

Rural/Agricultural Heritage: *Protect, Revitalize, Connect*

Scenario Vision & Support

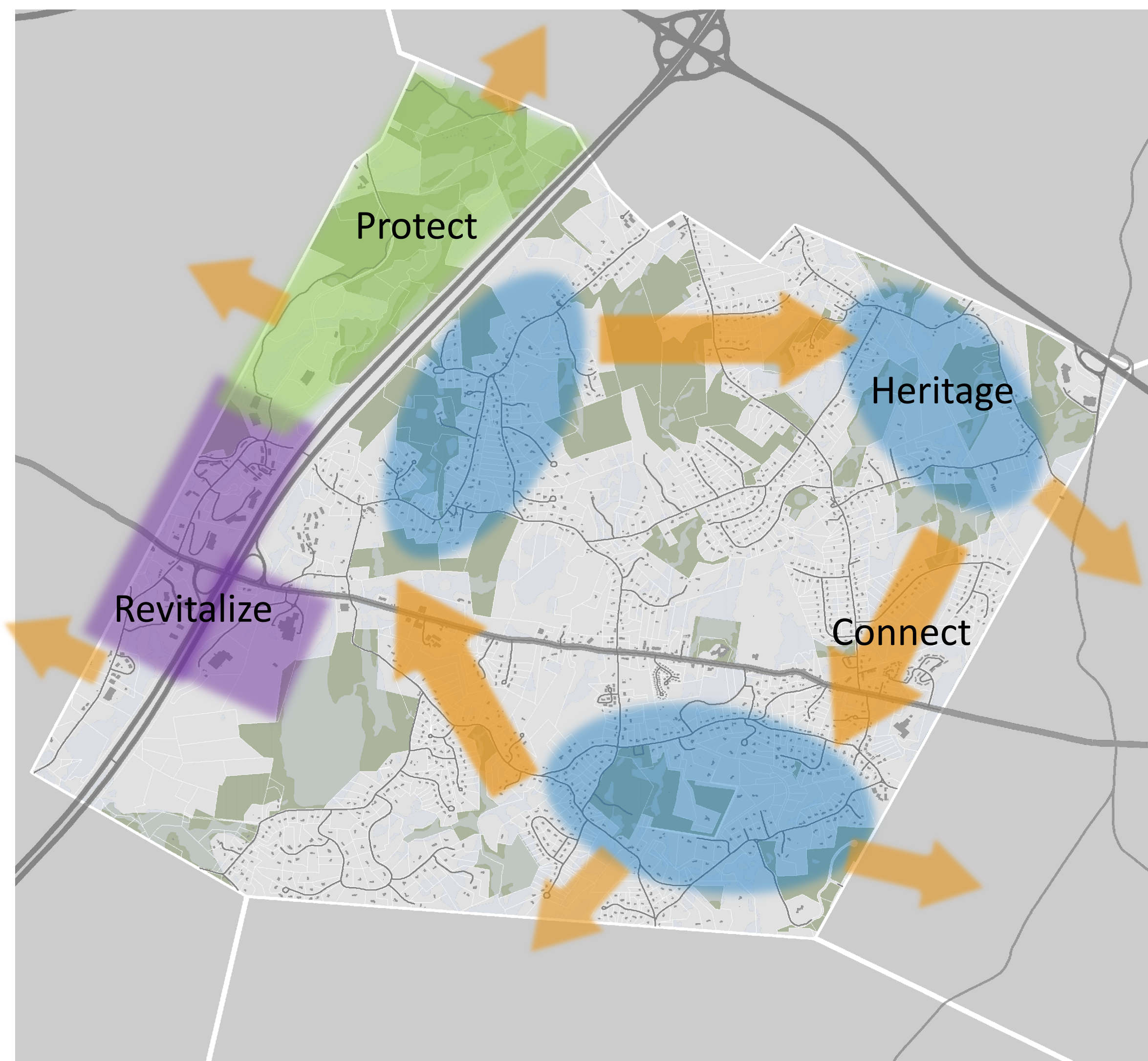
This scenario proposes that Boxborough become a **regionally unique destination** by leveraging its agricultural, historic, and natural heritage and trail network to support **small-scale economic development**. Agriculture and open space related businesses and community spaces emerge through zoning overlays in select locations around town, creating destinations for travel on an **improved, connected, regionally attractive trail network**. Land protection focused in the northwest, along I-495, preserves the high ecological value, limits the need for municipal services in this area, and offers additional **opportunities for education and recreation**. Improving utility capacity and amending zoning where office park infrastructure already exists creates opportunities for new kinds of businesses to set up, including facilities that supports the regional food system.

Meeting Master Plan Goals

- Protect heritage, character, land, water, habitat, agriculture, recreation, trails & wildlife (1.1 + 1.2 + 1.3)
- Concentrate growth in Business park and foster participation in regional agricultural economy (3.1 + 3.2)
- Enhance quality of life services and pursue regional approach to open space and recreation (3.3 + 7.3)

2019 Survey Responses

- #1 most mentioned response: Preservation of rural character
- #2 most desired business: Farm stand
- #3 most mentioned response: Only redevelopment, no new footprint



Creating Destinations with Character

Heritage

Location: throughout town



Intent: Celebrate rural heritage and create destinations that will support small scale economic development

Key Challenge:

- Regulations limit home businesses & agriculture accessory uses

Goals:

- Provide residents with quality of life amenities
- Preserve historic & cultural resources unique to Boxborough
- Create attractive regional destinations



Protect

Location: Beaver Brook



Intent: Protect ecologically valuable lands

Key Challenge:

- Absence of contiguous open space in town

Goals:

- Align land protection efforts with regional vision
- Provide education and recreation for residents and the region
- Protect key aquifers and priority habitat for rare species



Revitalize

Location: Office Park and Industrial Districts



Intent: Revitalize the existing office park and encourage agricultural & cultural opportunities

Key Challenge:

- Tax base threatened by increasing vacancy and lack of diversity

Goals:

- Increase occupancy through relaxed regulations
- Encourage industry diversity by supporting regional agriculture and local agricultural entrepreneurs
- Utilize existing infrastructure through creative reuse



Connect

Location: throughout town



Intent: Create connections to destinations through a regional trail network

Key Challenge:

- Discontinuity in existing network & lack of accessibility

Goals:

- Continuous trail networks
- Access to destinations from trails
- Support diversity of users and enhance accessibility



Implementation Process

Short Term

- Municipal water feasibility study
- Additional accessory use in A/R
- Office Park rezone for additional uses & reduce lot restrictions
- Trail improvement coalition

Medium Term

- Increase conservation spending for trail extension & improvements
- Context-sensitive design guidelines
- Participate in regional conservation efforts
- Regional Agricultural network

Long Term

- Agricultural economic & feasibility study
- Parks & Recreation Department
- Public community spaces