COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

43D SITE EVALUATIONS



Prepared for:
Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development
Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

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Fitchburg Sand and Gravel Site ■ Fitchburg, MA

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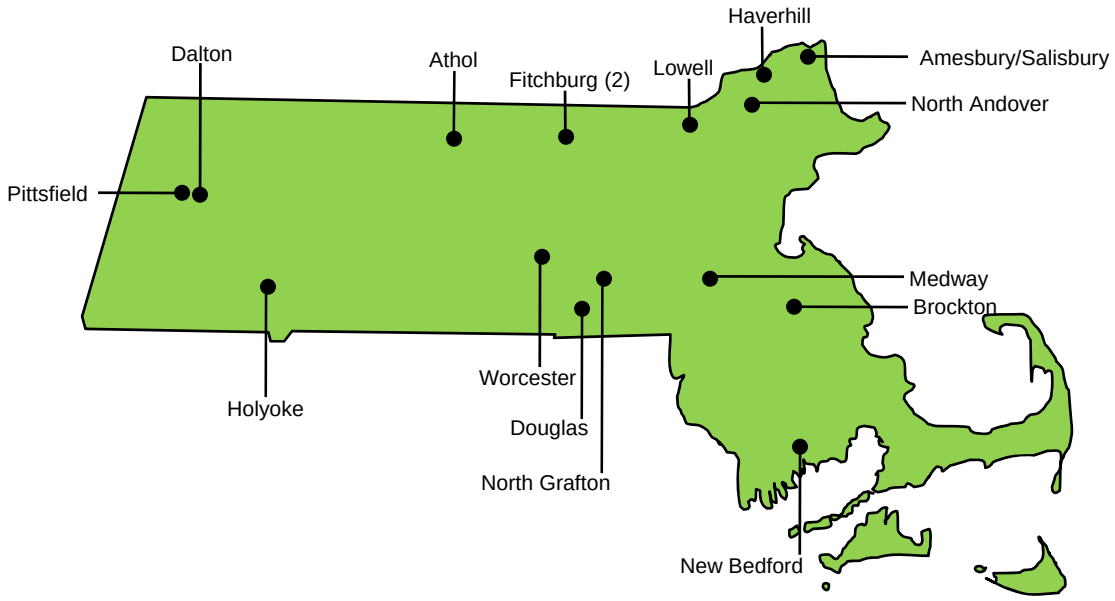
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Introduction

As part of an overall initiative to identify, evaluate and ultimately market sites under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 43D, The Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development (MAED) along with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development retained Moran, Stahl & Boyer, a nationally known site selection and economic development consultant, to perform evaluations of selected sites (see Figure 1 below). The evaluation included on-site reviews, input from site contacts, data collection, and ultimately an assessment of site resources, best uses for the site, and recommendations for any site upgrade required to achieve a needed level of readiness.

Figure 1 – Location of the 43D Sites That Were Included in the Site Evaluation Process

Location	Description
Pittsfield	Former GE site being developed as William Stanley Business Park of the Berkshires
Dalton	Ashuelot Park (former Beloit manufacturing complex currently owned by Crane & Co.)
Holyoke	Multiple sites within Crossroads Business Park off I-91
Athol	North Quabbin Business Park at corner of SR 2 and SR 32
Fitchburg (2)	Sand and gravel operation off Airport Rd and site off Princeton Road (former sludge pits)
Lowell	Downtown Lowell Hamilton Canal District
North Andover	1600 Osgood Street (former Lucent Technology complex)
Haverhill	Industrial land off SR 125/Hilldale Avenue on NH/MA border
Amesbury/Salisbury	Golden Triangle site at intersection of I-95 and I-495
Worcester	South Worcester Industrial Park
Douglas	Current sand and gravel operation and other adjacent lots off SR146 and Gilboa St
North Grafton	Grafton Science Park adjacent to the Tufts University School Veterinary Medicine
Medway	Medway Industrial Park at I-495 and SR 109
Brockton	Former Howard Johnson and other food processing plant at 309 Battles St
New Bedford	Former Polaroid office and manufacturing complex in the New Bedford Business Park



Site Evaluation Overview

Site evaluation is a multi-step process that includes information gathering, reflecting on options, and assigning best use(s) as outlined in Figure 2 . Information is packaged into seven modules as noted in Figure 3 and presented as tabular data, maps and photographs. A sample Site Evaluation Form is presented at the end of this section.

The end result of the evaluation is to address the following questions:

- What types of resources (labor, transportation, education, R&D, industry employment, etc.) are accessible to the site?
- What are the primary attributes of the site and related buildings (as they exist)?
- What level of readiness is the site and related buildings (as they exist), including completion of any studies and securing any permits?
- What are the soil conditions and the presence of rock outcrops and wetlands/flood plain that may impact site development?
- What level of local market competition exists?
- What types of industries and operations would be most interested in the site and related buildings (as they exist)?

With this information, the site owner and/or developer can formulate a strategy for highest/best use as well as for marketing the site and seeking prospects with the most interest.

Figure 2 - Site Evaluation Process

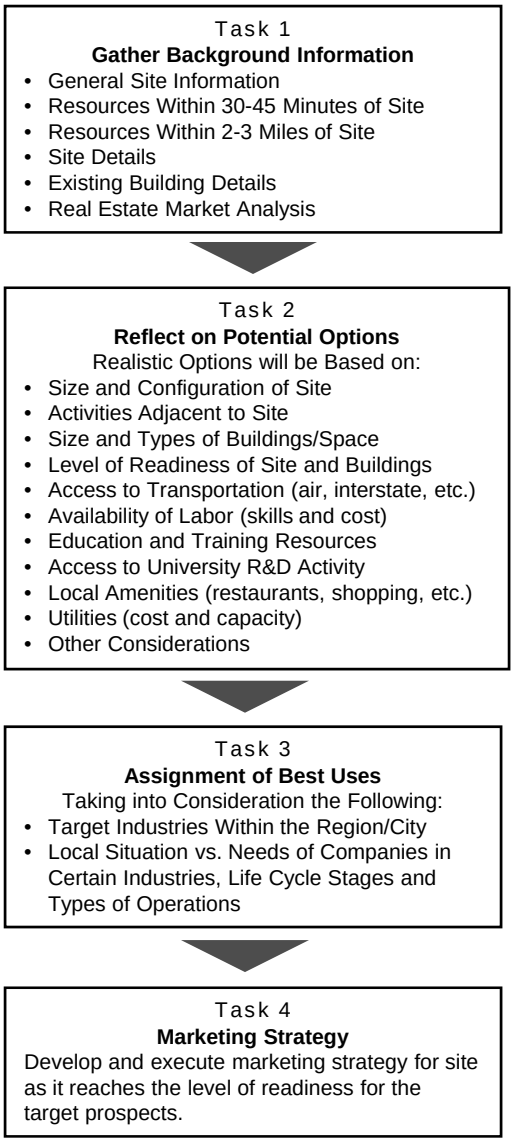


Figure 3 - Information Modules for Site Evaluation

Module 1:
Evaluation of Site

- General Comments and Resource Evaluation
- Recommendations for Site Use and Improvement

Module 2:
General Site Information

- Site designation
- Economic development region
- Address/location of site
- Local contact information
- Property owner(s)
- Current real estate broker
- Map identifying site location

Module 3:
Resources Within 30-45 Minutes of Site

- List regional airport(s) and travel distances
- Demographic map (population concentration) within 30-minute commute distance
- Demographic profile within 30-minute commute distance
  - Population
  - Average annual growth rate over past five years
  - Adult population with HS diploma only*
  - Adult population with 4-year college and above*
  - Median household income*
  - Population in the 25 to 34 year old cohort*

  * Compare with national averages
- Description of housing cost and supply within 30-45 minutes of site

Comment:
For the prospective company, the information related to a 30-minute commute from the site is of greater value than region or metro area data.

Module 4:
Resources Within 2-3 Mile Proximity to Site

- Distance to interstate or major limited access highway
- Condition of access road (pavement condition, shoulders, turning lanes, lights at intersections, etc.)
- Existence/plans for any of the following on the access highway between site and interstate: major shopping areas, schools, hospitals, parks or residential developments
- Access to public transportation (rail and/or bus)
- Access to any of the following amenities within two miles of the site: restaurants, shopping areas, banking, daycare, gym/workout facilities, outdoor trails, personal services
- Access to any of the following business services: copy/printing, office supplies, computer retail/service, etc.

Comment:
The resources that are within close proximity are important for headquarters, back office and R&D operations, and are less important for manufacturing operations.

Module 5:
Site Details

- Aerial photo of site noting proximity to other businesses, retail options and nearby residential properties
- Site plan of developed site/park
- Overall size of site/developable acres
- Level of site readiness to build new or move into existing structures
- Zoning classification/description and maximum allowable build-out (sf)
- Use/zoning of adjacent land
- Presence of wetlands or sections within 100-year flood plain
- Greenfield or brownfield site and current land cover
- Site studies completed, such as:
  - Environmental review (Phase 1 and 2)
  - Environmental Impact Study
  - Wetlands and flood plain review
  - MEPA review
  - Archaeological sites review
  - Traffic impact study
  - Soils analysis
- Site plans prepared
  - Overall site plan
  - Runoff Water Management Plan
- Permits secured
  - Site plan approval
  - Overall environmental permit
  - Wetlands permit
  - Highway access/curb cut permit
  - Army Corps permit (100-yr. flood plain)
  - Steep slope permit
  - Other permits
- Overview on utility services (power, gas, water, sewer, and telecom)
  - Name of utility
  - Capacity/availability (particularly water)
  - Dual feed/backup for power and telecom
  - Cost of power (cents/kWh)

Comment:
Site details provide not only general attributes of the site but also factors that help define the level of readiness of the site. Refer to Tables 3 and 4 for details on site readiness.

Module 6:
Existing Building Details

- Number of buildings on site
- Designated use(s) of buildings (office, light manufacturing, warehouse, lab, etc.)
- Age and condition of each building and class of office space (A,B or C)
- Overall square footage and size of floor plate for each building
- For industrial buildings: ceiling height, column widths, slab thickness, crane rails in place, etc.
- Parking capacity (open or garage)
- Lease or buy options
- Offering price/lease rate for space
- Level of building readiness (months to move in)
- Is this a LEED certified building?

Comments:

- For office space, parking capacity is often quoted in spaces per 1,000 sf of office.
- LEED Designation: the U.S. Green Building Council has defined The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ to encourage and accelerate global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices.

Module 7:
Real Estate Market Analysis

- Overall market situation (strong or weak)
- Average purchase price for land in similar situation (stand alone, within office or industrial park, etc.)
- Description of comparable property/building
- Average lease rate for comparable space
- Other information about local market

Comment:

The ability to define comparable market data will be determined by the level of specialization and unique features the site offers. The average lease rate for generic office and industrial space and gross inventory of space (in metro areas) will be the easiest information to gather from the marketplace.

Figure 4 – Sample Site Evaluation Sheet

General Comments and Resource Assessment

Site Designation	Address or other designation
Ownership	Current owner(s) of site
General Description of Site and Buildings	Overall size of site and usable acres as well as size of buildings and floor plate
Readiness of Site and Buildings	The time required to complete the site and/or building before the prospective company can have employees productively at their jobs
Site/Building Amenities	Parking, café, locker rooms, trails, etc.
Transportation Access	Air, interstate, rail, port and public transportation
Labor Resources	Population growth, education levels and specific industry presence
Education & Training	Two/four-year colleges and other technical/business training resources
University R&D Access	R&D as an economic engine and the support of specific industries
Amenity Access	Access to shopping, restaurants, personal services, gym, bank, etc.
Utilities	Note any extreme situation in capacity or cost for water, electric power, gas, sewer or telecom
Other Comments	Unique aspects of site or situation

Recommendations

Highest/best use for site/buildings

1. Considerations for improving the site
2. Other recommendations

Fitchburg Sand and Gravel Site



Fitchburg, MA

General Comments and Resource Assessment

Site Designation	Sand and Gravel Operation off of Airport Road
Ownership	City of Fitchburg
General Description	City owned sand and gravel operation of about 70 acres.
Site and Building Readiness	Level 6, undeveloped site with land in the hands of the original owner.
Site/Building Amenities	Possible development of bike trails along the North Nashua River.
Transportation Access	Air Access: Manchester-Boston Regional (39 mi) and Logan Int'l (63 mi). Located adjacent to the Fitchburg Regional Airport. Interstate/Limited Access Highway: Located 2.5 miles from Route 2.
Labor Resources	Modest population growth rate with significant industrial labor base.
Education & Training	Fitchburg State (local) and Mount Wachusett Community College.
University R&D Access	Worcester Polytechnic Institute and UMass Lowell.
Local Amenities	Accessible to restaurants, shopping, and personal fitness.
Utilities	Utilities exist along Airport Road.
Other Comments	The area surrounding the site is currently heavy industrial, although there is a project in progress to renovate a mill complex to become high-end residential and retail. There is a consideration to install a biomass power generation unit on the site supported by 30 tractor trailer loads/day. There is also a 100-year flood plain along the North Nashua River at the front of the property.

Recommendations

There are three options to consider for the development of the site:

1. Develop it as an alternative energy center to provide low cost power to area industrial operations.
2. Develop the site as an attractive light industrial site with heavy landscaping to create an environment amenable to higher end retail/residential area already being developed. There is also an opportunity to leverage the availability of the adjacent airport.
3. Position the site as a low cost industrial option in line with current adjacent heavy industrial and commercial operations.

General Site Information

Site Designation	Current Sand and Gravel Site
Region	North Central
Address/location	Airport Road
Local contact Phone No. E-mail Address	Dan Curley 978-345-1018 dcurley@fitchburg-ma.gov
Property Owner(s)	City of Fitchburg Simonds International
Current Broker Contact Phone No. E-mail Address	None

Overall Map of Site Location



General Proximity Information

Description	Input
Closest regional airport(s) with travel distance	Manchester-Boston Regional (39 mi) Logan Int'l – Boston (63 mi)
Distance to Major Cities	Worcester (26 mi) Lowell (32 mi) Manchester (42 mi) Boston (59 mi)
Demographics W/ 30-Minute Commute	**Input**
Overall population	269,900
Growth rate (2000-2006)	3.8% / Mass Avg = 0.67% / Nat'l Avg = 6.4%
Adult population with HS diploma only	30.4% / Mass Avg = 28.2% / Nat'l Avg = 30.2%
Adult population with 4-year+ college	26.6% / Mass Avg = 37.0% / Nat'l Avg = 27.0%
Median household income	$37,004 / Mass Avg = $59,963 / Nat'l Avg = $48,451
Population in 25 to 34-year old cohort	11.9% / Mass Avg = 12.7% / Nat'l Avg = 13.3%
Cost of Living (Nat'l Avg = 100) • Overall Cost of Living • Cost of Housing • Cost of Utilities	Reference: Sperling's Best Places web site 97 73 110

Local Access Information

Description	Input
Distance to interstate/major highway	Rt 12 (1 mi) and Rt 2 (2.5 mi)
Condition of access highway	Must travel down small two-lane road to gain access to Rt 2
Existence/plans for any of the following on the access highway between site and interstate: major shopping areas, schools, hospitals, parks or residential developments	Area surrounding site is predominately industrial with plans to renovate a nearby mill building and create high-end condos and retail as well as restaurant.
Access to public transportation (rail or bus)	MBTA Commuter Rail station located in downtown Fitchburg, North Leominster MBTA station located nearby, and bus transit provided by the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority.
Access to any of the following amenities within two miles of the site: restaurants, shopping areas, banking, daycare, gym/workout facilities, outdoor trails, personal services	Retail/restaurants located within one mile of site.
Access to any of the following business services: copy/printing, office supplies, computer retail/service, etc.	Office copy services and office supply stores (Office Max and Staples) located nearby.

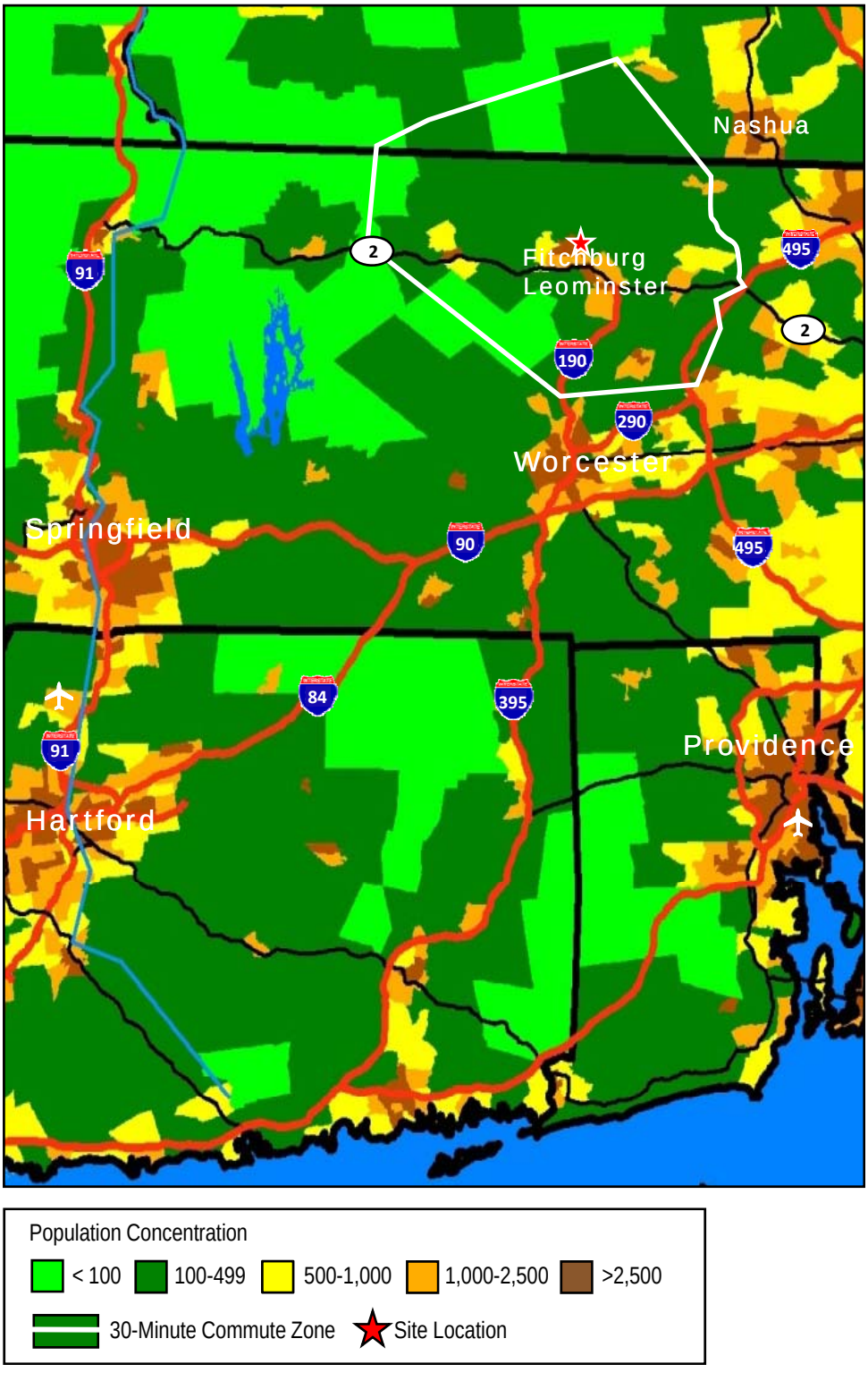
Site Characteristics

Description	Input
Overall size of site/developable acres	Approximately 58 acres
Cost of Land ($/Acre)	
Zone classification/description and maximum allowable build-out (SF)	Industrial
Use/zoning of adjacent land	Industrial
Level of site readiness	Level 6, active sand and gravel site
Presence of wetlands or sections within 100-year flood plain	Yes
Greenfield or Brownfield site and current land cover	Sand and gravel
Site studies complete, such as: • Environmental review (Phase I/II) • Environmental Impact Study • Wetlands and flood plain review • MEPA review • Archeological sites review • Traffic impact study • Soils analysis	None completed
Site plans prepared • Overall site plan • Runoff Water Management Plan	None
Permits secured • Site plan approval • Overall environmental permit • Wetlands permit • Highway access/curb cut permit • Army Corps permit (100-yr. flood plain) • Steep slope permit • Other permits:	None

Site Characteristics

Description	Input
Electric Power Service • Utility • Capacity • Cost (KWH) • Dual feed available (Y/N)	None • Unitil • • •
Gas Service • Utility • Capacity • Cost	None • Unitil • •
Water Service • Utility • Capacity • Cost	Engineering service and design needed • • •
Wastewater Service • Utility • Capacity • Cost	Engineering services and design needed. • • •
Telecom Service • Utility • Capacity • Dual feed available (Y/N)	None • Verizon • •

Demographic Map Covering 30-Minute Commute Zone Around Site



Nearby Commercial and Industrial Businesses

Letter	Business Name	Employment	Line of Work
A	Gettens Electric Supply Co - HQ	19	Electrical apparatus, equipment, and wiring supplies
B	New England Road Machinery	20	Mfg mining machinery and structural metal fabrication
C	Benson Street Storage Center	5	Marking devices
D	Simonds Industries, Inc - HQ	300	Mfg machine tool accessories
E	Minuteman Press	5	Commercial printing, lithographic
F	Eastern Bearings, Inc	6	Wholesale industrial supplies
G	Viana Distributors, Inc	8	Equipment rental/leasing
H	Brideau Oil Corp	2	Wholesale petroleum products
I	Schwan's Sales	20	Wholesale general groceries
J	AKS Recycling, Inc	1	Wholesale brick/stone materials
K	Iron Construction Co	10	Water, sewer, pipeline, communications, and power line construction
L	Crawford Street Collision	n/a	Automotive collision and frame repair
M	Alonso Construction Co	20	Sewerage systems repair and construction
N	Wass-Arthur Signs, Inc	2	Operators of nonresidential buildings

Nearby Retail Businesses, Food Establishments, and Banks

Retail Businesses	Food Establishments	Banks
CVS/Walgreen's Pharmacy	Ninety Nine Restaurant	Rollstone B&T
Hannaford/Shaw's Grocery	Friendly's Restaurant	Bank of America
Staples/Office Max	Burger King, McDonald's, Subway	Sovereign Bank
Fitness Club at Liberty Place	Boston Market	TD Banknorth

Aerial View of Site and Surrounding Area



Pictures of Site/Facility



View of Access Road Along Creek



Overall View of Site



View of Site From Rear Fence Line Boundary



Simonds Industries, Inc From Back Fence Line



High-End Housing/Retail Development Near Site



Current Condition of High-End Development Site

Housing Examples Within Surrounding Area

$200,000



Fitchburg
$204,800 l 3 Bed, 2 Bath
1,520 Sq. Ft. l 0.27 Acres



Leominster
$207,900 l 3 Bed, 1 Bath
1,613 Sq. Ft. l 0.24 Acres



Gardner
$205,000 l 3 Bed, 2 Bath
1,900 Sq. Ft. l 0.23 Acres

$250,000



Fitchburg
$249,900 l 3 Bed, 2 Bath
1,456 Sq. Ft. l 0.3 Acres



Leominster
$254,750 l 3 Bed, 1 Bath
1,545 Sq. Ft. l 0.17 Acres



Gardner
$249,800 l 3 Bed, 2.5 Bath
2,182 Sq. Ft. l 0.25 Acres

$350,000



Fitchburg
$349,900 l 3 Bed, 2.5 Bath
2,020 Sq. Ft. l 0.46 Acres



Leominster
$349,900 l 4 Bed, 2 Bath
3,270 Sq. Ft. l 0.32 Acres



Gardner
$339,900 l 4 Bed, 2.5 Bath
1,956 Sq. Ft. l 0.28 Acres