

TECHNICAL MEMO

Pare Project No. 22072.00

STUDY REPORT

FOR THE

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

WEST STREET (ROUTE 32)

Ware, MA

JUNE 2022

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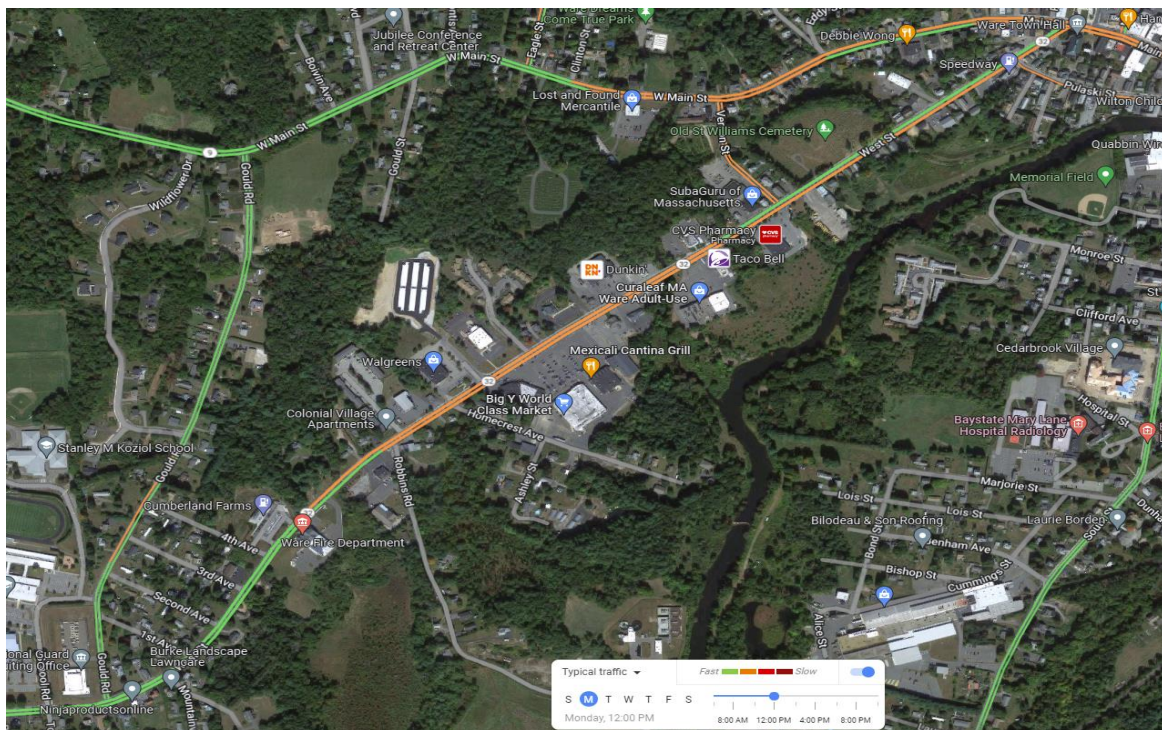


1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The West Street (Route 32) corridor in Ware is currently seen by most of the general public as a means of accessing other destinations beyond Ware and by many members of the Town as an under producer with regard to real estate taxes and contribution to the availability of local jobs. Fortunately, this means that the corridor has immense potential. With a recurring desire from the Town to enhance the corridor, they have been enabled with a Planning Assistance Grant to commission this study aimed at evaluating the traffic operations and developing a buildout analysis for the West Street corridor in Ware. The traffic operations will be reviewed by Pare Corporation and a buildout analysis for economic development will be provided by McCabe Enterprises.

FIGURE 1

West Street Project Locus



Like many similar corridors that began as traffic routes and developed into loosely defined commercial zones, the physical conditions and visual experience along West Street are challenged by one-off developments that have established over time without consistent zoning and development planning. This pattern of development has left the West Street corridor with little definition as to physical design or visual character. Lacking these key ingredients for a sense of place, West Street today is a zone in-between major highway and a local attractions, and not a destination in its own right that can meet the desired economic potential. As a gateway to the downtown and further destinations, West Street is often the first impression of Ware for passers-by.

Along with parcel development/redevelopment, the transportation corridor needs to support and be capable of handling the traffic trips that will be associated with expanded and added uses. In addition to accommodating vehicular traffic, improvements to the West Street corridor can help address existing safety concerns, improve mobility into the future and allot space appropriately for multi-modal use, meeting local, state and federal transportation initiatives.

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1. Data Collection

A field inventory of the existing conditions within the study area was conducted in May 2022. The study area is defined as the significant roadways and intersections that may be impacted by traffic generated by the construction of the proposed build-out. Included within the study limits is the West Street roadway from the Ware Schools campus (School Road/Town Street intersection) to Main Street (Route 9) as well as the primary intersections along West Street in this stretch. This inventory included measurements and photo documentation of the roadway and intersection geometrics, sight distance observations, utility location, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, accessibility compliance, and the physical condition for the corridor.

To better our understanding of the existing conditions further from a transportation perspective, efforts were made to obtain and analyze various types of data including crash data for the latest three-year period and existing count data along the corridor. Additionally, GIS data was reviewed to assess the existing conditions from a topographic and resource perspective inclusive of terrain limitations, wetland locations, and flood zones. We also reviewed historic documentation provided by the Town including the following:

Technical Memo on Recommended Improvements
Traffic Operations Study West Street, Main Street East Main Street, Ware, MA
Fuss & O'Neill, Inc., June 1997

Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, Ware Massachusetts
Howard Stein Hudson, May 2020

Visioning, Branding, Wayfinding, & Business Development Plan
Town of Ware, Massachusetts
Prepared by Arnett Muldrow & Associates, 2015

West Traffic Operations Study, Final Report
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, March 2005

West Street Corridor SWOT Analysis 2021
Ware Planning & Community Development Department, 2021

Sewer Master Plan, Ware Department of Public Works
Wright-Pierce, October 2016

Water Master Plan, Ware Department of Public Works
Wright-Pierce, October 2016

2.2. Transportation Condition

In its existing condition, the Route 32 corridor within Ware has infrequent pedestrian activity on a general day-to-day basis. However, there is increased pedestrian use near the intersection of West Street and Vernon Street and also near the post office/Big Y Plaza. It should be noted that the corridor is currently lit with pole mounted streetlamps. Additionally, while shoulder widths vary and no bicycle striping or signing exists along the corridor, bicyclists make up approximately one percent of roadway users.

Ware is served by a community shuttle route. This is one of three community shuttle routes operated by Hulmes Transportation. These three routes combine to offer transit service to PVRTA's easternmost communities. Belchertown, Ware, and Palmer all have this type of route. During the week it is possible to travel between the three towns utilizing these shuttle buses. It is also possible to connect with PVRTA's main bus service at the Eastfield Mall in Springfield using the Palmer shuttle.

The Ware Shuttle runs approximately every hour in the morning and every hour and a half in the afternoon during the week. Limited service is offered on Saturdays with three trips in the morning running approximately hourly until 11:00 AM. Weekday service begins at 9:00 AM and ends at 4:00 PM. This route serves the downtown sections of Ware and also serves the Wal-Mart on Route 32 where it connects with the Palmer Village and Belchertown shuttles.

In addition to the fixed route service PVRTA provides Paratransit (van) service in Ware. PVRTA has two types of van service; dial-a-ride service and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service. The dial-a-ride service is available to persons over 60 years of age on a space available basis Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The ADA service, which is mandated under the American with Disabilities Act, is available for people with disabilities that limit them from being able to use the fixed route bus service. The hours that ADA service is offered mirrors the fixed route service hours of operation.

2.3. Physical and Environmental Condition

As noted previously, the study area consists of West Street (Route 32) from the Ware Schools Campus (School Road/Town Street intersection) to Main Street (Route 9) as well as the major intersections along West Street within this stretch. Below is an account of the existing physical conditions and related characteristics of the roadway network.

West Street (Route 32) within the Town of Ware is classified as an Urban Principal Arterial. The section from the Ware Schools campus north to Robbins Road is under MassDOT jurisdiction and the section from Robbins Road north to Main Street (Route 9) is under the jurisdiction of the Town of Ware. The posted speed limit within the corridor ranges from 25 to 35 miles per hour (MPH). The West Street corridor is part of a major north-south connection to the Massachusetts Turnpike interchange in Palmer.

The existing geometric conditions of the roadway are as follows:

TABLE 1
Roadway Characteristics

Metric	Dimension
Number of Lanes	1 Each Direction
Pavement Width	35' – 40'
Travel Lanes	13' – 12'
Center Turn Lane	11' – 13'
Usable Shoulders:	0' – 1.5'
Right-of-Way:	50' (Town/MassDOT)
Bridge Span	14' (Muddy Brook crossing)
Bridge Pavement Width	45'

The existing corridor carries two 12-foot lanes of vehicular traffic in both the northbound and southbound directions. Though there are shoulders present along the corridor they are not a consistent width and do not accommodate bicycle travel. There are sidewalks present throughout the corridor, but they are not continuous along the length of the corridor, nor do they connect uses along the corridor to neighborhoods adjacent to the corridor. The existing traffic along the West Street corridor within the limits of study area is approximately 11,000 vehicles per day.

The roadway in the study area consists of hot mix asphalt that is in fair condition. It should be noted that in the section from the Ware schools campus to Robbins Road and from the Muddy Brook crossing to the town hall to there is an unknown amount of concrete under the roadway. This should be considered during any reconstruction or utility work within the roadway. As noted above the roadway (curb to curb or paved surface) varies from 35' and 40' in width. West Street from Robbins Road to Main Street (under the Town's jurisdiction) is posted at 25 MPH. West Street from Robbins Road south to the limit of the study area at the Ware schools campus is a MADOT roadway and is posted at 35 MPH.

West Street is defined by a number of major driveways providing access to commercial, residential, and retail land uses between Gould Road and Vernon Street. In the vicinity of this commercial area, West Street provides one lane of traffic in each direction with a center lane for left turns in both directions. Site driveways in this area vary in width and alignment. Stop lines are not provided on any of the driveways in the study area and the only "STOP" sign at the time of the field inventory was located on the exit from the U.S. Post Office. The speed limit on West Street is posted at 25 mph in this area

There is one bridge along the study area located near the Citgo gas station, crossing Muddy Brook. This bridge and the West Street Right of Way are owned by MassDOT. Specific dimensions can be found in the table 1. Please see figures 2 and 3 for existing roadway cross sections.

FIGURE 2

West Street Existing Section w/Center Turning Lane

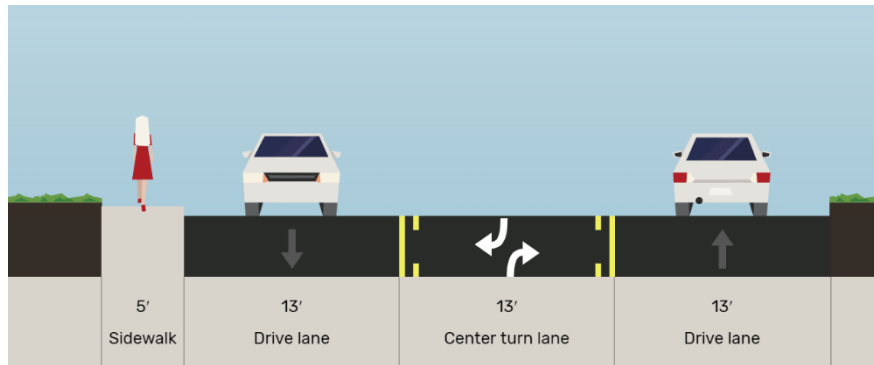
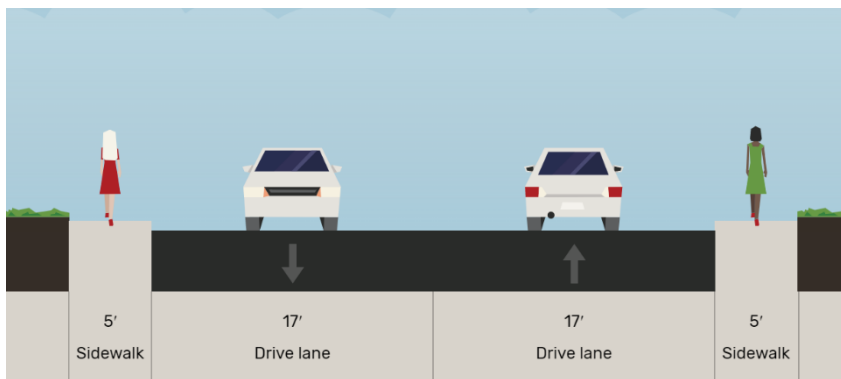


FIGURE 3

West Street Existing Section w/Sidewalks



There is generally good sight distance along the corridor. With a straight horizontal alignment, with the exception of gentle curvilinear alignment along the southern section of the study area. There is clear visibility for a minimum distance of approximately 800 feet. Historic speed data captured from an automated traffic recorder indicates an 85% speed ranging from a low of 29 mph (near Vernon Street) to a high of 42 mph near Gould Road. The available sight distance is sufficient for speeds recorded in the previous studies. However, as future development and/or redevelopment occurs along the corridor sight distances should be confirmed for all access points entering West Street.

2.4. Safety Condition

Crash data for the study area was extracted from the internet MassDOT crash portal for the most recent three-year period of January 2019 through December 2021. Crash data was reviewed to determine the presence of safety concerns within the study area. According to the data reviewed there were 118 total incidents that occurred in the study area over this three-year period. Of these 118 total incidents, 42 incidents occurred on the study area roadway not specifically at an intersection. Of these 42 incidents, 13 crashes resulted in non-fatal injuries with a total of 20 injured persons and none resulted in fatal injuries. The majority of incidents were rear-end and angle related crashes. Many of the collisions happened in front of the Big Y Plaza, near CVS, and at the

intersection of Main Street and West Street. A breakdown of the incidents by type and number of injuries can be seen in Table 2.

The crash data was analyzed from 2019 through 2021 stretching 1.3 miles from West Steet at Gould Road to the intersection of West Steet and Main Street. Based on the AADT from 2020 and the crash reports along West Street from Gould Road to Main Street, West Street has 7.55 crashes per MVMT (million vehicle miles traveled). The 2020 MassDOT statewide average crash rate for an Urban Principal Arterial is 3.58. The crash rate for this section of West Street exceeds the average for the state and was observed to be increasing while the average daily traffic volume is decreasing over the same time period.

TABLE 2

Roadway Collision Data

Manner of Collision	Number of Collisions
Rear-end	34
Angle	29
Single vehicle crash	16
Sideswipe, same direction	13
Front to Rear	11
Rear to Side	5
Head-on	4
Rear-to-rear	3
Front to Front	2
Unknown	1
Total	118

2.5. Character of West Street

Beyond what the corridor can carry today from a vehicular and transportation perspective, the corridor was assessed from an aesthetic and use point of view. It was found that generally beyond the asset such as the Ware River (which is largely hidden), the remainder of the corridor has utilitarian edge barriers, under-utilized properties, and large paved lots directly adjacent to the roadway that all detract from the aesthetic appeal. In addition, large signs, abandoned utilities, and utility poles crowd the corridors view shed.

2.6. Visual Clutter

As is found in similar corridors, West Street in Ware is marked by abandoned structures and unused utilities that detract from the area's natural assets and hamper the potential visual appeal. The corridor is dotted with outdated signs, unused poles, equipment and small structures left behind by businesses that have long since closed. These portray a sense of abandonment, mar the visual landscape and detract from the viability of businesses that remain.

Additionally, viewsheds are impeded by overhead wires and utility poles that run parallel to the roadway throughout most of the corridor. Not only do the prevalence of poles and wires detract from the scenic qualities of the corridor, but they add to visual distraction at key intersections where safety is a primary concern.

2.7. Lack of Cohesiveness

The West Street environment is characterized by a lack of cohesiveness, that is a result of the unplanned, incremental build-out that has occurred over time. Building setbacks vary greatly along West Street, creating an inconsistent edge along the length of the roadway. The lack of visual cohesion evolved largely because of the varied dimensional regulations along the corridor, and the challenges setbacks have presented for small, irregularly shaped lots, particularly on the northern stretch of the corridor. In some areas, structures have been built close to the road edge, leaving little space for access or parking due to lot shape, while in other areas buildings are set far back on the lot making businesses hard to identify from the roadway. In many areas along West Street, parking directly abuts the road edge, with no visual or physical separation. This condition detracts from the visual character of the corridor and creates hazardous conditions where it is unclear to traffic on the road where to expect vehicles entering the roadway from parking areas.

While there are a few areas where newer construction has occurred that reflects better site planning and design efforts, the majority of buildings along the corridor are older utilitarian structures or residential buildings converted to commercial uses due to a need for cost effective investments on the corridor. This further contributes to a lack of visual cohesion as there are no clear design guidelines in place to encourage a particular building form or quality of construction.

2.8. Streetscape and Visual Design

Uncoordinated and undefined edge conditions are found throughout the length of the corridor, compounding the lack of clarity of shoulder conditions. Where edges are defined, they often use utilitarian materials that convey the feeling of a temporary or expedient solution rather than a planned, cohesive design. Materials along the road edge include various curb treatments, shoulder and recovery zone treatments, and other materials. In some locations, new construction and redevelopment have begun to incorporate landscape buffers and shoulder treatments that begin to contribute positively to the image of the streetscape.

2.9. Signage

As is found on similar corridors, competing signage clutters the view corridor at points along West Street. There are a number of outdated signs that should be removed to improve the visual character of the street and increase legibility of existing businesses, wayfinding, and roadway user guidance.

Where buildings are set far back on the lot, business signage is hard to read amid the fast-moving traffic on the roadway. Property owners have made use of old (and potentially non-confirming) signage to aid with visibility, while others have resorted unique signage strategies to get attention of motorists.

2.10. Access Management

Access management along the corridor from Robbins Road north to Vernon Street has long been and continues to be a significant safety and capacity concern. The strip development environment of the corridor, with many individual business and parcels, resulted in more than one driveway for several properties. The multiple access points contribute to conflicting motor vehicle turning movements and increased safety concerns for all roadway users (motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists).

2.11. Pedestrians, Signage, and Bicycles

A sidewalk on the odd (west) side of the road is present from Gould Road to Main Street. The sidewalk width and condition vary along the route. Some sections have root damage and or heavy debris. The even (east) side of the road does not have a continuous sidewalk, although a sidewalk does begin at the O'Reily Auto Parts and continues north to Main Street. Pedestrian utilizing public transportation have a temporary bus stop located at 176 West Street. At this location there is no shoulder or designated bus stop, the bus must stop in a travel lane.

Signage for cross walks along West Street is not consistent. Some crosswalks have no signage to notify vehicular traffic while others have old or outdated signs. Signs for the center turn lane are present. In the school zone there is a flashing sign (during school hours, north and southbound) to slow traffic down.



Bicycle users have the option to ride on the road with motorists or on the sidewalk. Bicycle users who opt to travel on the roadway are provided limited space and generally required to ride in the travel lane with traffic. The south bound lane of West Street, near the intersection with Main Street, is posted with a bicycle on road sign. At this intersection Main Street is posted east and west bound with bike usage signage. The nearest designated bike lane is located on Main Street.

2.12. Utilities

The existing water main along West Street was constructed at differing periods and the size and material vary along the corridor. Large sections consist of 12" asbestos concrete pipe (ACP) while other sections are 3" iron pipe (IP), 6" IP, 8" IP, 12" IP and 6" ACP. The age, size and material of the water main system is a concern for future development. Note that the main running down West Street is also a feeding for residential streets.

Sewer infrastructure along West Street is also very old (installed in the late 1890s) and undersized for current standards. The main line varies in size and material, 8" AC, 10", 12" 15" VC. This type of variation in pipe size and material is common concern for infiltration and inflow (I/I). There is an unknown amount of concrete under the pavement by the Town Hall to Muddy Brook and from the high school to Robbins Road.

The storm drainage consists small, localized structures that discharge into the Ware River during heavy rain events. The lack of an urban drainage system along the corridor results in small, localized puddling and nuisance ponding during frequent storm events.

3. TRAFFIC CAPACITY ANALYSIS

A two lane arterial roadway serving a mix of commercial, retail and residential land uses, West Street is the primary route of travel for area commuters travelling to and from the Massachusetts Turnpike from surrounding communities. Because of the importance of West Street any future developments should try to mitigate any traffic issues along the route. The MassDOT 2020 traffic counts on West Street south of Pulaski Street recorded 5,554 vehicles per day (VPD) north bound, 5,422 VPD south bound with an average annual daily traffic (AADT) of 10,976. The traffic volumes recorded for the West Street Corridor have been dropping from 16,800 AADT in 1995 to 10,976 in 2020.



A center left turn lane is provided from Homecrest Avenue north approximately 700' to just south of the Muddy Brook bridge crossing. At the intersection of Vernon and West a traffic control signal is manages traffic turning into and from Vernon Street. This signal diverts traffic travelling to route 9 west bound from continuing north to Main Street and turning left. North and south bound traffic are provided a designated left turn lane with a permissive movement. A second traffic control signal is installed at the US Post Office/Walgreens entrance with the same left turn configuration.



The traffic volumes along this section of the West Street corridor have been declining since 2017 and congestion, as observed, is generally moderate and limited to peak travel times in the morning and afternoon. The congestion is generally limited to the Ware Schools campus and the business activities near the U.S. Post Office, grocery store, and pharmaceutical/convenience stores.

4. RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

4.1. Safety Recommendations

The safety review indicates a total of 34 rear-end incidents, 29 angle incidents and 16 single vehicle incidents as the highest quantities of incidents by type within the corridor. The roadway corridor's cross section can be a contributing factor in the number and types of incidents. A review of the incident types can identify ways that the corridor's cross-section can be adjusted to help alleviate these types of incidents. Rear-end incidents are typically reduced with the addition of dedicated turn lanes, such as those that exist at Vernon Street and the Post Office, allowing left turning movements to remove themselves from the high-speed left travel lane. Angle incidents are generally reduced with protected turns, which allow vehicles to turn with no opposition. The best way to reduce object incidents is by curbing the outer edge of the roadway, reducing the frequency that vehicles may leave the roadway and therefore reducing the potential to strike objects beyond the roadway's pavement limit and provide an adequate safety recovery zone.

An additional measure that can minimize rear-end and angle incidents as development unfolds is access management. Access management is a set of techniques used to maintain the safe and efficient flow of traffic along a roadway, implemented primarily along routes that are intended to maintain high volumes with minimal interruption or delay. Access management techniques include:

- Access Spacing – increasing the distance between traffic signals to improve the flow of traffic
- Driveway Spacing – increasing distance between driveways decreases conflict points and improves ingress/egress movements
- Right-of-Way Management – the preservation of right-of-way for future widenings

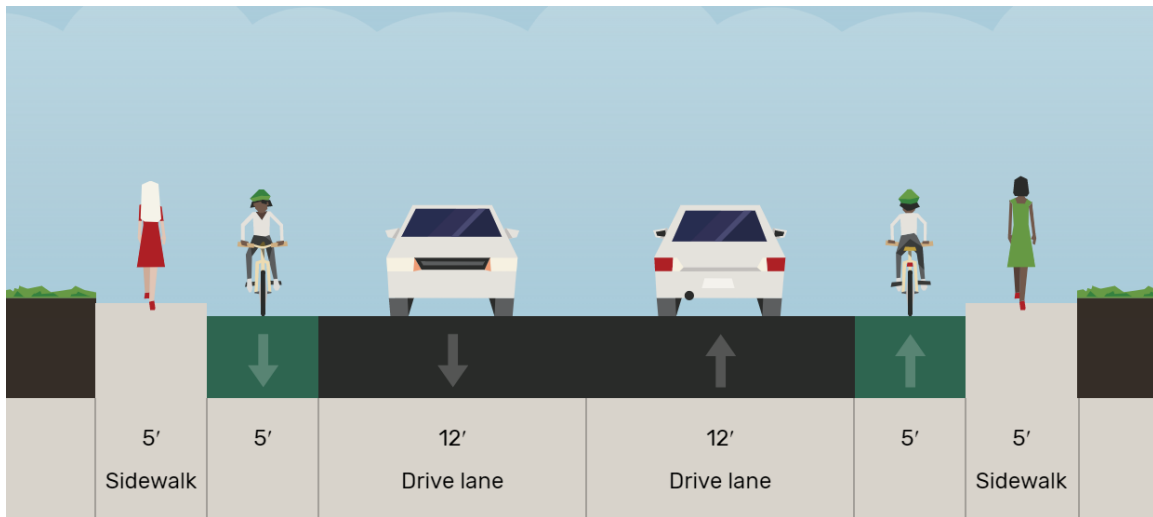
4.2. Roadway Section

Removing the center turn on West Street and incorporating more signalized intersections should be taken into consideration during future development. Consider upgrading existing signalized intersections with video detection and pre-emption for emergency vehicles. The signal timings and phasing should also be reviewed with the benefit of current traffic counts and turning movement data as the traffic volumes along the corridor have seen significant volume changes in recent years.

Looking at the potential roadway layout for the West Street corridor within Ware, the existing 50-foot right-of-way can accommodate many of these features including: reduced travel lane width, bicycle lanes, pedestrian walks, and shoulders. As well as reducing incidents of various types, the addition of designated turn lanes and median separation will help alleviate congestion and delays at the study area intersections.

FIGURE 4

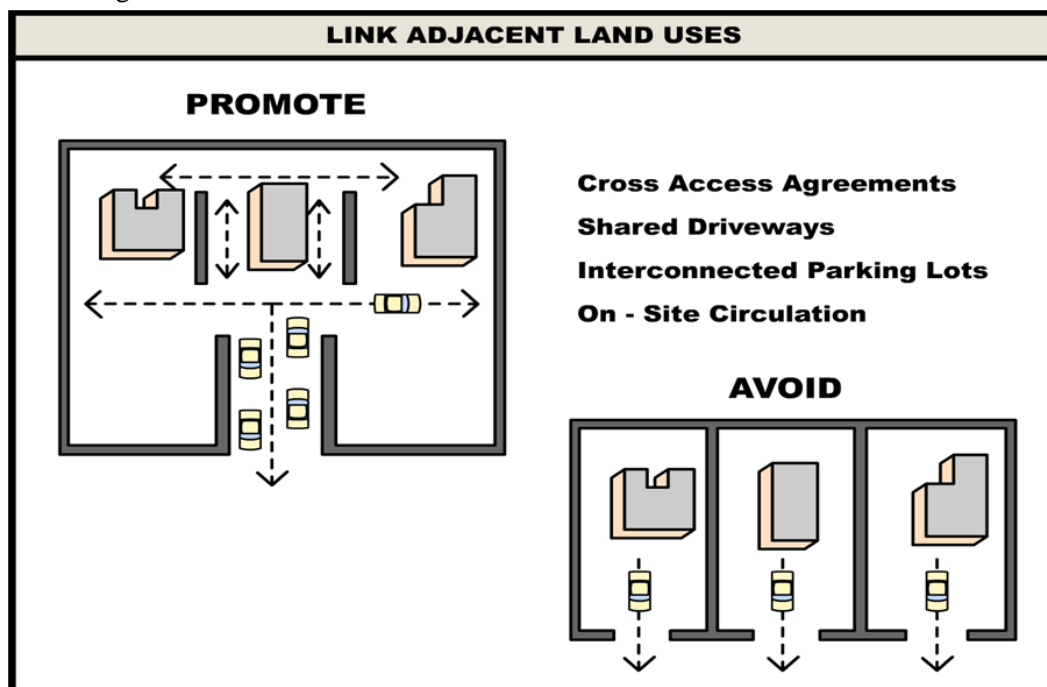
West Street Conceptual Section w/Sidewalks & Bike Lanes



Access management through the reduction and combining of access to individual parcels can lead safety improvements by reducing the number of points of conflict for vehicles entering and exiting the primary roadway, West Street. This can be difficult to achieve with privately owned parcels but should be encouraged where there are multiple uses/business on single parcels. An example is shown in figure 5.

FIGURE 5

Access Management

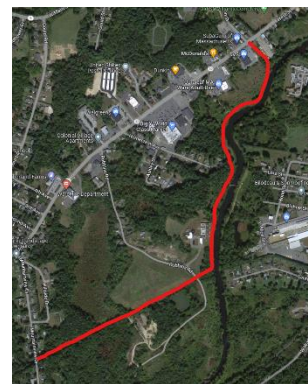


4.3. Bicycle Accommodations

In accordance with the current Federal Highway initiatives and MassDOT guidelines for complete streets, on-street bicycle accommodations have been considered as part of the potential roadway cross section. Technically the right-of-way width could provide for 5-foot bicycle lanes in each direction. However, the current conditions along this section of West Street with the traffic volumes, high accident rate, and access management concerns do not promote a high comfort level for cyclists sharing the travel lane.

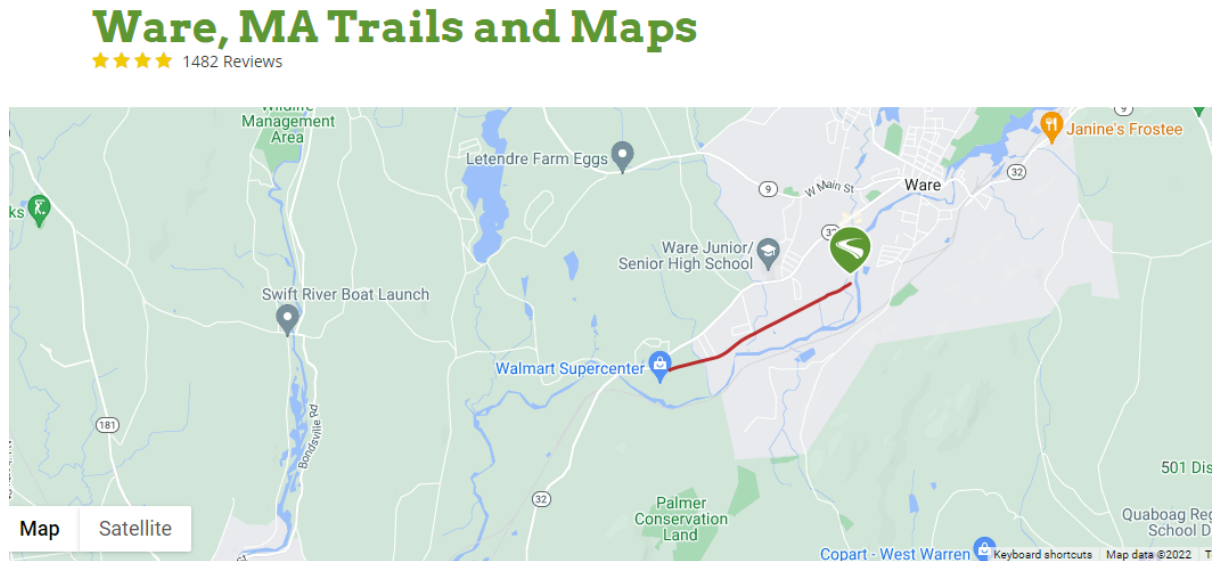
The West Street corridor could serve as a great avenue for bicyclists, both recreational and transportation users, benefitting from the business presence, public facilities, topography, and low posted speed limits. To accommodate bicyclists in an off-street setting, the Ware River Trail is now established and offers an alternative to the somewhat busy and uncomfortable bike conditions along West Street corridor, see figure 6. Bicycle access could also be taken off road and redirected along Robbins Road and connect to the Ware River Trail. The connection from West Street to the Ware River Trail needs to be developed and wayfinding signage developed to encourage it's use.

Pedestrians sidewalks should be provided along both sides of the road along the entire corridor. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) must be provided with any improvements or rehabilitation. The sidewalk clearance width with the existing sidewalks and along the entire corridor must be satisfied. This may require utility pole and/or hydrant relocations with additional property acquisitions. The existing ROW also allows room for two separate bike lanes (northbound and southbound). This change would reduce the travel lanes to 12'.



Recommend replacing old, worn/faded or missing signage on all crosswalks along the route. Further study is recommended to consider HAWK traffic signals (high visibility pedestrian crossing signal) in the area of the Ware schools campus and at mid-block sections that vehicles have poor visibility of pedestrians.

FIGURE 6
Ware River Trail



4.4. Developing the Character of West Street

While West Street faces many challenges to improving the character of the corridor, its natural areas and key position as the connection between major regional uses are strong assets to build upon. Carefully crafted zoning and design guidelines can help build a cohesive character for the corridor, while maintaining the expressed community desire to balance natural resource areas with sensitive development and planned economic growth.

Improvements to the look and feel of the West Street area are encouraged. Past master planning exercises and corridor studies have cited the desire for improved character along West Street and need for a local vision which balances development with the natural environment. Not only will improvements to the character of the corridor make the area more attractive to daily users, but it will also improve safety and help to encourage well-planned private investment.

To help create a sense of place and to limit sprawl, the focus of improvements should be to create consistency along the corridor and to foster well-defined nodes of development within the corridor. Consistency of streetscape elements including setbacks, building heights, materials and design standards, will provide a sense of cohesion and convey that West Street is a well-planned place. Defining development nodes will serve to protect sensitive habitats along the route, can increase synergy among businesses, can reduce the number of automobile trips by creating walkable nodes, and can improve traffic conditions by helping to set consistent driver expectations as traffic moves along the travel way.

Consistency and cohesion in the West Street environment can be achieved by the following means:

1. *Review and adjust zoning and dimensional regulations.*

Zoning components should be reviewed and adjusted as needed to encourage consistency in new development and redevelopment along the corridor. The following should be considered:

- Zoning that supports the concept of commercial nodes and protects resource areas.
- Consistent dimensional regulations across commercial areas in the corridor including development of consistent setbacks, building line, and building heights.
- Parking requirements that move lots away from the street edge, that require planting and buffering, and that create opportunities for shared parking.
- Landscape guidelines for planting and permeability.

2. Develop and implement design standards.

All buildings on the corridor need not look the same, however implementing design standards can help promote a consistent feel in the streetscape. Design standards to consider include elements such as: signage types and locations, lighting types and levels, landscape plantings and buffers, and building materials and site treatments.

3. Consider implementing design review as part of a streamlined permit process.

Design review of development projects provides opportunity for input into the development process. It allows for the oversight needed to ensure the level of consistency along the corridor necessary to establishing the desired sense of place.

4. Invest in roadway improvements.

Roadway improvements discussed previously will provide for both safety and consistency along the route. As part of the improvements, development of landscaped medians in key nodes will aid in traffic control, will allow for greening of the streetscape, and will promote walkability by providing safe areas for crossing. Coordinated roadway improvements can allow for consistency in road edge, dimensions, materials, lighting and signage, which, if well-planned, will contribute positively to the experience of the West Street corridor.

Additional development and redevelopment activities for this corridor are not expected to be significant traffic generators due to the development constraints inherent in the existing parcels. Discussions with Town officials did not identify any additional large-scale developments in the region that would generate additional traffic along this corridor. The roadway improvements should include traffic signal upgrades and roadway cross-section changes to accommodate all roadway users.

5. Create opportunities for multi-modal connectivity.

As previously discussed, multi-modal connectivity can support the development of a unique character for West Street. Wayfinding and connections to the multi-modal bike trail parallel to the corridor can help improve connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and support local usage. Additionally, a bike trail connecting the area's natural resources can help support business growth and development along the corridor by serving as an anchor attraction to the area. A trail system, in combination with improvements to support scenic areas along the corridor can help West Street reposition itself as an area for commerce, recreation and enjoyment of natural resources.

Development of corridor character is something that evolves over time. To set West Street on the path toward achieving this, the first steps are to set a vision, refine zoning tools and plan for infrastructure improvements. A focus on development nodes, balanced with rich natural resource areas, will serve to encourage investment, will improve commercial opportunities, and will result in an identifiable character for the corridor. With a supporting framework in place, West Street in Ware will be on a path to become a safer and more connected place, poised to attract the desired investment.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 21, 2022

TO: Robert Watchilla, Director of Planning & Community, Town of Ware

FROM: David Loring, P.E., LEED AP, ENV SP, Vice President

RE: **Ware - Corridor Buildout Project**
Funding Opportunities
PARE Project No. 22072

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Town with potential funding resource opportunity to achieve funding of the West Street Corridor Buildout from multiple programs. A brief description of each funding program is provided below, including eligibility requirements and the process for application.

1.0 Complete Streets Funding Program

The MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program provides technical assistance and construction funding to eligible municipalities. Eligible municipalities must pass a Complete Streets Policy (Tier 1) and develop a Prioritization Plan (Tier 2). The Town of Ware has completed these steps and is currently in Tier 3, and as a result is eligible to receive up to \$400,000 in construction funding. To apply, visit the Massachusetts Complete Streets Program Portal at <https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/CompleteStreets/Account/Login>.

2.0 Chapter 90 Program

The Chapter 90 Program provides funding for projects and expenditures that create or extend the life of local capital facilities. Eligible components of this project would include pavement resurfacing, traffic signs/signals, sidewalks, bike lanes, and drainage. Funding allocated for each municipality is approved by Massachusetts Legislature. For the Fiscal Year 2023, the town of Ware was allocated \$421,861. To pursue funding, the following steps would need to be taken:

1. Submit a Project Request on Massachusetts Project Intake Tool (MaPIT) for review by your District State Aid Engineer (SAE). The Project Request details the proposed project including scope, a preliminary estimate, and environmental punch list.
2. Submit a Reimbursement Request to your District SAE as expenses are incurred or upon project completion.

*Ware, Ma is located in District 2. SAE is Stefan Szulc, (857) 368-2217.

3.0 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program

The SS4A program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. Due to the increase in traffic accidents documented in the Study Report conducted, this project may be eligible to receive funding. To apply for funding the following steps would need to be taken:

3. Complete the registration process on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). This typically takes 2-4 weeks to complete.
4. Once registered, the final application must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Thursday, September 15, 2022.

4.0 MassWorks Infrastructure Program

The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides funding for public infrastructure projects that support and accelerate housing production, spur private development, and create jobs throughout the Commonwealth. Applications for FY23 have been closed, however when made available an application can be made for FY24. Prior to applying it is highly recommended to submit an Expression of Interest which allows an applicant to seek guidance from the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) and partner agencies. The Expression of Interest and Full Application can be submitted at <https://eohed.intelligrants.com>.

5.0 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The STIP is a combined effort between MassDOT and many state agencies that work together to design and build projects such as Bicycle Paths, Bridges, Roadways, Sidewalks, and Transit Investments. To be considered for TIP funding, a project must be approved by MassDOT's Project Review Committee. Projects must be submitted to MassDOT through the Massachusetts Project Intake Tool (MaPIT). The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) considers projects for funding through its six investment programs: Complete Streets Program, Intersection Improvements Program, Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections Program, Major Infrastructure Program, Community Connections Program, and Transit Modernization Program.

6.0 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program is a federal-state partnership that provides communities low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. Wastewater and stormwater systems being replaced in this project make it eligible for assistance under the CWSRF. Ways in which the CWSRF offers assistance include low-interest loans or purchase of debt. To apply, a Project Evaluation Form (PEF) must be submitted at <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DEP/SRFMADEP/logineSRF.aspx> no later than 12:00 noon on August 12, 2022.

7.0 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) provides low interest loans to eligible recipients for drinking water infrastructure projects. Water mains and related systems being replaced in this project make it eligible for funding from this program. To apply, a Project Evaluation Form (PEF) must be submitted at

<https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DEP/SRFMADEP/logineSRF.aspx> no later than 12:00 noon on August 12, 2022.

8.0 Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program

The Shared Streets and Spaces Program is administered by the MassDOT and provides funding to municipalities and public transit authorities to quickly implement improvements to plazas, sidewalks, curbs, streets, bus stops, parking areas, and other public spaces in support of public health, safe mobility, and strengthened commerce. Applications for the current grant round have been closed, however with the success of the program it is expected to be renewed for another round. Depending on project type different amounts of funding can be awarded. For bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure up to \$200,000 can be awarded. For main streets repurposing up to \$100,000 can be awarded. Lastly, for purchase of equipment up to \$50,000 can be awarded.

The available funding opportunities are fluid and evolving with programmatic changes and new programs introduced through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Pare, through our contacts with Government Agencies, Professional Organizations, and even our professional peers are constantly receiving new information and communicating this back to our clients for assistance with their projects. If we can be of any assistance with grant applications, scheduling, estimating, or scoping a project we will make ourselves available to you.



West Street Corridor

Zoning & Build-Out Analysis + Market Review Technical Memo

McCabe Enterprises with Pare Corporation, June 2022

McCABE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert Watchilla, Ware Planning & Community Development Director
Stuart Beckley, Ware Town Manager
CC: David Loring, Vice President, Pare Corporation
FROM: Kathleen McCabe, FAICP, McCabe Enterprises
DATE: June 30, 2022
RE: West Street Corridor Build Out Analysis Technical Memorandum

As part of the Pare team, please find the Technical Memorandum for the West Street Corridor Build Out Analysis.

It was a pleasure working with you and meeting with the Board of Selectmen. If you have any further questions or wish additional information, please feel free to contact our office at 617 469-9444, or via the mobile 617 549-7985. We may be contacted via email at mccabe@plan-do.com



Introduction

The West Street Corridor stretches 0.9 miles from Main Street in Downtown Ware (the intersection of Route 9 and Route 32), south along West Street to Flat Brook and the Ware Public School educational campus. The West Street Corridor encompasses 148 parcels in 187.5 acres, exclusive of streets. West Street doubles as Route 32, a state road in part. It is the southern gateway to Ware from Palmer and the MassPike. Over the past forty years, retail strip development has occurred on much on the West Street Corridor. The Town desires to sustain and build a healthy tax base.

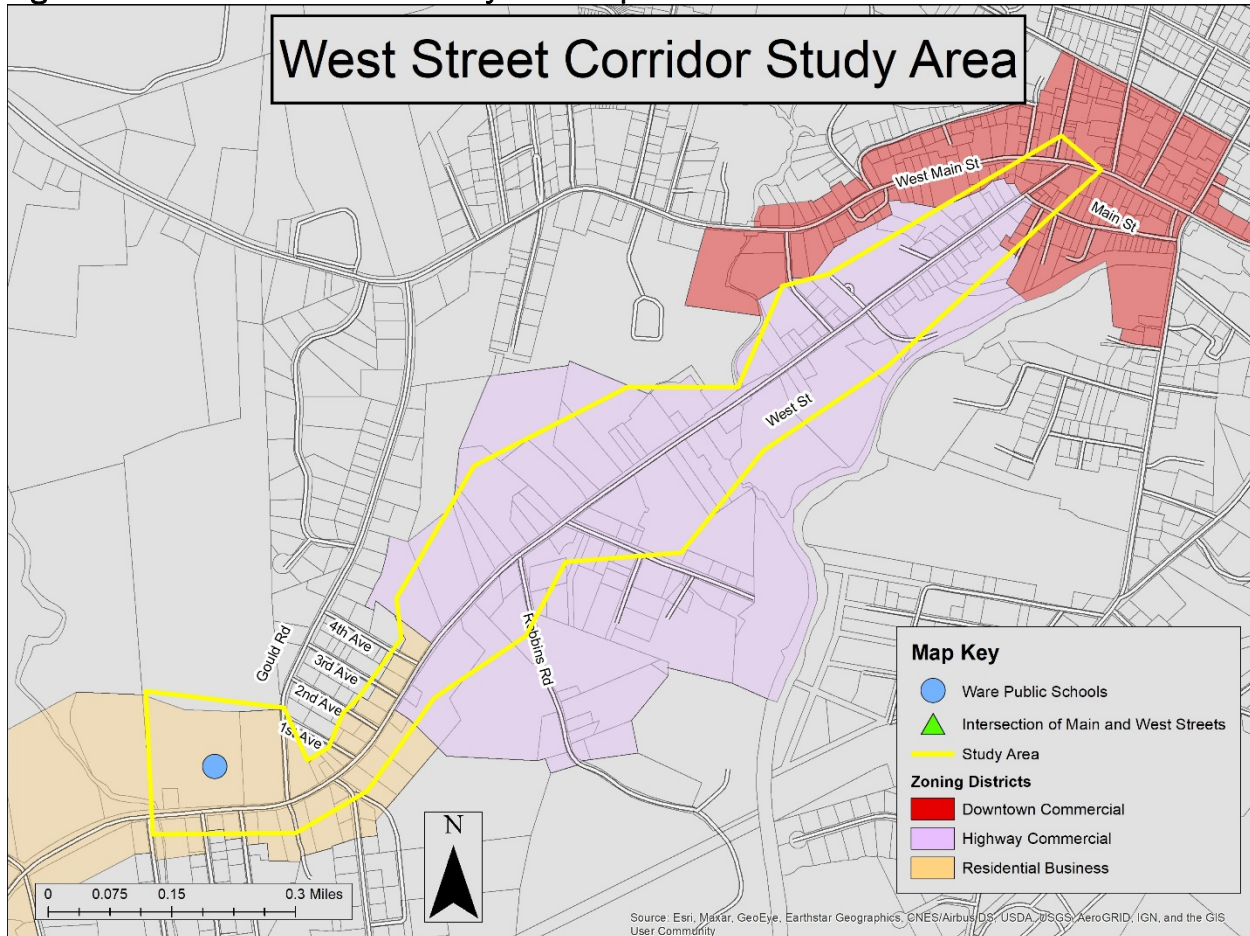
The Town of Ware in February 2022 requested proposals for a Build-Out Analysis with a Traffic Operations assessment for the West Street Corridor. Citing recent new development on West Street, the Town sought guidance as to how best to prepare for new commercial uses, while managing traffic operations and enabling easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists along the corridor. Ware is also interested in options for redevelopment, including how to better utilize vacant and blighted parcels along the corridor.

This technical memorandum details the following:

- Demographics and Ware's Potential for Growth
- Real Estate Market Overview
- Current Zoning and the Zoning Districts in the West Street Corridor
 - Downtown Commercial District
 - Highway Commercial District
 - Residential Business District
 - Suburban Residential District
- Build-out Analysis
- Key findings and Recommendations.

Following this technical memorandum is an Appendix with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation presented and discussed with the Ware Board of Selectmen on June 21, 2022, including suggestions offered by the Selectmen.

Figure 1. West Street Corridor Study Area Map.



Ware and Growth

Population

The Town of Ware, per the 2020 decennial census, has 10,066 residents. Ware's population grew 2.0% over the past decade. The Town of Ware spans forty square miles.

Ware is surrounded by seven municipalities in four different counties. They are Belchertown in Hampshire County, New Salem in Franklin County, Palmer in Hampden County, and four Worcester County municipalities – Hardwick, Petersham, Warren and West Brookfield. Ware and its seven neighboring towns cover 322.4 miles with a population of 51,516 people, a 1.6% population increase from 2010. Ware was one of four municipalities in the Ware vicinity whose population increased in 2020 over 2010. Four municipalities – New Salem, Warren, Petersham and Hardwick lost population in the past decade. Four municipalities grew – Belchertown led with a 4.8% population growth followed by West Brookfield (3.6%); Palmer (2.5%), and Ware (2.0%).

Ware is part of Hampshire County. Hampshire County's population grew 2.7% from 2010 to 2020, a slightly higher growth rate than Ware's 2.0% population growth rate. Adjoining Franklin County lost 0.5% of its population in the past decade. The population of Hampden County immediately to Ware's south increased slightly at 0.5%. Worcester County's population, to Ware's east, grew 8.0% from 2010 to 2020, exceeding the statewide population increase of 7.4%.

Table 1. Population Change, 2010 to 2020 for Ware and Surrounding Towns.

	Ware	Belchertown	Hardwick	New Salem	Palmer	Petersham	Warren	West Brookfield	Ware Area Towns
2010	9,872	14,649	2,990	990	12,140	1,234	5,135	3,701	50,711
2020	10,066	15,350	2,667	983	12,448	1,194	4,975	3,833	51,516
Change 2010 to 2020	194	701	(323)	(7)	308	(40)	(160)	132	805
Percent Change	2.0%	4.8%	-10.8%	-0.7%	2.5%	-3.2%	-3.1%	3.6%	1.6%

Source: 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census, US Census Bureau & McCabe Enterprises.

Households

The number of households in Ware in 2020 according to the American Community Survey (5-year estimate) was 4,289. This represents a small decrease (-1.4%) in the number of

households since 2010. The number of households in Ware and the seven surrounding municipalities decreased slightly (-0.2%). Four municipalities – Belchertown, New Salem, Petersham, and West Brookfield – increased the number of households. Ware, along with Hardwick, Palmer and Warren experienced a decrease in the number of households. The change as to the number of households and household size in depicted in the following table.

Table 2. Change in Households – Number and Size – 2010 to 2020.

	2010 Households	2010 Household Size	2020 Households	2020 Household Size	Change 2010 to 2020	Percent Change 2010 to 2020
Belchertown	5,442	2.64	5,667	2.66	225	4.1%
Hardwick	1,180	2.48	1,101	2.66	(79)	-6.7%
New Salem	382	2.44	467	2.28	85	22.3%
Palmer	5,189	2.34	4,904	2.48	(285)	-5.5%
Petersham	429	2.66	465	2.29	36	8.4%
Ware	4,352	2.27	4,289	2.29	(63)	-1.4%
Warren	1,990	2.44	1,971	2.36	(19)	-1.0%
West Brookfield	1,447	2.45	1,501	2.36	54	3.7%
Ware & Surrounding Towns	20,411		20,365		(46)	-0.2%

Source: American Community Survey 2020 and 2010, 5-year Estimates and McCabe Enterprises.

Housing

In 2020, Ware had 4,289 occupied housing units in the Town and 511 vacant housing units for a total of 4,800 housing units. From 2010 to 2020, eighty new housing units were constructed in Ware. The number of housing units in Ware grew 1.7%, slightly less than the overall population growth in Ware for the same period.

The number of housing units grew in Ware and each of the seven neighboring municipalities. Belchertown added 294 housing units from 2010 to 2020 and led with a housing growth rate of 5.2%. Overall Ware and its seven neighboring towns added 551 housing units from 2010 to 2020, for an aggregate housing unit growth rate of 1.6%.

Table 3. Housing Units in Ware and Surrounding Towns.

	Ware	Belchertown	Hardwick	New Salem	Palmer	Petersham	Warren	West Brookfield	Ware Area Towns
2010	4,720	5,672	1,169	513	5,185	535	2,190	1,661	21,645
2020	4,800	5,966	1,191	524	5,301	546	2,215	1,678	22,221
Change 2010 to 2020	80	294	22	11	116	11	25	17	576
Percent Change	1.7%	5.2%	1.9%	2.1%	2.2%	2.1%	1.1%	1.0%	2.7%

Sources: 2020 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates and McCabe Enterprises.

Household Size

Over the past couple decades average household size has been decreasing. The average household size in 2020 for homeowner households in Ware is 2.45 persons. Although 2020 saw a very slight uptick in household size in Ware and other nearby rural areas. This small rise in household size may be attributable in part to movement to more rural and small towns as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. As a result of the Coronavirus-induced economic disruption of 2020, people sought to reduce costs, which may have also contributed to the slight rise in household size in 2020.

Table 4. Average Household Size, 2010 and 2020.

	Ware		Hampshire County		Massachusetts	
	Homeowner Households	Renter Households	Homeowner Households	Renter Households	Homeowner Households	Renter Households
2010	2.45	1.83	2.47	1.92	2.67	2.15
2020	2.45	1.99	2.48	1.96	2.68	2.21

Sources: 2010 and 2020 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Jobs and Business Establishments

Ware like many municipalities across the Commonwealth and the US, experienced a downturn in employment in 2020 attributable to the pandemic. Ware, however, had been losing jobs from the 2010 high of 2,677 persons working in Ware. In 2020, local employment numbered 2,442 jobs in Ware. By the second quarter of 2021, employment levels had increased to 2,532, adding ninety local jobs in Ware.

The number of business establishments with employees has steadily increased in Ware since 2010 when there were 261 business establishments. By the end of the second quarter in 2021, the number of businesses establishments in Ware with employees numbered 293. The growth rate for business establishments in Ware from 2010 to second quarter 2021 was 12.3%.

Table 5. People Working in Ware, Employed by Ware Employers.

	Average Monthly Employment	Ware Business Establishments
2021 Q2	2532	293
2020 Annual	2442	283
2015 Annual	2590	268
2010 Annual	2677	261
Change since 2010	-145	32
Percent Change since 2010	-5.4%	12.3%

Source: MA Dept of Labor & Workforce, QCEW and McCabe Enterprises.

Labor Force and Unemployment

The number of Ware residents participating in the labor force has steadily increased since 2010. Employment and labor force participation dipped in 2020 to below 2010 levels, which is attributable to the Coronavirus pandemic. In 2010, Ware was experiencing high unemployment due to the Great Recession. In 2010 and 2020, unemployment rates in Ware exceeded nine percent. The annual unemployment rate in 2021 for Ware was 6.4%, indicating that Ware was on the road to recovering from the pandemic.

Table 6. Ware Labor Force Participation, Employment & Unemployment.

	Ware Labor Force	Ware Employment	Ware Unemployment	Ware Unemployment Rate	Massachusetts Unemployment Rate
2010 Annual	5,258	4,762	496	9.4%	8.1%
2015 Annual	5,263	4,930	333	6.3%	4.1%
2020 Annual	5,094	4,626	468	9.2%	7.4%
2021 June	5,362	5,040	322	6.0%	6.2%
2021 Annual	5,388	5,041	347	6.4%	5.7%
2022 February	5,490	5,162	328	6.5%	5.0%
Change 2010 to 2021 Annual	130	279	(149)	-3.0%	-2.4%
Percent Change 2010 to 2021 Annual	2.5%	5.9%	-30.0%	-31.9%	-29.6%

Source: MA Department of Labor & Workforce Development, LAUS, McCabe Enterprises.

The number of Ware residents participating in the labor force (working or actively looking for work) rose to 5,388 for 2021 overall. This represents a 2.5% increase in the size of the labor force and the employment of an additional 279 Ware residents. This trajectory of labor force growth and increasing number of employed Ware residents has continued in the first months of 2022. More people are returning to the labor force in Ware and finding employment.

Ware's Future Growth

By several indicators Ware grew modestly from 2010 to 2020, as summarized in Table 7. The population grew 2.0% over the past decade. The size of the Ware labor force increased 2.5% from 2010 to 2021. The number of Ware residents employed grew 5.9%. New business establishments in Ware with employees grew 12.3%. However, two indicators, new household formation and jobs created by local Ware businesses, both lagged. New household formation declined slightly (-1.4%). The number of jobs in Ware declined 5.4% in the period of 2010 to 2021Q2. However, there has been an increase in the number of jobs at Ware businesses since the 2020 – ninety jobs have been added.

New household formation supports retail spending and growth. Retention and increasing local jobs in Ware foster additional economic activity and positive benefits. These lagging indicators warn of potential storm clouds, and the need for the Town to support economic development to support business and local job growth. Increasing number of jobs is a catalyst for new household formation and housing.

Economic growth is regional. The UMass Donahue Institute (UMDI) developed projections for population, households and number of jobs as to municipality as part of MassDOT's and the regional planning agencies' development of 2040 area transportation plans. The UMDI projections for Ware and the surrounding towns is reported in Table 8. UMDI is forecasting fairly stable future conditions with very minor growth in Ware and the surrounding towns overall. UMDI forecast for Ware anticipates a growth in the number of household units as the population remains stable or decreases. This suggests that household size will decrease. During the pandemic, there was a slight increase in household size.

County-wide data as to changes in population, number of households and housing units from 2010 to 2020 indicates some modest growth in Hampshire County, where Ware is situated, along with neighboring Franklin and Hampden Counties. Worcester County's population grew 8% in the last decade. This growth rate is similar to cities and towns in greater Boston. Worcester County includes communities along I-495 and there is commuter

rail services seven days a week from Worcester to Boston. Worcester's geographic proximity to Boston combined with transit and easy highway access have encouraged growth in the county as people seek more affordable housing alternatives and take advantage of growing job opportunities along I-495 and in the City of Worcester.

Table 7. Growth Indicators for Ware.

	Actual Change Ware 2010 to 2020
Population	2.0%
Households	< 1.4% >
Housing Units	1.7%
Jobs in Ware	< 5.4% >
Business Establishments	12.3%
Labor Force	2.5%
Employment of Ware Residents (in Ware & elsewhere)	5.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Dept of Unemployment Assistance, LAUS, QCEW, and McCabe Enterprises.

Table 8. UMass Donahue Institute Growth Projections for Ware and Ware Area Towns.

	Town of Ware			Ware & Surrounding Towns		
	2020	2030	2040	2020	2030	2040
Population	-0.1%	0.7%	-3.1%	2.3%	1.2%	0.5%
Households	7.0%	7.6%	1.2%	9.2%	7.0%	3.3%
Jobs	-9.9%	-0.4%	0.2%	-5.9%	-0.3%	0.3%

Sources: UMass Donahue Institute and McCabe Enterprises.

Table 9.

Actual County-wide Changes in Population, Households, and Housing Units, 2010 to 2020.

	Population Percent Change 2010 to 2020	Households Percent Change 2010 to 2020	Average Household Size 2020	Percent Change in # of Housing Units 2010 to 2020
Massachusetts	7.4%	5.4%	2.50	4.2%
Franklin County	-0.5%	1.1%	2.24	2.4%
Hampden County	0.5%	1.6%	2.50	1.7%
Hampshire County	2.7%	1.7%	2.31	3.3%
Worcester County	8.0%	5.3%	2.54	3.5%

Sources: US Census Bureau Decennial Census 2010, 2020; American Community Survey 2010 and 2020, 5-year estimates; and McCabe Enterprises.

Real Estate Market Highlights

Ware is a rural market and the commercial center for Ware and the surrounding towns. The leading real estate investment trends as to sectors occurring in Massachusetts and the potential application to the Ware real estate market are highlighted here:

- Housing – single family and multi-family, responding in part to statewide housing crisis
- Warehousing (responding to the major shift to e-commerce)
- Life sciences (particularly in eastern Massachusetts centered around Boston-Cambridge but moving to the suburbs somewhat).
- Office market is weak as employers assess the impact of hybrid and remote work. There is some need for small offices for services and professional offices.
- Retail market is soft and little new retail is being constructed. The West Street corridor has commercial vacancies including spaces in the strip centers.
- Retail and offices are being included in some mixed-use development with only small proportions of commercial space being developed. Developers (and their bankers) are preferring projects for which a commercial retail or office tenant is committed prior to construction.
- Rapid rise in construction costs is further chilling speculative construction without pre-identified tenants/ users. Housing and warehousing are the exception.
- The Wall Street Journal recently reported that on a national level rural areas are experiencing noticeable new levels of investment and rising rural home sales for the first time in many years, which is propitious for Ware.

Commercial lease rates in the Palmer-Ware area range from \$8.00 to \$14.77 per sf depending upon the age and condition of the building. Properties owned by larger commercial investors tend to be triple-net rents (NNN). A triple-net lease requires the tenant to pay the monthly rent, as well as the real estate tax bill, property insurance, and operating expenses such as utilities and maintenance costs.

New Construction. There have been two properties with new construction in the study area in the past five years. A fast-food establishment – Taco Bell – was built in 2017 at 118 West Street. The second, a mini-warehouse storage facility was constructed in 2019 at 167 West Street. Just south of the study area at 256 West Street, there is a pending sale of 8.2 acres in the Rural Business zone, proposing a tractor sales project.

Properties for Sale. In late spring/early summer 2022, there are four properties listed for sale in the West Street corridor study area, plus one property being actively marketed for commercial leasing. The listings are highlighted in the next table.

Table 10. West Street Corridor Properties For Sale or Lease.

<p>35 West Street Assessor ID: 56-0-35 Asking For Sale Price: \$295,000. Assessed Valuation: \$174,300 Asking Lease Price: \$1,600/ month Land Area: 0.3 acre, 13,068 sf Building SF: 5,886 Year Built: 1884 Current Use: Vacant Zoning: HC</p>	
<p>124 West Street Assessing ID: 56-0-94 Asking For Sale Price: \$5,250,000. Assessed Valuation: \$1,504,200. Land Area: 7 acres; 304,920 sf Building SF: 16,609 Year Built: 1989 Current Use: Retail strip center with O'Reilly Auto Parts, Cura-leaf, Domino Pizza, Asian Garden Restaurant, H&R Block, and 2 vacancies Zoning: HC</p>	
<p>139 West Street Assessor ID: 56-0-7 Asking For Sale Price: Not disclosed Assessed Valuation: \$1,392,100. Land Area: 1.73 acres, 75,359 sf Building SF: 18,000 sf Year Built: 1965 Current Use: Retail Strip: Dunkin Donuts; Dollar General; and Subway Zoning: HC</p>	
<p>193 West Street Assessor ID: 52-0-69 Asking For Sale Price: \$475,000. Assessed Valuation: \$220,300. Land Area: 9.8 acres, 429,502 sf Building SF: 2,491 Year Built: 1890 Current Use: Single Family House & Land Zoning: HC and SR</p>	

197 West Street (2 commercial units for lease)

Assessor ID: 52-0-50

Assessed Valuation: \$280,100.

Asking Lease Price:

- Unit 1: \$17/sf for 2700 sf
- Unit 2: \$14/sf for 2,300 sf with full restaurant equipment

Land Area: 0.35 acre, 15,426 sf

Building SF: 3,144

Year Built: 1975

Current Use: Commercial—Vacant

Restaurant

Zoning: RB



Sources: LoopNet; Showcase; Town of Ware Assessing Records; Google Maps. Compiled by McCabe Enterprises.

Residential. Town-wide Ware has experienced a rapid escalation of median sales price of single-family residential homes over the past two years, rising 38.8% in 2021 over 2019 median sales prices. Ware's percentage increase in single-family home sales was second highest amongst Ware and the surrounding ten towns. Only Petersham exceeded Ware with a 52.23% price increase. Rising home prices have been occurring throughout the Commonwealth, with the exception of parts of Berkshire County. Eastern Massachusetts has been experiencing rapidly rising home sale prices pricing many buyers out of the market, prompting home buyers to consider more affordable communities, such as Ware in central and western Massachusetts. Table 11 details the changes in median single family home prices in the Ware area from 2019 to 2021.

Table 11. Median Single-Family Home Prices, 2019 to 2021 in the Ware Area.

Municipality	2021 Median SF Home Sale Price	2019 Median S-F Home Sale Price	Percent Change in Sales Price	# of 2021 SF Home Sales	# of 2019 SF Home Sales	Percent Change in # of Home Sales
Ware	\$ 266,500	\$ 192,000	38.8%	128	111	15.3%
Barre	\$ 305,500	\$ 225,000	35.8%	54	70	-22.9%
Belchertown	\$ 347,500	\$ 299,450	16.1%	166	158	5.1%
Hardwick	\$ 304,900	\$ 257,400	18.5%	29	21	38.1%
Monson	\$ 300,000	\$ 239,500	25.3%	106	98	8.2%
New Braintree	\$ 360,000	\$ 299,000	20.4%	11	9	22.2%
New Salem	\$ 282,450	\$ 244,700	15.4%	14	12	16.7%
Petersham	\$ 350,900	\$ 230,500	52.2%	22	18	22.2%
Palmer	\$ 254,000	\$ 207,000	22.7%	130	135	-3.7%
Warren	\$ 276,000	\$ 203,000	36.0%	49	50	-2.0%
West Brookfield	\$ 322,500	\$ 255,000	26.5%	63	43	46.5%

Sources: Warren Group, Boston Globe and McCabe Enterprises.

Zoning and the West Street Corridor

The West Street Corridor Study area stretches along West Street from the north at Main Street in Downtown (the juncture of Routes 9 and 32) southwesterly to Flat Brook, just south of the Ware public schools complex and easterly of Brookside Manor. The Flat Brook flows into the Ware River. There are 150 parcels within the corridor encompassing 188.7 acres. Much of the corridor is developed, although there are a few vacant land parcels.

There are three major zoning districts which guide most of the development in the West Street corridor. They are: Downtown Commercial (DTC), Highway Business (HB), and Residential Business (RB). One parcel, at the southern tip of the West Street Corridor, is in the Suburban Residential (SR) District. This discussion and analysis focus on the three major zoning districts in the corridor.

DTC – Downtown Commercial. The Downtown Commercial zone in the West Street Corridor is just south of Main Street, extending slightly south of Pulaski Street. The Downtown Commercial Zone is based on the historic commercial and industrial uses along Main Street in downtown Ware. There are a few existing residential uses, principally on upper levels of multi-story downtown buildings and at the perimeters of Downtown Ware, where one can find older single family, two-family and three-family homes, and the occasional multi-family apartments. The Downtown Commercial zone has thirty-two parcels occupying the smallest land area – 6.2 acres – in the West Street Corridor.

HC – Highway Commercial. The Highway Commercial district on Route 32 south of downtown is the location of the majority of the retail and businesses in Ware, and the locus of more suburban-style, auto-dependent development. There remain a number of residences in the area, including two multi-family developments. The zoning code indicates that the “Future uses in this area are expected to be commercial.” The majority of the land along the West Street Corridor is zoned Highway Commercial from just south of Downtown to Fourth Avenue on the west side, and opposite Second Avenue on the east side. The Highway Commercial zone runs approximately 0.9 miles along both sides of West Street and encompasses the major portion of the West Street Corridor. There are ninety parcels comprising 116.4 acres.

RB – Residential Business. This district features institutional uses, such as the Ware Public Schools complex and the National Guard Recruiting Office, small commercial uses, often professional and services offices – insurance, dentistry, bookkeeping, as well as residential

uses. The RB district in the West Street Corridor Study Area has twenty-seven parcels covering 58.1 acres.

Zoning uses dimensional and use requirements to govern development patterns. The dimensional requirements for the zoning along the West Street Corridor are found in Table 12.

A recap of the allowed uses as of right and by Special Permit for each of the zoning districts found in the West Street Corridor can be found as a supplement as the conclusion of the technical memorandum. The Highway Commercial zone has the largest number of allowed uses, enabling mixed use development as well as permitting a wide range of potential investments and uses in the zone.

A summary of each of the zoning districts, as to the number and character of the parcels, and conformity with the land dimensional features is detailed next.

Table 12. Dimensional Requirements for West Street Corridor Zones.

		DTC – Downtown Commercial		HC – Highway Commercial	RB – Residential Business
MINIMUM LOT Area (sf)*		R = 5,000 sf NR = None		20,000 sf	SF/TF = 20,000 SF; NR = 30,000
MINIMUM FRONTAGE		50 ft		100 ft	SF/TF= 125 ft NR = 175'
MAXIMUM DENSITY MF du/ac		20		10	NA (use not allowed)
MINIMUM SETBACKS	Front	R = 15'	NR = 0'	25	25
	Side	R = 10'	NR = 0	20	20
	Rear	R = 20'	NR = 20'	30	30
MAX HEIGHT (feet)		40		30	30
MAX STORIES		3		2.5	2.5
MAXIMUM BLDG COVERAGE		60%		20%	20%
MAXIMUM IMPERVIOUS SURFACE AREA		80%		40%	40%

*Minimum lot area can be reduced to 20,000 sf, if parcel is serviced by municipal water or sewer. 12-inch water line runs down West Street. Thus, all lots on West St have a minimum 20,000 sf lot area requirement, unless in DTC zone.

The West Street Corridor Zoning Districts

Downtown Commercial Zone

Table 13. Overview of Downtown Commercial Zone in West Street Corridor.

DTC	All Parcels	Privately Owned	Exempt Parcels
Number of Parcels	30	27	3
Total Land Area (acres)	5.0	3.6	1.41
Total Land Area (sf)	217,364	155,945	61,420
Total Assessed Value	\$ 6,501,700	\$ 3,450,500	\$ 3,051,200
Annual Real Estate Taxes		\$ 66,733	

Table 14. Parcel Sizes in DTC District with the West Street Corridor.

Parcel Sizes in DTC Zone	All DTC Parcels		Privately-Owned Parcels	
	Size (acres)	Size (sf)	Size (acres)	Size (sf)
Smallest Parcel by Size	0.30	1,307	0.30	1,307
Largest Parcel by Size	0.82	35,719	0.64	27,878
Mean Avg Size Parcel	0.17	7,246	0.13	5,776
Median Size Parcel	0.155	6,781	0.12	5,227

Table 15. DTC Non-Conforming Parcels as to Minimum Lot Size and Minimum Frontage Dimensional Zoning Requirements in the West Street Corridor.

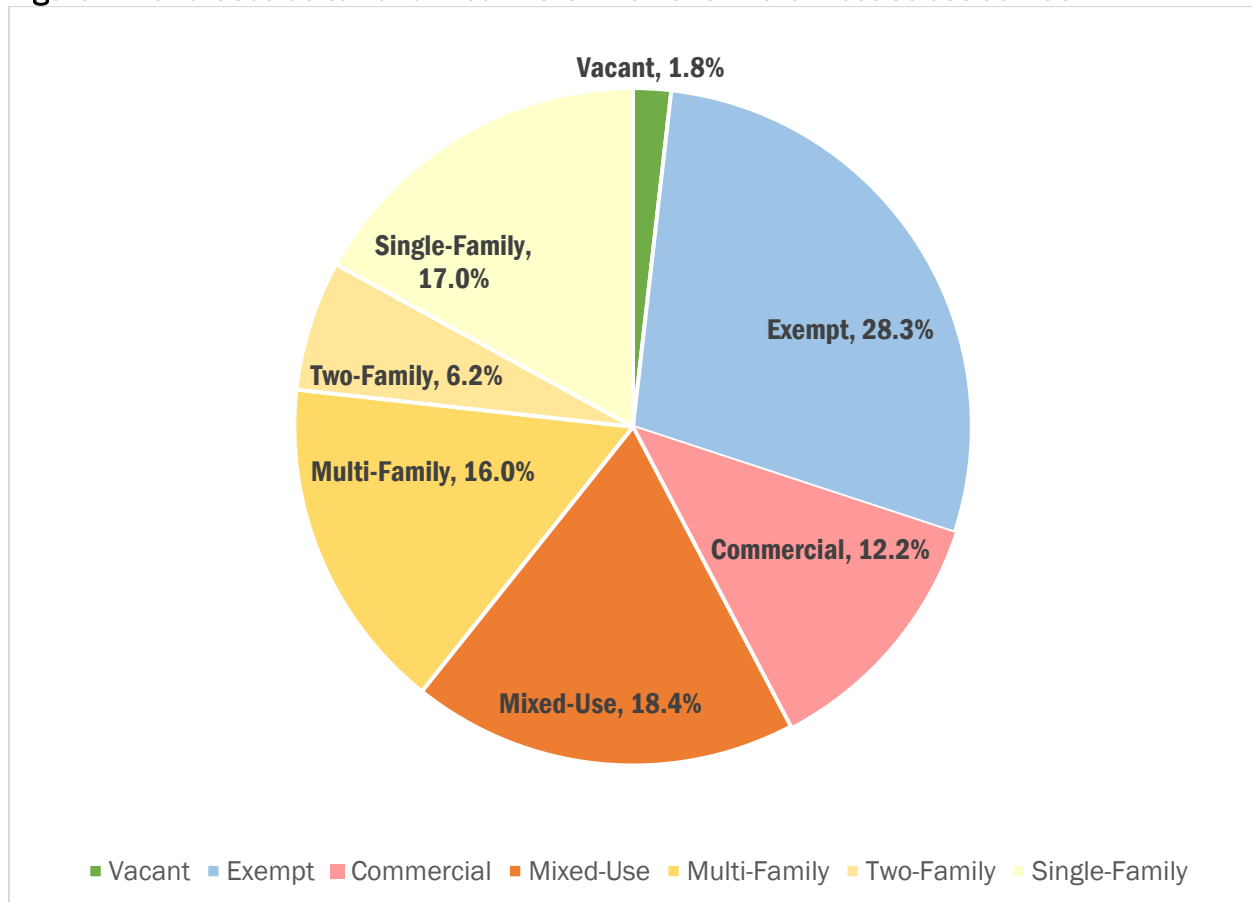
Non-Conforming Parcels as to DTC Minimum Lot Size	14 parcels	47% of DTC parcels in West St Corridor do not meet Minimum Lot Size Requirements
Non-Conforming DTC Parcels as to Minimum Frontage	10 parcels	33% of DTC parcels do not meet Minimum Frontage Standard
Total DTC Non-Conforming Parcels as to Minimum Lot Size or Min. Frontage	15 parcels	50% DTC parcels are Non-Conforming
Land Area of DTC Non-Conforming Parcels	1.16 acres	23% of land area is comprised by non-conforming parcels
Assessed Value of DTC Non-Conforming Parcels	\$ 1,555,300.	24% of Assessed Value of DTC parcels in West St. Corridor
Taxable Assessed Value of DTC Non-Conforming Parcels	\$1,509,700.	44% of Taxable Assessed Value of HC parcels

Table 16. Land Uses in the Downtown Commercial Zone in West Street Corridor.

	Percent of Parcels	Percent of Total Assessed Valuation	Percent of Taxable Assessed Valuation	Percent of Land Area (acres)	Percent of Building SF
Vacant	3.3%	0.3%	0.6%	1.8%	0.0%
Exempts	10.0%	46.9%	0.0%	28.3%	24.7%
Commercial	16.7%	10.1%	19.0%	12.2%	11.0%
Industrial	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed-Use	16.7%	14.8%	27.8%	18.4%	24.3%
Multi-Family	20.0%	11.9%	22.5%	16.0%	21.7%
2F	6.7%	3.8%	7.1%	6.2%	6.4%
Single-Family	26.7%	12.2%	23.0%	17.0%	11.9%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Data Sources: Town of Ware Assessing data and McCabe Enterprises.

Figure 2. Land Uses as to Land Area in the DTC Zone in the West Street Corridor.



The West Street Corridor Zoning Districts

Highway Commercial District

Table 17. Overview of Highway Commercial Zone Parcels in West Street Corridor.

HC	All Parcels	Privately-Owned	Exempts
Number of Parcels	90	82	8
Total Land Area (acres)	116.42	88.59	27.83
Total Land Area (sf)	5,071,229	3,858,954	1,212,275
Total Assessed Value	\$ 35,418,500	\$ 28,659,700	\$ 6,758,800
Annual Real Estate Taxes		\$ 554,279	

Table 18. Parcel Sizes in HC District with the West Street Corridor.

Parcel Sizes in HC Zone	All Parcels	Privately-Owned	Exempts
Smallest Parcel by Size	.08 ac (3,484.8 sf)	.08 ac (3,484.8 sf)	0.25 ac (10,890 sf)
Largest Parcel by Size	9.86 ac (429,502 sf)	9.86 ac (429,502 sf)	9.6 ac (418,176 sf)
Mean Avg Size Parcel (acres)	1.29	1.08	3.48
Mean Average Size Parcel (sf)	56,347	47,045	151,589
Median Size Parcel (acre)	0.41	0.36	3.24
Median Size Parcel (sf)	17,642	15,682	141,134

Table 19. HC Non-Conforming Parcels as to Minimum Lot Size and Minimum Frontage Dimensional Zoning Requirements in the West Street Corridor.

Non-Conforming Parcels as to HC Minimum Lot Size	46 parcels	51% of HC parcels in West St Corridor do not meet Minimum Lot Size Requirements
Non-Conforming HC Parcels as to Minimum Frontage	47 parcels	52% of HC parcels do not meet Minimum Frontage Standard
Total HC Non-Conforming Parcels as to Minimum Lot Size or Min. Frontage	60 parcels	68% of HC parcels are Non-Conforming
Land Area of HC Non-Conforming Parcels	25.4 acres	22% of land area is comprised by non-conforming parcels
Assessed Value of HC Non-Conforming Parcels	\$10,657,900.	25% of Assessed Value of HC parcels in West St. Corridor
Taxable Assessed Value of HC Non-Conforming Parcels	\$ 8,844,100.	31% of Taxable Assessed Value of HC parcels

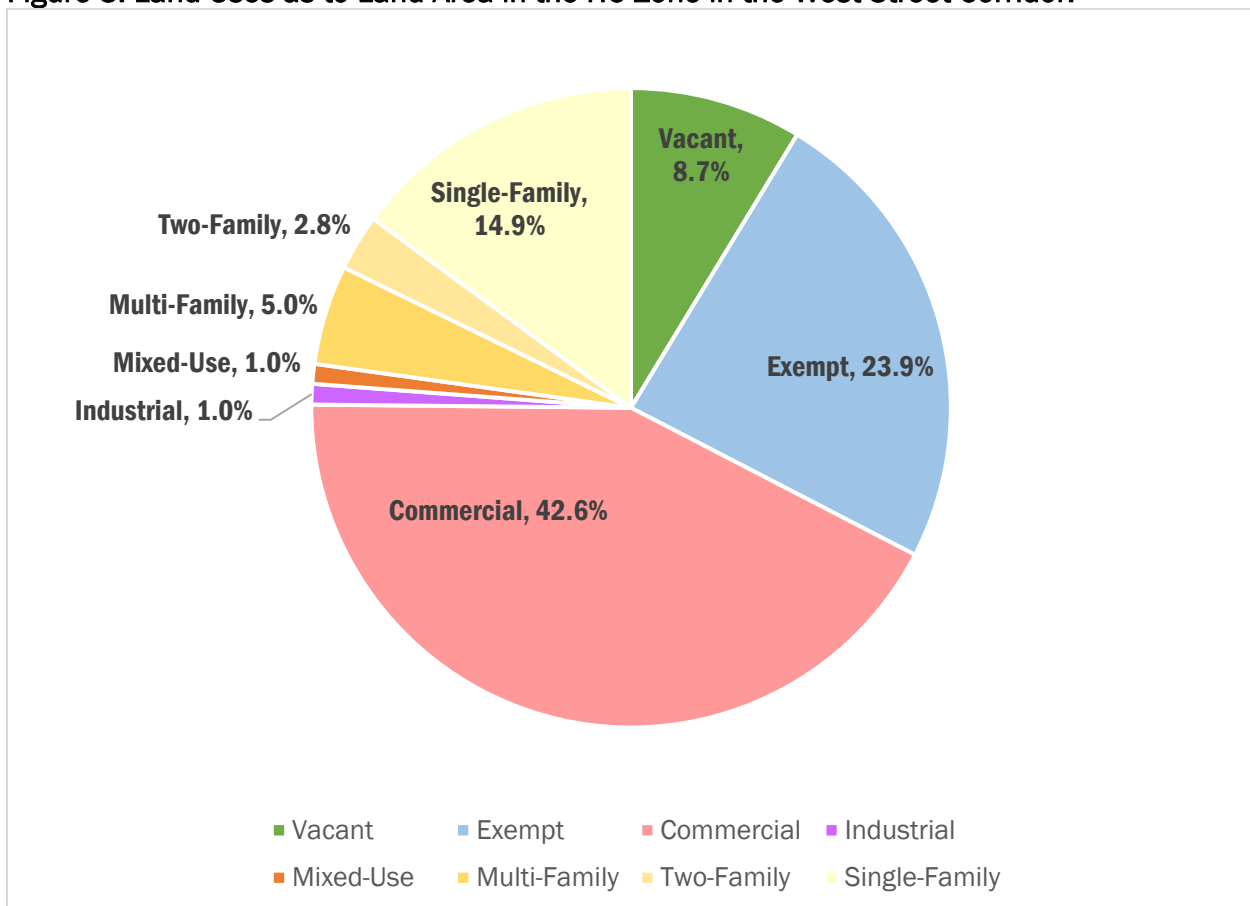
Table 20. Land Uses in the Highway Commercial Zone in West Street Corridor.

	Percent of Parcels	Percent of Total Assessed Valuation	Percent of Taxable Assessed Valuation	Percent of Land Area (acres)	Percent of Building SF
Vacant	7.8%	0.4%	0.5%	8.7%	0.0%
Exempts	8.9%	19.1%	0.0%	23.9%	13.2%
Commercial	34.4%	52.8%	65.3%	42.6%	50.9%
Industrial	1.1%	0.6%	0.7%	1.0%	1.3%
Mixed-Use	2.2%	1.5%	1.8%	1.0%	1.9%
Multi-Family	5.6%	12.1%	15.0%	4.3%	16.4%
Three-Family	4.4%	1.5%	1.9%	0.7%	2.9%
Two-Family	14.4%	4.4%	5.5%	2.8%	6.4%
Single-Family	21.1%	7.5%	9.3%	14.9%	7.1%

Data Sources: Town of Ware Assessing data and McCabe Enterprises.

Note: Three-family data has been combined with Multi-Family data in the pie chart below for the HC Zone.

Figure 3. Land Uses as to Land Area in the HC Zone in the West Street Corridor.



The West Street Corridor Zoning Districts

Residential Business Zone

Table 21. Overview of Residential Business Zone Parcels in West Street Corridor.

	All Parcels	Privately-Owned	Exempt
# of Parcels	27	25	2
Total Land Area (acres)	58.11	13.61	44.5
Total Land Area (sf)	2,531,272	592,852	1,938,420
Total Assessed Value	\$ 38,330,200	\$ 5,322,600	\$ 33,007,600
Total Real Estate Taxes		\$ 102,939	

Table 22. Parcel Sizes in RB District with the West Street Corridor.

Parcel Sizes in RB Zone	All Parcels		Privately-Owned	
	Acres	SF	Acres	SF
Smallest Parcel by Size	0.13	5,663	0.13	5,663
Largest Parcel by Size	41.00	1,785,960	2.22	96,703
Mean Average Size	2.15	93,751	0.54	23,714
Median Average Size	0.37	16,117	,0.35	15,246

Table 23. RB Non-Conforming Parcels as to Minimum Lot Size and Minimum Frontage Dimensional Zoning Requirements in the West Street Corridor.

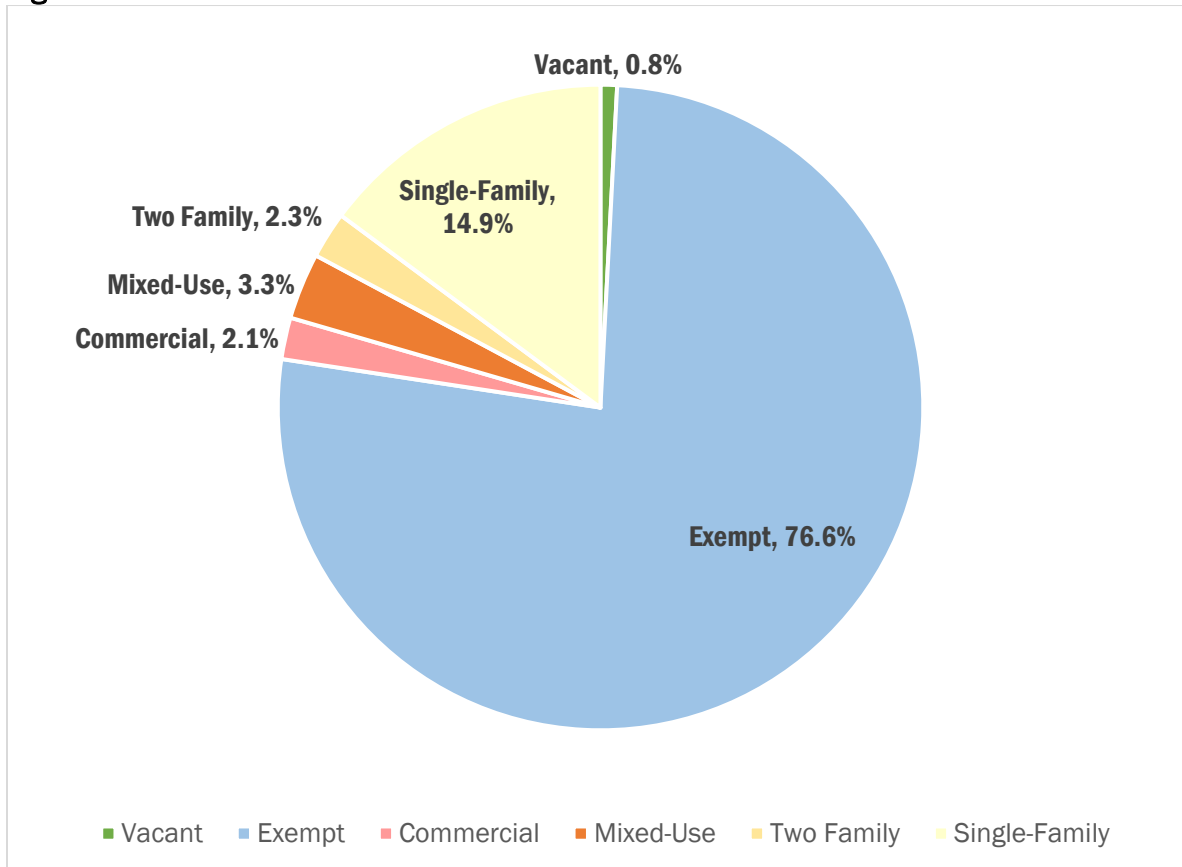
Non-Conforming Parcels as to RB Minimum Lot Size	15 parcels	56% of RB parcels in West St Corridor
Non-Conforming RB Parcels as to Minimum Frontage	10 parcels	37% of RB parcels do not meet Minimum Frontage Standard
Total RB Non-Conforming Parcels as to Minimum Lot Size or Min. Frontage	18 parcels	67% of RB parcels are Non-Conforming
Land Area of RB Non- Conforming Parcels	5.96 acres	10% of RB land area is comprised by non-conforming parcels
Assessed Value of RB Non- Conforming Parcels	\$2,969,700.	8% of Assessed Value of RB parcels
Taxable Assessed Value of RB Non-Conforming Parcels	\$2,969,700.	56% of Taxable Assessed Value of RB parcels

Table 24. Land Uses in the Residential Business Zone within the West Street Corridor.

	Percent of Parcels	Percent of Total Assessed Valuation	Percent of Taxable Assessed Valuation	Percent of Land Area (acres)	Percent of Building SF
Vacant	7.4%	0.1%	0.7%	0.8%	0.0%
Exempt	7.4%	86.1%	0.0%	76.6%	82.6%
Commercial	11.1%	4.6%	33.1%	2.1%	3.6%
Mixed-Use	7.4%	1.0%	7.5%	3.3%	2.4%
Two Family	11.1%	1.3%	9.7%	2.3%	2.9%
Single-Family	55.6%	6.8%	48.9%	14.9%	8.6%

Data Sources: Town of Ware Assessing data and McCabe Enterprises.

Figure 4. Land Uses as to Land Area in the RB Zone in the West Street Corridor.



West Street Corridor Existing Land Use Summary

A summary of the current land uses within the West Street Corridor overall is detailed in next table. The West Street Corridor is a mixed-use district with residential, commercial, and civic uses. While there are few mixed-use buildings, there is no one predominant land use in the corridor. With the expansive parking areas and signage, the retail commercial uses are most visually prominent. Only 7.4% of the parcels are defined as vacant, constituting ten percent of the overall land area in the West Street Corridor. It is the vacant parcels that form the basis for the build-out analysis, discussed in the subsequent section.

Overall, the West Street Corridor has 148 parcels of land, encompassing 187.5 acres with 813,538 sf of building. The total assessed valuation of the West Street Corridor is \$80.3 million, of which 53.3% is comprised of exempt properties. The total taxable assessed valuation of the Corridor is \$37,495,600. This generates \$724,972 in real estate taxes for the Town of Ware.

Table 25. Land Uses in the West Street Corridor as to Key Variables.

Use	Number of Parcels	Percent of Parcels	Total Assessed Value	Percent Total Assessed Value	Percent Taxable Assessed Value	Land Area (Acres)	Percent of Land Area	Building Area (SF)	Percent of Bldg Area
Vacant (not exempt)	11	7.4%	\$ 257,600	0.3%	0.7%	18.70	10.0%	-	0.0%
Exempts	13	8.8%	\$ 42,817,600	53.3%	0.0%	73.74	39.3%	293,800	36.1%
Commercial	39	26.4%	\$ 21,123,800	26.3%	56.4%	51.36	27.4%	258,625	31.8%
Industrial	1	0.7%	\$ 203,100	0.3%	0.5%	1.20	0.6%	6,000	0.7%
Mixed-Use	9	6.1%	\$ 1,884,300	2.3%	5.0%	4.02	2.1%	36,407	4.5%
Multi-Family	11	7.4%	\$ 5,075,900	6.3%	13.5%	5.86	3.1%	96,414	11.9%
3F	4	2.7%	\$ 548,000	0.7%	1.5%	0.80	0.4%	13,532	1.7%
2F	18	12.2%	\$ 2,329,100	2.9%	6.2%	4.97	2.7%	43,299	5.3%
Single-Family	42	28.4%	\$ 6,063,800	7.6%	16.2%	26.87	14.3%	65,461	8.0%
TOTAL	148	100.0%	\$ 80,303,200	100.0%	100.0%	187.52	100.0%	813,538	100.0%

Sources: Ware Assessing records and McCabe Enterprises.

Figure 5. West Street Corridor Land Uses as to Parcels.

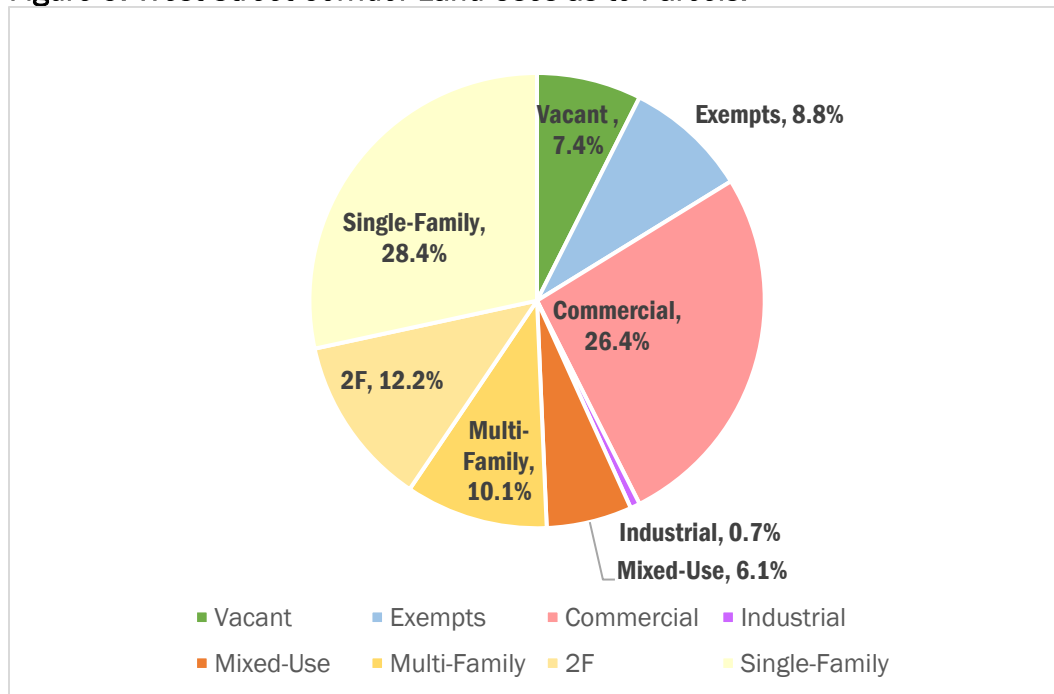


Figure 6. West Street Corridor Land Uses as to Assessed Valuation.

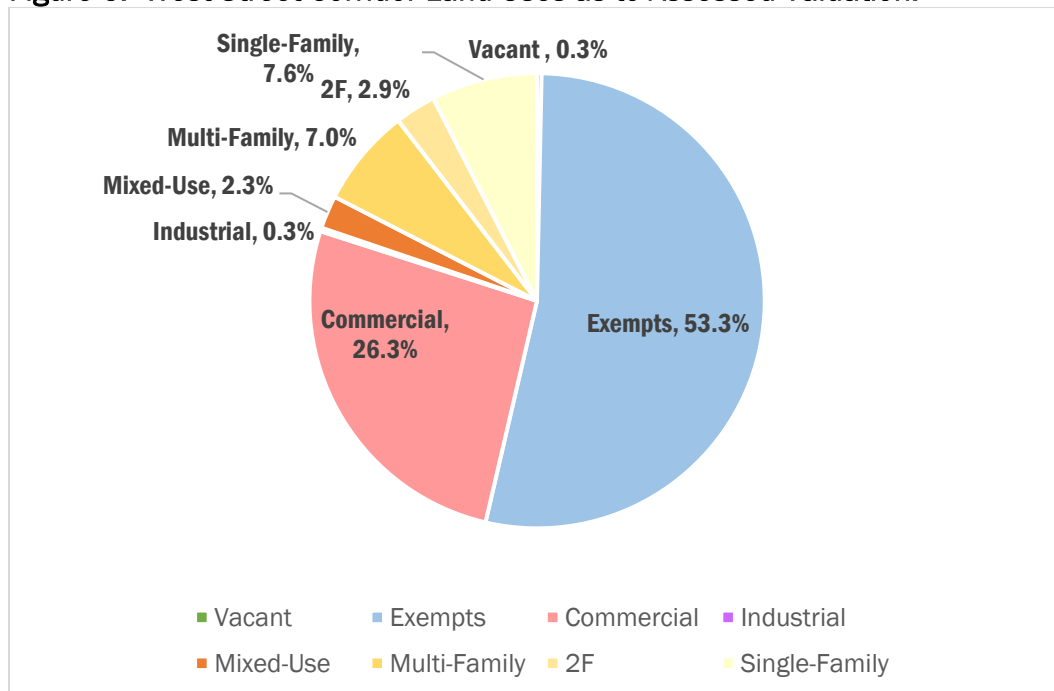


Figure 7. West Street Corridor Land Uses as to Land Area.

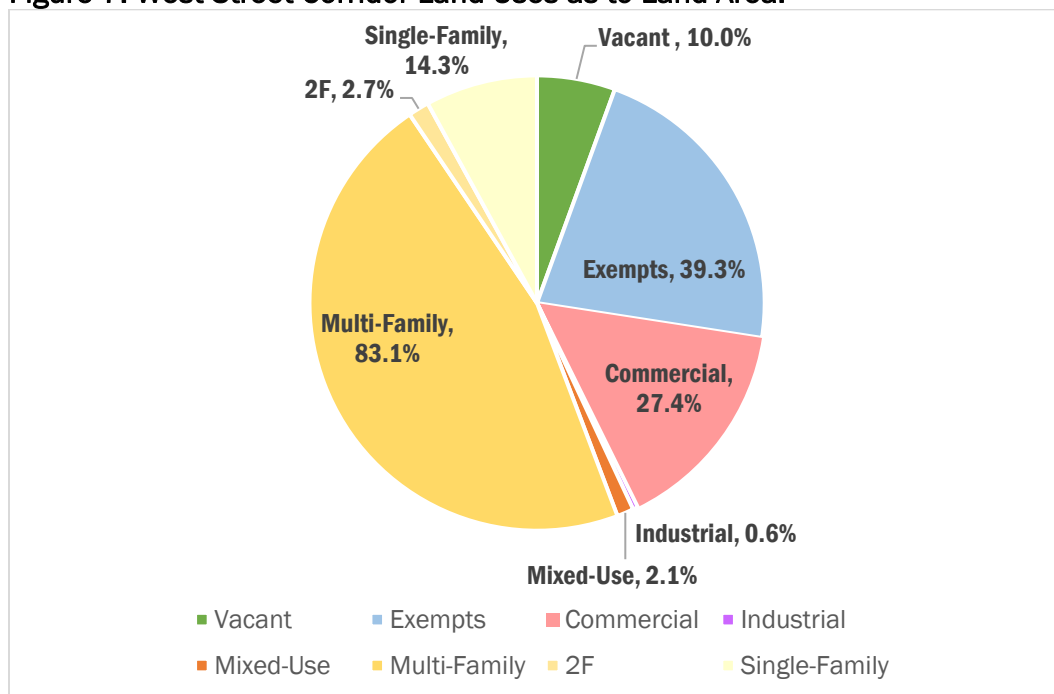
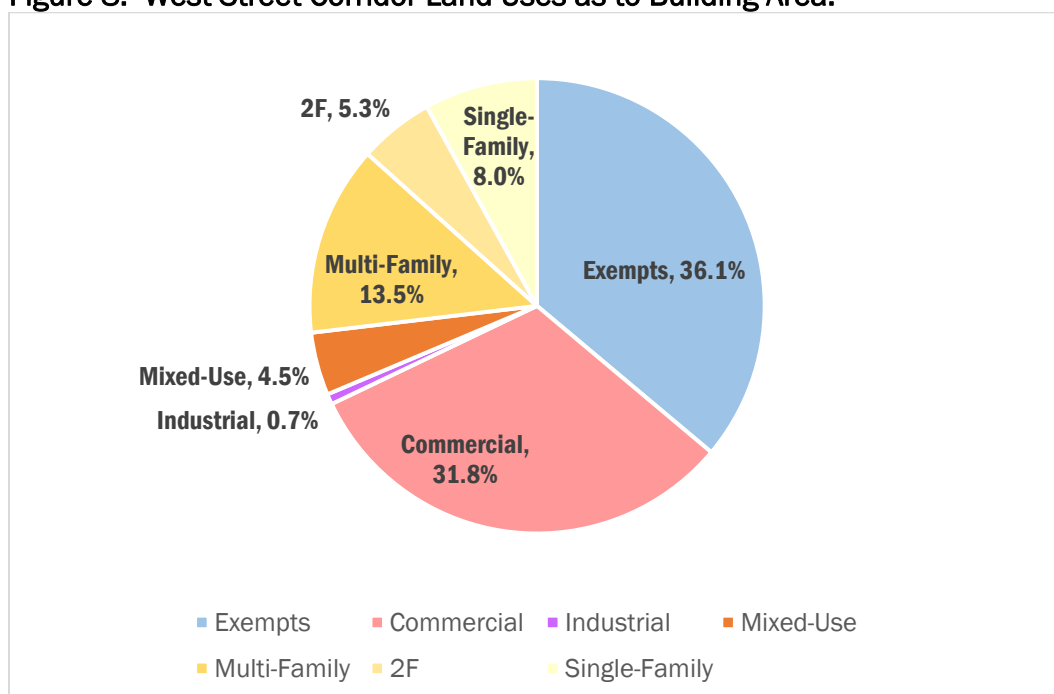


Figure 8. West Street Corridor Land Uses as to Building Area.



Flood Plain

The Ware River flows just east of the West Street Corridor. Two large brooks, the Muddy Brook and the Flat Brook flow across the West Street Corridor. These three waterways and their flood plains impact current and potential development in the study area. Over one-quarter (27.7%) of the parcels within the West Street Corridor are either totally or partially within the one-hundred-year flood plain, or Zone A, as identified and mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Over forty percent of the study area parcels are located in either the one-hundred or the five-hundred-year flood plain.

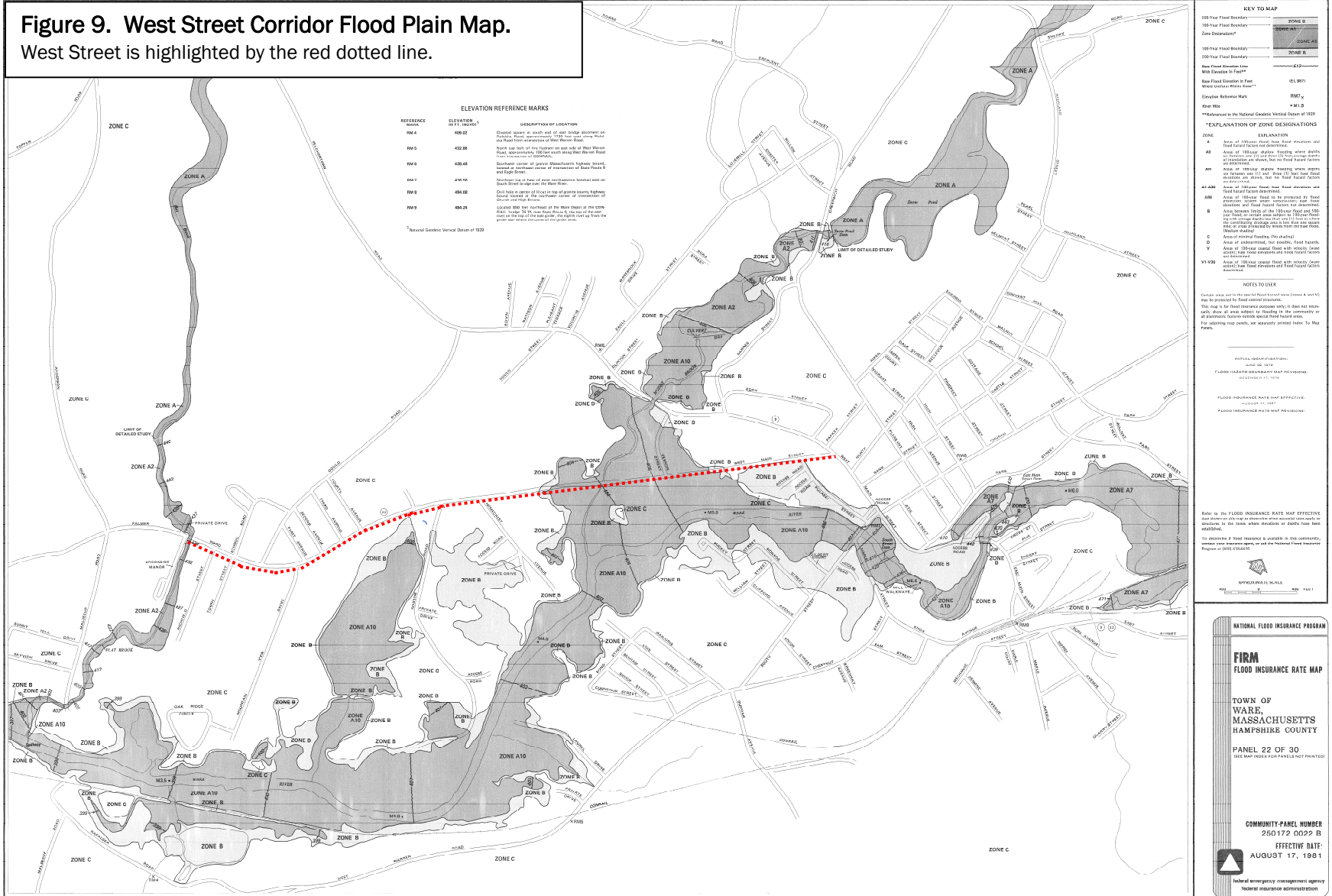
Table 26. Parcels in the Flood Plain Along the West Street Corridor by Zoning District.

Zone	Number of Parcels	# of Parcels only in Zone A – 100 Year Flood Plain (All or Partial)	# of Parcels only in Zone B – 500 Year Flood Plain (All or Partial)	# of Parcels in Zones A and B (All or Partial)	Total Within 100 & 500 Yr. Flood Plains
DTC–Downtown Commercial	30	0	6	0	6
HC – Highway Commercial	90	27	13	13	53
RB – Residential Business	27	0	0	0	0
SR – Suburban Residential	1	1	0	0	1
TOTAL in West St. Corridor	148	28	19	13	60

Determination of the flood plain in Ware is based on the most recent Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapping, which is the 1981 flood plain map shown in Figure 5. FEMA is in the process of updating the flood plain maps throughout the state but has not yet updated the Ware area map. (FEMA has been prioritizing mapping work along the coastal areas.)

The 2018 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness report for Ware identified the West Street Corridor as a high-risk area. The UMass Center for Resilient Metro-Regions noted that the extensive impervious area created by the many expansive parking lots poses a risk, particularly in an era of climate change and increasing number of adverse weather events. Impervious areas can exacerbate flooding and inhibit drainage.

Figure 9. West Street Corridor Flood Plain Map.
West Street is highlighted by the red dotted line.



Although, it is technically possible to build within a flood plain, it often requires additional costs to elevate buildings and to mitigate flood plain risks. Financial institutions and insurers are increasingly reluctant to lend or insure properties with known flood risks. When CVS built its new store on West Street in 2008, they elevated the building to minimize flood risks, as illustrated in Figure 10. New development on parcels in either the 100-year or 500-year flood plain will likely need to take similar mitigation measures. The use of permeable pavement strategies would also facilitate development, minimize risk, and contribute to better drainage, particularly in large parking lots and overflow parking areas.



Figure 10. Elevated Construction. The entrance to the CVS on West Street illustrates elevated construction to minimize flooding risks. In addition to the stairwell, there are handicap access ramps on each side of the building to reach the store entrance.

The Town of Ware has established a Flood Plain overlay zoning district which applies to all lands identified and mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency within the 100-year flood plain as of 1981, which is depicted in Figure XX. The goals of the Flood Plain overlay district are to:

- Enhance public safety through reducing the threats to life and personal injury;
- Minimize new hazards to emergency response officials resulting from flooding conditions;
- Prevent the occurrence of public emergencies resulting from water quality contamination, and pollution due to flooding;
- Avoid the loss of utility services which if damaged by flooding would disrupt or shut down the utility network and impact regions of the community beyond the site of flooding;
- Minimize costs associated with the response and cleanup of flooding conditions; and
- Minimize damage to public and private property resulting from flooding waters.

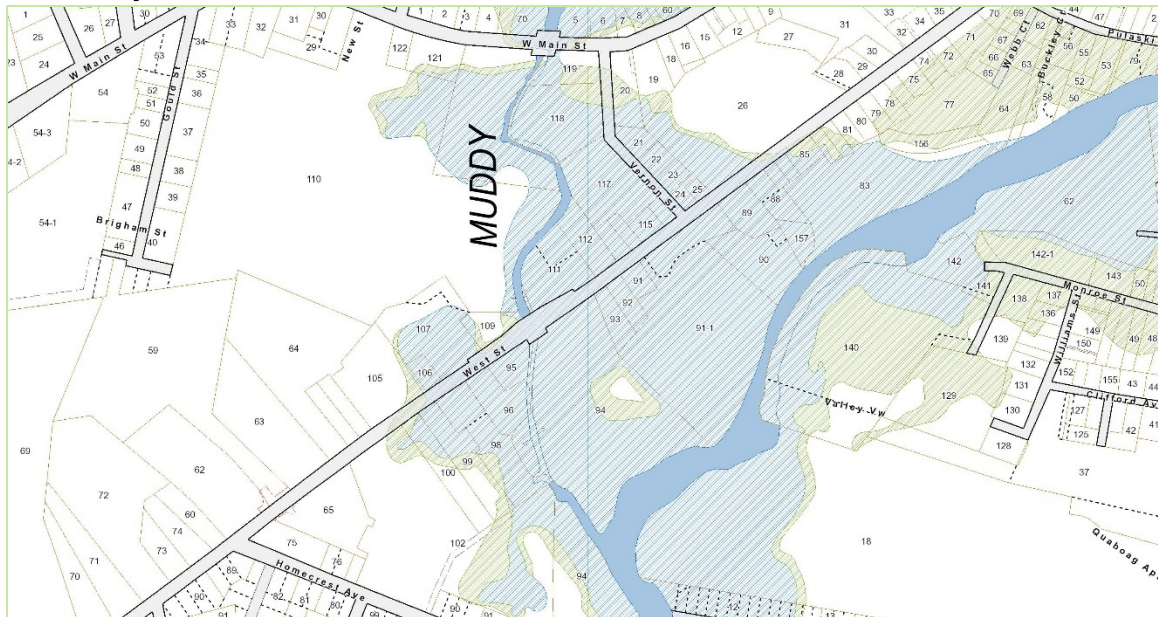
The underlying permitted uses, such as commercial uses, are allowed in the Flood Plain overlay districts through a Special Permit process. The allowed uses for the Flood Plain Overlay areas are detailed in the next table.

Table 26. Allowed Uses in Ware's Flood Plain Overlay District.

Flood Plain Overlay District Allowed Uses As-Of-Right	Permitted Uses Granted by a Special Permit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Uses, such as farming, grazing, truck farming, horticulture, etc. • Forestry and nursery uses • Outdoor recreational uses, including fishing, boating, play areas, foot, bicycle, and/or horse paths, etc. • Conservation of water, plants, and wildlife • Wildlife management areas • Temporary non-residential structures used in connection with fishing, growing, harvesting, storage, or sale of crops raised on the premises • Buildings lawfully existing prior to the adoption of these provisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowed Uses specified in the underlying zoning <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Certification by a PE that development will not result in any increase in flood levels during occurrence of the one-hundred-year flood. <u>And</u>, 2. Comments from the Board of Health; <u>And</u>, 3. Conditions that may be required and added by the Ware Planning Board to protect health, safety, and welfare of the public and occupants of the proposed use.

Source: Ware Zoning By-law.

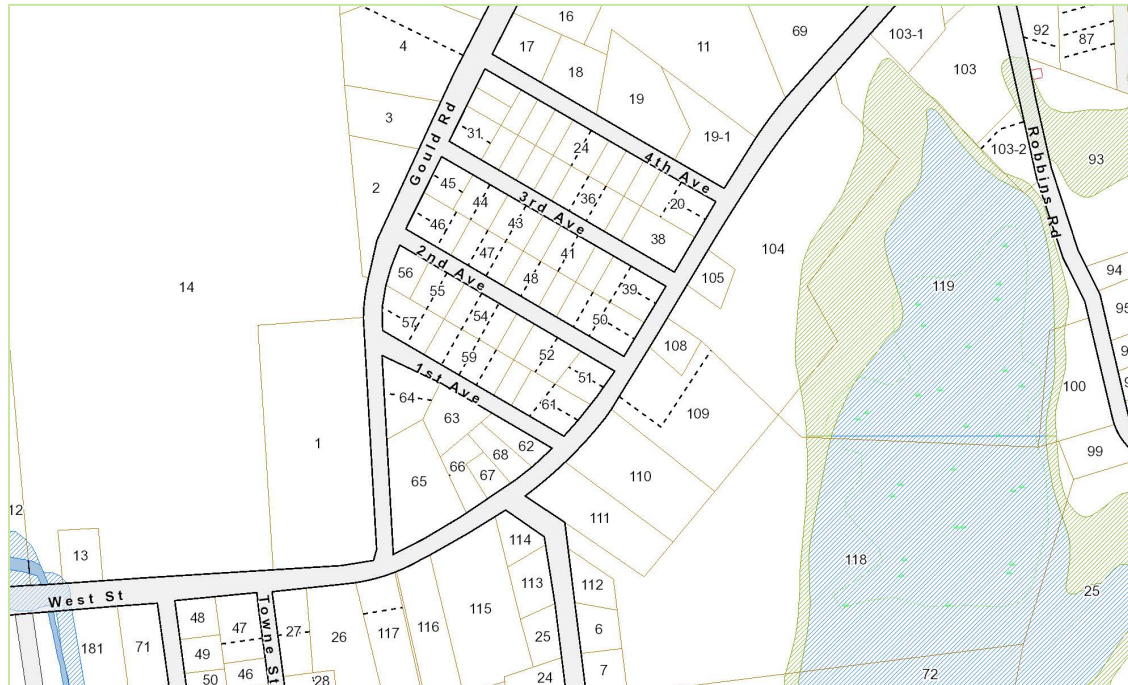
Figure 11. Close-Up Map of 100- and 500-Year Flood Plain Areas in West Street Corridor by the Muddy Brook and Ware River.



Source: Ware GIS.

The area highlighted in light blue indicates the location of the 100-year flood plain. The area highlighted in green is the location of the 500-year flood plain. Dark blue indicates waterways – rivers and brooks.

Figure 12. Close-Up Map of 100- and 500-Year Flood Plain Areas in southern section of the West Street Corridor from Robbins Road to Flat Brook.



Source: Ware GIS.

The area highlighted in light blue indicates the location of the 100-year flood plain. The area highlighted in green is the location of the 500-year flood plain. Dark blue indicates waterways – rivers and brooks.

Build-Out Analysis

Build-out analysis is a tool to help communities, such as Ware, better plan and prepare for future development, including commercial and residential uses. A build-out analysis identifies what can be constructed under the existing physical and environmental constraints and the zoning framework. It can also determine where existing zoning and desired future growth and land use may be out of alignment.

For this build-out analysis, zoning and flood plain issues have been considered. The earlier sections of this technical memorandum highlighted existing conditions and compliance with Ware's Zoning By-law, and for flood plain constraints. The West Street Corridor encompasses 148 parcels which comprise 187.5 acres. The current build-out in 2022 of the corridor is 813,538 sf.

Build-Out on Proto-Typical Lots

To initially understand how Ware's existing zoning effects development patterns, we analyzed a pro-typical lot for each of the major zoning districts. The analysis examined the potential of residential, office, retail and restaurant uses for each of the proto-typical lot sizes and is summarized below though this analysis is not specific to a specific parcel, it provides insights as to how the existing zoning shapes and regulates new development.

Downtown Commercial Zone (DTC) Proto-Typical Lot

Proto-Typical Lot Size: 5,000 sf minimum lot size with dimensions 50' x 100'

Property can accommodate the following uses and scale of development in conformance with the existing zoning:

- Single Family residential.
- 2 family residential unit.
- 2 family residential with 1 accessory unit.
- 2,700 sf of office space with 7 off-street parking spaces.
- Mixed-Use retail of ground level with upper-level housing (1 unit), with a maximum of 7 parking spaces.
- Retail ground floor with upper story office for a total of 2400 sf, with maximum 8 parking spaces.

The defining parameters for development are the parking requirements, the aisle width for parking lot circulation and access, and the maximum impervious surface requirement.

Highway Commercial Zone (HC) Proto-Typical Lot

Pro- Typical Lot Size 20,000 sf minimum lot size with dimensions 100' x 200'

The proto-typical lot can accommodate one of the following development uses and conform with Ware's existing zoning for Highway Commercial development:

- 1 Single Family residential house.
- 10 units of multi-family residential.
- 8,000 sf of office development (2 story), possibly 10,000 sf of office development with 2.5 stories and a 4,000 sf footprint. Half stories are not often utilized in new office design and construction. As a consequence, 8,000 sf would be the more likely build-out scenario.
- Mixed use with 4,000 sf ground level retail and upper level 4,000 sf office, total of an 8,000-sf building.
- Mixed use with 4,000 sf ground level retail or office, and upper level residential. Total of 8,000 to 10,000 sf. This is an unlikely combination due to market and financing considerations.
- Restaurant –3,800 sf with 38 parking spaces.

Defining parameters for development in Zoning By-law:

- Maximum density for residential of 10 residential units per acre.
- Maximum building lot coverage is 20%.
- Height limitations of 2.5 stories.
- Parking requirements for restaurant uses.
- The Maximum Impervious Surface requirement of 40% limits overall development with existing parking requirements. Additional commercial development building area gained through height cannot occur given the 40% impermeable surface requirements when parking is provided by use of impervious asphalt. This analysis assumed impervious asphalt for parking areas. Pervious materials could enable somewhat larger buildings, but the maximum building coverage is defining parameter.

Residential Business Zone (RB) Proto-Typical Lot

Pro- Typical Lot Size 20,000 sf minimum lot size with dimensions 125' x 160'.

Minimum lot size in the West Street Corridor is 20,000 sf due to the availability of the 12-inch water line and sewer service.

The proto-typical lot can accommodate one of the following uses and development scenarios and conform with Ware's existing Residential Business zoning:

- 1 Single Family residential house.
- 8,000 sf of office development (2 story), perhaps 10,000 sf with 2.5 stories. Half stories are not often utilized in new office design and construction. Half stories are more commonly used in residential construction. As a consequence, 8,000 sf would be the more likely build-out scenario.

- Mixed use with 4,000 sf ground level retail and upper level 4,000 sf office, total of an 8,000-sf building.
- Restaurant: 3,800 sf with 38 parking spaces.

Defining parameters for development in Zoning By-law:

- Use restrictions as to residential. Multi-family is precluded.
- Parking requirements for restaurant size.
- Maximum building coverage of 20%.
- The Flexible Residential Open Space (FROSD) use is a de facto subdivision approach and requires a minimum of 10 acres. All parcels in the West Street Corridor are less than 10 acres and ineligible for the FROSD.

Major constraints identified during this analysis are the minimum lot size, and maximum building coverage, and maximum impervious surface requirement of 40%.

The parking requirements for restaurant use appears to be high and constrain the size of development since land needed to be set-a-side for more parking. Ware has adopted a standard of ten spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (GFA), which is on the high side for restaurants. Decreasing the minimum number of parking spaces for restaurant uses could be helpful to encourage new restaurant uses. A lower parking minimum for restaurants could be adopted with policies for overflow parking, in the event that a restaurant is wildly successful, and demand exceeds supply. Share use parking strategies also can be very helpful. Enhancing walkability can facilitate shared use parking, particularly for peak overflow parking demands.

Vacant Parcels

There are eleven parcels classified as vacant either as developable or undevelopable land by the Town Assessor. Three additional parcels are classified as parking lots and could be used for redevelopment. In addition, there are two exempt properties which do not have a building. Table 27 details identifies these seventeen parcels, the applicable zoning district and whether the parcels currently conform with zoning standards. Most do not.

From a build-out analysis, these are the potential candidate sites for new development. The seventeen parcels constitute 29.8 acres, or approximately sixteen percent of all land in the West Street Corridor.

Table 27. Vacant Parcels in the West Street Corridor.

Parcel ID	Address	Owner	Zoning	Parcel Size	Conforms to Minimum Lot Size	Conforms to Minimum Frontage	Flood Plain Status
10-0181	0 West St.	Frank P. DeSantis, Tr	SR	0348,480	YES	YES	Zone A Partial
52-0-67	227 West St.	Daniel Rucki	RB	6,098	NO	NO	
52-0-20	0 West St.	John M. Handzel	RB	14,810	NO	NO	
60-0-139	121 Main St.	Town of Ware	DTC	5,662	YES	NO	
60-0-156	44 West Main	James J Kelly III	DTC	3,920	NO	NO	
52-0-11	0 West St.	CFI Prop Co	HC	196,456	YES	YES	
52-0-119	0 West St.	Town of Ware	HC	418,176	YES	YES	Zones A & B
52-0-73	0 West St.**	Francis E. Moran, Tr	HC	22,651	YES	NO	
56-0-77	0 West St.	Timothy Burke	HC	98,446	YES	NO	Zone B
56-0-157	West St	Chris & Aline LeMaitre	HC	13,926		NO	
52-0-92	Robbins Rd.	Elaine J. Moran	HC	15,346	NO	YES	Zone A
52-103-1	184 West St*	Richard C. O'Riley, Tr	HC	24,829	YES	YES	
56-0-71	26 West St.*	Amerada Hess Corp	HC	18,731	NO	YES	Zone B
56-0-76	52 West St.*	Ware 48 West Street Corp	HC	6,098	NO	NO	
56-0-27	0 West St.	Sharper Holdings	HC	29,185	YES	NO	
56-0-90	West St.	Owl's Nest LLC	HC	65,340	YES	NO	Zone A
56-0-79	62 West St.	Hampshire Co Regional	HC	10,890		NO	Zone B

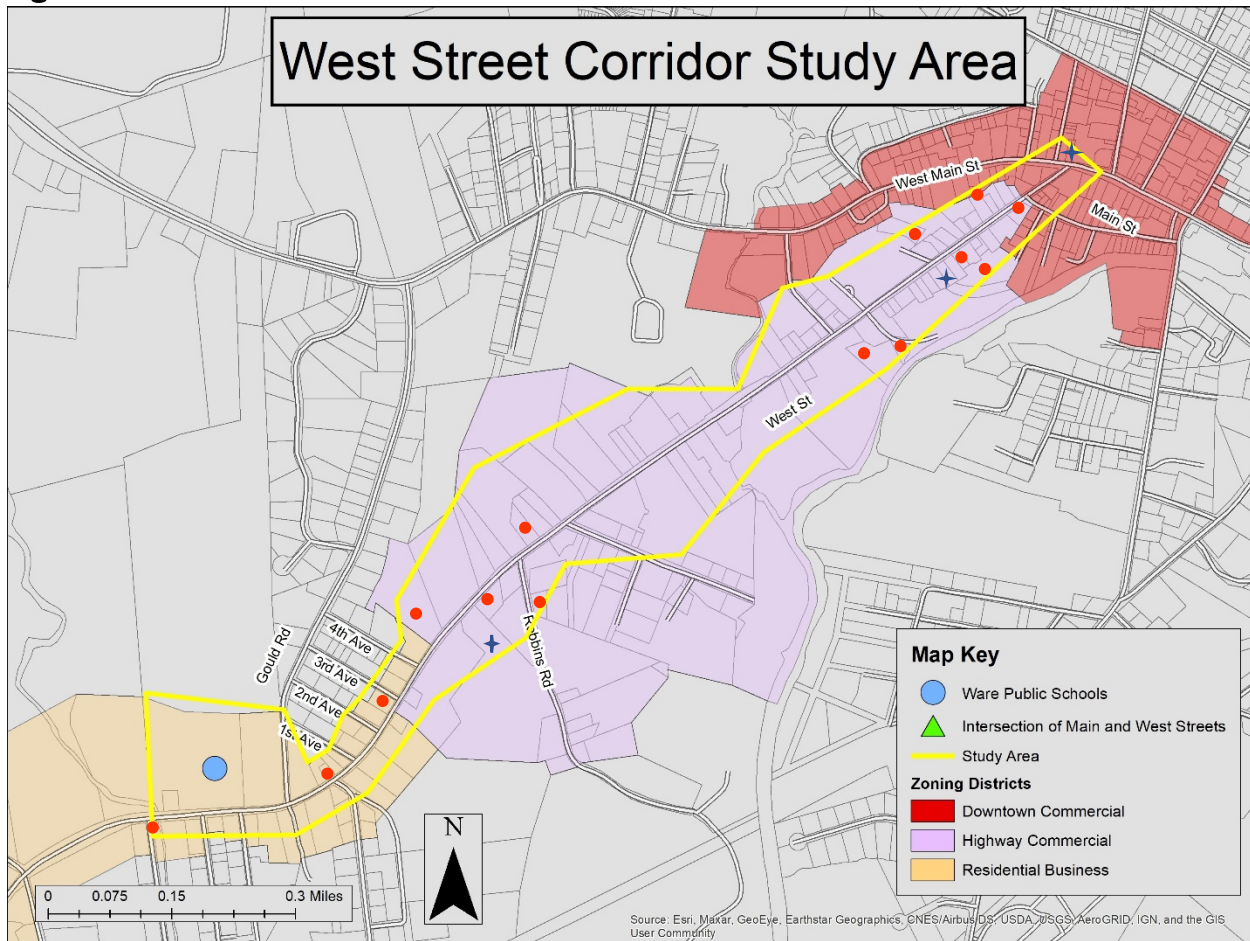
Source: Ware Assessing records and McCabe Enterprises.

*This property is classified as a parking lot.

** This property is classified as vacant, but a field review indicates it is being used as parking for the adjoining retailer.

Of the seventeen parcels identified as vacant in the West Street Corridor, only three parcels fully conform with zoning and are candidates for development. Under the current zoning framework, these are the only three parcels in the maximum build-out analysis that could add new development and square footage to the existing inventory.

Figure 13. Vacant Parcels.



LEGEND

- Vacant Lot or "Parking" Lot – Private Ownership
- ★ Publicly Owned Vacant Lot

Each parcel and the applicable zoning parameters were reviewed, and the potential build-out findings are detailed next as to each parcel.

Parcel 10-0-181, 0 West Street in the SR District

Size: 8 acres or 348,480 SF

Permitted Uses as of Right: Single Family or Two-Family

Maximum Build-out: 2 residential units as a two-family dwelling

Flood Plain Status: This property includes land within and outside Zone A, the 100-year flood plain. It is possible to site new construction outside the flood plain area of the Flat Brook.

Parcel 52-0-11, 0 West Street in the HC District

Size: 4.51 acres or 196,176 SF

Permitted Uses as of Right include:

Residential (Single Family and Multi-Family)
Office
Retail
Restaurant/eating establishment

Maximum Build-out as to Major Use:

Residential: 45 units with 90 parking spaces
Office: 47,200 sf with 118 parking spaces
Retail: 37,500 sf with 125 parking spaces
Restaurant: 18,200 sf with 182 parking spaces

NOTE: This includes 4 alternative scenarios. Maximum build-out is per land use scenario.

Parcel 52-103-1, 184 West Street in the HC District

Size: 24,829 sf

Permitted Uses as of Right include:

Residential (Single Family and Multi-Family)
Office
Retail
Restaurant/eating establishment

Maximum Build-out as to Major Use:

Residential: 4 units with 6 parking spaces
Office: 4,965 with 13 parking spaces
Retail: 4,700 sf with 16 parking spaces
Restaurant: 2,300 sf with 23 parking spaces

NOTE: This includes 4 alternative scenarios. Maximum build-out is per land use scenario.

Table 28. Total Maximum Build-Out for West Street Corridor Vacant Parcels.

	Residential	Office	Retail	Restaurant
Maximum Build-Out as to Alternative Use Scenario	51 units	52,165 sf	42,200 sf	20,500 sf

Source: McCabe Enterprises.

It is important to note that maximum build-out scenarios do not include an analysis of market feasibility, construction costs, or the specific geo-technical feasibility as to soils, brownfields, and other environmental issues for each parcel. These factors are considered by property owners and developers before undertaking prospective development.

Redevelopment and Build-Out

It is difficult to have a crystal ball and predict which parcels will be redeveloped. However, properties that are vacant (as described above) as well as properties that are for sale are the most likely candidates for redevelopment. The real estate market overview in this technical memorandum noted four properties with the West Street Corridor which are listed for sale. The descriptions and build-out potential for these parcels is highlighted next.

1. **35 West Street**, parcel # 56-0-35, is a 13,068 sf lot in the HC zone. This parcel does not meet the minimum lot size requirements, nor does it meet the minimum frontage requirements. The existing building is vacant. This property is a candidate for building rehabilitation, not redevelopment, given the zoning constraints. No further build-out is without zoning relief or a change in zoning.
2. **124 West Street**, parcel # 56-0-94, which is a 7-acre parcel (304,920 sf) with an existing 16,609 sf retail strip shopping center, including a restaurant. Some of the current tenants have long-term leases. This property conforms to the minimum lot size and minimum frontage requirements of the HC zone. However, over 85% of the property appears to be located within the 100-year flood plain (Zone A-10), and additional land is also situated in the 500-year flood plain (Zone B). Redevelopment of this site will likely require elevation of livable, usable space in buildings above the anticipated flood line in accordance with FEMA standards. The maximum build-out analysis as to use scenarios that are permissible by right in the HC zone found:

Residential Uses:

- 10 single-family dwellings; OR
- 70 apartments or town houses with parking

Office Use Scenario: 73,189 sf of office with 183 parking spaces

Retail Use Scenario: 54,885 sf of retail with 183 parking spaces

Restaurant Use Scenario: 18,295 sf of restaurant with 183 parking spaces.

3. **139 West Street**, parcel #56-0-7, has 1.73 acres (75,359 sf) of land with an existing 18,000 sf of building with restaurant and retail uses including a drive-thru. This property conforms to the minimum lot size and minimum frontage requirements of the HC zone. Substantial portions (over two-thirds of the lot area) are within the one-hundred-year flood plain (Zone A-10), and a small portion is also in the five-hundred-year flood plain (Zone B). The area outside of the flood plain is at the rear of the lot

and is sloped. The existing building at 139 West Street equals the maximum build-out area allowed for an office use with sufficient parking per the Ware Zoning By-law, which is 45 parking spaces. Redevelopment of this site will likely not increase available building area nor increase leasable space resulting in a higher valuation. It is already at maximum build-out under the current HC zoning regulations.

4. **193 West Street**, parcel # 52-0-69, has 9.8 acres (429,502 sf), and the current land use is a single-family home. This property spans two zoning districts, Highway Commercial (HC) and Suburban Residential (SR). 4.4 acres is within the HC zone, and 5.4 acres is in the SR zone. Road access to the parcel is from West Street. This property conforms to the minimum lot size and minimum frontage requirements of the HC zone. The property has no roadway frontage in the SR portion of parcel. There is a small area of DEP-designated wetlands within the SR portion of 193 West Street property.

The maximum build-out analysis examined both SR and HC uses. This parcel does not meet the minimum lot size requirement for a Flexible Residential Open Space Development allowed in SR. Thus, only single-family residential development is permitted in the SR-zoned section. Likely maximum build-out in the SR section of 193 West Street is 10 single-family home sites (assuming access to West Street).

The maximum build-out for the HC section of 139 West Street analyzed four major land use scenarios and found:

Residential in HC Zone: 44 multi-family residential units

Total Residential HC & SR: 54 residential homes

Office: 46,000 sf with 115 parking spaces (for HC zoned portion only)

Retail: 34,500 sf with 115 parking spaces (for HC zoned portion only)

Restaurant: 11,500 sf with 115 parking spaces (for HC zoned portion only).

Table 29. Maximum Build-Out Summary for Potential Redevelopment Parcels.

	Residential Use	Office Use	Retail Use	Restaurant Use
124 West Street	70 units	73,189 sf	54,885 sf	18,925 sf
139 West Street	17 units	18,000 sf	13,565 sf	4,500 sf
193 West Street	44 units	46,000 sf	34,500 sf	11,500 sf
TOTAL Potential Maximum Build-Out	131 units	137,189 sf	102,950 sf	34,925 sf

Source: McCabe Enterprises.

Theoretical Maximum Build-out

In theory, all of the existing buildings could be demolished and newly constructed in accordance with the underlying zoning framework. As an exercise, we undertook a maximum build-out analysis for all privately-owned properties conforming to the existing zoning standards as to minimum lot size and minimum frontage requirements and projected the maximum building area that could be construction (with no consideration of market feasibility or geo-technical and environmental constraints and costs). The office commercial use was utilized, since it has the lowest parking requirements of the three commercial uses (office, retail, and restaurant), and would generate the largest potential building area, as measured by square feet.

Table 30. Theoretical Maximum Build-Out of Zoning Compliant Privately-Owned Parcels in the West Street Corridor.

ZONE	Zoning Compliant Parcels	Existing Constructed Building SF	Theoretical Maximum Build-Out for Office –SF	Net Projected Potential Change in SF
DTC	13	38,581	22,694	(15,887)
HC	25	281,079	601,461	320,382
RB	7	15,863	67,300	51,437
TOTAL	45	335,523	691,455	355,932

Source: McCabe Enterprises.

Overall, the West Street Corridor today has 813,538 sf of building area in all parcels, both publicly and privately owned, and both conforming and non-conforming parcels as to zoning. The theoretical maximum build-out utilizing the office use scenario indicates a theoretical potential of an additional net 355,932 sf of additional building area, assuming existing buildings were demolished first. This is nearly doubling the existing build-out on conforming parcels in the West Street Corridor.

A more likely scenario is focusing on the existing conforming parcels that are vacant or are being offered for sale. The potential build-out of vacant and for sale parcels in the West Street Corridors could create an additional 189,354 sf of office space (less for retail and restaurant scenarios), with a possible net increase of 152,254 sf in the West Street Corridor, as shown in the table below.

Table 31. Total Potential Maximum Build-Out for Privately Owned Vacant and For Sale Conforming Parcels.

	Existing Building sf	Maximum Build-Out Office Use sf	Net Increase
Privately-Owned Vacant Parcels	0	52,165	52,165
Redevelopment Potential of For Sale Properties	37,100	137,189	100,089
TOTAL Potential Maximum Build-Out for Conforming Privately-Owned Vacant & For Sale Properties	37,100	189,354	152,254

Source: McCabe Enterprises.

Key Findings

- The build-out and zoning analysis of the West Street Corridor properties found a substantial number of properties in each zoning classification – Downtown Commercial (DCT), Highway Commercial (HC), and Residential Business (RB) zones do not conform to the existing zoning minimum requirements. Two-thirds of the parcels in Highway Commercial and Residential Business zones do not conform to minimum lot size or minimum frontage requirements of Ware’s zoning bylaw.
- The West Street Corridor is largely built out. There are only a few vacant parcels. Future new growth along the West Street Corridor will largely stem from redevelopment or expansion of existing properties. Growth is limited by the building coverage and impervious surface requirements in the zoning.
- The total maximum build-out for the privately-owned, vacant West Street Corridor parcels is one of the following – 51 residential units, OR, 52,165 sf of office, OR 42,200 sf of retail, OR 20,500 sf of restaurant space, OR some mix of the above, under the current zoning framework. The potential build-out from redevelopment of prospective privately-owned parcel conforming to the minimum requirements of zoning is a net additional 100,089 sf of built space using an office scenario.

- The number of business establishments with employees has increased in Ware 12.3% since 2010. A total of thirty-two new employer-based businesses are operating in Ware. Businesses in Ware today tend to be smaller with fewer employees. The average business establishment with employees has 8.7 workers in Ware. The sectors with the highest average number of employees in Ware are food and beverage retailers (32), manufacturers (28), restaurant & eating establishments (15.9), ambulatory health care (13.3), and the leisure and hospitality sector (10.5). [Note: the number in parentheses following each business sector is the average number of workers per business establishment in this specific sector.]
- The real estate market for retail and office uses in 2022 is weak and uncertain. The rise in e-commerce, which accelerated during the pandemic, has decreased the demand for retail space. The office market is changing with remote work and work-from-home options, decreasing the demand for traditional office developments. There is some need for small offices for business and professional services. Demand for warehouse space is strong, but not ideal for the West Street Corridor. Moreover, it is a prohibited use in the HC and DTC zones and allowed by special permit in RB.
- The demand for housing continues. Ware has experienced a 38.8% increase in median single-family home sale prices and an 15.3% increase in the number of home sales over the past two years.
- The West Street Corridor is a commercial corridor with a mix of uses, including residential. The mixed-use character of the West Street Corridor should continue and be reinforced. This complements and supports the Town's Complete Streets policy.
- Route 32 – the West Street Corridor and the Palmer Road sections – is the southern gateway to Ware. It creates the first impression of Ware. The towering mature trees along Route 32 and grassy/woody landscape help define the character of Ware and introduce the community to visitors. The West Street Corridor is the entrance and approach to Ware's historic downtown and the rising red brick towers of Town Hall. This is a defining and important vista.
- Property and business owners, as well as the Town will need to consider use of pervious materials for parking areas and circulation on West Street Corridor properties, particular properties which are wholly or partially within Zones A or B of the flood risks identified the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) flood plain maps. 59 parcels within the West Street Corridor are either wholly or partially within the 100-year and 500-year flood plains. Over half of the Highway Commercial zone parcels are flood-prone.

- Several prior planning studies and reports stated that there is a lack of community consensus on the future of the West Street Corridor. Our experience in economic development and community planning indicates that a lack of consensus creates challenges and difficulties in advancing economic development and zoning changes. It will be important for Ware as a town to develop a shared vision of the West Street Corridor and build community consensus as to the future desired uses and development.

Recommendations

1. Ware has built a handsome educational school campus with high school, middle school and elementary school at West Street and School Road. New private construction and development in this vicinity should focus be focused on a school-home neighborhood theme that can include a mix of uses. Additional housing using a variety of housing types – single family, two-family, townhouses, duplexes and multi-family should be encouraged.
2. The West Street Corridor has several deep lots, that occasionally entail multiple zoning districts. These properties do not qualify for the Town’s Flexible Residential Open Space Development (FROSD) special regulations since they do not meet the minimum size requirement of 10 acres. The Town should consider the development of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning regulation to enable developer/ owners to develop creative site plan designs that advance Ware’s community aspirations and goals for the West Street Corridor using a flexible approach to zoning. PUDs provide an option for developing commercial, residential and mixed-uses on larger sites (usually three acres or larger). Property owners would typically have the option of following the regulations of the district zone, such as Highway Commercial, or proposing a development plan using a PUD approach. Successful PUD regulations often include some regulatory incentives for addressing community needs and goals.
3. The Ware Senior Center on Robbins Road could provide the focus of additional infill development in the vicinity of West Street, Robbins Road, Homecrest Avenue, and the private “paper street” Lafayette Street using a senior housing and senior services theme with walkable connections in this area of the West Street corridor.
4. In the vicinity of Muddy Brook, and the east side of the West Street Corridor, there are numerous parcels that are nearly completely in the 100-year flood plain. New development in this area will need to be elevated to remain above flood risks. The “new” CVS on West Street near Vernon Street illustrates a successful local approach

to elevating a building above the flood risk. Increased awareness and adoption of flood resilient design and elevating buildings is needed.

5. The Ware River is an important amenity and resource. The area along the Ware River in the West Street Corridor could be the locus of new recreational-oriented businesses and amenities, drawing residents and visitors to Ware and the corridor. The areas north of Muddy Brook on the east side of West Street, and from Robbins Road provides several possibilities for connection to the river, and the Ware Rail Trail.
6. Numerous parcels in the Highway Commercial zone along West Street north of Vernon and south of the Downtown Commercial Zone are non-conforming. This area is a transition zone between Downtown and the “highway commercial” area embracing features of each zone. Many of these parcels meet the minimum lot size and minimum frontage requirements of the Downtown Commercial zone. The zoning requirements pertaining to parking location and design for the Highway Commercial zone, as specified in Section 6.1.2 would be appropriate to retain in this area. A hybrid transitional zone enabling conformance with smaller minimum lot sizes and frontage requirements with parking design standards should be developed and adopted.
7. The Town-owned parcel at the northern tip of the West Street Corridor at 121 Main Street provides an opportunity for the Town to activate Main Street and Downtown. Tables, chairs and umbrellas on the grassy green area would provide people with an opportunity for outdoor eating and dining with food provided by either the adjacent Villa’s Restaurant or food trucks. This could be an easy-to-implement project with support from a MassDOT’s Shared Streets grant.
8. The future development and growth along the West Street Corridor will require a redevelopment approach. Redevelopment often entails more staff-intensive work fostering redevelopment, than greenfield development. The Town should allocate time for the staff of the Planning & Community Development Department to work on redevelopment in the West Street Corridor, and to support professional development training regarding redevelopment and economic development.
9. To successfully advance redevelopment in the West Street Corridor for a mixed-use district using a complete streets approach, the Town should engage in a more detailed planning process which incorporates community engagement of stakeholders, including residents, businesses and property owners.

Appendix

Appendix I: Allowed Uses per Zoning District in the West Street Corridor.

Appendix II: Powerpoint Presentation to the Ware Select Board, June 22, 2022.

Appendix I: Allowed Uses By Zoning District Within the West Street Corridor.

Downtown Commercial (DTC) Zone		
	Allowed Uses As-Of-Right	Permitted Uses Granted by a Special Permit
Downtown Commercial Zone – DTC	Residential Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single Family Residential Two-Family Residential Multi-Family Residential Public & Civic Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonprofit Library or Museum Government facilities Community Center Recreation, publicly-owned lands Adult Day Care Utilities (minor) Agricultural Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm at least 5 acres in size Office and Research Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business, Finance or Other Commercial Offices Office or clinic for health services Trade, Professional or Other School (Private, for Profit) Radio or Television Studio Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banks Eating establishment, high turnover Eating establishment, low turnover Indoor entertainment or recreation facility Inn, Bed'n'Breakfast, Tourist Home Parking facilities Personal service Private membership club or lodge Retail sales & service, small-scale, w/ no outside storage Veterinary or pet grooming establishment 	Public & Civic Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Daycare Home Large Family Daycare Home Nursing or Convalescent Center Hospital Utility (major) Wireless Communication Facilities Office and Research Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laboratory Research Facility Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult entertainment Auto body shop Auto service Eating establishment, specializing in serving alcohol Hotel Non-family accommodations Retail sales & service, Large-scale, w/ no outside storage Sales of agricultural or horticultural products & associated supplies, partly or wholly outdoors, not associated with an agricultural use. Taxicab business Industrial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wholesale Marijuana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical, Recreation or Hybrid Marijuana Sales
Highway Commercial (HC) Zone		
	Allowed Uses As-Of-Right	Permitted Uses Granted by a Special Permit
	Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-Family Residential Multi-Family Residential Public & Civic Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonprofit Library or Museum Government facilities Community Center 	Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two-Family Residential Public & Civic Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nursing or Convalescent Home Hospital Cemetery Utilities (major)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation, publicly-owned lands • Adult Day Care • Utilities (minor) • Large Ground mounted Solar Facility <p>Agricultural Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm at least 5 acres in size • Farm less than 5 acres in size • Commercial Greenhouse • Equestrian Stable <p>Office and Research Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business, Finance or Other Commercial Offices • Office or clinic for health services • Trade, Professional or Other School (Private, for Profit) • Laboratory • Radio or Television Studio <p>Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto Fuel Station (with or without Convenience Store) • Auto service • Banks • Campground • Car wash • Construction • Eating establishment, drive-in/drive-thru • Eating establishment, high turnover • Eating establishment, low turnover • Funeral home, mortuary, or undertaking establishment • Hotel • Indoor entertainment or recreation facility • Inn, Bed'n'Breakfast, Tourist Home • Kennels, pet day care establishments • Motor vehicle sales • Non-family accommodations • Outdoor recreation facility • Parking facilities • Personal service • Private membership club or lodge • Retail sales & service, Large-scale, w/ outside storage • Retail sales & service, Large-scale, w/ no outside storage • Retail sales & service, small-scale, w/ outside storage • Retail sales & service, small-scale, w/ no outside storage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wireless Communication Facilities <p>Agricultural Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smokehouses <p>Office and Research Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Facility <p>Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult entertainment • Auto body shop • Eating establishment, specializing in serving alcohol • Recycling center, composting facility • Tow service <p>Industrial Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry, light • Wholesale • Wood processing, lumber mill <p>Marijuana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical, Recreation or Hybrid Marijuana Sales
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sales of agricultural or horticultural products & associated supplies, partly or wholly outdoors, not associated with an agricultural use. Self-storage facility Taxicab service Veterinary or pet grooming establishment Industrial Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None Marijuana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
Residential Business (RB) Zone		
	Allowed Uses As-Of-Right	Permitted Uses Granted by a Special Permit
	Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-Family Residential Public & Civic Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonprofit Library or Museum Government facilities Community Center Recreation, publicly-owned lands Adult Day Care Utilities (minor) Large Ground mounted Solar Facility Agricultural Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm at least 5 acres in size Farm less than 5 acres in size Commercial Greenhouse Equestrian Stable Office and Research Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business, Finance or Other Commercial Offices Office or clinic for health services Trade, Professional or Other School (Private, for Profit) Laboratory Radio or Television Studio Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auto Fuel Station (with or without Convenience Store) Auto service Banks Car wash Construction Eating establishment, high turnover Eating establishment, low turnover 	Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two-Family Residential Public & Civic Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large Family Daycare Home Adult Daycare Nursing or Convalescent Home Cemetery Utility (major) Large Ground Mounted Solar Facility Wireless Communication Facilities Office and Research Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laboratory Research Facility Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult entertainment Auto body shop Eating establishment, drive-in/drive-thru Eating establishment, specializing in serving alcohol Hotel Kennels, pet day care establishments Non-family accommodations Taxicab service Tow service Veterinary or pet grooming establishment Industrial Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry, light

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funeral home, mortuary, or undertaking establishment • Indoor entertainment or recreation facility • Inn, Bed'n'Breakfast, Tourist Home • Motor vehicle sales • Outdoor recreation facility • Personal service • Private membership club or lodge • Retail sales & service, small-scale, w/ outside storage • Retail sales & service, small-scale, w/ no outside storage • Sales of agricultural or horticultural products & associated supplies, partly or wholly outdoors, not associated with an agricultural use. • Self-storage facility <p>Industrial Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None <p>Marijuana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse • Wholesale • Wood processing, lumber mill <p>Marijuana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
	Suburban Residential (SR) District	
	Allowed Uses As-Of-Right	Permitted Uses by Special Permit
	<p>Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Family Residential • Two-Family • Flexible Residential Open Space Development (per Sec. 4.8.1., which requires a minimum of a 10-acre site with 100' frontage). <p>Public & Civic Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government facilities • Community Center • Recreation, publicly-owned lands • Family Daycare Home • Utilities (minor) <p>Agricultural Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm at least 5 acres in size <p>Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None <p>Industrial Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None <p>Marijuana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<p>Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Family Residential <p>Public & Civic Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonprofit Library or Museum • Large Family Daycare Home • Adult Daycare • Nursing or Convalescent Home • Hospital • Cemetery • Utility (major) • Wireless Communication Facilities <p>Agricultural Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm less than 5 acres in size • Commercial Greenhouse • Equestrian Stable <p>Office and Research Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business, Finance or Other Commercial Offices • Office or clinic for health services • Laboratory • Research Facility <p>Retail Business & Consumer Service Uses</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult entertainment • Funeral home, mortuary, or undertaking establishment • Inn, Bed'n'Breakfast, Tourist Home • Non-family accommodations • Outdoor recreation facility • Personal Service • Private membership club or lodge • Retail sales & service, small-scale, w/ no outside storage • Veterinary or pet grooming establishment Industrial Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None Marijuana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
	Flood Plain Overlay District	
	Allowed Uses As-Of-Right	Permitted Uses Granted by a Special Permit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Uses, such as farming, grazing, truck farming, horticulture, etc. • Forestry and nursery uses • Outdoor recreational uses, including fishing, boating, play areas, foot, bicycle, and/or horse paths, etc. • Conservation of water, plants, and wildlife • Wildlife management areas • Temporary non-residential structures used in connection with fishing, growing, harvesting, storage, or sale of crops raised on the premises • Buildings lawfully existing prior to the adoption of these provisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowed Uses specified in the underlying zoning <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Certification by a PE that development will not result in any increase in flood levels during occurrence of the one-hundred year flood. <u>And</u>, 5. Comments from the Board of Health; <u>And</u>, 6. Conditions that may be required and added by the Ware Planning Board to protect health, safety, and welfare of the public and occupants of the proposed use.



1



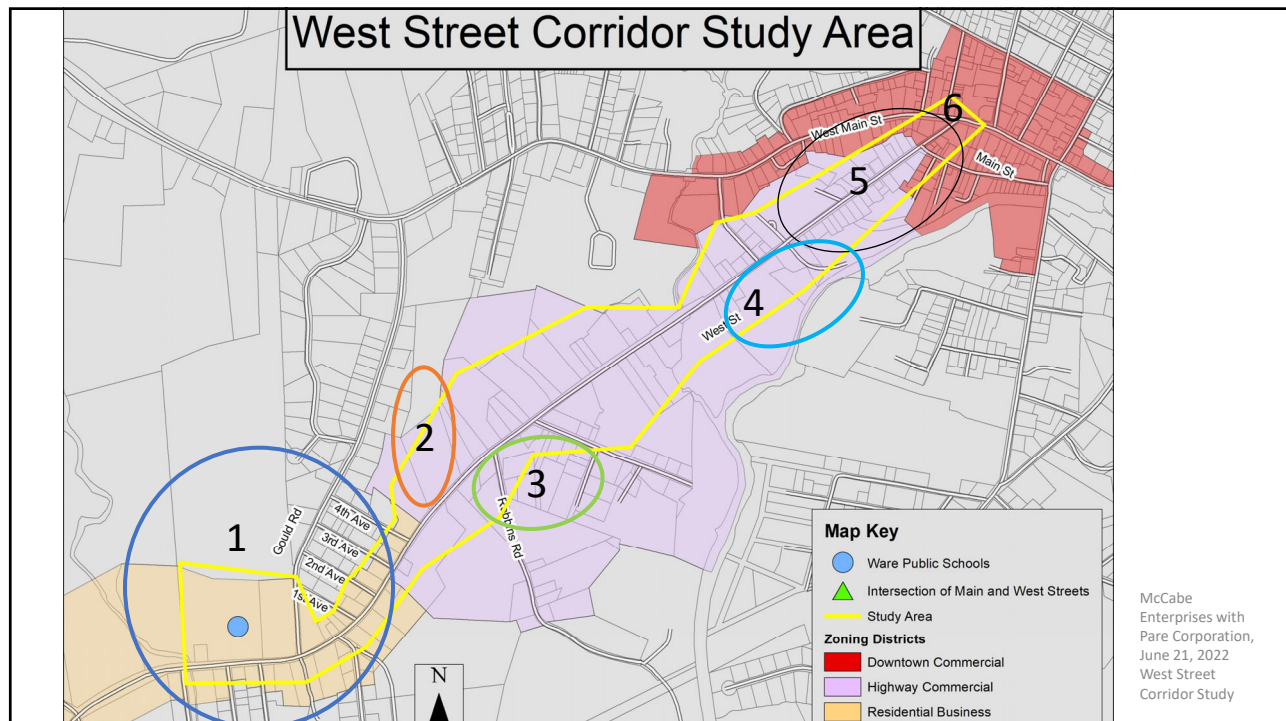
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Market Overview

- **Demand for Housing continues.**
 - 38.8% increase in median home sales price in Ware.
 - Trend for commercial and housing is to be more mixed. Shopping centers now incorporating housing on the site.
- **Demand for retail and office is weak and uncertain.**
 - Some need for small offices for business and professional services
- **Warehousing is a strong sector, but Ware is distant from the MassPike.**
 - West Street between the School Campus & Downtown is not ideal for major increases in tractor trailer traffic.

McCabe Enterprises, June 21, 2022 West Street Corridor Study

3

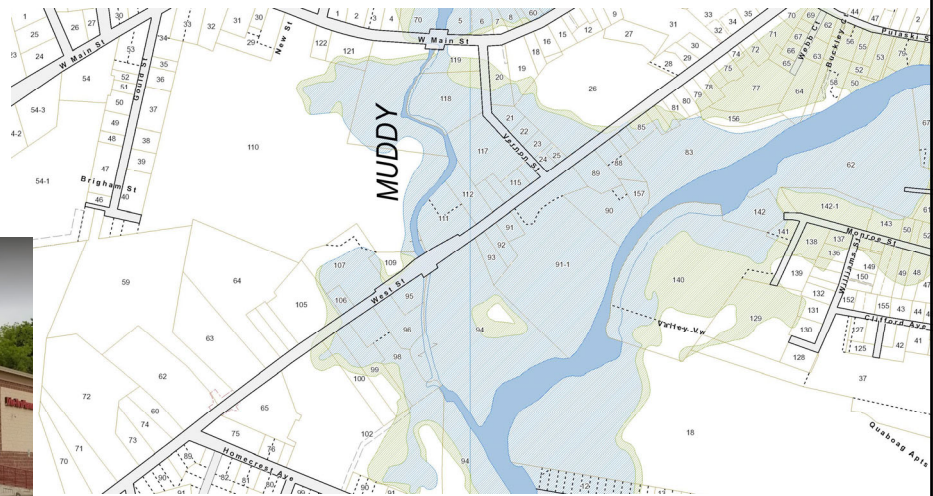


4

Flood Plain Poses Risk & Opportunity



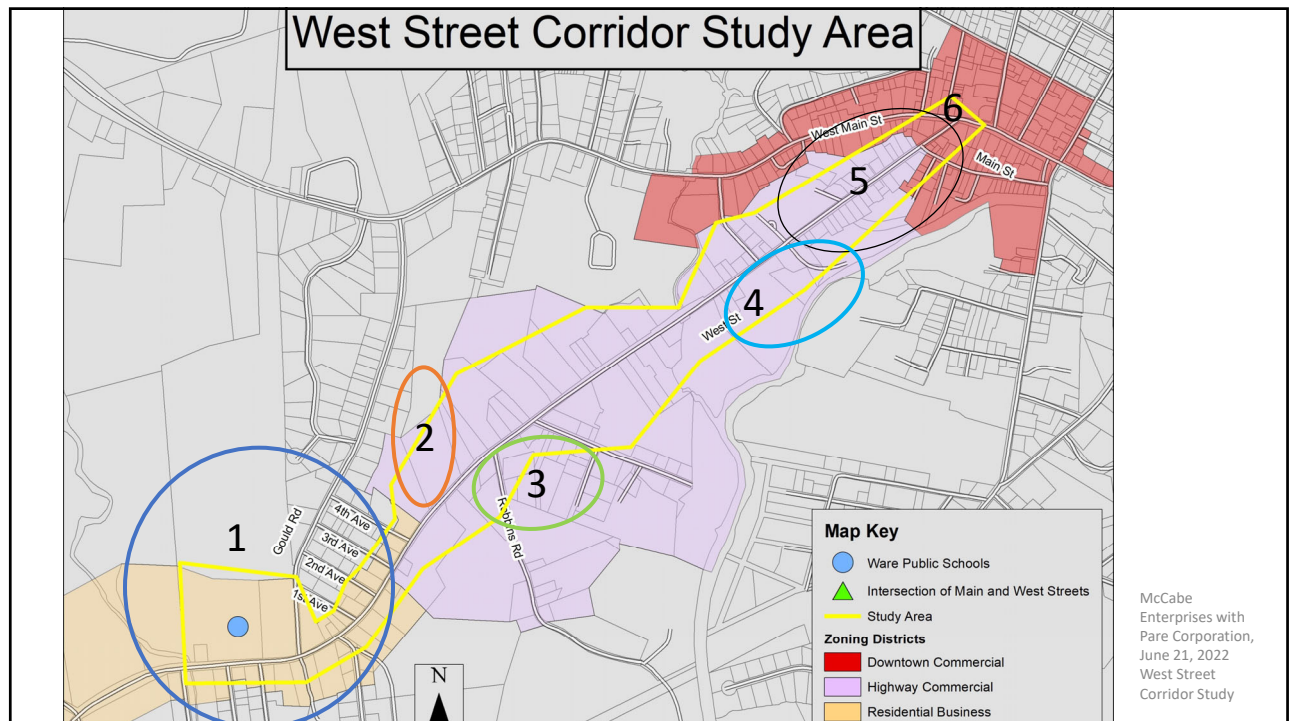
Elevating buildings will be needed, as CVS did.



Several West Street parcels have Ware River access with an opportunity for recreational businesses – boating, kayaking, canoeing. The Ware River could be an amenity drawing visitors to Ware.

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5



6

Downtown Parcel Can Activate Area



The vacant parcel next to Veteran's Park is waiting for tables and chairs to activate this corner of Downtown Ware. A MassDOT Shared Streets grant could help transform this spot.



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7

1. **School-Home Neighborhood** -- Focus on housing in-fill development with complementary commercial uses.
2. Develop a **Planned Unit Development option** for commercial, housing & mixed-use development in zoning by-law to foster better development on larger parcels.
3. **West St & Robbins** – **opportunity for elder housing** infill with proximity to Senior Center creating a walkable area.
4. **Flood Plain challenges** require elevated development.
Ware River is an amenity and business opportunity.
5. **Create a hybrid transitional zone** between DTC and HC zones.
6. **Downtown parcel could be activated** for outdoor dining.

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