

Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	I
1 VISION AND GOALS	1-1
Vision Statement	1-1
Master Plan Goals	1-1
2 LAND USE	2-1
Introduction	2-1
Land Use Goals	2-2
About Webster.....	2-2
Historic Land Use Patterns	2-3
Current Land Use	2-7
Local Development Regulations.....	2-9
Land Use and Zoning Recommendations	2-18
3 HOUSING.....	3-1
Introduction	3-1
Housing Goals.....	3-2
Housing Resources Assessment	3-2
Housing Recommendations.....	3-20
4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	4-1
Introduction	4-1
Economic Development Goals	4-1
Economic Profile.....	4-6
Economic Outlook	4-17
Economic Development Recommendations	4-21
5 TRANSPORTATION	5-1
Transportation Overview.....	5-1
Transportation Goals.....	5-3
Regional Context.....	5-4
Existing Conditions	5-7

	Future Conditions	5-16
	Transportation Recommendations.....	5-17
6	OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION	6-1
	Introduction	6-1
	Open Space and Recreation Goals	6-1
	Summary of Open Space and Recreation Resources	6-3
	Recreational Programs	6-9
	Community Need Assessment	6-11
	Open Space and Recreation Recommendations	6-13
7	NATURAL, HISTORIC, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.....	7-1
	Introduction	7-1
	Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources Goals	7-2
	Natural Resources Existing Conditions.....	7-2
	Historic and Cultural Resources Existing Conditions.....	7-15
	Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources Recommendations	7-34
8	PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES	8-1
	Introduction	8-1
	Public Facilities and Services Goals	8-2
	Baseline Assessment	8-2
	Public Facilities and Services Recommendations.....	8-12
9	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	9-1
	Introduction	9-1
	Community Development Goals.....	9-1
	Community Development Assessment.....	9-2
	Community Development Recommendations.....	9-10
10	IMPLEMENTATION	10-1
	Webster Master Plan Recommendations, Priorities, and Responsible Parties	10-3
	APPENDIX A.....	A-1
	APPENDIX B.....	A-2
	APPENDIX C.....	A-10

1 Vision and Goals

Vision Statement

Webster is the home of the largest natural body of water in Massachusetts, Lake Chargoggagoggmanchaugogoggchaubunagungamaugg. The Town is proud of its rich industrial heritage and culturally diverse community. Webster was established by Samuel Slater in the early 1800's along the French River and the Town's history provides both value and opportunity in the use of its natural and recreational resources. The Town is federally recognized as a hub within the Blackstone and Quinebaug/Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridors, offering many opportunities for recreation and cultural enjoyment. Furthermore, the Town's location makes it easily accessible to major southern New England cities. Webster's future includes a vibrant downtown, a variety of housing choices, and a business friendly environment. Webster is a highly desirable place to live and work for current and future generations.



Historic clock tower in Webster

Webster works for the future! Join us!

Master Plan Goals

Land Use

Goal 1. Encourage an appropriate mix of commercial and industrial development to ensure that the Town continues to prosper while protecting the rural character of Webster's residential areas, particularly east of Webster Lake.

- Goal 2.** Ensure that new development around Webster Lake is accomplished in a manner that is sensitive to the important environmental and recreational resources associated with the lake.
- Goal 3.** Undertake a comprehensive review of the zoning bylaw and incorporate new smart growth zoning tools and techniques.
- Goal 4.** Improve the architectural quality and streetscape of the Main Street business areas to make it more attractive to businesses, residents, visitors and tourists.
- Goal 5.** Promote compact residential and commercial, including mixed use, in and around Webster's downtown area through innovative strategies and policies.
- Goal 6.** Encourage the reuse and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized buildings and land in downtown Webster and along the major roadway corridors.

Housing

- Goal 1.** Encourage infill development and redevelop substandard, vacant or abandoned buildings in high density population areas, including the Downtown Main Street area for live/work space.
- Goal 2.** Preserve the existing rental housing stock as affordable to low and moderate income households.
- Goal 3.** Create opportunities for first time homeowners and increase the percentage of owner-occupied housing units.
- Goal 4.** Reduce the vacancy rate in existing residential or mixed-use buildings.
- Goal 5.** Discourage housing in environmentally sensitive areas around and near Lake Webster.

Economic Development

- Goal 1.** Attract diverse businesses to Main Street and East/South Main Street through investments in commercial and mixed-use properties.
- Goal 2.** Improve and upgrade Webster's active industrial corridor.
- Goal 3.** Support regional efforts to connect workers to jobs in the region.
- Goal 4.** Develop capacity for the use of federal/state programs and grants for economic development.
- Goal 5.** Promote local tourism that capitalizes on Webster's natural resources, cultural assets and local entertainment venues.

Transportation

- Goal 1.** Assess current and long-term on- and off-street parking needs along the major corridors leading up to and into downtown.
- Goal 2.** Work with the WRTA and other private transit agencies to expand bus services and stops, including the opportunity to create a town bus loop.
- Goal 3.** Create a toolbox of transportation measures (traffic calming, access management, complete street, operational improvements, etc.) that can be used to reduce traffic congestion and improve efficiencies at major intersections and corridors.
- Goal 4.** Develop a Town bike loop through a series of on- and off-road bicycle routes.
- Goal 5.** Provide better multi-modal connections between the easterly and westerly side of Town (as defined by I-395) and establish park and ride/WRTA lots at 395 interchange.
- Goal 6.** Improve sidewalk conditions, connectivity, and crosswalk options in and between downtown, its parking facilities, and nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Goal 7.** Create pedestrian and bicycle safe routes to schools.

Open Space and Recreation

- Goal 1.** Protect large areas of natural and undeveloped space in the Town of Webster.
- Goal 2.** Preserve the quality and character of Webster Lake and French River for all residents to enjoy.
- Goal 3.** Improve and expand the Town's open space and recreation facilities for the
- Goal 4.** Link active and passive recreation areas.

Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources

- Goal 1.** Preserve Webster's natural resources, especially its remaining open space, wetland and wildlife communities and scenic views.
- Goal 2.** Reduce non-point source pollution through sustainable stormwater management techniques.
- Goal 3.** Establish balance between recreational use and preservation through local planning and protection measures for natural resources.
- Goal 4.** Preserve and enhance the historic character of downtown Webster.
- Goal 5.** Incorporate specific historic preservation objectives in community revitalization and economic development efforts.

Goal 6. Enhance cultural opportunities and programming and create signature Webster events.

Public Facilities and Services

Goal 1. Develop greater municipal government capacity to plan for, guide, and regulate growth and change.

Goal 2. Develop a comprehensive planning process for short- and long-term capital improvements for all town facilities and services.

Goal 3. Given the often conflicting demands, establish priorities for building and facility upgrades and replacement.

Goal 4. Encourage reuse, rehabilitation, improvement and expanded capacity of existing infrastructure and facilities over the construction of new infrastructure in undeveloped areas.

Goal 5. Enhance communications with residents and among Town boards, departments, commissions and staff.

Goal 6. Lead by example in community facilities and operations by establishing sustainability principles and initiatives.

Community Development

Goal 1. Support the construction, redevelopment and rehabilitation of housing to meet the needs of people of all abilities, income levels, and household types.

Goal 2. Reinvigorate Webster's downtown and foster economic development growth by supporting new and existing local businesses.

Goal 3. Expand social services to improve the lives of Webster's elderly, lower income, and disadvantaged residents.

Goal 4. Provide innovative educational opportunities to students, families, and adults to increase educational attainment.

Goal 5. Encourage improvements to the existing infrastructure rather than construct new infrastructure in undeveloped areas.

Goal 6. Develop greater municipal government capacity to plan for, guide, and regulate growth and change.

2 Land Use

Introduction

Land use within a community is the pattern of residential, commercial, industrial and institutional development, interspersed with natural features including undeveloped open spaces, forests, wetlands, water bodies, and agricultural land. The evolution of land use within a community is the product of local economic conditions and community preferences; growth and development is based on such factors as access to jobs, employment, and the availability of land for new housing or commercial development. Community preferences, expressed as land use plans and regulations, dictate the form, location, and sometimes the pace, of new development.

Land use forms the basis for master planning and determines, to a large extent, a Town's need to provide public facilities and infrastructure, transportation networks and services, and protection of environmental and natural resources. As communities plan for their future, determining how and where development should occur will identify where investments for municipal services will be needed, as well as what controls will be necessary to protect areas of the Town from inappropriate development. Communities have the ability to control land use and development patterns through a variety of mechanisms, including zoning and subdivision regulations, provision of public utilities and infrastructure, and preservation of open space lands through direct acquisition and the acquisition or acceptance of conservation restrictions/easements.

The following sections provide an overview of the historic and current land use patterns in Webster. The discussion includes a breakdown of the percentage of land devoted to different types of development based upon MassGIS data, the Town's data, an analysis of the current zoning regulations and recommendations for potential changes, as well as initiatives in past years to manage growth and development.

Land Use Goals

- Goal 1.** Encourage an appropriate mix of commercial and industrial development to ensure that the Town continues to prosper while protecting the rural character of Webster's residential areas, particularly east of Webster Lake.
- Goal 2.** Ensure that new development around Webster Lake is accomplished in a manner that is sensitive to the important environmental and recreational resources associated with the lake.
- Goal 3.** Undertake a comprehensive review of the zoning bylaw and incorporate new smart growth zoning tools and techniques.
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- Goal 5.** Promote compact residential and commercial, including mixed use, in and around Webster's downtown area through innovative strategies and policies.
- Goal 6.** Encourage the reuse and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized buildings and land in downtown Webster and along the major roadway corridors.

About Webster

Webster is located in southwestern Worcester County along the Connecticut state line, approximately 56 miles southwest of Boston and 18 miles south of Worcester. Abutted by the town of Douglas on the east, the town of Oxford on the north, the town of Dudley on the west, and Thompson, Connecticut on the south, Webster has a total size of 9,332 acres, including 8,000 acres of land areas and 1,332 acres of water, mostly within Lake Chargoggagogmanchaugagoggchaubunagungamaugg (Webster Lake), the Town's largest water body and most distinctive landscape feature.

The establishment of the Town of Webster was a direct result of the influence of Samuel Slater and the textile industries he brought in from England to utilize the water power potential of Webster Lake and the French River. Originally part of the towns of Oxford and Dudley, Webster soon outdistanced them by a considerable margin in terms of population and economic activity after it was created as a new town in 1832. The expansion of the Norwich and Worcester Railroad in Webster in 1840 provided the Town with excellent transportation resources and resulted in a major change in the location of its commercial district. Most of the Town's activities, which centered on the East Main Street area prior to the coming of the railroad, shifted to the area of today's Main Street

as the railroad's importance increased. Three other railroads, namely the Boston-Hartford-Erie Railroad, the Providence-Webster-Springfield Railroad, and the Southern New England Railroad (or Grand Trunk), entered Webster between the 1860s and early 20th century.

As with other New England towns located on major rivers and railroad corridors, Webster experienced heavy industrial development, centered along the shoreline of the French River, during this period. The industrial base of the community continued to expand in the 19th century as other industrialists established operations in the area, particularly the shoe industry. Immigrants from many nations flocked to Webster looking for opportunities to work in the busy mills. With the growing population, the Main Street business and retail district continued to expand. People from surrounding communities traveled to Webster for its many products and services. Webster Lake, whose recreational resources were also parlayed into significant economic activity late in the 19th century, became one of the top summer destinations in all of Worcester County.

The 20th century saw continued expansion throughout the community in terms of population, town services, schools, industry, recreation, and housing. The Depression of the 1930s was a major economic setback, but the rebound with the start of World War II was remarkable as Webster has been noted for supplying not only the forces needed to wage battle, but also for goods to help conduct the war effort successfully.

In the middle of the 20th century, Webster's industries began to disappear as industrial activities shifted to the southern United States and then overseas where costs were lower. Business began to locate in East Webster where there was room for expansion and parking space that was not available downtown. The once bustling Main Street started to deteriorate, which was exacerbated by the advent of the out-of-town mall and suburbanization. Travel out of town was made easier by the construction of Interstate 395 in the late 1970's which bisected the Town into eastern and western sections. The net loss of industry and industrial jobs has changed the complexion of the area from a blue-collar mill town to a more demographically diverse population.

Historic Land Use Patterns

While the Town of Webster transitioned away from its former industrial prosperities and sought to reposition itself in the regional economy, the land use composition in the community transformed greatly over the past four decades. As indicated by the land use

data from MassGIS, in 1971 more than half of the land in Webster was classified as natural land or undisturbed vegetation, 174 acres or 1.9% of land in Webster was for agricultural uses. Among the developed land in 1971, residential land took up 1,692 acres or 18.2% of the total area, industrial uses accounted for 349 acres or 3.7%, and commercial land 170 acres or 1.8% (see Table 1.1).

By 1999, natural land in Webster decreased to 4,337 acres or 46.5%. Only 0.6% of land in Webster was used for agriculture. Residential land increased to a total of 2,347 acres or 25.1%, while commercial and industrial land increased 2.3% and 5.4% of the total area in Town respectively.

Table 1.1 Land Use Composition in Webster, 1971, 1985, and 1999*

	1971 (acre)	1971 Percent of Total	1985 (acre)	1985 Percent of Total	1999 (acre)	1999 Percent of Total
Agriculture	174	1.9%	137	1.5%	55	0.6%
Open Undeveloped Land	240	2.6%	218	2.3%	154	1.7%
Commercial	170	1.8%	187	2.0%	218	2.3%
Industrial/Transportation/Mini ng	349	3.7%	413	4.4%	501	5.4%
Higher Density Residential	922	9.9%	1,008	10.8%	1,071	11.5%
Medium Density Residential	475	5.1%	585	6.3%	759	8.1%
Low Density Residential	295	3.2%	355	3.8%	517	5.5%
Urban Open/Institutional/Recreation	253	2.7%	320	3.4%	334	3.6%
Natural Land/Undisturbed Vegetation	5,071	54.3%	4,722	50.6%	4,337	46.5%
Water	1,384	14.8%	1,386	14.9%	1,386	14.9%
Total	9,332	100.0%	9,332	100.0%	9,332	100.0%

Source: MassGIS

*Note: As defined by MassGIS, Higher Density Residential included multi-family and single-family housing on smaller than 1/4 acre lots; Medium Density Residential included single family housing on 1/4-1/2 acre lots; Low Density Residential included single family housing on larger than 1/2 acre lots.

A close examination of the percentage change reveals that the most significant decrease between 1971 and 1999 happened in agricultural land which diminished by 68.3%. Open undeveloped land experienced a decrease of 35.7% while natural land decreased by 14.5%. By contrast, low density residential land increased by 75.5% between 1971 and 1999, followed by medium density residential land with a 59.9% increase and industrial land with a 43.6% increase (see Table 1.2).

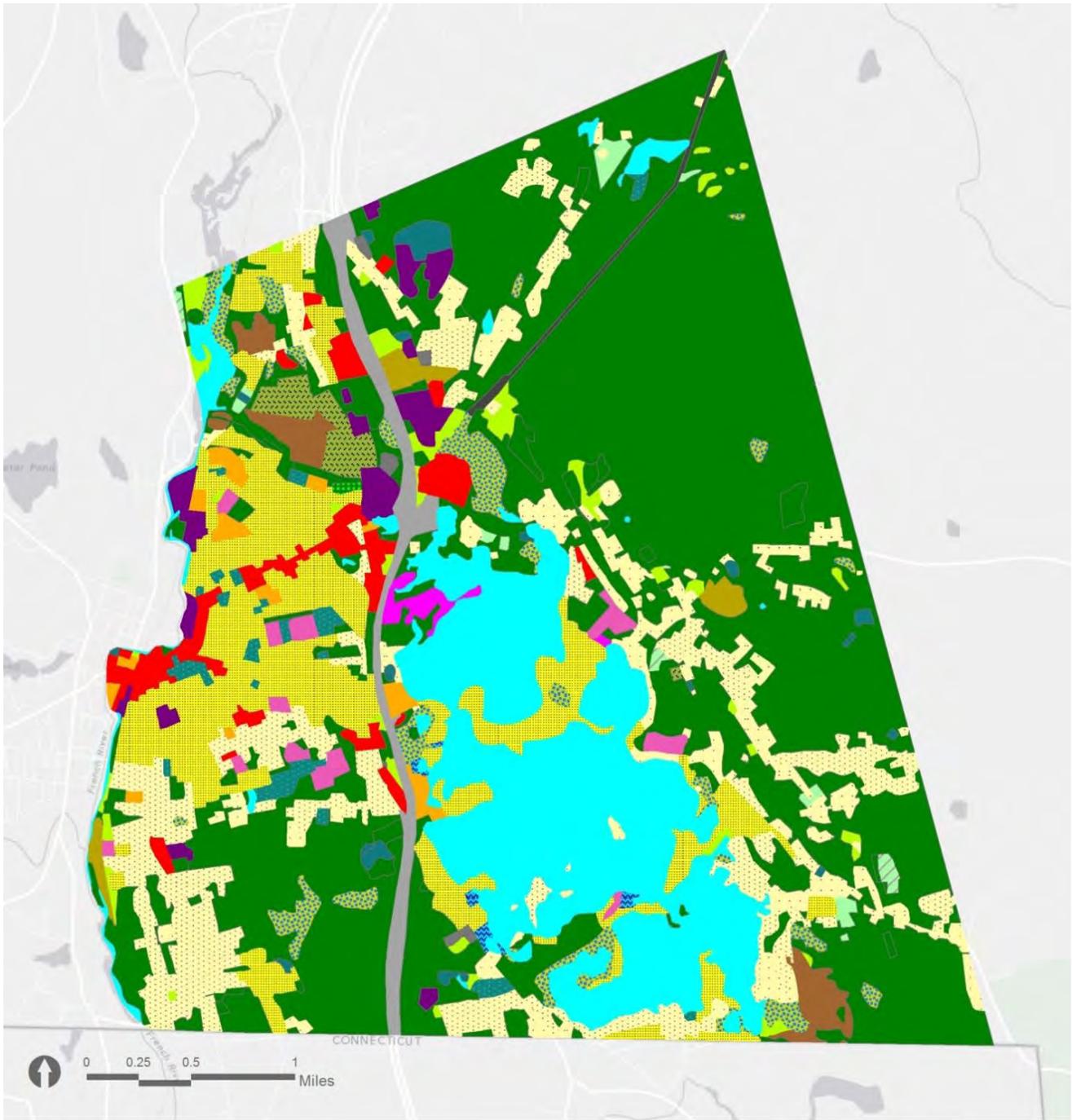
Table 1.2 Land Use Change in Webster, 1971, 1985, and 1999

	1971-1985 Change	1985-1999 Change	1971-1999 Change
Agriculture	-21.0%	-59.9%	-68.3%
Open Undeveloped Land	-9.3%	-29.0%	-35.7%
Commercial	10.0%	16.3%	28.0%
Industrial/Transportation/Mining	18.5%	21.2%	43.6%
Higher Density Residential	9.3%	6.3%	16.1%
Medium Density Residential	23.2%	29.8%	59.9%
Low Density Residential	20.6%	45.5%	75.5%
Urban Open/Institutional/Recreation	26.7%	4.2%	32.0%
Natural Land/Undisturbed Vegetation	-6.9%	-8.2%	-14.5%
Water	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%

Source: MassGIS

The 1989 Master Plan established the goal to promote a land use pattern which provides sufficient open space for the activities of Webster's residents, locates industry in close proximity to infrastructure and major transportation routes, and encourages commercial development compatible with surrounding residential uses. It recommended a phased growth bylaw (zoning) to control the timing of new residential construction and suggested adopting sign regulation and development review tools to better control strip commercial development along state-numbered Routes 12, 16 and 193. In addition, the Plan recommended the draft and implementation of a cluster development bylaw as an alternative to conventional subdivision development to help preserve the environment and open spaces. It also encouraged mixed use development in the form of a planned business development overlay district as well as the development of non-polluting and job-generating industries where infrastructure is readily available.

Although many of these recommendations, such as the cluster development bylaw, have not been adopted, the Town did enact a Redevelopment Overlay District which is designed to encourage the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized buildings in the downtown area of Webster. The Town has also adopted an over-55 residential development bylaw to foster the creation of alternative housing choices for the Town's growing elderly population. See *Chapter 3 Housing* for more detail on this bylaw provision.



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Map 1.1 1985 Land Use, Webster, MA

Legend

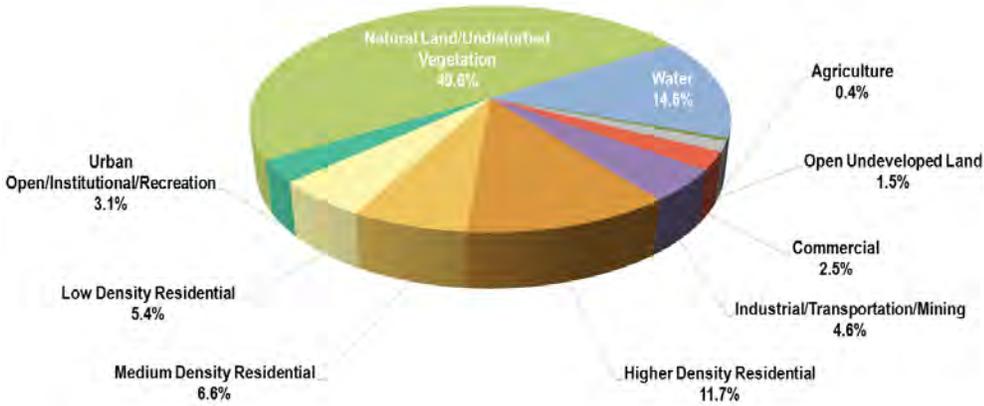
Crop Land	Open Land	High Density Residential	Industrial	Cranberry Bog	Urban Public
Pasture	Participation Recreation	Medium Density Residential	Urban Open	Powerline	Transportation Facility
Forest	Spectator Recreation	Low Density Residential	Transportation	Golf Course	Heath
Non-Forested Wetland	Water-Based Recreation	Salt Water Wetland	Waste Disposal	Marina	Cemetery
Mining	Multi-Family Residential	Commercial	Water	New Ocean	Orchard
				Nursery	

Current Land Use

In addition to the historic growth patterns outlined above, growth in Webster has generally been influenced by zoning. According to the latest land use data available from MassGIS, approximately half of the town was classified as natural and undisturbed land in 2005¹. Agricultural land further declined to 0.4% while 3.1% of the town land was identified as urban open, institutional, and recreational uses.

Residential land combined accounted for 23.7% of the total land in Town. Specifically, Higher Density Residential, which included duplexes, apartment buildings, and condominium complexes, and housing on smaller than ¼ acre lots as defined by MassGIS, comprised 11.7%, and is primarily concentrated on the western part of town. Medium Density Residential, including housing on ¼ - ½ acre lots, made up 6.6% of the land in areas west of I-395 and around Webster Lake. Low Density Residential with housing on larger than ½ acre lots covered another 5.4% of the Town’s area.

Figure 1.1 Land Use in 2005, Webster, MA²

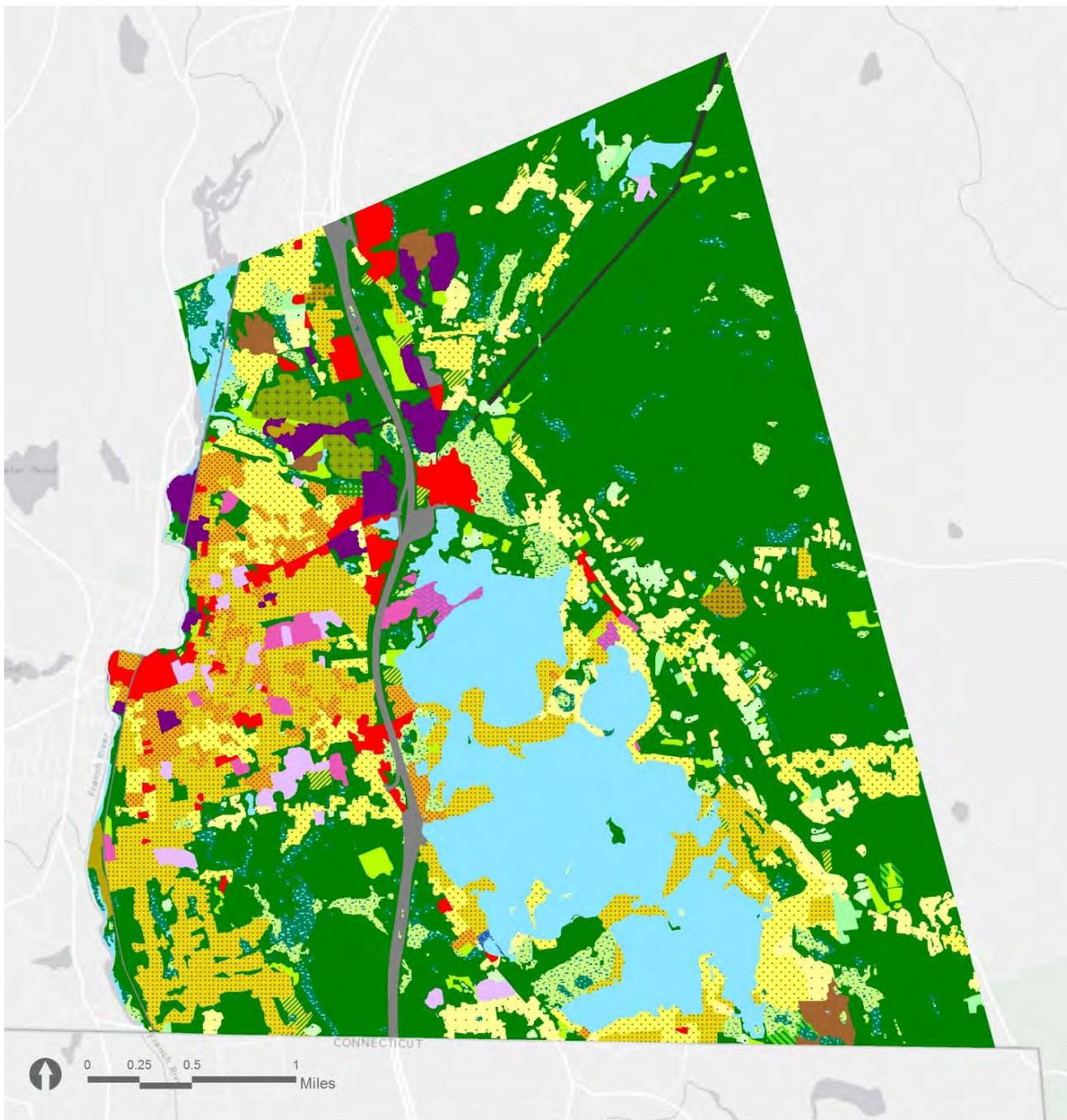


Source: MassGIS

Commercial land accounted for 2.5% of the total area in town and is primarily located in the western part of Webster along major transportation corridors such as Route 12, 16 and 193. An additional 4.6% of the land is dedicated for industrial, transportation, and mining uses, among which industrial land was primarily located in the northwestern part of the Town.

¹ Note: The amount of land designated as natural and undisturbed land increased from prior analyses due to evolved image interpretation, more detailed resource definitions and better data collection.

² Note: Due to evolved image interpretation and data production methods, as well as changes in land use categories, 2005 land use data is not completely comparable to land use data from 1971, 1985, and 1999.



Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Map 1.2 2005 Land Use, Webster, MA

Legend

Forest	Salt Water Wetland	Pasture	Marina	Transitional	Mining
Brushland/Successional	Saltwater Sandy Beach	Cemetery	Multi-Family Residential	Urban Public/Institutional	Waste Disposal
Open Land	Cranberry Bog	Golf Course	High Density Residential	Commercial	Junkyard
Water	Orchard	Participation Recreation	Medium Density Residential	Industrial	
Forested Wetland	Nursery	Spectator Recreation	Low Density Residential	Transportation	
Non-Forested Wetland	Cropland	Water-Based Recreation	Very Low Density Residential	Powerline/Utility	

Today, the historic town center and hub of commercial activity is located along the banks of the French River, slightly west of the Webster Lake. Interstate 395, while providing transportation resources attractive to industries, forms an artificial delineation of Webster's land use pattern. The area west of the highway is densely populated, bustling with higher density residential uses, commercial activities, and infill developments. East of the highway, much of Webster Lake's shoreline has been developed for seasonal cottages, high-end residences, and recreational uses. This part of the Webster is largely rural and undeveloped, primarily due to several large tracts of conservation land that are protected in perpetuity.

Local Development Regulations

Like most New England towns, Webster relies on several means to regulate development including zoning, site plan review, subdivision control, and wetland protection. This section of the Master Plan considers the important role played by zoning in guiding future land use decisions. In the Zoning Diagnostic section below, the existing zoning bylaw will be assessed in more detail and will include specific recommendations for changes and amendments to the bylaw so that it achieves the Goals and Objectives of the Master Plan as a whole. Recommendations for other chapters such as Housing, Natural Resources, and Transportation will be incorporated into that review.

Modern zoning began in the early 1900's in response to the location of potentially incompatible and noxious land uses next to commercial and residential areas. The zoning bylaw has evolved over the years as a means to limit the types of land uses that could locate in a particular area of the municipality, resulting in a separation of uses. Ideally, the Master Plan is the blueprint for the Town and the zoning bylaw is the regulation that implements the plan. Typically, a zoning bylaw regulates land use by:

- *Specifying and distinguishing different land use types;*
- *Creating development standards for the size and shape of lots and the buildings erected on those lots;*
- *Addressing lots, buildings and uses that pre-dated the adoption of the zoning bylaw (non-conformities);*
- *Establishing criteria for the evaluation of permit applications for new buildings;*
- *Establishing procedures for permitting uses not specifically allowed by right;*
- *Defining terms that have specific meanings under the bylaw; and,*
- *Creating a map that displays the geographic extent of each zoning district.*

Zoning Overview

The Webster Zoning Bylaw establishes 10 districts and three overlay districts. Please see Map 1.3 Webster Zoning Map.

1. S.F.R. - Single-Family Residential

This is primarily a district that allows detached single family dwellings and related accessory uses, as well as institutional uses with adequate off-street parking area. The minimum lot area is 12,000 square feet and the minimum width at the building line is 100 feet.

2. A.S.F.R. - Agricultural Single-Family Residential

This district, while allowing all uses permitted in S.F.R district, also supports agriculture related uses such as farm, nursery, and their accessory uses. Some other uses, such as farm slaughtering, restaurant, hotel, etc., might be permitted by special permit from the Board of Appeals. Minimum lot size in this district is 43,560 square feet (one acre) with 100 feet minimum width. The A.S.F.R district occupies the majority of the land in Webster.

3. M.F.R. - Multiple-Family Residential (two-family)

Besides all uses permitted in S.F.R district, the M.F.R district also allows higher density residential uses, such as two-family dwellings, as well as hotel, motel, nursing homes, and schools. The minimum lot area for two-family dwelling is 12,000 square feet with 6,000 square feet required for each additional dwelling unit. For hotel, motel, nursing homes, and schools, the floor area ratio to land area is 1:2.

4. B-4 - General Business (within sewer district)

This district allows residential uses permitted in S.F.R. and M.F.R. districts and general retail and commercial uses. A 10 feet building set-back is required in this district. Any lot used principally for residence purposes should conform with the M.F.R. district requirements.

5. B-5 - General Business (outside sewer district)

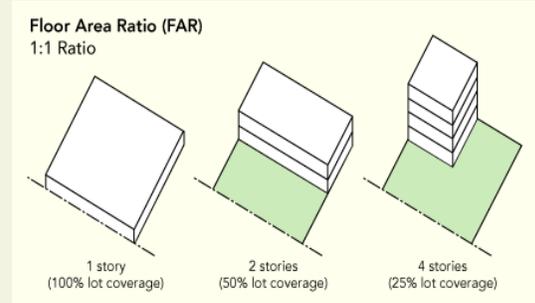
This district offers great flexibility in possible uses of the land. It allows all uses – residential, retail, and commercial – permitted in the B-4 business district and the majority of the uses, including agriculture uses, permitted in the A.S.F.R. district. Minimum lot size in this district is 25,000 square feet and floor area ratio is 1:2.

5A. B-5A - Gore Business

This is a small zoning district along the east side of Gore Road. It allows similar residential and agricultural uses as permitted in the A.S.F.R. district, and allows a variety of retail, office, and commercial uses that are similar to what the B-4 business district permits. Minimum lot size in this district is 43,560 square feet.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

The floor area ratio is the total square footage of a building divided by the total square feet of the lot the building is located on. Higher FARs tend to indicate more dense development.



Source: Building Healthy Communities: <http://lahd.lacity.org/>

6. IND. – Industrial

This district generally allows any manufacturing or industrial use with minimal negative impact, wholesale facilities, storage facilities, and office space. It also allows all uses permitted and as regulated in the A.S.F.R. district. Automobile dismantling yard and junkyard may be granted special permits by the Board of Appeals.

7. L.R. - Lake Residential

The L.R. district covers almost the entire shoreline of the Webster Lake. It allows any uses permitted in the S.F.R. district. The minimum floor area ratio to land area in the L.R. district is 1:2. No structure is allowed within 10 feet to the lake lines except boat houses and wharves.

8. Floodplain

This district, currently not shown on the zoning map, includes all land within the 100-year floodplain. All underlying permitted uses whether by right or by special permit must be in compliance with: Massachusetts State Building Code which addresses floodplain areas; as well as Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulations regarding Wetlands Protection; Inland Wetlands Restriction; and Minimum Requirements for the Subsurface Disposal of Sanitary Sewage.

9. C.D. - Conservation District

The purpose of the Conservation District is to protect large areas of the natural landscape for the benefit of the health, safety and welfare of the public. This district limits the

permitted land uses to those having low environmental impacts. Parkland and open space area the predominant uses in this district which can be primarily found at the northeastern part of the town. Other uses allowed by right or by special permit include municipal use, wildlife management, and recreation related uses, etc.

10. Lake Watershed Protection District

The purpose of this overlay district is to protect, preserve and maintain the existing and potential ground and surface water resources of the Town and the watershed of Webster Lake. Uses such as landfills, junkyard, or disposal work that can cause any damage to the water quality are prohibited.

11. Redevelopment Overlay District

The formation of this district aims to encourage the redevelopment and reuse of existing nonresidential buildings, to preserve the character and historic built form of Webster's central business district, to protect the value of property, and to create opportunities for housing within walking distance of goods and services. To qualify for placement in the Redevelopment Overlay District, the property will need to be located in a B-4 business district that has access to public water and sewer service. The parcel should be at least 5,000 square feet in size (although there is no minimum lot size for the redevelopment of the parcel) and the existing nonresidential building should be at least 50 years old. There are a variety of uses allowed in the Redevelopment Overlay District by right or by special permit, including offices, financial institution, multi-family housing, assisted living facility, etc. the height of any building may be increased by one story with the issuance of a special permit.

12. B/I – Business/Industrial

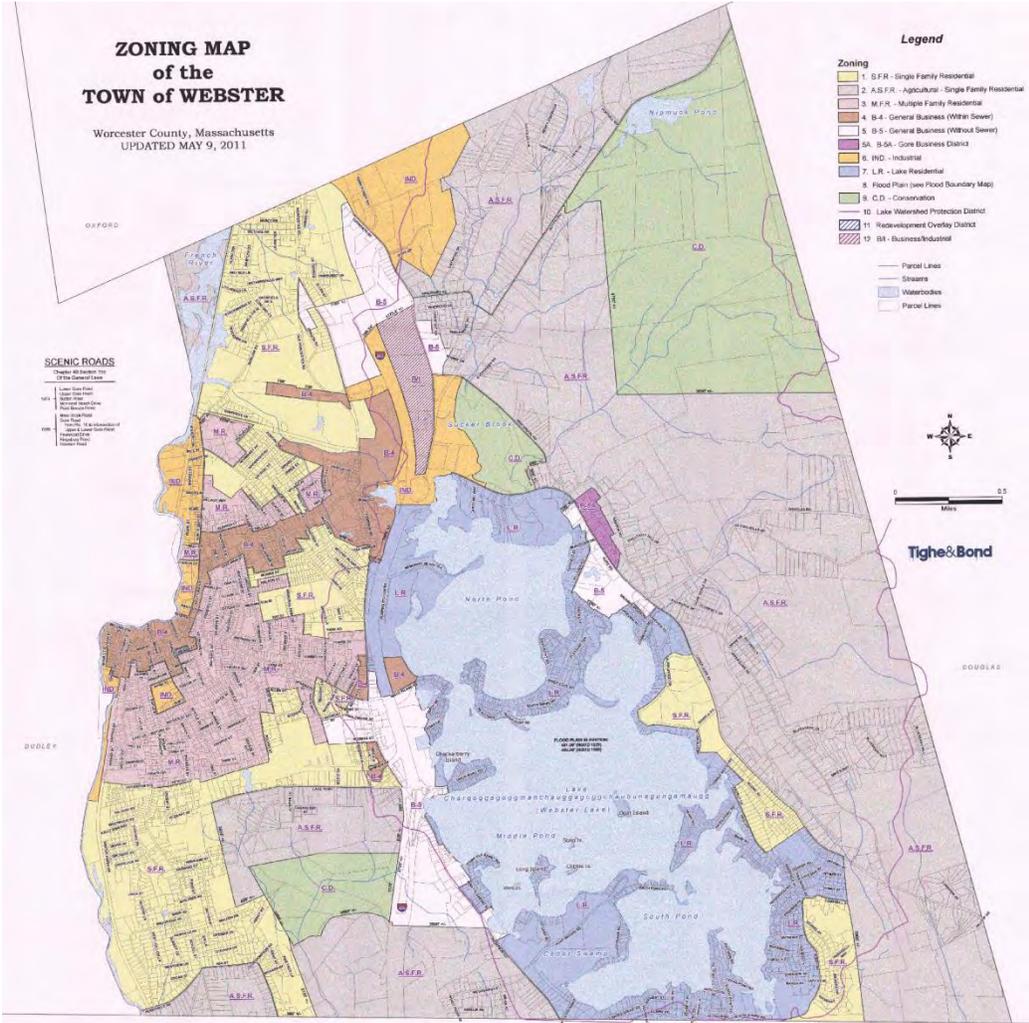
Overall, Webster has 59.6% of its land area zoned for residential purposes, 25.2% zoned for conservation (this includes Webster Lake), 8.6% zoned for industry, and 6.6% zoned for commercial activity.

The Zoning Map of Webster delineates where various uses area permitted in town. Industrial developments are allowed in several locations, including an area north of town bounded by Oxford, Sutton Road and Cudworth Road; an area just north of Webster Lake between Route 12 and Cudworth Road; three distinct strips along the French River; and a block in the town center bounded by Elm Street, Park Street, Maple Street and Myrtle Avenue. Business zoning districts can be found along either side of Route 12 in the town center; along either side of Cudworth Road to the north; an area between Route 16 and

the Lake in the vicinity of the La Vue Du Lac village; and along either side of Route 193 south of Birch Island Road.

Multi-family residential zoning occurs in the town center; single-family zoning occurs north and south of the town center and two locations east of the Lake; the shoreline of the Lake is zoned Lake-Residential; and east of the Lake is zoned Agricultural/Single-Family Residential. There are also four Conservation Districts scattered throughout Town, including the islands within Webster Lake; a large tract of land in the northeast corner; the area in the vicinity of Sucker Brook Swamp and an area in the vicinity of Freeman's Brook.

Figure 1.3 Zoning Map, Webster, MA



Source: Town of Webster

Zoning Diagnostic

Due to the fact that the Webster Zoning Bylaw has not been comprehensively reviewed since its initial adoption, a zoning diagnostic will be incorporated into the Webster Master Plan. The zoning diagnostic identifies a list of initial findings and recommendations regarding improvements and updates needed to make the zoning bylaw a more effective tool for the Town to use in implementing the Master Plan.

During the public outreach process, comments were made regarding the zoning bylaw including that it is out-of-date, difficult to use, and does not include the types of smart growth tools and techniques that have been employed by numerous other communities in

Massachusetts and around the country. Land use and development has changed substantially over the years and it is important for the Town to “keep up with the times”.

One of the main recommendations of the land use chapter of the Master Plan is to conduct a thorough review and comprehensive update of the zoning bylaw that addresses issues including format of the bylaw to make it more user-friendly, land uses, dimensional regulations, parking requirements, and supplemental development regulations (landscaping, stormwater management, etc.). The Town should also consider new provisions that incorporate smart growth tools designed to steer development where appropriate and preserve natural resources. This review should lay the groundwork for many of the important changes that the Town should consider when updating its zoning. In this diagnostic, observations regarding the current zoning bylaw will be outlined, along with suggested changes. As the Town moves forward with the adoption and implementation of the Master Plan, it will be important for the zoning to be consistent with the Plan.

What is zoning?

- Regulates the use of land
- Determines where different uses occur and under what circumstances
 - Setbacks and buffers
 - Building height
 - Density
 - Parking
 - Signs
- Implements recommendations of town planning documents
- Legality confirmed by Supreme Court in 1926

Reasons for updating a zoning bylaw

- Zoning should meet current needs and anticipated trends
 - Zoning regulations should reflect desired land use policy
 - Some land could be at risk to inappropriate development
 - Ensure that growth is concentrated in areas where the infrastructure is sufficient to support it
- Lack of modern smart growth tools and techniques
- Piecemeal revisions over the years
 - Confusing for all users
- Out of date policies and procedures
 - Old, irrelevant, redundant use classifications
- Not current with legal requirements
- Sustainability and design standards

Goals of a zoning update effort

- Simplify, clarify, and update the bylaw
- Make the zoning code consistent with Town and State planning policies
 - Implement recommendations from the Master Plan
- Strengthen zoning language
 - Clarify existing language
 - Add new sections
- Evaluate zoning districts and specific sections
- Improve permit process and reorganize (recodify) for ease of use

Initial findings and recommendations

The following is a preliminary description of key issues that should be addressed in the revision process.

- **Purpose:** Update the purpose section of the bylaw.
- **Table of Uses:** Include a Table of Uses rather than the narrative list of uses for each district in Article IV – District Regulations. Some zoning districts do not include a purpose or description section.
- **Dimensional Regulations:** The dimensional regulations are also part of the Article IV District regulations. It should be a separate section with a Table of Dimensional Regulations (the table at the beginning of Article IV is incomplete). Some districts have no specific dimensional requirements.
- **Definitions:** There is no comprehensive set of definitions for the bylaw. Definitions can arguably be considered the most important section of a zoning code since interpretations, code enforcement and administration need to be based upon how the words in the zoning are defined. This is true for land uses; dimensional criteria such as building height or floor area; permits and permitting processes; and various regulatory provisions such as parking and signs. There are some definitions in specific zoning Articles, but that is not sufficient since it could be argued that those definitions do not apply townwide.
- **Use of graphics:** Illustrations should be added to graphically describe terms included in the definitions sections or in supplementary regulations to assist in the understanding and interpretation of the specific provisions.
- **Land use designations:** The land use designations within most zoning districts should be updated and revised. At a minimum, there are numerous types of land use types that were not contemplated when the bylaw was written that we frequently see in other municipalities (i.e. assisted living, biomedical research, etc.).
 - There is no description or regulation for the Business/Industrial district, including such basic things as what uses are allowed by right or special permit.

- The Town should consider uses related to alternative energy production and research.
- Medical marijuana should be addressed by the Town.
- **Parking and access management:** The Town should consider shared parking where appropriate to reduce parking requirements and access management controls in some of its business districts to better manage curb cuts and traffic along major roadway corridors.
- **Site plan review:** The site plan review process has no specific thresholds for when site plans are required. For example, a site plan review process is required for “any construction, reconstruction, exterior alteration, or addition to any commercial or industrial building”. This implies that such activity, even if the square footage of new construction or an addition is small, would require site plan review. There may also be times when the Town would want to require site plan review for larger multi-family residential projects. A minimum threshold should be established to determine when site plan review is appropriate. A number of communities also establish a process for minor site plan review, which involves a less intensive review and permitting process for smaller projects.
- **Smart growth tools and techniques:** Numerous communities have adopted smart growth tools and techniques that Webster may want to consider as well such as open space residential design, low-impact development for stormwater management, inclusionary zoning for affordable housing, design standards and guidelines, landscaping, and adaptive reuse to encourage the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized buildings.

The following issues or questions should be considered as the zoning review and planning process moves forward.

- Do the zoning district designations still make sense? For example, East Main Street and South Main Street have the same zoning designation, yet the development patterns and the vision for those areas are different.
- Similarly, how would the Town revise and update the uses allowed (either by right or by special permit) within each zoning district? Should certain business uses be allowed in the Industrial district, for example?
- Should the Redevelopment Overlay District be revised if there are other areas where it could be applied?
- Are there any specific zoning provisions that have been particularly problematic for the Town to administer or enforce?

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

- The Webster Zoning Bylaw has not been revised and updated in a comprehensive manner in many years. Consequently, it is out-of-date, difficult to use, and does not include the types of smart growth tools and techniques that have been employed by numerous other communities in Massachusetts and around the country. Land use and development has changed substantially over the years and it is important for the Town to “keep up with the times”. Additionally, if the zoning regulations are not updated to reflect desired land use policy, some land could be at risk to inappropriate development or it can be concentrated in areas where the infrastructure is insufficient to support the new growth.

The Town should conduct a thorough review and comprehensive update of the zoning bylaw that addresses issues including format of the bylaw to make it more user-friendly, land uses, dimensional regulations, parking requirements, supplemental development regulations (landscaping, stormwater management, etc.), and potential new provisions that incorporate smart growth tools designed to steer development where appropriate and preserve natural resources.

- The Town should consider design guidelines for new construction, including redevelopment and adaptive reuse, in the downtown area and along the main commercial corridors. Design parameters can be incorporated into the zoning bylaw or as stand-alone design guidelines that would be more advisory, but can steer developers toward preservation and enhancement of the Town’s character. This is particularly important for downtown Webster where considerable efforts are underway to transform the area to a more vibrant center of activity. In addition, the Town should consider establishing zoning incentives to encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of existing properties, particularly historic buildings. Such incentives could include density bonuses.

Amend the zoning bylaw to encourage more mixed use development, particularly in the downtown area.

Incorporate open space residential design (OSRD) as a by-right residential land use to encourage the preservation of open space while creating a new option for single-family residential development. OSRD can be an effective tool for open space preservation for smaller project sites and its use would be encouraged by streamlining the permitting process for developers. This is more effective than

increasing lot size as a means to reduce the overall impacts of development while preserving more contiguous tracts of land for open space.

- Develop a comprehensive vision for the Town's major arterials to address future land uses, zoning requirements, design and signage (see *Chapter 4 Economic Development* for more detail on this).
- Continue the ongoing effort to capitalize on the potential of the French River in downtown Webster by providing connections through easements between downtown businesses and the River.

3 Housing

Introduction

As a significant percentage of the Town's land area, housing is the most prevalent developed land use in Webster; its cost and availability are critical components in the range of elements that together define the character of the community. While the housing stock (supply) today serves the needs of many of its citizens, market changes have made it difficult for certain segments of the community to afford housing costs. The housing goal is to provide choices for people and therefore, diversity in housing type and price is a significant aspect of this Plan.

An analysis of the housing condition in Webster should consider three important aspects: the housing structures, the population inhabiting the housing and the environment in which the housing is located. While the types and availability of housing is not necessary equally distributed, there are opportunities, through regulatory actions and resource programs, to bridge the gap and ensure all residents – current and future – have access to quality, affordable housing throughout the various stages of their lives.

This section of the Comprehensive Master Plan examines Webster's housing stock in terms of age, condition, cost and availability, and considers the demographic trends and the specific needs of different population groups in the Town. This section also discusses housing affordability in Webster as well as major housing issues identified during the public outreach process. Existing housing resources and programs in Webster will be reviewed and additional planning and regulatory considerations will be identified to help meet local housing needs.

Housing Goals

- Goal 1.** Encourage infill development and redevelop substandard, vacant or abandoned buildings in high density population areas, including the Downtown Main Street area for live/work space.
- Goal 2.** Preserve the existing rental housing stock as affordable to low and moderate income households.
- Goal 3.** Create opportunities for first time homeowners and increase the percentage of owner-occupied housing units.
- Goal 4.** Reduce the vacancy rate in existing residential or mixed-use buildings.
- Goal 5.** Discourage housing in environmentally sensitive areas around and near Lake Webster.

Housing Resources Assessment

This section of the Housing Chapter examines the existing housing resources in Webster and assesses future housing needs based on changing demographic and social context.

Existing Housing Stock

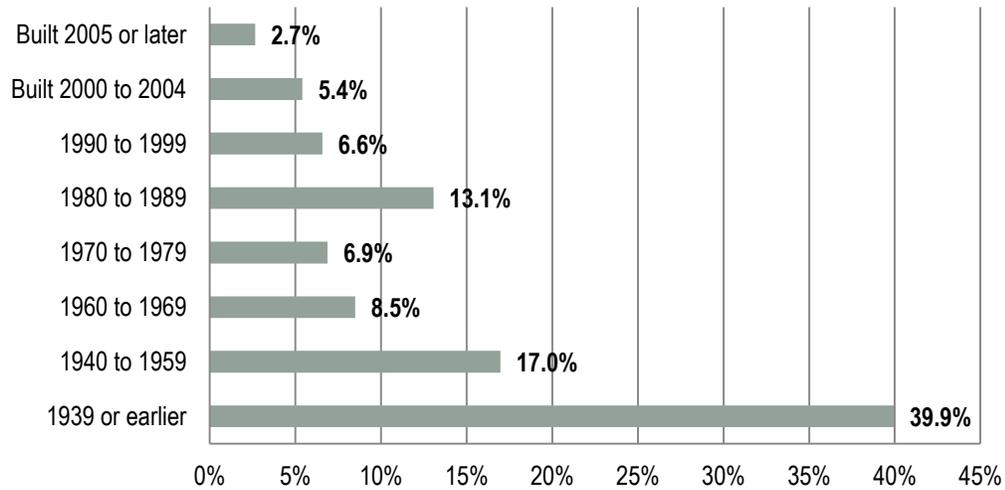
According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there were 8,267 housing units in Webster. This represents an increase of 713 units or 9.4 percent from the 2000 total of 7,554 units. During this time, the Town's housing growth rate was higher than the state (7.1 percent) but lower than the Worcester County average (9.6 percent).

Age and Condition of Housing Stock

Webster has a relatively old housing stock, as indicated in Figure 3.1. The Town has nearly 40 percent of its existing housing constructed prior to 1940. Of the housing units built after 1940, over 45 percent of the total housing units in Town were constructed between 1940 and 1989, with only 14.7 percent of total were constructed during the past 30 years.

Field investigations of the Town's residential areas reveal that while most of Webster's housing stock is in fair to good condition, a number of marginal areas exist in and around the downtown area where primarily two and/or multi-family rental properties cluster.

Figure 3.1 Age of Housing Stock in Webster, 2009-2011



Source: US Census Bureau 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Housing Stock by Type

Table 3.1 compares the change in the number of different types of housing units in Webster from 2000 to 2010. Consistent with national trends, single family detached housing comprises the majority of the Town’s housing inventory. During the decade, single-family attached units almost doubled, from 178 units in 2000 to 353 units in 2010. Single-family detached housing grew the fastest with an increase of 757 units or 23 percent. Multi-family dwellings with ten or more units also increased by nearly 20 percent. In contrast, mobile homes, two-family units, and other types of multi-family housing have experienced contractions at different levels.

Table 3.1 Housing Stock in Webster, MA

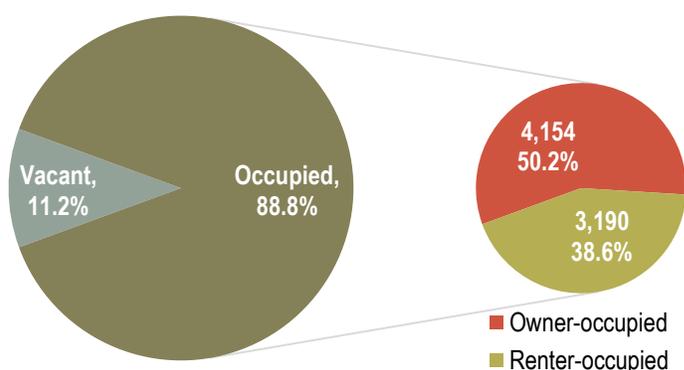
Number of Units per Structure	2000		2010		Percent Change 2000-2010
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Single-family (detached)	3,285	43.50%	4,042	48.90%	23.00%
Single-family (attached)	178	2.40%	353	4.30%	98.30%
Two-family units	1,184	15.70%	1,013	12.30%	-14.40%
Three or four units	1,537	20.30%	1,493	18.10%	-2.90%
Five to nine units	792	10.50%	726	8.80%	-8.30%
Ten or more units	499	6.60%	595	7.20%	19.20%
Mobile Home	79	1.00%	45	0.50%	-43.00%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010

Housing Ownership and Occupancy

According to U.S. Census, in 2010 the overall occupancy rate of housing units in Webster was 88.8 percent, which has declined by 2.6 percent since 2000, indicating an increasing number of vacant units in the Town.

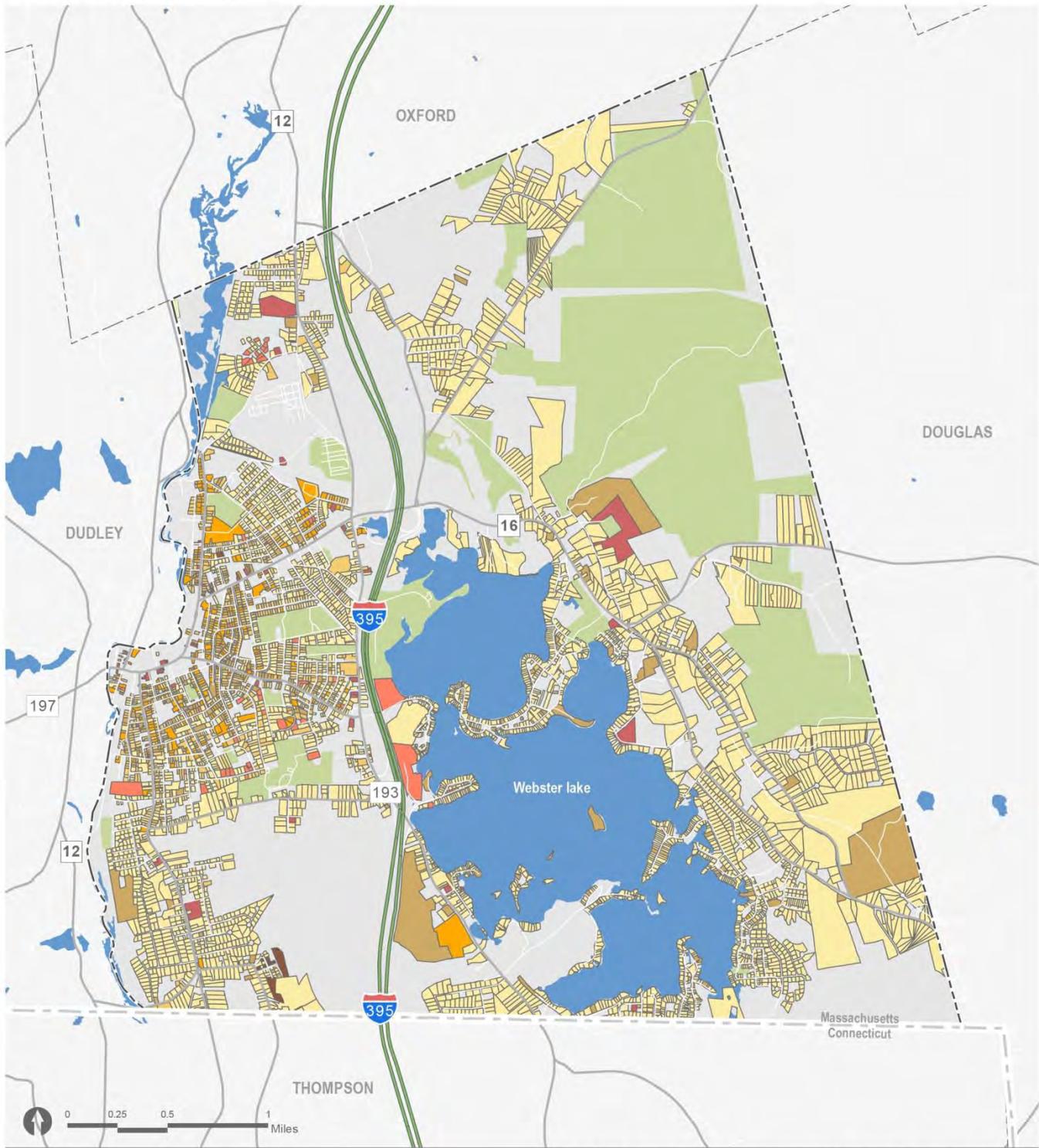
Figure 3.2 Housing Units and Households in Webster, 2010



Source: US Census Bureau 2010

In terms of housing occupancy, 4,154 or over 50 percent of the total housing units in Webster were owner-occupied in 2010, representing a 11.4 percent increase since 2000, whereas that of the renter-occupied units experienced a slight increase of 0.4 percent or 13 units. However, the 2010 U.S. Census data revealed that the percentage of owner occupied housing units in Webster was still noticeably lower compared to the county and state average, 61.3 percent and 56.5 percent respectively. The statistics highlight the issue the Town has with absentee landlords, particularly in downtown neighborhoods where blight has propagated due to lack of property maintenance.

Vacancy rate, in addition, indicates the availability of housing units in a community. Generally, a vacancy rate below 5 percent indicates there is a demand for additional housing, while a vacancy rate greater than 5 percent may indicate that a community has a problem with underutilization, has an overabundance of rundown and disinvested properties, or lacks an effective redevelopment/reinvestment policy. Although high vacancy rates can also be the result of economic weakness at state, regional or national level, in Webster the concern is focused primarily on the disinvestment in properties, primarily by absentee landlords. In fact, a number of derelict, tax delinquent or foreclosed properties that have been abandoned have been demolished by the Town in recent years.



Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. **Map 3.1 Housing Type and Distribution in 2013, Webster, MA**

Legend

Road Type

- Primary Route
- Secondary Route

- Open Water
- Open Space

Housing Type

- Single Family
- Two Family
- Multi-family
- Condominium
- Apartments with Four and More Units
- Mixed Use - Primarily Residential
- Other Residential

Table 3.2 Housing Vacancy in Webster, MA

	2000	100	2010	100
Vacant housing units	649	100	923	100
For rent	194	29.9	392	42.5
For sale only	38	5.9	89	9.6
Rented or sold, not occupied	20	3.1	21	2.3
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	211	32.5	223	24.2
For migratory workers	0	0	0	0
Other vacant	186	28.7	198	21.5

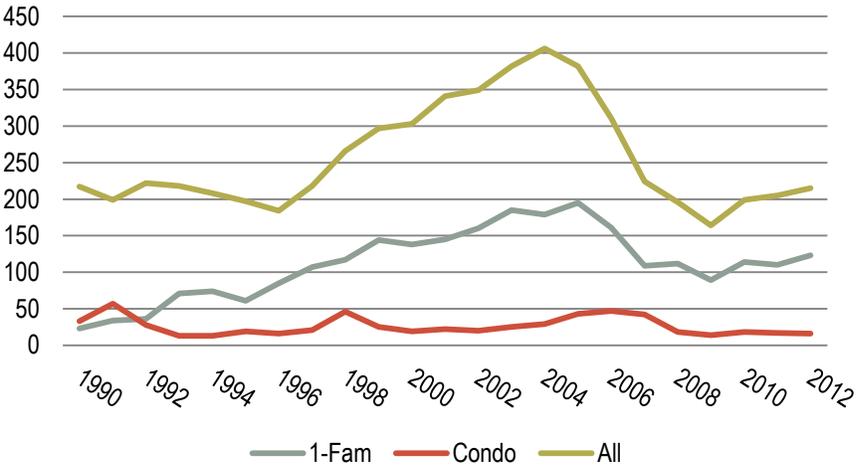
Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010

The Town has launched an initiative to target foreclosed or tax delinquent properties that are abandoned, have structural hazards, and spread blight. Some of these properties were foreclosed through housing court and then demolished by the Town using town money. Approximately 40 problem buildings have been demolished over the last two years. In other cases the Town puts pressure on banks or other lending institutions that hold the mortgage on problem properties to address the issues. The Town is also trying to identify properties in transition before they become problem properties so they can be rehabilitated before conditions deteriorate beyond repair. This program represents a significant step the Town has taken to address the issue of deteriorating housing condition in the historically low income downtown areas. Since its launch, this program has helped turn around blighted neighborhoods, such as the Tower Street neighborhood, and minimize unsafe conditions.

Home Sale Activity

Home sale activity in Webster revealed a fairly consistent trend for increased single-family home sales between 1990 and 2005. Single family home sales peaked in 2005 with 195 units sold and began to decline until reaching the lowest point in 2009 with only 89 units sold. The trends for all real estate sales were similar to single family home sales, which peaked at 406 units in 2004 and began a steady decline to its lowest point of 164 sales in 2009, which has since seen a slight rebound. Condominium sales account for a relatively smaller share of the overall home sales in Webster. The condo sales activity has fluctuated since 1990 with several peaks seen in 1991, 1998 and more recently 2006. These trends are consistent with the region and the state, and reflect the boom in housing development and the subsequent economic recession.

Figure 3.3 Home Sales Activity in Webster, 1990-2012



Source: The Warren Group, 2013

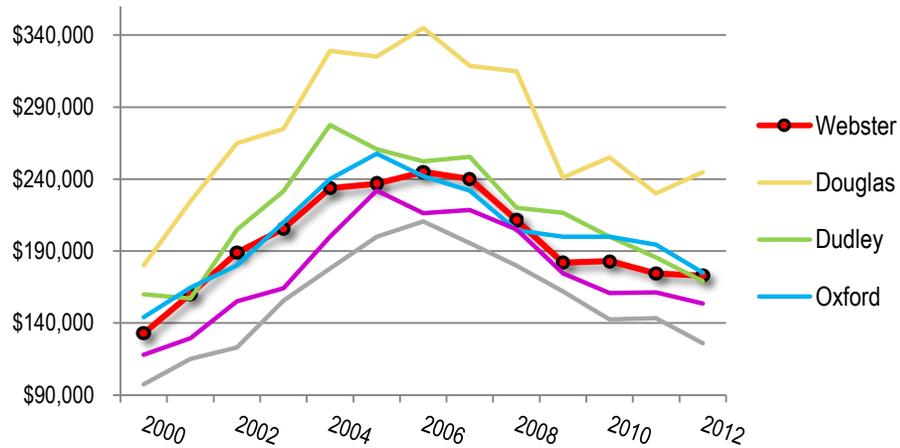
Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is a critical factor that determines who will be able to live in Webster and, in turn, its residential and neighborhood character. This section provides an analysis of housing costs and affordability in the Town.

Cost of Homeownership Units

According to The Warren Group, the median sales price for single family houses sold in Webster peaked at \$245,000 in 2006 as a result of the housing boom and started declining sharply through 2009 before leveling off in 2010 (see Figure 3.4). During 2012, Webster’s single family house median sales price was \$172,913, representing a 30 percent increase from \$132,950 in 2000. Compared to neighboring communities, Webster’s median sales price for single family houses over the years were generally lower than that of the other Massachusetts towns, such as Douglas, Dudley, and Oxford, yet overall higher than that of the Connecticut towns including Putnam and Thompson.

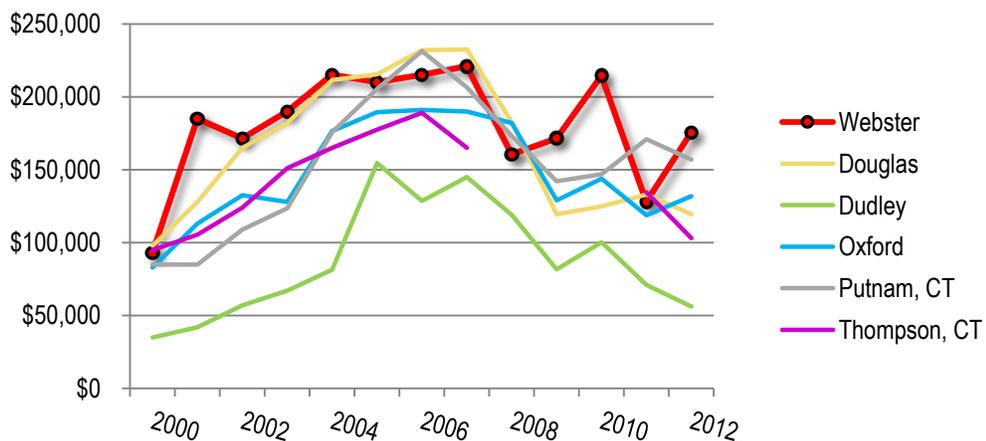
Figure 3.4 Median Sales Price for Single Family Houses, Webster and Neighboring Communities



Source: The Warren Group, 2013

On the other hand, the median sales prices for condominiums show a less distinct hierarchy among Webster and its neighbors (see Figure 3.5). While condos prices in Webster between 2000 and 2012 were generally higher than the majority of the neighboring towns, the median sales price for condo units in Webster experienced a more significant fluctuation since it peaked at \$220,950 in 2007. In 2012, the median condo sales price in Webster rebounded to \$175,500, or a nearly 90 percent increase from 2000, and ranked the highest among its neighbors.

Figure 3.5 Median Sales Price for Condominiums, Webster and Neighboring Communities



Source: The Warren Group, 2013

Note: Median condo sales price for Thompson, CT is unavailable for the year of 2008, 2009, and 2010.

Cost of Rental Housing

Rental housing in Webster is considerably more affordable when compared to the county and state market. Between 2000 and 2012, Webster’s median monthly gross rent per month experienced a 54.5 percent increase, consistent with the county (55.2 percent) and state (54.4 percent) rate. According to the latest American Community Survey data, Webster’s median monthly gross rent was \$799 in 2012, lower than that of the Worcester County (\$900) and the state (\$1,056).

Table 3.3 Median Monthly Gross Rent, Webster, Worcester County and MA, 2000-2012

Year	Webster	Worcester County	Massachusetts
2000	517	580	684
2012	799	900	1056
% Change	54.5%	55.2%	54.4%

Source: US Census 2000 and American Community Survey 2008-2012 5-Year Estimates

Housing Affordability Indices

Housing affordability considers both the price of the housing unit and the income of the household living in it. It should be noted that the term “affordable housing” is relative, since it depends on the income of the households. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) measures affordability against how much a household spends on housing; a household should be spending no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered to be cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

The 2012 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that approximately 33.5 percent of Webster homeowners spend 30 percent or more of their household income on housing costs while 45.3 percent of all renters spent the same percentage of their household income on housing costs. In comparison to the 2000 U.S. Census data, as shown in Table 3.4, housing costs burdens in Webster have increased substantially since 2000 with more households spending higher percentages of their income on housing costs.

Table 3.4 Monthly Housing Cost as a Percentage of Household Income, Webster, MA

	Homeowner		Renter	
	2000 Percent	2012 Percent	2000 Percent	2012 Percent
Less than 20 percent	53.8%	38.3%	40.8%	24.9%
20 to 29 percent	22.6%	26.5%	19.6%	24.1%
30 percent or more	23.1%	33.5%	32.4%	45.3%

Source: US Census 2000 and American Community Survey 2008-2012 5-Year Estimates

Chapter 40B Qualifying Affordable Housing

Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws mandates that communities have 10 percent of their total housing units dedicated to households with low and moderate incomes as defined by HUD. In order to qualify as affordable under Chapter 40B, housing units must be subsidized by the state or federal government by means of financial subsidies or programs providing subsidies in-kind or through technical assistance or other supportive services, such as the Department of Housing and Community Development’s (DHCD) Local Initiative Program (LIP), the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston Affordable Housing Program, and the New England Fund (NEF). Housing units (for sale or rental) must also have a deed restriction that ensures that the cost of housing remains affordable for those low and moderate income households. Income Eligible Households are determined to be a household of one or more persons whose maximum income does not exceed 80% of the area median income, adjusted for household size, or as otherwise established by the DHCD guidelines.

Table 3.5 Level of Affordable Housing, Webster and Neighboring Communities, 2013

Community	# Year Round Units	# Total Development Units	# SHI Units	% SHI Units
Webster	7,788	663	663	8.5%
Douglas	3,147	183	140	4.4%
Dudley	4,360	105	105	2.4%
Oxford	5,520	404	404	7.3%

Source: Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) Subsidized Housing Inventory 4/30/13

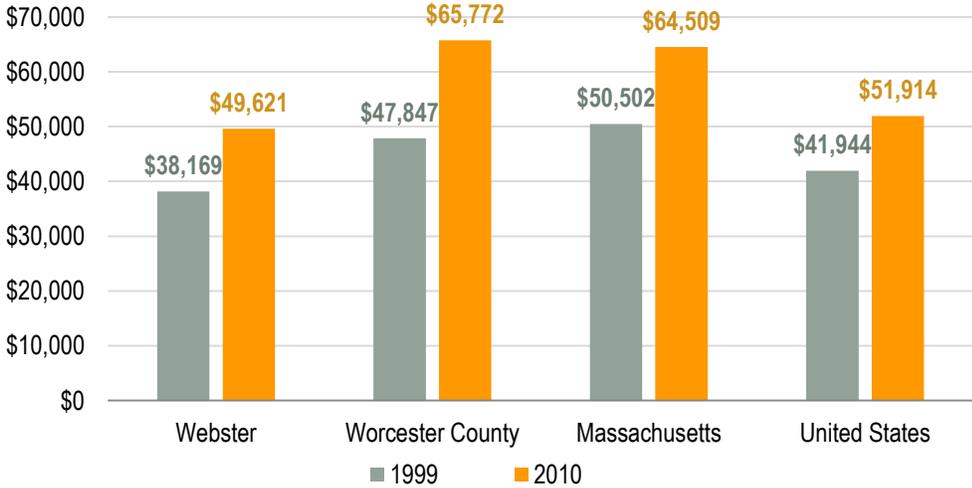
As of May 2013, 663 or 8.5 percent of Webster’s total housing inventory of 7,788 qualified as affordable under Chapter 40B. Table 3.5 compares Webster’s level of affordable housing to its neighbors, identifying it with the highest percentage of housing units qualified toward the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) among its neighboring communities. Thus, the Town currently falls short of the 10 percent target established by Chapter 40B despite anecdotal evidence that much of the housing stock, particularly the

rental housing, could be considered “affordable”. However, another 66 units will be added by April 2015 with the redevelopment of the Sitkowski School, which will bring the Town to 9.4 percent. The Town’s 40 Section 8 vouchers do not count towards the 10 percent target because the units are not deed restricted.

Housing Needs

As a Mini-Entitlement municipality designated by DHCD, Webster is home to a majority lower income population. According to U.S. Census, the Median Household Income (MHI) in Webster has historically been below the county, state, and national level despite an increase of \$11,452 from 1999 to 2010 (see Figure 3.6). Preserving and improving a quality supply of housing units affordable to a low- and moderate-income population is among the top priorities to meet the community’s long-term housing needs.

Figure 3.6 Change in Median Household Income, 1999 and 2010

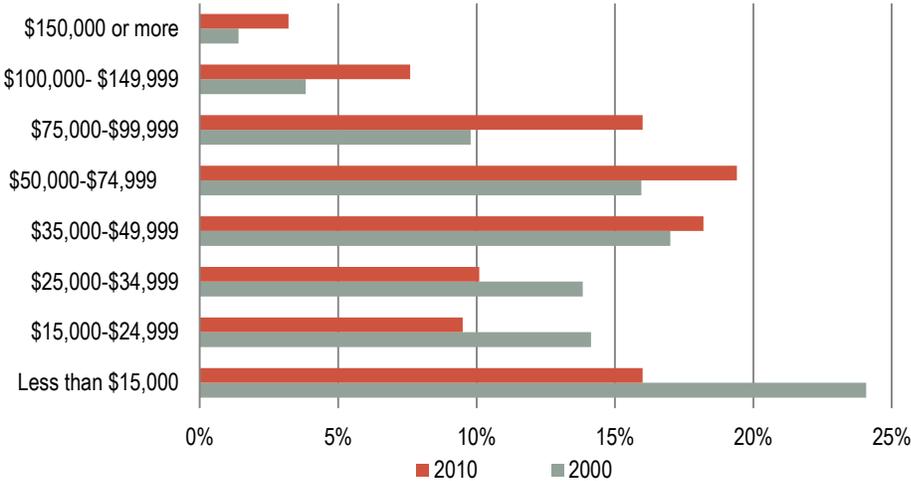


Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010; 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Nonetheless, a breakdown of income distribution among Webster’s households reveals that over the past decade more households in Webster have been earning higher incomes. As shown in Figure 3.7, the number of households in Webster with an annual income of less than \$35,000 has decreased substantially by over 32 percent from 2000 to 2010. Households within the income bracket between \$35,000 and \$75,000 have increased moderately by 12.8 percent or 335 households, whereas higher income households earning more than \$75,000 a year have seen a significant growth by over 76 percent or 912 households. It is critical for the Town to support the housing needs of a growing

middle- and higher-income population as a way to foster an economically diverse population that has greater means to support essential municipal services and stimulate local economic activity, which in return helps preserve and expand housing affordability in town.

Figure 3.7 Household Income Distribution, 2000 and 2010



Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010

Several demographic trends will also influence the needs for various types of housing in Webster. As shown in Figure 3.8, Webster experienced a population increase of 2.1 percent between 2000 and 2010. This growing trend is likely to continue for the next two decades, as projected by MassDOT, with a population of 17,390 in 2020 and 17,850 in 2035, respectively 3.7 percent and 6.4 percent increase from 2010.

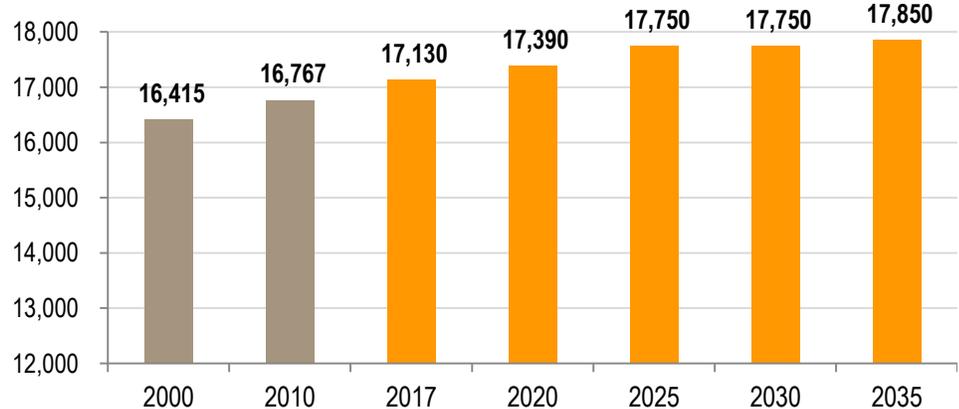
According to the population age distribution projected by Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER), the most significant population increase in 2020 will occur in the age cohort of 55 to 84



Golden Heights senior housing project

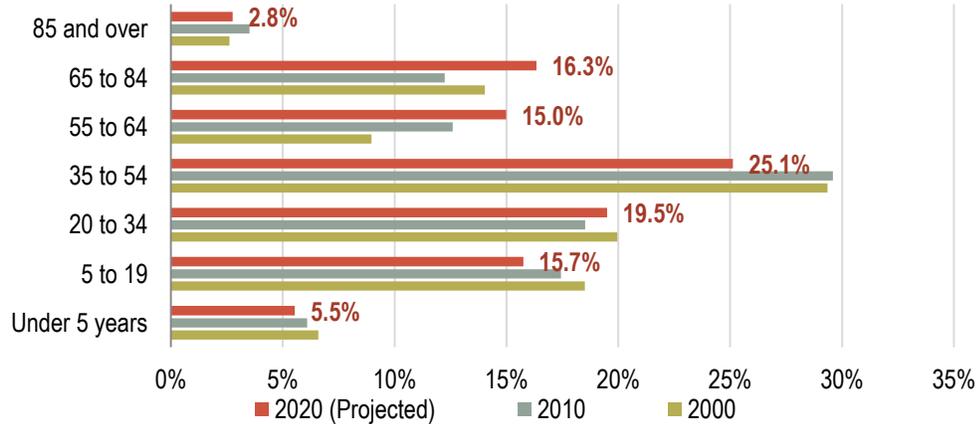
(see Figure 3.9). This projection echoes with the state and national trend of an aging population. The Town has also recognized the need for a housing rehabilitation program to help senior citizens. On the other hand, school age children and teenagers under 19 years old are projected to further decrease by 2020. It can be reasonably estimated that additional housing will be needed to meet the needs of “empty nester” couples as well as older adults seeking independent or assisted congregate living options. In addition to a growing senior population in 2020, Webster will likely to have more population between the age of 20 and 34. These younger adults entering the workforce and forming their own families will introduce a higher demand for starter homes with easy access to services and amenities in town.

Figure 3.8 Total and Projected Population in Webster



Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010; Projections developed by MassDOT in consultation with CMRPC

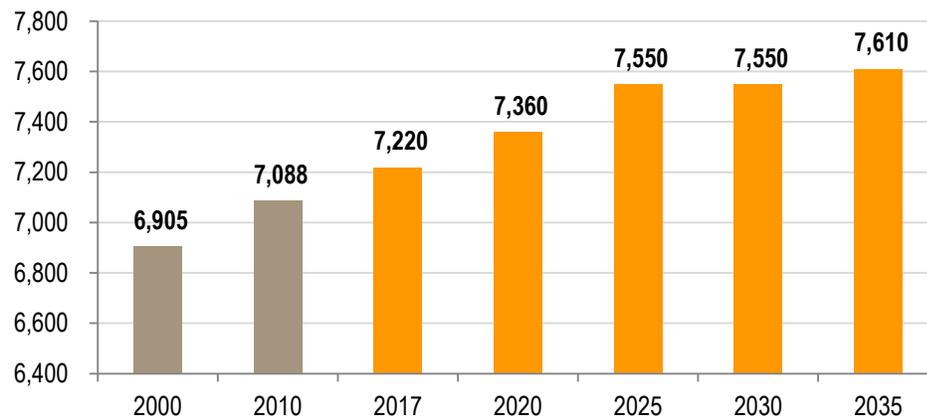
Figure 3.9 Population Distribution by Age Cohort: 2000, 2010 and 2020 (projected)



Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010, Estimates produced by MISER

From 2000 to 2010 Webster’s total household grew by 183 households or 2.7 percent. However the U.S. Census data indicates that Webster had experienced a decreasing percentage of family households during the decade, from 61.9 percent in 2000 to 58.1 percent or 4,270 households in 2011 (Table 3.6), while the average household size remained stable, with a minor decrease from 2.34 in 2000 to 2.32 in 2011. It should also be noted that while the number of households in Webster is estimated to grow for the next two decades (see Figure 3.10), the projected number of households in 2035 of 7,610 households is still below the number of existing housing units of 8,267 reported by the U.S. Census in 2010. This suggests that rather than substantially expanding the quantity of the housing stock, the Town should focus more on improving housing quality and reducing housing vacancy, and aim to repurpose the housing supply to be more adaptive to an aging population while attracting more families to settle in the Town.

Figure 3.10 Webster’s Total and Projected Households



Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010; Projections developed by MassDOT in consultation with CMRPC

Table 3.6 Characteristics of Households in Webster, MA

Households by Type, 2011	Number	Percentage of Total
Family households:	4,270	58.10%
Married-couple:	2,891	39.40%
With own children under 18 years:	1,822	24.80%
Male householder, no spouse	387	5.30%
Female householder, no spouse:	992	13.50%
Nonfamily households:	3,074	41.90%
Total householders living alone:	2,526	34.40%
Householders 65 and older living alone:	859	11.70%
Total Households	7,344	100.00%

Source: US Census Bureau 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Residential Development Pattern and Housing Trends

Zoning for Housing

Webster has a relatively unrestrictive zoning bylaw compared to many Worcester County communities. Currently, Webster has 59.6% of its land area zoned for residential purposes, including Single-Family Residential (S.F.R.), Agricultural Single-Family Residential (A.S.F.R.), and Multiple-Family Residential (M.F.R.). Nearly all of the other zoning districts and overlay districts also allow residential use (refer to the Land Use chapter for more detailed zoning review).

There have been a number of residential use related zoning changes recommended over the years. The 1989 Master Plan recommended a phased growth bylaw (zoning) to control the timing of new residential construction and suggested the draft and implementation of a cluster development bylaw as an alternative to conventional subdivision development to help preserve natural resources and open spaces. The 2003 Community Development Plan reiterated the benefits of “Open Space Residential Development” (the contemporary approach to cluster development), and recommended other proactive zoning tools such as accessory dwelling units (ADU), flexible development, and planned unit development (PUD) to ensure a diversity of housing options and protect sensitive resources while encouraging development that fits with the Town’s goals to diversify the housing stock and meet the needs of the Town’s residents.

Although these recommendations have yet to be realized, the Town is making progress in modernizing its zoning policy. In 2008, the Town enacted a Redevelopment Overlay District (ROD) which is designed to encourage the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized nonresidential buildings in the downtown area of Webster. Creating opportunities for housing within walking distance of goods and services is one of the purposes of this overlay district. A variety of housing types, such as multi-family housing, assisted and independent living units, and nursing home, are allowed by special permit in ROD.

In addition, the Town has also adopted an over-55 residential development bylaw to foster the creation of alternative housing choices for the Town’s growing elderly population. A community of single-family dwellings and/or duplex dwelling units

providing housing for those 55 years and older³ are allowed in single family residential districts upon the issuance of special permits from the Planning Board.

One such development for senior citizens will be realized with the construction of 66 apartment units of over-55 housing in the former Sitkowski School building behind Town Hall. Financing for the Sitkowski School Apartments was secured in January 2014 and a groundbreaking ceremony was held in February. The Neighborhood of Affordable Housing was selected by the Town of Webster to reinvent the historic school into affordable senior housing and a location for a new Community/Senior Center.



Rendering of the Sitkowski School Apartments

The project entails a substantial renovation of a locally prominent, historic, decommissioned school. Historic elements such as the original oak woodwork will be preserved where feasible, and the slender original wood floors will be repaired and restored. All exterior features will be maintained or enhanced with the addition of new parking areas, landscaping and streetscape improvements. The complex will have 59 one-bedroom apartment units and 7 two-bedroom units. Common amenities include lounges on each floor and a central laundry. The Community/Senior Center will include a large multi-purpose room with kitchen, a reading room, conference room and offices, an art space, an exercise room, a health office and a salon. Eight units will target residents earning less than 30% Area Median Income (AMI) using project-based Section 8

³ The development must qualify as 55 or over community as defined by the Fair Housing Act of 1988 and MGL c. 151B, § 4.

Vouchers. In addition, five units will be for residents earning less than 50% AMI, with the remaining 53 units affordable to those earning less than 60% AMI⁴.

Housing Permit and Construction Cost

Table 3.7 shows the residential building permit data and construction cost trends between 2002 and 2011 provided by MassBenchmark. The number of building permits peaked in Webster during 2002 with 86 units. A dramatic decline in the issuance of annual building permits was experienced in 2007 and since due in part to the economic recession in 2008. In 2011 there were only five building permits issued in Webster.

The average construction cost of a single-family home in Webster during 2001 and 2011 was significantly higher than the Worcester County average. In 2007 Webster's average residential unit construction cost peaked at \$251,250 compared to Worcester County's highest average of \$184,186 in 2008. It should be noted that the construction cost statistics cited in Table 3.7 exclude land cost.

Table 3.7 Residential Building Permits and Construction Costs in Webster: 2002 through 2011

Year	Webster Units	Webster Valuation	Webster Average Cost Per Unit	Worcester County Average Cost Per Unit
2001	61	\$10,171,000	\$166,738	\$139,954
2002	86	\$19,585,000	\$227,733	\$147,314
2003	61	\$13,237,000	\$217,000	\$145,587
2004	44	\$10,282,000	\$233,682	\$162,621
2005	63	\$14,716,045	\$233,588	\$161,990
2006	50	\$10,850,000	\$217,000	\$166,904
2007	20	\$5,025,000	\$251,250	\$177,173
2008	15	\$3,346,750	\$223,117	\$184,186
2009	9	\$1,834,272	\$203,808	\$136,886
2010	13	\$2,484,424	\$191,110	\$165,568
2011	5	\$1,042,000	\$208,400	\$191,047

Source: MassBenchmark, 2011 - <http://www.massbenchmarks.org/statedata/data.htm>

Potential for Future Residential Growth

In 2001, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) contracted with Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) to

⁴ See Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, <http://noahcdc.org/>

perform build-out analyses for communities in the CMRPC region including Webster. The build-out analysis estimated that an addition of 2,691 dwelling units in total could be created, the majority of which would be single family housing, with about 3 percent being multi-family units, based upon the zoning in place at the time (which has not substantially changed). According to the building permit data from MassBenchmark in Table 3.7, a total of 366 residential units have been constructed from 2002 to 2011. However, the build-out analysis assumes full build-out, which is unlikely, and was considered by local officials to have exaggerated the amount of available land for development due to inadequate consideration of conservation land. This analysis can serve as a basis for re-examining the Town's zoning policies and consider options that direct residential growth where appropriate while preserving land where development should not occur because of insufficient or to preserve environmental features.

Webster Housing Authority

The Webster Housing Authority has been developing and operating subsidized housing since it incorporated in 1949. The Authority also administers a Section 8 Tenant-Based Housing Choice Voucher program that is available to elderly, family and single person households. Participants who have received a Section 8 voucher find their own apartment in the community and the Authority pays a portion of the rent directly to the landlord.

The Authority's development for veterans is located on Second Island and Thompson Road and contains thirty units of family housing with two and three bedroom units. There are two one-bedroom units at this development and both are wheelchair accessible. These duplex and town house style apartments were built in 1954. Residents pay 27 percent of adjusted gross income for rent, along with cable, telephone, gas hot water, oil heat and electricity. This property is funded through the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD). Eligible local residents and veterans receive preference.

Golden Heights I is the Authority's state-aided elderly/disabled housing development and was built in 1978 across from the Slater Street ball field. Buildings are garden and row style and all 72 apartments (seven of which are wheelchair accessible) contain one bedroom, a bathroom, a living/dining area and kitchen. Residents pay 30 percent of adjusted gross income for rent which includes all utilities other than cable television and telephone service. Eligible local residents and local veterans receive preference and must be 60 or over to apply or have a qualifying disability. As with all state-aided housing of this type, 13.5 percent of housing units are set aside for disabled applicants under 60.

Golden Heights II is adjacent to Golden Heights I and was built in 1983 with federal funding from the HUD. There are six garden and row style residential buildings that contain ten units each. This development has six wheelchair accessible apartments. Applicants must be at least 62 or be disabled to apply. Rent is based on 30 percent of gross adjusted income and includes all utilities other than phone, cable and air conditioner.⁵

For a local resident, the wait list at Golden Heights I is approximately 12 months. For Golden Heights II, which has no preferences, the wait is two to three years. For both properties the wait list is longer for an accessible unit. Since there are only thirty family units, the wait is at least three years.

The Housing Authority currently administers 40 Section 8 vouchers, and does not usually exceed 43. It is possible that any of the surrounding housing authorities (Oxford, Southbridge, and Worcester) could be administering their own vouchers in Webster. In addition to housing authorities, RCAP Solutions also administers their own vouchers in Webster.⁶

The Housing Authority has identified several issues that require attention. Due to delayed funding, Golden Heights I (both family and elderly) suffers from a back log of emergency repairs. Due to the assumption that very low income residents would not own cars, parking at this development is inadequate to meet current needs. The HUD funded Golden Heights II has had some recent upgrades including replacement of its siding, roofs, kitchens, bathrooms and landscaping. In contrast, Golden Heights I still has the original siding, windows, kitchens, baths, and stoves from the initial 1978 occupancy.

The Housing Authority could access more state funding if it was used with local funding (CDBG, CRA). Going back to 1987, the Authority has not successfully accessed these local programs.

Another issue at Golden Heights II is that there are two sets of stairs separating the first and second floors. It is a difficult trek for many, which is why they prefer to wait for a first floor unit.

⁵ Webster Housing Authority website, accessed February 2014, http://www.webster-ma.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=175&Itemid=830

⁶ RCAP Solutions is a member of two networks.

- Rural Community Assistance Partnership, a national network of nonprofit organizations working to ensure that rural and small communities throughout the United States have access to safe drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal.
- Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts, a statewide network focused on delivering affordable housing solutions and education to families and individuals in every community throughout the Commonwealth.

The Authority expects that the demand for family housing always will exceed the supply. Calls are received from people that are in, or will have to go into shelters because they are homeless. Even those households approved as emergency cases have to go onto a waiting list due to the lack of available units. The first person on that list cannot be housed until one of the thirty existing resident families vacates a unit.

Moreover, the only financing for new housing/substantial rehab is tax credits, which may not help the very low income people because the tax credit units require residents to meet the affordability test, and the vast majority of applicants would not qualify.

Longer term, the recent proposal to allow the ownership and management of local housing authorities to transfer over to private management companies, threatens to discontinue the long-standing relationship that the Housing Authority shares with the Town.⁷

Housing Recommendations

- Amend the zoning bylaw to encourage more mixed use development, particularly in the downtown area. This will allow for residential uses to be located above retail or office uses, particularly in that part of Webster that is served by water and sewer and where higher density is appropriate. Moreover, downtown Webster will be a more attractive place to live as amenities such as the Riverwalk along the French River are completed.

Live/work space could appeal to people looking to establish a business where they live. This would be allow for residential occupancy of a dwelling unit and adequate working space accessible from the living area, reserved for, and regularly used by, one or more persons residing in that unit. Live/work differs from “home occupation” in that the residential space is secondary or incidental to the work use. Similar to this would be artist loft space. Zoning changes would be necessary to allow this option as well.

Encourage housing types such as multi-family (rental and ownership). The data shows that although the existing housing stock is fairly diverse, much of it is old and most of the newer housing has been single-family homes. There is a need for more

⁷ E-mail from Paula Mayville, Director of the Webster Housing Authority, February 24, 2014.

multi-family units (rental and for-sale), housing for working families at various income levels, and a desire for increased housing opportunities in downtown Webster. This includes creation of different housing types such as townhouses. District 3 – Multiple-Family allows two-family by right, but does not explicitly address additional units other than to indicate that proposals in excess of six units requires a public hearing before the Board of Appeals. Zoning changes may be required to establish where multi-family housing should be allowed either by right or by special permit.

- Consider establishing a Housing Task Force to address the issues of the quality of rental housing and code enforcement. The goal is to create an entity that can identify the key issues and shape a strategy to address those concerns. It would include key town officials and department heads such as the Building Inspector, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Health Department, Town Engineer/Planner, Community Development and others involved with housing and planning. Options to consider include:
 - Establishing owner and renter rights and responsibilities and conducting a public outreach campaign around them
 - Engaging the real estate community to understand and address their concerns
 - Ensuring that foreclosed and abandoned properties are cleaned and maintained
 - Exploring programs where renters enter into a unique financing agreement wherein a lessor agrees to collect monthly rent payments from a lessee for a specified period of time, after which the lessor transfers the title to the property to the lessee. This could provide incentives for better property upkeep.

Continue with the selective demolition of blighted and vacant properties. It is conceivable that the Town could increase overall tax revenue by replacing blighted properties with newer ones due to the increased value of the replacement units plus the overall positive impact on the neighboring properties. Tax title land can be sold cheaply with the stipulation that a new or improved house be built on the property to replace the dilapidated one. Redevelopment of infill sites such as tax title and blighted properties present an alternative to greenfield development. Demolition is an investment in the community and by taking the lead in this endeavor, the Town is taking action to facilitate improvements.

Continue to rehabilitate properties where appropriate. As mentioned above, nearly 57% of the Town's housing stock was built before 1960 and there are a substantial number of blighted residential properties in Webster. While it is not feasible and

may not be desirable to demolish all these properties, an aggressive rehabilitation program can assist in improving these properties and keeping them in a habitable condition.

- Reuse underutilized buildings within walking distance to downtown. There are a number of underutilized or vacant buildings near or within the downtown area especially along Main Street. Additionally, smaller infill sites and reuse of underutilized parcels in disrepair present additional opportunities for the creation of townhouses and other types of multi-family dwelling units. The zoning bylaw could be amended to create incentives for developers (density bonuses, etc.) to redevelop these properties.
- Meet the needs of elderly and disabled residents by conducting a detailed needs assessment of the housing options for the Town's aging population to ascertain actual demand for assisted or congregate living versus assistance for staying in and maintaining their own homes. Identify ways in which the elderly can age in place. Given the high elderly population in Webster currently and as projected in the future, as well as their relatively low income, a determination needs to be made as to whether such facilities will meet their needs. Moreover, with many so-called baby boomers reaching retirement age in the near future, such an assessment is needed to understand their future requirements.

Based upon waiting list information for area-wide elderly housing options, it is important to provide increased opportunities for housing that is affordable to the Town's aging population.

- There are no specific provisions within the Zoning Bylaw that allows for such uses as assisted living facilities, congregate housing, or other options that accommodate aging in place. Allowances should be made to allow for these uses by amending the bylaw to allow them close to where services could easily be provided.
- Furthermore, since much of the recent building permits have been pulled for single-family housing, the Town should consider attracting developer interest in elderly housing in Webster. The Town can consider issuing a Request for Proposals to seek a developer that could fill a particular need on tax title properties that have redevelopment potential.
- Examine the options for the elderly who wish to relocate to smaller units with less maintenance demands.

- Similarly, the Act Returning Tax Title Properties to Productive Use allows municipalities to shorten the process for taking the property and returning them to housing. The law allows abatements of taxes (75%) and interest and penalties (100%) if the property is used for affordable housing. It expedites the foreclosure process where the amount of the redemption exceeds the property value. A deed-in-lieu of foreclosure allows the property to be placed back on the tax rolls and therefore eliminates the need to incur full costs for a foreclosure proceeding.

Incorporate green building standards into new and rehabilitated housing. There are numerous examples of how green building standards can be incorporated into new and rehabilitated housing, particularly as a means to provide cost efficiencies to help keep housing costs affordable. The M2M (Mark to Market) Green Initiative, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rehabilitation program for multi-family properties is designed to encourage the inclusion of sustainable green building principles, particularly focusing on HUD's portfolio of Section 8 housing. See <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/omhar/paes/greenini.cfm>.

4 Economic Development

Introduction

Economic development refers to the policies and programs that support local employment and foster sustainable growth. The objective of economic development policies is threefold: to promote local job creation; to support job retention; and to ensure that the local workforce is suitable for local job opportunities. This can be achieved through business recruitment or creation, workforce recruitment and training, and through improvements to the commercial building stock through infrastructure investments, services, and real estate development.

This section discusses revitalization of the Main Street corridor in Webster and other key economic development issues identified during the Master Plan public outreach process. The economic profile of Webster presents the existing condition of the labor force, business establishments, and industry growth in the Town as well as regional economic development resources and programs.

Economic Development Goals

This section presents goals for economic development and downtown revitalization in Webster over the next twenty years. These goals can be achieved at the local level between Webster and its workforce and business community, but its success also depends on coordination with regional and state entities.

- Goal 1.** Attract diverse businesses to Main Street and East/South Main Street through investments in commercial and mixed-use properties.
- Activate Main Street and improve sidewalk culture by attracting retail and restaurant businesses to downtown Webster.
 - Facilitate mixed-use development in areas with high residential density, especially near Main Street.
 - Preserve the cultural and historic value of downtown buildings such as the Sitkowski School.

Goal 2. Improve and upgrade Webster’s active industrial corridor.

- Establish a coordinated permitting and design review process to streamline the location or expansion of businesses along Cudworth Road.
- Facilitate improvements to roadways, stormwater, and natural infrastructure along Cudworth Road.

Goal 3. Support regional efforts to connect workers to jobs in the region.

- Continue to support the Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board (CMWIB) in its provision of training programs that prepare youth for the workforce, such as Connecting Activities, Youth Works, and Job One.
- Continue to support the Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board (CMWIB) in its provision of training and workforce development programs that connect unemployed workers to job opportunities through the Workforce Central Career Center.
- Continue to provide public services that support residents of Webster who work in other communities, including providing a range of housing options; maintaining adequate infrastructure and public services; and improving the quality of public education.

Goal 4. Develop capacity for the use of federal/state programs and grants for economic development.

- Support public-private collaboration through the use of syndication, tax incentives and credits, such as the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit.
- Facilitate the redevelopment and the adaptive reuse of existing structures through the use of public and quasi-public resources such as LISC and CDBG grants, Redevelopment Authority funds, Urban Renewal, MassDevelopment, and the Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- Investigate the use of MassDEP’s brownfields program incentives for the cleanup and redevelopment of potentially contaminated properties along East Main Street and South Main Street.

Goal 5. Promote local tourism that capitalizes on Webster’s natural resources, cultural assets and local entertainment venues.

- Improve marketing of local events at Indian Ranch, Memorial Beach, and the French River. (See list of annual events in *Chapter 6 - Open Space and Recreation*)

- Improving overall marketing efforts including the enhancement of gateways on I-395 and Route 16 through the use of signage.

Past Planning Efforts

The economic development goals of this Comprehensive Plan were developed with public engagement during the master plan process, and are also based on goals from other recent planning efforts. Relevant objectives from Webster's Open Space and Recreation Plan, Community Development Strategy, and the Central Mass Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) are provided in this section.

Webster Comprehensive Plan (1989)

The current Webster Comprehensive Plan, published in 1989, presents goals that include locating industry in close proximity to infrastructure and major transportation routes, and encouraging commercial development that is compatible with surrounding residential uses. Additionally, the Plan recommends developing a mixed use business development overlay district.

Since 1989, business growth has continued on the I-395 and Route 16 corridors. To support downtown revitalization, the Town adopted a Redevelopment Overlay District in 2008 (§ 650-24 of the zoning bylaw), whose purpose is to “encourage the redevelopment and reuse of existing nonresidential buildings, to preserve the character and historic built form of Webster's central business district, to protect the value of property, and to create opportunities for housing within walking distance of goods and services.”

Webster Community Development Strategy (2010)

The 2010 Community Development Strategy of Webster was last updated in early 2013, with an economic development objective, “To reinvigorate Webster's declining downtown central business district and foster economic development growth by supporting new and existing local businesses.”

The strategy highlights six priority community development activities. The highest priorities among them include the redevelopment of the former Sitkowski School, the revitalization of the downtown business district, and the design and development of recreational facilities on the French River. Since 2010, the \$19.2 million Sitkowski School redevelopment into a senior citizen housing complex and new Senior Center for the Town has proceeded with State assistance, including a Massachusetts Historic

Rehabilitation Tax Credit. Additionally, the construction of the Webster Riverwalk on the French River is currently underway.

Table 4.1 Priority Projects Identified in the 2010 Community Development Strategy

Priority Level	Community Development Activities
HIGH	Disposition/redevelopment of the former Sitkowski School
HIGH	Revitalization of the downtown business district
HIGH	Upgraded infrastructure in established neighborhood areas Improving condition of housing stock in target area
MED-HIGH	Planning/design/development for public access/riverwalk to French River Improvement/expansion of recreation facilities
MED	Expansion of Corbin Library
MED	Jobs and related support services to lower income and low-skilled residents, especially those with limited transportation options

Source: 2010 Webster Community Development Strategy (updated - FY13 Mini-Entitlement Plan Application)

Economic development action items from the Community Development Strategy are listed below:

1. Completing planning, market, feasibility and other technical studies/reports as preliminary steps to actual redevelopment activities by utilizing a variety of resources, including private funding, Redevelopment Authority funds, Urban Renewal, MassDevelopment, LISC and CDBG grants.
2. Directing investment in downtown commercial and mixed use properties, utilizing private funds, syndication, tax incentives and credits, and public and quasi-public resources such as CDBG and MassDevelopment.
3. Improving public infrastructure, gateways, amenities and parking facilities, using private and local public funds and public grants such as CDBG and MassWorks.
4. Redeveloping vacant or underutilized municipal, industrial, commercial properties and vacant sites such the former Sitkowski School, Cranston Print Works, Anglo Fabrics Mill Complex and parcels along the South Main Street Gateway to downtown, utilizing private investment, tax incentives and credits, and public and quasi-public resources such as CDBG, MassDevelopment, EDA, 108, Brownfields grants and local funds. The redevelopment of the Sitkwoski is underway and the Cranston Print Works site is being redeveloped.
5. Improving the housing stock within and adjacent to the central business district, utilizing private funds, tax incentives and credits, and public and quasi-public resources such CDBG, HIF, HOME, MHIC.

6. Supporting efforts to foster the stewardship of and improve public access to the French River and encouraging environmentally appropriate development adjacent to it, especially where the river runs through downtown, using private, local town and available state and federal grant funds. The planning and development of a riverfront park and Riverwalk are objectives supporting this initiative. The 2011 completion of the French River Park represents an important achievement. The planning work funded by the FY12 grant has laid the groundwork to complete the first segment of the Riverwalk in 2013-14.
7. Strengthening the local economy in order to preserve and expand housing affordability. By retaining existing companies and increasing the job base in commercial/industrial sectors that pay competitive wages, Webster can buffer low-income homeowners from high taxes and, at the same time, provide jobs that attract a wider spectrum of incomes.
8. Selective demolition of seriously deteriorated buildings, where the deterioration is so great that rehabilitation is economically infeasible, particularly in view of Webster's weak real estate market. Most, though not all, of these buildings are residential structures. Demolition indirectly supports economic development by removing physical blight, which discourages reinvestment and community renewal. Demolition occurred at several sites in 2012 and 2013.
9. Provide jobs and related skill and job preparation training for lower income residents who need local jobs because of limited transportation options.

Open Space and Recreation Plan (2009)

Goal F of this plan recommends preserving and enhancing the historic character of downtown Webster through the following two actions:

- Work with property owners to preserve buildings that contribute to the historic look and character of the area
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing vacant and underutilized buildings

CMRPC – 2020 Growth Strategy: The Development Framework for Central Massachusetts, 2000; updated 2004

CMRPC is the regional planning commission for Central Massachusetts. The 2020 Growth Strategy presents several regional “Goals & Policies for Growth” that tie in with Webster’s own goals. These include policies that encourage reinvestment and reuse of brownfield sites, technical workforce training, public-private collaboration, and investments in public infrastructure.

- A. To capitalize on the region’s potential for new job creation opportunities.
 - a. Within the City of Worcester and older suburban towns, encourage reinvestment and reuse of sites, especially “brownfield” sites where feasible.
 - b. Provide information about the region’s economic development potential through the conduct and maintenance of an industrial site survey.
 - c. Promote economic growth in locations with public utilities that can be developed as clusters or nodes and eventually become linked to public transit.
 - d. Expand and coordinate public and private training programs to enable all members of the region’s labor force to improve technical, teamwork and problem solving skills.
 - e. Encourage collaboration among government, industry and public and private institutions in marketing this area as a place where “value” and opportunity can be found.
- B. To provide a basis for public infrastructure investments.
 - a. Identify potential centers of growth and the associated public infrastructure needed for continued development.

Economic Profile

This economic profile presents information on the labor force, local and regional economic development efforts, local business establishments and commercial space in Webster, and identifies target industries based on area employment projections. Other less tangible elements such as quality of life and business climate perceptions can also influence local conditions.

Labor Force Characteristics

The labor force in Webster is composed of 9,178 workers, out of 13,551 residents aged 16 and over. Close to one-third of workers (32 percent) are in management, business, science, and arts occupations; 28 percent are in sales and office occupations; and 16 percent are in service occupations. There are approximately 2,000 workers (24 percent) in occupations such as natural resources, construction, maintenance, production, transportation, and the moving of materials. The distribution of occupations in Webster is similar to that of Worcester County; however, Worcester County has a higher percentage

of workers in the management, business, science, and arts occupations—40 percent compared to 32 percent in Webster.

The labor force grew by 13 percent between 2000 and 2011. Underlying this growth is an uneven shift in industries and occupations over the past decade, as manufacturing declined and service-related industries grew across the Town and region.

Webster faces challenges such as unemployment and poverty levels that continue to be higher than the surrounding region. The unemployment rate in Webster was 8.7 percent as of May 2013, compared to 7.5 percent in Worcester County and 6.6 percent in the State. The poverty rate in Webster increased from 12.1 percent in 2011 to 14.0 percent in 2012, compared to an increase from 9.9 percent to 10.3 percent in the County.

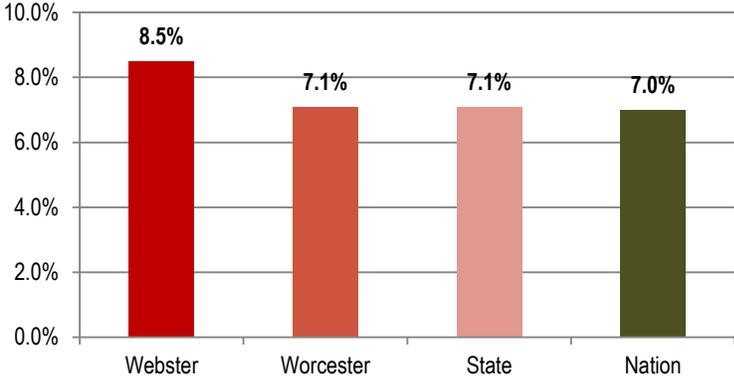
Webster’s workforce differs from that of the County and State in terms of educational attainment. Eighteen percent of adults in Webster over age 25 have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 33 percent in the County and 38 percent in the State.

Figure 4.1 Occupations in Webster



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Figure 4.2 Unemployment Rate, November 2013



Note: Worcester refers to the Worcester Metropolitan Statistical Area
 Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Table 4.2 Educational Attainment (Population 25+)

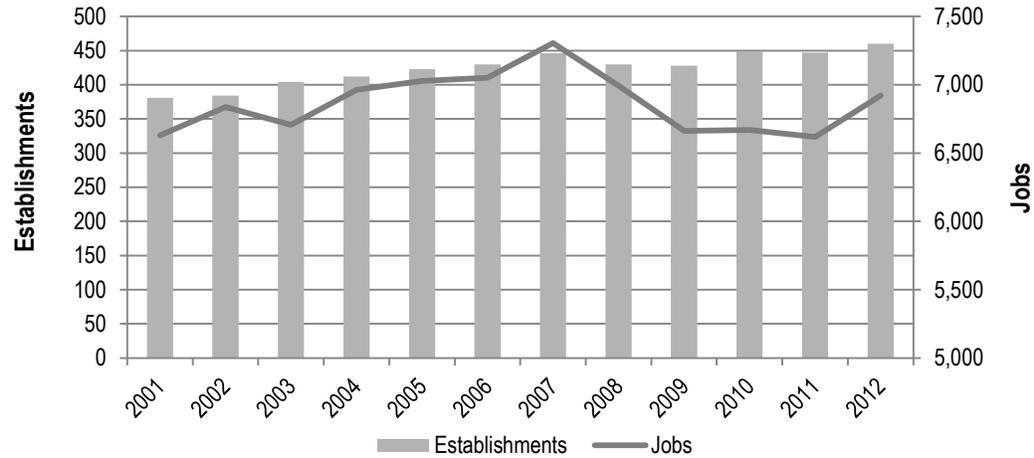
	Webster	Worcester County	State
High School Grad or Higher	83.4%	88.7%	88.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	18.4%	33.3%	38.7%

Source U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Business Establishments in Webster

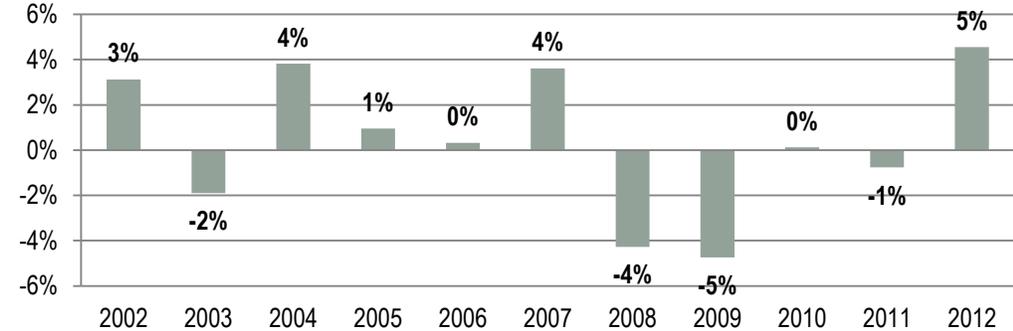
The number of business establishments in Webster has increased modestly over the past decade, reaching 460 business establishments in 2012 from 381 business establishments in 2000. However, the number of jobs has barely kept pace with business growth. The Town saw a five percent increase in jobs between 2011 and 2012, suggesting that an economic recovery may be on the horizon if such an increase can be sustained over time.

Figure 4.3 Establishments and Jobs, 2011-2012



Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2001-2012
 Note - will not sum due to exclusions of some NAICS codes from Service-producing domain

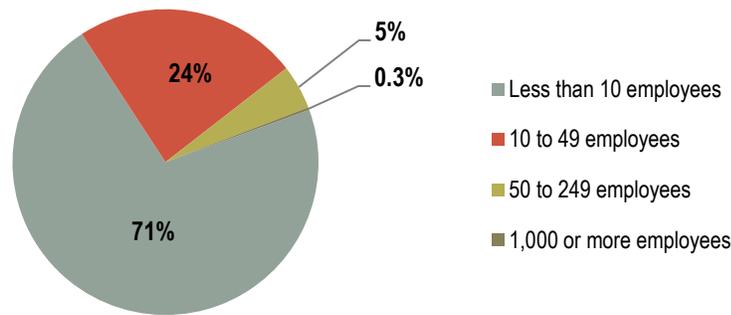
Figure 4.4 Change in Jobs, 2012



Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2012 3rd Quarter

The small business community is important to Webster’s local economy. Most of Webster’s businesses have fewer than ten employees; in fact, over half of business establishments in Webster have fewer than five employees.

Figure 4.5 Business Establishment Size, 2012



Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2012 3rd Quarter

Webster's local economy has evolved into a service-based economy, although manufacturing still has a presence on Cudworth Road. The industries with the greatest representation in the business community include miscellaneous service industries, as well as the following:

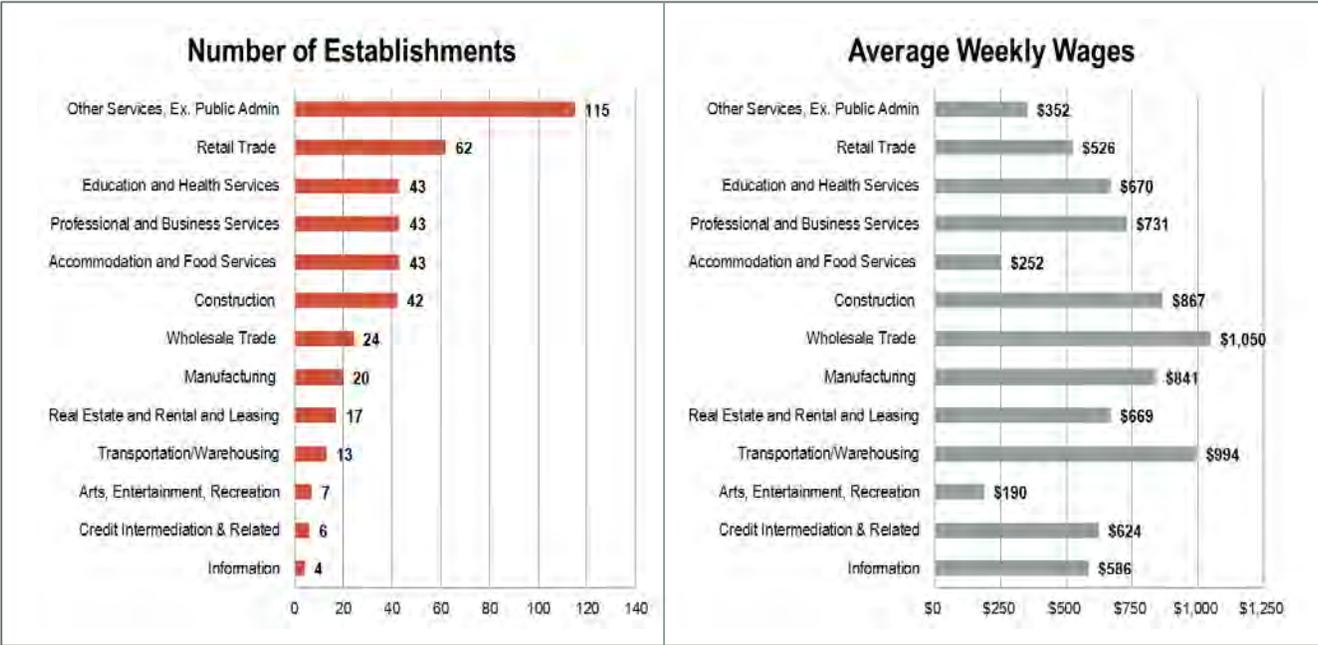
- Retail trade
- Education and health services
- Professional and business services
- Accommodation and food services
- Construction

The top employing industries in Webster include a range of income levels, based on the average weekly wages shown below. The top five industries range from an average weekly wage of \$252 in accommodation and food services (\$13,104 per annum) to \$731 in the professional and business services (\$38,012 per annum), with an average annual employment of 648 and 979 workers, respectively. Webster has a median household income of \$38,169 and median family income of \$48,898.

The retail trade industries, with an average weekly wage of \$670 (\$27,352 per annum), are the single top employing industry group in Webster, with an average monthly employment of 861 workers. Education and healthcare services, which employ an average of 1,204 workers per month, have an average annual wage of \$34,840.

The highest paying industries, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and construction, represent a lower number of establishments and represent average monthly employment of approximately 518 workers as of 2012 3rd Quarter.

Figure 4.6 Business Establishments and Average Weekly Wages, 2012 3rd Quarter



Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2012 3rd Quarter

The top employing industries in Webster, based on information from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, are Education and Health Services, Professional and Business Services, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Services.

The prominent industries in a town like Webster are closely tied to large employers. Manufacturing, once Webster’s largest employing industry, now accounts for five percent of employment. Goya Foods, Webster’s largest industrial company, employs several hundred workers on its campus on Cudworth Road.



Goya Foods

The Education and Health Services industries account for almost one out of five workers (17.4 percent) based on average monthly employment. This includes the teachers and staff of Bartlett High School; Harrington Healthcare, which maintains a comprehensive outpatient facility in Webster; the Oakwood Rehab and Nursing Center; Lanessa Extended Care, a 96-bed accredited healthcare facility; and the VNA of Southern Worcester County, which provides home health care services.



Mapfre Commerce Insurance Campus

Professional and Business Services account for 14 percent of employment in Webster. With over 1,000 employees, MAPFRE Commerce Insurance is by far the largest employer in Webster. The company provides auto, business, and homeowner insurance in 16 states across the country. In Webster, MAPFRE Commerce maintains a campus at the intersection of Route 395 and Gore Road and another office on Main Street in downtown Webster.

Other businesses employing over 100 workers at their Webster locations include transportation and distribution companies, as well as the regional and national retail chains. AA Transportation provides limousine services, and warehousing/distribution companies include LKQ (auto parts) and Guardian (glass products).

Table 4.3 Large Employers in Webster, 2012

1000+ Employees	100+ Employees
Personal, Auto, and Homeowner Insurance	MAPFRE USA Commerce Insurance
	Education
	Bartlett Jr./Sr. High School
	Food
	Goya Foods
	Harrington Healthcare
	Lanessa Extended Care
	Healthcare
	Oakwood Rehab and Nursing Center
	VNA – Southern Worcester County
	Retail
	Kmart
	Price Chopper
	Transportation
	A A Transportation
	Guardian Webster
	Warehousing/Distribution
	LKQ Route 16 Auto Parts

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2012 3rd Quarter



New Price Chopper plaza

Key Industries in Webster

Webster has experienced economic growth over the past decade, in spite of serious setbacks from the Great Recession. Based on information from the 2011 American Community Survey and 2000 Census, the highest-employing industries in Webster are as follows and are shown in Figure 4.7:

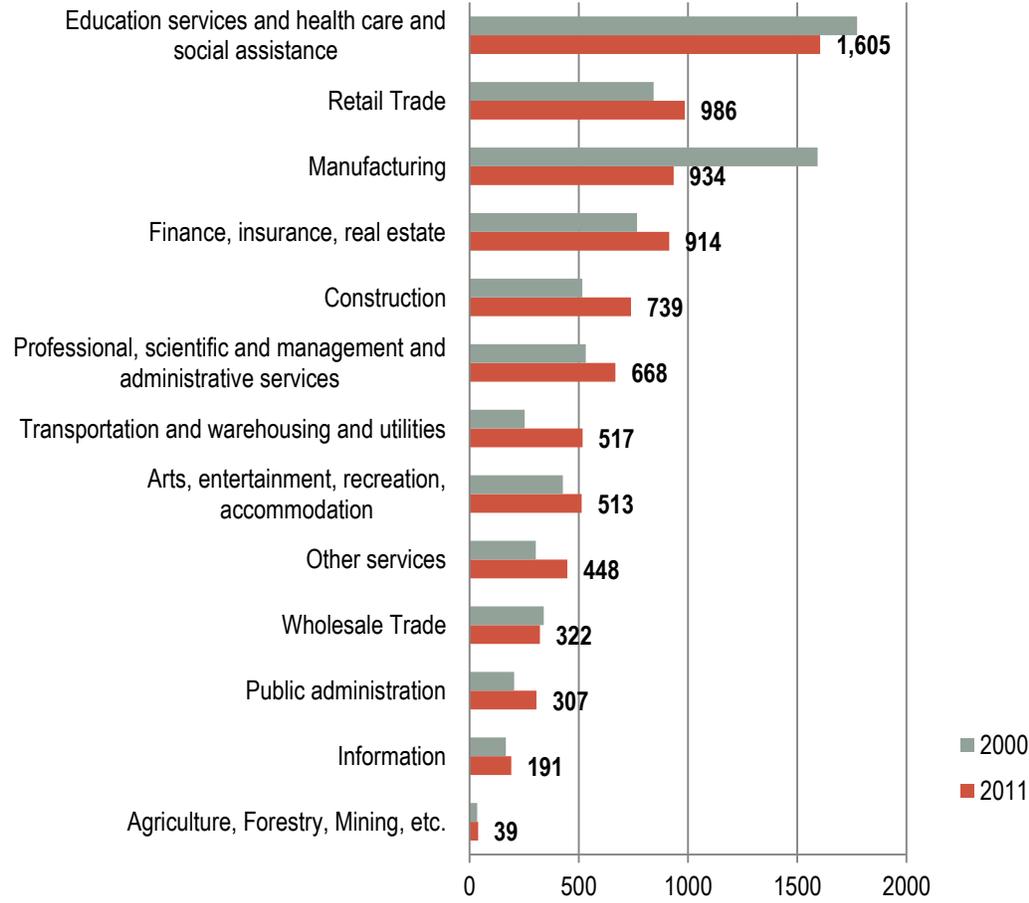
- Education services and health care and social assistance
- Retail trade
- Manufacturing
- Finance, insurance, real estate

Employment in some industries has grown more than in others over the past decade. Fewer jobs are available today in manufacturing, wholesale trade, and education and health services than in 2000. Most notably, manufacturing commanded close to 1,600 jobs in 2000, but only 934 jobs by 2011—a 41 percent decrease. This decrease in manufacturing jobs has contributed to the unemployment observed in Webster today.

Education services, health care, and social assistance were Webster's highest employing industries between 2006 and 2011. These industries still account for one out of five workers, in spite of a ten percent drop in employment since 2000. Additionally, retail and the finance, insurance, and real estate industries have shown modest growth, employing close to 1,000 workers each in 2011.

At the same time, employment in construction and the transportation, warehousing, and utilities industries has also increased. Webster’s location along I-395, leading north to the City of Worcester, and Route 16, which leads through Greater Boston, has been complementary to growth in its industrial corridor.

Figure 4.7 Growth in Employment by Industry, 2000-2011



Source U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 ACS 5-Year Estimates
 Note: These estimates are not directly comparable to MA EOLWD estimates of average monthly employment estimates due to differences in data collection methods and the aggregation of industries.

Table 4.4 Employment by Industry, 2000-2011

Employment by Industry	2000	2011	Percent of Total, 2011	Absolute Change, 2000-2011	Percent change, 2000-2011
Labor force	8,127	9,178	-	1,051	12.9%
Employed population over 16	7,752	8,183	100%	431	5.6%
Education services and health care and social assistance	1,773	1,605	20%	-168	-9.5%
Retail trade	842	986	12%	144	17.1%
Manufacturing	1,593	934	11%	-659	-41.4%
Finance, insurance, real estate	767	914	11%	147	19.2%
Construction	516	739	9%	223	43.2%
Professional, scientific and management and administrative services	532	668	8%	136	25.6%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	252	517	6%	265	105.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation	427	513	6%	86	20.1%
Other services	303	448	5%	145	47.9%
Wholesale trade	340	322	4%	-18	-5.3%
Public administration	205	307	4%	102	49.8%
Information	167	191	2%	24	14.4%
Agriculture, forestry, mining, etc.	35	39	0%	4	11.4%

Source U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Note: These estimates are not directly comparable to MA EOLWD estimates of average monthly employment estimates due to differences in data collection methods and the aggregation of industries.

Regional Economic Development Resources

Webster Dudley Oxford Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce is affiliated with the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, and offers services including health and dental insurance, networking and referral opportunities, and advertising and sponsorship. The Chamber also hosts events and participates in advocacy efforts related to economic development, training and education, and business resource assistance in the region. The membership directly lists 142 members, over half of which are located in Webster.

Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board (CMWIB)

The CMWIB serves the City of Worcester and 37 surrounding communities in Central Massachusetts. The CMWIB seeks to “ensure individuals have the skills necessary to

meet the demands of area employers, and to also ensure that employers have access to these skilled individuals.”

The CMWIB oversees the Workforce Central Career Center which has branches in Worcester, Southbridge, and Milford; develops the local workforce strategic plan; allocates federal and state training funds to companies and community based organizations; and assists with state grants for the training or retraining of employees at local companies. The CMWIB has an Executive Committee, as well as three active committees focused on Youth Workforce Investment, Adult Career Services, and Cultural Competency.

Of particular interest to Webster is the Youth Workforce programming offered through CMWIB. CMWIB sponsors its own programs; however funding was not allocated in FY2012. CMWIB also administers non-WIA programs throughout the Central MA region and is planning to provide youth orientations at the Workforce Central Career Centers. Youth programs include the following:

- The school-to-career Connecting Activities program promotes and coordinates work-based learning opportunities and career development activities for high school students.
- The YouthWorks summer youth employment program offers subsidized employment opportunities to youth between ages 14 and 21 in designated central Massachusetts communities, including Webster.
- JobOne; an initiative to promote youth work experience and employer involvement in youth education through an outreach campaign to connect employers with schools/youth training programs.

Economic Outlook

This section discusses the economic outlook in Webster through a review of employment projections provided by the Mass Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development for the Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Area (CMWIA). Economic development opportunities uncovered during the public input process are also considered.

Target Industries in Webster

Employment projections show that the primary industries in Webster are expected to grow on a region-wide basis between 2010 and 2020. These include healthcare, insurance, food manufacturing, and wholesale trade. In addition to high-employing industries, the perception of a vibrant community and livability are important to improving the economic development outlook. As a result, although employment projections are not provided, local tourism and the preservation, enhancement, and marketing of Webster's natural and cultural assets are also considered a target industry.

Target industries for Webster, based on the economic profile, employment projections, and public input, include the following:

- Healthcare and social assistance
- Insurance carriers
- Food manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Local tourism

Employment Projections for Central Massachusetts

This section reviews 2020 employment projections for Webster's key industries—healthcare, insurance, food manufacturing, and wholesale trade. Overall the industries with the strongest presence in Webster are expected to grow between 2010 and 2020. Given the longstanding presence of these industries in Webster, the Town should actively seek to retain and capture some of this growth.

Region-wide, healthcare and social assistance is expected to grow by over 11,000 jobs (26 percent) between 2010 and 2020. Webster currently has four major healthcare employers providing outpatient services, nursing, and residential care. While Webster does not have the major hospitals or research institutions present in nearby municipalities

or the City of Worcester, the Town has a foundation for maintaining or capturing some of this growth.

Growth in the healthcare industry will be partly driven by a projected 3,157 jobs in ambulatory healthcare services, i.e., outpatient services like those offered at Harrison Healthcare. Another 2,880 jobs are expected in nursing and residential care facilities like Lanessa and Oakwood, a 27 percent increase from existing employment of 10,726 workers across the region in 2010. Similar growth rates are expected in employment in hospitals and social services.

Insurance carriers and related activities are expected to add 1,620 jobs in the region, increasing from 7,852 jobs to 9,472 jobs by 2020 (a 21 percent increase). As one of epicenters for employment in the insurance industry in Central Massachusetts, Webster is likely to capture some of this growth.

Food manufacturing is expected to grow modestly by approximately 140 jobs (a 24 percent increase) from 596 jobs to 738 jobs in the region. Likewise, wholesale trade is expected to grow by 1,786 jobs (19 percent), as employment with merchant wholesalers of durable goods is expected to dip slightly (2.9 percent). Warehousing and storage, a related industry, is expected to grow by 17.9 percent or approximately 300 jobs over the next few years.

The industrial corridor along Cudworth Road is suitable for continuing to support the manufacturing and wholesale trade industry, as long as prudent investments in public infrastructure and services enable businesses to thrive. The growth and expansion of any industry relies in part on construction, another industry with a significant presence in Webster. Construction employment is expected to increase by 15.6 percent or 1,252 jobs, as construction and development continues to recover from the Great Recession.

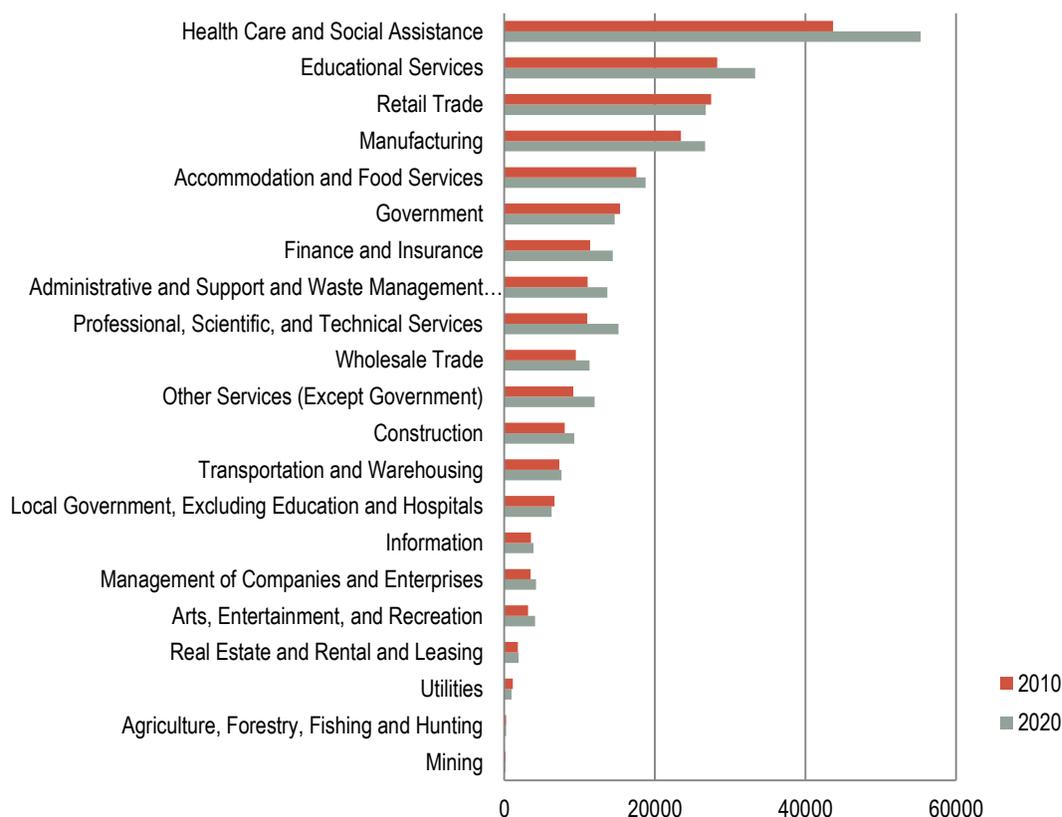
Table 4.5 Regional Employment Projections by Industry, 2010-2020

Employment by Industry	2010	2020 <i>(Projected)</i>	Percent of Total, 2020	Change, 2010-2010	% Change, 2010-2020
Total All Industries	253,299	292,369	0.1%	39,070	15.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	43,685	55,316	1.40%	11,631	26.60%
Educational Services	28,285	33,328	18.90%	5,043	17.80%
Retail Trade	27,465	26,764	2.60%	-701	-2.60%
Manufacturing	23,464	26,689	3.90%	3,225	13.70%
Accommodation & Food Services	17,547	18,779	4.10%	1,232	7.00%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11,035	15,190	1.40%	4,155	37.70%
Government	15,374	14,686	2.20%	-688	-4.50%
Finance and Insurance	11,419	14,394	0.60%	2,975	26.10%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation	11,063	13,688	11.40%	2,625	23.70%
Other Services (Except Government)	9,186	11,986	5.00%	2,800	30.50%
Wholesale Trade	9,524	11,310	9.20%	1,786	18.80%
Construction	8,032	9,284	9.10%	1,252	15.60%
Transportation and Warehousing	7,290	7,614	1.30%	324	4.40%
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	6,673	6,292	0.10%	-381	-5.70%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,497	4,204	4.70%	707	20.20%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	3,181	4,112	6.40%	931	29.30%
Information	3,526	3,886	4.90%	360	10.20%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,809	1,900	5.20%	91	5.00%
Utilities	1,124	986	3.20%	-138	-12.30%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	244	240	0.10%	-4	-1.60%
Mining	144	152	0.30%	8	5.60%

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2013.

Note: These estimates are not directly comparable to 2011 ACS estimates of annual monthly employment estimates due to differences in data collection methods and the aggregation of industries.

Figure 4.8 Regional Employment Projections by Industry, 2010-2020



Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2013.

Enhancing Natural and Cultural Assets

Indian Ranch and Memorial Beach are two of Webster’s key cultural assets and contribute to quality of life perceptions for the Town. Indian Ranch, located on the east shore of Lake Webster off of Route 16, is a lakeside outdoor amphitheater that hosts a variety of music and entertainment events throughout the year, including its Summer Concert Series which includes events on a weekly basis. The Town has expressed interest in continuing to improve upon infrastructure challenges



Indian Ranch

to the east side of Lake Webster. Likewise, improving public facilities on Memorial Beach will enhance its attractiveness to local and regional visitors. (See Open Space and Recreation plan element for more information on local events and marketing.)

Economic Development Recommendations

Downtown and Main Commercial Corridors Revitalization

The Town should consider design guidelines for new construction, including redevelopment and adaptive reuse, in the downtown area and along the main commercial corridors. Design guidelines can be established as part of the zoning bylaw and/or as a stand-alone set of parameters relating to the appearance, size and placement of buildings on the development parcel. Different guidelines should be prepared for the downtown area (which has an urban development pattern) and East Main Street (which has a suburban development pattern).

- Amend the zoning bylaw to encourage more mixed use development and consider design guidelines for new construction, including redevelopment and adaptive reuse, in the downtown area and along the main commercial corridors. Mixed use development, especially if there is a residential component to it, will bring more people into the downtown area to help support local businesses. Incentives and bonuses could be considered if developers meet certain objectives in terms of land uses or design elements.
- Similarly, the Town could consider establishing zoning incentives to encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of existing properties, particularly historic buildings. Such incentives could include density bonuses.
- Permit flexible use and live/work space in downtown Webster to encourage new businesses, start-ups and non-profits to locate there.
- Continue to make improvements to the downtown infrastructure including streets and sidewalks, streetscape and pedestrian linkages, benches and other such amenities, lighting, open space and greening, signage (way-finding system) and parking to make it more attractive for residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Re-establish the storefront and facade improvement program. The Town had such a program in the past, which can help to improve the appearance of the storefronts in both the downtown area and along main commercial corridors.

- Consider shared parking to help reduce the parking burden on new or redevelopment where land uses have different peak periods, especially in mixed use developments. This can serve as an incentive to redevelop in downtown Webster.

Local Tourism

- Continue the ongoing effort to capitalize on the potential of the French River in light of its proximity to downtown Webster by providing connections through easements between downtown businesses and the River. The River Walk is under development and it presents the Town with a great opportunity to attract visitors for local businesses. Enhance connections with the French River, such as with a series of boat launch points, and look for ways to capitalize on its proximity to downtown Webster.
- Continue to create and expand opportunities for more entertainment, markets, sidewalk sales, and cultural events in the downtown area and throughout the Town such as Harvest Fest, Winter Wonderland, and the Summer Concert Series.
- Continue the historic signage efforts to promote and link cultural and historical assets.
- Continue to highlight Webster Lake, Indian Ranch, Memorial Beach, the French River and the Town's other scenic, cultural and historical landmarks and assets as a true regional resources for social and cultural opportunities.

General Permitting and Business Development

- Ensure that the permitting process is transparent, prompt, reasonable, and consistent. Create a guidance document to assist new and expanding businesses through the permitting process. New and existing businesses need to know what is entailed in the permitting process and how long it will take. Developing and distributing (hard copy and on the Town website) a permitting guide should identify the permits needed for specific types of businesses, how the permits can be obtained, how long the process may take, and where to go for assistance and information. Numerous communities have prepared permitting guides and the Commonwealth has resources available as well to provide technical assistance.
- Conduct outreach efforts within the business community to ensure that the needs of existing businesses are fully addressed. Coordinate with the Webster Dudley Oxford Chamber of Commerce, Webster Dudley Business Alliance, and the Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board regarding business retention and workforce development issues. To enhance business retention, conduct regular

business roundtable discussions to talk about their needs and labor force issues. This is critical not only for large, but also small businesses.

- Reach out to key employers in Webster such as MAPFRE Commerce Insurance, Goya Foods, and Harrington Healthcare to ensure that their issues and needs are addressed to the best of the Town's ability so that they can flourish in Webster.
- Support vocational and technical training to prepare students for jobs that Webster would like to attract and retain. The curriculum could include practical business and vocational skills to provide a local labor force to support the Town's larger employers.

5 Transportation

Transportation Overview

This chapter provides an overview of Webster’s existing transportation system and identifies goals and strategies for moving towards the Town’s vision of a transportation system that is safe, efficient, and sustainable.

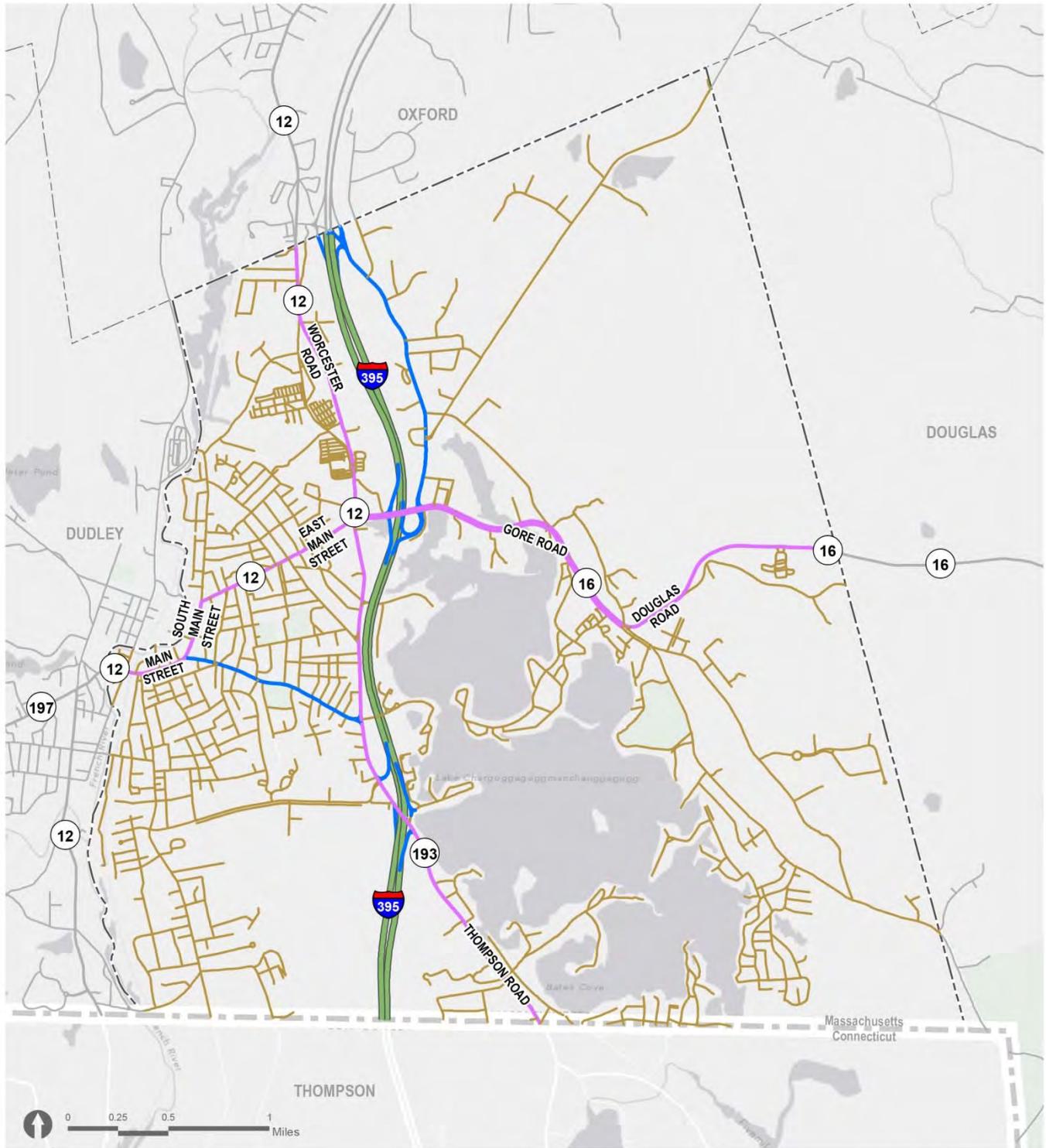
Webster is defined not only by its natural features, but also by its network of streets, highways, neighborhood blocks, and land uses that collectively contribute towards defining the Town’s character. Webster has excellent access to the region via Interstate 395, and adjacent communities such as Dudley, Douglas, Oxford and Thompson, CT use this interstate as a primary route to also access the region. The Town’s transportation goals and strategies should be implemented to spark economic development and encourage redevelopment/ development opportunities that complement land use.

The Town of Webster is located in southern Worcester County. This region has a healthy mix of cities, suburbs, and rural areas. Webster is approximately 15 miles south of Worcester, 47 miles southwest of Boston and 30 miles northwest of Providence, Rhode Island.

Map 5.1 illustrates the Webster transportation network.

Prior planning efforts (locally and regionally) identified a number of transportation challenges for the community. Many of these challenges target specific areas in the community. During several outreach meetings with the Town’s Master Plan Committee, and members of the community, a number of transportation themes were identified, including:

- Transit availability and access to bus stops;
- Sidewalk connectivity;
- On-street parking options/ restrictions;
- Crosswalk locations;
- Multi-modal accommodations;
- Traffic/ intersection congestion;



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Map 5.1 Traffic Network and Functional Classification, Webster, MA

Legend

Roadway Class

-  Limited Access Highway (Interstate)
-  Other Numbered Route (Arterials)
-  Major Road (Collectors)
-  Local Roads

- Roadway safety;
- Utilize complete streets tools and techniques, especially near the schools; and
- Economic development.

This Transportation Element is part of the Webster Master Plan, which identifies the range of transportation issues, needs, and deficiencies over the near and long-term. It establishes goals and strategies for physical enhancements and/or policies that are worth implementing.

Transportation Goals

Webster transportation must meet the needs of its residents, commuters, and businesses through vehicular, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian means. Transportation must be convenient, safe, aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly as it meets the complex needs of residents and travelers. A thorough transportation plan which both provides active and passive connectivity internally to neighborhoods within Webster (and to the greater region) is essential to ensure a sustainable system over the long-term. The goals are based upon this framework.

The following provides an overview of the transportation goals:

- Goal 1.** Assess current and long-term on- and off-street parking needs along the major corridors leading up to and into downtown.
- Goal 2.** Work with the WRTA and other private transit agencies to expand bus services and stops, including the opportunity to create a town bus loop.
- Goal 3.** Create a toolbox of transportation measures (traffic calming, access management, complete street, operational improvements, etc.) that can be used to reduce traffic congestion and improve efficiencies at major intersections and corridors.
- Goal 4.** Develop a Town bike loop through a series of on- and off-road bicycle routes.
- Goal 5.** Provide better multi-modal connections between the easterly and westerly side of Town (as defined by I-395) and establish park and ride/WRTA lots at 395 interchange.
- Goal 6.** Improve sidewalk conditions, connectivity, and crosswalk options in and between downtown, its parking facilities, and nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Goal 7.** Create pedestrian and bicycle safe routes to schools.

Regional Context

Regionally, Webster is positioned at the northeast corner of Connecticut, with direct access to Interstate 395, as well as the regional roadways Route 12 and Route 16. The Town is approximately 15 miles south of Worcester and 30 miles northwest of Providence, Rhode Island.

Regional Planning

For the development of this Master Plan, it is important to acknowledge and understand past transportation planning and land use efforts in Town and the region to ensure that recommendations are consistent and complimentary. Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) play a key role in the development and execution of any municipality's Master Plan. As overseers of a larger area, RPAs help ensure that regional plans are complementary to each community. The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC), located in Worcester, is the RPA to which Webster belongs. The following summarizes previous planning studies that have been prepared by CMRPC and the Town:

CMRPC Central Thirteen Prioritization Project (2012): The CMRPC Central Thirteen Prioritization Project outlines a number of goals, objectives, and implementation strategies for the future of the region. This project included an overview of key transportation goals for several communities, including Webster. One of the primary goals identified for the region is to generally focus on ensuring that people will have more transportation choices (or modes). For Webster, some other specific recommendations include evaluating the need to provide:

- Interchange improvements at I-395 interchanges with Thompson Road and Route 16;
- Intersection improvements at Lower Gore Road and Route 16;
- A climbing lane on Route 16 between Lower Gore Road and Douglas Town Line;
and
- A pavement rehabilitation plan for Route 16.

Local Master Plans: The Town of Oxford updated their 2006 Transportation Master Plan in 2011. The following provides an overview of some of the recommendations that were developed as part of that study:

- Officials may wish to review the public ways and make sure any public ways currently not designated as 'accepted public ways' be added to that category where appropriate, and that any additions are reported to MassDOT.

- Work with MassDOT where appropriate to improve sight distances at intersections where obstructions impede vision. This could include trimming the vegetation more regularly at intersections to increase sight distances where trees and shrubs obscure motorist visibility.
- Review zoning to keep the Town character from being driven by development demands along I-395 that may be best managed through zoning.

Local Planning

For the development of any Master Plan, it is also important to acknowledge and reflect on previous plans developed by the Town. The Town of Webster has undertaken several planning efforts that should be reflected in this Master Plan. The following summarizes past efforts:

Town of Webster Master Plan (1989): Completed in collaboration with the CMRPC, this document provides recommendations in a number of areas. Many of these recommendations have not been implemented, and the specific transportation-related recommendations are summarized below. If infrastructure improvements have been made since 1989 it has been noted below.

1. Intersection Improvements:
 - a. Gore Road (Route 16) and Killdeer Island Road;
 - b. School Street and Hill Street;
 - c. School Street and Klebart Avenue;
 - d. I-395 Interchange 1: Route 193 (Thompson Road) and Lake Parkway) – some improvements have been made with respect to pavement rehabilitation/ and lane striping; and
 - e. Route 12 at Route 16 & Route 193 (conduct safety assessment) – intersection safety improvements have been made by MassDOT at this intersection; however, further study is ongoing by MassDOT to make additional improvements.
2. Roadway Improvements:
 - a. Hill Street between School Street and Dudley Town Line (redesign existing roadway);
 - b. Route 12 in the vicinity of former Wonder Foods warehouse (conduct safety assessment);
 - c. Bigelow Road (based on growth consider realigning/widening road);
 - d. Lake Parkway (redesign existing roadway); and
 - e. Lower Gore Road (provide shoulders and sidewalks).

Community Development Plan (2003): The 2003 Community Development Plan was conducted to provide a vision for future build-out within the Town and potential issues and opportunities. While this was primarily a land use study, the following transportation goals were also developed for Route 16 east of I-395:

- Interstate 395 at Route 16: It was identified that an improvement plan was to be in place to resolve queuing issues at the I-395 ramps; which caused vehicle-backups on I-395.
- Route 16 at Lower Gore Road: It was identified that the horizontal curvature of the roadway on Douglas Road is deficient through this intersection. However, to improve this condition, the radius of the roadway needs to be increased. This would require property and house takings, and the roadway construction cost could (in 2003) exceed \$1.5 million dollars; depending on the takings and design option.
- Climbing Lane on Route 16: The study indicated that climbing lanes were warranted for approximately 1.2 miles of roadway leading into the Town of Douglas. However it was noted that providing such a lane could require significant widening resulting in right-of-way needs, and clearing of trees. At the time (in 2003) the anticipated cost to construct this lane could have exceeded two million dollars.
- Pavement: It was recommended that the Town pursue a pavement design for Route 16 that can better withstand the truck traffic.

Webster Downtown Plan (2003): The Webster Downtown Plan was prepared in two phases in 2003 to plan for the revitalization of downtown Webster. It addressed a variety of issues including traffic and parking. The plan recommends the expansion and reconstruction of specific parking lots to create additional spaces, as well as establishing a shared parking program, based upon a previous parking study in 1999. The plan also addressed pedestrian access enhancements and vehicular circulation improvements.

State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Air Quality Conformity Determination is an intermodal program of transportation improvements produced annually by CMRPC. The TIP serves as the implementation arm of the CMRPC's Regional Transportation Plan by incrementally programming funding for improvements over the next four-year period. It programs federal-aid funds for transit projects and state and federal aid funds for roadway projects.

Table 5.1 below summarizes all projects that are currently on the TIP. After further review of the latest 2014-2017 TIP, Webster has no roadway projects programmed and the one roadway project that was on the TIP is currently under construction.

Table 5.1 Transportation Improvement Projects

MassDOT Project #	Description and Location	Project Type	Status
605976	Bridge Preservation, W-12-023, W-12-024, W-12-025 & W-12-026, Along I-395	Structures Maintenance	Construction

Source: MassDOT, 2013

This is a \$3 million project under the MA Accelerated Bridge Program to correct significant structural deterioration on this bridge located on I-395. This includes deck work; full cleaning and painting of the structural steel; reconstructing the bridge approach; reconstructing the approach sidewalk; guardrail work; and patching deterioration in the concrete surfaces of the abutments, piers and walls.

Existing Conditions

Mobility in and around Webster is the central theme for the Transportation Element of the Master Plan. The sections below discuss the components that comprise the existing transportation network in Webster.

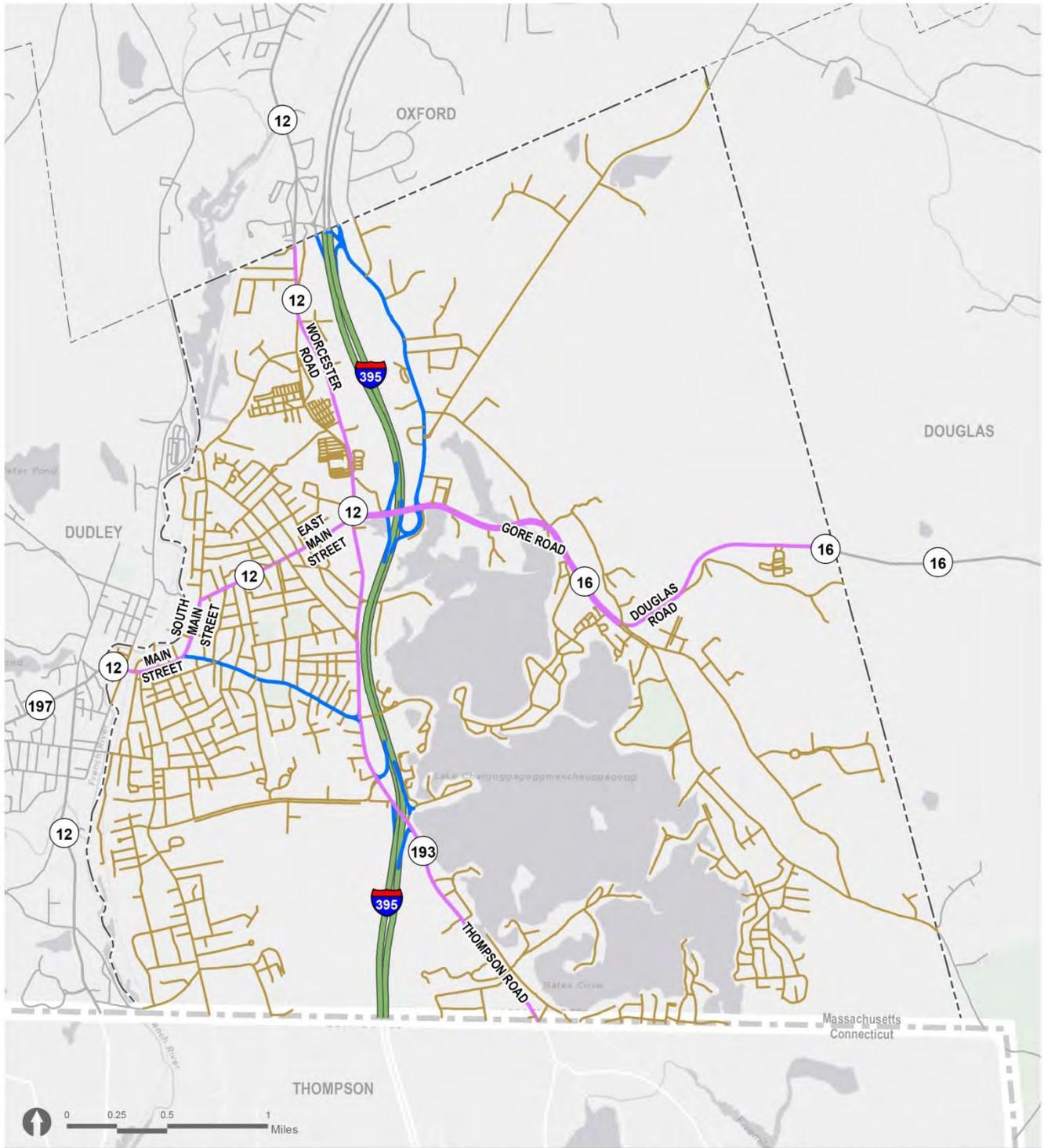
Roadway Jurisdiction/Functional Classification

The jurisdiction of roadways in Webster is depicted on Map 5.2 and summarized on Table 5.2. The jurisdiction of a roadway indicates the ownership and generally identifies who is responsible for maintenance, enhancements, and repairs.

Table 5.2 Jurisdiction of Roadways in Webster

Roadway Ownership	Length (miles)	Length (%) ^a
Town-owned roads	76	63%
MassDOT roads	15	12%
Private/Unaccepted Roadways	5	4%
<u>Other</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>21%</u>
Total	121	100%

Source: Office of Geographic Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of MA Information Technology Division



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Map 5.1 Traffic Network and Functional Classification, Webster, MA

Legend

Roadway Class

-  Limited Access Highway (Interstate)
-  Other Numbered Route (Arterials)
-  Major Road (Collectors)
-  Local Roads

The majority of the roadway system falls under the jurisdiction of the Town of Webster (76 miles of the 121 total miles, or 63 percent). The state owned roadways include I-395, Route 12 between the Oxford Town Line and Old Worcester Road, and Thompson Street between Lake Street and the Connecticut State Line, which total 15 miles and account for 12 percent of the roadway network.

The functional classification of roadways in Webster is depicted on Map 5.1 and summarized in Table 5.3. The roadway functional classification generally indicates its design function to serve local demands, whether it is designed with multiple driveways to maximize access; or designed to serve regional demands with limited access.

Table 5.3 Functional Classification of Roadways in Webster

Functional Classification	Length (miles)	Length (%)
Local Roadways	95	79%
Arterial	11	9%
Collector	11	9%
Interstate	4	3%
Total	121	100%

Source: Office of Geographic Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of MA Information Technology Division

The majority of the roadways in Webster are classified as local roadways totaling 95 miles, or 79 percent of the total roadway miles in Town, followed by arterials and collector roadways, which each comprise 9 percent of the Town’s roadway network. Based on the hierarchy of roadway functional classifications, arterials and interstates typically provide mobility, whereas local and collector roadways typically provide more access to adjacent parcels. After reviewing the functional classifications of all roadways, the Town has more local roadways, which should promote access more than regional mobility.

Roadway Network

Vehicular traffic in Webster is carried on several key roadways. The major north-south roadway in Webster is Route 12, and the major east-west roadway is Route 16.

Several regional highways travel through the Town including U.S. Route 12, Route 193, and I-395 in the north-south direction and Route 16 in the east-west direction. These roadways provide access both within the Town and the region, as well as other major roadways including Route 146, I-290 and the MassPike (I-90).

Interstate 395

Interstate 395 is an interstate highway with limited access that runs north-south through the middle of the Town. Two interchanges are provided within the Town's limits (Interchange 1 and 2), as well as a third located just over the Town line in Oxford. These interchanges provide excellent access to the interstate; which then provides excellent access to other roadways providing regional mobility.

While the Interstate provides great access, the highway does divide the Town into two distinct neighborhoods. To the west of the Interstate is the Town Center and many of the Town's retail/commercial land uses, while to the east the Town's major attraction, Webster Lake, is present.

Route 12

Route 12 is an arterial roadway that runs from the Dudley town line on the westerly edge of Webster, taking an east-west path through the Town Center before turning north to parallel I-395 and providing access to Oxford, Auburn and Worcester to the north. Route 12 is also known as Main Street, South Main Street, East Main Street, and Worcester Road as it makes its way through the town. The land use and roadway characteristics along this roadway varies from retail, commercial industry, restaurants and residential. The following provides a summary of other key statistics along the corridor:

- In general the roadway does not have a posted speed limit; however, the northerly portion of the corridor (Worcester Road) is posted at 40 mph.
- Route 12 is a two-lane roadway throughout the Town, with turning lanes at intersections. On-street parking appears to be provided on both sides of the roadway for the entire length of Route 12 west of Worcester Road (Main Street, South Main Street and East Main Street), with striped shoulders provided on Worcester Road. It is unclear whether on-street parking is restricted in some areas as most parking signs are faded to the point where they are hardly legible.
- Sidewalks are generally present on both sides of the roadway along Route 12 between the Dudley town line and Mill Brook. A sidewalk is maintained on the westerly side of Worcester Road just past the driveway to the Mt. Zion Cemetery. No sidewalk is provided along the remainder of Worcester Road.
- The segment of Route 12 between the Dudley town line and Mill Brook is under the Town's jurisdiction; however, from Mill Brook to the north, Route 12 is under MassDOT jurisdiction.

Route 16

Route 16, also known as Gore Road and Douglas Road, provides the primary east to west access through the east side of the Town running between Route 12 and the Douglas town line. Route 16 is a two-lane roadway with turning lanes at major intersections. A continuous sidewalk is provided along Route 16 between Mine Brook Road and the I-395 interchange (Exit 2), with non-continuous segments provided between the intersections of Route 12 and the I-395 interchange (Exit 2). Striped shoulders are provided along the length of Route 16, with wider shoulders provided on the portion designated as Douglas Road. The posted speed limit on Route 16 is 40 mph. The land use characteristics along this roadway vary from retail and commercial in the vicinity of Route 12 and I-395 to low-density residential further east.

Route 193

Route 193, also known as Thompson Road, is an arterial roadway that provides north-south access between Webster Center, Route 12 and Route 16 to the north and the State of Connecticut to the south. Route 193 is two lanes with wide shoulders for its entire length. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway between its intersection with Route 12 to the north and Memorial Beach Drive to the south. South of Memorial Beach Drive there are no sidewalks provided. Route 193 has a posted speed of 35 mph. The land use along Route 193 is a mix of residential, retail and commercial in nature.

Sutton Road / Cudworth Road

Sutton Road and Cudworth Road connect to form a roadway that runs north-south, parallel to I-395 between Exits 2 and 3. Approximately 1,800 feet north of Route 16, Sutton Road turns to the east, while Cudworth Road continues north, running parallel to I-395. Sutton Road and Cudworth Road are two lane roadways with wide shoulders. No sidewalks are provided along this corridor. This is an area of expanding development, with excellent regional access via I-395. Land use along these roads is primarily commercial in the vicinity of the interchanges with low density residential in between. The portion of Sutton Road that lies to the east of the corridor consists of low-density residential with some residential subdivisions.

Vehicular Traffic

To gain an understanding of existing travel patterns, historical traffic data and transportation mode choice data were obtained.

Traffic Volumes

Table 5.4 summarizes traffic volumes on various roadways throughout Webster using CMRPC and MassDOT⁸ historical traffic volume data.

Route	Source	Count Date	Average Daily Traffic Volume ¹
I-395 – North of Route 16	MassDOT	2009	32,890
I-395 – at Connecticut State Line	MassDOT	2009	23,475
Route 16 (Gore Rd) – East of I-395	CMRPC	2011	15,204
Route 12 (E. Main St) – West of Slater St	CMRPC	2011	13,906
Route 16 (Gore Rd) – East of Rawson Rd	CMRPC	2011	12,275
Route 193 (Thompson Rd) – South of Lake St	CMRPC	2011	11,323
Kleibart Road	CMRPC	2011	5,974
Lower Gore Road – South of Upper Gore Rd	CMRPC	2011	3,934
Sutton Road – North of Mine Brook Rd	CMRPC	2011	1,963
Lower Gore Road – at Douglas Town Line	CMRPC	2011	506

Source: Historical MassDOT and CMRPC count data

¹ Average daily traffic volumes expressed in vehicles per day (vpd).

Interstate 395 carry the most traffic, as would be expected since it serves as the principal means for regional mobility. Route 12, Route 16 and Route 193 all carry a similar amount of traffic (between 11,000 and 15,000 vpd) reflecting their status as arterial roadways within the Town.

Journey-to-Work

A review of US Census American Community Survey journey-to-work data⁹ for Webster residents and employers reveals commuting trends - specifically work location and mode choice. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 summarize the data.

Table 5.5 Census Journey-to-Work Data for Webster Residents

Location of Employment	Percent of Residents
Webster	27%
Worcester	21%
Auburn	6%
Dudley	5%
Oxford	4%
Westborough	3%
Shrewsbury	2%
Southbridge	2%
107 other communities (totaled)	30%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census Journey-to-Work Data

Note: Other towns and cities not listed comprise one percent or less each of employment locations of Webster residents.

⁸ <http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/default.asp?pgid=content/traffic01&sid=about>, accessed October 12, 2010

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Approximately 27 percent of the 7,549 Webster residents surveyed were also employed in Webster. The top commute single destination outside Webster was Worcester at 21 percent. The remaining commuter destinations represent a variety of Massachusetts and Connecticut cities and towns, the majority of which are located within 30 miles of Webster. The table above illustrates 6 other communities that have between two and six percent of residents working outside Webster. The balance of the residents, or approximately 30 percent, worked in a total of 107 other communities.

The journey-to-work census data was also reviewed to determine where people live and commute to Webster. Table 5.6 summarizes this data.

Table 5.6 Census Journey-to-Work Data for Webster Employees

Location of Employment	Percent of Residents
Webster	32%
Dudley	10%
Thompson, CT	8%
Worcester	6%
Southbridge	4%
Oxford	4%
Charlton	4%
Douglas	2%
99 other communities (total)	30%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census Journey-to-Work Data

Note: Other towns and cities not listed comprise one percent or less each of resident locations of Webster employees.

Approximately 32 percent of 6,414 Webster workers also live in Webster.

Approximately 10 percent of people employed in Webster resided in Dudley, while the next top location was Thompson, Connecticut (8 percent). The majority of the remaining top locations of residence of employees of Webster are within Worcester County or eastern Connecticut. Five other communities have between two and six percent of workers in Webster. The balance of the workers in Webster, or approximately 30 percent, traveled from 99 other surrounding communities.

Mode Choice

Similar to the journey-to-work evaluation, Table 5.7 summarizes the mode choice for Webster residents.

Table 5.7 Webster Journey-to-work Mode Choice

Mode	Percent of Employed Residents
Single-Occupant Automobile	82%
Multiple-Occupant Automobile	11%
Transit	0%
Walk/Bike/Other	5%
Work at Home	2%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011, American Community Survey

Approximately 93 percent of Webster residents take a car to work; either alone (82 percent) or with others (11 percent). Less than one percent of Webster residents use public transportation. The low transit mode share for Webster residents and workers could reflect the limited public transportation options in Town.

Safety

Potential transportation safety issues in the Town of Webster were identified through previous studies and through the MassDOT crash cluster database; which depicts locations in Town that could be considered eligible for safety funding under the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

Currently, no locations in Webster were noted as meeting 2010 HSIP eligibility requirements; however, the I-395 Exit 2 / Route 16 Interchange is listed as an HSIP cluster (based on 2009 data).

It is noted that in 2007 MassDOT began a Road Safety Audit (RSA) program to study roadways in which fatal and incapacitating injury cross median crashes had occurred. Today the RSA program has become an integral part of their HSIP program. MassDOT now requires that all HSIP locations have a RSA performed to determine if they are eligible for HSIP funding.

Transit

The Town of Webster receives bus service through the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). This is the only public transit service provided within the Town. The availability of public transit provides greater mobility to populations that do not have access to a private automobile such as low income, young adults, and the elderly. There is one fixed bus route (Route 42) that provides service between Webster Center and Union Station in Downtown Worcester, via Route 12. It is important to note that

southerly and easterly (i.e. east of I-395) portions of the Town are not served by public transit.

It is noted that the Town also has access to the Elderbus service; which is a private bus service that is operated based on need. It currently serves 21 communities including Webster. Service in Webster is only on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30 am to 4 pm and is available to residents who are 60 years or older, or if you are disabled. In-town service fees are \$1.25 with an additional \$0.25 for each Town traveled to or through outside Webster. See <http://www.scmelderbus.org/> for more details.



WRTA bus at Webster Town Hall

Lastly, Ready Bus is also a private transit services that is available to Webster residents. This service is operated by the same company that operates Elder Bus; however, this service is open to all and operates Monday – Friday (excluding holidays) from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. Cost is \$1.25 per (one-way) trip within town and reservations are required. See <http://www.readybus.org/> for more details.

Bicycle Facilities

Currently, there are no designated off-road bicycle facilities within the Town. Bicycle accommodations are currently limited to wide shoulders. Figure 7.2 illustrates the roadways with shoulders that are greater than 5-feet; which is a width that is typically acceptable for accommodating bicycles (a MassDOT standard).

Pedestrians Facilities

Pedestrian access and mobility is limited in Webster. The town center and the immediately outlying areas have sidewalk and crosswalk connectivity that is necessary for walking. However, outside of the downtown area, very few roadways have sidewalks; which presents challenges for pedestrians.

Bridges

There are 23 bridges in Webster, of which 11 are under the jurisdiction of MassDOT and 12 are under the jurisdiction of the Town. Of these bridges, eight (8) are listed on the National Bridge Inventory (NBI) reflecting that they are eligible for federal funding.

Bridges listed on the NBI are routinely inspected using National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS). The primary purpose of the NBIS is to locate, evaluate, and act on existing bridge deficiencies to ensure that the bridges are safe for the traveling public. Each NBIS bridge is inspected at regular intervals of two years with certain types or groups of bridges requiring inspections at less than two-year cycles.

Of the 15 non-NBI bridges within Webster, ten (10) were rated as “requiring high priority of corrective action” based on NBIS structure evaluation standards. The ten locations include the eight bridges that cross the French River into Dudley. Responsibility of these bridges is shared between the Town of Webster, the Town of Dudley and MassDOT. The eight crossings are located at:

- North Main Street;
- Peter Street;
- Tracy Court;
- Oxford Avenue;
- Main Street;
- Chase Avenue;
- Hill Street; and
- Perryville Road.

The remaining two bridges in need of corrective action include:

- Mine Brook Road over Mine Brook; and
- Bigelow Road over Mill Brook.

Future Conditions

The next step in the planning process is to identify growth trends in the area. These trends are often based on previous traffic volume patterns (as described in Table 5.4), past and forecasted population growth, and major development projects.

Future Challenges and Opportunities

Webster's population has steadily grown over the last six decades and is expected to continue growing through 2030 due in part to its accessibility to major highways. While the population has been increasing, local traffic counts suggest that traffic volumes have been remaining constant or decreasing slightly over the past five to seven years.

Transportation Recommendations

Taking into account the existing and future issues, needs, and the goals of this transportation element, the following specific strategies have been developed.

Downtown Parking

Issue: Parking availability and location.

Description: Parking and access to existing and future businesses within the Downtown will be a critical driver for future transportation planning. The Town of Webster should develop a Downtown Parking Master Plan to help determine the existing and future parking demands and determine where on-street parking should be provided or restricted. Components that should be explored include:

Implementation Measures:

- Create a parking plan that focuses exclusively on the current and future needs of the downtown;
- Evaluate future development proposals with an eye towards increasing the publicly available parking supply, particularly in the downtown and at the back of buildings; and
- Seek to create reserved and/or dedicated on-street parking supply for the public buildings in the town (Library and Town Hall, in particular).
- Establish a wayfinding system for rear parking lots and improve intra-lot connectivity.

Expand Public Transportation Options

Issue: Dependency of the automobile.

Description: Transit planning is an important part of the complete streets focus area for the transportation system in the community. The Town of Webster should focus on two

aspects: (i.) expand the existing transit program to provide the maximum coverage within the Town (bus loop service); and (ii.) expand the number of trips to Worcester. This may be accomplished by:

Implementation Measures:

- Expanding and promote existing public transportation opportunities (public and private).
- Exploring options for reducing headways for the existing WRTA transit service between Webster Center and Worcester.
- Explore options for providing a local bus loop service that would connect residential neighborhoods and Webster Lake to Webster Center.

Evaluate Complete Streets Programs

Issue: Infrastructure projects should consider all forms of transportation.

Description: The three-pronged approach of complete streets seeks to incorporate multimodal designs into roadway projects to ensure that streets are shared by all users and not just dominated by the automobile.

In addition, complete streets often look to place an emphasis on green design elements that promote an environmentally sensitive, sustainable use of the public right-of-way. Greener designs incorporate street trees, rain gardens, bio-swales, paving materials and permeable surfaces, with plants and soils collecting rain water to reduce flooding and pollution.

Lastly, the Town of Webster should develop a complete streets checklist that is appropriate for the community. Elements should be respectful of the specialized needs and environmental resources within the Town, but these should also be balanced with the overarching goal of providing for all modes of transportation. The focus of such a program should be to increase pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between key facilities and amenities such as schools, playgrounds, parks, etc.

Implementation Measures:

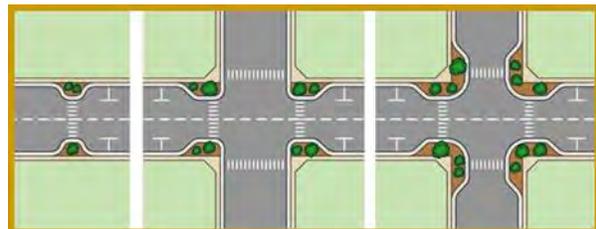
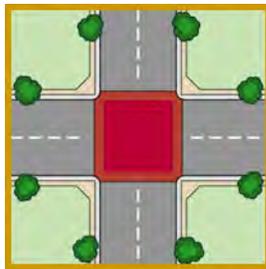
- *Develop Scenic Streetscapes*
Durable landscaping that is close to the highway or along medians can increase the driver's awareness of the immediate environment and alter behavior, resulting in slower speeds and a safer street. The following should be considered:
 - Consider expanding downtown streetscape beyond current extents;

- Consider developing gateways at entrances to downtown;
- Design ADA compliant sidewalks that include a landscaping buffer between the sidewalk and roadway on residential roadways; and
- Where appropriate, replace the existing faded crosswalks with imprinted/textured crosswalks at intersections and mid-block locations along major through routes through the downtown. This could also include consolidating crosswalks in Downtown to limit crossing areas.

- *Traffic Calming Measures*

Traffic calming involves changes in street alignment and other physical measures to reduce traffic speeds in the interest of street safety and livability. The following traffic calming elements could be considered for the downtown and within the established neighborhoods that abut high-volume roadways:

- Curb extensions/bump outs/neckdowns along with complementary on-street parking and the consolidation on crosswalks;
- Narrowed travel lanes and widened shoulders with potential for bike accommodating shoulders or lanes;
- Raised crosswalks/ speed humps/ table top intersections; and
- Mini-roundabouts or roundabouts to replace traditional signalized intersections; if deemed feasible.



Examples of a raised crosswalk, roundabout and curb extensions/bump outs/neckdowns

- *Access Management and Compact Development*

Develop access management and traffic impact study guidelines and incorporate them into the zoning by-laws and subdivision regulations. This by-law would minimize curb cuts and create guidelines for greater separation between driveways to improve safety and appearance. An access management approach could benefit Route 12 and the northerly segment of Route 193.

Review the zoning by-laws and consider amendments that would encourage mixed-use (residential, office, retail) and compact/clustered development in areas already served by transportation infrastructure, particularly in the downtown area or in priority development areas.

Intersection / Corridor Improvements

Issue: Traffic congestion, vehicle queues, vehicle delay, and roadway safety.

Description: A number of intersections and corridors in Webster are problematic and have been problematic for several years; which have been identified in past studies. For intersections that are state-owned, or constructed with state or federal funding, any improvements would need to be vetted with MassDOT. Improvements could consist of implementation of lane additions, roadway realignments, or signal enhancements. This strategy should be pursued in close coordination with the Complete Streets strategy previously mentioned.

Implementation Measures:

- Address pedestrian, cycling, and vehicle needs in the Lake Parkway corridor especially due to the presence of two schools and the use of the roadway as access from I-395 to Dudley.
- Develop intersection improvements at I-395 interchanges with Thompson Road and Route 16. MassDOT has identified this interchange eligible for HSIP funding in the past, and there is the potential that it could be eligible in the future.
- Develop intersection improvements at Lower Gore Road and Route 16.
- Identify the impacts associated with providing a climbing lane on Route 16 between Lower Gore Road and Douglas Town Line.
- Continue the town wide pavement rehabilitation program and biannual updates.
- Develop an improvement matrix identifying issues and needs at key intersections and roadways. Prioritize projects and pursue projects on the State TIP. The following areas have been identified in the past as needing improvements:

- Traffic signal enhancement through downtown.
- Pedestrian and bicycle access to the Town's park facilities.
- Investigate the feasibility of creating a one-way downtown loop (Main Street and Davis Street) roadway to promote economic development and utilize parking behind buildings.
- Gore Road (Route 16) at Killdeer Island Road.
- School Street at Hill Street.
- School Street at Klebart Avenue.
- Hill Street between School Street and the Dudley Town Line.
- Route 12 in the vicinity of former Wonder Foods warehouse.
- Bigelow Road realignment and/or widening.
- Lake Parkway redesign and sidewalk improvements (the Town will be seeking TIP funding for improvements to Lake Parkway and Klebart Avenue from Brandes Street to Thompson Road).
- Lower Gore Road (provide shoulders and sidewalks).
- Park Avenue School.

Pedestrians

Issue: Need to provide a safe and walkable environment,

Description: There is the need to enhance, relocate, or consolidate pedestrian crosswalks in downtown. In addition, pedestrian connections between the westerly and easterly side of Town need to be enhanced; i.e. on either side of I-395.

Implementation Measures:

- Evaluate and prioritize where sidewalks should be installed or upgraded, including ADA compliance and landscaped buffers where there is available right-of-way.
- Enhance the areas in and around public open spaces (parks, schools, athletic fields) so that children and parents who live nearby can make choices about how they can travel between home and these uses.
- Construct crosswalks that enhance the awareness of drivers to pedestrians; could include raised and or textured treatments.
- Install crosswalk signage to reinforce vehicle and pedestrian awareness.
- Install countdown pedestrian signal heads at signalized crossings that do not currently have them.
- Improve pedestrian mobility on residential roads.
- Educate public to "Stop- Look- and Wave" in the Town of Webster at crosswalks.
- Investigate locations for installation of future walking trails.

Bicyclists

Issue: Need to make areas within Webster more bicycle-friendly, for both commuter and recreational purposes.

Description: Providing a safer means of travel for bicycling could help reduce the dependency of the automobile in Town. Improvements could include on-road bicycle accommodations or off-road trails.

Implementation Measures:

- Develop, update, and implement a town wide Bicycle Master Plan that addresses both commuter and recreational bicycling.
- Improve bicycle mobility on roadways.
- Develop and sign on-road bicycle routes.
- Consider installation of bicycle racks at activity centers.
- Educate the public of existing bicycling opportunities.
- Look for opportunities to provide off-road bicycle connections between corridors and traffic destinations.

Signage

Issue: Need to address signage on town roadways and promote downtown amenities through wayfinding signage.

Description: I-395 divides the Town, and Webster Lake is a major destination for many during the summer months. Improving visitor's awareness of Town amenities, on-street parking restriction, or traffic regulations can improve roadway operations and promote economic development in Downtown.

Implementation Measures:

- Commission a "Way-finding Program" to assist visitors to navigate to and from the downtown areas of Webster and direct them to public parking opportunities by using branded signage for the community.
- Upgrade the overall consistency of traffic signage throughout Town by reviewing current regulatory signage and assuring that it is consistent with the current Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidelines.
- Collaboratively (DPW and MassDOT) remove existing sign clutter along state routes.

6 Open Space and Recreation

Introduction

An important aspect in judging quality of life, open space and recreational resources are crucial to sustaining a community's appeal. The Commonwealth recognizes this importance and encourages each community in the state to have a current Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), which is to be updated every seven years. When an OSRP is completed and approved by the Division of Conservation Services (DCS), the community is eligible for grant programs administered by DCS to fund open space acquisition or enhance recreational facilities.

Webster's latest Open Space and Recreation Plan was completed in 2009. It represented a strong collaborative effort among the various stakeholders in the community and involved a concerted and thorough public outreach component. This included a series of regularly scheduled Committee meetings conducted during the planning process, a survey which was distributed to all 8,300 households in town, and a public forum conducted to solicit public input on the Town's open space and recreation needs.

In October 2009, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs offered the Town the opportunity to extend the plan to March 2016 by expanding the five-year implementation program to seven years. The key points from both the 2009 OSRP and the expanded Seven Year Action Plan are summarized and updated in this element of the Town of Webster Master Plan. While open space resources, passive and active recreation are discussed in this chapter, natural resources, such as water and wildlife, are discussed in more detail in the Natural and Cultural Resources chapter.

Open Space and Recreation Goals

As derived from the public planning process for both of the 2014 Master Plan and the 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan, as well as related data collection and analysis

done in conjunction with preparing the Master Plan, the following are goals and objectives for Webster's open space and recreation resources:

Goal 1. Protect large areas of natural and undeveloped space in the Town of Webster.

- Acquire more land for conservation and passive recreation purposes in Webster.
- Educate the citizens, school children and Town officials in Webster about open space issues and the role they play in the community's redevelopment.
- Increase open space within land that is to be developed.
- Implement the French River Greenway.

Goal 2. Preserve the quality and character of Webster Lake and French River for all residents to enjoy.

- Identify and preserve important viewsheds at Webster Lake and French River.
- Retain the classic, scenic and family friendly atmosphere of Memorial Beach.
- Protect the water quality of the Lake and the River.
- Maintain the quality of the recreational experience for all lake users.

Goal 3. Improve and expand the Town's open space and recreation facilities for the enjoyment of all residents of Webster.

- Maintain the Town's current recreation areas as needed.
- Create new recreation facilities as needed.
- Improve parks and playgrounds adjacent to or within established neighborhoods.
- Make accessibility modifications as required to parks and recreation facilities.
- Consider using small, odd-shaped lots for recreation purposes.
- Create a new annual cultural or fun event for Webster.
- Establish paddling access on the French River.

Goal 4. Link active and passive recreation areas.

- Identify corridors that link existing recreation and conservation areas.
- Work cooperatively with Dudley, Oxford, and Thompson, CT to realize the vision of the French River Greenway.
- Work cooperatively with other parties on the implementation of the Quinebaug Valley Trail.
- Ensure there are active town representatives on Central MA Regional Planning Commission and Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor committees.

Summary of Open Space and Recreation Resources

Webster has a wealth of open space and recreation resources, predominately represented by the recreational opportunities associated with Webster Lake and the French River. This section of the Master Plan will provide an overview of existing open space and recreation resources in Town.

French River

As the vast majority (96%) of Webster's land area falls within the French River Watershed, the French River is Webster's most significant watercourse which forms the Town's western boundary line approximately 3.5 miles in length. Predominantly a small residential community, Webster's urban core developed along the French River during the 19th century when textile mills were a landscape fixture along riverbanks throughout New England. Industrial development historically created a host of environmental problems that the State and the Town, along with many community organizations and private citizens, have been slowly but steadily addressing during the last sixty years. Upgrades to wastewater treatment plants have resulted in significant water quality improvements for the river during the last 25 years. The relatively unpolluted area above Mill Brook is enjoyed by paddlers and fishermen, despite limited access. Nevertheless, there are still lingering concerns regarding the river's water quality. As the "backyard" of both Webster and Dudley, much of the river has historically been ignored and degraded rather than protected and enjoyed to its full potential for public recreation.

Despite the fact that the river is the most prominent natural feature in the downtown area, there are no public access points along the French River, which is a serious impediment to using this resource for recreational purposes. A number of planning visions have been made in effort to tap the potentials of such valuable resource. The French River Greenway, first proposed in 1990, is a trail system that would connect the Quinebaug Rail Trail and the Midstate Trail, traversing the communities of Dudley, Oxford and Webster. The Greenway is expected to be eventually completed as a link to a series of proposed standalone projects. Four of such projects – the Perryville Trace, French River Park, Webster Riverwalk, and Collins Cove, are within the Town of Webster. The French River Blueway Study, completed in 2007 by the University of Massachusetts for the Town of Oxford Open Space Committee and the French River Connection, identified four car-top access sites to the river in Webster, including downtown Webster, Collins Cove, Perryville, and the access road for the wastewater treatment plant. One other point

on Chase Avenue, owned by the Town, was subsequently identified as a potential point of river access.



French Riverwalk concept plan

The Perryville Trace is a one mile round trip trail beginning at the French River Bridge on Perryville Road on the Webster side of the river, and continuing to Webster wastewater treatment plant property. It was opened in 2008 and is maintained under license from the Craver Family. French River Park is a 1.66 acre urban park on Davis Street in downtown Webster, opened in 2011 and maintained by the French River Connection and the Town under a 15 year lease from Holden Block LLC. The park features a boat launch, benches and picnic tables, lighting, and native plantings, and is becoming a popular recreational destination in Town.

Webster Riverwalk, first envisioned as part of the French River Greenway in 1990 and then reinforced in the French River Revitalization Concepts report by the French River Connection in 2006, would be part of a one mile loop anchored by French River Park. It would go from the Railroad Museum past Peter Street along the river, and then return via downtown sidewalks. The Riverwalk and associated green space will create new town common areas that could host farmers' markets, holiday events, art and craft festivals, concerts and other events to celebrate the downtown and the river corridor. New and expanded business activity will grow with the popularity of the trail and new events, making the downtown a destination for a stroll, a snack, and increasing the vitality of the area with some casual shopping. The Riverwalk will also enhance community identify, brings attention to the natural beauty and history of the river, as well as increase health and wellness of local residents.



French River Park

A Riverwalk Trail Log was developed in 2008 with the technical assistance of the National Park Services and a Concept Plan for Pedestrian Access and Circulation for the French Riverwalk and Downtown Connection has been developed by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin Inc. under the direction of the Webster Office of Community Development in 2012. The Office of Community Development has submitted its FY 2013 Mini Entitlement Grant Program Application requesting funding for Phase I of the Concept Plan. Anticipated to be completed in the year of 2014, Phase I of the Riverwalk will connect to French River Park and will include pedestrian and bicycle lanes in its 12 foot width, with two river overlooks and native plants and trees.

Collins Cove is a riverside area more than one-half mile in length that is used as an informal boat launch by paddlers, and has a great potential as a wildlife and historic site. Ownership of the parcels comprising the area is unclear. Currently, the means to acquire the rights necessary to effectively make the land available to the public are being investigated¹⁰.

Webster Lake

Located in the center of the Town of Webster, the 1278-acre Webster Lake remains the Town's most significant landscape feature. Various Indian trails that converged on the Lake's western shore, including one that served as the major pathway by which settlers from Boston moved westward to Connecticut and beyond, served to influence current and prior settlement patterns of the community. The area east of Webster Lake includes most of the Town's forestlands, rolling hills and ledge. The relatively undeveloped landscape includes Wood Hill, which abuts the Douglas State Forest. There are still portions of this area that are served by on-site wells and septic systems, which contains the majority of the Town's vacant developable land, and currently faces development pressure.

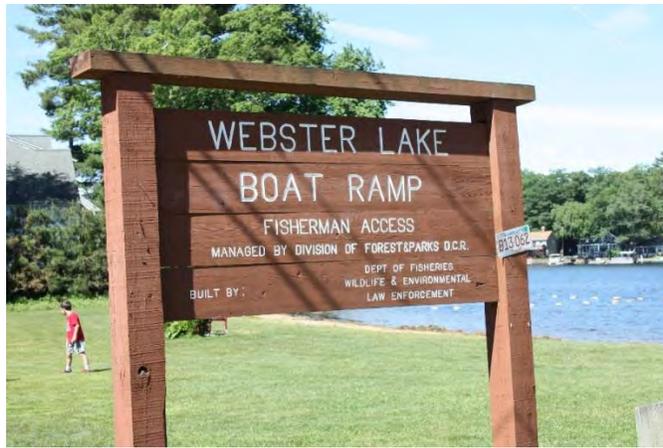


Webster Lake



There are currently two points of public access. The first is Memorial Beach – the Town Beach and boat launch – at the end of Memorial Beach Drive, which is currently accessed for a fee only. The facility contains parking, picnic areas, basketball court, playground, walking trails, fishing areas, and a bathhouse with a snack bar. The second public access is the State beach and boat launch at the end of Lakeside Avenue, which can be used for no charge. The facility is smaller with limited parking and porta potties and the ramp is limited to small watercraft with 25 HP or smaller motors.

¹⁰ French River Greenway, French River Connection, <http://www.frenchriverconnection.org/greenway.html>

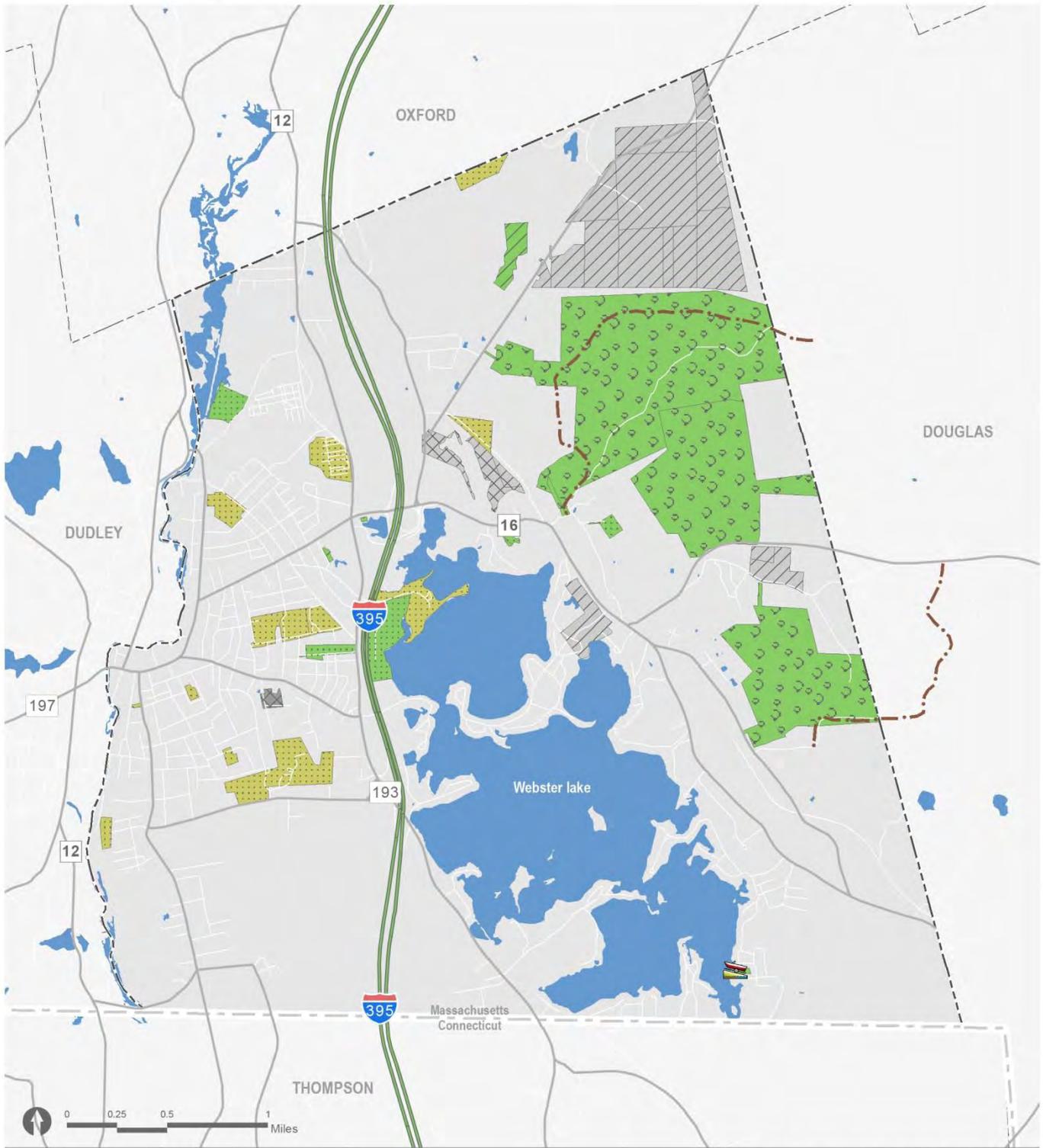


Webster Lake boat ramp

Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Despite that the Town of Webster does not have any MA Department of Environmental Management designated Scenic Landscape, there are many locations in Town that are considered to be special, unique and scenic by its citizens. Scenic overlooks at the top of Sugarloaf Hill and Upper Gore Road offer great views of Webster Lake. The Memorial Beach Drive leads to the town beach, the site of the Old North Village Bridge, and other recreation areas while offering views to the natural area with pine forest and scenic views of Webster Lake and Sugarloaf Mountain.

The top of Blueberry Hill is another scenic overlook that has views of three states – Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island – at once. The land bounded by Lake Parkway, I-395, the Connecticut border, and Freemans Brook, which is the last piece of undeveloped lowland in this vicinity, contains a rare freshwater cranberry bog, a heron rookery and valuable wildlife habitat. In addition, there are several locally designated Scenic Roads, including Upper and Lower Gore Road, Gore Road, Point Breeze Road, Sutton Road, Rawson Road, Mine Brook Road, Pinewood Drive, Memorial Beach Drive, and Kingsbury Road. The Unique Features and Scenic Resources Map indicates available resources in Town.



Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Map 6.1 Open Space, Webster, MA

Legend

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Route Secondary Route Open Water | <p>Open Space by Owner Type</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Private nonprofit Private for profit State | <p>Open Space by Level of Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protected Limited Protection Non-protected Protection Unknown | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boating Access Trails |
|---|--|--|--|

Protected and Recreational Open Space

According to the MassGIS protected and recreational open space data layer, as of June 2013, Webster has an approximate total of 1,700 acres of protected and recreational open space. 61.2% of these land areas are protected in perpetuity, while another 10% have limited protection. Almost all these open spaces are publicly accessible.

Among those permanently protected lands, the Town of Webster owns very little conservation land on its own (two parcels in the vicinity of the Mine Brook Wildlife Management Area – a 24 acre conservation area on School Street and 27 acres in and around Memorial Beach). The majority of the conservation land in Town – 948 acres out of 1,040 acres – is owned by the State of Massachusetts. Many of the privately owned parcels that have “limited protection” status fall under the Chapter 61 taxation program that offers a lower tax rate to property owners who keep their land in agricultural use, manage it in accordance with an approved forest management plan, or as private recreation land. An example is the 200 Sportsman’s Club, a private hunting organization, is another significant owner of open land in Webster.

Recreational Programs

The Town of Webster’s Recreation Committee sponsors numerous programs for local residents throughout the year:

- **Summer Basketball Program:** Run out of the Bartlett High School gym, this program serves grades 6 through 12.
- **Memorial Beach Summer Program:** This is a six-week program offered during the summer months for children ages 4 through 12. The program offers arts, crafts and playtime at the Beach’s playground. This program can accommodate up to 100 children. The Recreation Committee would eventually like to expand this program to include swimming lessons.
- **Winter Wonderland:** This is a family event held over two nights in December. Held on Memorial Beach, this program offers a bonfire, horse-drawn carriage rides, visits with Santa, and arts and crafts.
- **Easter Egg Hunt:** This family event is held around the time of Easter Weekend on Memorial Beach.
- **4th of July Fireworks:** This is a family event held on Memorial Beach around the weekend of the 4th of July. Historically the Town has funded this event, however in

recent years due to budgetary constraints the fund for the fireworks has come from private donations.

- Triathlons: The Town, along with private sponsors, holds two triathlons (one in the spring and one in the summer).



Memorial Beach Park in Webster

The Town has two recreation projects in the works:

- Rehabilitating the parking lot behind the old Armory building for a multi-use recreation field for soccer and football. The pavement has been removed from the parking lot and the Town is in the process of securing the necessary funds to complete this project.
- Installing multi-use fields on a piece of property in the Mine Brook area. This project is currently at a standstill until the Town can secure the necessary funding to proceed.

In addition to the Town-sponsored recreation programs described above, there are numerous private recreation groups active in Webster including: Little League baseball, Pop Warner football, and numerous softball groups with a diversity of age groups participating (men and women of various age groups, co-ed, and seniors).

Some of Webster's important parks are positioned to serve its environmental justice population. Several properties on Ray Street comprise Webster Memorial Park and adjoining amenities, including the unused armory which, when granted to the Town, was to serve the Town's youth. These facilities, totaling 30 acres, are one block from the Lincoln Street boundary of the environmental justice area. The 13 acre Slater Street Park is within the environmental justice area boundary near Arkwright Road. The 2 acre May Street playground is two blocks from the Negus Street boundary.

Much of Webster's environmental justice population is near the French River, which could offer fishing, boating, and walking. Almost all of the riverbank is in private hands, but not all of it is in active use, and there are opportunities to create various forms of public access which would serve area residents¹¹. Ongoing efforts to provide more access to the French River, including the planned Riverwalk, will offer new opportunities for local residents and visitors.

Community Need Assessment

The assessments of community needs for open space and recreational facilities are drawn from public feedback collected during the Master Plan process as well as planning process for the Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2009.

Webster's Open Space Committee utilized two methods of obtaining public input during the open space and recreation planning process, including a citizen survey, which was mailed to all households with the Town's annual census, and a public forum. The survey and forum revealed three main perceived needs in Webster: increased recreational opportunities, protection of natural resources and maintaining historic character. Residents responding to the survey expressed concerns that opportunities for active and passive recreation in Webster are limited. To promote the wellbeing of its residents and enhance the quality of life, residents indicated that they would like to see an increase in the number of walking (both historic and natural) and biking trails in Town, a recreation or community center, additional conservation areas, picnic areas and more children's play areas or neighborhood parks.

Also highlighted in the survey is a strong preference for improvements to the existing facilities at Webster Lake, such as the bath house, playground, etc., and the preservation

¹¹ From Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan 2009

of Webster's historic character, especially in the downtown. Residents also indicated a preference for more cultural activities in Webster including more youth programs, community fairs, arts events and concerts. Additionally, survey respondents felt that there was a need for more conservation areas in Webster. It is therefore important for the Town to be proactive in the pursuit of funding and identification of appropriate and available parcels for acquisition. Finally, the survey strongly indicates a preference for the preservation of historic buildings, places and sites in downtown Webster. There are a variety of older buildings downtown including Town Hall, the Town Library and the Sitkowski School that have special meaning to many of Webster's residents. The preservation of these buildings in addition to some form of assistance for the preservation of the facades of the commercial buildings downtown in conjunction with the construction of the French River Greenway can create an area that is active, attractive and economically thriving.

The 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan, in addition, emphasized the needs to manage open space and recreation resources in Town. It stated that the division of responsibility for upkeep and management of town-owned conservation and recreation lands needs to be reviewed annually, which should be done based on the primary management objective of each parcel, taking careful consideration of the consequences and advantages of different designations. Successfully managing the land will require collaboration between Town boards and the involvement of dedicated volunteers¹².

During the development of the Master Plan, stakeholder interviews with town staff were conducted and a public meeting was held early on to engage residents and understand general concerns and aspirations for the town's future. Public comments regarding open space and recreation received during the outreach process revealed similar themes as that of the Open Space Plan but with more attention paid on how to better utilize Webster Lake and the French River as more significant recreational resources in Town. People generally thought that Webster Lake is the most significant natural and recreational asset in town, but it is underutilized for recreational purposes. Many public meeting participants expressed the desire to use Webster Lake for more water recreation activities while also emphasizing the importance of protecting the water quality. The upgrade and maintenance of the Memorial Beach have been mentioned widely as a key step to provide better recreational opportunities to the residents. Improved public access to the lake in the form of walking trail connections, as well as more town-sponsored events were also desired by the public.

¹² From Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan 2009

During the public outreach process, town residents generally had very positive reactions to the recently opened French River Park and would like to see more events such as the summer concert series to make French River a more vibrant downtown waterfront. In addition, residents indicated the need for more and improved access to the river as well as improved boat launch at various locations along the river.

Another part of the public discussion was focused on enhancing regulations and management of open space resources in Town. Many public meeting participants as well as town staff indicated that the Town needs a full-time Town Planner and a Recreation Committee. They suggested Town departments need to be aware of their specific responsibilities to maintain and manage town-owned conservation and recreation lands and coordinate effectively among each other on land use issues. Review of the current zoning bylaw has been recommended, particularly regarding regulations on signs and electronic billboards that negatively affect the aesthetics of the Town's open space and recreational resources.

Open Space and Recreation Recommendations

- Establish an Open Space Committee.
- Identify preferred trail routes within Webster and work with other trail interests to maximize connections.
- Review the lake watershed protection district by-law and make changes as experience dictates to ensure high water quality in Webster Lake.
- Incorporate waterside parcels in the open space priority list.
- Develop a site master plan for Memorial Beach that will guide refurbishment of existing amenities and identify appropriate additions. Develop a capital plan that addresses costs for maintenance and enhancements of Memorial Beach and balances these with fees collected. Identify areas at Memorial Beach to remain undeveloped and develop a strategy for their permanent protection.
- Develop a town maintenance plan and schedule for all recreation areas and incorporate maintenance resources in the town's budget or capital plan.
- Compare the requirements for field use against total availability and determine needs for additional sports fields for all users, including time to rest/rehabilitate. Identify potential sites for new fields as needed.
- Create a list, from all maps, of town-owned property that have potential for recreation purposes.

- Identify a series of boat launch points along the French River which will offer varied paddling experiences.
- Create the position of Recreational Director to oversee community recreation and cultural activities.

Introduction

Webster's rich diversity of natural resources is reflected by its lakes, rivers, waterfronts, and habitat areas. Located in the center of the Town, Webster Lake – the second largest fresh body of water in Massachusetts – offers tremendous opportunities for recreation activities, wildlife habitat and fisheries. The French River corridor, which connects Webster's glorious industrial heritage to its transitioning present, unfolds great potential for an enhanced recreation system and ecological restoration in and beyond Webster. While these valuable resources have been playing various significant roles in the local and regional environmental health and socio-economic activities, they should be further recognized and celebrated as an integral part of the Town's identity and pride and enhanced through proactive planning and effective preservation and management.

On the other hand, historic resources and cultural assets contribute to and sustain a community's character and sense of place. Further, they enhance the quality of life for residents by providing educational and recreational value as well as create unique environments that visitors want to experience. Historic resources are visible, tangible records of the past that greatly shape a community's current physical environment. They may include individual or groups of buildings, districts, structures, objects, or sites with national, state, or local significance. Cultural assets include organizations, destinations, or events that celebrate or add to a community's collective heritage.

This chapter provides an overview of the Town of Webster's natural resources and historic and cultural assets. Some of these elements are well known, while others require more investigation and/or promotion. This chapter also sets forth goals and strategies, identified with input obtained through public participation, designed to preserve and foster these elements for use and enjoyment by future generations.

Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources Goals

Developed through the public planning process for the 2014 Master Plan, the following goals reflect the priorities of the Town of Webster relative to its natural, historic and cultural resources:

- Goal 1.** Preserve Webster’s natural resources, especially its remaining open space, wetland and wildlife communities and scenic views.
- Goal 2.** Reduce non-point source pollution through sustainable stormwater management techniques.
- Goal 3.** Establish balance between recreational use and preservation through local planning and protection measures for natural resources.
- Goal 4.** Preserve and enhance the historic character of downtown Webster.
- Goal 5.** Incorporate specific historic preservation objectives in community revitalization and economic development efforts.
- Goal 6.** Enhance cultural opportunities and programing and create signature Webster events.

Natural Resources Existing Conditions

This section of the chapter examines existing natural resources in Webster, with focuses on landscape characters, water resources, vegetation and wildlife resources.

Geology and Landscape

Situated in the southern portion of the French River Valley, Webster has a geomorphological landscape typically associated with glacial activity in central New England. The central plateau of Worcester County that Webster is located on is punctuated by hills rising higher than the general plateau elevation. As a result, Webster’s terrain is hilly with generally north to south oriented ridgelines that are interspersed with extensive wetland systems in areas of lower relief. While most of Webster’s landscape ranges in elevation from 500 feet to 600 feet above sea level, the highest point is at Woods Hill (905 feet) and the lowest at Webster Lake (480 feet), with a number of other significant hills including Sugarloaf Hill (767 feet) and Emerson Hill (688 feet).

Most of the land surface area of Worcester County is constituted of drumlins and glacial till. Some of Webster’s hills are drumlins, which are piles of unconsolidated clay, gravel and sand resulting from past glacial activity. The most recent glacier is estimated to have

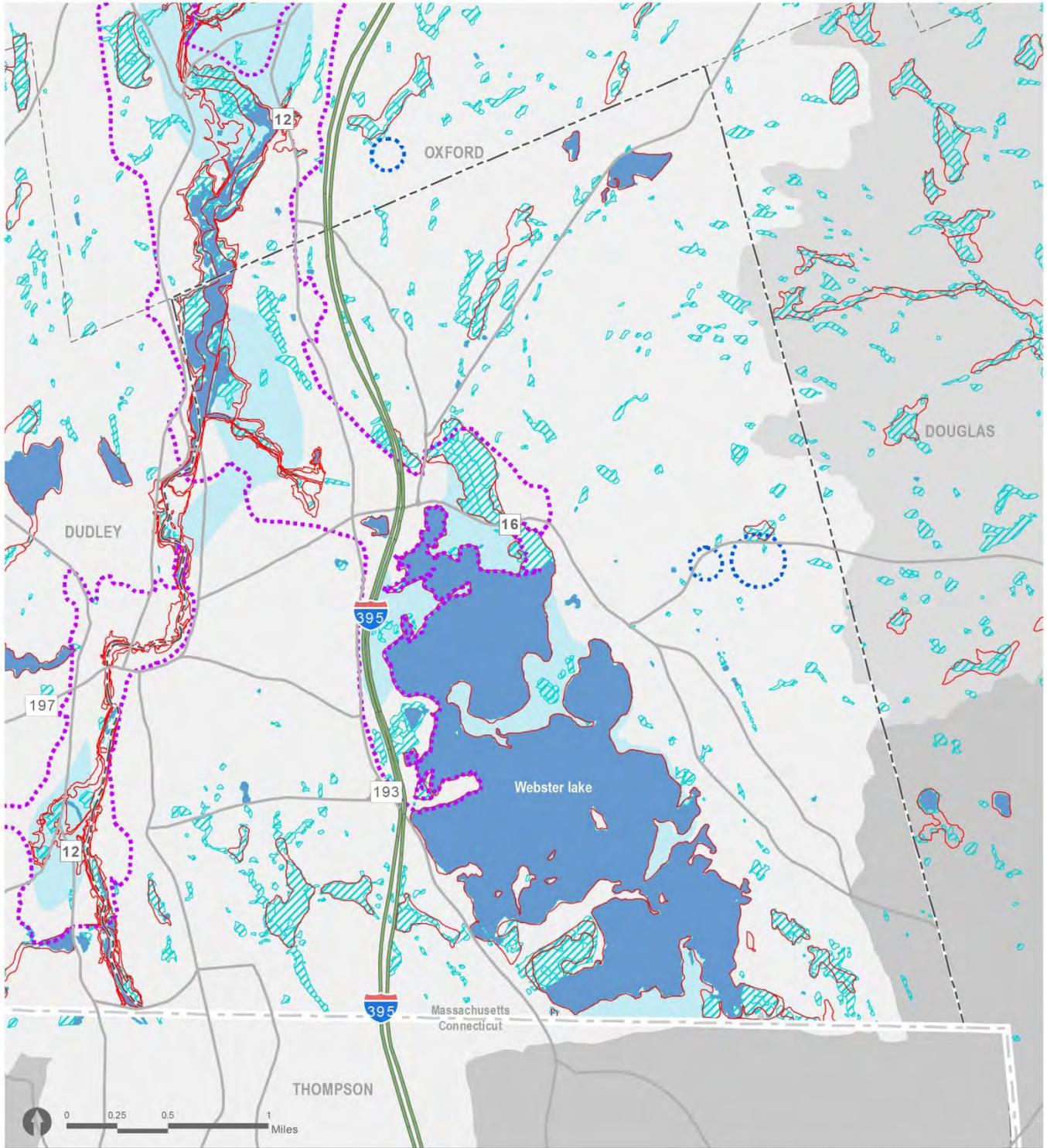
retreated southward some 12,000 to 15,000 years ago, leaving behind it glacial tills that cover large areas of present-day Webster. Materials moved by glaciers and subsequently sorted and deposited by streams flowing from melting ice are called Glaciofluvials. Webster has several examples of these types of stratified drift deposits including eskers, kames and kettle holes¹³.

In terms of soil type, Webster can be divided into three major soil categories including Merrimac-Hinckley-Windsor Soils (MHW soils), Canton-Montauk-Scituate Soils (CMS soils), and Chatfield-Hollis Soils (CH soils). The MHW soils were formed in water-sorted deposits of glacial outwash and appear in Webster along the banks of the French River, Mine Brook and all along the shoreline of Webster Lake. This soil type is suited to trees, cultivated crops, hay and pasture, but is limited for farming due to slope, droughtiness and low nutrient content. The CMS soils were formed in friable glacial till and dissected by broad drainage-ways that flatten out on the lower slopes. In Webster, this soil category covers a portion of land south of Klebart Avenue/Lake Parkway, between the French River and Webster Lake, as well as the majority of the eastern half of the Town, excluding Webster Lake. The CH soils were formed in glacial till and consist of soils on hills and ridges that have bedrock exposures throughout. This soil category appears as a small area along either side of Route 16 in the eastern portion of Webster.

Webster's landscape is defined by a dynamic interaction of human activities and its geological characteristics. Predominantly a small residential community, Webster's urban core developed along the French River during the 19th century when textile mills were a landscape fixture along riverbanks throughout the New England¹⁴. Webster Lake, the largest water body in Town, remains the most significant landscape feature in Webster. Various Indian trails converged on the Lake's western shore, including one that served as the major pathway by which settlers from Boston moved westward to Connecticut and beyond. These trails served to influence current and prior settlement patterns of the community. Today most the Town's forestlands, rolling hills and ledge are in the area east of Webster Lake, including the relatively undeveloped landscape such as Wood Hill abutting the Douglas State Forest. Portions of this area are still served by on-site wells and septic systems. This portion of Webster, which contains most of the Town's vacant developable land, is currently facing development pressure.

¹³ Town of Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2009.

¹⁴ Ibid



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Map 7.1 Water Resources, Webster, MA

Legend

Major Route

- Primary Route
- Secondary Route
- Open Water

Major Watersheds

- FRENCH
- BLACKSTONE
- QUINEBAUG

- Wetlands
- Aquifers
- Floodplain

- DEP Zone II - Approved Wellhead Protection Areas
- DEP Interim Wellhead Protection Areas

While Webster does not have scenic landscapes designated by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Scenic Landscape Inventory as either “Distinctive” or “Noteworthy”, there are many locations in Town that are valued by its citizens as special, unique and scenic (see Appendix A).

Water Resources

Webster has abundant water resources. Most of the Town’s land area (96%) falls within the French River Watershed, although 87 acres of the Blackstone River Watershed extends into Webster along the Town’s eastern boundary line and 260 acres of the Quinebaug River Watershed cover the Town’s southeast corner (see Water Resources map). The French River Watershed ranges from Leicester, Massachusetts in the north to Killingly, Connecticut in the south. The 1999 French-Quinebaug Watershed Plan, prepared by UMass Amherst for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, indicates that the French River has a lower energy system in Webster than the river segments with higher elevations located north of Webster. To better preserve the watersheds, the Town of Webster has recently adopted a Lake Watershed Protection District that covers the eastern half of the Town including the entire Webster Lake. The District prohibits several potentially hazardous land uses such as landfills, junkyard, or disposal work, and requires the use of Best Management Practices for others.

Webster’s surface water resources are primarily embodied by the 1,278-acre Webster Lake and the 3.5-mile segment of French River. Located in the center of Town, Webster Lake is the second largest fresh body of water in Massachusetts. The Lake is commonly divided into three smaller bodies of water, North Pond, Middle Pond, and South Pond, which are connected by narrow channels. There are two other named water bodies in Webster besides the Lake, Club Pond, which is hydrologically connected to the Lake but located on the north side of Route 16, and Nipmuck Pond (20 acres in size) located in the northeast corner of Town just south of Sutton Road. In addition, there are several small un-named ponds scattered throughout Webster.

The French River forms the western boundary line of Webster and is the Town’s most significant watercourse and the most prominent natural feature in the downtown area. Industrial development along the River since the 19th century created a host of environmental problems that the State and the Town (along with many community organizations and private citizens) have been slowly but steadily addressing during the last sixty years. Upgrades to wastewater treatment plants have resulted in significant water quality improvements for the River during the last 25 years. Nevertheless, there are still lingering concerns regarding the River’s water quality and thus the River is not

being used to its full potential for public recreation¹⁵ (more details in the Open Space and Recreation Chapter).

Other significant watercourses in Town include Mill Brook, Sucker Brook, Mine Brook, Brown’s Brook, and Freeman’s Brook. The Massachusetts River Protection Act establishes a 200-foot buffer zone on both sides of all perennial watercourses with the first 100 feet being a “no build” zone and the second 100 feet allowing for limited development. Webster has a total of approximately 506 acres of land falling under the River Protection Act’s jurisdiction, 256 acres of which are within the primary 100-foot “no build” zone.



French River

With all these major surface water resources, Webster has 1,572 acres of land or 16.8% of its total land area falling within the 100-year floodplains. Webster has adopted a Floodplain Protection Overlay District to regulate development within the Town’s flood hazard areas (see Water Resources map).

Wetlands are also important water resources in Webster that offer a series of essential environmental benefits to the community and beyond. They recharge groundwater, act as a spongy pollution filter, and control floodwater by absorbing and storing water while gradually releasing it. They are also invaluable wildlife habitats that support fisheries as

¹⁵ Town of Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2009.

well as rare plant and animal species. Webster contains 544 acres of wetlands or nearly 6% of the Town's total area. They include three major swamp areas: Sucker Brook Swamp in the north, Cedar Swamp in the southeast, and Cranberry Meadows Swamp in the southeast. Webster's Conservation Commission regulates development within wetlands and acts as the local administrator of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40) and associated regulations (Chapter 310, CMR 10.00). The Army Corps of Engineers, under provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act, also regulates the filling of wetlands. The Town does not have a Wetlands Protection Bylaw which could extend the Town's jurisdiction to protect wetlands beyond the state's regulatory authority.

Another important component of Webster's water resources is aquifers. As identified by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), Webster has seven stratified drift aquifers within its boundaries, six bordering the shoreline of Webster Lake and one in the northwest corner of Town bordering the French River. Although the hydrological connections between Webster's aquifers and the surface water resources of Webster Lake and the French River have not been studied in great detail, they are generally considered as being connected and influential to each other. The Water Department's Bigelow Road wellfield is located above the largest aquifer in Town, a 254-acre aquifer bordering the French River, while the wellfields on Thompson Road and Memorial Beach Drive are located above a 67-acre stratified drift aquifer. Additionally, the Town of Dudley currently maintains two municipal water wells above an aquifer located on the west side of the French River.

Vegetation

Webster's vegetation can be generally divided into three categories, upland forests, wetlands, and grasslands. Webster's forests are typically composed of southern New England hardwoods, dominated by oaks and hickories in the uplands. There are also large stands of white pine and red maple that grow in both Webster's uplands and wetlands. Birch is another common species to the forestlands, reflecting the Town's location not far from the northern Worcester county transition zone where this species is prevalent. Hemlock and beech, which are typical southern New England species farther north, are generally restricted to the cool, moist, and shadier north facing slopes in Webster.

Webster's wetland vegetation includes both shallow and deep fresh water marshes, cranberry bogs, shrub swamps, wet meadows and wet woods, which provide valuable habitat, protect the quality of surface and ground waters nearby, contribute to the diversity of wildlife found in Webster and provide flood storage that protects downstream

areas. The majority of wetlands in Webster contain water lilies, duckweed, pondweed and forested red maple swamp, while northern white cedars and pitcher plants are also fairly common in Sucker Brook Swamp and lower Cedar Swamp¹⁶. Webster's grasslands, on the other hand, were once cleared by early settlers for agricultural use and have been gradually absorbed by much of the Town's urban core, leaving very few undeveloped grasslands in Town.

Several unusual plant species such as the Spiked Rush, the Bog Sedge and the Bog Aster can be found within Webster's grassland habitats. In addition, there is one threatened plant species in Webster listed by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program which is the Potamogeton confervoides, a vascular plant species that appears as an algae-like pondweed.

Webster's public shade trees can be found at the Town Hall and school complex as well as local cemeteries among other locations. In 2004 the Town received a tree planting grant from DCR and has since planted trees along Main Street in 2009, in 2011 at the Main Street/Negus Street parking lot, at the School Street parking lot in 2012, and in French River Park. Although Webster's public shade trees receive sporadic special care, at this time there is no monitoring or maintenance of public shade trees funded by the Town.

Fisheries and Wildlife

The interspersed open fields, woodlands, lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and wetlands in Webster supports a diversity of habitats for wildlife that are common in Massachusetts, including insects, spiders, birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, and amphibians, as well as several species that are less common. Wildlife corridors exist in the vicinity of Webster Lake and Lower Cedar Swamp, continuing east to the Douglas State Forest; along the French River; and along either side of I-395. These corridors are not protected and could potentially be developed in the future.

Webster Lake has been recognized as providing important recreational fishing opportunities for warm water and stocked fish species. The State Department of Fish and Game last stocked Webster Lake with trout in 1997 and northern pike and tiger muskies in 1998, with assistance from the Webster Fish and Game Club. In addition, Webster Lake hosts a variety of other fish species including bass, pickerel, and panfish. French

¹⁶ Town of Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2009.

River is home to perch, shiners, bullheads, trout, bass, rock bass, bluegill, white suckers, northern pike, fallfish, and American eel.

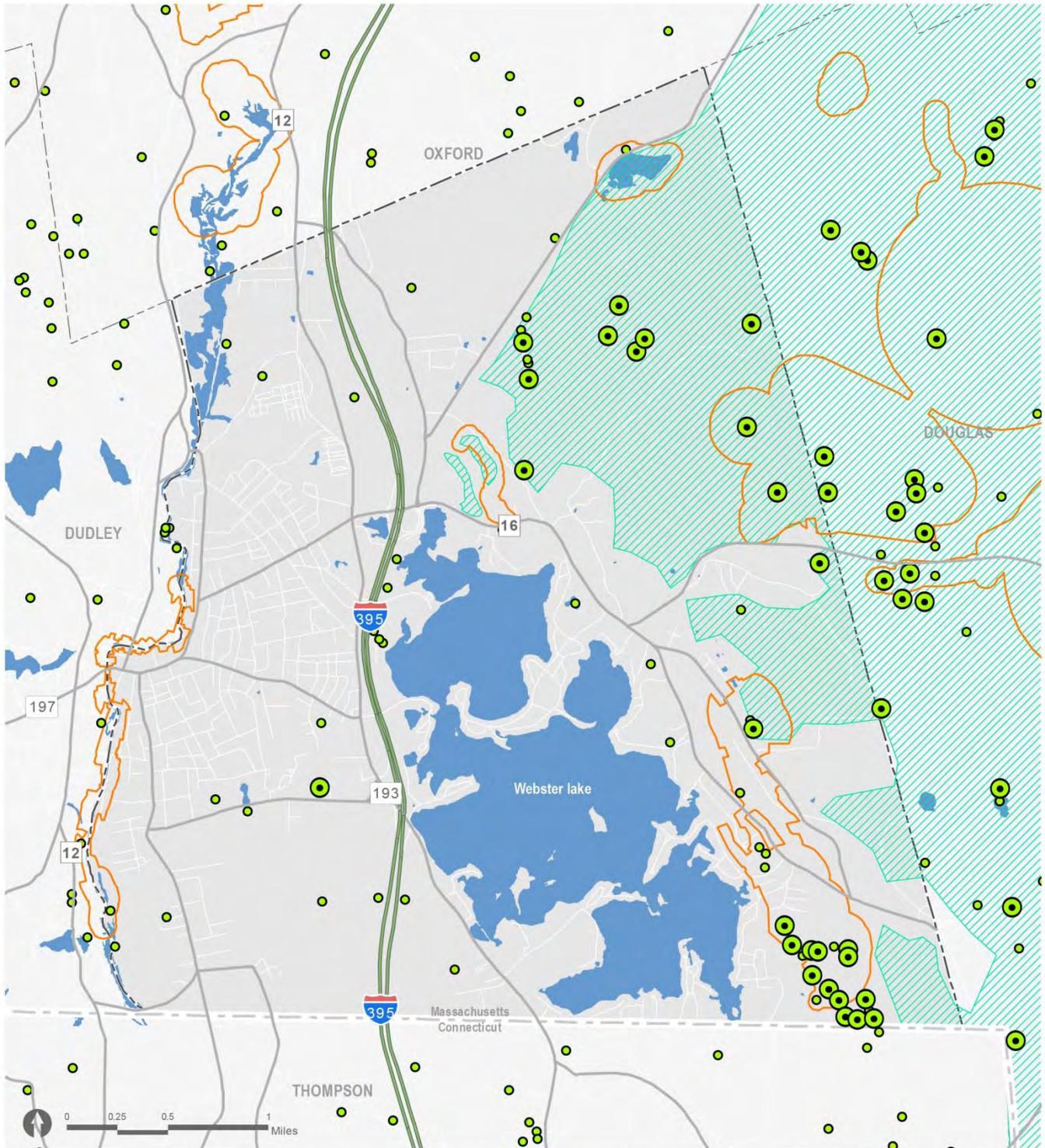
Table 7.1: Rare and Endangered Species in Webster

Taxonomic Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Most Recent Observation
Amphibian	Ambystoma opacum	Marbled Salamander	T	2004
Mussel	Alasmidonta undulata	Triangle Floater	SC	2002
Mussel	Strophitus undulatus	Creeper	SC	2002
Reptile	Glyptemys insculpta	Wood Turtle	SC	1993
Reptile	Terrapene carolina	Eastern Box Turtle	SC	1994

SC = Special Concern at State Level; T = Threatened at State Level.
 Source: MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, Natural Heritage & Endangered Species program.

Webster also has rich wildlife resources. Five rare and endangered species listed by Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife’s Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP) exist in Webster (see Table 7.1). Furthermore, there are 19 certified vernal pools and 51 sites considered “potential” vernal pools in Webster according to NHESP (see Primary Natural Habitat map). As temporary bodies of fresh water, vernal pools provide critical habitat for many vertebrate and invertebrate wildlife species¹⁷. Many of the species which are entirely dependent on vernal pool habitats for breeding are listed by the state as rare species. As a result, vernal pools are protected in Massachusetts under the Wetland Protection Act regulations as well as several other federal and state regulations.

¹⁷ Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program, Vernal Pool Fact Sheet



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Map 7.2 Primary Natural Habitats, Webster, MA

Legend

Major Route

- Primary Route
- Secondary Route

- Open Water
- NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- NHESP BioMap Core Habitat

- NHESP Certified Vernal Pools
- NHESP Potential Vernal Pools

In addition to vernal pools, the *BioMap2*, developed by NHESP in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, has identified a large swath of land in Webster located east of I-395 and Webster Lake as Core Habitats for aquatic, plant and wildlife species, and adjacent areas as Supporting Natural Landscape. The NHESP's Living Water Project further designated a section of French River as a Living Water Core Habitat, starting at the South Dam and extending south to the Connecticut state line (see Primary Natural Habitat map). These designations will help the Town prioritize land protection efforts.

Environmental Challenges

Like many communities in Massachusetts, Webster has a number of environmental challenges that need to be addressed to preserve its natural resources and environmental health.

Surface Water Pollution

Surface water pollution has historically been a major challenge to Webster's water resources. The French River is well known as both a source of power for the textile mills that flourished late 19th and early 20th century and a major transportation corridor for shipping goods, materials and finished products. The industrial activities along the River have resulted in serious impact on the water quality, particularly sludge, sedimentation, and high nutrient and coliform levels from industrial discharges. In addition, municipal wastewater treatment plants have also been identified as significant contributors of high nutrients and organic loads of the French River. The area's treatment plants have all received significant upgrades since the 1980's which have substantially reduced pollutants in the rivers. Webster's municipal wastewater treatment plant was upgraded in 1990 and recently completed a state-of-the art upgrade for phosphorus.

The water quality of the French River has improved dramatically over the past few decades with a marked reduction in the amount of pollutants entering the River from point pollution sources such as municipal treatment plants, abandoned landfills and auto salvage yards. The primary pollution problems for Webster's surface waters today are "non-point" pollution sources, that is, pollution sources that are diffused in nature and discharge pollutants over a broad area, typically including stormwater runoff, lawn fertilizers, manure, leachate, septic systems, pesticides, road salt, erosion, etc.

Tremendous efforts have been put into monitoring and exploring solutions to improve the quality of Webster's waters, both at state and local levels. The state has conducted numerous scientific studies of Webster's water resources over the years, primarily under the auspices of the MA Department of Environmental Protection and its predecessor. The

2001 French & Quinebaug River Watersheds Water Quality Assessment Report indicated that the lower three miles of the French River was considered impaired in its ability to support aquatic life as a result of organic enrichment and habitat quality degradation, while the lower 12.7 miles of the French River were impaired for recreational use and aesthetics due to objectionable deposits, odor, and/or turbidity resulting from urban runoff, illegal dumping and municipal wastewater treatment plants. The latest Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) 2012 Integrated List of Waters (305(b)/303(d)), required for each state under the regulations of the Federal Clean Water Act, lists the Webster section of the French River as Category 5 water that is impaired for one or more designated uses due to pollutant and requires the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) investigations. Webster Lake is listed as Category 4C water which is impaired due to non-native species infestations but does not require the development of a TMDL¹⁸.

Water quality of the French River and Webster Lake has also been monitored at local level. The French River Connection has been monitoring the French River and its tributaries since 2005 with funding and support from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation, the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor, MassDEP and Nichols College. The Webster Lake Association, primarily funded through the support of its membership, has been monitoring water quality in Webster Lake in one deep spot in North Pond, one in South Pond and one in Middle Pond since 2003. In 2006, the Association contracted with GeoSyntec to assess nuisance aquatic vegetation in the Lake, particularly macrophyte communities in 18 specific areas where herbicides had been applied. Aquatic Control Tech Inc. was also hired to apply a combination of herbicides and mechanical hydro-raking in an effort to control both milfoil and large-leaf pondweed¹⁹.

On the other hand, the Town of Webster has long recognized the importance of stormwater management and has established regulations including the Conservation and Lake Watershed Protection Districts to provide an added level of protection of key natural features such as Webster Lake. Recently the Town has adopted a Stormwater Management bylaw to address large construction projects and post-construction stormwater runoff from new development. It also prohibits non-stormwater discharges from entering the municipal storm drain system. The bylaw will further help avoid sedimentation and erosion from stormwater runoff and reduce contamination by toxic chemicals by improving construction practices and eliminating prohibited discharges. In

¹⁸ Massachusetts Year 2012 Integrated List of Waters, 2012.

¹⁹ Town of Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2009.

addition, the Town has recently taken action to modernize its winter maintenance practices by implementing an EPA recognized eco-friendly deicer, which helps reduce impact on watersheds, aquatic life, and roadside vegetation by significantly reducing salt and sand use.

Identified Polluted Sites

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has current inventoried 114 reportable chemical releases from 1987 through the present in Webster, most of which are associated with oil or hazardous materials (see Appendix B). While these sites are in various stages of remediation, most of Webster’s sites are in the Response Action Outcome (RAO) compliance status, meaning that immediate actions were taken on these sites that were sufficient to contain the spill to the point of posing no significant risk to the public. Nonetheless, nine of the 114 sites in Webster are currently listed as MassDEP Tier Classified Chapter 21E sites that have not achieved a permanent cleanup within a year of being reported.

Table 7.2 Tier Classified Chapter 21E sites in Webster

Site Name	Address	Status
BP Station 30458	88 East Main St	Tier II
Residential fuel oil release	19 Joyce Street	Tier ID
Residence	35 Mechanic St	Tier ID
Webster Fish and Game	91 Gore Rd	Tier ID
Apple Dor Tree Inc	Old Worcester Rd	Tier ID
Richards residence	1052 School St	Tier ID
Leo Construction	Arkwright Rd	Tier II
Healy Trucking	30 Hill St	Tier ID
Former Empire Cleaners	6-8 River Ct	Tier ID

Source: MassGIS

Note: Tier ID: A site where the responsible party fails to provide a required submittal to MassDEP by a specified deadline.

Tier II: Any site receiving a total NRS (Massachusetts Contingency Plan’s numerical ranking system) score of less than 350. Permits are not required at Tier 2 sites and response action may be performed under the supervision of a Licensed Site Professional, without prior Departmental approval.

Erosion, Chronic Flooding and Sedimentation

The sedimentation issue in Webster is partially attributed to catch basins. There are currently five catch basins draining into the French River and as many as 50 catch basins draining into Webster Lake. Sandbars have formed in the river and collected on banks due to road runoff, and snowplowing has pushed sand directly onto the banks and into the river. While the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has been

proactive in addressing its catch basins along I-395, the Town should do more to address the catch basins under its own local jurisdiction²⁰.

Table 7.3 Webster Dams

Dam Name	Owner	DCR Hazard Code Description
Lake Chaubunagungamaug Dam	Cranston Print Works Co.	Significant Hazard
Club Pond Dam	Webster Fish & Game Assoc.	Low Hazard
Nipmuck Pond Dam	200 Sportsman Club	Low Hazard
Storage Pond Dam	Cranston Print Works Co.	Non Jurisdictional
Recreation Pond Dam	200 Sportsman Club	Non Jurisdictional
Mill Brook Canal Dam	Cranston Print Works Co.	Significant Hazard
Fish and Game Pond	Webster Fish & Game Assoc.	Non Jurisdictional
Webster Lake Dam	Cranston Print Works Co.	Significant Hazard
Pool Dam	Webster Fish & Game Assoc.	Non Jurisdictional

Source: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Dams also have long term effect on the retention of sediment and if not properly maintained can be the cause of highly damaging floods. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation identifies a total of 9 dams in Webster and some pose a greater hazard than others (see Table 7.3).

There are three dams on the French River which are anchored on the east in Webster and on the west in Dudley. From north to south they are the North Village Dam, which currently is used for electric power generation, South (sometimes called Middle) Dam, and Perryville Dam at the Connecticut border. Sediment behind the latter has been studied extensively by USGS, and there are tens of thousands of yards of contaminated sediment. Many chemicals are present at levels that adversely affect benthic organisms. There is contaminated sediment behind the others as well²¹.

Littering poses another significant challenge in Webster both environmentally and socially. The streets, roads, waterways, and vacant lots in town collect a lot of garbage, from discarded household trash to illegal dumping of large items such as tires, construction materials, and yard wastes. More effective education and incentives are needed to encourage proper disposal of large items and reduce the impact of littering.

²⁰ Town of Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2009.

²¹ Ibid.

Historic and Cultural Resources Existing Conditions

First settled in 1731 and incorporated in 1832, the Town of Webster possesses an abundance of historic resources. Many of these resources stem from industrial developments that took place during the 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly during the Federal (1775-1830) and Early Industrial (1830-1870) Periods.

Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg (Webster Lake) and French River, besides being the dominant features of the Town's landscape, were catalysts for the area's early Native American habitation followed by European settlement. These water bodies provided reliable hydropower that attracted early grist and sawmill operations, and later, textile-manufacturing developments that would come to dominate Webster's economy for much of the 19th and early 20th centuries.²²



Shopping plaza featuring the official name of the Webster Lake

²² Massachusetts Historical Commission. 1983. *MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Webster*. <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/townreports/Cent-Mass/web.pdf>. Accessed February 26, 2014.

The textile manufacturing industry in Webster began in 1810 with the incorporation of the Village Cotton, Woolen, and Linen Company. However, textile manufacturing did not start to flourish until Samuel Slater (1768-1835), a figure known in history as the “father of American industry,” brought his manufacturing prowess and capital to the area and established textile-manufacturing developments at North, East, and South Villages



Webster Town Hall and Veteran's Court Of Honor

beginning in 1812.²³ Many of these developments, along with a variety of early 19th century residential neighborhoods that accompanied them, remain intact today. These areas include numerous, high-quality worker housing such as Slater Company Mill Housing at North Village and mill buildings such as Slater, Horatio N. Company Cambric Works at East Village. The Bell Tower (1875), also located at East Village, is all that is left of Samuel Slater and Son’s Green Mill. This structure, otherwise known as the Slater Cotton Mill Monument, endures as a memorial to Samuel Slater and Webster’s industrial heritage.²⁴

Commercial developments in Webster benefited from and supported the Town’s thriving industrial developments and rising population numbers during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Rail connections established in 1840, and later by 1866, further stimulated commercial activity in Webster. Depot Village, which encompasses the general area of Main Street between the French River and Lake Street, was the commercial center of the community during this time. Most of Webster’s surviving commercial buildings in this area, such as the Tiffany Block (1900) and the Larchar-Branch Block (1912), date between 1900 and 1920.²⁵ These buildings represent the continued economic vitality of the community into the early 20th century.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Massachusetts Historical Commission. 2000. *MHC Inventory Form: Slater, Samuel S. and Son – Green Mill Bell Tower, WEB.913.* <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhcl=WEB.913>. Accessed February 26, 2014.

²⁵ Massachusetts Historical Commission. 1983. *MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Webster.* <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhpdf/townreports/Cent-Mass/web.pdf>. Accessed February 26, 2014.

As Webster developed its urban form during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Town erected several important institutional buildings. These include schools such as Rock Castle High School (1871) and Bartlett High School (1903-5; remodeled circa 1927-8) as well as municipal buildings such as the Chester C. Corbin Public Library (1921) and Webster Town Hall (circa 1926-28).^{26,27}



Webster's historic Main Street

Past and current threats to Webster's historic resources include the growth of recreational cottages around Webster Lake, and industrial park development.²⁸ Further, the downturn of Webster's economy along with its aging population - who cannot easily take care of their properties - have contributed to the deterioration of many buildings and neighborhoods. This is especially true in Webster's downtown area.

Designated Historic Resources

The Town of Webster possesses numerous historic resources, including properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and properties included in the *Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth*, as well as several archaeological sites (see Historic Resources Map).

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ National Park Service. 2012. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District*. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?MhclD=WEB.P>. Accessed February 25, 2014.

²⁸ National Park Service. 2012. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District*. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?MhclD=WEB.P>. Accessed February 25, 2014.

Properties in Webster that are listed in the NRHP consist of historic districts and individual buildings. Webster has two NRHP-listed historic districts: the Main Street Historic District and the Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District. The Main Street Historic District represents the core of Webster’s commercial activity, and contains one- to three-story buildings at 175-299 and 228-274 Main Street. Buildings within the Main Street Historic District possess varying architectural styles and date back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District is located one block east of the Main Street Historic District, and includes three Classical Revival municipal buildings along with complementary objects and structures. The three buildings, Webster Town Hall, Anthony J. Sitkowski School (formerly Bartlett High School), and the Chester C. Corbin Public Library, are all contributing historic resources.²⁹



Webster Historic District

Webster has six individually listed buildings in the NRHP. The oldest of these properties is the District Five Schoolhouse (1835), also known as the “Little Red Schoolhouse,”

²⁹ National Park Service. 2012. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District*. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhcd=WEB.P>. Accessed February 25, 2014.

which was the first school built in the incorporated Town of Webster.³⁰ The Eddy Block (1878), Shumway Block (1886), and Spaulding Block (1866) are all within the confines of the Main Street Historic District. Table 7.4 details all NRHP-listed resources in the Town of Webster. All resources listed in the NRHP are also listed in the Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places.

Table 7.4 NRHP-listed Resources in the Town of Webster

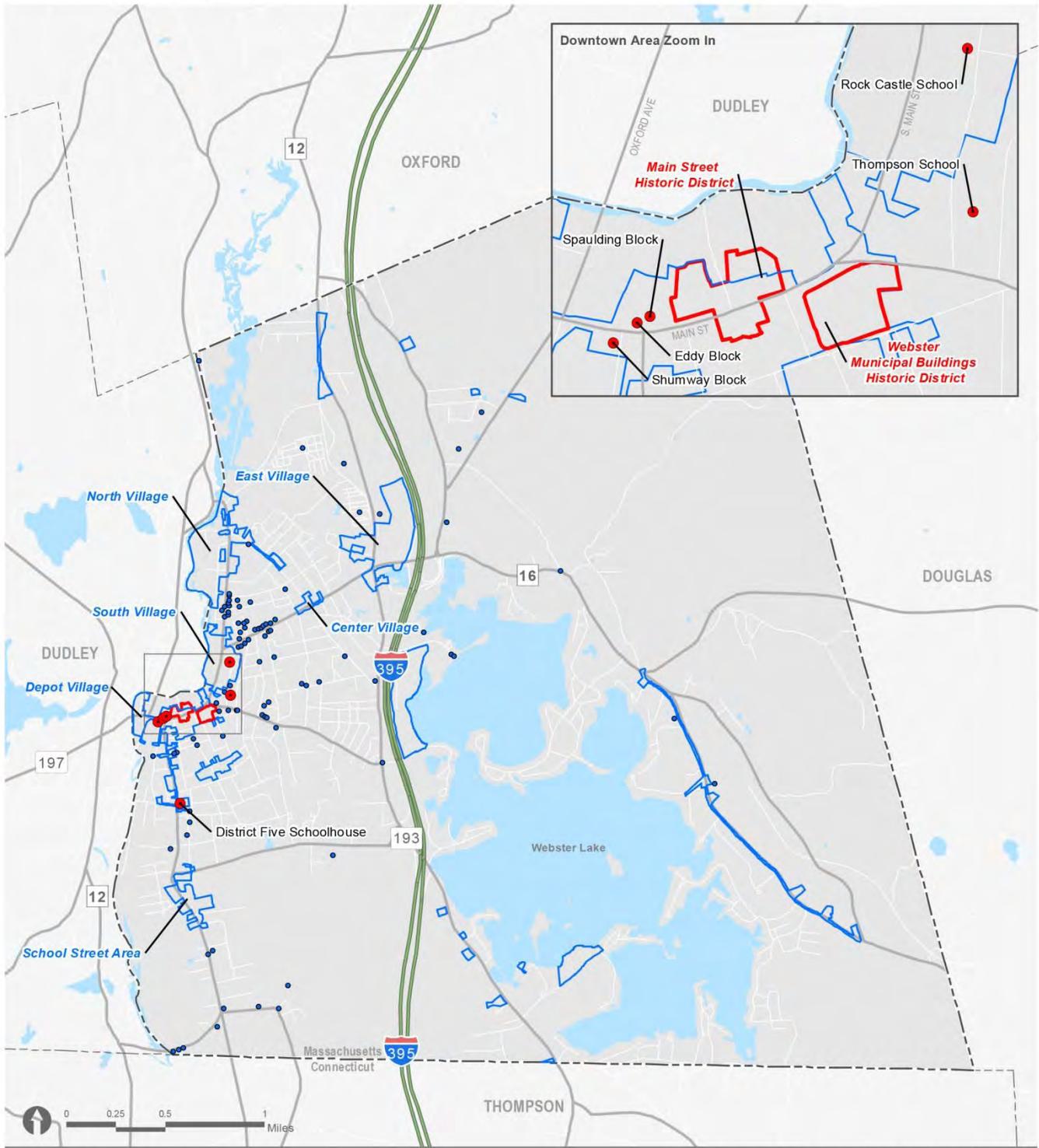
Name	NRHP Listing Date	Resource Type
District Five Schoolhouse	June 5, 1991	Building
Eddy Block	December 3, 1980	Building
Main Street Historic District	April 6, 1982	District
Rock Castle School	June 7, 1989	Building
Shumway Block	December 3, 1980	Building
Spaulding Block	December 3, 1980	Building
Thompson School	June 7, 1989	Building
Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District	March 27, 2012	District

Source: NPS 2014



Eddy Block on Main Street

³⁰ Massachusetts Historical Commission. 1978. *MHC Inventory Form: District Five Schoolhouse – WEB.129*. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhcid=WEB.129>. Accessed February 27, 2014.



Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Map 7.3 Historic Resources, Webster, MA

Legend

- National Register District
- National Register Individual Property
- MHC Inventoried Area
- MHC Inventoried Property (not within an MHC Inventoried Area)

Other than the Main Street Historic District, which was listed in the NRHP in 1982, no historic resource in Webster has a formal determination of eligibility as part of the Section 106 review process associated with the National Historic Preservation Act.³¹

In 1992, the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) rendered an opinion that the South Village Area in Webster is eligible for listing in the NRHP.³² However, no corresponding official determination of eligibility can be located. The South Village Area is a small rural mill village situated along the French River that contains the Slater & Sons Woolen Mill, multi-family and single-family early worker housing, and other historical resources connected to the mill industry. The NRHP-listed Rocks Castle School is also located in this area.

In addition to the South Village Area, several areas in Webster have been recognized for their potential as historic districts, but have no corresponding MHC opinion or formal determination of eligibility. Table 7.5 identifies these potential historic districts.

Table 7.5 Potential Historic Districts in the Town of Webster

Name	General Boundaries
Center Village	Along East Main Street between Stoughton Avenue and Bonette Place
East Village	Along Gore and Worcester Roads between Didonato Avenue and Interstate 395
North Village	Along North Main and Slater Streets between Aldrich Street and Bigelow Road, and extending to the French River
School Street Area (at Klebart Avenue)	Along School Street between Klebart Avenue and Harvard Street

Source: MHC 2014

None of Webster’s historic properties are subject to preservation restrictions. Preservation restrictions, which come with sizable federal income tax benefits if donated, are legal contracts by which a property owner agrees that a property will not change in a way that would compromise its historical and architectural integrity. These contracts run in perpetuity with the land; the owners who grant them, as well as all subsequent owners, are subject to their terms.

³¹ National Park Service. 2011. *National Register of Historic Places: Federal Determinations of Eligibility as of October 1, 2011*. <http://nrhp.focus.nps.gov/natreg/docs/Download.html>. Accessed February 25, 2014.

³² Massachusetts Historical Commission. 1992. *MHC Opinion: Eligibility for National Register*. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhclid=WEB.E>. Accessed February 25, 2014.

Inventoried Resources

The *Historical and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth*, an inventory of buildings, districts, structures, objects, archaeological sites, and burial grounds maintained by the MHC, includes a number of properties in Webster. Although many of these properties have not received an official designation, further study of inventoried properties often identifies candidates for designation as well as acts as a useful guide to explain the historical development of communities.

Webster has eighteen inventoried areas that do not have official designations.³³ These areas are recognizable residential, industrial, and landscape regions of the Town that either have a connection to the Town's early settlement or its industrial and cultural heritage. Examples include the Kingsbury District, Slater Cambric Mill Worker Housing, and Chaubunagungamaug Pond - Webster Lake.

Altogether, Webster has 431 inventoried properties that have not received an official designation (see Appendix C).³⁴ The majority of inventoried properties are located in and around downtown Webster as well as within the inventoried areas of East Village, North Village, and the Elm Street Area.³⁵

Webster's location around Webster Lake and the French River made for an ideal setting for Native American and European gathering and settlement. The Town's archaeological assets, which include four recorded prehistoric sites (pre-European contact) and one recorded historic period site (post-European contact), reflect this geographical magnetism.³⁶

Cultural Assets

The Town of Webster has an eclectic inventory of cultural assets that help evolve and celebrate its cultural heritage. Some of the major cultural assets in Webster include:

Chester C. Corbin Public Library – Located in the Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District, the Chester C. Corbin Public Library provides traditional library services along with space for community gatherings. The library has a section dedicated to local history, which includes town reports and yearbooks. It also promotes local history and heritage

³³ Massachusetts Historical Commission. 2014. Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System - MACRIS. <http://mhc-macris.net/Towns.aspx?Page=towns.asp>. Accessed March 5, 2014.

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Massachusetts Historical Commission. 2014. *MACRIS Maps 2.0 Beta*. <http://maps.mhc-macris.net/>. Accessed March 5, 2014.

³⁶ The locations of known archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas are generally kept confidential for protection of these resources.

through sponsored lectures and educational programs. In the past, the library has collaborated with the Webster-Dudley Historical Society for the presentation of virtual walking tours.

Due to the building's deteriorating condition and other limitations, which prevent the library from achieving its mission, the Town plans a nearly complete remodel of the Chester C. Corbin Public Library. The Town has sought funding through the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has approved the Town's grant application, and as of October 2013, the Chester C. Corbin Public Library was on the top of the state's construction waiting list. As the Chester C. Corbin Public Library is listed in the State Register of Historic Resources and the Town is seeking state funding, the project is subject to M.G.L. Chapter 9, Sections 26-27c (otherwise known as Chapter 254). Under this legislation, the Town was required to consult with the MHC on feasible and prudent alternatives to the demolition; however, no feasible alternatives were determined. In 2010, the Town entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the MHC to mitigate the demolition. The MOA stipulates that the Town must: 1) ensure proper documentation of the building, including photographic documentation based on MHC requirements; 2) implement an architectural salvage plan; and 3) implement a public interpretive program, including interpretive exhibits.³⁷ Additionally, a portion of the façade of the Chester C. Corbin Public Library will be preserved and incorporated into the design of the new building.

Webster-Dudley Historical Society – The Webster-Dudley Historical Society occupies and maintains the District Five Schoolhouse at 449 School Street. The mission of this non-profit, volunteer organization is to preserve and propagate the history of the Towns of Webster and Dudley. It meets its mission through sustaining a museum with a collection of historical documents and artifacts in addition to offering programs such as virtual walking tours, presentations, and lectures.³⁸ The Town is currently exploring ways to increase participation in this organization, as membership has dwindled in recent years.

Webster Cultural Council (WCC) - The WCC provides grant support to individuals, schools, and cultural organizations involved with the arts, humanities, and sciences. In addition, the WCC holds small events such as art shows and concerts as well as

³⁷ Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Town of Webster. 2010. *Memorandum of Agreement Among the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Historical Commission Regarding the Chester C. Corbin Library Project, Webster, Massachusetts in Compliance with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act*. December 6, 2010.

³⁸ Webster-Dudley Historical Society. 2013. *Welcome to the Webster-Dudley Historical Society*. <http://wdhs.webs.com/>. Accessed February 27, 2014.

subsidizes student field trips to cultural institutions for performances, educational tours, and exhibits. The Massachusetts Cultural Council supports the WCC.³⁹

Webster Lake: Webster Lake is the Town’s most significant landscape feature as well as a symbol of its historical development. Residents and visitors alike gather at the lake for town-wide events such as Winter Wonderland, the Easter Egg Hunt, and Fourth of July Fireworks. As discussed in Chapter 6 - *Open Space and Recreation*, the lake is also a popular destination for the natural recreational opportunities it provides.

Webster Lake Association (WLA) – The WLA is a steward of Webster Lake, and as such, conducts activities such as invasive plant control and lake and stream water quality testing. The WLA has a public service component, through which it educates the public on topics that have included “The History of the Lake” and “The Last Green Valley.”⁴⁰

French River Connection – The French River Connection, similar to the WLA, is a local environmental steward. Focused on the preservation and revitalization of the French River, the French River Connection has embarked on a number of projects and programs such as water quality initiatives and river cleanups. The French River Connection is also an advocate for the French River Greenway and the Webster Riverwalk, active projects that would re-connect Webster with the water body that was once a vital part of the Town’s economy.⁴¹ As envisioned, these projects would include the development of cultural points of interest.⁴² Signage and pavement treatments along the Riverwalk will create a link between the Riverwalk and the Town’s cultural, historic and natural history.

Indian Ranch Campground – Indian Ranch, located on the eastern edge of Webster Lake at Gore Road, hosts the annual Indian Ranch Summer Concert Series. Noted as the “Country Music Capital of New England,” Indian Ranch attracts performances that are primarily associated with the country music genre.⁴³

October Harvest Festival – The Town of Webster sponsors the annual October Harvest Festival. This event takes place at Town Hall, and has featured musical entertainment, food, crafts, and a petting zoo.

³⁹ Town of Webster. 2013. *WCC- Webster Cultural Council*. http://www.webster-ma.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=181&Itemid=831. Accessed February 27, 2014.

⁴⁰ Webster Lake Association. 2014. *About the WLA*. <http://www.websterlakeassociation.org/aboutWLA.html>. Accessed March 3, 2014.

⁴¹ French River Connection. Undated. *French River Connection: About Us*. <http://www.frenchriverconnection.org/about.html>. Accessed March 3, 2014.

⁴² French River Connection. Undated. *French River Connection: French River Greenway*. <http://www.frenchriverconnection.org/greenway.html>. Accessed March 3, 2014.

⁴³ Indian Ranch. 2014. *About Us, Welcome to Indian Ranch*. <http://www.indianranch.com/information/about>. Accessed March 3, 2014.

The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV) – The Town of Webster is within the boundaries of The Last Green Valley (otherwise known as the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor), a National Heritage Corridor composed of 35 towns throughout south-central Massachusetts and eastern Connecticut. National Heritage Corridors (alternatively known as National Heritage Areas [NHAs]) are federally designated places intended to promote historic preservation and the conservation of natural resources. NHAs are eligible for management planning assistance from the National Park Service along with limited financial assistance to carry out the recommendations of such planning. Federal funding for NHAs derives from the Heritage Partnership Program Fund.⁴⁴

The Last Green Valley is administered by TLGV, a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization. The primary roles of TLGV include promoting partnerships, educating and facilitating partner-administered actions, and managing its own projects and programs.⁴⁵ TLGV's past and ongoing efforts include grant distribution; publications on local heritage and environmental concerns; the Green Valley Institute, a partnership with the Universities of Connecticut and Massachusetts for continuing education on land use decision-making; and Walktober, a seasonal event that includes a series of guided tours and special events that take place annually in October and November.⁴⁶

TLGV has previously supported and/or collaborated with the WLA, French River Connection, and Webster-Dudley Historical Society. For example, TLGV assisted the WLA and French River Connection with their ongoing water quality monitoring activities.

TLGV featured the Town of Webster in *Notable & Notorious*, a publication that documents the historical importance of individuals that have been instrumental in the development of communities within The Last Green Valley. Samuel Slater was the chosen historical figure for Webster.

Walktober is a 23-year old program that celebrates the region's heritage and natural resources. In 2013, Webster hosted a single Walktober event, "Paddling Out of the Past: The French River," which discussed the importance of the French River during the

⁴⁴ National Park Service. Undated. *National Heritage Areas*. <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/REP/heritage.html>. Accessed March 3, 2014.

⁴⁵ The Last Green Valley, Inc. 2014. *Who We Are*. <http://www.tlqv.org/resources/more-about-us.html>. Accessed March 3, 2014.

⁴⁶ Ibid

inception and growth of the Webster's mill industry. Comparatively, the City of Norwich in Connecticut hosted 32 events.⁴⁷

In 2013, the economic impact of tourism within The Last Green Valley and associated with TLGV's efforts was \$278 million, an increase of 6 percent over 2012. This outcome includes visits from 1.9 million people, an increase of 5 percent over 2012. Walktober alone had a total economic impact of \$7.6 million, and participation from 51,932 people.⁴⁸

Preservation Programs in Use

The Town of Webster employs the following programs to assist in the preservation of the Town's historic properties.

Designation and Inventory Programs

National Register of Historic Places

As mentioned above, the Town of Webster has eight historic properties listed in the NRHP, including two historic districts. The NRHP is the nation's official list of significant historic properties. Properties listed in the NRHP include sites, buildings, structures, districts, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. Contrary to popular perception, listing in the NRHP does not limit a property owner's right to alter, manage, or sell the property when using private funds. Instead, the designation acts as a key to access preservation programs and incentives at the federal, state, and local level.

Some of the key benefits to NRHP listing include eligibility for federal and state rehabilitation tax credits, access to income tax deductions for the donation of historic preservation restrictions, and matching grant funds for preservation related projects. NRHP listing also requires consideration in federal, state, and some local planning projects.

Properties considered for NRHP listing must be at least fifty years old (unless they demonstrate exceptional significance) and must possess physical integrity by retaining enough of its original materials to exhibit its historic appearance during the period of its historic significance. The NRHP recognizes properties associated with famous figures

⁴⁷ The Last Green Valley, Inc. 2013. *The Last Green Valley's Walktober 2013 Schedule*. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/172918087/The-Last-Green-Valley-s-Walktober-2013-Schedule>. Accessed March 3, 2014.

⁴⁸ The Last Green Valley, Inc. 2013. *2013 Tourism Impact Report*. Report.

and events, but also acknowledges places that are associated with the history of important themes and trends in American history and pre-history. NRHP listing is accomplished through a nomination process initiated by an individual, or a private or public entity. Property owners may object to the listing through a certified letter to the State Historic Preservation Office. If 51 percent of the property owners within a district object to the listing through the certified letter objection process, the district will not be officially listed in the NRHP. The number of properties held by a single owner is immaterial; each property owner has one “vote.” The nomination addresses the significance and integrity of the resource through a thorough report documenting its appearance and history. Before the final designation, the report is reviewed by MHC staff, the MHC’s state review board, and the NPS.

State Register of Historic Places

The Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places was established in 1982 as a comprehensive listing of the buildings, structures, objects, and sites that have received local or national designations (local historic districts and landmarks and NRHP-listed properties) based on their historical or archaeological significance. The Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places is not a designation program per se and does not have a separate nomination process. Properties that have preservation restrictions or have been formally determined eligible for the NRHP in the Section 106 review process are also included in the State Register. Every property that is contained in the State Register is also part of the *Inventory of the Historical and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth*.

Inventory Programs

As noted above under Inventoried Resources, Webster has many individual properties and areas that have been documented on MHC inventory forms. The acceptance by the MHC of submitted forms places the properties in the *Inventory of Historical and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth*. The form is merely a record of the historical and architectural nature of a property and is not a formal designation of the property’s importance. An evaluation of the property’s significance is only undertaken if a project under review by the MHC and a federal or state agency would have a known effect on the property.

The MHC undertook a Town Reconnaissance Survey in Webster in 1983 as part of their inventory efforts. In 2000, the Webster Office of Community Development conducted a survey that provided updates to some existing forms and added several others.⁴⁹

Federal and State Preservation Laws and Regulations

Significant legislation exists to provide a review and consultation process to consider impacts from projects with state or federal involvement on historic properties. In Webster, the Department of Community Development is the predominant entity involved with these state and local historic preservation review processes.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

Section 106 of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, was originally enacted to address the widespread loss of historic properties during federally sponsored urban renewal initiatives and highway construction projects during the 1960s. The law requires that any project that receives federal funds or is required to obtain permits or licenses from a federal agency is required to be reviewed for its effects on historic properties. Section 106 review is required for properties that are both listed or *determined eligible* for the NRHP. This determination is part of the review process if the property has not been previously assessed for its eligibility.

Typical examples of federal undertakings that can require Section 106 review are the use of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for housing rehabilitation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' permits, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) supported road improvement projects. If a property is determined eligible for the NRHP, then the impact of the proposed federal project on the resource must be determined by the federal agency or its assignee and concurred upon by the MHC. If the project is determined to have an adverse effect on the resource, the lead federal agency must consult with the MHC in order to determine mitigation options.

The primary trigger for Section 106 review in the Town of Webster is the use of CDBG funds, which the Webster Office of Community Development administers. Webster's designation as a Mini-Entitlement community means that the Town receives a significant amount of funds under the CDBG program. The Town of Webster has a Programmatic Agreement (PA) in place with the MHC regarding project review using these funds. The Webster Redevelopment Authority manages this PA for the town.

⁴⁹ Massachusetts Historical Commission. 2014. *Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System*. <http://mhc-macris.net/>. Accessed March 10, 2014.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires all federal agencies to consider the environmental effects of their proposed actions and investigate alternatives and mitigation options that minimize any adverse impacts to the social, economic, and physical environment. Cultural and historic resources are included in the various categories considered in the NEPA process, and are addressed in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Often this review is coordinated with the Section 106 review to avoid duplication of efforts. Like the Section 106 process, the lead federal agency is responsible for identifying effects and proposing mitigation alternatives.

The Town of Webster coordinates with the MHC as part of the environmental review process for all projects with federal involvement, including federal funds and permits.

State Register of Historic Places Project Review

Chapter 9, Sections 26-27C of the Massachusetts General Laws, like Section 106 at the federal level, requires that any undertaking involving state funds or licenses be reviewed to determine whether the proposed project will have an adverse effect on a property listed in the State Register of Historic Places. If it is determined that the project will have an adverse effect on a listed property, the state agency and/or the project proponent must consult with the MHC to determine mitigation measures. Unlike Section 106, which considers NRHP-listed and eligible properties, M.G.L. Chapter 9 Section 27C considers properties or districts listed in the State Register of Historic Places, as well as inventoried resources that they believe are eligible for the NRHP.

Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)

The Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) is a comprehensive review process that requires state agencies to report on the potential environmental impacts of projects involving state licenses, permits, or financial support. This public process requires a thorough study of potential environmental impacts and the development of feasible mitigation options designed to avoid or minimize those impacts. Historic resources, both above and below ground, are included in the list of environmental factors that must be examined in the MEPA process.

If the project has a connection to state funds permits, or licenses, certain thresholds must be met in order to initiate MEPA review. For historic resources, the threshold is met if the project involves the demolition of any part of a structure listed in the State Register of

Historic Places, or (as of 1998) the property is listed in the *Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth*. A detailed project information statement, known as an Environmental Notification Form, must then be prepared to assess the impact of the project on the resource.

Similar to NEPA, the Town of Webster coordinates with the MHC as part of the environmental review process for all projects with state involvement, including state funds and permits.

Federal and State Historic Tax Credit Programs

Since 1976, a federal tax credit has been available for rehabilitating buildings listed in the NRHP that are used for an income-producing use. This program offers a 20 percent tax credit for the qualified costs of a substantial rehabilitation of historic buildings when the work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.⁵⁰ A similar tax credit program at the state level in Massachusetts provides a state tax credit up to 20 percent of qualified costs. The programs have made an important contribution to not only the continued use and preservation of many historic buildings in Massachusetts, but have also resulted in the creation of additional jobs, revenue for municipalities, and housing units, among a number of proven benefits.

To date, owners of three buildings in Webster have successfully taken advantage of either the federal or state historic tax credit programs, or both, as they can be combined. All three properties are former school buildings, including the Thompson and Rock Castle Schools on Prospect Street and the Sitkowski School on Negus Street.⁵¹ The Sitkowski School is the most recent development to receive federal historic tax credits (2010), and the only property that has applied for state historic tax credits.⁵² The planned rehabilitation of the Sitkowski School includes affordable senior housing and a community/senior center.⁵³

Public-Private Partnerships

The Town of Webster works with private entities to promote a host of community development initiatives, including the rehabilitation of the Town's historic properties.

⁵⁰ A federal 10 percent tax credit for rehabilitating buildings that were built before 1936 and are not historic (that is, not listed in the National Register of Historic Places) is also available. The rehabilitation requirements are minimal and do not require official approval.

⁵¹ National Park Service. Undated. *Technical Preservation Services, Check Project Status*. <http://tps.cr.nps.gov/status/>. Accessed March 5, 2014.

⁵² Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. 2013. *Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit*. <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhctax/taxidx.htm>. Accessed March 5, 2014.

⁵³ Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations. 2014. *Sitkowski School Groundbreaking*. <http://www.macdc.org/events/sitkowski-school-groundbreaking>. Accessed March 5, 2014.

One notable partnership is between the Town and Community Opportunities Group, Inc. (COG). This ongoing relationship has seen COG work on housing rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, and recreational facility development.

Beginning in 2010, COG worked with the Webster Office of Community Development on the development and implementation of the pilot Downtown Webster Commercial Property Improvement Program (DW-CPIP). Under the DW-CPIP, property owners were eligible for professional design assistance as well as matching grants for the completion of façade renovations and the installation of signs and awnings.⁵⁴ The overarching goal of the DW-CPIP was to revitalize Webster's historical downtown. Despite the benefits of the program, the Town had difficulty attracting participation from property owners. Under the program, only two facades were rehabilitated and approximately 18 new signs and awnings were installed.⁵⁵ One of the benefiting properties was 248 Main Street (before and after pictures), which is included in the *Inventory of the Historical and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth* and is within the Main Street Historic District. The DW-CPIP was financed by CDBG funds, which were secured with assistance from COG. The Town plans to reintroduce the DW-CPIP in fiscal year 2015.

In addition to their work on the DW-CPIP, COG has supported the renovation of the mixed-use former Aubuchon Hardware building as well as the redevelopment of the Sitkowski School.⁵⁶

Additional or Underutilized Preservation Programs

The Town of Webster has not taken advantage of the following programs that are suitable to its circumstances and have the potential to enhance its existing preservation efforts.

Local Historic Districts

Local Historic Districts (LHD) can protect the appearance of historic properties and encourage new construction that complements a district's historic setting. The designation of an LHD imposes a review and approval process by a Historic District Commission for proposed exterior changes to properties. The primary strength of an LHD is that it can be adapted to specific community needs, while providing greater protection for local resources. Designation as an LHD is one of the most effective ways

⁵⁴ Community Opportunities Group, Inc. 2011. *COG Works with Webster, MA to Expand Community Development Initiatives*. <http://www.cogincorp.com/uncategorized/cog-works-with-webster-ma-to-expand-community-development-initiatives/>. Accessed March 9, 2014.

⁵⁵ Cyr, Carol. 2014. Personal Communication with Carol Cyr, Director of the Webster Office of Community Development. March 10, 2014.

⁵⁶ Ibid

to protect the historic character of buildings, streetscapes, neighborhoods, and special landmarks from inappropriate alterations, new construction, and demolition. In addition to protecting historic resources, locally designated districts across the country consistently produce stable property values and greatly add to the attractiveness of neighborhoods.

Although the Town of Webster has an abundance of properties with historical value, it has no LHDs. In order to designate an LHD, Webster must refer to M.G.L. Chapter 40C, as amended. The process outlined in this law includes identifying an area for designation and forming a historic district study committee. The historic district study committee prepares a report that examines the area's qualifications for designation as well as the committee's recommendations; the report is prepared with input from the local planning board and the MHC. Once a final report is completed, the historic district study committee presents the document at a town meeting for approval. Once Webster designates an LHD, and establishes an associated historic district commission to oversee the LHD, the historic district commission assumes the role of the historic district study commission in future designation efforts.

Potential candidates for LHDs in Webster include several areas in the Town that have been recognized for their potential as historic districts, but have no corresponding MHC opinion or formal determination of eligibility. The *Designated Historic Resources* section in this chapter refers to these areas by name and general location. Depot Village, as previously described, is also a potential candidate.

If the designation of an LHD is not feasible, Webster can seek an alternative in a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD). NCDs are similar to LHDs in that they protect architecturally and historically significant resources through a review and approval process at the local level; however, they typically regulate a more limited set of design elements as well as demolition and new construction.

Demolition Delay Ordinance

The Town of Webster does not currently have a demolition delay ordinance. The objective of a demolition delay ordinance, which has been instituted in many Massachusetts communities, is to encourage owners of historic buildings to seek and consider alternatives to demolition.

Demolition by Neglect Ordinance

Demolition by neglect, defined as the deterioration of a building through abandonment and/or inadequate maintenance, poses a serious threat to many communities. Such

neglect can lead to the deterioration of a building's structural systems and its external and internal appearance. In addition to being dangerous, deteriorating buildings are an eyesore and discourage investment and damages neighborhood pride.

A Demolition by Neglect ordinance, which the Town of Webster has not adopted, protects individual derelict buildings as well as the physical integrity of an entire neighborhood by specifying a set of minimum maintenance requirements for all buildings. While historic buildings and neighborhoods are by no means the only structures to suffer from owner neglect, concerns about the high costs and hassles involved in rehabilitation of older buildings tend to make older structures more susceptible to abandonment. As described in *Chapter 3 Housing*, the Town has embarked on a program of selective demolition of derelict properties.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines provide a set of standards to owners and tenants of historic buildings to guide them in the maintenance and preservation of their properties in a manner consistent with a neighborhood's overall architectural character. By providing a consistent set of standards, a neighborhood can maintain its historic integrity and cohesiveness. Usually design guidelines cover such architectural elements as windows, exterior materials, new construction, and rooftop additions.

Although generally associated with local historic districts and their standard for review processes, design guidelines are often employed in areas outside of local historic districts as a set of voluntary standards.

The design guidelines of the Town of Webster, as outlined in Section 650-73 of the Town's Zoning Code, stipulates that the Planning Board shall evaluate designs in terms of their capacity to preserve "historic and prehistoric sites and their environs in-so-far as needed to protect the character of the site."⁵⁷ However, these design guidelines are specific to housing developments constructed for the 55 and Over Community under the Fair Housing Act of 1988 and under MGL c. 151B, § 4, and is not applied universally.

As part of the DW-CPIP, the Town instituted limited design guidelines to maintain the physical character and tone of Webster's historical downtown. Although the DW-CPIP is no longer functioning, the Town still requires that building permit applicants within the DW-CPIP boundary abide by these standards.

⁵⁷ Town of Webster. 2009. *Chapter 650 Zoning*. <http://www.ecode360.com/9233674>. Accessed March 5, 2014.

Chapter 2 - *Land Use* includes recommendations regarding design guidelines, particularly for downtown Webster and East Main Street.

Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a program instituted in 155 communities across Massachusetts since its inception in 2001. Used for projects that help develop or acquire open space, increase the number of affordable housing units, and support historic preservation efforts, the CPA is funded through a property tax surcharge of no more than 3 percent. If adopted, 10 percent of the funds must go toward open space, 10 percent toward affordable housing, and 10 percent toward historic preservation. The remaining 70 percent can be divided as the city or town determines among these three categories. The CPA ensures that funds will always be available for preservation activities.

Properties receiving CPA funding for historic preservation projects must be listed in or eligible for the State Register of Historic Places, or deemed historic by the local historical commission. Funded projects can be owned publicly, privately, or by a non-profit organization, as long as they provide a significant public benefit.

Funds can be used for a variety of project types. Examples of projects that could benefit Watertown include the purchase of preservation restrictions, preparation of a NRHP nomination, inventory efforts, or the installation of historic area signage.

The Town of Webster has not adopted the CPA. However, the Town's 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan did identify CPA adoption as a potential funding source to meet several of its goals and objectives.⁵⁸

Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources Recommendations

The following recommendations derived from the public planning process for the 2014 Master Plan, previous planning efforts such as the 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), and data collection and analysis performed in conjunction with Master Plan preparation:

⁵⁸ Town of Webster. 2009. *Town of Webster Open Space and Recreation Plan*. http://www.webster-ma.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=112&Itemid=611. Accessed February 25, 2014.

Natural Resources Recommendations

- Identify and secure priority areas in Town for natural resource conservation and passive recreation purposes, such as open land adjacent to important water supply areas, wetlands, wildlife corridors, and scenic landscapes, using various tools such as conservation restrictions, deeded easements, purchase, etc.
- Adopt a Wetland Protection Bylaw to protect important wetland resources throughout Town, using the MA Association of Conservation Commission model.
- Promote public education on recognizing and preserving Webster's natural resources as an integrated part of town pride through outreach, media, print materials, charrettes, and seminars.
- Re-evaluate and enforce the existing Stormwater Management Bylaw and promote town-wide Best Management Practices for the collection and treatment of stormwater. Adopt a Low Impact Development bylaw to better manage stormwater through reduced impervious cover and preservation of green space and other natural areas.
- Assess municipally-owned properties for potential environmental issues, particularly around water resource areas, drinking water supply areas, and recreation areas/facilities, and address stormwater management concerns as required.
- Continue working in partnerships with local and regional preservation organizations and state agencies to preserve watersheds and resolve the long-standing issues with sediment built-up along the French River.
- Support the ongoing efforts to monitor and control invasive species at Webster Lake.
- Create Stormwater Utility to be responsible for funding the operation, construction and maintenance of stormwater management structures, for stormwater system planning, and management.
- Identify and preserve corridors that link existing recreation and conservation areas and advance the implementation of additional recreation systems along resource corridors such as the French River Greenway and the Quinebaug Valley Trail.

Historic and Cultural Resources Recommendations

- Appoint an active historical commission to lead preservation activities in Webster. Identify historic buildings throughout Webster with signage and identify candidate buildings for preservation, starting with those listed in the state's database.
- Appropriately budget for the maintenance and renovation of historic buildings owned by the Town.
- Consider a policy of tax incentives for the appropriate re-use of existing buildings.

- Consider granting tax credits to property owners who restore buildings to their original character and style.
- Reinstigate the Downtown Webster Commercial Property Improvement Program (DW-CPIP) and promote it with an educational and marketing campaign. Bolster the design guidelines of Webster's downtown area, which were instituted as part of the DW-CPIP, and expand the scope of the design guidelines in the Town's zoning code.
- Hold property owners accountable for building maintenance by adopting a Demolition by Neglect ordinance.
- Promote additional spaces for community gathering such as the auditorium at Town Hall or new Senior Center community room.
- Promote the activities of the Webster-Dudley Historical Society and encourage membership. Explore a potential partnership and cross-promotional opportunities with the Old Slater Mill Association and the Slater Mill Historic Site in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.
- Support the creation of cultural points of interest as part of the French River Greenway and Webster Riverwalk. Increase participation in the activities of The Last Green Valley, including supporting additional Walktober events.

8 Public Facilities and Services

Introduction

The Public Facilities and Services element of a master plan should guide decisions about the public buildings and infrastructure a local government provides in order to deliver required services to residents and businesses now and in the meet future. Community facilities make it possible for municipal employees and volunteers to provide services for the public good. The adequacy of municipal and school facilities for the function they serve is largely determined by four factors:

- The form, size and organization of the community’s local government;
- The projected population and economic growth;
- The community’s land use pattern; and
- The expectations of the community’s population.

A town’s ability to provide adequate facilities depends on effective capital planning and a commitment to implementation, asset management policies, and the amount of revenue available for local government operations. Webster is a community with a largely aging and obsolete infrastructure that serves the downtown, industrial areas, and older residential neighborhoods. Many of the Town’s public facilities are more than 30 years old and require replacement or substantial capital investment to meet contemporary needs and codes. Webster’s lean town resources create a potential shortfall of the tools necessary to meet current and future needs as the Town continues to grow and change.

What is a Public Facility?

A public facility is any municipal property that has been improved for public purposes, such as Town Hall, library, police and fire stations, park and playgrounds, or schools. It also includes municipal utilities such as water or sewer service.

Public Facilities and Services Goals

- Goal 1.** Develop greater municipal government capacity to plan for, guide, and regulate growth and change.
- Goal 2.** Develop a comprehensive planning process for short- and long-term capital improvements for all town facilities and services.
- Goal 3.** Given the often conflicting demands, establish priorities for building and facility upgrades and replacement.
- Goal 4.** Encourage reuse, rehabilitation, improvement and expanded capacity of existing infrastructure and facilities over the construction of new infrastructure in undeveloped areas.
- Goal 5.** Enhance communications with residents and among Town boards, departments, commissions and staff.
- Goal 6.** Lead by example in community facilities and operations by establishing sustainability principles and initiatives.

Baseline Assessment

Town Hall

Webster Town Hall currently serves as the site for the Town's primary administrative and permitting functions including the offices of the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen, Assessing Department, Building Inspector, Town Engineer/Planner, Community Development Department, Planning Board, Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Town Treasurer, Town Collector, and Town Clerk.



Webster Town Hall

Webster Public Library

Webster's Public Library is located in the heart of downtown on Lake Street close to the Town Hall. Currently the library has a staff of six. Four staff members are full-time, including Director, Adult Services Librarian, Youth Services Librarian, and Senior Clerk. There are two part-time library assistants. The staff manages the circulation of a total of 44,238 holdings in the library, including books, audio and video materials, and print periodicals and serials.

The current library building, the Chester C. Corbin Public Library, was built in 1921 with the exception of an elevator installed in 1998 and a new roof in 2003. No other major expansion or structural improvements have been made. The aged facility presents a number of challenges to the adequate functionality and daily operation of the library. For example, the electrical system is outdated and does not meet the current technology needs of the community (media outlets, additional computer terminals, etc.). The building itself is also not energy efficient. Many of the original windows will not open or close, which are drafty in winter and contribute to high heating costs. Severe water damage to the ceiling and walls is prevalent on both levels of the building and there has been damage due to flooding. The interior and exterior lighting is insufficient. In addition, there is also a lack of space to adequately meet the community's demands for programing, circulating materials, quiet study areas and computer usage. The building only has one small conference room and there is no space for a local history room. The staff work room is very small, requiring most work be done at the Main Desk in view of the public. The Children's Room has no running water or restrooms. The library also has very limited parking and significantly lacks storage space.



Chester C. Corbin Public Library

In recent years the library has seen a large surge in registered patrons, particularly during the recent economic downturn. The current library facility is too small to meet the library service demands of the community. The existing library building's condition and limitations, as described above, make the need for a new library a necessity. The library has submitted a Library Construction Grant Application in hope for the construction of a new library building to meet the community's need. The Town is considering the construction of a new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified library that would be almost 23,000 square feet in size as compared to the current 7,400 square foot facility. It would replace the current library on the same site. The Town's application is currently on top of the list for receiving a construction grant, although the Town is responsible for a local match.

Department of Public Works

The Webster Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for highway, water, sewer, and other facility maintenance. The Highway Division currently has 9 full time staff members and also manages 25 trucks, machines, and lawn mowers. The Highway Division facility is 39 years old with a number of improvements over the years including new doors and roof upgrades, etc. The priorities of the Highway Division are to maintain roadways and bridges, upgrade road conditions, and make sure the public can travel safely on the Town's roads. The Highway Division is also responsible for the maintenance of recreational facilities in town, including Memorial Beach. Typically there are 27 seasonal employees hired for the summer beach program.

The Sewer Division currently has 13 employees. The buildings at the Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF) range in age from three years to more than 44 years, and all are considered to be in good condition for their ages. There are 19 Pump Stations (PS) ranging from 18 years to 46 years old. All the PS roofs were replaced in the last three years and all but two roofs at the WWTF were replaced in the same time frame. The Sewer Division also manages three road trucks, a 2011 swap loading truck, and a 1984 1-ton dump truck, in addition to a 24 year old sewer jetter and a 20 year old sewer camera van.

There are approximately 60 miles of sewer interceptors, trunk lines, and force mains. The Division is just completing an upgrade to the headworks and a phosphorous removal system was completed in late 2011. With the loss of many large water consuming industries in Webster, the sewer system currently operates at roughly 50% capacity. The collection system is typical gravity and lift station design while the WWTF is an extended aeration system supplemented with seasonal phosphorous removal and disinfection.

The priority of the sewer department is to continue with upgrades and replacing older equipment, meeting anticipated requirements of the delayed deferral discharge permit and improving staff abilities and skills.

Currently the Town of Webster does not offer curbside pickup of solid waste/recycling, although there is a compost facility for brush disposal.

Fire Department

The Fire Department in Webster has 42 paid employees, three of which are full time while the rest are on-call members who work part time shifts. The Department has two stations. The Headquarters building, located on Thompson Road, was built in 1969 and is slated for renovation work this year. The Fire Department will take over the side of the building that the Police Department currently occupies when they move to their new facility in downtown. Station Two is located on School Street was built in 1996 and is in need of an energy efficiency assessment and improvements.

The Fire Department merged with the Rescue Squad in 2012 and is responsible for all hazards within the Town of Webster including Emergency Management. The Department has a number of vehicles and equipment, including a 100' tower truck, four engines, one tanker, a 75' ladder truck, and one heavy rescue vehicle. One of the major capital expenses identified by the Department is the replacement of the 32 year old tower truck. Most of the roads in Webster are wide enough to accommodate the Fire Department's equipment, but not always adequate for conducting operations. A number of the older roads are narrow and difficult to navigate when there are cars parked on both sides of the road. Most of these roads are side roads emanating from Main Street and East Main Street, such as Prospect Street, Granite Street, and Goddard Street, etc.



Webster Fire Station

In 2013, the Fire Department responded to 536 emergency calls, approximately 45 calls per month. This number does not reflect the inspections that were done on a daily basis. The Department is currently undergoing a transformation in how it provides services. Part of the long term plan is to provide the Town with fire coverage 24/7 and the Department is working on plans for both full and part time staff to meet the goal. The on-call members are working part time shifts to provide better coverage for incidents and the Department is trying to expand that coverage and add more staff to the current shift to meet the minimum national standards for response. In addition, the Department is working diligently to keep up with the inspectional services which have been nonexistent while also providing the community with public education.

Police Department

The Webster Police Department currently employs 31 full-time officers and 16 part-time officers. The Chief has one full-time Administrative Assistant. In addition, the

Department has three full-time dispatchers and four part-time dispatchers. It is anticipated that in summer 2014 the Department will begin Regional Dispatch with seven full-time dispatchers and one Director. In 2013, the Department responded to a total of 21,936 offense incidents, which was less than 22,754 in 2012. The Police Department is scheduled to move into the new headquarter building on July 15, 2014. The 22,000 square foot station is located at 357 Main Street and is more than 50% complete as of March 2014.



New Police Station at 357 Main Street in downtown Webster

In terms of police vehicles, the Department currently has 18 vehicles under its control, including ten marked units used for patrol and six unmarked units in addition to two boats used for enforcement on the lake. At this time the Department leases its cruisers along with the Chief and Deputy Chief's vehicle on a three year lease plan. The Deputy Chief's and new K-9 vehicle are being funded through the Department's Federal Drug Account which is funded through seized proceeds from drug investigations. The Department also purchased an unmarked vehicle for the detective with funding from this program. The Department plans on leasing two new marked units each year in order to keep the fleet in a safe working condition. It is believed that if the current vehicle replacement rotation is continued, the Department can maintain a safe fleet of vehicles with low mileage and repair costs.

The Department recently purchased new Glock 45 caliber firearms to replace weapons that are 13 years old, which should be sufficient for the next 10 or more years. The Department plans to replace the current first generation Tasers with the latest generation by purchasing 20 new Tasers to maintain the safety of the officer and the public. Other equipment upgrades the Department seeks in both near and long terms include gradually replacing the camera systems, purchasing new servers with the opening of the new station and developing a plan of replacing the servers after the fifth year, and replacing aged computers. The Department also plans to establish a video surveillance system in the Main Street area that would consist of approximately 22 cameras with the system being monitored at the station.



Police substation on Main Street

The towns of Webster and Dudley recently signed an agreement to establish a regional dispatch center which will be located in the new police station. The center will enhance the service that is provided to both communities and will entitle the Department to apply for a grant for one million dollars towards purchases of new radio equipment, furniture and other equipment for the dispatch center. While the Department's radio communication is in good condition, there are plans to upgrade the system so that it would provide 97% portable radio coverage in Webster.

The Police Department, along with the Fire Department, currently utilizes the Armory as a storage facility for its boats, speed trailers, seized vehicles and miscellaneous items. The Armory is in need of repairs. The renovations that should be considered include the heating system, removing the wooden gym floor, securing the building and replacing the roof. One other area that needs to be addressed is the dramatic increase in paperwork that is required by the courts, which necessitates additional equipment in the new police station to efficiently manage the increased caseload.

Overall, the Police Department can meet the current demand for services and anticipated future needs.

Public Schools

The Webster School Department oversees three schools in Webster, namely the Park Avenue Elementary School (currently kindergarten through grade 2), Webster Middle School (currently grades 3 – 6), and Bartlett Junior and Senior High School for grades 7 – 12 . The Park Avenue School, which is more than 50 years old, is currently being rebuilt adjacent to the existing building. The Middle School was built in 2005 and the Bartlett School in 1979.



Webster School Department

As a result of the new Park School project, the grades will be reconfigured when the new school opens in September 2015. The Park Avenue School will include kindergarten through grade 4; the Middle School will be for grades 5 – 8; and the Bartlett School will cover the high school grades (9 – 12).

Current enrollment in the Webster’s schools is 1,812 students for the 2013-2014 academic year, according to the Webster School Department. It projects enrollment to be steady over the next few years, rising only to 1,842 in the 2017-2018 academic year. Thus, with the new school coming online and the realignment of the grades, future capacity within the school system is not expected to be an issue.

However, the Town has submitted a renovation letter of interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority to assist with the \$10 – 11 million worth of renovations identified in the capital Improvements plan. This includes work in the laboratories, site work around the school and upgrades to the fields.



Bartlett Junior Senior High School

The administration function for the School Department is housed in the former Filmer School, which is considered to be a historic building, was built in 1899. The building needs substantial upgrades including a new roof, boiler, and infrastructure work. Given the grade reconfiguration after the Park Avenue school reopens, the Department is considering moving its offices to the High School and the Town would then retain control of the Filmer School building. There has been some turnover in the upper administrative levels of the Department. The Superintendent joined the Department in 2012 and most top administrative personnel and school principals have no more than four years of tenure with the Department.

The total number of teachers in the district is 99.6 full-time equivalent, resulting in a student-teacher ratio of 13.9 to 1, as compared with a statewide average of 13.6 to 1.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/teacher.aspx?orgcode=03160000&orgtypecode=5&>

The total expenditure per pupil was \$12,786 in 2012, which is lower than the statewide average of \$13,636.⁶⁰

The School Department considers the educational system to be a big part of the Town's infrastructure. Recognizing that there is a pre-existing achievement gap among the students, the Department is in the process of trying to change the perception about the Webster school system and has begun to see some positive results. The Department is in the first year of a three-year commitment to participate in the Massachusetts Science Initiative. There has been an increase in the number of students participating in the Advanced Placement exams. Additionally, the Department has seen increases in achievement in math scores for the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exam. The drop-out rate has decreased from 6.6 percent to 4.7 percent in just the last couple of years. In 2013, 87 percent of the high school students either enrolled in a two- or four-year college, or joined the military.

Senior Center/Council on Aging

The current Webster Senior Center is located at 116 School Street, but will be housed within the new Sitkowski School Apartments when it opens in early 2015. This will allow the Senior Center to provide a greater variety of services and activities in a much more spacious and conducive environment in a building that will include 66 units for senior citizens.



Webster Senior Center

⁶⁰ Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/finance.aspx?orgcode=03160000&orgtypecode=5&leftNavId=501&>

The Senior Center and Council on Aging provide advocacy and support systems empowering older adults to maintain their independence, improve their quality of life and prepare for life change. The Council provides social services; wellness and fitness programs; information and referral services; case management; health promotion and prevention activities; socialization; volunteer opportunities; advocacy; and associated support systems.

There are a number of issues that continue to concern the Council on Aging. As Webster's population continues to age, these issues are likely to be on the Council's agenda for years to come. They include ensuring that there are affordable housing options for senior citizens, providing transportation for basic errands and medical appointments, helping to establish financial security as people age through workshops and education, and the stigma associated with mental illness as our aging population expands.

Public Facilities and Services Recommendations

These recommendations aim to help achieve the public facilities and services goals advanced above. They will contribute to the prosperity and economic competitiveness of the Town, and help to enhance its existing built infrastructure. Some of these recommendations are taken from the 2013 Community Development Strategy.

- Improve intra- and inter-departmental capacity, planning, and cooperation. The Town recently created and filled a new Town Engineer/Planner position that will enhance this effort. As described in the Land Use chapter, the Town needs to improve its planning and regulatory capacity and tools (revising zoning, improving site plan review standards, etc.), which will help to ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided as the Town develops and grows.
- Utilize existing staff resources such as the Office of Community Development to ensure that infrastructure improvements are carried out in a coordinated manner.
- Develop and implement a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) by establishing a permanent Capital Planning Committee. The Town should improve its systematic process for developing, maintaining and implementing a CIP. The Town should establish a town-wide capital improvement planning process and update it on a regular basis. However, much of the current planning is done by the individual

departments, as well as by the School Department. While that helps to establish priorities for each department, the plans need to be looked at in a coordinated and comprehensive manner so that the Town can better prioritize needs on a town-wide basis across all departments.

Projects anticipated to extend beyond the plan's window should be memorialized in an appendix or future projects list, and revisited as the plan is updated each year. Developing a CIP is not difficult, but developing a long-range CIP that a community can actually implement requires all of the following:

- A complete, descriptive inventory of existing assets – real estate, equipment, vehicles, infrastructure, and other items defined as a capital project under local policy;
- An assessment of the lifespan of existing assets;
- Criteria for evaluating and ranking capital project requests;
- A roster of current and anticipated near-term capital funding requests from town departments and the schools, including a description of each request, the time required to start, carry out and complete each request, and the estimated capital and operating costs associated with each request;
- An analysis of potential funding sources on a project-by-project basis, i.e., a determination of each project's eligibility for general fund, enterprise fund, recreation fees, grants, developer contributions, bonds, proceeds from sale of existing assets, and so forth, and the approximate amounts that should be contributed from each source;
- Six-year financial goals for the Town;
- Debt evaluation standards;
- Local revenue projections, and a transparent methodology for preparing them;
- An analysis of the CIP's impacts on the tax rate, cash reserves, enterprise reserves, and bonding capacity; and
- A financing plan for all projects included within the CIP.

Years of deferred maintenance will aggravate the condition of facilities that need to be renovated, replaced or expanded, such as the library. Substantial funds are needed to meet these needs and with all these pressing requirements, it is necessary to address the long-term priorities for making improvements, recognizing that continued deferral of these expenses will result in ever increasing expenses over time.

Essentially, the Town should ensure that a coordinated CIP process takes a holistic and comprehensive view of all the Town's capital needs. The process needs to allow

for the integration of recommendations from various plans and studies with other capital needs. The goal is for all departments to continue to work closely together to obtain the funding necessary to provide the best services and support to all Webster residents.

An effort should be made to share information and resources between different departments. The Town should encourage opportunities to break down the “silos” between municipal functions and enhance more efficient resource allocation to limited resources go further. The Town needs to develop a program for comprehensive capital planning to look at the “big picture” in setting budget priorities.

- Identify and improve or reconstruct infrastructure components (such as roadways, sidewalks, parking areas, storm drainage, and water and sewer facilities) that require upgrading or replacement by utilizing local and enterprise account funds, Chapter 90 funds, CDBG, MassWorks, DEP, and TIP grants and loans. Rehabilitation of public infrastructure should be promoted to provide safe access for walkers, bikers, those who use wheelchairs and support public transit such as WRTA Bus #42 to Worcester. Reinvesting in infrastructure such as new water and sewer lines eliminates leaks and distributes water more efficiently, using natural resources wisely. Similarly, drainage system improvements will protect land and ecosystems by protecting groundwater from nonpoint source pollutants.
- Improve public facilities (such as schools, police station, public library, senior center, municipal buildings, and recreational facilities) with local funds, CDBG, MPPF, EDA, RRD, SBAB, open space and recreation, public safety, library funds, and other grant and loan programs.
- Encourage a coordinated approach to completing infrastructure improvements (roads, sidewalks, water mains, etc.) to ensure that they are performed concurrently instead of piecemeal. This creates an economy of scale that uses human and fiscal resources and construction materials wisely and promotes clean energy and energy conservation.
- Improve communications by enhancing the Town’s website. One of the more significant ways in which the Town can communicate with residents and local businesses is through the posting of current information on the Town’s website.

Currently, there is very little information beyond the contact information for Town department personnel. Departmental web pages should have descriptions of their responsibilities, copies of key reports and plans, applicable rules and regulations, etc., and should be updated on a regular basis.

- The Town should take a leadership role in “greening” Webster through its operations, governance, and management. This is particularly true with respect to municipal buildings and facilities. Additionally, the Town should continue to advance employee and occupant health in municipal buildings through lighting and ventilation improvements.
- Develop a long-range energy reduction plan for municipal operations. The Town should seek ways to reduce the cost of municipal energy use and its carbon footprint. This strategy could advance efforts to develop public and private partnerships and to also reduce residential and business energy use. The Town should pursue grant funding to upgrade the energy efficiency in its municipal buildings and seek ways to reduce energy costs across all municipal operations. The new Police Station and Senior Center can serve as models for making cost-effective, sustainable planning and building practices part of project design, planning, construction, and operations.
- Webster has designated a Target Area that includes its older residential, commercial, and industrial core to the west of I-395. The Town should ensure long-term availability and accessibility of sidewalks, water and sewer service in the Target Area and in neighborhoods south of Main Street.

9

Community Development

Introduction

Planning for community development is important in order to create viable communities by promoting integrated and sustainable approaches that provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expand economic opportunities for all of Webster's residents, although it is important to seek ways to improve the lives of its low and moderate income population. In essence, it ties together many of the issues described in this Comprehensive Master Plan, although the emphasis is on meeting the needs of the Town's low and moderate income residents. The primary means towards this end is the development of partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations.

This element of the Plan synthesizes the information and recommendations from the Town's 2013 Community Development Strategy and other chapters of the Master Plan, with an emphasis on meeting community needs and improving the Town's overall health and vitality.

Community Development Goals

- Goal 1.** Support the construction, redevelopment and rehabilitation of housing to meet the needs of people of all abilities, income levels, and household types.
- Goal 2.** Reinvigorate Webster's downtown and foster economic development growth by supporting new and existing local businesses.
- Goal 3.** Expand social services to improve the lives of Webster's elderly, lower income, and disadvantaged residents.
- Goal 4.** Provide innovative educational opportunities to students, families, and adults to increase educational attainment.
- Goal 5.** Encourage improvements to the existing infrastructure rather than construct new infrastructure in undeveloped areas.

Goal 6. Develop greater municipal government capacity to plan for, guide, and regulate growth and change.

Community Development Assessment

As part of its FY 2013 Mini-Entitlement Plan Application, Webster prepared a revised Community Development Strategy (CDS) that represents a synopsis of the Town’s planning efforts to date. This includes incorporation of the goals and strategies from previous plans that have been identified in this Plan such as the 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan and the 2004 Community Development Plan, as well as the 2000 ADA Transition Plan and the 2010 Slums and Blight Inventory.

The Community Development goals outlined above stem from the 2013 CDS update. This Comprehensive Master Plan will help to advance the Town’s CDS by synthesizing the previous plans in more detail, in addition to generating new data and recommendations to guide the Town over the next 10 – 20 years.

While the Master Plan addresses a wide range of issues, the CDS focuses on four specific topics including housing, economic development and downtown revitalization, social services and public infrastructure, and community facilities. The CDS is consistent with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program with its focus on the development and preservation of affordable housing for people with a wide range of income and efforts to meet the housing needs of targeted populations and neighborhoods. It also meets Massachusetts’ objectives for economic development and infrastructure through “proactive and coordinated planning oriented towards both resource protection and sustainable economic activity; coordinated, integrated community development initiatives that are targeted to neighborhoods or particular geographic areas, that meet the needs of these areas, and are designed to demonstrate measurable improvements in the physical, social, and economic conditions of the area; and community revitalization that is integral to community development”⁶¹. The social services objectives are achieved through job training, services provided by the Senior Center, and protecting victims of domestic abuse. The Town’s strategy is to develop a community-based planning approach that assesses needs and identifies strategies for addressing these issues.

⁶¹ Town of Webster Community Development Strategy, 2013 update

The Town's CDS is also consistent with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles, particularly relating to concentrated development and mixed use. As demonstrated throughout this Plan and the discussion below, the Town is focusing its growth and development on the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized buildings, such as the former Sitkowski School. The Town seeks to encourage people to live in the compact, walkable, multi-family neighborhoods surrounding the downtown. Expanded housing opportunities are promoted through the rehabilitation of existing units, returning vacant housing to productive use, and encouraging adaptive reuse. This preserves and increases the diversity of Webster's housing stock which is well suited to many household types. Additionally, the Town is striving to ensure that there is adequate infrastructure to support future growth, while discouraging development around Webster Lake and the more rural sections of town.

Transportation choices are enhanced by recommending the rehabilitation of public infrastructure, providing safe access for walkers, bikers, those who use wheelchairs and supporting public transit such as WRTA Bus #42 to Worcester.

Other strategies are longer term and require significant investment. Infrastructure improvements such as new water and sewer lines can reduce leaks and distribute water more efficiently. Similarly, drainage system improvements will protect groundwater from nonpoint source pollutants.

The CDS encourages a coordinated approach to completing infrastructure improvements (roads, sidewalks, water mains, etc.) to ensure that they are performed concurrently instead of piecemeal. This creates an economy of scale that uses human and fiscal resources and construction materials wisely and promotes clean energy and energy conservation.⁶²

This Master Plan contains numerous recommendations to revise and improve the zoning bylaw, many of which are consistent with the Sustainable Development Principles.

Webster has designated a Target Area that includes its older residential, commercial, and industrial core to the west of I-395, which represents approximately 10 percent of the town's area. It includes part or all of nine census block groups that have the highest incidence of lower and moderate income (LMI) residents in town. This focus advances equity because it reduces the disparity between the predominantly LMI population west

⁶² Town of Webster Community Development Strategy, 2013 update

of I-395 and the middle and upper income residents residing east of I-395 and around the lake.

Housing

As mentioned in the Housing Chapter of this Plan, median household income in Webster is \$49,621, which is lower than that in Worcester County and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. While the number of households in Webster with an annual income of less than \$35,000 has decreased substantially by over 32 percent from 2000 to 2010, over a third of the Town's households still earn less than \$35,000 annually. At this level, most households are likely to be spending more than 30 percent of their income for housing, which is deemed to be unaffordable.

In 2009, 19.2 percent of Webster's residents were living below the poverty level and 5.1 percent were living at less than 50 percent of that poverty level.⁶³ The 100 percent Federal Poverty Level Guidelines for 2014 is \$11,670 for an individual, \$15,730 for a family of two, and \$23,850 for a family of four.⁶⁴

The Town's CDS advocates a strategy designed to encourage investment in the Town's existing neighborhoods, including downtown Webster, for both rental and home ownership opportunities. Recognizing the age and condition of the Town's housing stock as explained in more detail in the Housing chapter of the Plan, the CDS policy is to improve the quality and value of the existing residential structures, especially because some of the housing stock has historic or architectural significance and may be in poor condition. The key strategies in the CDS regarding housing include:

- The Town seeks to expand the housing stock so that it is affordable to low- and moderate-income persons and creating new units by pursuing redevelopment, substantial rehabilitation and the reuse of existing buildings. A significant project for the Town is the redevelopment of the former Sitkowski School, which is now underway. The building, located behind Town Hall in downtown Webster, is being converted into 66 apartments for low-income elders and a new Senior Center. The \$19.5 million project received \$1,275,361 in federal and state Low Income Housing Tax Credits and \$2,715,000 in DHCD housing subsidies. It is anticipated that it will also generate approximately 125 jobs.

⁶³ See <http://www.city-data.com/poverty/poverty-Webster-Massachusetts.html>

⁶⁴ Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Level Guidelines, 2014

- Encouraging infill development where possible and locating housing in established areas where infrastructure and town services are readily available. Zoning recommendations to implement this strategy is addressed in both the Housing and Land Use chapters of this Plan.
- The Town is seeking additional opportunities for adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized buildings beyond the Sitkowski School. Zoning incentives may be helpful in encouraging this type of development.
- Capitalizing on the Town’s zoning bylaw which “places few obstacles in the path of developers”. The Town’s zoning districts allow a variety of housing types and lot sizes, and there are development opportunities throughout the Town. Moreover, the Redevelopment Overlay District encourages the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized buildings, including housing, in the downtown area of Webster through flexibility on dimensional controls and parking requirements. However, as pointed out in the zoning analysis in the Land Use chapter, there are a number of ways in which the zoning bylaw can be improved to make it easier to undertake development projects in Webster. The recommended changes can provide additional incentives and reduce some barriers to a smooth permitting process.
- Using a combination of private funds, tax incentives and credits, and other resources including CDBG, HOME Investment Partnerships Program, Housing Innovations Fund and Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation to improve the housing stock.
- Strengthening the local economy in order to preserve and expand housing affordability. By retaining existing companies and increasing the number of jobs that pay competitive wages, Webster will be able to buffer low-income homeowners from high taxes and, at the same time, provide jobs that attract a wider spectrum of incomes.

Economic Development

The Economic Development chapter of the Plan focused on a similar theme as the CDS – looking for ways in which Webster’s downtown area can be reinvigorated while supporting existing businesses and creating an environment to foster new economic opportunities. That chapter contained recommendations for downtown Webster, local tourism, and permitting and business development. Some of the recommendations related to changes to the zoning bylaw as well as creating an internal infrastructure at Town Hall to support business growth and development such as the creation of an Economic Development Commission.

In 2012, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) prepared the *Central Thirteen Prioritization Project*, which was a regional planning project that establishes community-based priorities and strategies in the study area; integrates those priorities into regional development and preservation strategies; and provides a direction for public investments that conserve the intrinsic qualities of the region while capitalizing on its economic strength in the state.⁶⁵

The study points out that the population is educated and generally getting older and more ethnically and racially diverse. As a result, it is important to match new employment opportunities and the local labor force, housing preferences, and modes of travel. Potentially higher housing costs will affect how close workers can live to the places where they work. Moreover, nearly half the region's jobs are in three different industry sectors, one of which pays slightly more and the others less than the regional average wage, which places more emphasis on the need to expand the job base so that wages and housing costs are more in balance.⁶⁶

In Webster, three priority development areas were designated – the I-395/Route 16 redevelopment and industrial area, the I-395/Thompson Road general business zone, and downtown Webster along Main Street.

The CDS identified several economic development strategies to reinvigorate downtown Webster and support new and existing local businesses.

- Completing planning, market, feasibility and other technical studies/reports as preliminary steps to actual redevelopment activities by utilizing a variety of resources, including private funding, Redevelopment Authority funds, Urban Renewal, MassDevelopment, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and CDBG grants.
- Using a mix of private investment, tax incentives and credits, and public resources including CDBG and MassDevelopment, the Town should direct investment to downtown commercial and mixed-use properties. Zoning incentives can help to encourage such redevelopment.
- In order to support economic growth, investments in public infrastructure, the creation of gateways and amenities, and parking are important funded in part through a combination of CDBG, MassWorks and federal funding. The work being done to

⁶⁵ Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, *Central Thirteen Prioritization Project*, 2012, Executive Summary

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

improve the French River and better public access to it through the creation of French River Park in 2011 and the new riverwalk are examples of this type of investment.

- The Town is moving forward with the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized municipal, industrial, commercial properties and vacant sites such the former Sitkowski School, Cranston Print Works, Anglo Fabrics Mill Complex and parcels along the South Main Street Gateway to downtown, utilizing private investment, tax incentives and credits, and public and quasi-public resources such as CDBG, MassDevelopment, Economic Development Administration (EDA), 108, Brownfields grants and local funds.
- As mentioned earlier, a wide range of housing choices are needed to support economic development. Retaining existing business and expanding the number of jobs that pay well in the region can help to stabilize and expand housing affordability.
- For the last couple of years, the Town has undertaken a program of selective demolition of seriously deteriorated buildings, where the deterioration is so great that rehabilitation is economically infeasible, particularly in view of Webster's weak real estate market. Most, though not all, of these buildings are residential structures. Demolition indirectly supports economic development by removing physical blight, which discourages reinvestment and community renewal. This Plan recommends the continuation of this program.
- Job training, particularly for lower income residents, should be provided.

Social Services

One of the most important roles that a Town can play to support its neediest citizens is to provide the support social services. Webster provides such services through the Senior Center, the Board of Health, the Veteran's Office and the Webster Housing Authority. Thus, one of the main objectives in the CDS is to continue to provide and expand those services.

- Utilizing such programs as the Worcester Job Center, adult education programs, Department of Transitional Assistance, Department of Labor, and CDBG funding, provide services related to financial self-sufficiency, access to affordable child care, financial literacy, job readiness, and job training and retraining.
- Continue to provide services to the elderly through the Senior Center and other local or regional agencies to provide healthy meals, health services and counseling. The Department of Elder Affairs, CDBG, charitable gifts and foundation support can provide necessary funding for these programs.

- Domestic abuse and violence can be addressed through public education campaigns as well as support from CDBG, Health and Human Services, public safety agencies, and human services and foundation grants.
- Provide support and shelter to homeless people, persons with drug or alcohol addictions, or mental illnesses.

Public Infrastructure, Community Facilities, and Municipal Service Capacity

Like many communities, Webster is challenged by an aging, obsolete and sometimes inadequate infrastructure to support its existing residential and business communities, let alone the expansion that may be needed to accommodate growth in the future. The CDS indicates that much of the Town's public facilities are over thirty years old and need to be replaced or substantially renovated to meet current needs. At the same time, there are some improvements on the horizon including the new Senior Center, a new Police Station across the street from Town Hall, and the hope that the Corbin Public Library can be replaced or renovated since it is on top of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners grant funding list.

More detail on this issue can be found in the chapter on Public Facilities and Services.

The CDS focuses on the following strategies:

- The Town has made progress on improving its capacity to plan and address growth related issues. Funding was obtained for this master planning effort and the Town hired a planner in the Fall of 2013. This Plan includes a detailed implementation program and has a number of recommendations related to zoning. The top priority for the Town will be to establish a committee to oversee implementation of the plan, and updating the zoning bylaw should be one of the first actions that the Town undertakes. Additionally, the Town should develop and implement a capital improvements plan by establishing a permanent capital planning committee.
- Utilize existing staff resources such as the Office of Community Development to ensure that infrastructure improvements are carried out in a coordinated manner.
- The Public Facilities and Services and the Transportation chapters of this Plan will identify priorities for improving or reconstructing infrastructure components (such as roadways, sidewalks, parking areas, storm drainage, and water and sewer facilities) that require upgrades or replacement. Funding could be available by utilizing local and enterprise account funds, Chapter 90 funds, CDBG, MassWorks, Department of

Environmental Protection, TEA-21, and Transportation Improvement Program grants and loans.

- As mentioned above, improve public facilities (such as schools, police station, public library, senior center, municipal buildings, and recreational facilities) with local funds, CDBG, Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund, EDA, RRD, Park Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities, Massachusetts School Building Authority, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, public safety, library funds, and other grant and loan programs.

Community Development Accomplishments

Webster's broad community development goal is to revitalize the town's core area, largely the Target Area west of I-395, with its high concentration of older, deteriorated infrastructure, housing stock, and commercial/industrial areas. To date, accomplishments include: infrastructure improvements on 19 streets; numerous individual projects directly supporting downtown revitalization, including 12 properties rehabilitated for long-term affordable rental housing and approximately 130 housing units rehabilitated through the Housing Rehabilitation Program; studies of three abandoned properties; and improvements to, or construction of, ten parks, playgrounds, recreation facilities, and improvement of downtown commercial buildings.⁶⁷



Playground in Webster

⁶⁷ Town of Webster Community Development Strategy, 2013 update

Community Development Recommendations

The recommendations in the chapters of this Comprehensive Master Plan are consistent with the strategies outlined in the Town's CDS. In particular, please refer to the Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, and Public Facilities and Services chapters of the Plan.

10 Implementation

Introduction

The implementation element is based on the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Master Plan and the data that was collected and analyzed.

The Planning Board, Board of Selectmen and other Town Boards, Commissions and Committees with the assistance of the Town staff should use this Comprehensive Master Plan as a blueprint for future land use policies for the period of 2014 to 2024.

It is important to note that planning is a dynamic process and priorities can shift over time. A consistent review process allows for these issues to be acknowledged while keeping each specific recommendation on the table unless a situation dictates that it be reconsidered. A regular evaluation or follow-up procedure will at least indicate how a particular action item was ultimately addressed, or it calls out those that still need attention.

In order to ensure follow-through on the recommendations of this plan and provide some “accountability” for plan implementation, the Town should consider some mechanism for reporting on progress on a regular basis. This reporting should include updates on progress and achievements as well as information on barriers to implementation that have been identified. Some communities provide this information in annual reports to the Board of Selectmen and/or Town Meeting. Others have developed a follow-up evaluation form that specifically lists each action item and asks for responses.

It will be important to consider the establishment of a separate entity to coordinate implementation of the Plan. The Planning Board will be responsible for a number of the Plan’s recommendations, so this separate Committee can help in reducing the burden on the Planning Board. The appointment of a Master Plan Implementation Committee could assist in the oversight and coordination of the Plan’s implementation.

The implementation plan intends to deliver on the promise of the goals and objectives expressed throughout this process, with a program of tangible steps for the Town to take over the next ten years and beyond. There is a high level of

activity on these issues, based upon the input received during the planning process.

Town departments and boards reviewed the recommendations of this Plan to determine their ability to implement the recommendations. Table 10-1 below summarizes the specific recommendations found at the end of each of the Plan's elements. The priority for implementation of the recommendations are assigned as low, medium and high, based upon a number of factors including the Town's capacity to implement certain recommendations, such as staffing and funding. Some recommendations do not necessarily fall into those designations and are noted in each column to reflect that they are ongoing in nature. The responsible parties are also listed. If more than one entity could be charged with implementing a particular strategy or recommendation, the "lead agency" is listed first in **bold**. Table 10-2 sorts the recommendations by the department or board that has the lead responsibility for implementation.

The following list identifies the responsible parties and the acronyms used in the table:

- BI – Building Inspector
- BOS – Board of Selectmen
- Con Comm – Conservation Commission
- DPW – Department of Public Works
- Engineer – Town Engineer
- Historic Comm – Historical Commission
- Highway – Highway Department (DPW)
- Housing Auth. – Housing Authority
- OCD – Office of Community Development
- Open Space – Open Space Committee
- Planner – Town Planner
- PB – Planning Board
- Recreation Committee
- School Dept. – School Department
- Senior Center
- Sewer – Sewer Department (DPW)
- TA – Town Administrator
- Water – Water Department (DPW)

Webster Master Plan

Recommendations, Priorities, and Responsible Parties

Table 10.1 Implementation Priorities

LAND USE

	Land Use Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
LU – 1	Conduct a thorough review and comprehensive update of the zoning bylaw.			✓		TA, Planner
LU – 2	Amend the zoning bylaw to encourage more mixed use development and consider design guidelines for new construction, including redevelopment and adaptive reuse, in the downtown area and along the main commercial corridors. Consider establishing zoning incentives to encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of existing properties, particularly historic buildings.		✓	✓		TA, Planner
LU – 3	Develop a comprehensive vision for the Town’s major arterials to address future land uses, zoning requirements, design and signage.		✓			TA, Planner
LU – 4	Continue the ongoing effort to capitalize on the potential of the French River in downtown Webster by providing connections through easements between downtown businesses and the River.			✓	✓	OCD

HOUSING

	Housing Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
H – 1	Amend the zoning bylaw to allow live/work space or artist loft space and encourage more mixed-use development, particularly in the downtown area to allow for uses to be located above retail or office uses in that part of Webster that is served by water and sewer and where higher density is appropriate.		✓			Planning Board
H – 2	Consider establishing a Housing Task Force to address the issue of the quality of rental housing and code enforcement. Continue with the selective demolition of blighted and vacant properties to facilitate improvements and continue to rehabilitate properties where appropriate.			✓	✓	TA, BOS, BI
H – 3	Reuse underutilized buildings within walking distance to downtown.			✓		OCD
H – 4	Meet the needs of elderly and disabled residents by conducting a detailed needs assessment of the housing options for the Town's aging population to ascertain actual demand for assisted or congregate living versus assistance for staying in and maintaining their own homes. Identify ways in which the elderly can age in place.	✓			✓	Housing Auth., Senior Center, OCD
H – 5	Incorporate green building standards into new and rehabilitated housing.	✓			✓	BI, PB

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

	Economic Development Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
ED – 1	<p><i>Main Street Corridors</i></p> <p>Amend the zoning bylaw to encourage more mixed use development and consider design guidelines for new construction, including redevelopment and adaptive reuse, in the downtown area and along the main commercial corridors. Consider establishing zoning incentives to encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of existing properties, particularly historic buildings. Permit flexible use and live/work space in downtown Webster to encourage new businesses, start-ups and non-profits to locate here.</p>			✓		TA, Planner, OCD
ED – 2	<p><i>Main Street Corridors</i></p> <p>Continue to make improvements to the downtown infrastructure including streets and sidewalks, streetscape and pedestrian linkages, benches and other such amenities, lighting, open space and greening, signage (way-finding system) and parking to make it more attractive for residents, businesses, and visitors.</p>			✓		TA, Planner, OCD
ED – 3	<p><i>Main Street Corridors</i></p> <p>Re-establish the storefront and façade improvement program to help improve the appearance of the storefronts in both the downtown area and along main commercial corridor.</p>			✓		TA, Planner, OCD
ED – 4	<p><i>Main Street Corridors</i></p> <p>Consider shared parking to help reduce the parking burden on new or redevelopment where land uses have different peak periods, especially in mixed use developments.</p>			✓		TA, Planner, OCD

	Economic Development Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
ED – 5	<p><i>Local Tourism</i></p> <p>Continue the ongoing effort to capitalize on the potential of the French River in light of its proximity to downtown Webster by providing connections through easements between downtown businesses and the River, and enhancing the riverfront with features such as a series of boat launch points and lookouts</p>			✓		BOS, OCD
ED – 6	<p><i>Local Tourism</i></p> <p>Continue to create and expand opportunities for more entertainment, markets, sidewalk sales, and cultural events in the downtown area and throughout the Town such as Harvest Fest, Winter Wonderland, and the Summer Concert Series.</p>			✓		Recreation Committee, BOS
ED – 7	<p><i>Local Tourism</i></p> <p>Continue the historic signage efforts to promote and link cultural and historical assets.</p>	✓				OCD
ED – 8	<p><i>General Permitting and Business Development</i></p> <p>Ensure that the permitting process is transparent, prompt, reasonable, and consistent.</p>			✓	✓	BI, Planner
ED – 9	<p><i>General Permitting and Business Development</i></p> <p>Conduct outreach efforts within the business community to ensure that the needs of existing businesses are fully addressed. Particularly reach out to key employers in Webster such as MAPFRE Commerce Insurance, Goya Foods, and Harrington Healthcare to ensure that their issues and needs are addressed to the best of the Town's ability so that they can flourish in Webster.</p>			✓		TA, Planner
ED – 10	<p><i>General Permitting and Business Development</i></p> <p>Support vocational and technical training to prepare students for jobs that Webster would like to attract and retain.</p>		✓			School Dept.

TRANSPORTATION

	Transportation Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
T – 1	<p><i>Downtown Parking</i></p> <p>Create a parking plan that focuses exclusively on the current and future needs of the downtown. Evaluate future development proposals with an eye towards increasing the publicly available parking supply, particularly in the downtown and at the back of buildings.</p>			✓		Planner, Highway, OCD
T – 2	<p><i>Expand Public Transportation Options</i></p> <p>Expand and promote existing public transportation opportunities (public and private). Explore options for reducing headways for the existing WRTA transit service between Webster Center and Worcester.</p>		✓		✓	TA, BOS, Housing Auth., Senior Center
T – 3	<p><i>Expand Public Transportation Options</i></p> <p>Explore options for providing a local bus loop service</p>			✓		Housing Authority, BOS, DPW, Senior Center
T – 4	<p><i>Evaluate Complete Streets Programs</i></p> <p>Develop and expand scenic landscapes, including downtown streetscape, gateways, ADA compliant sidewalks, crosswalks, etc., to slow traffic and create safer streets. Implement traffic calming measures, such as curb extensions, raised crosswalks, widened shoulders, etc., for the downtown and within the established neighborhoods that abut high-volume roadways. Develop access management and traffic impact study guidelines and incorporate them into the zoning bylaw and subdivision regulations.</p>	✓				Planning Board, Planner

	Transportation Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
T – 5	<p><i>Intersection / Corridor Improvements</i></p> <p>Develop intersection improvements at I-395 interchanges with Thompson Road and Route 16 as well as Lower Gore Road and Route 16. Identify the impacts associated with providing a climbing lane on Route 16 between Lower Gore Road and Douglas Town Line.</p>			✓		Planning Board, Planner, Highway
T – 6	<p><i>Intersection / Corridor Improvements</i></p> <p>Continue the town wide pavement rehabilitation program.</p>		✓		✓	Highway, Planner
T – 7	<p><i>Intersection / Corridor Improvements</i></p> <p>Develop an improvement matrix identifying issues and needs at key intersections and roadways. Prioritize projects and pursue projects on the State TIP.</p>		✓		✓	Planner, Engineer, Highway
T – 8	<p><i>Pedestrians</i></p> <p>Evaluate and prioritize where sidewalks should be installed or upgraded, including ADA compliance and landscaped buffers where there is available right-of-way.</p>		✓		✓	Engineer, Highway, TA
T – 9	<p><i>Pedestrians</i></p> <p>Enhance the areas in and around public open spaces (parks, schools, athletic fields) so that children and parents who live nearby can make choices about how they can travel between home and these uses.</p>			✓	✓	Planning Board, Open Space
T – 10	<p><i>Pedestrians</i></p> <p>Construct crosswalks and install crosswalk signage to enhance the awareness of drivers to pedestrians (could include raised and/or textured treatments). Install countdown pedestrian signal heads at signalized crossings that do not currently have them.</p>	✓				Planning Board, Engineer, Highway

	Transportation Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
T – 11	<p><i>Bicyclists</i></p> <p>Develop, update, and implement a town wide Bicycle Master Plan that addresses both commuter and recreational bicycling. Improve bicycle mobility on roadways. Develop and sign on-road bicycle routes and install bicycle racks at activity centers. Educate the public of existing bicycling opportunities.</p>	✓				<p>Planning Board, Planner, Recreation Committee</p>
T – 12	<p><i>Signage</i></p> <p>Commission a “Way-finding Program” to assist visitors to navigate to and from the downtown areas of Webster and direct them to public parking opportunities by using branded signage for the community.</p>		✓			<p>OCD</p>
T – 13	<p><i>Signage</i></p> <p>Upgrade the overall consistency of traffic signage throughout Town by reviewing current regulatory signage and assuring that it is consistent with the current Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidelines.</p>		✓			<p>Planner, Planning Board, Highway</p>
T – 14	<p><i>Pedestrians</i></p> <p>Investigate locations for installation of future walking trails.</p>			✓		<p>Engineer, Recreation Committee, Highway</p>
T – 15	<p><i>Bicyclists</i></p> <p>Look for opportunities to provide off-road bicycle connections between corridors and traffic destinations.</p>			✓		<p>Engineer, Recreation Committee, Highway</p>

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

	Open Space and Recreation Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
OS – 1	Establish an Open Space Committee			✓		BOS
OS – 2	Identify preferred trail routes within Webster and work with other trail interests to maximize connections.			✓		Open Space/TA/ Recreation Committee
OS – 3	Review the Lake Watershed Protection District bylaw and make changes as experience dictates to ensure high water quality in Webster Lake.			✓		Planner/Planning Board
OS – 4	Incorporate waterside parcels in the open space priority list.			✓		Open Space, TA, Recreation Committee
OS – 5	Develop a site master plan for Memorial Beach that will guide refurbishment of existing amenities and identify appropriate additions. Develop a capital plan that addresses costs for maintenance and enhancements of Memorial Beach and balances these with fee collected. Identify areas at Memorial Beach to remain undeveloped and develop a strategy for their permanent protection.			✓		BOS, Recreation Committee
OS – 6	Develop a town maintenance plan and schedule for all recreation areas and incorporate maintenance resources in the Town's budget or capital plan.	✓			✓	TA, Highway, Recreation Committee
OS – 7	Compare the requirements for field use against total availability and determine needs for additional sports fields for all users, including time to rest/rehabilitate. Identify potential sites for new fields as needed.		✓			Recreation Committee, Highway
OS – 8	Create a list, from all maps of town-owned properties that have potential for recreation purposes.		✓			Open Space, Town Planner
OS – 9	Identify a series of boat launch points along the French River which will offer varied paddling experiences.			✓		OCD
OS – 10	Create the position of Recreational Director to oversee community recreation and cultural activities.		✓			TA, BOS

NATURAL RESOURCES

	Natural Resources Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
NR – 1	Identify and secure priority areas in Town for natural resource conservation and passive recreation purposes, such as open land adjacent to important water supply areas, wetlands, wildlife corridors, and scenic landscapes, using various tools such as conservation restrictions, deeded easements, purchase, etc.		✓	✓		Open Space, Con Comm
NR – 2	Adopt a Wetland Protection Bylaw to protect important wetland resources throughout Town, using the MA Association of Conservation Commission model.		✓			Con Comm
NR – 3	Promote public education on recognizing and preserving Webster's natural resources as an integrated part of town pride through outreach, media, print materials, charrettes, and seminars.	✓			✓	Open Space
NR – 4	Re-evaluate and enforce the existing Stormwater Management Bylaw and promote town-wide Best Management Practices for the collection and treatment of stormwater. Adopt a Low Impact Development bylaw to better manage stormwater through reduced impervious cover and preservation of green space and other natural areas.		✓			Planner
NR – 5	Assess municipally-owned properties for potential environmental issues, particularly around water resource areas, drinking water supply areas, and recreation areas/facilities, and address stormwater management concerns as required.			✓	✓	DPW, TA, Planner, Sewer, Water, Con Comm

	Natural Resources Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
NR – 6	Continue working in partnerships with local and regional preservation organizations and state agencies to preserve watersheds and resolve the long-standing issues with sediment built-up along the French River.	✓			✓	Con Comm, Open Space
NR – 7	Continue with the design and implementation of the Webster Riverwalk in compliance with state and federal environmental regulations while making extra efforts to consciously restore and improve water quality and ecological health of the French River.			✓		OCD
NR – 8	Support the ongoing efforts to monitor and control invasive species at Webster Lake.			✓	✓	Con Comm, BOS
NR – 9	Create Stormwater Utility to be responsible for funding the operation, construction and maintenance of stormwater management structures, for stormwater system planning, and management.			✓		TA, Planner, DPW, BOS
NR – 10	Identify and preserve corridors that link existing recreation and conservation areas and advance the implementation of additional recreation systems along resource corridors such as the French River Greenway and the Quinebaug Valley Trail.			✓		Con Comm, Recreation Committee

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

	Cultural and Historic Resources Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
HR – 1	Appoint an active historic commission to lead preservation activities in Webster. Identify historic buildings throughout Webster with signage and identify candidate buildings for preservation, starting with those listed in the state's database.			✓		BOS, OCD, Historic Comm
HR – 2	Appropriately budget for the maintenance and renovation of historic buildings owned by the Town.			✓	✓	TA
HR – 3	Consider a policy of tax incentives for the appropriate re-use of existing buildings.		✓			BOS, TA, Historic Comm
HR – 4	Consider granting tax credits to property owners who restore buildings to their original character and style.		✓			BOS, TA, Historic Comm
HR – 5	Reinstitute the Downtown Webster Commercial Property Improvement Program (DW-CPIP) and promote it with an educational and marketing campaign. Bolster the design guidelines of Webster's downtown area, which are instituted as part of the DW-CPIP, and expand the scope of the design guidelines in the Town's zoning code.			✓		OCD/Planner
HR – 6	Hold property owners accountable for building maintenance by adopting a Demolition by Neglect ordinance.			✓	✓	Historic Comm, TA, Planner, BI
HR – 7	Promote additional spaces for community gathering such as the auditorium at Town Hall or new Senior Center community room.		✓		✓	TA
HR – 8	Promote the activities of the Webster-Dudley Historical Society and encourage membership. Explore a potential partnership and cross-promotional opportunities with the Old Slater Mill Association and the Slater Mill Historic Site in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.		✓		✓	Historic Comm, BOS, Recreation Committee
HR – 9	Support the creation of cultural points of interest as part of the French River Greenway and Webster Riverwalk. Increase participation in the activities of The Last Green Valley, including supporting additional Walktober events.			✓		BOS

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

	Public Facilities and Services Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
PFS – 1	Improve intra- and inter-departmental capacity, planning, and cooperation.				✓	TA, BOS
PFS – 2	Utilize existing staff resources such as the Office of Community Development to ensure that infrastructure improvements are carried out in a coordinated manner.				✓	OCD, DPW
PFS – 3	Develop and implement a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) by establishing a permanent Capital Planning Committee.			✓	✓	TA, BOS
PFS – 4	Identify and improve or reconstruct infrastructure components (such as roadways, sidewalks, parking areas, storm drainage, and water and sewer facilities) that require upgrading or replacement by utilizing local and enterprise account funds, and grants and loans.		✓			Planner, Engineer, other departments
PFS – 5	Improve public facilities (such as schools, police station, public library, senior center, municipal buildings, and recreational facilities) with local funds, and other grant and loan programs.		✓			Planner, Engineer, other departments
PFS – 6	Encourage a coordinated approach to completing infrastructure improvements (roads, sidewalks, water mains, etc.) to ensure that they are performed concurrently instead of piecemeal.				✓	Highway/DPW
PFS – 7	Improve communications by enhancing the Town's website.				✓	All departments
PFS – 8	The Town should take a leadership role in “greening” Webster through its operations, governance, and management.				✓	TA

	Public Facilities and Services Recommendations	Levels of Priority				Responsible Party
		Low	Medium	High	Ongoing	
PFS – 9	Develop a long-range energy reduction plan for municipal operations.			✓		BOS, TA
PFS – 10	The Town should ensure long-term availability and accessibility of sidewalks, water and sewer service in the Target Area and in neighborhoods south of Main Street.			✓	✓	OCD, Highway, DPW

Table 10.2 Primary Responsible Parties

Department/Board	Priority Level			
	Low	Medium	High	Ongoing
BI	H-5		ED-8	H-5, ED-8, PFS-7
BOS		HR-3, HR-4	ED-5, OS-1, OS-5, HR-1, HR-9, PFS-9	PFS-7
Con Comm	NR-6	NR-2	NR-8, NR-10	NR-6, NR-8, PFS-7
DPW			NR-5	NR-5, PFS-6, PFS-7
Engineer		T-8	T-14, T-15	T-8, PFS-7
Historic Comm		HR-8	HR-6	HR-6, HR-8, PFS-7
Highway		T-6		T-6, PFS-6, PFS-7
Housing Auth	H-4		T-3	H-4, PFS-7
OCD	ED-7	T-12	LU-4, H-3, OS-9, NR-7, HR-5, PFS-2, PFS-10	LU-4, PFS-7, PFS-10
Open Space	NR-3	OS-8, NR-1	OS-2, OS-4, NR-1	NR-3, PFS-7
Planner		T-7, T-13, NR-4, PFS-4, PFS-5	T-1, OS-3, HR-5	T-7, PFS-7
Planning Board	T-4, T-10, T-11		H-1, T-5, T-9	T-9, PFS-7
Recreation Comm		OS-7	ED-6	PFS-7
School Dept		ED-10		PFS-7
Senior Center				PFS-7
Sewer				PFS-7
TA	OS-6	LU-2, LU-3, T-2, OS-10, HR-7	LU-1, LU-2, H-2, ED-1, ED-2, ED-3, ED-4, ED-9, NR-9, HR-2, PFS-1, PFS-3	H-2, T-2, OS-6, HR-2, HR-7, PFS-3, PFS-7, PFS-8
Water				PFS-7

Appendix A - Unique Features and Scenic Resources

Site Name		Significance
1	Top of Sugarloaf Hill	Scenic overlook: great views of Webster Lake.
2	Top of Blueberry Hill	Scenic overlook: views of three states at once: MA, CT and RI.
3	Upper Gore Road	Scenic view of Webster Lake.
4	Cranberry Bog - east	Rare freshwater cranberry bog.
5	Land bound by Lake Parkway, I-395, CT border, and brook	Last undeveloped lowland in this vicinity, containing a rare freshwater cranberry bog, heron rookery and wildlife habitat.
6	Memorial Beach Drive	Town beach, recreation area, natural area with pine forest, scenic views of Webster Lake and Sugarloaf Mountain, and site of the Old North; Village Bridge.
7	Webster Pump Station	Historic building (1893).
8	Slater Mansion	Historic building.
9	Market Street/Mill Street	Historic mill housing.
10	Pond Court	Historic mill housing and stone building.
11	Little Red School House	Historic building – current home of the Historical Society.
12	Slater Mills	Historic industrial mill buildings and mill housing.
13	South Dam	Scenic river view and significant engineering achievement.
14	Lakeside Cemetery	Historic cemetery.
15	Collins Cove	Old railroad engine turnaround and scenic riverside meadow.
16	Cranston Clock Tower	Only remaining element of historic mill building.
17	Slater Memorial	Historic memorial.
18	Town Hall/Court of Honor	Site of Webster Town Hall, historic watering trough and several war memorials.
19	Train Museum	Trail-related exhibits and artifacts.
20	Perryville Dam	Historic dam and scenic views of the French River.
21	Fenner Street Woods	Wooded area near the downtown.
22	Robinson Burial Plot	Historic gravesite.
23	Praying Indian Historic Marker	Historic marker.
24	Nap's Diner	Historic diner.
25	Railroad Trestle	Scenic overlook along the French River.
26	Main Street Historic District	National Register of Historic Places; Registered District.
27	State-owned boat launch	Boat launch site along the shoreline of Webster; Lake.
28	Upper Gore Road, Lower Gore Road, Gore Road, Point Breeze Road, Sutton Road, Rawson Road, Memorial Beach Drive, Mine Brook Road, Pinewood Drive and Kingsbury Road.	Locally designated Scenic Roads.

Appendix B – MassDEP Reportable Chemical Releases in Webster

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
112 EAST MAIN ST	AMERADA HESS STA 21210	120 DY	5/20/1999	DPS	3/16/2000			
112 EAST MAIN ST	WEBSTER HESS STA	TWO HR	9/29/1999	DPS	3/16/2000			Oil
2 WORCESTER RD	CRANSTON PRINT WORKS	NONE	1/15/1987	RAO	1/10/2002		A3	Hazardous Material
PT BREEZE	POINT BREEZE MARINA	NONE	10/15/1988	RAO	1/7/1998			
8 PARK AVE	PETERSONS OIL SERVICE INC	NONE	10/15/1988	RAO	6/23/2008		A2	Oil
2 OLD WORCESTER RD	ZMETRA MEMORIALS	NONE	4/15/1989	RAO	9/21/2000	III	A2	
112 EAST MAIN ST	HESS STATION 21210	NONE	5/3/1990	RAO	1/8/2001	III	A2	Oil
GORE RD	GORE RD WEBSTER LAKE	NONE	3/8/1990	RAO	9/6/1994		A2	Oil
3 EAST MAIN ST	TAC PROPERTIES	TWO HR	7/16/1994	RAO	11/17/1994		A2	Oil
10 12 UPLAND AVE	SALEM TOMATO PACKING	72 HR	9/6/1994	RAO	5/28/1996		A2	Oil
24 GRANITE ST	EAST MAIN INTERSECTION	TWO HR	10/21/1994	RAO	11/3/1994		A2	Oil
2 SUTTON RD	WAREHOUSE	120 DY	11/30/1994	RAO	10/10/2003	II	A2	Oil
12 PARK ST	JEFFCO FIBERS	TWO HR	1/13/1995	RAO	5/15/1995		A1	Oil
195 LOWER GORE RD	180 LOWER GORE RD	TWO HR	3/9/1995	RAO	5/4/1995		A1	Oil

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
100 EAST MAIN ST	KUNKEL BUICK	72 HR	6/13/1995	RAO	4/4/1997	II	A2	Oil and Hazardous Material
7 INDIAN POINT RD	WEBSTER LAKE	TWO HR	9/26/1995	RAO	9/26/1995		A1	Oil
33 EAST MAIN ST	RTE 16	TWO HR	8/13/1996	RAO	6/30/2008		A1	Oil
2 WORCESTER RD	CRANSTON PRINT WORKS	TWO HR	12/5/1996	RAO	12/5/1997		A3	Oil
1 PEARLE ST	ANGLO FABRICS	TWO HR	4/22/1997	RAO	6/16/1997		A1	Oil
DAVIS ST	FRENCH R	TWO HR	6/26/1997	RAO	10/30/1997		A1	Oil
67 EAST MAIN ST	HI LO GAS	TWO HR	7/14/1997	RAO	7/12/1998		A1	Oil
RTE 12	KMART PLAZA	TWO HR	7/16/1997	RAO	3/9/1998		A2	Oil
2 WORCESTER RD	CRANSTON PRINT WORKS	TWO HR	8/11/1997	RAO	10/14/1997		A1	Hazardous Material
30 HILL ST	HEALY TRUCKING	TWO HR	8/22/1997	RAO	6/10/2010		A2	Oil
RTE 16	NEAR RTE 16 AUTO	TWO HR	12/2/1997	RAO	1/30/1998		A2	Oil
ARKWRIGHT RD	LEO CONSTRUCTION	120 DY	1/12/1998	RAO	1/30/2014	IV	A2	Hazardous Material
SCHOOL ST	CHEM WASTE MGMT	TWO HR	1/26/1998	RAO	3/12/1998		A1	Oil
WORCESTER RD	EAST WEBSTER SUBSTATION	TWO HR	3/4/1998	RAO	5/4/1998		A2	Oil
48 NEGUNIS ST	ST LOUIS CHURCH	120 DY	8/4/1998	RAO	10/5/1998		A2	
8A WAKEFIELD ST	TREMBLAY OIL CO INC	72 HR	10/22/1998	RAO	12/10/1998		A2	Oil

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
144 THOMPSON RD	CITGO STATION	72 HR	12/22/1998	RAO	12/16/2005	III	A2	Oil
26 POLAND ST	DUGAS REALTY	72 HR	4/21/1999	RAO	4/28/2000		A2	Oil
4 OLD DOUGLAS RD	RTE 16 AUTO SALVAGE	72 HR	6/25/1999	RAO	7/28/2003	V	A2	Hazardous Material
20 ROBINSON ST	RESIDENCE	TWO HR	9/25/1999	RAO	1/31/2000		A2	Oil
GORE RD	RTE 16 - MV	TWO HR	12/24/1999	RAO	12/29/2000		A1	Oil
137 EAST MAIN ST	TOSCO CORP	120 DY	8/1/2000	RAO	8/3/2012		A2	Oil
PEARL ST	DUDLEY WOOLEN MILL FMR	120 DY	10/30/2000	RAO	11/7/2001		A2	Oil and Hazardous Material
96 CHASE AVE	RESIDENCE	TWO HR	2/7/2001	RAO	4/9/2001		A2	Oil
547-577 SOUTH MAIN ST	PRUETT TRUCKING	TWO HR	4/2/2001	RAO	6/25/2008		A2	Oil
10 KINGSBURY RD	OLEARY RESIDENCE	TWO HR	7/9/2001	RAO	8/30/2001		A2	Oil
661 SOUTH MAIN ST	SOUTH VILLAGE MILLS	TWO HR	9/28/2001	RAO	9/17/2002		A1	Oil
1 GOYA DR	CAPPYS TRANSPORT ROADWAY RELEASE	TWO HR	2/11/2002	RAO	7/9/2002		A1	Oil
10 GOLDEN HTS B12	MASS ELECTRIC CO TRANSFORMER BLDG 12	120 DY	9/23/2002	RAO	2/12/2008		A2	Oil
72 EAST MAIN ST	XTRA MART WEBSTER	72 HR	1/31/2003	RAO	8/4/2010		C1	Oil

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
72 EAST MAIN ST	XTRA MART WEBSTER	120 DY	6/4/2003	RAO	8/4/2010		C1	Oil
243 THOMPSON RD	WEBSTER LAKE	TWO HR	8/18/2003	RAO	8/23/2004		A1	Oil
106 EAST MAIN ST	J ROGER REISNER	120 DY	8/20/2003	RAO	12/31/2007	II	B1	Hazardous Material
100 EAST MAIN ST	FORMER KUNKEL BUICK	120 DY	9/3/2003	RAO	9/3/2004		A2	Oil
3 OLD WORCESTER RD	CAMS OIL SERVICE	TWO HR	12/11/2003	RAO	2/13/2004		A1	Hazardous Material
626 SOUTH MAIN ST	FORMER J G MOTORS	120 DY	2/3/2004	RAO	2/2/2005		A2	Oil and Hazardous Material
5 GOYA DR	DETENTION POND	TWO HR	3/4/2004	RAO	3/11/2005		A2	Oil
2-8 MAIN ST	VERMARK REALTY CORPORATION	120 DY	6/3/2004	RAO	6/3/2004	II	B1	Oil and Hazardous Material
626 SOUTH MAIN ST	WEBSTER MAIN, LLC	72 HR	6/9/2004	RAO	2/2/2005			Oil
10 GOYA DR	A. DUIE PYLE TRUCKING COMPANY	TWO HR	7/12/2004	RAO	9/10/2004		A1	
626 SOUTH MAIN ST	FORMER J. G. MOTORS	72 HR	8/3/2004	RAO	8/4/2005		A2	Oil
415-431 SOUTH MAIN ST	DRAKE PETROLEUM CO INC	TWO HR	10/12/2004	RAO	5/27/2005		A2	Oil
22 NEGUS ST	ANDREA GRECCO	TWO HR	4/2/2005	RAO	12/23/2008	II	A2	
80-90 MAIN ST	HI-LO GAS STATION	TWO HR	4/27/2006	RAO	6/30/2006		A2	Oil
114 POINT BREEZE RD	POINT BREEZE MARINA	TWO HR	8/14/2006	RAO	10/13/2006		A1	Oil

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
5 PINWOOD DR	HIBBARD RESIDENCE	TWO HR	9/12/2006	RAO	1/17/2007		A2	Oil
60 NORTH MAIN ST	EDS OIL CO ROADWAY REL	TWO HR	10/24/2006	RAO	11/20/2006		A1	Oil
130 SCHOOL ST	CAMS OIL SERVICE INC	TWO HR	12/26/2006	RAO	12/31/2007		A1	Oil
123 EAST MAIN ST	FORMER SHELL STATION	TWO HR	3/2/2007	RAO	5/1/2007		A1	
123 EAST MAIN ST	SHELL GASOLINE STATION	72 HR	3/8/2007	RAO	2/12/2008		A2	Oil
745 SCHOOL ST	WEBSTER MANOR	120 DY	5/23/2007	RAO	7/30/2007		A2	Oil
188 GORE RD	HONEY FARMS MOBIL STATION	TWO HR	2/21/2008	RAO	4/22/2008		A1	
5 GOYA DR	GOYA FOODS, INC.	TWO HR	6/25/2008	RAO	8/1/2008		A1	
RTE 395 S	MULTIPLE VEHICLE ACCIDENT	TWO HR	7/27/2008	RAO	7/21/2009		A2	Oil
1 BOYDEN ST	RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY	TWO HR	5/21/2009	RAO	12/15/2009		A2	Oil
BOYDEN STREET EXT	POLE 7 & 8	TWO HR	7/18/2009	RAO	9/15/2009		A2	
88 LAKE ST	RESIDENCE	TWO HR	9/2/2009	RAO	12/28/2010	II	A2	Oil
47 WHITCOMB ST	ST JOSEPH SCHOOL FUEL OIL RELEASE	TWO HR	10/5/2009	RAO	12/2/2009		A2	Oil
74 EAST MAIN ST	SUNOCO STATION	TWO HR	12/4/2009	RAO	4/7/2010		A1	Oil
47 MORRIS ST	RESIDENTIAL BUILDING	TWO HR	1/14/2010	RAO	2/24/2010		A2	Oil

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
57 THOMPSON RD	WEBSTER POLICE STATION PARKING LOT	TWO HR	1/25/2010	RAO	3/24/2010		A2	Oil
385 MAIN ST	CONDEMNED MULTIFAMILY	TWO HR	4/7/2010	RAO	11/30/2012	II	A2	
137 EAST MAIN ST	CUMBERLAND FARMS STATION	TWO HR	4/13/2010	RAO	6/7/2010		A1	Oil
112 MAIN ST	TRANSFORMER RELEASE	TWO HR	5/25/2010	RAO	7/22/2010		A2	
30 HILL STREET	MROCZKA PROPERTY	120 DY	6/17/2010	RAO	7/23/2010		B1	Hazardous Material
59 EAST MAIN ST.	FORMER GAS STATION	72 HR	8/19/2010	RAO	8/11/2011		A2	Oil
20 CARDIN DRIVE	MODF-PCB RELEASE	TWO HR	8/10/2011	RAO	10/6/2011		A2	
8 DAVIS ST	ROADWAY RELEASE	TWO HR	9/28/2011	RAO	11/22/2011		A1	
30 POINT PLEASANT ROAD	FUEL OIL RELEASE WEBSTER LAKE	TWO HR	3/6/2012	RAO	7/11/2012		A2	Oil
118 EAST MAIN STREET	PRICE CHOPPER PARKING LOT	TWO HR	1/29/2013	RAO	3/20/2013		A1	Oil
371 SCHOOL ST	MULTIFAMILY PROPERTY	72 HR	11/5/2013	RAO	1/3/2014		A2	Oil
NEGUS ST	MASS ELECTRIC	NONE	10/23/1992	RTN CLOSED	1/25/2000			Oil and Hazardous Material
3 OLD WORCESTER RD	CAMS OIL SERVICE	120 DY	10/9/1996	RTN CLOSED	1/31/2002	V		Hazardous Material
7 MAIN ST	SUBSTATION	72 HR	11/18/1998	RTN CLOSED	1/24/2000			Oil

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
144 THOMPSON RD	RABICOT ROMANEK INC	120 DY	6/8/1999	RTN CLOSED	12/23/1999			Hazardous Material
MAIN ST	MA ELECTRIC	72 HR	9/3/1999	RTN CLOSED	6/21/2000			
1 UNION ST	FORMER CAL GASIFICATION FACILITY	72 HR	11/12/1999	RTN CLOSED	1/25/2000			Hazardous Material
112 EAST MAIN ST	WEBSTER HESS	72 HR	3/22/2000	RTN CLOSED	7/20/2000			Oil
16 SUTTON RD	BURIS REFRIGERATE D LOGISTICS	72 HR	5/11/2000	RTN CLOSED	11/15/2001			Oil
MAIN ST AND UNION ST	MECO SUBSTATION	72 HR	1/26/2001	RTN CLOSED	2/4/2002			Hazardous Material
7 MAIN ST	NATIONAL GRID	72 HR	6/26/2001	RTN CLOSED	9/4/2001			Hazardous Material
16 SUTTON RD	COMMERCE INSURANCE CO	120 DY	11/19/2001	RTN CLOSED	11/19/2001			Hazardous Material
74 EAST MAIN ST	X-TRA MART	72 HR	8/3/2005	RTN CLOSED	12/28/2005			Oil
74 EAST MAIN ST	XTRA MART	72 HR	3/24/2006	RTN CLOSED	7/19/2006			Oil
74 EAST MAIN ST	EXTRA MART	72 HR	5/4/2007	RTN CLOSED	8/31/2007			Oil
74 EAST MAIN ST	SUNOCO STATION	72 HR	9/25/2008	RTN CLOSED	12/1/2008			Oil
74 EAST MAIN	SUNOCO - XTRA MART	72 HR	5/6/2010	RTN CLOSED	7/8/2010			Oil
88 EAST MAIN ST	BP STATION 30458	72 HR	6/15/2012	RTN CLOSED	10/16/2012			Oil
3 OLD WORCESTER RD	CAMS OIL SERVICE	NONE	7/15/1989	STMRET	4/24/2012	V		Oil
88 EAST MAIN ST	BP STATION 30458	72 HR	6/9/2011	TIER 2	10/5/2012	II		Oil

Release Address	Site Name Location Aid	Reporting Category	Notification Date	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class	Chemical Type
35 MECHANIC ST	RESIDENCE	TWO HR	7/31/1995	TIER1D	7/7/2008			Oil
30 HILL ST	HEALY TRUCKING	TWO HR	11/16/1995	TIER1D	7/7/2008			Oil
91 GORE RD	WEBSTER FISH AND GAME	TWO HR	9/27/2002	TIER1D	7/7/2008			Oil
OLD WORCESTER RD	APPLE DOR TREE INC	TWO HR	4/27/2004	TIER1D	7/6/2004			Oil
1052 SCHOOL ST	RICHARDS RESIDENCE	TWO HR	5/17/2004	TIER1D	7/7/2008			Oil
6-8 RIVER CT	FOMER EMPIRE CLEANERS	120 DY	10/13/2004	TIER1D	7/7/2008			Hazardous Material
19 JOYCE STREET	RESIDENTIAL FUEL OIL RELEASE	TWO HR	6/22/2012	TIER1D	7/1/2013			Oil
1 WEST POINT RD	RESIDENCE	TWO HR	7/13/2013	UNCLASSIFIED	7/13/2013			Oil
7 MAIN ST	WEBSTER FMR MGP SITE	NONE	7/15/1988	URAM	12/8/2006	IV		Oil
421 MAIN ST	GIBBS STATION FMR	NONE	1/15/1990	WCSPRM	9/20/1993			Oil

Appendix C – MACRIS Inventoried Historic Properties in Webster

Inv. No.	Property Name	Street	Year
WEB.A	Main Street Historic District		
WEB.B	Tanner Area		
WEB.C	The Gore - Webster's Gore		
WEB.D	East Village		
WEB.E	South Village		
WEB.F	North Village		
WEB.G	Center Village		
WEB.H	Depot Village - Webster Town Center		
WEB.I	School Street Area		
WEB.J	Slater Cambric Mill Worker Housing		
WEB.K	Slater North Main Street Worker Housing		
WEB.L	Slater Pearl Street Worker Housing		
WEB.M	Slater River Street Worker Housing		
WEB.N	Slater Street Worker Housing		
WEB.O	Slater Mill Street Worker Housing		
WEB.P	Webster Municipal Buildings Historic District		
WEB.Q	Elm Street Area		
WEB.R	School Street Area		
WEB.S	Kingsbury District		
WEB.T	Chaubunagungamaug Pond - Webster Lake		
WEB.163	Dietz, Frederick House	9 Aldrich St	1875
WEB.164	Aldrich, George House	15 Aldrich St	1850
WEB.146	Snow, Harvey House	Ash St	1870
WEB.147	Freeman, George and Samuel House	Ash St	1835
WEB.901	B and A Railroad Bridge - Webster Branch	B and A Railroad	1888
WEB.157	Bates, Andrew J. House	Bay View Rd	1885
WEB.937	Boston and Albany Railroad Embankments	Bigelow Rd	1844
WEB.159	Beacon Park Main Building	Birch Island Rd	1898
WEB.912	Chaubunagungamaug Indian Praying Town Marker	Birch Island Rd	1930
WEB.165	Aldrich, Samuel P. House	14 Brookline St	1874
WEB.96	Wood, Darius House	38 Chase Ave	1885
WEB.97	Putnam, John D. House	74 Chase Ave	1880
WEB.98	Sheldon, Lyman - Greenwood, Francis House	129 Chase Ave	1869
WEB.99	Joslin - Marble House	Church Ln	1870
WEB.204	First Congregational Church of Webster	4 Church St	1955
WEB.166	School Street School	5 Crosby St	1847
WEB.167	Watson - Palmer House	18 Crosby St	1870
WEB.367	Craver, Edgar House	44 Crosby St	1915
WEB.368	Kaplan, Eli House	47 Crosby St	1930
WEB.2	Cudworth, Lemuel House	Cudworth Rd	1800
WEB.910	North Village Bell	Cudworth Rd	1884

WEB.80	Edmunds Block - Edmunds Opera House	Davis St	1867
WEB.86	City Hotel	16 Davis St	1897
WEB.168	Steutermann - Gerber, Frank House	4 Day St	1873
WEB.269	Saint Anne's Parochial School	12 Day St	1913
WEB.270	Saint Anne's Roman Catholic Convent	12A Day St	1884
WEB.29	Slater Woolen Company Overseer House	2 East Main St	1828
WEB.262	Brown, O. House	10 East Main St	1865
WEB.175	Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church	12-16 East Main St	1895
WEB.174	Lyons - Nash House	15 East Main St	1842
WEB.176	Sacred Heart Rectory	18 East Main St	1895
WEB.177	Beaudry, Dr. F. X. House	27 East Main St	1888
WEB.178	First Baptist Church of Webster	29 East Main St	1867
WEB.179	Robinson, Dea. Solomon House	33 East Main St	1854
WEB.180	Slater Woolen Company Store	35-37 East Main St	1855
WEB.263	Marcy, Emery W. House	39 East Main St	1893
WEB.264	Slater, S. Woolen Mill Worker Housing	40 East Main St	1925
WEB.181	Filmer Grammar School	41 East Main St	1898
WEB.265	Bixby, A. House	42 East Main St	1850
WEB.182	Ames, Ebenezer House	43 East Main St	1850
WEB.266		49 East Main St	1895
WEB.31	Slater Woolen Company Worker Housing	54 East Main St	1855
WEB.74	Dixon, John Jr. House	75 East Main St	1841
WEB.75	Rawson, Joseph S. House	77 East Main St	1855
WEB.72	Freeman, Dea. Dyer House	87 East Main St	1857
WEB.22	Wade, Daniel House	128 East Main St	1845
WEB.283		130 East Main St	1885
WEB.138		138 East Main St	1880
WEB.284	Slater East Village Mill Worker Housing	138 East Main St	1880
WEB.346	Choiniere, Lou - Ramie, Al House	13 Elm St	1915
WEB.347		15 Elm St	1910
WEB.348	Choiniere, Arthur House	17 Elm St	1915
WEB.349	Schmidt, Emil House	18 Elm St	1897
WEB.350	Grimley, George H. House	21 Elm St	1893
WEB.351	Ashworth - Simons House	23 Elm St	1900
WEB.352	Shaw, Harold House	25 Elm St	1893
WEB.353	Bartlett, C. G. House	26 Elm St	1885
WEB.354	Towne, W. E. House	27 Elm St	1893
WEB.355	Woodward, S. House	30 Elm St	1883
WEB.356	Pickford, James - Pooler, John House	31 Elm St	1912
WEB.357	Shaw, Albert E. House	33 Elm St	1920
WEB.358	Joslin, Ernest A. House	35 Elm St	1917
WEB.359	Czhowski, Frank - Bundeff, Andrew Triple Decker	41 Elm St	1922
WEB.360	Zurawka, Veronica - Biadasz, Stan Triple Decker	43-45 Elm St	1910
WEB.361	Edmonds, Les Triple Decker	47 Elm St	1910

WEB.362	Klebart, Arthur Triple Decker	49 Elm St	1917
WEB.363		49 1/2 Elm St	1900
WEB.169	Davis, Pardon House	22 Fifth Ave	1850
WEB.173	Emanuel Lutheran Church	7 First St	1926
WEB.917	Webster First Sunday School Site Marker	Gore Rd	1976
WEB.911	Slater, Samuel S. Monument	Gore St	1967
WEB.905	Hub World War II Monument	Granite St	
WEB.906	Kosciusko, Thaddeus Square Marker	Granite St	1937
WEB.908	Leagris, Rev. J. Agapit Memorial	Granite St	1939
WEB.285	DiDonato, Leo House	7 Hartley St	1937
WEB.20	Slater Cambric Mill Worker Housing	8 Hartley St	1855
WEB.286	DiDonato, Leo House	9 Hartley St	1937
WEB.21	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	10-12 Hartley St	1900
WEB.287	DiDonato, Leo House	11 Hartley St	1939
WEB.288	DiDonato, Leo House	13 Hartley St	1939
WEB.289	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	14-16 Hartley St	1900
WEB.290	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	18-20 Hartley St	1900
WEB.291	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	22-24 Hartley St	1900
WEB.292	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	26-28 Hartley St	1900
WEB.293	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	32-34 Hartley St	1900
WEB.294	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	36-38 Hartley St	1900
WEB.295	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	40-42 Hartley St	1900
WEB.115	Siegel Hall	132 High St	1875
WEB.280	Sons of Italy Association Lodge	190 High St	1938
WEB.132	Plouffe House	11 Hill St	1875
WEB.170	Turverein Society Hall	9 Houghton St	1895
WEB.1	Kingsbury House	Kingsbury Rd	1775
WEB.207	Saint Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church	Lake Pkwy	1967
WEB.113	Corbin, Chester C. Public Library	Lake St	1921
WEB.171	Holy Trinity Catholic Church	Lake St	1903
WEB.206	Saint Louis Catholic Church	Lake St	1971
WEB.100	Keith, Parmeneus House	5 Lake St	1835
WEB.198	Robinson, James J. House	57 Lake St	1855
WEB.199	Agnew, Peter House	59 Lake St	1860
WEB.200	Davis, Prince House	61 Lake St	1850
WEB.172	Slater Company Worker Housing	2 Lincoln St	1840
WEB.6	Brown - Stone Farmhouse	Lower Gore Rd	1855
WEB.7	Smith, Reid House	Lower Gore Rd	1855
WEB.8	Webster's Gore Schoolhouse	Lower Gore Rd	1821
WEB.9	Rawson, Daniel F. House	Lower Gore Rd	1840
WEB.10	Brown, Josiah - Cooper, Jesse House	Lower Gore Rd	1828
WEB.11	Simpson, George L. House	Lower Gore Rd	1835
WEB.801	Lakeside Cemetery	Lower Gore Rd	1817
WEB.921	Campbell-Roxbury Free School Grants Boundary Wall	Lower Gore Rd	1718

WEB.935	Gore Reform Methodist Church Site Marker	Lower Gore Rd	1972
WEB.77	Norwich and Worcester Railroad Freight House	Main St	1845
WEB.216	Hotel DeWitt - Sheldon Hotel	Main St	1846
WEB.931	The Great Bridge	Main St	1868
WEB.936	Guenther, Charles R. Square Marker	Main St	1923
WEB.337	Webster and Southbridge Gas and Electric Company	7-9 Main St	1914
WEB.338		38-42 Main St	1895
WEB.257		42-45 Main St	
WEB.339		56 Main St	1900
WEB.83	Shumway Block	112-116 Main St	1886
WEB.340	Morehouse Block	118-120 Main St	1865
WEB.81	Eddy Block	119-131 Main St	1878
WEB.78	Wiswall, Artemus Store - Stockwell Block	140-145 Main St	1830
WEB.79	Spaulding Block	141-143 Main St	1866
WEB.87	Joslin House Hotel	168 Main St	1940
WEB.94	Gilles Block	175 Main St	1925
WEB.95	Tiffany Block	183 Main St	1926
WEB.90	Cook Block	201 Main St	1905
WEB.89	Racicot Block	211-219 Main St	1905
WEB.88	Tiffany Block	225 Main St	1900
WEB.85	Columbia Block	228-230 Main St	1892
WEB.223		240-242 Main St	1875
WEB.84	Tracy Block	241 Main St	1888
WEB.224		248 Main St	1915
WEB.91	Larchar - Branch Block	251 Main St	1912
WEB.225		256-262 Main St	1915
WEB.92	Holden Block	267-283 Main St	1921
WEB.226		268 Main St	1915
WEB.227	Hall Block	274 Main St	1915
WEB.222	Patenaude Block	283-289 Main St	1905
WEB.341	Webster Five Cent Savings Bank	290 Main St	1955
WEB.93	Dugan Block	299 Main St	1922
WEB.114	Webster Municipal Building	350 Main St	1928
WEB.903	Webster Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Monument	350 Main St	1907
WEB.916	Snow's Corner Horse Trough	350 Main St	1900
WEB.952	Veterans' Court of Honor	350 Main St	1974
WEB.953	Korean War Memorial	350 Main St	1953
WEB.954	Civil War Howitzer	350 Main St	1865
WEB.955	Webster Plaza Gazebo	350 Main St	2000
WEB.956	Webster Plaza Iron Fence	350 Main St	1920
WEB.342		357 Main St	1910
WEB.343	Vito, Anthony Block	367-385 Main St	1926
WEB.203	Davis - Bartolomei Block	407 Main St	1845
WEB.34	Joslin, Asher House	464-472 Main St	1845

WEB.58	Slater Company Pearl Street Worker Housing	5-7 Market St	1856
WEB.320		8-14 Market St	1885
WEB.239	Slater Company Pearl Street Worker Housing	9-11 Market St	1856
WEB.240	Slater Company Pearl Street Worker Housing	15 Market St	1856
WEB.59	Slater Company Pearl Street Worker Housing	16-24 Market St	1885
WEB.50	Slater Company Stone Mill Double Worker Housing	17-19 Market St	1856
WEB.49	Slater Company Stone Mill Double Worker Housing	21-23 Market St	1856
WEB.235	Slater Company Pearl Street Worker Housing	26-30 Market St	1885
WEB.51	Slater Company Pearl Street Double Worker Housing	32-34 Market St	1885
WEB.47	Slater Company Stone Mill Double Worker Housing	36-40 Market St	1850
WEB.40	Phoenix Thread Company Mill Mule Room	37 Market St	1835
WEB.48	Slater Company Stone Mill Double Worker Housing	42-46 Market St	1850
WEB.109	Haven - Cocks House	14 Mechanic St	1855
WEB.110	Davis, William H. House	24 Mechanic St	1872
WEB.920	World War II Memorial Beach Flagpole	Memorial Beach	1952
WEB.160	Webster Pumping Station	Memorial Beach Dr	1893
WEB.281	World War II Memorial Beach Bath House	Memorial Beach Dr	1952
WEB.973	Clearwell Building	Memorial Beach Dr	1893
WEB.915	Urbanowski, Joseph and Edward Square Memorial	Memorial Park Dr	
WEB.42	Slater #6 Weave Mill and Boiler House	Mill St	1896
WEB.43	Slater Cotton Weave Mill #7	Mill St	1913
WEB.323	North Village Cotton Mill Wheel House	Mill St	1914
WEB.324	North Village Cotton Mill #2 Engine Room	Mill St	1905
WEB.926	North Village Cotton Mill Dam	Mill St	1810
WEB.927	North Village Cotton Mill Canal and Raceway	Mill St	1820
WEB.950	Slater Cotton Mill Smokestack	Mill St	
WEB.951	Slater Cotton Mill Wheel House Fragment	Mill St	1840
WEB.321	Slater Company Mill Housing	3-13 Mill St	1905
WEB.55	Slater Company Boarding House	4-10 Mill St	1860
WEB.45	Slater Company Mill Housing	7 Mill St	1825
WEB.322	Slater Company Mill Housing	15 Mill St	1860
WEB.232	Slater Company Mill Housing	17 Mill St	1825
WEB.233	Slater, Lydia Robinson Worker Housing	21 Mill St	1825
WEB.41	Slater Company Cotton Mill #3	26 Mill St	1905
WEB.933	Webster Bicentennial Square Marker	Mine Brook Rd	1976
WEB.364		46 Myrtle St	1900
WEB.365	Hawkinson, Nathaniel P. House	48 Myrtle St	1893
WEB.366	Ferris, Benjamin K. House	51 Myrtle St	1893
WEB.101	Chase, John - Rawson, James House	4 Negus St	1860
WEB.102	Spaulding, Cyrus House	6 Negus St	1876
WEB.103	Methodist - Episcopal Church Parsonage	7 Negus St	1850
WEB.104	Houghton, Lewis House	8 Negus St	1852
WEB.105	Lamb, Josiah Quincy House	10 Negus St	1860
WEB.202	Corbin, B. A. Shoe Factory Building	13 Negus St	1860

WEB.112	Bartlett High School	29 Negus St	1905
WEB.106	Bartlett, Rufus House	34 Negus St	1870
WEB.107	Carey, John House	40 Negus St	1860
WEB.108	Carney - McQuaid House	42 Negus St	1870
WEB.183	Zion Lutheran Church	Nelson St	1895
WEB.208	Slater Company Mill Street Worker Housing	North Main St	1850
WEB.209	Slater Company Mill Street Worker Housing	North Main St	1850
WEB.259	North Village Schoolhouse	North Main St	1880
WEB.902	North Village Bridge - North Main Street Bridge	North Main St	1871
WEB.38	Church of the Reconciliation	5 North Main St	1870
WEB.39	Slater, James Howe Parish House	5 North Main St	1898
WEB.184		20 North Main St	1905
WEB.304	Thompson, William House	22 North Main St	1850
WEB.185	Hanley, Michael and James House	30-32 North Main St	1840
WEB.305		36 North Main St	1850
WEB.187	Northeast Dudley Schoolhouse	55 North Main St	1825
WEB.186	Moore, Lydia House	60 North Main St	1850
WEB.271	Dugan, James House	64-66 North Main St	1885
WEB.272	Breen, Patrick House	65 North Main St	1879
WEB.273	Ryan, Elizabeth House	73 North Main St	1899
WEB.274	Masse, Exaure - Hyland, Joseph House	76-78 North Main St	1920
WEB.275	Reagan, Isaac House	82 North Main St	1885
WEB.276	Lavassoeur, Joseph House	84 North Main St	1921
WEB.277		94 North Main St	1925
WEB.278		98 North Main St	1925
WEB.65	May, Edwin House	131 North Main St	1850
WEB.66	Chase, John House	135 North Main St	1850
WEB.67	Phetteplace, Wyman E. House	146 North Main St	1870
WEB.68	Bates, Capt. T. K. House	148 North Main St	1870
WEB.325		160 North Main St	1905
WEB.53	Slater Company North Main Street Worker Housing	185 North Main St	1840
WEB.54	Slater Company North Main Street Worker Housing	193-195 North Main St	1865
WEB.326		194 North Main St	1885
WEB.52	Slater Company North Main Street Worker Housing	201-203 North Main St	1840
WEB.64	Slater Company Superintendent House	202-204 North Main St	1875
WEB.56	Sullivan, John Grocery Store	215 North Main St	1890
WEB.44	Slater, George House	216 North Main St	1827
WEB.57	Slater, Horatio N. Company Double Worker Housing	221-223 North Main St	1897
WEB.236	Slater, Horatio N. Company Double Worker Housing	225-227 North Main St	1897
WEB.237	Slater, Horatio N. Company Double Worker Housing	229-231 North Main St	1897
WEB.238	Slater, Horatio N. Company Double Worker Housing	233-235 North Main St	1897
WEB.327		239 North Main St	1840
WEB.328	Slater, Horatio N. Company Worker Housing	241-243 North Main St	1840
WEB.329		249 North Main St	1865

WEB.69	Slater - Davis, Abijah Farmhouse	256 North Main St	1825
WEB.928	Old Thompson Road	Old Thompson Rd	1780
WEB.929	Old Thompson Road Remnant	Old Thompson Rd	1780
WEB.5	Larned, Isaac Farmhouse	Old Worcester Rd	1850
WEB.806	Saint Joseph Roman Catholic Cemetery	Old Worcester Rd	1889
WEB.188	Esten, Olney - Collins House	189 Oxford Ave	1820
WEB.391	Collins House	198 Oxford Ave	1845
WEB.907	Jablonski, Sgt. John Square Marker	Park Ave	1974
WEB.934	Borus, Felix E. Square Marker	Park Ave	1958
WEB.189	Bates, Andrew J. House	10 Park St	1880
WEB.190	Advent Church	24 Park St	1884
WEB.70	Perry Yarn Mill	21-37 Pearl St	1900
WEB.330		28 Pearl St	1900
WEB.331	Intervale Mills - Anglo Fabrics Mill	35-41 Pearl St	1900
WEB.148	Perryville Trolley Car Station	Perryville Rd	1898
WEB.150	Perry, Josiah Mill Worker Housing	Perryville Rd	1885
WEB.151	Perry, Charles H. Mill Worker Housing	Perryville Rd	1885
WEB.149	Perryville Woolen Mill Storage Shed	0 Perryville Rd	1874
WEB.941	Slater and Sons Woolen Mill Tenement Foundations	Peter St	1860
WEB.306	Slater and Sons Mill #5	10 Peter St	1903
WEB.904	Jericho Bridge	Pleasant St	1892
WEB.158	Bates, Andrew J. House	Point Breeze Rd	1880
WEB.296		66 Pond Ct	1920
WEB.19	Slater Mill Pond Worker Housing	67-72 Pond Ct	1880
WEB.258	Slater Mill Pond Worker Housing	67-72 Pond Ct	1865
WEB.30	Slater Woolen Company Barn	Prospect St	1885
WEB.37	Rock Castle School	Prospect St	1871
WEB.192	Thompson School	Prospect St	1912
WEB.191	Joslin, Asher House	13 Prospect St	1874
WEB.193	Walker, Edward R. House	18 Prospect St	1850
WEB.307	Mollard - Holland, J. House	24 Prospect St	1850
WEB.308	Dusaume, Samuel House	26 Prospect St	1885
WEB.309	King, H. C. Boarding House	32 Prospect St	1892
WEB.33	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	38 Prospect St	1828
WEB.255	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	42 Prospect St	1828
WEB.310		46 Prospect St	1893
WEB.311	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	75-79 Prospect St	1885
WEB.389	World War II Memorial Athletic Fieldhouse	Ray St	1950
WEB.919	World War II Memorial Athletic Field	Ray St	1950
WEB.111	Wood, Darius House	7 River Ct	1875
WEB.261		12 River Ct	
WEB.201	Slater, Horatio N. Company Cambric Works	Route 16	1825
WEB.205	School Street Fire Station	School St	1874
WEB.82	Bates Block	17 School St	1885

WEB.116	Burnham, J. Byron House	116 School St	1883
WEB.117	Howard, Prentiss House	151 School St	1897
WEB.118	Congregational Church Parsonage	203 School St	1847
WEB.119	Lamb, Liberty House	212 School St	1886
WEB.120	Haven - Lobban House	269 School St	1855
WEB.121	Brown, Frederick Davis House	318 School St	1850
WEB.122	Joslin, Nathan House	340 School St	1872
WEB.123	Day, John H. House	352 School St	1860
WEB.124	Day, Augustas Eddy House	360 School St	1867
WEB.125	Baker, Franklin House	366 School St	1894
WEB.127	Prout, Patrick House	416 School St	1870
WEB.128	Ellis - Niles House	429-433 School St	1860
WEB.129	District Five Schoolhouse	449 School St	1835
WEB.130	Snow, Andrew J. House	449 School St	1868
WEB.131	Moore, Rufus House	479 School St	1815
WEB.369	Klebart, William C. House	709 School St	1915
WEB.141	Smith, Henry E. Jr. - Tiffany, Luman House	749 School St	1909
WEB.370	Sears, Frank House	750 School St	1920
WEB.371	Nash, Maude E. House	768 School St	1915
WEB.142	Smith, H. R. - Trowbridge, David House	779 School St	1860
WEB.372	Smith, H. R. - Trowbridge, David Barn	779 School St	1860
WEB.373	Holmes, William House	790 School St	1915
WEB.374	Hubbard, Ralph K. House	791 School St	1925
WEB.375	Cleveland, Eben S. House	794 School St	1920
WEB.376	Piehler, Otto House	805 School St	1925
WEB.377	Riebe, Ferdinand C. House	821 School St	1900
WEB.378	Day, J. - Cleveland, Clarence House	824 School St	1865
WEB.379	Cleveland, Clarence Garage	824 School St	1915
WEB.380	American Woolen Company Worker Housing	835 School St	1921
WEB.381	Batten, William - Partridge, Everett House	844 School St	1880
WEB.382	Batten, William - Partridge, Everett Barn	844 School St	1880
WEB.383	Pattison, Edwin House	851 School St	1915
WEB.143	Converse, Amanda L. House	929 School St	1875
WEB.144	Jepson House	938 School St	1855
WEB.145	Brackett - Snow House	1083 School St	1825
WEB.918	Slater, William Strutt Memorial Park Marker	Slater St	1949
WEB.76		6 Slater St	1840
WEB.73	Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church Parsonage	8 Slater St	1870
WEB.242	Slater Company Pearl Street Worker Housing	34-39 Slater St	1880
WEB.62	Slater Company Overseer House	36-38 Slater St	1900
WEB.243	Slater Company Pearl Street Worker Housing	40-43 Slater St	1880
WEB.251	Slater Company Overseer House	40-42 Slater St	1900
WEB.252	Slater Company Overseer House	44-46 Slater St	1900
WEB.253	Slater Company Overseer House	48-50 Slater St	1900

WEB.254	Slater Company Overseer House	52-54 Slater St	1900
WEB.60	Slater Company Slater Street Double Worker Housing	85-87 Slater St	1860
WEB.71	Walker, Erie House	85 Slater St	1870
WEB.332	Slater Company Slater Street Worker Housing	86 Slater St	1840
WEB.248	Slater Company Slater Street Worker Housing	89-91 Slater St	1860
WEB.333	Slater Company Slater Street Worker Housing	90 Slater St	1820
WEB.46	Slater and Howard Company Double Worker Housing	92-94 Slater St	1825
WEB.234	Slater and Howard Company Double Worker Housing	93-95 Slater St	1825
WEB.36	Barrows, Erastus - Bell, John House	South Main St	1850
WEB.930	South Village Mill Raceway and Flume Gate	South Main St	1822
WEB.949	New England Railroad Bridge Abutments	South Main St	1865
WEB.312	Place Motors Showroom	469 South Main St	1930
WEB.35	Bartlett, Asa House	516 South Main St	1850
WEB.313		529 South Main St	1905
WEB.314	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	533 South Main St	1860
WEB.228	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	547 South Main St	1822
WEB.229	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	563 South Main St	1822
WEB.563	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	563 South Main St	1822
WEB.26	Slater and Howard Woolen Company Worker Housing	577-579 South Main St	1822
WEB.27	Slater Woolen Company Worker Housing	578 South Main St	1855
WEB.315	Nap's Diner	593-595 South Main St	1931
WEB.316		593-595 South Main St	1885
WEB.230	Slater Woolen Company Worker Housing	594 South Main St	1855
WEB.28	Slater Woolen Company Double Worker Housing	613-615 South Main St	1822
WEB.317	J. G. Motor Sales	626 South Main St	1955
WEB.942	J. G. Motor Sales Sign	626 South Main St	1955
WEB.231	Slater Woolen Company Double Worker Housing	629-631 South Main St	1822
WEB.23	Slater Woolen Company - Spinning and Carding Mill	661 South Main St	1876
WEB.24	Slater Woolen Company - Piece Dye House #13	661 South Main St	1876
WEB.32	Slater Woolen Mill Company Store	661 South Main St	1850
WEB.318	Slater and Sons Woolen Mill #4	661 South Main St	1892
WEB.319	Slater Woolen Company - Engine and Boiler House	661 South Main St	1895
WEB.944	Slater Woolen Company Stone Retaining Walls	661 South Main St	1822
WEB.945	Slater Woolen Company Canal	661 South Main St	1822
WEB.946	Slater Woolen Company Dam	661 South Main St	1822
WEB.947	Slater and Sons Woolen Mill Bridge to Weave Shed	661 South Main St	1916
WEB.948	Slater and Sons Woolen Mill #4 Bridge	661 South Main St	1893
WEB.61	Slater Company River Street Worker Housing	8 Starzec Dr	1865
WEB.334	Slater Company River Street Worker Housing	10 Starzec Dr	1865
WEB.335	Slater Company River Street Worker Housing	12 Starzec Dr	1865
WEB.282		20 Stoughton Ave	1925
WEB.3	Emerson, Augustus - Dudley, Reuben House	Sutton Rd	1865
WEB.800	Kingsbury Family Burial Ground	Sutton Rd	1812
WEB.900	Grand Trunk Railroad	Sutton Rd	1912

WEB.909	Nessmuck Monument	Sutton Rd	1976
WEB.4	Tanner, William B. House	Tanner Rd	1840
WEB.152	Bates, Alanson Jr. Farmhouse	Thompson Rd	1825
WEB.153	Bugbee, Henry Fielder House	Thompson Rd	1850
WEB.154	Bates, Orson House	Thompson Rd	1850
WEB.155	Bates, Capt. John House	Thompson Rd	1775
WEB.156	Bates - Alton House	Thompson Rd	1840
WEB.17	Slater East Village Stone Mill Worker Housing	10-12 Thompson Rd	1825
WEB.18	Slater East Village Stone Mill Worker Housing	11-15 Thompson Rd	1825
WEB.297	Slater East Village Mill Double Worker Housing	16-18 Thompson Rd	1870
WEB.344	Webster Electric Company Gas Compressor Station	65 Union St	1910
WEB.279	Webster Fruit Company Warehouse	10 Upland Ave	1915
WEB.923	Gore Pound	Upper Gore Rd	1780
WEB.267	Corbin, G. House	7 Wakefield St	1880
WEB.268	Sellig, Charles House	11 Wakefield St	1875
WEB.194	Corbin, George House	14 Wakefield St	1893
WEB.390	4-6 Park Street	4-6 Webster St	
WEB.345	Webster and Southbridge Gas and Electric Warehouse	12 Wellington St	1925
WEB.196	Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Church	Whitcomb St	1913
WEB.195	Meyers, William House	24 Whitcomb St	1880
WEB.197	Parent House	59 Whitcomb St	1870
WEB.802	Mount Zion Cemetery	Worcester Rd	1836
WEB.804	Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Cemetery	Worcester Rd	1890
WEB.805	Saint Anthony de Padua Roman Catholic Cemetery	Worcester Rd	1945
WEB.932	Albetski, Felix John Square Marker	Worcester Rd	
WEB.298	Slater East Village Mill Building B	2 Worcester Rd	1846
WEB.299	Slater East Village Mill Bleach House	2 Worcester Rd	1907
WEB.300	Slater East Village Mill Building D	2 Worcester Rd	1907
WEB.301	Slater East Village Mill Building E	2 Worcester Rd	1914
WEB.302	Slater East Village Mill Pump House	2 Worcester Rd	1905
WEB.384	Slater East Village Mill Chemical Storage Bldg #37	2 Worcester Rd	1920
WEB.385	Slater East Village Mill Fire House	2 Worcester Rd	1978
WEB.386	Slater East Village Mill Warehouse B-C	2 Worcester Rd	1973
WEB.387	Slater East Village Mill Waste Treatment Building	2 Worcester Rd	1974
WEB.388	Slater East Village Mill Blower Building	2 Worcester Rd	1991
WEB.913	Slater, Samuel S. and Son - Green Mill Bell Tower	2 Worcester Rd	1875
WEB.922	East Village Cotton Mill Raceway	2 Worcester Rd	1812
WEB.938	Slater East Village Mill Boiler Stack	2 Worcester Rd	
WEB.939	Slater East Village Mill Equipment	2 Worcester Rd	
WEB.940	Slater East Village Mill Bell	2 Worcester Rd	1877
WEB.12	Slater East Village Mill Company Store	15 Worcester Rd	1815
WEB.13	Slater Green Mill Double Worker Housing	19-21 Worcester Rd	1820
WEB.14	Slater Green Mill Double Worker Housing	23-25 Worcester Rd	1820
WEB.16	Slater Green Mill Worker Housing	37 Worcester Rd	1815

WEB.303	Webster Nursery	41 Worcester Rd	1940
WEB.15	Slater Green Mill Worker Housing	52 Worcester Rd	1825

