



NEWMARKET, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Newmarket Community Design Charrette

October 18-19, 2024

Newmarket Community Design Charrette Acknowledgements

Thank you to the individuals who donated their time, energy, and expertise for this charrette. Extra thanks to all the community members who shared their insights about Newmarket.

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Additional Thank Yous!

Crackskull's Coffee & Books



Who is Plan NH?

Plan New Hampshire (Plan NH), is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization formed in 1989. Plan NH has a vision of a New Hampshire that is vibrant and healthy for its people, its economies, and the environment. To achieve that vision, Plan NH's mission is to foster excellence in planning, design and development of New Hampshire's built environment, because we believe that what we build, where we build, and how we build anything has a significant impact on that vibrancy and health.

Plan NH champions principles and ideas that balance the built environment - including buildings, roads, bridges, memorials, public sculpture - with:

- the needs of people, including where they live, how they get about, what services are necessary, what they value;
- maintaining a "sense of place" of our towns, cities, and villages that make them unique, including preserving historic assets, open spaces, agriculture, and farming;
- and protecting our air, water, flora, and fauna.

Among our signature programs is the Community Design Charrette Program, a participatory exercise that brings professionals from our membership together with New Hampshire communities to explore design ideas, usually around a village center or other significant neighborhood or community asset. Through recommendations made, Plan NH can demonstrate the role and importance of the principles and ideas noted above in concrete, real examples.



What is a Charrette?

Simply stated, a charrette is a brief, intense, brainstorming session in which ideas are brought together for the purpose of defining potential planning recommendations and possible design solutions for an identified need. For Plan NH, this is usually related to a town center or other significant neighborhood in a community.

Plan NH's community design charrettes take place over the course of two days: eight hours on a Friday for listening and then another eight hours the next day for brainstorming, crafting recommended solutions, and presenting thoughts to the community.

The process engages planning and design professionals in direct dialog and conversation with each other and with local residents to collect information needed in order to develop good and relevant recommendations about how to address a particular challenge. Plan NH sees this part of the process as a period of discovery: discovering who the community is, what they value, what they really want. This community input is essential and critical to the value of the outcomes.

The results of a Plan NH charrette are general and overarching planning and design recommendations, rather than specific directions. Plan NH does not dictate but suggests. Most often, the outcome of a Plan NH charrette is described as a *vision*, or an expression of how things might be, based on what the team saw and heard and learned.



Sunapee, NH - Apr. 2024



Manchester, NH - July 2023



Brentwood, NH - May 2023



Temple, NH - Oct. 2022

Charrettes blend the broad experience of planning and design professionals with local citizens' detailed knowledge of their own community to develop recommendations that address challenges and opportunities in the project at hand. These recommendations provide a framework within which more detailed solutions and plans of action can be developed.

Why Did Plan NH Come to Newmarket?

The Town of Newmarket submitted an application to Plan NH in October 2023 to explore the riverfront area along the Lamprey River. The primary objective for this charrette exercise was intended to understand the interrelationship between people and the urban riverfront area located in downtown Newmarket.

- 1 Explore opportunities to connect the riverfront area** to provide easier access to Heron Point and other spaces downtown..
- 2 Understand the relationship between private property owners and the general public along the riverfront area** to see where there are opportunities to provide more of a shared use for the community.
- 3 Develop paths to infrastructure improvements** that will make vulnerable areas more resilient, as well as utilizing them for enhanced recreation and economic impact.
- 4 Utilize the downtown** to make a safer, more connected place for all users.



Site Tour Observations



What the Plan NH team saw during our project area tour of Newmarket:

- On Friday morning, we made several stops around downtown Newmarket and along the riverfront.
- **Our first stop was Schanda Park.** After a short walk from Town Hall, we stopped at Schanda Park. We observed a number of constraints and opportunities both with the area and the access to it, including little parking. Water quality issues were easily observed and noted around Moonlight Brook.
- **From there, our charrette team walked along the riverfront behind the RiverMoor development.** This is a terrific space but one with challenges and many “observed” rules and easements that seem to be unclear to some residents. Having cars pass through this confined space was also a little unnerving to pedestrians.
- **Next, we walked by the Chinburg property, up past the dam, and to Bryant Rock,** which was a really unique connection and mix of buildings and uses. Creating more access to this beautiful point has challenges based on private property considerations
- **Finally, we made our way back downtown** and noted the challenging intersection at Gerry Avenue, and considered ways to provide better traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and parking capacity.

Plan NH would like to thank our wonderful tour guides for our engaging and informative tour of Newmarket!

What Newmarket Told Plan NH

What Plan NH Heard from Community Leaders

After the tour of the riverfront and the downtown, the team met with key community leaders, including Town staff, Board and Commission members, local business owners, and key property owners. We learned about the challenges and opportunities from their perspectives as those that work in, and serve, the Town of Newmarket on a daily basis. Many of these challenges and findings are intertwined in terms of their causes and potential solutions.

Riverfront Area

- Area near the wastewater treatment plant could be better utilized
- Parking is a challenge
- Needs to be a clearer understanding of what is allowed for public versus private property owners
- Signage could really improve and inform users of the area
- Opportunities to implement a living shoreline, particularly near Schanda Park and Moonlight Brook
- How do we clean up the easements and find solutions that work for all?
- Recreational opportunities exist, as areas for playgrounds and/or community art might brighten up the area
- Are there ways to connect the riverfront experience to the downtown experience?
- Boat and kayak access
- Public-Private Partnership

Heron Point

- This area would be great to utilize for the community, how can we provide easier access?
- Private access road that is gated
- Opportunity for land swaps or other available nearby parcels?
- Could there be a consideration for a bridge?

Downtown Connectivity and Safety

- Is there an opportunity to add a traffic signal?
- Traffic is challenging - lots of horns
- Explore some traffic calming measures
- Street lighting would enhance safety and potentially add to the aesthetic
- Parking is a challenge



What Newmarket Residents Told Plan NH

Two public listening sessions were held during the afternoon and evening of Friday, October 18. The sessions served as an opportunity for the public to share their comments and ideas about the various challenges and opportunities throughout the project area. Plan NH's process encouraged participation and input from everyone in the room. The residents in attendance shared their opinions about how to improve the wonderful assets that the Newmarket community already has. The vibrancy of the community and its residents was evident to the charrette team, and we were excited to explore the possibilities of what the future holds with them.

Throughout these input sessions, community members discussed (1)community strengths, (2)concerns/challenges, and (3)desired improvements. From the common themes, we distilled an overall vision.

Overall Vision:

- Enhance connectivity of the riverfront and downtown areas while increasing overall access.
- Balance commercial development with preserving the small-town atmosphere of Newmarket.
- Create resilient infrastructure improvements that can make Newmarket safer and more desirable



What Newmarket Residents Told Plan NH

(Continued)



Current Conditions

- Vibrant and charming community with a local vibe
- Development has been strategic and has been a positive for the town overall
- Historic assets add to the overall charm (fishing weir)
- Riverfront is a wonderful community space
- Opportunities for recreational improvements



What Newmarket Residents Told Plan NH

(Continued)

Desired Improvements

Infrastructure and Safety:

- Turning left out of Water Street onto Main Street is unsafe
- Slower speed limit through downtown to calm traffic
- Improved street lighting
- General maintenance of Schanda and public parks
- Greater trail network

Riverfront Area:

- More obvious wayfinding/signage
- Greater access to the river for small boats
- Direct access to Heron Point
- Clarity on public easements

Environmental and Aesthetic Issues:

- Consideration to resilient solutions along the shoreline with regard to climate change
- Water quality and invasive plant species
- Wastewater treatment plant and trucking
- Preserve areas like Heron Point



Recommendations

Based on what the Plan NH Charrette Team learned from our walking tour and the stakeholder and community listening sessions, we developed a series of custom recommendations meant to address the concerns we heard about the project area. These recommendations were presented in-person to the community on Saturday, October 19, and are included in more detail in this report.

The following is a list of the recommendations developed by the Charrette Team for potential ways to address the community's vision. More detail regarding each recommendation is provided on the following pages.

- 1. Overall Connectivity Along the Riverfront Area**
- 2. Access to Heron Point**
- 3. Schanda Park Opportunities**
- 4. Living Shoreline Options**
- 5. Rivermoor Landing Public Access Options**
- 6. Dam Park Improvements**
- 7. Downtown Transportation Improvements**
- 8. Willey House Opportunities**
- 9. Parking and Wayfinding Opportunities**



Overall Connectivity Along the Riverfront - Waterfront Connections

The connectivity group explored increasing connections along the downtown riverfront. The table below highlights some of the requirements for implementing the proposed waterfront connections. As with any Town effort, support of the public and funding are two primary components that are necessary to make any recommended action a reality.

Connection Opportunity	Public Access Research	Negotiations with Property Owners	Neighborhood Support	Easement	Permitting
Rivermoor to Riverfront Area	X	X		X	
Bay Road to Heron Point		X	X	X	
Bridge at Narrows			X		X
Main Street Bridge		X		X	X
Class IV Road w/ Trail Improvements and Boardwalk to Narrows Bridge			X		
Schanda Park to Wastewater Treatment Plant		X	X	X	
Dam Park		X		X	
Pedestrian Bridge to Bay Road through Bryant Rock	X				
Access to Fish & Game Dock and Vicinity		X			

Overall Connectivity Along the Riverfront - Existing Conditions

Existing Conditions

The team participated in a site walk to review the existing riverfront, public spaces, and Town owned property, including Schanda Park, the downtown commercial core, Arbor Park, and Heron Point Sanctuary. This assessment also included developing an understanding of primary routes for pedestrian and vehicular access through Town, notably along Route 108, South Main Street/152, New Road and Bay Road.

Key

- A. Heron Point Sanctuary
- B. Schanda Park
- C. Newmarket Wastewater Treatment Plant (Town Land)
- D. Newmarket Fire/Public Works (Town Land)
- E. Pocket Art Park
- F. Arbor Park
- G. Main Street Bandstand / Willey House
- H. River Overlook at Newmarket Mills
- I. Bridge
- J. Public Viewing Area and Public Dock located at Bryant Rock Condominium Property (Bridge Access)

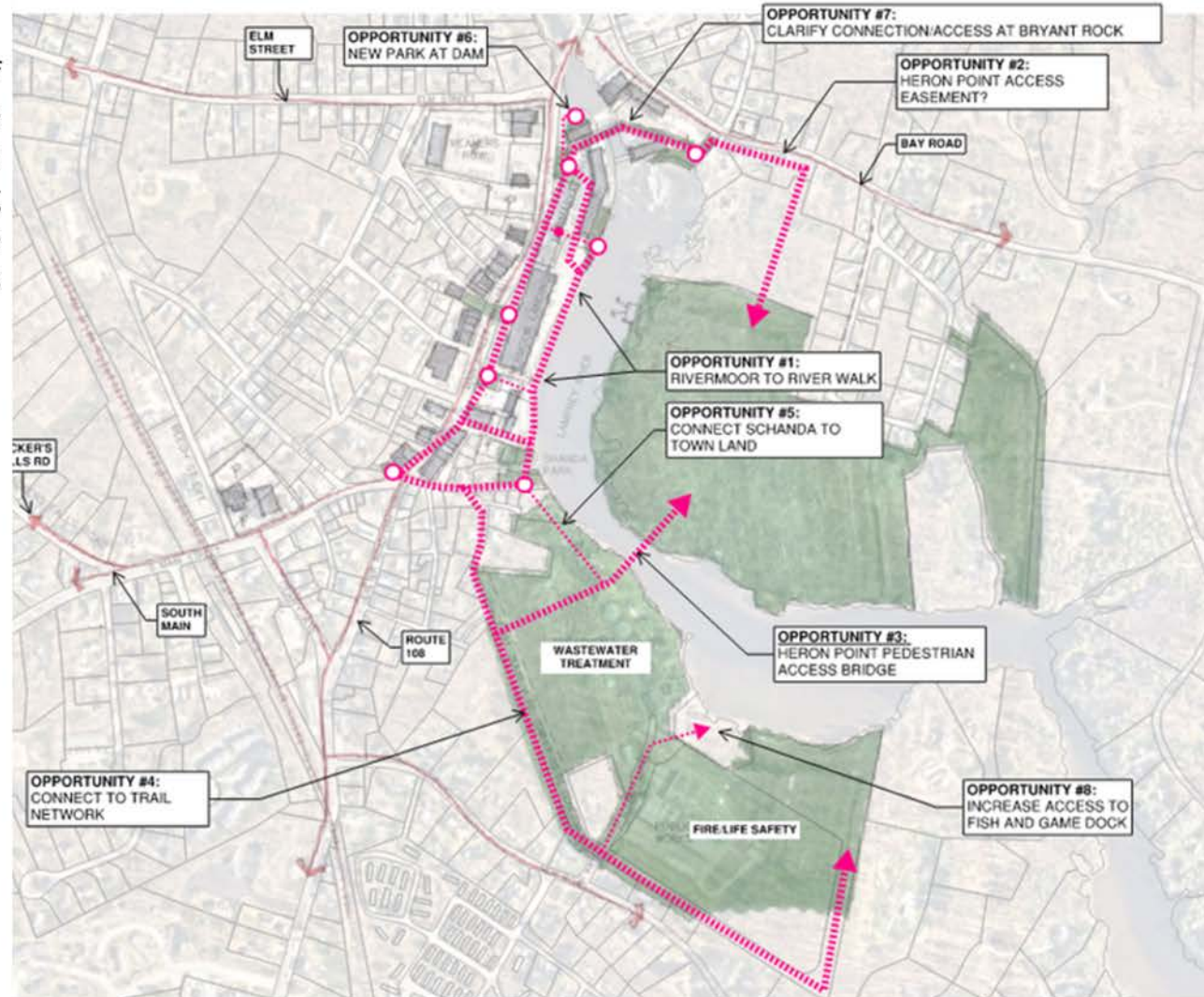


Overall Connectivity Along the Riverfront - Opportunities

Opportunities

After developing an understanding of existing public spaces on and near the Lamprey Riverfront, the team developed a series of recommendations for improving public access to the river. Many of these are discussed in greater detail later in this report; including:

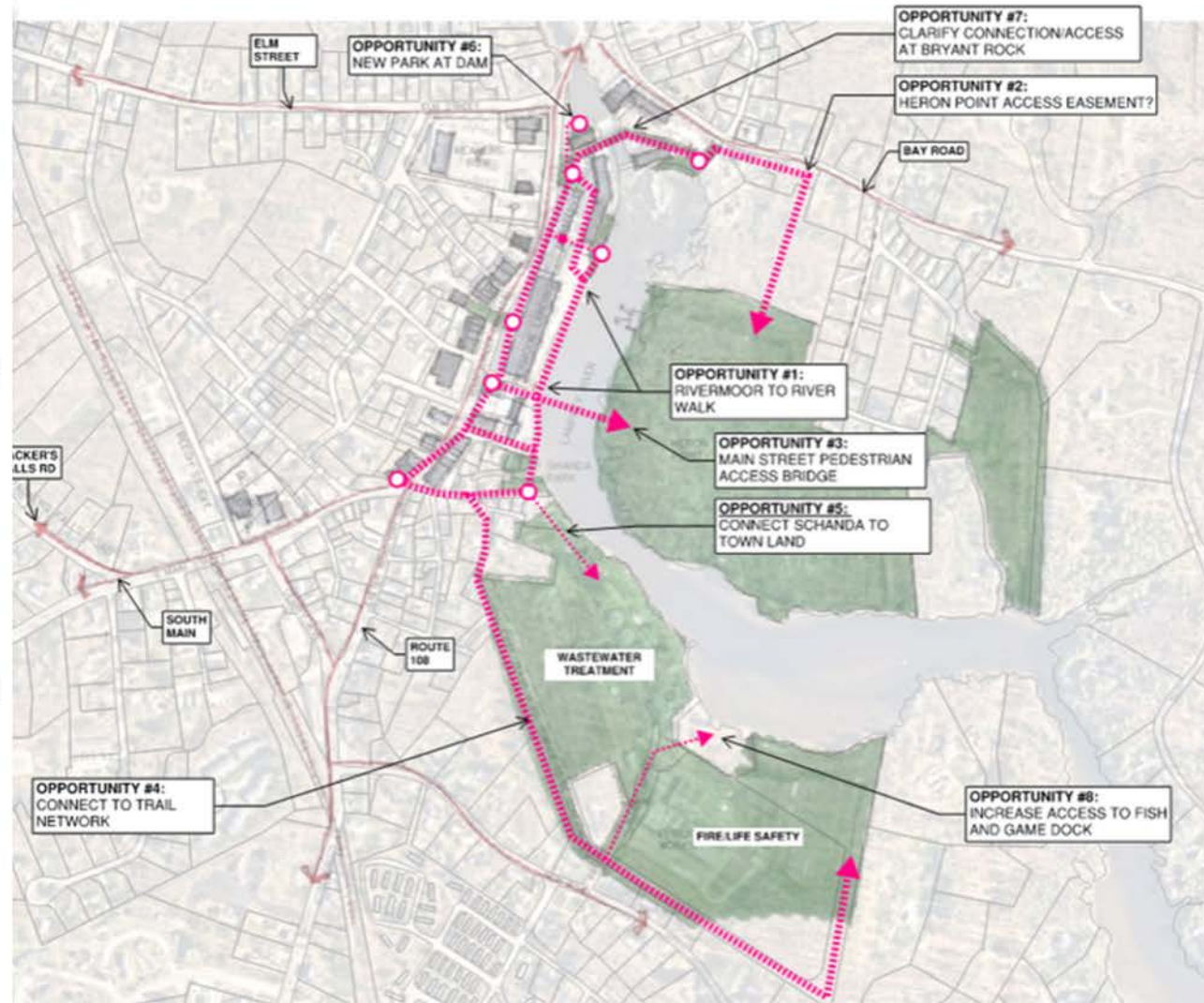
1. Work with the Association at Rivermoor Landing to develop options for increased pedestrian connectivity along the existing riverfront.
2. Coordinate access to Heron Point directly from Bay Road by engaging with private landowners to develop easements or other agreements.
3. Increase access to Heron Point from downtown through the construction of a pedestrian bridge over the Lamprey River. The team reviewed several possible locations for this:
 - a. River narrows, accessed from Town-owned land adjacent to the Wastewater Treatment facility.
 - b. Downtown location adjacent to Arbor Park.



Overall Connectivity Along the Riverfront - Opportunities

Opportunities (continued)

4. Promote connection to the existing trail network on the Wastewater Treatment land.
5. Connect Schanda Park to nearby Town-owned land through partnerships with neighboring private landowners.
6. Collaborate with NH Fish and Game and other stakeholders to develop a public park adjacent to the Lamprey River Dam.
7. Clarify expectations for public use/access through property at Bryant Rock Association.
8. Promote connection and use of an existing dock owned by NH Fish and Game adjacent to town-owned land South of Town.



Access to Heron Point

The team identified the potential for an easement or purchase of land on Bay Road to provide pedestrian access to Heron Point without the need to travel through Heron Point Estates Cooperative. Non-bridge options for access to Heron Point were considered, however our team developed some bridge options for consideration below.

Lamprey River Bridge to Heron Point

In response to the Town's desire to increase use and access at Heron Point, the team reviewed multiple potential locations for a pedestrian bridge over the Lamprey River, similar to the one included near the existing dam. Each scenario offers distinct advantages and disadvantages, and implementing either would require extensive permitting and coordination with entities including NH DES, US Coast Guard bridge requirements, private landowners, and others.

Heron Point is town owned and maintained conservation land that provides a trail network for non-vehicular recreation. A small parking lot is accessed through the Heron Point Estates Cooperative community off of Bay Road, but has been closed due to vandalism and issues with the parking gate. Visitors are currently directed to the municipal parking lot on Bay Road which requires about a quarter mile walk to the Heron Point Sanctuary. Accessibility is limited to this one location with no other connections to Main Street or the west side of the Lamprey River. The community recognizes Heron Point as conservation land with a strong desire to protect and maintain this land while balancing accessibility. Several community members discussed a desire to provide greater accessibility by adding a pedestrian bridge to provide a direct connection from the riverfront to Heron Point.

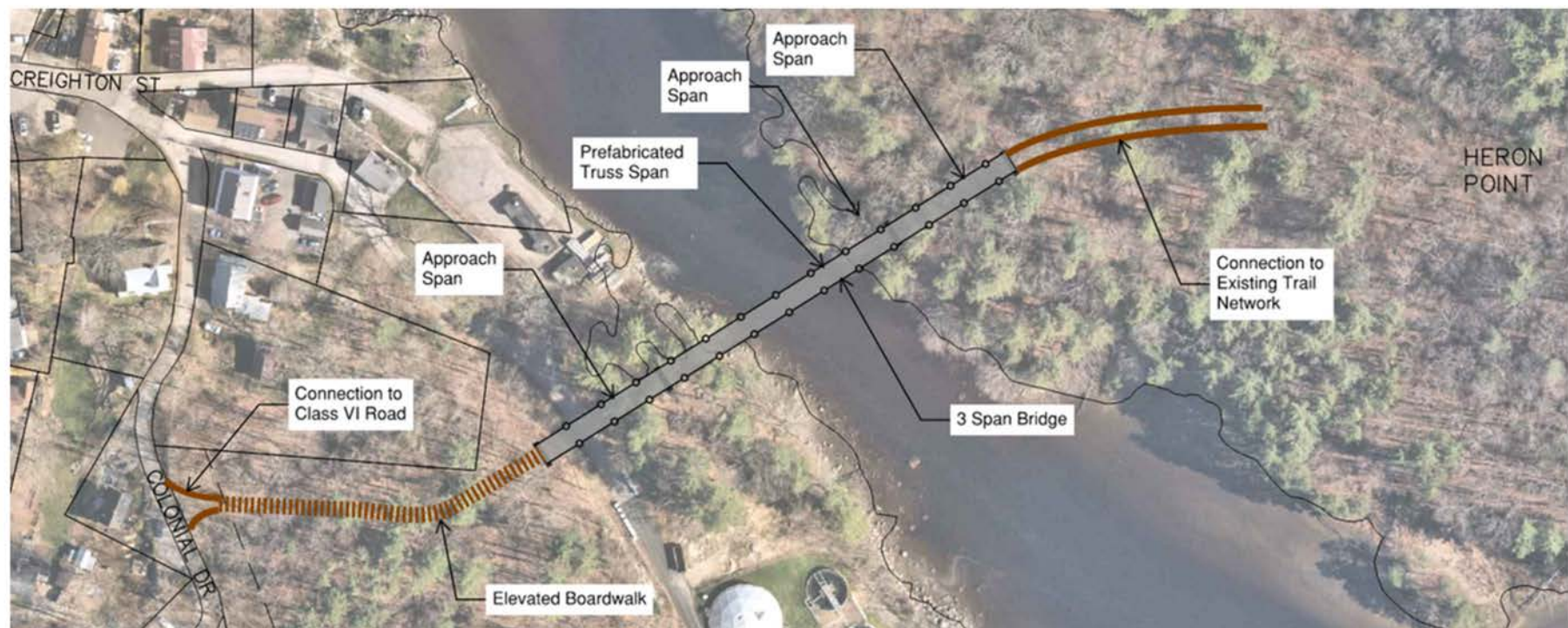
Two locations were considered for potential river crossings: one connecting to Main Street near Penstock Way and the other connecting across the Upper Narrows, south of Schanda Park and the pump station. Several community members noted that there may be limitations to construction at Heron Point. Therefore, additional information and research regarding construction activities and limitations or restrictions at Heron Point should be ascertained as an early step in evaluating the feasibility of either of these locations.

Access to Heron Point

Lamprey River Bridge to Heron Point - Narrows Crossing

Bridge connection at the River Narrows, from the Town-owned Wastewater Treatment property: due to the narrow span, this location offers a structurally efficient connection, and both sides of the river are owned by the Town. However, it is located remotely from Town, and proximal to the primary wastewater-processing facility, which may be undesirable.

Several community members noted underutilized public land and an existing Class VI road adjacent to the town's wastewater treatment facility. Upon reviewing LiDAR topography, the charrette team discovered this land is similar in elevation to the trails at Heron Point. Further evaluation of this area revealed that the river crossing is also the narrowest location along the riverfront, thereby requiring a shorter span than the Main Street connection. The Charrette team further evaluated topography and determined that a boardwalk structure could be constructed to maintain the elevation at the intersection of Colonial Drive and the Class VI road to continue across town property to the Upper Narrows connection. Similar to the Main Street connection, this structure was envisioned with a prefabricated truss structure as the main river crossing and approach spans on either side connecting to the boardwalk to the west and Heron Point to the east.



Access to Heron Point

Lamprey River Bridge to Heron Point - Main Street Connection

Heron Point is elevated above the riverfront and considering this portion of the Lamprey River is navigable, a similarly elevated bridge will be required. One potential location along the riverfront could be to connect to the Rivermoor Landing parking structure on Penstock. This structure is nearly level with Main Street and provides a potential connection to a bridge crossing the Lamprey River. Based on LiDAR topography, Main Street is at a lower elevation than the potential Heron Point landing. Therefore, the bridge will require an approach span from the parking lot to the riverbank to gain elevation to cross the Lamprey. Another approach span on the Heron Point landing may be required to further gain elevation and connect to the river span. A prefabricated truss structure, similar in appearance to the Bryant Rock pedestrian bridge, was envisioned, though this requires further evaluation depending on span requirements in accordance with regulatory agencies.



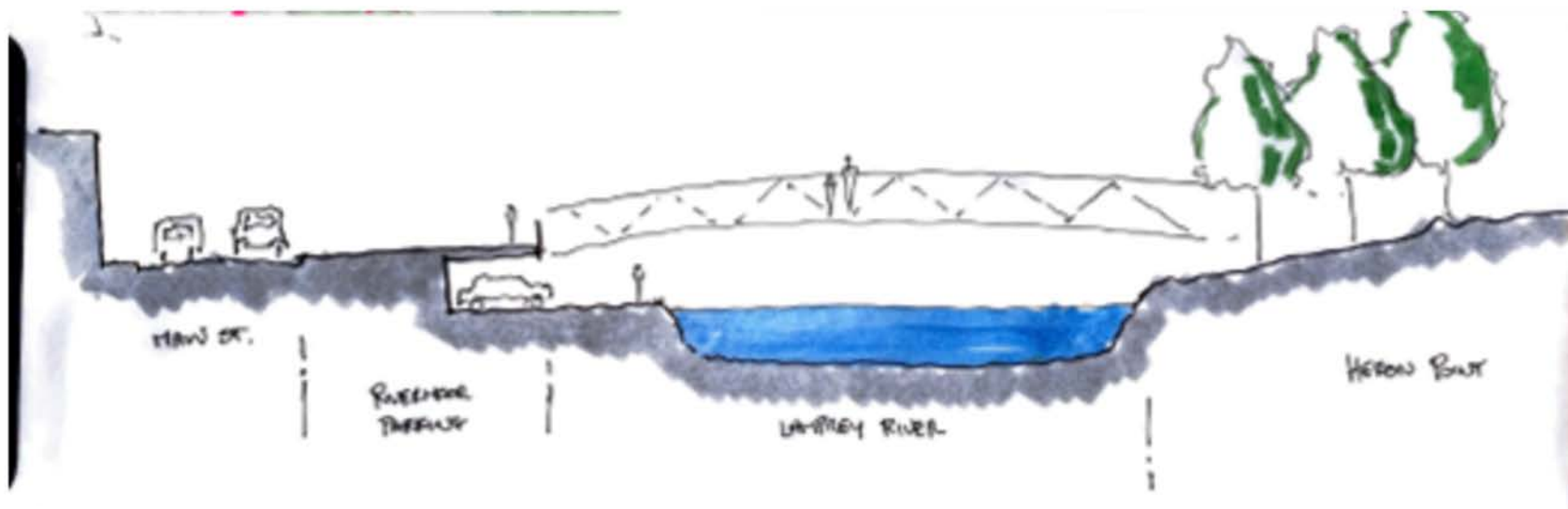
Example of a Prefabricated Truss Bridge with a Longer Span

Access to Heron Point

Lamprey River Bridge to Heron Point - Main Street Connection

Downtown connection from Arbor Park and elevated parking structure at Rivermoor Landing: this location offers the advantage of a direct connection from Main Street in Downtown Newmarket and potentially increased accessibility to the public. However, it requires a longer span, increased structural complexity, and coordination/input from the Rivermoor Landing Association that owns portions of the property on one side of the river.

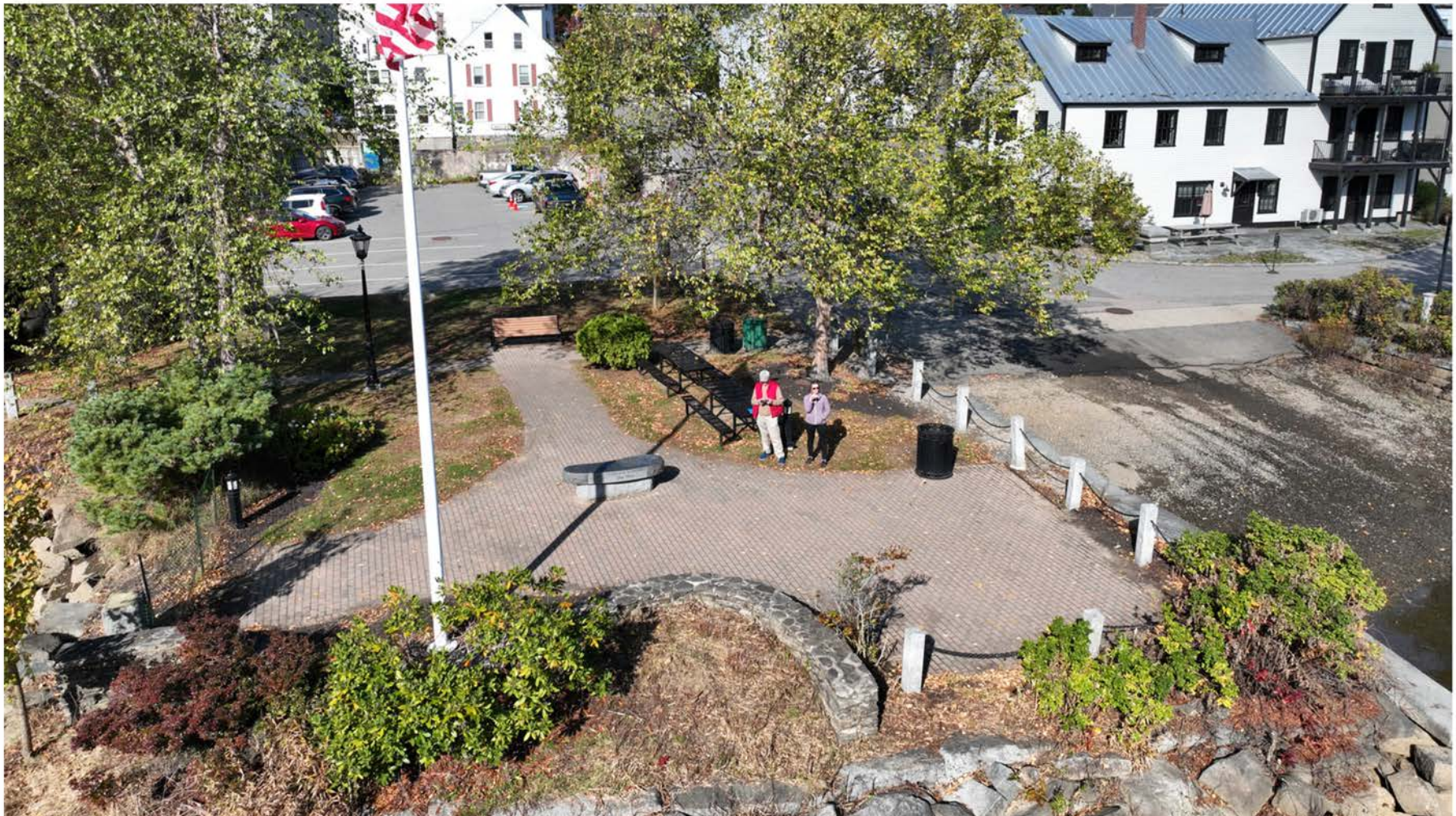
As the Main Street connection crosses and ties into private land, additional coordination with the Rivermoor Landing property owner is required to coordinate property rights and public access, as well as access for maintenance and constructability.



Example Sketch of a Prefabricated Truss Bridge over the Lamprey River

Schanda Park Opportunities

Schanda Park consists of two land segments connected by a narrow land bridge which encapsulates a series of culverts conveying Moonlight Brook and an existing gravity sewer main. It is a significant feature of Newmarket's riverfront that provides access to the Lamprey River with a boat launch immediately adjacent to the park and a public dock on the southern segment. Schanda Park also serves as a gathering place for both organized and recreational activity and is the center of the town hosted summer music series. The park's limited size and green space was emphasized during the listening sessions recognizing the land bridge and culverts bisect and limit open space.



Schanda Park Opportunities - Sea Level Rise

The charrette team conceptualized an elevated bridge structure crossing Moonlight Brook, thereby providing additional hydraulic capacity and expanding physical park space. The bridge could serve as the main focal point for organized events, allowing gathering space on both the bridge and the adjacent park segments. This bridge structure also allows the opportunity to enhance or expand upon the existing green space on both approaches within Schanda Park, further contributing to the natural environment and providing flood resiliency. The bridge deck is envisioned to be elevated above mean high water while considering sea level rise with ramp connections on either approach to maintain accessibility.



Schanda Park Opportunities - Sea Level Rise

Sea level rise (SLR) is an important factor to consider when discussing investment for Schanda Park. Schanda Park directly abuts the brackish tidal portion of Lamprey River which leads to the Great Bay Estuary and Atlantic Ocean. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published sea level rise projections in 2022 which provide context for various levels of risk. Below is an overview of current and future Mean High Water elevations based on the IPCC sea level rise projections.



Schanda Park Opportunities - Sea Level Rise



January 13, 2024



October 19, 2024

Schanda Park - Proposed Improvements

Parks are great at soaking up stormwater and inundation, which is one of the benefits of spaces like Schanda Park. The concept below creates a bridge platform/plaza space over Moonlight Brook, which is elevated and less prone to flooding. This design reconfigures many of the existing elements of the area.

Porous pavers would be added, as well as additional plantings, which will help with stormwater. Green infrastructure area (small rain garden) helps convey and clean the stormwater as it flows into Moonlight Brook. This becomes a much more natural system, and additional widening of the brook helps as well.

The kayak storage area remains the same, but we've increased the dock a bit in size and added an ADA-accessible dock to be used. We have created a spot for the weir to be removed seasonally and stored on the lawn in a designated space.

Shade sails and benches make this a more functional and comfortable space.



Schanda Park - Proposed Improvements

Sculpture can be an effective form of art to define and draw attention to public spaces. A sculptural element amplifies the visible sightline from Route 108 to Schanda Park, establishing an aesthetic identity and appeal that attracts downtown visitors to the park. Using art to define public access can have the added benefit of clarifying the boundary between the public park and adjacent private properties. Examples: The [Bohenko Park Sculpture](#) (Portsmouth - shown below) is used to mark the gateway to the new public park and to announce the entryway into Portsmouth's historic district for drivers. The [Chestnut Street Arch](#) (also in Portsmouth) straddles the roadway and acts as a celebratory feature to welcome visitors to The Music Hall.



Schanda Park - Proposed Improvements

As a family-friendly park, consider the addition of interactive art features to engage younger members of the community. A climbable piece of art made using water-resistant materials serves as a playground feature while also demonstrating that art isn't something that's untouchable; art, in fact, is relational and can encourage tangible engagement and play, while also facilitating relationships between children and parents in the park. Educational signage positions the park as a place to learn about Newmarket's riverfront from environmental and historical perspectives. Signage may be used in conjunction with public library programming for youth and families, to help engage the community in the health of the Lamprey River and promote shared knowledge and identity among Newmarket residents.

Idea Unique to Newmarket: Fishing Weir Interactive Sculpture



Schanda Park - Proposed Improvements

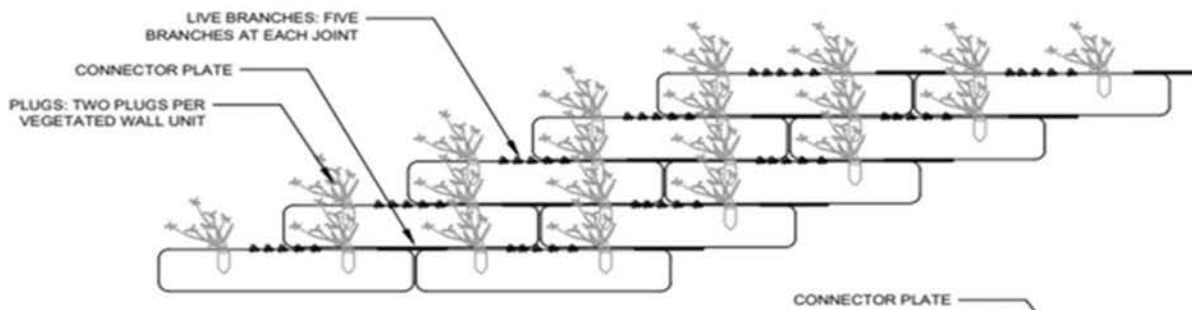
Additional opportunities to make Schanda Park more of a community asset is to expand and improve the public dock space. We envision this dock space to be versatile enough to accommodate power boats but also a space for kayaks and other self propelled watercrafts. Below are a conceptual design of a potential dock structure as well as an example from Dover, NH along the Cocheco River.



Example along the Cocheco River in Dover, NH

Living Shoreline Options

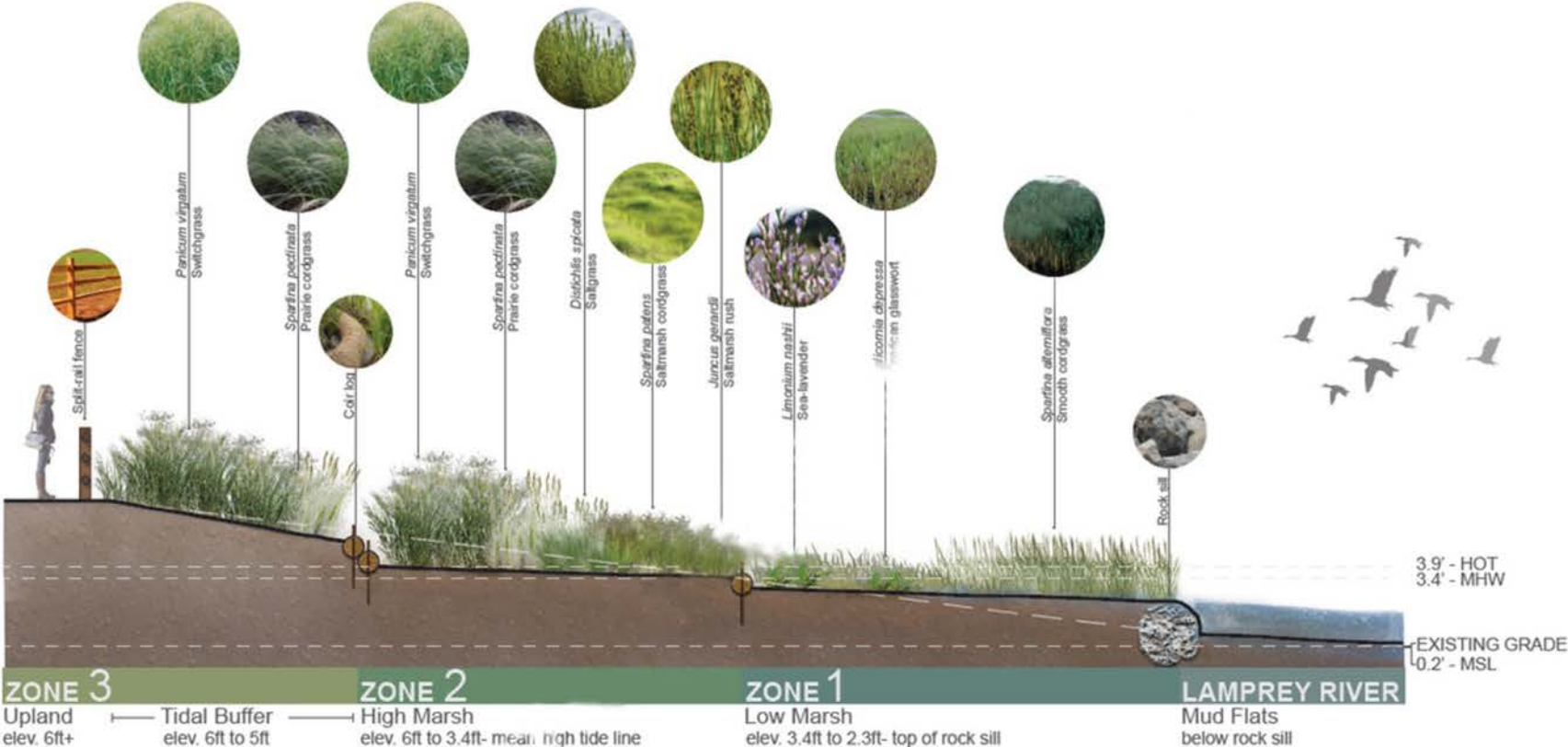
Living shorelines leverage nature and utilize what already exists ecologically to stabilize the shoreline. What is shown below, which is ideal for steep slopes, is the usage of flex MSE bags, where you can use geosynthetic fabric bags, wrap them around soil, and then plant in the bags to become a vegetative place but is actually stable enough to exist.



This approach can be applied to Schanda Park, Pump Station, and Treatment Plant parcels, and even to Rivermoor and Chinburg if adopted.

Living Shoreline Options

Effectively recreating a salt marsh is another treatment of a living shoreline, and the plantings used are dependent upon the waves, slope, elevation, and level of flooding. Salt and flood tolerant plants for the upland edge could include Seaside Goldenrod, Switchgrass, Bear Oak, and Serviceberry/Shadbush, among others.



Schanda Park Opportunities - Next Steps

Additional study is required to determine the feasibility of any of these structures, as well as understanding the potential project costs to explore funding mechanisms and project programming.

Initial first steps include additional research into any potential construction limitations or restrictions at Heron Point and other public land. If construction at Heron Point is feasible and allowed, continued public outreach will be an important element to further evaluate the feasibility of future connections to Heron Point. Bridge construction may require large construction equipment, so access for construction should be considered to refine potential crossing locations as part of the feasibility study.

Newmarket is invested and focused on the development of a living shoreline at Schanda Park, which provides an opportunity for the community to further explore concepts to expand the current footprint of the park. Continued public outreach, additional feasibility studies, and developing a funding program are important next steps in exploring the Schanda Park expansion with a bridge crossing Moonlight Brook.

All potential structural projects require additional information to inform the feasibility of these projects. Once feasibility is established, these projects will require topographic surveys, geotechnical borings and subsurface analysis, hydrologic and hydraulic analysis, permitting, and design. Any bridge crossing the Lamprey River will require coordination with the United States Coast Guard to determine navigation clearance requirements.



Rivermoor Landing Public Access Options

Before delving into some of the potential options to improve public access options through and around Rivermoor Landing, it is important to note that there is an access way from Shanda Park to the Chinburg property through Rivermoor which is utilized by the public. It was not clear, and there were mixed opinions from multiple parties on whether or not any legal access to the public existed through this property. We recommend that the town and Rivermoor landing review legal documentation, meeting minutes, and other sources to determine existing access rights. Because there seemed to be a sense that connectivity was preferred by all parties, and did not seem to be opposed by Rivermoor provided it was enjoyed responsibly, we recommend that both parties meet to discuss alternatives to promote responsible enjoyment. Wayfinding, signage, and clearly delineated areas that the public would be allowed to use, to keep private areas private, should be explored. Easements and agreements should be negotiated and put into place for whatever option is agreed upon between all stakeholders.



Rivermoor Landing Public Access Options

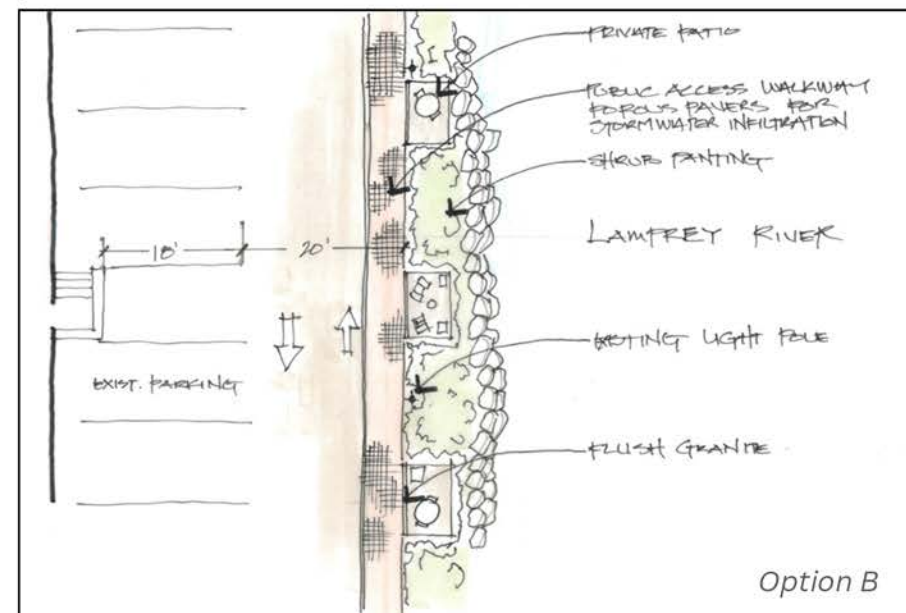
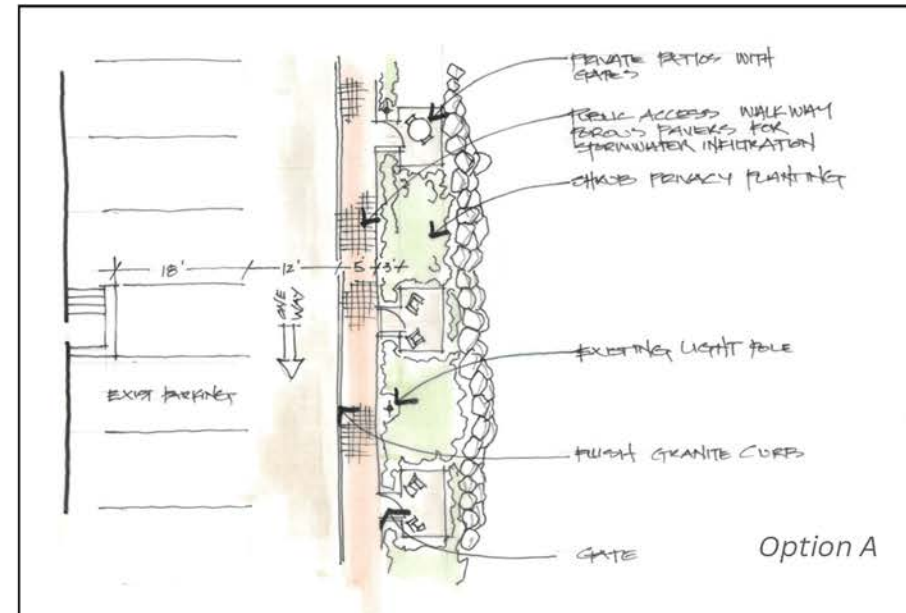
Increasing public access and understanding how to best understand the relationship between the public and private property and how to best utilize that in a manner that will satisfy all parties. Based on what we heard, our team came up with three different conceptual options to explore.

Option A

- Leaves existing parking as-is, and turns the road into a one-way going south, then creating a delineated five-foot pedestrian path
- Three-foot planting strip between the walkway and private patios
- Could add small gates to the patio spaces, designating them as private

Option B

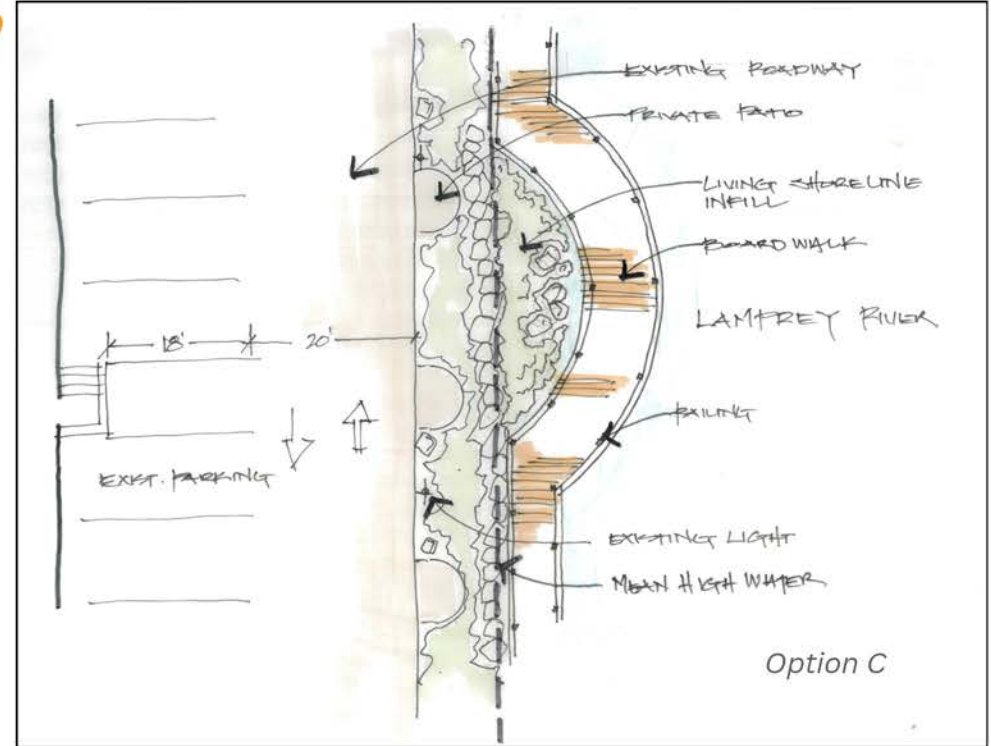
- Similar to Option A, however
 - Three-foot planting strip is removed
 - Road is a two-way passage, and painted walkway is driveable, making it a shared space
- Most similar to what exists today, however barriers and usage is better defined for all users



Rivermoor Landing Public Access Options

Option C

- Roadway keeps 20-foot, two-way, vehicular travel
- Maintains parking and private patios
- Installation of cantilevered boardwalk situated on piles outside of the private patio spaces
- Boardwalk would be at mean high water, and extend out over the river



Examples



Waterfront Riverwalk - Exeter, NH



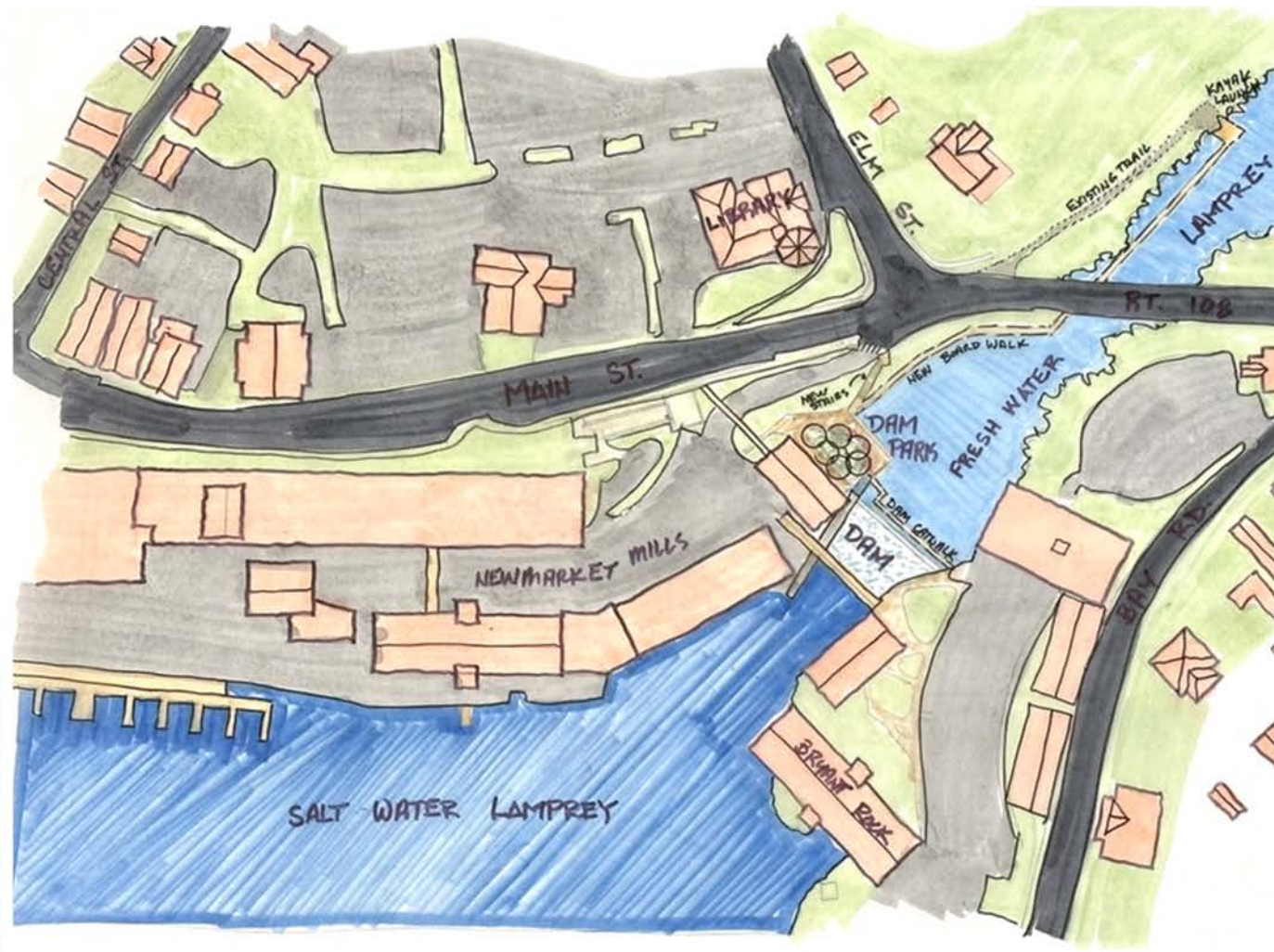
Waterfront Riverwalk - Portsmouth, NH

Dam Park Improvements

This park, at the edge of downtown, has a dam with a fish ladder that is utilized by the NH Fish & Game Department. There is an opportunity to connect this area with the downtown, the river, and potentially with the public library and the rest of Main Street.

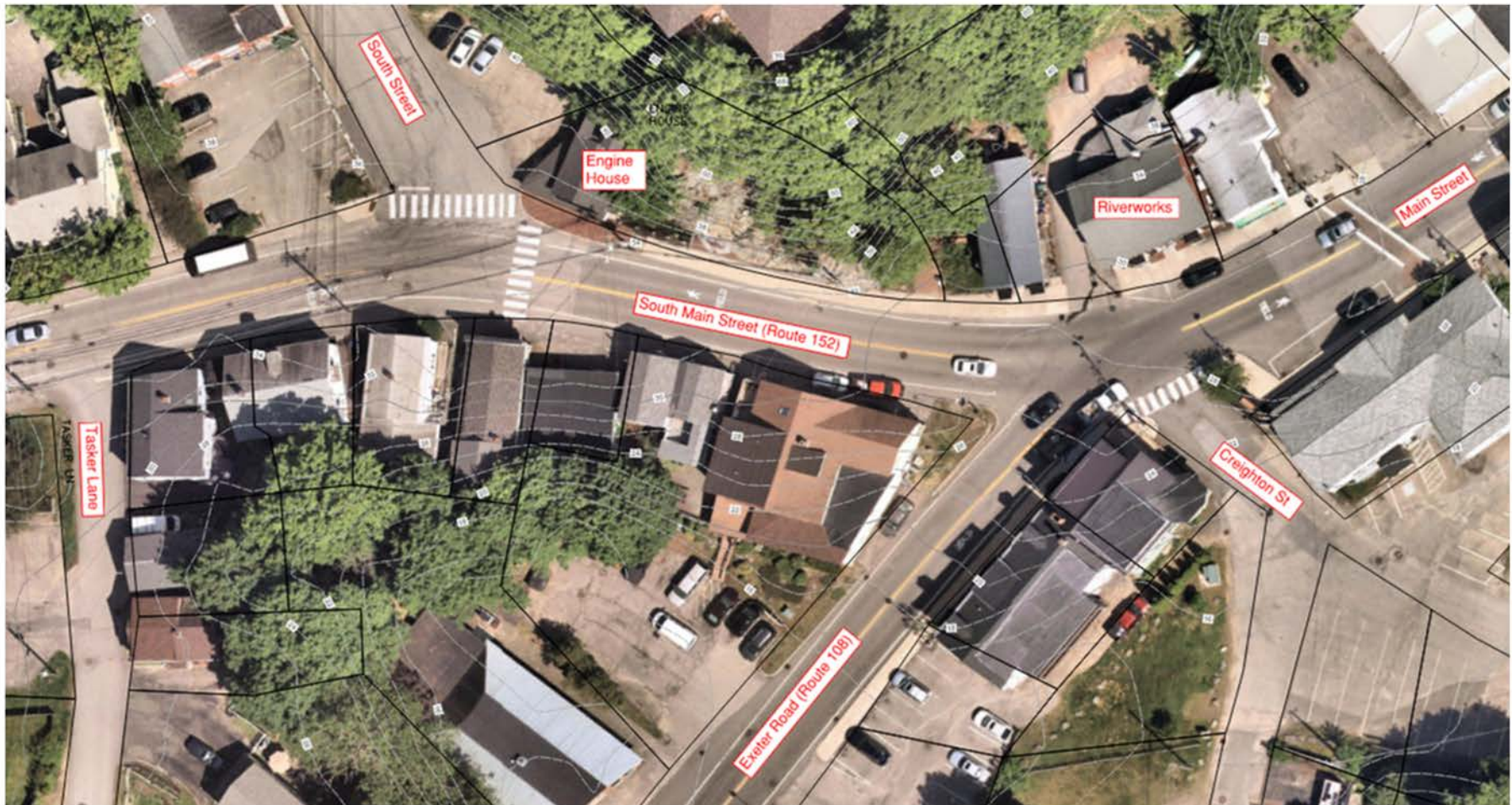
This area could be utilized as a nexus at the northern part of town for the area that connects multiple community assets. This could be a place for art installations or interpretive signage to inform people of the natural and cultural history of the area.

Recreational opportunities, such as a path to a kayak launch or a walking loop, are worth exploring. A catwalk with guardrails overtop of the dam is also a possibility. Safety would need to remain a priority given the site elements.



Downtown Transportation Improvements

As part of the listening sessions, the charrette group heard a desire for more “complete street” elements (parking, sidewalks, bike lanes, pocket parks etc.) on South Main Street (NH 152) near its intersection with NH 108 (Main Street / Exeter Road). In addition, the group heard concerns that South Main Street (NH 152) eastbound vehicles have a difficult time pulling onto Main St / Exeter Rd (NH 108) due poor sight distance and grades of the NH 152/NH 108 intersection. It was also noted that accidents have occurred at this intersection due to the limited sight distance and geometric layout.



Downtown Transportation Improvements

A previous Town idea was mentioned that would make South Main Street (NH 152) a one-way street between NH 108 and South Street to help provide additional space for the above mentioned desired complete street elements. As part of this idea, South Main Street (NH 152) eastbound traffic would be re-directed down Gerry Avenue to reach Main St/Exeter Rd (NH 108). The charrette team looked at the area and agreed that a one way street would enable valuable additional space for complete street elements and investigated this concept including the re-routing of NH 152 eastbound traffic via Gerry Avenue.

During the site walk, the team noticed that parking on the south side of South Main St (NH 152) was very narrow/minimal and no sidewalk was present on the south side of South Main St where several businesses are located. By proposing one lane of westbound only vehicular travel, the space from the current eastbound travel lane could be repurposed to provide a generous sidewalk on the south side of South Main St (NH 152) as well as additional, wider parking spaces. A wider westbound roadway shoulder for potential bicycle traffic could also be accommodated along with complete street amenities.

A typical section was developed as shown below based on the available width between the existing sidewalk on the north side of South Main St and the existing buildings on the south side:



Downtown Transportation Improvements

While designing a “complete street” the team looked to utilize as much newly available space as possible to provide as many complete street elements into this area as possible. The plan view concept shown below includes:

- An additional crosswalk on South Main St (NH 152) and on Main Street (NH 108) both near the intersection
- A wider sidewalk and enhanced bump out in front of the American Legion on the east side of Main St (NH 108) where existing pavement was underutilized
- Seven (7) parking spaces (an additional 5) on the south side South Main St (NH 152) in front of the local businesses
- An extra wide sidewalk at the southeast corner of South Main St / Main St where vehicular turning movements would no longer need to occur



Downtown Transportation Improvements

- 2 additional pocket parks – one at the corner of South Main & Main St and the other at the corner of South Main and South St near the historic Fire House,
- Additional ornamental street lights and street trees along the corridor, and
- Narrowing of South Street to accommodate 3 parallel parking spaces on the east side of South Street (some existing spaces would be lost with the proposed Pocket Park)



Downtown Transportation Improvements

The team also studied the re-directing of NH 152 eastbound traffic down Gerry Avenue. If NH 152 eastbound were to be re-signed/re-routed, motorist travelling eastbound on South Main St (NH 152) would proceed to turn right onto Gerry Avenue near the Town Hall and come to Exeter Rd (NH 108) near the Dino Mart gas station. This intersection as shown below currently is controlled with a stop sign on the minor leg (Gerry Avenue) with free-flowing traffic on NH 108 northbound and southbound. The Gerry Avenue approach currently has a small concrete island to divide motorists existing and entering Gerry Avenue from NH 108.

The team also felt that the existing sidewalk on the east side of Gerry Avenue could be improved and widened as shown below, with a proposed connection to the existing sidewalk on the east side of Exeter Rd (NH 108). This would involve the addition of a crosswalk just north of the intersection.

In addition, the team recommends that the Town investigate the addition of a sidewalk on the west side of Exeter Rd from Gerry Avenue north to the South Main St intersection. There is currently some parallel parking in this area along NH 108, however the parking spaces are overly wide and it appears there may be room to accommodate a sidewalk as well.



Downtown Transportation Improvements

It is important to note that the re-routing of NH 152 eastbound traffic onto Gerry Avenue would need to be further studied in terms of traffic volumes and capacities. The team recommends a traffic study and traffic warrant analysis to determine the potential need for a traffic signal and/or other traffic measures to safely and efficiently process traffic thru this intersection.

It is also noted that private property impacts could be expected on the east side of Gerry Avenue based on widening the roadway, as well as repairing and widening the existing sidewalk.

It is also noted that both NH 108 and Gerry Avenue are State Highways and therefore coordination with the Department of Transportation (NHDOT) would be necessary to seek approval and permits for these proposed changes.



Willey House Opportunities

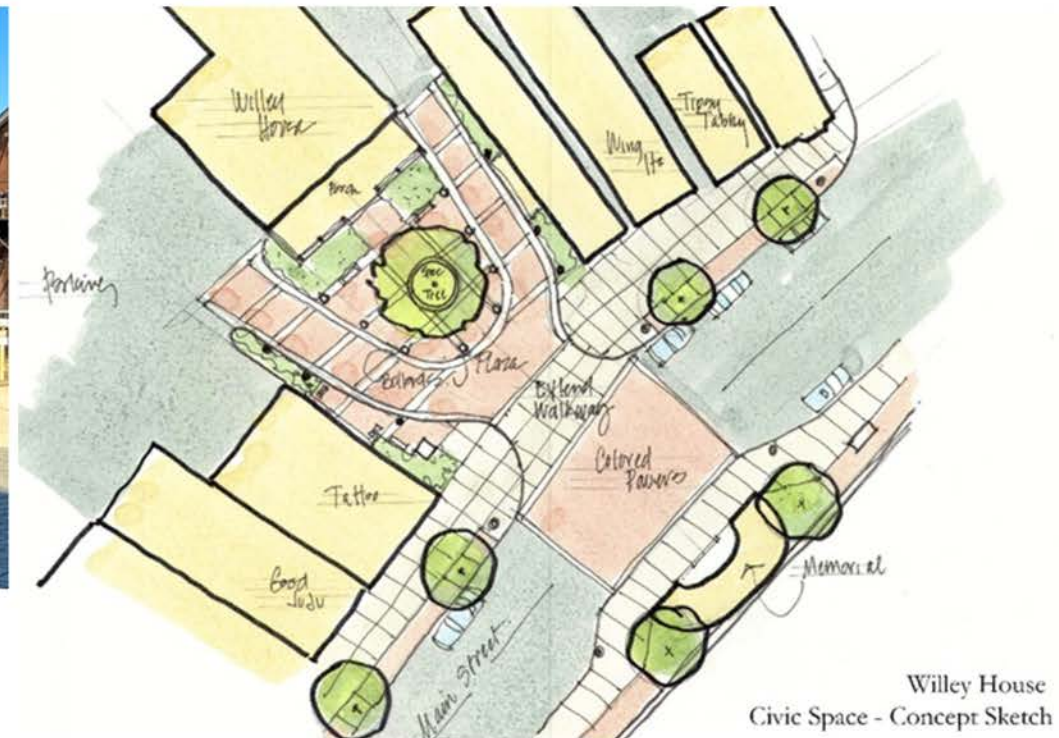
The Willey House is currently a privately owned property right in the middle of town directly across the street from the Veteran’s Memorial. It sits back from the street creating an open space with vehicle access to parking behind the building. This space has the potential to become a central civic space for the town.

Imagine if the Willey House was renovated as a small inn and/or a restaurant or both, and the space in front of it was repurposed as civic space shared by both vehicles and pedestrians. A central courtyard or “plaza” that connects in visually to the memorial across the street, it could host small art fairs, farmers markets, or music performances or just be a place to hang out and watch passersby. Vehicle access could be defined by changes in paving materials and bollards. Benches and chess tables could be provided, a central specimen tree could provide shade and a central focal point.



Above: Current conditions in front of Newmarket’s Willey House.

Left: Example of the Stage Coach Inn located in Berwick, Maine.



Willey House Civic Space - Concept Sketch

Are there other opportunities in Newmarket to activate the downtown?

Willey Park - Downtown Activation

Given its prime location in the center of town, the Willey House is a perfect place to feature public gatherings. The recent mural installation has started this re-purposing, by featuring this central area as a site for celebrating community. An additional mural on the opposing building could continue to frame this space as a pop-up park. The area could serve as an experimental space, where the town and local businesses/organizations could explore pop-up events, including art markets, farmers markets, flea markets, flower markets, youth and family art-making activities, and live music. This would maximize flexibility while establishing downtown Newmarket as a destination for activities and events.



South Main Street - Downtown Activation

The redesign of S. Main Street from the Route 108 turn off to South Street creates an opportunity to temporarily close the one-way stretch of road for festivals and events, without significantly impeding traffic flow. Events might include a community dinner in partnership with local farms, where a long row of tables is set up in the closed section of road. Or a town-wide music festival that activates public spaces across downtown Newmarket, including Schanda Park, the Dam Park, Willey House Central Park, the pocket art park, and ending at the historic Engine House. Engine House doors could be opened wide to accommodate a band, creating a block party style environment with individuals enjoying the performance from the closed street.



Parking

Parking is always going to be a topic of discussion, and in Newmarket that is no different. It is important to understand the current parking assets that are available and where there may be opportunities to consider more of a shared parking approach in certain areas of the town.

LEGEND:



EXISTING PUBLIC PARKING:

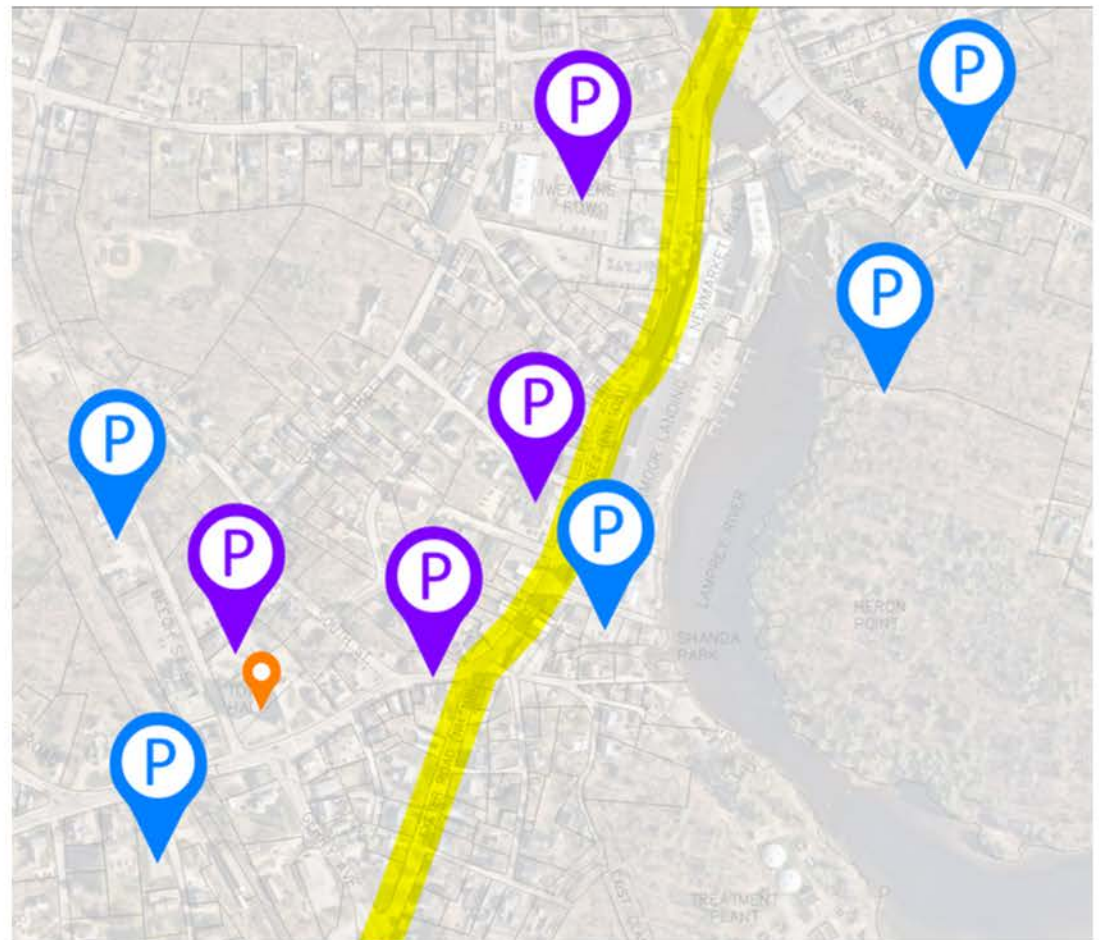
- RAILROAD ST LOT
- BAY ROAD LOT
- HERON POINT LOT
- BEECH ST EXP LOT
- SCHANDA PARK LOT



POTENTIAL SHARED PARKING:

- NEWMARKET LIBRARY PARKING LOT
- POST OFFICE (OFF-HOURS)
- TOWN HALL AUX LOT
- NEW MAIN ST

PARKING



Electrical Vehicle Charging

Several Newmarket residents informed us on October 18 that the electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure is inadequate. We concur. Only four publicly available Level-2 chargers are located in town, i.e. at the Library, by the Stone School, adjacent to Schanda Park, and at the recreational fields behind the High School.

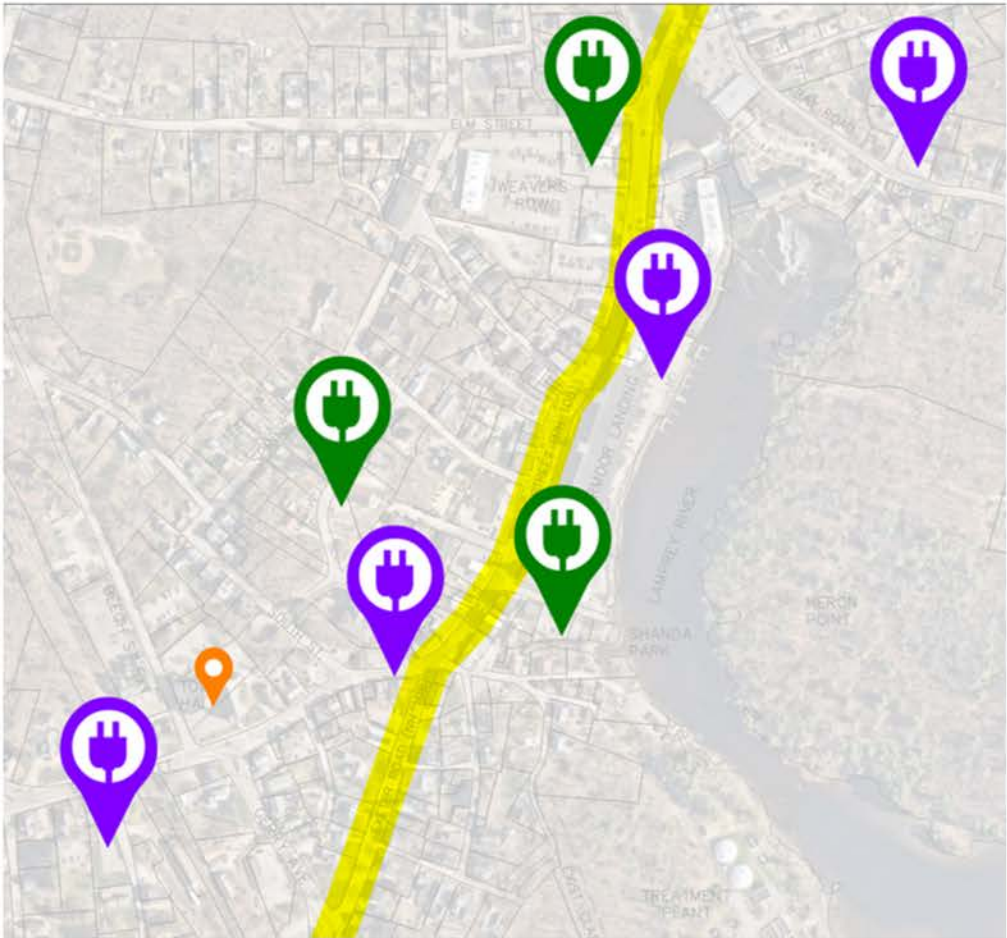
LEGEND:



EXISTING CHARGERS
- LEVEL 2 ONLY
(3 TOTAL IN DOWNTOWN)



POTENTIAL CHARGERS
- LEVEL 2 @ SCHANDA PARK, MAIN STREET, MULTI-FAMILY/ RESIDENTIAL, MIDDLE/ HIGH SCHOOL, RAILROAD ST
- LEVEL 3 @ BAY ST LOT, LIBRARY LOT, TD LOT ON 108



Electrical Vehicle Charging

Level-2 chargers require 8 to 10 hours to charge the vehicle. These installations are inexpensive. Level-2 is a practical solution for owner-occupied dwellings and the workplace.

Level-3 chargers, a.k.a. “fast chargers” do the job in 20 minutes, however such installations cost \$100,000 or more. A bank of publicly available Level-3 chargers situated downtown would give residents from outlying areas an added incentive to venture downtown.

As approximately half of Newmarket residents are renters, those folks are unlikely to have access to Level-2 at home. Publicly available Level-3 chargers would provide this population with an opportunity to transition from conventional motor vehicles to EVs.



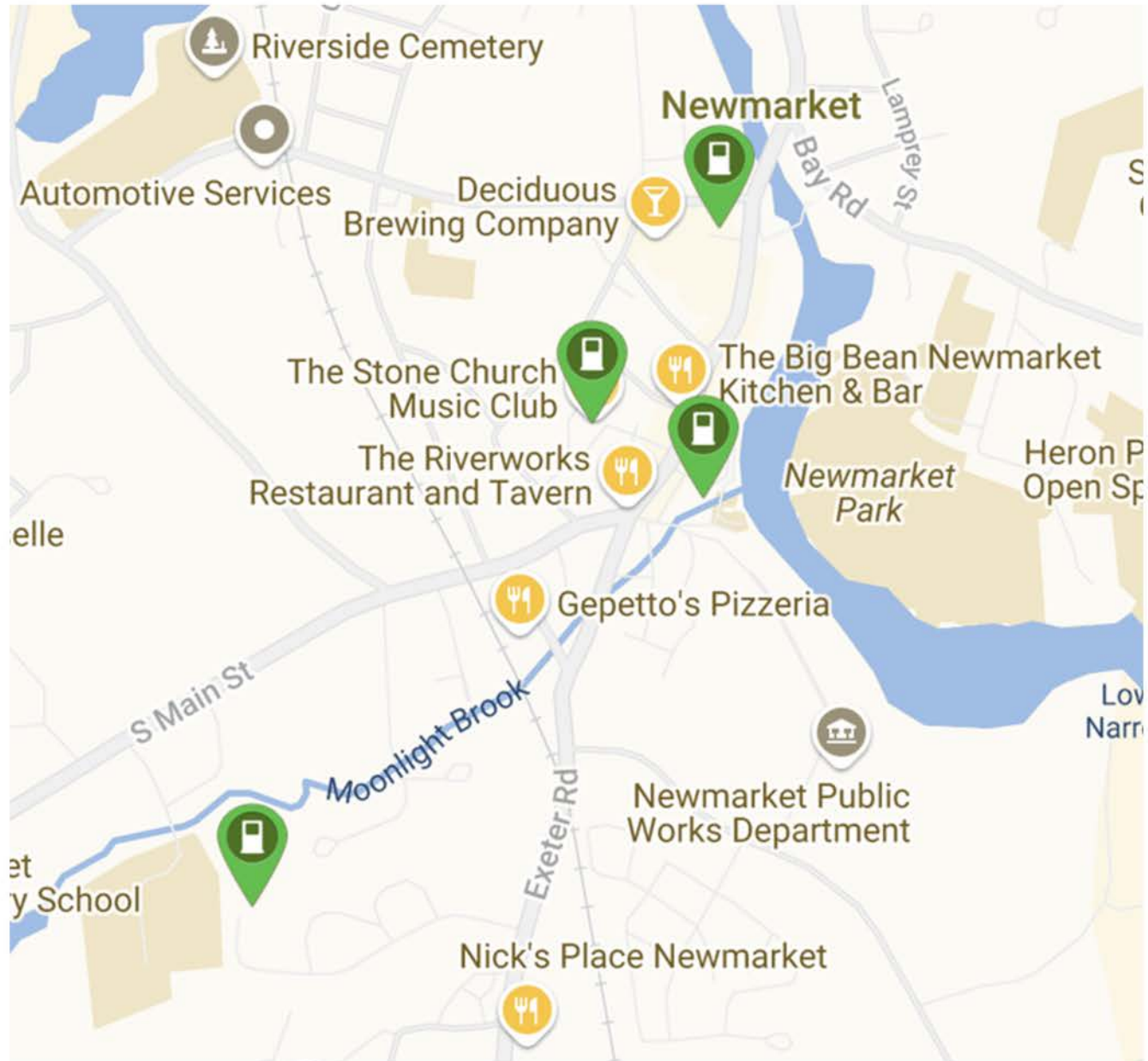
Chargers in Seabrook, NH

Electrical Vehicle Charging

How do we realize these EV charger goals without burdening the Newmarket taxpayer? The charging industry is usually willing to assume responsibility for installation and maintenance of Level-3 chargers so long as the property owner provides the space. Retail businesses gladly do so because they realize that the proximity of such installations will bring more 20-minute customers through their front doors.

Another low-cost approach would be the utilization of federal grants to acquire the equipment for installation on town-owned property. The nonprofit Clean Energy NH would gladly assist the Town in that regard.

The Plan NH team noted several potential sites downtown, all of them situated above the floodplain. The Master Plan update process will provide the public with an opportunity to weigh in on siting decisions.



Signage and Wayfinding

What we noticed is that in Newmarket, the town is at a bit of a crossroads when it comes to signage. There are some improvements being made to pedestrian signage, but what we have noticed is that some of the signage around town is small, difficult to see, or just not as effective as it could be.



Existing signage at the Newmarket Library, existing municipal signage is difficult to see

Some signage in Newmarket is high up, difficult to see, and in some cases, language is faded and borderline unreadable

Signage and Wayfinding

The good news is that some of the newer signage is heading in the right direction. Below are some examples of existing signage in Newmarket that is well situated, as well as a couple examples from nearby Rochester, which would be a terrific option to emulate moving forward and make wayfinding easier.



Existing signage at Schanda Park



Signage examples in Rochester



How to Increase Economic Development in Newmarket

The following are some ways to continue to build upon the momentum that Newmarket already has going with regard to economic development.

Comprehensive Master Plan Update

- Land Use - Existing/Future (Chapter 3 & 10)
- Population (Chapter 4)
- Economic Development (Chapter 6)
- Housing (Chapter 5)
- Community Facilities (Chapter 8)
- Riverfront (New)

Making Connections – Closely Related Issues

- Planning Board - Subdivision & Site Plan Regulations for Planned Unit Development (PUD's)
- Zoning/Regulation Updates - Form Based
- Local and Regional Trail Planning
- Downtown/Riverfront Parking Study

Economic Development Committees / Business Alliance

- Economic Development Committee - Revive
- Create/update an Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Main Street Program
- Business Retention and Expansion Programs
- Business Directories
- Regional (Exeter Area) Chamber of Commerce
- Newmarket Business Association
- Arts and Tourism Commission

How to Increase Economic Development in Newmarket

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA)

The CDBG Program supports community development activities to build stronger and more resilient communities.

For Newmarket - Public Facilities Grants

This financial assistance is aimed at supporting initiatives like enhancements to water and sewage systems, local infrastructure upgrades, ADA-compliant access, and centers for community or neighborhood activities that cater to individuals with low to moderate income levels and contribute to promoting health and well-being within the community.

Creative Strategies for Long-term Investments through the Town Budget

Creating an economic development fund that is invested in incrementally through the annual budget. For example, \$10,000 annually over ten years yields \$104,000 assuming 4% interest that the Town can invest in future economic development projects.

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)

PPPs are a mechanism for the government to procure and implement public infrastructure and/or services using the resources and expertise of the private sector.



Creating an economic development fund and investing incrementally can really build over time and provide opportunities to explore projects such as pocket parks (like the one the charrette team stopped at during our site tour) that can enhance the connectivity of a community.

Visioning for the Future: *It is Up to You!*

Newmarket is a wonderful town with residents that are passionate about finding ways to improve, economic development, define public and private entities, recreational opportunities, accessibility, resilience, and the overall quality of life in Newmarket without disrupting the charm and character of the community. How you choose to do that is up to you.

This report provides recommendations, not mandates, which are for you to explore, evaluate, and discuss. Ultimately, the choice of where to take Newmarket is up to its community members - **and that means all of you!**

We recommend that you circulate this report to all residents and community members of Newmarket, so that anyone interested can come together for a general review of the recommendations and a discussion about what's next.

Further, as recommendations from this charrette are further developed, we recommend that interested people be fully welcomed in for both the planning and implementation. Newmarket is already in a great spot with a collaborative spirit that will guide your future.

Good luck!



What is next for Newmarket? Instead of focusing on challenges, think about possibilities!

Resources & Funding

Community Design & Placemaking:

- [Creative Placemaking Public Resources Guide](#)
- [National Endowment for the Arts, Our Town](#)
- [New Hampshire State Council on the Arts Grants](#)
- [UNH Cooperative Extension, Characteristics of a Vibrant Downtown](#)
- [The Trust for Public Land: The Field Guide for Parks and Creative Placemaking](#)
- [New Hampshire Preservation Alliance Historic Preservation Grants](#)

Economic Development:

- [UNH Cooperative Extension](#)
- [Regional Economic Development Center](#)
- [New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority](#)

Housing, Planning, & Zoning:

- [Plan NH Community Design Charrette Program](#)
- [New Hampshire Housing Grant Program](#)
- [New Hampshire Housing Toolbox](#)
- [Housing Champion Program](#)
- [New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority Planning Grants](#)
- [New Hampshire Preservation Alliance Planning Grants](#)

Trails & Regional Connectivity:

- [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#)
- [NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources](#)
- [National Recreation and Parks Association: Safe Routes to Parks Action](#)

Transportation, Traffic Calming, Parking:

- [NH Department of Transportation Transportation Alternatives Program](#)
- [Rockingham Planning Commission](#)
- [DOT Navigator](#)

Other Resources/Funding Opportunities

- [AARP Livable Communities Resources & Grants](#)
- [New Hampshire Charitable Foundation Community Grants Program](#)





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