Feasibility analysis of the Watertown Community Path

Community survey analysis

Overall support for the Path project

Project Description

The Watertown Department of Community Development and Planning, in conjunction with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and Watertown Citizens for Environmental Safety (WCES) are in the process of expanding off-street options for the citizens in the town. The Watertown Community Path will serve as a primarily off-street transportation option linking East Watertown, Watertown Square, and the Charles River. In the summer of 2010 the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will commence construction of a "rail trail" that will connect the Charles River Reservation Path in East Watertown to the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway in Cambridge. The next phase of this network expansion, the Community Path, has a more concentrated focus on meeting the needs of residents in Watertown by providing walking and biking access to businesses, public facilities, schools, and recreational opportunities.

Spatial analysis for this infrastructure project is critical to address both the goal of the Path anchoring the redevelopment of lower Arsenal street and the importance of addressing citizen concerns early in the process to avoid future backlash. Comparing the land use maps to the survey results will assist in the making of basic conclusions about how residents feel towards the project compared to business owners and managers.

Survey geocoding methodology

A survey completed by 256 people provides a qualitative analysis to help identify geographic areas of support and locate specific areas of concern. This information will be critical to the proponents of the project as they finalize a design and continue to build momentum behind the Community Path. The geocoded data from the survey includes the overall level of support for the project, property concerns, safety concerns, and usage. Because residents were asked to provide a street address for the survey, they could be plotted using the parcel data from the town of Watertown. From the initial match analysis, 183 surveys were matched above a score of 70. An additional 19 surveys were manually matched to addresses within 50 feet. The remaining 54 survey responses emanated from beyond the town boundary or failed to provide an address and were not plotted. This point data was modeled as a density surface, joined to census block, and joined to parcel; however, the clearest representation of the survey data was displayed by creating large points for each response.

Land use analysis methodology

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Current land use analysis

Comparison of assessed value of property in corridor

Land use analysis methodology

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