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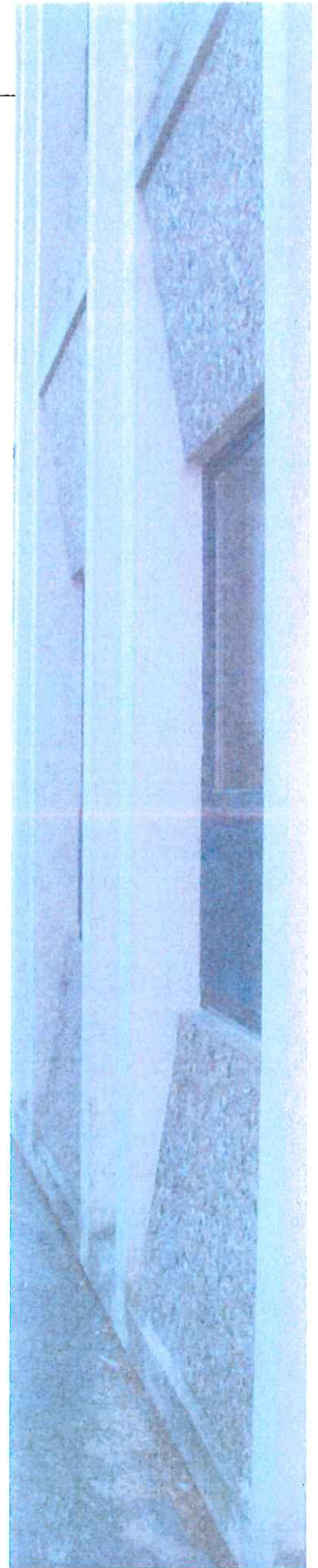
Executive Summary

Recommendations

After reviewing the enrollment projections, existing school environments, existing building conditions, current educational philosophies, and the concerns of the Building Committee and community at large, the following conclusions were established regarding the highest priorities facing the Norwood Public Schools:

Priority 1: The most significant educational facility challenge facing the Norwood Public School system is the lack of an appropriate 21st Century middle school environment. The lack of appropriately sized classrooms and educational support spaces, combined with aged building systems and components, creates a very challenging environment that is grossly insufficient when compared to surrounding Districts. Many proposed options for addressing the long-term needs of all Norwood school facilities are contained within this long-range study and report, and each of them is intended to initiate a thoughtful dialogue regarding the future of Norwood's school facilities. However, every option included herein identifies the middle school as the highest priority for the Town and the first project which should be addressed.

The middle school educational environment has changed dramatically over the past four decades (since Coakley was designed and constructed), as educators and parents began to realize that young adolescents are not simply older elementary school students nor younger high school students, but that there are dramatic changes that occur during this time of life requiring a radically different and unique approach to education. Middle school educators found that the biological event of puberty fundamentally disrupts the relatively smooth development of the elementary school years and has a profound impact upon the cognitive, social, and emotional lives of young teens. In line with this important insight, they saw the need for the provision of special instructional, curricular, and administrative changes in the way that education takes place for kids in early adolescence. Among those changes were the establishment of a mentor relationship between teacher and student, the creation of small communities of learners, and the implementation of a flexible interdisciplinary curriculum that encourages active and personalized learning. Newly created middle schools designed to support these changes quickly proved beneficial to the support of teaching, learning, socialization, and student confidence. These supportive middle school environments include small and large group study and instruction spaces, larger flexible classrooms, smaller academic neighborhoods, project-based learning laboratories, student socialization areas, and many other critical components and spaces. These new middle schools, often referred to as 21st century Middle Schools, differ dramatically from those of several decades ago. People often imagine middle school students sitting in straight rows, listening intently to the teacher and reading from the same book, this is no longer the case. Students work in small groups, perform different learning tasks and learn from different books. They integrate real-world problems and projects into their daily academic learning, and are often collaborating



with other students and presenting their ideas and concepts to their peers. These activities are greatly restricted in older facilities with undersized, inflexible classrooms with no small or large group support spaces and no project labs.

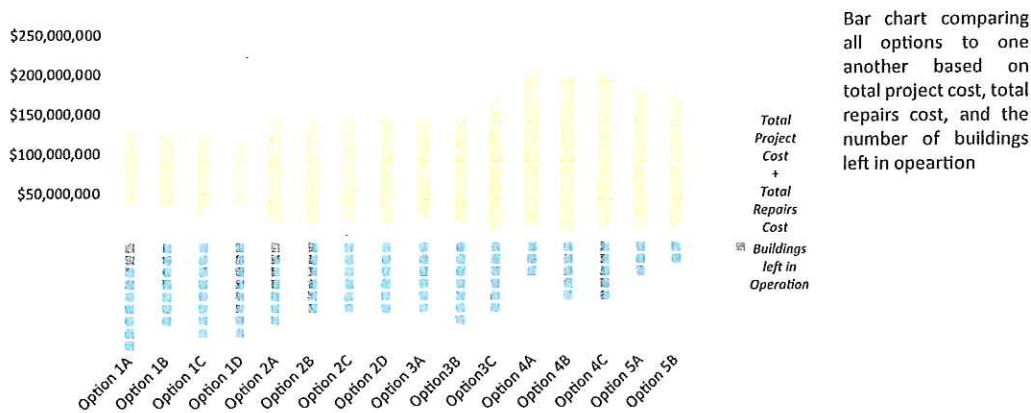
Despite the best efforts by faculty and staff to offer a modern middle school education within the confines of the existing facility, the Coakley Middle School facility does not represent a 21st Century middle school learning environment. It was designed almost 50 years ago and is based on long-outdated principles and concepts. Its educational deficiencies are fully detailed herein, as well as the numerous physical challenges created by its dated building systems and components, which have been maintained well beyond their intended life expectancy. The undersized and overcrowded school relies on six 20-year-old modular classrooms which are somewhat isolated from the remainder of the school and were never intended to be a permanent solution for an appropriate middle school instructional environment. The building is an extremely inefficient all-electric facility that is very expensive to operate and has a poorly insulated building envelope. It relies almost 100% on mechanical ventilation, resulting in poor fresh air ventilation in many areas of the building.

Subsequent to reviewing and discussing all of the options contained within this report, the Norwood Schools Long-Range Planning Committee was unanimous in their desire to recommend that the Town act immediately to address the middle school. The critical role that the middle school environment plays in addressing the specific cognitive, social, and emotional needs of Norwood's students and supporting their teachers is much too important to be ignored, and the inadequacies of the current facility requires immediate action. The Committee also recognized that although all options recommended that the town immediately address the middle school, those options that proposed a 5th through 8th middle school had the added benefit of resolving overcrowding across all of the elementary schools by removing the 5th grade population from the elementary schools. The Committee also reviewed other Districts and found this (5th through 8th grade middle school model) to be a common practice for enhancing 5th grade educational opportunities. Ultimately, the Committee voted to recommend that the Town consider moving forward immediately with the necessary steps to have the middle school project submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for consideration of grant funding. The details of the exact proposed project at the middle school (renovation, expansion, or new school construction) will ultimately be developed through a lengthy and detailed process as prescribed by MSBA guidelines. However, the Committee did express their support for consideration of a 5th through 8th middle school as part of this planning process.

The process of entering the middle school into the MSBA grant program would result in several years of planning and analysis before any construction would occur and would give the Town plenty of time to consider other recommendations contained within this Long-Range Planning Study. This includes future planning options associated with improvements, renovation, or replacement of the elementary schools. There are numerous options contained herein, with all of them fitting within categories 1 through 4, with variations labeled A, B, C, and D in some categories. These options include:

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|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| • Option 1A | • Option 2A | • Option 3A | • Option 4B |
| • Option 1B | • Option 2B | • Option 3B | • Option 4C |
| • Option 1C | • Option 2C | • Option 3C | • Option 5A |
| • Option 1D | • Option 2D | • Option 4A | • Option 5B |

Feasibility Study & Long Range Plan - Norwood Public Schools



As stated previously, all options propose proceeding to address the middle school as the highest priority. The variations in the options can be categorized into three major areas.

1. The amount of school consolidation

Category 1 options involve leaving all of the existing elementary school facilities in their current locations and proposes to address all school needs without closing any existing elementary schools. Category 5 options are on the opposite end of the spectrum, proposing an enormous amount of consolidation and the closing of several elementary schools. The Long-Range Planning Committee ultimately determined that subsequent to addressing the middle school as a priority, the Town should consider some level of consolidation in order to improve educational opportunities at the smaller elementary schools and improve operational efficiency for the Town. The Committee voted to reject extreme consolidation such as that identified in Options 5A and 5B but supported consideration for some consolidation such as that proposed in Options 2 through 4. Discussions regarding the appropriate balance of consolidation can occur over the next few years as the middle school is being addressed.

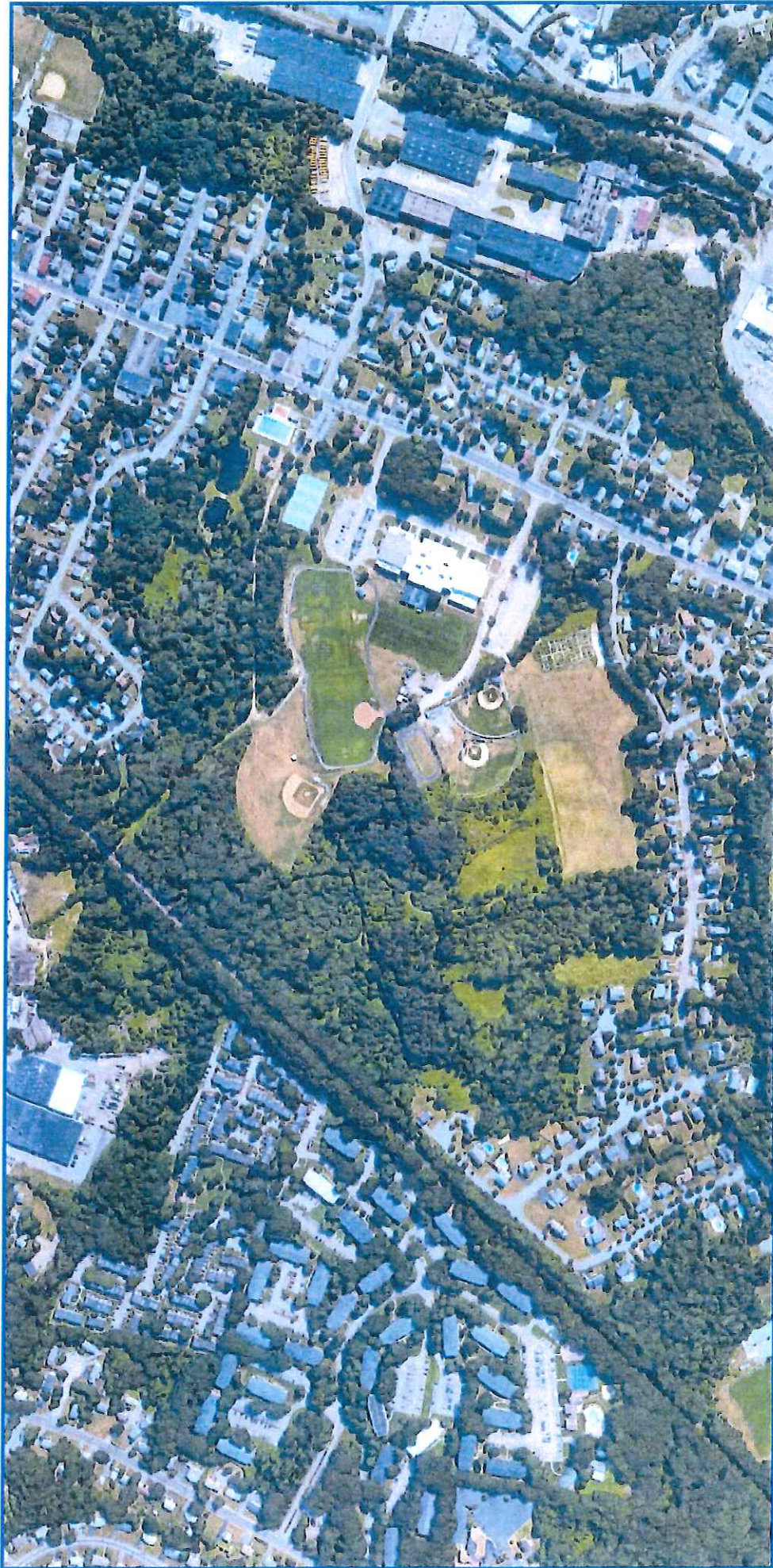
2. The specific schools that might be considered for consolidation in the future

The various options include different consolidation scenarios and therefore the specific schools which are proposed for closing vary within each option.

3. Middle school grade configuration (4th-8th), (5th-8th), or (6th-8th)

Although all options propose proceeding with addressing the middle school as the highest priority, some options propose a 4th-8th grade or a 5th-8th grade middle school over the current 6th-8th grade middle school configuration. After consideration and discussion of all options, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the School Department and the Town at least consider the possibility of a 5th-8th grade middle school. They subsequently voted to favor those options which utilize a 5th-8th grade middle school and simultaneously considered some amount of consolidation. A 5th-8th grade middle school project (either renovation, expansion, or all-new construction) would allow the Town to address the middle school needs while simultaneously providing overcrowding relief at the elementary schools. It would also have the net effect of placing two-thirds of the Norwood students (grades 5 through 12) into new facilities and

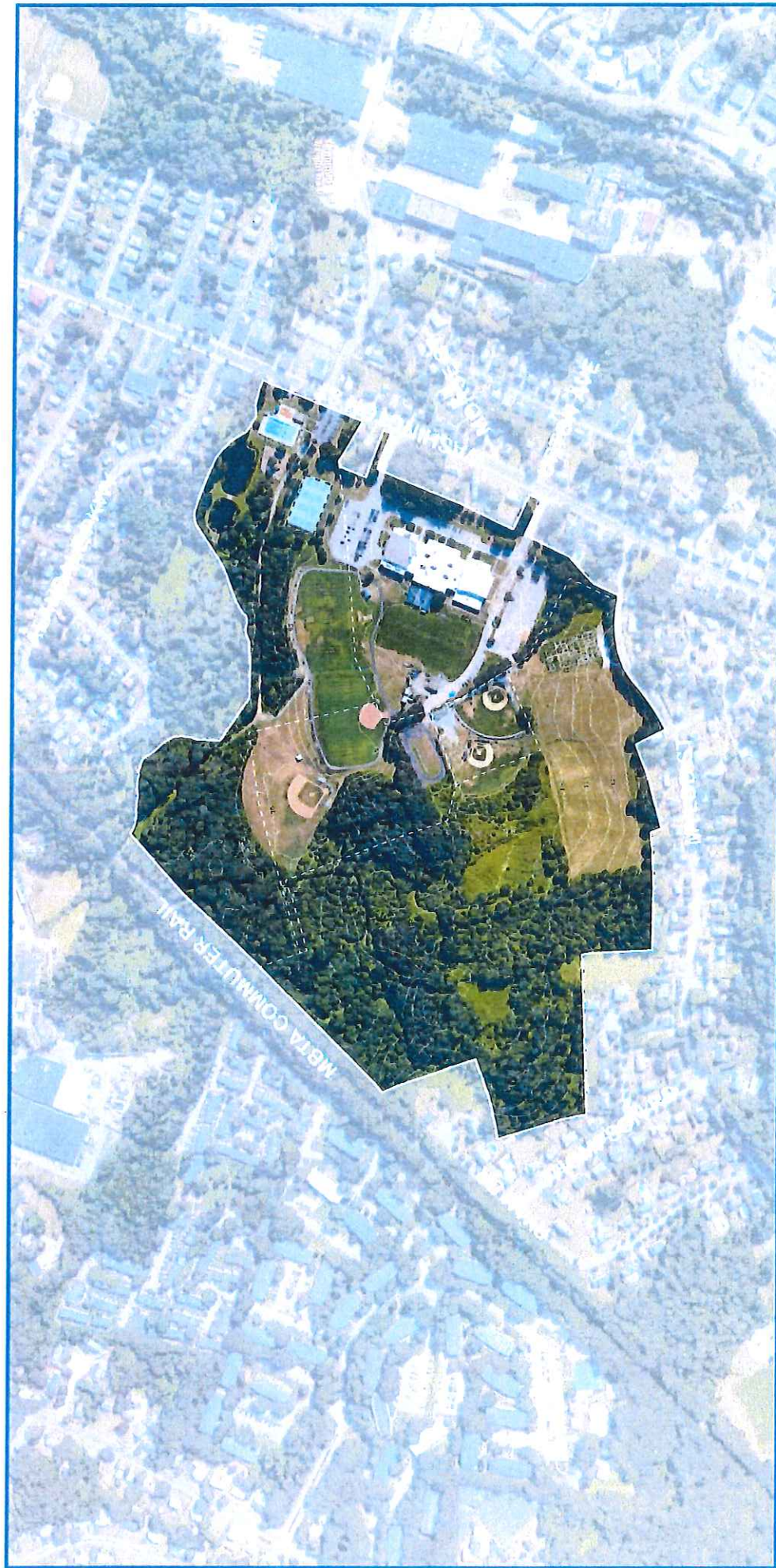
freeing up additional space in the elementary schools, thereby improving programming and educational delivery in grades PK-4. The single 5-8 middle school project could have an impact across all grade levels, PK-8, thereby improving educational opportunities Town-wide.



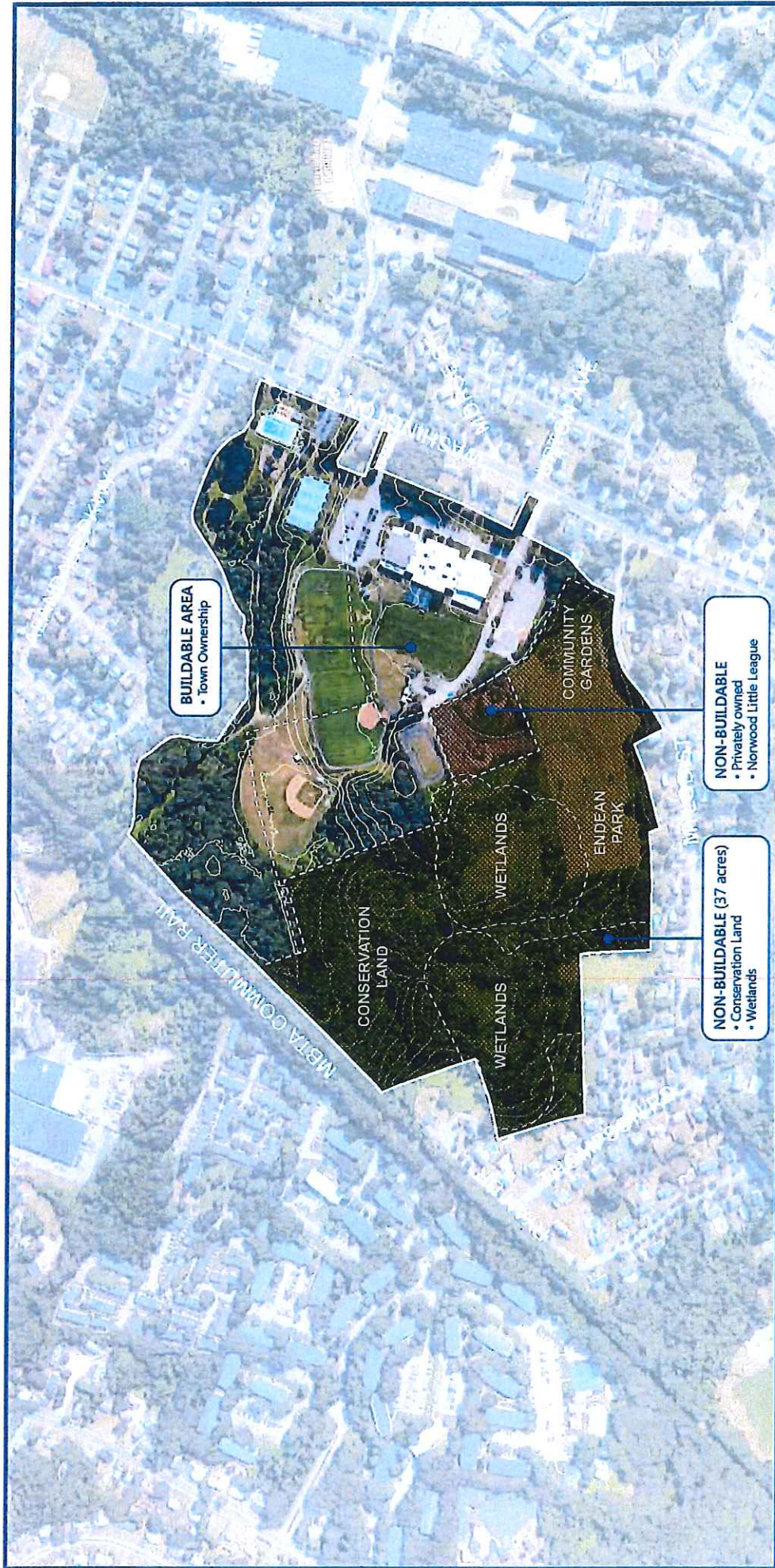
Coakley Middle School Site Analysis

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NORTH
Norwood, MA



Coakley Middle School Existing Conditions



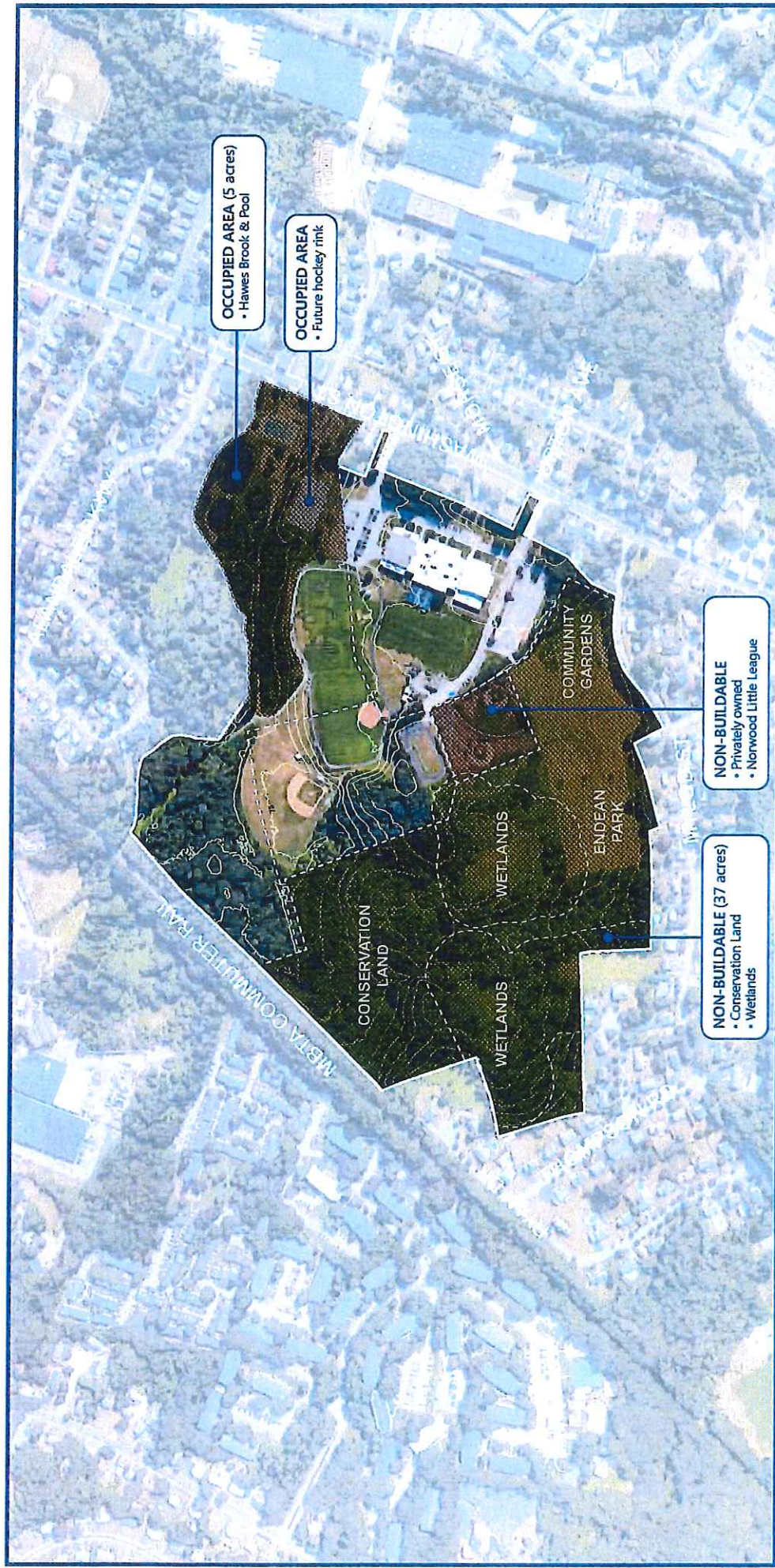
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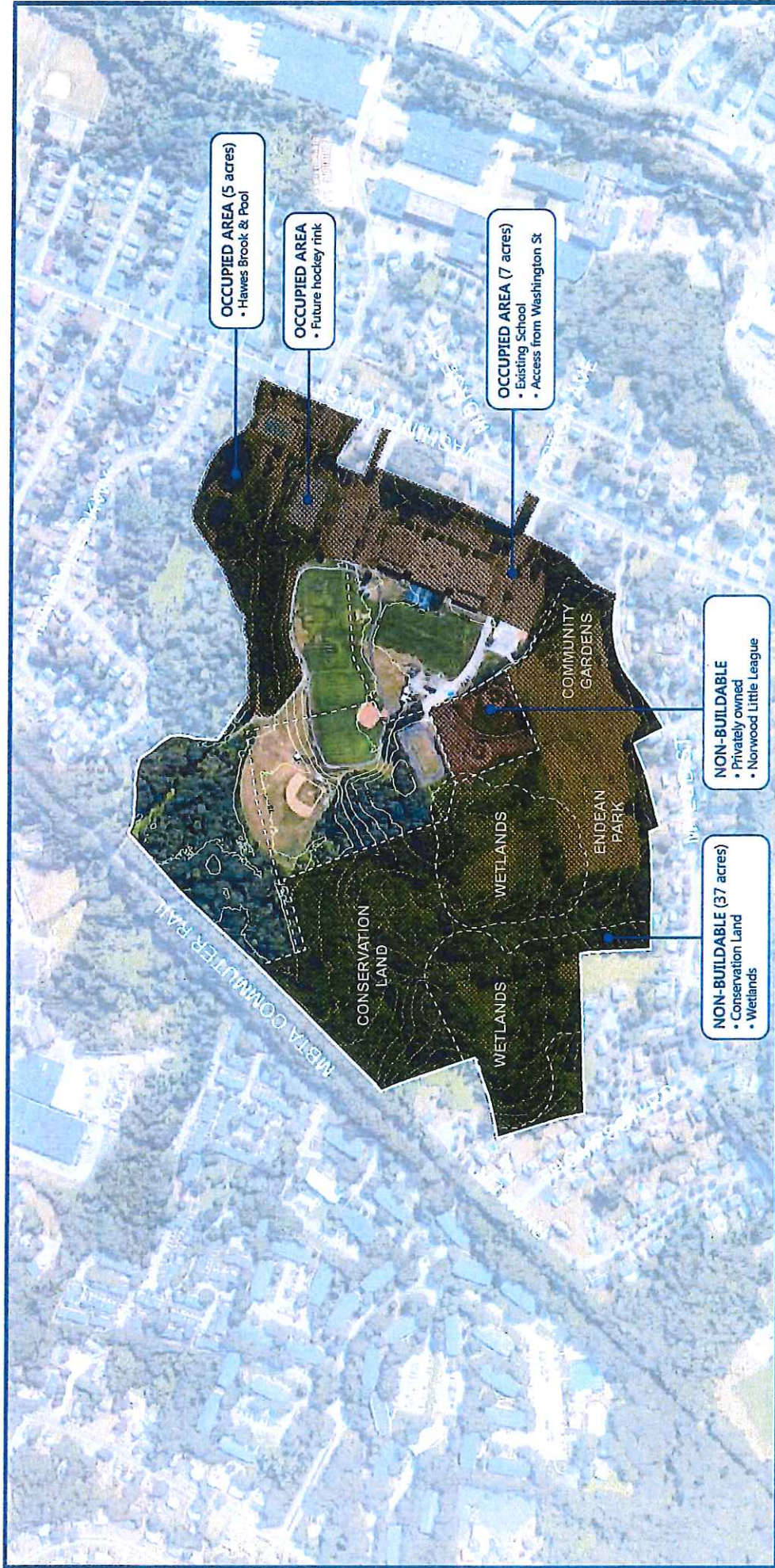
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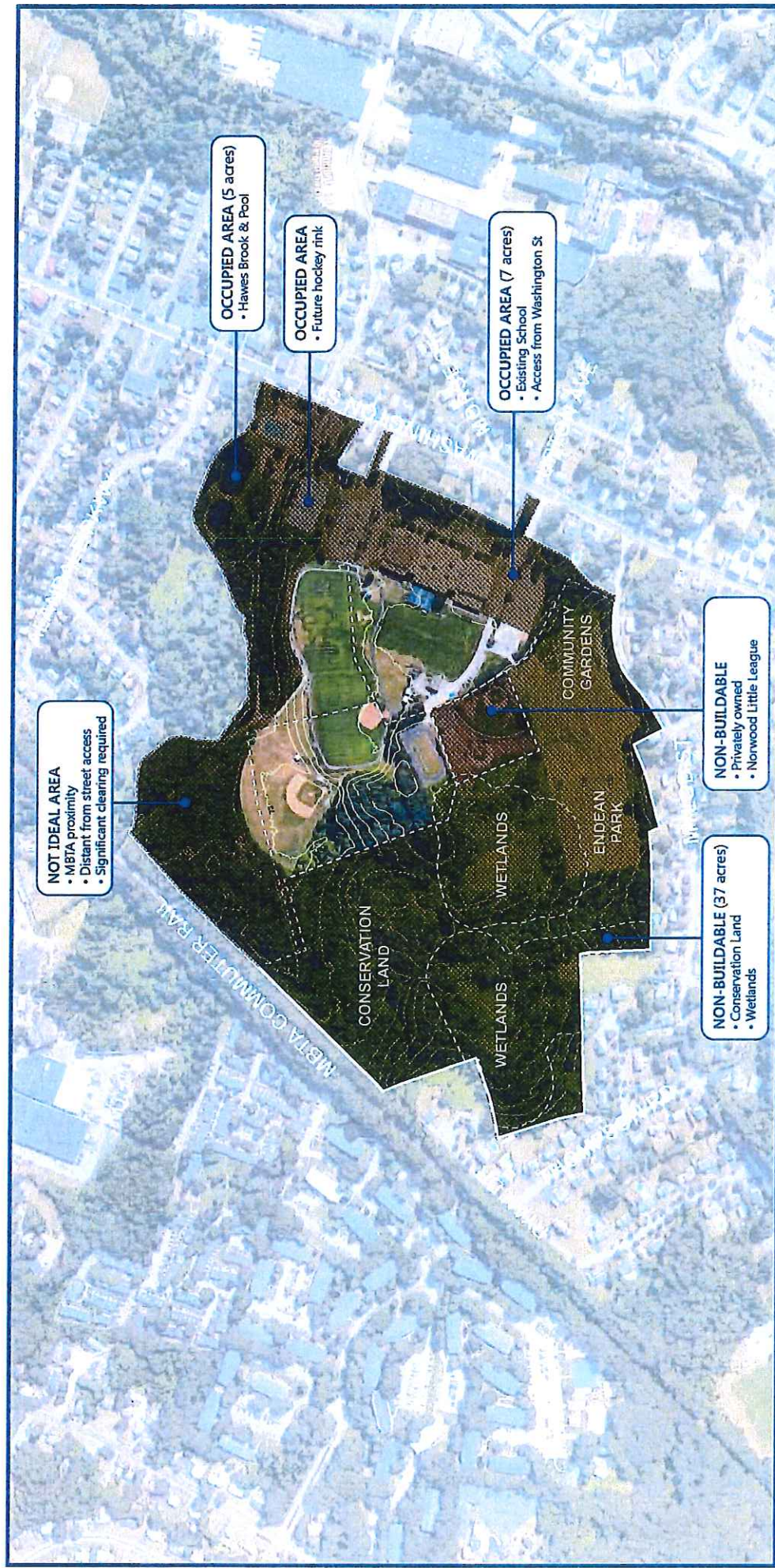
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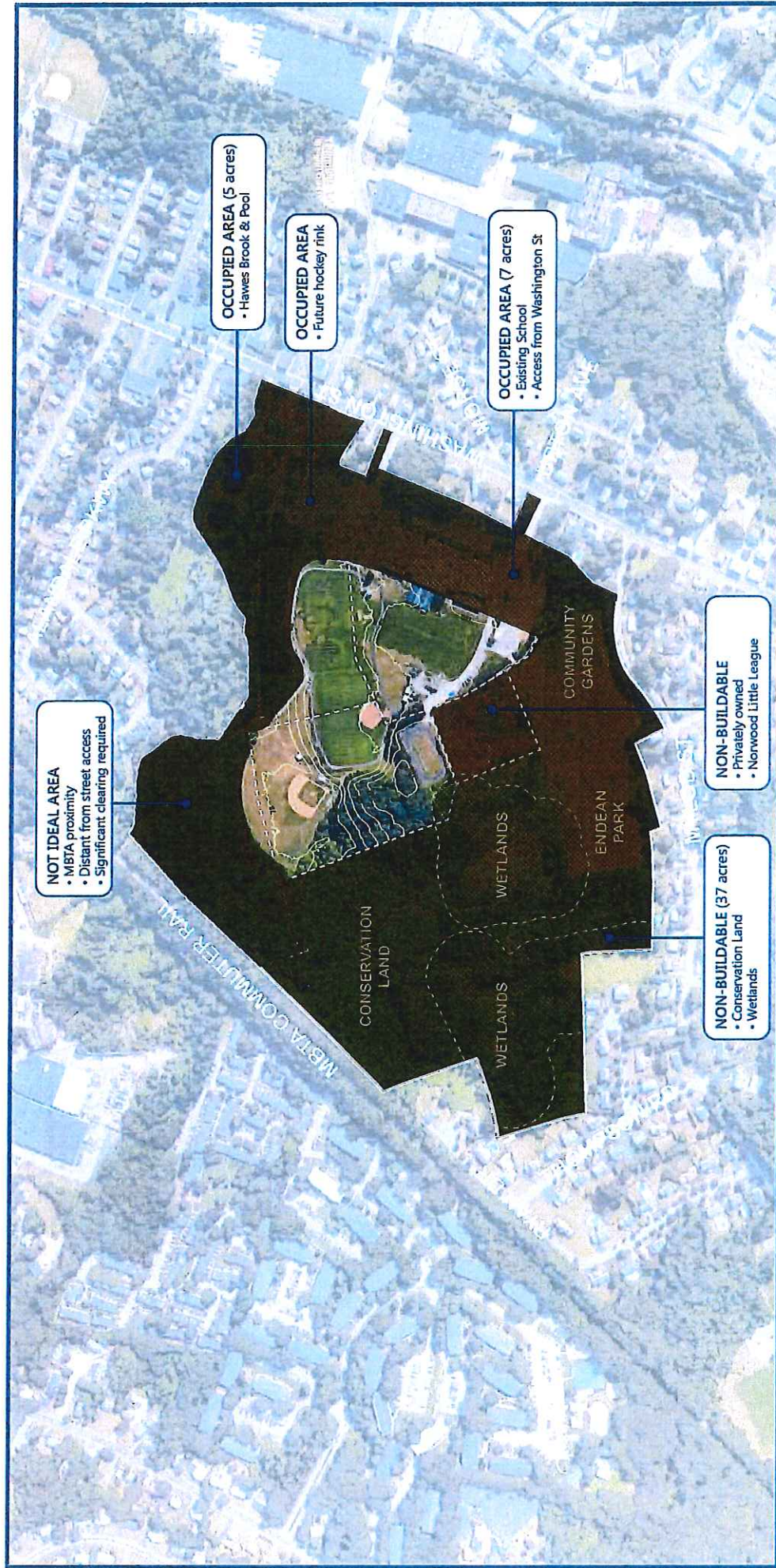
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Coakley Middle School Existing Conditions



Coakley Middle School Proposed Solution

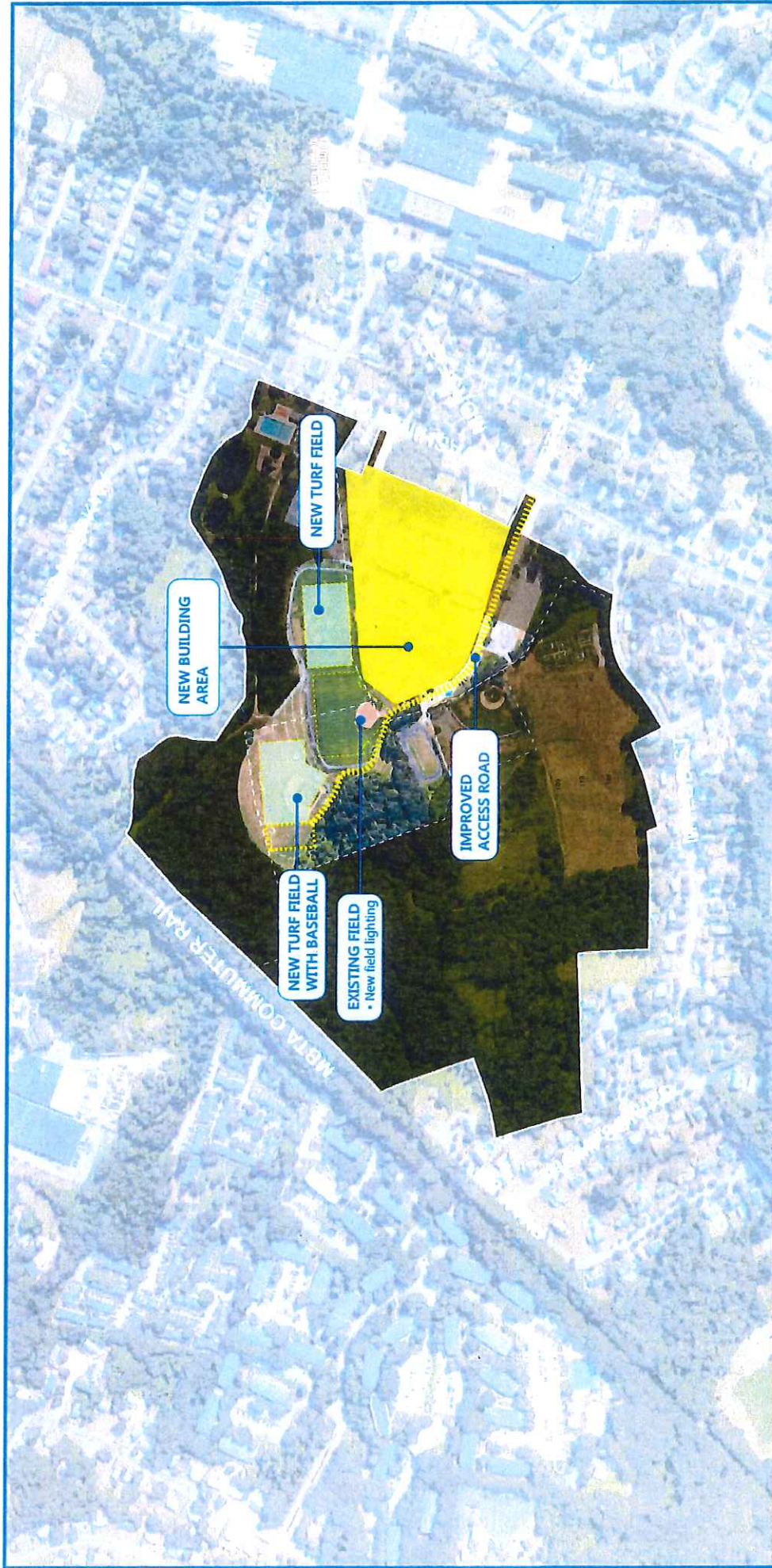




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Coakley Middle School Proposed Solution







Coakley Middle School Proposed Solution

Finalize and submit SOI (Statement of Interest) to MSBA	
Arrange local legislators (and review of SOI)	
Prepare for MSBA senior staff visits	
MSBA invitation to eligibility period	
Eligibility period - Initial Compliance Certification (ICC)	
Eligibility period - Est. Norwood School Building Committee (SBC)	
Eligibility period - Education Profile and Enrollment Projections	
Eligibility period - Maintenance Documents	
Eligibility period - Town Approval / Local Authorization of Funding	
Feasibility and schematic design	
Submission of final schematic design to MSBA	
MSBA board approval of grant funding for total project	
Design development and construction documents	
Construction Commencement	
Construction Completion (Estimated for 2025)	



**CONSTRUCTION
BEGINS
APPROXIMATELY 3-YEAR
CONSTRUCTION PERIOD**