

Chestnut Hill - Route 9

The Chestnut Hill area along Route 9 was designed with vehicles and parking in mind, and pedestrian mobility suffers as a consequence. This study area is dominated by heavy traffic vehicular routes such as Route 9 and Hammond Pond Parkway. Due to the high traffic volumes present throughout the day on Route 9, it is perceived by pedestrians as unsafe, despite having fairly new pedestrian facilities in place. We focused on three areas of concern: the travel path of pedestrians through the Mall at Chestnut Hill Shopping Center, the crossings on Route 9 until it reaches Hammond Pond Parkway, and Hammond Pond Parkway itself.

In Figure 33, we highlight challenges pedestrians face in this study area; each problem is signified by a red circle with a number corresponding to the following text.

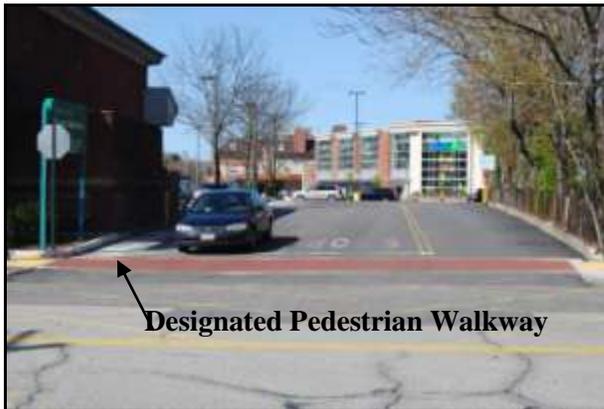


Figure 1: Chestnut Hill Problems and Opportunities Map

From the Chestnut Hill T stop through the Mall at Chestnut Hill Shopping Center:

- 1. Dangerous Interactions in Parking Lot:** The first problem we observed were pedestrians cutting through a parking lot entrance to the Chestnut Hill Shopping Center. The cut through begins behind a CVS Pharmacy on Hammond St. with a designated pedestrians area marked by white stripes. This can be seen below in Figure 34. However, where the parking lot begins the designated pedestrian path ends, leaving pedestrians to choose their own paths and causing potentially dangerous interactions between motorists and vehicles.

Recommendation: Install Crosswalks. We recommend that the crosswalks throughout the Chestnut Hill Shopping Center, shown in Figure 34, extend to the pedestrian designated entrance by CVS. This would be beneficial to pedestrian safety. Having pedestrians follow a designated path allows vehicles to be more aware of where pedestrians are likely to travel.



**Figure 2: Back entrance to the Mall at Chestnut Hill Shopping Center (left);
Crosswalks in Shopping Center Parking lot (right)**

Along Route 9:

- 2. Unsafe Designated Crossing:** There is a crosswalk across Route 9 located on the Brookline portion between Finagle-A-Bagel and the Chestnut Hill Shopping Center. This crosswalk is not safe for pedestrians to use because it is not signalized, and heavy vehicle traffic is almost always present at high speeds. Due to this, pedestrians cannot accurately determine on their own accord when a safe time would be to cross. This crossing is very intimidating and dangerous resulting in a lack of use. This crosswalk is shown in Figure 35. Below are two alternatives for improving safety at the crosswalk.

Recommendation: Remove the crosswalk: We recommend removing the crosswalk and encouraging people to use the two other crosswalks along Route 9, one at Hammond St. the other at Tulley St.

Recommendation: Implement a walking light. Alternatively, we recommend implementing a walking light, stopping traffic on both sides of Route 9, and allowing pedestrians to cross safely.



Figure 3: Un-signalized Crossing on Route 9

Along Hammond Pond Parkway:

3. **Inaccessible Sidewalk:** The sidewalk leading from Route 9 onto Hammond Pond Parkway on the westbound side is inaccessible, presents dangerous conditions for the elderly and disabled, and is not aesthetically pleasing. Where the off-ramp extends towards Hammond Pond Parkway, a sidewalk also begins. However, there are no crosswalks leading to this crosswalk and no curb cuts allowing those in wheel chairs access to this. Even when a pedestrian reaches this sidewalk, it is broken and covered in debris, which can present many tripping hazards to the elderly and disabled. The sidewalk looks as though it is not meant to be used. The beginning of this sidewalk is shown in Figure 36.



Figure 4: Poorly maintained sidewalk along Route 9 leading to Hammond Pond Parkway

Recommendation: Replace Existing Facilities. We recommend that this sidewalk is replaced and new facilities such as curb cuts and crosswalks are installed with its replacement.

4. **Hazardous Facilities along Hammond Pond Parkway:** The conditions of the sidewalk and facilities associated with it continue to be a problem along Hammond Pond Parkway.
 - a. **Hazardous Pedestrian Crossing without Proper Facilities:** Cars traveling southbound on Hammond Pond Parkway approach the intersection of Route 9 right after they take a sharp turn down a steep hill. Pedestrians do cross here;

the facilities seem to suggest a designated crosswalk because of a median with a paved patch of sidewalk. However, there are no crosswalks and no curb cuts leading to the median. This median is shown in Figure 37. As pedestrians cross here, they are presented with fast-moving traffic with poor visibility, putting them in danger.



Figure 5: Potential crossing across Hammond Pond Parkway

- b. Pedestrian Crosswalk with No Facilities Leading Up to It:** There is another designated crosswalk further north on this road, however, there are no facilities leading pedestrians here. This crosswalk is also hazardous as cars are still making the same turn as mentioned above. Hammond Pond Parkway consists of four lanes of fast moving traffic, presenting a hazardous crossing regardless of having the facility. Designating a crosswalk on a steep turn on a hill makes this particularly hazardous.

Recommendation: Renovate or Replace Existing Facilities: We recommend that these facilities be repaired, replaced, or otherwise built to ADA regulations, providing the proper widths, even surfaces, and curb cuts with crosswalks leading up to them. Signalizing the crosswalks along Hammond Pond Parkway would also be beneficial to pedestrian safety.

- 5. Pedestrians Use Underpass to Cross Route 9 without Facilities:** During our observations, many pedestrians were walking through the underpass without any designated facilities. The underpass is shown in Figure 38. To identify the reason for this, we observed where they were traveling. Some were walking through the underpass to use the crosswalks on the other side of Route 9 to cross Hammond Pond Parkway. Others were using the underpass to get from one side of Route 9

to the other. These paths are shown in Figure 39. Regardless of where they were traveling, using this underpass is extremely hazardous because it only provides a very narrow place to walk with cars traveling quickly around a sharp corner from Route 9. This area is likely to cause an accident between motorists and pedestrians.



Figure 6: Route 9 Underpass

Recommendation: Discourage the Use of These Facilities. We recommend that pedestrians should be discouraged from using this underpass. This can be done by encouraging people to use the crossings along Route 9 through signage. These signs will outline where pedestrians can get from the north side of Route 9 to the south side safely

Recommendation: Install Pedestrian Facilities along Underpass of Route 9. To solve this safety issue, new facilities need to be built to accommodate the pedestrians crossing through this underpass. In order to fit in new sidewalks and other facilities, the lanes through the underpass need to be narrowed. Narrowing street lanes is considered a method of traffic calming, which slows down traffic, also benefiting pedestrian safety.

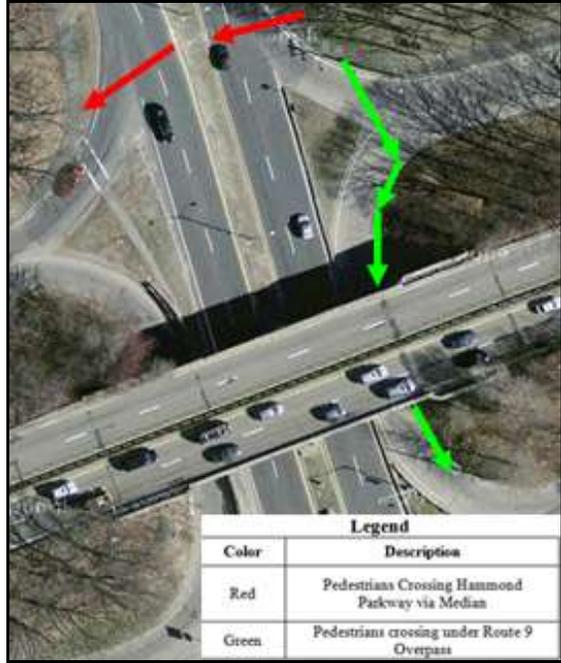


Figure 7: Map of Hammond Pond Parkway Unsafe Pedestrian Patterns

Summary of Chestnut Hill Recommendations



Figure 8: Chestnut Hill Recommendations Map

Location on Fig. X	Recommendation	Cost	Impact
1	Install crosswalks	Low	High
2	Remove the crosswalk	Low	High
	Implement the walking light	High	High
3	Replace existing facilities	High	High
4	Renovate or replace existing facilities	High	High
5	Discourage the use of these facilities	Low	Low

