

# Vision Plan and Recommendations

## Penacook Village District Concord, New Hampshire



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CITY OF CONCORD PLANNING DIVISION  
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# Vision Plan

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## Introduction

Penacook is a small picturesque village within the city limits of Concord, New Hampshire (see Figure 1). Penacook has long maintained a distinct identity and character from that of downtown Concord as a result of its unique history. Located at the confluence of the Contoocook and Merrimack Rivers, Penacook began as a prosperous mill village in the mid-19th century. Farms and industries flourished around the nearby hydro power offered by the rivers, with housing and commercial businesses concentrating close by the waterfront to support the workforce. Early growth of the community is largely attributed to the economic success of the former Allied Leather tannery.

Like many small villages born of early 19th century industry, Penacook developed around a central core of commercial enterprises surrounded by residential neighborhoods, a classic example of what we now call traditional urban design. Also like many small villages, as Penacook evolved throughout the 20th century, the urban fabric of the village began to erode as a result of vehicular-oriented patterns of development. When the tannery and

other major employers closed their doors in the 1980's and 90's, investment in the village core declined as well. However, much of the original form and character of the historic village remains, as a source of pride for residents and as a valuable template for future development.

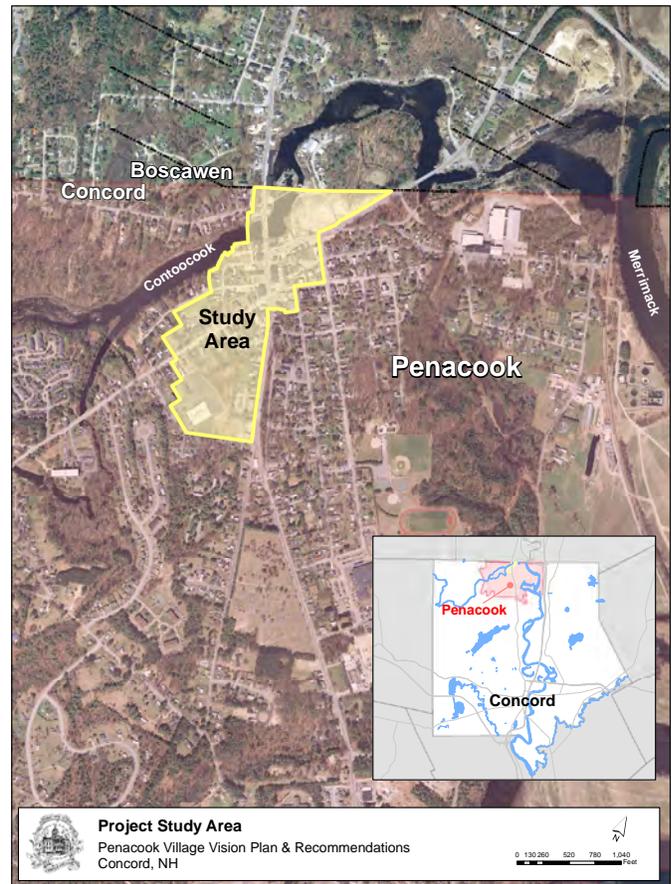
Penacook has seen several important changes over the past few years. In 2006, the City acquired the former tannery property with the intent to redevelop the site. Unfortunately, the mill collapsed and had to be demolished. After demolition of the building, the City worked with the Environmental Protection Agency to remediate the site, a portion of which has since been redeveloped into medical offices. The City is now seeking a partnership to develop the remainder of the property, which includes land ideally situated for a riverfront park along the Contoocook River.

The City also recently reconstructed Village Street, the “main street” of Penacook, as part of a larger Capital Improvement Project along the Route 3 corridor. In an effort to improve safety and

spur urban revitalization, the City is in the process of reconstructing much of the corridor from Penacook to downtown Concord. By the end of 2014, construction of streetscape improvements, placement of utility lines underground, and installation of a roundabout in the village center had been completed. The combination of redevelopment and recent road enhancement efforts constitutes a critical turning point for the village, which is long overdue for a new community vision, and a comprehensive review of the land use regulations that will be needed to enact a new vision.

The current zoning in downtown Penacook is a patchwork of residential and non-residential districts (see Figure 2). With each district having very different design and development standards, there is very little consistency to create a unified approach to development. Recognizing the need for a coherent, community-driven vision to guide growth in downtown Penacook, the City of Concord applied for a Community Planning Grant from the New Hampshire Housing and Finance Authority. The grant was awarded to the city in November of 2013, with the goal of engaging the community to establish a mixed-use village district for downtown Penacook. The City of Concord then hired Brown Walker Planners, in association with Mettee Planning Consultants, to assist with a comprehensive community planning and outreach process.

Figure 1. Project Study Area

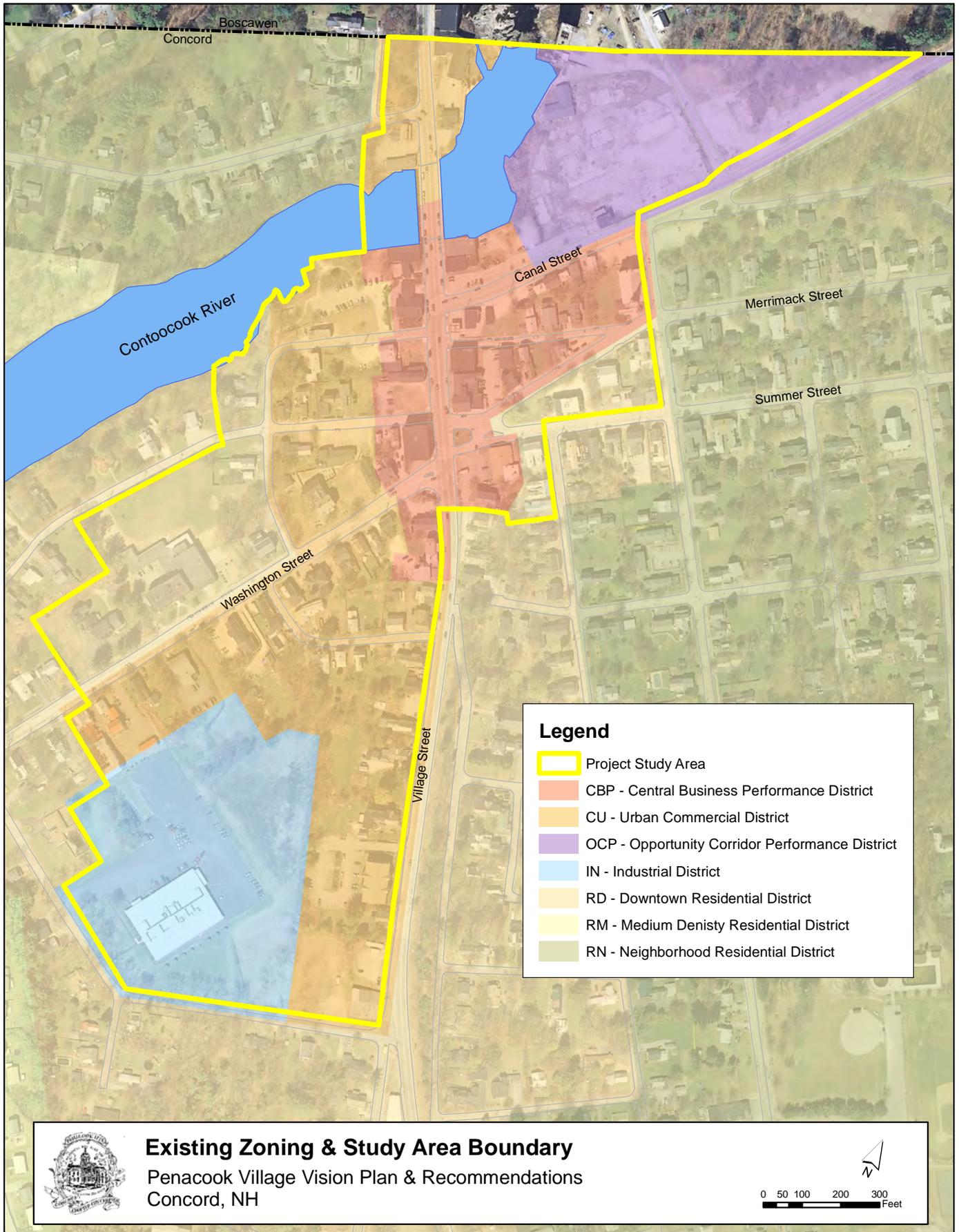


The City Planning Division and Consultants completed a review and analysis of historic development patterns, existing conditions, and current zoning regulations. The process involved a significant community outreach component. Public participation was encouraged primarily through an online visual preference survey, public visioning workshops, and stakeholder interviews. The recommendations summarized in this document are a direct reflection of the input received from the residents and stakeholders who participated.



Early in the planning process, the City determined that a form-based code would be an effective regulatory tool to implement the community's vision. Form-based codes organize development according to physical form, rather than focusing primarily on land use, as is found in traditional zoning ordinances. Form based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, including the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, the scale of streets and blocks, and the character of the streetscape. The Penacook Village District is intended to utilize this tool to preserve and celebrate the community's historic past, and create the desired future envisioned by residents and stakeholders.

Figure 2. Existing Zoning



# Public Participation

Several strategies were used to engage the community, and provide a forum for Penacook residents and business owners to express their desires for the future of downtown Penacook. These efforts included:

- Project Website & Facebook Page;
- Visual Preference Surveys<sup>®</sup> (VPS);
  - Online surveys;
  - Facilitated with Merrimack Valley High School students;
  - Facilitated with Penacook Community Senior Program;
- Public Visioning Workshops; and
- Stakeholder Interviews & Walking Tours.

## Website & VPS

Leading a transparent process was a high priority in developing a consistent, community-driven vision. The project website and Facebook page served as online resources for updates and information throughout the process. The website was also the portal to participate in the Online Visual Preference Survey.



Website Homepage

[www.visionpenacook.com](http://www.visionpenacook.com)

The VPS is a tool that assists residents in identifying which elements of the built and natural environment contribute positively to the character of the community. The technique utilizes a series of images that residents are able to score based on their preferences. The VPS offers an opportunity for residents to review and comment on architectural style, signs, building setbacks, landscaping, parking areas, transportation facilities, streetscape amenities, and any other design elements included in the survey.

From October through the end of December 2013, over 200 community members participated in the VPS, including Merrimack Valley High School students and members of the Penacook Community Senior Program. The survey asked participants to rate a series of images based on the following categories:

- Buildings;
- Streets & Parking;
- Landscape & Open Space;
- Storefronts & Signage; and
- Pedestrian Realm.



Open Space & Landscape survey image and scoring result

Participants rated each image on a scale from -4 to +4:

- Negative four (-4) = highly inappropriate
- Zero (0) = neutral
- Positive four (+4) = highly appropriate

The scale allowed participants to indicate how they felt about the images within the range of a strong positive to a strong negative, or a neutral response. High-rated images were considered to have desirable qualities, while low-rated images were considered inappropriate for Penacook.

A full review of the VPS results can be found in Appendix B.3 of this document. The average rating and standard deviations (in parenthesis) are listed for each image.

The VPS results were presented at the first public visioning workshop. "Playing cards" of the highest rated images were used by participants to create a Vision Map. The Vision Map process is discussed in the following section.

<sup>®</sup> The term Visual Preference Survey is a registered trademark of Anton Nelessen.

## Public Visioning Workshop #1

The first visioning workshop was held in November 2013 at the United Church of Penacook. Community members were divided into six small groups of 5-10 people each, where they participated in three visioning exercises, including:

- District Boundary Mapping;
- Susceptibility to Change Analysis; and
- Vision Mapping.

Each group began by creating a District Boundary Map. The purpose of the exercise was to allow the residents to participate in determining the boundaries of the project study area, and any potential subdistricts. Each group began by laying a sheet of trace paper over a base map of downtown Penacook, and outlining the commercial core of the community. Group members discussed among themselves what the boundaries should encompass, and made revisions as they worked together to determine what was most appropriate.

Using the District Boundary Maps, each group was then asked to identify which places were most susceptible to change. The intent of the Susceptibility to Change Analysis was to determine the extent to which community members felt that there were opportunities for the realization of a new vision in downtown Penacook. Colored markers were used to indicate areas of high, moderate, or low susceptibility to change. The categories were defined as follows:

- **Red:** Highly Susceptible – Major change, redevelopment or rehabilitation may happen soon.
- **Orange/Yellow:** Moderately Susceptible – Some change or rehabilitation may happen in the future.
- **Green:** Not Susceptible – Change is unlikely, or area should be preserved.

The results of the analysis made it apparent that residents felt very optimistic about the possibilities for revitalization and new development. The third mapping exercise then asked, “If you think some areas in downtown might change, how would you like to see downtown Penacook evolve?”

Using the highest rated images from the VPS, each group created its own Vision Map. Images from each of the VPS categories were assigned to the areas in downtown Penacook where they were felt to be most appropriate. “Wild cards” were also available for participants to specify elements not captured by the VPS images.



All six groups' maps were subsequently overlaid onto one another to produce a consensus map for each exercise. The Vision Map can be found in Appendix B.1 of this document. The images indicate the participant's collective desires with regard to the elements of urban design, buildings, parking, landscape, storefronts, and signage; as well as preferred uses for Penacook Village.

The public feedback culminated in a series of recommendations that were presented to the community for review and comment at the second visioning workshop.

## Public Visioning Workshop #2

The second visioning workshop was held in March 2014, also at the United Church of Penacook. The purpose of the second workshop was to allow community members to review and comment on the recommendations that resulted from the visioning process that had occurred to that point. Participants visited three stations including:

- Village Core,
- Village Neighborhood, and
- Open Space & Landscape.

Based on an analysis of historic development patterns, existing conditions, and the public input, two subdistricts were proposed within the study area, the Village Core, and the Village Neighborhood.



Storefronts along Village Street, Penacook

The Village Core is largely defined by Village Street, the “main street” of the community. It is the heart of downtown Penacook, and currently supports several retail and mixed use buildings. Multi-story mixed-use development is most appropriate for the Village Core, with retail or other non-residential uses at street level activating the sidewalks and public spaces.



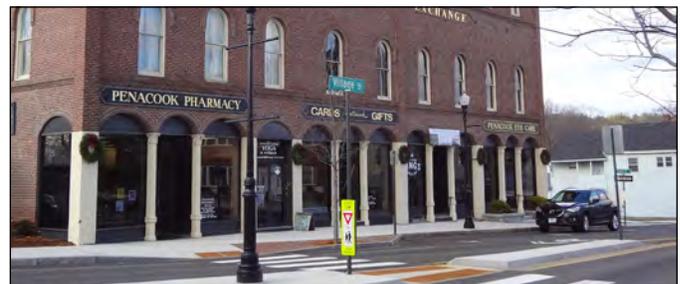
Statue and small open space in the center of Penacook



Residential building near the center of Penacook

The Village Neighborhood represents a transitional area between the Village Core and residential neighborhoods to the west. The architectural character of the Village Neighborhood was defined as predominantly residential, with both residential and some non-residential uses allowed.

At each of the two stations, participants gave feedback on recommendations concerning massing, height, setbacks, and articulation of buildings and storefronts, as well as treatment of parking areas. Comments were recorded and a voting matrix was used to tabulate responses.



Mixed-use building fronting recent streetscape improvements in Penacook

The community generally reacted positively to the recommendations and felt that the development types presented were appropriate and desirable for Penacook. Key comments primarily addressed parking, such as:

- Parking is necessary for development in Penacook, but standards that include parking minimums can deter investment.
- Parking should be screened and placed to the rear or side of buildings when possible, but parking should not be prohibited as a primary use on a site.
- Standards should offer flexibility.



View of Village Street across the Contoocook River, Penacook

At the Open Space & Landscape station, maps generated during a City sponsored 2012 workshop in Penacook on open space were re-visited. The purpose of the exercise was to foster continuity in the community's efforts, and to incorporate the open space maps into the current process. The maps sparked a renewed discussion on the needs and desires of the community with respect to open space, parks, and landscaping in general. The discussion focused on:

- Improving aesthetics;
- Screening of parking areas;
- Creating a more walkable environment; and
- Opportunities offered by the Hoyt Electric, Washington Street School, and former Tannery sites.



View down Merrimack Street towards the center of Penacook

Community members recognized that the Hoyt Electric site, the Washington Street School, and in particular, the Tannery site, presented significant opportunities for recreation and expansion of the open space network throughout Penacook. Redevelopment of

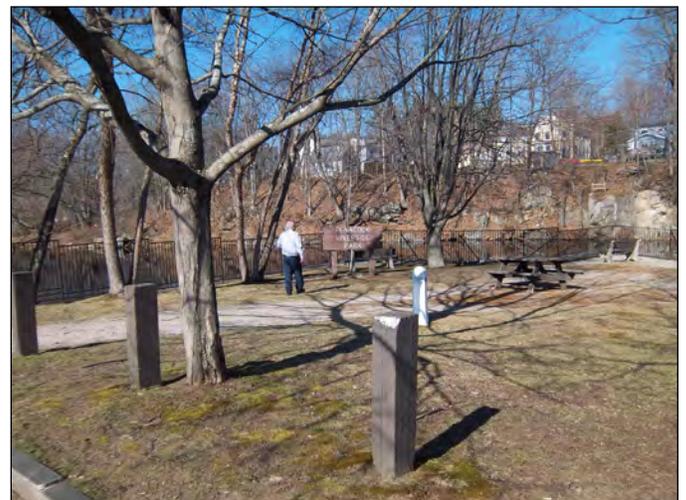
these large sites could also greatly impact the character of the village. To allow more site specific standards, and encourage further review and community input in the redevelopment of these sites, it is recommended that they be governed by an overlay district or conditional use review. Recommended strategies for addressing these sites are discussed on page 30.



Walnut Street Park, off of MacCoy Street in Penacook

Participants also noted that:

- Trees are an important part of the village landscape, and have many environmental benefits beyond aesthetics.
- Tree placement must consider snow removal, utilities, site maintenance, and the long term growth patterns of trees.
- Maintenance of existing and new open spaces is critical.
- Landscaping and open space networks should be used to create a pleasant walking environment throughout the village.



Riverside Park in the village center of Penacook

## Stakeholder Interviews

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During the months between the two public workshops, more detailed input was gathered from stakeholders. Stakeholders were defined as members of the community deeply invested in Penacook, either through time spent volunteering, professional work, financial investment, or other personal commitment. Stakeholder responses were very consistent with the information gathered from general public meetings. The following is a summary of questions and stakeholder responses.

### **What describes your position, interest, or role in the future of Penacook Village?**

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Most interviewed were property or business owners, some were lifetime or long-time residents. Stakeholders indicated that while they often use certain services or amenities in the village, other places within Penacook are often underutilized for commercial or recreational purposes. Village characteristics and amenities they appreciated included the walkability from home to village center, and access to recreational resources, including the Contoocook River and other open spaces.

Everyone interviewed stated an interest in the future of the village, including desires for:

- Greater security for investing in properties;
- A stable and resilient neighborhood;
- Compatible and complimentary businesses;
- An improved public realm;
- Greater variety of goods and services; and
- Public investment in parks and improved maintenance.



Pedestrian access to Village Street from Riverside Park, Penacook



Former police station converted into a library near village center, Penacook

### **What type of development is right or wrong for Penacook?**

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Everyone agreed that more and/or improved commercial development was desirable to ensure that the village survives as a business district. Stakeholders wanted to see a variety of businesses, with most noting that new buildings should be similar in scale to what currently exists. Specific uses mentioned included personal services, medical and social services, coffee shops, cafes, retail shops, a cooperative of small scale businesses, and arts or technology incubators. Some felt these shops should target the local population while others felt it was also important to draw in new customers.

Many noted the importance of retaining the historic character of the village, citing a desire for underground utilities, and preferences for brick storefronts and ground floor retail to enhance this. Stakeholders also noted the importance of the library within the village, of wide and accessible sidewalks, and of clean and safe parks. Some also noted the importance of allowing flexible standards to foster rather than restrict new development.

### **Do you or your customers (if applicable) have difficulty finding parking within the Village?**

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Opinions varied on the issue of parking. About half felt that parking was not currently an issue. Other responses included:

- Parking during construction of city road improvements has been difficult.
- Parking lots in the center are generally full.
- Residential parking is difficult, especially for multi-family units close to the center.
- Employee parking is needed.



On-street parking in front of shops along both sides of Village Street.

A number of stakeholders noted that additional parking will be needed as the Village continues to develop. Suggestions for parking included time restrictions for on-street parking, residential stickers, new parking on the former tannery site, and better designed and managed parking.

### **What would you like to see at the former tannery site along the riverfront?**

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The most frequent answer to this question was a grocery store, although a few did feel that a grocery store was an inappropriate use. Other ideas included restaurants, residential units, age restricted housing, shops, public space, ground level retail with second floor offices, commercial property, mixed-use development, library, and light industrial. Stakeholders noted that parking would be required to support any of these uses. There was agreement that the site should provide some public open space at the river's edge; a few suggested that the site should support a large public open space.

### **How do you feel about the current public spaces within the Village? What kinds of public spaces do you feel are appropriate within the Village?**

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There was general dissatisfaction with the condition and maintenance of the parks and public realm. While several reported regular use of the parks in the Village and along the river, others were unfamiliar with the parks, or noted their lack of use. Most wanted improved parks and a commitment for better maintenance. Many stated that the tannery site was appropriate for a new park or boardwalk. Many noted that a good sidewalk system is important.

### **What kind of zoning standards do you feel would contribute to downtown, your organization, or business?**

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Stakeholders indicated the need for flexible zoning standards that would also maintain the historic village style pattern of development, including aesthetic standards. The following ideas were offered by stakeholders regarding zoning standards:

- No more height than what currently exists
- Good public spaces
- No multi-unit housing on Village Street – parking is an issue
- Sign regulations are important
- Require on-site parking to the side or rear of buildings
- Design streetscape and building fronts to increase visibility of shops
- Reduce parking requirements
- Preserve historic structures within reason
- Encourage a mix of uses
- Encourage residential development downtown
- Similar to Concord downtown – wider sidewalks, buildings to street, architectural details
- Improve accessibility (reduce steps)
- Adopt design standards
- Offer tax incentives for preservation
- Side roads must be considered
- Allow conversion of homes to businesses along side streets

### **What types of standards do you think would be a detriment to downtown, businesses, or your organization?**

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Stakeholders voiced the need for standards that are easily interpreted that will streamline the approval process. Concerns over the size of non-residential uses were also addressed. Stakeholders offered the following suggestions:

- Make standards less technical;
- Allow flexibility to ease hurdles to development;
- Too many restrictions on design may be harmful to redevelopment;
- Do not allow big box stores in the Village or on the former tannery site; and
- Small local shops don't seem to have longevity, may need to allow for larger businesses.

# Urban Design Goals

The Vision Statement and Urban Design Goals were derived from the outreach efforts summarized in the previous section. They encompass a set of design principals that participants consistently chose during the visioning process. The images depicted in this section were the highest rated from the VPS, illustrating the preferred character of development for Penacook. Goals are presented here according to the same categories used during the VPS:

- Buildings
- Streets & Parking
- Landscape & Open Space
- Storefronts & Signage
- Pedestrian Realm

**Vision Statement:** *Penacook strives to be a walkable, vibrant place to live, work and play, that embraces it's heritage and natural resources, and maintains strong connections between destinations, pedestrian routes and open space.*

## Buildings

Building types preferred by community members were consistent with what one would find in a small traditional urban community. Buildings are placed along the street line, with limited or non-existent setbacks other than to create seating areas or expand the pedestrian realm. Small scale multi-story buildings are designed with attractive architectural features and function to activate the streetscape at the ground level.



Buildings are 2-3 stories, with some exceeding 3 stories. The variation in roof styles, facade materials, and height provides visual interest.



Zero front and side setbacks create a continuous, connected urban fabric, while a variety of building heights, roof types, and materials creates interest.

Height - Consistent with Penacook's oldest structures, buildings should be 2-3 stories in height, with allowances for some 4-story structures and variations in height to encourage visual interest.

Massing & Scale - Buildings should be articulated to reduce their perceived mass and engage pedestrians at the street level. Variations in materials, setback, architectural features, and roof lines should be used to make larger structures appear as smaller individual buildings. Doors, windows, and facade enhancements should be emphasized at street level and at the pedestrian scale.

Setbacks - Buildings should be located at property lines or with minimal setbacks to provide landscaping or enhanced pedestrian areas.



Mixed-use building with ground floor commercial and residential above. Note the additional height to define the corner and add interest.

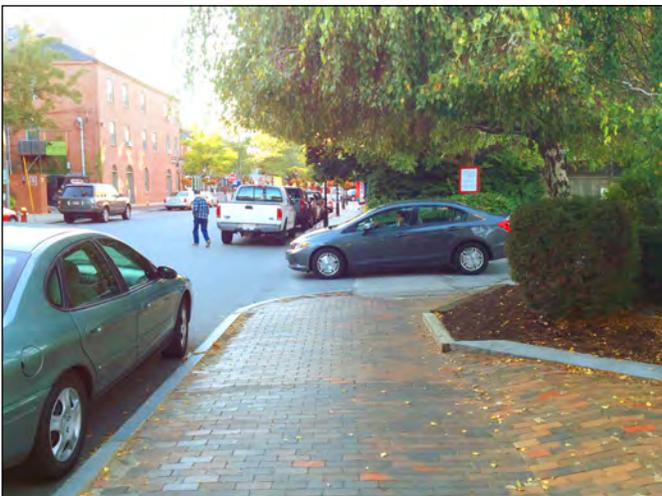
## Streets & Parking

The design of streets and parking areas has a significant impact on the character of the streetscape and the experience of the pedestrian environment. The images depicted here demonstrate attractive, narrow streets oriented towards safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic is slowed by design, while the visibility and impact of off-street parking areas are minimized



Parallel parking protects pedestrians along the sidewalk. Narrow streets with one travel lane in each direction limits vehicular speeds.

**Parking Areas** - Community members preferred off-street parking areas located to the side or rear of buildings, versus parking areas located to the front of buildings. On-street parking is also a valuable resource that should be retained and maximized where appropriate. To mitigate the negative impacts of parking areas, off-street parking should be screened with landscaping or other attractive features, and shade trees should be used to offset glare and heat effects.



Off-street parking is screened along the sidewalks. The car above is exiting a parking lot in a pedestrian-friendly area.



Shade trees and vegetation enhance the appearance of this parking area located on a side street. Clear signage improves access and wayfinding.

**Pedestrian-Oriented Design** - Streets should be designed for safety and movement of pedestrians and cyclists, rather than prioritizing vehicular traffic. Narrow streets lined with on-street parking, trees, and other streetscape amenities slows traffic and enhances pedestrian safety. Safety is also improved, and the integrity of the streetscape is maintained, by limiting driveway curb cuts and encouraging alleys or rear access parking. Streets should be lined with buildings or parks rather than off-street parking areas. Crosswalks and wayfinding signage can also help pedestrians and cyclists navigate the street network.



Residential parking is located to the rear of the building, reducing curb cuts along the frontage, improving safety, and enhancing the urban streetscape.

**Complete Streets** - Streets should be designed to safely accommodate vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit. Complete streets may include designated bike lanes or other protected routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and street trees are also characteristics of complete streets.

## Landscape & Open Space

The natural landscapes and water resources of Penacook are significant assets that have shaped the history of the village, and are still highly valued by the community today. The community indicated that the Contoocook River should be celebrated by creating public spaces along its banks, orienting activity towards the river's edge, and providing viewsheds and access points where feasible. The community also noted a preference for scenic natural spaces and paths, which indicates that existing forests and mature trees should be preserved or incorporated into public spaces when possible.



Riverfront park with picnic areas, walking path, and mature trees.

While parks and open spaces provide valuable recreation amenities, they also offer opportunities to tell the history of the village. The identity and character of the community can be preserved and enhanced through the use and placement of public art, plaques, artifacts, or materials with local or historic significance. Design standards for open space can guide the use of these elements to strengthen community identity.



Linear riverfront park passing along adapted historic buildings. Interpretive design of the public space reflects the story of the site's past.



Hardscape plaza lined with restaurants, retail, and mixed use buildings.

Waterfront Parks - Parks and open spaces that provide visual or physical access to the water should be encouraged. Future redevelopment of the tannery site should provide opportunities for access, passive recreational activities, and gathering places along the Contoocook River. Access and visual corridors should be designed to establish connections and continuity with the Village Core area.

Connectivity - Open spaces throughout the village should be interconnected with neighboring sites and each other using pedestrian paths or sidewalks. Consistency in design elements, such as hardscape, furniture, lighting, signage and other elements can help unify spaces, create a sense of place, and draw pedestrians into the area.

Variety - Community residents desire a range of public spaces designed for passive and active uses, including recreation, community gatherings, celebrations, and to support business. Public spaces may range from small plazas to large recreation fields, parks, or trails.



Multi-use park with attractive hardscape, lighting, and vegetation.

Sustainable Design - Parks and open spaces should be designed for longevity, safety, and ease of maintenance. Materials and design should be durable, without the need for specialized care. Adequate space for landscaping to mature reduces maintenance costs. Natural areas should be minimally developed with paths, seating areas, and overlooks.

## Storefronts & Signage

Historic village “main streets” are typically defined by “street walls” of buildings that are located at the edge of the sidewalk. The public space is activated through the variety and vibrance of building materials and storefronts, and by providing attractive and engaging areas for pedestrians to move through or gather. Features used to accomplish this include pedestrian-scale lighting; street furniture such as benches, bus shelters, kiosks, and planters; wayfinding signage; attractive hardscape; street trees; and elements that enhance safety such as crosswalks, bike lanes, and on-street parking.



Streetscape includes retail uses, seating, street trees, on-street parking, variations in building setback and materials, awnings, and small outdoor displays.

Retail uses are ideal for creating vibrant streets, though office and community service oriented uses can also engage pedestrians, especially when facades are dominated by windows, interesting architectural features, public art, awnings, or when an entrance incorporates a plaza, seating area, or other small gathering area.



Continuous street wall of storefronts with window displays and recessed entries. Most of the facade is composed of window and door openings.



Organized and tasteful display along the storefront does not overwhelm the sidewalk or create clutter, a clear zone is provided for pedestrians.

The traditional urban village development pattern was found desirable by Penacook stakeholders and residents. It is prominent along Village Street between Washington Street and the Contoocook River. New development should reflect similar principals, including:

Building Placement - Storefronts or other facades should line sidewalks, public parks or plazas to create a continuous urban fabric.

Variety - Materials, colors, lettering, and architecture of storefronts and signage should exhibit variety to create an attractive and engaging village downtown.

Activity - Pedestrian activity should be encouraged through the use of street furniture, public spaces, and retail activity such as open-air cafes. Storefront activity should not impede pedestrian movement.



Open air cafe with clear zone to allow pedestrians to move through the space.

## Pedestrian Realm

Throughout the public process, community members consistently emphasized that a high quality, pedestrian-oriented environment was desirable for the future of Penacook. While automobile use and its associated parking needs are necessary due to the low residential density of the village and overall development patterns of the community, a safe, accessible, and interconnected pedestrian network is vital to the realization of the community's vision. Safe integration of pedestrian routes with vehicular systems can be encouraged by clearly marking and designing walkways and by utilizing traffic calming strategies, such as on-street parking, narrow traffic lanes, and stamped or raised crosswalks colored differently than surrounding paving. The following are goals for Penacook's pedestrian realm, as gathered from the community outreach process:



Riverfront walking path.

**Connectivity** - Open spaces, parking areas and destinations (both residential and non-residential) should be well connected by a network of pedestrian paths or sidewalks. Consistent design features such as paving patterns, landscaping, or signage can improve visual connection and wayfinding. Pedestrian routes should be accessible, well marked, and safe to encourage use in conjunction with bicycle or vehicular systems.

**Visual Interest** - Pedestrian networks and views along pedestrian routes should be attractive, utilizing features of both the natural and built environment.

**Amenities** - A high quality pedestrian realm should provide amenities including seating areas, drinking fountains, public art, trash receptacles, lighting, shade, landscaping, water features, or other similar features to enhance the experience of the pedestrian.



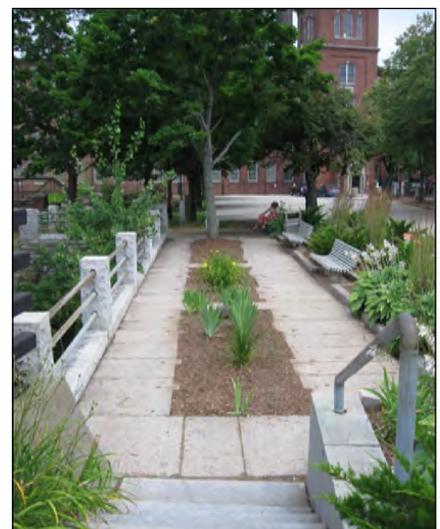
Pedestrian area with seating, landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting, and interesting hardscape materials next to an open air cafe.



Crosswalks with enhanced pedestrian safety and landscaping.



High quality pedestrian area with seating and active ground floor uses.



Pocket park along sidewalk with seating and landscaping.

# Recommendations

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## District Boundaries

The purpose of the District Boundary and regulatory recommendations of this section is to guide the implementation of the Vision and Urban Design Goals expressed by the community. Certain recommendations are intended to offer direction in drafting new zoning standards to accomplish this, while other recommendations may be more appropriate as design guidelines.

Through the public process and existing conditions analysis, it became clear that the Village District should consist of two sub-districts, the Village Core, and the Village Neighborhood (see Figure 3). Several larger properties were also identified as Redevelopment Opportunity Areas. These sites, offering significant redevelopment opportunities, should be governed by a conditional use permit process or overlay district, with specific criteria defined for each.

This section states overall recommendations for the entire Village District, and recommendations targeted to each sub-district when appropriate. Recommendations specific to Redevelopment Opportunity Areas are included at the end of the section.

### Village Core

The Village Core boundary encompasses the center of the District; it follows Village Street, and includes several blocks of higher intensity development near the crossing of the Contoocook River. The Village Core is most suitable for higher density mixed-use development.

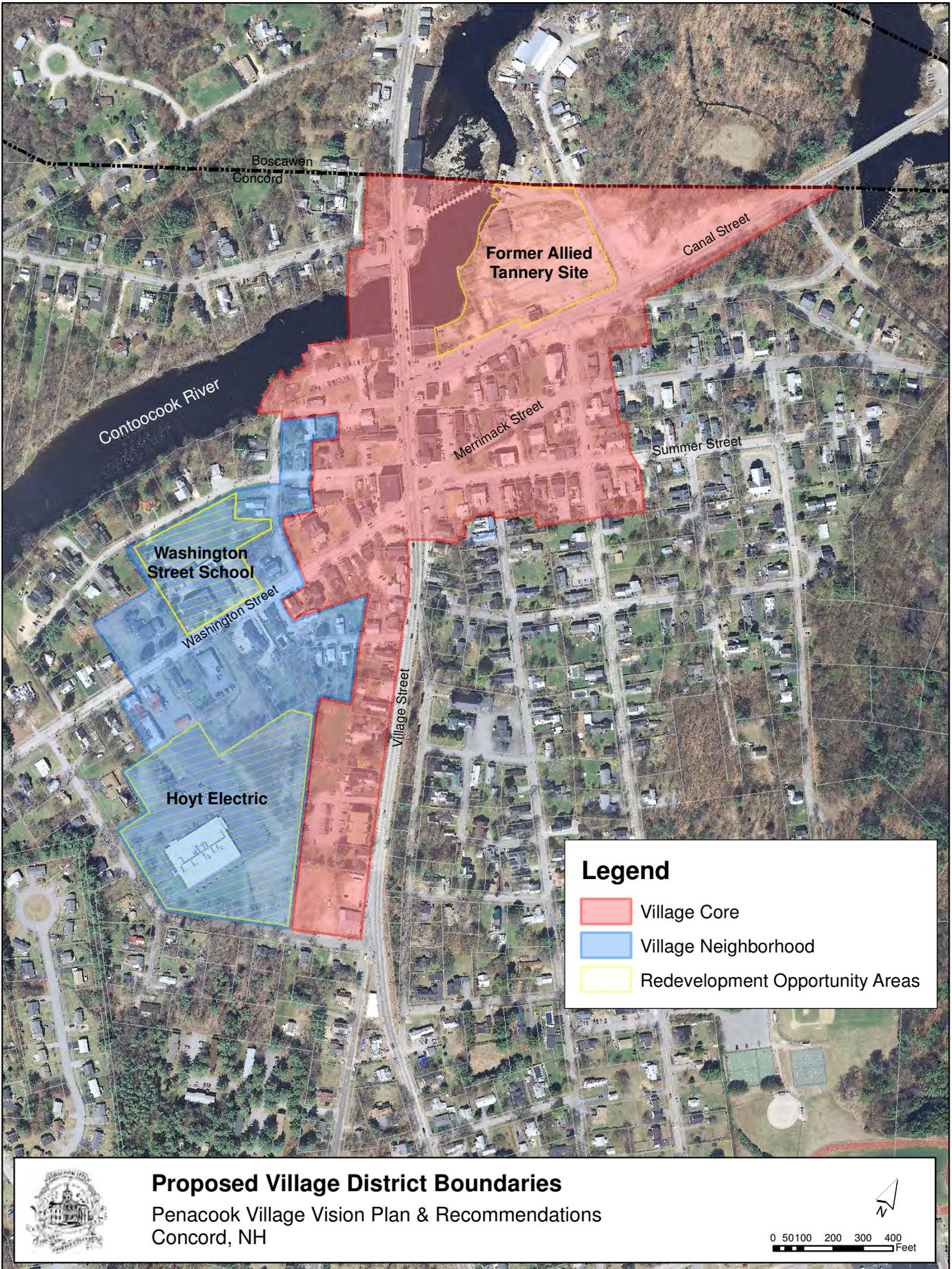
### Village Neighborhood

The Village Neighborhood boundary delineates a transitional area between the Village Core and residential neighborhoods to the west of Village Street. The architectural character of the Village Neighborhood district should be predominantly residential, although some non-residential uses should be allowed.

### Redevelopment Opportunity Areas

The three parcels recommended to be developed through conditional use or an overlay district include the Hoyt Electric property, the Washington Street School, and the former Tannery site. The Tannery site, in particular, was indicated to be most appropriate for mixed-use development with provisions for public open space.

Figure 3. District Boundary Map



# Buildings

Community members generally preferred buildings that were two to three stories in height, with a limited number of four story buildings, that had little or no setback from the sidewalk. Architecture traditionally found in New England was preferred, including colonial, cape, Victorian, Greek revival, shingle and bungalow styles. Preferred development types were consistent with the rich variety of buildings currently found throughout Penacook. The community also determined that mixed-use buildings were most appropriate for the Village Core and the former Allied Tannery site. Residential building types were found to be most appropriate for the Village Neighborhood area.



Two and three story buildings with no setback.

Definitions for the following terms used throughout this section are provided for clarification:

- **Articulation** - An architectural term describing the division of a building into meaningful parts. Elements of articulation include porches, balconies, columns, arches, doors, windows, dormers, parapets, awnings, variations in color, material, setback, and roof line, and any other architectural feature that helps to organize the appearance of a building.
- **Massing** - An architectural term describing the volume and shape of a building.
- **Scale** - The relative size of a building within the context of its streetscape and nearby buildings.
- **Setback** - The distance between a lot line or right-of-way and the nearest point of a building or structure, usually referring to the ground plane.

## Village Core

### Height

- Maximum permitted building height should be three (3) stories.
- A walk-out basement level (finished or unfinished) should not be considered a full story.
- A four-story or single-story building should be permitted only by Conditional Use Permit. The criteria for Conditional Use Permits should incorporate the goals of the Vision Plan.

### Massing

- Four stories should be permitted by Conditional Use Permit at street corners, where the volume gives emphasis to the corner.
- The facade of the fourth story of a building should step back from the facade of the third story a minimum of five (5) feet.
- Architectural features such as dormers or roof line variations should be provided to reduce the mass of the fourth story.
- One (1) story buildings permitted by Conditional Use Permit and two (2) story buildings should have peaked roof-lines, parapets, or other architectural features to reflect local character and/or emphasize the vertical plane. Flat roof lines without detail should be discouraged.



The second floor steps back and allows for outdoor dining.

## Village Core (con't)

### Setbacks (see Figures 4 & 5)

#### Front - Maximum

- The maximum setback for a principal structure fronting on Village Street should be no greater than ten (10) feet.
- The maximum setback for a principal structure fronting on any street other than Village Street should be no greater than fifteen (15) feet.
- A greater setback should be allowed for open air cafes, plazas, or other public space, only along the portion of the façade that provides the public space.

#### Side - Maximum

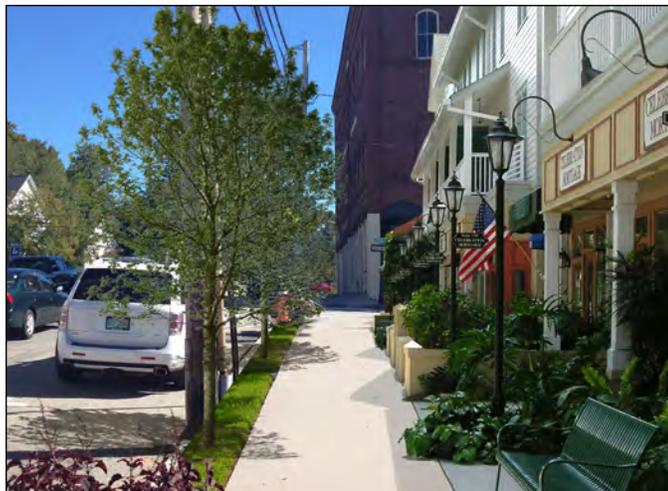
- The maximum setback for a principal structure fronting on Village Street, located between Washington Street and the Contoocook River, should be no greater than ten (10) feet (see Figure 4, Village Street Center).
- Other side setbacks should be no greater than fifteen (15) feet, except where access requires more.
- Permitted uses should be limited to access, plazas, cafes, bicycle parking or landscaping.

#### Rear - Minimum

- There should be no minimum rear setback when the rear property line abuts another lot in the Village Core.
- The minimum rear setback for all other lots should be no less than fifteen (15) feet.

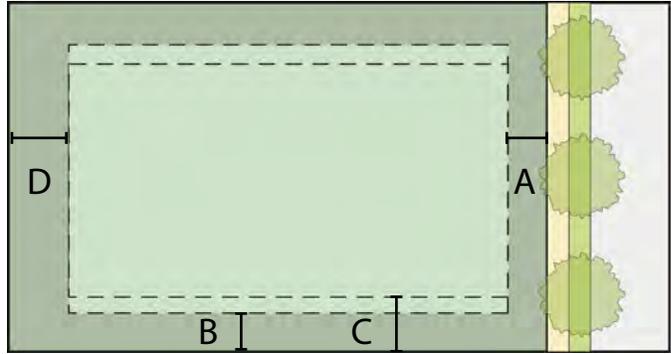
### Buffers

Buffering of non-residential uses from residential districts should conform to Section 26 of the City of Concord Site Plan Regulations.



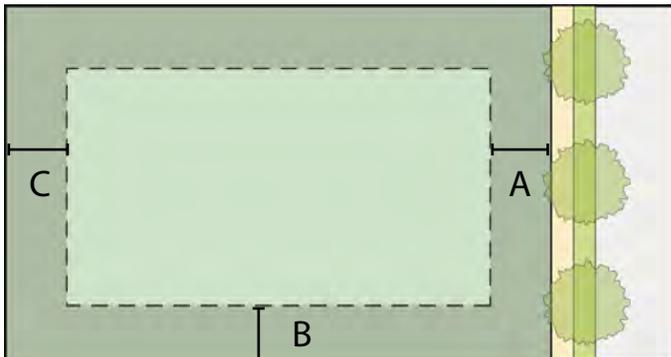
Sidewalk along storefronts with varying setbacks and landscaping.

Figure 4. Setbacks for Village Street



Symbol	Description	Min	Max
A	Front Setback - Village Street	0'	10'
B	Side Setback - Village Street Center	0'	10'
C	Side Setback - Village Street Other	0'	15'
D	Rear Setback - Village Street*	15'	0'

Figure 5. Setbacks for all other streets in the Village Core



Symbol	Description	Min	Max
A	Front Setback - All Other Streets	0'	15'
B	Side Setback - All Other Streets	0'	15'
C	Rear Setback - All Other Streets*	15'	0'

\* Except where rear property line abuts another lot in the Village Core



Outdoor dining is encouraged within the front setback.

## Village Core (con't)

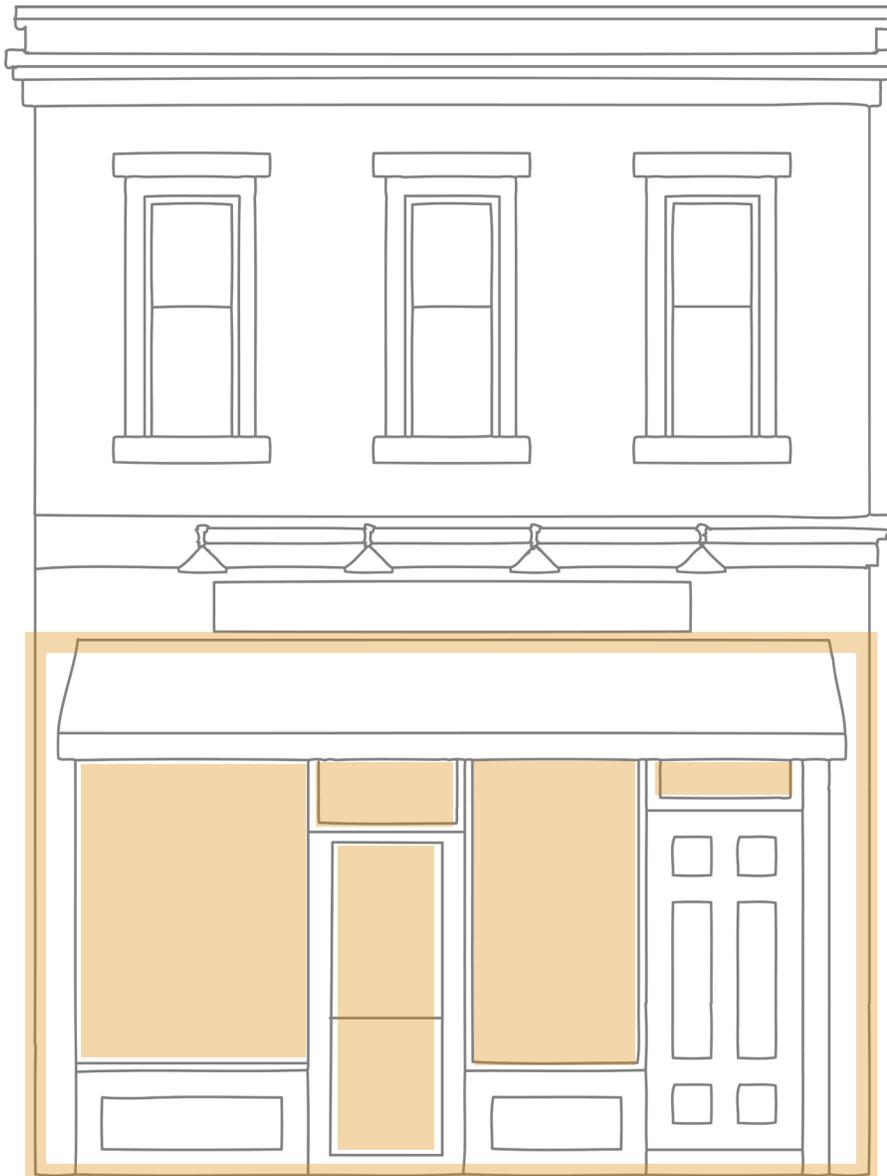
### Doors and Windows

- Primary entrances for all uses of buildings fronting on Village Street should be located along Village Street, or at a corner shared with Village Street.
- To allow activity to be visible to pedestrians, ground level façades of non-residential buildings should be required to provide a minimum of 40% transparent openings including doors or windows.
- The ground level façade should be measured by multiplying the length of the entire building by the distance between the interior finished floor elevation and the interior ceiling height (See Figure 6).



Building facade along Village Street composed of windows, recessed doors, and distinctive architectural features such as arches and vertical elements.

Figure 6. Ground Level Facade Requirement



Key:



**Ground Level Facade**



**Transparent Surface**

(min. 40% of ground level facade)



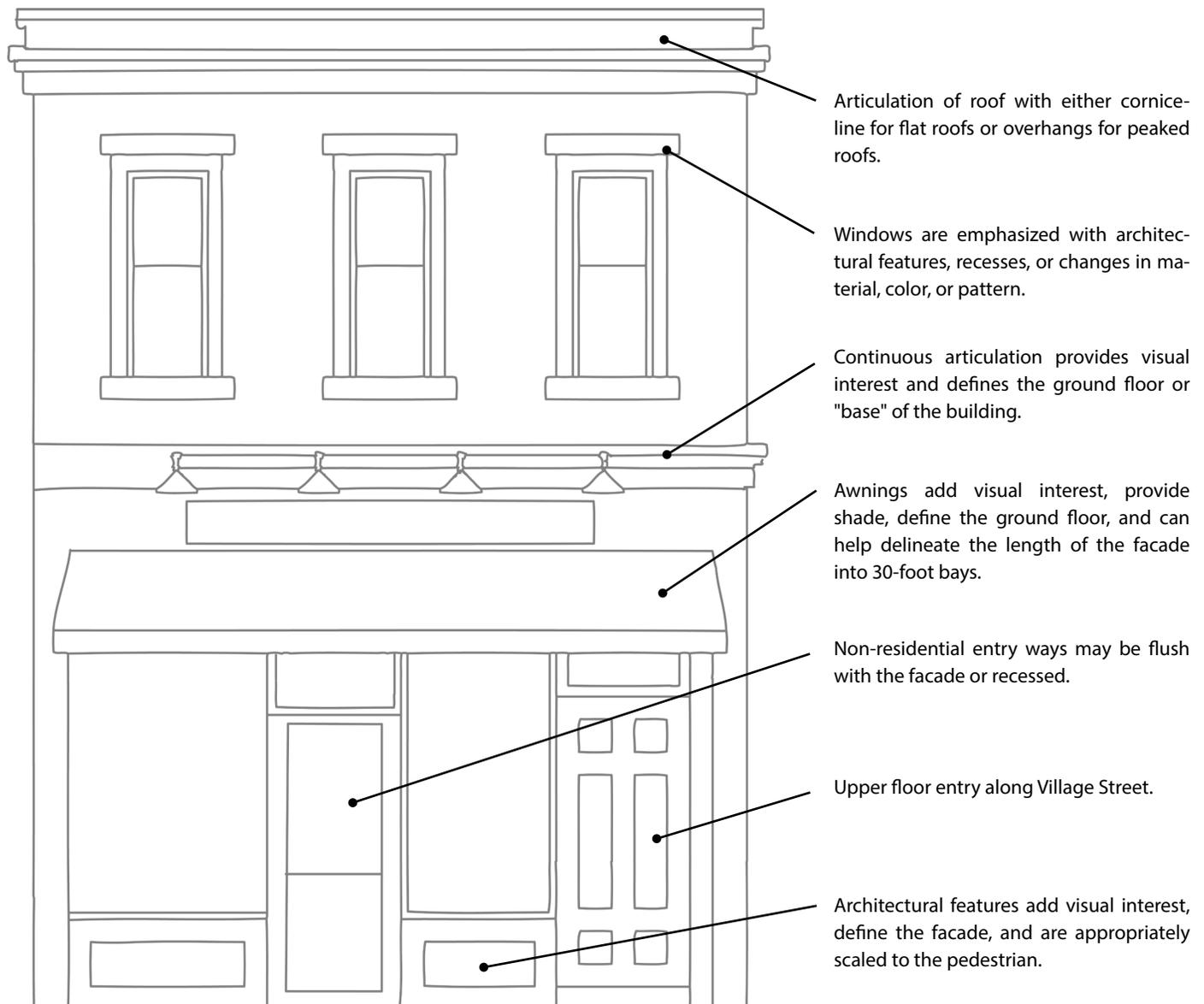
Facade consists of more than 40% transparent surfaces with entrance off of Village Street.

## Village Core (con't)

### Articulation (see Figure 7)

- New structures, renovation of existing structures, and proposed signage should be subject to architectural design review to ensure that the style is typical of buildings in the core and with the character of the village.
- Buildings should be designed with a "base", "middle", and "top".
- The "base" may consist of the ground level itself, or distinctive materials or colors along the base of the ground level. Eaves, overhangs, awnings, or changes in color, pattern, or material should be used between the ground level floor and upper floors to distinguish the base.
- The "top" may consist of features such as a cornice line, eave, parapet, crenellation (a series of alternating raised and lowered sections), or other distinctive feature emphasizing or adding variation to the appearance of the roofline.
- The "middle" consists of the bulk of the building between the base and top.
- Long, monotonous facades should be avoided.
- Windows should be emphasized with lintels, recesses, or other distinctive casing.
- Façades should be organized along the horizontal plane in increments of no more than thirty (30) feet. The appearance of thirty-foot bays may be achieved through the use of setbacks, columns, pilasters, changes in material or color, or other architectural features.

Figure 7. Mixed-Use Building Facade Design



## Village Neighborhood

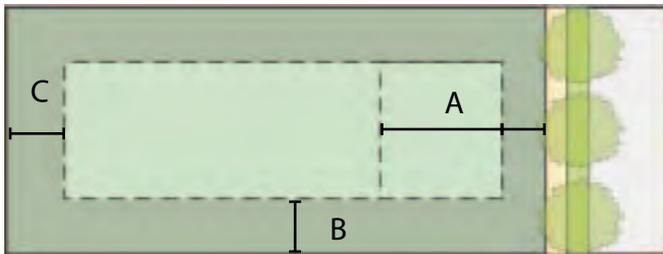
### Height

- Maximum permitted building height should be no greater than three (3) stories.
- Single-story non-residential buildings should be permitted only by Conditional Use Permit.

### Massing

- Traditional New England Architectural styles consistent with the neighborhood should be encouraged.
- One (1) story buildings permitted by Conditional Use Permit and two (2) story buildings should have peaked roof-lines, parapets, or other architectural features to reflect local character and/or emphasize the vertical plane. Flat roof lines without detail should be discouraged.

Figure 8. Setbacks - Village Neighborhood



Symbol	Description	Min	Max
A	Front Setback	10'	40'
B	Side Setback	15'	N/A
C	Rear Setback	15'	N/A

### Setbacks (see Figure 8)

- Accessory structures 250 square feet in area or greater should comply with the setback requirements for principal structures.

#### Front - Minimum and Maximum

- The minimum front setback for principal structures should be no less than ten (10) feet.
- The maximum front setback for principal structures should be no greater than forty (40) feet.
- Garages and other accessory structures should be set back from the right-of-way providing primary access the same distance as the principal structure, or a greater distance than the principal structure.

#### Side - Minimum

- The minimum side setback for principal structures should be no less than fifteen (15) feet.



Typical residential style architecture found in the Village Neighborhood.

- The minimum side setback for accessory structures that measure less than 250 square feet, such as sheds, should be no less than five (5) feet.
- The minimum side setback for driveways should be no less than five (5) feet.

#### Rear - Minimum

- The minimum rear setback for principal structures should be no less than fifteen (15) feet.
- The minimum rear setback for accessory structures that measure less than 250 square feet, such as sheds, should be no less than five (5) feet.

### Articulation

- New non-residential and multi-family structures (3-plus units) and renovations should be subject to architectural design review to ensure that the style is typical of residential buildings in the neighborhood and/or with the character of the village.

### Landscape & Buffers

- Trees defined as "Significant Trees" by the City of Concord Zoning Ordinance should be retained whenever possible.
- Buffering of non-residential uses from residential districts should conform to Section 26 of the City of Concord Site Plan Regulations.

### Non-Residential Conversion

- An existing residential building may be converted to non-residential use, provided that the exterior maintains the residential character of the building.

# Parking

It was the consensus of the Penacook community that the village should be a walkable, pedestrian-oriented environment. The community voiced a strong desire to avoid automobile-oriented design. The following recommendations support the community's desired village environment.

## Village Core

- Off-street parking areas should be permitted only to the rear of the principal structure, except for corner building lots, where parking areas should be permitted to the side.
- Setbacks from the Contoocook River should be required for parking areas and drive aisles.
- Off-street parking areas should not be permitted within twenty (20) feet of the Village Street right-of-way.
- New curb cuts should not be permitted on either side of Village Street between Washington Street and the Contoocook River.
- Off-street parking areas should be connected to the buildings they serve by raised (curb protected) pedestrian walkways.
- There should be no minimum off-street parking requirements.
- Bicycle racks should be required based on a percentage of parking spaces provided.
- Chapter 4 Section 18 of the City of Concord Site Plan Regulations regarding parking should apply.



Shade trees, shrubs, and groundcover provide attractive parking lot screening on School Street in Concord.



Garages located behind buildings on Warren Street in Concord.

## Village Neighborhood

- Garages and off-street parking areas should be located behind the principal structure whenever possible.
- When parking to the rear is not possible, garages and off-street parking areas should be permitted only to the side of the principal structure.
- Off-street parking should be prohibited between the principal structure and the right-of-way.
- With the exception of driveways, off-street parking areas or garages should be set back from the right-of-way the same distance as the principal structure, or a greater distance than the principal structure.
- Off-street parking should be provided in accordance with Article 28-7, Section 2 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Chapter 4 Section 18 of the City of Concord Site Plan Regulations regarding parking should apply.

## Landscape & Screening for both Districts

- Screening of off-street parking areas should be required, and should consist of landscaping, a landscaped berm, stone or brick walls, ornamental fencing, or a combination thereof.
- If landscaping is used to screen a parking area, it should be comprised of a combination of deciduous and coniferous (or evergreen) planting. Further standards may apply as set forth in the City of Concord Site Plan Regulations.
- Shade trees, shrubs, and/or groundcovers should be required within parking areas, particularly in landscape islands, medians, and along the perimeter.
- Chapter 4 Section 18 of the City of Concord Site Plan Regulations regarding Landscaping should apply.
- Where space permits, street trees should be required along driveways for publicly accessible parking areas.

# Landscape & Open Space

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Penacook residents and stakeholders agree that an improved village landscape that includes neighborhood parks and open spaces, sidewalks and well-defined roadsides is important to community revitalization. The new streetscape recently completed along Village Street was a great first step. It provides an attractive new street, sidewalks, curbing, and includes the redevelopment of Boudreau Square. Utilities were also placed underground, allowing for the removal of all electrical poles and wires, and eliminating the need to continually trim street trees to accommodate the wires.

This section provides recommendations for how to further improve the network of streetscapes, open spaces, and parks that serve the residents of Penacook.



Trees in urban settings provide shade and visual appeal, and create a more desirable pedestrian environment.

## Urban Tree Canopy

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Along with a host of environmental benefits, trees provide shade and aesthetic interest, improve air and water quality, improve property values, and can improve the biodiversity of urban areas. The overall urban tree canopy of the village could be increased through one or more of the following strategies:

- Streetscape improvements, including providing street trees and sidewalks, could be accomplished through federal funding, with the City as sponsor; or
- Grants for shade tree installation on public or private property could be acquired through a community organization, with the assistance of volunteers and/or school groups; or
- Sidewalks and street trees could be required along side streets during redevelopment, provided by the property owner.

## Open Space Network

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Key redevelopment sites including the Washington Street School and the tannery site are seen as important opportunities for improving the landscape and open space network in Penacook. While there are varying opinions as to the amount of open space the sites should provide, there is consensus that the tannery site should include a public walking path along the river, and provide landscape elements that make the site pleasant to view and experience.

The Open Space and Recreation Map (see Figure 9) created by City staff during the April 2012 charrette identifies potential new park locations, as well as links to parks, open spaces and other community resources.

- Utilize the Open Space and Recreation Map when working with developers interested in providing additional open space.
- Trail network gaps identified on proposed redevelopment sites should be bridged with a trail, sidewalk, park, or other public path during project construction.

## Improvements to Existing Parks

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Riverfront Park - Riverfront Park was cited by residents as a valued open space, yet there was consensus that its condition and maintenance could be improved. Community recommendations included:

- Provide more diverse plantings;
- Provide comfortable seating;
- Improve lighting;
- Create a pathway; and
- Install interpretive panels, signs, and/or a display of historic elements that tell the history of the site and the village.



View from Village Street across the Contoocook River, Riverfront Park is visible on the left beyond the building.

## Improvements to Existing Parks (con't)

Walnut Street Park - Walnut Street Park is located between the former tannery site and a residential neighborhood to the south of Walnut Street. Residents wanted this open space to remain a natural area, and suggested that with City support for modest improvements, a local group could provide care-taking services, such as trail maintenance and seasonal clean-ups. Desired improvements included:

- A walking path;
- Seating and picnic tables overlooking the river;
- Vegetation management and litter control;



View of Walnut Street Park along the Contoocook River in Penacook; the river crosses into Boscawen under the Canal Street bridge.

## Guidelines for New Parks & Plazas

The Open Space and Recreation Map (see Figure 9) provides a good blueprint for possible locations for new parks, plazas, or other open space connections in Penacook. To guide the development of new open spaces, this section discusses design strategies, types of open space, and general requirements for new parks and plazas.

### Design

The design of public parks and plazas should come from an open and inclusive process that involves the City or site property owner, neighborhood residents, and other stakeholders.

- Public park and plaza design should be responsive to the specific needs of the neighborhood, and the management capabilities of the City or property owner.
- Design should consider community event space needs, safety, maintenance, connectivity, accessibility and public input.
- Programming or other activation strategies that invite people into the space on a regular basis should also be considered.

### Types of Open Space

For the purposes of this document, the following types of public spaces are defined and described:

Public Park - A privately or publicly owned open space open to the public, either designed for human enjoyment, or preserved in a semi-natural state for natural resource protection. Parks designed for active use should be landscaped with shade trees and other vegetation, and should provide amenities such as pedestrian and bicycle paths, play structures, seating, or other community amenities.

Public Plaza - A privately or publicly owned hardscape open space open to the public, designed to support more intense public use or a greater concentration of people. Depending on the context, plazas may include fountains or other water features, pedestrian lighting, public art, shade trees, gardens or other landscaping, seating, or other amenities.

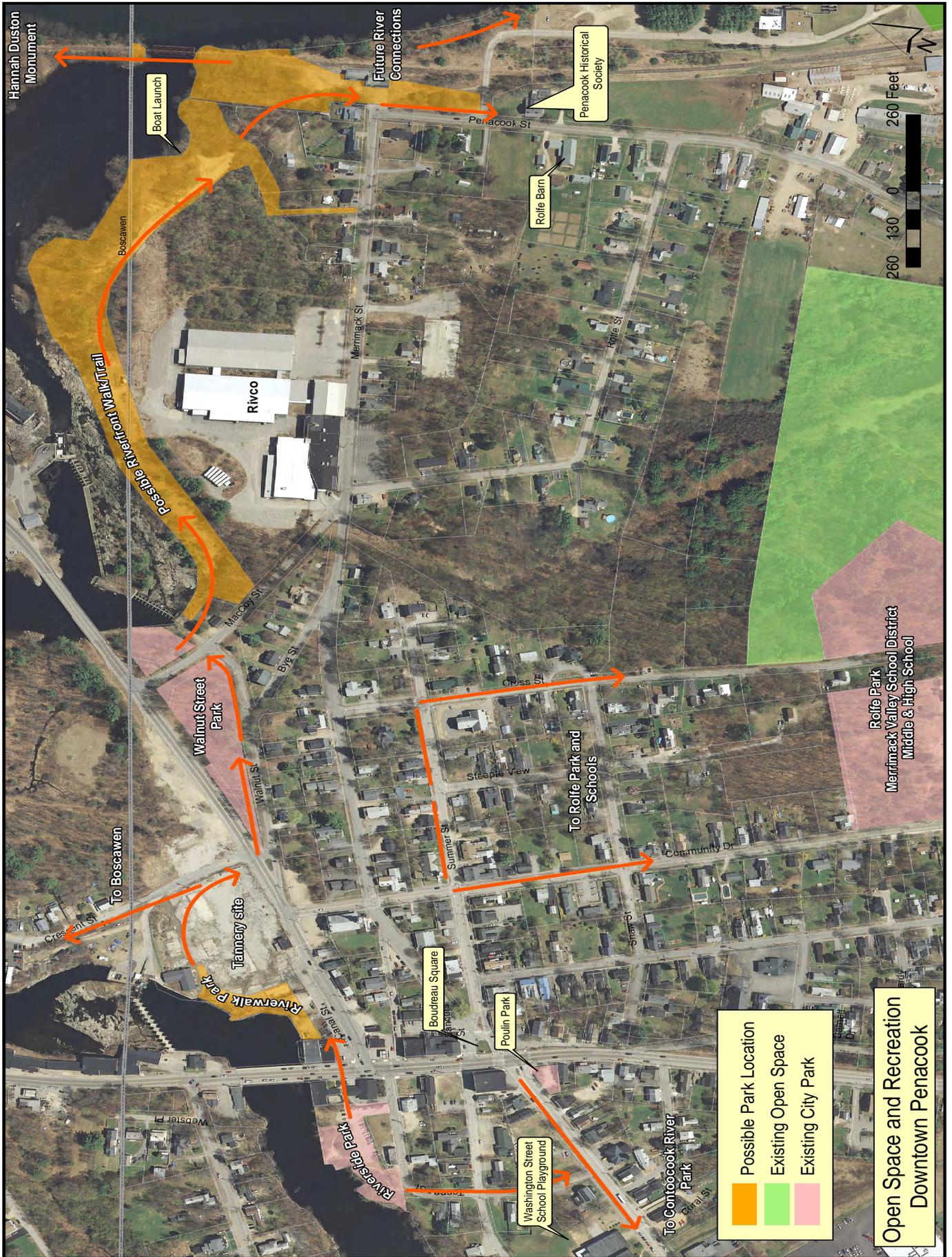
Waterfront Access - Riverfront parcels should be required to provide public access to the water either through easements for walking trails, or designated park space. Small docks or platforms could be provided for fishing, for a canoe or kayak launch, or for viewing the river.

### General Recommended Requirements

The following are recommended standards for all new public parks and plazas. More detailed specifications for certain amenities can be found in Appendix B.2.

- In addition to the requirements of Section 27 of the City of Concord Site Plan Regulations, additional shade trees and other landscaping should be required for parks and plazas.
- An appropriate mix of amenities should be provided, including features such as planters, public art, fountains or pools, drinking fountains, game tables, play structures, wayfinding signage, pedestrian lighting, cafes, food carts, and/or kiosks.
- At least 50% of the ground floor facade fronting on a public plaza should be allocated for non-residential use; all such uses should be directly accessible from the plaza.
- Public parks and plazas should be open for use by the public during normal daylight hours (sunrise to sunset), with direct access from a public walkway.
- Public parks, plazas, and building entrances fronting on those spaces, should meet ADA accessibility requirements.

Figure 9. Open Space and Recreation Map



# Permitted Uses

## Village Core

The intent of this district is to encourage a mix of uses typically found in a small New England Village: locally scaled retail, restaurants, offices and personal services, lodging and entertainment, residential units, civic services, and open spaces. The community stressed the desire that the Village Core be able to sustain sufficient commercial activity to meet the daily needs of residents. Allowing residential uses was seen as a strategy to increase the vitality and sustainability of the center without changing the general character of the built environment. While ground floors will typically consist of non-residential uses with residential or office uses located on upper floors, it is not recommended that uses be restricted by location within a building. This allows for greater development flexibility.

## Village Neighborhood

The Village Neighborhood district should be primarily residential in character with some commercial presence, including home businesses, and limited retail, office, and service uses. Residential infill of a similar size and design to what currently exists, along with conversions to residential units, will allow a moderate increase in density. Non-residential uses should not impose impacts of excessive traffic, noise, odor or light on the neighborhood and should be compatible in design and scale.

### Proposed Table of Uses

VC – Village Core; VN – Village Neighborhood

“P”-Permitted “-” Prohibited

PRINCIPAL USES	VC	VN
<b>Residential</b>		
Single Family detached	-	P
Two- family dwellings	-	P
Attached dwellings	-	P
Multifamily dwellings, except as noted below (*)	P	-
*Conversion of a residential building to accommodate not more than five (5) units	P	P
*Multifamily dwelling units for the elderly including congregate dwelling units	P	P
*Conversion of a nonresidential building to accommodate one or more dwelling units	P	P
<b>Educational/Institutional</b>		
Elementary and Secondary School	-	P
Church, synagogue, and place of religious worship	P	P
Child day care facility or nursery school	P	P
Adult day care facility	P	P
Libraries and museums	P	P
Historic property used as a visitor attraction	P	P
Community center	P	P
<b>Services: Entertainment and Recreation</b>		
Concert halls or indoor theaters	P	-
*Personal fitness or arts (fine or performing) studio	P	P
*Publicly owned park, plaza, and open space	P	P

Principal USES (CON'T)	VC	VN
<b>Services: Personal and Business</b>		
Service uses occupying up to 5,000 square feet of gross floor area	P	P
Funeral Home	-	P
<b>Services: Medical</b>		
Offices of healthcare practitioners including clinics and outpatient healthcare	P	P
<b>Services: Financial and Professional</b>		
Banking, and general business, financial, professional, and governmental offices, without a drive-through service	P	P
Expansion of an existing office use	P	P
<b>Services: Lodges and Meeting Facilities</b>		
Bed and Breakfast	P	P
Inn	P	P
<b>Retail (except motor vehicle and restaurant)</b>		
Sales of goods and merchandise within an establishment occupying up to 5,000 square feet of gross floor area with no outside storage of inventory	P	-
Sales of goods and merchandise within an establishment occupying between 5,000 and 75,000 square feet of gross floor area with no outside storage of inventory	SE	-
<b>Restaurants, Eating and Drinking Places</b>		
Restaurant occupying up to 5,000 square feet with no drive-through service and with or without entertainment	P	-
Restaurant occupying up to 5,000 square feet with no drive-through service and without entertainment	P	P
<b>Transportation Communications and Utilities</b>		
Public or private parking lot	P	-
Bus, taxi, or railroad passenger station	P	-
Radio or TV stations and studios; telecommunications buildings	P	-
Municipal and other governmental facilities	P	-
Public bus shelters	P	P
<b>ACCESSORY USES</b>		
Major Home Occupation	-	P
Minor Home Occupation	P	P
Drive-through service	-	-

\* Requires amendment to the Table of Uses in the City of Concord Zoning Ordinance.

# Redevelopment Opportunity Areas

Three sites were identified during the public outreach process as offering significant opportunities for redevelopment, the Hoyt Electric property, the Washington Street School, and the former Allied Leather Tannery site (see Figure 3).

Due to their size and/or location within the village, redevelopment of these sites could dramatically affect traffic, circulation, open space opportunities, and the overall appearance and character of the community. To ensure adequate review of redevelopment proposals, and to provide greater flexibility, it is recommended that these lots be governed by an overlay district and/or Conditional Use Permit process. Criteria specific to each property should be established after a careful analysis documenting the different contexts and characteristics of each. Proposed standards should require the following:

- Design review for site layout, architecture, signage, and overall compatibility with the character of the village.
- A narrative describing how the proposal is consistent with the Vision Plan.
- A certain percentage of each site set aside for public space in the form of parks, plazas, or waterfront access.

## Allied Leather Tannery site

The former tannery site is seen as offering the greatest opportunity for an expansion of the higher density mixed use development currently found in the village core. With significant frontage along the Contoocook River and easy access from the village center, redevelopment of the site should provide public open space in the form of either a linear waterfront park, an access easement along the river, or an interconnected series of access areas and park spaces.



Former tannery site outlined in yellow, with views towards the village center and Contoocook River.

The Tannery site should be permitted the highest intensity of use in the village. Buildings of four (4) to six (6) stories in height should be permitted by conditional use to incentivize the provision of open space amenities. The site could support a mix of residential, office, retail, and other commercial uses.

## Washington Street School Property

The Washington Street School is an attractive historic building near the village center. Surrounded by residential and lower density development, the most appropriate uses could include educational, institutional, office, recreational or community oriented facilities.



Washington Street School property outlined in yellow, with views towards the Contoocook River and surrounding low density neighborhood.

## Hoyt Electric Property

The Hoyt Electric Property is surrounded by residential and low density development. Reuse that is in keeping with the context of the surrounding neighborhood would most likely consist predominantly of residential single-family detached or attached homes. A small corner store or other similar use could also be appropriate.



Hoyt Electric property outlined in yellow, with views of surrounding residential and lower density neighborhoods.

# Summary

The Vision Plan is intended to document the needs and desires of Penacook residents and stakeholders, and create a blueprint for new zoning districts to implement the community's goals. The public outreach funded by the New Hampshire Housing and Finance Authority Community Planning took place over approximately five months from November of 2013 to March of 2013. However, the efforts of community members, stakeholders, and City staff have been ongoing over the past several years.



Gateway Sign along Canal Street in Penacook.

In 2007, a series of meetings was sponsored by Concord 20/20 to brainstorm new ideas and create a new vision for the community. Residents discussed cleanup and redevelopment of the tannery site, Route 3 corridor improvements, and the feasibility of a new grocery store in Penacook.



Immaculate Conception Church in Penacook - Attractive architectural style typical of the village.

By 2012, planning for the Route 3 corridor improvements had advanced substantially, and the City held another round of workshops to gain feedback on the community's preferences for the streetscape enhancements. Also addressed at that time were the community's needs regarding Open Space and Recreation, and continued discussions on significant sites, including the Rivco property, Thirty Pines, the Washington Street Fire Station, the Summer Street School, and the Washington Street School.



Rolfe Park in Penacook is easily accessible from the village center.

Community feedback throughout these events greatly assisted the City in making development and investment decisions in the village, and led to the pursuit of the Community Planning Grant. Moving forward, the combined efforts of the community and City over the past decade must be incorporated into current strategies for adopting new regulations and attracting development to the area.

Penacook is an intimate community characterized by great natural beauty, abundant recreational resources, unique historic character, and dedicated community members. Combined with youthful demographics and new development strategies, new investment should create a vibrant community revitalization.



Dams on the Contoocook River, adjacent to the Rivco property.



# Appendix



This Appendix includes information documenting the public outreach process funded by the Community Planning Grant, as well as the 2012 outreach efforts. Past efforts are included to provide con-

text for the current process. The results of current and past efforts combined should be utilized in moving forward to draft ordinances or guidelines for future development in Penacook.

## Appendix A: Penacook Village Charrettes (past effort)

In 2012 City staff conducted several workshops with Penacook residents. The purpose was to gain feedback on proposed improvements to the Route 3 corridor (now completed), discuss redevelopment options for significant sites, and identify opportunities for open space connectivity across the community. The following summaries of the two sessions are included in this Appendix:

- A.1 Public Parks and Connectivity - Summarizes break-out group discussions and recommendations.
- A.2 Reuse of Sites - Summarizes comments regarding the Summer Street School, the Washington Street School, and the Washington Street Fire Station.

## Appendix B: Penacook Vision Plan (current effort)

- B.1 Vision Map - The Vision Map is the result of a compilation of maps created by the public during the visioning workshop using images from the VPS.
- B.2 Specification for Open Space Amenities - The Consultants provided detailed recommendations to guide future requirements or guidelines for open space design.
- B.3 Visual Preference Survey (VPS) - The method and process of the VPS is described; the complete results of the Penacook survey are included.

# A.1. Public Parks & Connectivity

## Penacook Village Charrette Thursday April 19, 2012 6:00-9:00

### ● CURRENT PARKS: Riverside Park, Poulin Park, Walnut Street Park, Contoocook River Park, Boudreau Square, Rolfe Park, Merrimack Valley Schools, others...

#### GROUP 1

- Need crossing guard for west to access Rolfe Park
- Leave Contoocook River Park as is, rural
- City needs to maintain Riverside Park and all parks. Broken lights, trash, graffiti.
- Difficult to access river at Riverside Park

#### GROUP 2

- Should connect Sandwood and western neighborhoods to the east, Rolfe Park
- Washington Street School has play area
- Rolfe has play area

#### GROUP 3

- Maintenance! Riverside Park should be maintained as it was originally designed
- There is a lot of canoe activity at Riverside Park
- Leave Contoocook River Park as it is, rural.

#### GROUP 4

- Contoocook River Park needs signage / publicity
- Collaborate w/ Boscawen – share resources

- Poulin Park: Okay to move gazebo, maybe to Tannery Park

### ● POSSIBLE NEW PARK LOCATIONS: Riverwalk at Tannery Redevelopment Site, Riverfront Walk at the Rivco property, Contoocook River Park, others...

#### GROUP 1

- Ward 2 has no open space

#### GROUP 2

- Need a park on the west side of Village St. 10 acre parcel near Primrose that has potential

#### GROUP 3

- Need a playground west of Village St. that connects to the Washington St. School

#### GROUP 4

- Will there be a consistent theme to tie the parks to downtown to development?

# A.1. Public Parks & Connectivity

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- Park needed west of Village Street. Area near Mayflower may work well (with amenities)
- Concerns re hazardous waste in soil
- Team with the churches for recreational opportunities
- Need regional parks to serve all areas... WITH CONNECTIONS
- Riverside Park to Tannery Park should be a stroll park with benches
- RW is a good idea. Combine w/ restaurant / museum
- The proposed paths in Tannery Park should be wide enough for children learning to ride.
- Need commitment for maintenance: litter, grass, lights, graffiti
- Riverwalk Park: YES, with access from Tannery Park. Leave east end “wild” with a gravel surfaced trail
- Tannery Park will be well sited, w/ good access, parking and visibility
- Riverway (RW) is a great idea. Great spot for a wide walking path for a stroller and dog walk
- Collaborate w/ Boscawen - share resources

# A.1. Public Parks & Connectivity

**CONNECTIONS: Where are commonly used connections between open spaces? Where would you like to see additional connections for pedestrians and bicyclists? How would you like to see open space and recreation area connected?**

**GROUP 1**

- Connection b/t Riverside Park and Village St. is owned by the bank

**GROUP 2**

- Connect neighborhood from the west to the east by bike
- Connect Riverside Park to Tan-nery Park by bike

**GROUP 3**

- Need to improve connectivity by bike

**GROUP 4**

- Connect Penacook to Sewalls Falls – gravel surface is adequate
- Collaborate w/ Boscauwen – share resources

**ACCESS TO THE RIVERS: What type of water related activities should be accommodated in downtown Penacook? Fishing, picnic areas, scenic views, walking trails, boat launch and water access, etc.**

**GROUP 1**

- People fish off the Village St. bridge

**GROUP 2**

- Pier some positive, some negative
- Provide a swimming area, attended or not
- Restore Contoocook River Park to resemble the past, bandstand, etc.

**GROUP 3**

- Improve access behind Rivco bridge downtown, from Riverside Park and Riverwalk Park

**GROUP 4**

- Fishing access, YES
- Boating access, risky due to current, dams, rocks
- Better access at Hannah Dustin for recreation, more welcoming, clean it up, xc skiing, parking for general recreation, ice skating (coordinate activity with adjacent warehouse)
- Reconnect Penacook to the river

# A.1. Public Parks & Connectivity

## ● **RECREATIONAL AMENITIES: What type of recreational amenities would you like to see in downtown Penacook? Playgrounds & tot lots, bike racks, trails, improved lighting, benches, gardens, trees, fishing piers, parking, Christmas tree lighting, etc.**

### **GROUP 1**

- Riverwalk Park – Dog park

### **GROUP 2**

- Rolfe (or other park) needs a skate board park
- Look for an opportunity to a music/entertainment venue
- Incorporate history into the parks!

### **GROUP 3**

- Basketball is needed
- Exercise/activity stations
- Additional playground at Washington St School

### **GROUP 4**

- Opportunity to enhance connection from Riverwalk Park to Hannah Dustin monument
- Historic walk: Native Americans, Hannah Dustin, involve children in the process
- resurrect the history walk by the Penacook Historical Society

- Artifacts from tannery were kept for future display
- Expressed concern with the idea of a pier for safety reasons

- Community gardens are welcome
- Will there be a consistent theme to tie the parks to downtown to development?

- Bridges seem to be a destination and may be possible at Riverwalk Park. Can the railroad bridge be used?
- Use stone structure at Riverside Park as a clam shell for music and entertainment

- Community gardens are welcome
- Penacook is a quaint village, build on that!

- Restore Contoocook River Park to resemble the past, bandstand, etc.
- Community gardens are welcome

- Dog park

- Restrooms
- More lighting at Riverside Park

- Skate park

- Question use of woodchips in play areas

- Restrooms

- Washington Street School has play area
- Dog park: some positive, some negative

- Collaborate w/ Boscawen – share resources

# A.1. Public Parks & Connectivity

---

- Rolfe has play area
- Tie parks together with history: Penacook heritage trail
- Room for expanded farmers market - Rivco
- Rolfe used to have ice skating. Planned for Beaver Meadow GC
- Provide opportunity for music/entertainment somewhere
- Contoocook River Park: Add historical elements. Reference the powwows.
- Contoocook River Park: Add parking

● **SAFETY: Are there any safety considerations that the City should be aware of at existing or proposed parks? Lighting, illegal dumping, water safety, etc.**

**GROUP 1**

- River is a safety hazard due to the drop off
- Tannery Park will likely see more use than Riverside Park since there is more visibility and will therefore feel safer
- Riverside Park is a hidden pocket and doesn't feel safe

**GROUP 2**

- Condition of stone structure. Kids are disassembling, removing stones, graffiti
- Only a concern at night

**GROUP 3**

- Concerns re river quality and environmental issues

**GROUP 4**

## A.2. Reuse of Sites

---

The following is a summary of the comments received at the breakout table in regard to the re-use of the Summer Street School, Washington Street Fire House, and the Washington Street School. While there was a range of options expressed in regard to the desired re-use of the buildings there was a consensus on many issues.

### **Summer Street School**

1. Everyone who spoke said this building is an important part of the community, and is an historical asset, and should not be demolished.
2. Everyone who spoke felt the reuse of the building would be acceptable as multi-family residential property. Several participants suggested that the building could be used as incubator office space, a child care center, private school or homeless shelter. The consensus of each group was other uses would require additional parking and could spill over onto the neighborhood streets. The use of the building for senior housing or market rate housing is acceptable. The use of the building for affordable housing, or housing for the homeless was only supported by one individual.
3. The groups strongly supported placing the building back on the tax base unless there was a compelling public need for the building.
4. The MVSD representative advised that asbestos in the building has already been abated and the building is in good condition.

### **Washington Street School**

1. Everyone who spoke said this building is an important part of the community, and is an historical asset, and should not be demolished. The group noted that the 1956 single story addition at the rear of the building, while still functional is not of the same significance as the original 1936 building and the gymnasium addition.
2. It was a unanimous opinion that the existing playground use, gymnasium and ball field should be retained in public use.
3. There was also a consensus that the building is large enough to allow for a number of different uses both public and private.
4. Notwithstanding the recreational component, the consensus of the groups was that the building should generate revenue either by adding to the tax base or by income or rent from the property.
5. The building and site were suggested by a number of people as being suitable, at least in part, as a community center, and/or senior center.
6. Other uses suggested included a museum, library, housing, office and business incubator space, as well as continued use for educational purposes. The groups did not express any preference for any single use or mix of uses. There was a consensus of all groups that the community did not want the site to be converted to a large parking lot to serve the future uses, nor would the groups support uses which would generate the need for on-street parking in the adjacent residential areas.
7. The MVSD representative advised that the building and heating plant is in good condition. While there is a small amount of asbestos containing materials in the building it not at this time present a threat or require further abatement.

### **Washington Street Fire Station**

1. Everyone who spoke said this building is an important part of the community, and is an historical asset, and should not be demolished.
2. The amount of parking and the difficulty of providing handicapped access to the upper story were identified as issues limiting what uses should be proposed for the site.
3. This site was identified by many of the participants as a potential location to relocate the Penacook Library. It was suggested that the building could be used as a fire museum, or could be used for office/retail uses on the ground floor with residences above. It was also suggested that the building could be used as a police sub-station, or for other city services.
4. There was not a clear consensus on what would be the best potential use or mix of uses for the property.
5. The MVSD representative advised that the building is in good condition and that there does not appear to be any issue with asbestos or other hazardous materials in the building.



# VISION MAP

## PENACOOK VILLAGE DISTRICT

The images shown here represent planning and design principles desired by the community regarding specific areas within the Village District. These images were the most highly favored by participants of the online Visual Preference Survey™. At the November 23, 2014 Public Visioning Workshop, participants allocated these images throughout the study area as shown on this map.

This community-generated map helped guide the Village District's recommendations. Icon(s) indicate the recommendation category informed by each image.

### KEY:

- B** BUILDINGS: MASSING & SCALE
- P** PARKING
- L** LANDSCAPE & OPEN SPACE
- S** STOREFRONTS & SIGNAGE
- U** USES

### VILLAGE GATEWAYS



Well marked crosswalks with pedestrian islands on wide roads.



3 story mixed-use building with additional height at corner, modern design.

### VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD & WASHINGTON STREET SCHOOL



Historic home converted to office use.



Historic home converted to office use & new infill office building with residential design.



Playground and park for residents.



Historic building with mural related to local natural heritage on otherwise blank wall.

### VILLAGE CORE



Mixture of building heights. On average 2-3 stories, some exceed 3 stories.



Consistency in building placement and style. Variety in materials and massing.



Three and four story mixed-use buildings.



3 story, mixed use buildings set at the edge of the sidewalk.



Pedestrian ways along driveways with enhanced safety and landscape.



Well signed and landscaped public parking areas located on side streets.



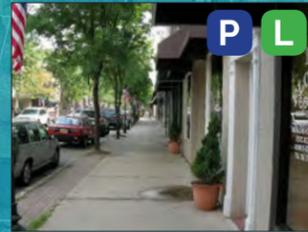
Large open park with formal walking paths.



Park with active recreation uses, such as basketball.



Mixture of hardscape and landscaping - pocket park with seating.



Wide sidewalks, brick edge and street trees. Buildings and parking along sidewalk edges.



Sidewalk along storefronts with landscaping between sidewalk and street.



Off-street parking is screened along sidewalks. This car is exiting a parking lot.



Second floor outdoor dining.



Town common with gazebo.

### FORMER TANNERY SITE



Varied setbacks & materials. Storefronts and on-street parking accessed by sidewalk.



Hardscape plaza surrounded by restaurants and stores.



Riverfront linear park among historic buildings. Interpretive design of public space that reflects local history.



Riverfront walking path.



Outdoor dining along sidewalk



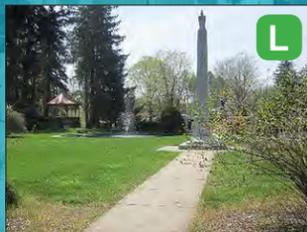
Recessed entries into storefronts, similar to bay windows.



Larger display of outdoor goods.



Outdoor display of goods allowed within small area of storefront.



Park with monument and lawn space.



Corner building setback from street for outdoor dining.



Riverfront boardwalk along mixed-use buildings sited close to the riverbank.



Open air cafes.



Riverfront park with picnic areas.

## B.2. Specifications for Open Space Amenities

---

The following recommendations are provided for various amenities that may be required in parks, plazas, or other open spaces:

### Seating

Seating should be provided in the form of benches, seating walls, movable furniture or other appropriately designed surface.

- A minimum of 1 linear square foot of seating should be provided for every 30 square feet of plaza area.
- Seating 30 inches or more in depth may be credited as two (2) linear square feet toward the seating requirement.
- Seating should be between 12 and 30 inches in height.
- Tops of walls, such as those which bound planting beds or other features, may be counted toward the seating requirement if they conform to dimensional standards.
- No more than 50 percent of the linear seating requirement should be met by movable seating.

### Trees Planting Requirements

In addition to the requirements of Section 27 of the City of Concord Site Plan regulations, the following shade trees should be required based on the square footage of plaza space:

- 0 - 1,500 square feet - none required
- 1,500 - 5,000 square feet - 4 trees
- 5,000+ square feet - 6 trees plus 1 additional tree for each additional 2,000 square feet of plaza area.

### Amenities

In addition to required landscaping and seating, two (2) of the following amenities should also be provided:

- Twice the required quantity of trees;
- Planters – a minimum of 150 square feet per 1,000 square feet of plaza area should be provided;
- Vegetation – a minimum of 150 square feet per 1,000 square feet of plaza area should be provided;
- Tables and chairs not associated with an open air cafe, including game tables;
- Public art;
- Fountains or pools;
- Drinking fountains; or
- Open air cafes - A maximum of 20% of a plaza area may be occupied by open air cafes.

### Lighting

- Lighting should be provided with a minimum of two (2) horizontal foot candles.
- Lighting should be required throughout plaza areas.
- Full cut-off lighting fixtures should be required.
- Lighting should not exceed zero (0) footcandles at property lines.



# APPENDIX B.3.

# VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS

The image shows a screenshot of a website titled "a VISION for DOWNTOWN PENACOCK". The website has a navigation bar with links for Home, About, Online Survey, Calendar, and Updates. The main content area is titled "Online Survey" and "What is the Visual Preference Survey?". It contains text explaining the survey process and a list of "Individual Sections" including Buildings, Streets & Parking, Open Space, Pedestrian/Shopping, and Storm & Snow. A large, semi-transparent instruction box is overlaid on the right side of the screenshot. The box contains the text: "WELCOME TO THE VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY! LET'S START BY BRIEFLY SHOWING YOU HOW TO TAKE THE SURVEY". Below this text is a photograph of a street scene with a silver car. A white box with the text "CLICK THE 'NEXT' BUTTON TO PROCEED" and a yellow arrow pointing down is overlaid on the bottom right of the photograph. At the bottom of the instruction box is a navigation bar with buttons labeled -4, -3, -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, +3, +4. A red triangle points to the -2 button, and a yellow arrow points to the +4 button.

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## Introduction

A Visual Preference Survey™ (VPS) is a technique that assists the community in determining which components of a plan or project environment contributes positively to a community's overall image or features. The technique is based on the development of one or more visual concepts of a proposed plan or project. Once the visual concepts are developed, they are used in a public forum or other specialized public gathering to provide the public with an opportunity to review, study, and comment on their preferences for the features depicted by the visual representations. Visual preference surveys can help the community define their preferences for architectural style, signs, building setbacks, landscaping, parking areas, size/scope of transportation facilities, materials, and other design elements.

The VPS was originally developed and administered around the country by Professor Anton Nelessen, of Rutgers University. The term Visual Preference Survey™ is a registered trademark held by Prof. Nelessen.

The image displays four sequential screenshots of a Visual Preference Survey (VPS) application interface, illustrating the user experience and rating process.

**Top Screenshot:** Shows the survey question: "3 story, mixed use buildings set at the edge of the sidewalk." Below the question is a blurred image of a street scene. A yellow arrow points to the question text. Below the image, a text box reads: "YOU WILL BE SHOWN A SERIES OF IMAGES. ABOVE, YOU WILL SEE A SHORT DESCRIPTION. BELOW, YOU WILL SEE A RATING SCALE." A "CLICK THE 'NEXT' BUTTON TO PROCEED" instruction is visible on the right.

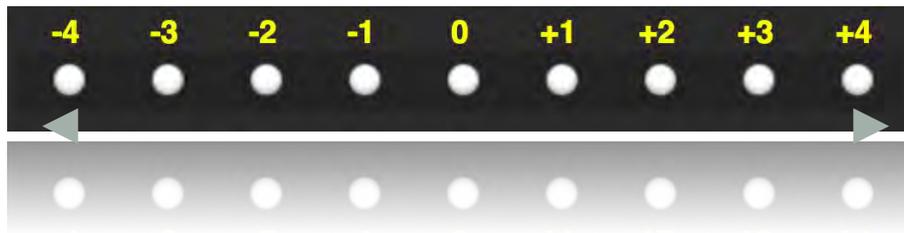
**Second Screenshot:** Shows the rating scale: "RATE EACH IMAGE USING THE SCALE PROVIDED. CLICK A NUMBER ANYWHERE ON THE SCALE TO RATE THE IMAGE. (NEGATIVE = BAD, POSITIVE = GOOD)". The scale is a horizontal line with dots labeled -4, -3, -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, +3, +4. Below the scale, the words "VERY INAPPROPRIATE", "NEUTRAL", and "VERY APPROPRIATE" are displayed. A yellow arrow points to the scale.

**Third Screenshot:** Shows the rating scale with the number "0" circled in yellow. The words "VERY INAPPROPRIATE" and "VERY APPROPRIATE" are still visible.

**Bottom Screenshot:** Shows the rating scale with a yellow double-headed arrow spanning from -2 to +2. Text boxes above the scale read: "IT'S NOT GOOD, BUT NOT THE WORST." and "HMM, IT'S JUST OKAY". A "(CLICK NEXT)" button is visible at the bottom right.

## Rating

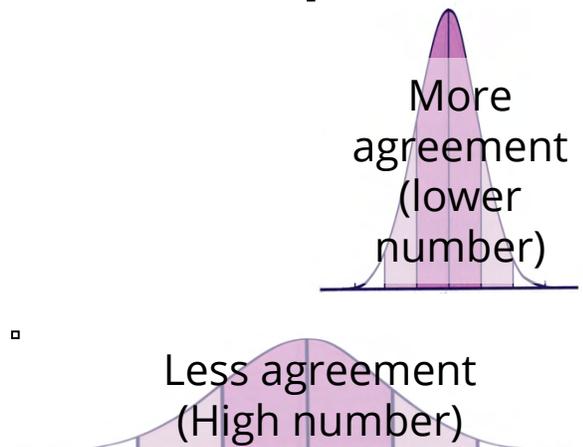
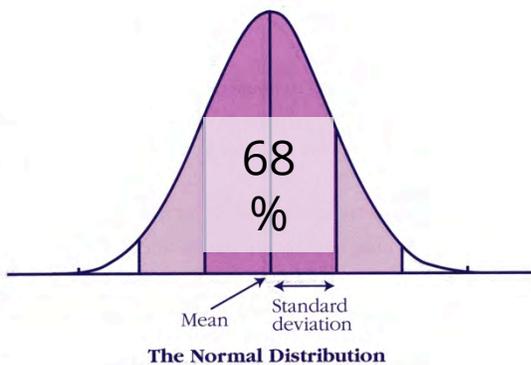
The average rating and standard deviation is shown for each image. Within each category, images are ranked from lowest-rated to highest-rated.



2 (1.5)

**Average**  
(Mean) of responses

**Standard Deviation**  
level of agreement



▫

# BUILDINGS

207 RESPONSES

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings

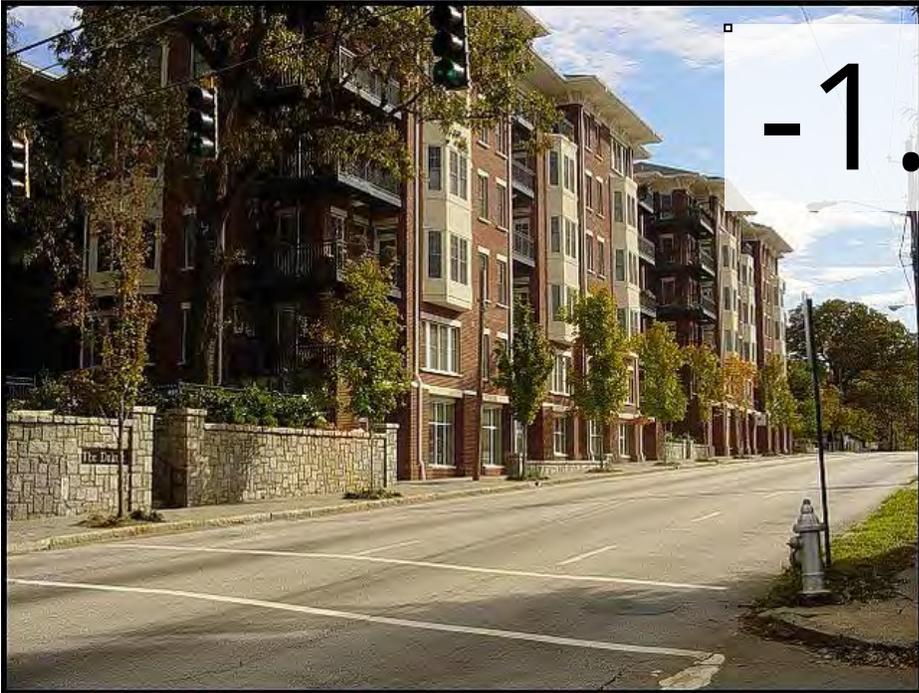


-2.4 (1.9)

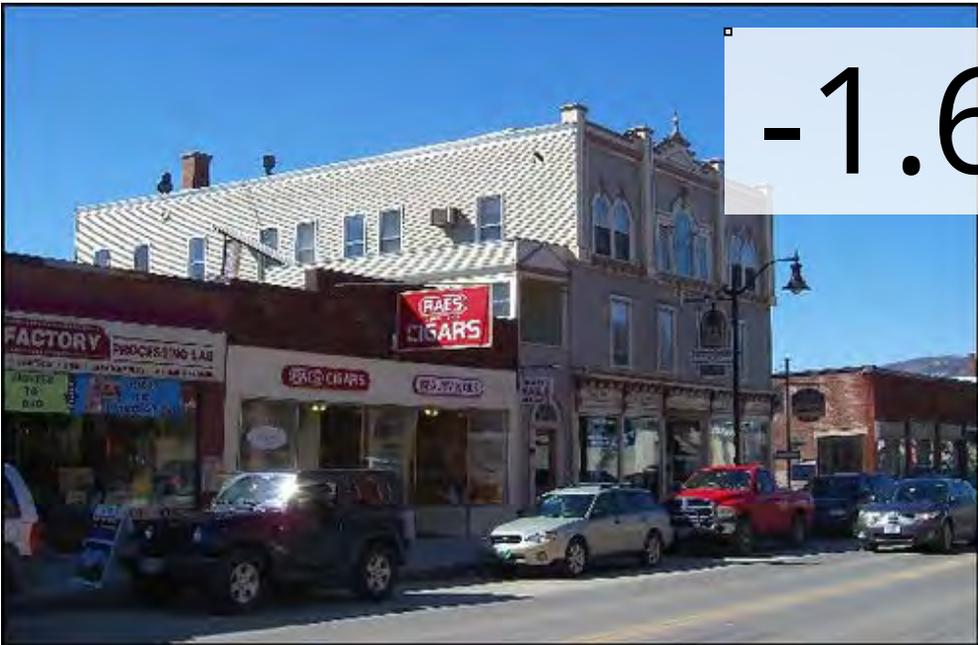


-1.8 (2.2)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings

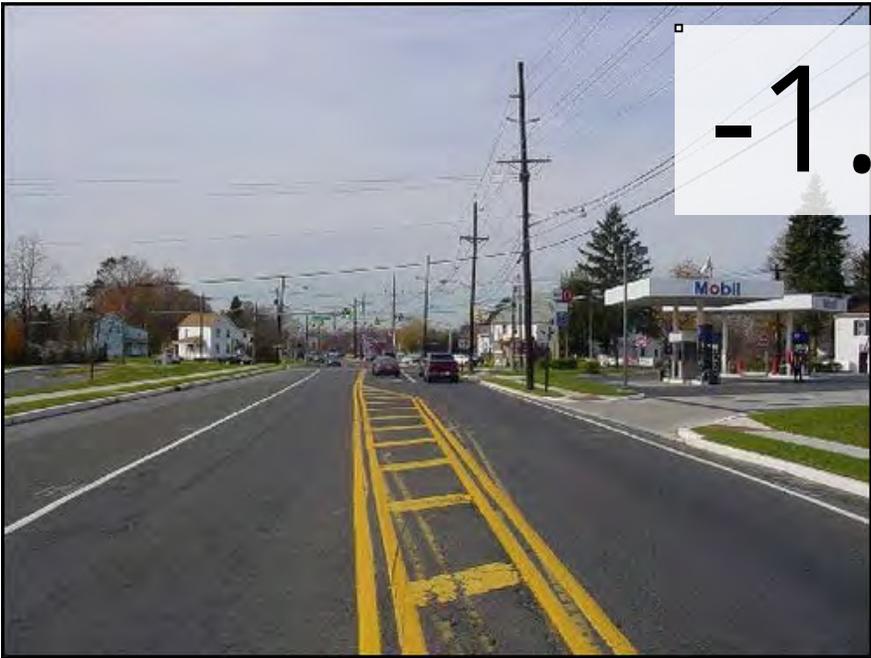


-1.6 (2.5)



-1.6 (2.4)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



-1.5 (2.3)



-0.9 (2.6)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



-0.8 (2.7)



-0.4 (2.0)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



0.1 (2.6)



0.1 (2.2)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



# Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



0.7 (2.3)



0.8 (2.1)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



0.9 (2.1)



1.1 (2.2)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



1.2 (2.2)



1.4 (2.1)

Visual Preference Survey – Buildings



1.6 (2.0)



1.7 (2.0)

▫

# STREETS & PARKING

159 RESPONSES

Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



-2.8(1.7)



-1.7(2.5)

Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



-1.5 (2.4)



-1.4 (2.5)

Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



-1.2 (2.5)

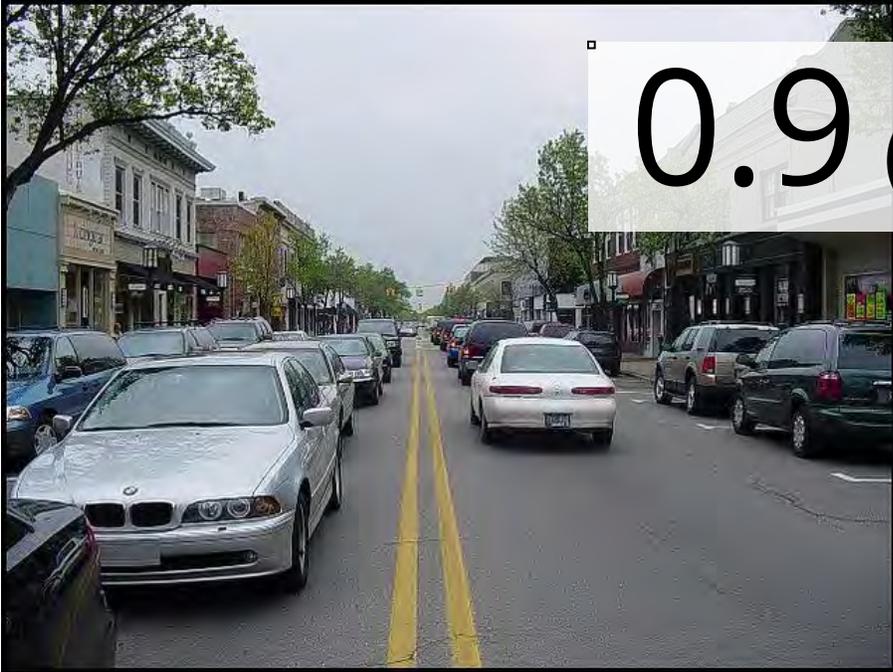


0.0 (2.4)

Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



1.2 (1.8)



1.3 (2.2)

Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



1.4(2.1)



1.8(1.9)

Visual Preference Survey – Streets & Parking



2.4(1.4)



2.6(1.6)

□

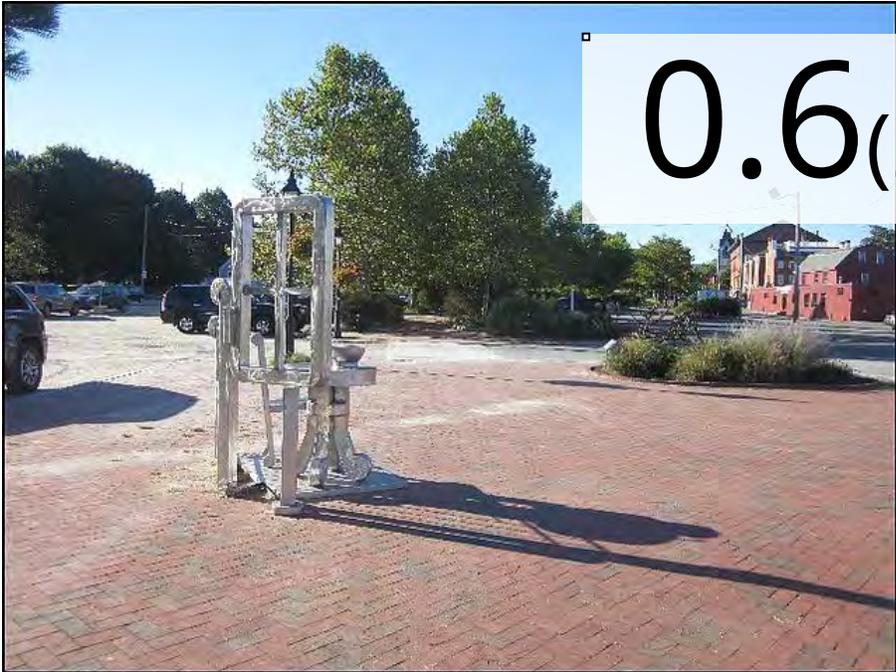
# OPEN SPACE & LANDSCAPE

150 RESPONSES

Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape



0.1 (2.3)



0.6 (2.5)

Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape

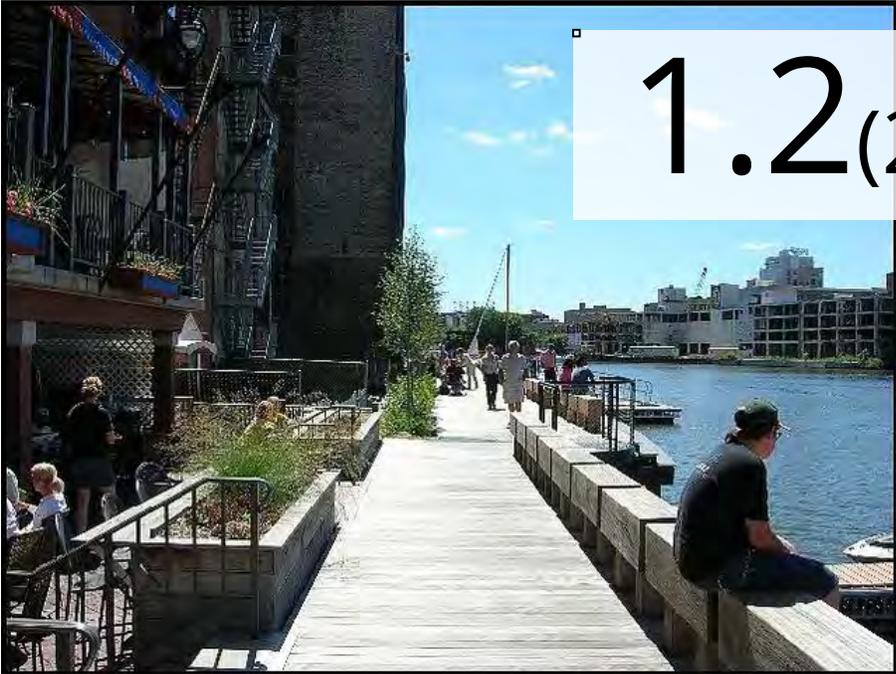


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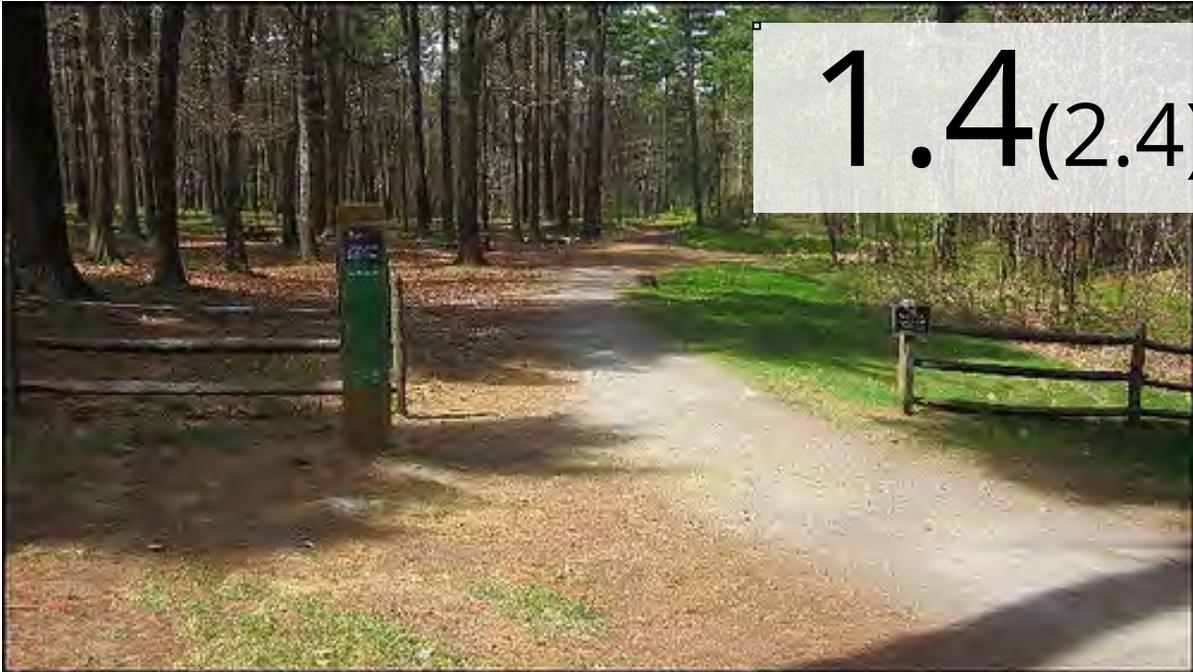


1.2 (2.2)

Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape



1.2(2.2)



1.4(2.4)

Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape



Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape



Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape



2.0(1.8)



2.0(1.7)

Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape

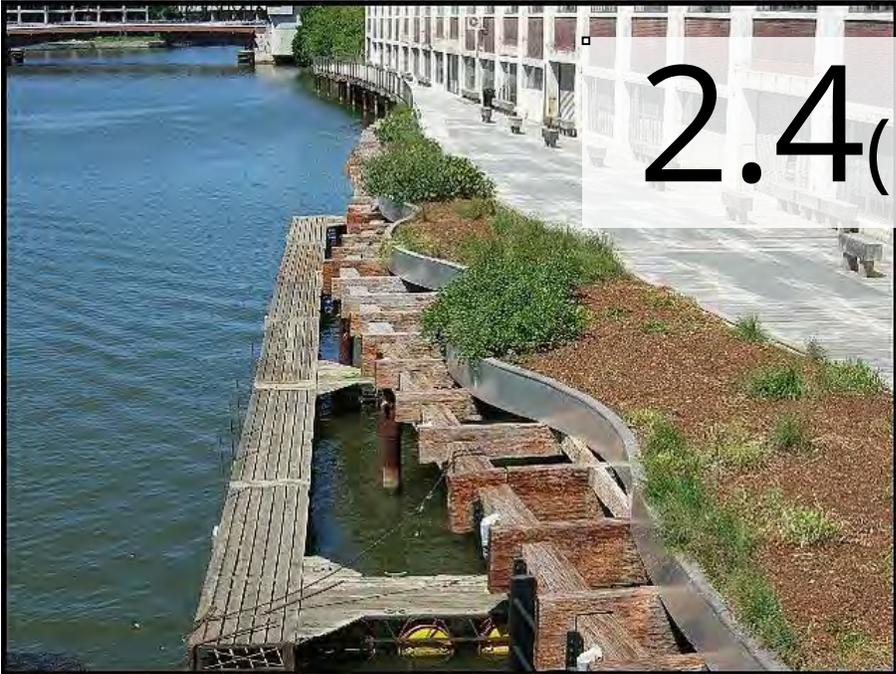


2.1 (1.9)



2.1 (1.6)

Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape

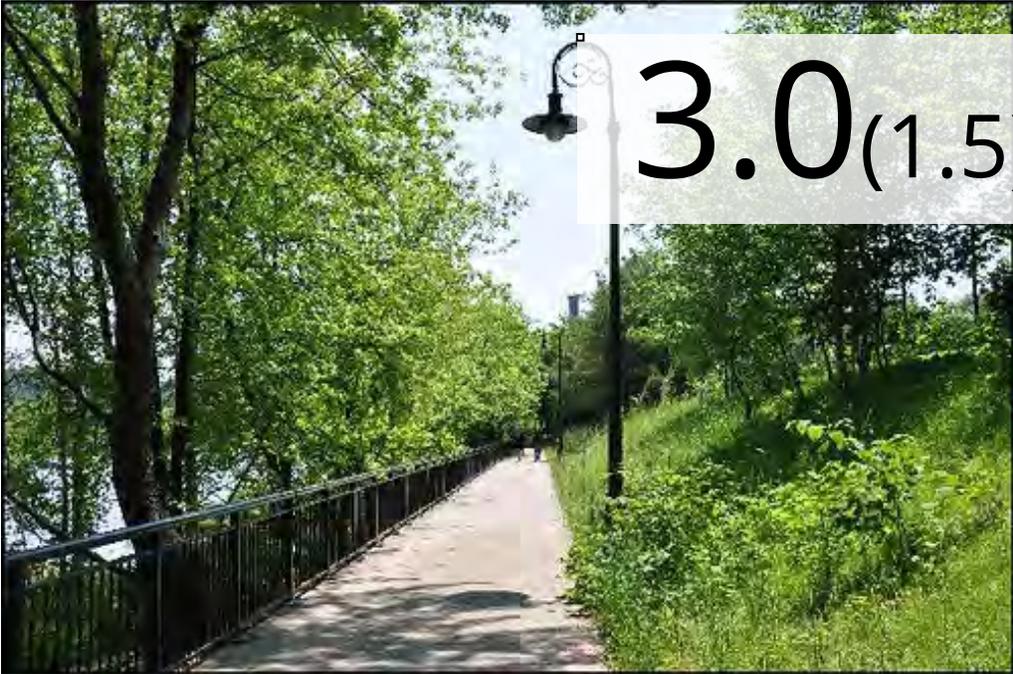


2.4(1.8)



2.8(1.6)

Visual Preference Survey – Open Space & Landscape



▫

# STOREFRONTS & SIGNAGE

143 RESPONSES

Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



0.3(2.3)



0.5(2.4)

Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



0.8(2.4)

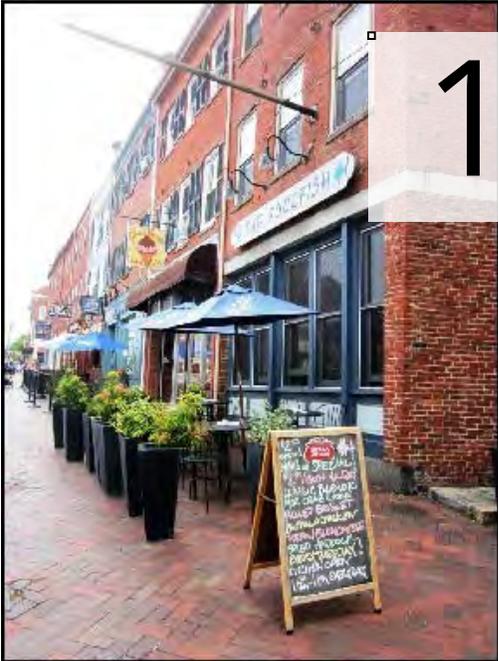


1.0(2.1)

Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



1.7 (2.0)

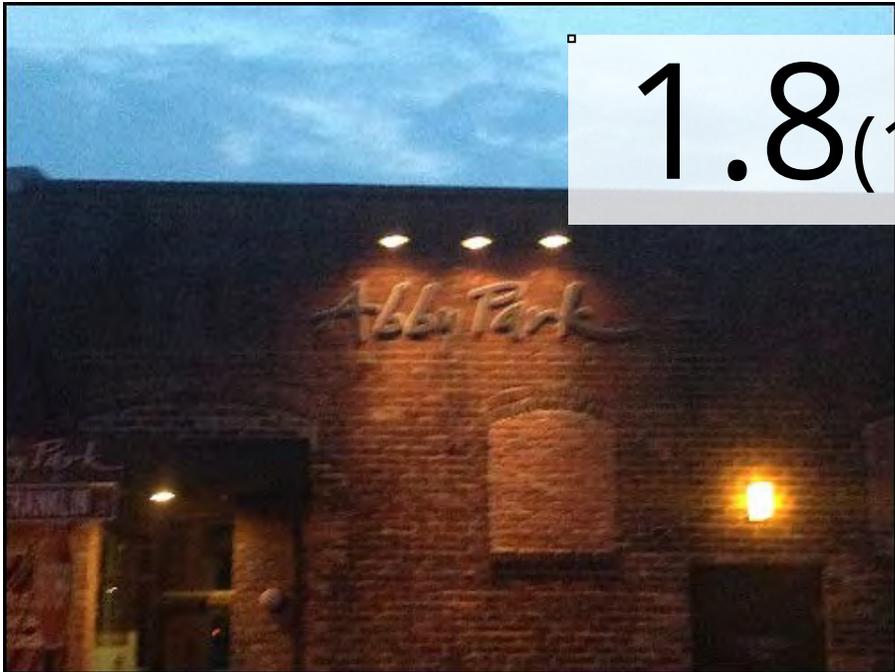


1.7 (1.8)

Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



1.7 (1.8)



1.8 (1.8)

Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



1.9(1.9)



1.9(1.8)

Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



2.0 (1.7)



2.1 (1.5)

# Visual Preference Survey – Storefronts & Signage



2.2(1.9)

▫

# PEDESTRIAN REALM

143 RESPONSES

Visual Preference Survey – Pedestrian Realm



Visual Preference Survey – Pedestrian Realm

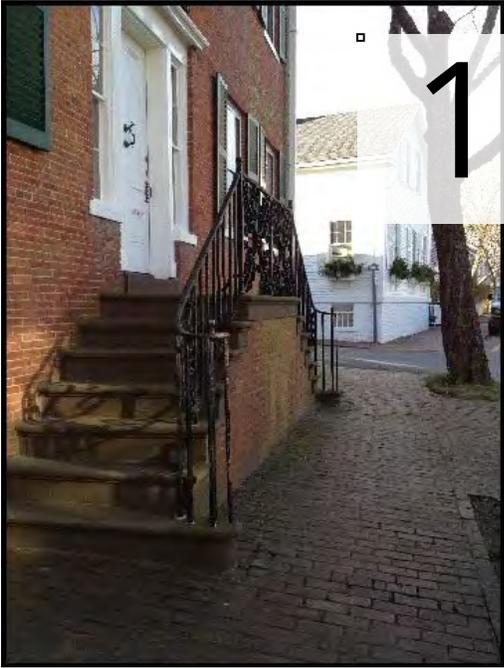


0.2<sub>(2.4)</sub>



0.7<sub>(2.4)</sub>

Visual Preference Survey – Pedestrian Realm



1.0(2.0)



1.4(1.8)

Visual Preference Survey – Pedestrian Realm



Visual Preference Survey – Pedestrian Realm



Visual Preference Survey – Pedestrian Realm



2.4(1.7)

▫

# PHOTO-SIMULATIONS

BEFORE & AFTER

## Visual Preference Survey – Photo-Simulations

The addition of landscaping and screening of automobile-oriented uses improves the pedestrian environment, as indicated by the higher rating between the before and after images shown here.



## Visual Preference Survey – Photo-Simulations

Sidewalk improvements and a limited amount of screening of a parking area received a slightly positive rating. However with a mixed-use building lining the street with parking located to the rear, the image received a much higher rating.



## Visual Preference Survey – Photo-Simulations

While both images received positive feedback, the addition of bike lanes along Community Drive did not improve the image's rating.

