

SECTION 4: PLAN ELEMENTS

4.1 Cultural + Historic Resources

4.2 Economic Vitality

4.3 Housing

4.4 Land Use + Zoning

4.5 Mobility + Transportation

4.6 Open Space + Natural Resources

4.7 Public Facilities + Infrastructure

4.8 Fiscal Planning

Each plan element section contains the following information:

- Introduction
- What the Community Said
- This “Element” Today (Existing Conditions)
- Goals + Policies, Strategies, and Actions
- Systems Matrix



Damon Mill Square

SECTION 4.2 ECONOMIC VITALITY

INTRODUCTION

Concord has many economic assets that contribute to its economic vitality, historical, architectural, cultural and intellectual fabric, and quality of life that are critical to preserving and strengthening the town. Concord’s village centers are vibrant business, historical, and cultural centers that provide valued amenities to residents, attract and serve visitors, and are desirable business locations. The many self-employed residents, entrepreneurs, and creative enterprises in Concord are important yet underappreciated resources for ensuring future economic vitality that will serve community needs, as well as social and environmental goals. Other assets are the long-standing independent businesses that contribute to town character and quality of life for residents, and the cultural and historical heritage that attracts visitors and shapes the town’s image and values as well as potential business, agricultural and commercial properties on Old Road to Nine Acre Corner (ORNAC), Baker Avenue, Virginia Road, Forest Ridge Road, and 2229 Main Street.

Concord also faces economic trends and local conditions that threaten its long-term economic health. These threats include the growth of online shopping, changes in business technology, a difficult local business environment due to changing property ownership and increasing rents, and limited civic and government capacity to support and guide economic development. Concurrently, Concord has opportunities improve its economic vitality including an active self-employed and entrepreneurial population, as well as locations for business and commercial growth noted above. A more proactive plan and greater attention to economic development is now needed to ensure that Concord sustains its vibrant village centers, diverse economy, and commercial tax base.

Supporting economic vitality in town will provide the following benefits:

- Sustain and strengthen Concord’s village centers and their contribution to the town’s character, culture, and overall quality of life;
- Maintain a larger commercial property tax base to help fund the Town’s services and modulate increases in residential property taxes;
- Provide business ownership and employment opportunities for Concord residents;
- Create opportunities for entrepreneurs and enterprises to advance sustainability, resiliency, and equity goals and help address community needs;
- Provide goods and useful services conveniently to residents and visitors;
- Strengthen Concord’s connection to the region with opportunities to advance its vision and priorities regionally.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID...

October 2017 Envision Concord Survey Highlights

(Total of 458 Respondents from mid-September to mid-October 2017)

- Many self-employed Concord entrepreneurs and established businesses have plans to expand within the next ten years.
- West Concord, Concord Center, and the Thoreau Street Depot Area are preferred locations for commercial growth.
- Help in finding space is by far the most useful assistance sought by businesses.
- Self-employed entrepreneurs are also interested in obtaining assistance with business planning and town permits.

Envision Concord Website:

- High real estate costs, up-front sewer capacity charges, and difficulties in finding workers are key business challenges and are barriers to new business.
- There is strong community support for local businesses and Town employees work hard to solve problems and get things done for new and expanding enterprises.
- The regulatory and approval process to fill a vacant space, start a new business, and make property improvements can be difficult, costly, and take many months.
- Limited parking, traffic congestion, and a lack of bike infrastructure are concerns for the village centers.
- The town centers are not pedestrian friendly and lack facilities to encourage social interaction.

ECONOMIC VITALITY TODAY

Concord has a diverse economy that included 960 businesses and 11,807 jobs in 2015. Key economic sectors and assets from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (see Fig. 17 and Fig. 18) for Concord include:

- Health & Education sectors account for 2 in 5 jobs – much larger than the one-quarter share for Massachusetts and Middlesex County and there are opportunities to expand the Health Sector along the Route 2 corridor.
- Professional & Business Services represent 19% of jobs, slightly below the county and state percentages.
- Leisure & Hospitality businesses provide 12% of Concord jobs and were the main source of the town’s job growth over the past decade.
- There is a large base of self-employed workers and entrepreneurs. At 12%, Concord’s self-employment rate is twice the state and county level.
- A highly educated labor force (68% have a bachelor’s degree or higher) concentrated in high skill and well-paying occupations (74% work in management, business, science, and the arts).

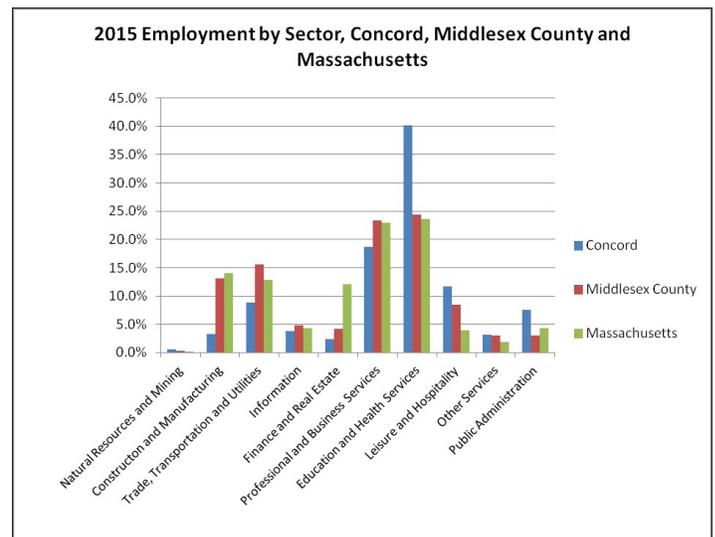


Figure 17 Employment by Sector - Concord, Middlesex County, and Massachusetts (Data Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages)

- Large (\$6 billion) tax base that is the highest among its neighboring communities and lower residential and commercial property tax rates than its neighbors results in higher absolute tax dollars paid.
- Three vibrant commercial centers with a diverse mix of largely independently-owned businesses, artists, and cultural uses provide valuable amenities and serve as community centers for residents. Many of these businesses, especially in Concord Center, also depend on tourism and visitor spending to remain viable (see Fig. 19).
 - Concord Center and Thoreau Street Depot Area have 214 establishments and 54 individual artists, including several important historical and cultural destinations. Retailers, professional services, and finance and real estate are the most common business types.
 - West Concord has 139 businesses and 17 individual artists with a larger share of restaurants and personal services enterprises than Concord Center.
- Concord’s abundant natural assets and open space provide value to the business community by making Concord a desirable place to live, work, and visit. Concord’s broadly varied land use similarly provides economic value.

- Agriculture is a key component of Concord’s economy but faces important issues including labor availability, lack of housing for employees and transportation for seasonal workers, farm/agriculture economic viability, and ownership succession.
- Concord’s locally-owned business community is diverse, service-oriented, growing, and comprised of smaller businesses.
- An active and energetic business community committed to sustaining Concord’s economic vitality, sustainability, historic and cultural assets, and quality of life.

Along with these assets, Concord faces less favorable trends and important challenges to its long-term economic vitality:

- Concord has a declining economic base that lost 6% of its jobs from 2005 to 2015 while Middlesex County grew by 11% and Massachusetts by 8%, including job losses in fast growing regional sectors (Health Care, Education and Professional Services).
- Concord employers are heavily dependent on recruiting workers from outside the town with 3,600 more jobs than residents in the labor force and many jobs that do not match its highly educated labor force.

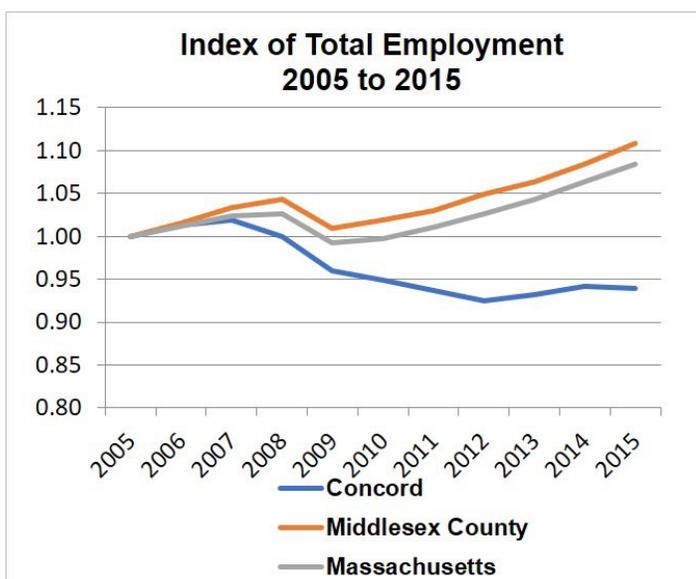


Figure 18 Index of Total Employment - Concord, Middlesex County, and Massachusetts, 2005-2015

(Data Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages)

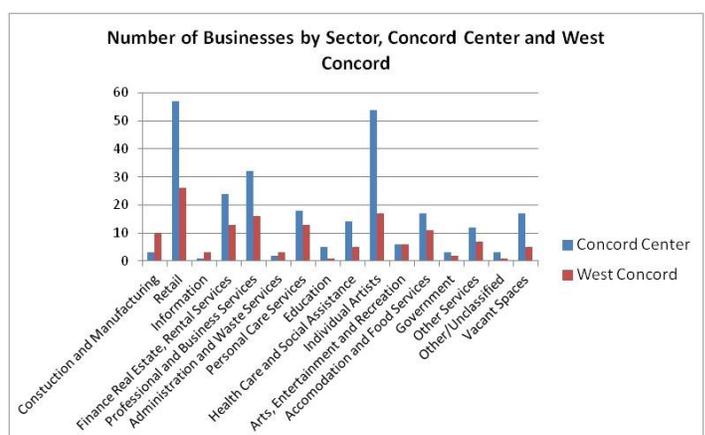


Figure 19 Number of Businesses by Sector - Concord Center and West Concord

(Data Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages)

- Concord has limited land and building sites for new development opportunities and attraction and growth of larger employers.
- The town is a challenging environment in which to start, operate, and grow a business due to high real estate costs, lengthy zoning and permit approval processes, and limited parking in some areas.
- Concord's relative lack of housing choices for those who work in town is an obstacle to attracting needed workers.
- Weak connections between the town's commuter rail and other in-town locations limit these transit hubs and their usefulness to customers, workers, and visitors.
- The lack of public transportation services at extended hours and to communities where existing and potential workers live is an impediment to recruiting workers.
- Concord's small independent businesses need support addressing their space and hiring needs.
- Growing competition from internet-based shopping and services and large businesses and retail chains that are increasing their use of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, to gain customers, increase revenue and reduce business costs.
- The loss or relocation of several long-term businesses and growing vacancies in Concord Center are a concern.
- There are challenges to providing a consistently welcoming and positive experience to shoppers, pedestrians, and visitors in village centers due to traffic congestion, limited open spaces and sitting areas, insufficient signage and pathways to connect to historic, cultural, and recreational assets.
- There is an absence of active business and civic organizations focused on the town's economic development, management of its village centers, and promotion of its visitor experiences.

Indicator	Concord	Middlesex County	Massachusetts
Employment Growth, 2005 to 2015	-6.0%	10.9%	8.4%
Establishment Growth, 2005 to 2015	3.9%	13.0%	16.5%
Payroll Growth, 2005 to 2015	14.4%	52.6%	44.4%
Average Wage, 2015	\$67,836	\$79,230	\$66,696
Manufacturing Employment Change, 2005 to 2015	-75.3%	-13.7%	-18.5%
Professional and Business Services, 2005 to 2015	-7.4%	25.8%	16.1%
Education and Health Care, 2005 to 2015	-0.3%	22.6%	27.0%
Leisure and Hospitality, 2005 to 2015	13.9%	22.4%	19.6%
Public Administration, Employment Change, 2005 to 2015	17.2%	11.1%	4.2%

Table 3. Employment and Economic Base Indicators
(Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages)

GOALS + POLICIES, STRATEGIES, AND ACTIONS

Concord has many economic assets that contribute to its economic vitality, unique character, and quality of life that are critical to preserve and strengthen. Concord’s village centers are particularly important as vibrant business, historical, and cultural centers that provide valued amenities to residents and are attractions for visitors. The village centers’ proximity to transit, many amenities, and active businesses also make West Concord, Concord Center, and Thoreau Street Depot areas desirable business locations. Consequently, these areas are priority locations for future business growth through new infill and redevelopment projects. However, in the face of a rapidly changing economy and market and many new business technologies, the long-term vibrancy of Concord’s village centers and diverse independent small business base is not guaranteed. Enhancing and managing Concord’s village centers as unique and welcoming experience-oriented cultural, shopping, and dining destinations is a key strategy to sustaining their economic vitality and on-going contribution to the town’s character and quality of life.



Concord Center

Concord’s diversity of self-employed residents, entrepreneurs, and creative enterprises are important and underutilized assets for ensuring future economic vitality. Entrepreneurs and new enterprises are important drivers of economic development and are increasingly being recognized as a means to advance social and environmental goals. An intentional strategy to recognize, support, and nurture local entrepreneurs will generate new businesses and jobs, help strengthen village centers, and potentially create solutions to address social, economic, and environmental challenges in Concord and the larger society.

Future economic vitality also depends on tackling three critical challenges: (1) a difficult business environment that may make Concord a less attractive location to start, establish, or grow a business than other communities in the region, thereby eroding its business base and economic vitality; (2) limited civic and government capacity to support and guide economic development; and (3) the lack of a growing workforce in the community due to an aging and overly-qualified population.

Envision Concord’s plan for Economic Vitality is organized around the following four goals that preserve, strengthen, and capitalize on these critical economic assets while addressing key challenges to Concord’s economic vitality in the coming decade. This section presents each goal along with the specific strategies, policies, and actions to advance it.



Thoreau Street Depot Area

Goal 1: Renew and improve Concord's village centers as vital pedestrian-friendly, economic, and social hubs that enable community engagement on a wider scale.

Since many town and private sector actions, policies, and investments shape Concord's village centers, a comprehensive and coordinated systems approach is critical. This multifaceted systems approach to the village centers is presented in Section 3's Opportunity Scenario #1. Land-use policies, transportation and infrastructure investments, historic preservation, cultural resource policies, and other town services contribute to the quality and vitality of the village centers as both economic and social hubs. This section addresses the main economic development strategies, policies, and actions to advance this goal through development policies, business recruitment and leasing, events and programming, marketing, and promotion of the centers. Key tenets for the village center economic development strategy are:

- Reinforcing West Concord, Concord Center, and Thoreau Street Depot areas as dense mixed-use commercial centers with active ground uses that emphasize retail, restaurant, entertainment, and activities.
- Maintaining a diverse mix of unique independently-owned businesses, including goods and services for residents and visitors.
- Utilizing Concord's significant historical, cultural, artistic, and natural assets to bring more residents, visitors, and regular customers to the centers and support local businesses.
- More actively promoting Concord and the rich range of experiences that it offers to residents and visitors within and outside the Boston region to support local businesses, artists, and cultural institutions.



West Concord Village Center

Six core action areas will be used to advance this goal:

1. Maintain and extend zoning policies that allow mixed-use and appropriately dense development in and around village centers. These policies may also encourage new development to be concentrated in and around the village centers and allow for higher density development on infill sites and at redevelopment projects within the centers. Policies may provide a streamlined permitting process for projects that meet explicit use, form, and design standards. Zoning revisions may be considered to also allow more intensive but non-industrial uses (such as high density commercial, or high density residential which creates more market demand for local goods and services) in the immediate environs of the two train stations.
2. Enhance the public spaces, physical connectivity, and general environment of the business centers. Through collaboration of appropriate Town departments and appointed boards and commissions, improvements in the physical infrastructure within and surrounding the village centers is a goal. These improvements may include refining transportation and parking, identifying safe pedestrian and bicycle connections, adding public outdoor seating, upgrading water/sewer service, enhancing cell and WiFi service, and other facets of infrastructure to improve the visitor experience and

business environment. More detailed actions are described in the Mobility + Transportation and Public Facilities + Infrastructure Plan Elements.

3. Through public-private partnership, work with business and property owners to coordinate the marketing and leasing of vacant ground floor spaces. Learning from other communities who have tried to solve similar issues, consider that this coordination effort could create a shared vision to curate the desired types of businesses to occupy ground floor spaces that enhance the village centers and sustain an emphasis on active ground floor uses and unique independent businesses. A leasing team could be established with property owners, commercial brokers, businesses, and Town economic development representatives to market and lease vacant space. Marketing materials that document the advantages of starting or locating a business in Concord with success stories could be prepared to use in this effort. This team could also provide information, introductions, and guidance on the required licenses and permits and connect prospective businesses to other business owners and resources that can support their decision-making and success in Concord.
4. Establish a coordinated marketing initiative that brands and packages a range of experiences and destinations related to culture, history, art, agriculture, natural areas, and other themes along with retail and dining at local establishments. Elements of this initiative may include:
 - a. Concord Day Pass/Visitor Card that includes entry to several attractions and offers discounts to local stores and restaurants for one package price.
 - b. A branded message that seeks to attract those seeking a “deeper dive” into one or more Concord’s experiences and who have disposable income to support local businesses.
 - c. A map showing overall destinations as well as maps with itineraries that connect sites and narratives by “themes” so people can seek out experiences of their interest or be compelled to come back again and again. These theme maps would be comprehensive in scope - including sites, connections, history, culture, art, retail, and restaurants.
 - d. Efforts that focus on increasing visitor numbers during off-season times including marketing and collaboration between businesses and organizations to develop events and attractions in off-peak times.
 - e. Website and/or app to host all of the above and clearly show parking options, including electric vehicle charging locations.
 - f. Initiatives that involve high school students in creating marketing ideas, maps, themes, etc.
5. Encourage and support more festivals and events to draw more visitors and surrounding area residents to the village centers, with an emphasis on events held during off-peak tourist times. These initiatives could also invite people to stay multiple days. Several ideas for new festivals and enhanced existing events:
 - a. Literary festival (such as Concord’s Festival of Authors)
 - b. Agricultural Day (enhance the existing successful Ag Day)
 - c. Discover West Concord day (enhance the existing annual event)
 - d. Holiday Tree lighting
 - e. Riverfest (expand event to West Concord)
 - f. July 4th Picnic in the Park
 - g. Music festivals
6. Through public-private collaboration, provide information and services to improve the visitor experience and connect visitors to the varied experiences and businesses in Concord. This will require a range of digital, physical, and personal resources and tools to be tested and adapted over time based on their feasibility and impact. An initial set of actions for this strategy includes:
 - a. Develop a map of attractions and a visitor-friendly website and/or app to help create a compelling visitor destination that is easy to navigate and that encourages return visits.
 - b. Recruit volunteer ambassadors to provide a personal touch and local knowledge, giving free tours, providing information, i.e., directions to sites and friendly reminders about parking rules.

- c. Install standardized signage with historical interpretation where appropriate and “you are here” maps. Trails and destination maps would be named with themes such as “Thoreau Trail,” “Literary Trail,” “Art Trail,” “Greenway,” “Riverway,” etc.
 - d. Institute a public art program that supports local, regional, and international installations – attracting a visitor market with an interest in purchasing art.
 - e. Increase and enhance number of local restaurants and cafés featuring “art on the walls,” showcasing local artistic talent.
 - f. Assess feasibility of a “Wild, Historic River tour package” to bring visitors to the nationally designated wild, historic waterway with stays at historic B&Bs or farm-stays, and provision of maps with river access points and boat rentals, and a “food and agricultural tour” to bring visitors to selected farms and food-related businesses, highlight the town’s historic and current agricultural and food-related policies, amenities, and resources.
- 2. Support growth of existing and similar businesses within existing industrial and commercial areas in town, such as Baker Avenue, Virginia Road, near Emerson Hospital/Concord Turnpike, 2229 Main Street (Starmet) site, and others. Outline development guidelines for appropriate potential infill development to be tied to transportation management strategies for improved shared transportation access and updated sustainable design requirements.
 - 3. Encourage local businesses to work collaboratively with local and regional workforce development programs, transportation authorities, and housing agencies to help with workforce shortages. With transportation and housing being major issues for certain employers, such as food production and service businesses, businesses should be encouraged to work together to find possible solutions. Town government in conjunction with local business associations may convene businesses to identify shared workforce and occupation needs. This information will help determine the appropriate education and training providers to partner with to address workforce shortages. As proposed under Goal 4, Concord may advocate with the State Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Workforce Development Board to change its regional affiliation from Metro South/West to the Greater Lowell to better connect Concord employers to more proximate and relevant workforce development resources
 - 4. Conduct a needs assessment with Emerson Hospital and other local health care employers to identify factors and initiatives surrounding workforce attraction and retention for healthcare and medical institutions.

Goal 2: Build on the enhanced quality of life encapsulated in Goal 1 to support the strong commercial business successes throughout town and attract and retain a constant workforce.

To encourage and support the local business community, the Town can further study policies and programs to address additional issues, including diversity in business types and workforce attraction and retention.

Four actions are proposed to further the support of the village center businesses:

- 1. Develop a strategy to balance a visitor-based economy with a resident-based economy. With input from residents, businesses, property owners, and other stakeholders, the Town should conduct a market study to understand the actual demand for certain services and goods. Information from this study and the resulting strategy can inform the work to market and lease vacant ground floor spaces discussed under Goal 1.

Goal 3: Become a recognized and supportive community for business and social entrepreneurs to start and grow new businesses.

Concord can adopt a number of policies and activities to encourage resident entrepreneurs and support their efforts to start and grow their enterprises in Concord and build greater recognition of these efforts to attract entrepreneurs from surrounding communities. Finally, Concord may tap its entrepreneurial community and talent as a resource to address important community and social needs.

Eight key policies and initiatives are proposed to achieve these ends:

1. Support the expansion of co-working and incubator spaces in Concord. Co-working and small business incubator spaces provide an accessible, supportive, and collaborative environment for new and small enterprises. The Wheelhouse in West Concord is a successful example of such a space that is highly valued by its tenants and fully occupied. The Town should indicate its support for co-working spaces and encourage property owners and developers to include them in proposed projects. Developing a co-working space use category by right in appropriate locations in village centers (upper floor space and all floors in buildings outside of the main pedestrian retail streets) and with standard requirements tailored to their needs would simplify regulatory approval for these projects.
2. In collaboration with others, host networking events for self-employed residents and entrepreneurs. Working with the Chamber of Commerce and Concord Business Partnership, the Town can host periodic events (perhaps quarterly) to encourage self-employed residents and both aspiring and exiting entrepreneurs to gather, get to know each other, and explore potential business opportunities. These events promote community and peer support among entrepreneurs, signal the town’s support for entrepreneurs, and increase recognition of the town’s entrepreneurial activity. Beyond their primary networking role, these events would include a short program or speaker on an important issue for entrepreneurs or new business success stories.

3. In collaboration with others, organize an annual new enterprise competition with public presentations. This competition would invite the development and submission of private and “social” business proposals to a panel of judges and the public. Along with normal for-profit businesses, the competition would emphasize business proposals with a positive community or social impact, including meeting an important community need or business gap in Concord or address larger social needs related to environmental sustainability, health, housing, equity, etc. The top business proposals/plans that pass the panel of judges would present at a public pitch event with attendees voting on the award of prize money (judges might also award some prize money). Winners would also receive support and referrals to resources to help them to launch their business idea. The Town would help top proposers work with banks, business associations, and employers to raise prize funds and organize and promote the competition. Successful examples of these community-scale events are Holyoke Soup night organized by the Holyoke Chamber Foundation’s SPARK program and Start-Up Portland Week in Portland, Maine.



Wheelhouse Coworking Space, Concord MA (Exterior)



Charles River Coworking Space, Newton MA
(Source: www.charlesrivercoworking.com)



Wheelhouse Coworking Space, Concord MA (Interior)
(Source: <http://bradfordmill.com/wheelhouse/>)

4. Serve as a referral resource to key entrepreneurial development resources. Massachusetts and the Boston region have extensive resources to support entrepreneurs, many of which are low or no-cost and some are targeted to specific populations, business types, and stages. These resources include US Small Business Administration programs, college and university centers, and private sector networks and service providers. A Town staff person or volunteer can serve as a point person to become familiar with these resources, supported by community crowd-sourcing and an intern, and over time work to develop referral relationships with resources that are most proximate and relevant to Concord.
5. Create a process for coordinated review and decision-making for small business projects. Concord's zoning and licensing process for new businesses can be complex and cumbersome especially when review and action by multiple departments and boards are required. Concord has utilized a process to coordinate reviews across departments for larger projects (e.g., Concord Market at Millbrook Tarry) but no such formal process exists for smaller projects. However, it is often the smaller projects and businesses that are most in need of a coordinated and more streamlined process since they are less familiar with the Town regulations and processes and have less money to hire consultants and attorneys and absorb business delays. This process would include a point person to: (1) coordinate the process, provide an early review to identify all license, permits and actions needed with required supporting documentation to establish the business and (2) convene all relevant department staff to raise any issues and concerns and propose a schedule to reduce delays and compress the review and decision process, working out any conflicts or differing interpretations that arise in the process. As experience is gained with this small project review process, department heads and boards may identify actions to further simplify and streamline the process consistent with addressing the underlying regulatory and policy goals.
6. Regularly review existing business regulations to remove or revise outdated ones and respond to the changing business environment. Since regulations can accumulate over time and combine to become costly and time-consuming for businesses to address, it is important to ensure that regulations or requirements are eliminated when they are no longer needed or

effective, for example, when they are superseded by state regulations or their original goal or purpose no longer exists. The Planning Division could coordinate such a review every three to five years, working with other departments and an advisory group that includes business owners.

7. Create a Business Welcoming Committee through the business community to formally welcome new businesses to Concord and to help connect them to resources so they can have a strong start. This committee would not be an official Town Committee but may include existing business owners and representatives of the Town. It would contact and welcome the new businesses, meet with the owner or manager to offer support, and address any questions they have and inform/refer them to resources they may need or want to pursue for their first year in town. The committee may also assist new businesses and the new proposed civic organization to organize a grand opening event to announce and attract customers to the business.
8. Incentivize businesses to become zero emission entities.

Goal 4: Build local civic and government capacity for economic development with a special focus on (a) related arts, cultural and tourism activities, (b) medical and healthcare specialties, and (c) "green" and environmental businesses.

Concord has very few staff and little organizational capacity focused on addressing the Town's economic development goals, working with the business community, artists and cultural organizations, healthcare institutions, managing its village centers, and promoting tourism. One consequence of this limited capacity is that Concord is not well connected to regional economic development and workforce development organizations that can provide resources to support its economic development agenda.

Five key actions are needed to address this capacity gap:

1. Create a nonprofit civic organization to work on improving and managing Concord’s three main village centers and promote the town’s arts, culture, and tourism resources. This organization would engage businesses, property owners, town government, and arts and cultural organizations to collaborate on two closely related agendas: (1) improving and managing the three village centers (Concord Center, Thoreau Street Depot Area, and West Concord); and (2) promoting Concord to local, regional, and international visitors, creating strong linkages for visitors among its varied historical, cultural, natural, and business resources. This new organization could be modeled on Main Street organizations that work to revitalize and manage commercial districts in hundreds of communities and that are supported by the National Main Street Center (originally created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation). Boston, Somerville, and Salem all use main street organizations to promote, manage, and strengthen their commercial districts. Funding for the organization would come from private sponsorships and contributions, Town funds, foundation grants, and self-generated revenue.
2. Consider establishing a Town economic development staff position. This new staff person would oversee implementation of the Economic Vitality component of Concord’s long-term plan, serve as a liaison to the business and non-profit cultural and arts communities, represent and advocate for Concord with regional organizations, and monitor and provide information on economic trends, opportunities, and business issues. This staff person would also support promotion and coordination efforts among arts and cultural organizations. Any decision on this new staff position needs to reflect the fiscal planning goals and budget priorities in Section 4.8.
3. Connect and engage with state and regional economic development resources. The Town, through its new economic development staff person, volunteers, and other town representatives can enhance its relationships and participation with key state and regional economic development organizations and agencies. This will allow Concord to help shape regional visions and initiatives and potentially bring new resources and services to town. Key state and regional resources to connect with include:
 - a. MassDevelopment – a key source of business, real estate and non-profit financing, including a cultural facilities fund and brownfield development grants.
 - b. Commonwealth Corporation – an important source of employer workforce development training grants.
 - c. The Boston regional Small Business Development Center and Service Corps of Retired Executives.
 - d. Middlesex Community College and Minuteman Technical High School for vocation training and hiring.
 - e. Concord should also explore joining the Middlesex 3 Coalition through which nine communities along Route 3 collaborate on economic development. Although Concord does not border Route 3, the Coalition’s members are strongly connected to similar economic development and transportation issues and the Coalition includes the neighboring towns of Bedford and Lexington. Concord should also advocate with the state’s Department of Labor and Workforce Development and state Workforce Development Board to change its region affiliation from Metro South/West to the Greater Lowell Workforce Development Board and region. This no-cost change will facilitate efforts to better connect Concord employers to more proximate and relevant workforce development resources.
4. Create a Town-sponsored economic development website and guide to opening and maintaining a business. Concord currently lacks these two basic information tools that inform business and entrepreneurs interested in starting, locating, and maintaining a business in Concord about the Town’s goals and environment for businesses and the relevant regulations, permits/license requirements, and process. The website could also serve as a clearinghouse for information on available commercial and business space and help connect businesses seeking new space to available options.
5. Conduct an assessment of demand for additional medical uses and “green” and environmental businesses and associated needs for those businesses. Location of medical facilities, in particular, should be easily accessible for residents and the larger community, possibly along or adjacent to Route 2.

SECTION 4.2 - ECONOMIC VITALITY SYSTEMS MATRIX

		Section 4.1				Section 4.2				Section 4.3						Section 4.4					Section 4.5					
		Cultural + Historic Resources				Economic Vitality				Housing						Land Use					Mobility + Transportation					
		Goal #1	Goal #2	Goal #3	Goal #4	Goal #1	Goal #2	Goal #3	Goal #4	Goal #1	Goal #2	Goal #3	Goal #4	Goal #5	Goal #6	Goal #1	Goal #2	Goal #3	Goal #4	Goal #5	Goal #1	Goal #2	Goal #3	Goal #4	Goal #5	
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	#3		●			●	●	●	●																	
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Note: The Systems Matrix is intended to depict crossover between goals and actions throughout the Plan Elements section. It is intended as a tool to assist in prioritization of actions based on the "breadth" of their crossover with formalized goals both within and outside of their respective sections.

