



Town of Exeter

Downtown Parking, Traffic, and Pedestrian Flow Analysis

DRAFT Report – February 2024

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Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Introduction

During Town Meeting in March of 2023, the Town of Exeter passed, during its Town Meeting Warrant Article No. 21, an allotment of \$50,000 to conduct a “traffic and parking, traffic and pedestrian analysis in the downtown area to include a portion of Front Street, Water Street, String Bridge, Franklin Street, Bow Street, Chestnut Street, Center Street, and other streets in the general downtown area.” As an initiative brought about by the Town of Exeter’s 2018 Master Plan, the intent was to evaluate and understand traffic and pedestrian flow through Downtown Exeter, impacts on local businesses, and to develop a parking management plan with a six-year schedule for implementation.

The Town of Exeter has produced multiple studies about transportation and parking in the Downtown over the past couple of decades, including:

- Exeter Downtown Parking Study – April 2002 – Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Town of Exeter and Rockingham Planning Commission.
- Town of Exeter Master Plan – Adopted February 2018, Action Agenda Analysis April 2021 – Town of Exeter
- 2018 Exeter Downtown Parking Survey – Summer 2018 – Town of Exeter and Rockingham Planning Commission.
- Exeter Intersection Evaluations – July 2022 – Town of Exeter and VHB, Inc.

These studies indicated a need for the Town to better understand on the comings, goings, and movements within the Town to put together a vision for how this data plus feedback from the community could be put into action through new policies and improved infrastructure. Upon being selected for the opportunity, Stantec understood that to evaluate transportation in Downtown Exeter was to evaluate the complete picture of parking and traffic in the study area, due to Exeter’s importance as a regional destination drawing customers, area residents, employees, students, tourists, and more.

Stantec initiated a new parking and traffic survey to the community to build upon the work down by earlier studies. Feedback from the survey was used to inform identified concerns and recommendations throughout the study. Two public meetings were held; one to discuss survey results and the parking and traffic findings, and one to discuss early considerations for recommended policy and infrastructure changes in the Downtown. The results from these methods of public outreach are included within the study.



Executive Summary

Parking Summary

The Town of Exeter’s public and private parking areas, both on-street and off-street, were inventoried for this study, totaling 1,586 parking spaces for the study area. Of this total, the Town manages 938 parking spaces, including 397 parking spaces located in three off-street parking lots. The Town has parking regulations revised as recently as April 2019, which include prominently signed “Two-Hour Parking Limit” parking spaces along the Downtown commercial corridor of Water Street, Center Street, and portions of Front Street, Spring Street, and String Bridge.

Due to recently interpreted Federal court rulings in other communities and changes to staffing at the Exeter Police Department, the parking regulations related to length of stay are not regularly enforced. Local business owners have been noticing the behaviors of the vehicles parked in front of their businesses for extended periods of time, connecting the lack of turnover with potential impacts to patrons seeking storefront parking. This lack of turnover and extended length of stay in the busiest part of Exeter’s business district, Water Street close to the bandstand, leaving only one or two spaces available in this stretch of Water Street. Water Street and the Municipal Parking Lot see utilization (above 80 percent) and some completely full zones during the peak midday period of the day. Other than the few spaces and zones noted above, timelapse photography observed that the average stay of a vehicle was under two hours.

Of the remaining observed public parking, both off-street and on-street, aside from certain locations detailed later in this study, there were ample underutilized spaces on streets and in lots less than a two-minute walk from Water Street. One of the concerns found during the surveys and the public was the lack of wayfinding to these available parking spaces, especially for nonlocal visitors with certain destinations in mind.





Executive Summary

Parking Summary

Sixty-two (62) percent of the off-street parking inventoried was identified as private parking or restricted to the public and generally identified as such with regulation and warning signs. Private parking areas included those signed for certain businesses and residences but did not include those single-family households or smaller driveways with parking. Assessing these private spaces in addition to public spaces helps understand overall parking activity and often demonstrates how private parking serves multiple uses in a downtown, providing potential opportunities to smartly share existing underutilized private supply for other uses.

Overall, at its peak (12PM), the parking inventory of Downtown Exeter was found to be about 56 percent utilized, with specific areas, such as Water Street and the Municipal (Water Street) Parking Lot at full capacity. In its field inventory, Stantec identified a lack of wayfinding for parking throughout the Downtown, challenging connections from the public off-street parking lots for pedestrians, limited special parking zones for short-term visitors along the busiest segments of Downtown, and few loading zones for delivery vehicles. Furthermore, as the Town's supply of housing has been increasing at rates not seen for decades, stakeholders voiced a concern that residential units built with waivers for parking will result in new residents being frustrated by unclear messaging on where long-term and overnight parking can be found near their Downtown home.





Executive Summary

Traffic Summary

Stantec reviewed historical studies related to transportation through Downtown Exeter and found that some of the identified issues related to intersection operations and congestion have remained the same for generations. Concepts and considerations have been discussed for the intersection of Water Street at Front Street (the “Bandstand Intersection”) as early as the 1968 Exeter Transportation Study. While traffic volumes have remained relatively steady over the 56 years since that study, the need for improvements has also not changed.

After inventorying potential areas for multimodal (pedestrian, bicycles, and others) improvements throughout the study area, improvements were recommended with a primary intent of improving safety for pedestrian and bicyclists, while also improving operations and sight distances for vehicles through the dense Downtown.

Stantec also assessed the heavy trucking identified in field visits and the surveys, speeding and sightline concerns, crosswalk and sidewalk conditions, and pedestrian-level lighting, to identify other current shortcomings in the existing transportation system of Downtown.





Executive Summary

Outreach and Engagement Summary

As highlighted above, Stantec performed an extensive public outreach campaign in Downtown to gauge the thoughts of all types of users of the transportation system in Exeter. The interface with the community, included a virtual public survey, public open house and presentation of parking inventory and analysis, and meetings with Downtown stakeholders – all of which were used to help identify and prioritize the study’s recommendations. A second public meeting was conducted on December 13th, 2023 to present preliminary recommendations for public comment. Stantec attended the February 12th Select Board meeting to officially submit a draft Downtown Parking, Traffic, and Pedestrian Flow Analysis Report for review and comment, before Stantec finalized its Report.

Strategy and Recommendations Summary

After analyzing all the data collected from the field inventories, utilization and turnover analysis, traffic operations, existing infrastructure review, survey analysis, and public feedback during public meetings, Stantec has identified twelve (12) strategies and recommendations for the Town of Exeter to pursue to improve their Downtown transportation and parking systems:

- Share Private Parking Supply
- Establish Short/Long-Term Loading Spaces
- Introduce Pay Parking and Expand Permit Parking
- Improve Parking Wayfinding
- Introduce Parking Ambassadors Downtown
- Reconfigure Bandstand Intersection
- Establish New Truck Route
- Adjust Zoning for Small-Scale Developments
- Redefine Winter Parking Procedure
- Multimodal Improvements
- Improve Markings + Signage for Bicyclists
- Consider Reimagining Parking on Water Street

As requested in the 2018 Town of Exeter Master Plan and in the Request for Proposals related to the project, this report includes an implementation matrix visualizing the timeline related to implementing the recommendations in a prompt schedule, from short-term, low-cost recommendations to long-term, high-cost recommendations. To supplement the ideas requiring a longer timeline that includes additional planning, engineering, budgeting and funding, and construction, Stantec has included potential funding sources to help the Town obtain regional, state, and federal assistance to realize its vision for Downtown.



What this study intended to achieve

Project Scope and Goals

This report summarizes the findings and presents recommended strategies associated with the Downtown Exeter Parking Study. The Study included the following:

- Review and evaluation of over 1,500 parking spaces in Exeter
- Counts for typical weekday and Saturday midday operations in the Downtown (not including special events).
- Review and evaluation of the Town's parking management practices, from enforcement to regulations.
- Public engagement through workshops and a widely distributed survey.
- Assessment of the Town's Zoning Code, Parking Regulations, and foreseeable Downtown developments.
- Infrastructure inventory and assessment related to vehicular and pedestrian circulation throughout Downtown.

The consultant team worked with a team of Town staff members to develop six goals to guide the parking study. These were also shared at community meetings in the fall and early winter of 2023.

The outcomes of this effort are a series of recommendations, detailed later in this report, which generally seek to adjust the parking and transportation system to better meet the Town's goals for its future.

1. Create a **comprehensive inventory** of downtown parking
2. Assess how parking areas or regulations can better support **long-term economic vitality** downtown
3. Identify opportunities for **long-term parking** areas beyond the downtown core
4. Improve **traffic flow and safety** throughout downtown
5. Identify opportunities to establish or improve **safe and convenient pedestrian connections** to and from parking
6. Evaluate opportunities to improve the **efficiency and effectiveness** of parking enforcement

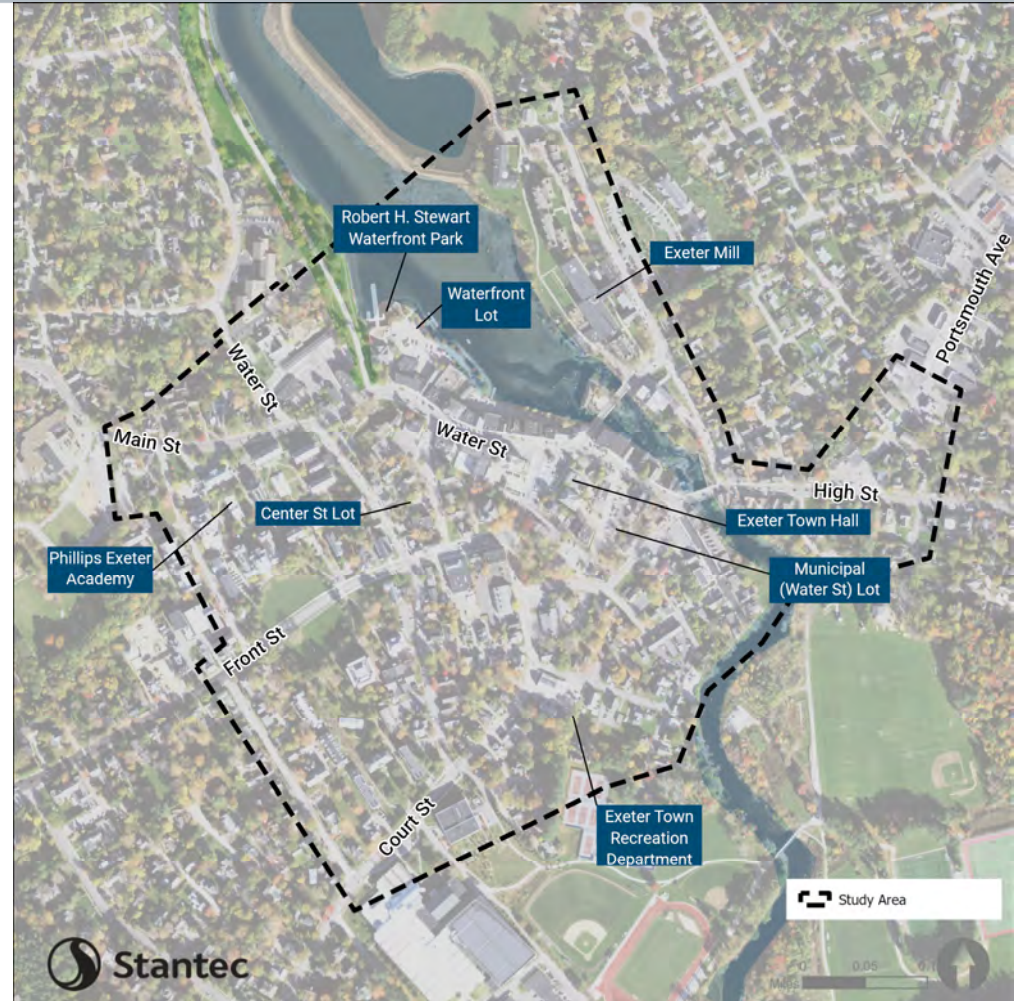


Downtown Exeter Study Area

Area of Analysis

The area of study for this assignment was designated in the Town's Request for Proposals (RFP) represented in the following map. This area covers Downtown Exeter in which the existing inventory of parking and roadway attributes, land uses, traffic operations, and parking signage and regulations were collected, reviewed, evaluated, and pursued for potential improvements as an outcome of this study. To effectively measure parking usage across the Downtown, the team emphasized review of the vital commercial corridor areas along Water Street, Main Street, Front Street, High Street, and Court Street, and residential and academic areas around Phillips Exeter Academy

In addition, the study area incorporates residential streets adjacent to the commercial corridors and the Phillips Exeter Academy campus and adjacent infrastructure. The land uses supported in these areas attract different types of users with varying parking needs and generate demand for parking at different times during the day/week. The study area also includes a mix of multi-family and single-family residential units, small businesses, churches, and other localized services and institutions.



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Parking Summary



The parking system in Exeter today

WHO OWNS AND OPERATES PARKING IN EXETER

Who can use parking is often closely tied to who owns parking, though the key difference is in privately-owned parking, where more nuanced and informal agreements may allow parking facilities to be used among multiple businesses, but not for the general public. Parking ownership and/or operation of parking in downtown Exeter can be summarized as follows.

PUBLIC

The Town of Exeter manages all on-street parking as well as three off-street parking lots within the study area:

- Municipal (Water Street) Parking Lot
- Center Street Parking Lot
- Waterfront Parking Lot

Within the project study area, the Town manages 938 parking spaces, including 397 spaces in the three parking lots and specially regulated spaces throughout. There are few wayfinding signs to navigate drivers to specific parking areas, and limited signage associated with public lots to indicate their association with the Town.

Permit parking is provided specifically for Town employees and those requesting a permit for parking along Pleasant Street. This permit is pertinent to night parking, especially during the Winter Parking Ban.

PRIVATE

The remaining 648 parking spaces inventoried for this study are off-street private parking spaces and lots, with 109 of these parking spaces owned and operated by the Phillips Exeter Academy. The remainder of the private parking spaces are by various other business and residential owners.

Observations throughout the study area found the Phillips Exeter Academy parking lots were well signed, not just for regulation but for wayfinding. Other private spaces and lots were well marked to ascertain the ownership of specific lots.



The parking system in Exeter today

To gather the most accurate understanding of downtown Exeter’s existing parking, the team recorded regulations within the defined study area as they would be viewed by a first-time “visitor” to downtown Exeter. This study’s inventory represents the current signage and usage rather than the legal status of ownership of parking areas.

The maps and tables on the following pages illustrate how the parking in downtown Exeter is distributed among an array of categories and user permissions. The regulations have been defined as shown on the right. Overall, 31% of the parking is ‘restricted,’ or in other words reserved for customers, tenants, or visitors of the business or establishment with which the parking is associated. The remainder of the overall parking supply for each area is available to the general public.

There are a few key objectives from analyzing private parking as part of this project:

1. Understand accessibility of the overall system-

How much private parking exists and where it is located in relation to key destinations helps us understand how accessible parking is for a public visitor

2. Analyze whether development requirements are reasonable-

It is important to know how private parking is actually being used in comparison to what the Town requires

3. Optimize existing supply to avoid overbuilding parking-

Under certain conditions, private parking, and how it is regulated and managed, can potentially provide an opportunity to “expand” public supply

ON-STREET PARKING REGULATIONS

PUBLIC PARKING (TIME-RESTRICTED)

These spaces are available to any user for a designated period of time, e.g., “15-minute.”

RESERVED

These spaces are available only to designated users, such as tenants or visitors of a particular business

UNREGULATED

These spaces are available to any user at any time and do not have a time restriction

OFF-STREET PARKING REGULATIONS

PUBLIC PARKING

These spaces are associated with Town-owned facilities and are available to any user

PRIVATE PARKING

These spaces are available only to designated users, such as tenants or visitors of a particular business

PRIVATE P.E.A. PARKING

These spaces are only available for students, faculty, employees, and other visitors of Philips Exeter Academy

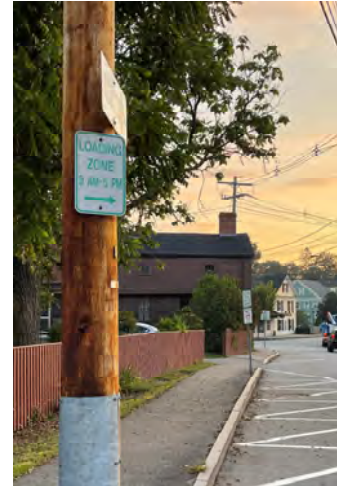


The parking system in Exeter today – Regulation Signage

PARKING REGULATIONS

A sample of the wide variety of parking regulation signage seen throughout downtown Exeter is shown to the right.

For regulation signage relating to public, on-street spaces, clarity could be improved (e.g., '30 MIN. PARKING LIMIT, MON-SAT' doesn't clarify if time limit is in effect 24/7 or during specific times; '2 HR PARKING 8AM TO 6PM' doesn't clarify whether this is in effect 7 days a week or only during weekdays. Clear signage reduces confusion and improves the user's parking experience.





The parking system in Exeter today – Multimodal Access

MULTIMODAL PATHS + ACCESS

Although Downtown Exeter is largely dominated by visitors who arrive using a car, Downtown’s key destinations are within reasonable distance of each other by foot or other modes, and pedestrian-related infrastructure is an important component of maintaining downtown vitality and mobility for all.

For pedestrians walking to and from parking and between Exeter’s destinations and for bicyclists on the road, there are several challenges:

- Crosswalk locations are lacking at areas where support for safe crossings are desired and could benefit from enhanced markings or signage to encourage drivers to slow down and yield to pedestrians.
- Back-out angled parking and other factors perpetuate limited sightlines for pedestrians or bicyclists trying to ride on the road
- Some barriers in the sidewalks (such as street utilities) interrupt the easy flow of movement and accessibility for those with mobility challenges
- Some parking facilities and the paths leading to/from parking are not well lit, making these options uncomfortable
- Bicycle infrastructure and signage is lacking





The parking system in Exeter today – Winter Parking

WINTER PARKING

All on-street parking spaces and the three public off-street parking lots in the downtown study area are subject to a winter parking ban for a significant portion of the year (three and a half months) between December 1st and March 15th. The only spaces allowing for overnight parking are permitted on Pleasant Street and in specific spaces within the lots.

Although the intention of this ban is ultimately to guarantee snowplows can operate without obstruction, the ban is in effect regardless of whether there is an occurrence of inclement weather events. Unintended consequences can occur where parking areas may experience excessive overnight demand due to the displacement otherwise not seen during the non-ban months. The Town hosts a general procedural plan but could benefit from more details and clarification for potentially impacted parkers, particularly downtown residents.



Winter Overnight Parking Plan map from the Town's website



The parking system in Exeter today – User Experience

ENFORCEMENT

The Town of Exeter has parking regulations that include parking prohibitions, the winter parking ban, school hour restrictions, and time-based parking limits most apparent in the Downtown as Two-Hour Parking between 8:00AM to 6:00PM along Water Street, Front Street, String Bridge, and Center Street. Due to recent federal court findings and Exeter Police Department staffing reorganization, the Town can no longer effectively monitor and enforce these parking limits.

Anecdotes provided by attendees to the public meetings and comments in the survey shared that there are issues with business owners, employees, and residents parked in these parking spaces for times much longer than permitted.



Example parking signs with restrictions (Source: Stantec Field Inventories)



The parking system in Exeter today – Wayfinding

PARKING SIGNAGE

How parking information is communicated is just as important as the existence of parking itself, in many cases of small towns and cities. Parking wayfinding signage is an important part of creating efficiency in the road network and improving the parking experience for visitors unfamiliar with parking options. Parking wayfinding signage should be appropriately sized, strategically positioned, and designed to be recognizable as part of a comprehensive and connected parking system.

As the project team conducted analysis in Exeter, the importance of clear and consistent wayfinding signage and parking information was raised.

Downtown Exeter currently features few parking wayfinding signs, particularly along Water Street where the majority of traffic flows through. The frequency of signage, their positioning, design, and level of information on the signs may be beneficial to help parkers 1) be aware that off-street facilities exist, and 2) understand which facility meets their needs (i.e., hours of operation, long- or short-term, etc.). Signage should follow the guidelines provided by the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Parking information that is available online is also important to help first-time or less-familiar visitors plan their visit ahead of time and understand where parking is located in relation to intended destinations, and parking costs. Currently, there is no map of on the Town's website to provide an overview to visitors of the general types of parking available and their locations in relation to key destinations in the downtown area.



The parking system in Exeter today – Wayfinding

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Some of the challenges in Exeter’s wayfinding system today are identified to the right.

Stantec's field inventories identified limited or no clear wayfinding from Exeter's main roadways to its off-street parking located behind the Town Offices (Municipal Parking Lot), the Waterfront Parking Lot, and the Center Street Parking Lot. In addition, it is unclear the extent of on-street parking surrounding the central business district, impacting the overutilization along Water Street. Upon parking, there is no pedestrian-level wayfinding to assist those



Scale of sign to parking is too small for drivers (Source: Google)



Signs to public parking are lacking at key driving route decision locations (Source: Google)



Sign not present at key entrance to Municipal Parking Lot (Source: Stantec Field Inventories)



Municipal lots lack consistent town-branding and essential details indicating lot name, hours of operation, etc. (Source: Stantec Field Inventories)



The parking system in Exeter today – Parking and Zoning

Zoning Requirements

Parking requirements for new development in Exeter are outlined in the City’s Zoning Ordinance (most recently updated in March 2020). Land uses included in this table are those most commonly seen in Downtown Exeter. The team consulted the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation manual for similar land use categories to be able to make a more accurate comparison between Exeter’s requirements and typical/best practice parking requirements as informed by data collected for similar cities across the country. This analysis revealed the following:

- Base parking standards are generally higher than the ITE Observed Parking Use Rate.
- There are exceptions for parking reductions for shared use and lower utilization at the discretion of the Planning Board.
- There is an opportunity to reduce parking standards for small scale projects Downtown.

Land Use	Exeter Requirement	Mixed Use Neighborhood Development	Equivalent ITE Category	ITE Observed Parking Use Rate	Comparison
Residential – Multi-family	2 spaces per unit (2+ bedrooms) 1 space per unit (1 bed/studio)	1 space per unit (any bedroom)	Multifamily Housing, Low-Rise (221)	1.21 spaces per unit	Base: Higher MUND: lower
Office	1 space per 300 square feet	1 space per 600 square feet	General Office Building (710)	1 space per 420 square feet	Base: Higher MUND: lower
Medical Office	1 space per 200 square feet	1 space per 400 square feet	Medical-Dental Office Building (720)	1 space per 310 square feet	Base: Higher MUND: lower
Retail	1 space per 300 square feet (GFA less than 30,000) 1 space per 500 square feet (GFA over 30,000)	1 space per 600 square feet (GFA less than 30,000) 1 space per 1000 square feet (GFA over 30,000)	Shopping Center (820)	1 space per 515 square feet	Base: Higher MUND: lower
Restaurant	1 space per 3 seats	1 space per 6 seats	High-Turnover, Sit Down Restaurant (932)	1 space per 5 seats	Base: Higher MUND: lower

*The ITE (Institution of Transportation Engineers) Parking Generation Manual is the preferred resource for transportation professionals to determine standard/best practice for parking requirements nationwide.

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Parking Inventory + Utilization



The parking system in Exeter today

A complete understanding of parking supply and regulation is a basic component to understanding parking patterns and local knowledge of what locations are most accommodating. This study documented public and private parking facilities, both on- and off-street, in the Exeter Downtown Study Area. The totals represented in this report include all parking within the study area, with the exception of small, private residential parking areas such as driveways. This work serves as the baseline for all information calculated and analyzed over the course of the project.





Parking Inventory

UNDERSTANDING HOW MUCH PARKING EXISTS BY TYPE

To gather the most accurate understanding of downtown Exeter’s existing parking, the team recorded regulations within the defined study area as they would be viewed by a first-time “visitor” to downtown Exeter. This study’s inventory represents the current signage and usage rather than the legal status of ownership of parking areas.

The maps and tables on the following pages illustrate how the parking in downtown Exeter is distributed among an array of categories and user permissions. Overall, 31% of the parking is ‘restricted,’ or in other words reserved for customers, tenants, or visitors of the business or establishment with which the parking is associated. The remainder of the overall parking supply for each area is available to the general public.

Generally, there is opportunity to re-evaluate whether time-restricted pricing regulations are relevant to areas where they are likely in demand. In parallel, there is opportunity to improve the clarity and consistency of how parking regulations are displayed Downtown, or in directing users to parking appropriate to their needs. Specifically, there is opportunity to better clarify where user types can park in Downtown Exeter, along with an opportunity to improve the clarity and consistency of signage associated with parking. For visitors who are unfamiliar with Exeter’s parking system, a lack of parking signage can lead to off-street facilities being under-utilized because they are not immediately visible from key through streets, such as Water Street. Confusion about where and how to park can lead to parkers occupying the closest available space to their destination (regardless of regulation/signage) and potentially displacing other parkers from spaces more appropriate for their specific use.

Signage that does not include explicit and complete information about when time limits are in effect, for example, can force a parker to make their own interpretations, which may not be accurate.

On-Street Regulations	Inventory	% of Sub-total
Less than 1-Hr Parking	18	4%
2-Hr Parking	152	28%
Loading Zone	5	1%
Reserved Parking	12	2%
Unregulated Parking	354	65%
Sub-Total	541	
Off-Street Regulations	Inventory	% of Sub-total
Public Parking	397	38%
Private Parking	539	52%
PEA Private Parking	109	10%
Sub-Total	1,045	
Total	1,586	

Parking Inventory Map

KEY OBSERVATIONS

More than 1,500 parking spaces were identified in the Downtown area, which generally represents areas where there is demand for parking among various user groups such as residents, employees, customers, and other types of visitors.

- More than half of the **off-street supply is restricted** and unavailable to the general public
- **Two-hour spaces** are appropriately concentrated near retail and dining locations along Water and Main Street
- **Short-term (e.g. 15-minute spaces) are limited** in the central areas of Water Street near businesses or municipal buildings that may attract very short customer visits
- **Public parking behind Water Street** businesses may be misinterpreted as private due to their positioning and **less visible** access points
- Most on-street parking in residential areas is **unregulated and unmarked**
- There is only **1 designated loading space each** on Water Street and Clifford Street, which is insufficient given the concentration of businesses that have regular deliveries



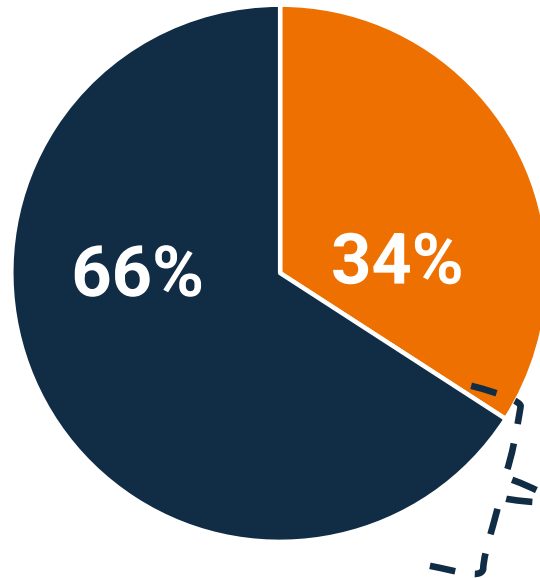


Parking Inventory

THE INVENTORY BY PARKING TYPE

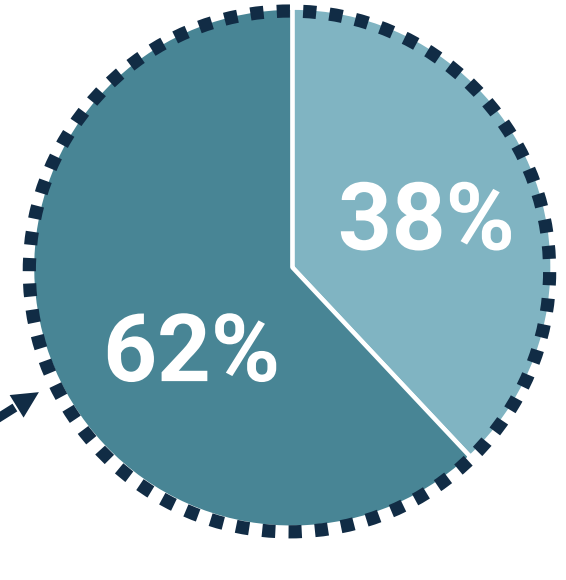
The majority of Exeter’s overall inventory is off-street, but most of the off-street supply is **restricted to the public**. In essence, restricted spaces can be considered as unavailable within the publicly available inventory. Communities across New England and the nation have identified opportunities for “opening up” this supply to other users as a way of reducing the unnecessary building of additional, new supply for public use. These will be investigated later in the report.

ON-STREET VS. OFF-STREET
(overall inventory- 1,586)



- On-Street Parking (541)
- Off-Street Parking (1,045)

PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE
(off-street inventory- 1,045)



- Off-Street Public Parking (397)
- Off-Street Private Parking (648)



Parking Utilization- Data Approach and Intent

PARKING UTILIZATION DATA COLLECTION

The team conducted parking utilization counts in all* private and public facilities during a typical weekday (**September 7, 2023**) and typical weekend (**September 9, 2023**) to represent usual conditions of parking demand in Downtown Exeter. Counts included four weekday time periods to understand how demand changes throughout the day: **6:00 AM, 9:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 6:00 PM**. Three weekend time periods were analyzed at **10:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 5:00 PM**.

To ensure efficient parking management operations in any urban area, it is ideal to maintain at least one empty space on each block of street parking. This allows reliable visitor access to destinations, and typically equates to about one out of eight spaces free, or a target of 15% vacant per block. Similarly, a goal of at least 10% vacancy is considered ideal in off-street facilities (this occupancy target assessment ensures that front-door spaces are available for those who need them - such as those with mobility challenges). If any facility has less availability than this, it is usually the case that users arrive to a full lot or have significant trouble finding space. However, if a facility has substantially more availability (especially in high-demand areas), this points to conditions or regulation that may be keeping potential parkers away, including lack of demand as well as practical factors such as walkability, price, time limits, or wayfinding.



Water Street businesses after dawn

****Some parking facilities that are dedicated for exclusive use by Philips Exeter Academy students, faculty, and employees were included in the inventory and analysis as part of this study.***



Parking Utilization- Data Approach and Intent

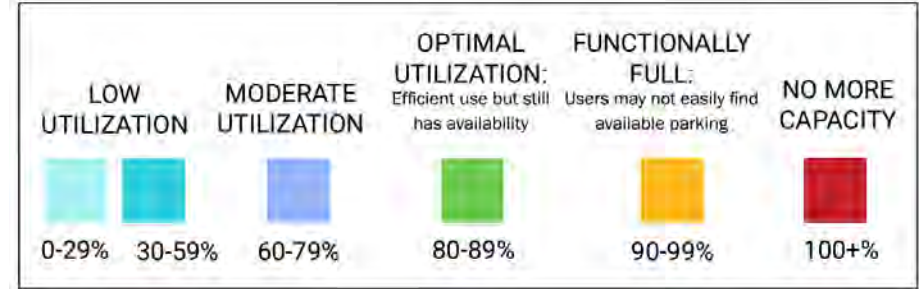
HOW TO READ THE CHARTS

UNDERSTANDING UTILIZATION

The series of maps and charts throughout the following pages illustrate the results of the in-person parking counts conducted for Downtown Exeter. The maps demonstrate utilization levels for each individual parking facility or space (see following page). The bar charts illustrate how utilization levels change throughout an entire day for different types of parking within the overall supply.

The parking utilization information can provide clarity about the accuracy of long-held community perceptions about parking availability but also identify opportunities to improve availability in targeted locations so that the optimal vacancy of 15% for any area within the parking system can be consistently maintained.

Identifying where and when parking spaces are being utilized can lead to potential understanding around the factors of why spaces are being used – this can be due to a combination of things, such as their location to popular destinations (i.e., front door access), awareness of the facility being usable by the user it is intended for, whether there is a time limit (i.e., whether it meets the needs of a visitor making a short trip vs. a downtown employee), and more.

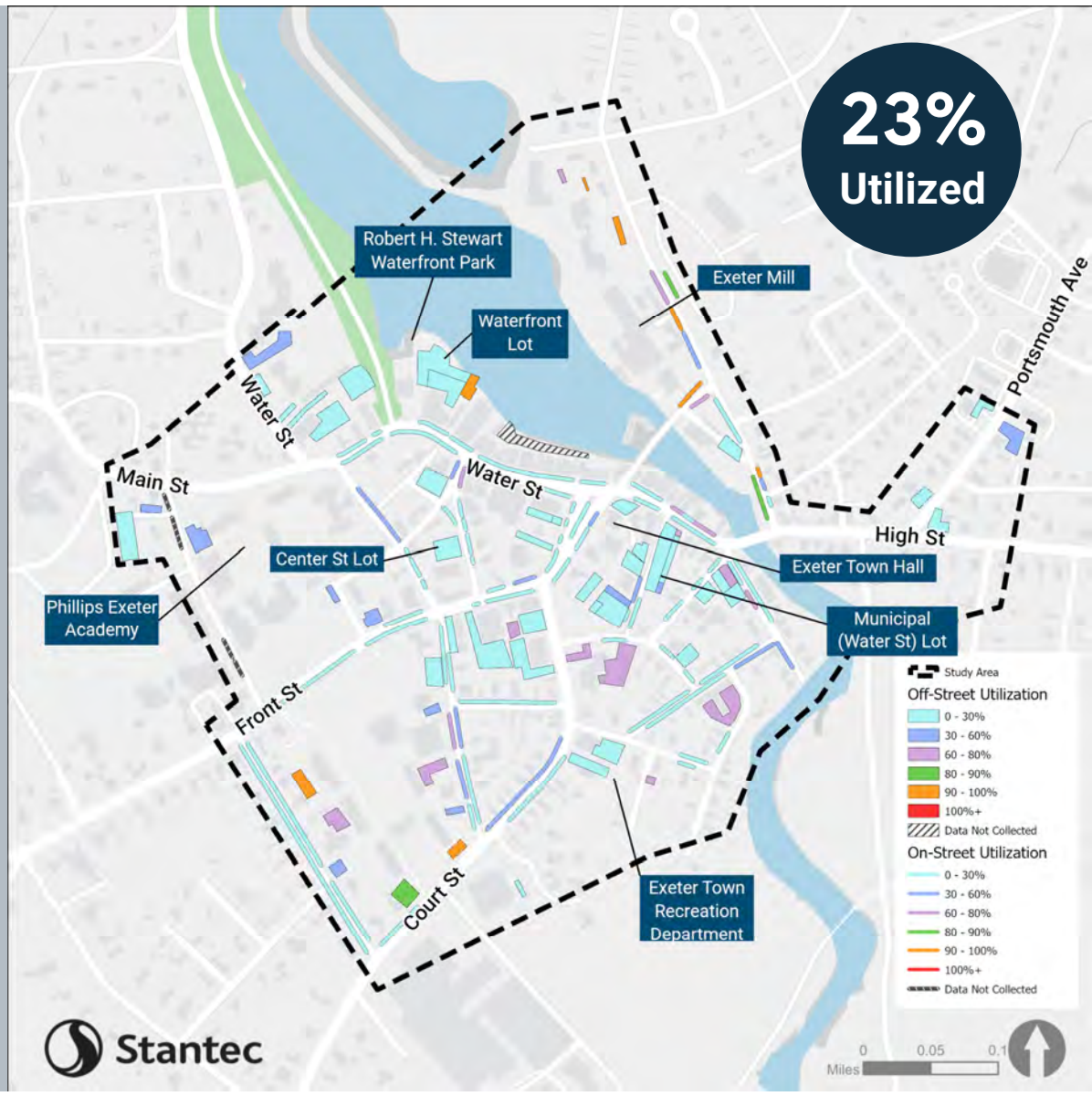
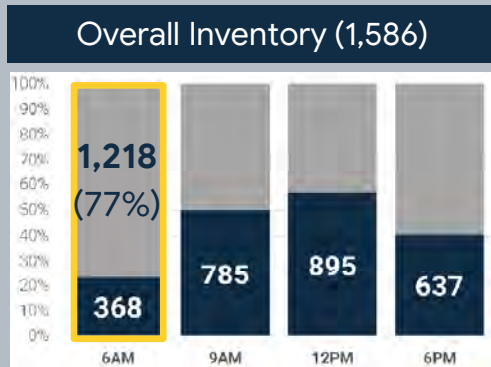


Parking Utilization- Weekday

THURSDAY, 6AM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Overall, the study area has significant capacity available, including along and near Water St
- Only a few, small resident facilities full
- Chestnut St well-utilized due to its proximity to the Exeter Mill Apartments
- PEA lots near Court St and Elliot St see optimal utilization
- Municipal Lot has ample capacity

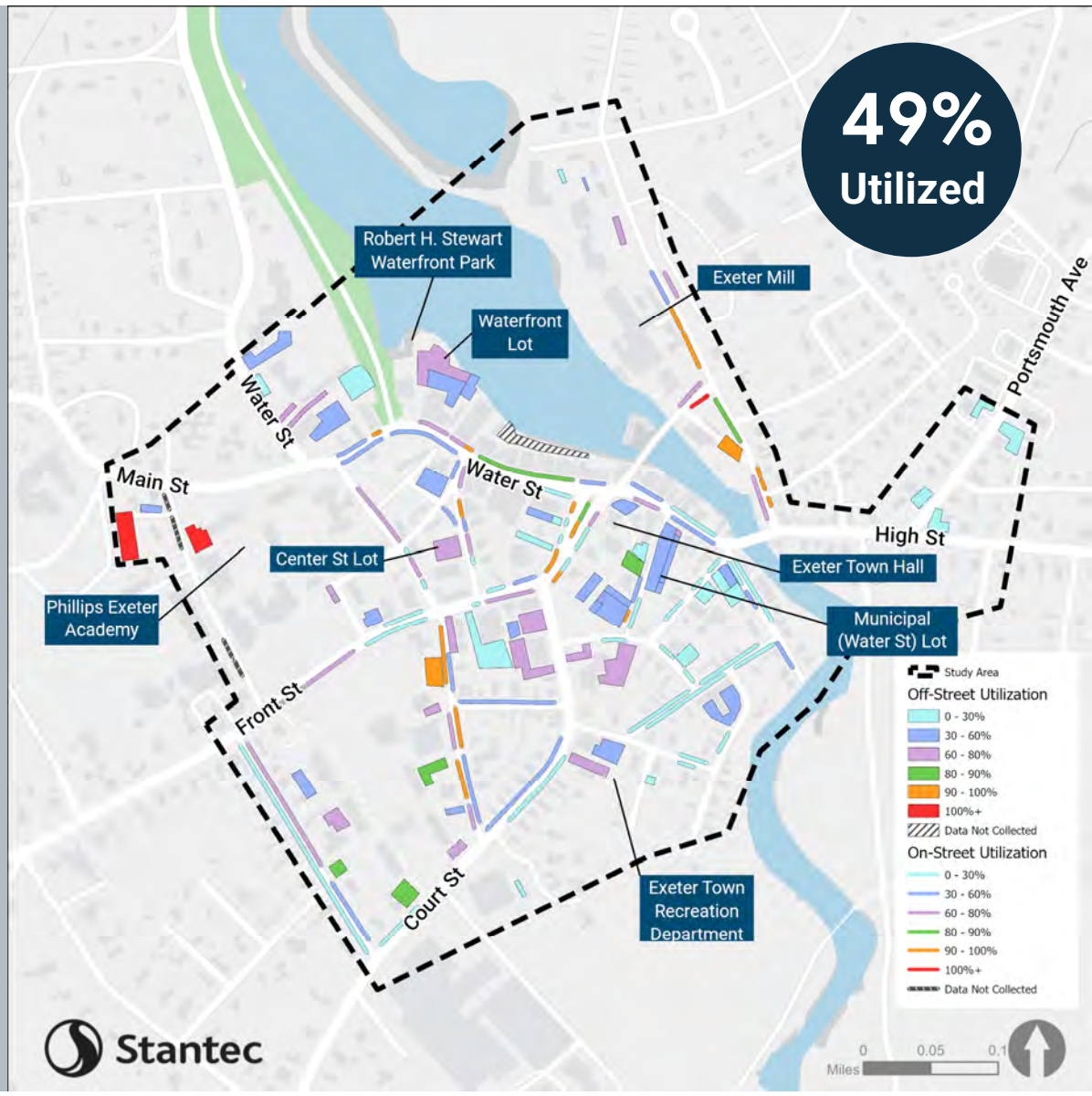
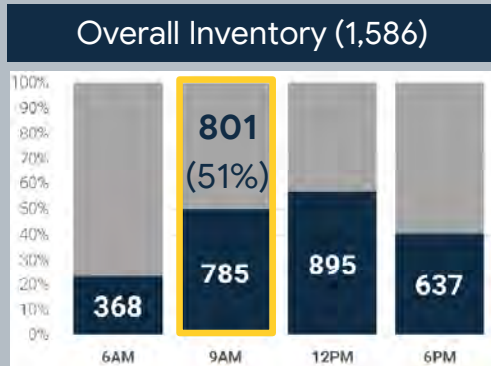


Parking Utilization- Weekday

THURSDAY, 9AM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Demand has doubled overall but 50% capacity remains
- The Water St core is at optimal utilization (85%), with plenty of capacity in nearby, walkable spaces
- PEA Lots off Main Street are at capacity
- Chestnut St sees its highest demand with several segments full or near-full
- Elm Street sees its period of highest demand

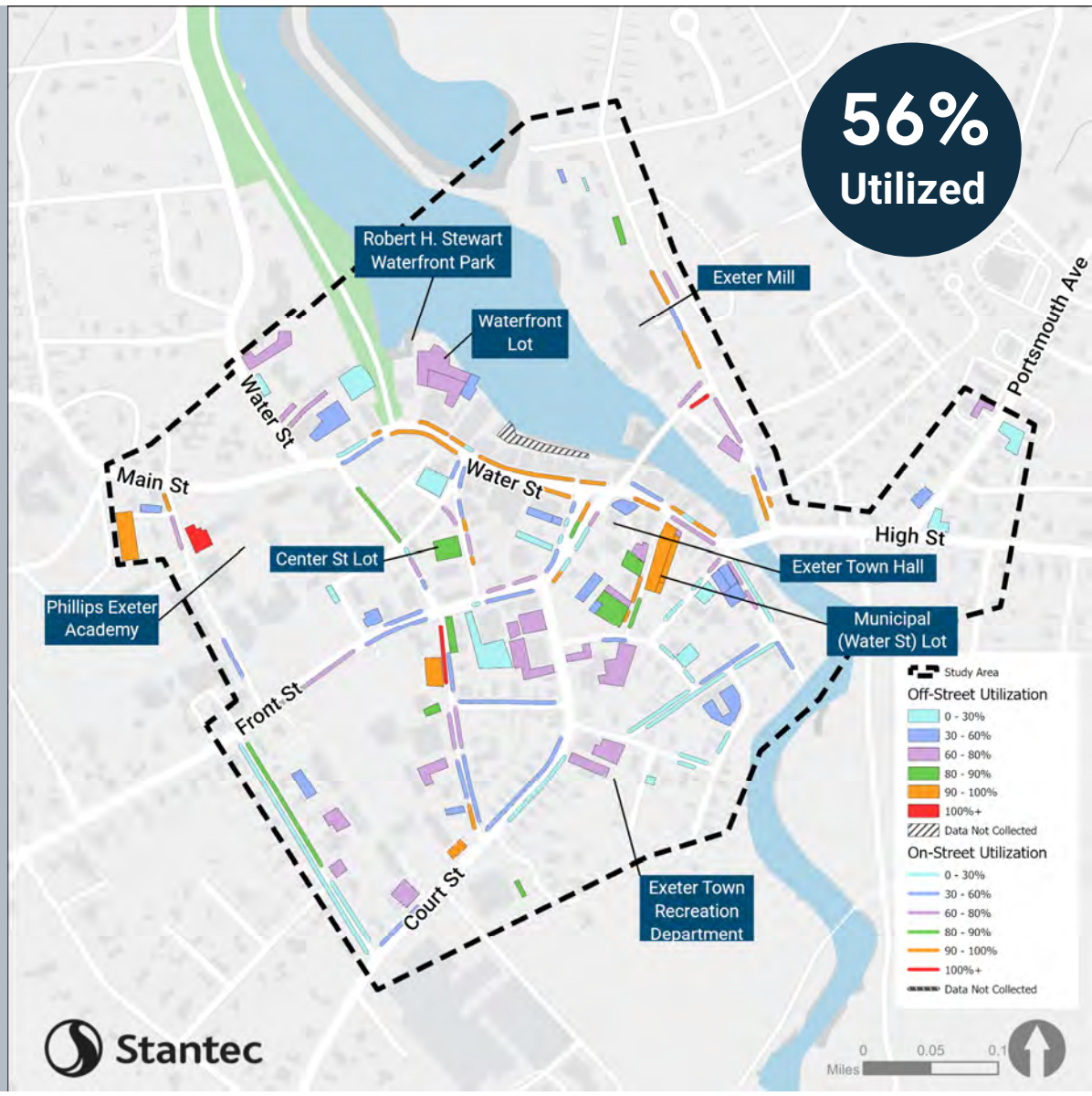
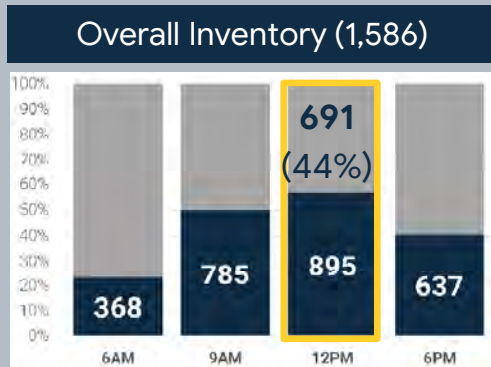


Parking Utilization- Weekday

THURSDAY, 12PM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Most of Water St on-street is completely full
- The Municipal Lot is completely full
- PEA lots off Main Street remain full or near full
- Chestnut St remains heavily occupied
- Center Street Lot is optimally utilized

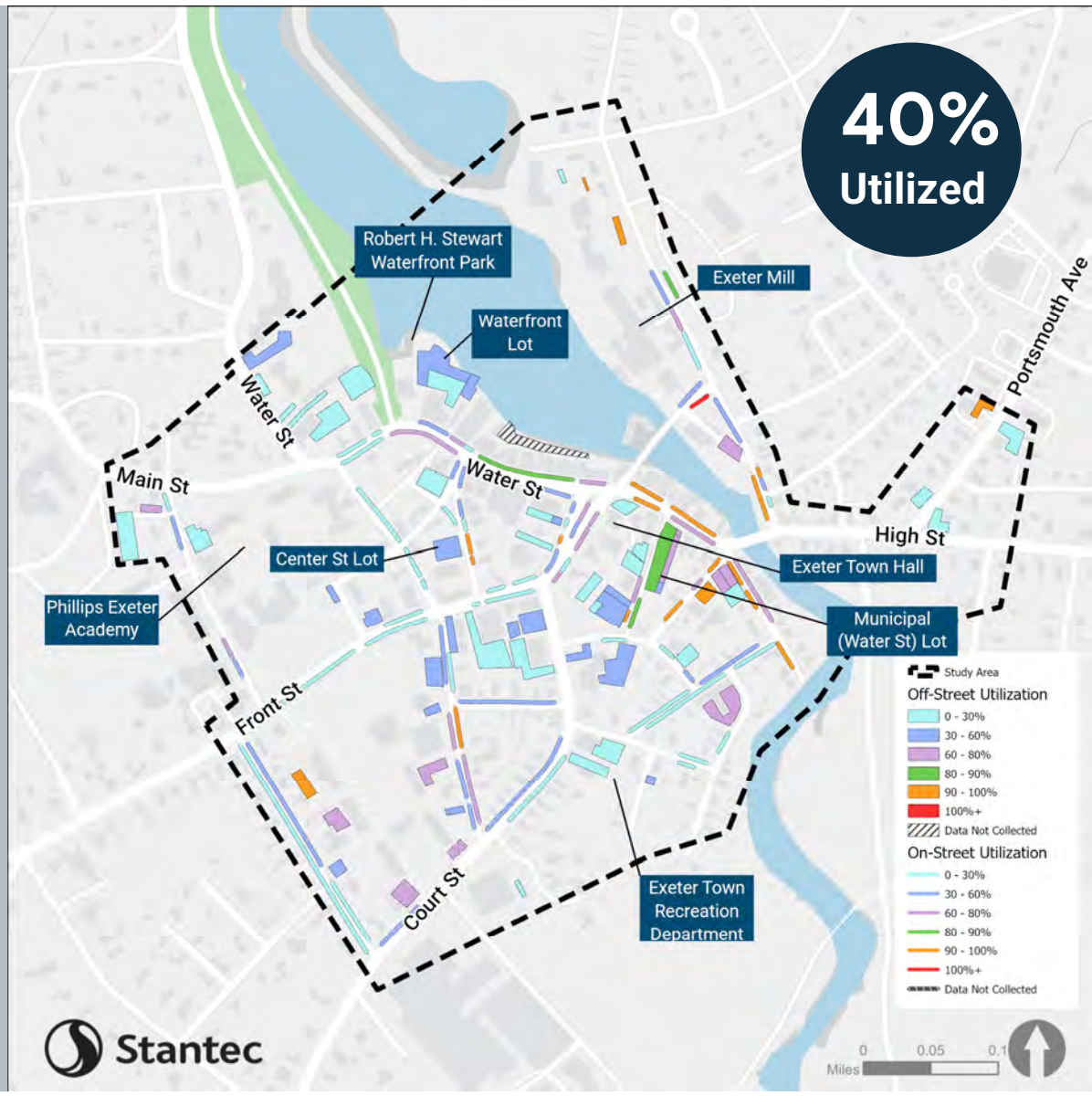
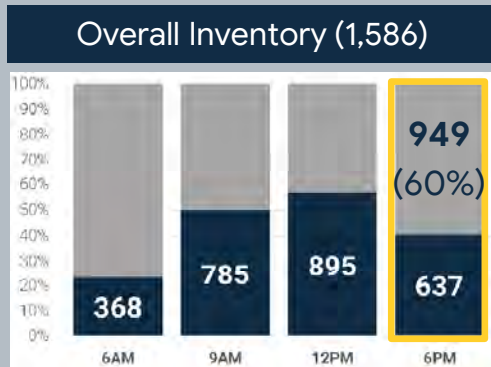


Parking Utilization- Weekday

THURSDAY, 6PM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Parking generally available throughout downtown, generally
- Western Water Street is optimally used
- Eastern Water Street is now at capacity
- The Municipal Lot is at optimal utilization
- Streets adjacent to Water Street have parking availability





Parking Utilization- Weekday

HOW DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARKING WERE UTILIZED

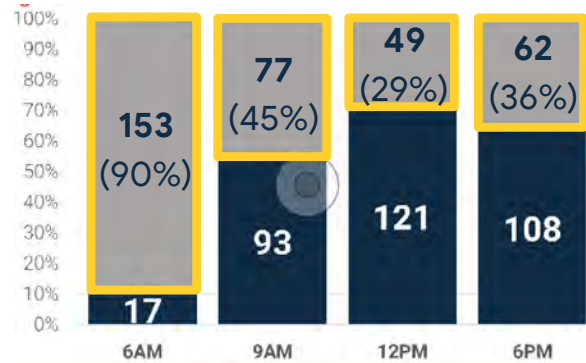
ON-STREET

- While time-limited parking is 70% full (49 vacant spaces) at peak, there are nearly 150 vacant unregulated on-street spaces nearby
- Both time-limited and unregulated parking see similar patterns of use;
- Peak demand occurs at 12 for both

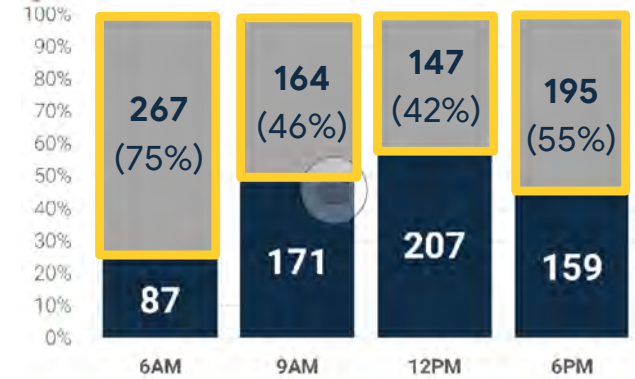
OFF-STREET

- Both off-street private and off-street public see similar patterns of use throughout the day
- Over 475 vacant off-street spaces remain at peak (309 private; 169 public)

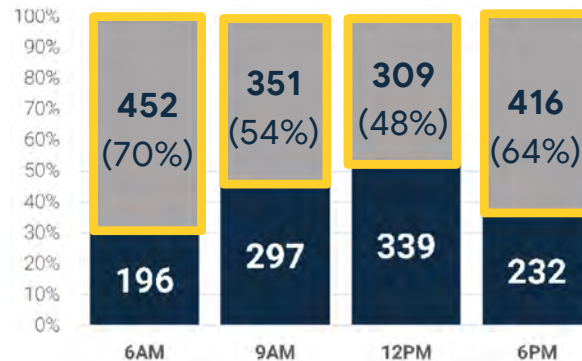
ON-STREET, TIME LIMITED
(170 spaces)



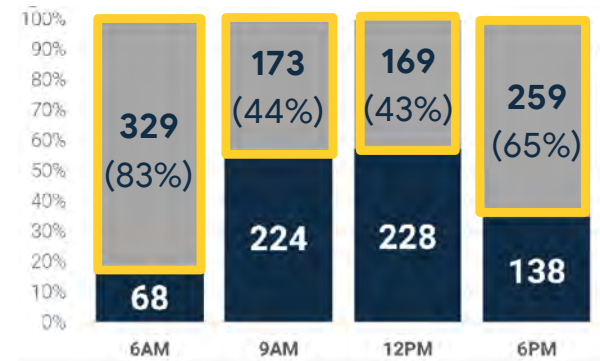
ON-STREET, UNREGULATED
(354 spaces)



OFF-STREET PRIVATE
(648 spaces)



OFF-STREET PUBLIC
(397 spaces)

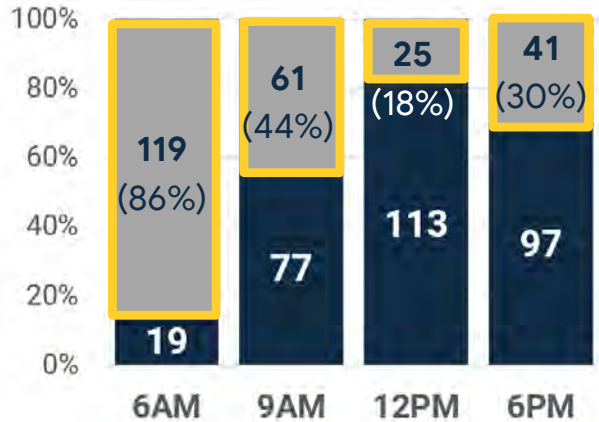




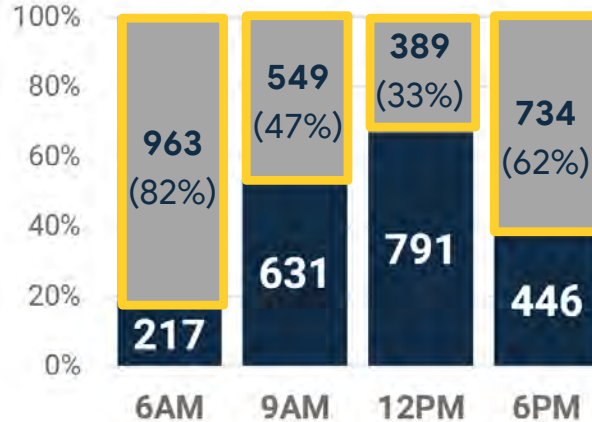
Parking Utilization - Weekday

HOW DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARKING WERE UTILIZED

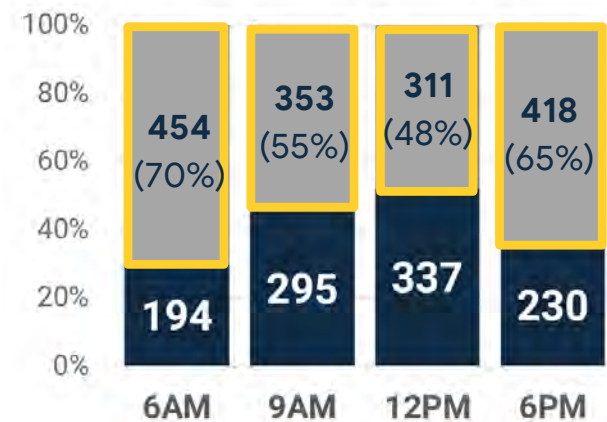
WATER STREET PARKING
(138 spaces)



ALL OTHER PUBLIC PARKING
(1,180 spaces)



OFF-STREET PRIVATE PARKING
(648 spaces)



- These spaces are in higher demand from lunch through dinner periods
- Some spaces are still available during the midday peak

- These spaces see their highest demand during midday, however still have significant capacity available to absorb public parking on Water Street in areas of higher demand

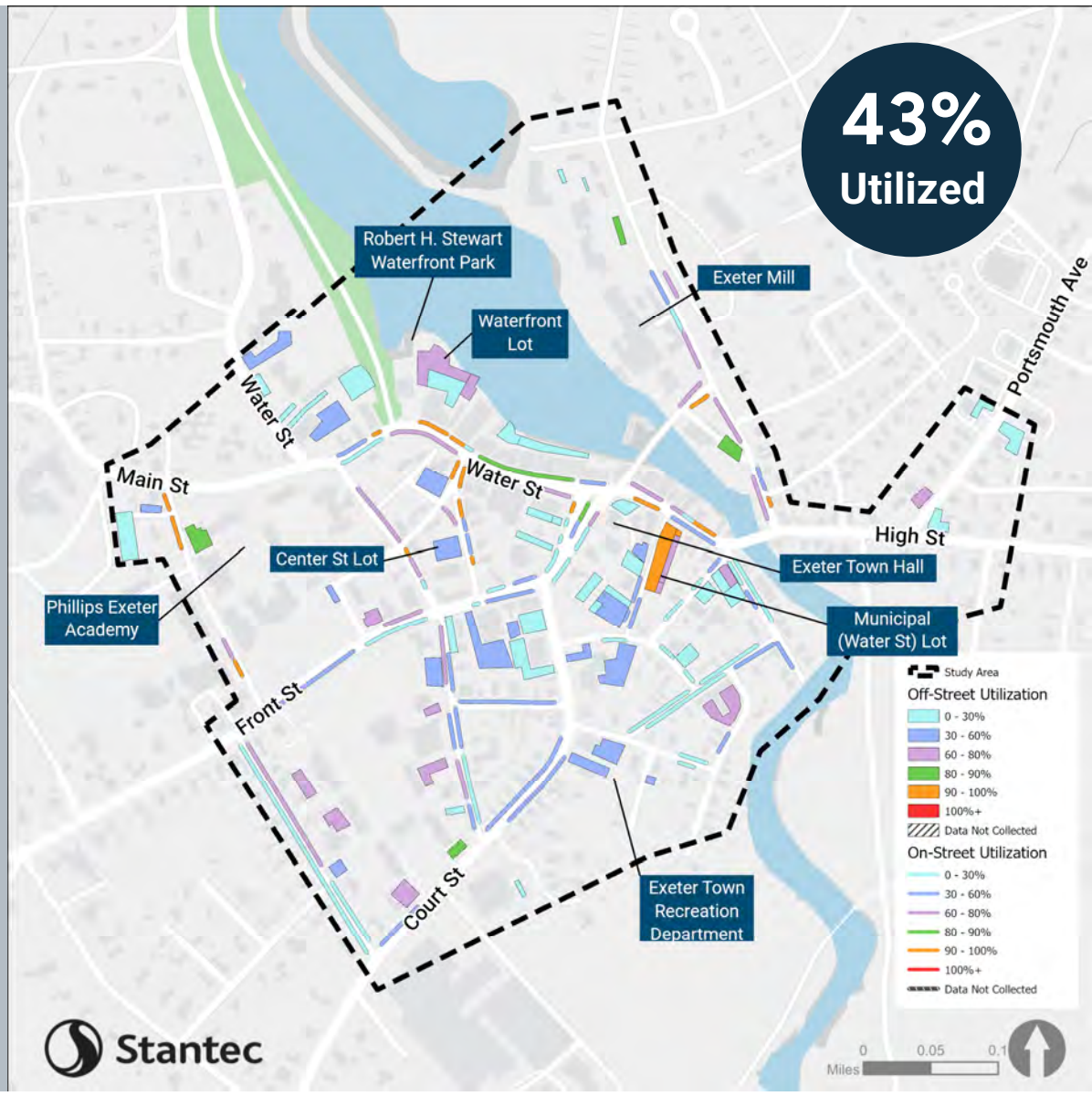
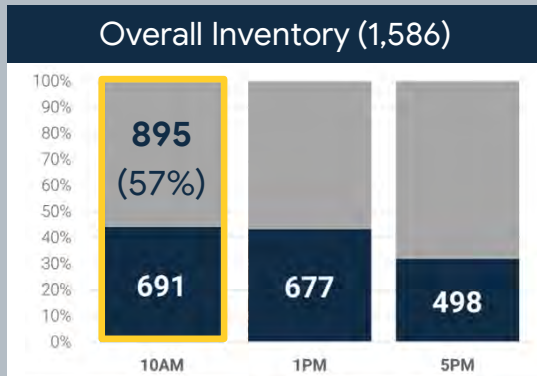
- These spaces have 48% or more capacity throughout the entire day

Parking Utilization- Weekend

SATURDAY, 10AM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Water Street is mostly full in the core with availability on the perimeter
- Municipal Lot is the only off-street lot that is full
- Significant capacity available in all other lots
- A few, small areas on Chestnut are in higher demand

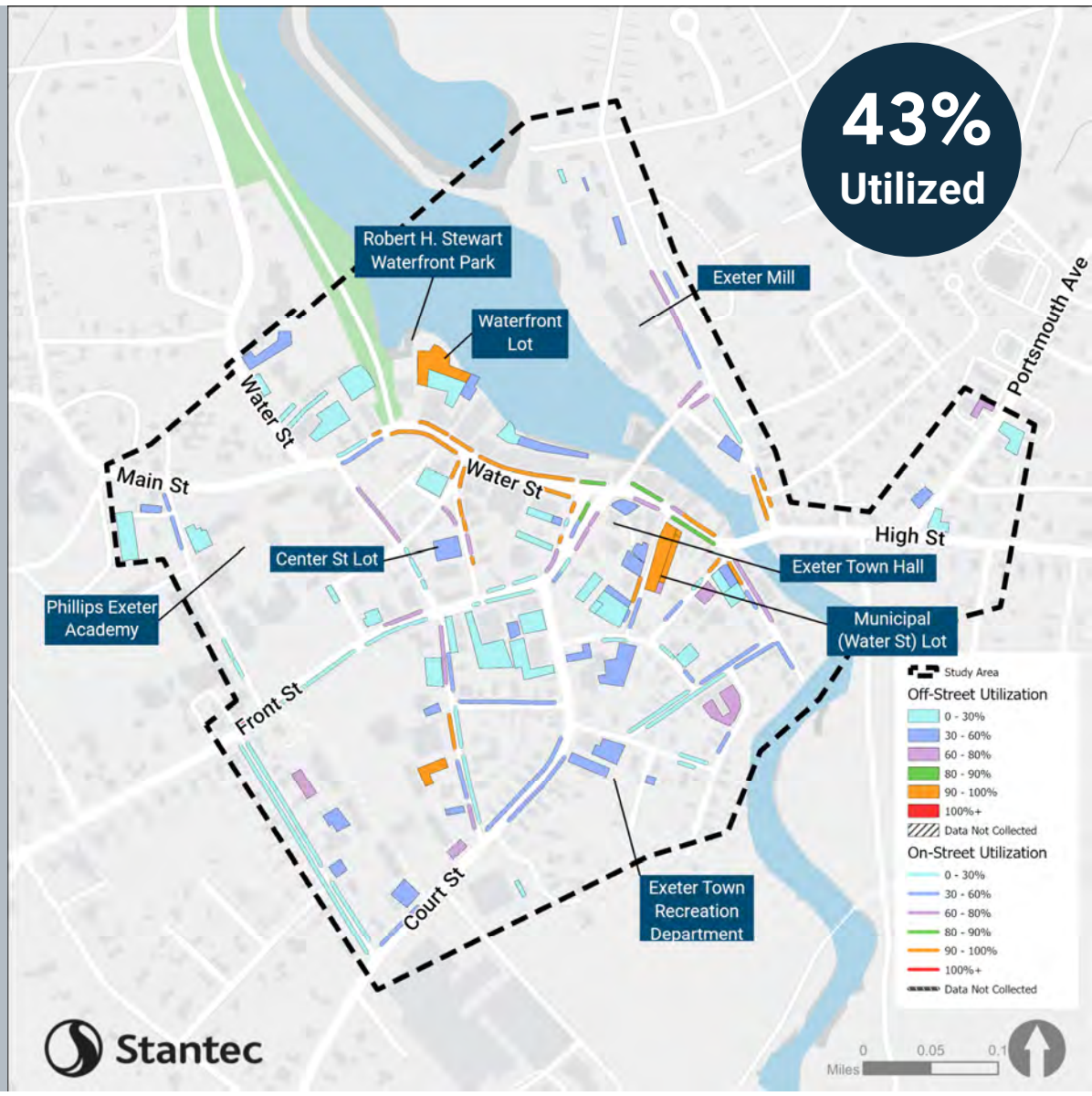
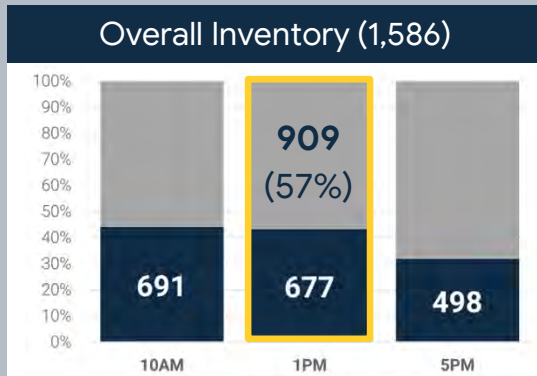


Parking Utilization- Weekend

SATURDAY, 1 PM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- On-street parking along Water Street is completely full.
- Municipal Lot is at full capacity.
- Public parking at the Boat Ramp Lot is also at capacity.
- Other off-street lots have decompressed, leaving ample capacity

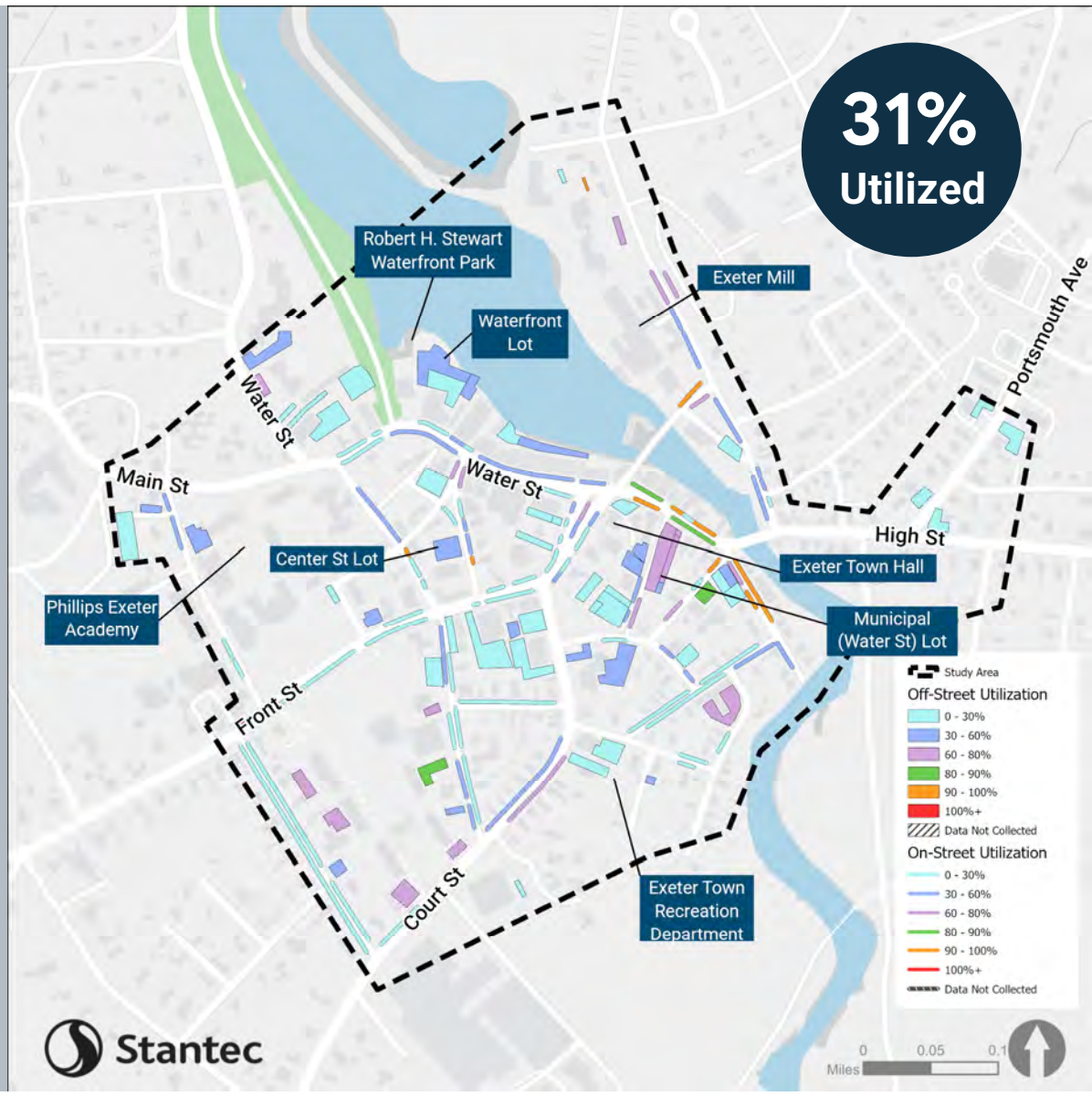
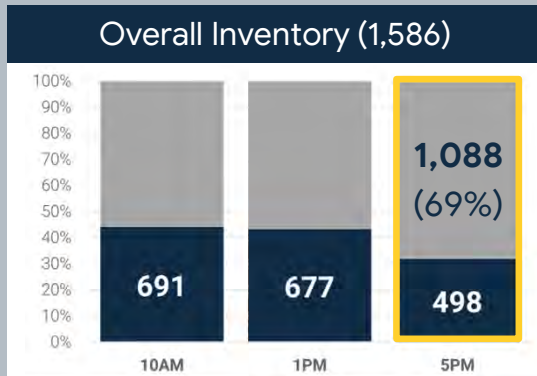


Parking Utilization- Weekend

SATURDAY, 5PM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Western Water Street utilization is low
- Eastern Water Street spaces are now full
- The Municipal Lot is being utilized but capacity remains
- Generally high level of availability of all other spaces throughout downtown
- More than 1,000 empty spaces throughout





Parking Utilization- Weekend

HOW DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARKING WERE UTILIZED

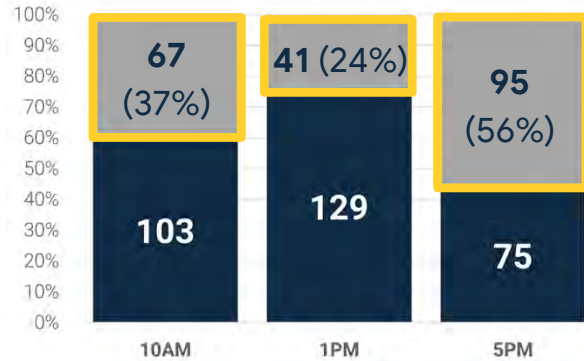
ON-STREET

- Similar patterns for parking demand throughout the day, regardless of time limit restriction
- Slightly more demand for unregulated spaces than time-restricted

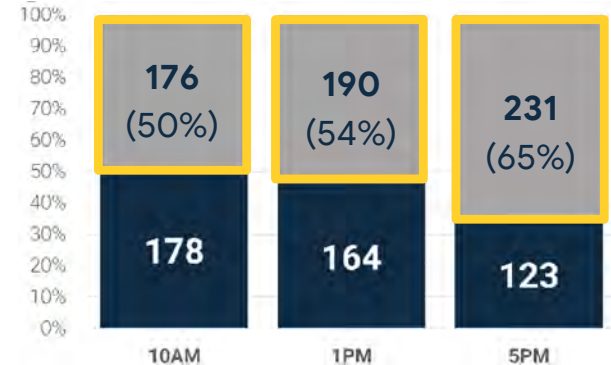
OFF-STREET

- Similar patterns for parking demand throughout the day
- There is a larger increase in off-street public spaces than private as businesses start to open

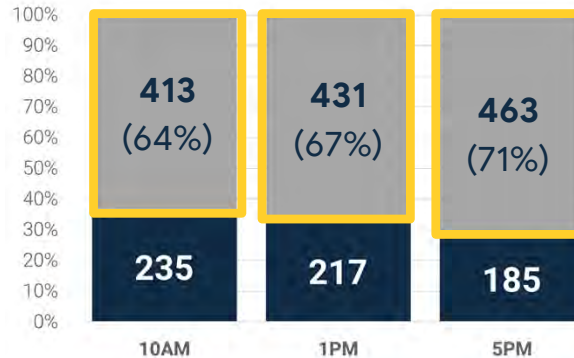
ON-STREET, TIME LIMITED
(170 spaces)



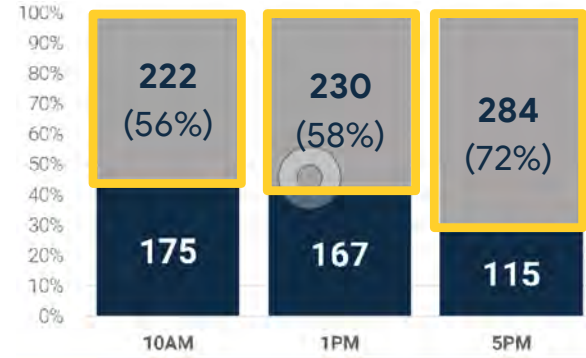
ON-STREET, UNREGULATED
(354 spaces)



OFF-STREET PRIVATE
(648 spaces)



OFF-STREET PUBLIC
(397 spaces)





Parking Utilization Summary

EXETER HAS SUFFICIENT PARKING SUPPLY TO MEET DEMAND

The data reveals that, broadly, there is **significant capacity available across the Downtown to meet current levels of demand at any time of the day**. Collectively, a maximum 57% of all parking in the Downtown is occupied during the weekday midday peak period. Although on-street parking along the core, mixed-use area of Water Street is utilized at 88% percent (just above optimal utilization) at its midday peak, off-street public spaces are only 67% full at this same time period and are within a comfortable walking distance (less than five minutes) of Water Street.

The Municipal Lot remains in high demand or full during nearly all time periods, as expected during business hours during the week, and busy during weekday evening and both weekday key dining periods, likely serving visitors of the nearby restaurants.

Areas along Chestnut Street see higher demand during 9AM and 12PM on the weekday, with the most frequent areas of demand being closest to High Street or the bridge.

A few areas along Elm Street were full during 9AM, however demonstrated having a good level of availability during all other time periods.

In summary, areas of persistent higher demand are not in need of additional supply to increase demand, but can benefit from other strategies to optimize use of other available supply nearby.





Parking Turnover Analysis

UNDERSTANDING HOW LONG PARKING SPACES ARE BEING OCCUPIED

WHAT TURNOVER AND OCCUPANCY DATA CAN TELL US

Stantec and the Town understands, from the public meetings and survey for this project, in addition to the findings from previous studies and surveys for the study area, the frustrations shared by residents, business owners, and visitors to Downtown regarding finding open parking spaces along Water Street. Those impacted are then found to circulate Exeter's Downtown to find an open space and may contribute to traffic congestion along other roads adjacent to Water Street. Business owners were frustrated with the two-hour time limit signs not being enforced and witnessing vehicles occupying parking spaces on Water Street for much of a day, if not multiple days.

Parking turnover is an important metric for downtowns as reduced turnover, particularly along a vibrant Downtown business center, can be representative of potentially less patrons to businesses due to difficulties in finding nearby parking spaces. In addition, a long-occupied parking space is not dissimilar to no parking space at all to a short-term visitor and potential patron.

By encouraging more frequent turnover along a downtown business district, more spaces are made available to visitors to specific businesses. More frequent turnover allows for the parking spaces to be less likely to attain the 90 percent to 100+ percent utilization and maintain the 80 percent optimal utilization. Areas where turnover is limited may imply that strategies such as adjusted parking regulations and permitting or parking pricing may be necessary to encourage optimal availability.





Parking Turnover Analysis

UNDERSTANDING HOW LONG PARKING SPACES ARE BEING OCCUPIED

APPROACH SUMMARY

Utilizing the Town's camera located on the upper levels of the Town Hall, the Town was able to share timelapse videography in late September 2023 with Stantec for analysis of turnover and length of stay for twenty-two (22) parking spaces along Water Street; from 85 Water Street (*Trends Gift Gallery*) west to 127 Water Street (*Martin Family Services*), which includes businesses like *Water Street Bookstore*, *Whirlygigs Toy Shop*, *Exeter Jewelers*, *Capital Thai*, and others. Stantec reviewed parking turnover and length of stay within view of a critical segment of Water Street.

A typical day's parking operations in the studied segment was further analyzed and is presented in the following pages. Stantec reviewed parking turnover analysis from 6 AM to 4 PM to identify periods of the day and discern shortcomings of the existing inventory or regulation and used to feed some of the recommendations herein. From this typical day review, three periods of parking were further broken down for occupancy and length of stay data.

VIDEO TIME	TIME	1	CARS	2	CARS	3	CARS	4	CARS	5	CARS
0	17:15	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
7.5	17:30	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1
15	17:45	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	1
22.5	18:00	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	1
30	18:15	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	2
37.5	18:30	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	2
45	18:45	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	2
52.5	19:00	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	3
60	19:15	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	3
7.5	19:30	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	3
15	19:45	1	2	1	1	0	2	2	3	1	3
22.5	20:00	1	2	1	1	0	2	2	3	1	3
30	20:15	1	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	1	3
37.5	20:30	1	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	1	3
45	20:45	1	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	1	3
52.5	21:00	1	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	1	3
60	21:15	1	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
7.5	21:30	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
15	21:45	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
22.5	22:00	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
30	22:15	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
37.5	22:30	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
45	22:45	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
52.5	23:00	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
60	23:15	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
7.5	23:30	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
15	23:45	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
22.5	0:00	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3

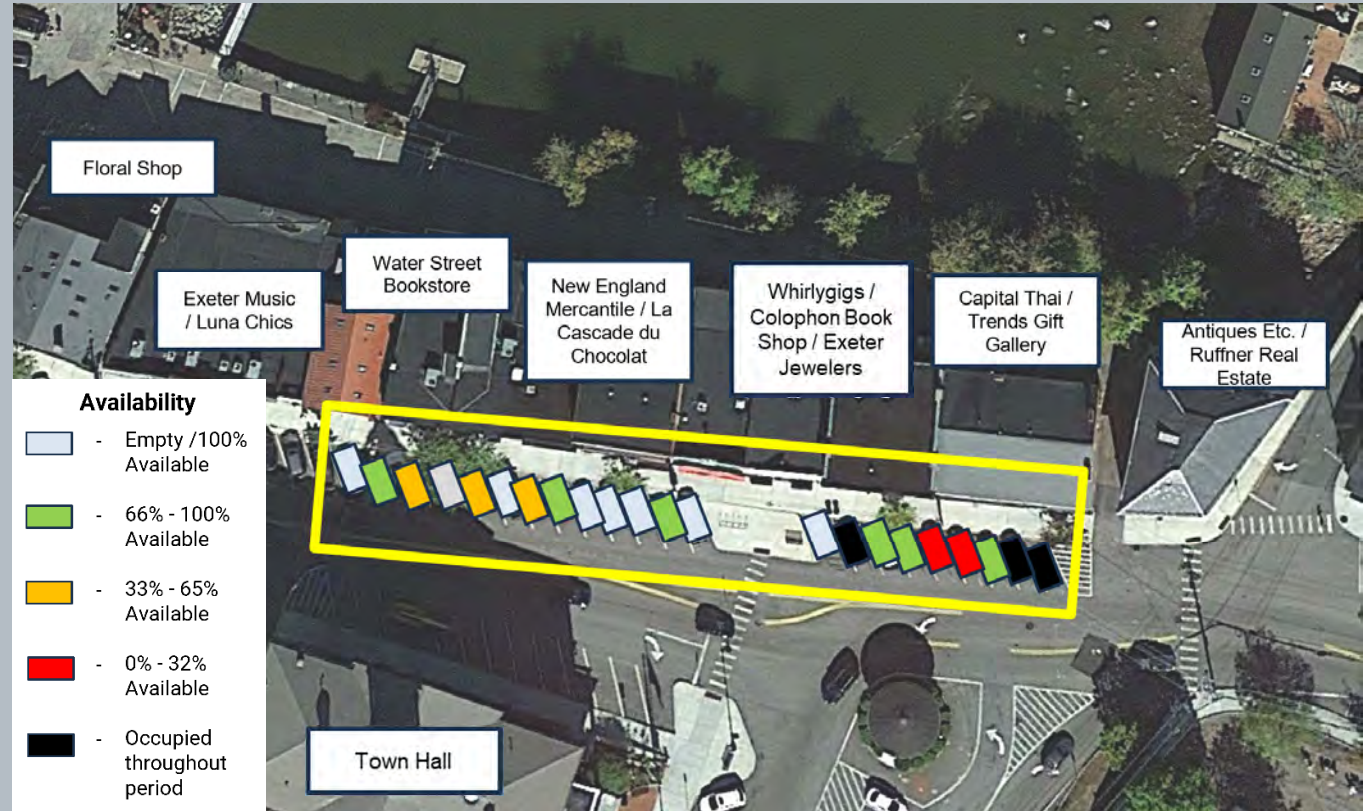


Parking Turnover Analysis

WEEKDAY, 6AM - 9AM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- There was very low turnover during this time but also low demand, with several empty parking spaces throughout the period.
- Reduced demand allows for direct periods of alternate uses, such as delivery spaces.
- Spaces occupied throughout the period were typically residents of the upper floors of the Water Street buildings.



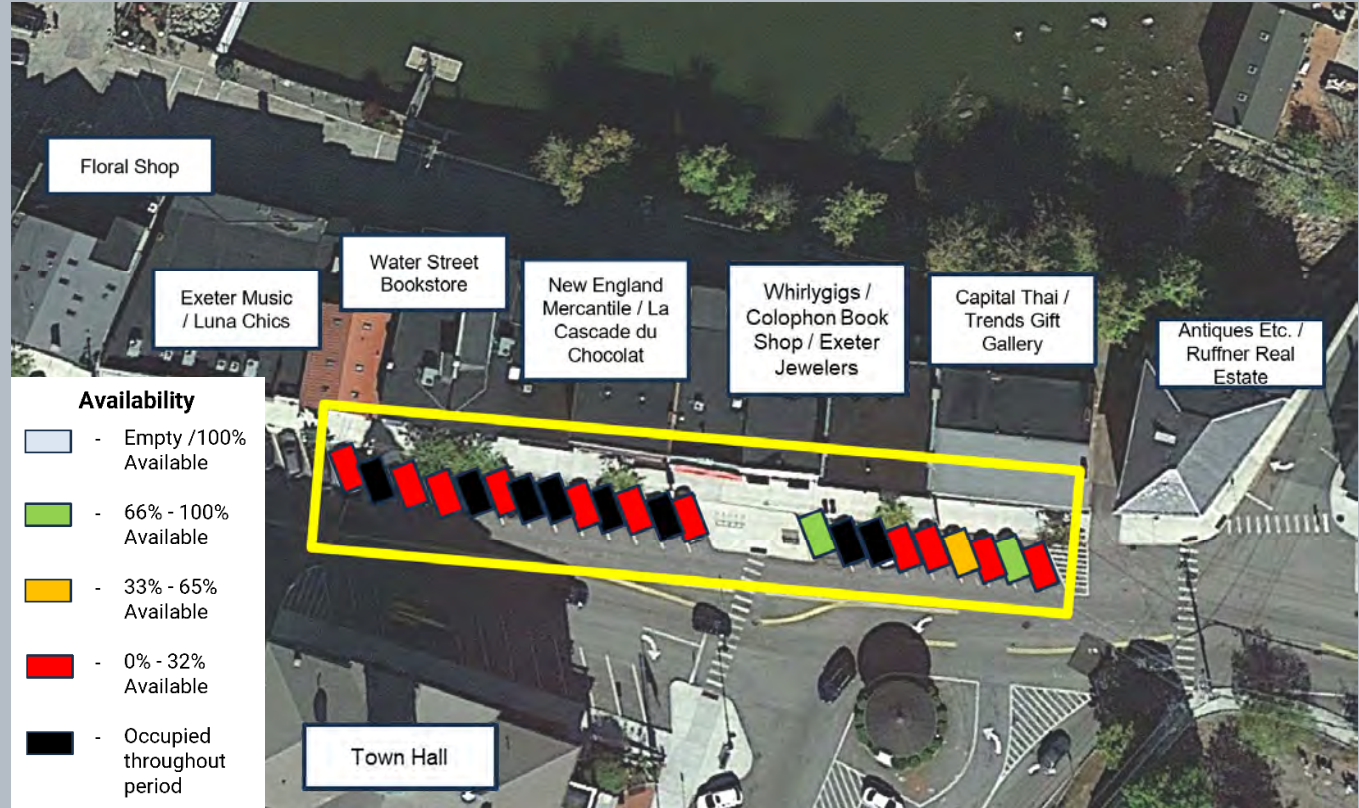


Parking Turnover Analysis

WEEKDAY, 9AM - 1 PM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- All spaces were occupied, with the most frequent turnover occurring in front of the Capital Thai restaurant and Trends Gift Gallery
- This period saw four parking spaces become occupied no turnover observed through the remainder of this period or the following 1PM to 4PM period
 - 18% of parking spaces in segment not available for the remainder of the observed weekday.



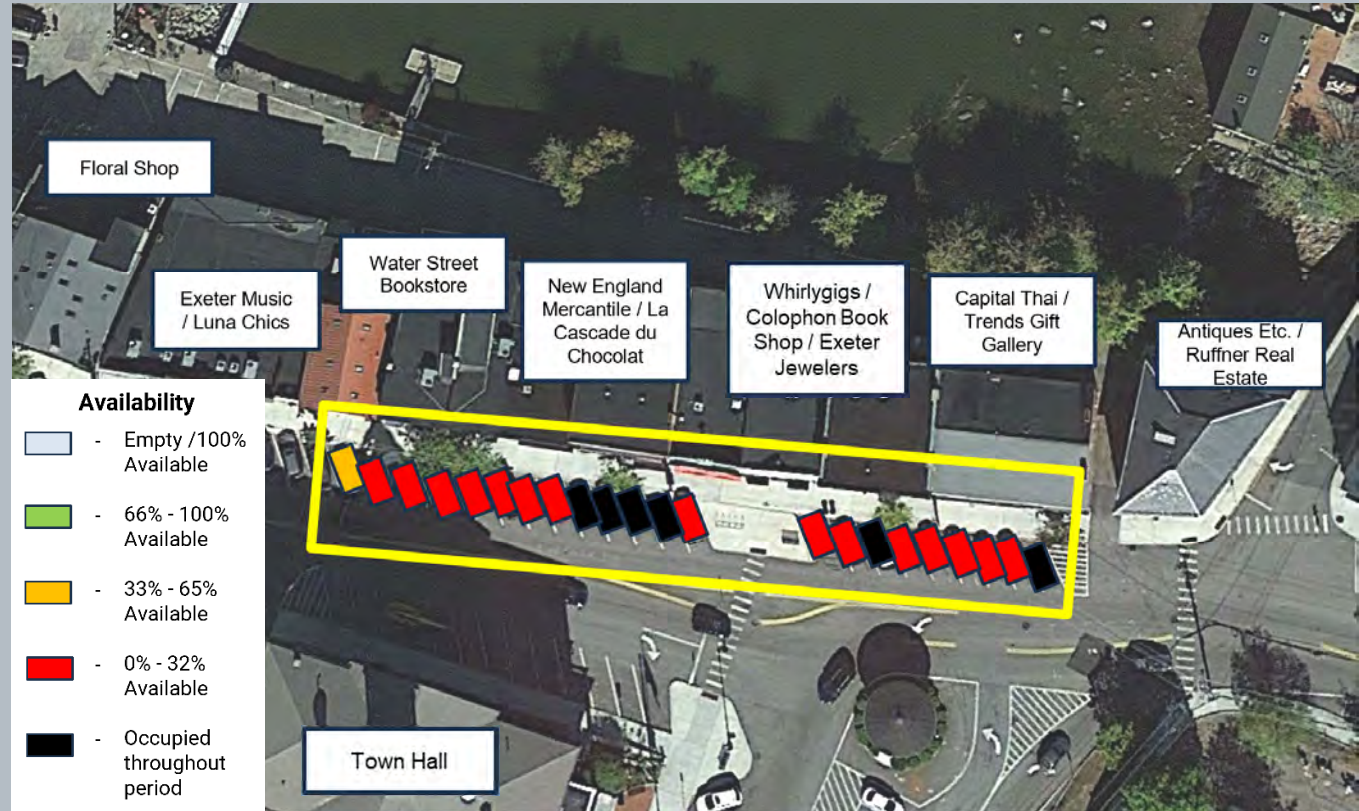


Parking Turnover Analysis

WEEKDAY, 1PM - 4PM

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- All spaces were occupied, with the most frequent turnover in front of Water Street Bookstore.
- Through all three periods, the average length of stay was 120 minutes or 2 hours.
 - Average stay matches the signed, yet unenforced, parking limit.
- Seventeen (17) of the 22 parking spaces were observed to have vehicles exceed the two-hour parking limit.
 - Ten (10) of the 17 parked vehicles exceeding the two-hour parking limit were parked for 3.5 hours or longer.





Parking Demand Analysis

HOW MUCH PARKING DOES EXETER NEED IN THE FUTURE?

Parking Demand Model

An analysis of the existing parking supply’s ability to accommodate future development for Downtown Exeter was carried out using a customized shared parking demand model. This section covers the inputs to this model and its findings when new development is projected for the downtown area. The focus area of this exercise is the same study area (slide 6) and is meant to encompass a short walk from available on-street and off-street parking to businesses, retail, and restaurants in Downtown Exeter. A core component of this analysis is an understanding of the land uses present in the community. Parcel-level land use data was shared with the project team. This was verified with a combination of staff feedback, Exeter’s Online Assessor’s Database, and other online resources such as the publicly available GIS parcel maps.

Estimating Parking Demand

A typical suburban approach to estimating parking demand incorrectly assumes that each land use in a downtown needs its own supply of parking and thus simply adds together the amount of parking demand “required” for each use to estimate demand. This traditional type of analysis assumes that demand for each land use is constant throughout the day and that the parking supply for each parcel is at a quantity needed to accommodate its highest demand on-site. Whereas the total parking supply in the focus area is 1,586 spaces, this typical suburban approach would yield 1,871 spaces given the study area’s land uses.

Study Area Land Uses		
Land Use	Size	Unit of Measure
Apartment - Low Rise	379	Units
Automobile Parts & Service Center	2,314	S.F.
Bank	12,909	S.F.
Church	27,916	S.F.
Fire & Police Dept.	17,992	S.F.
General Office	109,305	S.F.
Govt. Building	25,386	S.F.
Hotel	6,252	S.F.
Library	14,252	S.F.
Mini-Warehouse	8,918	S.F.
Museum	16,552	S.F.
Post Office	14,468	S.F.
Rec Community Center	1,404	S.F.
Restaurant	16,952	S.F.
Retail	186,614	S.F.
Senior Citizen Center	2,847	S.F.
Theatre	20,049	S.F.

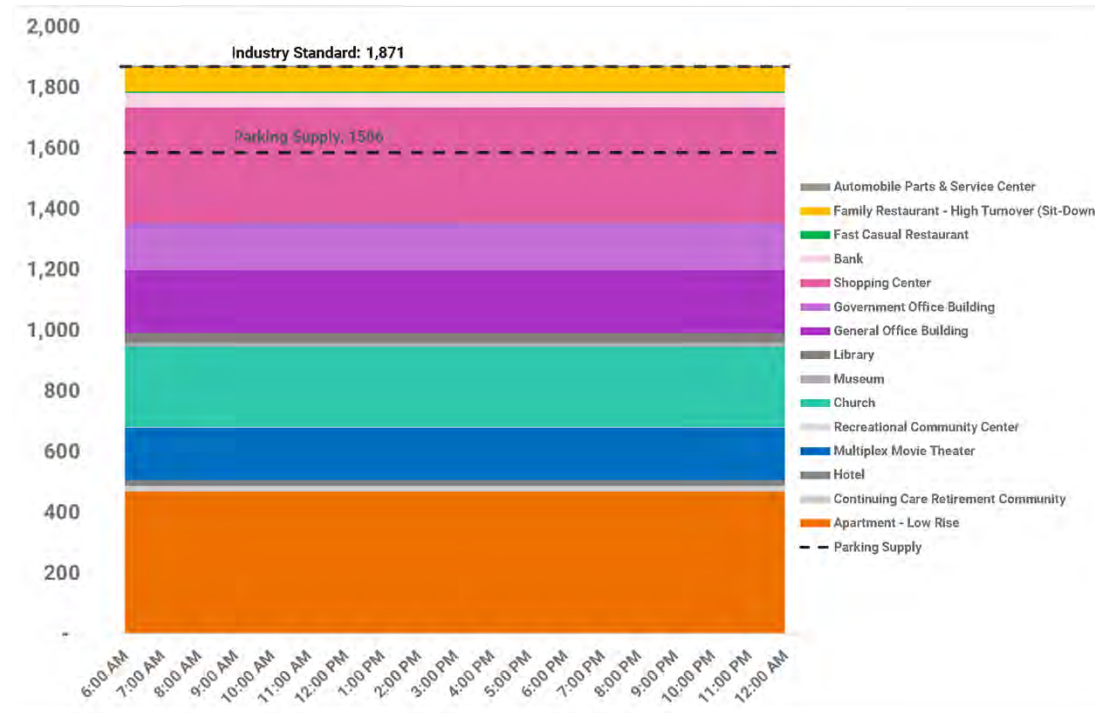


Parking Demand Analysis

Estimating Parking Demand

An analysis applicable to a mixed-use environment will more accurately reflect demand patterns that vary by use throughout the day. The Urban Land Institute (ULI) publishes the Shared Parking Manual, which provides analysts with a methodology to estimate real parking demand over the course of a day in mixed-use areas like Downtown Exeter.

The Shared Parking Manual was referenced to create a model to demonstrate how parking can be shared among different uses. For example, demand at an office is low in the middle of the night, hits its peak in the middle of the day, and drops off again in the early evening. Conversely, a restaurant may have little to no demand during the day but peaks in the late afternoon or evening. Modeling parking demand of these land uses applies a time-of-day percentage to the peak parking demand rates to create a more realistic estimate of demand in mixed-use environments like Downtown Exeter, as demonstrated in the figure to the right. However, this approach lacks further adjustments to account for local context and shared trips and uses.



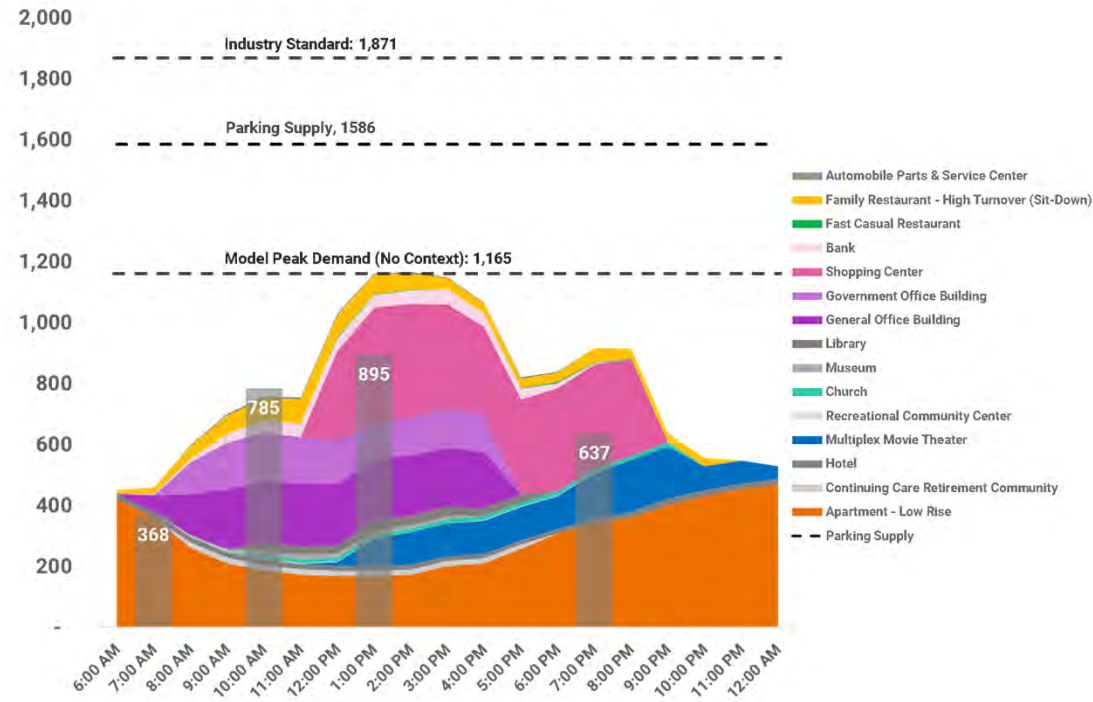


Parking Demand Analysis

Actual Parking Demand in Exeter

Parking demand is further reduced in downtown environments because retail, commercial, office, and residential uses are closer together and more walkable. Users that opt to walk within the core area to get from one destination to another (without moving and parking their vehicle a second time) are considered “internally captured.” Depending on the use, this can reduce total parking demand from stand-alone uses by least 15%. In addition, the walkable focus area may have trips from outside that don’t need a car at all, so additional reductions can be taken for some users who walk, bike or ride transit. Finally, certain vacancy assumptions for housing, office, retail, and restaurant uses were also incorporated into the model.

Using the ULI methodology together with these local context reductions applied to parking demand rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, parking demand was modeled in the focus area.



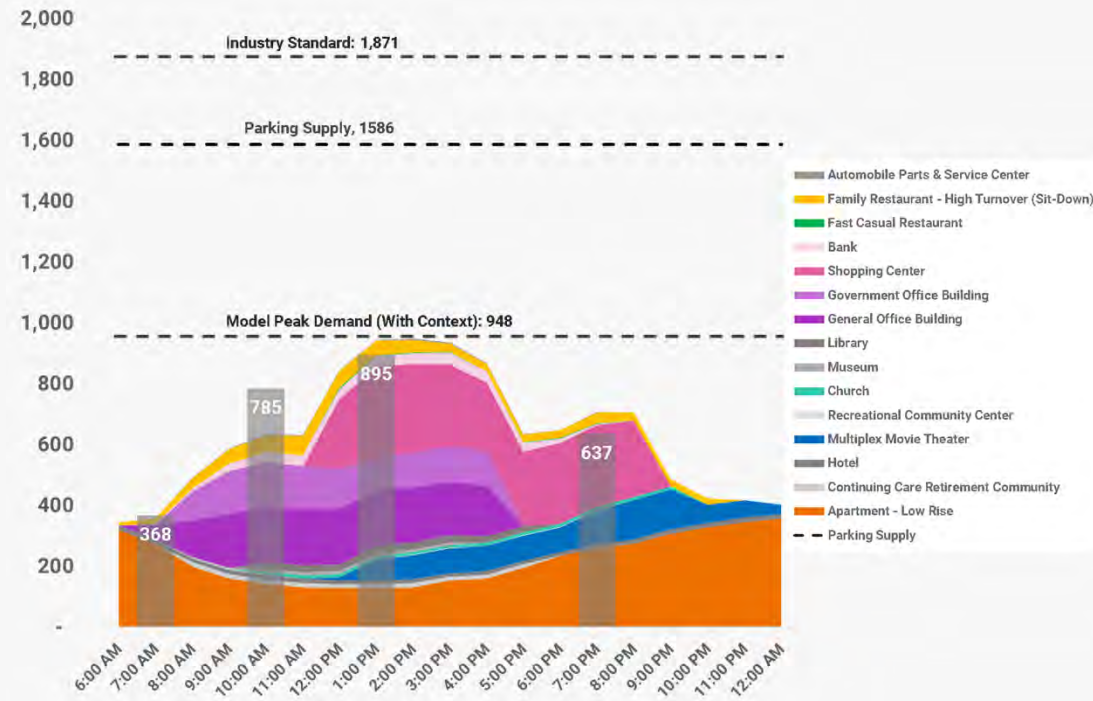


Parking Demand Analysis

Actual Parking Demand in Exeter

Parking utilization counts captured for the study were used to calibrate the model, resulting in a model that is based off observed demand. The modeled peak demand falls above the study’s observations to provide a conservative estimate of the amount of parking needed for existing land uses in the study area.

The results of this exercise point to the existing parking supply in the focus area being approximately 640 spaces larger than the need at the midday peak, although approximately 10% of this supply should be held in reserve. This equates to 66% of parking spaces in the Study Area being in use. It is important to note that not all this parking is in the exact right location or currently regulated appropriately to support additional development.



0

The background of this slide is slightly grayer than the rest.

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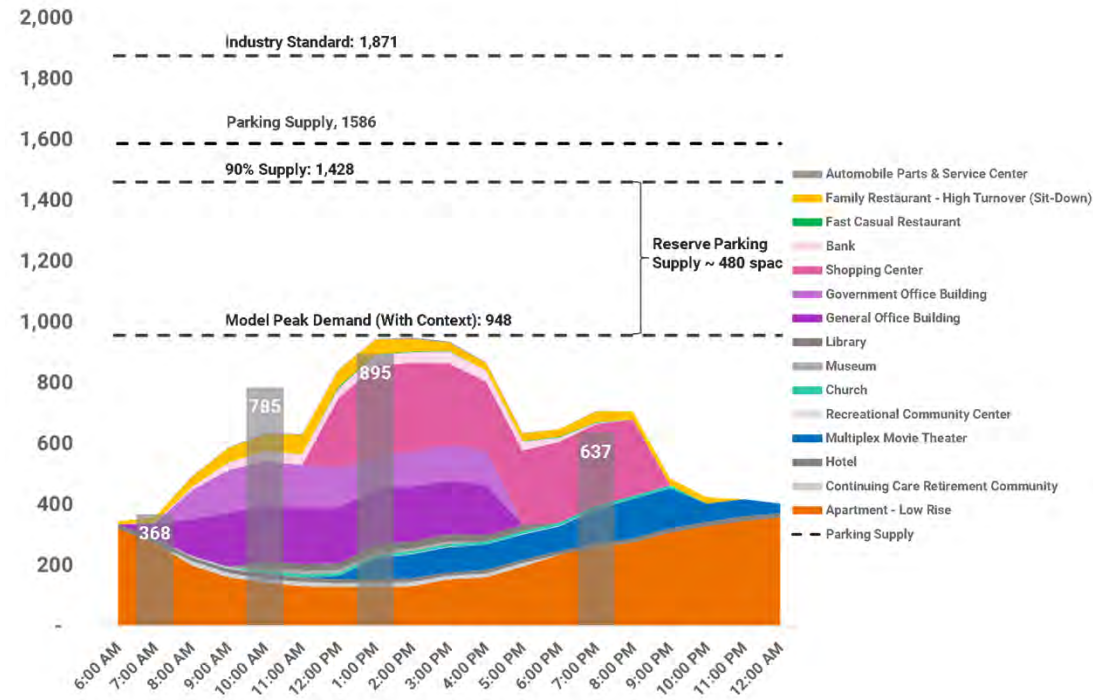


Parking Demand Analysis

Estimating Demand for Future Development Scenarios

Three development scenarios in the study area were identified to evaluate the impact of new development on the Downtown Exeter parking supply:

- **Scenario #1** – Adds the potential for 20 residential units located above Water Street businesses. The assumption is all units would have parking minimums waived.
- **Scenario #2** – Adds the potential 100+ residential units located at 261 Water Street adjacent to Swasey Park, replacing the Phillips Exeter Academy parking lot at this location. While the development would provide parking for this location, it removes the option of this parking lot that is currently utilized at no penalty for public parking.
- **Scenario #3** – Replaces the Citizen's Bank Drive-Thru at 11 Front Street with a typically sized multi-use, multi-story commercial and residential development. The assumption is all residential units would have parking minimums waived.





Parking Summary



Parking Supply

There is significant capacity at all times at off-street lots within a short walk of key destinations downtown



Wayfinding Signage

There is little wayfinding to direct parkers to off-street public parking



Parking Configuration

Back-in angled parking causes frequent concerns regarding the safety of people using all transportation modes



Long-Term Parking

Without other appropriate options, there is little incentive for employees to not occupy prime spaces. Winter bans cause a significant challenge during several months.

?AM to ?PM

Parking Regulations

Signage for some regulations is lacking clarification



Parking Enforcement

Parking enforcement has limited capacity to enforce high amount of perceived violations



Parking Facilities

Several conditions contribute to challenges of safety and comfort for those walking to/from parking



Short-Term Parking

Demand for short visits on Water St is high, compounded by delivery vehicles servicing local businesses

03

Traffic + Circulation Summary





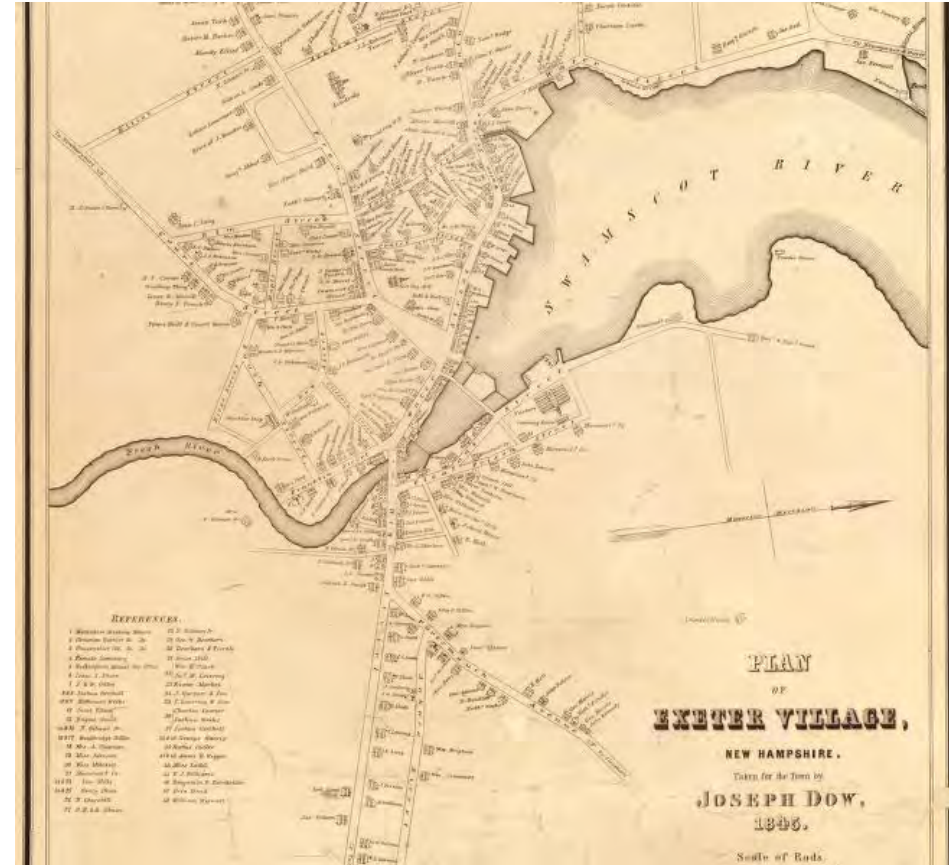
Exeter's History in Transportation

19TH CENTURY TRANSPORTATION

To understand how to evaluate current transportation conditions in the Town of Exeter and provide recommendations for future improvements, a quick review of Exeter's transportation past is required.

As shown in the map to the right, the general layout of Exeter's Downtown roadways has remained relatively unchanged since 1845. In 1845, Exeter had seen the opening and operation of the Exeter Manufacturing Company for textile manufacturing over 15 years earlier, with the mill still prominent along the northeastern banks of the Squamscott River at 10 Chestnut Street, today. With the opening of the mills, as seen all over New England, came workers of various means who were the daily travelers along these roadways.

While the general layout looks similar today, these roadways were laid in an era nearly 100 years before the commonality of car ownership for the average citizen. These roadways were laid in an era of transportation by foot and horses, with different methods and requirements for moving around and parking.





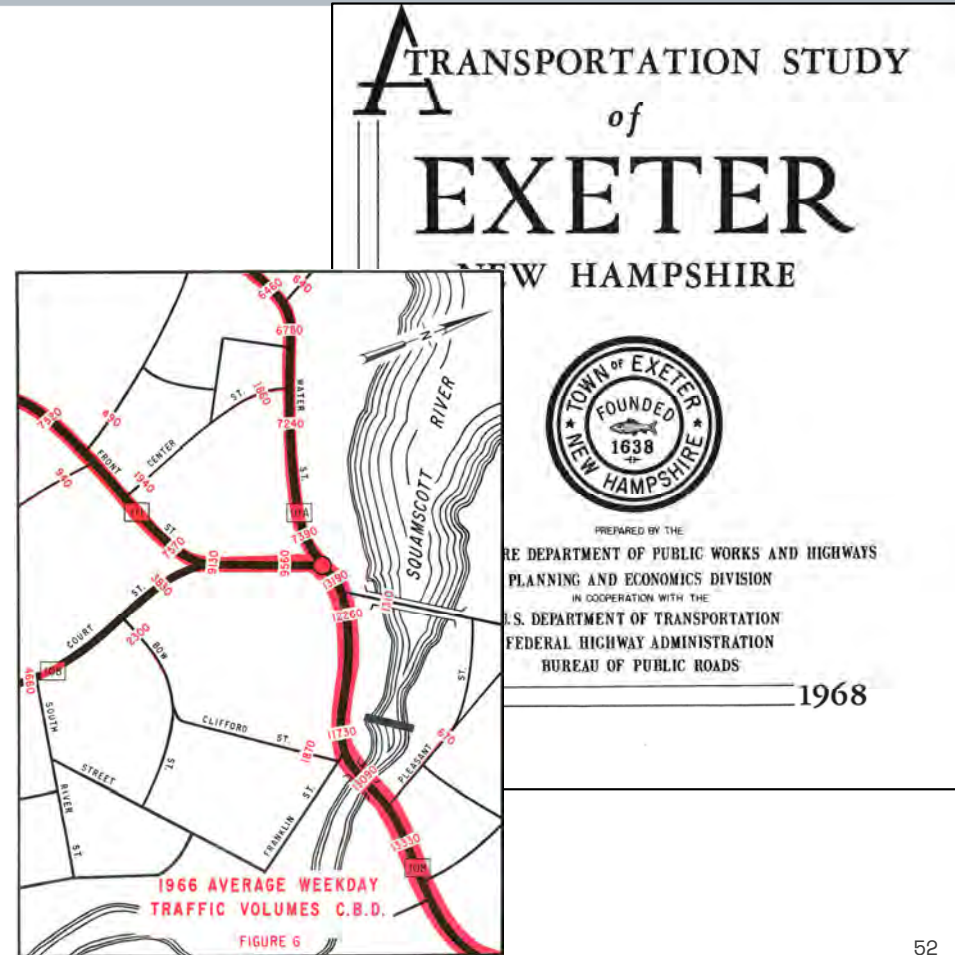
Exeter's History in Transportation

20TH CENTURY STUDIES

The Town was able to retrieve and share the full Transportation Study for Exeter published in 1968. This study of 108 pages in length resembles a transportation study of today, establishing existing traffic volumes, their origins and destinations, infrastructure inventories, daily and seasonal variations, crash data, growth evaluations, projections of traffic, and recommendations for improvements to accommodate future transportation. It should be noted that this study was conducted and provided recommendations prior to other nearby infrastructure projects significant to the region, most notably the construction of the limited-access highway of NH Route 101.

The anticipated daily traffic volumes study projected for 1986 within the study amounts to volumes nearly doubling the traffic volumes seen in 2023. These projected volumes, as typical for these transportation studies, are used to evaluate shortfalls in the existing infrastructure and to plan for improvements to accommodate these projected traffic flows.

Stantec reviewed the document when comparing to the data captured in 2023 and initial analyses of the existing conditions and future needs. Most notably, the daily vehicular traffic volumes recorded in 1966 are similar to vehicular traffic volumes recorded in 2022 along Water Street and daily traffic volumes only somewhat greater on Front Street from 1966 to 2022.





Exeter's History in Transportation

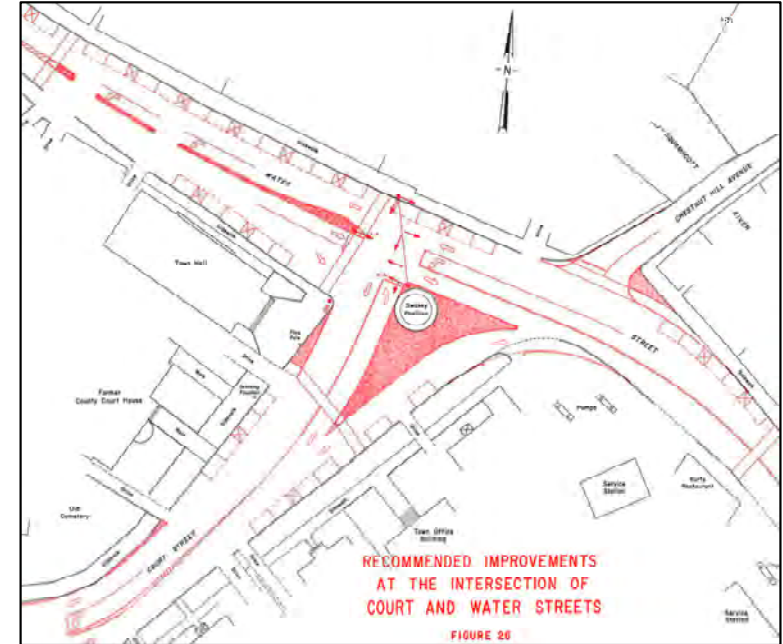
1968 TRANSPORTATION STUDY RECOMENDATIONS

After thoroughly establishing the existing transportation conditions in the 1968 study and the projections to the study's future conditions anticipated for 1986, the study evaluates major infrastructure improvement recommendations throughout Downtown. Pertinent to this current 2024 study was the general comment that "angle parking should not be allowed on arterial, or major streets, regardless of their widths, due to the greater incidence of accidents and disruptive effect on traffic flow ... which is typical of this type of on-street parking."

Also relevant to this 2024 study are the suggestions specific for the intersection of Water Street at Front Street; typically referred to locally as the "Bandstand Intersection." The way the intersection is described is similar to how the intersection has been described during the two public meetings held and the results of the survey conducted in 2020 and 2023, particularly the expanse of paved travel way, limited sightlines, and associated congestion.

In addition to suggesting the installation of traffic signals, the study suggests the following at the intersection:

- Improving access management to the adjacent businesses.
- **Formalizing travel lanes and expanding the non-roadway space in the intersection to encapsulate the "Bandstand".**
- **Change the orientation of on-street parking from angled parking to parallel parking.**



Additional recommendations included much more intrusive measures, including Downtown bypasses and other intersection improvements that were either outside of the 2024 study area or alternatives that are more of the time (1960s) than current practices.



Exeter's History in Transportation

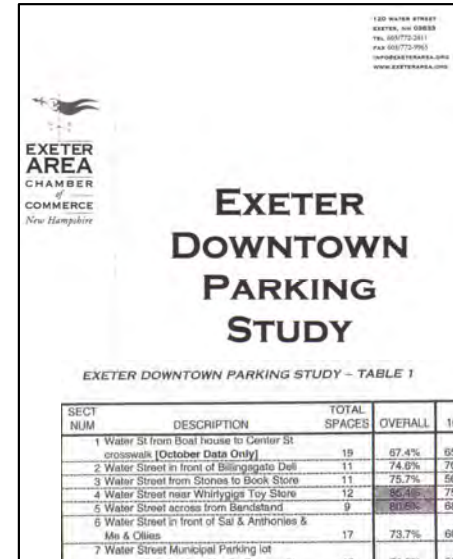
2002 EXETER DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY

In April 2002, Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce published the Exeter Downtown Parking Study in cooperation with the Town of Exeter and the Rockingham Planning Commission. Based on the 2002 Parking Study, conclusions drawn included:

- There is sufficient on-street parking capacity (~60% average utilization)
- ~2% - ~6% of users violated the signed two-hour parking limit where applicable, suggesting Downtown employees using the on-street parking is not considered a significant problem.
- Off-street [public] parking is being utilized at or beyond its effective capacity for most of the daytime hours. A serious deficiency is noted at noon where utilization exceeds 100 percent of capacity in some locations.

Recommendations and Potential Recommendations requiring further study included:

- **Increasing off-street parking inventory through leasing or purchasing properties.**
- **Meter on-street parking or municipal lot.**
- Construction of a parking structure at the Municipal Lot.
- Converting underutilized on-street parking for all-day parking (Center Street and String Bridge / Chestnut Street).
- **Consider alternative ways to finance the costs of obtaining additional parking in Downtown Exeter.**
- **Form a Downtown Parking District to share cost and benefits of parking improvements.**



EXETER DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY - TABLE 1

UTILIZATION RATES (OCTOBER & JULY DATA SETS)

SECT NUM	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SPACES	OVERALL	10:00	12:00	2:00	4:00	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
1	Water St from Boat house to Center St crosswalk [October Data Only]	19	87.4%	85.3%	71.6%	67.4%	83.3%	48.7%	73.7%	83.2%	64.5%	86.5%
2	Water Street in front of Billingsgate Deli	11	74.6%	79.3%	89.6%	66.4%	77.3%	62.5%	78.4%	81.0%	66.4%	63.6%
3	Water Street from Stones to Book Store	11	78.7%	58.4%	63.6%	74.6%	62.3%	73.9%	76.0%	75.0%	80.7%	73.9%
4	Water Street near Whittypipe Toy Store	12	80.4%	76.0%	84.2%	88.5%	64.2%	68.5%	81.3%	92.7%	89.5%	78.1%
5	Water Street across from Bandstand	9	80.6%	88.9%	85.1%	84.4%	88.3%	79.2%	73.6%	79.2%	89.0%	81.9%
6	Water Street in front of Sal & Anthonies & Me & Cities	17	73.7%	60.6%	60.6%	50.0%	65.3%	80.3%	77.9%	75.0%	75.0%	80.1%
7	Water Street Municipal Parking lot crosswalk to Loaf and Ladie Crosswalk	18	71.0%	59.4%	88.4%	78.1%	58.9%	66.0%	72.2%	66.7%	77.1%	72.9%
8	Water St/Front Street in front of Town Hall	18	53.8%	35.6%	61.7%	63.3%	54.4%	41.7%	51.4%	61.8%	64.6%	49.3%
9	Front Street - Bandstand parking	15	60.5%	62.0%	76.7%	65.3%	48.0%	55.0%	62.5%	60.0%	69.2%	55.8%
10	Front Street from Citizens Drive-thru to Court Street and on other side from Court Street to Water Street	16	47.0%	50.0%	56.3%	48.6%	33.1%	45.3%	57.0%	44.5%	44.5%	43.8%
11	Front Street from Court Street to Center Street	18	51.3%	52.8%	51.1%	51.7%	49.4%	56.3%	45.1%	59.7%	40.3%	54.9%
12	Center Street from Front St to Citizens Bank	12	41.5%	61.7%	45.0%	33.9%	35.8%	45.8%	46.9%	52.1%	32.3%	30.2%
13	Center St between Citizens Bank and First Savings of NH [July Data Only]	7	45.0%	61.4%	45.7%	51.4%	31.4%	46.4%	50.0%	46.4%	39.3%	42.9%
14	Water St from Swazey Pkwy to Center St (Center St Side) [October Data Only]	15	40.0%	33.3%	44.0%	52.0%	30.7%	26.7%	40.0%	35.0%	43.3%	55.0%
15	Water St from Swazey Pkwy to Spring St [October Data Only]	17	44.1%	52.9%	52.9%	40.0%	30.6%	41.0%	54.4%	35.3%	54.4%	33.8%
16	String Bridge and Chestnut Street [October Data Only]	17	25.3%	17.7%	25.9%	29.4%	28.2%	17.3%	27.9%	33.8%	26.5%	27.9%
17	Pleasant Street (No Time limit on Parking) [October Data Only]	17	69.4%	63.5%	61.2%	74.1%	68.8%	63.0%	64.7%	65.9%	83.8%	66.2%
TOTAL	ALL PARKING SECTIONS	249	59.8%	53.9%	68.0%	62.5%	54.6%	54.1%	61.3%	60.7%	62.2%	60.4%



Exeter's History in Transportation

2018 EXETER DOWNTOWN PARKING SURVEY

In the summer of 2018, the Town of Exeter in cooperation with the Rockingham Planning Commission commissioned an online survey providing questions of opinion to public regarding parking in the Downtown.

Included in the Survey were questions including:

- Methods of travel into Downtown.
- Frequency and length of parking.
- Where the surveyed prefers to park.
- How long do you expect to walk between parking location and destination.
- Preferred amenities.
- Ranking of concerns raised.

Stantec analyzed the results to identify included:

- **Increasing off-street parking inventory through leasing or purchasing properties.**
- **Meter on-street parking or municipal lot.**
- Construction of a parking structure at the Municipal Lot.
- **Consider alternative ways to finance the costs of obtaining additional parking in Downtown Exeter.**
- **Form a Downtown Parking District to share cost and benefits of parking improvements.**



Possible Solutions

Better Signs & Wayfinding
Multiple comments indicated that self-identified "long-time" residents were not aware of all of the parking options in the downtown area. The addition of signage identifying publicly available parking lots would be helpful. Many comments also indicated confusion about when parking was allowed or not when a businesses or offices are closed.

Change On-Street Parking
A common concern from survey participants was the parallel and angled parking in downtown. Many find it difficult to pull in or out of the angled parking along Water Street, with a common concern regarding the narrowness of spaces. Many also indicated the roadways becoming very narrow in areas where there is parallel parking on both sides of the street, especially in the winter.
Widening or eliminating certain parking spaces may be a solution in key areas but should be done in conjunction with parking improvement measures (such as creating new parking areas or increasing parking turnover through the use of parking meters).

Build A Parking Garage
A common recommendation from survey participants was to build a parking garage on the municipal parking lot behind the Town Offices. Many respondents also indicated not wanting such a garage. Building a parking garage is typically an expensive option for increasing parking availability, however, the financing options and economic impacts may offset upfront costs.
The City of Dover built a municipal garage in 2016 with 321 parking spaces. The total cost to build was \$11 million or \$34,000 per space. Currently, parking cost a dollar per hour during weekday business hours. Additional detail on Dover's garage development is available at: <https://www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/police/new-police-facility/index.html>

Did you know Exeter had parking meters in 1968?
Revenue generated was over \$16,000, or about \$118,000 today.

“The angled parking spaces are very challenging to back out of - at some point you just have to cross your fingers and go (especially if you're parked next to an SUV or pickup truck) assuming travel does not slow as stop for people parking backing up difficult.”

“I've lived in Exeter all my life and I had no idea there were three designated municipal lots. ...[b]ut there are always spots on the street, whether it be store front, bandstand, river lot, etc. However, I could possibly understand how it may be difficult for a visitor to know the other spots to park.”

2018 Exeter Parking & Traffic Survey Results
Rockingham Planning Commission



Traffic and Circulation Summary

THE BANDSTAND INTERSECTION

The intersection of Water Street and Front Street is known as the “Bandstand Intersection” and is understood as the hub of Downtown Exeter, as it is the convergence of two of Exeter’s highest traveled Downtown roadways, as well as New Hampshire Routes 27, 108, and 111. With about 13,000 vehicles per day passing through the intersection in addition to pedestrians and bicycles navigating the busy corridor, the operations of this intersection are important to the vitality of the Downtown.

Events throughout the year bring attention to the Bandstand, including holiday concerts and lighting, as well as regular concerts and activities throughout. However, the center of a New England town typically provides a green public space to accompany similar structures, but Exeter’s Bandstand is located in an island of pavement.





Traffic and Circulation Summary

THE BANDSTAND INTERSECTION

The Bandstand Intersection operates as a hybrid, unsignalized intersection, with stop-controls for the Water Street eastbound approach and Front Street northbound approach, each with a through to left-turn lane and a right-turn lane. The right-turn lane from Front Street operates as a channelized yield-control.

Water Street westbound operates feely and holds the priority right-of-way under the intersection's current operations. This approach is provided a short left-turn lane at the Bandstand to allow for Water Street through movement to continue unimpeded.

The Bandstand, adjacent parking spaces, both angled and parallel, and wide paved area provide challenges for sightlines at the intersection, with Water Street eastbound and Front Street northbound vehicles having insufficient intersection sight distances. These challenges impede traffic flow through the intersection as it relates to operations, as delays are caused by confused drivers over right of way and no visibility on potentially conflicting vehicles, and with safety, as the deficiencies for sight lines impacts vehicle and pedestrian and bicycle interactions.





Traffic and Circulation Summary

OTHER CRITICAL DOWNTOWN INTERSECTIONS

Front Street at Court Street

The intersection of Front Street at Court Street is an unsignalized intersection just south of Water Street and is a gateway between the Downtown business district, Phillips Exeter Academy, and communities south of Downtown. The intersection is yield-controlled from Court Street and is provided two pedestrian crossings over its very large, paved footprint. Sight distance is limited to Court Street due to the building at the southwest corner of the intersection (24 Front Street) and operations confuse drivers due to the yield-control from Court Street that would typically be a stop-control.

There are limited wayfinding signs tying the prime destinations accessed by this intersection to the vehicular approaches. For example, Court Street provides access to Bow Street and full access to the largest parking lot in Downtown.

The wide, existing right-of-way and pavement is a canvas for future traffic calming, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian crossing improvements to accentuate this important entrance into Exeter’s Downtown.





Traffic and Circulation Summary

OTHER CRITICAL DOWNTOWN INTERSECTIONS

Water Street at Clifford Street and Franklin Street

The intersection of Water Street at Clifford Street and Franklin Street has been subjected to recent study and conceptual redesign in 2022. The intersection is stop-controlled from Clifford Street (one-way to the intersection), with left-turns onto Water Street prohibited. Sight distance is limited to Water Street from the west and requires vehicles to pull ahead into the intersection.

This conflicts with the potential movements from Water Street onto Franklin Street, which is a one-way roadway away from the intersection and has seen increased activity due to recent redevelopments of housing and business condos. On-street parking is underutilized according to the parking study and improvements to the access to this area of Clifford Street and Franklin Street and nearby Bow Street and South Street can help guide visitors to the open on-street parking available within one block of the Water Street businesses and residences.





Traffic and Circulation Summary

INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS/SAFETY

Over the past few decades, transportation planning and engineering have become more holistic and inclusive in evaluating improvements to infrastructure, particularly through the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements for accessibility and further research, studies, and guidance regarding safety and evaluating costs and benefits. Stantec reviewed the Downtown area and its connections for all users to find general efficiencies and deficiencies found in the Downtown's transportation system. The images to the right are samples of items that can be focused on improving for Exeter's future.



Roadway curvature and limited warnings to drivers



Wide, ambiguous, unmarked areas



Obstructed sightlines



Unclear refuge/stopping areas



Unclear pedestrian connections



Interrupted sidewalk free flow



Traffic and Circulation Summary

INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS/SAFETY

Overall, the Town of Exeter has made steps towards improving sidewalks and crosswalks in multiple locations throughout Town. Recently, the Town made improvements to the sidewalks on Water Street with limited improvements to crossings or traffic calming elements.

With a positive history of implementing these improvements and ongoing and recently completed plans as it relates to all modes of travel through Exeter, the Town is in a good position to continue identifying, planning, and executing improvements and enhancements to its transportation system.



Improved sidewalks along Front Street



Advanced pedestrian crossing warning signs adjacent to Phillips Exeter Academy



Lack of curbs or delineated parking. Encroachment onto pedestrian sidewalk.



Deficient sidewalk and crossing at Chestnut Street and Woodlawn Circle.



Lack of advanced warning signs or pedestrian-level lighting



No identified or protected pathways for pedestrians in parking lots.



Traffic Circulation and Pedestrian Flow Summary



Longstanding Challenges

Roadway issues identified through plans in the past 60 years are still present today



Critical Downtown Intersections

The hubs and gateways to Downtown transportation need significant improvement to function efficiently and safely



Multimodal Improvements

Some infrastructure changes made by the Town have been successful and can be expanded throughout downtown



Truck Routing

Without other alternatives, truck routes through Downtown's primary roads contribute to congestion and potential safety challenges

04



Outreach + Engagement Summary



Public Outreach Overview

CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY IN DIFFERENT WAYS

Public outreach was conducted throughout the study to better understand community’s parking and traffic circulation goals, how parking functions or concerns about the system, and whether there was consensus for the draft recommendations prepared as part of this study. The feedback collected from all outreach efforts helped to provide insight on Exeter’s parking system, and traffic and pedestrian circulation, and ultimately inform the final project recommendations. Public Outreach efforts included the following:

DOOR-TO-DOOR BUSINESS INTRODUCTIONS

August-September 2023

PUBLIC SURVEY

September-October 2023

PUBLIC MEETING #1

October 4th, 2023

STAKEHOLDER MEETING

October 4th, 2023

PUBLIC MEETING #2

December 13th, 2023

Town of Exeter
Downtown Parking, Traffic, and Pedestrian Flow Analysis

The Town of Exeter is conducting a parking study in the Downtown area to better understand:

- Do we need more parking?
- Can we better use the parking we have?
- Is the parking system meeting other Town goals?
- Can finding parking become easier?
- How can walking be made safer for pedestrians?

In the coming weeks, you will have a chance to share your concerns and desires for the parking and pedestrian network downtown.

Stay tuned for project updates!

<https://www.exeternh.gov/>

townofexeternh
@TownofExeterNH

FOUNDED 1638

Town of Exeter E-Newsletter

Downtown Parking, Traffic, and Pedestrian Survey

The Town of Exeter is conducting a parking study downtown to better understand:

- Do we need more parking?
- Can we better use the parking we have?
- Can finding parking become easier?
- Can traffic flow be improved?
- Can driving be safer?
- How can walking be made safer?

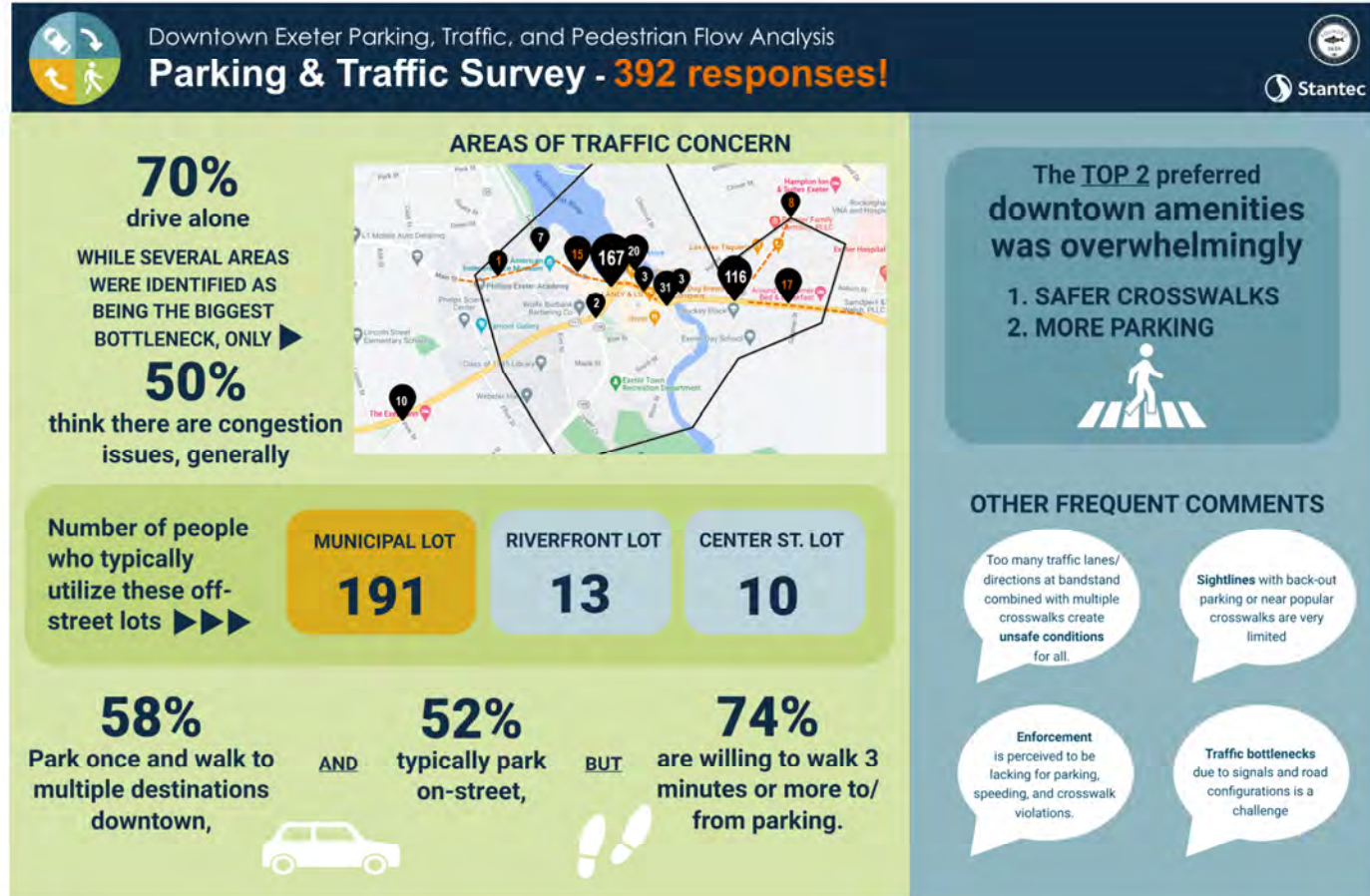
Share your thoughts, take our survey now!



Public Outreach Overview

PUBLIC SURVEY

The public survey was available from September 18th to October 14th 2023 and received a total of 392 responses. The survey asked a series of questions to better understand the kind of parking people typically use, how long they spend on a typical visit, potential challenges which inform how they select parking, and other details. The survey was primarily promoted through the Town's newsletter and social media channels.





Public Outreach Overview

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Two public meetings were held for this project. Both meetings were held both in-person, and were broadly advertised to reach as many residents, employees, business owners, or visitors, as possible. Both meetings were intended for a general audience, though key stakeholders were also invited. The feedback collected from all outreach efforts helped to provide insight into Exeter's parking system, pedestrian flow, and traffic patterns, and ultimately informed the final project recommendations.

FIRST PUBLIC MEETING – OCTOBER 4, 2023

The first public meeting started with two drop-in open house sessions in the afternoon where members of the public were invited to review materials – background information, parking utilization, initial traffic flow and pedestrian flow findings – ask questions and provide feedback to the Study Team. In the evening, the study team gave a brief presentation of study goals, parking utilization, key findings, and next steps. Over 20 people attended this meeting.

SECOND PUBLIC MEETING – DECEMBER 13, 2023

The second public meeting was held in the evening of December 13th. At this meeting the Study Team presented draft recommendation for the public to provide feedback and ask questions. Only 8 people attended this presentation, but it was also broadcast over the Town's local access channel.

Key takeaways from these meetings are noted on page 62.





Stakeholder Engagement Overview

KEY FEEDBACK RECEIVED

From the public survey, two public meetings, and the stakeholder roundtable the Study Team repeatedly heard several common themes. This key feedback served as the basis of the Recommendations:

- Adding **more parking** is a priority by some, while others note that there is **sufficient parking but poor signage**.
- The **cost of parking** and the **proximity** to destination are the two factors that influence parking choice.
- **Crosswalk safety**, intersection conflicts and sightlines are pressing issues.
- The greatest parking issues in the Downtown are on **Water Street**.
- Many are open to **pricing parking** on Water Street.
- The lack of consistent, quality **wayfinding** is a problem.
- There is a lack of **pedestrian lighting**.
- The **Bandstand intersection** is congested and unsafe.
- Many are open to voluntary **shared private parking**.
- There is limited **bicycle infrastructure**.
- There is too much **through traffic** Downtown.

05



Strategies + Recommendations



Strategy + Recommendation Overview

Historic mill towns throughout New Hampshire, such as Exeter, were not built around the car but became car-centric over time as travel patterns and policies changed and cars became a common method of transportation for the average person. The original downtowns of these communities were originally designed around pedestrians and somewhat for horses. Fortunately, Exeter has taken proactive efforts in keeping the pulse on its parking inventory through listening to its residents, business owners, and visitors, and has been forward-thinking in considering that some assets which are underutilized may better serve the needs of Downtown Exeter and reduce the needs of higher risk and cost implementation of new assets, such as parking garages and expanding inventory and roadways.

Like most historic downtowns, Exeter's parking system has evolved over time. Paid parking was present along Water Street from 1949 to 1973, abandoned due to lack of maintenance and reduced revenue due to the American retail model transitioning to suburban malls from the downtown storefronts. Through time and evolving legalities of enforcement and penalties, this has resulted in a disjointed and confusing system and rules needs to be revamped to meet the needs of specific but varied users. As consumer spending is rebounding following the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and residential development is increasing to meet high demand in New Hampshire, new mixed-use development or redevelopment continues the momentum Exeter has carried for a vital downtown.

The following recommendations will help create a transportation system that better meets Exeter's goals below while building in additional flexibility for the system to adapt as travel patterns continue to change and evolve.

- Create a **comprehensive inventory** of downtown parking
- Assess how parking areas or regulations can better support **long-term economic vitality** downtown
- Identify opportunities for **long-term parking areas** beyond the downtown core
- Improve **traffic flow and safety** throughout downtown
- Identify opportunities to establish or improve **safe and convenient pedestrian connections** to and from parking
- Evaluate opportunities to improve the **efficiency and effectiveness** of parking enforcement



Strategy + Recommendation Overview

The strategies and recommendations also build on those which have been developed as part of historical planning efforts, both recent and in decades gone by, including:

- **Transportation Study of Exeter, New Hampshire** – 1968 – Town of Exeter and New Hampshire Department of Transportation (Formerly New Hampshire Department of Public Works and Highways)
- **Exeter Downtown Parking Study** – April 2002 – Town of Exeter and Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce
- **Town of Exeter Master Plan** – February 2018 – Town of Exeter and Horsley Witten Group, Inc.
- **2018 Exeter Parking & Traffic Survey Results** – Late 2018/ Early 2019 - Town of Exeter and Rockingham Planning Commission
- **Exeter Intersection Evaluations** – July 2022 – Town of Exeter and VHB, Inc.
- **Exeter Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan** – September 2022 – Town of Exeter and Rockingham Planning Commission

In addition, successful implementations of similar improvements or enhancements of other municipalities' transportation and parking systems were reviewed as references in context of similar types of communities with similar issues, such as:

- Parking Supply and Demand Strategies of Portsmouth, NH – May 2012 – City of Portsmouth, NH and Parking, Transit & Downtown Development Consulting.
- Parking Pricing & Management Report - February 2011 - Town of Durham, NH and TND Engineering
- Lebanon Winter Parking Area Map - November 2021 –City of Lebanon, NH
- Lease Agreement Pettee Brook Parking Lot and Strafford Avenue Parking – February 2014 – Town of Durham, NH and University of New Hampshire
- Bedford No Thru Trucking Map - March 2017 – Town of Bedford, NH

The strategies, although addressing individual challenges revealed through the data and analysis portion of the study, should be viewed as a package that, together, creates a streamlined and holistic parking system that is user-friendly, consistently managed, and thoughtfully designed with Exeter's current and future goals in mind.



Strategy + Recommendation Overview

1. Share Private Parking Supply
2. Establish Short/Long-Term Loading Spaces
3. Introduce Pay Parking and Expand Permit Parking
4. Improve Parking Wayfinding
5. Introduce Parking Ambassadors Downtown
6. Reconfigure Bandstand Intersection
7. Establish New Truck Route
8. Adjust Zoning for Small-Scale Developments
9. Redefine Winter Parking Procedure
10. Multimodal Improvements
11. Improve Markings + Signage for Bicyclists
12. Consider Reimagining Parking on Water Street

● Short-Term ● Mid-Term ● Long-Term



Share Private Parking Supply

STRATEGY #1

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter’s Challenge: Water Street parking has select periods of very high demand while nearby facilities have plenty of availability

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Today, many off-street lots in Exeter are designated for specific businesses and their patrons. At certain times of the day this can lead to unoccupied private lots right next to highly occupied on-street parking. Working with private parking lot owners to allow public parking in their lots some or all the time is a way to quickly expand the public parking supply. Sample shared agreements between municipalities and private lot owners are included in the Appendices.

HOW IT WORKS

1. The Town identifies facilities that can absorb nearby high demand.
2. The Town works with interested property owners to open currently restricted but underutilized parking to the public. Each agreement can be customized to meet the needs of the public and the property owner.
3. Agreements can be for some or all spaces of a parking lot for specific or unlimited time (i.e., after a business is closed for the day). They can also be for select groups, such as employees or residents. In exchange for the additional parking the Town can offer lot maintenance and repairs such as snow plowing, repaving, and restriping



Example of an underutilized private facility nearby public parking that is very high in demand.

KEY BENEFITS

- Redirect high demand from Water Street
- Optimize existing supply without building new
- Build public-private collaboration
- Potentially improve amenities and conditions of private facilities



Establish Short-Term/Loading Parking Spaces

STRATEGY #2

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter’s Challenge: Designated areas for short-term parking or loading are significantly less than the volume of short visits and deliveries on Water Street

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Currently, the downtown area only hosts 3 loading zones (5 parking spaces total), and 18 spaces with a time limit of less than an hour. Adding more loading zones and short-term parking accommodates short-term visitors without competing with high-demand parking areas or causing safety issues perpetuated by double parking.

HOW IT WORKS

LOADING ZONES

To establish more loading zones the Town should identify preferred locations for loading areas in the Study Area. One loading zone per block is recommended on Water Street. Since most of the parking on Water Street is well utilized, work with local businesses to understand peak demand for loading zones and decide whether time limitations are appropriate (e.g., before 10AM only)

SHORT-TERM PARKING

Short-term parking is particularly valuable near businesses where visitors don’t stay long, such as a coffee shop or convenient store. To make sure short-term parking spaces are ideally located, work with local businesses to determine preferred location of short-term parking spaces and establish a process for new businesses to request short-term parking spaces near their business based on use/demand.



Example best practice regulation signage

KEY BENEFITS

- Reduce occurrence of double parking
- Improve circulation and reduce congestion
- Support efficiency for necessary operations of local businesses



Introduce Pay Parking and Expand Permit Parking

STRATEGY #3A

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: Availability of some parking on Water Street is limited due to vehicles occupying spaces for long periods

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Ensures there is availability in the facilities of highest demand and encourage use of nearby underutilized spaces which are walkable

HOW IT WORKS (PAY PARKING)

- Introduce smart meters that accept coin, card, and pay by app (e.g., Passport)
- Paid parking on Water Street core, only
- Consider introducing paid parking at municipal lot at a later date
- Define a test period of pricing to evaluate effectiveness
- Provide information on Town website where meters are located, when in operation, and how to use them

KEY BENEFITS

- Redirect high demand from prime spaces
- Revenue stream for Town to fund parking and other related improvements
- Tool for easier/ongoing tracking of utilization and enforcement



Example of where paid parking in Exeter might make sense (based on demand)

PRICING APPROACH IN SIMILAR COMMUNITIES

	Meter Cost (8-Hrs)	Violation Fee
Northampton, MA	Dynamic Pricing \$8 (Main St) \$6 (other areas)	\$15
Pittsfield, MA	Dynamic Pricing \$8 (Main St) Free (elsewhere)	\$15 (1 st offense) \$30 (2 nd offense)
Keene, NH	\$8	\$15



Introduce Pay Parking and Expand Permit Parking

STRATEGY #3A

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

STEPS TO INTEGRATE METERS OR KIOSKS

STEP 1.

The Town should weigh the options for paid parking fixtures:

- Purchase new meters or kiosks (such as those pictured) to allow for multiple payment options including pay-by-app
- Negotiate with meter vendor for new, “free” meters with a lease agreement and Town covering installation costs (this may not be a viable option depending on vendor’s interests, and Town’s desire for longer-term revenue control)
- Purchase used meters from another community. Typically older, electromechanical models that a pay-by-phone parking app sticker could be overlaid on.

STEP 2.

The Town should select a preferred meter/kiosk/vendor through a process that includes feedback from relevant departments.

STEP 3.

The Town should identify how many meters or kiosks are needed for Water Street based on recommended placement (e.g., 1 per 6 spaces, etc.)

STEP 4.

Once overall costs have been identified, the Town should initiate the necessary processes for securing budget approval. If the overall budget can only be secured in part, initially, the Town should identify priority locations for installation, and develop a rollout/budget plan for the remainder.

STEP 5.

The Police Department should pursue and identify a preferred approach for enforcement, such as with LPR. Enforcement officers should be trained on the new devices and protocol.

STEP 6.

A public information campaign should be developed ahead of time to alert visitors to Exeter on the change to paid parking, and to provide information on how to use the meters/kiosks. Clear directions should be present on the fixtures, as well.

STEP 7.

Data from the fixtures and enforcement should be periodically reviewed to ensure that meters/kiosks are achieving their intent of maintaining availability in prime parking locations, disincentivizing long-term parkers, and contributing revenue to multimodal improvements.



Example of a smart parking meter



Introduce Pay Parking and Expand Permit Parking

STRATEGY #3B

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

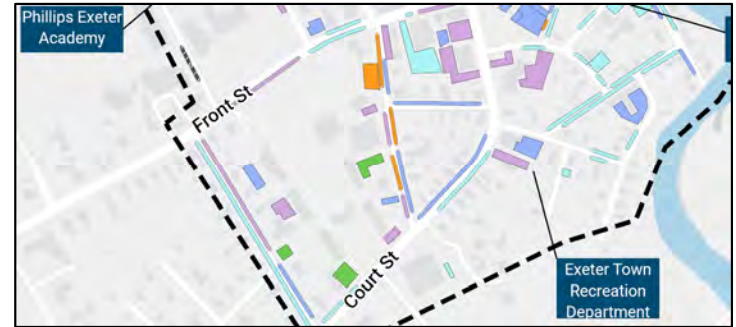
Ensures there is accounting in the public, on-street facilities of highest long-term/all-day demand generally understood to be used by specific commercial or private users. In addition, permits may be expanded to regular users of the off-street parking lots (employees of Water Street businesses) in the case where pay parking is implemented in these municipal lots.

HOW IT WORKS (PERMIT PARKING)

- Expand permit parking to the following streets:
 - Front Street (Adjacent to PEA)
 - Court Street (Elm St to Pine St)
 - Elm Street
 - Spring Street
 - Tan Lane
- Provide info and application on Town’s website and/or through parking vendor.

KEY BENEFITS

- Formalize long-term / all-day on-street parking related to specific private entities, such as adjacent to Phillips Exeter Academy
- Redirect on-street overutilization to private off-street parking that may be available
- Reasonable charge that can provide revenue for Town to fund enforcement, improvements, and formalize parking areas.



Example of where expanded permit parking in Exeter might make sense (PEA demand on Front St and Elm St through entire day)

PRICING APPROACH IN SIMILAR COMMUNITIES

	Street	Monthly Cost
Dover, NH	Main Street	\$30
	First Street	\$45
	Chapel St	\$35
Manchester, NH	Commercial Use “Pay and Display”	\$20
Keene, NH	Day Parking, Uncovered	\$54 (Est.)



Improve Parking Wayfinding

STRATEGY #4

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: A lack of wayfinding may result in public parking facilities being underutilized and contribute to congestion as parkers hunt for a space

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Ensures that parking information available to visitors through wayfinding and other signage is consistent, located in appropriate locations to improve navigation, and is integrated as part of a recognizable Town brand

HOW IT WORKS

- Establish a consistent sign design approach reflective of Exeter's brand/character
- Install highly visible directional signage to public parking at key intersections
- Install information signage at the entrance of public parking facilities including: name of lot, parking hours, information about fees (if relevant), etc.
- Develop a map of public parking facilities for the Exeter website, to be distributed to merchants, etc.

KEY BENEFITS

- Improve ease of navigation for visitors to appropriate parking for their needs
- Reduce congestion due to vehicles circulating to find a space
- Improve the use of facilities which are less visible from the street



Example of general areas in Exeter where directional wayfinding signage or identification signage could be beneficial



Introduce Parking Ambassadors Downtown

STRATEGY #5

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: Parking enforcement has limited capacity/resources

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

This program provides citizen enforcement to help alleviate the Town's enforcement burden. It also engages the community and increases knowledge of parking regulations in areas with higher volumes of parking infractions.

HOW IT WORKS

- Identify where ambassador zone(s) are, identifiable to visitors, and can communicate with Town officials while in the field, etc.
- Recruit parking ambassadors through PEA or an internship program to
- Document overstays, double parking, etc. particularly along Water Street
- Be a visible resource of information for visitors with parking questions
- Determine ideal shift times (Seasonal? Peak periods only?)

KEY BENEFITS

- Gives Exeter parking a “face” to create a more friendly user experience
- Extra “eyes on the street” to disincentivize parking violations



Seasonal parking ambassadors in Pittsfield, MA



Reconfigure Bandstand Intersection

STRATEGY #6

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: Longstanding safety and circulation challenges at its central and most distinctive intersection

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Reimagines the design of the intersection as a critical location to efficiently move traffic, encourage safe movement of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, and to establish a stronger sense of place and community.

HOW IT WORKS

- Develop a steering committee for coordination and oversight of redesign process
- Either develop internally or hire consultant to develop preferred concept design, including an in-depth outreach process
- Hire additional consultants for:
 - Necessary feasibility studies
 - Conducting pilots and demonstrations
 - Developing engineered final designs

KEY BENEFITS

- Optimize and maximize available space in the right-of-way
- Makes circulation more intuitive
- Improve the travel experience for visitors of all modes



Example design concept



Reconfigure Bandstand Intersection

STRATEGY #6

Concept Only

KEY CONCEPT DESIGN BENEFITS

- Convert the intersection to All-Way Stop-Control
- Stronger sense of place and gathering
- Widened pedestrian paths
- Narrowed travel lanes
- Conversion of angled to parallel parking
- Enhanced crosswalks
- Continuity with proposed concept on Front St (Rec. #12)

29 spaces (existing)
21 spaces (proposed)
Net -8 spaces

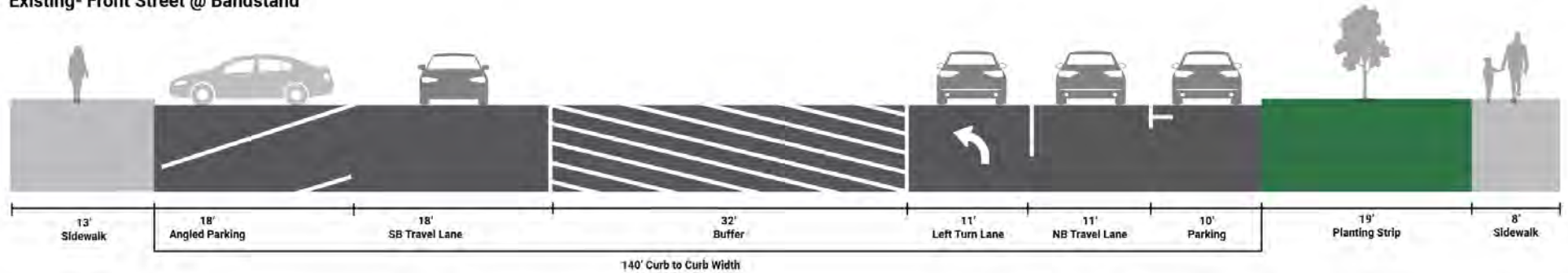




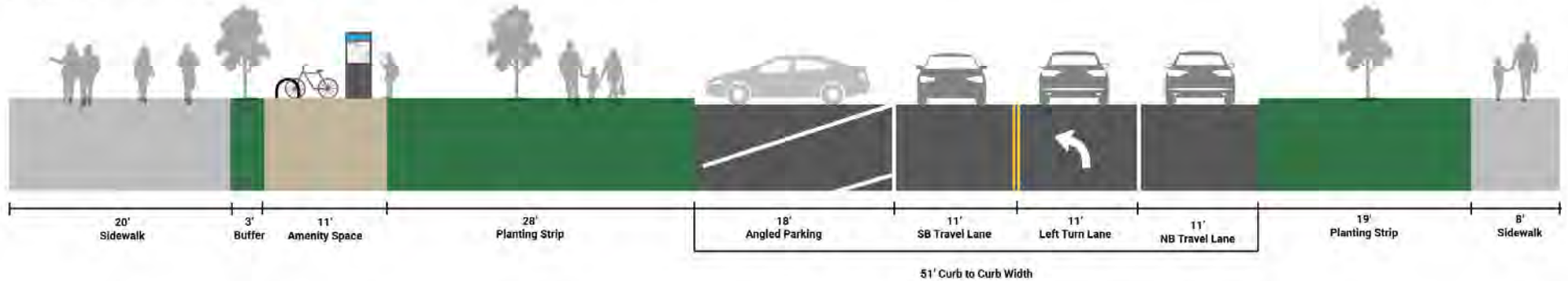
Reconfigure Bandstand Intersection

STRATEGY #6

Existing- Front Street @ Bandstand



Proposed- Front Street @ Bandstand





Establish New Truck Route

STRATEGY #7

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: Large trucks use high-volume routes through Downtown

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

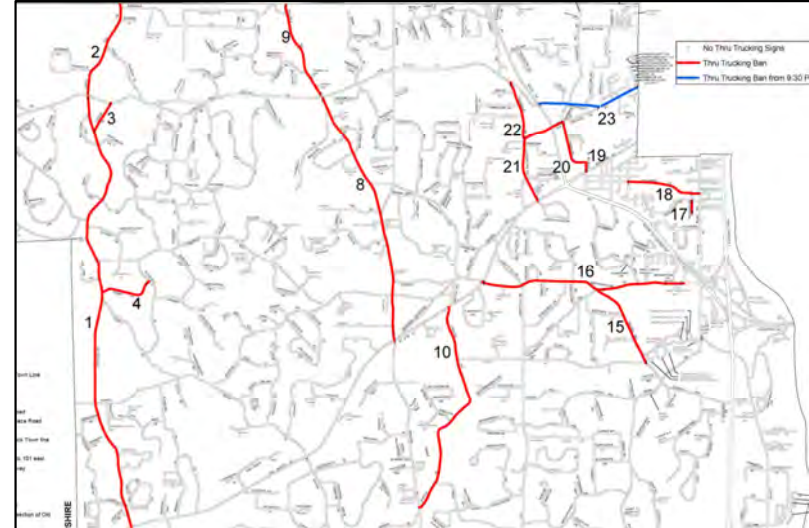
Evaluates how the current truck route can be improved to efficiently and safely divert large vehicles from high volume areas of Downtown to aid in reducing congestion and potential safety conflicts.

HOW IT WORKS

- Town should request reviewer status for NHDOT Oversize/Overweight Permits
- Establish list and plan for "No Thru Trucks", including high visibility signing and time-based restrictions
- Develop an ordinance article by Select Board for vehicles on roadways
- Notification to navigation providers

KEY BENEFITS

- Reduce large vehicles navigating and circulating through Downtown and interacting with Downtown's high pedestrian activity, typical bicycle activity, and smaller streets.



Example truck route map developed in Bedford, NH



Example road signs to support/direct trucks to appropriate routes



Adjust Zoning for Small-Scale Development

STRATEGY #8

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: Current parking requirements are one-size-fits-all and put burden on developments to build additional supply that may not be needed

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Create a scale-appropriate zoning approach that supports incremental new development in the downtown without building more unnecessary surface parking.

HOW IT WORKS

- Reduce or eliminate parking requirements for small scale development
- Simplify parking requirements and allow reduced parking requirements by right when possible
- Incorporate provisions to reduce the demand for parking by providing amenities that support walking and bicycling

KEY BENEFITS

- Scale-based requirements
- Opportunities to reallocate space from new parking to developing other amenities that support a balanced built environment
- Support developments that cater to non-vehicle lifestyles



Small developments in Exeter including residential and other mixed uses



Revise Winter Parking Plan

STRATEGY #9

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: A significant portion of on-street parking is unavailable for overnight use during periods without a weather event

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Re-evaluating the winter parking plan and limiting parking bans to when they are needed for an emergency means that Downtown residents won't need off-street parking regularly and can more efficiently make use of the existing on-street and off-street public parking. This will minimize inconvenience to parkers and decrease the need for off-street residential parking in the winter.

HOW IT WORKS

- Today, Water Street Municipal Lot open (33 overnight spaces), 8 spaces on Pleasant Street, and beginning inclusion of Center St Lot
- Specify bans during weather emergencies only
- Provide an online map showing where parking is available during the ban
- Provide communication options for citizens to be notified or access current information/updates (e.g., Email / Text, Beacons on structures)

KEY BENEFITS

- Re-opens central/convenient parking options for parkers in the evening
- Creates clarity and guidance for parkers who are impacted by a ban



Example concept for a revised Exeter Winter Parking Plan



Multimodal Improvements

STRATEGY #10

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter’s Challenge: Several components of the road and sidewalk network inhibit safe, intuitive, and free-flowing movement for pedestrians and bicyclists

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Address gaps and other inadequacies in the transportation network with the goal of prioritizing safety for bicyclists and pedestrians connecting to/from parking and other key destinations Downtown.

HOW IT WORKS

- Close sidewalk gaps and reduce sidewalk obstructions through utility pole licensing
- Enhance crosswalks with bump outs (shortened crossings), widened striping, active pedestrian warning signage, etc.
 - Swasey Parkway @ Water Street
 - Water Street @ Center Street (North Side)
 - Water Street @ Municipal Lot Entrance
 - Front Street @ Court Street
- Formalize parking infrastructure on Front Street (adjacent to PEA), Court Street (from Elm Street to Elliot Street, Elm Street, Tan Lane, and Spring Street to reduce roadway impingements



Successful implementation of similar effort on Lincoln Street in Exeter (Source: Google)

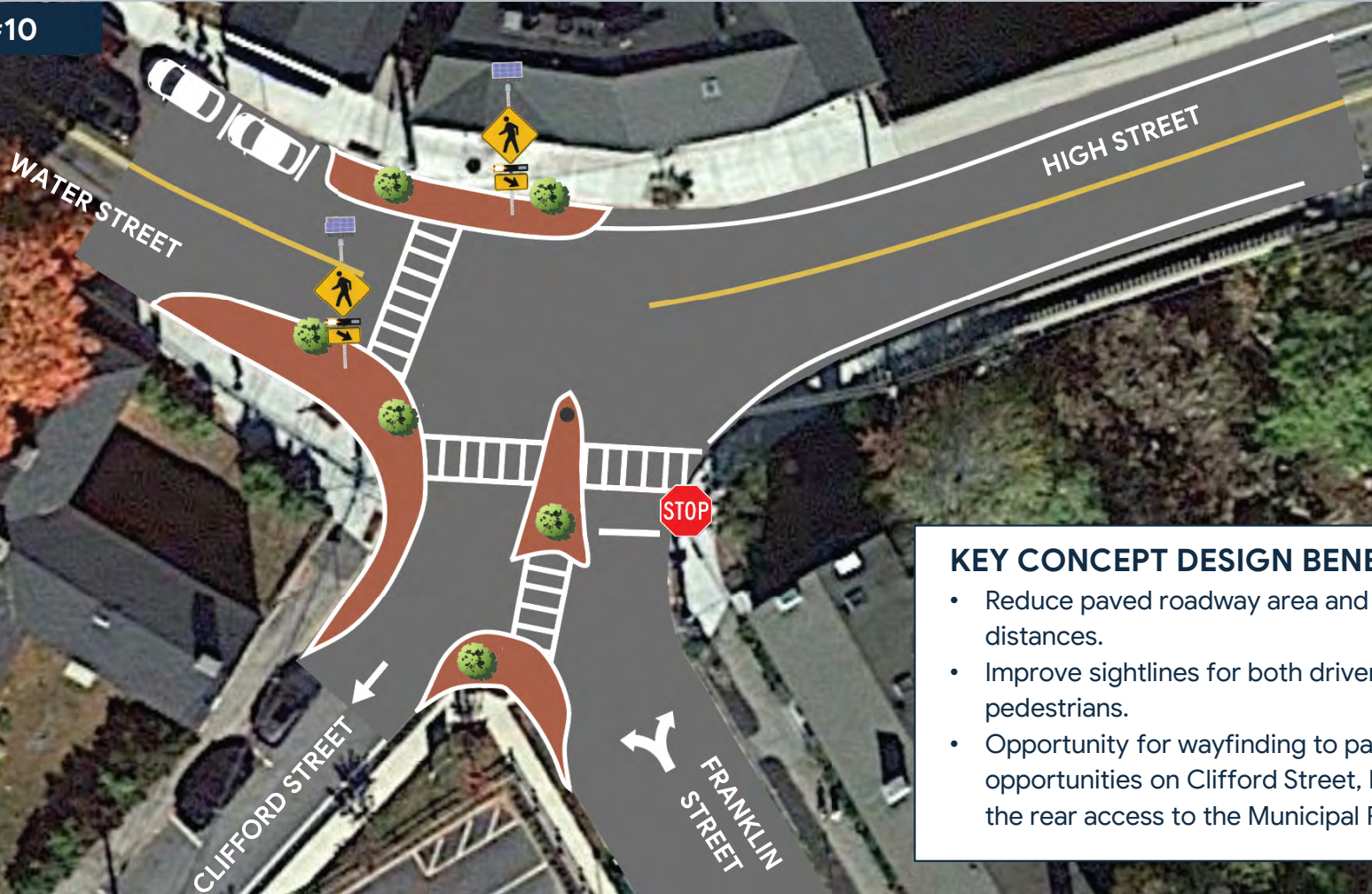
KEY BENEFITS

- Supports safety for people of all mobility levels
- Creates a consistent and comprehensive multimodal transportation network



Multimodal Improvements

STRATEGY #10



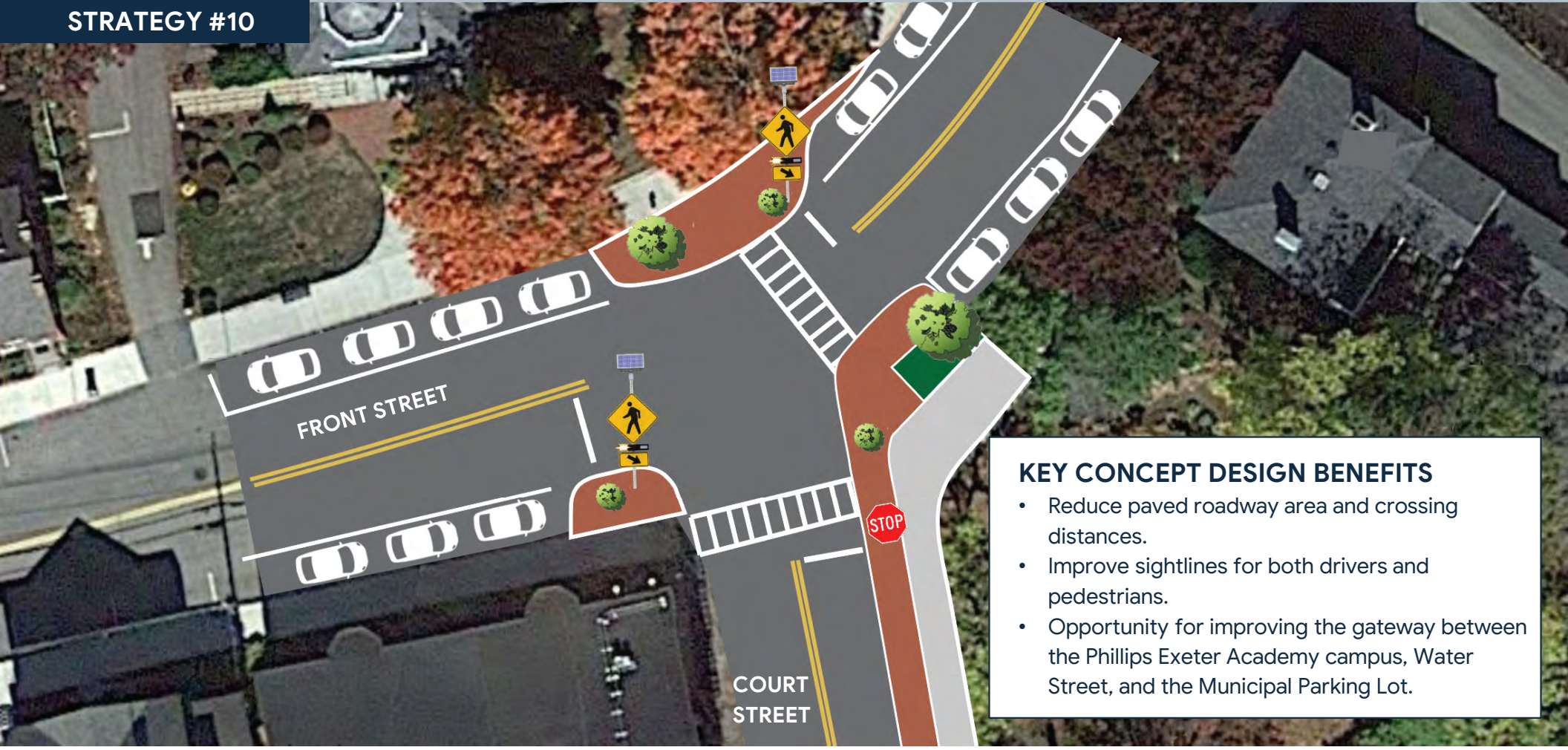
KEY CONCEPT DESIGN BENEFITS

- Reduce paved roadway area and crossing distances.
- Improve sightlines for both drivers and pedestrians.
- Opportunity for wayfinding to parking opportunities on Clifford Street, Bow Street, and the rear access to the Municipal Parking Lot.



Multimodal Improvements

STRATEGY #10



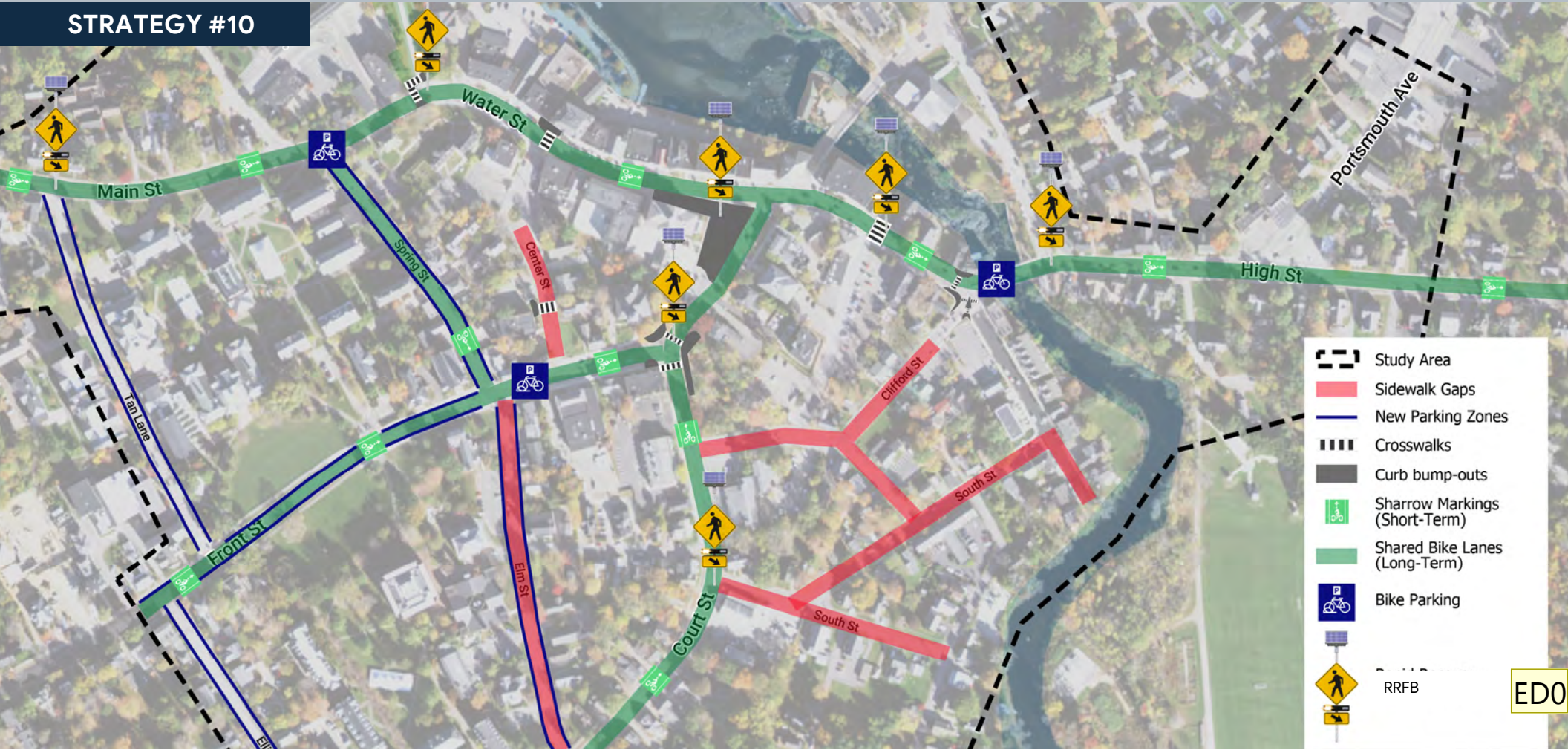
KEY CONCEPT DESIGN BENEFITS

- Reduce paved roadway area and crossing distances.
- Improve sightlines for both drivers and pedestrians.
- Opportunity for improving the gateway between the Phillips Exeter Academy campus, Water Street, and the Municipal Parking Lot.



Multimodal Improvements

STRATEGY #10



EDO

RRFB

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Improve Signage + Markings for Bicyclists

STRATEGY #11

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

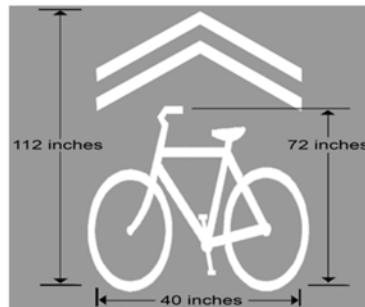
Exeter's Challenge: *There is limited presence of infrastructure or signage to support the safe movement of bicyclists*

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Promote higher visibility of features that increase driver awareness of bicyclists, and encourage bicycle movement throughout Downtown for riders of all comfort levels.

HOW IT WORKS

- Install sharrow markings along Water and Main Street using MUTCD guidance
- Install Share the Road signs, particularly at locations with sightline challenges
- Install bike parking signage



Example best practice signage and road markings

KEY BENEFITS

- Increase awareness of bicyclists and promote safer driver behavior
- Improve awareness of and navigation to available bike parking areas



Consider Re-Imagining Parking on Water Street

STRATEGY #12

Time-Frame: Short-Term

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exeter's Challenge: Angled parking on Water Street has challenging sightlines and creates frequent safety challenges

WHAT THIS STRATEGY DOES

Reimagines the Water Street right-of-way to better improve the experience for visitors using all transportation modes, with an emphasis on reducing safety challenges, increasing the visibility and condition of pedestrian infrastructure, and introduce space for bike infrastructure or other amenities.

HOW IT WORKS

- Convert angled parking to parallel
- Install a dedicated bike lane on the North side of Water Street
- Upgrade, enhance, and add crosswalks at intuitive locations
- Expand sidewalk areas to narrow vehicle travel lanes (i.e., calm traffic speed)

KEY BENEFITS

- Maximizes right-of-way space to better serve the needs of a wider range of uses
- Improves safety

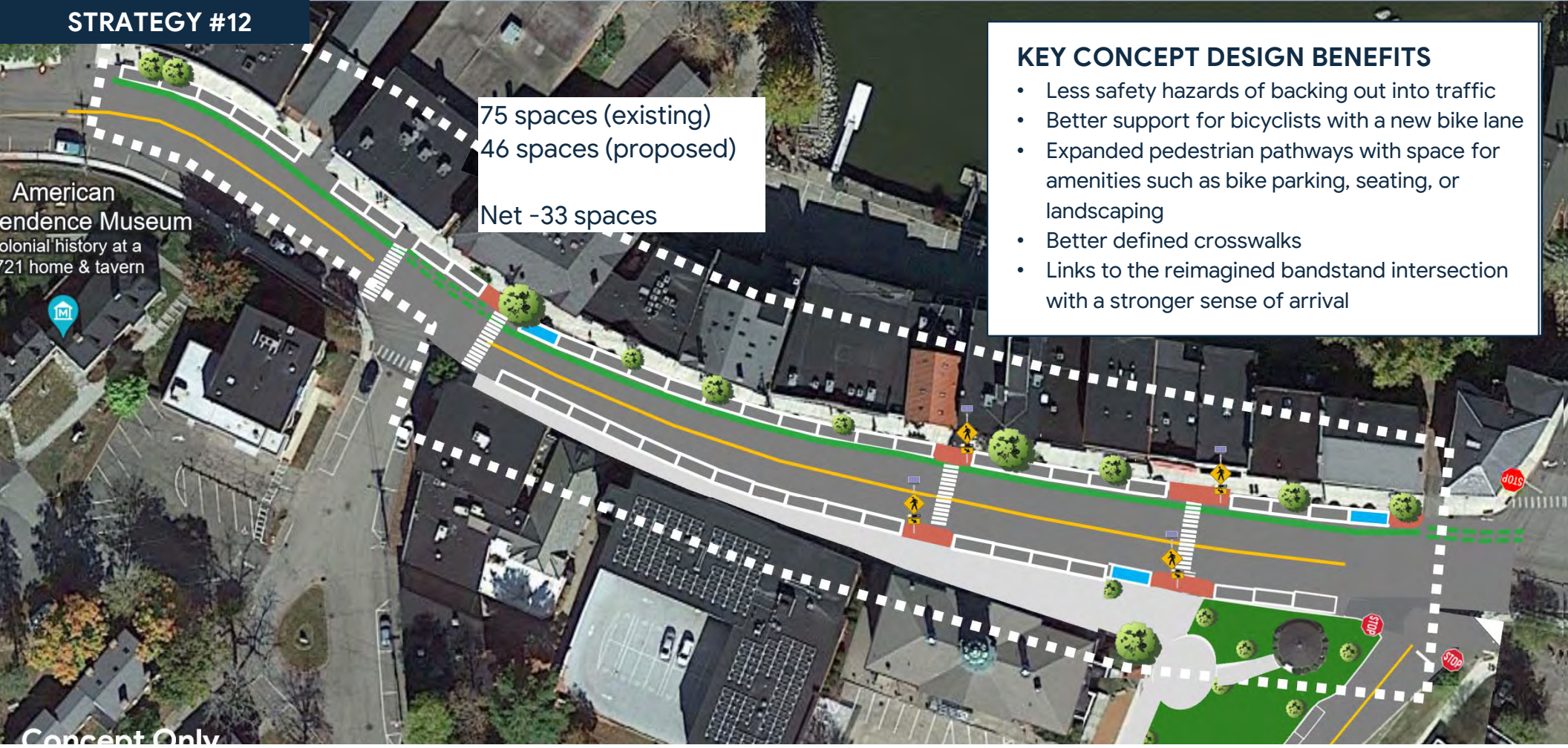


Current parking configuration along Water Street (Source: Stantec Field Inventories)



Consider Re-Imagining Parking on Water Street

STRATEGY #12



75 spaces (existing)
46 spaces (proposed)
Net -33 spaces

American Independence Museum
Colonial history at a
721 home & tavern

KEY CONCEPT DESIGN BENEFITS

- Less safety hazards of backing out into traffic
- Better support for bicyclists with a new bike lane
- Expanded pedestrian pathways with space for amenities such as bike parking, seating, or landscaping
- Better defined crosswalks
- Links to the reimagined bandstand intersection with a stronger sense of arrival

Concept Only

06



Implementation Approach



Putting the Recommendations into Action

There are several steps which must be realized in order to implement the changes detailed in this study. Some of these include procurement of new technology and signs, administrative changes to best carry out new programs, and legislative changes to enable parking rates to be tied to performance. Critical paths to success include:

Coordinate with Town Select Board: The Select Board has reviewed the recommendations included in this report at its session on ----- . As needed, the Town should check in with this body for feedback.

Ongoing Public and Staff Engagement: Many of the changes proposed will require continuing to coordinate with the public as well as particular stakeholders, such as downtown businesses and the Town's enforcement staff. It may be useful to convene a Parking Working Group to review potential changes, or to check-in with select stakeholders such as existing permit-holders to review changes to the permit program.

Pilot Early Changes, Monitor, and Report: Providing several months to test new changes, such as pricing changes or even temporary improvements to the roadway network including breakaway posts, stop signs, and pavement markings, coupled with monitoring and reporting back in a public manner, can help increase user buy-in.

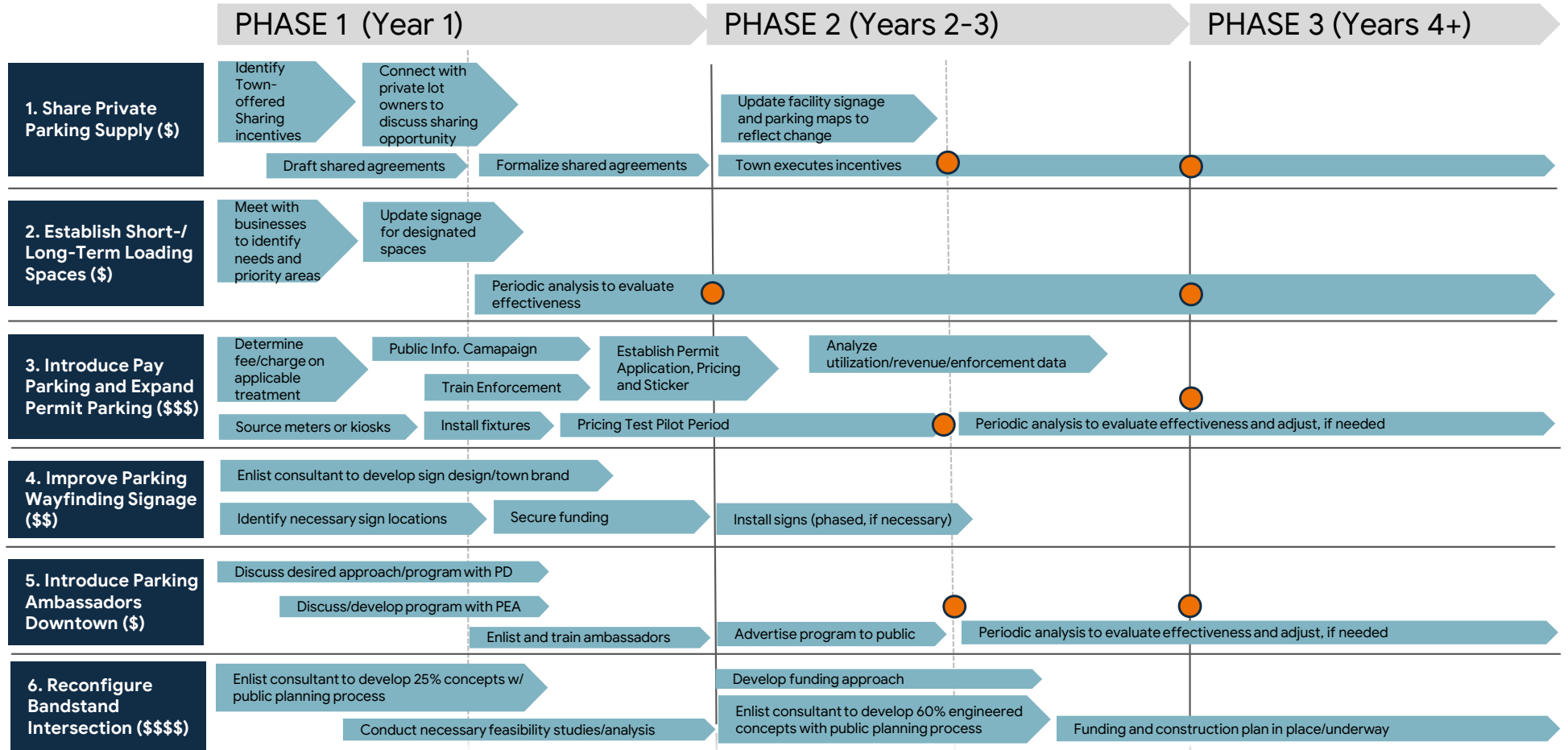
The implementation roadmap on the following pages can provide a general timeline for guidance.





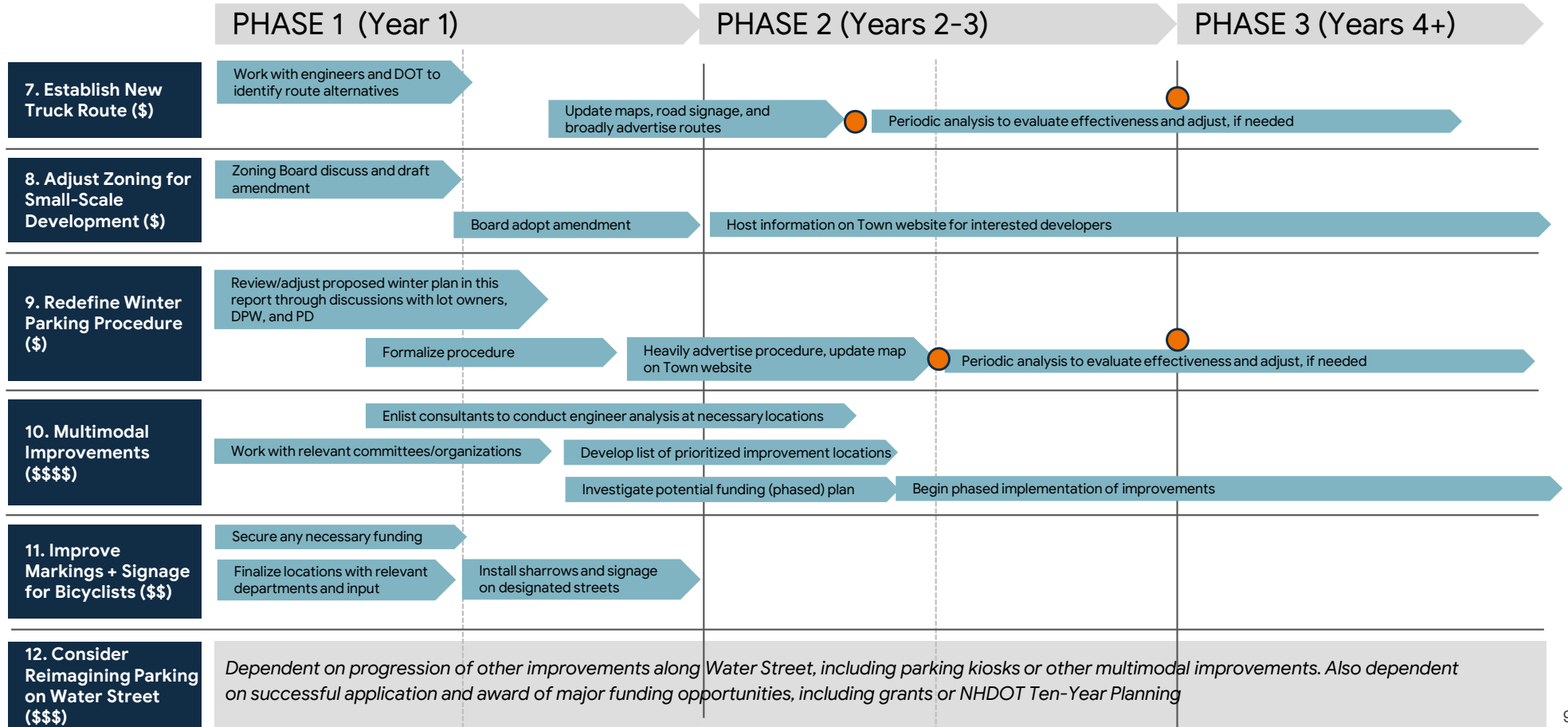
Review period

Putting the Recommendations into Action- Implementation Roadmap





Putting the Recommendations into Action- Implementation Roadmap





Funding Opportunities

The recommendations identified within this study range from rapid deployment and reasonably limited effort and cost through multi-year planning, engineering, and construction requiring extensive funding for programming. As the undertaking of the larger cost recommendations by funded by only the Town is likely unfeasible, the following list identifies state and federal funding opportunities for the Town to pursue to realize these recommendations effectively:

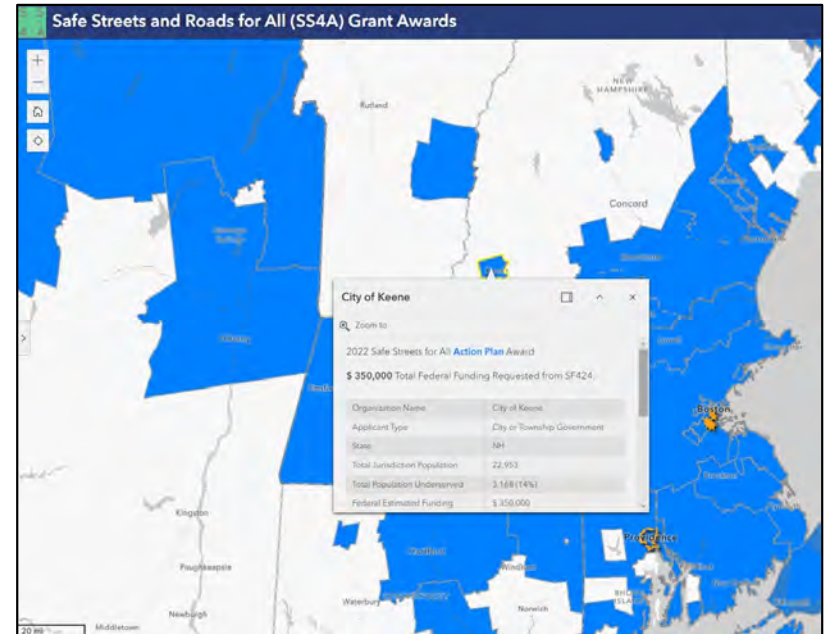
RAISE Transportation Discretionary Grants: Similar previous editions of this funding were called TIGER or BUILD Discretionary Grants, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (“Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” or “BIL”) authorized and appropriated \$1.5 billion to be awarded by the Department of Transportation (“DOT”) for Local and Regional Project Assistance Program Grants under National Infrastructure Investments in FY 2023.

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A): The BIL established the SS4A discretionary grant program to support local initiatives to prevent death and serious injury, formerly referred to as Vision Zero initiatives. \$1 Billion per year is funded through fiscal year 2026 and is seeing many communities throughout New England receive significant funding. The SS4A funding supports:

- Local safety action planning,
- Planning, design, and development activities identified in the safety action plan, and
- Implementing the projects and strategies in the safety plan.

Just in the past two years, multiple New England communities and Metro Planning Organizations have seen successful applications and awards from this program including:

- City of Keene, NH - \$350,000 - New Safety Action Planning
- All four NH MPOs - \$220,000 - New Safety Action Planning
- City of Salem, MA - \$200,000 – New Safety Action Planning
- Town of Haverhill, NH - \$200,000 – New Safety Action Planning





Funding Opportunities

Advanced Transport Technologies and Innovation (ATTAIN) Program: The BIL authorized and appropriated \$60 million annually through fiscal year 2026 and allocates up to 80% of the cost of prospective projects. The ATTAIN Program may fund the following advanced transportation and congestion management technologies related to this study:


- Advanced parking reservation or variable pricing systems
- Integration of transportation service payment systems
- Advanced mobility access and on-demand transportation service technologies, such as dynamic ridesharing and other shared-use mobility applications and information systems to support human services for elderly and disabled individuals;

Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving

Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary Grant Program: The BIL \$300 Million per year is funded from fiscal year 2024 through fiscal year 2026 for the PROTECT discretionary grant program to support resiliency for surface transportation against natural hazards and potential disasters related to climate change through supporting the following activities:

- Planning
- Resiliency Improvements
- Community Resilience and Evacuation Routing
- At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure

As the Town of Exeter sits on the Squamscott River, a tidal river that help's feed New Hampshire's Great Bay and has been subject to regional and statewide studies on the potential impacts due to sea level rise (Seacoast Transportation Corridor Vulnerability Assessment and Resiliency Plan, Rockingham Planning Commission, March 2022), Exeter should be a good candidate to be considered for this type of funding due the potential impacts to the historic Downtown and the impacts to the Town's infrastructure anticipated in the mid- to late-21st Century.



Municipality: Exeter

Location: NH 85 (Water Street)

Cross Streets: Summer Street, Swazey Pkwy

Impacts Begin: 4.0 Foot sea-level rise

Tolerance for Flood: Low

Risk (High, Medium, Low, Very Low):

Plan for Sea-level Rise Impacts by: 2080

State or Local Roads: Local and State Roads

Current Traffic Volume (Average Annual/Peak): 6,500 AADT / 7,700 Peak

Pavement Condition: Good/Fair

Infrastructure at Site: Tidal Crossing 124

Water/Sewer Infrastructure: Water and Sewer

Known Site Contamination: No known site contamination

Existing Tidal Wetland Types (Upstream/Downstream): Brackish Riverbank Marsh/ Intertidal Habitat

Invasive Species Present: Yes

FEMA Floodplain Category: X, AE

Average Ground Elevation: 10ft

Design Flood Elevation: 11ft (2050) / 14.3ft (2100)

Projected Groundwater Rise: 0.7-2.2ft (2050) / 1.2-3.2ft (2100)

Depth to Future Groundwater: Data Needed

Projected Precipitation Estimates for 10-year 24-hour storm: 4.91 inches – 20% increase volume from present day

Site Description: This portion of water street is the southern terminus of NH 85 which connects from Exeter to NH 101 and through Newfields to NH 108. The roadway parallels the Squamscott River in this vicinity and at SLR water from Norris Brook could impact the roadway. Use on this section of Water Street is primarily residential and recreational.

Anticipated Site Impacts from Sea-Level Rise Water Street is inundated between Summer Street and the Swazey Parkway where the roadway crosses over Norris Brook. This divides the northern portion of this street from the southern and somewhat isolate a few houses, the public works facility, and the sewer treatment plant from the remainder of the downtown area and require vehicles to reroute using NH 101.

Estimated Impacts of closure due to SLR Closing this roadway would result in a relatively small shift of traffic to alternative routes as this only impacts through traffic and access to a few homes directly. Most neighborhood access to downtown Exeter could continue as it does currently.

Surrounding Land Use Profile

	Acres	Percent
Forested	0.1	3%
Other/Idle	0.7	14%
Open Wetlands	0.0	0%
Mixed Urban	0.2	1%
Recreation	2.0	40%
Residential	1.4	27%
Transportation	0.8	15%
Water	0.0	0%

Water Street - Exeter Site Profile from Seacoast Transportation Corridor Vulnerability Assessment and Resiliency Plan, Rockingham Planning Commission, March 2022

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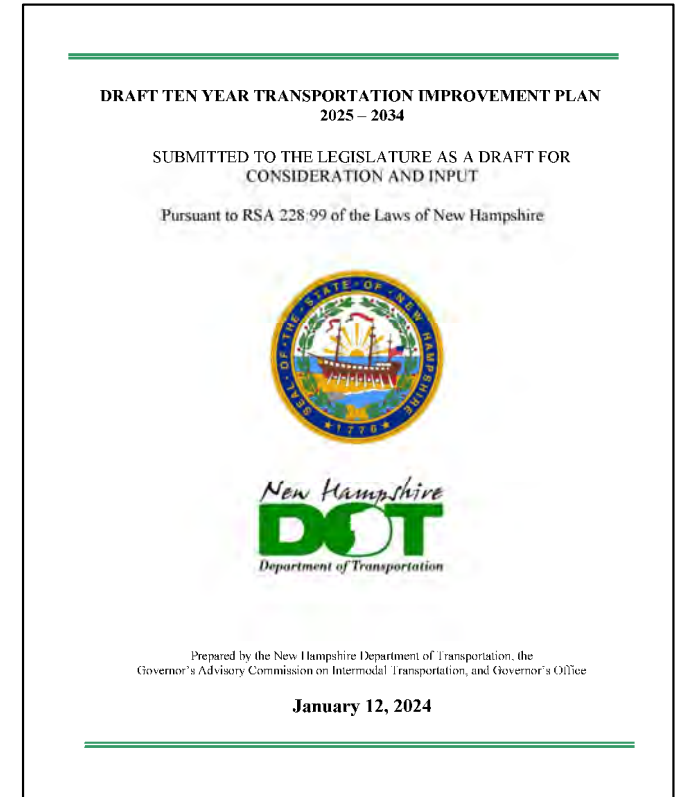


Funding Opportunities

NHDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP): Funded through NHDOT with Federal matching, NHDOT provides \$9 million annually to address highway safety improvement projects at locations deemed hazardous due to crash experiences, potential, or other metrics such as severity and substandard geometric designs. Typically, this comes with an 80% to 100% match. Network screening (crash data), Systemic Approach (maintenance-based improvements), and Road Safety Audits (RSAs) are used to identify and select sites. Although crash data was not of a quality to include in this study, future safety-based studies of Downtown Exeter can be used to identify metrics in which safety-based improvements may be applicable.

NHDOT Surface Transportation Program (STP): Funded through NHDOT with Federal matching, a portion of funding is made available to municipalities or other project sponsors to develop, improve, and enhance their transportation network. These projects are identified as Local Public Agency (LPA) projects and are guided with assistance from NHDOT or municipal consultants to follow the LPA Manual and traditional NHDOT processes.

The Draft 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan is currently going through its legislative processes. The Ten-Year Plan is updated every two years and is advocated for through local, regional, and state advocates for inclusion and funding. Getting on the Ten Year Plan is a Town's way to have major projects incorporated into the budgeting and funding through NHDOT. Utilizing the next two years to identify potential projects and develop advocacy with the Rockingham Planning Commission and other regional and state advocacy groups can help the Town add potential projects to NHDOT's 2027-2036 Ten-Year Plan.



The Town can proceed with planning major projects in cooperation with Rockingham Planning Commission and NHDOT Community Development to be ready for the 2027-2036 Ten Year Plan