Review: Planning Board's Proposal for 3A

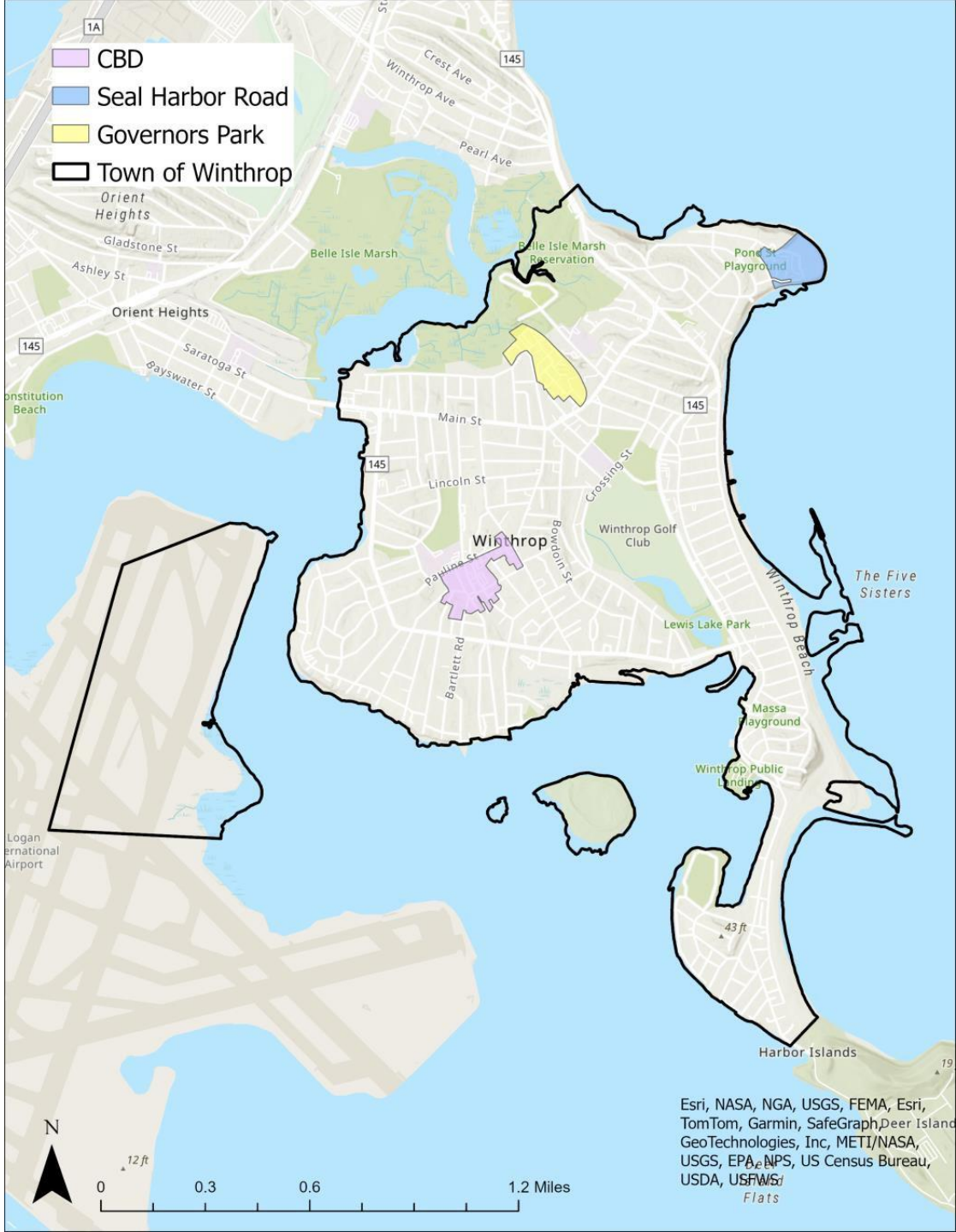
Key Takeaways:

- 3A/ MBTA Communities law requires all communities with access to T, rail, and bus to add zoning to allow for increased density beyond single-family dwellings.
    - Winthrop already meets these density requirements in many areas, and has multifamily buildings, but is not zoned for what exists today
    - Winthrop will be in non-compliance as of July 14, 2025

- 3A in Winthrop requires adding overlay districts to allow for *zoning* for 882 Additional Units
    - Utilizing Existing Zoning in the CBD allows Winthrop to reduce this number to 661

- The Planning Board's Proposal utilizes two overlay districts that are not currently zoned for the existing density
    - No new units can be built under this proposal - units already exist
    - Seal Harbor Road Parcels
        - 394 Existing Units, will be zoned for 333 Units
    - Governor's Park Parcel
        - 393 Existing Units, will be zoned for 336 Units

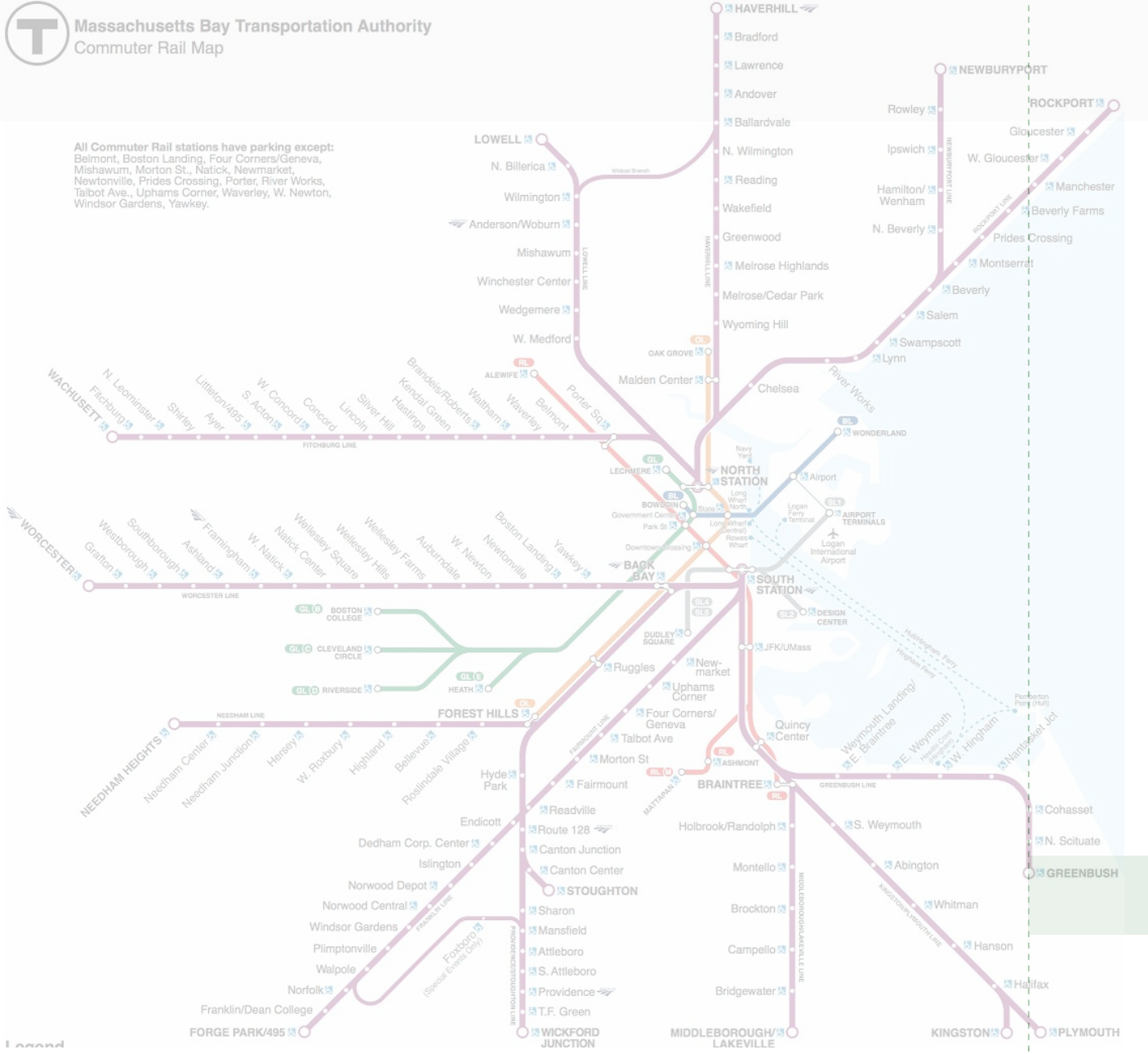
- Why should Winthrop comply with 3A?
    - This proposal complies with the law without allowing for any new units
    - Non-compliance will lead to loss of grants/ funding, especially for infrastructure, as well as forced-compliance by the state (unknown risk)



Appendix: RKG November 2024 Presentation

WINTHROP MBTA COMMUNITIES

Planning Board Meeting
November 12, 2024



RKG ASSOCIATES INC

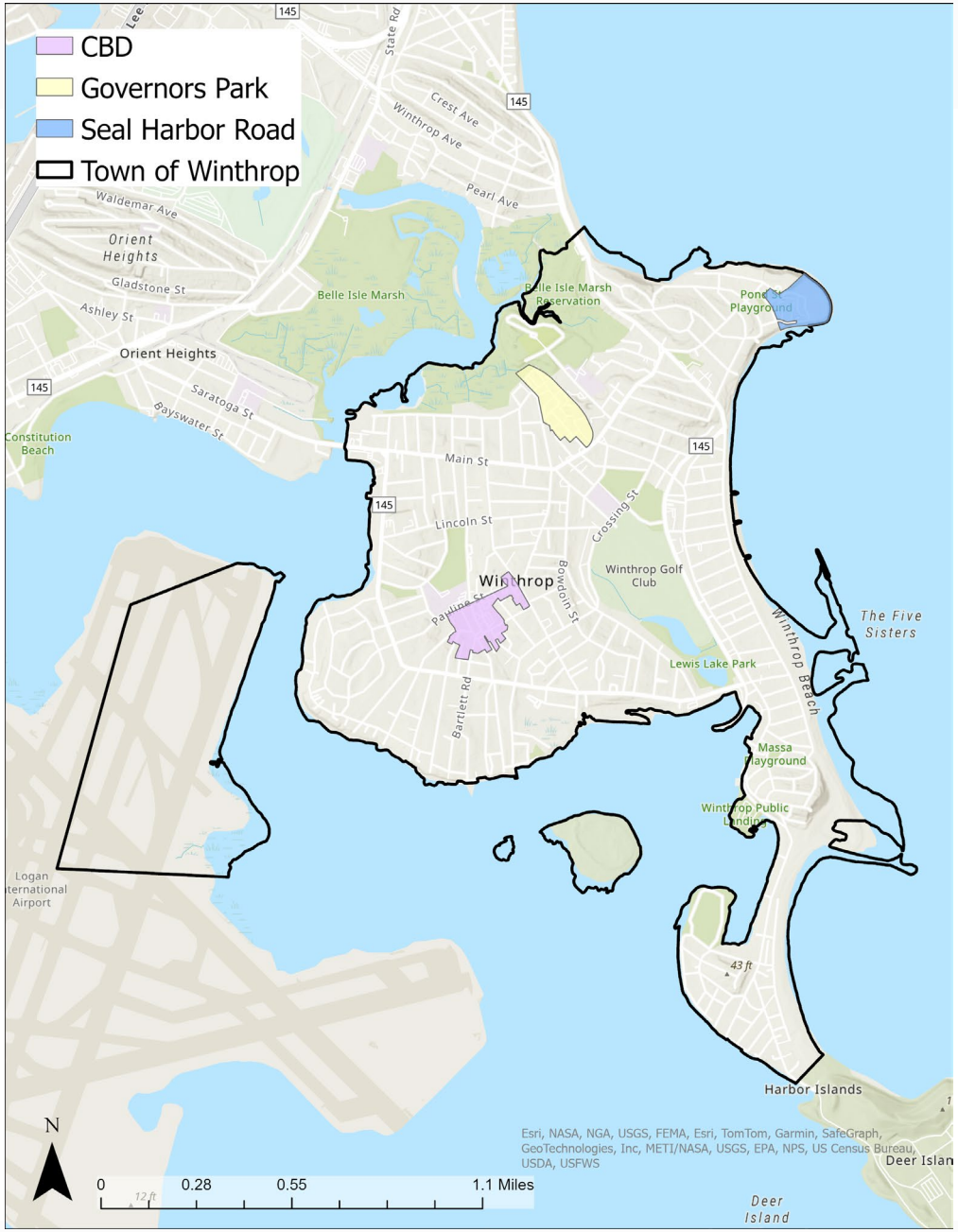
Innes Associates Ltd

Recommended Compliance Scenario

Compliance Scenario

Metric	Seal Harbor Road	Governors Park	TOTALS
Gross Acreage	12.3 Acres	13.9 Acres	**26.1 Acres**
Net Acreage	10.2 Acres	13.5 Acres	**23.8 Acres**
Unit Capacity	333 Units	336 Units	**669 Units**
Density (Dwelling Units per Acre)	32.6 DU/AC	24.8 DU/AC	**28.2 DU/AC**

Using the CBD for the MMU offset, we will exceed unit capacity by 8 units (890 units total).

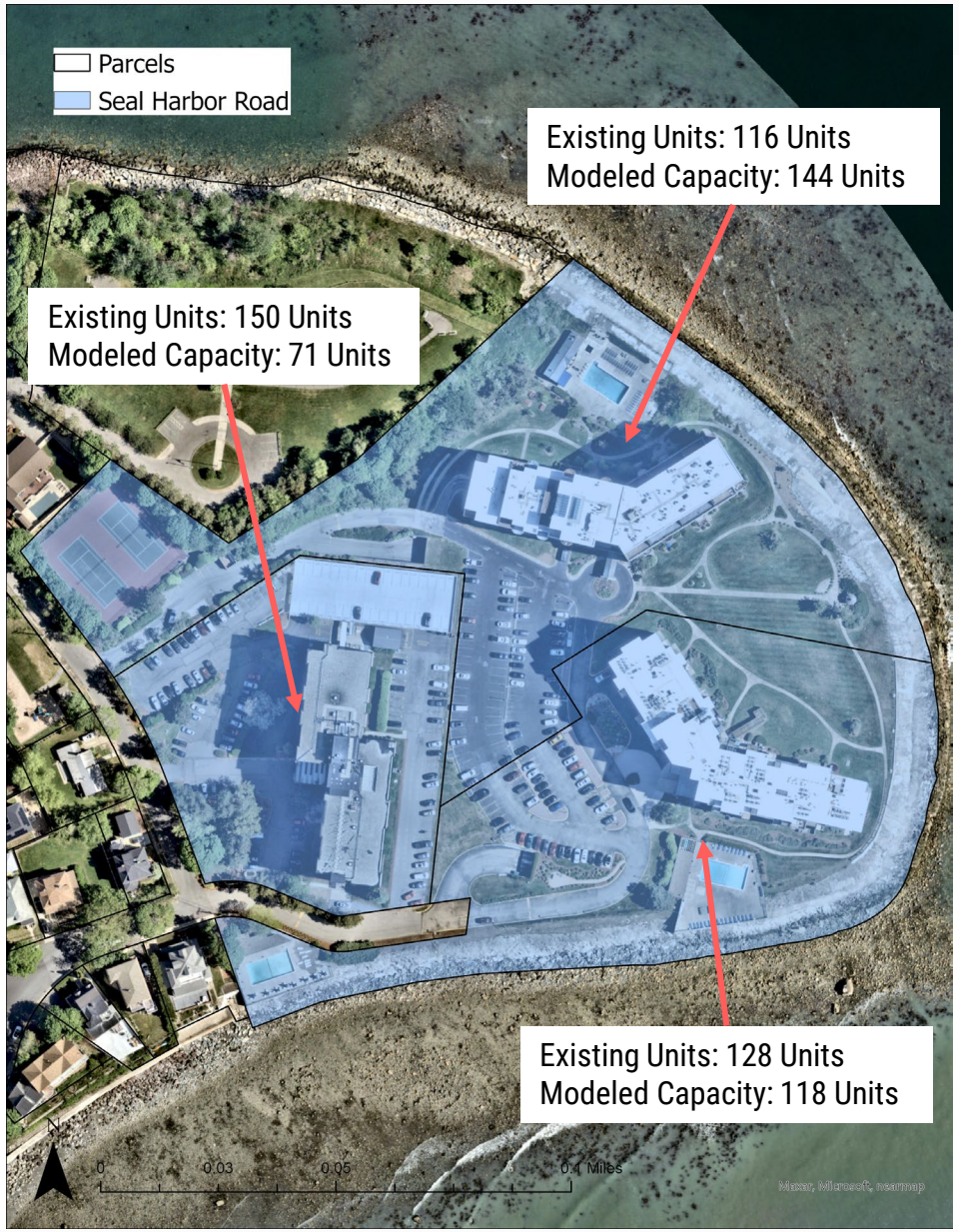


Preliminary Modeling: Seal Harbor Road

Parameter	Seal Harbor Road – Residential C Mid-Rise Apartment Complex
Minimum Lot Size	100,000 sq ft
Stories	6 Stories
Maximum Lot Coverage	20%
Minimum Open Space Requirement	30%
Setbacks	50F, 50S, 50R
Parking Spaces	2 Spaces
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	*1,600 sq ft

Metric	Seal Harbor
Gross Acreage	12.3 Acres
Net Acreage	10.2 Acres
Existing Units	**394 Units**
Unit Capacity	**333 Units**
Density (DU/AC)	**32.6 DU/AC**

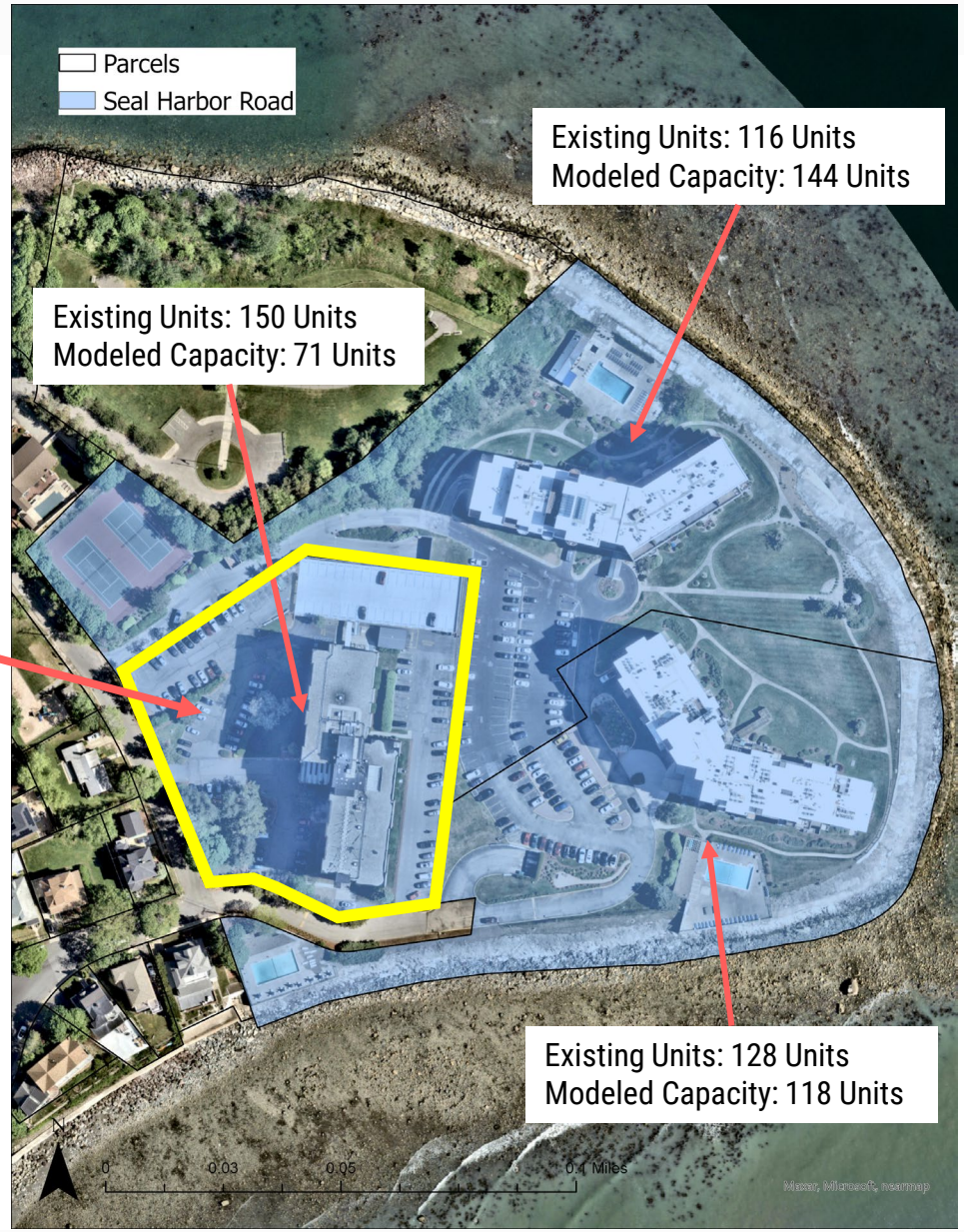
*The zoning for Mid-Rise Apartment Complex calls for 2,000 sq ft, this change to 1,600 sq ft allows for a compliant scenario



Preliminary Modeling: Seal Harbor Road

Concerns about subdividing the Fort Health Property:

- Fort Heath Parcel is 113,997 SF in size or 2.6 acres.
- Increasing the minimum lot size in the overlay district to 100,000 SF (2.3 acres), effectively eliminates the possibility of subdivision of land. You would not have enough land to create two conforming parcels.
- The proposed zoning would also allow half the number of units as is built today, which minimizes the economic incentive to change this property.

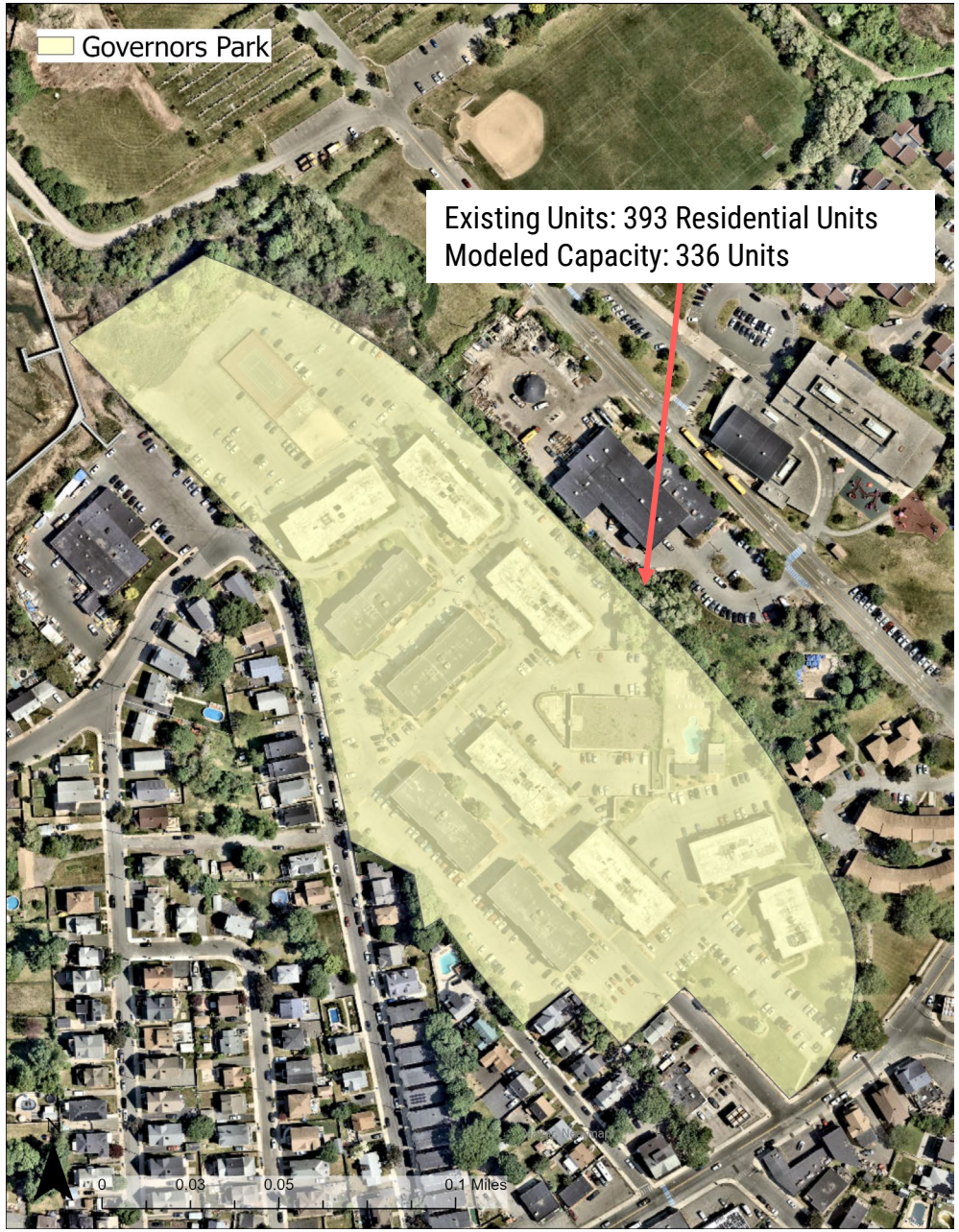


Preliminary Modeling: Governors Park

Parameter	Governors Park – Residence C Garden Apartment or Attached Dwelling Complex
Minimum Lot Size	20,000 sq ft
Stories	3 Stories
Maximum Lot Coverage	30%
Minimum Open Space Requirement	30%
Setbacks	25F, 25S, 40R
Parking Spaces	2 Spaces
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	*1,800 sq ft

Metric	Governors Park
Gross Acreage	13.9 Acres
Net Acreage	13.5 Acres
Existing Units	**393 Units**
Modeled Unit Capacity	**336 Units**
Density (DU/AC)	**24.8 DU/AC**

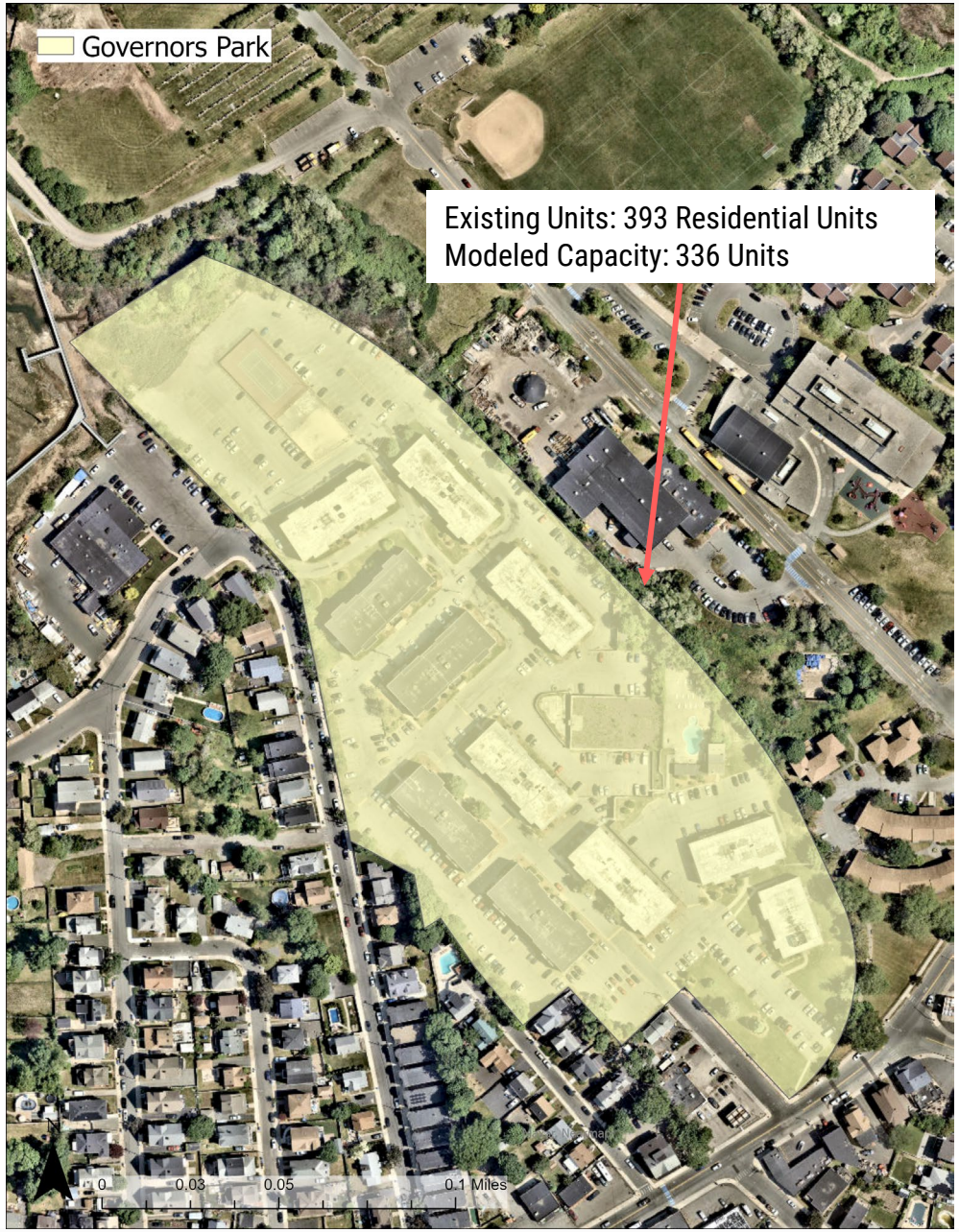
*The zoning for Residence C calls for 2,500 sq ft, this change to 1,800 sq ft allows for a compliant scenario



Preliminary Modeling: Governors Park

Concerns about RPM Fitness:

- RPM Fitness parcel has been removed from the proposed Governor's Park 3A Overlay District.
- Had to decrease the lot area per dwelling unit on the remaining parcel to bring the zoned unit capacity up to make up for the lost units from the removal of the RPM parcel.
- Overlay zoning dimensional regulations would allow almost 60 fewer units than are built today.



Winthrop Compliance Requirements

The consulting team will work to help the Town of Winthrop evaluate options for complying with MBTA Communities in a way that mitigates impacts as much as possible and recognizes the unique challenges of Winthrop's size, location, and environmental constraints.

Metric	Winthrop's Requirements	Does the Compliance Scenario meet 3A Requirements?
Minimum Land Area	12 acres	**YES**
Minimum Contiguous District Size	6 acres	**YES**
Minimum Contiguous Percentage of Net Acreage	50%	**YES**
Minimum Non-Contiguous District Size	5 acres	**YES**
Minimum Unit Capacity	882 Units	**YES**
Minimum Density Requirement	15 Dwelling Units per Acre	**YES**

Proposed Zoning Bylaw

- Zoning Bylaw would create two new overlay districts referred to as the Multi-Family Overlay District (MFOD).

- Within the MFOD overlay district bylaw the zoning would then establish two subdistricts:
  - Seal Harbor Road Subdistrict
  - Governor's Park Subdistrict

- The only permitted use in the MFOD is multi-family housing and it would be permitted as-of-right with site plan review by the Planning Board.

- The Bylaw also includes a provision for affordable housing at 10% set aside at 80% AMI and would trigger at buildings of 10 or more units.

Proposed Zoning Bylaw

Proposed Dimensional Regulations

Dimension Requirements	Seal Harbor Road	Governor's Park
Minimum Lot Area (square feet)	100,000 SF	20,000 SF
Maximum Density	1,600 SF of lot area per dwelling unit	1,800 SF of lot area per dwelling unit
Minimum Frontage (feet)	100	100
Minimum Lot Width (feet)	100	100
Maximum Lot Coverage	20%	30%
Minimum Open Space	30%	30%
Minimum Yard Setback (feet)		
Front	50	25
Side	50	25
Rear	50	40
Maximum Number of Stories	6	3
Maximum Height (feet)	65	35
Parking Requirement	2 per unit	2 per unit

Deviations in the Overlay from the Base Zoning:

- Lot area per dwelling unit in Governor's Park from 2,500 SF to 1,800 SF.
- Lot area per dwelling unit in Seal Harbor Road from 2,000 SF to 1,600 SF.
- Minimum lot area increased to 100,000 SF in Seal Harbor Road.

EOHLC Review – Recommended Changes

To comply with the law and guidelines, there is also a minor change needed to Winthrop's existing zoning bylaw:

- Remove Special Permit requirement for the Fee in Lieu of Parking in the CBD, change to Site Plan Review.
  - 17.50.210 Parking requirements for the Center Business district.
    - D. Fees in Lieu of Parking. In the Center Business district, any commercial or mixed use structure that is required to provide parking spaces may make payments to the town in lieu of providing for all or part of the on-site required parking. Payment made to the town in-lieu of providing up to fifty (50) percent of the required on-site parking spaces for a project in the central business district (CBD) shall be allowed by special permit from the planning board, consistent with standards to be adopted by, and published in advance by the planning board. These standards must be kept on file with the Winthrop Town Clerk.