

A Sample Community Inventory:

Commercial Development within the Boundaries of the Columbia Savin Hill Civic Association

Overview

The Boston Globe recently ran a headline suggesting that, “Construction May Bring a New Vitality to Columbia Point.” Significant residential & commercial projects are under review before the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), which adopted the Columbia Point Master Plan in 2011. A Dorchester Avenue Zoning Update, begun in the fall of 2010, is ongoing. In a review of the planning initiative, the BRA recognized Dot Ave as, “one of Boston’s most important boulevards...providing a spine that ties together diverse residential areas and business centers.” Yet, both residents and planners see the potential for more growth, specifically commercial development to enliven Dorchester Avenue and make it a destination for the community.

Would Columbia Point Savin Hill be a viable competitor for a Main Street program? Unfortunately, it lacks the density that many of these neighborhoods boast; the commercial area is stretched out along a long & narrow swath of Dot Ave. Informal meetings with staff at the BRA & the Department of Neighborhood Development revealed that the area is, “too dispersed, too intermittent” for a Main Street Program. Furthermore, it lacks an active business association. The Columbia Savin Hill Civic Association (CSHCA) enthusiastically endorsed an inventory of commercial development. As a first step towards that goal, this research demonstrates the application of GIS in asset mapping.

Analysis

The CSHCA provided a map of the geographic boundaries of the Association but not exact data points. The boundary here is an approximate replication of the area. The first four maps below use parcel data provided by the BRA. Commercial parcels were identified using land use codes & include Commercial parcels, Mixed Residential & Commercial parcels, & Commercial Land. Total Assessed Land Value is used here as an example of the comparative analysis possible through GIS. At first glance, it is apparent that the count of commercial parcels increases (from 277 to 312), an increase of around 12.6%. The increase in land value over ten years is tremendous. Net floor area, or the “living” versus total structure

of the parcels, illuminates opportunities for businesses of all sizes. Selecting only the vacant parcels will advance this type of map and its utility in identifying sites for immediate development. The chart on the right reveals commercial landowners of four or more properties in the area. Though Dorchester Realty owns the greatest quantity of parcels, there are others who have a greater financial investment in the neighborhood. Identifying ownership is a first step in building strategic alliances in the community. Finally, though the map on household income extends beyond the boundary using census tracts, it is concentrated within the CSHCA and exhibits the neighborhoods financial strength.

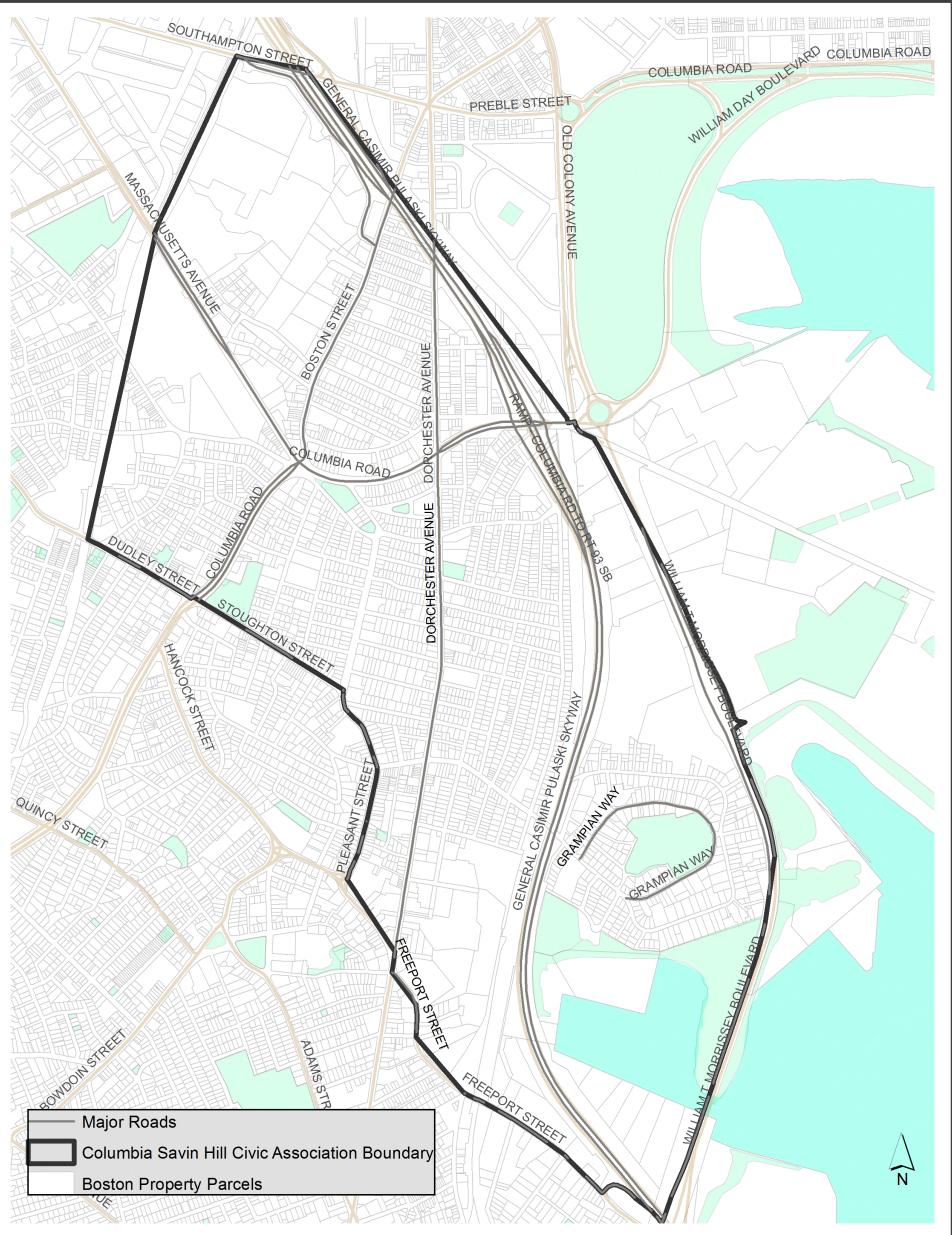
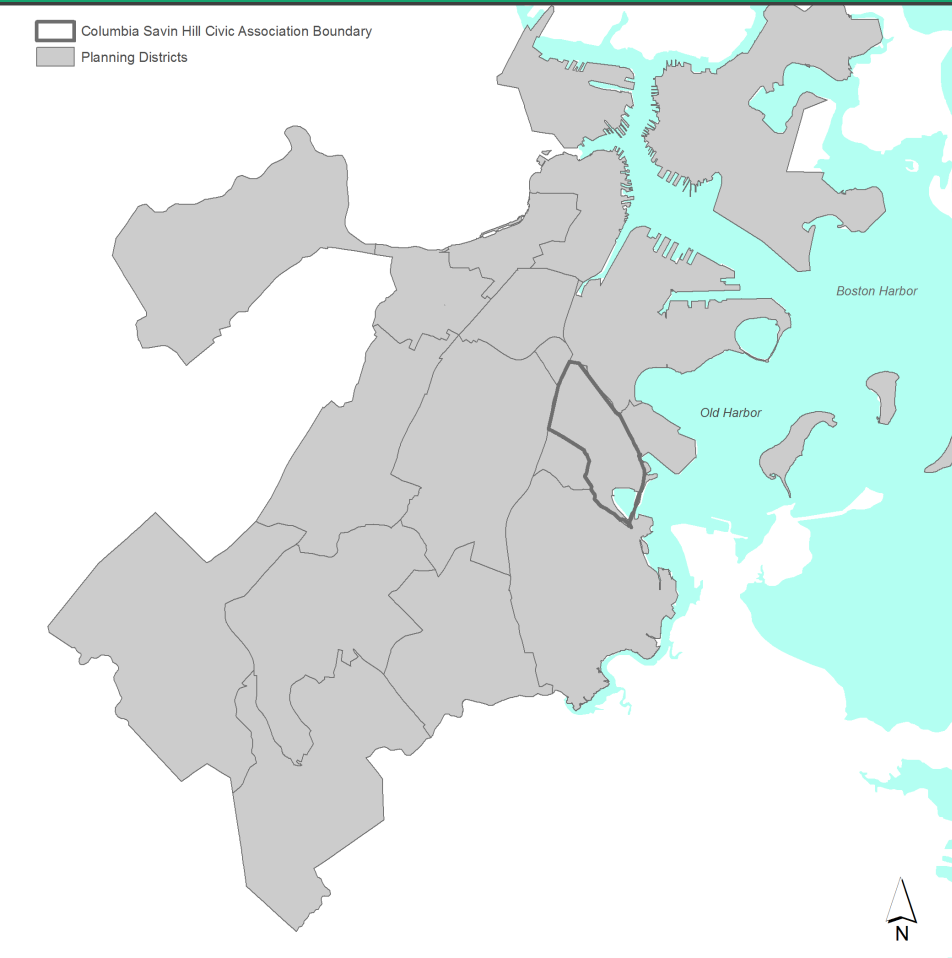
Recommendations

The CSHCA held a merchant gathering in 2011 but no further organizing has followed. An inventory of existing businesses may invite area business owners to engage with the CSHCA more formally and can identify opportunities for development. An atlas of maps can be artfully employed to invite commercial enterprises to consider locating in the area. Transit maps, for example, will demonstrate the area as a communication hub. Further research on neighborhood demographics can highlight the extent of diversity and quantify the effects of the development already underway. Together, this portfolio of visual information is impactful.

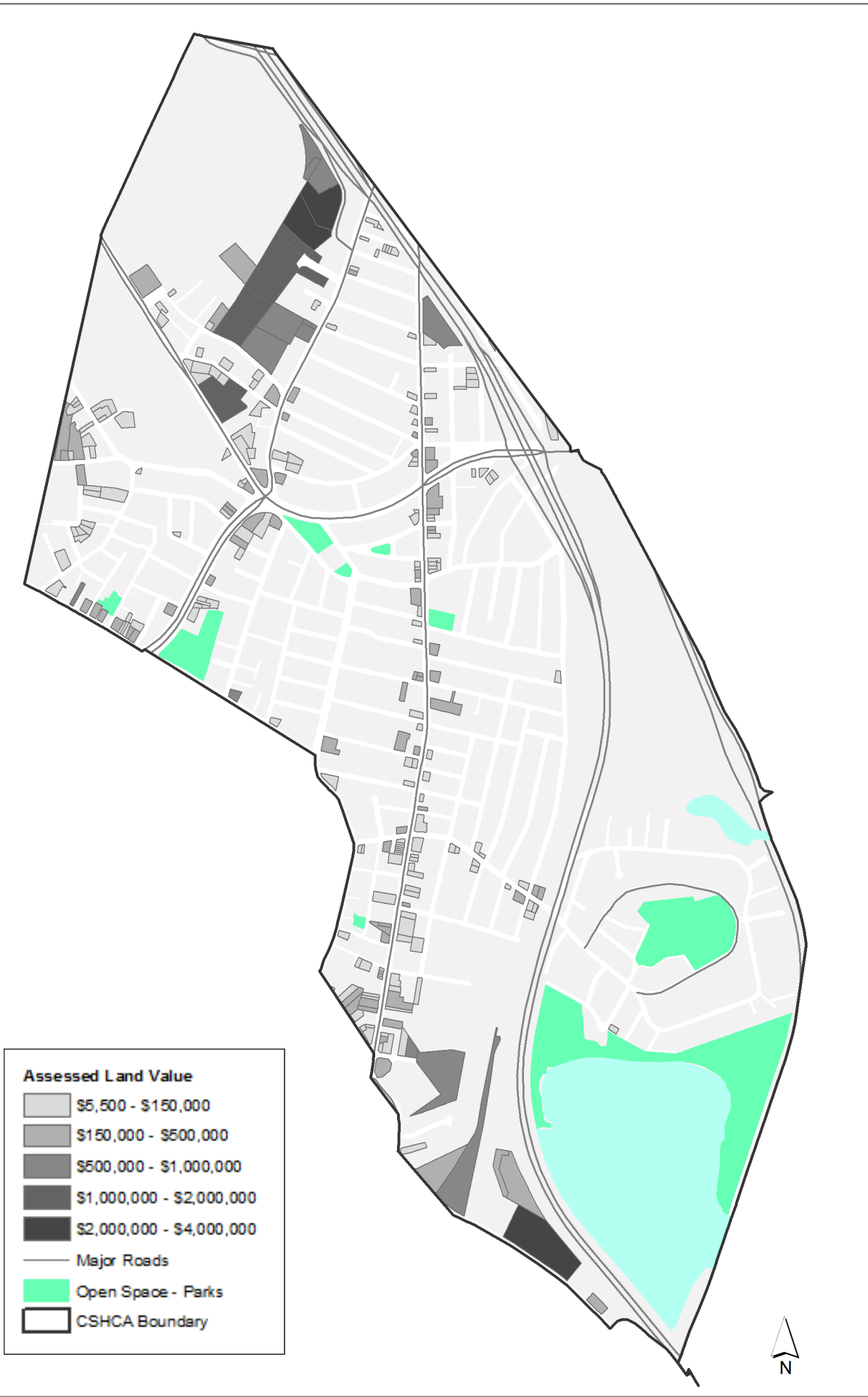
Label	Owner	Number of Properties	Sum of Total Assessed Value	Sum of Living Area
1	BASS REALTY LLC	4	3672900	36600
2	CAMPEDELLI JOSEPH J TRSTS	4	280498	0
3	CONNOLLY JOHN N	4	158700	0
4	DUDLEY STREET LLC	5	3446700	16940
5	LAI HARVEY B F	4	417543	2990
6	LINDENMUTH PETER	5	72700	0
7	LISEK CHRISTOPHER W	1	350000	4047
8	MARR DANIEL F TS	4	9653600	68877
9	MURPHY JAMES T TS	5	930393	6908
10	NGUYEN ANH VAN	5	318501	1850
11	PIC DORCHESTER REALTY LLC	10	1938000	12808
12	SEVEN08 COLUMBIA ROAD LLC	5	544119	6639
13	TRAN KENDALL V	7	751500	5299

Tori Okner
December, 2012
Sources: MassGIS, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Census 2010

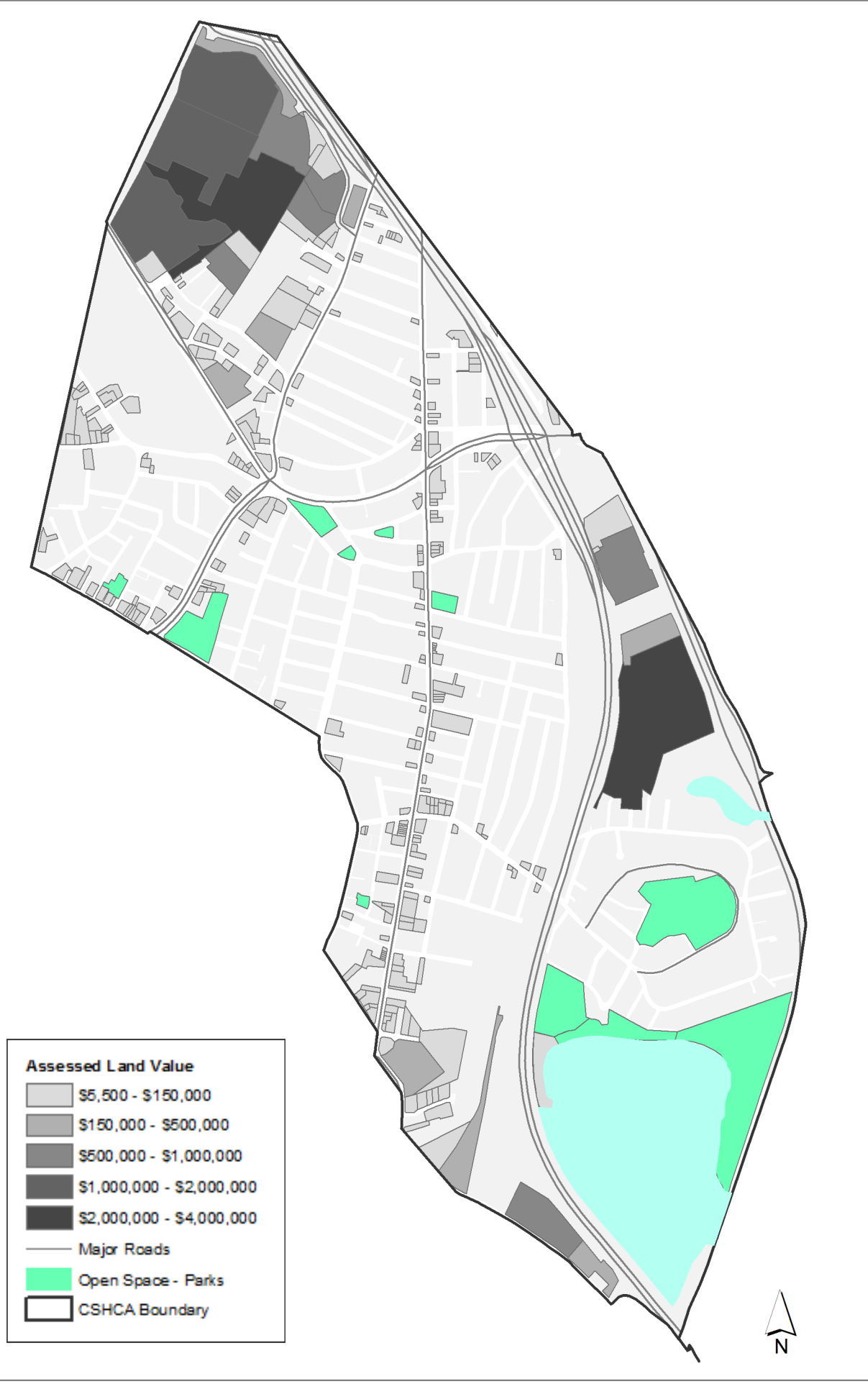
Situating the Civic Organization within Greater Boston Area and North Dorchester.



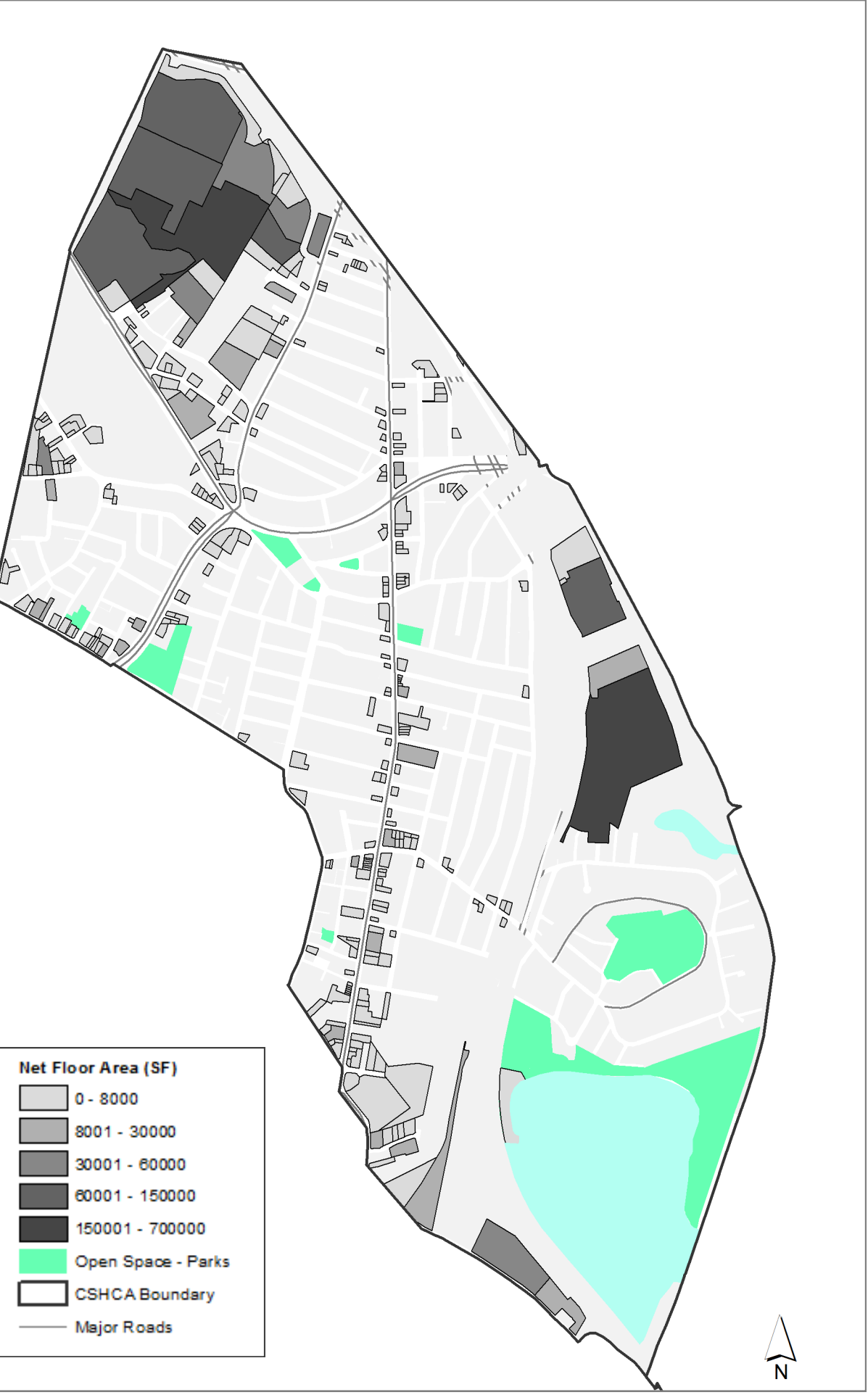
Total Assessed Land Value - 1999



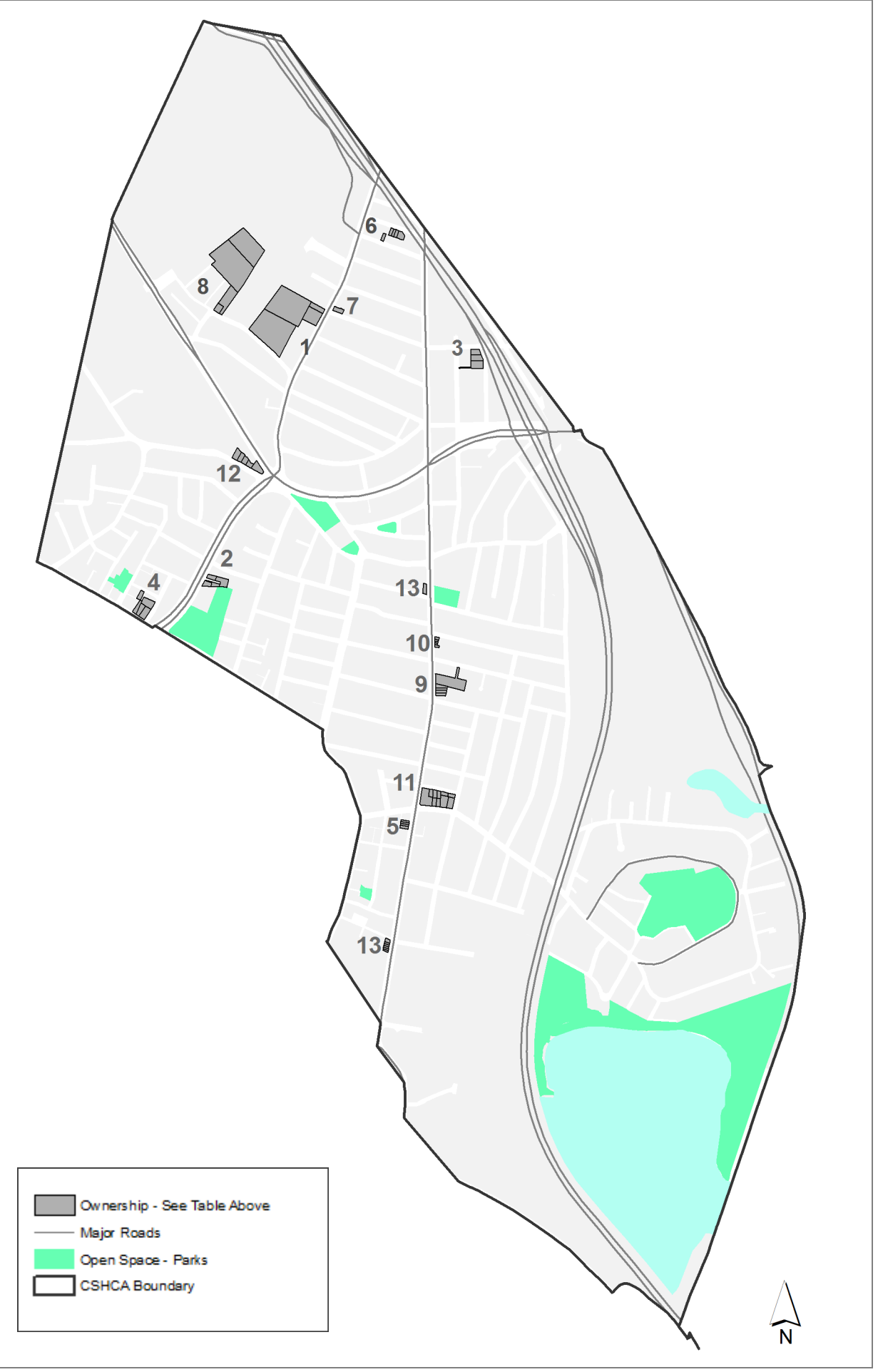
Total Assessed Land Value - 2009



Net Floor Area - 2009



Principal Landowners-2009



Household Income > 60K

