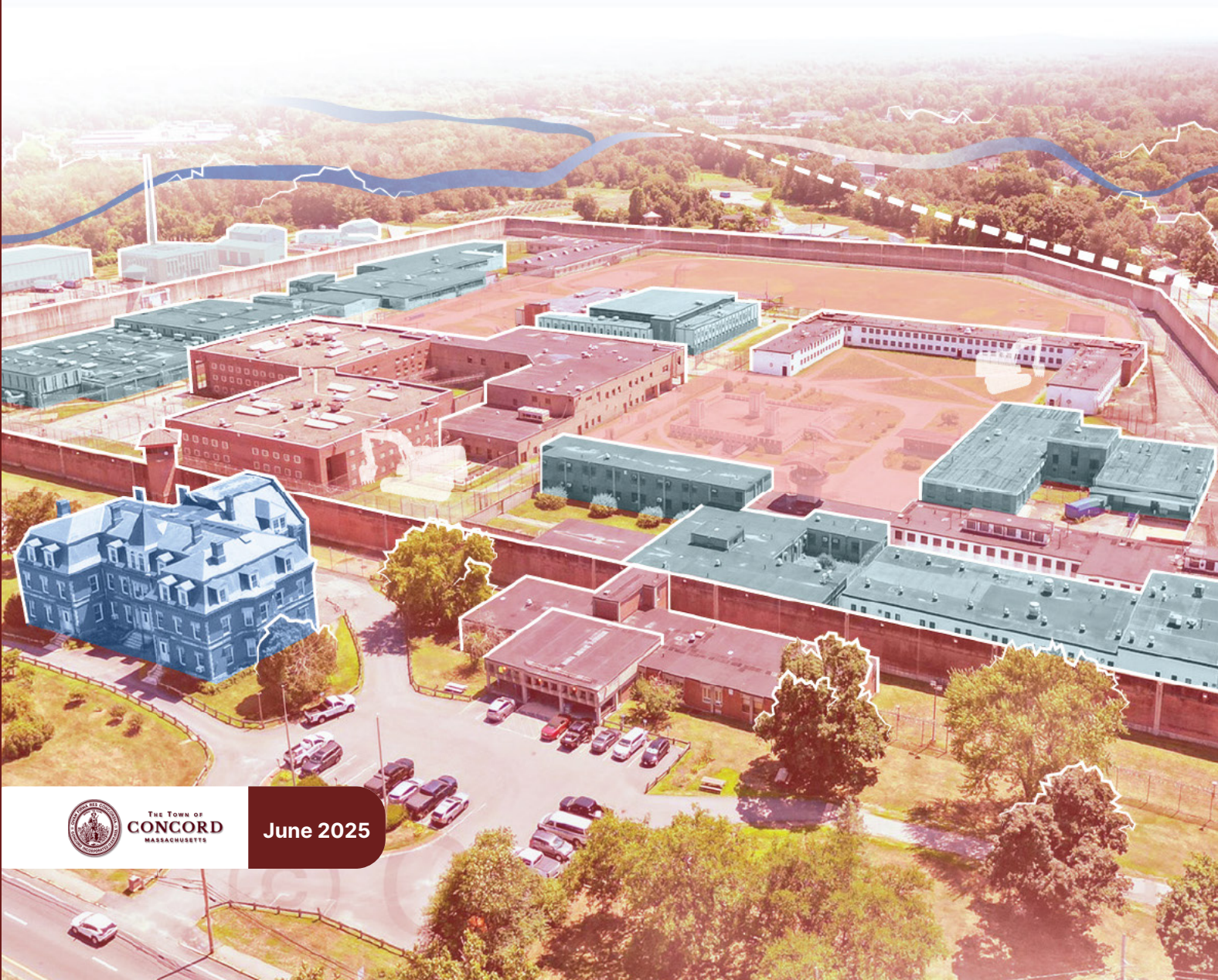


Town of Concord Vision Plan

For the Site of the Closed
Massachusetts Correctional Institution
at Concord (MCI Concord)



THE TOWN OF
CONCORD
MASSACHUSETTS

June 2025

Acknowledgements

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Key Stakeholders

Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM)
Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC)
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Private Groups and Organizations

Concord Bridge
Concord Prison Outreach
New Beginnings
National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
Prison Studies Project Harvard
Just Impact
Shelterwood Collective

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Advisory Board Letter

Dear Concord Community,

On behalf of the Advisory Board and Town of Concord, we are proud to introduce the Vision Plan for the future of the MCI Concord — a significant milestone in our collective effort to reposition the historic prison site as a sustainable, vital district that is connected to its community, natural surroundings, the region, and its history.

A Transformative Opportunity at the Right Moment

MCI Concord — once the oldest men’s correctional facility in Massachusetts — closed in 2024 and unlocked a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform an 83-acre site that has been largely walled-off and inaccessible for nearly 150 years. This redevelopment effort aims to reconcile the site’s complex history while addressing local needs and advancing the Commonwealth’s goals for housing, sustainability, and community well-being.

An Engaged and Grounded Process

Assembled collaboratively with the community over the course of spring 2025, this plan reflects hundreds of perspectives alongside broad analysis of the opportunities and constraints of this complex site. Community memory and voice are integral to the vision as motivators and inspiration for a site future that meets current and future needs and aligns with community values. This plan lays the groundwork for how we as a town should consider potential futures for the site.

A Bold and Catalytic Vision

In Concord, the epicenter of the “shot heard round the world,” we have consistently risen to challenges with our “dream big” mentality. This plan is yet another step toward realizing an ambitious future built on our strong foundations.

The MCI Concord Advisory Board, in close partnership with local leaders, Concord residents, and stakeholders, is committed to ensuring that future development of this catalytic site reflects the values, needs, and aspirations of those it is meant to serve. This is an ongoing conversation, and we invite you to continue to engage with us about your perspectives on the development scenarios presented here. Together, we can turn this opportunity into a lasting legacy for future generations.

With appreciation,



Dan Gainsboro
Co-Chair, MCI Concord Advisory Board



Patrick McCurdy
Co-Chair, MCI Concord Advisory Board

Introduction

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A Once-in-a- Generation Opportunity

For nearly 150 years, the Massachusetts Correctional Institute at Concord (MCI Concord) functioned as a medium-security State-run correctional facility. It housed over 1,300 inmates at its peak population – at one point including Malcolm X – and as few as 300 by its closing.

While it offered a number of educational and work programs to inmates who were housed long-term—such as the Tufts University Prison Initiative of the Tisch College of Civic Life (TUPIT) that offered Associates and Bachelors Degree programs—it was also the site of painful injustices—such as the Concord

Prison Experiment—that exacerbated the lives of the incarcerated. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts officially closed the prison on June 30, 2024. The Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) is now leading the redevelopment planning and public engagement process in collaboration with the Town of Concord and its Advisory Board to first envision possible futures, then determine a plan for the future redevelopment of the property and an approach for its disposition, intended to further the Commonwealth's housing production and decarbonization goals, as well as to serve local needs.





The Time is Now

MCI Concord was the oldest men's correctional facility in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts until its closure by the Healey-Driscoll Administration due to a decline in the number of incarcerated people, as well as the challenges of maintaining its aging buildings and infrastructure. Control of the site shifted from the Department of Corrections (DOC) to DCAMM for management and disposition—and close coordination with the Town of Concord on its redevelopment. In December 2024, the Town issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a concept and vision plan for the redevelopment of the 83-acre site that will benefit the Town, the region, and the state.

As the site transitions from its historical role, the Town of Concord and DCAMM are leading a planning and public engagement process to thoughtfully reimagine its future without losing sight of its past. While DCAMM maintains control over the site, they have been charged with disposing of the property on behalf of the Commonwealth, and the Town will ultimately guide the land use of the future development. This redevelopment effort aims to reconcile the site's complex history while addressing local needs and advancing the

Commonwealth's goals for housing, sustainability, and community well-being. Redevelopment is a multi-year process; the soonest construction could begin on the site is 2028.

This stage, therefore, is focused on the many possibilities of future redevelopment and thoughtfully blending diverse perspectives while paying homage to the complicated history of the former prison facility. In understanding the history of prison sites and their potential for future uses, it is imperative to ask—what is the value in preserving the history of a place of imprisonment?

As former prison sites are being closed and redeveloped for new uses, these sites' histories can be completely erased, become integral to the site's new life, or fall somewhere in between. When history is treated with nuance and respect, these former prisons can educate visitors about the intersections of the past and present, provide opportunities for contemplation, or support new opportunities for healing and transformation. Without intention, their history can be exploited as a marketing gimmick.

Process and Timeline

The Town of Concord has been stewarding the redevelopment vision under the guidance of an Advisory Board, which seats 11 members who have volunteered to educate and advise the Town's Select Board on the most effective strategy to achieve a disposition of the MCI Concord property most favorable to the interests of the Town. The Advisory Board has formed three committees to advance their work:

- Community Outreach Subcommittee
- Legal & Government Affairs Subcommittee
- Land Use Planning & Strategy Subcommittee

In December 2024, the Town released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for MCI Concord Concept Planning, Economic and Market Analysis, and Proposed Zoning. A consultant team was selected in February 2025 to complete the initial four tasks of the RFP:

- Discovery of the site and its history
- Working with the Advisory Board to conduct public outreach

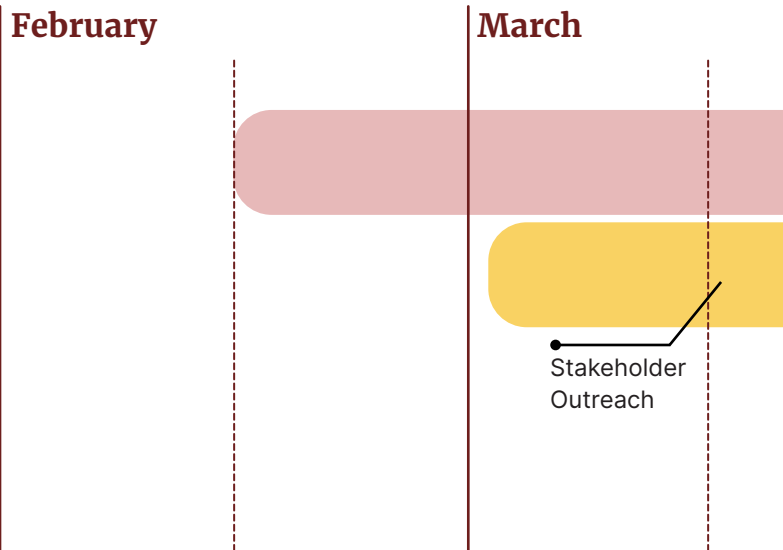
- Undertaking a concept plan process, and
- Economic impact, market analysis and feasibility assessment.

This is but the first step of redevelopment: what follows will be zoning and regulatory updates by the Town, then a competitive selection process headed by DCAMM for redevelopment, followed by construction permitting and finally construction.

Redevelopment is a multi-year process, and the soonest construction could begin on the site is 2028. While DCAMM controls property approach to disposition by either sale or lease and is expected to contract directly with developers, Concord has significant influence through zoning regulations and community engagement to shape what is ultimately developed.

Part of that influence lies directly with the community. As the Advisory Board's charge is a future that fulfills the best interests of the Town, the community of Concord and their desires have been integral to the Vision Plan. The backbone of the process is a robust community

2025



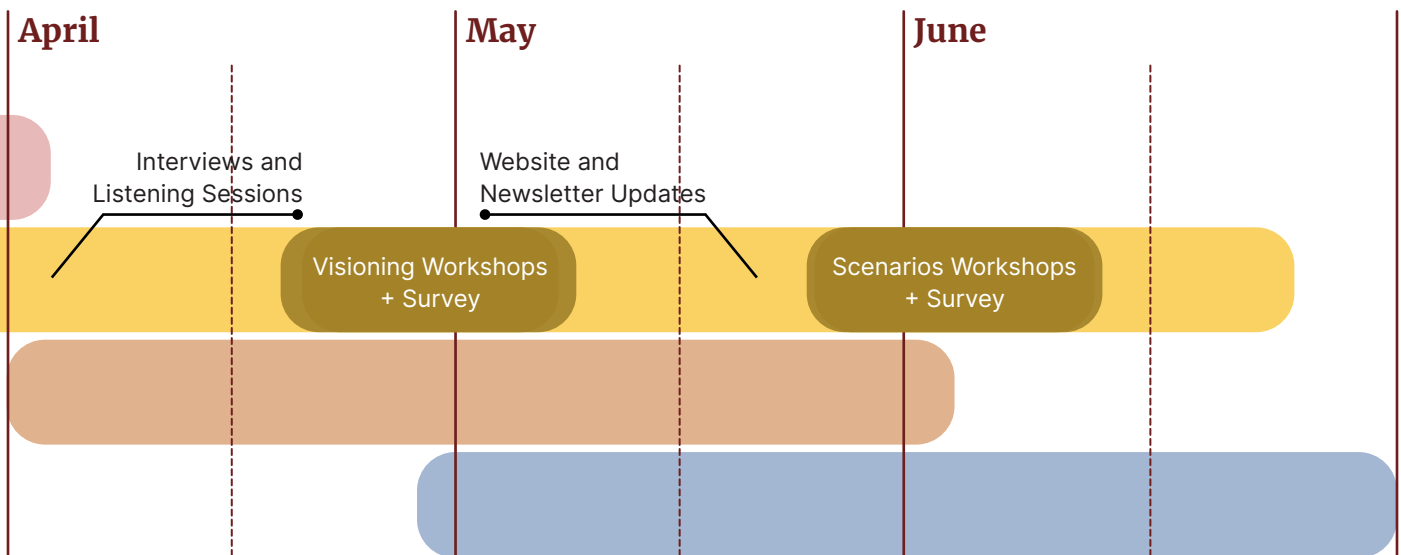


engagement strategy that has engaged municipal employees, stakeholder groups, and community members alike through direct outreach, public workshops, a detailed website, and ample feedback mechanisms. Details of the strategy and diverse community perspectives are outlined in the next section.

Finally, side-by-side with the paying of respect to the prison's legacy, the RFP set seven key planning goals for the planning process:

- Livable built environment
- Housing
- Sustainability, climate resilience and environment
- Positive fiscal impact scenarios
- Historic preservation
- Transportation, mobility, accessibility and connectivity
- Community cohesion and interaction

The following MCI Concord Vision Plan details an understanding of the site's history and current conditions, then reconciles them with community feedback into development scenarios for the future of the site. Scenario building explores various redevelopment ideas by assessing their impacts on traffic, utilities, schools, and other community factors to inform decisions that balance benefits and challenges. While no scenario is individually perfect, they each embody different characteristics that have been expressed by the community and contribute different ways of thinking about the site's potential. The future will not be one of these scenarios, but a combination of aspects that the community has collectively agreed will best support the Town's interests. Concluding with next steps, the Plan is intended to be an actionable document to provide the Town and community of Concord with tools to make decisions on the development of MCI Concord.



MCI Concord Over Time



“One day in 1948, after I had been transferred to Concord Prison, my brother Philbert, who was forever joining something, wrote me this time that he had discovered the ‘natural religion for the Black man,’ He belonged now, he said, to something called ‘the Nation of Islam.’”

Malcolm X, (Excerpt from The Autobiography of Malcolm X)

1850

1850

- There are several factories in town including Damon Mill, Pratt’s Powder Mills and Warner’s Pail and Tub Factory.

1859

- Over 5,000 Massachusetts militia camped along Concord’s Assabet River at “Camp Massachusetts,” one of the nation’s first organized military gatherings anticipating the Civil War two years later.



1875

1873

- Massachusetts budgets \$1M for a new prison and seeks an affordable site with access to transport.

1878

- The Massachusetts State Prison at Concord opens with 725 common cells, employing 40 guards.

1880

- The Concord prison became a reformatory where incarcerated individuals learned marketable skills.

1882

- Following a rebellion, 75 men were “fed on bread and water”.

1889

- Concord Junction is an busy village with 125 trains stopping per day.

1893

- Construction at the prison adds 230 cells.

“So it started in the late 1800s and it was called the Concord Reformatory. People in town were working in the prison and people in town were volunteering in the prison.... So it really has been a tradition of involvement, of local involvement, in the prison.”

Diana Clymer, Concord Prison Outreach Founder

1900

“The prison has been an important part of Concord’s economy and Concord’s history. People don’t get to choose their history. History just is.... And history comes in all different shapes and sizes.”

Liz Rust, Chair of Concord Prison Outreach

1927

- Concord Junction rail station is busy and the surrounding neighborhood is a busy shopping district with a diverse mix of retailers and service businesses serving residents and visitors. The area is renamed West Concord.

1925

1930

- The Waring Hat Factory in West Concord decorated and sold prison-made hats.

1935

- Construction of Route 2 four-lane bypass of Concord and Lexington, from the rotary in Cambridge to the rotary in Concord.



Mother Teresa at MCI Concord



Voter Registration Event at MCI Concord

1950

1975

2000

2025

1947

After WWII, the houses opposite the prison were torn down and razor wire was added to make the prison more secure.

1948

Malcolm Little served 15-months at the Concord Reformatory. He later converted to Islam and took the name Malcolm X.

1959

A mass escape attempt by 59 inmates was halted by the State Police Riot Squad with 13 guards and 2 civilians taken as hostages.

1963

The Concord Prison Experiment led by Timothy Leary and a team of Harvard University researchers, dosed prisoners and researchers with psychedelic drugs to measure impacts on recidivism.

1972

State police quelled an uprising after 14 escaped.

1968

Freight service on the Framingham & Lowell line ends.

1993

All freight rail service to West Concord ends.

1988

Concord's long standing furlough program becomes a topic in the Presidential election. Willie Horton's crime while on furlough helps George Bush defeat Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis.

Catholic nun Mother Teresa, renowned for her work with the poor in India, visited the prison. She was later canonized, becoming Saint Teresa of Calcutta in 2016.

1976

A campaign to register inmates to vote inspires MCI Concord inmate Carl Velleca to run for the Select Board. With record turn-out Velleca is defeated.

Local attorney (and later Select Board Chair) Henry Dane files suit claiming voter enrollment for prisoners should be with their home community rather than where they are incarcerated. In 1978 the Supreme Judicial agrees with Dane.

2000

Incarceration rates are soaring as the war on drugs become a war on poor people of color. The number of inmates reached over 1,300 – triple the population in 1973 and over double its capacity.

2015

Tufts offers a Prison Initiative Program at MCI Concord which helps incarcerated individuals earn bachelors' degrees.

Views are changing on drug related convictions. The prison population is in decline in MA.

2019

The West Concord section of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail opens.

2025

Reimagine MCI Concord planning process takes place.

2024

Naming the Unnamed project is launched, in partnership with Concord Prison Outreach, to help identify numbered graves and tell the story of the Reformatory's cemetery.

Concord-MCI inmate population is operating at less than 50% capacity with 300 prisoners. Deferred maintenance on the property is estimated at \$100M.

State transferred prisoners and closed facility in June 2024.

“The program [that] has probably become one of the most powerful programs that we offer is the parenting program, which expanded to not just offering a parenting program but a father support group. Now also happening is a program called family relationships where they work with the spouses and so forth.”

Diana Clymer, Concord Prison Outreach Founder



Gravestone at the Reformatory Cemetery

A Community-Driven Vision

The community has been intimately involved throughout the planning process, from attending public workshops to listening in on Advisory Board meetings to submitting detailed feedback online. The Advisory Board's Community Outreach Subcommittee has also done extensive outreach throughout Town, including through newsletter updates, attending stakeholder group meetings, and via word-of-mouth.



6 Advisory Board Meetings

The Advisory Board meeting met a 1-2 times a month and were open to the public.

7 Interviews and Listening Sessions

These were conducted with people impacted by the MCI Concord prison site to get their input regarding redevelopment plans for the site.

97 Outreaches with Key Stakeholder Groups

The Advisory Board and consultant team met or reached out to 97 town stakeholder groups.

~375 Public Workshop Attendees

An estimated 375 people attended 5 public workshops – 4 in-person and 1 online. Two workshops centered around visioning, and three on future scenarios.



8700+ Postcards

Postcards were mailed to every household and business in Town to spread the word about the planning process and public workshops.

5400+ Website Visits

From launching the mci-concord.org website in March through publishing this report, there have been over 5000 website visits to learn more about the project.

325 Survey Respondents

Online surveys were launched with each round of workshops to share information with and capture feedback from audiences who were not able to attend the workshops in-person.

Merging History with Vision

The MCI Concord site sits historically at the intersection of colonialism, mass incarceration, activism and daily life in Concord and could support healing and transformation of people and the land. From its establishment as the Concord Reformatory—later the Concord Prison—the prison played an important role in shaping the Town of Concord. In addition to factoring in the vision of the Concord community, this planning process aims to reconcile its future with its past: how will the community today hold them in tandem with one another? The Town and prison’s layered histories can be used to tell a range of historical narratives with links to the present day.

Concord’s legacy of incarceration dates back to colonial settlement and continues to have impacts today. In the 1670s, Concord imprisoned Indigenous families at night “for their protection” before shipping them to Deer Island. In the 1700s, the land that would become the Concord Reformatory was a homestead owned by John Cuming, who owned slaves including the notable Concordian Brister Freeman. After serving in the Revolutionary War, Brister Freeman became one of the first free African Americans to own land in Concord. Now known as Brister Hill, this land is a popular Concord attraction.

The prison was used to test models for prison reform and operations, which would inform and shape the American prison system over time—including the practice of using prison labor to produce goods. Malcolm X’s incarceration at the site from 1947-1948 was a spark that led him toward dedicating his life to racial justice and Islam. Many Black American Muslims consider visiting Malcolm X historic sites a meaningful pilgrimage that honors his legacy as a civil rights leader and Muslim figure.

The prison’s role in the Town of Concord spans both past and present. The prison was central to the economic development of the Town of Concord and its prosperity. When it was established, it was the Town’s largest

employer, and many of the adjacent developments such as the workers’ housing on Commonwealth Avenue were connected to the prison. With its prominent architecture, the prison and Superintendent’s House served almost as a gateway to the Town. For those that have grown up in and live in Concord, the prison walls have been an iconic part of the Town’s geography.

In telling the story of the past, present, and future of the MCI Concord site, we must listen to those closest to its history. How did the prison impact the surrounding community, people who were imprisoned there, those who worked there, and the indigenous people who stewarded the land for centuries before it was colonized? Which of these stories are being told? Those that we are accountable to include:

- Residents and historians of Concord
- Incarcerated individuals and their ecosystem of care
- The Nipmuc Nation (Indigenous Natives)
- Former prison workers and their families
- Black Muslims and the legacy of Malcolm X
- Nature

Among them are also the following people impacted by the MCI Concord prison site with whom interviews and listening sessions were conducted:

Maureen Steinmann (Granddaughter of Superintendent Michael Dee 1926-1946), **Donald Traves and Stacey Borden** (New Beginnings), **Andrea James** (National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls), **Liz Rust and Sam Williams** (Concord Prison Outreach), **Kaia Stern** (Co-founder of Prison Studies Project Harvard), **Just Impact** (Convening of 40 systems-impacted people), **Layel Camargo** (Co-founder of Shelterwood Collective, a nonprofit, BIPOC-led land collective).

Community Perspectives

Community perspectives will be sprinkled throughout the report. Across them all, some high-level takeaways are apparent:

- 1 Appreciation for opportunities to learn about the site and engage in the planning process.
- 2 Curiosity and diverse opinions on types of housing and kinds of programming the site can support.
- 3 Interest in the redesign of the Route 2 rotary and the future of Warner's Pond.
- 4 Mixed feedback on the preservation of prison features, such as the Warden's House and wall.
- 5 Interest in the creation of a museum and elements that honor Concord and the site's history.



A Vision Grounded in Community Voice and Reality



The vision for the MCI Concord site is anchored in a commitment to the many voices that contributed to this effort, where reinvestment leans into the many stories of the site and community desires to build new stories and experiences for a more sustainable, vibrant future.

The outcome is a vision for a sustainable multi-use redevelopment that balances change with tradition, while incorporating green space, mobility, and innovation with opportunity for the Town, its residents, and its visitors to thrive.



The five principles for the site's development, outlined below, emerged from community engagement and guide the MCI Concord Vision Plan.

1

A Green Habitat along the Assabet

Connect to nature, embrace sustainable design, and adapt to a climate-resilient future.

2

A Uniquely Concord Destination

Honor what makes Concord unique, creating meaningful, lasting experiences that add value to the quality of life for residents and visitors.

3

A Place to Live and Thrive

Preserve and enhance the site as a livable, walkable neighborhood for future generations to thrive.

4

A Boon to Boston's Metro-West

Build local and regional economic strength and amplify the community's identity.

5

A Positive Contributor to Concord

Balance community sentiments with the need to have a net positive impact on annual town finances, livability, and traffic.

Site Understanding

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Setting the Stage

The first step toward envisioning the future is understanding the past and present. The MCI Concord site sits at a unique location in the greater Boston area steeped in a rich history with diverse uses and evolving community.

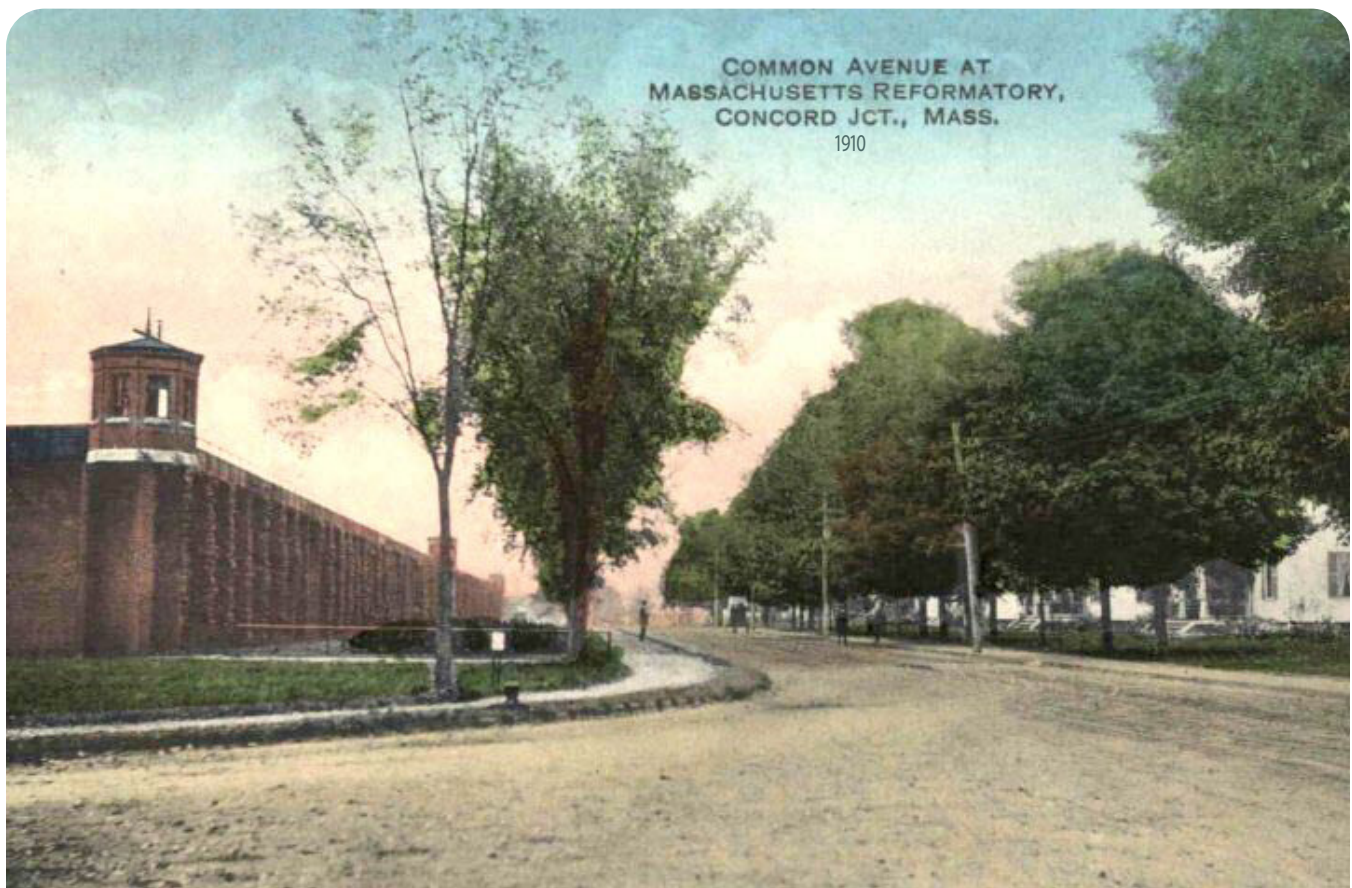
Geographically, it is bordered to the north by Route 2, to the west by Commonwealth Avenue, to the south by the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and West Concord, and to the east by the Assabet River. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail creates a connection from Sudbury to Chelmsford, passing through West Concord and Warner's Pond in between. Route 2 provides a crucial link from Boston and Cambridge west through Massachusetts.

Concordians and those passing MCI Concord readily identify the site by its towering concrete walls and towers, which leave a lasting impression as the only part of the prison that many ever encounter. To develop

a deeper understanding of the site on both sides of the wall, analysis of existing conditions is broken into six topic areas: **Community + Culture, Buildings + Structures, Environment + Open Space, Transportation + Access, Energy + Infrastructure, and Economics + Feasibility.**

Each topic area, though themed, is grounded in community and culture, as understanding of each is inextricable from the distinct context of what makes Concord and West Concord unique. Simultaneously, this opportunity for redevelopment has national significance: how can redevelopment of a state prison in the greater Boston area inform future projects across the country?

The following section lays the groundwork to both answer that question and assess what is possible in the future. More detailed information can be found in the appendices at the end of this document.





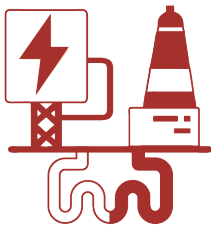
Buildings + Structures



Environment + Open Space



Transportation + Access

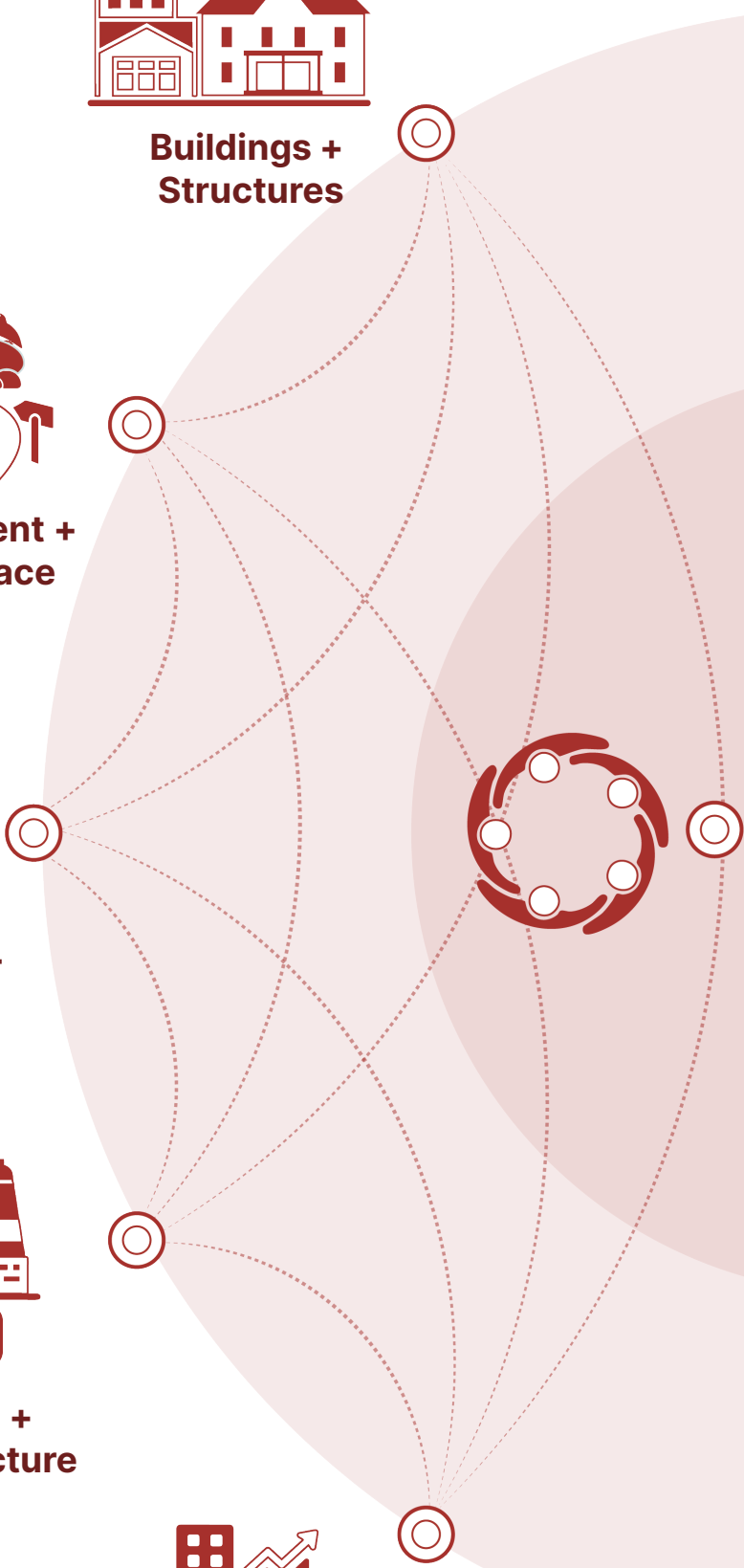


Energy + Infrastructure



Economics + Feasibility

Community + Culture



Community + Culture

Concord, a town that welcomes over 1 million visitors per year, is known for its rich history and progressive roots. Like many others, it has also been experiencing demographic shifts and growing pressure on housing affordability in recent years. In response, the town is working to balance growth while preserving Concord's unique character and history.

Reimagining the future of this former prison site comes with an amazing opportunity to reallocate resources away from a penal system and toward flourishing communities. In the case of MCI Concord, the redevelopment and repurposing must reflect the town's future audiences and communities, the layered history of the site, West Concord's unique arts and cultural resources, and the town's growth and housing affordability goals.

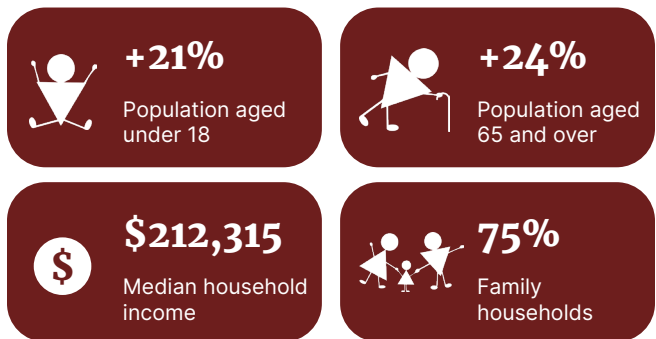
Key Takeaway 1

Concord is a historic community with progressive roots.

Today, Concord hosts one million visitors per year, the majority of whom come for the revolutionary war history, literary heritage sites, and recreation and outdoor activities. In reimagining the site and acknowledging the former prison, it is of significance that the town of Concord has deep connections with social justice and reform movements in history. Most notable is Concord's participation in the underground railroad and the birthplace of Transcendentalism, a philosophical and social movement which emphasizes free thinking and social reform.

Concord also has a unique history of communal and communitarian living. Indigenous communities in the Musketaquid area, most notably the Nipmuc and Massachusetts tribes, shared resources and lived collectively, embodying an early form of co-living rooted in sustainability. In the 1800s, the tight-knit intellectual

community of the transcendental movement gathered in the homes of Emerson, Thoreau and the Alcotts, using them as informal hubs for fellow thinkers and blurring the lines between private and communal spaces. They inspired later communal movements and utopian projects, particularly through their emphasis on simplicity and self-reliance. Newer developments, such as NOW Communities' Concord Riverwalk and Concord Millrun, foster a sense of community that is designed and built for social, environmental, and financial sustainability.

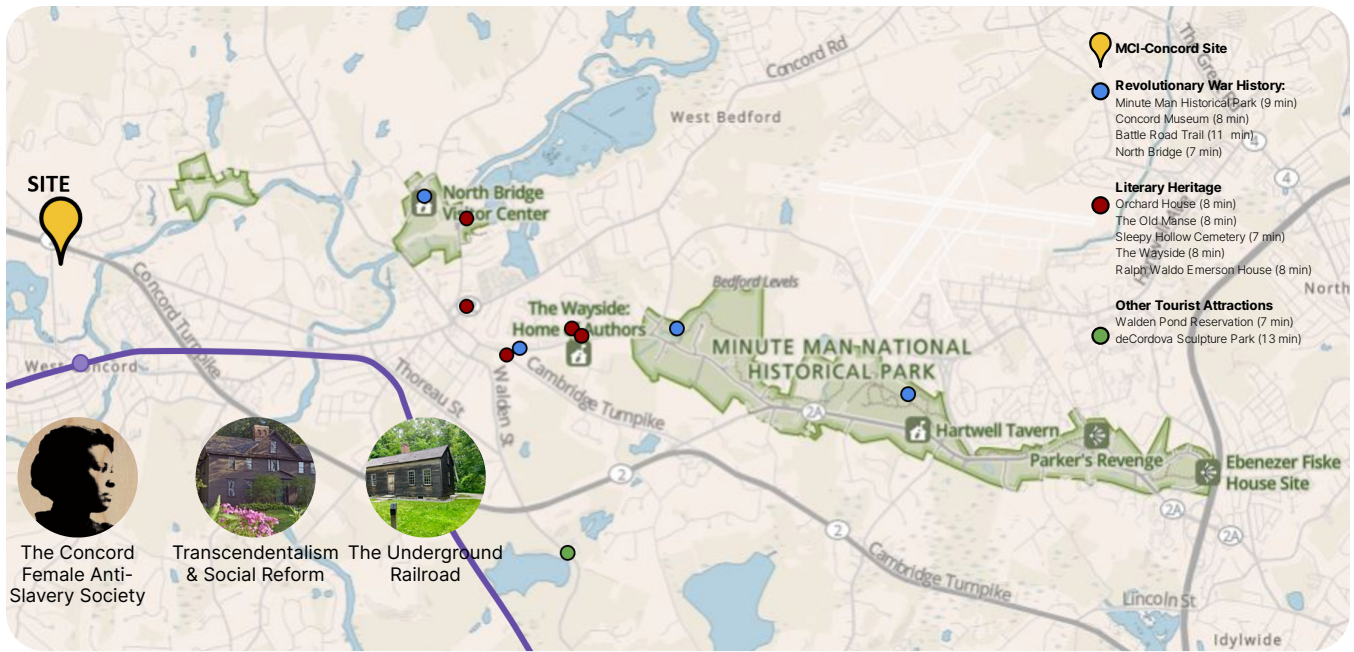


Key Takeaway 2

Concord's community is changing.

Located 20 miles west of Boston, Concord is a desirable place to live: a picturesque New England community with open space, family-owned farms, and commercial centers. It is important to note, however, that the people who live, work and go to school in Concord today are much different than they were even 15 years ago in 2010.

Most notably, there has been a recent increase in both the elder (65 years old and over) and youth (under 18 years old) populations. There has also been an increase in the population of immigrant communities and communities of color, who now make up 10% and 18% of the Town, respectively. These trends are important to consider when determining who this site will serve in the future.



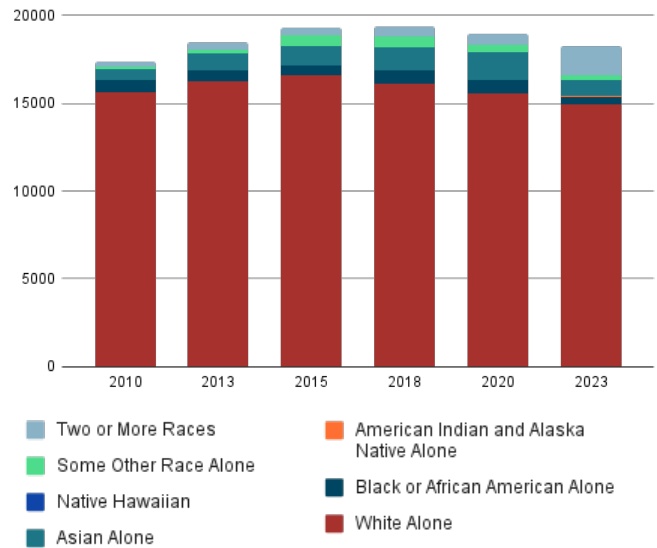
Key Takeaway 3

Concord is facing pressure on housing and affordability while balancing its growth.

Concord has become increasingly expensive for renters and for people who want to own a house, with housing stock primarily focused on single-family homes. In 2022, nearly half of renters and a quarter of homeowners in Concord spent over 30% of their income on housing. Additionally, the increasing costs of condominiums and single family homes has out-paced the growth of median income.

Concord has worked to increase housing diversity while remaining mindful of preserving the Town's rural and historic traditions. While detached single-family homes make up the majority of homes, communal neighborhoods, townhomes, multifamily developments, and mixed-use complexes contribute to West Concord's housing diversity. The Housing Production Plan (2023-2028) includes clear takeaways for the town's goals to address housing affordability.

- **Immediate and Long term Affordability.** Achieve and Maintain the state's goal under Chapter 40B that at least 10% of Concord's year-round housing units are countable on its Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI).
- **Support Healthy Aging.** Expanding affordable and intergenerational housing options, particularly housing targeted at the 65+ demographic.
- **Increase Rental and Ownership Variety,** particularly near transit stations and village centers, to promote smart growth.



~5000

Single family units



~1000

Multi-family units

- **Assist in Stabilizing Housing.** Providing services for Concord's most vulnerable residents, including those in inadequate housing conditions or at risk of homelessness.
- **Encourage Smaller Homes** through the preservation of existing homes and the construction of new smaller homes.
- **Foster Outreach and Education** about the need for affordable housing, affordable family units, and group homes.

Buildings + Structures

West Concord's housing patterns have shifted alongside changes in industry. As the MCI Concord site is reimaged, some buildings may be reused while others should be removed. Salvaging materials can reduce embodied carbon, but reuse will come at a cost. The plan will weigh reuse versus new construction, identify programs suited to existing structures, and compare upfront and long-term costs.

Key Takeaway 1

Housing in West Concord has historically evolved with changing industries and eras.

West Concord's housing patterns and typologies have evolved alongside its shift from agricultural town to industrial village to today's small commercial center surrounded by residences. With the emergence of factories in the 1800s, the three villages of Westvale, Waterville, and the Reformatory (f.k.a. Prison Village) developed as main industrial hubs around which associated worker housing grew.

The introduction of faster transportation—including the rise of the automobile—and the closing of factories in the 1900s resulted in changing commuting patterns and exchanging flows: more residents began to work outside of town and more people commuted into town for work. With this shift came more multifamily and communal housing in the 2000s.

West Concord has embraced the various architectural styles and typologies of each time period, collectively shaping a framework for future developments. There are some distinct pockets of uniformity in building type with a mix of many in other areas.

While detached single family homes make up the majority of buildings in residential neighborhoods,

communal neighborhoods, townhomes, multifamily developments, and mixed-use complexes contribute to West Concord's housing diversity. These shifts raise the question of what housing typologies will best serve the community today.

Key Takeaway 2

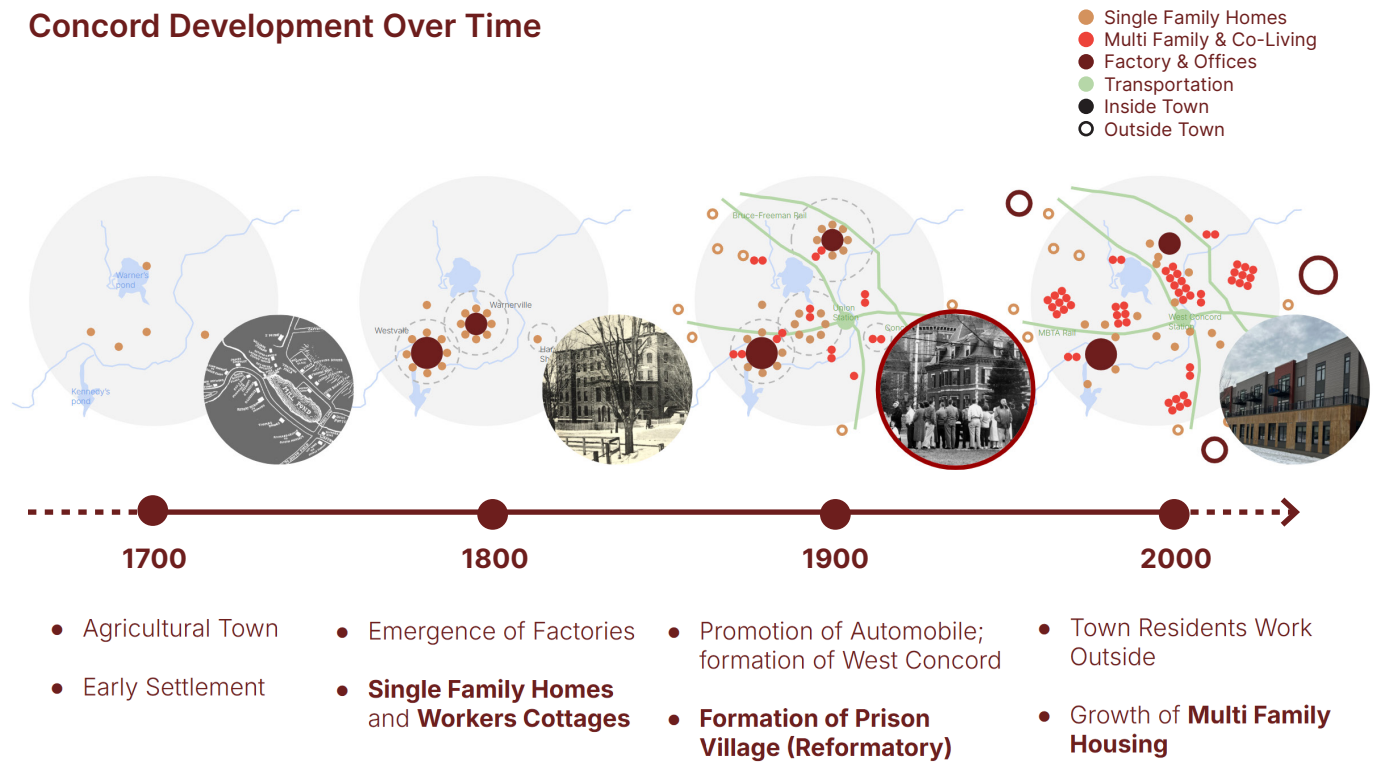
Establishment of the reformatory contributed to West Concord's economic growth at the cost of incarcerated individuals.

Since its beginning, the prison has been an integral part of West Concord's fabric. In 1873, when the Commonwealth of Massachusetts budgeted \$1 million for a new prison, Concord petitioned for the prison to bring employment—some of which was fulfilled by the employment of 40 guards. The Reformatory's establishment contributed to West Concord's economic growth through the labor and exploitation of incarcerated individuals.

Many learned marketable skills to work in shops within the prison or the piggery while some were held in solitary. In a larger context of the American mass incarceration system, new prison facilities were built every 15 days in the 1900s to not only imprison people but also to create jobs. MCI Concord is but a piece of that story. Even through periods of rebellion, health crises, and unethical medical experimentation (during the Concord Prison Experiment), MCI Concord continued to operate in an industrial capacity to produce goods and provide services until its closing in 2024.

Prison closures are an opportunity to reallocate resources toward collectively beneficial developments that help foster thriving communities. As incarcerated populations shrink, the spaces left behind are opportunities to revitalize. Land redevelopment and

Concord Development Over Time



Concord Housing Types

				
Detached Single Family	Communal Neighborhoods	Townhomes, Duplex, and Triplex	Multifamily and Senior Living	Mixed Use Developments
				
	Concord Riverwalk	WedgeWood Commons	NOVO Riverside	Brookside Square
				
	Concord Riverwalk	Center Village	Concord Park	Concord Commons

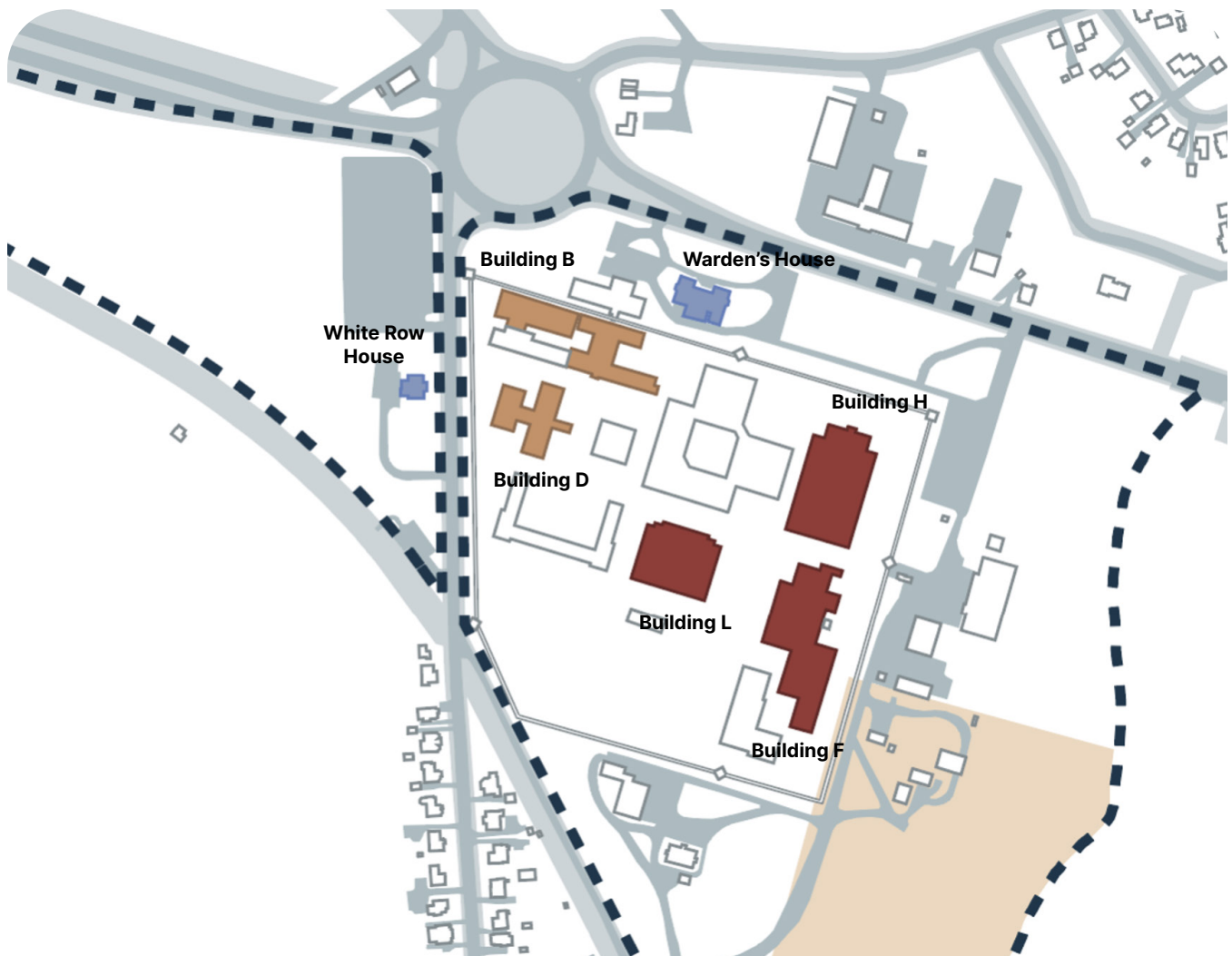
adaptive reuse are effective pathways for positive impact. When well considered, the resources prisons previously captured—land, infrastructure, and human—can be utilized for the collective good.

Key Takeaway 3

Understanding the adaptive reuse potential of existing prison structures means balancing memory, cost, and sustainability.

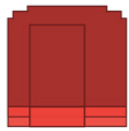
Each building type offers different potential for reuse, depending on its footprint and internal structure. Given their age, all buildings will present significant

rehabilitation challenges—especially in meeting modern energy codes. Administrative buildings, with their narrow floor plates and large windows, may be suitable for housing conversion. General-purpose buildings like the gym and foundry could support commercial uses that can take advantage of their deep floor plans. Cell blocks present the greatest challenges for reuse. Physically, their dense cellular layouts, uneven floor levels, and small windows make adaptation difficult. Socially, their history as spaces of incarceration complicates their use for anything other than interpretive or museum purposes. Two buildings are also listed as Cultural Resources by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, which may influence how they are treated. All reuse strategies should be thoughtfully aligned with the site's interpretive journey (see Sharing the Story of the Site). Existing buildings are grouped into the following re-use potential categories:



High re-use potential

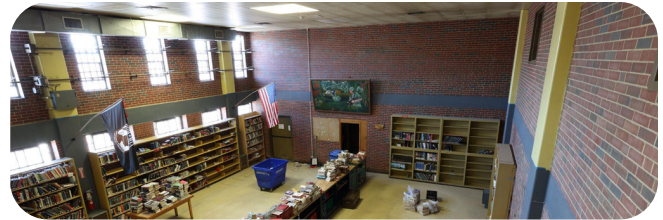
Building H, Gym, School



175'

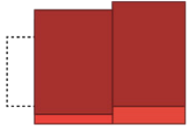
150'

2 stories
64,000 sq ft



Building H, Library

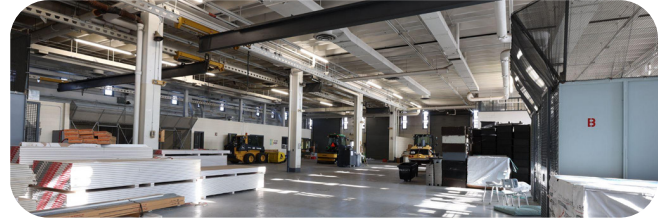
Building L, Intake, Laundry



225'

150'

1 story
40,800 sq ft



Building L, Intake

Building F and I, Shops



380'

170'

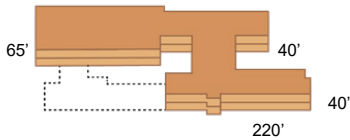
1 story
28,600 sq ft



Building F, Shops

Medium re-use potential

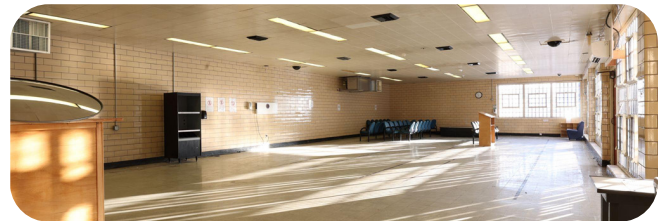
Building B, Admin. (1996)



65'

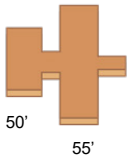
220'

2 stories
20,800 sq ft



Building B, Admin

Building D, Kitchen and Dining (1960)



50'

55'

1 story
14,900 sq ft

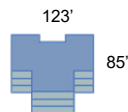


Building D, Dining

Historic Significance

Massachusetts Historical Commission Cultural Resource

Warden's House / Overflow



123'

85'

3 stories
28,960 sq ft



Warden's House

White Row House



123'

56'

2.5 stories
6,300 sq ft



White Row House

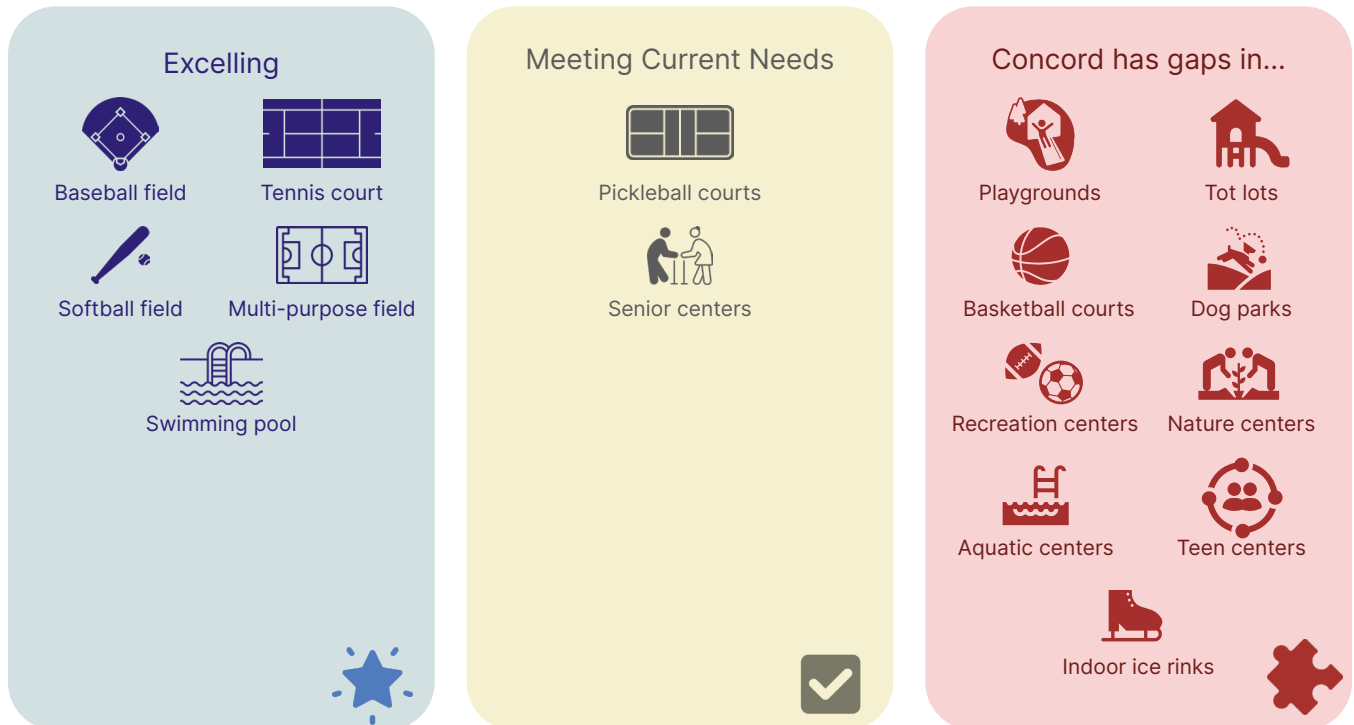
Environment + Open Space

Key Takeaway 1

Concord has identified recreation needs.

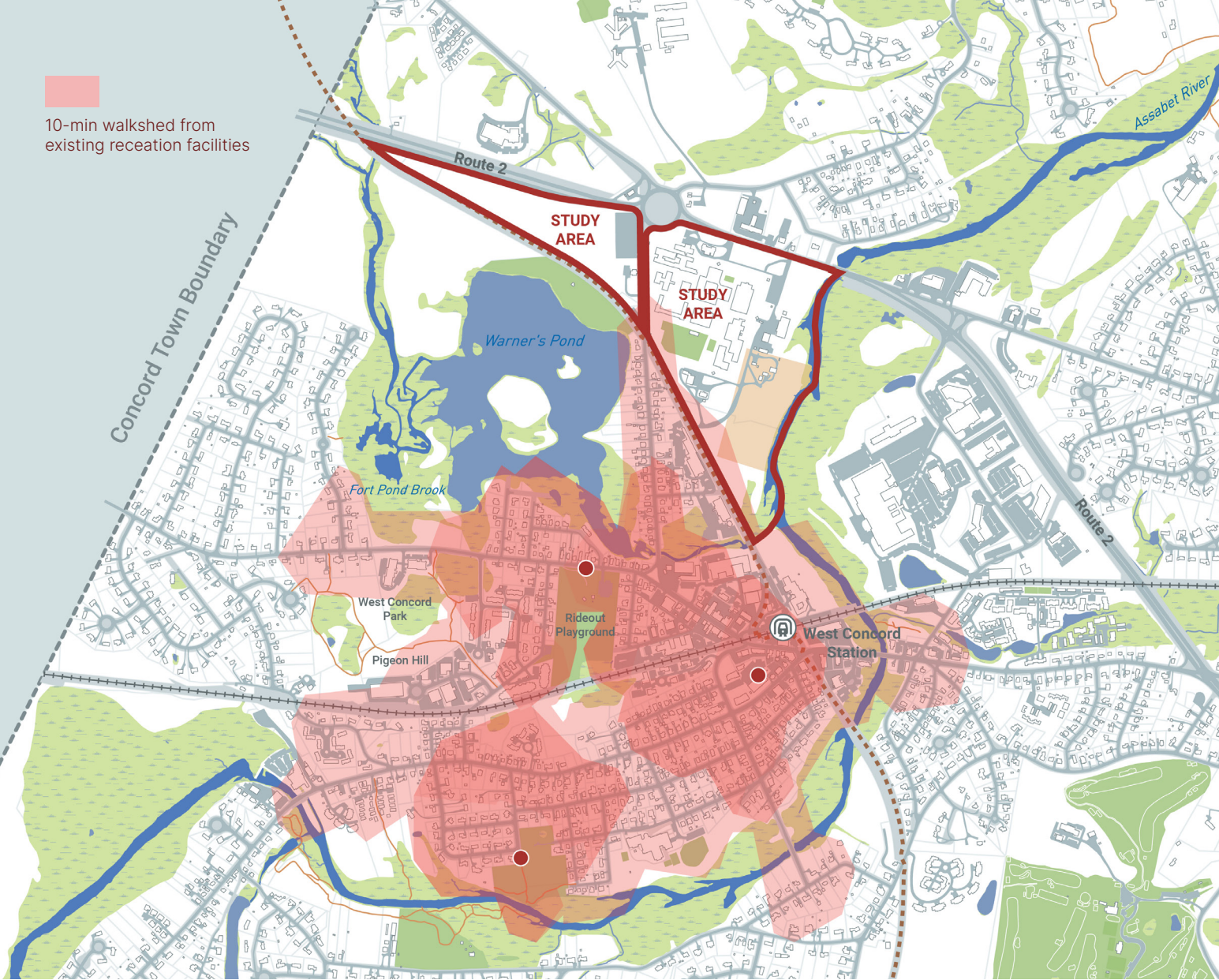
Concord already has a robust and well-used parks and recreation system, which underwent a comprehensive evaluation in the 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan. Aside from specific recommendations for existing facilities across Concord, the document identifies gaps in recreation amenities, based on National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) data for comparable community sizes. Key missing amenities that the MCI Concord Site could potentially help to meet include playgrounds and tot lots, basketball courts,

dog parks and centers of various types. A ten-minute walkshed analysis of the recreation amenities nearest to the MCI Concord site underscore the need for amenities to serve the future population of the area, as most existing parks and recreation resources in West Concord are beyond a quarter-mile from the site. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) identifies a ten-minute walk from recreation amenities as a key goal for residential areas nationwide.



* Data Source: Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan

10-min walkshed from existing recreation facilities



Key Takeaway 2

Existing natural habitats need restoration.

The site sits at the confluence of Warner's Pond and the Assabet River, both well-loved community and ecological resources. This presents key opportunities for future uses of the site to take advantage of existing natural resources, and also points to the value of site programming that advances both restoration and stewardship of these important environmental assets.

Warner's Pond

Warner's Pond, dammed as a reservoir since the late 1600s, has been a significant feature of West Concord's industry, community, and recreation since the 1850s. Over the last several decades, it has been a well-loved destination in all seasons—recently enhanced by Town investment in Gerow Park.

Unfortunately, the pond is now in an advanced state of eutrophication. This condition has decreased water depths and advanced the growth of aquatic invasive plants, both of which impair water quality, ecological habitat health, and recreational opportunities. The Town of Concord is currently evaluating three potential future scenarios: dredge the pond, remove the dam, or continue maintenance strategies. The pond's proximity to the southern extents of the MCI Concord site, as well as its outlet into the Assabet River, mean that any future strategy for Warner's Pond could affect habitat and water quality as experienced on the site.

The Assabet River

The Assabet River lines the entire eastern border of the MCI Concord site. The southern reach of the site includes wetlands at the confluence of Nashoba Brook (which flows out of Warner's Pond) and the Assabet River. The Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge is an important feeding and breeding ground for migratory

birds and other wildlife. Some of these species make their way along the river past the MCI Concord site, but invasive species and erosion plague significant portions of the riverbank. Stewardship efforts to enhance and restore natural habitat along the river's edge have the potential to increase riparian health, improve wildlife habitat, and provide engaging visitor experiences with the watershed's natural flora and fauna.

Environmental Regulations

Beyond the river and wetland systems themselves, state environmental regulations limit development within a 200-foot buffer of the riverbank and a 100-foot buffer

from wetlands. Effectively, this means that a portion of the eastern edge and southern tip of the site can have only limited site improvements (such as trails and boardwalks) but not new buildings. Although portions of the western triangle of the MCI Concord site include active agricultural lands and forested areas near the historic cemetery, these are not currently protected via conservation restriction or officially designated as priority habitat for wildlife or State Article 97 lands. The State Department of Corrections (DOC) has expressed interest in continuing to actively farm the agricultural land as part of their minimum-security facility to the north of the MCI Concord site.



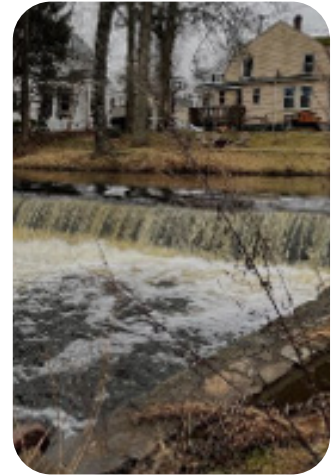
Used to host winter activities including skating parties



Now in "advanced state of eutrophication"



Well-loved for fishing, boating, and swimming



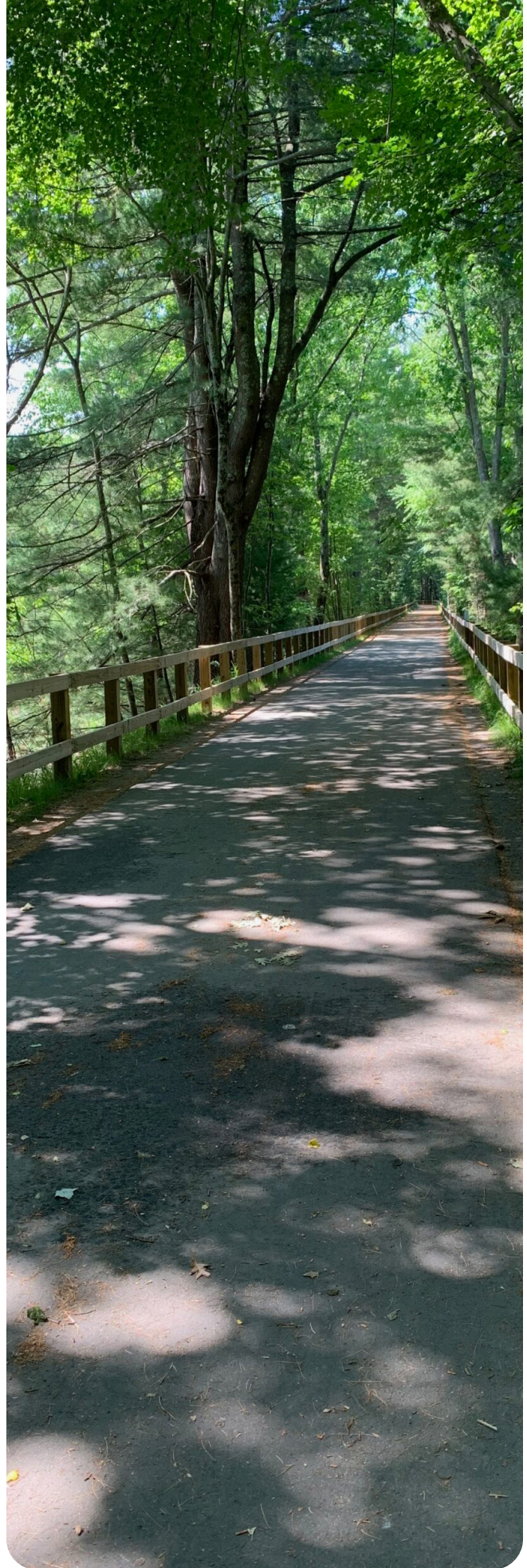
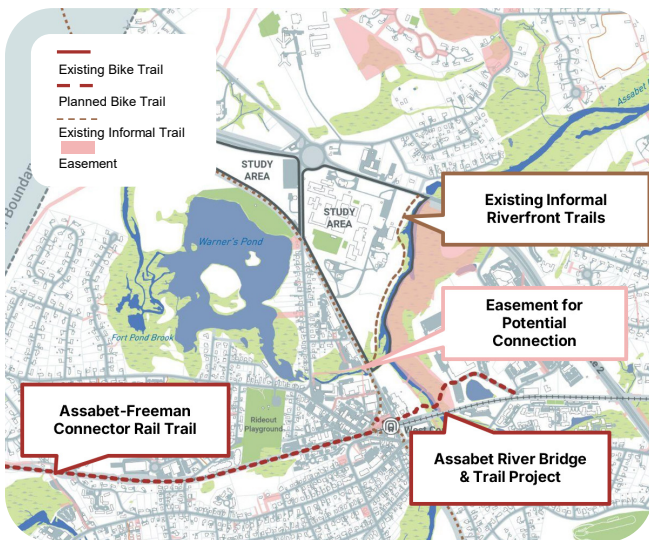
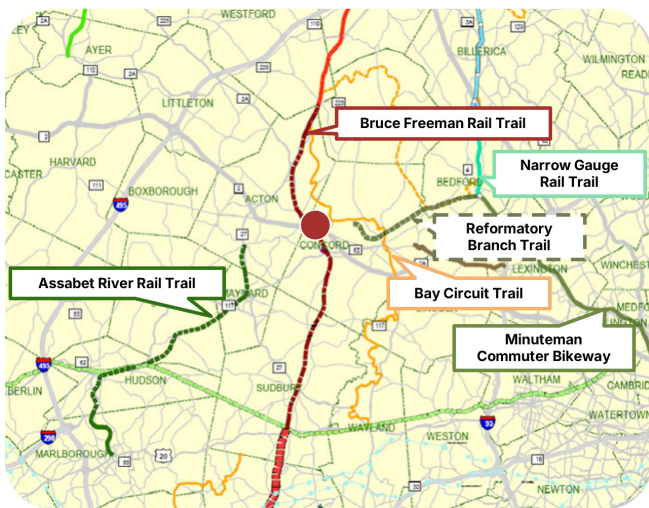
Future scenarios - dredging, dam removal, and maintenance



Key Takeaway 3

Onsite trails can connect into a regional network.

In 2023, the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail converted an abandoned railroad right-of-way along the entire southern length of the site into a well traveled recreational and commuter route with a pedestrian bridge across Route 2. Built in phases, the completed trail will eventually connect Framingham to Lowell over 25 protected miles. This is a key link in a highly active regional network well-known for trails and protected bike routes. The Assabet River Rail Trail, the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway and the Bay Circuit Trail all come within striking distance of the MCI Concord site, and regional trail planning has already mapped potential connections nearby. The opening of the MCI Concord site to public access will enable additional potential connections, especially along the banks of the Assabet river, where informal trails already exist.



Transportation + Access

The MCI Concord development presents a timely opportunity to advance Concord's transportation and land use goals by leveraging existing infrastructure and aligning with planned mobility improvements—including MassDOT's on-going Route 2 rotary redesign project. With thoughtful design and coordination, the project can enhance connectivity, reduce traffic impacts, and promote healthier, more sustainable travel options. These improvements will not only benefit future site users but also support broader community objectives related to safety, accessibility, and environmental sustainability.

Currently, the surrounding transportation network is fragmented and poses safety concerns for all modes of travel. High traffic volumes, limited multimodal infrastructure, and constrained site access create challenges that must be addressed through integrated

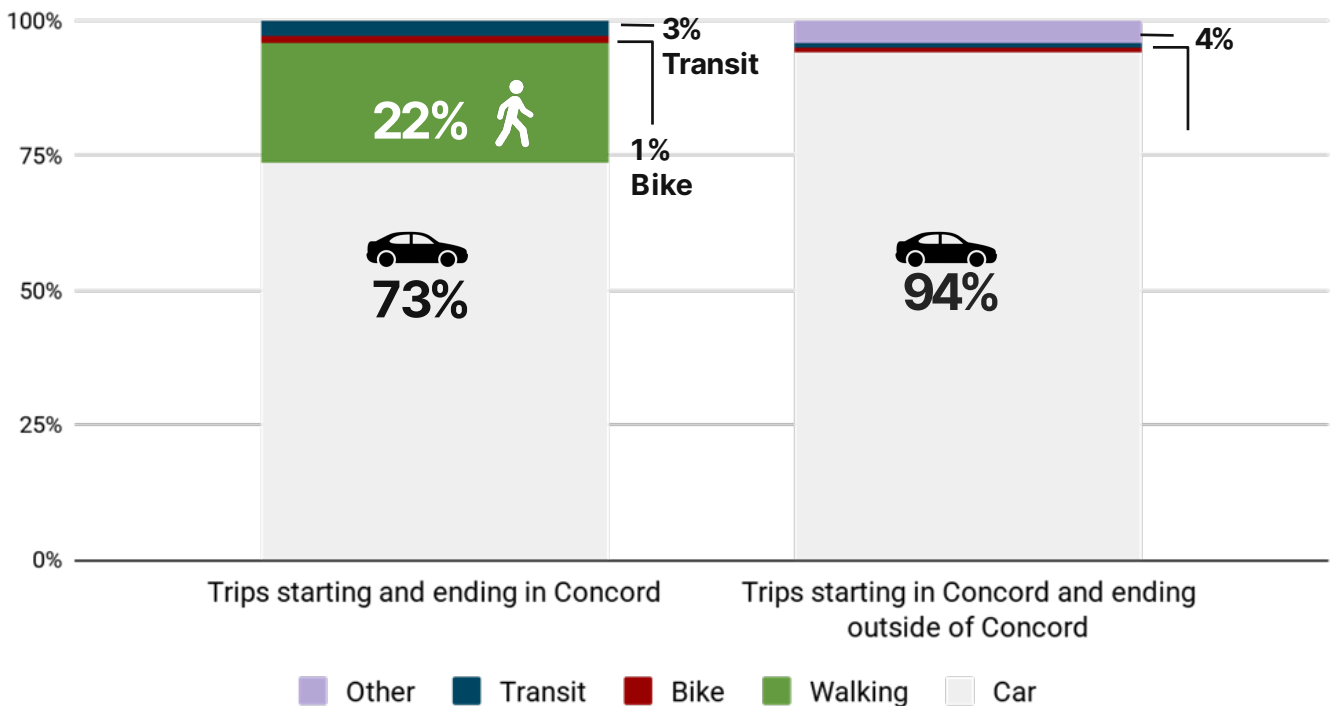
planning. By strengthening multimodal connections, reducing car dependency, and coordinating with local and state initiatives, the development can help transform a constrained site into a model for safe, connected, and inclusive mobility.

Key Takeaway 1

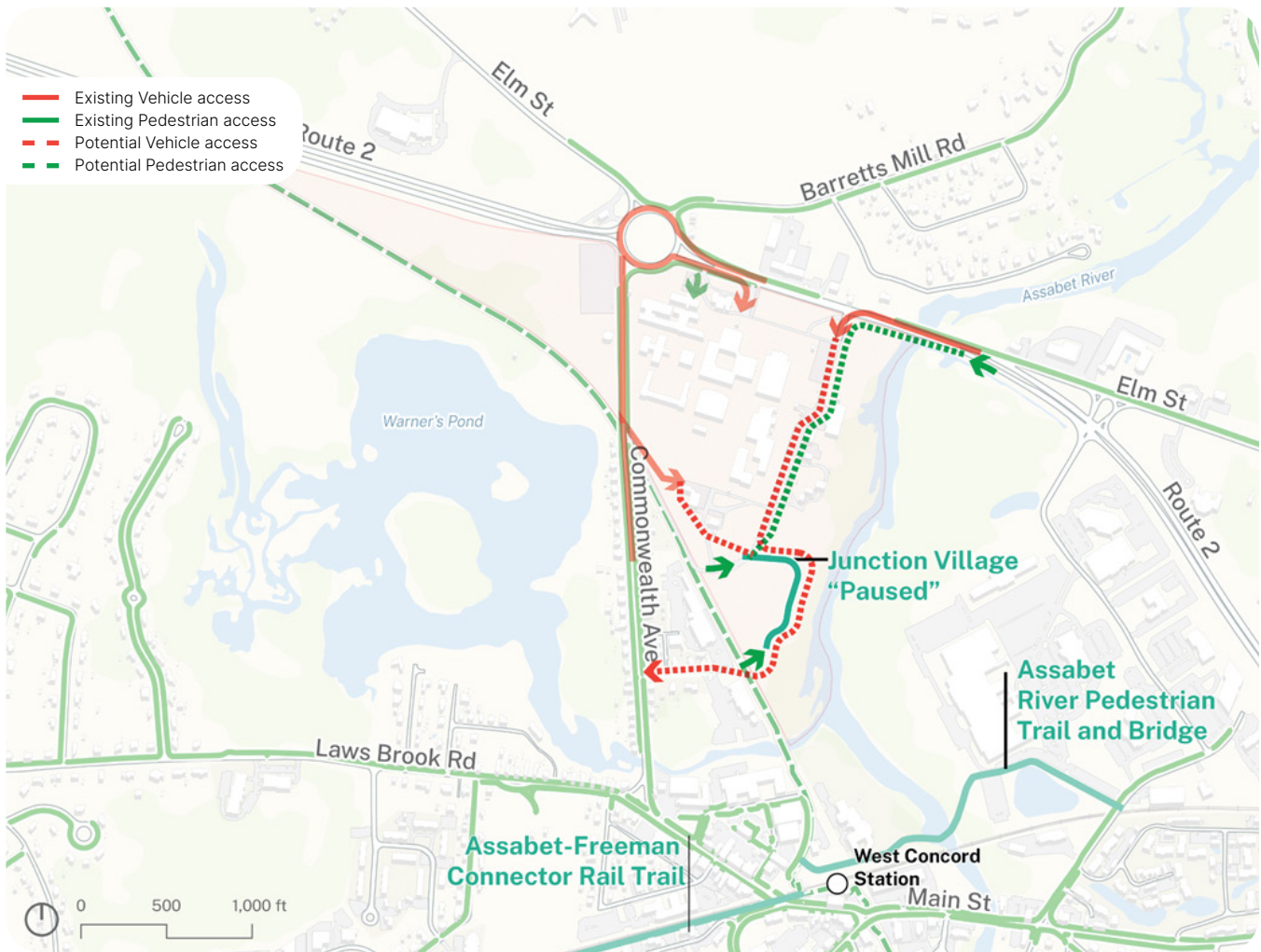
More connections are needed to promote healthier, multimodal travel.

The site is well positioned to support a shift toward healthier, more sustainable modes of transportation. It lies within a 20-minute walk of West Concord Station

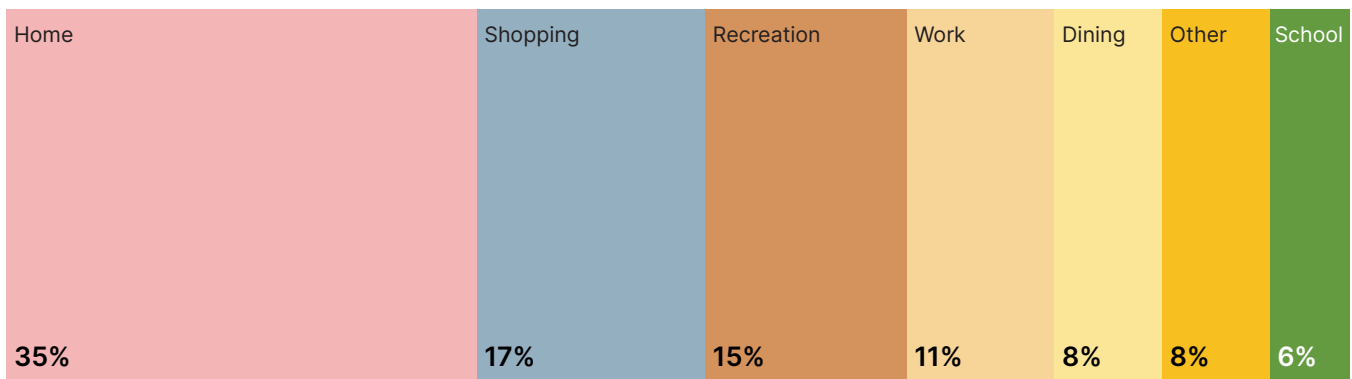
Trips Originating in Concord by Mode In and Out of Concord



Possible Connections and Planned Projects



Trips Originating in Concord by Destination Type

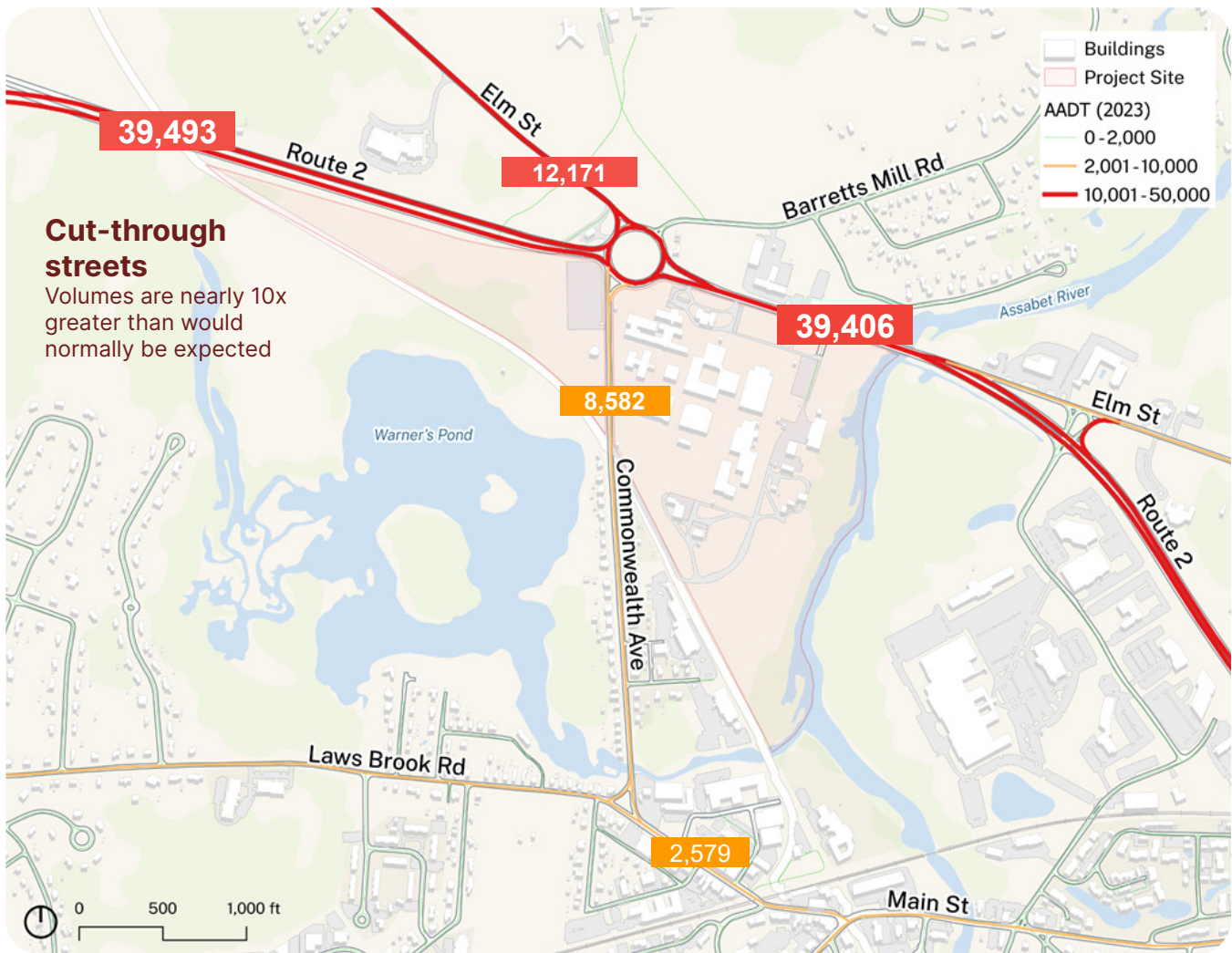


and is directly adjacent to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, which runs along its southern edge. Additionally, scenic trails along the Assabet River offer further opportunities for recreational and commuter connections. These assets provide a strong foundation for encouraging walking, biking, and transit use.

Currently, approximately 73% of trips that begin and end within Concord are made by car, while walking

accounts for 22%, and transit and biking make up only a small share. For trips entering or leaving Concord, car usage rises to 94%. These figures underscore the need to expand access to non-automobile travel options. By investing in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure, the development can help reduce car dependency, promote physical activity, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and improve public health.

Average Daily Traffic



Key Takeaway 2

Site access is limited by both natural and built barriers for non-motorized modes of transportation.

Access to the site is currently limited by both natural and built barriers. The Assabet River restricts direct entry from the east, while Route 2—characterized by high speeds and motor vehicle volumes—creates a significant physical divide to the north.

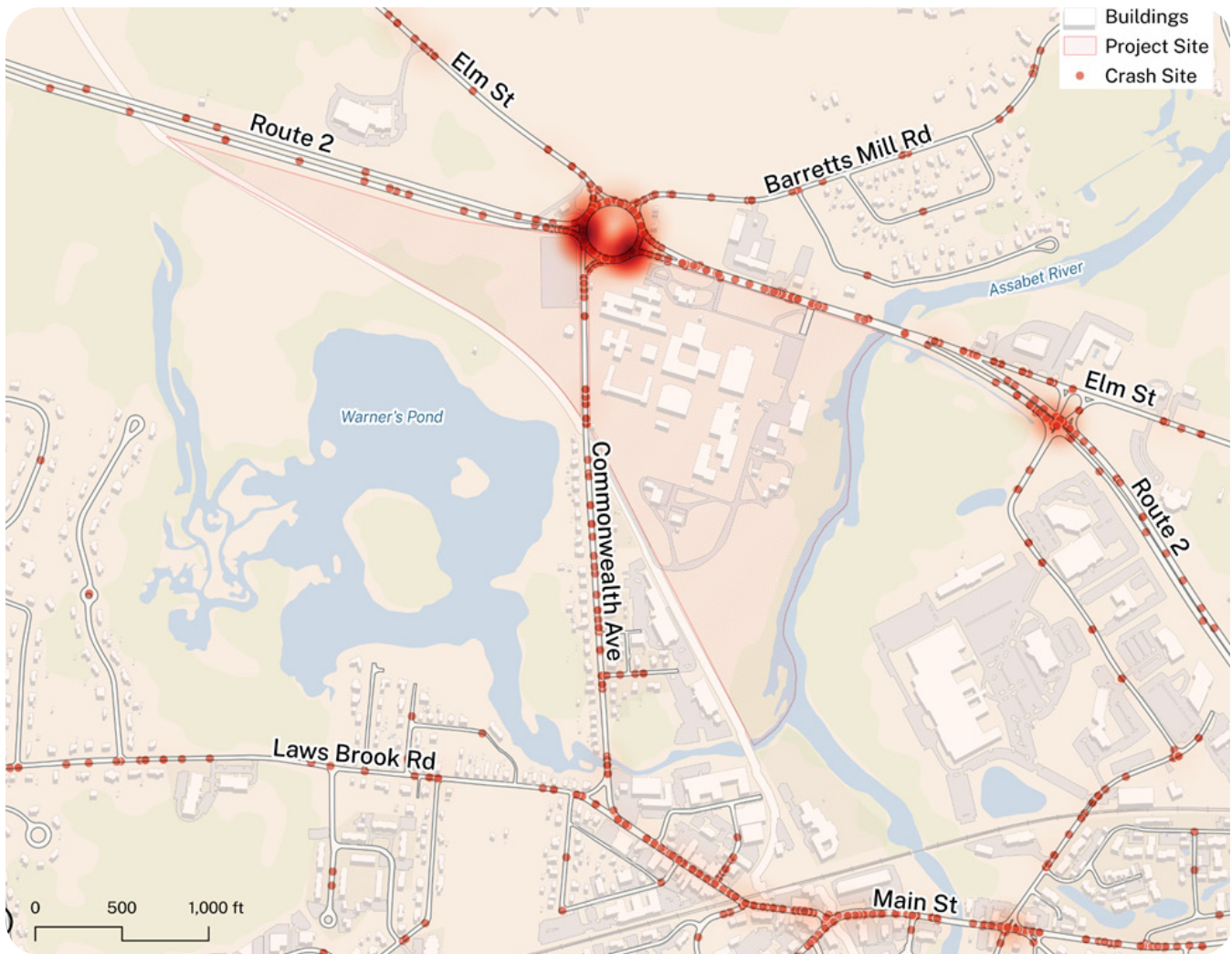
These constraints limit safe and convenient access for all users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists. For pedestrians, the area lacks continuous and accessible sidewalks, particularly along key routes like Commonwealth Avenue and Route 2. Where sidewalks do exist, they are often narrow, disconnected, or poorly maintained, and there are few marked crosswalks or

pedestrian signals—especially near the rotary—making walking unsafe and inconvenient. Cyclists face similar barriers, with no dedicated bike lanes or safe on-road infrastructure. High vehicle speeds and volumes on Route 2, combined with narrow shoulders, create a hazardous environment for biking.

Although the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is nearby, there are limited safe connections between the trail, the site, and West Concord Station, reducing the potential for active transportation. Vehicular access is also constrained.

Route 2's high speeds, lack of signalized intersections, and prohibited left turns at key points force circuitous travel routes and increase travel times. The rotary at Commonwealth Avenue adds further complexity, with congestion and unpredictable traffic patterns that raise safety concerns and limit direct access to the site.

Crash Sites



Key Takeaway 3

Route 2 and rotary traffic is high and dangerous, and safety concerns in the surrounding road network need to be addressed.

Route 2 today experiences high traffic volumes and is operating at capacity, with future regional growth—unrelated to the site—expected to further strain the corridor. Without careful planning, the proposed development could exacerbate both congestion and collision risks, particularly at the rotary and along Route 2. In addition, Commonwealth Ave cut-through traffic volumes are nearly ten times higher than would typically be expected for local roads, indicating spillover effects from regional congestion. To address these challenges, the development must prioritize traffic reduction strategies and enhanced safety measures. This includes

encouraging a shift toward micromobility, walking, and public transit through improved infrastructure and connectivity, as well as limiting on-site parking to reduce car dependency. Coordinating closely with MassDOT on roadway improvements will be essential to ensure the development supports a safer, more efficient transportation network.

The surrounding road network poses serious safety risks for both motorized and non-motorized users. The Route 2 rotary is particularly hazardous, with a crash rate nearly five times higher than the statewide average. Over a recent reporting period, a total of 360 crashes were recorded at this location, including two involving pedestrians or cyclists. Common collision types include sideswipes, rear-end impacts, and angle crashes—patterns that indicate high-speed conflicts and limited visibility or maneuverability. Commonwealth Avenue also experiences a higher-than-average number of crashes, further underscoring the need for targeted safety interventions in the area.

Key Takeaway 4

MassDOT is managing a project to redesign the Route 2 rotary. Special coordination will be required to align MassDOT and MCI Concord projects.

MassDOT is currently undertaking a project to redesign the Route 2 rotary and Commonwealth Avenue intersection. While that project and this one are on separate paths, they are very much intertwined in nature: each will have an outside effect on the other.

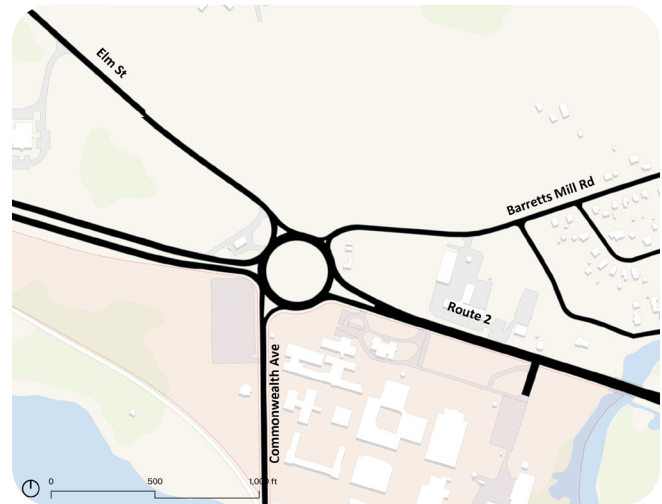
While it is undeniable that this intersection does not function optimally and must be redesigned for better regional and local traffic, an open question remains of what the redesign will be and when it will be constructed. MassDOT is currently at the beginning of their design phase, which is expected to take five years. Construction would follow on a to-be-determined timeline. As the MCI Concord Redevelopment selection, permitting, and construction processes are all expected to begin prior to the end of MassDOT's design phase, close coordination between the Town, DCAMM, and MassDOT is necessary to ensure that the redevelopment phasing and rotary redesign and reconstruction work in tandem with each other to fulfill both regional and local needs.

MassDOT is considering two types of options for the rotary redesign: a grade-separated solution (where one road goes over the other and some local roads get rerouted) and an at-grade solution (where all roads remain at ground-level in a different configuration). Both grade-separated and at-grade options present key opportunities and challenges.

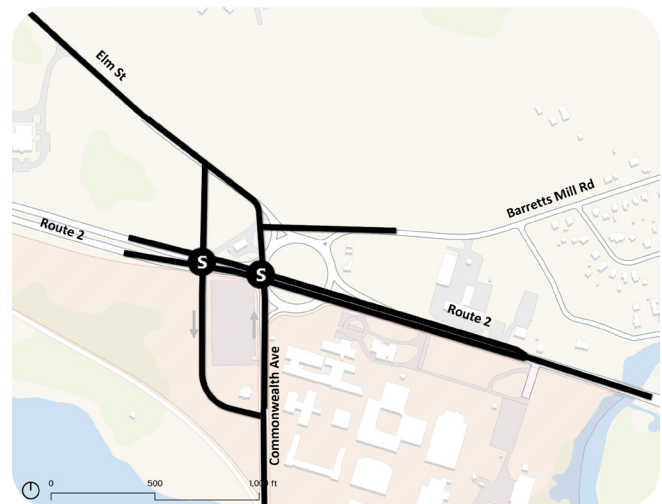
The grade-separated option, which currently envisions Commonwealth Avenue going over Route 2, has the potential to improve passthrough traffic and safety on Route 2 by separating local from regional traffic. However, a challenge for the MCI Concord site in this scenario is the limited pedestrian and bicycle access along and across Route 2. It would also require ramping onto Commonwealth Avenue, which would limit space for development on the site.

The at-grade option, on the other hand, would allow more land for development at the site and create a more urban environment, enhancing at-grade connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. This option does pose the challenge of combining regional and local traffic, which would reduce speed and level of service along Route 2 compared to the grade-separated option.

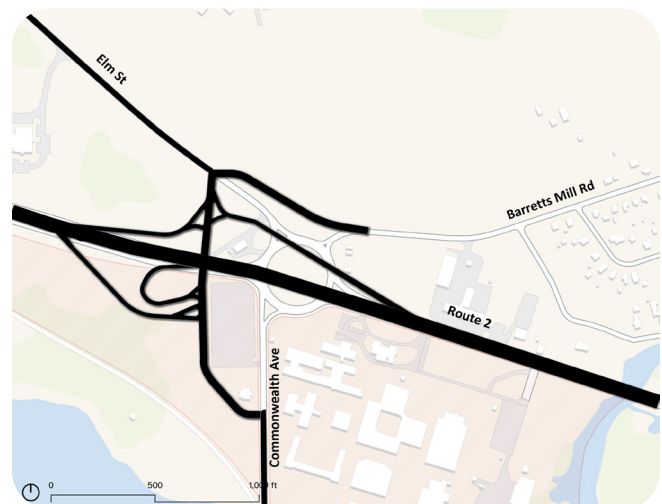
Existing Rotary



At-Grade Concept*

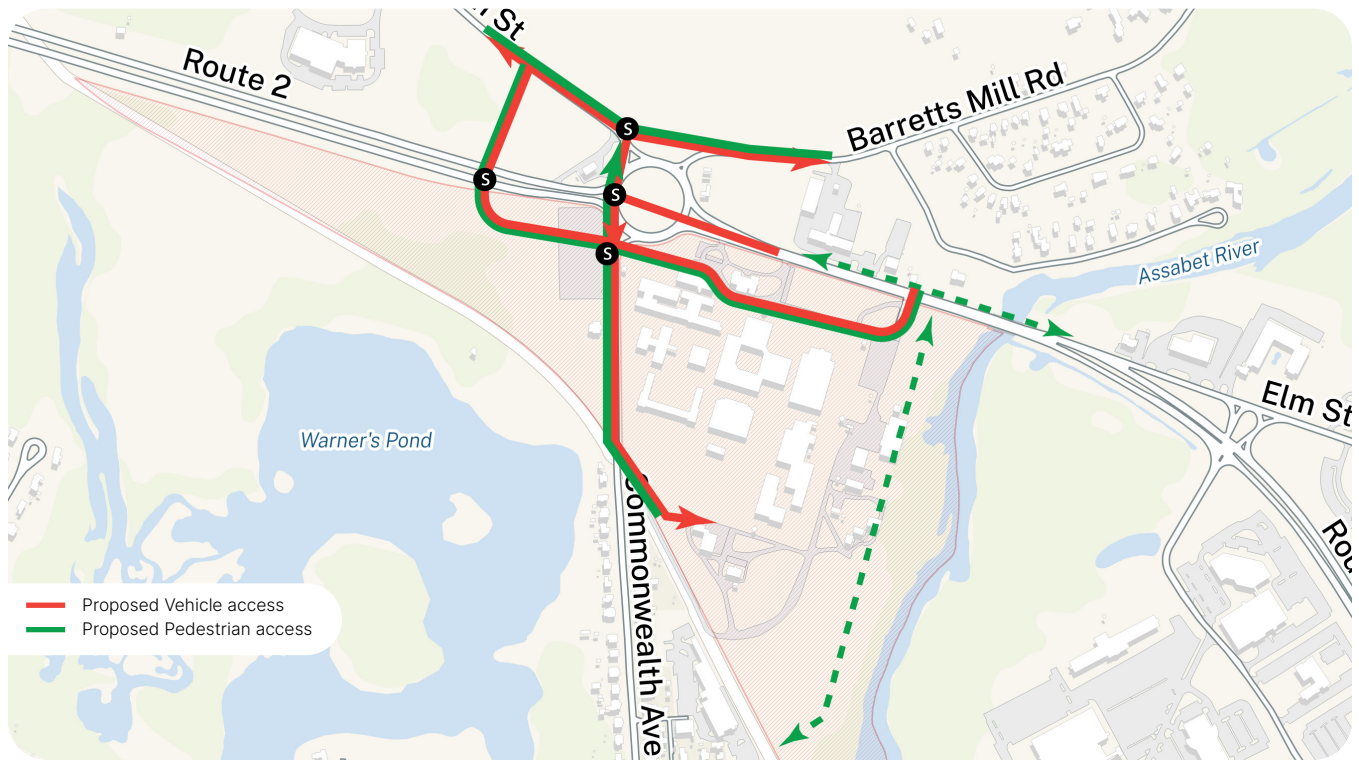


Grade-Separated Concept*

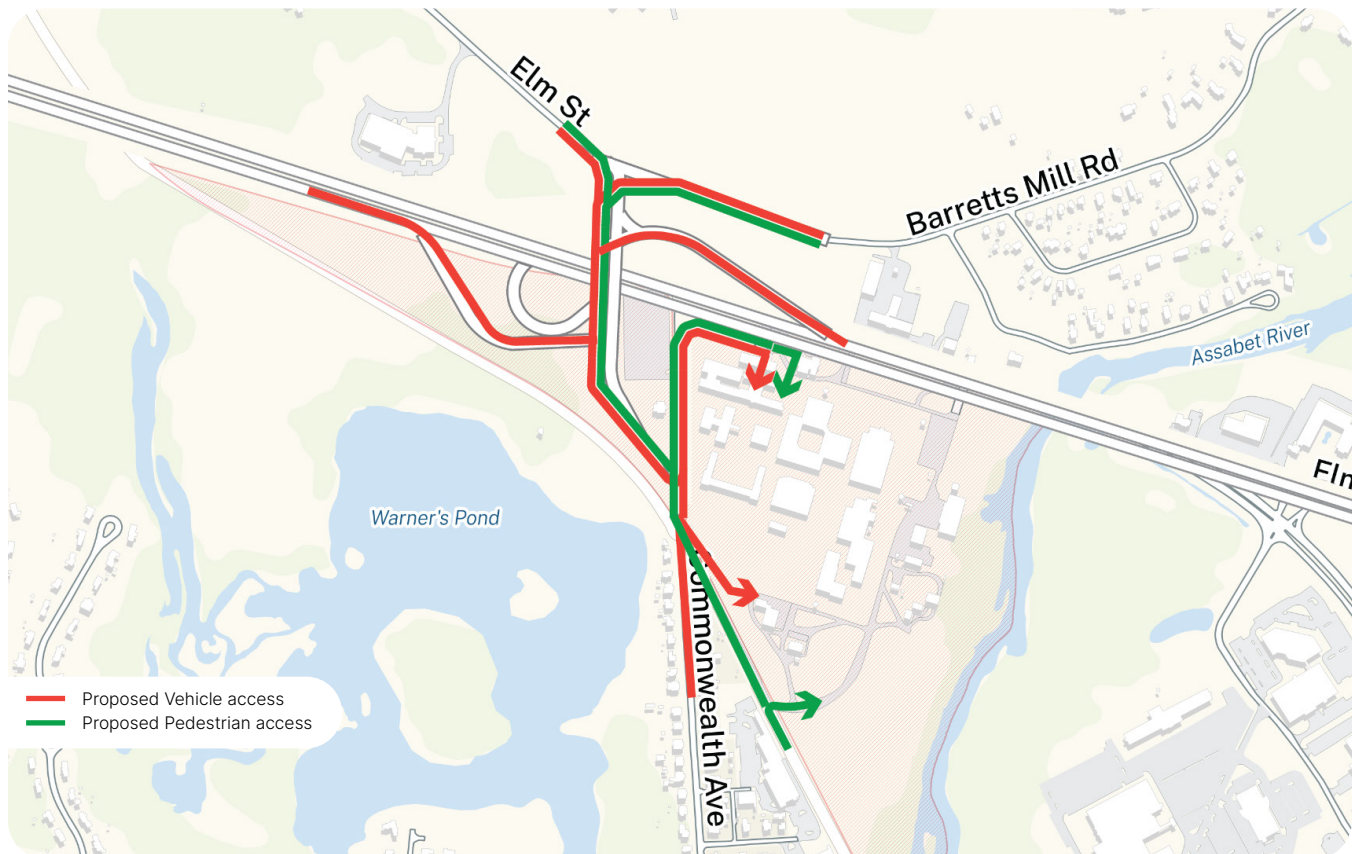


*Concepts do not represent actual plans

At-Grade Redesign Concept Access and Circulation



Grade-Separated Redesign Concept Access and Circulation



Energy + Infrastructure

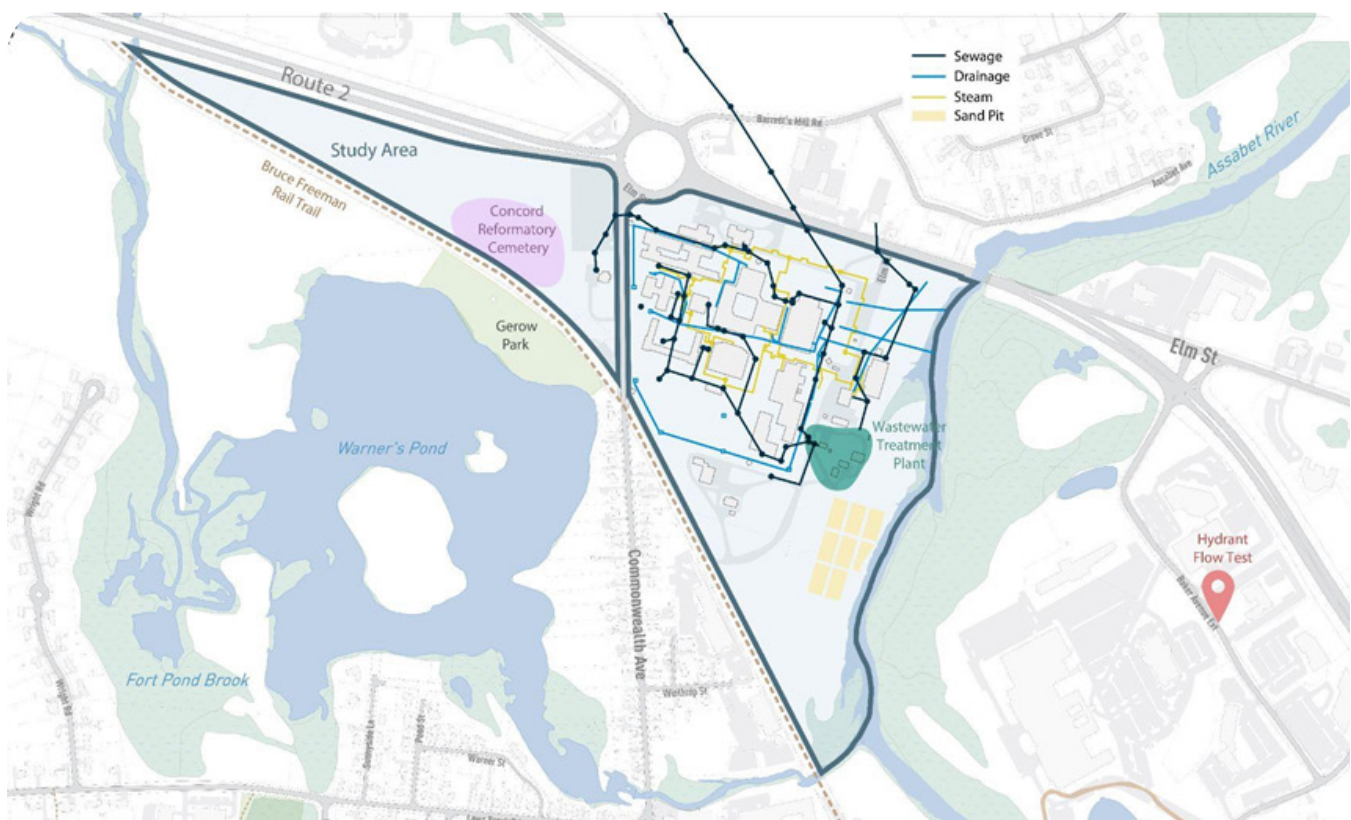
The MCI Concord Site boasts a large network of existing infrastructure that brings both assets and challenges to future development. Its large network of existing underground utilities includes stormwater, wastewater, gas, water, and steam systems. Most of these systems have been mapped, though some elements such as the steam tunnels are not fully documented in the materials provided by DCAMM. While some of the existing infrastructure could remain in some manner, such as the wastewater treatment plant, most of the systems would need to be entirely constructed for redevelopment.

Redevelopment, particularly of the site's stormwater system, brings an opportunity to improve environmental performance and make the site more resilient to climate change. More than 22 acres of impervious surfaces on the existing site currently send untreated stormwater directly into the Assabet River. Future plans should include stormwater systems that treat runoff pollution and are sized to accommodate projected increases in precipitation in the future.

Key Takeaway 1

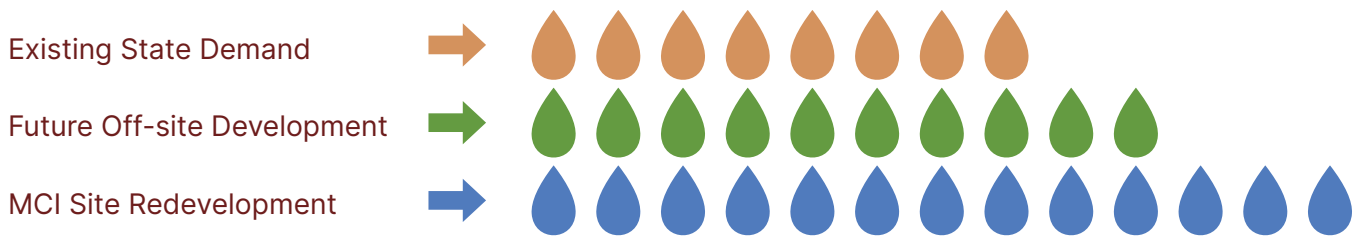
The Site has a large network of existing underground infrastructure.

A comprehensive inventory of all existing utility systems on the site—including stormwater, wastewater, gas, water, and steam—revealed an intricate system of underground utilities, including the locations of drainage outfalls and manholes. One aspect of the site's infrastructure that is unknown but could impact future development is the network of steam tunnels that previously delivered heat to the buildings. Approximate locations of the steam tunnels were discerned based on available documents, but there was no indication of their dimensions or current state of repair. It is assumed that the steam tunnels will be abandoned or removed in future site scenarios, eventually being filled in, sealed, or



Potential Future Distribution of Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity

● = 10,000 gallons per day



portions or all of the tunnels removed, where the size of the tunnels could have structural implications for future development. South of the Wastewater Treatment Plant are a collection of abandoned sand filter beds, which were previously part of the WWTP system. Currently, unused photovoltaic panels sit on top of the former sandbeds. The Town has considered rehabilitating these sandbeds to expand onsite wastewater disposal capacity. It is currently overseeing further study to investigate the potential of the sandbeds serving both the future MCI Concord development and West Concord village sewer flows.

reliance on traditional drainage systems and provide valuable co-benefits, such as reducing the urban heat island effect, improving air quality, and supporting pollinator habitats.

The green infrastructure approach employs landscape-based strategies to minimize impacts of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces and treats stormwater as a resource to support on-site vegetation, rather than a waste product to be drained away. Potential contamination of soils on site may require remediation and could limit opportunities for infiltration at the site. Any stormwater management facility or water quality management may require the use of underdrains or other innovative stormwater management structures.

Key Takeaway 2

Stormwater mitigation strategies will enhance site resilience and local water quality.

Introducing stormwater management to the site offers an opportunity to reduce runoff pollution that currently drains into nearby waterways and enhance the site's resilience to increasingly frequent and severe rainfall events, which are exacerbated by climate change. Today, the site contains 22.5 acres of impervious surfaces—such as roads, roofs, and paths—that drain directly into the Assabet River without pollutant treatment, which degrades the quality of the waterbody.

Redevelopment of the site will require a Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) compliant stormwater system to be designed that conforms to the MassDEP Standards for new development and reduce stormwater discharge rates, along with forthcoming changes to the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Regulations (310 CMR 10.00), the Stormwater Handbook, and Stormwater Management Standards. As the site does not currently have any stormwater mitigation strategies, the proposed design has the opportunity to incorporate low impact development and green infrastructure techniques, such as rain gardens, bioretention basins, water quality swales, vegetated roofs and permeable pavement to provide adequate water quality treatment and rate reductions. Green infrastructure uses distributed small-scale practices to mimic natural hydrologic cycles, working with nature to manage stormwater, reduce

Key Takeaway 3

The wastewater treatment plant could dictate development intensity.

The existing wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) on the site offers significant advantages for future site development but also potentially serves as a limiting factor for future growth. A 2024 evaluation of the plant demonstrated the need for \$25 million in upgrades in order to bring the facility up to its full design capacity of 310,000 gallons per day (GPD).

Discussions with the Town and State indicated an appetite for distributing that capacity between future on-site development, existing State users in the immediate area, and future off-site development in Concord. This split would leave a roughly 130,000 GPD of capacity for future MCI site development. Programming, density, and design choices will all directly impact the daily wastewater capacity requirements of future scenarios. Increases in residential units, hotel rooms, and commercial uses will all increase wastewater needs. Innovative and alternative onsite wastewater treatment systems, such as enhanced or aerobic septic systems, could be considered to supplement wastewater treatment on the MCI Concord site. By improving the efficiency of wastewater treatment and reducing the environmental impact, these innovative systems support the sustainable growth of mixed-use developments while ensuring the protection of local water resources.

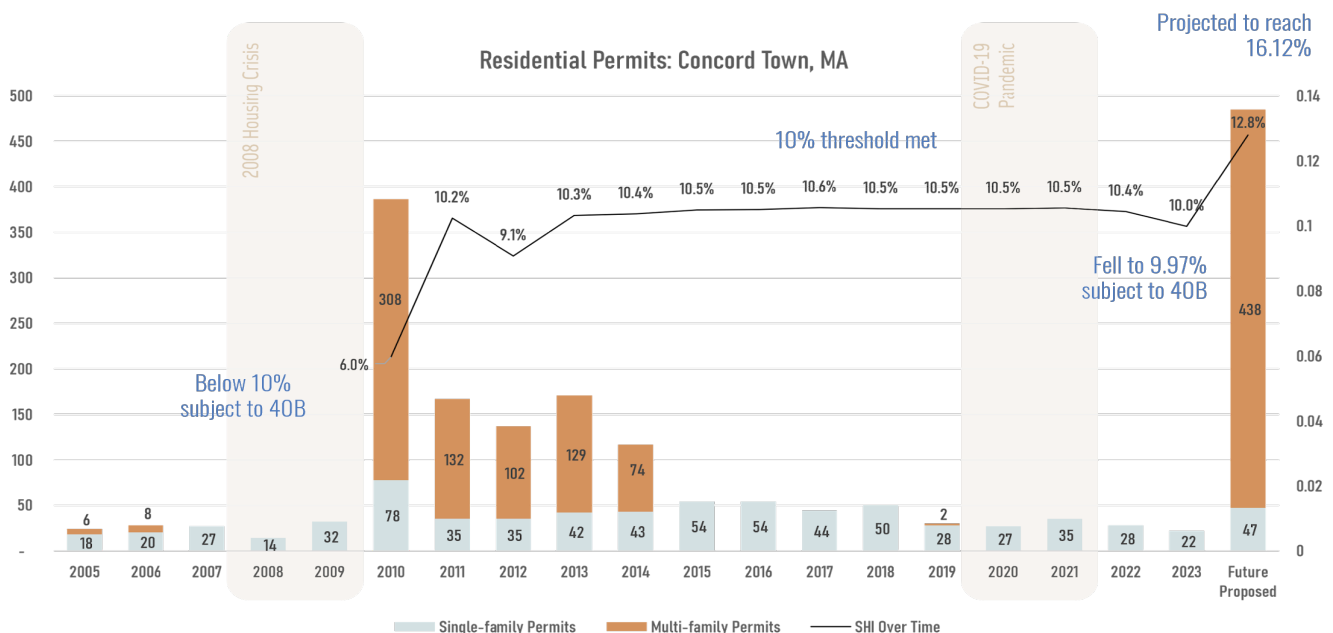
Economics + Feasibility

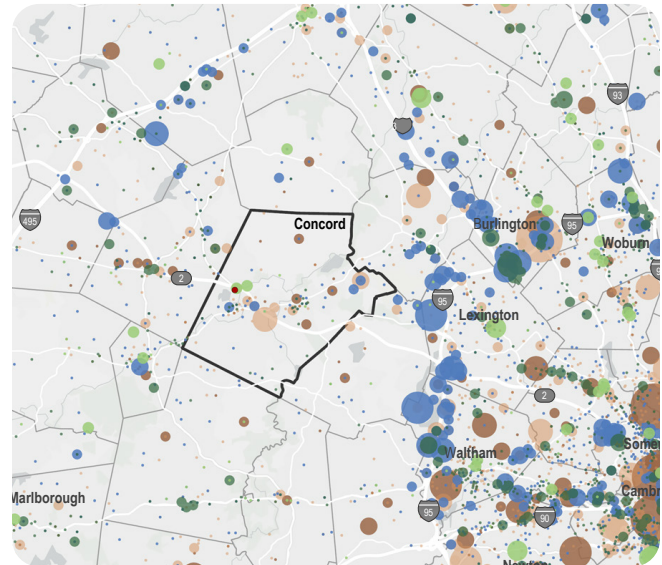
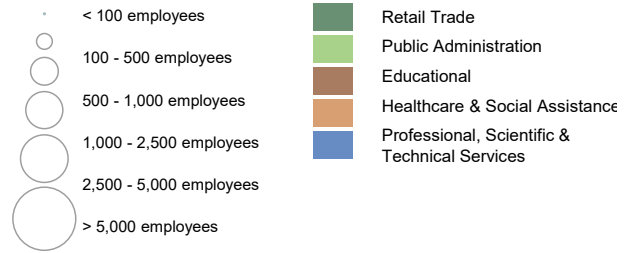
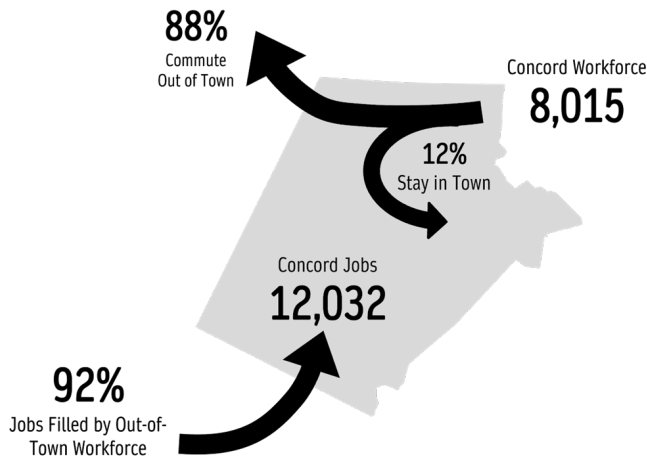
To understand what the MCI Concord site can support in the future, it is important to first conduct a market analysis to understand past trends and the current market for development. The analysis showed that there is a strong demand for a mix of uses on this site over the next 10 years, with current market dynamics favoring residential development. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the region has been experiencing ongoing reduced demand for office space, which is expected to continue for several years to come. Additionally, lab space is currently in oversupply. Federal policy changes are now shifting landscapes for many other uses, including research and development (R&D) and institutional sectors. Commercial space with demand potential in the next decade on the site is likely to include hotel, retail and restaurant, and industrial.

Key Takeaway 1

Housing is in demand.

The market is ready for more diverse housing options and supporting retail and services. Concord has higher-than-average median incomes, home values, rents, and property taxes. These high housing costs are driving demand for more affordable residential options. With 92% of local jobs held by people who live outside Concord, it's likely that many workers can't afford to live in town. Historically, most of Concord's housing growth has been driven by state-level policies like Chapter 40B; otherwise, development has remained relatively steady. Over the past five years, the town has averaged 28 single-family housing permits per year, with little to no multi-family construction. However, two approved 40B projects are set to add 438 new multi-family units in the coming years. Interviews with local real estate experts indicate strong demand for "right-sized" housing—smaller units and homes with first-floor bedrooms that suit downsizers, singles, and young professionals looking for more affordable options.





Key Takeaway 2

Near-term commercial demand will be driven more by hospitality and retail, than office and lab.

Vacancy rates for retail, office, industrial, and flex space in Concord are lower than the regional average, with little new inventory added over the past decade. However, office demand has not fully recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic, and most companies are adjusting to hybrid work by downsizing. Broker interviews confirm that medical office space is the most active segment, aligning with Concord’s healthcare-focused employment base. Companies value locations near or within Route 128 to attract younger talent—evidenced by Welch’s move out of Concord.

As a result, speculative office development at the MCI Concord site is unlikely in the near term, though build-to-suit projects could attract the right tenant. Concord’s Formula Business Bylaw regulates the number, location, and visual features of chain businesses in Concord Center, Thoreau Depot, West Concord Business, and West Concord Village Districts. Given that formula businesses have limited locations they can go in Town, and the MCI Concord site is not currently subject to this bylaw, it may be attractive to some national retailers. Furthermore the large scale of the site, road access, and visibility from Route 2 provide the MCI Concord site with a fundamental appeal for retail uses that most locations in Concord cannot offer. Review of hotel occupancy data and conversations with Concord’s Tourism leaders indicate the MCI Concord site could likely support either a boutique or flag hotel. While the surrounding Merrimack Valley has 8,000 hotel rooms, very few hotel properties are in Concord, and demand to stay in Concord likely outstrips supply. A small boutique inn would match Concord’s historical and cultural character, while a larger flag hotel could serve educational travel to

the area which often relies on accommodations in nearby towns. A hotel on-site could complement the West Concord business district as well as nearby recreational and cultural resources.

Key Takeaway 3

Mission-driven uses are desired but challenged.

Demographic shifts and political headwinds are challenging higher education institutions and the region’s economy. In the Northeast, declining enrollment and rising financial strain have led to the closure of many small colleges, making more campuses available for institutional reuse. While some of MCI Concord’s buildings may have potential for such reuse, the site was built for a different function and may not be the best fit compared to other available properties. Additionally, recent federal funding cuts for research and development could have long-term impacts on Boston-area institutions and the job market, potentially leading to a period of contraction. Mission-driven uses could appeal to Concord residents and are worth exploring, though they may require more time and external funding to become viable.

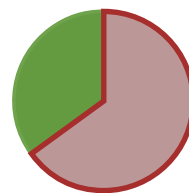
Site Framework and Considerations

Site Framework

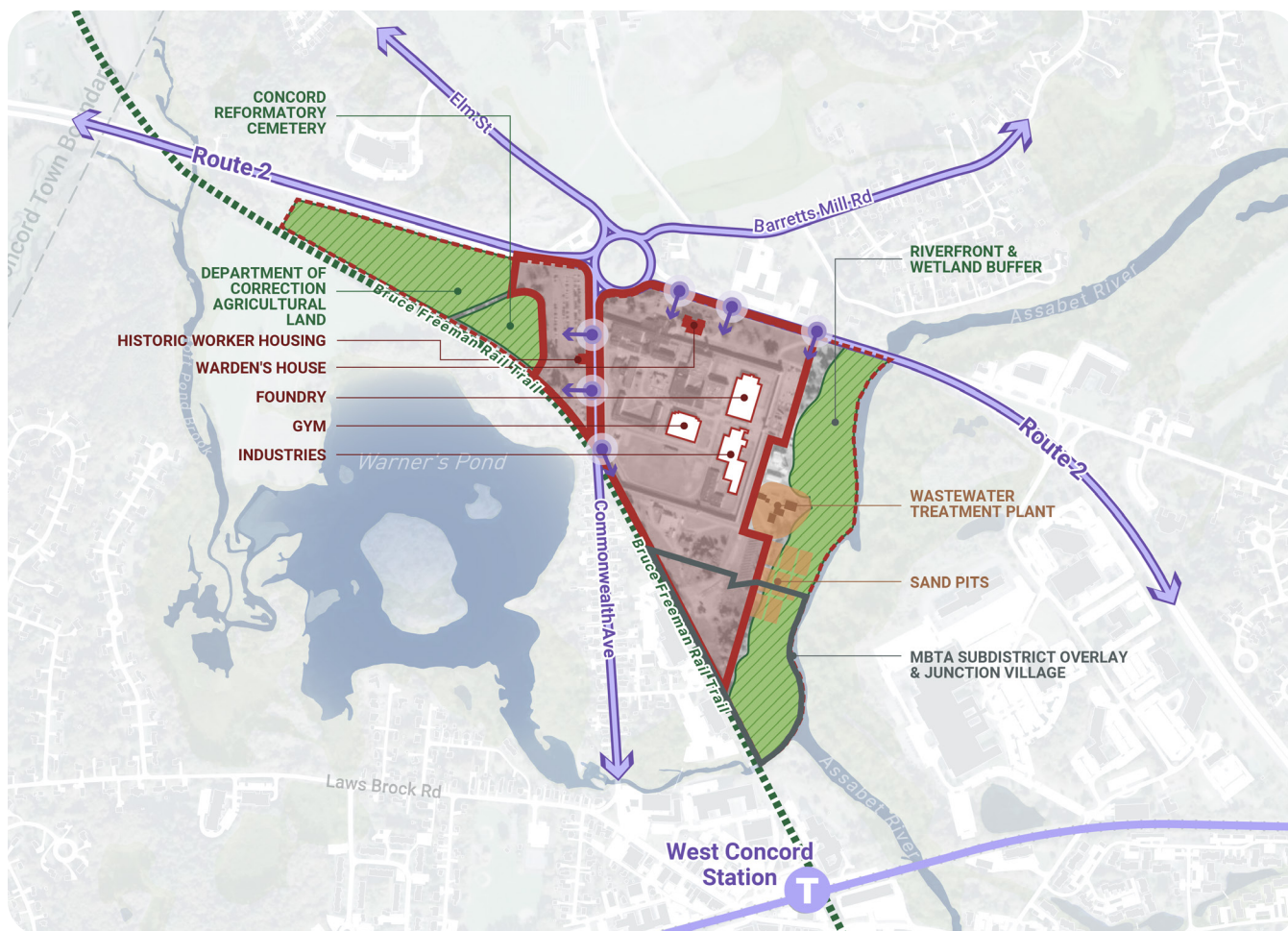
This site has several important physical factors that will influence what can be built, how much it will cost to prepare the site, how development is phased over time, the future mix of uses, and the ownership structure. These include the location of Route 2 and the possibility of rotary redevelopment; requirements to protect the riverfront and wetlands; the preservation of the Concord Reformatory, cemetery, and surrounding agricultural land; the condition of existing buildings and wastewater treatment infrastructure; and the presence of MBTA zoning overlays on the Junction Village site.

The 83-acre site includes dedicated areas for open space

29 acres of site preserved for wetlands, agriculture, and cemetery.



54 acres of developable site area.

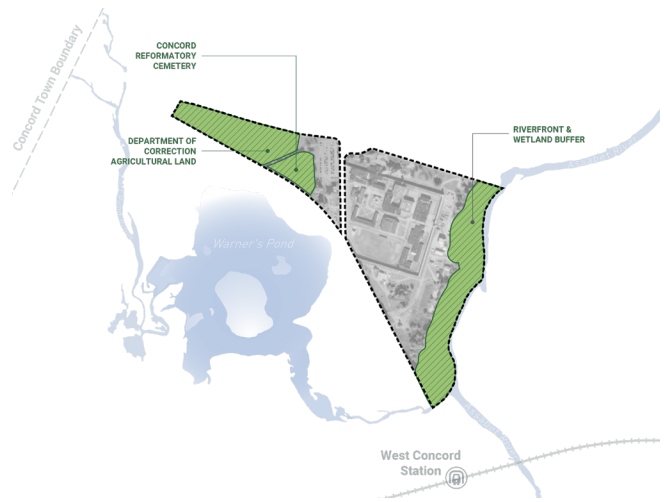


Developable Areas



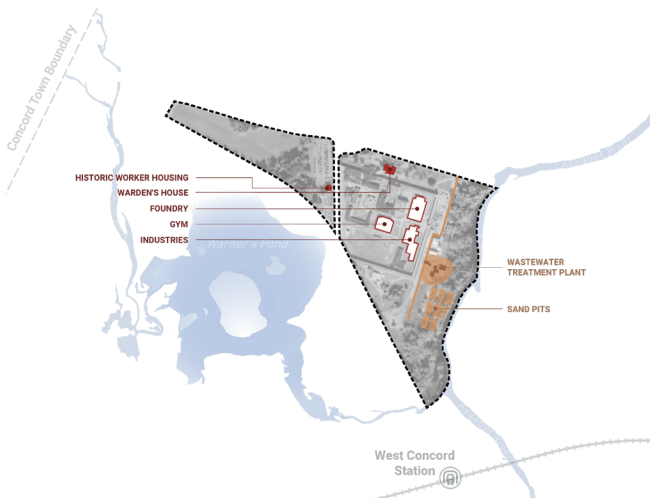
Circulation + Access

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation is currently planning future designs to replace the existing Route 2 rotary. Existing vehicle access points from Route 2 and Commonwealth Avenue may change and will need coordination with MassDOT. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, which connects directly to West Concord Station, is a key bike and pedestrian route. Future plans will prioritize strong bike and pedestrian connections between the site and the trail.



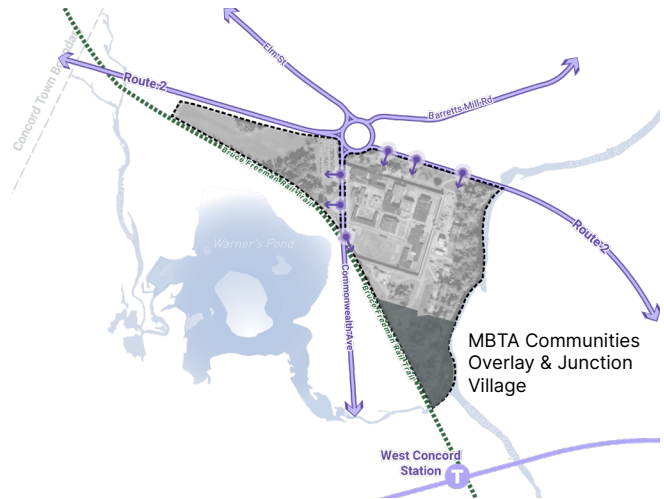
Ecological + Open Space Buffer

To protect nearby wetlands and waterbodies, a 200-foot setback from Warner's Pond and the Assabet River restricts large building construction. These buffers help preserve the waterways and add natural areas to the site. The Concord Reformatory Cemetery and adjacent agricultural land, managed by the Department of Corrections, will remain untouched in all future plans, and can be incorporated into interpretive elements.



Historic Buildings + Public Infrastructure

Two buildings on the site—the former Warden's House and the historic worker's housing—are designated as historic by the State of Massachusetts. A few other existing buildings may be reused in some scenarios, depending on the site's future program. The wastewater treatment plant will require significant upgrades, which will vary based on the scale of use and the number of housing units planned.



MBTA Communities Overlay

The southern portion of the site is subject to an MBTA Communities Overlay, which allows multi-family housing and requires a minimum density of 15 units per acre. Further conversation with the community, with an approval from the Town Meeting, is needed to determine whether the required density and number of housing units can be achieved in areas of the site outside the overlay.

Cost and Development Assumptions

Development Context

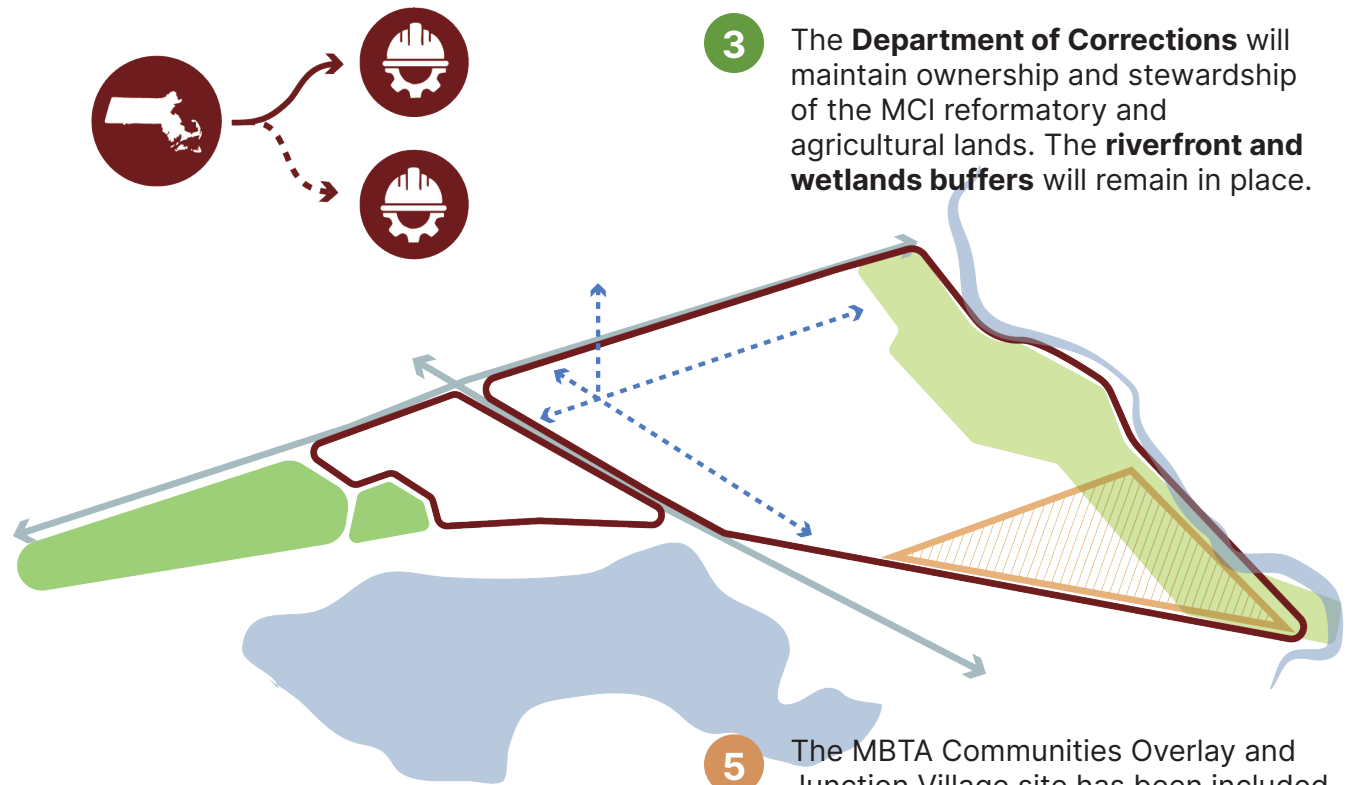
The site will be transferred and developed in collaboration with multiple partners.

The State of Massachusetts, the Town of Concord, and a future developer—who will be selected through a separate proposal process—are working together to coordinate the site’s development, each with a distinct role.

1 The **State currently owns** the site and will manage its transfer to a **future owner or owner(s)**.

2 Preparing the site will require a significant upfront investment, which will likely be the responsibility of a **future owner or owner(s)**.

3 The **Department of Corrections** will maintain ownership and stewardship of the MCI reformatory and agricultural lands. The **riverfront and wetlands buffers** will remain in place.



4 The **Town of Concord has the ability to rezone** the site, helping shape the future mix of land uses and types of development.

5 The MBTA Communities Overlay and Junction Village site has been included in the scenarios to ensure integrated site planning. The site is currently owned by **Concord Housing Development Corporation (CHDC)** who could either transfer the property to a master developer or implement redevelopment in a coordinated way.

Financial Feasibility*

The MCI site faces high upfront costs.

Preparing the MCI site for new development will require a major and costly effort. This includes demolishing prison buildings and walls, removing outdated infrastructure, possibly cleaning up environmental contamination (with unknown costs), and constructing new infrastructure and access routes for the developments. Site preparation is estimated to cost around \$34.2 million.

It is assumed the state will provide the land to the developer at no cost in its current condition, meaning the developer will likely be responsible for these site preparation expenses.

A previous study estimated that upgrading the wastewater treatment plant will cost \$25 million. Since the facility will likely be transferred to the Town early in the development process, the developer may need to pay a fee for their share of the system's upgraded capacity (estimated at \$10.2M) after the Town funds and completes the improvements.

Potential Site Preparation Costs	Total \$
Waste Water Upgrades	\$10.2 M
Buildings and Structures Demolition and Disposal	\$11.8 M
Utilities and Infrastructure Demolition and Disposal	\$6.5 M
Contingency (20% Including remediation)	\$5.7 M
Total	\$34.2 M

Site costs are dependent on the planned development mix.

Without public subsidy, most of the developable area on the MCI site will need to be dedicated to revenue-generating residential or commercial uses in order to cover the high costs of site preparation and infrastructure.

Civic and open space uses—such as parks, community facilities, or cultural amenities—require significant

funding and typically do not generate direct revenue, making them more difficult to support without outside investment.

The value of finished development parcels resold by a master developer is estimated to average around \$2.8 million per acre, though this varies by use. Financial projections assume an annual revenue and cost escalation of 3%. Based on market trends, the site is expected to absorb about 80 residential units per year and approximately 50,000 square feet of commercial space annually.

The type and mix of future uses planned for the site will impact overall costs for new infrastructure, which are currently estimated at over \$50 million. This includes the construction of roads, parks, public amenities, and offsite roadway improvements needed to support the development.

Potential Development Infrastructure Costs	Total \$
New Street Grid & Sidewalks	\$9.8 M
District Energy Facility	Not Assumed
Sewer Pipe, Structures	Refine by Scenario
Water Pipe, Structures, Hydrants, Pumps	Refine by Scenario
Electrical Ducts, Distribution Tel/Com	Refine by Scenario
Public Open Space Amenities	\$3 M
Major Built Amenities	\$10 M
Monumentation	\$1 M
Off-Site Traffic Improvements	\$5 M
Contingency	\$4.3 M
Soft Costs	\$18 M
Total	>\$50 M

*All assumptions included in appendices

Fiscal Impact*

Residential tax burdens may mean there is limited appetite for public spending.

Outstanding debt has grown in recent years, and current debt obligations—combined with already high residential tax burdens—may limit public support for additional spending. As of FY25, the average single-family tax bill in Concord is \$19,585, the fifth highest in Massachusetts. Since FY16, the average tax bill has increased by 45%, while average single-family home values have risen by 52%.

Schools have some capacity, not unlimited capacity.

Capacity was modeled by Landwise for purposes of MCI project in coordination with Concord Public Schools. Projections for two new permitted 40Bs have been factored into the model. Total enrollment has declined six years in a row. Over capacity issues occurred for a number of years at the high school level.

The most recently available enrollment projections for Concord and Concord-Carlisle were done in November of 2023 by New England School Development Council (NESDEC). This 10-year projection shows a decline based on birth rates, and then potential for some recovery. Concord Public Schools did not order projections in 2024, given the limitations for the projection methodologies which do not take into account local changes in migration, growth and construction, and other market factors like availability and cost of housing.

Concord Schools	Capacity	Enrollment (24-25)
CCHS	1,200	1,183
CMS	700	645
Elementary	1,350	1,222
Total	3,250	3,050
Current Excess Capacity		200
Planned 40B Projects	Units	Projected Students
NOVO & Thoreau	438	120
Remaining Capacity		80

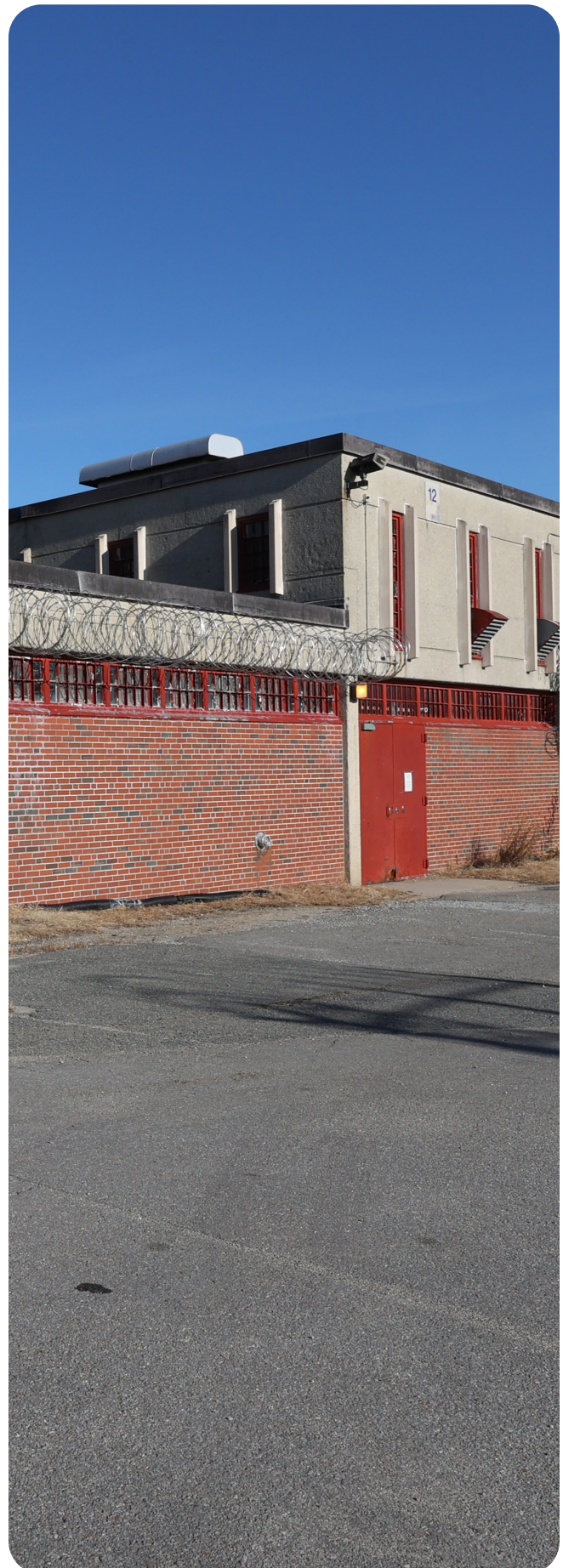
*All assumptions included in appendices

While people want a commercial tax base, residential assessed values in Concord are high.

Replacing existing buildings on the site with tax-generating uses could create significant annual net revenue for the Town. Commercial property assessments are based on income and expenses, while residential assessments typically lag behind actual sale prices by about two years and fall within 90–110% of market value. On a per-square-foot basis, newly constructed residential buildings tend to be more valuable than other types of buildings in Concord.

Assessed Value	\$ per SF
Industrial	\$250
Hotel / Event / Retreat	\$400
Retail	\$400
R&D or Office	\$430
Residential - Rental Apartment	\$500
Residential - Single Family	\$650
Residential - Townhome	\$700

Local Revenues (Taxes)	Rates
Property Tax - Commercial (per \$1,000)	12.39
Property Tax - Residential (per \$1,000)	13.26
Personal Property (assuming .5% of commercial tax revenue)	12.39
CPA Surcharge	1.5%
Local Options Hotel Tax	6.0%
Local Options Meals Tax	0.75%
Motor Vehicle Excise (per \$1,000)	\$25



Mobility Assumptions

Opportunities to Improve Mobility

Route 2 currently experiences heavy traffic and is at capacity, with regional growth expected to further strain the corridor. Without careful planning, the proposed development could worsen congestion and increase collision risks, especially at the rotary and along Route 2. Cut-through traffic on Commonwealth Ave is nearly ten times higher than typical for local roads, showing clear spillover from regional congestion. To address this, the development must focus on reducing traffic and improving safety by promoting walking, micromobility, and public transit through better infrastructure and connectivity, while limiting on-site parking.

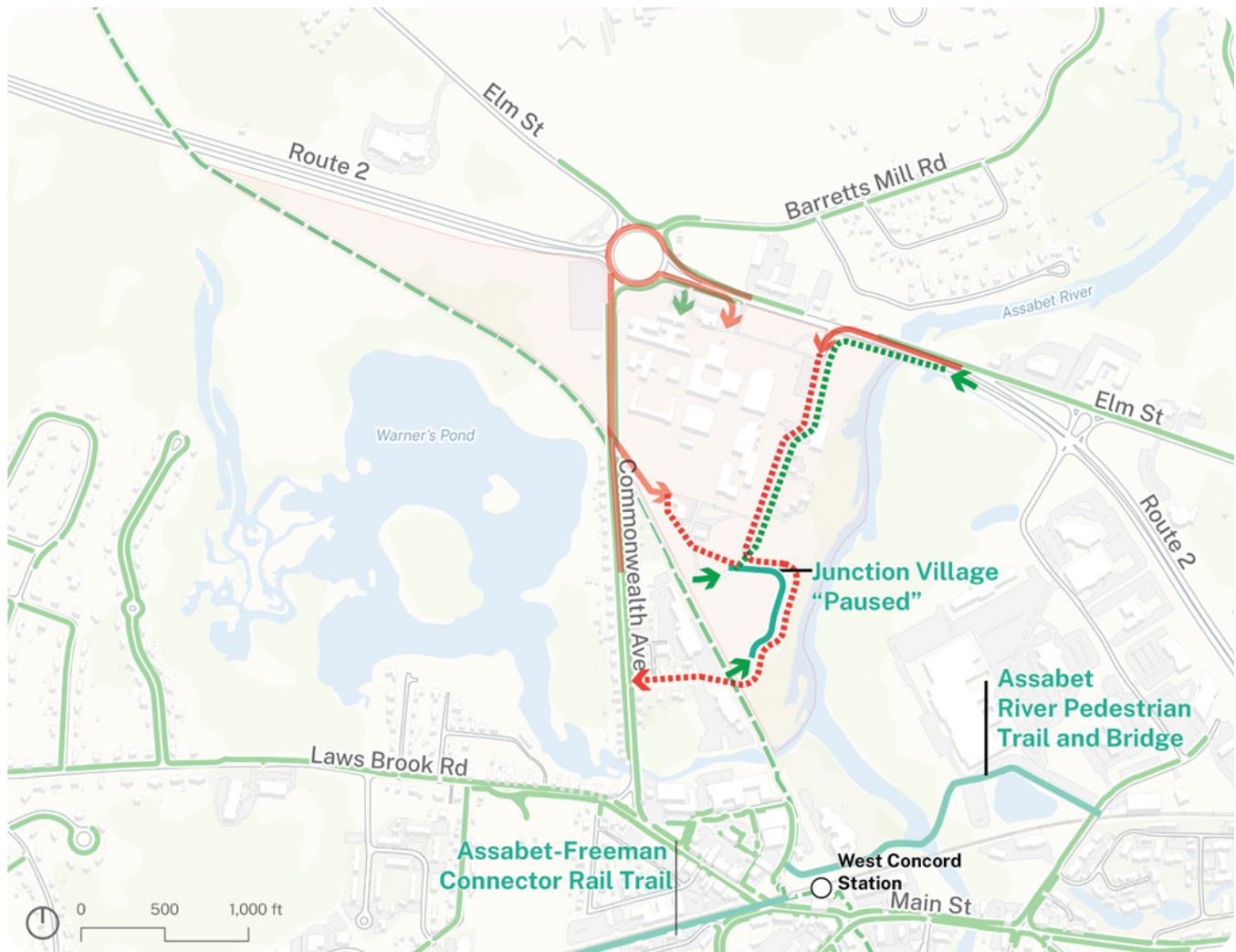
Rotary Redesign Alignment

The proposed redesign of the Route 2 rotary and Commonwealth Avenue intersection by MassDOT introduces both challenges and opportunities for site

access. Future configurations and traffic patterns will directly influence how vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists can enter and exit the site. MassDOT is currently evaluating both at-grade and grade-separated alternatives, with the latter aimed at improving regional traffic flow and safety. However, from a local connectivity standpoint, an at-grade solution is generally preferred. It offers more direct, flexible access for all users and better supports integration with the surrounding street and trail networks. An at-grade design would also help avoid isolating the site behind high-speed infrastructure, preserving its accessibility and walkability. Despite the uncertainty, this planning process presents a timely opportunity to advocate for access improvements that align with Concord's multimodal goals. While MassDOT's current preferred alternative involves a grade-separated Commonwealth Avenue, the agency is actively revisiting design concepts—creating space for local input. Site-specific enhancements could include new or upgraded pedestrian and bicycle connections, secondary vehicle



Possible Connections and Planned Projects



access points, and integration with the Assabet River Rail Trail to support non-motorized travel. Proactive engagement with MassDOT and local stakeholders will be essential to ensure that future infrastructure investments promote safe, convenient, and equitable access to the site, while reinforcing the town's broader vision for sustainable, connected mobility.

During the morning peak period, Route 2—both ingress and egress—and the inbound direction on Commonwealth Avenue are able to accommodate a limited volume of traffic, estimated at approximately 200 vehicles. However, during the evening peak, Route 2 reaches its operational limits in both westbound and eastbound directions, indicating that it cannot support additional traffic without contributing to congestion. In contrast, the southbound direction on Commonwealth Avenue retains some capacity and can accommodate additional vehicle volumes during this time. Notably, all alternative design concepts currently under

consideration for the Concord Rotary demonstrate improved operational performance and increased capacity, suggesting that future enhancements at this key junction could help alleviate current constraints and support additional development-related traffic.

Mobility Network Integration

The site should be thoughtfully integrated with existing and planned mobility infrastructure. This includes creating safe, direct pedestrian and bicycle routes that build upon the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and the Assabet-Freeman Connector Trail, and connect with planned improvements along Route 2. Enhancing access to public transit stops and ensuring seamless links to regional trails—such as the Assabet River Rail Trail—will further strengthen the site's connectivity. Prioritizing active transportation in the site's design will align with Concord's broader mobility goals and foster a more inclusive, accessible environment for all users.

Infrastructure Assumptions

Wastewater Needs

The wastewater capacity analysis assumed that the needed renovations on the Waste Water Treatment Plant are completed, and that the project does not use the sand pits to expand the site's wastewater treatment capacity.

Wastewater capacity needs were modeled using standards from Massachusetts 310 CMR 15.000 ("Title 5"). These standards for wastewater use by land use type are:

- Residential - 110 GPD Per Bedroom
- Commercial/Industrial - 75 GPD per 1,000 square feet
- Museum – 75 GPD per 1,000 square feet
- Hotel – 110 GPD per bedroom

These numbers are intended to be used as estimates and may vary based on actual buildout.

Housing Split

Housing types were factored into wastewater needs modeling to estimate the total number of bedrooms the site could support, which in turn informs projected wastewater flows. The team assumed that any future residential development would consist of a mix of unit sizes, with 40% of units being two-bedroom and 60% being one-bedroom.

This assumption was based on several factors, including recent multifamily housing trends in Concord, where smaller unit types have become more common due to market demand, affordability considerations, and alignment with the town's housing goals. In particular,

Concord's 2023 Housing Production Plan highlights the need for smaller, more attainable housing options for seniors, small households, and individuals seeking to downsize. This mix also reflects patterns observed in comparable developments across the region and ensures that the model accounts for a realistic scenario.

Stormwater Modeling

An "above and beyond approach" to stormwater management was used, which exceeds the base requirement of a 1-inch storm event. Stormwater management on the site was modeled in alignment with the Massachusetts Stormwater Management Standards, as outlined in the 2008 MassDEP Handbook, and the Town of Concord's Stormwater Regulations. Additionally, to advance climate resilience goals at the site, the City of Cambridge's approach of using the rainfall data based on the 2070 projected event was adopted. This proactive approach ensures resilience against future climate variability and optimizes pollution mitigation. To determine bioretention area sizing, the model assumed that runoff would be managed using a combination of strategies: 20% of the runoff would be handled by permeable pavement, 40% by subsurface infiltration systems, and the remaining 40% by bioretention. The amount of bioretention required on-site for the three scenarios was 58,000 SF, 93,000 SF, and 99,000 SF, respectively.



Power-plant Building

Generator Building

Storehouse Building

Activated Sludge Aeration Tanks

Secondary Clarifiers

Pump Station

**Headworks
Grit Chamber**

Sludge Building

Operations Building

Filter Building

Chlorine Disinfection

Solar Array

Sand Pits

Site Scenarios

Range of Scenarios	60
Site Framework in Action	82

Range of Scenarios

There are so many ways for the MCI Concord site to take shape. To ensure that the process looked at all options for the site's future, the Advisory Board and Consultant Team crafted eight future scenario concepts and evaluated those scenarios through three lenses. There are eight "possible" futures, which are all of the ways the site could transform, regardless of physical and fiscal constraints. There are five "probable" scenarios, which are the scenarios that the Consultant Team has identified as being economically, physically, and logistically viable. Then there are three "preferable" scenarios, which are the future development conditions that are most enticing to the community.

The goal is to align the probable and preferable scenarios into a direction that will determine the range of land uses, densities, and development considerations or agreements that will ensure the future development aligns with the community-led vision and ensures long-term sustainability for the Town.

Possible Futures

Once analysis and an initial wave of community engagement was completed, the Advisory Board and Consultant Team assembled a broad range of possible futures for the site that were refined and reduced to a shorter list of probable and preferable future conditions as the economic development, policy, infrastructure, and mobility evaluations were completed (for more details about these evaluations, see the appendix). The possible futures were grounded in over 30 hours and 50 pages of dialogue with the Advisory Board, various stakeholder groups and commissions, and the broader public. Those eight possible futures are detailed on the next page.

Probable Futures

The five probable scenarios were identified through a series of workshops with the Advisory Board and broader Concord community. These probable scenarios enable the town to maintain flexibility to changing market conditions, the needs and aspirations of Concord residents, and guiding principles of this plan.

Preferable Futures

Once the possible futures were identified the Advisory Board and Consultant Team worked to identify three preferable scenarios from the five emerging probable futures. Three scenarios were chosen to craft high level concepts and feasibility models. Those three scenarios are emblematic of the range of Concord community desires, current and future real estate market needs, and Town goals. Referred to as "metrics", those considerations were applied to each scenario to help define a preferable vision for the site, one that considers the strengths of each scenario to craft a hybrid vision that considers all tradeoffs.

LEGEND

- Existing
- Open Space
- Community and Civic Uses
- Housing (Low to High Density)
- Commercial (Retail, Office, Hotel, Light Industrial)

PROBABLE

POSSIBLE

PREFERABLE



High Density Mixed Use Campus



Higher-Density Mixed-use Neighborhood



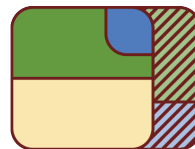
Mid-Density Mixed-use Neighborhood



Lower-Density Mixed-use Neighborhood



Park + Commercial Campus + Additional Housing



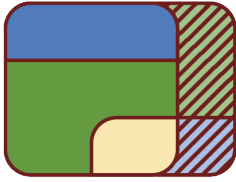
Park + Lower-Density Neighborhood



Park / Public Use + Additional Housing



Do Nothing. Site is not used/ changed.



SCENARIO #1

Civic and Institutional Campus

The Civic and Institutional Campus scenario reflects community desires for a large open space that fits in with the pastoral nature of the surrounding area and supports Town infrastructure needs. It includes some housing while also featuring cultural experiences.

Anchored by a central public park, the campus includes playing fields, courts, in addition to the 29 acres of preserved open space included in each scenario. Trails weave throughout the site, connecting event spaces and gathering areas at the heart of the campus. While primarily open space, the scenario includes low-density housing on the edges to meet residential needs.

Three of the original MCI Concord buildings are preserved and repurposed in this scenario: the gym becomes a community center and the foundry and intake/laundry building become spaces that can support workforce development and training or innovation and incubation. They can include maker space, incubators, or independent/vocational school.

Coupled with the existing and renovated wastewater treatment plant, the site becomes a town civic commons with centrally located maintenance facilities. It is envisioned as a place that supports the Town's open space and infrastructure needs while bringing the community together to gather.

Part of that gathering is the extensive museum and interpretive experience that will draw tourism and diverse perspectives. The former Warden's House is transformed into a museum and a starting point for an interpretive loop through the site. Through the network of trails, visitors will be guided through a section of the wall and guard tower, Malcolm X's cell block, the reformatory cemetery, and John Cuming's house. While the Dr. John Cuming House is not on the MCI Concord site, it is a historical site tied to the legacy of the site and the region. It will become a place for learning and reconciling the layered histories of the site, Concord, and the nation.

While the center of the site is dedicated to common and supportive space, the edges contain a low-density concentration of housing on the Junction Village site and along Commonwealth Avenue on the northern side—some of it to be affordable housing. Diverse housing options are envisioned, including a mix of single family housing and multi-family housing.

Investing in this Vision: What Does This Scenario Need to be a Reality?

To bring this ambitious vision to life, significant public and private investment is essential. This scenario enables necessary and overdue investments in civic facilities for the Town and could unlock other sites currently owned by the Town for future housing investments, especially those close to MBTA rail stations and walkable, community amenities.

The scenario holds the fewest revenue-generating land uses out of the three scenarios which would likely have a net-negative fiscal impact on the Town as ongoing costs to maintain the park, museum, civic buildings, and public spaces will exceed the generated revenue, with a long-term cost to municipal budget. While it includes the most varied community facilities to support residents and visitors, it is also expected to have the longest implementation timeline, which could have little conflict with the Route 2 redesign timeline. Much of the funding to enable development of new facilities and park spaces will require creative and public funding mechanisms, which could take time to fundraise.

What Concordians had to say about this scenario:

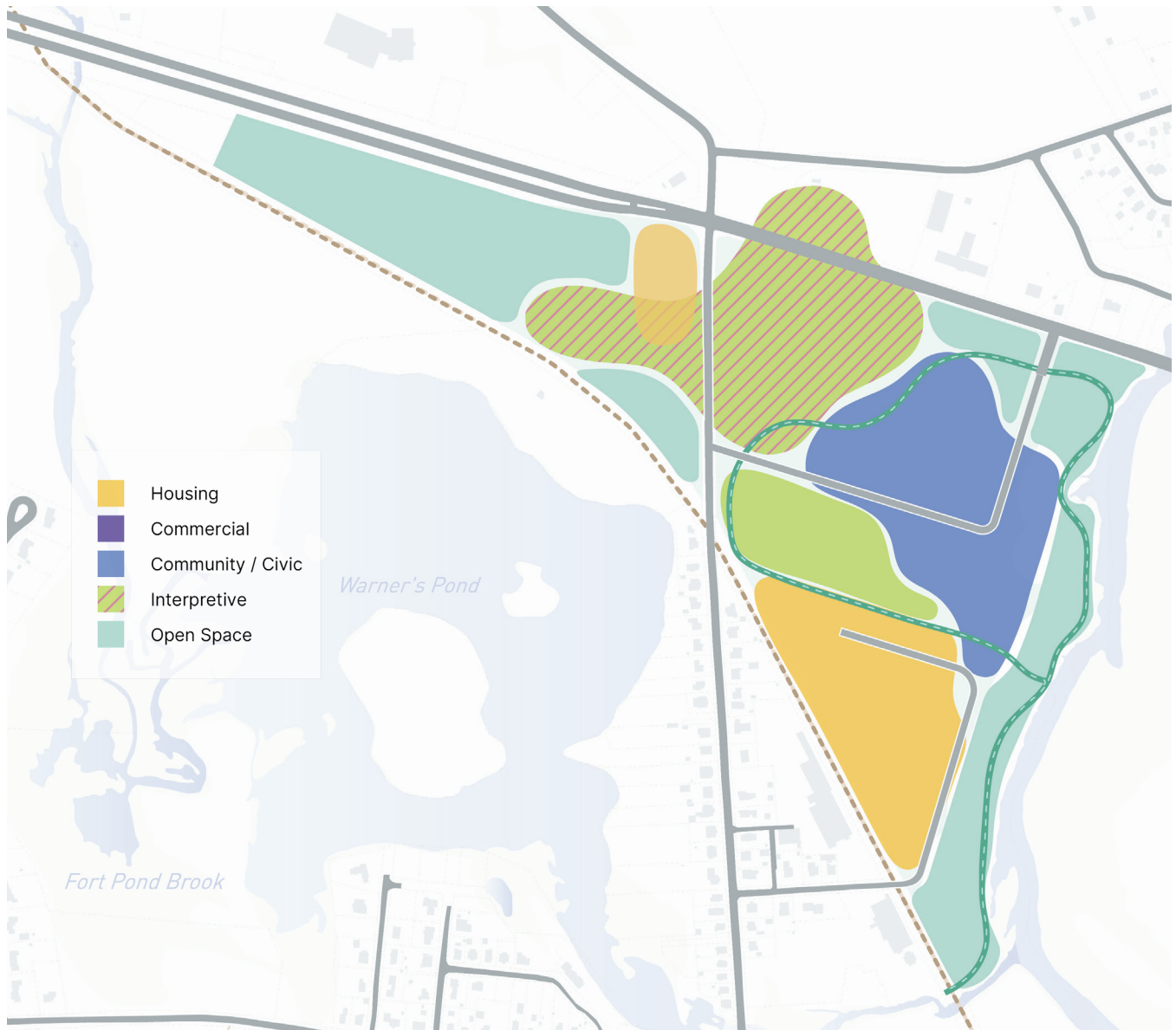
"While this is a dreamy scenario, clearly the town needs to make more revenue than this scenario provides."

"I like that the housing is mostly buffered from Rt 2 by the civic buildings."

"More housing, less open space, more built infrastructure. Needs to be more dense"

"I like that the everything on the scheme would enhance West Concord businesses rather than compete with them."

"Need more housing!"



A Civic Commons Rooted in Open Space and Building Preservation

Nestled into the pastoral context of Concord, the Civic and Institutional Campus scenario provides interpretive trails, scenic overlooks, recreation amenities and civic uses that prioritize highlighting the historic character of the campus. A compact neighborhood anchors the southern edge of the site.

Preserve pastoral views from Route 2

Mini-neighborhood honors the historic fabric of Commonwealth Ave

Interpretive journey tells many stories of the site's past through relics, art and the cemetery

Museum and cultural center

Links between Gerow Park, BF Rail Trail and Campus Cultural Trail

Preserve mature oaks along Route 2

Adaptive re-use of industries and community buildings forms an active civic commons

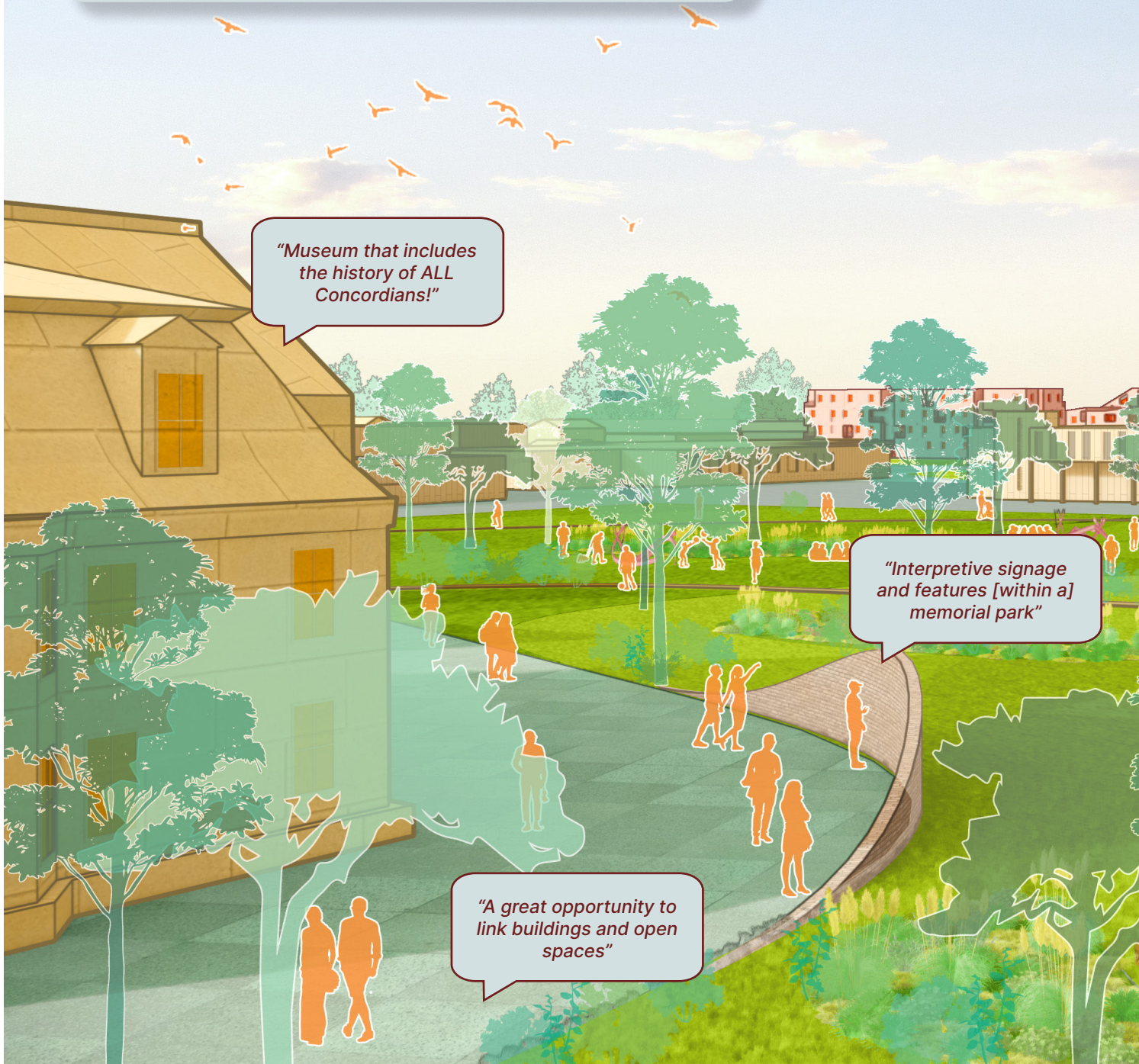
Interpretive trails and overlooks along a restored riverfront

Compact neighborhood fronting on the Rail Trail

Communal Open Space for both Honoring and Creating Memories

Visitors to the Civic and Institutional Campus are grounded in rich experiences of the site's long and varied history, including interpretive moments related to the landscape of incarceration, a museum and cultural center at the former Warden's House and access to the site's cemetery. The site's open spaces also provide ample room to gather in both active and passive ways, including picnicking, events and sports.

This view from the heart of the memorial park foregrounds the restored Warden's House, with community center, interpretive elements and low-rise housing in the distance.



**Note: all quotes from community engagement events and surveys*



"The mixing of history with nature"

"Community center for kids and adults"

"Should have both outdoor memorial park and indoor recreation"

"Lots of open space, and trees!"

"Landscaped open spaces and walking paths...with informational signage to read as you pass by"



SCENARIO #2

Vibrant Center for Commerce

The Vibrant Center for Commerce scenario transforms the former prison site into a walkable innovation district that draws people off bustling Route 2 and into a lively extension of West Concord. At its heart is a commercial core designed to attract Concord residents and visitors from across the region, while complementing the charm and energy of the nearby West Concord Village.

This scenario responds to community desires for more retail, restaurants, and job centers, envisioning a mix of lifestyle retail (like a much-needed grocery store), hospitality (such as a hotel for visitors exploring Concord's history), and science or technology space (including labs or research hubs). Historic structures like the foundry and intake/laundry building from the MCI Concord campus could be adapted for creative commercial or light industrial uses.

Surrounding this economic engine is a thoughtfully integrated network of public trails, green spaces, and gathering areas that connect to the Assabet River. At the northern edge, a small interpretive loop anchored by a new museum in the former Warden's House helps preserve and share the site's layered past, including sections of the wall and guard towers.

Framing the site, a range of mid- to high-density housing adds a live-work dimension, placing residents within walking distance of jobs, shops, and transit. Housing is carefully scaled to blend with surrounding neighborhoods, offering a variety of housing options that support Concord's evolving needs while ensuring this vibrant new center remains rooted in community.

Investing in this Vision: What Does this Scenario Need to Be a Reality?

Because the Vibrant Center for Commerce scenario includes commercial space, it can help generate some tax revenue for the Town, create jobs, and support local spending. It would offer fiscal impacts that help offset public costs tied to the project. That would, however, result in a longer-term implementation timeline, as a phased approach to redevelopment may be necessary for large scale commercial investments on the site. Current market trends indicate that housing is the easiest to build first, and additional outside funding would be required to fulfill this scenario.

Though this scenario has fewer community facilities than the Civic and Institutional Campus, public facilities would support both residents and visitors and range from recreation fields and courts, trails, a community center or gym, and Town civic commons. For this future to be realized, additional outside funding may be needed, along with significant improvements to Route 2 and additional wastewater treatment solutions that support the increased intensity of uses at the site.

What Concordians had to say about this scenario:

"Multi family and affordable housing is great."

"This scenario could be improved if there were more tax benefits to existing residents while also allowing for more low-income housing options."

"We need commercial/ industrial development and revenue"

"Innovation campus is a great idea, especially surrounded by affordable housing."



A Dynamic Hub for Innovation and Everyday Life

Grounded by adaptive re-use of the existing industries buildings, the Vibrant Center for Commerce scenario builds out a series of active commercial and semi-industrial spaces around an activated campus quad. Live-work neighborhoods along the Rail Trail and Commonwealth Ave balance commemorative space flanking Route 2.

Modest interpretive park and memorial center visible from route 2

Neighborhood fabric continues existing patterns along Commonwealth Ave

On-site agriculture supports a live-work lifestyle

Walkable neighborhood access to Gerow Park and the Cemetery

New community center is a local and town-wide destination on route 2

Adaptive re-use of industries and community buildings flanks eastern edge of quad

Riverfront trails provide active recreational break for residents and employees

Live-work neighborhood equidistant from West Concord and the commercial center

Live, Work and Play in one Vibrant Place

Connecting with neighbors and colleagues in welcoming, inclusive and flexible shared spaces is core to the Vibrant Center for Commerce Scenario. The quad offers both quiet areas to chat and reflect as well as gathering spaces for events of all varieties, all activated by a commercial edge and fueled by both walkable neighborhoods and office spaces.

This view at the heart of the quad foregrounds active community uses surrounded by layered commercial development, with mixed housing visible in the distance.

"More co-working spaces"

"Create a mini housing and business district to build on what West Concord has."

"Welcoming, inclusive and communal"



**Note: all quotes from community engagement events and surveys*

"Outdoor art, dramatic performances, & musical events could be open to many as communal spirit development."

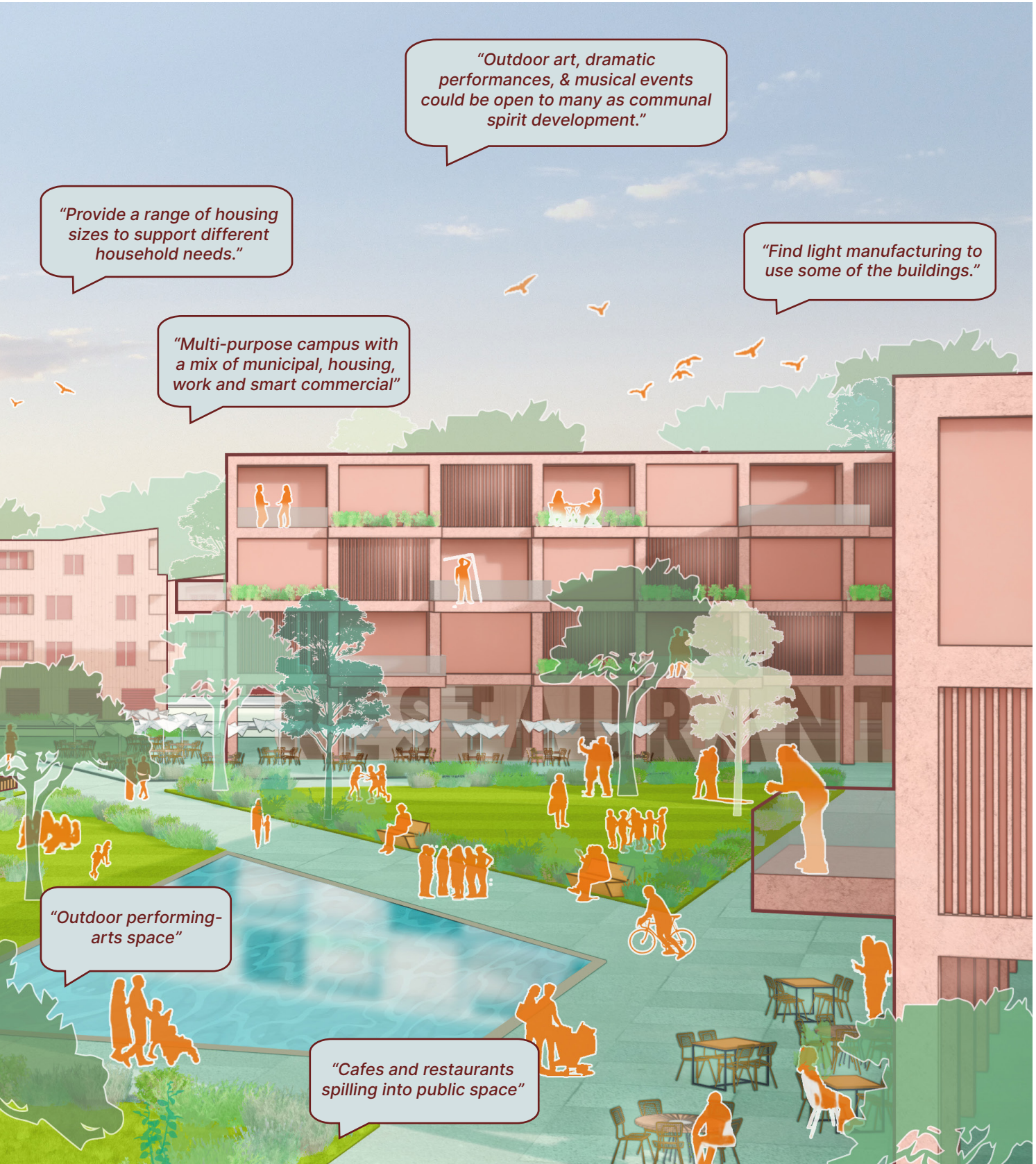
"Provide a range of housing sizes to support different household needs."

"Find light manufacturing to use some of the buildings."

"Multi-purpose campus with a mix of municipal, housing, work and smart commercial"

"Outdoor performing-arts space"

"Cafes and restaurants spilling into public space"





SCENARIO #3

Thriving Mixed-Use Neighborhood

The Thriving Mixed-Use Neighborhood scenario transforms the site into a vibrant, inclusive community that balances growth with green space. A central core of parks and gathering spaces anchors the neighborhood, while housing, shops, and amenities weave throughout. Open space is preserved at the edges, connecting to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and the Assabet River.

A dynamic commercial corridor energizes the Route 2 corridor by offering shops, services, and civic anchors while buffering housing from the roadway. The Warden's House is preserved as a community-focused space that could include interpretive programs to add cultural value and honor the site's layered history.

This scenario responds to the region's call for more housing—with a mix of apartments, townhomes, and smaller-scale options that meet the needs of young professionals, growing families, and downsizing households. This scenario's land uses are centered on creating more housing than any other scenario, while still incorporating the diversity of uses that Concordians communicated were priorities for the site's future.

A walkable street network, community center, and easy trail access make it a truly livable neighborhood, one designed to serve Concord residents and welcome newcomers for generations to come.

Investing in this Vision: What Does this Scenario Need to Be a Reality?

The Thriving Mixed-Use Neighborhood scenario brings strong fiscal benefits by pairing new housing with a mix of retail and commercial space. This mix and density of different land uses not only generates meaningful tax revenue and local spending to help offset public costs, but it also allows for a quicker, more dynamic buildout compared to an approach centered on developing more commercial uses.

The faster timeline means Route 2 improvements and added wastewater capacity will be needed sooner. These upgrades, either on-site or through other Town infrastructure, are essential to support growth.

While the scenario includes fewer public facilities at the outset, it offers opportunities for lasting community benefits. Developers could invest in riverfront enhancements, trails, or other shared spaces. For this future to be realized, it would need to closely align with Route 2 and infrastructure improvements to support the additional use.

What Concordians had to say about this scenario:

"Dense housing with a community center could create sense of community"

"Building footprints are too large - residential should focus on creating a "Concord neighborhood" feel with single family, duplex, some townhouses."

"It makes the most sense based on our housing situation and tax base."

"Net revenue positive. Good balance among uses. Quicker implementation than other scenarios."

"Positive fiscal impact on the town"



Thriving Together: A Sustainable, Complete Neighborhood

Rooted in the fabric of West Concord, this comfortable new village offers walkable access to friends, community center, recreational opportunities and lifestyle-focused commercial amenities. Venturing further afield, residents can make easy bikable connections to town center and the region.

Non-profit or cultural use of former Warden's House anchors mini-interpretive zone

Activated commercial spine provides ground-floor lifestyle retail

Commercial buildings with visibility along Route 2 protect the neighborhood

Farm to table supports prison job training and provides local produce

Increased pedestrian access to Gerow Park and Warner's Pond

Commonwealth Avenue development extends existing residential fabric

Parking below residential development provides communal amenities above

Riverfront trails and overlooks provide a communal backyard along a restored river

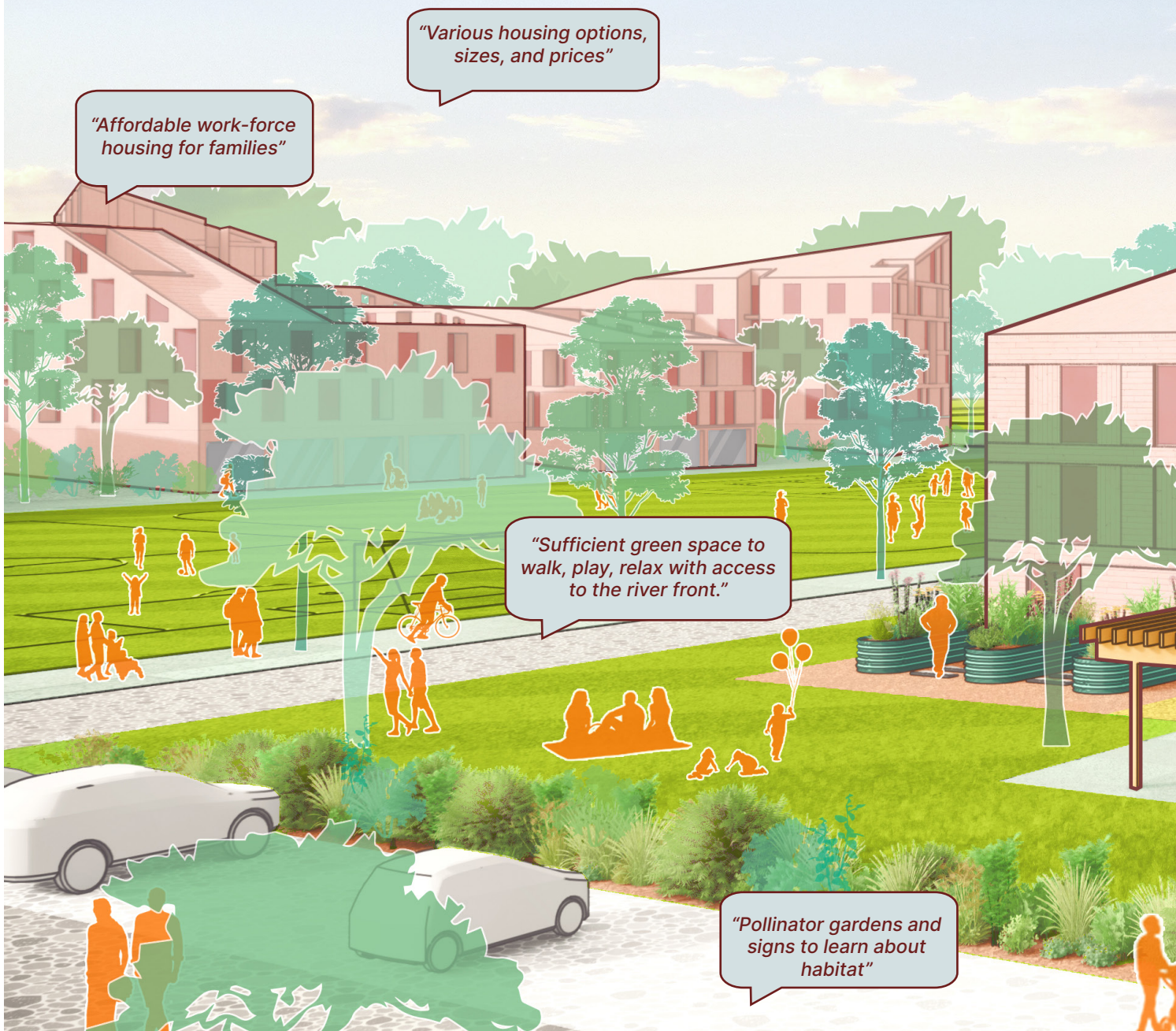
Community center and recreational amenities anchor the neighborhood center

Neighborhood fabric less than a 10 minute walk from West Concord shops and train

Communal Front Yards in a Walkable Village

With picnic pavillions, community gardens, playgrounds and plenty of open-spaces for pick-up sports or events, the open spaces in the Thriving Mixed-Use Neighborhood scenario stitch together a variety of architecturally-distinct housing types. Intuitive pathways make pedestrian-friendly connections to the site's commercial spine and off-site destinations like West Concord.

This view foregrounds communal neighborhood space, flanked by walkable housing in a wide range of architectural styles, with lifestyle commercial uses hidden behind trees in the distance.



**Note: all quotes from community engagement events and surveys*

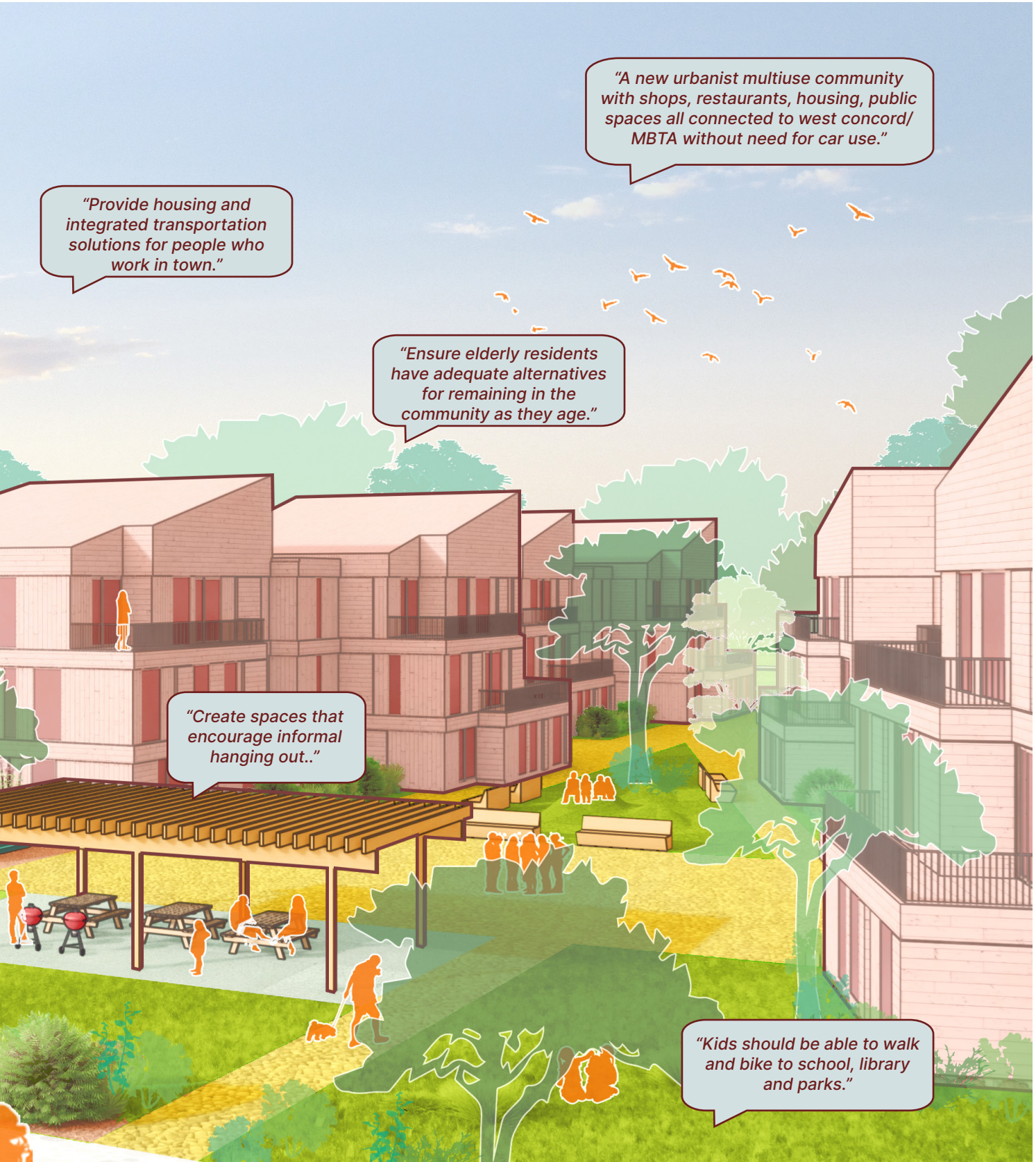
"Provide housing and integrated transportation solutions for people who work in town."

"A new urbanist multiuse community with shops, restaurants, housing, public spaces all connected to west concord/ MBTA without need for car use."

"Ensure elderly residents have adequate alternatives for remaining in the community as they age."

"Create spaces that encourage informal hanging out.."

"Kids should be able to walk and bike to school, library and parks."



Community Perspectives

The project included two phases of community input—one centered on developing a vision for the site and the other on exploring potential site scenarios. In both phases, a digital survey was distributed to gather feedback from people who couldn't attend the in-person workshops. While a variety of perspectives were shared, responses to the site scenarios survey showed an overall preference for the "Thriving Mixed-use Neighborhood" option.

Participants shared what they liked and what could be improved within each scenario. Overall, there was strong support for small, local retail that complements existing businesses in West Concord, as well as for community amenities and open spaces—both recreational and natural—that would benefit the wider Concord community. Many acknowledged the need to balance these priorities to ensure financial feasibility. Opinions on housing density were mixed—some favored higher-density options, while others preferred a smaller-scale, single-family approach.



50% chose this as a favorite image

Flexible Event Lawns



68% chose this as a favorite image

Retail and Dining



53% chose this as a favorite image

Smart Growth Mixed-Use Development



57% chose this as a favorite image

River Access



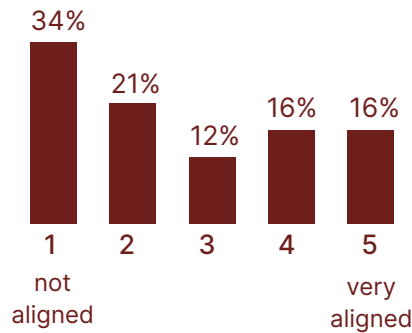
33% chose this as a favorite image

Townhouses



SCENARIO #1

Civic and Institutional Campus



Average rating of 2.6/5 for how well the scenario aligned with participants' vision for the site

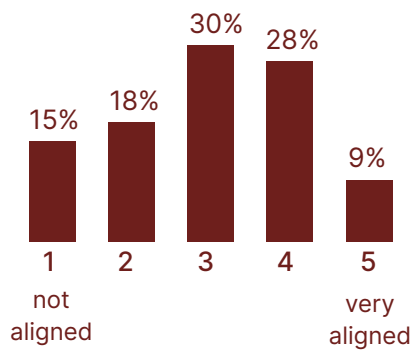
"I love the emphasis on housing and civic spaces."

"I LOVE that it includes community space as well as affordable housing and reworks the roundabout."



SCENARIO #2

Vibrant Center for Commerce



Average rating of 3.0/5 for how well the scenario aligned with participants' vision for the site

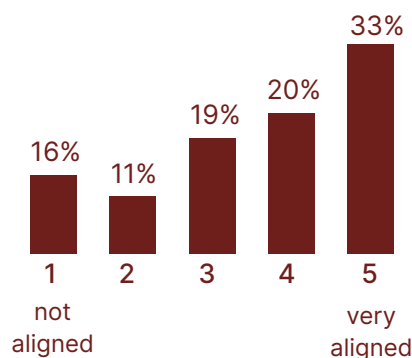
"More housing and activities available close to housing"

"Innovation center near mass transit"



SCENARIO #3

Thriving Mixed-Use Neighborhood



Average rating of 3.4/5 for how well the scenario aligned with participants' vision for the site

"It creates a cool commercial space, provides housing, and has good use of open space"

"Best scenario in terms of revenue. Brings commerce into the town"

Site Framework in Action

Evaluating Scenarios

A number of different metrics were used to understand how the land use program mixes and differing intensities of each land use might impact the Town and the various systems that the site will rely on to be functional. In this section, the Vision Plan defines each metric, articulates how each scenario responds to each metric, and identifies ways to alleviate any pressures on that metric. Assumptions about metrics can be found in the appendices.



Financial Feasibility

This metric uses an understanding of the costs to prepare the site for development and the costs related to the unique land use program mix for each scenario to identify how much outside additional investment is needed to make the vision financially feasible.



Housing Density

This metric expresses the total housing units proposed within each scenario and evaluates the number of units by the total buildable acreage for the site, not including the MCI Concord agricultural land west of Commonwealth Avenue.



Town Fiscal Impact

This metric uses an understanding of the annual impact to Town finances by evaluating both projected annual tax revenues from each scenario land use mix minus the annual costs to identify net revenue.



Mobility Considerations

The mobility metric determines general impacts of the land use mix within each scenario on surrounding transportation infrastructure, especially vehicular traffic along Commonwealth Avenue and Route 2.



Implementation Timeframe

Using past development timelines and market feasibility to estimate project development timing and phasing, this metric identifies generally how long will it take to reinvest in the entire site.



Infrastructure Considerations

This metric explores the impacts of each scenario program mix on the capacity of the on-site wastewater treatment facility and opportunities to offset impacts when the program exceeds the facility's capacity.



Community Facilities

This metric expresses a proportion of the direct community facilities (which include programming, events, parks, trails, buildings) that align with community stated priorities and past planning recommendations.



Cultural and Historic Storytelling

The site is layered with unique histories. While this topic is not evaluated as a metric that will have significant fiscal or programmatic barriers, investing in the site's history could open up opportunities for public or philanthropic funding.

Financial Feasibility

This analysis assesses the financial viability of each scenario by examining both the site preparation costs and the unique mix of land uses proposed. It highlights the scale of external funding or investment required to bring each vision to life.

Site Preparation Costs

As noted earlier in this document, site preparation costs to enable development vary depending on the type and intensity of the development. Those costs are summarized on the graphic to the right and are identified as the “total cost”. Those total costs include the costs to remediate the site and remove existing infrastructure and buildings, install new infrastructure, provide various site amenities, and include a cost to upgrade the waste water treatment facility. The total cost also includes contingencies, fees, and soft costs.

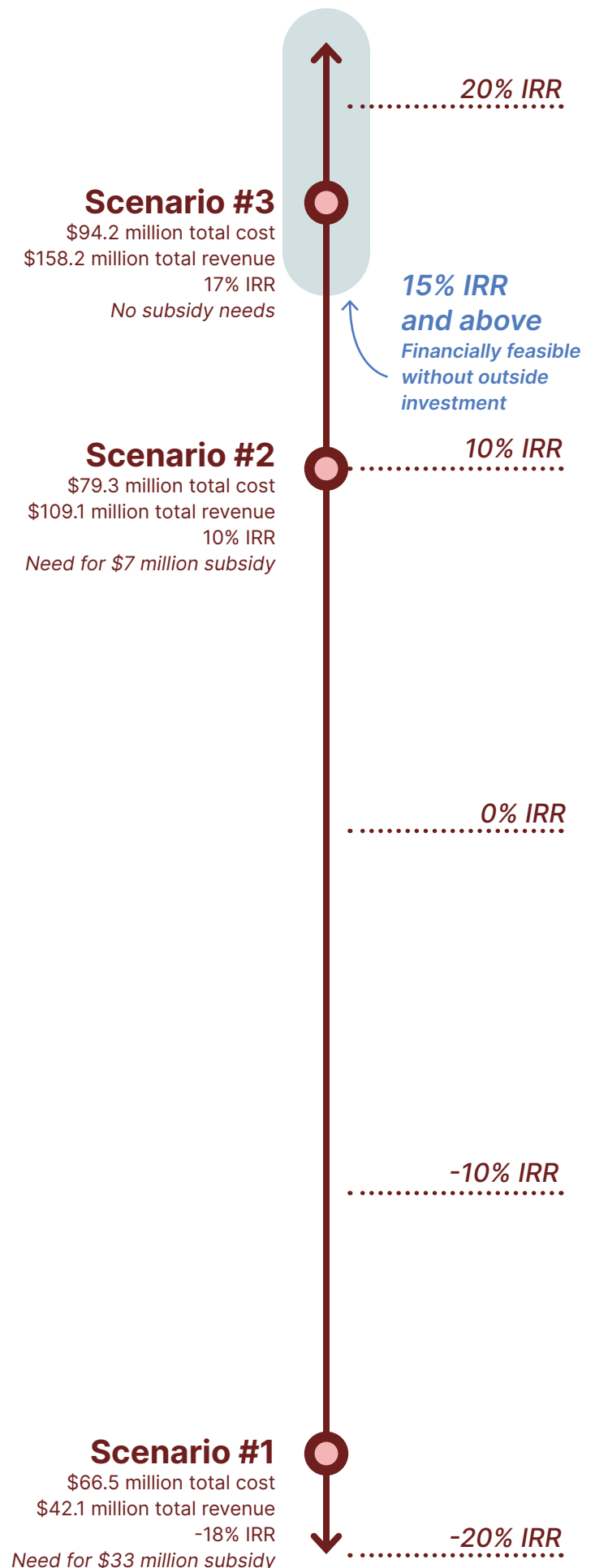
Site Profitability Needs

To recapture the site’s high upfront costs, around three quarters of the 54 acres of developable area should be sold for redevelopment. The ability of each scenario to be profitable is measured by what is called an Internal Rate of Return (IRR). An IRR is an important metric in real estate development, especially when evaluating and comparing potential projects or investments. It measures the costs and expected annual growth rate of an investment over time, taking into account the time value of money. An IRR of 15% signifies a strong rate of return with lower risk, which is appealing to entities seeking to develop a site, especially in the current real estate market.

Engagement Outcomes

The topic of financial feasibility came up throughout the plan process. Concordians were generally aligned in their desire to provide a mix of experiences, but not at the expense of the Town’s own financial capacity. Some additional takeaways are identified below:

- There was significant interest in efficient reuse of the wastewater treatment plant and sustainable building practices.
- 42% of comments from the first public workshop highlighted mixed-use development to provide additional experiences and enhance the town.



Fiscal Impact + Community Facilities

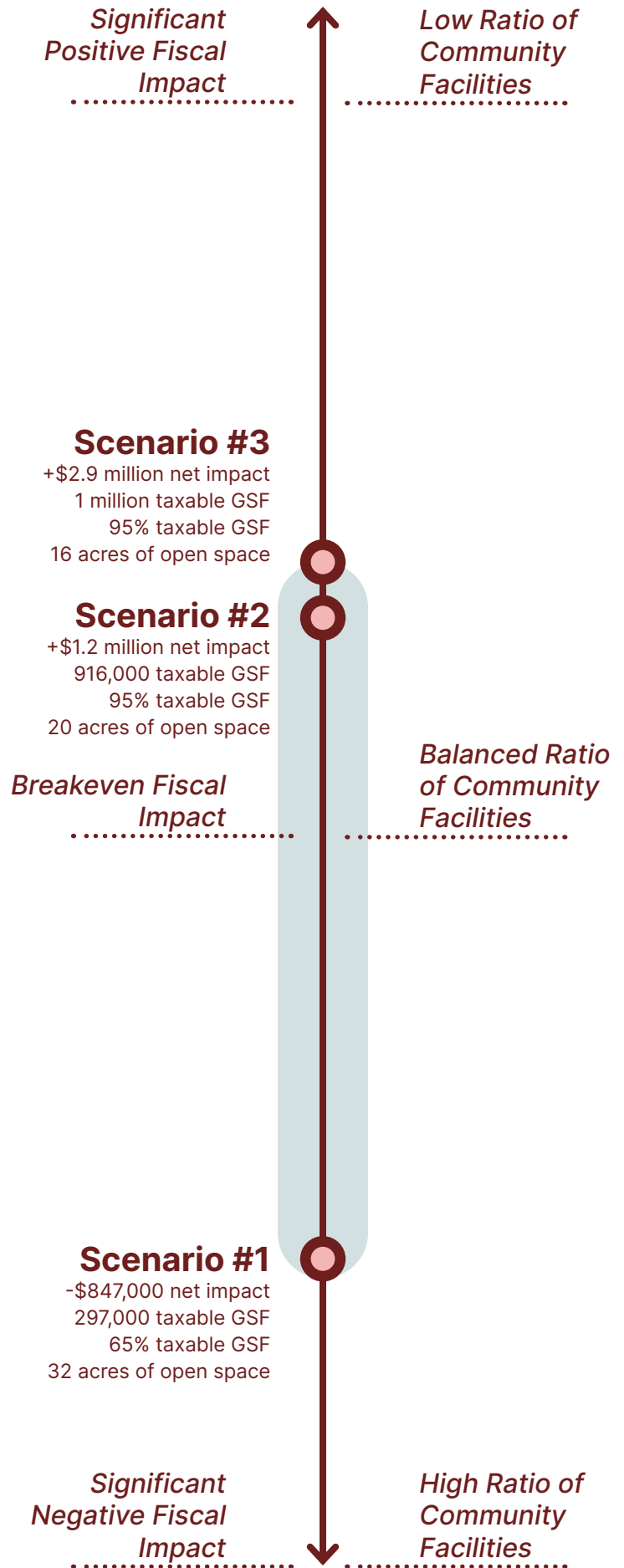
The fiscal impact and community facilities metrics are inversely linked because the two metrics are tied to the costs and revenues of the Town. Scenarios that have a significant positive fiscal impact also provide the least amount of open space and community facilities on the site.

This section evaluates both how each scenario would affect the Town's finances by estimating annual revenues (such as taxes) and comparing them to projected annual service costs, ultimately identifying the net fiscal benefit or burden. It also expresses the amount and type of direct community-serving amenities, which may have an element of Town responsibility for maintenance and ongoing costs. This is measured by the number of acres of open space and the amount of gross square footage that is not taxable.

Engagement Outcomes

Below are a few key takeaways from conversations with residents across a wide range of public input opportunities:

- In the first round of public workshops, there was agreement to keep big box stores out of Concord and to protect West Concord businesses. In those workshops, 42% of comments highlighted mixed-use development or adding experiences that enhance the town.
- When asked to identify inspiring images of the future of the site, the top three images selected expressed a desire for more flexible open spaces, retail and dining, and investments in natural spaces along the river's edge.
- "Positive Fiscal Impact" was the most referenced reason for survey respondent's scenario preferences.



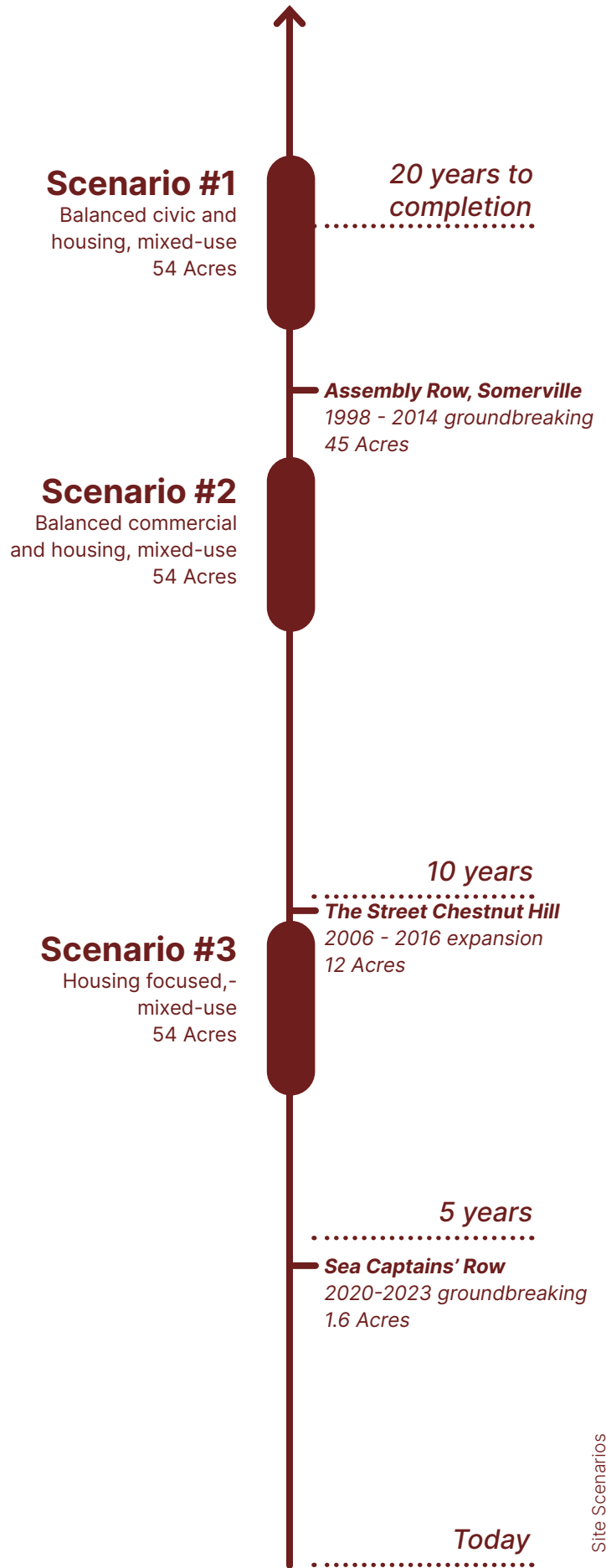
Implementation Timeline

This metric is highly variable and depends on changes within the real estate market, broader industry trends, and policymaking at the local, national, and global levels. By looking to relevant past projects, this metric can extrapolate the challenges and opportunities encountered in those projects to consider how long it might take to fully reinvest in and develop the site under each scenario.

The timeline ranges shared below communicate the amount of time from property disposition to groundbreaking or the first phase of construction.

Engagement Outcomes

While there was consensus that the site should not sit in its current state for too long, many residents acknowledged that it is important to align behind a vision that is thoughtful and deliberate.



Mobility + Infrastructure Considerations

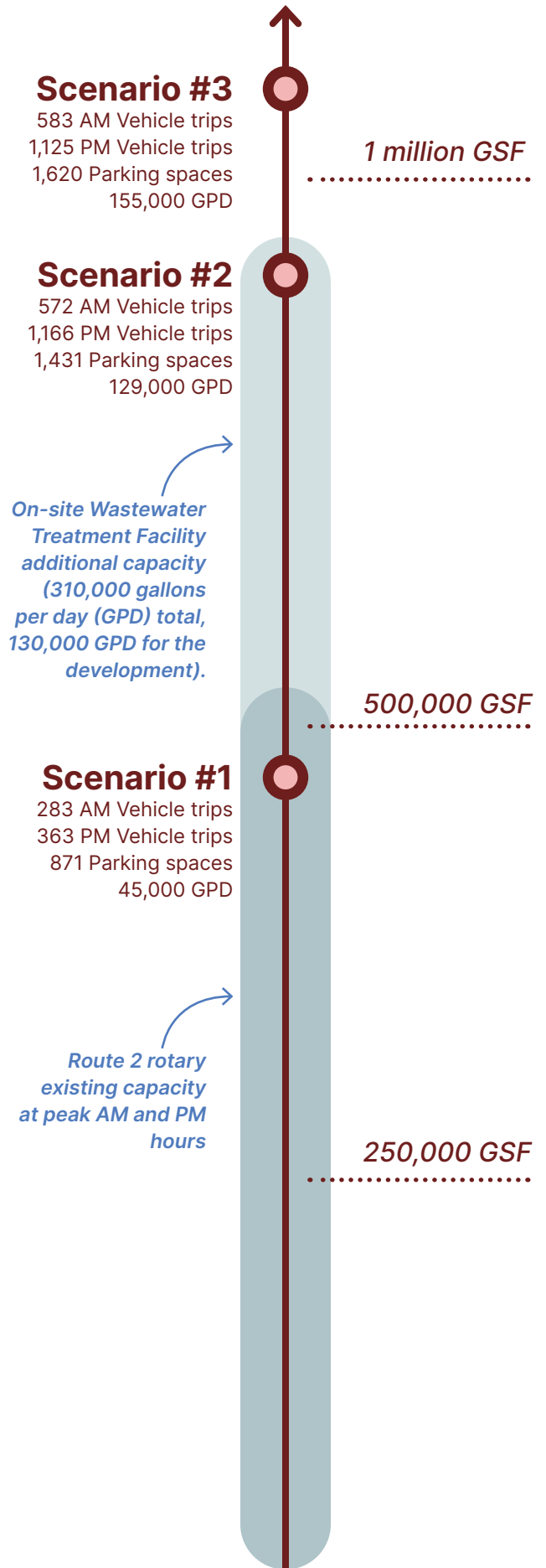
This section evaluates how each scenario's land use mix would affect the surrounding transportation network and the capacity of the on-site wastewater treatment facility, with a focus on potential impacts to traffic and mobility along key corridors such as Commonwealth Avenue and Route 2. It also identifies whether proposed development programs exceed the limits set by existing infrastructure.

Engagement Outcomes

Across all public engagement events and surveys, attendees and respondents consistently expressed desire for more active transportation connections and concern for traffic impacts, especially surrounding the Route 2 rotary:

- 40% of commenters in the visioning phase and 25% of respondents on scenarios wanted better pedestrian and bicyclist access and safety, particularly in the development of a walkable community and the addition of multi-use trails.
- 20% of all respondents touched on either the Route 2 rotary or traffic impacts. There was overall a desire to see traffic alleviated and the rotary issues addressed, as well as how the Route 2 redesign process fit in with the visioning.

While the waste water treatment facility was rarely discussed, Concordians expressed a desire for the future redevelopment to embody sustainability principles and limit waste.



Housing Density

This analysis focuses on the intensity of residential development in each scenario by calculating total housing units per buildable acre, excluding the MCI Concord agricultural land, to understand how compact or expansive the development would be. For the purposes of analysis, each scenario includes the land and development capacity for Junction Village as part of its unit number.

School Capacity

Public School District, there is currently capacity for an additional 80 students, or under 400 multi-family units, 229 townhouses, or 160 single family homes. By restricting some percentage of housing to residents 55 and above, or building smaller unit types like more one and two bedrooms demand on school capacity could be lessened.

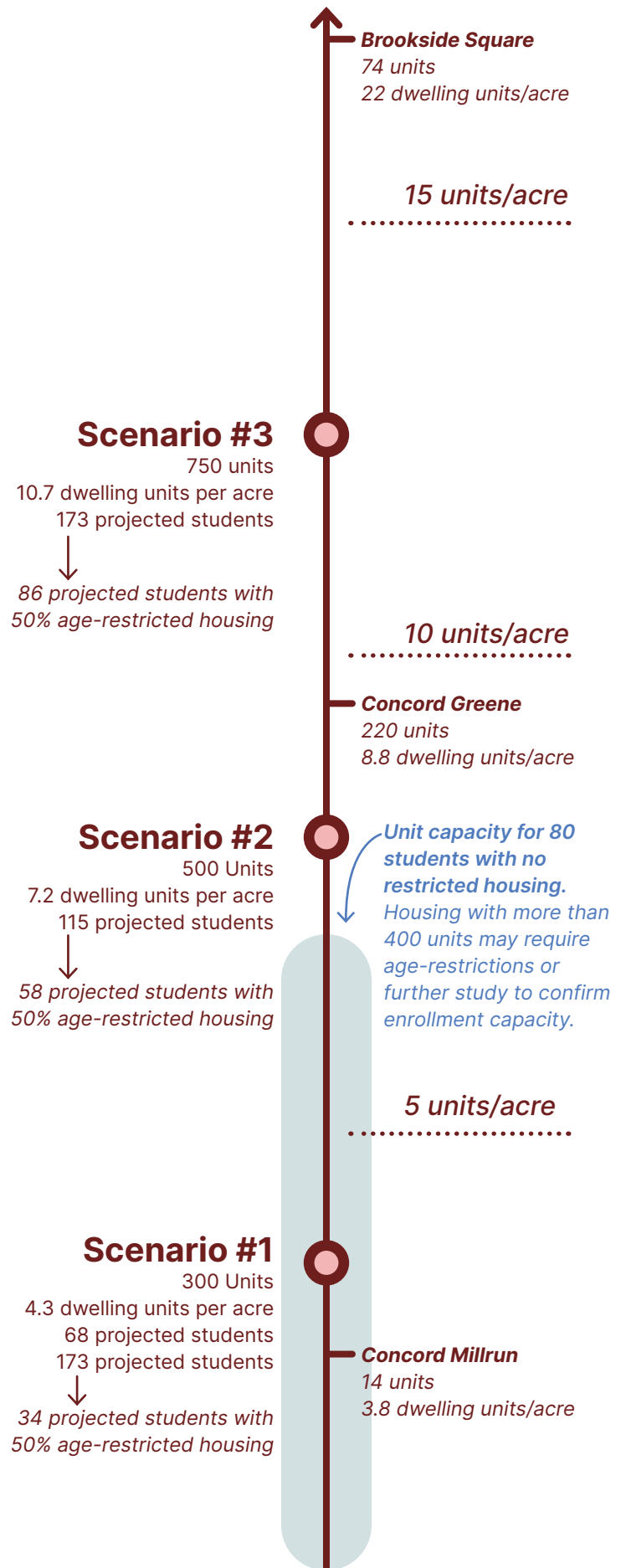
Housing Density Restrictions

Concord's zoning code provides the number of dwelling units constructed within the town to preserve the character of the Town and ensure that public services and facilities are able to meet the needs of residents.

Engagement Outcomes

As part of broad and varied public outreach methods, Concord residents weighed in on the housing topic in a number of ways. Here are a few key takeaways from conversations with residents via surveys, public workshops and conversations:

- 40% of respondents prioritized more attainable housing
- 23% supported options for aging in place and a range of housing sizes to meet diverse needs.
- Interest in affordable housing and a hotel



Cultural + Historic Storytelling:

Sharing the Story of the Site

Preserving this history will require both a research effort to build a deeper understanding of the prison's legacy and investment in the public humanities—the interpretive content, exhibitions, media, arts, or physical spaces in which the public can interact with the history. The following are initial recommendations of which spaces are significant, the stories that they might tell, and how they could be expressed in a contemplative journey on the site. While this journey takes different forms in each scenario, it remains a vital component of any future development.

The proposed contemplative Journey is a way to capture and honor the full history of the MCI Concord site, including those who were incarcerated. Existing and historic buildings can be adaptively reused along with contemplative reconstruction of the wall, chapel and watch towers. Historic related buildings off-site can also be a part of the experience.

Existing structures of this Contemplative Journey are ranked based on levels of priority for reuse. The following structures should be evaluated further and considered as key components of the contemplative Journey. Potential building uses are shown here:

1. Concord Prison Cemetery (high priority):

Established in 1878, the Concord Prison Cemetery is the final resting place for over 100 individuals who were incarcerated at MCI Concord. Concord Prison Outreach has researched and developed ideas for contemplative elements to honor the stories of these unnamed graves. The site should be preserved in its current state.

2. Wardens House (high priority): The Warden's House, a prominent Second Empire-style building located outside the walls of MCI Concord, is recognized by the Massachusetts Historical Commission as a Cultural Resource due to its architectural significance and historical ties to the prison. Potential future uses include a Concord Restorative Justice Museum, a Restorative and

Transformative Justice Center (possibly operated by the Transformational Prison Project), a community meeting space, or a specialized library or reading room focused on abolition.

3. Original Brick Wall / Interpretive Entry (high priority):

For 146 years, the prison wall was the most visible feature of the site, marking a clear divide between the Town of Concord and those incarcerated—shaping both what was seen and by whom, and how life differed inside and outside the walls. A potential future use includes an art installation sharing the site's history and the stories of its diverse stakeholders.

4. Malcolm X's Cell (high priority): Civil Rights leader Malcolm X, then known as Malcolm Little, was incarcerated at MCI Concord for 15 months from 1947 to 1948. His time there was crucial to his spiritual transformation into an influential Civil Rights figure. The exact location of his prison cell warrants further research. Potential uses for the site include a library, museum or memorial, and a pilgrimage destination.

5. Concord Reformatory Worker Housing (medium priority):

The Worker's House, a Victorian-style building outside MCI Concord's walls, is designated by the Massachusetts Historical Commission as a Cultural Resource for Concord. It is the last remaining building of a former row of worker housing. Potential uses include artist housing, workforce or live-work housing, and re-entry housing.

6. Watch Towers / Interpretive reconstruction (low priority): The MCI Concord Watch Tower played a crucial role in daily prison operations by overseeing the site and inmates, while also serving as a visual landmark for Concord residents. Reinterpreting this structure can strengthen the site's new identity. Potential uses include a sustainability feature, art installation, or gateway element.



7. Chapel Site (low priority): The MCI Concord chapel, visited by Mother Teresa in 1988, is the prison's religious building located within the walls. Before demolition, its historical significance should be thoroughly researched. It could potentially be reused as a memorial.

8. Concord Reformatory Superintendents House (off-site): The former superintendent's house, located across from the MCI Concord site, is currently used as a Department of Corrections office. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and designated as a Cultural Resource by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. This site could be included in interpretive walking tours.

9. Concord Reformatory Farm (off-site): The reformatory farm is designated as a Cultural Resource by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Some areas of the farm remain in use. This site could also be included in interpretive tours.

Elements of the proposed contemplative journey may qualify for funding if they incorporate African American or Civil Rights history. Potential sources include the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, the African American Civil Rights Grant, and Museum Grants for African American History and Culture. Additionally, preserving historically designated structures may make the project eligible for federal and state historic tax credits.

Implementation Steps

Bringing the Vision to Life

The purpose of this plan is to outline a shared vision and three future scenarios to reimagine the former MCI Concord site. Each scenario explores a different direction for the site's future, helping the Advisory Board and the Town of Concord identify the most compelling and realistic ideas from each. These elements can then be combined into one preferred framework.

The plan is designed to be flexible. The illustrative diagrams and perspectives are examples of what could be done by following the proposed scenarios. Although the site may not be developed exactly as depicted in any of the scenarios, the goals established by the Advisory Board and outlined in this plan will remain unchanged.

In planning processes like this one, it is important to keep two key things in mind for achieving successful outcomes. The first is a commitment to keep up momentum (long-term planning takes time to implement) and the second is a willingness to reflect on and update community values. The recommendations in this chapter articulate tactics to confirm a preferred scenario and move closer towards the desired outcomes of the Town.

Reflect And Update Community Values

Communities identify what matters most to them, then use those values to guide future decisions. When a community like Concord is guided by a thoughtful plan, each investment is more likely to enhance quality of life rather than detract from it. The plan is important, but continued, meaningful engagement and commitment to a thoughtful plan process are equally important as the plan and its recommendations.

Immediate Tactics

1. Update the website to include a copy of this plan document, with an opportunity for feedback as part of an online form.
2. Consider assembling a "leave behind" printed pamphlet or "zine" that summarizes this document. The leave behind should be highly graphic and use accessible language for various audiences.
3. Work with DCAMM to host a public workshop at the MCI Concord site, to encourage diverse audience participation and to better connect participants with the former role of the site and their responsibility to help shepherd its future.

Within a Year

1. **Communicate Zoning to the Town:** Communicate the desired future site's program mix with the Town and build excitement and dialogue around the development of the future zoning for the Property.

Keep Up Momentum

Much of the plan will be implemented gradually by both public and private entities as individual properties are developed. In the short term, within the next few years, the focus will be on public-sector strategies and action items. These efforts will lay the foundation and establish development regulations that will guide future private development.

Immediate Tactics

1. Create a schedule with key milestones for the project's next steps, including an understanding of parallel project processes (MCI Concord site disposition timing by DCAMM, Rotary redesign design timeline).
2. Reconfirm the goals and role of the Advisory Board to ensure the Advisory Board continues to guide implementation and is responsible for shepherding the community-driven vision, goals, and appropriate future program mix of the site.
3. Consider applying to include the Warden's House and Concord Reformatory Superintendents' House (offsite) as part of a National Register of Historic Places nomination to protect these historically significant sites and unlock additional funding opportunities.

Within a Year

1. **Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Maps Amendments:** With direction from the vision and development scenarios, confirm the level of flexibility that the future site's program mix should include and undertake the process of developing a zoning approach, policy directions, and supporting codes and amendments in support of the site's redevelopment.
2. **Waste Water Treatment Facility Implementation:** Develop an approach to financing and implementation of the wastewater treatment facility upgrades, with the understanding that the facility's deferred maintenance and upgrade needs are time sensitive and will likely precede the site's development
3. **Phasing Plan:** Together with DCAMM, develop a parcel plan and identify a Phase 1 site to include in a developer solicitation. Concord and DCAMM can use this approach to evaluate future phases for

remainder of MCI as developer options available to the Phase 1 developer, subsequent RFP issuance, or retained for Concord use as part of the "Culture Strategy".

4. **Cultural Alignment and Implementation Strategy:** Create a Cultural Alignment and Implementation Strategy to codify and implement investments in various cultural components of the vision. These uses and facilities include non-revenue or limited revenue generating uses like parks, historic and interpretive elements, recreational amenities, arts, and cultural uses.
5. **Property Disposition:** Ultimately the MCI Property will be disposed of by DCAMM likely through a developer solicitation process, but there is a short window of opportunity for the town to proactively provide input on DCAMM's solicitation process. This could include a 2-3 month process to explore concrete programming options and identify potential tenants/business owners and/or partners that have interest in supporting Concord's goals to create a cultural, arts, small business, food, or recreational anchor. As part of this disposition approach, this is an opportune moment to identify potential funding, management entities, implementation approaches for the non-revenue generating uses could be pushed on to developers as part of the solicitation and negotiation process. It might also result in Concord determining there are parcels they want to own and control, beyond the waste water treatment facility site.

Ongoing coordination

1. Continue coordinating with MassDOT, DCAMM, and other local and state agencies that have aligned, adjacent, or overlapping interests in the site's future.

