

REPORT

To: Town of Concord Select Board
From: Land Use Working Group
Date: February 23, 2026
Subject: Phase I Summary Report

BACKGROUND

The Land Use Working Group (LUWG), established by the Select Board in July 2025, is charged with re-evaluating Concord's network of municipal facilities—including Public Works, Public Safety, and Town and School administrative offices—while aligning recommendations with broader goals for commercial growth, housing, and recreation. Many existing sites are outdated, undersized, or scattered, creating inefficiencies and service challenges. With major parcels such as MCI-Concord, Peabody Middle School, and potentially 2229 Main Street on the horizon, along with town-owned properties like Ripley School, Concord has a unique opportunity to consolidate or upgrade essential services.

The LUWG has developed a one-year work plan divided into two six-month phases.

- **Phase I** focuses on an examination of public facilities in three priority categories: i) public works, ii) public safety, and iii) municipal consolidation. Phase I prioritizes actionable options for repair, renovation, relocation, and disposition, including the potential to redevelop surplus parcels for new housing or economic development, ensuring future facilities are strategic, resilient, and suited to community needs.
- **Phase II** examines the implications of public facility needs on other land uses in town, including housing, commercial, and recreational. The planned work for Phase II is discussed at the end of this report, in "next steps."

This Phase I summary report, which also serves as a Q2 progress report:

- Builds on the Q1 progress report dated 10.23.25 (Appendix A) that provides context for the work of LUWG, including its charter from the Select Board;
- Provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the LUWG and its three subgroups over the past seven months (from July 2025 to January 2026);
- Presents the preferred recommendations of each of the three subgroups (Appendix B, C, D);
- Concludes with next steps for the LUWG and planned conclusion of work in July 2026.

PUBLIC WORKS Subgroup Report (Appendix B)

The Public Works subgroup conducted a comprehensive analysis of options for the future of Concord's Public Works Division (CPW) facilities in response to critical challenges (Appendix A). Specifically, current facilities at 133 and 135 Keyes Road, central to CPW operations, are aging, inadequately sized, and fall short of modern safety and efficiency standards. Repair or upgrade at these locations is not viable given site constraints, environmental risks, and structural limitations.

The full subgroup report (Appendix B) identifies increasing service demands and benchmarks against peer communities, which clearly demonstrate Concord's facilities are outmoded and hinder effective service delivery, particularly as West Concord grows. Input from staff, industry experts, and extensive site analysis reinforce the need for consolidation of CPW services at a single, modern site to maximize efficiency, safety, and cost-effectiveness.

Preferred Options

The subgroup identified and evaluated several options for upgrading and potentially relocating and rebuilding DPW facilities. Evaluation criteria include size, development costs, access, neighborhood impacts, environmental compliance, zoning, and logistical feasibility. Based on this analysis, the subgroup categorized each site option as "good use," "possible use," or "not suitable," as summarized below.

1) Good Use

- MCI-Concord/Junction Village: The state-owned prison site and adjacent parcels offer significant acreage and feasibility for renovation. Buildings L, F, and I are suitable for repurposing for public works use. Challenges include state ownership, regulatory constraints (wetlands, buffer zones), and uncertain acquisition costs. Advantages are ample space, proximity to Route 2, and potential for phased municipal development.
- Ripley School (120 Meriam Road): The site is approximately 18 acres, currently used for education and recreation purposes, adjacent to residential and agricultural areas. The school and associated buildings are at the end of their useful life and would require demolition and new construction. Site redevelopment potential and access are subject to review for environmental considerations.
- 509 Bedford Street: The existing wastewater treatment facility and site, in conjunction with nearby municipal parcels, offer 8.97-11.30 acres of total land area. No hazardous materials, reasonable central access, modest neighborhood impact, but would require construction of a new facility (~\$60M) and utility upgrades.

2) *Possible Use*

- 133-135 Keyes Road: The existing site is landlocked and adjacent to wetlands, and the facilities are outdated. Expansion to 141 Keyes Road or nearby parcels would be costly and logistically complex, offering limited improvement given environmental risks and restricted available space.
- 2229 Main Street: Federal Superfund site with large acreage (46.4, ~23.7 developable), but acquisition, environmental remediation, and distance from the town center are significant hurdles. Development is likely delayed to 2029/2030+; the site is not ideal for day-to-day operations due to location.
- Peabody Middle School: Total of 10 acres excluding existing recreation fields. The former school building is past its useful life, and there are some hazardous materials present (asbestos, old heating lines). Terrain is uneven; moderately accessible but at the town's southwestern edge.

3) *Not Suitable*

- 755 Walden Street: Former landfill site with a solar array and compost operations. Environmental constraints, difficult subsoil, site history, and proximity to recreational areas (Walden Pond/Walden Woods) make it unsuitable for major CPW operations.
- Virginia Road: Commercial properties, mostly small, fragmented, and privately owned. Would require combining multiple lots and extensive investment for limited gain; legal and zoning constraints, non-central location.

Recommendations to the LUWG

1. THAT prioritizing MCI-Concord/Junction Village, Ripley School, and 509 Bedford Street as primary candidates for a new consolidated public works facility. These sites offer sufficient size, favorable locations, and development flexibility without excessive environmental or neighborhood impacts.
2. THAT MCI-Concord is favored due to its large acreage, adaptability, and potential for phased municipal use, though challenges remain regarding state ownership and regulatory compliance. Ripley and Bedford sites are strong alternatives if acquisition or development at MCI-Concord stalls.
3. THAT expansion at Keyes Road or Peabody and redevelopment at 2229 Main, Walden Street, or Virginia Road are not recommended due to site limitations, cost, neighborhood, and environmental concerns.
4. THAT the next steps involve coordination with the other LUWG subgroups, Concord's MCI efforts, community engagement, detailed engineering and financial studies, and ongoing evaluation as legal and environmental hurdles are addressed.

PUBLIC SAFETY Subgroup Report (Appendix C)

The Public Safety subgroup evaluated Concord's main police and fire facilities, including the Walden Street Public Safety Campus and the West Concord Fire Station, with the aim of determining their adequacy for current operations and future needs. Both sites are aging, undersized, and increasingly unable to meet requirements for modern emergency response, regulatory compliance, and staff well-being (Appendix A). These inefficiencies hinder public safety operations, limit accessible and secure spaces for evidence and equipment, and prevent staff from effectively training or cooperating. Service demand is changing, especially in West Concord, and peer benchmarking confirmed that substantial investment in new facilities is necessary for Concord to match contemporary standards and expectations.

The full subgroup report (Appendix C) stresses the urgent need to modernize Concord's public safety infrastructure, maximize operational efficiency, enhance staff collaboration, and ensure adaptability for future service demands. Facility improvements should also prioritize accessibility, sustainability, and resilience, while minimizing disruption and seeking broad community engagement.

Preferred Options

The subgroup identified and rigorously evaluated sixteen different options for Concord's public safety facility strategy. While each option has strengths and weaknesses, the realities of Concord's needs and resources meant several could be eliminated from consideration outright, others are likely to be set aside pending further study, and the remainder move forward for detailed review.

In reviewing these options, the subgroup considered evaluation criteria centered on operational effectiveness, cost, community accessibility and impact, minimization of disruption, and flexibility for the future. Each option comes with trade-offs, balancing capital costs, site acquisition, construction timelines, operational efficiency, and community impact. Many assumptions, including cost estimates, site suitability, and operational impacts, depend on detailed future studies. Further, as options are narrowed, engagement with expert consultants, input from the community, and careful consideration of site-specific challenges and opportunities will be necessary to inform decision-making.

1) Eliminated Options

- Status Quo for Walden Street Campus and Main St. Station (Options 1A, 2A, 3A)
Retaining current facilities, though less expensive and minimally disruptive, was unanimously eliminated. These options fail to address essential space, access, and operational issues identified by staff and assessments. Relying on outdated infrastructure defers problems and will likely raise long-term costs, falling short of Concord's public safety needs.
- Renovation of West Concord Fire Station (Option 1B):
Renovating the existing West Concord Fire Station was also eliminated. While somewhat less expensive than building new, structural and siting limitations and the inability to adequately expand or modernize the facility made this option impractical relative to its expected lifespan and investment required.

2) *Likely Eliminated Pending Further Study*

- Renovation of Walden Street Facilities (Options 2B, 3B):
Renovations of the Walden Street fire and police buildings are likely to be eliminated. Both suffer from site constraints, odd interior layouts, and limitations in expansion potential. While renovation might offer lower upfront costs and preserve sites' central locations, they may fail to achieve the core standards needed for modern operations, especially regarding accessibility and specialized spaces. A final determination awaits an expert cost study, as well as an assessment of the Walden site's adaptability.
- Single Central Campus (Option 4D):
The idea of a single public safety campus could theoretically optimize operational synergy and create shared efficiencies. However, initial analysis suggests it may compromise fire response times and would require significant land acquisition, making it unlikely and recommended for elimination unless further studies can address these concerns.

3) *Options Currently Under Review*

- New Builds on Same Sites (Options 1C, 2C, 3C):
Building new facilities at their current locations, on Main Street for West Concord Fire HQ and Walden Street for Fire Substation and Police HQ, remains under consideration and is among the most efficient options if sites are viable. These options benefit from familiarity, town-owned land, and established community presence. However, they hinge on being able to acquire additional land (especially for Main Street), as well as managing service disruption. Professional consultants will be needed to guide design and public input, especially if expansion is required.
- New Builds on Alternate Sites (Options 1D, 2D, 3D): Alternatives involving new facilities on new sites will only move forward once current site options are fully evaluated. The flexibility of a new site could ease design limitations and reduce disruption to ongoing operations but would add time for site identification, acquisition, and planning. This set requires detailed study by experts.
- Combination and Stand-alone Options (Options 4A, 4B, 4C):
Combining Fire HQ and Police HQ at a shared West Concord site (Option 4A) or pairing a Fire Substation with Police HQ in Concord Center (Option 4B) offers capital and operational efficiencies. These options could streamline administration, reduce overall square footage, and support shared infrastructure. They do, however, risk complicated massing and site constraints, particularly on Main Street or Walden Street, where acquiring adjacent parcels may be necessary. Plus, in a matter needing more investigation, our cost benchmarking shows that these facilities are often more expensive to build based on per square foot costs.

Additionally, building new stand-alone facilities (Option 4C)—such as a Fire HQ in West Concord, a Police HQ in Concord Center or West Concord, and a Fire

Substation in Concord Center—maximizes flexibility and specialized space for each department. While potentially the most responsive to operational needs, it is also the most expensive and could multiply service disruptions and site acquisition needs.

Recommendations to the LUWG

1. THAT Concord’s public safety facilities require significant upgrading to reliably meet current and future demands.
2. THAT the priority order/phasing for addressing public safety facilities is as follows: i) a new Fire HQ in West Concord; ii) a new/renovated Police HQ in either Concord Center or West Concord; and, iii) a new/renovated Fire Substation in Concord Center
3. THAT the subgroup evaluation identifies the following as preferred options for detailed review:
 - i) Build New Fire HQ in West Concord: Addressing service demand growth in West Concord, first consideration should be given to building on the existing Main Street site, provided adjacent parcels can be acquired to accommodate the necessary footprint efficiently and cost-effectively. If this is not feasible, an alternate site in West Concord should be evaluated.
 - ii) Build New Police HQ in Concord Center or West Concord: In response to increasing public safety needs and specialized facility requirements, detailed review should include either renovating or building new at the existing Walden Street site OR locating in West Concord (potentially with the new Fire HQ) OR selecting another suitable site in town. Alternative combinations with other facilities may also be considered.
 - iii) Build New Fire Substation in Concord Center: To sustain fire and emergency services in Concord Center, a detailed review should include renovating or building new at the existing Walden Street site OR on an alternate site in the Concord Center area OR in combination with other public safety facilities.
4. THAT the LUWG recommend to the Select Board that a Public Safety Facilities Building Advisory Committee be created, without waiting until the delivery of the final LUWG in June 2026, so that necessary feasibility and analysis can be undertaken by outside consultants to inform next steps.

MUNICIPAL CONSOLIDATION Subgroup Report (Appendix D)

The Municipal Consolidation subgroup explored opportunities for consolidating Concord's municipal and school administrative functions. Currently, administrative staff are distributed across 18 municipal buildings and the Ripley School administration building, resulting in inefficiencies, fragmented communication, and difficulty for residents in accessing services (Appendix A).

The full subgroup report (Appendix D) stressed the need to optimize operational efficiency, staff collaboration, and information sharing. It also prioritized reducing ongoing maintenance and capital expenses that stem from aging, obsolete facilities. Simplifying the resident experience by providing more centralized access to services was a central concern, along with enhancing the sustainability and flexibility of municipal operations to accommodate future growth. Finally, the ability to generate revenue by selling or repurposing vacated properties, especially for housing, was considered an essential strategic benefit.

Preferred Options

The subgroup identified and evaluated several options for municipal consolidation and developed a shortlist of five options that were each rigorously evaluated through detailed financial modeling and qualitative scoring. These five options are as follows:

1. Status Quo: Maintaining municipal and school administrative offices in their current locations avoids disruption and immediate expenses associated with relocation or renovation. However, this approach perpetuates ongoing inefficiencies, fragmented operations across outdated and high-maintenance buildings, and inconvenience for residents who must visit multiple sites for services. Selling Peabody for housing provides some revenue, but other valuable properties remain underused, and Concord continues to lag behind best practices seen in peer communities.
2. Renovate Peabody School: Consolidating staff and programs into a renovated Peabody School leverages an existing town asset and enables the sale of Ripley, 141 Keyes Road, 55 Church Street, and Harvey Wheeler for housing, generating substantial revenue. This would streamline services and improve collaboration, but it demands significant investment to modernize Peabody's dated structure, systems, and accessibility. Renovation may uncover unforeseen complications and disrupt ongoing uses, while the building's physical constraints could limit adaptability to future needs.
3. New Building at Peabody: Constructing a new, purpose-built facility at the Peabody site allows for maximum flexibility to design spaces for current and future municipal and school needs. It supports efficient, sustainable operations and provides substantial revenue from selling vacated properties for housing. The downside is the high capital cost, extended permitting and construction timeline, and potential site-specific challenges such as zoning or access. Staff and program transitions may be complex, and final costs could exceed early estimates.

4. New Building at Ripley: Building a new facility on the Ripley School campus supports modern municipal and educational operations, potentially enhancing collaboration through co-location. Selling Peabody and other vacated sites would offer a financial boost. Like the previous option, this scenario involves high construction costs and environmental constraints associated with the Ripley site. Moving existing educational programs adds complexity and may disrupt services, and public approval will likely be needed for conversion and property sales.
5. Purchase & Renovate Existing Office Building: Acquiring and renovating a commercial office building presents the quickest route to consolidation, leveraging modern infrastructure and flexible layouts while minimizing downtime and disruption. Tailoring renovation allows Concord to accommodate specialty municipal and educational needs, and property sales would offset costs. The main challenges are finding a suitable building, navigating purchase negotiations, adapting the space for specialized programs, and obtaining public support for asset conversion. There are examples of peer communities that have used this model effectively.

Recommendations to the LUWG

1. THAT the purchase and renovation of an existing office building (Option 5) be reviewed as the preferred strategy to consolidate town and school administrative offices and programs.
2. THAT vacated properties as a result of consolidation (Peabody, Ripley, 141 Keyes Road, 55 Church Street, Harvey Wheeler, etc.) be reviewed for disposition, with attention to offsetting consolidation costs, as well as the potential to generate new revenues.
3. THAT the town develop refined cost estimates and detailed space plans through additional studies and professional consultation.
4. THAT the town engage in robust, transparent public engagement to gather feedback, with potential support from a consulting firm, to facilitate citizen input and inform decision-making.

NEXT STEPS

This Phase I report from the LUWG marks an important step toward modernizing Concord's municipal facilities and improving service delivery across public works, public safety, and town and school administrative functions. The subgroup recommendations put forward offer actionable paths to address outdated infrastructure, meet current and future demands, and enhance efficiency for both staff and residents.

Next steps are centered on integrating the findings from each subgroup to optimize use of town-owned land, minimize site conflicts, and ensure that facility investments are strategic and resilient. These include:

- Combining the recommended options from each subgroup;
- Moving forward with detailed cost, engineering, and space planning studies;
- Refining cost estimates for new builds and renovations as needed;
- Reviewing opportunities to dispose of or repurpose surplus and obsolete properties to support housing and generate revenue.
- Forming any needed advisory committees needed to oversee detailed feasibility and design work, such as those proposed to advise public safety building planning, and another to evaluate and guide the purchase of an existing building for municipal consolidation;
- Expanding public communication efforts to ensure transparency.

As the Working Group transitions to Phase II, it will broaden its focus to review properties not earmarked for municipal use. Over the 3-4 remaining meetings, the LUWG will take into account the market potential for redevelopment or repurposing of these parcels, as well as the town's goals for housing, economic development, and recreation uses, among others. The LUWG will identify synergies and potential conflicts between projects, ensuring recommendations are aligned with Concord's broader strategic vision.

By July 2026, LUWG expects to conclude its work and present a final report for Select Board review.

/END

Appendix A

PROGRESS REPORT

To: Town of Concord Select Board
From: Land Use Working Group
Date: October 23, 2025
Subject: Quarterly Progress Report

Introduction

The Land Use Working Group (LUWG), established by the Select Board in July 2025, is tasked with analyzing future municipal needs while also considering Concord's broader goals for commercial development, diverse housing, and recreation/open space. The first phase of this work focuses on undertaking a comprehensive review of Concord's portfolio of public facilities. Many of these facilities, which support essential municipal operations and resident services, have evolved over time in an ad hoc fashion, resulting in a patchwork of sites with varied conditions, capacities, and suitability for current and future needs. Several buildings are outdated, undersized, or require significant upgrades, and the dispersion of services across many locations contributes to operational inefficiencies.

At the same time, Concord faces a pivotal opportunity. Two large parcels, the MCI-Concord site (state-owned) and the former Peabody Middle School (town-owned), in addition to one possible future large parcel, 2229 Main Street, have recently become available or are expected to be available soon. These properties, in addition to other properties that could be acquired by the town, create a rare opening to rethink how municipal services are delivered and where strategic investments could be made to meet changing service expectations. These choices will have a long-lasting impact on Concord's fiscal stewardship, resilience, and ability to respond to future regulatory and demographic changes.

One important part of the LUWG's charge is to provide actionable and prioritized recommendations for existing municipal buildings, comparing repair, renovation, relocation, and disposition options. We are considering not only the physical condition and functional requirements of each facility but also the potential for consolidation into upgraded, leased, and/or new civic buildings. Where appropriate, we also assess the potential redevelopment of surplus, high-value parcels for other town priorities such as housing or economic development.

Work Plan and Timeline

The LUWG has developed a one-year work plan divided into two six-month phases. Phase I focuses on an examination of public facilities in three priority categories: i) public works, ii) public safety, and iii) municipal consolidation. Phase II examines the implications of public facility needs on other land uses in town, including housing, commercial, and recreational. This first quarterly report highlights activities undertaken by the LUWG between July and October 2025, emphasizing needs assessments, site visits, staff consultations, data gathering, and the steps planned for the next quarter.

Subgroup 1: Public Works

The Public Works Subgroup is currently assessing Concord's public works facilities, focusing on the diverse functions and staffing needs that are spread across multiple buildings and sites. Administrative operations, such as permitting, engineering, and project management, require secure, climate-controlled offices, modern meeting spaces, and up-to-date IT infrastructure. At present, these offices are distributed across several buildings, which staff report creates challenges for workflow coordination, resource sharing, and communication. The subgroup has met with representatives from public works as well as community development, building inspections, health, and natural resources. Staff report that many of these facilities are aging and lack features needed for efficient, modern operations and for attracting and retaining high-quality personnel.

Field operations, including the management of Concord's rolling stock, vehicle garages, and material storage, are similarly distributed, creating inefficiencies in equipment maintenance and deployment. This arrangement leads to inefficiencies in maintenance and deployment, complicates safe access for large vehicles like snowplows and dump trucks, and results in higher material costs (ordered in sub-optimal amounts) as well as accelerated equipment wear due to inadequate garage space and off-site parking. Safety concerns arise from the cross-traffic between field activities and public access to administrative areas. Additional staff concerns include limited parking, outdated utility systems, insufficient indoor maintenance space, and a lack of modern amenities, such as break rooms, lockers, secure storage, and flexible spaces to accommodate staffing surges during weather emergencies or special events.

A key consideration for our assessment is the Keyes Road campus, which serves as the primary hub for many public works functions but also occupies a site with potential value for alternative uses that are priorities for the town. The subgroup is gathering capacity and condition data to evaluate scenarios such as continued use, phased renovation, relocation, or consolidation. This includes the potential acquisition of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and adjacent buildings at the MCI-Concord site, since the acute shortage of wastewater treatment capacity (currently zero) impacts many of the town's needs, especially sustainability goals (as two-thirds of the town rely on septic systems), and limits potential business expansion or growth in housing. As our review progresses, we are developing evaluation criteria based on regulatory compliance, operational reliability, safety, sustainability, and the long-term fiscal impact of any proposed changes.

Subgroup 2: Public Safety

The Public Safety Subgroup is evaluating Concord's police and fire facilities with a focus on building condition, operational needs, and adaptability to future demands, including anticipated growth in West Concord. Police operations are based at the Walden Street public safety campus, which houses patrol, investigations, administration, and the police lockup. While the detention areas are of adequate size, the facility lacks a dedicated sally port for secure prisoner transfer and needs increased parking for staff and visitors. Other challenges include limited space for training and meetings, outdated amenities, and building systems that do not fully support the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel or the integration of updated technology. With increasing service demands in West Concord, a small police substation in that area may be worth exploring to improve response times and coverage.

Fire services are split between the Walden Street station and the West Concord fire station. Both sites require apparatus bays, equipment maintenance areas, training rooms, dispatch spaces, and overnight accommodations for firefighters. The Walden Street location, despite its solid outward appearance, requires substantial renovation to meet modern standards and better support staff well-being, recruitment, and long-term retention. The West Concord fire station, although a valued historic landmark, cannot accommodate larger modern fire apparatus or allow for future equipment needs, limiting its effectiveness as calls and population increase in that area.

The subgroup met with the police and fire chiefs, as well as their deputies, to understand operational challenges, clarify service priorities, and review facility needs. Across both departments, common issues include limited space, aging utility systems and staff amenity spaces, as well as insufficient secure storage. The separation of facilities can complicate coordination and resource sharing, especially in emergencies, though it is important to note that police and fire do not always need to be housed at the same location. That said, co-location can offer operational synergies, such as shared training spaces, joint emergency planning, and efficiency in building systems, that may benefit service delivery. The long-term suitability of public safety sites will be assessed using data on capacity, condition, and flexibility, along with criteria such as compliance, reliability, response times, safety, fiscal impact, and staff recruitment and retention, as we consider renovation, relocation, consolidation (including possible co-location), or continued use.

Subgroup 3: Municipal Consolidation

The Municipal Consolidation Subgroup is evaluating Concord's town administrative offices with a focus on operational efficiency, building condition, and adaptability. Currently, more than fifteen buildings house municipal staff and services, the result of years of incremental growth as the town outgrew older facilities. This dispersal creates departmental silos, makes collaboration more difficult, and often forces residents to visit multiple locations to access services such as permits or bill payment. Moving toward consolidation—co-locating select town functions in shared, modern spaces—offers benefits for staff efficiency and public access, while also reducing the long-term costs of maintaining and renovating aging buildings.

Site visits to current locations—including the Town House, Assessor's Office, Harvey Wheeler Community Center, 55 Church Street, Hunt Gym, the Keyes Road Public Works campus, and both Police and Fire Stations—revealed generally positive staff morale but also a lack of awareness about challenges faced in other departments. Many buildings had substantial paper document storage, pointing to inefficiencies and space constraints. When assessing potential consolidation sites such as MCI Concord (Warden's HQ), Peabody, Ripley, and 2229 Main Street, the subgroup noted all would require major renovation, with new construction costs estimated to be similar to renovation. Of these, the Peabody building appears viable, though a more detailed analysis is needed and is underway to determine building condition, financial feasibility, and fiscal impacts.

The subgroup has established a list of facilities for consolidation or as possible receiving sites, supported by an evolving evaluation matrix weighing productivity, customer service, operational savings, revenue, capital costs, and suitability. This matrix draws on staffing figures (currently about 100–135 employees) and observations of program needs and facility usage. Leasing private space is also under consideration. Moving forward, the subgroup work focuses on refining the matrix and developing an economic assessment of consolidation scenarios to guide

recommendations that emphasize operational improvement, fiscal prudence, and long-term adaptability.

Next Steps

The coming quarter will focus on systematically identifying and evaluating proposed options in all three areas. The group will expand its data gathering, refine analytical tools, and apply evaluation criteria to potential scenarios. A communications plan will also be developed to update stakeholders and ensure public visibility into the LUWG's work.

Appendix B

Town of Concord Land Use Working Group (LUWG) Subcommittee Report: Public Works Feasibility Study

LUWG Members: Rob Almeida, Matt Boger, Linda Miller

Staff Liaisons: Alan Cathcart, Russ Karlstad, Shannon McAndrew

Date: January 28, 2026

1. Executive Summary

Purpose:

In line with Concord's Masterplan, *Envision-Concord: A Bridge to 2030* which prioritizes the goal to "Continue to maintain and improve the Town's existing public buildings, facilities, infrastructure, and service delivery at a level consistent with the Town's fiscal sustainability" and

the *Land Use Working Group Charge*, "Concord faces critical challenges delivering the services of its municipal departments due to the limitations of existing facilities. Both the Public Safety building and the Public Works facility are in failure mode, and both require relocation",

this report evaluates options for Concord's key public works buildings for future municipal needs.

Properties reviewed by the Land Use Working Group – Public Works Subcommittee (LUWG-PWS) include current sites of the Public Works Division's (PWD) administration and operations:

- Main facilities at 133 and 135 Keyes Road and adjacent properties,
- 755 Walden Street landfill site used for recycling, composting and solar arrays,
- 509 Bedford Street wastewater treatment plant and nearby municipal lands, and

other municipal locations included in the Land Use Working Group's (LUWG) list of Town properties or potential properties, or locations recommended by residents:

- 965 Elm and 6X Winthrop Streets (the decommissioned MCI-Concord prison and Junction Village),

- 120 Meriam Road (Ripley School used for Concord Public and Regional School administration and early education classes),
- 1231 Old Marlboro Road and 78 Old Pickard Road (former Peabody Middle School),
- 2229 Main Street (Federal Superfund site) and,
- commercial property on Virginia Road near Hanscom Airport.

Our analysis aims to ensure that Concord's Public Works facilities meet modern municipal standards for safety, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability. Based on input from staff, administration, industry experts, and benchmarking with comparable towns, the subcommittee determined that consolidating public works services at a single site is essential. Operating from multiple locations would decrease efficiency, reduce productivity, and increase costs.

Criteria:

The LUWG-PWS used the following major and minor criteria to assess sites for hosting a Public Works facility:

Major

- Physical features, including size and shape,
- Cost of site development such as necessity for cut and fill, extent of site clearing, difficult subsoil conditions, timing and phasing requirements, Town ownership of site, renovation vs. reuse,
- Location, whether centrally located to service areas, adequate access to site,

Minor

- Site history, favorability of past/existing use, presence of hazardous materials,
- Sustainability and environmental impacts including moderation of neighborhood effects,
- Zoning consistency and requirements,
- Potential traffic impacts,
- Access to utilities, and,
- Permitting and other risks.

Key Findings:

- The facilities at 133 and 135 Keyes Road are inadequate for efficient operations and do not meet current safety, security, or service standards.
- These sites fail to align with the Town objectives for sustainability, economic vitality, and fiscal responsibility.
- Growing service demands, particularly in West Concord. underscore the need for updated infrastructure.
- Comparative analysis with peer municipalities further highlights the need for modernization, increased functionality and improved interface with residents and businesses.
- Potential locations for future Public Works facilities were grouped into three categories based on their suitability:

Good Use	Possible Use	Not Suitable
MCI-Concord	133-135 Keyes Road	755 Walden Street
120 Meriam Road (Ripley)	2229 Main Street	Virginia Road
509 Bedford Street (Concord WWTF)	1231 Old Marlboro Road (Peabody)	

Next Steps:

- ***Co-ordinate findings*** of this report from this LUWG-PWS with reports from two other subcommittees- LUWG-Public Safety Subcommittee and LUWG-Municipal Consolidation Subcommittee.
- ***Initiate additional studies*** (service analysis, design and engineering for renovation/new build, location analysis, financial viability).
- ***Plan and engage in stakeholder and community engagement.***

2. Role of Public Works in Concord

Concord Public Works (CPW) is responsible for Engineering, Highway and Grounds, Solid Waste Disposal, Water and Sewer and Facilities Management Operations throughout Town. Concord's Public Works' facilities are concentrated at 133 and 135 Keyes Road. There are also operations at the 755 Walden Street compost and landfill site and the 509 Bedford Street wastewater treatment plant, plus smaller buildings for specific functions. The Concord Municipal Light Plant (CMLP) operates separately from Concord Public Works.

The *Engineering Division* of CPW is chiefly accountable for the planning, engineering, design, and construction of municipal infrastructure, encompassing roads, curbing, sidewalks, and drainage systems.

Highway and Grounds is responsible for the comprehensive maintenance of all public ways, encompassing streets, sidewalks, stormwater drainage systems, guardrails, signage, snow removal operations, and the upkeep of Public Works buildings, vehicles, and equipment. This division manages and maintains over ninety (90) vehicles to service approximately 107 miles of public streets, fifty-eight (58) miles of sidewalks, and eighty-two (82) acres of parks and grounds. Additional duties include managing public playgrounds, athletic fields, shade trees, cemeteries (Old Burying Ground, South Burying Grounds, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery), conservation lands, and recreation infrastructure (Gerow Park, White Pond, and Warner's Pond).

Solid Waste Disposal is responsible for the collection and recycling of solid waste, managing initiatives such as Drop-off/Swap Off days, compost site operations, and BigBelly Trash Compactors.

Concord introduced its water system in 1872, followed by the sewer system in 1900. The water system comprises six (6) groundwater supply wells, one surface water source, pumping stations, and two storage reservoirs with a total capacity of 7.5 million gallons. Approximately 121 miles of water mains serve about 95% of Concord residents, along with a small number in Carlisle and Acton. The sewer system includes a central treatment plant with a capacity of 1.2 million gallons per day, two pumping stations, six lift stations, and about 33 miles of collection lines. The sewer system currently serves 1,692 customers, approximately 35% of the Town.

Facilities Management is responsible for maintaining, repairing, and making ongoing improvements to all municipal buildings in the Town, except for those owned by Concord Public Schools and the regional Concord Carlisle High School.

3. Study Scope, Methodology and Outline

- **Study Scope:**

This report is a part of a community effort established by the Select Board to examine parcels of new land that have become recently available for municipal or other desired uses in Concord. To this end the Select Board created the Land Use Working Group (LUWG) to strategically evaluate current and potentially available land, including the significant opportunities presented by MCI Concord, 2229 Main Street, and the Peabody School site alongside existing town-owned land. A team of Concord residents was asked to evaluate the Town's future needs, focusing on issues like insufficient Public Works and Public Safety buildings and possible administrative consolidation, considering Concord's larger objectives for commercial growth, varied housing options, and recreation or open space.

The LUWG partitioned this task into two phases:

- Phase I addresses the Town's most urgent needs: Public Safety and Public Works facilities in failure mode which require relocation. As identified in the 2020 Concord Municipal Facilities Assessment, renovations and/or expansion of these facilities are not an option. Consolidation of administrative space was also considered.
- Phase II will address commercial development, housing, and recreation/open space options.

The LUWG determined three analysis streams and created three subcommittees to address the Phase I task: a Public Safety Subcommittee (PSS), a Public Works Subcommittee (PWS) and a Municipal Consolidation Subcommittee (MCS). This report represents the work of the Public Works Subcommittee.

- **Methodology:**

This evaluation began with a review of documents, of which the 2018 Envision Concord: Bridge to 2030, the 2020 Concord Municipal Facilities Assessment, the 2024 Analysis and Recommendations for Possible Acquisition of the 2229 Main Street Site Property, and the 2025 MCI Concord Vision Plan were most relevant to this phase of analysis. The 2016 Junction Village Open Space Planning Study, the September 25, 2019, Request for Designer Services Concord Middle School Project, the March 22, 2024, Town of Concord Facilities Condition Assessment: Concord Integrated Preschool & Ripley Administration were also consulted.

Assessing the Public Works building conditions, operational suitability, and adaptability to projected needs was accomplished on this preliminary basis via:

- Site visits - facility walkthroughs and condition assessments
- Review of historical and current building data
- Staff and expert input – with support from Alan Cathcart, Director of Public Works and Russ Karlstad, Facilities Manager and their associates
- Comparative benchmarking with similar Massachusetts communities, with site visits to Public Works Departments in Arlington, Belmont, and Lexington, and
- Public meetings of the Land Use Working Group (LUWG) (14 meetings including site visits) and LUWG Public Works Subcommittee (12 meetings), including opportunities for public comment at each meeting.

Outline: The outline of this report includes the following Sections:

- **Section 1** Executive Summary
- **Section 2** Role of Public Works in Concord
- **Section 3** Study, Scope, Methodology and Outline
- **Section 4** Existing Conditions Assessment
- **Section 5** Risk Analysis
- **Section 6** Options Analysis
- **Section 7** Evaluation Criteria
- **Section 8** Appendices
 - Public Works Maps
 - 133-135 Keyes Road (Site Map: 133-135-141 Keyes Road (Parcel 1682))
 - MCI-Concord (Site Map: 965 Elm Street (Parcel 2013))
 - Concord WWTF 509 Bedford Street and nearby municipal property (Site Map: 509 Bedford Street (Parcel 1198))
 - Ripley School (Site Map: 120 Meriam Road (Parcel 4187))
 - Peabody School (Site Map: 1231 Old Marlboro Road and 78 Old Pickard Road (Parcels 2999 and 3000))
 - 2229 Main Street (Site map: 2229 Main Street (Parcel 2970-1))
 - 755 Walden Street (Site map: 755 Walden Street (Parcel 4039))
 - Virginia Road (Site Map: 48X, 50A, 52X, 477, 490, 521, 530, 555, 561 and 575 Virginia Road (Parcels 4287-2, 4287-1-2, 4288-2, 4287-1, 4261-1, 4288-1, 4257-1, 4288-5, 4288-3 and 4288-4))

4. Existing Conditions Assessment

133-135 Keyes Road Public Works Campus: The source of many of these comments is the 2020 report, “The Concord Municipal Facilities Assessment and Masterplan” (CMFAM) by TBA Architects which provides condition reports and recommendations regarding Concord’s municipal buildings, including 133 and 135 Keyes Road. Excerpts from this document are in this report’s Appendix.

Geography: 133 and 135 Keyes Road, primary locations for Concord Public Works (CPW), are located along with 141 Keyes Road on a 9.7-acre lot (Parcel 1682). CPW occupies an estimated five (5) acres of property and the Town’s Community Development, Health, Building and Natural Resources Departments are on the remainder of the land. This central location has been optimal for the Town as it provides quick access to centers of commerce, tourism and historic preservation in Concord Center and West Concord, and is also near to many residential properties.

Nevertheless, the site is complex with environmental constraints on three sides. Keyes Road intersects Lowell Road to the east, the Concord River borders the west, properties to the north including Town conservation land are separated from the Keyes Road property by wetlands buffer zones, and similar wetlands buffer zones are on the south which separate the site from private commercial properties.

Facilities: CPW facilities at 133 and 135 Keyes Road include:

- Administrative offices for Engineering, Highway and Grounds, Solid Waste, Water and Sewer and Facilities,
- Fleet, materials and salt storage,
- Fuel depot,
- Shops for vehicle repair, welding, sign making, painting,
- Vehicle washing station,
- Sewer pumping station,
- Cardboard recycling bins.

Description: 133 Keyes Road is a two-story, brick-veneer colonial-style structure constructed on finished concrete block during the mid-twentieth century. The facility currently accommodates Engineering, Cemetery Operations, and Solid Waste Disposal programs. Administrative areas comprise approximately 2,800 square feet and include a public reception area, offices on both floors, a break room, a conference room, and staff restrooms. An additional 14,000 square feet is allocated to the garage, featuring twenty-one vehicle bays

utilized for maintenance, equipment storage, and tool housing. The garage bays are two stories in height and provide a break room, locker rooms, four offices designated for field supervisors, and seven storage rooms.

135 Keyes Road, built in the same period, is a single-story building with slab-on-grade construction and eight-inch concrete block walls. Approximately 6,000 sq ft of the building is administrative and 5,000 sq ft is fleet operations. The front office area features interior gypsum board finishes, while the garage area consists of unfinished concrete block. Neither section is well insulated. The roofing system includes metal trusses, a corrugated roof deck, rigid insulation, and a built-up gravel surface. This building houses the Highways & Grounds and Water & Sewer divisions. Administrative offices are the eastern portion, while the western half functions as a garage with three vehicle bays.

Key Issues:

- ***Aging infrastructure***, particularly the salt storage facility, leads to frequent maintenance costs and poses risks to people and property.
- ***Inadequate, unsecured and poorly configured fleet storage*** reduces vehicle lifespans, increases repair frequency and delays service response. Poor separation of work areas and challenges to air quality management result in failure to meet industry standards.
- ***Insufficient and unsecured materials storage*** results in inefficient inventory management, permits inventory and personal property shrinkage, reduces efficiency in procurement practices, and increases costs and risk of shortages, especially for winter road treatment supplies.
- ***Limited parking and circulation space*** creates safety hazards due to cross-traffic among public works vehicles, employee parking, and pedestrians. It also leads to lost productivity from additional time devoted to moving multiple vehicles to position them for daily work activities.
- ***The absence of a secure campus*** raises concerns for the safety of visitors, employees, and property.
- ***Public-facing structures lack clear signage and wayfinding*** making navigation difficult for residents.
- ***Limitations in administrative workspace*** including collaboration areas, conference rooms, document management, and common building amenities negatively impact employee productivity and the building's value for public use.
- ***The site's proximity to wetlands presents environmental risks.***
- Additionally, Concord misses opportunities to provide expanded in-house functions and community spaces that peer towns offer through their public works facilities.

Current Zoning: Zone B

Cost estimates of replacement: The July 2020 Concord Municipal Facilities Assessment and Masterplan projected the replacement of 133-135 Keyes Road DPW facilities at \$46,164,000 in 2019 dollars (\$38,279,000 for construction). Adjusting for 37.5% inflation raises the current estimate to \$63,475,500 (\$52,633,625 construction), not including land acquisition costs.

Document	Date	Replacement Cost (2019 dollars)	Construction Cost (2019 dollars)	Inflation Adjustment (%)	Replacement Cost (Adjusted)	Construction Cost (Adjusted)	Land Acquisition Included
Concord Municipal Facilities Assessment and Masterplan	July 2020	\$46,164,000	\$38,279,000	37.5%	\$63,475,500	\$52,633,625	No

5. Risk Analysis

The LUWG-PWS examined areas of risk in the development of a new Public Works facility location. These included: costs of construction, schedule/phasing logistics, renovation/reuse vs. new build tradeoffs, and mitigation of neighborhood effects especially near residential neighborhoods.

Cost Analysis of New Construction and Renovation

Materials and labor costs for construction, including those for commercial buildings such as Public Works buildings, began to escalate in the Covid-construction era starting in 2021 and 2022. Construction cost increases were at their highest levels since the 1980s. By 2025, both CPI and Construction inflation have moderated. Estimates for the range of cost increases for construction in 2025 is between 4.0% to 6.6% based on sector and region. Between 2019 and 2025, standard inflation rose 25% whereas construction costs surged by 32% to 44%.

Annual Change: CPI vs. Construction Costs (2020-2025)

Year	Annual CPI Change	Construction Cost Inflation (nonresidential)
2020	1.4%	2.5%
2021	7.0%	8.0%
2022	6.5%	12.8%
2023	3.4%	5.6%
2024	2.9%	3.2%
2025	2.7%	4.0%-6.6% est.

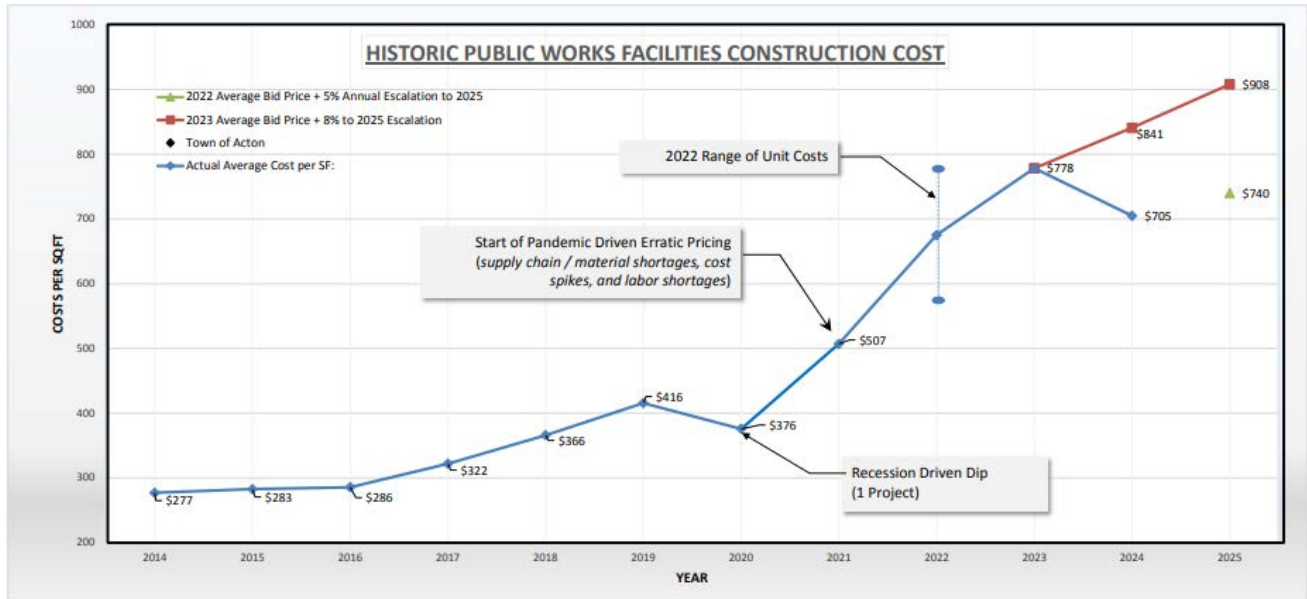
Source: BLS Consumer Price Index and FRED Producer Price Index for Construction

Independent of inflation, higher costs may result from unforeseen site conditions such as subsurface issues, labor or supply delays, tariff changes, and environmental regulation compliance.

Comparative Analysis: Based on comparative analysis the cost of new construction of a public works facility, including soft costs, is in the \$650-800 / sq ft range. These figures may differ across cities and towns. Costs do not include land acquisition.

Comparison Costs, dates and sizes of Public Works Facilities in Massachusetts

Town Public Works Facility	Bid Date	Low Bid Price	Average Bid Price	Size (SF)	Average \$/SQF
Acton	2025	\$37,946,168	\$37,946,168	46,884	\$809
Andover Municipal Services Facility	2017	\$16,049,000	\$18,413,675	54,088	\$340
Arlington	2021	\$37,350,000	\$37,350,000	75,050	\$498
Billerica	2024	\$38,104,000	\$41,455,000	67,298	\$616
Bourne	2014	\$10,441,002	\$11,063,598	39,040	\$283
Boxford	2025	\$18,990,000	\$18,990,000	22,392	\$848
Boylston Highway Facility	2015	\$3,364,000	\$3,935,419	13,926	\$283
Burlington	2019	\$23,925,000	\$26,074,333	66,200	\$394
Duxbury	2024	\$22,677,000	\$23,381,200	32,600	\$717
Easton Public Safety and Public Works	2025	\$150,535,620		139,580 71,071 PW & salt shed	\$1,078
Grafton	2018	\$11,713,205	\$12,399,201	33,710	\$368
Holden	2020	\$14,519,200	\$15,780,624	42,000	\$376
Holliston	2026	\$52,550,000 est	\$56,120,000 est	45,150	\$1,203
Hopkinton	2016	\$11,532,000	\$12,112,833	42,410	\$286
Hudson	2024	\$23,900,000	\$23,900,000	35,000	\$683
Lexington	2007	\$27,500,000	\$27,500,000	87,057	\$315
Longmeadow	2018	\$12,707,000	\$14,773,364	44,858	\$329
Marshfield	2021	\$11,070,841	\$11,517,899	27,800	\$414
Maynard	2026 est	\$65,000,000	\$77,800,000	45,000	\$1,586
Medford	2014	\$12,186,000	\$12,340,333	45,000	\$274
Middleboro	2019	\$13,673,300	\$14,355,199	34,000	\$422
Montague	2020	\$9,860,000	\$9,860,000	25,000	\$394
Norwood	2014	\$14,902,289	\$15,437,343	53,870	\$287
Orleans	2017	\$11,774,000	\$12,833,834	42,278	\$304
Pembroke	2022	\$9,969,876	\$9,969,876	28,540	\$349
Provincetown	2024	\$40,700,000	\$40,700,000	61,815	\$658
Revere	2024	\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000	40,000	\$500
Rockport	2021	\$12,550,000	\$13,799,954	22,658	\$609
Rockport-rebid	2022	\$17,540,800	\$17,540,800	22,658	\$774
Seekonk (rejected)	2024	\$40,000,000	\$40,700,000	61,815	\$658
Tewksbury DPW and School Maintenance Facility	2023	\$28,527,000	\$32,623,458	41,907	\$778
Wayland	2014	\$8,877,000	\$10,519,754	39,867	\$264
Whitman	2023	\$21,000,000		27,000	\$777
Yarmouth	2019	\$14,633,435	\$16,367,227	37,990	\$431



Source: Acton, MA

Schedule/phasing

Logistical challenges of constructing Public Works facilities can add costs and time to a project. This could result from complex site conditions like addressing ledge, slope stabilization, disposal of underground materials, or existing wetlands. Other phasing challenges can arise when temporary facilities like offices, restrooms, or parking are needed to relieve site constraints during construction. When phasing is used, say to spread costs over multiple years, safety and access can require costs to maintain clear separation between construction zones and operation areas, with temporary access routes required.

Renovation/reuse vs. new build tradeoffs

The decision between new construction and renovation involves significant trade-offs regarding budget, timeline, customization, and risk.

New Construction Trade-offs		Renovation Trade-offs	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Total customization of layout and finishes	Generally higher upfront costs (land, materials, labor)	Often lower, more flexible costs	Limited by existing structural layouts
Modern energy-efficient systems	Longer, unpredictable construction timelines	Potential to preserve historic value	Potential for "scope creep"
No immediate maintenance or repair needs		Renovating is generally more sustainable, as it reduces waste and reuses existing infrastructure	Lower energy efficiency compared to new builds

Moderation of neighborhood effects on nearby properties, especially residential neighborhoods.

Moderating the impact of a public works facility on nearby neighborhoods involves a combination of strategic site planning, physical buffering, operational restrictions, and proactive community engagement. Key strategies include placing high-impact areas (docks, storage) away from residents, installing sound/visual barriers, and setting strict operational hours. These strategies are in accord with Concord's Planning Board site review requirements.

Site Planning and Design Mitigation

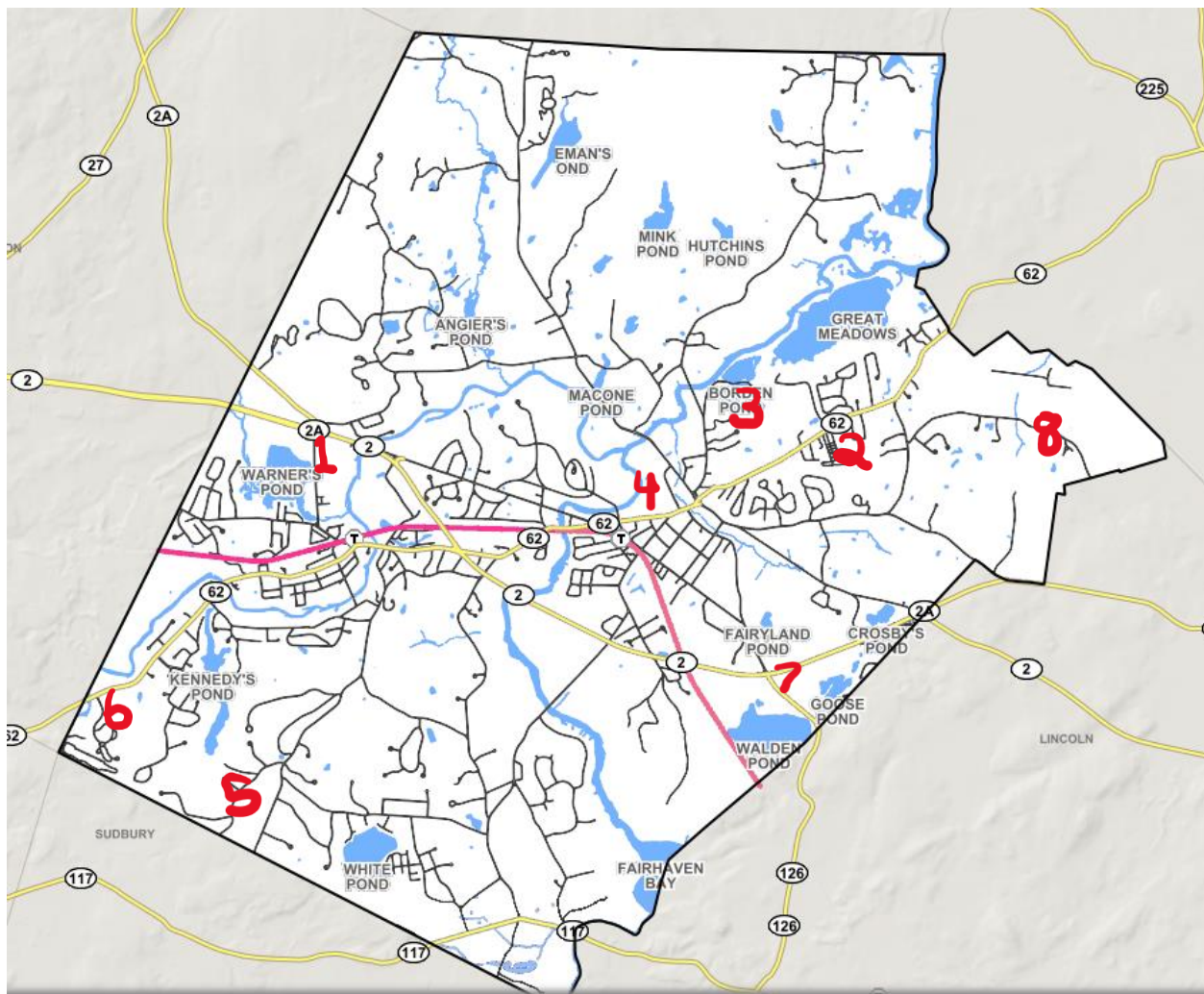
- **Buffer Zones:** Maintain at least 1,000 feet between the facility and the nearest home to reduce noise and traffic impacts.
- **Operational Orientation:** Position warehouse dock doors, truck idling areas, and entry/exit points away from sensitive receptors (homes, schools).
- **Visual Screening:** Utilize vegetation, landscaped berms, or decorative fencing to hide the facility from view.
- **Building Design:** Align the building's scale and height with neighboring structures to reduce its perceived size.
- **Lighting Control:** Direct lights downward, use shielded fixtures, and install timers to minimize light pollution.

Operational Controls

- **Noise Mitigation:** Erect precast concrete sound barriers or acoustic fencing to block sound waves.
- **Traffic Management:** Designate specific, non-residential routes for heavy trucks, and prohibit idling in residential areas.
- **Air Quality Measures:** Use water trucks or misting systems to control dust during construction and operation.
- **Operating Hours:** Restrict loud operations, such as material loading or truck maintenance, to daytime hours.

6. Options Analysis

- **Option 1:** MCI-Concord/Junction Village renovation
- **Option 2:** Ripley School new build
- **Option 3:** Expansion of 509 Bedford Street
- **Option 4:** New Build and/or renovation of 133-135 Keyes Road, with potential expansion to 141 Keyes Road or private properties
- **Option 5:** Peabody School renovation/new build
- **Option 6:** 2229 Main Street new build
- **Option 7:** 755 Walden Street new build
- **Option 8:** Virginia Road renovation/new build



Option 1: MCI-Concord/Junction Village

Site: The Massachusetts Correctional Institution-Concord (MCI Concord), located at 965 Elm Street (Parcel 2013), is bordered by Route 2 to the north, Commonwealth Avenue to the west, the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and Junction Village property (owned by the Concord Housing Development Corporation, or CHDC) to the south, and the Assabet River to the east. The MCI-Concord site spans fifty-one (51) acres, with 44.5 acres suitable for development—excluding areas within the FEMA floodway and the 100-year floodplain. As befits a prison, the land is flat and unwooded, with significant prior use.

The MCI-Concord Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) and nearby abandoned sand filter beds are on the eastern side of the property, are outside the prison’s secure perimeter. The Town is currently exploring acquiring the WWTF and filter beds for municipal use in partnership with the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM)—the agency overseeing the disposition of former prison land—and the CHDC, which owns Junction Village.

Junction Village (Parcel ID 2013-1), in West Concord, covers 12.8 acres, with 7.9 acres suitable for development. The Department of Corrections used the land for sewage disposal and aggregate storage; it has since been considered for housing and open space. It sits adjacent to the Assabet River and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, with proximity to the West Concord Business District and the MBTA Fitchburg Commuter Rail Station. Winthrop Street, lined with residential and light industrial properties, provides access. The land is flat and wooded, especially that portion near West Concord Center and the Assabet River.

According to the Vision Plan Report for MCI, Building L (40,800 sq ft) and Buildings F and I (28,600 sq ft) are suitable for reuse. Public Works management has expressed interest in the Storehouse Building near the wastewater facility for storage or administrative purposes.

Zoning: Both MCI-Concord and Junction Village are zoned Industrial Park A.

Key issues:

Space requirements: The MCI-Concord site offers enough space for Public Works Division needs. CPW is considering expanding its operations from five (5) acres at Keyes Road to 7.8 acres at MCI-Concord. Using this portion for municipal purposes may result in higher residential density, less mixed use, and reduced open space and amenities, as noted in the Vision Plan Report for MCI-Concord.

Development expenses: MCI-Concord is owned by the State, not the Town, and Concord's costs for land and buildings as a public works site are unclear. Ballpark renovation costs for the main buildings could be \$350–450 per square foot (\$28–36 million total), plus \$1–3 million for a new salt barn. Repurposing a portion of the prison wall to provide a buffer zone for the WWTF may allow removal costs to be moderated. Estimates exclude upgrades at the WWTF. Because portions of these buildings fall within the WWTF “buffer zone,” property costs should be moderate due to low development interest.

Location: The MCI-Concord site in West Concord sits next to Route 2. Though less central than 133-135 Keyes Road or 509 Bedford Street, it is about as far from Concord's center as Ripley School.

Site History: The Vision Plan for MCI discusses significant underground infrastructure at the site, including unused steam tunnels. If these tunnels are large enough to impact future development, they might need to be filled, sealed, or removed.

Regulatory Constraints: The MCI-Concord and Junction Village sites must comply with local, state, and federal regulations because of their location near riverfronts, wetlands, floodplains, and the Assabet River (a Federal Wild and Scenic River). Both properties are subject to a 100-foot Wetland Buffer, a 200-foot Riverfront Buffer, and a 25-foot No Build Zone. Permits and Town Natural Resource Commission review are required before any construction or changes.

Traffic, Utilities and Permitting: Creating a Public Works department at MCI-Concord would shift traffic onto Route 2 from Concord Center. This assumes Route 2 is used for access and egress rather than Commonwealth Avenue, and that Winthrop Street is reserved for emergency use only. Development should not require re-zoning and utility upgrades are underway for the MCI-Concord site.

Option 2: Ripley School (120 Meriam Road)

Site: Ripley School, at 120 Meriam Road (Parcel 4187), is bordered by homes (east/north), farms (south/west), and wetlands/conservation land (northwest/west). Access is via Meriam Road to Old Bedford Road. The 17.76-acre site includes parking, three soccer fields, a baseball field, and a 42,331 sq ft building (15,543 from the original 1957 building and 26,788 from the 1968 addition) excluding walkways. The building houses Concord's Schools administration, a preschool, a gymnasium for Town use, and a K-8 STEAM lab.

Nearby municipal parcels include 4209, 4185-2, and 4185-3. Parcel 4209 (33X Old Bedford Road), north of the Ripley building site, covers 11.83 acres used for farming and community gardens; it is zoned Residential B, has a high-water table, and limited access. Parcel 4185-2 (11A Old Bedford Road), south of Ripley, spans 12.72 acres, was bought with School land proceeds for future educational use, is in the Residential A zone, and is currently farmed despite high groundwater. Parcel 4185-3 (155 Old Bedford Road) lies south and east of Ripley and is the 4.47-acre, privately owned Heritage Pool & Racquet Club, also in Residential A zoning.

Zoning: Residential A.

Key issues:

Space requirements: with nearly 18 acres on the Ripley campus and other nearby municipal land in agricultural use, the Ripley are provides options with a size and shape that would be sufficient to relocate the CPW Department.

Development Expenses: The Ripley building, constructed in 1957, ceased to function as a school in 1981 and was subsequently repurposed for municipal and educational activities. Its physical condition is now approaching or has reached the end of its serviceable life. According to the 2024 Facilities Condition Assessment, "Ripley remains in serviceable condition overall; however, the preschool section (constructed in 1957) has exceeded its service life and requires extensive renovation or complete replacement. The Administration area is considered to be in fair condition, benefiting from recently updated conference rooms and the STEAM Lab. The unenclosed covered walkways connecting the preschool pods leave students and staff exposed to the elements while moving between spaces." Interior architectural components and finishes are generally in serviceable condition, though those in the original 1957 section are particularly poor, the 1968 section is rated as fair, and the recently renovated STEAM Lab is noted to be in good condition. Complete demolition and new construction would be necessary

for conversion to a Public Works facility, which may require phased implementation as current functions at Ripley are relocated to alternative sites in Concord.

Location: Ripley School sits mid-range in Concord, near the town's eastern edge and close to Main Street (Route 62), though less central than 133-135 Keyes Road, 509 Bedford Street, or MCI-Concord. Currently landlocked on Miriam Road, it may require an additional exit via Dalton Road or Ridgeway/Ash Streets for improved access.

Site History: There are no known hazardous materials on the site.

Environmental and other impacts: Part of the Ripley site includes wetlands, which don't significantly affect space or construction requirements but may limit options for additional access. Increased traffic on Meriam Road could impact nearby homes. Using agricultural land across Old Bedford Road would reduce traffic issues but may requires utility connections and rezoning from Residence A.

Option 3: 509 Bedford Street

Site: 509 Bedford Street (Parcel 1198) encompasses 8.97 acres and serves as the location of the Concord Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). Bedford Street provides a southern boundary, while additional municipal properties are situated along its eastern, northern, and western limits. Municipal land on the opposite side of Bedford Street to the WWTF is in agricultural use.

Adjacent lots—including 405 Bedford Street (Parcel 1195), 50X Bedford Street (Parcel 1196), 49X Bedford Street (Parcel 1197), 40E Bedford Street (Parcel 1199), 40W Bedford Street (Parcel 1200), 40R Bedford Street (Parcel 1201), and 361 Bedford Street (Parcel 1213)—may be suitable for development as a Public Works facility. Wetlands exist, particularly at 40E Bedford Road; a cell tower is present at 40S Bedford Road; and remnants of sand beds located at 50X Bedford Road may provide future wastewater filtration capacity, subject to permitting.

Currently, the Town is leasing the parcels at 40R and 40W Bedford Street for short-term agricultural use. Both offer potential for location of a Public Works facility.

Zoning: Parcels near the Concord WWTF are zoned B-residential.

Key issues:

Space requirements: Both 40R and 40W Bedford Street, with 11.30 and 9.10 acres available, respectively could provide sufficient land area for new administrative offices and operations of Public Works.

Development expenses: At any of the locations on Bedford Street a Public Works facility would require a new building with costs in the range of \$60 million. We have not found issues with site clearance, cut and fill, timing and phasing or difficult subsoil conditions from our review to date.

Location: 509 Bedford Street offers a reasonable central location for service requirements, modest neighborhoods impact, and access to the site from Bedford Street.

Site History: There is no known history of hazardous materials or concerns with past or existing uses.

Environmental Impacts: Concord Public Works prefers to preserve the abandoned sand pits on Bedford Street's northwest side, though there are no current reuse plans. The agricultural use

of Bedford Street lots 40W and 40R and the recent introduction of endangered species to the southern portion of the site should be reviewed for environmental concerns and potential mitigation.

Traffic and Utilities: Traffic, including large vehicles, could increase on Bedford Street, which is primarily residential on one side and wetlands/recreation on the other. Utilities may be required if the location on the south side of Bedford Street currently in agricultural use was selected as a site for PW facilities.

Option 4: 133 and 135 Keyes Road

Key Issues: The 2020 Concord Municipal Facilities Assessment does not support upgrading the 133-135 Keyes Road Public Works campus because the buildings cannot adequately serve their function.

The subcommittee evaluated several options for expansion:

- Incorporating 141 Keyes Road into the Public Works site would entail significant expenses to bring all existing structures into compliance with applicable codes.
- While this expansion would result in an approximate 50% increase in available land, a portion of the area would be required to upgrade current structures to code standards.
- Any renovation or new construction at this location would necessitate phased work, leading to additional costs associated with relocating operations, establishing temporary facilities, and holding expenditures. These are estimated to account for 20–30% of the total construction and logistics budget.
- Renovation or new construction costs will include demolition and site remediation, which should consider the property’s large cistern.
- Ongoing environmental and sustainability risks are present at the 133-135-141 Keyes Road site based on its surround by wetlands. Re-building Public Works facilities meant to address the community’s vulnerabilities at such as location presents cognitive challenges.
- The adjacent properties reviewed for expansion were 129 Lowell Road (Parcel 1681) and 147 Lowell Road (Parcel 1680), collectively known as Concord Oil. Parcel 1681 consists of 1.29 acres, with roughly 0.30 acres outside the 100-foot wetlands buffer zone, while Parcel 1680 is 1.36 acres with a comparable amount of buildable land. The acquisition costs may not justify the limited gain in usable space.

Option 5: Peabody Middle School

Site: The former Peabody Middle School, located at 1231 Old Marlboro Road (Parcel 2999) and 78 Old Pickard Road (Parcel 3000), comprises approximately 56,500 square feet of building space and spans eighteen (18) acres used for educational and recreational purposes. Constructed in 1967 as an open-plan elementary school, the facility was later repurposed to serve middle school students. The main campus covers eight acres on Old Marlboro Road, while the contiguous 10-acre parcel on Old Pickard Road is dedicated to recreational functions, including sports fields. Additionally, a two-acre off-site septic system parcel situated at 68B Powder Mill Road (Parcel 2991-7) serves the property. This location addressed bedrock constraints but the septic system which is over fifty (50) years old may not comply with Title V regulations.

Peabody School is bordered by Old Marlboro Road on the west, a private home at 1201 Old Marlboro Road to the north, and Old Pickard Road on the east. Its southern edge abuts residences located along Old Marlboro Road or Old Pickard Road. Directly to the south, there is also a land-locked parcel at 23Y Old Pickard Road that features extensive wetlands.

The property surrounding the building consists of rocky, uneven terrain. The site is densely wooded and slopes gradually upward from Old Marlboro Road on the west side, featuring a crescent drive with two vehicle entrances. A continuous drive extends from the crescent to a circular turnaround and drop-off area at the main entrance. The building has a “plus sign” or Greek cross shape, with the entrance located where the west and south wings meet. The land continues to rise toward the east, creating only a crawl space beneath the east wing. The car park is situated south of the circular drop-off drive. Between the west and north wings lies a paved basketball and recess area, while a truck dock is positioned between the north and east wings. The flat membrane roofs were replaced twenty years ago.

Zoning: Residential AA

Key issues:

Space requirements: Sufficient space may be available on either of the parcels that constitute the former Peabody School; however, the exact amount necessary remains uncertain due to the uneven and sloped terrain present on the Old Marlboro lot. In contrast, the Old Pickard lot—currently functioning as playing fields—offers more open areas, as well as unobstructed access and egress not impeded by significant slopes.

Development expenses: September 25, 2019, Request for Designer Services found that the Peabody building's systems—including its roof, mechanical, and electrical equipment—were past their useful life, with only a few exceptions like boilers, hot water heaters, and circulation pumps in useful condition.

Location: The Peabody School is located to the southwest extremities of Concord and thus one of the least central locations under consideration by this assessment.

Site History: The Request for Designer Services from 2019 noted corrosion in heating lines and lead solder in joints and buildings, though at the time there was no detectable water contamination. Asbestos was present in floor tiles, insulation, coatings, and caulking. Certain fluorescent tubes, thermostats, signs, and switches may contain PCBs or mercury.

Environmental Impacts: There are few abutters to the Peabody Middle School, though the general neighborhood is residential.

Zoning, Permitting and Regulatory Constraints: There are few zoning, permitting and regulatory constraints from our research to date.

Traffic and Utilities: Given the distance from large portions of Concord from the former Peabody School, traffic and travel distances need to be considered. Utilities should be adequate at this location.

Option 6: 2229 Main Street

Site: 2229 Main Street (Parcel 2970-1) is a 46.4-acre property in western Concord, bordered by Main Street to the north and residential areas with conservation land to the east and northeast. To the west is the 5.23-acre Minuteman ARC facility, serving individuals with disabilities. South of the site us parcels include the Thoreau Club, town-owned conservation lands, and several mostly landlocked lots with possible access via Forest Ridge or Border Road.

Zoning: Industrial

Key issues:

Space requirements: The acreage at 2229 Main Street is 46.3 acres of which approximately 23.7 acres are developable as shown on the map below from the Analysis and Recommendations for Possible Acquisition of the 2229 Main Street Site Property report.



This space would be more than adequate for PW facilities. The municipal uses cited in the report that would be suitable include (but not limited to):

Passive recreation and trails	Town offices
Recreation fields	DPW facilities
Solar energy production	Transit node
Battery storage	

Development expenses: The timing and likelihood of Concord acquiring 2229 Main Street remain uncertain. The 2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force's report, Analysis and Recommendations for Possible Acquisition of the 2229 Main Street Site Property, recommends the Select Board pursue acquisition, contingent on satisfactory legal, financial, and other conditions clarified through further negotiations with federal, state, and possibly private parties. Although development is estimated to begin around 2029/2030, the Task Force suggests initiating reuse planning alongside ongoing legal discussions. Expenses could be greater for development of a former superfund site than for other municipal properties, though our subcommittee has no expertise in this area.

Location: With a location in Concord essentially bordering neighboring towns of Acton and Maynard, 2229 Main Street is one of the furthest of the potential locations from the Concord town centers reviewed in this analysis. As such, transportation of the PW fleet would require additional operator time, wear and tear on equipment and roadways, and risk potential systemic service delays.

Site History: 2229 Main Street is a Federal Superfund site, and though the intention is to bring this property to “residential standards” certain uses of and available locations on the property will be limited.

Environmental Impacts: There are limited current uses of the property that would suffer environmental impacts from the development of the 2229 Main Street site. However, there is a rare Sphagnum bog on the property to be conserved and would not be suitable for the Public Works Department.

Zoning, Permitting and Regulatory Constraints: Zoning for Industrial use would not likely need to change with municipal use as a Public Works Department.

Traffic and Utilities: Utilities may need to be upgraded with development of the site. Issues of greater traffic along the Main Street corridor in Concord should be considered, especially with the distance from other portions of Town.

Option 7: 755 Walden Street

Site: 755 Walden Street (Parcel 4039) is a former Concord municipal landfill located at the junction of Walden Street and Concord Turnpike (Route 2). The site is adjacent to several key properties: to the south and east-- Commonwealth of Massachusetts land (801 Walden Street (5.65 acres) and 85X Walden Street (19.94 acres), which provide parking for Walden Pond and include part of Goose Pond; to the west--additional Commonwealth property, and to the north-- the Walden Woods Project located at the southeast corner of Concord Turnpike and Walden Street.

The property covers 35.41 acres and is designated as Residential A. It currently accommodates composting activities, resident recycling services, storage for Public Works materials, snow removal operations, and staff training. The northern part of 755 Walden Street includes a 16-acre former landfill, which stopped receiving waste in 2000 and was capped in 2001. A municipal recycling facility was established on the west side of the site in 2003. The area also features a 5-acre solar array and a space reserved for a cell tower.

The site's proximity to major transportation routes and recreational areas presents both opportunities and challenges for future municipal use. Its history as a landfill and current roles in recycling and solar energy may impose environmental and regulatory constraints but also offer potential for sustainable development. The hilly terrain presents operational challenges for large vehicle access and movement.

Zoning: Residential A

Key issues:

Space requirements: 755 Walden Street is a large parcel with many demands upon it. It currently houses a large solar array, has a capped landfill area and provides the Town with a small area used for composting and other Public Works needs.

Development expenses: Site development could require significant grading and or cut and fill, with difficult subsoil conditions to manage structurally. Construction would be required as a new building, which would need to accommodate the challenging site requirements, including height restrictions likely from its proximity to Walden Pond.

Location: Though situated near Route 2, 755 Walden Street is near the border of Concord and the Town of Lincoln and equally distant from eastern, northern and western reaches of Concord.

Site History: The capped former landfill would need to be avoided in the location of a Public Works Department because of the high risk of penetration of the landfill cap and the high cost of stabilizing that cap.

Environmental Impacts: Opposition from Town historical/recreation/sustainability groups regarding proximity to Walden Pond/Walden Woods

Traffic and Utilities: Traffic, including large vehicles, would increase on Walden Street, which is primarily in recreation/tourism use associated with Walden Pond. It is unclear whether all utilities are available at this site.

Option 8: Virginia Road addresses: 48X, 50A, 52X, 477, 490, 521, 530, 555, 561 and 575 (Parcels 4287-2, 4287-1-2, 4288-2, 4287-1, 4261-1, 4288-1, 4257-1, 4288-5, 4288-3 and 4288-4)

Site: This area comprises approximately 44 acres of commercial development, including the Middlesex Green Office Park (530, 555, 561 and 575 Virginia Road), Concord Farms (490 Virginia Road), and several residences. Some properties are federal land. It is located about three miles from Route I-95/128 and is adjacent to Hanscom Field and Hanscom Air Force Base to the east. The terrain is gentle hills with elevations ranging from 150 to 230 feet.

Zoning: Residence A (4287-2), Industrial Park B (4287-1-2, 4288-2, 4287-1, 4261-1, 4288-1, 4257-1, 4288-5, 4288-3, 4288-4)

Key issues:

Space requirements: None of these properties offer sufficient space for a Public Works facility. Multiple properties would need to be combined, though some have common ownership. Several sites are landlocked or non-conforming and would require improved access to Virginia Road. Based on advertisements on listing sites like LoopNet, adequate administrative/office space would be available to serve the needs of the Public Works Department.

Development expenses: Buildings with access to public roads are privately owned and range in assessed value from \$1 to \$9 million. Most are used as office buildings and would only be useful for the administrative functions of Public Works. Building costs for garage and storage are significantly lower than for office buildings, but even assuming a \$200/sq ft cost, this would require an additional investment of \$15-20 million in addition to the purchase of multiple lots.

Address	Parcel	Assessed Value	Address	Parcel	Assessed Value
48X	4287-2	\$180,800	50A	4287-1-2	\$102,600
52X	4288-2	\$171,200	477	4287-1	\$1,122,100
490	4261-1	\$3,381,900	521	4288-1	\$8,223,700
530	4257-1	\$9,061,000	555	4288-5	\$5,754,400
561	4288-3	\$729,100	575	4288-4	\$8,036,800

Location: Location at the far end of Town where traffic can be cumbersome already

Site History: There is no information available regarding any history of hazardous materials at these sites.

Environmental Impacts: There are small areas of wetlands on the south and eastern portions of these properties.

Zoning, Permitting and Regulatory Constraints: As most of the locations are zoned for Industrial use, there are no clear issues for constraints.

Traffic and Utilities: As commercial buildings off Virginia Road, it is not likely that there would be a greater disturbance of traffic from use of these properties as a location for Public Works. In fact, with the proximity of Route 95/128 choice of this location might eliminate delivery traffic through other roadways across Concord. Utilities are currently serving these locations.

7. Evaluation Criteria

The LUWG-PWS used three different approaches to evaluate and score site options for the Public Works facility. The first approach was the use of a grading scale of Excellent, Average, Good, Fair or Poor. This resulted in 3 classifications of properties:

Good Use	Possible Use	Not Suitable
MCI-Concord	133-135 Keyes Road	755 Walden Street
120 Meriam Road (Ripley)	2229 Main Street	Virginia Road
509 Bedford Street (Concord WWTF)	1231 Old Marlboro Road (Peabody)	

A second approach used similar categories and scored properties on Low-Moderate or High grades.

	Cost	Access/ Location	Acreage	Neighborhood	Sustainability	Phasing
133-135 Keyes	Low- Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low	Low	High
MCI Concord	Unknown	High	High	High	High	Low
509 Bedford	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	Low
Ripley School	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	Low
Virginia Road	Moderate- High	Low	Moderate	High	High	Low
2229 Main	Moderate- High	Low	High	High	High	Low-Moderate
755 Walden	Moderate	High	High	High	Low	Low

A third approach used numeric scoring across properties and criteria, even though there was information lacking for all criteria for many of the properties.

Major

- Physical Features, including size and shape.
- Cost of Site Development, necessity for cut and fill, site clearing requirement, difficult subsoil conditions, timing and phasing, Town ownership of site, renovation vs. reuse.
- Location, centrally located to service areas, access to site.

Minor

- Site History, favorability of past/existing use, hazardous materials
- Sustainability and Environmental Impacts including moderation of neighborhood effects.
- Zoning consistency and requirements
- Potential Traffic impacts
- Access to Utilities
- Permitting and other risks

Scoring Criteria	Factors	MCI-Concord	Ripley School	509 Bedford Street	133-135 Keyes Road	Peabody School	2229 Main Street	755 Walden Street	Virginia Road	Weight
Physical Features/Size (20 points)	Size and Shape of Usable Site	20	20	20	5	10	20	5	0	20
	Appropriate for Full DPW=20, Seriously Restrictive =0									
Cost of Site Development (20 points)	Cut and Fill Necessary	14	6	20	6	14	10	6	0	20
	Site Clearing Required									
Location (20 points)	Difficult subsoil Conditions	16	12	20	20	4	0	10	0	20
	Timing and Phasing									
	No Impact=20, Significant Impact=0									
Site History (10 points)	Centrally Located to Service Area	5	10	10	5	5	0	0	10	10
	Adjacent Neighborhood									
	Access to site									
Environmental Impacts (10 points) (Soils, Wetlands)	Excellent location =20; poor location=0	6	6	0	0	8	10	0	10	10
	Presence of Environmental Receptors									
	Abutters/Wetland Impacts									
Zoning Consistency (6 points)	Riverfront/ Endangered Species	6	0	0	6	6	6	6	0	6
	No Impact=10, Significant Impact=0									
	Consistency with Allowed Zoning Use									
Potential Traffic Impacts (6 points)	Site Usability within Setbacks	6	5	5	6	3	6	3	6	6
	Site Usability Allowed Area Coverage									
Access to Utilities (4 points)	Not Restrictive=10, Restrictive=0	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4
	Residential Abutters, Heavily Traveled Road									
Permitting (4 points)	No impact=6, Significant Impact=0	4	4	2	4	2	2	4	2	4
	Availability of Nearby Utility Infrastructure: Electric, Sewer, Gas, Water, Telecom									
TOTAL	All Available=4, None Available=0	81	67	80	56	55	57	37	31	100
	Permit Requirements									
	No Specialty Permits=4									
	Variance and/or excess permitting required=0									

Independent of the approach used, the general ranking of candidate sites was similar.

Appendix C

Concord Land Use Working Group (LUWG)

DRAFT Subgroup Report: Public Safety Facilities

Subgroup Members: Judith Grant Long, Mark Martines, Sven Weber

Staff Liaisons: Kerry Lafleur, Town Manager
Tom Mulcahy, Police Chief
Brian Whitney, Fire Chief
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Walter Latta, Asst. Fire Chief
Steve Johnson, Emergency Communications Center Manager
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Date: February 16, 2026

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Executive Summary

The Public Safety Subgroup of the Land Use Working Group (LUWG) was tasked with evaluating Concord's major public safety facilities, specifically the Walden Street Public Safety Campus and the West Concord Fire Station, to determine their fitness for current operations and future municipal needs, and in the context of a set of opportunity parcels potentially available for redevelopment.

Key Findings

- *Existing facilities:* Both Walden Street and West Concord stations are aging, undersized, and increasingly unable to meet the complex requirements of modern public safety services. Significant deficiencies exist in accessibility, evidence processing, training space, secure storage, and staff wellness infrastructure.
- *Service needs:* Demographic shifts, especially growth in West Concord, are driving increased and diversified service demand. Emergency response requirements and regulatory standards highlight the need for flexible, adaptable spaces.
- *Peer benchmarking:* Comparison with peer municipalities demonstrates that modernization and investment are critical for efficiency and effectiveness. Concord's facilities lag behind regional examples in space, amenities, and operational design.
- *Feasibility and cost:* Cost assessments and benchmarking indicate that new construction, while expensive, delivers longer-term operational value, improved staff retention, and greater long-term savings than ongoing repair or limited renovations.

Recommendations

- *Upgrade public safety infrastructure:* Concord should prioritize significant upgrading of its public safety facilities to reliably meet present and future demands.
- *Respect priority order:* First priority should be placed on developing a new Fire Headquarters in West Concord. Second is upgrading or rebuilding the Police Headquarters, either at the current Walden Street location or potentially at a new site, including options for co-location with fire services. Third, the subgroup recommends enhancing or relocating the fire substation in Concord Center.
- *Advance specific options:* The subgroup recommends pursuing new builds at current sites where feasible, but also urges evaluation of alternate locations and integrated facilities to maximize flexibility, minimize service disruption, and ensure operational resilience.
- *Establish advisory committee:* A dedicated Public Safety Facilities Building Advisory Committee should be formed at the soonest opportunity to oversee feasibility studies, engage expert consultants, and guide the next phase of facility planning.

Risks & Considerations

- *Service disruption:* Upgrading or constructing new facilities will inevitably cause some disruption to police, fire, and EMS operations, requiring strategic planning and phased implementation.
- *Cost & uncertainties:* There are significant budget and schedule risks associated with unknown site conditions, evolving operational requirements, and market fluctuations.
- *Community Engagement:* Ongoing outreach to stakeholders, including town residents, businesses, staff, and elected officials, will be critical in refining options and ensuring transparency.

Next Steps

This report forms the basis for LUWG's Phase II deliberations and recommendations to Concord's Select Board. The subgroup urges prompt establishment of an advisory committee and recommends targeted feasibility studies to determine optimal locations and approaches for renovation or new construction of public safety facilities. Community engagement and expert input should guide all phases of project development.

1. Introduction

Charge of the Land Use Working Group

The Town of Concord established the Land Use Working Group (LUWG) in July 2025 to analyze how future municipal facility needs might be addressed using “opportunity parcels”: a set of larger-size properties under both town and private ownership expected to become available for potential repurposing or redevelopment.

The Select Board identified several opportunity parcels for LUWG’s review, including:

- *Town-owned sites available for redevelopment:* The former Peabody School and the former Ripley School, each offering substantial land area for potential redevelopment.
- *Town-owned sites potentially available for redevelopment if current public facilities uses are relocated:* In addition, some parcels such as Keyes Road and Harvey Wheeler could become available for redevelopment if existing public facility uses are relocated to other sites.
- *Non-town-owned sites:* Parcels such as MCI Concord and 2229 Main Street, which may be acquired in whole or part by the Town, should a strategic public use be identified.

The LUWG was directed to conduct its review over a one-year period, from July 2025 to June 2026. Accordingly, the LUWG divided its workplan into two phases, each of approximately six months in duration.

- *Phase I:* Three subgroups were created and tasked with reviewing three specific types of public facilities: i) public works, ii) public safety, and iii) municipal offices suitable for consolidation.
- *Phase II:* The full working group will make recommendations to the Select Board regarding the use of opportunity parcels as future sites for public facilities, as well as for other uses of strategic importance to the town, including housing, economic development, and recreation uses.

Work of the Public Safety Subgroup

The following report summarizes the Phase I work of the public safety subgroup. This subgroup included LUWG members Judith Grant Long, Mark Martines, and Sven Weber, working in conjunction with key public safety stakeholders, including Police Chief Mulcahy, Police Captain Goldman, Fire Chief Whitney, and other members of their teams, as well as the Town Manager and other relevant staff. This work spanned from September 2025 through January 2026.

Study Goals

The primary goal of the public safety subgroup was to evaluate whether Concord's current public safety facilities are capable of meeting the town's evolving needs, and, if not, to explore how "opportunity parcels" might be utilized to address these needs in the future.

Concord's public safety operations rely on the Walden Street Public Safety Campus and the West Concord Fire Station. These facilities are essential for emergency response, but they are older buildings increasingly in need of repair and upgrading. Further, these buildings have not kept pace with advances in public safety equipment, technology, community expectations, and demographic changes. In particular, increasing population from new developments, shifting geographic distribution toward West Concord, and changes in our demographic composition, are raising questions about the adequacy and adaptability our existing infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

Study Approach

To help answer Concord's questions about public safety facilities and the possible use of opportunity parcels, the subgroup took a practical and multi-faceted approach focused on a few core areas: current building condition, regulatory compliance, operational effectiveness, and how well our facilities might handle future demands.

- *Facility walkthroughs and condition assessments:* The subgroup toured the main public safety buildings alongside Town staff and public safety officials, taking stock of each building's structure, layout, accessibility, and everyday challenges, like space limitations and outdated features.
- *Staff and expert consultations:* We spoke with police, fire, public works, and facilities staff to understand day-to-day operations, regulatory requirements, and longer-term planning considerations. Both the Police and Fire Chiefs provided detailed feedback about the existing conditions of current buildings, and their future needs.
- *Comparative benchmarking:* We looked at what similar towns, including Lexington and Natick, have done with their public safety facilities, to learn from their experiences and modernization efforts.
- *Identifying options:* The subgroup identified a range of possible strategies, from keeping things as they are, to renovating or rebuilding, or shifting services to new locations or opportunity parcels. Each option was considered with operational needs and community impact in mind.
- *Selecting evaluation criteria:* We set criteria to help weigh different options, including operational efficiency, overall cost, community impact, risk of disruption, flexibility for future needs, and sustainability.
- *Pros and cons:* We considered the advantages and disadvantages of each plan, including trade-offs and uncertainties, to see how each would affect public safety services in Concord.

- *Recommendations and next steps:* Based on our work, we offer prioritized recommendations and outline possible next steps, knowing that many questions require additional analysis and community input.

Study Limitations

This report reflects the resources, expertise, and time available to the Public Safety Facilities Subgroup. While based on invaluable stakeholder input, informative site visits, and the careful review of available information, it does not constitute a formal consulting or technical study; rather, it offers a practical foundation for evaluating facility options going forward.

2. Public Safety Facilities in Concord

Concord's public safety facilities are essential to the Town's emergency preparedness and the delivery of police, fire, and EMS services. The two primary sites, the Public Safety Building on Walden Street and the West Concord Fire Station on Main Street, serve as the core infrastructure of Concord's emergency response network.

These facilities support critical functions such as emergency dispatch, incident response, evidence handling, administrative operations, training, overnight accommodations for staff, and community engagement. Each site is home to specialized personnel and infrastructure designed to meet the Town's public safety needs.

Walden Street Public Safety Campus (209, 219, and 203 Walden Street)

- Located in Concord Center, this facility was constructed in 1960 and covers approximately 20,400 square feet on a 1.6-acre site. It includes both the Fire Headquarters and Police Headquarters, sharing space and resources to support unified emergency operations.
- *Fire Headquarters (209 Walden Street):*
Occupying the northern half of the building, this fire section features four equipment bays, administrative offices, overnight quarters for firefighters, and dedicated areas for training and meals. The building is rated in fair to good condition, with further detail provided in the existing conditions discussion.
- *Police Headquarters (219 Walden Street):*
Occupying the southern half of the building, the police section contains administrative offices, booking and interrogation rooms, the emergency dispatch center, spaces for evidence storage and handling, and areas supporting specialized functions such as investigations. Condition is similarly rated fair, with more information in the existing conditions discussion.
- *Storage (203 Walden Street):*
Adjacent to the main sites, this building provides additional storage space for equipment and supplies.

West Concord Fire Station (1201 Main Street)

- Situated in West Concord, this historic station was built in 1932 and occupies just over 2,000 square feet on a 0.34-acre lot. It features three truck bays, which are undersized for modern fire apparatus, as well as administrative space and parking. The building is in poor condition, exacerbating operational challenges as service demands in West Concord increase.

Walden Street Public Safety Campus, Police Station, 219 Walden Street



Walden Street Public Safety Campus, Fire Station, 209 Walden Street



West Concord Fire Station, 1201 Main Street



3. Existing Conditions Assessment

Assessing the existing conditions of Concord's public safety facilities is critical for informed future planning, whether for renovation, repurposing opportunity parcels, or new construction. This evaluation examines location, site characteristics, and building conditions, emphasizing each facility's capacity to meet present and future needs. As peer communities are building public safety facilities with greater space and modern amenities, Concord must ensure its facilities keep pace to remain effective and sustainable.

Key Issues

Walden Street Campus

The Walden Street Public Safety Campus serves as Concord's primary hub for both police and fire services. While the combined headquarters maximizes operational cooperation, it faces several significant challenges. The facility's infrastructure is aging; many building systems and finishes are outdated and have recently suffered water leak damage, with mechanical and electrical systems nearing the end of their functional lives. Space constraints are a persistent issue, as the campus has outgrown its original design, leaving both departments limited in available square footage and hampering the ability to expand or adapt to increasing demands.

Safety and security concerns compound these difficulties: antiquated security systems, inadequate building access controls, and the absence of a secure perimeter all threaten staff wellbeing and operational continuity. Despite efforts to improve accessibility, the campus remains non-compliant with current ADA standards, further impacting both staff and public access.

For the police department specifically, these deficiencies translate to operational limitations: a lack of secure evidence handling spaces, inadequate facilities for interviews and meetings, unreliable dispatch operations, and the absence of dedicated areas for staff training hinder both effectiveness and morale. On the fire side, the apparatus bays and storage areas cannot accommodate modern vehicles and equipment, forcing personnel to use undersized, makeshift administrative, living, and fitness spaces. Critically, there are no dedicated decontamination facilities, putting staff and station hygiene at risk.

West Concord Fire Station

In contrast, the West Concord Fire Station on Main Street provides a smaller, satellite presence focused on fire and EMS response. The facility is fully at capacity, with undersized bays, storage, and living quarters severely limiting operational flexibility. The station's technology and physical plant are outdated, which restricts the department's ability to respond to evolving service demands. Expansion is effectively precluded by the limited site footprint.

1. Condition of Police HQ, Walden Street: Police Chief Input

- *Security deficiencies:* Evidence rooms, interview areas, and overall building access lack modern security. Surveillance is outdated and coverage is minimal. No secure perimeter or fenced vehicle/evidence storage areas.
- *Space and ergonomics:* Inadequate office space; supervisors and detectives work in cramped conditions without privacy. Minimal dedicated areas for confidential interviews, victims/families, or staff wellness.
- *Evidence processing & storage:* Firearms stored in old gym lockers; evidence rooms undersized and non-compliant, making safe, secure handling impossible.
- *Dispatch & emergency operations:* Dispatch is undersized and noisy, impacting reliability and efficiency. EOC is makeshift and lacks needed isolation and workspace during emergencies.
- *Training & community engagement:* No dedicated training or fitness areas; community outreach spaces are unavailable or not secure.
- *Parking & public access:* Only 32 spaces—mostly for staff and police vehicles. Public parking is reduced to two spots, hindering access.
- *ADA compliance:* Facility remains inaccessible for many, despite attempts at improvement.
- *Outdated infrastructure & technology:* HVAC is inefficient and unreliable. Security technology, servers, and recording systems are old, with frequent failures.
- *Layout inefficiencies:* Core spaces (squad, booking, roll call) are not adjacent; offices are scattered, resulting in poor workflow and staff frustration.

2. Condition of Fire HQ, Walden Street: Fire Chief Input

- *Apparatus bays & garage:* Doors are undersized (12' x 11' vs. USFA standard). Ladder truck fits only after significant modifications. Congested bays, with some vehicles parked externally.
- *Parking:* Exterior parking for command vehicles, trailers, staff; visitor parking is extremely limited. Shift changes lead to overflow on Walden Street.
- *Medical & equipment storage:* No climate-controlled, secure storage for advanced medical supplies. Gear is scattered in unsuitable areas: stairwells, crawl spaces, attics, hose tower, basements.
- *Administrative & office areas:* Makeshift offices (former bunks, storage), lack privacy, particularly problematic for HIPAA-related work. Staff dispersed across three floors; storage constantly repurposed for office use.
- *Living quarters:* Six-person capacity; no room for needed expansion.
- *Decontamination & hygiene facilities:* None exist; contamination risk to staff and facility.
- *Fitness/wellness area:* Converted police shooting range; limited space, poor environment for exercise.

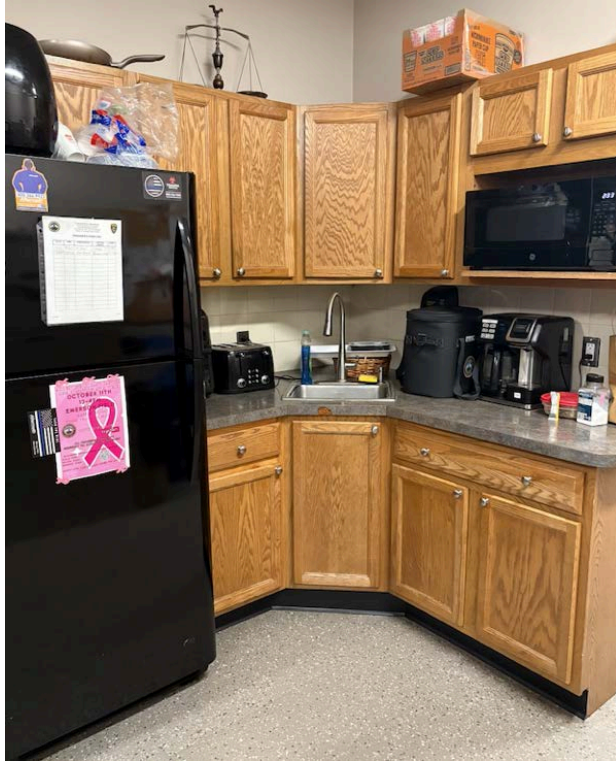
3. Condition of Fire HQ, Walden Street: Fire Chief Input

- *Apparatus bays & garage:* Even smaller doors (9’6” x 9’2”). Larger vehicles cannot fit; special ordering required for ambulances. Bays constricted and fully occupied; some vehicles outside.
- *Parking:* Limited and requires constant shuffling; impacts shift change and visitor/training access.
- *Medical & equipment storage:* No secure medical storage; repurposed closet barely fits basic supplies. Fire equipment storage insufficient and scattered.
- *Administrative & office areas:* Only two desks in multipurpose room; lacks privacy and professional setting. Lieutenant’s office is part of bunk room, highly inadequate.
- *Living quarters:* Expanded from three to five bunks, but now maxed out; no further expansion possible.
- *Decontamination & hygiene facilities:* No dedicated facilities; risk of contamination.
- *Fitness/wellness area:* Former PPE room repurposed; undersized and next to dirty turnout gear.

Fire Building Feature	Fire HQ (Walden Street)	West Concord Fire Station (Main St.)
Apparatus Bay Door Size	12’ x 11’ (modifications needed)	9’6” x 9’2” (very restrictive)
Apparatus Fit	Ladder fits w/ mods; some vehicles outside	Ladder/large units cannot fit
Parking	Congested; limited visitor/staff/EOC parking	Small lot; frequent car shuffling
Evidence/Asset Security	Limited; poor perimeter/security	N/A
Medical Storage	No secure, climate-controlled space	No secure, climate-controlled space
Equipment Storage	Scattered, undersized	Scattered, undersized
Admin Office	Makeshift, converted rooms; dispersed staff	Two desks in multipurpose room
Living Quarters	Space for 6, cannot expand	Space for 5, cannot expand
Decontamination Facilities	None	None
Fitness/Wellness Facilities	Converted shooting range; limited	Former PPE room; limited, next to gear
Dispatch/EOC	Undersized, unreliable	N/A
ADA Accessibility	Inadequate	Inadequate
Training/Community Spaces	Unavailable	Unavailable
Facility Infrastructure	Aging, water leaks, systems near end-of-life	Aging, outdated

Existing Conditions Images

Walden Street Building, Staff Kitchen



Walden Street, Dispatch Center (relocated from flood damaged area on 1st floor)



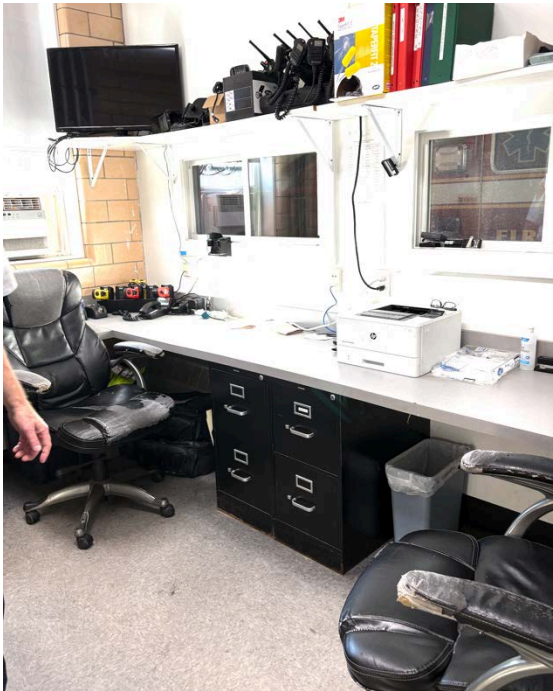
Walden Street, Ceiling height too low for newest trucks



West Concord Fire Station, Ceiling height too low for many trucks



West Concord Fire Station, Police Satellite Office



West Concord Fire Station, Staff Accommodations



Water Damage at the Dispatch Center, Walden Street Public Safety Building



4. Future Needs Assessment

A future needs assessment is a systematic process that considers what facilities, resources, and functions public safety agencies will require as the community grows and changes. It looks beyond immediate problems to anticipate emerging needs, ensuring that investments in infrastructure, personnel, and technology keep pace with local trends and national standards. For public safety, this process is essential because each agency—police, fire, EMS, and dispatch—has distinctive operational demands, community interfaces, and regulatory standards.

This discussion reflects first stage consideration of these issues for public facilities in Concord. While we have looped in the chiefs, there has not been a systematic, formal, analysis. This would be the responsibility of an expert consultant, in conversation with appropriate town staff, elected officials, community groups, town residents and businesses.

Key Issues

As Concord plans for its future public safety needs, several critical factors stand out. Understanding these concerns is essential for guiding decisions about facility design, location, and investment. The following key issues shape how the Town might think about approaching upgrades and expansion:

- *Population and community change:* While overall population growth remains uncertain, there is a shift in residential and commercial activity toward West Concord. Redevelopment and new housing or business projects are reshaping where and how public safety services are needed. Precinct-based voter data and lists of proposed developments suggest that service demand may increasingly concentrate in these areas. Ongoing changes in community composition, such as varying age groups and household types, can also influence the nature and volume of calls.
- *Projected service demand:* Even without significant population growth, areas with new developments or changing demographics often see higher volumes and greater variety of calls, including medical emergencies, fires, and other incidents. Increases in school enrollment, business activity, and new transportation corridors can further affect service patterns. These factors suggest that Concord's public safety agencies may need to prepare for more frequent and diverse calls.
- *Operational and technology requirements:* Modern public safety operations depend on robust communications, secure evidence handling, and advanced IT infrastructure. Concord's facilities must support digital record-keeping, secure data management, and integration of new technologies. Spaces should be designed both for current needs and future upgrades to ensure the Town keeps pace with evolving standards and workflows.
- *Facility flexibility:* Public safety buildings should be designed for adaptability, allowing for phased reconfigurations and expansions as service demands and models evolve. Flexible layouts accommodate new equipment and changing staffing patterns while minimizing disruption. Investing in scalable infrastructure positions the town to respond effectively to fluctuating demand and advances in best practices.

Concord's Future Police Needs: Input from the Police Chief

Effective police facilities require a nuanced approach to location and design. Unlike fire stations, police station location is less constrained by rapid response radius, but demands accessibility for the public and operational efficiency for diverse police functions, including investigation, evidence handling, community engagement, custody, and collaboration with EMS and dispatch. The facility must also anticipate future growth, technological advances, and evolving standards in law enforcement. (See Appendix for the Police Chief's full report on existing conditions at the Police station.)

1. Location & Service Considerations

- *Accessibility:* Station placement should maximize accessibility for the public, staff, and partnering agencies, considering proximity to high-demand areas (downtown, West Concord, commercial districts, schools).
- *Service distribution:* Although not bound by NFPA-style response times, population shifts (e.g., increased activity in West Concord) can drive the need for flexible station locations and specialized satellite facilities.

2. Community Demographics & Service Population

- *Residential patterns:* Facility planning should reflect the diversity of the community: single-family homes, apartments, assisted living, as well as areas with changing demographics and new developments.
- *Service population:* Account for resident and non-resident populations: commuters, visitors, students, hospital patients, and those interacting with schools, business districts, medical facilities, rail and highway corridors, and correctional institutions.
- *Demand forecasting:* Utilize precinct-based data (such as voter counts, which correlate to population shifts), projected development tables, and trends in calls for service for data-driven planning.

3. Compliance & Standards

- *ADA accessibility:* Fully compliant for staff, public, and individuals in custody.
- *Police accreditation Standards:* Adherence to state and national law enforcement regulations (e.g., CJIS, NIBRS, PREA for custody areas).
- *Safety & security:* Incorporate standards for secure evidence and record storage, custody spaces, and site surveillance.
- *IT & data security:* Meet requirements for confidential communications, secure server rooms, and digital evidence protection.
- *Environmental & sustainability guidelines:* Leverage energy efficiency and green building standards.

4. Core Facility Functions & Features

- *Dispatch & emergency operations:* Separate, soundproof communications/dispatch center; Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with fiber connectivity, also serving as a training room.
- *Evidence processing center:* Secure facility equipped for advanced processing—fuming, fingerprint recovery, pass-through lockers, high-density evidence and records storage (including secure rooms for drugs, valuables, and assault kits).
- *Family & victim support spaces:* Dedicated, audio-recorded interview rooms for domestic violence/sexual assault cases; conference rooms for families.
- *Confidentiality spaces:* Soundproofed public conference rooms with window shades.
- *Surveillance & security:* Comprehensive site surveillance system (360° coverage), electronic monitoring, security bollards, window security film, fencing, gated entrance/exit, panic buttons throughout the building.
- *Custody & interview areas:* Sight-and-sound compliant cell block area, separate juvenile space, interview/bail room near cell block with secure exit, audio/video recording in all spaces.
- *Armory:* Secure storage for weapons and ammunition.
- *Training & wellness spaces:* On-site gym, training room, outdoor picnic/break area for staff to support health and resilience.
- *Community engagement:* Public meeting rooms, media/cable rooms for outreach and education.
- *Annex & storage:* Outbuilding for seized vehicles, extended evidence handling, and high-density archive storage; redundant server room with cooling.
- *Facility infrastructure:* Simplified, redundant HVAC for reliability; covered parking (solar-equipped) for staff and public; lunchroom/kitchen with water stations.
- *Workspace design:* Private, secure offices/workstations with advanced IT, ergonomic counters, and modern roll call room.
- *Flexibility:* Capacity for expansion to accommodate future staffing, service models, and technological upgrades; modular design for phased renovations and adaptation.

Concord's Future Fire Needs: Input from the Fire Chief

Effective fire facilities require careful attention to site selection and station design. Unlike police stations, fire station location is tightly governed by response times and geographic coverage—rapid access to emergencies is essential for community safety. Facilities must support a broad range of functions, including fire suppression, EMS, hazardous materials response, training, and equipment maintenance. The station must also be equipped to accommodate future growth, advances in fire service technology, and evolving standards in public safety and health. (See Appendix for the Fire Chief's full report on existing conditions at the Fire stations.)

1. Location & Response Considerations

- *Response times:* Optimizing response time is the top priority for station site selection, directly impacting community safety and aligning with NFPA 1710 standards.
- *GIS analysis:* Use geographic information systems to evaluate current and future coverage, ensuring rapid access to high-risk and high-density areas.
- *Recent examples:* Evaluate lessons from nearby builds—Lexington, Natick, and Maynard Fire Stations—to inform best practices.

2. Community Demographics & Service Population

- *Residential mix:* Plan for a variety of residential types—single-family homes, multi-family units, assisted living, and apartment complexes—all requiring tailored response strategies.
- *Population density:* Consider higher density areas that may pose increased risks or require specialized apparatus and staffing.
- *Service population:* Don't overlook non-resident groups. Include commuters, hospital patients, visitors, nursing home residents, prison populations, and the presence of transit infrastructure—rail, highways, waterways.

3. Compliance & Standards

- **OSHA 1910:** Occupational safety.
- **USFA Fire Station Design Guide:** Guidance on efficient station layout and safety.
- **ISO Public Protection Classification (PPC™):** Impacts homeowner insurance rates and risk assessments.
- **NFPA Standards:** **NFPA 101:** Life Safety Code, **NFPA 1500:** Firefighter Health & Wellness, **NFPA 1581:** Infection Control, **NFPA 1583:** Fitness Programs, **NFPA 1710:** Response time/service delivery benchmarks

4. Core Facility Functions & Features

- *Administrative suites:* Dedicated spaces for fire prevention, training, EMS, and HIPAA-compliant reporting.
- *Medical supply & equipment storage:* Secure, climate-controlled storage for medical supplies and fire equipment.
- *Decontamination & infection control:* Rooms for cleaning equipment, PPE storage & drying, and infection prevention.
- *SCBA maintenance:* Separate compressor and maintenance rooms for breathing apparatus.
- *Fitness & wellness spaces:* On-site gym and recovery areas supporting staff health.
- *Integrated training props:* Station design includes built-in props for realistic scenario training.
- *Maintenance workshops:* Dedicated areas for equipment servicing.
- *Apparatus bays:* Double-depth bays, larger bay doors to accommodate current and future vehicles.
- *Exhaust control:* Advanced diesel and exhaust removal systems for clean indoor air.
- *Emergency Operations Center (EOC):* Flexible space for incident management and staff training.
- *Sustainability:* Incorporate energy-efficient systems and environmentally responsible design.
- *Flexibility:* Modular layouts allow for expansion and adaptation to future needs.

5. Peer Benchmarking

Understanding what peer communities are building, and at what cost, is a critical foundation for public safety facility planning in Concord. Peer benchmarking enables us to assess the choices of nearby and comparable municipalities, providing practical lessons for our own process.

By examining real projects recently undertaken by towns with similar populations, service expectations, and geographic challenges, we can answer key questions: Who is building? What types of facilities are they constructing? What do these projects actually cost? Are cost overruns a frequent occurrence, or are communities generally staying within their budgets? And how has the rapid escalation in construction costs affected the ability of towns to bring these projects to completion?

To build this picture, we reviewed a mix of sources, including consulting reports from firms like Tecton and KBA, municipal websites, published media articles, and case studies. Our sample is admittedly selective, reflecting more recent projects in comparable towns and cities, where data are publicly available or have been shared by local experts.

As such, the numbers and approaches captured here should be considered a helpful starting point, not a guarantee of what any project will cost in Concord. The true cost and scope of our facilities will ultimately depend on specifics like design decisions, site constraints, and local market conditions. Once engaged, expert consultants can provide more precise estimates and refine benchmarking data to reflect Concord's particular needs.

Our survey encompassed a range of facility types and configurations. Most commonly built are police headquarters, fire headquarters, and fire substations, with multiple municipalities favoring combined facilities that integrate police, fire, dispatch, and emergency medical services under one roof. We did not survey renovations, since this data can be harder to both find and trickier as the basis of meaningful comparisons. The town will need an expert consultant to provide more information about the cost of renovations, as appropriate.

When it comes to cost, benchmarking reveals striking variability (see table below). For example, the average construction cost for new fire headquarters and substations is approximately \$825 per square foot in 2026, while police headquarters often average around \$1,150 per square foot. Combined public safety facilities come in higher still, typically exceeding \$1,200 per square foot. These numbers reflect baseline construction costs, but recent history has shown a sharp escalation: since 2020, national construction costs have risen by more than 40 percent, mainly driven by material price increases and, in the Boston area, by substantial wage growth. To project current and future costs, we've used a 3.5 percent annual inflation adjustment, as informed by the Construction Cost Index (CCI), to provide a more realistic outlook for budgets.

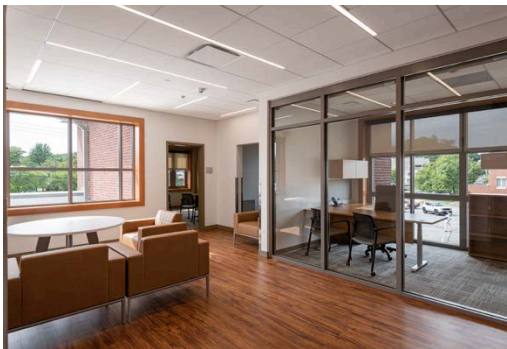
For further benchmarking data for fire facilities in MA and other states, please refer to the Appendices.

Selected Public Safety Facility Construction Costs								
	<i>Location</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Year Open</i>	<i>Cost (\$M)</i>	<i>Built Area</i>	<i>Cost/sf Open</i>	<i>Cost/sf 2026</i>	<i>Current Pop</i>
POLICE HQ								
1	Beverly	Police HQ	2021	\$29.0	32,000	\$906	\$1,076	42k
2	Leominster	Police HQ	2023	\$30.0	30,000	\$1,000	\$1,109	44k
3	Shrewsbury	Police HQ	2023	\$42.0	44,300	\$948	\$1,051	39k
4	Lexington	Police HQ	2024	\$35	33,000	\$1,061	\$1,137	34k
5	Burlington	Police HQ	2025	\$46.2	39,000	\$1,185	\$1,226	27k
6	Falmouth	Police HQ	U/C	\$60.0	45,000	\$1,333	\$1,333	33k
	AVERAGE						\$1,155	
FIRE HQ								
1	Maynard	Fire HQ	2022	\$10.3	18,000	\$572	\$656	11k
2	Lexington	Fire HQ	2022	\$19.0	26,000	\$731	\$839	34k
3	Woburn	Fire HQ	2023	\$19.0	27,500	\$691	\$766	45k
4	Auburn	Fire HQ	U/C	\$31.0	30,000	\$1,033	\$1,033	18k
	AVERAGE						\$824	
FIRE SUBSTATION								
1	West Natick	Fire Station	2020	\$14.0	17,000	\$824	\$1,013	37k
2	Needham	Fire Station	2021	\$12.5	22,204	\$563	\$667	32k
3	Acton	Fire Station	2021	\$7.5	12,179	\$616	\$732	24k
	AVERAGE						\$809	
COMBINED POLICE/DISPATCH/FIRE HQ/FIRE SUB								
1	Needham	Police/Fire HQ	2021	\$34.6	60,690	\$570	\$667	32k
2	Dedham	Police/Fire HQ	2023	\$55.0	50,000	\$1,100	\$1,220	25k
3	Pembroke	Police HQ/Fire Sub	U/C	\$50.0	40,000	\$1,250	\$1,250	18k
4	Brockton	Police/Fire HQ/IT	2025	\$150.0	108,000	\$1,389	\$1,437	106k
5	Hingham	Police/Fire HQ	U/C	\$46.0	49,000	\$939	\$939	24k
	AVERAGE						\$1,212	
Notes:								
1. Data gathered from various consulting and media reports, and while useful as baseline figures may not reflect actual final figures.								
2. Inflation adjustments using a 3.5% annual rate. Since early 2020, national construction costs have risen by over 40%, mainly due to material cost increases. Boston area price increases run higher than the national average, mainly due to higher wages.								

Lexington Police HQ



Lexington Fire HQ



Natick Fire Station (not HQ), Exterior



Natick Fire Station (not HQ), Interior



6. Options Identification

This section presents a master list of alternatives for Concord's public safety facility planning, assembled by the working group. Our purpose is to clarify what each option means, how it might serve Concord's needs, and to be transparent about the range of pathways considered. Options are grouped by facility type and location, further distinguished by whether they involve maintaining the status quo, renovating existing structures, building new facilities on current sites, or building at new locations.

This section does not evaluate the options: that analysis follows in later sections. Importantly, while we aimed to capture the main options, it is possible there are additional options that could be added as the process moves forward.

The options share some basic terms:

- *Status quo*: Retaining the existing facility as-is, aside from routine repairs, with no major upgrades or expansions.
- *Renovation*: Upgrading the facility to modern standards, addressing critical needs, possibly reconfiguring interior layouts, and possibly expanding the building footprint.
- *Build new (current site)*: Constructing a brand-new facility at the same site, with the potential for expanded or reconfigured space, contingent on suitable available land.
- *Build new (alternate site)*: Building a new facility at a different location, chosen for improved access, space, or operational advantages.

Some options involve distinctions between types of facilities:

- *Fire headquarters (HQ)*: The primary administrative and operational center for the fire department, housing leadership, advanced equipment, training spaces, and serving as the main base for fleet and response coordination.
- *Fire substation*: A smaller, strategically located station providing localized firefighting and EMS response; relies on HQ for administrative and specialized support.
- *Police headquarters (HQ)*: The central facility for police administration, investigations, evidence handling, and core operations; anchors law enforcement in the community.
- *Police satellite office*: A smaller police presence, supporting community engagement and faster response in a specific area, but relying on HQ for command, processing, and specialized services. (In some cases, the need for a satellite was satisfied by a large single office.)
- *Public safety campus*: An integrated site hosting multiple agencies or functions (police/fire HQs, substation, satellite), designed for shared efficiencies and collaboration.

Set 1: Options for a new Fire HQ in West Concord

The first set of options is a response to the opportunity of shifting the Fire HQ to West Concord. A fire HQ is the primary facility for the department, providing housing, operations, advanced equipment, training spaces, most administrative activities, and serving as the main base for fleet, staff, and response coordination. Options range from maintaining or renovating the current station, to building a new HQ either at the existing Main Street site (assuming additional land can be acquired to accommodate the larger building footprint and circulation areas), or building a new HQ an alternate location in West Concord.

	Option	Description	Location	Facility Type
1A	Status Quo	Keep existing station, repair as necessary, no substantial improvements	1201 Main Street (West Concord)	Fire HQ
1B	Renovate	Upgrade existing station, renovate to meet future needs	1201 Main Street (West Concord)	Fire HQ
1C	Build New Fire HQ at Main St.	Build new main fire HQ in West Concord, at the current site, if additional adjacent property can be acquired	1201 Main Street (West Concord)	Fire HQ
1D	Build New Fire HQ, Site TBD	Build new main Fire HQ in West Concord, at an alternate site, TBD	TBD (West Concord)	Fire HQ

Set 2: Options for a New Fire Substation in Concord Center

The second set of options is a response to the opportunity to reduce the scale of the fire services in Concord Center to the “substation” level, if the HQ moves to West Concord. Fire substations (sometimes called satellite stations, neighborhood stations, or engine houses) enhance emergency coverage by providing strategic, localized response capacity across the district, especially in areas distant from headquarters. Substations are typically smaller than HQs, offering basic firefighting and EMS functions, but relying on the central HQ for administrative, specialized, or training needs. Options include keeping or renovating the existing Walden Street facility, or constructing a new substation either on the current site or elsewhere in Concord Center.

	Option	Description	Location	Facility Type
2A	Status Quo	Keep existing fire station, convert to “substation” scale,	Walden Street (Concord Center)	Fire Substation

		repair as necessary, no substantial improvements		
2B	Renovate	Upgrade existing fire station, convert to “substation” scale, renovate to meet future needs	Walden Street (Concord Center)	Fire Substation
2C	Build New Fire Substation at Walden St	Build new fire substation in Concord Center, at the current site on Walden Street	Walden Street (Concord Center)	Fire Substation
2D	Build New Fire Station, Site TBD	Build new fire substation in Concord Center, at an alternate site, TBD	TBD (Concord Center)	Fire Substation

Set 3: Options for a new Police HQ

The third set of options addresses the Police HQ as having more flexible location attributes than the fire HQ, since officers often respond to emergencies while off-site. The Police HQ is the central facility for law enforcement, containing administration, investigation, evidence processing, holding areas, and core response teams. As with fire HQ, this facility anchors police operations and interacts with substations or satellite offices (if they exist). These options cover keeping or renovating the current Walden Street building, or building a new HQ either at the current site or another location anywhere in Concord.

	Option	Description	Location	Facility Type
3A	Status Quo	Keep existing police HQ, repair as necessary, no substantial improvements	Walden Street (Concord Center)	Police HQ
3B	Renovate	Upgrade existing police HQ, possibly expand to take over entire building if fire substation located elsewhere, renovate to meet future needs	Walden Street (Concord Center)	Police HQ
3C	Build New Police HQ, at Walden St.	Build new Police HQ in Concord Center, at the current site on Walden Street	Walden Street (Concord Center)	Police HQ
3D	Build New Police HQ, Site TBD	Build new Police HQ, at an alternate site, TBD	TBD (Anywhere in Concord)	Police HQ

Set 4: Other Options, Combinations

The fourth set of options examines other approaches for organizing Concord’s public safety facilities, focusing on combinations that could lead to increased operational efficiency and reduced overall space needs through shared resources. One option is to create a single, combined headquarters in West Concord for both the police and fire departments. By integrating both departments under one roof, the Town could streamline operations, consolidate common functions such as training, meeting spaces, and infrastructure, and potentially save on total facility square footage.

Another option builds on this idea by pairing a new fire headquarters in West Concord with a smaller, satellite police office located within the facility. This allows for shared site amenities and increased police presence in West Concord, without fully relocating the main police headquarters, taking advantage of joint infrastructure while maintaining specialized spaces.

Alternatively, Concord could construct three stand-alone facilities—a new fire headquarters in West Concord, a police headquarters in Concord Center, and a fire substation also in Concord Center—to provide dedicated coverage for both central and outlying areas. (Note that this option also arises through choosing options C or D in all three earlier sets.)

Finally, the Town could consider a unified public safety campus that brings all police and fire functions together at a single site, maximizing efficiencies through shared spaces, centralized administration, and joint technology and operational systems. However, the feasibility of this option depends on whether a location can be found that meets response time standards.

	Option	Description	Location	Facility Type
4A	Combine Fire HQ and Police HQ in West Concord	Build combined Fire HQ & Police HQ	Main St./ Alt. Site (West Concord)	Fire HQ + Police HQ
4B	Combine Fire HQ and Police Satellite in West Concord	Build Fire HQ & Police satellite office	Main St./ Alt. Site (West Concord)	Fire HQ + Police Satellite
4C	Build three new separate facilities, in different locations	Build three stand-alone buildings: Fire HQ (West Concord), Police HQ (Center), Fire Substation (Center)	West Concord/ Concord Center	Fire HQ + Fire Substation + Police HQ
4	Build one central campus, housing Fire HQ and Police HQ	Build new public safety campus combining all needs, if site supports standards	TBD (as identified)	Fire HQ + Police HQ

7. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation criteria are the standards used to compare the different options for Concord’s reviewing public safety facilities. The subgroup sought to select criteria to ensure the process is transparent and rooted in what matters most for Concord: operational effectiveness for public safety services, cost, community accessibility, and the facility’s ability to adapt over time. These benchmarks help guide discussions about pros and cons such as the impact on response times, the upfront and ongoing costs to taxpayers, risks to service continuity during construction or renovation, and accessible public safety services for a changing community.

It is important to note that since this assessment was completed on a rapid timeline and with limited data, our criteria are necessarily high-level and preliminary. Cost figures, for example, are order-of-magnitude estimates based on comparable projects, not detailed budget projections. Our judgments about operational and community impacts rely on our collective experience and publicly available data, not exhaustive analytics. As the planning process advances, as experts are engaged and more information emerges, we expect these criteria to become more refined, offering deeper insight and more reliable comparisons to inform future decisions.

Criteria Used

- *Operational efficiency:* Measures how well each option enables essential functions for police, fire, EMS, and dispatch. This includes service effectiveness (meeting current and anticipated demand), response times (especially crucial for fire and EMS), and facility capacity (space for staff, vehicles, equipment, and flexibility for future growth).
- *Cost:* Considers both upfront capital costs (land, construction, engineering) and life-cycle costs (maintenance, utilities, upgrades, staffing). Estimates are based on order-of-magnitude benchmarking and recent comparable projects. Exact costs will become clearer with further site studies and design development.
- *Community impact:* Looks at how each option affects equity, accessibility, and public trust. This includes physical accessibility for residents and visitors, potential for community engagement, visibility of public safety services, and responsiveness to demographic shifts. Community engagement will further refine these factors.
- *Disruption:* Assesses the risk to ongoing operations during construction, renovation, or relocation. This includes the likelihood of service interruptions, temporary relocations, or phased operations needed to maintain continuity—especially for critical emergency services.
- *Flexibility & sustainability:* Evaluates how adaptable and environmentally responsible each facility option is. Flexible, modular spaces can accommodate changes in staffing, technology, and service models. Sustainable design practices, like energy efficiency and climate resilience, are important town values, and future-proof the Town’s investments.
- *Risk management:* Considers readiness for unknowns: budgeting challenges, regulatory hurdles, and unexpected site or environmental constraints. Good options allow contingency planning and adaptability to shifting conditions.

8. Discussion

In evaluating the sixteen public safety facility options, our subgroup relied on transparent, community-centered criteria: operational effectiveness, cost, community accessibility and impact, minimization of disruption, and flexibility for the future. While each option has strengths and weaknesses, the realities of Concord's needs and resources meant several could be eliminated from consideration outright, others are likely to be set aside pending further study, and the remainder move forward for detailed review.

Eliminated Options

Status Quo (Options 1A, 2A, 3A):

Retaining current facilities without upgrade or expansion, while cost-effective in the short term and causing minimal disruption, was unanimously recommended for elimination. These options fail to address critical space, access, and operational shortcomings, for both fire and police, outlined in staff reports and reflected in the existing condition assessments. Continued reliance on outdated infrastructure would defer problems and almost certainly increase long-term maintenance costs, without meeting Concord's public safety needs.

Renovation of West Concord Fire Station (Option 1B):

Renovating the existing West Concord Fire Station was also eliminated. While somewhat less expensive than building new, structural and siting limitations, and the inability to adequately expand or modernize the facility, made this option impractical relative to its expected lifespan and investment required.

Likely Eliminated Pending Further Study

Renovation of Walden Street Facilities (Options 2B, 3B):

Renovations of the Walden Street fire and police buildings are likely to be eliminated. Both suffer from site constraints, odd interior layouts, and limitations in expansion potential. While renovation might offer lower upfront cost and preserve sites' central locations, they may fail to achieve the core standards needed for modern operations, especially regarding accessibility and specialized spaces. However, a final decision awaits the results of a consultant's cost study, as well as further assessment of the Walden site's adaptability.

Single Central Campus (Option 4D):

The idea of a single public safety campus could theoretically optimize operational synergy and create shared efficiencies. However, initial analysis suggests it may compromise fire response times and would require significant land acquisition, making it unlikely and recommended for elimination unless further studies can address these concerns.

Options Currently Under Review

New Builds on Same Sites (Options 1C, 2C, 3C):

Building new facilities at their current locations, on Main Street for West Concord Fire HQ and Walden Street for Fire Substation and Police HQ, remains under consideration and is among the most efficient options if sites are viable. These options benefit from familiarity, owned land, and established community presence. However, they hinge on being able to acquire additional land (especially for Main Street), as well as manage construction-related disruption. A dedicated

building advisory committees and professional consultants will be needed to guide design and public input, especially if expansion is required.

New Builds on Alternate Sites (Options 1D, 2D, 3D):

Alternatives involving new facilities on new sites will only move forward once current site options are fully evaluated. The flexibility of a new site could ease design limitations and reduce disruption to ongoing operations, but would add time for site identification, acquisition, and planning. This set requires further site search and detailed study by experts.

Combination and Stand-alone Options (Options 4A, 4B, 4C):

Combining Fire HQ and Police HQ at a shared West Concord site (Option 4A) or pairing a Fire Substation with Police HQ in Concord Center (Option 4B) offer capital and operational efficiencies. These options could streamline administration, reduce overall square footage, and support shared infrastructure. They do, however, risk complicated massing and site constraints, particularly on Main Street or Walden Street, where acquiring adjacent parcels may be necessary. Plus, in a matter needing more investigation, our cost benchmarking shows that these facilities are often more expensive to build based on per square foot costs.

Building three stand-alone facilities (Option 4C)—a Fire HQ in West Concord, a Police HQ in Concord Center, and a Fire Substation in Concord Center—maximizes flexibility and specialized space for each department. While potentially the most responsive to operational needs, it is also the most expensive and could multiply service disruptions and site acquisition needs.

Trade-Offs and Recommendations

Each remaining option comes with trade-offs—balancing capital costs, site acquisition, construction timelines, operational efficiency, and community impact. Staff perspectives stress the importance of future-ready facilities, modern training and evidence processing areas, and ADA compliance. Maintaining core operations during construction or renovation will be essential for uninterrupted emergency response.

Current data are preliminary, and many assumptions, including cost estimates, site suitability, and operational impacts, depend on detailed future studies. As options are narrowed, engagement with expert consultants, input from the community, and careful consideration of site-specific challenges and opportunities will be necessary to inform decision-making.

SET 1: EXISTING FIRE STATION, WEST CONCORD (Main Street)

	<i>Option</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
1A	STATUS QUO ELIMINATED	<u>Cost</u> : \$ Low <u>Lifespan</u> : Low (5-10 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : Low <u>Timing</u> : Immediate	Low capital cost; minimal service disruption	Cannot meet FIRE HQ/WC needs , defers problems rather than solving; high operating/maintenance costs; building condition, capacity, and location remain issues; does not solve equipment storage issues; staff areas remain substandard
1B	RENOVATE ELIMINATED	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$ Med/High (\$500-600 sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : 20-30 yrs <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5 years	Lower cost than new build (w shorter lifespan), retain historic façade/streetscape (could be acknowledged in design of new build), good location central to West Concord service area	Cannot meet FIRE HQ/WC needs , not cost effective relative to lifespan; structure is old, cannot be expanded to needed size and modern functions; not efficiently sited on for new main station configuration; service disruptions
1C	BUILD NEW FIRE HQ at current Main St. site, with additional land for expansion	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$800 sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : 30-50 yrs <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5 years (priority)	Can deliver FIRE HQ station in WC , meeting growing service needs; cost effective relative to lifespan; upgrades building/equipment to modern standards; externalities tolerated by adjacent uses; could also deliver POLICE station, or fire substation	High capital cost, broader scope, longer timeline; service disruption would need solution; requires land acquisition (costs unclear), dedicated committee, design consultants, public review
1D	BUILD NEW FIRE HQ at alternate site in WC	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$800 sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : 30-50 yrs <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5 years (priority)	All above, plus new site could offer additional design and site planning flexibility, avoid service disruption by using WC station while new being built	All above, plus added time of site selection process, tolerance of adjacent parcels for public safety facilities

SET 2: EXISTING FIRE STATION, CONCORD CENTER (Walden St.)

	<i>Option</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
2A	STATUS QUO ELIMINATED	<u>Cost</u> : \$ Low <u>Lifespan</u> : Low (5-10 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : Low <u>Timing</u> : Immediate	Low capital cost; minimal service disruption	Cannot meet FIRE HQ needs : site is too small; defers problems rather than solving; high operating/maintenance costs; building condition, capacity, and location remain issues; does not solve equipment storage issues
2B	RENOVATE LIKELY ELIMINATED Cost study needed	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$ Med - High (\$500-\$600/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : Med (20-30 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5-10 years	Could possibly deliver FIRE SUB station , lower cost than new build (w shorter lifespan), good location for Concord Center, externalities well tolerated by adjacent uses; Walden St. site has limited alternative uses currently	May not adequately deliver FIRE SUB station : site is small, reno. not cost effective relative to lifespan; existing structure is odd layout; footprint cannot be expanded; site configuration, wetland/drainage limitations
2C	BUILD NEW FIRE SUB at Walden site	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$800+/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5-10 years (priority)	Can deliver FIRE SUB station , meeting response time needs in CC; new build more cost effective to lifespan; upgrades buildings, systems, equipment to modern standards; externalities tolerated by adjacent uses, possibly combine with new POLICE HQ (Option 4B)	High capital cost, broader scope, longer timeline; service disruption would need solution; requires land acquisition to expand site area (costs unclear), dedicated committee, design consultants, public review;
2D	BUILD NEW FIRE SUB STATION at alternate site	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$800+/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5-10 years (priority)	All above, plus depending on site, could deliver additional design and site planning flexibility;	All above, plus added time of site selection process, tolerance of adjacent parcels for public safety facilities;

SET 3: POLICE HQ, CONCORD CENTER (Walden St.)

	<i>Option</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
3A	STATUS QUO ELIMINATED	<u>Cost</u> : \$ Low <u>Lifespan</u> : Low (5-10 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : Low <u>Timing</u> : Immediate	Low capital cost; minimal service disruption	Cannot meet POLICE needs : defers problems rather than solving; condition and capacity remain issues; configuration is odd; does not solve specialized space needs: sally port, dispatch, parking, etc.
3B	RENOVATE LIKELY ELIMINATED Cost study needed	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$ Med - High (\$500-\$600/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : Med (20-30 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5 years	Could possibly deliver POLICE HQ , possibly lower cost than new build (w shorter lifespan), established location in Concord Center, externalities well tolerated by adjacent uses; Walden St. site has limited alternative uses currently.	May not adequately meet POLICE needs : site is small, renovation not cost effective relative to lifespan; existing structure is odd layout; footprint cannot be expanded b/c site configuration limitations, wetland/drainage, etc.
3C	BUILD NEW POLICE HQ at current Walden site	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$800+/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5-10 years (WC building highest priority)	Can deliver POLICE HQ , meeting town-wide service needs; new build more cost effective to lifespan; upgrades building and services to modern standards; externalities tolerated by adjacent uses, possibly combine with new FIRE SUB (Option 4B)	High capital cost, broader scope, longer timeline; service disruption would need solution; requires dedicated committee, design consultants, public review; remaining concerns about site configuration, size, drainage, etc.
3D	BUILD NEW POLICE HQ at alternate site	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$800+/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5-10 years (WC building highest priority)	All above, plus depending on site, could deliver additional design and site planning flexibility, possibly combine with MAIN FIRE Station in West Concord (Option 4A)	All above, plus added time of site selection process, tolerance of adjacent parcels for public safety facilities;

SET 4: OTHER OPTIONS, COMBINATIONS

	<i>Option</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
4A	FIRE HQ + POLICE HQ in West Concord	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$1200+/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5 years (WC fire is highest priority)	Reduces capital and operating costs through combination of two functions into one building; <u>plus</u> the advantages of new FIRE HQ in WC, and new POLICE station	Service disruptions in WC during construction; acquisition of adjacent parcels required to accommodate building footprint, massing may be large for Main Street, site constraints
4B	FIRE SUB + POLICE HQ, in Concord Center	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$1200+/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 10 years (WC fire is highest priority)	Reduces capital and operating costs through combination of two functions into one building; <u>plus</u> the advantages of new SUB FIRE station in CC, and new POLICE station; Walden site can accommodate larger massing	Service disruptions in CC (fire) during construction, and town-wide police; Walden St. site may be too small, awkwardly configured for both functions
4C	Build three new STAND-ALONE BUILDINGS	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$800-1200/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5-10 years (WC building highest priority)	Maximum flexibility for each building type, would require at least one additional site as Main St./Walden St. too small for 3 stand-alone, frees up POLICE station location to broader possibilities	Highest capital cost, lost efficiencies of combining buildings and sites, broader scope, longer timeline; service disruption would need solution
4D	SINGLE CENTRAL CAMPUS LIKELY ELIMINATED Need response time study	<u>Cost</u> : \$\$\$ High (\$1200+/sf) <u>Lifespan</u> : High (30-50 yrs) <u>Scope</u> : High <u>Timing</u> : 5-10 years (WC building highest priority)	Reduces capital and operating costs through combination of all functions into one building; operating, training, and morale synergies from being on same campus	Centralized location likely to present fire response time issues , requires acquisition of large parcel in a centralized location

9. Recommendations

The public safety subgroup offers the following recommendations to the LUWG for further consideration:

1. **THAT** Concord's public safety facilities require significant upgrading to reliably meet current and future demands.
2. **THAT** the priority order for addressing public safety facilities is as follows:
 - *First priority/most urgent:* Consider a new Fire HQ in West Concord
 - *Second priority/urgent:* Consider a new/renovated Police HQ in either Concord Center or West Concord
 - *Third priority/less urgent:* Consider a new/renovated Fire Substation in Concord Center
3. **THAT** the evaluation results identify the following options for detailed review:
 - *New Fire HQ in West Concord:*
Addressing service demand growth in West Concord, first consideration should be given to building on the existing Main Street site, provided adjacent parcels can be acquired to accommodate the necessary footprint efficiently and cost-effectively. If this is not feasible, an alternate site in West Concord should be evaluated.
 - *New Police HQ in Concord Center or West Concord:*
In response to increasing public safety needs and specialized facility requirements, detailed review should include either renovating or building new at the existing Walden Street site, OR locating in West Concord (potentially with the new Fire HQ), OR selecting another suitable site in Town. Alternative combinations with other facilities may also be considered.
 - *New Fire Substation in Concord Center:*
To sustain fire and emergency services in Concord Center, detailed review should include renovating or building new at the existing Walden Street site, OR on an alternate site in the Concord Center area, OR in combination with other public safety facilities.
4. **THAT** the LUWG recommend to the Select Board that a Public Safety Facilities Building Advisory Committee be created, without waiting until the delivery of the final LUWG in June 2026, so that necessary feasibility and analysis can be undertaken by outside consultants to inform next steps.

10. Next Steps

Phase I work complete: The three subgroup will present their reports to the Land Use Working Group (LUWG) during the month of February 2026. Upon receipt, review, and discussion, the LUWG will prepare group-wide recommendations and a Phase I Summary Report to present to the Select Board.

Pending further discussion of the LUWG, the subgroup recommends that the following opportunity properties be eliminated from consideration for public safety facility uses:

- For fire services: MCI Concord, 2229 Main Street, Keyes Road, Peabody, Ripley, and Harvey Wheeler.
- For police services: MCI Concord, Peabody, and Ripley.

Phase II work begins: The LUWG will continue to meet to discuss the “opportunity parcels” in the context of other land uses, such as housing, economic development, and recreation. The final report of the LUWG is scheduled for delivery in June 2026.

In the interim, the public safety subgroup would like to encourage the Select Board to establish a dedicated public safety facilities advisory committee to lead subsequent phases of work specific to our needs in the police, fire, EMS, and dispatch categories, without waiting for the delivery of the final LUWG report. This committee could:

- Procure and supervise expert fire, police, EMS, and dispatch facility planning and design consultants;
- Make recommendations regarding future building needs, locations, designs, costs, and fiscal impacts, including innovative capital structure approaches such as public-private partnerships; and
- Make a final determination about the feasibility of renovating the existing Walden Street building.

Appendices

- A. Report from Police Chief Mulcahy on the condition of police facilities
 - B. Report from Police Chief Mulcahey on the future needs for police services
 - C. Report from Fire Chief Whitney on the existing conditions and future needs for fire facilities
 - D. Current Heat Map of public safety calls, 2024
 - E. Selected cost and size benchmarking data for new facilities in New England, MA, and peer municipalities
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Appendix A:

Report from Police Chief Mulcahy on Existing Conditions of Concord Police Station

Police Department Facility Comparison

(Current)
1960s-Era Facility (Current)
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Inefficient layout, outdated systems:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office space is limited and scattered throughout the building.• Administrative offices are uneven in size and lack space along with privacy.• Some offices are secured with a key while others have FOB access. Some have both.• Five (5) Patrols supervisors share one office, with limited filing space and computer space, Also there is no privacy to meet with staff.• Patrol Division Commander (Lieutenant) is on the second floor away from patrol staff. This limits availability as this office should be on first floor rear sergeants and staff coming and going.• Officers have only two work spaces in an open room (squad room). No privacy. Room doubles as a ready room and lunchroom with constant foot traffic coming thru.• Second floor “staff” room is used for roll calls, another lunchroom, training room, and small meeting room. No dedicated roll call / ready room.• Second floor office space is scattered with only two available offices for the following: training, Safety Officer, Accreditation, Records Clerk, Mental Health Clinician. Spaces and records keeping is limited and well undersized if available at all.• Second floor detectives have desks on an open floor plan with no privacy to make phone calls and extremely limited file space. Detective Sergeant has no office.• Patrol Division Commander (lieutenant) has small office big enough for one. With limited file and storage space.• Records room is vastly undersized and cannot hold a modern filing system. The building / structure is too weak to support a modern system.• Second floor interview room is not in a secure location and serves as a small meeting room as well.• Second floor evidence room is not secure and could be entered thru the ceiling. There are limited cameras for surveillance in place due to location. The structures within are undersized and sufficient to handle all evidence recovered.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Not ADA compliant:</u></p> <p>Building has some modifications but is not ADA compliant for wheelchair access and other mobility impaired individuals.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal evidence processing area</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence room is undersized• There is no secure location to hold large pieces of evidence• There is no location for Motor vehicles that are seized and need to be secured for processing and/or held.• No secure location for other large items such as bicycles, trailers, etc...• There is no dedicated workspace to process evidence (fingerprinting, examination)

- There are no dedicated lockers for securing firearms in evidence (old gym lockers are being used which are outdated).

Shared spaces and computers:

- Insufficient number of work stations: Only three computer stations available for staff on any given shift. Sergeants five (5) share one of the three at one desk.
- No private space to conduct interviews of witnesses and victims
- No “quiet” or “safe” space
- No private space for sergeants to meet with staff.

Limited parking

- Station parking is extremely limited at 32 spaces:
 - 32 spaces includes:
 - One (1) Handicap space
 - One (1) Tesla charging station
 - One (1) Motorcycle Trailer
 - Four (4) Electric Vehicle Charging stations
 - Eighteen (18) spaces allocated for police vehicles
 - Fourteen spaces left for staff and the public. Dayshift staff accounts for, at a minimum, 12 of those spots. This leaves two for the general public.
 - Meeting groups are forced to park along the street
- **If CFD has a Fire truck parked along their side of the building, vehicles cannot exit out that side as dictated by the design of the lot.

Minimal secure sally port

- Police garage is limited to holding one vehicle
- If there are multiple arrests, one vehicle needs to wait for the other to unload or to remove prisoners in the parking lot. NOT SAFE.
- Newer Police Stations have at minimum, three or more oversized garage bays to bring cruisers into
- Newer Police Stations also have at least one oversized dedicated garage bay for storing and securing vehicles (stolen, seized, impounded)
- Modern Police Stations have dedicated space for police motorcycles, ATV’s, UTV,s and other secondary equipment. This would include equipment storage for those types of vehicles.

Minimal dispatch center

- Dispatch Center is undersized with no room for expansion. Computer server and other dedicated equipment are split between the first and third floors
- There is no separation between dispatch stations which is needed to control excess “noise”
- No storage space for personal items or duty gear
- No dedicated supervisor office in close proximity to dispatch
- 911 and other servers do not have dedicated space

Minimal Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

- EOC center also serves as a meeting room and training room
- EOC is one room versus having multiple workspaces
- Work areas are not isolated for sound.
- No private areas.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal training or fitness facilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated Training facility • Shared fitness facility with FD which has limited space
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal community space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared space with EOC, • No dedicated area, • Not secure
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal family or victim spaces</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated area • Currently use whatever common areas available
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal confidentiality features</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated area • Currently use whatever common areas available
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal security</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building is not completely secure, can be accessed without restrictions • Some areas are FOB access, some are key access, some both
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>• Minimal site surveillance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current exterior and interior camera system are ten (10) plus years old • Equipment is outdated
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal secure perimeter</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No secure, fenced in area for cruisers, personal vehicles
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal annex for seized vehicles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated secure area for securing and storing seized vehicles • No dedicated area for securing large items seized or recovered as evidence
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal staff wellness space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dedicated area
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal dedicated cell block</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited space for cell blocks • Juvenile / Female cell located in rear of un-secureable garage
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal interview/bail space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview located in un-secure area • Interview room doubles as small conference room • No dedicated bail space
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal recording</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booking room recording is limited by space • Cellblock recording system outdated, tied into overall building camera system • Interview recording system in shared room
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minimal panic systems</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panic system in booking and cellblock areas only • Outdated, from original design • Triggers a wired “blue” light as a signal, prone to not working
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Limited armory</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small room on second floor • Lacks space to store all necessary items such as targets, and other large sized training equipment • Not convenient for large ammo deliveries or accessing items for training

<u>Outdated HVAC</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HVAC system inconsistent throughout building ● Prone to failures ● No climate control -too cold in summer in some areas, too cold in winter ● No ventilation (windows) on first floor
<u>Minimal secure server space</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Third floor server room is the only secure room ● Some servers unsecured on first floor ● Not enough dedicated space for servers ● Small closet dedicated to some phone and computer equipment on first floor unsecured
<u>Paper storage only</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small closet on second floor can only house paper ● Limited accessibility for 24 hour staff ● No location to house other office supplies
<u>Outdated roll call area</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll call room located on second floor ● Limited space ● Round table set up ● No monitor to display shift briefings ● Limits the ability to rapidly deploy as some equipment is not only available on the first floor squad room. ● No cooktop
<u>Outdated staff kitchen (limited)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kitchen consists of refrigerator sink and toaster on first floor ● Second floor (Roll Call room) has dorm size fridge ● No additional space for staff to store perishable food ● No cooktop
<u>Minimal ergonomics</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Layout and structure of building is scattered ● Not “user” friendly, difficult to navigate ● Offices, staff room and squad room are not in close proximity to each other ● Booking area is one of two entrances into squad room. Booking area should be isolated and not serve as a second entrance when not in use.
<u>Outdated detective bureau (small, limited)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workspace are limited (3 large, 2 small spaces) ● No barriers for privacy ● Desks are “leftovers” from other departments ● HVAC is not consisted ● No dedicated space to secure evidence while working on a case
<u>Outdated archive storage (limited capacity)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Third floor ● Not secure, doubles as a location for janitorial services ● No secure racks or other devices for storage

Appendix B:

Report from Police Chief Mulcahy on Future Needs for Concord Police Station

Police Department Facility Comparison

1960s-Era Facility (Current)	Modern 21st-Century Facility (Proposed)
Inefficient layout, outdated systems	Efficient, future-ready design (single-floor for accessibility or two-story with expansion capacity)
Not ADA compliant	Fully ADA compliant throughout
Minimal evidence processing area	Dedicated Evidence Processing Center with fuming, fingerprint recovery, pass-through lockers
Shared spaces and computers	Private, secure offices and workstations with modern IT infrastructure
Limited parking	Covered parking with solar panels for all staff and public areas
Minimal secure sally port	Multi-bay sally port directly attached to building
Minimal dispatch center	Separate, soundproof Communications/Dispatch Center
Minimal Emergency Operations Center	Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with fiber connectivity (doubles as training room)
Minimal training or fitness facilities	Training room and on-site gymnasium
Minimal community space	Public meeting room and local cable/media room for outreach
Minimal family or victim spaces	Dedicated interview rooms for domestic violence & sexual assault; two family conference rooms (audio-recorded)
Minimal confidentiality features	Public conference rooms with shades and soundproofing
Minimal security	Security bollards, security film on windows, fencing, gated entrance/exit
Minimal site surveillance	Full exterior camera system, 360° coverage, including rear of building
Minimal secure perimeter	Fenced site with electronic monitoring
Minimal annex for seized vehicles	Annex/outbuilding for seized cars, storage, and evidence processing
Minimal staff wellness space	Outdoor picnic/break area with tables for staff
Minimal dedicated cell block	Cell block area: sight & sound compliant; separate juvenile area

Minimal interview/bail space	Interview & bail room near cell block with side exit to secure lot
Minimal recording	Audio/video recording in all custody and interview spaces
Minimal panic systems	Panic buttons throughout building
Limited armory	Dedicated armory with separate weapons and ammunition storage
Outdated HVAC	Simplified, redundant HVAC system for reliability
Minimal secure server space	Dedicated server room with redundant cooling
Paper storage only	High-density evidence & records storage (secure rooms for drugs, valuables, sexual assault kits)
Outdated roll call area	Modern roll call room for briefings, equipped with updated technology
Outdated staff kitchen (limited)	Lunchroom/kitchen area with water filling stations
Minimal ergonomics	Report writing counters at proper height
Outdated detective bureau (small, limited)	Modern Detective Bureau: detectives, detective sergeant, lieutenant offices
Outdated archive storage (limited capacity)	High-density archive storage for long-term retention

Appendix C:

Report from Fire Chief Whitney on Existing Conditions and Future Needs for Concord Fire Stations



CONCORD FIRE DEPARTMENT Overview of Fire Station Needs and Deficiencies For Land Use Working Group



At the August 22, 2025 meeting of the Land Use Working Group's Public Safety Sub-Committee, we were asked to provide data and concerns regarding the capacity, condition, and location of our fire stations.

The following is a high-level overview outlining key issues, including space limitations, equipment storage challenges, training constraints, building condition concerns, and location-related considerations. This summary is intended to serve as an initial framework to support future needs assessment planning, site selection, and the design of modern fire station facilities.

Apparatus Bays/Garage

Fleet (background information):

- 4 Fire Engines – Primary firefighting units equipped for structural fires, vehicle accidents, and general emergencies.
- 4 Ambulances – Two staffed 24/7, two reserve.
- 1 Ladder Truck.
- 1 Boat.
- 1 Water Rescue Vehicle – Carries specialized equipment for ice, swift-water, and dive rescues.
- 1 HAZMAT Trailer – For hazardous materials containment, mitigation, and decontamination.
- 1 Utility Trailer – Transports support gear for incidents and special events.
- 7 Command/Support Vehicles – Used by chiefs, inspectors, shift commander, and support staff for response and other duties.
- 2 Off-Road Utility Vehicles (RTV) – Access remote areas, trails, and events where standard apparatus cannot operate.

Garage space issues:

- Apparatus bay and doors (garage):



CONCORD FIRE DEPARTMENT Overview of Fire Station Needs and Deficiencies For Land Use Working Group



- Not built for modern apparatus. Garage door widths and heights are undersized for today's larger, heavier vehicles. Walden Street apparatus are 12 feet wide by 11 feet high. Main Street apparatus doors are 9 feet 6 inches wide by 9 feet 2 inches high. The USFA recommends at least 14 feet wide by 14 feet high. This results in custom ordering apparatus to fit each station, often costing more and/or losing vehicle capacity.
- Carrying beam notched at Walden Street fire station to allow space for the ladder truck. The ladder truck needed to have lighter weight springs installed for it to fit in the station (sits closer to ground to fit in the door).
- The ladder truck and some fire apparatus do not fit in the Main Street station.
- Ambulances are also special ordered so that they fit in at the Main Street station.
- Congested bays: Limited space around parked apparatus restricts safe movement, cleaning, and restocking operations.
- Fully occupied without room for all vehicles.
- Annex sharing: Half of the two-bay "Annex" garage next to Walden Street fire station was used for some expansion many years ago. Shared by CFD and CPD.

Parking and Vehicle Flow

- Walden Street fire station houses command vehicles, HAZMAT spill and RTV trailers, all in exterior parking spaces. Regular shifts fit six personal vehicles, leaving only two visitor spots. Shift change complicates parking. This limits visitor parking and parking for training or EOC participants, requiring parking on Walden Street.
- Main Street fire station's lot is smaller; outgoing personnel often move cars to let incoming staff park.

Medical and Fire Equipment Storage

Both stations lack secure, climate-controlled areas to store advanced life support (ALS) equipment and medications. Storage for current BLS supplies is also limited.



CONCORD FIRE DEPARTMENT Overview of Fire Station Needs and Deficiencies For Land Use Working Group



- Walden Street fire station uses stand-up cabinets on the apparatus floor and inside a stairwell, exposing supplies to temperature extremes and limited security.
- Main Street fire station repurposed an old supply closet in its stairwell, barely fitting current BLS gear.

Firefighting equipment and tools also exceed proper storage capacity.

- Fleet expansion and larger vehicles crowd apparatus bays, reducing maneuvering room. For example, the department now houses four ambulances compared to only one when the existing stations were first built.
- Equipment is spread across crawl spaces, attics, mezzanines, old hose towers, and basements.

Report Writing and Administrative Areas

- Walden Street fire station converted a former bunk room into a report writing office.
- The lieutenant office at Walden Street fire station is a converted storage area.
- Main Street fire station has two desks in the training/break room area. This results in distractions and more importantly, limited privacy handling protected health information (HIPAA).
- The Lieutenant office at Station Two is now part of the bunk room. This is less than adequate for both space and professional setting.

On-Site Training

- Drills requiring hose lays, ladder raises, or prop simulations force crews to relocate apparatus, blocking parking spaces, or the need to train off-site.
- The fire department training/conference room has been repurposed for the Emergency Communications Center.

Dormitory and Living Quarters



CONCORD FIRE DEPARTMENT Overview of Fire Station Needs and Deficiencies For Land Use Working Group



Current space is at capacity.

- Walden Street fire station has quarters for the six on-duty personnel. There is no room for further expansion or to support occasions of increased shift staffing needs.
- Main Street fire station expanded from three to five bunk rooms when the ambulance was added to West Concord. There is no room for further expansion or to support occasions of increased shift staffing needs.

Decontamination and Hygiene Facilities

Neither station has a dedicated decontamination area for equipment and firefighting personal protective equipment (PPE) cleaning or personnel showering following fire or medical incidents that require personnel decontamination prior to entering office and living areas.

Fitness and Wellness Spaces

- Walden Street fire station fitness area is the former police shooting range. Shared with the police it has limited open floor space and low ceiling height.
- Main Street fire station re-purposed its former Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) room for exercise, limited area and adjacent to dirty turnout storage.

Office Space for Day-Shift Personnel

To meet growing operational needs, the department has added daytime administrative staff and has outgrown available offices.

- Walden Street fire station, the fire prevention officer, clerk, and two assistant chiefs are spread over three floors. Storage areas have been reduced to accommodate new office needs.
- Main Street fire station has no dedicated office for the lieutenant and report writing.

General Considerations of Design Features and Location



CONCORD FIRE DEPARTMENT Overview of Fire Station Needs and Deficiencies For Land Use Working Group



New stations include the following common functional areas:

- Administrative offices for the various functions of the organization, such as fire prevention and fire education, training, EMS, HIPAA compliant report areas, etc.
- Secure and climate controlled medical supply storage.
- Fire equipment storage.
- Decontamination rooms.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) storage and cleaning rooms.
- Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) compressor and maintenance rooms.
- Fitness rooms.
- Training props, including some integrated into the station design.
- Maintenance workshops.
- Larger garage bay doors.
- Double depth apparatus bays.
- Diesel and vehicle exhaust systems.
- Emergency Operation Center (EOC).
- Sustainability.
- Flexibility for future requirements.
- Some nearby recent new fire stations:
 - [Lexington Fire Station](#)
 - [Natick Fire Station](#)
 - [Maynard Fire Station](#)

Standards considered when considering station location and building design:

- OSHA 1910.
- United States Fire Administration (USFA) Fire Station Design Guide.
- Insurance Services Office Public Protection Classification (PPC™) Rating.



CONCORD FIRE DEPARTMENT Overview of Fire Station Needs and Deficiencies For Land Use Working Group



- NFPA –
 - NFPA 101 Life Safety Code.
 - NFPA 1500 Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety, Health, and Wellness Program.
 - NFPA 1581 Standard on Fire Department Infection Control Program.
 - NFPA 1583 Standard on Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Department Members.
 - NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Department (response time benchmarks).

Location considerations:

- Response times are the fundamental concern of site selection.
- GIS studies based on current and projected responses.

Community Demographics:

- Population demographics (single family, assisted living, etc.).
- Population density (single family, multi-family, apartment buildings, etc.).
- Service population (non-resident population that may require fire/EMS resources). Includes commuters, visitors, hospitals, nursing homes, medical facilities, one prison, rail, highways, waterways, etc.

Town projects that will impact fire department responses:

Currently Under Construction

- Highland @ Main – 16 residential units
- Rothermal Place (Old Marlboro Rd) – 4 residential units
- Saddler (Main Street) – 3 residential units



CONCORD FIRE DEPARTMENT Overview of Fire Station Needs and Deficiencies For Land Use Working Group



- Middlesex School – New athletic field house
- 785 Main Street – Pyramid Health – 114-bed healthcare facility

Submitted Plans / Concept Drawings

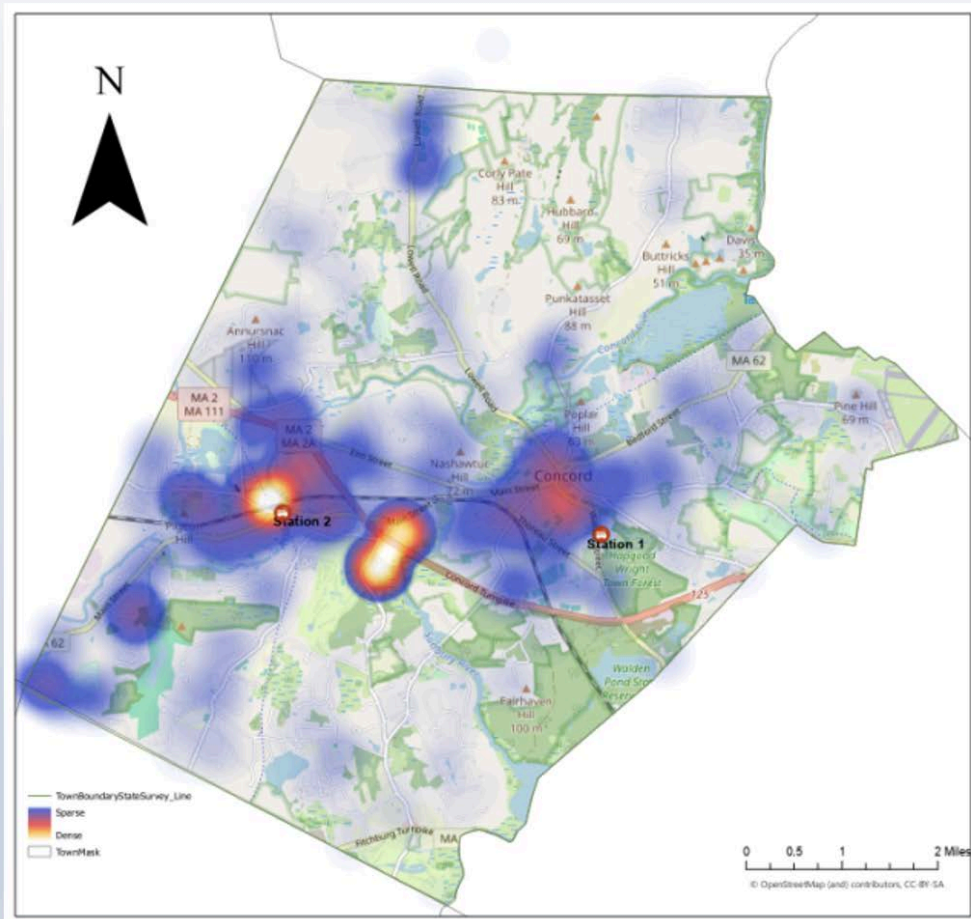
- Marabello Farm – 5 residential units
- Baker Avenue (NOVO) – 201 residential units
- Thoreau Hills – 200+ residential units
- 555 Virginia Road – New adult day care center
- Newbury Court 2.0 – Potential 100-unit senior living expansion

Future Developments

- Emerson Hospital – Emergency Room expansion
- MCI Concord – Redevelopment anticipated in 5–10 years

Appendix D:
Current Heat Map of public safety calls, 2024

FIRE DEPARTMENT ALL RESPONSE HEATMAP



Responses for July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

Appendix E:

Selected cost and size benchmarking data for new facilities in New England, MA, and peer municipalities

Benchmarking Fire Station Cost, Size

		Built or Under Construction	Completion Year	Cost	Area	\$/sq ft	Assumed Build Completion Year	Escalated \$/sq ft	Escalated w/o Outliers (1)	
1							2024			
2	Mitchell Associates Architects (MAA)	Lisbon, CT	2023	\$ 11,662,635	17,924	\$ 651	2024	\$ 703	\$ 703	
3		Purchase, NY Addition Only	2019	\$ 6,445,265	14,669	\$ 439	2024	\$ 646	\$ 646	
4		Putnam Valley - Avg of 4 bids	2021	\$ 13,639,215	28,876	\$ 472	2024	\$ 595	\$ 595	
5										
6										
7	Other Architects	Bedford Village, NY	2021	\$ 10,301,825	20,189	\$ 510	2024	\$ 643	\$ 643	
8		Lexington, MA (High site & remediation costs)	2022	\$ 14,500,000	26,000	\$ 558	2024	\$ 650	NA	
9		Yonkers as Built (Cost includes 6,731 sq ft garage under)	2019	\$ 13,755,000	14,618	\$ 941	2024	\$ 1,383	NA	
10		Yonkers Assumed w/o Parking Below	2019	\$ 9,755,000	14,618	\$ 667	2024	\$ 981	\$ 981	
11		West Natick (Tecton & PRA)	2020	\$ 14,072,984	17,000	\$ 828	2024	\$ 1,126	\$ 1,126	
12		Woburn, MA	2022	\$ 18,512,000	33,858	\$ 547	2024	\$ 638	\$ 638	
13	Kaestle Boos Associates (KBA)									
14										
15			Hyannis	2019	\$ 19,038,000	33,400	\$ 570	2024	\$ 838	\$ 838
16			Mansfield Fire, Police & DPW	2019	\$ 19,414,290	39,621	\$ 465	2024	\$ 683	\$ 683
17			Nantucket, FD Addition	2019	\$ 15,928,420	22,340	\$ 713	2024	\$ 1,048	NA
18			Needham Fire & Police	2021	\$ 34,593,300	60,690	\$ 570	2024	\$ 718	\$ 718
19			Needham Station 2	2021	\$ 12,493,280	22,204	\$ 563	2024	\$ 709	\$ 709
20		North Acton	2021	\$ 7,595,000	12,179	\$ 624	2024	\$ 786	\$ 786	
21		Plainville Combined	2018	\$ 20,619,225	41,655	\$ 495	2024	\$ 786	\$ 786	
22		Estimates - Unbuilt								
23										
24	MAA	Ithaca, NY - East Hill Station (DD Estimate)	2024	\$ 8,702,979	16,183	\$ 538	2024	\$ 538	\$ 538	
25			New Rochelle - Concept Estimate	2019	\$ 17,175,600	36,700	\$ 468	2024	\$ 688	\$ 688
26			Poughkeepsie fire/police - Concept Estimate	2023	\$ 43,705,176	73,208	\$ 597	2024	\$ 645	\$ 645

30	KBA									
31			Quincy, MA w/o active fire station	2021	\$ 98,000,000	130,000	\$ 754	2024	\$ 950	NA
32			Dennis, MA	2020	\$ 7,000,000	14,000	\$ 500	2024	\$ 680	\$ 680
33			Brockton, MA	2024	\$ 75,467,614	107,330	\$ 703	2024	\$ 703	\$ 703
34			Hingham, MA	2024	\$ 35,448,960	49,233	\$ 720	2024	\$ 720	\$ 720
35			Southbridge, MA	2024	\$ 19,629,000	26,800	\$ 732	2024	\$ 732	\$ 732
36			Middlefield, CT (Reno & addition)	2024	\$ 20,936,258	27,831	\$ 752	2024	\$ 752	\$ 752
37		Middlefield, CT (New Construction)	2024	\$ 21,444,148	28,423	\$ 754	2024	\$ 754	\$ 754	
38										
39	Other Architects									
40			Norwich, MA (Noriko Estimate)	2019		1	\$ 519	2024	\$ 763	\$ 763
41			North Plymouth, MA (Noriko Estimate)	2020		1	\$ 415	2024	\$ 565	\$ 565
42			Stoughton, MA (Dore Whittier)	2021	\$ 23,237,000	36,630	\$ 634	2024	\$ 799	\$ 799
43			Maynard, MA	2022	\$ 10,275,000	18,000	\$ 571	2024	\$ 666	\$ 666
44			Greenfield (May not get built until 2023)	2022	\$ 10,100,000	19,800	\$ 510	2024	\$ 595	\$ 595
45			Millbury	2022	\$ 14,000,000	22,515	\$ 622	2024	\$ 725	\$ 725
46			Northbridge Fire HQ	2022	\$ 16,700,000	27,900	\$ 599	2024	\$ 698	\$ 698
47			Hanover Study (Saccoccio Study)	2023	\$ 9,009,688	15,344	\$ 587	2024	\$ 634	\$ 634
48			Colliers							
49			North Brookfield Fire Headquarters	2021	\$ 7,500,000	14,782	\$ 507	2024	\$ 639	\$ 639
50			Ashby Public Safety Complex (new & reno)	2022	\$ 6,900,000	16,000	\$ 431	2024	\$ 503	\$ 503
51			Hadley Fire Substation	2020	\$ 2,390,000	5,400	\$ 443	2024	\$ 602	\$ 602
52			Somerville Public Safety Facility	2022	\$ 50,000,000	77,000	\$ 649	2024	\$ 757	\$ 757
53			Westminster Public Safety Building	2023	\$ 17,500,000	21,500	\$ 814	2024	\$ 879	\$ 879
54		Williamstown	2024	\$ 19,214,600	27,215	\$ 706	2024	\$ 706	\$ 706	
55		Williamstown Adjusted ⁽²⁾	2024	\$ 18,000,000	27,215	\$ 661	2024	\$ 661	\$ 661	

(1) The column labelled "Escalated w/o Outliers" excludes projects with abnormal cost data, such as environmental remediation

(2) For comparison purposes, the adjusted figure for Williamstown removes the cost of addressing specific site challenges and of aiming for net carbon-zero design.

Average \$/sq ft (3)	\$ 734	\$ 705
Escalation Rate	8.0%	

Appendix D

Town of Concord Land Use Working Group (LUWG) Municipal Consolidation Subcommittee (MCS) Report:

LUW/MOC Members: Paul Boehm, Mary Hartman, Tracey Marano

**Staff Support: Kerry Lafleur, Megan Zammuto,
Alan Cathcart, Russ Karlstad,
Shannon McAndrew**

Date: February 20, 2026

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1. Executive Summary

Introduction. The Select Board has tasked the Land Use Working Group (LUWG) to evaluate parcels of land that are or may become available to the Town and to identify current town needs and recommend best matches between needs and available parcels. This report contains the initial (Phase 1) findings and recommendations of the LUWG's Municipal Consolidation Sub-group (MSG). It summarizes the evaluation criteria, data sources, and recommendations related to the opportunities to consolidate Concord's current municipal and school offices into a single location. This analysis does not include, but is related to, those of the other two Sub-groups focusing on Public Safety and Public Works.

Town administrative offices are now spread across 18 municipal buildings and a school administration building. As a result, information is not shared optimally and collaboration among staff is impeded. Furthermore, residents must navigate and travel across multiple locations to obtain in-person services.

The rationale for our analysis focused on the need to:

- Recognize economies of scale that reduce costs and optimize the value of available land
- Evaluate the options of repurposing and realizing potential revenues from existing Town buildings
- Improve communication, coordination, and collaboration among Town Departments and Town staff
- Allow for improved efficiency and uncover ways to consolidate overhead functions in the future
- Provide fewer touch points for residents and as a result to improve services

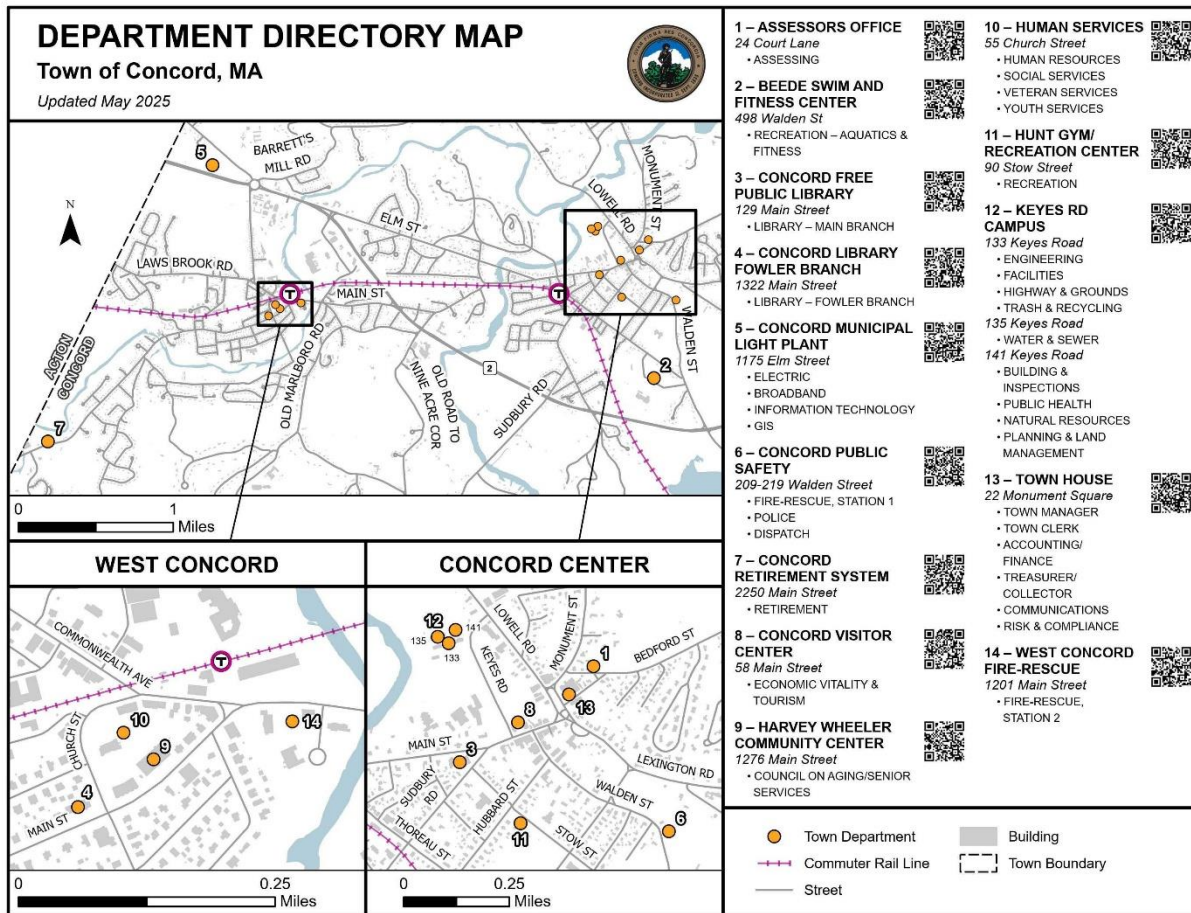
Consolidation Location Options. Several parcels of land that are or may become available to the Town as municipal offices' consolidation target sites include:

- Peabody School (existing building or newly constructed building on land)
- Ripley School (existing building or newly constructed building on land)
- Existing office building(s) (purchase and renovation)

Consolidation Candidates. The subgroup evaluated current municipal offices and program locations (see map below) and through discussions with the Town Manager and School Committee representatives, narrowed the candidates to:

- Existing Town buildings to be totally or partially vacated:
 - Total: (Assessors Office @ 24 Court Lane (#1); 55 Church Street (#10); Harvey Wheeler Community Center (#9); 37 Knox Trail), Town House (#13); 141 Keyes Road (#12); plus the Ripley School campus.
- Existing programs to be moved and co-located with municipal staff (Council on Aging and Concord Carousel Pre-School both @Harvey Wheeler; CPS Integrated School Classrooms @ Ripley School Building),

Figure E1



Data Acquisition and Preliminary Analysis. A large amount of information and data related to both the consolidation candidate locations/buildings and relocation candidates were collected from existing Town reports, Town and Department Managers, site tours of current municipal sites and conversations with staff, and inputs from knowledgeable outside sources.

Based on extensive sub-group discussion, discussions with staff, feasibility discussions, and analysis of needs, an overall assessment was conducted including:

- Numbers of Town and School administrative staff (ca. 125) to potentially be relocated
- Functions to remain at the Town House (archives and Clerk’s Office)
- Existing programs to be moved and co-located with municipal staff (Council on Aging, Concord Carousel Pre-School; CPS Integrated School Classrooms),
- Existing Town buildings to be vacated (Assessors Office @ 24 Court Lane; 55 Church Street; Harvey Wheeler Community Center; 141 Keyes Road; Ripley School; 37 Knox Trail)

Short list of Options. Based on our initial analysis of all information, five (5) options were selected for detailed financial analysis regarding consolidation of Town staff, School Administration staff and associated programs (pre-school classrooms; senior center) currently at those locations¹:

- Option 1: Status Quo – No consolidation
 - Sell: Peabody property for housing
- Option 2: Renovated Peabody School Building. Consolidate Staff and Programs into Renovated Peabody School Building
 - Sell: Ripley, 141 Keyes Road; 55 Church Street; Harvey Wheeler – for housing
- Option 3: New Building Peabody Site. Consolidate into Newly Constructed Building at Peabody Site
 - Sell: Ripley, 141 Keyes Road; 55 Church Street; Harvey Wheeler – for housing
- Option 4: New Building @ Ripley Site. Consolidate into Newly Constructed Building at Ripley Site
 - Sell: Peabody, 141 Keyes Road; 55 Church Street; Harvey Wheeler – for housing
- Option 5: Purchase and Renovate Existing Office Building. Consolidate into existing office building
 - Sell: Peabody, Ripley, 141 Keyes Road; 55 Church Street; Harvey Wheeler – for housing

Detailed Evaluation of Short-Listed Options. Each of the five (5) options received a rigorous analysis based on existing information. This analysis included both financial analysis and the application of non-financial criteria.

The financial analysis included operational costs of Town Buildings; cost of maintenance and anticipated capital expenses, costs of relocation; costs of renovations; costs of new construction; market value (i.e., potential revenues) of vacated properties under different residential zoning assumptions. A discounted cash flow model described in Section 8 was created to capture quantified benefits and costs. The model estimates future cash inflows and outflows under different residential zoning scenarios. Results are summarized in Table E1.

¹ See Appendix for staff locations, staff numbers, and programs to be consolidated

Table E1

Summary	Outflow	Inflow	Net
Status Quo costs over 10 years with no consolidation & Sell Peabody with AA Zoning	\$ (28,676,468)	\$ 3,714,905	\$ (24,961,563)
Status Quo costs over 10 years with no consolidation & Sell Peabody with B Zoning	\$ (28,676,468)	\$ 13,817,958	\$ (14,858,510)
Consolidate into Renovated Peabody with current A Zoning at Ripley	\$ (42,630,615)	\$ 36,144,422	\$ (6,486,193)
Consolidate into Renovated Peabody with B Zoning at Ripley	\$ (42,630,615)	\$ 45,569,950	\$ 2,939,334
Consolidate into New Bldg at Peabody with current A Zoning at Ripley	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 36,144,422	\$ (5,787,537)
Consolidate into New Bldg at Peabody with current B Zoning at Ripley	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 45,569,950	\$ 3,637,991
Consolidate into New Bldg at Ripley; Sell Peabody with AA Zoning	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 27,848,271	\$ (14,083,688)
Consolidate into New Bldg at Ripley; Sell Peabody with B Zoning	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 38,269,137	\$ (3,662,821)
Buy & Renovate NEWMUNI; Sell Peabody at AA Zoning; Ripley at A zoning	\$ (42,463,949)	\$ 46,513,265	\$ 4,049,316
Buy & Renovate NEWMUNI; Sell Peabody and Ripley at B Zoning	\$ (42,463,949)	\$ 59,705,721	\$ 17,241,772

The subjective, non-financial analysis included application and subjective scoring of the following criteria applied to each option included:

- Staff collaboration opportunities, inferred staff satisfaction, and operational efficiencies
- Convenience for residents (customer service)
- Sustainability considerations

Results. These analyses resulted an integrated assessment of the “Pros and Cons” of each option Table E2) and were also captured in a scoring matrix (Table E3).

Table E2

Option	10 Year \$\$ Inflows	10 Year Costs	Net \$\$	Pros	Cons
Status Quo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No consolidation Sell Peabody but keep playing fields 	With AA Zoning = \$4m ----- With B Zoning = \$14m	(\$29m) ----- (\$29m)	With AA Zoning = (\$25m) ----- With B Zoning = (\$15m)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows Town to prioritize DPW and Public Safety needs No disruption of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costly to operate and maintain Missed opportunity to unlock revenues from vacated location No benefits from consolidation
Consolidate to Renovated Peabody <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovation to net zero Sell Excess Assets (Ripley, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$36m ----- With B Zoning = \$46m	(\$43m) ----- (\$43m)	With AA Zoning = (\$6m) ----- With B Zoning = +\$3m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increased staff collaboration and satisfaction, b) reduced travel times, c) more convenience for residents d) increased operational efficiencies Flexible timing, i.e., can be done in stages Aligns with reuse sustainability goal Maintain unique distinctive architecture Some positive financial benefit compared to Status Quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town perception of the health of the building Life span of building Moving Costs FFE costs Not Central Location Temp. Services Disruption Uncertainties/Risks**
Consolidate at a New Building at Peabody Site (retain playing fields) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell Excess Assets (Ripley, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$36m ----- With B Zoning = \$46m	(\$42m) ----- (\$42m)	With AA Zoning = (\$6m) ----- With B Zoning = +\$4m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation (see above) Longer lifespan than renovation Will be designed to meet Concord’s specific needs including sustainability goals No disruption of services Flexible timing, i.e., can be done in stages Some positive financial benefit compared to Status Quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving Costs FFE costs Non-Central Location Temp. Services Disruption Uncertainties/Risks**
Consolidate at a New Building at Ripley Site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell Excess Assets (Peabody, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$28m ----- With B Zoning = \$38m	(\$42m) ----- (\$42m)	With AA Zoning = (\$14m) ----- With B Zoning = (\$4m)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation (see above) Longer lifespan than renovation Will be designed to meet Concord’s specific needs including sustainability goals No disruption of services Less costly than status quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving Costs FFE costs Non-Central Location Temp. Services Disruption Uncertainties/Risks**
Buy & Renovate NewMuni Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell Excess Assets (Peabody, Ripley, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$46m ----- With B Zoning = \$60m	(\$42m) ----- (\$42m)	With AA Zoning = +\$4m ----- With B Zoning = +\$18m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation (see above) Large Revenue potential from sale of excess space Rent revenue potential to balance operational costs Central Location Shorter term positive impacts (faster implementation) Flexible timing, i.e., can be done in stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town becomes a landlord Moving Costs FFE costs

**Uncertainty and risks associated with estimates of cost to renovate and build new

Table E3.

Criteria	Weight	Option 1 No Consolidation - Sell Peabody		Option 2: Renovate Peabody		Option 3: New Bldg at Peabody		Option 4: New Bldg at Ripley		Option 5: Buy & Renovate NewMUNI	
		Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**
Financial Benefits	45	1	45	4	180	5	225	2	90	10	450
Staff Collaboration/Efficiency + Satisfaction	30	1	30	8	240	8	240	8	240	10	300
Convenience for residents	15	1	15	6	90	6	90	6	90	10	150
Sustainability	10	1	10	6	60	10	100	10	100	6	60
TOTALS	100	4	100	24	570	29	655	26	520	36	960
* Score Range 1-10											
** Weighted Score = Score x Weight											

Recommendation. Through the analysis described above including the overall assessment of “pros and cons” of each option, as detailed in the following sections, the LUWG’s MCS recommends to the Select Board that the Municipal Consolidation part of the overall Land Use strategy should focus on the implementation of

- **Option 5: Purchase and Renovate of Existing Office Building and Renovation.**

Based on data and information available at the date of this report, including best estimates, our analysis strongly supports this option.

Although there are uncertainties in the financial analysis (see Section 9) that can only be minimized through additional work Phase 2 (e, g, new construction, renovation costs and market analysis) we believe that the strength of the recommendation is unlikely to change with new information. The value (i.e. revenues) and the net financial benefits that can be realized by the Town through the execution of Option 5 align with the clear preference for this option based on non-financial criteria.

Next Steps and Timing Considerations.

Next Steps. Our recommendation must now be integrated with the recommendations and findings of the sub-groups looking at locations for DPW and public safety operations. Also, to gain confidence in our recommendations, we must do further study.

Since the financial benefits play a big role in the decision to consolidate or not, our confidence in our recommendation must be confirmed/refined via independent, objective study by knowledgeable consultants. These include:

- Study to refine estimates to renovate and bring Peabody up to code
- Study to refine estimate to renovate and bring the selected existing office building up to code
- Study to refine estimates to construct a new building at Peabody
- Develop a specific space plan for the proposed office building to ensure that space requirements can be accommodated

Timing. The timing of any or all of these potential moves needs to be discussed soon given the critical nature of the timing related to: a) the availability of the preferred office building and the need for Town approvals related to purchase, b) the need/desirability of the Town generation of revenue from potential sales of Town properties, and c) the potential impact on MCI negotiations if housing is build on vacated municipal land.

Public Involvement. Furthermore, our recommendations, and the assumptions behind them, must be held up for public scrutiny. We recommend our recommendation be presented to the public and that Town hire a professional firm with a solid track record of soliciting broad, public input and organizing it in a meaningful way for decision-makers.

2. Introduction

The Land Use Working Group (LUWG) was established to make recommendations to the Select Board regarding the best use of parcels as they become available. The Select Board tasked the Land Use Working Group (LUWG) to evaluate parcels of land that are or may become available to the Town and to identify current town needs and recommend best matches between needs and available parcels. The group initially focused will future municipal needs, particularly concerning the inadequate Public Works and Public Safety facilities and potential administrative consolidation. The LUWG was divided into three subgroups, each to focus on current and future facility and land needs related to: 1) Public Safety; 2) Public Works; 3) Consolidation of Municipal offices. This report contains the initial (Phase 1) findings and recommendations of the LUWG's Municipal Consolidation Sub-group (MSG).

The work was focused on the evaluation of current municipal offices including the school administration, their multiple (15) locations and condition of existing facilities in order to determine if consolidation of the staff and programs into a single location was feasible, desirable, and financially viable.

It summarizes the evaluation criteria, data sources, and recommendations related to the opportunities to consolidate Concord's current municipal and school offices into a single location. This analysis does not include, but is related to, those of the other two Sub-groups focusing on Public Safety and Public Works.

3. Current Roles of Municipal/School Offices in Concord

Town administrative and public school functions are currently distributed across multiple municipal buildings and the Ripley Administration Building. These facilities collectively support core governance, education, human services, recreation, public works, and community programming.

Municipal Offices (Figure 1)

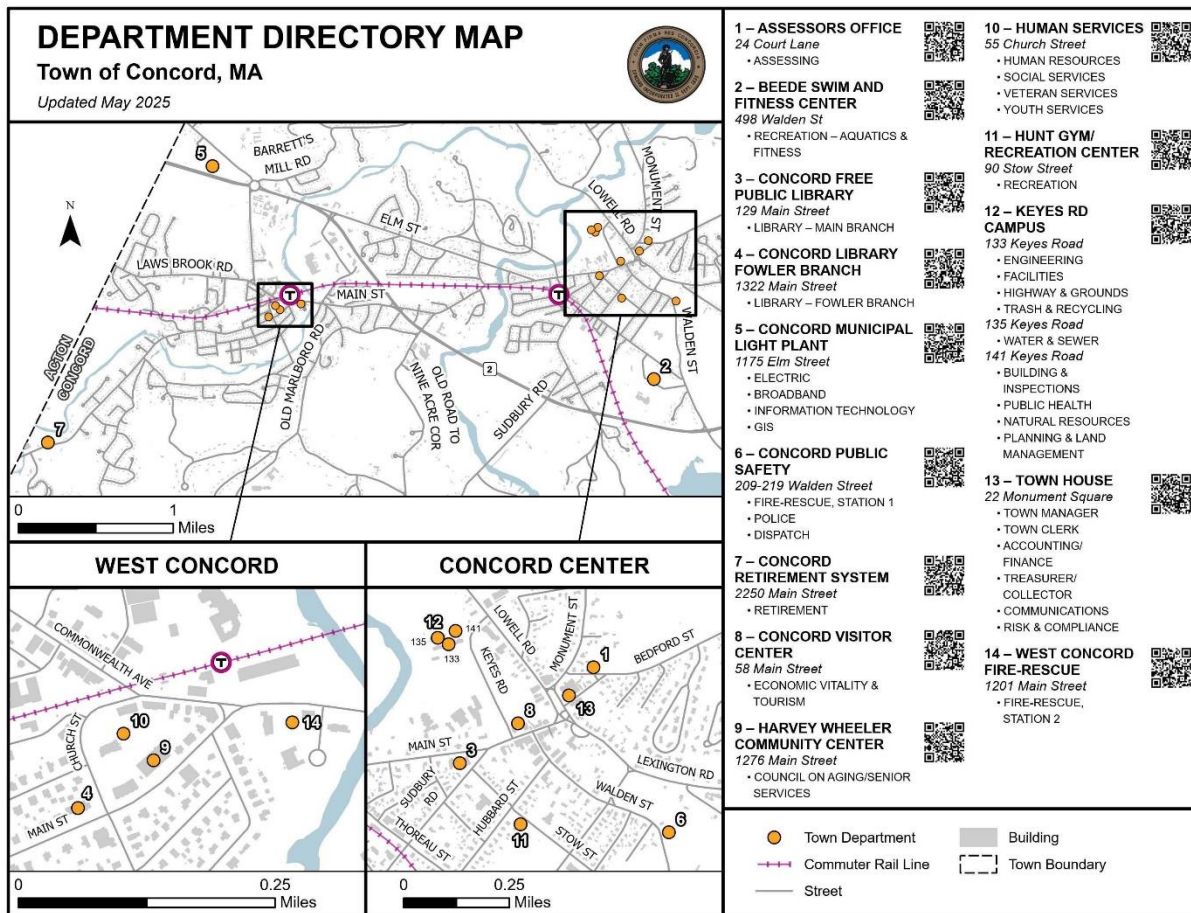
Municipal services are provided by the following facilities:

- **Town House (22 Monument Square, ~27,000 SF):** Historic municipal building housing central administrative offices and public meeting space.
- **24 Court Lane (~6,000 SF):** Small municipal office building currently serving the Assessor's Office.
- **1276 Main Street – Harvey Wheeler (~32,000 SF):** Multi-use community facility housing Recreation, Council on Aging, preschool, and community programs.
- **Hunt Gym (~10,000 SF):** Gymnasium supporting recreation and athletic programming.
- **50 Main Street – Visitor Center (~3,000 SF):** Facility providing visitor and tourism services.

- **55 Church Street (~12,000 SF):** Houses Human Services, Youth Services, Veterans Services, Community Services, and Facilities.
- **37 Knox Trail (~8,500 SF):** School transportation offices and Regional Housing (non-Town).
- **141 Keyes Road (~9,000 SF):** Planning and Land Management, Natural Resources, and Health.
- **133–135 Keyes Road (~36,000 SF combined):** Public Works administrative offices and operational facilities including Highway & Grounds and Water & Sewer.

These buildings vary significantly in age, layout, and condition, resulting in fragmented operations and limited opportunities for collaboration across departments.

Figure 1



School Administrative and Program Functions at Ripley

The Ripley Administration Building serves as the central hub for Concord Public Schools administration and specialized educational programs. Functions housed at Ripley include:

- Superintendent's Office, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
- Finance and Human Resources Departments
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Director
- Special Education Director
- CASE Collaborative Administration
- Concord Integrated Preschool
- STEAM and Innovation Labs
- Launch Special Education Transition Program

Concord Integrated Preschool provides inclusive early childhood education for preschoolers with learning disabilities and community peers, emphasizing kindergarten readiness, independence, and curiosity.

The **STEAM and Innovation Labs** function as maker spaces supporting hands-on learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math, including robotics, 3D printing, recycled art, and engineering challenges tied to curriculum.

The **Launch Program** serves young adults ages 18–22, focusing on functional academics, vocational training, life skills, and community experiences to support transition from high school to adult life.

Together, Ripley supports administrative functions alongside instructional and therapeutic programming, creating significant space and infrastructure demands.

4. Existing Conditions Assessment

School Administration Building (Ripley)

<u>Building</u>	<u>Existing Conditions</u>	<u>Cost & Plan for Maintenance</u>
Ripley Administration Building	Aging exterior envelope with deteriorating masonry and sealants; roof nearing end of useful life; outdated HVAC systems; electrical infrastructure undersized for modern loads; plumbing fixtures at or beyond expected lifespan; interior finishes worn; accessibility upgrades needed; life-safety systems require modernization.	<p>Immediate (0–2 yrs): Address roof repairs, masonry repointing, sealant replacement, HVAC controls, electrical panel upgrades, and life-safety items. <i>Estimated cost: ~\$1.2–\$1.5M.</i></p> <p>Short-Term (3–5 yrs): Replace roof, upgrade HVAC equipment, improve ADA accessibility, update lighting to LED, selective plumbing replacement, interior refresh. <i>Estimated cost: ~\$2.0–\$2.5M.</i></p> <p>Long-Term (6–10 yrs): Full HVAC replacement, major electrical upgrades, comprehensive plumbing renewal, exterior envelope improvements, interior modernization. <i>Estimated cost: ~\$3.0–\$3.5M.</i></p> <p>Total projected investment over 10 years: approximately \$6–\$7.5M, phased to prioritize building envelope, mechanical systems, and safety first.</p>

Municipal Facilities

Municipal buildings range from historic structures to mid-20th-century operational facilities:

<u>Building / Site</u>	<u>Existing Physical Conditions</u>	<u>Maintenance Requirements to Sustain Current Use</u>
Town House (22 Monument Sq.)	Structurally sound historic building with multiple floors and attic/basement spaces. Interior layouts reflect incremental modifications over time, resulting in inefficient circulation and limited functional storage. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems require ongoing maintenance and upgrades to meet current needs. Limited on-site parking and constrained service access.	Regular maintenance of historic fabric (roof, masonry, windows). Upgrades to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems as needed. Routine cleaning and minor repairs. Coordination for limited parking and deliveries. Periodic accessibility improvements.
24 Court Lane	Small, older office building with a compact footprint. Building systems are serviceable but limited by the size and configuration of the structure. Interior space offers minimal flexibility for reconfiguration or expansion.	Routine system inspections and preventive maintenance. Minor interior repairs and painting. HVAC and plumbing upkeep. Limited space means any operational change requires careful planning.
1276 Main St. – Harvey Wheeler	Multi-use community facility with varied interior spaces and phased renovations. Building systems and finishes vary by area. Some spaces are well-suited to current uses, while others reflect dated construction and limited adaptability.	Ongoing maintenance for multiple system types and finishes. Targeted renovations to keep high-use spaces functional. Scheduling and custodial care across varied uses. Monitoring aging areas to prevent service disruptions.
Hunt Gym	Single-purpose gymnasium structure designed for recreation use. Building is straightforward in layout with limited support or ancillary space. Physical condition supports continued use but offers little flexibility for alternative functions.	Routine HVAC, lighting, and floor maintenance. Safety inspections for gym equipment and structure. Minimal interior repairs, but high-use surfaces require frequent attention.

50 Main St. – Visitor Center	Small historic structure adapted for public-facing use. Limited interior space and storage. Building condition is generally adequate for current use, with inherent constraints related to size and age.	Preservation of historic elements. Regular cleaning and minor repairs. Mechanical systems require ongoing checks. Management of limited storage and visitor flow.
55 Church St.	Older multi-department office building with fragmented interior layouts. Building systems and finishes are dated in several areas. Physical configuration results in smaller office areas and shared support spaces, limiting efficiency.	Frequent maintenance of older mechanical and electrical systems. Repairs to worn finishes. Coordination of shared spaces. Updating safety systems as needed.
37 Knox Trail	Late-20th-century office building in generally good physical condition. Interior office spaces are functional, and building systems are serviceable. Site is largely developed, limiting expansion. Observed condition is stable, with no major structural concerns noted.	Standard preventive maintenance for building systems. Routine cleaning, minor repairs, and landscaping. Occasional modernization of office systems or finishes.
141 Keyes Road	Mid-20th-century office building on the DPW campus. Interior spaces are compact and shared among departments. Building systems are aging, and the layout provides limited separation between public and staff functions.	Regular system inspections and preventive maintenance. Interior upkeep to manage high-density shared areas. Minor remodeling for operational efficiency. Safety and accessibility monitoring.

Collectively, these facilities reflect incremental adaptation over time rather than coordinated planning, resulting in inefficiencies and increasing maintenance burdens.

5. Future Needs Assessment

The future needs of the school district are uncertain due to the types of specialty programs and potential increase in enrollment with more housing being built in the future. The current space needs and programmatic needs are listed below.

Current Ripley Program Spaces

Administrative space supports approximately 35+ FTE across HR, Finance, IT, Special Education, Teaching and Learning, Superintendent, DEIB, Facilities, Food Service, and CASE.

Ripley currently accommodates:

Specialty Spaces	Total Square footage needed
5 classrooms for integrated preschool	1,089 sq ft each
2 Speech and language rooms	190 sq ft, 432 sq. ft
2 OT rooms	1,089 sq. ft.
1 PT room	360 sq. ft
Preschool Psychologist room	360 sq. ft
Nurse's Office	250 sq. ft
STEAM lab	1,764 sq. ft
Indoor playspace/gym	3,060 sq. ft
Outdoor spaces	7,500 sq. ft
School Committee/Large space meeting room	1,782 sq. ft

Launch Space (1 Classroom)	1,184 sq. ft
Potential additional classroom space for housing growth (3 classrooms)	1,089 sq. ft each

Office Space Needs
3 conference rooms
HR space (3 FTE)
Finance department (6 FTE)
Offices, Facilities Director, Food Service Director (2 FTE)
IT department (6 FTE)
Special Education / Student Services (4 FTEs)
Teaching & Learning Dept. (5 FTE)
Superintendent's Office (2 FTE)
DEIB Director office (1 FTE)
CASE Administration space (6 FTEs)

The school district's planning for future growth and enrollment are not explicitly considered in this analysis

Current Municipal Needs

The current space requirements for staff and programmatic needs are summarized in Appendix 1. Consolidation planning includes approximately 90-100 administrative staff across all Town Departments (see Figure 1) except: Recreation Department (staff, Beede and Hunt)), Clerk's Office,

Town Archives, and Visitor Center. The staff and operations address multiple departments and functions.

The ability to accommodate growth, adapt to changing service models, and improve collaboration while central to long-term planning, are not explicitly considered in our analysis.

6. Peer Benchmarking & Best Practices

There are many examples of Massachusetts towns (and some cities) that have consolidated municipal departments or operations — whether through formal statutory consolidation, shared services, intermunicipal cooperatives, or reorganized internal departments. Many of these examples involve shared staffing, merged functions, or streamlined structures that cut across traditional independent departmental silos. Most examples center around the formation of a municipal complex where municipal offices and public safety operations were merged into a single complex. Examples include the Towns of Medway, Hubbardston, Lee, Tisbury and Reading and all involve new construction projects rather than the conversion of existing building into centralized municipal offices

However, such a “municipal complex” is not being contemplated in this report or in the LUWG as a whole.

More common has been the conversion of excess or decommissioned school buildings into municipal offices. Examples (source ChatGPT) include:

- The historic Ames Schoolhouse (built 1898) in **Dedham** was repurchased and *renovated to serve as the Dedham Town Hall and Senior Center*, with most town administrative offices moving into the building in June 2020
- In **South Deerfield**, the 1888 Building (originally a town grammar school built 1888) is undergoing major renovation to become municipal offices for the town.
- The building originally served as high school until 1957 and later elementary school; now it is repurposed for municipal office use in **Methuen**.
- **Granby** is moving forward with plans to renovate the former West Street School into a new town office building and senior center.
- **Royalston** is renovating the old Raymond School (WPA-era building) to house town administrative offices that are currently in Whitney Hall. The building will become the new municipal offices once upgrades (including energy system improvements) are finished.
- The **City of Watertown** has agreed to purchase the former Parker School building with the intention of using it to house municipal staff and relieve crowding in City Hall. This effectively converts a former school into municipal office space.

Although the scopes of these projects vary widely, the range of costs of these conversions have been cited as \$8-20+ million.

7. Methodology

Our overall methodology included the following steps:

- Gathered information on all current municipal facilities and staff therein
- Evaluated current information and data related to the operations of the current facilities (e.g., building footprints; staff numbers; costs of ongoing operations, etc.)
- Identify potential consolidation locations
- Discussed approaches and overall strategies with Town Manager
- Developed a list of facilities to potentially be vacated and consolidated and those that would remain at current locations
- Developed a long list of consolidation locations
- Pared down the list to a short list- of locations and consolidation options
- Conduct quantitative (financial) and qualitative assessments of the short-listed options.
 - A discounted cash flow model was created to capture quantified benefits and costs.
 - Subjective evaluation criteria were established; those criteria weighted and scored collectively by the SubGroup members; and a scoring and ranking “matrix” of options was established combining qualitative and quantitative results
- Conducted an evaluation of “Pros and Cons” of each
- Uncertainties in data were assessed
- Decided on recommendations and next steps to be presented to the Select Board

Benefits to consolidation are both quantifiable and hard-to-quantify. Quantifiable benefits include:

- Avoid operational and maintenance costs of vacated buildings, many of which are old, obsolete and/or energy inefficient buildings.
- Avoid necessary capital expenditures of vacated buildings.
- Realize revenues through the sale of vacated lots and use the proceeds to offset tax increases.
- Realize incremental property tax revenues from potential new housing under different zoning rules.

Qualitative (Hard-to-Quantify) benefits include:

- Improved staff collaboration/efficiency/satisfaction
- Convenience for residents
- More sustainable energy sources

Benefits are estimated using a variety of data sources* and professional opinions of town management and real estate professionals. We offset benefits with the cost to renovate or build

new at a target site, including the cost of demolition, to arrive at the net benefit to the town. We also include the cost of moving and fit-up for staff and programming at a potential target.

Date Sources – Data were gathered from discussions with staff as well as from written reports, specifically including:

- TBA Architects, *Concord Municipal Facilities Assessment and Masterplan*, July 2020
- Gorman Richardson Lewis Architects, Building Condition Assessment for Concord Public Schools, 2023.
- Current budget spending by department compiled by town staff.
- Tour of town facilities and conversations with staff.

8. Options Analysis

Although there were many land parcels and buildings potentially available as a consolidation target, a short list of options was developed by the MSG using the following criteria and principles:

- Scope of consolidation - the consolidation objective focused on nearly all municipal and public school administrative functions and staff. Along with these functions related “programs” (i.e., Council on Aging/Senior Center, Department of Recreation’s Carousel Pre-School; Concord Public School’s Integrated Pre-School were part of the objectives)
- Sufficient size – meeting these consolidation objectives required existing or new buildings of sufficient space (see Appendix).
- Ownership – the main consolidation targets were buildings and properties owned by the Town, of the potential for ownership
- Advantages of deferring future operating and capital improvement costs – All of the buildings under consideration will require significant operating costs as well as capital improvements if they remain under Town ownership
- Revenue opportunities – the buildings to be vacated offer revenue potential through sale of properties for “development”. “Development” was defined for this work as housing which included both the property sale market value and residential tax potential
- Renovation vs. new building costs – The uncertainty in the relative costs of renovation of existing structures versus new construction to accommodate staff and programs drove the need to consider both options.

We identified a short-list of scenarios/options that could yield net benefits from the consolidation of select town and school offices.

The Consolidation Sites included for this analysis include:

- Peabody school (potential target site)
- Ripley School campus (vacate)
- Purchase an existing building (potential target site)

Consolidation Candidates/Locations to be vacated partially or completely and consolidated include:

- Ripley School campus
- Assessors' Office, Court Lane
- 141 Keyes Rd, Division of Community Development
- 133 Keyes Road – Engineering
- Harvey Wheeler Campus
- 55 Church Street
- 37 Knox Trail
- Town House (partial)

Based on extensive discussions, review of building layouts, and preliminary financial considerations the MSG arrived at the following short list of five (5) options:

- Option 1: Status Quo – No consolidation, sale of Peabody property for housing
- Option 2: Consolidate into Renovated Peabody School Building
- Option 3: Consolidate into Newly Constructed Building at Peabody Site
- Option 4: Consolidate into Newly Constructed Building at Ripley Site
- Option 5: Purchase of Existing Office Building and Renovation

9. Results

Financial . A discounted cash flow model was created to capture quantified benefits and costs. The model estimates future cash inflows and outflows under different scenarios. Factors considered to estimate cash flows under various scenarios include:

- Avoid operating, maintenance and capex cost of vacated buildings. These figures were obtained from the 2020 TBA report as well as the FY26 approved town budget.
- Cash realized from the sale of vacated land. These figures were estimates from local real estate professionals.
- Cash realized from incremental property tax revenues from housing at various zoning requirement. These figures applied our current tax rate against the expected market value of new homes built.
- Cost to renovate/rehab or build new at a target site. These are estimates from architects and staff yet require a closer look.
- Cost to move and fit-up new facility for staff and programs. These were derived from costs incurred to move and fit up the recently built middle school.

Cash outflows are deducted from inflows to arrive at potential net benefit to the town over a 10 year period, discounted at a 2.3% discount rate to account for expected inflation.

The net cashflows under various scenarios are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Cash Flow Model Results Summary

Summary	Outflow	Inflow	Net
Status Quo costs over 10 years with no consolidation & Sell Peabody with AA Zoning	\$ (28,676,468)	\$ 3,714,905	\$ (24,961,563)
Status Quo costs over 10 years with no consolidation & Sell Peabody with B Zoning	\$ (28,676,468)	\$ 13,817,958	\$ (14,858,510)
Consolidate into Renovated Peabody with current A Zoning at Ripley	\$ (42,630,615)	\$ 36,144,422	\$ (6,486,193)
Consolidate into Renovated Peabody with B Zoning at Ripley	\$ (42,630,615)	\$ 45,569,950	\$ 2,939,334
Consolidate into New Bldg at Peabody with current A Zoning at Ripley	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 36,144,422	\$ (5,787,537)
Consolidate into New Bldg at Peabody with current B Zoning at Ripley	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 45,569,950	\$ 3,637,991
Consolidate into New Bldg at Ripley; Sell Peabody with AA Zoning	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 27,848,271	\$ (14,083,688)
Consolidate into New Bldg at Ripley; Sell Peabody with B Zoning	\$ (41,931,959)	\$ 38,269,137	\$ (3,662,821)
Buy & Renovate NEWMUNI; Sell Peabody at AA Zoning; Ripley at A zoning	\$ (42,463,949)	\$ 46,513,265	\$ 4,049,316
Buy & Renovate NEWMUNI; Sell Peabody and Ripley at B Zoning	\$ (42,463,949)	\$ 59,705,721	\$ 17,241,772

Table 2 – Supporting Financial Data

Peabody				Notes
Assumptions	AA Zoning (2 Acre lots)	B Zoning (1/2 acre lots)		
Building lots/homes net of infrastructure space	4	16		8 acres that excludes 10 acres for playing fields and 2 acres for septic
Revenue when sold to a developer (net of demolition)	\$ 2,700,000	\$ 11,700,000		Assumes \$950k per bldg lot (AZoning) and \$800/lot(B Zoning) less \$1.1M demolition
Assessed Value of Lot and new House	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 1,500,000		Sales price = \$2.5 with 2 acre lots; \$1.5 with 1/2 acre lots
Tax Revenue Year built	\$ 132,600	\$ 318,240		Assumes 13.26 tax rate in Year 1
Tax increase per year	3%	3%		Assumes taxes grow at 3% per year
Ripley				
Assumptions	A Zoning (1 Acre lots)	B Zoning (1/2 acre lots)		
Building lots/homes net of infrastructure space	12	24		12 acres that excludes 6 for playing fields (18 acres total site)
Revenue when sold to a developer (net of demolition)	\$ 9,624,000	\$ 17,856,000		Assumes \$900k per bldg lot (AZoning) and \$800/lot(B Zoning) less \$900k demolition
Assessed Value of Lot and new House	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 1,500,000		Sales price = \$2.0 with 1acre lots; \$1.5 with 1/2 acre lots
Tax Revenue Year built	\$ 311,875	\$ 467,813		Assumes 13.26 tax rate in Year 1
Tax increase per year	3%	3%		Assumes taxes grow at 3% per year
Harvey Wheeler & Chruch St Complex				
Assumptions	Mixed Use Zoning			
Housing units	49			Per staff
Revenue from a developer	\$ 12,250,000			Assumes cost to developer = 25% of selling price
Assessed Value of Housing Units	\$ 1,000,000			Assumes 1,500 sq ft condos at a \$1m selling price
Tax Revenue Year built	\$ 649,740			Assumes 13.26 tax rate in Year 1
Tax increase per year	3%			Assumes taxes grow at 3% per year
141 Keyes Rd. (16,800 sq ft only)				
Assumptions				
Housing units	15			Per staff
Revenue from a developer	\$ 4,687,500			Assumes cost to developer = 25% of selling price
Assessed Value of Housing Units	\$ 1,250,000			Assumes 1,500 sq ft condos at a \$1.25m selling price
Tax Revenue Year built	\$ 248,625			Assumes 13.26 tax rate in Year 1
Tax increase per year	3%			Assumes taxes grow at 3% per year
Cost to Renovate Peabody	\$ 36,166,667			Avg of three estimates of \$28.5m, \$30m and \$50m
Cost to Build New at both Peabody and Ripley	\$ 35,000,000			Collaboration between Russ and Paul
Cost to Purchase and Update NewMUNI	\$ 36,000,000			Assumes \$6m purchase price plus \$400/sq ft for 75000 sq ft
Demolition Cost	\$ 1,577,000			Based on cost for demolition of Sandborn middle school
Cost to add Play area	\$ 300,000			Per Tracey

Subjective (Qualitative). A benefit that does not lend itself to straightforward quantification is still a benefit that is relevant to this analysis. To include these criteria in a meaningful way, we used a score and weight technique. To begin with, we assigned a weight to each benefit based on its relative importance. The sum of the weights must = 100. Next, we score a value of 1-10 for each scenario based on its ability to achieve a specific benefit. Finally, we multiply the score * weight and summarize for each scenario. The results are shown in Table 3:

Table 3 – Scoring Matrix Results

Criteria	Weight	Option 1 No Consolidation - Sell Peabody		Option 2: Renovate Peabody		Option 3: New Bldg at Peabody		Option 4: New Bldg at Ripley		Option 5: Buy & Renovate NewMUNI	
		Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**	Score*	Weighted Score**
Financial Benefits	45	1	45	4	180	5	225	2	90	10	450
Staff Collaboration/Efficiency + Satisfaction	30	1	30	8	240	8	240	8	240	10	300
Convenience for residents	15	1	15	6	90	6	90	6	90	10	150
Sustainability	10	1	10	6	60	10	100	10	100	6	60
TOTALS	100	4	100	24	570	29	655	26	520	36	960
* Score Range 1-10											
** Weighted Score = Score x Weight											

Overall Evaluation. The overall Pros and Cons of each option were assessment by the subgroup (Table 3)

Table 3

Option	10 Year \$\$ Inflows	10 Year Costs	Net \$\$	Pros	Cons
Status Quo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No consolidation Sell Peabody but keep playing fields 	With AA Zoning = \$4m ----- With B Zoning = \$14m	(\$29m) ----- (\$29m)	With AA Zoning = (\$25m) ----- With B Zoning = (\$15m)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows Town to prioritize DPW and Public Safety needs No disruption of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costly to operate and maintain Missed opportunity to unlock revenues from vacated location No benefits from consolidation
Consolidate to Renovated Peabody <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovation to net zero Sell Excess Assets (Ripley, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$36m ----- With B Zoning = \$46m	(\$43m) ----- (\$43m)	With AA Zoning = (\$6m) ----- With B Zoning = +\$3m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff collaboration and satisfaction, reduced travel times, more convenience for residents increased operational efficiencies Flexible timing, i.e., can be done in stages Aligns with reuse sustainability goal Maintain unique distinctive architecture Some positive financial benefit compared to Status Quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town perception of the health of the building Life span of building Moving Costs FFE costs Not Central Location Temp. Services Disruption Uncertainties/Risks**
Consolidate at a New Building at Peabody Site (retain playing fields) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell Excess Assets (Ripley, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$36m ----- With B Zoning = \$46m	(\$42m) ----- (\$42m)	With AA Zoning = (\$6m) ----- With B Zoning = +\$4m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation (see above) Longer lifespan than renovation Will be designed to meet Concord's specific needs including sustainability goals No disruption of services Flexible timing, i.e., can be done in stages Some positive financial benefit compared to Status Quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving Costs FFE costs Non-Central Location Temp. Services Disruption Uncertainties/Risks**
Consolidate at a New Building at Ripley Site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell Excess Assets (Peabody, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$28m ----- With B Zoning = \$38m	(\$42m) ----- (\$42m)	With AA Zoning = (\$14m) ----- With B Zoning = (\$4m)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation (see above) Longer lifespan than renovation Will be designed to meet Concord's specific needs including sustainability goals No disruption of services Less costly than status quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving Costs FFE costs Non-Central Location Temp. Services Disruption Uncertainties/Risks**
Buy & Renovate NewMuni Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell Excess Assets (Peabody, Ripley, 55 Church, Harvey Wheeler, 141 Keyes) 	With AA Zoning = \$46m ----- With B Zoning = \$60m	(\$42m) ----- (\$42m)	With AA Zoning = +\$4m ----- With B Zoning = +\$18m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits of Consolidation (see above) Large Revenue potential from sale of excess space Rent revenue potential to balance operational costs Central Location Shorter term positive impacts (faster implementation) Flexible timing, i.e., can be done in stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town becomes a landlord Moving Costs FFE costs

**Uncertainty and risks associated with estimates of cost to renovate and build new

10. Trade-Offs and Uncertainties

Our financial modelling includes many assumptions. Many of these are based on solid data and/or have a relatively insignificant impact on the results. Others, however, have a relatively significant impact on our results and need more study to gain confidence in our projections. A summary of all the assumptions used to quantify cost and benefits:

Assumptions that need further study include:

- Cost to renovate Peabody
- Cost to build new at Peabody or Ripley
- Cost to purchase and update an existing building

Finally, the scenarios that assume changes to zoning regulations of vacated parcel is critical to forecasting expected revenues from the sale of these parcels and the incremental property tax realized from incremental, new housing units. These zoning changes require approval at town meeting.

11. Recommendations

Through the analysis described above including the overall assessment of “pros and cons” of each option, as detailed in the following sections, the LUWG’s MCS recommends to the Select Board that the Municipal Consolidation part of the overall Land Use strategy should focus on the implementation of

- **Option 5: Purchase and Renovate of Existing Office Building and Renovation.**

Based on data and information available at the date of this report, including best estimates, our analysis strongly supports this option.

Although there are uncertainties in the financial analysis (see Section 9) that can only be minimized through additional work Phase 2 (e, g, new construction, renovation costs and market analysis) we believe that the strength of the recommendation is unlikely to change with new information. The value (i.e. revenues) and the net financial benefits that can be realized by the Town through the execution of Option 5 align with the clear preference for this option based on non-financial criteria. Our recommendation include the selection of this option plus moving forward on the next steps as summarized in the next section.

12. Next Steps

Our recommendation must now be integrated with the recommendations and findings of the subcommittees looking at locations for DPW and public safety. There may be some synergies or conflicts among our findings. For example, a recommendation to buy a new existing building at a location near DPW or public safety could further enhance the benefits of improved staff collaboration and citizen convenience. On the other hand, a recommendation to vacate a certain parcel may not have public support. To gain confidence in our recommendations, we must do further study.

Since the financial benefits play a big role in the decision to consolidate or not, our confidence in our recommendation must be confirmed/refined via independent, objective study by knowledgeable consultants. These include:

- Study to refine estimates to renovate and bring Peabody up to code
- Study to refine estimates to build new at Peabody
- Study to refine estimate to renovate and bring an existing building up to code

- Develop a specific space plan for the proposed office building to ensure that space requirements can be accommodated

Most importantly, our recommendations, and the assumptions behind them, must be held up for public scrutiny. The ideas presented here will have lasting impact on the town. Public outreach via forums, surveys, hearings, focus groups, etc. must be conducted to hear from our citizens. We recommend the town hire a professional firm with a solid track record of soliciting broad, public input and organizing it in a meaningful way for decision-makers.

Appendix 1 - Summary of Space Needs

Land Use Working Group - Municipal Consolidation Indoor Space Requirements (Dec 18, 2025)

Municipal Properties		Staff/Staff Support Space		Specialized Program Spaces (To Support Programs/COA/Schools, etc.)		Specialized Outdoor Spaces	
Bldg.	Functions	Staff No. (For Muni Consolidation)	Estimate of Required Staff Space (@150SQFT/Staff) (Includes Offices, Conf Rooms, Bathrooms, Kitchenettes, IT, Storage, Corridors)	Required Program Spaces (From Note A List)	Required SQ FT Needed for Programs	Description	Required SQ FT Needed for Outdoor Spaces
24 Court Lane	Assessors	4	600				
141 Keyes Road	Planning, Health, Natural Resources, Building Inspector	21	3150				
133 Keyes Road	Engineering, Facilities, Cemeteries	10	1500				
37 Knox Trail	Facilities	8	1200				
Town House (22 Monument)	Offices, Finance, Accounting, Economic	18	2700				
Ripley School	School Admin; CASE Program; STEM; Integrated School	35	5250	Note A	16,000	Playground	7,500
55 Church Street	HR, Public Health, Nurse, Archive	10	1500				
Harvey Wheeler	Council on Aging, Concord Recreation/Carousel	11	1650	Note B	12,750	Playground	7500
CMLP (IT and GIS)	IT and GIS Staff Only	8	1200				
Totals		125	18,750		28,750		15,000
Note A	From T. Marano 12-17-2025 (Not including 3000 SQFT of future needs based on Town Growth)						
	5 classrooms for integrated preschool						
	2 Speech and language rooms						
	2 DT rooms						
	1PT room						
	Preschool Psychologist room						
	Nurse's Office						
	STEAM lab						
	Indoor playspace/gym						
	School Committee/Large space meeting room						
	Launch Space (1 Classroom)						
Note B	COA programming and Concord Carousel - Estimated at 15 x existing space (8,500 SQFT) - To Be Confirmed						

47,500 Indoor
15,000 Outdoor