

## **SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**Monday, May 4, 2026**

**6:15 pm**

**Nowak Room, Town Offices**

**10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833**

## **REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING BEGINS AT 7:00 PM**

Meetings can be watched on Ch 22 or Ch 6 or YouTube. Attendees can join in person or virtually via Zoom.

To access the meeting, click this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84816342007>

To access the meeting via telephone, call: +1 646 558 8656 and enter the Webinar ID: 848 1634 2007

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 to access the meeting here: <https://www.exeternh.gov/townmanager/virtual-town-meetings>

Contact us at [extvg@exeternh.gov](mailto:extvg@exeternh.gov) or 603-418-6425 with any technical issues.

### **AGENDA**

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Non-Public Session
3. Public Comment
4. Proclamation
  - a. Affordable Housing Week – May 11-17, 2026
5. Approval of Minutes
  - a. April 27, 2026 – On hold until 5/18/26
6. Appointments/Resignations
  - a. Budget Recommendations Committee – Geoffrey Bell
  - b. Rockingham Planning Commission Member Re-Appointments
  - c. Trustees of the Robinson Trust Funds – Request for New Member Position
7. Discussion/Action Items
  - a. Complete Streets Policy Approval – Dave Sharples, Town Planner
  - b. Epping Waste/Transfer Facility Update – Kristen Murphy, Conservation/Sustainability Planner
  - c. Drought Update – Stephen Cronin, Public Works Director
  - d. Energy Cost Comparison Q1 2026 v. 2025 – Corey Stevens, Finance Director
8. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits & Exemptions
9. Permits & Approvals
10. Town Manager's Report
11. Select Board Committee Report
12. Correspondence
13. Review Board Calendar
14. Non-Public Session
15. Adjournment

**Niko Papakonstantis, Chair**

**Select Board**

**Posted 5/1/26 Town Office, Town Website**

**Persons with a disabling condition may request accommodations in order to attend this meeting. Requests should be made with 72 hours notice.**

**AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

**Non-Public Session**

**Public Comment**

## Proclamation

*Town of Exeter, New Hampshire  
A Proclamation*

**Affordable Housing Week**  
**May 11-17, 2026**

- Whereas,* As people should have access to safe healthy and affordable homes within communities that provide opportunity;
- And Whereas,* The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as “housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities”;
- And Whereas,* The Seacoast region of New Hampshire faces one of the most severe housing shortages in the State, with rents and home prices outpacing wages and contributing to increased housing insecurity and homelessness;
- And Whereas,* Housing instability undermines the ability of young families to stay in our communities, creates barriers for older adults wishing to age in place, and impacts workforce retention and economic growth across the Seacoast;
- And Whereas,* Studies have found that each \$100 increase in median rent results in a 15 percent increase in homelessness in metro areas and a 39 percent increase in homelessness in nearby suburbs and rural areas;
- And Whereas,* The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention recognize safe, healthy and affordable housing within communities of opportunity as key social determinants of health;
- And Whereas,* Everyone benefits from affordable housing, including the people who reside in these properties, their neighbors, businesses, employers and the community as a whole;
- And Whereas,* United through the Home for All Coalition, municipalities, organizations and residents across the Seacoast are participating in Affordable Housing Week to elevate the urgent need for affordable housing solutions and to ensure homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring.

*Now, therefore,* I, Niko Papakonstantis, Select Board Chair of the Town of Exeter, do hereby proclaim and affirm May 11-17, 2026 as Affordable Housing Week within the Town of Exeter, NH. All people are hereby called upon to commit to actions and policies that expand affordable housing opportunities and strengthen community stability for all residents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Niko Papakonstantis,  
Select Board Chair, Exeter, NH



## **Appointments/Resignations**



**Town of Exeter**  
Town Manager's Office  
10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833

Tentative:  
Mon. 4/27/26 6:45 pm.

## Statement of Interest Boards and Committee Membership

Committee Selection: BRC

New  Re-Appointment  Regular  Alternate

Name: Geoffrey Bell Email: GCBell20@gmail.com  
Address: 85 Park St Phone: 207 318 5832

Registered Voter: Yes  No

Statement of Interest/experience/background/qualification, etc. (resume can be attached).

As a 3-year resident of Exeter I'm excited to start getting more involved in town planning activities. As a young family with a 7-month old I hope to be able to bring a valuable perspective to this conversation.

If this is re-appointment to a position, please list all training sessions you have attended relative to your appointed position.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that: 1. this application will be presented to the Exeter Select Board only for the position specified above and not for subsequent vacancies on the same board; 2. The Town Manager and Select Board may nominate someone who has not filed a similar application; 3. this application will be available for public inspection.

- After submitting this application for appointment to the Town Manager:
- The application will be reviewed and you will be scheduled for an interview with the Select Board
  - Following the interview the Board will vote on your potential appointment at the next regular meeting
  - If appointed, you will receive a letter from the Town Manager and will be required to complete paperwork with the Town Clerk prior to the start of your service on the committee or board.

I certify that I am 18 years of age or older:

Signature: Geoffrey Bell Date: 3/25/26

To be completed by Select Board upon appointment:

Date Appointed: \_\_\_\_\_ Term Ending: \_\_\_\_\_ Full: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate: \_\_\_\_\_



# TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

10 FRONT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 778-0591 • FAX 777-1514

[www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov)

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Select Board**

**DATE: May 4, 2026**

**FROM: Pam McElroy  
Senior Executive Assistant**

**RE: Rockingham Planning  
Commission Re-Appointments**

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After speaking with Annette at Rockingham Planning Commission, the following Exeter Representative service terms have been confirmed for:

Langdon Plumer      Term expired: April 30, 2026      Request extend term to: April 30, 2030

Gwen English      Term expired: April 30, 2026      Request extend term to: April 30, 2030

Marty Kennedy      Term to expire: November, 2029      Request change term to: April 30, 2029

Annette also confirmed that terms are typically 4 years and terms are reinstated by each Town's Select Board annually. We also agreed to request the Exeter Select Board change Marty Kennedy's term to expire in April of 2029 for consistency in Exeter's annual re-appointment schedule.

Thank you.

### *SUGGESTED MOTION:*

*The Exeter Select Board approves the Rockingham Planning Commission Exeter Representative service term extensions for Langdon Plumer and Gwen English to April 30, 2026.*

*The Exeter Select Board approves the Rockingham Planning Commission Exeter Representative service term change for Marty Kennedy from November 2029 to April 2029 for consistency in the Town of Exeter's annual Board/Committee/Commission re-appointments.*

## **Discussion/Action Items**

## **Complete Streets Policy Approval**

<b>Town of Exeter</b>	Policy Number <b>2026-02</b>	Adopted by <b>Selectboard</b>
Subject:  <b>COMPLETE STREETS POLICY</b>	Adoption Date: <b>05/04/2026</b>  Effective Date: <b>05/11/2026</b>	Supersedes: None

## **TOWN OF EXETER COMPLETE STREETS POLICY**

### **PREAMBLE**

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

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

### **1. VISION AND INTENT**

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

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

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

Key elements of the vision include:

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

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

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

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

## **CORE COMMITMENT**

### **2. ALL USERS AND MODES**

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

### **3. ALL PROJECTS AND PHASES**

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

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

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

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

1. Where pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited by law from using the facility. In this case, alternative facilities and accommodations should be provided within the same transportation

corridor, and the ability to reasonably and conveniently cross the facility will be part of the facility design and construction.

2. Where existing right-of-way does not allow for the accommodation of all users. In this case alternatives shall be explored such as obtaining additional right-of-way, use of revised travel lane configurations, paved shoulders, signage, traffic calming, education or enforcement to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles and riders and persons with disabilities.
3. Where the cost of establishing walkways or bikeways or other accommodations would be disproportionate to the need, particularly if alternative facilities are available within a reasonable walking and/or bicycling distance.
4. Where application of Complete Streets principles is unnecessary or inappropriate because it would be contrary to public safety and increase risk of injury or death.
5. Where the construction is not practically feasible or cost effective because of unreasonable adverse impacts on the environment or on neighboring land uses, including impact from right-of-way acquisition.
6. Ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep street and other transportation assets in serviceable condition or when interim measures are implemented on temporary detour or haul routes. However, all temporary detours shall comply with temporary traffic control requirements of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
7. Ordinary public works or utility maintenance activities, including, but not limited to: water, sewer and storm sewer main repairs; installation of new or removal of existing water or sewer service lines, installation or repair of fire hydrants, installation or repair of private utility fixtures.

## **BEST PRACTICES:**

### **4. DESIGN**

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

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

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

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

## 5. CONTEXT SENSITIVITY

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

## 6. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Established performance standards shall measure how well the street is serving all users. As better data collection evolves, so will the standards. Using existing baseline data, the following

performance measures will be used to show progress. These include both Implementation Measures and Measures of Effectiveness:

### **Implementation Measures**

- New and reconstructed pedestrian and bicycle facilities:
  - Feet of sidewalk
  - Feet of multi-use path
  - Feet of buffered on-street bicycle lanes
  - Number of sharrows
  - Number of crosswalk improvements (high visibility striping, signage, lighting).
- Number and percent of projects identified in Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan that have been implemented.
- Number of and reasons for approved exemptions from requirements of this policy
- Average time to complete snow removal from primary and secondary sidewalk networks following snow storms.

### **Measures of Effectiveness**

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

## **7. IMPLEMENTATION**

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

1. Establish new or revise existing procedures, plans, regulations, policies, guidelines and other documentation to ensure accommodation of all users in each project and to reflect current best practices in transportation design. As part of this, implement a complete streets project development checklist to be used for all large-scale public projects, consistent with the requirements of this policy.
2. Encourage municipal staff and community leaders to attend training on Complete Streets principles and best implementation practices.

3. Establish and maintain an inventory of pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure to assist with prioritization of improvement projects.
4. Promote project coordination among Town departments to encourage the most responsible and efficient use of resources for projects within the public way.
5. Consider capital planning and funding increases to encourage implementation of the Complete Streets Policy and projects identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and pursue outside federal, state and private resources.
6. Work with neighboring municipalities and relevant stakeholders as needed to improve interregional travel between Exeter and neighboring communities when Complete Streets improvements warrant such collaboration.
7. Engage residents, business owners and employees along targeted corridors to inform design priorities for complete streets improvement projects.
8. Provide public education on and enforcement of proper road use behavior for all users and all modes
9. Present a Progress Report to the Master Plan Oversight Committee, Select Board and Town Manager each year including performance measures outcomes and Complete Streets implementation successes.

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

# EXETER COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN GUIDELINES

PLANNING BOARD DRAFT 4/6/2026



# Acknowledgements

## Exeter Master Plan Oversight Committee

Martin Kennedy

Aaron Brown

John Grueter

Dave Sharples, Director of Planning & Sustainability

Steve Cronin, Director of Public Works

## Prepared for

Town of Exeter

10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833

## Prepared by

Rockingham Planning Commission

Scott Bogle, Principal Transportation Planner

Mikayla Jerominek, Regional Planner

Mike Packer, GIS Specialist



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## Glossary of Acronyms

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



# Introduction

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

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

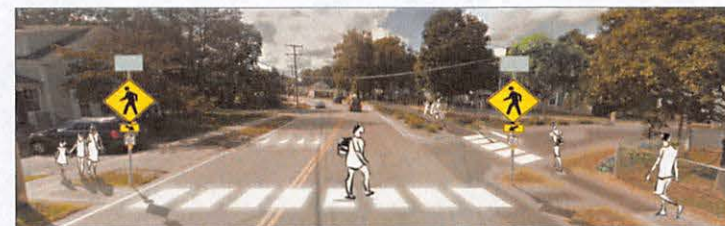
This document draws upon best practices from national and state transportation agencies while tailoring strategies to the scale, character, and goals of Exeter. While each street is unique, the guidelines are intended to create a foundation for predictable design and long-term investment for safe accommodation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

## What are Complete Streets?

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

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

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



## Benefits of Complete Streets

Complete Streets create wide-ranging benefits including:

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

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

*A Complete Streets policy can give the Town guidance around planning and implementing walking and biking infrastructure... By thinking holistically about mobility, roadways become safer.*

*- Exeter Master Plan (2018)*

## Vision for Complete Streets in Exeter

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

Key elements of the vision include:

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

# Components of Complete Streets

## Roadside Zone Elements

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

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

# Components of Complete Streets

## ADA and Accessibility Considerations

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

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

## Roadway Zone Elements

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



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

# Components of Complete Streets

## Roadway Zone Elements - Continued

- **Marked Bicycle Lanes** – Marked bicycle lanes designate a specific space for bicycling on a roadway, though without vertical physical separation. These are often marked with a single line of paint and stencils, though can be “buffered” with a wider painted horizontal separation. These are an improvement over having no dedicated space for bicycling, though offer no protection from a vehicle veering into the lane. If placing a bicycle lane next to parallel parking it is critical to provide a door zone buffer area to reduce the likelihood of bicyclists being hit by drivers opening their car doors into traffic.
- **Sharrows** – Shared-lane marking arrows, or “sharrows” are road markings used to indicate a travel lane where inadequate space exists to the right of traffic for people on bicycles to ride. The sharrow puts motorists on notice to expect bicyclists in the lane. Sharrows are not appropriate for roads with speeds over 30mph and should not be considered a substitute for bike lanes unless there is inadequate space for a designated bike lane. They should be accompanied by Bikes May Use Full Lane signs and a community outreach effort to remind drivers of bicyclists’ right to use the travel lane.
- **On-street parking** – On-street parking meets some of the parking need for adjacent land uses, whether on residential streets or in the downtown. It can have benefits for bicycle and pedestrian safety in creating a buffer between automobile travel lanes and adjacent sidewalks, bicycle lanes or multi-use paths; and has a traffic calming effect by typically narrowing travel lanes and increasing driver focus.

A key design consideration is minimizing the potential for “dooring” of passing cyclists as parkers exit their vehicles.

- **Median Refuge Islands** – Median refuge islands are vertically separated spaces at the center of wider multi-lane arterial road that offer shelter to pedestrians if they are unable to cross the entire street in a single walk signal cycle. They are particularly beneficial for pedestrians with limited mobility, whether older adults, people with disabilities, or families with children who may need more time to cross wide streets.



*High visibility crosswalk markings installed on Front Street in 2023*

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

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

## Traffic Calming Strategies

- **Narrower lane widths.** The width of the travel lane is a key factor that influences vehicular speed. On narrower suburban or rural roads such as most in Exeter, an effective traffic calming strategy is visually narrowing the road by striping narrower travel lanes. Lanes can be narrowed by vertical barriers as well, whether on-street parking or curbing.
- **Curb extensions (bulb-outs)** - In environments with sidewalks, traffic calming can be achieved with curb bulb-outs, where curbing is used to physically narrow the roadway, particularly at crossing points. This has the double benefit of shortening the crossing distance for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- **Speed humps and tables** – These are longer and flatter than traditional speed bumps, designed to slow vehicles on residential or in-town streets by forcing a gradual reduction in speed. The longer design makes them more compatible for emergency vehicles and snow plows than older style speed bumps. Exeter has installed a speed table at Lincoln Street School
- **Chicanes and curves** – Another strategy to slow traffic is to introduce artificial curves in travel lanes on an otherwise straight road, forcing drivers to slow down and concentrate to navigate these features. Strategies include center islands or alternating bulb outs.

- **Roundabouts** – Roundabouts are circular intersections where traffic flows in a counter-clockwise direction and entering traffic is forced to slow-down and yield to vehicles already in the intersection, resulting in fewer severe crashes than a signal or stop-controlled intersection. This said, the consistent flow of traffic, where cars are not required to stop by a signal or stop sign, requires special design attention to ensure safe pedestrian and bicycle accommodation.
- **Speed Feedback Signage** – Speed feedback signs show the posted speed limit but also feature a radar unit which displays the speed of oncoming vehicles to alert drivers to their actual speed and the posted speed limit. These work best if they flash or provide a SLOW DOWN message if drivers exceed a preset speed threshold.
- **Tightening Intersections** – The design of an intersection influences vehicle speed as drivers navigate a turn. Where slower vehicles speeds are desired, especially in downtowns and neighborhoods, intersections should be designed or redesigned to force drivers to slow down to make their turn. This can be accomplished by converting acute angle intersections to right angles, and tightening the radius at right angle intersections – especially where truck access is not a major design consideration. This also has the benefit of shortening pedestrian crossing distances.

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

## Complete Streets Challenges

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

- Auto oriented roadways – For much of the last 75 years, streets and roadways in the U.S. have been designed and built primarily for automobiles, and primarily to allow automobiles to move as quickly as possible. Some will argue that roads are built to serve cars because they are funded by fuel taxes, but many local roads, especially in New Hampshire, are funded with local property taxes which are paid by residents regardless of how they get around. Cars and trucks have become our principal form of transportation in part out of convenience, and more recently this has been reinforced by safety concerns about walking and bicycling on roads with higher traffic volumes, higher speeds, larger vehicles and more distracted driving.
- Main Street as State Highway – A challenge for smaller communities is where main streets also serve as state highways, needing to serve as both pedestrian friendly business districts and through roads. In Exeter’s case NH Route 101 functions to as an east-west bypass, while NH101 in combination with NH 125 and 195 serve as north-south bypasses for regional trips that would have passed through downtown in earlier decades. The presence of these other options for through trips helps make the case for prioritizing slow speeds and pedestrian and bicycle orientation in the town center and connecting routes.
- Adequate Right of Way - Adding dedicated bike/ped usually requires widening roadways, and in older communities like Exeter, lack of public right of way can be a problem. Smaller communities tend to be reluctant to use eminent domain to secure right of way; so assembling adequate width for improvements is at best time-consuming and often challenging or prohibitive depending on abutters willingness to grant or sell easements. Town support for acquiring easements will be important.
- Climate and maintenance – Winter snow adds maintenance challenges for pedestrian facilities that aren’t faced by towns in the south. Still, Exeter’s Department of Public Works and their counterparts in communities that get more snow than the NH Seacoast have developed effective strategies for maintaining not just sidewalks and multi-use paths but bump-outs, pedestrian islands, and speed tables such as installed on Lincoln Street
- Lack of Other Transportation Options – Communities that lack fixed route transit have a heightened need for safe pedestrian facilities, as residents without cars may need to walk substantial distances on relatively high stress roads to reach employment and other destinations.
- Funding – Exeter has been very effective at securing federal funding for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and other sources. While still available, these programs have increasingly long timelines and cumbersome administrative requirements. Local investment can be the most timely and cost-effective approach to implementing projects.

## Street Typology

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

Neighborhood Streets

Town Center Streets

In-Town Connector Streets

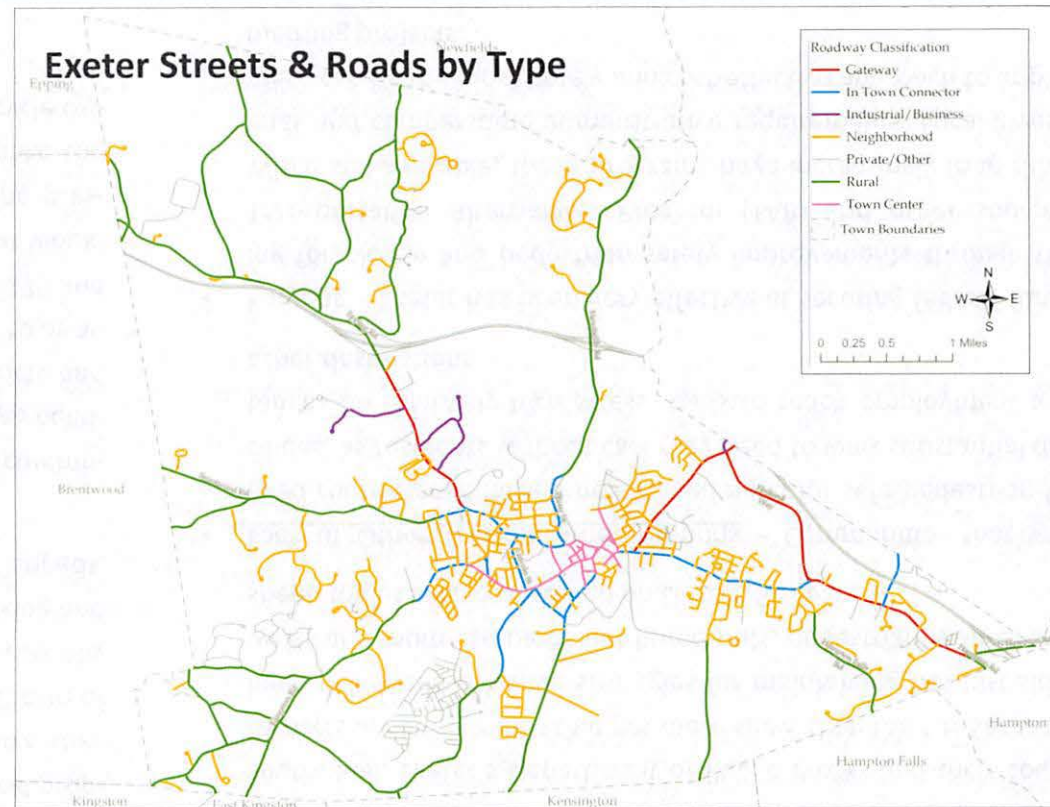
Gateway Streets

Business & Industrial Access Roads

Rural Roads

## Modal Priorities

Adjacent land uses determine the types of trips and activities likely to be prevalent on a given street or road. This in turn should shape the priority given to different



uses and users of the street or road in designing its features. As an example, on-street parking is more important in the town center and neighborhoods than it is on Rural Roads. Foot traffic is key to the vitality of restaurants and retail shops, so pedestrian access is a high priority in a downtown area. The discussion of each street type includes recommended prioritization of four street uses: Automobiles, Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Parking.

# Neighborhood Streets

## Description

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

## Vision for Neighborhood Streets

Neighborhood Streets should:

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

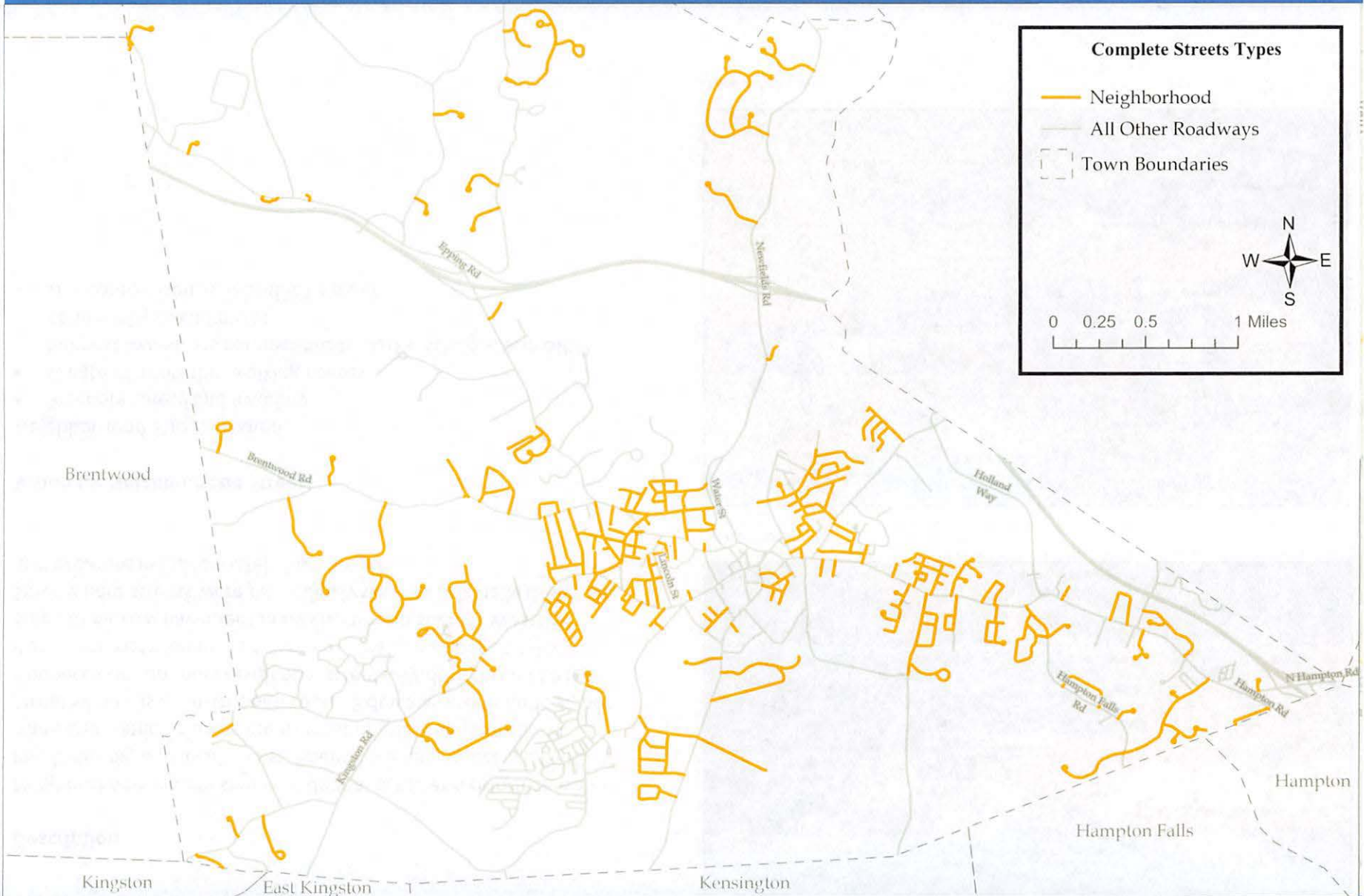


*Washington Street*

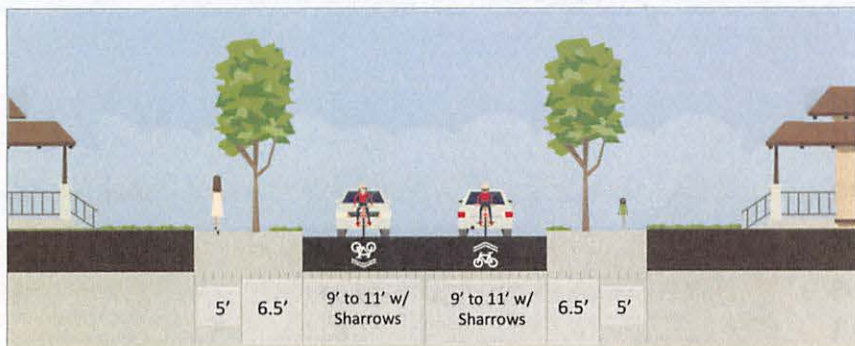


*Towle Avenue*

# EXETER'S NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS



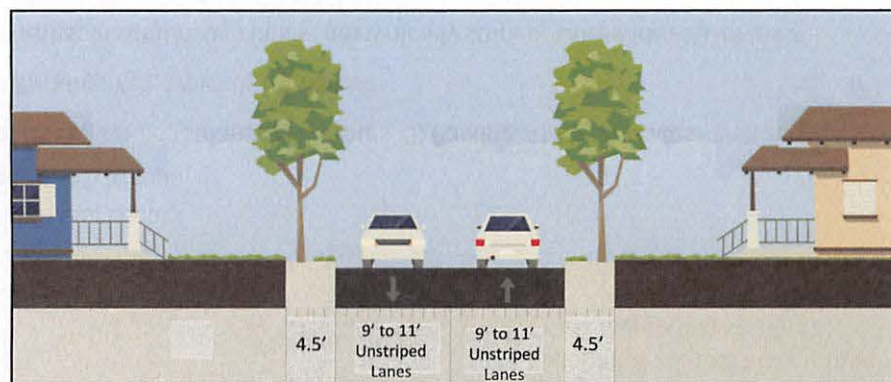
## NEIGHBORHOOD STREET: EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONCEPTS FOR REDESIGN



***Neighborhood Street with sidewalks and shared lane markings***

Neighborhood Streets in Exeter can include a variety of pavement widths depending on when the neighborhood was built. Streets in neighborhoods developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s often have narrow pavement width but include sidewalks and in some cases buffer strips between road and sidewalk. Washington Street and Union Street are examples from this era. Mid-20th century, post-WWII neighborhoods such as Towle Avenue or Haven Lane often lack sidewalks and also have narrow overall pavement width. Later neighborhoods from the 1980s-2010s such as Westside Drive frequently have very wide spans of pavement of 40' and greater, sometimes with sidewalks and sometimes without. Sidewalks are

not essential for a low-speed, low traffic volume street like Towle Avenue to feel safe for walking and bicycling. Higher volume residential streets that are used as cut-through routes, like Washington Street, Winter Street, or Jady Hill Avenue, straddle the line between Neighborhood Streets and Connector Streets. For these streets sidewalks are especially important and shared lane markings (sharrows) may be appropriate. On-street parking on Neighborhood Streets serves as an ad-hoc traffic calming measure. Neighborhood Streets should avoid centerlines and striped shoulders which tend to serve as visual cues for higher vehicle speeds.



***Lower volume Neighborhood Street without sidewalks***

## NEIGHBORHOOD STREET: STREET FEATURES OVERVIEW

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



West Side Drive

**Functional Class:** Local

**Target Speed:** 20-25 mph

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

**On Street Parking:** Yes, typically unmarked

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

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

**Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path:** No

**Shoulder Bike Lane:** No

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

**Centerline or Median:** No

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

# Town Center Streets

## Description

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

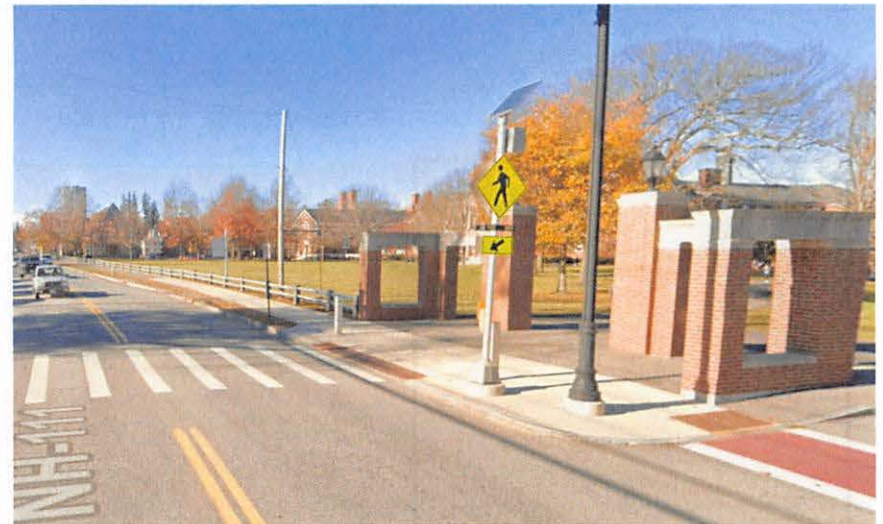
## Vision for Town Center Streets

Town Center streets should:

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



Water Street Looking West

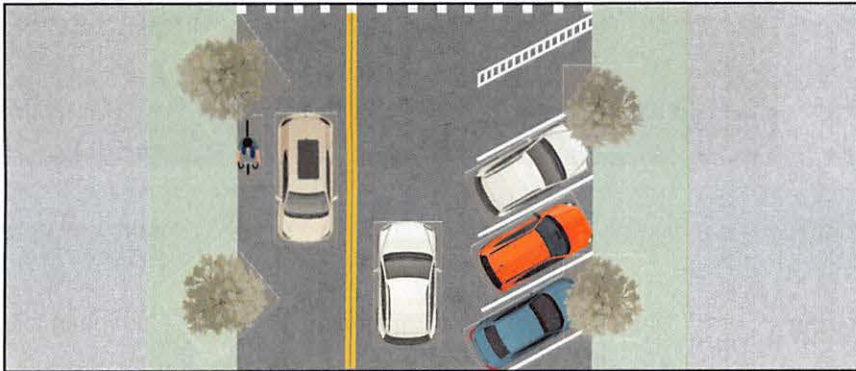
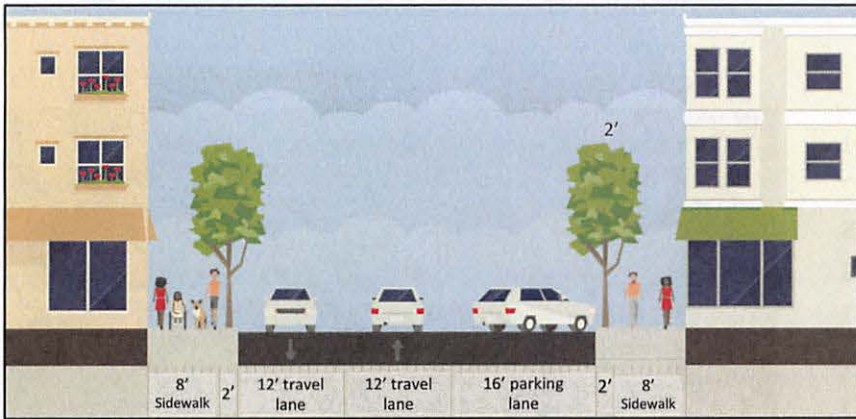


Front Street at Phillips Exeter Green

# EXETER'S TOWN CENTER STREETS



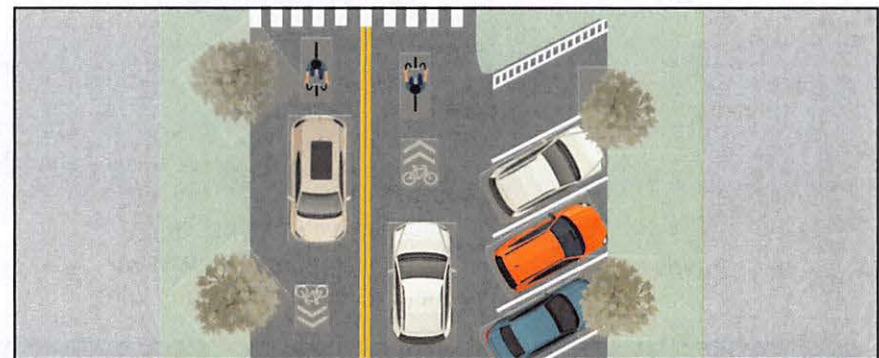
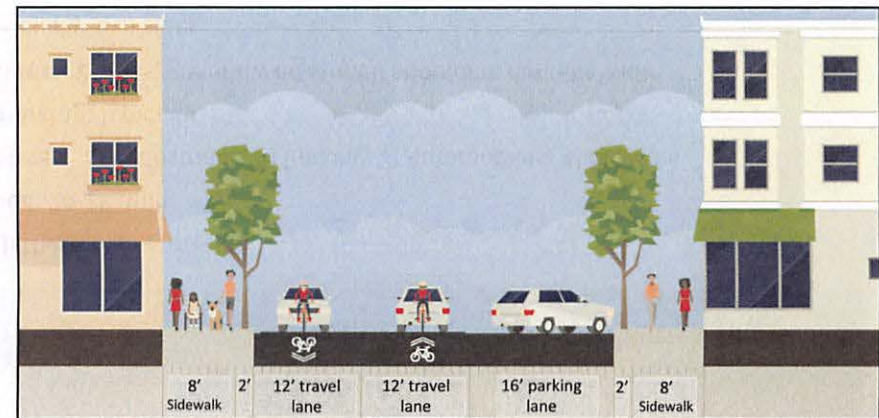
## TOWN CENTER STREETS: EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONCEPTS FOR REDESIGN



*Existing conditions on Water Street east of Center Street*

Exeter has made significant investments in recent years in its downtown sidewalk system, replacing older asphalt sidewalks with concrete, upgrading ADA tip-downs and tactile plates at crossings, and adding a bump-out at one key crossing point. Street trees add to the pleasant walking atmosphere. The angled parking on Water Street between Front Street and Swazey Parkway creates a high stress environment for bicycling, but inadequate right of way exists to add

dedicated bicycle lanes. Opportunities to improve safe interactions between motorized and non-motorized users include adding sharrows and “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs where bicycle lanes won’t fit, higher visibility crosswalks with improved lighting, warning signage and in some cases bump-outs and flashing beacons at crossing points. In some locations uneven brick and sloped concrete sidewalk areas create accessibility problems that should be addressed.



*Concept for pedestrian crossing and bicycle improvements*

# TOWN CENTER STREETS: STREET FEATURES OVERVIEW

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



Front Street at Exeter Town Offices

- Functional Class:** Minor Arterial
- Target Speed:** 20-25 mph
- Priority of Uses:** 1) Pedestrians, 2) Parking, 3) Automobiles, 4) Bicycles
- On Street Parking:** Typically
- Lanes & Widths:** 2 lanes, generally no striped shoulders defining width
- Sidewalk:** Usually two sides
- Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path:** Ideal, but width generally not available
- Shoulder Bike Lane:** Where right of way is available
- Sharrows:** Usually most viable solution in Exeter Town Center
- Centerline or Median:** No
- Traffic Calming:** Narrow Lanes, Potential Curb Extensions

## In-Town Connector Streets

### Description

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

### Vision for In-Town Connector

These corridors should:

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

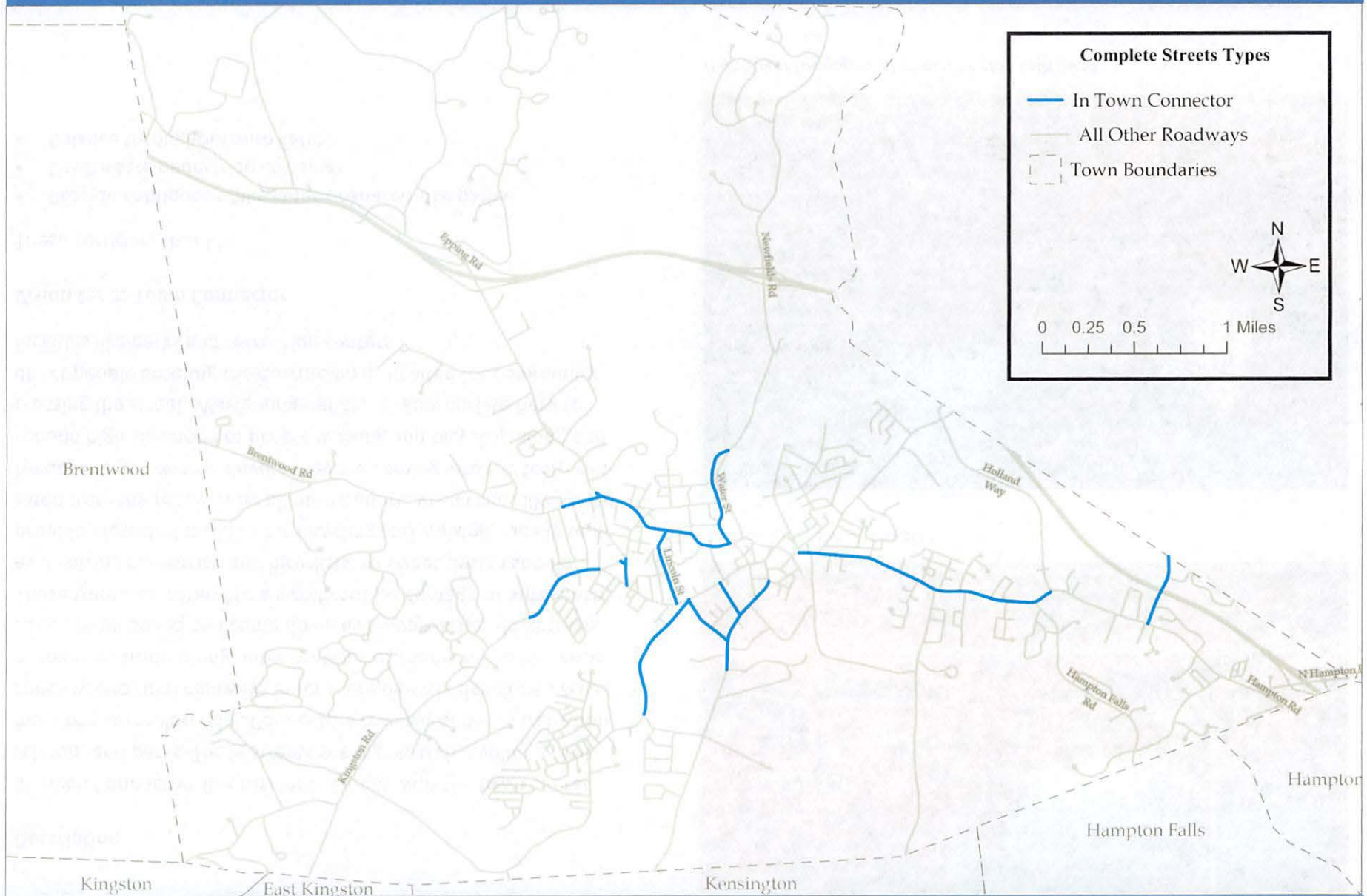


*Lincoln Street School Crossing*

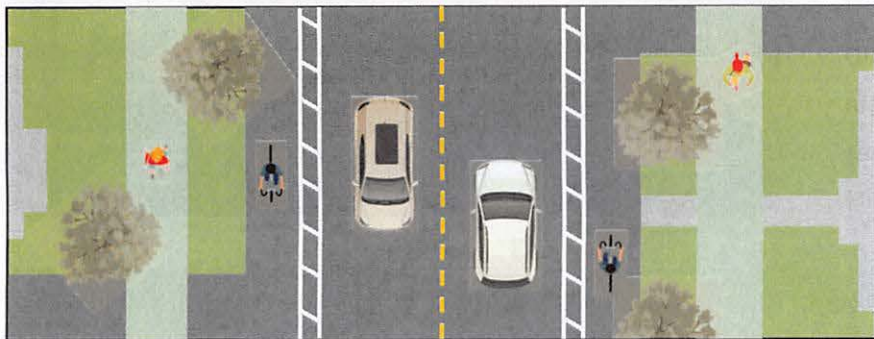
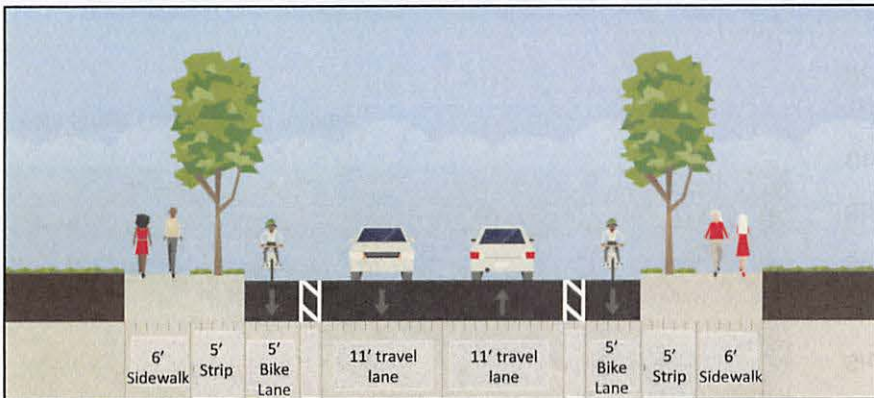


*High Street Looking West from Hampton Falls Road*

# EXETER'S IN-TOWN CONNECTOR STREETS



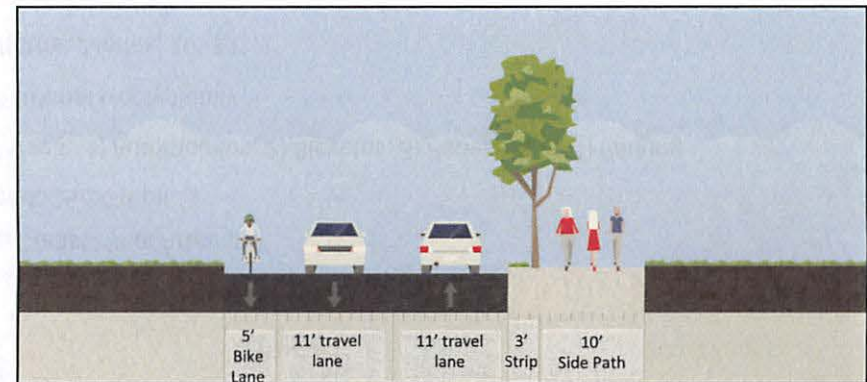
## IN-TOWN CONNECTOR STREETS: CONCEPTS FOR REDESIGN



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

A clear finding from the community survey conducted for the Exeter Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was public desire for greater separation between automobile traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. While all of Exeter’s In-Town Connector Streets feature sidewalks on at least one side, in most cases people must ride bicycles either in lanes shared with automobiles or on shoulders separated from the travel lane by only a stripe. Right of way exists on many of these Connector streets to achieve better separation between automobiles and people on bicycles. Two approaches to this

are shown in the illustrations here. Concept A replaces a single fog line with a 2’ wide striped buffer to create horizontal separation. Concept B is designed for areas of narrower right of way, and foregoes sidewalk on one side of the road to have space for a 10’ wide, bi-directional multi-use path on the opposite side. Ideally this is separated from the roadway by a planter strip, which together with street trees create a lower stress environment than sidewalk immediately adjacent to the curb. Concept A lacks the safety of vertical separation, but is suggested in the Historic District where center lines likely cannot be moved.



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

## IN-TOWN CONNECTOR STREETS: STREET FEATURES OVERVIEW

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



High Street East of Buzell Avenue

**Functional Class:** Minor Arterial

**Target Speed:** 25-30 mph

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

**On Street Parking:** Not typically

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

**Sidewalk:** Usually two sides

**Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path:** Preferable

**Shoulder Bike Lane:** Minimum accommodation

**Sharrows:** In some cases

**Centerline or Median:** Centerline

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

# Gateway Streets

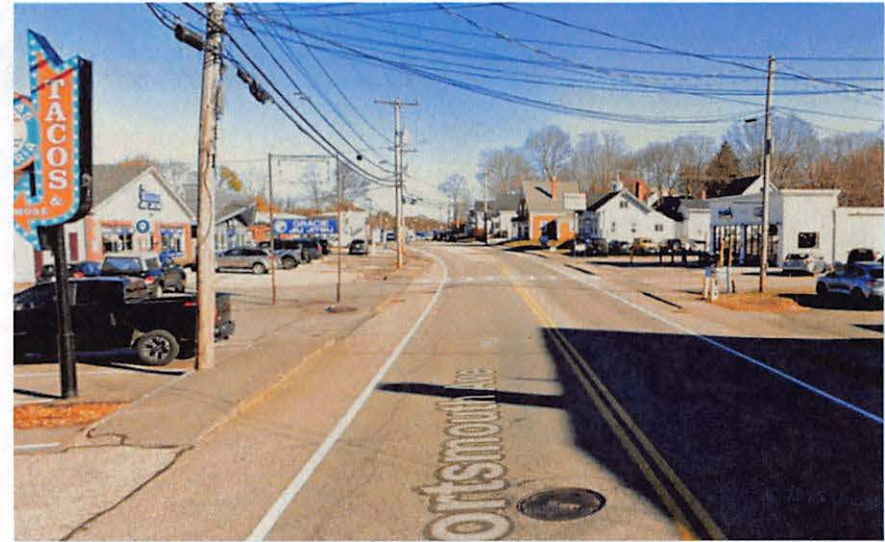
## Description

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

## Vision for Gateway Streets in Exeter

Gateway streets should:

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

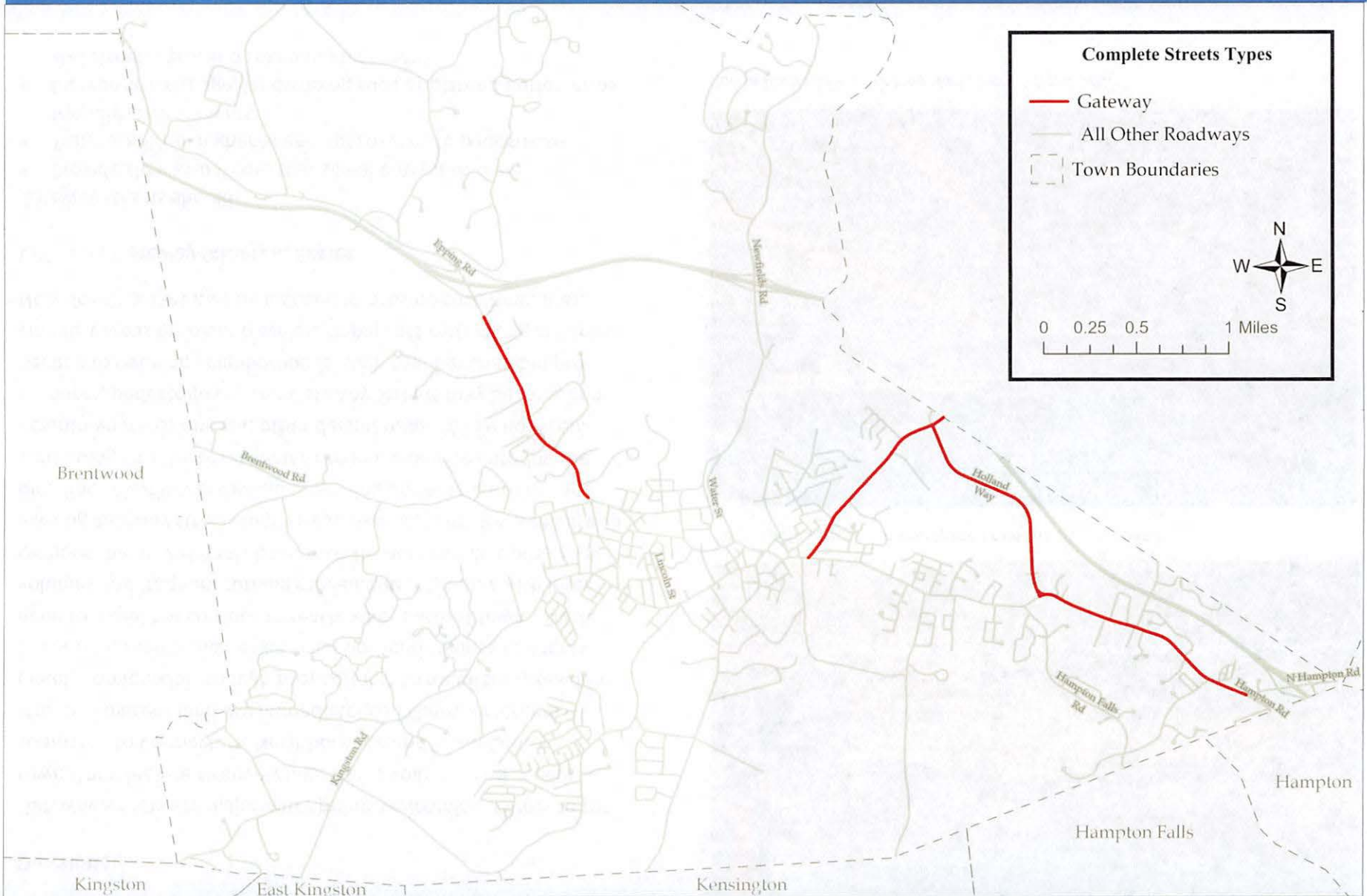


*Portsmouth Avenue Looking North From Las Olas Taqueria*

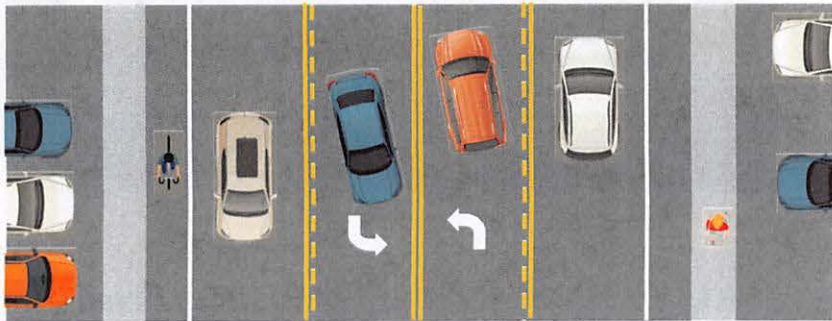
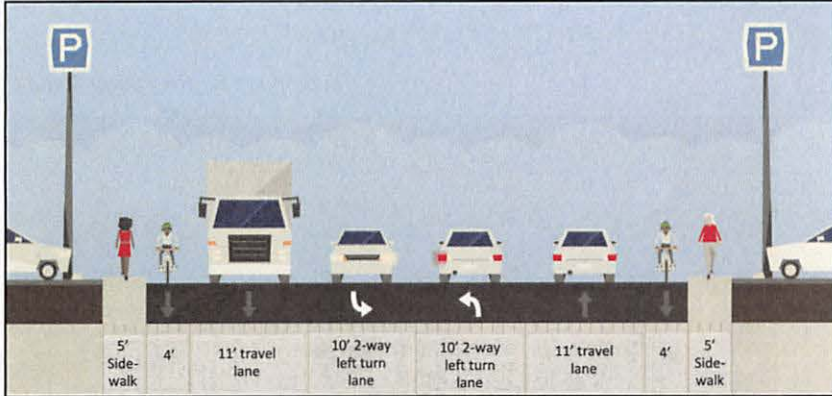


*Portsmouth Avenue Looking North from Alumni Drive*

# EXETER'S GATEWAY STREETS



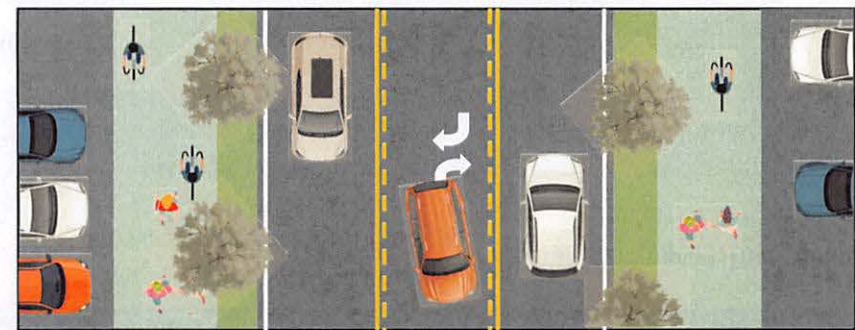
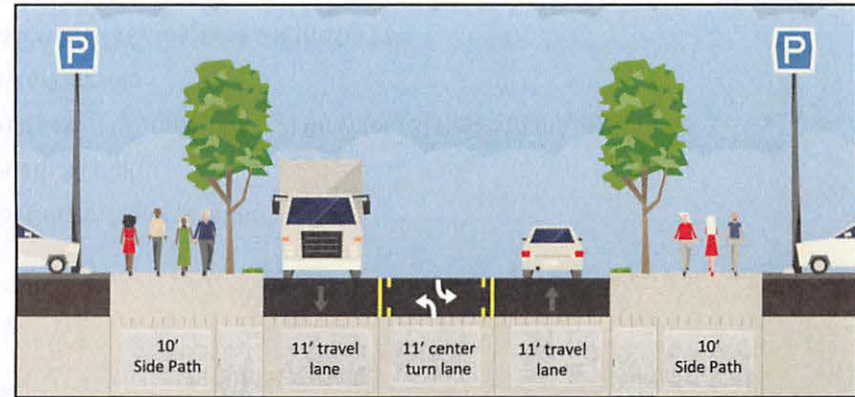
## GATEWAY STREETS: EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONCEPTS FOR REDESIGN



**Existing conditions on Portsmouth Avenue**

Public desire for greater separation between automobile traffic and bicycle and pedestrian facilities applies on Gateway Streets as well, with their high traffic volumes and frequent turning movements. Portsmouth Avenue north of Alumni Drive currently features two 11' travel lanes, two 10' left turn lanes, 4' shoulders and narrow 5' sidewalks without buffers, situated between road and parking lot. This 60' wide expanse of asphalt creates a high stress environment not conducive to walking or bicycling. An alternate scenario would be to provide vertically and horizontally separated multi-use side paths on each side of the street, with a planted buffer strip between

road and path. Space for this could be created by removing one of the two center turn lanes and using two additional feet of existing town right of way. Based on available data, the town's right of way for Portsmouth Avenue between Alumni Drive and Needham Bank is 64'-66' - wider than used by the current configuration. Right of way north of Needham Bank to the NH101 interchange is approximately 75'-100'. Similar designs are likely feasible for other Gateway Streets in town, though may be hampered by inconsistent right of way that narrows in places, and dependent on abutter willingness to cooperate on easements.



**Concept for redesign of Portsmouth Avenue with multi-use sidepaths**

## GATEWAY STREETS: STREET FEATURES OVERVIEW

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



Epping Road Existing Conditions

**Functional Class:** Minor Arterial

**Target Speed:** 30 mph

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

**On Street Parking:** No

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

**Sidewalk:** Usually two sided

**Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path:** Preferred

**Shoulder Bike Lane:** Minimum

**Sharrows:** No

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

**Traffic Calming:** Not typically

## Business/Industrial Access Roads

### Description

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

### Vision for Business/Industrial Access Roads in Exeter

Business/Industrial streets should:

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

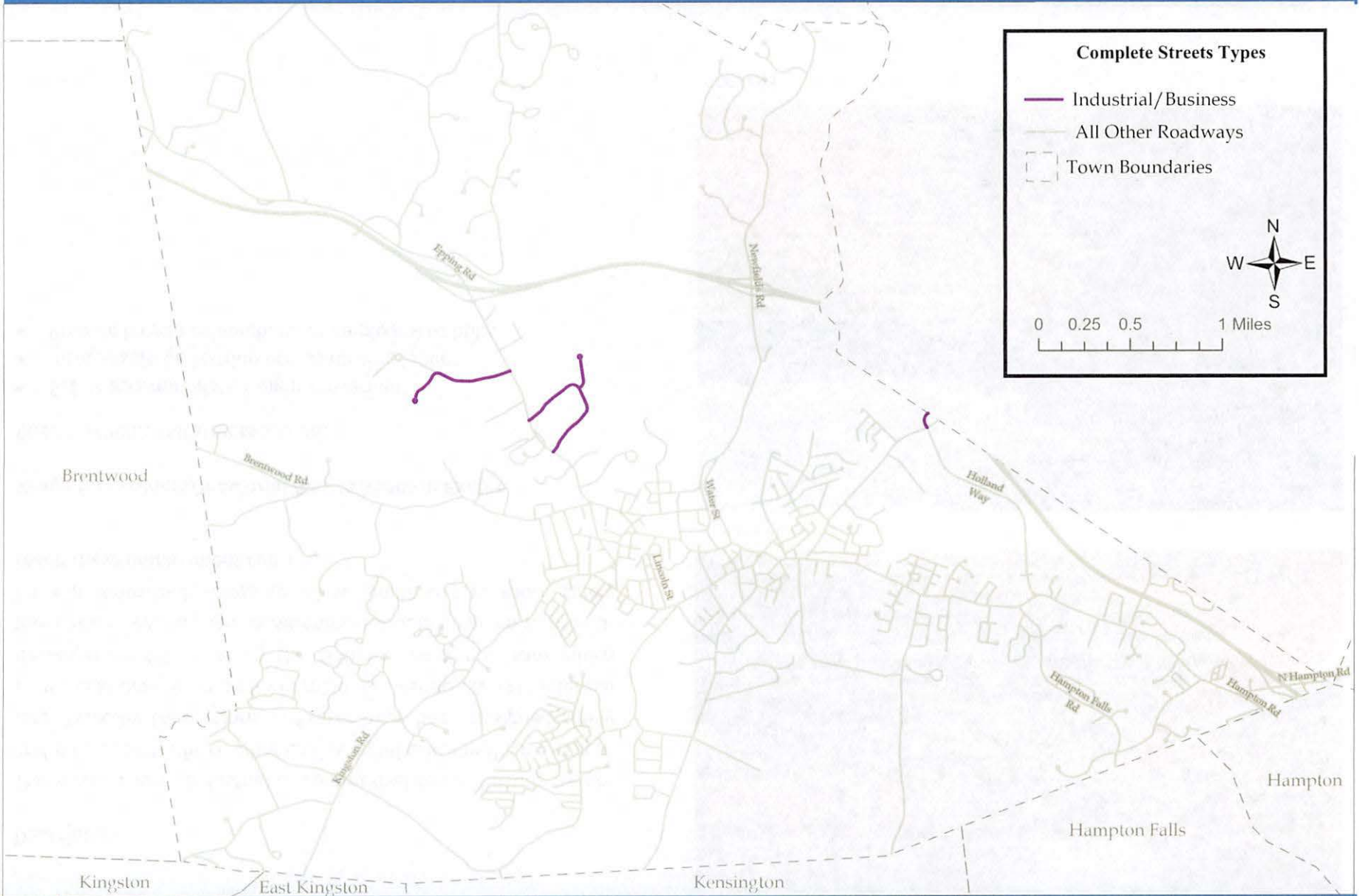


*Continental Drive*

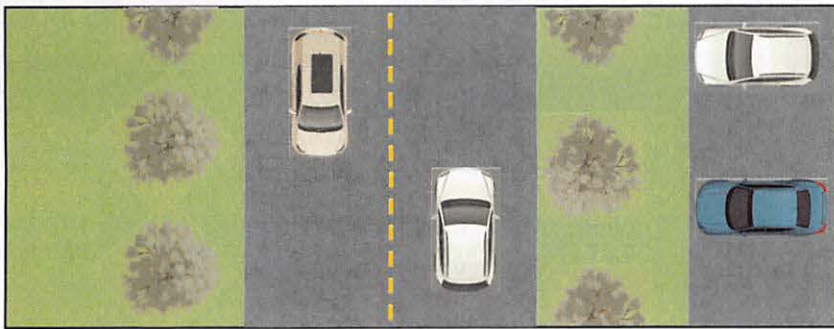
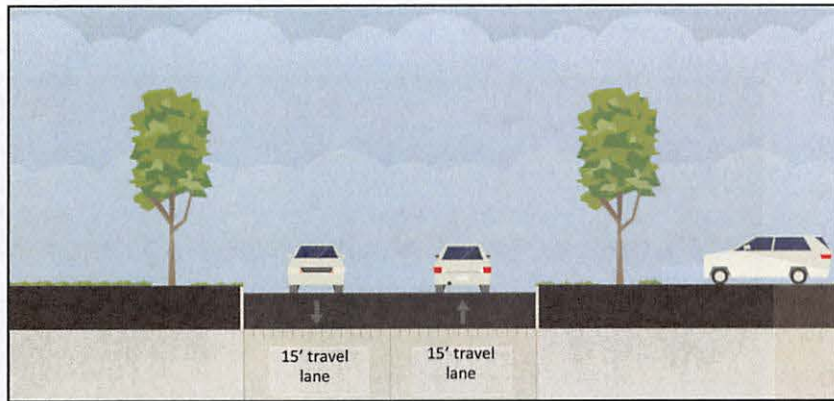


*GTE Road*

# EXETER'S BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROADS



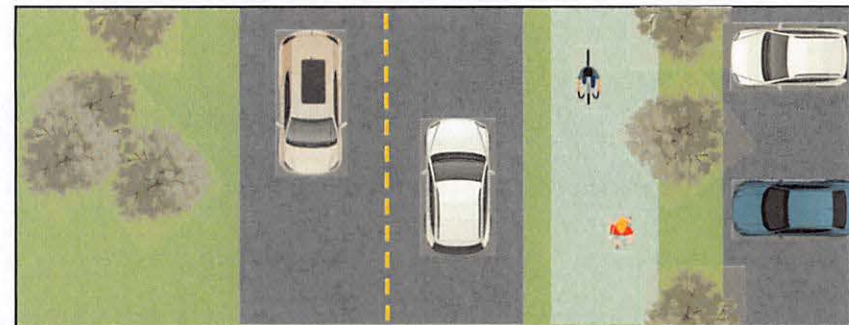
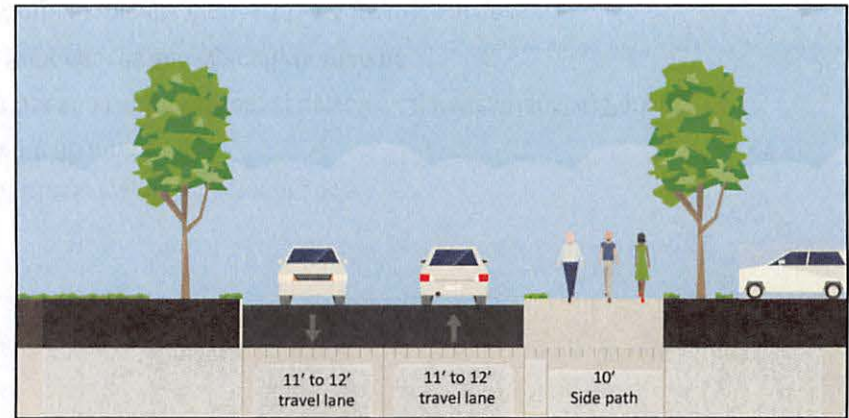
## BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROADS: EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONCEPTS FOR REDESIGN



*Typical existing conditions on industrial park access roads in Exeter*

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

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



*Concept with side path added*

# BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROADS: ROAD FEATURES OVERVIEW

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



Industrial Drive

**Functional Class:** Major Collector or Local

**Target Speed:** 30 mph

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

**On Street Parking:** Yes and typically unmarked

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

**Sidewalk:** One side

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

**Shoulder Bike Lane:** Preferred

**Sharrows:** No

**Centerline or Median:** Not necessarily

**Traffic Calming:** No

# Rural Roads

## Description

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

## Vision for Rural Roads in Exeter

Rural streets should:

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

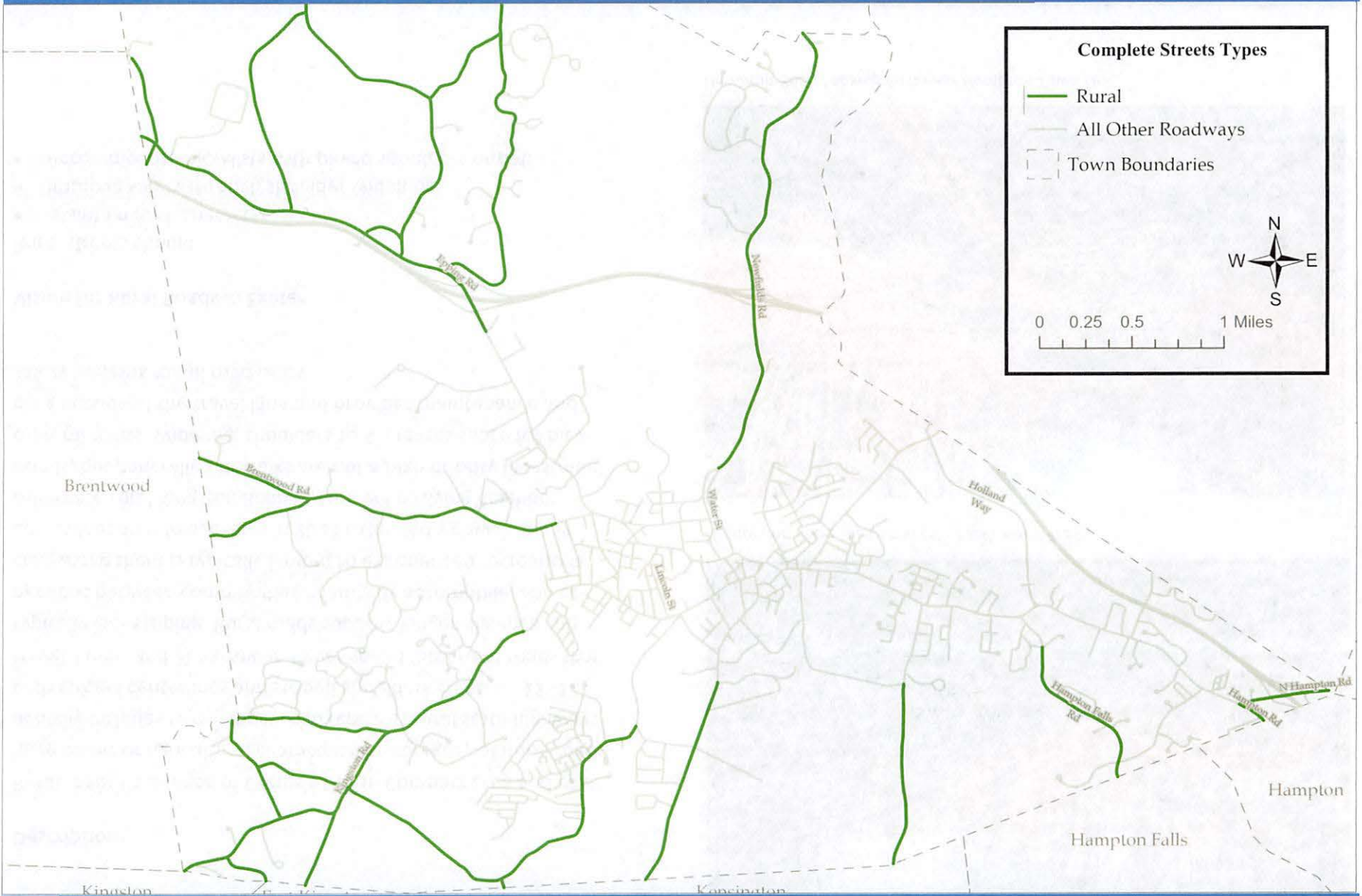


*Brentwood Road Looking West at Jolly Rand Trail*

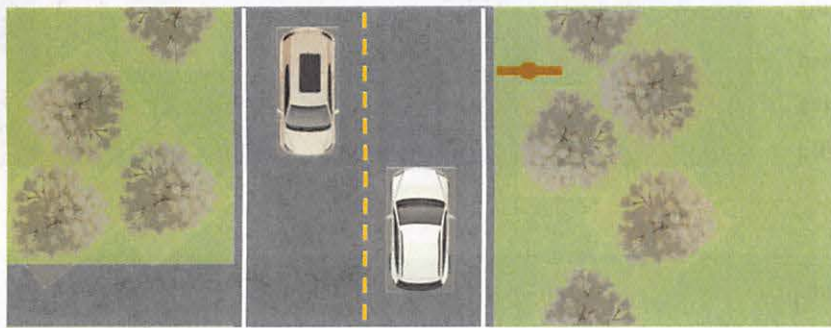
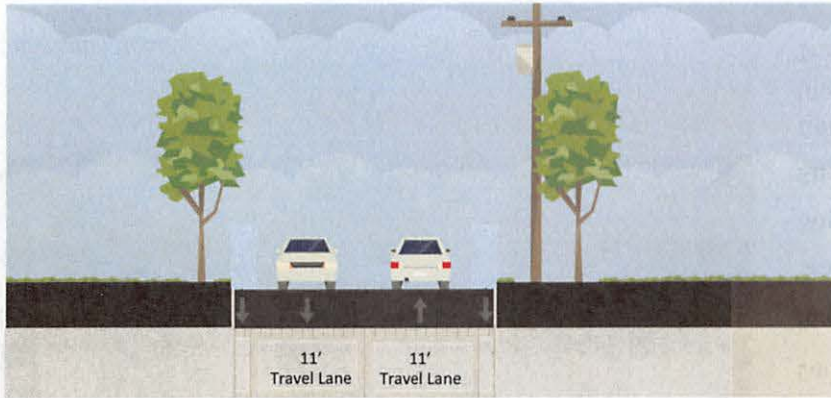


*Hampton Road Looking East near Hampton Town Line*

# EXETER'S RURAL ROADS



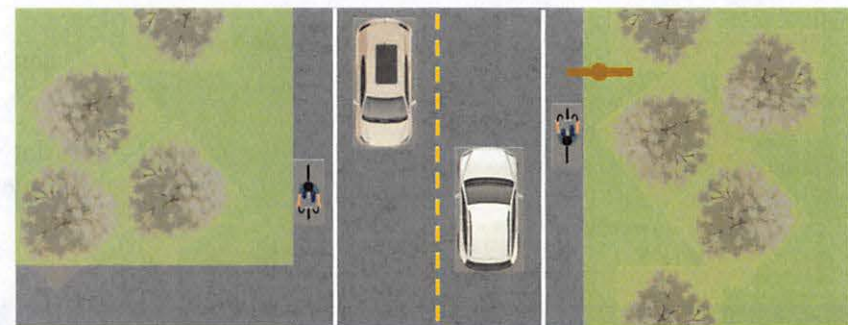
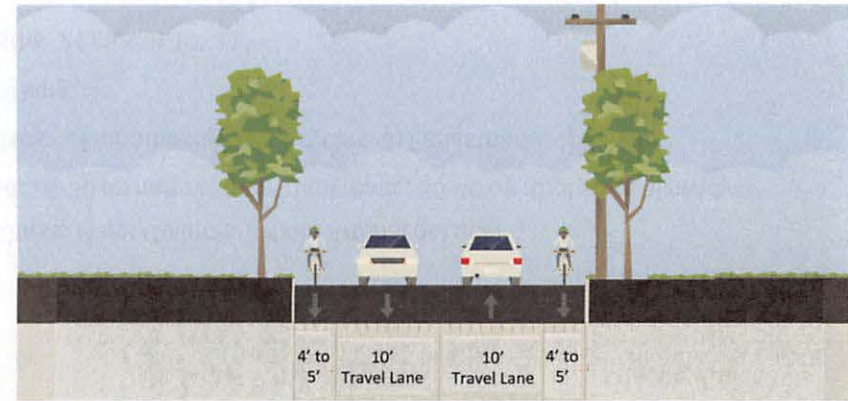
## RURAL ROADS: EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONCEPTS FOR REDESIGN



*Typical existing conditions on rural roads in Exeter*

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

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



*Proposed configuration with shoulder widening*

# RURAL ROADS: ROAD FEATURES OVERVIEW

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



Drinkwater Road

**Functional Class:** Major Collector, Minor Arterial or Local

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

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

**On Street Parking:** No

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

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

**Traffic Separated Bike Lane or Side Path:** No

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

**Sharrows:** No

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

**Traffic Calming:** Narrowing striped lane width

# Implementation

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

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

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

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

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

## Implementation - Continued

- Low Hanging Fruit - Not all infrastructure improvements rise to the level of a CIP project. The Exeter Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2025) describes over 50 pedestrian and bicycle safety projects addressing Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation. Each is coded based on cost, timeline and level of impact. Among the lowest hanging fruit on the list are crosswalk safety improvements focused on higher visibility paint markings, warning signage and lighting.
- Complete Streets Design Approach for All Road Projects - Update the project development process for all local street and road projects to ensure needs of all road users are considered in the design process – recognizing that different street types have different user hierarchy as described in this document. Implement a complete streets project development checklist to be used for all large scale public projects, consistent with the requirements of the Exeter Complete Streets Policy. Encourage town staff and officials to participate in training on Complete Streets principles and best practices for design, maintenance and operation.
- Expand Community Outreach on Complete Streets - Public engagement on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan indicated understanding of and support for Complete Street concepts, but additional outreach will be key to building support for implementation.
- Demonstration Projects - Look for opportunities to test complete streets improvements with temporary “pop-up” installations of features like bump-outs and other traffic calming measures.

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

### Implementation Measures

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

### Measures of Effectiveness

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

## Additional Design References

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

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



## **Epping Waste/Transfer Facility Update**



# TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

10 FRONT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 778-0591 • FAX 772-4709

[www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov)

May 4, 2026

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services  
Solid Waste Management Bureau  
Attn: Samantha Lazo  
P.O. Box 95 Concord, NH 03302-0095

Email: [swpublic.comment@des.nh.gov](mailto:swpublic.comment@des.nh.gov)

**Re: Permit Application for Solid Waste Transfer Facility ReSource Waste Services – 270 Exeter Road, Epping, NH DES-SW-SP-92-3**

Dear Members of the Solid Waste Management Bureau,

The Exeter Select Board writes to reiterate and expand upon the concerns outlined in our January 22, 2026 letter regarding the pending application for a solid waste transfer facility proposed by ReSource Waste Services in Epping, New Hampshire. While a member of our staff attended the April 28 public information session, we remain concerned that the proposed design does not include sufficient safeguards to protect the water quality of Great Bay.

The Town of Exeter recognizes the need to expand the State's capacity for solid waste management. However, we continue to question the suitability of this particular location. As a neighboring community situated along a tributary to Great Bay, Exeter has made substantial and sustained investments to protect regional water quality. These efforts include a \$53 million upgrade to our wastewater treatment facility, as well as an annual commitment exceeding \$500,000 for water quality monitoring, catch basin maintenance and upgrades, street sweeping, public education, and outreach. We have also adopted zoning ordinances that establish some of the most stringent local stormwater standards in the region.

Despite these efforts and the regional importance of Great Bay, the current application does not clearly demonstrate the required public benefit and instead presents potential risks to public and environmental health. Specifically, the proposal does not adequately demonstrate that:

- All incoming waste (up to 750 tons per day) will be effectively inspected to prevent the inclusion of hazardous materials;
- Stormwater management systems will prevent pollutant discharge during storm events exceeding design standards; and
- Robust, continuous monitoring and detection systems are in place to ensure that water quality will not be adversely impacted.

Given these unresolved concerns, the Exeter Select Board respectfully opposes the issuance of this permit and urges the State to deny the application on the basis of insufficient demonstrated public benefit and potential risk to the Great Bay watershed.

Respectfully submitted,

Niko Papakonstantis, Chair, Exeter Select Board

## **Drought Update**



## EXETER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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

[www.exeternh.gov/publicworks](http://www.exeternh.gov/publicworks) • [publicworks@exeternh.gov](mailto:publicworks@exeternh.gov)

TO: Exeter Select Board

FROM: Stephen Cronin, Public Works Director

DATE: May 1, 2026

RE: Drought Conditions Update

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I wanted to share a quick update on current drought conditions in our region based on the latest National Weather Service briefing (attached) and the U.S. Drought Monitor (<https://www.drought.gov/states/new-hampshire>).

While there has been some recent improvement from spring rain and snowmelt, much of New Hampshire remains in moderate to severe drought. Surface conditions—streams, reservoirs, and shallow groundwater—have improved, but these gains are likely temporary.

The main concern is that deeper soil moisture and groundwater levels remain below normal. This is largely due to early snowmelt and lower-than-normal water content in this winter's snowfall, which limited how much water was able to soak into the ground. As soils continue to thaw and vegetation begins to grow, much of the recent moisture will be drawn downward or used by plants, reducing what is available at the surface.

Groundwater levels remain a particular concern, and many private wells across the region have already been impacted over the past year. Without consistent rainfall this spring, conditions could decline again fairly quickly.

The near-term forecast calls for near-normal precipitation, but there is no strong indication of a sustained wetter-than-normal pattern heading into summer. As a result, the next few weeks will be important in determining whether conditions stabilize or worsen. In short, while conditions have improved somewhat, the region remains vulnerable, and continued monitoring is recommended as we move into the warmer months.

At this time, the Water Department is not recommending any change to the Level 4 Water Restriction currently in place. The Department does intend to proceed with its seasonal water distribution system flushing program, as this work is necessary to maintain water quality and ensure compliance with disinfection byproduct regulations. Crews will manage flushing activities as efficiently as possible given current conditions. The Department is also nearing completion of maintenance on the Epping Road water tower and will soon transition work to the Cross Road storage tank.



# Drought Information Statement for New Hampshire and Western Maine

April 16, 2026

Issued By: NWS Gray Maine

Contact Information: [gyx.skywarn@noaa.gov](mailto:gyx.skywarn@noaa.gov)

- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/> for regional drought status updates.
- Weekly updates to the US Drought Monitor can be found at [droughtmonitor.unl.edu](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

- **Severe Drought (D2)** conditions are present across portions of Maine and New Hampshire
- Spring thaw is supporting a recharge phase characterized by improved streamflows and groundwater infiltration
- Surface improvements had led to a slight reduction of the D2 in western Maine and Northern New Hampshire
- Despite any minor improvements to drought classifications this spring, the water table remains below normal so the overall drought trajectory could worsen again in the warm season unless spring precipitation overperforms



# U.S. Drought Monitor

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

Link to the [latest U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for the Northeast

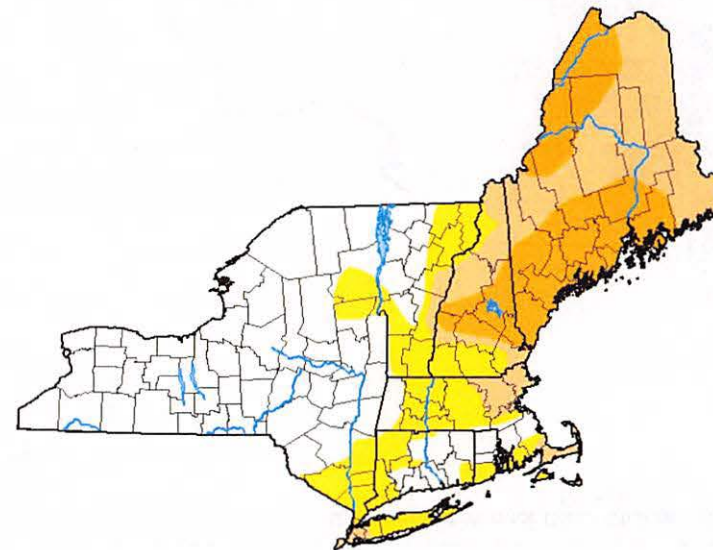
## Drought intensity and Extent

- **D3 (Extreme Drought):**
  - 0% of New Hampshire
  - 0% of Maine
- **D2 (Severe Drought):**
  - 41% of New Hampshire
  - 54% of Maine
- **D1 (Moderate Drought):**
  - 37% of New Hampshire
  - 46% of Maine
- **D0 (Abnormally Dry):**
  - 22% of New Hampshire

Click [here](#) to see more change maps.

## U.S. Drought Monitor Northeast DEWS

April 14, 2026  
(Released Thursday, Apr. 16, 2026)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



### Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

### Author:

Brian Fuchs  
National Drought Mitigation Center



[droughtmonitor.unl.edu](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

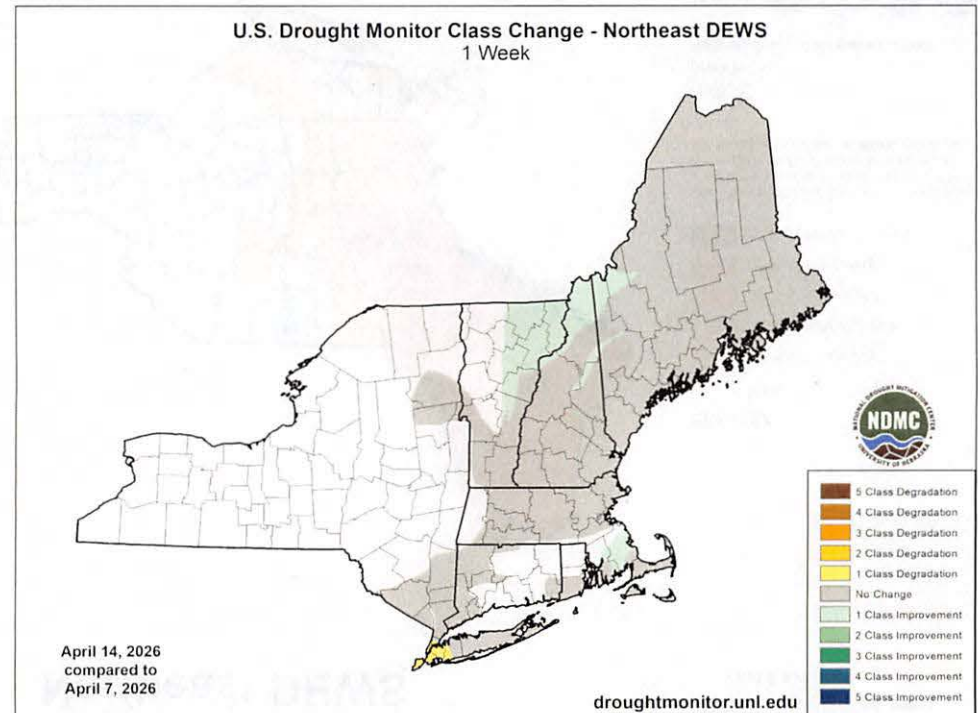


# Recent Change in Drought Intensity

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

Link to the latest 1 week [change map](#) for New England

- The area saw a reduction in Severe Drought (D2) across Western Maine and Northern New Hampshire



Color	Class Change
Dark Brown	5 Class Degradation
Orange	4 Class Degradation
Yellow-Orange	3 Class Degradation
Yellow	2 Class Degradation
Light Yellow	1 Class Degradation
Light Gray	No Change
Light Green	1 Class Improvement
Green	2 Class Improvement
Dark Green	3 Class Improvement
Dark Teal	4 Class Improvement
Dark Blue	5 Class Improvement



# Short Term Drought Index

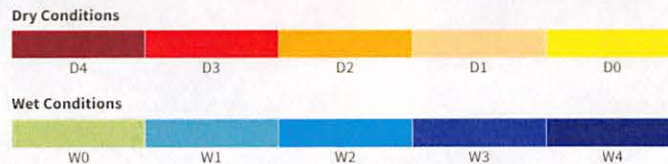
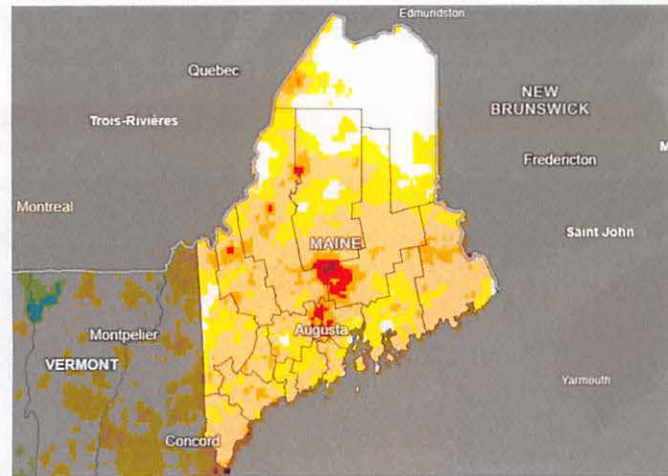
April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

The Short-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index (MIDI) estimates current short-term drought conditions by combining several indicators of drought into a single, map from changes in precipitation and moisture over the past 3 months.

Short term drought conditions indicate improvements based on spring recharge

This experimental map is based on methodology from the NOAA National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center.

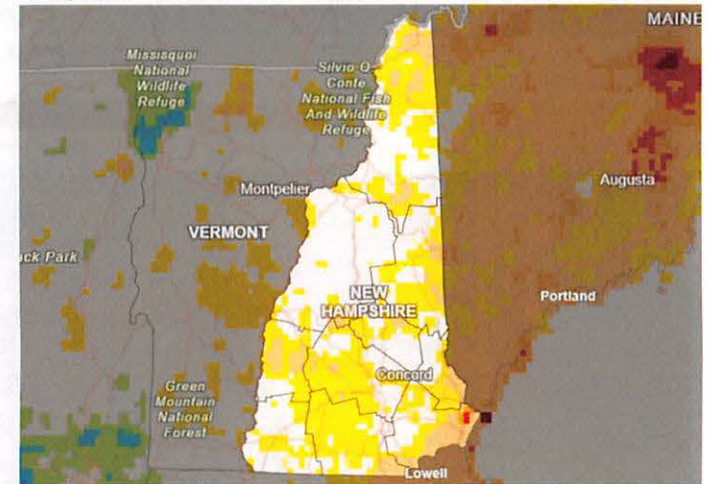
Short-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: Maine



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine  
Data Valid: 03/31/26

Drought.gov

Short-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: New Hampshire



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine  
Data Valid: 03/31/26

Drought.gov



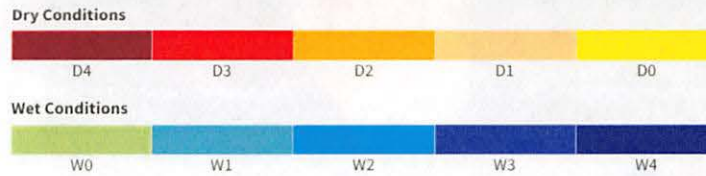
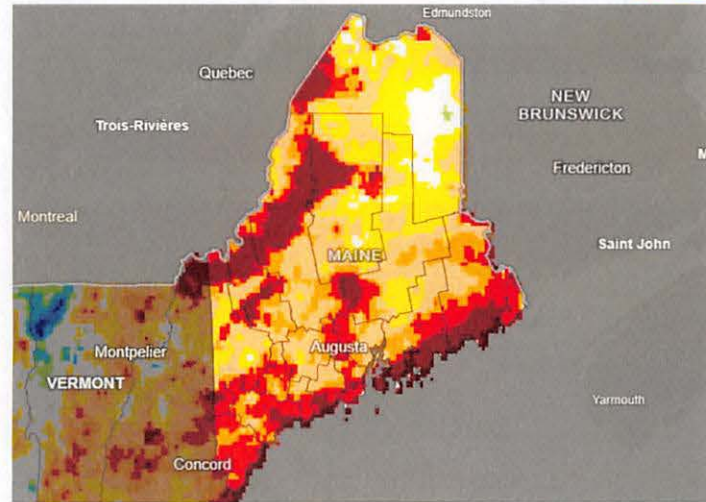
# Long Term Drought Index

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

The Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index (MIDI) estimates current long-term drought conditions by combining several indicators of drought into a single, map from changes in precipitation and moisture over the past 5 years.

This experimental map is based on methodology from the NOAA National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center.

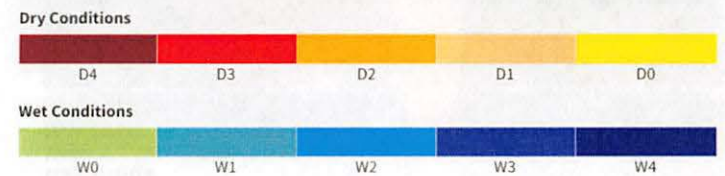
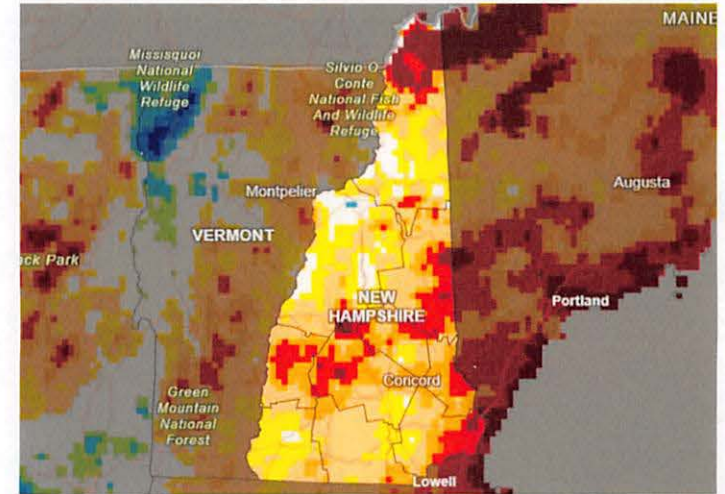
Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: Maine



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine  
Data Valid: 03/31/26

Drought.gov

Long-Term Multi-Indicator Drought Index: New Hampshire



Source(s): UC Merced, via Climate Engine  
Data Valid: 03/31/26

Drought.gov

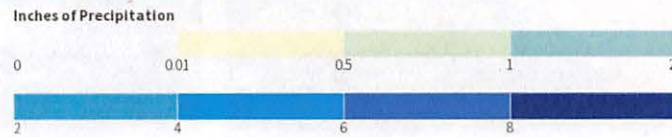
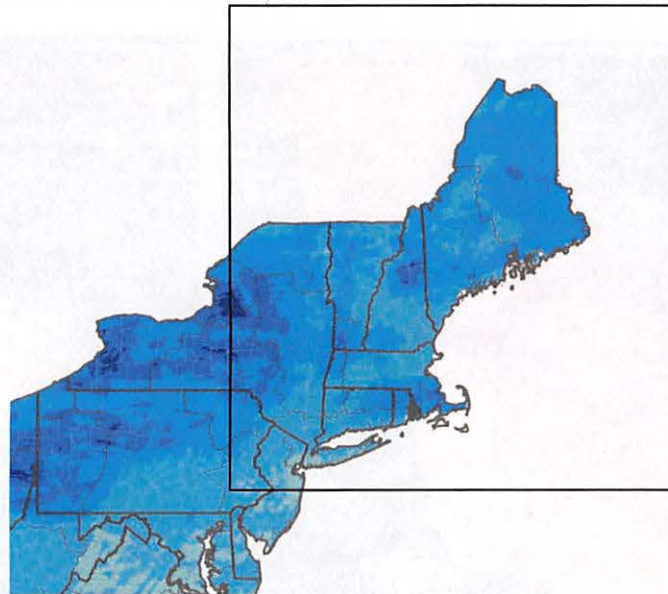


# Precipitation- 30 Day

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

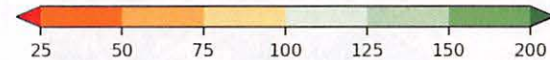
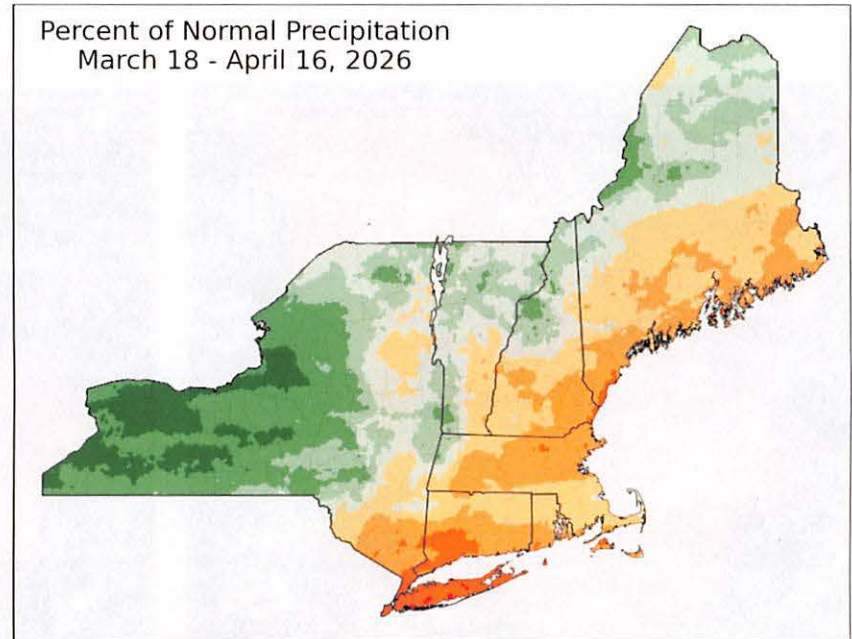
An active weather pattern brought wet conditions, with heaviest precipitation amounts across the Mountains Regions. Despite recent wet weather, the overall trends remain below normal for most areas in the severe drought conditions.

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations (Inches)



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 04/16/26

Percent of Normal Precipitation  
March 18 - April 16, 2026

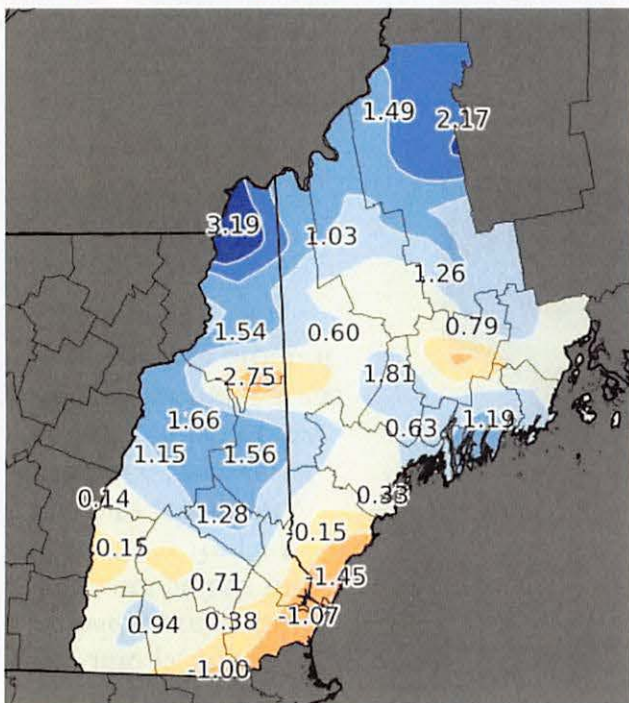




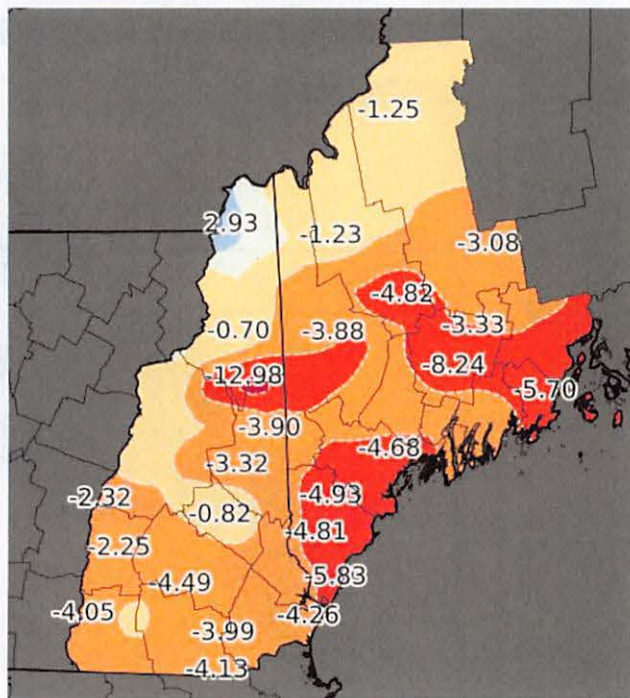
# Precipitation Deficits

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

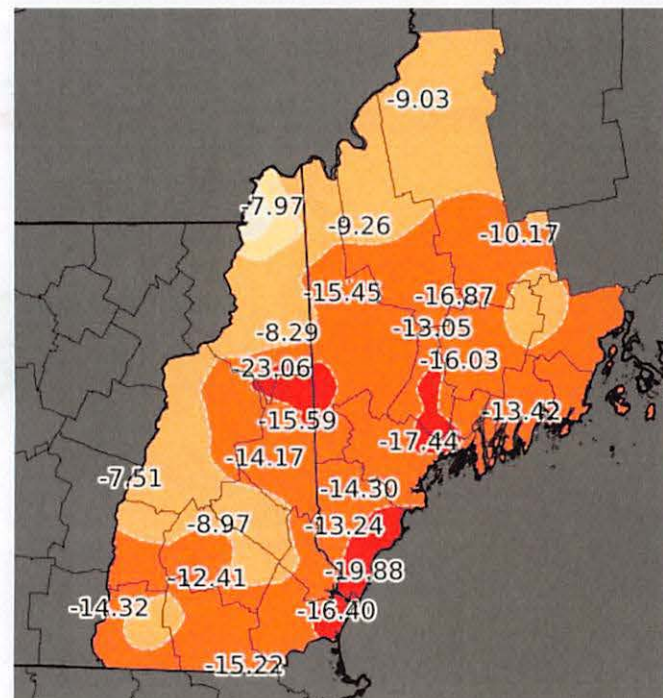
Ending April 16



30 Days



Year To Date



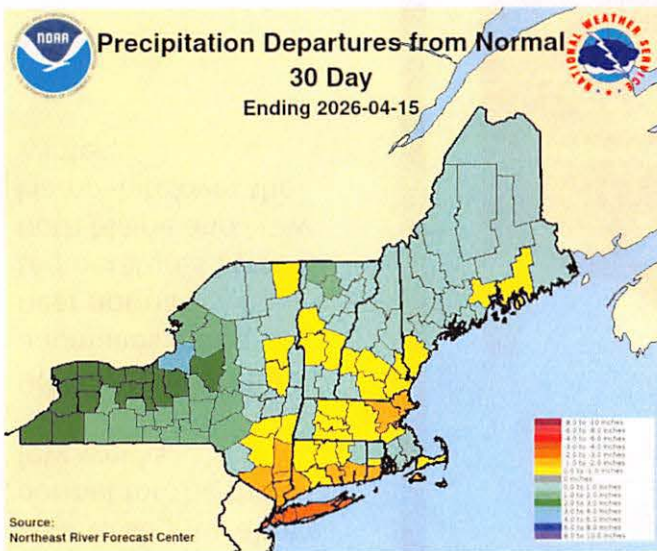
Since June 1, 2025



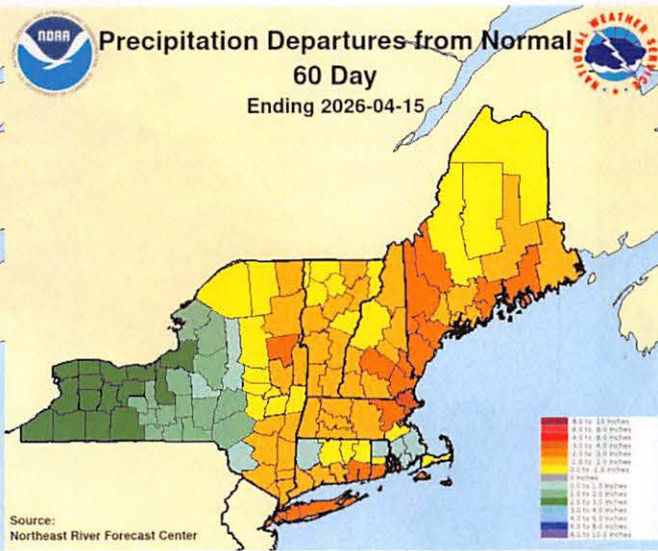
# Precipitation Deficits- Regional View

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

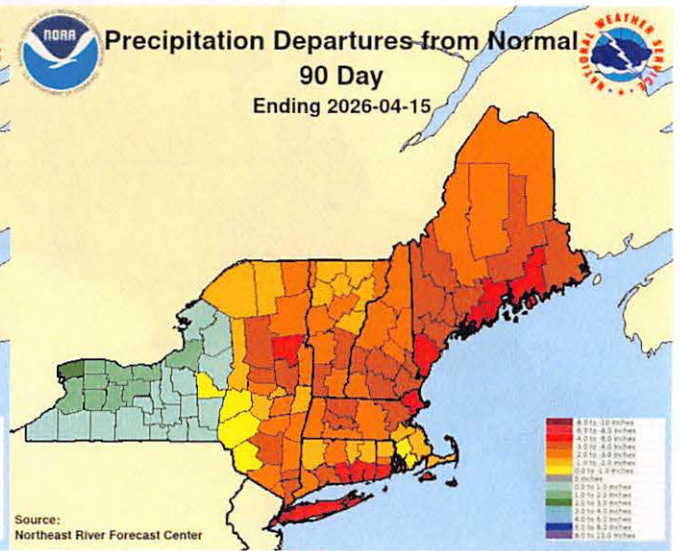
Maps of Departures from Normal by County



Local Departures +2 to -1"



Local Departures 2-5"



Local Departures 4-6"

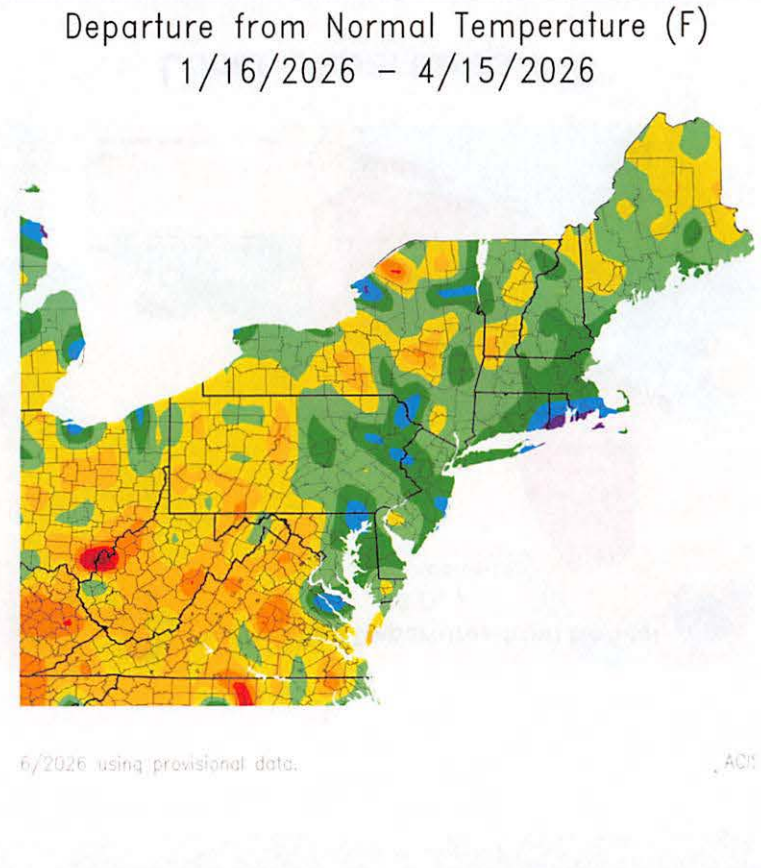
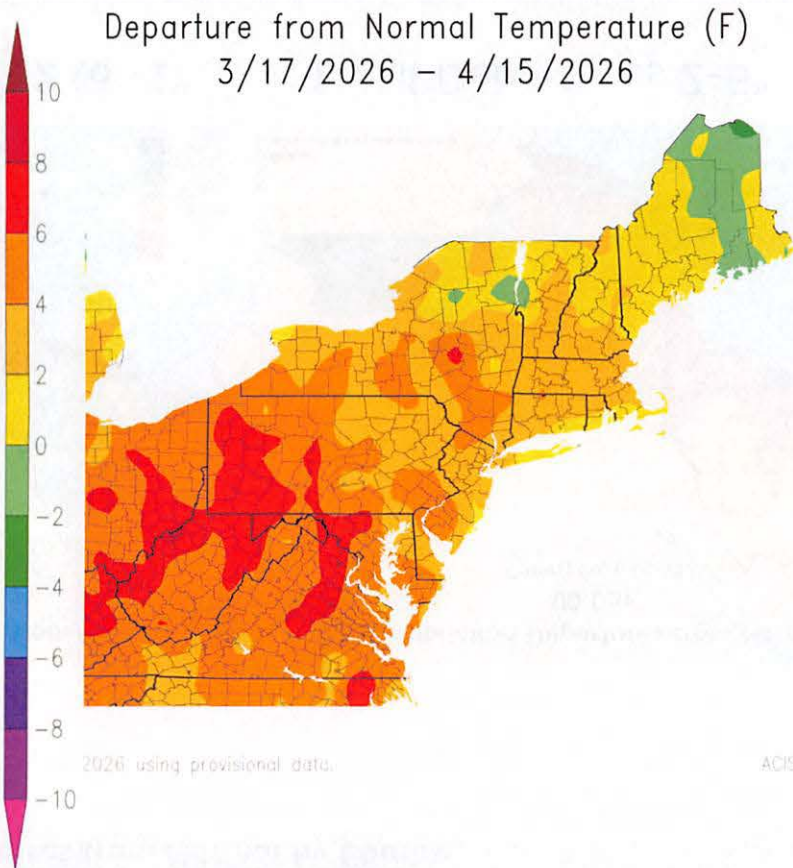


# Temperature Anomalies

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

30 Day temperature anomalies registered near to slightly above normal for the the last few weeks.

90 Day temperature anomalies indicate near normal temperatures across both Maine and New Hampshire over the winter





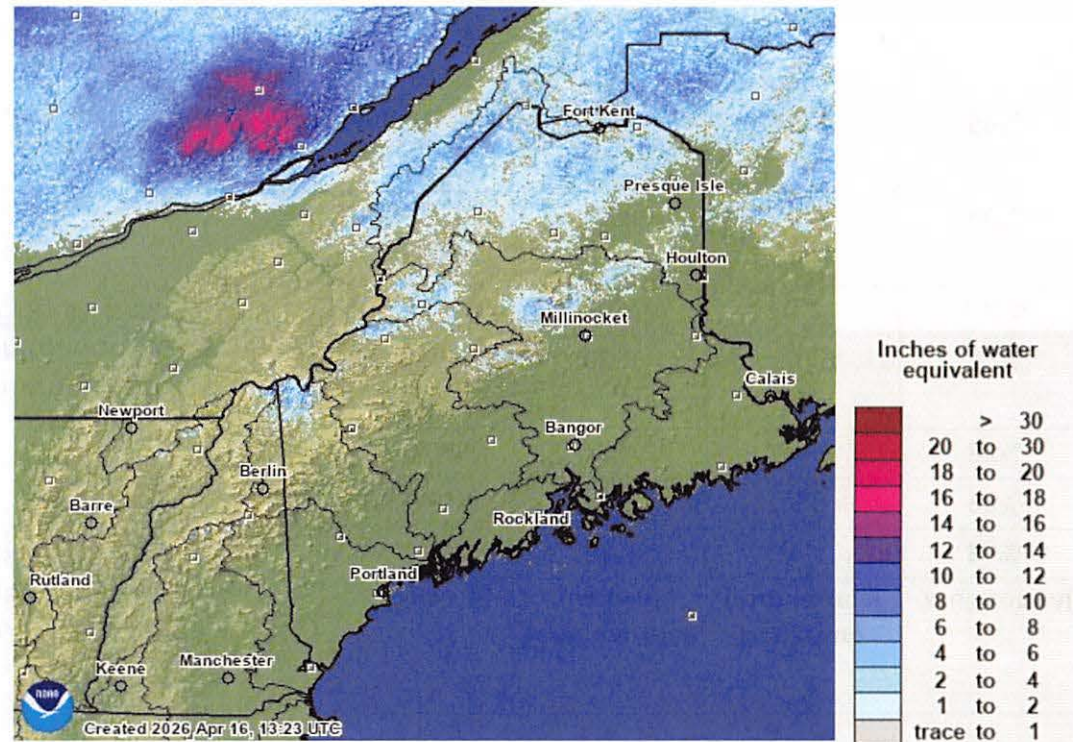
# Snowpack on April 9, 2026

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

NOAA's National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center Modeled Snowpack

## Modeled Snow Water Equivalent for April 16, 2026

- Snowpack conditions had been depleted for all but northern Maine and the highest northern slopes of the White Mountains



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Gray-Portland, ME



# Winter Season Review

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

Snowfall and Snowpack ending April 7 2026

**Overview:** The winter of 2025-2026 was characterized by an early snowpack and a premature melt. While residents in coastal Maine and southern New Hampshire saw snowfall totals near 100% of climatological normals, the water value of that snow was lower than average and much of it was lost prior to the spring thaw.

- Southern NH and ME: 75-100% of normal
- NH North Country: 50-75% of normal
- Foothills into the Western Maine Mountains: 50-75% of normal. Early winter upslope conditions favored snow growth in the White Mountains region, leading to near normal seasonal totals in north facing slopes.

Site	Total Snowfall (inches)	Departure from Normal	% of Normal
Concord, NH	58.3	-9.4	86%
Portland, ME	63.7	-5.0	93%
Gray, ME	73.4	-10.6	87%
Jackman, ME	65.8	-40.9	62%
Keene, NH	60.5	0.7	102%
North Conway, NH	75.9	-8.1	90%
Rangeley, ME	73.0	-49.8	59%





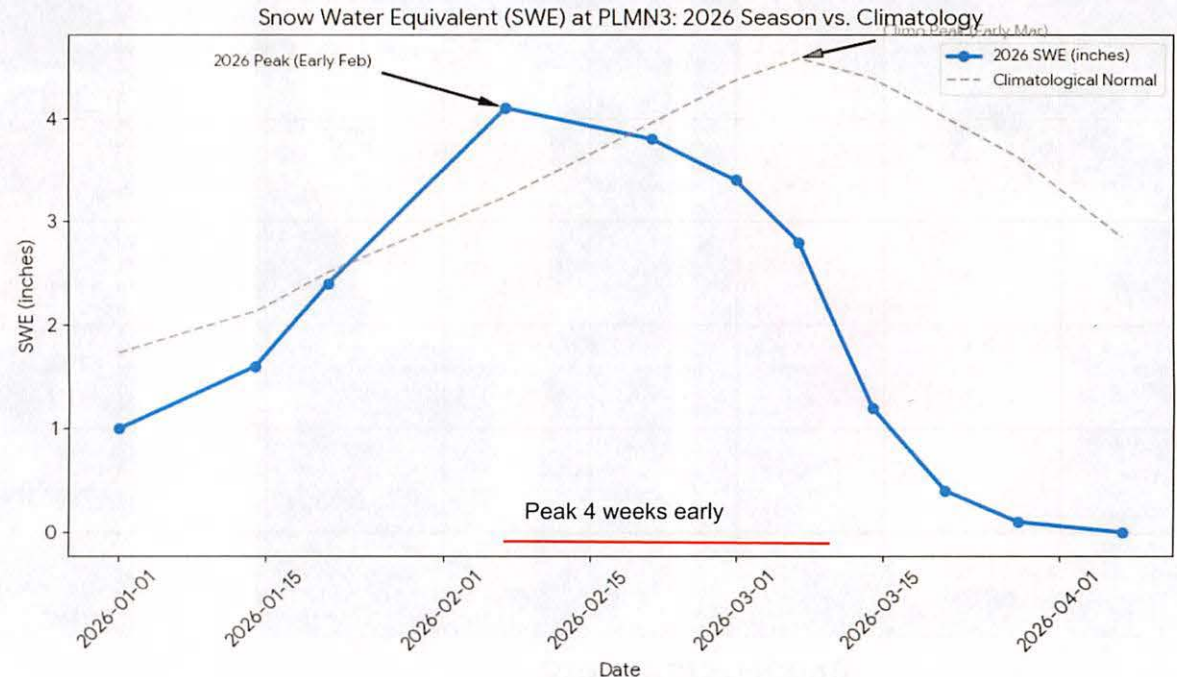
# Winter Season Review

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

## Snowfall and Snowpack

**Snowfall vs. Spring Recharge:** How can a near normal snowfall equate to a below normal spring recharge?

- January and February were dominated by cold, dry airmasses, the snow that did fall had a high low liquid-to-snow ratios overall (not much water)
- The snowpack depth and SWE peaked in late February, nearly three weeks early.
- The spring recharge has occurred 2-4 weeks earlier than the 2003–2021 average.
- Because the winter was consistently cold the ground held deep frost. A rapid early March melt subsequently lost much of the melted snow to runoff into rivers as surface flow rather than soaking into the ground.
- ***By the time the recharge window opened, most of the snow had already melted or sublimated.***



The graph below compares the Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) at station PLMN3 (Plymouth, NH area) in the Pemigewasset River watershed for the 2026 season against the climatological normal.



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Gray-Portland, ME

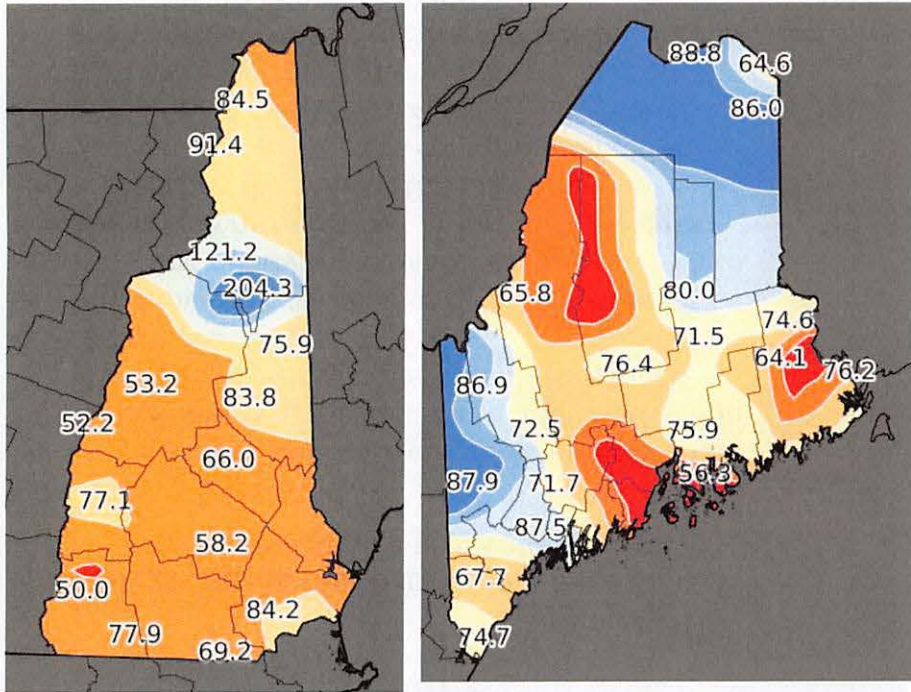


# Winter 2025-2026 Seasonal Assessment

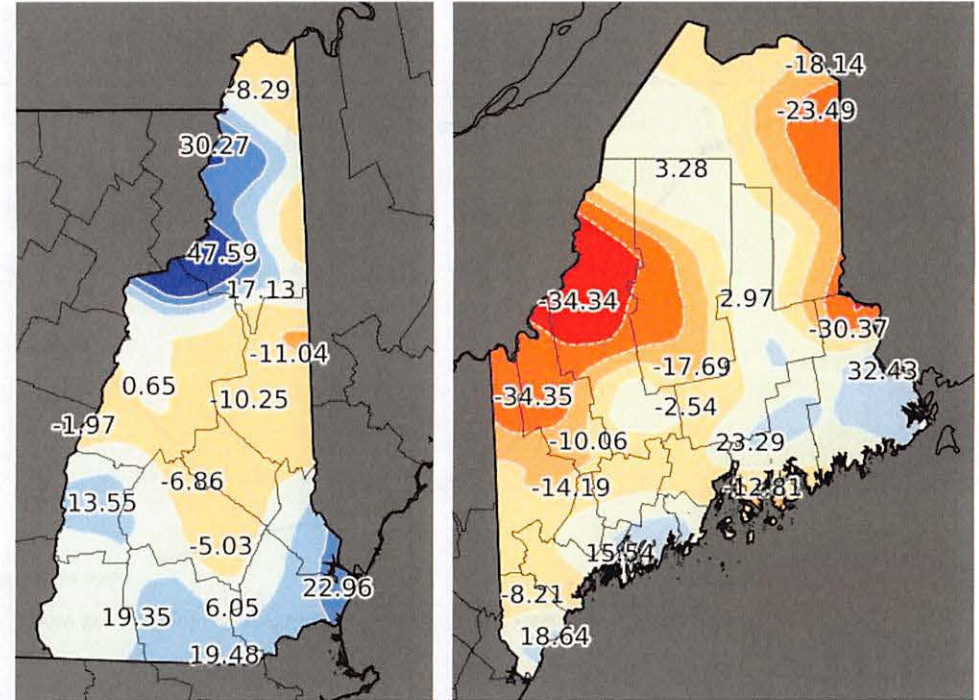
April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

November 1, 2025- April 7 2026

### Seasonal Snowfall Totals (in) State Perspective



### Seasonal Snowfall Deficits (in) State Perspective



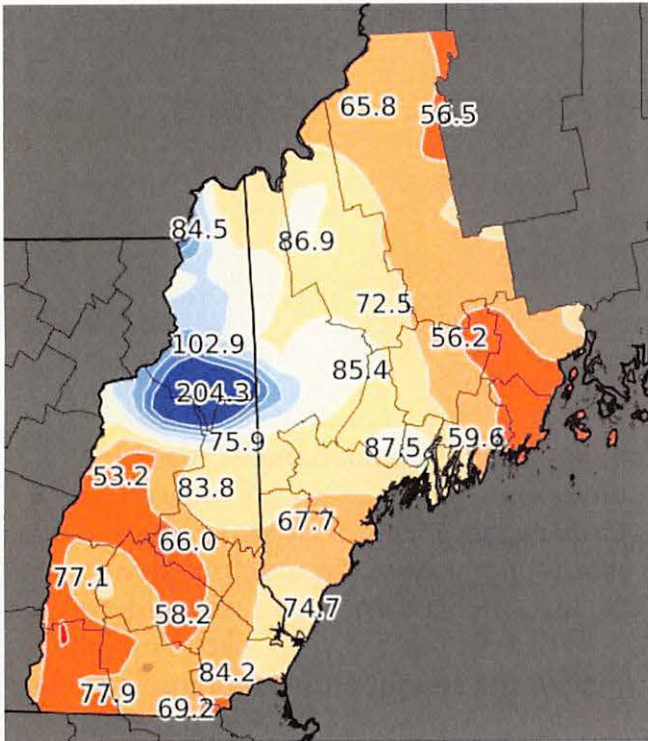


# Winter 2025-2026 Seasonal Assessment

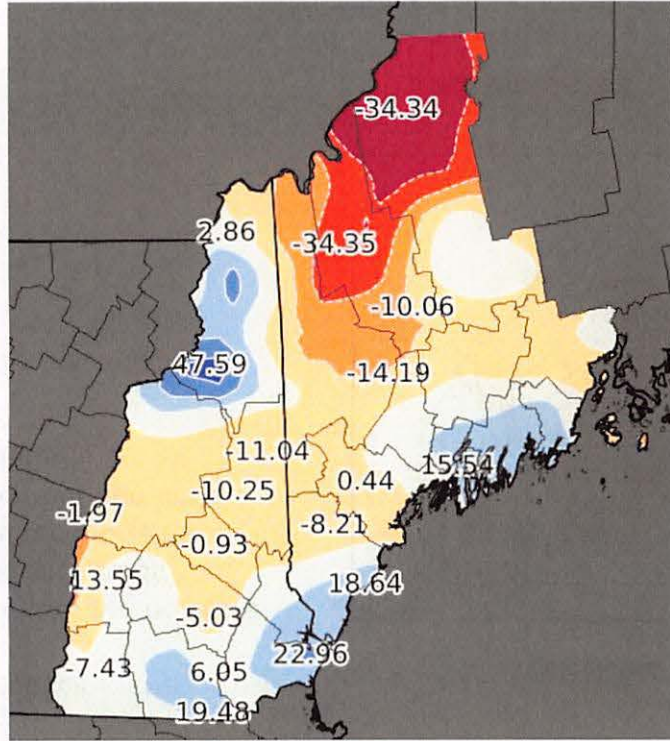
April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

November 1, 2025- April 16 2026

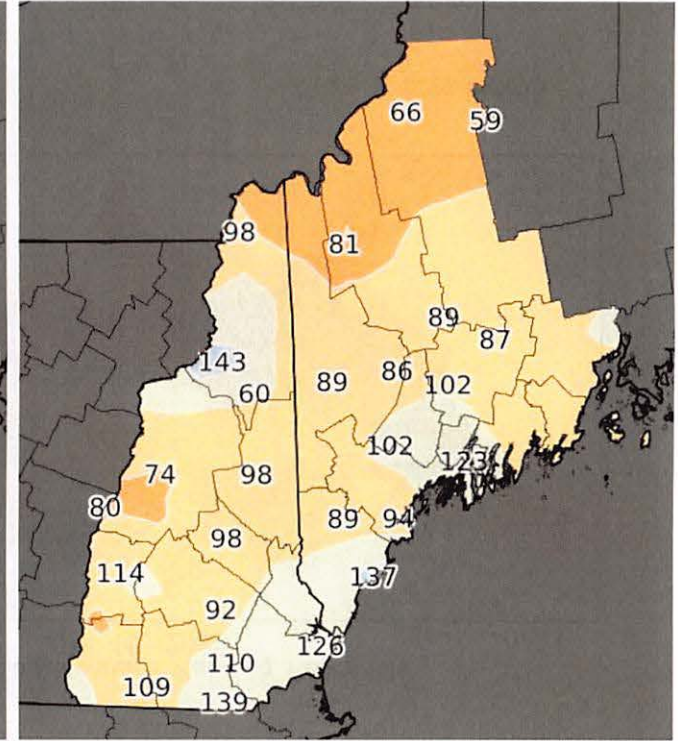
### Seasonal Snowfall Total



### Seasonal Snowfall Deficits from Normal



### Seasonal Snowfall % of Normal



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Gray-Portland, ME

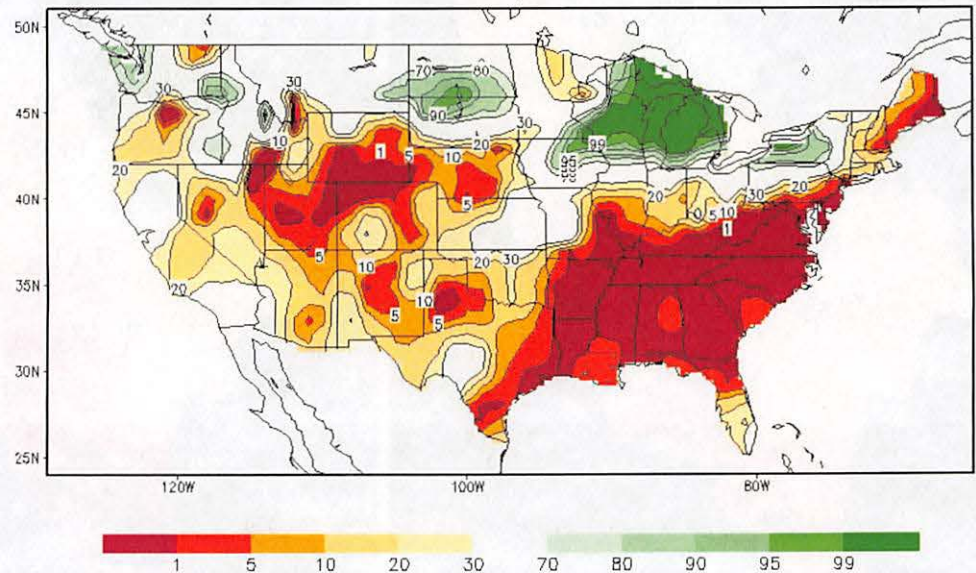


# Soil Moisture

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

- The prolonged drought has left moisture deficit in the deeper soils
- As the frost fully thaws, capillary action will draw moisture downward from the topsoil to fill these deeper voids, essentially robbing the surface layer of its recent gains
- As of April 16, thawing was undergoing with it eliminated along coast and penetrating into the foothills

Calculated Soil Moisture Ranking Percentile  
APR 15, 2026



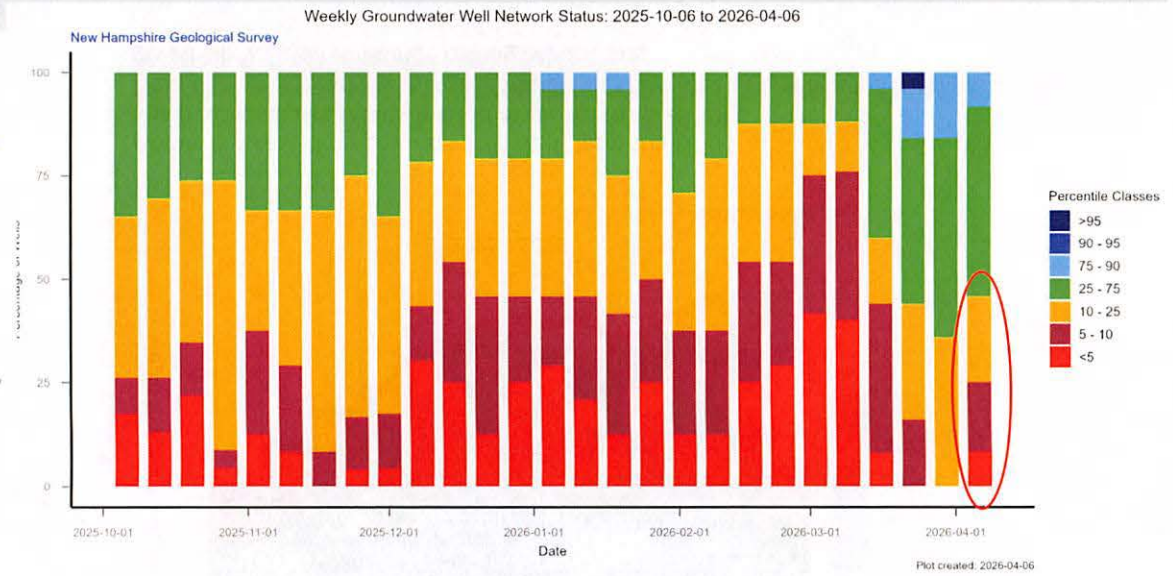
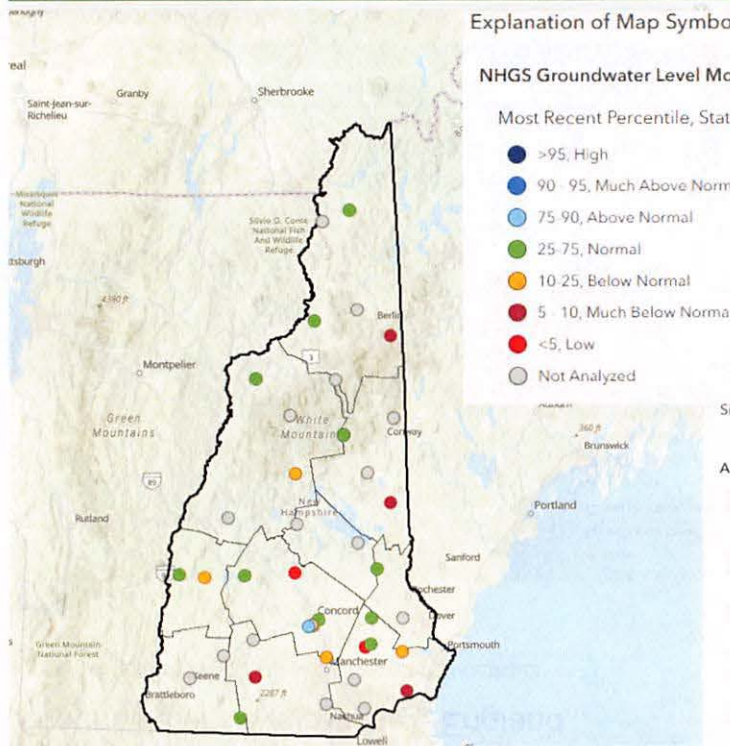
Source: Climate Prediction Center's soil moisture ranking percentiles  
[https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/Soilmst\\_Monitoring/US/Soilmst/Soilmst.shtml#](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/Soilmst_Monitoring/US/Soilmst/Soilmst.shtml#)



# Groundwater Levels- New Hampshire

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

## New Hampshire Groundwater Level Monitoring Dashboard New Hampshire Geological Survey



Spring recharge led to improvements in groundwater levels across New Hampshire and parts of Maine. However, the recharge came weeks early for most locations, suggesting that without persistent wetting rains, wells are likely to fall below normal for April as indicated by the last bar.

Several groundwater monitoring wells are Below to Much Below Normal per NH Groundwater monitoring dashboard (<https://nhdes.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/6b333fa640994c17a31993a9e5298043>) and the USGS Groundwater Levels



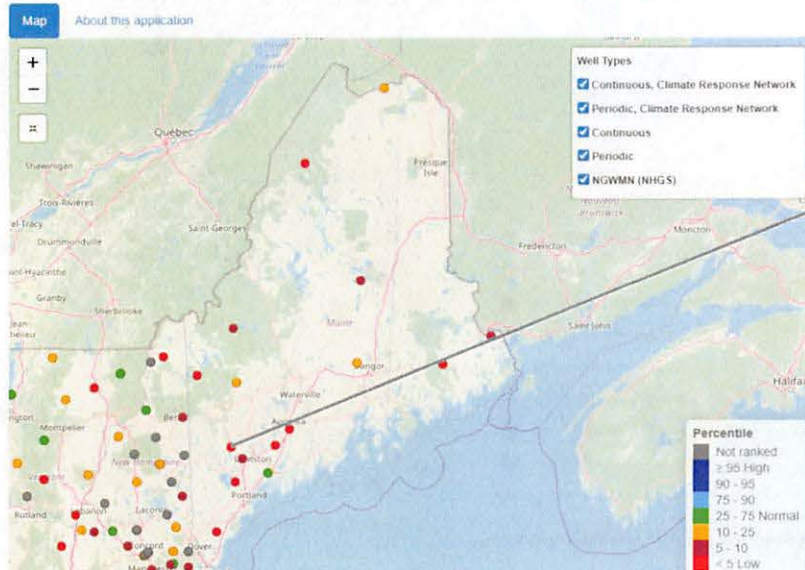
# Groundwater Impacts

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT



## Groundwater Levels in New England

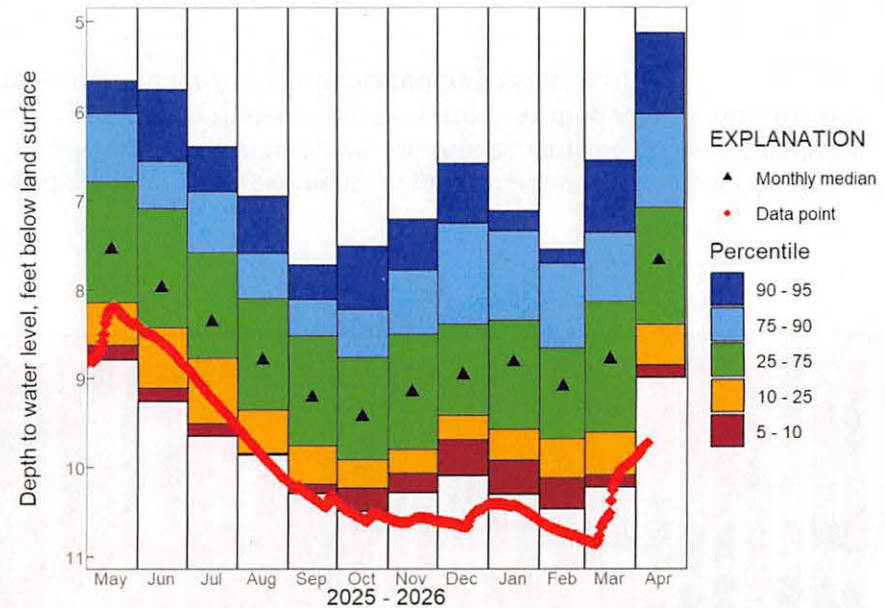
Recent conditions relative to historical monthly statistics



USGS Groundwater Levels  
([https://newengland.water.usgs.gov/web\\_app/GWW/GWW.html](https://newengland.water.usgs.gov/web_app/GWW/GWW.html)) in  
New England dashboard.

USGS-440823070291501 ME-OW1214 Oxford, Maine

U.S. Geological Survey



Above is a real-time groundwater well from the USGS in Oxford Maine is plotted again historic percentiles (period of record from 1980).  
Note the weeks early recharge in March puts the area at a deficit for spring and into green-up unless repeating wetting rains occur.



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Gray-Portland, ME

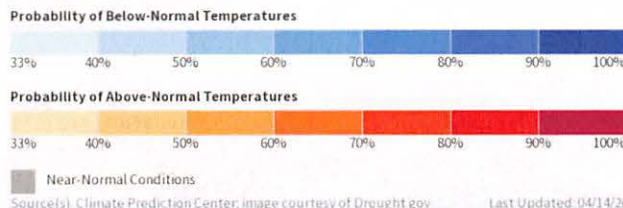
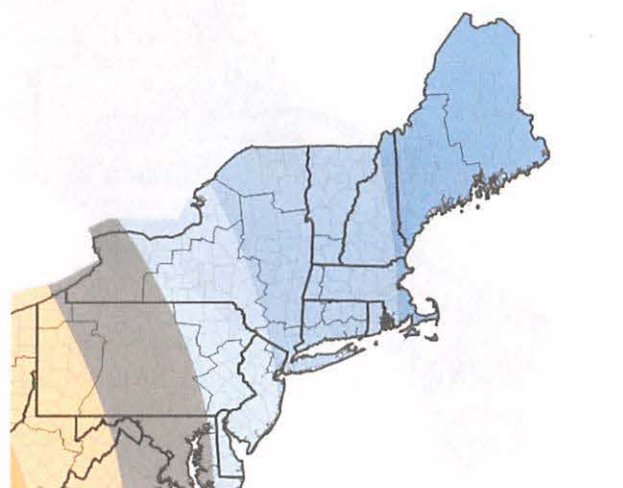


# 6-10 Day Outlooks

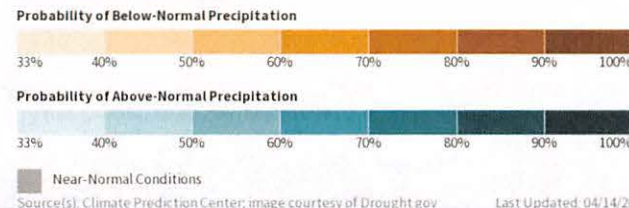
April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

- Below normal temperatures expected for late April
- Drier airmasses, interrupted by rain with cold frontal passages, will keep a near normal precipitation potential
- Note: This pattern favors windy conditions

6-10 Day Temperature Outlook for April 20, 2026-April 24, 2026



6-10 Day Precipitation Outlook for April 20, 2026-April 24, 2026





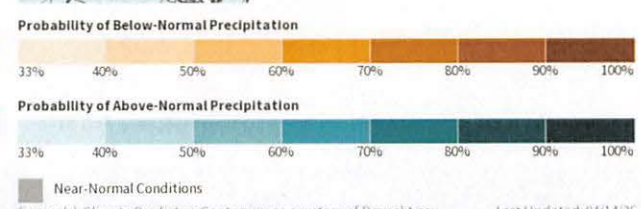
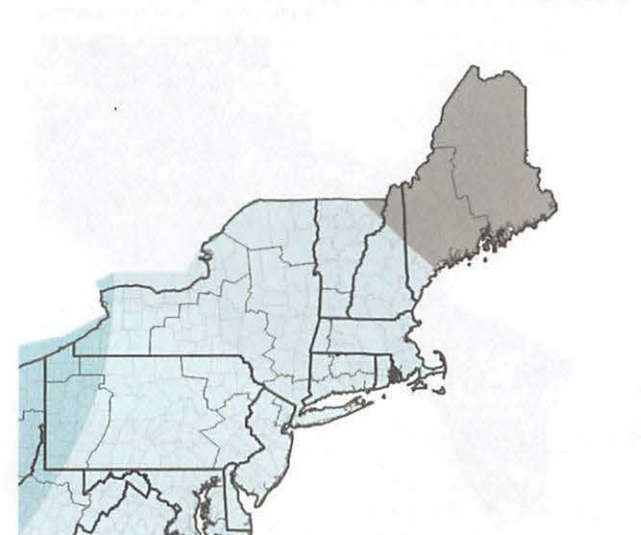
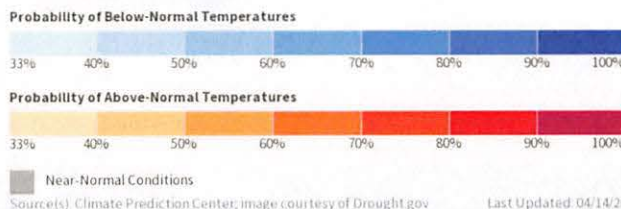
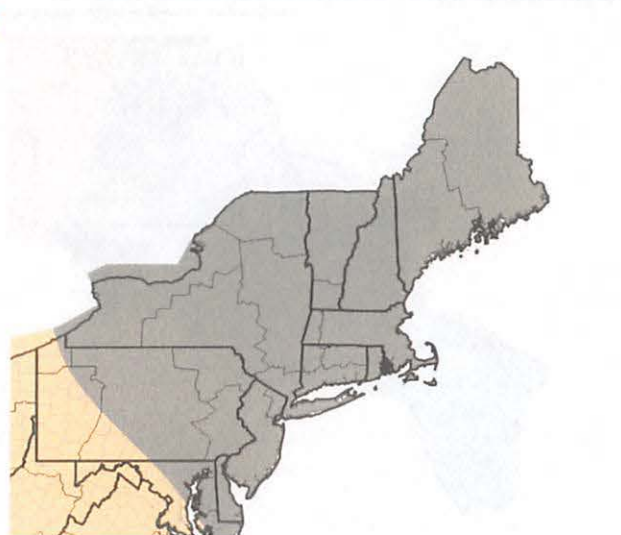
# 8-14 Day Outlooks

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

8-14 Day Temperature Outlook for April 22, 2026-April 28, 2026

8-14 Day Precipitation Outlook for April 22, 2026-April 28, 2026

- Near to slightly below normal temperatures possible through the end of April
- Precipitation chances are near to above normal



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Gray-Portland, ME



# Long-Range Outlook

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

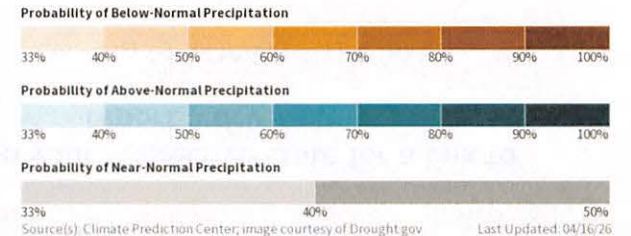
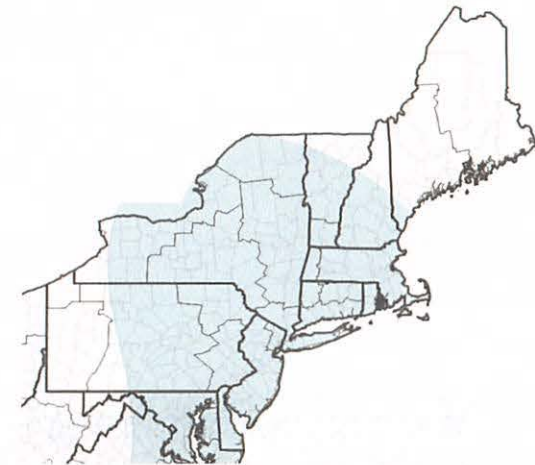
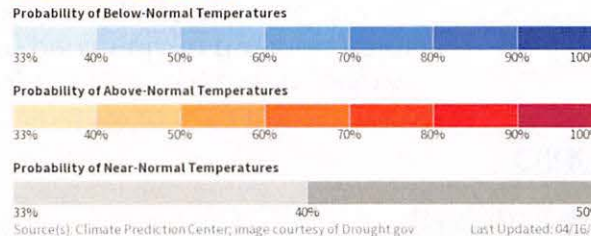
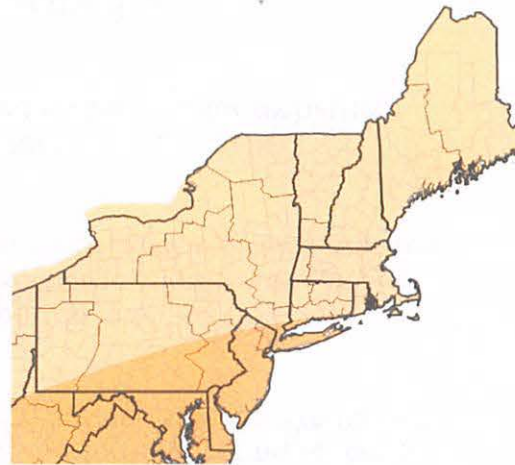
Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for May 1, 2026–July 31, 2026

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for May 1, 2026–July 31, 2026

Climate Prediction Center is forecasting A transition to ENSO-neutral is expected next month, with ENSO-neutral favored through May–July 2026 (55% chance).

In June–August 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (62% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026

No strong climate signals for rainfall across New England for this summer





# Summary of Impacts

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

**Hydrologic Impacts:** Although snowfall was slightly below to near normal for parts of the states, the headwaters and particularly the Upper Kennebec were below normal. The remaining snowpack is below the 30th percentile in the mountains, trailed only the winters of 2012, 2016, and 2010. Melt in March reduced the snowpack prior to ground thaw, resulting in an underperforming spring recharge into groundwater. Some improvements were made to surface storage like lakes and reservoirs.

**Dry Private Wells:** Hundreds of dry wells were reported in Maine and New Hampshire since the start of the drought in 2025. Recharge should slow any new dry-wells, but the coming reactivation of vegetation could quickly reduce the water table and again increase the number of dry wells.

**Aquifer Deficits:** Groundwater levels in many monitoring wells reached period-of-record lows over the winter. Thawing frost is allowing for recharge, though it is occurring 2-4 weeks early.

**Agricultural Impacts:** There are no known impacts at this time.

**Fire Hazard Impacts:** There are no known impacts at this time.

**Mitigation Actions:** Please refer to your municipality and/or water provider for mitigation information.

Click on your respective state for a link to report a dry well

[Maine Dry Well Survey](#)

[New Hampshire Dry Well Survey](#)



NOAA  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
Gray-Portland, ME



# Main Takeaways

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT

**Bottom Line:** While surface conditions have improved, an early melt season has reduced further recharge potential through green-up. The area already plagued by a significant moisture debt carried over from the fall will be vulnerable to flash drought conditions in the warm season unless replenishing rains arrive this spring.

**Current Drought Conditions:** Persistent groundwater deficits support moderate (D1) to severe drought (D2)

- Recent rain and snowmelt has saturated the top layer of soil, increased streamflows and reservoir levels, and slightly buoyed shallow groundwater levels
- These modest improvements led to the reduction in the Severe Drought (D2) for parts of northern New Hampshire and Western Maine

**Outlook:** Despite these improvements in water levels, the long-term prognosis remains concerning

- As the frost fully thaws, moisture will be drawn downward from the topsoil to fill these deeper voids, essentially robbing the surface layer of its recent gains.
- Once green-up occurs, plants will begin actively pumping water from the soil. This demand coupled with the deep-layer deficits could rapidly reduce topsoil moisture.
- This lack of late-season melt means that streamflows will likely drop to summer levels much earlier than usual, leading to the regress in drought conditions.
- Repeating wetting rains through spring will be vital to sustain soil moisture, otherwise evaporative losses will dominate.
- The next few weeks' precipitation will greatly determining the severity of drought conditions through the warm season.
- **This combination of factors suggests that while conditions improve in the short term, the deep moisture deficits remain, making the region highly vulnerable to further regressing as the summer heat begins.**



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Gray-Portland, ME



# Contact Information

April 16, 2026  
2:30 EDT



## Briefing Webpage

→ [www.weather.gov/gyx/EMhome](http://www.weather.gov/gyx/EMhome)

→ <https://www.weather.gov/gyx/drought>

→ <https://www.weather.gov/gyx/droughtinformationstatement>



## Contact Information

### Web

→ [www.weather.gov/gyx](http://www.weather.gov/gyx)

### Phone (public)

→ (207) 688-3216

### Email

→ [gyx.skywarn@noaa.gov](mailto:gyx.skywarn@noaa.gov)

→ PRIMARY: [sarah.jamison@noaa.gov](mailto:sarah.jamison@noaa.gov)

### Facebook

→ [NWSGray](#)

### Twitter

→ [@NWSGray](#)



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Gray-Portland, ME

## **Energy Cost Comparison Q1 2026 v. 2025**



# TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

10 FRONT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 778-0591 • FAX 772-4709

[www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov)

**TO:** SELECTBOARD & MELISSA ROY, INTERIM TOWN MANAGER  
**FROM:** COREY STEVENS, FINANCE DIRECTOR  
**SUBJECT:** ENERGY COST COMPARISON Q1 2026 V. 2025  
**DATE:** MAY 4, 2026

Below is a comparison of energy costs for 2026 and 2025 for town facilities, and fuel costs for town vehicles. The Selectboard had requested this information at its regular meeting on April 13<sup>th</sup>. These results are for the General Fund, Water and Sewer.

The year over year increase in electricity costs clearly stands out. As we know, electrical rates in the Northeast have been rising over the past year, and this increase largely explains the results you see below. Electricity Supplier rates increased on average 55% between March 2025 and March 2026, while Delivery rates increased 95%. Electricity consumption in town facilities remained relatively consistent year over year, with notable exceptions at 32 Court Street (decrease) and 10 Hampton Road (increase), due to Parks & Recreation's move to the latter. Natural Gas costs in 2026 increased by 4.8% over the same period in 2025. While Natural Gas rates have remained stable over the past year, 2026 saw colder than normal temperatures, with February standing out as especially cold in the state. Fuel costs (unleaded gas and diesel fuel) were \$8K higher in the first quarter of 2026. Our contract rate for diesel fuel has remained the same year over year, while the gas rate declined slightly. Therefore, the increase in costs for fuel this year is likely due to increased consumption during storm fighting activities this past winter.

## Electricity/Fuel/Natural Gas Costs Year Over Year Comparison: Q1

ACCOUNT	2026 Actual	2025 Actual	'26 Actual vs.	'26 Actual vs.
			'25 Actual \$ Increase/ (Decrease)	'25 Actual % Difference
Electricity	237,611	163,014	74,597	45.76%
Fuel	59,608	51,686	7,922	15.33%
Natural Gas	58,204	55,519	2,684	4.83%
	<b>355,422</b>	<b>270,220</b>	<b>85,203</b>	<b>31.53%</b>

### Electricity Costs Breakdown and Utility Rates Detail

Account Description	2026	2025	Change \$	Pct. Δ
P&R- Electricity	1,594	1,416	178	13%
Town Hall- Electricity	2,694	2,084	611	29%
Town Office- Electricity	7,042	4,789	2,253	47%
Senior Center - Electricity	1,354	942	412	44%
Safety Complex- Electricity	11,385	7,515	3,870	51%
DPW Complex- Electricity	6,473	4,451	2,022	45%
Train Station- Electricity	242	191	52	27%
Other Structures- Electricity	806	536	270	50%
10 Hampton- Electricity	4,403	487	3,916	805%
Street Lights- Electricity	30,160	26,708	3,452	13%
Stormwater- Electricity	662	283	379	134%
Swasey Pkwy- Electricity	400	376	24	6%
Water Distr. - Electricity	33,887	19,065	14,822	40%
Water Treat.- Electricity	17,922	17,874	48	
Sewer Collect.- Electricity	89,221	22,145	67,076	55%
Sewer Treat.- Electricity	29,367	54,153	(24,786)	
	237,611	163,014	74,596	46%

### Utility Rates: Feb. 15 - Mar. 15

	2026	2025	Pct. Δ
<b>Electricity</b>			
Demand	12.13	12.13	0%
Delivery	0.04907	0.02516	95%
Stranded	0.00001	0.00013	-92%
System	0.00778	0.00756	3%
Supplier	0.11320	0.07470	52%
Supplier	0.14049	0.08900	58%
<b>Natural Gas - Unutil</b>			
Metered Usage	1.04399	1.04232	0.16%
Customer	80.00000	80.00	0.00%
Distribution	0.27200	0.27200	0.00%
Local Delivery Adj.	0.03670	0.03870	-5.17%
<b>Natural Gas - NRG</b>			
Commodity	7.89	7.89	0.00%
Law Changed 2025	0.0031	0.0031	0.00%
Law Changed 2025	0.0139	-	
Law Changed 2024	0.7754	0.7754	0.00%

## **Tax Abatements, Veteran's Credits & Exemptions**



## **Permits & Approvals**

## **Town Manager Report**

## **Select Board Committee Reports**

## **Correspondence**

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

From: **Silas Wellington Richards** <[silas.richards@gmail.com](mailto:silas.richards@gmail.com)>

Date: Thu, Apr 30, 2026 at 5:12 PM

Subject: Select Board Public Comment - May 4, 2026

To: <[selectboard@exeternh.gov](mailto:selectboard@exeternh.gov)>

Good afternoon,

Thank you for taking the adoption of the Complete Streets Guidelines with zeal and asking critical questions regarding this matter.

I'm writing to share information on the RecReady NH initiative, a statewide recreation planning toolkit designed to help municipalities assess existing assets, engage the public, and implement projects that strengthen community well-being and local economic development .

Given Exeter's ongoing work related to wayfinding, trail connectivity, and expanding safe alternatives for walking and biking, I believe this resource is both timely and relevant.

Would you be willing to include the attached RecReady NH flyers in the Select Board packet for the upcoming meeting? This would help provide context and ensure Board members have a shared understanding of the opportunity alongside my public comment.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let me know if you need anything further.

Best regards,

Silas Richards

--

*Silas W. Richards M.Ed.*

[LinkedIn Profile](#)

April 25, 2026

Dear Members of the Select Board,

I am writing as a resident of Westside Drive to formally raise a concern regarding an incident that occurred yesterday related to the ongoing water project in our neighborhood.

During the course of the construction work, the crew struck and damaged our gas line. As a result of this incident, our furnace is now completely non-functional. Prior to yesterday, our heating system was working without any issues. However, since the gas line was disrupted, the furnace has stopped working entirely. A Unitil technician attempted to relight the pilot, but was unsuccessful, and the system remains inoperable.

Given the direct timing and circumstances, we feel strongly that the damage caused during the construction project has led to the failure of our furnace. We believe the town bears responsibility for this situation, or at the very least, shares in that responsibility.

Additionally, I would like to express broader concerns about the ongoing issues tied to this water project. There have been repeated disruptions and complications affecting residents on Westside Drive, and it is becoming increasingly concerning. We respectfully request that greater care, oversight, and accountability be exercised moving forward.

At this time, we are seeking prompt assistance in addressing the damage to our property and guidance on how this matter will be resolved. We would appreciate a timely response regarding next steps.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

The Herricks

Home - 603-778-8120  
Cell - 603-770-1441

Cc: Town manager

**RECEIVED**

APR 27 2026

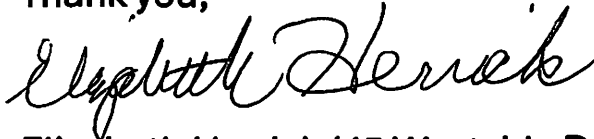
**Town Manager's Office**

4/27/26

Enclosed, please find a copy of Abbott HVAC's bill for fixing our furnace which went down due to the workers hitting the gas line in our neighborhood this past Friday. We would like to be reimbursed for this repair which would never have been necessary if the gas line had not been hit.

Not sure if this is the correct office to send this to. If not, please forward to whoever should receive it.

Thank you,



Elizabeth Herrick (45 Westside Drive)

**RECEIVED**

APR 28 2026

**Town Manager's Office**

Work performed by: Abbott HVAC, LLC  
Mechanical License #: GFE0803275  
Date of Completion: April 27, 2026

Abbott HVAC, LLC  
abbotthvacnh@gmail.com  
(603) 814-0625

Payment to be sent to: 33 Squamscott Road Stratham NH, 03885

---

Work Completed for:  
Liz Herrick  
45 Westside Drive  
Exeter, NH 03833

Job Location:  
45 Westside Drive  
Exeter, NH

**Service Performed:**

- Dispatched For No Heat
  - Performed Full Diagnostics on The System
  - Found The Thermocouple To Not Be Working Properly
  - Installed A New Thermocouple
  - Tested & Ran The System
- 

Service of the above according to all specifications and requirements is a sum of:  
**\$221.35 (Two Hundred Twenty-One Dollars And Thirty-Five Cents)**

**\*\* PAID IN FULL 4/27/2026\* - Thank you-!**



# Saturday May 9th

## Founders Park, 10a-1p

*An Environmental Festival Celebrating  
the Annual Return of the Alewives*

**ART - KIDS ACTIVITIES - EDUCATIONAL DISPLAYS  
LIVE FISH - CORNHOLE - EDUCATIONAL TALKS**

### Partners:



**Town Depts & Committees**  
Planning, EXTV, Exeter Public Library, Parks & Rec, Public Works, Energy, Sustainability, Tree Committee



**Local Nature Photographers:**  
Annie Brown, John Saleda  
Ron Watson

Info: [www.exeternh.gov](http://www.exeternh.gov)





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## Bulletin #18: Bad News on Land Use Bills; Take Action Now!

1 message

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NHMA Advocacy <advocacy@nhmunicipal.org>  
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fri, May 1, 2026 at 1:28 PM

### New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

# LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 18

2026 Session

May 1, 2026



[Live Bill Tracker](#)  
[Bill Hearings Schedule](#)

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### In this issue:

- Bad News on Land Use Bills
- The Finish Line is in Sight
- Risk Pool Update
- Senate to Vote on Multiple Municipal Bills
- Governor Signs Municipal Bills
- Follow Bills That Matter to You Online

### Bad News on Land Use Bills

The **Senate Commerce Committee** voted this week to make multiple land use bills worse for municipalities, including bills supported by NHMA to bring clarity to previously passed zoning mandates, benefitting local officials, taxpayers, and property owners. Ignoring NHMA's efforts to reach a compromise, the committee recommended that the full Senate pass them—almost all on the consent calendar—with **last-minute amendments and no opportunity for public review or comment.**

Members should **contact their local senator now to oppose this anti-local power grab**, as all of the following bills are scheduled to be acted upon on **Thursday, May 7.**

**HB 1588 (am-1720s)** was recommended ought to pass as amended (OTP-A). The bill, which NHMA was monitoring, has become **one of the most anti-local control bills of the session** with this substantial amendment adopted without any opportunity for public comment. The bill, as amended, would:

- Effectively **exempt** all proposed residential development on land zoned to permit commercial uses from all zoning ordinances except those ordinances regulating frontage, setbacks, and height.
- **Prohibit** municipalities from adopting zoning ordinances for residential development in commercial zones that differ from those for commercial development.
- **Prohibit** municipalities from requiring accessory parking spaces to be garaged.
- **Mandate** that municipalities reimburse private property owners “reasonable attorney's fees” if they go to court over whether a proposed residential development in a commercial zone is legal and conforming.

The Senator from District 9 ensured **HB 1588** would receive a debate and floor vote by withholding consent after the committee adopted the amended bill, **creating an opportunity to kill the bill. Members and concerned citizens need to contact their local Senator now to oppose this bill.**

**HB 1010 (am-1712s)**, relative to multi-family residential development on commercially zoned land, was recommended OTP-A. The bill is now **opposed** by NHMA. As amended by the House, this bill made significant positive updates to the 2025 universal zoning mandate, requiring municipalities to permit multi-family residential uses on all land zoned to permit commercial uses, and representing a balance between land use regulation and development. However, the Senate Commerce Committee amendment removes key provisions from the bill and expands the current universal mixed-use zoning mandate. Further, it:

- Adds language requiring municipalities to permit residential development in commercial zones by right, rather than allowing municipalities to require a conditional use permit or special exception approval.
- Removes language clarifying how legal nonconforming structures could be converted into residential uses, and language ensuring that all state-mandated residential development in commercial zones remains subject to local site plan review regulations.
- “Waters down” the language in the bill that made it clear that municipalities could require a water supply study.

All in all, **the committee gutted the bill**, which had been previously negotiated by stakeholders in the House.

**HB 1681 (am-1709s)** was recommended OTP-A. The bill establishes standards for innovative housing structures, including tiny houses, tiny houses on wheels, and yurts; authorizes their use as single-family or accessory dwellings; sets construction, inspection, and off-site manufacturing requirements; and directs related rulemaking under the state building code and wastewater and modular building statutes. The bill is a local option; however, the bill’s requirements for assessing innovative housing structures needed to be significantly updated to address technical flaws and establish clarity for municipal assessors and private property owners. Unfortunately, the amendment muddied the waters further and there is no language in the bill now regarding how these structures will be assessed, especially if they are used transiently. NHMA **opposes** the bill as amended due to these unresolved assessing issues.

**HB 1079 (am-1710s)** was recommended OTP-A. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, allows accessory dwelling units to be built within or attached to certain non-conforming structures. Although the bill was requested by NHMA to clarify a specific section of the state’s ADU law, the House amended the bill to apply the vesting procedures for approved subdivisions in RSA 674:39 to approved building permits for

ADUs. We are unsure how this could work in practice. The Senate Commerce Committee amended the bill but neglected to fix the problem. Instead, the Senate's amendment removed a section of the bill that sought to eliminate a redundant statute relative to detached ADUs.

HB 1540 was recommended OTP. The bill, **supported** by NHMA, regulates ADUs in protected shoreland districts. We hoped the bill could have been improved by an amendment, but the Senate Commerce Committee stuck with the House version, positing that more waterfront ADUs within the protected shoreland could create more affordable year-round housing.

Considered as a whole, the actions on **these bills are a full-on attack on local decision-making and an affront to the legislative process**. At this point, only one of these bills is on the regular calendar to be debated by the Senate. **Ask your local senator to pull the other bills off of consent and oppose the ought to pass motions.**

## The Finish Line is in Sight

The House deadline to report any remaining Senate bills out of committee is **Thursday, May 7**, and the deadline for both chambers to act on all bills from the other chamber is **Thursday, May 14**. NHMA is following more than 100 bills still in play, although more than 40 of them will be voted on by the House or Senate next week.



Some important bills we're still waiting for committees act on include:

**House Municipal and County Government Committee, executive sessions, Tuesday, May 5, 10:30 a.m., Government Place (GP) Room 154.**

- **SB 508**, relative to the zoning board of adjustment appeal period, and requiring municipalities to stamp and accept revised plans submitted by an applicant within 10 business days of submission. The acceptance of the plans would be contingent on the revised plans reflecting specific requests made during the planning board's initial review, and the planning board would be prohibited from making any further requests to ensure the plans comply with local regulations. This would establish a rushed process that forces municipalities to permit incomplete plans and conflicts with several existing state laws. **NHMA opposes.**
- **SB 439** would define "data center" and require municipalities to permit data centers on land that permits commercial or industrial uses. It would also allow planning boards to adopt regulations through rulemaking. Currently, municipalities can determine whether to permit data centers, and planning boards can adopt local administrative procedures in accordance with state law without approval from the legislative body. **NHMA opposes.**
- **SB 435** clarifies the relatively confusing language in current law and replaces the term "unnecessary hardship" with "unreasonable restriction." The bill does not change how the criterion for a variance from the terms of a zoning ordinance is applied, usually called the "hardship requirement." The bill restates what already exists in law in a more easily understandable and

- accessible form for applicants and volunteer ZBA members. It aligns the new language with existing law and case law. NHMA **supports**.
- [SB 440](#) updates the local adoption process for energy efficient and clean energy districts by municipalities. NHMA **supports**.

Senate and House committees are also meeting next week to act on a pair of risk pool bills. (*see below*)

In addition to the bills above, we're hitting the point in the session where non-germane amendments will begin to pop up. These are, mostly, pieces of legislation that the originating body passed but the other body did not. As such, the originating body will tack the language of the bill onto an unrelated bill that it believes that the other body is interested in passing. Consequently, it is entirely possible that some remaining bills will get festooned with unrelated provisions as they move through the second body. Please keep reading the Legislative Bulletin to keep up with any non-germane amendments as they are published and become relevant to municipalities.

## Risk Pool Update

Key Senate and House committees have until next Thursday to finish their work on a pair of competing pool regulatory bills already endorsed by the other chamber.

Risk pools are created by political subdivisions to reduce risks and associated insurance costs. Across the country, two primary types of risk pools exist: assessable and non-assessable. The Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRIP) recognizes both models.

The [Senate Finance Committee](#) will meet **Tuesday, May 5, at 1:30 p.m. in State House (SH) Room 103** for executive sessions on multiple bills, including [HB 1491](#), the House-passed risk pool bill. NHMA **supports** the original version of the HB 1491 but has concerns about the Senate's [preliminary attempt](#) at amending it. A revised amendment is expected to be introduced next week; from what we understand, it is substantially different—and better—than the prior amendment considered in Senate Finance.

The [House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee](#) will meet **Wednesday, May 6, at 10:00, in GP Room 229** to act on [SB 661](#), the Senate's take on this important and complicated topic. SB 661, **opposed** by NHMA, introduces assessable risk pools into the NH statutory scheme, which subjects members to potential unbudgeted, mid-year assessments at any time.

The expectation is that HB 1491 will almost certainly be amended to address some of the Senate's concerns, and SB 661 is likely to be updated, as well, so the bills may become more complimentary. The goal appears to be to pass both bills, with HB 1491 creating an insurance regulation option and SB 661 substantially changing 5-B, the current statute giving regulatory authority to the Secretary of State. Of course, things could still change, and a reasonable compromise may remain out of reach.

NHMA supports the ability of members to establish and govern the pools and understands that clear regulations that protect the members and allow the pools to operate are necessary. If your community has been impacted by assessments or is concerned about the long-term viability of risk pools, please reach out to your [local Senator](#) and [House delegation](#) to share your thoughts and concerns.

## Senate to Vote on Multiple Municipal Bills

On **Thursday, May 7**, the Senate will take up a pair of high priority bills **opposed** by NHMA:

- [HB 1064](#), which eliminates municipal immunity regarding negligence that results in personal injury or property damage, is on the regular calendar as refer to interim study. While intended to expand liability and improve compensation for injured parties, the bill goes too far and creates serious financial risks for municipalities. Significantly raising liability caps will increase insurance and risk pool costs, which will lead to a combination of property tax increases and reductions in municipal services. NHMA **supports** the interim study recommendation.

- [HB 1184](#), which outlines procedures for issuing, extending, and challenging no trespass orders (NTO) on public property, is on the consent calendar as ought to pass as amended (OTP-A). The amendment provides a more workable duration for an emergency NTO (45 days) and a more reasonable standard (majority vote of the governing body) for extending the NTO. Although NHMA continues to oppose the bill, we appreciate the work of the Senator from District 2 in crafting this amendment.

Additionally, a quartet of problematic bills dealing with town meeting are on the calendar.

- [HB 1131](#), on the consent calendar as OTP-A. The bill amends the method of adopting official ballot referendum form of meeting (“SB 2”) by placing the question at the top of the warrant. The amendment, which NHMA is **neutral** on, is a major improvement over the House version of the bill, which would have placed the question on the official ballot with no opportunity for deliberation.
- [HB 1224](#), on the consent calendar as inexpedient to legislate (ITL). The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, places draconian requirements on the default budget calculation for SB 2 towns.
- [HB 1319](#), on the consent calendar as refer to interim study. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, enables towns, village districts, or school districts to adopt or rescind a local fiscal accountability committee for towns and schools.
- [HB 1355](#), on the consent calendar as refer to interim study. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, eliminates the default budget from the official ballot referenda and prevents the purpose of a petitioned warrant article from being amended.

Besides the bills listed above, here are some other bills to be voted on by the Senate next week:

- [HB 164](#), on the consent calendar as ought to pass with amendment (OTP-A). The bill, **supported** by NHMA, authorizes the state to create and maintain a website for electronic records and allows municipalities to store electronic records on the website. This option could be useful for municipalities to be able to refer right-to-know requests to a website managed by State Archives instead of having to compile and supply the information directly. The amendment reduces the state appropriation to set up the website to \$50,000.
- [HB 1021](#), on the consent calendar as ought to pass with amendment (OTP-A). The member-requested bill, **supported** by NHMA, amends the date to provide written notice to a municipality of a taxpayer's election to be assessed under the low-income housing tax credit program.
- [HB 1187](#), on the consent calendar as OTP-A. The original bill, **opposed** by NHMA, mandated a town clerk's office to be open a mandated number of days to allow candidates for state representative may file their candidacy for a special election. The amendment removes the mandate and requires the clerk to post contact information for election officials authorized to accept the declaration of candidacy.
- [HB 1195](#), on the consent calendar as OTP. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA due to unaddressed technical issues, expands the current statewide zoning mandates for commercial and home-based childcare operations.
- [HB 1213](#), on the consent calendar as ITL. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, regulates the number, selection, and terms of town highway agents and the appointment of an “expert highway agent.”
- [HB 1577](#), on the consent calendar as OTP-A. The bill, which NHMA is monitoring, allows the disclosure of utility customer data to municipalities for emergency response planning.

**Note:** The House is also meeting next **Thursday, May 7**, but there are no bills with significant municipal impact on the calendar.

## Governor Signs Municipal Bills

The governor recently signed two bills NHMA is following into law:

- [HB 1204](#) (Chapter 32), relative to the grading and use of timber grown in New Hampshire.

- [HB 1246](#) (Chapter 33), relative to planning board members serving on other local boards.

## Follow Bills That Matter to You Online

In addition to our weekly *Legislative Bulletin*, NHMA provides members access to FastDemocracy, an online bill tracking platform, for efficient, real-time updates to legislative activity of interest to members. Visit our online [Bill Tracker](#) page to learn more and feel free to subscribe to weekly or daily updates on subjects and bills of interest.

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### NHMA Events Calendar 2025 Final Legislative Bulletin

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## **Review Board Calendar**

**Non-Public Session**