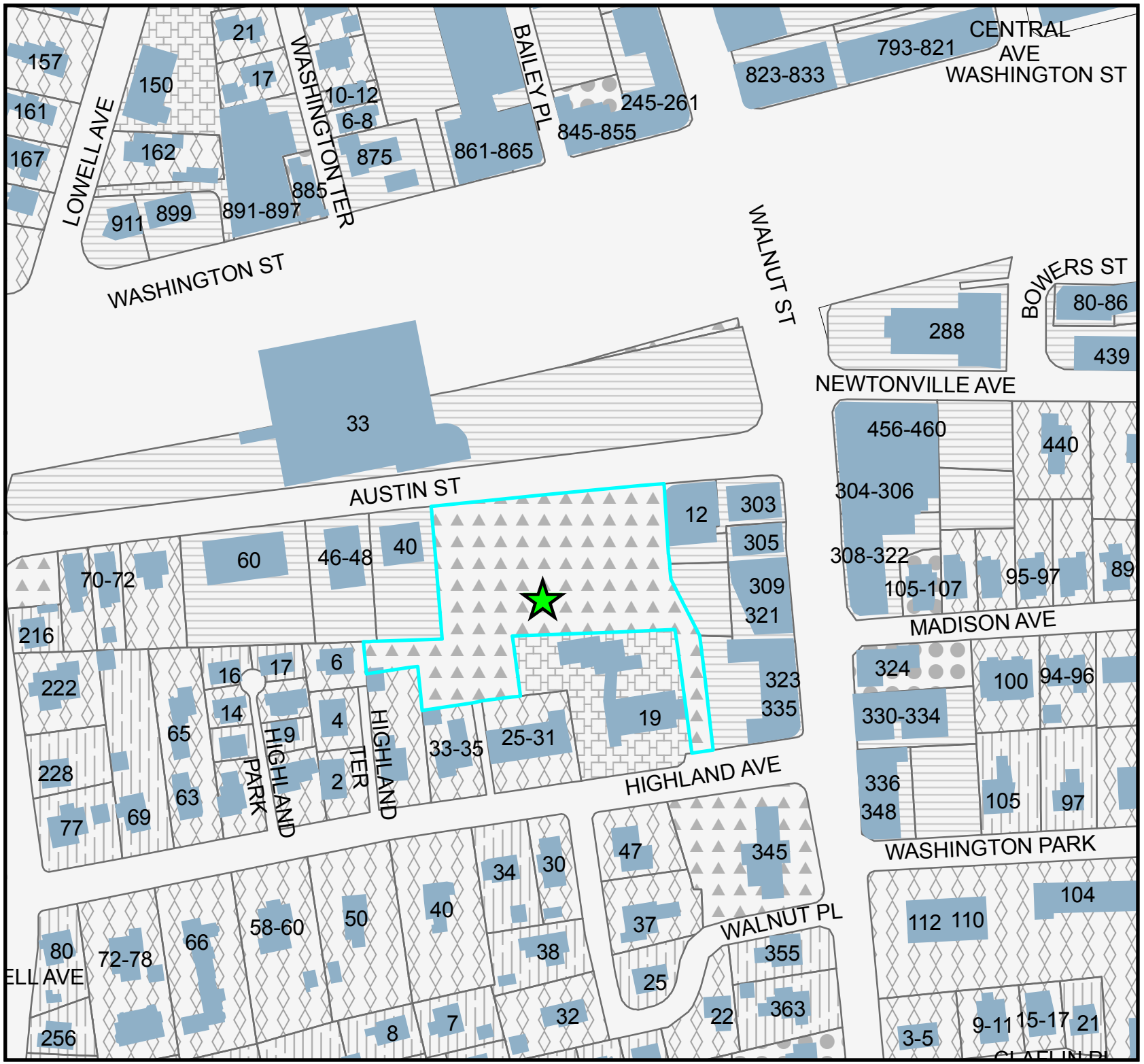
NEWTON GIS

The information on this map is from the Newton Geographic Information System (GIS). The City of Newton cannot guarantee the accuracy of this information. Each user of this map is responsible for determining its suitability for his or her intended purpose. City departments will not necessarily approve applications based solely on GIS data.

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Mayor - Setti D. Warren
GIS Administrator - Douglas Greenfield

0 12.5 25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225
Feet

Map Date: May 25, 2015




# Land Use Map
# 28 Austin St

*City of Newton, Massachusetts*

**Legend**

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Open Space
- Nonprofit Organizations

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**ATTACHMENT J**

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CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Mayor - Setti D. Warren
GIS Administrator - Douglas Greenfield

0 12.5 25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225 Feet

Map Date: May 25, 2015