

# SELECT BOARD AGENDA

## Special Meeting

### 3:00 p.m. July 9, 2024

## Memorial Park Fieldhouse

### Board Room & Zoom



Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, meetings of public bodies may be conducted virtually provided that adequate access is provided to the public.

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82601013229?pwd=OE82V1MxQnJUZHVXZjFNbWJXRFRJoQT09>

Webinar ID: 826 0101 3229

Passcode: 652800

One tap mobile: [+16469313860](tel:+16469313860).,82601013229#,,,\*652800#

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|    | <p>Public Comment Period</p> <p>Residents are encouraged to inform the Office of the Town Manager in advance via email (OTM@needhamma.gov), telephone (781) 455-7500 extension 204, or in person by the end of the business day prior to the meeting of their intent to participate in the public comment period. The Chair will first recognize those who have communicated in advance their desire to speak for up to three minutes. If time allows, others wishing to speak will be recognized in an order determined by the Chair for up to three minutes. The Board’s policy on public participation in meetings can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> |
| 1. | Seven Goals Review                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 2. | FY2024 – FY2025 Objectives Review                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 3. | FY2025 – FY2026 Goal Discussion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

## CONSENT AGENDA

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| 1. | Accept the following donation to the Needham Fire Department: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$100 from Nancy Mayo</li></ul>                                                                                                       |
| 2. | Accept the following donations made to the Needham Community Revitalization Trust Fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$2,000 from C. Bruce Johnstone</li><li>• \$500 from Harry and Kristen Stants for the Caley Bench</li></ul> |

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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$300 from Kelsey Crow for the Caley Bench</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3. | <p>Approve a request from Allan Eyden, Road Coordinator of PanMass Challenge, to hold the road event “PanMassachusetts Challenge” in Needham. The event is scheduled for Saturday, August 3, 2024, and Sunday, August 4, 2024, at 6:30 a.m. The event and route have been approved by the following departments: Fire, Police, and Public Works.</p> |



**TOWN OF NEEDHAM**  
**TOWN HALL**  
**Needham, MA 02492**

**DRAFT**

Location: Memorial Park Field House  
Board Room  
92 Rosemary Street  
Needham, MA 02494

Date: Tuesday, July 9, 2024, 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Vision: Needham is a safe and welcoming town that people are proud to call home, where neighbors care, respect differences, and contribute to the global community.

**Select Board Goal Statement**  
**Adopted September 26, 2023**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Select Board Goals is to effect positive change, set policy direction for Town government, and guide the development of the budget.

**GOAL #1: Healthy and Socially Thriving** – Needham residents enjoy plentiful recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in an environment that upholds human rights, celebrates diversity, and fosters a sense of connection among neighbors, thus strengthening their bond to the community they proudly call home. Needham:

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups,
- Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members,
- Fosters inclusion, diversity, and equity in order to become a culturally responsive, anti-racist, and anti-biased community, and
- Values public art.

| <b>FY2024-2025 Initiatives</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Status</b>                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                              | Identify ways to institutionalize community conversation around race, diversity, equity, and inclusion, to build relationships and a stronger understanding of different | <b>A planning group has been established. The first event was led by the High School students on May 2, 2024. The planning group is</b> |

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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|   | perspectives and lived experiences. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                                    | meeting to plan the next event for Fall 2024.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2 | Make intentional efforts and identify creative ideas for community outreach to diversify the candidate pool for all appointed Boards and Committees, measure progress. <i>(0-18 months)</i> | Topic surveys complete, curriculum and media being finalized. Target date will be September for new appointments. Using this data, community groups were directly solicited to pass along the Town's request for committee member applications in the Spring of 2024.                                                                            |
| 3 | Complete the Equity Audit, clarify objectives, and determine next steps. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                               | The Town received a \$50,000 Community Compact Grant for this project. The project will kick off this summer. The Town has partnered with a DEIB consultant to conduct employee focus groups, for the purpose of recommending impactful next steps in our DEIB strategy, more meaningful engagement in DEIB themes, and equity audit objectives. |
| 4 | Conduct Board and Committee member orientation sessions to include the Town's race equity vision statement and NUARI principles. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                       | Staff drafted the curriculum outline and received feedback via survey from current Board/Committee Members. Orientation planned for Fall 2024.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 5 | NUARI: Conduct Board and Committee member orientation sessions to include the Town's race equity vision statement. <i>(Included in Initiative 1.4)</i>                                      | Included in Initiative 4.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 6 | Hold a public hearing and determine if the Town will change Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                   | Hearing held 11/28/2023, vote to change held 12/5/2023.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 7 | Invite various identity network groups to meet with the Select Board and introduce the work they do and the community they serve. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                      | Staff will use data gleaned from surveys and committee recruitment outreach to engage with identity network groups, with the intent of using these conversations as segues to Select Board meeting discussions. A request for outreach was included in the solicitation of committee member applications.                                        |



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| 8  | Develop a plan for a community observance of Juneteenth. <i>(18-36 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                                        | A brief ceremony was held on June 19, 2024, and the Board will discuss this goal at its next goals workshop. |
| 9  | Implement Valor Act and consider aligning the administrative process for both the Valor Act and the Senior Corps programs. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i>                                                                             | Staff will make a proposal in CY2024 Q4 for the Board's consideration.                                       |
| 10 | Conduct focus groups with BIPOC community members to identify strategies for ensuring that all members of the community feel welcome as outlined in the NUARI vision statement and guiding principles. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i> | Focus groups were held in Fall 2023.                                                                         |

**GOAL #2: Economically Vital** – Needham welcomes investment in local businesses and has a thriving local economy that contributes to a growing local tax base to support desirable community amenities and programs. Needham:

- Has a growth mindset and encourages business development and redevelopment,
- Supports an environment for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship,
- Promotes a well-educated, skilled, and diverse work force that meets employers' needs,
- Fosters a collaborative and resource-rich regional business climate,
- Attracts, sustains, and retains a diverse mix of businesses, entrepreneurs and jobs that support the needs of all community members, and
- Supports financial security and economic opportunity.

| <b>FY2024-2025 Initiatives</b> | <b>Description</b>                                         | <b>Status</b> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 11                             | Evaluate Chestnut Street Redevelopment <i>(36+ months)</i> | Deferred.     |

**GOAL #3: Livable**– Needham values diversity and a broad spectrum of housing options. The community is supported by well-maintained public infrastructure and desirable amenities that accommodate a variety of community needs. Needham:

- Promotes and sustains a secure, clean, and attractive place to live, work and play,
- Supports an increase of housing, including a variety of types and price points,

- Provides high-performing, reliable, affordable public infrastructure and Town services,
- Encourages and appropriately regulates sustainable development, and
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability and accessibility for all members of the community.

| <b>FY2024-2025 Initiatives</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Status</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| 12 *                           | Work with the Planning Board on next steps related to the MBTA Community Housing Guidelines and the update to the Town's Affordable Housing Plan. Review updated demographics and impact on anticipated transit-oriented development and schools. <i>(0-18 months)</i> | <b>The HONE Working Group submitted its final recommendations to Select Board &amp; Planning Board on April 30<sup>th</sup>. The initial plan has been filed with EOHLC. October 21, 2024, STM is the target for Town Meeting Action.</b>            |
| 13                             | Identify funding for School Master Plan projects and participate in the planning process. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                         | <b>The MSBA approved an Invitation for Eligibility for the Pollard project on December 13, 2023. Funding for feasibility was approved by the 2024 Annual Town Meeting.</b>                                                                           |
| 14                             | Evaluate RTS Service Delivery Model to guide long-term investment and review operational efficiencies in the short-term. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                          | <b>After failing to receive bids within the allocated budget, DPW is working with a firm to conduct a survey. Once results are complete, viable options will be evaluated by a consultant. The target for survey completion is Fall/Winter 2024.</b> |
| 15 *                           | Evaluate next steps for use of the Stephen Palmer Building. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>A survey has been drafted with Select Board and Park &amp; Recreation Commission input, with targeted distribution in Fall 2024 following a stakeholder meeting, to include current residents.</b>                                                |
| 16                             | Evaluate expansion of off-leash dog areas. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Staff will provide concept plans based on the ARA Working Group recommendations by August 2024.</b>                                                                                                                                               |
| 17                             | Support for the Needham Housing Authority redevelopment project. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>The Select Board, Planning Board, and CPC advanced articles to the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. All of the articles passed. The Town-Financed Community Housing</b>                                                                                  |

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|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Oversight Committee (T-CHOC) will oversee the allocated funds.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 18 | Evaluate the role of the Affordable Housing Trust. <i>(18-36 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Deferred.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 19 | Begin the Ridge Hill/Nike Assessment Phase 2 Project, including working with the Community Farm to decide on the long-term plan for the farm at the side as well as considering potential future uses of the site. <i>(36+ months)</i>                                                       | <b>Deferred.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 20 | Create a voluntary local historic district under Chapter 40C for the property of Elizabeth and Maurice Handel at 3 Rosemary Street, built by Jonathan and Jemima Kingsbury in 1779, the oldest house in 02494 and the 11th oldest in Needham. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i> | <b>The Final Report is complete, and the By-law amendment was approved by the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. The By-law will become effective upon the approval of the Office of the Attorney General.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 21 | Upgrade Town Seal to improve graphic quality and historical accuracy. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i>                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>The Needham Branding and Town Seal Committee was appointed by the Board and has been meeting since Fall 2023. The Governor has cut the funding allocated for this project in half under the 9C cuts. The Board has allocated ARPA funds to fund the remainder of the project. The Committee is working with a consultant to develop a brand logo and revised Town Seal.</b>                                                                                       |
| 22 | Identify opportunities for expanded active and passive recreation facilities including but not limited to an action sports park and additional boat ramps. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i>                                                                                    | <b>Construction funding for reconstructed and expanded NHS tennis courts projects is in the permitting phase, with funds proposed for the October 21, 2024, Special Town Meeting. The Active Recreation Feasibility Study has been awarded to CHA Solutions Company. Their process began in early 2024 and is likely to run through the summer in order to deliver their suggestions before budget season in Fall 2024. Their focus is to find the best location</b> |

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|    |                                                                                                                                                | for a skate park and pickleball courts.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 23 | Maintain/repair the barn at Ridge Hill. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i>                                                         | The revised License for use of the barn by Needham Community Theater is complete (Select Board endorsement approved on 12/19/2023). Emergency repairs are on-going – discussions on the future of the property will be scheduled in 2024. |
| 24 | Improve trailhead access to ensure clear and accessible access; consider creating a trails app. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i> | The Conservation and Park & Recreation Departments have reestablished the Town's Trail Stewards Program and have engaged Tighe & Bond, who designed uniform trail markers.                                                                |

**GOAL #4: Accessible and Connected** – In Needham, people can easily and affordably travel to their desired destinations without relying solely on cars. Needham:

- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use, manages congestion, and facilitates strong regional multimodal connections,
- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, comfortable, affordable, reliable, convenient, and clean mobility options,
- Applies Complete Street principles to evaluate and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety,
- Coordinates with state and federal leaders to ensure access to safe, reliable, and efficient public transit,
- Provides effective infrastructure and services that enables people to connect with the natural and built environment, and
- Promotes transportation options to remain an age-friendly community.

| <b>FY2024-2025 Initiatives</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                             | <b>Status</b>                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25                             | Update parking payment technologies to allow for credit card and/or app-based payments. <i>(0-18 months)</i>   | The procurement of an app-based payment option has begun. Four bids were received with review of bids in June 2024.                                                    |
| 26                             | Ask the Planning Board to update parking requirements in zoning at May 2024 Town Meeting. <i>(0-18 months)</i> | The Planning Department requested FY2025 funding for technical assistance to inform a Planning Board zoning amendment on this topic. The funding request was approved. |

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| 27 | Pilot converting some on-street parking spaces for more active curb use (e.g., short customer visits, active loading areas). <i>(0-18 months)</i> | <b>Deferred until after the app-based payment technology is in place and additional data has been collected.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 28 | Update the Town's parking regulations and permit program (including permit rules, time/day regulations, and pricing). <i>(0-18 months)</i>        | <b>Deferred until after the app-based payment technology is in place.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 29 | Seek funding for noise reduction/Quiet Zone feasibility, design, and construction. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                           | <b>Funding in the amount of \$750,000 for design was funded at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. DPW is drafting procurement documents.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 30 | Evaluate and make a final determination of the appropriate plan for Downtown Redesign Phase 2. <i>(0-18 months)</i> .                             | <b>The Director of Public Works solicited design concepts from consulting engineers, and presentations were made to the Select Board this past winter. A design contract was awarded to Environmental Partners. The Town is currently defining the scope for Phase I of the project, to include community outreach and design of pilot. Phase I is expected to be implemented in CY2025.</b> |
| 31 | Evaluate expansion of snow removal efforts, including sidewalk plowing strategies. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                           | <b>DPW will provide an update to the Board during Q1 FY2025.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 32 | Evaluate funding options for the Rail Trail extension from High Rock Street to Needham Junction. (36+ months)                                     | <b>Deferred.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 33 | Evaluate future use of the rail corridor between Dover and Newton. (36+ months)                                                                   | <b>Deferred.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 34 | Evaluate the feasibility of a shared use way between Needham Heights and the City of Newton. (36+ months)                                         | <b>Deferred.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 35 | Implement the Parking Study. (Included in 4.25 -4.28)                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 36 | Prioritize Funding for the Central Ave/Center St Bridge<br><i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i>                                         | <b>Funding for this project is included in the amended FY2025 TIP. Dover is taking the lead on designing a new bridge and has contracted with TEC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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|  |  | to work the TIP process. It is anticipated this project will be approximately 5 years out and will have to be coordinated with MassDOT's project at Chestnut St. |
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**GOAL #5: Safe** – Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety. Needham:

- Provides public safety in a manner consistent with community values,
- Provides comprehensive advanced life support level care,
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and responses to emergencies and natural disasters,
- Fosters a climate of safety in homes, businesses, neighborhoods, streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, schools, and public places, and
- Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety, and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive.

| <b>FY2024-2025 Initiatives</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Status</b>                                                                                       |
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| 37                             | Actively monitor progress on the law enforcement recommendations that NPD Chief Schlittler presented to the Select Board on June 8, 2021. <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i> | The Police Chief attended the March 26 2024 Select Board meeting to present the 2023 Annual Report. |

**GOAL #6: Responsibly Governed** – Needham has an open and accessible Town government that fosters community engagement and trust while providing excellent municipal services. Needham:

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the Town's financial, human, information, and physical assets,
- Invests in making Town-owned buildings safe and functional,
- Supports strategic decision-making with opportunities for engagement and timely, reliable, and accurate data and analysis,
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality service in all municipal operations,
- Supports, develops, and enhances relationships between the Town and community and regional partners,
- Proactively reviews and updates Town policies and regulations and ensures compliance,
- Promotes collaboration between boards and committees,
- Values the local government workforce,
- Identifies and implements strategies to hire, support and retain diverse staff at every level of the organization, and

- Prioritizes acquisition of strategic parcels.

| <b>FY2024-2025 Initiatives</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Status</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| 38                             | Evaluate the need for a flag policy. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                        | The policy was approved at the 11/28/2023 Select Board meeting.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 39                             | Evaluate the possibility of developing a Community Master Plan. Develop an inventory of Town long-range plans and identify overlaps and conflicts, including other Boards of jurisdictions. <i>(0-18 months)</i> | Pending                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 40                             | Establish process to do regular by-law charter review updates. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                              | The Select Board appointed a working group on 1/9/2024 to develop a proposal for Town Meeting. The proposed By-law amendment to implement the review process was approved at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. This committee will be established in Q2 FY2025 following approval by the Attorney General.                                                         |
| 41                             | DPW phased renovation/construction. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                                                                                         | Funding for the design of Phase I of this project was approved at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. Staff is performing a scope review in June 2024.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 42                             | Capital Facilities: CATH upgrades (including additional parking) and Library phased renovations. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                                                                            | Projects requests were submitted in the FY 2025-2029 CIP. Design of the Library's Young Adult project was approved at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. Funding for the rental of 13 additional parking spots from the MBTA next to the CATH was approved at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. CATH upgrades are included in the most recent Capital Improvement Plan. |
| 43                             | Evaluate ways to increase minority and women-owned business participation in construction, building maintenance projects, and other Town programs. <i>(0-18 months)</i>                                          | The PPBC will meet or exceed the MSBA standards for MBE & WBE participation on the design and construction of the Pollard project. This topic will be included in the                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|    |                                                                                                          | <b>Town's upcoming procurement manual.</b>                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 44 | Review and recodify the non-criminal disposition by-law ( <i>Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative</i> ) | <b>The October 30, 2023, Special Town Meeting approved the By-law amendment that has been approved by the Attorney General. A correcting amendment was approved at the May 13, 2024, Special Town Meeting</b> |

**GOAL #7: Environmentally Sustainable** – Needham is a sustainable, thriving and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth's resources; and cares for ecosystems. Needham:

- Combats the climate crisis,
- Prioritizes sustainability, including transitioning from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy,
- Encourages the efficient use of natural resources, and
- Protects and enhances the biodiversity and vitality of ecological systems.

| <b>FY2024-2025 Initiatives</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                               | <b>Status</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 45                             | Prioritize and implement the Climate Action Plan. ( <i>0-18 months</i> )                                         | <b>The CAPC presented a draft plan on 12/19/2023, and a public hearing was held on 1/9/2024. The Select Board approved the composition and charge of the permanent committee (CAC) at its meeting on March 12, 2024 and approved the Climate Action Roadmap on May 14, 2024. A Sustainability Manager was hired in December 2023.</b> |
| 46                             | Identify parcel acquisition to comply with Land and Water Conservation Fund requirements. ( <i>0-18 months</i> ) | <b>Pending</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 47                             | Evaluate adoption of net-zero building code; specialized opt-in code. ( <i>0-18 months</i> )                     | <b>The October 30, 2023 Special Town Meeting approved the adoption of the code.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 48                             | Sponsor a tree summit. ( <i>0-18 months</i> )                                                                    | <b>The Tree Summit was postponed from 2/7/2024. The Town Manager is convening a</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



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|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | small working group to help determine next steps.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 49 | Explore development of a Town Electric Vehicle (EV) policy, i.e., the default position for fleet replacement should be EVs unless there is a compelling reason to use an alternative. <i>(18-36 months)</i> | The Sustainability Manager has started a process to identify what the potential policy may cover.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 50 | Recommend community energy aggregation <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i>                                                                                                                       | Public comment on draft plan held 12/6/2023 to 1/5/2024. Comments were compiled and submitted to the DPU. The draft plan was validated and approved for submission by the Town working group on 1/8/2024. A required meeting with DOER occurred on 1/16/2024, followed by DPU Public hearing held on 3/14/2024. The proposal is currently awaiting review by the DPU. |
| 51 | Review/establish electric vehicle charging rates <i>(Operationalized FY 2023-24 Initiative)</i>                                                                                                             | The Select Board approved the rates at its 10/24/2023 meeting.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

### **August 3 & 4 Select Board Retreat - Items for Referral to Others**

- Consider restriction of individual serving alcohol bottles – referred to the Board of Health on 8/15/2023
- Create a town wide bike route map to use as a planning tool - deciding intentionally on which roads we would like to have a bike lane, where we want to channel our bike traffic – referred to Mobility Committee 8/15/2023
- Explore opportunities to increase bike infrastructure as possible throughout the town – referred to Mobility Committee 8/15/2023
- Explore the creation of a mountain biker trail extending south from Kendrick Street and parallel to Greendale Ave. – referred to Mobility Committee 8/15/2023
- Evaluate the issue of bicycles on sidewalks – referred to Mobility Committee 8/15/2023
- Procure a level 3 charging station to enable electric school transportation and town vehicle fleet changes – Referred to the Climate Action Planning Committee on 8/15/2023

### **August 3 & 4 Select Board Retreat - Items referred to staff for budget consideration**

- Explore increasing the budget for Town Tree Planting
- Arts
  - Increase NCAC funding in FY2025 Operating Budget
  - New arts goal after plan is complete
- Cooling Infrastructure (shade structures at Rosemary, playgrounds & playing fields, and on Town Common)
- Social Safety Net (increase funding for direct support)
- Food Insecurity (expand food insecurity remediation programs supported by the Town)

**Discussion Items**  
**Select Board Goals Setting FY2025 – 2026**

**GOAL #1: Healthy and Socially Thriving**

- Equity and inclusion Roadmap
- Create an action plan for transitioning all Town Buildings to having all-gender bathrooms.
- Launch a Citizens Academy to introduce Needham residents to all facets of local government
- Establish clear guidelines for public art proposals for the Town of Needham, including an outline of the existing process for approval from the appropriate committees to develop a consistent public arts program to serve the Needham community.
- 1776 celebration
- Town Hall Dance Party

**GOAL #2: Economically Vital**

- Gather community data from Placer.ai to look at movement and time in location (duration) to target future businesses and amenities (parking lots, parks, etc.).

**GOAL #3: Livable**

- Consider setting a production goal for affordable housing units. Map out multi-year strategies for how to achieve.
- Encourage and participate in the Planning Board's large house review
- Stephen Palmer Transition Plan

**GOAL #6: Responsibly Governed**

- Collaborate with the Finance Committee about the Town's policies regarding the use of free cash and debt.
- Recruitment initiatives
- Sign Bylaw review
- Code of Conduct Review
- Policy updates
- Developing measurable metrics and targets for adopted goals
- Guidelines for staff to respond to ad-hoc queries from residents

**GOAL #7: Environmentally Sustainable**

- Strengthen the Town's Stormwater bylaw
- Identify and implement strategies to protect the Town's tree canopy
- Create and adopt an EV-first policy that requires Town-owned and leased vehicle to adopt readily available EV technology at the time of replacement, where feasible.
- Develop and enact a Tree Preservation Bylaw covering the removal and restoration of trees on private land.
- Enable Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) by opt into MassDevelopment Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.
- Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap.



June 4, 2024

Kevin Keane, Needham Select Board Chair  
Heidi Frail, Needham Select Board Vice Chair  
Needham Town Hall  
1471 Highland Ave  
Needham, MA 02492

Re: Climate Action Planning Committee (CAPC) Recommended Actions for FY25

Dear Chair Keane and Vice Chair Frail:

The Climate Action Planning Committee (CAPC) has completed its charter to produce the the Town's first Climate Action Roadmap and looks forward to presenting it to the Town in June. The CAPC recognizes that the Town of Needham has already made significant progress on several key priorities from the Climate Action Roadmap, including passing the Opt-in Specialized Energy Code (which goes into effect July 1, 2024 for new construction), passing a new bylaw to help spur more solar PV installations on commercial structures and parking lots, hiring our Town's first Sustainability Manager, and initiating process to create the Town's first municipal electricity aggregation program. There have been many other steps taken by the Town and School Committee, and we thank the Select Board, Planning Board, School Committee, Town Manager's Office, Town Staff, and other volunteers for the seriousness with which they have considered and acted upon previous recommendations from the CAPC.

Before we formally wind down as a committee, the CAPC would like to recommend additional priorities for FY 2025. At our May 2024 meeting, the CAPC voted to recommend several high priority actions that will have a significant impact on our Town's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The key actions from the Climate Action Roadmap that the CAPC recommend that the Town begin working on next are as follows:

**TR.1.2.A Create and adopt an EV-first policy that requires Town-owned and leased vehicles to adopt readily available EV technology at time of replacement, where feasible.**

While the Town's emissions from its fleet of vehicles is not in and of itself a major driver of the Town's total CO<sub>2</sub> output, there are two reasons to prioritize the development of an EV-first policy. The first is pragmatic: adopting an EV-first policy is a requirement for participation in the Massachusetts Climate Leader Communities program, a new grant program that stacks upon the existing Green Communities program and opens new funding sources for the Town to pursue other actions in the Climate Action Roadmap. The second reason is symbolic: as Town residents and businesses see the Town shift to EVs, the more likely they will be able to appreciate the feasibility of individual conversions to EVs.

Note: An EV-first policy does not require the Town to purchase an EV; it just requires the Town to begin with the assumption that if an EV option exists that is affordable, available, and able to fill the role intended for the vehicle, it should be purchased over internal-combustion engine vehicles. Several other Towns have already adopted EV-First policies, including Lexington, Natick, Melrose, Brookline, Cambridge, Framingham, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Wellesley's EV First policy has been adopted by their DPW and Municipal Light Plant and is now being considered by other vehicle-owning departments.

**NA.1.1.A Develop and enact a Tree Preservation Bylaw covering the removal and restoration of trees on private land.**

Needham's tree cover is a substantial asset to the Town, currently sequestering 18,681 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> per year, or roughly 5% of the CO<sub>2</sub> that the Town produces each year. We recommend that the Town prioritize the protection of this resource.

**BU.1.1.B Enable Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) by opting into MassDevelopment Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.**

This action is focused on helping commercial property owners secure financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on private property. The program allows property owners to tie debt incurred for the investment in efficiency or renewable energy to be tied to the property instead of the individual, and that debt be transferred along with the property should the property be sold. There are modest requirements of Town staff specifically related to the recording of betterment assessments as they occur, but the benefit would be to potentially remove a disincentive to private property owners to pursue decarbonization projects.

**GO.1.2.A Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap.**

This last action item in the CAR also relates to several other actions, including promoting solar PV installation (EN.1.2.B); promoting building efficiency programs (BU.1.2.B); decarbonizing transportation (TR.1.1.B), heating of buildings (BU.1.2.C), and electricity (EN.1.1.B); waste reduction (NA.2.1.A). Since these actions will require substantial community outreach and education, it makes sense to establish a cohesive outreach program to address them together.

In transmitting these recommendations to you, the CAPC asks for the Select Board's support of these priorities over the coming year.

Sincerely,

Stephen Frail, Climate Action Planning Committee, Chair  
Nicholas Hill, Climate Action Planning Committee, Vice-Chair

**Board of Trustees  
of the  
Needham Free Public Library**

June 11, 2024

Kevin Keane, Chair  
Heidi Frail, Vice-Chair  
Cathy Dowd, Clerk  
Marianne Cooley  
Josh Levy  
Needham Select Board  
Needham Town Hall  
1471 Highland Avenue  
Needham, Massachusetts 02492

Re: Library Board of Trustees Feedback on Select Board Goals FY 25 & 26

Dear Members of the Needham Select Board:

We, the Trustees of the Needham Free Public Library, submit this letter to provide you with feedback on the priorities for the FY25 and FY26 Select Board Goals. You have strongly supported the Library in the past, including your recent recommendation to Town Meeting to fund the first phase of our space renovations. We appreciate that many of the Select Board's goals justify the Town's investment in the Library to "support an environment for creativity" that "enhances neighborhood livability" and "values public art." With evident alignment between current goals and the Library's 2023–2027 Strategic Plan, we anticipate your continued support for the Library to be a natural fit moving forward.

**Healthy and Socially Thriving.** Goal #1 currently calls for cultivating "a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups." During our strategic planning and space planning last year, we found significant need for enhancing cultural and educational services for young children, emerging adults, and aging residents. Our renovation plan calls for work on our tween and teen space and our children's room in its first two phases. We request your support in advancing the capital requests for construction of Phase 1 and design and construction of Phase 2 over the coming years. This will enable us to unlock opportunities for renovations that serve our aging residents as well.

**Responsibly Governed.** We are pleased to see "Library phased renovations" included under the Responsibly Governed (Goal #6) section of the FY2024–2025 Initiatives to Begin: Now (0–18 months). The decision to phase our renovation plans reflects our commitment to responsible governance of the Town's attention and finances. Moreover, the renovations respond to the need to ensure our Library's spaces are fit for the purpose of serving our

current and future residents, representing a direct “[Investment] in making Town-owned buildings safe and functional,” in Goal #6’s definition. In addition to our core functions, we believe the Library is an economic asset to Needham (Goal #2) because research has consistently shown that every dollar invested in public libraries produces, on average, five dollars in economic value.<sup>1</sup>

**Accessible and Connected.** We commend the Select Board’s emphasis on accessibility and connectedness in Goal #4, especially expanding multimodal transportation throughout the town, and ensuring it is safe for pedestrians and cyclists as they go to and from the Library (Goal #5). The Library looks forward to serving the new patrons anticipated by the HONE Advisory Group’s plans for expanding affordable and commuter-friendly housing. As a municipal building and municipal service located between Needham Center and Needham Heights, we hope the Library will be viewed as a key part of the development plans and a key partner in the enhancement of relevant public works. We are fortunate to have an MBTA bus stop across from our Highland Avenue entrance. However, our parking spaces for cars and access and parking for bicycles are currently limited.

**Valuing the Local Government Workforce.** Library staff have benefited from recent initiatives by the Town’s HR department to create employee resource groups and develop new policies for paid leave. We applaud this work. Supporting our staff is critical to supporting the Library’s mission and to helping to ensure “Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community,” as Goal #5 states.

The Library is designed to be inclusive through its collection, programming, and physical resources, a commitment we are expanding as a core part of our 2023–2027 Strategic Plan. Inclusion is necessary for safety (Goal #5). And it also represents collaboration. Our Strategic Plan specifically calls for increasing the Library’s visibility and position as a community partner. We are excited to be partners with the Select Board and the Town on achieving Needham’s upcoming goals. Let’s work together to make Needham an even more inclusive, connected, and thriving community.

Sincerely,

Board of Trustees of the Needham Free Public Library

Erhardt Graeff, Chair  
Robert A. Petitt, Vice-Chair  
Michael O’Neal, Secretary  
Kay Cahill  
Jay Fialkov  
Meghan Small  
Joshua Small

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.irs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/return-on-investment/recent-studies/>





# Sustainable Needham

## Climate Action Roadmap

Prepared by the Climate Action Planning Committee of Needham





# Acknowledgments

## Needham Climate Action Planning Committee (CAPC)

Stephen Frail, Chair  
Nick Hill, Vice Chair  
Rachel Bright  
Marianne Cooley, Needham Select Board  
Artie Crocker, Needham Planning Board  
Paul Dellaripa  
Natasha Espada, Needham Planning Board  
Joe Higgins  
Kevin Keane, Needham Select Board

## Town Staff Support for the CAPC

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Town of Needham  
Kathryn Copely, Administrative Specialist of  
Design and Construction, Town of Needham  
Hank Haff, Director, Building Design  
& Construction, Town of Needham

## CAPC Interns, 2022 & 2023:

Andy Atallah, Resident, Student,  
Middlebury College  
Rachel Alpert-Winna, Student, Emory University  
Joseph Sten, Resident, Student,  
Boston University

## Working Groups

### Clean Energy Supply

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Nick Hill, Needham CAPC  
George Kent, Resident  
Carys Lustig, Director of Public Works,  
Town of Needham  
Eileen Mullen, Green Needham  
Mathew Tuttleman, Resident  
Donna Vello, Green Needham

### Climate Smart Zoning & Planning

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Jacob Knowles, BR+A Consulting Engineers  
Andrea Love, Payette  
Oscar Mertz, Resident  
Lee Newman, Director of Planning &  
Community Development, Town of Needham  
David Roche, Former Building Commissioner,  
Town of Needham  
Justin Savignano, Assistant Town Engineer,  
Town of Needham

## Governance

Peter Atallah, Resident  
Rachel Bright, Needham CAPC  
Cyndi Gonzalez, Former Chief Information  
Officer, Town of Needham  
Amy Haelsen, Director of Communications &  
Community Engagement, Town of Needham  
Moe Handel, Former Member of Needham  
Select Board  
Karen Price, League of Women Voters of  
Needham  
Cecilia Simchak

## Natural Resources/Zero Waste

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Artie Crocker, Needham CAPC  
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Joe Leghorn, Needham Community Farm  
Ally Littlefield, Public Health Division,  
Town of Needham  
Christine Mittaz, Student, Needham High School  
Ed Olsen, Superintendent of Parks  
& Forestry, Town of Needham  
Mike Retzky, Superintendent of Water,  
Sewer and Drains, Town of Needham  
Eleanor Rosellini, Green Needham  
Isabell Wells, Resident

## Net Zero Buildings

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Barry Dulong, Director,  
Building Maintenance, Town of Needham  
Reg Foster, Chair, Needham Housing Authority  
Tali Golan, Sherman, Trip Advisor  
Hank Haff  
Joe Higgins, Needham CAPC  
Matthew Mayerhofer, Trip Advisor  
Shannon Nelligan, Assistant Director of  
Building Maintenance, Town of Needham  
Bill Paulsen, Realtor, Rotarian  
Ed Quinlan, Green Needham

## Zero Emissions Transportation

Carol Brown, Congregational Church  
of Needham  
Paul Dellaripa, Needham CAPC  
Jackie DeWolfe, Resident  
Michael Greis, Green Needham

Robbie Havdala, Needham Public Schools  
JP Mittaz, Green Energy Consumers Alliance  
Nick Morris-Kliment, Christ Episcopal Church  
John Regan, Fleet Supervisor, Town of Needham

## Sustainable Needham Advisory Group Members

Georgina Arrieta-Ruetenik, Resident  
Kim Hewitt, Former Director,  
Needham Free Public Library  
Peter Atallah  
Keith LaFace, Resident  
Hans Bhatra, Needham High School  
Environmental Club  
Andrea Longo Carter, Needham School  
Committee  
Kathleen Ward Brown, Needham Board  
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Carys Lustig  
Alexandra Clee, Assistant Town Planner,  
Town of Needham  
Louise Miller, Needham Finance Committee  
Hannah Corrigan, Assistant Director Parks  
& Recreation, Town of Needham  
Lee Newman  
Paul Corwin, Resident  
Bill Paulsen  
Rob Dangel, Resident  
Robert Petitt, Trustees of the Needham  
Free Public Library  
Matthew DeMarrais, Superintendent,  
Recycling & Solid Waste, Town of Needham  
Karen Price  
Jackie DeWolfe  
John Regan  
Reg Foster  
Kate Robey, Needham Center at the Heights  
Dave Greenstein, Resident  
Claire Rodgers, Associate Energy Engineer,  
Olin College  
Amy Haelsen  
Eleanor Rosellini  
Hank Haff  
Justin Savignano  
Moe Handel  
Mathew Tuttleman

## Consultant

 **KIM LUNDGREN  
ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
Customized Solutions for the Community You Want



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## SELECT BOARD

Marianne Cooley, Chair

Kevin Keane, Vice Chair

Marcus Nelson

Heidi Frail

Cathy Dowd

The fight to save our planet is on, and Needham is committed to doing our part.

To paraphrase President John F. Kennedy, “The problems of mankind...can be solved by mankind.” And so in this spirit, we look to science and good environmental stewardship to move Needham towards a carbon-free future. This roadmap is part of that effort.

Over the past decade, the Town of Needham has made significant investments in improving the energy efficiency of Town buildings, increasing the availability of solar-powered electricity, and switching street lights to more efficient LED lights.

Since Needham embarked upon its efficiency efforts, the urgency of reducing greenhouse gas emissions has increased significantly. Climate change is here. We have all seen it in the form of more frequent intense storms, extended heat waves, wind events, droughts, and damage to utilities and infrastructure, trees, and our own gardens.

Recognizing the importance of tackling climate change, the Massachusetts Legislature passed the 2022 Act Creating a Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy, committing the state with all its communities to achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with interim targets in 2030 and 2040. Further, the Town has responded to an October 2021 Needham Town Meeting resolution asking the Select Board to act now to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions across the municipal, business, and residential sectors of Needham.

During the Summer 2021 Select Board goal setting process, the board chartered the Climate Action Planning Committee (CAPC) to advise the Select Board on prioritizing climate actions, and the CAPC has done so. We are pleased to report that current CAPC recommendations are being implemented: Municipal Electrical Aggregation, adopting the State’s Specialized Energy Code, hiring a Sustainability Manager, understanding Needham’s greenhouse gas profile, and generating this Climate Action Roadmap.

We thank the Climate Action Planning Committee and everyone who participated in creating this Climate Action Roadmap, and we are committed to supporting the implementation work that lies ahead.



# Letter from the Climate Action Planning Committee

## CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING COMMITTEE

Stephen Frail, Chair

Nick Hill, Vice Chair

Rachel Bright

Marianne Cooley

Artie Crocker

Paul Dellaripa

Natasha Espada

Joe Higgins

Kevin Keane

We are pleased to present the Town of Needham's Climate Action Roadmap, a comprehensive plan that outlines our commitment to achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, as mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and directed by the Needham Select Board.

The Sustainable Needham Climate Action Roadmap represents a collective response to the urgent challenges of climate change. It is the result of extensive research, community engagement, and collaboration with various stakeholders. Our goal is to secure a sustainable and resilient future for our town while reducing our carbon footprint and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

This roadmap outlines specific targets, milestones, and actionable strategies across all sectors of our community. It covers essential areas such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, transportation, waste management, land use, and community engagement. The roadmap emphasizes the importance of collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity in achieving our shared goals.

Throughout the planning process, we have considered the unique characteristics of Needham, including its demographics, infrastructure, and local resources. We have also acted upon the valuable feedback and input received from residents, businesses, and community organizations.

By implementing the strategies outlined in this roadmap, Needham will not only reduce GHG emissions but also create opportunities for economic growth, improve public health, and enhance the overall quality of life in Needham. The roadmap emphasizes the role that each of us plays in achieving our Net Zero goals.

We are excited about the transformative potential of this roadmap and look forward to working closely with the entire community. Together, we can make a significant difference and leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

Thank you for your dedication to the well-being of our town and your commitment to climate action. We invite you to review the complete Sustainable Needham Climate Action Roadmap for detailed strategies and implementation steps. We are confident that, with your involvement, Needham will emerge as a leader in sustainability and inspire other communities to follow suit.

# What We Have Accomplished

**2011**

Public Services Administrative Building is built and uses geothermal energy

**2014**

First Solarize Needham yields 99 new solar PV installations on homes

**2016**

Solar array installed at Needham Recycling and Transfer Station, producing 25% of the Town's electricity



**2019**

Solarize Needham Plus generates 52 new solar PV installations

**2021**

Mitchell & Newman Elementary Schools, Pollard Middle School undergo lighting upgrades projected to save 142,056 kWh annually



**2020**

Needham adopts Stretch Energy Code and becomes a Green Community

**2020**

Sunita L. Williams Elementary School opens with a roof-mounted 155 kW solar array earning LEED Silver rating

**2021**

LED Streetlight Project completed, saving 21,637 kWh annually

**2021**

Needham Town Meeting passes resolution to declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency

**2022**

Climate Action Plan Committee is chartered by the Select Board

**2023**

Needham Town Meeting passes the Specialized Energy Code



## What We Will Do Next



### 2023

Needham hires its first Sustainability Manager



### ACTIONS

In the coming years, Needham is committed to taking the following actions.

#### 2030

Needham will aim to electrify 20% of residential and 25% of commercial buildings

#### 2040

Needham will strive to electrify 80% of passenger vehicles

#### 2050

Needham will aim to achieve net zero emissions across our entire community





## A Clean Future Together

Needham is a place where civic engagement thrives, we embrace the role of responsible stewards, and we set high expectations for all of us to meet together. We take pride in the strategic and prudent decisions that have shaped our community, and **Sustainable Needham**—Needham's first Climate Action Roadmap—is our commitment to embracing smart choices today for a safer, cleaner future together.

Through **Sustainable Needham**, we are involving our entire community in making smarter decisions about how we get around town, heat and cool our buildings, source our electricity, and more. We will rely on the collective participation of residents, businesses, civic organizations, and the municipality itself to get the job done. Ultimately, we will draw on best practices to make the investments and create the opportunities needed to safeguard our health and safety and that of our future generations.

The goals, strategies, and actions in this Roadmap are organized into  
**SIX KEY FOCUS AREAS**



CLEAN ENERGY



GOVERNANCE



NATURAL RESOURCES  
& WASTE



NET ZERO BUILDINGS



RESILIENCE &  
PUBLIC HEALTH



TRANSPORTATION

## Why We Are Taking Action

Residents of Needham are already experiencing the impacts of climate change such as extreme heat, intense storms, and destructive flooding. If we do not prepare for climate change, residents will face a range of consequences from increasing costs to repair infrastructure to severe public health impacts. We must take action now for the following reasons:



Save money and conserve resources as the cost of taking action now is far less than the cost of climate change later.



Preserve Needham's history, culture, and quality of life because residents deserve a healthy and safe place to live.



Prepare for current and future climate impacts that are becoming more frequent and intense.

Since 1980, the US has experienced over 370 major climate-related disasters with a combined total of over \$2.6 trillion in damages and over 15,000 fatalities.<sup>1</sup> As the costs of failing to reduce climate change become more apparent, the value of avoided Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions becomes clearer too. The Social Cost of Carbon (SCC)<sup>2</sup> quantifies reduced emissions in terms of avoided damage. Governments and major companies are using the SCC to guide decision-making. Our analysis assumes \$190 per ton in alignment with EPA's calculated 2023 value for the SCC. By utilizing the SCC to calculate the cost of our GHG emissions, we can better understand the economic impacts of decisions that would increase or decrease our emissions.



The Roadmap's three guiding principles represent Needham's values and goals for implementation:



### REDUCE GHG EMISSIONS

Prioritizing the reduction of Needham's greenhouse gas emissions to address climate change.



### EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Addressing challenges that disproportionately affect underserved communities and prioritizing opportunities that benefit them.



### RESILIENCE

Strengthening Needham's ability to adapt to climate impacts through a robust social network, reduced economic stressors, and direct investment in ecological systems.

## Main Climate Hazards

### Climate Change in Needham

We know climate change is here. We've already experienced its impacts in the form of localized flooding, more intense storms, droughts, and oppressive heat waves. It takes a toll on our infrastructure, energy bills, health, taxes, and property. While climate change will be experienced by everyone, the impacts will not be equal. Low-income families, people with pre-existing health conditions or disabilities, seniors, and youth are particularly vulnerable. But we've got what it takes to be resilient—to act now so that Needham emerges stronger tomorrow.



#### INTENSE STORMS

##### 70% INCREASE

in the amount of precipitation falling in heavy rain events between 1958 and 2010 in the Northeast.<sup>3</sup>

##### 9.9%

increase in total precipitation by 2050.<sup>4</sup>



##### IMPACTS

- Downed trees
- Power outages
- Property damage



#### HEAT WAVES

##### 5.5

Average number of days above 90 degrees F from 2016-2021.<sup>5</sup>

##### 21

Projected number of days above 90° F by 2050.<sup>6</sup>



##### IMPACTS

- Heat-related illness and death
- Higher energy demand
- Increased risk of vector borne disease
- Strain on electricity grid
- Increased risk of fires



#### DROUGHT

##### 22 WEEKS

with moderate to severe drought in Norfolk County in 2022.<sup>7</sup>

##### UP TO A 10 DAY

increase in annual maximum number of consecutive dry days expected by 2100 in Massachusetts.<sup>8</sup>



##### IMPACTS

- Stress on wildlife
- Diminished water supply
- Damage to local farm crops
- Increased food insecurity



#### FLOODING

##### 220 HOMES AND BUSINESSES

were impacted by the August 8, 2023 flooding event.<sup>9</sup>

##### 25%

increase in annual days with total precipitation > 1 inch by 2050.<sup>10</sup>



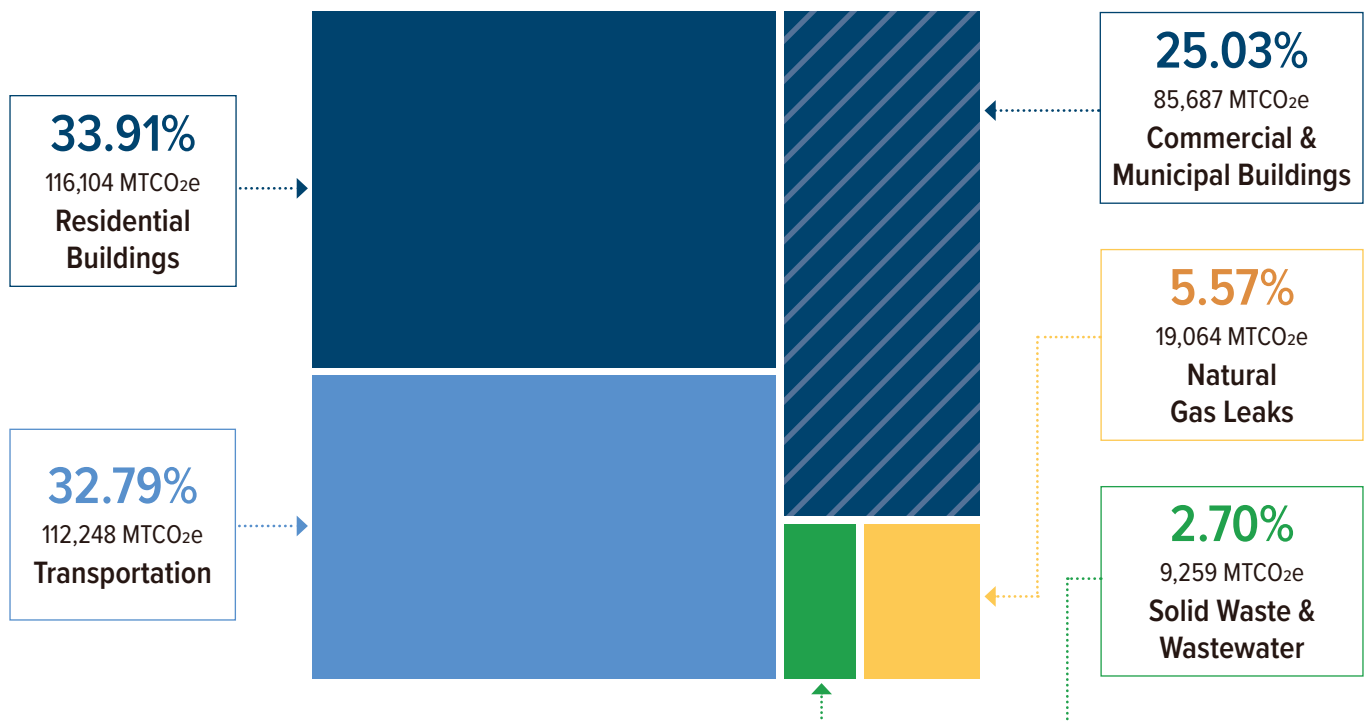
##### IMPACTS

- Damage to critical facilities, infrastructure, homes, and businesses
- Costs to taxpayers
- Risk to humans and wildlife
- Pollution from stormwater runoff

## Assessing Our Contribution

The key to addressing climate change in Needham is reducing our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. GHGs are the planet-warming product of burning fossil fuels like natural gas and oil to power our homes, businesses, and vehicles. Emissions are also produced when trash and food waste are incinerated or decompose in a landfill. To create an actionable and data-driven climate action plan, we need to identify and understand the sources of GHG emissions in Needham. A community wide GHG inventory with a 2021 baseline year identifies the largest sectors and sources of emissions. The inventory provides a foundation to develop high-impact strategies and actions for **Sustainable Needham**.

In 2021, Needham generated 342,362 metrics tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) community-wide, including the public and private sectors. Energy used to power buildings accounts for the majority of our emissions (65%). These emissions are related to lighting, heating and cooling, and powering the appliances and devices we use. The second largest source of GHG emissions was the transportation sector (33%), primarily from private passenger vehicles with small additions from commercial vehicles and public transit. Municipal operations, including energy consumed by Town-owned buildings, facilities, and vehicles, account for less than 3% of Needham's total GHG emissions. As a result, the high-impact strategies laid out in this Climate Action Roadmap specifically target community-wide actions.



Needham's 2021 GHG Emissions by Sector = **TOTAL 342,362 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>**



# Pathways to Reducing Emissions

Reducing our direct GHG emissions is the primary way that we can reduce our contribution to climate change.

## Achieving Net Zero by 2050

Reducing our GHG emissions is the primary way we can reduce our contribution to climate change. We can directly affect our sources of emissions by changing what types of energy we use, how efficiently we use it, and how much waste we generate. The strategies outlined in this Climate Action Roadmap are designed to help us reach our climate goals. The chart below models the opportunity for GHG reductions in our community through 2050. The different bands in the graph correspond to the remaining emissions after Needham's high-impact strategies are implemented. To achieve these reductions, an additional overarching strategy to purchase 100% of our electricity from new renewable energy resources is required—aligning with Massachusetts's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (REPS) and related investments in solar and off-shore wind projects. This will ensure we maximize GHG reductions as we transition our homes, businesses, and vehicles to operate using electricity.

### Impact of Strategies

#### HIGH IMPACT STRATEGIES

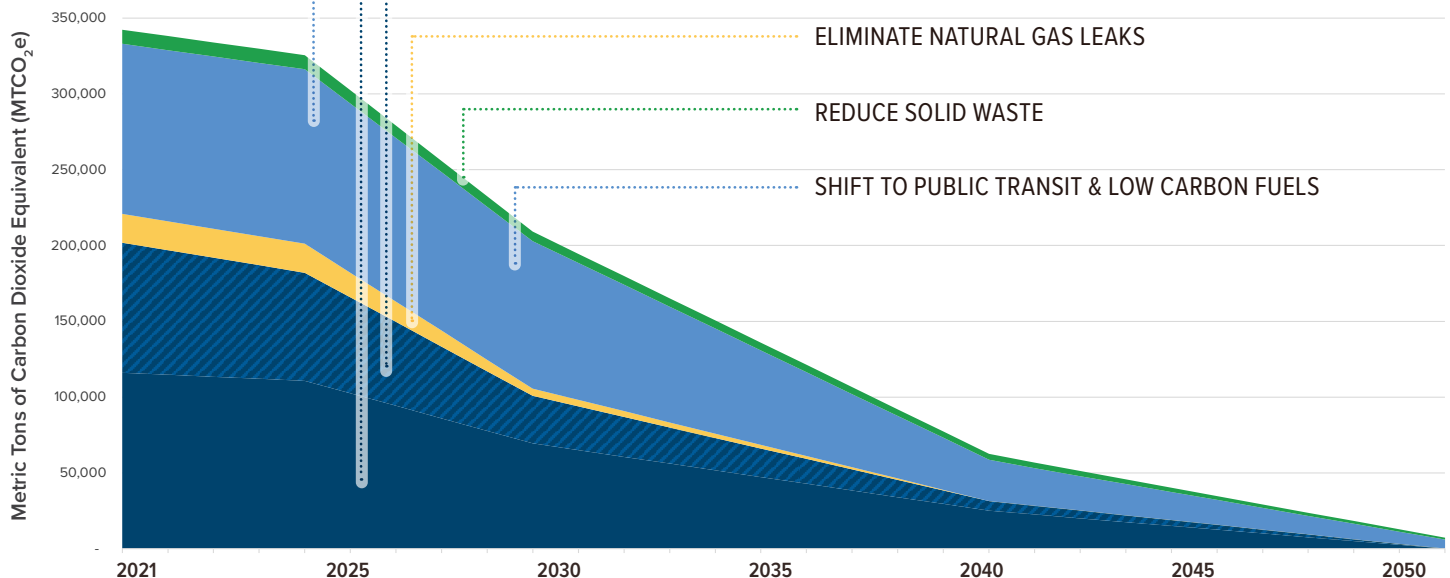
ELECTRIFY TRANSPORTATION

ELECTRIFY BUILDINGS & PURSUE EFFICIENCY

ELIMINATE NATURAL GAS LEAKS

REDUCE SOLID WASTE

SHIFT TO PUBLIC TRANSIT & LOW CARBON FUELS



#### GHG Emissions by Sector

- Residential Buildings
- Commercial Buildings
- Transportation
- Natural Gas Leaks
- Solid Waste & Wastewater

## High Impact Strategies

### ELECTRIFY TRANSPORTATION

GHGS REDUCED: 120,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

SOCIAL COST OF CARBON AVOIDED: \$22.8M

Transportation represents the second largest source of GHG emissions. To tackle emissions from the transportation sector, we will need to transition a significant number of both passenger and commercial vehicles to EVs; these milestones are in alignment with the MA Decarbonization Roadmap and the 2025-2030 Climate and Clean Energy Implementation Plan.

### ELECTRIFY BUILDINGS & PURSUE EFFICIENCY

GHGS REDUCED: 111,400 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

SOCIAL COST OF CARBON AVOIDED: \$21.2M

Energy use in buildings accounts for almost two-thirds of Needham's GHG emissions. To rapidly reduce emissions, we must eliminate the direct use of fossil fuels for heating, cooking, and other uses in both new and existing buildings. All electrification efforts should be accompanied by high efficiency retrofits to minimize the demand for new renewable energy.

### ELIMINATE NATURAL GAS LEAKS

GHGS REDUCED: 19,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

SOCIAL COST OF CARBON AVOIDED: \$3.6M

Natural gas leaks in buildings, which account for 5% of Needham's emissions, can be a significant contributor to climate change, as it is a source of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>). Methane is a potent greenhouse gas with a global warming potential (GWP) that is over 25 times greater than carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).

### REDUCE SOLID WASTE

GHGS REDUCED: 8,200 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

SOCIAL COST OF CARBON AVOIDED: \$1.6M

Between now and 2050, we need to steadily increase diversion rates to ultimately reach 90% (which is the threshold for "zero waste"). This means diverting organic waste (e.g., food waste) to compost, reducing our use of plastics and other non-recyclable materials, and preventing as much waste as possible from being incinerated.

### SHIFT TO PUBLIC TRANSIT & LOW CARBON FUELS

GHGS REDUCED: 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

SOCIAL COST OF CARBON AVOIDED: \$570K

Increased use of public transportation can decrease vehicle miles traveled and will further reduce emissions from transportation. With the uptake in transit-oriented development, Needham is moving towards more sustainable options. As heavy-duty trucks lag in EV transition due to market and technology limitations, state and federal standards to reduce these residual emissions in the short-term.



## Decarbonizing Our Electricity Supply

How "clean" our electricity is will be determined by which resources we use to generate it. The greater the percentage of clean energy sources, the less carbon is emitted to serve our needs. Purchasing 100% of our electricity from new renewable sources will ensure significant GHG reductions as we transition our buildings and vehicles away from fossil fuels. The High Impact Strategies listed above assume that the carbon intensity of our electricity will be zero in 2050.

# Action Plan Summary

The **Sustainable Needham** planning process identified goals, strategies, and actions under each focus area that will reduce our contribution to climate change and prepare our community for climate impacts.



## CLEAN ENERGY

### Goal EN.1 Needham achieves 100% renewable energy by 2050.

**EN.1.1** Provide residential and commercial customers with electricity options that are clean, local, and competitively priced.

⚙️ EN.1.1.A Design and implement a Municipal Electricity Aggregation program to drive the development of local renewable capacity and community solar.

EN.1.1.B Create and implement an outreach campaign to educate residents about the Municipal Electricity Aggregation program and encourage residents to opt up to the greenest option.

### EN.1.2 Accelerate local renewable energy installation.

⚙️ EN.1.2.A Identify sites to install solar plus storage on public property.

✳️ EN.1.2.B Re-establish a solarize campaign and expand it to include storage and other complimentary technologies.

⚙️ EN.1.2.C Update zoning and permitting bylaws to encourage the installation of solar PV, particularly over parking lots and commercial buildings.

### Goal EN.2 Needham has a resilient energy infrastructure and supply.

**EN.2.1** Collaborate with local and regional entities to drive the transition to clean, renewable energy.

EN.2.1.A Formalize a collaboration with Eversource to address gas leaks, plan for infrastructure upgrades, and invest in electrification.

### EN.2.2 Strengthen and expand back-up power infrastructure.

EN.2.2.A Explore opportunities for microgrids to improve energy reliability and resilience in the face of climate impacts.

⚙️ EN.2.2.B Identify candidate sites and assess the feasibility of network geothermal systems and the expansion of energy storage capacity for critical facilities.



## NET ZERO BUILDINGS

### Goal BU.1 Buildings in Needham are designed, constructed, and maintained to be energy efficient and minimize greenhouse gas emissions.

**BU.1.1** Implement high-efficiency and carbon neutrality standards for new construction and significant renovations.

✓ BU.1.1.A Adopt Specialized Energy Code ("Net-Zero") for all new construction including municipal buildings, residential, and commercial developments.

✳️ BU.1.1.B Enable Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) by opting into MassDevelopment Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.

BU.1.1.C Require municipal building construction and renovations to calculate embodied carbon and life cycle costs and encourage reductions where feasible.

⚙️ BU.1.1.D Partner with Needham Housing Authority to identify funding opportunities for sustainability upgrades in existing affordable housing units.

### BU.1.2 Pursue deep energy efficiency through retrofits and electrification in existing buildings.

⚙️ BU.1.2.A Pursue upgrades to existing municipal facilities to achieve net zero energy performance and publish energy use data to increase transparency.

✳️ BU.1.2.B Develop educational materials and conduct a targeted outreach campaign around MassSave incentives to residential and commercial property owners.

BU.1.2.C Establish a local energy coaching program where trained coaches can engage directly with residents and businesses on electrification and efficiency upgrades.



## TRANSPORTATION

### Goal TR.1 Needham accelerates the transition to electric vehicles.

#### TR.1.1 Promote and encourage EV adoption among Needham residents.

- \* TR.1.1.A Install EV charging stations in priority parking locations such as apartment buildings, municipal buildings, and local businesses.
- TR.1.1.B Create a public awareness campaign for electric vehicles, available charging stations, and existing incentives for EVs.

#### TR.1.2 Transition all municipal vehicles to electric models by 2030.

- \* TR.1.2.A Create and adopt an EV-first policy that requires Town-owned and leased vehicles to adopt readily available EV technology at time of replacement, where feasible.

### Goal TR.2 Needham has low-carbon mobility options accessible to all.

#### TR.2.1 Decrease single occupancy vehicle trips.

- \* TR.2.1.A Create a bike network plan and launch an outreach campaign to educate residents about active mobility options for local trips.
- TR.2.1.B Invest in high-comfort bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and expand bike lane connectivity.
- TR.2.1.C Identify opportunities and work with community partners and neighboring towns to connect the Needham Rail Trail to other local trails and commercial points of interest.
- TR.2.1.D Update zoning by-laws to reduce minimum parking requirements in an effort to reduce vehicle trips and increase safety for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

#### TR.2.2 Increase public transit ridership and reduce transit-related emissions through operational improvements and electrification.

- TR.2.2.A Support electrification of transit vehicles through installation of level 3 chargers at strategic locations throughout town.
- TR.2.2.B Collaborate with MBTA to improve operations including route efficiency, expanded service, last-mile options, improved affordability, and electrifying railway.
- ⚙️ TR.2.2.C Revise local zoning requirements to ensure compliance with MBTA Communities zoning law.



## NATURAL RESOURCES & WASTE

### Goal NA.1 Public and private landscapes are designed to be climate resilient, manage stormwater, maximize tree canopy, and promote community resilience and carbon sequestration.

#### NA.1.1 Protect and enhance tree canopy and open space.

- \* NA.1.1.A Develop and enact a Tree Preservation Bylaw covering the removal and restoration of trees on private land.
- NA.1.1.B Identify private parcels of land with a high natural resource or recreation value and pursue local, state, and federal funding to acquire and preserve them as open space.
- ⚙️ NA.1.1.C Conduct a baseline tree inventory to map and track tree canopy and identify heat islands and other areas to enhance the canopy.

#### NA.1.2 Implement sustainable landscaping practices and green infrastructure on private and public lands.

- NA.1.2.A Create a municipal planting policy that prioritizes adaptive and native species and supports pollinators and other wildlife.
- NA.1.2.B Incentivize developers to obtain UMASS Clean Energy Extension Pollinator-Friendly Certification for medium- and large-scale solar installations.

# Action Plan Summary

The **Sustainable Needham** planning process identified goals, strategies, and actions under each focus area that will reduce our contribution to climate change and prepare our community for climate impacts.



## NATURAL RESOURCES & WASTE

- NA.1.2.C Accelerate the uptake of sustainable landscaping practices through rebates, incentives, and education.
- NA.1.2.D Develop and enact an ordinance to phase out the use of gas-powered lawn equipment on public and private property.

### Goal NA.2 Needham manages waste responsibly and reduces waste where possible.

#### NA.2.1 Reduce consumption and maximize reuse.

- NA.2.1.A Develop and implement a public outreach campaign to educate residents about how to reduce waste to meet the goals of the state's Solid Waste Master Plan.
- NA.2.1.B Expand existing plastic bag ordinance to target other types of single-use plastics and packaging.
- ⚙️ NA.2.1.C Partner with local organizations, businesses, and the library to expand and increase use of mini "Re-Use-It Swap Shops" and lending libraries in multiple locations across the community.

#### NA.2.2 Increase diversion to recycling and composting.

- NA.2.2.A Allocate additional resources and infrastructure for Needham's Community Food Waste Recycling Program.
- NA.2.2.B Maintain and publicize online resources to help community members recycle or donate textiles, mattresses, hazardous materials, and other hard-to-recycle items.
- \* NA.2.2.C Audit the waste stream in municipal facilities and schools from purchasing to disposal and develop and implement plans to reduce waste.

### Goal GO.1 Needham has a culture of climate action through enhanced education and leadership.

#### GO.1.1 Increase the Town's organizational capacity to implement the Climate Action Roadmap.

- GO.1.1.A Educate municipal departments, Town Boards, Committees, and Town Meeting about the *Climate Action Roadmap* objectives and its applicability to operations and procedures.
- \* GO.1.1.B Report implementation progress of the *Climate Action Roadmap* to Town Boards, Committees, Town Meeting, and the general public on an annual basis and update the GHG inventory and Roadmap every 5 years.
- ✓ GO.1.1.C Hire a Sustainability Manager to oversee the implementation of the Climate Action Roadmap and reevaluate capacity needs every five years.

#### GO.1.2 Enhance climate literacy and leadership among Needham's residents and businesses.

- GO.1.2.A Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap.
- GO.1.2.B Develop and promote a green business designation program that highlights simple cost-saving sustainability measures for local businesses.

### Goal GO.2 Needham's municipal operations reflect sustainability and resiliency principles.

#### GO.2.1 Incorporate climate change into Town projects, programs, and plans.

- GO.2.1.A Integrate the Social Cost of Carbon into the Town's financial analyses to ensure Town projects, programs, and policies align with Climate Action Roadmap principles and goals.
- GO.2.1.B Require Capital Improvement Plans to align with the Town's climate goals.
- GO.2.1.C Integrate sustainability requirements and standards into Town procurement policies where feasible.



## GOVERNANCE





## RESILIENCE & PUBLIC HEALTH

### Goal RE.1 Needham's infrastructure and services are equipped to respond to climate hazards.

#### RE.1.1 Implement climate-smart zoning practices to enhance resilience and address threats.

- RE.1.1.A Conduct a targeted outreach campaign to homeowners, renters, and prospective buyers about local flood, stormwater, and other climate change driven risks and protection best practices.
- RE.1.1.B Update Flood Plain maps to incorporate climate projections including sea level rise.
- RE.1.1.C Update zoning bylaws to require occupiable spaces and critical building systems to incorporate flood protection measures and prevent stormwater runoff from damaging neighboring properties.

#### RE.1.2 Enhance the resilience of Town infrastructure and services.

- ⚙️ RE.1.2.A Elevate or protect vulnerable utilities or infrastructure above projected flood levels.
- RE.1.2.B Strengthen existing emergency response plans to include strategies and procedures to address the impacts of climate change.
- RE.1.2.C Implement cooling strategies at existing Town-owned property.

### Goal RE.2 People in our community are prepared to recover quickly from short-term shocks and long-term stressors.

#### RE.2.1 Strengthen communication and education to increase emergency preparedness of residents.

- RE.2.1.A Assess and improve accessibility of climate and emergency preparedness educational resources to ensure they reach everyone, especially vulnerable populations.
- RE.2.1.B Create a promotional plan to increase the number of people signed up to receive emergency alerts through AlertNeedham.
- RE.2.1.C Establish partnerships with community-serving facilities to distribute emergency preparedness information and serve as hubs during climate emergencies.
- RE.2.1.D Develop and disseminate climate resilience toolkits for small businesses, community groups, houses of worship, and other organizations.

✓ Complete   ⚙️ In Process   ✳️ High Priority





## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Local renewable generation
- ✓ Energy supply
- ✓ Resilience retrofits
- ✓ Grid resilience

## Clean Energy

Maximizing new renewable energy and storage capacity within the local built environment.

## BY THE NUMBERS

In recent years, there has been an increase in solar production in Needham as more and more property owners are choosing to install solar systems on their homes and businesses. Needham aims to encourage more solar installation with the adoption of the Specialized Energy Code.



**84%**

increase in solar system installations in Needham from 367 in 2016 to 674 in 2021.<sup>13</sup>



**62%**

increase in local solar production in Needham from 7,986 MWh in 2016 to 12,911 MWh in 2021.<sup>14</sup>



**122,000 MWh**

of local renewable energy could be produced if rooftop solar systems were installed on all existing buildings with conditions suitable for solar. This would supply 30% of the building electricity demand in 2050 under our Pathways to Reducing Emissions scenario.<sup>15</sup>

## TRACKING PROGRESS

The following metrics will help Needham monitor progress toward our goals for Clean Energy.

| METRIC                                                                              | BASELINE YEAR              | 2030 TARGET | 2040 TARGET | 2050 TARGET |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Solar Capacity (MW)                                                                 | 11 MW (2021) <sup>11</sup> | 27 MW       | 54 MW       | 108 MW      |
| Solar Potential Reached                                                             | 10% (2021) <sup>12</sup>   | 25%         | 50%         | 100%        |
| Percent of households enrolled in Municipal Electricity Aggregation greenest option | New Metric                 | 50%         | 100%        | 100%        |

## TAKE ACTION

Thinking of installing solar or battery storage at your home or business? Ask a Green Needham expert any questions you may have about the process.

[LEARN MORE](#)





## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Climate literacy
- ✓ Climate communications
- ✓ Procurement policies
- ✓ Green businesses



## Governance

Ensuring the Town's ability to implement the Climate Action Roadmap and improving climate literacy through community outreach.

## BY THE NUMBERS

Throughout the process of developing this Climate Action Roadmap, Needham conducted a survey to receive feedback from community members and key stakeholders. The survey received 334 responses and the overwhelming majority agreed that Needham should take action on climate.



**87%**

of survey responders are worried about global warming.



**82%**

of survey responders agree that Needham should do more to reduce its impact on the environment.



**85%**

of survey responders agree that the residents and businesses of Needham should do more to reduce their impact on the environment.<sup>16</sup>

## TRACKING PROGRESS

In order to measure progress toward implementing the Climate Action Roadmap, the Town of Needham will track the following metrics:



Implementation progress of Climate Action Roadmap actions



Number of citizens reached through climate educational programming and events

## TAKE ACTION

Stay updated on what the Town is doing by signing up for the Town's weekly e-newsletter, The News you Need(ham).

**LEARN MORE**





## Natural Resources & Waste

Maximize carbon reduction through natural resources protection and responsible waste management.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Recycling and composting
- ✓ Reduced consumption
- ✓ Sustainable landscaping practices
- ✓ Parks, open spaces, tree canopy

### BY THE NUMBERS

Trees are vital for helping absorb and reduce Needham GHGs, making the preservation and expansion of tree canopy a high priority. Additionally, while Needham is already above the national average in residential diversion rates, continuing to divert waste from landfills through increasing recycling and composting rates will help reduce emissions.



**4,114**

acres of tree cover.\*

\*MassGIS (2016). Landcover.

Stores **469,168** MTCO<sub>2</sub>e, equivalent to over **59,000** homes' energy use for one year

Sequesters **18,681** MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year



**39%** of residential waste is diverted from landfills\*

\*MassDEP (2021).  
Municipal Solid Waste & Recycling Survey.

National average household diversion rate is **32%**

### TRACKING PROGRESS

The following metrics will help Needham monitor progress toward our goals for Natural Resources & Waste.

| METRIC                                         | BASELINE YEAR            | 2030 TARGET       | 2040 TARGET | 2050 TARGET     |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Percent of tree canopy coverage                | 48% (2016) <sup>17</sup> | 49% <sup>18</sup> | 50%         | Maintain at 50% |
| Percent of land covered by impervious surfaces | 30% (2019)               | 29%               | 27%         | 25%             |
| Residential waste diversion rate               | 39% (2021) <sup>19</sup> | 50%               | 60%         | 90%             |

### TAKE ACTION

Reduce the amount of food waste you send to the landfill by participating in the Town of Needham's composting program or hiring a composting company to collect it.

LEARN MORE



WHAT’S INCLUDED

- ✓ Energy efficiency
- ✓ Electrification
- ✓ Existing buildings
- ✓ New construction

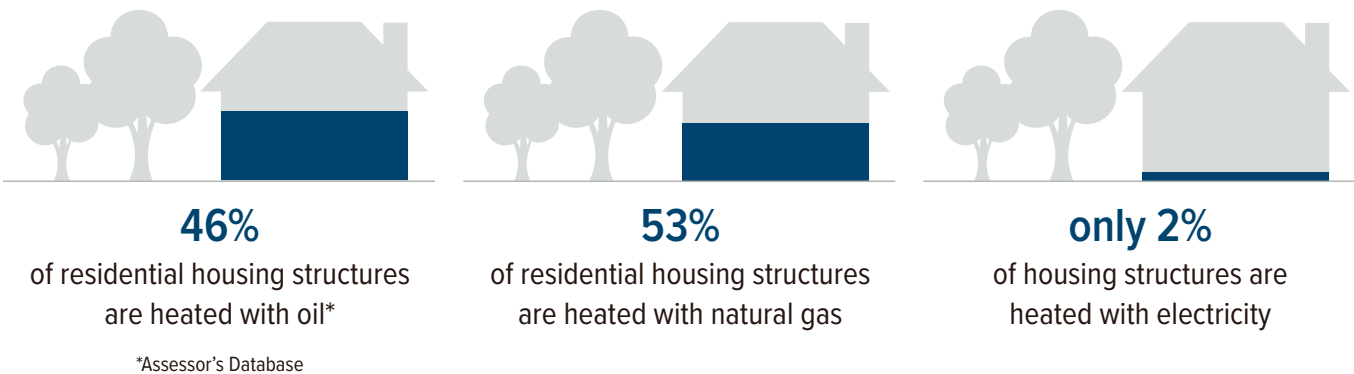


Net Zero Buildings

Improving building energy performance through high-efficiency and carbon neutral standards.

BY THE NUMBERS

Only a small percentage of households in Needham are heated with electricity. There is significant opportunity in Needham to retrofit and electrify homes and buildings. As the electricity grid continues to get cleaner, electrifying buildings is a critical step to reducing our contribution to climate change.



TRACKING PROGRESS

The following metrics will help Needham monitor progress toward our goals for Net Zero Buildings.

| METRIC                                       | BASELINE YEAR           | 2030 TARGET | 2040 TARGET | 2050 TARGET |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Percent of residential buildings electrified | 2% (2023) <sup>20</sup> | 20%         | 50%         | 100%        |
| Percent of commercial buildings electrified  | 1% (2023)               | 25%         | 75%         | 100%        |

TAKE ACTION

Lower your energy costs and improve the comfort of your home by taking advantage of rebates and incentives offered by Mass Save to insulate and switch to heating and cooling heat pumps.

LEARN MORE







## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Reduced flood risk
- ✓ Infrastructure resilience
- ✓ Emergency preparedness
- ✓ Access to resources and services

## Resilience and Public Health

Preparing for climate hazards through enhanced resilience infrastructure and emergency services.

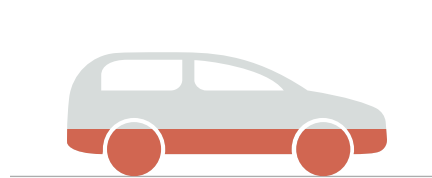
### BY THE NUMBERS

Needham has already been experiencing increased levels of flooding during intense rainfall events. For example, on August 8, 2023, Needham experienced a 1 in 1,000-year storm with some areas receiving over 6 inches of rain per hour, leaving drivers stranded and public transit disrupted. As projected flood risk continues to increase, strengthening infrastructure and protecting critical assets will improve resilience for the Needham community.



**1,368 out of 8,799**

residential properties have a moderate flood risk over the next 30 years\*



**61 out of 204**

miles of roads have a moderate flood risk over the next 30 years



**82 out of 314**

commercial properties have a moderate flood risk over the next 30 years

\*Flood Factor. Flood Risk Overview: Needham.

### TRACKING PROGRESS

The following metrics will help Needham monitor progress toward our goals for Resilience and Public Health.

| METRIC                                                                     | BASELINE YEAR            | 2030 TARGET | 2040 TARGET | 2050 TARGET |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Percent of homes with moderate flood risk                                  | 16% (2023) <sup>21</sup> | 11%         | 6%          | 0%          |
| Heat-related ER visits in Norfolk County                                   | 51 (2020) <sup>22</sup>  | 35          | 20          | 0           |
| Percent of Needham residents signed up for Needham's Rave911 mobile alerts | 13% (2023) <sup>23</sup> | 45%         | 60%         | 70%         |

### TAKE ACTION

To prepare for emergencies, sign up to receive alerts through Needham's Rave911 System and report floods and other hazards that you experience through SeeClickFix.

**Rave911 System**

**LEARN MORE**

**SeeClickFix**

**LEARN MORE**



## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Public transportation
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Low-carbon mobility (e.g., walking, biking)
- ✓ Electric vehicles and charging



## Transportation

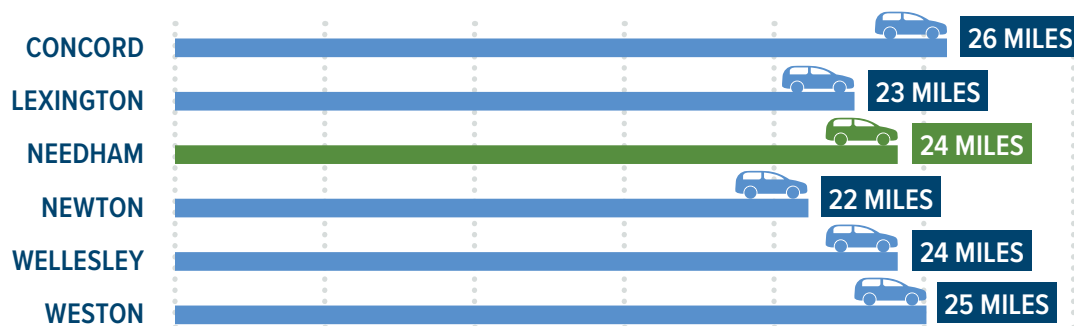
Accelerating the transition to electric vehicles and enhancing low-carbon mobility alternatives.

### BY THE NUMBERS

Transportation contributes one-third of Needham's GHG emissions, most of which come from private vehicles driven by residents and businesses. We can significantly reduce GHGs by shifting to public transit and transitioning to electric vehicles (EVs). Fortunately, Needham has already seen an increase in EV adoption with fully electric and hybrid EVs making up 10% of passenger vehicles.

### How does Needham Compare to Other Communities?

PASSENGER VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT) PER PERSON PER DAY



Data Source:  
Massachusetts  
Vehicle Census  
(2022)

### TRACKING PROGRESS

The following metrics will help Needham monitor progress toward our goals for Transportation.

| METRIC                                                                  | BASLINE YEAR                                     | 2030 TARGET | 2040 TARGET | 2050 TARGET |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Share of Passenger Vehicles 100% Electric                               | 2% (2023) <sup>24</sup>                          | 19%         | 80%         | 100%        |
| Increase in Daily Transit Riders                                        | # of MBTA Riders:<br>~1,440 (2023) <sup>25</sup> | +268        | +535        | +669        |
| Percentage of residents within .25 mile of high comfort bicycle network | <1% (2023) <sup>26</sup>                         | 30%         | 80%         | 100%        |

### TAKE ACTION

Massachusetts offers rebates for the purchase or lease of new and used electric vehicles, as well as the installation of home EV chargers. See if you qualify.

[LEARN MORE](#)



## Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters, NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (2023).
- 2 The Social Cost of Carbon, United States Environmental Protection Agency (2023).
- 3 Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment, Ch 16: Northeast (2014).
- 4 Climate Explorer, NEMAC (2023).
- 5 National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, CDC (2023).
- 6 Climate Change Projections Dashboard, Resilient MA (2023).
- 7 US Drought Monitor, Norfolk County (2023).
- 8 Climate Action Tool, UMass Amherst (2017).
- 9 Town of Needham Data (2023).
- 10 Climate Resilience Mapping for Adaptation, NOAA (2023).
- 11 Production Tracking System (PTS) Solar Photovoltaic Report, MassCEC (2022).
- 12 Google Project Sunroof, Data Explorer (2019).
- 13 Production Tracking System (PTS) Solar Photovoltaic Report, MassCEC (2022).
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- 15 Google Project Sunroof, Data Explorer (2019).
- 16 Community Survey, Town of Needham (2023).
- 17 Neighborhoods at Risk, U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit (2023).
- 18 Tree Equity Score, American Forests (2023).
- 19 Municipal Solid Waste & Recycling Survey Responses, MassDEP (2021).
- 20 Assessor's Database, Town of Needham (2023).
- 21 Flood Factor, Needham (2023).
- 22 National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, CDC (2023).
- 23 Town of Needham Data (2023)
- 24 Massachusetts Vehicle Census, MassDOT (2023).
- 25 MBTA Commuter Rail Ridership, MassDOT MBTA Open Data Portal (2023).
- 26 Town of Needham Data (2023)









**Have questions? email us at:**  
[climate@needhamma.gov](mailto:climate@needhamma.gov)

**Sign up for Needham's newsletter**



## **Input from the Board of Health, Council on Aging and Health & Human Services Department**

### Board of Health Select Board Goals Recommendations for FY25-26

- Overall
  - Would like to see more action planning on all pieces of overarching goals.
    - For example, the goal is “Promotes transportation options to remain an age-friendly community” but there is nothing in the timeline below about age friendly transportation.
- Healthy and Socially Thriving
  - Promote and support the initiative of Needham becoming a Heart Safe Community.
  - Participate in recognizing those who perform bystander CPR.
  - Support the use of opioid remediation funding through collaboration with other town boards and committees.
  - 18-36 months:
    - Begin conversations about a back-up plan for sustaining the Traveling Meals program if BIDN decides they can no longer support it.
- Environmentally Stable
  - Help promote to residents and restaurants about the importance of Food Safety Excellence Program.
- Safe
  - Use lessons learned from the COVID pandemic to improve emergency preparedness and response and help build community confidence and trust of public health officials,

Rough Crosswalk between BOH Priorities, Public Health Division Strategic Priorities, and Select Board Goals

| Needham Public Health Division Strategic Priority                                                             | Needham Board of Health Governance & Oversight Priority                                                           | Needham Select Board Goals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ensure equitable access to care                                                                               | Utilize all legal and regulatory actions available to improve and protect the public's physical and mental health | <b>Goal 1:</b> Healthy and Socially Thriving<br>Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members.<br><b>Goal 4:</b> Accessible and Connected-<br>Offering mobility options, incl. transportation. Options to remain an age-friendly community. |
| Collaborate closely with other Town departments and regional partners to address intersecting community needs | Promote community activities that increase health and wellness, including building community partnerships         | <b>Goal 5:</b> Safe<br>Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety, and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive.                                                                                          |
| Prioritize responses to and prevention of mental health crises, substance use, and chronic conditions         | Support the strategic use of remediation funds as determined by the division's strategic planning process         | <b>Goal 1:</b> Healthy and Socially Thriving<br>Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members                                                                                                                                               |
| Use lessons learned during the pandemic to improve emergency preparedness and response                        | Build confidence and trust of public health officials within the community; act as a champion for the division    | <b>Goal 5:</b> Safe<br>Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and responses to emergencies and natural disasters.                                                                                                                         |



## Council on Aging Feedback on Select Board Goals Recommendations for FY25-26

- OVERALL
  - Provide additional resources and training to address food insecurity, overall nutrition, and physical activity for seniors.
  - Support more resources, both in CATH and in the community, to address senior isolation and depression.
  - Continue pursuing Complete Streets concepts to support community accessibility for individuals across the age spectrum.
  - Set a goal to support a campaign that focuses upon how the Town can better support seniors and their caregivers. For example, provide resources and staffing to make Needham a Dementia Friendly Community.
- FITNESS
  - Create a safe environment at CATH for seniors to exercise and engage in related fitness activities. The present situation is woefully inadequate to meet the needs of our senior citizens.
  - Fitness room- switching of rooms and additional availability
- TRANSPORTATION/PARKING
  - I propose a program which can stand apart from what presently exists. I envision a plan which could collaborate with local businesses, a plan with a well considered schedule, a thoughtful pick-up and drop-off location, fee based ridership.
  - Procurement of first row of MBTA spaces adjacent to highland avenue.
- PROGRAMMING
  - Payment for programs- update so credit cards accepted for all CATH registrations.
- CATH SPACE USAGE
  - Outdoor deck- purchase of a large awning for shade and increased participation
  - Consider using computer room for other programs- purchase laptops to replace desk units.
- OTHER
  - The Town should pursue land purchase opportunities, and then prioritize collaboration with community development corporations to construct a significant number of affordable (and ideally age-restricted) housing in town.
  - When investigating curbside trash removal options, consider a pilot program that would focus upon seniors (and individuals with access and functional needs) with curbside trash removal.





# **NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION**

## **2024 – 2028 STRATEGIC PLAN**

**APPROVED DECEMBER 12, 2023  
FOR BOARD OF HEALTH REVIEW FEBRUARY 9, 2024**

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **CONTEXT**

The Needham Public Health Division engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process to support its application to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). This strategic plan establishes the division's 2024 – 2028 priorities, provides a roadmap for the work, and is a tool to aid leadership and staff decision-making. The process was led by the Needham Strategic Planning Team and supported by the consulting team of [BME Strategies](#) and [Copper Strategic](#). It began in June 2023 and concluded in December 2023.

## **MISSION**

The Needham Board of Health and its Public Health Division promote and protect the public health and social well-being of all Needham's residents, especially the most vulnerable. The division seeks to prevent and control the spread of disease, address environmental issues, promote healthy lifestyles, and embrace its role in regional health initiatives.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The following six priorities will guide the work of the division:

|                                                                                     |   |                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | 1 | Ensure equitable access to care.                                                                               |
|    | 2 | Address the impacts of social determinants of health on the Needham community.                                 |
|   | 3 | Use lessons learned during the pandemic to improve emergency preparedness and response.                        |
|  | 4 | Collaborate closely with other Town departments and regional partners to address intersecting community needs. |
|  | 5 | Prioritize responses to and prevention of mental health crises, substance use, and chronic conditions.         |
|  | 6 | Invest in workforce development.                                                                               |

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND DELIVERABLES**

A detailed set of measurable and time-bound targets has been established to operationalize the strategies outlined above. Each strategy is linked to an overarching Board of Health governance priority, broken down into defined tasks, and assigned to an owner.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Implementation planning began with an analysis of the division's strengths and weaknesses, an assessment of external trends, events, and other factors that may impact community health or the health division, and consideration of the division's capacity needs.

The first step upon formal adoption of the plan is to build out a detailed performance management plan. This will serve as the division's primary tool for managing workflow, driving accountability, and celebrating success. The Performance Management Plan will follow the fiscal year and be synchronized with the division's CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan) timeline.

## **STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

Feedback and input from the Board of Health and division staff was sought throughout the process. In addition, focus groups were conducted with representatives of community and advocacy groups, other Town departments, partner organizations, and elected officials.

# SECTION 1: THE PLANNING PROCESS

## A. Participants

Needham's strategic planning process was directed by the Needham Strategic Planning Team (see below) and supported by the consulting team of BME Strategies and Copper Strategic. The planning team represented knowledge and perspectives from across the health division.

The group met monthly and conducted work in between meetings. The process began in June 2023 and concluded in December 2023.

Timothy McDonald and Tiffany Benoit were in frequent communication with the Needham Board of Health about the process. The strategic plan was discussed at the June 9, July 14, September 8, October 13, and December 8, 2023 Board of Health meetings. In addition, an in-depth discussion was conducted with Board Chair Tejal Gandhi, M.D., MPH, and Board member Kathleen Ward Brown, Sc.D., on November 27, 2023. In each case board feedback was solicited and incorporated into the development of the plan.

### *Strategic Planning Team:*

Timothy McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services

Tiffany Benoit, Assistant Director of Public Health

Tara Gurge, Assistant Director of Public Health

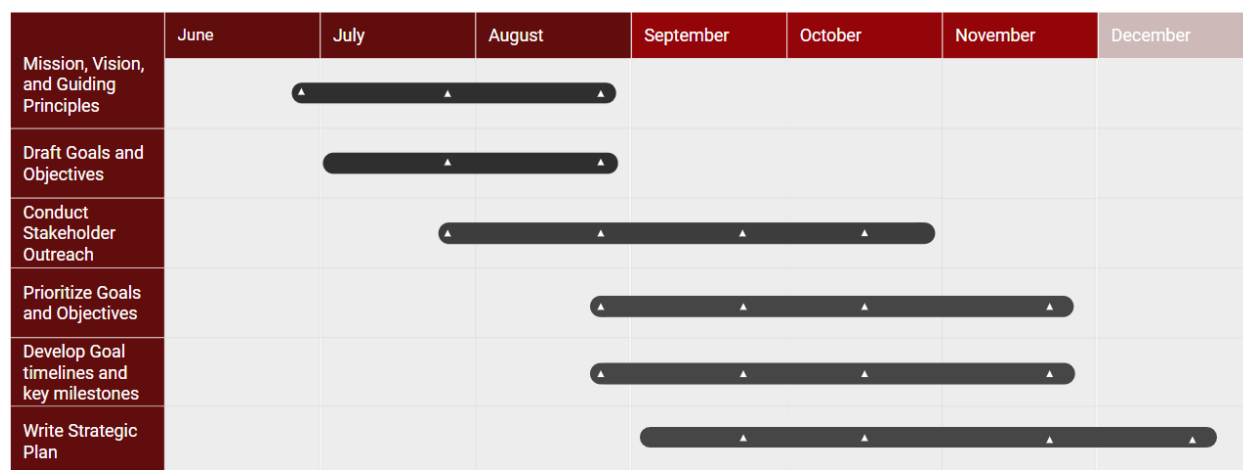
Lynn Schoeff, Accreditation Coordinator

Julie McCarthy, Epidemiologist

Kerry Dunnell, Program Manager

## B. Sequence of the Process

The team began by crafting an outline informed by PHAB standards. From there, they built out iterative drafts in the following sequence:



▲ Meeting



## **C. Stakeholder Engagement**

Key stakeholders were engaged throughout the process.

- As noted above, the Board of Health was kept apprised of progress regularly and was asked for input.
- In addition, focus groups were conducted with representatives of:
  - Community and advocacy groups
  - Other departments in the Town of Needham
  - Partner organizations
  - Elected officials
- Finally, the plan was developed to ensure it is widely understood by staff. In addition to informal discussions with staff throughout the process, an all-hands meeting was held on November 30, 2023, dedicated to discussion of the plan. The strategic plan was updated based on feedback generated during this meeting.

Please see the Appendix for stakeholder lists.

## **D. Board Approval**

On February 9, 2024, the plan will be introduced to the Needham Board of Health for approval.

## **SECTION 2: OUR PRIORITIES & DIRECTION 2024 - 2028**

### **A. Mission, Vision, Values, and Guiding Principles**

#### *Mission*

The Needham Board of Health and its Public Health Division promote and protect the public health and social well-being of all Needham's residents, especially the most vulnerable. The division seeks to prevent and control the spread of disease, address environmental issues, promote healthy lifestyles, and embrace its role in regional health initiatives.

#### *Vision*

The vision of the Needham Board of Health and its Public Health Division is a community where all residents can live, work, play, and grow in an environment conducive to optimal health and well-being through all stages of life.

#### *Values*

- Integrity, Reliability, and Trust: We are a trusted resource, communicating accurate and concise information. We are professional, direct, honest, and flexible, listening and responding to community concerns with patience and respect. Our services are based on evidence and best practices. We are responsible stewards of limited resources.
- Dedication and Collaboration: We advocate for the health and well-being of the community. We demonstrate dedication, passion, and empathy while collaborating with community partners. We are motivated by the belief that people are empowered by knowledge that allows them to make informed decisions.
- Professional and Supportive: We provide a professional, collaborative, and respectful work environment. Staff members act as team players, supporting each other by sharing the work and being considerate of others.

#### *Guiding Principles*

1. We are guided by the fundamental belief that everyone has the right to live a healthy, safe lifestyle.
2. As public health professionals, we view it as our responsibility to:
  - Protect the public, especially the most vulnerable;
  - Prevent when possible, respond when necessary;
  - Contribute to individual and societal well-being;
  - Ensure people can live to their fullest capacity;
  - Make government work better, more efficiently, and more responsively.
3. We approach our work:
  - Acknowledging the social determinants of health, i.e., the conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks, as defined in Healthy People 2030;
  - With a commitment towards advancing racial and health equity;
  - Promoting evidence-based health practices and data-driven program management;
  - In partnership with residents, community organizations, other Town departments, and federal, regional, state, and local agencies;
  - As good stewards of public resources, using Town operating funds, grant resources, and donations efficiently;
  - Striving to provide as many public health resources as possible to residents and community organizations.

## B. Strategic Priorities

The division's priorities were selected based on a current understanding of community needs. They were developed to reflect Needham's Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). In consultation with the Board of Health, governance and oversight priorities were established in alignment.

|                                                                                    |   | <b>Needham Public Health Division<br/>Strategic Priority</b>                                                  | <b>Needham Board of Health<br/>Governance &amp; Oversight Priority</b>                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | 1 | Ensure equitable access to care                                                                               | Utilize all legal and regulatory actions available to improve and protect the public's physical and mental health          |
|   | 2 | Address the impacts of social determinants of health on outcomes                                              | Augment the knowledge and information staff has to help inform best approaches to addressing social determinants of health |
|   | 3 | Use lessons learned during the pandemic to improve emergency preparedness and response                        | Build confidence and trust of public health officials within the community; act as a champion for the division             |
|   | 4 | Collaborate closely with other Town departments and regional partners to address intersecting community needs | Promote community activities that increase health and wellness, including building community partnerships                  |
|   | 5 | Prioritize responses to and prevention of mental health crises, substance use, and chronic conditions         | Support the strategic use of remediation funds as determined by the division's strategic planning process                  |
|  | 6 | Invest in workforce development                                                                               | Support the budget process with the Select Board; ensure the necessary resources for staff, services, and training         |

## C. Goals and Objectives

To operationalize these strategic priorities, the Needham team will execute a detailed set of measurable and time-bound targets. These goals were developed to be:

*Strategically cohesive, i.e.:*

- Logically linked to the strategic priorities
- Developed through the lens of social determinants of health
- Consistent with our Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
- Specific, measurable, and time-bound
- Matched to an owner, with specific deliverables and deadlines identified

*and anchored on:*

- Closing gaps between residents' needs and the division's current efforts
- Connecting residents to physical and mental health care resources
- Refining standard operating procedures to respond to emerging needs
- Developing a Behavioral Health Emergency Response Plan in collaboration with other Town departments and community organizations
- Developing health promotion/health education campaigns with other Town departments and community partners
- Expanding training opportunities for NPHD staff

| Board Priority                                                                                                                         | Divisional Strategic Priority                                             | Goal                                                                                                                                                                                             | 1-Year Strategies and Deliverables (additional years to be developed by NPHD as the strategic plan is implemented)                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Deadline (subject to change) | Owner (subject to change)                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Utilize all legal and regulatory actions available to improve and protect the public's health.                                      | Ensure equitable access to care                                           | Conduct a gap analysis of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)/protocols to identify missing and outdated plans or protocols that do not reflect the current procedures of Needham Public Health | Update existing insurance enrollment and school vaccine protocols with Needham Public Schools (NPS) to prepare for large numbers of migrant families/children                                                                                                                                                                         | Late summer 2024             | Nursing Staff working with Needham Public Schools (NPS)                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                        |                                                                           | Better connect residents to physical and mental health care resources                                                                                                                            | Host "health fairs" at various community locations with access to an interpreter to educate and connect residents to physical and mental health resources<br><br>Promote local shuttle services that can help decrease barriers to healthcare access such as the Needham Community Council and Aging Services Division amongst others | Late summer 2024             | NPHD Staff with Community Based Organizations (CBOs)                                                            |
|                                                                                                                                        |                                                                           | Develop SOPs and educational materials to respond to migrant family public health needs (mental and physical health) from notice to referral                                                     | Develop an SOP to respond to arriving migrant families and their needs<br><br>Develop a "welcome" one-pager prepared in different languages that can be distributed to new arrivals.                                                                                                                                                  | Early summer 2024            | NPHD Staff with community-based organizations (and NPS)                                                         |
| 2. Augment the knowledge and information staff have to help inform best approaches to addressing social determinants of health (SDOH). | Address the impacts of social determinants of health on outcomes          | All goals will be developed with the SDOH in mind                                                                                                                                                | As determined in other strategic planning goals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | -                            | NPHD staff                                                                                                      |
| 3. Build confidence and trust within the community in NPHD; act as a champion for the division.                                        | Use lessons learned during the pandemic to improve emergency preparedness | Develop a Behavioral Health Emergency Response Plan by working with other Town of Needham departments and community organizations                                                                | Identify training needs that can help Needham Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to respond effectively to community mental health needs during an emergency.                                                                                                                                                                                | Late summer 2024             | NPHD/HHS mental health staff, emergency management personnel / leadership, Riverside - mental health clinicians |



| Board Priority                                                                                                         | Divisional Strategic Priority                                                                                 | Goal                                                                                                       | 1-Year Strategies and Deliverables (additional years to be developed by NPHD as the strategic plan is implemented)                                                                                                                                                                               | Deadline (subject to change)   | Owner (subject to change)                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. Promote community activities that increase health and wellness, including building community partnerships.          | Collaborate closely with other Town departments and regional partners to address intersecting community needs | Develop health promotion/health education campaigns with other Town departments and community partners     | Continue and expand partnership with Police for tobacco product and substance use prevention<br><br>Advocate for the hiring of another clinician to work with Needham youth in various community settings to connect to resources, such as the interface referral system, and perform screenings | Winter 2024                    | NPHD Staff, HHS, community-based organizations, other Town of Needham departments, Charles River Regional Staff |
| 5. Use remediation funds strategically as determined by the division's strategic planning process.                     | Prioritize response to mental health, substance use, and chronic conditions                                   | Design opioid-specific programming using public engagement feedback from various ongoing outreach efforts. | Connect with members of the community to identify which community resources or interventions would make the most impact on residents to address the opioid crisis                                                                                                                                | Starting in spring 2024        | NPHD leadership                                                                                                 |
| 6. Support the budget process with the Select Board; ensure the necessary resources for staff, services, and training. | Encourage and facilitate workforce development                                                                | Expand training opportunities for NPHD Staff and equip NPHD staff with Mental Health-specific skills       | Update the Workforce Development Plan<br><br>Offer Adult Mental Health First Aid training to NPHD staff and offer the training to municipal partners.                                                                                                                                            | Winter 2024<br><br>Winter 2024 | NPHD leadership                                                                                                 |

## D. External Factors

External trends, events, or other factors that may impact the health division include:

- Reliability of funding streams
- Statewide efforts to transform local public health infrastructure in Massachusetts through the Public Health Excellence grant program and additional legislation pending in the Massachusetts State House
- Lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of residents' perception (positive and negative) of public health officials as trusted messengers
- Tight job market, impacting recruitment and retention
- Imperfect tools to ensure all community members are aware of the range of services provided by the division
- Nationwide mental health and opioid crises and their impacts on Needham residents
- The tight housing market and increased cost of living make it difficult for elderly residents to stay in their homes and increases the support needed from NPHD
- Due to the recent influx of migrants to the state of Massachusetts, hotels across the state have been used as temporary housing. While no hotels in Needham are in use right now, the NPHD needs to prepare for this eventual likelihood and the public health needs that will arise from it.

Other constraints exist within the Town but are outside the purview of the Health Division:

- Capacity of Town-wide services that the division does not have control over, such as human resources and information technology
- Restrictions on the use of indirect grant funding
- Lack of data, and access to and ease of use of data collected by other Town departments and local hospital partners

## **E. Divisional Strengths and Weaknesses**

### *Strengths / Key Assets*

- Degree of commitment and mission-alignment across leadership and staff
- Staff capabilities and skill level; depth of experience and subject matter expertise
- Team culture and cohesion
- Strong foundation built over time to access a breadth of funding sources
- Political and policy-maker relationships
- Relationships and collaboration with other Health and Human Services (HHS) divisions and Town of Needham departments
- Orientation toward long-range planning, transparency
- Dual assistant directors' structure which increases capacity and continuity
- Established infrastructure to bring in grant funding, increase the division's resources and capacity

### *Gaps to address / opportunities for improvement*

- Staff capacity – people are stretched across multiple projects
- Inconsistent practices around document sharing and knowledge management
- Program management capacity – both people-power and technical tools
- Lack of full visibility into what is happening enterprise-wide with respect to IT
- Speed of hiring
- Need to synchronize and be more cohesive division-wide (esp. with stakeholder outreach, but not limited to that) (some silo effect)
- Need an internal dashboard to show progress and/or better tools to improve project integration
- Stakeholder networks – we often go back to the same well
- Opportunity to turn temporary funding sources into permanent, sustainable funding sources
- Additional way to assess and evaluate the needs of the community beyond online surveys

## **F. Linkages**

This strategic plan was designed to complement and build upon other guiding documents, plans, initiatives, and coalitions already in place to improve the health of Needham residents. Rather than conflicting with or duplicating the recommendations and actions of existing frameworks and coalitions, the participants of the strategic planning process identified potential partners and resources wherever possible. This was done explicitly with the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham (SPAN), Massachusetts Collaboration for Action, Leadership, and Learning (MassCALL3), and opioid abatement work underway, along with other initiatives.

## **SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY PLANNING**

As we transition to implementation planning, we have reviewed our existing capacity and our capacity needs.

### **A. Information Management**

The Needham Public Health Division currently utilizes three different document-sharing functionalities – a shared drive, Microsoft Teams, and OneDrive. The need is to better coordinate the use of these systems to share information more efficiently and effectively.

The Town of Needham plans to remove the shared drive in the coming years, leaving in place Microsoft Teams and OneDrive. NPHD is currently devising a staff survey to better understand how each staff member uses the current systems. This will provide the baseline data to develop a plan to organize a standardized and consistent approach to information management.

### **B. Workforce Development**

The Needham Public Health Division participated in the 2021 – 2022 PH WINS workforce development survey. This survey provided data on NPHD staff training needs. Through this survey NPHD developed a set of goals to increase the type and amount of training each employee attends on an annual basis. These are detailed in the Workforce Development Plan. NPHD plans to participate in the PH WINS workforce survey each cycle that it is offered to track progress against these training goals.

### **C. Communications and Branding**

The Needham Public Health Division has retained the services of MORE Advertising to develop a comprehensive brand strategy, including a logo update, brand and style guide, and standardized templates for documents and social media posts.

Improving internal communications remains an area of need and opportunity. Specific to strategic planning implementation, discussions with staff are underway to update the meeting and reporting cadence and to more broadly evaluate and improve how information is shared internally.

### **D. Financial Sustainability**

The Needham Public Health Division is well-resourced through a combination of funds provided by the annual municipal budget, revolving funds, donations, trust funds, and grants. Approximately half of the Public Health Division's spending comes from its operating budget, with the other 50% supported by non-profit, foundation, state, and federal sources. NPHD also relies upon other types of accounts – donation accounts, revolving funds, trust funds, and financial warrant articles – to support smaller programs or very targeted activities.

Our fiscal strategy includes spending non-durable sources first, maximizing potential earnings, and limiting costs. Two specific needs moving forward are:

- Increased support from the Board of Health in pursuing new funding opportunities, especially those that can be made permanent rather than temporary
- Greater flexibility in using indirect grant funds.

## **SECTION 4: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The division will track progress in achieving its goals using a methodical process, a tracking tool, and quarterly in-person status review meetings.

The forthcoming Performance Management Plan will follow the fiscal year, will align CHIP and Strategic Plan timelines, and will establish:

- Individual and team priorities aligned with overall organizational priorities
- Priorities broken down by quarter
- An effective pattern of well-organized weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings to monitor progress toward achieving objectives, maintain alignment, and drive accountability
- What data sets will be reviewed and at what intervals
- Key activities by owner
- Deliverables and timelines
- Resource allocation
- The system/platform used to track progress, including:
  - Identifying the primary owner(s) or user(s) of the system
  - How data is entered into the system
  - How data will be used to guide decision-making, programming decisions, and continuous quality improvement



# APPENDIX: STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS

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## **Advocacy Groups – October 30, 2023**

Hanna Burnett, Domestic Violence Action Committee (NPHD staff)  
Nancy Irwin, Friends of Needham Board of Health  
Sandra Robinson, Needham Community Council  
*Lt. Belinda Carroll, Police DVAC Co-Chair (invited)*  
*Colleen Schaller, Council on Aging (invited)*  
*Tatiana Swanson, Disability Commission (invited)* (Town staff)

## **Peer Departments – October 31**

Deputy Chief Chris Baker, Community Crisis Intervention Team  
Chief Thomas Conroy, Fire Department  
Lee Newman, Planning & Community Development  
Sara Shine, Youth & Family Services  
*Stacey Mulroy, Parks and Recreation (invited)*  
*Lt. John McGrath, Police Department (invited)*  
*LaTanya Steele, Aging Services (invited)*

## **Customers – October 31**

Laurie Blake, Needham Housing Authority  
Steve Volante, Volante Farms

## **Community Partners - November 1**

Jill Carter, Beth Israel Lahey Hospital  
Susannah Hann, Needham Public Schools  
*Emily Turnbull, Needham Police (invited)*

## **Elected Officials – To Be Scheduled**

Denise Garlick – 13<sup>th</sup> Norfolk

## **KEY THEMES:**

Appreciated the outreach and being involved in the process

## **Compliments:**

- Very thorough, logical, covers all the pillars of public health
- Priorities are well thought out
- Reads as inclusive doc; the priority around people and compassion, caring for each other – that value really came through
- Mission statement captures what the department is trying to do
- Really liked and understood the mission, vision, and values (esp. “prevent when possible, respond when necessary”)

## **Questions / Curious for more information**

- How much of this is new? How much is ongoing/continuation of existing work?
- Hadn’t seen BOH/staff areas of focus divided so starkly in the past

## **Encouragements**

- ID any gaps in awareness of public health services within the general public
- Communications are good between our divisions – keep doing this!
- ID how some of the goals overlap between departments
- Involve other departments in the goal-planning process
- Mental health cannot be emphasized enough
- Involve staff to a greater degree and make it readable/accessible to them
- Consider naming the schools as a key partner

## Executive Summary

The Needham Public Health Division (NPHD) presents the Needham community with this Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for 2024-2028. The CHIP was developed based on data collected in the Community Health Assessment (CHA), which included demographic information as well as valuable information collected via surveys and focus groups, in partnership with other town divisions, community organizations, and agencies within the town.

The full CHA document as well as an executive summary translated into Russian, Mandarin, and Spanish can be found at <https://needhamma.gov/health> under Public Health Education> Data and Reports.

The CHIP is designed to provide a framework for implementing strategies to the health concerns and problems identified in the CHA, but it is meant to be modified as these concerns or community priorities change, resources shift, or other external factors are identified. The priority areas for the CHIP were selected based on many variables, including the feasibility of the solutions and the potential impacts on the community, with health equity as a cross cutting factor. The CHIP provides focused, targeted solutions to the identified health concerns and thus, must only address a select few priority areas. Therefore, not all goals identified in the CHA were chosen as priority areas to be addressed in the CHIP. By targeting only a few priority areas, the Health Division can focus community efforts and resources to provide the greatest opportunity for improvement of health. The priority areas of the CHIP are:

- Mental Health and Wellness
- Substance Use Prevention
- Physical Health and Wellbeing

## Background

The Needham Public Health Division (NPHD) began a comprehensive health assessment and planning process with the aim of understanding and improving the health of the residents. The two major components of this are the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHA is used to identify health issues, needs, and disparities in Needham, while the CHIP determines the Needham Public Health Division's overarching priority areas as well as specific strategies to be implemented to address the health issues identified in the CHA.

The CHIP was finalized in 2024, using findings from the 2024 CHA. The full CHA document as well as an executive summary translated into Russian, Mandarin, and Spanish can be found at <https://needhamma.gov/health> under Public Health Education> Data and Reports.

### What is a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)?

The CHIP is meant to be a framework for implementing action towards the goals identified from data in the CHA. The CHIP includes broad, overarching priority areas and goals, as well as specific objectives and activities aimed at addressing these priority areas to improve the health of the community. The document will be reviewed frequently and modified in accordance with changing resources within the Public Health Division, shifting community priorities, new and emerging health concerns, and other factors.

### Strategic Alignment

The CHIP was created to align with, and complement, other guiding documents from NPHD. It is intended to highlight existing coalitions and initiatives and identify resources within NPHD and throughout Needham that will be utilized to improve the health of the community. The intention of the CHIP is not to supersede or duplicate recommendations from other plans, such as the Strategic Plan, but rather build upon them and identify specific strategies to accomplish NPHD's goals.

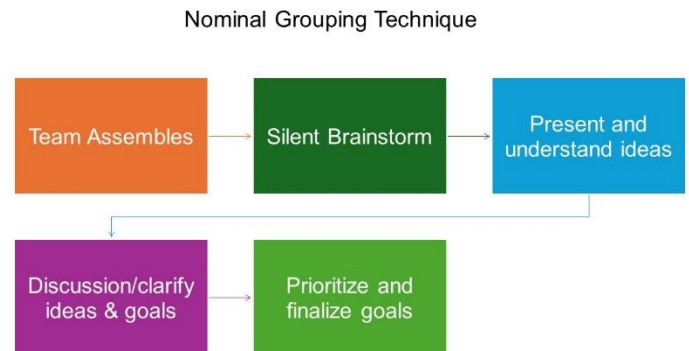
### Methodology

The CHA was published in 2024, which provided the health division with demographic data, health outcome data, and information on community concerns. Using this data, priority areas were identified to address specific health concerns. The priority areas were based on the priority areas identified in Beth Israel Deaconess-Needham's 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment. While the BID-N priority areas covered data collected among all the towns in the hospital's catchment area, NPHD was able to narrow down more specific priority areas which encompassed issues identified in Needham:

| Community Health Assessment Priority Areas                     |                                                          |                               |                                  |                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital – Needham Priority Areas</b> | Equitable Access to Care                                 | Social Determinants of Health | Mental Health and Substance Use  | Complex and Chronic Conditions                                   |
| <b>NPHD Priority Areas</b>                                     | Access to transportation resources for healthcare needs. | Cost of living burden.        | Mental health and substance use. | Physical health, cardiovascular disease, and other risk factors. |

The CHIP Committee, formed in Fall 2023, was composed of representatives from Needham Public Health Division, Needham Aging Services Division, Needham Community Council, Needham Community Farm, and the Needham Commission on Disabilities. Key findings from the CHA were presented to the CHIP Committee, including demographic information and information on social determinants of health including income, poverty, education, and housing. Critical disparities identified in the data were highlighted to demonstrate how the CHA priority areas were formed. Nominal group technique was utilized in the selection of goals for the CHIP, where the structure and purpose of the CHIP was introduced, the CHA findings and priority areas were reviewed and discussed, the Committee members shared their input and asked questions about the reviewed data and potential impact of the priority areas, and the following criteria were discussed and used to choose final priority areas:

- Is the goal measurable either with data or deliverables?
- Can it be accomplished within the 5-year timeframe?
- Does it connect to the Community Health Assessment?
- Is it feasible based on existing Public Health Division resources and influence in regulatory affairs in other departments or town agencies?
- What is the impact of the problem within the 5 years?
- What is the impact of the solution (both immediate and future)?



These same criteria were used in selecting the Strategic Planning Goals for the Public Health Division.

Health equity is a cross-cutting factor in all work done by the Needham Public Health Division. Each priority area will be addressed with a health equity lens.

The priorities for the Community Health Improvement Plan are:

❖ **Priority area 1: Mental Health and Wellness**

- **Goal:** Ensure Needham residents have access to knowledge, education, and resources to support their mental health and wellness.

❖ **Priority area 2: Substance Use and Prevention**

- **Goal:** Decrease substance use while providing harm reduction services and education to the community.

❖ **Priority area 3: Physical Health and Wellbeing**

- **Goal:** Ensure that all Needham residents have access to the preventative services which can address cardiovascular disease as well as the resources to support a healthy lifestyle.

Mental health and substance use was identified as a singular goal in the CHA, and the division acknowledges that this is a very broad goal which encompasses two very complex and multi-faceted public health issues. As the CHIP outlines very specific, focused strategies to better the health and wellbeing of the community, it was decided that these two issues must be separated. However, when selecting strategies, it was determined that both issues were of high community importance, have a vast impact on the community currently and into the future, have available solutions and resources, and have a great impact on health equity. Therefore, mental health and substance use were both included as separate priority areas in this CHIP.

While Needham Public Health Division felt it was crucial to acknowledge the very significant problems surrounding transportation as a barrier to health care access and the burden of housing costs and the downstream impacts on health



and wellbeing, it was determined that the solutions to these problems were not feasible for the health division to implement. However, the Public Health Division and Board of Health will continue to advocate for solutions to these complex problems, including promoting existing transportation resources in the town, and referring residents to healthcare resources supported by the Health and Human Services Department and other community partners and organizations.

### **Priority Area 1: Mental Health and Wellness**

**Goal:** Ensure Needham residents have access to knowledge, education, and resources to support their mental health and wellness.

**Why is mental health a priority area for the Needham Public Health Division?**

- The percentage of Needham High School and Middle School students reporting having seriously considered attempting suicide in their lives increased dramatically from 2018 to 2021 (MWAHS, 2018-2021).
- 42% of Needham High School students reported feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge more than half the days/nearly every day in the past 2 weeks (MWAHS, 2021).
- Female Needham High School students reported stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms at significantly higher rates than their male peers (MWAHS, 2021).
- Just under a third of respondents of the Survey on Healthy Aging reported feeling isolated sometimes or often (Healthy Aging Assessment, 2023).
- Over a third of respondents of the Survey on Healthy Aging reported feeling a little more or much more isolated or lonely in comparison to before the COVID-19 pandemic (Healthy Aging Assessment, 2023).
- Needham Public Health Division is lacking local data related to mental health and wellness, especially for adults in the population aged 18-59.
- Throughout the state, 25% of emergency department beds in October 2021-September 2022 were occupied by persons awaiting behavioral health treatment, as there are not enough behavioral health providers to meet the growing need<sup>1</sup>.

| Priority Area 1: Mental Health and Wellness                                                                                                             |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Objective 1:</b> Develop a greater understanding of the mental health needs and services in Needham.                                                 |  |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Survey residents on mental health and wellness.                                                                                      |  |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Improve collection of mental health data from Police, Fire/Emergency Medical Services, and hospitals.                                |  |
| <b>Objective 2:</b> Ensure community members are knowledgeable of and have access to mental health resources.                                           |  |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Promote mental health awareness and proactive community engagement                                                                   |  |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Provide resources to the community on mental health and wellness.                                                                    |  |
| <b>Objective 3:</b> Implement or continue partnerships with town departments or community organizations to prevent and/or react to mental health crises |  |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Equip Needham community with skills to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses.                               |  |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Advocate for hiring of additional clinicians in Health and Human Services.                                                           |  |

<sup>1</sup> “An Acute Crisis: How Workforce Shortages are Affecting Access and Costs”, a report from the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association, October 2022. Accessed via <https://mhalink.informz.net/mhalink/data/images/An%20Acute%20Crisis%20-%20MHA%20Workforce%20Report.pdf>.

## **Priority Area 2: Substance Use and Prevention**

**Goal:** Decrease substance use while providing harm reduction services and education to the community.

### **Why is substance use a priority area for the Needham Public Health Division?**

- Needham High School students reported current alcohol use (31%) and binge drinking (19%) at higher rates than MetroWest High School students (25% and 15%, respectively).
- The percentage of Needham High School students who reported having ever used alcohol in their lifetimes increased significantly from 8<sup>th</sup> grade (10%) to 9<sup>th</sup> grade (34%) and continues to increase gradually through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (69%).
- Perceived risk of using marijuana once or twice a week decreases by grade in High School (64% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders reported there is moderate/great risk while 38% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported there is moderate/great risk).
- Over a third of Needham Parent Survey respondents reported that youth drinking alcohol occasionally was not at all wrong or a little bit wrong.
- Needham adults aged 18+ report binge drinking at a higher rate (17.70%) than adults aged 18+ in Massachusetts (16.76%) and the United States (15.50%).
- Needham Public Health Division is lacking local data related to substance use, especially adults in the population aged 18-59.

| Priority Area 2: Substance Use and Prevention                                                                                                                  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Objective 1:</b> Develop a greater understanding of needs related to substance use in adult residents.                                                      |  |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Collect information on needs and priorities of the community related to substance use and harm reduction.                                   |  |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Improve collection of substance use data from Police, Fire/Emergency Medical Services, and hospitals.                                       |  |
| <b>Objective 2:</b> Ensure community members have access to resources and substance use services.                                                              |  |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Increase awareness and availability of Narcan.                                                                                              |  |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Collaborate with other town departments and community organizations to provide referrals to intervention, treatment, and recovery options.  |  |
| <b>Strategy 3:</b> Introduce and promote recovery coaching.                                                                                                    |  |
| <b>Objective 3:</b> Use education and health promotion efforts as a tool for prevention and harm reduction.                                                    |  |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Educate youth, parents, other adult caregivers, and Needham community on the health harms related to alcohol, cannabis, and other drug use. |  |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Continue and expand upon partnership with Police for tobacco product use and substance use prevention.                                      |  |
| <b>Strategy 3:</b> Shift community norms away from the inevitability of alcohol, cannabis and other drug use for adolescents and young adults.                 |  |

### **Priority Area 3: Physical Health and Wellbeing**

**Goal:** Ensure that all Needham residents have access to the preventative services which can address cardiovascular disease as well as the resources to support a healthy lifestyle.

#### **Why is physical health a priority area for the Needham Public Health Division?**

- Heart disease is consistently in the top 2 leading causes of death in Needham residents.
- There is a high incidence of obesity in Needham residents.
- There is a high incidence of high cholesterol and high blood pressure in Needham residents.
- Half of the respondents of the Assessment of Housing Authority Residents reported having difficulty walking or climbing stairs (Assessment of Housing Authority Residents, 2020)
- Needham Public Health Division is lacking local data related to physical health and wellbeing, including access to and use of health care resources and chronic conditions.

| Priority Area 3: Physical Health and Wellbeing                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Objective 1:</b> Identify incidence of cardiovascular disease and other risk factors which may impact the health of residents and promote heart safe activities |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Collect health information from Needham residents using a community health survey or similar tool.                                              |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Increase access to healthy and affordable food options.                                                                                         |
| <b>Strategy 3:</b> Work towards becoming a HEARTSafe community.                                                                                                    |
| <b>Objective 2:</b> Empower residents to make healthy lifestyle choices.                                                                                           |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Create a central hub for health-related resources, assets, and services in town.                                                                |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Promote healthy eating choices in the community.                                                                                                |
| <b>Strategy 3:</b> Provide health events and opportunities to the community, with a focus on access for the most vulnerable populations.                           |
| <b>Objective 3:</b> Increase access to disease prevention tools.                                                                                                   |
| <b>Strategy 1:</b> Advocate for increased transportation options and promote existing transportation options in town to improve access to health care.             |
| <b>Strategy 2:</b> Educate and inform the community about food safety practices.                                                                                   |
| <b>Strategy 3:</b> Provide education to community members about the genetic and lifestyle factors which may improve their physical health, including heart health. |

## Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Each year, members of the Accreditation Team and/or Accreditation Steering Committee will meet with the groups within the Public Health Division responsible for accomplishing each priority area. Strategies and specific activities will be prioritized for the upcoming fiscal year and an action plan will be created outlining the timeline, responsible staff members, collaborators and resources required for each activity.

An example of the first fiscal year action plan has been included in **Appendix A**. This document is subject to change as, throughout the fiscal year, those responsible for each activity or strategy will meet to review progress. Quarterly, this progress will be formally reviewed, tracked, and documented in VMSG, a project management software. Changes to the specific activities will be made in VMSG.

Creating an action plan annually allows the Public Health Division the opportunity to evaluate the CHIP progress and assess resources within the Division, staff capacity, town priorities, emerging health issues, and other variables which may lead the Division to adjust the objectives, strategies, or activities.



## Acknowledgements

Prepared by: Needham Public Health Division

### **Needham Public Health Division Accreditation Steering Committee**

Timothy McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services

Tiffany Benoit, Assistant Director of Public Health

Tara Gurge, Assistant Director of Public Health

Lynn Schoeff, Accreditation Manager

Alison Bodenheimer, Sr. Public Health Associate

Julie McCarthy, Epidemiologist

Karen Shannon, Substance Use Prevention Coordinator

Kerry Dunnell, Shared Services Program Manager

### **CHIP Steering Committee**

Tiffany Benoit, Needham Public Health Division

Julie McCarthy, Needham Public Health Division

Anna Aguilera, Needham Community Farm

Karen Morales, Needham Commission on Disabilities

Jessica Moss, Needham Aging Services Division

Sandra Robinson, Needham Community Council

LaTanya Steele, Needham Aging Services Division

## Year 1 Action Plan

**Objective 1:** By June 2028, NPHD will analyze Needham-specific mental health data from new or improved data sources, such as a community health survey and EMS data system, to develop a greater understanding of the mental health needs and services in Needham.

**Strategy 1.1.1** Survey residents on mental health and wellness.

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i>                 | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i>                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Gather/analyze costs for providing Community Health Survey (survey deployment target goal would be before CHA 2028) | Feb – June 2024                                                                                           | Administration                                                                        | When we have a price list or rough budget                                                      | Not Started                                                           | Price out different modes of delivery, survey length<br><br>Develop budget requests and place in budget for FY26-FY27                                      |
| Connect with other communities that have developed and deployed surveys                                             | Feb – March 2024                                                                                          | Administration                                                                        | Learnings from 3-5 communities                                                                 | Not Started                                                           | Possible communities to connect with: Cambridge, Worcester<br><br>Understand best model for survey development and delivery informed by other communities: |

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|                                                                                                                             |                |              |                                       |          | Contract externally completely? Or combined external and internal?      |
| <b>Strategy 1.1.2 Improve collection of mental health data from Police, Fire/Emergency Medical Services, and hospitals.</b> |                |              |                                       |          |                                                                         |
| Gain access to EMS data system                                                                                              | 9/2023-11/2023 | Epidemiology | Login information<br>Successful login | Complete | Identify and explore mental health data available in EMS system in FY25 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Resources Required for this Objective</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Online survey platform &amp; paper version</li> <li>• Consultant to support survey design and development</li> <li>• Staff time - research on what other communities have done</li> <li>• Community support</li> </ul> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Potential Partners for this Objective</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different communities</li> <li>• Youth and families</li> <li>• Mental Health – Riverside Community</li> <li>• HHS Partners</li> <li>• Community-led groups</li> <li>• Previous vendor who has worked on surveys for Needham</li> </ul> |

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**Objective 2: By June 2026, NPHD will develop, provide, and promote ## mental health resources on social media and other internal and external distribution channels to ensure community members are knowledgeable of and have access to mental health resources in multiple languages**

**Strategy 1.2.1 Promote mental health awareness and proactive community engagement.**

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i>                                   | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SOP for migrant families: Write SOP                                                                                                   | Feb -April 2024                                                                                           | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | Draft SOP                                                                                      | In progress                                                           |                                                                                                                 |
| SOP for migrant families: Provide SOP to Tim and Lynn for review                                                                      | Feb -April 2024                                                                                           | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | SOP sent to Tim & Lynn                                                                         | Not yet started                                                       |                                                                                                                 |
| SOP for migrant families: Incorporate feedback and make some changes after SOP is reviewed by relevant stakeholders                   | Feb -April 2024                                                                                           | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | SOP ready for approval                                                                         | Not yet started                                                       |                                                                                                                 |
| SOP for migrant families: Approval by Tim                                                                                             | April 2024                                                                                                | HHS Director                                                                          | SOP approved                                                                                   | Not yet started                                                       |                                                                                                                 |
| One-pager for migrant families: Develop a “welcome” one-pager prepared in different languages that can be distributed to new arrivals | July 2023-April 2024                                                                                      | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | Completed                                                                                      | Completed                                                             |                                                                                                                 |
| One-pager for migrant families: Translate into Spanish and Creole                                                                     | February 2024                                                                                             | Translation service                                                                   | Receiving translation pages                                                                    | In Progress                                                           |                                                                                                                 |
| One-pager for migrant families: Make it available to internal users/staff for use/dissemination to public                             | April 2024                                                                                                | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | Distribute to internal users                                                                   | In Progress                                                           |                                                                                                                 |

**Strategy 1.2.2 Provide resources to the community on mental health and wellness.**

|                                                                                         |                |                                           |                                                                  |             |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Identify relevant mental health and wellness materials to post on social media accounts | 7/1/23-6/30/24 | Public Health<br>Nursing,<br>Epidemiology | Posts on Instagram, Facebook, X                                  | In progress |  |
| Post on Instagram, Facebook, X                                                          | 7/1/23-6/30/24 | Public Health<br>Nursing,<br>Epidemiology | Posts on Instagram, Facebook, X                                  | In progress |  |
| Track analytics on platforms                                                            | 7/1/23-6/30/24 | Public Health<br>Nursing,<br>Epidemiology | Number of interactions (including clicks, likes, comments, etc.) | In progress |  |

**Resources Required for this Objective**

- Canva access
- Translation services

**Potential Partners for this Objective**

- Social Work from Center at the Heights and Youth and Family, Community Council, Interfaith Clergy
- Police/Fire and other town departments
- Other LBOHs



NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

**Objective 3: From FY24 - FY28, NPHD will increase town capacity to respond to mental health crises by implementing or continuing partnerships with town departments or community organizations by providing ## trainings to prevent and/or react to mental health crises and by hiring additional clinicians in Health and Human Services by June 2024.**

**Strategy 1.3.1 Equip Needham community with skills to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses.**

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i>                                                        | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i>                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MRC: Identify training needs that can help Needham Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to respond effectively to community mental health needs during an emergency | March - May 2024                                                                                          | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | List of trainings identified                                                                   | Not Started                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| MRC: Discuss plan with Assistant Director of Public Health                                                                                                 | March 2024                                                                                                | Assistant Director of Public Health, Substance Use Prevention                         | Training Delivery Plan & Start Date                                                            | Not Started                                                           | Determine how to conduct the training – outsource or train a staff member. If so, which staff member and how many. Determine target date to start offering training. |
| MRC: Research vendors and identify costs associated with each one                                                                                          | April – June 2024                                                                                         | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | List of potential vendors and costs associated                                                 | Not Started                                                           | Depending on conversation, this is either vendor for whole training or train the trainer                                                                             |
| MRC: Do necessary prep to be able to conduct training – train a staff                                                                                      | April – June 2024                                                                                         | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | Staff member is trained or                                                                     | Not Started                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                      |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| member or identify an outsourced trainer                                                                                                                   |                         |                                                   | outsourced trainer is identified                            |             |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| MRC: Confirm funding source – current grant from NC-8 or other source                                                                                      | March-April 2024        | Emergency Preparedness                            | Funding source is determined                                | Not Started |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Adult MHFA: Identify process for providing Adult MHFA training incl. number of participants to be trained, identifying trainer, and calendar for training. | February 2024-June 2024 | Substance Use Prevention                          | Training Delivery Plan                                      | Not Started | Expected to continue into Jan 2025<br><br>Identify process for providing Adult MHFA training incl. number of participants to be trained, identifying trainer, and calendar for training. |
| Adult MHFA: Discuss plan with Tiffany and Taleb for training NPHD staff and emergency response staff in Adult MHFA                                         | March 2024              | Substance Use Prevention                          | Training Delivery Plan & Start Date                         | Not Started | Determine how to conduct the training – outsource or train a staff member. If so, which staff member and how many. Determine target date to start offering training.                     |
| Adult MHFA: Do necessary prep to be able to conduct training – train a staff member or identify an outsourced trainer                                      | April – June 2024       | Substance Use Prevention                          | Staff member is trained or outsourced trainer is identified | Not Started | Completion of staff training is dependent on funding and scheduling of training opportunities                                                                                            |
| Adult MHFA: Identify a funding source to hold the training                                                                                                 | April – June 2024       | HHS Director, Assistant Director of Public Health | Funding source identified                                   | Not Started |                                                                                                                                                                                          |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

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| Youth Mental Health First Aid activities                                                         |                | Substance Use Prevention, Youth & Family Services | Minimum of 3 sessions offered per year by K. Shannon and Sara Shine             | Ongoing  | Need to increase # of staff certified to train course                          |
| Teen Mental Health First Aid activities                                                          |                | Substance Use Prevention, Youth & Family Services | Needham High 10 <sup>th</sup> grade class receives training –completed annually | Ongoing  | Need to increase # of staff certified to train course                          |
| <b>Strategy 1.3.2 Advocate for hiring of additional clinicians in Health and Human Services.</b> |                |                                                   |                                                                                 |          |                                                                                |
| Defending justification to hire new staff members (Warrant article)                              | September 2023 | HHS Director                                      | Complete defense meeting                                                        | Complete |                                                                                |
| Town meeting authorized budget justification for hiring new staff members                        | October 2023   | HHS Director                                      | Authorized budget justification                                                 | Complete |                                                                                |
| Submit budget justification to move grant-funded clinicians into town budget                     | October 2023   | HHS Director                                      | Budget justification submitted                                                  | Complete |                                                                                |
| Present budget request to BOH                                                                    | November 2023  | HHS Director                                      | Budget presented                                                                | Complete |                                                                                |
| Defend budget request to town manager                                                            | November 2023  | HHS Director                                      | Budget meeting with town manager                                                | Complete |                                                                                |
| Defend request to Finance Committee                                                              | February 2024  | HHS Director                                      | Budget defended to Finance Committee                                            | Complete |                                                                                |
| Receive approval to get grant-funded clinicians into town budget                                 | February 2024  | Finance Committee/ HHS Director                   | Decision reached by Finance Committee                                           | Complete | On-target to get clinicians into town budget; waiting for finance committee to |

# NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

|                                                                                                                        |                     |                                     |                                                  |                 |                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                        |                     |                                     |                                                  |                 | make a recommendation                                          |
| Transition grant-funded clinicians into town budget for Youth and Family Services division and Aging Services division | Feb 2024 – Jan 2025 | HHS Director                        | Transfer to operating budget to become permanent | In Progress     | Grant-funded clinicians under ARPA funds until Dec 2024 (FY25) |
| Post job description for clinicians                                                                                    | Feb 24 - March 24   | Director of Youth & Family Services | Job description posted                           | Not Yet Started | Two positions - Children's hospital grant-funded               |
| Interview candidates                                                                                                   | March - April 24    | Director of Youth & Family Services | Candidates are interviewed                       | Not Yet Started |                                                                |
| Hire Clinicians                                                                                                        | May 2024            | Director of Youth & Family Services | Offer Letters Start Date for Clinicians          | Not Yet Started | Dependent on town meeting approval in May                      |

## Resources Required for this Objective

- Funding for train the trainer or access to attend online training
- Funding for trainings, including MHFA
- Staff resources for event logistics
- Canva, Google Docs, etc. to create flyers
- Translation, interpretation services for trainings and materials (e.g. Russian, Chinese)
- Staff time to justify, present, document past success with hiring additional staff

## Potential Partners for this Objective

- National Council for Mental Wellbeing (MHFA organization)
- NC-8 Coordinator
- Needham Public Schools
- Community organizations – interfaith clergy, etc.
- Town manager

- Finance committee
- Board of Health
- Other Municipal departments



## Year 1 Action Plan

**Objective 1:** By June 2028, NPHD will analyze Needham-specific substance use data from new or improved data sources, such as qualitative data from people with lived experiences, key stakeholder data and EMS data system, to develop a greater understanding of needs related to substance use in adult residents.

**Strategy 2.1.1** Collect information on needs and priorities of the community related to substance use and harm reduction.

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i>                                                                                                                    | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Identify and hold Key stakeholder interviews to identify which community resources or interventions would make the most impact on residents to address the opioid crisis                                               | Nov 23 –Jan 2024                                                                                          | Contractor                                                                            | Key Stakeholder Interview Results                                                              | In Progress                                                           |                                                                                                                 |
| Connect with people with lived experience and families and complete small group interviews to identify which community resources or interventions would make the most impact on residents to address the opioid crisis | Jan- Feb 2024                                                                                             | Contractor                                                                            | Small Group Interview Results                                                                  | In Progress                                                           |                                                                                                                 |
| Hold a large community forum to get feedback on which community resources or                                                                                                                                           | April 2024                                                                                                | Contractor                                                                            | Forum Feedback data                                                                            | In Progress                                                           |                                                                                                                 |

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| interventions would make the most impact on residents to address the opioid crisis                                          |                 |              |                                       |             |                                                                         |
| Final report from contractor                                                                                                | End of Jun 2024 | Contractor   | Final Report                          | Not Started |                                                                         |
| <b>Strategy 2.1.2 Improve collection of substance use data from Police, Fire/Emergency Medical Services, and hospitals.</b> |                 |              |                                       |             |                                                                         |
| Gain access to EMS data system                                                                                              | 9/2023-11/2023  | Epidemiology | Login information<br>Successful login | Complete    | Identify and explore mental health data available in EMS system in FY25 |

|                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Resources Required for this Objective</b>                                                                                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractor help</li> <li>• Funding to pay contractor</li> <li>• Interpreters as needed</li> </ul> |

|                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Potential Partners for this Objective</b>                                                             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Managers office</li> <li>• Police and Fire Dept</li> </ul> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                   |                     |                             |                        |                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Objective 2: By June 2026, NPHD in partnership with other town department and community organizations will develop, provide, and promote substance use &amp; prevention resources on social media and other internal and external distribution channels to ensure community members have access to resources and substance use services, including increasing awareness and availability of Narcan, 15 installed SAMBOXes, and recovery coaching program.</b> |                   |                     |                             |                        |                                        |
| <b>Strategy 2.2.1 Increase awareness and availability of Narcan.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                   |                     |                             |                        |                                        |
| <b>Year 1 Activities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Date Range</b> | <b>Lead Contact</b> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b> | <b>Progress Status</b> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b> |

# NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

| <i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i> | <i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i>                     | <i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Develop Narcan training                                                 | Prior to current fiscal year                                                         | Public Health Nursing                                          | Training in place                                                                   | Complete                                    | (training was developed prior to this fiscal year)                    |
| Promote opportunities for Narcan training to the community              | Ongoing                                                                              | Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology                            | Posts going on social media, newsletters, article in local online newspaper, flyers | Complete / ongoing                          |                                                                       |
| Develop SOP for Narcan training / distribution                          | October 2023                                                                         | Public Health Nursing                                          | SOP developed                                                                       | Complete                                    |                                                                       |
| Apply to BSAS Community Naloxone Program                                | October 2023                                                                         | Public Health Nursing                                          | Application sent                                                                    | Complete                                    |                                                                       |
| Join BSAS Community Naloxone Program                                    | November 2023                                                                        | Public Health Nursing                                          | Part of the program, able to order Narcan through them                              | Complete                                    |                                                                       |
| Order / obtain Narcan                                                   | Ongoing                                                                              | Public Health Nursing                                          | Narcan is obtained                                                                  | Completed / Ongoing                         |                                                                       |
| Set up / organize SAMBOXES                                              | January 2024                                                                         | Public Health Nursing                                          | SAMBOXES ready to be mounted                                                        | Completed                                   |                                                                       |
| Develop an SOP for refilling Narcan and taking care of the boxes        | February 2024                                                                        | Public Health Nursing                                          | SOP developed and utilized                                                          | In progress                                 |                                                                       |
| Set up SAMBOXES in town next to AEDs                                    | June 2024                                                                            | Public Health Nursing                                          | 15 SAMBOXES are placed near AEDs                                                    | In Progress                                 |                                                                       |
| Collaborate with building maintenance to set up SAMBOXES                | June 2024                                                                            | Public Health Nursing                                          | 15 SAMBOXES mounted in place                                                        | Not started                                 |                                                                       |

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| Create social media advertising for SAMBOXES                                                                                                                     | June 2024 / ongoing  | Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology | Posts shared on Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, local newsletter                                       | In progress | Narcan advertisement is ongoing, SAMBOXES will be added once fully set up                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Strategy 2.2.2 Collaborate with other town departments and community organizations to provide referrals to intervention, treatment, and recovery options.</b> |                      |                                     |                                                                                                        |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Promote: Present recovery coach services program to departments and community orgs                                                                               | Jan 2024-June 2024   | Recovery Coach                      | Presentations given                                                                                    | Ongoing     | Group or one-on-one presentations                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Building relationships with town departments and comm orgs                                                                                                       | Jan 2024-June 2024   | Recovery Coach                      | Presentations given                                                                                    | Ongoing     | New town depts and comm orgs are referring people                                                                                                                                                         |
| Advocating to town departments and community members – reducing stigma around substance misuse by having employee with lived experience share their experience   | Jan 2024-June 2024   | Recovery Coach, Human Resources     | When community members are comfortable accessing substance use resources and sharing lived experiences | Ongoing     | Town departments and community organization are advocating for reduced stigma<br><br>HR – keep position, which requires person with lived experience to fill the role<br><br>Will continue on beyond FY24 |
| Educate other town departments to allow people with lived experiences to advocate for what they need – developing a recovery-oriented system of care             | Jan 2024 – June 2024 | Recovery Coach                      | Conversations with town departments                                                                    | Ongoing     | people with lived experiences advocate for what they need – developing a recovery system of care<br><br>Will continue on beyond FY24                                                                      |

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| Receiving TA from CATH social workers                                                                                                                                                                            | Jan 2024 – June 2024     | Recovery Coach                                                                                 | TA meetings                                                   | Ongoing  | Working with senior population and community in general<br><br>Will continue on beyond FY24                                                                                                                |
| <b>Strategy 2.2.3 Introduce and promote recovery coaching.</b>                                                                                                                                                   |                          |                                                                                                |                                                               |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Funds approved for this program                                                                                                                                                                                  | July 2023 – Oct 2023     | HHS Director, Assistant Director of Public Health                                              | Finance committee approval<br><br>Passed by town meeting vote | Complete | Efforts to have prog covered under opioid settlement funds started before FY24                                                                                                                             |
| Preparation for program implementation: Development of materials for program - Consent for peer services, referral form; access to database for storing client records; create presentation for town departments | November 2023 – Dec 2023 | Recovery Coach                                                                                 | Documents are completed                                       | Complete | Develop infrastructure for providing a recovery-oriented system of care. Including: policies, procedures, client records, data tracking, promotional material, and build relationships with town partners. |
| Developed procedure for recovery coaching & approved by Tim                                                                                                                                                      | December 2023            | Recovery Coach, Substance Use Prevention, HHS Director and Assistant Director of Public Health | Approved by Tim                                               | Complete |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| TA provider to supervise recovery coaching work                                                                                                                                                                  | Dec 2023 – June 2024     | Angi & TA Provider                                                                             | Identified TA Provider                                        | Ongoing  |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

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| Promote program: to PHD, CCIT, CATH, Needham housing                                  | December 2023 – June 2024 | Recovery Coach                                       | Number of presentations to community members                                                               | Ongoing         |                                 |
| Provide Angi with a cell phone                                                        | Jan 2024                  | Assistant Director of Public Health                  | Cell phone acquired                                                                                        | Complete        | As part of implementation       |
| Approval to increase hours of recovery coach up to 18 hours/week                      | January 2024 – June 2024  | Assistant Director of Public Health, Human Resources | Hours increased                                                                                            | Complete        |                                 |
| Implementation of recovery coaching program                                           | Mid-January – June 2024   | Recovery Coach                                       | Number served (peers)<br><br>Number of presentations to community members<br><br>Receiving referrals/month | Ongoing         |                                 |
| Empower people with lived experiences to access services for themselves (equity goal) | Mid-January – June 2024   | Recovery Coach                                       | Social workers and recovery coach become resource navigators                                               | Ongoing         |                                 |
| Explore possibility of group coaching                                                 | June 2024                 | Recovery Coach & Recovery Coach supervisor           |                                                                                                            | Not yet started | Currently only doing one-on-one |

Resources Required for this Objective

- Social Media
- Funding & Approval
- Flyers, Business Cards
- Cell Phone

Potential Partners for this Objective

- BSAS
- Select Board, BOH
- Police Dept
- Housing Authority
- Recovery Education Collaborative
- People with lived experience

**Objective 3:** From FY24 - FY28, NPHD will use education (e.g. Alcohol EDU or Smart Talk curriculums, parent/caregiver education events) and health promotion efforts (e.g. TIPS trainings, retailer alcohol & tobacco vendor compliance, and community norms campaigns) as tools for prevention and harm reduction among youth and chronic substance users in Needham.

**Strategy 2.3.1** Educate youth, parents, other adult caregivers, and Needham community on the health harms related to alcohol, cannabis, and other drug use.

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i> | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i> |
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| MassCALL3 - AlcohoLEDU or Smart Talk curriculums - Meet with school leaders to assess status of current health education curricula for 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> graders in each cluster community                           | May 2024       | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Meetings completed with appropriate middle and high school personnel in each cluster community | Not yet started |  |
| MassCALL3 - AlcohoLEDU or Smart Talk curriculums<br>- Research DESE requirements for health education for how many hours of health ed, for middle and high schoolers to understand parameters around integrating new health curricula. | May 2024       | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Review of DESE requirements completed in designated timeframe                                  | Not yet started |  |
| MassCALL3 - AlcohoLEDU or Smart Talk curriculums<br>Curate/develop education materials to inform school leaders about the AlcohoLEDU and Stanford Marijuana Curricula                                                                  | May-June 2024  | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Education materials compiled                                                                   | Not yet started |  |
| MassCALL3 - AlcohoLEDU or Smart Talk curriculums<br>Meet with school administrators to educate about state requirements around health education (if necessary) and describe the value of these two programs                            | May- June 2024 | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Meetings conducted in each cluster community                                                   | Not yet started |  |
| MassCALL3 - AlcohoLEDU or Smart Talk curriculums<br>Convene key community members (e.g., health directors from each time, youth serving counselors, school nurse                                                                       | June 2024      | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Meeting with key community members conducted                                                   | Not yet started |  |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

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| leaders, health educators, etc.) from each cluster town as advisory group to strategize about integrating the curricula into standing 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> grade health curriculum.                                                                                            |                  |                                        |                              |                 |                                                     |
| MassCall and SPAN to align AlcoholEDU curriculum                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | June 2024        | Substance Use Prevention               |                              | Not yet started |                                                     |
| SPAN parent education event: SPAN Education Action Team meets to identify objectives for parent community education: provide parents with information on the impact of youth substance use on the teen brain, and how to have conversations with their children to convey disapproval of use. | April 2024       | Substance Use Prevention, SPAN         |                              | In progress     | Event logistics and promotion                       |
| SPAN Education Action Team identifies speakers, event date, and venue.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Feb 2024         | Substance Use Prevention, SPAN         |                              | In Progress     |                                                     |
| SPAN prevention staff create event flyer and work with SPAN Ed. Action Team to promote event.                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Feb – April 2024 | Substance Use Prevention, SPAN         |                              | In Progress     |                                                     |
| SPAN prevention staff meets with speaker panelists to coordinate event program and prepare list of topic areas to be covered.                                                                                                                                                                 | June 2024        | Substance Use Prevention, SPAN         |                              | Not yet started |                                                     |
| <b>Strategy 2.3.2 Continue and expand upon partnership with Police for tobacco product use and substance use prevention.</b>                                                                                                                                                                  |                  |                                        |                              |                 |                                                     |
| Collaborate with police to develop new alcohol compliance checklist                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Sept 2023        | Substance Use Prevention & Police Dept | Alcohol Compliance checklist | Complete        | Through this process gained buy-in from police dept |

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| Lead responsibility for recruiting underage operatives for alcohol compliance checks   | July 2023 | Substance Use Prevention & Police Dept            | Identified operatives for each alcohol compliance check                                   | Ongoing     | Includes: Develop flyer for recruitment, work with college campuses to send out flyers, communicate with operatives and maintain list of student volunteers, buy gift cards for operative incentives, maintain list of student volunteers, coordinate of ushering process for operatives, build relationships with campus staff.<br><br>Need to repeat for every compliance check |
| Discuss development of alcohol compliance check procedure with Needham Chief of Police | February  | Substance Use Prevention, Needham Chief of Police | Responsibility for who will write the alcohol compliance check procedure will be resolved | In progress | Needham Police Dept. Will draft a Standard Operating Procedure for their role in conducting alcohol compliance checks. NPHD will draft a procedure for their role in the alcohol compliance check.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Modify policy for Tobacco checks/compliance                                            | Jan. 2024 | Environmental Health                              | Updated retail tobacco vendor inspection report                                           | Incomplete  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



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|                                                                                                                                                                                             |                               |                                                   | and tobacco compliance check form with the state's suggested edits. Still need to update policy.         |                                                                             |                                                                                                                             |
| Update Compliance Form before First Compliance Checks                                                                                                                                       | Jan. –February 2024           | Environmental Health                              | Compliance form was updated. There should be more details gathered with new form and thus more evidence. | Completed                                                                   | Identify any other things that need to be added or removed from the form as the final policy is drafted                     |
| Meet with police chief to schedule annual alcohol compliance checks                                                                                                                         | Feb 2024                      | Substance Use Prevention, Needham Chief of Police | 2024 alcohol compliance check schedule                                                                   | In Progress                                                                 | Trying to schedule meeting with NPD Chief to identify 2024 alcohol compliance check schedule.                               |
| Update Retail Inspection Form before First Retail Inspections. Combining old form (2017) and new form (2021) and incorporating comments from state Subject matter expert into a master form | January-March 2024            | Environmental Health                              | Form is redone and sent to SME for additional thoughts                                                   | In progress                                                                 | Update form as new products and regulations come out.                                                                       |
| Conduct retail tobacco vendor compliance checks with Needham Police                                                                                                                         | February 2024, Every 3 months | Environmental Health                              | No sales of tobacco and/or nicotine dispensing products to minors.                                       | On-going<br>(Completed 1 in October 2023, next in Feb/ March, and May/June) | Change up how checks are performed to check different situations. (one vs. Two buyers, etc., asking for different products) |
| Train staff on new updated retail inspection form so inspections can be performed independently                                                                                             | March –June 2024              | Environmental Health                              | Inspections can be assigned to other                                                                     | Not started                                                                 | Train staff on being able to identify new emerging tobacco                                                                  |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

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|                                                                                                                                                              |                            |                                           | staff without oversight                                                                                                                   |             | products and the regulations afterwards.                 |
| Perform Retail Tobacco Inspections                                                                                                                           | March 2024, every 6 months | Environmental Health                      | Inspections can consistently be done at least twice a year and violations noted in the previous reports have been corrected going forward | Not started |                                                          |
| Update/Create Tobacco Retail Inspection SOPs                                                                                                                 | March-June 2024            | Environmental Health                      | SOPs updated                                                                                                                              | Not Started |                                                          |
| Create email listserv for providing additional training/education to Tobacco retailers about tobacco sales and local and state regulations, required signage | March 2024                 | Environmental Health                      | Email listserv is created                                                                                                                 | Not started | Incorporate within the online permit in next fiscal year |
| Connect with Additional Officers from Needham Police to assist with Compliance Checks, create procedure on who and how to reach out                          | April – June 2024          | Environmental Health                      | Up to date list of Needham police officers that can assist with drive arounds and enforcement is available.                               | Not started |                                                          |
| <b>Strategy 2.3.3 Shift community norms away from the inevitability of alcohol, cannabis and other drug use for adolescents and young adults.</b>            |                            |                                           |                                                                                                                                           |             |                                                          |
| Engage intern to support PhotoVoice project implementation                                                                                                   | October 2023               | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Intern has been identified and committed to support PhotoVoice project                                                                    | Complete    |                                                          |

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| Develop information sheet and recruitment materials about PhotoVoice project                                                                                    | January 2024          | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Informational/promotional materials developed                                                                        | Complete    |  |
| Recruit youth participants in Photovoice project                                                                                                                | January-February 2024 | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Group of at least 8 youth from each cluster community recruited and committed to participating in PhotoVoice project | In Progress |  |
| Schedule weekly PhotoVoice project meetings with youth from each town based on participant availability                                                         | January-March 2024    | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Meeting schedule confirmed                                                                                           | In Progress |  |
| Begin PhotoVoice project, including 5 weekly meetings in each town with youth participants                                                                      | January-March 2024    | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | First PhotoVoice meeting held                                                                                        | Incomplete  |  |
| Determine and secure locations for photo displays in each cluster community                                                                                     | April 2024            | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Photo display locations secured in each community                                                                    | Incomplete  |  |
| Host photo displays in each community                                                                                                                           | May 2024              | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Photo displays hosted in each community                                                                              | Incomplete  |  |
| Convene a four-town gallery walk to display photos and recruit community members to participate in the positive social norms (PCN) campaign development process | May 2024              | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Gallery walk held                                                                                                    | Incomplete  |  |
| MassCALL3 - Positive community norms campaign                                                                                                                   | June 2024             | Substance Use Prevention                  |                                                                                                                      | Incomplete  |  |

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|                                                                                                                                                  |               | (MassCALL3 team)                          |                                                                                                                               |            |  |
| MassCALL3 - Post Scope of Work and Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire social marketing consultant (SMC) to advise on message content and design | February 2024 | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Social marketing consultant RFP process initiated.                                                                            | Incomplete |  |
| MassCALL3 - Articulate objectives and desired process and outcome measures of social marketing campaign                                          | March 2024    | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Objectives and evaluation measures agreed upon by LT                                                                          | Incomplete |  |
| MassCALL3 - Determine focus group timing and logistics (e.g., number of focus groups to hold locations to hold them).                            | March 2024    | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Key decisions are made, documented, and shared with LT regarding focus group implementation                                   | Incomplete |  |
| MassCALL3 - Draft parent focus group questions and interview guide                                                                               | March 2024    | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Focus group interview protocol drafted and approved by responsible parties                                                    | Incomplete |  |
| MassCALL3 - Develop and disseminate promotional materials (e.g., flyer, email) to recruit focus group participants                               | March 2024    | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Promotional materials are developed and have been delivered to community partners virtually and in hard copy for distribution | Incomplete |  |
| MassCALL3 - Conduct parent focus groups                                                                                                          | May 2024      | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Previously determined number of focus groups have been conducted                                                              | Incomplete |  |

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| MassCALL3 - Determine status of parent surveys in each cluster community and modify existing services to include campaign related questions                     | May 2024                     | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Existing parent surveys modified to include campaign-related questions                               | Incomplete  |  |
| MassCALL3 - Work with cluster communities without parent surveys to develop a brief parent survey specifically for collecting baseline information from parents | May 2024                     | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Process for collecting baseline parent information in communities without a parent survey determined | Incomplete  |  |
| MassCALL3 - Review focus group data and summarize key themes                                                                                                    | May 2024                     | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Review complete and summary document finalized                                                       | Incomplete  |  |
| MassCALL3 - Present data back to focus group participants and community members in each community.                                                              | June 2024                    | Substance Use Prevention (MassCALL3 team) | Community presentations delivered to participants/community members in each cluster community        | Incomplete  |  |
| Needham SPAN - Positive community norms campaign: continue distribution and marketing of PCN poster series in community. There are 6 posters.                   | July 2023 – January 2024     | Substance Use Prevention                  | PCN messages developed in 2022 under guidance of consultant.                                         | In progress |  |
| Create list of locations to distribute PCN posters including town offices and private businesses.                                                               | July 2023                    | Substance Use Prevention                  | List was created.                                                                                    | Completed   |  |
| Recruit SALSA student volunteers to distribute PCN posters to designated locations. Posters are distributed monthly.                                            | September 2023- January 2024 | Substance Use Prevention                  | Students were recruited and posters were distributed.                                                | Completed   |  |

# NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

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| Order vinyl banners for each of the 6 PCN posters.                                                                                           | December 2023     | Substance Use Prevention | Banners were ordered from vendor and received.                                                                                             | Completed   |  |
| Meet with Director of Needham Park and Recreation to identify local parks and outdoor public spaces for hanging vinyl banners. Post banners. | March – June 2024 | Substance Use Prevention | Locations will be identified in partnership with Dir. of Park and Recreation and banners will be hung in public outdoor spaces in Needham. | In progress |  |

## Resources Required for this Objective

- State Tobacco Prevention Program (guidance for updating policies)
- 

## Potential Partners for this Objective

- Needham Police Department
- Local schools and colleges (partnering for tobacco & alcohol compliance checks)



## Year 1 Action Plan

**Objective 1:** By June 2028, NPHD will identify incidence of cardiovascular disease and other risk factors which may impact the health of residents from new or improved data sources, such as a community health survey, and promote heart safe activities.

**Strategy 3.1.1** Collect health information from Needham residents using a community health survey or similar tool.

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i>                 | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i>                                            |
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| Gather/analyze costs for providing Community Health Survey (survey deployment target goal would be before CHA 2028) | Feb – June 2024                                                                                           | Administration                                                                        | When we have a price list or rough budget                                                      | Not Started                                                           | Price out different modes of delivery, survey length<br><br>Develop budget requests and place in budget for FY26-FY27                                      |
| Connect with other communities have developed and deployed surveys                                                  | Feb – March 2024                                                                                          | Administration                                                                        | Learnings from 3-5 communities                                                                 | Not Started                                                           | Possible communities to connect with: Cambridge, Worcester<br><br>Understand best model for survey development and delivery informed by other communities: |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                          |                 |                             |                                                                                                                                            |             | Contract externally completely? Or combined external and internal?                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Strategy 3.1.2 Increase access to healthy and affordable food options.</b>                                                                                                            |                 |                             |                                                                                                                                            |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Advocate for increased pay for summer drivers to attract more applicants for Traveling Meals Program                                                                                     | March-June 2024 | Traveling Meals Coordinator |                                                                                                                                            | Not Started | If it is found that rates are too low, then work on proposal to Finance Committee to increase Schedule C Rates for FY 2025. Currently spring/summer drivers are the only ones paid; look into interest in changing winter/fall volunteer model |
| Compile summary of summer employment positions in town and their corresponding pay rates to determine if we are competitive or not.                                                      | March-June 2024 | Traveling Meals Coordinator | Compare rates found against 2024 Schedule C Rates. If our rates are more than 25% lower, then we should look to increase rates for FY2025. | Not Started | May continue through Dec 2024, must be in place by January 2025 when HR publishes rates                                                                                                                                                        |
| CATH kitchen funding: Completed year-long study of utilization of space with recs on how to improve facility to support in house meals for seniors and better meals for Travelling Meals | FY23 into FY24  | HHS Director and Vendor     | Utilization study complete                                                                                                                 | Complete    | Learnings on improving space on usage and need                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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| CATH kitchen funding: Presented to Permanent Public Building Committee                                                                                             | August 23 - September 23 | HHS Director                                                                         | Presentations to committee                                                                             | Complete    | Presented twice                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| CATH kitchen funding: Submitted for capital budget - design money in FY26 and construction money in FY27                                                           | October 23               | HHS Director                                                                         | Capital Budget Request                                                                                 | Complete    | Not yet chosen for funding into capital budget                                                                                                                                                            |
| CATH kitchen funding: Advocate for funding to be approved into next year's capital budget                                                                          | Jan 24 - June 24         | HHS Director                                                                         | Finance Committee approval<br><br>Town Meeting vote<br><br>Capital Request is in Capital Plan (Feb 25) | In progress | Activity will continue into FY25: get community champions to advocate to get funded in next year's capital budget                                                                                         |
| CATH kitchen funding: Develop interim solution for Traveling Meals Program, including how to meet additional traveling meals clients beyond BID 75-meals/day quota | Feb 2024 – June 2024     | Traveling Meals Coordinator,<br>HHS Director,<br>Assistant Director of Public Health | Vendor contracted to provide meals (Dec 2024 latest)                                                   | Ongoing     | Develop plan for how to meet additional traveling meals clients beyond 75-meals/day quota<br><br>Possibly partner with Community Council; Hearth as a back-up option<br><br>Likely to continue after FY24 |

**Strategy 3.1.3 Work towards becoming a HEARTSafe community.**

|                                                                                              |                     |                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Identify AEDs in town and create a map of them on app PulsePoint.                            | Feb 2024- June 2024 | Public Health Nursing | We might not be able to, we will not know if we don't find all. Hope is community will be aware of our efforts and will let us know as they get new AED's. Also, we (through FIRE) get reports from one Stryker about the machines they service. | In Progress | AED Scavenger hunt, Needham cable interview, Needham Observer article, outreach to larger businesses / facilities to inquire. Add from reports from Stryker.<br><br>Educate Needham 911 Dispatch on PulsePoint                                                                                                    |
| Share the AED map with community through Healthy Needham site.                               | By June 2024        | Epidemiology          | Resource hub with AED map available                                                                                                                                                                                                              | In Progress | Healthy Needham site is already available                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Increase public awareness of sudden cardiac arrest and importance of bystander intervention. | Feb 2024- June 2024 | Public Health Nursing | # of CPR trainings<br><br># of education events<br><br>Goal is to have 15% of population to know SCA, AED use and hands only CPR. We will use census data, track links viewed, collect data through our events.                                  | In Progress | Multiple CPR classes available for community to sign up for, trainings for town staff, hands-only CPR walk-in clinics planned for several times a year throughout the community, Harvest Fair CPR training, AHA ultrashort video distribution (the views count towards our 15%). Outreach to schools for training |

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|                                                                                                                             |                          |                                        |                                                                                                                                                                   |                         | their staff and students with hands-only CPR and AED use.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Raise awareness of preventative measures each person can take                                                               | April 2024- June 2024    | Public Health Nursing                  | # of education events<br><br>Cholesterol screening 2x/year.<br><br>BP clinic at NHA (by us) and CATH (by VNA).<br><br>Longterm: BMI, BP, A1C Within normal limits | In planning / progress. | “Coffee w/ PHN” educational events, planned at CATH and NHA throughout the year. Cholesterol screening 2x/year. BP clinic at NHA (by us) and CATH (by VNA). Targeted campaigns around “topic months” (Feb, June, Oct, Dec)? |
| Create a formal process for recognizing bystander assistance in SCA                                                         | April 2024- June 2024    | Public Health Nursing, Fire Department | When the process has been approved for use.                                                                                                                       | In planning             | Create a certificate to use, create process (picture in paper / Town social media, select board notification), potential for annual lunch with survivors, bystanders, first responders?)                                    |
| Use of social media, town media channels, newspaper, Needham channel to advertise training events, all HEARTSafe activities | July 1, 2023 – June 2024 | Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology    | Social Media Analytics                                                                                                                                            | Ongoing                 | 3-year HEARTsafe designation by December 2024 (FY25) - need to demonstrate                                                                                                                                                  |

Resources Required for this Objective

## NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

- Time to make connections with partners, plan and create content. Money for materials (from signs to mannequin supplies and CPR class materials). Money for “coffee with PHN”’s to entice residents to attend. Money for Bystander certificates, AED signs (this AED was used in saving a life), annual lunch/dinner with survivors?
- If we need to increase rates, will need additional funding
- Staff time to research, write materials, present, advocate, lobby

### Potential Partners for this Objective

- Needham FIRE, NHA, CATH, NPS, daycares, medical provider offices, MRC, passionate community members. Everyone!
- Town Meeting, Finance Committee
- permanent public building committee (town body)
- Town manager
- Council on Aging
- Contractor to research food ops

**Objective 2: By June 2026, NPHD will empower residents to make healthy lifestyle choices by developing and promoting a central resource hub of health-related resources, assets, and services in town and by connecting residents with tools and resources at health events (e.g. fairs), with a focus on access for the most vulnerable populations.**

### Strategy 3.2.1 Create a central hub for health-related resources, assets, and services in town.

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i> | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i> |
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| SOP for migrant families: Write SOP                                                                 | Feb -April 2024                                                                                           | Emergency Preparedness                                                                | Draft SOP                                                                                      | In progress                                                           |                                                                                                                 |



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| SOP for migrant families: Provide SOP to Tim and Lynn for review                                                                          | Feb -April 2024      | Emergency Preparedness | SOP sent to Tim & Lynn       | Not yet started |  |
| SOP for migrant families: Incorporate feedback to make some changes after SOP being reviewed by relevant stakeholders                     | Feb -April 2024      | Emergency Preparedness | SOP ready for approval       | Not yet started |  |
| SOP for migrant families: Approval by Tim                                                                                                 | April 2024           | HHS Director           | SOP approved                 | Not yet started |  |
| One-pager for migrant families: Develop a “welcome” one-pager prepared in different languages that can be distributed to new arrivals     | July 2023-April 2024 | Emergency Preparedness | Completed                    | Completed       |  |
| One-pager for migrant families: translation to Spanish and Creole                                                                         | February 2024        | Translation service    | Receiving translation pages  | In Progress     |  |
| One-pager for migrant families: Make it available to internal users/staff for use/dissemination to public                                 | April 2024           | Emergency Preparedness | Distribute to internal users | In Progress     |  |
| Contact Economic Development Manager for list of practitioners in town (physicians, specialists, dental, mental health, urgent care, etc) | February 2024        | Epidemiology           | List of businesses in town   | Not started     |  |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

|                                                                                                                               |                       |              |                                                                                             |             |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Identify trails, parks, playgrounds, fields in town and relevant information to be included in site (amenities, parking, etc) | January-February 2024 | Epidemiology | List of parks, playgrounds, field in town                                                   | In Progress |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Geocode businesses and outdoor resources                                                                                      | January- March 2024   | Epidemiology | Excel sheets of geocoded locations for all businesses and resources to be included in site. | In Progress |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Create map layers/map                                                                                                         | March-May 2024        | Epidemiology | Map layers & Map created                                                                    | Not started |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Build site                                                                                                                    | January-May 2024      | Epidemiology | ArcGIS StoryMaps site                                                                       | In Progress |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Publish site (available to public)                                                                                            | May-June 2024         | Epidemiology | Published ArcGIS StoryMaps site                                                             | Not started | Publicize launch of site; Use Google Analytics or similar site to track visits to site.<br><br>Maintenance plan – possible yearly review; crosswalk with Economic Development Manager |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

**Strategy 3.2.2 Provide health events and opportunities to the community, with a focus on access for the most vulnerable populations.**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                               |                                               |                                       |               |                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Host “health fairs” at various community locations with access to an interpreter to educate and connect residents to physical and mental health resources                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                               | Assistant Directors of Public Health          |                                       | In Progress   | how many health fairs? |
| Host booths at annual Needham Street Fair, first Saturday in June, and also at the Needham Harvest Fair, first Sunday in October. These annual fairs, presented by the Town of Needham and the Charles River Regional Chamber, showcase Needham-based businesses, and community organizations, which are well attended by the community. | Typically held on Saturday June 3 <sup>rd</sup> / Sunday Oct. 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Multiple Public Health Division staff members | Number of pamphlets distributed, etc. | In Progress   | Two annually           |
| Provide heart health educational fair.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | May 2024                                                                      | Public Health Nursing                         | Host fair                             | Not completed |                        |
| Provide cholesterol machine, BP check needs, educational materials                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | May 2024                                                                      | Public Health Nursing                         | Material handed out                   | In progress   |                        |
| Coordinate with EH team about healthy food options to discuss/present at fair                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | March 2024                                                                    | Assistant Director of Public Health           | Held meeting                          | Not Started   |                        |

# NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

|                                                                                               |                   |                                      |                             |             |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Before each event, identify translation needs to give notice to vendor for on-site translator | July 23 - June 24 | Assistant Directors of Public Health | On-site translator at event | Ongoing     | Vendor Contract already in place – currently working mostly on written materials but offers in-person translation/interpretation; need to provide notice in place for on-site translator |
| Standardize procedure for identifying translation/interpretation services                     | June 2024         | HHS Director                         | SOP Created                 | Not Started | Standardized procedure – advertise events in advance, ensure community reach, build in opportunities to request translation services                                                     |

## Resources Required for this Objective

- Translation and interpretation services - contract
- ArcGIS license
- Staff time
- Vendor contract for the health fair

## Potential Partners for this Objective

- Town Economic Development Manager
- Park and Recreation Department
- Needham Housing Authority
- Chamber of Commerce
- Health fair vendor

# NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

- Other Health & Human Services groups (shared space in the past)

**Objective 3: From FY24-FY28, NPHD will increase access to disease prevention tools, including transportation to access healthcare, information about food safety practices, education about genetic and lifestyle factors that may improve physical health.**

**Strategy 3.3.1 Advocate for increased transportation options and promote existing transportation options in town to improve access to health care.**

| <b>Year 1 Activities</b><br><i>What activities are needed to accomplish the strategy in Year 1?</i>                                        | <b>Date Range</b><br><i>Set start/end dates for each activity. This should be within one fiscal year.</i> | <b>Lead Contact</b><br><i>Who is responsible for the completion of this activity?</i> | <b>Process Indicator(s)</b><br><i>How will we know we successfully completed the activity?</i> | <b>Progress Status</b><br><i>What is the status of this activity?</i> | <b>Progress Notes &amp; Next Steps</b><br><i>Describe progress and next steps beyond Year 1, if applicable.</i>                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Connect with Community Council to see what we can promote to residents about their programs to help decrease barriers to healthcare access | March 31, 2024                                                                                            | Public Health Nursing                                                                 | Held a meeting                                                                                 | Not Started                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Connect with CATH about transportation offerings to help decrease barriers to healthcare access                                            | March 31, 2024                                                                                            | Public Health Nursing                                                                 | Held a meeting                                                                                 | Not started                                                           | Traveling meals included flyers about a Shopping Trip Program at the Center at the Heights (CATH) Aging Services Division, in her Traveling meals bags to her clients. She said that this program |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

|                                                                                                |                               |                                     |                                                 |             |                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                |                               |                                     |                                                 |             | offers round-trip rides on Wednesdays and Thursdays to local grocery and convenience stores. |
| Create handouts to provide to residents with concerns with transportation                      | April 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2024 | Public Health Nursing               | Handouts are complete and available to hand out | Not Started |                                                                                              |
| Create social media post about transportation offerings from the Community Council, CATH, etc. | April 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2024 | Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology | Social media content is prepared and posted     | Not started | Connect with Aging Services Division about transportation offerings                          |
| <b>Strategy 3.3.2 Educate and inform the community about food safety practices.</b>            |                               |                                     |                                                 |             |                                                                                              |
| Revised 2022 policy internally & received approval from BoH on scoring and fining              | July 2023                     | Environmental Health                | BoH- approved Revised policy                    | Complete    |                                                                                              |
| Minor revisions to policy                                                                      | Nov 2023                      | Environmental Health                | Revised policy                                  | Complete    |                                                                                              |
| Develop pamphlets for the public on food safety                                                | Fall 2023                     | Environmental Health                | Pamphlets developed                             | Complete    | Will do again in FY25                                                                        |



NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

|                                                                                                                           |                      |                      |                                                               |                 |                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Distribute at local public venues (I.e., Farmers Markets, June Fair, etc.)                                                | Fall 2023            | Environmental Health | Venues shared                                                 | Complete        |                                                      |
| Education for food establishments of Food Safety Excellence Program                                                       | Oct 2023             | Environmental Health | Food establishment attendance at trainings                    | Complete        |                                                      |
| Pilot Food Safety Excellence Program with restaurants                                                                     | Nov 2023 – June 2024 | Environmental Health | Participating restaurants                                     | In Progress     |                                                      |
| Develop standardized feedback survey for food establishments to provide thoughts on program                               | Feb 2024             | Environmental Health | Results                                                       | Not Yet Started |                                                      |
| Working with town economic development manager to promote getting feedback                                                | April - May 2024     | Environmental Health | Town Economic Development Manager supporting feedback efforts | In Progress     |                                                      |
| Gather feedback from food establishments after each inspection, through survey, through town economic development manager | Nov 2023-June 2024   | Environmental Health | Feedback gathered                                             | Not Yet Started |                                                      |
| Use feedback to inform score adjustment if needed and understand if this certificate program will work in Needham         | June 2024            | Environmental Health | BoH – group discussion on whether this will work in Needham   | Not Yet Started | Also happening during pilot, figure out fair scoring |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

|                                                                                                         |           |                                                           |                                                                 |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Post-pilot program feedback from food establishments                                                    | June 2024 | Environmental Health                                      | Feedback gathered                                               | Not Yet Started |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Inform public - Post food safety and recall info. on social media and on Public Health Division website | June 2024 | Environmental Health, Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology | Tracking venues, information channels, PSA video views, reposts | Not Yet started | <p>Additional public information dissemination: July FY25: Do PSA with Needham Cable Channel on food safety related topics. Write articles on food safety and post on Observer or Needham Patch; News to You Needham Newsletter; News e-Needham(?); Would happen after finalization/enaction of certification program</p> <p>Continue to educate the public by developing pamphlets and distributing them at local venues in town. Continue to educate our food establishments on common food safety violations that are observed during our inspections at our</p> |

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

|                                                                                                                                                                       |                |                                     |                                 |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                       |                |                                     |                                 |             | annual restaurant forum trainings. Share recorded trainings with the public, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                       |                |                                     |                                 |             | Activities beyond FY24: Implementation of certificates and fines - Less P, Pf and Core Food Code violations. Higher routine food establishment inspection scores/issuance of Certificate of Excellence for scores >90. Decrease in food establishment related complaints. |
| <b>Strategy 3.3.3 Provide education to community members about the genetic and lifestyle factors which may improve their physical health, including heart health.</b> |                |                                     |                                 |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Identify relevant physical health and wellbeing materials to post on social media accounts                                                                            | 7/1/23-6/30/24 | Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology | Posts on Instagram, Facebook, X | In progress |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Post on Instagram, Facebook, X                                                                                                                                        | 7/1/23-6/30/24 | Public Health Nursing, Epidemiology | Posts on Instagram, Facebook, X | In progress |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## NEEDHAM COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

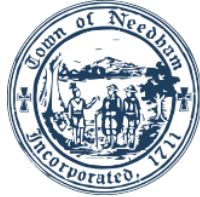
|                              |                |                                           |                                                                           |             |  |
|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Track analytics on platforms | 7/1/23-6/30/24 | Public Health<br>Nursing,<br>Epidemiology | Number of<br>interactions (including<br>clicks, likes, comments,<br>etc.) | In progress |  |
|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--|

### Resources Required for this Objective

- Canva access
- Paper
- 

### Potential Partners for this Objective

- Community Council
- Center at the Heights staff
- Media outlets
- Restaurant/food establishments



## TOWN OF NEEDHAM

### Needham Unite Against Racism Initiative Interim Report for Town Meeting May 2021

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### **Launch of NUARI**

In July 2020, the Select Board launched the [Needham Unite Against Racism Initiative](#) (NUARI) to foster a dialogue about racism in Needham and produce actionable strategies to ensure Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community. This included a listening session for community members who wished to share with Town officials their personal experiences with racism in Needham, their concerns, and suggestions for improvement.

This initiative is intended to be an ongoing effort so that together, Town leadership and residents can craft effective solutions to identified challenges. The Town is committed to ensuring that all residents of Needham are safe and free from racism, discrimination, and hate.

In September, the Select Board finalized the charge of the NUARI Working Group and appointed its founding members. In October, Town Meeting Members adopted a resolution (Special Town Meeting Warrant [Article 17](#)) requesting that the Select Board “conduct a review of the effects of systemic racism in Needham and, if warranted, present to the 2021 Annual Town Meeting and subsequent Annual and Special Town Meetings specific warrant articles aimed at improvement.” The Needham Unite Against Racism Initiative is driven by a shared understanding, as reflected in both the NUARI Charge and Article 17, that proactive dialogue and actions are needed to achieve racial equity in Needham. This report aims to provide Town Meeting and the broader Needham community with an overview of NUARI’s progress to date, initial recommendations, and the work that remains ahead.

##### **Working Group Members**

###### **Members:**

- Ramin Abrishamian, Needham Clergy Association, Needham Diversity Initiative
- Matthew Borrelli, Select Board Vice Chair
- Marianne Cooley, Select Board Member, NUARI Chair
- Natasha Espada, Resident
- Olutoyin Fayemi, MD, Resident
- Vivian Hsu, Resident
- Jen Howard, Needham Human Rights Committee
- Sue Neckes, School Committee
- Marcus Nelson, Needham Human Rights Committee
- Jay Spencer, owner, French Press
- Oluwatoni Ajayi, student (stepped down)
- Dennis Zhang, Resident (stepped down)

Staff:

- Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager
- Katie King, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Operations

### **NUARI Working Group Charge**

1. Articulating a recommended vision for racial equity in Needham and guiding principles that will inform future actions.
2. Establishing protocols and practices for getting community feedback, with a specific focus on engaging Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), and others who have been marginalized due to their race or ethnicity. Strategies should be identified to keep Needham's racial equity work informed by BIPOC input but owned by Town leadership and the broader community.
3. Setting up communication structures to ensure the sustainability and accountability of the Initiative.
4. Discussing and prioritizing other recommendations that have been submitted to the Select Board.
5. Making recommendations to the Select Board about future action.

### **WORK TO DATE**

The NUARI Working Group has met 2 - 3 times per month since convening in October 2020. Members dedicated a significant amount of time to completing the first item of their charge: "Articulating a recommended vision for racial equity in Needham and guiding principles that will inform future actions." (see page 4 and Appendix A)

NUARI members were also asked to identify key areas of focus, which they ranked in this priority order:

- Policing
- Schools
- Housing
- Diversity on Town Boards and Committees
- Neighbor Interaction
- Interaction with Local Businesses
- Diversity of Town Staff

These priority areas informed subsequent meeting agendas, presentations, and discussion topics. Content experts from Town departments and the Needham Public Schools presented to the NUARI Working Group to provide foundational knowledge about their work and existing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. The NUARI Working Group was provided with relevant documents, resources and links to existing studies including the Needham Public Schools Equity Audit, Attorney Natasha Tidwell's Investigative Report of the Needham Police Department, and the Town of Needham's Housing and Zoning Analysis (see Resources, page 8). These meetings launched the start of ongoing dialogues between NUARI members and municipal leaders about additional actions that may be needed to



achieve our vision for racial equity. Those conversations have informed the recommendations included in this report and will serve as the basis for future discussions over the next year.

Beyond the concrete deliverables outlined in this report, the members of the NUARI Working Group have committed themselves to building relationships with one another and fostering an environment where members can openly and productively grapple with the real impacts racism has had on individual members of the Needham community and on the Town, as a whole. NUARI Members have shared personal experiences, asked questions to better understand different perspectives, and modeled how to meaningfully engage in this uncomfortable but necessary dialogue. The hallmark of NUARI's work has been the candor, respect, and appreciation members have shown one another throughout this process.

## Meetings

NUARI Working Group members were asked to identify priority areas of focus, which informed the meeting agendas, presentations, and discussion topics:

- [10/20/2020](#): Overview of NUARI and the Working Group; Discussion of Operational Questions
- [11/09/2020](#): Survey Results for Priority Areas of Interest; Discussion of Facilitator for Vision Planning
- [11/16/2020](#): Vision Setting Session 1 with Lisa Smith-McQueenie, facilitator
- [12/07/2020](#): Vision Setting Session 2
- [12/21/2020](#): NPS REAL Coalition presentation with Dan Gutekanst, Superintendent of Schools, Mary Lammi, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services, and Joanne Allen-Willoughby, Needham METCO Director.
- [01/04/2021](#): Vision Setting Session 3
- [01/11/2021](#): Law Enforcement Session 1: Discussion with Police Chief John Schlittler; Vision Setting Session 4
- [01/25/2021](#): Public Listening Session 1
- [02/08/2021](#): Vision Setting Session 5; Final vote on Vision Statement
- [02/22/2021](#): Discussion of Guiding Principles; Zoning and Housing Session, Lee Newman, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Karen Sunnarborg, Community Housing Specialist
- [03/08/2021](#): Town of Needham & Needham Public Schools Staff Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Efforts with Rachel Glisper, Town of Needham Director of Human Resources, and Alexandra Montes McNeil, NPS Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Discussion on Diversity of Town Boards and Committees.

- [03/22/2021](#): Final Vote on Guiding Principles; Law Enforcement Session 2: Discussion on Attorney Natasha Tidwell Report with Chief John Schlittler and Lt. Chris Baker
- [03/29/2021](#): Discussion of Draft Town Meeting Report; Planning for Public Listening Session
- [04/12/2021](#): Public Listening Session 2
- 04/26/2021: Final Vote on Town Meeting Report
- May and June 2021: Mapping Next Steps

### **Vision Setting Process**

The Town partnered with Lisa M. Smith-McQueenie, an independent consultant who specializes in community culture, diversity, equity, and inclusion work, to facilitate NUARI's vision setting process. Ms. Smith-McQueenie is an experienced trainer, facilitator, and practiced leader oriented to integrating theory and practice. She holds a Master of Arts in Experimental Psychology from Northeastern University and has held numerous roles at Simmons University including Assistant Vice President, Organizational Culture, Inclusion, & Equity and Associate Dean for Student Life. She facilitated more than 10 hours of discussion, resulting in NUARI's recommended vision statement, guiding principles and intentional practices.

Members of NUARI agreed that a vision statement and guiding principles on racial equity are intended to help make decisions and align goals and actions with the community's values. It should be heavily informed by communities of color who have been impacted by institutional and structural racism. After discussion, NUARI agreed the shared vision statement should include the following characteristics:

- it is where you want to be (as a community).
- it is aspirational and inspirational.
- it describes an outcome that is meaningful, believable, and relevant.

The visioning process included electronic communication and in-person sessions via Zoom:

- Sending a pre-survey completed by NUARI Working Group members individually
- Facilitating sessions which included the following:
  - Confirming Working Group agreements.
  - Distinguishing among vision, mission, strategy, and goals/objectives.
  - Establishing a shared language bank, vocabulary, or glossary of terms.
  - Discussing emerging themes and identifying focus areas.
  - Reviewing and analyzing sample statements, drafts, and formats.
  - Considering values and guiding principles.
- Hosting a public listening session on 1/25/2021.
- Reviewing public feedback received from session, emails, and previously published survey.
- Making edits and revisions.

The final vision statement, guiding principles, and intentional practices were adopted by the NUARI Working Group on March 22, 2021 and by the Select Board on March 23, 2021. **See Appendix A.**

## **KEY TAKE-AWAYS & INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Since October, NUARI received presentations from Town staff in each of the key areas and reviewed relevant documents and resources. This informed the Working Group's discussions and their identification of the take-aways and interim recommendations listed below. This is not an exhaustive or final list. It is a work in progress, as NUARI continues to learn, engage with key stakeholders, and get additional community input.

The recommendations below are framed as actions that *should* be taken. This is in recognition that, within the formal structures of our local government, there are many individuals and entities that have formal jurisdiction over this work. Through this report and its future work, the NUARI Working Group aims to provide a framework for how to improve racial equity in Needham and to create the conditions where others within and outside of Town government will be willing, proactive, and dedicated partners in this work. NUARI will continue its work over the next year to recommend initial strategies, goals, and objectives as well as institutional owners for each area of prioritized work.

### **General**

**Recommendations:** The Town should...

- Submit a resolution requesting that Town Meeting adopt Needham's vision statement for racial equity at the May 2021 Special Town Meeting.
- Forward the vision statement and guiding principles to all Needham Boards and Committees for their consideration and integration into their goals.
- Encourage Needham non-profit organizations, civic groups, and businesses to adopt or endorse, as appropriate, the vision statement. All community members are welcomed in this work.
- Include a question in its bi-annual Town survey to gauge residents' perceptions of how welcoming and inclusive the Needham community is.

### **Boards and Committees**

#### **Key Take-Aways**

- Town Board and Committee members volunteer their time and skills to solve complex issues and recommend policy that helps to shape the Needham community.
- The Town Charter details which Board and Committee members are to be elected or appointed and who has appointment authority. Many appointed positions are under the authority of the Select Board or the Town Moderator.
- While the Town has not collected uniform demographic data to date, historically the majority of elected and appointed members have been White. The proportion of representation by gender varies by Committee.

**Recommendations:** The Town should...

- Make intentional efforts and identify creative ideas for community outreach to diversify the candidate pool for all appointed Boards and Committees.
- Identify strategies and partners to encourage diverse candidates to run for elected office.
- Measure efforts and progress on efforts to make Boards and Committees more diverse.

## **The Community**

### **Key Take-Aways**

- There are several formal and informal affinity groups in Needham that bring together people with shared identities or interests, but not all identities (e.g. culture, race, ethnicity, religion) have an existing affinity group.
- Needham has many community-based organizations and initiatives that are focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion broadly, and racial equity specifically.
- The Town of Needham has a vital role in advancing our shared vision for racial equity, but cannot be successful alone. Achieving this vision will require the engagement of Needham residents, businesses, and organizations in partnership with our schools and government.

**Recommendations:** The Town should identify partners and opportunities to...

- Develop a discrimination complaint process and provide forums where individuals feel comfortable discussing their concerns related to diversity, equity, and/or inclusion.
- Provide educational opportunities and community dialogues on the history of racism in America and other topics on equity.
- Create a framework for how community members can effectively engage in conversations around race, diversity, equity, and inclusion, to build relationships and a stronger understanding of different perspectives and lived experiences.
- Host and promote cultural events and celebrations to be welcoming and inclusive of all cultures and backgrounds.
- Increase, encourage and assist minority-owned businesses.
- Provide education to local businesses about the negative experiences of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) individuals in local businesses and ways to improve.
- Strengthen the network of those engaged in this work including but not limited to the faith community, the business community, hospitals, colleges, civic and community organizations, and neighboring municipalities.

## **Housing**

### **Key Take-Aways**

- The Town of Needham faces increasing housing demand and rising costs due in part to Needham's location as an inner suburb of Boston with four commuter rail stations, an excellent school system, and limited available land. Despite intense market pressures, the Town has made progress in promoting greater diversity and affordability of its housing stock including:
- *Increasing supply of affordable housing* -- The Town's supply of affordable housing has increased markedly over the years and has surpassed the 10% affordability threshold under Chapter 40B, now at 12.7%.
- *Further diversifying the housing stock with more rental housing* – While single-family homes have predominated Needham's housing market, almost one thousand units of new rental housing has been built in the recent past with one-quarter being affordable.
- *New funding to help existing owners and renters* – The Town has launched the Small Repair Grant Program for qualifying homeowners in making important health and safety improvements

and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program to assist tenants who have lost income due to COVID-19 in covering part of their rent and avoid eviction.

- *Less restrictive zoning* – Almost half of the Town’s land area is zoned for 10,000 square foot lots, relatively rare in other suburbs where large-lot zoning predominates.
- *Promotion of mixed-use, mixed-income and multi-family housing* – The Town has established special overlay districts to encourage the development of mixed residential and commercial uses at a denser scale in appropriate locations. These districts mandate the inclusion of affordable housing.

**Recommendations:** The Town should...

- Create pathways for racially and economically diverse neighbors to buy and rent homes in Needham.
- Set new goals related to affordable housing, and identify strategies to achieve them now that Needham has surpassed the 10% threshold under MGL Chapter 40B.
- Evaluate and prioritize policies and programs for encouraging the development of housing for individuals and families across all affordability levels, with a particular focus on those earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income.
- Encourage Federal support for affordable housing, including the redevelopment of Needham Housing Authority units.
- Identify and address any barriers to fair housing in Needham.

### **Policing & Law Enforcement**

#### **Key Take-Aways**

- The Needham Police Department places a significant focus on ongoing training to improve individual officers and staff, the department, and to ensure everyone’s safety. Every officer goes through a 26-week Recruit Academy Training followed by an internal 12-week field training program. This includes reviewing Standard Operating Procedures and being shadowed by a plain clothes officer to monitor how the recruit operates in the field. An additional 40-hours of professional development is required each year by the Commonwealth. Some of these trainings include de-escalation, defensive tactics, use of force, implicit bias, firearms, active shooter, and taser training. The Police Chief and Lieutenants collect and monitor data relative to officer actions, and can require supplemental training to address areas of concern.
- Hiring and promotions within NPD are dictated by Civil Service. The Town has asked the Civil Service Bureau for lists of diverse candidates in the past, but have been denied. It remains a Town priority to leave the Civil Service system to increase the ability to diversify the Police Department.
- NPD aims to be a community partner, not solely an enforcement agency. They have forged strong partnerships with the Needham Public Schools, the Needham Housing Authority, the Needham Department of Health and Human Services and others. NPD officers serve on the Domestic Violence Action Committee, the Human Rights Committee, the Coalition for Suicide Prevention, and the Community Crisis Intervention Team.
- The Needham Police Department identified building trust, legitimacy, and communication with the community as a priority. The Chief identified areas for improvement including working with

community members so they have a better understanding of the “why” behind certain police actions and creating opportunities to hear from community members about their personal experiences interacting with law enforcement and the impact it has had on them.

**Recommendations:** The Town and Needham Police Department should:

- Meet regularly with stakeholder groups and communities of color to build mutual trust and respect.
- Work with stakeholders to sponsor a series of conversations between the public and police officers, including especially BIPOC individuals, to build relationships and a stronger understanding of different perspectives and lived experiences.
- Find ways to educate the public on the role of police officers, such as through a Citizen Academy.
- Emphasize training on mental health issues, threshold inquiries, de-escalation techniques and the impact of implicit bias on policing. Further de-escalation training in non-life-threatening conditions should also be considered.
- Prioritize leaving Civil Service to gain greater flexibility within the hiring and promotional process to achieve a more diverse department which reflects the broader community.
- Implement all local components of the new state police reform law once additional guidance is made available. Following that, the Select Board should identify if any local policies or practices warrant additional review or changes or whether additional reforms should be made.
- Review the Use of Force Policy after the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission issues the model policy and determine whether NPD’s policy should include a stronger focus on de-escalation.
- Have the Select Board serve as the oversight body of the Needham Police Department until the POST Commission role is defined.
- Report regularly and make publicly available key enforcement data, broken down by race, gender and residency, to identify potential disparities and monitor trends over time.
- Support funding for a regional collaboration with the Needham Police Department, Dedham Police Department, and Riverside Community Care to provide clinical support services for individuals with mental illness, co-occurring substance use disorders and trauma histories who might otherwise become incarcerated (see May 2021 Special Town Meeting Warrant Article 15).

## **Schools**

### **Key Take-Aways**

- The Needham Public Schools’ Race, Equity, Access, Leadership (REAL) Coalition provides leadership and guidance on eliminating barriers to racial equity and supporting the advancement of all learners in the Needham Public Schools. The coalition was formed in 2018 and includes district leaders, school leaders, teachers, parents, community members, and students. REAL focuses on (1) policies and practices, (2) curriculum & instruction, (3) professional learning, (4) hiring and employment practices, (5) culture and climate, and (6) communications and community engagement.
- Recent equity accomplishments across the Needham Public Schools includes an Elementary Racial Literacy Task Force, Middle School Social Justice League & Launching Scholars Program,



High School Castle Scholars Program, Portrait of a Needham Graduate and Courageous Conversations on Race, a full-year NHS course where juniors and seniors apply what they learn about how racism operates on a systemic level, both in our society and in the schools.

- NPS has a written protocol for how to respond to an act of bias or hate in the schools. The District includes clear race equity goals in school improvement plans that are presented to the School Committee. The District's evaluation system also assesses teachers, principals, and superintendents on their progress in being culturally responsive.

**Recommendations:** The Town and the Needham Public schools should:

- Collaborate to determine how NUARI and the REAL Coalition can be complementary partners, including ongoing communication and coordination strategies.
- Continue to support the development of curriculum and programs that further promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at all grade levels.
- Continue to use the Portrait of a Needham Graduate Strategic Framework to guide decision making and planning around DEI program development, budgets, staffing, data collection, and accountability.
- Identify what community-based equity work is needed to better support the school district.
- Explore opportunities for ongoing community engagement including but not limited to Voices in Unity, a regular convening of equity-focused groups in Needham hosted by the school district.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and communication with private and parochial schools regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

## **Staffing**

### **Key Take-Aways**

- The Human Resources Departments for both the Town of Needham and the Needham Public Schools are making concerted efforts to hire and retain diverse talent. The Town has purchased applicant tracking software that can hide personally identifiable information from applications, eliminating bias early in the hiring process. The School Department has explored new and creative ways to get job postings to a wider audience, including utilizing Handshake, a job posting software used extensively by colleges and universities to recruit recent graduates.
- There are robust efforts to provide professional development opportunities for all staff around cultural competency, workplace inclusion, and reducing implicit bias. NPS is identifying the skills and competencies required to achieve the strategic vision set forth in The Portrait of a Needham Graduate and aligning this with professional development opportunities and staff evaluations.
- The Town and Schools have partnered to launch Stronger Together, the first joint Employee Resource Group, created for BIPOC employees to have a safe place to share experiences in Town and to discuss ways to drive change towards equity. The Park & Recreation Department has also partnered with the METCO Program to promote hiring at the Pools at Rosemary and summer programs.

**Recommendations:** The Town and NPS should...

- Identify and implement strategies to hire, support and retain diverse staff at every level of the organization.

- Measure their efforts to recruit and retain BIPOC individuals and provide annual updates on progress.
- Continue to provide diversity, equity and inclusion professional development opportunities for all staff geared towards deepening understanding and becoming culturally responsive, anti-racist, and anti-biased members of the Needham community.
- Analyze the pilot year of the METCO/Park & Recreation summer jobs partnership to identify opportunities for improvement and expansion.

## **NEXT STEPS**

NUARI members have articulated a vision statement for racial equity (charge #1) and have begun making recommendations for future action (charge #4 and #5). The Working Group is intended to be temporary in nature. However, the work to achieve racial equity is long term and will only be successful if recommended actions are integrated throughout the Town's structures of governance and broadly embraced by the community. In the coming months, NUARI members will explore how to meaningfully engage and incorporate the input of those who have been marginalized due to their race or ethnicity (charge #2) and how to set up structures to ensure the sustainability and accountability of this initiative (charge #3). The NUARI Working Group will produce a second report upon the completion of this work.

## **Status of Charge**

1. Articulating a recommended vision for racial equity in Needham and guiding principles that will inform future actions. (**COMPLETED**)
2. Establishing protocols and practices for getting community feedback, with a specific focus on engaging Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), and others who have been marginalized due to their race or ethnicity. Strategies should be identified to keep Needham's racial equity work informed by BIPOC input but owned by Town leadership and the broader community. (**UPCOMING WORK**)
3. Setting up communication structures to ensure the sustainability and accountability of the Initiative. ( **UPCOMING WORK**)
4. Discussing and prioritizing other recommendations that have been submitted to the Select Board. (**IN PROCESS**)
5. Making recommendation to the Select Board about future action. (**IN PROCESS**)

## **RESOURCES**

### **General**

- [NUARI Webpage](#)
- E-mail address: [NUARI@needhamma.gov](mailto:NUARI@needhamma.gov)
- [YouTube Recordings of NUARI Meetings](#)
- [Needham Human Rights Committee](#)
- [Select Board FY2021-FY2022 Goals](#)
- [Adopters of Vision Statement](#)

### **Housing**

- [Town of Needham Housing and Zoning Analysis, Feb. 2021](#)

### **Policing**

- [2018-2020 Needham Police Department Enforcement Data](#)
- [Police Policies, Procedures, and Information of Interest](#)
- [Attorney Tidwell Investigative Report](#)

### **Schools**

- [NPS REAL Coalition](#)
- [NPS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion website](#)
- [Needham Public Schools Equity Audit](#)

## **APPENDIX A**

### **A RACIAL EQUITY STATEMENT FOR THE TOWN OF NEEDHAM...**

Needham will be a community free of racism, racial bias, prejudice, and discrimination. Our residents, schools, businesses, organizations, and government will work together to identify barriers to racial equity and create solutions, opportunities, resources, and support for removing them.

1. We will work collaboratively and democratically toward a just, equitable, antiracist community.
2. We will work to identify and change current policies, procedures, practices, and cultural norms in Needham that prevent meaningful access to opportunities because of race.
3. We will create opportunities for the community to confront unpleasant truths and seek solutions that always amplify values of racial equity.
4. We will intentionally create spaces for respectful dialogue and difficult conversations toward racial amity.
5. We will actively engage with those who feel the impact of racism most directly, seeking their input, guidance, and honoring the wisdom of their experience.
6. We will commit as individuals to be intentional in our efforts to learn and practice anti-bias and antiracism, transforming our thinking, attitudes, and behaviors.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES...**

1. Racial equity in Needham means that the experiences of people of color are the same as those of the white majority – from day to day interactions, housing opportunities, interactions with the police and other first responders, employment, and educational opportunities, etc. On the path to racial equity...
  - a. People of color will see others of color in leadership roles in government, business, the school system, and civic groups.
  - b. Our community will have opportunities to learn a more complete version of American history and its relevance to today's challenges.
  - c. Students in schools will experience equity with regard to all aspects of their education (e.g. placement, acknowledgement, recognition, engagement, discipline, curriculum, and co-curricular involvement).
  - d. People of color will feel safe, validated, and treated equitably with respect to public safety (e.g. arrests, use of force, motor vehicle stops, traffic infractions, handcuffing, and criminal applications).
  - e. People of color will feel safe, validated, included, and treated equitably in all Town-related activities (e.g. town meeting/government, services, and events).
  - f. In the decision making process, the voices and experiences of people of color will be honored and respected as valid (e.g. equity in hiring, engagement and promotion, programs and events are inclusive and equity minded, intentional anti-bias efforts are employed in all considerations).
  - g. All races will want to live here – Needham will be a desirable community for everyone. The town will take proactive measures to support a more racially and economically

diverse and inclusive population (e.g. housing access, mixed income, and diversity of housing stock).

2. A healthy and equitable community recognizes the harm created by implicit bias, intolerance and racism and strives to embrace diversity and inclusion by using a racial equity lens to promote anti-racist behaviors and attitudes in all aspects of civic and inter-personal living.
3. We value lifelong/ongoing self and group learning and critical social analysis to acknowledge and to further understand the dominance of white culture and privilege throughout US history, and the importance of disrupting racial structures that perpetuate it.
4. Becoming anti-racist means that we must tackle our own implicit bias, intolerance, and discriminatory lenses - thus, bringing about restorative justice, healing, and reconciliation to truly bring together the community we live in.
5. All members of the community commit to engaging with good will and respect in order to repair and build healthy relationships.

**SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING INTENTIONAL PRACTICES WILL HELP NEEDHAM  
REALIZE THE VISION FOR RACIAL EQUITY...**

1. Seek to increase interactions and create/cultivate friendships across and among the various groups
2. Commit to self-education to have a better understanding of and be more informed about race, racism, racial equity, race amity, and race relations.
3. Foster safe environments for, and listen to residents who are, directly affected by racism and racial inequities.
4. Engage in meaningful and productive conversations on racial issues with town/community members.
5. Support those services, materials, expertise, scholarships, and organizations that advocate for racial equity.
6. Stand up, speak out, and act against racism and racial injustice.
7. Encourage vision, transformation and advocacy anchored in democratic action.
8. Encourage and build public understanding of the need to eliminate racial injustice.

**NEEDHAM**  
**ARTS&CULTURE**  
**ACTION PLAN**

**DRAFT: GOALS, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS**

**GOAL 1: CENTRALIZE NEEDHAM'S ARTS AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

***STRATEGY 1.1 Bolster the Town's administration & coordination of arts and cultural resources.***

- a. Coordinate and organize the efforts of the councils, committees, and commissions that support and fund arts and culture in Needham.
  - i. Establish a regular (quarterly or bi-annual) gathering for arts and cultural organizations to give updates on their programming to support networking and collaboration, develop a town-wide calendar of events, and support communication and coordination between organizations.
  - ii. Administer an annual evaluation of the greatest needs pressing arts and cultural organizations through either a survey or town hall meeting with representatives of arts and cultural organizations.
  - iii. Strengthen the Town's grant process for arts and culture to ensure accessibility, transparency, and consistency.
- b. Maintain an arts and culture assets inventory as documented in the Action Plan with a consistent schedule for updating the list of cultural assets.
- c. Collect data on the impacts of arts and culture programs and activities on the local economy, including festivals and events.

***STRATEGY 1.2 Broaden awareness of Needham's existing arts and cultural resources through consistent promotion & communication.***

- a. Establish a centralized calendar of arts and culture programs and activities as a community resource for community events. Potential options include sharing events on an embedded calendar on the Town website (e.g., time.ly) and distributed through the Town newsletter.
- b. Explore opportunities for permanent signage or rotating banners to increase the visibility of Town events.
- c. Amplify local press and media outlets as they promote stories related to Needham's arts and cultural life.
- d. Create a listserv for arts and cultural organizations to share resources, information, and grant opportunities.

***STRATEGY 1.3 Formalize town-wide efforts for public arts and cultural programming.***

- a. Establish clear guidelines for public arts proposals for the Town of Needham, including an outline of the existing process for approval from the appropriate committees to develop a consistent public arts program to serve the Needham community.
- b. Complete a public art strategy to identify the goals and vision for a public art program, including opportunities for community feedback to guide public arts opportunities, including temporary and permanent public art installations, and identifying priority locations for public art installations with local business and property owners, and appropriate Town committees, such as the Design Review Board.
- c. Clarify and communicate the Town's current community programming and responsibilities related to arts and culture across the Community Programs offered by the Town of Needham.

**NEEDHAM**  
**ARTS&CULTURE**  
**ACTION PLAN**

**DRAFT: GOALS, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS**

**GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN NEEDHAM'S ARTS AND CULTURAL CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

***STRATEGY 2.1 Establish a staff position to support the implementation of the Arts & Culture Action Plan.***

- a. Draft a job description for an arts and cultural administrator to coordinate facility rentals, lead grant writing, convene cultural organizations, staff cultural committees, manage and develop a cultural organization directory, promote and support Town events, and maintain a cultural events calendar.
- b. Outline the departments that would benefit from establishing this part-time position, including a cost-benefit analysis.
- c. Establish a singular point of contact for navigating the rental of public facilities and events on Town property.

***STRATEGY 2.2 Increase funding for arts and culture to support staffing and programming.***

- a. Identify public and private funding sources to support arts and culture in Needham. Potential funding sources include existing tax revenue, state and federal grants, or earned income from programming or events.
- b. Explore funding opportunities for a cultural administrator position, including event fees, grants, or direct allocation from the Town's Annual Budget.

***STRATEGY 2.3 Improve accessibility to arts and cultural facilities for community members and organizations.***

- a. Streamline the process for securing permission, permits and insurance for renting public facilities, and holding events on Town property.
- b. Develop a database of existing public facilities available for cultural uses and clear instructions on what is needed to use, reserve, and access these spaces.
- c. Explore opportunities to create new performing arts facilities in town that might serve Needham Public Schools and other community groups.
- d. Develop a formal partnership with higher educational institutions (i.e., Olin College of Engineering and Babson College) to utilize performing arts facilities for public events.



**NEEDHAM**  
**ARTS&CULTURE**  
**ACTION PLAN**  
**DRAFT: GOALS, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS**

**GOAL 3: SUPPORT NEEDHAM'S CULTURAL EQUITY INITIATIVES**

**STRATEGY 3.1** *Identify opportunities that further cultural equity in Needham's schools and town history.*

- a. Collaborate with Needham Public Schools to develop opportunities to incorporate cultural equity initiatives within the district, particularly for middle and high school students.
- b. Coordinate efforts with Needham History Center & Museum to uncover omitted histories and document Needham's current community and cultural life.

**STRATEGY 3.2** *Curate programming and events that reflect the diversity of communities in Needham.*

- a. Support community initiatives focused on multicultural learning and celebration of diversity within Needham, including but not limited to the Needham Diversity Initiative, Multicultural Festival, Juneteenth Celebration Planning Committee, and the Human Rights Committee.
- b. Facilitate intergenerational community events to support life-long learning and engagement around cultural appreciation and understanding in partnership with the Council on Aging and the Center at the Heights (CATH) and the Needham Youth Commission.

**STRATEGY 3.3** *Foster inclusion and belonging throughout the broader arts and cultural community.*

- a. Develop guidelines for hosting events and meetings that account for different abilities and sensitivities in partnership with the Commission on Disabilities.
- b. Circulate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) resources and training opportunities for local arts and culture organizations to improve cultural competency.
- c. Pursue funding opportunities to ensure all public facilities and cultural facilities are made ADA accessible.

**NEEDHAM**  
**ARTS&CULTURE**  
**ACTION PLAN**  
**DRAFT: GOALS, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS**

**GOAL 4: IMPROVE NEEDHAM'S QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH ART AND CULTURE**

**STRATEGY 4.1 *Facilitate arts and culture partnerships to strengthen local businesses, community health, and wellbeing.***

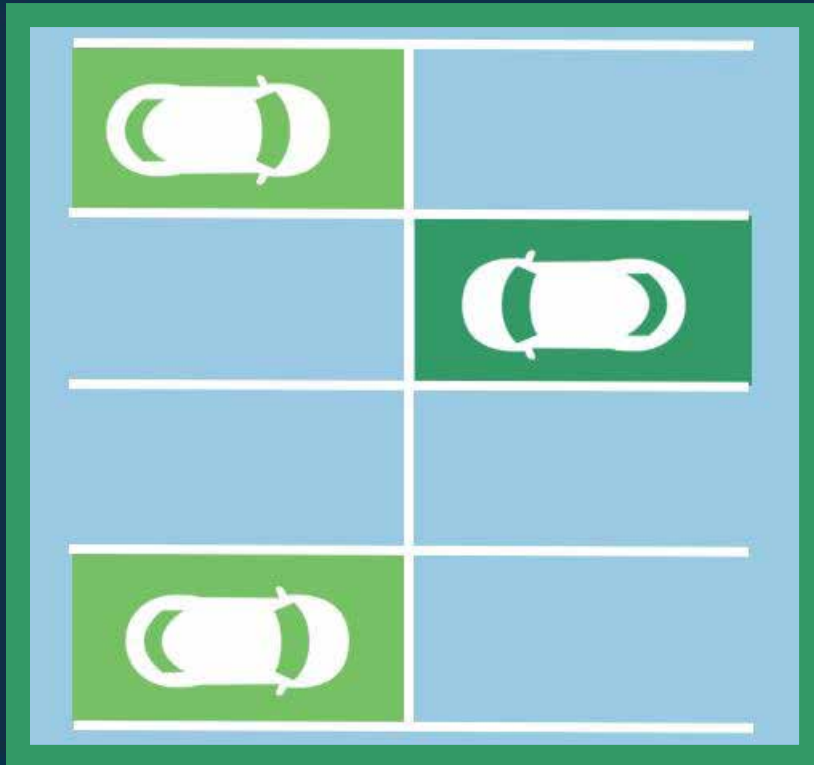
- a. Strengthen Needham's arts and cultural sector by fostering collaboration with local businesses and the Charles River Chamber of Commerce.
  - 1. Offer artists professional development opportunities through networking, workshops, grant assistance, and mentorship.
  - 2. Connect local businesses with local artists for opportunities to host local artists for performances and exhibiting local artwork.
- b. Expand opportunities for youth to access expressive art therapy in coordination with Youth & Family Services.

**STRATEGY 4.2 *Incorporate arts and cultural initiatives when planning for a safe and resilient community.***

- a. Use street painting installations for traffic calming to promote pedestrian safety at crosswalks and other busy intersections.
- b. Incorporate arts and culture into climate and resilience planning efforts, creating space for Needham residents to imagine a more resilient community through arts-based engagement.

**STRATEGY 4.3 *Support local policies that allow the arts and culture sector to thrive.***

- a. Invest in housing policies that allow artists and cultural workers to live in Needham, by expanding permitted uses for within the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) bylaw and supporting affordable housing measures.



# Needham Center + Needham Heights Parking Study

PREPARED FOR: THE TOWN OF NEEDHAM









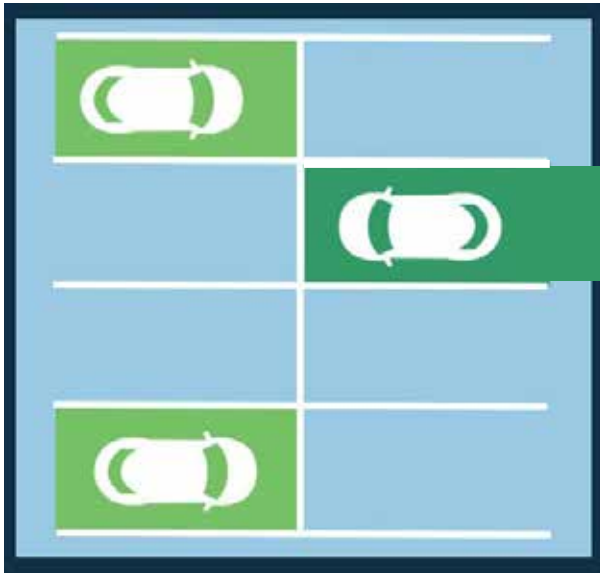
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## **APPENDICES**

# 1



## INTRODUCTION AND DATA

This report summarizes the findings and presents recommended strategies associated with the Needham Center and Needham Heights Parking Study. The Study included the following:

- **Review and evaluation of about 2,800 parking spaces** in Needham Center and Heights
- Counts at additional locations including some **multifamily residential developments** as well as a **commercial area close to Needham High School**
- Review and evaluation of the **Town's parking management practices**, from enforcement to regulations
- Public engagement through **workshops and a widely distributed survey**
- Assessment of the **Town's Zoning Code**

The consultant team worked with a Parking Study Working group to develop seven goals to guide the parking study, outlined to the right. These were also shared at a community meeting in the winter of 2023.

The outcomes of this effort are a series of recommendations, detailed later in this report, which generally seek to adjust the parking system to better meet the Town's goals.



**1. Document existing parking supply and daily demand**



**2. Improve parking management system for residents, employees, customers, and visitors**



**3. Investigate efficiency and user-friendliness of parking meters and other payment methods and find opportunities to improve**



**4. Identify and recommend parking supply efficiencies/opportunities to unlock parking in areas of higher demand**



**5. Identify opportunities to better align policies with the long-term goals and growth of the two areas**



**6. Support the economies of the Needham Center and Needham Heights**



**7. Inform decision-making for future street improvement projects and zoning updates**



## Parking Today in Needham Center



A parking space on Great Plain Ave converted to welcome outdoor diners



Variation of private parking



Variation of private parking signage



Variation of private parking



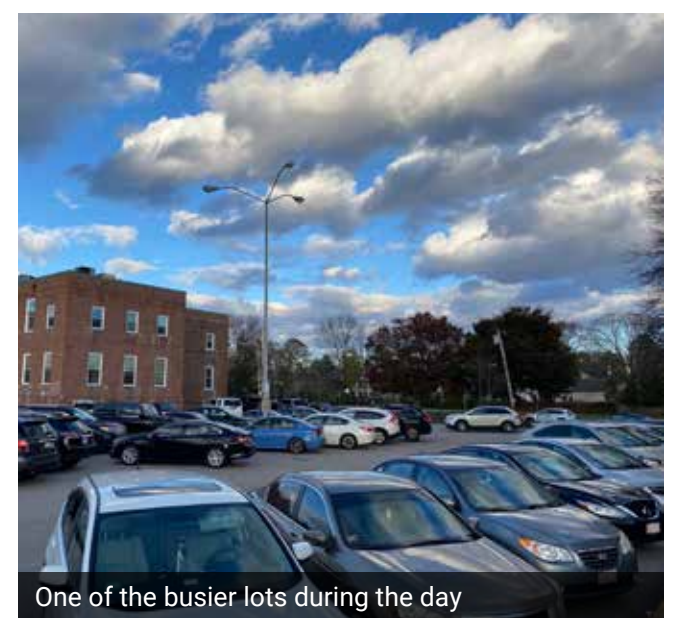
Typical on-street parking sign



An example of permit parking signage



EV parking is supported in Needham



One of the busier lots during the day



## Parking Today in Needham Heights



One of the busier lots during the day



A lot with availability during the day



Drop-off zone in use for temporary loading/unloading



Informal "spaces" being occupied in spite of on-street availability



Typical residential street parking



Permit signage in residential area

## I.1 INVENTORY OVERVIEW

This section is focused on the inventory for Needham Center and Needham Heights, which were the main focus of the study. The project team also gathered a parking inventory, and performed utilization counts at a small, defined area along Highland Avenue (see p.30).

An inventory of parking spaces was conducted separately for two areas of Needham with the understanding that the character for each and the demands for parking are slightly different. There are nearly 1,800 parking spaces in the Center and nearly 1,000 parking spaces in the Heights, respectively. Although not covering the entire boundary of each of these areas, this inventory is meant to represent parts of each where demand for parking between residents, employees, customers, and other types of visitors is mixed.

Evaluation of Needham's parking system overall reveals several key findings about how parking works in the community. These include:

- The consistent pricing for paid parking across the community and presence of two-hour time limits for most on-street parking speaks to a **uniform approach to parking management in the community**. A "one size fits all" approach like this requires those desiring longer visits (employees in particular) to move their cars or park in an on-street space that is free and located farther from the core. The lack of centralized, short-duration parking spaces (often limited to 15 minutes of free parking) is also particularly noticeable in the core of these two areas where businesses that attract shorter customer visits are concentrated.
- Today, **the Town offers annual permits to businesses and employees** in a number of Town-owned lots in the Center as a way to encourage optimization of the existing public parking supply.
- A **significant portion of the overall parking supply is privately-owned**.

- The Town has also **supported shared parking agreements between land owners as another tool to minimize the need of building additional private parking**. In Needham Heights, one landowner leases spaces within a private lot for use by local businesses and their employees. This was intended to "expand" long-term parking within the Town's private parking supply. The Town has observed that this arrangement could benefit from some potential adjustments/improvements but also that other existing Town-owned spaces might be able to accommodate long-term parking.
- **Overnight parking is not allowed on-street throughout Needham**. Specifically, no vehicles are allowed to be parked on the street for longer than one hour between 1:00 and 6:00 am. The Town can waive this under certain circumstances if a "hardship" condition exists.



### Parking Inventory Key Takeaways

- Most parking is restricted today
- Overnight parking is not permitted on any street or in a public lot
- No long-term parking options without a permit
- Permits not available to residents
- At dinnertime, parking regulations change significantly
- On-street parking is free
- Permit parking is free but that is unclear
- Insufficient long-term supply remains a problem

**Key inventory highlights...**



**The majority of off-street PUBLIC PARKING (237 spaces) are within a 5-minute walk to the Center's core.**

**Most parking is RESTRICTED today**

**In the Center, regulations change significantly between the daytime and evening**

**7%**  
**of the inventory between both areas is for PERMIT PARKING**

**Without a permit, there are NO LONG-TERM PARKING options**

**67%**  
**of on-street parking in the Center is PAID (metered)**

**21%**  
**of on-street parking in the Heights is PAID (metered)**



## Regulation Definitions:

### PUBLIC

These spaces are categorized as those available to all users regardless of their destination – they are not associated with a private business. This includes parking with a time limit.

### PERMIT

These are categorized as public spaces available to users with a special permit during a specified time, and to the general public during non-specified times.

### RESTRICTED

These spaces are privately-owned and often restricted to users of a certain business, i.e. “bank parking only.”

### TIME-RESTRICTED

These spaces are available to any user for a designated period of time.

### CENTER AT THE HEIGHTS

These spaces are available only to visitors of this public recreational and educational facility.

### COMMUTER RAIL PARKING

The MBTA (through its contractor Keolis) manages these spaces, which are mainly targeted toward commuter rail riders.

## Regulation Overview

To gather the most accurate understanding of Needham’s existing parking, the team recorded regulations within the two defined study areas as they would be viewed by a first-time “visitor” to Needham Center or Needham Heights. This study’s inventory represents the current signage and usage rather than the legal status of ownership of parking areas.

The maps and tables on the following pages illustrate how the parking in Needham Center and Needham Heights is distributed among a complex array of categories and user permissions. Overall, 73% of the Center and 83% of the Heights’ parking is ‘restricted,’ or in other words reserved for customers, tenants, or visitors of the business or establishment with which the parking is associated. The remainder of the overall parking supply for each area is available to the general public, but even then this does not always apply. For instance, there are no spaces specifically dedicated for use for more than two hours.

Generally, there is opportunity to simplify the number of regulation types in Needham. In parallel, there is opportunity to improve the clarity and consistency of how parking regulations are displayed in the Center and the Heights, or in directing users to parking. Confusion about where and how to park can lead to parkers occupying the closest available space to their destination (regardless of regulation/signage) and potentially displacing other parkers from spaces dedicated for their specific use. Time spent hunting for a parking space can also contribute to traffic congestion in higher-demand areas and can create unsafe driving conditions to both drivers and pedestrians when an unfamiliar visitor tries to navigate to parking.

There is significant opportunity to better clarify where user types can park in Needham Center and Needham Heights, along with an opportunity to improve the clarity and consistency of signage associated with parking. For visitors who are unfamiliar with Needham, inconsistent signage can lead to confusion about who is truly permitted to park in some locations. Signage that does not include explicit and complete information about overlapping regulations or when time limits are in effect, for example,, can force a parker to make their own interpretations, which may not be accurate.



The Trader Joe's/CVS lot during a busy period





**1,771  
spaces\***

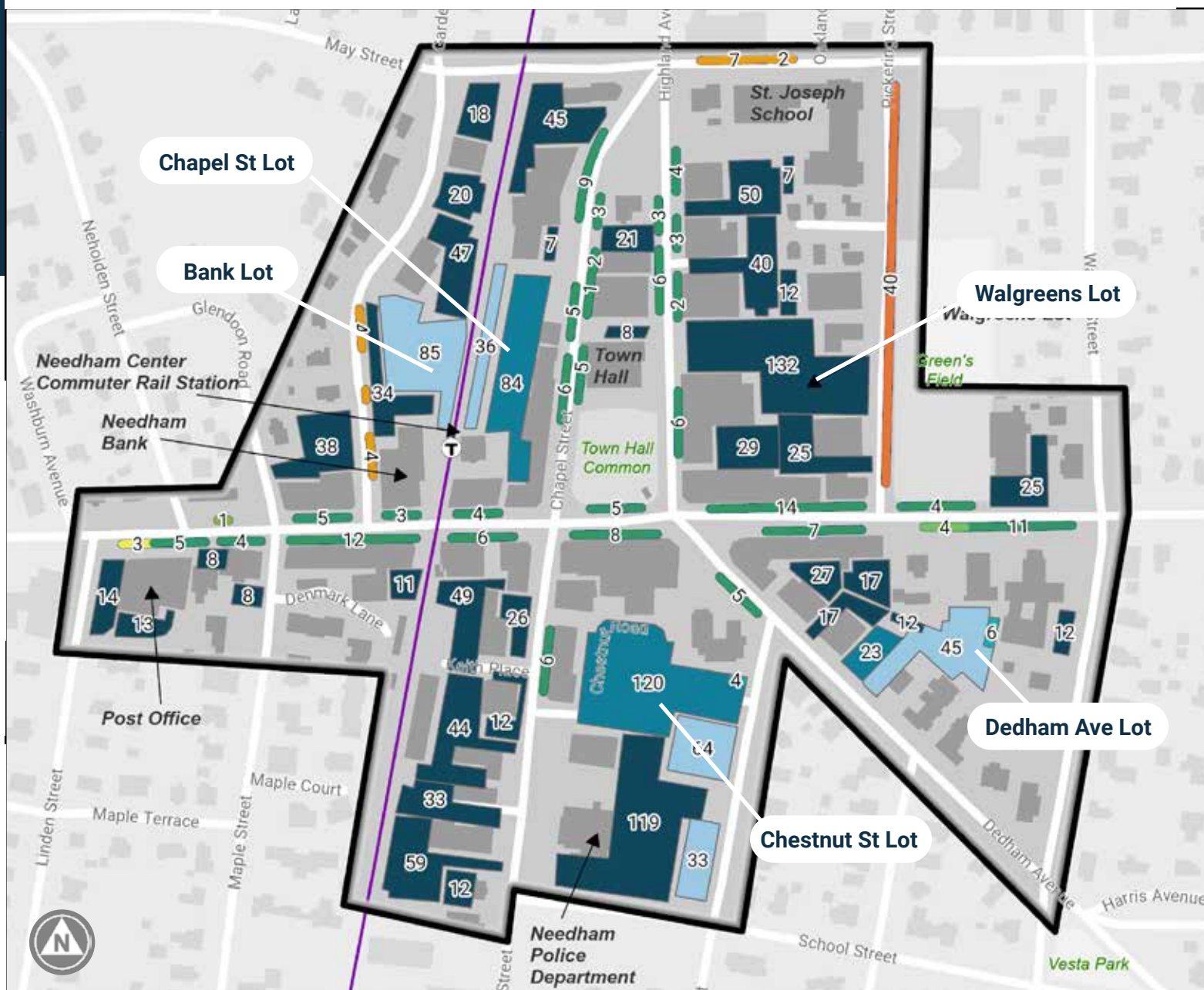
## Needham Center Parking Inventory and Regulations

### On-Street Regulation

- 15 Min Limit, No Charge
- 2-Hr Parking, No Charge
- 2-Hr Parking, No Charge
- Parking: 7AM-9AM and 1PM-3PM, No Charge
- Metered Parking, 2-Hr Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr
- Metered Parking, No Time Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr
- Permit Parking, 8AM-2PM, M-F

### Off-Street Regulation

- Restricted Parking
- Public Parking, 30-Min Limit, All Day, No Charge
- Public Parking, 2-Hr Limit, All Day, No Charge
- Permit Parking, 8AM-2PM, M-F

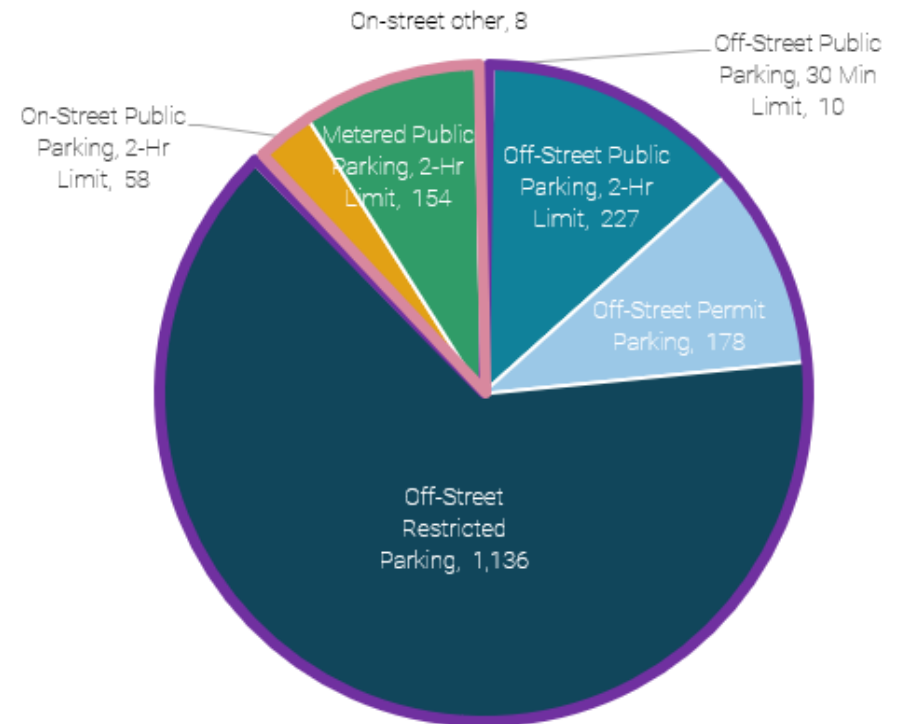




**Table 1. Needham Center Parking Inventory by Regulation**

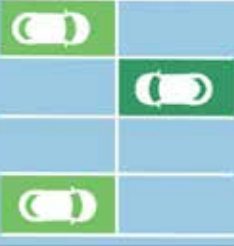
| Regulation                                               | Inventory    | % of Sub-Total |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>On-Street</b>                                         |              |                |
| 15 Min Limit, No Charge                                  | 3            | 1%             |
| 2-Hr Parking, No Charge                                  | 18           | 8%             |
| 2-Hr Parking, No Parking: 7AM-9AM and 1PM-3PM, No Charge | 40           | 18%            |
| Metered Parking, 2-Hr Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr    | 154          | 70%            |
| Metered Parking, No Time Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr | 1            | 0%             |
| Permit Parking, 8AM-2PM, M-F                             | 4            | 2%             |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>                                         | <b>220</b>   |                |
| <b>Off-Street</b>                                        |              |                |
| Restricted Parking                                       | 1,136        | 73%            |
| Public Parking, 30-Min Limit, No Charge, All Day         | 10           | 1%             |
| Public Parking, 2-Hr Limit, No Charge, All Day           | 227          | 15%            |
| Permit Parking, 8AM-2PM, M-F                             | 178          | 11%            |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>                                         | <b>1,551</b> |                |
| <b>Total</b>                                             | <b>1,771</b> |                |

**Fig.1- Needham Center Parking Inventory by Regulation**



88% of the overall inventory is located off-street.

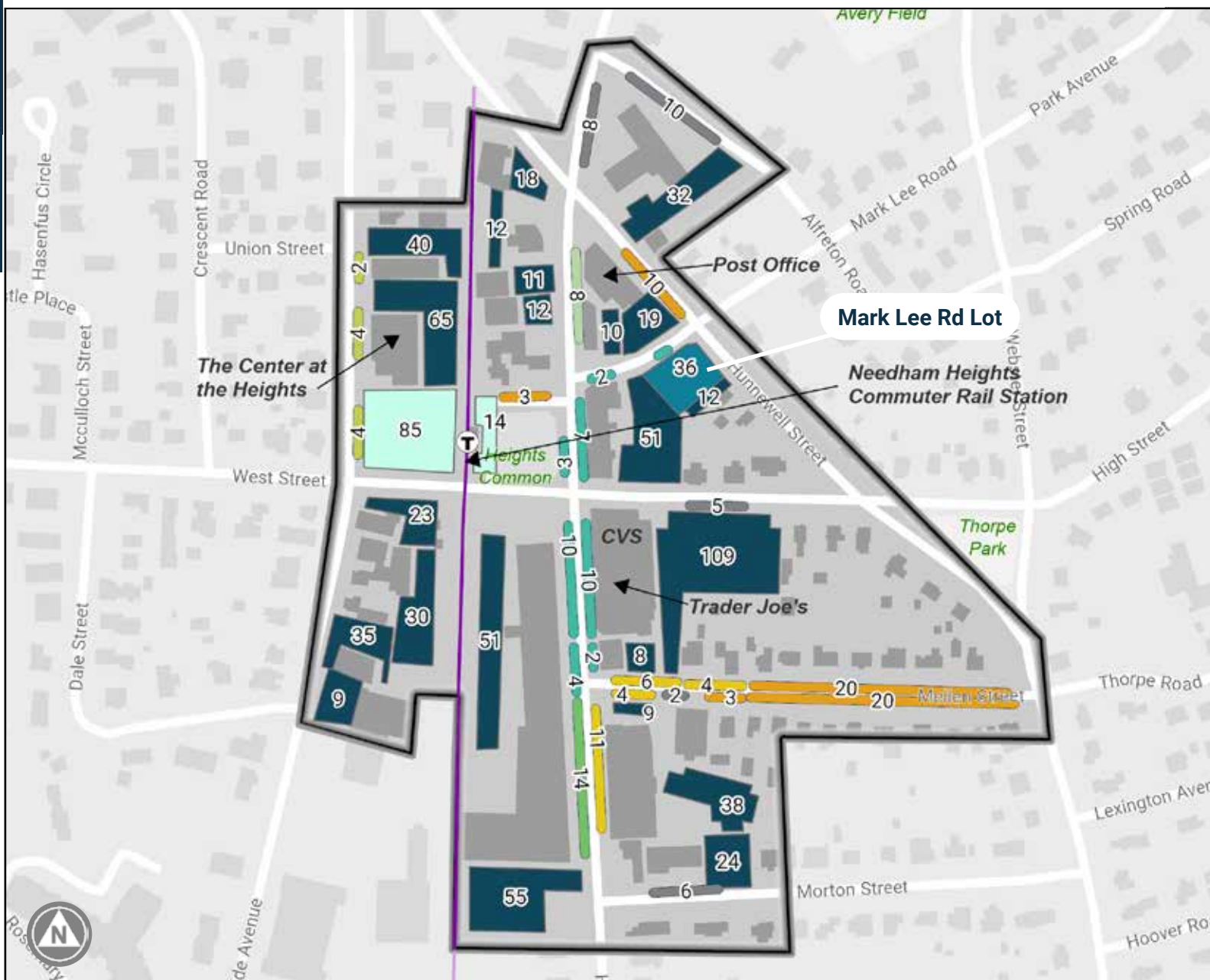
*\*Inventory excludes 11 on-street and 5 off-street spaces that were occupied by outdoor dining at the time of data collection.*



**991  
spaces**

# Needham Heights Parking Inventory and Regulations

- On-Street Regulation**
- 1-Hr Parking, No Charge
  - 2-Hr Parking, No Charge
  - Center at The Heights Parking, 8AM-2PM, M-F
  - Metered Parking, 1-Hr Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr
  - Metered Parking, 10-Min Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr
  - Permit Parking, 8AM-2PM, M-F
  - Unregulated Parking
- Off-Street Regulation**
- Restricted Parking
  - Public Parking, 2-Hr Limit, All Day, No Charge
  - Commuter Rail Parking Only (Paid)

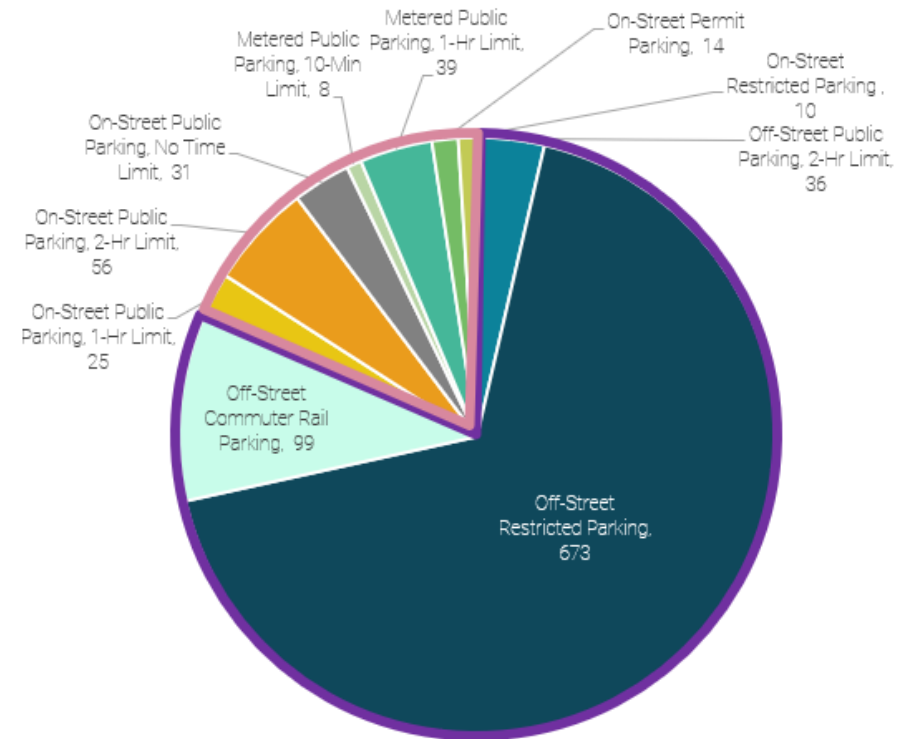


**Table 2. Needham Heights Parking Inventory by Regulation**

| Regulation                                              | Inventory  | % of Sub-Total |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| <b>On-Street</b>                                        |            |                |
| 1-Hr Parking, No Charge                                 | 25         | 14%            |
| 2-Hr Parking, No Charge                                 | 56         | 31%            |
| Center at the Heights Parking, 8AM-PM, M-F              | 10         | 5%             |
| Metered Parking, 10-Min Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr | 8          | 4%             |
| Metered Parking, 21Hr Limit, 8AM-6PM, M-Sa, \$0.50/hr   | 39         | 21%            |
| Permit Parking, 8AM-2PM, M-F                            | 14         | 8%             |
| Unregulated Parking                                     | 31         | 17%            |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>                                        | <b>183</b> |                |
| <b>Off-Street</b>                                       |            |                |
| Restricted Parking                                      | 673        | 83%            |
| Public Parking, 2-Hr Limit, No Charge                   | 36         | 4%             |
| Commuter Rail Parking Only (Paid)                       | 99         | 12%            |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>                                        | <b>808</b> |                |
| <b>Total</b>                                            | <b>991</b> |                |

\*Inventory excludes 11 on-street and 5 off-street spaces that were occupied by outdoor dining at the time of data collection.

**Fig. 2- Needham Heights Parking Inventory by Regulation**



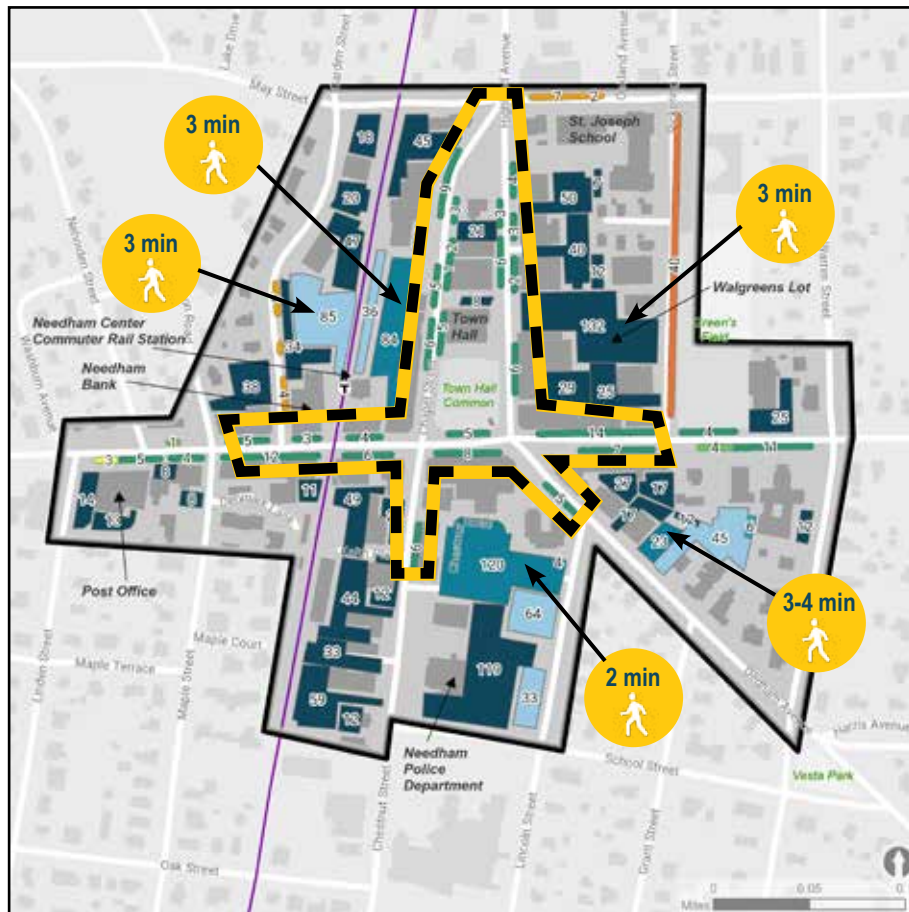
78% of the overall inventory is located off-street.

## Other Observations

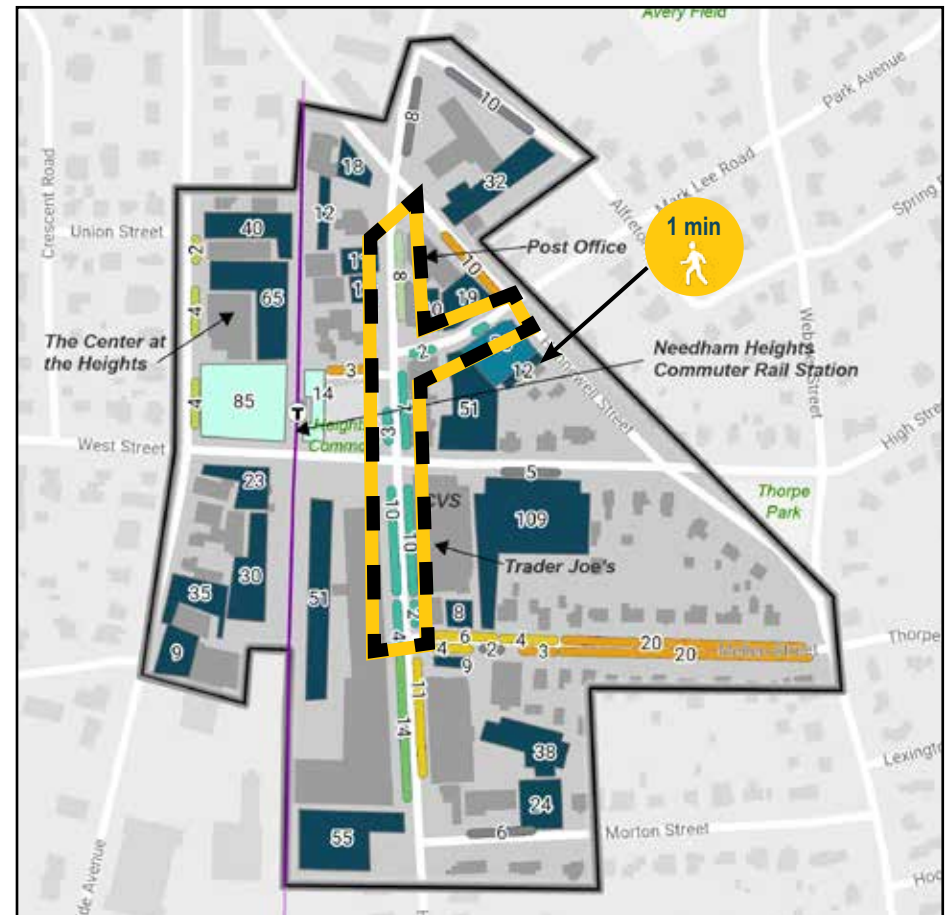
### CORE ACTIVITY AREAS

Although the study areas defined for Needham Center and Heights incorporated geographies across multiple blocks, the project team recognized that the areas where peak parking demand was being generated from could be concentrated to a much smaller core area as shown below. These areas will be referenced throughout this document as 'the core.'

**Fig. 3- Walking Distance to the Core from Public Parking in Needham Center**



**Fig. 4- Walking Distance to the Core from Public Parking in Needham Heights**





## PARKING WAYFINDING

How parking is signed is just as important as the existence of parking itself, in many cases of small towns and cities. As the project team conducted analysis in Needham, one of the most important observations was the lack of wayfinding signage (in scale and presence) to the town's largest public parking facilities.



With very small or no signage present at key access points, visitors seeking public parking (especially unfamiliar visitors) are likely to miss it.

## 1.2 UTILIZATION ANALYSIS

The study conducted parking utilization counts in all private and public facilities during a typical weekday (November 17, 2022) to represent usual conditions of parking demand in Needham Center and Needham Heights. Counts included six time periods to understand how demand changes throughout the day: 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm, 2:00 pm, 4:00 pm, and 6:00 pm.

To ensure efficient parking management operations in any urban area, it is ideal to maintain at least one empty space on each block of street parking to ensure easy visitor access to destinations. This typically equates to about one out of eight spaces free, or a target of 15% vacant per block. Similarly, a goal of at least 10% vacancy is considered ideal in off-street lots (this occupancy target assessment ensures that front-door spaces are available for those who need them - such as those with mobility challenges). If any facility has less availability than this, it is usually the case that users arrive to a full lot or have significant trouble finding space. However, if a facility has substantially more availability (especially in high-demand areas), this points to conditions or regulation that may be keeping potential parkers away, including lack of demand as well as practical factors such as walkability, price, time limits, or wayfinding.



### Parking Utilization Key Takeaways

- Peak utilization of parking never exceeds 63% (Center) or 53% (Heights)
- Public parking never exceeds 70% (Center) or 50% (Heights)
- More remote spaces regularly under 60% utilized
- Prime on-street spaces fill up as soon as meters shut off
  - Proximate lots are nearly empty
- Commuter rail parking is in low demand, particularly in the Center

### How to Read Utilization Maps

The series of maps and charts over the following pages illustrate the result of the in-person parking counts conducted for Needham Center and Needham Heights. The maps demonstrate utilization levels for each individual parking facility or space (see following page). The bar charts illustrate how utilization levels change throughout an entire day for different types of parking within the overall supply.

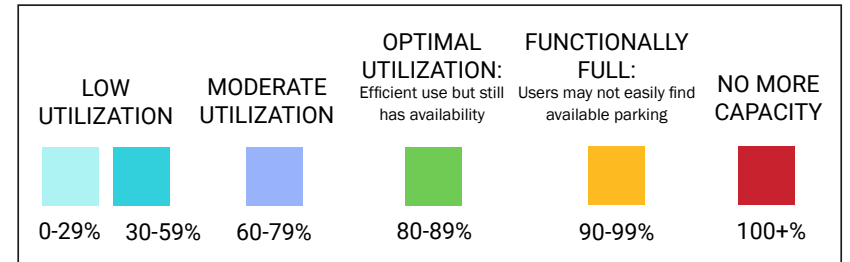
The parking utilization information can provide clarity about the accuracy of long-held community perceptions about parking availability but also identify opportunities to improve availability in targeted locations so that the optimal vacancy of 15% for any area within the parking system can be consistently maintained.



**Fig. 5- Utilization Map Color Guide**



The color scheme used here applies to the maps on the following pages.



Example of low utilization



Example of optimal utilization



Example of full utilization

## Key Observations (Center)

### 8:00AM

- The only facilities at optimal utilization are the Hospital and Post Office lots. All other lots have significant capacity
- On-street spaces near Town Hall are nearly full

### 10:00AM

- The Walgreen's and Commuter Rail lots are now at optimal utilization
- Other lots are starting to fill up more but all still have significant capacity

### 12:00PM

- On-street spaces near Town Hall are full, also in front of food establishments on the southeastern end of Great Plain Ave
- The Chapel St lot is now full while the Chestnut St lot is at optimal utilization

### 2:00PM

- Demand for off-street spaces is decreasing, with no lots being near-full
- On-street spaces remain in demand near Town Hall and have increased in demand along other areas of Great Plain Ave

### 4:00PM

- Several on-street areas near Town Hall and along Great Plain Ave are full but all off-street facilities have capacity

### 6:00PM

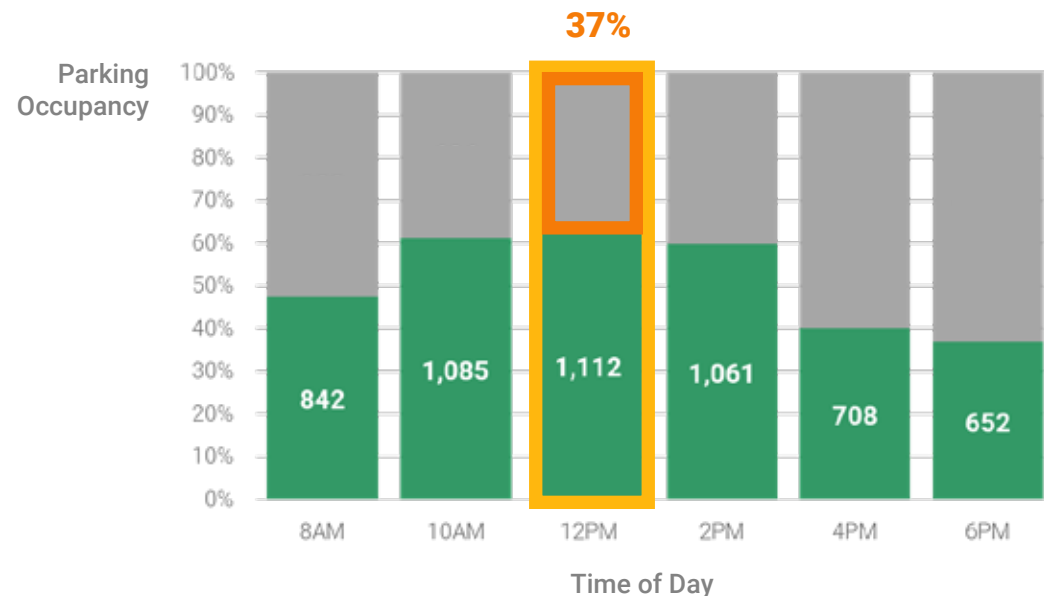
- All off-street facilities have further capacity, but Chestnut St lot is now full
- On-street areas are now at their highest demand of the day, with most areas in the core being full

## Needham Center Utilization Summary

There is **significant capacity available across the Center throughout the entire day**. In spite of perceived demand, the Walgreen's lot never achieves optimal utilization throughout the day, even during the midday peak. On-street spaces near Walgreen's on Highland Ave and just west on Chestnut St however, see consistent higher levels of demand throughout the day. This particularly occurs during noon and at 6:00pm, which aligns with peak dining periods. The Chestnut St lot is also nearly full or full during these times, reflecting that it is being used as a walkable option to key dining options in the Center. The Post Office lot is full or nearly full during the morning and mid-afternoon. The Bank lot and the Dedham Ave lot are the largest public lots and neither reach optimal utilization throughout the entire day. This aligns with that they are less visible from the street as being parking options, particularly for those unfamiliar with the area.

Collectively, 63% of all parking in the Heights is occupied during the weekday midday peak period. On-street metered parking is utilized at 59% percent and off-street, private (restricted) parking is utilized at 56% percent, indicating excess capacity for this kind of parking.

**Fig. 6- Overall Utilization at 12PM Peak- Needham Center**



## Key Observations (Heights)

### 8:00AM

- There is significant capacity available in all on- and off-street facilities, aside from all on-street spaces on Mark Lee Rd, right in front of the Center, and a few spaces on Mellen Street, all of which are full

### 10:00AM

- On-street spaces on Mark Lee Road have reduced in demand but additional spaces in front of the Center, and its lot are full
- The Trader Joe's lot is optimally utilized

### 12:00PM

- The Center lot remains full, and the Trader Joe's and Mark Lee Rd lots are also full
- On- and off-street spaces nearer the core have increased in demand but still have capacity

### 2:00PM

- There is significant capacity in all spaces, besides the Trader Joe's lot and a small number of nearby spaces which are full
- Spaces in front of the Post Office are full

### 4:00PM

- Demand at Trader's Joe lot has slightly reduced and is now optimally utilized
- Significant capacity remains in all other areas, aside from a few, which are full

### 6:00PM

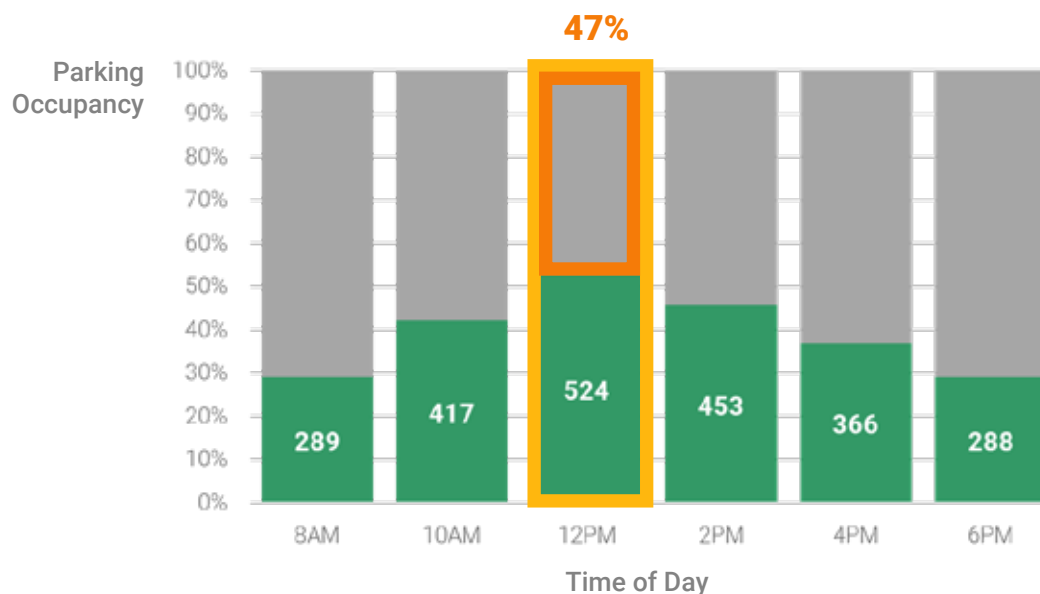
- Significant capacity has opened up in nearly all spaces, but on-street areas on Mark Lee Road and its lot are now full.
- Spaces on Mellen Road have maintained significant capacity throughout the day

## Needham Heights Utilization Summary

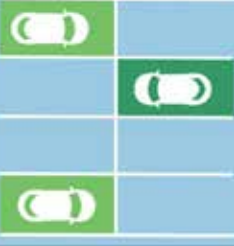
There is **significant capacity available across the Heights throughout the entire day**. The Trader Joe's lot is the only off-street facility that is full or nearly full through the majority of the day. The lot at the Center at the Heights and its nearby on-street spaces are full during the late morning and midday, which is in line with peak times for programming. These spaces open up with capacity for the remainder of the day. The Mark Lee Road lot is full during the lunch and dinner periods, which is in line with its proximity to dining destinations, nearby. The Commuter Rail Station is just below optimal utilization for the majority of the day before significant capacity becomes available at 6:00pm, which is in line when commuters have typically departed for the day. The majority of Mellen Street is significantly underutilized, with only a few areas near a pedestrian access point to/through the Trader Joe's lot seeing a higher level of demand throughout the day for those wanting to avoid the lot. Generally, on-street spaces see a broader rise in demand during the midday peak, particularly in the core. This aligns with parkers seeking convenient options as other nearby lots start to become more full.

Collectively, 53% of all parking in the Heights is occupied during the weekday midday peak period. On-street metered parking is utilized at 57% percent and off-street, private (restricted) parking is utilized at 53%, indicating excess capacity for this kind of parking.

**Fig. 7- Overall Utilization at 12PM Peak- Needham Heights**

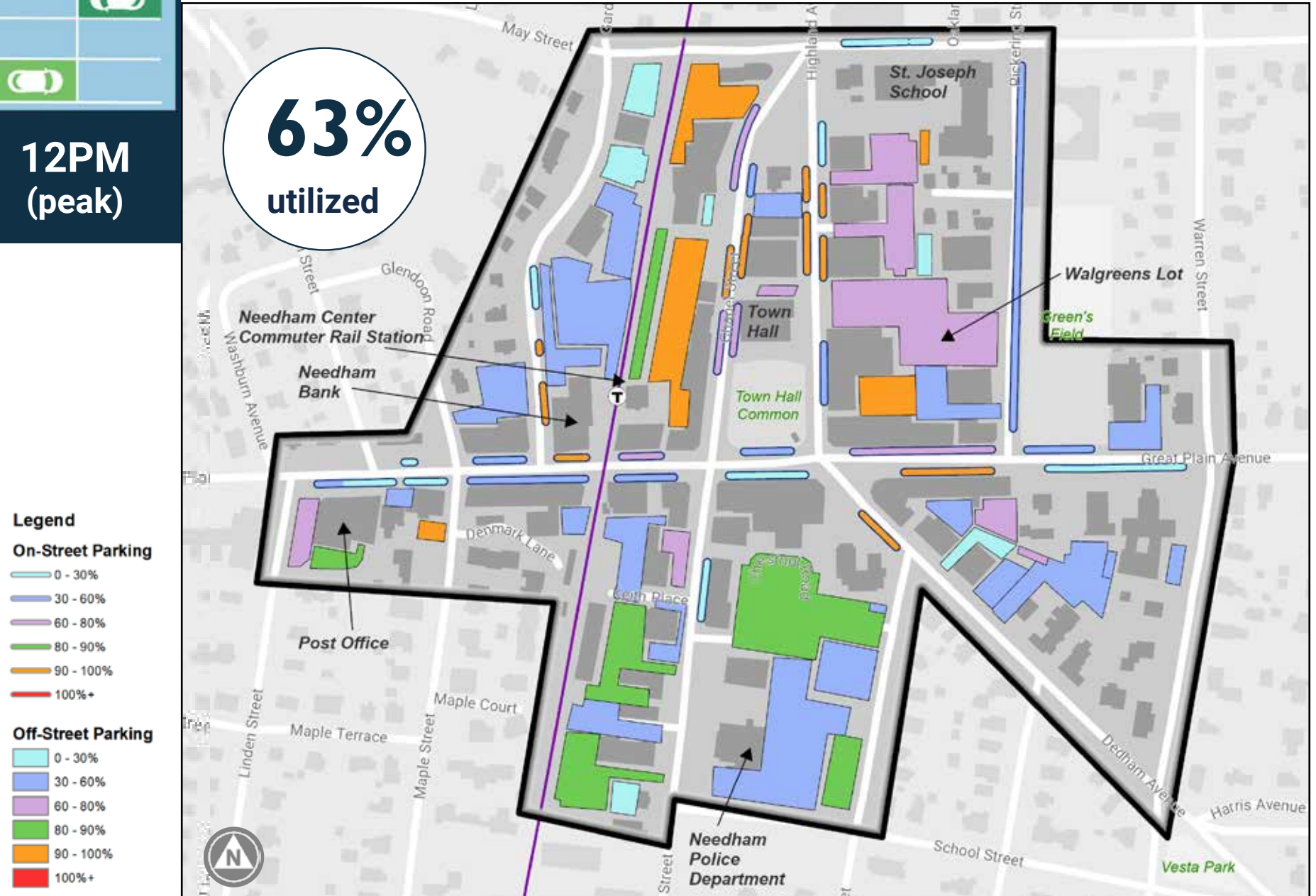


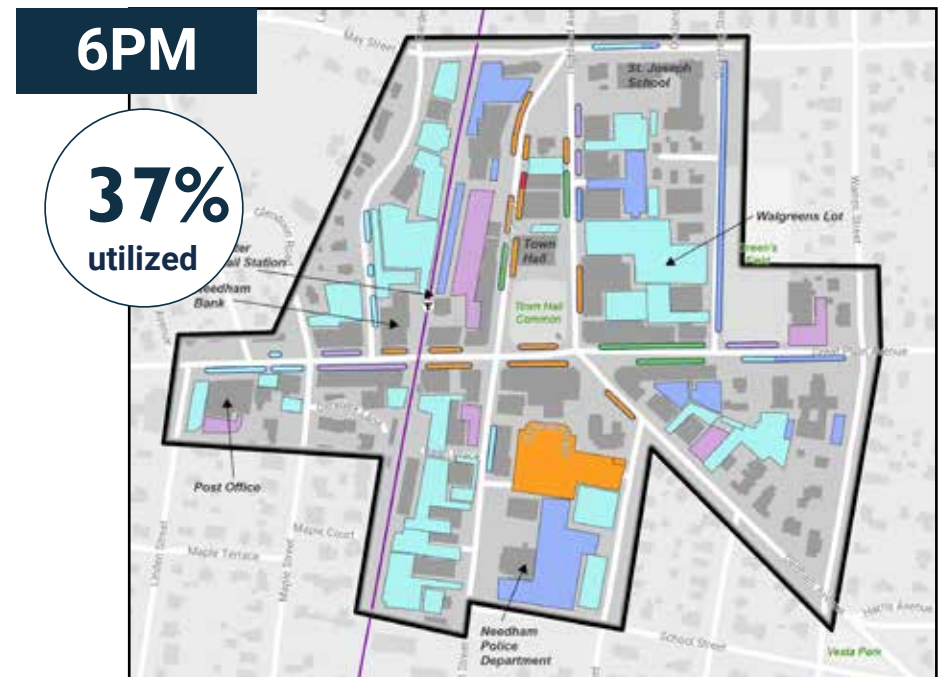
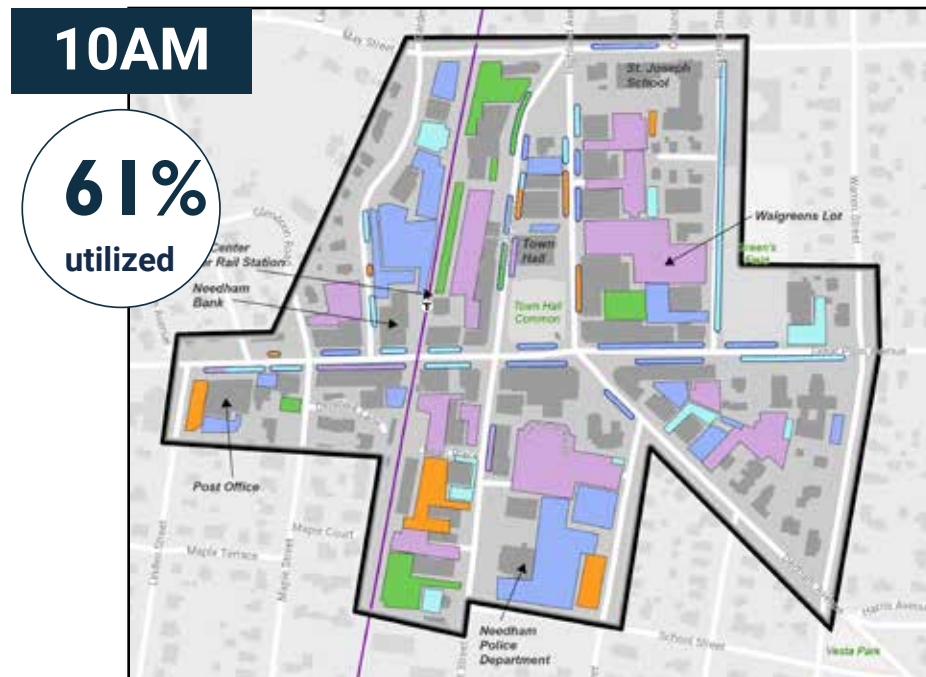
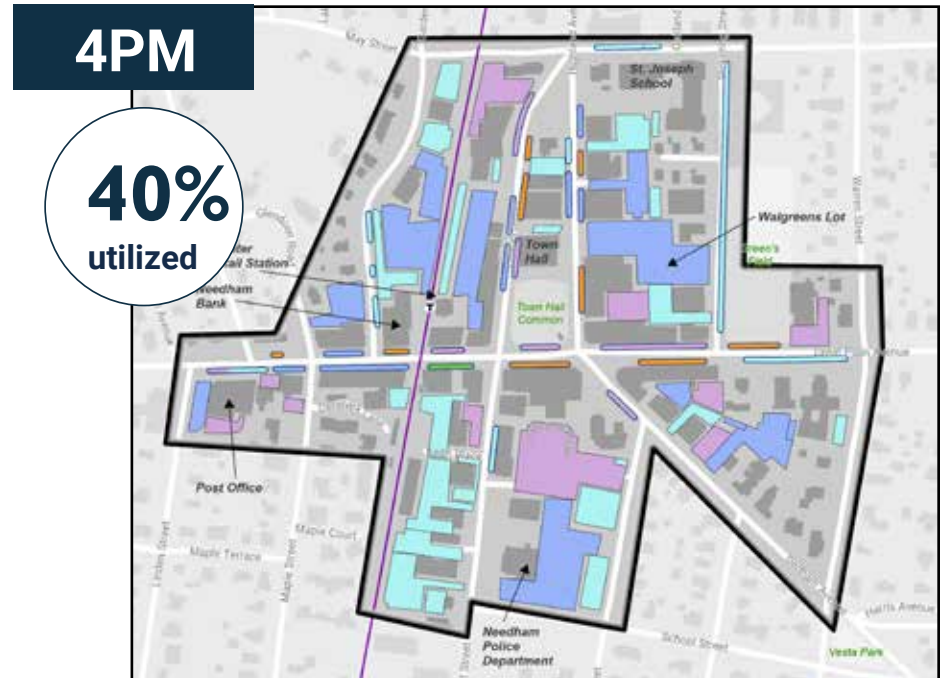
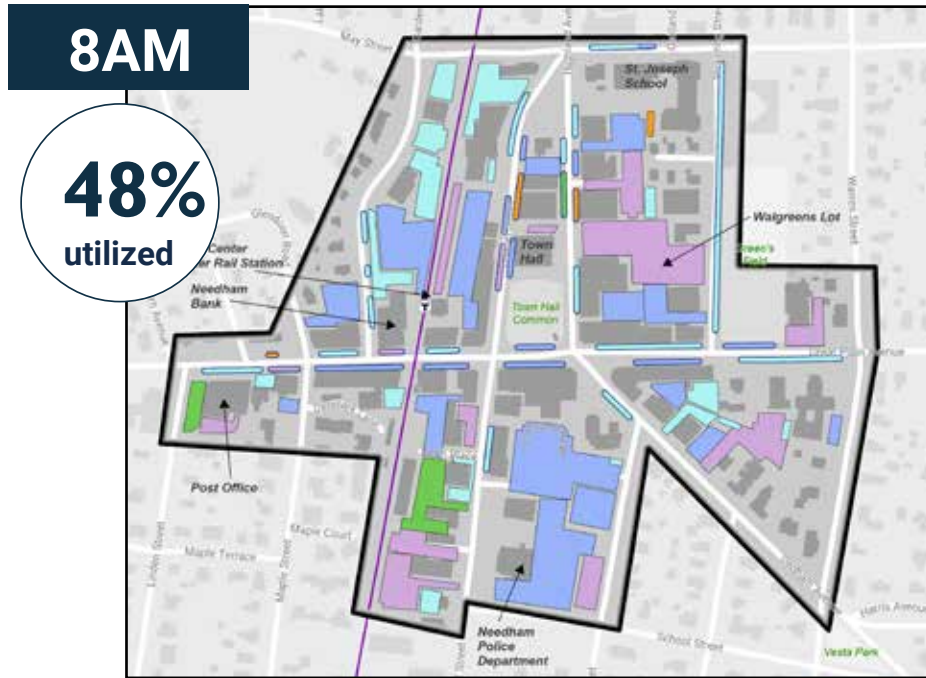




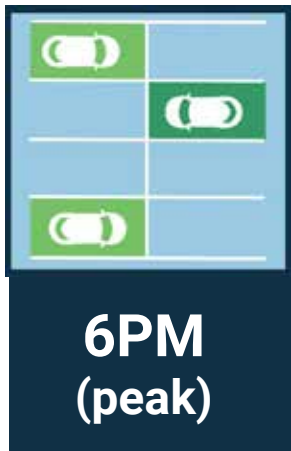
**12PM  
(peak)**

## Needham Center Weekday Parking Utilization

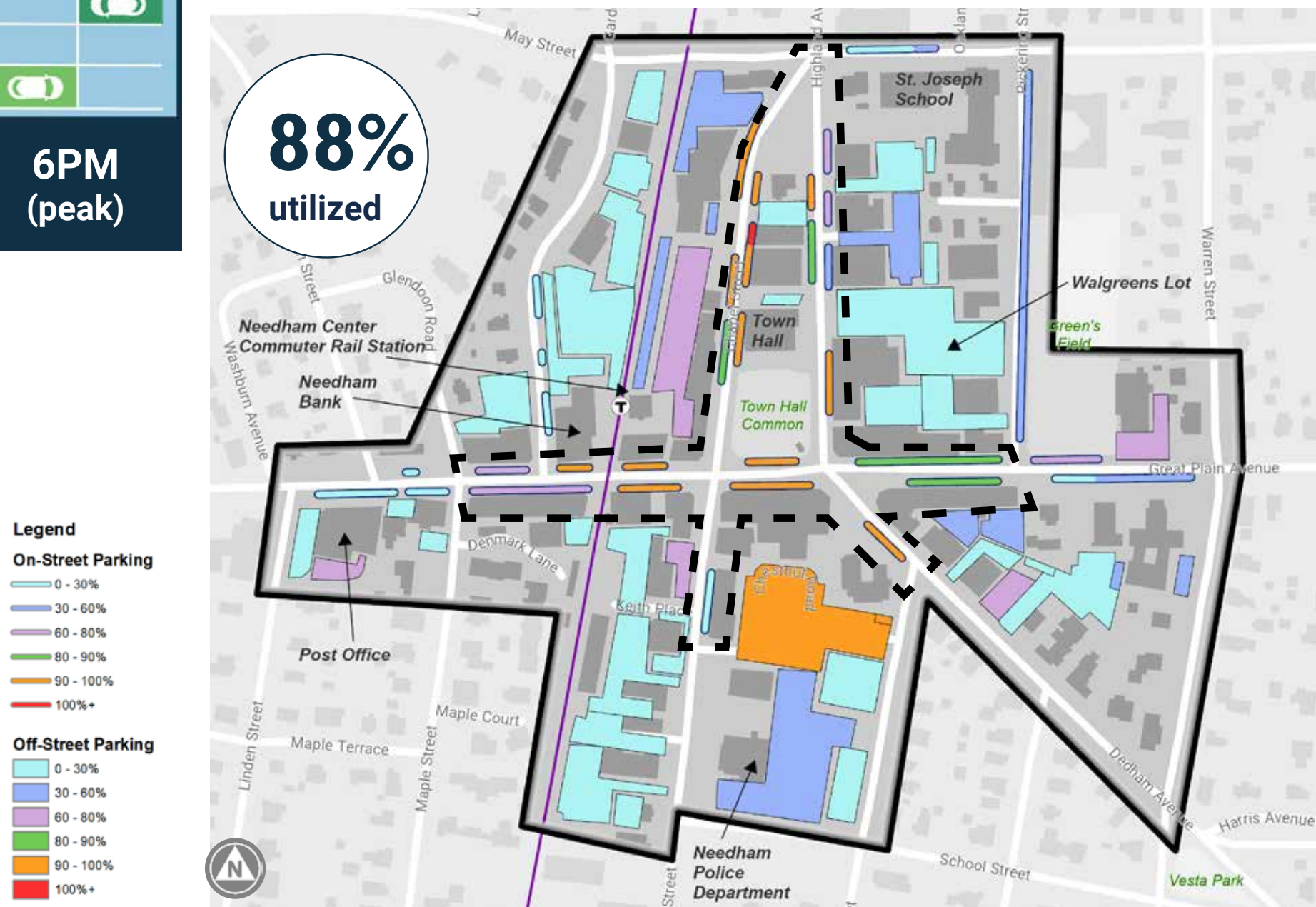








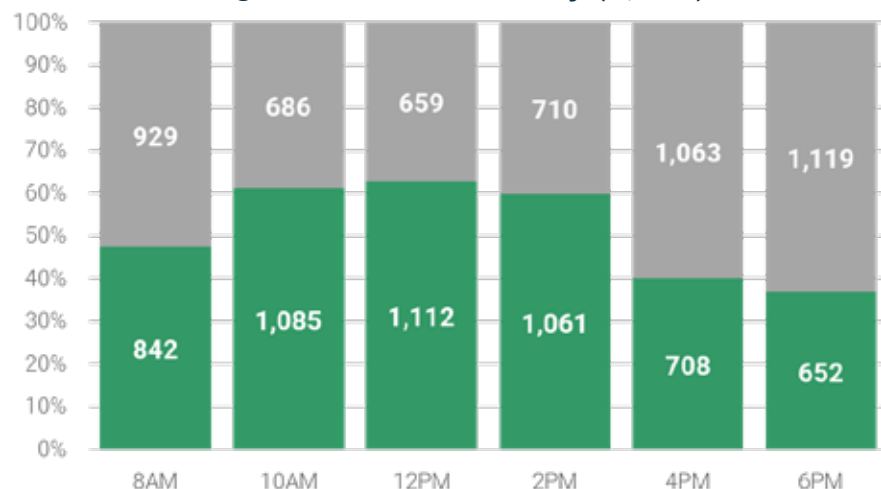
## Needham Center Weekday Parking Utilization- Core Area





## Analyzing Utilization by Parking Type

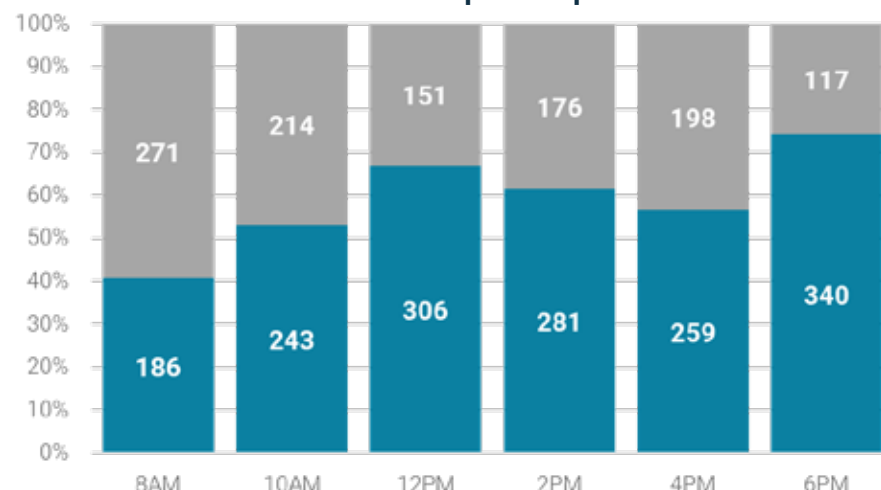
**Fig. 8- Overall Inventory (1,771)**



A significant number of spaces is available, even at the peak period, but why some types of parking are utilized more is dependent on a range of factors.

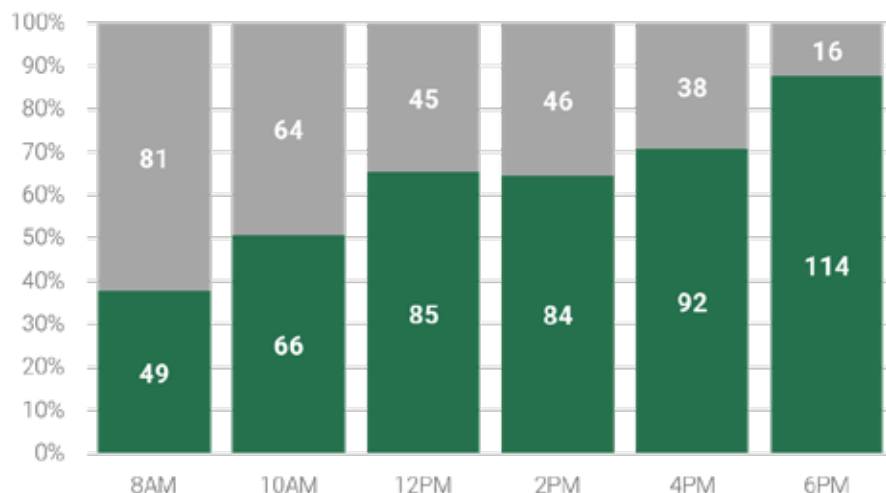
**Fig. 9- Public Inventory (457)**

Does not include permit spaces.



These spaces see a similar level of demand at noon and at 6PM, when there is a particularly high number of available spaces in the overall inventory.

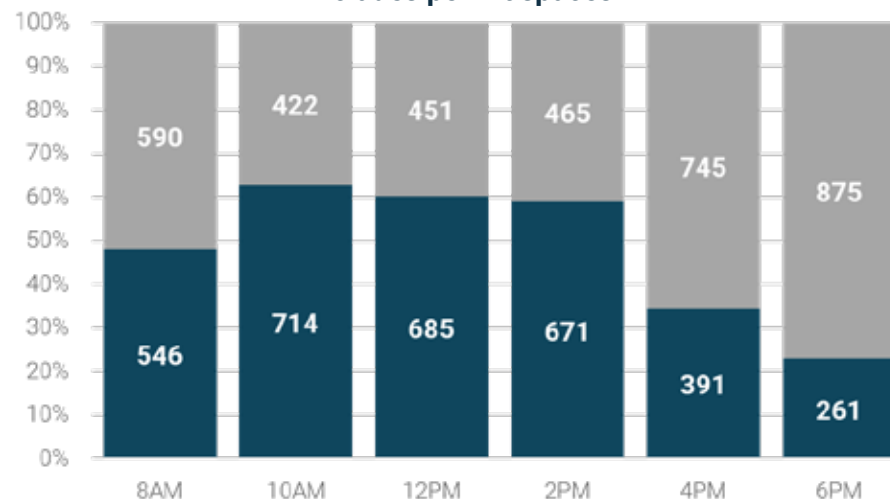
**Fig.10- Core Area: On-Street 2-Hr Metered Inventory (130)**



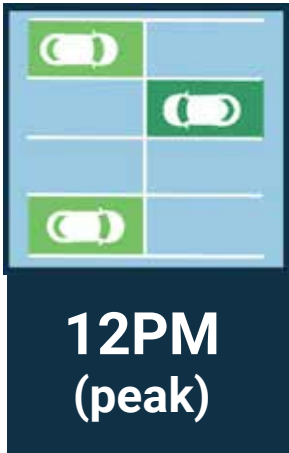
The highest utilization of spaces occurs at 6PM, correlating with these spaces 1) becoming free, and 2) being located next to key dining locations.

**Fig. 11- Restricted Inventory (1,136)**

Includes permit spaces.



This pattern shows that spaces which are designated for specific users drops off at 6PM just as on-street spaces are being pressed for demand.

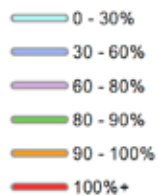


## Needham Heights Weekday Parking Utilization

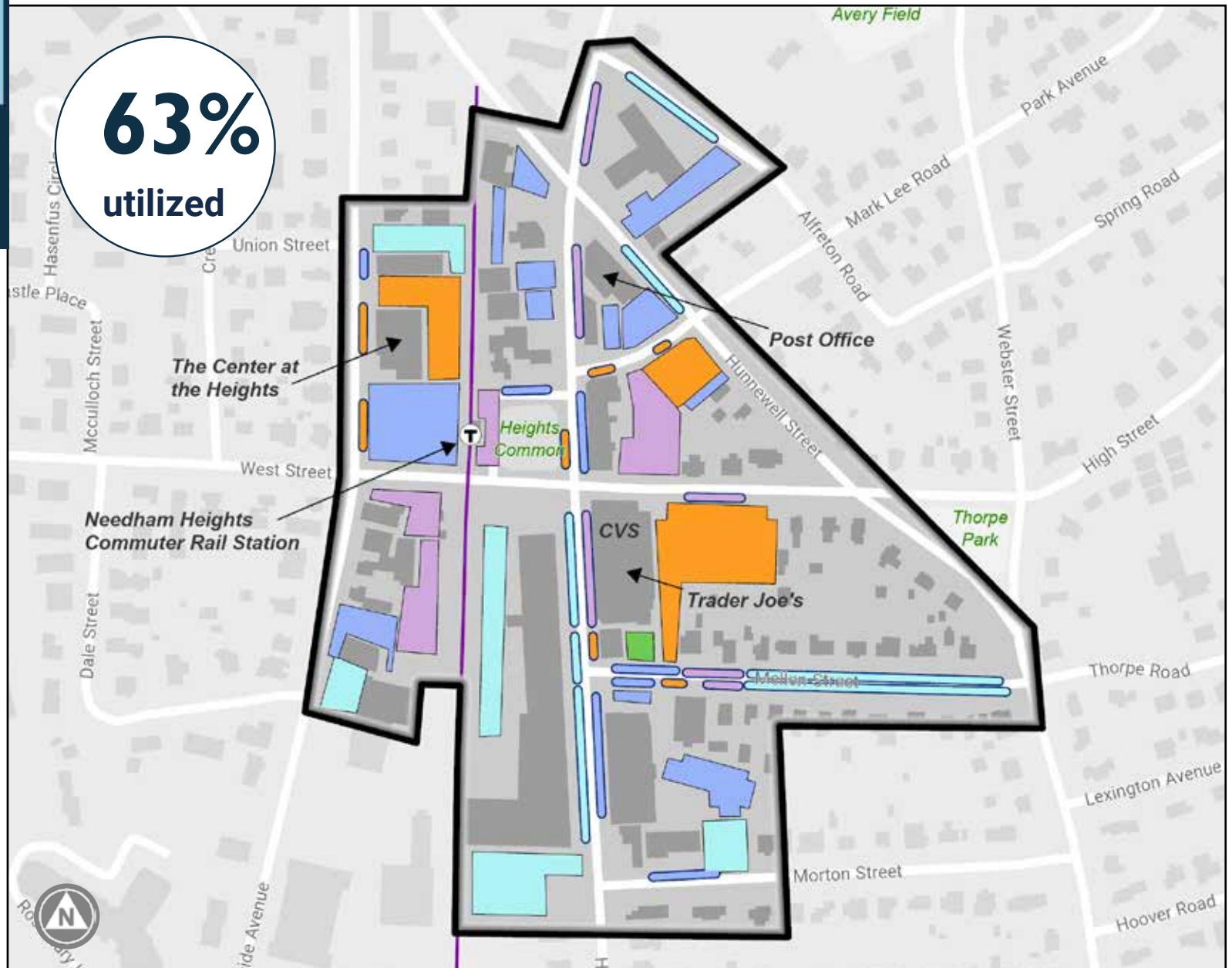
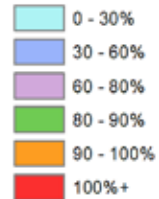
63%  
utilized

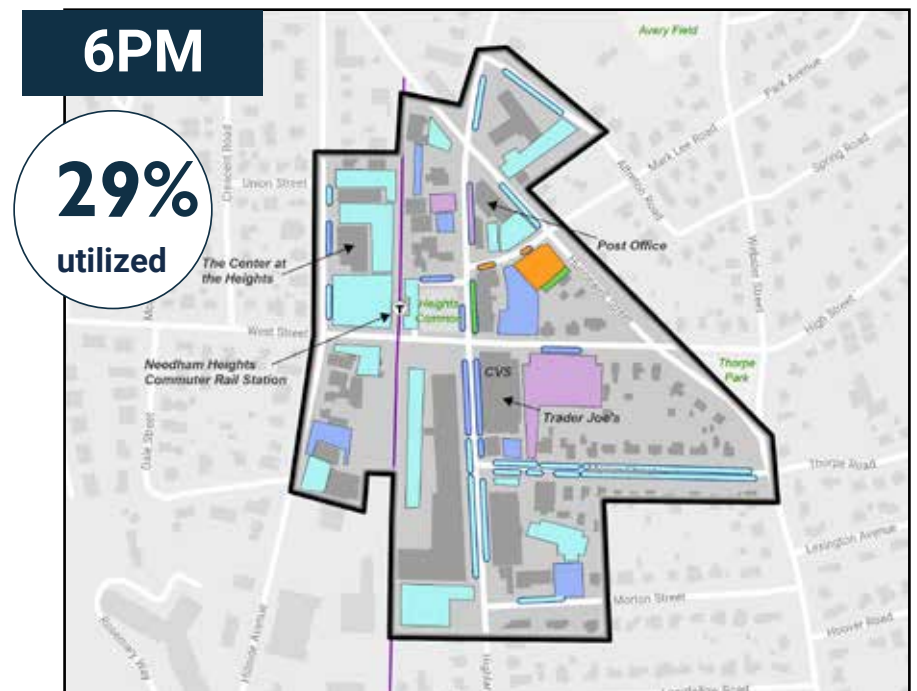
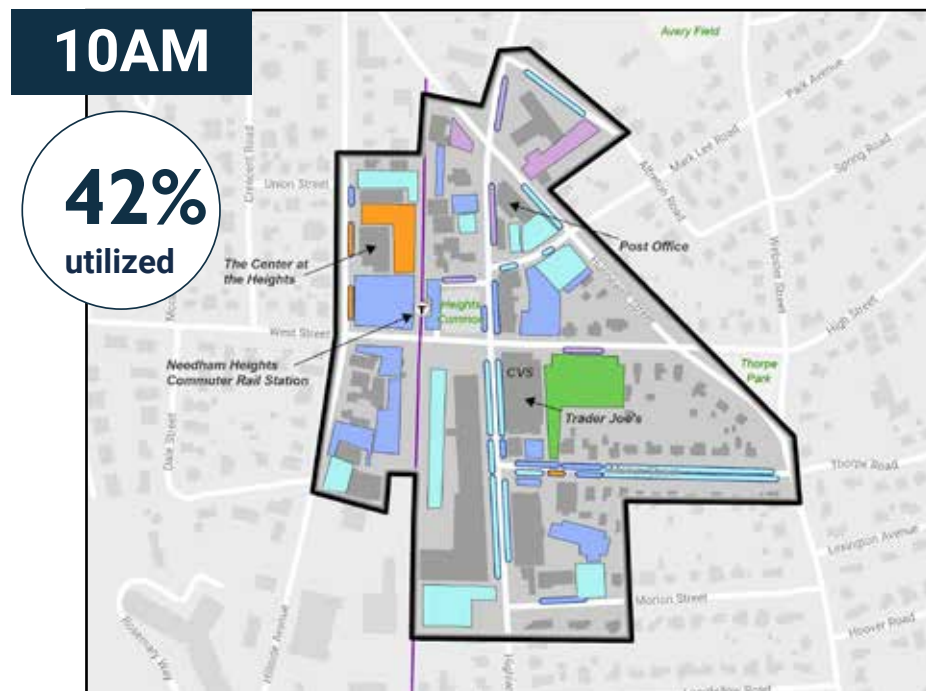
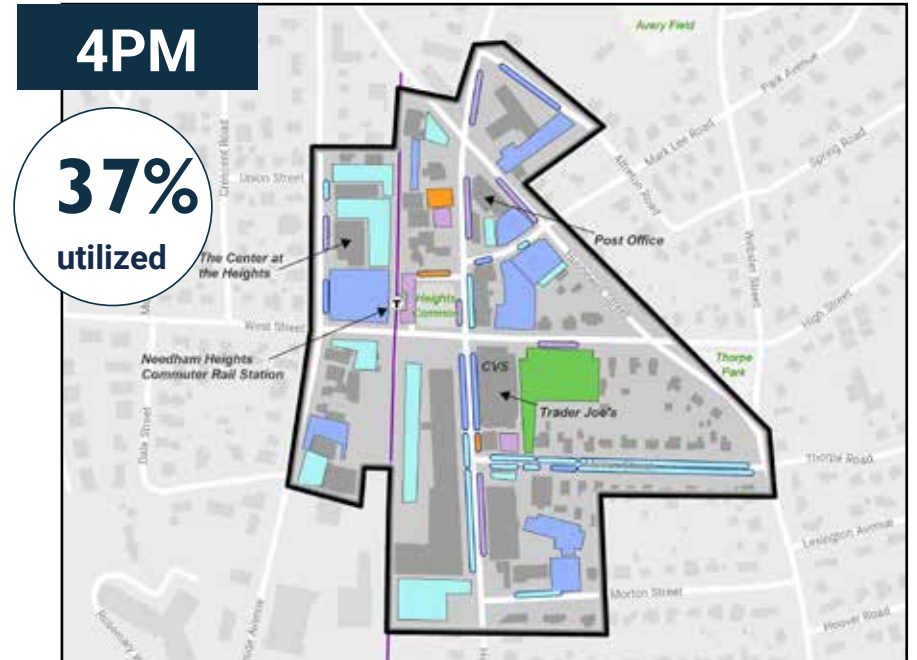
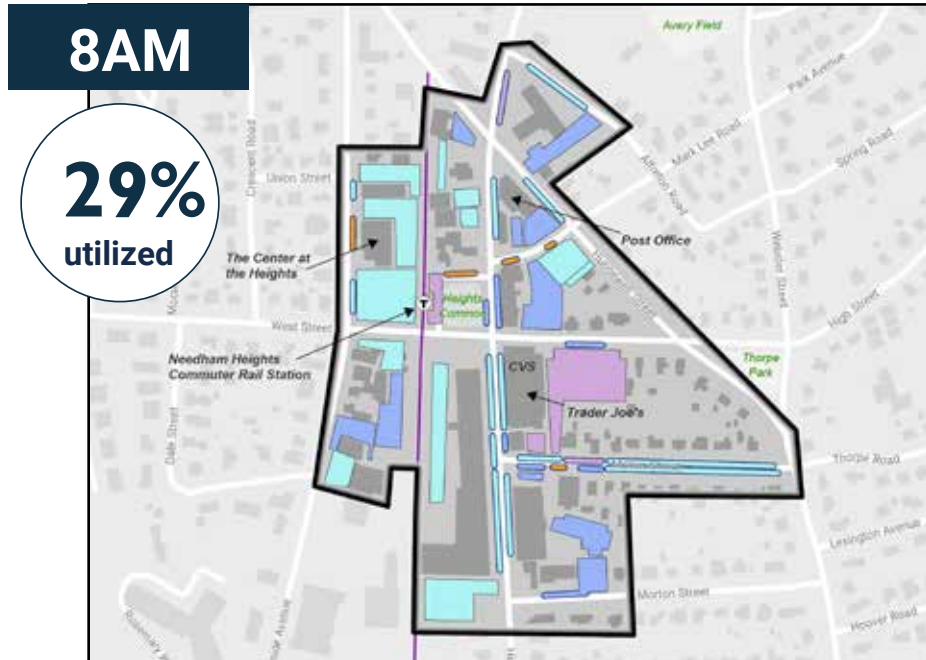
### Legend

#### On-Street Parking

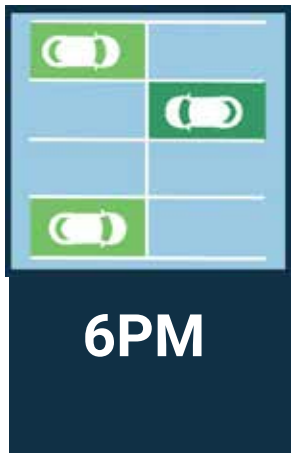


#### Off-Street Parking







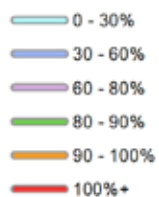


## Needham Heights Weekday Parking Utilization- Core Area

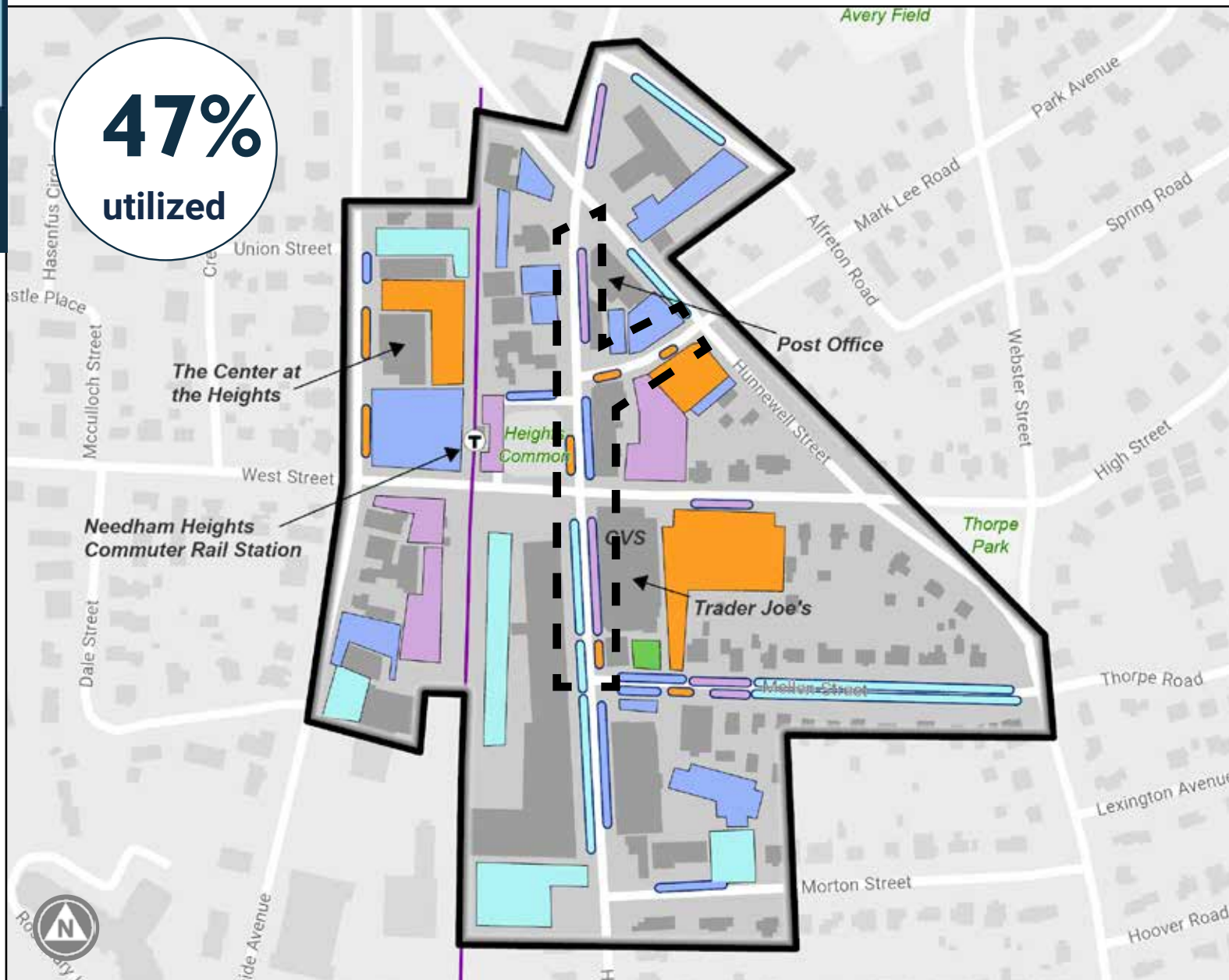
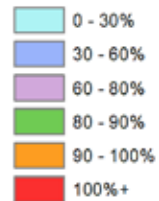
**47%**  
utilized

### Legend

#### On-Street Parking

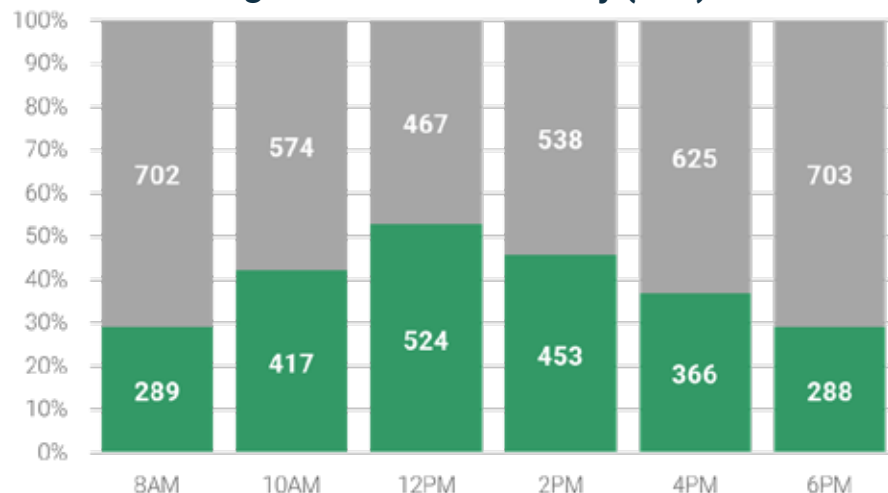


#### Off-Street Parking



## Analyzing Utilization by Parking Type

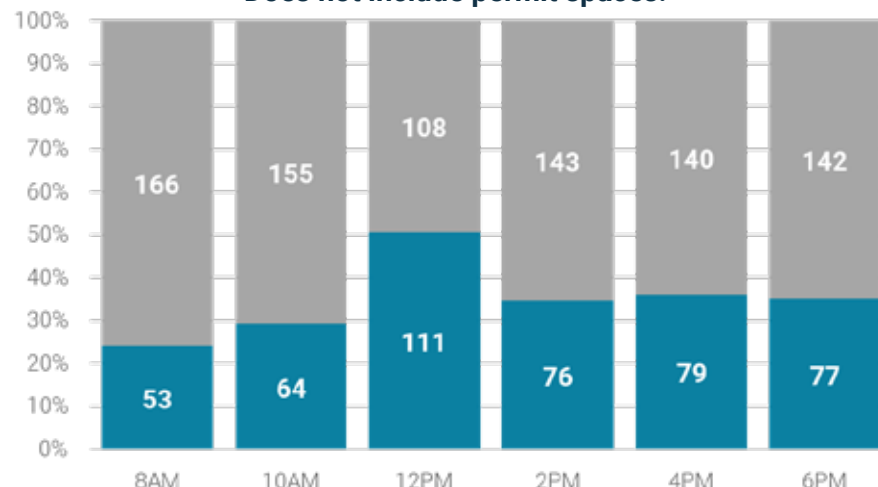
**Fig. 12- Overall Inventory (991)**



This chart demonstrates that overall, the Heights only encounters one peak demand period throughout the day, with 47% of its inventory still available.

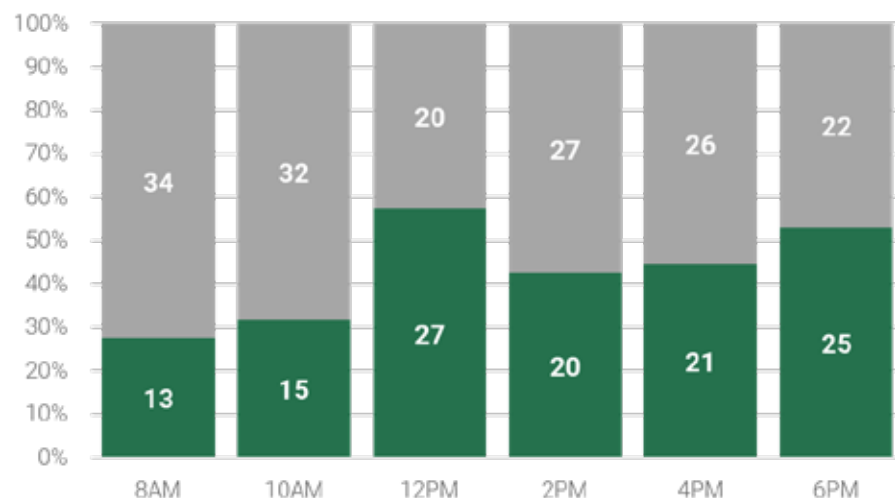
**Fig. 13- Public Inventory (219)**

Does not include permit spaces.



The public inventory also only encounters one daily peak demand period, with 49% of its inventory still available.

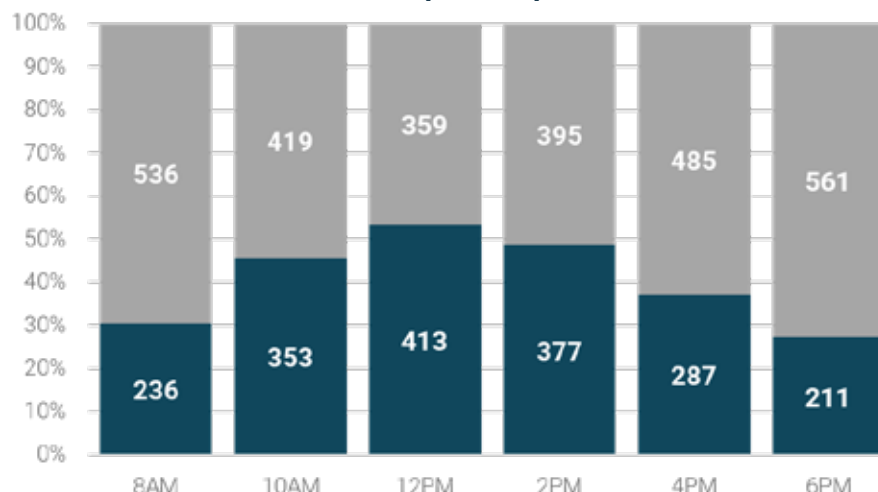
**Fig. 14- Core Area: On-Street 2-Hr Metered Inventory (47)**



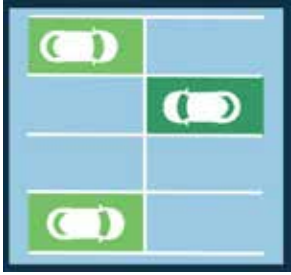
This inventory demonstrates two peak periods (in line with lunch/dinner periods) but there is opportunity to absorb additional demand in the core.

**Fig. 15- Restricted Inventory (772)**

Includes permit spaces.



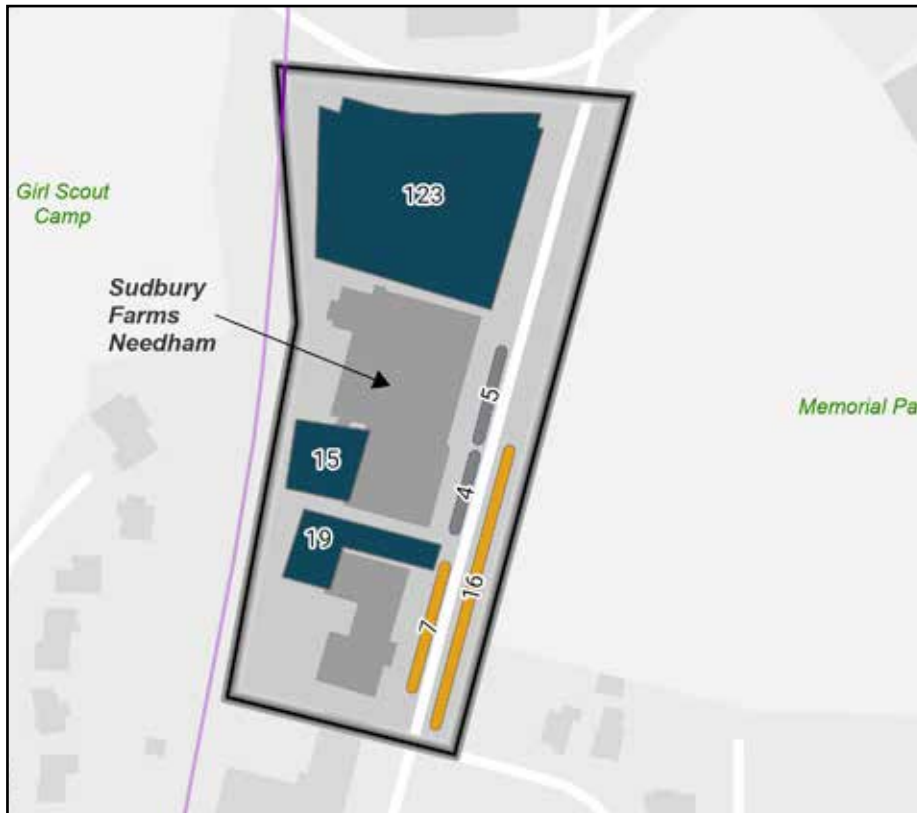
This inventory closely matches the all-day pattern of the overall inventory, and is lowest just outside of typical 9-5 business hours.



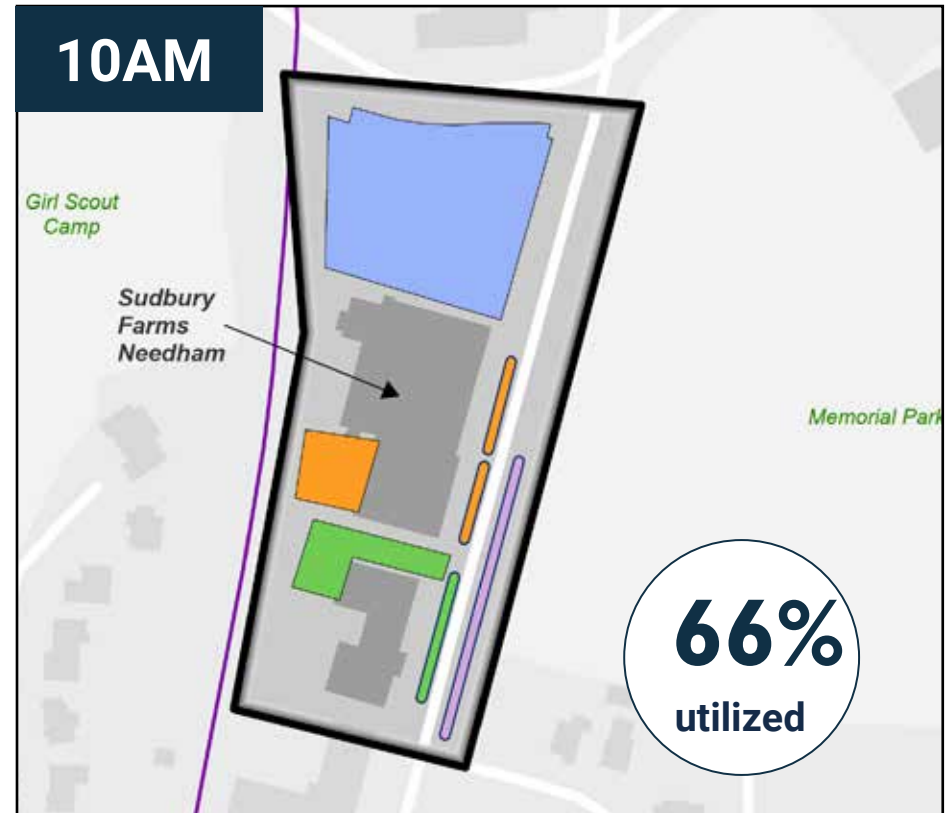
## Highland Ave/High School Inventory and Weekday Parking Utilization

Although this study largely focuses on the Needham Center and Needham Heights study areas, the project team also gathered a parking inventory and performed utilization counts at a small, defined area along Highland Avenue. This area was investigated because of the concentration of businesses, the proximity to Needham High School, and known safety challenges along this part of the street.

### Parking Inventory



### Parking Utilization- Peak Period



On-Street Regulation

— 2-Hr Parking

— Unregulated Parking

Off-Street Regulation

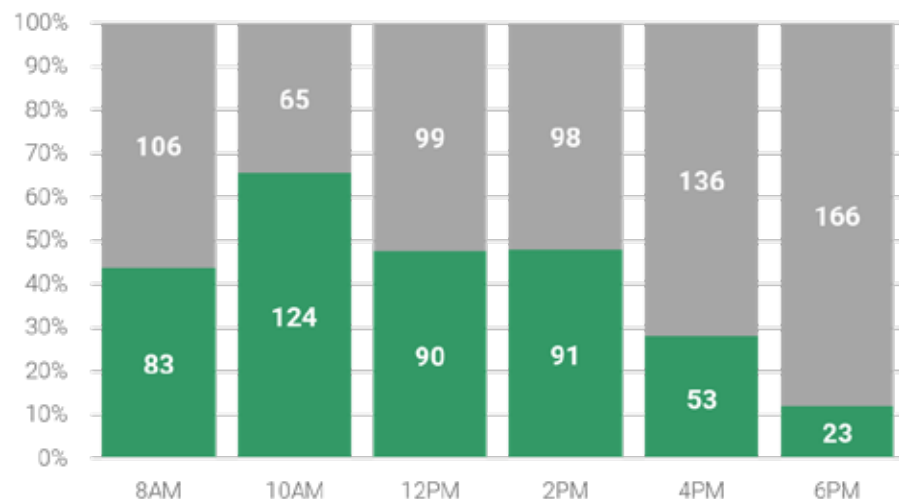
■ Restricted Parking



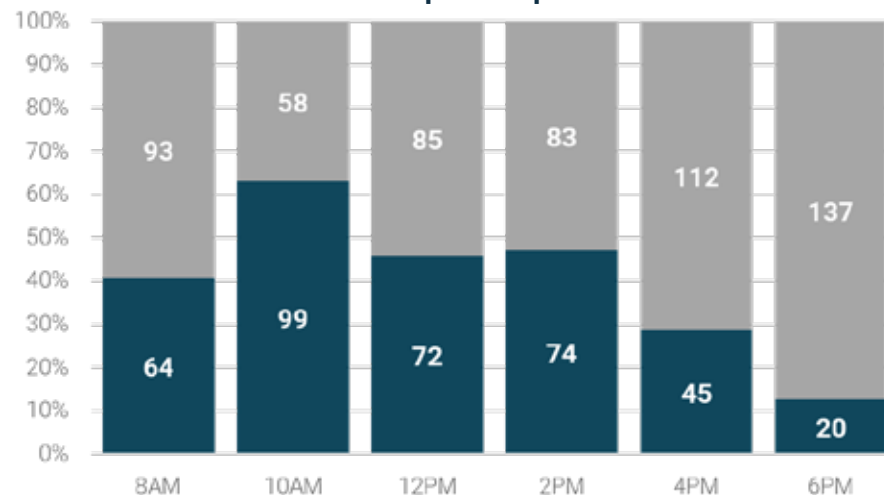
## Analyzing Utilization by Parking Type

The utilization patterns for all types of parking is similar throughout the day, with a level amount of demand at 8:00 am, 12:00 pm, and 2:00 pm, when the high school is in session. The 10:00 am peak demand period is also similar, when visitors to Sudbury Farms are likely highest. As business activity closes for the day, all parking spaces are nearly empty.

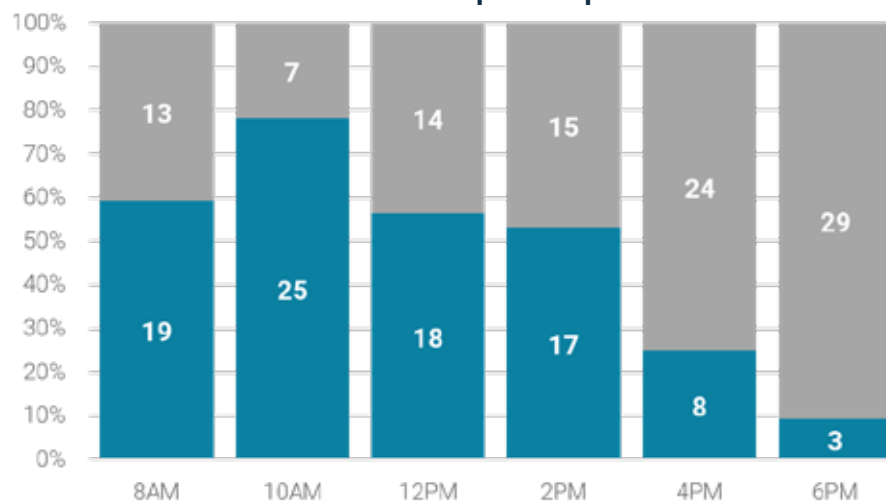
**Fig. 16- Overall Inventory (189)**



**Fig. 17- Restricted Inventory (157)**  
Includes permit spaces.



**Fig. 18- Public Inventory (32)**  
Does not include permit spaces.



## 1.3 PARKING USER EXPERIENCE

Whether a first-time visitor or a long-term resident, parking is often the first point of interaction that any visitor will have when arriving to Needham Center or Needham Heights. It is therefore, very important to make a good impression through a positive parking experience to encourage return visits.

Components of the user experience include things such as:

- How easy it is to pay for parking, and the range of payment options available to accommodate the needs of different types of visitors
- How *reliable* payment options are to provide for a seamless visit every time
- The availability and clarity of information about the “rules” of parking and how enforcement works
- (For residents), the ease of the process for securing a parking permit for their particular needs
- The financial impact of parking in Needham (i.e. cost of meters, cost of permits, cost of violations)

The parking user experience is directly related to the options provided through the Town’s management of the overall system. While there are often limits in capacity of municipal staffing and budgets, being proactive and responsive to changes in visitor preferences and changes in technology can ensure a more consistently positive association with parking in Needham.

This study investigated how parking is managed and how a visitor experiences parking to better understand opportunities for improving efficiencies in the system and meeting the needs of its many different users.



### User Experience Key Takeaways

#### PRICING

- Permits are not available to downtown residents, hurting viability of needed infill housing
- Annual permit purchase is not a realistic option for part-time workers, resulting in meter-feeding & “rolling”
- Enforcement mostly chases workers, not legitimate violators
- 6pm meter end results in restaurant workers claiming prime on-street spaces before customers arrive

#### TIME LIMITS

- Most on-street spaces have a 2-hour maximum limit which aligns with the vast majority of (surveyed) visitor trips being less than 2-hours
- Public lots also are generally signed for shorter visits
- However, long-term visitors do not have parking options without a permit

#### ENFORCEMENT

- Enforcement currently limited to daytime
- Staying overtime (including overnight) is one of the most frequent parking violations
- Tickets can be paid online
- Span of enforcement does not match hours of ‘parking crunch’ (after 6pm)

# Parking Meters

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Meters accept nickels (5 minutes), dimes (10 minutes) and quarters (30 minutes)
- No credit card or pay-by-smartphone app options are currently available

## FUNCTIONALITY

- All metered spaces have “electro-mechanical” meters
- Currently, one meter head per space is installed
- Current meters do not include the number of minutes in violation, if surpassed
- Parking sessions do not reset upon turnover



Typical meter in Needham

# Permits

## SUPPLY

- 60 (free) permits are issued to the Town staff (for free)
- 460-480 (paid) permits are purchased by business owners, annually

## ELIGIBILITY

- Local employees (Businesses' responsibility to purchase employee permits)
- Center and Height businesses (No clear method on how these are distributed)

## PURCHASING/RENEWALS

- Permit cost is \$200
- Purchased annually (even if only used for a portion of the year)
- Can be paid by cash or check, in-person or through the mail (no online option)
- Re-application required every year (January 1)
  - Town sends renewal notice
  - Renewal is easier than first-time application

## DISPLAY/PRACTICE

- Physical permit, displayed on the dashboard
- Not associated with a license plate
  - Can be shared between multiple vehicles



Typical hanging-style permit offered in Needham

## Sell Rate and Revenue

More permits are sold than spaces available (this is a best practice to achieve utilization throughout the year)

- Utilization indicates that not everyone uses permit every day
- Permits sold remain very consistent every year
- Revenue from permits is about \$100,000/annually
- Permits cost about \$17/month, or \$0.10-0.20/hr\*
  - By comparison, a monthly MBTA bus pass is \$55/month

**Table 3. Permit Sell Rate and Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | Permit Holder     | Needham Heights Permits Issued (14 on-street spaces available) | Needham Center Permits Issued (178 spaces available) | Cost  | Total Permits | Total Revenue |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------|---------------|
| 2020-2021   | Business/Employee | 18                                                             | 442                                                  | \$200 | 520           | \$92,000      |
|             | City Staff        | 0                                                              | 50                                                   | \$0   |               |               |
| 2021-2022   | Business/Employee | 20                                                             | 471                                                  | \$200 | 568           | \$92,800      |
|             | City Staff        | 17                                                             | 60                                                   | \$0   |               |               |
| 2022-2023   | Business/Employee | 16                                                             | 442                                                  | \$200 | 530           | \$91,600      |
|             | City Staff        | 12                                                             | 60                                                   | \$0   |               |               |



## Enforcement/Tickets

### STAFF

- Enforcement is conducted by Community Relations officers in the Police Department
  - The officers also serve as crossing guards, which dictates enforcement times
- There are currently five Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs)

### ENFORCEMENT PERIOD

- A total of 31-35 hours are spread throughout the week to monitor the violations of meter parking and permit parking
- Enforcement generally ends at 2pm

### PRACTICE

- The number of violations/tickets that are issued in a week varies greatly.
  - PEOs issue tickets for a subset of police-enforced violations
  - Handheld system PEOs use is glitchy
- Turnover and utilization is not currently tracked with the current enforcement system

### VIOLATIONS

- The most expensive violations are for blocking bus stops and handicapped spaces
- The most frequent violations are related to staying over time and/or violating meters
  - This includes overnight parking
- Permit violations (enforced by Town) are not listed on Table 4.

**Table 4. Needham Parking Violations (2018)**

| Violation                    | Fee      | Frequency (2018) |
|------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Meter Violation              | \$15.00  | 1874             |
| <b>Overtime Meter*</b>       | \$15.00  | 1500             |
| <b>Overtime*</b>             | \$15.00  | 900              |
| Restricted                   | \$15.00  | 401              |
| <b>Improper*</b>             | \$15.00  | 276              |
| All Night                    | \$15.00  | 224              |
| Fire Hydrant                 | \$25.00  | 35               |
| <b>Wrong Direction*</b>      | \$15.00  | 32               |
| Obstructing Sidewalk         | \$15.00  | 29               |
| 20ft Intersection            | \$15.00  | 24               |
| Fire Lane                    | \$25.00  | 21               |
| Bus Stop                     | \$100.00 | 13               |
| <b>Handicapped*</b>          | \$100.00 | 12               |
| Obstructing Driveway         | \$15.00  | 11               |
| Foot from Curb               | \$15.00  | 11               |
| Impede Snow Removal          | \$20.00  | 10               |
| Obstructing Crosswalk        | \$20.00  | 5                |
| Double                       | \$15.00  | 2                |
| <b>Blocking Handicapped*</b> | \$100.00 | 2                |

\*Enforced by Needham PEOs. Source: Town Finance Officer

## Revenue Summary

- During a typical year, the revenue from parking meters and parking permits is almost equal
- Overnight parking fees represent applications for temporary overnight parking. The fee is \$35, and rarely more than 10 are issued in a year.

**Table 5. Needham Annual Parking Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | Parking Meter Receipts | Parking Permits Revenue | Overnight Parking Fee | Parking Fines Issued |
|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 2018        | \$105,003              | \$106,720               | \$350                 | \$86,538             |
| 2019        | \$107,524              | \$107,000               | \$385                 | \$105,722            |
| 2020        | \$86,700               | \$5,260*                | \$315                 | \$159,297            |
| 2021        | \$8,699*               | \$149,020               | \$35                  | \$25,349             |
| 2022        | \$64,999               | \$97,867                | \$175                 | \$59,946             |
| 2023        | \$32,662               | \$3,010**               | \$175**               | \$27,035             |

\* Low figures due to COVID-19

\*\* Annual renewal is May 1; for FY23, most of receipts will be collected in April 2023.



Needham Town Hall

## I.4 ZONING ANALYSIS

### Summary

(see Appendix for full memorandum)

### REQUIREMENT OVERVIEW

Needham's parking ratio requirements are relatively high compared to national standards for parking generation (Table 6). The code allows for some flexibility to account for context, but it is limited. Flexibility includes:

| Best Practice Downtown Zoning Flexibility                               | Needham Application                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Removal of all minimum requirements                                     | In Needham Center, no parking requirements for small retail land uses. Slight reductions for upper levels of multi-story buildings. |
| No change use requirements                                              | In Needham Center and Needham Heights, exemptions for certain changes of use                                                        |
|                                                                         | <i>Additional Options by Special Permit</i>                                                                                         |
| Off-site parking allowed within 2,000 feet and no ownership requirement | Off-site parking allowed within 300 ft and if under same ownership                                                                  |
| Tiered fee schedule to promote use                                      | Off-street parking fund exists for payment in-lieu, but isn't actively used                                                         |
| One bicycle parking space required for every parking space              | One bicycle space required for every 20 parking spaces                                                                              |
| Municipal-wide TDM ordinance                                            | TDM plans required in some districts, but not Needham Center or Heights<br>- NEBC, HC-128, and MU-128 Districts                     |

**Table 6. Needham Zoning Requirements in Comparison to Best Practice National Standards**

| Land Use              | Needham Requirement                                                                | National Standards                | Comparison        |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Residential</b>    | 1.5 spaces per unit (1 space per unit for affordable units w/ no more than 1 bed.) | 1.15 spaces per unit <sup>1</sup> | <b>Higher</b>     |
| <b>Office</b>         | 3.33 spaces per 1,000 square feet                                                  | 2.39 spaces per 1,000 square feet | <b>Higher</b>     |
| <b>Medical Office</b> | 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet                                                     | 3.23 spaces per 1,000 square feet | <b>Higher</b>     |
| <b>Retail</b>         | 3.33 spaces per 1,000 square feet                                                  | 1.94 spaces per 1,000 square feet | <b>Higher</b>     |
| <b>Restaurant</b>     | 1 space/3 seats, plus 10 spaces/ takeout service station                           | 1 space per 3 seats               | <b>Comparable</b> |

<sup>1</sup> Assumes 2 spaces per bedroom unit



## Zoning Key Takeaways

- Requirements are relatively high
- Waiver requests are frequent, indicating requirements don't match the market
- Limited options for reductions as of right; lengthy review process required
- Although some flexibility exists, it is limited
- Parts of Needham Center/Heights do not fall into these areas

## WAIVER REQUESTS IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT FROM 2018-2022

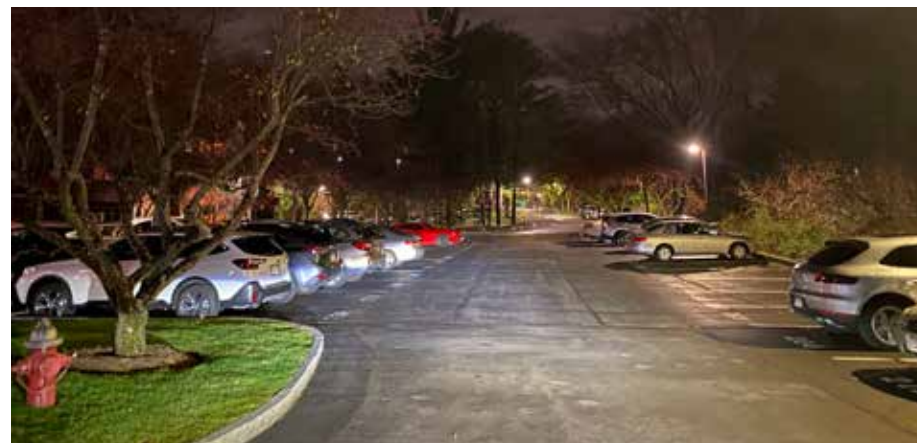
There have been multiple waivers requested to waive parking requirements recently in downtown Needham areas. This indicates that parking requirements do not match with market demands.

Details include:

- 9 waivers requested, all approved
- 7 of 9 provided no off-street parking (retail/medical office/restaurant/gym)
- **Up to 158 parking spaces waived**
- Common justifications:
  - Off-street parking not currently available at the property
  - Minor modifications to the property wouldn't impact vehicle/pedestrian movement
  - Properties in close proximity to municipal lots for employee and/or customer parking
  - Employers would be ordered to purchase parking stickers

## MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

Based on data from select multi-family properties, the average residential demand in Needham is about 0.84 per unit. The team collected overnight data as part of this study in December 2022 to gain a general understanding of parking demand at peak at a residential location. In addition, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) also conducted counts as part of the HOME Consortium Parking Study. The table below provides additional detail.



View of the southern lot of the Rosemary Ridge property at midnight.

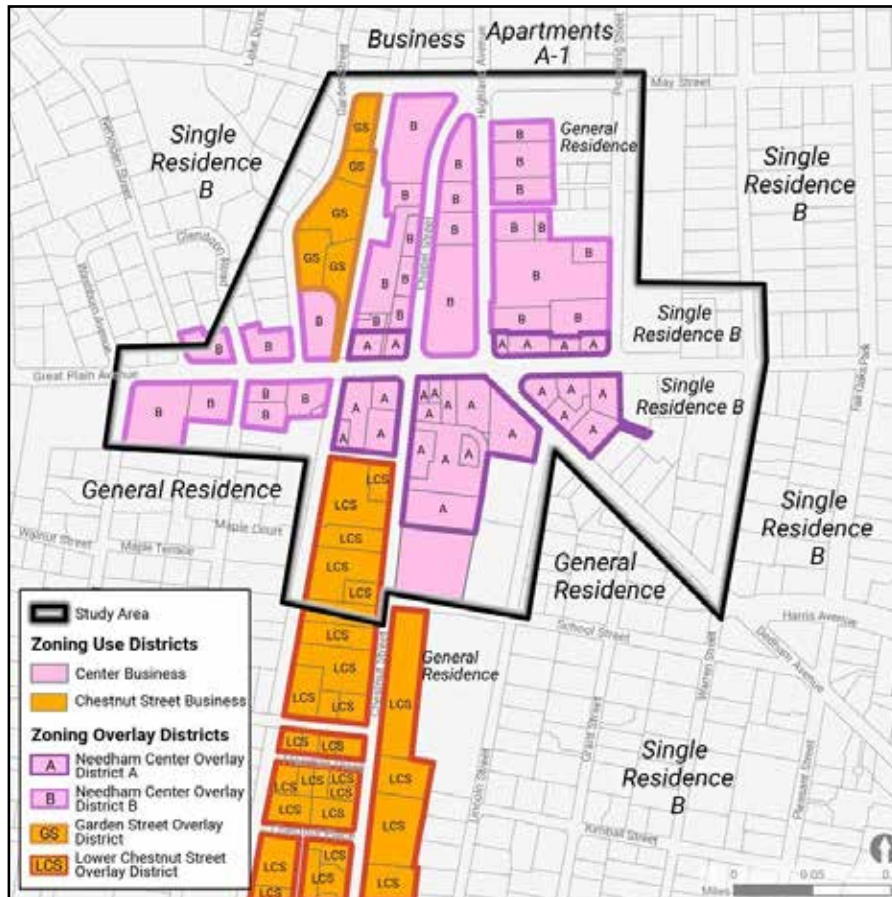
**Table 7. Sample Overnight Multi-family Residential Parking Demand Ratio**

| Property Address    | Total # Vehicles | # Units | Ratio |
|---------------------|------------------|---------|-------|
| 275 2nd Avenue*     | 242              | 390     | 0.63  |
| 757 Highland Avenue | 84               | 77      | 1.10  |
| 100 Rosemary Way    | 88               | 105     | 0.84  |
| 50 Dedham Avenue    | 13               | 10      | 1.30  |

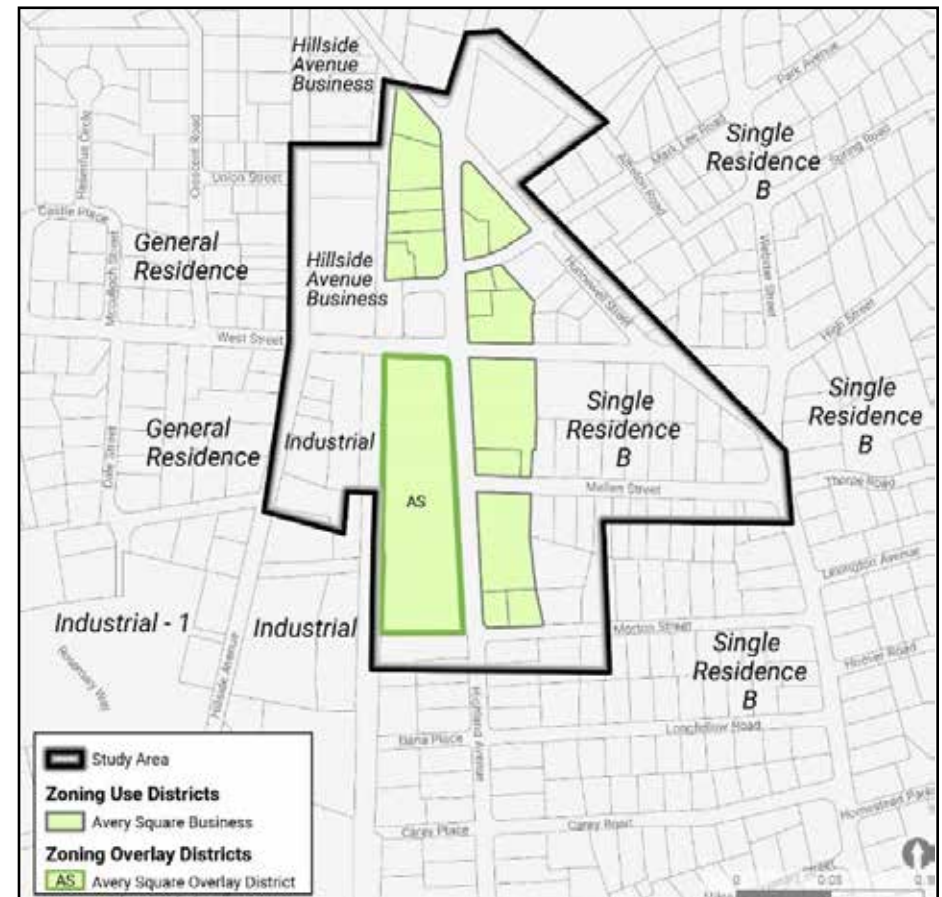
\*Data courtesy of MAPC, June 2022



**Fig. 19- Needham Center Zoning Overlay/Districts**



**Fig. 20- Needham Heights Zoning Overlay/Districts**



**Table 8. Zoning Requirement Comparison Between Needham Zoning Overlays/Districts**

|                                                                                                                                                              | Center Business District | Needham Center Overlay | Lower Chestnut St Overlay | Garden St Overlay | Avery Sq Business District |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Relief from Requirement by Right</b>                                                                                                                      |                          |                        |                           |                   |                            |
| Retail uses > 800 sf of floor area                                                                                                                           | X                        | X                      |                           |                   |                            |
| Buildings with 40% or more of its usable floor area above the ground floor, upper-story non-medical uses only need to provide 80% of the parking requirement | X                        | X                      | X                         | X                 |                            |
| Change of use requires nine or fewer additional off-street parking spaces for compliance                                                                     | X                        | X                      | X                         | X                 | X                          |
| <b>Special permit to relieve or waive parking requirements if:</b>                                                                                           |                          |                        |                           |                   |                            |
| Project replaces or substantially improves an existing building or site                                                                                      | X                        | X                      |                           |                   |                            |
| Promotes the goal of preserving and enhancing the Center Business District as a pedestrian-oriented local shopping and business district                     | X                        | X                      |                           |                   |                            |
| Incorporates the recommendations of the Design Review Board                                                                                                  | X                        | X                      |                           |                   |                            |
| Demonstrates that the maximum number of off-street parking spaces practicable are provided                                                                   | X                        | X                      |                           |                   |                            |
| Applicant demonstrates it cannot accommodate parking in an economical way ( <b>in-lieu fee required</b> )                                                    |                          | X                      | X                         |                   |                            |
| Applicant demonstrates it cannot accommodate parking via adjoining shared parking ( <b>in-lieu fee required</b> )                                            |                          | X                      | X                         |                   |                            |
| Project has been designed to reduce required parking ( <b>in-lieu fee required</b> )                                                                         |                          | X                      | X                         |                   |                            |
| Complementary uses (Shared parking), or other reduction devices pursued                                                                                      |                          |                        |                           |                   | X                          |
| Off-site parking to meet requirement for non-residential                                                                                                     |                          |                        |                           |                   | X                          |



## I.5 MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS

### Pedestrian/Bicycle Experience

Parking is one component of the overall transportation system, and the quality of the multimodal environment impacts parking demand. A multimodal environment that emphasizes car travel will encourage parking demand. In addition, poor walking connections from parking facilities to the core can dissuade people from using the entire system as certain facilities feel much farther away than they actually are. With these patterns in mind, this study assessed the multimodal environment for its potential impact on parking demand.

### SAFETY/ACCESSIBILITY

- The existing transportation network in Needham is car-centric but there is some infrastructure in place to support and encourage walking and bicycling
- Sidewalks are complete and in generally good condition, however some areas and crosswalks need improvement to increase safety and comfort
- Crosswalks are also needed at key locations near the Chestnut St and Dedham Ave lots

### OTHER AMENITIES

- The presence of consistent streetscaping, park pathways, historic lighting, and a good amount of benches (particularly in the Center) improves the experience of pedestrians
- Sharrow markings are present but dedicated bike lanes would be more desirable for some riders
- Bike racks are present in some areas but might not be in locations convenient to destinations desired
- There is a lack of signage to direct people to bike parking



### Multimodal Key Takeaways

- Connectivity to/from public parking can be significantly enhanced to increase the utilization of public facilities, and to create a more walkable downtown
- Several pedestrian amenities are generally present throughout Needham but are lacking in some areas, which contributes to a sense of inconsistency
- Larger, more centralized bike rack areas are needed to attract bicyclists to visit key destinations where parking is in higher demand



The ride can be somewhat uncomfortable for young bicyclists like this one who are traveling from Greene's Field along Pickering St (Source: Google)



One of the more attractive and well-maintained intersection corners of Needham Center, which contributes to a more pleasant atmosphere for pedestrians and bicyclists (Source: Google)



An ideal location for a high-visibility crosswalk on Dedham Ave (Chestnut St lot is on the left) (Source: Google)



EV parking spaces in Needham provide another travel alternative for visitors who would like options (Source: Google)



## I.6 SUMMARY ANALYSIS



**Supply is available,  
but not always easy to  
understand**



**Utilization is uneven,  
and some lots have  
capacity all day**



**There are limited  
opportunities for  
long-term parking**





**Enforcement ends early and may be 'chasing' employees**

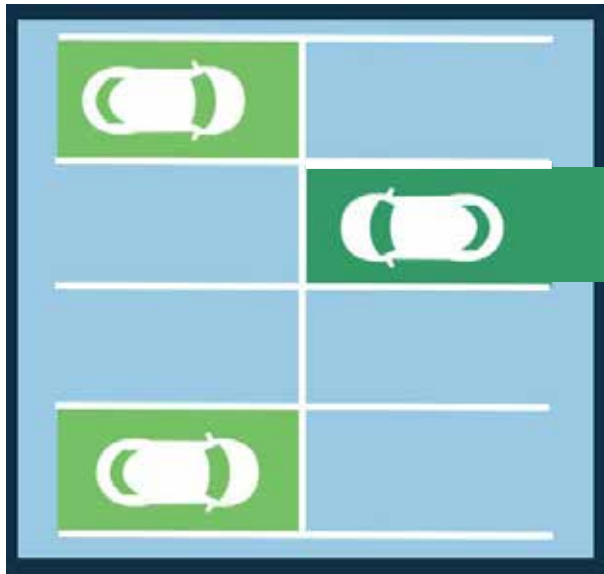


**Pricing does not match demand and ends on-street just as dining gets busy**



**Long and/or difficult crossings limit access to parking**





# 2

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public outreach was conducted at regular intervals throughout the study to better understand how parking functions, with a specific emphasis on Needham Center and Needham Heights. Meetings were held both in-person and virtually, so as to reach the broadest range of residents, employees, business owners, or visitors. The feedback collected from all outreach efforts helped to provide insight on Needham's parking system and ultimately inform the project recommendations.

### Online Survey

The study posted and promoted an online survey to gain input from Needham residents and other stakeholders about their experiences finding and using parking in Needham Center and/or Needham Heights. The Town promoted the survey through flyers, postcards, and directly e-mailing various groups and agencies. The survey received 1,049 responses between November 23, 2022 and January 19, 2023. Participants were able to take the survey for the Center, the Heights, or for both areas. Questions were asked covering the following topics:

- How frequently respondents visited either area
- Where respondents parked most frequently when they drove to either area
- How close to their destinations respondents typically parked in either area
- What influenced where respondents parked when they visited either area
- Whether respondents were residents, employees, or business owners in either area



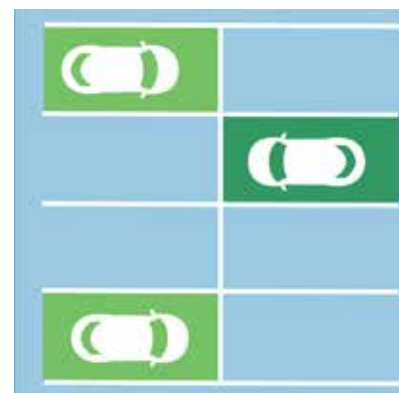
**629**  
participants

## WHO DID WE HEAR FROM?

|            |                                                |
|------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <b>46</b>  | Visitors to Needham                            |
| <b>322</b> | Residents of greater Needham                   |
| <b>230</b> | Residents of Needham Center or Needham Heights |
| <b>35</b>  | Business owners                                |
| <b>23</b>  | Employees                                      |
| <b>7</b>   | Commuter Rail riders                           |
| <b>6</b>   | Hospital workers/visitors                      |

## AGES OF PARTICIPANTS

|            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| <b>2</b>   | 18-24             |
| <b>237</b> | 25-44             |
| <b>443</b> | 45-64             |
| <b>327</b> | 65 and over       |
| <b>28</b>  | Prefer not to say |



## Needham Center + Needham Heights Parking Study PUBLIC SURVEY

Whether you live, work, or play in Needham Center and Needham Heights, we want to hear about your parking experience!

The Town of Needham is conducting a parking study in these two areas to better

- Do we need better access to parking?
- Can we better use the parking that we have?
- What kind of parking payment options are preferred?
- Is the parking system meeting other Town goals?
- Can improved walking help parking?
- Can finding parking become easier?

understand:

The study involves an in-depth process of data collection and analysis. This is your chance to be heard about parking-related concerns. Your survey input will be used to

### WHEN?

The survey will be open between November 23, 2022- January 3, 2023

### HOW?

- Visit this website link- <https://tinyurl.com/NeedhamParking>
- Scan the QR code to the right



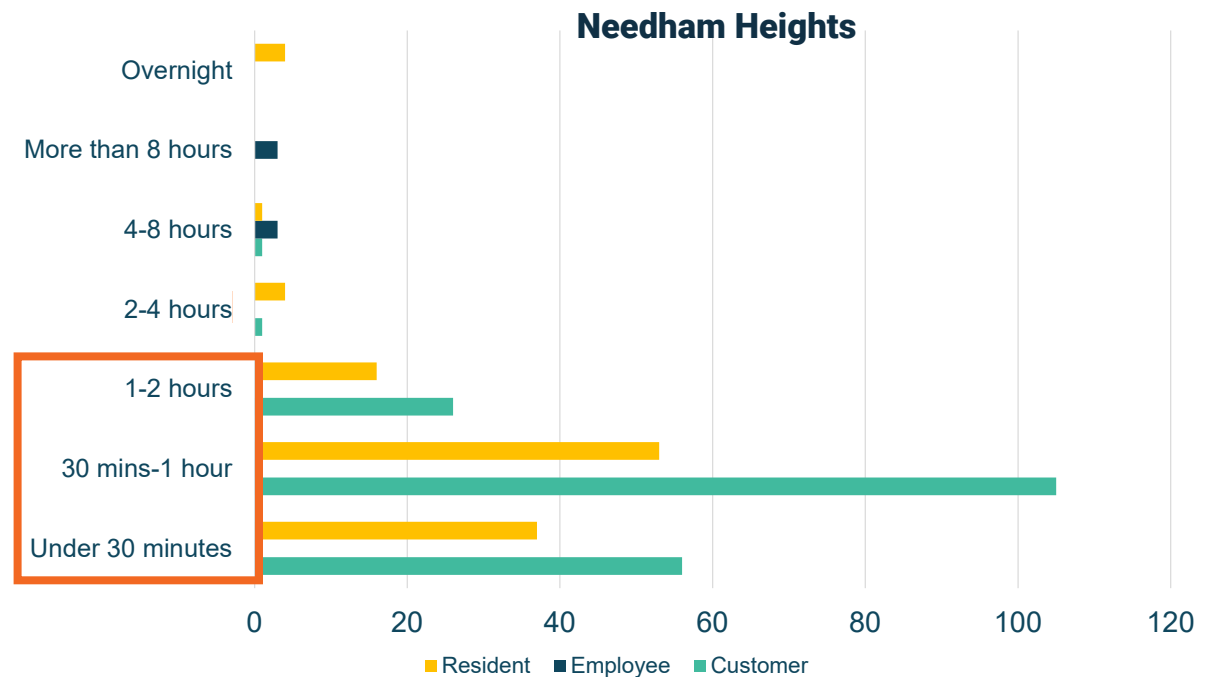
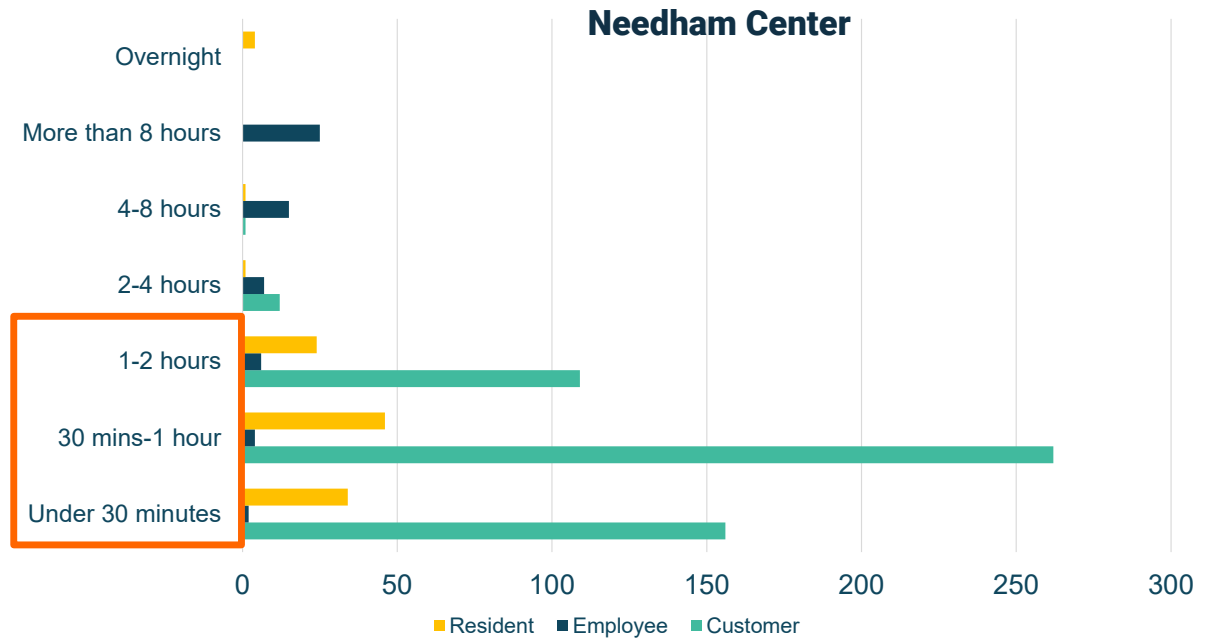
### QUESTIONS?

Contact Amy Haelsen, Economic Development Manager- [ahaelsen@needhamma.gov](mailto:ahaelsen@needhamma.gov)



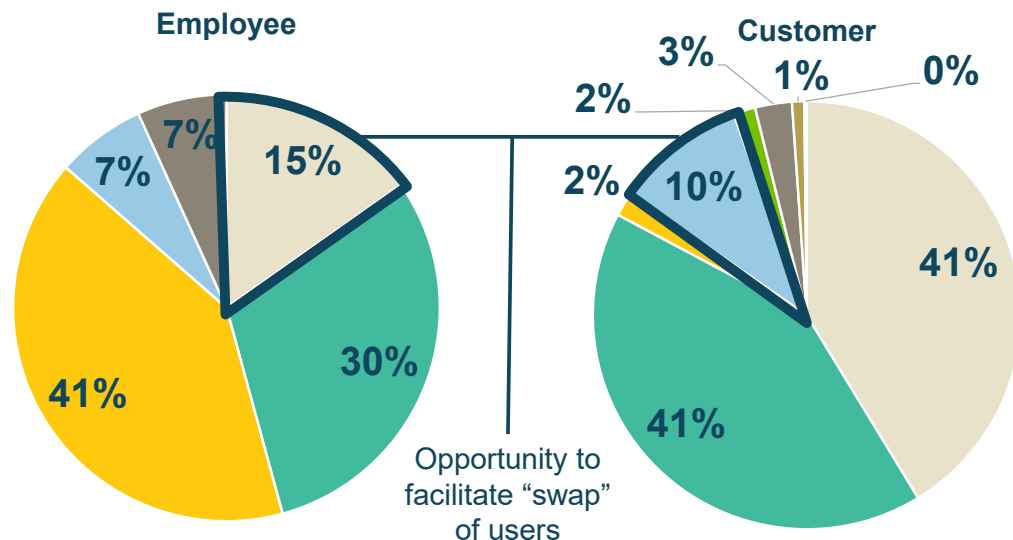
## Q. How long do you spend on a typical visit?

These responses reveal that short-term spaces (less than 2 hours) are in much higher demand for both the Center and the Heights than any other time periods.



## Q. When you drive, where do you park most frequently?

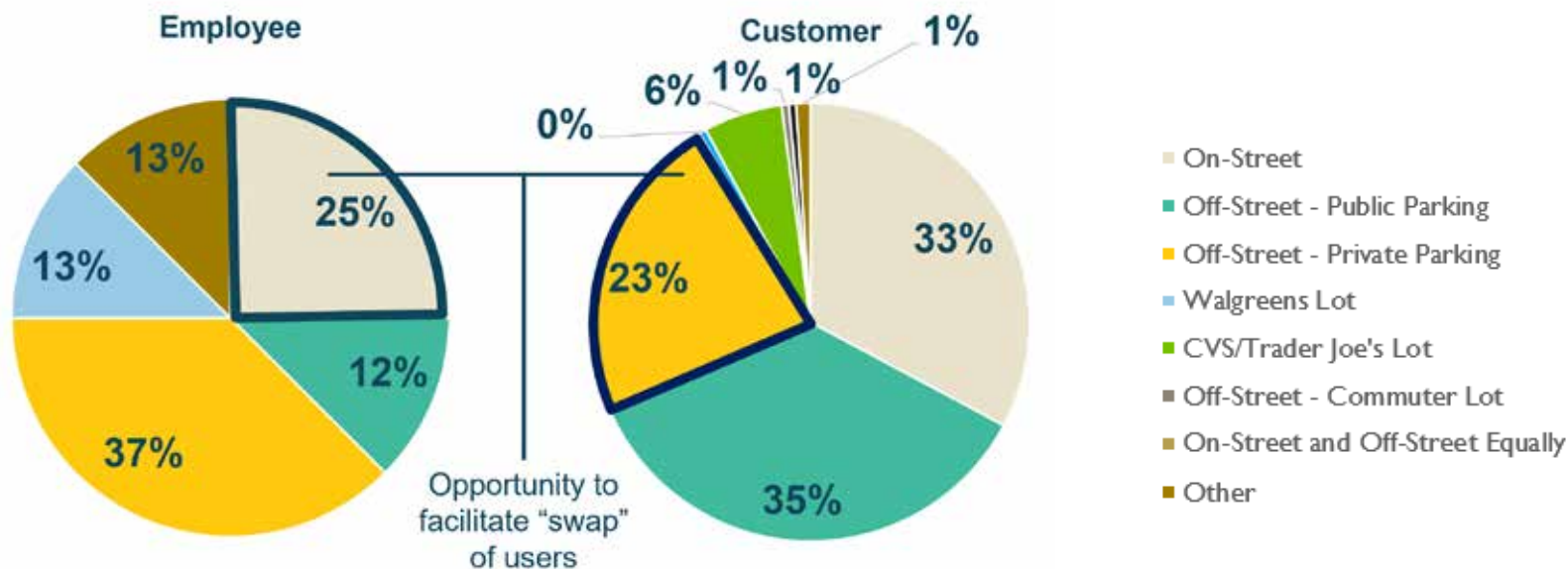
### Needham Center



These responses reveal that, in the Center, a considerable portion of employees claim to park on-street, which is ideally targeted for customers. These occupied spaces then force customers to park elsewhere, such as in the Walgreens Lot, as reflected.

This same practice is echoed in the Heights, with an even larger portion of employees occupying on-street spaces. The portion of the overall on-street inventory used by employees or customers is similar.

### Needham Heights

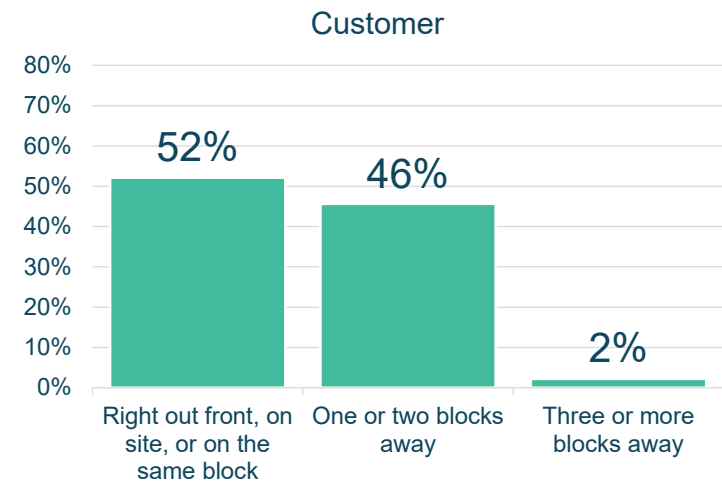
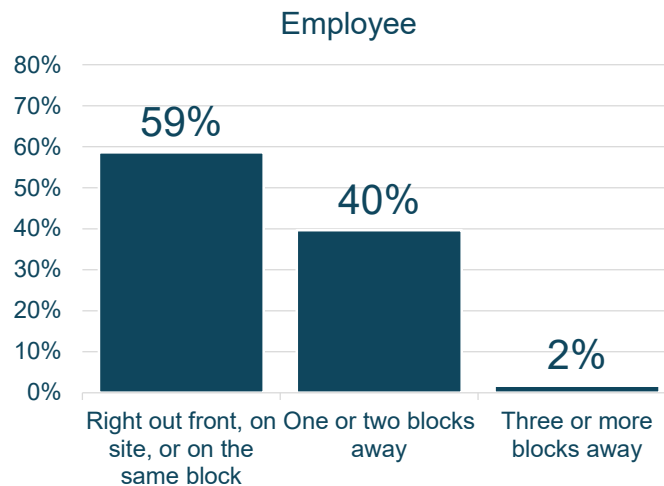


- On-Street
- Off-Street - Public Parking
- Off-Street - Private Parking
- Walgreens Lot
- CVS/Trader Joe's Lot
- Off-Street - Commuter Lot
- On-Street and Off-Street Equally
- Other

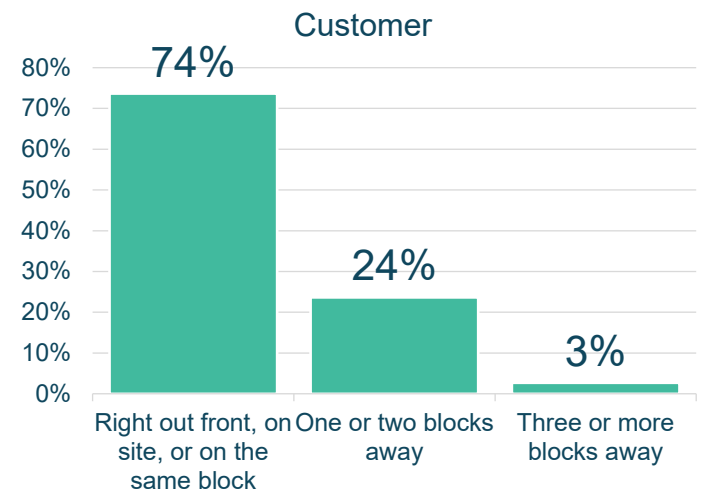
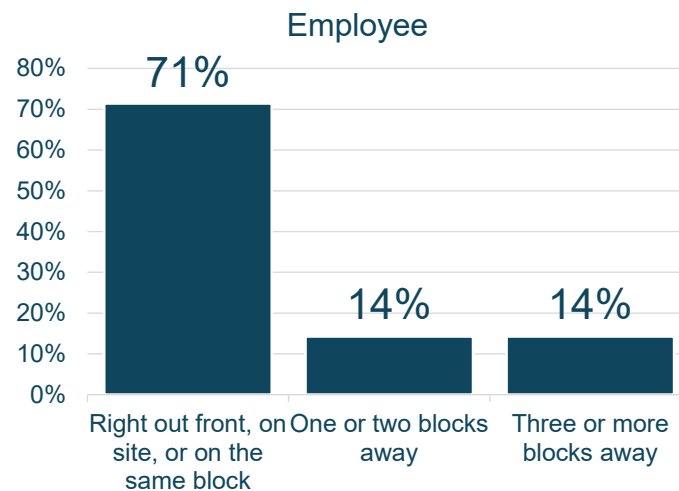
## Q. How close to your destination do you typically park?

These responses reveal that, in the Center, customers are more willing to park a few blocks away from their destinations than employees. In the Heights, a much larger portion of respondents prefer parking right in front of their destination but again, customers are more willing than employees to park a little farther away.

### Needham Center



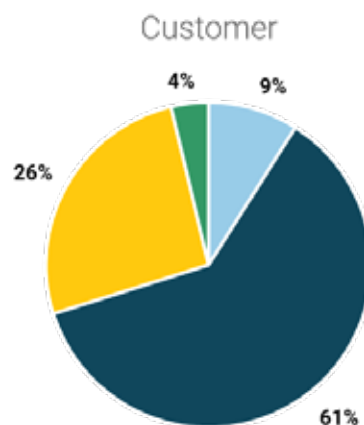
### Needham Heights



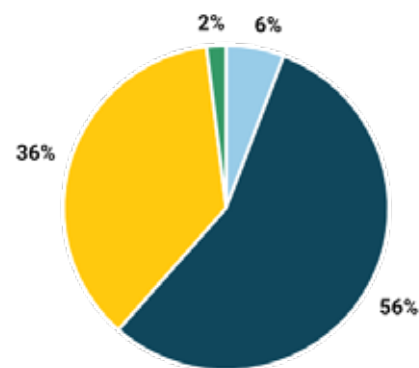
## Q. How does paid parking influence your parking choice?

These responses reveal that in both Center and the Heights, 70% of the customers will park further away in order to pay less for parking. Approximately 28% of all users in both study areas are willing to pay more to park closer to their destinations.

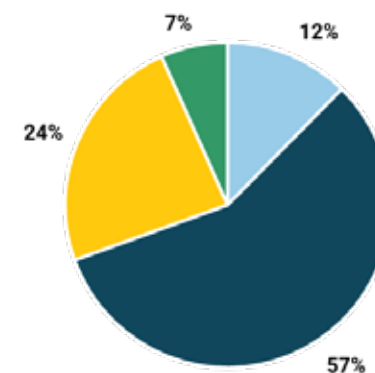
### Needham Center



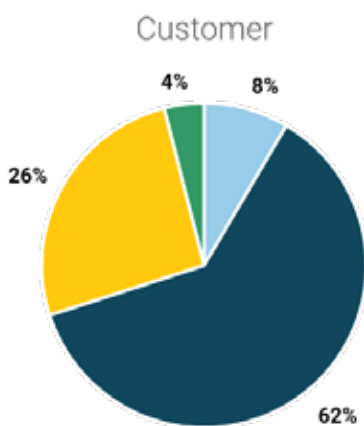
### Employee



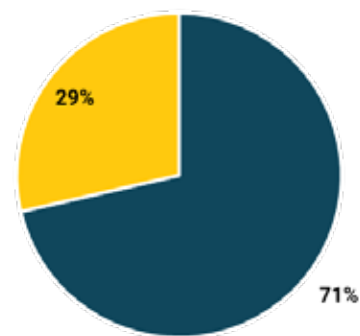
### Resident



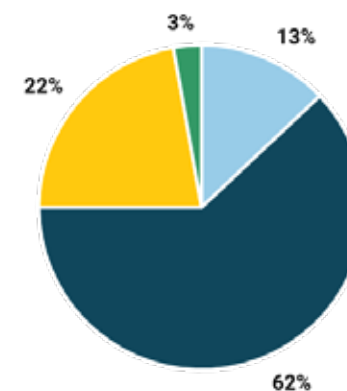
### Needham Heights



### Employee



### Resident



- I will choose to drive elsewhere
- I will park farther away from my destination for less expensive or free parking
- I will pay more to park closer to my destination
- I will walk, bike, or take a bus, taxi or rideshare instead of paying to park



# Community Open House

An in-person public meeting was held for the project on January 26, 2023 at Town Hall in Needham Center. The Town advertised the meeting with a postcard, through direct e-mails, and social media posts. The meeting was intended for a general audience with a goal of sharing project information, including **the study goals, project schedule, parking inventory and utilization data, and results from the public survey**. The meeting was attended by 50 people.

The meeting also focused on collecting feedback in an open house style format, and provided all attendees the opportunity to participate through interactive exercises and conversations with the project team. Some of the key points from these discussions are highlighted below.

## NEEDHAM CENTER

- Parking signage is confusing and wayfinding is difficult for off-street lots
- Parking is imbalanced- there is too much at private lots or the police station, but not enough public parking
- MBTA Commuter Lot lacks clarity on who can park where
- More focus is needed on non-car transportation, including bike lanes, bike parking, and improving the pedestrian experience

## NEEDHAM HEIGHTS

- The MBTA lot has been underutilized, post-pandemic
- The Trader Joe's lot is always full and dangerous to maneuver through
- There is a lack of parking signage, generally
- Walking and biking infrastructure needs improvement



## Stakeholder Roundtables

The study team hosted two stakeholder meetings in February 2023, which targeted businesses in Needham Center and Needham Heights. The meetings were held virtually to best accommodate the available times of attendees, and focused on gaining individual feedback. Similar to the Community Meeting, the team shared an overview of the project and some high-level findings, then held an open discussion.

These meetings gave business owners the opportunity to learn about parking demand and regulations in their neighborhood, voice their issues and concerns about how they and their employees are impacted by parking, and to provide input on opportunities for the parking system. Some of the key points from these discussions are highlighted below.

### NEEDHAM CENTER / NEEDHAM HEIGHTS

- Enforcement varies
- Legal permit parkers are getting ticketed
- There are limited employee parking passes
- Loading/short-term parking spaces are desired
- Employees occupy prime spaces in front of businesses
- Centralized employee parking area is desired (Mark Lee Road has potential to accommodate)
- Leased spaces need better signage
- Employee permit costs can add up



### WHO DID WE TALK TO?

#### NEEDHAM CENTER

- Abbot's Frozen Custard
- Barre 3
- French Press Bakery
- House of Pizza
- Michelsen's Shoes
- Needham Music
- Proud Mary's Gifts

#### NEEDHAM HEIGHTS

- Blue on Highland
- Cafe Fresh Bagel
- Koko Fit Club
- Town Pizza

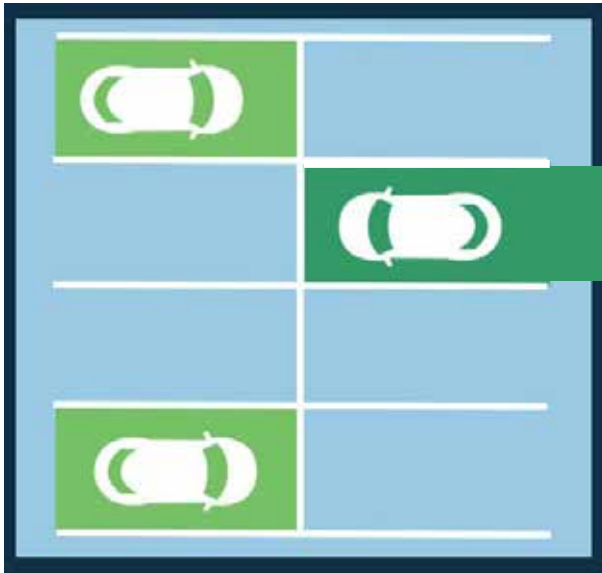


### Community Outreach Key Takeaways

- People generally feel there is enough parking in the Center or the Heights but not enough clarity about how to find it or who can use it
- The user experience of parking could be improved by making parking easier to find, and increasing options for how to pay for parking
- Some parking areas and the connections to/from them are uncomfortable to use because of safety challenges
- The local business community feels the identification of new short-term and long-term spaces are a priority
- The community perceives enforcement practices are inconsistent and not enforcing true parking violators

# 3

## RECOMMENDATIONS



Historic communities such as Needham were not built around the car but became car-centric over time as travel patterns and policies changed. Fortunately, Needham has successfully held a strong line in limiting the growth of its off-street parking supply, attracting compatible development which has sought to limit its parking footprint.

Like most historic downtowns, Needham's parking system has evolved over time in a somewhat ad hoc way. This has resulted in a disjointed and at times confusing system that does not respond to today's travel patterns. As consumer spending rebounds following the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and new, mixed-use and denser development emerges in both the Center and the Heights, the time is right for a more coordinated approach to the parking system and how it can best support community goals over the coming years.

The following recommendations will help create a parking system that better meets Needham's goals while building in additional flexibility for the system to adapt as travel patterns continue to change and evolve.

# GOALS



**1. Document existing parking supply and daily demand**



**2. Improve parking management system for residents, employees, customers, and visitors**



**3. Investigate efficiency and user-friendliness of parking meters and other payment methods and find opportunities to improve**



**4. Identify and recommend parking supply efficiencies/ opportunities to unlock parking in areas of higher demand**



**5. Identify opportunities to better align policies with the long-term goals and growth of the two areas**



**6. Support the economies of the Needham Center and Needham Heights**



**7. Inform decision-making for future street improvement projects and zoning updates**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

### DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Performance-based pricing
- 2 Permit spaces
- 3 Long-term parking
- 4 Shared parking opportunities
- 5 Enforcement
- 6 Create more active curbs
- 7 Improve parking signage and wayfinding

- 8 Payment technologies
- 9 Introduce flexibility in zoning
- 10 Parking supply opportunities
- 11 Multimodal improvements
- 12 Bike parking infrastructure
- 13 Clarity of regulations

 Short-Term    Long-Term    Periodic Evaluation Required



## Best Practice Opportunities for Needham

| Recommendation                                   | Best Practice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Needham's Existing Practice                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Downtown Parking Management</b>               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Performance-based Pricing</b>                 | Parking in a downtown should implement performance-based pricing to spread parking demand. All parking facilities should be well advertised and connected to the downtown.                                                                                                     | Needham's one-size-fits-all pricing results in excess demand of prime spaces, while nearby spaces are highly underutilized.                                                             |
| <b>Introduce Flexibility in Zoning</b>           | A progressive zoning code can ensure that growth in travel demand is absorbed by other travel modes, and that those requiring vehicle access utilize nearby parking resources and only construct new parking as needed.                                                        | The Town's zoning policy requirements are significantly higher than best practice, and don't incentivize non-vehicle modes and their connectivity/access.                               |
| <b>Pursue Shared Parking Opportunities</b>       | Broadening the use of shared parking agreements between private landholders can ensure that growth in the restricted, off-street parking supply is kept to a minimum.                                                                                                          | Needham does not currently have a parking district but has successfully supported shared parking agreements.                                                                            |
| <b>Parking Regulations and Permit Management</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Long-Term Parking Options + Permit Spaces</b> | Pricing should be performance-based, using the cost of parking to achieve ideal parking availability by setting the cost of parking to allow users to pay more for the most desirable spaces. Permit spaces may be able to be shared by other users to maximize their use.     | Unclear signage and the designated permit parking times in Needham reduce the optimal utilization of these designated spaces. Permit pricing does not align with their demand.          |
| <b>Update Payment Technologies</b>               | Mechanisms should provide an array of options for users (i.e. coins, credit card, smartphone). Mechanisms should use the same billing systems.                                                                                                                                 | Needham's meters only accept a specific combination of coins, which is inconvenient and doesn't allow for flexibility to extend parking time.                                           |
| <b>Clearly Sign Regulations</b>                  | Time limits are several hours or discouraged entirely to allow for more flexibility for visits; cost is a more appropriate mechanism to ensure parking spaces are valued appropriately by drivers.                                                                             | Parking signage in Needham is present but unclear language can leave some regulations open to interpretation.                                                                           |
| <b>Focus Enforcement on Customer Service</b>     | Enforcement practices should be consistent and conducted during peak periods of demand. Officer training should include clarification about regulation signage, permit systems, and should emphasize education to parkers.                                                     | Parking enforcement in Needham is conducted during a limited period that doesn't include peak evening times. Variation of revenue alludes to a lack of consistency in practice.         |
| <b>Parking Supply Optimization</b>               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Create Simple Long-Term Parking</b>           | Long-term parking areas can be identified in areas that are underutilized at the rear of lots or on-street areas that are less in demand, in order to maximize on existing supply and minimize the practice of prime customer spaces being utilized by employees.              | Currently, there are no designated long-term parking areas that are centralized or advertised to incentivize employees from using spaces better matched for customers.                  |
| <b>Create More Active Curbs</b>                  | In strategic areas of high activity, some on-street spaces can be converted into uses that support other modes of travel, act as short-term/loading areas, or that contribute to street vitality and a stronger sense of place.                                                | There are no short-term parking spaces in areas where short customer visits or rideshare pick-up/drop-off is higher in demand.                                                          |
| <b>Consolidate Lots to Expand Supply</b>         | Opportunities to expand parking supply through consolidation of adjacent lots with existing barriers is a simple approach that should be prioritized before pursuing building new supply.                                                                                      | Several of the lots in Needham are divided by a minor physical barrier that limits the optimal use and access of either facility.                                                       |
| <b>Improve Parking Signage + Wayfinding</b>      | Signage directing to parking should be located at various key locations throughout town, and signage at individual lots should be highly visible and informative. The signs should be recognizable, legible, and work in tandem with parking information on digital platforms. | Needham does not have a comprehensive, branded wayfinding signage system, and the few signs directing to parking are lacking visibility. The Town doesn't have a parking map available. |
| <b>Encouraging Other Uses</b>                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Improve the Multimodal Network</b>            | Connections to/from parking should be welcoming to pedestrians and bicyclists and prioritize their safety.                                                                                                                                                                     | Sidewalk repairs/connections are needed at some locations, and crosswalks to/from key public parking areas is missing.                                                                  |
| <b>Increase Bike Parking Infrastructure</b>      | Bicycle parking should be located throughout town, especially concentrated near key destinations. Signage should be incorporated to direct bicyclists to these areas.                                                                                                          | Bike parking is present at some locations throughout Needham but is not centralized and is lacking signage to direct bicyclists.                                                        |

# 1

## Performance-Based Pricing

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



### WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

A performance-based pricing structure follows best practice in many communities across the country in better managing systemwide demand for user-friendliness. It involves tiered pricing adjusted on a periodic basis in response to demand, helping to ensure some amount of availability is always present. Many motorists will be sensitive to pricing and happy to seek a cheaper, more remote alternative, which creates availability for others—particularly those seeking a shorter stay. In a performance-based system, some parking will remain inexpensive or even free as compared to peer communities, while other spaces will increase in price depending on the time of day. Operating spans are also adjusted to match demand, such as extending hours into the evening when dinnertime parking demand increases.

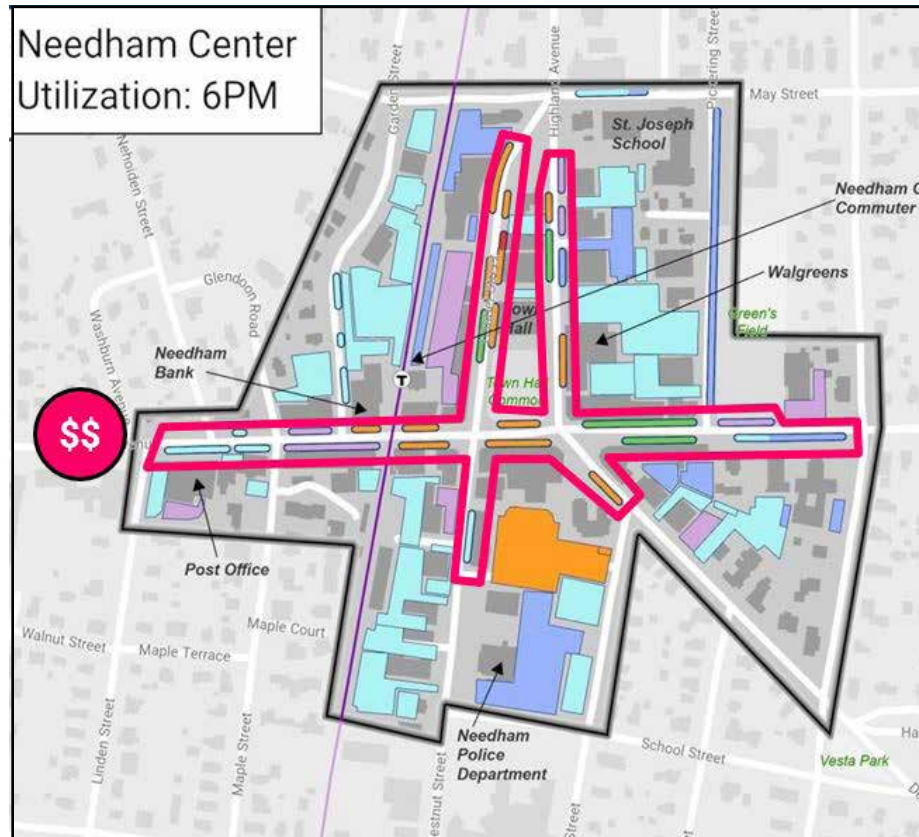
By pricing parking around a performance target—typically 85% occupied, drivers can understand that a space will be available where they need it or choose to pay less by parking further away.

### WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

A key challenge faced with parking operations in Needham today is managing system demand during peak periods in a small number of localized areas (generally, the 'core'). The current meter pricing and operating span has led to a parking crunch in certain areas while other spaces go underutilized. In addition, spaces are 'claimed' in these prime areas early in the evening when they become free with no time limits, while there is no incentive to use off-street spaces a little farther away.



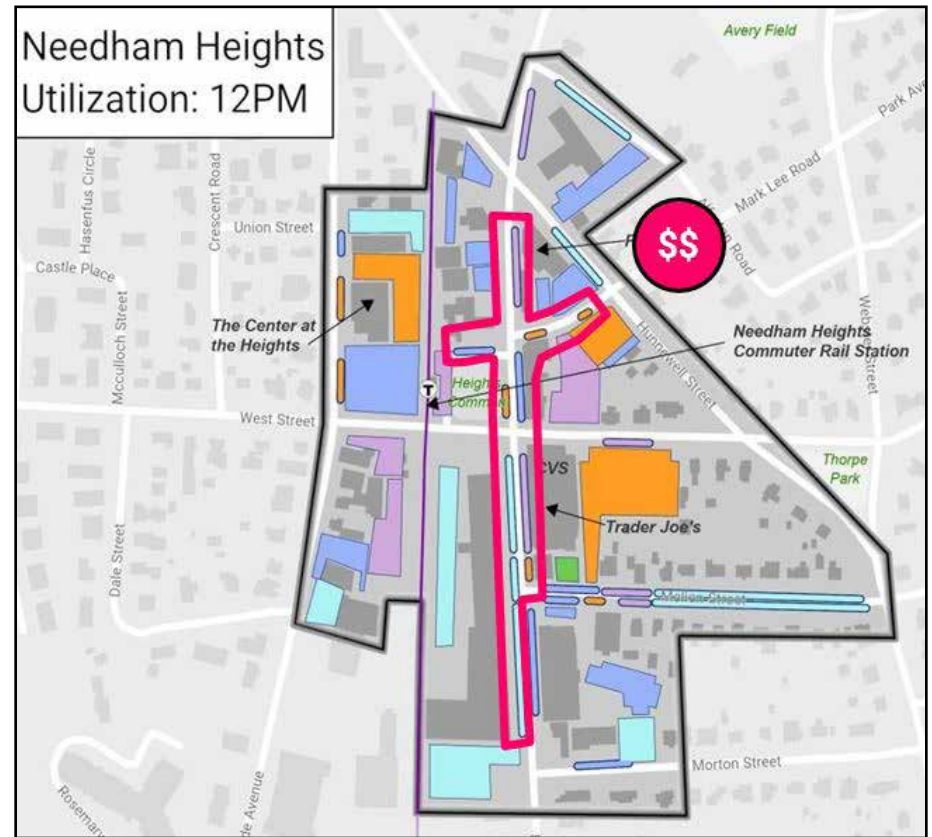
**Fig. 21- Needham Center- Existing Price Structure**



| Existing Price Structure | Existing Time Limit | Time Span |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| \$\$- All meters         | 2 hours (until 6PM) | 8AM-6PM   |



**Fig. 22- Needham Heights- Existing Price Structure**

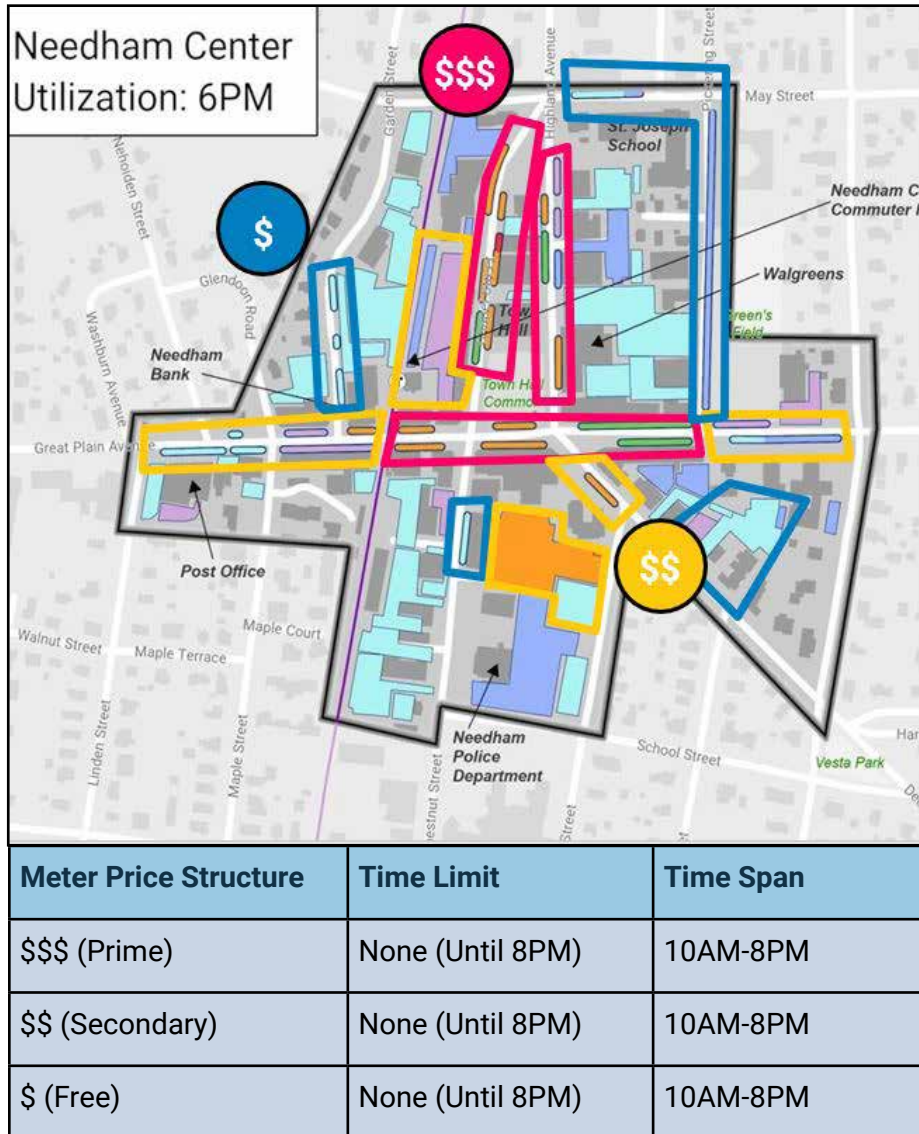


| Existing Price Structure | Existing Time Limit | Time Span |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| \$\$- All meters         | 2 hours (until 6PM) | 8AM-6PM   |

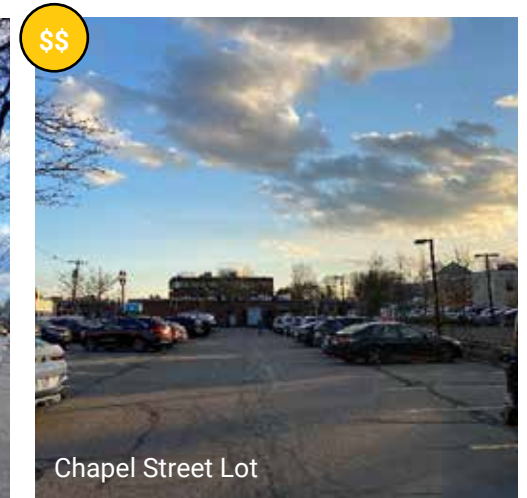
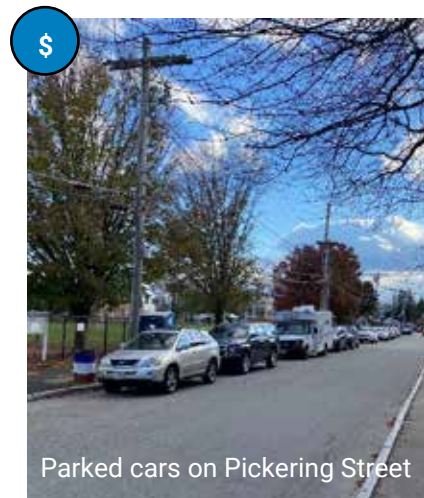
◀ Metered parking doesn't currently exist along Highland Avenue near Needham High School, where front-of-business spaces are more in demand by customers of the nearby businesses.

## HOW IT WOULD WORK

**Fig. 23- Needham Center- Proposed Price Structure**



Tiered pricing in the Center would align the pricing of parking areas with their observed demand. This would increase the availability of the most in-demand areas in the core, and incentivize the use of more remote on-street spaces or lower-cost facilities, such as the Dedham Avenue lot, that are within a walkable distance to key destinations. In addition, the pricing acts as a limit on parking duration, and therefore advertised time limits on the meters are unnecessary, eliminating the need for time-consuming overtime enforcement. Examples of these areas in the Center are shown below.





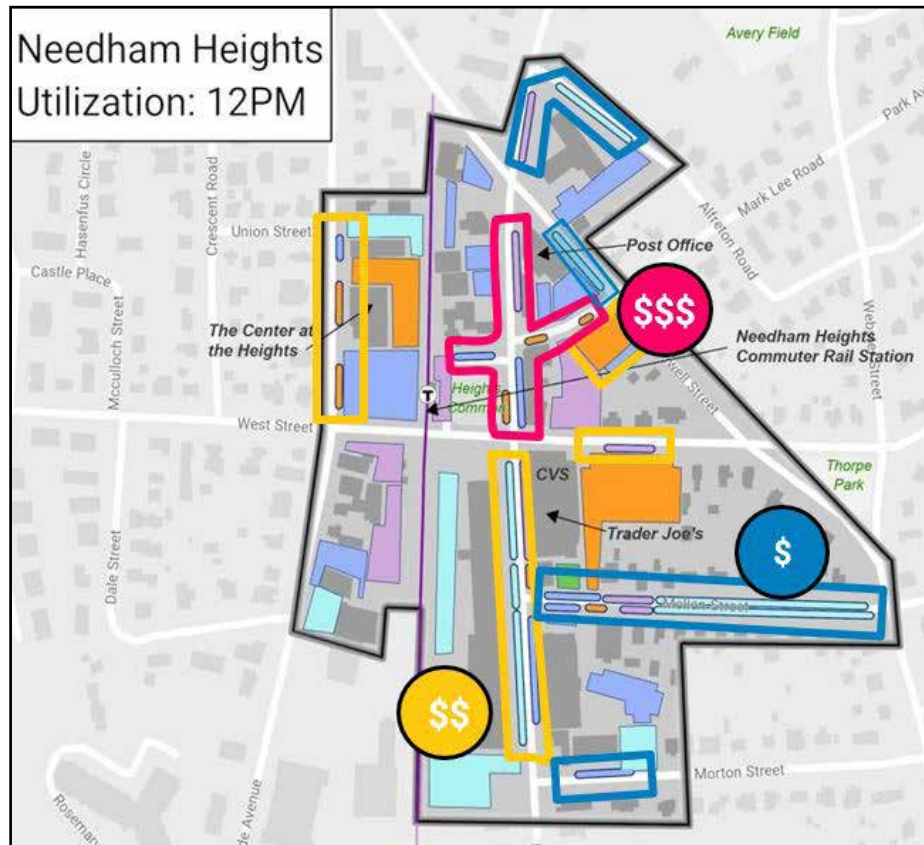


In both study areas, parking demand did not pick up until close to 10am but continued through dinner hours, so the current pricing time span of 8am-6pm should be adjusted accordingly to 10am-8pm.



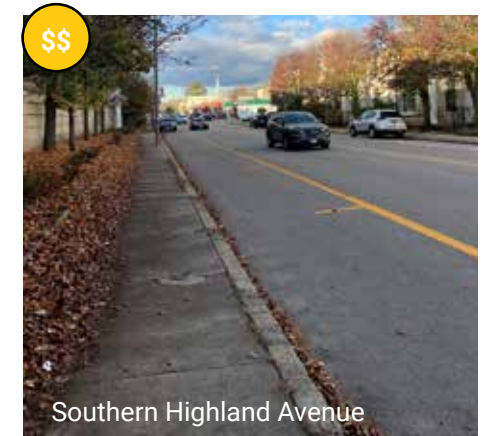
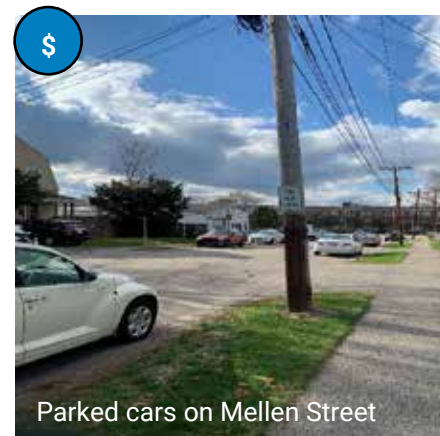
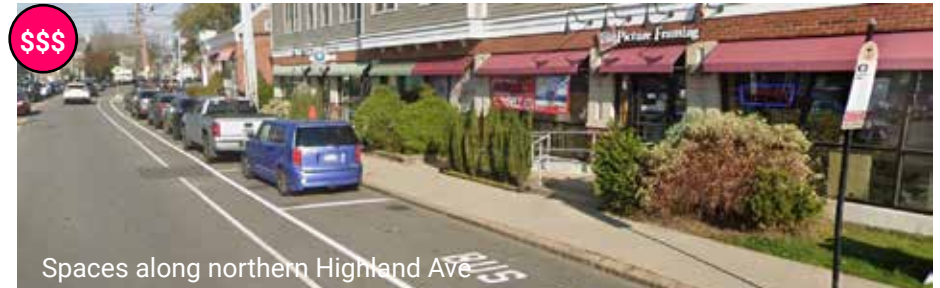
Transparency around parking rates, such as on signs, through the Town's website or at parking meters, is required to allow drivers to make informed decisions.

**Fig. 24- Needham Heights- Proposed Price Structure**



| Meter Price Structure | Time Limit       | Time Span |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|
| \$\$\$ (Prime)        | None (Until 8PM) | 10AM-8PM  |
| \$\$ (Secondary)      | None (Until 8PM) | 10AM-8PM  |
| \$ (Free)             | None (Until 8PM) | 10AM-8PM  |

A performance-based approach to pricing in the Heights would similarly decongest core areas to alleviate negative perceptions about parking availability. The area of highest cost would be substantially smaller than that in the Center.



Beyond the Center and the Heights, metered parking along Highland Avenue near Needham High School could also be considered, as needed, to encourage availability on-street.



# 2

## Long-Term Parking Options + Permit Spaces

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Case Study: Various Locations

Description: To seamlessly share parking spaces for multiple users, this sign simply consolidates the information for both types of parking available

### WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Reconsider long-term parking, including who can access permits and permit holder spaces, and where non-permit holders can park for longer periods of time. Specifically:

- Establish some long-term spaces outside the core that do not require permits (see Rec. #3 ). This will create a system that can easily and cost-effectively accommodate those who need longer term parking but don't need full-day access every day, such as part-time employees.
- Expand eligibility of permit-holders to include downtown residents. This would allow the system to support residential development without new parking required.
- Allow paid parking in permit only spaces to maximize current underutilized facilities. (See Rec. #1)
- Adjust permit pricing for specific areas based on proximity to the core, in order to better reflect the value of parking spaces in terms of how close they are to the core.

### WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

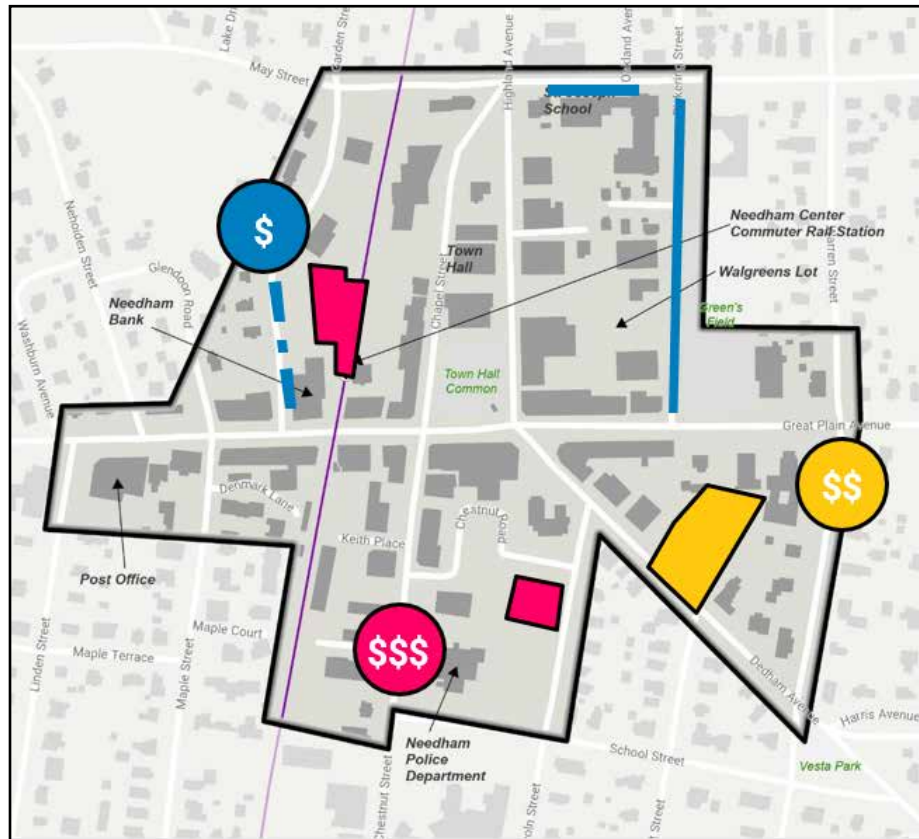
Needham's parking permit system requires users to purchase permits annually, regardless of how many days/weeks/months the permit holder actually intends to use the permit. In addition, many permit spaces throughout Needham are consistently underutilized but are currently only open to permit users.

In addition, Needham's permit system restricts eligibility of permits only to local businesses and employees. This limits the parking system from supporting residential development downtown, despite the fact that many facilities are underutilized in the evening and early morning hours, when residential parking demand peaks.

## HOW IT WOULD WORK

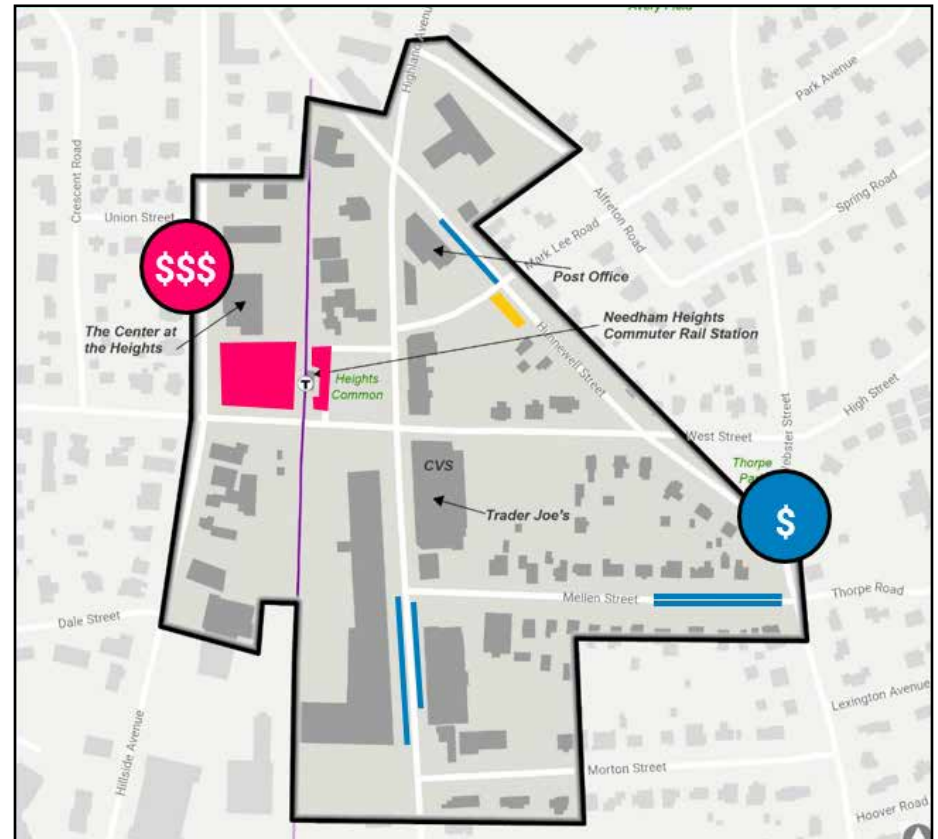
These maps highlight the recommended tiered permit pricing approach, which would apply to new monthly permits and any remaining annual permits. It includes new free spaces. The pricing should be regularly monitored and adjusted, as needed, depending on demand.

**Fig. 25- Needham Center- Proposed Price Structure**



| Recommended Structure | Recommended Time Limit |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| \$\$\$ (Prime)        | None                   |
| \$\$ (Secondary)      | None                   |
| \$ (Free)             | 12-hour                |

**Fig. 26- Needham Heights- Proposed Price Structure**

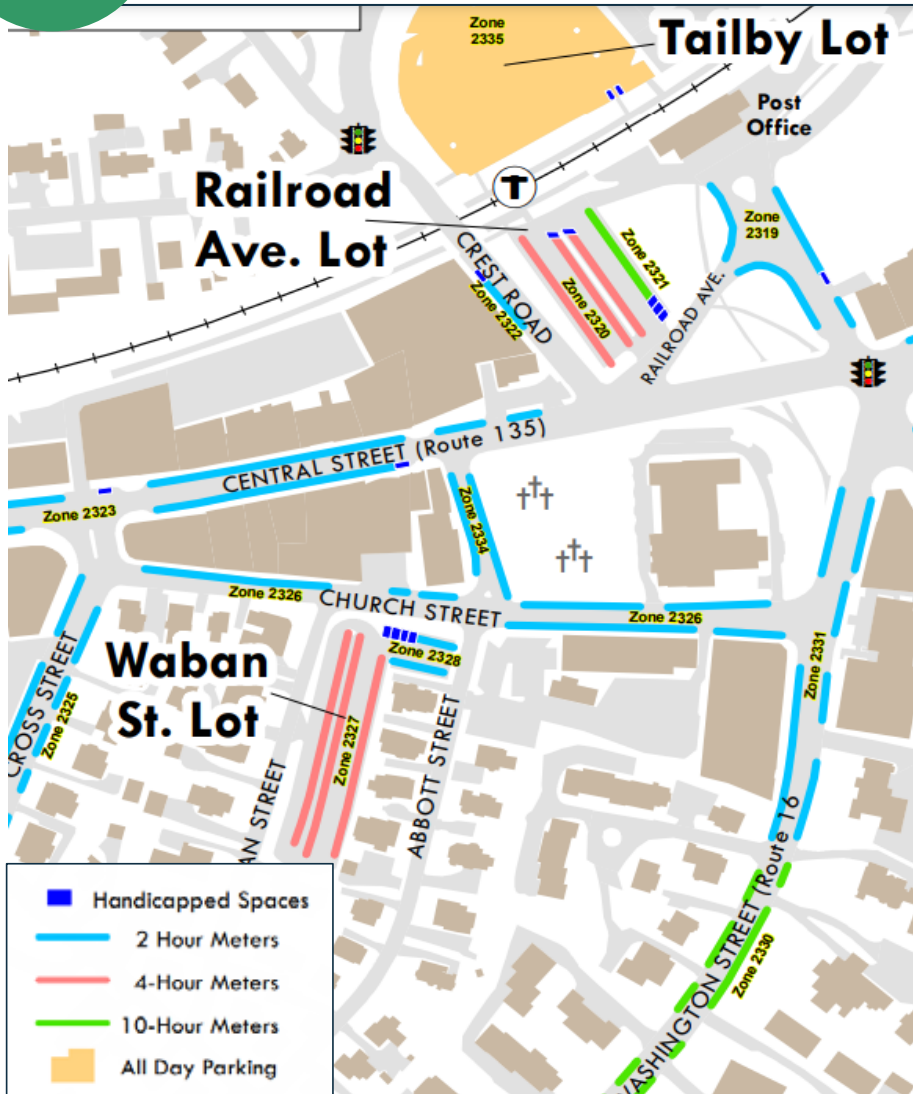


| Recommended Structure        | Recommended Time Limit |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| \$\$\$ (Prime) MBTA-operated | None                   |
| \$\$ (Secondary)             | None                   |
| \$ (Free)                    | 12-hour                |

# 3

## Create Simple Long-Term Parking

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



### WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Designating areas of existing on- or off-street facilities to accommodate long-term parkers (i.e. employee, business owners, residents). This would require signing individual spaces or areas to clarify the regulation and establishing wayfinding signage to direct parkers to long-term areas. These could have a 12-hour time limit, or be restricted from overnight parking in to ensure that they are free for daily needs only and not car storage. Time-limits could be shortened if commuters from the rail stations abuse the resource.

In addition to these designated daytime long-term spaces, removing the overall ban on overnight parking can extend the reach of the parking system to support current and future Downtown residents. The ordinance can be adjusted to prevent long-term vehicle storage on public roads.

### WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

A key challenge of Needham's parking inventory is the lack of long-term parking areas that don't require a permit and could be utilized by part-time employees or others who cannot afford a permit or prefer a free option and are willing to walk further. As such, employees, business owners, or other visitors to the commercial centers who need to stay for more than two hours are often utilizing short-term customer spaces in prime locations by feeding meters and "rolling" their car every two hours. In addition, the overnight parking restriction eliminates spaces from the parking inventory every night, limiting residential access in particular. Furthermore, each study area currently has underutilized on-street parking within walkable distances to businesses in the core. This indicates that the regulations of these spaces may not match demand, and they could support longer-term parkers to decongest prime spaces.

Case Study: Newton, MA

Description: Simple online maps such as this one can help visitors identify the most appropriate places to park ahead of time.



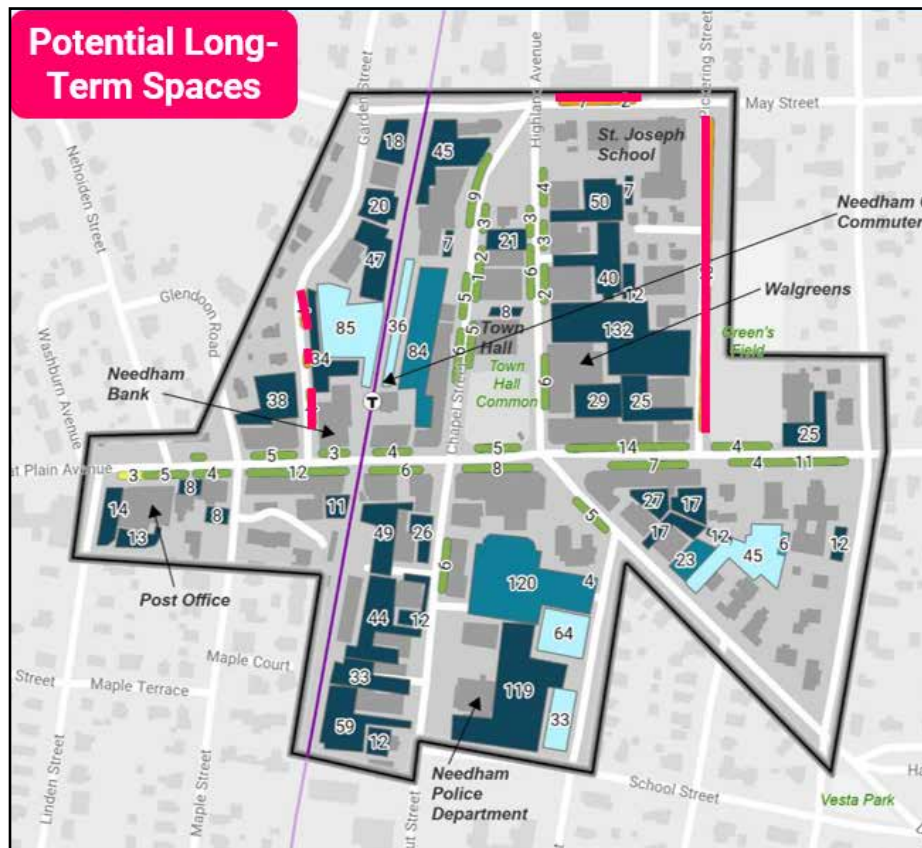
## HOW IT WOULD WORK



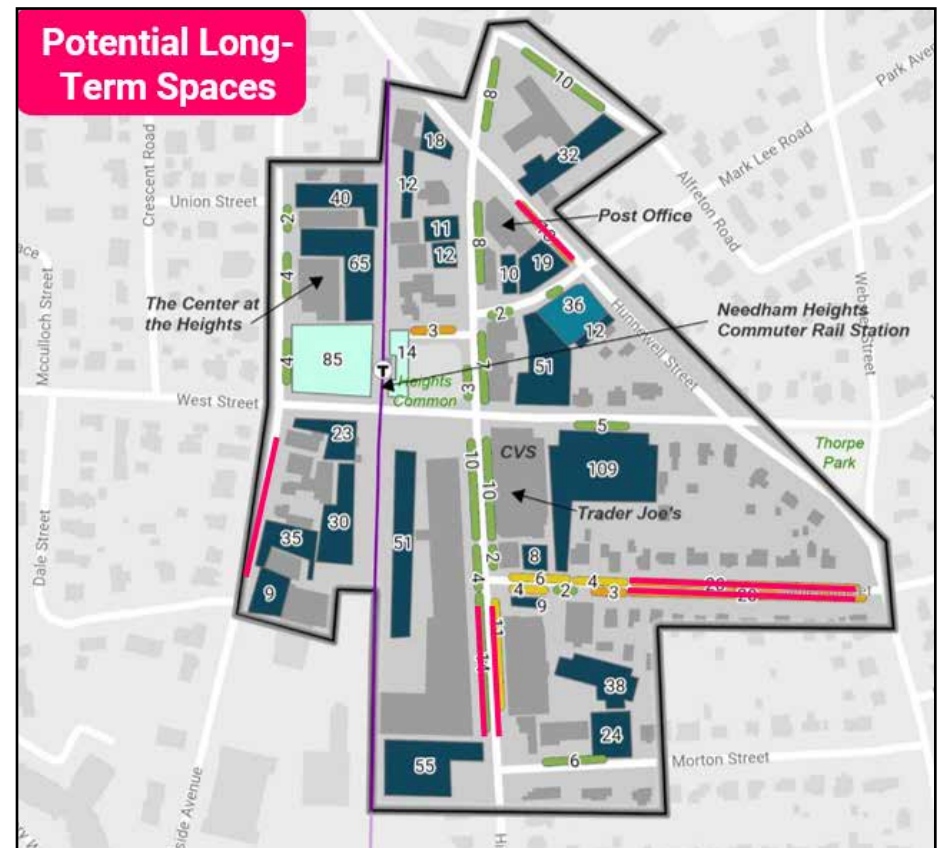
**Snow Procedures:** With the removal of the general overnight ban, the Town may need to devote more resources to communicating and planning during a snow event. This includes identifying lots that residents can use for off-street parking, direct outreach to affected residents, and voicemail/social media postings regarding snow emergencies.

The spaces highlighted on the maps below identify potential areas which are currently underutilized but still walkable to nearby businesses. These could easily be designated for longer-term parking without a fee, alleviating core congestion. This recommendation also requires the communication to, and coordination with, business owners to identify appropriate areas for their employees to park, and dialogue with the Town about specific considerations or concerns—especially for part-time employees.

**Fig. 27- Needham Center- Potential Long-Term Spaces**



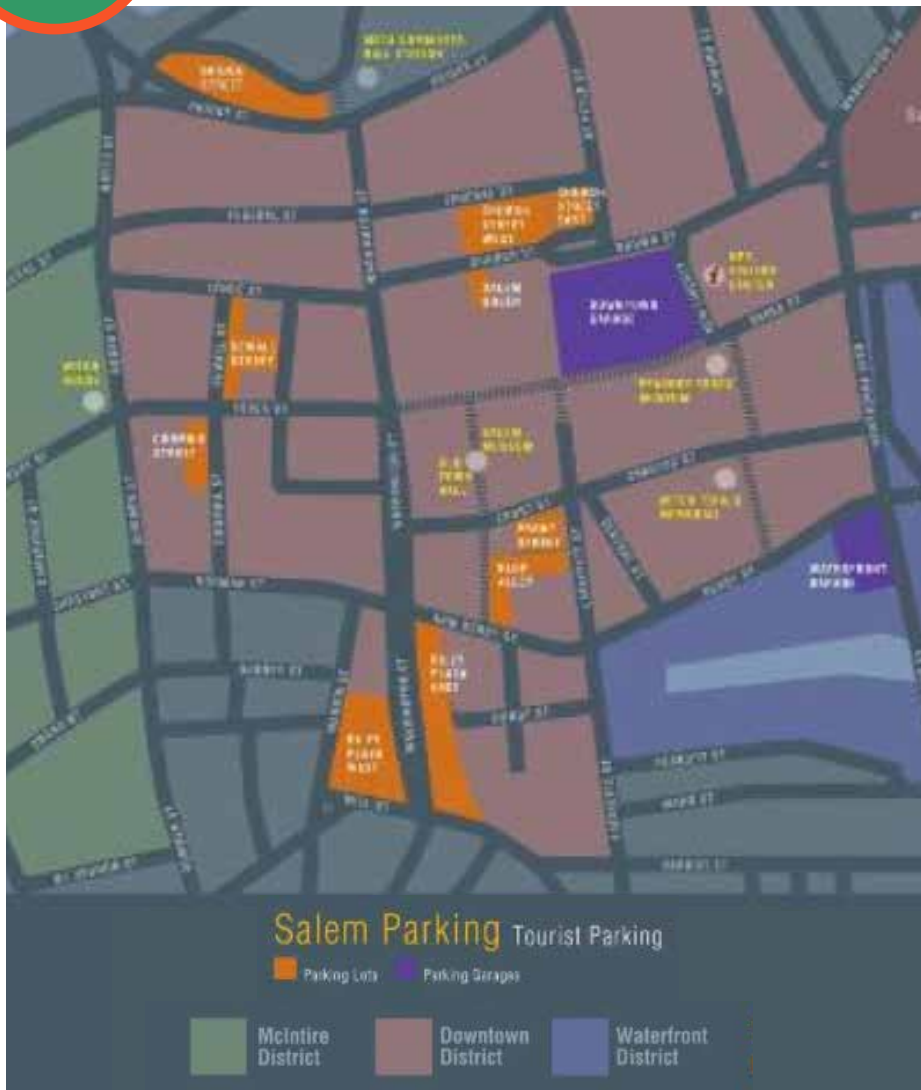
**Fig. 28- Needham Heights- Potential Long-Term Spaces**



# 4

## Pursue Shared Parking Opportunities

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Case Study: Salem, MA

Description: The City's Shared Parking District expands on the idea of looking at parking as shared assets that can benefit different types of owners and users

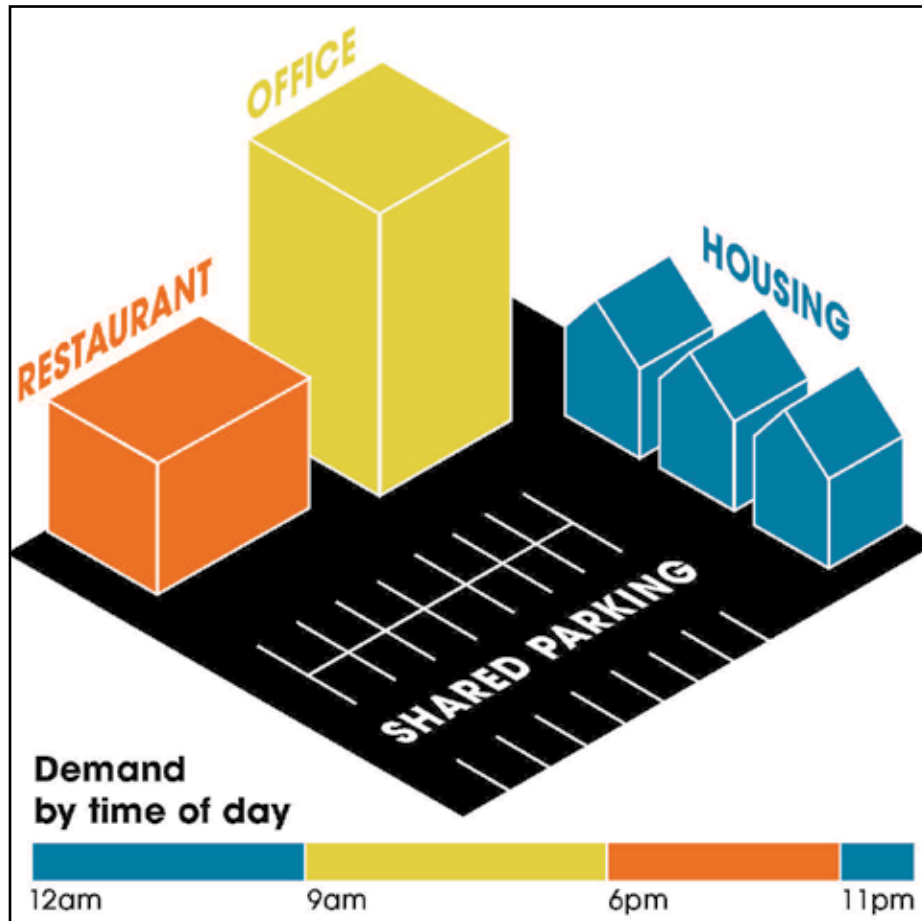
### WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Shared parking requires identifying and filling underutilized parking at times of the day when other kinds of parking, such as metered parking or restricted off-street spaces, are full or do not meet the needs of users. This can include employees desiring longer-term parking when metered parking is time-limited, retail proprietors who desire additional parking for their customers, and residents of Needham Center or Needham Heights for whom sufficient on-site parking is not available. A shared parking district in Needham would bring as many public and private parking resources together under one system as possible, helping to better manage availability, costs, and pricing. Parking ownership may still be disparate but the Town would take the lead in working with private parking owners to develop a coordinated system with various levels of incentives to participate partially or in full, including offering different levels of revenue sharing or in-kind services and improvements. The Town may also support, partial or full operational needs for private landowners, including staffing and equipment. Once operational, parking areas are branded and signage is provided to note the regulation (visitor parking, reserved parking, etc.).

### WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Overall, in both Needham Heights and Needham Center, the parking system has significant availability. Much of that availability is in 'restricted' private spaces. These spaces take up space in Needham's dense commercial cores, but may not be the best use of space if they remain underutilized. Meanwhile, at certain hours and in certain locations, the average user experiences a parking 'crunch' while hundreds of private spaces remain vacant.





- ▲ Shared parking is a natural synergy among mixed uses, especially in a downtown. Multiple sharing opportunities exist in Needham between daytime office uses and nighttime restaurant uses.

The Citizens Bank in Needham Center informally allows public parking in customer spaces after banking hours in return for lot maintenance from the Town. ►

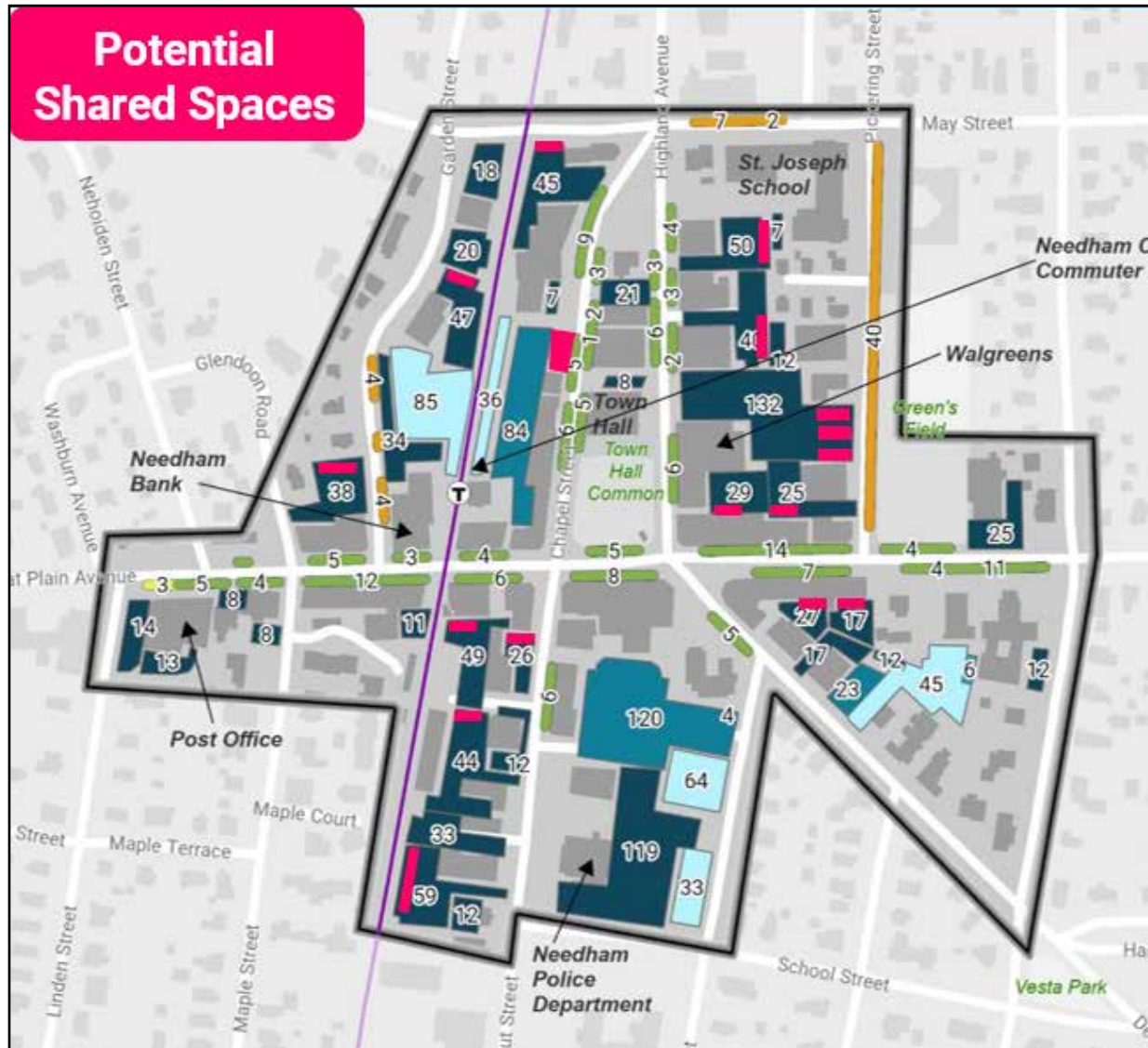


- ▲ The Post Office lot in Needham Heights shown above is currently already successfully practicing a shared approach with its business neighbor, Koko Fit Club. In practice, the post office closes for business and its parking spaces open up just as visitors to the Fit Club start to increase in volume in the evening and are in need of parking.

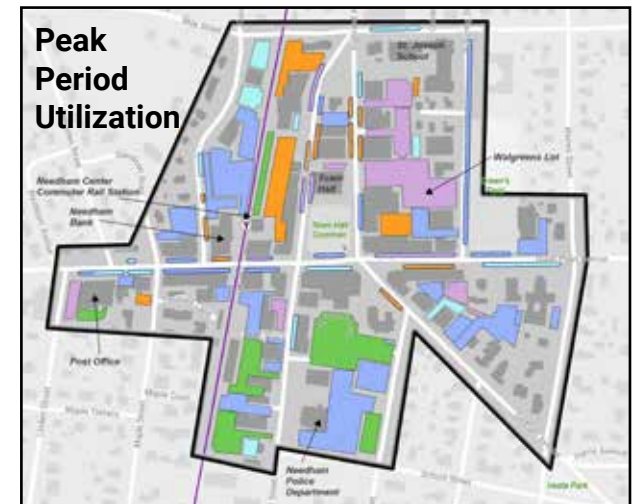


## HOW IT WOULD WORK

Fig. 29- Needham Center- Potential Shared Spaces



The maps on this and the following page very roughly identify areas that may have potential for being shared with other users. Generally, these spaces are located at the rear of private facilities and are less utilized than other spaces nearer the entrance of the associated destination, enabling the spare capacity to be shared.

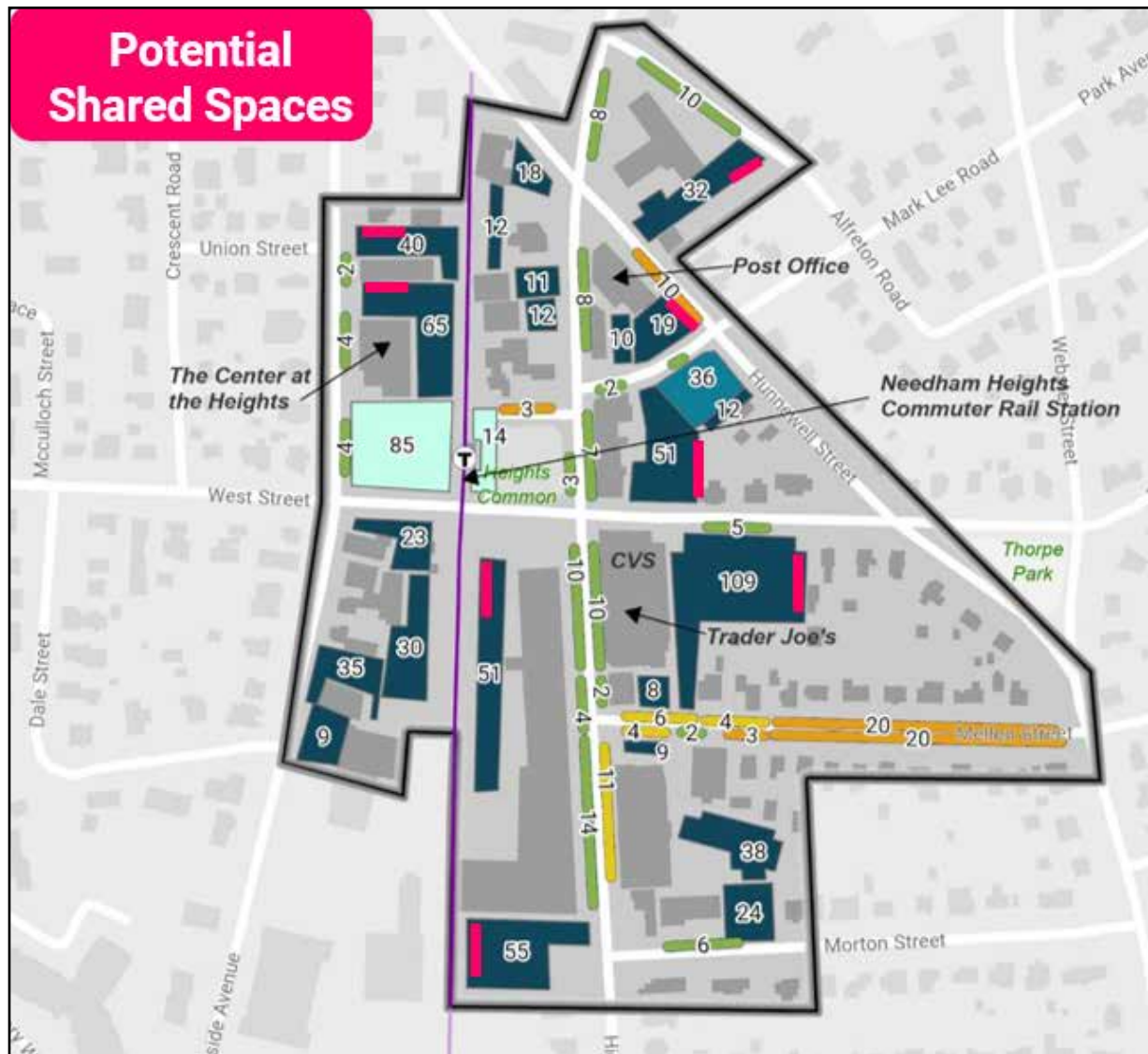


A potential priority option for consideration in the Center is the Walgreens Lot (below), which is already informally shared, today.



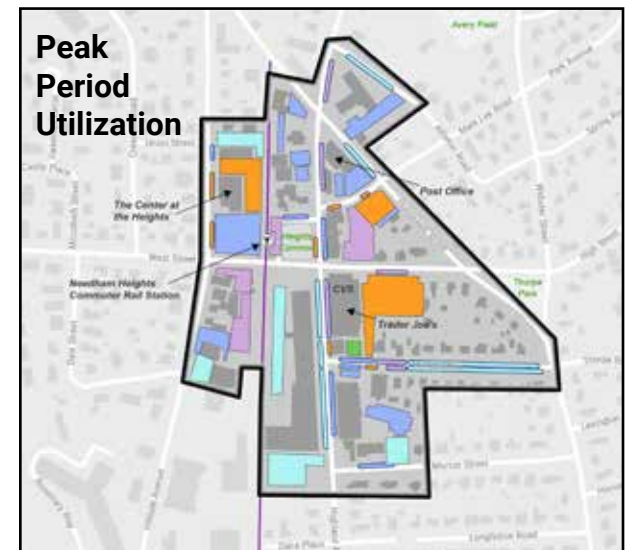


**Fig. 30- Needham Heights- Potential Shared Spaces**



For potential shared spaces in both the Center and the Heights, the Town could approach owners and offer in-kind improvements to make the facilities safer and more welcoming at different times of the day, such as:

- Increase lighting at rear
- Paint high-visibility crosswalks
- Re-stripe to improve flow



A potential priority option for consideration in the Heights is the Starbucks Lot (below).



In addition to these areas, the Sudbury Farms lot on Highland Avenue may also be a good location for shared parking, as needed, when there are events at Memorial Park.

# 5

# Focus Enforcement on Customer Service

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



**Case Study: Pittsfield, MA**  
 Description: The City hires students to act as seasonal parking ambassadors. They hand out parking information and assist visitors with using the parking kiosk.

## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Enforcement is a challenging yet critical part of any parking system as staff are often the front line between customers and the parking system. It is important that they have the right mission, equipment, and staffing. Needham needs several changes:

- Adjust enforcement hours to match the recommended metering time span (10AM - 8PM). Any double-staffing can focus on the peak which is both noon and the dinner hours.
- Upgrade enforcement technology to address glitches or issues. Consider incorporating License Plate Recognition (LPR) to clearly record violations and simplify tracking. This can also be integrated seamlessly with both new meters and a new permit system.
- Consider a policy where the first ticket is free, and instead a notice is provided that includes parking information or a parking map. This helps encourage first-time visitors in particular to return.

## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Currently, enforcement often ends much earlier than when meters stop operating (6PM) and well before the dinnertime peak demand period in the core areas when cars fill the free meter spaces.

Recent concerns have recently been raised from permit-holders who have legally parked in a 'permit only' space but have still been ticketed due to a lack of clarity on the regulation signage. Other concerns have been raised by local businesses who have observed variation in enforcement practices.



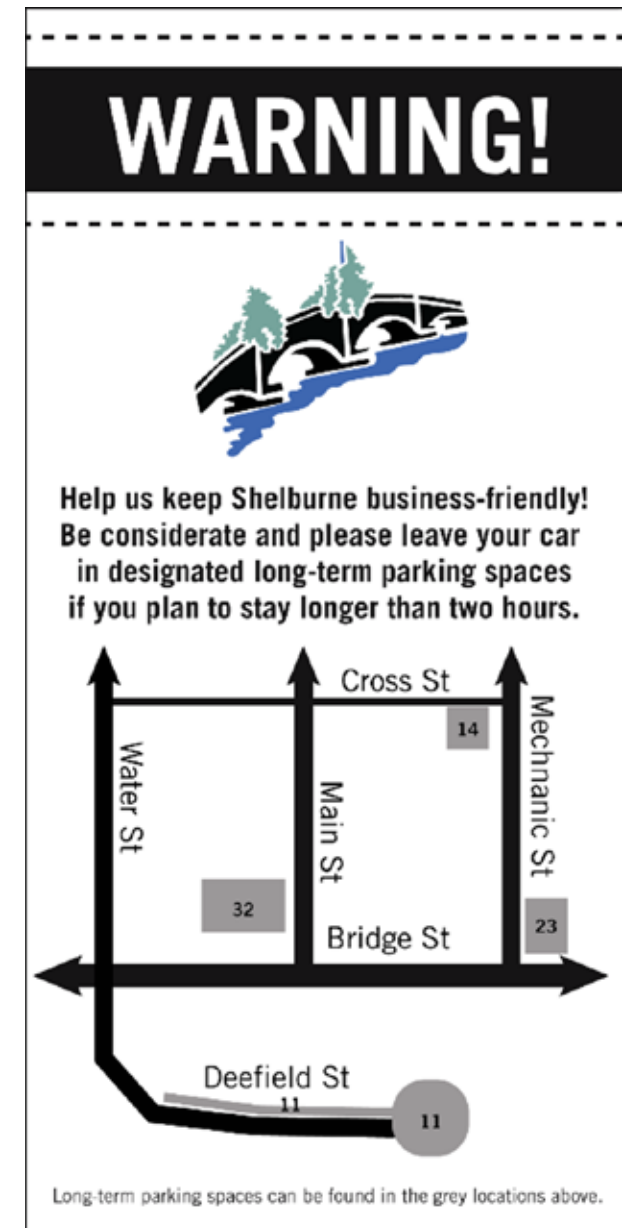
## HOW IT WOULD WORK



Parking tickets could be re-imagined/ re-designed to include parking maps or other information to educate motorists. A sample is shown to the right.



Handheld License Plate Recognition (LPR) devices or the use of LPR apps can greatly improve the ease and efficiency of monitoring for enforcement officers.





# 6

## Create More Active Curbs

Goals Aligned: **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**



Case Study: Boston, MA

Description: The City's signage encourages high-turnover with pick-up/drop off areas, while bike corrals are another option in some areas for generating activity.

### WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

With the rapid increase in gig economy rides and deliveries, electrified mobility devices, and the use of shared bikes, municipalities are designating centralized, on-street parking spaces for: **Uber/Lyft/DoorDash; Pick-up/Drop-off; Loading zones; Bike parking; Taxi stands; and Valet parking.**

Many also are converting parking spaces to: **Bicycle lanes; Bus stops; Bicycle parking; EV parking; and other uses.**

Any of these options require coordination with adjacent business owners and ride share providers, additional public surveys to gauge preferences, posting of new signage, and/or installing materials to define the new curbside uses including paint striping, furniture, etc.

### WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Needham Center and Needham Heights both feature some infrastructure that is supportive of non-auto modes, but the curb can play a more active role in supporting the growing multimodal demands in each study area.

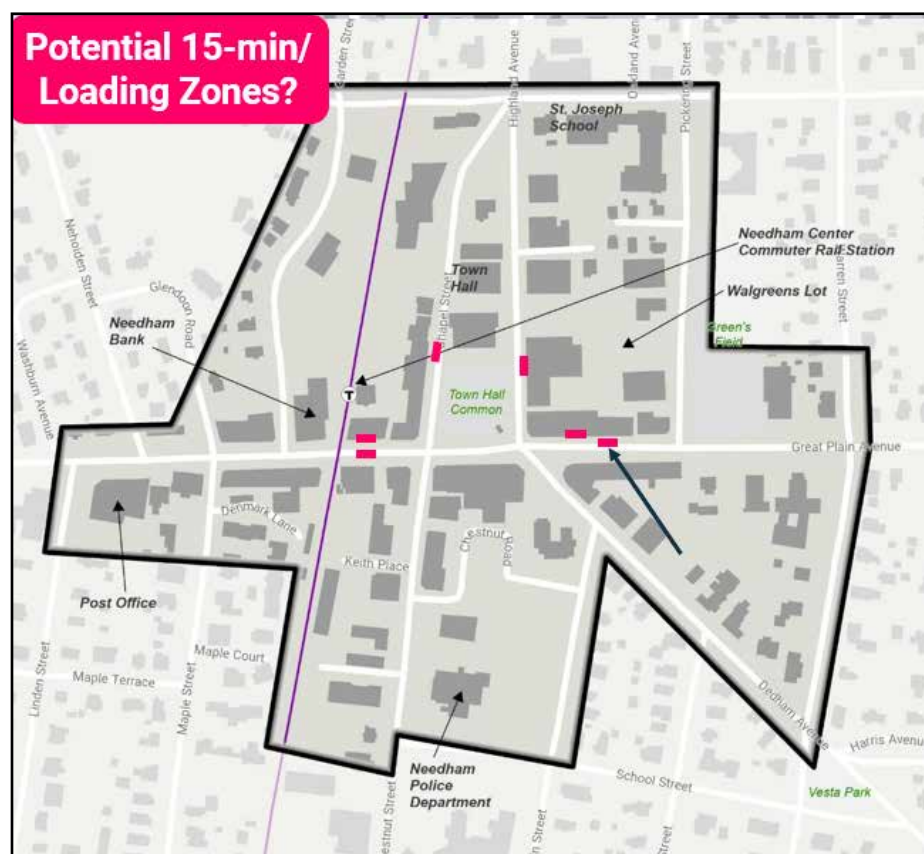
Discussions with the public at the open house revealed an openness to seeing some existing on-street parking spaces being potentially used for other purposes that contribute vitality to streets and sidewalks. Additionally, business owners vocalized a desire to see the integration of more short-term/loading zone spaces to be able to facilitate very short visits that some businesses generate.

## HOW IT WOULD WORK

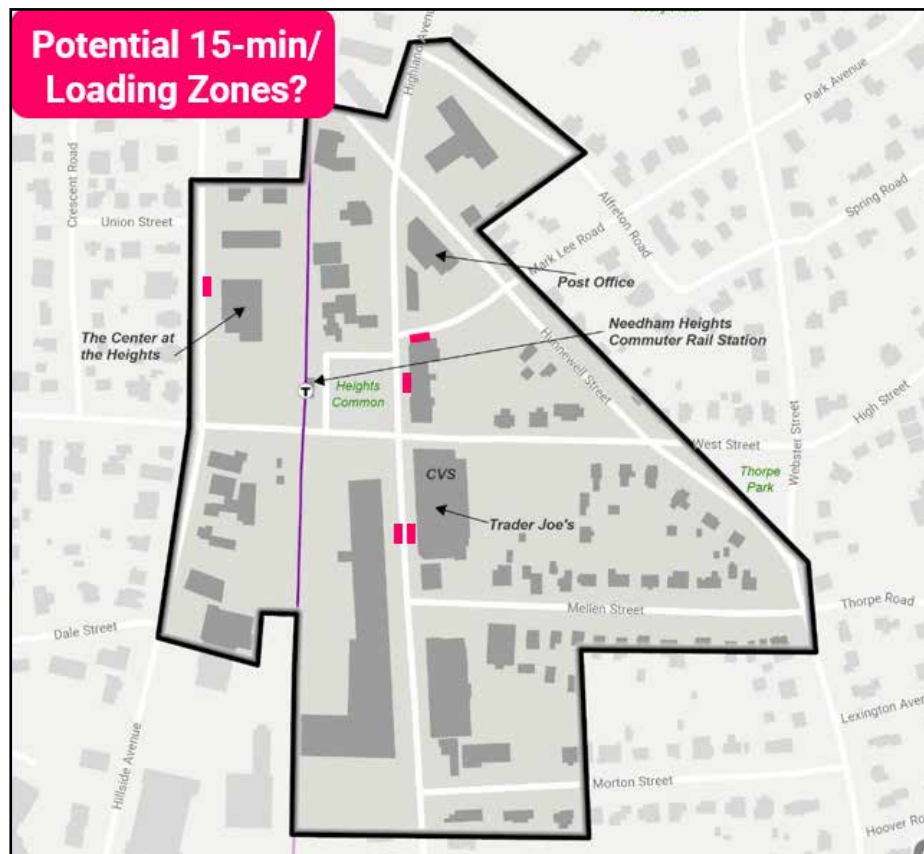
An analysis of utilization data (Table 9) shows that at peak, if the Town removed some lanes of parking from key streets, the 'spillover' demand would be about 50 vehicles max, which could be accommodated in public lots.

The maps below identify spaces in strategic locations that could potentially be ideal for accommodating alternative curb uses. These areas have recurring demand for quick visits by rideshare and delivery vehicles or are well-suited for passenger drop-off or bike parking.

**Fig. 31- Needham Center- Potential Short-Term Spaces**



**Fig. 32- Needham Heights- Potential Short-Term Spaces**

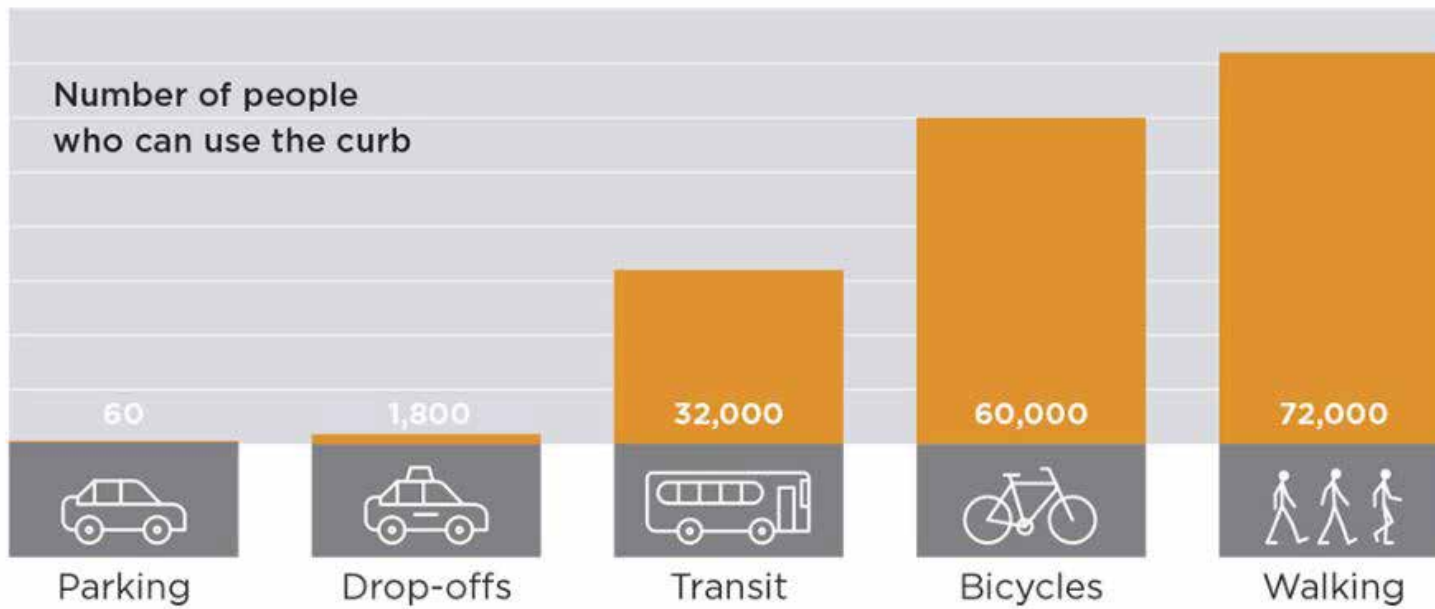


**Table 9. Analysis of Utilization if Parking Became Something Else**

| Street                 | Peak Utilization    | Parking Available | Parking Utilization w/ One Parking Lane Removed* | Potential Spillover w/ One parking lane removed (90% occupancy) |                                                         |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Great Plain Ave        | 12PM: 47<br>6PM: 64 | 96                | 12PM: 97%<br>6PM: 133%                           | 12PM: 4<br>6PM: 21                                              | <div> <b>Total:</b><br/> 12 pm: 19<br/> 6 pm: 48 </div> |
| Chapel St              | 12PM: 25<br>6PM: 33 | 37                | 12PM: 135%<br>6PM: 178%                          | 12PM: 9<br>6PM: 17                                              |                                                         |
| Highland Ave (Center)  | 12PM: 16<br>6PM: 20 | 24                | 12PM: 133%<br>6PM: 167%                          | 12PM: 6<br>6PM: 10                                              |                                                         |
| Highland Ave (Heights) | 12PM: 30            | 69                | 12PM: 87%                                        | 12PM: 0                                                         |                                                         |

\* Assumes equal parking distribution on street

**Fig. 33- Understanding Hourly Curbside Capacity by Block**



Accommodating other modes of access is about very efficiently increasing customer access and business visitation. A single block of parking spaces may handle 60 drivers parking, but as drop-off spaces, the same block could process 1,800 people.

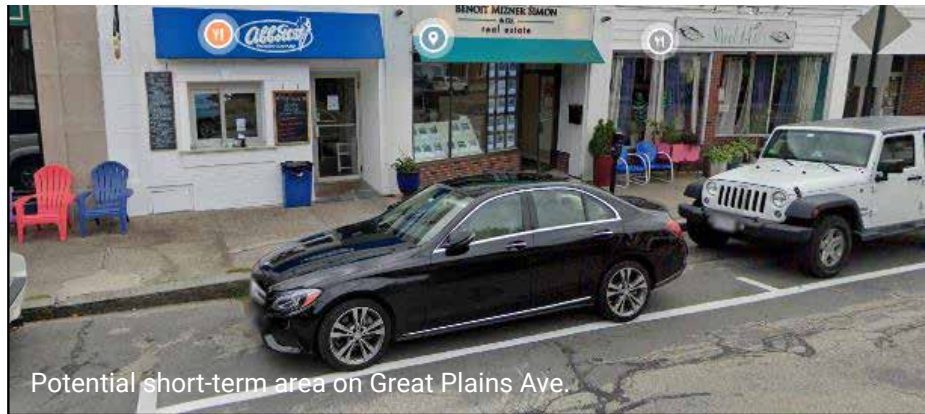
Source: Stantec Urban Places (based on NACTO data)



## Needham Center- How Potential Short-Term Spaces Look Today



Potential short-term area on Chapel Street

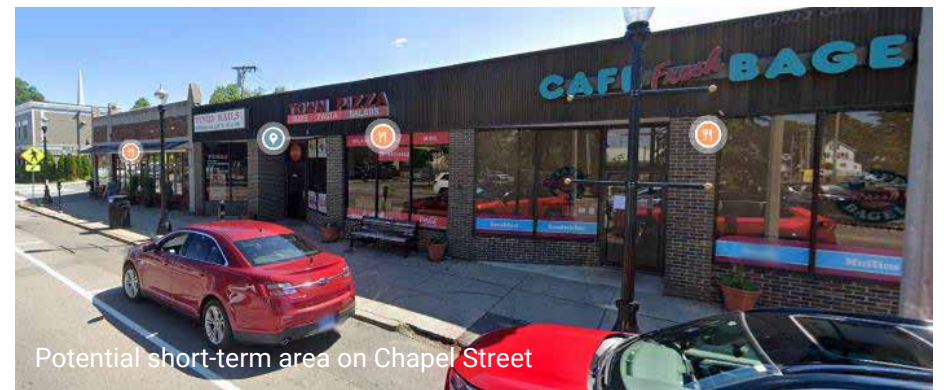


Potential short-term area on Great Plains Ave.

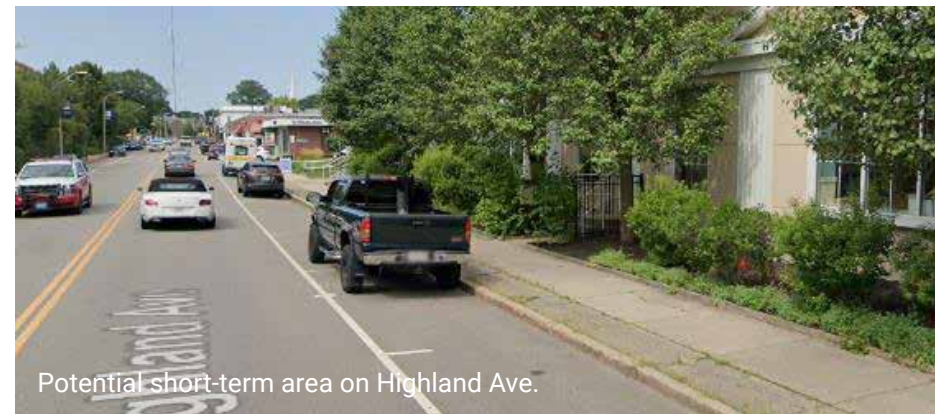


Potential short-term area on Highland Ave.

## Needham Heights- How Potential Short-Term Spaces Look Today



Potential short-term area on Chapel Street



Potential short-term area on Highland Ave.

## 7

# Improve Parking + Wayfinding Signage

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Case Study: Hanover, NH

Description: Wayfinding signage such as this is highly visible and very clearly directs visitors to the type of parking that is right for their needs.

## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

As a short-term approach, this recommendation involves improving the clarity of directional and entry signage at public lots, as well as improving the clarity of existing permit parking signage (by type, zone, time in effect, and that paid parking is permitted, as explained in Recommendation #2). This recommendation also includes expanding Information available about the parking system on various platforms, including online and through physical maps.

As a long-term approach, this recommendation encourages the eventual development of an overall, streamlined parking signage system that completely replaces the existing signs, and is clear and recognizable.

## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Currently, there is very limited or non-existent signage to direct motorists to Needham's public parking facilities, which are convenient to visitor destinations but consistently underutilized. In addition, the signage currently present in the Center and the Heights is too small, lacking information, and is not reflective of a cohesive Town "brand" to make these facilities easier for motorists to quickly recognize. Nearly 80 respondents in the public survey stated that it has taken them over 5 minutes to find parking,

As the parking utilization data shown earlier in this report indicates, a few on-street areas are particularly busy, when nearby public lots have availability. Strong wayfinding signage located at strategic places where motorists are seeking parking can improve awareness about public parking and increase the utilization of these facilities.



## HOW IT WOULD WORK

For each area, establish a wayfinding signage system that is highly visible and includes these two, key signage types-

### \* Directional Signs

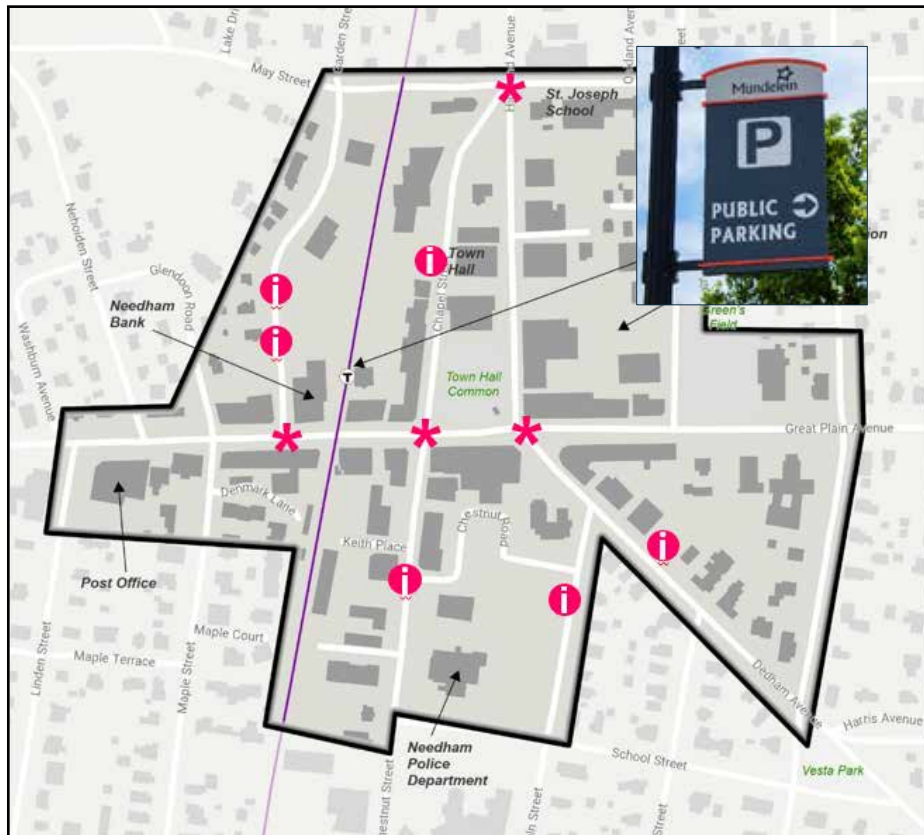
- Clearly directs to public parking from key intersections and access points where visibility of the facility from primary roads is limited

### i Identification Signs

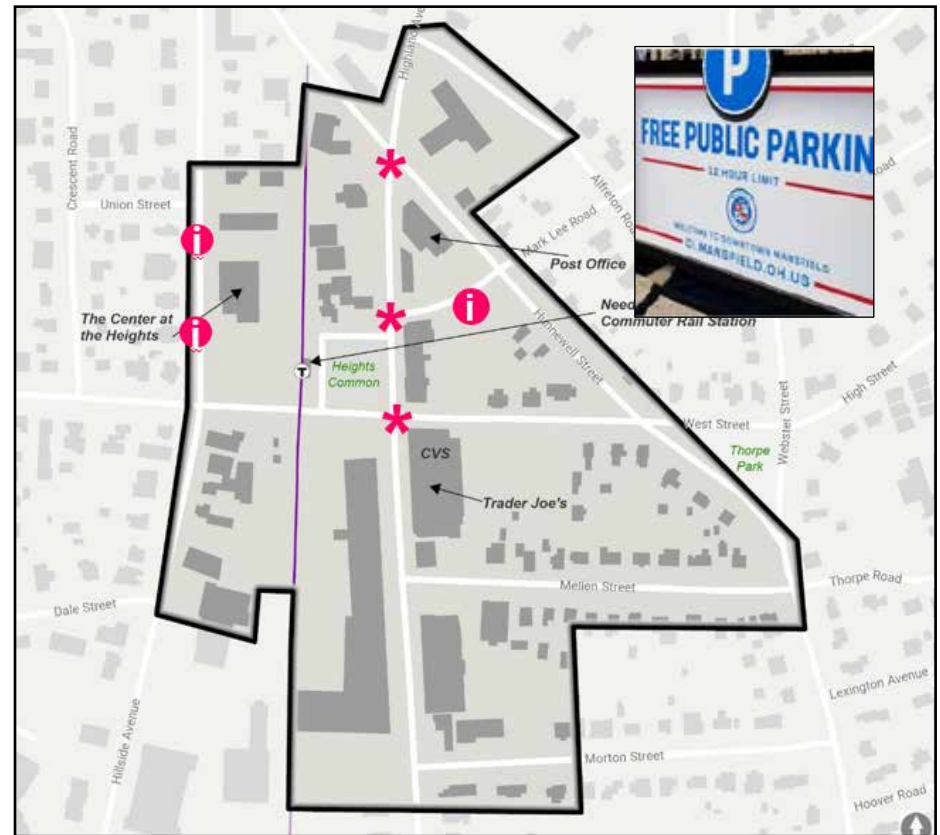
- Located at the entrance of public lots, including information, like:
  - Price to park
  - Time limits
  - Hours of operation

The Town should also develop a simplified map of public parking facilities for the Needham website, to be included with parking tickets, distributed by merchants to their customers, etc.

**Fig. 34- Needham Center- Recommended Sign Locations**



**Fig. 35- Needham Heights Recommended Sign Locations**



# Update Payment Technologies

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Case Study: Various Locations

Description: In recent years, meters like these that accept multiple payment options have become available in various municipalities throughout New England.

## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Updating meters or installing kiosks in Needham to be able to offer multiple payment options (i.e. cash, card, and pay-by-smartphone) would remove the inconvenience of needing specific coins available for payment, improving the user experience. This should also provide more efficient ways for the Town to track how parking is used and enforced.

This recommendation also includes allowing the sale of virtual permits to long-term users, with the transactional data being tracked/shared with parking enforcement and management. License Plate Recognition (LPR) devices or apps could be used by enforcement officers.

With better recording capabilities, this electronic option for tracking violations can improve Needham's understanding of true violations and how best to mitigate and enforce them.

## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Needham's current parking meters offer only coin payment options, meaning that people parking have to have quarters, nickles, and/or dimes on hand. The survey as part of this study revealed that 'better meters/ technology' was the first-choice Town improvement that respondents in the Center would like to see, and the third-choice improvement for respondents in the Heights. 40% of all survey-takers would also prefer meters that accept coins and credit cards, while an additional 36% would prefer to pay using a smartphone app. Stakeholders also raised concerns about inconsistent enforcement, whether it is valid permit parkers being ticketed or enforcement equipment being glitchy for staff.

## HOW IT WOULD WORK

### STEP 1.

The Town should weigh the options of pursuing either new meters or kiosks (and within those options, the different features, pricing, and agreements available through different potential vendors).

### STEP 2.

The Town should select a preferred meter or kiosk and vendor through a process that includes feedback from relevant departments.

### STEP 3.

The Town should identify how many meters or kiosks are needed for both the Center and the Heights based on existing priced areas and recommended placement for the fixtures (e.g., 1 per 6 spaces, etc.).

### STEP 4.

Once an overall cost has been identified for the fixtures, the Town should initiate the necessary processes of securing budget approval.

### STEP 5.

If the overall budget of the fixtures can only be secured in part, initially, the Town should identify priority locations for replacing the existing meters, and a rollout/budget plan for installing the remaining locations.

### STEP 6.

Concurrently with Step 5, the Police Department should pursue and identify a preferred approach for using LPR in their practices. Enforcement officers should be trained on the new devices and enforcement protocol.

The Town's Permit program should also be updated to be able to accommodate virtual permits.

### STEP 7.

A public information campaign should be developed ahead of time to alert visitors to Needham on the changes to the meters, and to provide information on how to use them. Clear directions should be present on the fixtures, as well.

### STEP 8.

The selected fixtures are installed.

**Table 10. Considerations When Selecting a Parking Payment Fixture**

| Feature                          | Meters                                                 | Kiosks                                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Capital cost per parking space   | \$\$                                                   | \$\$\$                                                      |
| Operating cost per parking space | \$\$                                                   | \$\$\$                                                      |
| Maintenance/Lifespan             | More units to maintain/long                            | Fewer units to maintain/long                                |
| Convenience/User-friendliness    | Right at space<br>Convenient<br>Limited screen options | Large screen - more information<br>More options - confusing |
| Ease of revenue/Data collection  | More units to track                                    | Fewer units to track                                        |



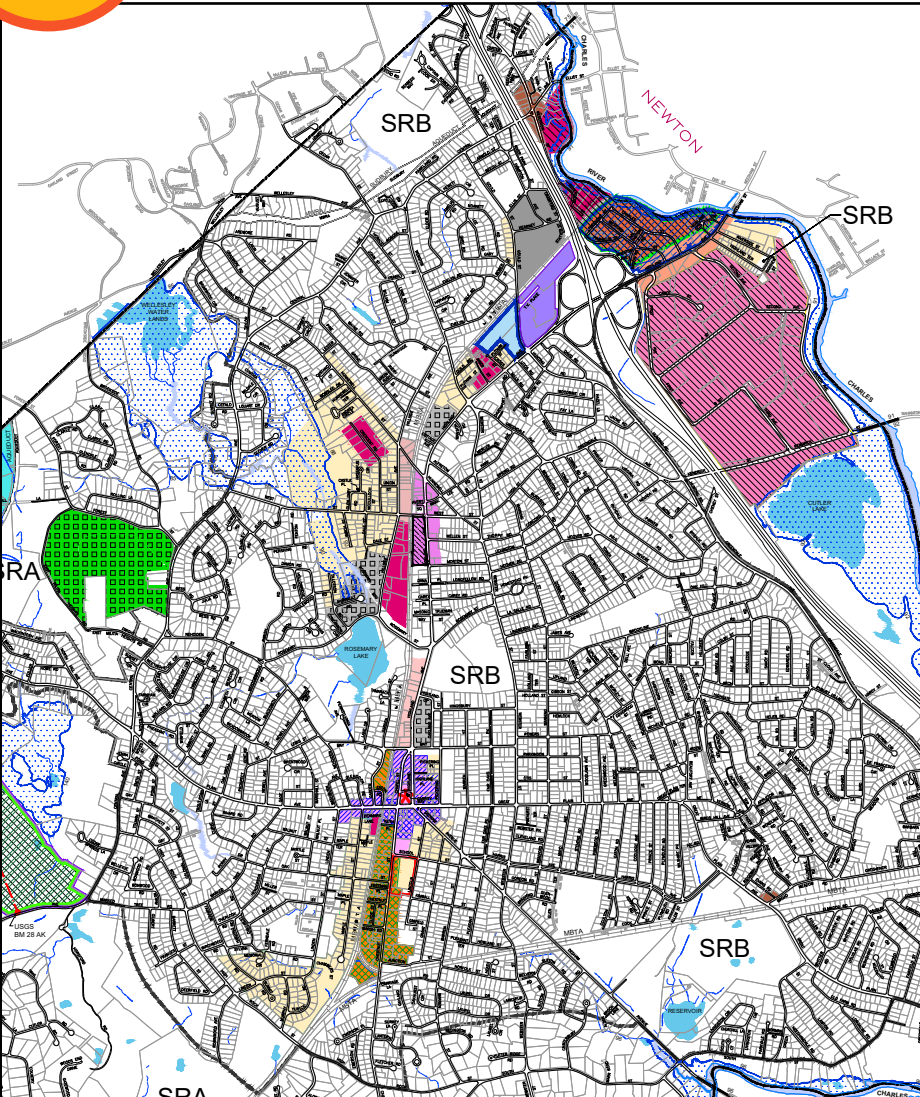
Source: Adobe



# 9

# Introduce Flexibility in Zoning

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Description: A snapshot of Needham's zoning map

## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

This recommendation is to introduce flexibility and standardization into Needham's zoning code in the study areas - and potentially beyond - by:

- Standardizing regulations across the study areas
- Considering eliminating or lowering minimums
- Considering implementation of maximums
- Allowing reductions for mixed-use projects
- Expanding off-site parking allowances
- Expanding the use of the existing in-lieu fee program
- Considering the incorporation/expansion of transportation demand management elements

Together, these changes would allow parking to support rather than stand in the way of broader goals for the study areas and beyond.

## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Needham's minimum parking guidance exceeds observed demand and any national standards and offers limited flexibility for context. This may be limiting development downtown and/or encouraging developments to overbuild parking. This is evidenced by the number of zoning waivers requested recently in the area; the majority were requests to build no new parking. (See Appendix)

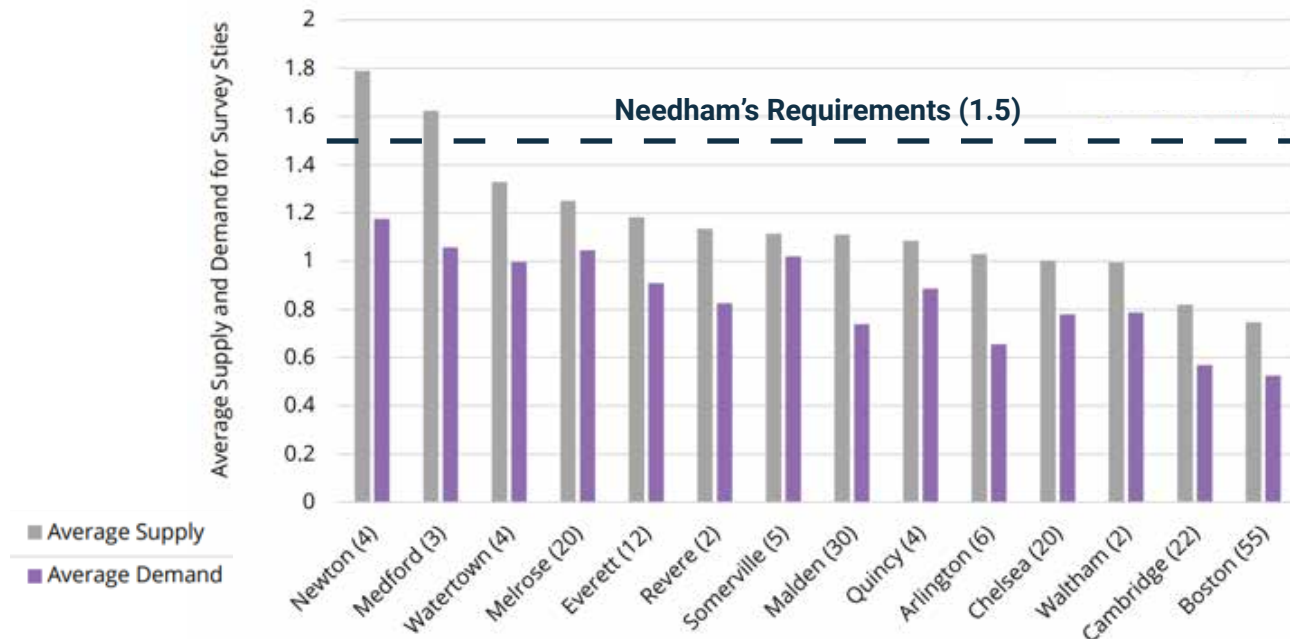
## HOW IT WOULD WORK

**Table 11. CASE STUDY- Somerville, MA**  
**Zoning Ordinance Mixed-Use Reduction Table**

| Time of Day | Commercial | Evening Commercial | Residential | Total     |
|-------------|------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------|
| 6AM-9AM     | (X) * 25%  | (X) * 0%           | (Y) * 100%  | = row sum |
| 9AM-7PM     | (X) * 100% | (X) * 50%          | (Y) * 65%   | = row sum |
| 7PM-11PM    | (X) * 25%  | (X) * 100%         | (Y) * 100%  | = row sum |
| 11PM-6AM    | (X) * 0%   | (X) * 25%          | (Y) * 100%  | = row sum |

A typical parking zoning regulation in mixed-use districts is to allow shared parking reductions, like those calculated in this example from Somerville.

**Fig. 36- Average Residential Supply and Demand by Massachusetts Municipality**



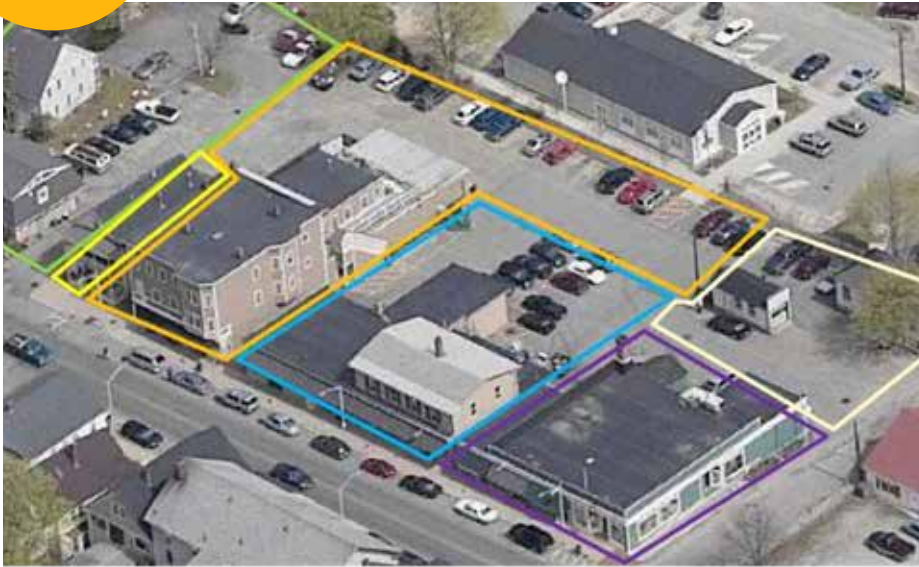
Needham's residential parking requirement of 1.5 spaces per unit far exceeds observed demand locally (only 0.9 cars per unit) or anywhere else in the region.

Source: Perfect Fit Parking Study  
Numbers in parentheses indicate number of sites surveyed in each municipality



# Consolidate Lots to Expand Supply

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Case Study: West Concord, MA

Description: Private landowners identified an opportunity to increase parking supply by removing fences and re-envisioning their lots as a consolidated public lot.

## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Identifying opportunities to increase parking supply through lot consolidation, such as removing fences and redundant aisles to remove redundancies and inefficiencies that have developed on adjacent lots over time. Like shared parking, this recommendation would require an agreement between adjacent landowners, but nearly all insurance agreements already cover public access, making the process simple to complete. Agreements with the Town and a private lot owner may involve potential incentives to participate, including lease payments or revenue sharing.

Like other municipalities, Needham can benefit from optimizing its existing supply through creative strategies like this, which are low-risk and low-cost to parties involved.

## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Currently there are a number of locations in Needham Center and Needham Heights where adjacent lots are imbalanced in their respective utilization but could be more efficiently used and see a combined supply increase by making minor adjustments to remove the boundary between them and re-striping new spaces in place of redundant aisles.

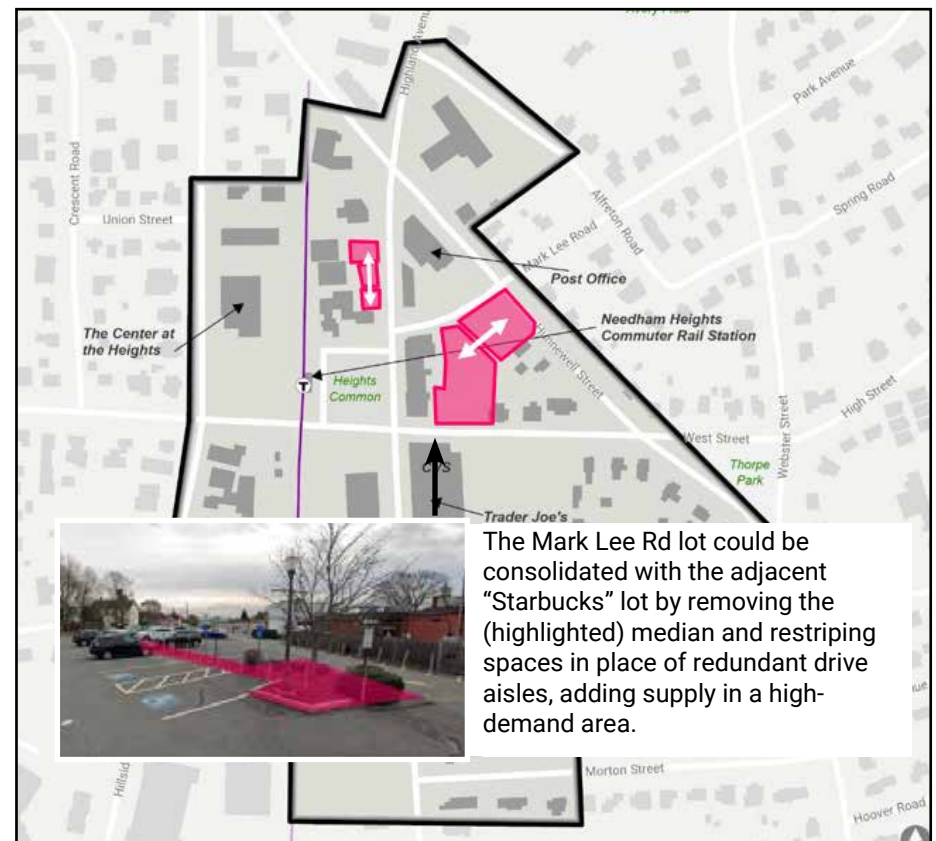
## HOW IT WOULD WORK

The maps below identify potential lots that could be consolidated with only minor physical adjustments. Two areas are described below, as an example. While many opportunities are between adjacent private property owners, some can be facilitated between the Town and an adjacent private lot. In order for such consolidated lots to be effectively operated/managed, the Town would first need to pursue agreements that identify potential lease payments or in-kind services the Town could offer in exchange for shared use of the lot. These might include revenue sharing, updating signage, installing lighting, or offering periodic maintenance, for example. The Town would also review the zoning rights of the property and develop any needed documentation to ensure they are preserved.

**Fig. 37- Needham Center- Potential Merged Lots**



**Fig. 38- Needham Heights- Potential Merged Lots**





# Improve the Multimodal Network

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Case Study: Bourne, MA

Description: A lot located in the heart of the Town that had undergone significant improvements to increase safety and improve the user experience.

## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Improving the infrastructure and amenities to better connect remote parking areas to core districts, including improvements that support walking or biking in general to incentivize these modes as an option for nearby residents and even visitors.

This includes:

- Improving the pedestrian conditions/ user experience of existing parking facilities
- Improving walkways and sidewalks between parking facilities and core destinations
- Accommodating bicycle parking at public lots

Needham's public facilities can benefit from simple adjustments that will increase pedestrian safety, create a more pleasant user experience, support bicyclists, and therefore make underutilized parking assets more accessible on foot while encouraging a more multimodal-friendly environment.

## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Comments from the public throughout this study process, along with the utilization data, reinforce that many people are not aware of some of the public parking facilities available in Needham. In addition, observations and comments received through the survey demonstrate a desire for improvements of some facilities and their access routes to make them more inviting. Currently, the road geometry forces longer walking routes to/from key destinations, such as the Chestnut St lot because of the absence of a crosswalk along Dedham Ave. Similarly, a fence in an adjacent lot forces users of the Dedham Ave lot to take a long route around the block.

## HOW IT WOULD WORK

The rendering below demonstrates best practice guidance when designing a parking lot with consideration of how pedestrians move through it. These practices can be incorporated into Needham's existing facilities individually over a period of time, or as a more comprehensive upgrade.

### SAFE PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Traffic-calming features, such as speed tables and clearly delineated crosswalks, slow traffic

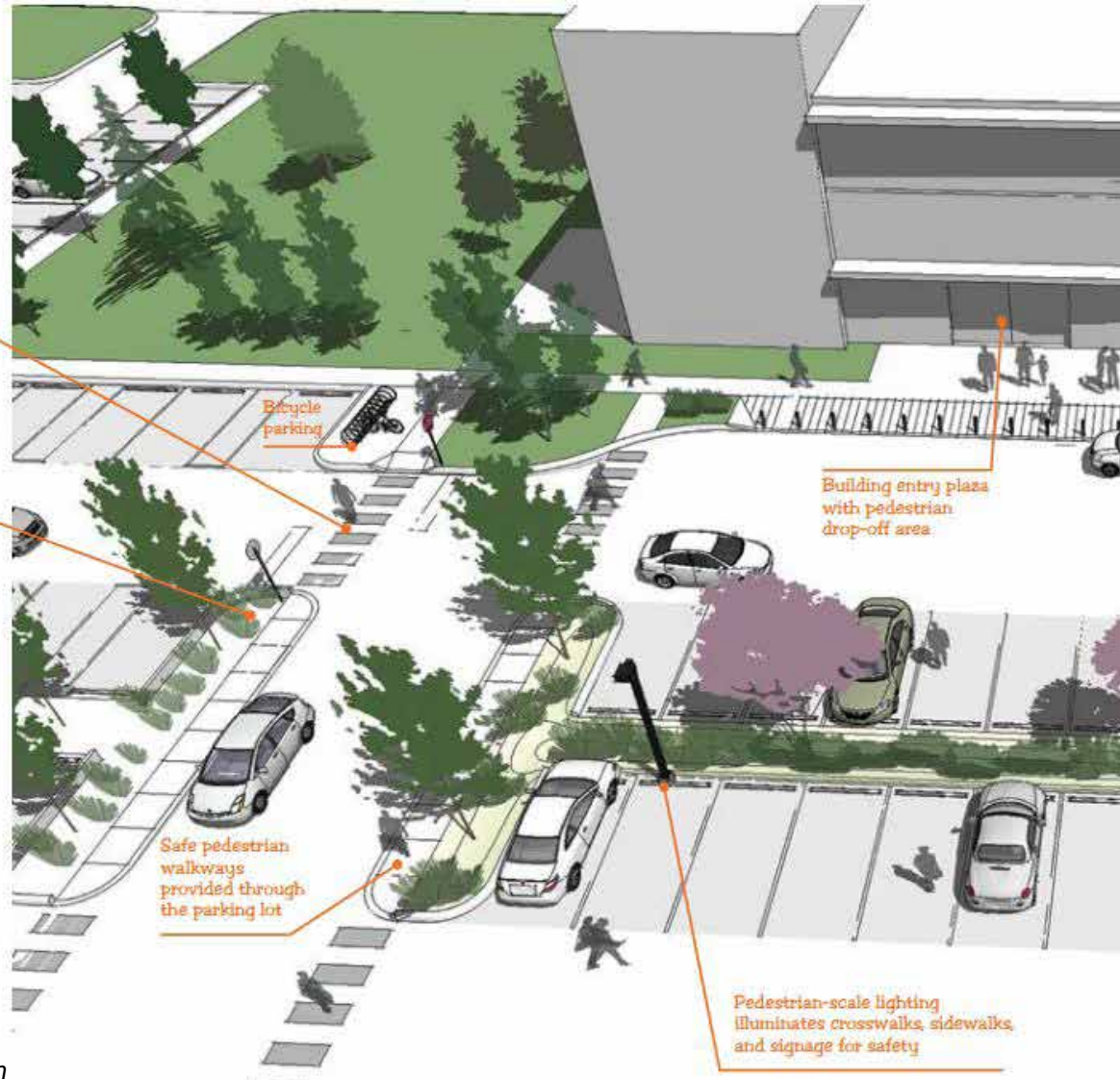
Pedestrian crossing signs and other intersection controls

Bicycle parking

Building entry plaza with pedestrian drop-off area

Safe pedestrian walkways provided through the parking lot

Pedestrian-scale lighting illuminates crosswalks, sidewalks, and signage for safety



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission



The images on this and the following page outline some of the simple improvements in Needham Center and Needham Heights that could be pursued to improve pedestrian connectivity and access. In addition to these, improved advertisement of bike parking areas (see Recommendation #12) is also recommended.

### Needham Center- Potential Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements



This rendering demonstrates how a high-visibility crosswalk along Dedham Avenue near the entrance of the Dedham Ave and Chestnut St lots, can reduce the walking time for pedestrians who would otherwise need to walk up to/down from Great Plain Ave to cross the street.



These images demonstrate that the entrance to this (highlighted) walkway to parking could benefit from the clarity of even a simple sign to indicate access to Dedham Street lot if an opening in the single fence dividing it from Great Plain Ave were made.



## Needham Heights- Potential Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements

### CURRENT CONDITIONS



### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



This rendering demonstrates how high-visibility crosswalks at Highland Ave and Mellen St can greatly improve access to parking on the opposite side of the street.



This image highlights a large sidewalk gap in Needham Heights which is directly adjacent to the public parking lot.

# Increase Bike Parking Infrastructure

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Installing bike racks in visible and accessible places near key destinations to encourage more bicycling. This could mean replacing a car parking space with bicycle parking. To encourage their visibility and accessibility, Needham could benefit from an increased number of smaller racks, as well as a few, highly-visible areas designated for a larger number of racks (i.e. bike corrals) that are centrally-located and potentially combined with other active uses.

Bike parking wayfinding signage should also be included at key locations to help bicyclists find parking.

Locations of bike racks (at least larger corrals) should be included on parking maps and information made available through the Town website or other platforms.



## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

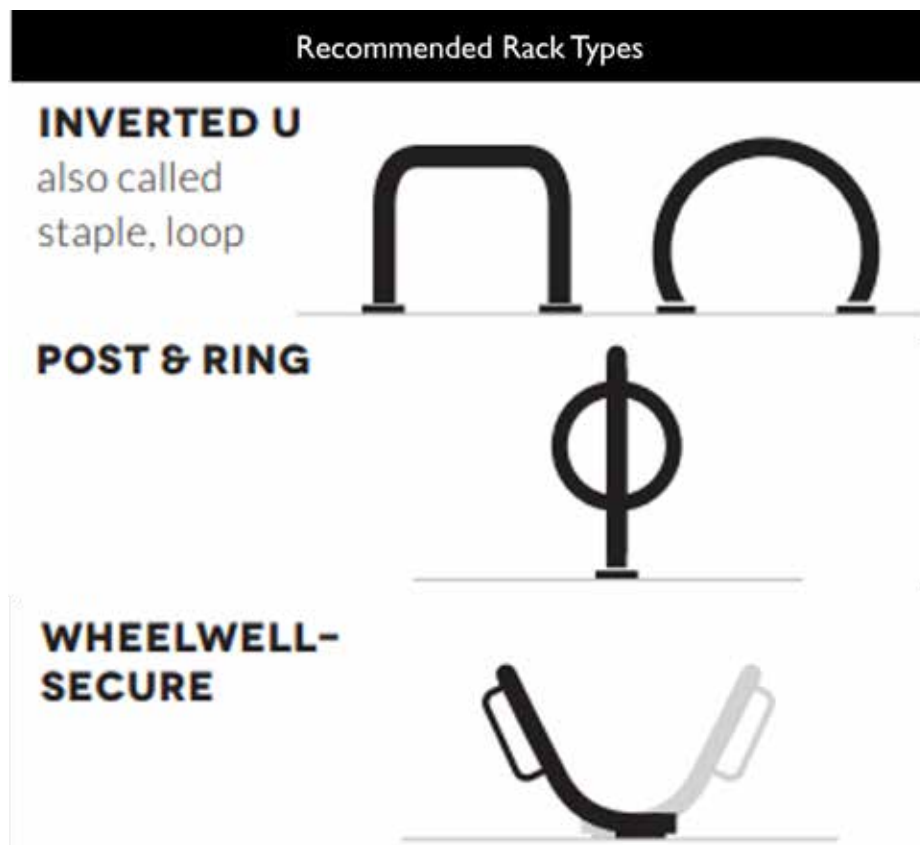
Currently, Needham hosts a number of post and ring bike racks at various locations throughout the Center, however they are not always located in the most convenient areas. Furthermore, there is currently no signage or information to indicate to bicyclists where parking is available. Comments received from the public survey were in favor of converting some parking spaces into other uses, such as those shown on the left.

Case Study: Cambridge, MA

Description: The City demonstrates how using parking spaces to accommodate more bicycle visitors in a central area increases the likeliness of it being used.

## HOW IT WOULD WORK

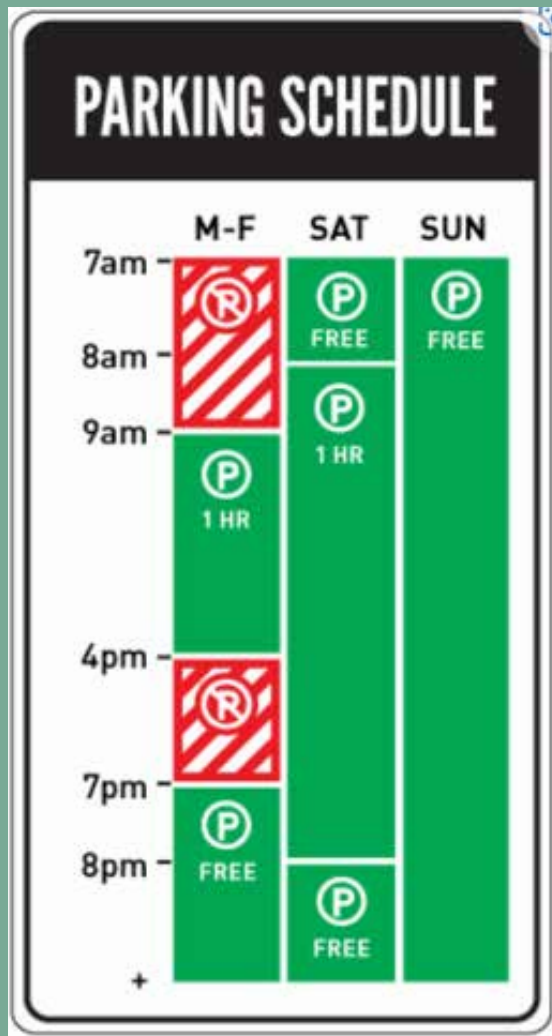
Installing more frequent signage and bike racks throughout Needham Center and the Heights is recommended, however specific locations are not included in this plan. The bike racks shown below are generally recommended by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) for their ability to stabilize a parked bicycle at two points, preventing the bike from falling over.. Other sources are available for guidance on best practice design and placement for bike corrals. The sign example below demonstrates typical best practice standards for size and clarity, however the Town could customize their approach to signage once defining a broader, cohesive wayfinding system (see Recommendation #7).





# Clarity of Regulations

Goals Aligned: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Case Study: Various locations, including New York City and Los Angeles

Description: Regulation schedule signage such as this is one of many options for helping users quickly understand how parking rules may vary throughout the day and/or week.

## WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

Including essential information on all parking signs, particularly including the time span of regulation (i.e., 8:00 am – 6:00 pm). This also includes improving the clarity of language on signage where regulations are combined or overlapping (e.g., Loading Zone and 15 minute parking that switches to unregulated in the evening) and establishing signage that provides direction during snow events.

## WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED

Currently, the Town does not host a parking map with regulations on its website and motorists must rely on signage to understand regulations. However, many signs in Needham are lacking information, which leaves some signs open to interpretation in when parking can be used and by whom. 'Permit Parking Only' signs in particular have caused confusion about who is allowed to park in these spaces after the 2:00 pm mark passes. Similarly, many time-limit signs have no hours of operation posted.

## HOW IT WOULD WORK

The Town should prioritize replacement of signs with unclear language (such as the examples shown below) with signs that more explicitly define who can park, how, and when (sample language shown to the right). These simple adjustments can be pursued as a short-term, relatively low-cost solution that should incorporate earlier recommendations in this report relating to proposed time limit adjustments, paid parking areas, and shared spaces between permit and paid parking.

### Existing Signage Examples in Needham That Require Clarity



What time is this in effect?



7 days a week?



Free parking after 2?



At what times/days?

**Proposed  
Chestnut St.  
Lot permit  
area sign**

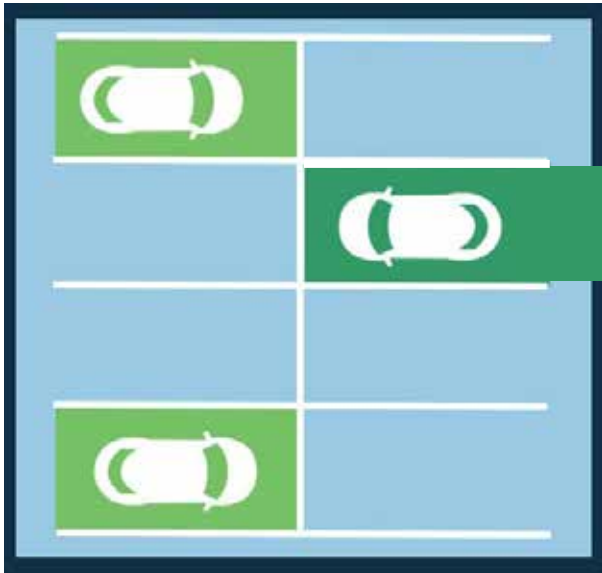


**Proposed on-  
street Sign**





# 4



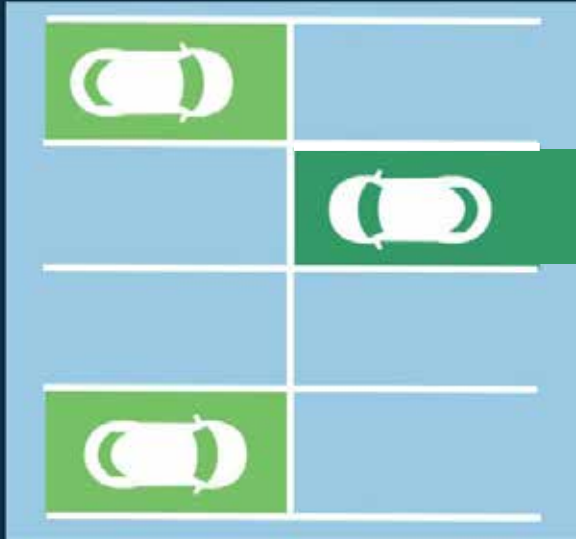
## NEXT STEPS

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

- **Coordinate with Town Select Board:** The Select Board has reviewed the recommendations included in this report at its session on March 14, 2023. As needed, the Town should check in with this body for feedback.
- **Ongoing Public and Staff Engagement:** Many of the changes proposed will require continuing to coordinate with the public as well as particular stakeholders, such as Needham Center/Heights businesses and the Town's enforcement staff. It may be useful to convene a Parking Working Group to review potential changes, or to check-in with select stakeholders such as existing permit-holders to review changes to the permit program.
- **Pilot Early Changes, Monitor, and Report:** Providing several months to test new changes, such as pricing changes or even temporary adjustments to the walking network, coupled with monitoring and reporting back in a public manner, can help increase user buy-in.

## Recommendation Implementation Strategy

| Recommendation                        | Short-Term                                                                                     | Mid-Term                                                                             | Long-Term                                          |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Performance-Based Pricing             | Confirm price adjustment areas                                                                 | Adjust prices and time span                                                          | Monitor, report, and adjust                        |
| Adjust Permit System                  | Confirm price adjustment areas                                                                 | Implement adjusted permit prices, expand permit program eligibility                  | Monitor, report, and adjust                        |
| Pursue Shared Parking Opportunities   | Identify a few key property owners for a shared parking pilot, hold initial meetings           | Implement shared parking via agreement                                               | Expand program                                     |
| Provide Long-Term Parking             | Meet with enforcement staff as needed, adjust signage to implement long-term parking           | Monitor, report, and adjust                                                          |                                                    |
| Focus Enforcement on Customer Service | Meet with enforcement staff, develop new protocols and customer information                    | Adjust enforcement hours & protocols                                                 | Readjust enforcement patterns to new pricing, etc. |
| Create More Active Curbs              | Pilot loading zones in the Heights and Center                                                  | Coordinate with stakeholders                                                         | Consider changing parking lanes to other users     |
| Improve Parking + Wayfinding Signage  | Review existing signage and create template for updated signage                                | Implement signage as needed in coordination with any changes in pricing/ regulations | Continue to update signage                         |
| Update Payment Technologies           | Coordinate with vendors to understand costs and fees. Consider community “test” of technology. | Develop operating standards, advertise, Procure, implement                           |                                                    |
| Introduce Flexibility in Zoning       | Coordination with Town boards and local developers                                             | Develop proposed zoning language / amendments                                        | Implement zoning changes                           |
| Consolidate Lots to Expand Supply     | Coordinate with landowners to develop rough design as “proof of concept”                       | Implement initial pilot                                                              | Expand program                                     |
| Improve the Multimodal Network        | Prioritized list of targeted improvements                                                      | Include in Town budgets as needed and implement                                      | Continue implementation and improvements           |
| Increase Bike Parking Infrastructure  | Identify locations, consider part-time summer bicycle corrals                                  | Implement, monitor                                                                   | Continue to adjust as needed                       |
| Clearly Sign Regulations              | Review existing signage and create template for updated signage                                | Implement signage as needed in coordination with any changes in pricing/ regulation  | Continue to update signage                         |



## APPENDICES

- Zoning Memorandum
- Survey Results

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|       |                                          |       |                       |
|-------|------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| To:   | Amy Haelsen<br>Town of Needham           | From: | Liza Cohen<br>Stantec |
| File: | Needham Parking Study –<br>Zoning Review | Date: | March 21, 2023        |

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**Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

As part of the Needham Parking Study, Stantec completed a review of parking standards in the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Needham. This summary memorandum defines:

- How Needham’s minimum parking requirements compare with observed activity in Needham Center and Needham Heights, as well as against national standards.
- How the Zoning By-Law currently provides for reduced parking provision with new projects based on location, land use types, and other factors.
- How the town’s parking requirements and by-laws compare against the existing parking supply in Needham Center and Needham Heights.
- How parking standards support or detract from the Town’s planning and community development vision.
- What policies and mechanisms are available for Needham to adopt which have been used elsewhere.

Recommendations for adjusting Zoning By-Laws to adopt more progressive parking management practices in line with the goals of the study are outlined in the last section.

**PARKING REQUIREMENTS**

Parking requirements are used by communities to ensure that a development’s parking supply is appropriate to meet the demands of the project. Many communities employ minimum parking requirements, mandating that parking be provided on the basis of a project’s square footage or number of housing units.

Standards in several communities have been found to be too permissive of new parking construction and have remained unchanged for several decades. Furthermore, many communities base these standards on national best practices, which tend to favor larger lot sizes, car-centric land use patterns, and single-use projects. In a town like Needham, using national-level standards as inspiration for minimum parking requirements is inadvisable based on:

- The Town’s centuries-old development pattern promoting mixed-use buildings, which is incongruent with the greenfield, single-use projects constructed in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century where automobile travel took precedent.
- The intense mix of land uses within walking distance of one another within Needham Center, Needham Heights, and surrounding neighborhoods.
- The multimodal travel environment of Needham Center and Needham Heights, with Commuter Rail stations, bus services, a robust sidewalk network, and streets which facilitate bicycle use.

Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

Nevertheless, Needham's minimum parking requirements exceed standards cited in the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) Parking Generation Manual, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Table 1 references these standards:

**Table 1 – Needham Parking Requirements Compared Against ITE Rates**

| Land Use       | Needham Requirement                                                                          | ITE Land Use Code                        | ITE Projection                                   |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Residential    | 1.5 spaces per unit<br>(1 space per unit for affordable units with no more than one bedroom) | 221 (Multifamily Housing, Mid-Rise)      | 1.15 spaces per unit <sup>1</sup>                |
| Nursing Home   | 1 space per 2 beds, plus 1 space per 2 employees during peak shift                           | 254 (Assisted Living)                    | 1-1.25 spaces per 1,000 square feet <sup>2</sup> |
| Office         | 1 space per 300 square feet                                                                  | 710 (General Office Building)            | 1 space per 420 square feet                      |
| Medical Office | 1 space per 200 square feet                                                                  | 720 (Medical-Dental Office Building)     | 1 space per 310 square feet                      |
| Retail         | 1 space per 300 square feet                                                                  | 820 (Shopping Center)                    | 1 space per 515 square feet                      |
| Restaurant     | 1 space per 3 seats, plus 10 spaces per takeout service station                              | 932 (High-Turnover, Sit Down Restaurant) | 1 space per 5 seats                              |

These comparisons found that Town parking requirements trend more conservatively than national standards. However, as noted elsewhere in this memo, requirements in zoning and overlay districts in the study area allow for reductions of these requirements for development projects.

Given the mixing of different use types (office, retail, restaurant) in Needham Center and Needham Heights, the study team was limited to an evaluation of observed parking demand at three multi-unit residential

<sup>1</sup> Assumes 2 bedrooms per housing unit

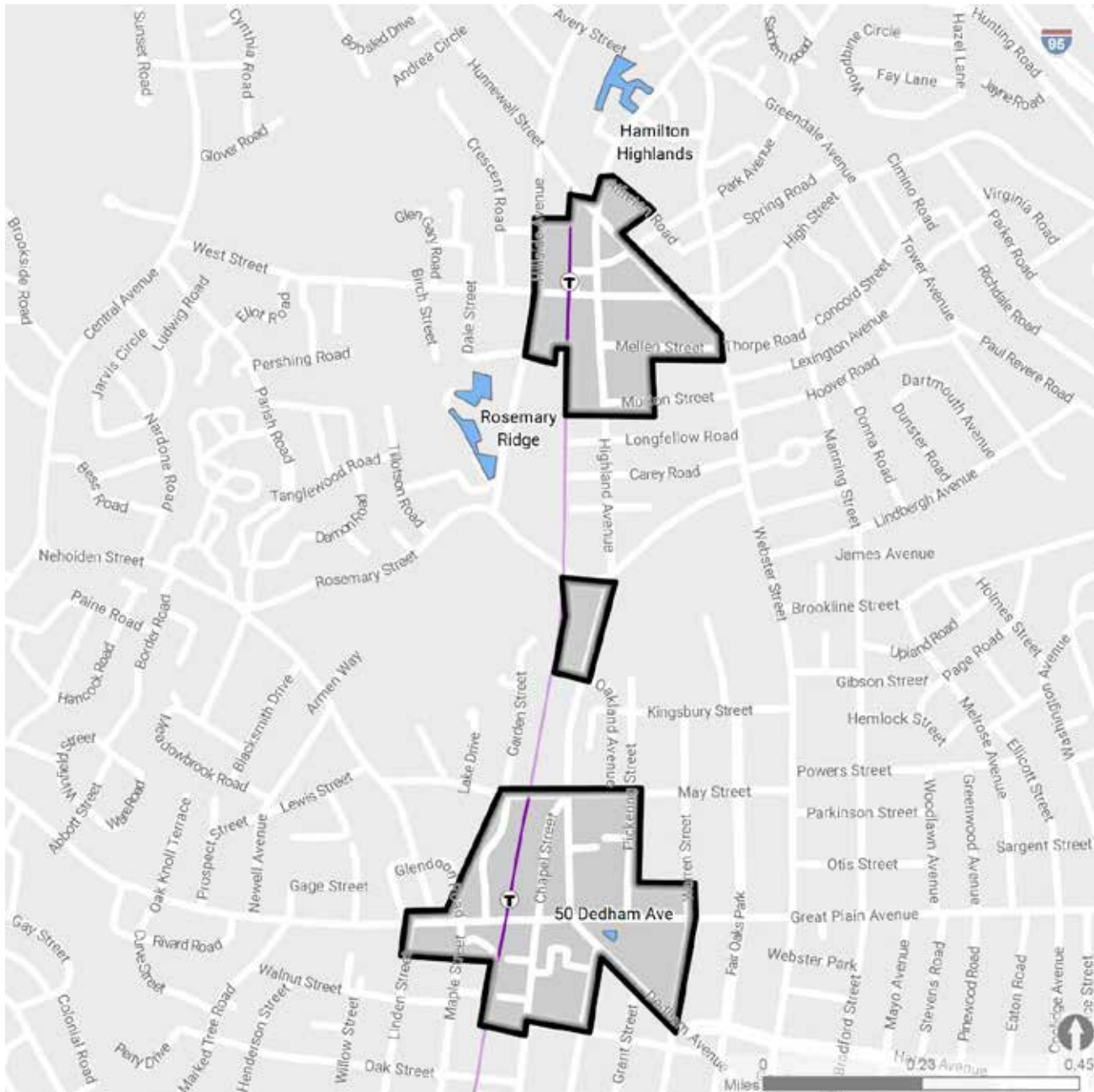
<sup>2</sup> Assumes 400-500 building square feet per bed (<https://seniorcare.levinassociates.com/2017/07/03/paying-square-footage-skilled-nursing/>)



Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

complexes in or adjacent to Needham Center and Needham Heights to compare this demand with the parking requirement. A map of the three apartment complexes is shown in Figure 1. This analysis found:

**Figure 1 – Apartment Complexes with Overnight Residential Parking Demand Data**



**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

- Of the 212 housing units present at the Hamilton Highlands and Rosemary Ridge projects adjacent to Needham Heights, 172 vehicles were counted; this reflects a parking demand of 0.81 spaces per unit compared against the 1.5 space per unit requirement.
- Of the 10 housing units present at the 50 Dedham Avenue project in Needham Center, 13 vehicles were counted; this reflects a parking demand of 1.3 spaces per unit compared against the 1.5 space per unit requirement.

Additionally, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) conducted parking counts at two apartment complexes on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, within the New England Business Center Zoning District, in June 2022. Of the 740 housing units present in these projects, 1,147 vehicles were counted. This equates to 1.55 spaces per unit, similar to the Town's Zoning By-Law requirement; it is noted that these apartment complexes are in more automobile-oriented areas of the community than Needham Center or Needham Heights.

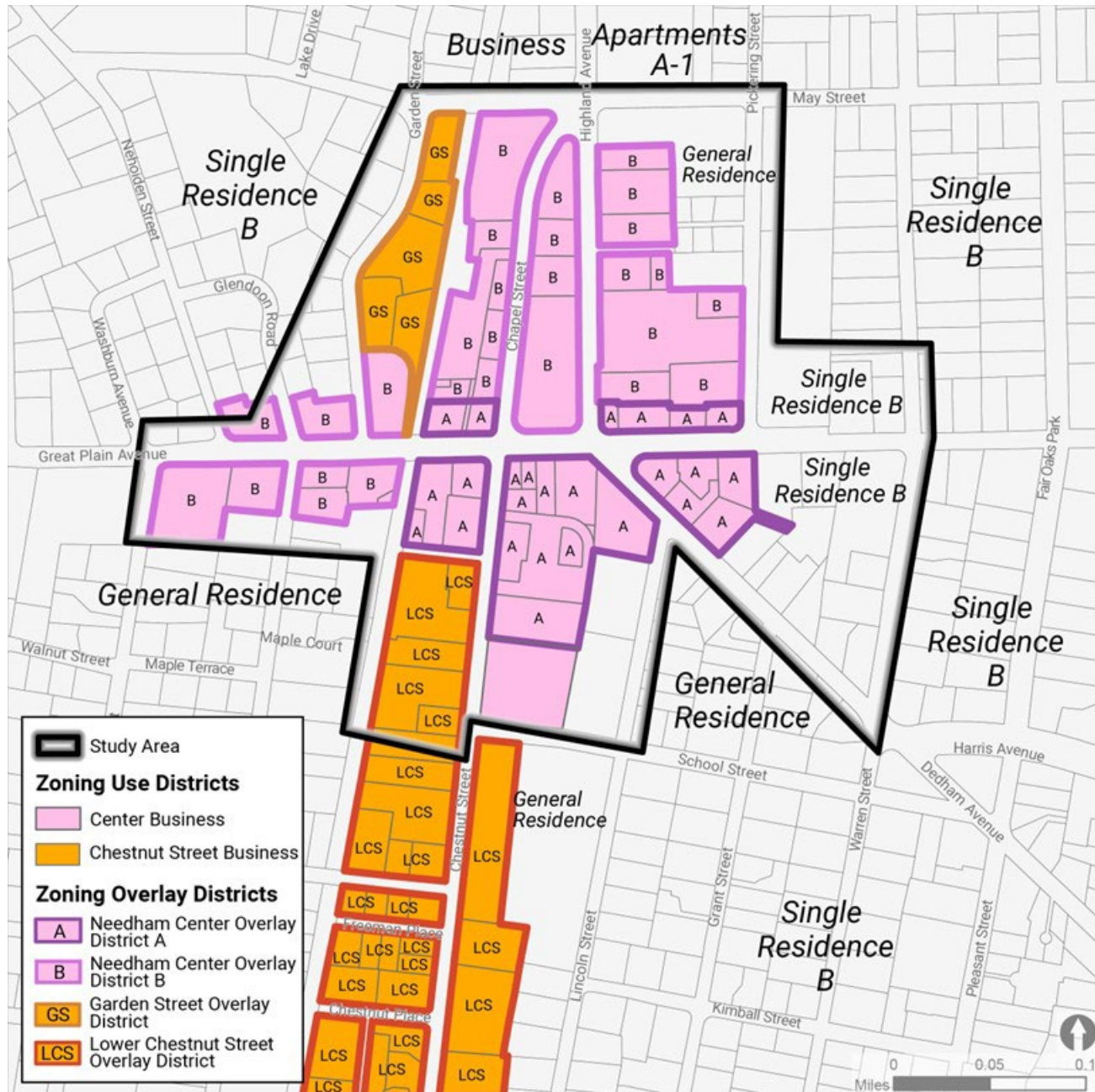
## **EXCEPTIONS FOR PARKING REQUIREMENTS**

The Zoning By-Law allows for several provisions where minimum parking requirements may be waived. These provisions often differ by zoning district and require approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals in a way which can be seen as subjective and risky for developers to pursue. Conversations with Town staff indicated that waivers are frequently requested and granted for commercial establishments in Needham Center and Needham Heights.

The maps of zoning districts and overlays can be found in Figure 2 and Figure 3. Note that the Avery Square Overlay district is targeted primarily towards senior housing and does not contain special provisions for parking outside of these uses.

**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

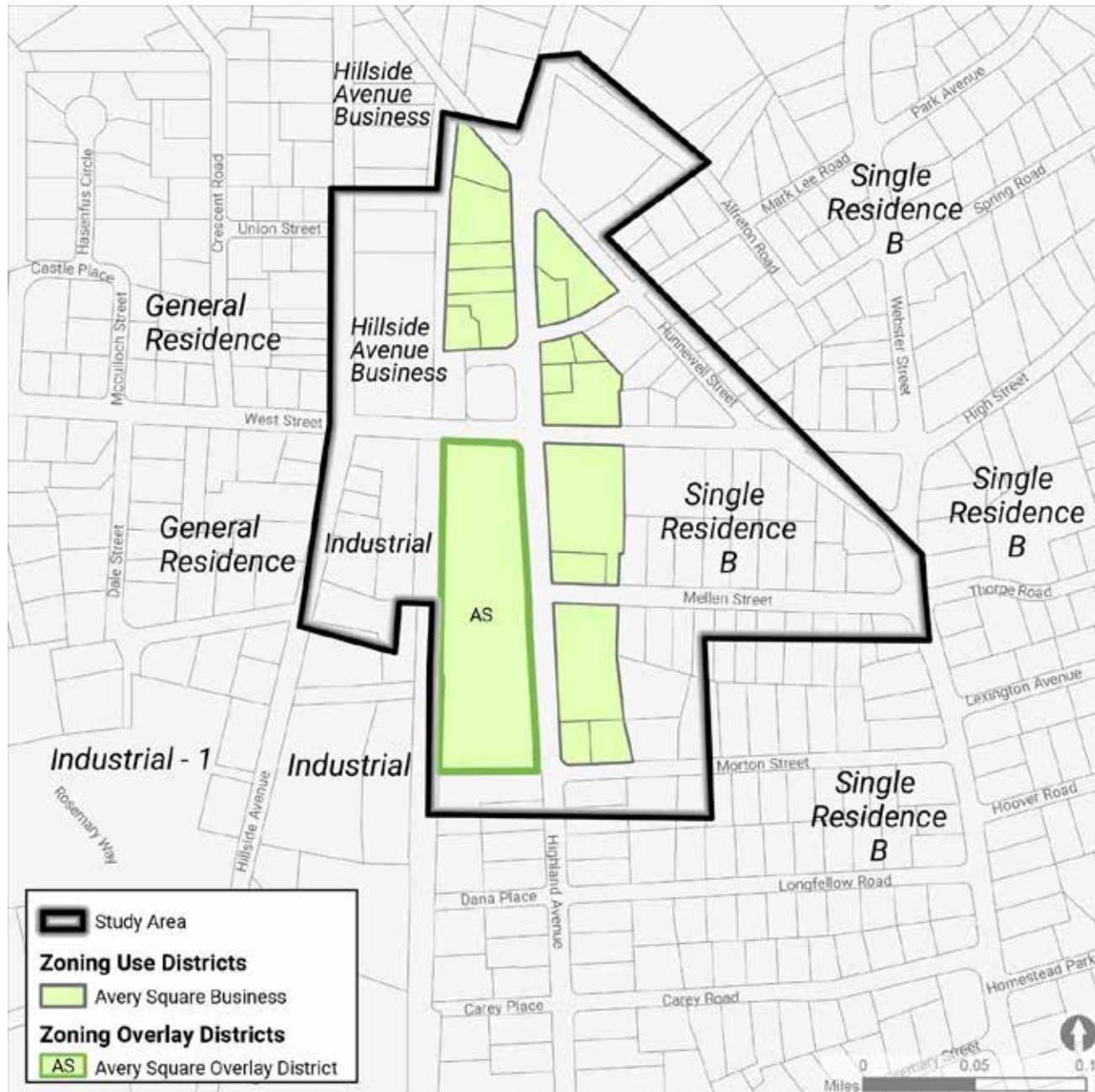
### Figure 2 – Zoning Districts and Overlays in Needham Center





Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

Figure 3 – Zoning Districts and Overlays in Needham Heights



Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Table 2 – Exceptions to Parking Requirements in Selected Zoning Districts and Overlays**

| District/Overlay                | Exceptions to Parking Requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Center Business District        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking requirements relieved or waived for the following instances:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Retail uses under 800 square feet of floor area do not need to provide off-street parking.</li> <li>○ Buildings with 40% or more of its usable floor area above the ground floor, upper-story uses only need to provide 80% of the parking requirement, with the exception of medical office uses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Special permit to relieve or waive parking requirements if project:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Replaces or substantially improves an existing building or site;</li> <li>○ Promotes the goal of preserving and enhancing the Center Business District as a pedestrian-oriented local shopping and business district;</li> <li>○ Incorporates the recommendations of the Design Review Board; and</li> <li>○ Demonstrates that the maximum number of off-street parking spaces practicable are provided.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Changes of use excepted when the change of use requires nine or fewer additional off-street parking spaces for compliance without requiring Special Permit.</li> </ul> |
| Needham Center Overlay District | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking requirements relieved or waived for the following instances:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Retail uses under 800 square feet of floor area do not need to provide off-street parking.</li> <li>○ Buildings with 40% or more of its usable floor area above the ground floor, upper-story uses only need to provide 80% of the parking requirement, with the exception of medical office uses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Special permit to relieve or waive parking requirements if project:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Replaces or substantially improves an existing building or site;</li> <li>○ Promotes the goal of preserving and enhancing the Center Business District as a pedestrian-oriented local shopping and business district;</li> <li>○ Incorporates the recommendations of the Design Review Board; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

|                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demonstrates that the maximum number of off-street parking spaces practicable are provided.</li> <li>• Changes of use excepted when the change of use requires nine or fewer additional off-street parking spaces for compliance without requiring Special Permit.</li> <li>• Special Permit to allow for payment of a fee in lieu of meeting the minimum number of parking spaces if the Planning Board determines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The applicant has demonstrated it cannot accommodate the required parking spaces on a surface lot or under the building in an economical way.</li> <li>○ The applicant has demonstrated it cannot accommodate the required parking spaces through a combination of on-site parking and shared parking with an adjoining property.</li> <li>○ The project has been designed to the extent feasible to reduce the required number of off-street parking spaces.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                |
| Chestnut Street Business               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes of use excepted when the change of use requires nine or fewer additional off-street parking spaces for compliance without requiring Special Permit.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Lower Chestnut Street Overlay District | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes of use excepted when the change of use requires nine or fewer additional off-street parking spaces for compliance without requiring Special Permit.</li> <li>• Parking requirements relieved or waived for the following instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Buildings with 40% or more of its usable floor area above the ground floor, upper-story uses only need to provide 80% of the parking requirement, with the exception of medical office uses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Special Permit to allow for payment of a fee in lieu of meeting the minimum number of parking spaces if the Planning Board determines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The applicant has demonstrated it cannot accommodate the required parking spaces on a surface lot or under the building in an economical way.</li> <li>○ The applicant has demonstrated it cannot accommodate the required parking spaces through a combination of on-site parking and shared parking with an adjoining property.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

**Reference:**      **Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The project has been designed to the extent feasible to reduce the required number of off-street parking spaces.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Garden Street Overlay District | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes of use excepted when the change of use requires nine or fewer additional off-street parking spaces for compliance without requiring Special Permit.</li> <li>• Parking requirements relieved or waived for the following instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Buildings with 40% or more of its usable floor area above the ground floor, upper-story uses only need to provide 80% of the parking requirement, with the exception of medical office uses.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Avery Square Business District | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justification for relieved or waived requirements if shared parking for uses having peak demands at different types, unusual age or other characteristics of site users, or user-sponsored demand reduction devices are being pursued.</li> <li>• Allowance for off-site parking (parking on a separate parcel serving more than one user) for non-residential uses at distances up to 500 feet for general parking, or 800 feet for employee parking, including for limited encroachment into adjacent residential districts.</li> <li>• Changes of use excepted when the change of use requires nine or fewer additional off-street parking spaces for compliance without requiring Special Permit.</li> </ul> |

### **Waiver from Minimum Parking Requirements**

The Board of Appeals may provide a special permit exempting projects from meeting minimum parking requirements if fitting one of the following conditions:

- The particular use of the structure does not warrant the minimum number of spaces; or
- The extent of the building coverage on a particular lot is such that in laying out parking spaces in accordance with design requirements that the minimum number of spaces can not be met.

The Board of Appeals considers the following in granting Special Permits:

- The permit will not be detrimental to the Town or to the general character and visual appearance of the surrounding neighborhood and abutting uses
- Changes that would alter the special circumstances contributing to the reduced parking need or demand are precluded

**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

- In some business districts (including Avery Square, but not Center Business), shared parking for uses having peak demands at different types, unusual age or other characteristics of site users, or user-sponsored demand reduction devices are being pursued
- The ability to provide for additional parking is demonstrated
- A structure, use, or lot is not exempted from future compliance with parking standards

These subjectively-written standards, even if carried out in a consistent way by the Board of Appeals for prospective commercial development projects, introduce a high degree of risk for developers. Developers must demonstrate that it is possible to be compliant with minimum parking requirements, requiring a flexible approach to design and precluding prospective projects for which meeting this condition is not possible.

*Waiver Review*

The Town provided decisions for nine special permit applications from the Zoning Board of Appeals for commercial projects seeking relief from parking standards in the Center Business District. The decisions reflect a four-year period between May 2018 and April 2022. Seven of the nine applications involved a request to provide no new off-street parking for a project; all but one project (which involved a farmer's market) were for redevelopment of an existing property.

All nine projects were granted approval by the Board; the list of projects is detailed in Table 3.

Several common justifications were provided by the Board of Appeals in granting waivers to these developers, including:

- Off-street parking is not currently available at the property
- Only minor modifications to the property were sought which would not affect vehicular or pedestrian movements
- Properties were in close proximity to municipal lots for employee and/or customer parking
- Employers would be ordered to purchase parking stickers to allow for employees to park in municipal lots

Up to 156 parking spaces were waived from construction requirements as a result of these decisions.

**Off-Site Parking Arrangements**

The Town allows for off-street parking to be provided up to 300 feet away from the subject building; this lot must be under the same ownership. This in addition to the Avery Square Business District allowing for shared parking (parking on a separate parcel serving more than one user) at distances up to 500 feet for general parking, or 800 feet for employee parking.

Although cited above as justification for granting a waiver from minimum parking requirements, provisions for shared parking in other zoning districts and overlays are not referenced in the Zoning By-Law.

Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Table 3 – List of Projects for Waiver Review**

| Date          | Business Name           | Business Type  | Address                 | Parking Required | Parking Requested/Granted |
|---------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| June 2018     | Eat Well                | Restaurant     | 946 Great Plain Avenue  | 30 spaces        | 0 spaces                  |
| October 2018  | PEX Health and Fitness  | Gym            | 1451 Highland Avenue    | Up to 16 spaces  | 0 spaces                  |
| October 2018  | Rx2Care Clinic          | Medical Office | 1498 Highland Avenue    | 6 spaces         | 4 spaces                  |
| November 2018 | Gyro and Kebab House    | Restaurant     | 1056 Great Plain Avenue | 14 spaces        | 0 spaces                  |
| February 2019 | Pancho's Taqueria       | Restaurant     | 1450 Highland Avenue    | Up to 23 spaces  | Up to 4 spaces            |
| October 2019  | PM Story Corporation    | Restaurant     | 946 Great Plain Avenue  | 24 spaces        | 0 spaces                  |
| June 2021     | Klein Orthodontist      | Medical Office | 30-50 Chestnut Street   | 9 spaces         | 0 spaces                  |
| October 2021  | Needham Nutrition       | Retail         | 915 Great Plain Avenue  | 16 spaces        | 0 spaces                  |
| April 2022    | Needham Farmer's Market | Retail         | Greene's Field          | 26 spaces        | 0 spaces                  |

**Needham Center Off-Street Parking Fund**

The Zoning By-Law allows for a Special Permit to allow for payment of a fee in lieu of meeting the minimum number of parking spaces in the Needham Center, Lower Chestnut Street, and Garden Street Overlay Districts. The Planning Board must determine that:

- The applicant has demonstrated it cannot accommodate the required parking spaces on a surface lot or under the building in an economical way.
- The applicant has demonstrated it cannot accommodate the required parking spaces through a combination of on-site parking and shared parking with an adjoining property.
- The project has been designed to the extent feasible to reduce the required number of off-street parking spaces.

The fee is computed on a per-space basis and paid into a special revenue fund known as the Needham Center Off-Street Parking Fund. The Fund is meant to be used towards providing shared or public parking benefiting uses within the area covered by the Needham Center Development Plan. The amount of the fee is determined by the Planning Board in accordance with the Needham Center Development Plan or the Town of Needham Capital Improvements Plan.

**Reference:** Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

Although considered a best practice for managing a downtown's parking system, conversations with Town staff indicated that the Parking Fund is not actively contributed towards or drawn from.

## PLACING NEEDHAM'S PARKING REQUIREMENTS IN CONTEXT

An analysis of Needham's parking requirements was compared against the existing land uses and the existing parking supply in Needham Center and Needham Heights by employing a customized shared parking demand model. This section covers the inputs to this model and its findings to demonstrate how Needham's parking requirements are misaligned with how residents, customers, and employees currently access Needham Center and Needham Heights, particularly given the existing parking supply.

A core component of this analysis is an understanding of the land uses present in the community. Parcel-level land use and assessing data from the Town of Needham was shared with the project team and verified through a combination of staff feedback, online research, and "windshield" surveys on Google Maps. Square footages for Needham Center and Needham Heights land uses are shown in Table 4 and Table 5, respectively.

A typical approach to estimating parking demand, also reflected in Needham's current off-street parking requirements, 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. As shown in Figure 4, whereas there are 1,771 existing spaces in Needham Center, an industry standard approach using ITE requirements (see Table 1) would yield construction of 2,748 spaces if all of Needham Center's land uses were built to this standard. In Needham Heights the supply of 991 spaces is in closer alignment with the industry standard of 1,007 spaces, as shown in Figure 5.

**Table 4 – Land Uses in Needham Center**

| Land Use                 | Square Footage   | Units                 |
|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Apartments</b>        | 88               | Dwelling Units        |
| <b>Auto Shop</b>         | 9,717            | Square Feet           |
| <b>Bank</b>              | 53,362           | Square Feet           |
| <b>Church</b>            | 98,010           | Square Feet           |
| <b>Government Office</b> | 129,235          | Square Feet           |
| <b>Medical Office</b>    | 28,914           | Square Feet           |
| <b>Office</b>            | 117,019          | Square Feet           |
| <b>Restaurant</b>        | 39,024           | Square Feet           |
| <b>Retail</b>            | 327,437          | Square Feet           |
| <b>School</b>            | 62               | Students              |
| <b>Warehouse</b>         | 26,307           | Square Feet           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>1,026,615</b> | <b>Square Feet</b>    |
|                          | <b>88</b>        | <b>Dwelling Units</b> |
|                          | <b>62</b>        | <b>Students</b>       |



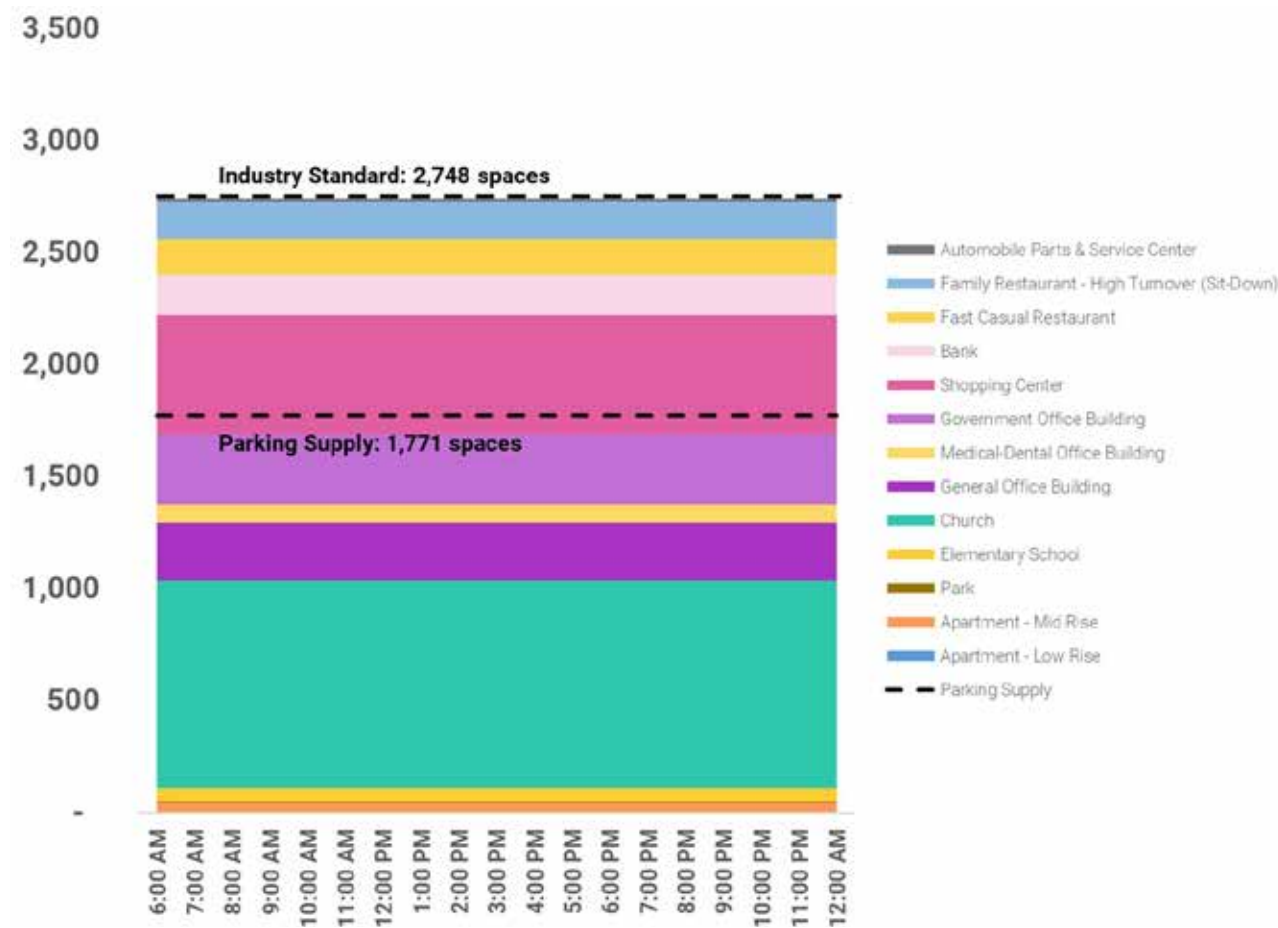
Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Table 5 – Land Uses in Needham Heights**

| Land Use                   | Square Footage              | Units                         |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Apartments</b>          | 14                          | Dwelling Units                |
| <b>Auto Shops</b>          | 9,903                       | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Bank</b>                | 12,348                      | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Church</b>              | 35,034                      | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Day Care</b>            | 4,224                       | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Government Office</b>   | 23,780                      | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Health/Fitness Club</b> | 6,440                       | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Medical Clinic</b>      | 3,360                       | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Nursing Home</b>        | 160,742                     | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Office</b>              | 77,780                      | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Restaurant</b>          | 6,664                       | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Retail</b>              | 64,396                      | Square Feet                   |
| <b>Warehouse</b>           | 19,800                      | Square Feet                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>424,485</b><br><b>14</b> | Square Feet<br>Dwelling Units |

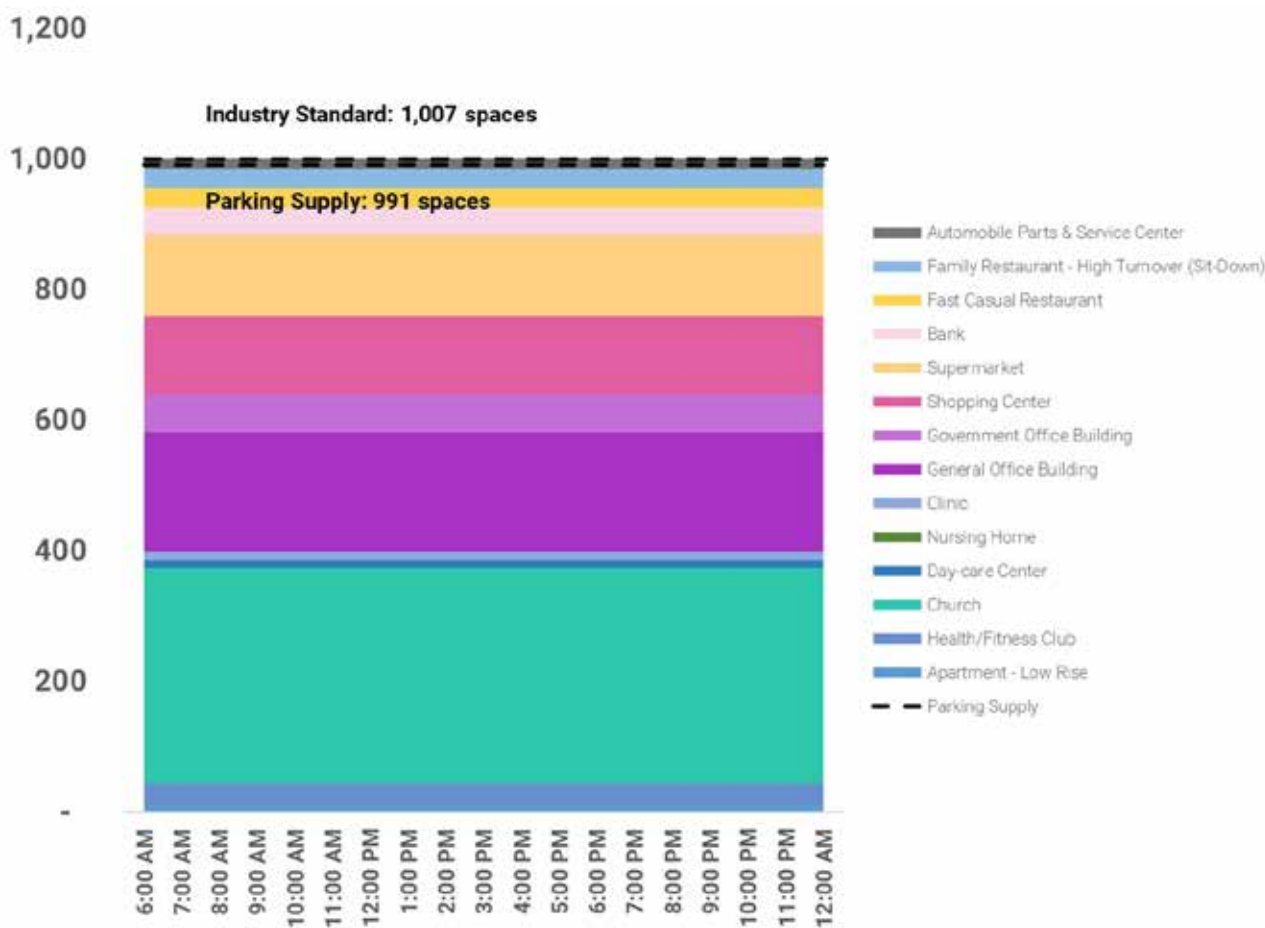
Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Figure 4 – Needham Center Parking Supply Compared Against Industry Standard**



Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Figure 5 – Needham Heights Parking Supply Compared Against Industry Standard**



As Table 1 demonstrates, commonly-observed land uses in Needham are subject to more conservative requirements than this industry standard. Needham Center and Needham Heights land uses were compared against Needham's parking requirements after adjusting for reductions allowed by-right in the study areas. This includes:

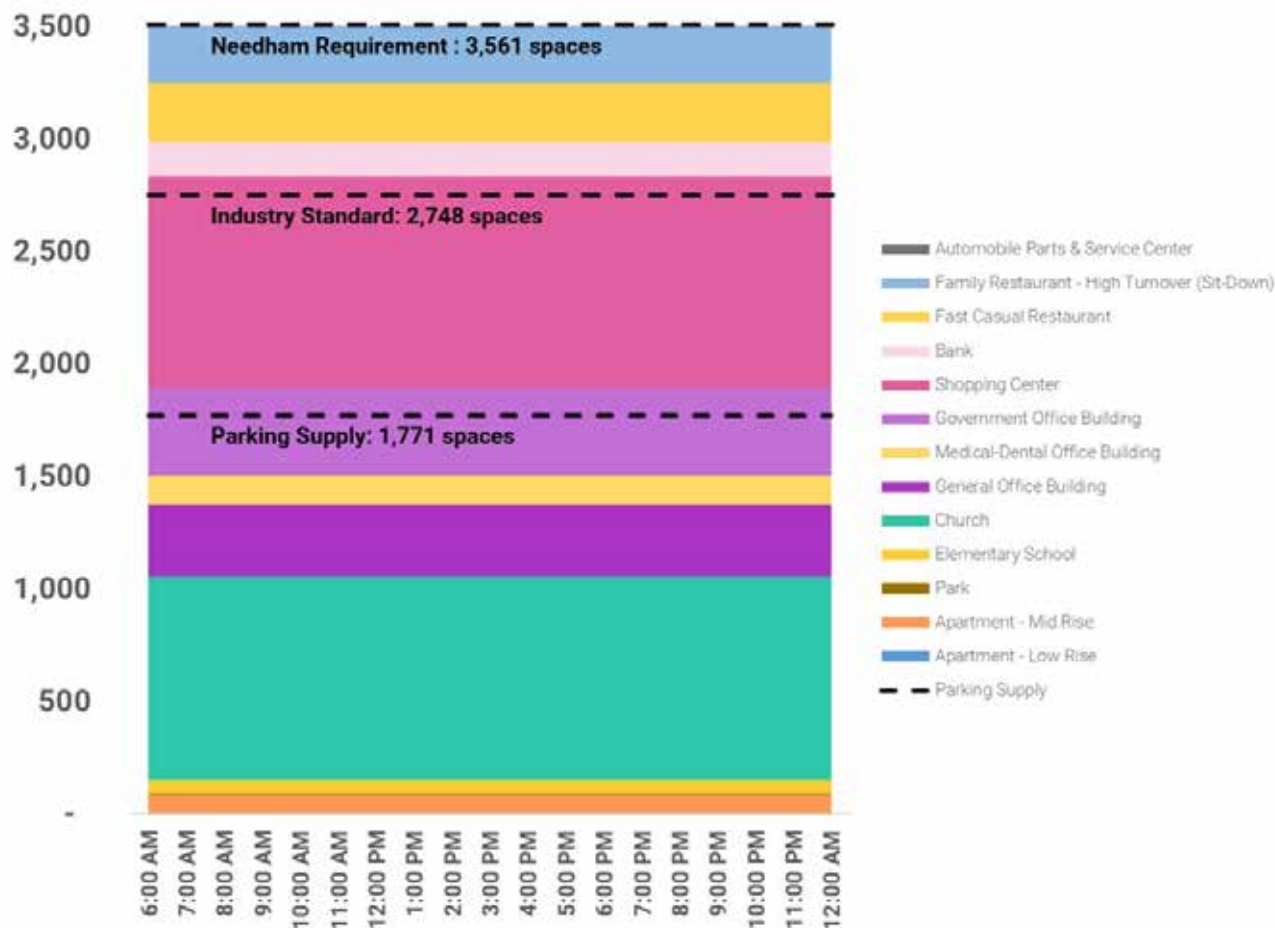
- Exception for retail uses under 800 square feet of floor area to require off-street parking
  - Given assessing data, only one retail use with under 800 square feet of gross floor area was identified
- Allowance for buildings with 40% or more of its usable floor area above the ground floor to meet 80% of the parking requirement for upper-story uses, with the exception of medical office uses
  - A windshield survey on Google Maps, followed by cross-checking with assessing data, identified 286,000 of square feet (approximately 28% of the Needham Heights study area) to subject to 80% of the parking requirement rather than 100%.

Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

Reductions were only applied in Needham Center; no buildings and/or land uses in Needham Heights were found to meet these provisions.

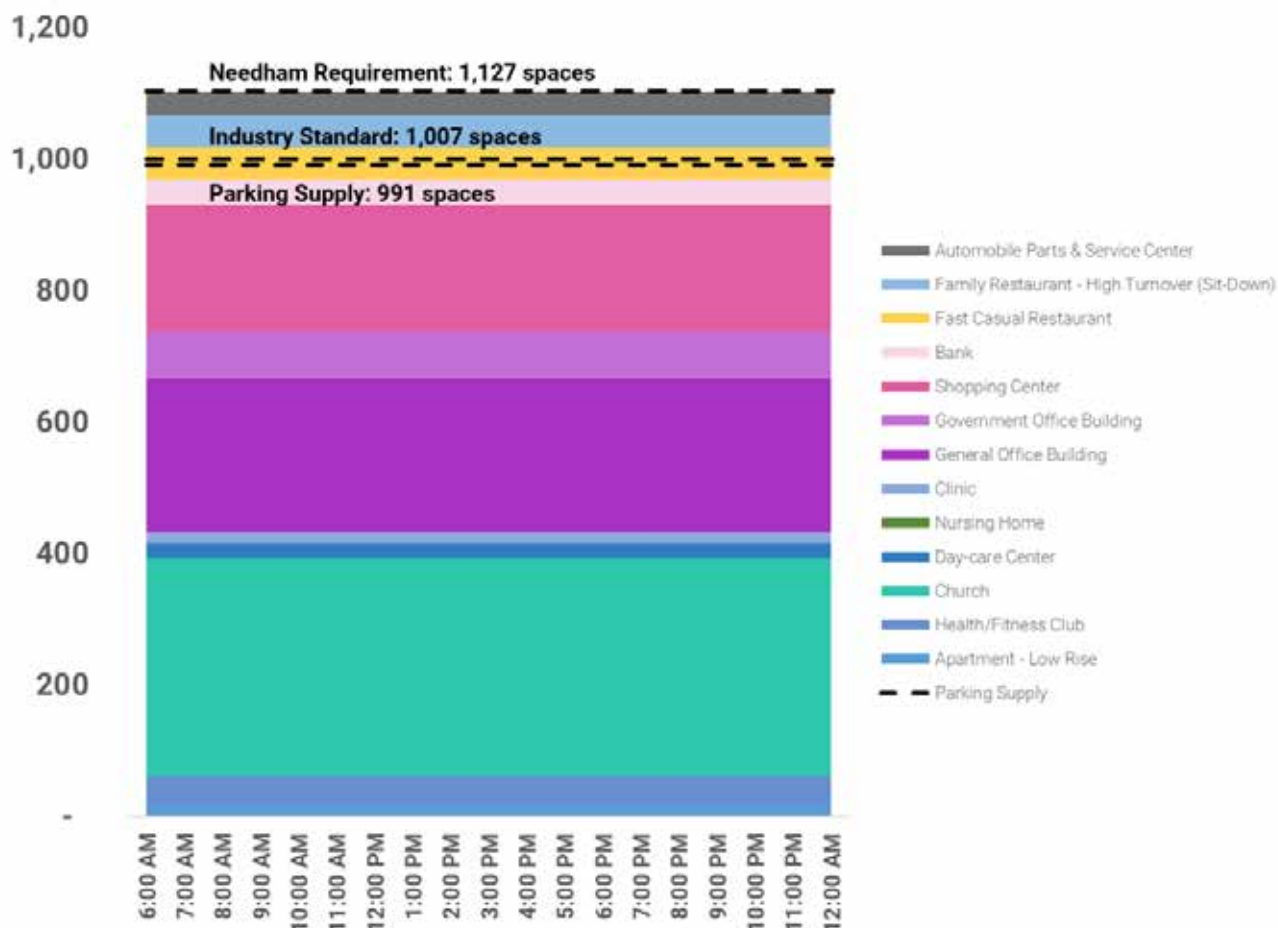
Figure 6 shows that in Needham Center, if all existing land uses were built to Needham's parking requirements with provision for by-right reductions, a total of 3,344 parking spaces would need to be constructed; compare this against the 1,771 spaces currently in use. In Needham Heights, Figure 7 shows 1,127 spaces would be required for construction compared against the existing supply of 991 spaces.

**Figure 6 – Needham Center Parking Supply Compared Against Needham Parking Requirements**



Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Figure 7 – Needham Heights Parking Supply Compared Against Needham Parking Requirements**



This analysis shows that both the industry standard and Needham’s requirement for off-street parking construction would yield more parking spaces than is currently supplied in both Needham Center and Needham Heights. In reality, this study has shown that peak utilization of parking in the Needham Center and Needham Heights study areas does not approach the capacity of the parking supply. An analysis based on this “real demand” more accurately reflects demand patterns that vary by use throughout the day.

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) publishes the Shared Parking Manual, which provides analysts with a methodology to estimate real parking demand over time in mixed-use areas like Needham Center and Needham Heights. The Shared Parking Manual was referenced to create a model of demand if parking supply were to be shared across the entire Needham Center and Needham Heights study areas.

For example, demand at an office is low in the middle of the night, hits its peak in the middle of the day, and drops off again in the early evening. Conversely, a restaurant may have little to no demand during the day but peak around the dinner hour. 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 Needham Center and Needham Heights.



**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

Parking demand is further reduced in downtown environments because retail, commercial, office, and residential uses are closer together and more walkable. Users that opt to walk within the study areas to get from one destination to another (without parking their vehicle) are considered “internally captured.” Depending on the use, this can reduce total parking demand from stand-alone uses an average of 15%. In addition, Needham Center and Needham Heights may each generate trips from outside these geographies that don’t need a car at all, so additional reductions can be taken for some users. Finally, certain vacancy assumptions for housing, office, retail, and restaurant uses are also incorporated into the model.

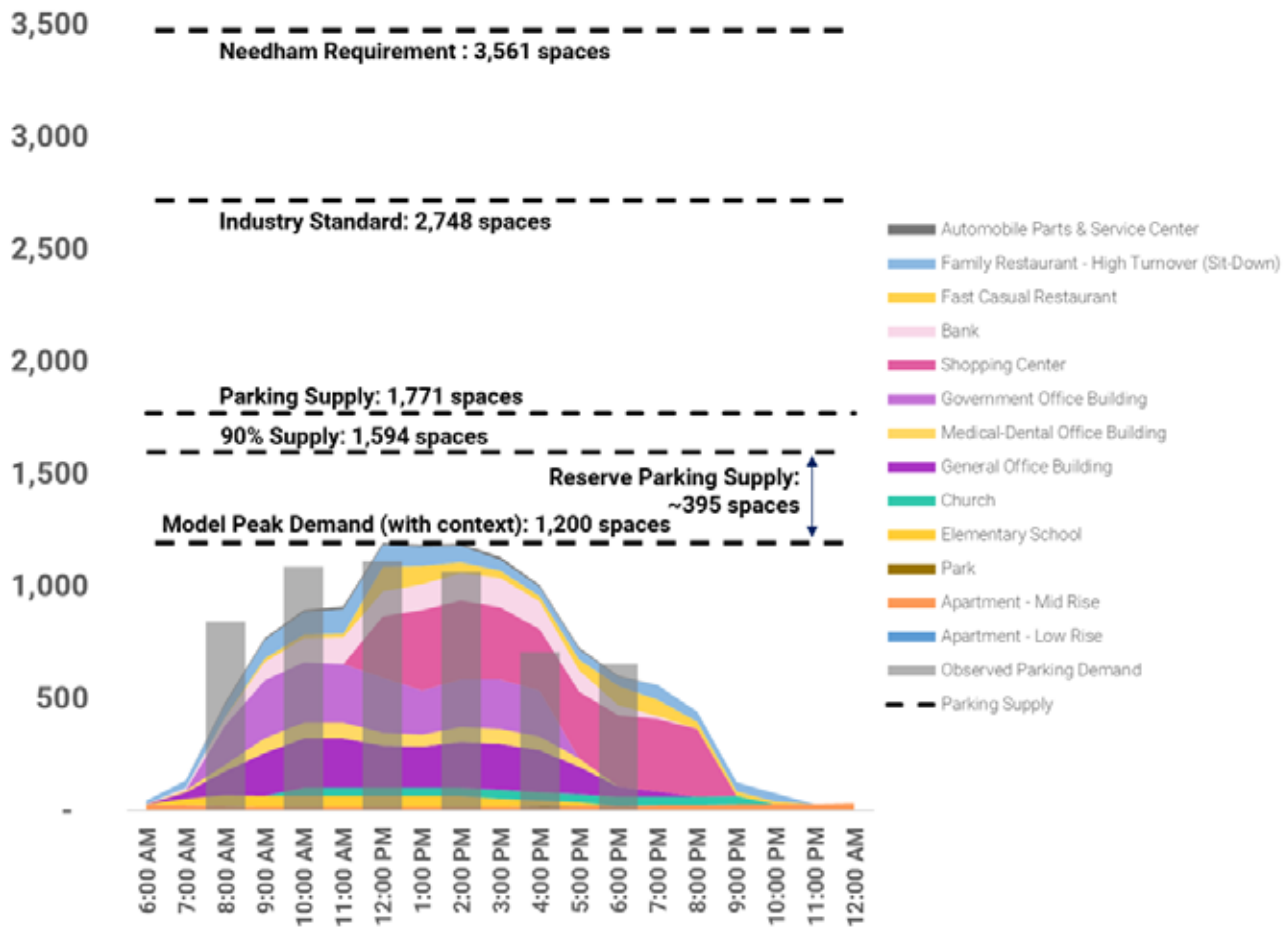
Using the ULI methodology together with these local context reductions applied to industry standard parking requirements, parking demand was modeled for the Needham Center and Needham Heights study areas. Parking utilization counts captured for the study were used to calibrate the model, resulting in 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 Needham being approximately 395 spaces larger than the need at the weekday midday peak, assuming that 10% of this supply should be held in reserve. This is reflected in Figure 8. In Needham Heights, Figure 9 shows that peak demand yields approximately 370 fewer spaces than the 90% supply.

It is important to note that not all parking is in the exact right location or currently regulated appropriately to support the additional development that this oversupply of parking could generate. However, strategies discussed in this report involve use of some of this excess parking to support new development would save significant financial and land costs compared to building new parking.

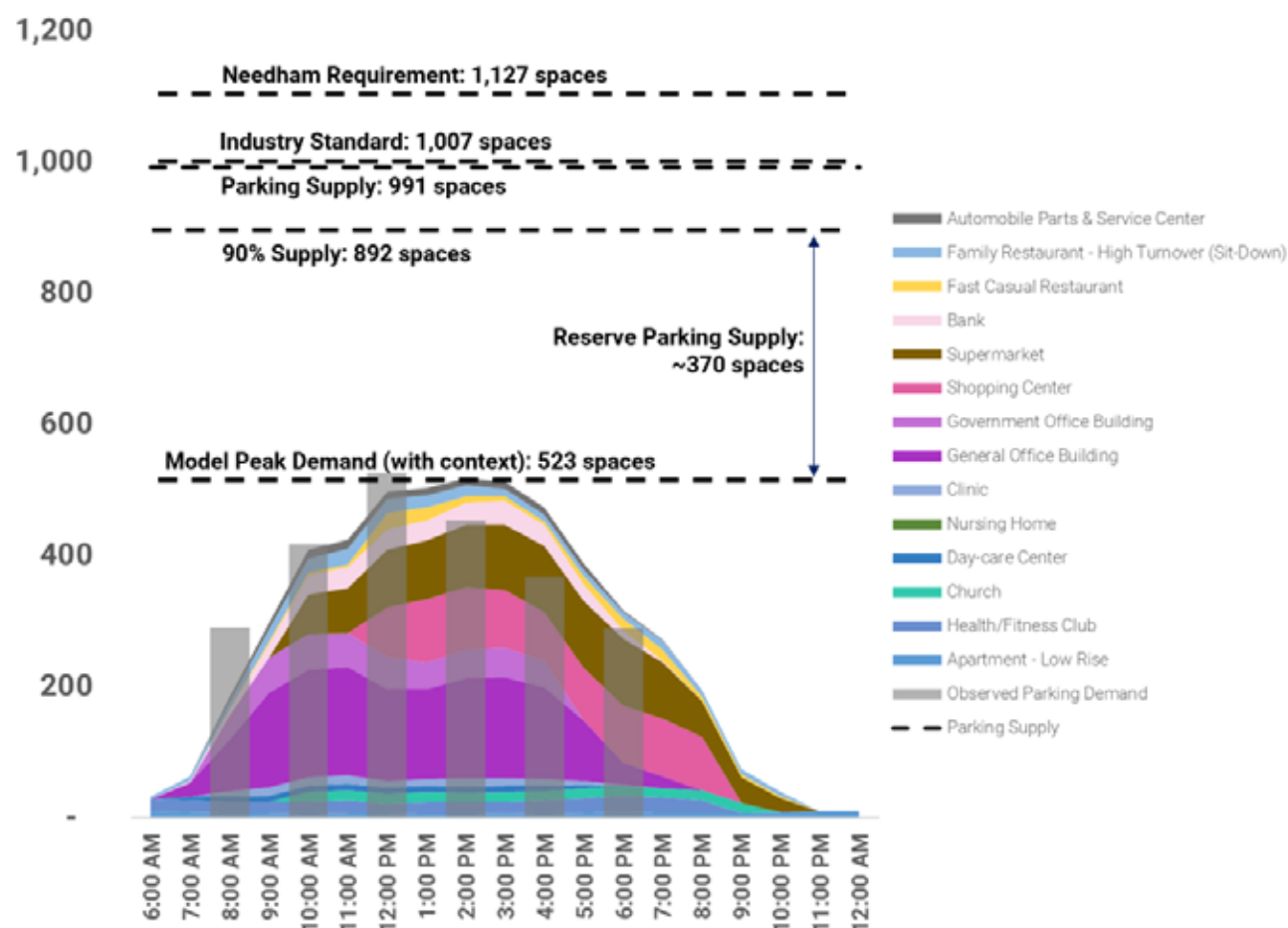
Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Figure 8 – Calibrated Parking Demand in Needham Center Compared Against Parking Supply**



Reference: Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review

**Figure 9 – Calibrated Parking Demand in Needham Heights Compared Against Parking Supply**



## ALTERNATIVE PARKING STANDARDS

Parking standards in Needham were reviewed to identify where listed standards support or detract from community goals and the vision encouraged as part of this parking study.

Several requirements relating to parking space dimensions and driveways were found to be in harmony with encouraging a pedestrian-scale in Needham Center and Needham Heights, including:

- Prohibition on new curb cuts in the Center Business District along Chapel Street, Chestnut Street, Great Plain Avenue, and Highland Avenue
- Limitations on the number of curb cuts based on project site frontage (no more than two for every 150 feet or less of frontage)
- Floor-to-area ratio (FAR) bonuses for vehicular access for providing parking and loading area access from an existing shared or common access driveway

Design with community in mind

**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

- Lot coverage bonuses for enclosed parking provided underground and/or within building itself
- Front setbacks are strongly restricted in the Center Business District (with the exception for providing a pedestrian plaza or similar amenity) and limited to no more than 15 feet in the Avery Square Business District, effectively prohibiting parking in the front setback area
- Driveway openings are restricted to no more than 18 feet of width for one-way travel and 25 feet of width for two-way travel

Several other topic areas were identified for potential changes to the Zoning By-Law to lessen construction burdens for developers, better promote multimodal travel in the study areas, and conserve land area for uses other than parking.

### **LOADING AREAS**

The Zoning By-Law requires adequate off-street loading space for all new construction or building additions greater than 100 square feet of floor area. No trucks may be on the public way while loading, unloading, or waiting to do so.

This provision constrains the introduction of new retail uses, particularly restaurants, reliant upon deliveries to sustain daily operations. Existing properties with off-street loading facilities, or off-street parking which can accommodate vans and trucks, are able to be re-developed to introduce new retail or restaurant uses. However, new construction must accommodate parking capacity for deliveries regardless of the property's need for parking or feasibility in providing access to parking from the street.

A remedy for this restriction are flexible parking regulations in commercial districts which impose time restrictions at certain segments of the day where deliveries are expected. The ordinance would need to be revised to allow for trucks to reside in the public way; however, trucks would be able to complete deliveries without blocking travel lanes.

### **BICYCLE RACKS**

One bicycle space must be provided for every 20 parking spaces constructed for a new development; this threshold applies only when at least 40 parking spaces are constructed. In the Center Business District, mixed-use buildings with dwelling units must provide bicycle racks facilitating locking to accommodate one bicycle for every two dwelling units.

Requiring transportation demand management (TDM) measures for new development projects is a standard practice to encourage travel by means other than non-single occupancy driving. The Zoning By-Law requires TDM plans associated with new development projects in select business districts, but not in Needham Center or Needham Heights.

While justification for TDM planning may be applied elsewhere in the community given the lack of infrastructure to support multimodal travel, supporting bicycle, pedestrian, and transit usage in Needham Center and Needham Heights is a worthy goal in and of itself. Tying measures such as provision of bicycle racks or subsidizing transit passes to building square footage or employee count can support the adoption of TDM practices without such an explicit tie-in to parking.

**Reference:**      **Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

## **PARKING LOT DESIGN**

Dimensional standards in parking lots trend slightly towards granting an excess of space for vehicles, which risks encouraging vehicle speeding and increases the total square footage needed for a parking area. It is noted that:

- Parking space dimensions could be reduced to a minimum of 8 feet in width and 16 feet in length, consistent with existing requirements for compact spaces.
- The minimum width for drive aisles in one-way lots with spaces of 60-degree angles or less be reduced to 12 feet.

## **POLICY AND MECHANISM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Needham's Zoning By-Law includes several provisions which relieve burdens from developers to provide off-street parking at a rate which demand may not generate. These provisions spur economic development by reducing development costs as well as conserve land in Needham Center and Needham Heights to be used for more efficient purposes than parking. Additionally, the Zoning Board of Appeals has demonstrated a precedence for granting waivers from minimum parking requirements for commercial developers when requested.

The review of the Zoning By-Law found that the zoning ordinance often applies parking standards in a way which can be challenging for developers to navigate and can be out of line with progressive municipal parking planning and management. This section defines new or revised policy measures with the aim of:

- Providing consistency with the application of policies across zoning districts and overlay areas which are each primarily associated with commercial and/or mixed-use buildings.
- Reducing time and cost delays for developers seeking exceptions to zoning standards which have a strong precedent of being granted.
- Advancing best practice standards from other local communities which help meet townwide transportation, community development, and economic development goals.

## **REDUCE PARKING REQUIREMENTS**

Many communities across the country have sought to lower, or outright eliminate, their minimum parking requirements to spur development or ease the burdens faced by developers, municipal staff, and elected officials in advancing projects with reduced parking provision.

As the study has shown, Needham's parking requirements skew more conservative (higher minimums) than national standards and do not reflect observed parking demand in Needham Center and Needham Heights. While minimum parking requirements may have once reflected a sensible approach to ensuring developers were addressing the parking demands generated by projects, today they represent an artificial requirement which commercial projects in Needham often seek to get out of.

Many municipalities across Greater Boston have lowered or waived parking requirements in portions of their communities, including Walpole (no commercial parking requirements within the central business district),



**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

Ipswich (no requirements within the central business district or within 500 feet of municipal parking), and Brookline (reduced residential requirements in close proximity to transit).

When enacted in combination with other measures detailed in this section, common concerns raised by community members related to parking can be sufficiently addressed to allow lowered parking requirements to move forward.

**ALLOW REDUCTIONS FOR MIXED-USE PROJECTS**

Under Needham's Zoning By-Law projects with more than one use must meet minimum requirements for all uses, regardless of whether these uses place similar demands on the parking network at different points of the day. Many communities acknowledge that a mixed-use project, such as a retail building with above-ground apartments, will almost never see peak demand for each of these components realized at the same time.

A sample table allowing for mixed-use reductions from the Somerville Zoning Ordinance is defined below:

| Time of Day | Commercial   | Evening<br>Commercial | Residential  | Total             |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 6am - 9am   | ( X ) * 25%  | ( X ) * 0%            | ( Y ) * 100% | = sum of this row |
| 9am - 7pm   | ( X ) * 100% | ( X ) * 50%           | ( Y ) * 65%  | = sum of this row |
| 7pm - 11pm  | ( X ) * 25%  | ( X ) * 100%          | ( Y ) * 100% | = sum of this row |
| 11pm - 6am  | ( X ) * 0%   | ( X ) * 25%           | ( Y ) * 100% | = sum of this row |

Mixed-use computation applies percentages at different points of the day to estimate parking demand under different use types. For instance, an office project may be required to meet 100% of the minimum parking demand during weekday working hours but have no requirement during overnight hours. A related residential project may require 100% compliance during overnight hours but only 65% during weekday days, as shown in the Somerville example, reflecting those commuting to work or using their vehicle for other purposes. A mixed-use residential and office project in this instance would have a peak demand reflecting the greater sum of:

- 100% of the office use and 65% of the residential use or
- 0% of the office use and 100% of the residential use

The parking requirement would be customized to meet this level of demand.

**EXPAND OFF-SITE PARKING ALLOWANCES**

Needham's Zoning By-Law allows limited use of off-site parking provided the lot and subject building are no more than 300 feet apart and under the same ownership. The By-Law does not allow for the use of public parking to satisfy this condition, whether for on-street or off-street spaces.

Many communities allow development projects to tap into public parking resources or enter into arrangements with private parties (explored in the following measure) to use off-site parking to satisfy parking requirements. These provisions typically require projects to demonstrate that estimated parking demand can be satisfied using these resources, such as by showing that the satellite parking location can accommodate some or all of the subject project's demand at different points of the day. Protections are often built into by-laws requiring

**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

the off-site location to fall within a similar zoning district, to retain the character of nearby residential neighborhoods.

The review of waivers for recent Needham commercial development projects found several instances where the Town obligated businesses to purchase employee permits to park in municipal lots, an example of using off-site parking to satisfy off-street parking requirements.

### **CODIFY SHARED PARKING AGREEMENTS**

Shared parking agreements enable separate properties to share a common parking area within some established distance of the property. This allows for the private parking supply at a single location to be opened up to a greater number of users, helping to limit the future growth of the parking supply associated with new development projects.

Needham allows for shared parking in the Avery Square Business District for non-residential users at up to an 800-foot distance for employees; many nearby communities have similar provisions in their zoning ordinances. In Needham, developers must demonstrate that shared parking is for uses with peak demands at different times, there exists unusual age or other characteristics of site users, or feature user-sponsored demand reduction devices such as car-pooling.

Shared parking agreements can take on many forms, including:

- Shared parking between two complementary uses to unlock “restricted” parking facilities
- Shared parking at specific times of the day or week for specific users, such as restaurant employees using bank parking at night through an agreement between limited entities
- Active involvement from the Town to work with private property owners to open underutilized parking to the general public

Agreements between private parties often take on the form of a lease, where one user pays the other for access to parking. The Town can serve as a mediator between involved parties to provide fair protections and exit clauses to agreements, ensure land rights are protected, and to maintain any grandfathered zoning privileges. The Town’s involvement can also inventory the status of parking areas and serve as a facilitator for parties seeking to obtain or lease parking. These actions help relieve developers of the effort involved in facilitating a shared parking arrangement and encourage continued adoption of the practice.

When an agreement takes place between the Town and a private party, such as for general parking on a private lot during off-hours, the Town can provide “in-kind” services such as improvements to and maintenance of surface areas, lighting, and signage, as well as commitments to provide snow clearance during winter weather.

In many communities, shared parking is already informally practiced; a formal agreement ensures that the party “providing” parking is monetized for doing so and clarity is provided for users to park in designated areas without the fear of being towed.

### **EXPAND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT**

**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

Transportation demand management (TDM) speaks broadly to measures constructed as part of development projects or practiced by multi-unit residences, offices, and retail stores to encourage non-single occupancy vehicle travel by employees, residents, and visitors. In Needham, TDM measures are required for projects in some commercial districts, but not those in Needham Center or Needham Heights.

Requiring TDM measures for all projects can further encourage multimodal travel throughout Needham; individuals will be more likely to walk, bike, or take transit with assurances that bike parking will be available at destinations, incentives will be in place for those carpooling or vanpooling, and transit users will be supported with subsidies or other means to encourage travel by train or bus.

An effective TDM strategy should be clear and attainable; developers should not be incentivized to seek exceptions or skirt requirements which cannot be well enacted or tracked. Many municipalities throughout Greater Boston feature a static list of measures to enact or to choose from, much like Needham has for projects which require TDM action.

### **ALLOW BY-RIGHT REDUCTIONS**

Special permits to relieve developers from meeting minimum parking requirements are granted by the Board of Appeals; as stated earlier, the Board may consider factors such as the ability of a project to demonstrate it can be compliant with parking standards if need be, or that a future change of use does not preclude meeting requirements.

These strictly-worded provisions, requiring projects to plan for the provision of parking it has no intention of meeting or removing from consideration projects with no ability to meet parking requirements, introduce a high level of uncertainty for developers seeking waivers from meeting parking requirements. Town staff indicated that most commercial projects end up at the Board of Appeals seeking a waiver from minimum parking requirements.

Clear, objective standards which developers can meet to reduce their on-site parking provision can simplify the development review process and provide peace of mind to the community that providing less parking with development projects will not produce harmful outcomes. These can include requirements to satisfy other measures detailed in this memo, such as seeking off-site parking or shared parking agreements and enacting transportation demand management strategies. If a developer satisfies these requests, a waiver to forego meeting minimum parking requirements can be obtained by-right rather than via request from the Board of Appeals.

### **ADOPT IN-LIEU FEE PROGRAM**

More active use and management of the Needham Center Off-Street Parking Fund can ensure that developers seeking waivers from minimum parking requirements are creating community benefits by some other means, in much the same way that the minimum parking standard is meant to retain parking availability and prevent overflow parking throughout Needham's commercial areas and its edges.

A transparent fee, which can be tied to the per space cost of a surface or structured parking space in a way which can incentivize forgoing parking construction (rather than one tied to Planning Board approval, on a case-by-case basis, as practiced today), can be requested and used to fund transportation improvements in Needham's commercial districts. These can include:

- Maintenance and improvements (landscaping, lighting) to public parking assets

**Reference:      Needham Parking Study – Zoning Review**

- Improvements to the multimodal transportation network to encourage greater walking and bicycling activity
- Beautification for Needham Center and Needham Heights to spur economic activity

Many communities throughout Greater Boston have enacted parking benefit districts, which use revenues from sources like in-lieu fees to fund local improvements, including Natick, Brookline, and Arlington.

## **CONSIDER PARKING MAXIMUMS**

Parking maximums help ensure that developers can opt into supplying parking at a rate commensurate with new development projects, but not at a rate above this. By placing a restriction on the number of spaces a developer can provide with a project, the community limits the negative impacts that an oversupply of parking can impose.

Where stakeholders might resist the introduction of parking maximums, softer measures such as in-lieu fees or shared parking arrangements can ensure that an overprovision of parking for a development project can help advance one or more community benefits. For instance, where a developer will build parking at a rate that the community feels would result in an underutilization of the space, the developer can be made to share a portion of the parking or pay a per-space fee to help advance community transportation and/or economic development initiatives.

The City of Boston recently instituted citywide parking maximums tailored towards a project's location and land use mix. Developments must demonstrate that the off-street parking provision is below listed maximum provided by the City. In more suburban settings, Belmont (in specific districts) and Burlington (throughout the community) each provide for parking maximums.

## **Entity**

## **SenderName**

Phone:

Fax: Fax Number

Attachment:

Attachment

c. C.C.

1. Would you like to take the parking survey for Needham Center or Needham Heights? Note that if you would like to do both, simply take the survey twice and answer this question differently each time.

[More Details](#)

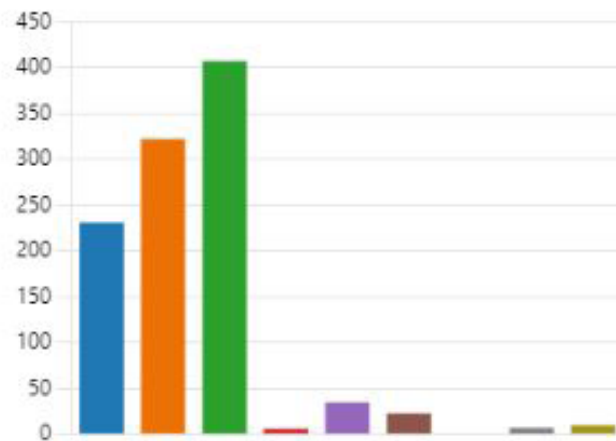
|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Needham Center  | 710 |
| Needham Heights | 313 |



2. Which of these best describes you? If multiple, pick the one that is the most frequent reason that brings you to the Needham Center or Needham Heights study area.

[More Details](#)

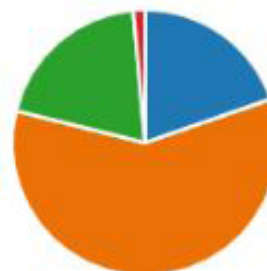
|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| I live in the Needham Center or ...   | 231 |
| I live elsewhere in Needham           | 322 |
| I visit the study area to shop, di... | 407 |
| I work at/visit the hospital          | 6   |
| I am a business owner in the stu...   | 35  |
| I am an employee in the study a...    | 23  |
| I go to school or drop my child ...   | 1   |
| I go to take the commuter rail        | 7   |
| Other                                 | 10  |



3. How often do you visit Needham Center/Needham Heights? (Select one)

[More Details](#)

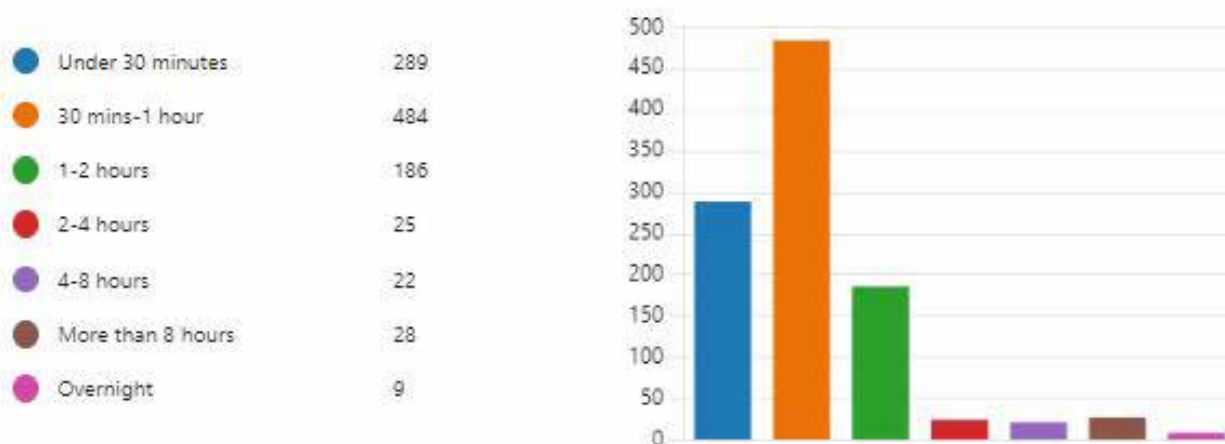
|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Every day               | 205 |
| Multiple times per week | 616 |
| A few times a month     | 205 |
| Once a month or less    | 15  |





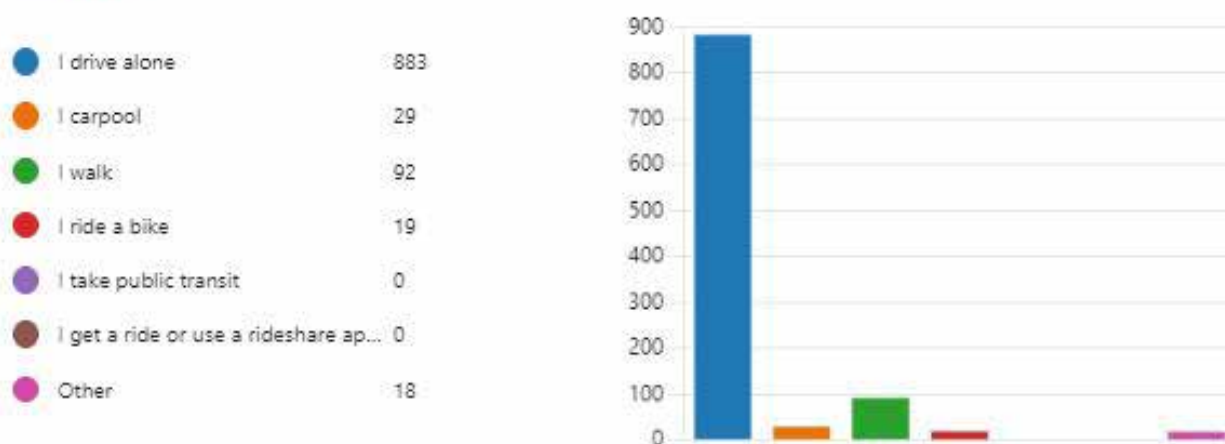
4. How long do you spend on a typical visit to Needham Center/Needham Heights? (Select one)

[More Details](#)



5. How do you typically travel to Needham Center/Needham Heights? (Select one)

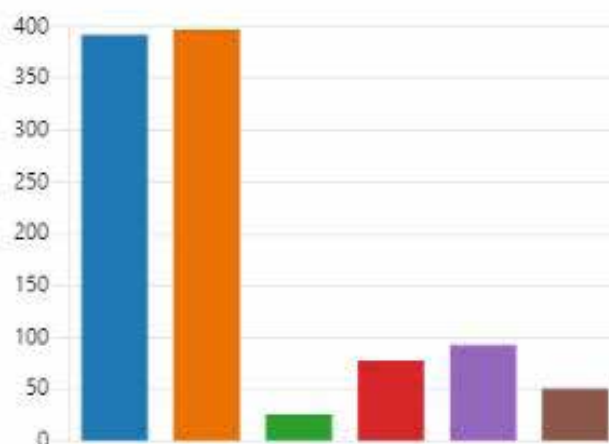
[More Details](#)



6. When you drive to Needham Center/Needham Heights, where do you park most frequently? (Select one)

[More Details](#)

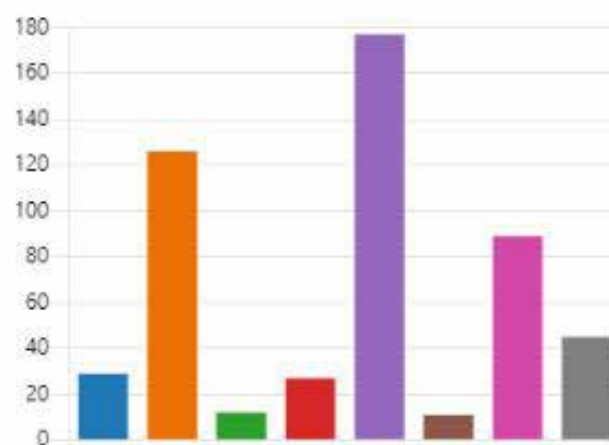
|                                        |     |
|----------------------------------------|-----|
| On-street                              | 392 |
| Off-street in a public lot (NOT a ...  | 397 |
| Off-street in a Commuter Rail Lot      | 26  |
| Walgreens Lot                          | 78  |
| Off-street in a private lot (includ... | 93  |
| Other                                  | 51  |



7. Which of the off-street public lots do you most frequently park? (Select all that apply)

[More Details](#)

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Needham Center- Eaton Square...   | 29  |
| Needham Center- Chapel Street...  | 126 |
| Needham Center- Dedham Ave...     | 12  |
| Needham Center- Lincoln/Stree...  | 27  |
| Needham Center- Lincoln/Chest...  | 177 |
| Needham Center- I'm unsure of ... | 11  |
| Needham Heights- Mark Lee/H...    | 89  |
| Other                             | 45  |



8. How close to your destination do you typically park? (Select one)

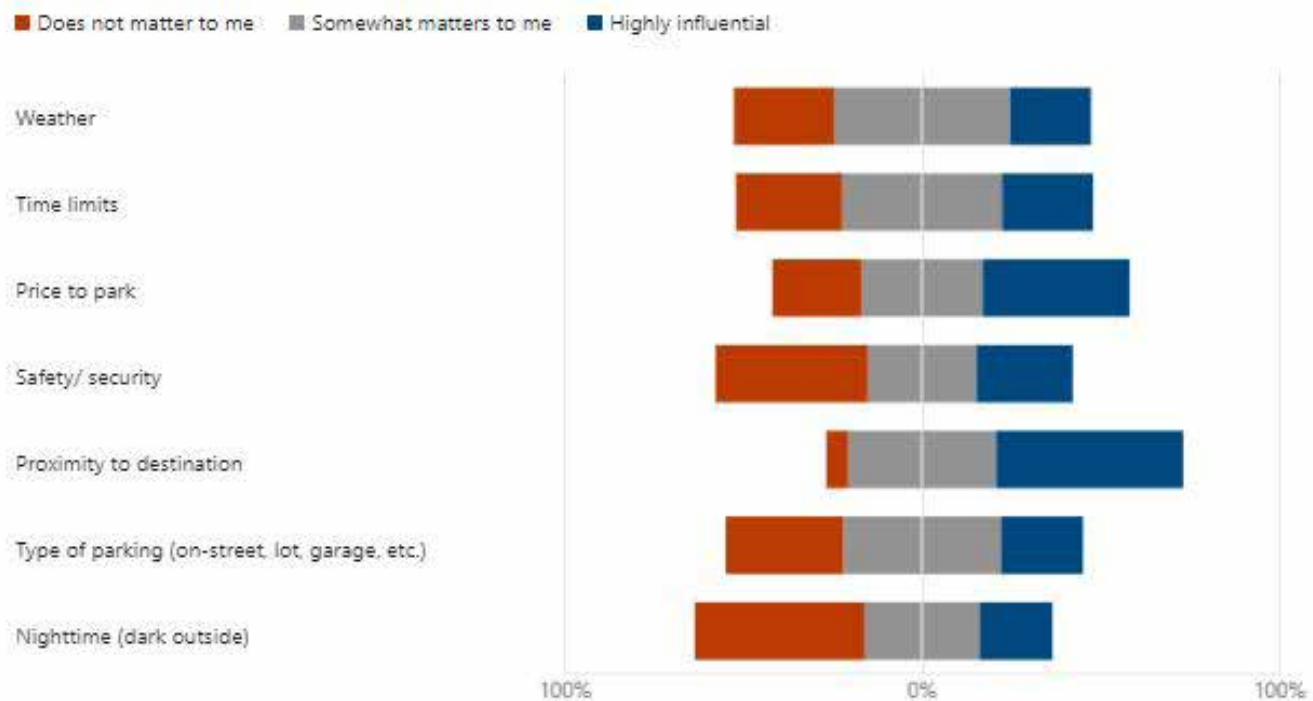
[More Details](#)

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Right out front, on site, or on th... | 607 |
| One or two blocks away                | 407 |
| Three or more blocks away             | 20  |



9. When you are looking for a space to park, what influences your choice? Please mark one circle per row.

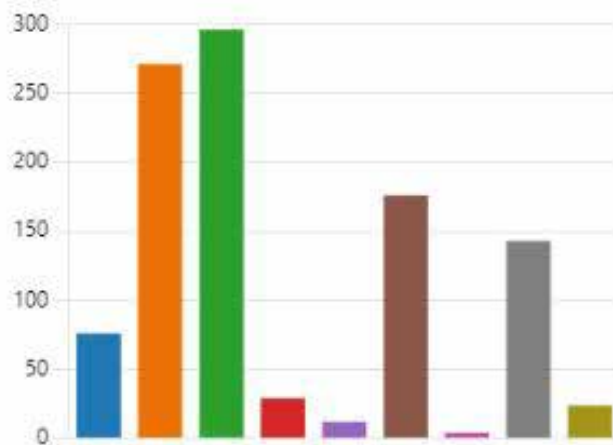
[More Details](#)



10. What type of parking do you use most often when you visit? (Select one)

[More Details](#)

|                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| 10 or 15-minute parking            | 76  |
| 30 min or 1-hour parking           | 271 |
| 2-hour parking                     | 296 |
| Permit parking (employee, com...   | 29  |
| Employee-designated parking w...   | 12  |
| Customer-designated parking w...   | 176 |
| Tenant-designated parking (suc...  | 4   |
| Unregulated parking (no time li... | 143 |
| Other                              | 24  |



11. Which of the following most applies to your typical visit? (Select one)

[More Details](#)

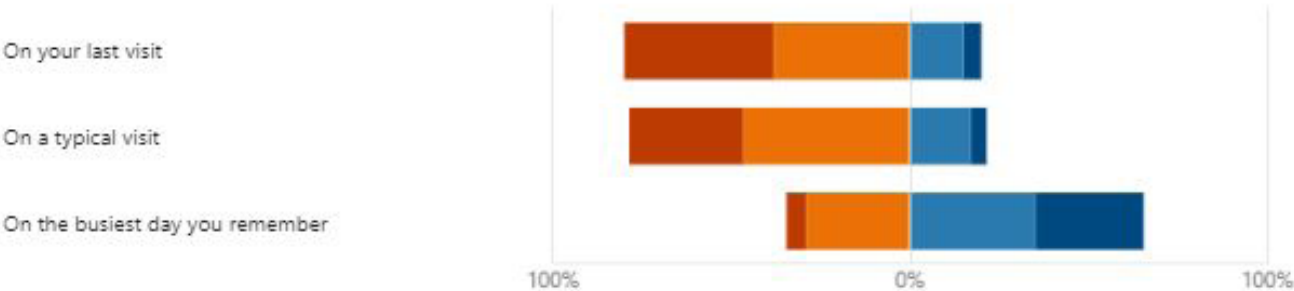
- I visit one destination only 360
- I visit multiple destinations, drivi... 162
- I visit multiple destinations, park... 502
- Other 10



12. How long does it take to find a space...

[More Details](#)

- I find a space right away every time
- An extra minute or so
- It can take up to 5 minutes to find a space
- It takes over 5 minutes to find a space



13. In the question above, if you selected that it takes over 5 minutes to find a space when you visit Needham Center/Needham Heights, where are you typically going? (e.g., Town Hall)?

[More Details](#)

397

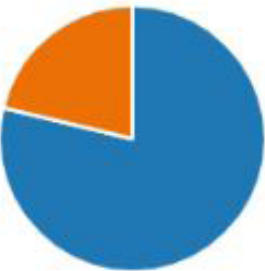
Responses

Latest Responses

14. Have you ever paid for parking using one of the available parking meters in Needham Center/Needham Heights?

[More Details](#)

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 811 |
| No  | 219 |



15. On a scale of 1-5, indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your experience with parking meters when visiting Needham Center/Needham Heights?

1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neither agree nor disagree, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree)

[More Details](#)

1 2 3 4 5

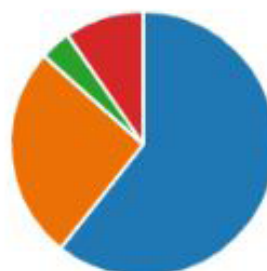




## 16. How does paid parking impact your parking choice?

[More Details](#)

- I will park farther away from my ... 597
- I will pay more to park closer to ... 255
- I will walk, bike, or take a bus, ta... 37
- I will choose to drive elsewhere 95



## 17. If the Town were to investigate different options for paying for parking in the future, which of the following would be your preference? (Select one)

[More Details](#)

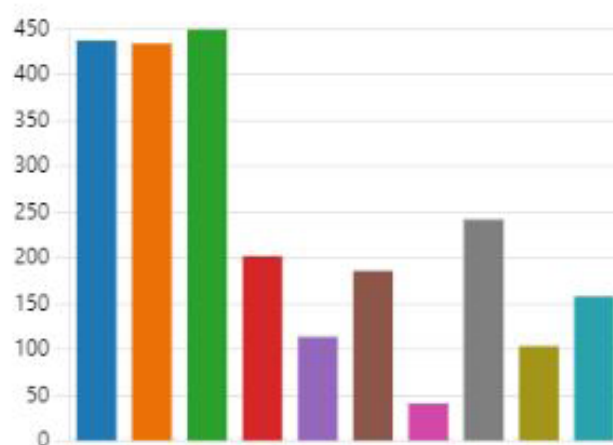
- Meters that accept coins only 51
- Meters that accept both coins a... 403
- Meters that accept coins, bills a... 153
- Meters that accept credit cards ... 32
- Pay by smartphone app 368



## 18. If the City were to invest in improvements, which of the following would be your top three (3) choices?

[More Details](#)

- More parking 437
- Improvements to the walking e... 434
- Better parking meters/technolo... 449
- Better lighting 202
- Better parking signage 114
- Better information about parkin... 186
- Better parking enforcement 41
- Establish a Parking Benefit Distri... 242
- Longer parking hours 104
- No time limits 158



19. What else would you like to tell us about parking in Needham Center/Needham Heights?

[More Details](#)

430  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*"Issues arise from approving new buildings and businesses without enough p...*

20. What is your zip code of residence?

[More Details](#)

1012  
Responses

Latest Responses  
"02492"  
"02494"

21. What is your age?

[More Details](#)

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| 18-24             | 2   |
| 25-44             | 237 |
| 45-64             | 444 |
| 65 and over       | 327 |
| Prefer not to say | 29  |











