

NORTHPOINT

EAST CAMBRIDGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

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NOTE:

THIS DOCUMENT IS A MARK UP TO HIGHLIGHT THE NEW AND EDITED TEXT IN 2016 NORTHPOINT DESIGN GUIDELINES WITH COMPARISON TO THE 2003 EASTERN CAMBRIDGE DESIGN GUIDELINES: NORTHPOINT.

YELLOW HIGHLIGHT: TEXT/SECTIONS MODIFIED FROM 2003 VERSION

ORANGE HIGHLIGHT: NEW TEXT/ SECTIONS ADDED

NO HIGHLIGHT: TEXT SAME AS 2003 VERSION

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PREFACE

The layout of the new NorthPoint neighbourhood is driven in large part by the desire to structure a contiguous public realm, which is well integrated into the surrounding neighbourhoods. The streets, sidewalks, central park, and green fingers are designed to hold together as a single network, while providing formal and functional variety. The **tight** city block structure sets up an urban streetscape to create a hierarchy of uses, clarity of circulation, human scale and an animated public and pedestrian realm. **Short blocks-along-with** Buildings exhibiting a diversity of architectural expression, establish a comfortable pedestrian scale common to all building types, framing streets and enlivening the sidewalks with entrances, life, and activity.

Design principles used to create the NorthPoint Master Plan emphasize a variety of scale and form to reflect a diversity of experience throughout the 45-acre site. Each parcel is intended to relate to its immediate surroundings as well as the larger context. The larger context is defined by overall image, legibility, cohesiveness, scale, character, connections, and movement. Local context determinants include orientation, solar exposure, parking, views to the surroundings and the central park, definition of un-built open spaces, public-private hierarchy, strategic location/program/opportunity, integration of multiple uses and interface with transit. This urban design framework builds on the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines and sets out the basic parameters, which will shape built form.

Attached are the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines: NorthPoint (“NorthPoint Guidelines”). These guidelines are based on the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines for the entire Eastern Cambridge area developed by the City of Cambridge and the ECaPs Committee. The North Point Design Guidelines reflect the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines, but are specific to the North Point area and provide additional illustration of design components that may be applicable to North Point.

PURPOSE

These Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines: NorthPoint provide a framework for the design of a livable mixed-use community and will be provided to architects as NorthPoint buildings are designed. These guidelines will be provided to architects of each building or other public space as they are chosen to guide them in their design efforts. The guidelines represent a consensus of attitude regarding the development of the NorthPoint site as derived through several years of planning in East Cambridge by the City of Cambridge, the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines as well as the project specific permitting and community outreach processes for the NorthPoint site. In addition, these guidelines are consistent with the parameters of the Special Permit issued by the Cambridge Planning Board in March 2003.

It is understood that the application of these principles, including numerical guidelines, can vary with the context of specific building proposals in ways that, nevertheless, fully respect the policies’ intent. It is intended that proponents of projects and city staff, the Planning Board and the general public, where public review or approval is required, should be open to creative variations from the detailed provisions presented herein as long as the core values expressed are being served.

ORIGINAL TEXT

The attached guidelines consist of four components as described below. Architects and reviewers should refer to additional documents including: the Planning Board Special Permit for NorthPoint and the roadway Network Schematic Plan that will be submitted to the Planning Board for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit for the first building at the site.

Part 1: Guidelines Text

The Guidelines Text is based on the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines developed by the City of Cambridge. It provides the dimensional guidelines that should drive the design of buildings and other public spaces at NorthPoint. The Guidelines Text is the controlling component of this guideline package and where there are discrepancies between the guidelines and Catalog of Images or Specific Block Guidelines, the Guidelines Text will rule.

Part 2: Catalog of Images

The Catalog of Images consists of graphics that illustrate the concepts described in the Guidelines Text. They are referenced throughout the Guidelines Text as Exhibits 1 -19.

Part 3: Specific Block Guidelines

The NorthPoint team has developed examples of how the guidelines are applied to each building block. These will be provided to each building architect and include approximate size, height and use of the buildings on each block, as well as recommended locations for pedestrian and vehicular entries. The Specific Block Guidelines also highlight the unique characteristics particular to each block of which architects should be aware. These may include items such as proximity to the Central Park, integration with the MBTA transit station or requirement for a connection to the Gilmore Bridge.

ORGANIZATION

The attached guidelines consist of six components as described below. Architects and reviewers should refer to additional documents including: the Planning Board Special Permit for NorthPoint and the roadway Network Schematic Plan that will be submitted to the Planning Board for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit for the first building at the site. The Guidelines Text is based on the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines developed by the City of Cambridge. It provides the dimensional guidelines that should drive the design of buildings and other public spaces at NorthPoint. The Exhibits are graphics that illustrate the concepts described in the Guidelines Text. The Guidelines Text is the controlling component of this guideline package and where there are discrepancies between the guidelines and Exhibits or Specific Block Guidelines, the Guidelines Text will rule.

Part 1: Urban Structure

This section outlines the overall layout of the masterplan and various urban design considerations that create a holistic vision for NorthPoint. The Urban Structure also highlights how the masterplan not only strengthens the connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and creates new green connections within the site.

Part 2: Built Form

The Built-Form section lays out design guidelines for the character of the urban fabric of NorthPoint in terms of scale, massing, ground floor articulation and architectural character.

Part 2: Public Realm

The team has developed a robust set of guidelines to decide the nature of different types of open spaces and streetscapes.

Part 4: Transportation and Public Transit Nodes

This section highlights how the urban design of NorthPoint enhances the user experience from both, green and orange line, T stops into the site. Moreover, it also outlines how the open space network facilitates the East-West bicycle and pedestrian connections.

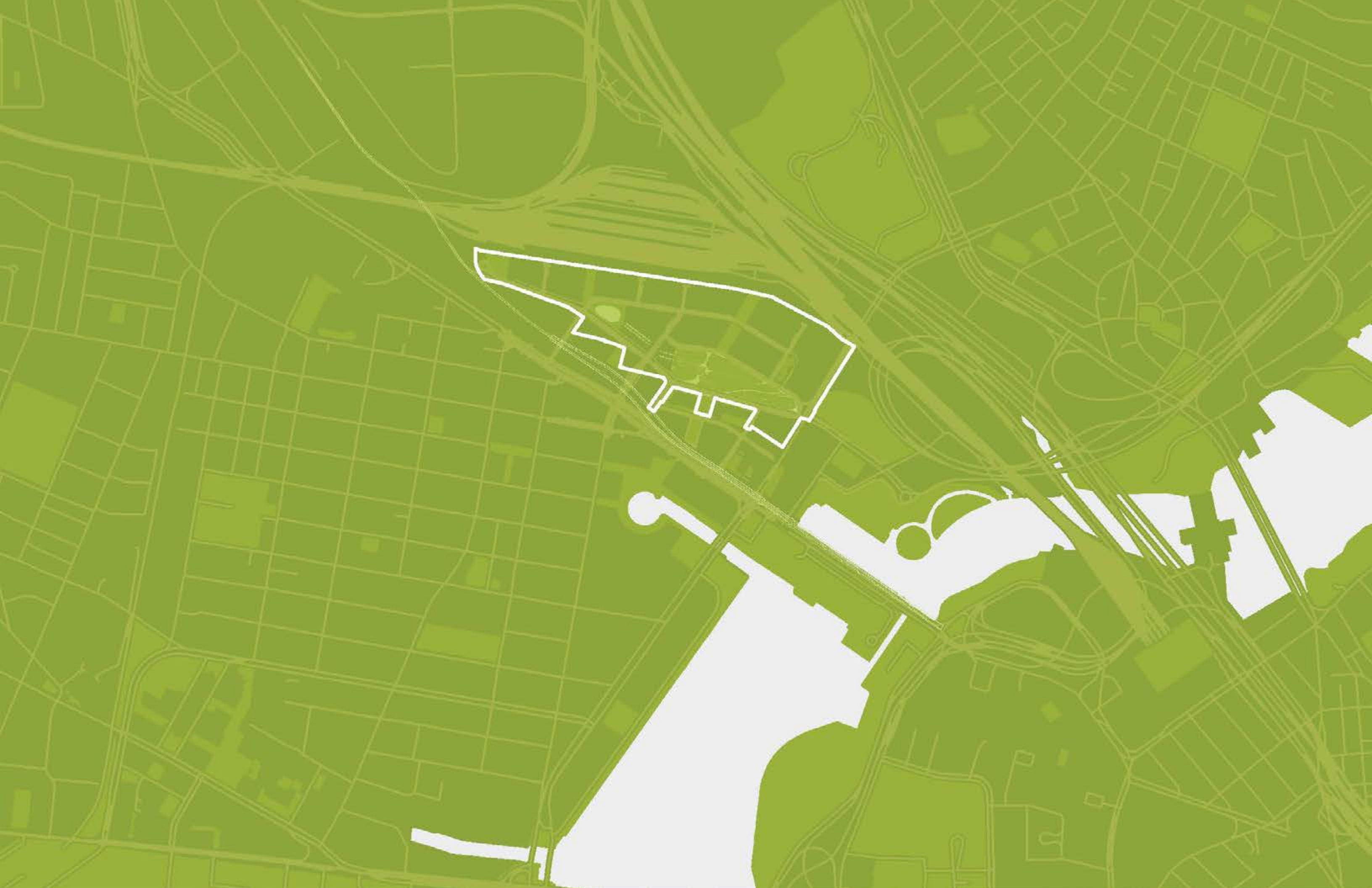
Part 5: Specific Block Guidelines

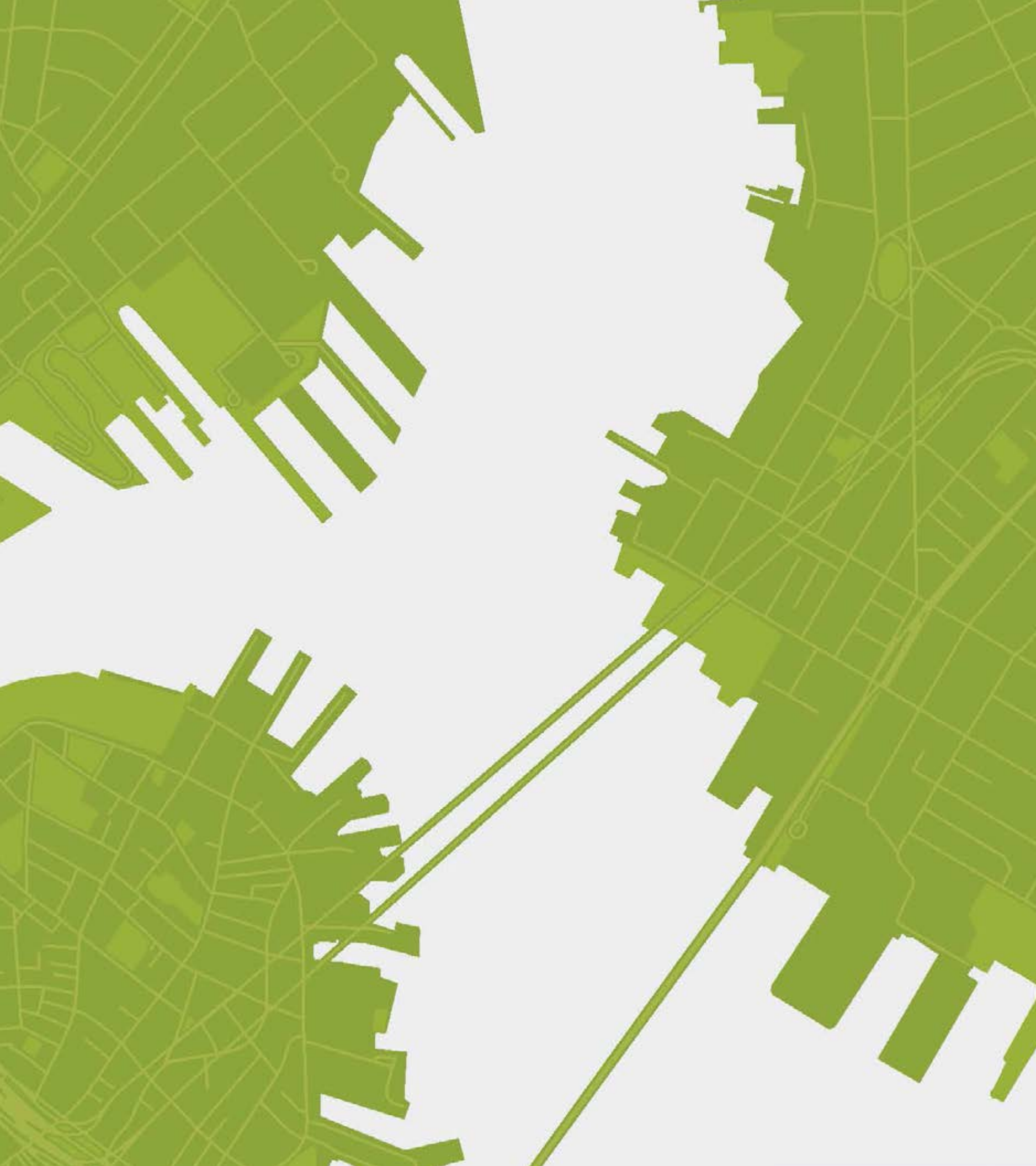
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Part 6: Model Images and Renderings

This section consists of graphics that illustrate the NorthPoint model and artist’s renderings from different viewing perspectives.

Note: All exhibits and images in the Guidelines are illustrative examples only. Designs will be subject to detailed design review and approval by the Planning Board.



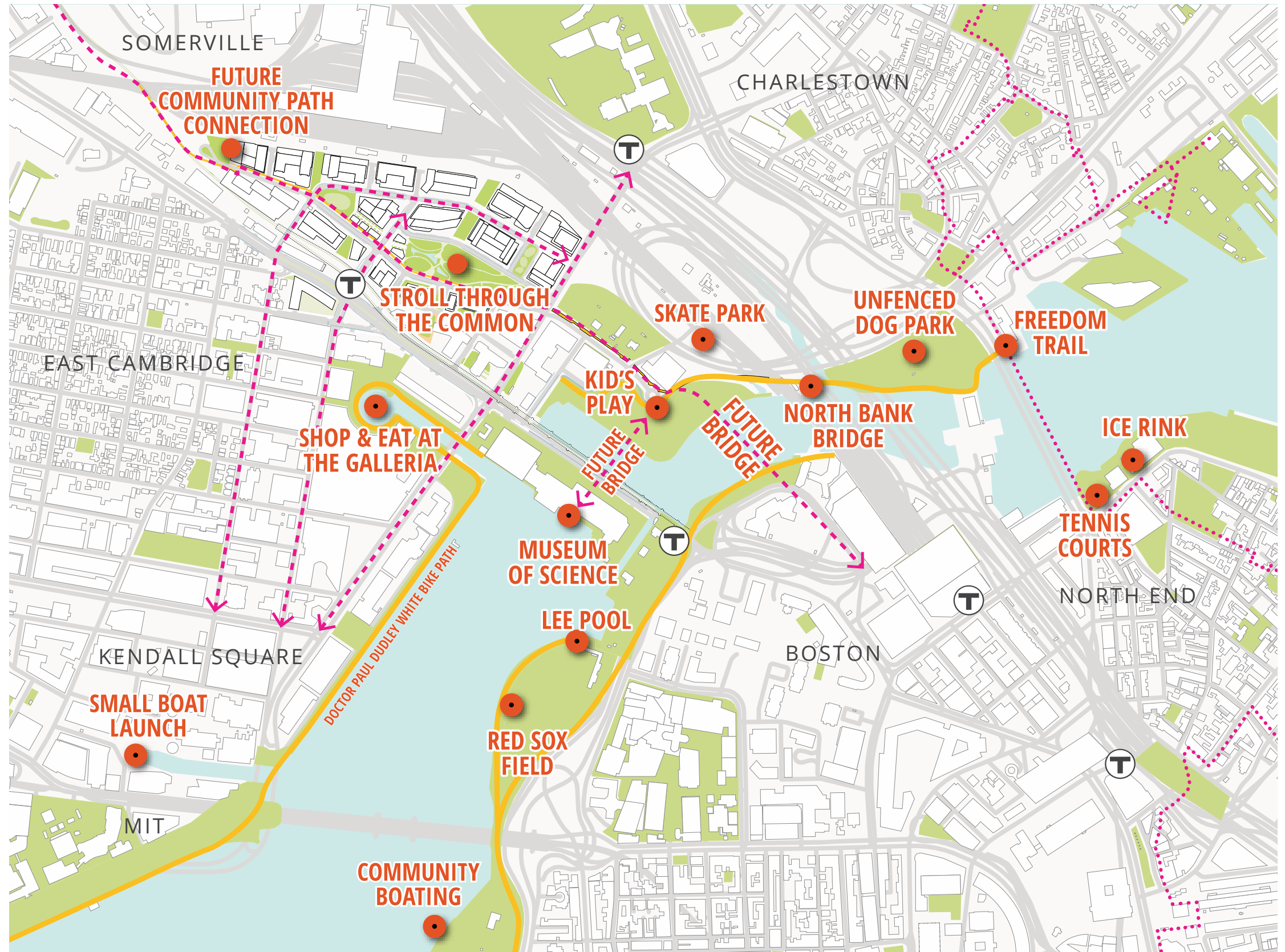


01 Urban Structure

1.1 THE NORTHPOINT NEIGHBORHOOD

NorthPoint is the last largest contiguous piece of land to be developed in Cambridge. Located on the fringes of East Cambridge -- and derelict, underutilized and landlocked -- The project sits in a crucial junction of Cambridge, Somerville and Boston. The roughly triangular site is surrounded by O'Brien Highway, the elevated Gilmore Bridge and the Massachusetts Bay Transport Authority (MBTA) rail yard. The challenge then is to work with these hard edges and connect The Project with the surrounding communities and the region.

The Master Plan fulfills a missing link by connecting the Minuteman Bike/Multi-Use Trail to the Charles River Basin. The open space network is created in such a way that it carries this trail elegantly through it and connects to the neighboring Charles River Basin, and in turn, to downtown Boston.



Key
 ● Points of Interest
 ■ Open Spaces

EXHIBIT: 01 NORTHPOINT NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

1.2 URBAN DESIGN GOALS

The urban design goals are as follows.

- Create a lively new mixed-use district with strong visual, bicycle and pedestrian connections to East Cambridge. The new district should be a place to live, work, and enjoy a variety of parks and public spaces
- Create a new east-west street through the center of NorthPoint, connecting East Cambridge with the NorthPoint Park
- Extend First Street into NorthPoint to connect existing and new neighborhoods
- Create a major new public park easily accessible from the relocated Lechmere T station, First Street, and O'Brien Highway
- Create a new retail edge at the relocated Lechmere T station and at the intersection of First Street, Cambridge Street, and O'Brien Highway that will complement, not compete with, existing retail on Cambridge Street

“EXHIBIT: 06 CONCEPTUAL LANDUSE PLAN” on page 12, provides a diagrammatic representation of the NorthPoint master plan approved by the Planning Board. In addition, the Land Use Plan provides some understanding of the distinction between the block types discussed in later sections. However, the categorization of blocks may change pursuant to the Special Permit granted by the Planning Board.



EXHIBIT: 02 CONCEPTUAL RENDERINGS

1.3 GREEN CONNECTIONS

Major street Connections into the site wherever possible, without interfering with the underlying principles of the plan, shall create a “green and pedestrian friendly” experience that connect the neighborhood to interior green spaces at NorthPoint. Plans shall include enhanced sidewalks, expanded plantings and where reasonably possible a view corridor to interior green spaces.

- Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to future regional pathways (Grand Junction railroad, NorthPoint path).
- Provide continuous pedestrian and bicycle access, and strong visual connections to the Charles River and public parks through view corridors, signage, and/or art installations.
- Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to hubway stations, existing and new bus stops and to transit stations including Kendall Square, Lechmere, Community College and North Station MBTA stations. In particular, direct access from the residential neighborhood south of Msgr. O’Brien Highway and Cambridge Street to the new T station, if relocated, is desirable.
- Provide new pedestrian crossings along Msgr. O’Brien Highway with strong visual connections from existing streets in East Cambridge to new streets and open spaces at NorthPoint. Ensure that new pedestrian crossings are coordinated with traffic operations on Msgr. O’Brien Highway.
- Provide landscaped pedestrian/cycle connections from NorthPoint to the future regional bicycle path.
- Provide for improved pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from the Orange Line T station.
- Provide a clear, public, legible and green connection between NorthPoint Common and Parcel I Park through the retail plaza area.

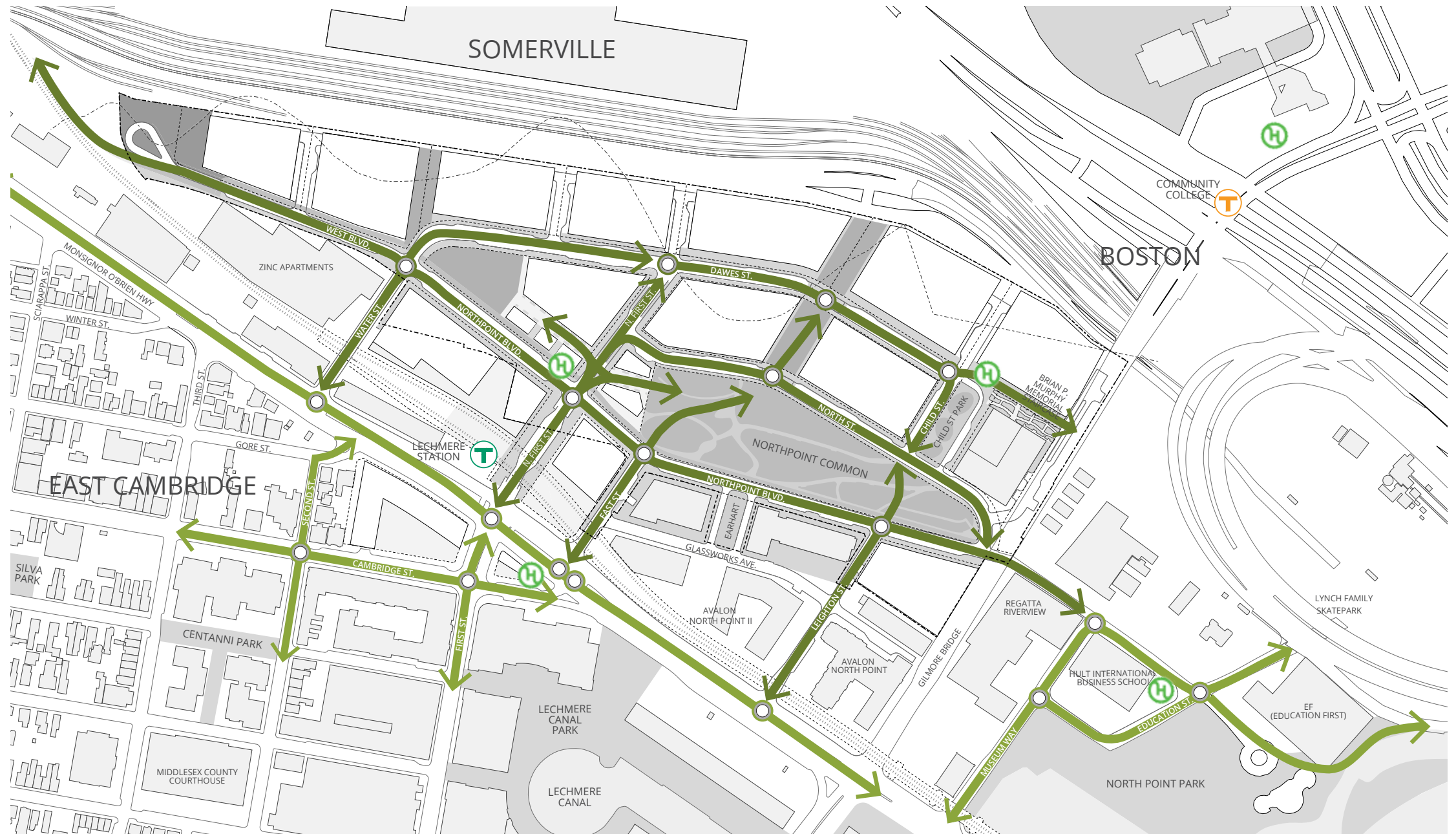
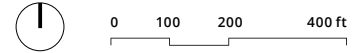


EXHIBIT: 03 CONNECTION PLAN DIAGRAM



1.4 VIEW CORRIDORS & LANDMARKS

The NorthPoint master plan is organized as a series of connected experiences with multiple nodes and landmarks. This unique sequence of spaces acts as valuable way-finding tool throughout the development. The strength of the NorthPoint Master Plan is that visitors to the site are greeted by an open space at every point of arrival. These open spaces, including Water Street, First Street, NorthPoint Boulevard and Gilmore Bridge, provide critical connective tissue and view corridors throughout the site.

- Lechmere Square (Existing Lechmere Station) will serve as an important physical and visual organizational element in the development. With its new transit station, and the redevelopment of Parcel V, Lechmere Square will offer views to the Parcel I tower in NorthPoint, down First Street in East Cambridge and across the river to the Prudential Tower in Boston. In these ways, Lechmere Square will enhance wayfinding through view corridor creation.
- The realigned and straightened First Street acts as the strongest north-south organizational element in the development. This corridor culminates with an architectural landmark at Dawes Street. The urban geometry allows for this unique architectural expression by turning perpendicular to Dawes Street at the end of the view corridor.
- The Water Street entrance in to the site will offer a view of the newly created active park on Parcel I and to another architectural expression on Parcel C.
- The Brian Murphy Memorial Stair serves as yet another gateway into NorthPoint from Gilmore Bridge and Community College Orange Line Station. This pedestrian connection provides view corridors both down Dawes Street and back to the city.
- NorthPoint Boulevard will offer those entering from the east a spectacular view to the NorthPoint Common.
- Lastly, the master plan creates a critical view corridor from NorthPoint Common to downtown Boston and the Zakim Bridge.



Key Plan



Water Street View Corridor
EXHIBIT: 04 EXISTING VIEW CORRIDORS TO THE SITE



East Street View Corridor



Leighton Street View Corridor



View from Lechmere Square looking towards NorthPoint



View of North First Street from the New Lechmere Station



View from park at Water Street looking towards the retail core



View from Dawes Street looking towards Brian Murphy Staircase
EXHIBIT: 05 VIEW CORRIDOR SNAP SHOTS



View from eastern side of NorthPoint Common looking towards retail core



View from Parcel W looking towards east and Zakim Bridges

1.5 MASTERPLAN EXHIBITS

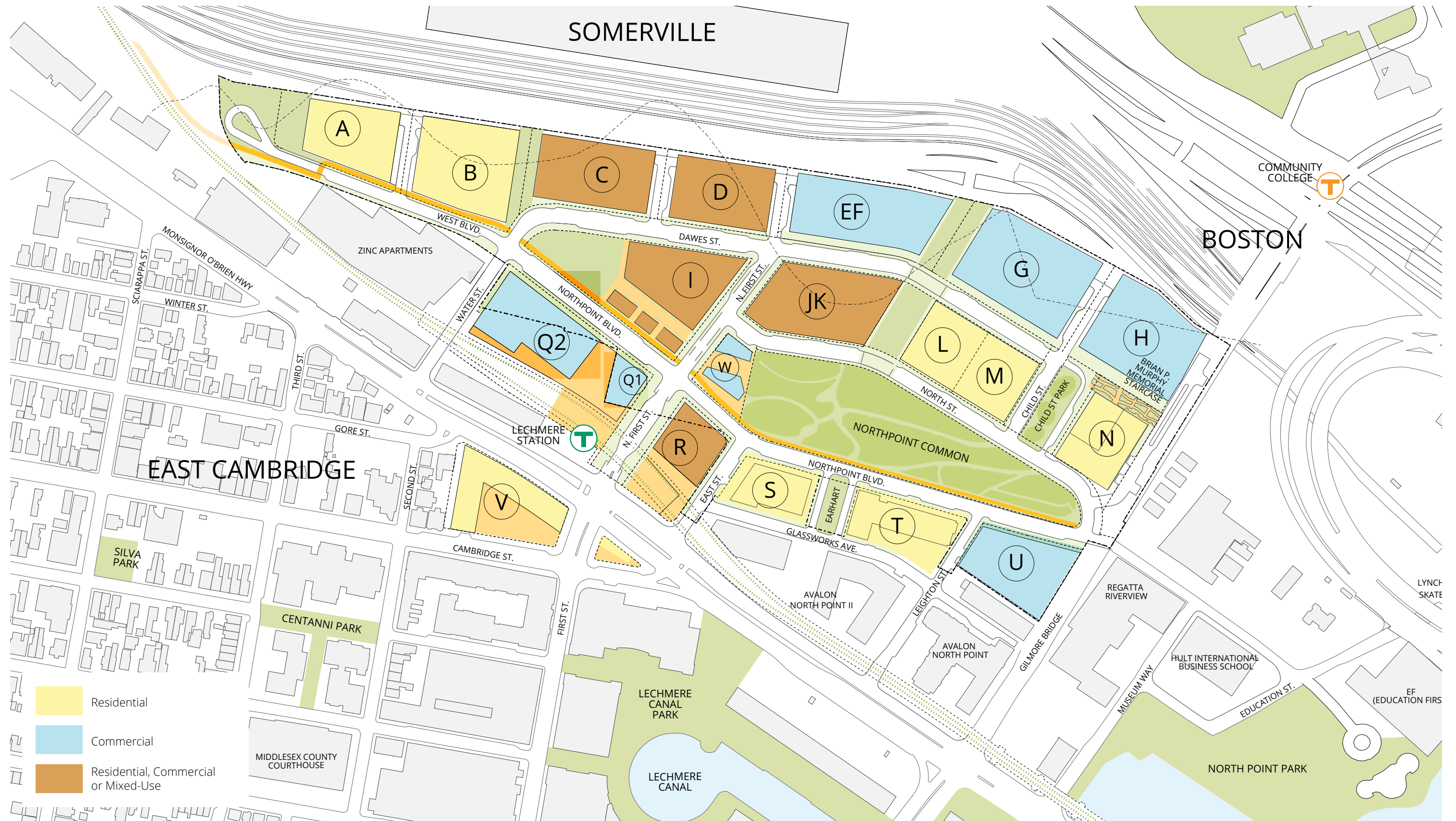
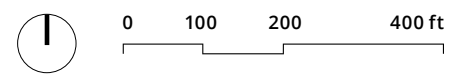


EXHIBIT: 06 CONCEPTUAL LANDUSE PLAN



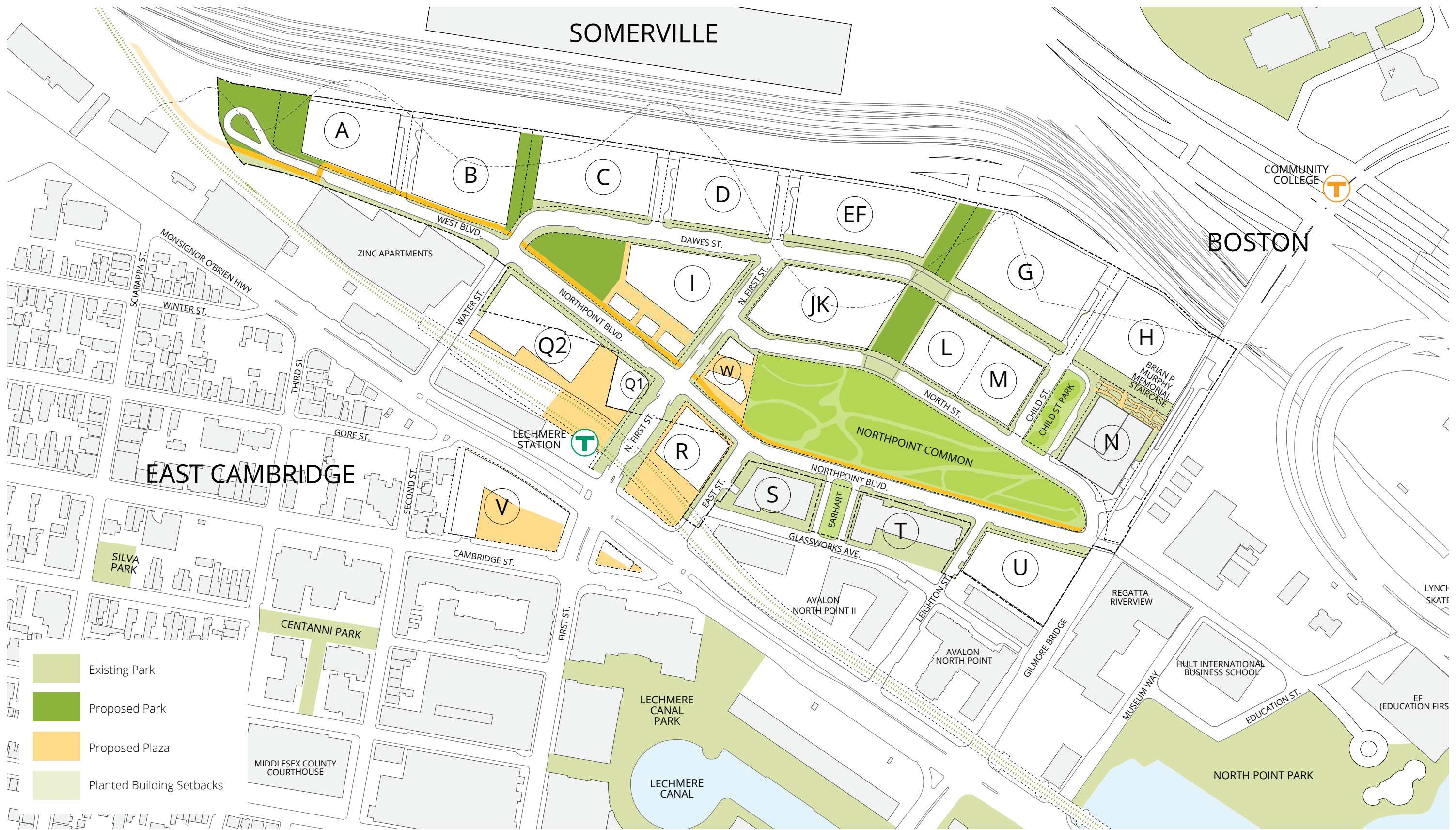
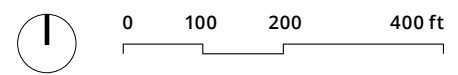


EXHIBIT: 07 CONCEPTUAL OPEN SPACE PLAN



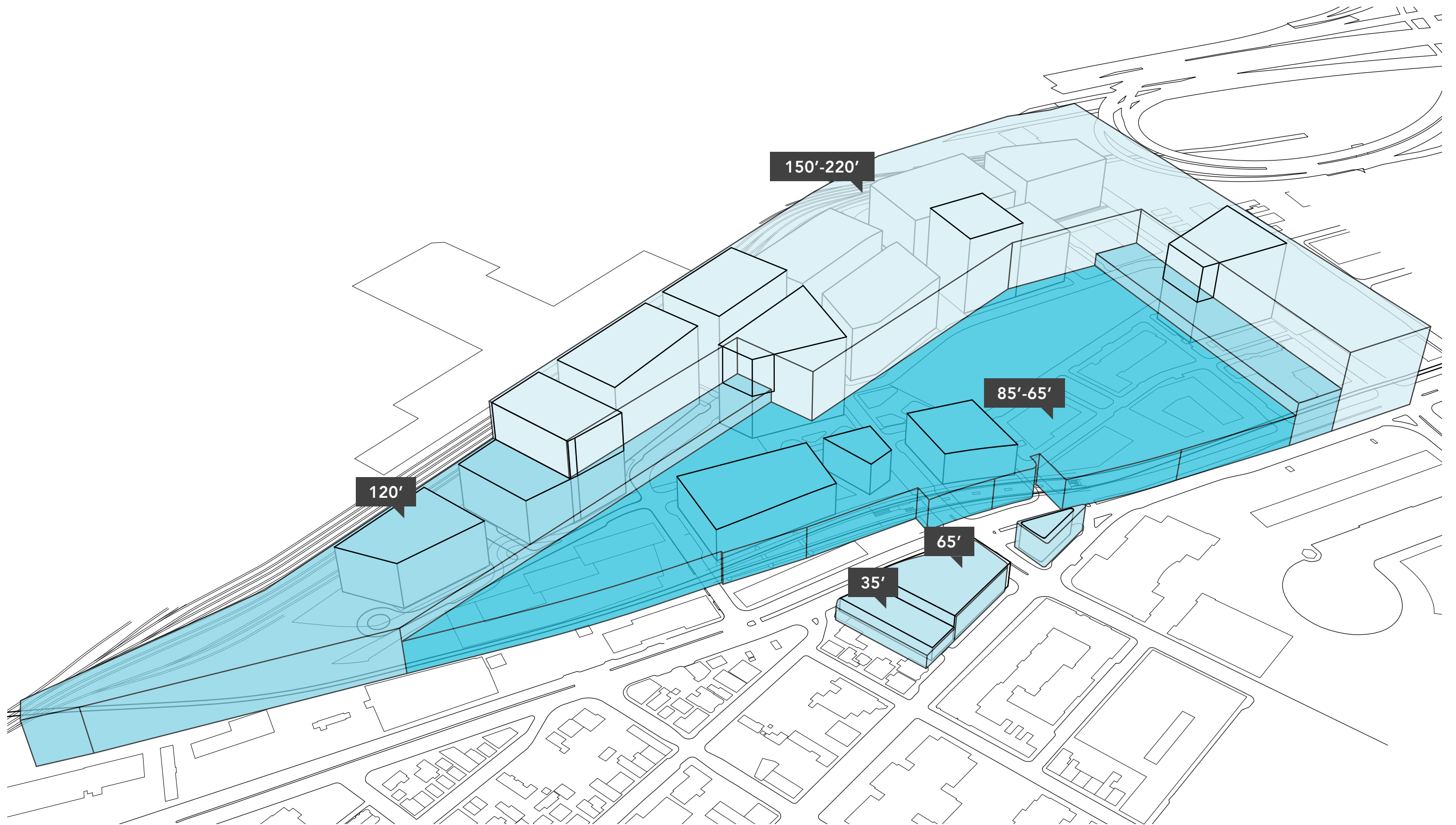


EXHIBIT: 08 ZONING ENVELOPE

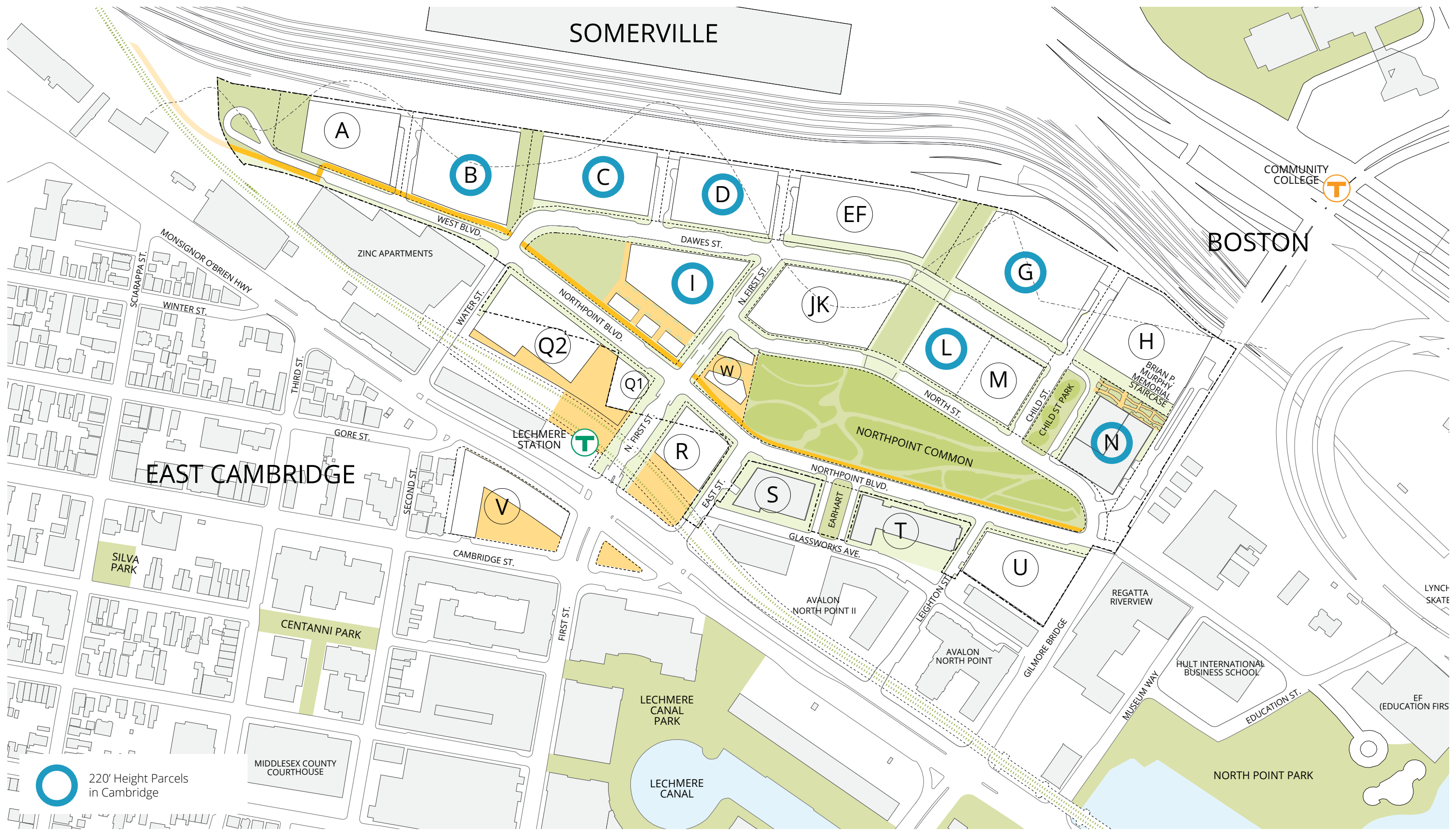
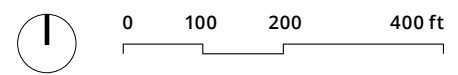


EXHIBIT: 09 LOCATION OF 220' TOWERS



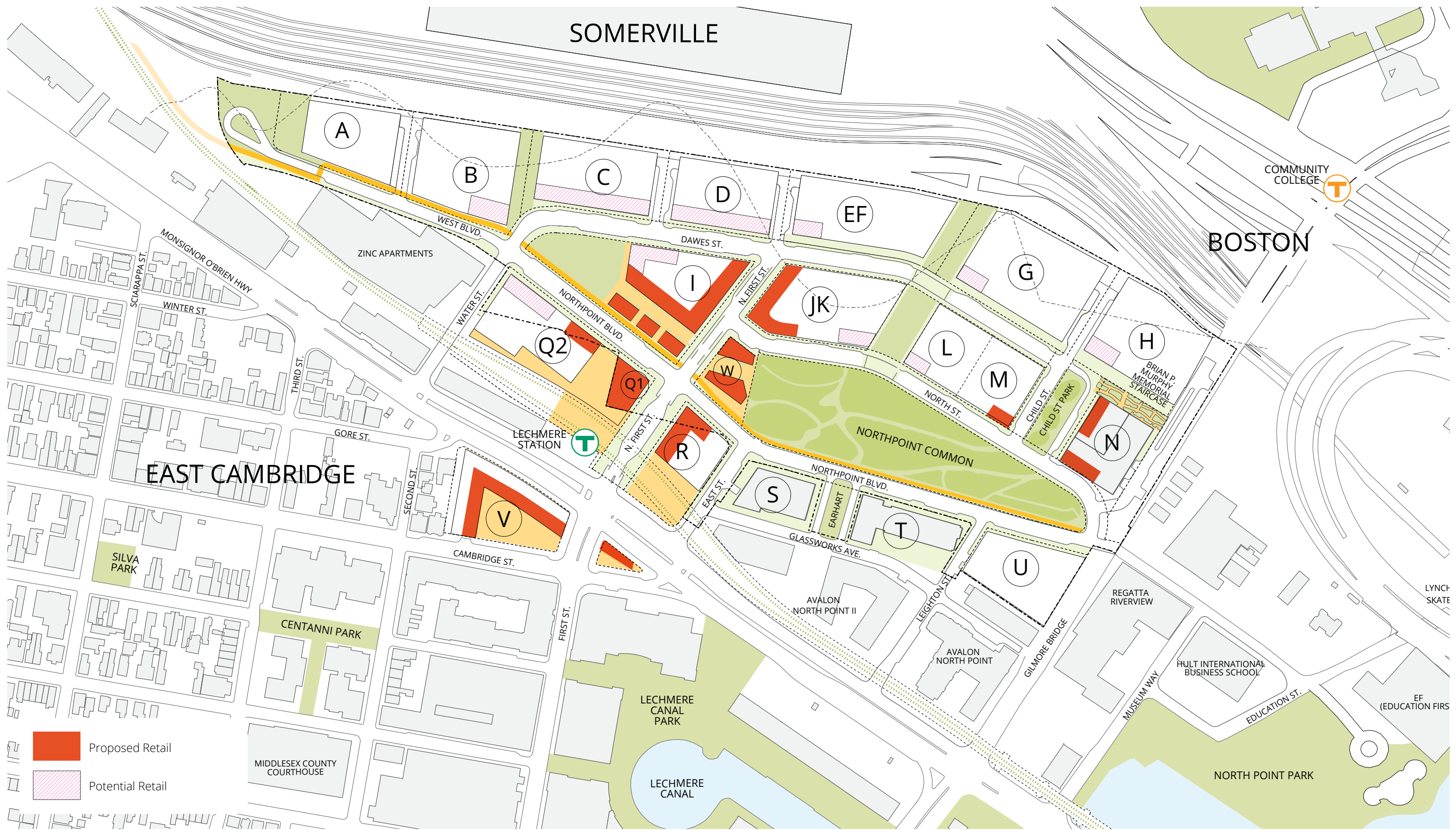
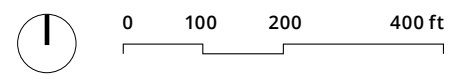
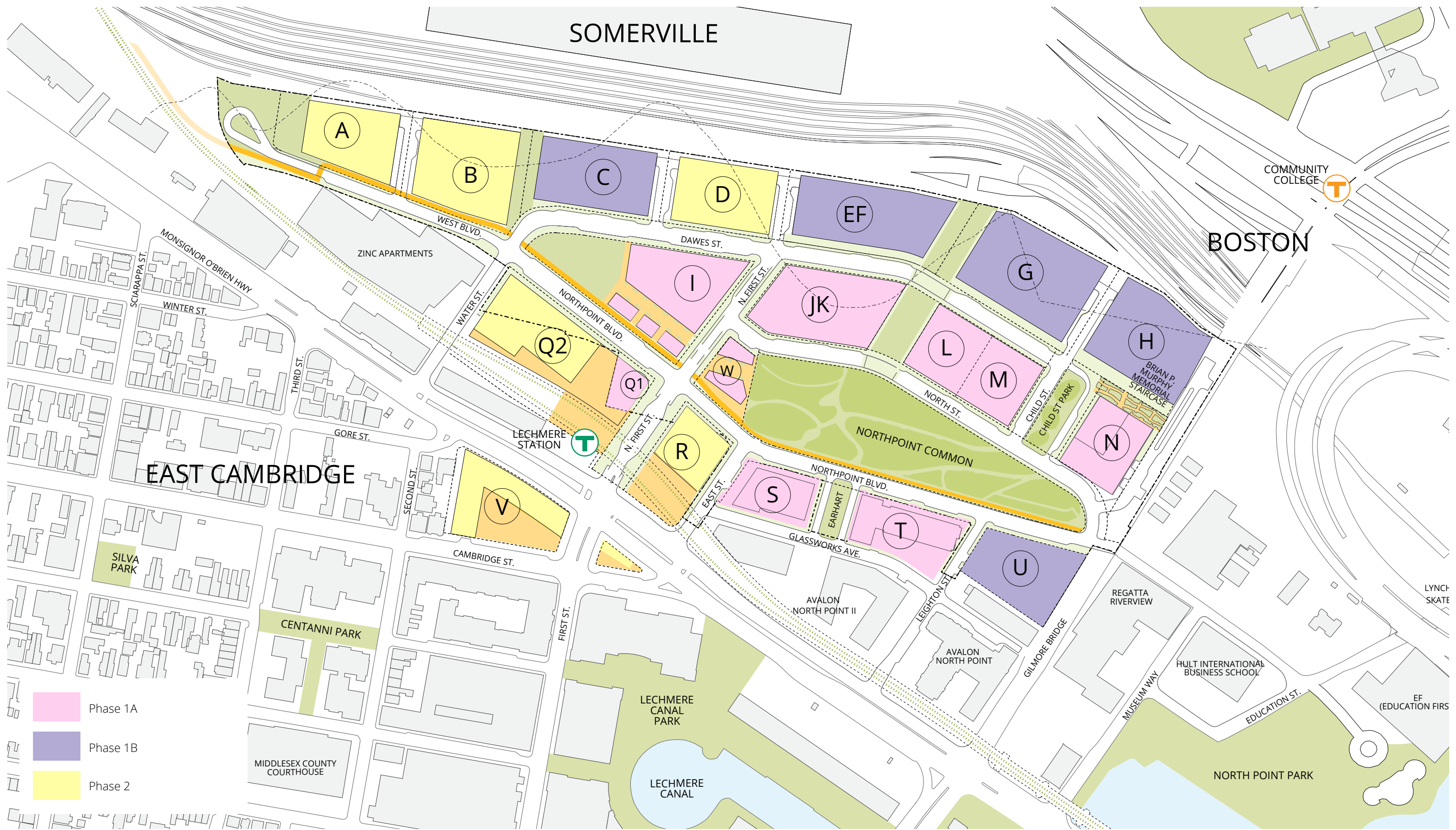


EXHIBIT: 10 CONCEPTUAL RETAIL PLAN





- Phase 1A
- Phase 1B
- Phase 2

EXHIBIT: 11 CONCEPTUAL PHASING PLAN

