

Select Board Meeting
Monday, February 12th, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
Nowak Room, Town Offices
10 Front Street, Exeter NH 03833
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING starts at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meetings can be watched on Ch 22 or Ch 98 and YouTube.

To access the meeting, click this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89334490093>

To access the meeting via telephone, call: +1 646 558 8656 and enter the Webinar ID: 893 3449 0093

Please join the meeting with your full name if you want to speak.

Use the "Raise Hand" button to alert the chair you wish to speak. On the phone, press *9.

More instructions for how to access the meeting can be found here:

<https://www.exeternh.gov/townmanager/virtual-town-meetings>

Contact us at extvg@exeternh.gov or 603-418-6425 with any technical issues

AGENDA

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Non-Public Session – RSA 91-A 3 2 A, L
3. Bid Award – Septage Equipment
4. Public Comment
5. Proclamations/Recognitions
6. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Regular Meeting: January 29th, 2024
7. Appointments
 - a. None
8. Resignations
 - a. None
9. Discussion/Action Items
 - a. Bill Keegan Associates Presentation: Organizational Study
 - b. Stantec Consultants: Downtown Parking, Pedestrian & Traffic Study Results
 - c. Greg Bisson, Parks/Recreation Director re: Planet Playground
10. Regular Business
 - a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits & Exemptions
 - b. Permits & Approvals – Snow/Ice Deficit Fund; Water-Sewer Impact Fees
 - c. Town Manager's Report
 - d. Select Board Committee Reports
 - e. Correspondence
11. Review Board Calendar
12. Non-Public Session

13. Adjournment

Niko Papakonstantis, Chair
Select Board

Posted: 02/09/24 Town Office, Town Website

Persons may request an accommodation for a disabling condition in order to attend this meeting. It is asked that such requests be made with 72 hours notice.

AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Bid Awards



TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

13 NEWFIELDS ROAD • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 773-6157 • FAX 772-1355

www.exeternh.gov

Memo

To: Russell Dean

From: Stephen Dalton

CC: Stephen Cronin, Pam McElroy, Chris Goodwin, Trisha Allen

Date: February 7, 2024

Re: Award of Septage Receiving Equipment

The Public Works Department and Wright Pierce have reviewed the bid results and recommends to award the contract to Claro Environmental Technologies and Equipment.

The Town has authorization from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services to award the contract to Claro Environmental Technologies and Equipment. This authorization allows the project to remain eligible for the State Aid Grant (SAG) plus program.

The Town received and reviewed two bids for the Septage Receiving Upgrade Project that was approved to be funded by Sewer Reserves. Claro Environmental Technologies & Equipment and Saveco (Formerly Enviro-Care) submitted bids for \$288,200 and \$259,466 respectively. Both bids were below the estimated budgeted amount for the septage pre-treatment system equipment. Claro provided a Septage Pre-Treatment System as specified in the Pre-Selection Contract Documents. In contrast, Saveco (Enviro-Care) submitted a Septage Pre-Treatment system which, in our and Engineer's judgement, does not include a screening wash press which meets the intent and performance requirements of the specification. With the decreased performance of the screenings wash press, there would be a larger and wetter volume of septage screenings material for disposal, which would increase the disposal costs. Also, the reduced organics removal performance may create odors which could require the future addition of odor control in the Septage Building.



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services

Robert R Scott, Commissioner



February 7, 2024

Andy Morrill, P.E.
Wright-Pierce
230 Commerce Way
Suite 302
Portsmouth, NH 03801

(via email: andy.morrill@wright-pierce.com)

Re: Authorization to Award – Equipment Pre-Purchase
Town of Exeter, NH
WWTF Septage Upgrade
NHDES/SAG Project No. D2022-1211

Dear Andy:

The NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) has completed its review of the request package, submitted on behalf of the Town of Exeter, to approve the purchase of the Septage Pre-Treatment System for the subject project.

After reviewing the material submitted, NHDES authorizes the Town of Exeter to award the contract to Claro Environmental Technologies & Equipment in the amount of \$288,200, as presented in their proposal dated December 18, 2023, for the purchase of the previously stated equipment.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tracy L. Wood, P.E., Administrator
Wastewater Engineering Bureau

ecc: Steve Dalton, Town of Exeter
Mike Curry, P.E., Wright-Pierce
Lauren King, Wright-Pierce
John Muras, P.E., NHDES WWEB

www.des.nh.gov

29 Hazen Drive • PO Box 95 • Concord, NH 03302-0095
(603) 271-3503 • TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964



230 Commerce Way, Suite 302
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: 603.430.3728 | Fax: 603.430.4083
www.wright-pierce.com

January 11, 2024
W-P Project No. 21338

Mr. John Muras, PE (NHDES)
Wastewater Engineering Bureau
Department of Environmental Services
29 Hazen Drive/P.O. Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095

via email

Subject: Town of Exeter, NH – Septage Receiving Upgrade Project
Request to Authorize Award of Pre-Selection Contract

Dear Mr. Muras:

The Town received and reviewed two bids for the Septage Receiving Upgrade project Septage Pre-Treatment System. Claro Environmental, Technologies & Equipment and Saveco (Formerly Enviro-Care) submitted bids for \$288,200 and \$259,466 respectively. Both bids were below the Town’s budgeted amount for the Septage Pre-Treatment System equipment. The Town has selected Claro to supply the Septage Pre-Treatment System. A summary of the basis of selection and scoring is provided in the Table and discussion below.

BASIS OF SELECTION			
CRITERIA	TOTAL POINTS	Claro	Saveco
COST (Capital)	50	45	50
TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS / EXPERIENCE	20	20	20
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION	20	20	15
EXCEPTIONS	10	10	8
TOTAL	100	95	93

The evaluation of the equipment was based on Capital Cost, Technical Qualifications & Experience, Supplemental Information (pertaining to the capability of the system including adherence to technical and performance specifications) and exceptions. The Town’s selection was based on the Owner’s best interest with regards to overall performance, maintenance, and operational costs.

Claro provided a Septage Pre-Treatment System as specified in the Pre-Selection Contract Documents. In contrast, Enviro-Care submitted a Septage Pre-Treatment system which, in the Town and Engineer’s judgement, does not include a screening wash press which meets the intent and performance

Mr. John Muras, PE (NHDES)

January 11, 2024

Page 2 of 2



requirements of the specification. With the decreased performance of the screenings wash press, there would be a larger and wetter volume of septage screenings material for disposal, which would increase the disposal costs. Also, the reduced organics removal performance may create additional odors which could require the future addition of odor control in the Septage Building.

The Town requests the Authorization to Award the Septage Pre-Treatment System contract to Claro Environmental, Technologies & Equipment.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

WRIGHT-PIERCE

Andy Morrill PE

Project Manager

andy.morrill@wright-pierce.com

Cc: *Steve Dalton, Town of Exeter, NH – Water and Sewer Manager*
Michael Curry, PE, Wright-Pierce – Technical Advisor

PRE-SELECTION EVALUATION OF BIDS

Project Name: Exeter Septage Receiving Upgrade
 Project No.: 21338
 Date: 1/8/2024
 By: L. King, A. Morrill

Manufacturer	SAVECO	Claro
Model	SAVI Beast VFA-800-DM	1100-700-6

Criteria

Capital Cost			
Available Points	50		
Bid Capital Cost		\$ 259,466.00	\$ 288,200.00
Lowest Cost Bidder	\$ 259,466.00		
Awarded Points		50	45

Technical Qualifications & Experience			
Available Points	20		
No. of Installations		>5	>5
Required Min. No. of Installations	5		
Awarded Points		20	20

Supplemental Information			
Available Points	20		
Items Missing/Performance Requirements not met		2	0
Point Deductions per Missing Item	2.5		
Awarded Points		15	20

Exceptions			
Available Points	10		
No. of Exceptions		1	0
Point Deductions per Exception	2		
Awarded Points		8	10

Total Points		93.0	95.0
Ranking		2	1

Notes

Saveco submittal does not include a screenings wash press which meets the intent and performance requirements as specified. Therefore the septage screenings material for disposal will not meet the performance requirements for the Screenings Wash Press.

Saveco submittal does not include a screenings wash press which meets the intent and performance requirements as specified.

Minutes

Select Board Meeting
Monday January 29, 2024
6:30 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Draft Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Clerk Julie Gilman, Dan Chartrand, and Nancy Belanger. Vice-Chair Molly Cowan was present via Zoom; she stated that she was alone in the room and that it was not practical to attend in person.

Town Manager Russ Dean and Assistant Town Manager Melissa Roy were also present at this meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 6:30 PM.

2. Non-Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II(d). Ms. Cowan seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

3. Board Interviews

- a. Sean Torrez for the Conservation Commission

The Board reconvened in the Nowak Room at 7:03 PM.

4. Public Comment

- a. Catherine Addison of 12 Connie Road said she is a member of The Friends of Exeter River of Exeter and Brentwood, who are concerned about recent decisions in support of removal of Pickpocket Dam. She said that Mr. Chartrand stated the Select Board only voted to apply for a grant and did not make a decision, but the minutes and video of the meeting made it clear that the motion stated that dam removal was the preferred option. It appears that in spite of Mr. Chartrand's assertions that the Board has already decided the issue. This Board should vote to publicly correct the record and amend their letter to NOAA.

5. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. There were no proclamations or recognitions at this meeting.

6. Bid Opening: Linden Street Bridge Repair

Mr. Dean said that the Linden Street Bridge is also referred to as Second Bridge or Bridge 081-046.

- a. Evroks Corporation from Tilton NH: base bid \$1,129,194; bid alternate \$102,300; and mobilization \$15,000. The total bid is \$1,246,494.

- b. New England Infrastructure Inc, Hudson MA: base bid \$1,358,055; bid alternate \$126,500; and mobilization \$10,000. The total bid is \$1,494,555.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to refer the bids to the Department of Public Works for review and recommendation. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

7. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: January 16, 2024

Corrections: The minutes stated that Mr. Chartrand not present at the December 28 meeting; he was present, but abstained.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the minutes of January 16, 2024 as amended. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

8. Appointments

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Sean Torrez to the Conservation Commission as an alternate, term to expire April 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

9. Resignations

Mr. Papakonstantis accepted with regret the resignation of Lew Hitzrot from the Energy Committee. Ms. Gilman said he was instrumental in moving us to the Community Power Coalition of NH.

10. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Water/Sewer Abatement Request

Scott and Pam Cerrato, the owners of 5 Chestnut Street, were present to discuss their abatement request. Mr. Cerrato said at their property 5 Chestnut Street there was a water issue. The bill was \$19,000 and the Water/Sewer Committee only took off \$4,000. They're still looking for help with that bill. There are 11 units, and a girl who lived in one apartment had a leaky toilet that she didn't tell him about. They've never asked for an abatement before.

Ms. Cowan said this is one of those situations where it's hard and unfortunate. Her recollection of the discussion [in the Water/Sewer Advisory Committee] was that it was out of the ordinary to abate as much as we did.

Bob Kelly, Chair of the Water/Sewer Advisory Committee, said it's the town's policy that if it's inside the meter, it's the ratepayer's responsibility. We have unofficially relaxed that since Covid and have been trying to work with ratepayers. Our concern here was that it spilled over into a second billing period. There was a repair that was made but it didn't take. That's not really the town's responsibility. Because of the volume of leakage, the committee bent over backwards recommending an abatement of \$4,000, which he thinks is a new record. These would be two separate abatements because it's over two quarters; the policy is to abate once in 10 years, so the second quarter would be denied automatically. The Public Works Department is good about setting up payment plans. The committee allowed a 50% abatement of the overage.

Mr. Chartrand said he is loath to see the Select Board take this task back. He's going to stand with what the Water and Sewer Committee advised.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if the abatement is for the August bill. Mr. Kelly said yes, they would abate the first quarter affected rather than the November bill.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked when they first became aware of the issue. Mr. Cerrato said when the bill came in August, he went through the apartments and found the issue. He fixed it but the part was defective so it didn't fix it. The plumber came in October.

Pam Cerrato said this is an 11 unit apartment so there is a lot of opportunity for this to come about. This is low-rent workforce housing. It's not just absorbing the cost for us but the cost could also trickle down to the tenants. We have 17 units in town and we've never come to the town for an abatement.

Ms. Gilman said the Department notified them in June and October, so it wouldn't have been the bill that informed them.

Mr. Papakonstantis said this is one of the highest numbers we've ever abated. He's inclined to agree with the Water/Sewer Commission.

Ms. Belanger said she feels that we have to stick to our policies.

Mr. Chartrand said the workforce housing issue resonates with him. He hopes that they will take advantage of the payment plan. Mr. Dean said he will follow up with the Cerratos.

b. Parks/Recreation Policy Updates: Field Allocation Refund Policy, Town Hall Refund Policy

Parks and Rec Director Greg Bisson was present remotely via Zoom.

Mr. Bisson said last week we had a presidential candidate cancel the night before the event. We didn't have a policy, so we had to refund in full. We thought it would be best to have a policy that if they cancel within 30 days they would not receive a refund. If it's more than 30 days, we'd refund, less a \$50 administration fee. Ms. Belanger asked if the Police detail comes out of the fee. Mr. Bisson said yes.

Mr. Bisson said regarding the field allocation, when we adjusted the fees to make it more affordable for local leagues, we didn't match that in our refund policy. A local league will pay \$10 per 1.5 hours for Rec Park and Brickyard. We can't get a \$25 cancellation fee from a \$10 fee. We thought a 50% refund would be appropriate.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Parks and Rec new field allocation refund policy of 50% of the fee per day provided written notice of cancellation is submitted no later than 21 days prior to the field use date. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Parks and Rec new Town Hall refund policy of a full refund minus a \$50 administration fee provided cancellation is submitted in writing before 30 days of the event. No refund will be granted if the request is within 30 days of the event. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Bisson said with the acquisition of Planet Playground, we'd like to use the Rec Revolving Fund to remove four trees. Last summer several branches fell off. Will Curtis of Curtis Tree Care noticed rot and insect activity. The ash tree shows signs of the ash borer beetle. We need to remove them before anyone gets hurt. It requires an 150 ton crane to reach across the playground. There are two companies that have this equipment: Noel's Tree Service and Seacoast Tree.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if we approve the removal of these trees, do we need to get authorization of the Tree Committee? Mr. Dean said maybe the Tree Warden, but not the Tree Committee. Mr. Papakonstantis said his recollection of the Tree Ordinance is that removal of trees on public property has to be put by the Tree Committee. Mr. Bisson said he already let the Chair of the Tree Committee know. Mr. Papakonstantis said he was at the previous committee meeting and it was not discussed.

Ms. Roy said this is a safety concern. The ash tree is diseased. This isn't an aesthetic decision. Mr. Dean read from the tree ordinance: *"A significant public tree, defined as having a diameter larger than 20", may be removed only following consultation with the Tree Committee, and only after the opportunity for public input at a Tree Committee meeting, except where delay in the removal of the tree would pose an imminent threat to public safety or property."*

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to allow the Parks and Rec Department to expend \$7,750 from the Recreation Revolving fund to enter into a contract with Seacoast Tree Care to remove four trees from around Planet Playground for the safety of our residents. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Belanger asked how much money is in that fund, and Mr. Bisson said \$121,000. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

c. Tax Exemption Committee Proposal

Mr. Dean said a proposed Tax Exemption Advisory Committee would be charged with reviewing the town's exemption and credit programs to maintain fairness. This was something the Master Plan recommended be addressed. This committee would be a 5 members, with one Select Board member. It would review the current exemptions and credits. We could consider expanded Veteran's Credits; there has been legislation that has expanded the Veteran's Credits program but we haven't followed up on it. The committee could recommend any changes for the 2025 Town Meeting and could remain a standing committee to make recommendations to the town on a yearly basis. The Housing Advisory Committee would be involved because of their work on 79E.

Ms. Gilman said on the State level, exemptions and credits are changed every year. Some of them need to be adopted by town vote, or the amount is set by town vote; some of them are just policies. The committee could meet just once or twice a year around the State legislation being made. Mr. Dean said he thought the committee could meet once a month to start because there is a learning curve to learn all the different exemptions.

Ms. Belanger asked if their role would be vetting any individual exemptions. Mr. Dean said no, this would be looking at the big picture, policy, and cost.

Mr. Chartrand said he thinks this committee is a great idea. Anytime we give a particular group of property owners an exemption, all the other property owners pay for that exemption. The exemptions weren't put together holistically and did not consider how much tax obligation was being put on the other citizens.

Ms. Belanger asked if they considered three members instead of five, since we have so many committee vacancies. Mr. Dean said it would be four plus a Select Board member. Mr. Chartrand said he thinks we will have folks interested.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked who the staff liaison to the committee would be. Mr. Dean said himself, but also the Assessor's office.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to implement a Tax Exemption and Credit Advisory Committee to be made up of 5 voting members, one Select Board member, to serve staggered terms. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

d. SB533 on Virtual Meetings

Ms. Gilman said this is a bill being heard by the Senate Judiciary Committee Thursday. It has to do with the physical presence of a quorum of a committee, commission, etc. This would allow for all but two people to be remote. During the shutdown when people could participate remotely, we had an increase in volunteerism. She would like the Select Board to sign a letter in support of this bill.

Mr. Papakonstantis said this is more inclusive for folks such as those with small children, those with mobility issues, and those who don't want to drive at night.

Ms. Belanger asked if Mr. Dean could create a short letter in support that the Board could sign.

Mr. Chartrand said moving toward hybrid models of meeting will increase the number of people who can participate and increase the vibrancy of town government.

Ms. Cowan said it's important to have a diversity of views. We miss out when we require in-person-only volunteering.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to authorize the Town Manager to write a letter of support for SB 533 relative to the physical quorums at public meetings to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

11. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 72/106 in the amount of \$1,194.39 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve Veteran's Credits for 70/15 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve Veteran's Credits for 82/7/4 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve Veteran's Credits for 90/18/2 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve Veteran's Credits for 85/68 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 104/79/806 in the amount of \$152,251 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

The permit was discussed earlier in the meeting.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Deliberative Session is Saturday at 9 AM.
- ii. We posted the warrants today. We'll have our explanatory factsheets ready to go by tomorrow or Wednesday.
- iii. We got a proposal regarding the master meter residential issues.
- iv. We responded to a Pickpocket Dam 91A request.
- v. He's working on the Town Report, and thanked Pam McElroy for her work on it.
- vi. We're continuing to recruit for positions, and getting some applications in.
- vii. The groundwater letter of intent with PEA has been finalized. We're waiting to hear back from their trustees.
- viii. There was a Town Hall Zoom meeting with the consultants for the Town Hall project. The next step is to have a stakeholders meeting.
- ix. We signed the P&S for Planet Playground. Now we need to schedule a closing.
- x. Town and City Magazine is going to do a profile of Renay Allen for their next issue, as well as Lang Plumer and Laura Davies.
- xi. The siphons are up to 388 linear feet. The project is on schedule.

d. Deliberative Session

Mr. Papakonstantis said he doesn't think it's imperative that the Board speak to each article at Deliberative Session, but there are a few we should take ownership of. He would be interested in presenting Article 4 and showing the video. Mr. Chartrand will take Article 5. Ms. Gilman will take 7 and 8. Ms. Cowan will take Article 13 on Planet Playground. Mr. Papakonstantis will discuss the Trustees' investment services. Ms. Gilman will discuss the Solar Array Revolving Fund. Article 22 and 23 will go with the two committee reps, Ms. Gilman for Heritage and Ms. Cowan for Sewer Advisory.

e. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Belanger had a Planning Board meeting, where there was a final public hearing on the zoning amendments. There was a field modification

that our Town Planner takes care of. They hit ledge and had to move their drainage system.

- ii. Ms. Gilman attended the Energy Committee. They said goodbye to Lew, and there is a new volunteer. They went over the events calendar. They reviewed the window dressings program for indoor storm windows; they will make a decision by June on whether to do it this year. They talked about changing monthly meeting dates to 10 AM on the third Wednesday of every month.
- iii. Mr. Chartrand attended a meeting with the Chairs of the Energy and Sustainability Advisory Committees. There is a plan for one joint meeting in February.
- iv. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- v. Mr. Papakonstantis attended a Swasey Parkway Trustee meeting. Jen Martel went over her proposed plan. The Trustees discussed the flooding downtown and how we need to start paying attention. They suggested having life jackets on the Parkway.

f. Correspondence

- i. Ms. Gilman gave an update on State issues.
- ii. An NHMA Legislative Bulletin
- iii. A fact sheet and Q&A for the Exeter/Newfields property purchase.
- iv. A letter relative to Pairpoint Park with ideas and thoughts. Mr. Papakonstantis would like to put this on an agenda in February.

12. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meetings are February 12, February 26, March 4, and March 18. Deliberative Session is February 3, and Town Election is March 12.

13. Non-Public Session

- a. There was no non-public session at this time.

14. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

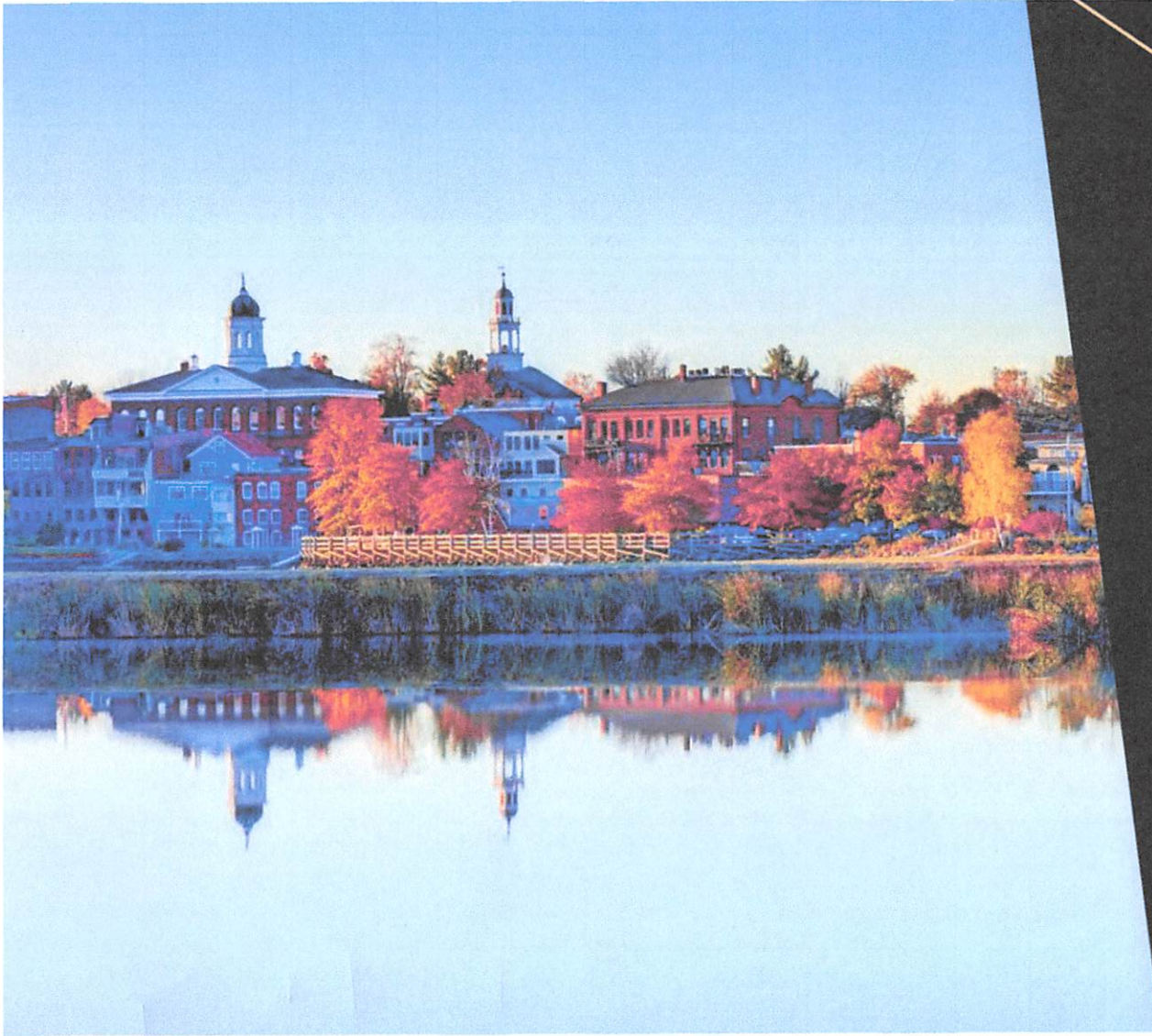
Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary

Appointments

Resignations

Discussion/Action Items

Bill Keegan Associates Presentation: Organizational Study



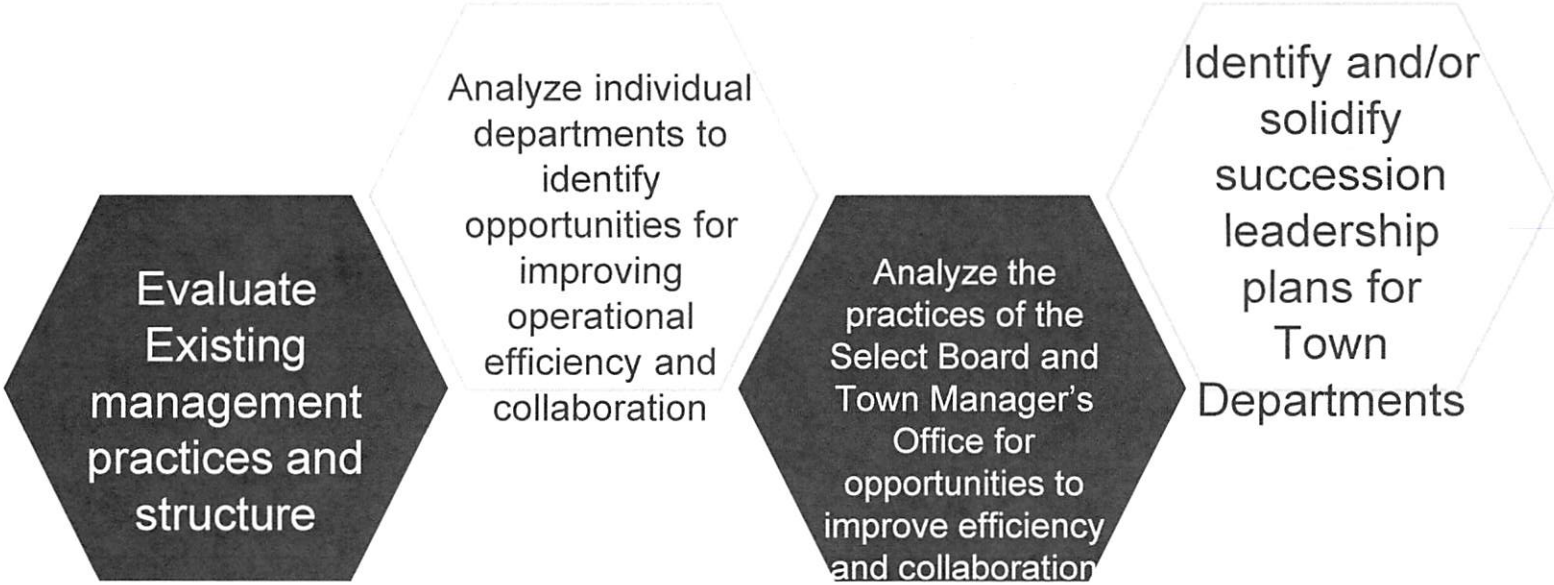
KEEGAN ASSOCIATES
MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Town of Exeter, New Hampshire

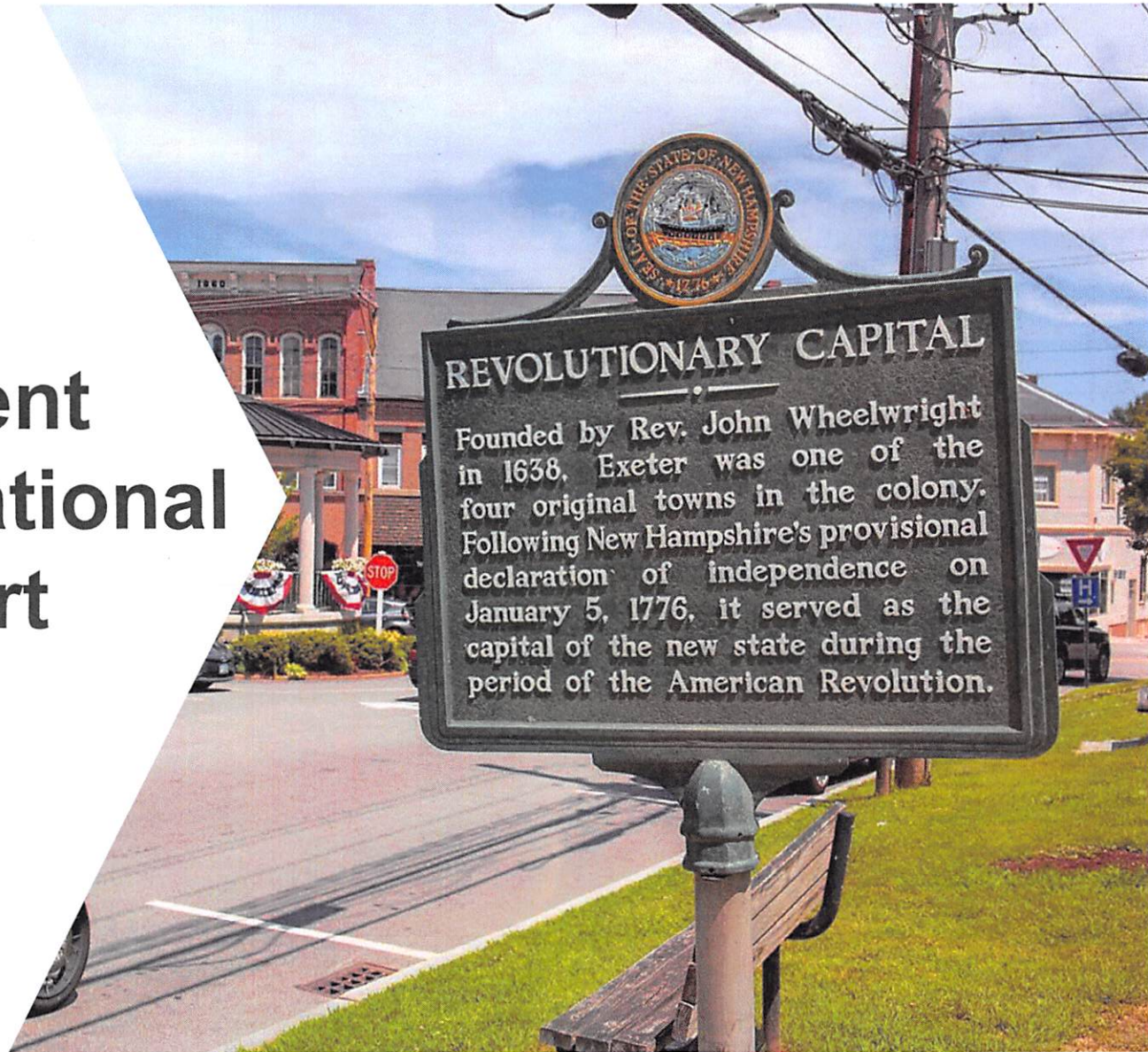
Management Study and
Strategic Recommendations

February 2024
WG Keegan Associates

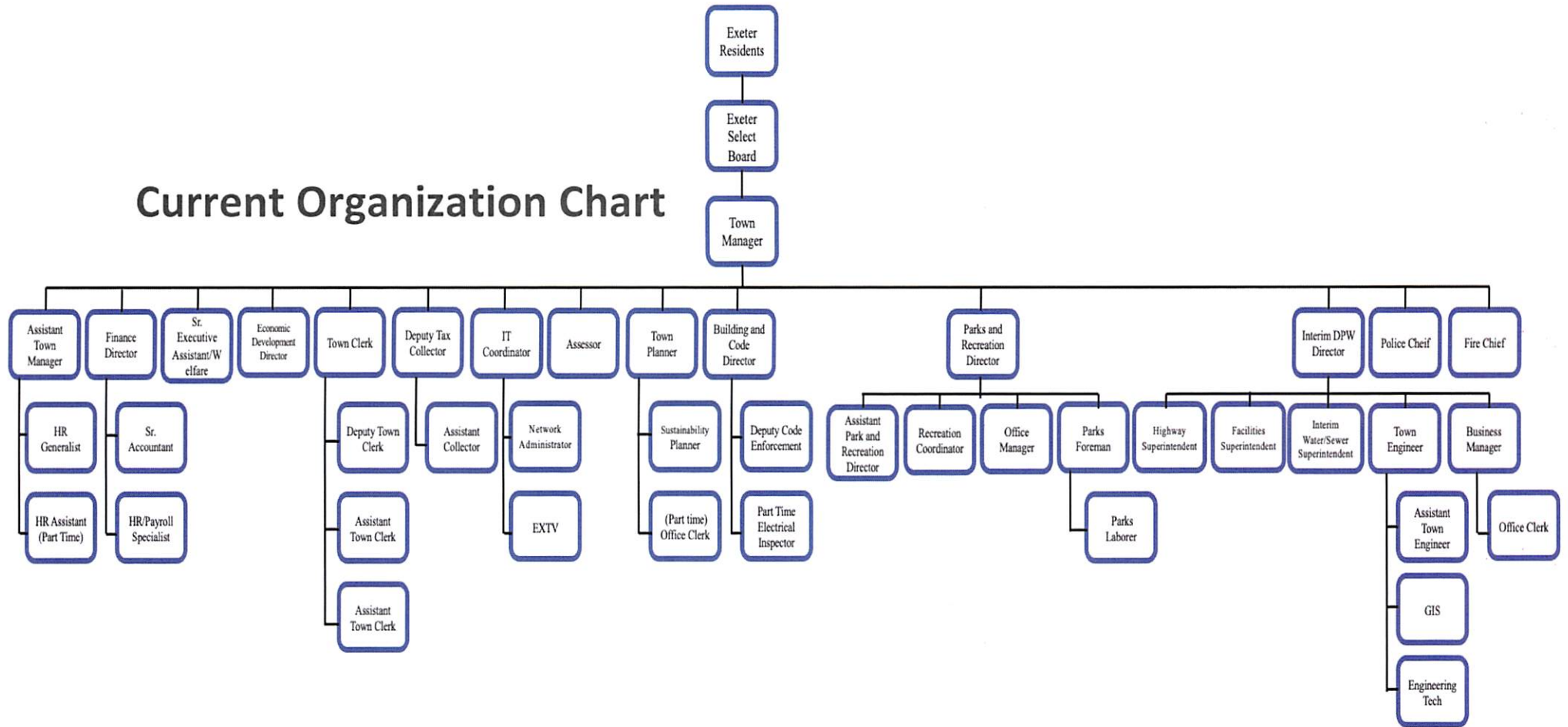
Project Overview and Purpose



Current Organizational Chart



Current Organization Chart



Interview of Department Heads, Key Personnel, and Town Officials

Meetings were held with representatives from each of the operating departments

The purpose of the meetings was to identify how their departments currently operate and to understand working relationships with other departments, with the Administration, the Select Board and the public

The meetings also helped to reveal what worked well and things that could be improved

Departments were forth coming about what their organizational needs were and what changes they thought might be helpful for them to do their jobs better

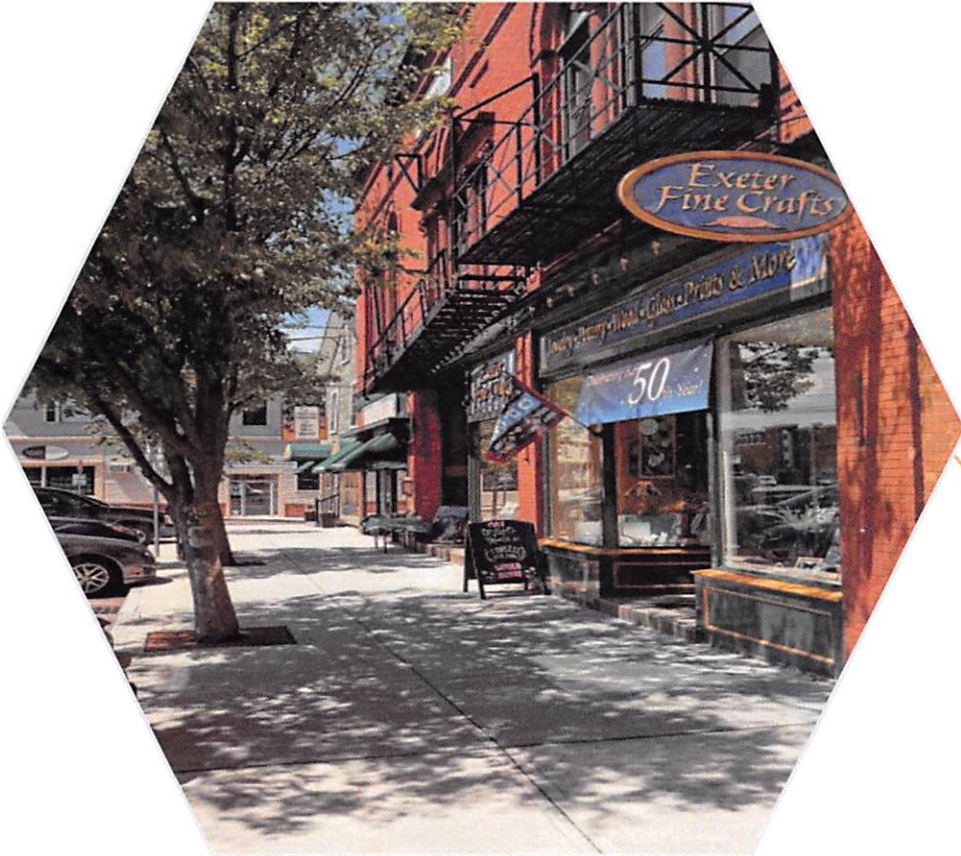
The range of responses were wide-spread. Some departments felt that their organizations operated well, and others identified some important gaps that should be

Some of the More Notable Issues

Filling Vacant Positions - Some positions, most notably in Public Works, have been vacant for more than a year and the absences are taking a toll on those existing employees who are keeping the operations functioning

The Inability to Retain Good Talent - This concern is almost universal in local government and is attributed to many different factors such as a highly transient labor market and competing wage scales from both the public and private sectors

The Lack of Ability to Grow Talent from Within the Organization - This is something we can help address but it needs to be an important component of the Town's strategic hiring and retention plans





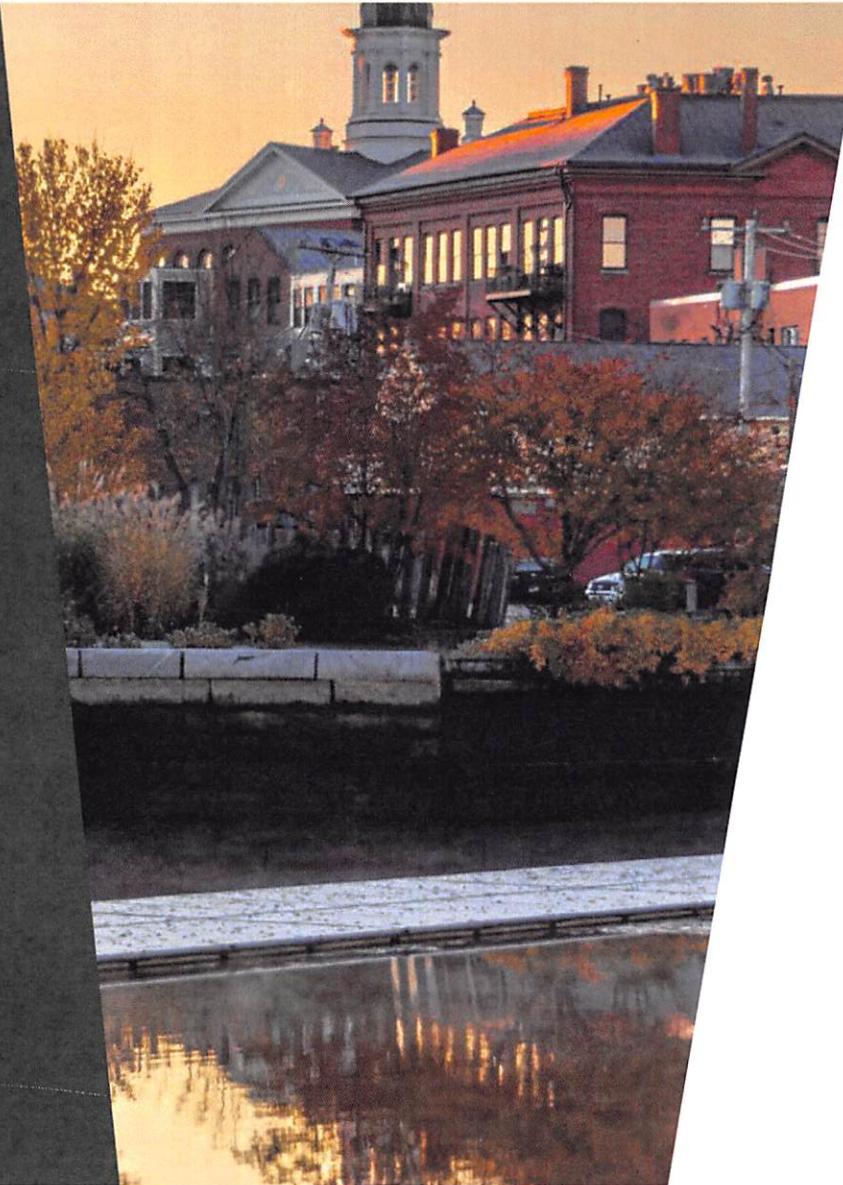
The Existing Organization

- The Town of Exeter currently operates under the Select Board/Town Manager form of leadership in the local government. The Select Board serve as the chief executive and policy making board for the Town. The Town Manager serves as the chief administrative officer of the Town
- There are currently fifteen (15) operating departments all reporting directly or indirectly to the Town Manager
- This includes administration of Welfare which operates out of the Town Manager's Office
- This high number of direct reports to one individual is simply an inefficient organizational design that is difficult for any one person to manage under the best of circumstances

The Existing Organization

The Current Number of Direct Reports to the Town Manager Include:

- 1) Assistant Town Manager which includes Human Resources,
- 2) Senior Executive Assistant which includes Welfare Administration
- 3) Police Department, which includes 911 Communications,
- 4) Fire/EMS Department, which includes the Health Division,
- 5) Planning and Sustainability, which includes Planning and Conservation,
- 6) Building Inspection, Zoning and Code Enforcement,
- 7) Economic Development,
- 8) Public Works, which includes Engineering, Water, Sewer, Highway, Facilities, Trash Collection and Recycling,
- 9) Parks and Recreation,
- 10) Finance and Accounting,
- 11) Tax, Water and Sewer Bill Collection,
- 12) Assessing,
- 13) Information Technology
- 14) Town Clerk (Indirect report since this position is elected)
- 15) Communications



The Existing Organization

- The number of direct reports to the Town Manager should be reduced so that the TM can focus on strategic initiatives while working more directly with the Select Board and the community

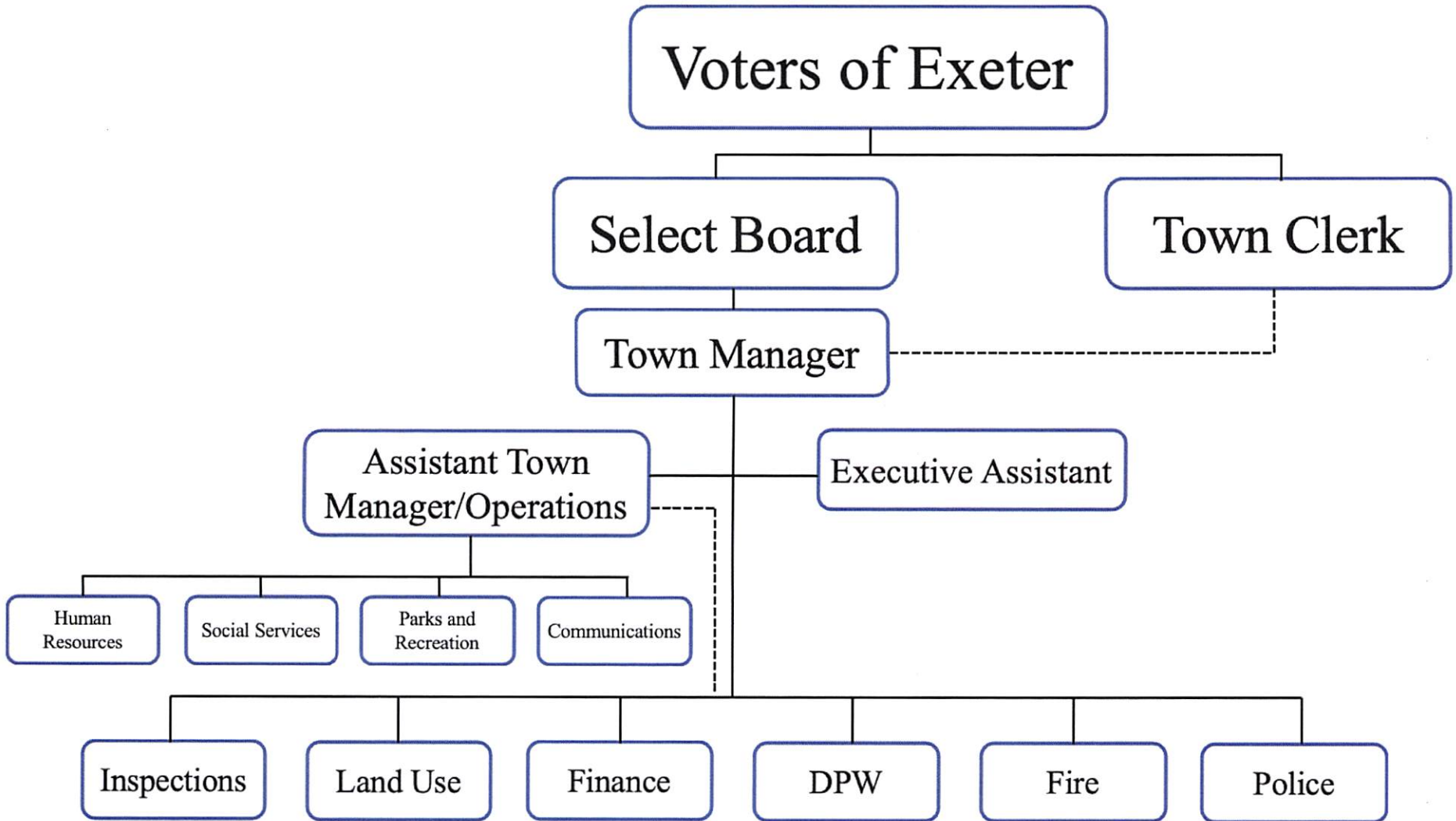
- The number of staff in the Town Manager's Office is inefficiently low and offers virtually no backup when there is an absence in the Office

- Communication throughout the organization could be improved. If there were fewer direct reports with a more consolidated leadership team, the outcomes should correspondingly improve



Proposed Organization Chart





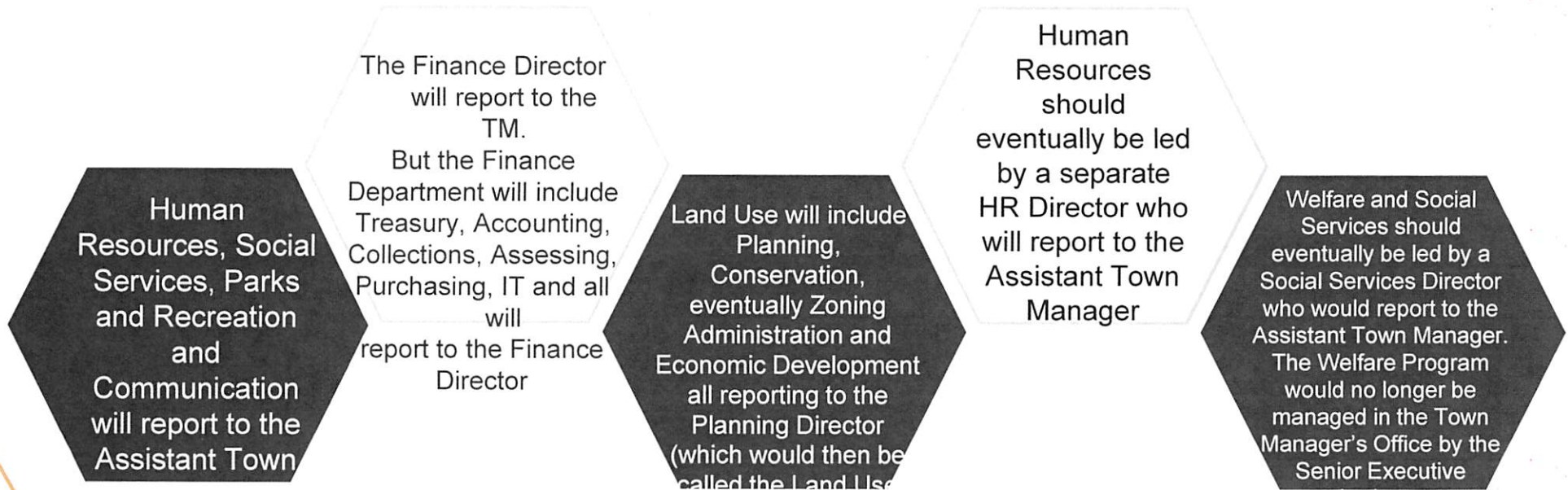
The Proposed Organization Chart

Significant Changes:

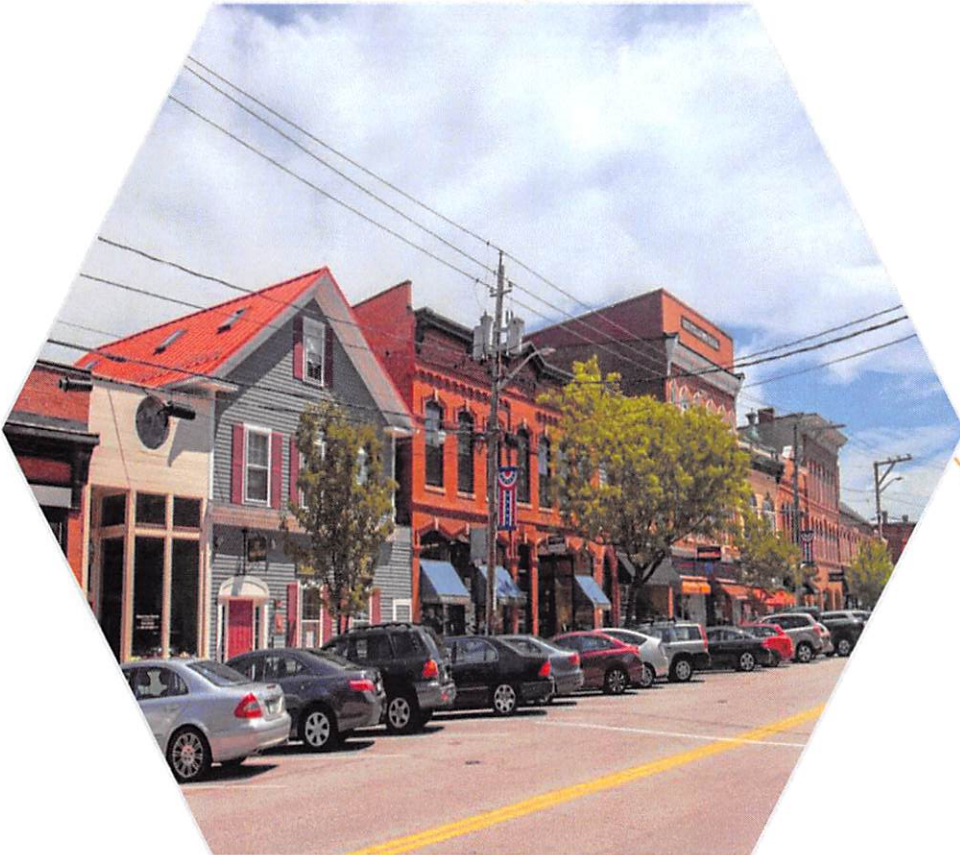
- Currently there are fifteen operating departments who all report directly or indirectly to the Town Manager
- Under the proposed changes, seven (7) consolidated departments will report directly to the Town Manager and four (4) departments will report directly to the Assistant Town Manager
- Finance, DPW, Police, Fire, Land Use, Inspections and Town Clerk will report directly to the Town Manager. Town Clerk will remain elected but will still report to the Town Manager regarding day-to-day operations.



The Proposed Organization Chart



The Proposed Organization Chart



- Communications is the newest division in the Town Manager's Office. The Communications Coordinator will report to the Assistant Town Manager. However, the Coordinator will also work with the TM, ATM, Department Heads and the Select Board regarding the communications strategy for the Town
- Inspections and Code Enforcement will continue to report directly to the Town Manager until such point that Inspections can realistically be housed with the Fire Department. When that occurs, the Inspector would then report to Fire Administration. The Zoning Administration responsibilities of the Inspector should then be relocated to the new Land Use Department but that can only occur when an additional planning professional can be added to the Land Use Department's staff.

The Proposed Organization Chart

- The Police Department should add a third Lieutenant to the ranks which will help to balance the administrative responsibilities of the department. It will also help to manage shift responsibilities when one of the current two Lieutenants is off-duty, for whatever reason.
- Even though DPW is one of the most challenged departments with respect to filling vacancies, it does have a very well-structured department. The one significant change would be to take the Town Engineer position and redefine it as the Deputy DPW Director. That creates a clear path for succession while helping to balance the workload for the DPW Director.



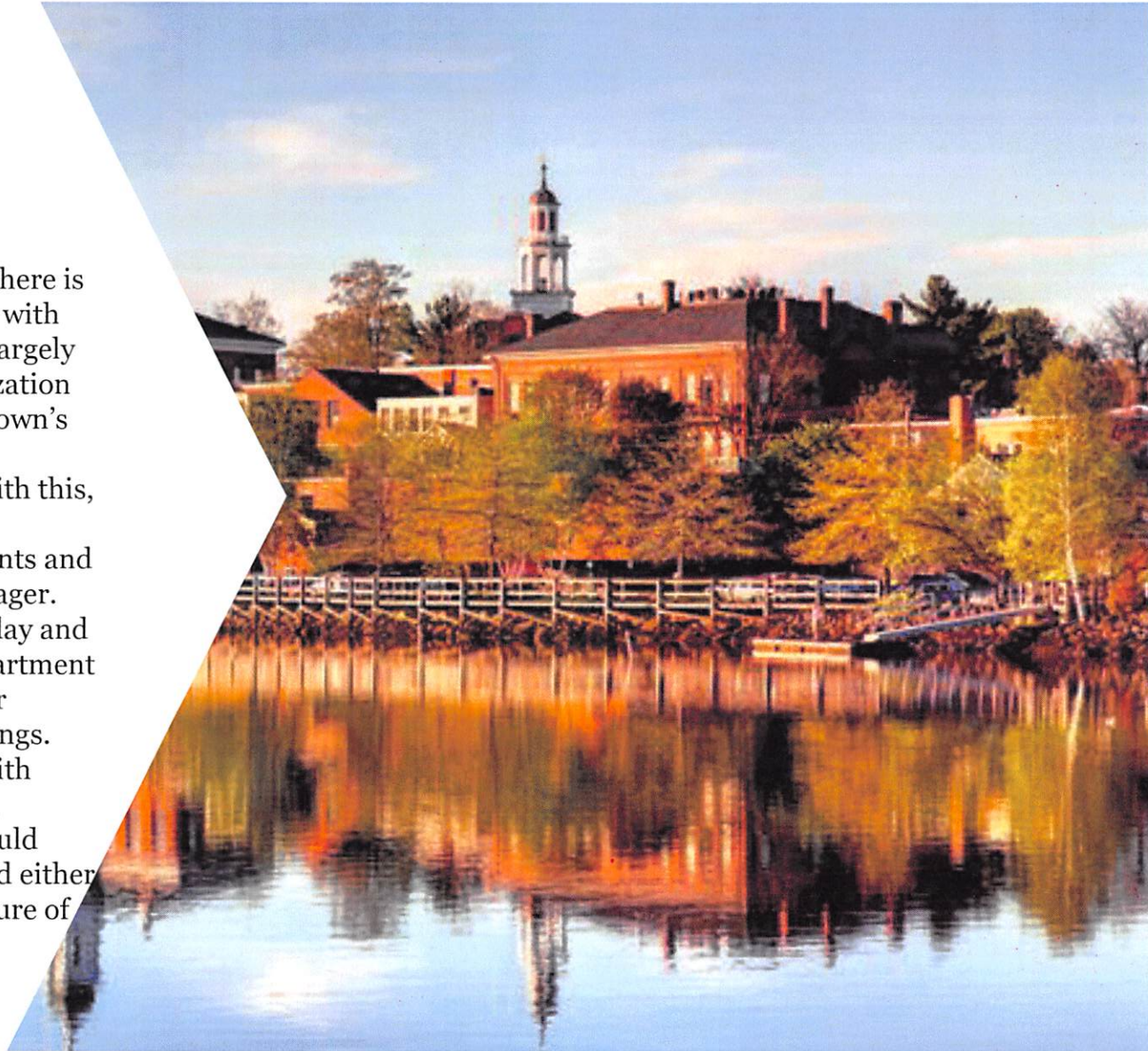
An aerial photograph of a town, likely in Vermont, showing a large red brick building with a white dome, a river, and colorful autumn foliage. The image is partially obscured by a white triangular graphic element.

The Proposed Organization Chart

- Parks and Recreation will now report to the Assistant Town Manager, but they also need some additional staff support to keep their programs current and vibrant
- Additional assistance includes someone to lead new Senior Citizen Programs, particularly as the population of the community continues to age
- Additional assistance is needed in the Parks Maintenance Area. With only two individuals assigned to this responsibility, it would be difficult under any conditions to stay ahead of the workload

Internal Communications Improvements

- Throughout my time in Exeter, I noted that there is an organizational tendency to become siloed with respect to internal communications. This is largely driven by the current structure of the organization and the competing demands placed on the Town's administration.
- A more streamlined organization will help with this, but we are also suggesting that weekly team meetings be held between the new departments and the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager. This meeting would be held on a consistent day and time and would be limited to one hour. Department Heads would be responsible for keeping their departments informed following those meetings.
- The Town Manager and ATM should meet with Chair of the Select Board weekly (Zoom or in Person), and the Town Manager or ATM should keep the remaining Board members informed either by telephone or e-mail depending on the nature of the topics that week.



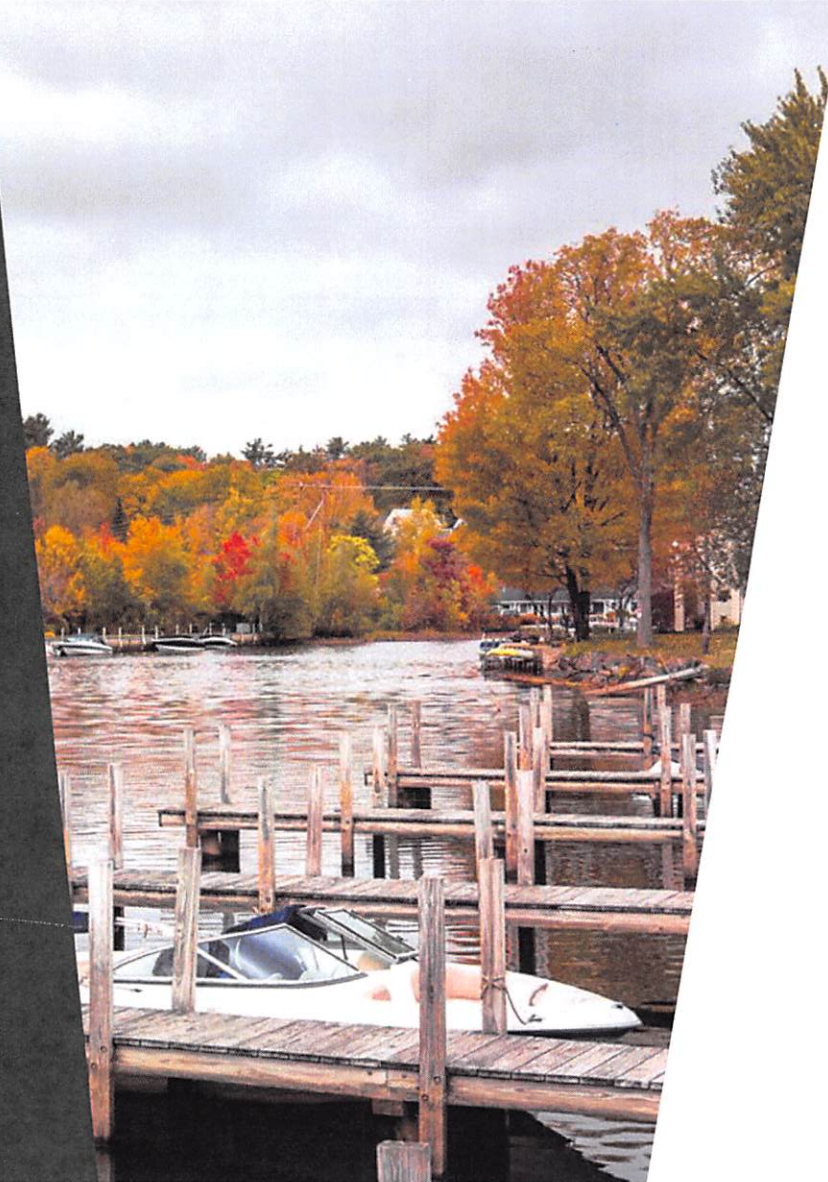
Proactive Labor Meetings

- During the meetings with the three labor unions, there were some common themes that emerged from those discussions
- Meetings beyond grievances and labor negotiations generally do not occur with the Unions
- The Unions share concerns over the Towns inability to fill positions
- There is a perception that the Towns wage and compensation offerings are not competitive in this region's market
- An opportunity exists to work with labor to develop ideas, options and possible solutions that might proactively help to address these concerns



Succession Planning

- There are several departments where succession planning has been established for the future leadership of that organization while a few have not
- Departments that have taken this important step include:
 - Administration
 - Police
 - Fire
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Town Clerk
 - Information Technology



Succession Planning

Departments who **have not** taken this step include:

- Planning and Sustainability
 - Building Inspection
- Economic Development
 - Public Works
- Human Resources
 - Social Services
- Finance, Assessing, Collections, Treasury, Accounting

Succession Planning

- Departments that have not planned for succession have been limited by low staffing levels, vacancies at the top of their departments or limited interest in promotion from existing employees
- Succession planning for these departments must be a consideration for any future recruitments. Succession planning begins at the lowest hiring level of an organization.
- Hiring decisions should be based on an assessment of sound skill sets and not just experience
- A formalized employee development program is needed for all levels of the organization
- The entire organization should develop “Succession Binders” for each position





Next Steps

- Review, Discuss and Determine which of the proposed organizational changes make sense
- Develop an implementation strategy and potential timeline for changes that is realistic and responsive
- Develop a financing strategy for staffing additions that can be addressed in the short and long term
- Identify professional development plans for those individuals who have a defined path toward a leadership role
- Evaluate job descriptions and salary plans for individuals taking on expanded roles and responsibilities; identify changes as necessary
- Provide coaching and mentoring to the leadership team and to those individuals who will be taking on expanded department head roles

Stantec Consultants: Downtown Parking, Pedestrian & Traffic Study Results



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.



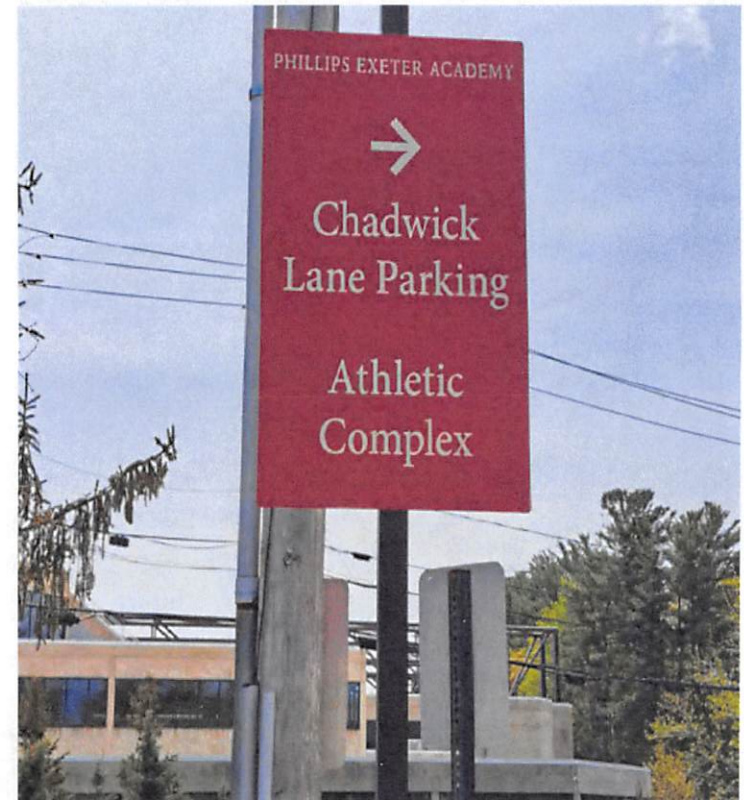


Executive Summary

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.



01



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

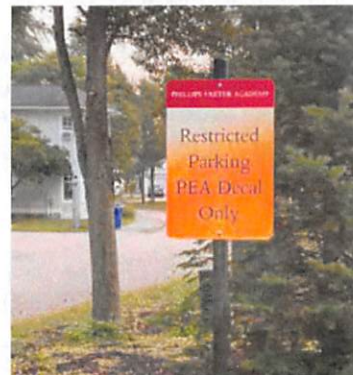


The parking system in Exeter today – Regulation Signage

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.*

02 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



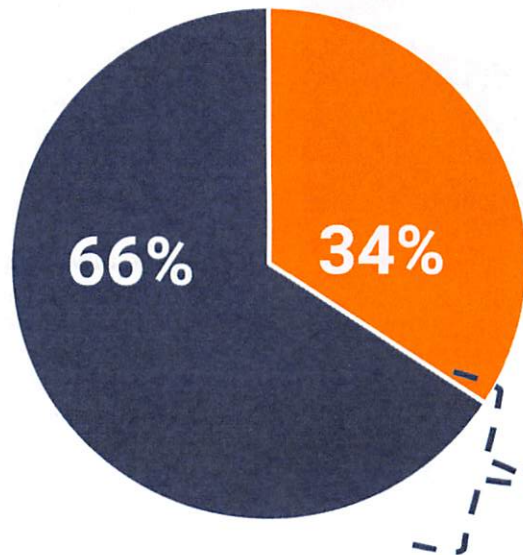


Parking Inventory

THE INVENTORY BY PARKING TYPE

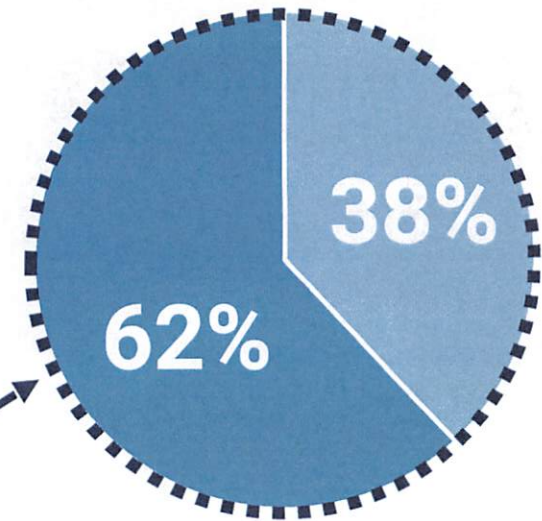
The majority of Exeter's overall inventory is off-street but the majority of the off-street supply is **restricted to the public**. In essence, restricted spaces can be considered as unavailable within the publicly available inventory. Communities across New England and the nation have identified opportunities 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. OFFSTREET
(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 Phillips Exeter Academy students, faculty, and employees were analyzed as part of this study.*

included in the inventory and



Parking Utilization - Data Approach and Intent

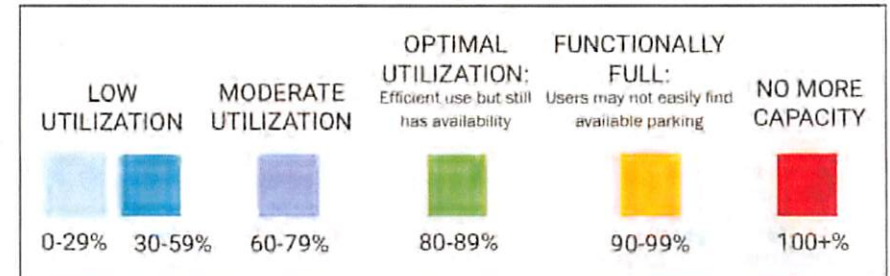
HOW TO READ THE CHARTS

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.

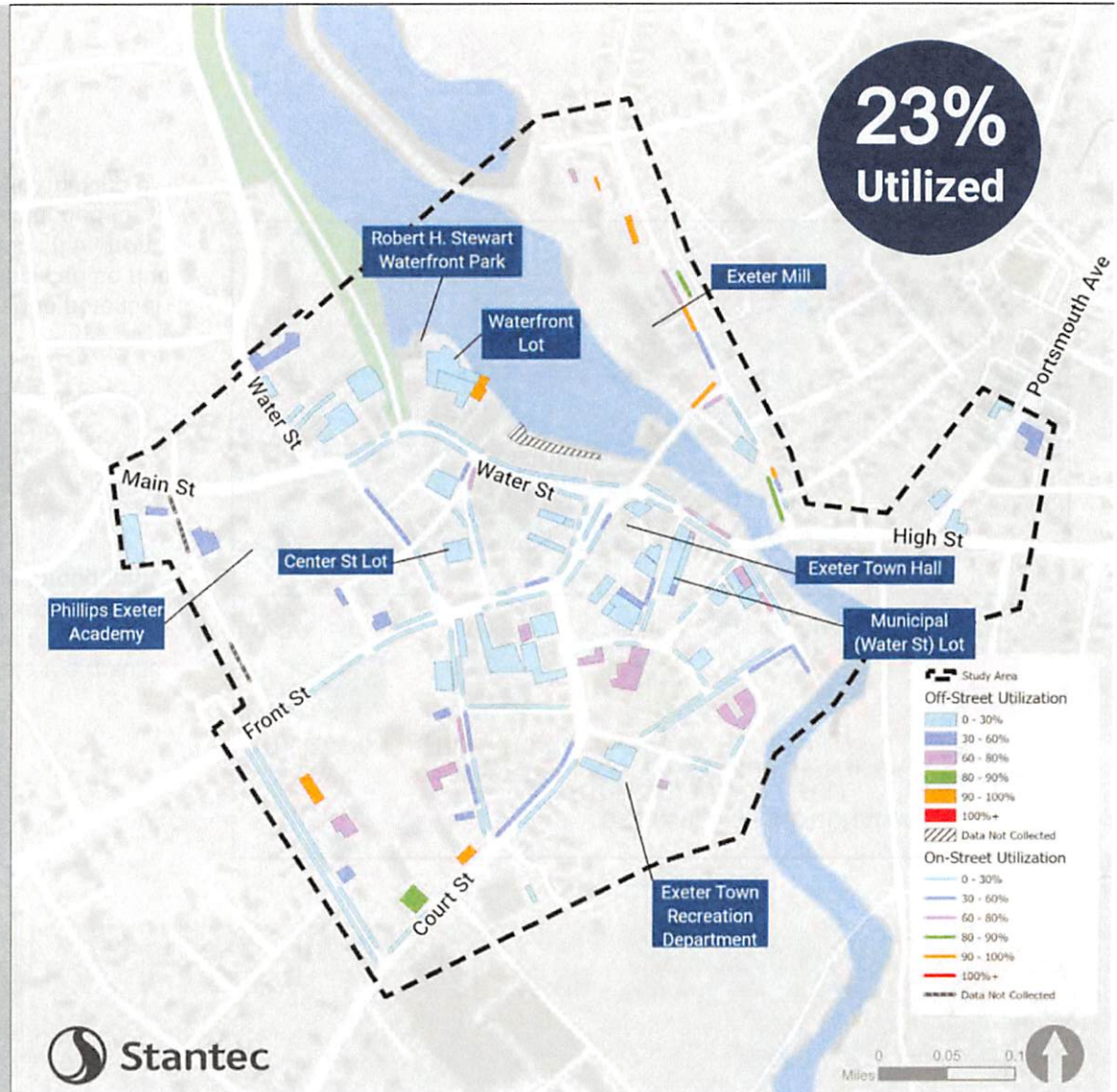
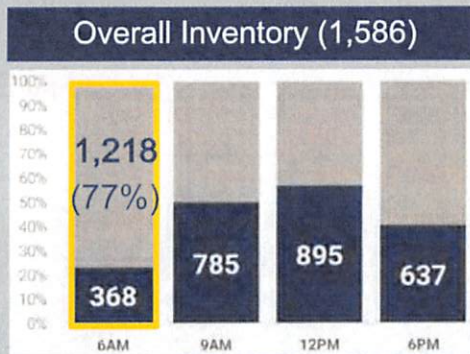


Parking Utilization - Weekday

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

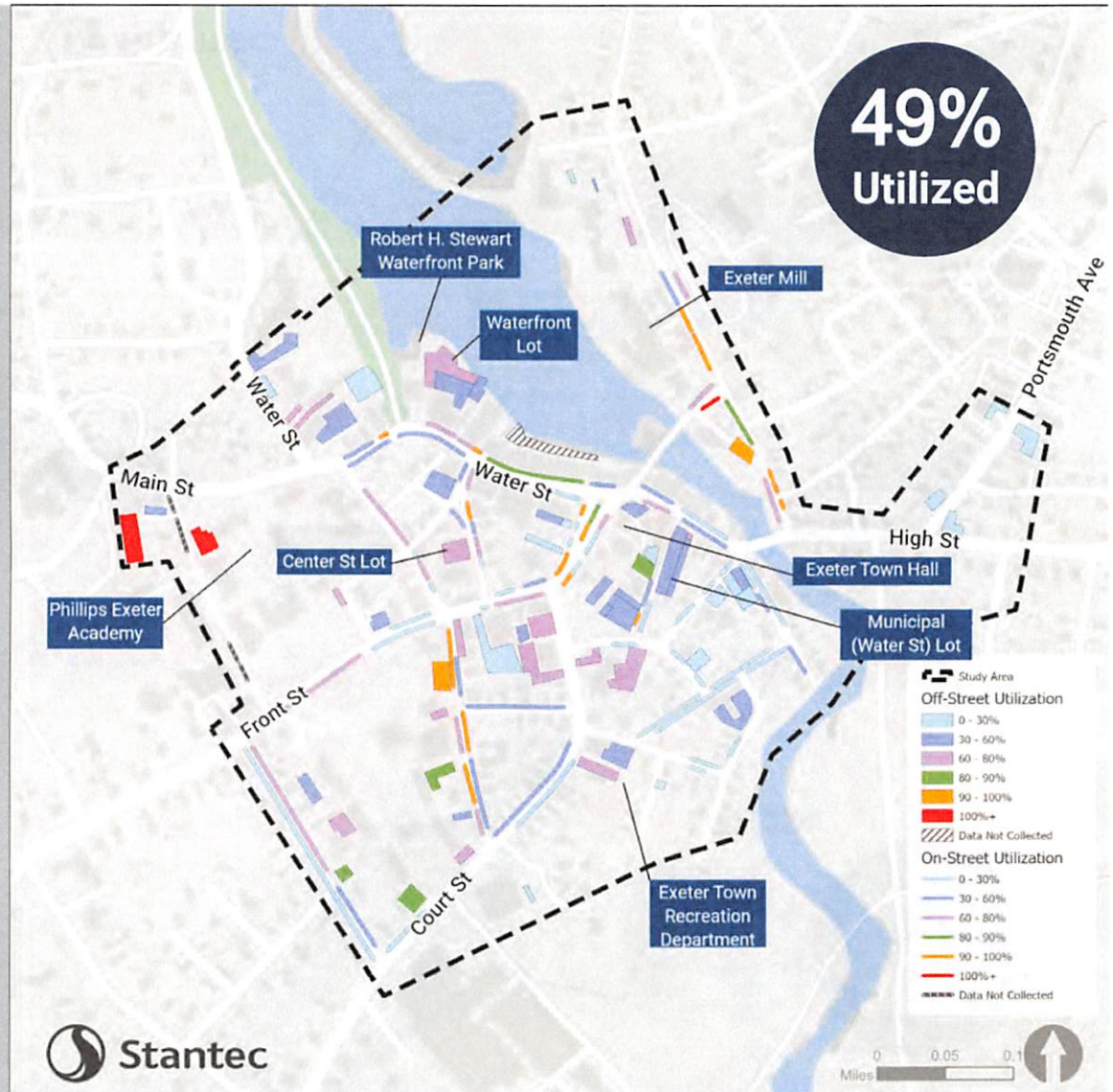
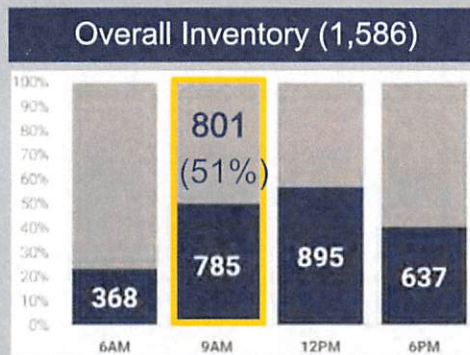


Parking Utilization - Weekday

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

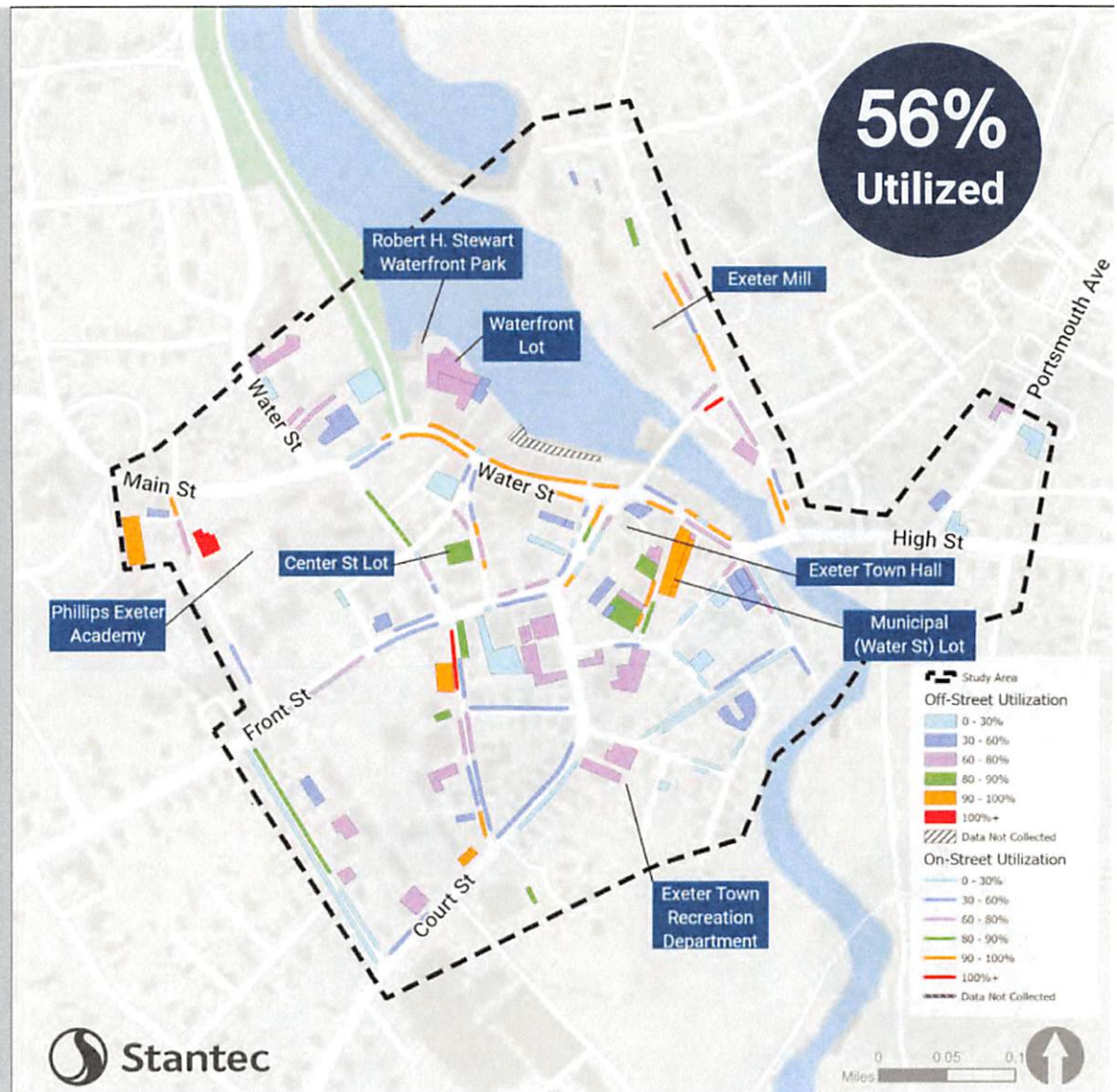
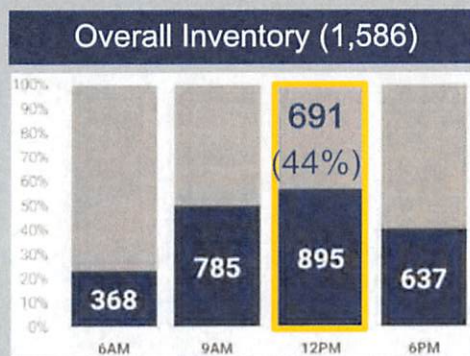


Parking Utilization - Weekday

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

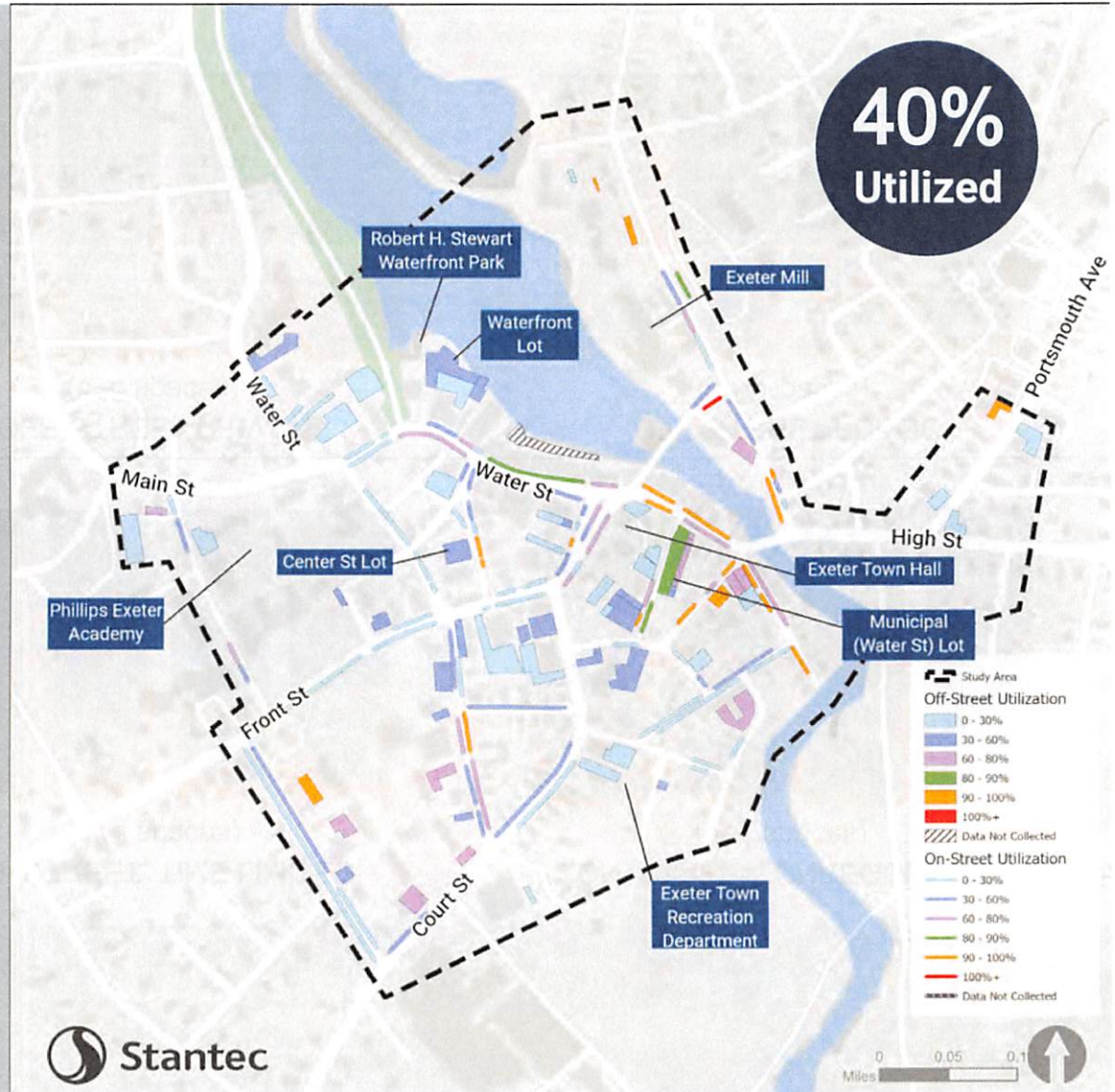
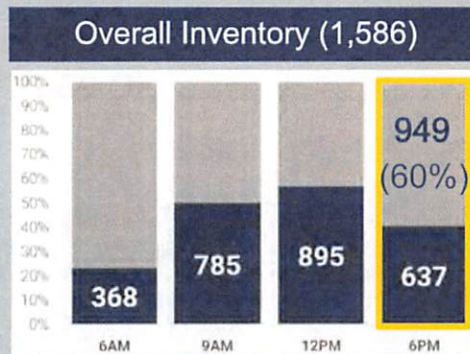


Parking Utilization - Weekday

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

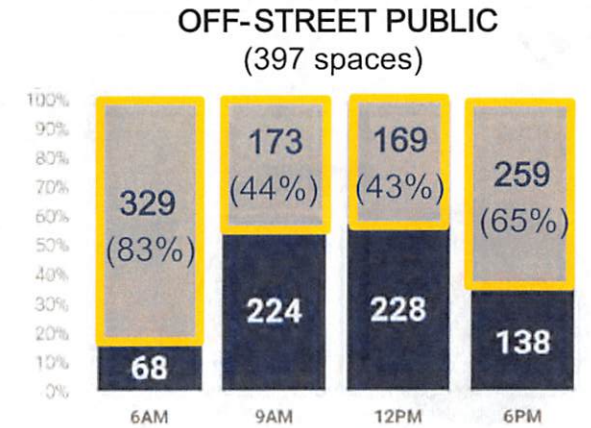
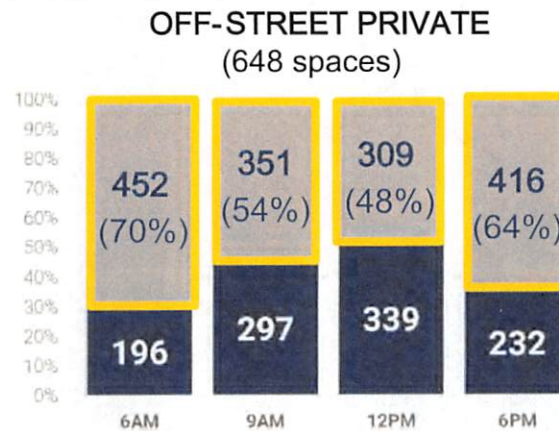
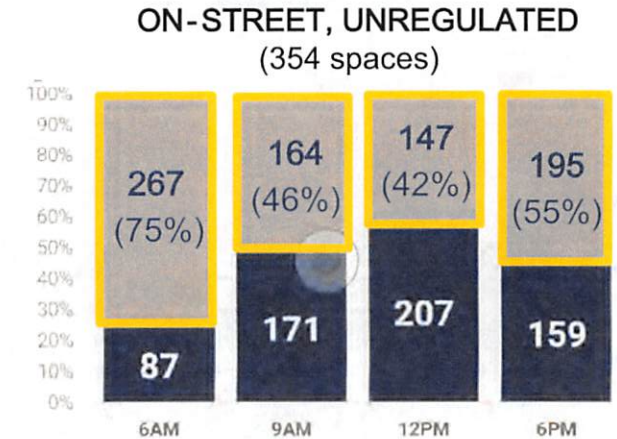
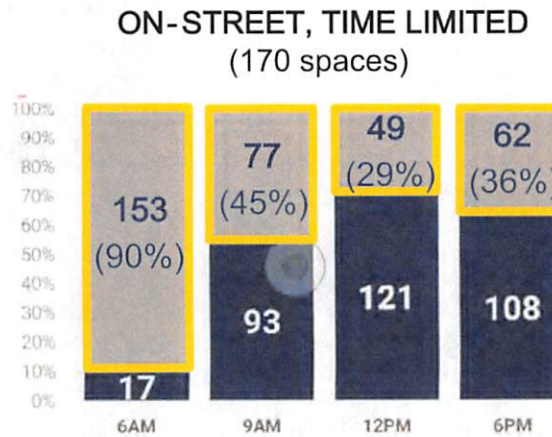
HOW DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARKING WERE UTILIZED

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

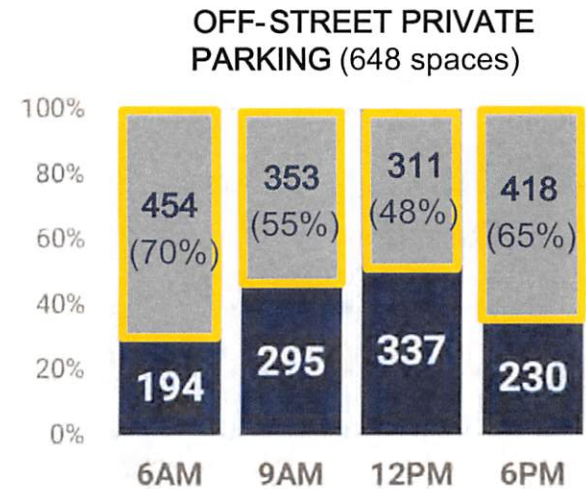
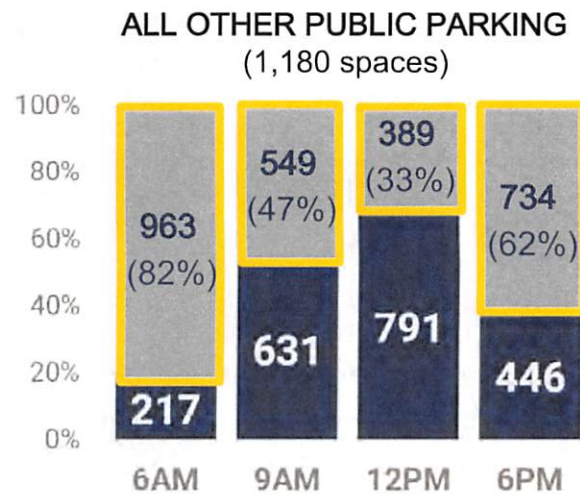
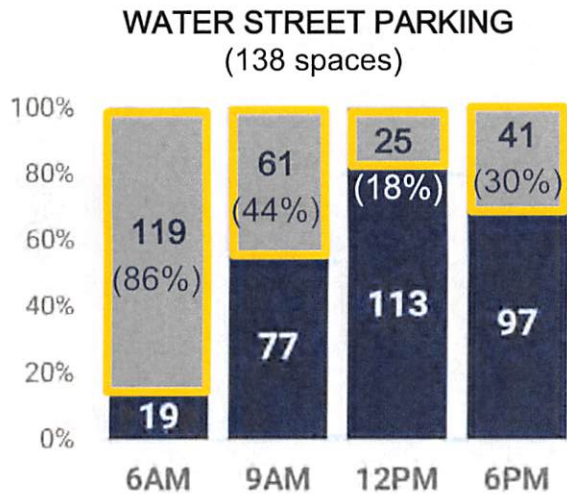
- Both off-street private and off-street public Similar patterns of usage throughout the day
- Over 475 vacant off-street spaces remain at peak (309 private; 169 public)





Parking Utilization - Weekday

HOW DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARKING WERE UTILIZED



- 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

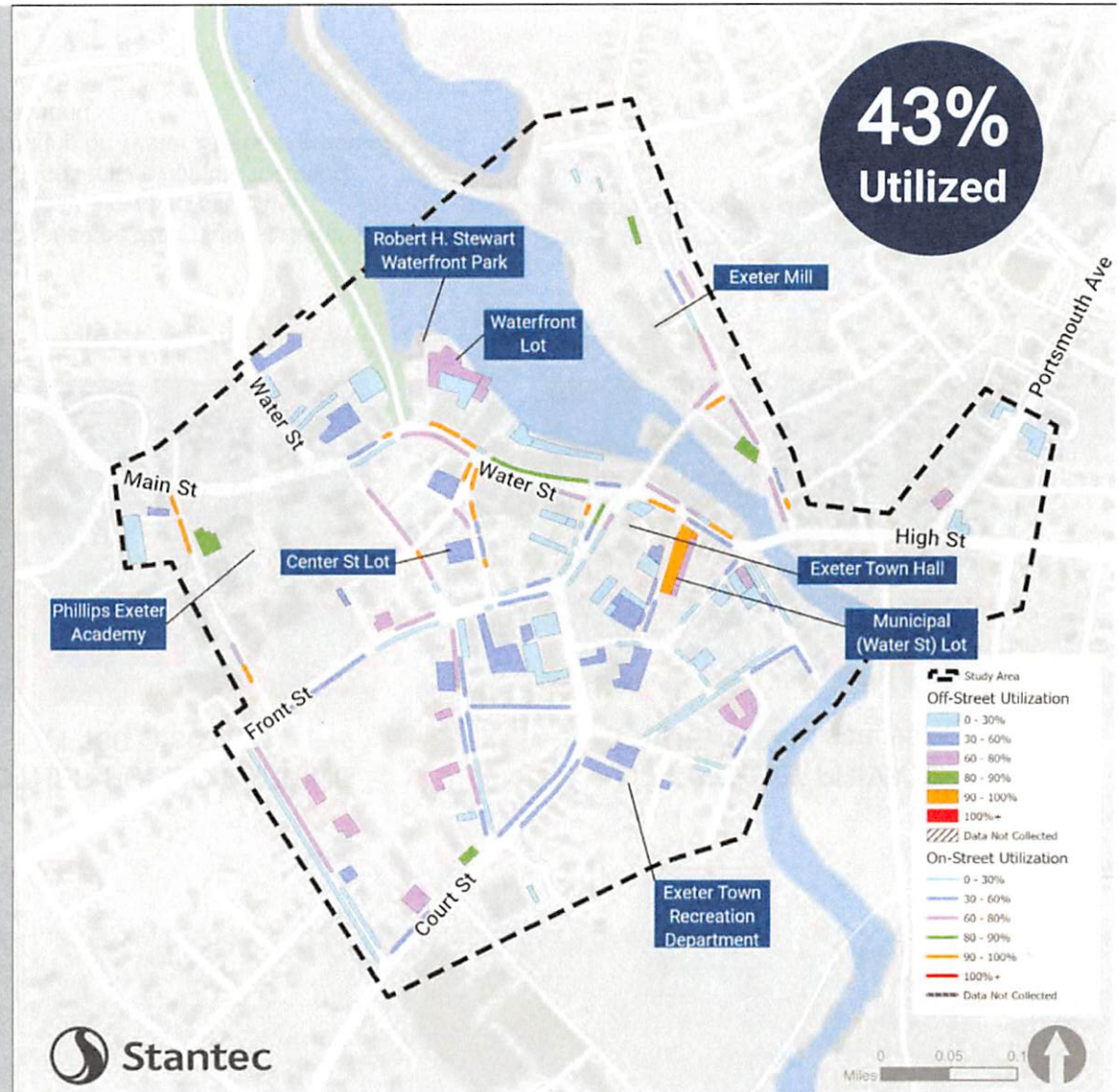
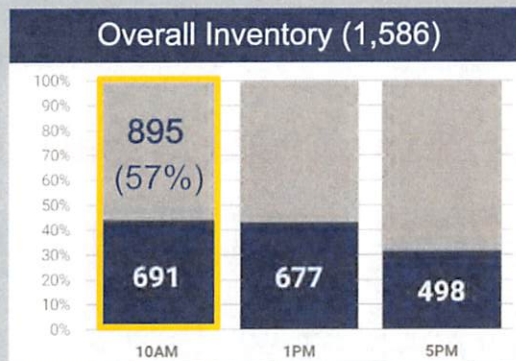
- These spaces have 48% or more capacity throughout the entire day

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

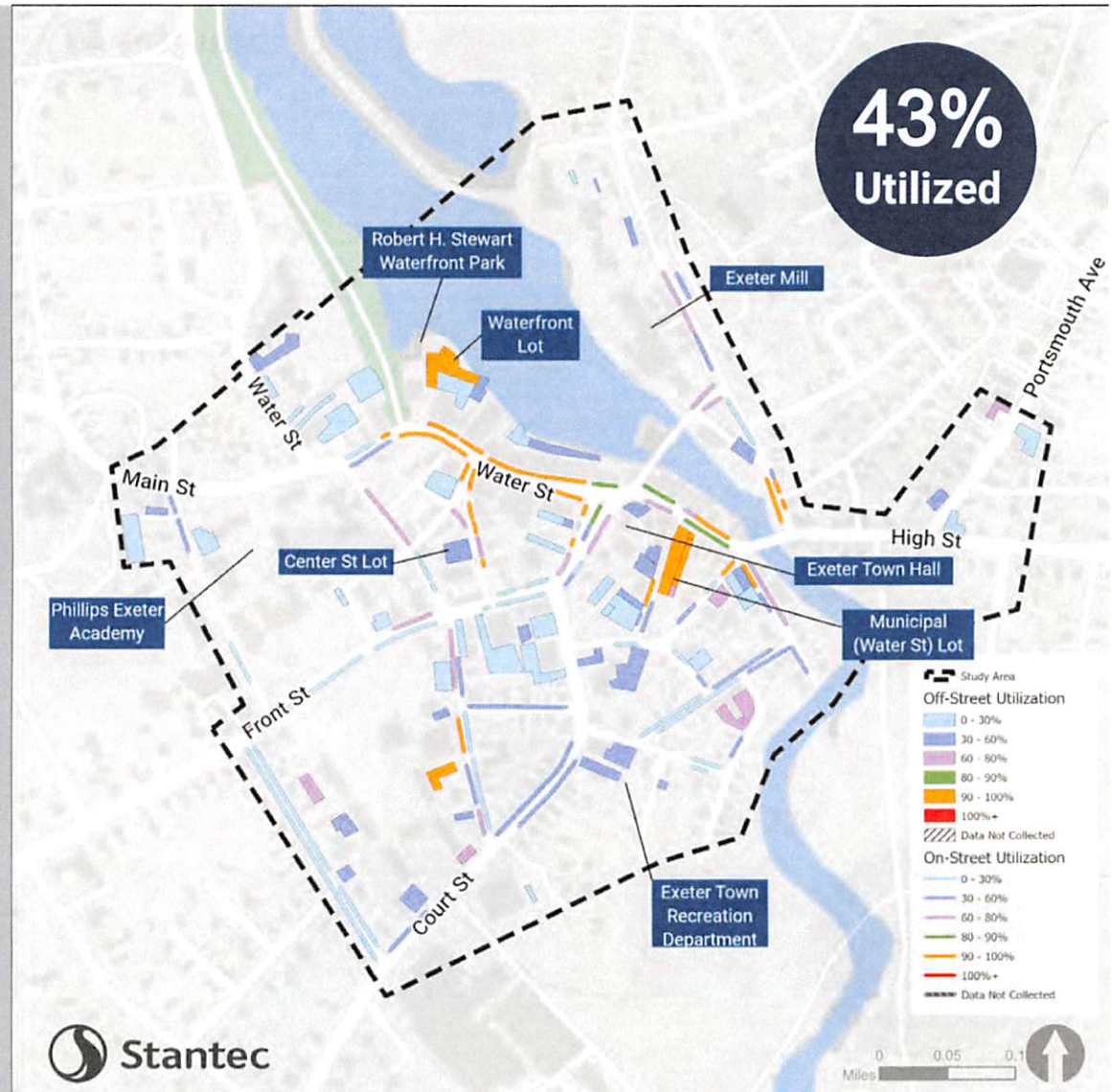
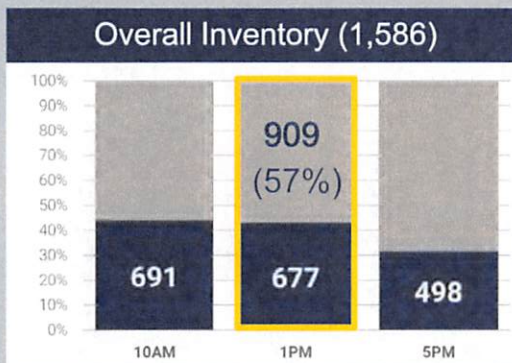


Parking Utilization - Weekend

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

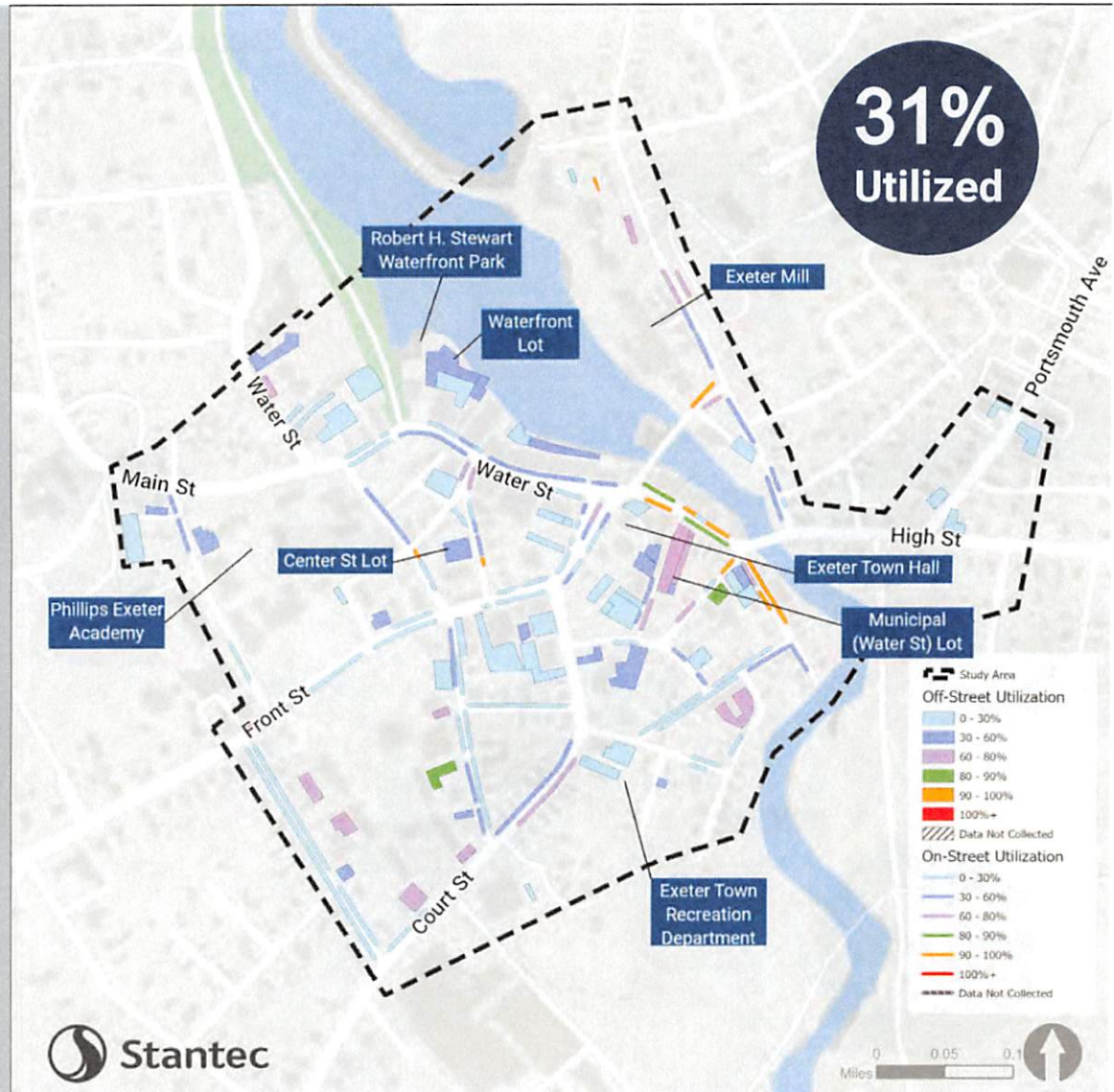
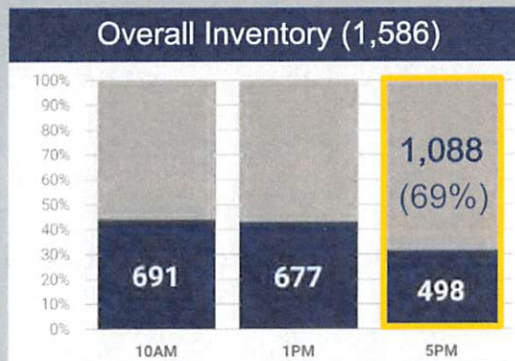


Parking Utilization - Weekend

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

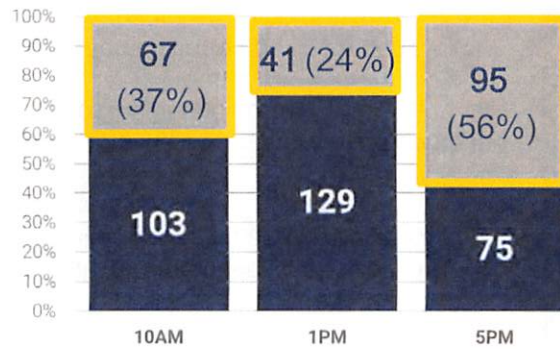
ON-STREET

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

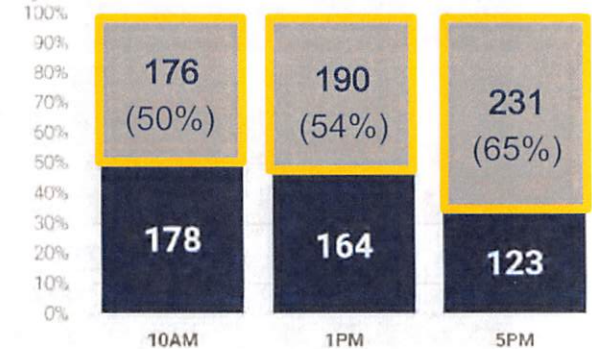
OFF-STREET

- 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

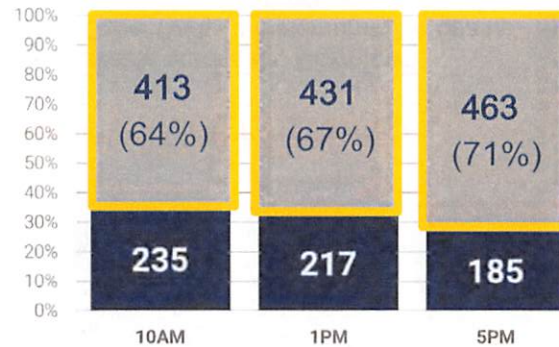
ON-STREET, TIME LIMITED
(170 spaces)



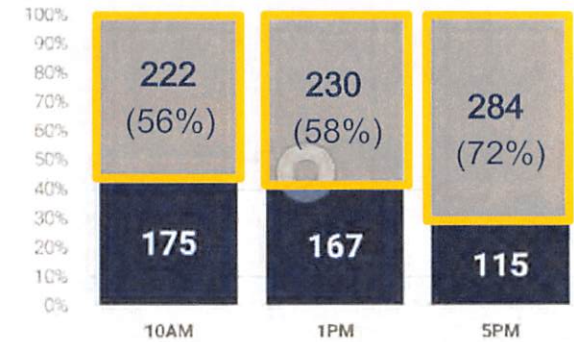
ON-STREET, UNREGULATED
(354 spaces)



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.



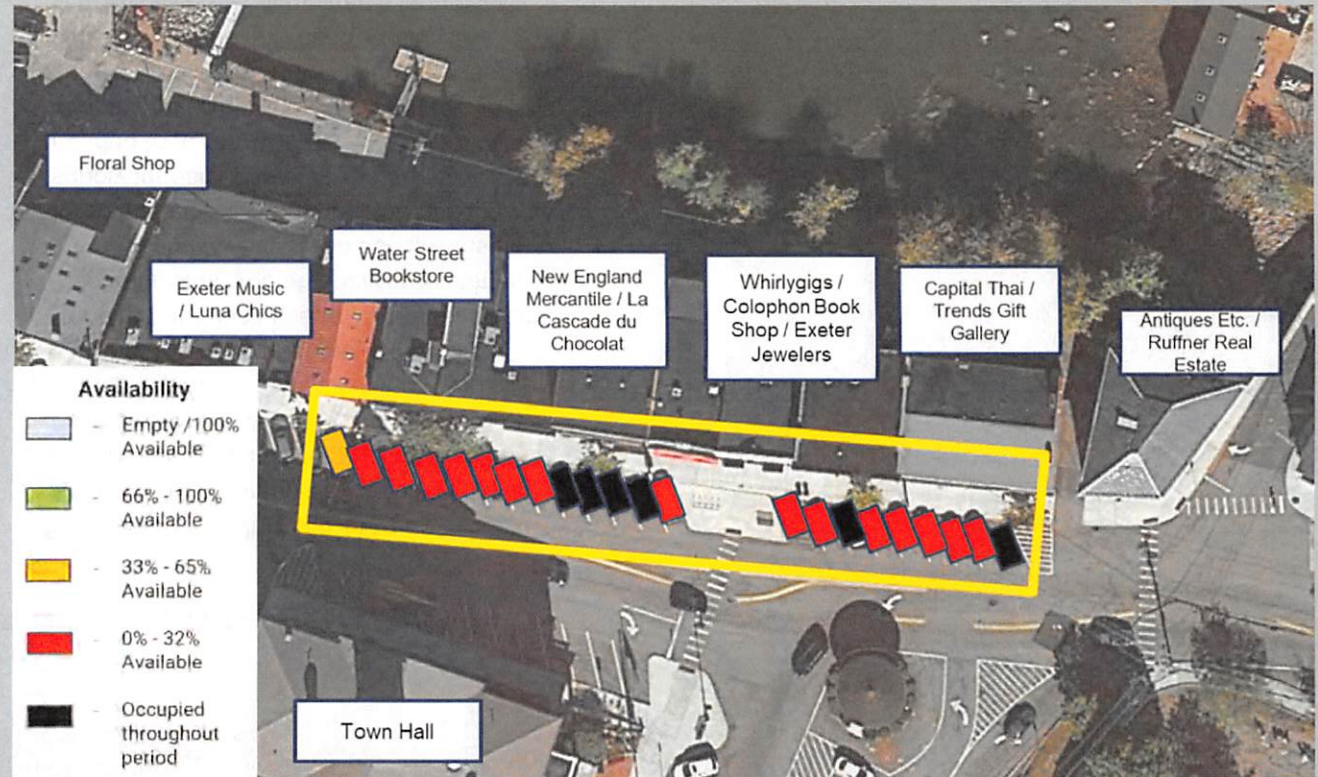


Parking Turnover Analysis

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.

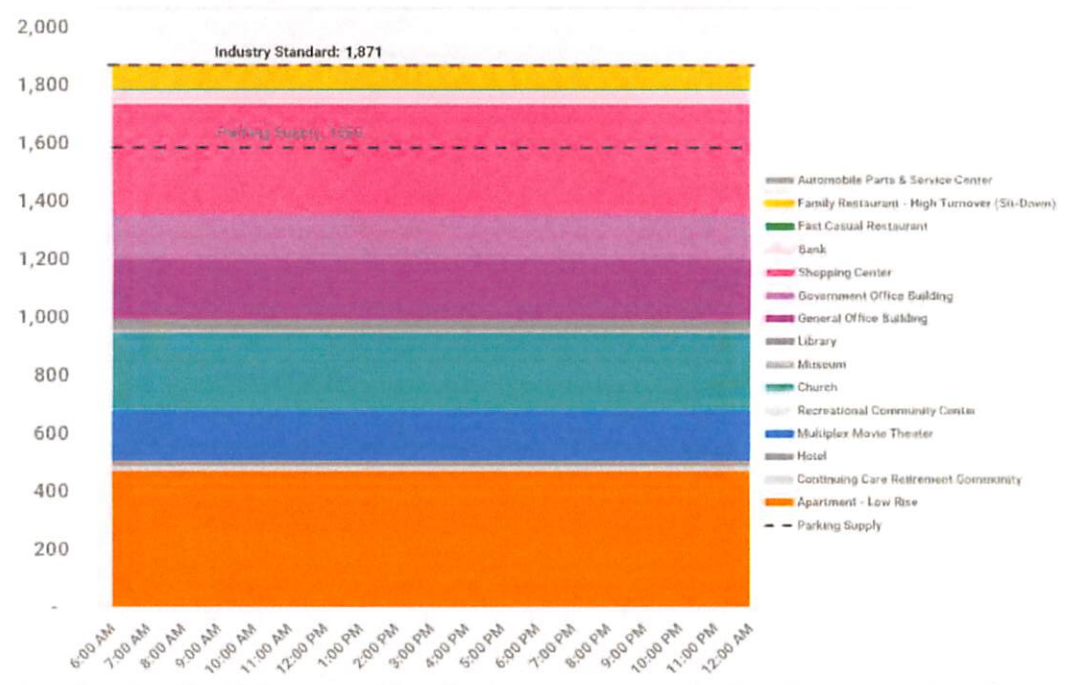


Parking Demand Analysis

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.



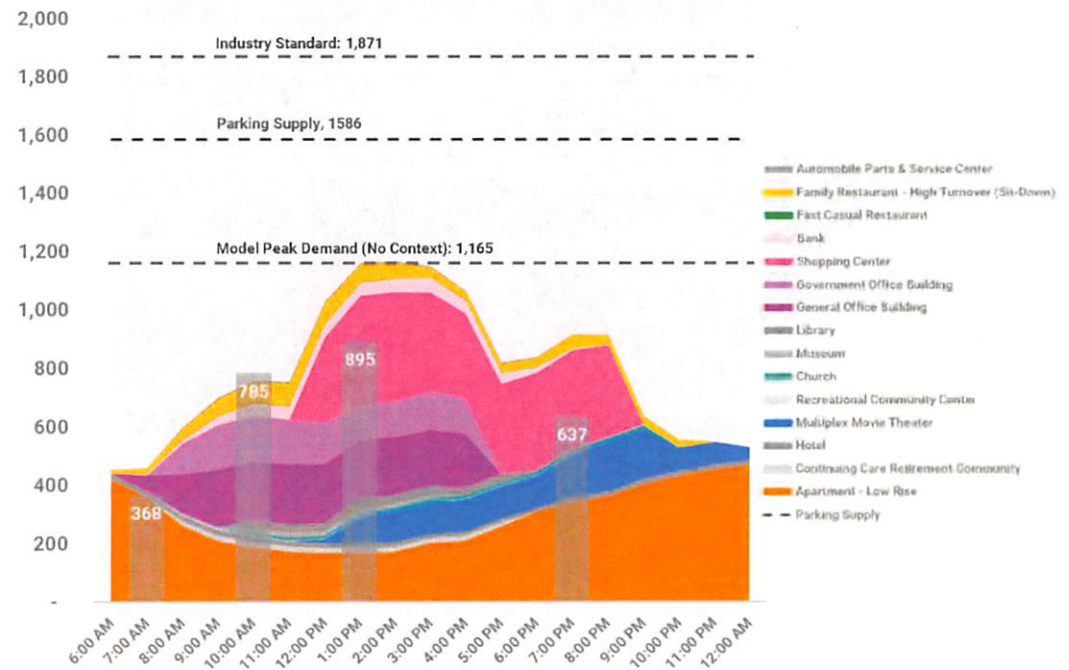


Parking Demand Analysis

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.



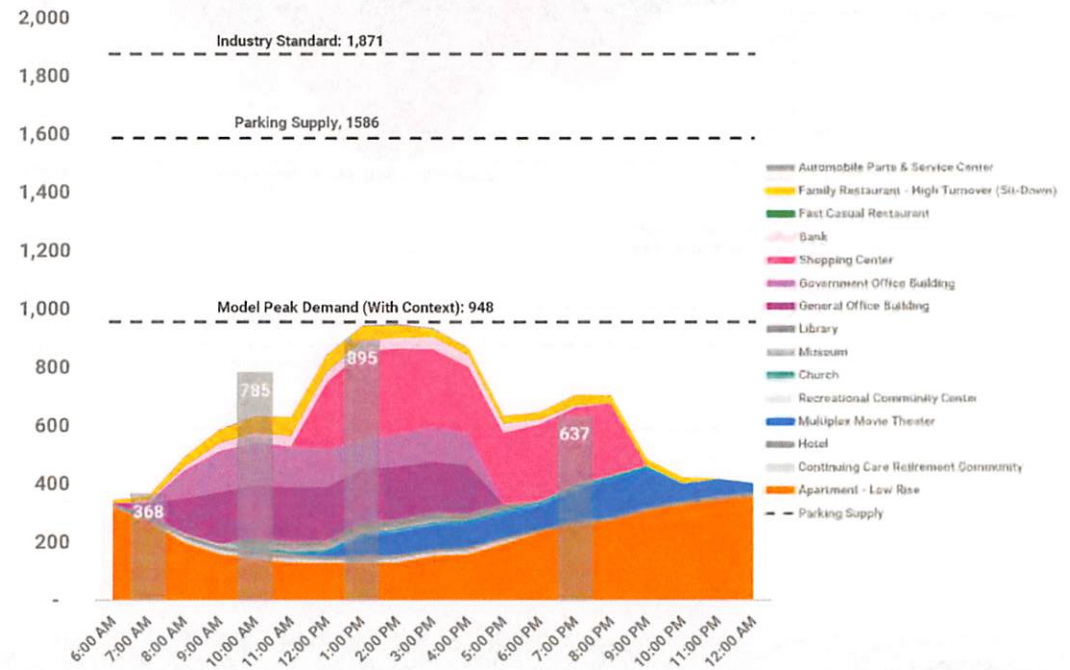


Parking Demand Analysis

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.



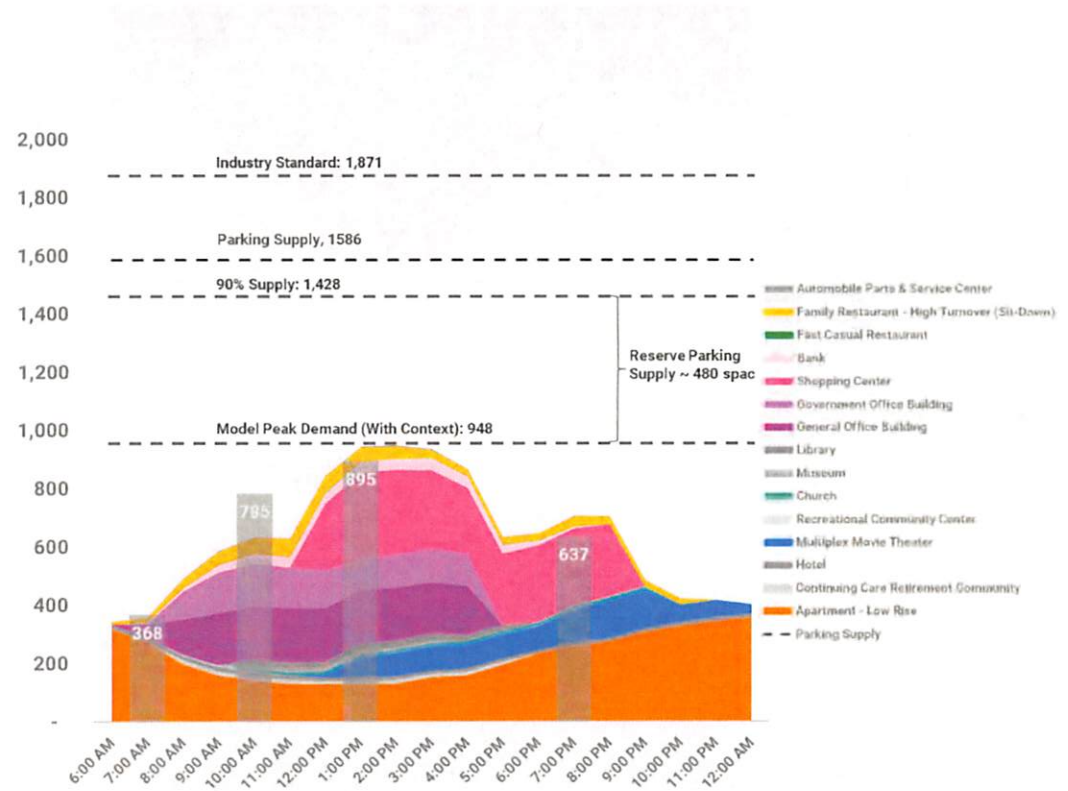


Parking Demand Analysis

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



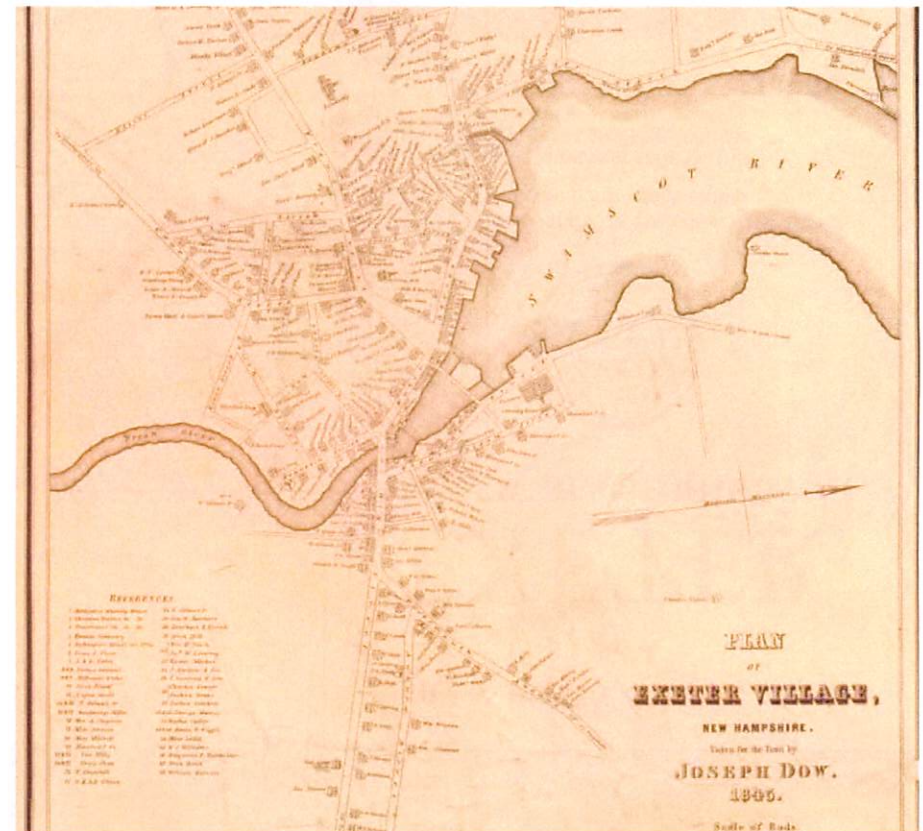
Exeter's History in Transportation

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.





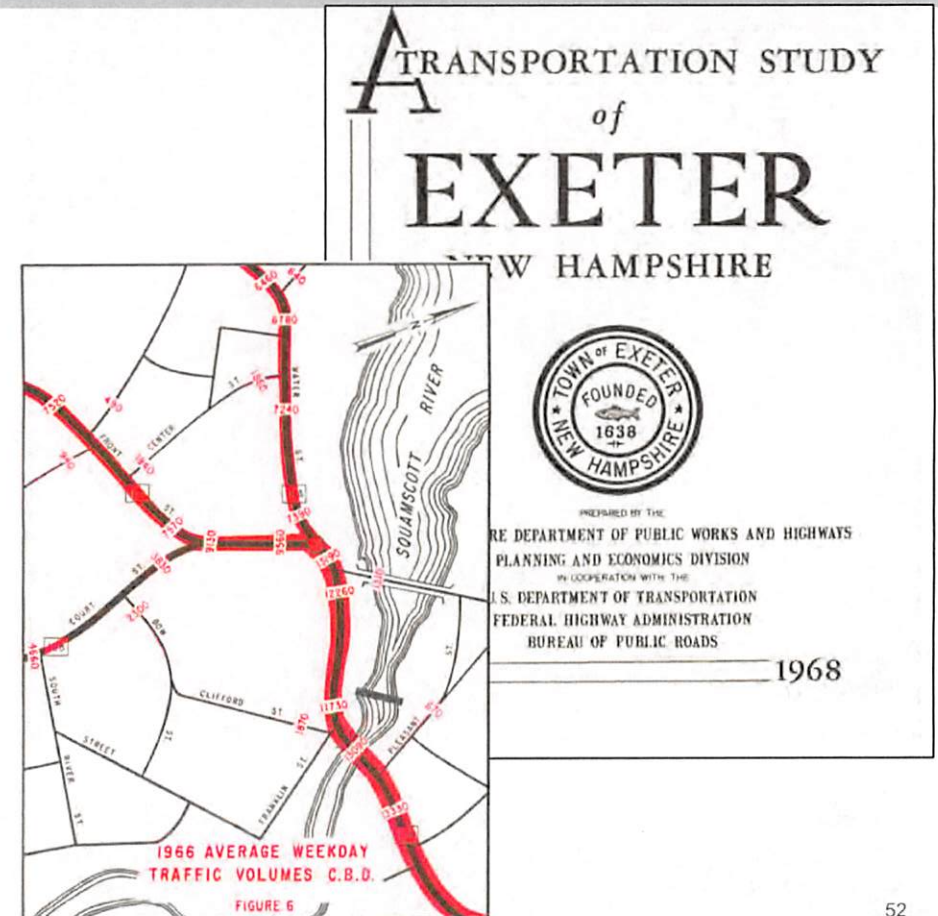
Exeter's History in Transportation

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

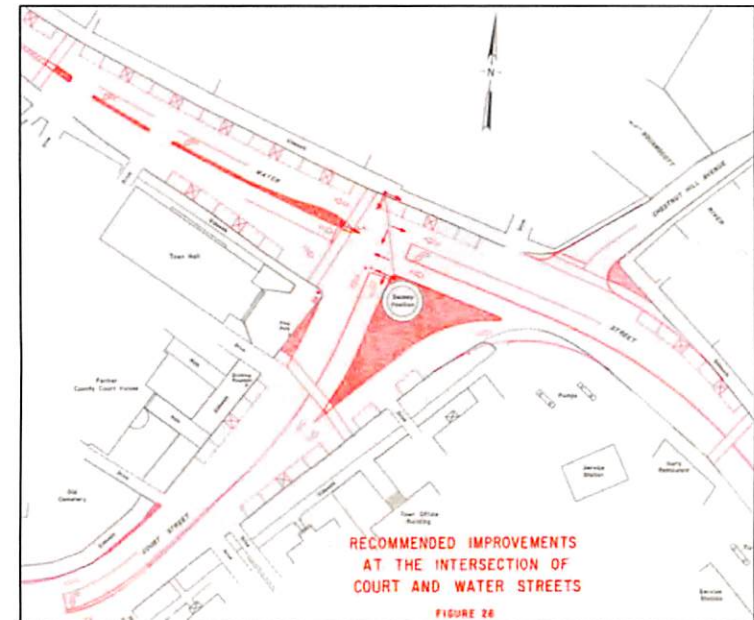
1968 TRANSPORTATION STUDY RECOMENDATIONS

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**

100 STATE STREET
EXETER, NH 03824
TEL: 603/773-2811
FAX: 603/773-2800
WWW.EXETERNH.COM

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 Blue House to Center St crosswalk (October Data Only)	19	87.4%	65.3%	71.6%	87.4%	88.3%	48.7%	73.7%	83.2%	84.8%	86.8%
2	Water Street in front of Bullock's Doll	11	74.6%	70.9%	77.7%	86.4%	77.3%	62.5%	76.4%	81.8%	86.4%	63.6%
3	Water Street from Shoes to Book Store	11	75.7%	56.4%	77.7%	74.6%	80.5%	73.9%	76.0%	76.0%	80.7%	73.5%
4	Water Street near Whipple's Toy Store	12	80.0%	75.0%	84.2%	85.0%	84.2%	88.9%	81.9%	82.7%	89.3%	78.1%
5	Water Street across from Bandstand	9	81.6%	88.9%	88.9%	88.9%	88.9%	79.2%	73.6%	79.2%	88.9%	81.6%
6	Water Street in front of Sal & Anthony's & Mac A Cakes	17	73.7%	60.6%	66.5%	60.0%	86.3%	60.3%	77.9%	76.0%	76.0%	80.1%
7	Water Street Municipal Parking lot crosswalk to Leaf and Lacie Crosswalk	18	71.0%	59.4%	66.1%	70.1%	58.9%	66.0%	72.2%	68.7%	77.1%	72.3%
8	Water St Front Street in front of Town Hall	16	53.8%	36.6%	61.7%	63.3%	54.4%	41.2%	51.4%	51.8%	64.6%	49.2%
9	Front Street - Backland parking	15	60.5%	52.0%	76.7%	65.3%	48.0%	53.0%	62.0%	60.0%	59.2%	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%	58.0%	56.3%	48.8%	33.1%	45.3%	37.0%	44.9%	44.0%	43.8%
11	Front Street from Court Street to Center Street	18	51.3%	50.9%	51.1%	51.7%	49.4%	56.3%	45.1%	58.7%	40.3%	54.9%
12	Center Street from Front St to Citizens Bank	12	41.5%	51.7%	45.0%	33.3%	35.8%	45.8%	46.0%	52.1%	30.3%	30.2%
13	Center St between Citizens Bank and First Savings of NH (July Data Only)	7	45.0%	51.4%	45.7%	51.4%	31.8%	46.4%	50.0%	46.4%	39.3%	42.9%
14	Water St from Sweeney Place 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 Sweeney Place to Spring St (October Data Only)	17	44.1%	52.9%	52.9%	40.0%	39.0%	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%	28.0%	17.3%	27.9%	33.8%	26.5%	27.3%
17	Pineau's Drive (No Time limit on Parking) (October Data Only)	17	66.4%	63.5%	83.0%	74.1%	68.6%	83.0%	84.7%	85.9%	83.0%	86.2%
TOTAL ALL PARKING SPACES		340	69.8%	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

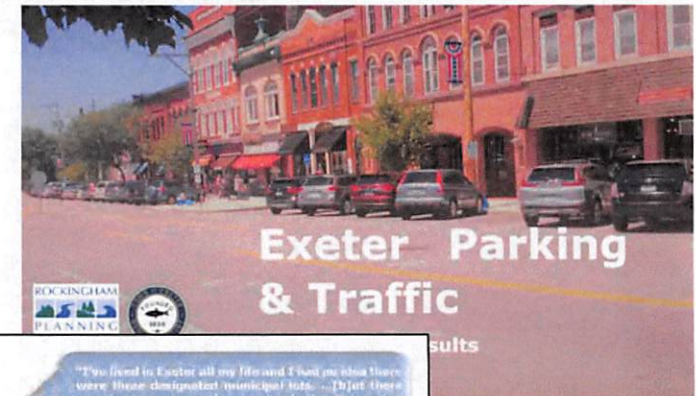
In the summer of 2018, the Town of Exeter in cooperation with the Rockingham Planning Commission commissioned an online survey providing questions of opinion to public regarding parking in the Downtown.

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

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.de.gov/government/city-operations/office-space-pricing-facility/index.html>

2018 Exeter Parking & Traffic Survey Results
Rockingham Planning Commission

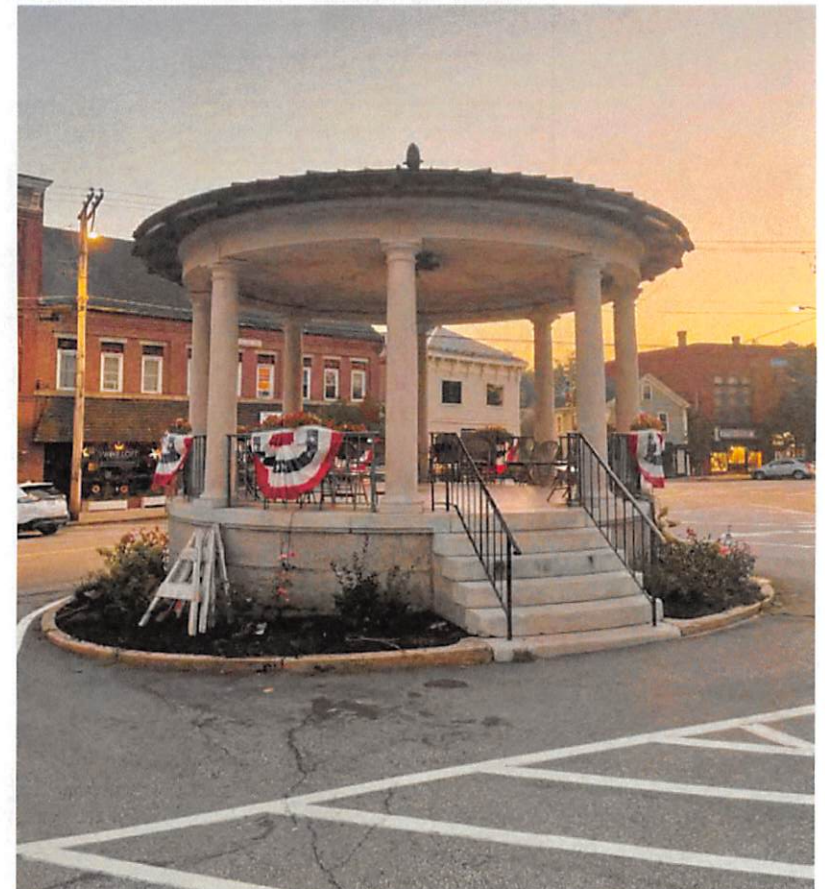


Traffic and Circulation Summary

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.





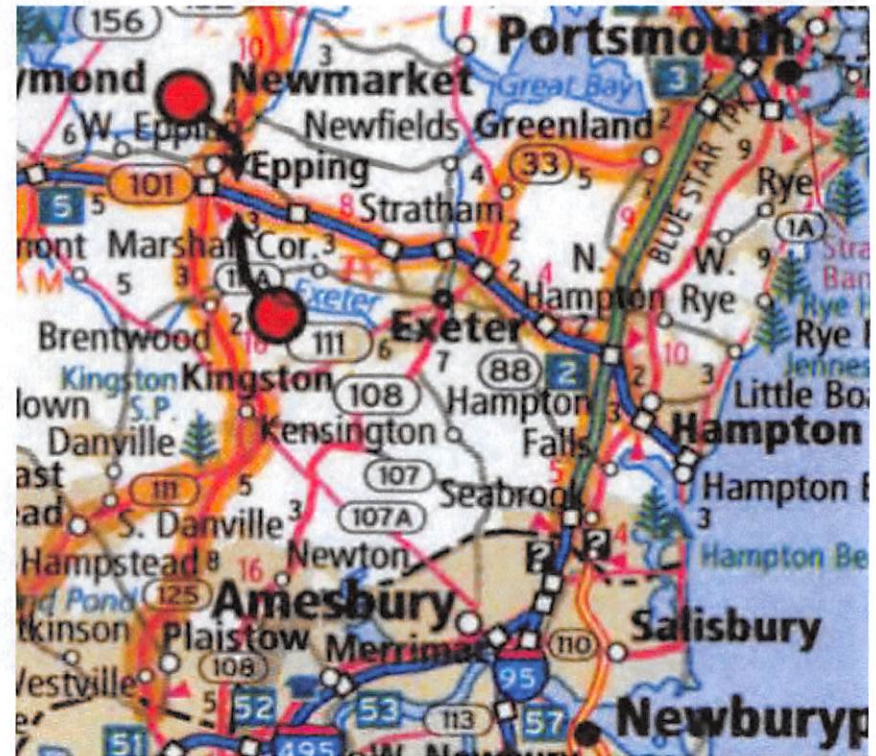
Traffic and Circulation Summary

TRUCK ROUTES

As Exeter is the convergence of several state highways and four interchanges off the limited access highway of NH Route 101, so in addition to the local charm that draws businesses, residents, tourists, and shoppers, it provides a regional hub for access to other communities just inside New Hampshire's seacoast region.

New Hampshire statute states the Commissioner identifies allowable trucking routes, with allowance of one mile from these designated roadways for deliveries and service. As Downtown Exeter is more than one mile from the nearest designated trucking route, Stantec noted during field visits and public outreach the numerous large trucks attempting to navigate Downtown. The increasing activity of trucks through Downtown pose a risk to both operations and safety for other users of the roadway and crossings.

NHDOT manages the Oversize/Overweight Permit relates to trucking that exceeds the allowed sizes on state highway. They receive a management and routing plan by the applicant and review the intended roadways and bridges. NHDOT allows for the municipalities to be reviewers on the Oversize/Overweight Permit.





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.

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/>

Facebook: townofexeternh
Twitter: @TownofExeterNH

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?

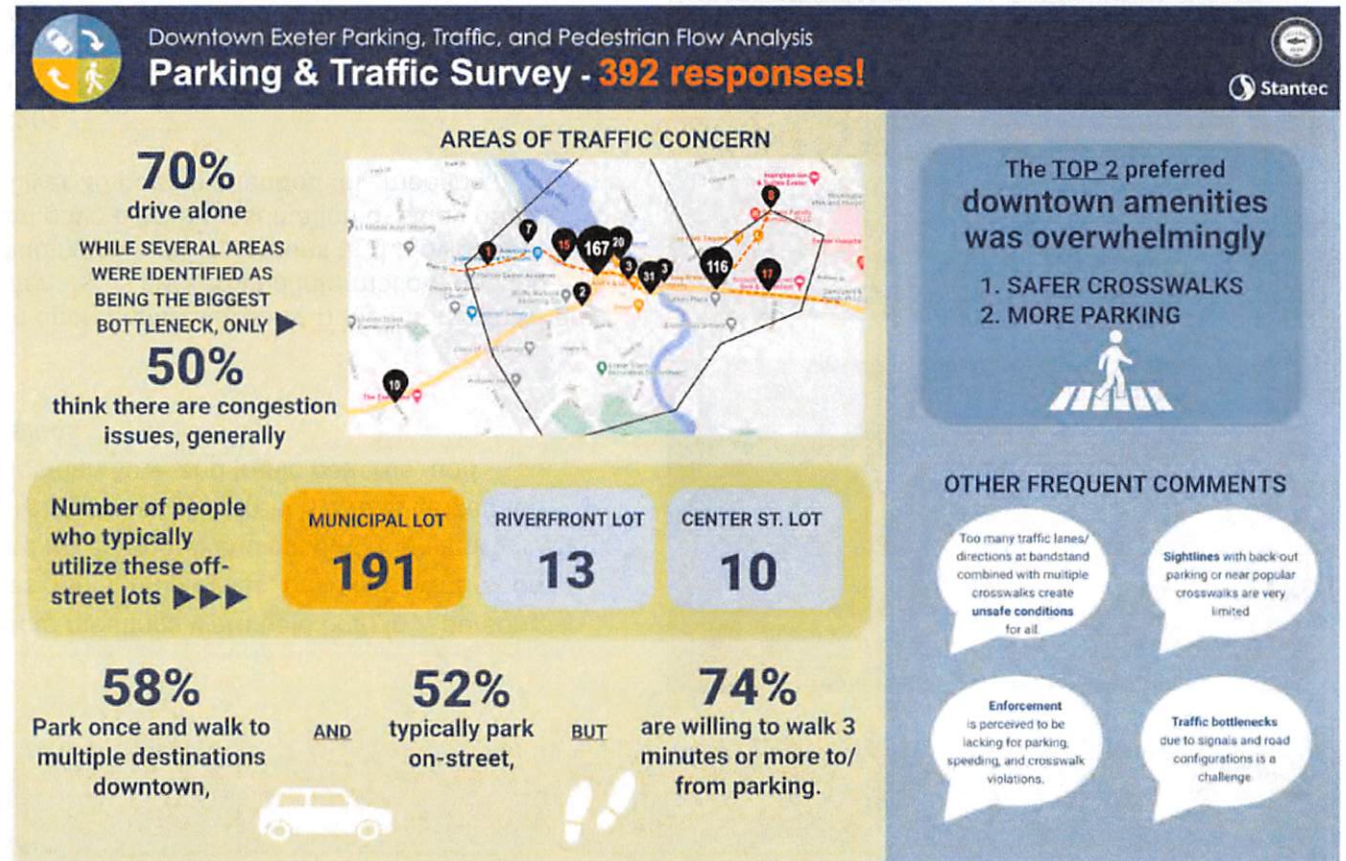
Share your thoughts, take our survey now!



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

STAKEHOLDER ROUNDTABLE

OCTOBER 4, 2023

The Study Team hosted a Stakeholder Roundtable to hear directly from local businesses, property owners, Town representatives, and other stakeholders. Ten stakeholders were present at this meeting and participated in dialogue and mapping exercises to provide input. Key takeaways from this meeting is noted on Page 69.





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

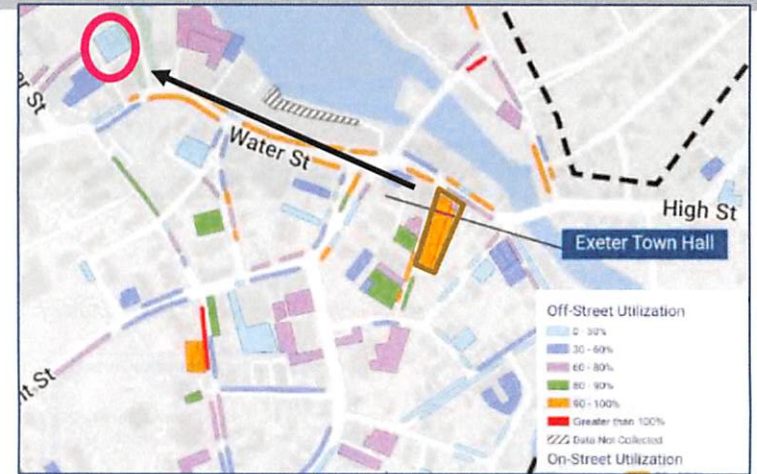
Exeter's Challenge: Water Street parking has select periods of very high demand while nearby facilities have plenty of availability

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

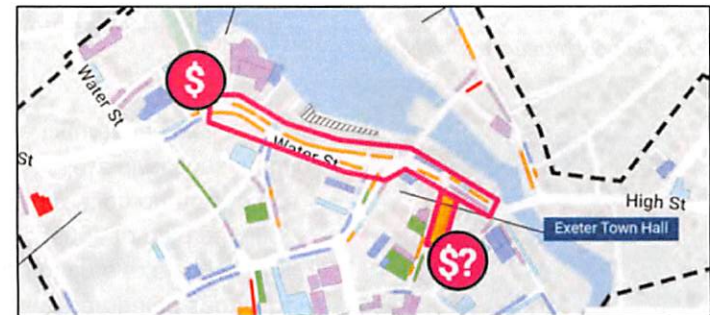
Ensures there is availability in the facilities of highest demand and encourage use of nearby underutilized spaces which are walkable

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)
- Borrow 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.



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.)

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.



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

218 ft

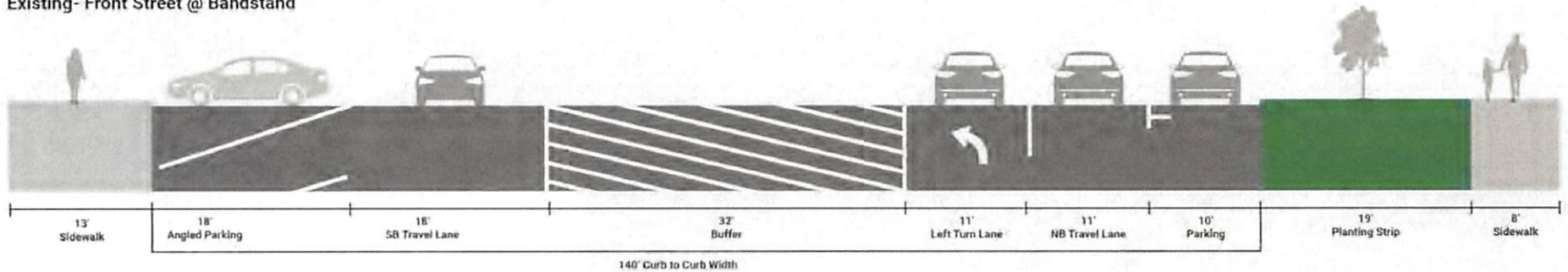




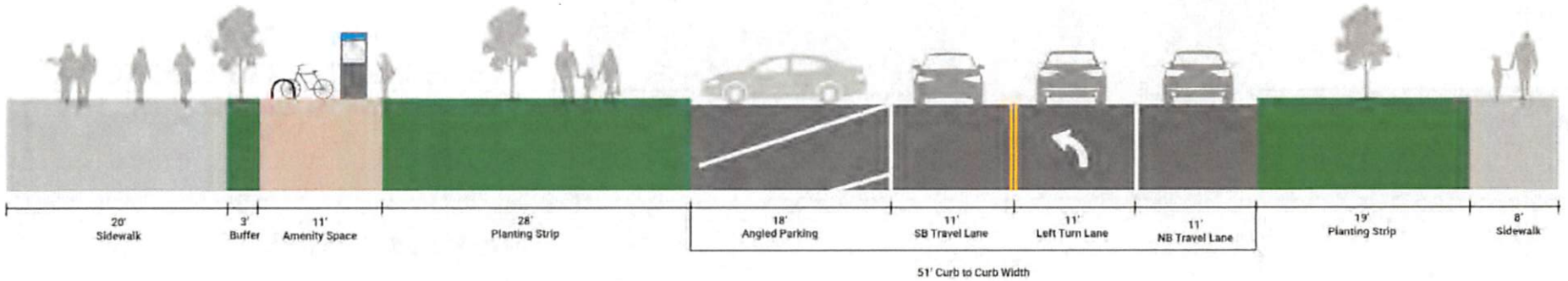
Reconfigure Bandstand Intersection

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

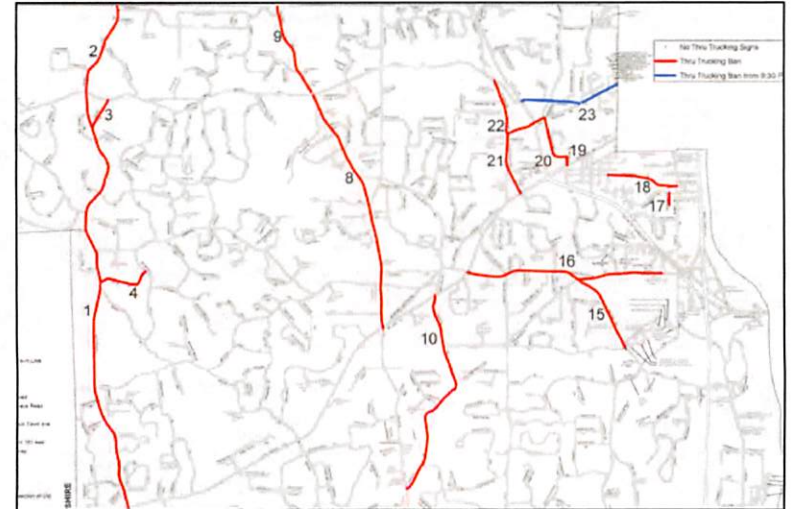
Evaluates how the current truck route can be improved to efficiently and safely divert large vehicles from high volume areas of Downtown to aid in reducing congestion and potential safety conflicts .

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

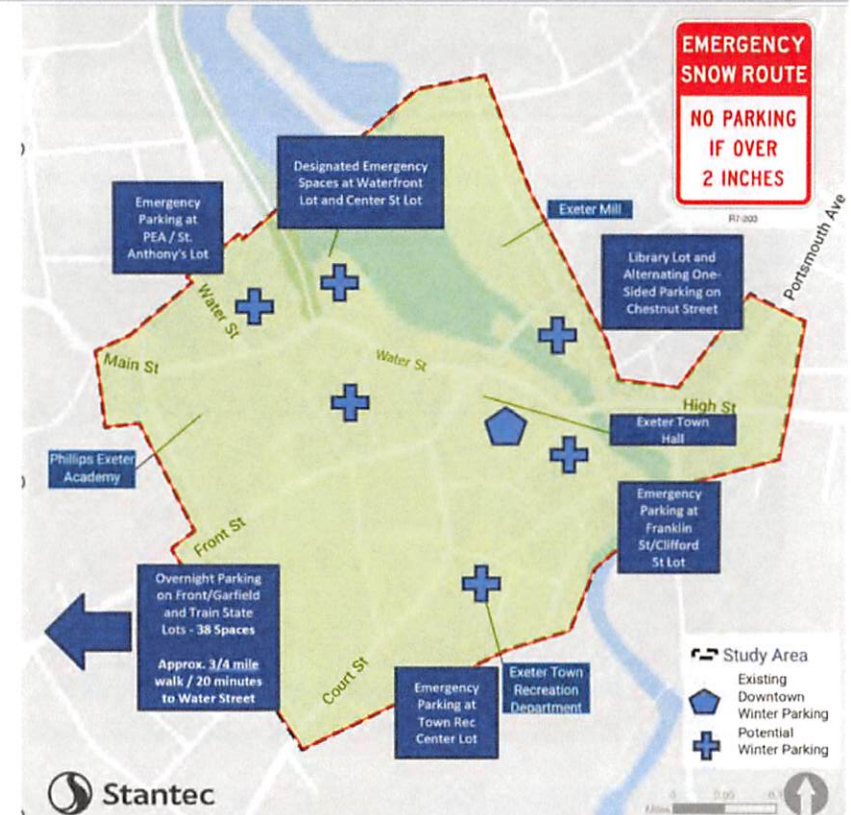
Re-evaluating the winter parking plan and limiting parking bans to when they are needed for an emergency means that Downtown residents won't need off -street parking regularly and can more efficiently make use of the existing on -street and off -street public parking. This will minimize inconvenience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

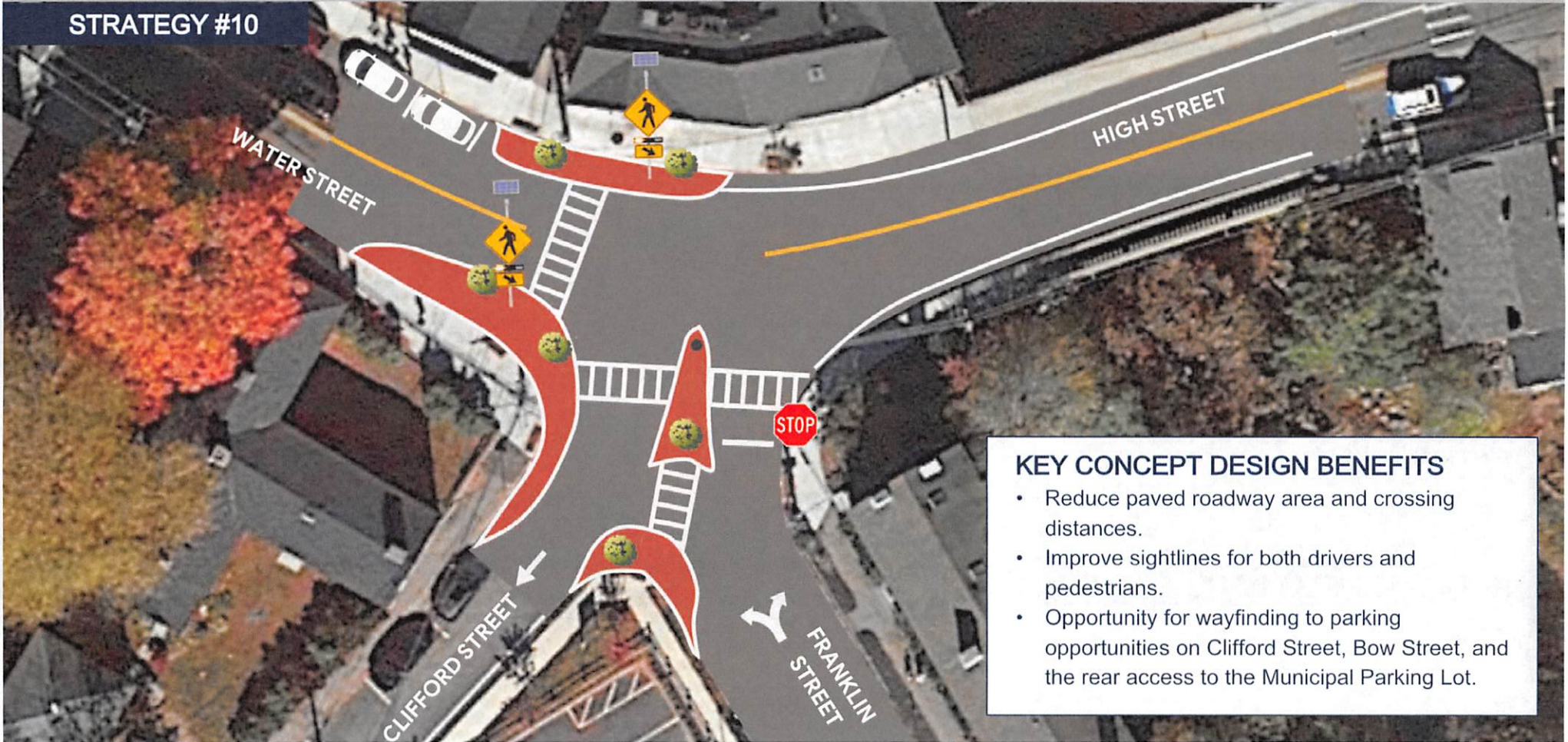
KEY BENEFITS

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



Multimodal Improvements

STRATEGY #10



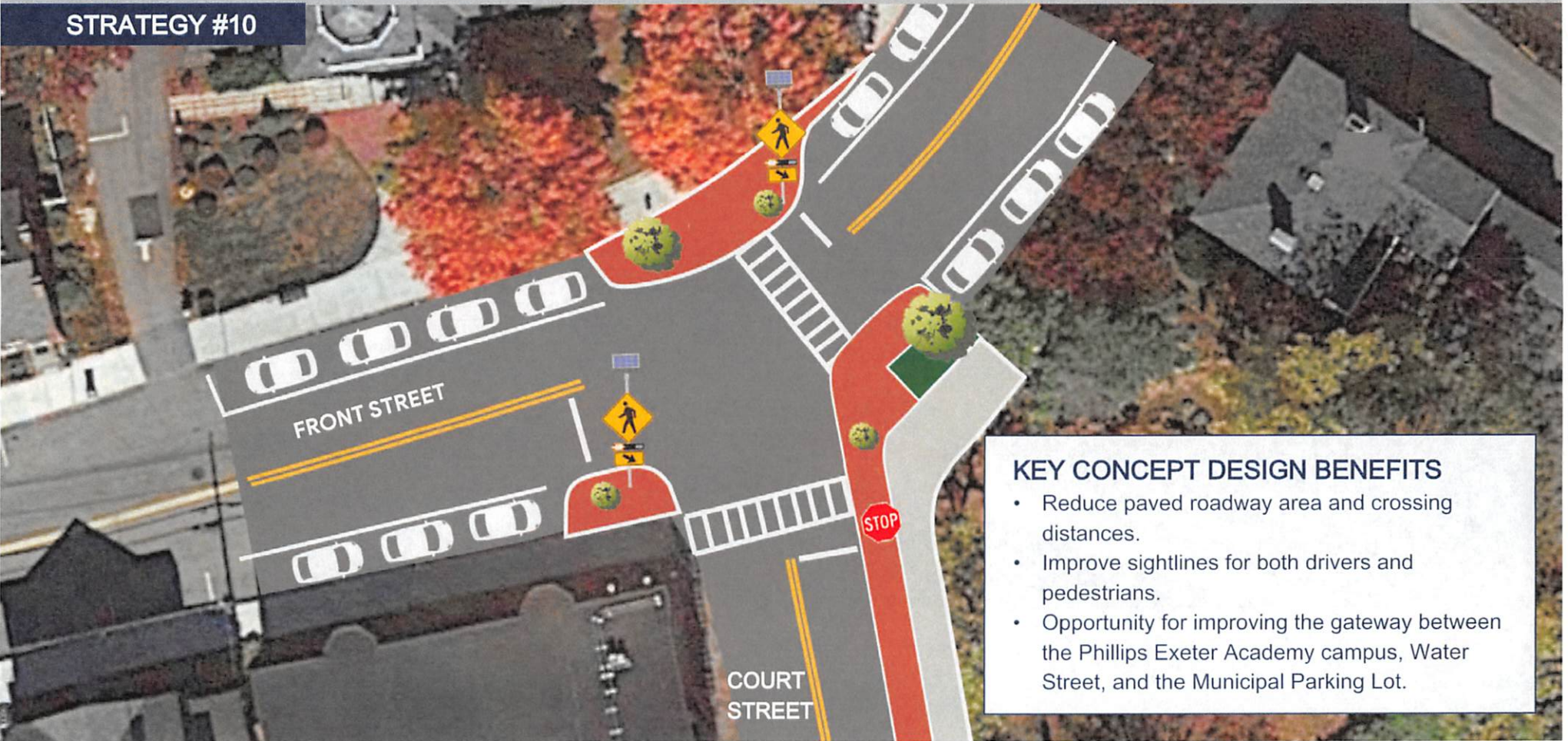
KEY CONCEPT DESIGN BENEFITS

- 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





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

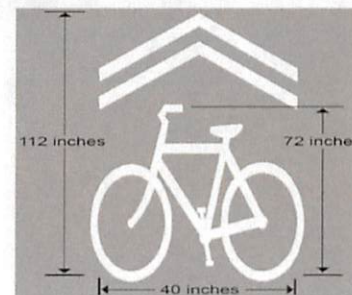
Promote higher visibility of features that increase driver awareness of bicyclists, and encourage bicycle movement throughout Downtown for riders of all comfort levels.

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

KEY BENEFITS

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



Example best practice signage and road markings



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: Wikimedia)



Consider Re -Imagining Parking on Water Street

STRATEGY #12



American Independence Museum
Colonial history at a
21 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

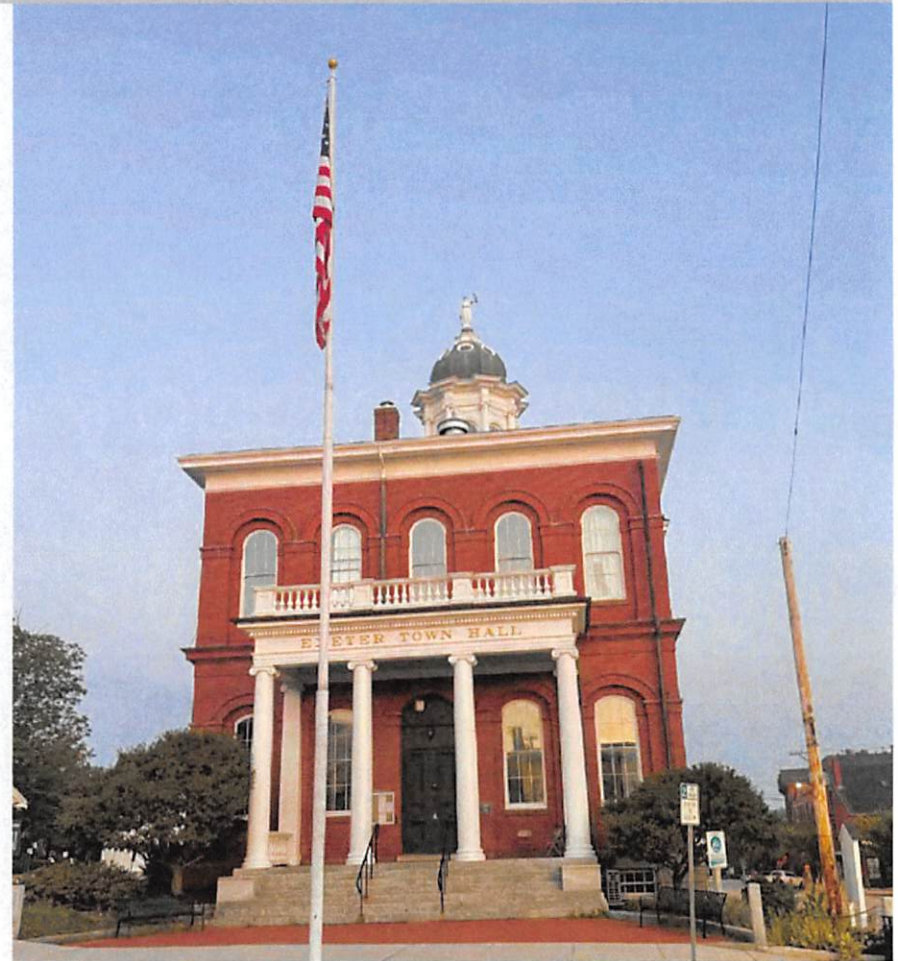
There are several steps which must be realized in order to implement the changes detailed in this study. Some of these include procurement of new technology and signs, administrative changes to best carry out new programs, and legislative changes to enable parking rates to be tied to performance. Critical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

Coordinate with Town Select Board : The Select Board has reviewed the recommendations included in this report at its session on [REDACTED]. 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.

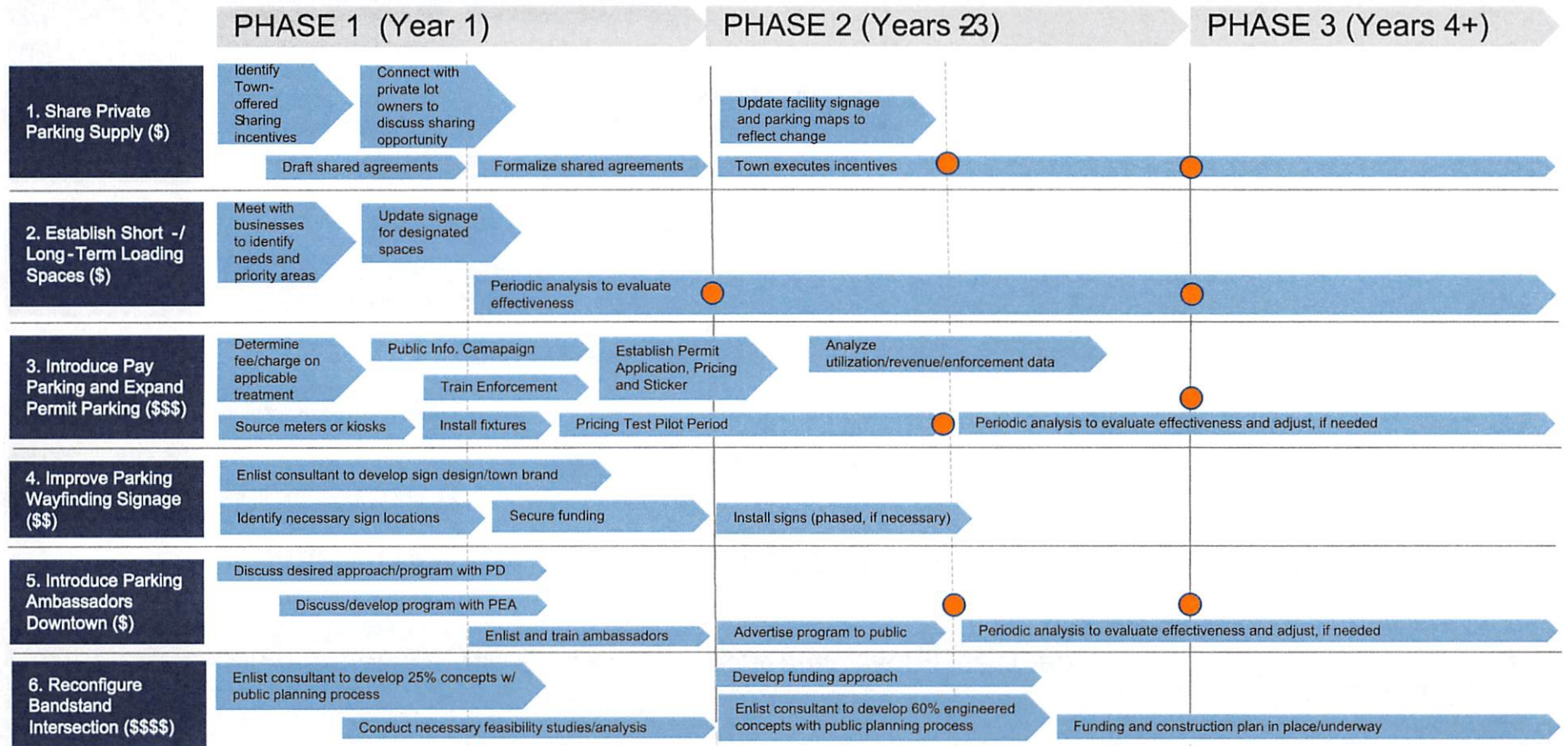
The implementation roadmap on the following pages can provide a general timeline for guidance.



Putting the Recommendations into Action - Implementation Roadmap

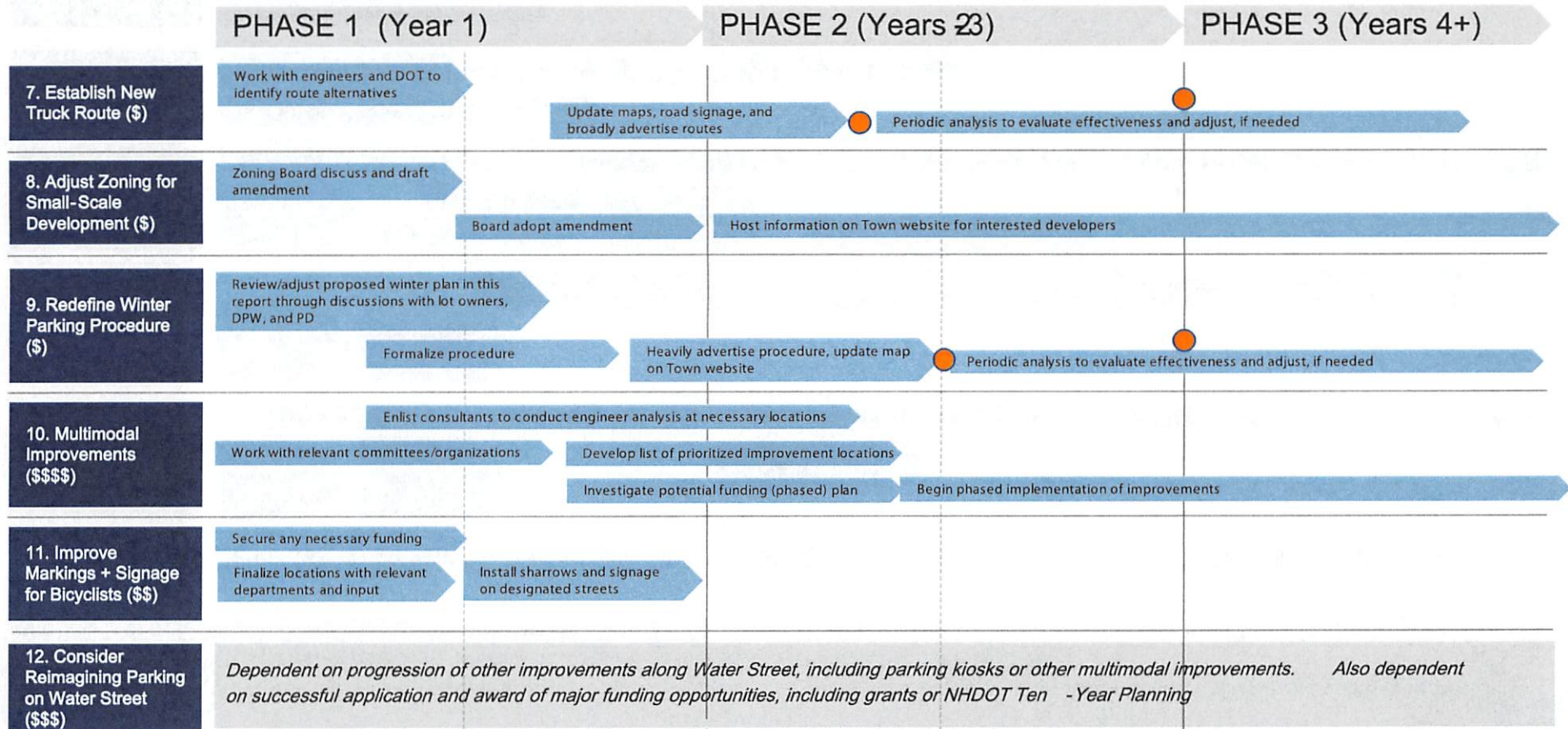
Low Cost \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ High Cost

Review period



Putting the Recommendations into Action - Implementation Roadmap

Low Cost \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ High Cost
 ○ Review period





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:

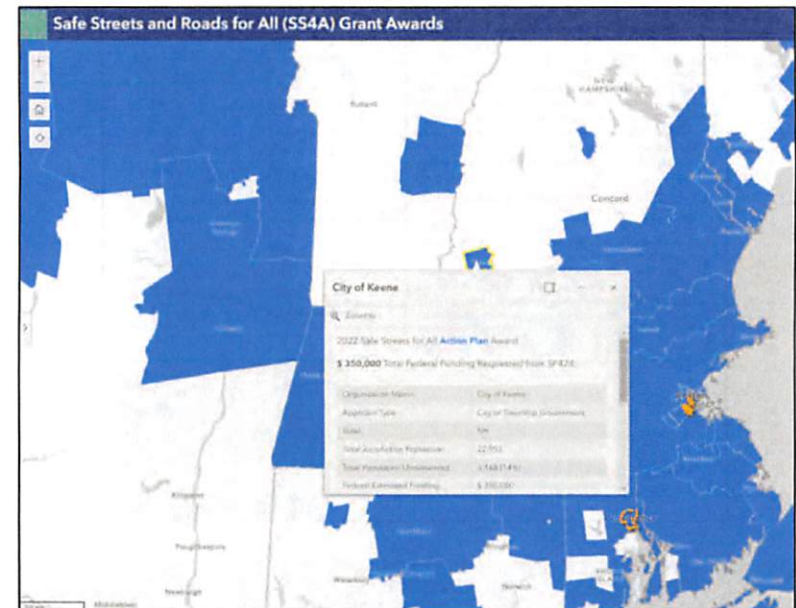
RAISE Transportation Discretionary Grants : Similar previous editions of this funding were called TIGER or BUILD Discretionary Grants, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (“Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” or “BIL”) authorized and appropriated \$1.5 billion to be awarded by the Department 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

Project Range: 4.0 Foot sea-level rise

Tolerance for Flood Risk (high, Medium, Low, Very Low): Low

Water Table/Slope: 2050

Rise Impacts by:

- State or Local Roads: Local and State Roads
- Current Traffic Volume (Average Annual Peak): 6,500 AADT
- Peak: 7,700 Peak
- Pavement Condition: Good/Fair
- Infrastructure at Risk: Tidal Crossing 124
- Water/Sewer Infrastructure: Water and Sewer
- Known Site Contamination: No known site contamination
- Existing Tidal Wetland Type(s) (Disturbed/Downstream): Brackish Riverbank Marsh/ Intertidal Habitat
- Invasive Species Present: Yes
- FEMA Floodplain Category: X, AE
- Average Ground Elevation: 10ft
- Current: 11ft (2050)
- Dakota Flood Elevation: 14.3ft (2100)
- Projected Groundwater Rise: 0.7-2.2ft (2050)
- 1.2-3.2ft (2100)
- Depth to Future Groundwater: Data Needed
- Projected Precipitation Increase for 100-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 106. The roadway parallels the Squamscott River in this vicinity and at 4' 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 isolates 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	3%
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

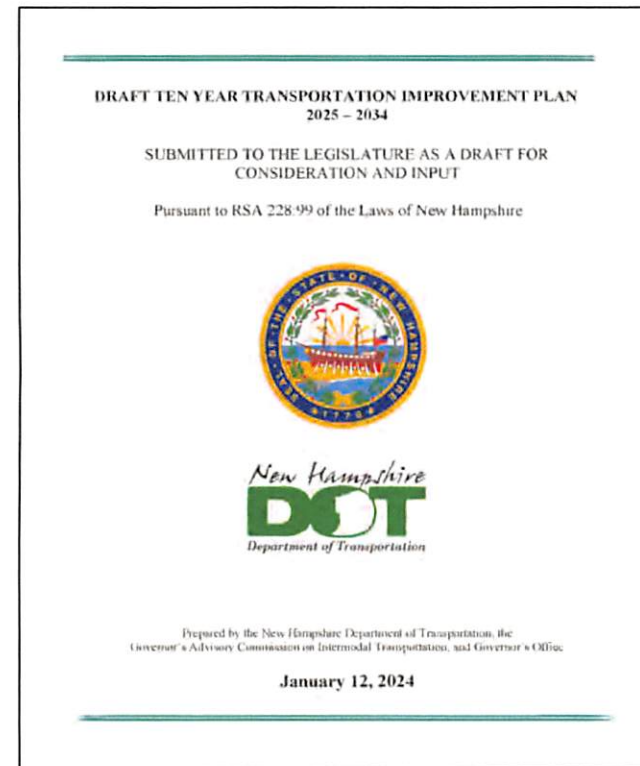


Funding Opportunities

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

Greg Bisson, Parks/Rec Director re: Planet Playground



EXETER PARKS & RECREATION

32 COURT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833 • (603) 773-6151 • www.exeternh.gov



TOWN OF EXETER MEMORANDUM

TO: Russ Dean, Town Manager
CC: Melissa Roy, Assistant Town Manager
FROM: Greg Bisson, Director of Parks and Recreation
RE: Planet Playground Update
DATE: 02/09/2024

Planet Playground will be replaced if we are awarded the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant through the State of New Hampshire and the National Park Service.

We have a conceptual design by Miracle Playground that we will use as a foundation for the new Planet playground. This conceptual plan is flexible and can be tweaked. We plan to form a playground committee, a sub-committee of the recreation advisory board, to examine the playground design and site and make changes to utilize the space entirely. We will invite residents to join three of our Rec Advisory Board members and staff to make up this committee.

Process:

The process of replacing Planet Playground has been going on for years. In 2016, Leather's and Associates, the company behind Planet Playground, inspected the playground. At that time, Leathers reported that the playground should be entirely replaced. The report can be found on our website. The only obstacle to replacing the playground was that it sat on private property.

2019, the department held a walk-up vision session during Saturday morning soccer. The department allowed sticky notes to be placed on a whiteboard with suggestions each person wanted to see in a new playground. We received over 100 suggestions. At that time, Parks and Recreation started discussions with the former owner about a possible acquisition or lifetime lease of the property to take back to the board. This effort stalled as 8 Hampton Rd. was sold to Athena Health. The sale process took almost two years because it was a Hud-controlled property.

In 2022, the town was exploring applying for the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to help renovate Planet Playground but needed to acquire the property and develop a playground design. The town would not be eligible for the grant if it did not own the property or a conceptual design. Parks and Recreation submitted a letter of intent for the grant and started backup discussions with the current property owner, Athena Health. Athena Health agreed to negotiate the sale of that portion of the property with the town. Simultaneously, the Parks and Recreation Department created the first of many surveys to get input into the new playground design. Using the suggestions from 2019, the department developed a detailed survey to collect feedback on what elements the public wanted to incorporate into the new design. The survey was promoted through email, online on social media, and on our website. Three hundred and sixteen people participated in the first survey. The collected data was sent to the significant playground manufacturer representatives for an initial concept for a new playground. Seven playground designs were submitted, ranging from custom designs to standard designs.

A second survey was launched on July 11th to select the top 3 designs. The survey provided multiple pictures of the design so people could make an informed decision. About two hundred ninety-eight people responded to this survey. The top 3 manufacturers selected were Miracle, Little Tykes, and GameTime. On August 10, 2022, the Parks and Recreation Department held a public information session via Zoom for the three top presenters to discuss the design,

show a fly-through, and get input. After the input session, a third survey was published to select the top design. Miracle Playground was the third survey's top choice and the most affordable, with over 100 responses.

The playground renovation and replacement were stalled as the town couldn't agree with Athena Health to purchase the property and held off until 2023 to apply for LWCF funding. We have applied for LWCF. We are still waiting to hear if we were selected to move for approval by the National Park Service and Governor/Executive Council. This process will take until the fall to be finalized, allowing the playground committee time to tweak any of the concepts and set up fundraising that can help offset some of the cost of the playground and enhance site amenities for the playground.

Respectfully Yours,

Greg Bisson,

Director

Exeter Parks and Recreation

Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits & Exemptions

Permits & Approvals



TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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www.exeternh.gov

TO: EXETER SELECT BOARD AND TOWN MANAGER
FROM: COREY STEVENS, FINANCE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: SNOW & ICE DEFICIT FUND REQUEST
DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2024

I respectfully submit this request for the Select Board to authorize a withdrawal from the Town's Snow & Ice Deficit Fund in the amount of \$64,655 to cover spending in excess of budget during FY2023.

During FY2023, the Town budgeted \$313,016 for snow/ice removal and had actual spending of \$377,671, resulting in overspending of \$64,655. The balance in the snow/ice deficit fund as of 12/31/2023 was \$119,654. Should the above request of \$64,655 be authorized, the new fund balance at 12/31/2023 will be \$55,000. Article 17 of the 2024 Town Warrant asks voters to add an additional \$50,000 to the snow/ice deficit fund. Adding \$50,000 to the snow/ice deficit fund will result in a starting balance of \$105,000 for FY2024.

Corey



TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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www.exeternh.gov

TO: RUSSELL DEAN, TOWN MANAGER
FROM: COREY STEVENS, FINANCE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: USE OF WATER/ SEWER IMPACT FEES
DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2024

The Water and Sewer Impact Fee bank accounts have balances of \$60,383.77 and \$106,797.03 respectively as of 12/31/2023. The Town is authorized to use water/ sewer impact fees to offset debt payments on water/ sewer capital projects. I recommend that the amount representing water and sewer impact fees collected in 2022 be transferred to the General Fund for that purpose at this time. The total to be transferred would be \$100,971, broken down as follows: Water Impact Fee account \$37,532; Sewer Impact Fee account \$63,439.

Corey

Town Manager's Report

Select Board Committee Reports

Correspondence



Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: connection

1 message

Greg Bisson <gbisson@exeternh.gov>

Thu, Feb 8, 2024 at 3:12 PM

To: Jeff Beck <jbeck@exeternh.gov>, Stephen Cronin <scronin@exeternh.gov>, Melissa Roy <mroy@exeternh.gov>, Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>

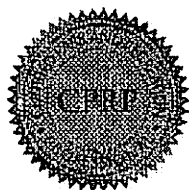
Hi Everyone,

We had Jeff Caley, Living Stone Church, approach us about volunteering to redo the floor in one of the small programming spaces upstairs. They currently use it on Sundays, and the small room is in pretty rough shape, with tiles popping off the floor, creating a tripping and slipping hazard. Jeff is willing to donate material and time to fix the floor. He runs a successful construction company (see link). I spoke with Jeff Beck earlier and know how tight his budget is and that 32 Court St isn't a high priority with the impending move of the Parks and Recreation Department (which I agree with). We will be in the building for a few more months. This is a great way to fix something for no cost. We would get a certificate of insurance from him. If we think this is a good idea, maybe we include it in the packet for Monday?

Greg Bisson

Director

Exeter Parks and Recreation

Follow us!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <J.caley@comcast.net>

Date: Thu, Feb 8, 2024 at 8:50 AM

Subject: Re: connection

To: Greg Bisson <gbisson@exeternh.gov>

Good Morning Greg

Great catching up with you yesterday.

I'm writing to offer our assistance with installing a new floor in the smaller second floor meeting room, located with-in the Rec department. As a church we would like to supply the materials and labor for the completion of this project.

As well as being a lead for our church, I own and operate a site & building company, J Caley Associates in which part of our service's include the scope of what we would like to offer the Town/Rec dept. www.jcaleyassociates.com

The Flooring product I would like to recommend is the vinyl plank product "life proof" which is supplied by Home Depot, we have used it several times and are quite happy with the quality of the product and its ease of installation. For your project we are planning for the cost of around \$4/sf for the flooring in which we will cover along with the cost of installation. If you could provide a color and patten that you would prefer, we would be happy to pick up and schedule the installation. When searching, please check product availability to assist with the turnaround time and completion of the project.

On behalf of the Living Stone Church, I would also like to say thank you to Rec Dept & Town for providing such a nice space for our church to meet.

If there are any questions you might have, feel free to reach out via email or my cell

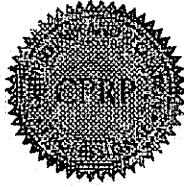
Thanks again - We look forward to being of service.

God Bless
Sincerely
Jeffrey Caley 603-231-4512

On 02/07/2024 2:26 PM EST Greg Bisson <gbisson@exeternh.gov> wrote:

Greg Bisson
Director
Exeter Parks and Recreation

Follow us!



66 Main Street, Suite B
Plymouth, NH 03264

International Drive
Portsmouth, NH



Telephone: (603) 279-0352
Toll Free: (866) 501-0352

all@mrigov.com
www.mrigov.com

2023-2024 New Hampshire Revaluation Update General Revaluation Process FAQ and MRI Contact Information

Key Contacts:

Revaluation Project Manager:

Paul McKenney, CNHA Supervisor, pmckenney@mrigov.com 603-534-2118

Assessing Project and Staff Manager:

Scott Marsh, CNHA Supervisor, smarsh@mrigov.com 603-785-5805

Commercial Property Review Lead:

Ed Tinker, CNHA Supervisor, etinker@mrigov.com 603-545-1761

*Revaluation Coordinator:

Michelle McDonald, Assessor Assistant, mmcdonald@mrigov.com, 814-442-2355

MRI Chief Financial and Administrative Officer:

Christian Pearsall, cpearsall@mrigov.com, 603-279-0352

General MRI Assessing Contact Information:

assessing@mrigov.com, 603-279-0352

Documents for the Revaluation:

All documents will be sent to the town for review. We may ask for town letterhead for some documents. FAQ documents will be sent to the town electronically and can be customized as needed.

- Press-releases
- Income/Expense Questionnaires
- Sales inspection/sales survey letters
- Preliminary value notices, final value notices
- FAQ documents (flyer/pamphlet/custom FAQ)

*For questions regarding documents, mailings, or hearing logistics please contact Michelle at mmcdonald@mrigov.com or 814-442-2355.

FAQs:

Where should the press release be posted?

The initial press release introduces MRI and provides a basic overview of the revaluation process. We

recommend the press release be posted on the town website as well as other places deemed suitable by the town. This could include the local newspaper, town newsletters, town social media accounts, the local cable channel, and other public places.

What are income and expense questionnaires?

Income and expense questionnaires, or "I&Es," are sent to commercial and industrial properties. I&Es are surveys used to gather data about local commercial market rents and the income and expenses associated with rented or leased space. The I&Es pertain to the prior calendar year and are typically mailed in the end of January and due by mid-March.

I&Es are typically returned by mail to the town. Please keep a folder with all returned I&Es for MRI staff to review. Please note, submitted information from commercial properties will be kept confidential. Refer business owners with questions about the I&E forms to Ed Tinker, etinker@mrigov.com.

I got a call from a concerned taxpayer saying someone is at their property. Is it MRI?

Field inspections are part of the revaluation process. All MRI staff will have picture IDs and will register their car information with the Police Department. MRI field staff will wear high visibility, yellow vests and will have magnets on their cars which say, "Municipal Assessor."

Will all properties need to have inspections?

MRI will conduct full inspections for properties as required by the contract. Most properties will receive a drive-by inspection during the field review process.

What happens during a full inspection?

For full inspections, staff will knock on the property's front door before conducting an inspection. If an adult is home, staff will review the interior property details with them. Once interior details are reviewed, staff will review the property interior and exterior. If no one is home, staff will review the property exterior to verify as many details as possible. A typical inspection takes around 15 minutes. Depending on the contract, additional attempts to visit the property may be made. If such attempts are unsuccessful, letters requesting a scheduled appointment will be sent to taxpayers. We call this process "call backs."

What about sale inspections?

As part of the revaluation, MRI conducts full inspections on properties sold within the analysis period, 4/1/22-3/31/24. MRI will send letters to all taxpayers that purchased property during the analysis period.

The letter informs taxpayers when, roughly, to expect a property visit if they have not already been visited. Taxpayers may deny an inspection by calling the MRI office at 603-279-0352. Although MRI's contact information is listed on the letter, you may receive calls. If you do receive calls, please refer taxpayers to the MRI office, or let us know the property denying a visit by calling us or by emailing: assessing@mrigov.com.

What sales survey?

With the letter mentioned above, we enclose a sale survey asking about the sale details, like price and conditions, and interior details of the property. We ask taxpayers to return the survey using one of three ways: by mailing to the town, by completing over the phone with MRI staff, or by completing online. If you receive surveys by mail, please keep them in a folder for MRI staff to review.

The online survey link will be established, and the town will be informed of the link to the online survey. If someone has trouble completing the survey, they can contact the MRI office at 603-279-0352.

When will taxpayers receive notice of their new value?

Taxpayers will receive preliminary value notices stating their proposed values according to a schedule developed between MRI and the town. The preliminary value notice typically contains the prior year's value and will contain the new, preliminary assessed value. The letter contains information on how to schedule an informal hearing. The mailing will be done through a third-party mail house.

When the preliminary notices are ready to be sent, we suggest the town post information about the notice and upcoming hearings on the town website or another public source like a town newsletter.

Where should informal hearings be held?

The town determines an informal hearing meeting space based on room availability, capacity, and accessibility. The meeting place should be established before preliminary values are presented to the town. Typical places include large town meeting rooms, local libraries, or community centers.

How do taxpayers schedule appointments?

Taxpayers will schedule appointments by calling MRI's office 603-279-0352 or by scheduling online at <https://mrischedule.as.me/schedule.php>. Please refer taxpayers to MRI for scheduling appointments.

How many hearings are held at a time?

We typically offer phone, in-person, and zoom hearings. Appointments are typically 20 minutes long and held between the hours of 8:30-4. Typically, 1-3 appointments take place in each 20-minute time slot. Meetings are 1-on-1, with multiple staff members holding appointments at the same time.

How long do hearings take place?

Generally, 2 weeks, but the timeframe may vary. If a taxpayer cannot make the scheduled hearing dates, we try to accommodate as best as possible and will likely schedule a phone or an online meeting with that person.

What do taxpayers need to bring to their hearings?

Taxpayers can bring any evidence which they feel supports their opinion including, but not limited to, comparable sales, appraisals, boundary or wetland surveys, or photographs. Their evidence should demonstrate error in valuation or prove that the property is not being assessed equitably. Taxpayers may want to see the property record card on file with the town prior to a hearing. MRI staff will review the property record cards with taxpayers as part of the hearing process.

Submissions from taxpayers. What do I do with them?

Taxpayers who cannot attend hearings can send written submissions to the town. Please keep all such returned submissions in a folder for MRI staff to review.

Email submissions? Taxpayers can submit hearing materials ahead of time via email to assessing@mrigov.com. If you receive something via email, please forward the materials to us and they will be shared with the MRI assessors holding the hearings.

What follow-up happens after taxpayer hearings?

Taxpayers with hearings may have a property visit, if necessary, and/or MRI assessing supervisors will review information provided during the hearing.

Final value notices. Who receives them?

Unlike the preliminary value notice, only those who had hearings or changes to their preliminary assessments will receive final notices of value. Typically, 5-10% of properties will receive these notices.

Please let us know if you have any further questions. Thank you!



TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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www.exeternh.gov

February 2, 2024

Peter Lennon, Trustee of Trust Funds
10 Front Street
Exeter, NH 03833

Dear Peter:

Enclosed is a check for \$3,500.00 for deposit into the Swasey Parkway Maintenance Fund, subaccount #111 for permit fees collected in 2023.

Also, please kindly process a disbursement in the amount of \$15,030.84 payable to the Town of Exeter from the Swasey Parkway Maintenance Fund, subaccount #111 for expenses paid by the Town during the year 2023.

Supporting documents are enclosed.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dwane Staples
Exeter Swasey Parkway Trustee Chair

Town of Exeter
Deposit to Swasey Parkway Maint. Fund
Permit fees
January - December 2023

ORG	OBJECT	DESCRIPTION	YEAR	PER	AMOUNT	CHECK NO	VDR NAME/ITEM DESC	COMMENTS
01340100	44401	Swasey Permit Fees	2023	8	(300.00)			Rec Rev DD
01340100	44401	Swasey Permit Fees	2023	5	(1,200.00)			Farmers Market
08452010	55272	RR- Special Events	2023	11	(2,000.00)	62844	SWASEY PARK TRUSTEES	Powder Keg Swasey Rental
					(3,500.00)			

ORG	OBJECT	DESCRIPTION	YEAR	PER	JOURNAL	AMOUNT	VDR NAME/ITEM DESC	COMMENTS
						905.61	UNITIL- ELECTRIC	Swasey Parkway
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	12	259	45.74	TOWN OF EXETER W/S	QTRLY WATER/SEWER- SWASEY PARK
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	12	259	18.15	TOWN OF EXETER W/S	QTRLY WATER/SEWER- SWASEY PARK
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	12	8	153.80	SEACOAST MEDIA GROUP	SWASEY PARK BID
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	10	134	125.00	Vater Irrigation, LLC	irrigation winterizing
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	10	41	43.00	TOWN OF EXETER W/S	QTRLY WATER/SEWER-SWASEY
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	10	41	43.00	TOWN OF EXETER W/S	QTRLY WATER/SEWER SWASEY
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	7	55	38.03	TOWN OF EXETER W/S	Qtr water/sewer- Swasey
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	7	55	8.51	TOWN OF EXETER W/S	Qtr water/sewer- Swasey
Non-Repairs/Maintenance						1,380.84		
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	12	204	2,850.00	All Natural Landscaping	SWASEY FALL CLEAN UP
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	11	61	1,800.00	All Natural Landscaping	SWASEY MOWING & TRIMMING
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	11	8	810.00	Bio Spray	GRUB CONTROL
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	10	41	1,800.00	All Natural Landscaping	SWASEY MOWING
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	9	12	2,250.00	All Natural Landscaping	mowing and trimming
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	9	12	1,200.00	WILLIAM E. CURTIS	swasey clean up
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	9	12	1,000.00	John J. Laurence	SWASEY PARK- STUMP GRINDING
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	8	43	1,800.00	All Natural Landscaping	mowing and trimming
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	8	43	900.00	WILLIAM E. CURTIS	Cut and remove Ash tree- Swasey
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	7	55	1,800.00	All Natural Landscaping	swasey park mowing/trimming
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	6	14	1,800.00	All Natural Landscaping	mowing & trimming
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	5	21	1,840.00	All Natural Landscaping	SPRING CLEAN UP-SWASEY PK
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	2	34	2,542.50	JACOB D. SHORT	swasey park-pruning/cutback
01458908	55295	SP- Swasey Pkwy Maintenance	2023	2	34	1,257.50	JACOB D. SHORT	pruning shrubs
Repairs/ Maintenance						21,650.00		
Total Expenses						\$ 25,030.84		

Breakdown:	
Town pays for non-R&M expenses	1,380.84
Town portion of R&M expenses	8,619.16 b
Total Town Budget for Parkway	10,000.00
Balance of R&M Expenses after Town's Portion	15,030.84 a-b



Bulletin #6: Immunity repeal bill scheduled, anti-lobbying bill update, ambulance billing & more

1 message

NHMA Government Affairs <governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org>

Fri, Feb 9, 2024 at 11:32 AM

To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 06

2024 Session

February 9, 2024



[Live Bill Tracker](#)

Repeal of Immunity Protections Returns Again

On **Wednesday, February 14 at 1:00 p.m.** in **LOB 206-208**, the **House Judiciary Committee** will hear testimony on **HB 1640**, which would repeal all existing statutory and common law immunity protections that apply to local government and allow lawsuits for monetary damages for essentially all governmental functions.

All local officials are urged to register their opposition to HB 647. This is a top priority bill for NHMA. You can come to the hearing and testify or register your opposition **online** for the committee. Please read on to understand just some of the devastating consequences of this bill for local governments.

HB 1640 would authorize an incredible number of private lawsuits against cities and towns.

HB 1640 would delete or nullify the entire body of law on governmental immunity—tossing aside decades of statutory and case law (also known as common law) developed by the New Hampshire Supreme Court. The bill states that a claim against a governmental entity **shall not be subject to:** (a) Common law doctrines of immunity; (b) Federally recognized doctrines of qualified immunity; (c) Sovereign immunity, governmental immunity, custom, or policy; or (d) Statutory immunities and limitations on liability or damages.

But what does that really mean? This bill would allow an individual to sue a governmental entity for monetary damages under any state or federal constitutional provision.

Currently, governmental bodies, officials, and employees can be sued for monetary damages and held responsible for legal fees only when the legislature or the courts have specifically created a right to sue either in statute or common law. Legislators and courts have—prudently—not created a private action for money damages and attorney’s fees in most state and federal statutes, regulations, and constitutional provisions because they have recognized that such lawsuits would be crippling to governmental operations. **HB 1640** would change that entirely, incentivizing lawsuits on a wide variety of issues for which lawsuits are not currently allowed.

HB 1640 would dramatically increase expenses for taxpayers.

If this bill passes, it would invite a barrage of lawsuits because there would be no limitation on the amount of damages that could be awarded. Combined with the expansion of municipal liability, taxpayers will see a definite increase in costs due to increases in insurance premiums, settlements, and attorneys’ fees.

Insurance premiums are calculated, in large part, based on the risk of suit and the relative costs associated with that risk. By expanding the pool of possible claims and eliminating the cap on the amount of damages, the incentive to sue and the incentive for those who sue to settle decreases. As any civil attorney will admit, settlements occur largely because it’s cheaper for their client to pay a small fee to make the problem go away—rather than to continue to accrue court (and attorney) costs in defense of their actions. The consequence of expanding the pool of possible claims is that more people may sue, increasing the need to offer settlements. Also, the possibility of winning large sums of money due to a legal judgement for legitimate suits means there is less incentive for those types of suits to settle. Combined, this one-two punch is certain to increase the risk of insuring municipalities, increasing costs for insurance, which will ultimately be passed on to the taxpayer.

HB 1640 would cripple government operations.

Aside from these “hard costs” discussed above, lawsuits take time to litigate and take administrative staff away from their regular duties. Having an increased number of ongoing lawsuits would create administrative paralysis and undue interference with governmental operations because government employees would need to spend time responding to the lawsuit rather than performing their functions.

The government needs certain protections to be able to function. Cities and towns provide a wide variety of services to the general public, which opens them to the constant risk of something going wrong. Governmental immunity recognizes this reality and allows government to operate and serve the public, without the risk of costly lawsuits at every turn. These protections are even more critical for New Hampshire’s local government system, which rests heavily on regular people who volunteer their time to serve the public.

A fair balance between imposing civil liability on local governments, given the reasonable priority of the competing interests, already exists in the law between managing the needs of the public – as provided by the government – and the need to ensure that the injured are compensated.

We urge our members to attend the hearing to testify; or, if you would like to submit written testimony, you can do so by [registering your opposition online](#). Please be sure to email a copy of your testimony to us at governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org as well.

Anti-Lobbying Deja Vu

On Wednesday, the Legislative Administration Committee heard **HB 1479**, the bill that would prohibit local officials from advocating or engaging in the legislative process and would prevent organizations that receive any public money from lobbying, with criminal penalties and costly lawsuits for taxpayers as the consequences. This same bill, in different iterations, has been filed at least five times in the last several years.

Let’s start with a bright spot. We want to thank the following 35 municipalities for submitting letters in opposition to **HB 1479**:

Allenstown	Dover	Hillsborough	New London
Auburn	Dunbarton	Holderness	Newmarket
Barrington	Francistown	Hudson	North Hampton

Bedford	Franklin	Keene	Newton
Bennington	Fremont	Lebanon	Salem
Berlin	Goffstown	Litchfield	Sandwich
Candia	Greenfield	Londonderry	Swanzey
Claremont	Groton	Meredith	Wolfeboro
Dalton	Hampton	Moultonborough	

We also want to thank officials from the towns of Derry, New London, Stratham, and Woodstock for coming to testify against the bill, alongside the Building Officials Association, Town Clerks Association, and the Association of Counties.

Now let's turn to the bill.

First, the bill prohibits local officials from any form of advocacy. It broadly prohibits any public funds from being used to “lobby, attempt to influence legislation, participate in political activity, or contribute funds to any entity for the purpose of engaging in same.” This would prevent any local official, whether a paid employee or an elected official receiving a stipend, from any advocacy on behalf of its city or town because that activity would be funded with public money.

Some legislators in the hearing attempted to lull local officials who testified in opposition into a false sense of security, by explaining that it would not affect them because RSA 15:1 exempts local officials from registering as lobbyists. If this bill passes, RSA 15:1 would not protect local officials. Instead, it would unconstitutionally deprive them – and those they employ to speak for them – of their voice during the legislative process.

Second, the bill prohibits others—recipients of public funds—from lobbying. This paragraph—per the prime sponsor and several who came to testify in support—is about preventing NHMA from advocating for you. Despite the focus on NHMA in the hearing, this bill affects every recipient of public funds: every municipal organization, like the Building Officials, Assessors, Town Clerks, Tax Collectors, Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs; and every single nonprofit organization that receives state or local funds, since “public funds” is defined in the bill “as a grant or appropriation of a state, county, town, city, village district, unincorporated place, or school district.” In fact, the bill is so vague and so broad in its language, that there is no reason it would not also apply to any private corporation that receives payment from a public entity, since the purchase of goods or payment for services constitutes an appropriation of public funds.

There is a so-called exception to this prohibition: the recipient of public funds who wishes to lobby can do so if they segregate the funds for lobbying from public funds. Current state law reflects reality: lobbying time and revenue received must be reported at the end of each quarter. This is because no one can predict the future. It is impossible to know how many bills will be filed of municipal interest, how late committee hearings will run, or how much time will need to be spent on advocacy until after that activity occurs. Current state law also requires that lobbyist reporting be available to the **public**.

Third, the bill would cost taxpayers money. And that's not just because the bill would allow any resident of the state to bring a costly lawsuit against a city and town (in addition to criminal penalties). Every year, most of NHMA's advocacy falls into one of two categories: defeating bills that cost municipalities money and supporting bills that maintain or increase state aid. Every new cost on municipalities is paid for by taxpayers, and every additional dollar sent from the state to the cities and towns offsets property taxes. Some who testified even objected to NHMA providing objective cost analysis in response to inquiries by the Legislative Budget Office (LBA). (You can read about LBA's Fiscal Note Process on the [LBA's webpage](#).)

Finally, this bill strips local officials and town meetings of authority to make their own local decisions. Dues paid to organizations that provide services to local officials, such as legal services, training, and advocacy, are included by local officials in municipal budgets. In most of our municipalities, these budgets are adopted by the voters. In the rest, they are adopted by the representatives the voters elect to make those decisions for them. Cities and towns make decisions every year to be members of organizations that provide these services to make them more efficient and

to operate in a more cost-effective manner. The state should not be able to supplant its judgment for that of our local officials or voters on local spending decisions.

Ultimately, this bill is about silencing local government. If you have not yet contacted the [Legislative Administration Committee](#) to ask them to recommend this bill as Inexpedient to Legislate, there is still time. **Raise your voice before you lose your voice.**

You may watch the video of the entire hearing [here](#).

Bills on Billing

Several bills have been introduced this session to address issues around municipal ambulance billing for services.

- **SB 407:** On Wednesday, the Senate Health and Human Services Committee heard **SB 407**, which would require insurers to directly reimburse ambulance service providers at the usual rate for services or at the rate negotiated between the insurer and ambulance service provider. Currently, out of network insurance companies reimburse the patient, not the ambulance service, creating confusion for the patient and costs for the municipality. There's still time to contact members of the [committee](#) and explain how this bill would protect patients and recover revenue losses borne by property taxpayers.
- **SB 409:** On Thursday, the Senate passed **SB 409** as amended would allow for Medicaid reimbursements when an ambulance responds to an emergency call originating from 9-1-1 and treats a patient but the patient does not consent does to transport the patient to a hospital emergency room. This bill would help reduce the cost shift to the municipal budget when municipal emergency services respond to a non-transport call under certain circumstances. The Senate Finance Committee will take up **SB 409** to assess the financial impacts on the state Medicaid plan, and we encourage members to contact members of [Senate Finance Committee](#) and your legislators to express support for this policy proposal.
- **HB 1081:** Coming up on **Wednesday, February 14 at 10:00 a.m.**, in **LOB 302-304**, the [House Commerce and Consumer Affairs](#) committee will hold a work session on **HB 1081** which would require health insurance providers to directly reimburse ambulance service providers. While similar to **SB 407**, **HB 1081** would not preclude insurers from negotiating rates of reimbursement with non-participating ambulance providers. Local officials dealing with ambulance bill should contact the [committee](#) and explain how the current law on direct pay affects your ambulance services and budgets.

Local Option Right-to-Know Cost Bill Recommitted

On Thursday, the House reconsidered its prior vote on **HB 1002**, the local option Right-to-Know Law bill supported by NHMA. Although the House passed the bill last week by a 14-vote margin, the reconsideration motion passed by a 12-vote margin this week – and a supermajority of House members agreed to send it back to the House Judiciary Committee for further work.

NHMA remains confident that the House Judiciary Committee will be able to work through the remaining concerns with this bill and produce an amendment that resolves those concerns and addresses the issues raised by our members. We are happy to continue to work with other stakeholders as the House Judiciary Committee revisits this important legislation.

Local Solutions to the State's Housing Crisis Webinar Series

NHMA is proud to partner with New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs, New Hampshire Planners Association, New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions, University of New Hampshire Extension, PLAN NH, New Hampshire Housing, Community Development Finance Authority, and the Center for Ethics in Society at Saint Anselm College on a 5-part webinar series focusing on local solutions to New Hampshire's housing shortage, which will kick off on February 15 with a program titled "[Our Housing Shortage](#)."

The other programs in the series are:

["The Intersection of Development and Clean Water"](#) (Thursday, February 22)

["YIMBYism: A Different Approach to Development"](#) (Thursday, February 29)

["Transfer of Development Rights 101: A Primer"](#) (Thursday, March 7)

["Attracting Developers"](#) (Thursday, March 14)

The series will highlight a variety of actions municipalities are taking to improve the housing shortage. We've all seen numerous news reports about, for instance, the [2,717 housing units that will shortly be under construction in Concord](#) (a [14% increase](#) in housing

units), but this series will delve into the factors that lead to success and how growth can balance against existing demands for municipal services. We hope that you will register via the links above and join us during this series.

Get Involved in NHMA's Legislative Policy Process

NHMA's biennial legislative policy process is getting underway. As a first step, we are recruiting volunteers to serve on our three legislative policy committees. These committees will review legislative policy proposals submitted by local officials and make recommendations on those policies, which will go to the NHMA Legislative Policy Conference in September.

If you are a municipal official in a city or town and are interested in serving on one of the policy committees, please contact the Government Affairs staff at 603-224-7447 or governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org.

Each of the committees deals with a different set of municipal issues. The committees and their subject areas are as follows:

- Finance and Revenue – budgeting, revenue, tax exemptions, current use, assessing, tax collection, retirement issues, education funding.
- General Administration and Governance – elections, Right-to-Know Law, labor, town meeting, charters, welfare, public safety.
- Infrastructure, Development, and Land Use – solid/hazardous waste, transportation, land use, technology, environmental regulation, housing, utilities, code enforcement, economic development.

When you contact us, please indicate your first and second choices for a committee assignment. We will do our best to accommodate everyone's first choice, but we strive for equal membership among the committees. We hope to have 15-20 members on each committee.

There will be an organizational meeting for all committees on **Friday, April 5**. After that, each committee will meet separately as many times as necessary to review the policy proposals assigned to it—typically three to five meetings, all held on either a Monday or Friday, between early April and the end of May.

**Bill Hearings Schedule
NHMA Events Calendar
2023 Final Legislative Bulletin
Website: www.nhmunicipal.org
Email: governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org**

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