

## **8 Weymouth**

The first section of this chapter provides a profile of the town. The second section describes existing bicycling and walking conditions in the study area and recommendations for improvements. The study area, Jackson Square and the adjoining neighborhoods south and west, is located in northeast Weymouth. The findings are based on meetings and correspondence with local staff, fieldwork, and a review of previous studies. The studies consulted in the preparation of this report are *East Weymouth Station: Preparation for Station Opening*, August 2005, prepared by the Town of Weymouth, and *Back River Trail: Master Plan and Design Guidelines*, August 2005, prepared by ICON for the Town of Weymouth.

### **8.1 COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Included in this chapter are a short history of Weymouth, a general description of land use, population, and employment data, an overview of the transportation network, and crash data.

#### **8.1.1 HISTORY**

Weymouth is the second oldest town in Massachusetts, preceded only by Plymouth. Settled in 1622 as Wessagusset and incorporated in 1635, Weymouth enjoyed an economy based on fishing and agriculture into the 19th century, and then shoemaking until 1973. Today the town serves as a coastal suburb of Boston. Weymouth's proximity to Route 3 helps support a variety of commercial activities. In 1999 the residents voted to adopt a mayoral form of government, but the formal name remains the Town of Weymouth.

#### **8.1.2 LAND USE**

In 1940, with a population of just under 24,000, Weymouth had several dense, walkable retail districts. After World War II, significant changes in local demographics and regional economies profoundly affected the town. Dramatic increases in car ownership rates, coupled with highway expansion projects, led to a population boom, with the number of residents more than doubling between 1940 and 1960 to over 48,000. Commuter rail service on the Plymouth and Greenbush commuter rail lines of the Old Colony Railroad and the 1956 opening of Route 3 contributed to the town's development as a "bedroom community" within the greater Boston region. Three years later, in 1959, commuter rail service in Weymouth ended. At the same time that new expressways allowed residents to travel easily throughout the region, traditional industries such as

shoe factories closed. The local economy became based largely on service, retail, and wholesale operations.

### 8.1.3 POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The population of Weymouth declined slightly, from 54,063 in 1990 to 53,987 in 2000, but the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) projects an 18.2 percent residential growth from 2000 to 2030, to 63,788. MAPC projects employment to grow at more than twice that rate during the same time period, increasing by 40 percent from 16,560 to 23,168. (See Table 8-1.)

**TABLE 8-1  
Population and Employment in Weymouth – 2000, 2010, and 2030**

<b>Weymouth</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>% Change 2000-2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>% Change 2010-2020</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>% Change 2020-2030</b>
Population	53,987	58,435	7.6%	61,373	4.8%	63,788	3.8%
Employment	16,560	19,335	14.4%	21,780	11.2%	23,168	6.0%

### 8.1.4 TRANSPORTATION

Three MBTA commuter rail stations—Weymouth Landing and East Weymouth on the Greenbush Line, and South Weymouth on the Plymouth/Kingston Line—serve the town, as well as four MBTA bus routes: 220, 221, 222 and 225.

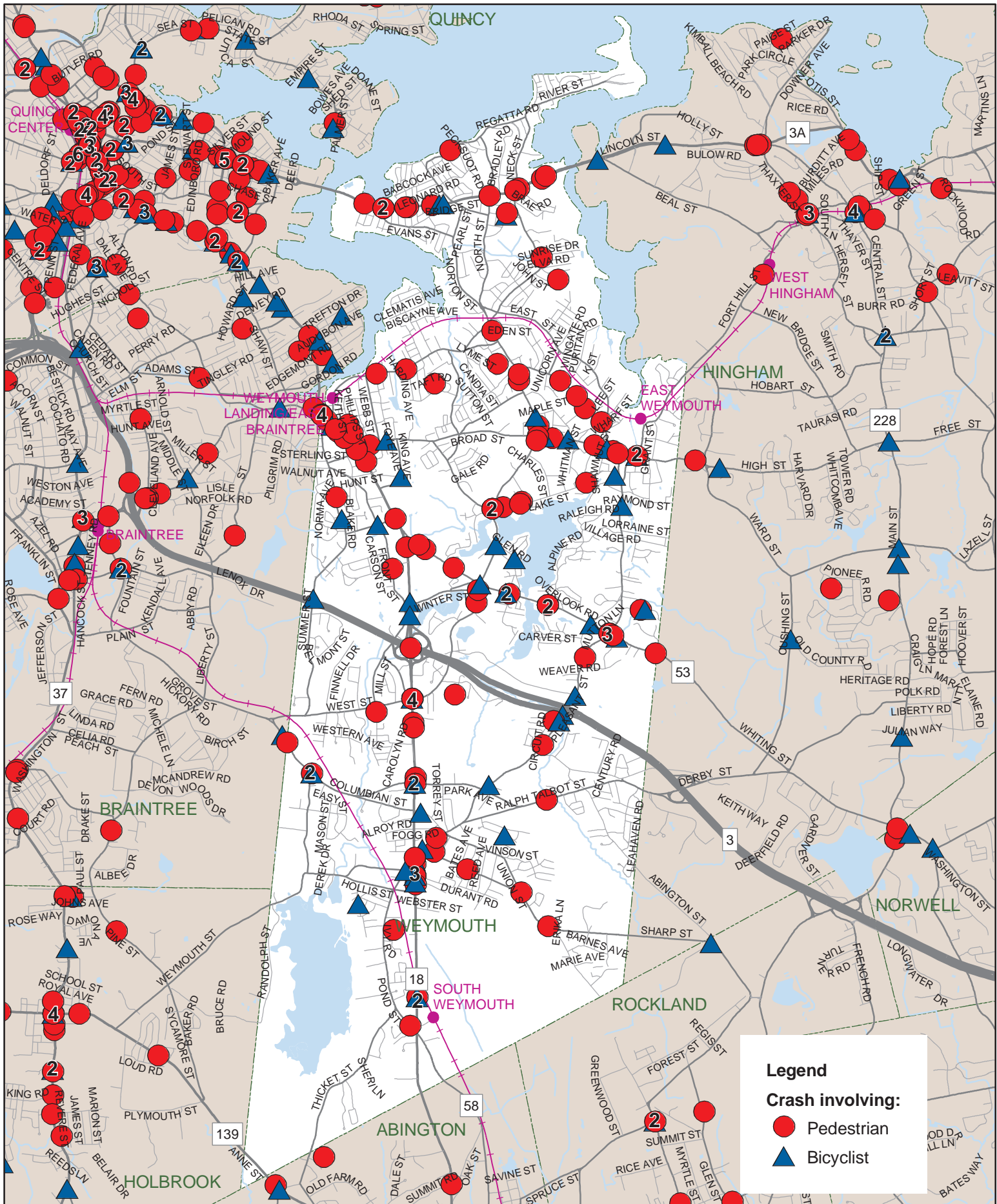
The only grade-separated highway in Weymouth is State Route 3, which runs east–west about midway through the town. The main north–south arterial is Route 18, which has the town’s only interchange with Route 3, about a mile from the town’s western border with Braintree. The other numbered arterial in town is Route 53, which runs north of Route 3 and roughly parallels it.

### 8.1.5 CRASH DATA

Between 2002 and 2006, of all reported crashes in Weymouth, 95 involved pedestrians, representing 1.5 percent of the total. Those 95 crashes resulted in three fatalities. In the same period there were 41 reported crashes involving bicyclists, representing 0.7 percent of all crashes; those resulted in one fatality. These data are shown in Table 8-2, along with motor-vehicle crashes. The latter category refers to crashes involving motor vehicles only; the reported bicycle and pedestrian crashes almost always involve a motor vehicle.

Figure 8-1 shows the location of the above bicycle and pedestrian crashes. As noted in Chapter 1, some crashes may not have been reported.

**FIGURE 8-1**  
**Weymouth: Crashes in 2002-2006 Involving Pedestrians and Bicyclists**



**TABLE 8-2  
Bicycle, Pedestrian, Motor-Vehicle, and Total Crashes and Fatalities in Weymouth,  
By Number and Percentage – 2002–2006 Inclusive**

Mode	Crashes		Fatalities	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Bicycle (Bike)	41	0.7%	1	12.5%
Pedestrian (Ped)	95	1.5%	3	37.5%
Motor vehicles (MV) only	6,170	97.8%	4	50.0%
All crashes (Bike, Ped, & MV)	6,306	100.0%	8	100.0%

## 8.2 STUDY AREA

The first part of this section of the chapter defines the study area and gives an overview of transit service and walking and bicycling conditions. Subsequent sections give more details on different parts of the study area.

Jackson Square is the largest of Weymouth’s four villages. The study area (shown in Figure 8-2) includes most of Jackson Square and adjoining areas west and south. In this report, the study area has been divided into the following categories:

- Broad Street from Middle Street east to Jackson Square
- Pleasant Street from Jackson Square to Riley Avenue/Raymond Street
- The neighborhood southwest of Jackson Square
- The corridor for the proposed Back River Trail

The East Weymouth commuter rail station, on the Greenbush Line, is located about a third of a mile north of the study area, off of Commercial Street. There are 12 inbound trains departing between 6:07 AM and 8:34 PM, and 12 outbound trains arriving between 7:23 AM and 10:28 PM. There is a 398-space parking lot with eight accessible spaces and three ribbon-style bicycle racks.

MBTA bus Route 222, Quincy Center Station–East Weymouth, serves the study area. The route, which provides service on Water, Pleasant, and Broad Streets, runs 45 times a day on weekdays, between 5:35 AM and 12:34 AM, most frequently during the morning and afternoon rush hours. The midday frequency is about every 30 minutes, and nighttime service is hourly. There are 34 trips on Saturdays, from 6:36 AM to 11:51 PM, hourly in the morning and evening, and more frequently from the early afternoon through the early evening. There is hourly service on Sundays, from 7:51 AM to 11:51 PM.



Sidewalk and curb in disrepair



Potential for bike lanes



Unhealthy street tree



Narrow path to school



No separation between the street, sidewalk, and parking lot



Lack of separation leads to parking issues



No crossings for pedestrians



New curb ramps but no sidewalk separation

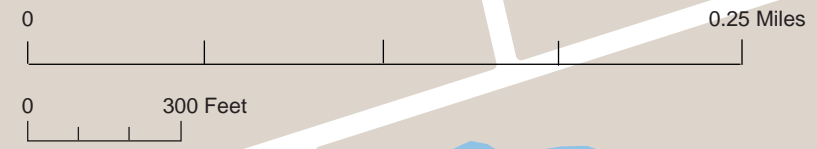


Large paved area

**FIGURE 8-2**  
**Weymouth – Jackson Square**  
**Existing Conditions**

**Legend**

- || Crosswalk
- No curb ramp
- Shared curb ramp
- Sidewalk in good condition
- Sidewalk in fair condition
- Sidewalk in poor condition
- Narrow sidewalk
- Poor sidewalk/street distinction
- Ⓣ Train station
- ⋯ Train line
- 🏫 School
- 📖 Library
- 📮 Post office
- 🚒 Fire department
- 🏟️ Playground
- 🏠 Community center
- 🌳 Park
- 🚦 Traffic signal



Overall, sidewalks are in good condition in the commercial area in Jackson Square, and in fair to poor condition elsewhere. The sidewalks in the commercial area are concrete, with granite curbs. The sidewalks elsewhere are either asphalt with granite curbs, or asphalt with no curbs, which results in little distinction from the roadway. Many of the sidewalks have weeds and minor cracking. Some of the minor streets have no sidewalks. Only sidewalks in the commercial area in Jackson Square along Broad Street have street trees, but there are only a few and some are in poor health.

Many crosswalks are barely visible, and several have shared curb ramps. A few crosswalks have no curb ramps. Almost all of the existing crosswalks extend along the most logical path for pedestrians. The crosswalks are green with white parallel bars in Jackson Square, and parallel bar-style elsewhere. There are no curb extensions.



*Sidewalk on Broad Street*

There are a few signalized pedestrian crossings, none of which have countdown signals. The pedestrian signal phases, all of which are exclusive, vary from too short in time to adequate for crossing.

Broad and Pleasant Streets accommodate on-street bicycling since they are wide enough and have marked shoulders. The shoulders along Broad Street accommodate parking; those along Pleasant Street do not, being only a few feet wide. The other streets are either not striped (Lake Street) or are too narrow (Shawmut Street between Lake and Pleasant Streets) to safely accommodate bicyclists.

All of the roadways are two lanes wide, except where there are turning lanes at some intersections. The edges of the roadway generally do not have significant cracks or large pieces of debris, and drainage grates are set back from the roadway. There is no formal bicycle parking in the study area. The closest bicycle parking is at the East Weymouth commuter rail station.

In the five-year period of 2002 through 2006, there were seven crashes within the study area involving a pedestrian and four involving a bicyclist (see Figure 8-3). One of the

**FIGURE 8-3**  
**Jackson Square, Weymouth**  
**Crashes in 2002-2006 Involving Pedestrians and Bicyclists**



pedestrian crashes, which occurred at Broad Street and Cairn Avenue, was fatal. As shown in the figure, although most crashes occurred on Broad Street, they were not concentrated at any particular locations. The number on Broad Street might be more of an indication that more bicycling and walking occurs there than that the conditions are relatively more hazardous than at other areas.

The following sections give more details on existing conditions and list recommendations, which are illustrated in Figure 8-4.

### **8.2.1 BROAD STREET: MIDDLE STREET TO PLEASANT/COMMERCIAL STREETS**

Broad Street is an important east–west roadway that stretches across most of Weymouth. Within the study area, Broad Street connects a small commercial area located on Middle Street, in the western portion of the study area, with the commercial area of Jackson Square, to the east. In between, in addition to medium-density housing, there are several churches and a fire station.

#### **Bicycling**

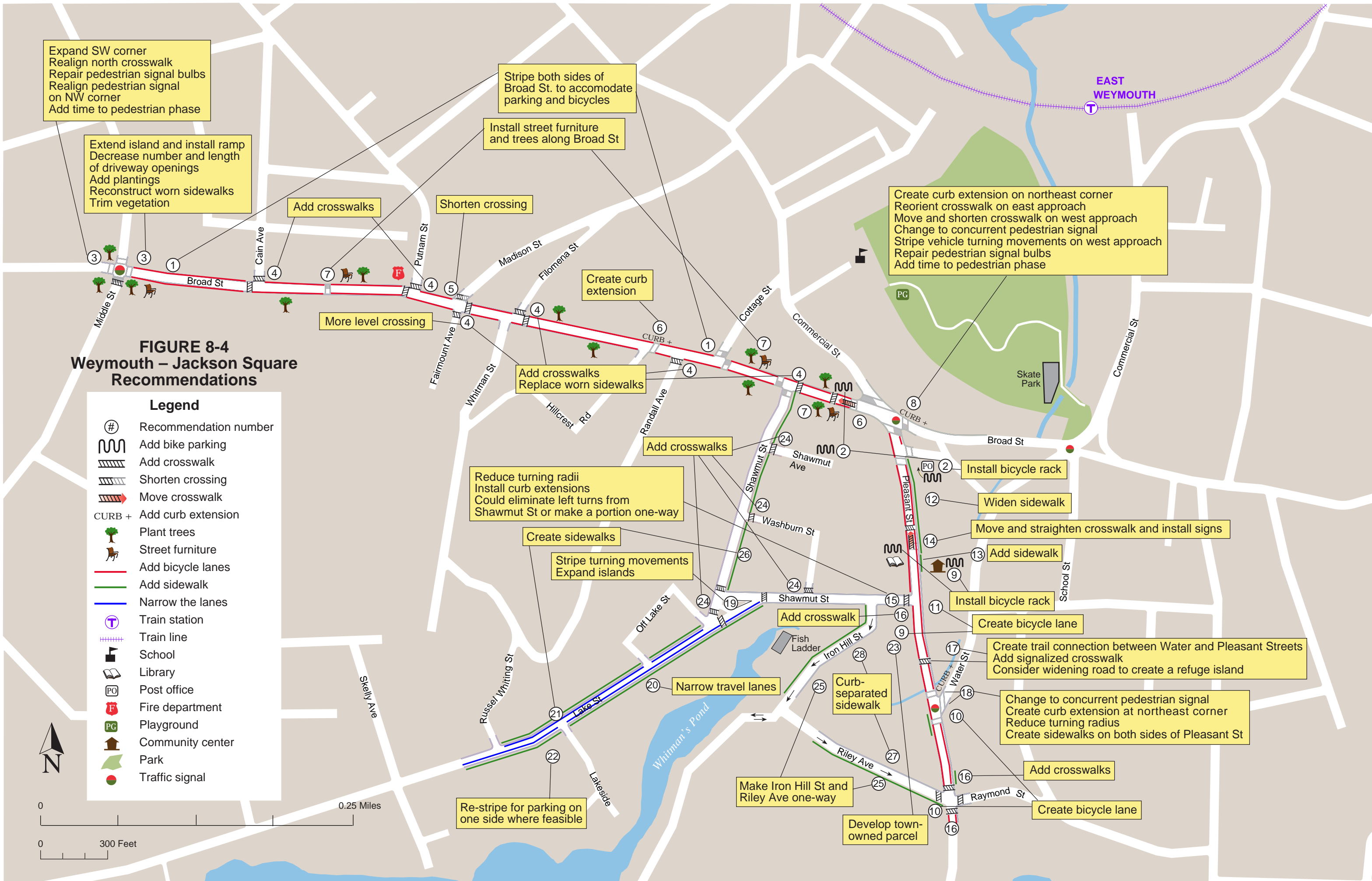
##### *Existing Conditions*

Broad Street is a two-way street and is two lanes wide in the study area. Parking is allowed on both sides, but few cars park between Middle Street and Randall Avenue. Broad Street’s width ranges from 38 to 40 feet. Double yellow lines separate the east- and westbound travel lanes, and a single white line demarcates the parking areas. The roadway surface is mostly smooth, with no major impediments. The roadway edge is clear of obstructions that would have an impact on bicyclists. There is no bicycle parking.

##### *Recommendations*

1. With roadway widths ranging from 38 to 40 feet, stripe a single white line on both sides of Broad Street. This line could be painted 9 feet from the curb to accommodate parking and provide a guideline for bicyclists. The width of the travel lanes would vary between 10 and 11 feet.
2. Install bicycle racks in or near the intersection of Broad and Middle Streets. Also install racks in Jackson Square, possibly in or near the Korean War Memorial Park, which is northwest of the Broad/Pleasant/Commercial Streets intersection; the Edward W. Owens Jr. Memorial Park, in front of the post office; and in the municipal parking lot between Broad Street and Shawmut Avenue. Preferably, the racks should be sheltered from the elements.





Expand SW corner  
 Realign north crosswalk  
 Repair pedestrian signal bulbs  
 Realign pedestrian signal on NW corner  
 Add time to pedestrian phase

Extend island and install ramp  
 Decrease number and length of driveway openings  
 Add plantings  
 Reconstruct worn sidewalks  
 Trim vegetation

Stripe both sides of Broad St. to accommodate parking and bicycles

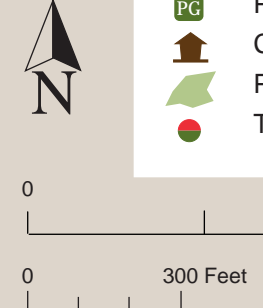
Install street furniture and trees along Broad St

Create curb extension on northeast corner  
 Reorient crosswalk on east approach  
 Move and shorten crosswalk on west approach  
 Change to concurrent pedestrian signal  
 Stripe vehicle turning movements on west approach  
 Repair pedestrian signal bulbs  
 Add time to pedestrian phase

**FIGURE 8-4**  
**Weymouth – Jackson Square**  
**Recommendations**

**Legend**

- # Recommendation number
- ~ Add bike parking
- ▨ Add crosswalk
- ▨ Shorten crossing
- ▨ Move crosswalk
- CURB + Add curb extension
- 🌳 Plant trees
- 🪑 Street furniture
- 🚲 Add bicycle lanes
- Add sidewalk
- Narrow the lanes
- 🚉 Train station
- 🚊 Train line
- 🏫 School
- 📖 Library
- 📮 Post office
- 🚒 Fire department
- 🏃 Playground
- 🏠 Community center
- 🌳 Park
- 🚦 Traffic signal



## Walking

### *Existing Conditions*

Sidewalks extend along both sides of the roadway and generally are more than five feet wide. Some sidewalks on Broad Street between Putnam Street and Randall Avenue are too narrow and, in some places, made even more so by overgrown vegetation. Between Hillcrest Road and Pleasant Street, the sidewalks are concrete, with granite curbs. The rest of the sidewalks are asphalt, and also have granite curbs. In general, the sidewalk surfaces are smooth and free of significant bumps or cracks. There are some sections of sidewalk, especially near Fairmount Avenue, that are in poor condition.

There are places where the driveways are either too wide or unnecessary. Two examples are a condominium complex, which has a driveway opening that is much wider than needed, and a church on the north side of Broad Street that has four driveways, all relatively wide. Just east of Middle Street, in front of a gas station, there is a sidewalk median with no curb ramps.



*Lack of curb ramps along Broad Street;  
the Middle Street intersection is in the background*

There is no vegetation buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway, but many front yards have large trees that provide shade along the street, except between Randall Avenue and Pleasant Street where there are commercial fronts and only a few street trees. In general, the sidewalk along the street angles down to the level of intersecting driveways.

There are several crosswalks along this corridor. One at the intersection of Middle and Broad Streets does not have any curb ramps. There is no curb ramp on the north side of the mid-block crossing of Broad Street between Cain Avenue and Putnam Street. Three other pairs of crosswalks in the area share curb ramps. All of the crosswalks in the

Jackson Square area are white parallel lines filled in with green; most of the other crosswalks are parallel-bar style. There is a long crosswalk across Madison Street that lacks refuge points.

There are two signalized intersections. The intersection of Middle and Broad Streets has a four-way stoplight with pedestrian-activated crossing signals. The signal has an exclusive pedestrian phase consisting of a seven-second “Walk” signal and an eight-second flashing “Don’t Walk” signal. These signals cannot be seen from all corners, however. Of the eight signals, one faces the wrong direction, one works for “Walk” but not for “Don’t Walk,” and one is not working. The parallel-bar-style crosswalks on the four approaches of the intersection are 54, 46, 53, and 48 feet long. Using the 3.5-foot-per-second standard, the pedestrian phase is barely adequate for the crossings.

The intersection at Broad and Commercial/Pleasant Streets has a four-way stoplight with a pedestrian-activated phase. Commercial and Broad Streets intersect at a skewed angle. The exclusive pedestrian phase consists of four-second “Walk” and 12-second flashing “Don’t Walk” phases. One of the pedestrian signals is not working. The crosswalks on each approach of the intersection are white parallel bars filled in with green paint and measure 70, 51, 64 and 62 feet long. Using the 3.5-foot-per-second standard, the pedestrian phase is not adequate for the lengths of the crossings.

### ***Recommendations***

3. Intersection of Broad and Middle Streets and east on Broad Street toward Jackson Square:
  - Expand the southwest corner to create more of a right angle.
  - The crosswalk on the north approach should be realigned so that it will be at a right angle across the street, thereby shortening the walking distance.
  - Fix the broken pedestrian signal bulbs and align the pedestrian signal on the northwest corner to face east.
  - Add more time to the pedestrian phase, unless the crossing distances are shortened.
  - Extend the island in front of the gas station and install curb ramps.
  - Visually emphasize the presence of sidewalks across the driveways of the gas station and the parking lots by raising the level of sidewalks or by striping.
  - Decrease the number and/or length of driveway openings, including the entrance to the condominium complex on the south side of Broad Street near Middle Street, and to the church on the north side of Broad Street.
  - Add street trees and other plantings.
  - The very worn sidewalks should be reconstructed. In the short term, remove or trim the vegetation growing through cracks and have property owners trim vegetation that obstructs the sidewalks.
4. Add crosswalks at the following locations:
  - Broad Street and Cain Avenue, across Cain Avenue and the west approach of Broad Street.

- At Putnam and Broad Streets, across Putnam Street and the west approach of Broad Street.
  - At Broad Street and Fairmount Avenue, on the east approach across Broad Street and on Fairmount Avenue.
  - Across Filomena Street and on the east approach of Broad Street.
  - Across Randall Avenue; also consider regrading Randall Avenue to make the crosswalk more level.
  - Across Broad Street on the east approach of the intersection with Shawmut Street.
  - Mid-block across Broad Street, between Shawmut and Pleasant Streets, at the walkway leading to the parking area south of Broad Street.
5. Shorten the crosswalk on Madison Street by either (1) painting or installing an island or (2) squaring the northwest corner and aligning it closer to Fairmount Avenue.
  6. Create a curb extension in front of the church on the north end of the crosswalk on Broad Street, between Hillcrest Road and Randall Avenue, and on the north end of the mid-block crossing of Broadway between Cain Avenue and Putnam Street.



*Curb ramp and extension are needed on Broad Street*

7. Install street furniture and trees along Broad Street between Middle and Commercial/Pleasant Streets.
8. Intersection of Broad, Commercial, and Pleasant Streets:
  - Create space for a curb extension on the northeast corner on Broad Street by narrowing the through and turning lanes at the intersection.
  - Reorient the crosswalk on Broad Street on the east approach, connecting it to the above-referenced curb extension, thereby shortening the crossing distance.
  - On the west approach of Broad Street, make the crosswalk perpendicular to the sidewalks, thereby shortening the crossing distance, and place it slightly farther back from the intersection than it is currently.
  - Change the pedestrian signals from exclusive to concurrent.
  - Stripe the turning movements for vehicles on the west approach of Broad Street.
  - Fix broken bulbs in pedestrian signal.

- Add at least four seconds to the pedestrian phase.



*Intersection of Broad, Commercial, and Pleasant Streets*

## **8.2.2 PLEASANT STREET: BROAD STREET TO RILEY AVENUE/RAYMOND STREET**

Pleasant Street is an important north–south roadway through the east central portion of Weymouth. In the study area, Pleasant Street connects the commercial area of western Jackson Square south to Riley Avenue/Raymond Street. Along the roadway are some civic buildings, including a post office, a library, and the Weymouth Teen Center; commercial buildings; and multi- and single-family housing. Pope Towers, a senior-housing facility, is located on Water Street, just behind and south of the Teen Center.

### **Bicycling**

#### *Existing Conditions*

Pleasant Street is two-way with two lanes and no parking. Its width ranges from 30 to 33 feet between Broad and Water Streets, and is approximately 44 feet wide farther south. Double yellow lines separate the north- and southbound travel lanes, and a single white line marks a shoulder of varying width. The roadway surface is mostly smooth, with no major impediments, and the edge is generally clear of obstructions. There is no bicycle parking.

#### *Recommendations*

9. Install bicycle racks at the Teen Center and library.
10. With roadway widths of around 44 feet south of Water Street, and parking on both sides, stripe 7-foot parking lanes and 5-foot bicycle lanes on each side. This leaves space for 10-foot travel lanes. Alternatively, allow back-in angle parking on one side only. Allow a 4.5-foot bicycle lane on the non-parking side, two 11-foot travel lanes, a 5.5-foot bicycle lane, and a 12-foot parking lane, with cars parked at a 45-degree angle.

11. With roadway widths ranging from 30 to 33 feet from Water Street north to Broad Street, stripe a bicycle lane on both sides of Pleasant Street. Travel lanes could be 11 feet in each direction. The bicycle lanes, using the remaining width, would range from 4 to 5.5 feet.

## **Walking**

### *Existing Conditions*

Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway are sometimes less than five feet wide. The sidewalks are asphalt, with granite curbs. Due to wide driveways and parking lots, there are numerous expanses where there is no distinction between the sidewalk and the roadway. The surface of the sidewalks is rough and contains some significant bumps and cracks. From Jackson Square to the Teen Center, the sidewalks are narrow and in poor condition. Most of the sidewalks slope down to the level of intersecting driveways.

There is no vegetation buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway, and there are no front yards with trees to provide shade and aesthetics. There is also no vegetation buffer between the sidewalk and adjacent parking lots, except in front of the library. Coupled with the wide driveways and lack of curbing, there is no distinction in some areas between the sidewalk, roadway, and parking lots.



*The sidewalk is not clearly separated from the roadway at the intersection of Pleasant and Water Streets*

There are several crosswalks along this corridor, but more are needed. At Riley Avenue/Raymond Street, new concrete curb ramps have been installed, but there are no crosswalks. The crosswalk between the Teen Center and library, which is zebra style, crosses at an oblique angle between the parking lots of the two buildings. The other crosswalks are white parallel bars filled in with green. All of the existing crosswalks are sufficiently to highly visible.

The recent reconstruction of the intersection of Pleasant and Water Streets included a three-way stoplight with pedestrian-activated signals. The exclusive pedestrian phase consists of a 7-second “Walk” signal and a 19-second flashing “Don’t Walk” signal. The parallel-bar-style crosswalks are 50, 65, and 82 feet long, clockwise from the north. The pedestrian phase is adequate for the lengths of the crossings.

### ***Recommendations***

12. Widen the sidewalk between Jackson Square and the Weymouth Teen Center.



*A narrow sidewalk leading to the Teen Center*

13. Construct a sidewalk with vegetation buffers in front of the Teen Center parking lot. Ideally, have a buffer on both the street and parking lot sides of the sidewalk.
14. Straighten and move the crosswalk on Pleasant Street that connects the Teen Center and the library to the northern edge of the Teen Center, both to increase the sight distance and to move it away from the parking lots; install signs alerting motorists to the crosswalk.
15. Reduce the turning radius for vehicles turning right from Shawmut Street onto Pleasant Street and vehicles turning right from Pleasant Street onto Shawmut Street. Install curb extensions on Shawmut Street. (Alternatively, consider eliminating all left turns out of Shawmut Street, given the limited sight distance, or prohibit traffic from exiting from Shawmut Street onto Pleasant Street by creating a one-way, westbound block for traffic entering from Pleasant Street.)
16. Add crosswalks at the following locations:
  - Across the west approach of Shawmut Street at Pleasant Street
  - At Pleasant/Riley/Raymond Streets, across all approaches
17. Create a trail connection between Water and Pleasant Streets on the walkway south of Pope Towers, and add a crosswalk across Pleasant Street. Install a signalized

crosswalk that flashes yellow to alert motorists. Consider widening the roadway here, using land in the town-owned lot on the west side of Pleasant Street, to allow the creation of a median island sufficiently wide to be a refuge for people to cross the road. This trail connection would be part of the Back River Trail, which is discussed in the next section.

18. Intersection of Pleasant and Water Streets:

- Change the pedestrian signals from exclusive to concurrent
- Create a curb extension on the north side of the east approach on Water Street to alter the turning radius and to provide pedestrians with a wider area to wait for the pedestrian signal. Realign crosswalks accordingly
- Reduce the turning radius for vehicles turning right from Pleasant Street to Water Street
- Create a curb-separated sidewalk along the west side of Pleasant Street in front of the car dealership, and on the east side of Pleasant Street in front of the convenience store, which is just north of Raymond Street

### **8.2.3 THE NEIGHBORHOOD SOUTHWEST OF JACKSON SQUARE**

This area is primarily residential. A fish ladder with a small viewing platform is located just off Iron Hill Street. Southwest of the viewing platform is Whitman's Pond. There are some commercial developments on Lake Street and a ball field at Russel Whiting Street.

#### **Bicycling**

##### *Existing Conditions*

The roadways in this neighborhood, all two-way, are generally in fair condition. The relatively major streets in the neighborhood are Shawmut and Lake Streets. The minor roads are Riley Avenue and Iron Hill Street. The intersection of Lake and Shawmut Streets is confusing. There is a large, open parking area on the southwest corner of Shawmut and Pleasant Streets.

Parking is allowed on both sides of most portions of Lake Street, and on Shawmut Street between Lake and Broad Streets. There are no striped areas for parking, and because of the poorly defined sidewalks, motorists sometimes park on the sidewalk. The width of Lake Street ranges from 24 to 33 feet. Shawmut Street is approximately 24 feet wide between Lake and Pleasant Streets and approximately 25 feet wide between Lake and Broad Streets.

There are double yellow lines on Lake Street, thence on Shawmut Street to Pleasant Street, as well as fog lines on Lake Street. The roadway edges are generally clear of obstructions.

##### *Recommendations*

19. Intersection of Shawmut Street and Lake Street:

- Stripe and sign the turning movements for vehicles.



- Expand the islands to better guide traffic or consider constructing a roundabout.
20. Reduce the width of travel lanes on Lake Street to 10 feet. This will allow more room for bicyclists and pedestrians, and will help slow traffic down to the 30 miles-per-hour speed limit that is signed in the northeast-bound direction. Add a similar speed limit sign in the other direction.

## **Walking**

### ***Existing Conditions***

None of the sidewalks are in good condition. All are asphalt, some with granite curbs. The sidewalks along the southeast side of Iron Hill Street, the north side of Riley Avenue, and both sides of Shawmut Street between Lake and Pleasant Streets have curbs and are in fair condition. The sidewalks along the east side of Shawmut Street between Broad and Lake Streets have curbs and are in poor condition. There is little distinction between the roadway and the sidewalks on the west side of Shawmut Street between Broad and Lake Streets and along Lake Street since there are no curbs. There are no sidewalks along the south side of Riley Avenue and the northwest side of Iron Hill Street.

There are no vegetation buffers between the sidewalk and the roadway. There are no street trees in the neighborhood, but many front yards have trees that provide shade and aesthetics along the street, except along Lake Street. The sidewalks slope down to the level of intersecting roadways and driveways. There are no signalized pedestrian crossings or crosswalks in this corridor.

### ***Recommendations***

21. Create curb-separated sidewalks along both sides of Lake Street southwest of its intersection with Shawmut Street.
22. Re-stripe Lake Street to accommodate parking on one side of the street where space allows, and eliminate parking on sidewalks.
23. Redevelop the town-owned parking/open area on the southwest corner of Pleasant and Shawmut Streets. One option would be to create a park with either a fenced-in playground or simply an open area with trees and plantings. Some parking could be retained.
24. Add crosswalks at the following locations:
  - All approaches of the intersection of Shawmut and Lake Streets
  - Across Washburn Street and Shawmut Avenue where they intersect with Shawmut Street
25. Make Iron Hill Street one-way southwest from Shawmut Street to Riley Avenue, and make Riley Avenue one-way southeast toward Pleasant Street.

26. Construct a curb-separated sidewalk on the east side of Shawmut Street between Broad and Lake Streets.
27. Construct a curb-separated sidewalk along the south side of Riley Avenue between Pleasant and Iron Hill Streets
28. Construct a curb-separated sidewalk along the northwest side of Iron Hill Street between Riley Avenue and Shawmut Street.

#### **8.2.4 THE ALIGNMENT OF THE PROPOSED BACK RIVER TRAIL**

In August 2005, ICON Parks Design prepared the *Back River Trail: Master Plan and Design Guidelines* at the request of the Town of Weymouth. According to this plan, the proposed Back River Trail will connect Abigail Adams State Park in North Weymouth to the Iron Hill Fish Ladder site in the study area. Walkers, bicyclists, joggers, in-line skaters, people in wheelchairs, and walkers pushing strollers could use the trail system.

The Town requested that the Boston Region MPO staff comment on that plan for the portion of the trail from the East Weymouth commuter rail station to the Iron Hill Fish Ladder. According to the plan:

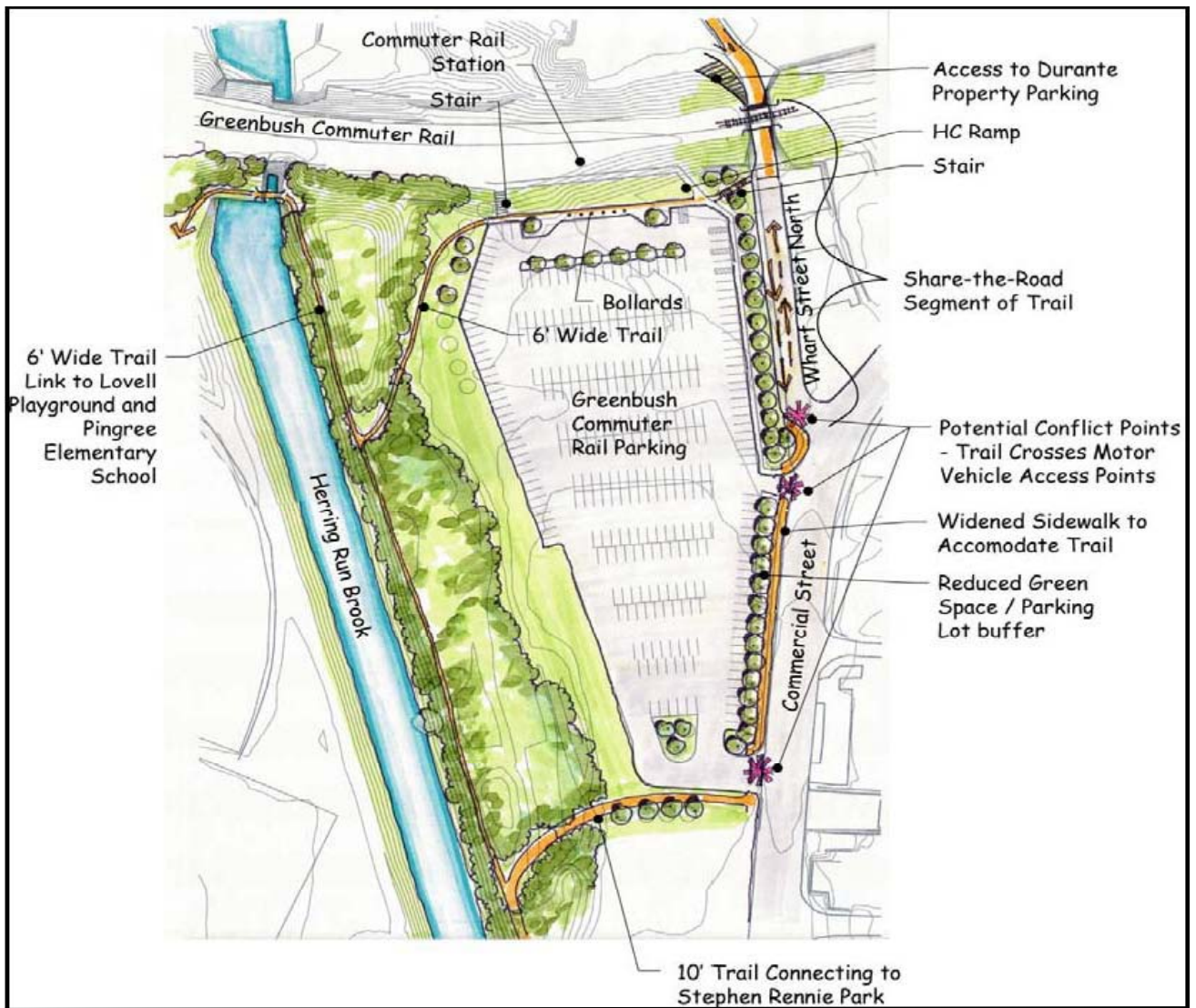
The trail will turn and follow along the northernmost end of the new MBTA train station parking lot before turning to follow Herring Brook into Lovell Playground. From Lovell Playground the trail will become an on-road trail with dedicated bike lanes along Water Street up to and through the intersection with Pleasant Street. Intersection improvements at Pleasant Street will include user activated crossing signals and minor road realignments [Ed. note: these intersection improvements have been completed]. The trail will continue along Iron Hill Street to the site of the Iron Hill Fish Ladders, where site improvements will include a fish ladder, viewing improvements, picnic tables and playground. A network of on street “share the road” bicycle routes will connect the trail to other points of interest in the immediate neighborhoods and the surrounding communities.

#### ***Recommendations***

Figure 8-5, which is Figure 13 in the ICON report, shows the area near the East Weymouth MBTA station.

A1. As the ICON report points out, Alternative A is more desirable than Alternative B at the commuter rail parking area because it keeps the trail away from the parking lot and street. Putting the trail between the drop-off area and the station would eliminate all conflicts with motor vehicles but would maximize conflicts with passengers. Therefore, require bicyclists on this portion of the trail to reduce speed, and install signage reminding them to yield to pedestrians.

**Figure 8-5**  
**Proposed Back River Trail through MBTA East Weymouth Station Parking Lot**



A2. As the trail approaches the intersection of Broad, Commercial, and High Streets, it should use the path and bridge through Stephen Rennie Herring Run Park. The trail should be striped through the park.

A3. At Stephen Rennie Herring Run Park, one branch should continue to the Herring Run Pool (Branch A), and another branch should connect to the school (Branch B). Branch B could replace, or be an addition to, the proposed northern branch to the school from the commuter rail station. Branch B, according to the plan, would better accommodate users, including students, traveling to school, the ball fields, and Lovell Playground.

- A4. Once Branch B passes over the bridge, it should follow the existing path along the skate park and around the ball fields to the school parking lot. This path should be expanded to 10 feet wide. From the parking lot, striping should guide people to the school entrance. Widen the sidewalks on both sides of the roadway up the hill. Additional striping and a crosswalk could then connect these sidewalks to the proposed bicycle lanes on both sides of Commercial Street.
- A5. From the park, Branch A would follow the river to Pope Towers on Water Street and use an off-road connection to reach Pleasant Street (see Recommendation 17 above). A safe crossing must be provided across Pleasant Street for the path to continue through the parking lot and up Iron Hill Street to the proposed Iron Hill Park. The off-road connection between Water and Pleasant Streets would obviate the need for southbound trail users to backtrack north on busy Pleasant Street to reach Iron Hill Street.
- A6. Having the path cross through the private parking lot at the intersection of Commercial, High, Broad, and Water Streets would be preferable to having it use roadways.
- A7. Potential on-street connections to the Back River Trail, discussed elsewhere in this chapter, include bicycle lanes on Pleasant Street, and improved accommodations for bicycles on Broad Street.