TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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WORK SESSION
EXETER PLANNING BOARD
AGENDA

The Exeter Planning Board will meet on Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 7:00 P.M. in the Nowak Room of the Town Office Building located at 10 Front Street, Exeter, New Hampshire, to consider the following:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 12, 2026 and February 26, 2026

NEW BUSINESS: PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion of Complete Streets Design Guidelines and Next Steps

- Master Plan Discussion
- Land Use Regulations Review
- Field Modifications
- Bond and/or Letter of Credit Reductions and Releases

EXETER PLANNING BOARD
Langdon J. Plumer, Chairman

Posted 03/6/20/26: Exeter Town Office and Town of Exeter website

TOWN OF EXETER
PLANNING BOARD
NOWAK ROOM
10 FRONT STREET
FEBRUARY 12, 2026
DRAFT MINUTES
7:00 PM

I. PRELIMINARIES:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Chair Langdon Plumer, Clerk, John Grueter, Gwen English, Marty Kennedy, Jennifer Martel, Alternate Dean Hubbard, Alternate Sam MacLeod, and Select Board Representative Nancy Belanger.

STAFF PRESENT: Interim Town Planner Carol Ogilvie (remotely)

II. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Plumer called the meeting to order at 7 PM, introduced the members and activated Alternate Dean Hubbard.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

1. The application of Scott Boudreau, LLS for a minor subdivision of the property located at 13 Bayberry Lane into two residential lots.
R-2, Single Family Residential zoning district
Tax Map Parcel #86-56
Planning Board Case #25-13.

Chair Plumer read the public hearing notice.

Ms. Ogilvie indicated that the case was ready to be heard, was reviewed by staff, complied with zoning and met all requirements for subdivision.

Ms. Belanger motioned to open Planning Board Case #25-13. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Scott Boudreau presented the application for a minor subdivision plan to create two lots from one. He displayed a plan and pointed out existing buildings on the lot with frontage on Bayberry Lane and the second lot with 28,272 SF with utilities, including water service, on Little Pine Lane and a potential sewer connection.

Mr. Grueter asked if the sewer line was connected and Mr. Boudreau indicated no, but there was potential to bring it down the hill onto Little Pine Lane.

Ms. English asked if the artesian well was still active and Mr. Brock indicated yes, he still uses it. She asked if it would be on the new lot and he indicated yes. Ms. Belanger asked if he would continue to use it while it is situated on another lot and Mr. Brock pointed out existing structures, basketball court, well and shed that would go with the new lot.

Chair Plumer opened comments to the public at 7:17 PM and being none the Board entered deliberations.

Ms. Belanger motioned to approve the application of Brock Revocable Trust, Planning Board Case #25-13 for a minor subdivision be approved with the conditions read by the interim town planner. Ms. English seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ogilvie indicated that the plan would be recorded and the conditions were:

1. An electronic as-built plan with details acceptable to the town be provided prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. This plan must be in dwg or dxf file format and in NAD 1983 State Plane New Hampshire FIPS 2800 feet coordinates.

2. All applicable state permit approval numbers shall be noted on the final plans; and

3. All appropriate fees to be paid including but not limited to sewer/water connection fees, impact fees, inspection fees (including third party) prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

2. Pursuant to RSA 231:158, Scenic Road Designation, a public hearing will be held on a request from Unitil for the pruning of trees and removal of hazardous trees on the following Scenic Roads in Exeter: Pickpocket Road, John West Road, Powder Mill Road, Garrison Lane and Birch Road.

Chair Plumer read the public hearing notice.

Ben Richard appeared remotely and indicated he is the forestry supervisor and a certified arborist. He described the proposal to prune two circuits which are on a five-year cycle and to remove hazardous trees on the hazardous tree list provided marked 43x1 and 19x3 which work will be overseen by him. He described the trimming process which is to trim 10’ on either side and 15’ above. He described the ash trees on Pickpocket Road and provided three maps of the work areas.

Mr. Grueter asked about notice to homeowners, and he described the process for trees being removed on private property. The permission person would make contact with the homeowner and if not home leave a door hanger with contact information. He described the orange flagging.

Ms. English asked if he had appeared before the Tree Committee concerning any street trees over 20” in diameter and Ms. Ogilvie indicated they had been in touch with Jay Perkins, the tree warden who looked at the trees and said they needed to come down.

Ms. Belanger asked if tagging had been done yet and Mr. Boudreau indicated about a month and a half ago.

Mr. Kennedy confirmed that trees on private property won't be removed without permission.

Ms. Belanger asked if there was any contact information he could provide and Mr. Boudreau provided an email forestry@unitil.com.

Ms. English thanked him for his professionalism.

Chair Plumer opened comments to the public at 7:37 PM and being none the Board entered deliberations.

Ms. Belanger motioned that the request of Unitil dated January 27, 2026 to submit a letter on five scenic roads listed on the letter be approved. Ms. English seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 22, 2026

Ms. English recommended edits to lines 116 and 238.

Ms. Belanger motioned to approve the minutes of January 22, 2026, as amended. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Ms. Martel abstained. The motion passed 6-0-1.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

- Presentation of Complete Streets Design Guidelines – Scott Bogle, Senior Transportation Planner, Rockingham Planning Commission

Scott Bogle of Rockingham Planning Commission indicated he is the principal transportation planner and that he has been working with staff and the Master Plan Oversight Committee on the Complete Street Guidelines.

Mr. Bogle reviewed the scope which included reviewing other towns, community engagement, design guidelines, a policy statement and referenced the 2018 Master Plan and 2024 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan.

Mr. Bogle discussed designing, operating and maintaining roads, supporting safe access and prioritizing safety. He discussed considering how quickly recommendations can be implemented. He noted there is not enough funds to do everything in this report so someone needs to direct that focus. Ms. Belanger noted that Mr. Sharples did a lot of grant funding. Ms. English asked if it would be helpful for the Board to send a letter of recommendation. Chair Plumer recommended they come back to another meeting.

Mr. Bogle reviewed the community engagement so far including the survey with 880 responses, focus groups, public input sessions and regular meetings with the MPOC, town staff, residents and business owners.

Mr. Bogle discussed some of the goals such as a walkable downtown, connectivity and use by all ages and abilities.

Mr. Bogle reviewed policy elements, design guidelines, different types of streets and implementation and performance tracking.

Mr. Bogle reviewed the Vision and included incremental investments. He discussed components of the roadside zone. He explained what sharrows were, which is shared lane marking to warn motorists that bicycles would be utilizing the same lane. He discussed traffic calming strategies and ADA accessibility considerations.

Mr. Bogle described street typology and maps and defined the six street types.

Mr. Bogle described the width of the town center streets and noted it was not sufficient to allow for separate bike lanes, therefore the recommendation of sharrows. He discussed on street parking, sidewalks and improving crossings. He reviewed multi use paths, gateway streets, single turn lane recommendations, improving connectivity and projects in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Bogle recommended engagement via a citizen's advocate committee to implement measures, track performance and effectiveness and look at increases in volume and crashes. Mr. Kennedy agreed this would be an important oversight to keep things happening. Ms. Belanger will bring it up to the Select Board. Ms. English recommended an educational component. Ms. Belanger noted police departments will often take on that role and she will follow up. Mr. Kennedy agreed education is important as most motorists would recognize the sharrow symbol or know what it means.

Chair Plumer noted two pedestrian crosswalks that need improvement by the Loaf & Ladle and High Street where the sidewalk ends on the right side. He noted it makes

sense to work things into repaving projects. Mr. Bogle discussed shifting away from the curb, and use of flashing beacons.

Ms. Martel expressed concerns with lighting at night, which is super important and recommended following what PEA did. Chair Plumer noted the use of flashing beacons should be applied in limited places. Ms. Belanger agreed that many homeowners don't want lights flashing in their windows.

Silas Richards spoke to the framework to improve conditions and recommended four steps:

- Establishing the Advocate Committee
- Implementing Priority Projects
- Separate pathways where allowed including multi-use paths
- Implementing signage and pavement markings

Ms. Ogilvie asked if once the policy was adopted whether it would make the town more eligible for transportation grants and Mr. Bogle indicated he did not think of anything more than Mr. Sharples had done being proactive in going after grants.

Ms. Belanger reported that Exeter was awarded the Housing Champions Program which gives more points to grant applications.

Mr. Bogle recommended the Safe Streets for All funding, which might be an area where taking these steps may make the town more competitive.

Andrew Koff, a member of the Conservation Commission, stated that forming the Committee was a no brainer and it should not be hard to find people to serve on it. He found that the town was not safe for pedestrians and bicycles and low-cost fixes would help. He shared his personal story of being hit and that he could have been killed on Front and Winter Street. He feels the town has been negligent for allowing these intersections to exist without addressing them and it should be a real priority. He stated that it is not safe for children to walk to school.

Andrea Richards noted Lincoln Street has been a lot safer since work has been done. She agreed volume of traffic has increased and opportunities have been missed that could have been implemented while new work was being done. She recommended getting this in place, so more opportunities are not missed.

Ms. Belanger urged her to reach out to Steve Cronin and discuss her concerns. She noted that with some of the opportunities the town had no choice. There are six routes going through downtown and a lot of traffic. GPS will tell you to drive 35mph in areas not posted for that. There are speeding issues.

- Master Plan Discussion

- Field Modifications

- Bond and/or Letter of Credit Reductions and Release

VI. TOWN PLANNER'S ITEMS

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S ITEMS

VIII. PB REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT ON "OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITY"

IX. ADJOURN

Ms. Belanger motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 PM. Ms. English seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted.

Daniel Hoijer,
Recording Secretary (Via Exeter TV)

TOWN OF EXETER
PLANNING BOARD
NOWAK ROOM
10 FRONT STREET
FEBRUARY 26, 2026
DRAFT MINUTES
7:00 PM

I. PRELIMINARIES:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Chair Langdon Plumer, Clerk, John Grueter, Gwen English, Marty Kennedy, Alternate Dean Hubbard, Alternate Sam MacLeod and Select Board Representative Nancy Belanger.

STAFF PRESENT: Kristen Murphy, Conservation & Sustainability Planner

II. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Plumer called the meeting to order at 7 PM, introduced the members.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

IV. OLD BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 12, 2026 – Tabled

Ms. Belanger motioned to table approval of the minutes. Ms. English seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

- Discussion of Complete Streets Design Guidelines and Next Steps

Chair Plumer noted that Scott Bogle had presented the Complete Streets report at the last Planning Board meeting. He noted some steps have been taken already on Lincoln and Water Streets and they recommended sidewalks be plowed quickly and establish a committee to move things along. He noted the committee could be a Planning Board subcommittee or Select Board committee.

Mr. Grueter recommended doing a video presentation through ExeterTV. He recommended there be parking on one side of the street by Sea Dogs. Chair Plumer recommended looking at the area near Loaf & Ladle. Mr. MacLeod recommended looking at Franklin Street and whether

there should be no left turn. Ms. Belanger discussed line of sight and Mr. Grueter added parked cars. Ms. Belanger asked Mr. Richards if he thought right turn only would be safer for bicyclists and he recommended having a committee to answer with experience versus one individual. Water Street is dangerous for cyclists, and it would be good to have a place to park bikes and walk into town.

Chair Plumer asked the next steps. Mr. Grueter who serves on the MPOC recommended presenting to the Select Board to adopt with a recommendation letter from the Planning Board.

Mr. Kennedy, who serves on the MPOC, recommended once adopted the advisory committee is needed. Ms. Belanger noted she brought that up at the Select Board meeting. The Board discussed potential representatives. Chair Plumer recommended a citizen representative, and a Select Board representative. Ms. Belanger agreed, someone like Silas Richards. She noted the MPOC meets during the day.

Silas Richards noted he had concerns with the subcommittee being only Planning Board members and noted it was important to include public safety and planner. He noted there are opportunities and having workshops before projects begin at an accessible time and being proactive rather than reactive and having a wide variety of people, maybe a representative from River Woods. He recommended establishing the scope of the committee to provide input on future projects and improving low-cost existing conditions.

Chair Plumer expressed concern with having too large a committee. Mr. Grueter agreed that different projects will need different people. Mr. Kennedy recommended one Planning Board representative, one from Public Works and that the rest be citizens not to make decisions but an advisory committee with staff.

Ms. Murphy discussed the pros of a daytime meeting and the availability of staff, maybe during lunch with a Zoom option. Ms. Belanger reminded that a quorum is required in person. Mr. Richards noted they need representation from town staff, the Planning Board, Public Safety and the Recreation Dept. Ms. Belanger noted there are a lot of meetings already and that is something the Select Board is looking at. Ms. Murphy noted the MPOC could be the vector and create forums of interest groups.

Chair Plumer summarized the next steps, to accept the report, recommend to the Select Board and have the report presented to the Select Board. He encouraged the Board to consider who needs to be on the committee. Mr. MacLeod recommended having people who work in shops and restaurants who he imagined often get feedback from people.

Ms. English questioned if others had reviewed the report as much as they should. Chair Plumer agreed the Board needed more time to go through it and see if it meets the Board's criteria. Mr. Kennedy agreed they should take time to go through it but not wait. Ms. Belanger noted the next meeting is March 12. Mr. Grueter recommended being prepared at that meeting and it would be good to have input from Ms. Martel and Vice-Chair Brown.

Mr. Richards stated that people want to see safer streets and encouraged the Board to advance as fast as possible with critical projects advancing and especially with low-cost improvements. Ms. Murphy noted the low-cost proposals could be demonstrated. Ms. Belanger agreed and noted they could film it.

- Master Plan Discussion

- Field Modifications

- Bond and/or Letter of Credit Reductions and Release

VI. TOWN PLANNER'S ITEMS

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S ITEMS

Chair Plumer announced that Dawn Ferringo is the new Planning & Building Administrator.

VIII. PB REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT ON "OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITY"

IX. ADJOURN

Ms. Belanger motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:53PM. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted.

Daniel Hoijer,
Recording Secretary (Via Exeter TV)

TOWN OF EXETER COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

PREAMBLE

Exeter's traditional New England community layout includes a downtown core centering on Water and Front Streets, residential neighborhoods in close proximity to downtown, town parks and conservation land, gateway business districts and rural highways connecting to neighboring communities including Portsmouth, Hampton, Newfields, Brentwood, and Stratham. Exeter is home to Phillips Exeter Academy, historic districts and individual historical and cultural sites foundational to the nation's history, and nature-based recreational opportunities like the Swasey Town Forest. The town is also served by the Amtrak Downeaster passenger rail service and the Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) on-demand transit, allowing people of all ages and abilities to make trips around town and the region. Exeter's amenities and location make it an attractive place for families and households of all ages and abilities, and for multiple transportation modes.

Exeter's downtown and its in-town neighborhoods are largely walkable and connected by an extensive sidewalk network, which the town has incrementally expanded over many years. Town support for Complete Streets principles was made explicit in the 2018 Exeter Master Plan, and reiterated in Exeter's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan adopted in 2025; both of which call for development of a town Complete Streets Policy. In addition to the call for a Complete Streets Policy, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan included recommendations for over 50 specific infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects to improve non-motorized safety and accessibility.

1. VISION AND INTENT

Streets and roadways in Exeter will be convenient, safe and accessible for travelers of all ages and abilities, including people walking, bicycling, driving, and riding public transportation.

The term "Complete Streets" means streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, so that pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across streets and roadways.

The town's vision for Complete Streets is shaped by the Town Master Plan (2018), Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan (2025), and public engagement undertaken for the development of this Complete Streets Policy and the accompanying Complete Streets Design Guidelines. Public feedback received as part of all three of these planning processes strongly supported the idea that streets should support safe travel for residents and visitors, strengthen economic centers, and enhance neighborhood livability.

Key elements of the vision include:

- A network of walkable, connected neighborhoods
- A vibrant and accessible town center
- Safe, low-stress walking and bicycling corridors
- Streets that reflect distinct rural, suburban, and downtown character
- Incremental infrastructure investment that supports safety, economic vitality, long-term sustainability and resilience

While motor vehicles are anticipated to remain a principal mode of transportation in town, ensuring that people walking and bicycling can safely get where they need to go in Exeter is important and will yield broader benefits for the community, supporting economic vitality and quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses. People who need complete streets range from youth commuting to school, jobs and entertainment in town; to visitors coming to town to shop and dine; to older adults aging in place in their homes who need to reach the grocery store, library, downtown businesses, or doctor's offices.

The intent of this Policy is to formalize the strategic and comprehensive planning, design, operation and maintenance of Exeter roadways so that Complete Streets principles are able to be incorporated during eligible improvements and projects. These principles strive to provide the best possible combination of service, mobility, convenience, health, and safety while strengthening connection to civic life and essential destinations in Exeter.

All transportation infrastructure and street design and construction projects requiring funding (state, federal, private) or approval by the Town of Exeter shall adhere to the Town's Complete Streets policy. For projects inside the Town's boundaries but outside its jurisdiction, such as on a private development or at an education institution, the Town will advocate that the project comply with the Complete Streets Policy and interconnect with the existing multimodal transportation network.

CORE COMMITMENT

2. ALL USERS AND MODES

Exeter's transportation system will be designed, maintained and operated to the greatest extent possible to ensure and promote the safety, health, comfort and convenience of all users of all modes of transportation. These users include pedestrians, bicyclists, assistive mobility device users, public transit and paratransit riders, motorists, commercial vehicle drivers, emergency crews, and freight providers. Those who cannot drive private cars – including children, and many elderly, disabled or low-income residents – will have increased mobility, independence, and safety. The transportation system will contribute directly to the safety, health, economic vitality and quality of life of all Town residents and will promote access to multi-modal transportation for all.

3. ALL PROJECTS AND PHASES

All transportation and roadway projects, including municipal road repairs, upgrades and expansion projects on public right-of-way, and new private subdivision and commercial projects, are opportunities to incorporate Complete Streets principles in design and construction.

Complete Streets elements that anticipate future demand for walking, bicycling, transit and motorist uses will be integrated into the design of new, rehabilitated or reconstructed roadways and/or transportation infrastructure projects. Complete Streets may be achieved by incorporating single elements into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance over time.

The Town of Exeter will develop procedures to incorporate Complete Street elements in all transportation projects, including municipal road repairs, upgrades, or expansion projects on public right-of-way. The Town will approach every relevant project – transportation, public utilities, infrastructure, and public and private development – as an opportunity to improve public access and safety along Exeter's transportation network. The Town of Exeter, through collaboration with the appropriate Town boards, committees, and departments, will actively seek opportunities to repurpose rights-of-way to enhance interconnections for people walking, biking, or riding public transit.

Complete Streets principles shall be applied in all street construction, retrofit, and reconstruction projects except the following:

1. Where pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited by law from using the facility. In this case, alternative facilities and accommodations should be provided within the same transportation corridor, and the ability to reasonably and conveniently cross the facility will be part of the facility design and construction.

2. Where existing right-of-way does not allow for the accommodation of all users. In this case alternatives shall be explored such as obtaining additional right-of-way, use of revised travel lane configurations, paved shoulders, signage, traffic calming, education or enforcement to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles and riders and persons with disabilities.

3. Where the cost of establishing walkways or bikeways or other accommodations would be disproportionate to the need, particularly if alternative facilities are available within a reasonable walking and/or bicycling distance.

4. Where application of Complete Streets principles is unnecessary or inappropriate because it would be contrary to public safety and increase risk of injury or death.

5. Where the construction is not practically feasible or cost effective because of unreasonable adverse impacts on the environment or on neighboring land uses, including impact from right-of-way acquisition.

6. Ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep street and other transportation assets in serviceable condition or when interim measures are implemented on temporary detour or haul routes. However, all temporary detours shall comply with temporary traffic control requirements of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

7. Ordinary public works or utility maintenance activities, including, but not limited to: water, sewer and storm sewer main repairs; installation of new or removal of existing water or sewer service lines, installation or repair of fire hydrants, installation or repair of private utility fixtures.

Exceptions from the Complete Street Policy shall be reviewed by the Planning Board which will forward its recommendations to the Select Board with supporting documentation. Any exceptions must be approved by the Select Board, with documentation made publicly available.

BEST PRACTICES:

4. DESIGN

The Town of Exeter shall use the best and latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations to make Complete Streets improvements that are relevant, applicable, functional, and desirable. Design criteria shall not be purely prescriptive, but shall be based on the thoughtful application of engineering and design principles. References include, but are not

Relevant and updated documents and guidelines produced by relevant experts, including but not limited to:

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities, 5th Edition (2024)
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, 2nd Edition (2021)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Design Guide (2016)
- FHWA Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP) Studio: Tools for Selecting and Implementing Countermeasures for Improving Pedestrian Crossing Safety (2020)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), 11th Edition (2023)

- United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board), Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) (2024)
- United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Standards (2010)
- Smart Growth America, Complete Streets Policy Framework (2023)
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide, 3rd Edition (2025)
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide (2013)

As design guidelines and best practices such as those listed above are updated, the most recent versions shall be referred to in place of older versions.

5. CONTEXT SENSITIVITY

Complete Streets elements included in the planning and implementation of roadway projects shall be applied in a manner sensitive to the context of the community's physical, economic, and social setting. This context sensitive approach seeks a balance between preserving and enhancing scenic, aesthetic, historical, community and environmental resources while improving safety, mobility, accessibility and infrastructure. It includes participation of those affected, and, as much as feasible, neighborhood-based community outreach and/or meetings on or near project sites. Balance is achieved through broad, active and innovative public outreach efforts early and continually, the application of flexibility through design, addressing all relevant modes of travel, and considering the community's goals, values and aesthetics at a level commensurate with project needs.

6. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Established performance standards shall measure how well the street is serving all users. As better data collection evolves, so will the standards. Using existing baseline data, the following performance measures will be used to show progress. These include both Implementation Measures and Measures of Effectiveness:

Implementation Measures

- New and reconstructed pedestrian and bicycle facilities:
  - Feet of sidewalk
  - Feet of multi-use path
  - Feet of buffered on-street bicycle lanes
  - Number of sharrows
  - Number of crosswalk improvements (high visibility striping, signage, lighting).

- Number and percent of projects identified in Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan that have been implemented.
- Number of and reasons for approved exemptions from requirements of this policy
- Average time to complete snow removal from primary and secondary sidewalk networks following snow storms.

Measures of Effectiveness

- Pedestrian and bicycle volume counts to measure use of existing and improved routes. Conduct baseline counts then track changes in volume following completion of improvements.
- Vehicle speed counts in targeted corridors. Establish baseline speed data on targeted streets and track change as traffic calming strategies are incorporated.
- Crash incidence, particularly involving vulnerable road users. Track crash numbers, severity, locations and contributing factors such as speed and distraction.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

The Town of Exeter shall implement this policy in such a way that Complete Streets principles are fully integrated into routine transportation decision-making practices and processes. The following is the implementation plan:

1. Establish new or revise existing procedures, plans, regulations, policies, guidelines and other documentation to assure accommodation of all users in each project and to reflect current best practices in transportation design.
2. Encourage municipal staff and community leaders to attend training on Complete Streets principles and best implementation practices.
3. Establish and maintain an inventory of pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure to assist with prioritization of improvement projects.
4. Promote project coordination among Town departments to encourage the most responsible and efficient use of resources for projects within the public way.
5. Consider capital planning and funding increases to encourage implementation of the Complete Streets Policy and projects identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and pursue outside federal, state and private resources.
6. Work with neighboring municipalities and relevant stakeholders as needed to improve interregional travel between Exeter and neighboring communities when Complete Streets improvements warrant such collaboration.
7. Engage residents, business owners and employees along targeted corridors to inform design priorities for complete streets improvement projects.

8. Provide public education on and enforcement of proper road use behavior for all users and all modes
9. Present a Progress Report to the Master Plan Oversight Committee, Select Board and Town Manager each year including performance measures outcomes and Complete Streets implementation successes.

Oversight responsibility: The Select Board and the Town Manager, in concert with other appropriate Town departments and committees, shall oversee implementation, establish reporting requirements, and review annual progress reports.

Exeter Complete Streets Design Guideline

PLANNING BOARD DRAFT 2/3/2026

Acknowledgements

Exeter Master Plan Oversight Committee

Martin Kennedy

Aaron Brown

John Grueter

Dave Sharples, Director of Planning & Sustainability

Steve Cronin, Director of Public Works

Prepared for

Town of Exeter

10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833

Prepared by

Rockingham Planning Commission

Scott Bogle, Principal Transportation Planner

Mikayla Jerominek, Regional Planner

Mike Packer, GIS Specialist

Table of Contents

Maps

Glossary of Acronyms

5Es	Engineering, Encourage, Education, Enforcement, Evaluation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CIP	Capital improvement Program
CMS	Cooperative Middle School
EHS	Exeter High School
MPOC	Master Plan Oversight Committee
MUND	Mixed Use Neighborhood Development
MUTCD	Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices
NACTO	National Association of City Transportation Officials
PROWAG	Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines
RPC	Rockingham Planning Commission
RRFP	Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon
SS4A	Safe Streets and Roads for All
TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program

Introduction

In 2025 the Town of Exeter adopted its first Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Among the key recommendations of the Master Plan was that the town develop a Complete Streets Policy and set of Complete Streets Design Guidelines. A Complete Street Policy represents Exeter's commitment to considering the safety and access needs of all road users when making improvements to existing infrastructure or building new projects. It also encourages street design that supports surrounding land use and transportation context.

These Design Guidelines are intended to work in tandem with Exeter's Complete Streets Policy to provide a consistent framework for designing, retrofitting, and evaluating streets so they safely accommodate all users, regardless of age, ability, or travel mode.

This document draws upon best practices from national and state transportation agencies while tailoring strategies to the scale, character, and goals of Exeter. While each street is unique, the guidelines are intended to create a foundation for predictable design and long-term investment for safe accommodation of all road users.

What are Complete Streets?

Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe, comfortable, and convenient travel for everyone, regardless of age, ability, or how people get around. This includes pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit riders, emergency responders, freight operators, and people of all ages and abilities.

A Complete Street is not a one-size fits all prescription. A complete street will look different in Boston or Brentwood than in Exeter; and within Exeter, 'completeness' looks different on Water Street than Portsmouth Avenue, Washington Street or Drinkwater Road. Rather than following a single template, Complete Streets are context-sensitive. Their design responds to land use, expected vehicle mix and travel speeds, likelihood of pedestrian and bicycle activity, and local community vision. Depending on this mix of factors, different types of streets should incorporate a range of design elements to safely accommodate all users. These elements may include sidewalks, widened shoulders, side paths, buffered bicycle lanes, curb extensions, crossing safety improvements such as flashing beacons, median islands, wider or narrower lanes, traffic calming devices, street trees, benches, etc. The mix of design elements corresponds to the safety and access needs of mix of users prioritized for each different street type.

This guide outlines a series of street design recommendations for Town staff, residents and consultants to consider when working in the public right of way. The intent is to provide flexible guidance for accommodating and balancing needs of multiple users of town roadways when making investment and design decisions.

Benefits of Complete Streets

Complete Streets create wide-ranging benefits including:

- **Safety:** Reduced crashes and safer environments for all users.
- **Economic Vitality:** Increased foot traffic and support for local businesses.
- **Accessibility:** Ensuring residents and visitors can get where they need and want to go in town, regardless of age, disability or access to a private automobile.
- **Public Health:** More opportunities for active transportation.
- **Mobility:** Manage congestion and ensure safe freight access
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and stormwater improvements.

Nearly 28% of daily trips in the U.S. are less than a mile long – a distance easily covered on foot or by bicycle. To the extent our roads can be designed or redesigned such that people feel safe walking or bicycling to work, to school, to the grocery store or the town recreation center, many trips can be converted from driving to other modes; with benefits in traffic congestion, parking availability, air quality and health. The community survey conducted for Exeter's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in 2023 garnered over 880 responses, of which 82% indicated they would be more likely to walk and/or bicycle with access to more traffic separated biking/walking paths.

> *A Complete Streets policy can give the Town guidance around planning and implementing walking and biking infrastructure… By thinking holistically about mobility, roadways become safer.*
>
> *- Exeter Master Plan (2018)*

Vision for Complete Streets in Exeter

The town's vision for Complete Streets is shaped by the Town Master Plan, Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, and public engagement undertaken for the development of Complete Streets Policy and these Design Guidelines. Streets should support safe travel for residents and visitors, strengthen economic centers, and enhance neighborhood livability.

Key elements of the vision include:

- A network of walkable, connected neighborhoods
- A vibrant and accessible town center
- Safe, low-stress walking and bicycling corridors
- Streets that reflect distinct rural, suburban, and downtown character
- Incremental infrastructure investment that supports safety, economic vitality, long-term sustainability and resilience

Components of Complete Streets

Roadside Zone Elements

The roadside zone includes everything between the curb and building frontage, including elements highlighted below. Each of these are also discussed in the Exeter Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan:

- **Sidewalks** – Sidewalks are spaces for walking, window-shopping, sitting or socializing that are separated from vehicle traffic by some combination of curb, planted buffer strip, and on-street parking. Sidewalks can be made of concrete, asphalt, or brick; and should be a minimum of five feet, and up to 20 feet in some contexts such as to allow outside dining areas.
- **Traffic Separated Multi-Use Paths** – Multi-use paths are similar to sidewalks in being horizontally and vertically separated from automobile traffic, but are wide enough to accommodate bi-directional bicycling and walking traffic. With growing driver distraction, larger vehicles and higher traffic speeds there is growing public demand for traffic-separated bicycling facilities.
- **Street Furnishings** – Streetscape elements like trees, lighting, benches play an important role in creating a safe and inviting environment for pedestrians. Lighting at crosswalks is especially critical to ensure drivers see people in crosswalks or waiting to cross. Mature trees provide shade, offsetting summertime heat for pedestrians and making downtown streets more attractive for shoppers and other road users. Benches offer respite for anyone walking, and especially older adults and young families.
- **Stormwater Features** – While rainwater on a rural highway will drain to the shoulder and be absorbed into the ground, adding curbing for vertical separation between roadway and sidewalk introduces the need for drainage infrastructure to manage stormwater. This can include connections to existing town-wide storm drain network, or other strategies like permeable pavement and bioswales.
- **Bicycle parking and amenities** - It is important to have a secure place to park bicycles as part of encouraging bicycle transportation. Racks should be placed near the entrance of buildings and parks. Given width constraints that limit dedicated bicycle lanes in Exeter's downtown, providing racks at entrances to downtown would encourage bicycling for utilitarian trips, whether to shop, eat, or visit the library or park. Covered bicycle parking area is preferred, as well as amenities like self-serve bicycle maintenance stations.
- **Transit Stops and Shelters** – In communities served by fixed route public transportation, a complete streets design treatment will often include transit shelters paired with pull-outs allowing cars to pass buses at regular stops. Exeter is not currently served by fixed route transit, though this should be considered as a future scenario in planning for major corridors.

Components of Complete Streets

ADA and Accessibility Considerations

Ensuring accessibility for all users is a fundamental principle of Complete Streets. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sets out principles for universal design of streets to ensure they safely accommodate travelers regardless of not just travel mode but also mobility limitations. A companion document to the ADA is the Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG), produced by the United States Access Board, which provides a framework for designing inclusive public spaces. Design and operating considerations emphasized under the ADA and PROWAG, and required when streets are altered, include:

- Sidewalk curb ramps with compliant slopes at all intersections.
- Tactile strips to provide detectable warning at curb ramps.
- Minimum clear areas and passing areas on sidewalks and median refuge islands.
- Maximum slopes including ≤5% for longitudinal/running slope and ≤2% cross-slope.
- Accessible pedestrian signals with audible and vibrotactile features.
- Accessible parking spaces with proper sizing, slopes and signage, including spaces sized for accessible vans.
- Timely snow removal from sidewalks for equitable access.

Roadway Zone Elements

The roadway zone includes travel and operational areas. Each of these are also discussed in the Exeter Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan:

- **Travel lanes** – The travel lane is the portion of the road that carries vehicles, whether cars, trucks, buses and in many cases bicycles. The width of the travel lane is a key factor that influences vehicular speed. Per the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE), roads with speeds below 35 mph are usually suitable for 10’ travel lanes depending on truck traffic volumes. On narrower suburban or rural roads such as most in Exeter, an effective traffic calming strategy is visually narrowing the road by striping narrower travel lanes.

Components of Complete Streets

Roadway Zone Elements - Continued

- **Marked Bicycle Lanes** – Marked bicycle lanes designate a specific space for bicycling on a roadway, though without vertical physical separation. These are often marked with a single line of paint and stencils, though can be "buffered" with a wider painted horizontal separation. These are an improvement over having no dedicated space for bicycling, though offer no protection from a vehicle veering into the lane. If placing a bicycle lane next to parallel parking it is critical to provide a door zone buffer area to reduce the likelihood of bicyclists being hit by drivers opening their car doors into traffic.
- **Sharrows** – Shared-lane marking arrows, or "sharrows" are road markings used to indicate a travel lane where inadequate space exists to the right of traffic for people on bicycles to ride. The sharrow puts motorists on notice to expect bicyclists in the lane. Sharrows are not appropriate for roads with speeds over 30mph and should not be considered a substitute for bike lanes unless there is inadequate space for a designated bike lane. They should be accompanied by Bikes May Use Full Lane signs and a community outreach effort to remind drivers of bicyclists' right to use the travel lane.
- **On-street parking** – On-street parking meets some of the parking need for adjacent land uses, whether on residential streets or in the downtown. It can have benefits for bicycle and pedestrian safety in creating a buffer between automobile travel lanes and adjacent sidewalks, bicycle lanes or multi-use paths; and has a traffic calming effect by typically narrowing travel lanes and increasing driver focus. A key design consideration is minimizing the potential for "dooring" of passing cyclists as parkers exit their vehicles.
- **Median Refuge Islands** – Median refuge islands are vertically separated spaces at the center of wider multi-lane arterial road that offer shelter to pedestrians if they are unable to cross the entire street in a single walk signal cycle. They are particularly beneficial for pedestrians with limited mobility, whether older adults, people with disabilities, or families with children who may need more time to cross wide streets.

High visibility crosswalk markings installed on Front Street in 2023

- **Marked Crosswalks** - A marked crosswalk signals to motorists that people frequently cross at that location, and that they are required to slow down and yield to people in the crosswalk. How a crosswalk is painted and marked makes a big difference in how visible it is to oncoming vehicles. The Continental/Longitudinal Bar striping pattern is highly visible and has become the standard in Exeter. Visibility should be increased with lighting and signage at the crosswalk,

and potentially additional markings such as advance warning signage, sharks teeth pavement markings, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs). In placing sidewalks it is critical to consider factors such as sight lines, lighting and crossing length.

Traffic Calming Strategies

- **Narrower lane widths.** The width of the travel lane is a key factor that influences vehicular speed. On narrower suburban or rural roads such as most in Exeter, an effective traffic calming strategy is visually narrowing the road by striping narrower travel lanes. Lanes can be narrowed by vertical barriers as well, whether on-street parking or curbing.
- **Curb extensions (bulb-outs) -** In environments with sidewalks, traffic calming can be achieved with curb bulb-outs, where curbing is used to physically narrow the roadway, particularly at crossing points. This has the double benefit of shortening the crossing distance for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- **Speed humps and tables –** These are longer and flatter than traditional speed bumps, designed to slow vehicles on residential or in-town streets by forcing a gradual reduction in speed. The longer design makes them more compatible for emergency vehicles and snow plows than older style speed bumps. Exeter has installed a speed table at Lincoln Street School
- **Chicanes and curves** – Another strategy to slow traffic is to introduce artificial curves in travel lanes on an otherwise straight road, forcing drivers to slow down and concentrate to navigate these features. Strategies include center islands or alternating bulb outs.
- **Roundabouts –** Roundabouts are circular intersections where traffic flows in a counter-clockwise direction and entering traffic is forced to slow-down and yield to vehicles already in the intersection, resulting in fewer severe crashes than a signal or stop-controlled intersection. This said, the consistent flow of traffic, where cars are not required to stop by a signal or stop sign, requires special design attention to ensure safe pedestrian and bicycle accommodation.
- **Speed Feedback Signage** – Speed feedback signs show the posted speed limit but also feature a radar unit which displays the speed of oncoming vehicles to alert drivers to their actual speed and the posted speed limit. These work best if they flash or provide a SLOW DOWN message if drivers exceed a preset speed threshold.
- **Tightening Intersections** – The design of an intersection influences vehicle speed as drivers navigate a turn. Where slower vehicles speeds are desired, especially in downtowns and neighborhoods, intersections should be designed or redesigned to force drivers to slow down to make their turn. This can be accomplished by converting acute angle intersections to right angles, and tightening the radius at right angle intersections – especially where truck access is not a major design consideration. This also has the benefit of shortening pedestrian crossing distances.

Note that some of these strategies add challenges for winter maintenance, requiring additional labor to clear snow. Decisions on whether and where to use them should factor this in, and implications for time required to fully clear facilities after storms.

Complete Streets Challenges

Implementing a Complete Streets approach to transportation network planning can be a challenging transition for any municipality, and this is compounded in smaller communities in New Hampshire. Some factors in this include the following

- Auto oriented roadways – For much of the last 75 years, streets and roadways in the U.S. have been designed and built primarily for automobiles, and primarily to allow automobiles to move as quickly as possible. Some will argue that roads are built to serve cars because they are funded by fuel taxes, but many local roads, especially in New Hampshire, are funded with local property taxes which are paid by residents regardless of how they get around. Cars and trucks have become our principal form of transportation in part out of convenience, and more recently this has been reinforced by safety concerns about walking and bicycling on roads with higher traffic volumes, higher speeds, larger vehicles and more distracted driving.
- Main Street as State Highway – A challenge for smaller communities is where main streets also serve as state highways, needing to serve as both pedestrian friendly business districts and through roads. In Exeter's case NH Route 101 functions to as an east-west bypass, while NH101 in combination with NH 125 and I95 serve as north-south bypasses for regional trips that would have passed through downtown in earlier decades. The presence of these other options for through trips helps make the case for prioritizing slow speeds and pedestrian and bicycle orientation in the town center and connecting routes.
- Adequate Right of Way - Adding dedicated bike/ped usually requires widening roadways, and in older communities like Exeter, lack of public right of way can be a problem. Smaller communities tend to be reluctant to use eminent domain to secure right of way; so assembling adequate width for improvements is at best time-consuming and often challenging or prohibitive depending on abutters willingness to grant or sell easements. Town support for acquiring easements will be important.
- Climate and maintenance – Winter snow adds maintenance challenges for pedestrian facilities that aren't faced by towns in the south. Still, Exeter's Department of Public Works and their counterparts in communities that get more snow than the NH Seacoast have developed effective strategies for maintaining not just sidewalks and multi-use paths but bump-outs, pedestrian islands, and speed tables such as installed on Lincoln Street
- Lack of Other Transportation Options – Communities that lack fixed route transit have a heightened need for safe pedestrian facilities, as residents without cars may need to walk substantial distances on relatively high stress roads to reach employment and other destinations.
- Funding – Exeter has been very effective at securing federal funding for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and other sources. While still available, these programs have increasingly long timelines and cumbersome administrative requirements. Local investment can be the most timely and cost-effective approach to implementing projects.

Street Typology

Street design must respond to context. Exeter's Complete Streets Typology classifies streets into six primary types. The descriptions of these types make up the balance of the Design Guidelines Book. The section for each type includes a map of included streets and roads, target speeds and traffic volumes appropriate to each type, modal priorities, recommended design elements, and illustrations of street profile scenarios based on specific streets in Exeter.

Neighborhood Streets

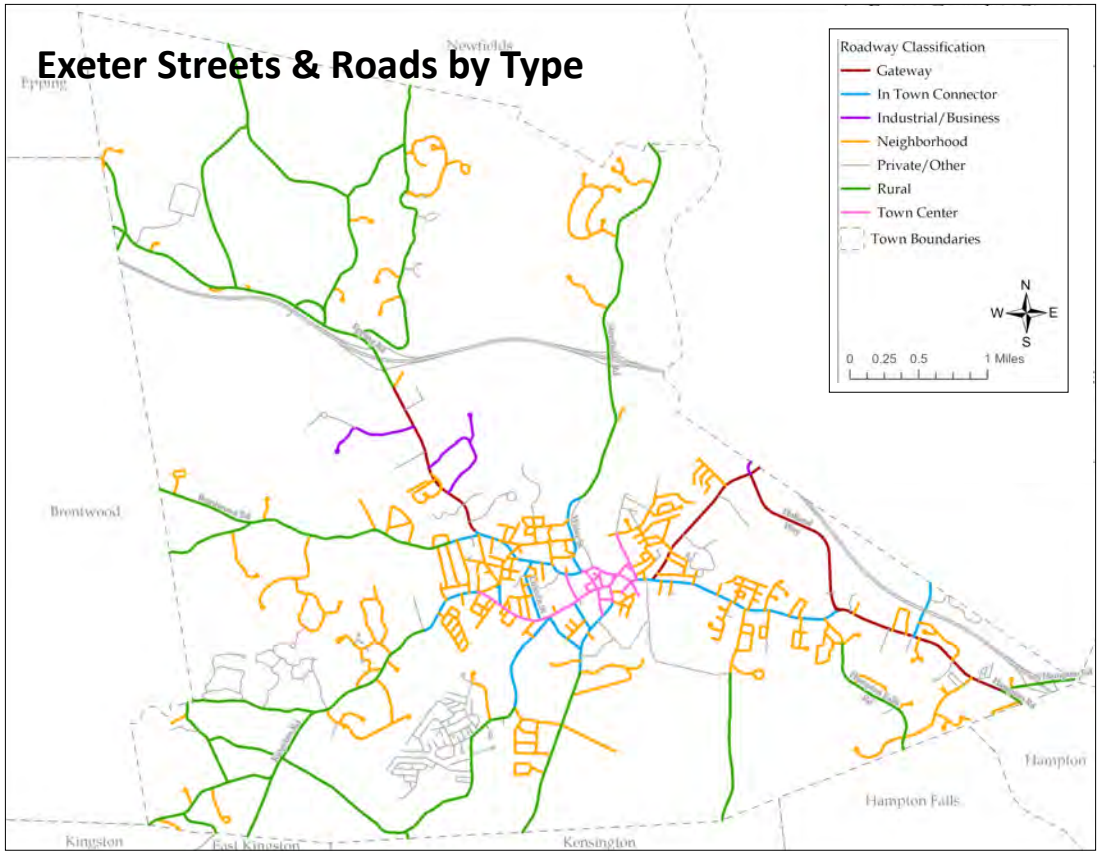
Town Center Streets

In-Town Connector Streets

Gateway Streets

Business & Industrial Access Roads

Rural Roads



Modal Priorities

Adjacent land uses determine the types of trips and activities likely to be prevalent on a given street or road. This in turn should shape the priority given to different uses and users of the street or road in designing its features. As an example, on-street parking is more important in the town center and neighborhoods than it is on Rural Roads. Foot traffic is key to the vitality of restaurants and retail shops, so pedestrian access is a high priority in a downtown area. The discussion of each street type includes recommended prioritization of four street uses: Automobiles, Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Parking.

Neighborhood Streets

Description

Neighborhood Streets serve residential areas and prioritize walking, bicycling, and local access. Speeds are low, typically 20–25 mph, and traffic volumes are modest unless a neighborhood street serves as a cut-through route. Sidewalks are beneficial, but not necessary on most residential streets. Widths should be limited to promote lower traffic speeds. Exeter has begun taking steps to narrow pavement in neighborhood such as Westside Drive where streets were exceedingly wide as originally designed and promote inappropriately high speeds.

Washington Street

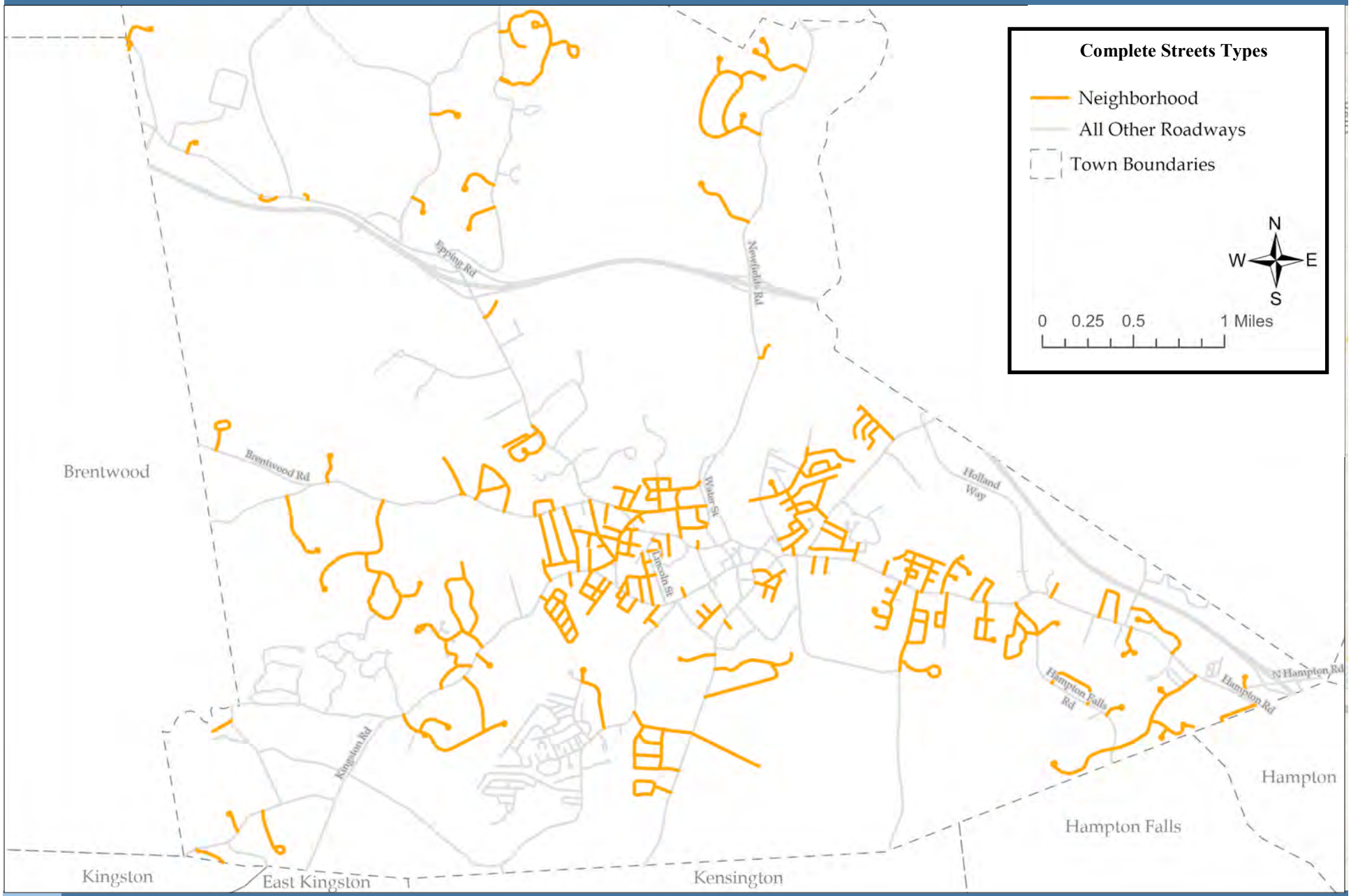
Vision for Neighborhood Streets

Neighborhood Streets should:

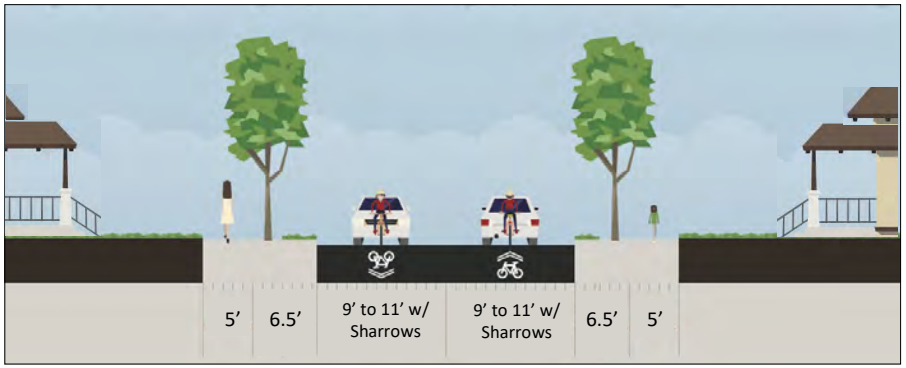
- Promote safety and livability
- Create comfortable walking routes
- Support low-stress connections to parks, schools, and other community destinations
- Use context-sensitive traffic calming

Towle Avenue

Exeter's Neighborhood Streets

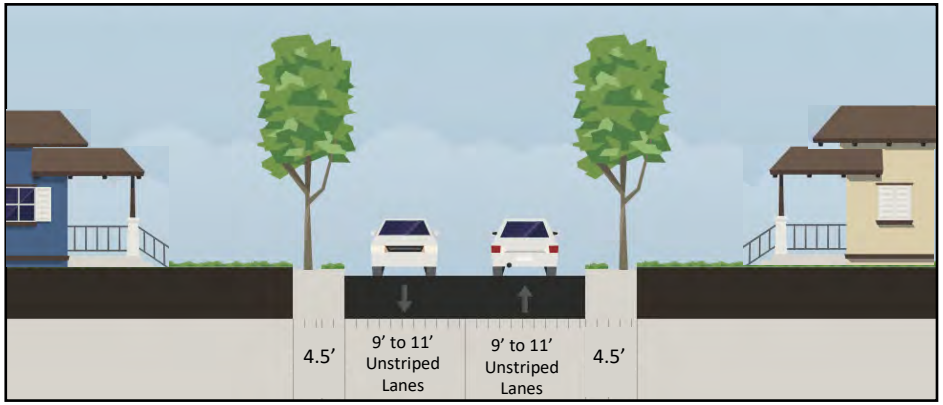


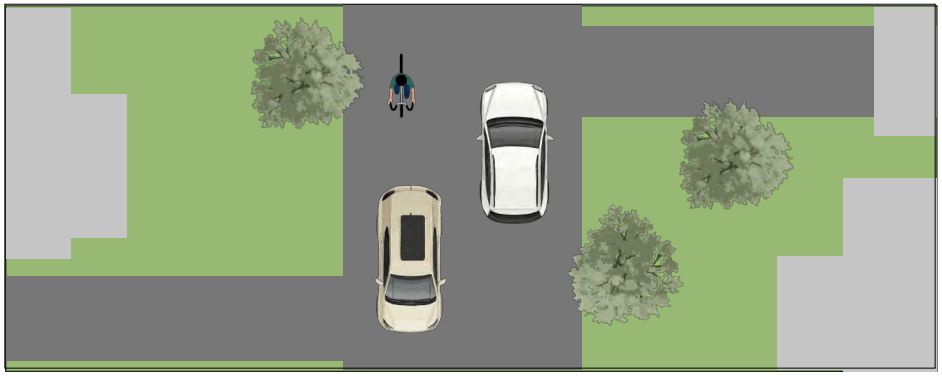
Neighborhood Street: Existing Conditions & Concepts for Redesign



Neighborhood Street with sidewalks and shared lane markings

Neighborhood Streets in Exeter can include a variety of pavement widths depending on when the neighborhood was built. Streets in neighborhoods developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s often have narrow pavement width but include sidewalks and in some cases buffer strips between road and sidewalk. Washington Street and Union Street are examples from this era. Mid-20th century, post-WWII neighborhoods such as Towle Avenue or Haven Lane often lack sidewalks and also have narrow overall pavement width. Later neighborhoods from the 1980s-2010s such as Westside Drive frequently have very wide spans of pavement of 40’ and greater, sometimes with sidewalks and sometimes without. Sidewalks are not essential for a low-speed, low traffic volume street like Towle Avenue to feel safe for walking and bicycling. Higher volume residential streets that are used as cut-through routes, like Washington Street, Winter Street, or Jady Hill Avenue, straddle the line between Neighborhood Streets and Connector Streets. For these streets sidewalks are especially important and shared lane markings (sharrows) may be appropriate. On-street parking on Neighborhood Streets serves as an ad-hoc traffic calming measure. Neighborhood Streets should avoid centerlines and striped shoulders which tend to serve as visual cues for higher vehicle speeds.





Lower volume Neighborhood Street without sidewalks

Neighborhood Street: Street Features Overview

	Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements	Traffic Calming	Curbside Management	Traffic Management
High Priority	N/A	Narrow pavement widths and on-street parking calm traffic	On-street parking (typically unstriped), street lighting (particularly at crossings), street trees	N/A
Appropriate in Some Circumstances	Sidewalks, sharrows	Curb extensions/ bulb-outs, raised speed reducers, chicanes	Curb, planting strip	N/A
Not Required	Sidepath, buffered bike lane, separated bike lane, bike racks	Mid-block crosswalk, pedestrian refuge islands	Striped shoulders	Loading zones
Not Appropriate	N/A	N/A	Median	Evacuation routes, truck routes, centerline striping

West Side Drive

Functional Class: Local
Target Speed: 20-25 mph

Priority of Uses: 1) Pedestrians, 2) Bicycles, 3) Parking, 4) Automobiles

On Street Parking: Yes, typically unmarked

Lanes & Widths: Maximum two lanes, not typically striped. Lane width 10' or less

Sidewalk: Usually only one side, none in low volume mid-century neighborhoods

Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path: No

Shoulder Bike Lane: No

Sharrows: Typically not needed with exceptions of streets used as cut-throughs

Centerline or Median: No

Traffic Calming: Narrow Lanes, Potential Curb Extensions or Speed Tables if desired to limit cut-through traffic

Town Center Streets

Description

Town Center streets serve the historic and commercial core of Exeter. They carry a mix of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and slow-moving vehicles coming into town for shopping, restaurants, other services or community destinations like the public library, town hall or the town recreation center. An attractive and low stress walking environment is critical to the success of downtown businesses. While Exeter's town center streets largely lack adequate width for dedicated bicycle lanes, a combination of narrow travel lanes, on-street parking, and high likelihood of cars pulling out of parking stalls, opening car doors and pedestrians in crosswalks force most drivers to slow down in these areas. Posted speed limit is 25 mph. A safe and attractive pedestrian environment is a particular priority in the town center.

Vision for Town Center Streets

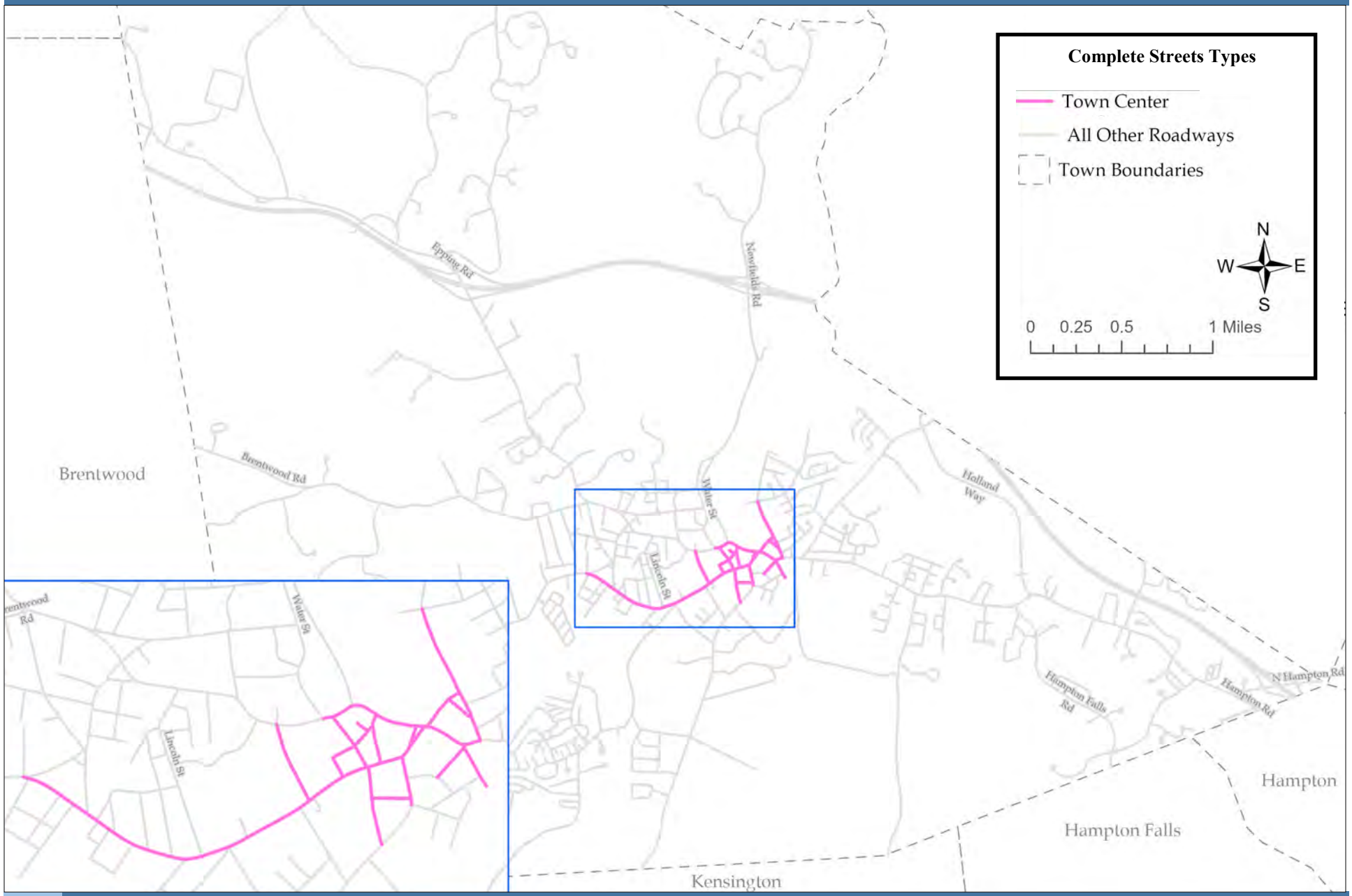
Town Center streets should:

- Support economic activity
- Encourage walking and lingering
- Integrate placemaking features like benches, wayfinding and street trees
- Provide for bicycle safety, while recognizing that most streets in Exeter's town center are too constrained to retrofit with dedicated bicycle facilities.

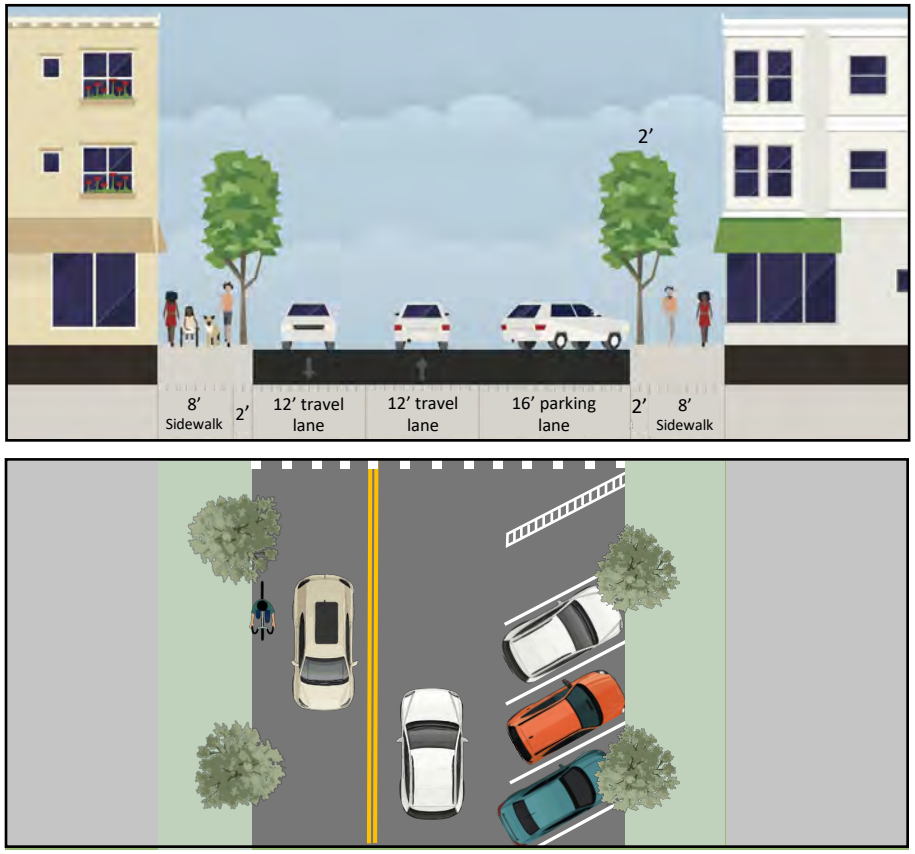
Water Street Looking West

Front Street at Phillips Exeter Green

Exeter's Town Center Streets



Town Center Streets: Existing Conditions & Concepts for Redesign



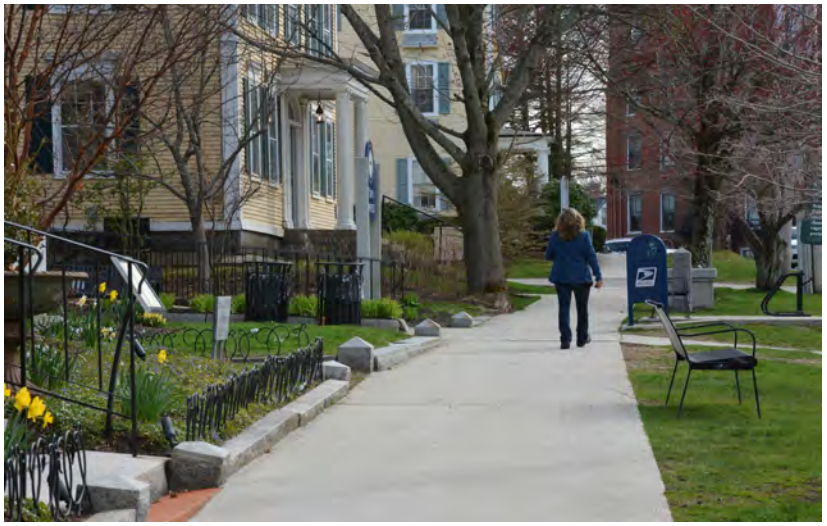
Existing conditions on Water Street east of Center Street

Exeter has made significant investments in recent years in its downtown sidewalk system, replacing older asphalt sidewalks with concrete, upgrading ADA tip-downs and tactile plates at crossings, and adding a bump-out at one key crossing point. Street trees add to the pleasant walking atmosphere. The angled parking on Water Street between Front Street and Swazey Parkway creates a high stress environment for bicycling, but inadequate right of way exists to add dedicated bicycle lanes. Opportunities to improve safe interactions between motorized and non-motorized users include adding sharrows and “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs where bicycle lanes won’t fit, higher visibility crosswalks with improved lighting, warning signage and in some cases bump-outs and flashing beacons at crossing points. In some locations uneven brick and sloped concrete sidewalk areas create accessibility problems that should be addressed.

Concept for pedestrian crossing and bicycle improvements

Town Center Streets: Street Features Overview

	Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements	Traffic Calming	Curbside Management	Traffic Management
High Priority	Sidewalks, Bike Racks	Narrow Lanes	Curb, Street Lighting (particularly at crosswalks), On-Street Parking, RRFBs, Street Trees, Benches	N/A
Appropriate in Some Circumstances	Sharrows, Bike Lanes, Buffered Bike Lanes, Bike Maintenance Stations	Mid-Block Crosswalks, Curb Extensions/ Bulb-outs, Raised Speed Reducers, Pedestrian Refuge Island, Bus Shelter	Planting Strip	Loading Zones
Not Required	Sidepath, Separated Bike Lane	Bus Pull Off	Striped Shoulders	N/A
Not Appropriate	N/A	Chicanes	Median	Evacuation Routes, Truck Routes



Front Street at Exeter Town Offices

Functional Class: Minor Arterial

Target Speed: 20-25 mph

Priority of Uses: 1) Pedestrians, 2) Parking, 3) Automobiles, 4) Bicycles

On Street Parking: Typically

Lanes & Widths: 2 lanes, generally no striped shoulders defining width

Sidewalk: Usually two sides

Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path: Ideal, but width generally not available

Shoulder Bike Lane: Where right of way is available

Sharrows: Usually most viable solution in Exeter Town Center

Centerline or Median: No

Traffic Calming: Narrow Lanes, Potential Curb Extensions

In-Town Connector Streets

Description

In-Town Connectors link residential areas with the town center, schools, and parks. These streets see higher traffic volumes but must remain multimodal. Connectors typically serve as transition zones where rural highways enter more densely developed areas of town, so traffic along outer portions of connector roads tends to be higher speed and come down as it approaches downtown. These transition zones see a significant percentage of auto crashes involving pedestrian and bicyclists, so street design should provide protected facilities for bicycling and walking, ideally separated from the roadway by planted buffers. Visual cues like speed feedback signs remind drivers they are coming into the town center and high likelihood of people walking and bicycling along and crossing the street. Wayfinding signage is appropriate here to direct people entering the downtown or headed for community facilities like parks and recreation centers.

Vision for In-Town Connector

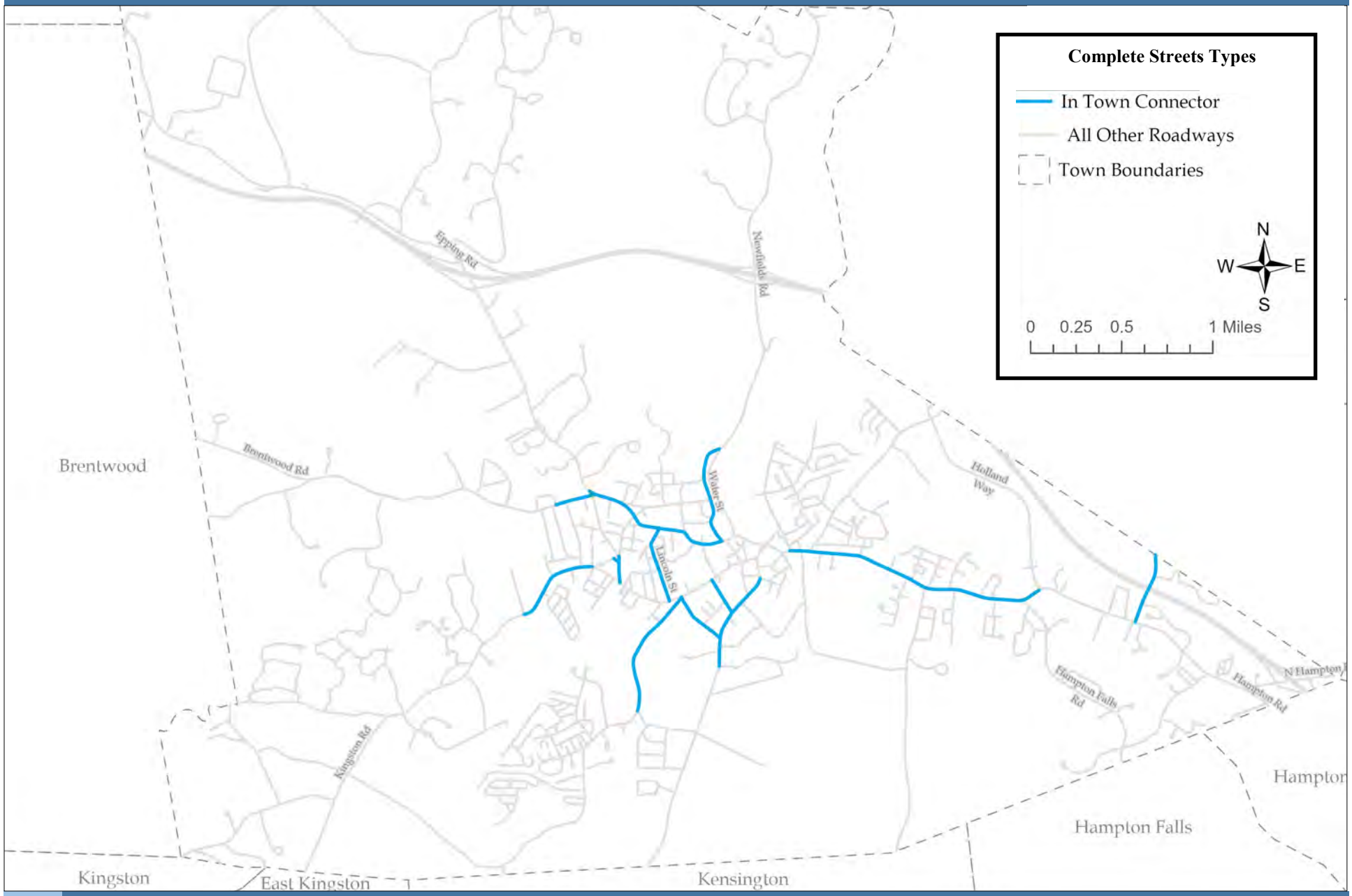
These corridors should:

- Provide continuous bike lanes or shared-use paths
- Ensure safe pedestrian crossings
- Balance throughput with safety

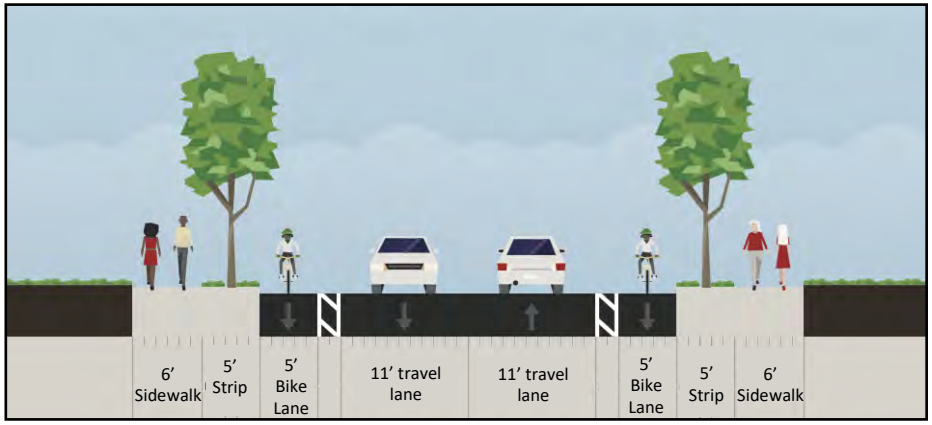
Lincoln Street School Crossing

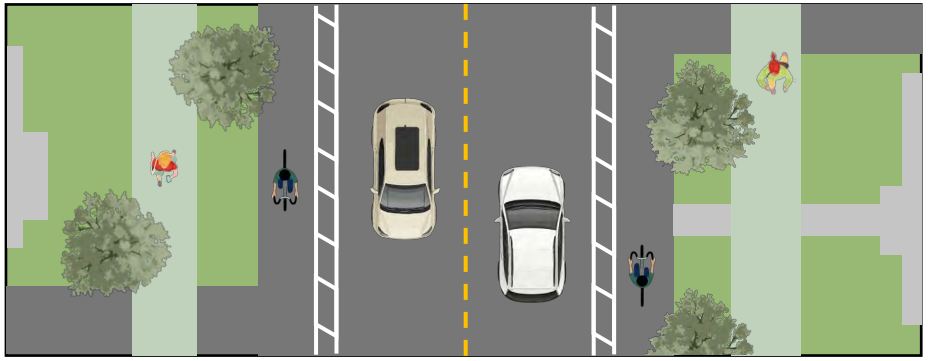
High Street Looking West from Hampton Falls Road

Exeter's In-Town Connector Streets



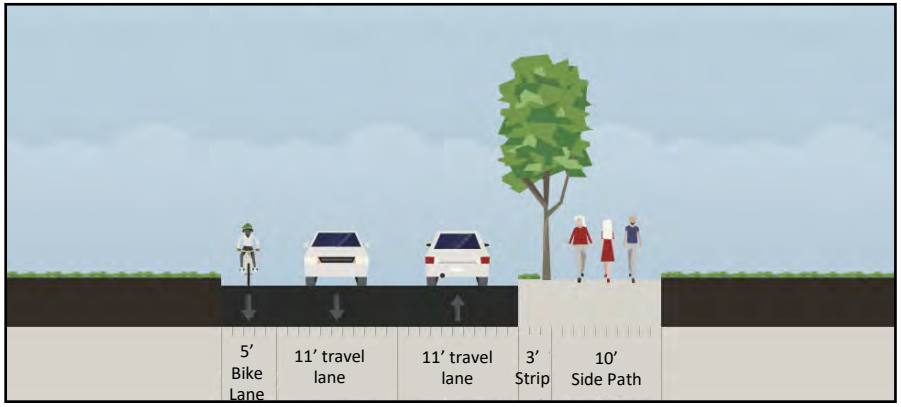
In-Town Connector Streets: Concepts for Redesign

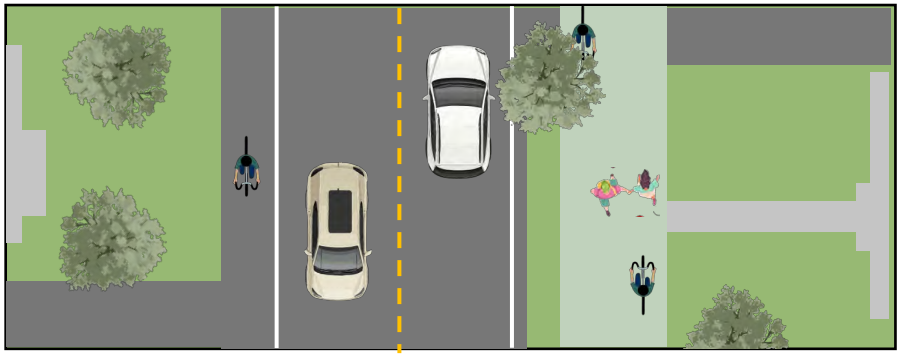




Concept A for buffered bicycle facilities on Connector Streets, recommended where constraints prevent moving center lines

A clear finding from the community survey conducted for the Exeter Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was public desire for greater separation between automobile traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. While all of Exeter’s In-Town Connector Streets feature sidewalks on at least one side, in most cases people must ride bicycles either in lanes shared with automobiles or on shoulders separated from the travel lane by only a stripe. Right of way exists on many of these Connector streets to achieve better separation between automobiles and people on bicycles. Two approaches to this are shown in the illustrations here. Concept A replaces a single fog line with a 2’ wide striped buffer to create horizontal separation. Concept B is designed for areas of narrower right of way, and foregoes sidewalk on one side of the road to have space for a 10’ wide, bi-directional multi-use path on the opposite side. Ideally this is separated from the roadway by a planter strip, which together with street trees create a lower stress environment than sidewalk immediately adjacent to the curb. Concept A lacks the safety of vertical separation, but is suggested in the Historic District where center lines likely cannot be moved.





Concept B for separated bicycle facilities on Connector Streets including multi-use side path on one side of the street

In-Town Connector Streets: Street Features Overview

	Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements	Traffic Calming	Curbside Management	Traffic Management
High Priority	Sidewalks, Bike Lanes, Buffered Bike Lanes	N/A	Curb, Street Lighting (particularly at crossings), Planting Strips, Street Trees, RRFBs	Centerline Striping
Appropriate in Some Circumstances	Sharrows, Side Paths, Separated Bike Lanes	Curb Extensions/ Bulb-Outs, Mid -Block Crossings, Bus Shelter	Shoulders, On-Street Parking	Emergency Routes
Not Required	Bike Racks, Bike Corrals	Bus Pull Offs	N/A	N/A
Not Appropriate	N/A	Chicanes	Medians	Loading Zones

High Street East of Buzell Avenue

Functional Class: Minor Arterial

Target Speed: 25-30 mph

Priority of Uses: 1) Automobiles, 2) Bicycles, 3) Pedestrians, 4) Parking

On Street Parking: Not typically

Lanes & Widths: 2 lanes, 10'-11'

Sidewalk: Usually two sides

Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path: Preferable

Shoulder Bike Lane: Minimum accommodation

Sharrows: In some cases

Centerline or Median: Centerline

Traffic Calming: Speed notification, signage or other notification of rural transition zone. Potential lane narrowing from adjoining rural highway.

Gateway Streets

Description

Gateway streets are major entry points welcoming visitors to the town. They feature relatively high traffic volumes and speeds as compared to Connectors, Neighborhood and Town Center streets. Adjacent land use immediately on Gateway Streets is largely commercial , though they connect to multifamily residential developments and pocket neighborhoods whose residents need to travel the corridor to reach other parts of town. Traffic volumes and frequent turning movements, together with intersections that have largely been built for automobile traffic, make existing gateway streets high stress environments for walking and bicycling. Wayfinding signage beginning on these corridors and continuing into the town center can guide people entering the downtown to parking and other destinations. While not scenic corridors, pedestrian trips on Gateway Streets may be long, connecting to outlying neighborhoods, such that benches can provide rest areas for older travelers or parents with young children. New development may be induced to provide such amenities.

Vision for Gateway Streets in Exeter

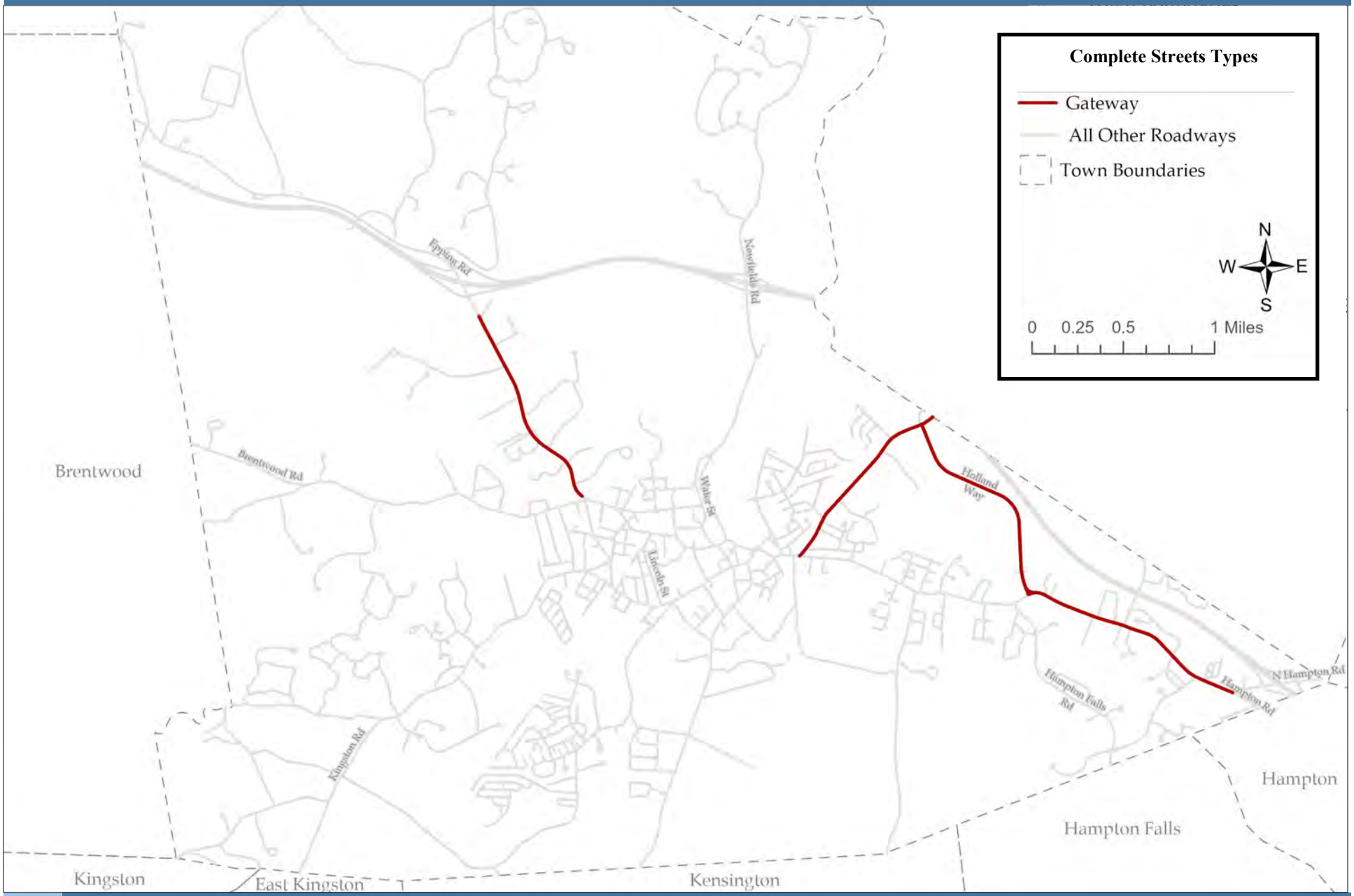
Gateway streets should:

- Provide clear visual cues that signal entry into town
- Transition from higher-speed approaches to pedestrian-friendly environments
- Incorporate signage, landscaping such as planted buffer strips and street trees, and speed management

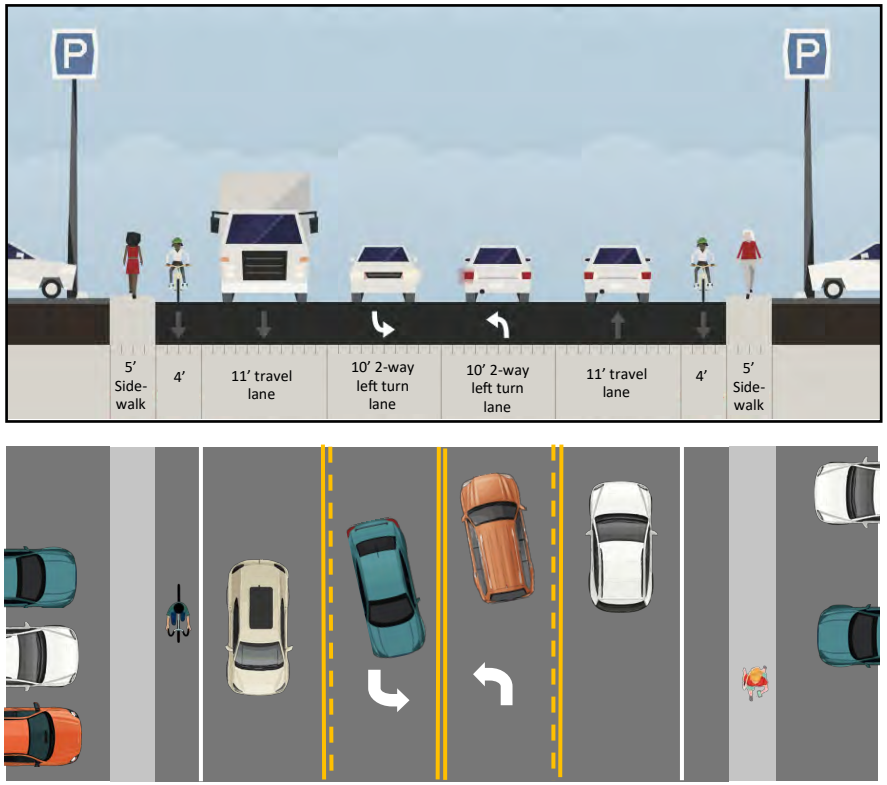
Portsmouth Avenue Looking North From Las Olas Taqueria

Portsmouth Avenue Looking North from Alumni Drive

Exeter's Gateway Streets

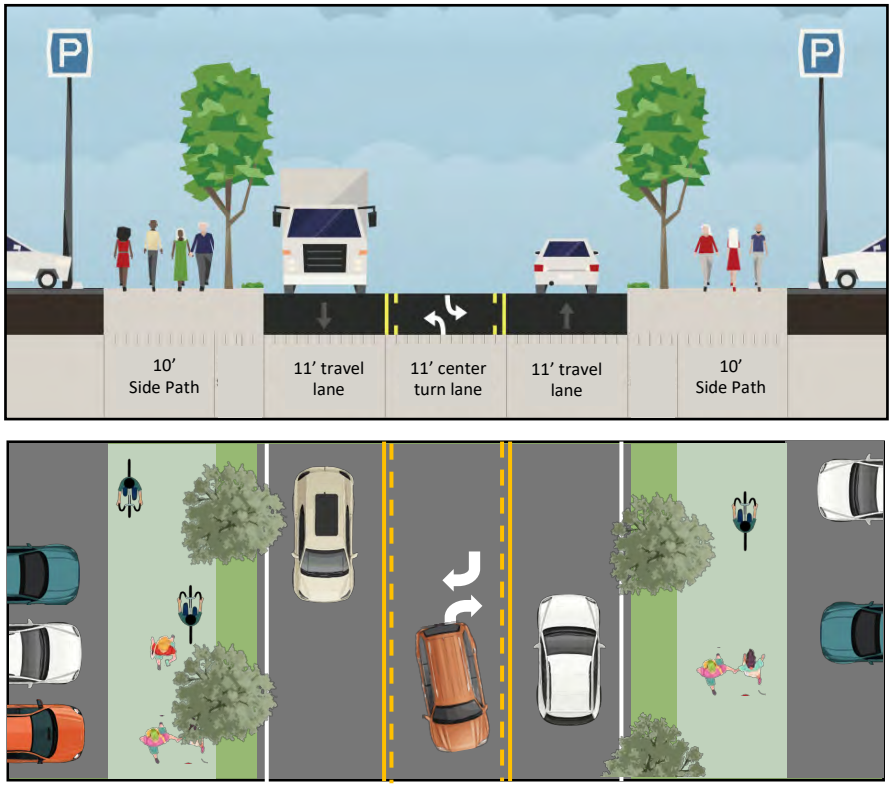


Gateway Streets: Existing Conditions & Concepts for Redesign



Existing conditions on Portsmouth Avenue

Public desire for greater separation between automobile traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities applies on Gateway Streets as well, with their high traffic volumes and frequent turning movements. Portsmouth Avenue north of Alumni Drive currently features two 11' travel lanes, two 10' left turn lanes, 4' shoulders and narrow 5' sidewalks without buffers, situated between road and parking lot. This 60' wide expanse of asphalt creates a high stress environment not conducive to walking or bicycling. An alternate scenario would be to provide vertically and horizontally separated multi-use side paths on each side of the street, with a planted buffer strip between road and path. Space for this could be created by removing one of the two center turn lanes and using two additional feet of existing town right of way. Based on available data, the town's right of way for Portsmouth Avenue between Alumni Drive and Needham Bank is 64'-66' - wider than used by the current configuration. Right of way north of Needham Bank to the NH101 interchange is approximately 75'-100'. Similar designs are likely feasible for other Gateway Streets in town, though may be hampered by inconsistent right of way that narrows in places, and dependent on abutter willingness to cooperate on easements.



Concept for redesign of Portsmouth Avenue with multi-use sidepaths

Gateway Streets: Street Features Overview

	Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements	Traffic Calming	Curbside Management	Traffic Management
High Priority	Sidewalk, Buffered Bike Lanes, Side Paths	Pedestrian Refuge Islands, Bus Shelters, Bus Pull-Offs	Shoulder, Lighting (particularly at crossings), Street Trees, Planting Strips	Center Line Striping, Truck Routes, Emergency Routes
Appropriate in Some Circumstances	Shoulder Bike Route	Mid-Block Crosswalks with Flashing Beacons	Curb	N/A
Not Required	Bike Racks	Curb Extensions/Bulb-Outs	N/A	N/A
Not Appropriate	Shared Lane Markings/ Sharrows	Raised Speed Reducers, Chicanes	On-Street Parking	Loading Zones

Epping Road Existing Conditions

Functional Class: Minor Arterial

Target Speed: 30 mph

Priority of Uses: 1) Automobiles, 2) Bicycles, 3) Pedestrians, 4) Parking

On Street Parking: No

Lanes & Widths: 2-3 lanes, lane width 10'-11'

Sidewalk: Usually two sided

Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path: Preferred

Shoulder Bike Lane: Minimum

Sharrows: No

Centerline or Median: Centerline or other lane delineation, Median refuge at crosswalks

Traffic Calming: Not typically

Business/Industrial Access Roads

Description

These roads serve industrial or commercial zones, hosting freight and employee traffic to what can be significant employment centers. Typically these roads in Exeter have been designed solely with trucks and automobiles in mind; but especially as residential development fills in along the Gateway corridors from which these roads lead, design consideration should be given to providing non-motorized access to allow employees to more safely reach these employment centers.

Continental Drive

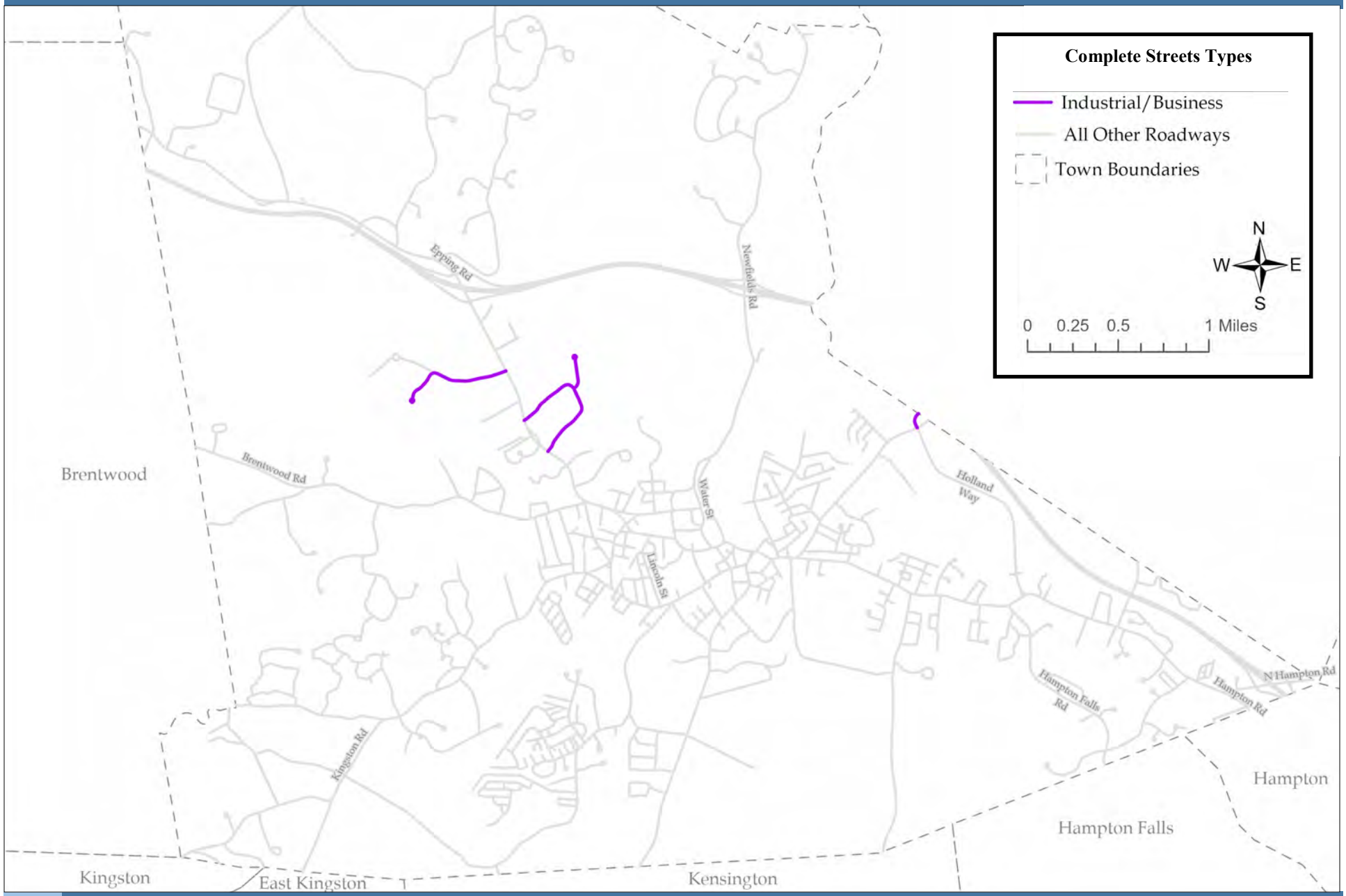
Vision for Business/Industrial Access Roads in Exeter

Business/Industrial streets should:

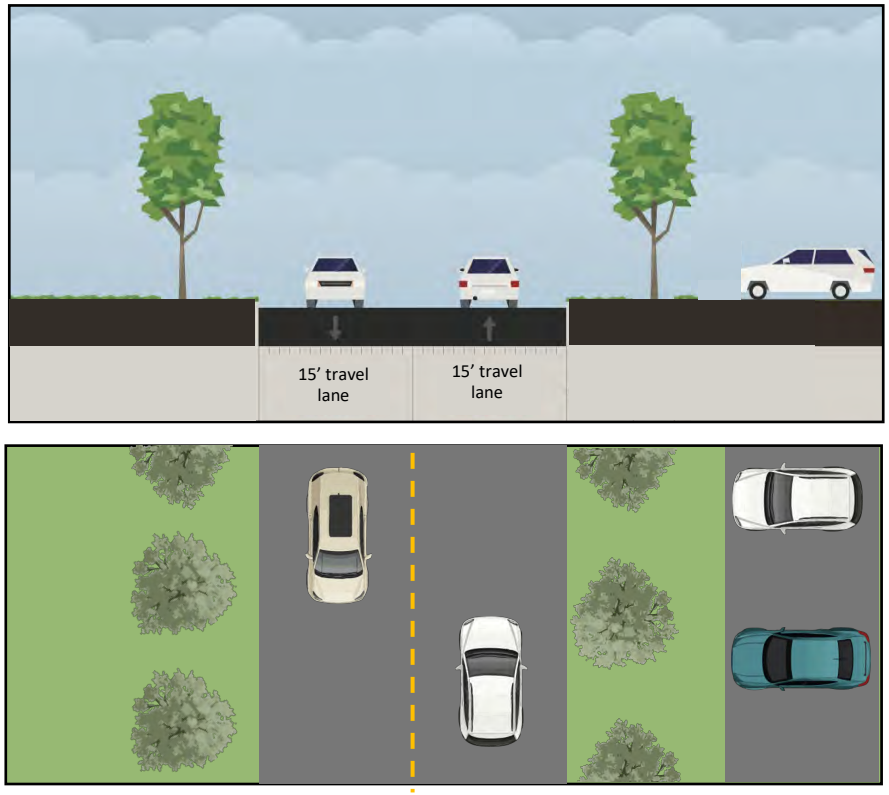
- Safely accommodate freight movement
- Include safe pedestrian access for employees
- Provide bicycle connections to employment hubs

GTE Road

Exeter's Business/Industrial Access Roads



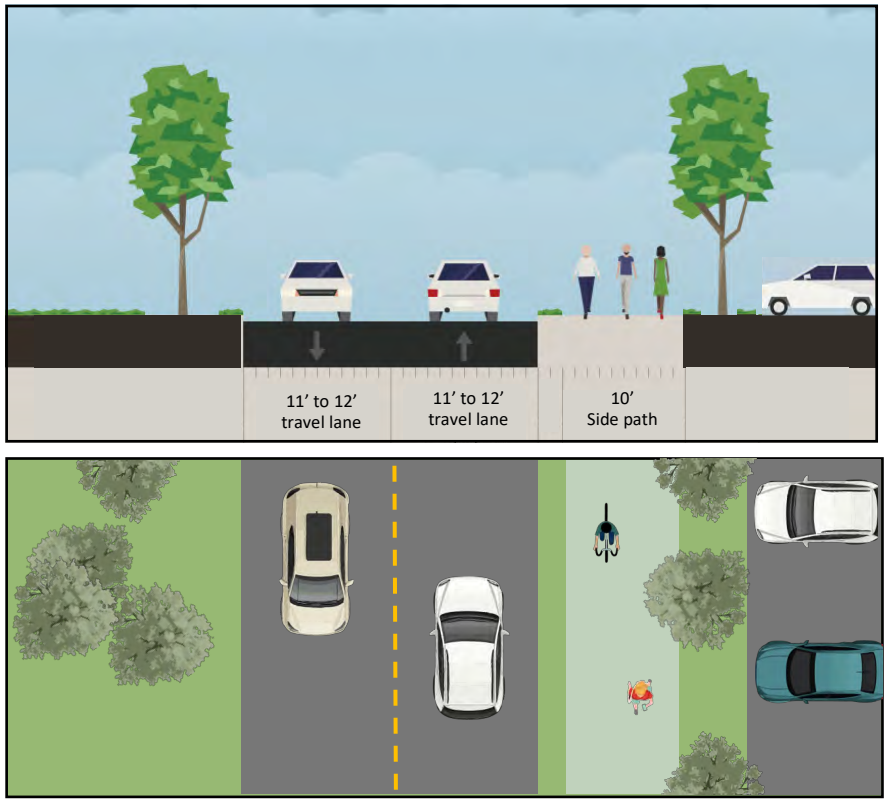
Business/Industrial Access Roads: Existing Conditions & Concepts for Redesign



Typical existing conditions on industrial park access roads in Exeter

Exeter has only a handful of publicly-owned business/industrial access roads, including Industrial Drive, Continental Drive, and GTE Road. All are designed for large truck and other automobile traffic, with no pedestrian or bicycle accommodation. Given that these roads connect some of the largest employment centers in town, pedestrian and bicycle access would also be appropriate.

Vertically separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities are preferred over painted horizontal separation. Industrial Drive in particular serves as an access point to the town trail system in Swazey Forest, such that ped/bike accommodation improvements are desirable in that location. Redesign of other business/industrial roads may be a lower priority for town funds than corridors that connect to a wider range of destinations.



Concept with side path added

Business/Industrial Access Roads: Road Features Overview

	Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements	Traffic Calming	Curbside Management	Traffic Management
High Priority	Sidewalks	N/A	Shoulder	N/A
Appropriate in Some Circumstances	Bike Lane, Buffered Bike Lane, Side Path	Mid/Block Crosswalks	Curb, Planting Strip, Street Lighting especially at crossings	Center Lane Striping
Not Required	Bike Racks	Curb Extensions/Bulb Outs	N/A	N/A
Not Appropriate	Shared Lane Markings/ Sharrows	Raised Speed Reducers, Chicanes	On-Street Parking	Loading Zones

Industrial Drive

Functional Class: Major Collector or Local

Target Speed: 30 mph

Priority of Uses: 1) Automobiles, 2) Bicycles, 3) Pedestrians, 4) Parking

On Street Parking: Yes and typically unmarked

Lanes & Widths: Typically 2 lanes 11'-12' for truck access

Sidewalk: One side

Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path: Consider multi-use side path

Shoulder Bike Lane: Preferred

Sharrows: No

Centerline or Median: Not necessarily

Traffic Calming: No

Rural Roads

Description

Rural roads lie outside of Exeter's Urban Compact area and often have scenic or agricultural character. The category of Rural roads actually includes two distinct road types: 1) rural state highways with striped centerlines and striped shoulders creating 11'-12' travel lanes; and 2) narrower, lower speed local rural roads that typically lack striping. Rural roads support longer distance connections between communities, mainly by automobile, and cycling along them is typically limited to experienced recreational and utilitarian riders. Exeter in 2023 extended sidewalk along otherwise rural Kingston Road to connect outlying neighborhoods, but generally sidewalks are not a high priority investment on rural roads. Widening shoulders to 4' creates space for bicycling outside of the travel lane and provides maintenance and safety benefits for all road users.

Vision for Rural Roads in Exeter

Rural streets should:

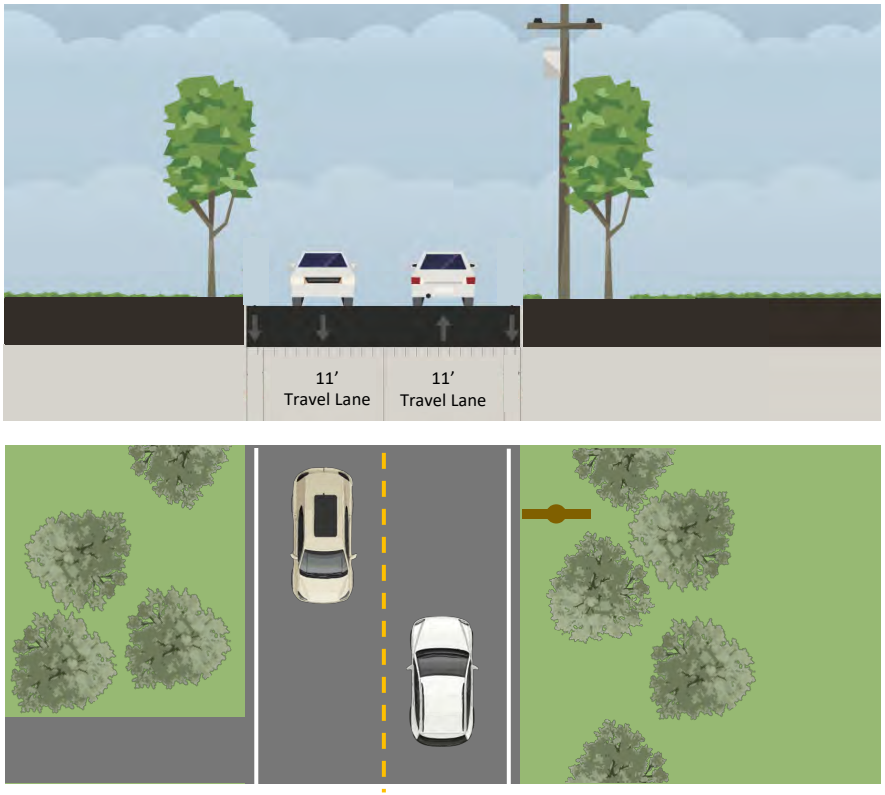
- Maintain rural character
- Improve safety through shoulder widening
- Accommodate bicyclists with paved shoulders or paths

Brentwood Road Looking West at Jolly Rand Trail

Hampton Road Looking East near Hampton Town Line

Exeter's Rural Roads

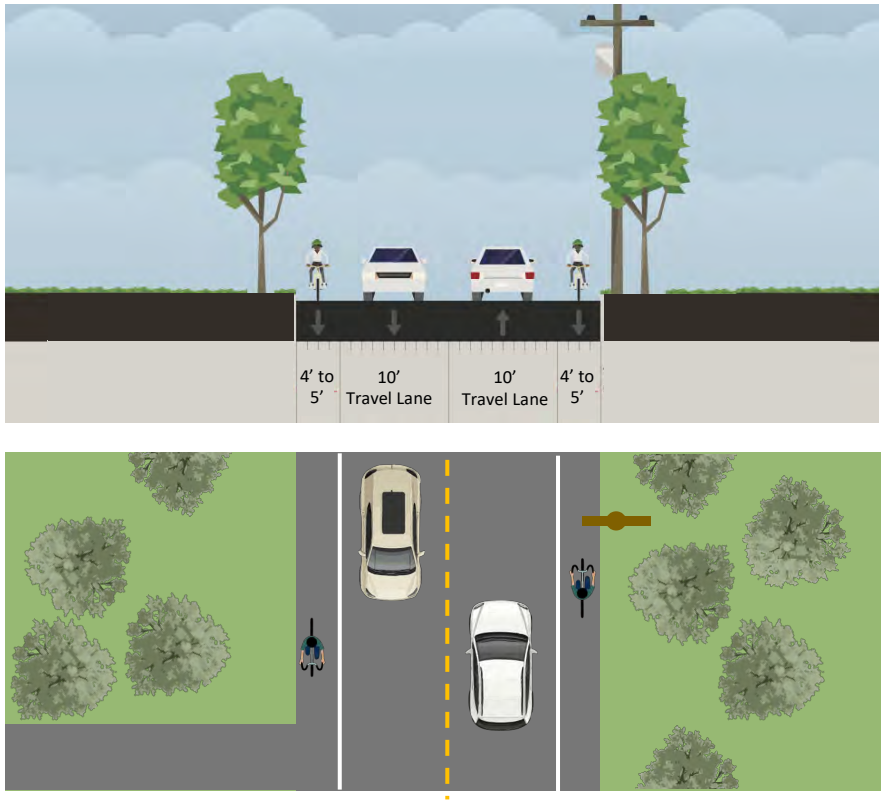
Rural Roads: Existing Conditions & Concepts for Redesign



Typical existing conditions on rural roads in Exeter

Rural Roads in Exeter include both numbered state highways featuring striped centerline, striped shoulders, and relatively high speeds and traffic volumes; as well as narrower local rural roads that often lack center lines and support lower traffic volumes and speeds.

What both types of rural roads generally share in is design focused on accommodating automobiles and not other modes of transportation such as walking or bicycle. This said most rural roads in Exeter have adequate right of way to support shoulder widening. Sidewalks are generally not appropriate for rural roads, with possible exceptions for connecting neighborhoods to downtown from just outside of Urban Compact boundaries.



Proposed configuration with shoulder widening

Rural Roads: Road Features Overview

	Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements	Traffic Calming	Curbside Management	Traffic Management
High Priority	Shoulder Bicycle Lane	Narrow Lane Striping	N/A	N/A
Appropriate in Some Circumstances	Sidewalks	Crosswalks for Trail Crossings, Pedestrian Refuge Islands, Bus Shelter	Lighting at Trail Crossings	Centerline Striping, Evacuation Routes, Truck Routes
Not Required	Separated Bike Lane	Pedestrian Refuge Islands, Bus Pull-Outs	Curb, Street Trees	N/A
Not Appropriate	Buffered Bike Lane, Bike Racks	Chicanes	On-Street Parking, Median	Loading Zones

Drinkwater Road

Functional Class: Major Collector, Minor Arterial or Local

Target Speed: 25-30 on narrow, local rural roads; 35-40 on rural state highways

Priority of Uses: 1) Automobiles, 2) Bicycles, 3) Pedestrians, 4) Parking

On Street Parking: No

Lanes & Widths: 2 lanes at 10'-11'

Sidewalk: Typically none. Kingston Road sidewalk to Tamarind Lane is exception

Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path: No

Shoulder Bike Lane: Target 4' shoulders on rural state highways

Sharrows: No

Centerline or Median: Centerline on state highways, usually no centerline on local rural roads

Traffic Calming: Narrowing striped lane width

Implementation

Plans and guideline books are only as good as their implementation. The following paragraphs offer recommendations for ensuring that Exeter's new Complete Streets Policy and Design Guidelines result in the desired incremental improvements to safety, connectivity and economic vitality.

Operations & Maintenance – Much of this guide focuses on design or redesign of street infrastructure. There is much to be gained with these engineering improvements, but they tend to be expensive and time consuming to implement. It's important to also focus attention and resources on how existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities are operated and maintained for a safety and accessibility.

- Plowing pedestrian facilities promptly following snow storms - A sidewalk or multi-use path is of little use in winter if it's not plowed for days after a storm such that people, particularly people with disabilities, must walk in the travel lane to find clear pavement.
- Clearing shoulders and vegetation management – Sand and debris collect on road shoulders and can create hazards for people on bicycles. Spring cleaning of shoulders is important as well as regular trimming of roadside brush that impinges on shoulders blocking sightlines or forcing people biking out into the travel lane.
- Regular repainting of pavement markings – As paint on crosswalks and other markings is worn by auto tires, those crosswalks and marking becomes less visible and the safety benefit diminishes considerably. Visibility of crosswalks is largely a matter of painted lines being wide, close together and regularly refreshed.

Prioritizing Projects - Which complete streets redesign projects are implemented first will be a combination of purposeful prioritization of larger projects and a systematic approach to incrementally incorporating small improvements as opportunities arise.

- Connectivity – Public input heavily emphasized the importance of connectivity in project prioritization. When adding new projects to the town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), priority should be given to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that enhances safe connections to key destinations, including schools, parks, playgrounds and other community facilities; as well as grocery stores and Lincoln Street train station.
- Opportunistic Approach - Look for opportunities to incorporate improvements such as identified here into broader projects already defined in Exeter's 2026-2031 Capital Improvement Program. CIP projects presenting opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility, whether conceived for this purpose or as side benefits from utility work, include:
  - Railroad Avenue/Front Street (2026-2027)
  - Phase III Intersection Study Program (2027)
  - Portsmouth Avenue Reconstruction (2027-2029)
  - Water Street Improvements (2024-2026)
  - Washington Street Improvements (2026-2027)
  - Green Street Neighborhood Reconstruction (2029-2030)
  - Bow Street Area Reconstruction (2031)

Implementation - Continued

- Low Hanging Fruit - Not all infrastructure improvement rise to the level of a CIP project. The Exeter Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2025) describes over 50 pedestrian and bicycle safety projects addressing Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation. Each is coded based on cost, timeline and level of impact. Among the lowest hanging fruit on the list are crosswalk safety improvements focused on higher visibility paint markings, warning signage and lighting.

- Complete Streets Design Approach for All Road Projects - Update the project development process for all local street and road projects to ensure needs of all road users are considered in the design process – recognizing that different street types have different user hierarchy as described in this document. Encourage town staff and officials to participate in training on Complete Streets principles and best practices for design, maintenance and operation.

- Complete Streets Citizen Advisory Committee – Establish an Exeter Complete Streets Advisory Committee composed of town staff, residents and business representatives that can guide implementation of the Bike/Ped Master Plan and Complete Streets Policy.

- Expand Community Outreach on Complete Streets - Public engagement on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan indicated understanding of and support for Complete Street concepts, but additional outreach will be key to building support for implementation.

- Demonstration Projects - Look for opportunities to test complete streets improvements with temporary "pop-up" installations of features like bump-outs and other traffic calming measures. The proposed Advisory Committee can guide this with Public Works.

- Tracking Performance – Exeter's new Complete Streets Policy, the companion document to these Design Guidelines, identifies several metrics for tracking performance in implementing a complete streets approach in town. These are divided into Implementation Measures and Measures of Effectiveness and include:

Implementation Measures

- Feet of new and reconstructed pedestrian and bicycle facilities (sidewalk, multi-use path, bicycle lanes, sharrows, crosswalk improvements).
- Number and percent of projects identified in Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan that have been implemented.
- Average time to complete snow clearance on sidewalks.

Measures of Effectiveness

- Pedestrian and bicycle volume counts to measure use of existing and improved routes. Conduct baseline counts then track changes in volume following completion of improvements.
- Vehicle speed counts in targeted corridors. Establish baseline speed data on targeted streets and track change as traffic calming strategies are incorporated.
- Crash incidence, particularly involving vulnerable road users. Track crash numbers, severity, locations and contributing factors such as speed and distraction.

Additional Design References

As planning concepts advance to engineering, projects should reflect current best practices in bicycle and pedestrian design. The technical sources below provide extensive guidance for planning, implementing, and maintaining bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities, 5th Edition (2024)
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, 2nd Edition (2021)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Design Guide (2016)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), 11th Edition (2023)
- United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board), Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) (2024)
- United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Standards (2010)
- Smart Growth America, Complete Streets Policy Framework (2023)
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide, 3rd Edition (2025)
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide (2013)
- FHWA Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP) Studio: Tools for Selecting and Implementing Countermeasures for Improving Pedestrian Crossing Safety (2020)
- Exeter Town Master Plan (2018)
- Exeter Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan (2024)