

# ADAPTIVE REUSE AND INFILL DEVELOPMENT



*Adaptive reuse of the old Baystate Hotel and infill development on Strong Avenue, Northampton*

## **What is the objective of this strategy?**

Through Adaptive Reuse and Infill Development, communities can encourage more investment or reinvestment of underutilized buildings and lots in downtown areas and encourage more efficient use of existing infrastructure resources, improve streetscapes in downtown urban core and village areas, further economic development opportunities, and to promote historic preservation.

## **Why should we implement this strategy?**

Adaptive reuse, along with infill development, is seen by many as a key factor in land conservation and reducing the amount of sprawl. For those who prescribe to the smart growth concept, it is more efficient and environmentally responsible to redevelop older buildings

closer to urban cores, where infrastructure such as water, sewer, and roads already exist, rather than build new construction on faraway greenfield sites. In addition, adaptive reuse and infill development can provide opportunities for mixed-use development, a variety of housing options, and encourage economic development in commercial centers.

## **How does Adaptive Reuse / Infill Development work?**

Adaptive reuse is the act of finding a new use for a building. The recycling of buildings has long been an important and effective historic preservation tool. Buildings and neighborhoods with interesting spaces and unusual appearance are particularly attractive to developers and buyers.

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or under-used parcels within existing urban areas that are already largely developed. Often within urban core areas and downtowns, there exists vacant or under utilized lots that do not meet current zoning standards such as frontage and lot area. Through the use of an infill development ordinance/bylaw, these vacant nonconforming lots can be brought back into productive use.

## **DID YOU KNOW...**

In 1997, Builder magazine published a survey of 516 new-home shoppers. While one-third said they preferred life in suburbia, nearly two-thirds objected to the extra driving suburbia typically requires.

Some 84 percent desired proximity to a town center with shops, cafes, and small parks.

*(Source: Northeast Midwest Institute, "Strategies for Successful Infill Development, 2001)*

## EXAMPLES FROM THE PIONEER VALLEY



### **Eastworks, Easthampton**

The redevelopment of the Eastworks building was the first in a series of public and private actions to revitalize the center of Easthampton. Formerly the Stanley Home Products factory, the Eastworks building in Easthampton is a vibrant mixed-use mill redevelopment containing 75 businesses and 32 housing units. Purchased in 1997, the 500,000 square foot complex houses public retail space, a restaurant, an art and photography school, offices for non-profit

organizations and professional businesses, and a branch office for the Registry of Motor Vehicles. This adaptive reuse project has generated 170 new or retained jobs and eventually will provide housing for 46 households. In recognition of their achievements, the City of Easthampton received a 2005 Smart Growth Governor's Award.

[MODEL MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT BYLAW](#)

[MODEL INFILL DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT](#)