

## 7 Franklin

The first section of this chapter provides a profile of the town. The second section describes existing bicycling and walking conditions in the study area, Franklin Center and environs, and recommendations for improvements. The findings are based on meetings and correspondence with local staff, fieldwork, and review of previous studies.

The studies consulted in the preparation of this report are the following:

- *Franklin Center Downtown Revitalization Initiative*, Weston and Sampson, 2002/2003
- *Franklin Center Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study*, The Cecil Group and Peter Smith Associates, December 2006
- *Franklin Community Development Plan*, The Cecil Group, May 2004,
- *Town of Franklin Downtown Parking Assessment*, Town of Franklin Department of Planning and Community Development, July 2008
- Memo: “Downtown Parking Study,” Bryan Taberner, Director of Town of Franklin Department of Planning and Community Development, March 25, 2008
- Memo: “Welcome to Downtown Franklin Sign and Related Cultural Corridor Map for the Downtown Common,” Bryan Taberner, Director of Town of Franklin Department of Planning and Community Development, March 11, 2008
- Memo: “Downtown Manager Projects,” Bryan Taberner, Director of Town of Franklin Department of Planning and Community Development, March 7, 2008
- Memo: “Parking,” Franklin Downtown Partnership Board of Directors, March 14, 2008
- *Downtown Franklin Goals and Objectives*, Franklin Downtown Partnership, February 13, 2008
- *100 best places to live and launch*, money.cnn.com, March 2008

Of these materials, four were particularly pertinent to this study: the *Downtown Revitalization Initiative*; the *Franklin Center TOD Study*; the *Franklin Community Development Plan*; and the *Town of Franklin Downtown Parking Assessment*.

### 7.1 COMMUNITY PROFILE

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

### 7.1.1 HISTORY

Settled in 1676, the town was part of its eastern neighbor, Wrentham, until 1778. It became the first community in the nation named after Benjamin Franklin, who showed his appreciation by sending over a hundred books, forming the core of "America's First Public Library." With waterpower, industry flourished in this initially agrarian community. Providing a blend of open space, affordability, job opportunities, good schools and intangible charm, *Family Circle* magazine recently named Franklin as one of the best towns in the nation in which to raise a family.

### 7.1.2 LAND USE

Franklin is located about 30 miles southwest of Boston and 20 miles north of Providence, Rhode Island. Land uses are primarily residential, retail, and manufacturing. Franklin State Forest is located in the west central part of town. The well-defined central business district is composed of retail shops, the library, a commuter rail station, an elementary school, and Dean College.



*Dean College, Downtown Franklin*

### 7.1.3 POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT

As shown in Table 7-1, according to the 2000 census, 29,798 people called Franklin home. That was up from 22,095 in 1990 – a 34.9 percent boom. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) forecasts the population to grow another 15.4 percent to 34,385 from 2000 to 2030. Recorded at 13,596 in 2000, MAPC projects employment in Franklin to grow by 18.4 percent to 16,091 from 2000 to 2030.

**TABLE 7-1  
Population and Employment,  
in Franklin–2000, 2010, 2020 and 2030**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change 2000-2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Change 2010-2020</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>Change 2020-2030</b>
<b>Population</b>	29,798	31,186	4.7%	32,964	5.7%	34,385	4.3%
<b>Employment</b>	13,596	14,613	7.5%	15,510	6.1%	16,091	3.7%

#### **7.1.4 TRANSPORTATION**

Since 1849 Franklin has enjoyed rail access, which initially extended from Boston, south through Franklin, to New York. The line was later shortened to Hartford, then to Blackstone, Massachusetts, and was finally terminated at Downtown Franklin in 1966. In 1989, the MBTA extended the Franklin Line of the commuter rail system to Forge Park just west of Interstate 495 (I-495).

State Route 140 bisects the town, running east-west between Foxborough and Bellingham and points beyond. The town is linked via two interchanges to the circumferential I-495, which runs from northwest to southeast through Franklin.

#### **7.1.5 CRASH AND USAGE DATA**

As shown in Table 7-2, between 2002 and 2006, there were six reported crashes in Franklin that involved bicyclists, none of which were fatalities, representing 0.3 percent of all crashes. In the same period there were 16 reported crashes involving pedestrians, representing 0.9 percent of all crashes. Two of these were fatalities.

**TABLE 7-2  
Bicycle, Pedestrian, Motor-Vehicle, and Total Crashes and Fatalities in Franklin,  
By Number and Percentage–2002-2006 Inclusive**

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Crashes</b>		<b>Fatalities</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bicycle (Bike)	6	0.3%	0	0.0%
Pedestrian (Ped)	16	0.9%	2	22.2%
Motor Vehicles (MV) only	1,824	98.8%	7	77.8%
All Crashes (Bike, Ped & MV)	1,846	100.0%	9	100%

On West Central Street between Emmons and Cottage Streets on Tuesday, August 26, 2008, there were 15 bicyclists and 276 pedestrians counted from 6:00 AM to 10:00 AM.

Figure 7-1 shows the location of the above bicycle and pedestrian crashes. As noted in Chapter 1, some crashes may not have been reported.

## 7.2 STUDY AREA

The first part of this section of the chapter defines the study area (shown in Figure 7-2) and gives an overview of transit service and walking and bicycling conditions. Subsequent sections provide more details on the different parts of the study area.

The study area for Franklin includes five corridors:

- Central Street from King/Chestnut Streets to Union Street
- Main Street from Central Street to Pleasant Street
- Union Street from Beaver/Pleasant Streets to Cottage Street
- Cottage Street from Union Street to Central Street
- Emmons Street from Main Street to West Central Street

The heart of the downtown is sometimes described as the downtown triangle. The three streets creating the triangle, Emmons on the northwest, West Central on the south, and Main on the northeast, are all one-way counterclockwise.

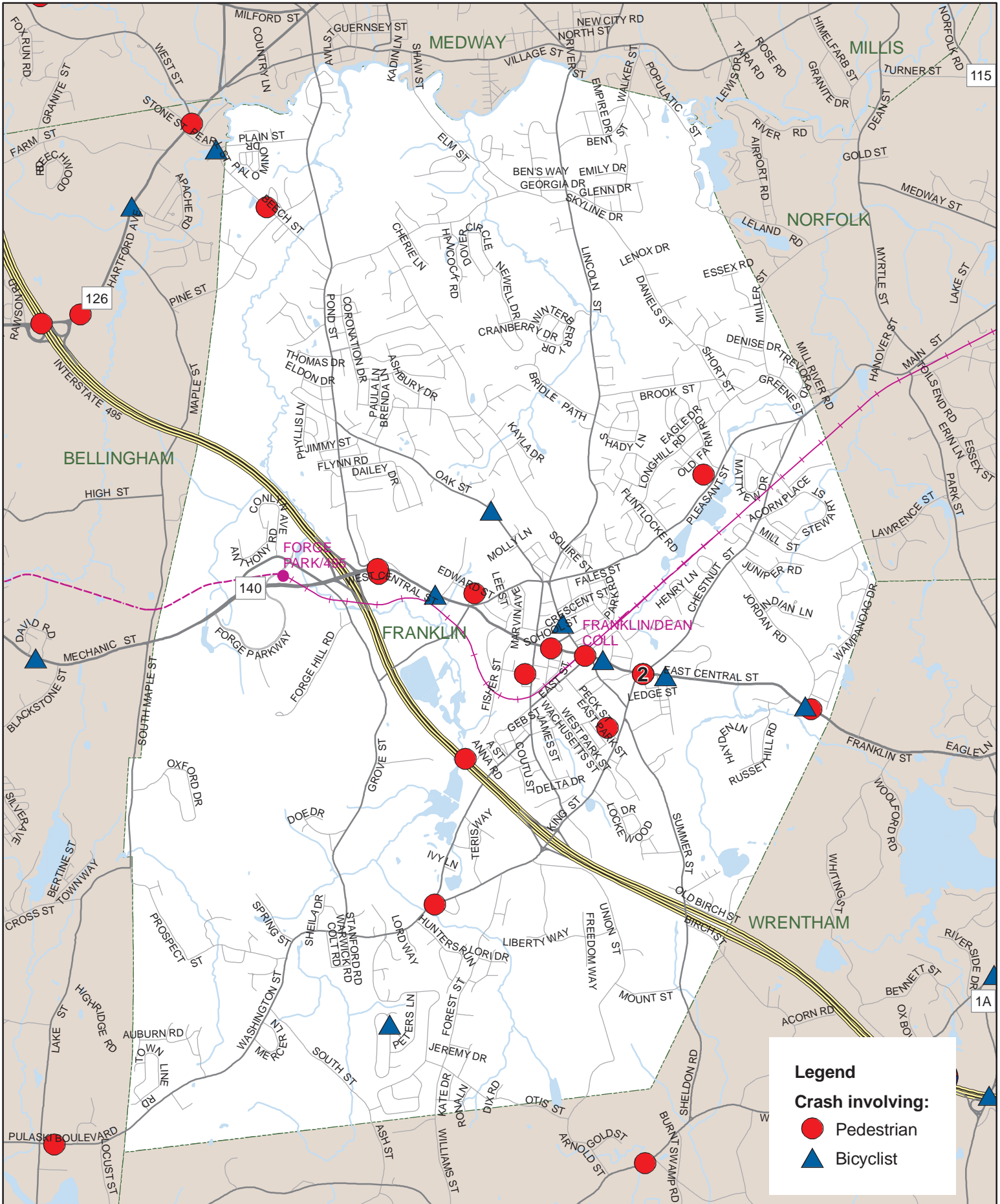
One of Franklin's two commuter rail stations is located in the study area. Franklin Station is adjacent to the downtown triangle. There are 16 inbound trains to Boston between 5:15 AM and 11:57 PM and 15 trains arriving from Boston between 4:40 AM and 12:44 AM, with the greatest frequencies during rush hour. There is a 173-space parking lot with three accessible spaces and seven official bicycle spaces. Only one or two bicycles were observed parked on the racks when conditions around the station were evaluated. The other MBTA commuter rail station in town, Forge Park, is located near I-495.



*Bicycle parking at the Franklin Commuter Rail Station*

The Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) operates the Franklin Area Bus (FAB) shuttle service through the study area between Village Plaza

**FIGURE 7-1**  
**Franklin: Crashes in 2022-2006 Involving Pedestrians and Bicyclists**







and Jordan Road. There are several stops within the study area, including those at or near Dean College and Franklin Station. The GATRA FAB service connects the station to area employment, retail, and residential centers. The service runs 22 times on weekdays and 14 times on Saturday.

The town recently installed new sidewalks along Union and Cottage Streets. The sidewalks in the other areas are generally in good condition with only minor cracking and weeds growing sporadically. A major exception is the sidewalk on the south side of Depot Street from Main Street to the train station, which is in poor condition.

The sidewalks are primarily concrete with granite curbs, although there are some sidewalks with no curbs along Main Street between School Street and High Street and some brick sidewalks along Union Street and brick details along Main Street downtown. While only the sidewalks along Main Street in the downtown area and East Central Street between Alpine Row and the railroad tracks have street trees, trees growing in the front yards of homes and businesses shade many of the sidewalks throughout the study area.

Recent studies support planning strategies that will accommodate and likely increase pedestrian mobility in Downtown Franklin. Produced by the Cecil Group, the *Franklin Community Development Plan* includes creating a special zoning overlay district to encourage mixed uses, expanding the efficiency of the central business district, as well as implementing new streetscape and pedestrian improvements to encourage reinvestment and initiating transportation studies to improve traffic circulation and pedestrian safety. Also conducted by the Cecil Group, the *Franklin Center TOD Study* contends that “a new parking garage located on nearby MBTA property would offer great convenience to shoppers, visitors, commuters, and employees who enjoy so many services within walking distance... A new garage would greatly support this walking convenience and ambience that will make downtown Franklin even more attractive.”

In the *Downtown Revitalization Initiative*, Weston & Sampson Engineering, Inc., offered several suggestions for improving pedestrian safety and mobility, including streetscape improvements in Franklin Center. Finally, the Town of Franklin Department of Planning and Community Development, in the *Town of Franklin Downtown Parking Assessment*, urges local officials to consider signage, pedestrian linkages, pedestrian-scale lighting, bicycle racks, bicycle lockers, and handicapped accessibility.

The crosswalks in the study area are generally highly or sufficiently visible with exclusive curb ramps for each crosswalk. However, crosswalks should be added, particularly across East Central Street and parts of Cottage and Main Streets. Consistent with this recommendation, the *Downtown Revitalization Initiative* recommends mid-block crosswalks on Dean, Depot, and East Streets.

Almost all of the existing crosswalks extend along the most logical path for pedestrians, although some need minor realignments. The crosswalks in the downtown area are ladder style; many of the others in the study area are either zebra or parallel-bar style.

There are curb extensions in the downtown area for crosswalks across busy streets. Islands are present at signalized intersections where motorists have dedicated right turns, namely King/Chestnut Streets at East Central Street, Central and Main Streets, Main and Pleasant Streets, and Emmons and West Central Streets.

There are a few signalized pedestrian crossings in the study area. The pedestrian phases at some of the intersections are adequate, but at some, too short. All of the pedestrian phases are exclusive. There are no pedestrian countdown signals.

Most of the five roadways in the study area are wide enough to accommodate on-street bicycling and many have marked shoulders. East Central and Union Streets have striped shoulders of various widths, which sometimes accommodate parking. West Central and Cottage Streets are narrow but have striped shoulders of a few feet that help accommodate on-street bicycling. Main Street could better accommodate on-street bicycling, particularly north of Emmons Street where the shoulders are wide but unmarked. Emmons Street is too narrow to safely accommodate on-street bicyclists. All of the roadways have two lanes. The roadways around the downtown triangle (Main-Emmons-West Central) are two-lane, one-way streets.

Approximately a quarter of the roadways in the study area have on-street parking, which increases the risks to bicyclists. The edges of the roadway generally do not have significant cracks or large debris, and drainage grates are set back from the roadway.

The *Downtown Revitalization Initiative* supports traffic-calming measures at Franklin Center's three gateways at the intersections of Main, Central and Emmons Streets. Slower traffic speeds resulting from such efforts to calm traffic would support increased on-road bicycling in Downtown Franklin.

There is bicycle parking at the commuter rail station and the library. However, the parking at the library is on grass with no access walkway and does not conform to current design guidance.

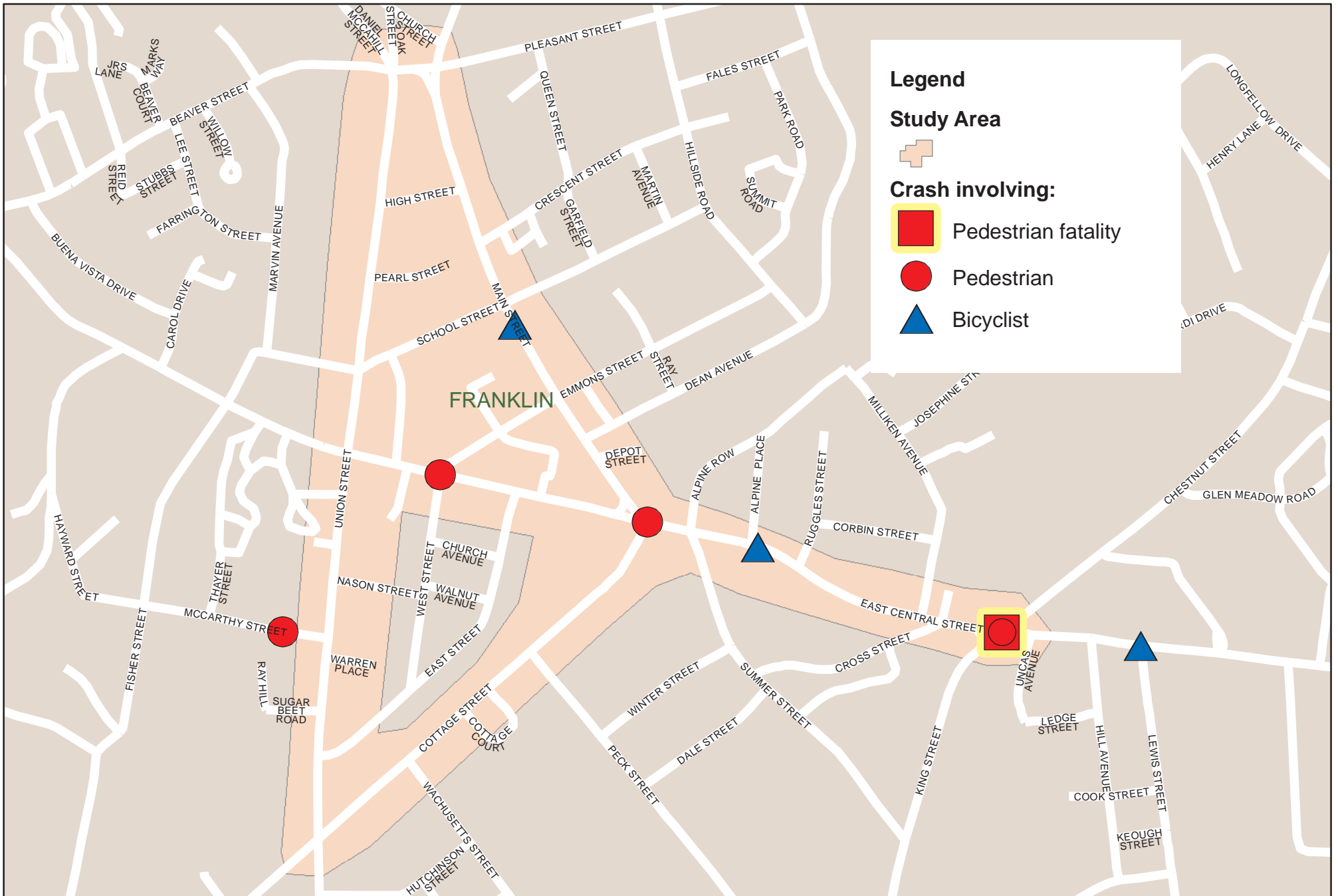


*Bicycle parking at the library*

Figure 7-3 indicates bicycle and pedestrian crashes within the study area from 2002 through 2006. During those five years, there were four crashes involving a pedestrian and



**FIGURE 7-3**  
**Downtown Franklin**  
**Crashes in 2002-2006 Involving Pedestrians and Bicyclists**



two involving bicyclists. Two of those four pedestrian crashes occurred at the same location, East Central/King/Chestnut Streets, and one was a fatality. The two other pedestrian crashes were on West Central Street, one at Main and Cottage Streets and one at West Street. One bicycle crash occurred on East Central Street, near Alpine Street. The remaining bicycle crash was on Main Street near School Street. Two other crashes occurred near the study area: one involving a pedestrian on McCarthy Street near Union Street and one involving a bicyclist on East Central and Lewis Streets.

The subsequent sections of the chapter include more detail on existing conditions as well as recommendations, which are shown in Figure 7-4.

### **7.2.1 CENTRAL STREET: KING/CHESTNUT STREETS TO UNION STREET**

The Central Street corridor includes West Central Street from Union to Cottage/Main Streets and East Central Street from there to King/Chestnut Streets. Included here are a commercial area at King/Chestnut Streets, residences, the downtown, the Davis Thayer Elementary School and Dean College.

#### **Bicycling**

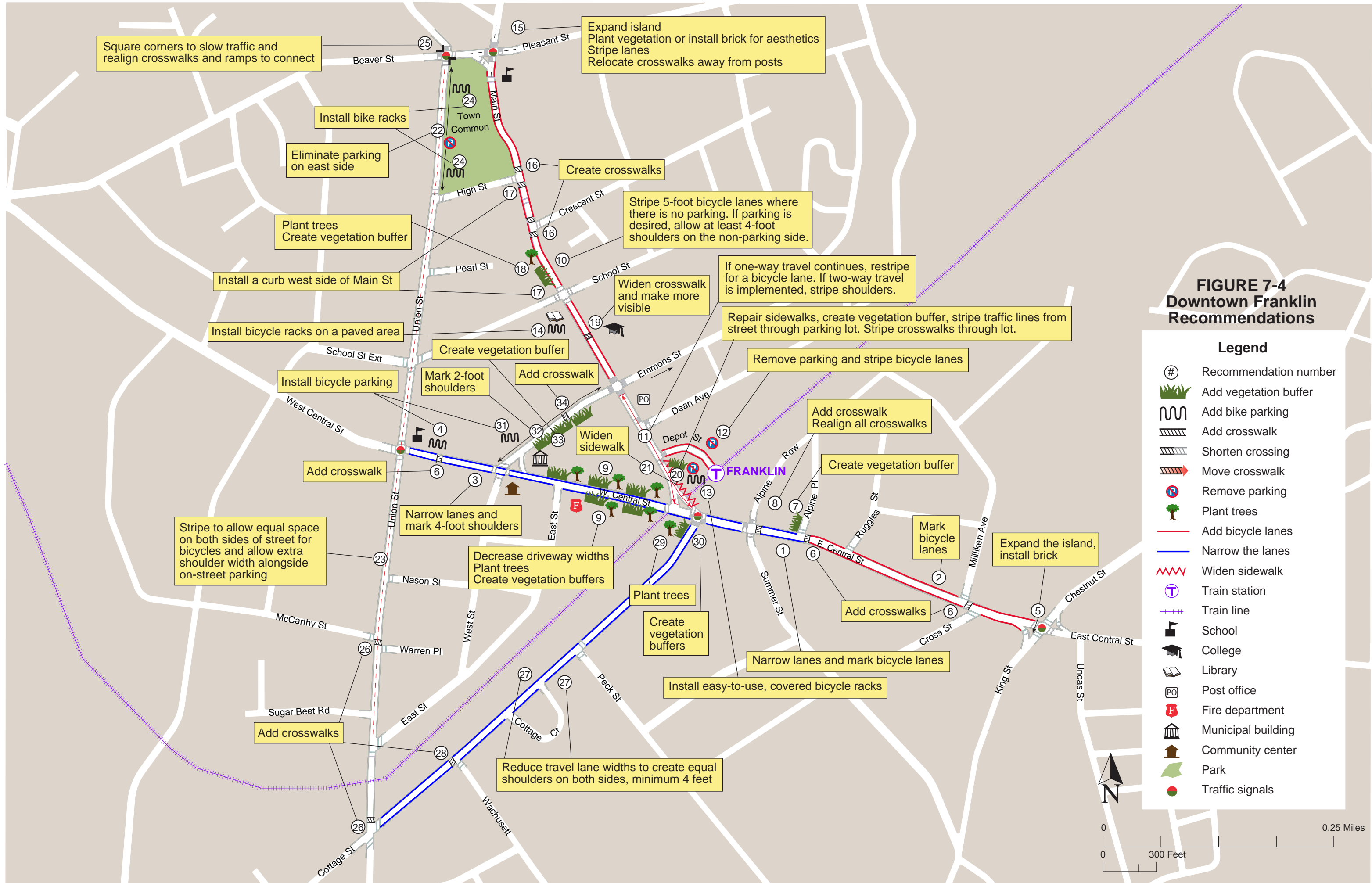
##### *Existing Conditions*

There are two travel lanes on East Central, one in each direction, separated by double yellow lines. There are left-turn lanes at Summer Street and at Cottage Street. Between Main Street and Alpine Place, there is parking on both sides of the street. Solid white lines mark the parking lanes, which are 8 feet wide. The travel lanes are 13 and 14 feet wide, eastbound and westbound respectively, and the left-turn lanes are 12 feet wide.

Between Alpine Place and King/Chestnut Streets, there is no parking. Marked shoulders abut the 12-foot travel lanes. With the roadway width ranging from 35 to 39 feet, the shoulder width ranges between six and eight feet. The roadway surface is smooth, with no major impediments. The roadway edge is clear of obstructions that would inhibit the safety of bicyclists.

There are two travel lanes on West Central Street—both in the same direction between Main and Emmons Streets and one in each direction between Emmons and Union Streets. There is no on-street parking on West Central Street. The 28-foot right-of-way includes two 13-foot travel lanes and two one-foot shoulders. A single dashed white line that becomes solid at the approaches to and exits from the intersections with Main and Emmons Streets divides the travel lanes. A double yellow line divides the travel lanes between Emmons and Union Streets. The roadway surface is smooth, with no major impediments. The roadway edge is clear of obstructions that would inhibit the safety of bicyclists.

There is no bicycle parking along this corridor.



**FIGURE 7-4**  
**Downtown Franklin**  
**Recommendations**

**Legend**

- # Recommendation number
- Add vegetation buffer
- Add bike parking
- Add crosswalk
- Shorten crossing
- Move crosswalk
- Remove parking
- Plant trees
- Add bicycle lanes
- Narrow the lanes
- Widen sidewalk
- Train station
- Train line
- School
- College
- Library
- Post office
- Fire department
- Municipal building
- Community center
- Park
- Traffic signals

## ***Recommendations***

1. On East Central Street between Main Street and Alpine Place, narrow the parking lanes to 7 feet, the travel lanes to 11 feet, and the left-turn lane to 10 feet, thereby providing 4.5-foot lanes for bicyclists.
2. On East Central Street, between Alpine Place and Chestnut/King Streets, with the existing roadway width ranging from 35 to 39 feet, mark the shoulders as bicycle lanes on both sides of the street.
3. On West Central Street, with a width of 28 feet, narrow the travel lanes to 10.5 feet and mark 3.5-foot shoulders.
4. Install bicycle parking, covered where possible, at various locations, including the elementary school, the commercial area, and the municipal parking lot.

## **Walking**

### ***Existing Conditions***

Sidewalks extend along both sides of Central Street. The sidewalks are more than five feet wide and are made of concrete with granite curbs. The surface is smooth and free of significant bumps or cracks. There is no vegetation buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway. There are no street trees along the roadway, but many front yards have large trees that provide shade along the street, except between Emmons Street and Alpine Place. The sidewalk slopes down to the level of intersecting roadways and driveways.

There are numerous crosswalks along this corridor. Some share a curb ramp, but many have exclusive cuts. Almost all of the Central Street crosswalks are ladder style; some of those that cross intersecting streets are parallel-bar style.

The intersection of West Central and Union Streets has a four-way stoplight with pedestrian-activated crossing signals. The exclusive pedestrian phase consists of a 6-second “Walk” signal and a 15-second flashing “Don’t Walk” signal. There are crosswalks across each side of the intersection, all parallel-bar style. Clockwise from the north, they are 41, 36, 48, and 44 feet long. Using a 3.5-foot-per-second standard for pedestrians crossing a roadway, the total pedestrian phase is adequate for the lengths of the crossings.

At the East Central and King/Chestnut Streets intersection, from 2002 to 2006, there were two pedestrian crashes, including a fatality. The intersection has a four-way stoplight with pedestrian-activated crossing signals. There is an island with connecting crosswalks on the southwest approach of the intersection. The exclusive pedestrian phase consists of a 6-second “Walk” signal and a 12-second flashing “Don’t Walk” signal. There are crosswalks across each approach of the intersection, and the crosswalks are ladder style across East Central Street and parallel-bar style across King/Chestnut Street. Clockwise from the north, they are 48, 47, 56, and 58 feet long. Using a 3.5-foot-per-second



standard for pedestrians crossing a roadway, the total pedestrian phase is adequate for the lengths of the crossings.

The Central and Cottage Streets intersection has a three-way stoplight with pedestrian-activated crossing signals. The exclusive pedestrian phase consists of a 5-second “Walk” signal and a 10-second flashing “Don’t Walk” signal. There are ladder-style crosswalks on each approach of the intersection. Clockwise from the north, they are 52, 47, and 49 feet long. Using a 3.5-foot-per-second standard for pedestrians crossing a roadway, the total pedestrian phase is barely adequate for the lengths of the crossings.

### ***Recommendations***

5. Intersection of East Central, King, and Chestnut Streets
  - Expand the islands at the northeast and southwest approaches of this intersection so that they nearly fill the space within the current striped area. This will slow turning traffic through this intersection and provide more protection for pedestrians. If the town decides to add a traffic lane to King Street, then make the island smaller.
  - Consider planting or installing brick on the island at the entrance of the downtown area to both enhance the aesthetics and provide visual cues to help slow down motor vehicles.
6. Add crosswalks at the following locations:
  - Across East Central Street between Cross Street and Milliken Avenue
  - Across East Central Street at Alpine Place (at least one)
  - Across West Central Street, from the elementary school to Dean College’s Bourret Hall
7. Create a vegetation buffer between the sidewalk and the paved area surrounding the gas station on the northwest corner of East Central Street and Alpine Place.
8. Intersection of East Central Street, Summer Street, and Alpine Row
  - Create a crosswalk across East Central Street on the east approach of the intersection
  - Realign all crosswalks to go straight across the streets



*Misaligned crosswalk across Summer Street*

9. West Central Street between Cottage and East Streets
  - Where possible, decrease driveway widths
  - Create vegetation buffers between the sidewalk and parking lots
  - Plant street trees

## **7.2.2 MAIN STREET: CENTRAL STREET TO PLEASANT STREET**

Main Street extends northward from downtown near the train station past Dean College, the town library, and some residences, to the Benjamin Franklin Public Charter School, the Franklin Federated Church, and the Town Common.

### **Bicycling**

#### *Existing Conditions*

There are two travel lanes on Main Street—both northwest-bound between Central and Emmons Streets and one in each direction between Emmons and Pleasant Streets. There is parking on both sides of the street between Central Street and Emmons Street. No marked shoulders abut the travel lanes except between Emmons and School Streets. The roadway in the downtown area is between 44 to 45 feet wide; from Emmons Street north, the width ranges between 34 and 41 feet.

In the downtown area, eight-foot parking lanes on both sides of the street are striped, leaving 14-foot travel lanes. A single dashed white line, which divides the travel lanes, becomes solid at the approach to and exit from the intersections with Emmons Street and Central Street respectively. A double yellow line divides the travel lanes between Emmons and Pleasant Streets. The roadway surface is smooth, with no major impediments. The roadway edge is clear of obstructions that would inhibit the safety of bicyclists.

There is a bicycle rack at the library.

#### *Recommendations*

10. On Main Street from Emmons Street to Pleasant Street, with the existing roadway width ranging between 34 and 41 feet, where there is no parking, stripe at least 5-foot bicycle lanes on both sides of the street. The narrowest travel lane would then be 12 feet wide in these areas. If parking is provided on one side in areas where Main Street is wider, allow at least 4-foot shoulders on the non-parking side. On the parking side, allow at least 5 feet between the outermost edge of the marked 7-foot wide parking spaces and the travel lane.
11. On Main Street between Central and Emmons Streets, with a roadway width of 44 to 45 feet (two feet having been taken for a widened sidewalk on the east side of Main

Street, per Recommendation 21 below), stripe as follows, from the west to the east side of Main Street:

- If the current one-way travel continues: 7 feet for parking, 12.0 feet for a travel lane, 12.0 feet for a travel lane, 6 feet for a bicycle lane, and 7 feet for parking
- If two-way travel is implemented: 7.0 feet for parking (marking spaces with a “T”), a solid line 12.0 feet from the curb, two 10.0-foot travel lanes, a solid line 12.0 feet from the curb, and 7.0 feet for parking (marking spaces with a “T”)

12. Remove parking on the north side of Depot Street to allow for the striping of bicycle lanes on both sides of the street to the commuter rail station.

13. Install racks at the commuter rail station that are easier to use and under cover.

14. Install racks at the library on a paved area that is easier to access.

## Walking

### *Existing Conditions*

Sidewalks extend along both sides of Main Street. Between Central and Emmons Streets in the downtown area, the sidewalks are very wide on the east side except between Central and Depot Streets, where they are only a few feet wide. The sidewalks on the west side are wider than five feet. Outside of the downtown area, the sidewalks are more than five feet wide. All of the sidewalks are made of concrete with granite curbs except for the west side of Main Street between School and High Streets where the sidewalk has no curb. The surface is smooth and free of significant bumps or cracks.



*Narrow sidewalk on Main Street*

There is a vegetation buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway between Emmons and School Streets and High and Pleasant Streets. A partial buffer extends along the west side

of Main Street north of School Street. There are no street trees along the roadway except between Central and Emmons Streets, but many front yards, the Town Common, and the college have large trees that provide shade and aesthetics along the street. The sidewalk slopes down to the level of intersecting roadways and driveways.

There are numerous crosswalks along this corridor, including a mid-block crossing at Dean College between Emmons and School Streets. Some crosswalks have exclusive curb ramps, but many have shared curb ramps.

The intersection of Pleasant and Main Streets has a four-way stoplight with pedestrian-activated crossing signals. The signal has an exclusive pedestrian phase consisting of a 7-second “Walk” signal and a 10-second flashing “Don’t Walk” signal. There are parallel-bar-style crosswalks across each approach of the intersection, which are, clockwise from the north, 43, 45, 44, and 48 feet long. Using the 3.5-foot-per-second standard for walking, the total pedestrian phase is adequate. There is also an island with connecting crosswalks on the southwest corner of the intersection.

### ***Recommendations***

#### 15. Intersection of Main and Pleasant Streets:

- Expand the island to provide a safer refuge for pedestrians and to slow down turning traffic
- Plant vegetation or install brick on the island for aesthetics
- Stripe approaching lanes to better separate traffic
- Make sure curb ramps are in the middle of the crosswalks
- Ensure that no signal posts are interfering with any crosswalks



*Intersection of Main and Pleasant Streets:  
no curb ramp, pole obstructing crosswalk.*

16. Create crosswalks on Main Street at the intersections of High and Crescent Streets.

17. Install a curb on the west side of Main Street between School and High Streets.

18. Plant street trees and continue the vegetation buffer on the west side of Main Street.



19. Widen and increase the visibility of the mid-block crossing of Main Street between School and Emmons Streets.
20. Depot Street to Commuter Rail Station
  - Repair the sidewalk on the south side of Depot Street
  - Create a vegetation buffer between this sidewalk and the parking lot behind the businesses on Main Street
  - Stripe traffic lines down Depot Street through the parking lot to the station
  - Stripe crosswalks and walkways for pedestrians traversing the station parking lot
21. Widen the sidewalk by at least two feet on the east side of Main Street between Central and Depot Streets.

### **7.2.3 UNION STREET: PLEASANT STREET TO COTTAGE STREET**

Union Street, reconstructed in the summer of 2007, stretches south from the Town Common, past residences and the Davis Thayer Elementary School, to a commercial area south of downtown.

#### **Bicycling**

##### *Existing Conditions*

There are two travel lanes, one in each direction. There is parking on both sides of the street along the Town Common between Beaver and High Streets, no parking on either side between High and School Streets, parking and a school bus pull-in on the east side between School and West Central Streets, and parking on the east side, south of West Central Street. Marked shoulders abut the 11-foot travel lanes. The roadway width ranges between 28 and 34 feet. The shoulder width ranges between three and six feet except from Beaver Street to High Street where there are 10-foot wide parking lanes instead of shoulders. A double yellow line divides the travel lanes. The roadway surface is smooth, with no major impediments. The roadway edge is clear of obstructions that would inhibit the safety of bicyclists.

There is no bicycle parking along this corridor.

##### *Recommendations*

22. Eliminate parking on the east side of Union Street between Pleasant and High Streets.
23. Stripe Union Street so the space available to bicyclists is the same on both sides of the street and allow extra shoulder width alongside on-street parking.
24. Install covered bicycle parking in the town common area.

## Walking

### *Existing Conditions*

Sidewalks rebuilt as part of the roadway reconstruction extend along both sides of Union Street. The sidewalks are more than five feet wide and are made of brick with granite curbs along the Town Common and of concrete with granite curbs elsewhere. The surface is smooth and free of significant bumps or cracks. There is a vegetation buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway on both sides of the street from the intersection of Pearl Street north and no buffer from this intersection south. There are no street trees along the roadway, but many front yards have large trees that provide shade. The sidewalk slopes down to the level of intersecting roadways and driveways.

There are numerous crosswalks, each with exclusive curb ramps. The crosswalks are parallel-bar style, with the exception of the brick inlaid crosswalk across Union Street at High Street.

The intersection of Pleasant, Beaver, and Union Streets has a four-way stoplight with pedestrian-activated crossing signals. The signal has an exclusive pedestrian phase consisting of an 8-second “Walk” signal and an 18-second flashing “Don’t Walk” signal. The parallel-bar-style crosswalks on each approach of the intersection are, clockwise from the north, 62, 51, 50, and 55 feet long. Using a 3.5-foot-per-second standard, the total pedestrian phase is adequate. The radii on the corners of this intersection allow vehicles to make right turns at too high a speed. Two crosswalks share a curb ramp. The crosswalks do not extend along the most logical path for pedestrians as they cross the street.

### *Recommendations*

25. At the intersection of Union, Pleasant, and Beaver Streets, square off the southeast and northwest corners to slow turning traffic. Realign crosswalks and curb ramps to connect the corners of the new intersection.
26. Add crosswalks at the following locations:
  - Across Union Street between McCarthy Street and Warren Place
  - On the north approach of Union and Cottage Streets

## **7.2.4 COTTAGE STREET: UNION STREET TO CENTRAL STREET**

Cottage Street runs north from the commercial area south of downtown past residences to the eastern point of the downtown triangle.

## **Bicycling**

### *Existing Conditions*

Cottage Street was reconstructed in 2006. There are two travel lanes, one in each direction, with two-hour parking allowed near the Central Street intersection. Marked shoulders abut the 12-foot travel lanes. The roadway width ranges between 28 and 33 feet and the shoulder width ranges between two and five feet. A solid double yellow line divides the travel lanes. The roadway surface is smooth, with no major impediments. The roadway edge is clear of obstructions that would inhibit the safety of bicyclists.

There is no bicycle parking along this corridor.

### *Recommendations*

27. Reduce the travel lanes on Cottage Street to allow a minimum shoulder width of 4 feet. Mark the travel lanes and shoulders so that the shoulder width is equal on both sides, except where parking is allowed. In those areas, mark a 7-foot parking lane and mark a bicycle lane extending at least 5 feet from the parking lane.

## **Walking**

### *Existing Conditions*

Sidewalks extend along both sides of Cottage Street. More than five feet wide, they are made of concrete with granite curbs. The surface is smooth and free of significant bumps or cracks. There is no buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway. There are no street trees along the roadway, but many front yards have large trees that provide shade. The sidewalk angles up and down to the level of intersecting roadways and driveways.

Besides the crosswalks at the signalized crossings, there is an additional one at Peck Street. It is sufficiently visible, with exclusive curb ramps, and is parallel-bar style.

### *Recommendations*

28. Create a crosswalk across Cottage Street at Wachusett Street, on the southwest approach of the intersection.
29. Plant trees along Cottage Street near the approach to Central Street.
30. Create vegetation buffers between the sidewalks and the area parking lots.

## **7.2.5 EMMONS STREET: MAIN STREET TO WEST CENTRAL STREET**

Emmons Street forms one side of the downtown triangle, with commercial and civic buildings on the downtown side and Dean College across the street.

## **Bicycling**

### ***Existing Conditions***

Emmons Street is 24 feet wide and is composed of two one-way travel lanes; there are no marked shoulders or bicycle lanes. A single dashed white line, solid at the approach to and exit from the intersections with West Central and Main Streets, divides the travel lanes. The roadway surface is smooth, with no major impediments. The roadway edge is clear of obstructions that would inhibit the safety of bicyclists.

There is no bicycle parking along this corridor.

### ***Recommendations***

31. Install bicycle parking in the downtown area.
32. Mark two-foot shoulders on both sides of Emmons Street.

## **Walking**

### ***Existing Conditions***

Sidewalks extend along both sides of Emmons Street. The sidewalks, which are more than five feet wide, are concrete with granite curbs. The surface is smooth and free of significant bumps or cracks. There is no buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway. There is a guardrail but no other buffer between the sidewalk and the municipal parking lot on the corner of Emmons and West Central Streets. There are no street trees along the roadway. The sidewalk slopes down to the level of intersecting roadways and driveways.

According to the Town of Franklin *Downtown Parking Assessment*, design of a \$5.0 million roadway and streetscape improvement project was to begin in 2008. Public parking, signage, pedestrian linkages, pedestrian-scale lighting and other amenities are part of the proposal.

There are three crosswalks along this corridor. The two at Main Street have highly visible pavement markings, but they share curb ramps with adjacent crosswalks. The crosswalk at West Central Street has highly visible pavement marking and exclusive curb ramps.

There are no signalized pedestrian crossings in this corridor.

### ***Recommendations***

33. Create a vegetation buffer between the sidewalk on the southeast side of Emmons Street and the parking lot surrounding the municipal building at West Central Street.
34. Create a mid-block crossing on Emmons Street between Main and West Central Streets.