

4.0 A VISION FOR THE FUTURE: RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous sections provide the foundation for the West Concord Village Master Plan recommendations. A vision for the future is illustrated in the Graphic Master Plan and supplemented with diagrams and perspective sketches. The plan is based on the findings of the public scenario building and design workshops, existing conditions analysis, meetings with the West Concord Task Force and town staff, two surveys, and interviews with property owners, business owners, residents and other stakeholders. It also draws on previously completed studies of West Concord, most recently the 2007 Village Centers Study.

4.1 Creating a Vision for West Concord Village

Master Plan Priorities

The West Concord Village Master Plan is driven by the following priorities identified by the West Concord Task Force at the beginning of the planning process:

West Concord Task Force Master Plan Priorities	
Priority for village	Means to achieve
1. Improved flow and connectivity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for pedestrians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ more paths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for cars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ less congestion ○ better access to current parking ○ more parking ○ enhanced crosswalks, sidewalks, street furniture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for bicycles and other small transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ better bicycling and related infrastructure
2. New building development attuned to village scale and character	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain small village character and scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ limit building height and density via zoning changes ○ work with developers and landowners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain and enhance village visual appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ institute design guidelines or standards ○ develop property improvement program
3. Focus on small business preservation and development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep primarily independently owned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ prevent presence of large chain stores ○ work with developers and landowners ○ promote startups/incubators ○ maintain affordable rents for small businesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance visual appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ institute design guidelines or standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain and enhance practical nature of store offerings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ prevent "boutiquification" of village stores
4. Model best practices in environmental sustainability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote use of sustainable strategies and green materials in all village development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ facilitate energy conservation and environmental sustainability programs
5. Enhance recreation and social engagement opportunities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote recreation opportunities for residents, families, children, teens, seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ family-friendly meeting places ○ better access to natural resources ○ enhance active and passive recreation facilities ○ teen-oriented activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community-building opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ places for community events ○ civic, educational, and recreational amenities

Conceptual Theme Boards

Four conceptual theme boards were developed during the public process to further define and categorize the Master Plan priorities, relevant issues, and future opportunities in West Concord. They covered:

- Transportation Network and Circulation
- Streetscape and Parking
- Parks, Open Space, and Trails
- New Development, Redevelopment, and Property Reuse

The conceptual theme boards provided a framework for evaluating public enhancements, future development, and other changes facing West Concord.

Preferred Scenarios

For each conceptual theme board, a variety of potential alternate scenarios were represented graphically. They reflected the various ideas and recommendations derived from Task Force meetings, public workshops, and other community involvement. These potential alternate scenarios included two-dimensional plan view drawings and three-dimensional sketches illustrating key sites around the village where changes were recommended or anticipated in the future. Many of the alternate scenarios also illustrated possible density, design, and use characteristics of future development in selected areas, opportunities for public infrastructure improvements (such as streetscape, parking, lighting, signage, and similar enhancements), potential open space and recreation enhancements, and traffic management and safety improvement ideas (including circulation for pedestrians, vehicles, and bicycles) that could provide public benefit to West Concord.



Public Discussion of Concept Plan at Design Workshop, September 2009

The conceptual theme boards and scenarios were presented to the public at the Community Design Workshop in September, 2009. Based on the input from this workshop and follow-up meetings with the West Concord Task Force, preferred scenarios were selected for the Master Plan. In choosing the preferred scenarios, the Task Force conducted the following evaluation process:

- Accounting for all public feedback from the design workshop and other community venues;
- Merging highly supported and performing elements of the alternate scenarios into an overall conceptual design (the green dot/yellow dot/red dot test);
- Documenting the degree to which the preferred scenarios performed according to Task Force goals and objectives; and
- Reviewing preferred scenario plans with the town staff and primary stakeholders.

This process was designed to assure that the West Concord Village Master Plan has public support and that various public enhancements are feasible and may be achievable over a period of time. In Section 5, the Plan is translated into specific implementation strategies including zoning revisions, business development and marketing programs, and capital improvement planning.

The Graphic Master Plan illustrates a vision for the future of West Concord. It shows recommended traffic circulation and connectivity improvements, a phasing of infill development where appropriate, existing building renovation and reuse in selected locations, parking improvements, streetscape treatments, waterfront access and facilities improvements, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and other public enhancements.

4.2 Recommendations: Circulation and Connectivity

The primary goal for the West Concord transportation system is the efficient movement of people and goods. Existing commuter traffic, motorists bypassing the Route 2 rotary, and anticipated future development, however, have the potential to greatly impact traffic conditions and safety in the village center.

The Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue corridor is the social and economic spine of West Concord as well as the surrounding area. The appearance and functionality of this corridor are a direct reflection on the village and have a significant impact on its economic performance and opportunities.

Based on public input and in collaboration with the Task Force, West Concord circulation, connectivity, and accessibility improvements were identified and incorporated into the West Concord Village Graphic Master Plan. They include preferred circulation and safety improvements, expanded street network, enhanced accessibility, and better commuter rail access and reflect the principal goals of coordinated access and improved flow and connectivity both internal and external to the village.

Street Function and Design

Streets are the primary public spaces in West Concord village and create the framework by which the town organizes existing and future development patterns. The streets in the core business area, not a particular parcel or building site, should be the starting point for planning future changes.

Improve traffic flow, connectivity, and safety - There are six (6) key areas identified and illustrated on the Village Graphic Master Plan where new streets are proposed or existing streets are redesigned to improve traffic flow, connectivity, safety, and appearance.

- Proposed Beharrell Street extension west to Commonwealth Avenue;
- Proposed connector street between Beharrell Street and the commuter rail parking lot;
- Proposed connector street between Commonwealth Avenue and Maple Court;
- Commonwealth Avenue streetscape design (including traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements);
- Maple Court redesign; and
- Bradford Street redesign

These recommendations are discussed in more detail in the next section.

Adopt “Complete Street” Policy and Design Hierarchy of New Streets and Existing Corridors – “Complete Streets” is a term used when the needs of all road users are taken into consideration with each road project – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transport users – with the goal of designing and operating streets that are safe, attractive and provide comfortable access and travel for all users. Some of the benefits of adopting a Complete Street policy may include: creating or enhancing a “sense of place” and improving social interaction while generally improving adjacent land values.

Complete Streets

Complete streets are a balanced transportation system that can bolster economic growth and community stability by providing intermodal accessible and efficient connections between residences, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations. Design characteristics of complete streets include:

- ADA-compliant curb cuts
- Sidewalk improvements
- New bicycle lanes
- Roadside improvements for public transportation, including bus shelters and bus-priority traffic signals
- Traffic-calming measures such as curb extensions, pedestrian medians/refuges, chicanes, and speed humps
- Improved landscape features, including street trees, benches, and street lighting
- Intersection and crosswalk improvements for non-motorized users
- Other improvements to the safety, accessibility, and quality of the road

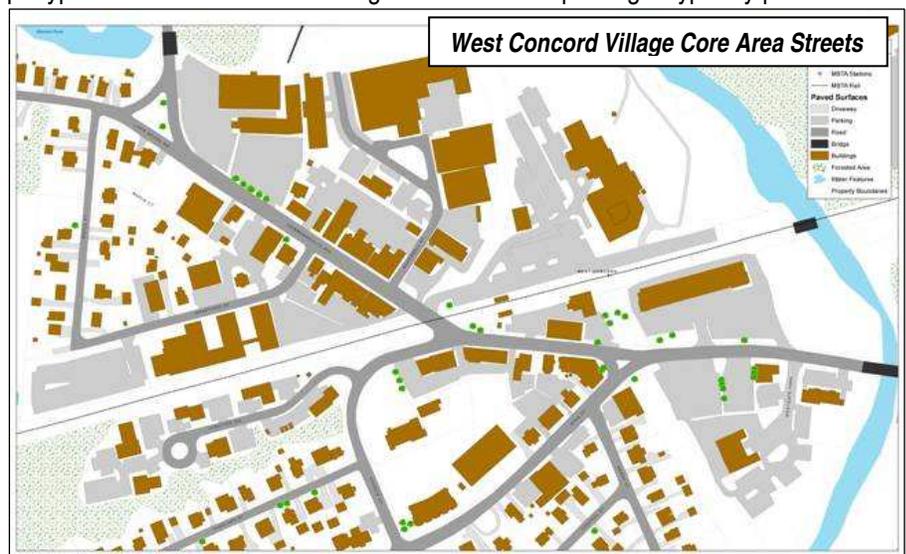
While acquiring land and constructing new streets in West Concord may not be financially feasible for the town at this time, providing detailed design standards and a hierarchy for new and reconstructed public roadways is achievable. New growth and redevelopment should be targeted to areas based on the development's relationship to the public realm of streets, trails and open spaces.

Additionally, the integration of various modes of travel including private vehicle, public transit, pedestrian, and bicycle into the land use regulations (subdivision and zoning ordinance) and design guidelines for West Concord can then become part of the discussion with developers. The proposed network and design (or redesign) of existing and new public streets should also be incorporated into the town's Long Range Comprehensive Plan, which will then provide clear direction to future developers about the intended patterns of development and supporting infrastructure.

A hierarchy of complete street design standards has been prepared for the West Concord village (see table below). It categorizes the thoroughfares according to width, parking, and overall appearance with the goal of enhancing the pedestrian experience and providing an attractive public roadway environment.

1. **Village Center Avenues** – This streetscape type serves as a central thoroughfare. On-street parking is typically parallel to the curb and on both sides of the street, depending on the width of the right-of-way. Avenues in West Concord include Main Street from the Westgate Park/Assabet River bridge to Junction Park and Commonwealth Avenue from the railroad tracks to Kenneth Dunn Square. Streetscape improvements are emphasized in these segments to set the stage for an attractive entrance into the village. One variation would be to provide a partial center-landscaped median at key locations to enhance the gateway approach into the village from the east and west.

For larger version of this image see Appendix 6



2. **Village Center Main Streets** – This street type is slightly narrower than an avenue; parking is typically located on both sides. It applies to Commonwealth Avenue between Junction Park and the railroad tracks in the core part of the village center and Main Street to Church and Pine Streets. Streetscape improvements include site-specific traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements; street trees can be installed in curb extensions and on adjacent private properties. Some variations on this street design include the eastern segment of Laws Brook Road and Church Street.

3. **Village Center Side Street** – This street design type typically applies to new or existing side streets that serve as connectors within the village and in neighborhoods. This streetscape type typically has designated on-street parking on one side, a planted green strip with street trees, and sidewalks/trails on one or both sides depending on the pedestrian travel patterns, potential destinations, and demand. Current side streets include Maple Court and Bradford Street; recommended connector streets such as Beharrell Street extensions to Commonwealth Avenue and to the commuter rail parking lot and a connection between Commonwealth Avenue and Maple Court.

4. **Village Neighborhood Street** – This streetscape type reinforces a traditional low-scale neighborhood access road with narrow travel lanes, informal or no street parking, and large mature trees. Depending on the location, need, and application, this type of street is narrow (18–22 feet) with an optional sidewalk on one or both sides and a green strip. This streetscape type would apply to any future development off well established residential areas in the village such as Laws Brook Road, Conant Street, Main Street, Highland Street, and Cottage Street.

New streets developed as part of public or private development plans should also follow the “complete street” hierarchy and general design standards. Currently, the subdivision regulations provide design standards for all new public streets. These may be adjusted, however, to specifically address new streets in the West Concord village area.

Recommended Complete Streets Hierarchy & Design Guidelines for West Concord Village - Part 1				
<p>EXAMPLE USE OF HIERARCHY</p> <p>ST-57-20-BL</p> <p>↑ With Bicycle Lane</p> <p>↑ 20 Ft. Pavement Width</p> <p>↑ 57 Ft. Right-of-Way Width</p> <p>↑ Thoroughfare/Streetscape Type</p>	<p>DEFINITION OF THOROUGHFARE: The man-made element that provides the major part of the public open space as well as paved lanes for vehicles. A thoroughfare is endowed with two attributes: capacity and character. Capacity is the number of vehicles that can move safely through a segment of a thoroughfare within a given time period. It is physically manifested by the number and width of lanes, by the centerline and curb radius, and the elevation of the pavement. Character is physically manifested by the thoroughfare's associated building and frontage types as determined by its location within the transect.</p>			
CLASSIFICATION	VILLAGE CENTER THOROUGHFARES			
DEFINITION	<p>Village Center Avenue: A short, axial, local speed-movement thoroughfare suitable for downtown center and core zones, providing frontage for higher density mixed-use buildings such as storefronts, shops, and offices. It is urban in character with raised curbs, storm-drain inlets, and striped on street parking. A single species of tree is planted in opportunistic alignment and confined by individual planters to create a sidewalk of maximum width, with areas accommodating street furniture. Clear trunks and high canopies are necessary to avoid blocking views of storefronts, signage, and awnings. An avenue may be conceived as an elongated square.</p>	<p>Village Center Street: A local slow-movement thoroughfare suitable for primary village center streets, providing frontage for higher density mixed-use buildings such as houses, shops, and offices. It is urban in character with raised curbs, storm-drain inlets, and striped on street parking. A single species of tree is planted in opportunistic alignment and confined by individual planters creating a sidewalk of maximum width, with areas accommodating street furniture. Clear trunks and high canopies are necessary to avoid blocking views of storefronts, signage, and awnings.</p>	<p>Alley: A narrow vehicular access way to the rear of more urban lots providing service areas, parking access, and utility easements. Alleys as they are used by trucks and must accommodate dumpsters should be paved from building face to building face and screened if possible.</p>	
CROSS SECTION/ PERSPECTIVE VIEW				
PLAN VIEW				
CHARACTERISTICS	VILLAGE CENTER AVE. (VCA-60-40)	VILLAGE CENTER SIDE STREET (VCSS-40-32)	VILLAGE CENTER MAIN STREET (VCMs-50-38)	AL-20-20
Type	Free Movement	Free Movement	Free Movement	Slow Movement
Movement	Two- 12 foot	Two- 12 foot	Two- 11 foot	Two - 10 foot
Traffic Lanes	Both Sides @ 8 ft. Marked	One Side @ 8 Feet Marked	Both Sides Parallel @ 8 Feet Marked	None
Parking Lanes	60 feet	40 feet	50 Feet	20 ft.
R.O.W. Width	40 feet	24-32 feet	38 Feet	20 ft.
Pavement Width	Two Ways	Two Ways	Two Ways	One Way or Two Way
Traffic Flow	Raised	Raised	Raised	None
Curb Type	15 feet	15 Feet	15 Feet	15 ft. max
Curb Radius	30 MPH	25 MPH	25 MPH	15 MPH
Vehicular Design Speed	4.5 Seconds	3.5 Seconds	3.5 Seconds	NA
Pedestrian Crossing Time	Curb	Curb	Curb	Curb or Swale
Road Edge Treatment	3x3 Planters	4 feet	3x3 Planters	None
Planter Strip/Box Width	Individual	Continuous	Individual	None
Planter Type	Trees at 40 Feet O.C. Average	Trees at 40 Feet O.C. Average	Trees at 40 Feet O.C. Average	None
Planting Pattern	Selected Street Trees	Selected Street Trees	Selected Street Trees	None
Tree Type	Pedestrian Scale Ornamental	Pedestrian Scale Ornamental	Pedestrian Scale Ornamental	None
Street Light Type	40 foot Intervals	40 foot Intervals	40 foot Intervals	None
Street Light Spacing	Not Dedicated; With Flow	Not Dedicated; With Flow	Not Dedicated; With Flow	None
Bike Way Type	None	None	None	None
Bike Way Width	Both Sides	Both Sides	Both Sides	None
Sidewalks	10 feet	4-8 Feet	4-8 Feet	N/A
Sidewalk Width	Commonwealth Avenue RR Tracks to KD Square	Bradford St., Beharrel St.	Comm Ave Junction Sq to Church St	Behind Main Street and Comm. Ave.
LOCAL APPLICATIONS				

For larger version of this image see Appendix 5

Recommended Complete Streets Hierarchy & Design Guidelines for West Concord Village - Part 2				
<p>EXAMPLE USE OF HIERARCHY</p> <p>57-57-20-BL</p> <p>↑ With Bicycle Lane</p> <p>↑ 20 Ft. Pavement Width</p> <p>↑ 57 Ft. Right-of-Way Width</p> <p>↑ Thoroughfare Streetscape Type</p>	<p>DEFINITION OF THOROUGHFARE: The man-made element that provides the major part of the public open space as well as paved lanes for vehicles. A thoroughfare is endowed with two attributes: capacity and character. Capacity is the number of vehicles that can move safely through a segment of a thoroughfare within a given time period. It is physically manifested by the number and width of lanes, by the centerline and curb radius, and the elevation of the pavement. Character is physically manifested by the thoroughfare's associated building and frontage types as determined by its location within the transect.</p>			
CLASSIFICATION	RESIDENTIAL	PASSAGE	BIKE/MULTI-PURPOSE TRAIL	FOOT PATH
DEFINITION	Village Neighborhood Street: A local, yield making thoroughfare suitable for village neighborhoods. Street provides frontage for low to moderate density residential buildings such as single family detached or attached homes, apartment buildings, and rowhouses.	Passage: A pedestrian connector passes between buildings. Passages provide shortcuts through long blocks and connect near parking with street frontage. Passages may not be routed over and lined by shop fronts.	Bike Trail: An independent bicycle way generally running through the countryside or parallel with parkways and highways.	Foot Path: A pedestrian way traversing a park or the countryside. Paths should connect directly with the sidewalk network.
CROSS SECTION/ PERSPECTIVE VIEW				
PLAN VIEW				
CHARACTERISTICS				
Type	VISSO-22	PS-18-D	MAVAR-12	FTVAR-6
Movement	Slow Movement	Pedestrian Only	Bicycle & Pedestrian Only	Pedestrian Only
Traffic Lanes	Two- 10 foot	varies	varies	varies
Parking Lanes	Normal	N/A	N/A	N/A
ROW Width	50 ft.	varies	varies	varies
Pavement Width	24 ft.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Traffic Flow	Two Ways	N/A	N/A	N/A
Curb Type	Raised or None	N/A	N/A	N/A
Curb Radius	15 ft. max.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vehicle Design Speed	15 MPH	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pedestrian Crossing Time	27 Seconds	N/A	N/A	N/A
Road Edge Treatment	Curb or Sweek	Sweek	Sweek	Sweek
Planter Width	4-7 feet	varies	varies	varies
Planter Type	Continuous	Continuous	N/A	N/A
Planting Pattern	Varies depending in size of tree	occasional	Single and cluster, avg. 1/30 ft.	Single and cluster, avg. 1/30 ft.
Tree Type	variable species	Natural	Natural	Natural
Street Light Type	None	None	None	None
Street Light Spacing	None	None	N/A	N/A
Bike Way Type	None	N/A	Bike Path	N/A
Bike Way Width	None	N/A	8 to 15 feet	N/A
Sidewalks	Both Sides	One	none	One
Sidewalk Width	6 ft.	9-18 ft.	N/A	6 ft.
LOCAL APPLICATIONS	Village Neighborhood Streets	Connectors to Comm. Ave and Main St.	Bruce Freeman Trail	Masscha Brook and Assabel River Paths

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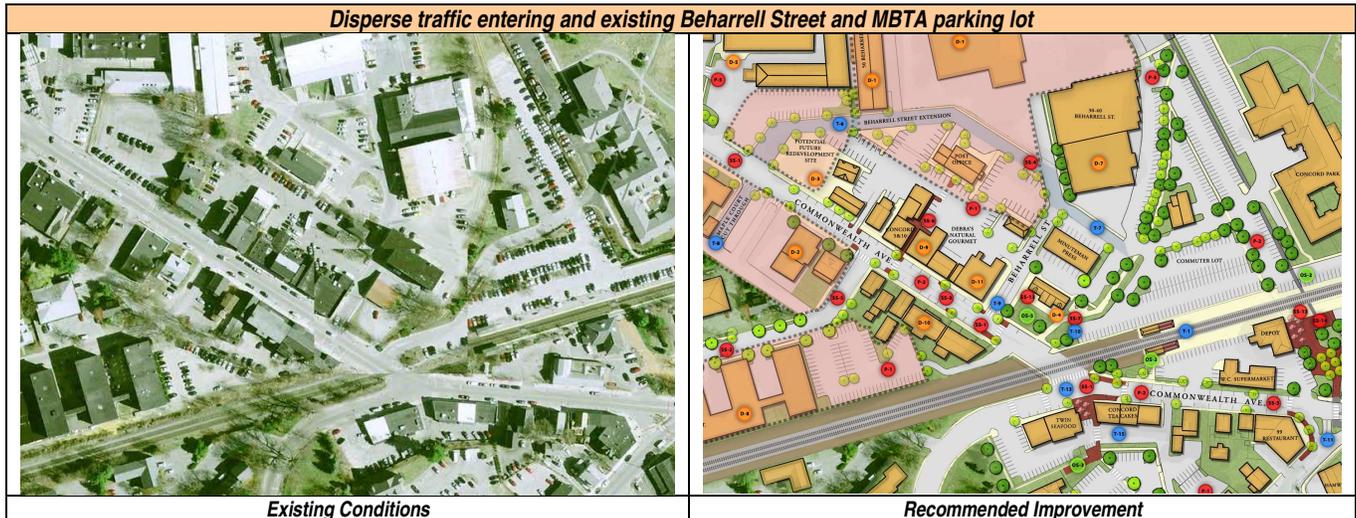
Circulation and Accessibility Improvements

Extend Beharrell Street to the West and Connect to Commonwealth Avenue (T-6) – The extension of Beharrell Street to reconnect with Commonwealth Avenue at the current auto dealer parking lot would establish an improved network of public streets in the village and a viable alternative access to and from Commonwealth Avenue for an estimated 30 businesses located on Beharrell Street. It would disperse traffic away from the current intersection of Beharrell Street and Commonwealth Avenue, which tends to bottleneck at peak hours of the day. It would also create a block-type network in the village, providing a framework for traditional village development patterns on the western section of Commonwealth Avenue and Beharrell Street. In keeping with complete street design standards, the new Beharrell Street corridor should include sidewalks on both sides and possibly bike lanes, which are not possible on Commonwealth Avenue because of limited width.

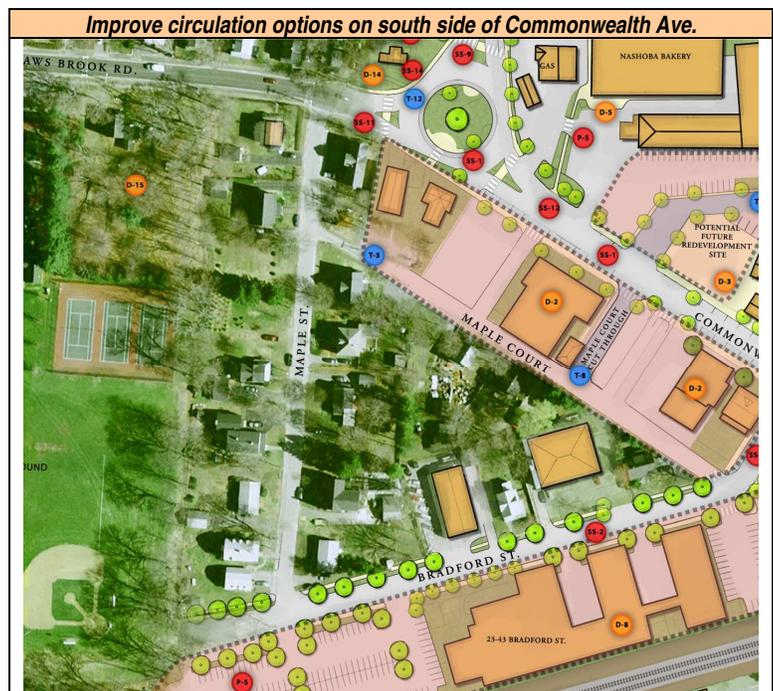
New Connector Street between Beharrell Street and the Commuter Parking Lot (T-7) – Providing direct access between Beharrell Street and the commuter parking lot creates another opportunity to redistribute and disperse traffic around and through the village center. A new access road, in combination with removal of the existing commuter lot driveway intersection (see below), would also remove traffic from a highly congested area at peak hours.

New Connector Street between Commonwealth Avenue and Maple Court (T-8) – Currently, there is no direct access between Commonwealth Avenue and Maple Court for over 1000 feet west of Bradford Street. This significantly limits access

to Maple Court and the rear portion of the businesses along Commonwealth Avenue. As development occurs in the future, a small access road should be created to connect Commonwealth Avenue and Maple Court somewhere between Bradford Street and Maple Street, which would help improve access and better distribute traffic in the village center.



Maple Court Enhancements (T-3) – Maple Court is a narrow private street running south of and parallel to Commonwealth Avenue that connects to Maple Street on the west end and Bradford Street on the east end. The street is generally in poor condition and used primarily as an alley for businesses on Commonwealth Avenue. Two houses face the street and the backs of commercial properties on Commonwealth Avenue, which includes parking areas, dumpsters, and other storage. Streetscape improvements should be added to the south side of the street including a sidewalk and street trees to provide safe pedestrian access for the residents and screening from commercial uses. Parking behind the businesses should be reorganized with the cooperation of property owners to improve efficiency and access. Particular focus points include the areas behind the former Concord Auto Dealership and the Bradford Street mills, where parking could be expanded for use by these local businesses.



Intersection Treatments

Upgrade Intersection of Beharrell Street and Commonwealth Avenue (T-9) – Currently, Beharrell Street is approximately 24 feet wide with one travel lane in each direction at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue (existing right-of-way width is 30 feet). There is a short sidewalk segment about 4 feet wide on the west side adjacent to Concord Outfitters and another on the east side extending up to the Minuteman Press building. As future growth occurs along Beharrell Street, if the commuter lot is connected, and if the adjacent Acadian property is redeveloped, this intersection should be reconfigured by widening the access point to a three-lane cross section with sidewalks on both sides. Under this scenario, there would be one lane entering from Commonwealth Avenue and separate right and left-hand turn lanes exiting Beharrell Street. This may reduce future back ups at the intersection as some or all of the commuter traffic is rerouted to Beharrell Street.

Reconfigure Intersection of Commuter Lot Driveway and Commonwealth Avenue (T-10) – In combination with a new access road between the commuter parking lot and Beharrell Street (see project description above), the entrance from Commonwealth Avenue should be closed and the curb cut removed. This would eliminate traffic exiting onto Commonwealth Avenue immediately adjacent to the railroad tracks, where visibility is limited. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail on the former railroad spur east of the existing access road would also serve as a sidewalk, significantly improving pedestrian safety and access to the commuter lot. The Acadian property, next to the Trail and sidewalk, could be redeveloped as a new village green and/or trail head. If partial access to the commuter lot is required by the MBTA and/or Concord Park, limiting it to a one-way entrance into the parking lot would reduce pressure on the Beharrell Street intersection and allow motorists to continue to conveniently use the public parking spaces that serve the village businesses.

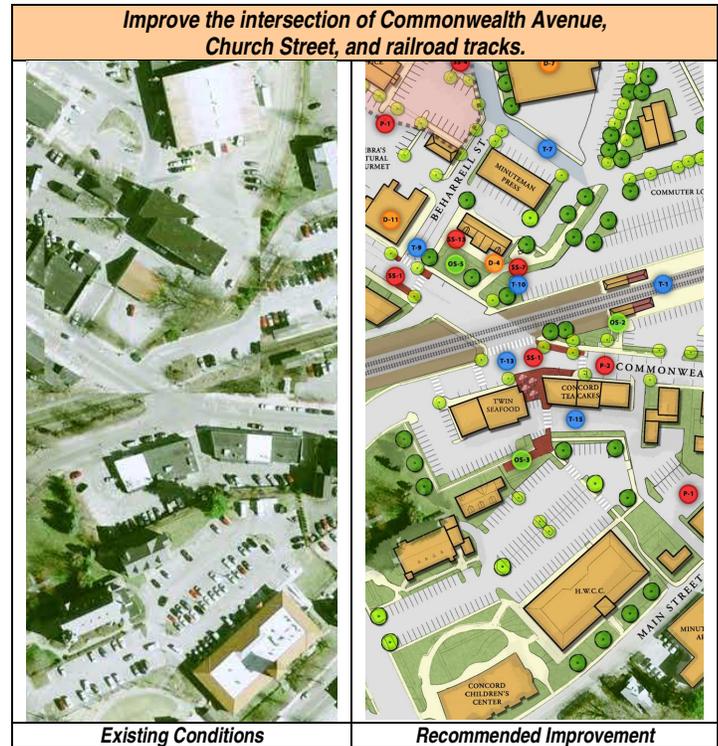
Extend MBTA Platform East and Expand Handicapped Ramp (T-1) – The MBTA commuter train currently blocks Commonwealth Avenue while stopping to unload or board passengers. This can create a significant traffic jam for several minutes. This also creates a significant back up in the commuter parking lot where there is only one access point and one exit lane onto Commonwealth Avenue. Although it has been suggested that blocking the intersection is at the discretion of the train conductor, it appears that there is no solution to this problem for westbound trains because the crossing gate sensors do not differentiate between trains that will stop in the station and express trains that continue through the crossing without stopping. However, it does appear that if the raised handicapped accessible ramp and the platform located on the inbound side of the tracks were extended eastward towards the Assabet River, then the inbound train would be able to pull all the way into the station and not block the intersection.

Other long-term changes to the MBTA platform considered to reduce traffic congestion in the village center included:

- Relocation of the westbound platform to the west side of Commonwealth Avenue in front of 23-43 Bradford Street.
- Relocation of the MBTA platform to Baker Street Extension adjacent to the business park.

These long-term scenarios may still be relevant to the future of West Concord but do not appear to be practical at this time.

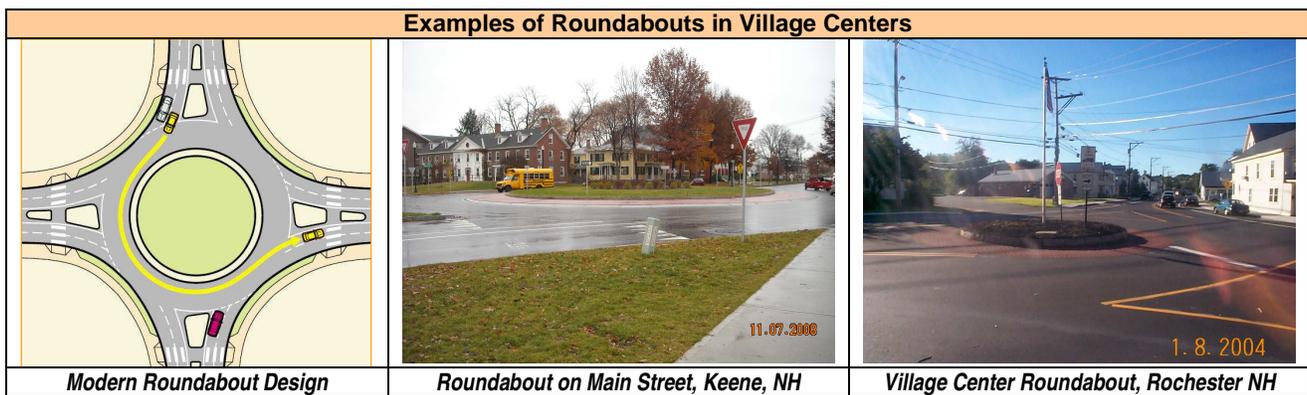
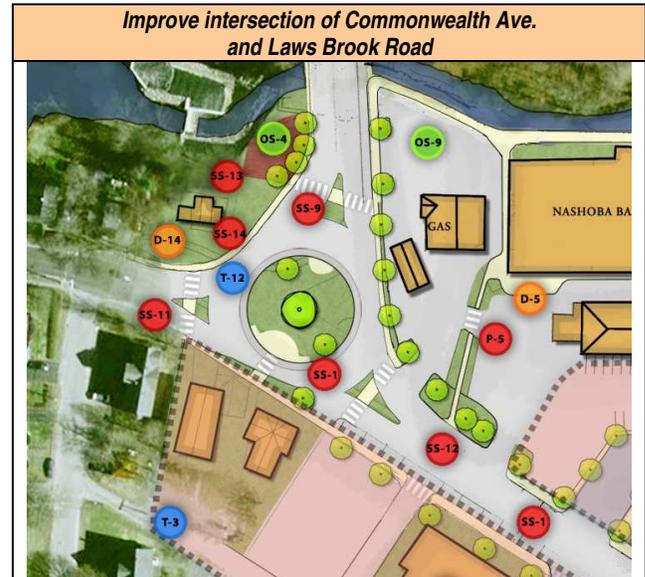
Reconfigure the Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue Intersection (T-11) – Pedestrian and bicycle enhancements are recommended for the Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue intersection including reconstruction of the traffic island, curb



extensions, and wider crosswalks with new materials (e.g., brick or stamped concrete pavers). Pedestrian signal equipment should also be upgraded including a new phasing configuration to automatically activate with regular cycling of the red and green signal phases for vehicles. Currently, the pedestrian signal only changes from a red hand (Don't Walk) to a white walking person (Walk) when the button is pressed. Pedestrians and bicyclists should not have to "ask" to cross the street by pressing the button in an active pedestrian zone as is the case in the village center. It should be noted that this change would not necessarily change the phasing or cycling of the lights. The side-mounted signal posts are difficult for both motorists and pedestrians to see and should be replaced with mast-arm signal mounts for better visibility. This new signal equipment should be decorative and consistent in design with the existing pedestrian-level lighting fixtures. Directional signage is also important at this intersection and may be side-mounted on posts or attached to the mast-arm at the intersection.

Commonwealth Avenue/Laws Brook Road/Kenneth Dunn Square Intersection (T-12) – The intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Laws Brook Road (at Kenneth Dunn Square) is a key transitional area between the village center and neighborhoods and serves as the northern gateway to the village center. Two effective, safe, and attractive options for improving this intersection are proposed. Both would enhance traffic calming and create an appealing gateway into the village center. These alternatives are:

Option 1 - Roundabout – The preferred alternative at this intersection is to construct a roundabout. The existing traffic volumes on Laws Brook Road and Commonwealth are well balanced, and the left-hand turns from Laws Brook Road north onto Commonwealth Avenue are substantial during the AM and PM peak hour (ranging from 30 to 55% of the total traffic volume). The roundabout would provide the highest level of service at this intersection over a 24-hour period and provide an effective traffic-calming application as motorists approach the village center. Pedestrian crossing would be easier and safer at both Laws Brook Road and Commonwealth Avenue by using cuts through the splinter islands on each approach. Additionally, Kenneth Dunn Square and its monument would create an attractive centerpiece in the roundabout and a gateway to West Concord. There are two potential drawbacks to this option. First, the roundabout would be approximately 120 to 130 feet in diameter and may require partial acquisition of property on adjacent, privately owned parcels including the Gulf Station at the northeast corner. Secondly, while the roundabout would make it easier for pedestrians to cross both streets, it might be more difficult to reach Kenneth Dunn Square.



Option 2 – T-Intersection – An appealing alternative for this intersection is to realign the intersection of Laws Brook Road and Commonwealth Avenue to create a T intersection at the south end of Kenneth Dunn Square. The current stop sign for southbound traffic on Commonwealth Avenue would be either supplemented or replaced by a stop sign for eastbound traffic on Laws Brook Road. The northern segment of Laws Brook Road between Kenneth Dunn Square and the residence at 169/171 Commonwealth Avenue would be removed and replaced with green space. The south end of Kenneth Dunn Square

would be reshaped so that Laws Brook would line up with Commonwealth Avenue at a 90-degree angle. This reconfiguration provides a safer intersection for both motorists and pedestrians as traffic would be slowed as it approaches the village center. As part of the plan, the sidewalk on the north side of Laws Brook Road would be extended to the Commonwealth Avenue bridge and the future pocket park at the Warner’s Pond dam. Additionally, new pedestrian crossings would be placed at the intersection. Under this scenario, Kenneth Dunn Square would be expanded on the north end with the removal of the travel lane, connecting directly to the new sidewalk and the small park at the Warner’s Pond dam. If the property at 169/171 Commonwealth Avenue is acquired by the Town in the future, then a larger village park could be created extending from Warner’s Pond to the south end of Kenneth Dunn Square.

Improve Intersection of Church Street and Commonwealth Avenue (T-13) – This is a difficult intersection to maneuver through at certain times of the day. One way to simplify it would be to close the driveway between Concord Teacakes and Twin Seafoods, replacing it with a dining terrace to support both food establishments. Vehicle access to the rear of the buildings would then be by way of the public parking lot on the south side of the Village Cleaners building and the driveway to the east side of the Teacakes building.

Improve Main Street-Baker Avenue-Cottage Street Intersection (T-14) – The Town of Concord is working with the state on improvements to this intersection. An important concern is the redevelopment of the Dee Bus site at the southwest corner. An important consideration is safe access to and from Main Street, Baker Avenue and Cottage Street. One idea expressed is reconfiguring the eastbound lanes on Main Street to provide dedicated right-turn, through traffic, and left-turn lanes at Cottage Street/Baker Avenue. Future realignments of the Cottage Street and Baker Avenue approaches to the intersection will be developed by Concord Public Works.



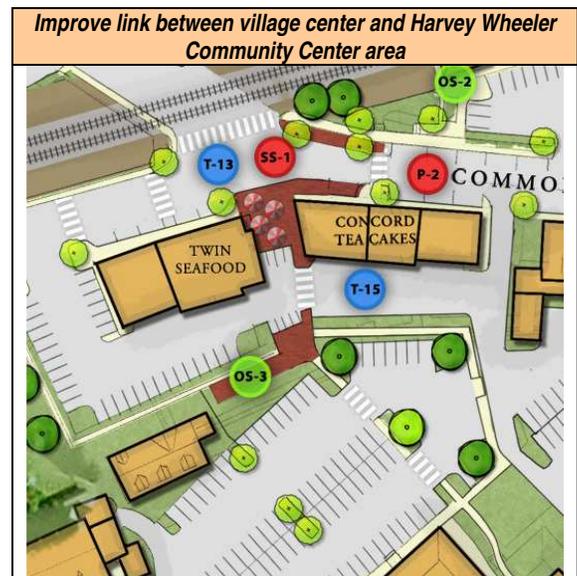
Pedestrian Connectivity

Construct Pedestrian Bridge Over Assabet River (T-2) – As shown on the Graphic Master Plan, the proposed pedestrian bridge over the Assabet River would be located north of the Main Street bridge and the MBTA commuter rail bridge. The bridge would be part of a new trail extending from the MBTA platform to the 300 Baker Avenue Business Park. The bridge and trail would provide a safe and attractive direct connection between the village center and the offices and proposed commuter rail parking on Baker Avenue Extension, and could open up a significant market for local businesses. The bridge connection would also be a valuable benefit to employees, some of whom are now using the railroad bridge to cross the Assabet River. The bridge will also tie into trail systems proposed along the Nashoba Brook and Assabet River as well as the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Construction of the bridge and trail would require state and federal permitting and a partnership between the Town and owners of the business park.



Sidewalk Improvements on Main Street Bridge over Assabet River (T-5) – The existing sidewalk on each side of the bridge is only 3 feet wide and in poor condition. Additionally, the town’s sidewalk plow is too wide to clear snow in the winter months. The recommended improvement is the installation of a cantilevered walkway on the north side of the bridge to enhance pedestrian connection and safety. The new sidewalk should be accessible and wide enough to allow for plowing in the winter months.

Stairway or Ramp to Harvey Wheeler Center and Proposed Overlook Park. As illustrated on the Village Graphic Master Plan, Harvey Wheeler Center and the proposed Overlook Park could be tied directly to the village center with a staircase and sidewalk connection behind and adjacent to the Concord Teacakes building. (There was previously a staircase in this location). While the park is located on public land, the staircase/ramp and sidewalk would require cooperation with the property owners including the relocation of the current dumpster and alterations to the driveway.



Upgrade Intersection of Church Street and Commonwealth Avenue (T-13) – There are a significant number of pedestrians in this intersection drawn by the surrounding neighborhoods, the Fowler Library, Harvey Wheeler Community Center, and Junction Square Business Park. However, only two of the three legs of this T intersection currently have crosswalks. Given the orientation of the village toward pedestrian access and the number of pedestrians at this intersection, it is very important that people can easily cross Church Street to Commonwealth Avenue (in front of Twin Seafood). This leg of the intersection should be reconfigured by adding prominent crosswalk striping (or possibly concrete pavers or blocks) and a curb extension on either the south side or north side of Church Street.

Improve Pedestrian Crossings in Village Center (T-4) – The Graphic Master Plan illustrates the recommended locations of other new or relocated pedestrian crosswalks and treatments along Commonwealth Avenue and Main Street. These include the locations identified in the table below.

The recommended new and relocated crosswalks are intended to improve pedestrian safety. Some current crosswalks, such as the one adjacent to the train platform and railroad tracks, are difficult for motorists to see as they round the corner and head west on Commonwealth Avenue. The proposed curb extensions improve pedestrian safety by reducing the width (and time necessary) to cross the roadway. These can be further enhanced by including street trees and different color and texture treatments to the roadway. The combination of curb extensions, street trees, and colored texture are also effective traffic-calming devices as they provide a visual indication to motorists that the road is narrowing and pedestrians are crossing. Planting street trees in the curb extensions is particularly important on the south side of Commonwealth Avenue where underground utilities are located within the sidewalk, limiting planting sites. The curb extensions may result in the loss of a few on-street parking spaces. However, re-striping the remaining spaces, done in coordination with curb extensions and other streetscape improvements, will minimize the potential loss of parking.

Recommended Pedestrian Improvements in West Concord Village		
Location	Current Treatment	Recommendation
Main Street in front of Dunkin' Donuts at Westgate Park	Painted white stripes	Curb extensions and colored concrete pavers (red/white)
Main Street between fire station and WC Shopping Plaza	Painted white stripes	Removal
Junction Park/Main Street/Commonwealth Ave. intersection	Painted red with white stripes	Widen for Bruce Freeman Rail Trail; treat with colored concrete pavers
Commonwealth Ave. between Concord Teacakes and Mandrioli Park	Painted white stripes	Curb extension, street trees, bulb-outs and colored concrete pavers (red/white)
Church St. at Commonwealth Ave. intersection	None	Colored concrete pavers (red/white)
Commonwealth Ave. at RR tracks and platform	Painted white stripes	Removal
Commonwealth Ave. at Beharrell Street	Painted white stripes	Relocate; add curb extension, street trees, bulb-outs, and colored concrete pavers (red/white)
Commonwealth Ave. across from Concord 5&10/Debra's Gourmet alley	None	Curb extensions, street trees, bulb-outs, and colored concrete pavers (red/white)
Commonwealth Ave. across from Gatehouse	Painted white stripes	Removal
Commonwealth Ave. between Chrysler building and parking lot	Painted white stripes	Relocate to new Beharrell St. extension access point with curb extensions, street trees, bulb-outs, and colored concrete pavers (red/white)

Laws Brook Rd. across from Kenneth Dunn Square monument	None	Curb extensions, street trees, bulb-outs, and colored concrete pavers (red/white)
Commonwealth Ave. across from Warner's Pond and next to bridge	None	Curb extensions, street trees, bulb-outs, and colored concrete pavers (red/white)
Laws Brook Rd. across from Percy Rideout Park	Painted white stripes	Curb extensions, street trees, bulb-outs, and colored concrete pavers (red/white)

4.3. Recommendations: Streetscape and Parking

The Village Graphic Master Plan illustrates well distributed and connected public and private parking areas throughout the village center. Several private parking lots are shown to be reconfigured to improve access, safety, and aesthetic appeal. The Graphic Master Plan also shows the reconfigured on-street parking in selected areas along Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue to provide for streetscape and traffic-calming enhancements such as new street trees, curb extensions, and crosswalks (often combined together). Throughout the Graphic Plan and sketches, new private parking lots are distributed to the side, behind, or below areas where new development or redevelopment is anticipated in the future. Connections between parking lots (both public and private) are also shown, where possible, to improve internal circulation and maximize parking opportunities. This practice is in keeping with traditional village development patterns.

Key Viewsheds in the Village

West Concord village center is visually distinct from surrounding landscapes. It has a series of attractive viewsheds (note: a viewshed is an area of land, water, or other environmental element that is visible to the human eye from a fixed vantage point) that should be preserved and enhanced as further development occurs. One should feel a sense of arrival approaching the center through a series of changes in land use, topography, organization and density of buildings, and formal streetscapes in character with a traditional village pattern. Key viewsheds include the following:

- Main Street looking west from the Assabet River bridge toward the 99 Restaurant
- Church Street looking east at Commonwealth Avenue toward the West Concord Supermarket
- Commonwealth Avenue looking west from Beharrell Street toward Kenneth Dunn Square
- Commonwealth Avenue looking east from Kenneth Dunn Square toward the MBTA commuter rail crossing
- Main Street looking east from the Harvey Wheeler Community Center toward the West Concord Shopping Center
- Commonwealth Avenue looking south from Winthrop Street toward Kenneth Dunn Square

As one travels to and from the village center, some important visual characteristics deteriorate into a series of non-traditional buildings and poor landscaping. For example, the view of Main Street looking west from the Assabet River bridge creates an attractive vista with Junction Park, the West Concord Depot, and the 99 Restaurant building as key landmarks that terminate the view. However, there are several elements including the Dunkin' Donuts building, Colonial Gas/Wave canopy, and strip commercial characteristics of the West Concord Shopping Plaza that detract from this important vista.

This and other visual issues can be addressed through a combination of attractive gateway treatments, infill buildings and existing building renovations with traditional village design and architecture, and formal streetscape improvements such as sidewalks, street trees and other landscaping, bicycle paths, and ornamental lighting.

Parking Access, Distribution, and Connectivity Improvements

The West Concord Village Graphic Master Plan illustrates parking and circulation enhancements aimed at improving safety and efficiency such as consolidated or relocated curb cuts and access to side streets, internal connections, shared and expanded parking opportunities, safe placement of crosswalks, internal connections between public sidewalks and businesses, and intermodal opportunities (integrating vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and uses) within the village. Specific parking improvements recommended and illustrated in the Graphic Master Plan are identified below.

Enhance Private Off-Street Parking Lots (P-1) – In order to maximize efficiency and accessibility, the Graphic Master Plan illustrates several locations in the village where private off-street parking spaces could be



reorganized, interconnected, and possibly expanded. Landscaping applications such as raised planting island beds and trees are also important ways to improve internal circulation and provide shading for and visually breaking up larger parking lots. Key recommendations include:

- Reconfigure, landscape, and connect the West Concord Post Office parking lots off Beharrell Street and the adjacent private parking lots behind Commonwealth Avenue.
- Reconfigure, landscape, and connect parking areas between 23 Bradford Street and 75–105 Commonwealth Avenue along Maple Court. Improved landscape screening is also recommended for the northwesterly end of the parking lot across from residences on Maple Court.
- Coordinate Maple Court access and parking between property owners on Commonwealth Avenue between Maple Street and Bradford Street.
- Reconfigure and connect parking lots between 41 Commonwealth Avenue (Forever Tile) and 1260 Main Street (DCR Apple Computer); create a stairway/ramp connection to public parking at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center.
- Expand and reorganize the parking lot at the south end of 55 Winthrop Street to support businesses on site as well as businesses across the Nashoba Brook (Pail Factory) pedestrian bridge. Given the close proximity of this parking area to the brook and floodplain, surfacing materials should be permeable.
- Place additional landscaped islands and trees in the West Concord Shopping Plaza parking lot.

These parking reconfigurations will require agreement and coordination between property owners and are included in the plan to demonstrate public encouragement for better parking circulation, landscaping, and connectivity in the village.

Enhance Public On-Street and Off-Street Parking (P-2) – Preserving and expanding public parking where possible is a key component of the infrastructure recommendations for the village. Minor alterations have been made to the current on-street parking spaces along Main Street, Commonwealth Avenue, and Church Street to provide for streetscape and pedestrian safety enhancements as described above. While there are limited opportunities to expand on-street parking, the Graphic Master Plan illustrates the addition of three to four spaces along Bradford Street.



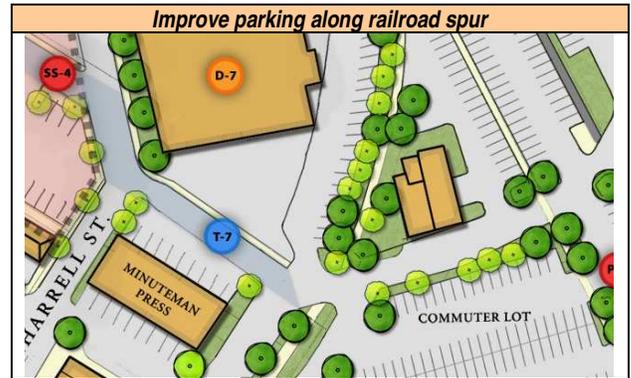
Off-street public parking in the village center is limited to approximately 31 spaces at the commuter lot and 21 spaces off Church Street next to the Village Cleaners. A portion of the commuter lot is owned by the town, which includes 74 spaces reserved for local resident commuters. It may be possible to reallocate some of these spaces in the future for general public parking if commuter spaces can be reserved at the business park on Baker Avenue and connected to the platform via a trail and bridge over the Assabet River (see project P-05 above).

There are also approximately 114 public parking spaces located at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center (HWCC). This parking lot, however, is not directly connected to the core area and is well utilized in the daytime by HWCC, Concord Children’s Center, Fowler Library, and adjacent churches. The Graphic Master Plan includes a stairway or ramp connection (as there used to be) between this lot and Commonwealth Avenue, which may help support local businesses and provides a convenient path for residents, particularly in the morning and evening hours.

All public on-street and off-street parking areas need to be made easier to locate by improving directional signage. The town should also consider replacing the meters, which are labor-intensive to manage and maintain, with other parking payment

equipment such as parking payment stations that can handle various forms of payment. If possible, the current system of allowing 12 free minutes of parking for quick errands should be maintained.

Expand Public Parking along RR Spur (P-3) – In anticipation of the future Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, the Graphic Master Plan illustrates the former railroad spur as being utilized for additional parking in addition to the rail trail. This discontinued rail spur runs behind 20–40 Beharrell Street and to the side of 74 Commonwealth Avenue. The corridor ranges from 50 to 60 feet wide and is presently used as informal parking by a number of businesses on Beharrell Street. Angled parking would be added to the spur and separated from the trail by a landscaped strip. Access would be provided off Beharrell Street and the commuter parking lot. This parking would be used to support the businesses on Beharrell Street as well as for public use by trail riders and village businesses.



Designate Satellite Commuter Parking Area at Baker Avenue Business Park (P-4) – This potential future project designates a portion of the privately-owned parking lot at the southwest edge of the Baker Avenue Business Park for local commuters with a pedestrian bridge over the Assabet River to the MBTA platform. The parking lot associated with the business park is very large and appears to have significant excess capacity. The advantage of providing parking spaces for local commuters is that it may divert traffic away from the village center during morning and evening peak hours and allow for some of the spaces in the existing commuter lot to be reassigned for general public parking. This would require Specific improvements recommended for the pedestrian alley between 100 and 104 Commonwealth Avenue include the following:



- Remove asphalt and replace with concrete, stamped concrete, or concrete paving bricks.
- Install a trellis or arcade-style canopy attached to the adjacent building(s) and extending out to the sidewalk on Commonwealth Avenue for enhanced visibility.
- Encourage the use of outdoor seating along the sides of the alley.
- Install decorative pedestrian level lighting fixtures, either wall-mounted or overhead, within the trellis or canopy.
- Install business kiosk and interpretive signage to direct people who are unfamiliar with West Concord to public parking and local points of interest in the village.
- Extend the pedestrian lane across the parking lot to the post office and eventually to the Nashoba Brook.

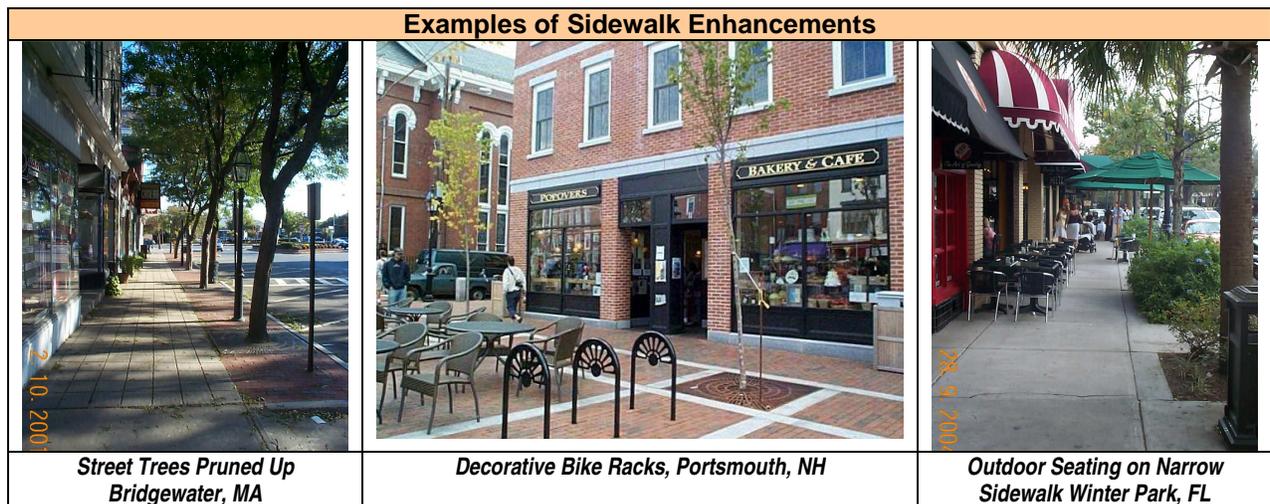
Screen Large Parking Areas (P-5) – Large parking lots open and visible to the sidewalk, particularly in the pedestrian-oriented village center, significantly detract from the walking experience in West Concord. Pedestrians walking in front of such parking areas feel exposed and vulnerable to turning traffic. There are a few key locations along Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue where large exposed parking areas exist. Specific locations that should be given priority and are illustrated in the Graphic Master Plan include the following:

- Gulf Station on Commonwealth Avenue
- Former tannery building site (Nashoba Brook Bakery) on Commonwealth Avenue
- Former Concord Auto parking lots on north side of Commonwealth Avenue
- Former Concord Auto parking lots on south side of Commonwealth Avenue
- West Concord Shopping Plaza

Simple solutions would be to work with property owners to create a green strip either on the inside edge of the sidewalk (between the sidewalk and parking area) or, preferably, between the street and sidewalk to create separation. Street trees should be planted within the green strip to provide a vertical buffer and shading for pedestrians as well as to enclose the street. Depending on the site, other treatments may include low shrub or flower plantings and ornamental fencing. In certain locations, these parking lots are significantly oversized for their intended uses and may be good locations for infill development that can utilize excess parking, enclose the street, and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Streetscape and Aesthetic Enhancements

Streetscape improvements in West Concord are necessary to provide a safe pedestrian environment as well as attractive public streets that support business development and private investment. A consistent scheme of streetscape improvements is recommended throughout the core area as illustrated on the West Concord Village Graphic Master Plan. The specific details of street and streetscape design are based on the overall principles of balancing vehicle mobility with pedestrian safety and enjoyment.



Generally, streetscape improvements are designed to improve crosswalk visibility and aesthetic value, provide barrier-free access, calm traffic, and accommodate modes of alternative transportation such as bicycles and pedestrians. On the primary streets, such as Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue, design elements include uniform pedestrian-level ornamental lighting, new sidewalks where needed, new street trees, benches, trash receptacles, planters, directional and gateway signage, informational kiosks, bulb-outs (curb extensions), center medians, and other enhancements. Streetscape improvements illustrated on the Graphic Master Plan also enhance access to parking lots, neighborhoods, and points of public interest.

West Concord's utility wires are underground along much of Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue (primarily under the sidewalk), which reduces some of the visual clutter typical in other village settings. Building on this advantage, the town can install streetscape enhancements such as street lighting and trees that can have a significant impact on appearance.

Narrow or Shorten Pedestrian Crossings at Key Locations along Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue (SS-1) – Curb extensions (or bulb-outs) are short sections of the street, usually at intersections, where pavement has been narrowed by extending the sidewalk into the on-street parking lanes. This reduces the width of the street that a pedestrian must cross, making crossing times shorter, easier, and safer. It also puts pedestrians in a place of greater visibility so that they can see traffic more easily and motorists can see them. Pedestrian refuge islands are placed in the center of the road between travel lanes, providing an opportunity for pedestrians to cross one lane at a time safely. An additional benefit of curb extensions and pedestrian refuge islands is that the street is narrowed so vehicles tend to slow down. These traffic-calming treatments, together with crosswalks, are also designed to enhance appearance through pavement treatments and landscaping.

Examples of Pedestrian Safety/Traffic-Calming Treatments		
		
<i>Curb Extension with Brick Apron and Street Tree</i>	<i>Narrow Lanes with Landscaped Center Island/Pedestrian Refuge</i>	<i>Crosswalk and Pedestrian Refuge</i>

Recommended applications for crosswalks, curb extensions, and pedestrian refuges are illustrated on the Graphic Master Plan and identified below:

- Reconstruct crosswalk with alternative materials on Main Street at the Baker Avenue, Cottage Street, and Old Bridge Road intersections.
- Renovate center islands with landscaping and pedestrian refuges at Baker Avenue and Old Bridge Road.
- Install new curb extension and crosswalk treatment on Main Street in front of Dunkin' Donuts.
- Reconfigure and widen crosswalk and center island at intersection of Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue.
- Add new crosswalk and curb extension on Commonwealth Avenue in front of West Concord Supermarket.
- Relocate and reconstruct crosswalk on Main Street between Mandrioli Park and Concord Teacakes with brick pavers (or similar materials), curb extensions, and street trees.
- Construct a new crosswalk and possibly a center island or bulb-out at the intersection of Church Street at Commonwealth Avenue.
- Eliminate crosswalk on Commonwealth Avenue at end of MBTA platform (poor visibility, long crossing distance, and high level of vehicle turning movements).
- Reconstruct crosswalk on Commonwealth Avenue at west side of Beharrell Street intersection with brick pavers (or similar materials), curb extensions, and street trees.
- Relocate and reconstruct crosswalk on Commonwealth Avenue at Bradford Street to align with pedestrian alley on east side of Concord 5&10 with brick pavers (or similar materials), curb extensions, and street trees.
- Relocate and reconstruct crosswalk on Commonwealth Avenue at Concord Auto parking lot to align with east side of new intersection of proposed Beharrell Street extension with brick pavers (or similar materials), curb extensions, and street trees.
- Construct new crosswalks on Commonwealth Avenue and Laws Brook Road at the proposed roundabout in the splinter islands with pedestrian refuges, brick pavers (or similar materials), and street trees.
- Construct new crosswalk across proposed roundabout in front of Kenneth Dunn Square memorial with brick pavers (or similar materials) and street trees.

Bradford Street Streetscape Improvements (SS-2) – The Bradford Street right-of-way is 40 feet wide. The recommended cross-section is for two 12-foot travel lanes, an 8-foot parking lane on the east side (adjacent to the Bradford Mills), and a 4-foot planting strip and 4-foot sidewalk on the west side. A 4-foot wide sidewalk is also recommended for the east side abutting the Bradford Street mill buildings on private property as the mills are renovated in the future. The new sidewalk on the west side would provide a direct connection between Commonwealth Avenue and Percy Rideout Playground. The planting strip should include new street trees to provide a buffer to pedestrians and screen the neighborhood on the west side of the street. A small parking area is recommended at the south end of Bradford Street to support the playground, and additional landscaping and screening (evergreens) is recommended on the south end of Bradford Street to buffer the Maple Street neighborhood. The town is also encouraged to work with the property owner to allow for shared use of the parking lot in the evening when the playground is most active.

Main Street and Commonwealth Ave Streetscape Improvements (SS-3) – As illustrated on the Village Graphic Master Plan, the recommended streetscape improvements on Commonwealth Avenue include an extension of the sidewalk (brick

aprons, crosswalks, and curb extensions) at strategic locations as described above. New street trees are also identified in selected locations, mostly in combination with new curb extensions and crosswalks given that underground utilities below the sidewalk on the north side of the street limit the opportunity to install tree pits.

New street trees need to be carefully located so as not to screen doorways and windows. Plantings between buildings (especially where there are significant differences in height or architectural styles) are an appropriate location for street trees. Street trees are also positioned to screen unsightly off-street parking lots and buildings that are significantly out of character (in design and use) with others on Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue. Street trees should be planted in curb extensions to maintain clear full width of sidewalks. All street trees on Commonwealth Avenue and Main Street should be pruned up to 10 feet so that business signs, doorways, and window displays are clearly visible to pedestrians and motorists.



The Graphic Master Plan also encourages the active use of public sidewalks and private frontages to add vitality to the village center, including informal sitting areas, outdoor dining terraces, and patios. The widest portion of public sidewalks in combination with private frontages should be focal points for sidewalk entertainment and outdoor uses.

In addition to the streetscape enhancements described above, the following site treatments are recommended on Commonwealth Avenue:

- Install bike racks at West Concord Shopping Plaza, Dunkin' Donuts, Junction Park, BOA ATM Kiosk, Concord Teacakes, RR spur, the alley between Debra's Natural Gourmet and Concord 5&10, and 101 and 114 Commonwealth Avenue.
- Install decorative trash receptacles at 75 to 100 foot intervals along Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue depending on adjacent uses and demand.
- Replace 5-foot asphalt sidewalks on Commonwealth Avenue with concrete from Bradford Street to Laws Brook Road and the Nashoba Brook bridge.
- Encourage the replacement of landscape timbers at 114 Commonwealth Avenue with a more durable and aesthetic material such as concrete pavers or raised planting boxes.
- Encourage the replacement of landscape timbers at 1260 Main Street with concrete pavers or raised planting boxes.
- Renovate planting strip in front of Concord Auto parking lot with curbing and additional landscape screening.
- Reduce curb cuts and extend planting strip and landscape screening at 152–166 Commonwealth Avenue.

Beharrell Street Extension and Streetscape Improvements (SS-4) – The proposed cross section of Beharrell Street as it is extended to intersect with Commonwealth Avenue at the Concord Auto parking lot is 32 feet wide with two 12-foot travel lanes and 4-foot concrete sidewalks on both sides. Landscaped islands between a sidewalk and parking areas on the west side are recommended to buffer pedestrians and provide shade. As redevelopment at 50 Beharrell Street is probable over the next few years, site plans should include sufficient landscaping and screening where parking is proposed adjacent to the roadway, with internal sidewalk connections to new buildings.

Extend Decorative Light Fixtures within the Village Center (SS-5) – The existing decorative light fixtures in the village center are attractive in terms of scale and design. Public input, however, has suggested that they may not always provide sufficient lighting levels, that some of the light is misdirected, and that other areas of the village center are not lit at all. To address this issue, the overall pattern of lighting should be evaluated and additional lighting fixtures could be installed along some of the gateway corridors to reinforce the village development patterns and pedestrian safety of the core area. It is important that the general fixture style and design be consistent in order to tie the entire village together. Specific recommended locations to be evaluated include the following:

- Main Street between the Assabet River and Commonwealth Avenue
- Main Street between Commonwealth Avenue and Church Street
- Church Street between Commonwealth Avenue and Main Street
- Bradford Street between Commonwealth Avenue and Percy Rideout Playground
- Laws Brook Road from Percy Rideout Playground to Commonwealth Avenue
- Beharrell Street (once extended to Commonwealth Avenue)

While the town does not use LED-bulbs in its decorative light fixtures, the town has already made a significant investment in energy efficient light fixtures. New light fixtures installed as part of redevelopment or new site plan improvements should require comparable energy efficient, decorative lighting that also reduces light pollution.

Upgrade Main Street Pedestrian Alleys (SS-6) – There are two privately owned pedestrian alleys between Commonwealth Avenue and the private parking lots located on the north side of the street on either side of the Concord 5&10 building. They currently provide access to private parking lots and could be connected in the future to Beharrell Street (if extended). Also, a new crosswalk on Commonwealth Avenue aligning with one of the alleys could provide better access to Bradford Street. Ultimately, a safe and attractive pedestrian connection could be provided from Percy Rideout Playground through the village to Nashoba Brook.

Specific improvements recommended for the pedestrian alley between 100 and 104 Commonwealth Avenue include the following:



Enhance Pedestrian Access to and within the Commuter/Public Parking Lot (SS-7) – Enhancing the commuter parking lot’s accessibility, safety, and aesthetic appeal is important to the village center. This is where a large number of local business customers and visitors park; it provides a “first impression” of West Concord for people walking around the village. Recommended enhancements include the following:

- In the short term, reconfigure the access from Commonwealth Avenue to a one-way entrance to reduce peak hour congestion at the intersection and safety concerns at the railroad crossing. This can only be done in combination with the extension of Beharrell Street and access between the commuter lot and Beharrell Street.
- In the long term, possibly close off existing commuter lot access to Commonwealth Avenue and use the area as public open space and a trail head for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

- Install a sidewalk in combination with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail along the northwesterly side of the existing access road and within the railroad spur right of way to Commonwealth Avenue.
- Install a 4-foot sidewalk from the northern portion of the MBTA parking area to the MBTA platform. This sidewalk should be located between the MBTA parking spaces and the parking area at the adjacent 66 Commonwealth Avenue property.
- Install information kiosk and business directory in the parking lot to help orient visitors.
- Install new shade trees in strategic locations throughout the parking lot to improve shading in the lot and screening of the lot from surrounding uses such as Concord Park.

Gateway Treatments

Attractive entrances or “gateways” into West Concord are critical to making a good impression on residents, visitors, and potential customers. Gateway treatments also function as traffic-calming devices, providing a message to travelers to slow down as they approach the village center. Attractive planters and coordinated directional and welcome signs should be installed to enhance aesthetic value at key entrances to the village. (The landscaped traffic island at the intersection of Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue provides a model for other planting projects.)

Examples of Gateway Treatments		
		
<p><i>West Concord Branding and Logo Example</i></p>	<p><i>Welcome Sign, Keene, NH</i></p>	<p><i>Gateway Monument, Batavia, NY</i></p>

Gateway improvements, as well as a wayfinding system, should highlight West Concord as a genuine and authentic village. One branding theme that evolved out of the public involvement process with West Concord was a “place to live, work, and play....for real!” A preliminary logo concept was developed by a West Concord resident during the master planning process and illustrated above.

West Concord gateway locations, potential enhancements, and examples shown in the Graphic Master Plan are identified below:

Install Gateway Treatment at East Entrance (SS-8) – On Main Street, at the town’s pumping station next to the Assabet River bridge, a “Welcome to West Concord Village” ground sign should be installed. This should be an attractive and visible ground sign placed in a decorative planter or landscaped bed and possibly lit. This is the first impression of West Concord for travelers heading west through the village from Route 2. New light fixtures with side arms for flower baskets could also be installed in this area and on the bridge to further accent the approach along Main Street.

Install North and West Gateway Treatment (SS-9 and SS-11) – The north gateway is located on Commonwealth Avenue at Kenneth Dunn Square. Similar to the east gateway, a new welcome sign should be placed in a landscaped planter or bed at a prominent and visible location such as in triangle facing north toward Commonwealth Avenue. The west gateway is located on Laws Brook Road approaching Kenneth Dunn Square. A new small welcome sign should be placed in a landscaped planter or bed in a prominent and visible location. Such signage should also be considered as part of any intersection redesign at this location.

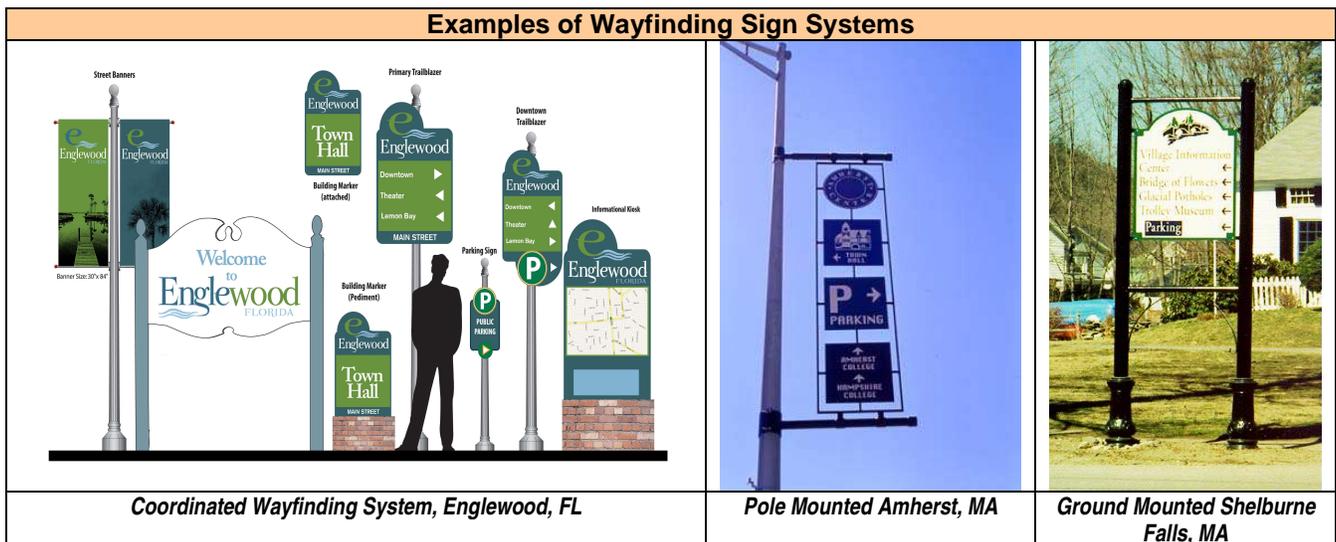
Install South Gateway Treatment at Main Street and Church Street (SS-10) –The south gateway is located at the traffic light at the intersection of Main Street and Church Street. A welcome sign should be placed in a landscaped planter or bed at this location.

Directional “Wayfinding” Sign System and Interpretive Boards

Attractive directional signage should be installed to guide visitors and potential customers to public points of interest throughout the village. Business directory maps should be installed in attractive cases and in informational kiosks at strategic locations for customers and visitors. The wayfinding system should be implemented in concert with traffic-calming and crosswalk improvements at key intersections along Main Street, Commonwealth Avenue, Church Street, Laws Brook Road, and Beharrell Street. Wayfinding elements should be installed at the following locations:

Install Wayfinding Signage (SS-12) – Existing signs directing motorists to public parking lots in the village are small and difficult to read. They should be replaced with a high-quality and coordinated system of new directional signs placed in strategic locations to lead visitors to the MBTA station, off-street parking lots, and points of interest such as parks, schools, and civic institutions (e.g., the Fowler Public Library and Harvey Wheeler Community Center). Suggested locations include:

- Main Street at Assabet River bridge
- Main Street at Church Street
- Main Street at Commonwealth Avenue
- Commonwealth Avenue at commuter/public parking lot
- Commonwealth Avenue at Kenneth Dunn Square
- Laws Brook Road at Kenneth Dunn Square



Install Informational Kiosks and Business Directories (SS-13) – The informational kiosks should contain a village directory map which identifies various businesses, services, parks, historic landmarks, public parking, and other points of interest. (Village directory maps can also be installed in ground- or wall-mounted cases.) The kiosk should contain graphic materials explaining and illustrating West Concord’s history, architecture, and culture. Community events should also be posted on the kiosk. Suggested locations include the following:

- Junction Park (kiosk)
- Mandrioli Park (ground-mounted village directory)
- Alley between Concord 5&10 and Debra’s Natural Gourmet (wall-mounted village directory)
- Commuter Parking Lot (ground-mounted village directory)

Examples of Wayfinding Signs, Informational Kiosks, and Village Directory Boards



Install Interpretive Sign Boards (SS-14) – Interpretive boards are small ground- or wall-mounted signs depicting and describing important historic and cultural attributes in West Concord. Some potential locations for interpretive signs include Junction Park, Mandrioli Park, strategic locations on Commonwealth Avenue, Bradford Street mill buildings, along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (future), along the Nashoba Brook behind the former tannery building, along the Assabet River behind Concord Park, and the park at Warner’s Pond dam (future).