

ARTICLE 24
Regional Center (RC) Overlay District
(Planning Board)

ARTICLE LANGUAGE

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 323.1.5 of the Natick Zoning Bylaw to include uses identified under Section III - A.2.27A to be allowed in the Regional Center (RC) Overlay District; or otherwise act thereon.

PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE

The Golden Triangle, an area of significant economic development opportunity for the Town, has a series of different zoning districts and zoning overlays. Several parcels are split zoned, and certain uses are limited to only portions of the Golden Triangle. This article would allow administrative offices, clerical offices, statistical offices, and establishments for research and development throughout Regional Center (RC) Overlay District. The RC Overlay District and the Industrial-I Zoning District would allow the Golden Triangle to allow office and research and development uses throughout, providing Natick with a competitive edge for establishing a live, work, play environment.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Finance Committee took the following action:	RECOMMENDATION:	Favorable Action
	QUANTUM OF VOTE:	11-0-0
	DATE VOTED:	April 5, 2022

MOTION (Requires a 2/3 Vote)

Move to amend Section 323 (Use and Other Zoning Regulations) of the Natick Zoning Bylaw as follows:

At the end of Section 323.1.5, after the last sentence which ends in “such shopping mall use.”, insert a new sentence that reads:

All uses permitted or allowed in the Table of Use, 27A. “Administrative offices, clerical offices, statistical offices and establishments for research and development” shall be permitted without restriction in the RC Overlay District.

So that the amended Section 323.1.5 shall read as follows:

323.1.5 All uses permitted or allowed in the underlying zoning districts (including the RC District) shall still be permitted or allowed respectively on land in the MC Overlay District. In addition, hotel and motel use (including serving of food and/or permitted beverages), as well as shopping mall use, shall be permitted in the MC Overlay District. “Shopping mall use” shall include those uses customary in shopping malls, e.g., retail stores, service establishments, restaurants, and entertainment uses, in multiple stores in a building or group of buildings containing no less than two (2) levels (each of which levels is principally devoted to selling or providing service or entertainment to customers), and in which access to the majority of stores is via an enclosed pedestrian mall or malls, and in which no less than thirty-five (35%) percent of the gross floor area leased to tenants is devoted to individual stores having a floor area of less than 15,000 square feet. Access drives and parking facilities serving such buildings, whether such facilities are below or above ground or below such buildings or in separate structures, located on the same lot or an abutting lot shall also be permitted as an accessory use to such shopping mall use. All uses permitted or allowed in the Table of Use, 27A. Administrative offices, clerical offices, statistical offices and establishments for research and development shall be permitted without restriction in the RC Overlay District.

FINANCE COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING AND DISCUSSION

The Finance Committee met on March 24, 2022, and April 5, 2022 to discuss Article 24 and voted to recommend Favorable Action 11-0-0.

Ms. Amanda Loomis, Director of Community & Economic Development presented.

Ms. Loomis explained the benefits of bringing the whole of the Golden Triangle under the zoning of Table of Use 27A. The Natick Mall area would be a more attractive location for research and

development spaces or flexible office uses if Table of Use 27A were allowable throughout. Currently, half of the Natick Mall is zoned for Industrial, while the other half is zoned for Commercial.

Article 24 is specific to the Regional Center Overlay and not the whole of the Golden Triangle because the rest of the Golden Triangle, for example the southern part of Sherwood Plaza, already permits uses listed on Table of Use 27A. Implementing the Regional Center Overlay article as it is presented would bring the entirety of the Golden Triangle to a consistent zoning standard. Additionally, the RC Overlay will allow Table of Use 27A zoning in the Golden Triangle without impacting the other areas of Manufacturing, Offices, and Commercial space in Natick.

Ms. Loomis added that Natick is using a \$50,000 One-Stop Permitting grant to contribute to a larger Golden Triangle study with the city of Framingham.

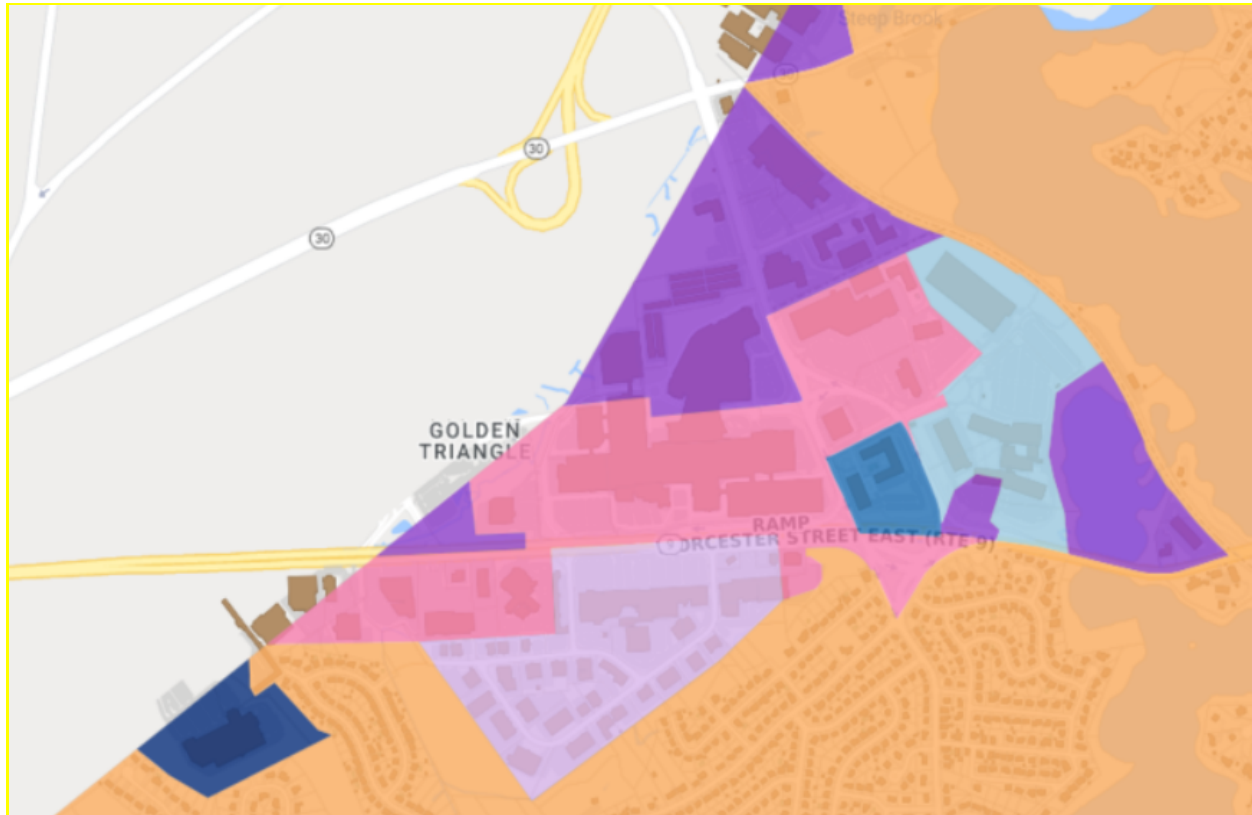
A member asked if this would expand the number of marijuana establishments. Ms. Loomis indicated that this article would not increase the number of adult-use marijuana establishments (currently two). Mr. Erickson, Town Administrator, added that adult-use marijuana is restricted by separate overlay districts, which will not be expanded or altered by this article (see Golden Triangle Zoning Overlay Districts).

A member asked about updating the underlying zoning instead of amending the use of an overlay on top of the existing, disjointed zoning. Is this adding to the confusion and complexity of the zoning and permitting process? It can be difficult for residents or even committee members to discern the color and particular angle of hashmarks.

Ms. Loomis responded that one of the purposes of the Golden Triangle Study is to update the zoning for the whole of the district. The comprehensive study will address long-term uses and infrastructure needs as well as updating underlying districts and overlays. Currently stakeholders are being interviewed and the existing 2018 plans are being reviewed and moved into the zoning recommendation phase. This article represents an action the town can take now, independently and without much effort, to improve the area's zoning uses.

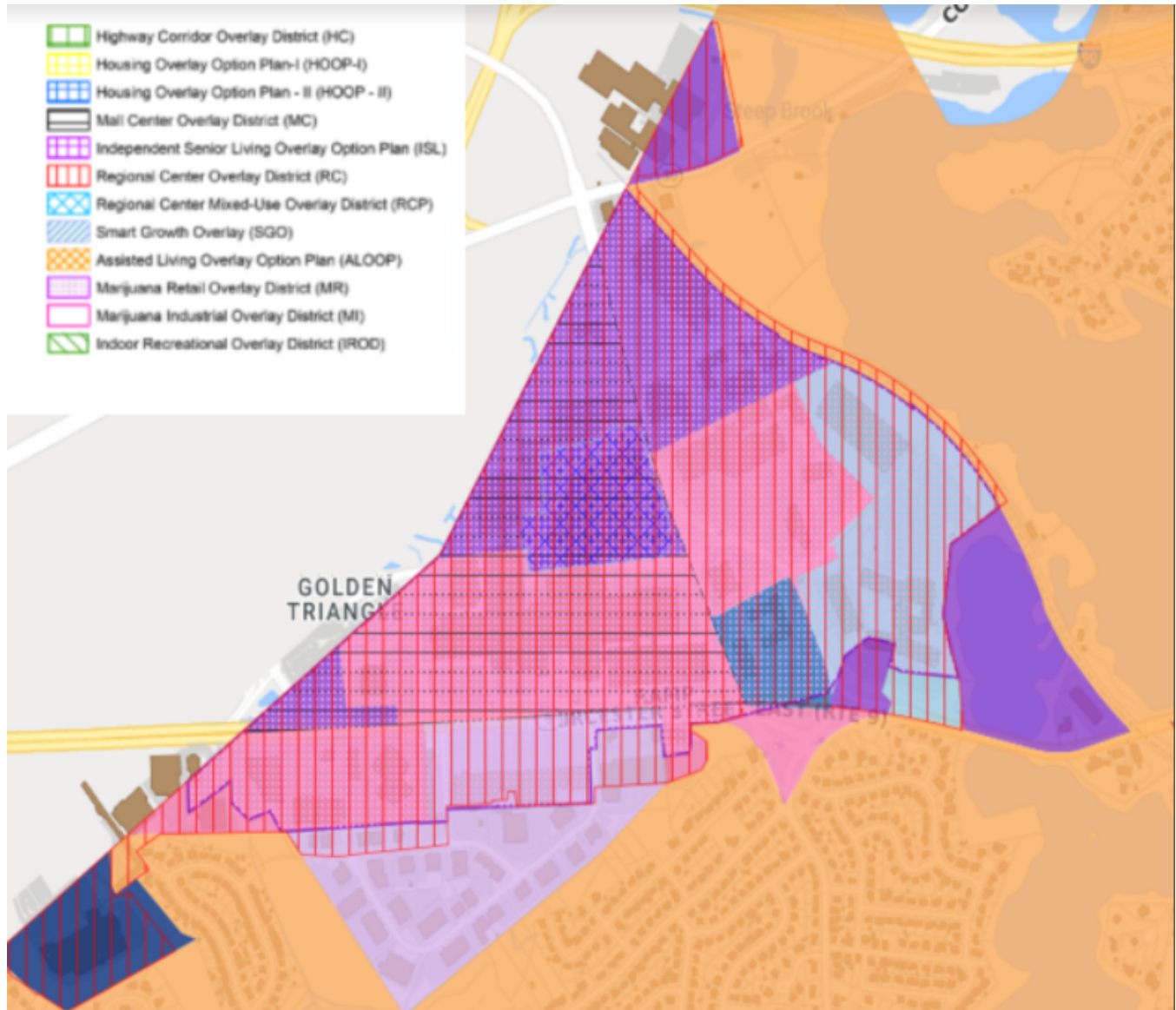
The Finance committee first heard the article on March 24. We considered the motion on April 5 when the wording of the article was finalized and recommended favorable action.

Current Zoning:



- Commercial-II
- Limited Commercial
- Administrative and Professional
- Planned Community District
- Downtown Mixed-Use
- Hospital
- Industrial-I
- Industrial-II
- Highway Mixed-I
- Highway Mixed-II
- Highway Mixed-III
- Highway Planned Use
- Residential General
- Residential Multiple
- Residential-Single A
- Residential-Single B
- Residential-Single C

Golden Triangle Zoning Overlay Districts:



~~ END OF ARTICLE ~~