



PLANNING BOARD STAFF REPORT

To: Auburn Planning Board

From: Douglas M. Greene; AICP, RLA
Urban Development Specialist

Re: Zoning Map Amendment for 186 Main Street

Date: January 9, 2018

I. PROPOSAL –, The Auburn Planning Board initiated a Zoning Map Amendment (zone change) at their November 14, 2017 meeting for the property located at 186 Main Street (PID # 231-020). This property is owned by the City of Auburn and is currently zoned Traditional Downtown Neighborhood (T-4.2) and is being proposed to be rezoned to Downtown Traditional Center (T-5.1).

BACKGROUND and STAFF COMMENTS – This property was been selected by the City as a valuable downtown redevelopment site and an RFP was released in the summer seeking qualified development firms to develop the site. To date, no proposal has been accepted by the City but during the Staff review period it was determined that the existing zoning of T-4.2 is not the appropriate zoning for a more urban type redevelopment of 186 Main Street. The Staff feels that this site is more suitable for Downtown Traditional Center (T-5.1) for the following reasons:

- The T-5.1 zoning will allow for a denser, more urban type development than the Traditional Downtown Neighborhood (T-4.2) zoning.
- The T-5.1 zoning is more compatible to the adjacent properties at 178 Main Street and other nearby properties further to the north on Main Street.

THE SITE – The vacant property is approximately .13 ac. (5,662 s.f.) in size and is the site of previous multi unit structure. There is a significant grade difference from the Main Street frontage to the rear of the lot closer to the Riverwalk and Androscoggin River. A portion of the property is located in the 100 year flood plain but a future development could use the lower area for parking both outside of and underneath a new structure.

II. DEPARTMENT REVIEW - The proposed zoned change was reviewed at the October 18, 2017 Plan Review Committee.

- a. Police - No Comments

- b. Auburn Water and Sewer - No Comments
- c. Fire Department - No Comments
- d. Engineering – No Comments
- e. Public Services – No Comments
- f. Economic and Community Development – Staff presented the zone change request to the Plan Review Committee.

III. PLANNING BOARD ACTION- The Planning Board is being asked to use Chapter 60-1445, *Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance Map* and the *2010 Comprehensive Plan* during its review. The Planning Board should reference and make findings that the proposed zone change is in compliance with: A.) The Comprehensive Plan Policies, Goals and Objectives and B.) The Future Land Use Map designations and descriptions.

A. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan has the following sections described in the Chapter 1, *Goals, Policies and Strategies* that support the mixed use that this zone change would create:

From the Executive Summary Land Use *Policies for Commercial/Mixed Use* (pg. ix)

- *Continue to promote development/redevelopment/reuse in intown areas that reinforces the traditional development pattern and increases pedestrian use.*

From Community Development- H.2 Housing (Policies)

Objective H.2.4: (pg. 61)

Encourage investment in higher-density downtown multi-family and mixed-use neighborhoods to develop a balance of rental and ownership options that serve a wide range of households.

- *In other (areas), particularly along the River, there are opportunities for higher-cost apartments and condominiums suitable for young professionals and empty-nesters seeking an urban lifestyle.*

From Economic Development - I.1 Downtown Development (Policies)

Objective I.1.1: (pg. 65)

Attract and retain a wide range of small and medium size businesses to the Auburn and New Auburn downtowns that promote and enhance a vibrant urban environment.

B. Future Land Use Map- The 2010 Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map categorizes this area as a *Nonresidential and Mixed Use Designation* and shows this property to be in the *Main/Elm Corridor Mixed-Use District (MEMUC)* The Comprehensive Plan (pg. 97) further describes this District as follows:

Objective – Encourage the reuse and reinvestment in properties in a manner that maintains and is consistent with the historical development pattern while allowing a wide range of residential and nonresidential uses.



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Allowed Uses – The following general types of uses should be allowed in the Main/Elm Corridor Mixed-Use District:

- residential uses including multifamily housing
- elderly housing
- professional and business offices
- personal and business services
- art and craft studios and galleries
- restaurants (without drive thru service), bakeries, cafes
- small retail stores
- neighborhood/specialty grocery/food stores
- home occupations
- bed and breakfast establishments
- community services and government uses
- recreational facilities and open space

Development Standards – Development within the district, including renovations or expansions of existing buildings, should be required to maintain the established character of the neighborhood, including the relationship of the building to the street and the placement of parking with respect to the building. The intent of the development standards is to allow buildings to be used for a wide range of smaller scale nonresidential uses, as long as the character of the neighborhood is maintained. The standards should require that new or renovated/expanded buildings be compatible with nearby properties with historical significance.

Residential development and redevelopment should be allowed at a density of up to 12-18 units per acre. The reuse/reconfiguration of the space within existing buildings for residential purposes should be allowed without consideration of the density/lot size requirements, provided that the building will be renovated, be compatible with the neighborhood, and will meet the City's requirements for residential units including the provision of appropriate parking and green space. Buildings with both residential and nonresidential uses should be allowed to consider shared parking to meet their parking requirements.

IV. STAFF COMMENTS-

Context- The proposed zone change, while not officially part of "Downtown Auburn", and designated as the *Main/Elm Corridor Mixed-Use District* is adjacent, similar in character and visual appearance for properties to the north that are zoned Traditional Downtown Center (T-5.1). Re-zoning this property to Traditional Downtown Center (T-5.1) would

allow the redevelopment of the property to benefit from this more urban style zone of the Form Based Code by allowing:

- Taller buildings and more building area and coverage.
- Smaller set-backs.
- Reduced parking requirements.
- Greater flexibility how you can use your property.
- New construction will have to follow the Form Based Code creating a predictable built environment that protects investment.

The Traditional Downtown Center (T-5.1) zoning for the proposed property will be a positive incentive for redevelopment by taking advantage of the increased density and building size that the Form Based Code allows.

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Staff recommends the Planning Board forward a motion of **APPROVAL** to the City Council of the Zoning Map Amendment for the property at 186 Main Street (PID # 231-020) from Traditional Downtown Neighborhood (T-4.2) to Traditional Downtown Center (T 5.1).

This recommendation is made with the following findings:

1. The zoning request to the Traditional Downtown Center (T-5.1) is in compliance with Chapter 60-1445, *Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance Map*.
2. The proposed zone change is in compliance with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan's policies, goals, and objectives for Housing and Economic Development by meeting the following:
 - a.) **Land Use Policies for Commercial/Mixed Use (From the Executive Summary pg. ix)**
 - Continue to promote development/redevelopment/reuse for intown areas that reinforce the traditional development patterns and increases pedestrian use.
 - b.) **Housing Objective H.2.4 (pg. 61)**
 - Encourage investment in higher-density downtown multi-family and mixed-use neighborhoods to develop a balance of rental and ownership options that serve a wide range of households.
 - In other (areas), particularly along the River, there are opportunities for higher-cost apartments and condominiums suitable for young professionals and empty-nesters seeking an urban lifestyle.
 - c.) **Economic Development Policies - I.1 Downtown Development Objective I.1.1: (pg. 65)**
 - Attract and retain a wide range of small and medium size businesses to the Auburn and New Auburn downtowns that promote and enhance a vibrant urban environment.
3. The proposed zone for the property is in compliance with the Future Land Use Designation of *Main/Elm Corridor Mixed-Use District (MEMUC)* and supports the rezoning the property to Traditional Downtown Center (T-5.1) by allowing future



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redevelopment to be constructed in a manner consistent with the adjacent area's character and visual appearance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas M. Greene".

Douglas M. Greene, A.I.C.P., R.L.A.
Urban Development Specialist

C: File

Attachment 1
Existing Conditions



186 Main Street

Miller

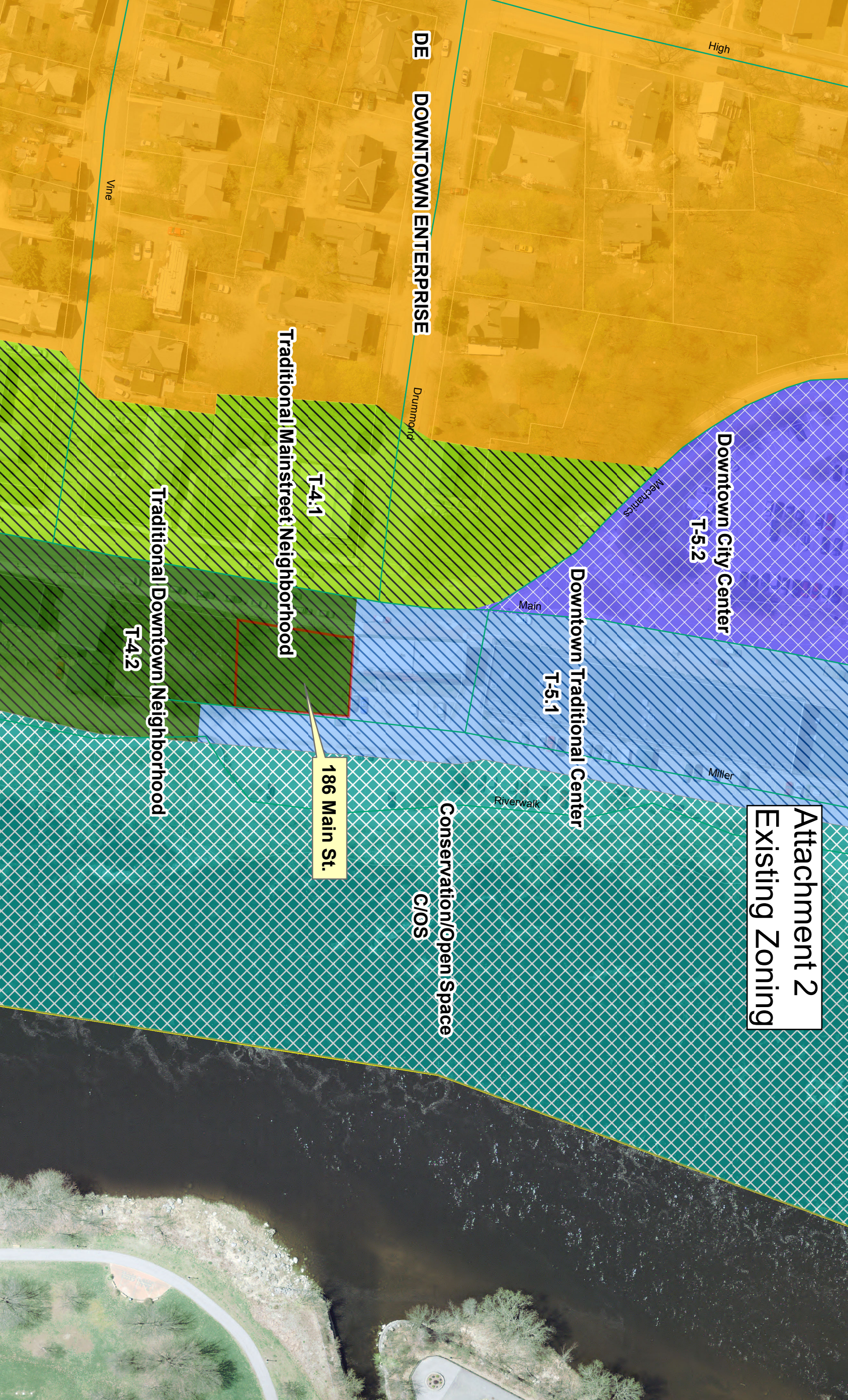
Main

Riverwalk

Vine

Drummond

**Attachment 2
Existing Zoning**



**Downtown City Center
T-5.2**

**Downtown Traditional Center
T-5.1**

DE DOWNTOWN ENTERPRISE

**Traditional Mainstreet Neighborhood
T-4.1**

**Traditional Downtown Neighborhood
T-4.2**

**Conservation/Open Space
C/OS**

186 Main St.

**Attachment 3
Proposed Zoning**

Downtown City Center

T-5.2

Downtown Traditional Center

T-5.1

Conservation/Open Space
C/OS

DE DOWNTOWN ENTERPRISE

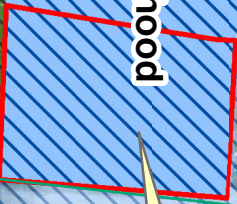
Traditional Mainstreet Neighborhood

T-4.1

Traditional Downtown Neighborhood

T-4.2

Proposed Zoning for
186 Main St.



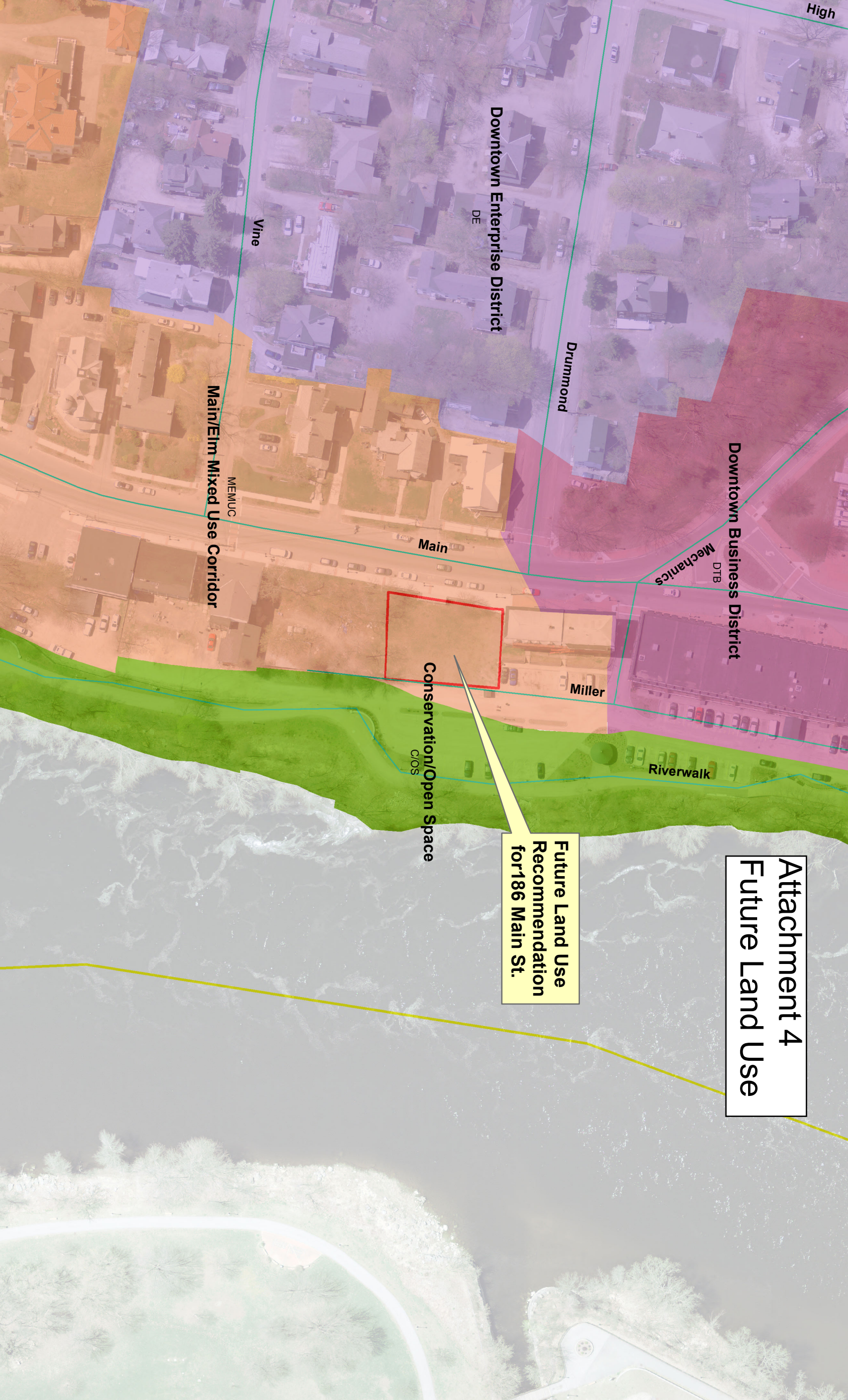
High

Drummond

Vine

Mechanics
Main

Walk



Attachment 4 Future Land Use

Future Land Use
Recommendation
for 186 Main St.

Conservation/Open Space
C/O/S

Miller

Riverwalk

Downtown Business District
DTB

Mechanics

Drummond

Downtown Enterprise District
DE

Main

Main/Elm Mixed Use Corridor
MEMUC

Vine

High