



SHELBURNE PARKING STRATEGY Final Report

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NYGAARD

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Introduction



Introduction

This report was prepared on behalf of the Town of Shelburne through a “Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance Program” competitive grant from the State Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The Shelburne Town staff oversaw and reviewed data collection processes as well as the development of the parking management plan, final report, and final presentation. In addition, Town businesses, residents, visitors, and employees provided insight and input into this study at a public open house and stakeholder meeting held in August 2017. On behalf of DHCD and the Town of Shelburne, the study team would like to thank all stakeholders and public participants for their constructive inputs to this process.



Background and Understanding

The Town of Shelburne, and its almost 1,900 residents, is located 10 miles west of Greenfield and I-91 in Franklin County. The Deerfield River runs through the Shelburne Falls cultural district, attracting a significant number of regional and local visitors to the area, particularly for its Bridge of Flowers and Glacial Potholes features. The beauty of the region has attracted new residents and generated an increasingly strong tourism market. Downtown art galleries, restaurants, and bookstores also attract significant visitor traffic, especially in the summer and fall months. The active Senior Center and Town Hall frequently host popular events that generate a large parking demand.

In 1999, the Towns of Shelburne and Buckland conducted a parking study to assess utilization/availability patterns, turnover, needs, and sufficiency of parking spaces in the two downtown areas that collectively form Shelburne Falls. The study identified an underuse of remote spaces and opportunities for new signage and time restrictions to encourage better utilization of available spaces.

Since then, the number of commercial properties downtown has grown, as has tourism and parking demand. The Town hired an additional police officer to help with parking enforcement in the Business District. Town officials and the Shelburne Falls Partnership Group recently discussed proposals to improve the built environment and redevelop vacant properties in the heart of downtown. While much of the town's off-street parking is municipally-owned, business owners have relied on informal shared parking agreements to balance customer demand and employee parking access.

In the context of additional local planning initiatives, the Town conducted this comprehensive parking study to unlock potential for local development, enhance visitor access, and better accommodate the parking needs of both visitors and residents. It also presents a chance to review zoning bylaws, which currently mandate minimum parking requirements for residential units, which likely discourages the vibrant mixed-use properties sought for downtown by residents and visitors alike. An effective parking management plan can maximize existing Town resources and provide important data to support future development initiatives. In addition, it gives local residents and business owners a forum to express concerns and solutions for improving access and mobility town-wide. The study is multimodal in nature and examines issues not only related to vehicle parking management, but possibilities to improve access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and potential transit connections.





Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions

This section documents the existing parking conditions within the Shelburne village center. Data collection efforts in the Summer of 2017 identified existing parking assets, their regulation, how they are used today, and the Town's current parking management strategies.

STUDY AREA

To effectively measure parking usage across the village center, a study area was identified that includes a portion of Bridge Street from the Deerfield River to Mechanic Street, Deerfield Ave, and part of Water, Main, and Mechanic Streets from Bridge Street to Cross Street. The defined study area also includes the Town Hall and major local and regional attractions such as restaurants, bookstores, and art galleries.

The study area encompasses several private lots serving local businesses, along with three municipal lots. Most businesses rely on the limited on-street parking or their own parking spaces tucked behind the building, but informal agreements to share off-street parking between businesses also support those with limited on-site parking supply for employees. The primary on-street parking supply consists of spaces along Bridge Street, Main Street, Deerfield Ave, Water Street, and Mechanic Street.

Figure 1: Shelburne Study Area & Parking Inventory



Note: Detailed inventory map in the Appendix.

Existing Conditions

PARKING INVENTORY

A field inventory conducted in August 2017 identified approximately 375 public and private parking spaces in the Shelburne study area. As shown in Figure 2, the majority of the parking supply — approximately 61% — is publicly owned and thus available to all users, such as customers, residents, or employees. More than 80 spaces, or about 34% of the off-street supply in the Shelburne, are located in the public off-street spaces behind Keystone Market. On-street parking supply is more limited, and ambiguous regulations and restrictions reduce the perceived supply, particularly on Water, Main, and Mechanic Streets.

The full parking inventory is depicted in the parking inventory map in Figure 1. Other key findings from the inventory are shown below.

Parking inventory key findings

- There are approximately 375 existing parking spaces in the study area, less than half of which are on-street (139 spaces).
- About half of the on-street supply (47%) is restricted to two-hour parking: found on Bridge Street and Deerfield Ave.
- Another 45% are unregulated and unmarked: found on Water, Main, and Mechanic streets, and lower Deerfield Ave.
- Public parking makes up less than half of the off-street spaces (42%), but informal shared-parking agreements allow up to 58% of off-street spaces to be more publicly-accessible.
- The 22 spaces (6% of the total supply) at the end of Deerfield Ave below Mole Hollow are unregulated and allow for overnight parking.

Figure 2: Parking Inventory in Shelburne

Parking Location	# of Spaces	%	% Publicly Available	% Restricted Access	% Time-limited
On-Street	139	37%	92%	8%	47%
Off-Street	236	63%	42%	63%	0%
Total	375	100%	61%	41%	18%

Parking Inventory

On-Street Parking Regulation

- Loading Zone
- Public, Unregulated
- Public, 2-hr limit, 9am-6pm, Thurs. 9am-9pm
- Public, 2-hr limit, Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, Sat. 9am-2pm
- Informal Parking
- Illegal Parking

Off-Street Parking Regulation

- Customers Only
- Employees Only
- Employees and Customers
- Open / Public
- Residents Only
- Residents and Employees
- VFW Parking Only

Existing Conditions

PARKING UTILIZATION

Periodic counts of parking occupancy provided data for a time series of parking demand levels and patterns, at different times of a typical day in an area. To gather this data, the team counted parked cars along each on-street segment and every off-street facility at three-hour time intervals, starting at 8:00 a.m. Mapping the resulting parking utilization data helps identify clear patterns of high and low usage, including the impact of regulations, as well as the overall share of the parking supply that is actually utilized during times of peak demand. Land usage, regulations, topography, and signage can drastically impact how neighboring parking assets are utilized, leaving some locations significantly underutilized, while drivers circle around other locations in search of an available space.

To ensure efficient parking management operations, a certain level of vacancy and utilization is preferred, both on-and off-street. It is ideal to have at least one empty on each block-face of street parking, to ensure easy customer access to businesses. This typically equates to about 1 out of 8 spaces free, or a target of 15-percent vacant per block face. Similarly a goal of at least 10-percent vacancy is considered ideal in off-street lots. If any facility has less availability, it is effectively at its functional capacity and drivers perceive a lack of availability. Facilities with lower utilization have excess capacity and can accommodate additional parked cars.

The study team conducted parking occupancy counts on a typical summer weekday to capture parking demand during Shelburne's seasonal peak for the year. Utilization counts were conducted on a sunny Thursday in late-August from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. to understand parking demand associated with Shelburne's peak activities, capturing, in particular, dining-generated demand from breakfast through the dinner hour.

Spatial Analysis of Parking Utilization: General Analysis

A chart of hourly utilization rates for the aggregate supply serving downtown is valuable. Mapping, however, can identify how demand varies by location, and reveal patterns and trends not evident within aggregate data. For managing parking resources, which typically occupy significant portions of downtown real estate, it is important to know if geospatial utilization patterns offer opportunities to better accommodate demand with existing supplies, before additional supply is contemplated.

A series of maps organizes the collected utilization data to depict conditions at each facility over the course of the survey day. The relative utilization level at each location is marked using colors representing increasing occupancy levels/decreasing availability levels:

- **Shades of Blue** represent locations that are underutilized.
- **Yellow** represents locations where utilization is nearing the optimal range.
- **Orange** represents actively-used locations that are being optimally utilized.
- **Red** represents locations that are over-utilized, presenting conditions of constrained availability to approaching drivers.

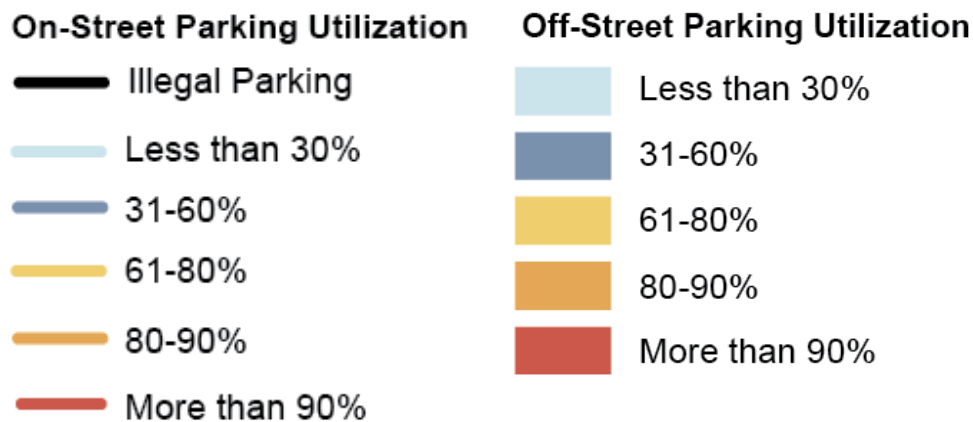
Existing Conditions

PARKING UTILIZATION

Parking utilization counts were conducted on a typical summer weekday between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Data collectors captured parking demand for 12 hours with counts every three hours in the study area. These hours were chosen to capture residential, employee, retail, and restaurant activity within Shelburne during the peak summer tourism season. An additional count of occupied spaces in the core of the study area (Bridge Street and the municipal lot) occurred at 1:00 p.m. to capture parking demand at the height of midday/lunch activity.

On the right are the key findings for weekday parking utilization, followed by the spatial analysis maps on the next page which show the geospatial parking utilization patterns during each survey period.

Figure 3: Parking Utilization Color Shades



Note: "Illegal parking" indicates cars parked on-street in areas where parking is not allowed by sign, or street marking.

Parking utilization key findings

- Overall, parking utilization peaks around midday, at 54%
- Both on- and off-street parking was observed to peak at this same level, during the same time period.
- The maximum observed occupancy level was 185 parked cars across the study area.
- Parking utilization appears to be extremely concentrated on Bridge Street itself and in the municipal lot behind Keystone Market.
 - The municipal lot was most utilized between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., with a peak demand of 91%, with every space besides the handicap spaces fully utilized.
 - On-street spaces on Bridge Street were more utilized on the western end and northern side of the street, but no more than 66% full all day, with a peak between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
 - Public spaces in long-term remote lots on Cross St, Deerfield Ave, as well as the lot owned by People's United Bank, were no more than 27% utilized, with a peak at 2:00pm – 5:00pm.
- Private lots with restricted-access lots were no more than 42% full all day and reach a peak demand midday between 11:00am – 5:00pm. Among them, Keystone Market's 12-space row is 100% full all day.

Figure 4: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 8am-11am



Figure 5: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 11am-2pm



Figure 6: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 2pm-5pm



Figure 7: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 5pm-8pm



Note: Detailed utilization maps in the Appendix.

Existing Conditions

PARKING UTILIZATION

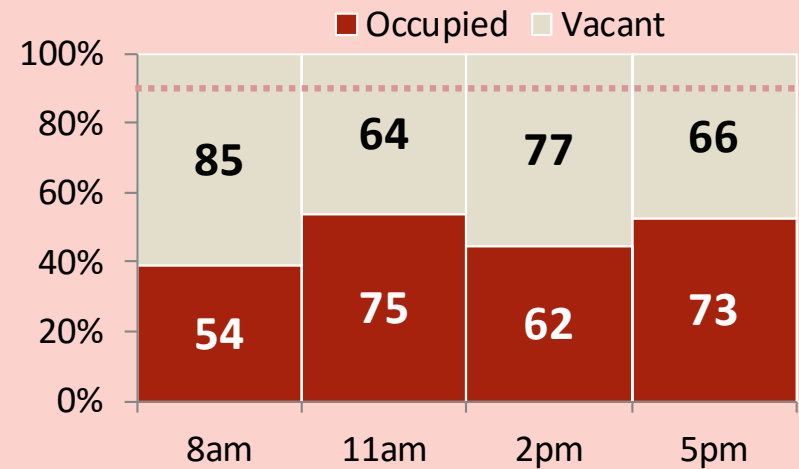
The utilization charts on this page provide an aggregate overview of parking occupancy and vacancy. The red bars indicate how many cars are parked in each time period, while the tan areas indicate the number of available parking spaces.

Overall, Shelburne’s parking supply is under 55% utilized, indicating sufficient overall parking capacity throughout the day. Off-street and on-street spaces lots are fairly evenly utilized. Spaces on Bridge Street east of Main Street are the most heavily utilized on-street parking locations. Off-street, the lot behind Keystone Market between Water and Main Street is highly utilized throughout the day. Remote spaces are no more than 29% full all day.

Charts on the following pages depict utilization levels within several “sub inventories” within the overall parking supply.

Figure 9: Utilization Profile: On-Street Parking

Utilization chart - Thursday



Note: The red dotted line indicates the 90-percent optimal occupancy

Figure 8: Utilization Profile: All Parking Within The Study Area

Utilization chart - Thursday

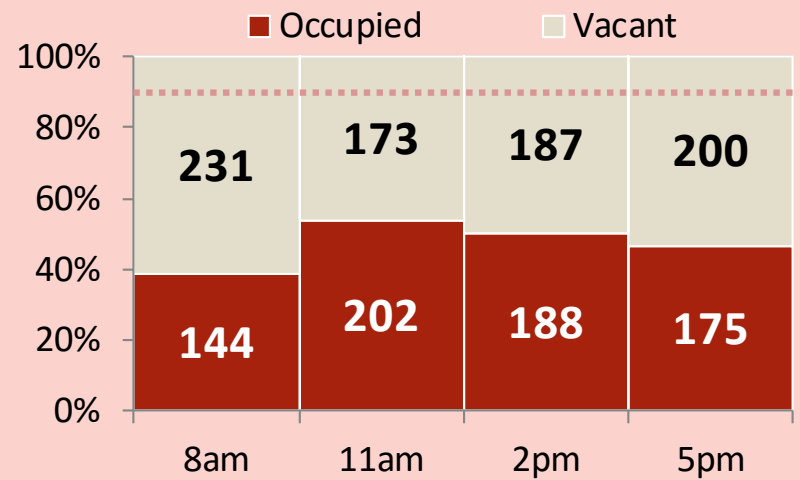
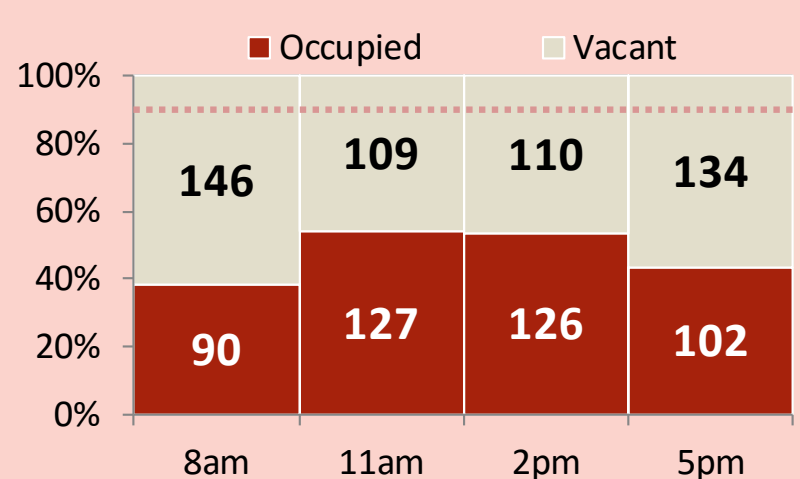


Figure 10: Utilization Profile: Off-Street Parking

Utilization chart - Thursday



Existing Conditions

Figure 11: Utilization Profile: All Restricted Parking Spaces

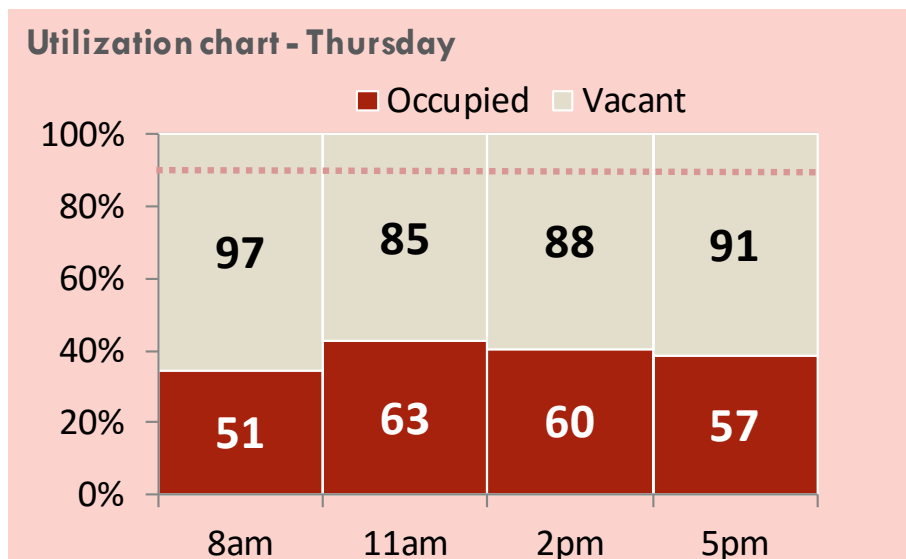


Figure 12: Utilization Profile: Bridge Street On-Street Spaces

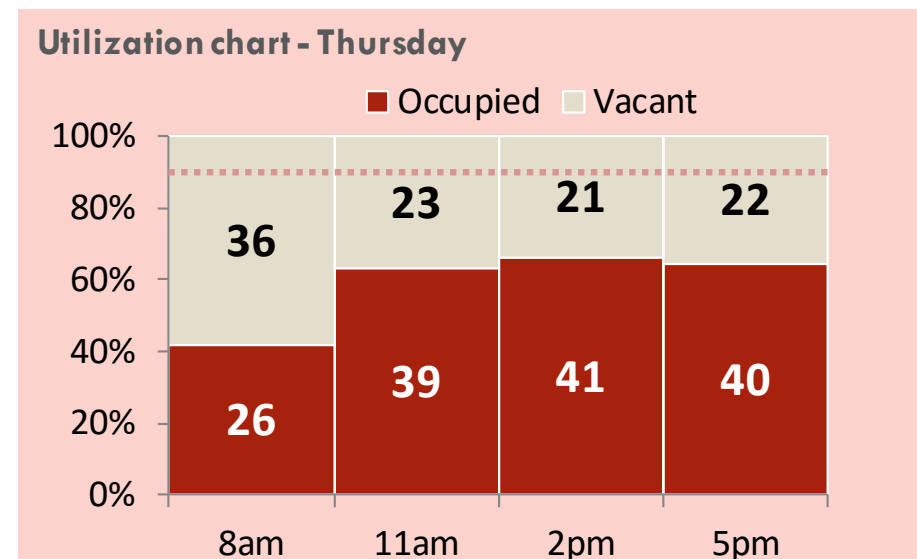


Figure 13: Utilization Profile: Bridge Street Municipal Lot public spaces

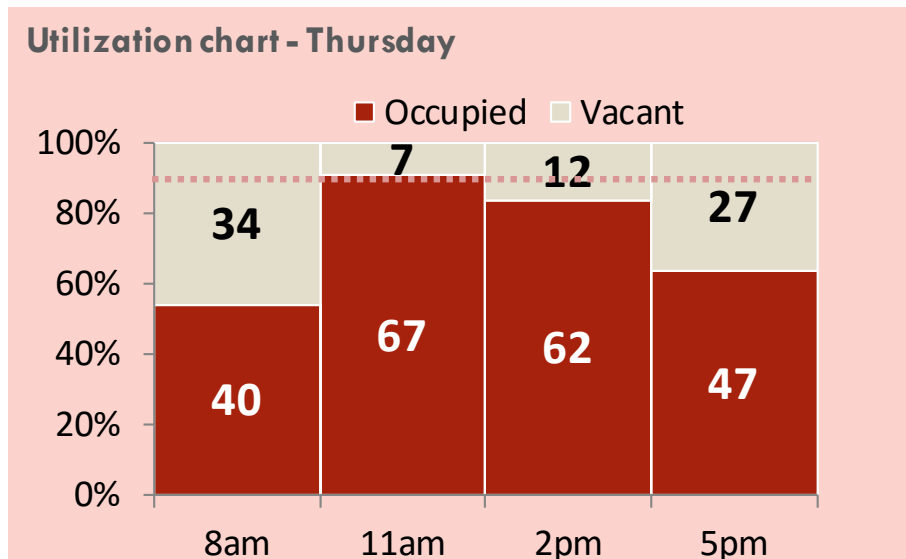
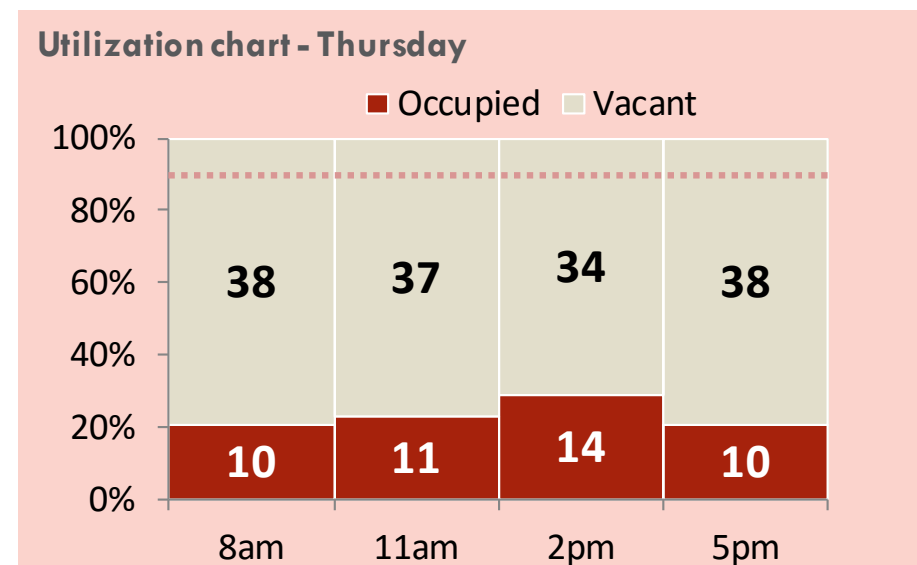


Figure 14: Utilization Profile: On- and Off-Street Public Remote Spaces



Note: The red dotted line indicates the 90-percent optimal occupancy



Public Process

Public Process

The public outreach process is an integral piece of the parking study, as it can help unlock another level of local understanding of how parking is used or not used and the reasons why. To complement data findings from parking inventory and utilization surveys, the study team conducted several conversations with business owners and facilitated a public open house in August 2017. These events provided valuable feedback, including first-hand perspectives on parking options and experiences, from those most directly familiar downtown parking.



VOTE FOR YOUR TOP PARKING PRIORITIES IN SHELBURNE

I would like to park once and walk to all my destinations in Shelburne.

I value Shelburne's historic character.

I sometimes avoid coming to Shelburne because I know parking will be hard to find.

I would come to Shelburne more often if parking was more convenient.

I would pay to park if I was guaranteed a convenient space.

I don't mind parking a little further from my destination if it means I don't have to search for parking.

I would like it to be easier/safer to walk, bike, or take transit to Shelburne.

I prefer to park on street in front of my destination and will circle to find the best space.

I find myself moving my car because of time limit restrictions.

I would like clearer information on parking in Shelburne.

I would like more designated long-term (including overnight) parking in Shelburne, even if it is slightly further away.

Write your own! Keep parked parking in the hills. Prefer my garage. As a long term owner, I see the no meters and no way to park. My first thing I'd do after we leave town. Park for the long term and just to the next town. Parking is the key for economic development. Also, making the character/quality of Shelburne better. Park for the whole village in Shelburne & Shelburne. PREVENT PARKING FORGOTTEN. Public space, don't let private space for public. Accessible parking for all. #OUR SHARED PUBLIC SPACE. No long term parking.

11

4

17

55

6

10

16

9

Projects when I trigger



Public Process

OPEN HOUSE

On August 24, 2017, local residents, business owners, employees and visitors were invited to the former Singley Furniture site to participate in a hands-on “Open House” designed to gather more input on parking in Shelburne.

Attendees provided feedback on existing parking conditions through direct dialogue, in which participants were encouraged to express their concerns and ideas for potential solutions. Feedback was also gathered through mapping and priority-voting exercises. More than a forty public participants showed up and voiced their comments and concerns.

Figure 15: Open House Flyer

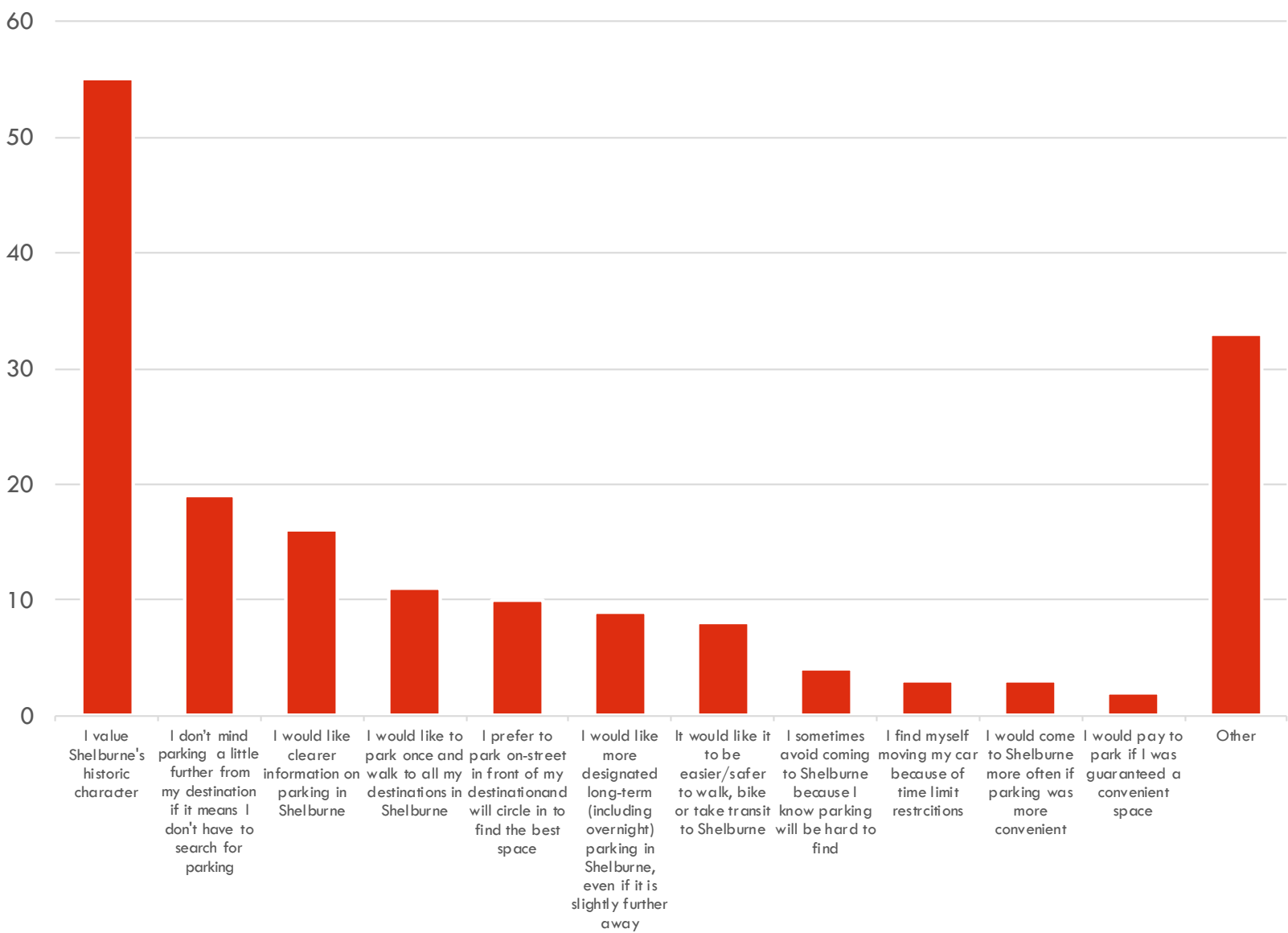


Open House key findings

- Many participants mentioned the architecture, nature, and historic character as big draws for town, as tourists come in to see the Glacial Potholes and the Bridge of Flowers.
- Many pointed out a preference for long-term parking in the municipal spaces in the lot behind Keystone Market between Water and Main Streets.
- Parking on Deerfield Ave is considered a “last resort.”
- Generally, participants agreed that long-term parking should be placed further from the restaurants and retail on Bridge Street
- High parking turnover on Bridge Street is seen as important to increase business.
- Participants also expressed that it was sometimes difficult to find parking in front of their businesses on Bridge Street when making short stops.
- A large portion of attendees stated that they were unaware of some of the parking resources available to visitors, particularly the small lot on Cross St and overnight parking rules in the lot at the end of Deerfield Ave.
- Long-term bus parking is a concern for many participants as the tourism industry grows.
- Attendees reported that time-limit enforcement on Bridge Street was both too lax and too strict.

Public Process

Figure 16: Parking Priority Exercise Results



Priorities Voting Exercise

Open House participants were invited to “vote” for the parking-related priorities that were of greatest concern to them. With 11 potential priorities, participants were allotted six “votes” that could be used to prioritize one of more issues.

The exercise revealed a strong preference (32% of received votes) for a preserving Shelburne’s historic character. This underscores the need for zoning regulations and parking management approaches that can facilitate redevelopment, while maintaining downtown’s historic built form. The second most-identified priority (19% of received votes) was “I don’t mind parking a little farther from my destination if it means I don’t have to search for parking,” indicating a willingness to use remote parking spaces. The strong vote count for “I would like clearer information on parking” suggests that many may not be aware of all their parking options.

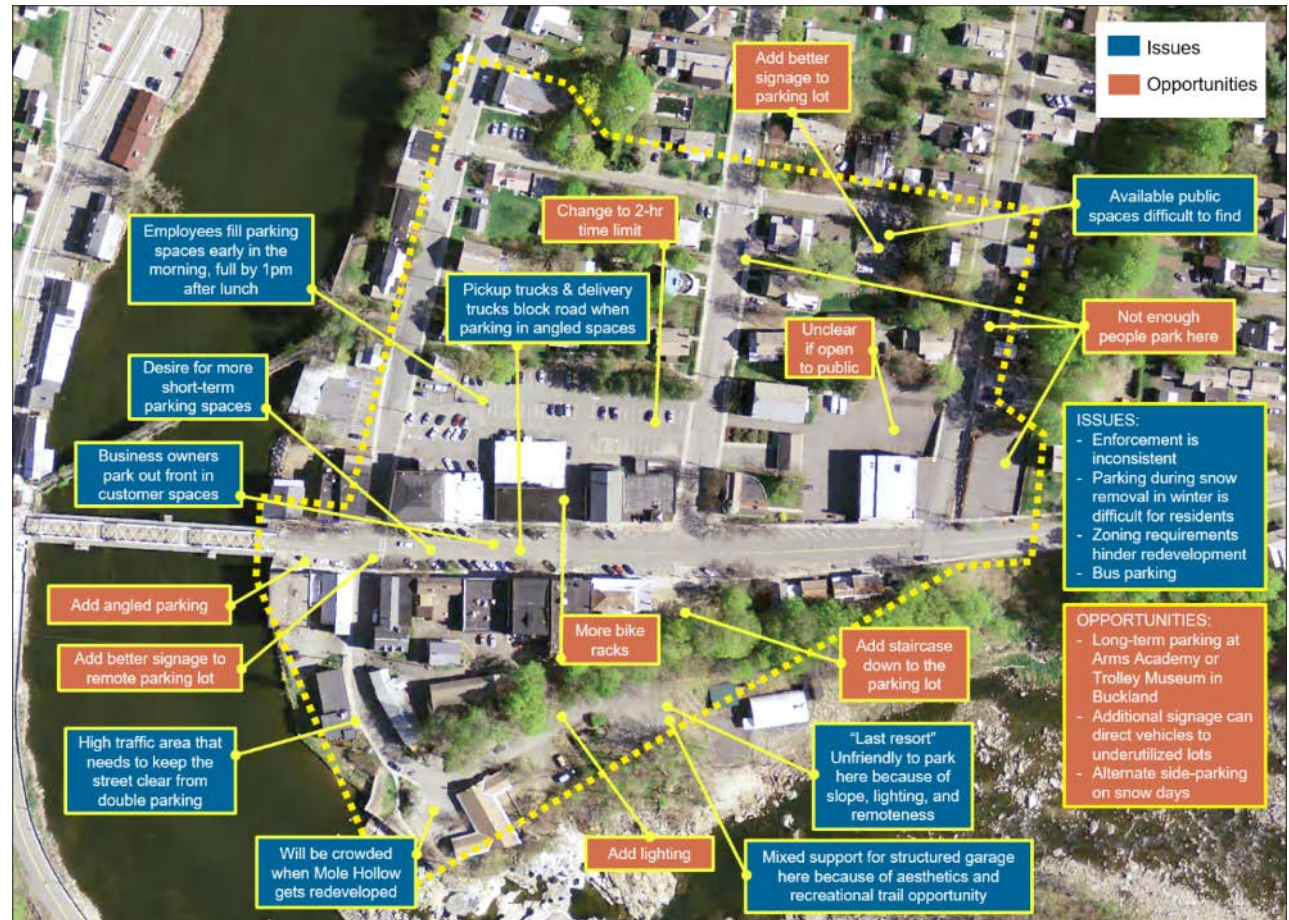
Public Process

OPEN HOUSE

Mapping Exercise

Open House participants directly expressed to the study team their comments on issues and opportunities regarding parking in Shelburne. Location-specific comments were marked onto a large printed map of the study area, while non-location-specific comments were listed separately. All comments were compiled into the electronic version in Figure 17. Possible solutions were marked as opportunities, while comments without a clear or immediate solution were marked as issues.

Figure 17: Open House Mapping Exercise Comments





Land Use and Zoning Analysis

Land Use and Zoning

EXISTING LAND USE

Parking is intricately intertwined with the overall mix of land uses and activities it serves. Careful consideration of what the development parcels are dedicated to (built environment, roadways, open space, parking) has a significant impact on the vitality of the downtown. And, downtown Shelburne has the variety of land uses typical of a traditional downtown environment. As shown in Figure 18, the mix of land uses and small-scale retail, with additional residential uses nearby, provides optimal conditions for a highly-walkable environment in the downtown core. As a result, parking demand is lower than comparable suburban areas.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics survey, there are currently 144 employees working in the downtown study area. The Town Assessor estimates 100 housing units and 86 residents (there are several addresses with no current resident information). As downtown Shelburne continues to grow, redevelop, and attract a variety of land uses, the balance and relationship between land uses and parking is critical. Figure 19 shows the estimated mix of future land uses based on development projects expected in downtown Shelburne.

This following land use and parking analysis helps to illustrate the existing ratio of land use and parking supply to expected demand in Shelburne. The combined results of these analyses are then compared to the actual observed parking demand from utilization data collection. The model determines how much parking would be needed assuming that parking is often shared between customers, employees, visitors, and residents.

Figure 18: Downtown Shelburne Existing Land Use

Commercial	64,751	square feet
Office	22,611	square feet
Industrial	7,970	square feet
Residential	100	units
Institutional	17,335	square feet

Figure 19: Downtown Shelburne Expected Future Land Use

Commercial	75,747	square feet
Office	22,611	square feet
Industrial	7,970	square feet
Residential	105	units
Institutional	17,335	square feet

Land Use and Zoning

PARKING REQUIREMENTS

A review of the most up-to-date Zoning Ordinance (May 2017) indicates that Shelburne's parking requirements are often higher than industry standards for peak parking demand rates, as proposed by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). ITE produces a periodic report titled *Parking Generation*, which is the prevailing national standard in determining parking demand for a development. ITE standards are based on parking demand studies submitted to ITE by a variety of parties, including public agencies, developers and consulting firms.

Although widely considered the industry standard, the peak parking demand rates found in the ITE guide are primarily derived from studies conducted in auto-dependent suburban settings. When used to project supply needs for land uses in more urban settings – such as downtown Shelburne – they tend to over-anticipate demand and justify supplies that are incongruous with walkable, historic downtown environments like Shelburne's. The new zoning regulations note that “one of Shelburne's greatest assets is the physical character of the commercial and residential sections of the village of Shelburne Falls.”

Shelburne's parking requirements exceed current ITE rates (*Parking Generation*, 4th Edition, 2010) for many common land use categories (Figure 20). These parking requirements are particularly important, as they will largely shape the balance of space used for active land uses versus parking as the downtown grows and sites are redeveloped.

Shelburne's stated intent is to “allow the Zoning Board of Appeals to work with those seeking to develop or redevelop land and buildings in the Town to find the best balance between (a) maintaining the character of the Town and (b) allowing the redevelopment of existing, deteriorating, or destroyed buildings or the development of new buildings.” Parking requirements may be waived if demand can be accommodated within existing parking assets or if there is no space on site to provide new parking. This is a nationwide best practice for sharing parking.

Figure 20: Sample of General Parking Requirements under Shelburne Zoning Ordinance

Use	Shelburne Regulation*	ITE Parking Ratio*	Shelburne vs. ITE
General Light Industrial	3.33	0.75	Above
Bowling Alley	3.33	4.00	Below
Recreational Community Center	3.33	3.20	Above
Day Care Center	3.33	3.16	Above
Shopping Center	3.33	2.55	Above
Supermarket	3.33	2.27	Above
Restaurant	3.33	5.55	Below
Drive-in Bank	3.33	4.00	Below
Library	3.33	0.42	Above
Office	2.00	2.47	Below
Government Office	3.33	3.20	Above
Junior/Community College	3.33	0.18	Above
Low to Mid-rise Apartment	2.00	1.20	Above

*per 1000 sqft. or per unit

Land Use and Zoning

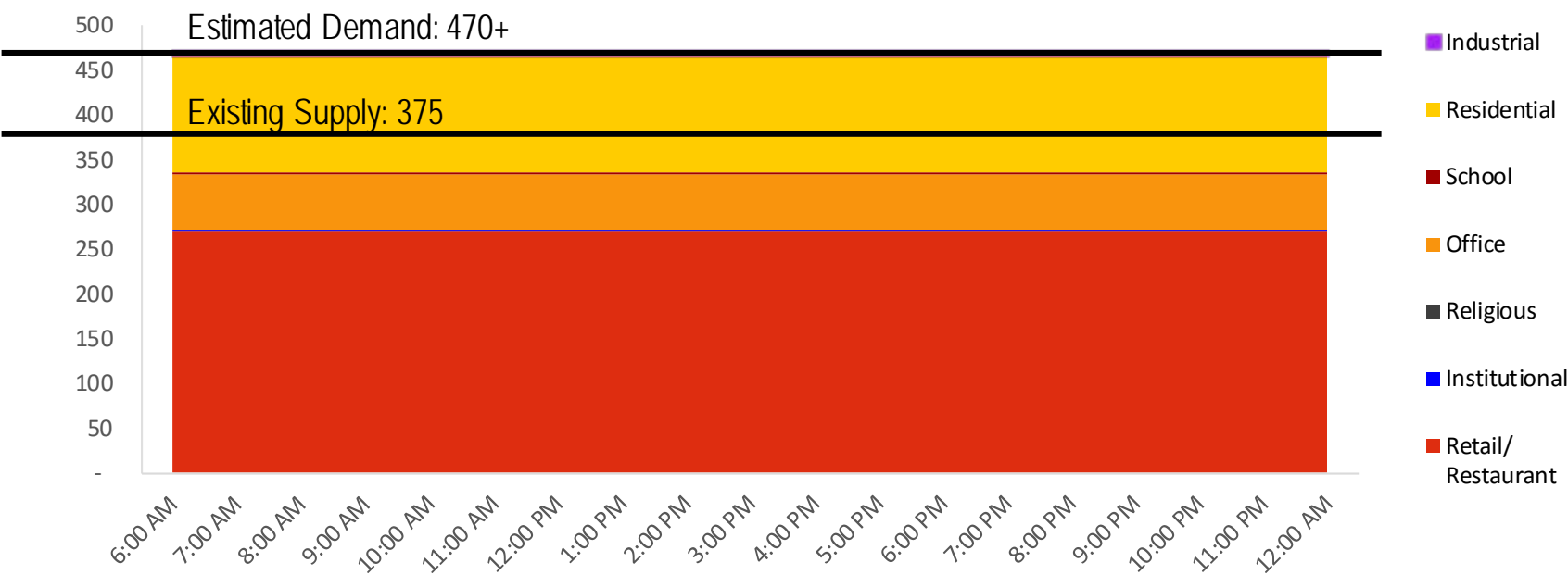
ITE EXPECTED DEMAND

Within the study area, there are approximately 250,000 square feet of space dedicated to a variety of uses in the downtown. As shown in Figure 18, there are also 52 residential units. The individual land uses represented by this measures were grouped into categories created by ITE's *Parking Generation, 4th Edition* to calculate how much parking demand would be projected for these land uses.

Using ITE measures results in an expected demand of approximately 470 spaces among downtown land uses, as displayed in Figure 21.

The term “unshared demand” reflects an expectation that every land use would have their own parking supply, restricted to on-site tenants and their visitors, throughout all hours of the day. The existing inventory within the downtown study area is only 375 spaces, nearly 100 spaces below this projection. Utilization counts indicate that, actually demand peaks at no more than 202 parked vehicles, an observed parking demand much lower than the existing inventory, and even lower than the need suggested by standard demand-generation rates.

Figure 21: Downtown Shelburne T raditional Parking Estimate



Land Use and Zoning

SHARED PARKING DEMAND

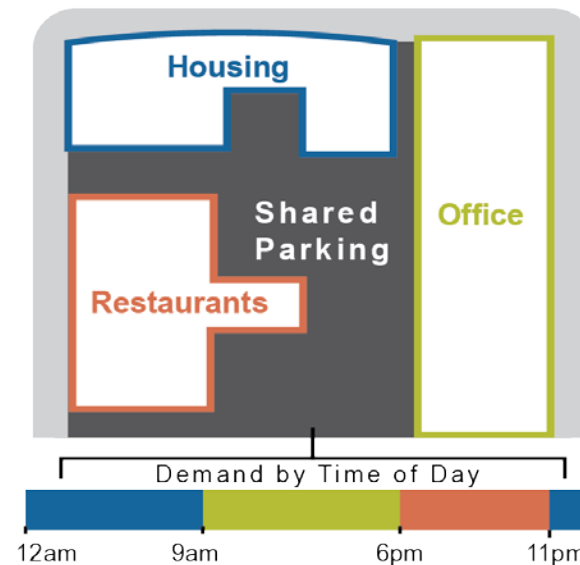
Mixed-use areas offer the opportunity to use one parking space for multiple land uses, with most local trips completed on foot rather than by car. This reduces the total number of spaces which would be required by the same land-uses in stand-alone developments. Furthermore parking demand varies by use throughout the day. Offices create parking demand that peaks during business hours, offset by minimal demand during evening and overnight times; Housing creates parking demand that peaks overnight, with modest daytime; and Restaurant uses peak at lunch and dinner.

To demonstrate the efficiency of such a “park-once” environment in downtown Shelburne, Nelson\Nygaard used an adapted shared parking model with inputs from the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) *Shared Parking Manual (2nd Edition, 2005)* and ITE's *Parking Generation (4th Edition, 2010)*. The shared parking model aggregates parking demand by time of day across all land uses to derive an overall parking expectation within the study area. The model includes a slightly larger than average percent reduction to account for the small size of Shelburne's downtown district where internal trips are short distances.

MODELED SHARED PARKING ANALYSIS

The same land use square footage from Figure 18 were used in the modified ULI Shared Parking Model to show the number of parking spaces needed after factoring in time of day demands by land use and Shelburne's mixed-use environment. These estimates can be viewed in Figure 23. The estimates show that the peak demand at 6:00 p.m. is only 217 spaces, indicating that there is adequate supply to meet demand, with a surplus of approximately 150 spaces during the peak demand period. Today there are only 202 spaces used at peak. Figure 24 estimates parking demand throughout the day based on the expected land use mix with redevelopment of Mole Hollow, the Singley Furniture building, and the lot next to the Visitor Center.

Figure 22: Shared Parking Model Example

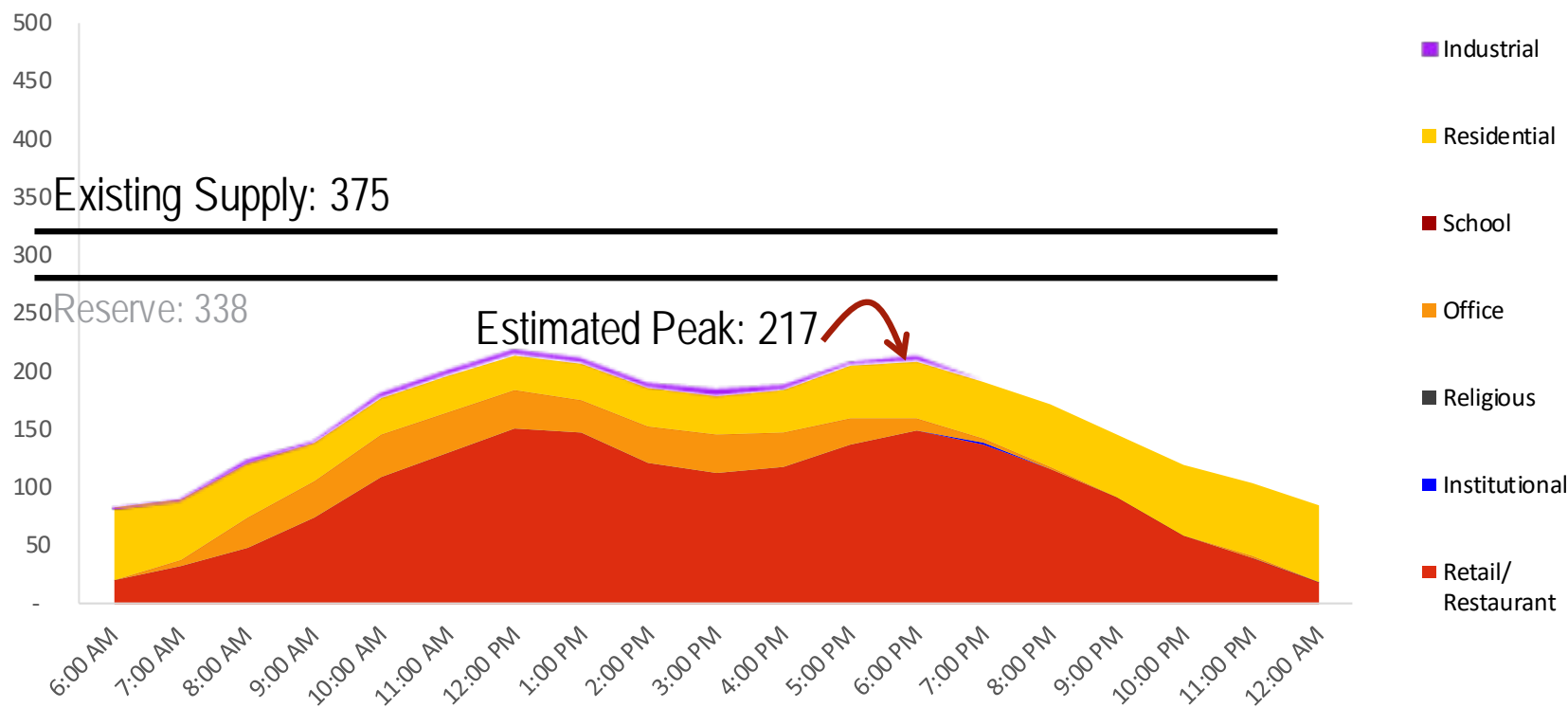


Land Use and Zoning

Figure 23: Downtown Shelburne Modeled “Shared” Existing Demand

Real Demand Profile

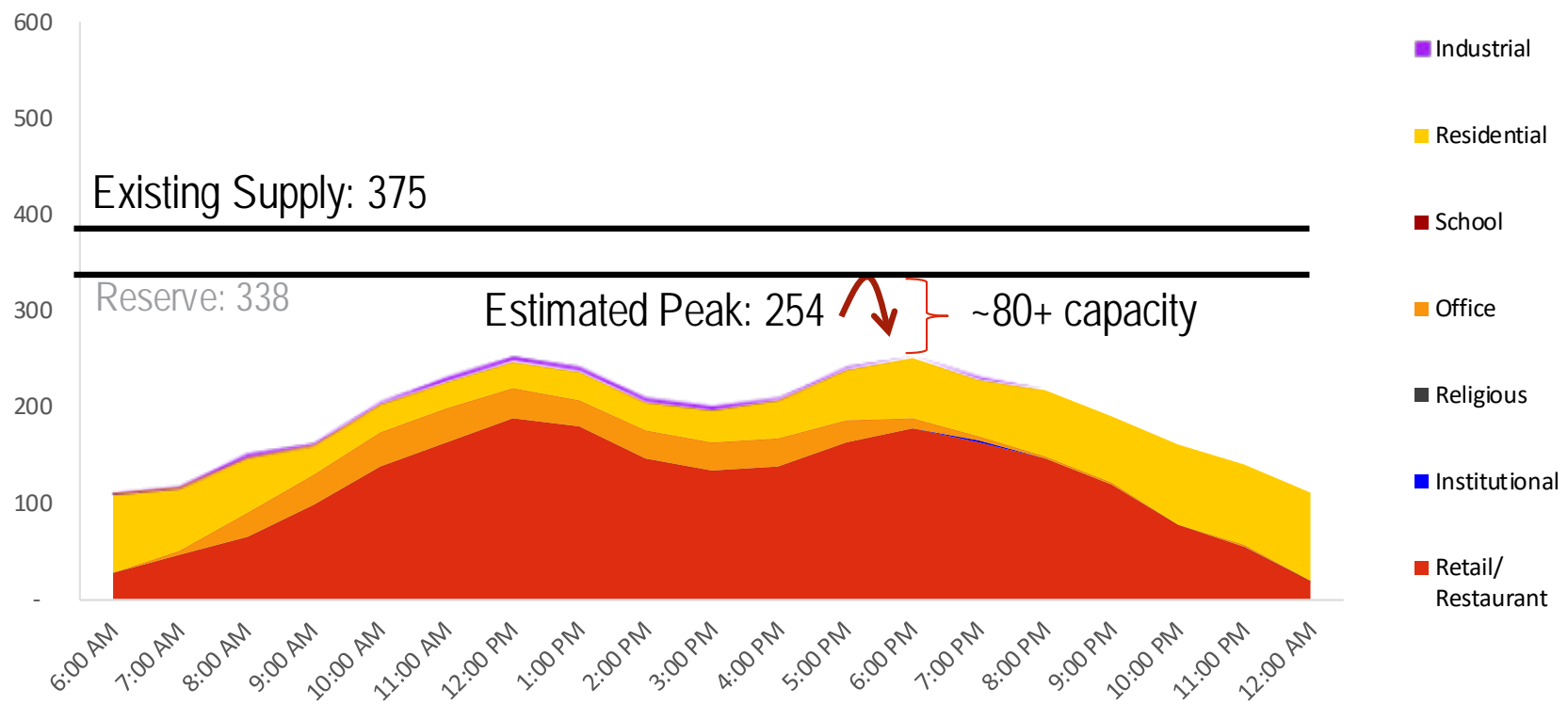
The *Weekday Demand with TDM* graph represents the number of parking spaces in demand for every land use and takes into consideration all TDM programs that apply.



Land Use and Zoning

Figure 24: Downtown Shelburne Modeled "Shared" Future Demand

Real Future Demand Profile





Recommendations

Recommendations

Shelburne's parking system currently meets the needs of its diverse retail, commercial and recreational uses, including the day-to-day resident, employee, and visitor needs. A majority of parking remains underutilized throughout the course of the day. A key exception is the municipal lot behind Keystone Market during the peak of lunchtime and mid-afternoon visitor traffic.

The main challenges for Shelburne is the imbalanced use of existing parking, including the underutilization of long-term parking spaces that increases pressure on the downtown's limited supply of short-term spaces. A strategic parking management approach will be crucial to address this imbalance in support of downtown businesses as well as the mixed-use development envisioned for the area.

The following recommendations outline such an approach, reflecting the conclusions of the study team, observations of the downtown environment, review, and most importantly, input from the participants of the public open house and Parking Working Group. These suggestions are also informed by parking management best practices across the country. Full implementation of these recommendations will not be possible without continued coordination and conversations between the Town and private business/landowners, as each has a common interest and commitment to maintaining Shelburne's historic charm that attracts a growing tourism market.

Recommendations

1. Maximize Existing Parking Resources

- A. Improve wayfinding and for shared and remote lots
- B. Improve lighting within lots and along prime walking routes to improve the appeal of peripheral parking options
- C. Formalize policy to encourage more sharing of spaces in municipal lots and privately-owned lots
- D. Set time limits on some spaces in the municipal lot off of Bridge Street; sign long-term parking in remaining spaces
- E. Remove overnight parking restrictions
- F. Clarify existing supply by striping on-street spaces on Main, Water, and Mechanic Streets

2. Support Downtown Business Through Sharing

- A. Formalize shared parking agreements

3. Enhance Downtown Experience

- A. Issue "first-time forgiveness" tickets for minor violations, and include information on long-term parking options
- B. Coordinate with Buckland on remote lots for events
- C. Create signed bus drop-off point with informational kiosk; create information card for bus drivers with desired long-term bus parking locations

4. Encourage Redevelopment in Downtown

- A. Waive parking requirements for commercial and residential development under a certain amount of square footage; monitor spare parking capacity and re-evaluate periodically

Recommendations

Figure 25: Recommendations Overview



1. Maximize Existing Parking Resources

1 A. Improve wayfinding and signage for shared and remote lots

Many Shelburne visitors – particularly out-of-town visitors – are unaware of many downtown parking options, often including those nearby their destinations. Having clear guidance and signage for patrons who are unfamiliar with the area is also an important component of the customer experience, and thus to maintaining Shelburne’s vibrant tourism market.

A wayfinding program should encourage visitors and employees to “park once” or “park and walk,” focusing not just on getting cars into long-term parking facilities and thereby freeing up prime spaces for customers, but getting people to visit multiple destinations on foot without moving their cars. In addition to parking facilities, signage should identify key sites of interest and their approximate walking distance (in minutes), such as the Glacial Potholes, the Bridge of Flowers, Information Center, town hall, and other points of interest.

Spaces at the end of Deerfield Ave. and on Cross Street are routinely underutilized, even when parking spaces in the municipal lot behind Bridge Street remain full. These lots should be clearly marked with additional signage so that visitors know they exist.

Highlighting existing on- and off-street spaces will improve visibility for visiting motorists seeking parking. Overall, signage should work to eliminate confusion and ensure that all users understand the rules and locations of parking. Parking signage should clearly indicate where the public is welcome and lay out any time-limits. The signage should aim to accomplish four things:

- Define clear parking rules
- Identify free and long-term parking
- Identify major points of interests
- Guide pedestrians walking around downtown and back again to their car

Existing wayfinding signage for drivers, although attractively branded and noticeable in a few key locations, is sometimes hard to see and can be difficult to read. Further, regulatory signage for parking off of Bridge Street is often faded and unclear. There are few pedestrian-scale signs at all to direct visitors to and from their parking space if they do park in remote lots. Additional wayfinding signs should be located at key intersections (see Figure 26) and can be offered to private owners whose lots are regularly open to public customers.

Figure 26: Recommended Parking and Wayfinding Signage



Note: Detailed recommendation map in the Appendix.



1. Maximize Existing Parking Resources

1 B. Improve lighting within lots and along prime walking routes (the end of Deerfield Ave.)

The 22 parking spaces at the end of Deerfield Avenue below Mole Hollow are less than 30% utilized all day with a peak between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. At the public workshop, participants mentioned that these spaces and the lot are considered a “last resort” for finding a parking space not only because of the distance and the slope of the hill, but because it is unfriendly. In order for remote off-street parking in Shelburne to be something other than the last resort parking option for employees and visitors to the area, walking routes to these spaces must be improved and made more inviting with pedestrian infrastructure.

Because no sidewalk exists next to the narrow roadway, there is little room for pedestrians to navigate back up to Bridge Street when vehicles occupy the on-street spaces along the length of the street. Additionally there is currently no lighting to illuminate the remote spaces at the end of Deerfield Ave, making them feel unsafe after dark. Pedestrian-scale lighting is often no more than 15 feet off the ground and is spaced closely together to create an even lighting down the length of the street that eliminates alternating bright and dark spaces, increasing the perception of safety. Bridge Street already has pedestrian lighting, and the same decorative lamps can be extended down Deerfield Ave.

If complemented by clear wayfinding and regulatory signing, this lot could be better utilized as a long-term parking area for Shelburne, with no time limits and with overnight parking allowed. While customers and employees would need to walk another minute or two further from the Town’s restaurants and shops, improvements to the pedestrian environment, such as lighting, should be constructed in order to facilitate the walking trip.



1. Maximize Existing Parking Resources

1 C. Formalize policy to encourage more sharing of spaces in municipal lots and privately-owned lots.

Mixed-use areas offer the opportunity to use one parking space for multiple land uses throughout the day without conflict. In general, effective shared parking can take advantage of three opportunities in districts like downtown Shelburne:

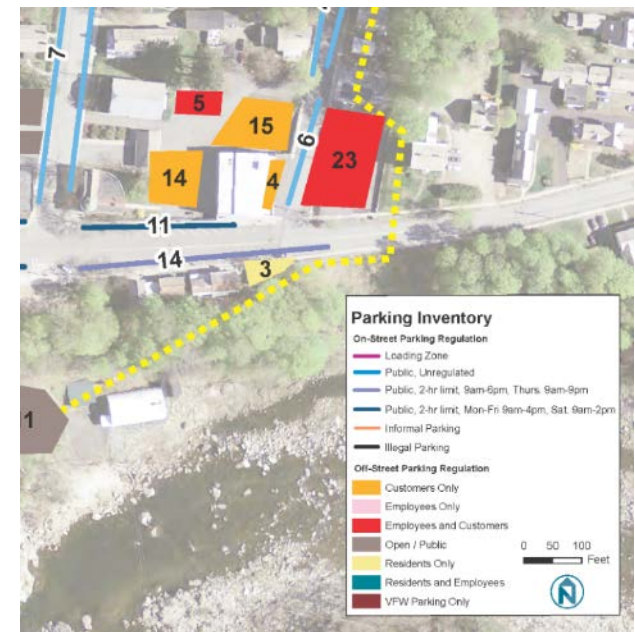
- **Captive Markets** - Residents and office workers that can walk or bike to nearby shops and services.
- **Off-setting Peaks** - Off-setting parking demand patterns among nearby land uses.
- **Park-Once Management** – Public policies and facilities that allow drivers to leave their cars in one place while they circulate amongst local destinations on foot.

To advertise the availability of parking in additional lots and balance the underutilization of some privately-owned parking spaces – such as the spaces for People’s United Bank and the Mole Hollow site – in downtown Shelburne, the Town can formalize a shared parking district downtown. Businesses that traditionally restrict their facilities to on-site customers or employees should make arrangements with other businesses – either directly or through a third-party “broker” — that are both willing to share their facilities and offer excess capacity at suitable times. These parking lots already tolerate some public parking, in addition to customer and employee parking, however a shared parking district will make this practice officially permitted and permanent.

A set of updated zoning-code parking standards could also be created to expand upon these benefits. Standards could include credits for shared parking, incentives to provide shared parking where new parking is built, and “maximums” on non-shared parking. Further, an In Lieu Fee alternative to parking requirements would provide funding to improve existing parking options, including the consolidation of private lots into larger, more efficient, shared lots. These changes would allow and encourage land owners and businesses to cooperate to provide sufficient parking at peak hours for the public.

It is also recommended that Shelburne:

- Encourage the sharing of parking facilities between public and private parking areas
- Utilize existing supply before investing in more parking
- Lease private parking for sharing, with the Town either directly leasing spaces or acting as agent between two private entities and offering maintenance services. In exchange for improving access to existing underutilized parking areas downtown, the Town would maintain the lot.



1. Maximize Existing Parking Resources

1 D. Set time limits on some spaces in the municipal lot off of Bridge Street; sign long-term parking in remaining spaces

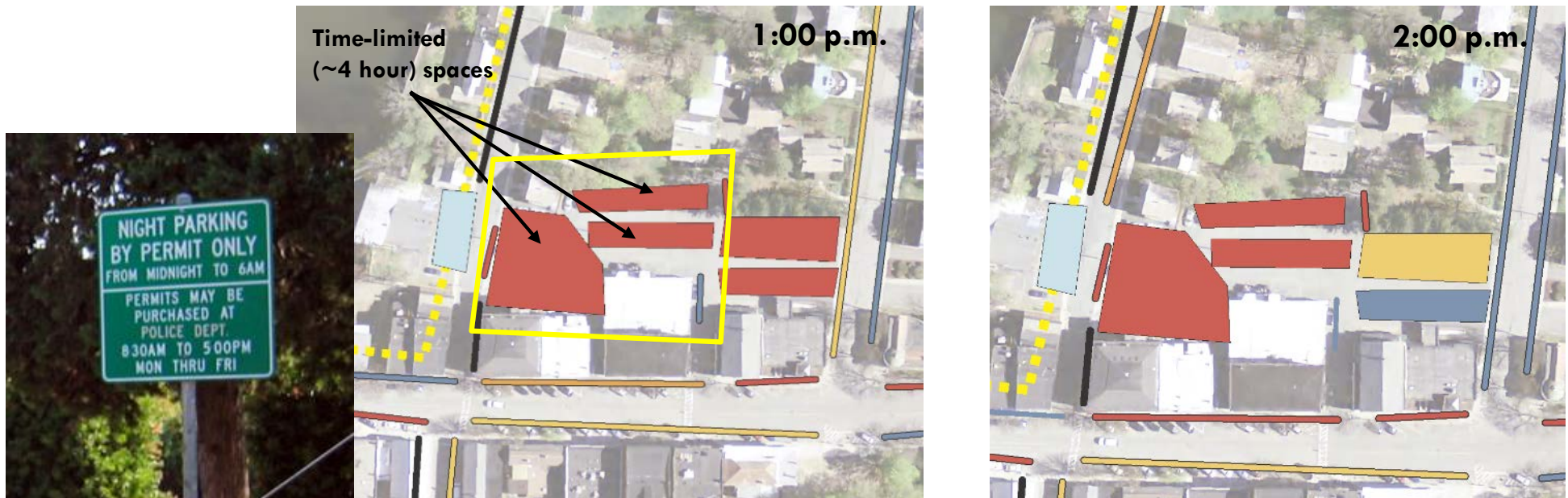
Parking supply is not the main issue in downtown Shelburne – the perception of low availability in prime spaces is the problem. Introducing demand-based management is an opportunity for Shelburne to better utilize existing parking resources and create parking availability without building new spaces to add supply and without discouraging redevelopment with requirements for many new parking spaces.

Overall, Shelburne's parking supply is under 55% utilized, indicating an adequate availability throughout the day. Spaces on Bridge Street east of Main Street the most heavily utilized on-street. Off-street, the lot behind Keystone Market between Water and Main Street is highly utilized throughout the day (particularly the spaces

closer to Water Street), but remote spaces are no more than 29% full all day.

Designating the 51 spaces on the western half of the municipal lot with a 4-hour time limit will alter long-term employee parking behavior and encourage use of remote lots, but not drive customers away. These time limits can be signed as in effect only during the peak tourism season. The eastern half of the municipal lot and its 32 shared spaces can remain unregulated. The team also recommends:

- Selling employee permits for \$5 for those that want/need them to park all day in the time-limited portion of the municipal lot
- Removing overnight parking restrictions, or clarifying that it applies only in winter months



1. Maximize Existing Parking Resources

1 E. Remove overnight parking restrictions

The Town's zoning bylaws state a desire to encourage development that is congruous with the existing architecture and built form of downtown. As such, it allows the Zoning Board of Appeals to waive off-street parking requirements if sufficient existing shared supply can accommodate demand. Such arrangements could be greatly expanded were the Town to more broadly allow downtown residents to park overnight on-street and in municipal lots. This would be vastly preferable to requiring significant new parking at new downtown developments, and to building a municipal parking garage at great expense.

Many downtown Shelburne residents already park overnight in some spaces in the rear of the municipal lot. In winter months, the Town can designate an overnight off-street location for residential parking when a winter parking ban is in effect, such as the Cross Street municipal lot, to allow for plows to remove snow on streets. The City of Salem, Massachusetts opens up city park and school parking lots to neighborhood residents when Snow Emergencies are declared. Other snow management parking strategies can be used. In Lawrence, the City requires residents to park only on certain sides of the street. In Somerville, the City requires residents of odd-numbered street addresses to move their cars in odd-numbered years, even-numbered addresses in even-numbered years.

The Town should also work with owners of private lots to remove restrictions in their lots. The Town can facilitate these agreements between potential partners by supplying appropriate legal mechanisms and providing liability education.



1. Maximize Existing Parking Resources

1 F. Clarify existing supply by striping on-street spaces on Main, Water, and Mechanic Streets

Parking is allowed on both sides of Main Street, the east side of Water Street, both sides of Mechanic Street, as well as the south side of Cross Street between Main and Mechanic Streets. Locals frequently utilize the spaces on Water Street near the entrances to the municipal lot and up to Cross Street between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. However, spaces on Main and Mechanic remain underutilized all day.

These blocks do not have any regulatory signage noting that parking is allowed, creating an environment of confusion, even for long-time residents and employees of downtown businesses. Having clear guidance for patrons who are unfamiliar with the area is an important component of the customer experience. Parking signage should clearly indicate where the public is welcome.

By formally striping these spaces on Main, Mechanic and Water Streets, including the two illegal but frequently utilized spaces between entrances to the municipal lot, downtown Shelburne would gain 41 visible and long-term parking spaces for customers and employees. On Cross Street, six additional spaces can fit on the south side of the block between Main and Mechanic Streets, but they are not recommended due to the narrow width of the roadway.



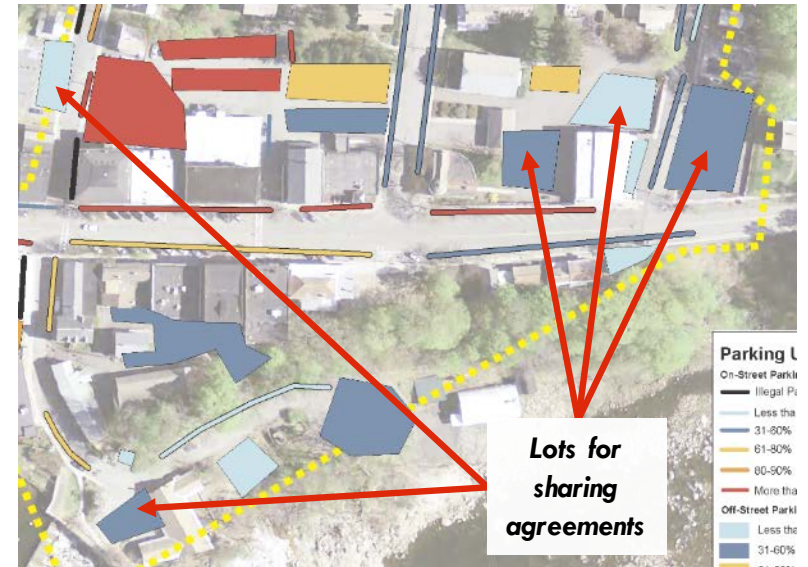
2. Support Downtown Business through Sharing

2A. Formalize shared parking agreements

Facilitate formal shared parking agreements between Shelburne businesses. By pursuing residential and business shared parking agreements, the Town can open up roughly 50 spaces to the public.

Today, an informal shared parking agreement exists with the People's United Bank's lots as they allow other business patrons to park at peak time. The Mole Hollow lot also allows the public to park in the customer-only spaces, despite signage that says otherwise. Further shared parking agreements could be made with places like the VFW Hall and the Mole Hollow employee lot in exchange for Town improvements, including repaving, upgraded landscaping, striping, lighting and signage.

The Town can facilitate these agreements between potential partners by supplying appropriate legal mechanisms and providing liability education. The Town also can support the continued sharing of parking in the event of a change of ownership or use. Shared agreements and signage should stipulate which spaces are open to the public and when spaces may be open to the public (i.e. during Senior Center events, or on weekends).

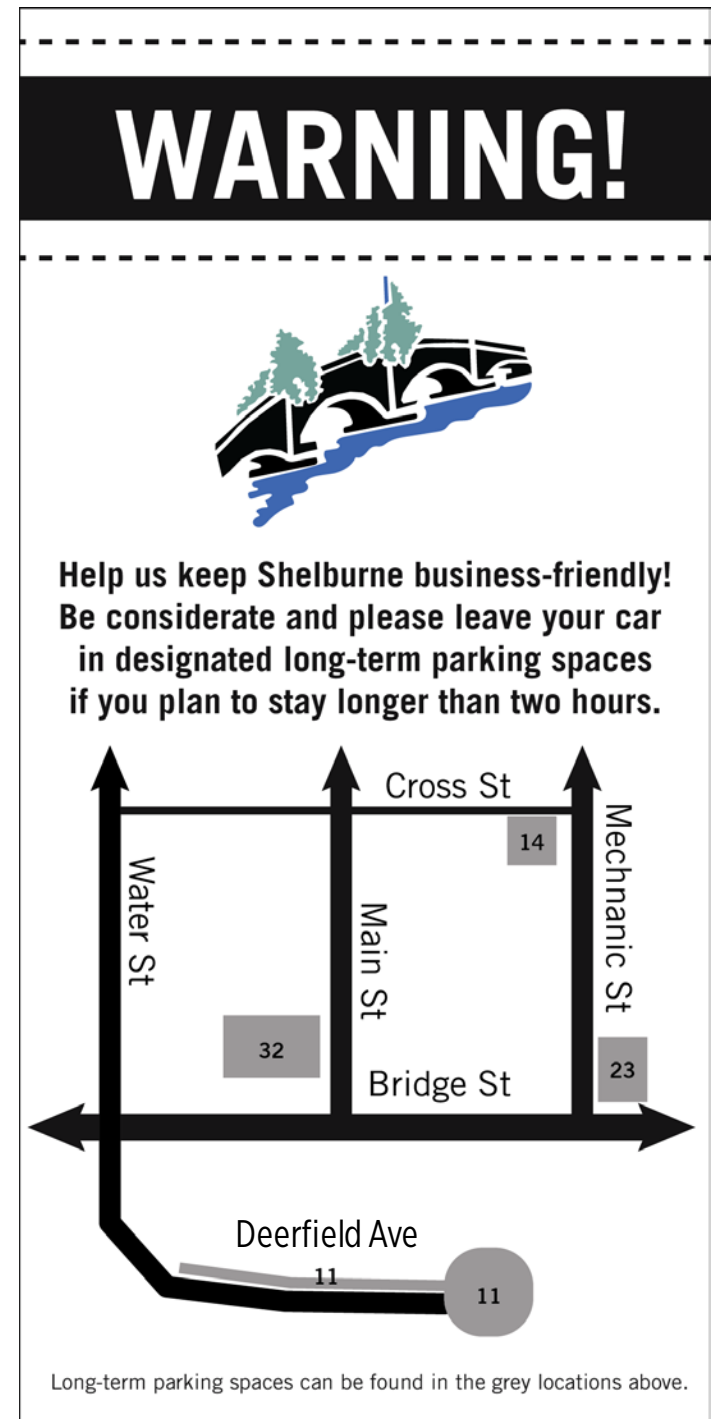


3. Enhance Downtown Experience

3A. Issue “first-time forgiveness” tickets for minor violations, and include information on long-term parking options

On-street parking in downtown Shelburne is essential for local businesses, allowing customers to park immediately outside their destination for quick visits up to a couple hours. Many visitors to Shelburne—particularly out-of-town visitors—are unaware of parking regulations in the downtown area or may inadvertently overstay the time limit in spaces on Bridge Street and Deerfield Street. Off-street long-term remote parking should be encouraged in Shelburne to improve parking options along Bridge Street, where there is high demand all day for short-term parking, particularly west of Main Street.

Combined with wayfinding signage to direct long-term parkers to remote lots and long-term on-street spaces, Shelburne can issue warning tickets, such as the one to the right, to parkers who overstay the time limits. These tickets would be a gentle reminder to scofflaws include information about where long-term spaces can be found.



3. Enhance Downtown Experience

3B. Coordinate with Buckland on remote lots for events

Special events place unique demands on the parking system, while attracting visitors from out of town who know least how to use the system. Each event has a different dynamic, mix of users, and localized impact on parking and transportation. Event management programs allow towns to better leverage and manage parking supply/demand during large events. Using such a system, a town can prevent excessive parking on residential streets proximate to the event site and find partners to share reserve supply for patrons, especially during after-work hours. For events that occur regularly, such as sports events, concerts, or festivals, a town can create parking districts that allow for certain regulatory designations on public streets, such as resident-only, vendors-only, or temporary public parking.

Shelburne should improve the parking management system during routine events, when infrequent guests are most likely to come to Shelburne Falls, like at the Senior Center or Second Saturdays, as well as during large events like the Syrup Festival, Cider Days, the Bridge of Flowers Road Race, and the Iron Bridge Dinner. Strategies to improve the visitor parking experience in the area include supplemental signage for remote parking at the Shelburne Historical Society or the Ashfield Street lot near the Trolley Museum, and event parking information via websites, postcards, and signs. Information should include navigational guidance to parking in remote areas. At the remote parking lots, the towns should place temporary pedestrian wayfinding signage back to the event site and to downtown Shelburne.

The Towns of Shelburne and Buckland can work with stakeholders and businesses in Shelburne Falls to develop targeted Event Management Plans, with specific actions and strategies that can be implemented during events to make parking more efficient and convenient. These strategies may include:

- Online parking information in advance of the event, including websites for the Town, venues, and the Greater Shelburne Falls Business Association.
- Temporary on-street directional signs
- Secure additional parking facilities for use during event times
- Signage during the event that indicates when lots are full
- Remote parking and shuttles
- Valet parking
- Access for disabled/special permit parking

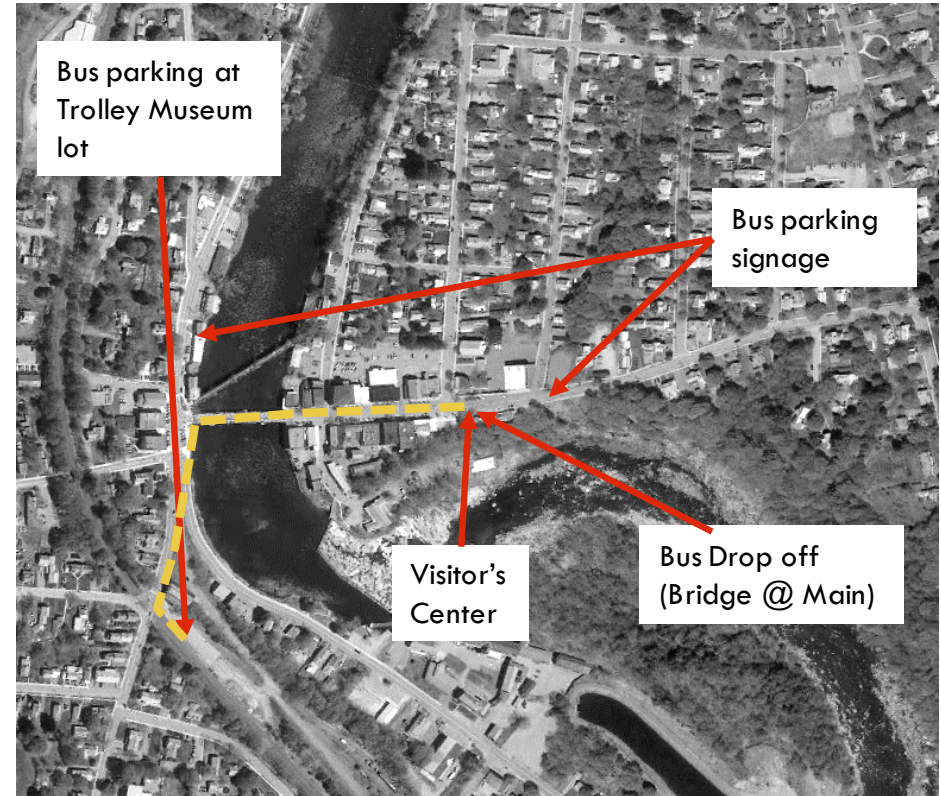


3. Enhance Downtown Experience

3C. Create signed bus drop-off point with informational kiosk for visitors; create information card for bus drivers with desired parking locations

During the height of the tourism season in Shelburne, chartered coach buses frequently bring visitors to town, parking for hours at a time. Shelburne can prevent disruptive bus loitering, and parking on Bridge Street or on nearby residential streets, by being proactive. The Towns of Shelburne and Buckland can work with tour companies and bus operators to improve the bus parking experience in the area. Strategies to consider include:

- Designating a set bus passenger drop-off point, such as in front of the Visitor Center
- Installing wayfinding signage on Bridge Street, State Street, and Main Street to direct drivers to the bus drop-off point
- Create and distribute an informational card for bus drivers that directs them to desired long-term parking locations, such as the Ashfield Street lot near the Trolley Museum or the Shelburne Historical Society.
- Add bus parking information to websites for the towns, Memorial Hall, and the Greater Shelburne Falls Business Association.



4. Encourage Redevelopment in Downtown

4A. Allow commercial and residential development with no parking under a certain amount of square footage; monitor spare parking capacity and re-evaluate periodically

While the new zoning regulations include parking requirements that are beyond the national standard set by ITE in some land use categories, the code also allows for these requirements to be waived when existing parking assets can be effectively shared and accommodate future demand. Sharing existing parking spaces between various uses (bank, residential, restaurants, retail, town offices, etc.) reduces the total number of spaces required compared to the same uses in stand-alone developments, thus requiring fewer parking spaces to be built or maintained. Allowing smaller developments with limited parking demand to share spaces in Shelburne's existing parking inventory encourages redevelopment and works to maintain the historic character of Shelburne Falls.

To help encourage redevelopment of existing vacant buildings, it is recommended that Shelburne:

- Sell long-term permits for the municipal lot
- Offer free long-term permits for the Deerfield Ave lot
- Encourage all existing supply to be shared and require new develop to build supply that is open to the public.
- Implement an in-lieu fee and enterprise fund to enhance the parking experience

RECOMMENDED ZONING CHANGES

In-Lieu Fees: As a best practice, many communities have allowed developers to build less than the required or desired number of spaces by making a payment in-lieu of providing parking to a municipality. This one time or annual fee can be built into the zoning code to be used toward other transportation and streetscape improvements suggested in previous recommendations. These funds can help support the overall parking system (streetscape, bicycle, pedestrian, or other parking improvements), or be “banked” towards the future provision of parking by the Town. In order to implement in lieu fees as part of zoning, the Town should develop a rate schedule for an in-lieu fee option.



Mole Hollow



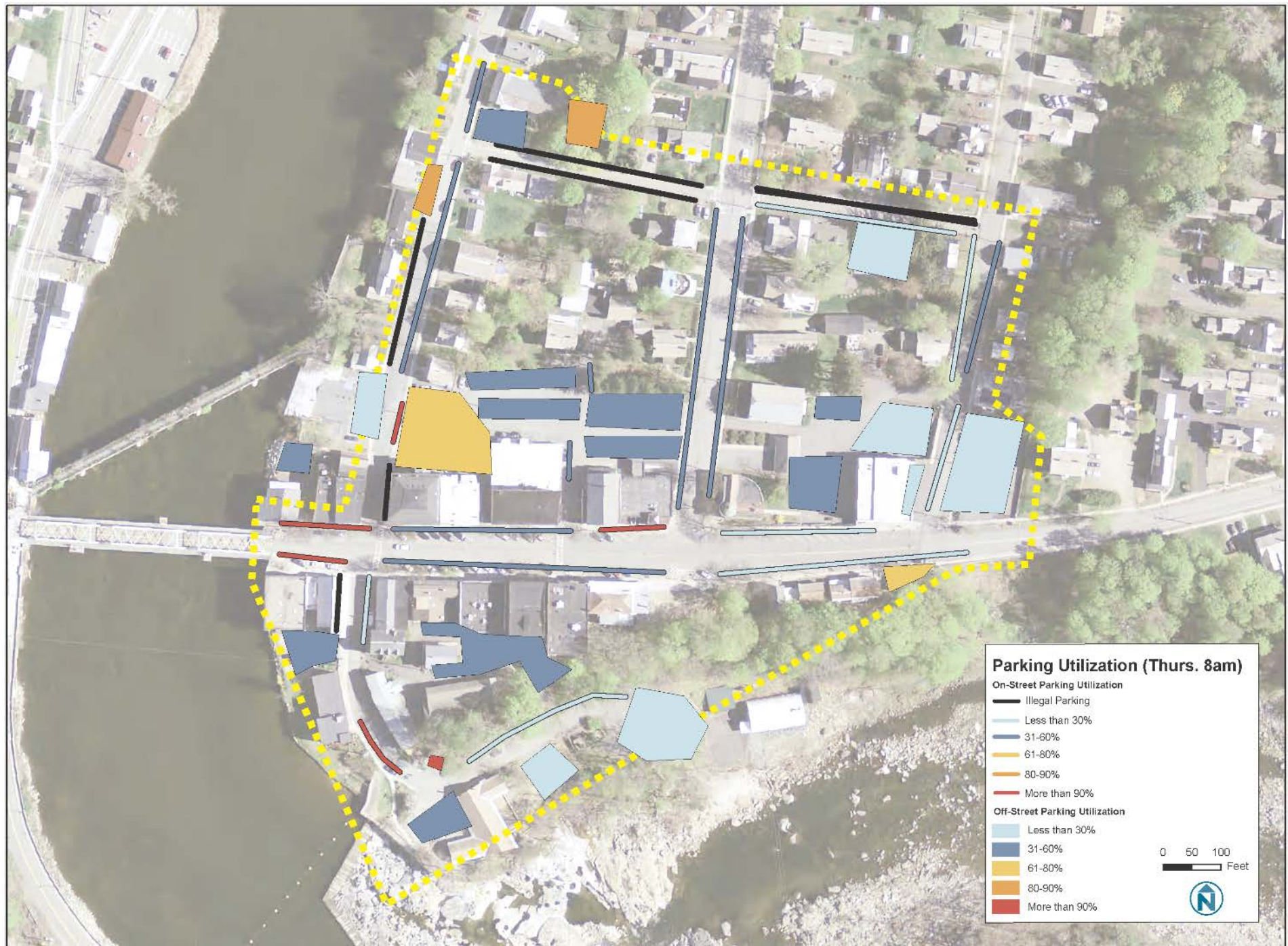
Singly Furniture Site

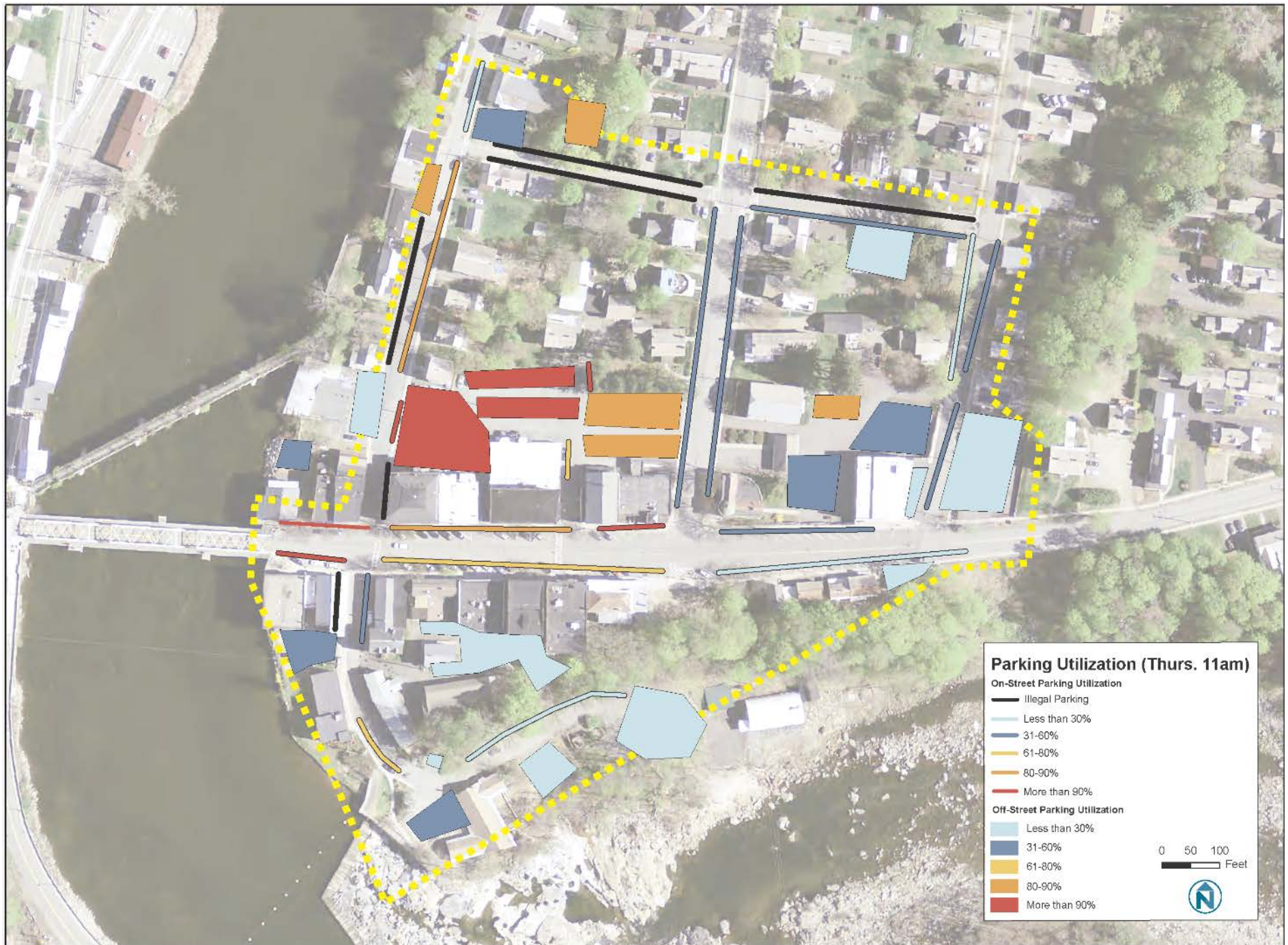


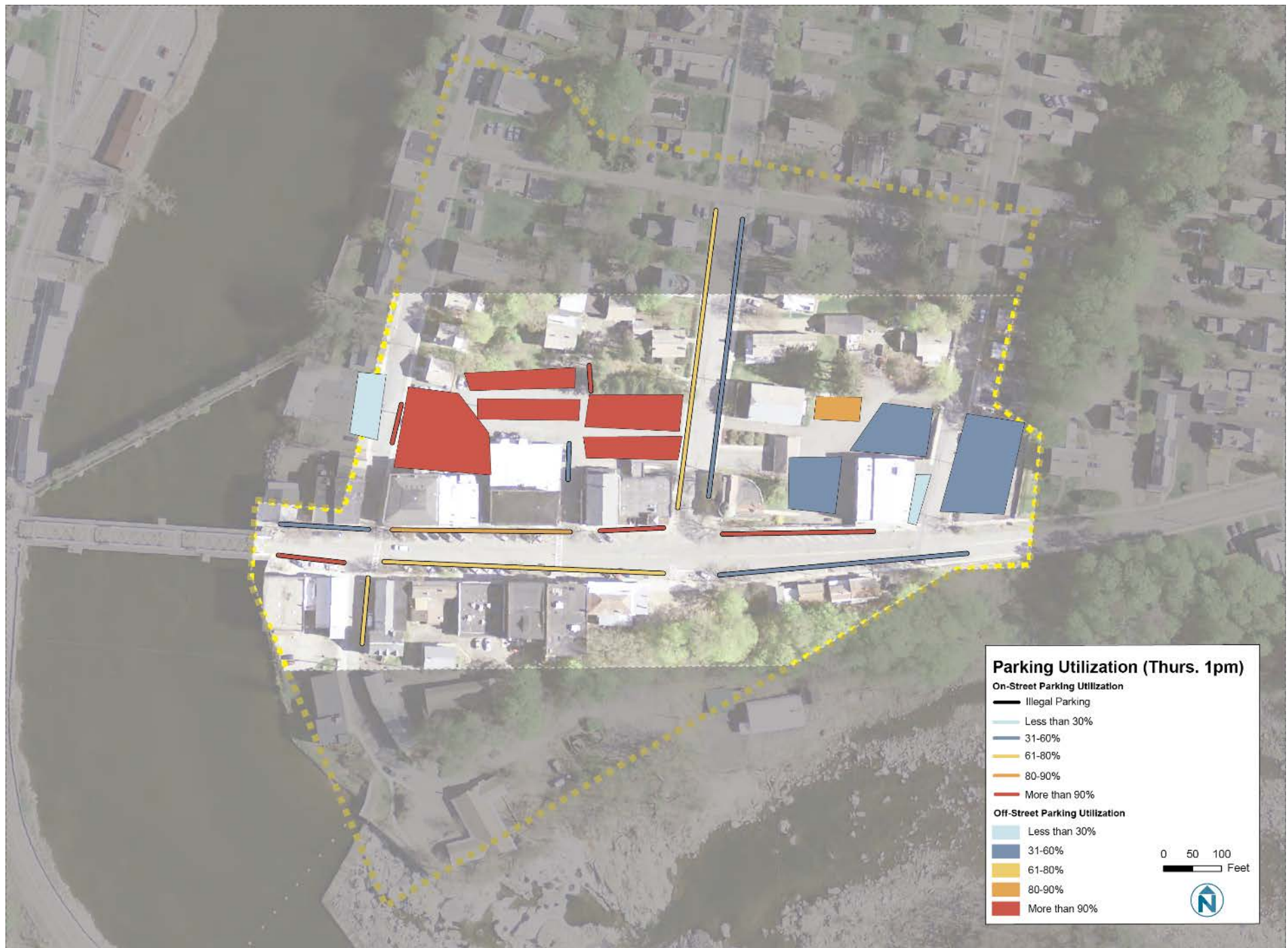
TECHNICAL APPENDICES

Appendix Figure 1: Shelburne Study Area Parking Inventory



Appendix Figure 2: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 8am-11am

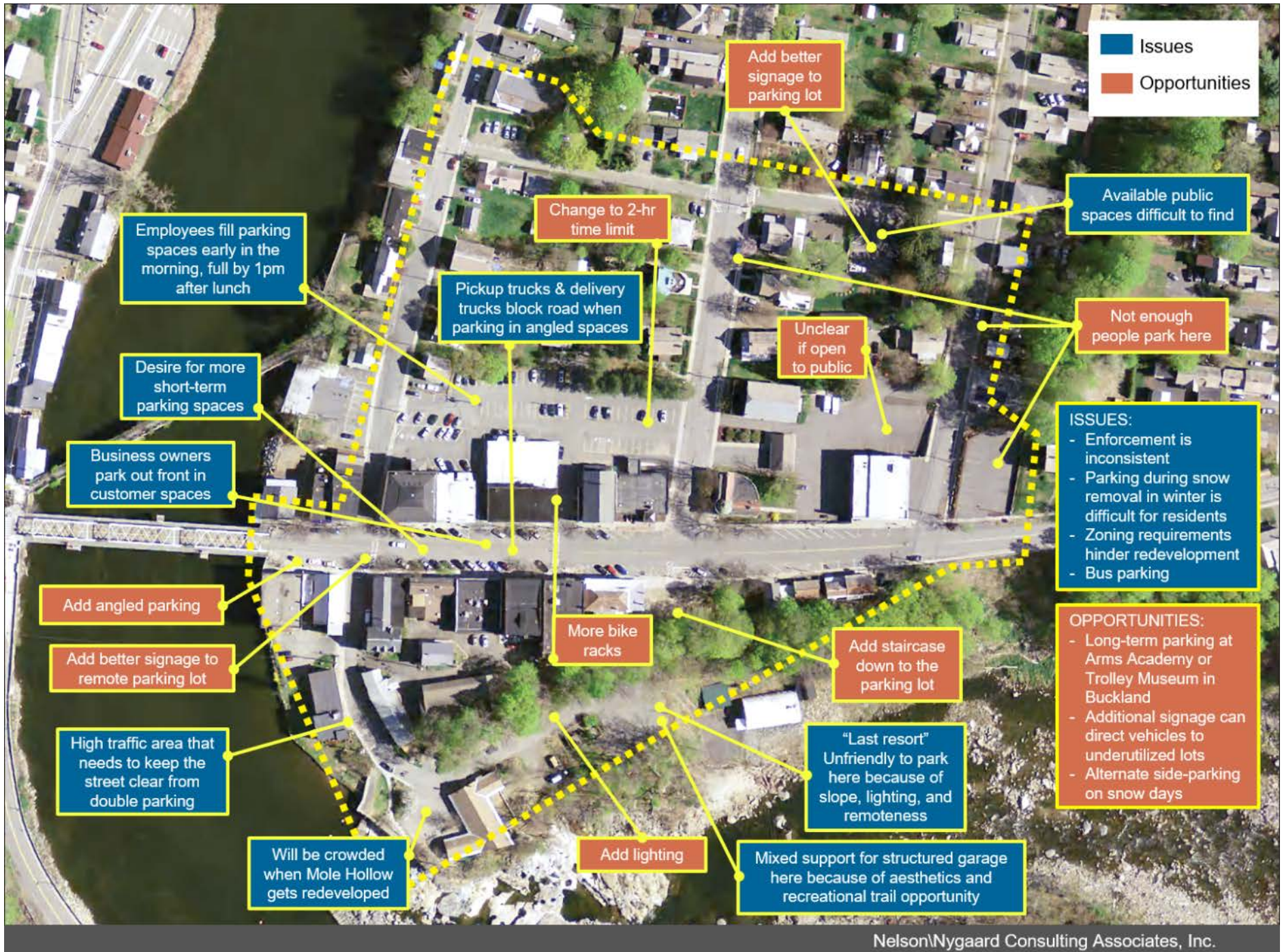
Appendix Figure 3: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 11am-2pm

Appendix Figure 4: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 1pm

Appendix Figure 5: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 2pm-5pm

Appendix Figure 6: Shelburne Parking Utilization – Thursday Aug. 24th 5pm-8pm

Appendix Figure 7: Open House Mapping Exercise Comments



Appendix Figure 8: Recommendations Overview



