

# NAYLOR COURT

## PLACE-MAKING STUDY



**MASSACHUSETTS DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE**

*prepared for* **Town of Maynard** *prepared by* **Harriman**

**January 2021**



Massachusetts Downtown Initiative



HARRIMAN



Innes Associates Ltd.



# Acknowledgments

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# Naylor Court

Naylor Court is the heart of Maynard's active downtown. The Court, a triangle bounded by Summer, Nason, and Main Streets, contains a significant collection of businesses, including restaurants; a large municipal parking area; and Veterans' Memorial Park.

The area is a complex combination of buildings, parking, and driveways. However, the convenient location of the parking lot connects Naylor Court to the larger downtown and its fabric of businesses. Naylor Court represents an opportunity to support economic development and community activities in the downtown. Because the parking lot is adjacent to Veterans' Memorial Park, an extension of public activities into designated spaces within the parking lot could increase opportunities for additional foot traffic to all businesses.

Businesses require additional support as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. One opportunity has been expanding outdoor dining and display of retail goods. However, the crowded layout of Naylor Court leaves little room for these outdoor activities. The public sidewalk along Main Street, Nason Street, and Summer Street is not quite wide enough to accommodate all the possible combinations of outdoor

uses and would be further narrowed by snow in the winter.

The internal parking lot, with direct access from many businesses, provides space for outdoor dining and several restaurants have already taken advantage of that space. However, use of the parking lot is restricted by the scattered placement of individual commercial dumpsters. The haphazard placement of the dumpsters greatly diminishes the aesthetics of the area and discourages outdoor activities such as dining, gathering, or community events.

Creating a centralized area for refuse collection in Naylor Court would free up land closer to the entrances to the businesses for outdoor dining and retail displays while enhancing the aesthetics of Naylor Court, improving pedestrian safety and vehicular circulation, and allowing safe and effective refuse collection. The central area can also tie into community values around recycling and energy efficiency.

## The Challenge

**Naylor Court is a complex combination of buildings, parking, driveways, and a public park.**

**Scattered locations of individual dumpsters create limited opportunities for outdoor activities such as dining or community events.**



# Naylor Court



# Project Goals and Process

## Goals

This planning study is part of the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, supported by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The program paired the Town of Maynard with Harriman to investigate the possibilities of moving the dumpsters in Naylor Court to a centralized collection point as part of a larger economic development strategy. Because the Town owns the parking lot, it could be an effective partner in supporting outdoor business activities.

The goals for the process included the following

- Support the surrounding businesses and boost the vibrancy of the location.
- Enhance downtown Maynard's economic opportunities.
- Increase foot traffic into the lot and make an experiential connection to Veterans Memorial Park and the rest of Downtown.
- Create areas for outdoor cafés and displays of goods.
- Improve the aesthetics of the area and encourage outdoor activities.

- Provide customers with a memorable experience.
- Be recognized as businesses that are environmentally conscious and be rewarded by your customers.
- Make the lot part of the Holiday Sip & Stroll, the Spring Art Walk, and potential new events.
- Include opportunities for Maynard's art community.
- Improve pedestrian safety.
- Improve the image of Naylor Court.

## Project Initiation

Harriman met with Town staff to discuss the layout of the area, options for the location of the collection area, the needs of existing businesses, and proposed access points for collection of the refuse.

With the help of maps, and electronic files, Harriman analyzed building footprints, paved surfaces, parcel lines, easements, utilities, and land ownership. A site visit provided an inventory of photographs and a deeper understanding of the constraints on the site.

## Precedents and Existing Conditions

Harriman reviewed previous planning stud-

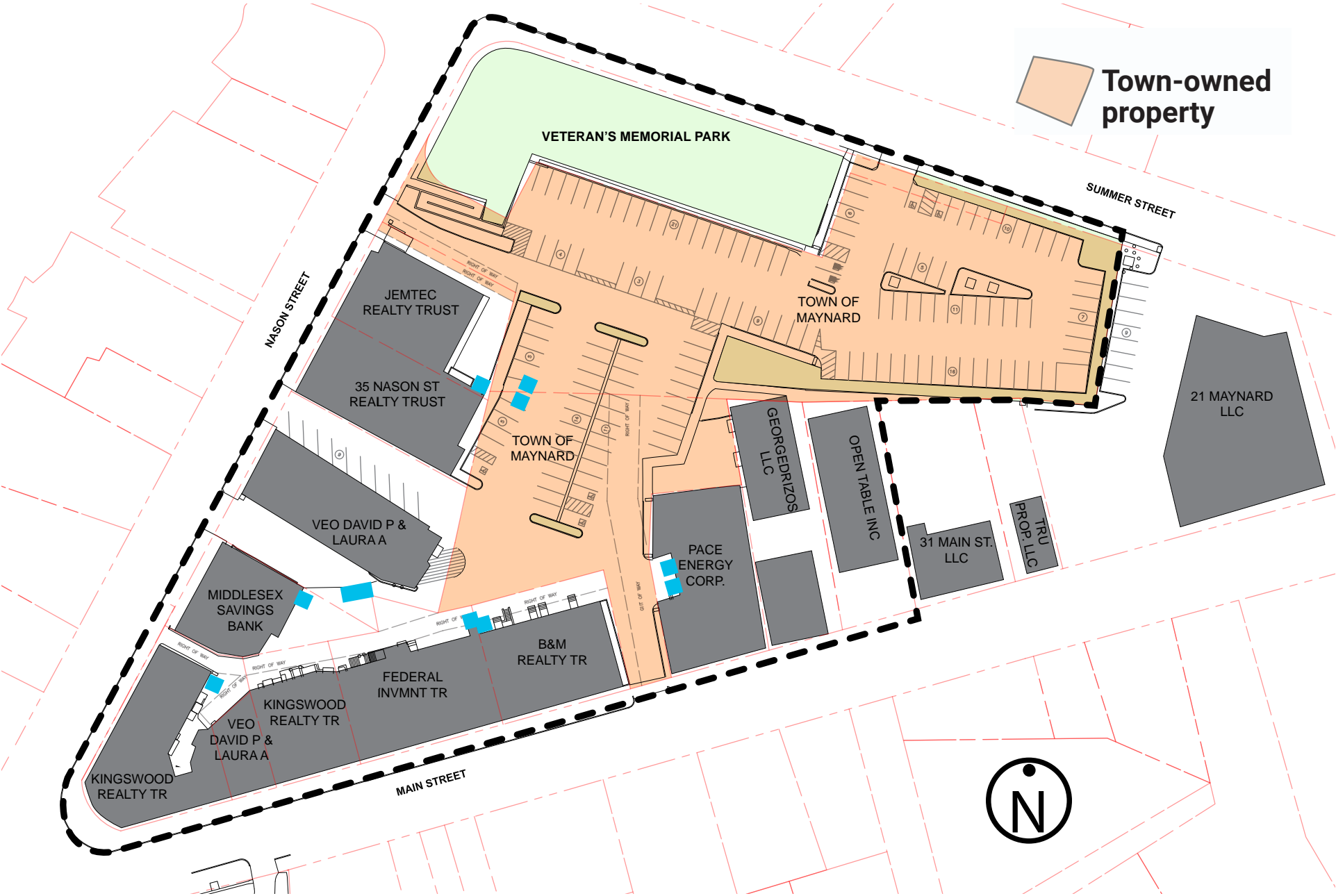
ies, to understand the context of the previous planning for this area and to build upon the hard work that had already been done.

The following is a list of previous studies that were reviewed and that help inform some of the objectives in this study:

- The **Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Program** report which recommended rethinking the organization of waste collection in this parking lot and served as the impetus for this planning study.
- The **Maynard Downtown Parking Analysis** by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) which found that there is no shortage of parking in the area
- The **Veterans Memorial Park Study** by BA Landscape Architects LLC which recommended enhancing the connectivity between the park and the parking lot.
- The **Town of Maynard Master Plan** by VHB and Landwise which recommended improving this area to encourage economic development.
- The **Downtown Maynard Study** by Fine Point Associates study which recommends improving the parking lot and make it a more attractive area.



# Land Ownership and Dumpster Locations



- Funding from the **MassDOT Complete Streets Program** to construct wheelchair ramps from Naylor Court to Veterans' Memorial Park to aid in accessible access for all.

Research also included precedents for place branding, the importance of foot-traffic to a downtown, waste-to-energy strategies, recycling and community participation, and biofuel recycling. The information from this research served as the basis for a sustainable and resilient design approach to the revised layout for Naylor Court.

Place branding helps communities leverage places as a competitive advantage over other market areas. By reinforcing a specific identity, branding materials for a place can draw potential customers who may have been unaware of the place. It also contributes to change the perception of the place and attract potential consumers.

The link between foot traffic and economic development is one that is often assumed, but not fully understood. According to the 2019 **Foot Traffic Ahead Study\*** by the George Washington University School of Business and Smart Growth America, walk-

able areas contribute a higher percentage to the national GDP than non-walkable areas despite the lower number of walkable areas. Communities that focus on foot traffic and increase economic performance and social equity outcomes.

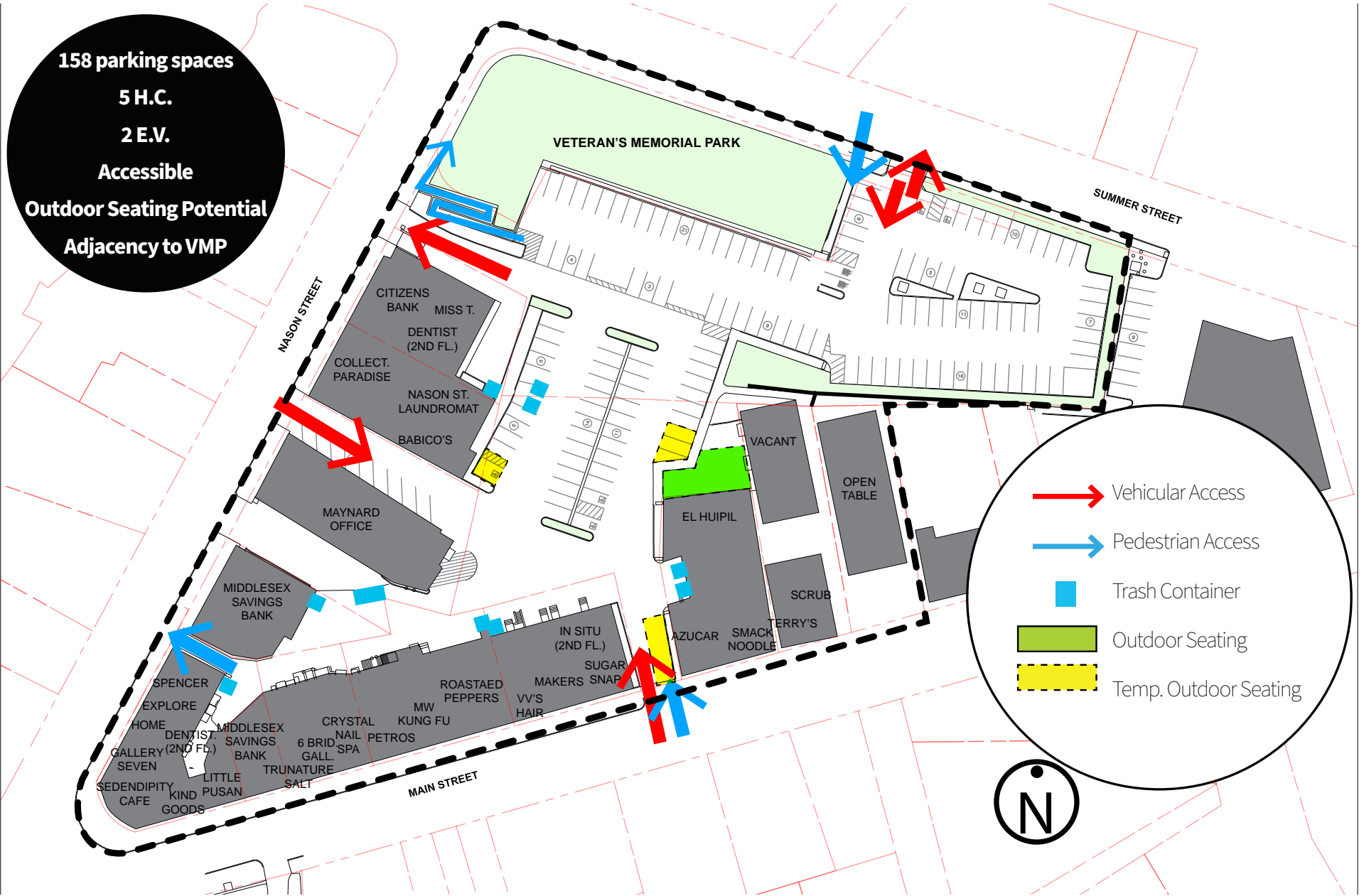
Changes in recycling technology, practices, and access provide an opportunity for Naylor Court to reinforce Maynard's designation as a Green Community by integrating the waste collection and recycling process into the design of the site.

\*<https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.gwu.edu/dist/a/326/files/2019/06/FTA19.pdf>





# Parking, Access, and Usage



## Scenario Development

Initial scenarios focused on locations for a centralized refuse collection area, access to each of the possible locations, and identification of the areas that would be available for reuse once the dumpsters were moved.

Research into waste management systems explored new methods of dealing with refuse, including strategies to reduce and recycle waste, composting strategies, and other options that may reduce costs to the businesses while improving the life cycle flow of the waste.

## Surveys and Interviews

A survey tested the concepts refined in the previous task, including potential benefits to each business from the creation of the centralized refuse collection area. Input from the survey provided information about costs and logistical considerations that were incorporated into the next set of scenarios.

Individual interviews with businesses and the Maynard Business Alliance provided more information about the operations of the businesses.

## Initial Concept Plans and Presentation

Two concept plans identified a clear choice in terms of logistics. While the location was the same for both, the management and pricing structure differed. Renderings illustrated the options for the centralized location and the reuse of the space freed up by moving the dumpsters. A second survey tested these two options with a wider audience.

## Final Concept Plan

The final concept plan in this report responds to comments from the public and direction from Town staff. The concept plan is accompanied by recommendations for implementing the Green Corner.

Funding sources for implementation include the Downtown Enhancement Funds, MassDevelopment's Commonwealth Places grant, the MassEVIP grant for electric vehicle charging stations, and other economic development grants.

Partners for implementation include the Town, the Naylor Court businesses, the Maynard Business Alliance, and local artists.

## Public Participation Opportunities

### TOWN OF MAYNARD

Help us transform Naylor Court into a new place that supports economic development!

The Town of Maynard is looking to consolidate waste collection into a single location in the Naylor Court municipal parking lot to improve its aesthetics and free up space for outdoor activities.

The survey will be open until October 4, 2020

We want to hear from the businesses around the court and have them be part of the process!

Please visit:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/naylor> to fill out the survey.

NAYLOR COURT  
CENTRAL REFUSE COLLECTION

DHCD MASSACHUSETTS DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE

### TOWN OF MAYNARD

Help us transform Naylor Court to support economic development and the Maynard community!

The Town of Maynard has generated two options to consolidate waste collection into a single location in the Naylor Court municipal parking lot to improve its aesthetics and free up space for outdoor activities.

We want to hear from the businesses around the court and the community to determine which is the best option for everyone!



The survey will be open until December 27, 2020

Please visit:

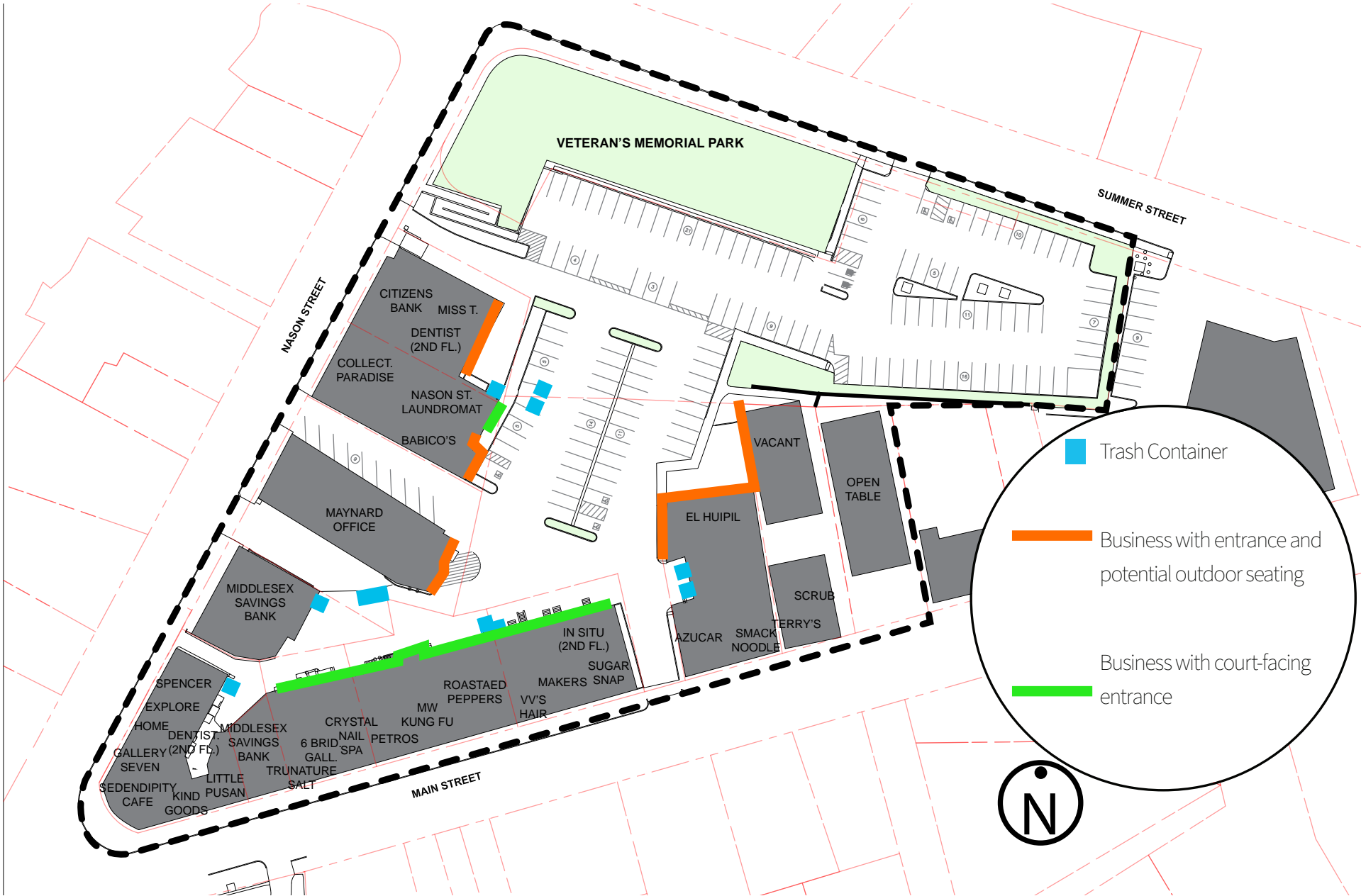
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZDP3GHZ> or scan the QR code to fill out the survey.

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# Business Frontage on the Municipal Parking Lot



# The Green Corner

“The Green Corner” configuration is a simple, convenient, and effective way to provide businesses with a central refuse collection area that avoids complex operations and instead simply relocates their containers into a central fenced area. Businesses do not need to change existing relationships or renegotiate contracts. The new location is equidistant to most businesses in the lot so the inconvenience in taking trash further from the back door is outweighed by the economic benefit of attracting more customers..

Removing the existing dumpsters from “back of house” frees those areas for use as outdoor dining, retail display, non-dining seating, or simply a better experience for customer entering a business directly from the parking lot. However, even businesses without an entrance from the lot can still benefit from the increased foot traffic in Naylor Court.

The revised parking layout required to incorporate the Green Corner into the lot increases pedestrian safety and does not reduce the number of parking spaces available to customers.

This central location changes the perspective visitors and residents currently have of Naylor Court by transforming it into an area that is complementary to the rest of the downtown. The Green Corner can be used to brand the Town and the Naylor Court businesses as supportive of recycling and other sustainable strategies.

By involving the local arts community, Naylor Court can graphically communicate the new identity on the fence surrounding the relocated dumpsters. Artists could also partner with landlords and businesses to enliven the rear walls of the building to highlight business entrances. Movable tables, seating, planters, lighting, and heaters allows for year-round use and visual interest.

This “Green Corner” belongs to the community. It promotes local businesses and a greener future, including alternative energy sources (electric vehicle charging stations); green infrastructure (bioswales); and community engagement (inclusion of arts community, public can and bottle recycling stations).

## Recommendations

- **Relocate existing dumpsters to new the central location. Other practices (quantities, frequencies, and type of waste collected) remain unchanged.**
- **Keep current contractual arrangements for waste collection.**
- **Use the enclosing fence as a branding strategy; partner with the Maynard Cultural Council, ArtSpace Maynard, and other local art and cultural groups.**
- **Include stations for biofuel recycling and composting for the businesses.**
- **Add a reverse vending machine provided by independent operator to encourage public recycling.**
- **Coordinate the same day for weekly pick up. (Friday morning suggested to clear residue and smells for Friday afternoon and the weekend.)**
- **Add electric vehicle charging stations to the corner to support carbon reduction.**
- **Work with businesses to reuse the space to support their business model: outdoor dining, retail display, or other active uses.**

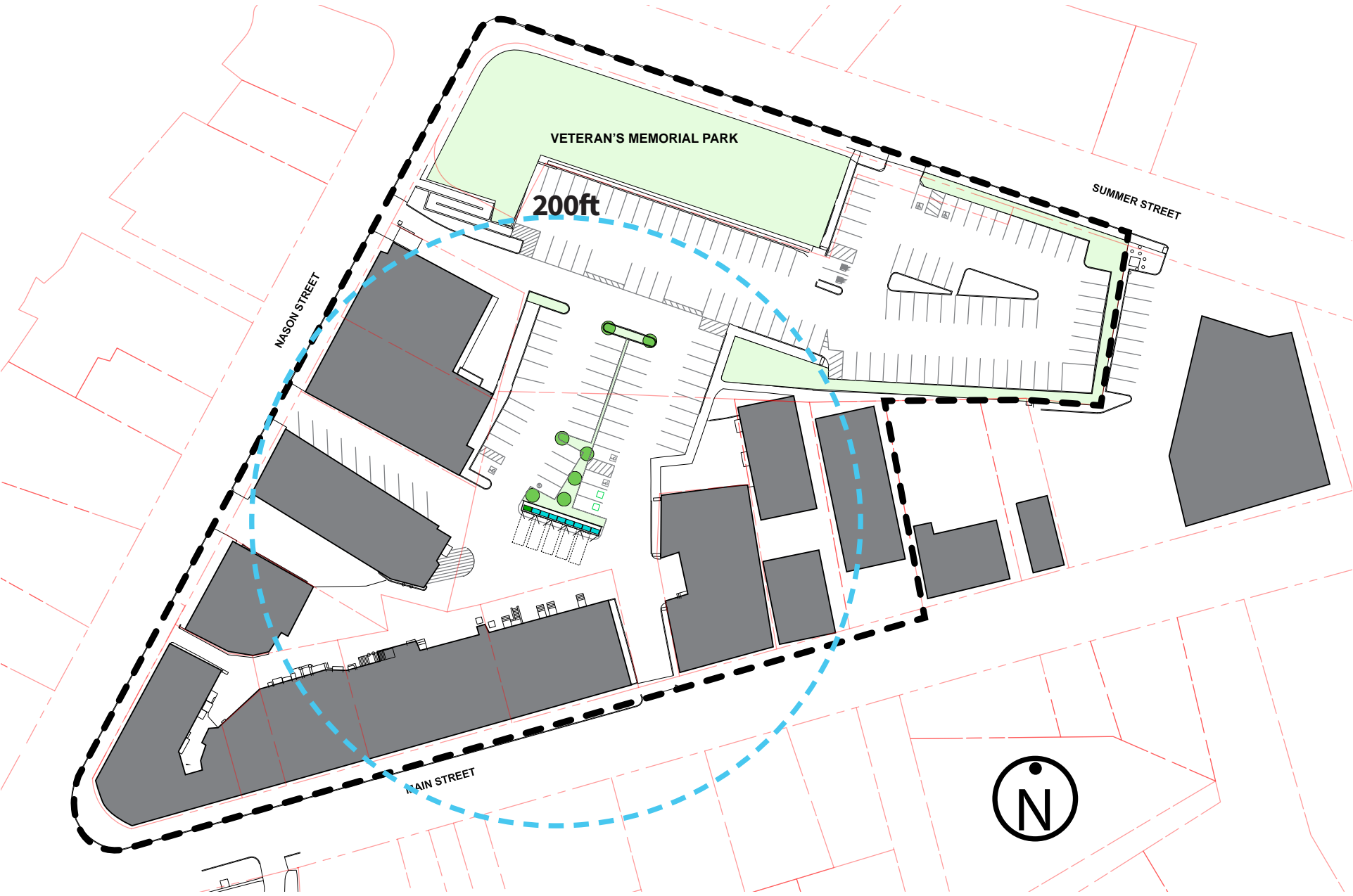


# The Green Corner

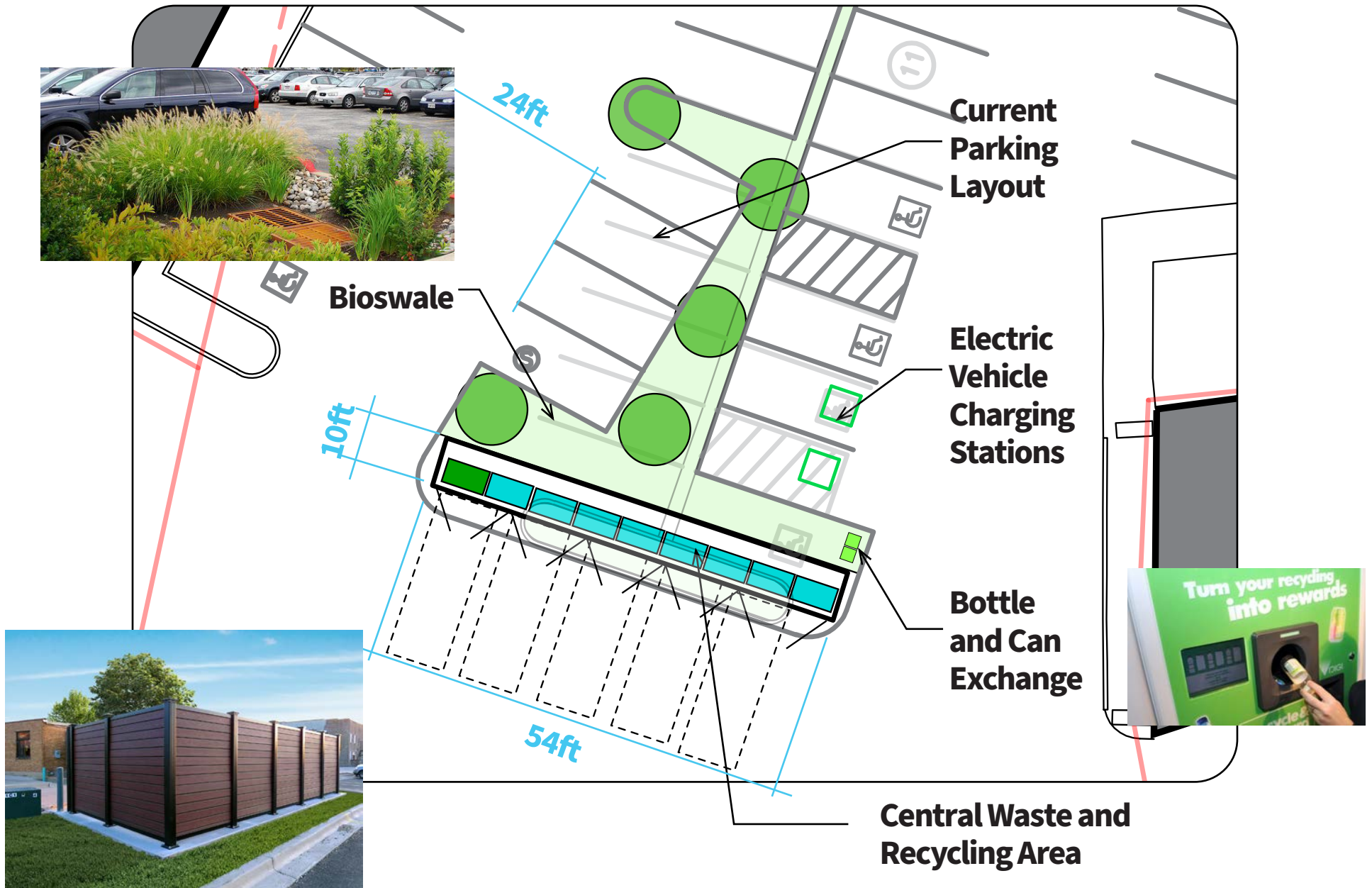




# Proposed Layout



# THE GREEN CORNER







# Naylor Court 2021



# Community Thoughts

The planning team tested two scenarios (summarized on page 18) in an online survey that was open for much of December 2020. The survey received 98 responses.

Of the responses, 49 people, or 51.04% preferred the Green Corner recommended by this plan (Scenario 2 in the survey). Scenario 1 gained the votes of 33 respondents, or 34.38%. Scenario 1 would have required all the businesses in Naylor Court to use the same dumpster and contract with the same waste removal company. Of the remaining 16 respondents, two did not answer the question, three preferred that Naylor Court remain as is and 11 did not like either scenario.

The respondents were divided by their origin: five were business owners in Maynard, but not in Naylor Court; only three business owners in Naylor Court responded. Maynard residents were 87 of the respondents and two were frequent visitors to Maynard. One person skipped this question.

Of the eight business owners, one wanted Naylor Court to remain as is; one did not like either scenario, three preferred Scenario 1 and three preferred Scenario 2. Two of the three who preferred Scenario 1 were business owners in Naylor Court.

The planning team asked whether respondents felt that implementing either scenario would help improve Naylor Court. Of the 96 respondents (two skipped the question), 67 said yes, 8 said no, and 21 were unsure.

Of the eight business owners, one was unsure, four thought the improvements would help (one of these was a business owner in Naylor Court), and three thought the improvements would not help (two of these were business owners in Naylor Court).

The three businesses from Naylor Court were evenly split on the last question, which was only open to business owners from Naylor Court. One answered “I love this project and I’m happy with the scenario I chose;” one answered “I love the idea of this project as long as it does not incur increased costs to my business;” and the final responded “I don’t agree with this project because I think it is unnecessary.”

The planning team asked two open-ended questions; the results are summarized on the next few pages.

## Further Outreach

- **98 people responded to this survey, which is a good response.**
- **However, only three businesses in Naylor Court responded, and their responses were mixed. This indicates that more outreach should be done to discuss the options directly with the businesses who would be affected if this plan moves forward.**
- **Input from residents was also mixed in terms of support for this specific project; in general, people were favorable but had more questions.**
- **As with any planning project, responses included ideas beyond the scope of this project. All responses were provided to the Town and are also shown here, grouped by who responded and whether the response was specific to the scenarios tested.**

As presented in the December survey, both scenarios would include recycling and options for composting and collection of waste oil for biofuel. **The key difference is the centralized location and management system in Scenario 1 vs. the centralized location but open management in Scenario 2.**

### Both Scenarios

- Single location for all dumpsters and other containers (trash and recycling).
- Change in parking layout; loss of three spaces in both scenarios to allow for the new trees (green circles) and the deeper landscaping.

### Scenario 1

- One operator; one main dumpster.
- All businesses must contract with the single operator as their current contracts expire.
- Businesses charged by their use of the dumpster (by cubic yard).

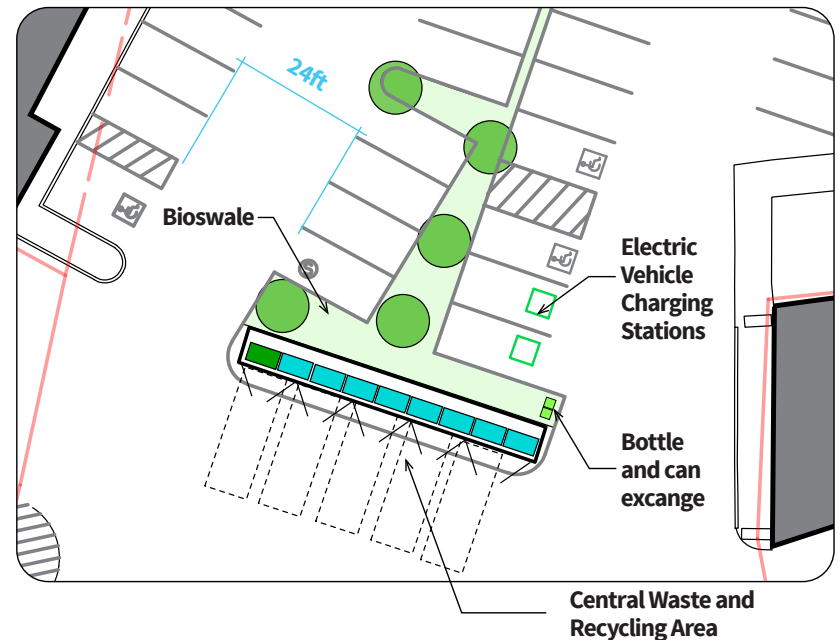
### Scenario 2

- Multiple operators, multiple dumpsters (no change from present).
- Businesses can keep their current contracts.

## Scenario 1



## Scenario 2





## Responses from Business Owners

### What other recommendations do you have for the planning team for the Naylor Court area?

- More green space and outdoor seating.
- 2 smaller, less visible, locations.
- Many business owners park adjacent to their businesses. If these spaces are used for some other function, the business owners' and employees' parking should be accommodated elsewhere.
- If a centralized location is what works, then the plan must include lighting and a clear safe path for staff and business owners to utilized the refuse area. Currently the basin area to employee entries of businesses is routinely icy and dark.
- Business owners that arent near where the dumpsters will be now located may have a long walk to carry their trash, no ideal for winter for business owners.

### Is there something you'd like to know that hasn't been addressed in this survey?

- Parking.

## Responses from Residents and Visitors

### What other recommendations do you have for the planning team for the Naylor Court area?

#### *Related to the scenarios presented*

- I feel unqualified to speak to the way maynard businesses will pay for refuse collection, ie individually or collectively. That seems like it should be the business owners' decision. But I love the swale and public recycling and EV charging design. I could not tell if design 2 also included additional parking spaces? The information provided for each design option wasn't entirely clear to me. It seems like the high fencing of business refuse will interfere with the placemaking/community welcoming aspects of the space...
- More green space and seating areas, benches. A dedicated area for open table pickups. Clean up and plant the rocky area next to sugar snap... it looks terrible in the summer. Trees please.
- Trash pickup should be at least twice a week. Food trash stinks in warm weather! I wouldn't eat anywhere near those central dumpsters.
- I'm a bit confused by it but I think improving the look without increasing the costs for the tenants is number 1 priority.
- Public art on scenario 2 fencing, along with art on the walls of some of the building/ walls.
- Centralized recycling/ not single stream that residents can access would be amazing! Definitely including compost for the businesses to use.
- Is there something less visible, not in the middle of the parking lot? It doesn't seem like great town branding to have all local trash in the middle of the lot, disguised or not.
- Use of charging stations should be paid for by the vehicle owners using them. Charging stations should not occupy spaces at the center if Naylor Court. The locations shown in proposal #2 would be better for handi-capped parking.
- I would like to understand why there are electric charging stations. Why is the town giving away free fuel? Can I drive up to the DPW and get a free diesel fill up for my truck?
- Make the plans/scenarios less wordy and clearer to review or understand, if you really want resident input.
- I think the overall idea is excellent...generate more space in Naylor Ct. for outdoor dining, etc. It feels like either of these two scenarios can help us get there. As a May-

nard resident I would hope the Naylor Ct. business tenants would have a lot of input into which scenario is chosen, it will impact them the most.

- Let's add some trees and other greenery.
- If the trash and recycling is going to be consolidated in one area, the parking lot itself should be improved with walkways and landscaping to make it more appealing and enticing for foot traffic. There needs to be a plan to account for any lost parking as parking downtown is limited.
- I particularly like the recycling options!
- Build and then prohibit the renewal of current contracts

Some were focused on non-business trash:

- Try placing temporary barrels for recycling of bottles, plastic and paper and see how well folks will comply. I recall that it didn't work too well years ago, but perhaps people have changed.
- Would like to see in general options for residents to be able to drop off recycling and other items to be properly disposed of than what the town offers today while not being confined to a rigid schedule. Ex bio fuel, compost etc!

### *Other thoughts*

- Bocce or a pickle ball court. A purposeful gathering space.
- More green space. Change parking/driving to make it more walkable and safe.
- More opportunities for green space. I love the idea of it being more of a destination with events, dining. We have no real common in Maynard and the green space we do have downtown is a bit run down.
- Bring back the parking garage.
- Cameras put out back
- Would like to see businesses provide a rear entrance from Naylor Court.
- There is so much potential at Naylor Court to be a central gathering point and a greener gathering point. Veteran's Park is nice, but highly limited in size. It feels like a jaunt, though it ain't, from the central downtown district. The wall of Naylor Court is an obstacle and limitation. With the density of restaurants and bars downtown, it would be nice to have a central park downtown for bigger concerts and organized and unorganized social gatherings. People love eating outside along Main Street, it seemed. It would be nice to have more outdoor gathering downtown. With some businesses going out down town, maybe more parking can be created elsewhere and Naylor turned into a proper park with large specimen trees, grassy open areas,

benches, tables for eating and gathering, etc. That would be tremendous.

- In general, the rear entrances of the Main Street businesses could do with a bit of a face-lift to make the area more attractive. Also, new paving and sidewalks would greatly help in this respect.
- Please work and help all the businesses. It will benefit everyone.
- The area is an eyesore, it's good the space is being looked at. Perhaps some wall art?
- Making the area more inviting helps everyone. A few trees would help as well as seasonal plants would be very appealing. Could you resurface the parking area? Just a thought. Clean & attractive. Thank you.
- We can not eliminate any parking. That being said, if we can do something to make it more attractive that would be great. Plantings, general cleanup. Maybe encouraging some property improvements.
- Get rid of the parking meters. More bike racks.
- Creating more open space and or plaza
- Get rid of the weeds and repave the lot. more trees.
- Overall beautification & safety should be improved.
- Make it more people/pedestrian-friendly, add more green space throughout
- Remove all parking meters

## Is there something you'd like to know that hasn't been addressed in this survey?

### *Related to the scenarios presented*

- Is the town going to assist the business owners in making the storefronts (or backs) more attractive?
- Why have you taken prime parking spaces for electric vehicle parking/charging? We already have two places in the Summer St. end.
- What do all the green circles represent in your two scenarios? It's very hard to conceptualize anything without knowing what they are or where the current businesses are. Labeling some of the buildings would be helpful. Also, even though I lived here for 23 1/2 years, I had no idea what "the basin" is. Reading the comments to the post was really confusing to me at first bc people are suggesting splash parks, green spaces, bandstands, and gazebos. Then I put on my smarty pants, and I got it.
- Costs for the tenants.
- It seems to me that the overriding decision is choosing to keep or change waste company/ companies. This has to be decided by the downtown businesses. Have they shown a preference?
- Would these very middle-of-the-lot public-facing refuse disposal stations be open to the public?
- It's a hot concrete jungle back there in the summer...can we add awnings/ trees/ a small community garden with the soil from the compost? Community solar panels on the top of the Green Corner?
- What made this location the final choice? Are there any other places with Naylor Court that were possibilities?
- Will the space opened up be use for parking or for other purposes? If so, what are those purposes contemplated?
- What do the actual business owners want? I would likely support the business' choices as they are the ones dealing with it daily.
- Would there be a way to make the refuse collections located somewhere else?
- I hope business owner comment is weighed carefully.
- 1. Does this include any relevant redesign conclusions from the TAP workshopping of 2018? 2. Are we taking every opportunity in any redesigns of the area to add water infiltration and vegetative water uptake? 3. Are we taking every opportunity to add deep healthy soil and shade tree planting to prepare for the increasing heat impact on this almost completely paved area? If we want it to be a welcoming place for community, that is a crucial problem to solve: tree planting to abate summer parking-lot heat! 4. Dog poop station? 5. Welcome to Maynard Community board, map, business alliance brochures, rail-trail info brochures, open space maps, etc.? 6. Bicycle parking? 7. Wheel chair access/safe-

ty? 8. Historic images of the old basin when it was a green, maybe part of a community board? 9. Townwide parking map for visitors?

### *Other thoughts*

- Someplace Maynard needs to have a splash pad for people to cool off . We have no pond and no splash pad. Some people may be fortunate enough to have private pools or a beach membership in another town but for many cooler off in the summer is nearly impossible. Having such a feature perhaps even downtown with outdoor vendors and eateries would support our local residents and bring in residents from other towns that will spend money downtown.
- Sure. Maybe spell out in plain English some of the town's thoughts. Abbreviating certain words and expecting the average citizen to know what these mean is a strong sign of being disconnected with the (average citizen).
- When the fire station is vacated, turn that lot into green space!!!!
- Is there a way to improve business access through naylor court?
- Traffic study.





Massachusetts Downtown Initiative

