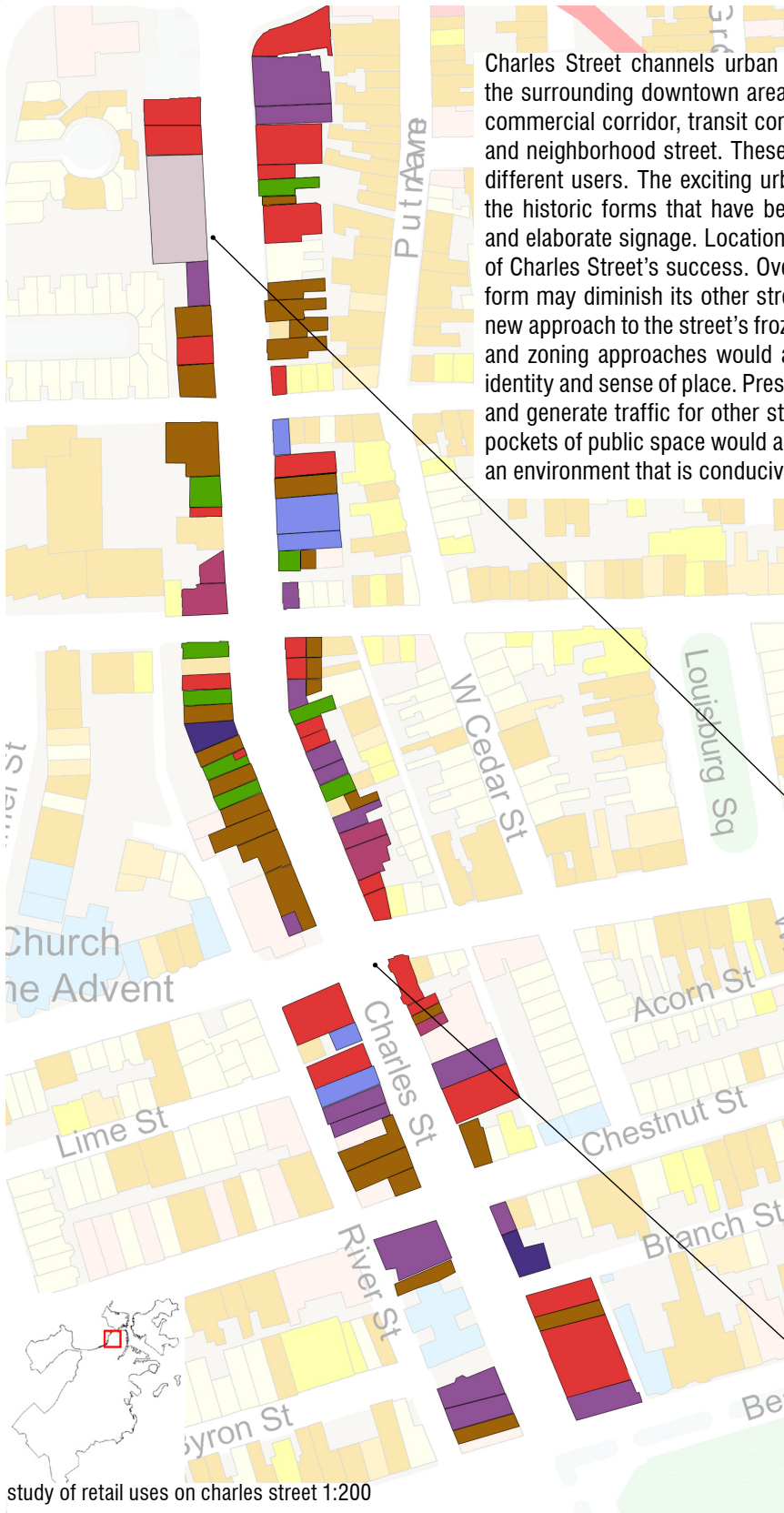




analysis of charles street, boston, ma

Charles Street channels urban vitality through the historic Beacon Hill neighborhood from the surrounding downtown areas of Boston. The street embodies several identities including commercial corridor, transit connector for pedestrian and vehicular flows, tourist destination, and neighborhood street. These functions are mutually reinforcing and attract a multitude of different users. The exciting urban experience on Charles Street can be attributed in part to the historic forms that have been preserved there like narrow sidewalks, large storefronts, and elaborate signage. Location, scale, access, and the mix of retail are the other key factors of Charles Street's success. Over time, strict historic design guidelines governing the street's form may diminish its other strengths. Redevelopment pressures will continue to soar and a new approach to the street's frozen identity may better preserve value. Innovative urban design and zoning approaches would allow the street to gradually adapt without losing its historic identity and sense of place. Preserving neighborhood uses and retail would stabilize commerce and generate traffic for other stores. Improvements to the public realm on the street and the pockets of public space would also enhance the street. Overall, these initiatives could generate an environment that is conducive to change and interventions from farsighted developers.



- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| family residential 1 | institutional | hotel |
| family residential 2 | industrial | real estate dealers |
| family residential 3 | open space | restaurants/bars/cafes |
| apartments | surface parking | gift shops |
| mixed use | neighborhood retail | clothes |
| commercial | antiques/furniture | garage |



north end of charles street



mt. vernon street

