



# Town of Leicester Downtown Parking Plan

Final Report- October 2024

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of  
Economic Development

# Acknowledgements

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This report was prepared on behalf of the Town of Leicester through a “Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance Program” competitive grant from the State Executive Office of Economic Development.

The Town staff of Leicester provided oversight and review of the parking plan and final report. In addition, city businesses, residents, visitors, and employees provided insight and input into this study through a series of engagement opportunities.

On behalf of The Massachusetts Executive Office of Economic Development and the Town of Leicester, the study team would like to thank all stakeholders and participants for their constructive inputs to this process.

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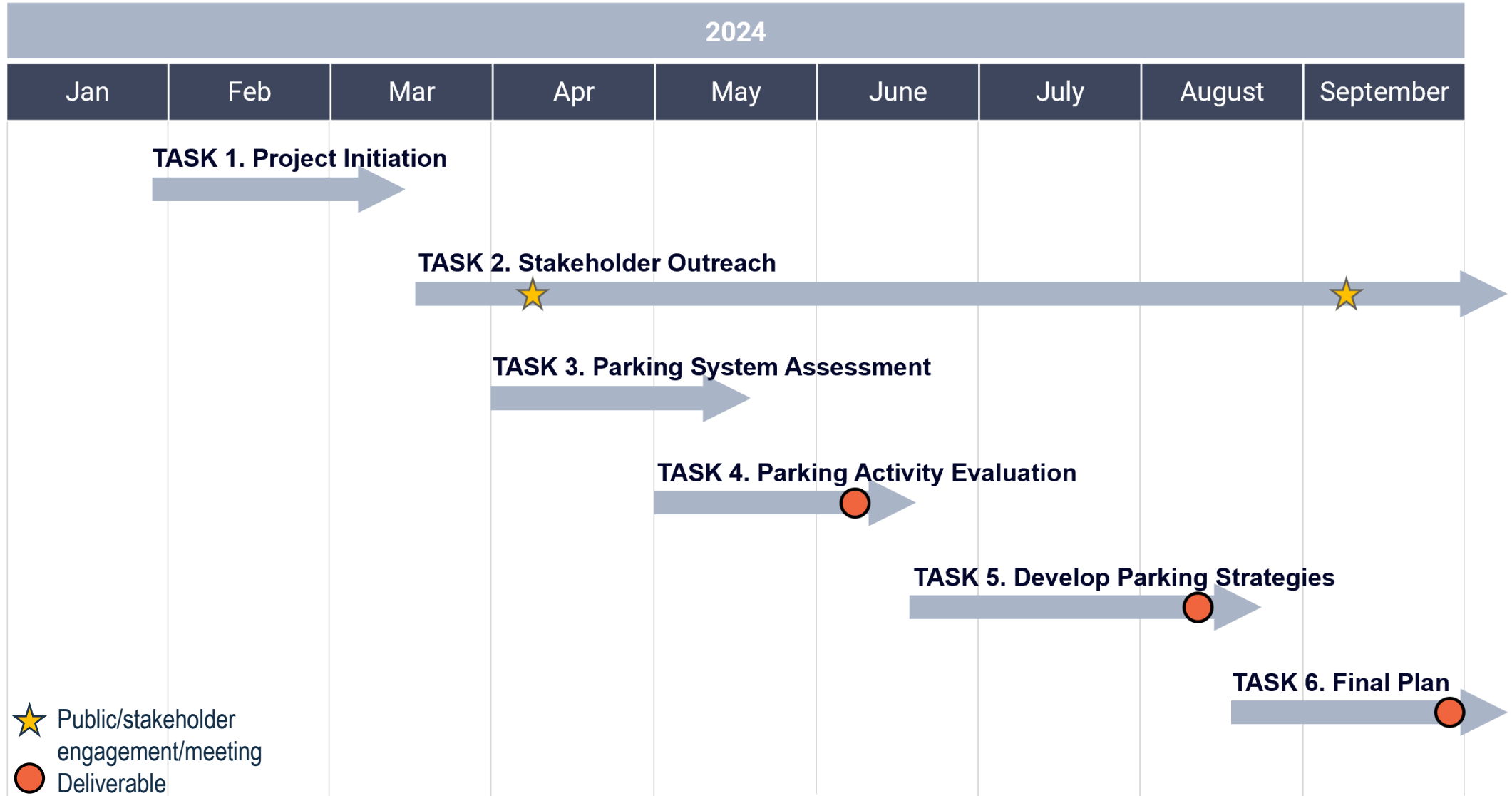
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# Project Overview and Background ● ● ●





# Study Schedule





# PROJECT GOALS

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Project goals for this study were developed in collaboration with the study team in January 2024 and focused on how addressing the town's parking needs can help support the town's growth and economic development goals.

## PROJECT GOALS:

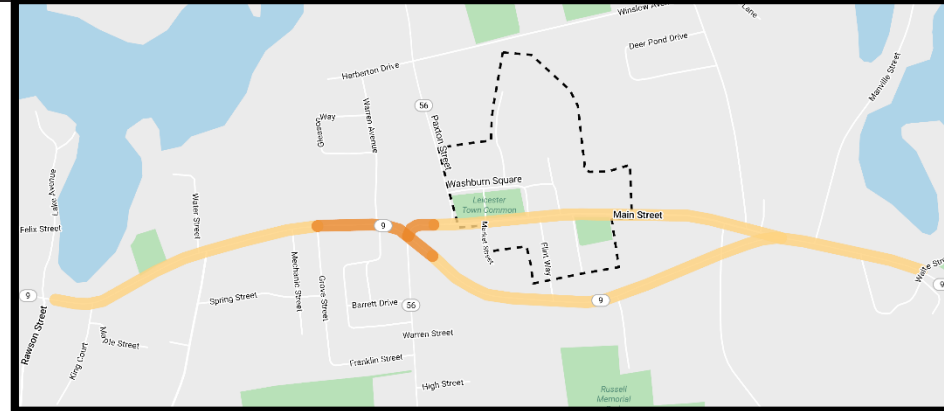
- Ensure parking regulations are **appropriately scaled** for long term development goals
- Improve **pedestrian/bicyclist safety** and mobility downtown
- Identify opportunities to **better connect parking** to retail/commercial areas along Route 9
- Consider how parking areas or regulations can support the **Town's economic growth**
- Assess the need for **new on-street** and off-street parking



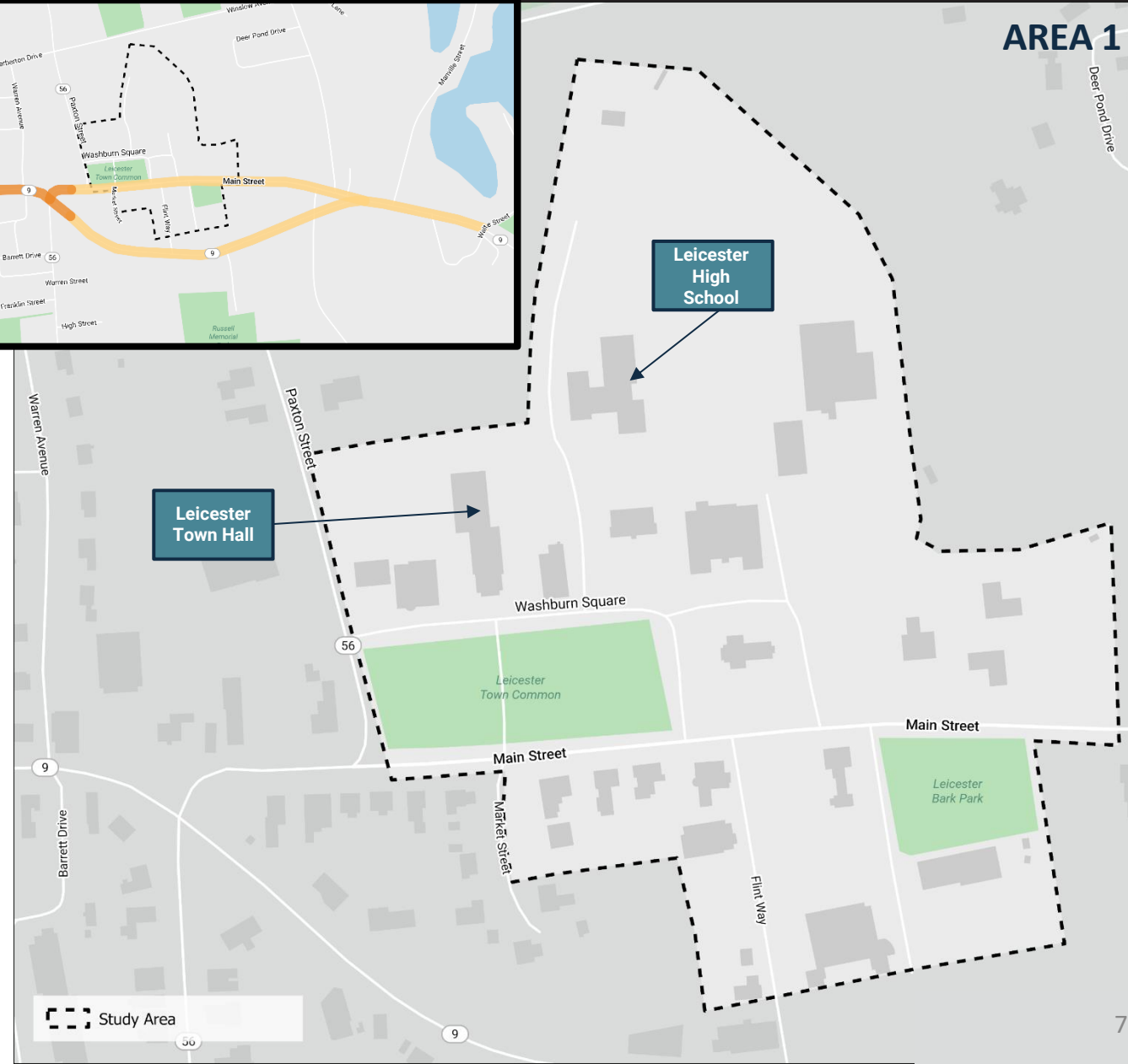
# STUDY AREAS

The Town of Leicester is located approximately forty miles to the west of Downtown Boston and five miles to the west of Downtown Worcester. The primary core study area of this project is Downtown Leicester, bounded by Paxton Street to the west and including all Leicester High School facilities and several former Becker College campus facilities, as well as Leicester Town Hall, and Washburn Square. The 'downtown' study area was defined for this effort to include the former Becker College mansions, which are potential opportunities for future mixed-use multi-family residential and retail development, as well as the primary public and Town-owned parking lots in Downtown Leicester. Parking in Downtown Leicester serves high school students and parents, the local resident population accessing popular parks, Town Hall, and churches, as well as Town employees.

A secondary, larger study area covering the Route 9 corridor adjacent to Downtown Leicester was also included to explore on-street parking opportunities.



**AREA 2**



**AREA 1**

# Existing Conditions Analysis ● ● ●



# Existing Plans/Recommendations

The following reports and plans were reviewed as part of this study, with several prior goals and recommendations established which are also relevant to this effort-

<b>Master Plan (2014, currently in process of being updated)</b>	<b>Rapid Recovery Plan (2021)</b>	<b>Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (2018)</b>
<p><b>Relevant Recommendations</b></p> <p><u>PARKING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with existing businesses to formalize shared parking agreements and promote such shared parking opportunities through signage. One example is to have signage in the Crossroad Marketplace Parking Lot indicating that the lot can be utilized for parking for patrons of Uncle Sam’s Pizza.</li> <li>• Consider purchase of 1122 Main Street or other properties, if feasible, for use as a Municipal Parking Lot</li> </ul> <p><u>STREETScape</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian-activated signal be incorporated into the existing fire station signal located at Main Street and the Water/Pine Street intersection. Also need to add a striped crosswalk.</li> <li>• Have a more detailed Main Street (Route 9) Streetscape Plan prepared. This more detailed study would be able to assess where additional crosswalks could be sited. The Town will also want to initiate conversations with MassDOT, which has been reluctant to allow a pedestrian crossing to be installed in a Route 9 section of Cherry Valley.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relevant Recommended Priority Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a pedestrian walking loop- This project will develop a Leicester Pedestrian Loop to connect public amenities, recreation, businesses, public transportation, and historically/culturally significant areas. The most likely location of the loop will connect the Town Common, Paxton Street, and Becker College area. Linking Leicester amenities</li> <li>• Create a Vision Plan and Conduct Zoning Updates- Provide a blueprint for zoning changes that have established community support. The Vision Plan would lay out the most desirable configuration of the former Becker College land, how to integrate that into the existing fabric of the Town center, potential streetscape and open space improvements, and potential changes to existing properties that would enable properties to adjust to shifting needs while maintaining the fundamental character of a New England village.</li> <li>• Create a Shared Streets Pilot Program</li> <li>• Launch a branding campaign</li> <li>• Create an Economic Development Committee Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relevant Recommended Priority Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install bicycle racks in Common across from Town Hall building, Middle School, High School, and Primary School. Racks will be installed in highly visible and convenient locations. Estimate assumes one large bicycle rack (10 bikes) at each location.</li> <li>• Shared use path construction and shared lane markings on Paxton Street from Winslow Avenue to Leicester High School- Phase 2 Northbound</li> <li>• Crosswalks and RRB along Paxton Street at Primary and High School entrances</li> <li>• Leicester is committed to moving forward with its ADA transition plan. As part of this effort, ADA compliant curb ramps are needed throughout town.</li> <li>• Shared use path construction and bike lane on Old Main Street</li> <li>• More level pathways from the Commons down to Paxton Street</li> </ul>



# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions

## Land Use Analysis

Downtown Leicester is the site of a mix of land uses – including several educational and institutional buildings, Leicester Town Hall, two churches, multifamily housing, and two public parks.

High school-related activities take place across downtown, as students use the Former Becker College buildings for academic and athletic activities. Several former Becker buildings house displaced families. The Leicester Common and Bark Park draw large crowds for events as well as daily visitors.

The former Becker mansions, located on Main Street, were a major focus of this study. While currently vacant, these buildings were identified as potential sites of future mixed-use development.





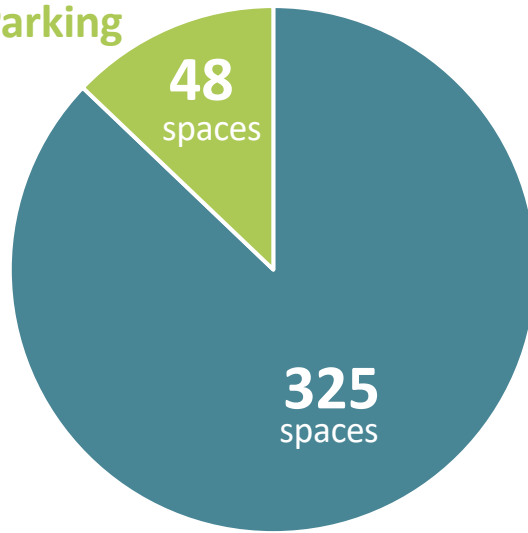
# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions



## Parking Inventory

Extensive parking facilities exist in Downtown Leicester. Over 350 off-street spaces are present, including over 100 spaces south of Main Street and over 175 spaces adjacent to the Town Hall and Borger and Marsh Halls.

## Private Parking



## Public Parking







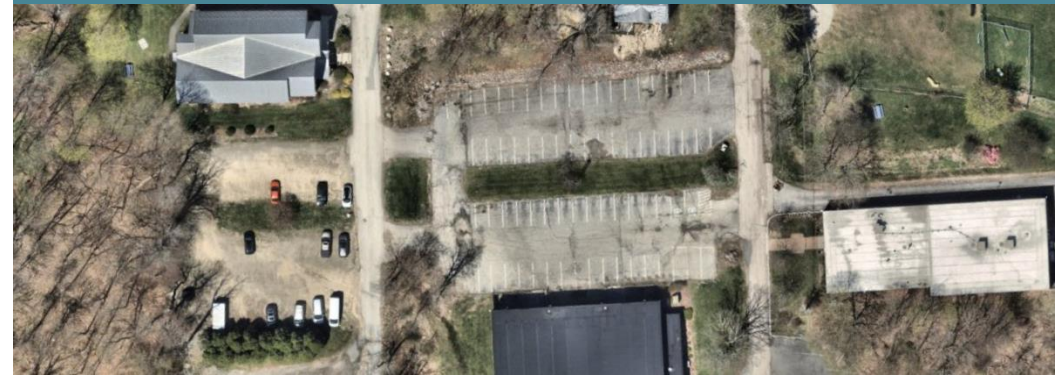
# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions

## Parking Conditions and Amenities

There is wide variation in the design and condition of parking facilities throughout downtown Leicester. Some lots are not paved and are located on gravel areas without defined boundaries. Other lots, such as at Town Hall are paved and clearly striped. This lot also provides the only location in Town to accommodate electric vehicles and charging. Most parking facilities lack amenities that support the convenience and comfort of their being used, such as good levels of lighting, defined pedestrian connections to and from the lot, clear signage, and other amenities such as waste bins or landscaping.



Electric vehicle parking and charging areas at the Town Hall lot



This lot is not designed to maximize use (e.g., space configuration, amenities)



The condition and formality of parking areas varies throughout Town



# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions



## Understanding where to park

Public parking facilities should be easy to navigate to and access without requiring to be “in the know.”

Although the Town currently hosts a **Parking Rules and Regulations** document on its website (excerpt below) which primarily identifies where one *cannot* park, there is no summarized information about where people *can* park, such as with a clear and simple downtown map identifying parking locations.

With no signage in the public realm to direct to parking, drivers can be put in the position of needing to hunt for parking or interpret whether they can park in a certain area when no clear regulation signage is present.

so as to be visible to approaching drivers; said signs shall conform to the standards prescribed by MassDOT.

IV. **Parking**

A. No person shall stand or park any vehicle in any street, way or highway under the control of the Town, and no person shall allow, permit, or suffer any vehicle registered in his name to stand or park in any street, way or highway under the control of the Town in violation of any rules and regulations of the Town as authorized under Section 22 of Chapter 40 of the Mass. General Laws except with the direction of a police officer or traffic sign.

B. No person shall stand or park any vehicle in any street, way or highway under the control of the MassDOT in violation of Section 1, Article II of the rules and regulations of the MassDOT as authorized by Section 2 of Chapter 85 of the Mass. General Laws.

C. In accordance with Article IV, Section A of these rules and regulations in particular, in any of the following places, no person shall park a vehicle:

1. within any crosswalk
2. within any bus stop
3. within any intersection
4. upon any sidewalk
5. upon any channelizing or traffic island
6. upon any roadway in a rural or sparsely settled district
7. upon any street or highway within ten feet of a fire hydrant
8. upon any roadway where the parking of a vehicle will not leave a clear and unobstructed lane ten feet wide in each direction for passing traffic
9. upon any roadway within twenty feet of any intersecting way
10. upon or in front of any private road or driveway without the consent of the owner of said road or driveway
11. upon any roadway where parking is permitted unless both wheels on the right side of the vehicle are within twelve inches of the curb or edge of the roadway
12. upon any roadway between the hours of 1:00am and 7:00am from December 1<sup>st</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup> in any year
13. upon any roadway at any time when there is in excess of four inches of snowfall
14. upon any roadway where the parking of a vehicle will obstruct or hide from view any traffic control signal
15. upon any roadway facing towards the direction of oncoming traffic

D. No person shall stop, stand, or park any vehicle upon any roadway, or in a fire lane established by the authority of the Leicester Fire Department, or within a private way or alley open to public use or furnishing means of access for fire apparatus or other emergency equipment to any dwelling, building, or any other place that might require

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Parking areas lack signage about who can use it, and is often underutilized



This area lacks signage about no parking areas or directing to available parking areas



Lack of on-street parking on Main St. removes opportunities for a more vibrant area

# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions



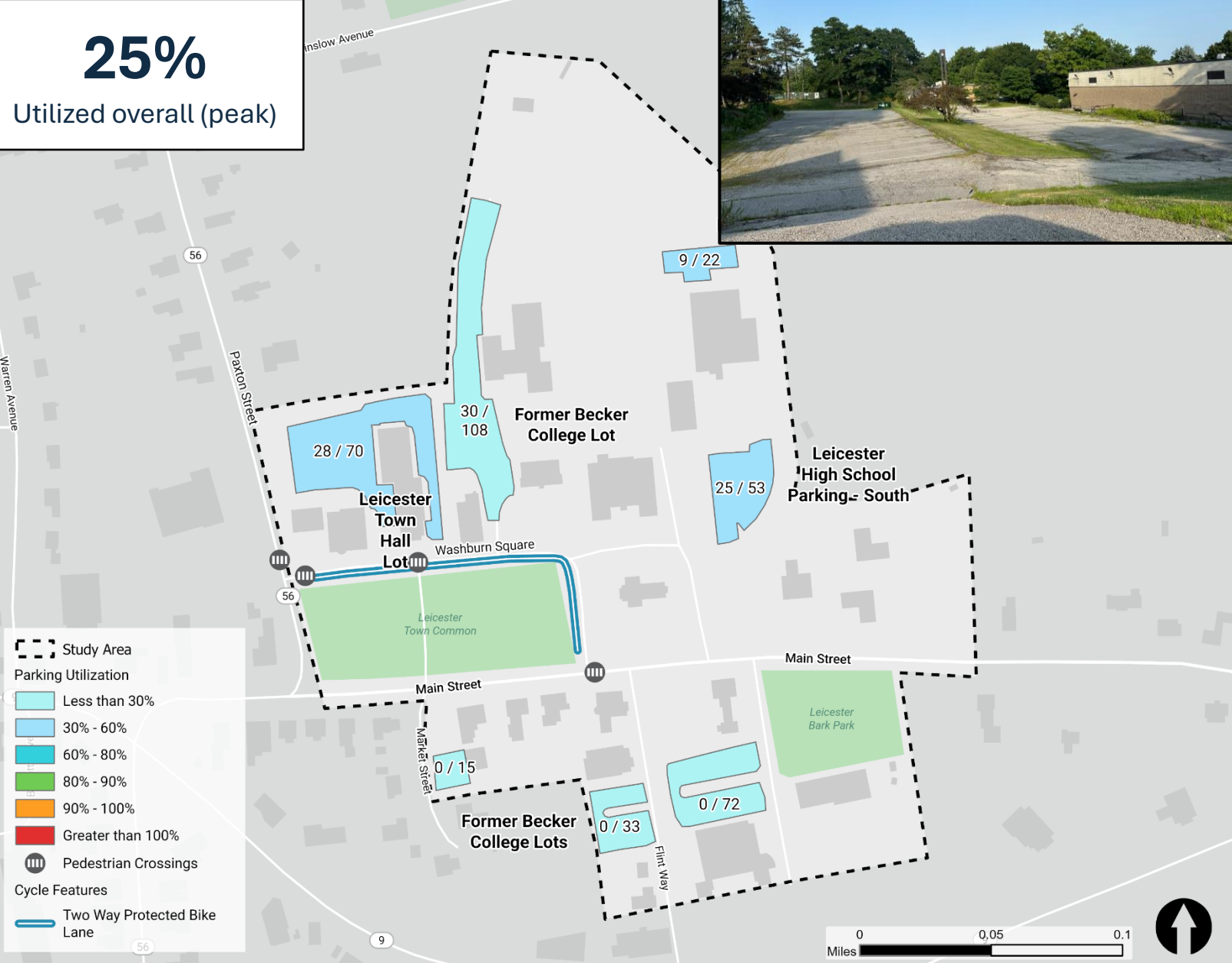
## Parking Utilization

The current regulations and patterns of usage for all 373 parking spaces in Downtown Leicester were determined as a starting point for the study.

To estimate existing demand, the study team examined aerial imagery from the past three years and counted cars parked in Downtown lots. On the highest utilization date – a Monday in June 2023 – a total of 92 cars were parking Downtown. At peak, **only 25%** of parking spaces Downtown are full. Parking is readily available, and although individual lots may fill at busy times of day – particularly the lot adjacent to the gymnasium. – capacity is available nearby.

**Optimal utilization for a parking facility is generally 80-90%** - meaning space is used efficiently but empty spaces are still available. The existing parking supply in Downtown Leicester can accommodate considerable additional parking demand before reaching optimal utilization.

**25%**  
Utilized overall (peak)



Source: Utilization derived from highest-utilization date within the last 3 years with aerial imagery available – Monday 6/5/23





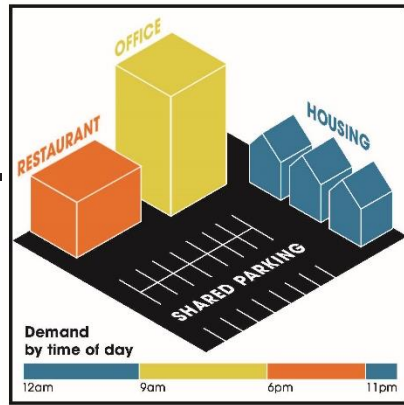
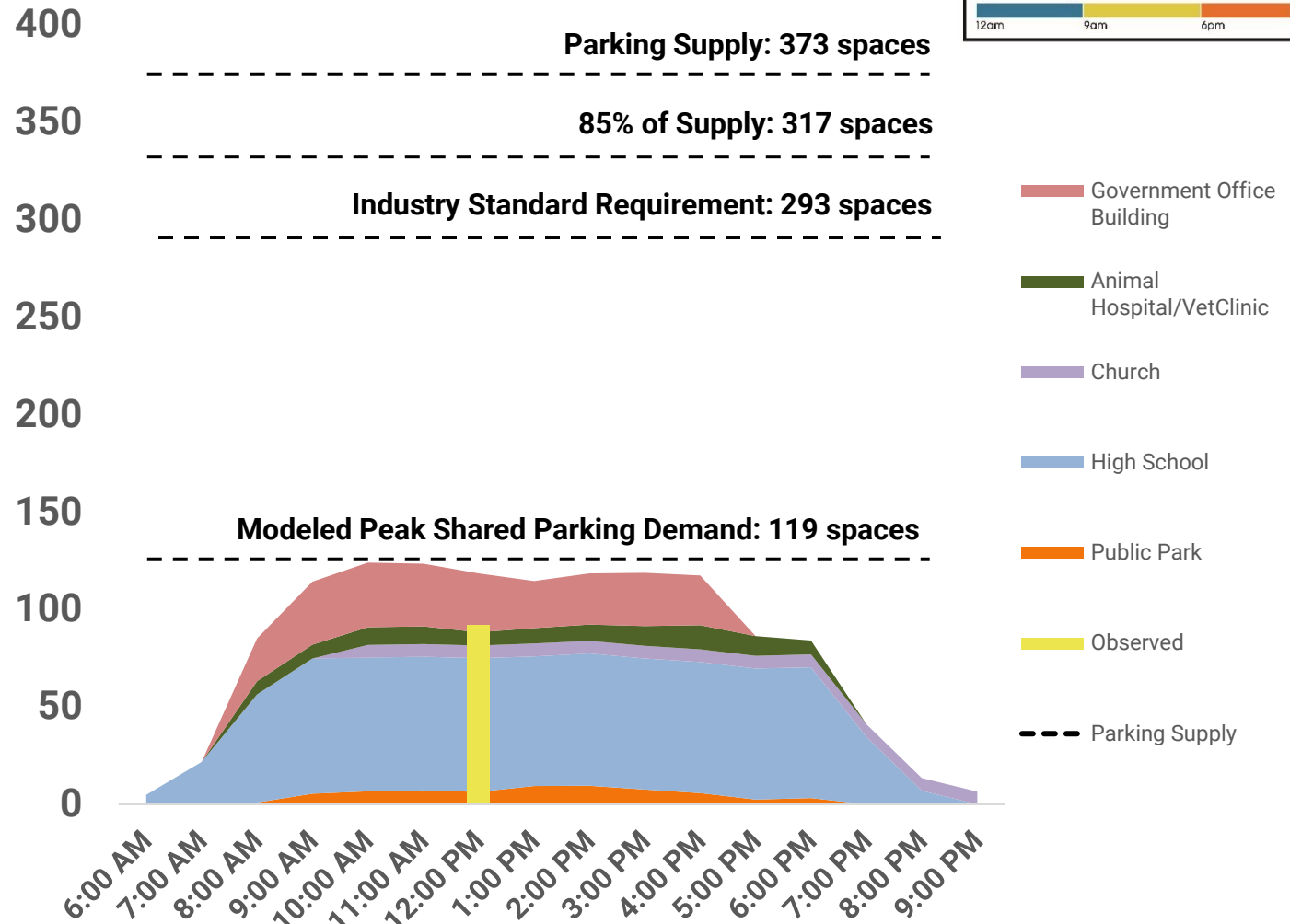
# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions

## Shared Parking Demand Model

An analysis of the existing parking supply’s ability to accommodate future development in Downtown Leicester was conducted using a customized shared parking demand model. A core component of this analysis is an understanding of the land uses present in the community. Parcel-level land use data from the Town of Leicester was shared with the project team and total quantities of each land use were determined.

A typical approach to estimating parking demand assumes that each land use in a downtown needs its own supply of parking and thus simply adds together the amount of parking demand “required” for each use to estimate demand. This level of analysis assumes that demand for each land use is constant throughout the day and that the parking supply for each parcel is at a quantity needed to accommodate its highest demand. This industry standard approach would yield 293 spaces given the study area’s land uses.

**An analysis based on “real demand” more accurately reflects demand patterns that vary by use throughout the day.** Modeling parking demand of these land uses applies a time-of-day percentage to the peak parking demand rates to create a more realistic estimate of demand in mixed-use environments like Downtown Leicester, as demonstrated to the right.



# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions

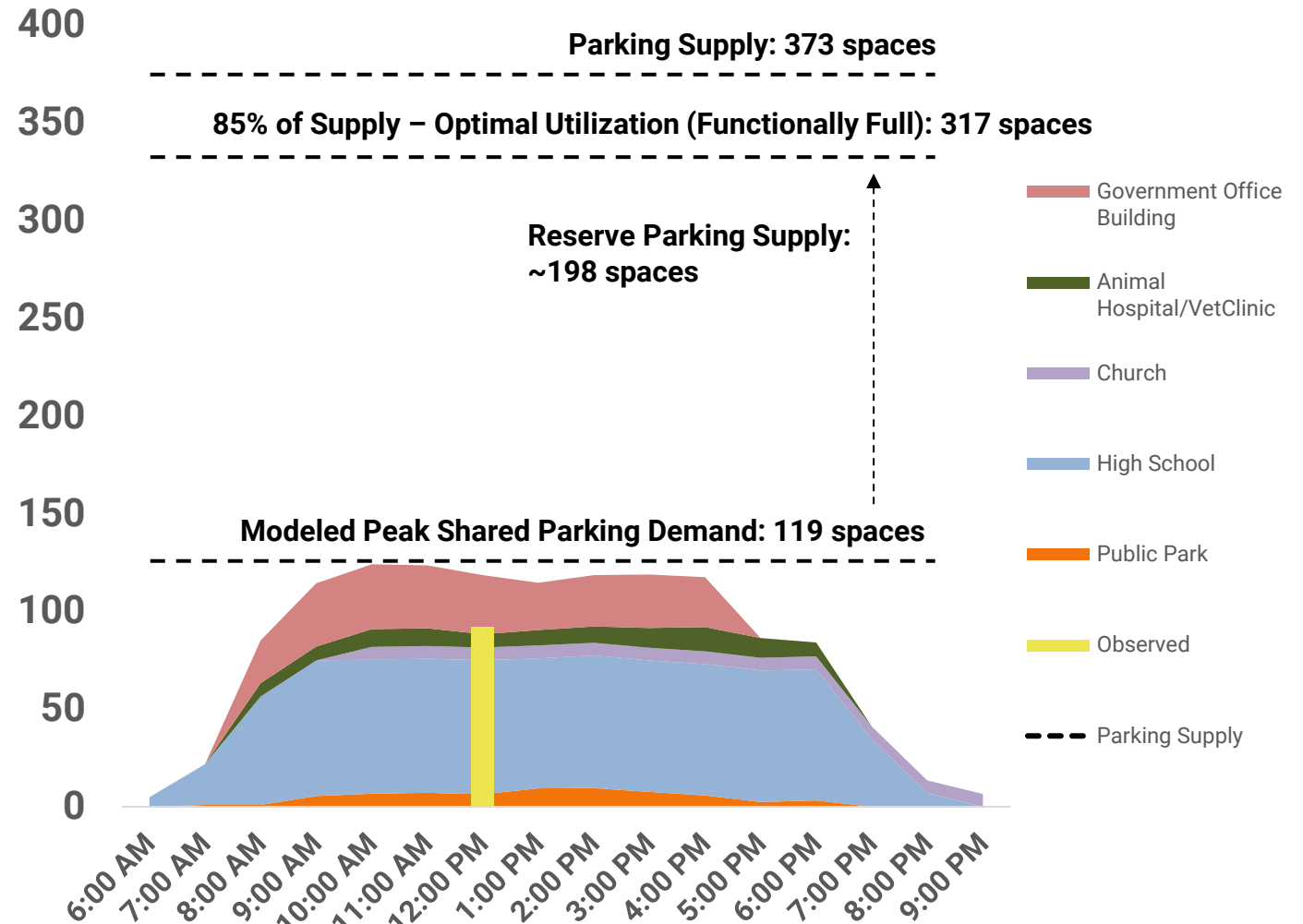


## Shared Parking Demand Model

Parking demand is further reduced in downtown environments because multiple destinations are closer together and more walkable. Users that opt to walk within the focus area to get from one destination to another (without parking their vehicle) are considered “internally captured.”

Finally, certain vacancy assumptions were also incorporated into the model. Using the ULI methodology together with these local context reductions applied to parking demand rates from Institute of Transportation Engineers, parking demand was modeled in the study area. Parking utilization counts captured for the study were used to calibrate the model, resulting in a model that is based off of observed demand. The modeled peak demand falls above the study’s observations to provide a conservative estimate of the amount of parking needed for existing land uses in the study area.

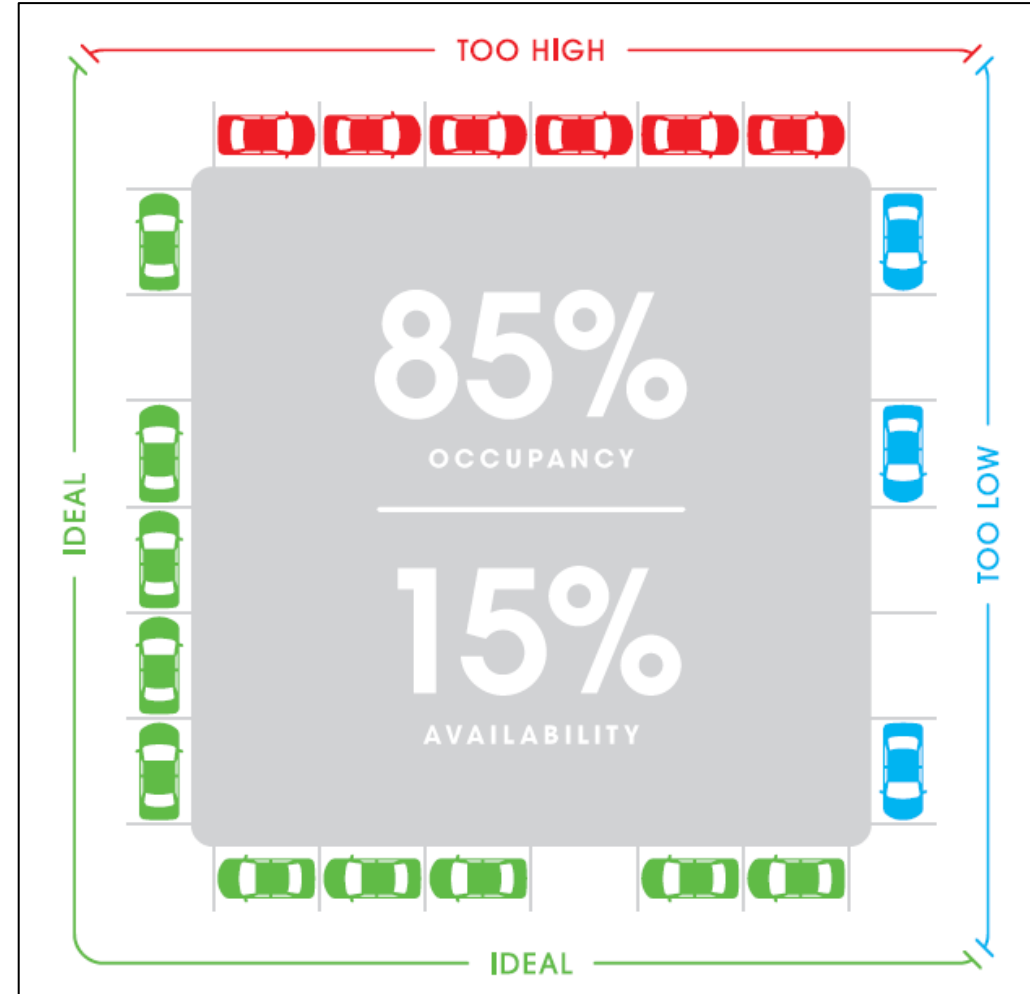
The results of this exercise point to the existing parking supply in the study area being approximately 198 spaces greater than the need at peak demand.



# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions

## Future Utilization Targets

Justification for expanding the public parking supply (through new facilities or sharing of existing private facilities) may need to be addressed as Leicester continues to develop and spare parking capacity lessens. The Town should refer to best practice guidance as demonstrated in the graphic to the right. A recommended 85% utilization target for on-street parking ensures at least one space is available on each block. Similarly, 85% utilization of an off-street facility ensures the lot is being effectively used while still guaranteeing some level of availability at any time.



# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions

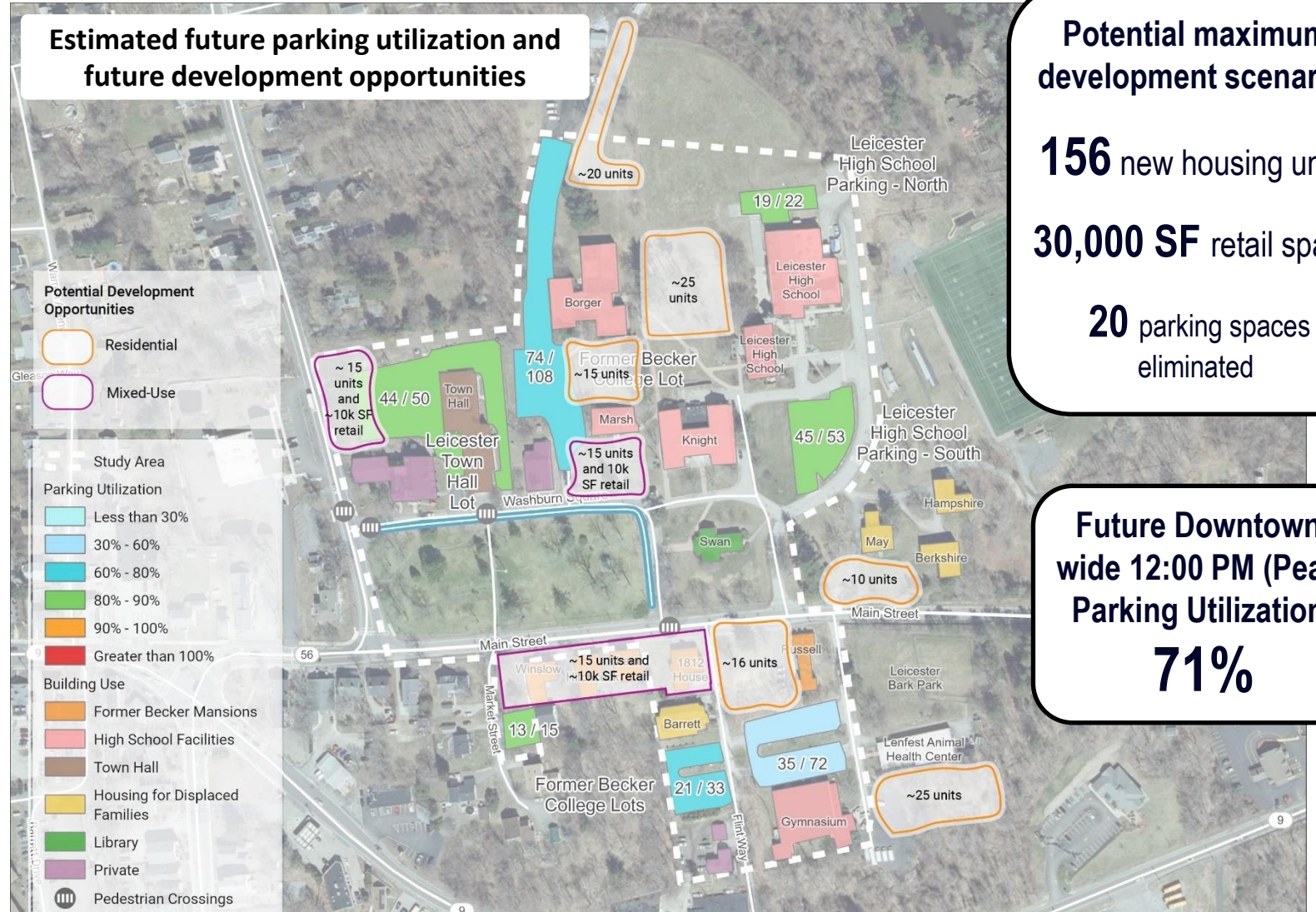


## Future Buildout Assessment

The significant parking capacity which exists in Leicester today presents an opportunity for **new development in Downtown without the addition of new parking spaces**. Using the Shared Parking Demand Model developed in this study, this map demonstrates where new housing units and retail development could potentially be located to achieve a full buildout scenario. This translates to a 10% increase compared to the existing housing supply in Leicester.

In this scenario, all parking spaces are within a reasonable distance of the location they are intended to serve. People parking are not expected to walk longer than 2 minutes from their space to their destination.

With the demand from this new development, parking in Downtown Leicester is better utilized throughout the day. However, parking is still generally available with only 71% of spaces full at peak.



**Potential maximum development scenario:**  
**156** new housing units  
**30,000 SF** retail space  
**20** parking spaces eliminated

**Future Downtown-wide 12:00 PM (Peak) Parking Utilization:**  
**71%**





# Downtown Core- Existing Conditions

## Multimodal Analysis

The downtown core of Leicester is a **very walkable area** contained within several blocks. Although the primary purpose of this study is parking, drivers become pedestrians when traveling to or from parking, and strong pedestrian/bicycle networks can also provide options for those who wish to walk or bike as an alternative to driving, which can also reduce parking demand.

Drivers often speed through Main Street but **crosswalks are entirely absent besides** the green-painted bicycle crossings connecting to Washburn Square from Main Street and Paxton Street. There is also no signage, such as pedestrian yield or rapid rectangular flashing beacons (RRFBs), to alert drivers to slow down.

There is a significant lack of general pedestrian amenities, such as signage, benches, or landscaping. There is also **very little lighting** throughout Leicester generally, a significant safety challenge, particularly around Washburn Square which is the town's primary public gathering space, and with consideration of the school zone.

There is also currently no connected, on-street bicycle infrastructure.



This high visibility crossing is a good approach but lacks supporting warning signage



Sidewalk is in need of maintenance, very little lighting present



Crosswalk is lacking along Main Street to connect to the Paxton Street crosswalk



# Route 9 Corridor- Existing Conditions



## Multimodal Analysis

The Route 9 corridor in Leicester is dominated by **auto-centric commercial development**. For the most part, each business has their own parking lot and visitors rarely visit more than one location per stop. However, along some portions of the corridor there are clusters of businesses that would be well served by on-street parking or shared parking agreements.

Although the sidewalk network in Leicester is generally complete, there are **many challenges for the safety and comfort of pedestrians**. The condition of the sidewalks varies throughout town, with some areas in need of maintenance. Near the Main Street/Route 9 intersection, there are several areas with excessively wide curb cuts which leaves pedestrians vulnerable and with no buffer from the roadway. It is notable that these areas are near the few WRTA bus stops in town (two routes operate along Route 9).

Just as in downtown, there is also currently **no connected, on-street bicycle infrastructure**.



The S. Main St./Route 9 intersection is intimidating to cross and the Crosswalk in need of re-stripping for visibility



Route 9 features many areas with consecutive or extremely wide curb cuts that interrupt sidewalks

# Outreach and Engagement Summary ● ● ●

# Municipal Stakeholder Working Session



On **May 9, 2024**, the project team held a virtual meeting with several municipal representatives, including: Town Planner, Town Administrator, Chief of Police, and Robert Provost, DPW Foreman. The key comments raised during this discussion provided insight into current challenges and the vision for the Town’s development and transportation future. A series of recommendations were drafted based on input from data analysis and this meeting.

## Washburn Square

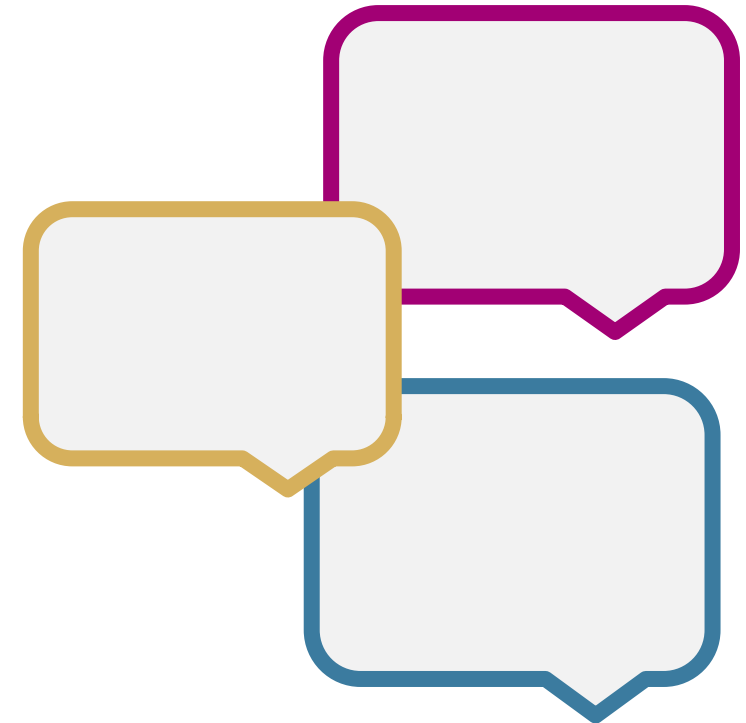
- Existing **bike lane rarely used** because of its lack of connection to other infrastructure
- **On-street parking** is perceived to be beneficial during infrequent, high-demand occasions (e.g., public meetings)
- Pick-up/Drop-off operations for the school have **challenges with safety and smooth vehicle circulation**. There is openness to considering alternate circulation, including the development of an access road to the north

## Future Development

- Town is **actively pursuing commercial development**, which an emphasis on mixed-uses that will contribute to town vitality and economy (the historic mansions are a priority)
- Traffic **flow integrated as part of economic development** is a priority before the establishment of bike connections
- Displaced family housing intended to **remain in its current location** for the long-term
- Knight and Marsh Hall future **uses are uncertain** and contingent on upgrade work
- Mary House is **desirable as a public space** or museum

## Parking

- Existing parking is generally **almost empty for most of the time**, besides periodic events (school events, public meetings)
- **No perceived need** for formalized parking agreements based on today’s demand
- Bark Park visitors **usually park on-street**



# Business Stakeholder Working Session



On **June 11, 2024**, the project team held a virtual meeting with the Leicester Business Association. Draft project recommendations were shared with this group to understand whether they were appropriate and relevant to address some of the challenges of the business community to potentially help it thrive.

## Reconfigure Washburn Square

- Supports safety
- The Victorian home redevelopment should **prioritize businesses**
- Potential for the square to offer **parking with business permits**

## Reconfigure Main Street segment

- General consensus

## Multimodal improvements

- Positioning of potential **through-square bike lane** would need to be vetted with Historic Commission
- Paxton Street improvements and **intersection signalization** are a priority before bike paths

## Explore adding on-street parking on Route 9

- Propose lower parking rates. Lack of parking has been an **impediment to some businesses opening**, some shared parking is occurring to address issue

- How to address with **pre-existing, non-conforming businesses** along Route 9?
- Loading/unloading is already very limited and being shut down further by police. Current **'no parking' areas are needed** for loading.
- Short-term parking spaces would be **desirable for loading needs**, particularly with existing street width capacity
- Traffic light timing at Route 9 intersection causing **safety issues, not intuitive**

## Other Considerations

- Cherry Valley area also has parking needs to consider
- Current crossing signal timing should be investigated
- Significant McCarthy Avenue access concerns with only one access point and many residences



# Planning Board Working Session

On **July 16, 2024**, the project team met with the Leicester Planning Board. Draft project recommendations were shared with this group for feedback regarding how well they met the needs of the community overall.

## Reconfiguring Washburn Square and Main Street

- Broad support
- Washburn Square used to have on-street parking, and it was much **more successful and utilized** than the bike lane.

## Improve pick-up/drop-off conditions at the school

- Rather than formalizing a pick-up/drop-off lane on Washburn Square, they recommended moving this area to the High School parking area east of Town Hall and **connecting that road all the way through** to Winslow Avenue.

## Reduce parking standards

- Broad support and desire to implement

## Add on-street parking along Route 9

- The Board liked the idea of **reducing speed in this area** and providing more public parking for nearby businesses, but they had some concerns about safety as this is a high traffic/high speed area.

## Further expand pedestrian connectivity

- Add a sidewalk in front of the dog park

## Increase parking in existing lots

- **Restriping the Town Hall lot** to accommodate more parking spaces was very well received.

## Other Considerations

- There is a need to provide **better pedestrian connectivity** between Town Hall and the fire station.
- There is a need to provide a **safer pedestrian connection** to the Leicester Police Department and the athletic fields behind it for students.



Recommendations ● ● ●

# Recommendations Origin

## What solutions can support Leicester's goals?

The recommendations in this section were developed after taking into account:

- Goals and intent of this study, as shown to the right
- Desires from recent planning efforts, the Master Plan (2014), Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (2018), and the Rapid Recovery Plan (2021).
- Evidence of needs for improvement in the built environment through data collection and analysis
- Opportunities identified through outreach and engagement activities to better support local business and downtown vitality
- Best practice techniques successfully implemented in environments similar to Leicester

Although this project was a parking study, over the course of the study it became clear that **for the town to achieve their economic development goals, a broader suite of recommendations focused on multimodal improvements would be more valuable to the community.** Through a combination of capital and administrative improvements, Leicester can be better positioned to enhance the vitality of its downtown.

## PROJECT GOALS

- Ensure parking regulations are appropriately scaled for long term development goals
- Improve pedestrian/bicyclist safety and mobility downtown
- Identify opportunities to better connect parking to retail/commercial areas along Route 9
- Consider how parking areas or regulations can support the Town's economic growth
- Assess the need for new on-street and off-street parking



## STRATEGY OVERVIEW

These recommendations focus on addressing challenges in both the parking and multimodal networks in order to better function as connected systems.

- 1** Reconfigure Washburn Square
- 2** Reconfigure Main Street Segment
- 3** Enhance Pedestrian Crossings/Safety
- 4** Wayfinding for Parking/Key Destinations
- 5** Reduce Parking Standards and Incentivize Shared Parking
- 6** Maximize Parking in Existing Lots
- 7** Enhance Connectivity Between Town Hall/ Fire Station
- 8** Improve Connectivity and PU/DO at School
- 9** Add On-Street Parking Along Route 9
- 10** Further Expand Pedestrian Connectivity
- 11** Create More Integrated Bicycle Connections
- 12** Construct A New Road Behind the High School
- 13** Increase Connectivity Between Main St. & Rte 9



# 1. Reconfigure Washburn Square

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years)



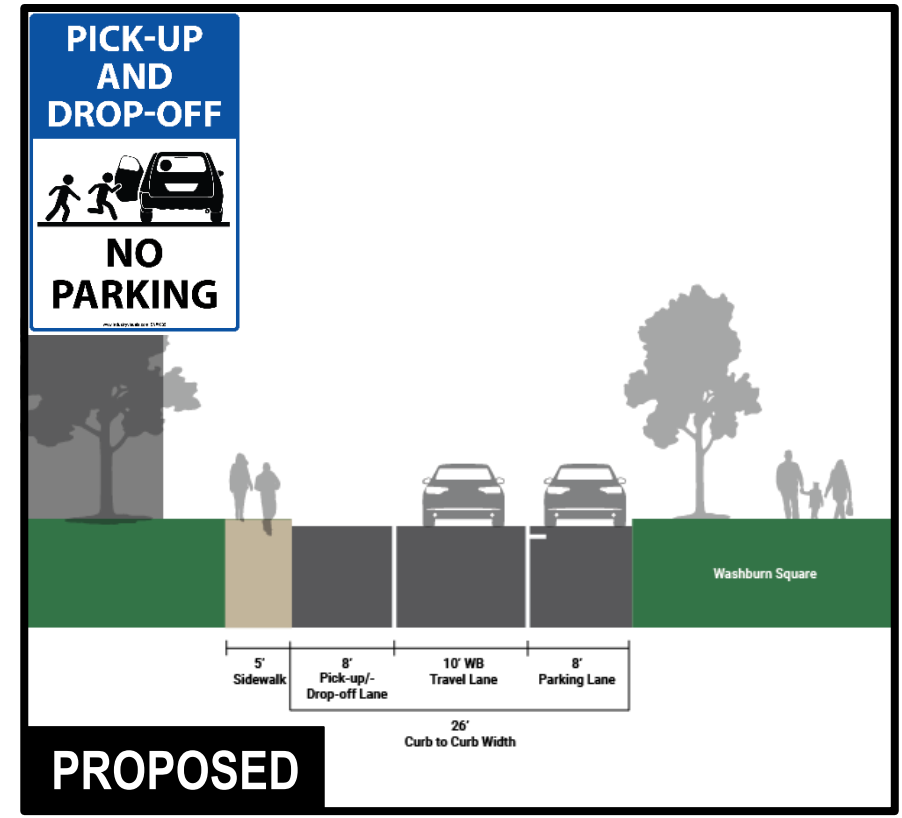
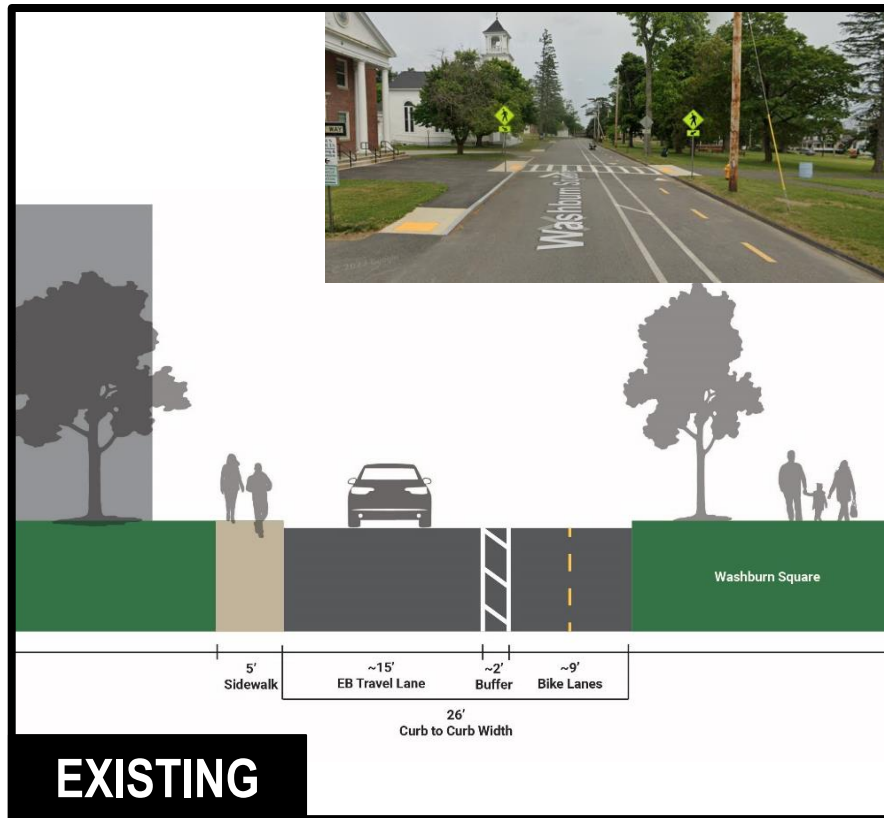
### Components

- Add a pick-up/drop-off lane in front of Town Hall
- Integrate an on-street, striped parking lane
- Redirect bicycles through the park instead of on-street

**What this does-** Adds parking and formalizes pick-up/drop-off locations to improve safety, add centrally-located parking and manages short-term parking needs

In 2021, the Town converted the parking along Washburn Square to an on-street two-way bicycle lane. However, since that time this lane is very rarely used by bicyclist, and instead is used for parking, pedestrians, and pick-up/drop-off associated with the high school.

Reinstating the on-street parking along Washburn Square will provide proximate parking for community events on the Square and also support economic development by increasing the overall on-street parking supply.





# 2. Reconfigure Main Street Segment

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years)



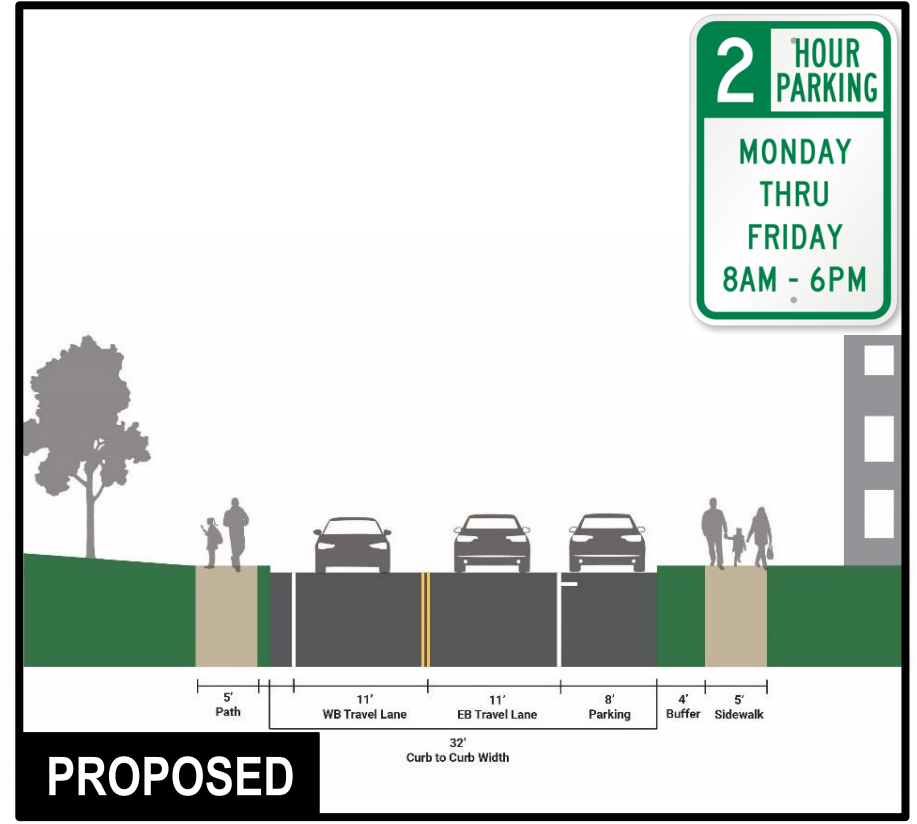
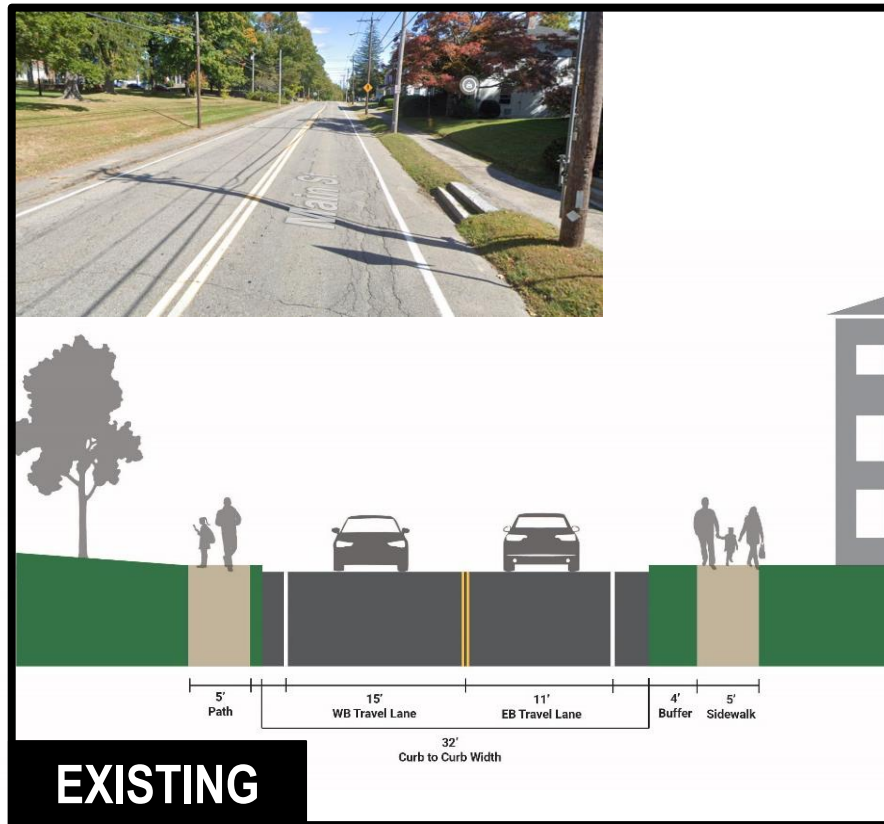
### Components

- Narrow width of travel lanes
- Integrate on-street parking lane within the existing roadway
- Install regulation signage

**What this does-** Adds parking along Main Street to support convenient parking for future businesses and add parking supply for community events in Washburn Square

Currently there is no parking along the section of Main Street in Downtown. There are also relatively wide travel lanes and a straight road, which leads to cars driving faster and going through the area without pausing.

Adding parking to one side of the road will support economic development as new businesses consider moving into this area. It will also provide visible and convenient parking for the dog park, school events and function on Washburn Square.







# 3. Enhance Pedestrian Crossings/Safety

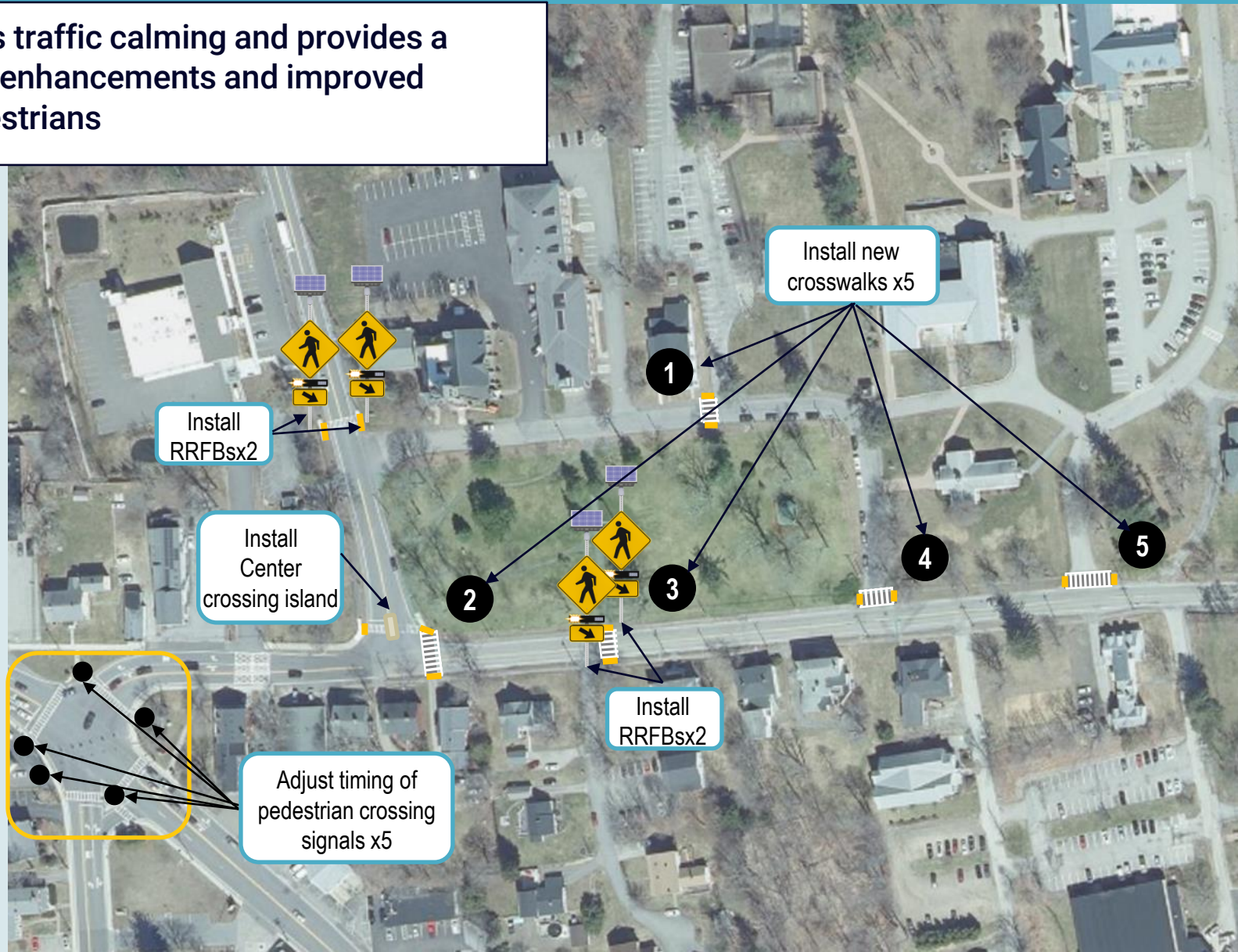
## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years) ● ● ●

**What this does-** Promotes traffic calming and provides a consistent level of safety enhancements and improved security/comfort for pedestrians

There is a significant lack of pedestrian safety elements to support and attract walking as an option throughout downtown.

This early concept proposes improvements at areas which connect intuitive pedestrian routes as well as calm traffic at areas vulnerable to high speeds. This also proposes signal timing adjustments at the intersection of Main Street and Route 9 in order to minimize wait times and to prioritize pedestrian movement.



*Best practice example.*

### Components

- Add high visibility crosswalks with ADA-compliant ramps/ tactile warning surfaces
- Install RRFBs at unsafe crossing
- Adjust timing of pedestrian crossing signals





# 4. Add Wayfinding for Parking Areas and Key Destinations

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years)





**What this does-** Provides clear direction towards available public parking as well as formally identify signage at the lots themselves to improve navigation and clarity.

Currently, there is no signage to direct motorists to Leicester's public parking facilities, which are convenient to visitor destinations but consistently underutilized. Without parking information and signs designed to reflect a cohesive Town "brand," these facilities are not easy for motorists to find or recognize.

Strong wayfinding signage located at strategic places where motorists are seeking parking can improve awareness about all public parking options and better balance the utilization of these facilities.



General locations of recommended parking signs

-  Directional sign
-  Identification sign

### Components

- **Formally name parking lots**
- **Add wayfinding to direct to and identify major parking lots**
- **Add wayfinding to direct to key destinations**





# 4. Add Wayfinding for Parking Areas and Key Destinations

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years)



- As a longer-term approach, this recommendation encourages the eventual development of an overall, streamlined and Town-branded parking signage system that is clear and recognizable. Good examples from other communities are shown on this page.



Hanover, NH



Pittsfield, MA



Mansfield, OH



Fort Wayne, IN





# 4. Add Wayfinding for Parking Areas and Key Destinations

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years) ● ● ●

This recommendation also includes expanding Information available about the parking system online to make visitors aware of parking options and to find them easily.

**Downtown LYNCHBURG ASSOCIATION PUBLIC PARKING**

■ FREE   
 ■ FREE TWO-HOUR PARKING   
 ■ FREE, OPEN TO PUBLIC NIGHTS AND WEEKENDS ONLY   
 ■ PAID HOURLY M-F FREE NIGHTS/WEEKENDS

FREE ON-STREET PARKING IS AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT DOWNTOWN LYNCHBURG

**PARKING LOTS**

- CANAL LOT
- DEPOT LOT
- MOVIE LOT
- RIVERFRONT LOT
- JEFFERSON STREET LOT
- PERCIVAL'S ISLAND LOT
- MOSAIC LOT
- HUMAN SERVICES LOT
- MIDTOWN DECK
- 12TH STREET LOT
- CROSSROADS LOT
- UPTOWN DECK
- COMMUNITY MARKET LOT
- CITY HALL LOT
- COURT STREET LOT
- CLAY STREET LOT

**LANDMARKS**

- ★ A AMAZEMENT SQUARE | B RIVERFRONT PARK | C BLUFFWALK | D ACADEMY CENTER OF THE ARTS
- ★ E CITY HALL | F COMMUNITY MARKET | G LYNCHBURG MUSEUM

UPDATED 09/25/23

**DOWNTOWN PARKING MAP**    **LOOK FOR THE GREEN FREE LOTS**

Map showing streets including Vine St, Cedar St, Spruce St, Pinney St, W. New York St, E. New York St, W. Galena Blvd, E. Galena Blvd, W. Downer Pl, E. Downer Pl, W. Benton St, E. Benton St, S. Lake St (Route 31), S. River St, S. Stoop Ave, N. Stoop Ave, S. Warner St, S. LaSalle St, Middle Ave, and Spring St.

**Legend**

- Parking Lots & Hours
- Parking Garages & Valet
- LaSalle Tower 7 S. Stoop Ave.
- Museums
- Aurora Transportation Center
- Pace Bus Stop
- Bike Rental Station
- SilverEdge Park
- City Hall
- Kayak Launch
- Fox River Trail
- Farmer's Market (June-Oct)
- 90 mins
- 1 hr
- 3 hrs
- 5 hrs

**AURORA DOWNTOWN**  
EAT · DRINK · PLAY · MORE  
[auroradowntown.org](http://auroradowntown.org)

**Downtown Beverly Parking District**

Map showing streets including Bridge Street, West Garage, Beverly Commons East Building, Main Street, and others.

**Legend**

- Green Parking Zone
- Purple Parking Zone
- Red Parking Zone
- Public Lots
- M&T Garage
- Downtown Parking District

**Green Parking Zone**  
Metered Parking: \$1.00/hr  
No Time Limits, Mon-Sat 8am-8pm  
20 Min. or Less Free

**Purple Parking Zone/Waterfront**  
Metered Parking: \$1.00/hr  
No Time Limits, Sun-Sat 8am-5pm  
2 hour time limit under bridge (no charge)

**Red Parking Zone**  
Monthly Employee Permit: \$25/mo  
Resident Parking Permits Free (apply by mailing address)  
2 Hr Time Limit Except by Permit (Mon - Sat 8am - 6pm)

**Public Lots**  
Metered Parking: \$0.50/hr  
No Time Limits, Mon-Sat 8am-8pm  
2 Hr minimum if using credit card

0 250 500 Feet



# 5. Reduce Parking Standards and Incentivize Shared Parking

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years)



**What this does-** Reduces parking standards for commercial and residential uses across town to open up existing parking for redevelopment and promote shared parking agreements

Across the board, Leicester’s parking standards exceed the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) observed parking use rates. Residents and business owners also report that more parking is required than needed.

In the downtown in particular, shared parking offers a great opportunity to make the existing parking areas more efficient and it is well suited to a mixed-use environment where peak usage is seen at different times of the day.

Although discussions with landowners would be the necessary first step, the Town could prepare to offer different levels of revenue sharing or in-kind services and improvements for the shared use of private facilities. Once operational, parking areas should be branded and with signage provided to note the regulation (visitor parking, reserved parking, etc.).

Land Use	Leicester Requirement	Equivalent ITE Category ID#	ITE Observed Parking Use Rate	Comparison	Recommendation
<b>Multi-family Residential</b>	2 spaces/unit (2+ bed) 1.5 space/unit (1 bed) Plus 1 space/3 units	Multifamily Housing, Low-Rise (221)	1.21 spaces/unit	<b>At least 19%-40% HIGHER</b>	<b>1.2 spaces per unit</b>
<b>Office</b>	1 space/350 sf	General Office Bldg (710)	1 space/420 sf	<b>17% HIGHER</b>	<b>1 space/420 sf</b>
<b>Retail</b>	1 space/200 sf (min. of 3 per establishment)	Shopping Center (820)	1 space/515 sf	<b>At least 61% HIGHER</b>	<b>1 spaces/515 sf</b>
<b>Restaurant</b>	1 space/employee on the largest shift, AND 1 space/3 seats based on max. seating capacity	High-Turnover, Sit Down Restaurant (932)	1 space/5 seats	<b>At least 85% HIGHER</b>	<b>1 space/5 seats</b>
<b>Schools and Colleges</b>	High School: 4 spaces/classroom OR 1 space/teacher and staff, plus 1 space/5 seats of total seating capacity in auditorium/ gymnasium (whichever is greater)	High School (525)	0.26 spaces/student	<b>About the same to at least 48% HIGHER</b>	<b>0.26 spaces/student</b>

### What does this look like in practice?

#### 10-unit multi-family

Current → Proposed  
20 spaces → 12 spaces

#### 1000sf Retail Space with 2 tenants

Current → Proposed  
6 → 2

#### Restaurant with seating for 20 people

Current → Proposed  
10 → 4





# 5. Reduce Parking Standards and Incentivize Shared Parking

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years)



### Recommendation Components

- Reduce off-street parking standards to at or below ITE Rates
- Identify incentives that the Town can offer in exchange for shared use of private lots
- Draft language for shared agreements and discuss options/arrangements with landowners
- Further reduce or eliminate parking requirements when near public parking

#### Model - Shared Use Agreement for Parking Facilities

This Shared Use Agreement for Parking Facilities, entered into this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, between \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter called lessor and \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter called lessee. In consideration of the covenants herein, lessor agrees to share with lessee certain parking facilities, as is situated in the City of \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter called the facilities, described as: [Include legal description of location and spaces to be shared here, and as shown on attachment 1.]

The facilities shall be shared commencing with the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and ending at 11:59 PM on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, for [insert negotiated compensation figures, as appropriate]. [The lessee agrees to pay at [insert payment address] to lessor by the \_\_\_\_ day of each month [or other payment arrangements].] Lessor hereby represents that it holds legal title to the facilities

#### The parties agree:

##### 1. USE OF FACILITIES

This section should describe the nature of the shared use (exclusive, joint sections, time(s) and day(s) of week of usage.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[Lessee shall have exclusive use of the facilities. The use shall only be between the hours of 5:30 PM Friday through 5:30 AM Monday and between the hours of 5:30 PM and 5:30 AM Monday through Thursday.]

##### 2. MAINTENANCE

This section should describe responsibility for aspects of maintenance of the facilities. This could include cleaning, striping, seal coating, asphalt repair and more.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[Lessor shall provide, as reasonably necessary asphalt repair work. Lessee and Lessor agree to share striping, seal coating and lot sweeping at a 50%/50% split based upon mutually accepted maintenance contracts with outside vendors. Lessor shall maintain lot and landscaping at or above the current condition, at no additional cost to the lessee.]

##### 3. UTILITIES and TAXES

This section should describe responsibility for utilities and taxes. This could include electrical, water, sewage, and more.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[Lessor shall pay all taxes and utilities associated with the facilities, including maintenance of existing facility lighting as directed by standard safety practices.]

##### 4. SIGNAGE

This section should describe signage allowances and restrictions.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[Lessee may provide signage, meeting with the written approval of lessor, designating usage allowances.]

##### 5. ENFORCEMENT

This section should describe any facility usage enforcement methods.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[Lessee may provide a surveillance officer(s) for parking safety and usage only for the period of its exclusive use. Lessee and lessor reserve the right to tow, at owners expense, vehicles improperly parked or abandoned. All towing shall be with the approval of the lessor.]

##### 6. COOPERATION

This section should describe communication relationship.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[Lessor and lessee agree to cooperate to the best of their abilities to mutually use the facilities without disrupting the other party. The parties agree to meet on occasion to work out any problems that may arise to the shared use.]

##### 7. INSURANCE

This section should describe insurance requirements for the facilities.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[At their own expense, lessor and lessee agree to maintain liability insurance for the facilities as is standard for their own business usage.]

##### 8. INDEMNIFICATION

This section should describe indemnification as applicable and negotiated. This is a very technical section and legal counsel should be consulted for appropriate language to each and every agreement.

**-NO SAMPLE CLAUSE PROVIDED-**

##### 9. TERMINATION

This section should describe how to or if this agreement can be terminated and post termination responsibilities.

**-SAMPLE CLAUSE-**[If lessor transfers ownership, or if part of all of the facilities are condemned, or access to the facilities is changed or limited, lessee may, in its sole discretion terminate this agreement without further liability by giving Lessor not less than 60 days prior written notice. Upon termination of this agreement, Lessee agrees to remove all signage and repair damage due to excessive use or abuse. Lessor agrees to give lessee the right of first refusal on subsequent renewal of this agreement.]

##### 10. SUPPLEMENTAL COVENANTS

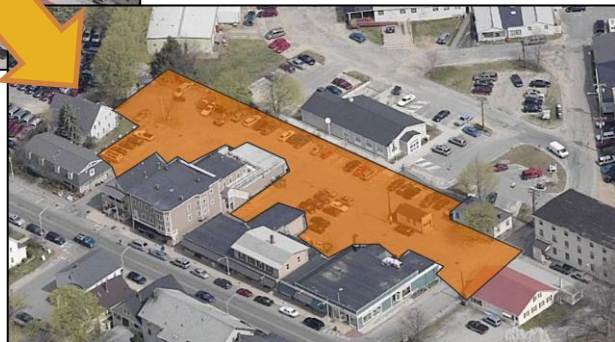
This section should contain any additional covenants, rights, responsibilities and/or agreements.

**-NO SAMPLE CLAUSE PROVIDED-**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the Effective Date Set forth at the outset hereof.

[Signature and notarization as appropriate to a legal document and as appropriate to recording process negotiated between parties.]

### Sample Shared Use Agreement for Parking Facilities



Concord helped facilitate the sharing of private lots to create a single shared facility, increasing supply for everyone





# 6. Maximize Parking in Existing Lots

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Short Term (1-3 years) ● ● ●

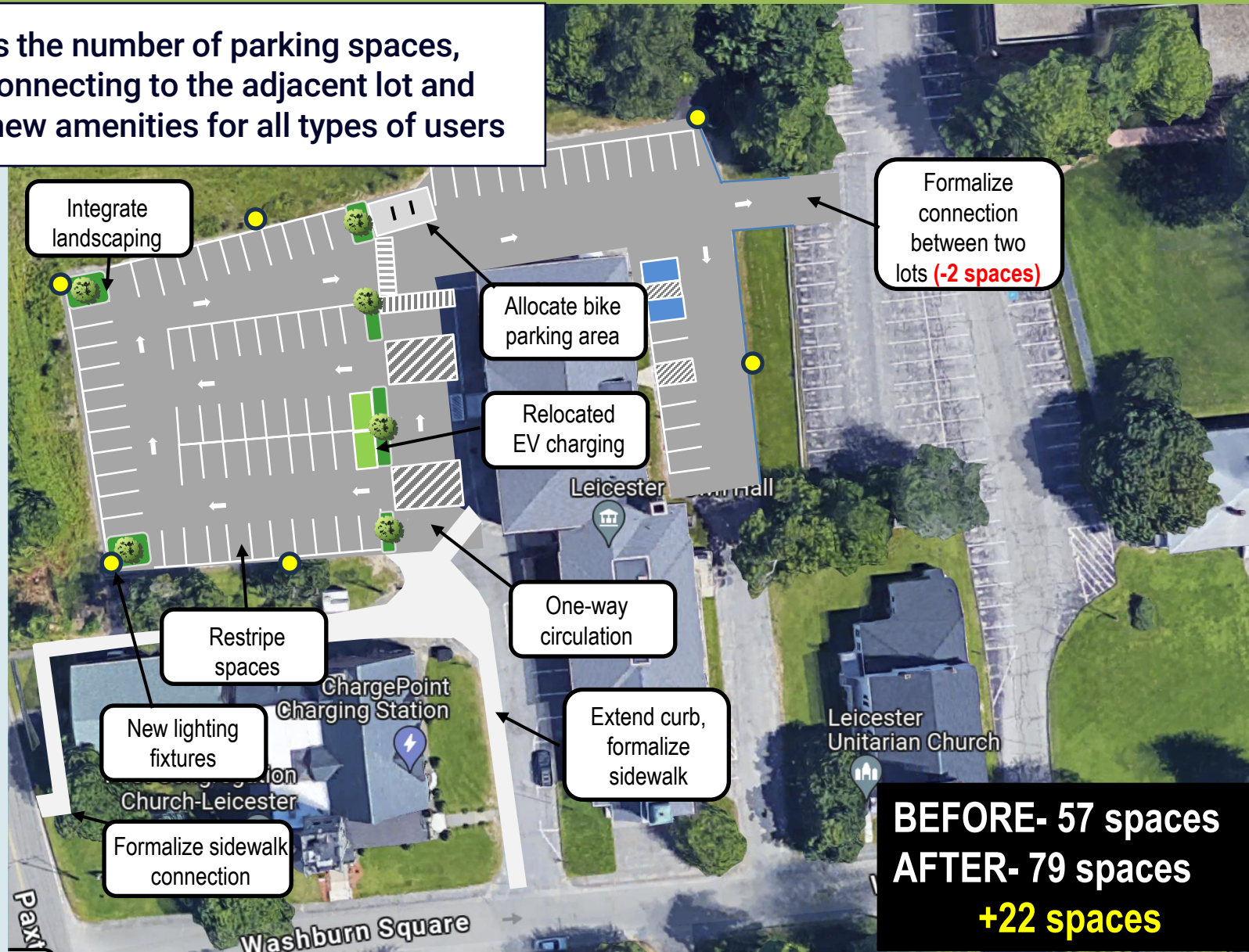
### Components

- Restriped spaces
- Build vehicle connection to adjacent lot
- Extend curb and sidewalks from the lot to Washburn Square and Paxton
- Bicycle parking area
- Relocated EV charging spaces
- Landscaping
- Lighting

**What this does-** Increases the number of parking spaces, improves circulation by connecting to the adjacent lot and sidewalks, and provides new amenities for all types of users

As the Town's most central parking facility, the current configuration of the Town Hall lot doesn't efficiently use the space available and lacks some amenities to fully and comfortably accommodate various users.

This early concept supports better flow of movement for vehicles, introduces a new connection to the adjacent lot as an overflow parking area, and provides new locations for EV and bike parking. The integration of landscaping elements and lighting further improves the ambiance of the facility.



**BEFORE- 57 spaces**  
**AFTER- 79 spaces**  
**+22 spaces**





# 7. Enhance Connectivity Between Town Hall and Fire Station

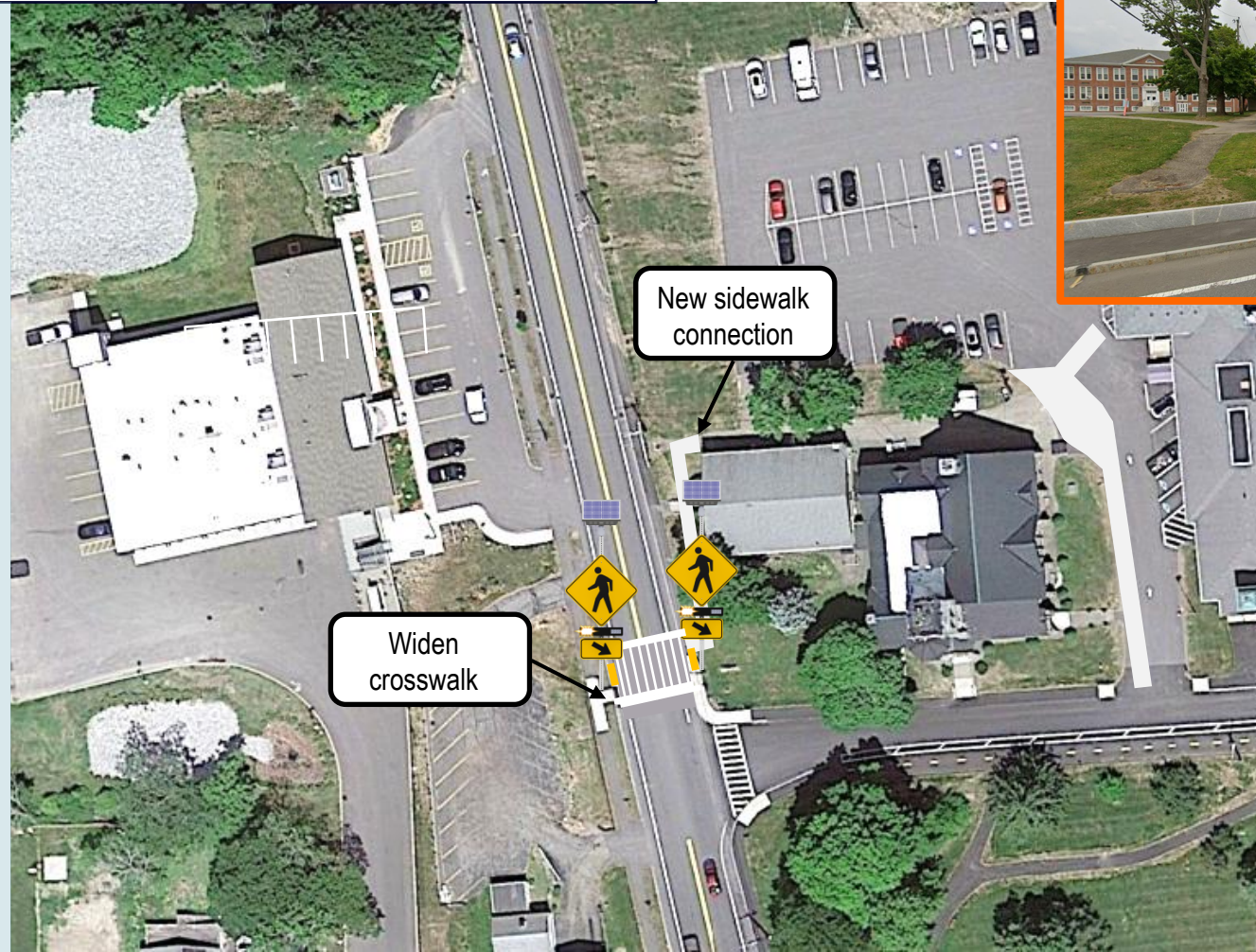
## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years)



**What this does-** Extend connectivity to adjacent sidewalks and enhance safety and visibility to support safer pedestrian movement and calm traffic along Paxton Street

Although there is an existing crosswalk on Paxton Street to connect to Washburn Square and the fire station area, the connection to Town Hall is incomplete as an intuitive path for pedestrians. There is also observed high volume of cars turning at this intersection and additional safety enhancements would benefit visibility and traffic calming. This location will also provide accessible grade access to the street from the path between the church and the Town Hall parking lot.







# 7. Enhance Connectivity Between Town Hall and Fire Station

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years)



**What this does-** Extend connectivity to adjacent sidewalks and enhance safety and visibility to support safer pedestrian movement and calm traffic along Paxton Street

### Components

- Improve existing sidewalk segment from Town Hall
- Create ramp down to Paxton from path to Town Hall
- Relocated crosswalk with increased width, ADA ramps and RRFBs







# 8. Improve connectivity and Pick-Up/Drop-Off Conditions at the School

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years)

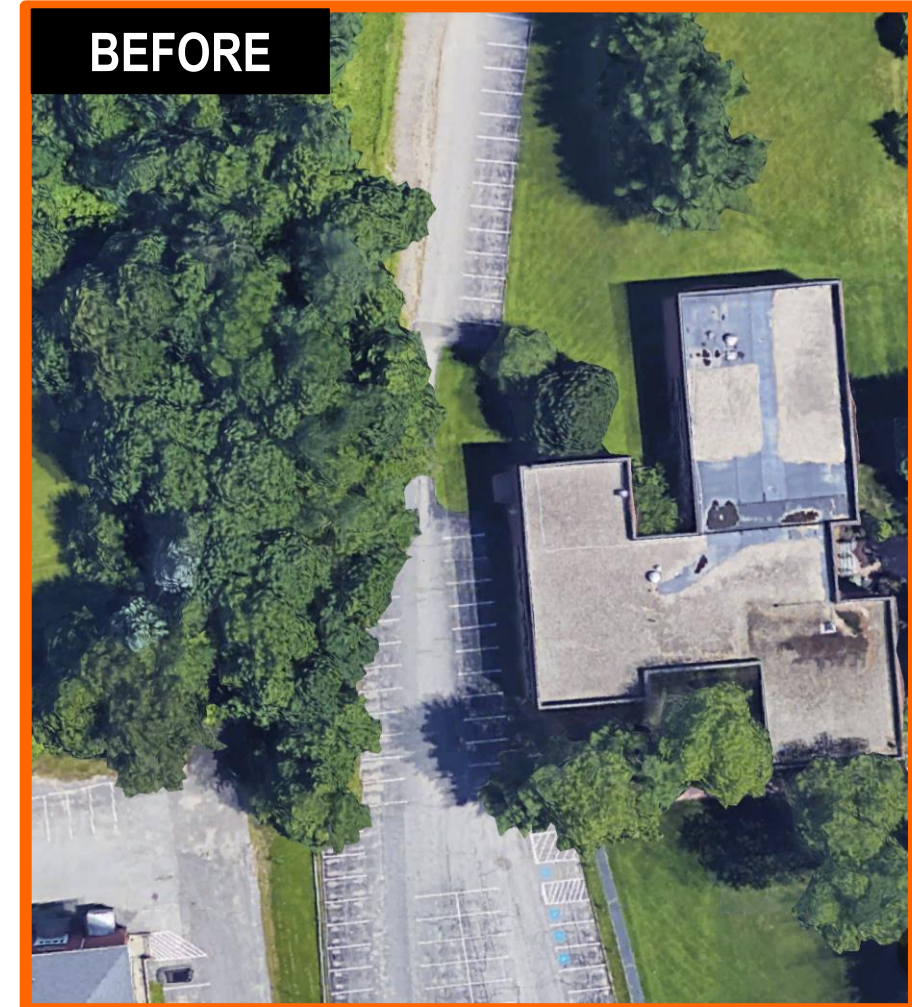


**What this does-** Improves ease and safety of school pick-up and drop-off periods with intuitive, one-way circulation

The school parking is currently challenged with high volumes of vehicles for pick-up and drop-off periods but with a narrow configuration requiring cars to enter, park, then reverse out the same entrance from Washburn Square. With only a short segment of undeveloped land between the north end of the parking lot and an existing path segment onto Winslow Avenue, this recommendation proposes closing the gap with a small road extension and introducing one-way circulation through the school.



Existing path access on Winslow Ave



Existing parking lot configuration





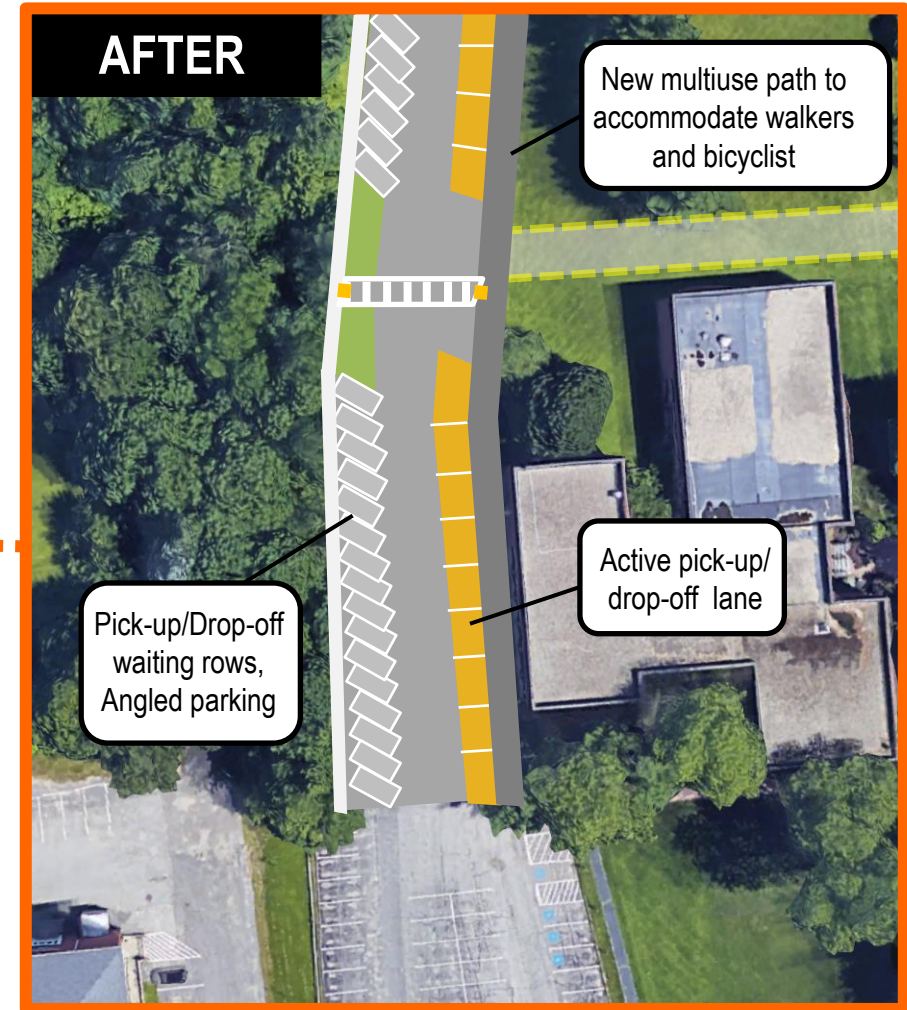
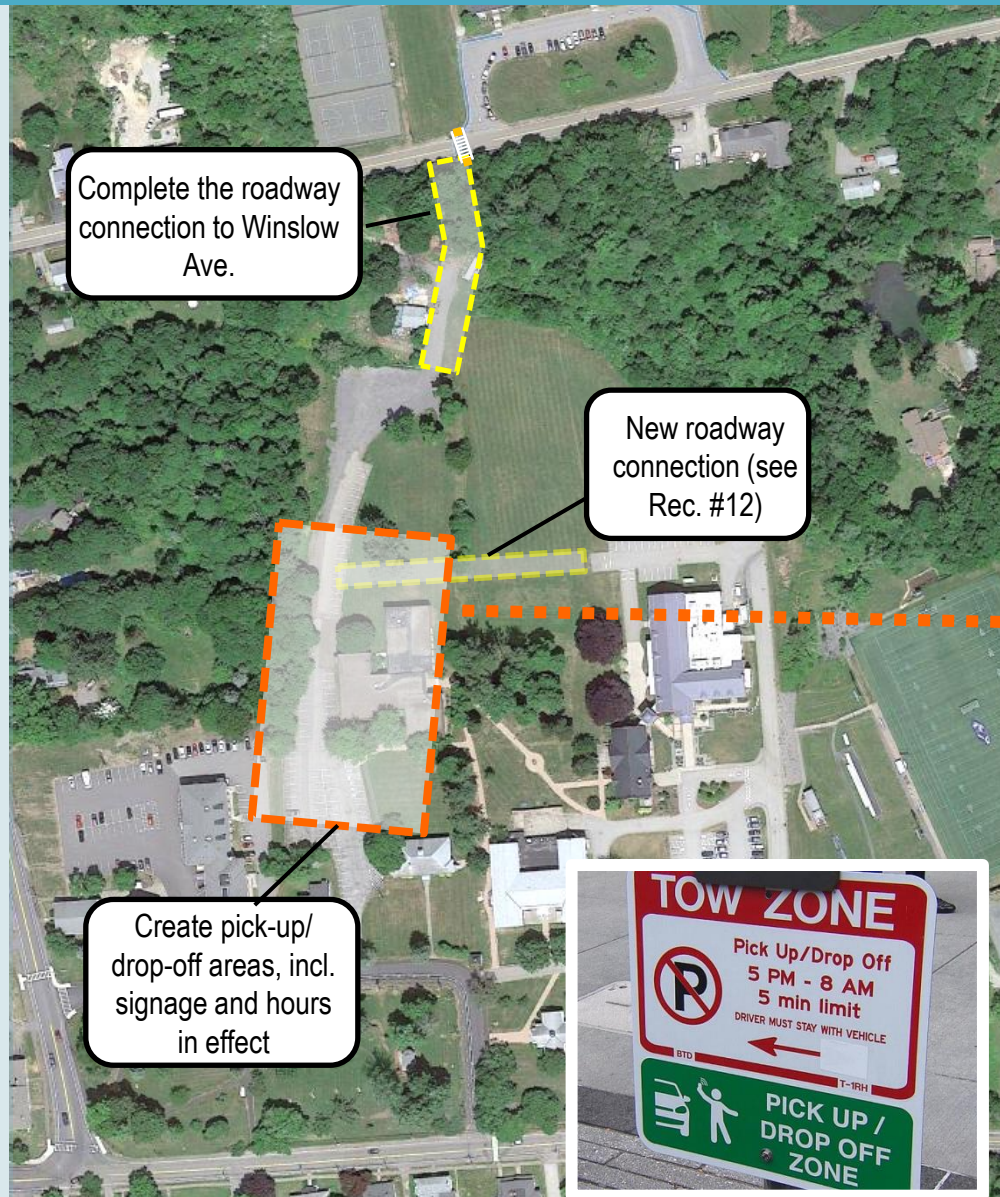
# 8. Improve connectivity and Pick-Up/Drop-Off Conditions at the School

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years) ● ● ●

### Components

- Roadway extension to Winslow and one-way circulation
- Designate a new area for student pick-up/drop-off with reconfiguration of parking to angled, designated areas for active pick-up/drop-off vs. waiting area, and new directional signage
- Sidewalk on eastern side of parking lot and multiuse path on west side of parking lot
- Integrated landscaping
- Ties in with proposed roadway extension in Recommendation 12







# 9. Add On-Street Parking Along Route 9

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years)



**What this does-** Adds on-street parking along Route 9 and encourages walking to multiple destinations through centralized on-street parking

The Route 9 corridor in Leicester currently has no on-street parking. The area is characterized by a lot of through traffic, but it also has a lot of businesses and abuts residential neighborhoods. Additionally, the traffic volumes and roadway widths provide opportunities to add on-street parking to portions of this corridor.

Adding on street parking not only encourages a park once strategy where customers will visit multiple locations with there car in a single spot, but it also slows traffic volumes and increases safety for all modes of travel.







# 9. Add On-Street Parking Along Route 9

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years)



**What this does-** Adds on-street parking along Route 9 and encourages walking to multiple destinations through centralized on-street parking

The intersection of Route 9, Main Street, and Pleasant Street is characterized by heavy traffic, and it is challenging for bicycles and pedestrians to navigate. There are two westbound lanes on Route 9 near the intersection, but they quickly merge into one. Additionally, there are several businesses clustered in this vicinity.







# 9. Add On-Street Parking Along Route 9

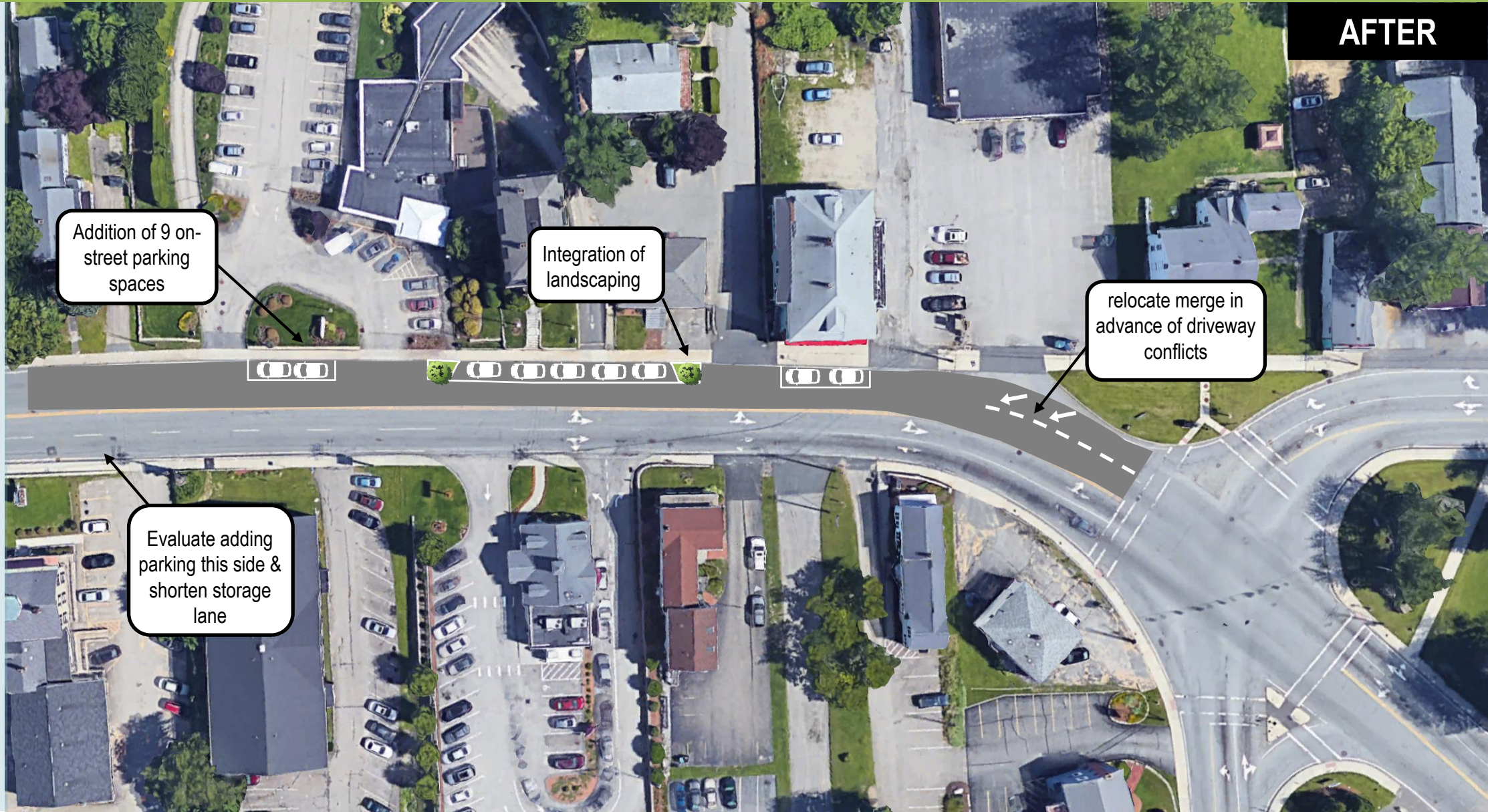
## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years)



### Components

- Add on street parking on Route 9 by Warren Ave.
- Integrate landscaping and curb expansions
- Evaluate adding parking on the southern side of Route 9
- Consider adjusting the bus stop location by Cumberland Farms to improve safety and traffic flow







# 10. Further Expand Pedestrian Connectivity

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Mid-Term (3-6 years)

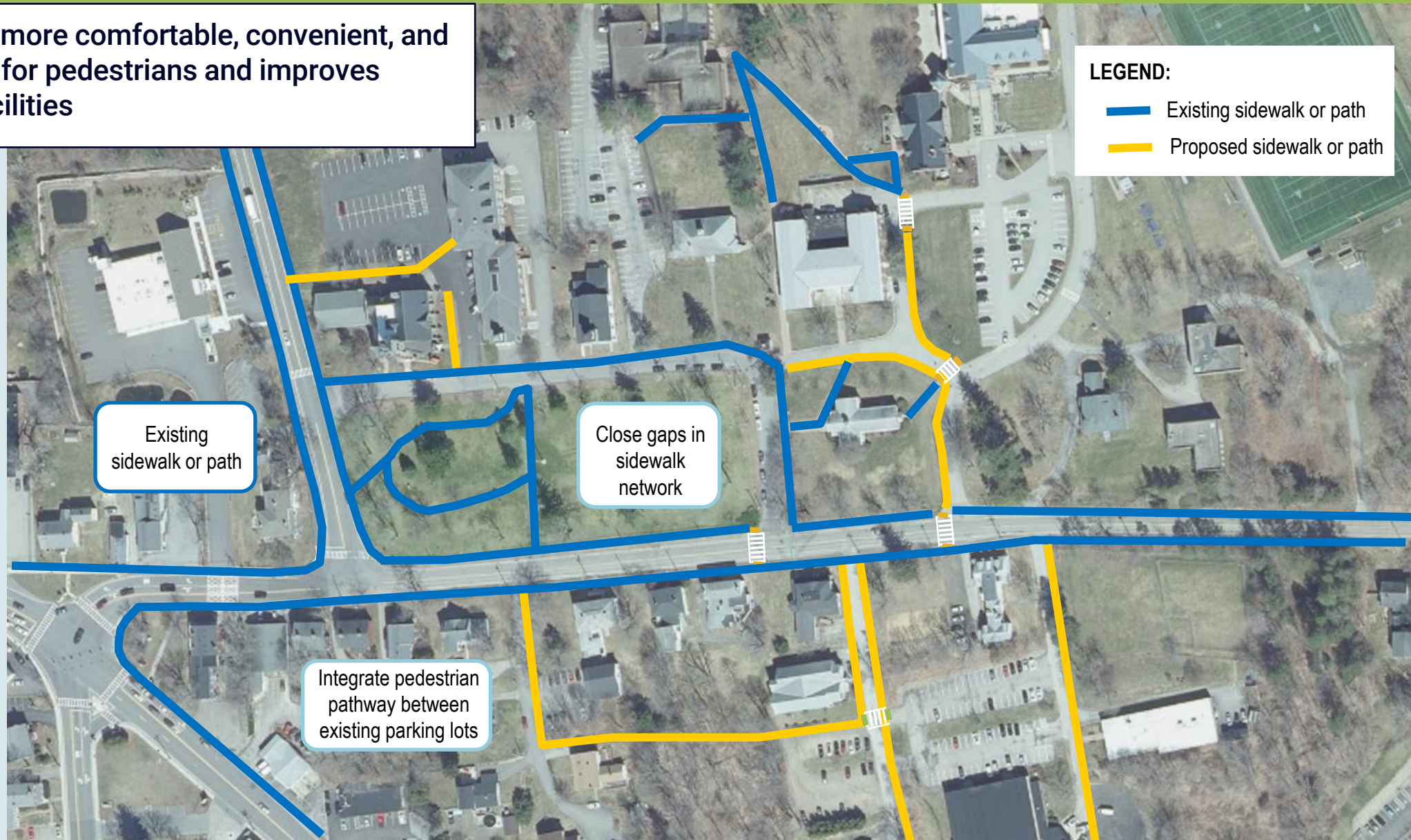


**What this does-** Creates a more comfortable, convenient, and safe walking environment for pedestrians and improves connectivity to parking facilities

Existing pedestrian connectivity to multiple key parking lots is limited by missing sidewalks or gaps in existing sidewalks, particularly to the south of the study area. Closing gaps in the sidewalk network and creating a pedestrian path between lots to the south of Main Street would benefit pedestrian safety, wayfinding, and comfort and improve access to parking.

### Components

- Add missing sidewalk connections
- Add paths from parking areas to key destinations



### LEGEND:

- Existing sidewalk or path
- Proposed sidewalk or path





# 11. Create More Integrated Bicycle Connections



## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Long-Term (7-15 years)



**What this does-** Provides an off-road shared use path in the Downtown

### LEGEND:

-  Existing path
-  Proposed connection

Create more integrated ped/bike connections

As this area continues to grow, the demand for bicycle infrastructure will also increase, particularly near a high school. Adding a shared use path around Washburn square, to the high School, and connecting to Winslow Avenue will be a great first step to building a more robust town-wide bicycle network.

### Components

- Provides a shared use path around Washburn Square, connecting to the school and Winslow Avenue







# 12. Construct a New Road Behind the High School

## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

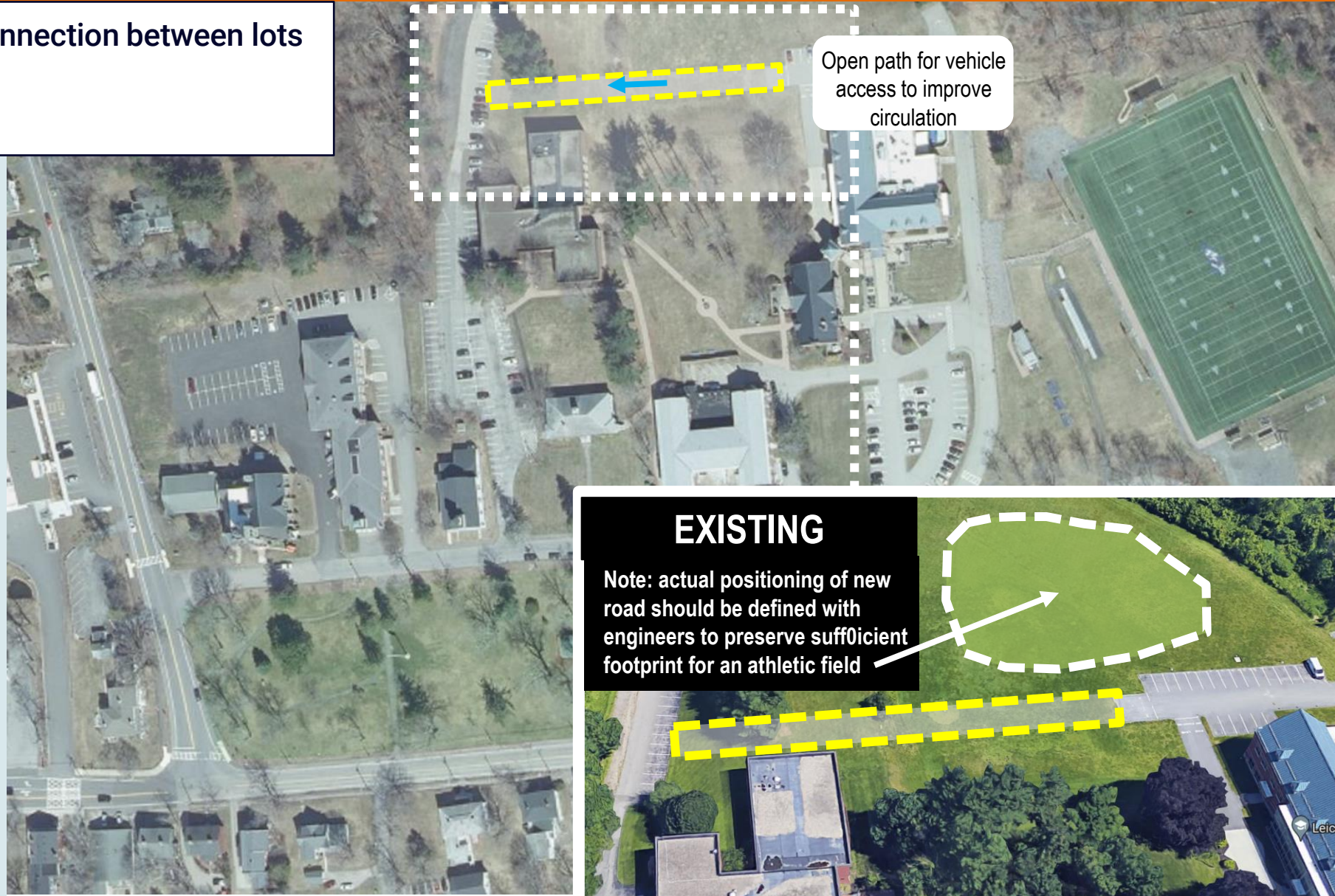
Long-Term (7-15 years) 

**What this does-** Provides a northern connection between lots to allow for loop circulation

Today, vehicles must turn around within the school lot to navigate back to a main road. This proposed concept creates a new, connecting loop route between existing lots to allow for easier circulation. This configuration would be particularly beneficial during special events attracting a higher volume of visitors at one time, such as visitors coming to the new athletic field proposed for this area.

### Components

- Build a new road behind the high school, while preserving option for athletic field
- Recirculate the bus route to use the new road
- Open the downtown core to new development and parking opportunities







# 13. Increase Connectivity Between Main Street and Route 9

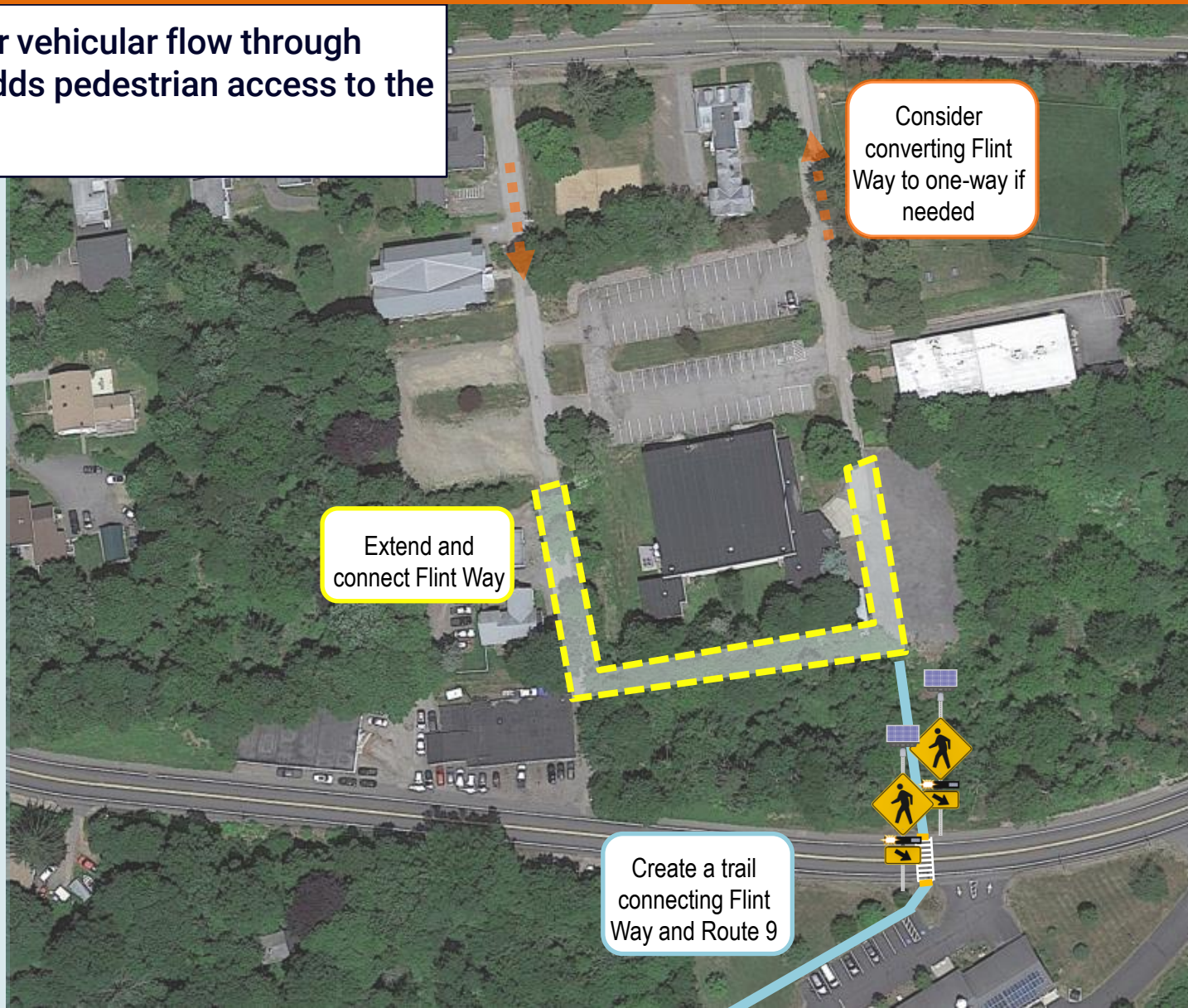
## DOWNTOWN LEICESTER PARKING PLAN

Long-Term (7-15 years) ○○○

**What this does-** Provides a circular vehicular flow through both segments of Flint Way and adds pedestrian access to the athletic fields.

Currently, there are two narrow dead-end streets parallel to each other, both named Flint Way because they were originally connected. Having dead-end roads makes it difficult to turn around and maneuver past oncoming traffic. Extending and re-connecting the two segments of Flint Way will improve circulation and flow.

Today, many students also cut through Flint Way to Route 9 to access the athletic fields behind the police station. Formalizing a trail connection and crosswalk will make this route safer and easier.



### Components

- **Extend and connect the two sections of Flint Way**
- **If needed, Flint Way could become one-way to add room for on-street parking or sidewalks**
- **Create a trail connecting Flint Way and the athletic fields behind the police station**
- **Evaluate the need for a crosswalk with RRFBs on Route 9**



**Next Steps** ● ● ●



# Next Steps

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## How can Leicester advance these solutions?

There are several steps which must be realized in order to implement the changes detailed in this study. Some of these include the development and procurement of new signage and capital improvements, administrative and operative changes to best carry out revised programs, and legislative changes to enable parking regulatory changes. Some relevant parallel efforts are already advancing through dialogue and early planning and these discussions should be aligned with the recommendations of this report. Critical paths to success include:

- **Coordinate with the Planning Board:** The Planning Board should review these recommendations. As needed, the Town should check in with this body for feedback as recommendations progress.
- **Coordinate with the DPW:** Many of the recommendation in the downtown involve restriping roads and parking lots and adding sidewalks and other multimodal amenities. Coordinating with DPW on the timing and funding of these improvements is essential to implementation.
- **Coordinate with MassDOT:** Recommendations along Route 9, such as adding on street parking and new pedestrian crossings will require active coordination and collaboration with MassDOT.
- **Ongoing Public and Staff Engagement:** Some of the changes proposed will require continuing to coordinate with the public as well as particular stakeholders, such as Leicester High School and nearby businesses. It may be useful to convene a Parking or Business Working Group to review potential changes, or to check-in with select stakeholders such as existing to review proposed changes to parking regulations.
- **Pilot Early Changes, Monitor, and Report:** Providing several months to test new changes, such as on-street parking, coupled with monitoring and reporting back in a public manner, can help increase user buy-in.

A general timeline of implementation is outlined on the following page, with the understanding that key tasks associated with each recommendation may occur at different timeframes and with different levels of activity/intensity.

# Implementation Timeline

Rec #	Recommendation	Cost	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3-6	YEAR 7+
1	Reconfigure Washburn Square	\$	Coordinate with key stakeholders	Fund and carry out reconfiguration	Monitor usage	
2	Reconfigure Main Street Segment	\$	Coordinate with key stakeholders	Fund and carry out reconfiguration	Monitor usage	
3	Enhance Pedestrian Crossings/Safety	\$\$	Finalize locations and timings, fund or create funding plan	Implement and monitor	Implement and monitor Continue to adjust as needed	
4	Wayfinding for Parking/Key Destinations	\$	Enlist wayfinding committee to finalize sign locations/design based on this study and oversee branding. Release RFP for sign/branding plan.	Complete sign/branding plan. Pursue manufacturing and installation of signs	Ongoing maintenance plan	
5	Reduce Parking Standards and Incentivize Shared Parking	0	Coordinate with Town boards and local developers	Implement zoning and/or policy changes	Monitor changes	
6	Maximize Parking in Existing Lots	\$\$\$	Assess existing lots for opportunities	Prioritize smaller-scale improvements to quickly unlock capacity	Conduct larger-scale lot improvements/redesign	
7	Enhance Connectivity Between Town Hall and Fire Station	\$\$	Identify funding (consider as part of Rec 33)	Coordinate with key stakeholders	Fund and carry out reconfiguration	Monitor usage

Active Task  
 Passive Task

# Implementation Timeline

Rec #	Recommendation	Cost	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3-6	YEAR 7+
8	Improve Connectivity and PU/DO at School	\$\$\$	Confirm PU/DO needs from school	Pilot reconfiguration	Refine as needed and implement permanent changes	Monitor usage, adjust as needed
9	Add On-Street Parking Along Route 9	\$	Coordinate with key stakeholders	Coordinate with MassDOT	Fund and carry out reconfiguration	Monitor usage
10	Further Expand Pedestrian Connectivity	\$\$	Coordinate with key stakeholders	Identify and secure funding	Design and implement sidewalk and pathway improvements	Monitor usage and supplement as necessary
11	Create More Integrated Bicycle Connections	\$\$		Identify key bike routes and locations for infrastructure	Design bikeways. Identify funding	Fund and implement bikeways
12	Construct A New Road Behind the High School	\$\$\$		Coordinate with key stakeholders. Identify alignment and cross-section	Design roadway. Identify funding	Fund and implement roadway
13	Increase Connectivity Between Main St. & Rte. 9	\$\$\$		Coordinate with MassDOT and other key stakeholders	Design connections. Identify funding	Fund and implement trail and roadway improvements

Active Task  
 Passive Task