

Preliminary Scenarios

The creation of the preliminary scenarios shows just a few of the many options for what could serve as a starting point for the Neighborhood Plan.

Each of the scenarios proposes a mixed use, 24-hour urban quarter, with a diversity of housing choices for a diversity of people, a generous retail distribution and workplace distribution, civic sites memorably and honorifically located, a variety of open space types with an emphasis on neighborhood serving pocket parks, and a network of complete streets that is designed to work for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians equally. Each of the scenarios will look to make connections beyond the site in order to open Somerville's waterfront up to more people. In keeping the City of Somerville's sustainability policies each of the four approaches will seek to mitigate the amount of carbon pollution produced by the site and adapt the site to rising seas and more turbulent climactic conditions.

Each scenario will seek to accommodate the following amenities and uses:

- Multimodal streets with street trees
- Multiple squares & plazas
- Parks and trails
- Formal restaurants
- Corporate offices and office spaces
- LifeScience labs, offices, and educational campuses
- A mix of housing types from studios to three bedroom units
- Regional shopping
- Pharmacy
- Cafes and delicatessens
- Hotels
- An expanded farmer's market
- Small offices for independently owned businesses and local non-profits
- Independently owned shops and restaurants
- Industrial spaces and maker spaces
- A University or college satellite campus
- A satellite government office



Remember: These scenarios are merely diagrammatic. They are a starting point and not a final proposal.

Left: Existing Conditions with proposed and under construction development
Right: Blank Plan with proposed ideas

**AN EXPANDED
FARMER'S MARKET**

INDUSTRIAL SPACES AND MAKER SPACES

A SATELLITE GOVERNMENT OFFICE

**SMALL OFFICES FOR INDEPENDENTLY OWNED
BUSINESSES AND LOCAL NON-PROFITS**

CORPORATE OFFICES AND OFFICE SPACES

REGIONAL SHOPPING FORMAL RESTAURANTS

MULTIPLE SQUARES & PLAZAS

PARKS AND TRAILS

MULTIMODAL STREETS WITH STREET TREES

**PHARMACY LIFESCIENCE LABS, OFFICES,
AND EDUCATIONAL CAMPUSES**

**A MIX OF HOUSING TYPES FROM
STUDIOS TO THREE BEDROOM UNITS**

**HOTELS A UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE
SATELLITE CAMPUS**

CAFES AND DELICATESSENS

**INDEPENDENTLY
OWNED SHOPS AND
RESTAURANTS**

DIAGRAM LEGEND

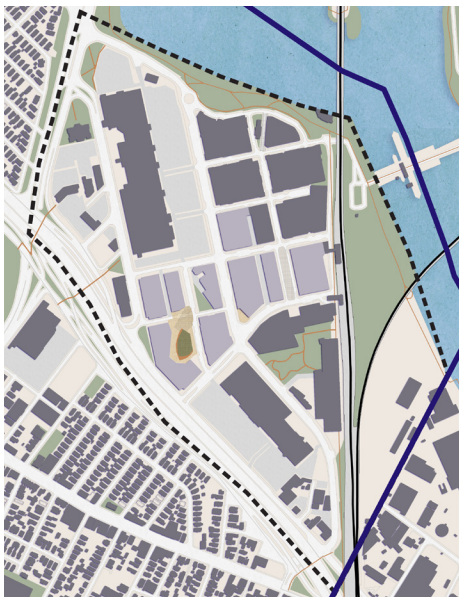
-  City Boundary
-  Neighborhood Bdry
-  Primary Ped Network
-  Proposed Buildings
-  Existing Buildings
-  Plaza
-  Blocks
-  Green Space
-  River

Start Here

A comparison of the preliminary scenarios and their strategies.

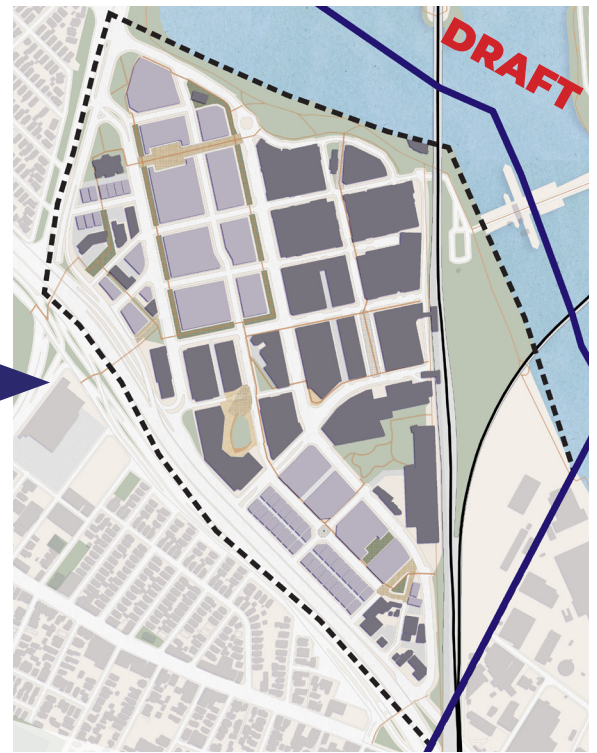
The purpose of this exercise is less to pick a scenario and more to identify what strategies to lead with and what elements you like and don't like. The next drafts of the plan will be a composite of these elements (a mix-and-match) using both strategies in unison.

EXISTING



Continue the Assembly Row "formula" in the next phases

1 THE GRID

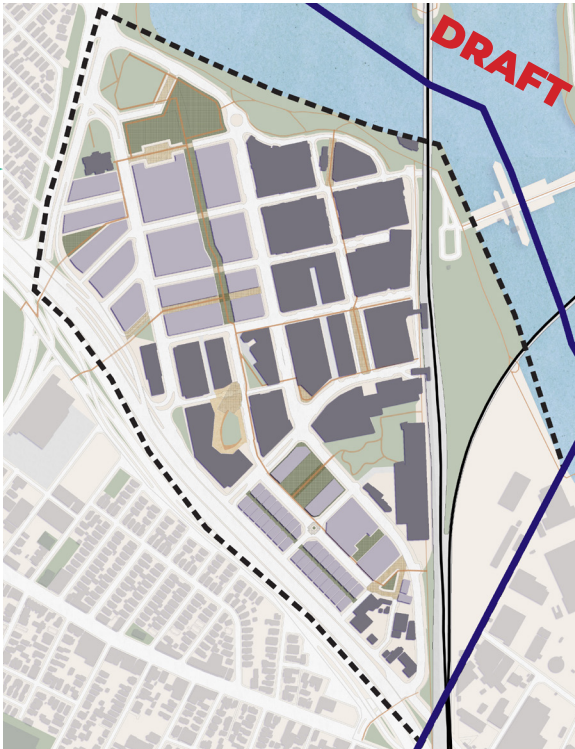


More **GREEN**
in the next phases

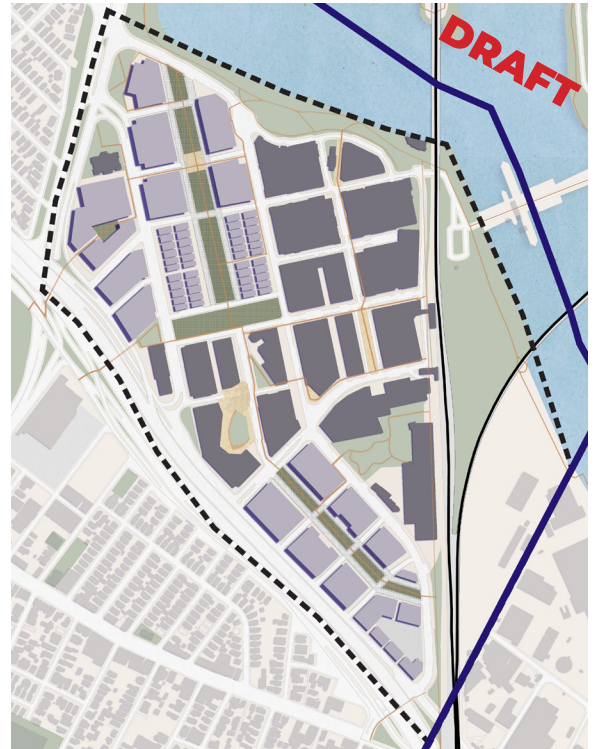
More **URBANISM**
(walkability & placemaking)
in the next phases

The scenarios are further explained in the following pages.

2 ASSEMBLY GREEN

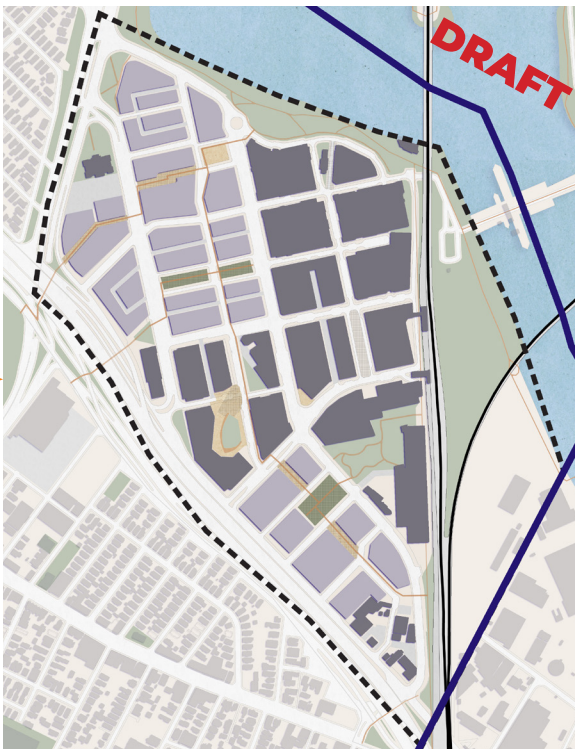


3 CENTRAL GREEN

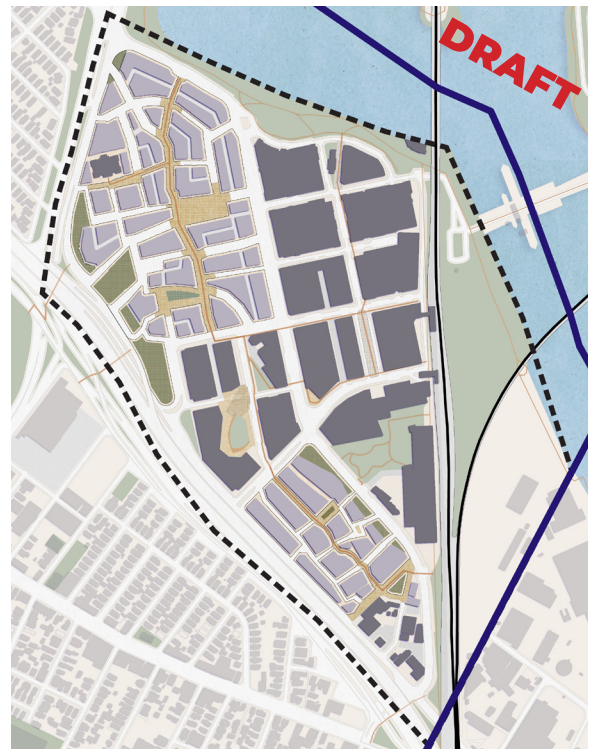


OR

4 THE TRIO



5 SOMERVILLE BARROW



OR

Scenario 1: The Grid

Continuing the street network of Assembly Square

The Grid approach extends the grid of streets imagined by the Mystic View Task Force Plan of 2000 logically according to geometries already established by Assembly Row and its perpendicular streets. The ruler-straight, rational geometry follows the four cardinal directions north, east, south, and west with only slight exemptions to account for the northwest-southeast alignment of Interstate 93. A pedestrian street (a paseo) at the northern edge of the site frames a view of the historic Somerville District Court with its colonial revival clocktower. Historic structures at the periphery of the FRIT properties are preserved along with their varied orientations.

This plan accentuates all that Assembly Square already has to offer and continues that legacy to reach new goals.

SUMMARY STATISTICS:

Additional Open Space Acreage: 10

Additional Housing Units: 900

Additional Full-time jobs: 12,500

Additional Municipal Tax Revenue: \$24M

Mode Shift (at build-out total trips which do not involve a car): 65%

Additional Leasable Square Footage (retail, restaurant, and office): 10,780,600

1 PEDESTRIAN STREET & PLAZA

A pedestrian oriented public space connecting Baxter Park to the Courthouse

2 PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

Civic spaces and pedestrian network to connect within and outside Assembly Square

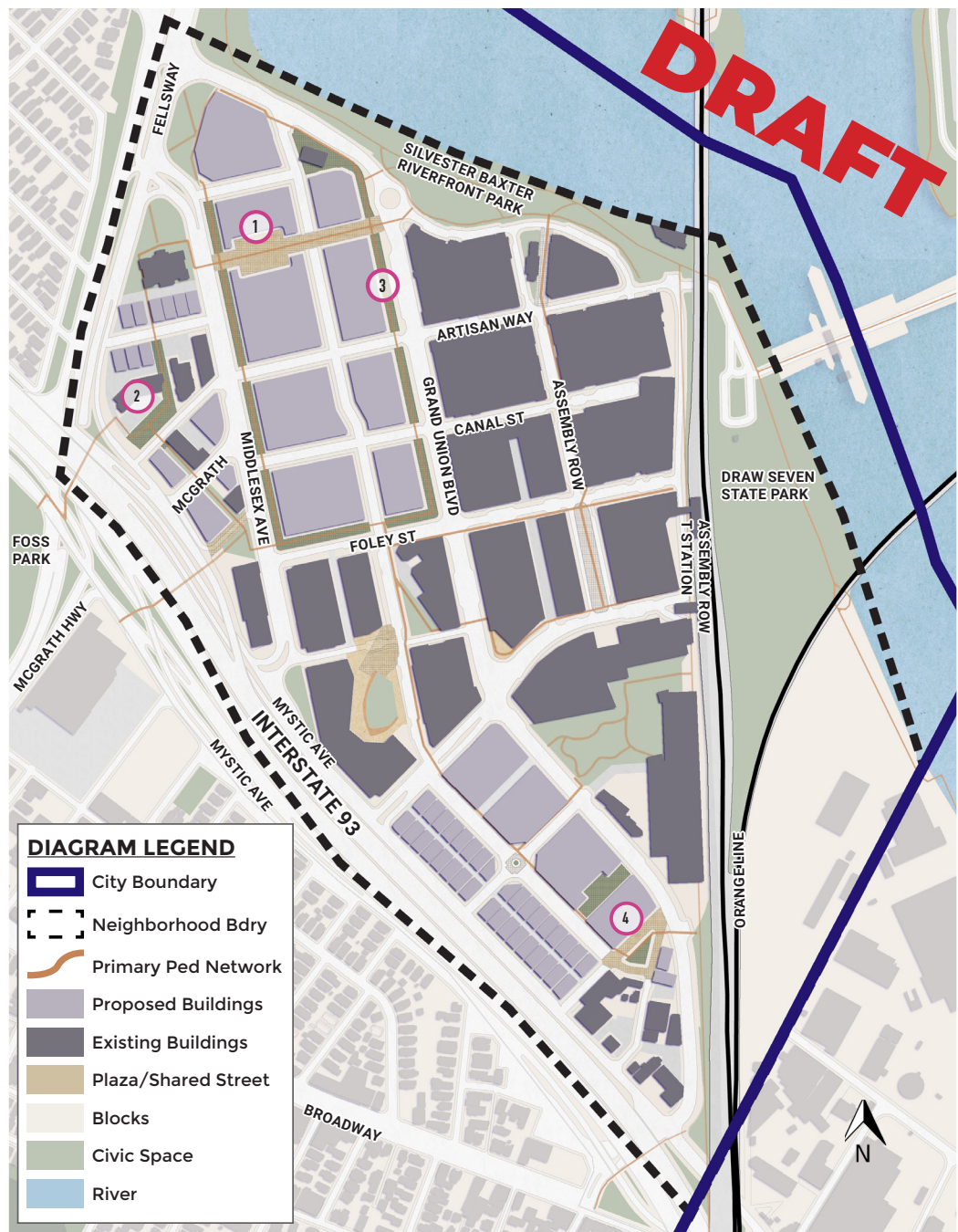
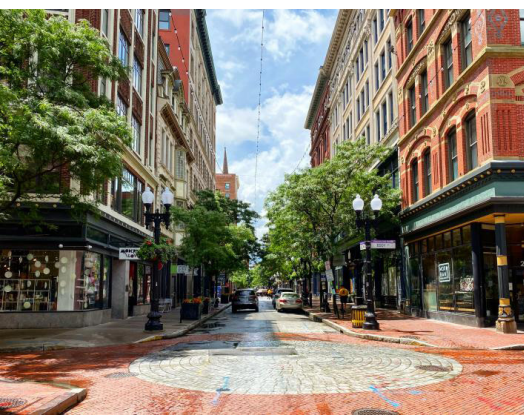
3 MARKETPLACE LOOP

Adding pedestrian loops for residents' exercise and workers' lunchtime walks

4 SHARED STREET PLAZA

Creating unique public spaces for food trucks or other uses to share the street





Scenario 2: Assembly Green

A culmination of the city's best green practices

Assembly Green imagines the largest realistic greenspace for the site and places the space adjacent to Baxter Park to maximize Somerville's riverfront experience. This scenario has the longest, continuous linear trails of all the scenarios. Assembly Green provides a variety of transportation choices, with an extensive bicycle network. The scenario preserves nature and celebrates nature. The high open space requirement in this scenario may necessitate taller structures in order for property owners to achieve a sufficient return on their investment. The result may be a mid-rise skyline for Somerville.

This plan would look to implement the best sustainability practices in both developments and open space. It would point to the public health benefits of access to civic spaces.

1 EXPANDING GREEN SPACES

Baxter Park would expand across Grand Union to the District Courthouse

2 GREEN AXIS

A linear green space that stretches from Foley Street up to the River

SUMMARY STATISTICS:

Additional Open Space Acreage: 35

Additional Housing Units: 400

Additional Full-time jobs: 8,400

Additional Municipal Tax Revenue: \$12M

Mode Shift (at build-out total trips which do not involve a car): 70%

Additional Leasable Square Footage (retail, restaurant, and office): 8,381,600

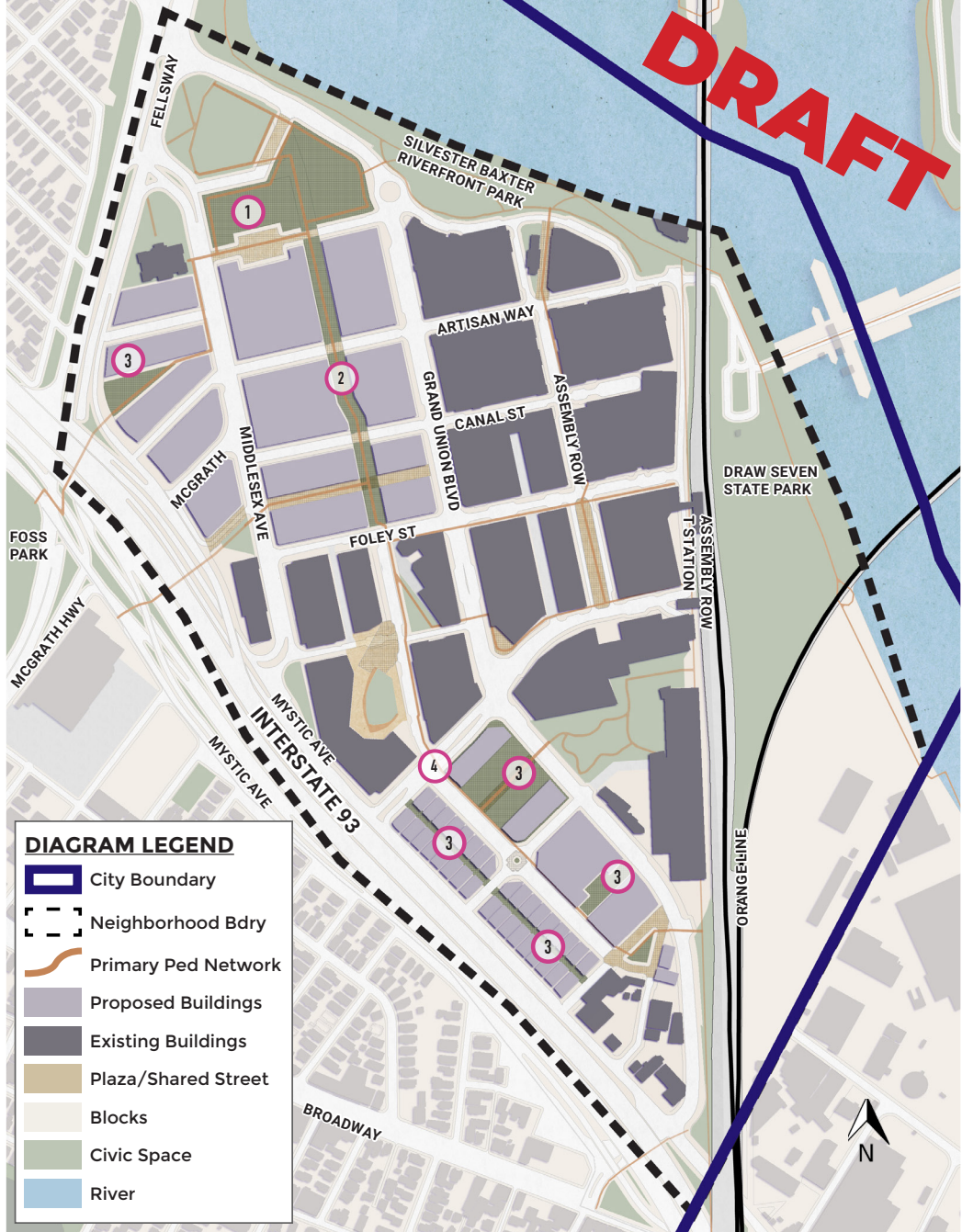
3 MID-BLOCK GREENS

Continuing the idea of the spine to have new buildings front onto green space

4 GREEN LOOP

A pedestrian loop would connect all major civic spaces from Draw Seven to Baxter Park to the Green Spine and all new development





Scenario 3: Central Green

Create a connected green space network

The Central Green design follows a street grid similar to the other design scenarios. This approach features centrally located civic spaces. The open spaces create a refuge away from the hustles and bustle of the highway. Commercial retail and office spaces placed along the I-93 create a buffer from the noise and air pollution. Mixed-use developments with residential component sit next to the park with convenient access to the transit station. The buildings are oriented with views to the park that promote eyes on the street and social interactions. Pedestrian pathways along the green space connect to existing riverfront parks and creates walkable pedestrian network within Assembly Square.

SUMMARY STATISTICS:

Additional Open Space Acreage: 35

Additional Housing Units: 450

Additional Full-time jobs: 9,200

Additional Municipal Tax Revenue: \$14M

Mode Shift (at build-out total trips which do not involve a car): 75%

Additional Leasable Square Footage (retail, restaurant, and office): 9,100,100

1 CENTRAL GREEN

A central green along Foley Street connects the T Station to the Kensington Ave Connection

2 GREEN AXIS

A linear green space that stretches from Grand Union Blvd in the south to the north

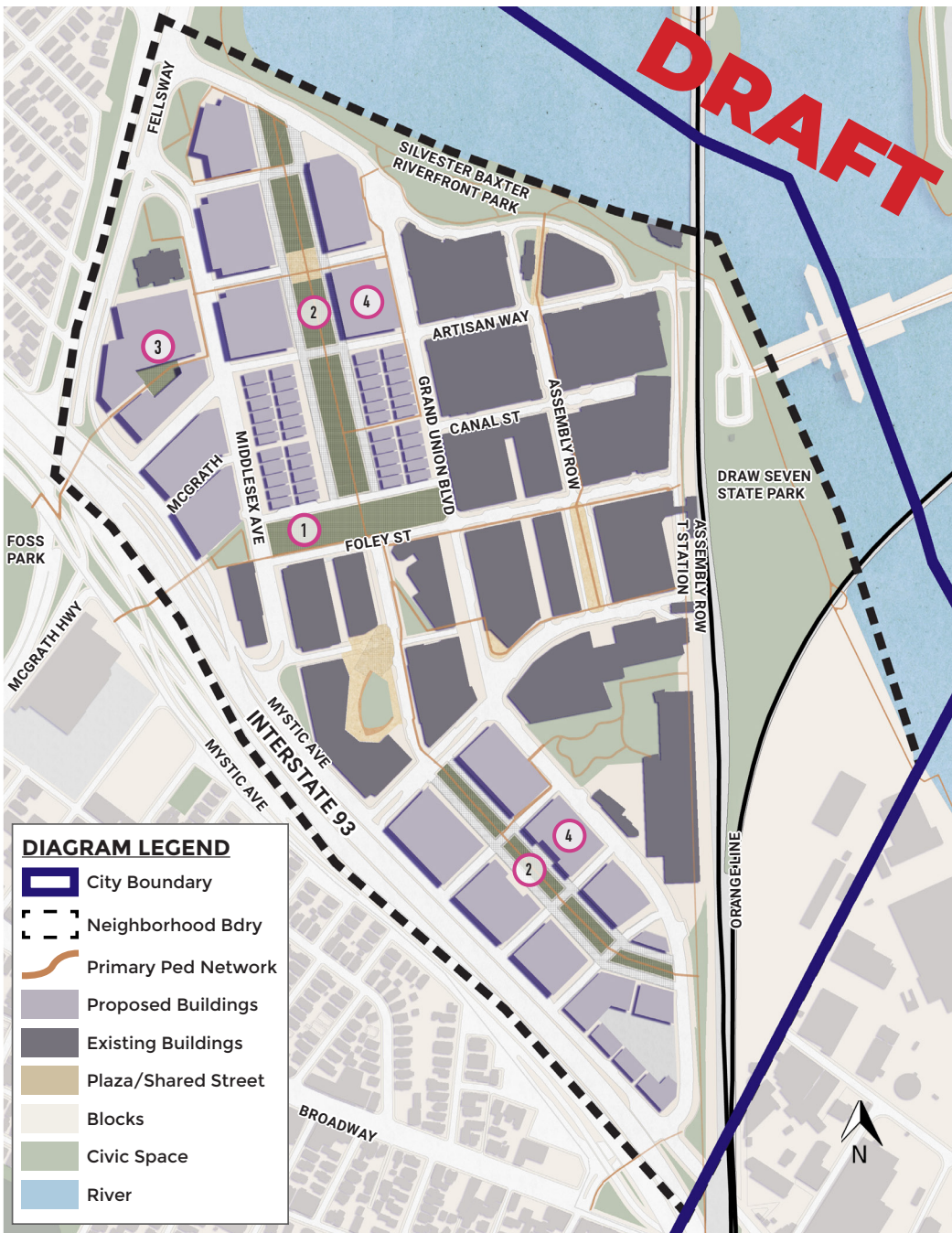
3 MID-BLOCK GREENS

Interior courtyards are buffered from heavier traffic along I-93 and Fellsway

4 PEDESTRIAN LOOP

The pedestrian network would connect all major civic spaces from Draw Seven to Baxter Park to the central green and all new development





Scenario 4: The Trio

A composition of three new public spaces

This scenario uses smaller blocks with strategically located pocket parks in order to create a complete, walkable urban district. The street network follows existing precedent in order to facilitate the evolution of the site. Over time redevelopment would replace aging structures and infill would replace parking lots in order to front a central plaza in the northern part of the site. New buildings in this scenario will create an “outdoor room” for community gatherings. The heights of these new buildings should take their cues from existing buildings on the site to appropriate scale. New buildings along the plaza would feature commercial and retail uses on all bottom floors to maintain a lively central space. Streets have streetlights and street trees at regular intervals to give pedestrians and cyclists a safe, comfortable, and interesting experience.

The Trio looks at providing three NEW major public spaces each with their own personality working in symphony with the existing to create beautiful walkable urbanism.

SUMMARY STATISTICS:

Additional Open Space Acreage: 20

Additional Housing Units: 750

Additional Full-time jobs: 10,000

Additional Municipal Tax Revenue: \$22M

Mode Shift (at build-out total trips which do not involve a car):65%

Additional Leasable Square Footage (retail, restaurant, and office): 9,351,000



NORTH PLAZA

An urban plaza for outdoor dining looking out to the open space of Baxter Park creates a north ward



LINEAR PARK

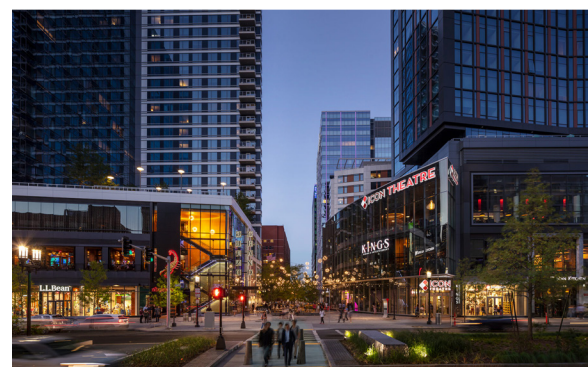
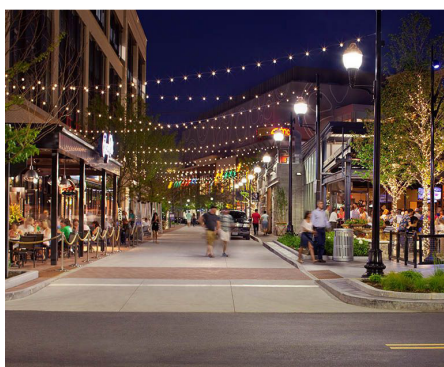
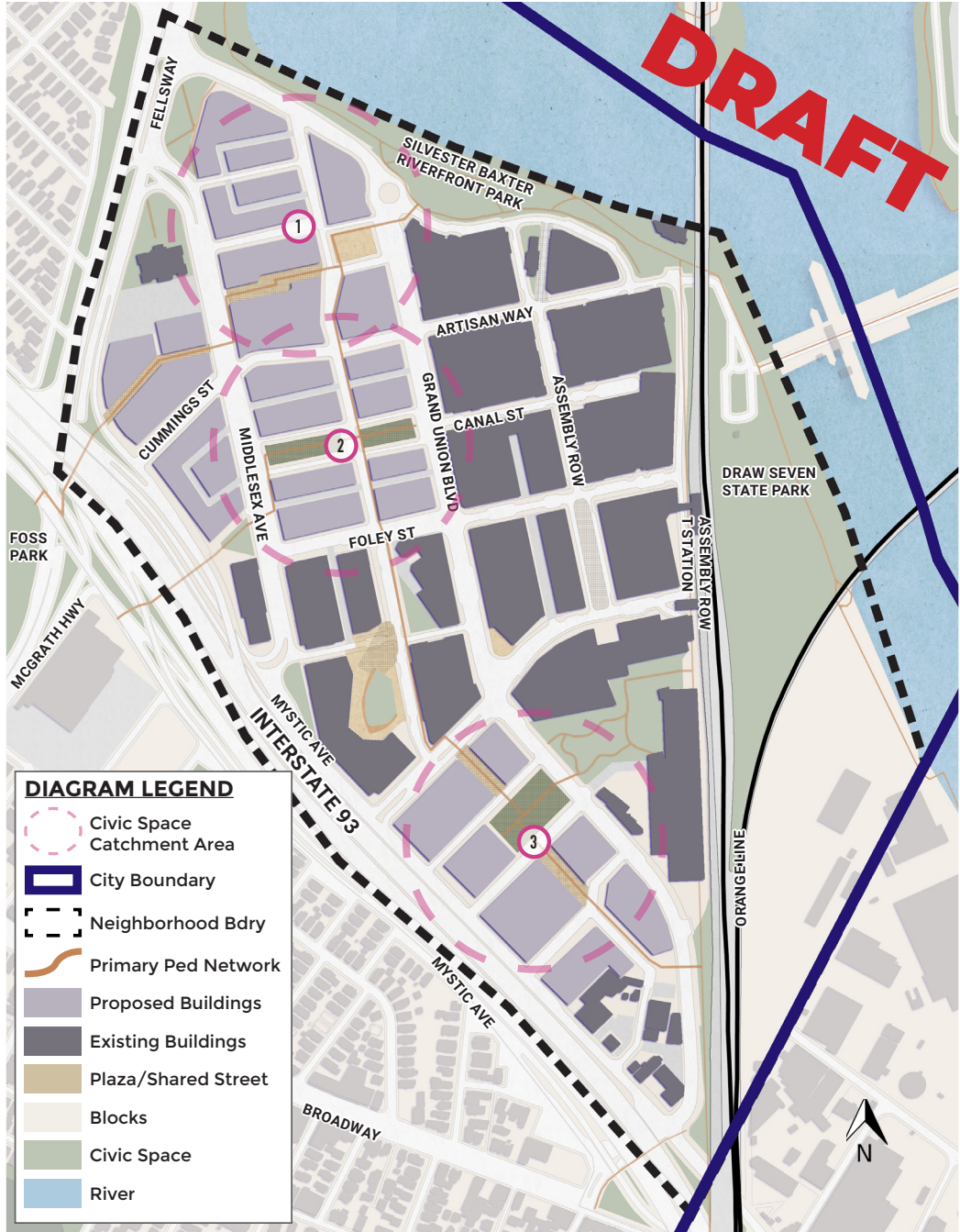
A midpoint of civic space between north, south, east, & west creates a central ward.



SOUTH SQUARE

A focal point to development in the south ward flanked by two pedestrian streets





Scenario 5: Somerville Barrow

Bringing your favorite old city patterns to Assembly Square

The place-based design draws from pre-automobile, historic communities with a dense network of interconnected streets (each with a pedestrian-only area), a variety of passages and paths, complex block geometries, designed vistas, and an emphasis on locally-owned retail, housing, and workplaces. The Barrow would have the lowest automobile usage, and lowest amount of carbon pollution by virtue of its low-scale buildings and intensities. The Barrow solves the problem of Middlesex Avenue remaining a street that is behind structures by (quite ambitiously) erasing it entirely and starting from scratch to create a new pedestrian thoroughfare entirely fronted by shopfronts, awnings and colonnades. The Barrow tames the automobile in the way of a European historic center. The Barrow also attempts to create a new walkable Downtown for Somerville and the surrounding communities connected entirely by transit, walking, and biking.

1 SHARED STREET SPINE

An pedestrian-oriented thoroughfare reaches from N Union Street to the River.

SUMMARY STATISTICS:

Additional Open Space Acreage: 15

Additional Housing Units: 400

Additional Full-time jobs: 22,000

Additional Municipal Tax Revenue: \$15M

Mode Shift (at build-out total trips which do not involve a car): 85%

Additional Leasable Square Footage (retail, restaurant, and office): 5,340,800

2 LARGE PUBLIC SQUARES

Assembly Square’s grand outdoor dining rooms for shared spaces

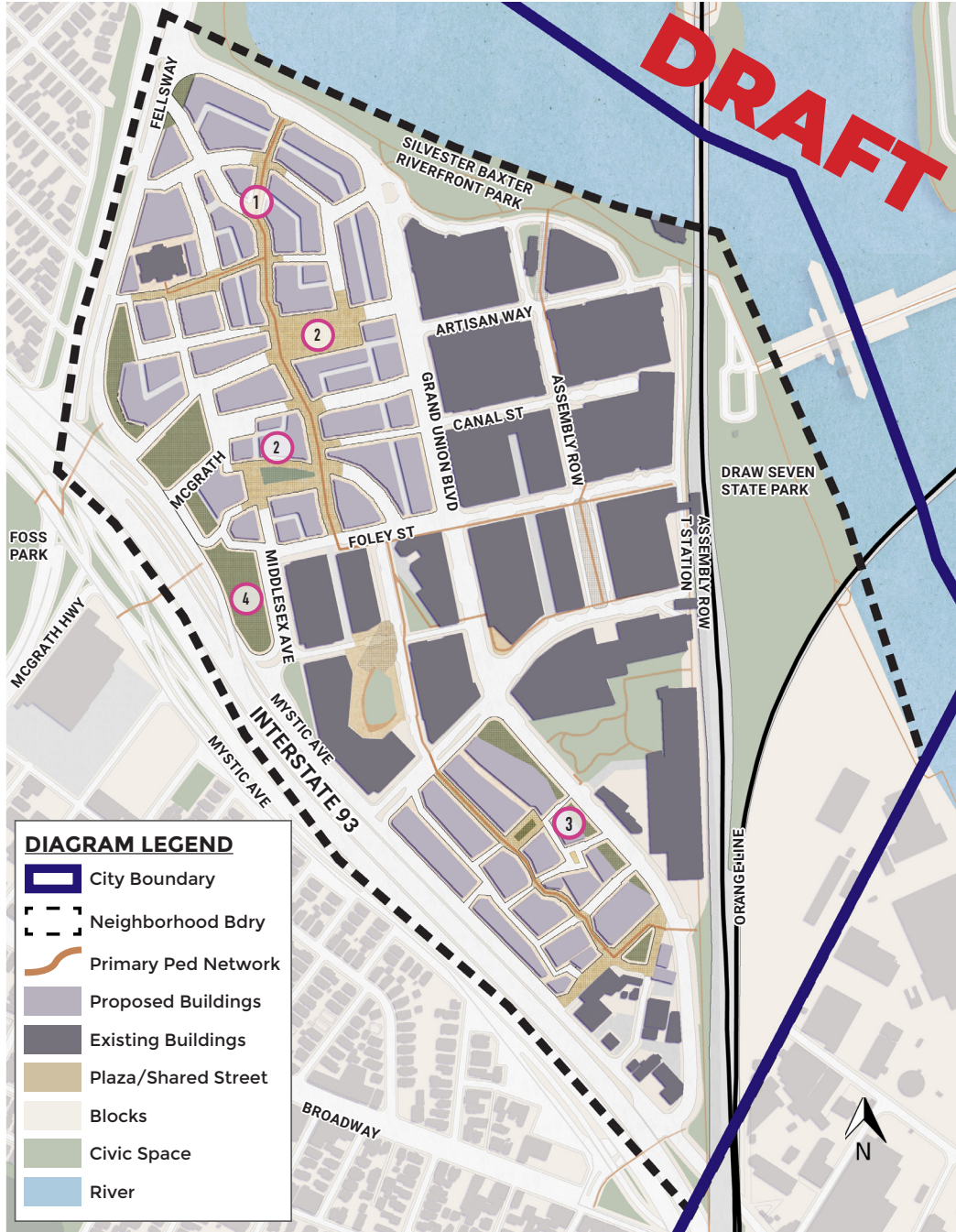
3 SMALL PIAZZE

Creating small intimate spaces so that everyone has access to open spaces.

4 GREEN EDGE

Within walking distance of the urban “spine” is a green edge for fresh air and exercise





Where do we go from here?

The preliminary scenarios opened up the conversation about different strategies for the Assembly Square Neighborhood Plan Update. Now we ask what can we should take into the next draft of the Plan.

The purpose of presenting these scenarios is to get the conversation started. We want to hear from you.

- What do you like about each of the scenarios presented?
- What do you not like?
- What are the postcard views in Assembly Square that we need to protect and enhance?
- Which uses are missing from Assembly Square and where should they be located?
- What character should new development have?
- What types of open space are best suited for the Assembly Square Neighborhood?
- Where should large formal squares or plazas be located?
- Where should smaller parks be located?
- Is it easy to walk or bike in this area? What improvements do you suggest?
- What do you want this area to be when it grows up?

