



Wayside District Vision Plan

PREPARED FOR



PREPARED BY



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Project Overview

The City of Marlborough, through the Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), embarked on a planning process to identify a future “vision” for the eastern section of Rt 20, which is a vital corridor that connects people, places, neighborhoods, businesses, and communities. Like many other well-travelled corridors in the broader region, development patterns have evolved over time, businesses have come and gone. Some properties within the corridor are fully developed, while others remain underutilized or vacant.

With the goal of establishing a more cohesive and sustainable vision for the corridor, MEDC engaged VHB to help facilitate a planning process aimed at culminating in the development of an urban design, future land use and urban layout for the eastern section Route 20 Corridor between Farm Road and the Sudbury town line. Through this process, VHB received and synthesized input from key stakeholders, completed a zoning review to develop a plan of conceptual elements and recommendations for key urban design enhancements and targeted future land uses. VHB’s team member RKG associates conducted a market assessment that identified the market potential for further economic development within the corridor. The resulting framework of this vision plan is built upon an implementation strategy using identified zoning changes and funding strategies that are targeted to help the corridor continue to evolve and reach its economic development potential. The process identified the need to brand this area so that it will become locally and regionally known as its own district within the Marlborough community. “Wayside District” is the name that emerged during the process and as such is reflected in the vision plan and subsequent draft zoning.

Public Participation

Stakeholder input has been a key element in this process. The City identified key members and solicited participation through a Project Steering Committee. The Steering Committee represented a cross-section of community interests and concerns. The broader community was invited to participate in a community open house, to discuss issues, opportunities within the Wayside district.

Study Area

The study area is shown in Figure 1. The study area generally includes parcels that front Rt 20, from Farm Road to the Sudbury Line. In addition to the frontage parcels, the study area also includes key parcels north and south of the corridor which include a range of uses that include office, retail, open space, and public facilities such as the wastewater treatment facility.

Figure 1 — Study Area



Legend

- Study Area
- Town Boundaries
- Buildings



Goals & Objectives

The primary objective of the Wayside District Vision Plan is to provide direction for future land use designation(s) intended to encourage redevelopment and economic development through a variety of means, and in a manner that promotes high quality development patterns that contribute to achieving a more cohesive and integrated built environment. Such considerations include offering incentives for redevelopment, reduced setbacks, shared parking, increased by-right uses, and higher levels of density in order to create “critical mass”. The ultimate goal is to create a better built environment along this corridor resulting in higher commercial values. The City of Marlborough recently completed development of an Economic Development Master Plan. Building upon the recommendation of that plan, the Wayside District Vision Plan has addressed:

- ✔ *The distribution, location and extent of land uses.*
- ✔ *The distribution, location, extent and intensity of essential public and private project opportunities needed to support these land uses.*
- ✔ *A vision for corridor.*
- ✔ *Recommended zoning criteria by which development and redevelopment of existing properties can proceed, natural resources will be conserved, and community identity can be enhanced.*

The Wayside District Vision Plan will serve as a guiding document for the transformation of the 20E corridor into a vibrant, attractive, mixed use area, capitalizing on its existing visibility, relatively dense development pattern, redevelopment interest, good transportation access, and available utilities.

The master plan sets the framework for implementing a series of strategic redevelopment initiatives that will guide public and private investment and development in a way that benefits the entire community. Finally, this Plan will be used by the City as a guide when seeking funding to implement the recommended improvements, particularly for the street and streetscape improvements.

Existing Conditions

Route 20E is located in Marlborough, Massachusetts. The street/corridor is approximately 1.3 miles long, aligned generally west to east from the intersection of Wilson Street and Farm Road to the Marlborough city limits (Sudbury Border). The roadway changes character several times throughout the project area and is bordered by a variety of land uses along its length, with the predominant feature being “strip” commercial development. See Figure 2 for land use composition within the study area.

Section 1 (Sudbury Line to Old Boston Post Road) of the corridor starts at the eastern portion of Rt. 20E road beginning at the city limit and is characterized by smaller commercial uses, many built near the street intermixed with major commercial/public land uses set back from the street (Raytheon, Treatment facility, Transfer Station).

Section 2 (Old Boston Post Road to Farm Road/Wilson Street) is characterized by large “big box” retail land uses and residential apartment buildings along with some smaller strip retail commercial uses.

Figure 2 — Land Use



Legend

- Study Area
- Civic
- Retail
- Residential
- Town Boundaries
- Office
- Storage



Although the mixed use nature of the Study Area would seem to make it an ideal walkable destination, this is not currently the case. Disjointed residential and commercial uses, unattractive streetscapes, inadequate pedestrian facilities, and congested intersections make for an uninviting pedestrian environment.

Existing Conditions Inventory Photos

1. The Wayside Inn
2. Rt. 20 is a four lane arterial with retail shopping
3. Portions of the corridor have multi-story buildings
4. Buildings range in character and size. Some have awnings, colonnades, and pitched roofs
5. The former driving range is currently vacant
6. Retail sites typically have parking in the front
7. Example of typical one story retail
8. Rt. 20 has several large format retailers such as Home Depot and Target, that have dedicated access driveways and or curb cuts and signage

In addition to the existing conditions inventory photos, several photos were selected and used as case study locations taken to illustrate issues and opportunities along the corridor. These Issues and opportunities are annotated on Figures 3 and 4.





Figure 3 — Existing Conditions Issues and Opportunities



1. The existing streetscape / sidewalks should be an amenity and contribute to the corridor character and walkability.
2. Drive lanes should be examined for the possibility to narrow their widths to widen shoulders and accommodate bikes.
3. A landscape theme or hierarchy should be created to help define the corridor.
4. A common signage plan should be considered for the corridor.
5. Unused or untapped branding opportunity areas should be examined.
6. An existing inventory should be completed and opportunities identified for signal, lighting, and signage pole upgrades.
7. Existing utilities and signage should be screened, consolidated, and/or hidden.

Figure 4 — Existing Conditions Issues and Opportunities



1. The existing streetscape / sidewalks should be an amenity and contribute to the corridor character and walkability.
2. A common signage plan should be considered for the corridor.
3. Bikes should be accommodated through restriping.
4. Low fencing and/or low landscaping should be used to block views to parking lots.
5. Enhancements are needed for pedestrians to establish it is clear that they are a priority, and part of a multimodal system.
6. Simple improvements, like accessible sidewalks, should be made to improve overall accessibility and walkability of the corridor.

Zoning Diagnostic

The study area comprises a wide range of land uses including residential development with single-family houses on small lots to big box retail. There are several zoning districts within the study area that include Residence A-1, Rural Residence, Business, and Limited Industrial. A review of the Marlborough Zoning Ordinance was conducted to identify the uses allowed in each of these zoning districts by right or with a special permit.

From the easternmost section of the study area on the Sudbury border heading west, the area is generally characterized by smaller commercial and office uses built along Rt. 20. These include small strip malls and some automotive uses. Larger buildings such as Raytheon's headquarters, big box retail buildings including Staples, Home Depot and Target, and public facilities such as the wastewater treatment plant and the transfer station are also located in the study area. Additionally, some retail strip development and multi-family residential buildings can be found on this stretch of the corridor. Single-family homes are set back from Route 20, but within the study area, particularly to the south of the corridor along Dicenzo Blvd.

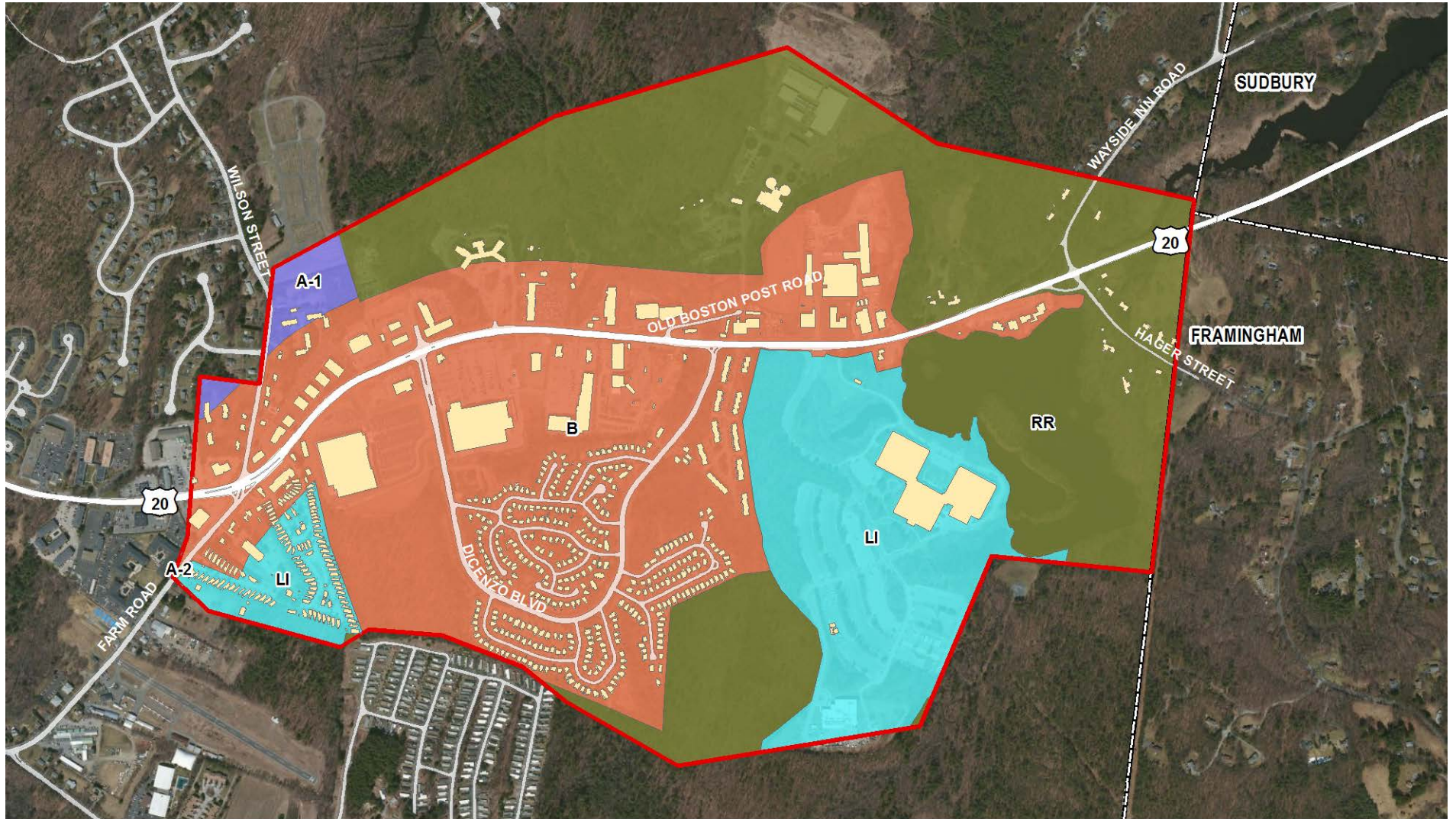
This section outlines some of the key provisions of the Marlborough Zoning Ordinance as it relates to the Wayside District and is supplemented by a more detailed Zoning Diagnostic. Figure 5 illustrates the zoning categories that fall within the study area. Although the ordinance does not include descriptions of the zoning districts, the following will summarize the type of zoning designation based on a summary of the use regulations and the dimensional standards.

- ❑ Residence A-1, which is confined to a small section of the study area north of Route 20 and along Wilson Road, is primarily a single-family residential zoning district with half acre minimum lot sizes.

- ❑ Rural Residence, which is located along the border with Sudbury and the northern extent of the study area, is also a single-family residential zoning district with a one acre minimum lot size.
- ❑ Business, which is the predominant zoning district directly on the Route 20 corridor, is a typical business district that allows a variety of commercial and office uses, as well as multi-family dwellings.
- ❑ Limited Industrial, which is the zoning district located south of Route 20 on the eastern portion of the study area, is essentially where Raytheon is located. A variety of industrial and commercial uses are permitted in this district.

Details regarding specific uses allowed in each district, along with associated dimensional standards, are outlined below in Appendix A.

Figure 5 — Zoning Map



Legend

- Study Area
 - Residence A-1
 - B - Business District
 - RR - Rural Residence
 - Town Boundaries
 - Residence A-2
 - LI - Limited Industrial District
- ↑ 0 500 1,000 Feet

Market Assessment Executive Summary

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this analysis is to provide an assessment of residential and non-residential market conditions to inform a corridor plan for an approximate 1.3 mile section of Route 20 East in Marlborough, Massachusetts. This analysis should be considered as a decision support tool to inform the corridor planning process.

As noted above, the Study Area is located on the eastern edge of the City of Marlborough and extends from the intersection with Farm Road to the municipal boundary with the Town of Sudbury. Access to the interstate highway system is relatively simple heading west on Route 20 to Exit 24-A. However, it can become congested with the multitude of signalized intersections along Route 20, as well as navigating through downtown Marlborough.

Key Findings

The key findings of this analysis are summarized next, and are presented in greater detail throughout the remaining chapters of this report.

❏ Land Use(s) -

Residential is the primary use in the Route 20 Corridor Study Area followed by commercial uses. The commercial uses are primarily along the Route 20 frontage, while the residential uses are set back from the highway. Municipal uses such as parks, a cemetery and a sewage treatment plant are also evident in the Study Area. Development along the corridor is somewhat mixed, with a few retail/service stores/centers exist interspersed with vacant land and automotive uses.

❏ Population -

Over the 2011 to 2016 time, Marlborough's population is projected to remain more or less stable, adding fewer than 1,000 persons, suggesting that there may be limited demand for additional new housing and relatively stable consumer spending demand. However, the population is projected to become increasingly more ethnically diversified, indicating potential "targeted" commercial development and consumer opportunities. On average the population of Marlborough is slightly older than the county with a higher percentage aged 55 years and older, those considered to be pre-retirement, with downsizing households and in peak disposable income years.

❏ Establishments -

The number of businesses in Marlborough increased between 2008 and 2010 by slightly more than 3%. This is dissimilar to both the county and the state which lost businesses. Marlborough has more businesses in 2010 when compared with 2006, also dissimilar to the county and state. Business growth in Marlborough was most pronounced in professional/technical services and the health care industry.

❏ Wages -

The all industry sector average annual wage in Marlborough, in 2010, was nearly \$86,500 and well above that for both the county and state. This wage represents a near 22% increase since 2006 and greater than the approximate 8% inflation since that time. However, wages in some industry sectors did not keep pace with inflation including wholesale trade, education, arts/entertainment and accommodations and food services.

❏ **Employment -**

Despite an increase in the number of businesses in Marlborough (2008 to 2010), there was a loss of more than 1,800 jobs representing a near 6.5% decline, which outpaced the percentage decline in either the county or the state. Losses in Marlborough employment were most prominent in manufacturing and information services. Employment growth in Marlborough was most noticed in finance/insurance and the health care industries.

❏ **Residential (Rental) Market -**

The rental market in Marlborough experienced significant expansion over the last decade, noting that over 90% of the increase in households in Marlborough during that time came from renters. The regional market is anticipated to expand by another 1,000 units or so over the next five years (5%).

Absorption is forecasted to be sufficient to fill the new units while occupancy rates are forecasted to remain above 95%. Average rents in the region are anticipated to increase by over 4% per year and by 2016 would average nearly \$1,770/month.

❏ **Residential (Owner) Market -**

The for-sale market in Marlborough averaged 23 single-family units annually during the 2000's, about one-fourth of the 1990's average. Similarly, new condominium development averaged less than 10 units per year during the 2000's, as compared to an average of 80 units per year in the 1990's.

The slow-down in sales and new construction over the last five years was due in part to the national recession and credit crisis, and further exacerbated by the number of foreclosure auctions, where in Marlborough, there was one auction for every three single-family sales and one auction for every 1.5 condominium sales. Sales activity

in the Study Area over the last the 5-year period accounted for more than 30% of citywide sales. Recently, most of the sales were in the \$200,000 to \$249,999 range, and likely below replacement cost, suggesting a limited market at this time for condominium development.

In addition, the sales in the Study Area are either townhouse-style units or prior apartment building conversions. Evidence of luxury "flats" in low-to-mid-rise buildings is not apparent today, nor is there a market to support such a development, given the higher costs for this type of construction. As conditions in the for-sale market improve in the future, high-density, mid-rise buildings could be planned, depending on the long-term focus/vision of the Corridor, recognizing that this market may not be apparent for 5 to 10 years, in the future.

❏ **Non-Residential Market(s) -**

The limited amount of developed office and industrial space in the Route 20 Corridor suggest that other areas in the city have better access to the interstate highway network and enjoyed a higher amount of business park development. The retail development with the Study Area accounts for basically 25% of the citywide supply, suggesting other areas in the city have better locational attributes for retail development.

The advent of Home Depot (2002) and Target (2010) has strengthened the retail dynamics of the Corridor; however, there is lots of competing retail opportunities in the rest of the city and neighboring communities. Attracting other major retailers to the corridor may be problematic unless these retailers need to protect and/or increase their market share from other competing entities entering the market.

Conclusions and Development Considerations

Based on the research and findings in this analysis, the following reflects RKG's opinion regarding development potential and considerations for the Study Area in Marlborough, Massachusetts. The inputs and assumptions which are the basis of these development considerations are presented in greater detail throughout this report and represent the consultants' best professional opinions.

However, there is no assurance that actual events will correspond with the assumptions on which these findings are based. Consequently, no guarantee can be made that the development potential, either in total or by use type (residential and commercial) estimated in this analysis correspond with the results actually achieved in the future.

1. Residential

Annual demand for new owner housing, in Marlborough over the next five years, is estimated to range from 50 and 60 units per year, and demand for new renter units between 90 and 100 units per year. Given construction activity in Marlborough (in total), and depending on the pricing for new products, RKG estimates that 30% to 50% of the owner units (about 20 to 30), would be condominiums while new single-family homes would range between 30 and 40 units per year.

These annual estimates would be for the City of Marlborough as a whole, and perhaps the Wayside District could capture between 30% and 50% of this demand depending on projects developed in the other parts of the city, pricing and amenities. This would equate to up to 30 owner units and up to 50 rental units per year along the Corridor.

Specifically, with respect to renter residential, if a suitable site(s) in the Study Area was available, an apartment complex of 150 to 250 units could be planned and phased in over time. Similarly, with respect to

owner residential, perhaps a project with 75 to 100 units could be phased in over a five-year time frame, but at this time, market indicators for renter residential development in the Route 20 Corridor Study Area appear more favorable.

2. Industrial

The Study Area does not have the locational attributes to capture future industrial/research and development opportunities, despite the presence of the Raytheon campus at its eastern edge. In addition to the 1.5 million SF of available industrial space (one-half represented by the former Hewlett Packard complex), another 0.67 million SF of industrial building area is proposed for Marlborough, which increases available space to 2.2 million SF when including a portion of neighboring Northborough. All of this proposed

industrial development is located on the western side of the city, where access to the interstates (I-495 and I-290) is more convenient than from the Study Area. Industrial opportunities in the Route 20 Corridor appear to be limited due primarily to its poor highway accessibility as compared to other parts of the city.

3. Office

The office market in Suburban Boston has shown signs of improvement over the last year or so, but unfortunately, this improvement was not evident in Marlborough as absorption remained negative. Office rents in Marlborough currently remain below their peak, and below the level to support new construction at this time.

In looking out at a ten-year period, RKG estimates that employment growth in Marlborough (in total) could result in additional office demand of over 772,000 SF, which is still well below the existing inventory of available space. Nonetheless, based on employment growth projections, RKG estimates that potential may exist for some medical

offices (11,800 SF to 35,300 SF) in conjunction with Marlborough Hospital, or service oriented office users (20,600 SF to 61,800 SF) that prefer locations with high traffic counts and retail/service build-up rather than an office campus or business park location where most of the Marlborough office supply exists.

Two important considerations with respect to such potential office development include:

- ❑ this analysis is stretched over a ten-year time period and would result in only incremental development annually; and,
- ❑ potential tenants could include small businesses, entrepreneurs, and start-ups, requiring flexible lease rates and terms that may be insufficient to warrant new construction costs.

4. Retail

RKG estimates potential capture rates (at 20% and 35%) of the locally unmet consumer demand could result in the potential development of 14,000 SF to 25,000 SF of additional retail in Marlborough, along the Study Area, realizing that the desire to be near the big box retailers may be strongest.

Although it is difficult to speculate specific tenants, the types of stores exhibiting the most potential include a clustering of apparel and accessory shops, with a focus to family clothing. Some potential has been identified for grocery and specialty foods, although not for a full-line supermarket unless the desire would be to protect market share from competitors.

Framework Plan

Based on outreach and conversations with the steering committee, a preliminary Framework Plan was developed to illustrate potential improvements within the study area. Figure 6 identifies these improvements, which range from streetscape upgrades, to access improvements, to private sector redevelopment potential.

More specifically, this includes developing targeted “gateway” improvements at the two entryways to the corridor to demarcate arrival to the district, corridor streetscape enhancements aimed at defining the street edge and improving the aesthetic look and rhythm of the corridor, the creation of nodes aimed at improving the pedestrian walkability and safety at key intersections. Improvements within the public realm include, targeting inter-parcel connections to allow for seamless pedestrian and vehicular circulation, identifying 3 key areas for potential private infill or redevelopment, and enhancing the surrounding trails to provide better connectivity between Panther Claw, Mount Ward Park, protected and municipal lands, and Callahan State Park.

The items listed above became the basis for creating the illustrative Vision Plan.

Figure 6 — Preliminary Framework



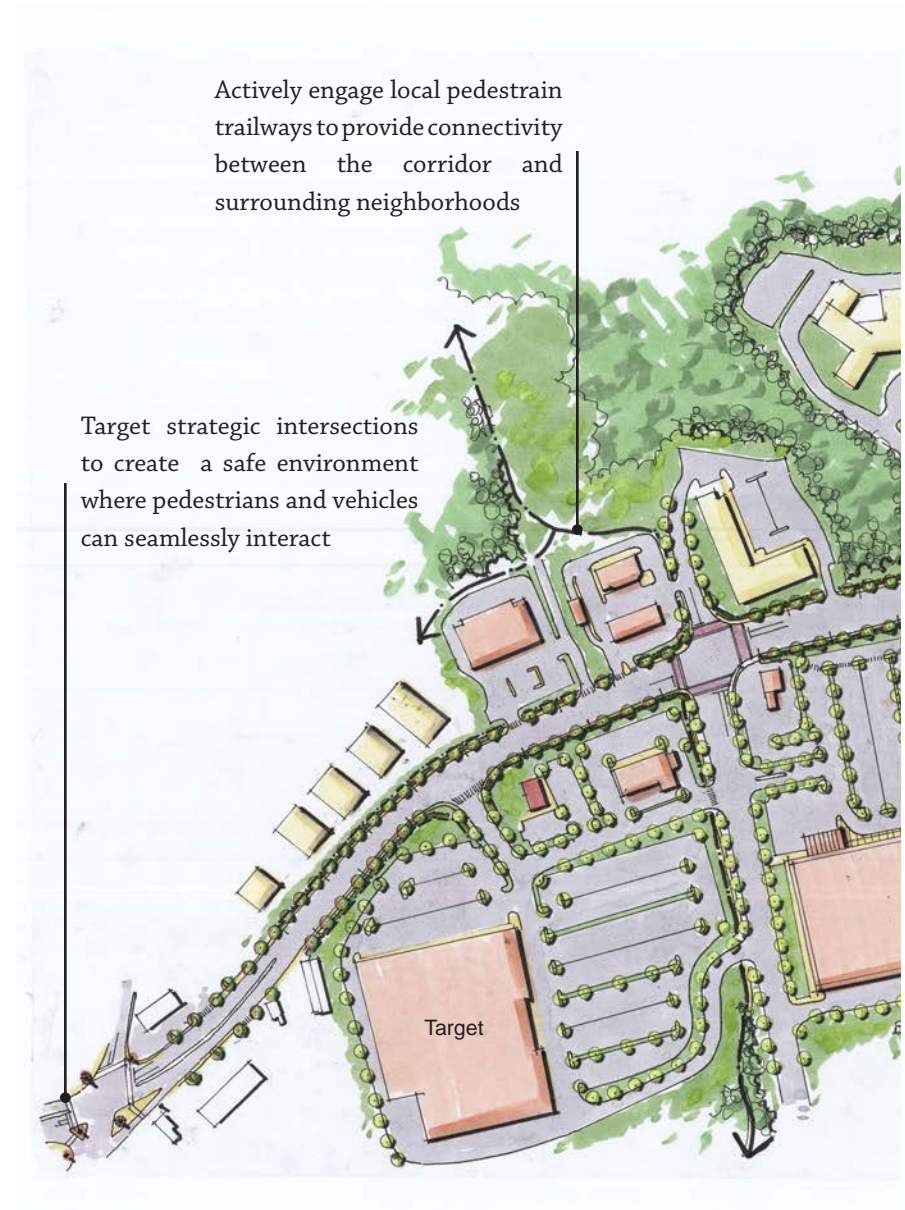
The Plan

The Vision Plan for the Wayside District was established by considering the Framework Plan, Community Input, results from the Market Assessment and conversations with the Steering Committee. The illustration to the right is the Vision Plan for the Wayside District, its intent is to show the conceptual approach for future growth, recommended streetscape improvements, potential vehicular and pedestrian connections, infill opportunities, and intersection upgrades.

The Vision Plan is meant to be conceptual in nature and further conveys a series of strategies that will enable the district to evolve over time. Those strategies include the following:

1. Gateway Enhancements
2. Intersection Enhancements
3. Corridor Enhancements
4. Inter-parcel Connections
5. Out-parcel Opportunities
6. Development Sites
7. Trail Connections

Each of these elements are further described in the following pages.





Select strategic infill opportunities to strengthen existing development

Create critical mass with additional market driven residential infill.

Demarcate entry into the corridor with gateway site amenities and ornamentation.

Legend

- Residential
- Existing Commercial
- Proposed Residential Infill
- Proposed Commercial Infill

Element 1: Gateway Enhancements

Two areas have been identified for targeted Gateway Enhancements along the corridor, Farm Road/Wilson Street to the west and the Sudbury Line to the east. The intent of the Gateway Enhancements is to create a signature experience to demarcate arrival and departure into this unique portion of the corridor. Attractive features, monuments, color, signage all play into creating this sense of arrival.

Potential enhancements should include Wayfinding signage, such as town line or historical signs, special feature landscaping to provide color and seasonal interest, repeating banners on highway light poles to reinforce corridor branding, and enhanced crosswalks as a means to slow traffic. The intent of these features is to create a pause for the visitor and a means to realize that arrival or departure to this special area has occurred.





Element 2: Intersection Enhancements

Three specific intersections have been identified for potential Intersection Enhancements along the corridor, the intersection of Rt 20 and Pomphrey Drive, Rt 20 and the revised entry into the redeveloped mixed –use commercial/residential site, and Rt 20 and the Raytheon entry intersection. The intent of these Intersection Enhancements is to promote walkability by creating an improved pedestrian experience, accommodate traffic and provide ease of access at key commercial and residential points along the corridor, and develop areas where repeated corridor amenities can reinforce the Rt20 brand.

Potential enhancements should include common signage and wayfinding, special featured landscaping at the corners of the intersections to provide color and seasonal interest, reinforced corridor branding, improved crosswalks for pedestrian safety, reduced curb cuts and defined roadway entrances, and targeted areas where the surrounding trails can safely cross the corridor.





Element 3: Corridor Enhancements

Successful corridor improvements often include a repetition and rhythm of materials to allow the visitor a level of comfort and clarity while traveling either by car or foot. Improvements and enhancements to the Rt 20 corridor should be no different.

A consistent rhythm of street trees and street lights will help to give a recognized cadence to the corridor. Low landscaping such as shrubs or a hedgerow along with decorative fencing will help to provide screening to the various commercial parking lots along the corridor. These enhancements provide a level of aesthetic treatment while also defining the extent of the public realm. Signage and banners along the corridor help to reinforce the brand as well as provide wayfinding, while reducing and consolidating curb cut will provide a safer experience for the vehicle and pedestrian alike.



Potential Enhancements

- ❑ Street Trees
- ❑ Lighting
- ❑ Low landscaping
- ❑ Fencing
- ❑ Signage
- ❑ Banners
- ❑ Reduced curb cuts





Element 4: Inter-parcel Connections

By providing inter-parcel connections between various parcels and destinations, a measurable amount of vehicle trips can be kept off of Rt 20, allowing for more seamless traffic flow, a safer pedestrian realm, and the ability for both pedestrian and bicycles to access numerous businesses without venturing out to the roadway. Inter-parcel connectivity also reduces the amount of curb-cuts along the roadway thus consolidating traffic at the signalized intersections. These connections, teamed with the proposed development scenarios, also encourage the dense concentrations of residential users to pass through the commercial and retail businesses daily. Potential enhancements along these connections should include pedestrian enhancements, landscaping and infill-development.

Key parcels that have been identified for connection opportunities include the Target, Home Depot, the Joy Asia site and the redeveloped Staples Shopping Center and Post Road Auto Parts sites. On the north side of Rt 20, future development to the rear of the light industrial sites across from the Raytheon entrance should encourage inter-parcel connections as well.

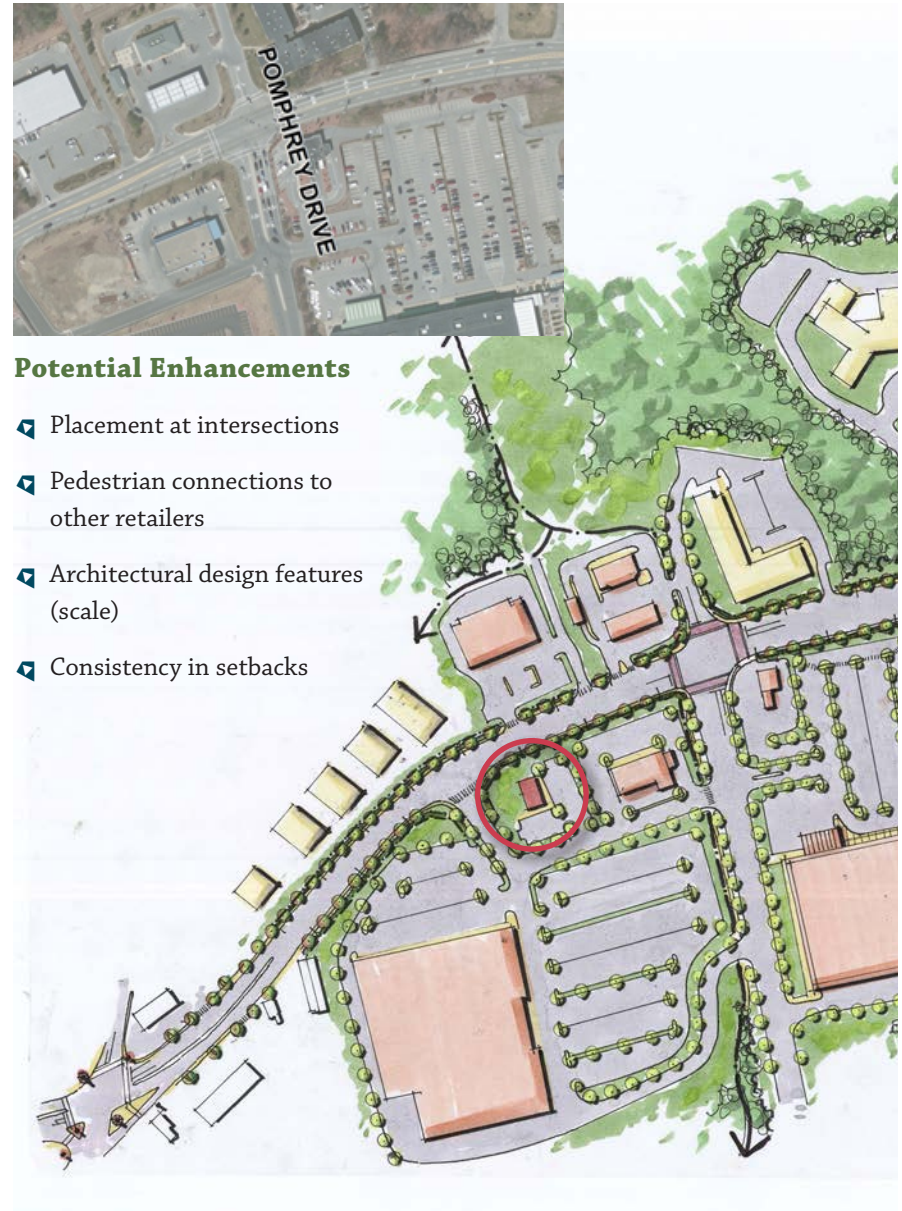




Element 5: Out Parcel Opportunities

A benefit of these corridor improvements is a more defined and legible street edge. Streets trees, lighting, and improved intersections all play an integral part in the development of the street edge, however when these amenities are matched with architecture, multiple layers of the street edge begin to form. The identification of out-parcel opportunities will provide the architecture that brings this multi-dimensional street edge to life. The placement of these parcels at the intersections matched with studying the architectural design features or scale of these structures will begin to frame the street form. A consistency of setbacks and providing multiple pedestrian connections to other retailers allow for will also help to define the pedestrian realm within this street edge.

Various parcels have been identified as infill opportunities for these street edge defining areas. A small parcel within the Target Site, another within the Home Depot site and a newly created parcel within the redeveloped Staples Shopping Center will all help to define the southern edge of the corridor. A key infill parcel just west of the Raytheon entry intersection will strengthen the northern edge of the corridor.





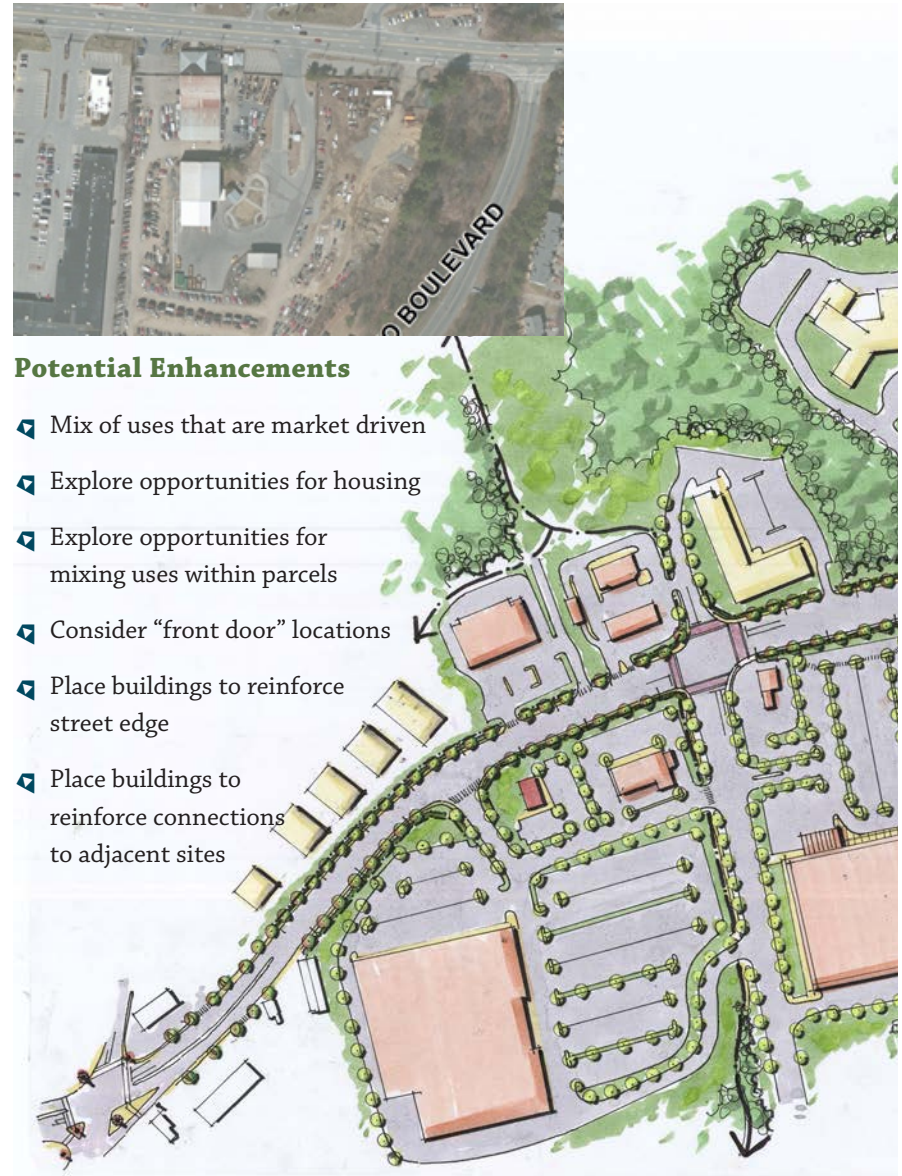
Element 6: Development Sites

Two key development sites have been identified within the plan. While it is understood that all land along the corridor might not yet be available for development, these two sites have been strategically selected for their locations, neighboring parcels, and potential that their future use could have upon the corridor and the area. As was noted in the zoning diagnostic there is a predominance of strip commercial and retail, as well as light industrial and office uses along the existing corridor. A very small amount of residential currently exists. One of the goals of the plan is to bring higher levels of density to reach a critical mass. The Market Assessment also identified a moderate demand for new multifamily residential. Two existing parcels have been identified as areas to target with this residential density.

To the south of Rt 20 in conjunction with the redevelopment of the existing Staples Shopping Center, a mixed-use commercial and residential development has been proposed on the Post Road Used Auto Parts site. These mixed-use and increased density projects will serve as a new feature defining architectural face for the corridor, will bring the desired increased density, and improve the existing tax base.

A second site has been identified to the north of Rt 20 has been identified on the existing driving range and portions of the existing light industrial site. Again, bringing this additional critical mass and increased density to the corridor strengthens the additional tax base and brings additional rooftops to the existing commercial developments allowing growth within their current fabric.

The intent would be to allow this mix of uses to occur both within parcels and on stand-alone sites and to allow them and the housing opportunities to be market driven. These developments would be considered “front door” and impactful faces of the corridor. The placement of the building would help to reinforce the street edge as well as connections to adjacent sites.



Potential Enhancements

- ❑ Mix of uses that are market driven
- ❑ Explore opportunities for housing
- ❑ Explore opportunities for mixing uses within parcels
- ❑ Consider “front door” locations
- ❑ Place buildings to reinforce street edge
- ❑ Place buildings to reinforce connections to adjacent sites



Element 7: Trail Connections

Currently three major trails intersect with the corridor. Panther Claw Trail, running north-south from Wilson Cemetery, through the Pomphrey Drive/Dicenzo Drive Intersection southward toward the protected land south of Target toward Callahan State Park. A second future trail connection from Mount Ward Park north of the corridor paralleling the western side of the Marlboro Nissan facility to the Home Depot, and a final connection from the municipal lands north of the driving range crossing the corridor at the Raytheon entry intersection then moving southward toward Callahan State Park.

Neighborhood trail systems that connect retail to residential to park systems provide a successful and safe realm for the pedestrian and bicyclists to access community's amenities. Improving and establishing these three identified trail corridors will play a major role in the success of the overall corridor improvements. As these trail connections are developed, the city should institute standards for the trailways assuring compliance both pedestrians and bikes. The convergence of these trails should occur at the major intersections along the corridor and be part of the proposed roadway and intersection improvements. Finally, the city should work with the property owners of the corridor businesses and residences to dedicate land for the establishment of the vital non-vehicular community links.





Applied Enhancements

To the right is a typical illustrative section of the overall improvements for the corridor. It is meant to be a graphic representation of the improvements from the face of building on one side to the face of building on the other side of the street.

Corridor Improvements

1. *Landscape at entries*
2. *Parking lot landscaping*
3. *Defined entry drives*
4. *Hierarchy and family of approved signage along corridor*
5. *Branding and banners*
6. *Fencing at Right-of-Way to define street edge and screen parking*
7. *Decorative lighting with ornamentation and branding*
8. *Incorporating “sharrows” and multimodal transportation options*
9. *Rythm of street trees along roadway to define corridor*
10. *Encourage building placement to help define the street edge and hide parking*
11. *Improved and newly signalized targeted intersections*
12. *Landscaping and fencing to hide single bay of parking at street edge*
13. *Common signage plans for corridor developments*
14. *Encourage building articulation and ornamentation at the street edge*
15. *Provide architectural tower elements at corners and intersections*





Character Sketch - Looking East along Boston Post Road toward Old Boston Post Road (Inset: existing conditions)

Roadway Improvements

The transportation environment plays a significant role in how this eastern portion of the Rt 20 corridor will look in the future. As part of this effort, transportation planners and engineers worked with the stakeholders to identify their visions and concepts of what the land uses in and around the corridor might look like, and then developed a plan for addressing the infrastructure needs along the roadway.

In preparing for this, VHB spent time in the field and reviewed available historic transportation information along the corridor to better identify what options could be investigated and what options held some promise, given the goals and objectives of the effort. This included outreach meetings with officials from the City of Marlborough, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), and interested stakeholders who have a working knowledge of the corridor. Additionally, VHB Transportation staff who are familiar with the overall makeup and character of the corridor offered their perspectives on what works well and not-so-well along this stretch of the corridor.

In almost all discussions, it was clear that the perceived nature of the roadway appears to be one that is focused almost exclusively on motorized modes of transportation. Very limited pedestrian and bicycle options are provided ~ and where they are provided, they are seldom used. Driver speeds along the corridor were also highlighted as a negative from a safety and operational perspective. Lastly, the historical development patterns along the corridor seems to have created a situation where the current four lane, high speed section of the roadway is considered unsafe by many drivers who are looking to turn off of the roadway.

The preliminary review of the corridor by the transportation team developed options that addressed these concerns from a global perspective ~ although it is clear that additional effort will need to be

made to address some of the outstanding questions raised by City & MassDOT officials. Mainly, those questions focused on the long-term needs of the corridor and the potential future user demands that may or may not be placed upon the existing infrastructure.

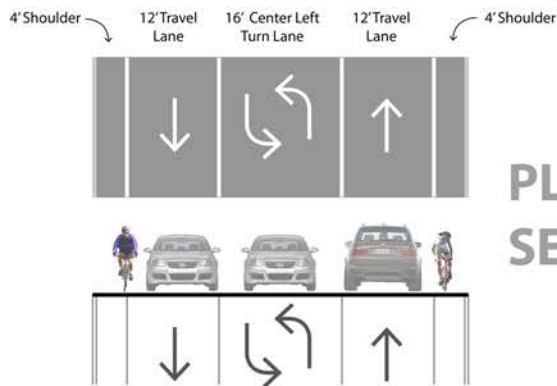
First option - Reduce the mainline from its current four-lane cross-section down to a three-lane cross-section, with a center left-turn lane for turning traffic. This option was considered as it includes the potential to reduce the overall perception of the corridor as one of a vehicular-oriented highway to a more basic roadway that would be supportive of the pedestrian and bicyclists using the roadway. It would, however, need to be demonstrated to MassDOT that the plan can accommodate both the current and future vehicular demands that could be placed upon it.

Second option - Reduce the lane widths along the corridor and provide the opportunity for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. This option

Figure 7 — Potential Roadway Improvements Diagram - Option 1



Figure 8 — Potential Roadway Improvements Diagram - Option 2



PLAN/ SECTION

PHASING

- 1 Re-Stripping within current roadway section to reduce lanes and accommodate a center left turn lane where applicable
- 2 Reduce curb cuts, encourage inter parcel connectivity, incorporate new signal at commercial hub, and consider intersection redesign at Farm Road

OBJECTIVES

- 1 -Examine Queuing Management in current condition
-Signal and Lane Efficiency Review in current condition
- 2 -Examine Possibility for Intersection Improvements in Future Phase
-Explore opportunity for Round About
- 3 -Future Phase Proposed Signalized Intersection in conjunction with internal parcel connectivity
- 4 -Future Phase Closed or Reconfigured Driveways in conjunction with new signal and internal parcel connectivity

would upgrade the pedestrian and bicycle options along the corridor, but would likely require roadway widening and potentially land takings to implement.

Next Steps

Based on the outreach with the Stakeholders and through meetings with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the City should advance the following next steps to take the Wayside District Vision Plan closer to reality:

- ❑ Conduct a more detailed statistical and engineering -based evaluation of the corridor’s transportation needs. While the prior efforts focused on historical information and stakeholder knowledge, it lacked specific information about traffic volumes, intersection and roadway operating parameters, and the physical condition of the roadways. A more thorough evaluation and understanding of this information would help in defining both the current needs of the corridor as well as the long-term needs of the area. Data that would need to be gathered would include:
 - ❑ *traffic volume information for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists on a daily, peak hour, and weekend basis;*
 - ❑ *safety statistics for the corridor (including areas just outside of the corridor);*
 - ❑ *known development and vacancy information; and*
 - ❑ *future plans for transit services and/or other improvements or programs that might impact traffic demands in either the short-term or long-term.*
- ❑ This transportation evaluation should include the definition of one or two “preferred” development options that would bring some focus

onto the projected needs of the corridor. This would include identifying the type and magnitude of potential land uses and zoning changes (residential, commercial, recreational, etc...) that could be located along the corridor in the future. This would allow transportation experts to project and overlay the impacts of those projects on top of the long-term needs of the corridor (outside of this stretch of roadway).

- ❑ All along, stakeholders and City officials should constantly be providing regular updates to each other and reaching out and connecting with MassDOT officials to gauge their interest and support of the project as the Route 20 corridor advances. Because Route 20 is under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth, MassDOT needs to be supportive of any changes being contemplated. More importantly, MassDOT can be a valuable resource in advancing the project beyond the planning stages on a number of different fronts.
- ❑ Along with planning for the needs of the corridor, it is important to identify potential short-term and long-term funding sources for the individual elements of the project and/or the collective project as whole. Some funding sources are provided later in this memorandum that should be explored for both design and implementation efforts.

In addition to the next steps identified above, a preliminary list of funding sources and order of magnitude costs were prepared for the anticipated roadway improvements / enhancements along the Rt. 20 Corridor. The funding and order of magnitudes costs are included in Appendix D, as a preliminary source of information that might assisted the City as they consider how projects are defined, implementation steps, and potential costs.

Zoning Recommendations

Based upon the Wayside District Vision Plan, the Commercial and Residential Market Assessment prepared by RKG Associates in December 2012, and a review of the Marlborough Zoning Ordinance, it is proposed that a new overlay district be considered to implement the recommendations emanating from this planning effort. The vision for the corridor calls for a mix of retail establishments along with residential developments; establish design criteria for new or redeveloped buildings; create better landscaping and streetscaping along the corridor; and improve access management through interconnections between developments and pedestrian and bicycle access. The goal is to provide for a more pleasing and attractive “gateway” to the City and to better manage traffic flow and parking within the developed parcels fronting on Route 20.

In order to implement the preferred scenario for the Route 20 East corridor, zoning changes will need to be addressed. The zoning districts that fall within or directly adjacent to the Core Study Area include:

- ❑ Residence A-1
- ❑ Rural Residence
- ❑ Business, and
- ❑ Limited Industrial

Although the provisions of the existing zoning allow for many of the land uses recommended in the illustrative corridor plan, it does not fully incorporate the type and mix of residential and commercial uses envisioned. Moreover, certain aesthetic and transportation standards are necessary to achieve the overall vision contemplated for the corridor. Such standards will enhance the streetscape, provide buffers between residential and non-residential uses, improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility, regulate parking and site access in a coordinated

manner, and encourage sound design principles to new development projects. To that end, the zoning must integrate design and access management standards to achieve the goals of this planning effort.

It is recommended that a new Wayside Overlay District be established. It will knit together the four existing zoning districts into one cohesive district designed to implement the vision for the study area. The regulations proposed within the overlay district would be mandatory for any proposed new development. Specifically, the proposed zoning changes (see Appendix C) will include the following:

- ❑ A revised list of uses allowed by right and by special use permit to include multi-family, commercial, and office uses;
- ❑ New dimensional regulations for the overlay district;
- ❑ Shared parking allowances where adjacent uses have differing hours of business in order to reduce the amount of land devoted to parking;
- ❑ Revised design standards for buildings, parking lots, and streetscapes (including pedestrian and bicycle access); and
- ❑ Access management regulations that will control the placement and design of curb cuts in the district.

This is a preliminary draft that requires additional vetting by the City to ensure that the proper procedures, use regulations, dimensional requirements, and other related development standards have been properly applied to the proposed overlay district.

Figure 9 — Draft Wayside Overlay District



Legend

- Study Area
- Town Boundaries
- Residence A-1
- Residence A-2
- B - Business District
- LI - Limited Industrial District
- RR - Rural Reside
- Potential Wayside Overlay District Boundary



