



MEMO

To: Adam Duchesneau, Boxborough Town Planner
From: Tim Reardon, MAPC Assistant Director of Data Services
RE: Boxborough Buildout and Alternative Futures – Completion Memo
Date: October 6, 2014

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council, under contract to the Town of Boxborough, has conducted a buildout analysis for the town and created alternative scenarios representing possible changes in town policy. The analysis was conducted using CommunityViz, a GIS-based decision-support tool that can be used to model the outcomes and impacts of alternative land use, housing, and environmental policies. In particular, the software features a Buildout module which provides additional tools to calculate development capacity of land area based on current or proposed zoning regulations. Assumptions about the impact of certain regulations or potential zoning or regulatory changes can be input into the model to rapidly generate alternative scenarios. This summary describes the results of the analysis. Technical details related to the modeling are described in a separate report.

The buildout model estimates the development potential—in terms of housing units and commercial square footage—that might feasibly be developed on each parcel in the town, based on current zoning, existing development, parcel attributes, and physical and environmental constraints to development. After receiving feedback in early 2013 from the (former) Town Planner and the planning board, MAPC and the Town Planner conducted parcel-by-parcel review of the model results and adjusted the development capacity estimates to account for site-specific factors that could not be accounted for in the automated model.

The following products have been generated through this analysis:

- A Technical Report describing the data sources, methods, and assumptions of the model
- A data table that includes attributes and estimates for each land parcel in the town, with a separate tab in the file that describes each field in the table.
- A map depicting the estimated additional “as-of-right” housing units that could be developed on each parcel under current zoning
- A map depicting the estimated additional commercial floor area that could be developed on each parcel under current zoning
- A working GIS model of the town’s growth potential

Key Findings of the Analysis

- Residential zoning districts in Boxborough have the “as of right” capacity to accommodate an additional 105 housing units in the Agricultural/Residential zone, 3 units in the Residential 1 zone, and 3 units in Town Center. Charts of development potential by zone and size of subdivision are presented on the following page.
- The town is projected to experience housing demand for approximately 80 new single family homes and 110 – 125 apartments, condominiums, or townhouses between 2010 and 2030. There is capacity to meet demand for single family homes, but not multifamily demand.
- Complete buildout of the residential zones is projected to generate \$950,000 of additional tax revenue (2013 dollars) based on current tax rates.
- Commercial districts have the potential to accommodate an additional 2.3 million square feet of commercial development. Capacity by zone is shown in the chart on a subsequent page.
- Complete buildout of the commercial districts is projected to generate \$3.48 million of additional tax revenue (2013 dollars) based on current tax rates.
- Preliminary MAPC projections indicate that Boxborough’s employment base may grow by 1,150 jobs from 2010 – 2030, which would require approximately 500,000 square feet of new commercial development, one quarter of the development capacity.

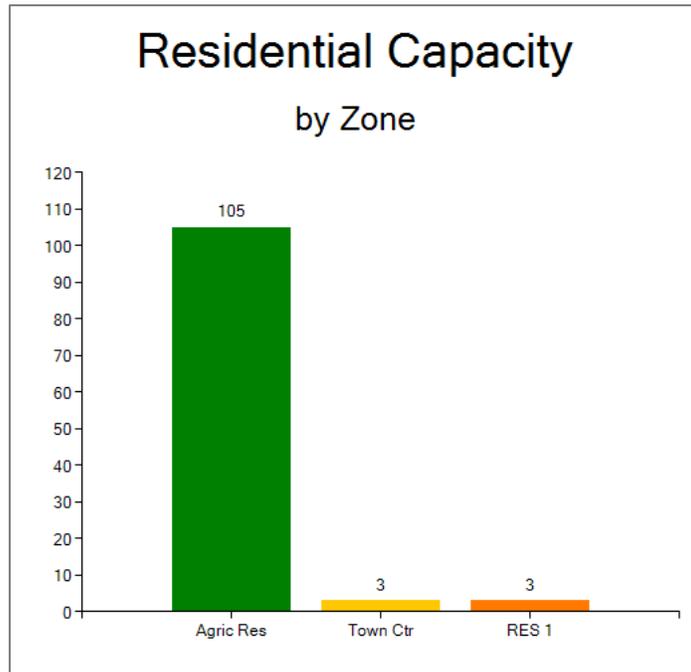


Figure 1: Potential Housing Units by Zone

This chart indicates that the greatest capacity for new housing development is in the AR Zone, which could accommodate almost 120 units.

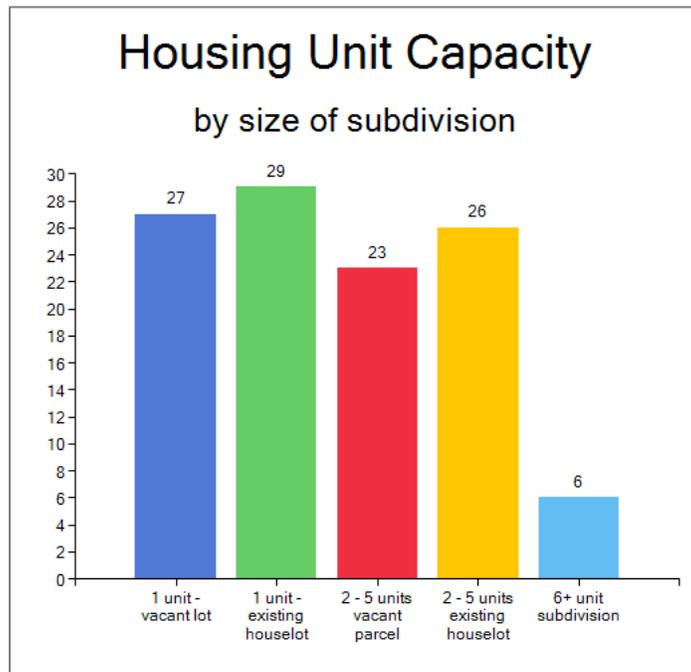


Figure 2: Potential Housing Units by Size of Subdivision

This chart indicates that approximately half of the housing unit capacity is on parcels that could accommodate only one unit.

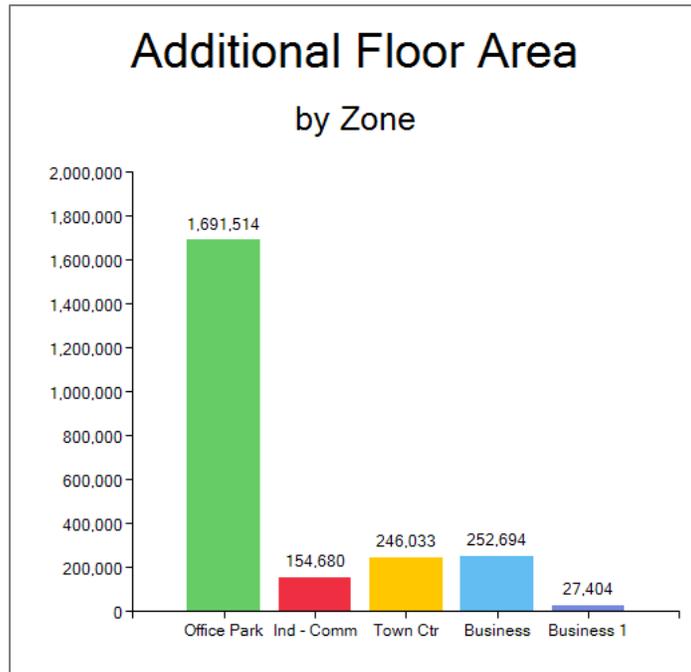


Figure 3: Additional Floor Area by Zone

This chart indicates that the majority of development potential is in the Office Park zone, and zones IC, TC, B and B-1 cumulatively have about a third of the OP zone's capacity.