

Downtown Smart Growth Overlay District (40R); benefits for Reading

Why is the Town considering a Smart Growth District?

- Goals of the 2005 Master Plan are to increase affordable housing, allow for mixed-use zoning & downtown revitalization
- The 2006 Comprehensive Housing Plan calls for more housing diversity & affordable housing in the downtown
- A more active downtown and business friendly Town Center was a major theme from the 2008 World Café
- Current zoning does not allow for mixed use or residential in the downtown by right

Downtown Smart Growth Overlay District

- Optional zoning, not mandated
- 27 Communities have adopted the 40R Smart Growth District (shown on back)
- Allows “as-of-right” residential and business use in the same building
- Preserves open space elsewhere in Reading
- Locates development near existing services, transportation and utility infrastructure
- Requires 20% of units to be sold or rented to households earning 80% of area median income.
- 256 units allowed by zoning at full building out
- Incentive payment by State to Town. 256 units = \$350K up front payment upon passage of zoning. Plus \$3,000/unit as permits are issued = \$768,000
- Any project being developed under this district still needs Site Plan Review approval from CPDC & Design Standards would have to be met
- 20 units per acre for Multifamily Housing
- Smart Growth District gives us priority for state grants
- Units built under 40R can count toward 40B requirements, allows Town to target where the units are located, and to control their design. Development process is collaborative as opposed to adversarial, since the developer is following our design guidelines of 40R
- Downtown Smart Growth 256 units, minimum 51 affordable to add to the Town’s Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI).

Design Standards

- The front & rear sides of 4 story buildings will be stepped back at least 5 ft at 2nd or 4th floor
- Side yard step back when 4 story buildings abut residential district
- Ground floor retail uses must have at least 60% glass façade
- Maximum building frontage = 300 ft
- Maximum front setback = 10 ft
- Minimum side/rear setback abutting residential zone = 15 feet
- Maximum building height for residential buildings = 33 ft
- Maximum building height for residential buildings with first floor commercial = 45 feet
- Requires landscaping in parking areas (1 tree per 5 parking stalls)

What is affordable?

- Affordable units are reserved for families or individuals at 80% or less than the area median income
- 80% of the median income for Reading is \$67,400

Properties where Smart Growth likely to be used first:

MF Charles Building Concept Plan:

Retail, banking and outdoor activity first floor, 14 units above, 20% affordable = 3 units

Atlantic Supermarket site concept plan: Oaktree Development proposal includes retail on first floor, 50 units, 20% affordable = 10 units

Municipalities that have adopted Smart Growth Districts:

Community	Year Adopted
Amesbury	2007
Belmont	2008
Boston	2008
Bridgewater	2008
Brockton	2007
Chelsea	2006
Dartmouth	2006
Easton	2008
Grafton	2007
Haverhill	2007
Holyoke	2008
Kingston	2007
Lakeville	2006
Lawrence	2008
Lowell	2008
Lunenburg	2006
Lynnfield	2007
Natick	2008
North Andover	2007
North Reading	2006
Northampton	2008
Norwood	2006
Pittsfield	2008
Plymouth	2007
Reading (the Gateway Smart Growth District at the former Addison Wesley site)	2008
Sharon	2009
Westfield	2008