



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

GREGORY T. FEDERSPIEL, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Town Hall, 10 Central Street

Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts 01944-1399

Telephone (978) 526-2000

FAX (978) 526-2001

FEDERSPIELG@MANCHESTER.MA.US

WWW.MANCHESTER.MA.US

Technical Assistance Program

Project Concept

Lead Municipality: Manchester-by-the-Sea

Lead Contact: Sue Brown, Town Planner

browns@manchester.ma.us

978-525-6436 (Office) or 617-429-9439 (Mobile)

Project Description and Context: Downtown Parking Study

Manchester-by-the-Sea is looking for Technical Assistance for a study to inventory and assess current parking in the downtown business area and provide recommendations for improving parking management, capacity, and accessibility to support downtown businesses and residents and accommodate beach and harbor visitors. We would look for the study to also produce parking recommendations for new multi-family housing in the village core that we may create zoning for in response to the recent Housing Choice legislation.

Manchester's compact downtown includes a variety of commercial uses as well as residential units, a grocery store, a community center, and a commuter rail station with surface parking. Singing Beach, about a half mile away, attracts visitors by foot, automobiles, and commuter rail drawing up to 4,000 visitors a weekend day during the height of the season.

The Downtown Parking Study would include an inventory of both on- and off-street public and private parking. The study would also include parking utilization counts as needed, assess current public and private parking management strategies, and evaluate the feasibility of structured parking, shared parking, satellite parking, one-way streets and other public and private parking management strategies to increase parking opportunities.

Existing challenges the study looks to address include the normal daily parking needs of businesses (for employees and customers) and residences, commuter parking, the dramatic increase in seasonal parking demand associated with beach and harbor activity, and parking accommodation during storm events. The study needs to also include consideration of new commercial and residential development in the nearby Limited Commercial District (LCD) that may impact the downtown and incremental residential

and commercial growth downtown, including multi-family development in close proximity to the train station.

The Town's goals are to address current needs, including the recovery of our downtown businesses, and to understand how additional residential development in the downtown and in outlying neighborhoods might impact parking and circulation in the downtown. Modeling the impacts of 50/100/200 new housing units would produce important information necessary for short- and long-term planning.

The attached Maps show the approximate scope of the study area and several parking areas outside the Downtown that should be considered for parking management options. Map 1 also indicates those buildings in the downtown that have commercial uses. Map 2 shows the location of the seasonal parking areas in comparison to the downtown.

Project Need and Alignment with Local, Regional and State Goals:

Completing a Downtown Parking Study is a key recommendation of the Town's recently adopted Comprehensive Master Plan. The Study is seen as a critical first step in considering changes to both downtown zoning, including multi-family housing by right, and supporting development within the Limited Commercial District. Recommendations for improving parking in downtown Manchester will help the Town maintain a vibrant mix of residential and commercial uses in the downtown, provide a walkable environment and create public infrastructure and amenities that support downtown businesses and residents.

Diversifying housing options, including more affordable housing in the downtown, is intended to help meet State as well as local housing goals by focusing on transportation-oriented development. Addressing parking issues will improve opportunities for "smart growth" both in the downtown and the nearby LCD, also aligning with State goals.

Project Deliverables(s) and Outcomes:

The project deliverable would be a report that includes an inventory and assessment of existing parking spaces and management strategies, modeling results and recommendations for increasing the supply of parking and/or managing existing parking more efficiently to meet existing and projected needs. If changes to zoning regulations are recommended, a draft zoning bylaw, or the criteria for a zoning bylaw would be expected to be another deliverable.

A clear set of recommendations will provide the Town with an action plan that can be supported by Town policies, initiatives, regulations, and budgets. An understanding of both parking opportunities and constraints will help determine uses and density that can be supported.

Community Engagement:

Parking is an issue that receives a lot of attention in Manchester and the Study will require a robust community engagement plan. We see community engagement as a combination of working groups, community meetings and communication through a variety of platforms. We suggest a steering

committee to include a Select Board member, Planning Board member, town staff including parking enforcement officers, along with representatives of the Downtown Improvement Committee and Bike and Pedestrian Committee and neighborhood representatives that would provide information and advice and be used for initial review of all findings and recommendations. We would also request an early meeting with members of the most recent community parking study committee to hear what has been previously studied and recommended. Specific community outreach would be targeted to downtown property and business owners and homeowners, along with LCD property owners.

Project Timeline:

A six-month timeline is expected to be sufficient for the study. We anticipate the project would be most effective if it could take place in part during the summer season when the parking issues are amplified by increased demand. For example, May through November would allow the consultant team an opportunity to experience the seasonal changes.

Municipal Commitment:

The Town is highly motivated to continue implementing the recommendations of its 2019 Master Plan. The Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, Planning Board, along with the many advisory boards and committees, see parking as an issue central to the quality of life in Manchester and resolution of parking challenges as pivotal to future growth.

The Town will support the Parking Study with staff and volunteer hours as needed throughout the project. Sue Brown, Town Planner will be the principal point of contact and project manager and will be available as needed to assist with or provide coordination and communication, meet with project team members and provide review of all materials. The Town will appoint a Steering Committee and will take the lead in coordinating and promoting Community Outreach.

Signature: _____



Gregory T. Federspiel, Town Administrator

