

Envision Concord Action Items: Planning Board Progress Chart September 30, 2025

Big idea #1. Strengthen the sustainability of local businesses and commercial districts and the cultural, historic and civic assets in Concord by connecting businesses to cultural, historic, and civic resources, and developing coordinated strategies that serve cross-sector goals.

Big idea #2. Create strategies that provide more housing choices consistent with town character and sustainability principles.

Big idea #3. Develop innovative ways to address transportation needs and challenges by aligning residents' direct needs with other goals such as supporting economic vitality, protecting the

Green - In-progress
Red - 1-2 years
Blue - 3-5 years
Pink - 6+ years
Orange -Lead by another committee
Violet - On-going
Dark Blue - Completed

SECTION	GOAL	ACTION	TIMING
4.1 Culture/ Historic Resources	2. Promote education and awareness among residents, Town officials, the business community, and visitors regarding the existence, variety, and value of Concord's historical and cultural resources.	4. Encourage cooperation and collaboration between Commissions, Boards, organizations, and others to protect heritage value of lands and raise awareness of residents.	<p>Another Committee: PB will continue to work w/ all historical & cultural boards, commissions, groups.</p> <p>1-2 years: The CHC will finalize the Historic Preservation Plan by the end of the year 2025. It is likely that there will be Action Items in that Plan that the Planning Board will partner with the CHC.</p>
		1. Consider sensible but robust expansion of existing local historic districts into contiguous areas	HDC ATM 2021 expanded Main St District w/ two properties - No additional properties being considered at this time
	4. Enhance regulatory tools to protect and preserve historical character and cultural resources.	3. Evaluate effectiveness of the Demolition Delay Bylaw.	<p>HC ATM 2021 amended Bylaw to structures 50 yrs.</p> <p>HC ATM 2023 amended Bylaw to provide additional review time</p>
		4. Study the use of Neighborhood Conservation Districts for potential positive and negative impacts in appropriate areas, such as Conantum and some West Concord neighborhoods.	HC/HDC/Neighborhood Driven: PB will coordinate with HC, HDC and any neighborhood grassroots effort to look into a NCD.
		6. Support green neighborhood zoning or cluster zoning (in coordination with goals in Housing for mitigation of agricultural impacts on neighboring landscapes)	<p>In-progress: Look at potential green zoning initiatives and sustainability measures that might be incorporated into ZBL and Subdivision Rules & Regs Update.</p> <p>3-5 years: Develop Site Plan Rules & Regulations</p>
4.2 Economic Vitality	1. Renew and improve Concord's village centers as vital pedestrian-friendly, economic and social hubs that enable community engagement on a wider scale.	1. Maintain and consider expanding zoning policies to allow mixed-use and appropriately dense development in and around village centers.	<p>Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment MBTA Communities Multi-family Zoning passed</p> <p>In-progress: PB drafting potential ZBL amendment to: 1) Section 4.2.3 Combined Business/Residence Bylaw to remove impossible development standards; 2) update to MBTA Communities Bylaw to bring into compliance with State's Conditional Compliance letter</p>
		2. Enhance the public spaces, physical connectivity, and general environment of the business centers.	3-5 years: PB to consider enhancement to public spaces, physical connectivity and general environment as part of the Site Plan Rules & Regs. Support the EVC and TAC on initiatives.
	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.	2. Support growth of existing and complementary businesses within existing industrial and commercial areas in town, and outline development guidelines for appropriate potential infill development.	Completed: ATM 2025 ZBL Amendment - PB co-sponsored with EVC ZBL amendment to allow accessory retail stores in Industrial Districts.
		2. Enhance the public spaces, physical connectivity, and general environment of the business centers.	3-5 years: PB to consider enhancement to public spaces, physical connectivity and general environment as part of the Site Plan Rules & Regs. Support the EVC and TAC on initiatives.

<p>3. Become a recognized and supportive community for business and social entrepreneurs to start and grow new businesses.</p> <p>4. Build local civic and government capacity for economic development with a special focus on and (a) related arts, cultural and tourism activities, (b) medical and healthcare specialties, and (c) green/ environmental businesses.</p>	<p>1. Support the expansion of co-working and incubator spaces in Concord.</p> <p>5. Conduct an assessment of demand for additional medical uses and green/ environmental businesses and associated needs for those businesses.</p>	<p><i>No specific PB action identified at this time</i></p> <p>Another Committee: Econ. Vitality Comm.</p>
<p>1. Develop realistic, achievable targets for preserving or creating housing of all types (beyond the Subsidized Housing Inventory).</p> <p>2. Develop additional, self-sustaining funding mechanisms to support achieving the housing targets in Goal 1.</p> <p>4. Discourage the demolition of smaller homes and their replacement with larger, more expensive residences.</p>	<p>1. Working with the Concord Housing Authority, Concord Housing Development Corporation, Affordable Housing Committee, and other committees and organizations, including local employers, Hugh Cargill Trust Committee, etc., the Town should study the existing status of Concord's housing stock by type and price and create realistic quantitative goals with supporting policies and programs.</p> <p>8. Consider the implications of including a provision in the Zoning Bylaw for Payment in Lieu of Units (PILU) as a tool to incentivize developers in creating affordable housing or contributing funds toward other affordable housing projects</p> <p>1. Identify and adopt best zoning practices to encourage preservation of existing smaller homes.</p> <p>2. A tool for neighborhoods in Concord may be to propose possible adoption of one or more Neighborhood Conservation Districts or hybrid Neighborhood/Historic Districts to protect older neighborhoods with modest housing.</p>	<p>Completed: Updated HPP adopted December 2022</p> <p>1-2 years: Subject to CPA funding, work with housing groups, RHSO and Planning Division on process of updating HPP and have approved by EOHLC prior to expiration of current plan at the end of 2027.</p> <p>In-progress: PB drafting potential ZBL amendment to: 1) Section 4.2.3 Combined Business/Residence Bylaw to include an affordable unit payment for fractional units.</p> <p><i>No specific PB action identified at this time</i></p> <p>HC/HDC/Neighborhood Driven: PB will coordinate with HC, HDC and any neighborhood grassroots effort to look into a NCD.</p>
<p>4.3 Housing</p>	<p>1. Amend the two-family or additional dwelling unit bylaw</p>	<p>Completed: ATM 2020 Add. Dwelling & ATM 2022 to allow units created prior to 2020 amendment passed</p> <p>Completed: ATM 2021 ZBL Amendment Two-family in Res. C by special permit passed (previously not permitted)</p> <p>Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment Two-family in Res. B by special permit passed (previously not permitted)</p> <p>Completed: ATM 2025 ZBL Amendment to adopt State by-right ADU Law requirements</p> <p>In-progress: ATM 2026 ZBL Amendment to further amend ADU Bylaw to be consistent with EOHLC Regulations</p>
<p>4.3 Housing</p>	<p>2. Allow accessory dwelling units to be rented, even if they have not been continually rented since 1928.</p>	<p>Completed: ATM 2020 Additional Dwelling Unit complete revision & ATM 2022 to allow ADUs units created prior to 2020 amendment</p> <p>In-progress: ATM 2026 ZBL Amendment to further amend ADU Bylaw to be consistent with EOHLC Regulations</p>
	<p>3. Adopt Natural Resource Protection Zoning (NRPZ), allowing co-housing and other clustered development.</p>	<p>3-5 yrs: Need to work with NRC on NRPZ. Research co-housing zoning options as part of HPP update</p>
	<p>1. Adopt zoning provisions, such as a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District, to encourage the redevelopment of the Thoreau Street Depot Area and adjacent Crosby's Market Area to allow mixed-use, multi-family redevelopment.</p>	<p>Failed: ATM 2022 ZBL Amendment for a TDB District Bylaw to promote development of combined business/residence projects with defined affordable housing requirements.</p> <p>In-progress: PB drafting potential ZBL amendment to Section 4.2.3 Combined Business/Residence Bylaw to remove impossible development standards</p>
<p>6. Identify regulatory tools and tax incentives to encourage developers to build housing the Town wants/needs, especially denser housing near town centers or small (5-10 unit) developments such as Riverwalk, in ways that reinforce existing historical character and support sustainable development practices.</p>		

town centers or small (5-10 unit) developments such as Riverwalk, in ways that reinforce existing historical character and support sustainable development practices.

2. Consider zoning amendments or use of the town's Planned Residential Development zoning provisions to foster development of potential opportunity sites in and near Concord Center, Thoreau Depot Area, and in and around West Concord Center.

Completed: ATM 2020 PRD Bylaw amended to modify Density Bonus and affordable housing requirements passed
Failed: ATM 2022 ZBL Amendment for a TDB District Bylaw to promote development of combined business/residence projects with defined affordable housing requirements.
Completed: ATM 2025 PRD bylaw amended to remove requirement for 80% AMI units to promote development of more workforce housing.

4.4 Land Use

1. Adopt zoning and other alternatives to protect unique features of existing village centers (e.g., potential expansion of the existing formula business bylaw complemented by other fee/ incentives options).

Completed: 2022 ATM expansion of the Formula Business Bylaw for TDB District
Completed: ATM 2025 parking amendment to not require additional parking for a change in use from a permitted Business use to another permitted Business use in the Commercial Districts.

2. Explore strategies and adopt zoning that recognizes the value of to extend landscape as well as the built environment, e.g., agricultural land, including fields, meadows, and orchards.

3-5 yrs: Need to work with NRC

3. Study realistic use of Transferable Development Rights (TDR) in Concord. (See Open Space/ Natural Resources Goal #1, Action #3)

3-5 yrs: Need to work with NRC

4. Research alternate zoning methods to preserve the natural and architectural characteristics of Concord while allowing appropriately scaled and designed redevelopment or development.

3-5 yrs: research Form-based code zoning & educate the community
Completed: ATM 2022 PRD Bylaw amended to require Site Plan Review passed
Failed: ATM 2022 ZBL Amendment for a TDB District Bylaw to promote development of combined business/residence projects with defined design guidelines
In-progress: ATM 2026 proposed amendment to Tree Bylaw and Rules & Regs.
3-5 years: Hire consultant to assist the Board with the creation of Site Plan Rules & Regulations
Completed: Creation of MBTA Communities Site Plan Rules & Regulations in FY25
In-progress: PB discussing a Zoning Bylaw amendment to update the lighting bylaw

1. Preserve Concord's current combination of land uses (e.g., open space, agriculture, and historic and culturally rich village centers) and consider design standards that preserve the town's "New England Character."

5. Adopt policies, appropriate zoning, and Town practices that recognize the value of street and neighborhood trees and natural spaces throughout the town. Consider expansion of the Tree Preservation Bylaw to protect existing trees in neighborhoods.

Completed: ATM 2021 Tree Bylaw amendments
In-progress: PB 2025-2026 Goals Amend Tree Rules & Regs.

6. Identify regulatory tools that preserve and restore important ecosystems, increase use of green infrastructure, and minimize development and/ or support use of permeable paving in 100-year flood zones.

Completed: ATM 2021: Update Floodplain bylaw with MA Model bylaw requirements
Completed: ATM 2024 Update Floodplain bylaw with additional MA Model bylaw requirements
Completed: ATM 2025 Update Floodplain bylaw to adopt new FIRM maps & FIS for Merrimack Watershed (Virginia Rd. area)

4.4 Land Use

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2. Explore zoning alternatives that enable higher density, mixed-use, more walkable and economically diverse neighborhoods within/near village centers while simultaneously preserving and restoring the rural and pastoral qualities of outlying neighborhoods and resilience of natural systems.

1. Increase allowable density in certain locations by allowing multi-family houses, tiny houses or townhouses.

Completed: ATM 2020 Amend ADU Bylaw to allow by-right units and in detached structures (previously not permitted)
Completed: ATM 2021 Two-Family dwellings by special permit in Res C passed (previously not permitted)
Completed: ATM 2022 Amend Additional Dwelling Unit Bylaw to allow ADUs with previous special permit prior to 2020 to remain passed
Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment MBTA Communities Multi-family Zoning passed
Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment Two-family in Res. B by special permit passed (previously not permitted)
Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment MBTA Communities Multi-family Zoning passed
In-progress: PB drafting potential ZBL amendment to: 1) Section 4.2.3 Combined Business/Residence Bylaw to remove impossible development standards; 2) ATM 2026 update to MBTA Communities Bylaw to bring into compliance with State's Conditional Compliance letter; 3) ATM 2026 ZBL Amendment to further amend ADU Bylaw to be consistent with EOHLIC Regulations

2. Incentivize or otherwise enable alternative housing development approaches that are owner-occupied or rental, such as Concord Riverwalk, Black Birch, or Brookside Square.

Completed: ATM 2025 PRD bylaw amended to remove requirement for 80% AMI units to promote development of more workforce housing.

3. Identify what zoning changes would need to be in place to encourage greater mixed-use development within the village centers.

FAILED: ATM 2022 ZBL Amendment for a TDB District Bylaw to promote development of combined business/residence projects with defined affordable housing requirements.
In-progress: mixed-use zoning
Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment MBTA Communities Multi-family Zoning passed
In-progress: PB drafting potential ZBL amendment to: 1) Section 4.2.3 Combined Business/Residence Bylaw to remove impossible development standards; 2) potential amendment to increase the maximum height in Limited Business District #1 (Elm St & Rt. 2) from 24 ft. to 35 ft

rural and pastoral qualities of outlying neighborhoods and resilience of natural systems.

4. Streamline/ coordinate zoning and permitting such that denser housing is easier to build in village centers relative to "greenfield" development, and discourage distant housing or new subdivisions.

Completed: ATM 2020 Amend ADU Bylaw to allow by-right units and in detached structures (previously not permitted)
Completed: ATM 2021 Two-Family dwellings by special permit in Res C passed (previously not permitted)
Completed: ATM 2022 Amend Additional Dwelling Unit Bylaw to allow ADUs with previous special permit prior to 2020 to remain passed
Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment MBTA Communities Multi-family Zoning passed
Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment Two-family in Res. B by special permit passed (previously not permitted)
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In-progress: PB drafting potential ZBL amendment to: 1) Section 4.2.3 Combined Business/Residence Bylaw to remove impossible development standards; 2) ATM 2026 update to MBTA Communities Bylaw to bring into compliance with State's Conditional Compliance letter; 3) ATM 2026 ZBL Amendment to further amend ADU Bylaw to be consistent with EOHLIC Regulations

5. Examine and prioritize alternative transportation options to link cluster housing/ multi-family/ age-in-neighborhood housing in Residential A or AA zones either by infrastructure connections or shuttle or carpool services to town centers and other high demand destinations.

Another Board/Committee: 2022 successful pilot of Concord Center Trolley. Trolley was not funded and Planning Division was not successful in getting a grant to run it again for summer of 2023. Planning Division will continue to look for other grants or another board/committee will need to seek funding.
Completed & Discontinued: 2022 Senior Planner hired in Planning Division to work on alternative transportation options and with Trans. Advisory Committee - Position cut in FY2025
In-Progress: Planning Division working with CPW & TAC and a consultant on the development of a Transportation & Mobility Plan

3. Encourage production of small-scale affordable and workforce housing that is sustainable, resilient, and consistent with Town character

1. Consider zoning alternatives, such as modifying the FAR bylaw and building setback requirements as well as form-based codes.

No additional PB action identified at this time

3. Encourage production of small-scale affordable and workforce housing that is sustainable, resilient, and consistent with Town character

<p>3. Consider feasibility of multi-family housing in other zoning districts.</p>	<p>Completed: ATM 2020 Amend ADU Bylaw to allow by-right units and in detached structures (previously not permitted) Completed: ATM 2021 Two-Family dwellings by special permit in Res C passed (previously not permitted) Completed: ATM 2022 Amend Additional Dwelling Unit Bylaw to allow ADUs with previous special permit prior to 2020 to remain passed Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment MBTA Communities Multi-family Zoning passed Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment Two-family in Res. B by special permit passed (previously not permitted) Completed: ATM 2024 ZBL Amendment MBTA Communities Multi-family Zoning passed In-progress: PB drafting potential ZBL amendment to: 1) Section 4.2.3 Combined Business/Residence Bylaw to remove impossible development standards; 2) ATM 2026 update to MBTA Communities Bylaw to bring into compliance with State's Conditional Compliance letter; 3) ATM 2026 ZBL Amendment to further amend ADU Bylaw to be consistent with EOHLIC Regulations</p>
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4. Support the expansion of commercial and industrial uses within the existing zoned areas to improve the Town's long-term financial sustainability through an expanded commercial tax base.

<p>4. Encourage in-fill development with affordable and sustainable (passive or net-zero) housing.</p>	<p>Completed: ATM 2023 adopt specialized energy code Completed: ATM 2021/2023/2024 adoption and amendments of Fossil Fuel Free Bylaw</p>
<p>6. Study the possibility of linking renewable energy and energy efficiency requirements on new large home construction to financing of workforce housing.</p>	<p>Another Committee: CAC</p>

5. Require development, and whenever possible redevelopment, to meet or exceed environmental sustainability criteria with respect to both clean energy use and stormwater, landscape, and irrigation while also considering life-cycle costs.

<p>2. Recommend that new and in-fill development incorporate transportation-related sustainability features.</p>	<p>In-Progress: Planning Division working with CPW & TAC and a consultant on the development of a Transportation & Mobility Plan 3-5 years: Hire consultant to assist the Board with the creation of Site Plan Rules & Regulations</p>
<p>3. Encourage or incentivize mid- and larger-sized employers to coordinate new jobs with assistance in searching for or creating workforce housing.</p>	<p>Another Committee: Eco. Vitality Comm.</p>
<p>1. Evaluate and determine need to regulate to Concord's 500-year floodplain. (See Open Space/ Natural Resources Goal #1, Action #6)</p>	<p>Completed: PB reviewed; Minimal areas in the community within 500-yr floodplain. Changes would have little effect.</p>
<p>2. Consider raising the energy-saving requirements of the Building Code, with the long-term goals consistent with Sustainability Framework.</p>	<p>Completed: ATM 2023 adopt specialized energy code Completed: ATM 2021/2023/2024 adoption and amendments of Fossil Fuel Free Bylaw</p>
<p>3. Promote use of low-impact development (LID) methods to reduce impacts of stormwater by adopting a residential lot stormwater bylaw.</p>	<p>In-progress: PB hiring consultant to amend Subdivision Rules & Regs to incorporate LID Completed: ATM 2024 adoption of Stormwater Utility Enterprise Fund bylaw</p>

	4. Preserve and strengthen the street tree replacement program and the enforcement of any tree preservation regulations on public or private properties	<p>In-Progress: Amend Tree Bylaw Rules & Regs and 2026 ATM Amend Tree Bylaw</p> <p>Completed: 2022 ATM adoption of Scenic Roads Bylaw</p> <p>Completed: PB coordinating with HC and PWC on development and adoption of Scenic Rds. Bylaw Rules & Regulations</p>
4.5 Mobility & Transportation	<p>1. Develop plans to decrease the demand for parking</p> <p>2. Within the context of the town's total parking and mobility plan, evaluate the creation of preferred parking for carpool, vanpool, and other high-occupancy vehicles as well as bicycles in public parking lots</p> <p>3. Reduce parking requirements near village centers and other specific areas while requiring multi-modal features.</p> <p>4. Provide electric-vehicle charging stations, bike racks, and public transportation stops at public parking facilities and in publicly funded development</p> <p>5. Develop an approach to parking that balances the principles of sustainability with the Town's economic goals, including managing existing parking spaces and providing parking options for the residential community and visitors outside of the village centers.</p>	<p>In-progress: ATM 2025 joint parking amendment failed likely due to presentation confusion; ATM 2026 PB to resubmit warrant article</p> <p>1-2 years: PB to discuss Parking Relief bylaw amendment</p> <p>In-Progress: Planning Division working with CPW & TAC and a consultant on the development of a Transportation & Mobility Plan</p> <p>Completed: ATM 2025 parking amendment to not require additional parking for a change in use from a permitted Business use to another permitted Business use in the Commercial Districts.</p> <p>In-progress: ATM 2025 joint parking amendment failed likely due to presentation confusion; ATM 2026 PB to resubmit warrant article</p> <p>1-2 years: PB to discuss Parking Relief bylaw amendment</p> <p>On-going: PB will evaluate inclusion of charging stations and bike racks as part of Site Plan Review & Site Plan Rules & Regs</p>
4.6 Open Space & Natural Resources	<p>1. Maintain and increase the amount of conservation land and protected open space in order to increase resilience and protect important ecosystems and natural systems.</p> <p>2. Identify lands of conservation interest using the criteria laid out in the 2015 Open Space & Recreation Plan Seven-Year Action Map and in this CLRP</p> <p>3. Expand implementation of Transferable Development Rights (TDR). (See Land Use Goal #1, Action. #3)</p> <p>4. Provide education, incentives and support for the creation and protection of natural habitat on private lands.</p> <p>6. Explore impacts of using the 500-year floodplain in the Zoning Bylaw. (See Land Use Goal #5, Action #1)</p> <p>7. Encourage private landowners to develop Conservation Restrictions for their land including allowing for public access.</p> <p>3. Protect and retain land that is in agricultural use through Town purchase of farmland (and leasing lease this land to new farmers) or by encouraging farmers to place their lands under an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR).</p> <p>6. Protect and promote local agricultural activities, land use, and traditions with sustainable practices.</p>	<p>Another Committee: NRC-Land Trust-SVT</p> <p>3-5 yrs: Need to work with NRC</p> <p>Another Committee: NRC-Land Trust-SVT</p> <p>Completed: PB reviewed - Minimal areas in the community within 500-yr floodplain. Changes would have little effect.</p> <p>Completed: ATM 2021 - Adobt MA Model Floodplain Bylaw and include as a requirement 1:1.5 Compensatory Flood Storage, which has been a policy since the late 70s</p> <p>Another Committee: NRC-Land Trust-SVT</p> <p>Another Committee: Ag Committee - NRC-Land Trust-SVT</p>
4.7 Public Facilities + Infrastructure	2. Evaluate cost-effectiveness of new or complete redevelopment of Town buildings and/or infrastructure (e.g., new middle school or integrated Town services building) using integrated planning principles with a view to achieving multiple objectives with any specific investment.	2. Reaffirm EPA's commitment to clean up 2229 Main Street to residential level standards, identify potential land uses for redevelopment and assess fiscal impacts for Town ownership.
		Another Committee: PB to provide input to 2229 Main St. Committee on potential land uses for redevelopment

4.7 Public Facilities + Infrastructure

3. With provisions to maintain the rural character of select roads, fully consider current sustainable, resilient “complete streets” principles and integrated planning into future design and construction of roadway, bikeway, and sidewalk infrastructure.

1. Enhance collaborative efforts between all Town departments, commissions, boards, and groups to improve efficiency, help prioritization, and ensure contextual design in projects related to roadway improvements.

2. Continue to evaluate and integrate the Complete Streets design standards for enhanced multi-modal transportation options and leverage program funding and participation when benefits are clearly identified.

3. Require consistent application of Right-of-Way (ROW) use to ensure delivery of uniform and efficient utilities services to residents, businesses, and institutions in town.

Completed: 2022 ATM adoption of Scenic Roads Bylaw
Completed: PB coordinating with HC and PWC on development and adoption of Scenic Rds. Bylaw Rules & Regulations
In-Progress: Planning Division working with CPW & TAC and a consultant on the development of a Transportation & Mobility Plan

Completed & Discontinued: 2022 Senior Planner hired in Planning Division to work on alternative transportation options and with Trans. Advisory Committee - Position cut in FY2025
Complete: ATM 2025 passage of Roads program funding & passage of ballot for override funding
In-Progress: Planning Division working with CPW & TAC and a consultant on the development of a Transportation & Mobility Plan

Another Committee: PWC & Public Works Dept.