

## **Winchester Town Center Parking Management Plan**

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Why do we need a parking plan?**

- We need a parking plan for **today** to ensure the economic vitality of the town's commercial center.

The lack of readily accessible parking is hurting retail and restaurant sales and making it harder for clients to reach professional offices and services in the town center. Winchester residents spend about \$370 million per year on retail and restaurant services, but of that total, about \$265 million per year is spent outside the town. Recapturing even a small portion of the \$265 million could increase revenues for town center businesses and the Town.

- We need a parking plan for **tomorrow** to lay the foundation for new housing, retail, and office development in the center.

State and federal aid to the town is shrinking and there is limited space in Winchester neighborhoods for new development, but the center could accommodate many more condos, apartments, and retail stores. Well-managed development would generate new-growth revenue that would help keep property taxes down and sustain quality schools and public services. Better **parking management**, updated zoning bylaws, and flood mitigation are the foundation blocks for economic growth in the center.

#### **What is the problem with parking?**

- Employees are using the close-in, "front-door" parking spaces that should be available to customers. Employees are using the close-in spaces because those spaces are free (if you are willing to move your car every 2-3 hours) while the outer parking lots require paid permits.
- The parking signs and regulations are complex and confusing; we have over 20 different parking regulatory signs for on-street parking and over 30 for the public parking lots.
- The commuter parking lots are under-priced relative to other parking lots along the MBTA Lowell Line and are attracting out-of-town commuters, displacing Winchester commuters.
- The sidewalks serving many of the parking lots are broken, the "Great Wall" underpasses between parking areas are dirty, and many of the lots are poorly lighted for winter evenings.
- Enforcement is limited because of budget constraints and outmoded enforcement technology.
- The center has an adequate supply of public and private parking spaces, but the parking spaces are not effectively allocated among users under our current system of time-delimited parking signs (e.g., 1/2-hour, 1-hour, 2-hour, 3-hour, 4-hour parking signs).

### **What does the parking plan do?**

- Preserves the key features of the current parking program: free parking in the town center, permit parking in the lots, and routine enforcement.
- Provides free, all-day-parking permits to town-center employees who are willing to park a few blocks from the center (in the Shore Road, Mt. Vernon, and Aberjona lots) so that their customers can park, shop, and conduct business in the center.
- Provides free one-hour parking in the commercial center (around Main Street, the Rotary, and the Common) to serve customers and clients running short errands.
- Provides nearby pay-parking areas for those who want to park for a longer period of time. The first hour in the pay-parking areas would be free, the second hour would cost \$0.50, and additional time could be purchase at an escalating rate.
- Provides free 90-minute parking in the municipal center (around Town Hall) to serve residents and visitors with business in Town Hall, patrons of the Library, and seniors attending functions at the Jenks Center.
- Provides commuter parking at Wedgemere and Winchester Center at rates consistent with other MBTA commuter rail station parking lots to reduce use by out-of-town commuters.
- Provide free all-day-parking permits to town-center residents living on streets within restricted parking zones; and provides free overnight-parking permits to town-center residents for town lots.
- Simplifies and standardizes parking regulations, and
- Improves the productivity of the parking enforcement wardens and increases enforcement against scofflaws.

### **Where are the parking areas?**

- The parking areas are shown in Figure 1. See the PLAN for details and a map of the Wedgemere parking areas.

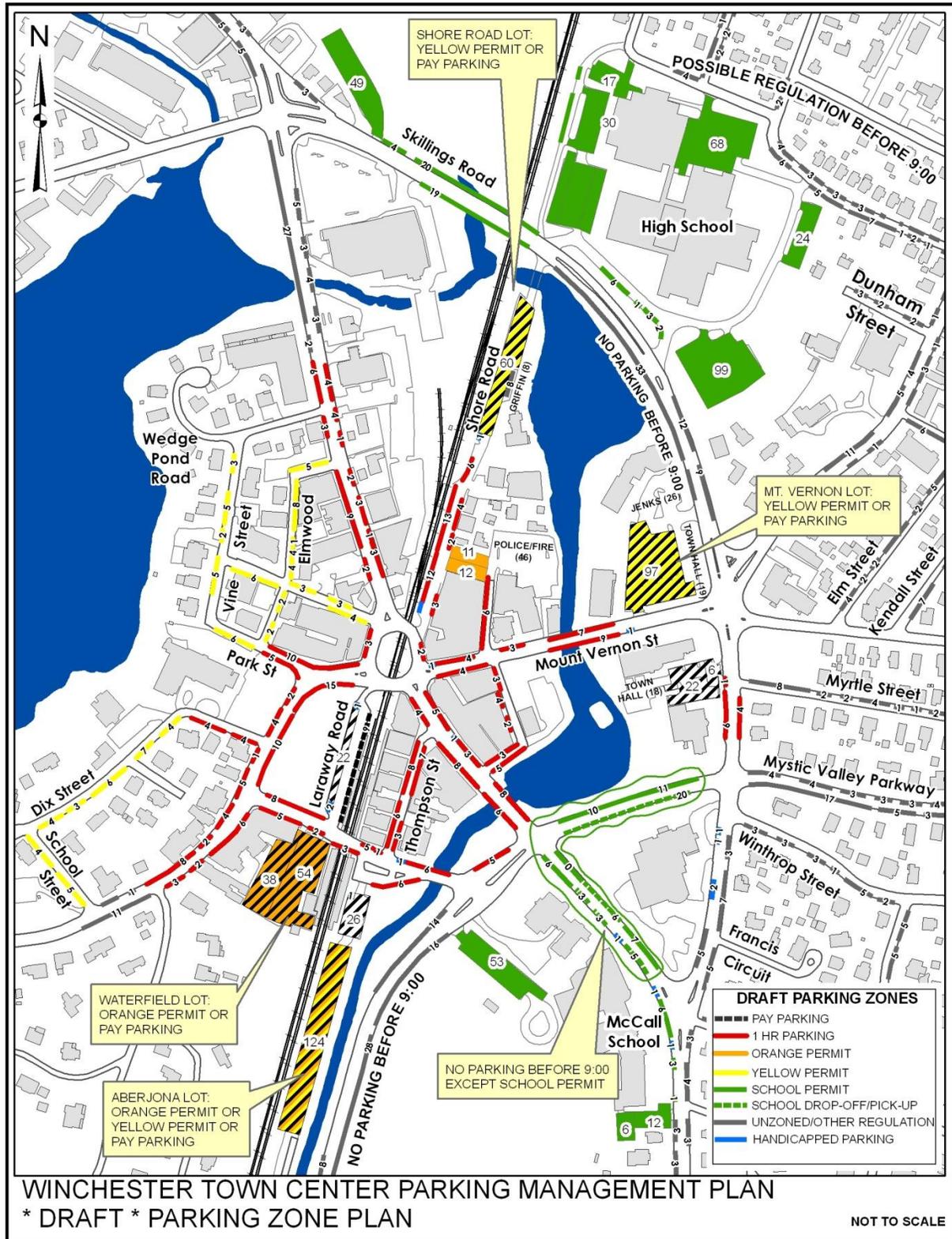
### **What are the parking hours?**

- The parking regulations would be enforced—as they are now—from 800AM to 600PM Monday to Friday and from 900AM to 200PM on Saturdays. Parking would be free during evenings and on Sundays and holidays.

### **What would the parking program cost?**

- Estimates are that the town center parking program would cover its costs and could generate sufficient revenue to partially fund a public/private not-for-profit business improvement district program for the town center. (The program could fund sidewalk maintenance, additional winter snow removal, marketing of the center as a shopping and restaurant destination, etc.).

Figure 1. Map of Town Center Parking Zones



*How would it work ...*

<b>If you are...</b>	<b>and you want to...</b>	<b>Then you would park in...</b>	<b>and pay...</b>
Business owner or employee working the town center	Go to work	Employer's private lot	Rate set by employer
		Orange Zone lot	Orange Zone rate
		Yellow Zone lot	Free with valid permit
Retail customer	Shop	Red Zone for errands under one hour or Any pay-parking area for as much time as you choose to buy	1 hour free
Restaurant customer	Dine		
Bank customer	Make a transaction		
Medical patient	Visit doctor or dentist		
Sales/service person	Meet with client		\$0.00 for first hour, \$0.50 for next hour with escalating rates for longer periods
Tourist	Tour town center		
Griffin Center visitor	Tour museum	Griffin lot (8 spaces)	Free
		Red Zone	1 hour free
		Any pay-parking area for as much time as you choose to buy	\$0.00 for first hour, \$0.50 for next hour...
Town employee	Go to work	Town Hall Front lot <i>(section of the Mt. Vernon lot facing Skillings Road)</i>	Free with valid staff permit
		Town Hall Back lot <i>(lower lot between Town Hall and Library)</i>	
		Public Safety lot <i>(police/fire only)</i>	
School Department employee	Go to work	Green Zone faculty lots and designated on-street spaces	Free with valid staff permit
Student	Go to school	Green Zone student lots/ on-street spaces <i>(WHS area only)</i>	Rate set by School Committee

*continued ...*

How would it work ... (continued)

If you are...	and you want to...	Then you would park in...	and pay...
Winchester-resident commuter using Winchester Center Station	Travel to Boston or Lowell	Waterfield or Aberjona South lots	Orange Zone rate
		Unrestricted spaces within walking distance	Free
Winchester-resident commuter using Wedgemere Station	Travel to Boston or Lowell	Wedgemere DCR/town lot	Wedgemere pay-parking rate
		Wedgemere Bacon Street spaces	Purple Zone rate
Jenks Center visitor	Attend function	Jenks lot (26 spaces)	Free
		Skillings Road	Free after 900AM
		Mt. Vernon lot pay-parking area	\$0.00 for 90 mins, \$0.50 for next hour...
		Red Zone	1 hour free
Library visitor or volunteer	Visit library	Red Zone (in front of Library)	1 hour free
		Town Hall/Library lot (upper lot)	\$0.00 for 90 mins, \$0.50 for next hour...
		Mt. Vernon lot	
		Unrestricted spaces within walking distance	Free
Town-center Resident	Park near residence during daytime	Yellow Zone	Free with valid permit
	Park overnight	Designated Town lots	

## How are parking permits issued?

- Permits are preprinted and numbered windshield stickers; they would be placed on the inside of the windshield above the MA inspection sticker. (Examples below are for illustration only.)
- You would apply on-line or at the town hall for a permit, paying a nominal application fee to cover the cost of the sticker, verification of residence or employment in Winchester, processing, and mailing of sticker and receipt.
- You can pay by cash, credit card, or electronic funds transfer through Town’s “online service,” with the option for automatic quarterly renewal with an approved credit card.
- The permit serial number is blacklisted if the permit is not renewed, the fee is not paid, or if a permit is reported lost or stolen, etc.



## What are pay-parking stations?

- Standalone, solar-powered, small footprint, ADA-compliant, black or dark green boxes with lighted panels and display screens. (Examples below are for illustration only.)
- You pay using a credit card/smart card reader or a coin acceptor (no bills, no change). The machine returns a dated and time-stamped receipt. For pay-and-display, the receipt is placed on the inside the driver’s door window.
- The units have modular, plug-and-play parts; wireless communications; security alarms; and are programmable from a central office (e.g., to change enforcement hours, turn off station on snow days, etc.)

