

FRAMINGHAM DOWNTOWN PROGRAMMATIC STUDY
TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM ON EXISTING CONDITIONS

Technical Memorandum #1 - Existing Surface Conditions/Deficiencies

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June, 2008

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

This memorandum provides an evaluation of the existing streetscape conditions and potential to facilitate improved pedestrian movement, safety and convenience within project area of the Downtown Framingham Programmatic Enhancements Plan. This area is the visual and perceived core of the town and one of the busiest locations for pedestrian activity throughout the year. In this area, are located local and regional transit facilities, government services, parks, churches and businesses that are frequently visited by community residents. Moreover, the character of the downtown pedestrian realm is an important indicator of a well-integrated transportation network and the hallmark of a ‘walkable’ community. A well-maintained, continuous sidewalk system will make downtown Framingham a more inviting and pleasant place for people to visit and shop.

PROJECT AREA

The project study area addressed in this memorandum consists of that part of Framingham’s central business district on both sides of Concord Street (Rt. 126) extending north from Waverly Street (Rt. 135) to the Clinton Street intersection. South of Waverly Street, the study area continues along Irving Street as far as the Hollis Street intersection/Burkis Square and then on Hollis Street as far as Hollis Court. It also includes Union Avenue from Memorial Square to the Pearl Street intersection and around the Park Street Common as defined by Park Street, Franklin Street and Howard Street. The study area is illustrated in Figures 1A and 1B.

This memorandum contains the following sections, which summarize the results of the field reconnaissance:

1. Description of Sidewalk Surfaces
2. Evaluation of Pedestrian Access along Public Streets
3. Review of Pedestrian Access to Buildings within the Project Area

DESCRIPTION OF SIDEWALK SURFACES

With some limited exceptions, the sidewalk surfaces within the project are constructed in cement concrete. In certain small areas, deteriorated concrete surfaces have been repaired with bituminous concrete pavement. In other high visibility areas, clay brick pavement has been installed as an ornamental treatment.

The sidewalk surfaces from the south limit of the project area to its northern limits are described below

Hollis Street

Beginning at Hollis Court at the southern limit of the study area, north to Burkis Square, the sidewalk on the west side of Hollis Street is about 11 feet wide from building face to curb face and is constructed of cement concrete. The surface of the walk is in generally good condition with a very gentle cross-pitch and few cracks and deteriorated panels. Various sidewalk panels appear to have been poured at different times creating a somewhat varied appearance along the length of this segment.

On the east side of Hollis Street, the sidewalk varies from 12-13 feet wide between the building face and curb face and constructed





of cement concrete. The sidewalk surface is in very good condition, with some visual variation due to panels being poured and /or repaired at a variety of times. While the sidewalk has a nearly imperceptible slope in both transverse and longitudinal directions, it drains well and exhibits little cracking or deterioration.

Irving Street

At Burkis Square, the concrete sidewalk on the east side of Irving Street shows considerable deterioration on either side of the wheel chair ramp in front of #22 Irving Street (H&R Block Tax Preparers) and should be replaced.

North of Burkis Square, on the east side of Irving Street, the cement concrete sidewalk is 10 feet wide and is in acceptable condition, but the jointing pattern is odd between #20 and #12 Irving Street.

The cement concrete sidewalk on the west side of Irving Street, between Burkis Square and Waverly Street, is about 12 feet wide and is in good condition.

Waverly Street

The short segment of Waverly Street sidewalk within the project area extends only a few dozen feet east and west of the Concord Street intersection. The sidewalk surfaces on the northwest, southwest and southeast corners of the intersection are constructed of cement concrete and are generally in good condition.



At the Hispano-Americana Record Shop on the northeast corner of the intersection, an 8 foot wide band of cement concrete pavement wraps around the corner and changes to bituminous concrete pavement on Waverly Street immediately east of the Waverly Street crosswalk. The area immediately adjacent to the record shop entry is also bituminous concrete pavement.

Concord Street - west side

Pedestrian surfaces on Concord Street immediately north of the Waverly Street intersection are bituminous concrete pavement on both sides of the street from the railroad tracks north to the building walls at #24 Concord Street on the west side of the street and #17 on the east side of the street.



The sidewalk on the west side of Concord Street from #24 to the Howard Street intersection is approximately 9'-6" wide, is constructed of cement concrete and is in good condition.

At the Common, on the west side of Concord Street between Howard Street and Park Street, the sidewalk is approximately 23 feet wide and is constructed in clay brick with tinted cement concrete wheel chair ramps. The pedestrian surface is level and in good condition.

Continuing north on the west side of Concord Street, the sidewalk is approximately 10'-6" wide to the Union Avenue intersection and the

through-building passage at Hemenway Crossing (#120 Concord). The sidewalk is constructed of cement concrete and is in generally good condition with the exception of some cracking and pavement deterioration just north of the Park Street intersection. The existing curb reveal is less than 6” from approximately #82 Concord Street to approximately #100 Concord Street.

From the front of the Memorial Building to Sanger Street on the west side of Concord Street, the cement concrete sidewalk is approximately 10’ wide and in good condition with the exception of some pavement cracking at the Frederick Street crosswalk landing and near the driveway at #188 Concord Street.

Between Sanger Street and the study area limit at Frederick Street, the cement concrete sidewalk is approximately 9 feet wide and is in good condition.

Concord Street - east side

On the east side of Concord Street from #17 to the Howard Street intersection, the sidewalk surface is cement concrete. The pedestrian zone is approximately 12 feet in width, has a gentle crosspitch and is in acceptable condition.



North of the Howard Street intersection, the sidewalk on the east side of Concord Street is approximately 13’-6” as far as the Union Avenue intersection (Memorial Square - #117 Concord). The cement concrete surface is in good condition, with some minor visual variation – probably due to some individual pavement panels being poured/repoured at various times in the past.

Between #117 Concord Street and ‘Made in Brasil Express’ (approx. #169 Concord) on the east side of Concord Street, the sidewalk narrows from 14’ wide to approximately 10’ wide. The cement concrete surface is in good condition. At #149 Concord, a sidewalk extension (“bumpout”) constructed in brick reduces the length of the pedestrian route at the Concord Street crosswalk linking the Memorial Building and the Arcade Building.



From #169 Concord Street north to the Frederick Street intersection, the cement concrete sidewalk is approximately 10 feet wide and is in generally acceptable condition with the exception of some bituminous concrete patching of the sidewalk at the fire hydrant near Frederick Street.

North of Frederick Street – to the Clinton Street intersection, the entire sidewalk on the east side of Concord Street in front of the shop row (from #183 - #199) has been paved with bituminous concrete. Approximately 60 feet of the gutter line extending south from the mid-block crosswalk exhibits poor drainage and standing water. Just north of the mid-block crosswalk, the cement concrete sidewalk pavement is in deteriorated condition for a distance of 35 feet.

Union Avenue - west side

Pedestrian surfaces on the west side of Union Avenue between #8 Union and Proctor Street are cement concrete and 12 feet wide. The sidewalk surface is in generally acceptable condition with

some minor pavement cracking at #42 Union and some odd pavement jointing between # 28 - #40 Union. At #26 Union, a sidewalk extension (“bumpout”) constructed in brick reduces the length of the pedestrian route at the crosswalk to the Memorial Building front entry.



Between the Proctor Street intersection and Pearl Street on the west side of Union Avenue, the sidewalk is about 8’-6” wide. The cement concrete surface is in good condition with the exception of significant concrete pavement deterioration where a driveway crosses the sidewalk just north of Proctor Street (Terra Brasili’s Restaurant). Both Union Street west side wheel chair ramps at Pearl Street exhibit poor drainage and standing water at the gutter line.

Park Street – Franklin Street to Concord Street

The cement concrete Park Street sidewalk between Franklin Street and Concord Street shows a considerable amount of cracking and pavement deterioration at the curb line. The curb on Park Street has a low curb reveal.

Franklin Street – at Common

The sidewalk at the Franklin Street entrance to the Common is constructed in clay brick with tinted cement concrete wheel chair ramps. The pedestrian surface is level and in acceptable condition. The concrete pavement at the wheel chair ramps is cracked and deteriorated.

Howard Street - Franklin Street to Concord Street

Pavement on the south side of Howard Street is narrow (5’-6”) and has several cement concrete panels repaired with bituminous concrete pavement.

EVALUATION OF PEDESTRIAN ACCESS ON PUBLIC STREETS

Most streets and intersections within the study area are served by curb cuts and wheel chair ramps. Some of these ramps, however, appear to have been constructed in an earlier era when slope and landings may not have been as precisely defined as they are currently. In other locations, ramps are in a deteriorated condition or have water ponding at the bottom of the ramp.

Hollis Street

- Hollis Street ramp at Hollis Court – wheel chair required to turn corner on ramp
- Hollis Street ramp at #85 – ramp too short
- Hollis Street crosswalk at #23 Hollis – no existing ramp
- Center wheel chair ramp at Burkis Square – two crosswalks share single ramp

Irving Street

- Irving Street ramp at #22 (H&R Block) – steep ramp, poor pavement, poor drainage at gutter



Irving Street/Waverly Street Intersection

- Irving Street ramp at SE intersection corner – ramp too short and steep

Concord Street/Waverly Street Intersection

- Concord Street ramp at record shop (NE intersection corner) – ramp in poor repair

Concord Street/Howard Street Intersection

- Ramp at SE intersection corner – ramp-top landing obstructed by traffic signal
- Ramp at NE intersection corner – ramp not aligned with crosswalk
- Ramp at SW intersection corner – wheel chair required to turn corner on ramp
- Ramp at NW intersection corner – ramps (2) not aligned with crosswalks



Concord Street/Park Street Intersection

- Ramp at Common corner – ramp needs repair; has curb/lip at bottom of ramp
- Ramp at bank corner – poor ramp geometry; has curb/lip at bottom of ramp
- Cross-Concord Street ramp (west side) – catch basin within crosswalk

Concord Street/Kendall Street Intersection

- Ramp at south corner – two crosswalks share single ramp
- Ramp at north corner – ramp-top landing inadequate for turning wheel chair

Concord Street/Fredrick Street Intersection

- Ramp at #188 Concord Street (west side) – ramp needs repair;
- Ramp at south corner – ramp needs repair; has curb/lip at bottom of ramp,
- Ramp at north corner – ramp needs repair; has curb/lip at bottom of ramp

Concord Street/Sanger Street Intersection

- Ramp at south corner – ramp needs repair; has curb/lip at bottom of ramp
- Ramp at north corner – no existing ramp

Concord Street at Civic League Crosswalk

- Ramp at west side – poor drainage; ponding at base of ramp



Concord Street/Clinton Street Intersection

- Ramp at north corner – poor drainage; ponding at base of ramp



Union Avenue/Proctor Street Intersection

- Ramp at south corner – ramp needs repair; deteriorated road pavement at ramp base
- Ramp at north corner – ramp needs repair; two crosswalks share single ramp

Union Avenue/William Welch Way Intersection

- Ramp at south corner –substandard ramp geometry; two crosswalks share single ramp;

deteriorated road pavement at ramp base

- Ramp at north corner – ramp needs repair; two crosswalks share single ramp

Union Avenue/Pearl Street Intersection

- Ramp at SE intersection corner – poor drainage, ponding at base of ramp; two crosswalks share single ramp
- Ramp at NE intersection corner – poor drainage, ponding at base of ramp
- Ramp at SW intersection corner – poor drainage, ponding at base of ramp; two crosswalks share single ramp
- Ramp at NW intersection corner – poor drainage, ponding at base of ramp



REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO BUILDINGS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

Unrestricted or universal access to public buildings and businesses is key component to the establishment of a downtown business district that serves all of Framingham’s residents. Besides being a worthy goal for the district, universal access is also good for business. During our access review of the Study Area, an interesting phenomenon was observed – i.e. most businesses and public buildings north of Waverly Street are accessible, while many establishments south of Waverly Street are not accessible.

Hollis Street – west side

Accessible Entry

- #95 Hollis Street – Brazil Travel Connection
- #45 Hollis Street – church
- #43 Hollis Street – Salon de Rosa
- #39 Hollis Street – Rincon Latino
- #37 Hollis Street – Millennium Connection
- #33 Hollis Street
- #27 Hollis Street

- #23 Hollis Street

Entry Not Accessible

- #93 Hollis Street
- #85-91 Hollis Street
- #75 Hollis Street
- #73 Hollis Street
- #61-63 Hollis Street
- #59 Hollis Street
- #57 Hollis Street
- #55 Hollis Street
- #53 Hollis Street
- #51 Hollis Street
- #49 Hollis Street



Hollis Street – east side

Accessible Entry

- #80 Hollis Street – Tesoro Supermarket
- #50 Hollis Street – Pentecostal Church

Entry Not Accessible

- #68 Hollis Street
- #66 Hollis Street
- #64 Hollis Street
- #60-62 Hollis Street
- #52 Hollis Street
- #46 Hollis Street
- #44 Hollis Street
- #40 Hollis Street
- #36 Hollis Street
- #30 Hollis Street



Irving Street – east side

Accessible Entry

- #22 Irving Street – H&R Block

- #20 Irving Street – Brazille Gal
- #18 Irving Street – Family Dollar Discount
- #16 Irving Street – Copacabana Grill
- #2 Irving Street – Family Dentist office

Waverly Street – north side

Entry Not Accessible

- #409 (?) Waverly Street – Hispano-Americana Record Shop

Concord Street – west side

Accessible Entry

- With two exceptions, all businesses and public buildings are accessible

Entry Not Accessible

- #74 Concord Street – TD Banknorth (accessible entry on Park Street)
- #188 Concord Street

Concord Street – east side

Accessible Entry

- With three exceptions, all businesses and public buildings are accessible

Entry Not Accessible

- #183 Concord Street – steep entry threshold, no step
- #185 Concord Street – steep entry threshold, no step
- #187 Concord Street – steep entry threshold, no step

Union Avenue – west side

Accessible Entry

- All businesses and public buildings are accessible

Union Avenue – east side

Accessible Entry

- All public buildings are accessible

Howard Street – south side

Accessible Entry

- #73 Howard Street
- #69 Howard Street



Entry Not Accessible

- #9 Howard Street

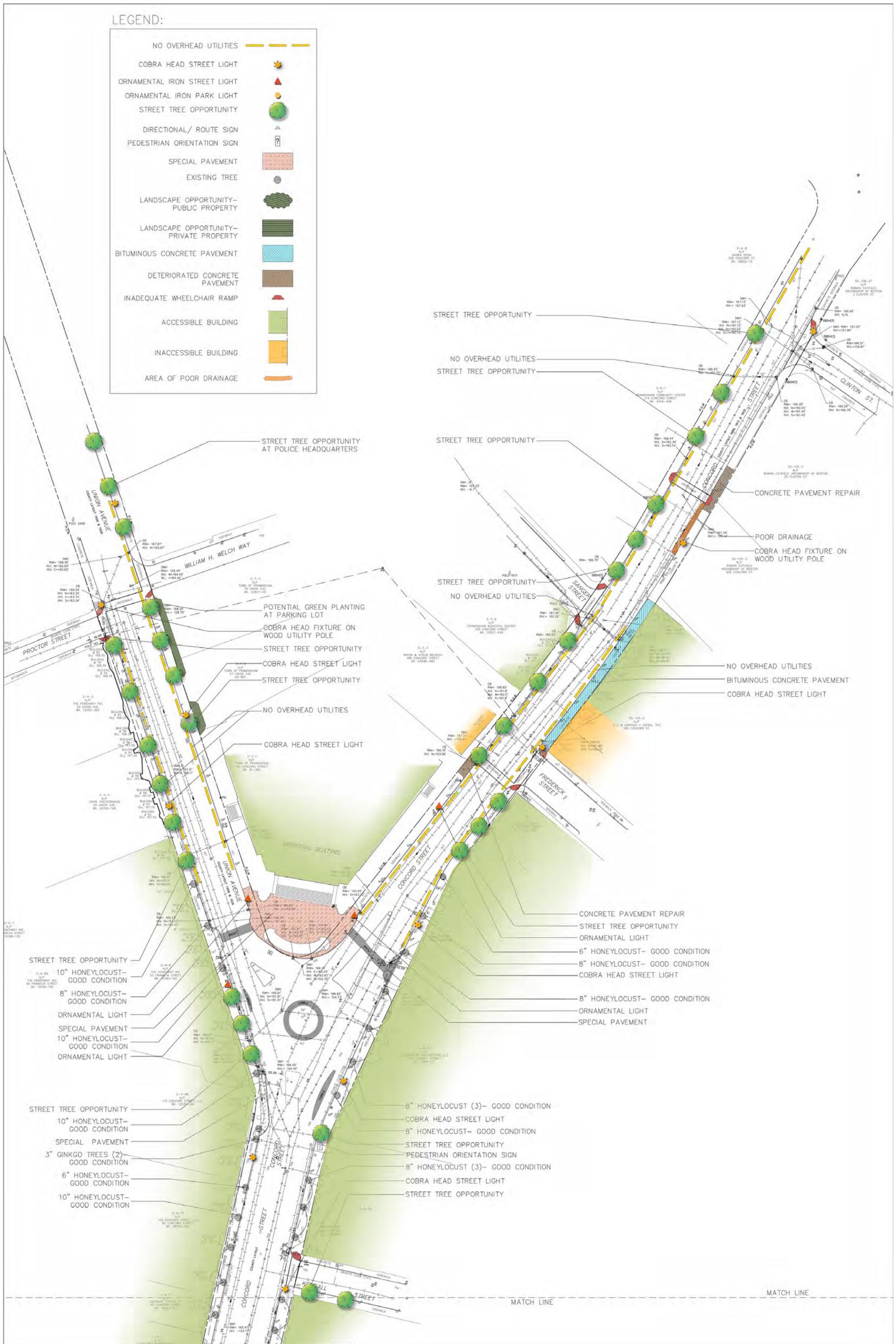
Park Street – north side

Accessible Entry

- #15 Park Street – TD Banknorth entry

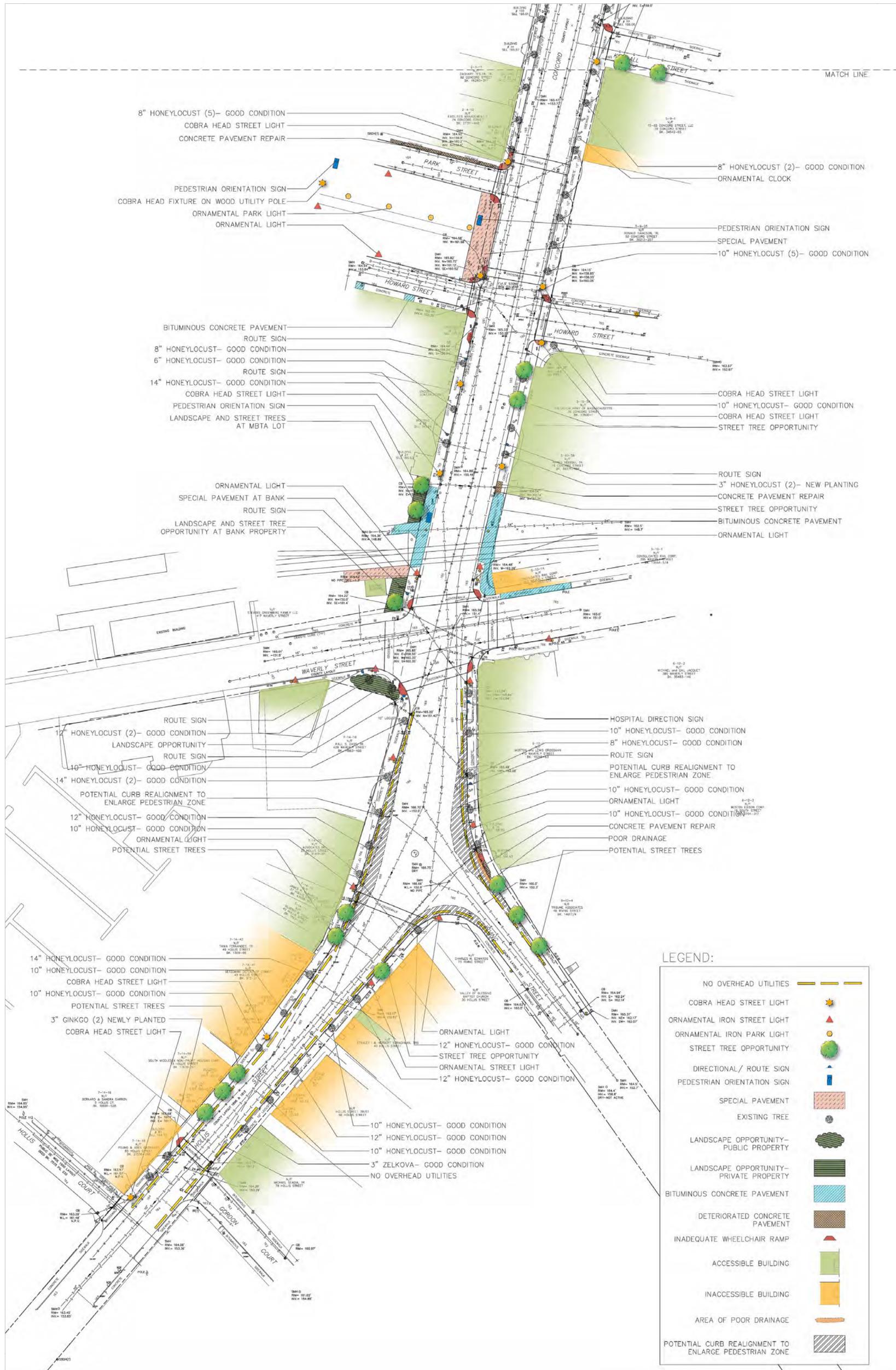


Figure 1A - Study Area North



Version: June 16, 2008

Figure 1B - Study Area South



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