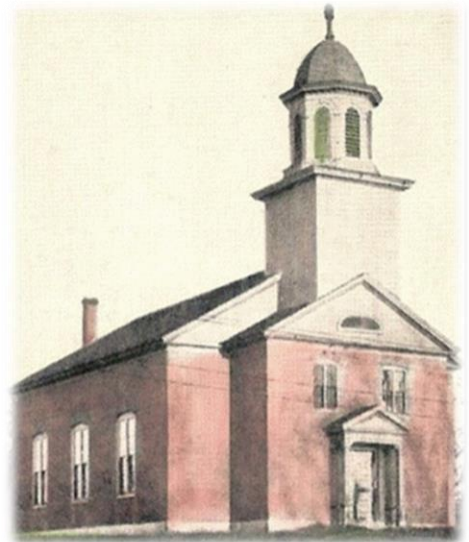




Town of Hooksett

2024-2034 Master Plan Update



TOWN OF HOOKSETT, NEW HAMPSHIRE

2024-2034 MASTER PLAN

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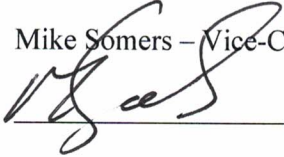
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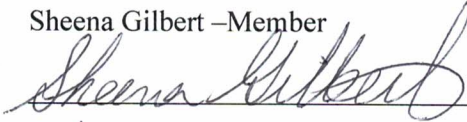
Paul Scarpetti – Member



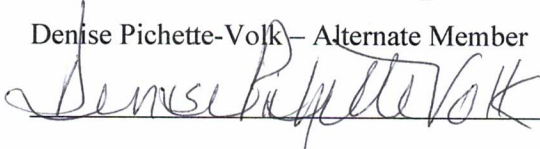
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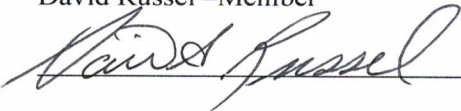
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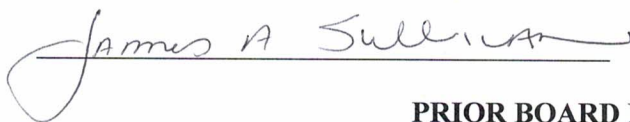
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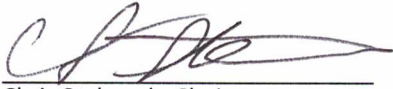
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Adoption Signatures
Certification of Master Plan Adoption
HOOKSETT PLANNING BOARD
Hooksett, New Hampshire

In accordance with New Hampshire RSA 674:4, Master Plan Adoption and Amendment, and New Hampshire RSA 675:6, Method Of Adoption, the Hooksett Planning Board, having held a public hearing on the 2024-2034 Hooksett Master Plan on April 15, 2024, the Board hereby certifies that the 2024-2034 Hooksett Master Plan was duly adopted by a majority vote of the Board's members on April 15, 2024.



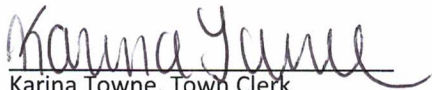
Chris Stelmach, Chairman



Mike Somers, Vice-Chairman

5-6-2024

Date of Signature by Planning Board



Karina Towne, Town Clerk

5/7/24

Date Filed with Town Clerk

1. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	02
Introduction and the History of Planning in Hooksett.....	02
The Value of Citizen Participation and Volunteer Groups.....	02
About the 2024 Update.....	03
2024 Master Plan Update Process.....	03
2024 Master Plan Update Subareas.....	04
Town of Hooksett Vision Statement.....	04
General Planning and Development Goals.....	05
Housing Goals.....	06
Economic Development Goals.....	07
Conservation and Cultural Resources Goals.....	08
Transportation Goals.....	09
Community Facilities and Recreation Goals.....	10
2. DEMOGRAPHIC AND REGIONAL ANALYSIS.....	12
Hooksett’s Regional Setting.....	12
Population Statistics and Projections.....	14
3. HOUSING ANALYSIS.....	24
Introduction.....	24
Types of Housing.....	24
Residential Development Considerations.....	31
Conclusions.....	39
4. Existing Land Use.....	41
General Overview.....	41
Transportation Corridors.....	41
Existing Land Use and Current Zoning.....	42
Land Use Issues.....	48
5. COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND RECREATION.....	50
Introduction.....	50
Local Government Facilities and Services.....	50
Public Utilities.....	62
Parks and Recreation Facilities.....	74
Public School Facilities.....	82
6. TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS.....	86
Existing Transportation Systems.....	86
Federal and State Roadway Classifications.....	92
Functional Classifications.....	94
Traffic Congestion Mitigation Focus Areas.....	100
Alternative Modes of Transportation.....	107
7. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS.....	109
Introduction.....	109
National and Regional Market Conditions.....	111
Employment Sectors and Hooksett Businesses.....	114
Economic Development Tools.....	121
8. CONSERVATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.....	134
Conservation Lands and Environmental Protections.....	134
Preserving the Historic Built Environment.....	145
The Village.....	150
9. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN.....	162
SWOT Analysis.....	162
Future Land Use Plan.....	165
10. PLAN OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX.....	174
Public Policy and Administrative Action.....	174
Information and Education.....	175
Zoning Tools.....	175
Financial Strategy.....	176

1. GOALS AND **OJECTIVES**

1.1 Introduction and the History of Planning in Hooksett

In the mid-1960s, the Town of Hooksett participated in the development of the *Metropolitan Manchester Planning Study*. In the late 1960s, the Town prepared its own sewerage facilities study; the first *Hooksett Comprehensive Plan* was developed in 1971, prepared by Medcalf-Eddy, under the 701 HUD program. In 1989, the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) wrote a new master plan for the community.

These efforts have been complemented over the years by activities of the Hooksett Central and the Hooksett Village Water precincts, by Manchester Water Works, by the Hooksett Sewer Commission, by the School Administrative Union (SAU) #15, and by SNHPC, the regional planning agency that serves Hooksett and twelve other communities in the area.

The 1989 Master Plan was followed by a 2004 document, which has served as the Town's Master Plan until the current initiative – the 2024 Hooksett Master Plan Update.

1.2 The Value of Citizen Participation and Volunteer Groups

In May of 2000, the Town hired its first Town Planner. Among the high priorities that the Planning Board desired to accomplish was the updating of the then eleven-year-old master plan. The Board requested that the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Cooperative Extension Service act as facilitator for a community meeting to begin encouraging citizen input to the updating process. UNH designed a two-day meeting that commenced on the first weekend in November 2001. The effort was called a “Community Profile” and approximately 150 people from the community attended the Friday evening and Saturday sessions. There was a report prepared describing the results of the Profile that is available in the Hooksett Community Development Department.

Out of the Profile effort, a Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) was established and a steering committee formed. This group organized a “kick-off” event at the Memorial School in May 2002, which approximately 50 people attended. From this gathering, groups of volunteer citizens came forward to take on the work of “visioning”. Initial research was done, facts and figures assembled, and a set of goals and objectives were developed—in short, the first draft of each master plan chapter was compiled and written by these volunteers. In the fall of 2002, the steering committee developed a working relationship with the School of Community Economic Development at Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU). Several professors and graduate students assisted with the presentations during the five monthly public information forums during the first quarter of 2003 that were held at SNHU. The attendance at these Saturday forums ranged from 30 to 50 people. Although these meetings energized the citizens and provided ample opportunities for citizen and business input to the master plan process, the Planning Board was

disappointed in the level of public involvement.

During 2003 and through the summer of that year, volunteers further refined the twelve chapters. By the fall of 2003, the Executive Summary was written and mailed to Hooksett citizens and the full text of the Plan was made available for review. An Informational Meeting was held on November 29, 2003, and a Public Hearing on December 4. After a 60-day comment period, the Board held a March 2004 workshop with the various chapter authors and staff. Changes were made to the text and maps. The Board proposed a second Public Hearing for June 2005.

1.3 About the 2024 Update

Much has occurred since the 2004 Master Plan was originally adopted. The housing bubble and subsequent economic recession of 2008-2009 greatly impacted the development of housing and largely stifled commercial development within our community for several years. Other national, statewide, and regional factors have also had an impact. Shifting statewide trends in median age, housing affordability, and the potential I-93 North expansion project all affect the way Hooksett will develop in the future. Shifts away from brick-and-mortar commerce to e-commerce had a transitional effect on retail, and the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic forced businesses to adapt.

These factors, among various others, necessitate a need to update the 2004 Master Plan in order to adequately plan for efficient future decisions in land use and local government decision-making in Hooksett.

1.4 2020 Master Plan Update Process

Since January of 2018, the Town has experienced a heavy turnover in Community Development staff, including a new Town Planner, a new Town Engineer, a new Director of Public Works, a new Assessor, and a new Town Administrator. This transition has somewhat delayed the development of the 2024 Master Plan Update, however the update has been in process since Summer of 2018 and has included the following:

1. In Summer of 2018, the Planning Board formed a Master Plan Update Subcommittee, which met several times throughout Summer and Fall of that year to review and comment on the action items within the 2004 Master Plan.
2. Throughout early 2019, the Town Planner met with each of the Town's department heads as well as each of the Town's various advisory and land use boards to review and discuss potential items to be included in the plan update.
3. In Summer of 2019, the Town administered a community-wide survey to all residents and businesses with the assistance of Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission.
4. In Summer of 2019, the Town held a community input session at Cawley School to present the results of the community survey. Over 70 residents participated in focus group sessions, and out of those discussions the six subareas of the 2024 Master Plan Update were determined.
5. In Spring of 2020, Town staff began the process of comprehensively updating the Capital Improvements Plan, which complements the Master Plan and vice versa.
6. January 2021- December 2021 – The Planning Board held workshops devoted to Housing needs and review of the draft document.
7. February 2022 – December 2022 – The Board discussed the need for the Housing Needs Assessment data and matrix items.

8. February 2023 – September 2023 – The Board formulated the Objective Matrix, received a presentation on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, began the public hearing process, and then paused the process to update the Transportation and Housing Chapters.
9. March and April 2024 – Planning Board workshop to finalize plan text, with input from public.

1.5 2024 Master Plan Update Subareas

During the Summer 2019 public input session, Hooksett residents identified six areas of focus for the 2024 Master Plan Update. This plan is framed around these six subareas, which include:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Community Facilities and Recreation
- Conservation and Cultural Resources
- Future Land Use

1.6 Master Plan Vision Statement

New Hampshire RSA 674:2, Master Plan, Purpose and Description, provides the guiding principles to municipalities preparing master plans. Only two sections are required to be a part of the plan – existing and future land uses and visioning, while other data may be included covering such topics as transportation, natural resources, etc.

In addition to a land use section, the community master plan shall also include: *“A vision section that serves to direct the other sections of the plan. This section shall contain a set of statements, which articulate the desires of the citizens affected by the master plan, not only for their locality but for the region and the whole state. It shall contain a set of guiding principles and priorities to implement that vision.”*

It is important to note that this update has been built upon previous work in developing a community vision for Hooksett. On November 2 and 3, 2001, an eight-month long planning process by the Hooksett Community Profile Steering Committee culminated in a gathering of Hooksett’s citizens to participate in a two-day Community Profile event. The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension oversaw the Community Profile program, which was attended by 82 citizens on Friday evening and 69 during the day on Saturday.

In 2019, Town staff prepared and administered an updated community survey which was distributed via mail to every residential address in Hooksett. The results of this survey are included in the Appendix to this document.

In July of 2019, the Town held a community visioning event at Cawley School. The results of this event are summarized in the appendix of this document.

Expanding upon the original community vision which was established for the 2004 Master Plan, the results of the 2019 community survey and the ensuing visioning session have been

used to develop and updated vision for the Town which more closely aligns with the development pressures of 2020 and onward.

Town of Hooksett 2030 Comprehensive Vision Statement

The Town of Hooksett will be a community which maintains its small-town New England atmosphere, yet will still seek to offer a variety of service-oriented businesses, recreational activities, employment opportunities, and housing choices to its residents and others within the Southern New Hampshire region. Hooksett will, in coordination with other communities within Southern New Hampshire, promote growth which makes the best use of limited land resources. New development will be practical, yet attractive, and it will make every effort to promote environmental stewardship and conservation of both the natural environment and the Town's historical resources. The Town will seek to remain an attractive place to live in the Southern New Hampshire region, and will also seek to become a competitive employment center while implementing land use policies which aim to increase incomes and lower the cost of housing.

1.7 General Planning and Development Goals

GOAL A: Guide, plan, and accommodate future growth and development in a manner which:

- Respects the traditional, historic, and small town atmosphere of Hooksett
- Promotes an efficient and well-ordered land use pattern
- Economizes community facilities with sustainable development
- Respects natural environmental features
- Promotes local business
- Is fiscally responsible and addresses the needs of a range of household income levels
- Addresses community housing shortages
- Attracts and retains businesses which provide high wage jobs

Objective 1.7.A1 Accommodate future growth while maintaining appropriate and compatible scale, use, intensity, and purpose.

Objective 1.7.A2 Encourage land use decisions which will reinforce a sense of place and community.

Objective 1.7.A3 Encourage the preservation of unique and historical features.

Objective 1.7.A4 Protect important natural features.

Objective 1.7.A5 Encourage ongoing maintenance and improvement of properties, buildings, and public facilities and services.

Objective 1.7.A6 Encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings as an alternative to new construction.

Objective 1.7.A7 Encourage development that will complement and utilize existing infrastructure in an efficient way.

Policy 1.7.A1 Reference the Master Plan prior to making long range planning decisions.

Policy 1.7.A2 Review, monitor, and update the Master Plan at regular intervals.

Policy 1.7.A3 Recommend appropriate changes to the Town Development Regulations and the Town Zoning Ordinance to achieve the goals specified herein.

Policy 1.7.A4 Eliminate nonconforming, incompatible structures and uses to permit more appropriate ones where possible.

- Policy 1.7.A5 Identify various funding sources for all projects.
- Policy 1.7.A6 Continue to encourage active citizen participation in the maintenance of this Plan.
- Policy 1.7.A7 Coordinate the CIP and the Master Plan.

GOAL B: Work cooperatively with other southern New Hampshire communities, government agencies, and service providers to maintain a mutually beneficial arrangement for area development and for the provision of services in a manner which:

- Respects the goals of all parties involved and aims to further those goals
- Promotes new development opportunities where appropriate
- Promotes and maximizes efficient use of infrastructure and services
- Enhances the economic viability of the area

- Objective 1.7.B1 Establish open communication networks with adjacent communities and planning entities to establish growth boundaries and goals.**
- Objective 1.7.B2 Implement techniques to share economic development success with adjacent communities.**
- Objective 1.7.B3 Investigate alternative methods to economic growth with adjacent communities and local infrastructure agencies/providers.**
- Objective 1.7.B4 Continue to improve functionality and expansion of existing infrastructure.**
- Objective 1.7.B5 Coordinate infrastructure expansion projects to maximize efficiency and economic development opportunities.**

- Policy 1.7.B1 Provide Master Plan goals and objectives to surrounding communities while simultaneously familiarizing staff with master planning objectives of surrounding communities.
- Policy 1.7.B2 Dedicate staff resources to meet with adjacent communities to periodically review planning objectives and progress.
- Policy 1.7.B.3 Dedicate staff resources to investigating alternative economic growth ideas such as seeking assistance and funding available through various state and federal grant administration programs.

1.8 Housing Goals

GOAL: Reinforce the single-family character and integrity of our neighborhoods while simultaneously planning for alternative varieties of housing types in a manner which:

- Maintains the current housing stock
- Plans for a variety of new residences to meet the needs of current and future residents
- Provides for housing that is environmentally responsible
- Satisfies the needs of people with variable levels of income
- Satisfies the needs of people of all ages and lifestyles
- Provides incentive and opportunity for new generations of Hooksett residents to become homeowners

- Objective 1.8.1 Encourage owner-occupied residential dwellings in all low-density single family residential neighborhoods.**
- Objective 1.8.2 Promote small town character by identifying and protecting historic homes.**
- Objective 1.8.3 Maintain and improve the economic value of all residential areas by**

	encouraging reinvestment in the existing housing stock, particularly in blighted areas and in low owner-occupied areas.
Objective 1.8.4	Encourage new residential development which provides a diverse array of housing options for homeowners and renters, including condominium developments, cluster housing for seniors, small homes for first time buyers, and rental properties which offer quality housing options to people of all income levels.
Objective 1.8.5	Encourage high standards of construction in all residential development.
Objective 1.8.6	Encourage residential development which stewards the natural environment and conservation areas while simultaneously providing limited access to these areas for recreational purposes.
Objective 1.8.7	Provide various transportation options which effectively link residential areas with commercial areas and employment opportunities.
Objective 1.8.8	Provide an appropriate balance of single family and multi-family housing.
Objective 1.8.9	Enhance the quality of existing multi-family housing.
Objective 1.8.10	Support the construction of a variety of senior housing options which meet the needs of seniors at all stages.
Policy 1.8.1	Conduct a comprehensive housing analysis to better understand the amount and condition of existing housing stock.
Policy 1.8.2	Pursue preservation mechanisms which provide incentives to restore and maintain historic homes.
Policy 1.8.3	Upgrade and enforce building codes to address neighborhood blight, such as parking on lawns, litter control and deferred home maintenance.
Policy 1.8.4	Discourage the conversion of single-family homes to multi-family dwellings in low-density areas.
Policy 1.8.5	Promote high density/multi-family development in areas which have available infrastructure to support these densities.
Policy 1.8.6	Modify the Zoning Ordinance to require new residential development to require open space and other recreational amenities.
Policy 1.8.7	Require new residential development to tie into existing sidewalk networks.
Policy 1.8.8	Institute new rental housing inspection programs to ensure higher quality rental housing.
Policy 1.8.9	Provide density bonuses and other incentives for the development of quality, affordable housing in targeted areas of Town.
Policy 1.8.10	Incorporate residential master planned communities with a mixed use environment at key locations, such as Exits 10 and 11.
Policy 1.8.11	Allow flexibility in dimensional standards of housing lots to permit the construction of smaller homes.
Policy 1.8.12	Provide development incentives to construct elderly housing options, such as 55+ communities, assisted living facilities and nursing homes.

1.9 Economic Development Goals

GOAL: Enhance the vitality of the local economy by retaining existing businesses, encouraging entrepreneurship, and attracting new business to Hooksett in support of the Town Council's effort toward the development of public policy and strategies that result in:

- Long term retention of existing businesses
- An economy which attracts and retains young people
- An economy which supports and attracts high wage sectors
- Small business success
- An aesthetically attractive community in which people and employers want to locate

Objective 1.9.1	Establish strong rapport with existing businesses to offer support in retention and to encourage expansion opportunities.
Objective 1.9.2	Promote the Town as a destination for new businesses.
Objective 1.9.3	Diversify the tax base by attracting various new types of businesses which offer highly competitive wages.
Objective 1.9.4	Identify strategies to adaptively reuse existing structures for commercial/industrial purposes.
Objective 1.9.5	Identify brownfield sites for hazard mitigation and redevelopment.
Objective 1.9.6	Provide more opportunities for mixed-use live/work spaces.
Objective 1.9.7	Create visual and physical improvements which highlight commercial nodes.
Objective 1.9.8	Promote redevelopment in blighted/underutilized industrial and commercial areas.
Objective 1.9.9	Expand infrastructure to meet the needs of the business community.
Policy 1.9.1	Maintain an Ambassador Group to make monthly contacts with identified existing business to understand their needs and to provide assistance with retention and expansion activities.
Policy 1.9.2	Compile a list of developable properties and advertise these sites on the Town website.
Policy 1.9.3	Strictly enforce newly adopted commercial architectural guidelines.
Policy 1.9.4	Explore a flexible zoning structure that encourages mixed use development within the Route 3 corridor from College Park to Industrial Drive.
Policy 1.9.5	Continue to develop Route 3A TIF infrastructure improvement plans including but not limited to water and sewer plans.
Policy 1.9.6	Consider rezoning to allow mixed-use live/work redevelopment opportunities.
Policy 1.9.7	Continue to advise the development community on available tax incentives; implement the commercial/industrial development incentive in targeted areas.
Policy 1.9.8	Continue to streamline the development review process to maximize efficiency.
Policy 1.9.9	Review Impact Fee Ordinance every five (5) years.

1.10 Conservation and Cultural Resources Goals

Goal: Provide for the protection and balanced use of the Town's natural resources and historical capital in a manner which:

- Supports local property values
- Maintains the natural and historically significant built environments of the Town
- Addresses the ecology of the Town's natural environment in a sensitive manner
- Instills a heightened sense of civic pride in the Town's natural features as well as the Town's historically significant built environment
- Provides outdoor recreational opportunities

Objective 1.10.1	Educate the Town on the value of preserving both the natural and the historical environments.
Objective 1.10.2	Identify specific natural and man-made features to focus preservation efforts.
Objective 1.10.3	Balance new development with conservation efforts.

Objective 1.10.4	Highlight the Merrimack River, Quimby Mountain, the Pinnacle, Bear Brook State Park, the Town trail system, Clay Pond and Heads Pond as premier conservation and recreation areas.
Objective 1.10.5	Continue to encourage environmentally safe and cost-effective solid waste management systems, including recycling and composting.
Objective 1.10.6	Coordinate environmental planning efforts with neighboring municipalities and NHDES.
Objective 1.10.7	Provide limited access to natural and conservation areas for recreational purposes.
Objective 1.10.8	Enhance natural features in commercial and industrial developments.
Policy 1.10.1	Work with the Conservation and Heritage Commissions and other local groups with shared conservation goals to develop a list of significant natural and historical resources to focus conservation and preservation efforts through 2030.
Policy 1.10.2	Revise Town Development Regulations and Zoning Ordinance to require elevated standards of environmental conservation stewardship, aesthetics, and recreational access in all developments, residential and commercial.
Policy 1.10.3	Comprehensively update Town open space plan to include a master plan of Merrimack River Rail Trail as well as a master plan for Town-owned property adjacent to Quimby Mountain.
Policy 1.10.4	Require high quality and water-efficient landscaping for all developments; enforce landscaping regulations.
Policy 1.10.5	Work with the Conservation Commission, NHDES, and Town legal counsel to draft and adopt regulations in support of the conservation of trees in private developments.
Policy 1.10.6	Work with the heritage Commission, the Planning Board, and Town Council to adopt local incentives for the adaptive reuse of historically significant buildings.
Policy 1.10.7	Coordinate new developments to preserve the quality and aesthetic value of the Merrimack Riverfront.
Policy 1.10.8	Reactivate the Wellhead Protection Program to protect local water resources.
Policy 1.10.9	Develop a recreational use policy for Pinnacle Pond and surrounding public lands.

1.11 Transportation Goals

GOAL: Provide and maintain a safe, efficient transportation system that:

- Promotes accessibility throughout the community
- Minimizes commuting times, the risk of accidents, and congestion
- Provides alternative modes of transportation for all residents and others of various ages and income levels
- Links residential areas with commercial nodes and employment opportunities
- Provides for the efficient integration of the local transportation system into the regional network

Objective 1.11.1	Identify and mitigate areas of increasing traffic congestion and transportation infrastructure inefficiencies.
Objective 1.11.2	Identify and mitigate locations of potentially hazardous traffic conditions.
Objective 1.11.3	Provide alternative transportation infrastructure in key areas which

	caters to pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms transportation.
Objective 1.11.4	Invest in short-term roadway and sidewalk maintenance programs in order to avoid costly deferred maintenance.
Objective 1.11.5	Continue to ensure major roadway infrastructure projects on NHDOT roadways are included in that agency's 10 year plan
Policy 1.11.1	Work with NHDOT and traffic study consultants to identify the potential for new traffic light and/or other mitigating infrastructure at Industrial Park Drive and DW Highway.
Policy 1.11.2	Work with NHDOT to consider a center turn lane along Londonderry Turnpike between Smyth Road and the NH 101 interchange.
Policy 1.11.3	Continue to pursue a traffic study on alternative traffic mitigating measures at the intersections of Hackett Hill Road and Route 3A and Main and 3A.
Policy 1.11.4	Work with Hooksett PD, NHDOT, and New Hampshire State Police to develop a strategy to reduce incidence of speeding and aggressive driving along Route 3A.
Policy 1.11.5	Revise Town Development Regulations to require enhanced sidewalk and pedestrian infrastructure in all developments, residential and commercial.
Policy 1.11.6	Implement traffic calming measures where appropriate on Town maintained streets.
Policy 1.11.7	Continue partnering with SNHPC and Manchester Transit Authority to provide shuttle bus service to Hooksett residents at no charge.
Policy 1.11.8	Conduct a comprehensive analysis of sidewalk/pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure connectivity.
Policy 1.11.9	Support DPW and contractors in the continued analysis and financial management of roadway conditions studies and short/long-term maintenance.

1.12 Community Facilities and Recreation Goals

Goal: Provide a superior level of quality Town services and recreational amenities to the taxpayers in a manner which:

- Maximizes taxpayer return on investment in both current services and future proposed services and facilities through sound operation and efficient delivery practices
- Improves and expands upon existing services and facilities to appropriately plan for population growth and expansion within the Town
- Maintains the most comprehensive life safety and law enforcement services as possible
- Promotes a business-oriented attitude and economic development opportunities through efficient operation and expansion of municipal services and utility infrastructure
- Provides generous and varied opportunities for educational attainment and healthy recreational activities for residents of all ages and income levels

Objective 1.12.1	Ensure adequate continued level of service for all Town-provided life safety, sanitation, educational, and utility facilities and services.
Objective 1.12.2	Accurately project and plan for increasing capacity needs for utility infrastructure, schools, and other facilities and services as necessary.
Objective 1.12.3	Implement programs and policies which strive to enhance the quality and accessibility of all Town-provided facilities and services.
Objective 1.12.4	Work to coordinate Town life safety and law enforcement services with all

	relevant state agencies to build upon current levels of service.
Objective 1.12.5	Work to enhance the quality of Town schools and library facilities.
Objective 1.12.6	Work to enhance access to Town parks via sidewalks, trails, and bicycle infrastructure.
Objective 1.12.7	Provide sewer and water service to commercial and industrial lands on the west side of the Merrimack River.
Objective 1.12.8	Explore providing environmentally responsible recycling and trash removal services.
Policy 1.12.1	Assess the need for police and fire coverage on the west side of the river; acquire land for future needs as appropriate.
Policy 1.12.2	Continue to develop the Route 3A TIF District in active pursuit of sewer and water installation along Route 3A.
Policy 1.12.3	Improve the quality of existing parks with annual reviews of park facilities and equipment; make updates as necessary.
Policy 1.12.4	Explore the possibility of upgrading parking at Petersbrook Park, along with providing sidewalks and other interconnected walking paths.
Policy 1.12.5	Identify centrally located vacant land for future public use, i.e., Town Office expansion, library expansion, community center, educational institution, etc.
Policy 1.12.6	Evaluate the possibility of a consolidation effort among the Town's various water utilities.
Policy 1.12.7	Coordinate and secure service agreements with neighboring municipalities to provide utility services and life safety services as needed.
Policy 1.12.8	Annually review and update the CIP.
Policy 1.12.9	Dedicate staff resources to planning the improvement/expansion of existing services/facilities, and promotion of economic development opportunities, with local utilities.
Policy 1.12.10	Implement a Utility Advisory Committee to better coordinate infrastructure planning.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC **AND REGIONAL** **ANALYSIS**

2.1. Hooksett's Regional Setting

The Town of Hooksett is in Merrimack County, and is located in the south-central part of New Hampshire, approximately 26 miles north of the Massachusetts state line. Adjacent communities are the City of Manchester and the Town of Goffstown in Hillsborough County, the Towns of Auburn, Candia, and Deerfield in Rockingham County, and the Towns of Allenstown, Bow, and Dunbarton in Merrimack County.

The Town's area covers about 36.3 square miles, being roughly 6 miles long and 8 miles wide at its largest dimensions. The Merrimack River runs north-to-south through the community, dividing the Town such that about 1/3 of the Town is west of the river.

Primary access is provided by I-293 (FE Everett Turnpike), I-93, US Route 3/NH Route 28 and NH Route 3A—all of which have north-south orientations through the center of Town, and by NH Route 27, which provides access to and from the east. The NH seacoast is about one hour east; Boston is about one hour south, and the ski slopes of the White Mountains are about one hour north. Travel time to Concord, the state capital, via I-93 is about 15 minutes.

The Town of Hooksett is part of the metropolitan area of the City of Manchester (population approximately 115,000) and stands at the northern tip of New Hampshire's "Golden Triangle," (Map 1-1) the state's fastest growing residential, commercial, and industrial area formed by the City of Manchester at the north, the City of Nashua at the southwest, and the Town of Salem at the southeast. Hooksett's favorable geographic location and its three interchanges on the Interstate System contribute to the significant growth that the Town has experienced and will likely see into the future.

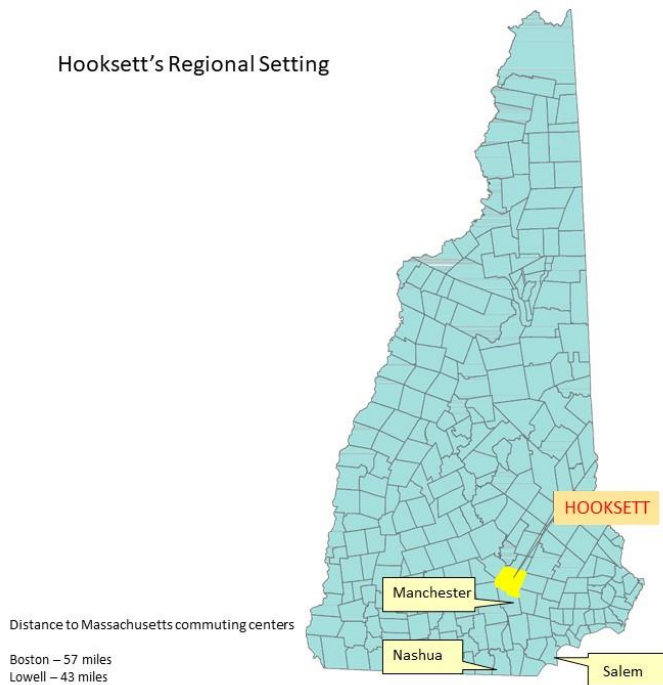
There are many regional decisions that influence the future of Hooksett and the general growth of southern New Hampshire. There are current and potential developments in Hooksett—Exit 11 development, future sewer expansion on the west side of the Merrimack River, the expansion of Southern NH University, and the emerging development of land owned by the Manchester Sand, Gravel, and Cement Company—that will have an effect on the surrounding regional area. Not only should Hooksett become more proactive in reaching out to the larger region and influencing how regional decisions are made, but Hooksett must also be mindful of how its own decisions influence land use matters in the regional area, now and into the future.

The update of the Master Plan presents unique challenges for a variety of reasons. Since the

adoption of the 2004 Master Plan, various advances in technology and the prevalence of smartphone technology, internet commerce, and E-delivery services have greatly impacted the world and national economies. Brick and mortar retail establishments are quickly becoming less attractive. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic placed additional strains on the world and national economies, such that e-commerce and contactless delivery options are preferred. E-commerce companies such as Amazon and eBay experienced exponential growth in the months following the onset of the pandemic. This has necessitated growth in the warehousing and distribution sectors of the economy, at least for the foreseeable future. It should be noted that the long term effects of this pandemic in concert with market shifts away from traditional commercial development are part of an extremely fluid situation. The long term impacts of the pandemic on the national/local economy are uncertain, however Hooksett should plan to assess land use impacts and to subsequently adapt land use regulations accordingly. More information on the long term impact will become clearer as time goes on.



Hooksett's Regional Setting



Prepared by the Hooksett
 Community Development Department



2.2 Population Statistics and Projections

A. *Executive Summary*

The US Bureau of Census, the NH Office of Energy and Planning (NHOEP), and the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) provide a description and analysis of existing demographic data. While it is essential to review relevant existing demographic information and to include it in the Master Plan, it should be emphasized that all such information should not be taken at face value. This is particularly true for population projections. This population portion provides:

1. Hooksett, Regional and State Population trends;
2. Hooksett, Regional and State Population projections;
3. Hooksett and Regional population density; and,
4. Hooksett, Regional and State population composition.

B. *Historic Population Trends*

Since the 1950s, Hooksett has experienced considerable population growth spurred by a number of reasons, including the increase of urban resettlement from the Boston metropolitan area which was made possible by major improvements to the state and federal highway system. As displayed in Table 5-1 and Figure 5-1, between 1960 and 1970, Hooksett grew by 50%. From 1970 to 1980, the Town grew more moderately from a population of 5,564 to 7,303, an increase of approximately 31%. Between 1980 and 1990, growth slowed down to 20% for the decade, the slowest growth period during the fifty-year period from 1950-2000. The Town's population was 8,767 in 1990, and 11,721 in 2000, which represented a 34% increase. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Hooksett's population as of July 2022 was estimated to be 14,740.

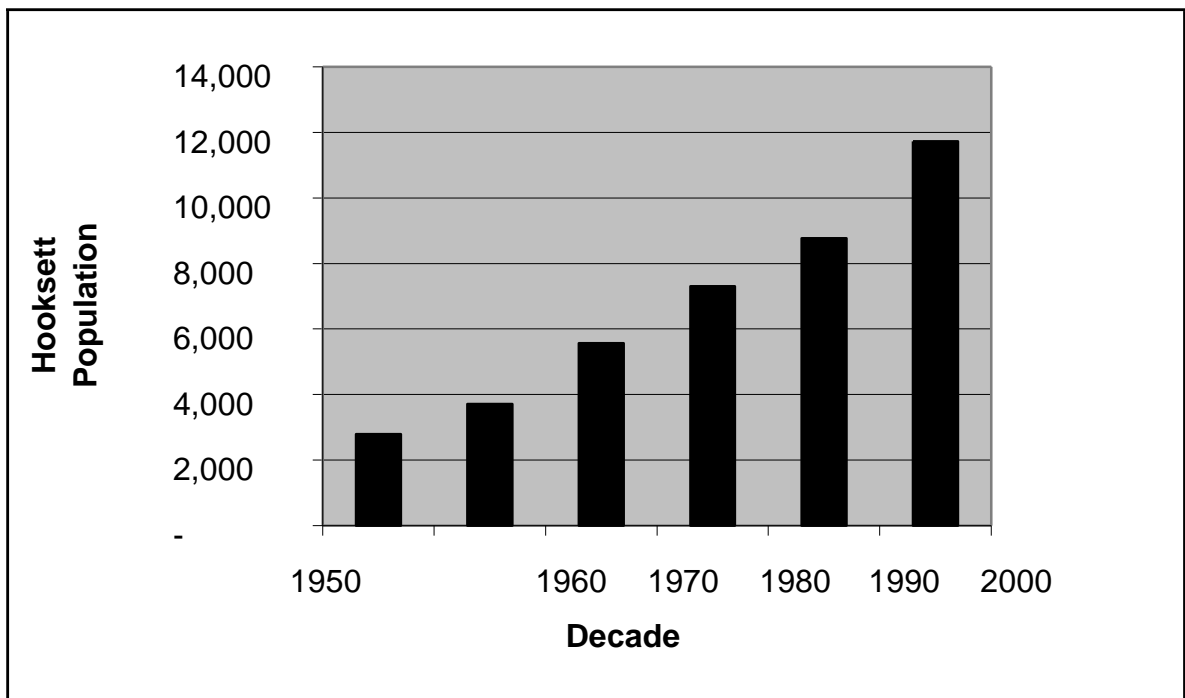
Table 5-1 further demonstrates that the Town of Hooksett has grown at an average annual rate of 3.36% for each of the last 70 years.

**Table 5-1 - Comparative Population Growth, 1950 –
2000**
Hooksett, SNHPC Region and New
Hampshire

Year	HOOKSETT	% Change	SNHPC	% Change	State of NH	% Change
1950	2,792	--	108,356	--	533,110	--
1960	3,713	32.99%	121,066	11.73%	606,921	13.85%
1970	5,564	49.85%	138,355	14.28%	737,681	21.54%
1980	7,303	31.25%	171,978	24.30%	920,610	24.80%
1990	8,767	20.05%	216,244	25.74%	1,109,252	20.49%
2000	11,721	33.69%	248,838	15.07%	1,235,786	11.41%

US Census & New Hampshire OEP

Figure 5-1 - Population Growth by Decade, 1950 - 2000
Hooksett, NH



US Census & New Hampshire OEP

From 1950 to 2000, Hooksett's growth exceeded both the SNHPC region and the state of New Hampshire's percentage growth rate, except during the decade of 1980-1990 when the SNHPC region outpaced Hooksett's growth by 5%. As a rule, though, Hooksett's growth is generally 15-20% higher per decade than the SNHPC region or the State of New Hampshire. Table 5-2 and Figure 5-2 compare the growth rates by decade for the Town, region, and State.

Table 5-2 - Proportionate Growth by Decade, 1950-2000

	Hooksett, SNHPC Region and State				
	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000
HOOKSETT	32.99%	49.85%	31.25%	20.05%	33.69%
AUBURN*	11.57%	57.51%	41.67%	41.69%	14.61%
BEDFORD	67.10%	61.14%	61.82%	32.51%	45.46%
BOW*	26.17	85%	61.96	25.77%	41.34%
CANDIA*	19.87%	34.03%	49.67%	19.00%	9.95%
CHESTER	30.48%	31.24%	45.15%	34.15%	40.91%
DEERFIELD	1.13%	64.99%	68.00%	57.86%	17.73%
DERRY	19.93%	67.63%	61.16%	56.84%	14.92%
DUNBARTON*	18.57%	30.53%	42.30%	49.82%	26.54%
GOFFSTOWN*	28.24%	28.41%	21.88%	29.22%	15.79%
LONDONDERRY	49.82%	117.58%	154.36%	45.47%	17.47%
MANCHESTER*	6.71%	-0.60%	3.63%	9.23%	7.49%
NEW BOSTON	6.94%	50.27%	38.71%	66.70%	28.75%
RAYMOND	30.74%	60.85%	81.59%	59.78%	11.03%
WEARE	5.58%	30.35%	74.61%	91.62%	25.56%
SNHPC Region	11.73%	14.28%	24.30%	25.74%	15.07%
State of New Hampshire	13.85%	21.54%	24.80%	20.49%	11.41%

US Census, New Hampshire OEP & SNHPC

*Towns adjacent to Hooksett

Historically, the Town has grown at a rate either equal to or greater than the state average. This trend continued into 2020. As of 2019, the Town of Hooksett has an estimated population of 14,542, representing a 24.1% increase since the year 2000. By comparison, the State of New Hampshire experienced a 10% increase in population over the same period of time.

Data shown in table 5-3 displays the actual and projected population by decade from 1950 through 2020 for Hooksett, the SNHPC region, and the State. Compared with communities directly abutting it, Hooksett was the second fastest growing town behind Bow and was the fourth fastest of the 15 communities listed in Table 5-3 through the year 2000. It should be noted that projected population increases for both 2010 and 2020 were overstated by 10-15% for nearly every community listed, including Hooksett and the State of New Hampshire. For Hooksett, whereas the population was projected to increase by approximately 44% in the 20 years between 2000 and 2020, current statistics indicate that the community experienced an increase of 24.1% - roughly half of the projected figure.

This indicates a slowing of population growth in Hooksett as well as statewide, which began after the year 2000. Note that while population growth is slowing, the Town of Hooksett continues to experience growth at a higher rate than the state average.

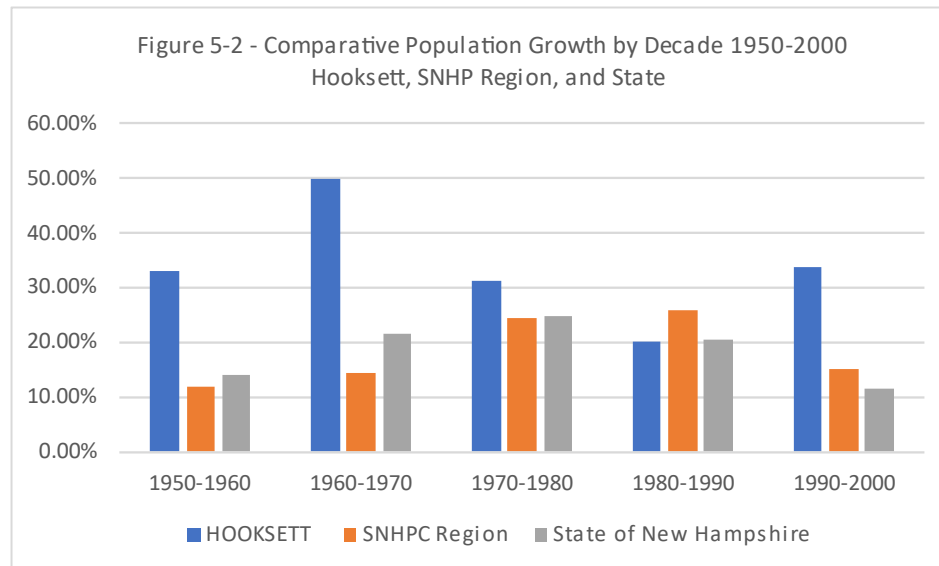


Table 5-3 - Population Growth, 1950 – 2020
Hooksett, SNHPC Region and State

Community	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010 **	2020 **
HOOKSETT	2,792	3,713	5,564	7,303	8,767	11,721	14,270	16,840
ALLENSTOWN*	1,540	1,789	2,732	4,398	4,649	4,843	5,420	5,550
AUBURN*	1,158	1,292	2,035	2,883	4,085	4,682	5,350	5,870
BEDFORD	2,176	3,636	5,859	9,481	12,563	18,274	22,190	25,280
BOW*	1,062	1,340	2,479	4,015	5,050	7,138	8,720	10,450
CANDIA*	1,243	1,490	1,997	2,989	3,557	3,911	4,420	4,800
CHESTER	807	1,053	1,382	2,006	2,691	3,792	4,600	5,130
DEERFIELD*	706	714	1,178	1,979	3,124	3,678	4,350	4,790
DERRY	5,826	6,987	11,712	18,875	29,603	34,021	38,210	42,030
DUNBARTON*	583	632	825	1,174	1,759	2,226	2,580	2,920
GOFFSTOWN*	5,638	7,230	9,284	11,315	14,621	16,929	19,230	21,350
LONDONDERRY	1,640	2,457	5,346	13,598	19,781	23,236	26,940	29,930
MANCHESTER*	82,732	88,282	87,754	90,936	99,332	107,006	118,630	127,140
NEW BOSTON	865	925	1,390	1,928	3,214	4,138	5,020	5,660
RAYMOND	1,428	1,867	3,003	5,453	8,713	9,674	10,970	11,980
WEARE	1,345	1,420	1,851	3,232	6,193	7,776	9,200	10,440
SNHPC Region	108,356	121,066	138,355	171,978	216,244	248,838	283,380	311,240
New Hampshire	533,110	606,921	737,681	920,610	1,109,252	1,235,786	1,385,210	1,523,680

* Towns adjacent to Hooksett

**Projected

Table 5-4 – Population Projections vs. 2019 Census Data

Community	2020 Projected	2019 Actual*	Percent Deviation
Hooksett	16,840	14,542	-13.6
Allenstown	5,550	4,359	-21.3
Auburn	5,870	5,582	-4.9
Bedford	25,280	22,628	-10.5
Bow	10,450	7,980	-23.6
Candia	4,800	4,101	-14.6
Chester	5,130	5,270	+2.7
Deerfield	4,790	4,475	-6.6
Derry	42,030	33,485	-20.3
Dunbarton	2,920	2,820	-3.4
Goffstown	21,350	18,053	-15.4
Londonderry	29,930	26,490	-11.5
Manchester	127,140	112,673	-11.4
New Boston	5,660	5,899	+4.2
Raymond	11,980	10,529	-13.9
Weare	10,440	9,091	-12.9
SNHPC Region	311,240	287,977	-7.5
New Hampshire	1,523,680	1,359,711	-10.8

*Sourced from US Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey Estimates

Table 5-4 displays a comparison of the projected 2020 population of all towns within the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission’s jurisdiction with actual 2019 US Census Bureau estimates. These figures indicate that projections made at the beginning of the millennium were generally overstated for all but two of the communities listed; the region and the state as a whole experienced a decreasing rate of growth in the twenty years between 2000 and 2020. The Town of Hooksett’s rate of population increase between 2000 and 2020 has been roughly half that which was projected in 2000. It should be expected that this trend will continue, and that Hooksett will experience a population increase at a slowly declining rate through 2030.

Various factors have played a role in the declining rate of population increase experienced statewide over the past two decades. Increasing costs of housing, an aging population, and the phenomenon referred to as “brain drain” (the outmigration of skilled workers to other states) have all negatively impacted New Hampshire’s rate of growth since 2000. As of 2020, this trend is expected to continue into the next decade and beyond and should be considered in developing long range planning documents.

It should be noted that Hooksett is unique among New Hampshire communities as it hosts Southern New Hampshire University’s brick and mortar campus, which houses roughly 3,000 students during the academic year. These students are not reliably tallied in the US Census Bureau’s tabulations, and they should be considered as a factor in all land use planning decisions due to the economic, housing, and traffic related impacts they exert upon the community.

C. Population Projections

The New Hampshire Office of Business and Economic Affairs population projections for the Town, region, and state are presented in Table 5-5. The NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs estimated Hooksett's population at 15,084 for 2022. BEA's forecasting methodology is based on a community's historical share of its respective county's growth, and it assumes that a community's share of growth, according to changes in the 1960 through 2030 population, will remain about the same into the future. While BEA's projections may be statistically relevant for projected county growth, this model's projected growth for Hooksett must be viewed cautiously. Based upon the trend evidenced in Table 5-4 of this document, it is highly likely that Hooksett's population growth will be less than the official BEA projections, as the rate of growth has declined consistently during the first two decades of the new millennium. Evidence of Hooksett's slowing rate of growth will be further displayed in the housing section of this report.

**Table 5-5 - Population Projections 2020-2030
Hooksett, SNHPC Region and State**

Community	Projected Population 2030	Population 2020	Projected Net Increase 2020-2030	Projected Percentage Increase 2020-2030	Projected Annual Percentage Increase 2020-2030
Hooksett	17,089	14,542	2,547	17.5%	1.75%
SNHPC Region	295,437	287,977	7,460	2.6%	0.26%
State of NH	1,402,878	1,359,711	43,167	3.2%	0.32%

US Census, NH OEP & SNHPC

D. Population Density

Rates of population change alone do not provide sufficient indication of the extent to which the land in a community is developed. A comparison of the densities for the Hooksett, SNHPC region, and the state is provided in Table 5-6.

In 2000, Table 5-5 below indicates that Hooksett had an overall population density that was higher than nine of the region's communities, all of which are significantly more rural. Compared to its immediate neighboring communities, Hooksett ranked third in density behind Manchester and Goffstown. Based on BEA's population projections, Hooksett's population density will increase substantially by the year 2030. Hooksett is increasingly becoming a suburban community to neighboring employment centers of Manchester and Concord. In light of the projected increased

density in Hooksett, there must be an awareness of what the housing build-out threshold of the community will be in order to properly plan for the type and quantity of public facilities needed in the future.

Table 5-6 - Population Density, 1990, 2000 and 2030
Hooksett, SNHPC Region and State

Community	Area (sq. mile)	Pop 1990	Density/sq mile 1990	Pop 2020	Density/sq mile 2020	Projected Pop 2030	Density/sq mile 2030
HOOKSETT	36.3	8,767	241.5	11,721	322.9	17,089	470.8
ALLENSTOWN*	20.4	4,649	229.8	4,843	237.4	4,110	201.5
AUBURN*	28.3	4,085	144.3	4,682	165.4	5,959	210.6
BEDFORD	34.6	12,563	363.1	18,274	528.2	25,276	730.5
BOW*	28.1	5,050	179.7	7,138	254	8,349	297.1
CANDIA*	30.2	3,557	117.8	3,911	129.5	3,967	131.4
CHESTER	26	2,691	103.5	3,792	145.8	5,660	217.7
DEERFIELD*	51.9	3,124	60.2	3,678	70.9	4,978	95.9
DERRY	35.6	29,603	831.5	34,021	955.6	32,733	921.3
DUNBARTON*	30.8	1,759	57.1	2,226	72.27	3,239	105.2
GOFFSTOWN*	36.9	14,621	396.2	16,929	458.8	18,689	506.5
LONDONDERRY*	41.2	19,781	480.1	23,236	564	26,639	646.6
MANCHESTER*	33.9	99,332	2930.1	107,006	3156.5	112,087	3306.4
NEW BOSTON	44.1	3,214	72.9	4,138	93.8	6,334	143.6
RAYMOND	29.3	8,713	297.4	9,674	330.2	10,814	369.1
WEARE	60.3	6,193	102.7	7,776	129	9,514	157.8
SNHPC Region	452.3	216,244	478.1	248,838	550.2	295,437	653.2
State of NH	8,993	1,109,252	123.3	1,235,786	137.4	1,402,878	156

US Census, NH OEP and SNHPC

*Towns immediately adjacent to Hooksett

E. Population Composition

According to the US Census 2000, 95.1% of Hooksett's population reported their race as white only, compared to 92.4% for the region. Table 5-6 compares the racial diversity of Hooksett to the region and the State in the year 2000.

Table 5-7 - Population by Race, 2020
Hooksett, SNHPC Region and State

Community	White	Black or African American Only	Indian or Alaska Native Only	Asian Only	Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Total Hispanic	Percent Non- White
Hooksett	11,305	80	28	195	3	23	87	170	4.93%
SNHPC Region	236,040	2,987	610	3,725	72	2,345	3,056	6,695	7.63%
State of NH	1,186,851	9,035	2,964	15,931	371	7,420	13,214	20,489	5.53%
US Census, NH OEP & SNHPC									

According to race and ethnicity statistics presented by the US Census Bureau, the racial composition of Hooksett in 2019 remains generally unchanged. 95.4% of Hooksett residents identify as Caucasian, with the next largest racial and ethnic groups consisting of Hispanic/Latino at 3%, African American at 1.3%, and Asian at 1%. These statistics are similar to statewide racial and ethnic composition. In 2019, 93.1% of all New Hampshire residents identified as Caucasian, with 4% reporting as Hispanic/Latino, 1.8% reporting as African American, and 3% reporting as Asian.

National trends indicate that the racial and ethnic composition of the country is diversifying, and New Hampshire should expect to experience the same albeit at a slower rate than that of the national statistic.

In terms of age, over 33% of Hooksett's population was between 35 to 54 years of age in 2000, forming the Town's largest age group. Comprising 23% of the population, school age children (5 to 19 years of age) were the Town's second largest age group. Population by age is displayed in Table 5-7 and Percentage of Population by age is indicated in Table 5-8.

Table 5-7, Population by Age, 2020

Hooksett, SNHPC Region, & State							
	Total Population	<5	5-19	20-34	35-54	55-64	65 or older
Hooksett	14,871	668	2,511	2,976	3,844	2,317	2,555
SNHPC	285,230	14,365	51,605	58,372	74,054	42,077	44,757
NH	1,377,529	61,480	231,222	257,146	340,287	221,440	265,954

2020 Decennial Census

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 5-8, Population by Age, 2020

Hooksett, SNHPC Region, & State						
	<5	5-19	20-34	35-54	55-64	65 or older
Hooksett	4.5%	16.9%	20.0%	25.8%	15.6%	17.2%
SNHPC	5.0%	18.1%	20.5%	26.0%	14.8%	15.7%
NH	4.5%	16.8%	18.7%	24.7%	16.1%	19.3%

2020 Decennial Census

Source: US Census Bureau

New Hampshire is an aging state. The Town is not immune from this phenomenon, and it should be expected that the population will gradually get older over the next several decades. For instance, according to US Census Bureau estimates for 2020, the percentage of Hooksett residents under the age of 18 decreased from nearly 30% in 2000 to around 19%. Likewise, people aged 65 and up accounted for 9% of all Hooksett residents in 2000 and currently comprises 17% of the population in 2020.

The demographics of the Town will likely align with state trends in population aging and decline. The New Hampshire Bureau of Economic Affairs forecasts that all New Hampshire counties will experience a natural decline in population by 2030 – that is, a higher number of deaths than births. It is also projected that the number of New Hampshire residents over the age of 65 will increase by over 200,000 by the year 2030, while the number of New Hampshire residents under the age of 18 will decline by over 50,000.

Aging populations require different types of housing, transportation, healthcare services, recreational and educational needs than their younger counterparts. An aging population also presents various challenges to both the Town and the state in terms of economic development and social services. It is imperative that local decision makers consider the long-term effects of an aging population on future land use, fiscal policy, transportation infrastructure, housing needs, and healthcare.



Ongoing single family home development
in University Heights Subdivision

3. HOUSING **ANALYSIS**

3.1 Introduction

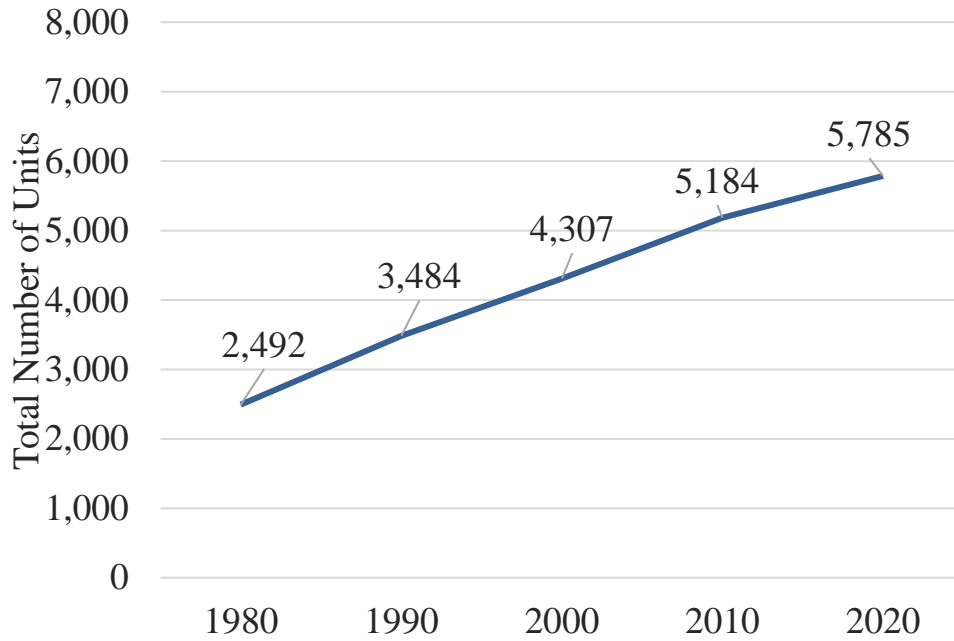
This section of the Master Plan analyzes the Town’s housing stock and development trends, and subsequently provides projections for new housing construction in the future. This information will serve as a guide for the formulation of the Future Land Use Plan at the conclusion of this document. A comprehensive plan for the future development of housing is vital to the preservation and improvement of the Town’s neighborhoods and housing stock. The plan will create opportunities for revitalization, growth, and new development, while preserving Hooksett’s character as a rural/suburban community.

3.2 Types of Housing

A. Existing Housing Supply

Hooksett is both a growing “bedroom community” to neighboring metropolitan cities such as Manchester, Nashua and Concord, and a town that is made up of longtime and new residents who work in and around Hooksett. Based on US Census figures, from 1980 and 2010, a total of 2,692 total units were added to the housing supply, representing a 108% increase or 4% annually. From 2010 to 2020, a total of 601 total housing units were added to the housing supply, representing a 12% increase or 1% annually. The numbers outlined in Figure 3-1 demonstrate the housing growth trends from 1980-2020.

Figure 3-1, Growth in Hooksett Housing Units (1980-2020)



Sources: IPUMS National Historical

Table 3-1 presents the total estimated number of units, based on American Community Survey five-year estimates, for Hooksett and neighboring municipalities. In 2020, approximately 74% of Hooksett's estimated 5,250 housing units are single-family homes. Approximately 23% have two or more units and 3% are manufactured or other types of units.

Table 3-1, Housing Stock by Composition, 2020

	Total housing units		Single-Family		Two or More Units		Manufactured or Other	
Hooksett	5,250	100%	3,894	74%	1,193	23%	163	3%
Allenstown	1,839	100%	772	42%	477	26%	590	32%
Auburn	1,923	100%	1,846	96%	77	4%	0	0%
Bow	2,756	100%	2,577	94%	171	6%	8	0%
Candia	1,505	100%	1,403	93%	26	2%	76	5%
Concord	18,810	100%	9,044	48%	8,708	46%	1,058	6%
Deerfield	1,893	100%	1,718	91%	137	7%	38	2%
Dunbarton	1,055	100%	1,028	97%	27	3%	0	0%
Goffstown	6,563	100%	4,883	74%	1,505	23%	175	3%
Manchester	50,177	100%	20,245	40%	29,536	59%	396	1%
Pembroke	2,852	100%	1,867	65%	798	28%	187	7%

2020 5-Year American Community Survey

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table 3-2, Hooksett Housing Stock
According to Assessing Data (2023)**

	Number of Structures
Single-Family Detached	3,485
Accessory Dwelling Unit	141
Manufactured Home	236
Residential Condo	1,195
Duplex	110
Triplex	12
Quadplex	3
Multi-Family (5+ Units)	7

Source: Town of Hooksett

In comparison to surrounding communities of similar size, the housing stock in Hooksett provides a wider variety of both single family and multi-family options, though it should be noted that the largest portion of the existing housing stock remains single family residential dwellings. It is also important to note that as of January 2024, there are several residential development projects which have been approved by the Town, but which have not yet been constructed. These development projects mainly consist of single-family residential dwellings located on lots at least one acre in size. Notable projects pending include:

- Hemlock Hill Conservation Subdivision – 37 single family units
- Autumn Frost Conservation Subdivision – 18 single family units
- Webster Woods Phase II – 27 single family units
- Granite Hill Phase III – 91 attached single family townhouse units/duplexes
- Unnamed development owned by Manchester Sand & Gravel – 420+ single family units
- University Commons – 20 attached single family townhouse units/duplexes
- Forest Oaks – 20 attached single family townhouse units/duplexes
- Park Place Community – 30 townhouses
- City to Mountain Estates – 72 apartment units
- 7 Martins Ferry – 6 townhouses
- Springwood Homes, Hunt & Dartmouth Street – 6 lot single-family subdivision

By understanding past housing trends, Hooksett can better predict future housing growth. Since 1980 construction of housing units in Hooksett has been growing, and outside of communities like Bow, Deerfield, and Goffstown, Hooksett has seen some of the highest growth in the greater Manchester region. From 2010 to 2020, housing growth slowed in the region and neighboring communities. However, apart from the Town of Auburn, Hooksett saw some of the highest relative housing growth in this period.

Table 3-3, Change in Total Housing Units, 1980-2020

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10	2010-20
Hooksett	2,492	3,484	4,307	5,184	5,785	40%	24%	20%	12%
Allenstown	1,592	1,868	1,962	1,881	2,023	17%	5%	-4%	8%
Auburn	979	1,354	1,622	1,814	2,138	38%	20%	12%	18%
Bow	1,284	1,860	2,330	2,807	3,009	45%	25%	20%	7%
Candia	995	1,192	1,384	1,494	1,574	20%	16%	8%	5%
Concord	12,126	15,697	16,881	18,852	19,085	29%	8%	12%	1%
Deerfield	828	1,227	1,406	1,743	1,920	48%	15%	24%	10%
Dunbarton	431	685	858	1,077	1,148	59%	25%	26%	7%
Goffstown	3,457	5,022	5,798	6,341	6,619	45%	15%	9%	4%
Manchester	35,869	44,361	45,892	49,288	51,438	24%	3%	7%	4%
Pembroke	1,788	2,536	2,734	2,872	2,985	42%	8%	5%	4%

Decennial Census

Sources: IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System; US Census Bureau.

The Town also hosts a variety of age-restricted housing developments which cater largely to older adults aged 55 and over. These developments include seven different communities with a combined total of 367 age-restricted units with either two or three bedroom units:

- Jensen's Brook Ridge – 92 units
- Berry Hill Estates – 107 units
- Stonegate – 34 units
- River Village – 20 units
- Webster Woods Phase I – 40 units
- Holly Berry – 44 units
- Westview Terrace – 30 units

B. Housing Conditions

Other factors which can be used to evaluate the quality and adequacy of a community's housing stock are the age of the units, the completeness of facilities, and the number of persons per unit. The table below illustrates the year of construction for Hooksett's housing units based on 2020 U.S. Census Bureau estimates. This data shows that over 70% of Hooksett's existing housing stock was constructed after 1970. While this factor by itself provides no guarantee as to the quality of housing, it does suggest that a large percentage of the housing stock more than likely meets minimum safety standards for structural, electrical, heating and plumbing work.

Table 3-4, Age of Hooksett Housing Stock

Year Built	Units	% of Total
2010 to later	637	12%
2000 to 2009	693	13%
1990 to 1999	798	15%
1980 to 1989	1099	21%
1970 to 1979	813	15%
1960 to 1969	434	8%
1950 to 1959	222	4%
1940 to 1949	78	1%
1939 or earlier	476	9%

2020 5-Year American Community Survey
Source: US Census Bureau

In addition to the overall physical quality of Hooksett’s housing, overcrowding is also a factor in determining substandard housing conditions. The generally accepted standard definition for overcrowding is more than 1.01 persons per room, when the total number of persons living within the housing unit is divided by the number of rooms in that unit. This statistic is difficult to quantify with accuracy as residents of rental properties are largely unaccounted for in Census Bureau tabulations in many cases. As shown in table below, overcrowding was found to occur in 56 units in 2020, which represents 1.1% of all units. Overall, these indicators show that Hooksett’s housing is in good condition with only some minor areas of concern requiring attention in the form of code enforcement. Housing units which lack complete kitchen and/or plumbing facilities are generally older homes which over time will likely be renovated, restored, or demolished.

Table 3-5, Hooksett Substandard Housing Units, 2020

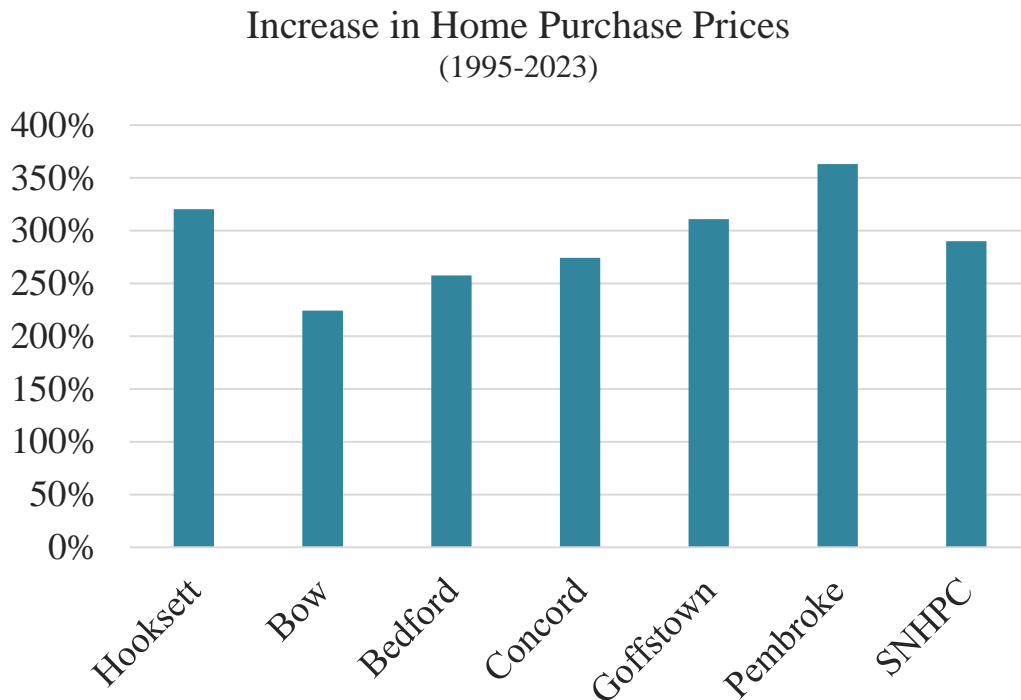
	Units	% of Total Units
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	32	0.6%
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	32	0.6%
1.01 or more persons per room	56	1.1%

2020 5-Year American Community Survey
Source: US Census Bureau

C. Cost of Housing & Affordability

Workforce and affordable housing are terms that are often used interchangeably and certainly are similar in that household income levels are involved. By definition, “Workforce Housing” means for-sale housing that is affordable to a household of four earning up to 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI); or rental housing that is affordable to a household of three earning up to 60% of the average median income (AMI). “Affordable” is defined as spending no more than 30% of a household’s income on housing costs. Ownership housing cost is defined as principal, interest, taxes and insurance; rental cost is defined as rent plus utilities.

Households and individuals spending more than 30% of their income on housing related costs are considered cost burdened. Rising rents, income stagnation or loss of income can lead once unburdened households to become cost burdened. This can lead to difficult choices about utilities, childcare and food every month. For many families, accessing housing has become increasingly difficult, given the rapid rise in area housing costs, both for rentals and for purchase.



Through July 2023.

Source: New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority

Merrimack County has experienced vacancy rates under 1% since 2021 across rental properties.¹ A healthy and balanced rental market should have a vacancy rate of 5 to 6 percent. Of the 1,230 rental properties in Hooksett, around half of those occupants reported spending 30% or more of their household incomes on gross rent, according to U.S. Census Bureau data from 2020. Of the 2,420 owner-occupied homes with mortgages in Hooksett, 25% reported having housing costs 30% or greater than their total gross income. The cost of new, single-family housing units rose significantly after the Great Recession of 2008, and lack of supply in conjunction with a growing population – albeit at a declining rate of growth – means that housing prices will likely continue to rise for both owner-occupied homes and renters alike.

In the Manchester area in 2023, HUD characterizes a family of four as low-income if the family's yearly income is \$84,600. With this income, it is assumed that a low-income family can afford to pay \$2,100 a month to rent an apartment. A very low-income family of four earns \$52,900 per year and can afford to pay \$1,300 a month for rent.² Unfortunately, according to NH Housing Finance Authority in 2023 the gross median rent for a two-bedroom unit in Hooksett and the region were \$1,500 and

¹ <https://www.nhhfa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/NHH-2023-Res-Rental-Survey-Report.pdf>

² <https://www.nhhfa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/HUD-Income-Limits-2023.pdf>

\$1,800 per month respectively. In the SNHPC region, median rents have grown by almost 40% since 2015. Over that same period Hooksett home sales prices increased by over 50%.³ Addressing this issue is not only important to ensure housing is available to all income groups but is also a vital economic development issue for Hooksett and the Southern New Hampshire region. In order to have local thriving economy, a diversified workforce must be available to businesses for growth and expansion.

Table 3-6 NH Housing Finance Authority's Documented Assisted Housing Units

		2022					
	Total Assisted Housing Units	Elderly Units	Family Units	Special Needs Units	Rent Assisted Units	Accessible Units	Income Based Rent Units
Hooksett	190	70	120	0	160	10	110
SNHPC	5,080	2,100	2,860	130	4,060	640	2,420
NH	22,750	11,490	10,740	520	20,350	2,840	14,240

Source: NH Housing Finance Authority

Currently, there are 120 family assisted housing units and 70 elderly assisted housing units in Hooksett, spread over four developments in the community. These rental units assist persons at low to very low incomes and are subsidized by the NH Housing Finance Authority or US Department of Agriculture Rural Development. As housing production and population increases in the area, the demand for affordable units will also increase.

With housing prices and rents increasing 40% and 50% respectively, available affordable workforce housing is a growing concern for the citizens of Hooksett, as it is in all areas in the Southern New Hampshire region. There have been a number of decisions by the New Hampshire Courts that have emphasized the need for communities to meet the housing needs of low-income families. Municipal land use ordinances must provide for the creation of workforce housing and New Hampshire legislation provides an expedited appeal for projects that are denied. It also requires the NH Bureau of Economic Affairs and the regional planning commissions to provide certain technical assistance.

Recommendations formulated in this master plan have been developed on the premise that a commitment to housing for people of all income levels, ages, and stages of life should continue as a best practice in land use planning and zoning.

3.3 Residential Development Considerations

A. Housing Projections

The following section is from Section VI of the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The purpose of the assessment is to identify and analyze baseline conditions for fair housing, equity, opportunity, and housing needs in the Southern

³ Through July 2023. <https://www.nhhfa.org/publications-data/housing-and-demographic-data/>

New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) region. The full RHNA can be found on the SNHPC website.

As part of the SNHPC RHNA, the State’s consultant, Root Policy Research, produced a Fair Share Housing Production Model to assist New Hampshire’s Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) in determining the housing production needed to meet future demand. The Housing Needs Assessment and the methodology by Root Policy Research that resulted in the Fair Share tables on the following pages do not break out the current municipal fair share of regional need for workforce housing and therefore shouldn’t be relied on for current compliance with the state’s Workforce Housing Law, RSA 674:58-61.

The Fair Share Housing Production Model (“model”) projects the number of housing units, by tenure and Area Median Income (AMI) threshold, that jurisdictions should allow or accommodate to meet projected population and employment demand—and to support a more balanced housing market in New Hampshire.

The employment component is critical to support economic stabilization and growth, especially in the state’s small towns and rural areas. A model based solely on demographic projections—which are based on historical trends—would drive housing demand into urban areas and away from rural areas that are aging. This would result in rural economies that cannot support the needs of aging residents, tourism and recreation activity—including second and vacation homeowners—and economic development.

Fair Share Distribution

Adequate, affordable housing for everyone is a basic yet critical concept that is vital to the welfare and security of all those residing in the SNHPC region. In 2008 (effective January 1, 2010) the New Hampshire legislature enacted RSA 674:59, which states that:

“I. In every municipality that exercises the power to adopt land use ordinances and regulations, such ordinances and regulations shall provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing, including rental multi-family housing [emphasis added]. In order to provide such opportunities, lot size and overall density requirements for workforce housing shall be reasonable. A municipality that adopts land use ordinances and regulations shall allow workforce housing to be located in a majority, but not necessarily all, of the land area that is zoned to permit residential uses within the municipality. Such a municipality shall have the discretion to determine what land areas are appropriate to meet this obligation. This obligation may be satisfied by the adoption of inclusionary zoning as defined in RSA 674:21, IV (a). This paragraph shall not be construed to require a municipality to allow for the development of multifamily housing in a majority of its land zoned to permit residential uses.”

It is also important to note the definitions in RSA 674:58, where:

1. Affordable housing is defined as “housing with combined rental and utility costs or combined mortgage loan debt services, property taxes and require insurance that do not exceed 30 percent of a household’s gross annual income.”

2. Multi-family housing is defined as “a building or structure containing 5 or more dwelling units.”
3. Workforce housing is defined as “housing which is intended for sale and which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 100 percent of the median income for a 4-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Workforce housing also means rental housing which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 60 percent of the median income for a 3-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Housing units that exclude minor children from more than 20 percent of the units, or in which more than 50 percent of the dwelling units have fewer than two bedrooms, shall not constitute workforce housing for the purposes of this subdivision.”

The results from the Roots model for the state, region, and individual municipalities can be found in Table 31 and illustrates the cumulative number of new housing units needed over five-year periods out to 2040. That is, the SNHPC region is expected to produce around 7,200 new housing units between 2020 and 2025 and an additional 6,000 between 2025 and 2030. By the 2035 to 2040 period the number of additional units has decreased to 2,500. This slowdown in growth reflects decelerating population growth due to an aging population and a more balanced housing market. The full detailed breakdown by tenure and AMI can be found in Appendix C. The estimate produced by using the Fair Share model should be considered as a guide or goal for each community striving to increase the housing supply and provide decent, affordable housing for all levels of income.

Table 3-7, Fair Share Cumulative Net New Housing Units

	2025	2030	2035	2040
Auburn	142	262	343	388
Bedford	572	1,044	1,374	1,581
Candia	102	187	245	277
Chester	115	212	278	315
Deerfield	85	156	204	231
Derry	848	1,559	2,043	2,309
Francestown	35	65	85	98
Goffstown	459	837	1,101	1,267
Hooksett	357	656	857	968
Londonderry	609	1,121	1,469	1,660
Manchester	3,171	5,787	7,605	8,738
New Boston	144	264	347	399
Weare	230	419	551	634
Windham	343	631	826	935
SNHPC	7,212	13,197	17,327	19,800
NH	32,704	59,919	77,969	88,363

Source: Root Policy Research

Table 3-7 displays the cumulative Fair Share numbers for SNHPC and its municipalities for owner-occupied housing units by income. The 100% AMI for a four-person household in the SNHPC region is \$90,677. The 60% AMI for a three-person household in the region, the figure used for rental Fair Share figures, is \$49,533. Therefore, the model forecasts that between 2020 and 2025, SNHPC municipalities should allow the construction of 4,885 owner-occupied housing units. Of these, 1,575 would need to be priced so that a four-person household making less than \$97,677 would not spend 30% or more of their gross household income on housing costs.

The breakdown of renter-occupied units by income is more problematic. The issue is the model utilizes the current income makeup to forecast future need. This works well in larger communities where there are plenty of renters. However, in municipalities with very few renting households, say less than a dozen, trends are extrapolated from only a handful of renters. This may not be an accurate representation of real community need. Moreover, these estimates come from the American Community Survey which can have large margins of error for small populations. So greater caution will be needed when interpreting the renter-occupied housing units by income. They can be found in Table 3-9. The model projects the region will need to accommodate 2,327 new renter-occupied units between 2020 and 2025. 653 would need to be affordable to three person households making less than \$49,533 annually. 1,674 units could be priced above that AMI threshold.

Table 3-8, Fair Share Cumulative Net New Owner-Occupied Housing Units by Income

	2025			2030			2035			2040		
	Total	Below 100% AMI	Above 100% AMI	Total	Below 100% AMI	Above 100% AMI	Total	Below 100% AMI	Above 100% AMI	Total	Below 100% AMI	Above 100% AMI
Auburn	97	23	74	178	43	135	232	56	176	260	63	197
Bedford	386	89	297	701	161	540	916	211	705	1,045	241	804
Candia	69	22	47	127	40	87	166	53	113	186	59	127
Chester	79	22	57	144	40	104	188	53	136	211	59	152
Deerfield	58	21	37	106	38	68	139	50	89	156	56	100
Derry	579	208	372	1,062	381	681	1,385	498	887	1,553	558	995
Francestown	24	9	15	43	15	28	57	20	37	65	23	42
Goffstown	310	98	211	562	178	384	735	234	501	838	268	570
Hooksett	242	78	163	442	143	299	573	186	387	641	208	434
Londonderry	416	135	281	763	247	516	995	323	673	1,117	362	755
Manchester	2,140	737	1,403	3,888	1,337	2,551	5,073	1,754	3,319	5,775	2,010	3,765
New Boston	97	23	74	177	42	135	231	55	176	263	63	200
Weare	155	48	106	281	87	194	367	115	252	418	131	286
Windham	234	63	171	429	115	314	559	150	409	628	168	460
SNHPC	4,885	1,575	3,310	8,904	2,869	6,035	11,615	3,756	7,859	13,156	4,270	8,886
NH	22,102	8,815	13,287	40,331	16,073	24,258	52,095	20,727	31,367	58,456	23,221	35,234

Source: Root Policy Research

Table 3-9, Fair Share Cumulative Net New Renter-Occupied Housing Units by Income

	2025			2030			2035			2040		
	Total	Below 60% AMI	Above 60% AMI	Total	Below 60% AMI	Above 60% AMI	Total	Below 60% AMI	Above 60% AMI	Total	Below 60% AMI	Above 60% AMI
Auburn	45	6	39	84	12	72	111	16	95	127	18	110
Bedford	186	43	143	343	80	263	457	107	350	536	127	409
Candia	32	17	15	60	31	29	79	41	38	91	47	44
Chester	37	21	16	68	39	29	90	52	38	103	59	44
Deerfield	27	10	17	49	18	31	65	24	42	75	27	48
Derry	269	74	194	497	138	359	659	183	475	756	209	546
Francestown	12	2	9	21	4	17	28	6	23	33	7	27
Goffstown	149	49	100	275	90	185	367	121	246	429	143	287
Hooksett	116	31	85	214	57	157	284	76	207	327	88	239
Londonderry	193	50	143	357	93	265	474	123	350	544	141	403
Manchester	1,031	308	723	1,899	567	1,332	2,532	761	1,770	2,963	900	2,064
New Boston	47	10	37	87	18	69	116	24	92	136	28	108
Weare	75	19	56	138	35	103	184	47	137	216	56	160
Windham	109	13	97	202	23	179	267	31	237	307	35	272
SNHPC	2,327	653	1,674	4,293	1,204	3,088	5,712	1,612	4,100	6,644	1,884	4,760
NH	10,602	3,196	7,405	19,587	5,906	13,680	25,874	7,794	18,078	29,908	8,997	20,908

Source: Root Policy Research

Table 3-10 demonstrates the average annual new housing growth by decade proposed under the model, in both absolute terms. It also compares them to historical trends for context. For example, between 2000 and 2010, the SNHPC region on average built about 1,110 net housing units every year for a growth rate of 1.1%. By the following decade that number had fallen to 710 units built every year. During this time, a total of 601 total housing units were added to the Hooksett housing supply, representing a 12% increase or 1% annually. Applying that same methodology to the Fair Share numbers, between 2020 and 2030, the SNHPC region is expected to add, on average, around 1,320 housing units annually with Hooksett accounting for 70 of those units. Increases slow significantly between 2030 and 2040 for the same reasons that they do for the cumulative figures.

TABLE 3-10, PAST HOUSING GROWTH AND
PROJECTED FAIR SHARE GROWTH
Average Annual Net New Housing Units

	Historical				Projected	
	1980 to 1990	1990 to 2000	2000 to 2010	2010 to 2020	2020 to 2030	2030 to 2040
Auburn	40	30	20	30	30	10
Bedford	130	220	120	60	100	50
Candia	20	20	10	10	20	10
Chester	30	30	30	30	20	10
Deerfield	40	20	30	20	20	10
Derry	460	90	50	70	160	80
Francestown	20	10	10	0	5	5
Goffstown	160	80	50	30	80	40
Hooksett	100	80	90	60	70	30
Londonderry	220	100	110	110	110	50
Manchester	850	150	340	220	580	300
New Boston	50	30	50	20	30	10
Weare	100	40	60	20	40	20
Windham	120	60	130	40	60	30
SNHPC	2,320	960	1,110	710	1,320	660
NH	11,730	4,340	6,760	2,430	5,990	2,840

Sources: IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System; Root Policy Research; US Census Bureau.

Looking at individual communities, often there are decades in which housing growth varied widely. Often, this may be due to one multi-family project being built or a large subdivision that was approved in the past is finally being built out. Still, as this is focused on just housing numbers, many communities are near the growth rate projected for the next decade, while some communities have not had as much housing growth in recent years.

B. Land Availability

Several hundred acres of vacant land in the north-central area of Town currently hold planning entitlements for the development of 400+ units of single-family residential homes. Nearly all of the land in the northeast quadrant of Town is included in Bear Brook State Park – a conservation trust – and is therefore undevelopable, with the exception of a handful of large lots adjacent to Chester Turnpike on the east side of Heads Pond. With these considerations in mind, most of the new single-family development proposed in the future will likely occur on the west side of the Merrimack River, in the area south of Cross Road and adjacent to the south side of Hackett Hill Road.

Housing development potential in the south and central areas of Town will be limited due to the density of existing development as well as current zoning restrictions. Though much of this area is zoned for commercial use, the development community has generally expressed an interest in the possibility of developing multi-family units on land immediately accessible to Route 3.

Furthermore, the vacant commercial properties at Exit 11 along with future redevelopment potential at big box locations at Exit 10 present the Town with an opportunity to pursue a mixed-use style of development – incorporating a diverse range of housing densities, styles, and other uses – in these areas. Market conditions at the time of this writing are such that brick and mortar retail establishments are struggling to remain viable, henceforth there will need to be a feasibility study to determine the potential possibility of any mixed-use development in these areas.

C. Utility and Public Service Capacity

Hooksett has a wide range of public services as discussed later in this document. The Town offers full-time Police, Fire, EMS, Public Works services, municipal water and sewer, and three schools which offer education to Hooksett children until grade 8. The Town will continue to offset additional expenses incurred as a result of new development with additional property tax revenues and impact fees.

D. Transportation System

One of the largest ongoing barriers to housing development and economic development potential continues to be Hooksett's transportation system. Geographic conditions such as the Merrimack River effectively divide the Town in half and funnel vehicular traffic through a select few bottlenecks throughout Town. The intersections of Main and 3A, 3A and Hackett Hill Road, Whitehall Road and Londonderry Turnpike, and various points along Route 3 present challenges in terms of congestion mitigation.

Furthermore, areas of potentially developable land are hampered by lack of transportation facilities which provide adequate and safe avenues for mobility. As the population of Hooksett grows and additional housing demand is placed on the Town, local decision makers will need to properly plan to expand capacity along various roadways such as Hackett Hill Road, Chester Turnpike, and Routes 3 and 3A while simultaneously incentivizing the development of infrastructure/services which offer alternative means of transportation, such as well-connected sidewalks, public transit services, and safe bicycle lanes.

E. Environmental Quality

Residential development can negatively impact the environment in many ways. Storm water runoff may pollute groundwater supplies, while the removal of woodlands can destabilize the soil, remove native habitats, increase ambient temperatures, decrease the air cleansing quality of trees, and destroy the natural beauty of the area. Hooksett may want to undergo a focused evaluation of site and subdivision regulations that ensure future housing development within low and medium density residential zones adheres to conservation subdivision guidelines or that any development be required to mitigate environmental impacts.

F. Efficiency of Development Patterns

Efficient development patterns or smart growth should be considered as well for all future residential housing. Municipal services can be delivered much more efficiently and cost effectively where development is well planned and compact. Large lot development and low-density suburban style neighborhoods are the most costly types of development for providing municipal services and infrastructure.

Currently, the Town has a well-established system of municipal water and sewer on the east side of the river, meaning that denser development potential exists in this area. At the time of this writing, major water and sewer infrastructure expansion projects are planned for the west side of the river, where the most readily developable residential land exists. The Town may want to focus various means to establish smart growth policies with allowances for various housing types and increased densities in locations where municipal water and sewer are established.

3.4 Conclusions

Generally, Hooksett is a suburban community. While it is true that the composition of housing in Hooksett is highly varied in comparison to other surrounding communities of similar size, the predominant type of housing has historically been the traditional single-family home on acre lots or larger. While it is true that there is a continuing demand for these homes, the Town should consider identifying alternative types and densities of housing which provide options for people of all ages, stages of life, and income levels. Due to the Town's proximity to Manchester, Concord, and Greater Boston, the Town will continue to experience housing demand for the foreseeable future, though it is expected that the rate of population increase – and therefore demand for housing – will continue to grow at a slower rate than in years past.



Webster Woods 55+ Condominium Duplexes

4. EXISTING

LAND USE

4.1 General Overview

Existing land use can be a confusing concept. For the purposes of master planning, the term means the identification of the *actual* use being made of a parcel of land at a given time—in this case, as of Summer 2020 per the Assessing records (The Existing Land Use map is provided as of 2023, uses as assessed). It *may not be the same as* its classification for zoning purposes. A zone designation, for example “medium density residential”, means the kind of use the community would like to see in that area, but one or more parcels in that area may contain “non-conforming” uses, or non-residential uses which are “grandfathered”. A convenience store may exist in a residential zone because it pre-dated the establishment of the zone designation. The convenience store is the existing land use in spite of the fact that the land is zoned for residential uses. In the context of this chapter, we are concerned with the actual use of the land regardless of its zoning classification.

Actual, or existing, land uses affect a community in many ways. The type and intensity of land use can influence an area’s sense of community and cohesiveness, its scenic beauty and general health and safety. From a planning perspective, the understanding and regulating of land use is important in order to avoid destruction of sensitive environments, to ensure property owners that their property values will not be threatened by undesirable neighboring land uses, and to avoid situations which would lead to inefficient provision of municipal services. This chapter provides a description of the actual existing uses of the land area in Hooksett.

4.2 Transportation Corridors

Like most suburban communities in New Hampshire, Hooksett has historically developed along auto-centric patterns; hence, major vehicular arteries have and will continue to exert a strong influence on the development of land in Town.

There are three major commercial arteries upon which most of the commercial and industrial development have occurred – DW Highway (US Route 3), West River Road (New Hampshire State Highway 3 Alternate), and Londonderry Turnpike (New Hampshire State Highway 28B). Additionally, the Town is tied to other regional transportation systems via three access points to the Eisenhower Interstate System (coterminous with the Everett Turnpike to the north of Town). Exit 9 provides direct access to Interstate 93 from DW Highway, while Exits 10 and 11 provide direct access to Interstate 93/Everett Turnpike from West River Road and Hackett Hill Road respectively. Exits 9 and 10 host the lion’s share of Hooksett’s retail commercial development, while Exit 11 remains largely undeveloped as of 2020.

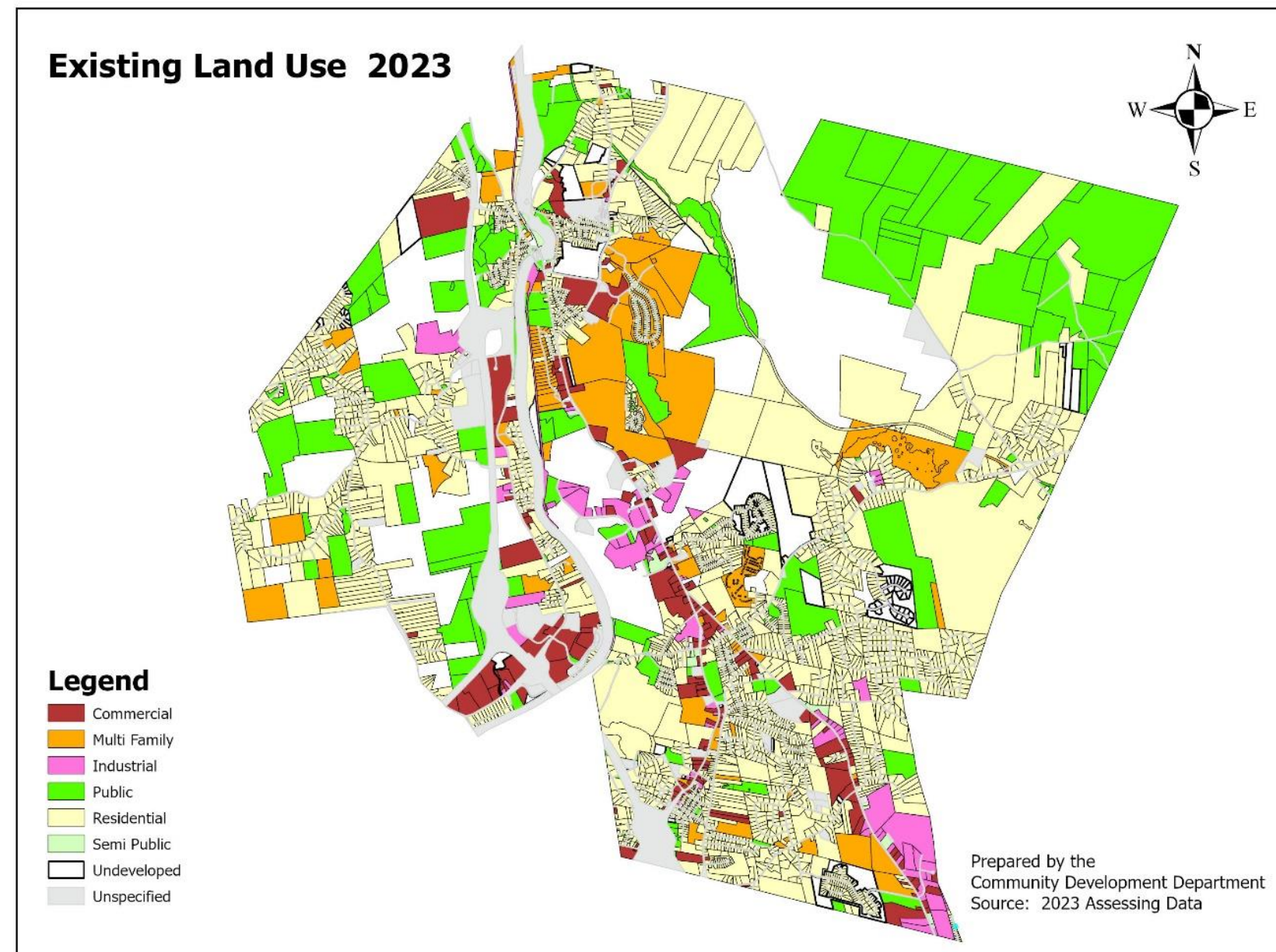
Londonderry Turnpike also hosts immediate access to New Hampshire Route 101 – a limited access east-west route – just over the Manchester city line adjacent to Eastpoint Drive Industrial Park.

Major residential collector streets include both Town-owned rights-of-way and State roads. These include Martins Ferry Road, Whitehall Road, Hackett Hill Road, Goffstown Road, South Bow Road, Auburn Road, Candia Road, Farmer Road, and Symth Road. Most residential subdivision activities in the last two decades have occurred on lands adjacent to these rights-of-way.

4.3 Existing Land Use and Current Zoning

The categories for existing land use map classification are described as follows:

- A. Residential: Includes all one, two and three family dwellings; these may include traditional stick-built homes constructed on site. In addition, it may include manufactured homes built off site on a chassis, transported to the site and set up after removal of the wheels; and may include manufactured homes built off site (without a chassis), transported to the site in one or more sections by trailer and placed on a foundation.
- B. Multi-Family Residential: Includes all residential structures housing four (4) or more families. These homes include condominiums that are often built with four units, sitting on a single footprint.
- C. Commercial: Includes all retail, wholesale, and personal and professional services locations; boarding houses; nursing, convalescent, and assisted living locations; and motels and hotels.
- D. Industrial: Includes all manufacturing, assembly, and warehousing operations; active sand, gravel, and quarrying sites, active sawmills; and auto body repair shops.
- E. Mixed Use: Includes locations where combinations of the above activities were identified within the same structure, or on the same lot. Because of the current limits of GIS, at this time it is difficult to graphically map more than one use on a property, therefore this Use category was not mapped.
- F. Public: State or municipally owned public lands that are normally or often open to the public; protected open public land.
- G. Semi-Public: Privately owned undeveloped lands (Manchester Water Works); open space associated with a cluster development.
- H. Undeveloped: Not Semi-Public; no habitable structures, forest or field, wetland or buildable, or when 10 acres more are open, regardless of what kind of structure is on it.



DISCLAIMER: The land uses depicted above “Existing Land Use”, from the categories described above should not be relied upon for complete accuracy. In addition, the Community Development Department may not know the actual use(s) of the parcel.

Existing land use acreage tabulations were compiled for the mapped categories. Tabulations were made by using data contained in the Assessing Department records, site/subdivision plans, and excavation site records. The acreage determination for exempt includes street area estimates made by the NH Department of Transportation (DOT) based on data contained in the Department's inventory of public rights-of-way. The table below contains a summary of Hooksett's 2020 land use acreage, and provides comparable data on the percentages of residential, commercial, industrial, utilities, exempt land, forest, unproductive and wetlands areas devoted to each category. It should be noted that the vast majority of the exempt land is essentially undeveloped. Much of this area, particularly State land, watershed protection land, and Eversource's land, are not likely to be developed due to the "open space" purposes for which it was acquired.

Table 3-1 - Existing Land Use Acreage 2020

PROPERTY TYPE	PARCEL COUNT	ACREAGE	% of Total Town Land
Residential Improved (with buildings)	3346	4823.60	21.7%
Residential Vacant	383	4144.97	18.6%
Residential Mobile Home	337	18.78	0.1%
Residential Condo	1240	113.26	0.5%
Residential Apartments	17	82.57	0.4%
Residential Subtotal	5323	9183.18	41.2%
Commercial Improved (with buildings)	255	1170.49	5.3%
Commercial Vacant	63	382.06	1.7%
Industrial Improved (with buildings)	120	303.00	1.4%
Industrial Vacant	23	226.20	1.0%
Sand Gravel Improved (w/ structures)	4	297.32	1.3%
Sand Gravel Vacant	10	497.53	2.2%
Cellular Tower	7	7.23	0.0%
Commercial & Industrial Subtotals	482	2883.83	12.9%
Utilities (*)	23	139.72	0.6%
Utilities Subtotals	23	139.72	0.6%
Exempt (**)	267	4371.05	19.6%
Exempt Subtotals	267	4371.05	19.6%
Forest w/stewardship (Current Use)	1	149.67	0.7%
Forest no stewardship (C/U ***)	161	4396.23	19.7%
Unproductive (C/U)	2	186.12	0.8%
Farm Land (C/U)	13	273.66	1.2%
Wet Land (C/U)	1	686.97	3.1%
Current Use Subtotal	178	5692.65	25.6%
UNKNOWN	0	0.00	0.0%
Totals	6273	22270.43	100%

- *Includes land of Eversource, Liberty utilities/Energy North/Tenn Gas/Pennichuck East Water.
- **Includes land of Town owned, schools, churches, grange, American Legion, Santo Community.
- ***Includes all zones “Current Use” land, greater than 10 acres (parcels without any improvements).

Source: Hooksett Assessing Department, 2019 MS 1 Report/Assessor’s Classification (LA4) Report.

A. Residential Land Use: From an examination of the Generalized Existing Land Use Map, it appears that residential development has followed closely the pattern set in the 2004 Master Plan. Residential development continues to be a major land use activity despite the fact that a drive along the community’s fast-growing major thoroughfares might suggest otherwise—and would certainly suggest a major increase in traffic. With three (3) major exceptions, dwelling units are somewhat unevenly distributed throughout the town. The first exception is the northeast quarter, where there is very little development of any type (due largely to the presence of Bear Brook State Park, to watershed conservation lands owned by Manchester Water Works and physical constraints of the landscape); the second exception is the approximately 3,800 acres of currently undeveloped land owned by Manchester Sand and Gravel, the town’s largest landowner; and the third exception is a collection of large, vacant areas north and south of Cross Road, and west of Hackett Hill Road.

The greatest concentration of residential uses occurs in southeast Hooksett in the areas served by Route 3, Mammoth Road (Route 28), Bypass 28, Whitehall Road (Route 27), and Smyth Road. Smaller, yet significant, residential concentrations occur west of the Merrimack River along Route 3-A, Hackett Hill, South Bow, Goffstown, and Roy roads, and in the Hooksett Village area.

B. Commercial Land Use: Commercial activity is primarily concentrated at three (3) locations: a) Along Route 3 especially south of Legends Drive; b) Along Bypass 28; and c) At Exit 10, where there has been the recent development of Target, Kohl’s, Amazon’s distribution facility, Home Depot, Walmart, and Bass Pro.

C. Industrial Land Use: In terms of acreage utilized, industrial activity in Hooksett is dominated by extensive sand and gravel operations (or lands recently played out and not yet developed), and quarrying operations, the most significant of which are found in the center of town on either side of Route 3; and west of the Merrimack River on Route 3-A adjacent to the Bow and Manchester lines. Several smaller sites occur at scattered locations.

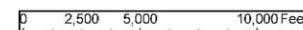
D. Other Industrial Land Use: Other industrial development (non-extractive) is, by and large, confined to the Hooksett Industrial Park and the Granite Industrial Park located on opposite sides of Route 3 in the center of town, and in somewhat smaller industrial areas at the southern end of Londonderry Turnpike adjacent to the Manchester city line.

Land subdivision and site development activities continued nearly undiminished until the housing bubble of 2008/2009. With the exception of the northeast corner and the tracts of played out extraction activity, no area of the community has lacked a considerable increase in land conversion from the “undeveloped” to the “developed” status. To date, the largest tracts of potentially developable lands for residential purposes are located mostly on the west side of Town adjacent to Hackett Hill Road, Goffstown Road, and South Bow Road.

The Planning Board and the staff are aware that there may be errors in the Existing Land Use Map. Changes to the land uses are occurring continually given the town’s rapid growth. It is the intent of the Community Development Department, the Assessing Department, and those involved with developing computer databases and mapping for the Town to enhance abilities to map these land uses with increasing accuracy.



**Prepared by:
Community Development
2023 Master Plan Update**



LEGEND
PROPERTY LINES
ZONE

- COM
- HDR
- IND
- LDR
- MD
- MDR
- MU5
- MUD1
- MUD2
- MUD3
- MUD4
- MUD5
- PZ
- URD
- ldr
- pz
- Unspecified

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4.4 Land Use Issues

A. *Multi-Family Dwellings/Alternative Housing Styles*

As stated in the Housing Analysis portion of this plan, the majority of existing housing stock in Hooksett consists of traditional single family style homes on one acre lots or larger. With an ageing population and a stated desire to attract and retain a skilled workforce and economic development opportunities, it is imperative that the Town work with the development community to ensure a variety of different housing options at various price points. Additionally, given the lack of available quality, affordable housing in Southern New Hampshire, the Town will need to identify vacant parcels or parcels which might be redeveloped to provide denser housing at lower price points.

Current zoning allows denser housing in the following zones: High Density Residential, Medium Density Residential (if serviced by municipal sewer and water), and two of the Town's five mixed-use zoning districts. Much of the property which is readily serviced by sewer and municipal water is situated along the Town's major commercial and industrial corridors – DW Highway, Londonderry Turnpike, and Route 3A. The development community has continued in recent years to place pressure on the Town to allow denser residential development in these areas, most notably within the Performance Zone. The Town should identify parcels to target for future multi-family residential development within these areas. Redevelopment opportunities at Exit 10 should also be considered as brick and mortar retail uses decline. These redevelopment opportunities should include a minimum amount of affordable housing.

B. *Transportation Relationships and Land Use*

Hooksett is unique to many New Hampshire communities in that it hosts several access points to limited access freeways, including Interstate 93/the Everett Turnpike and New Hampshire Route 101, just over the Manchester line off Londonderry Turnpike. These access points render Hooksett a potentially desirable location for specific types of businesses. Recently, there has been a pointed interest in developing much of the land along these access points with warehousing/distribution/industrial uses. Though the Town has expressed a consistent desire to develop many of these areas commercially, it should be noted that the current state of brick and mortar retail/commercial development is uncertain, though national trends indicate E-commerce is quickly becoming the preferred method by which Americans choose to shop. The Town should consider alternative plans for zoning in commercial areas in the event that these brick and mortar establishments are no longer financially viable developments in the future.

A variable at the time of this writing is the ongoing plan to increase the capacity of Interstate 93 north of Boston to Concord, New Hampshire. These plans include the addition of one or two carriageways (a side of a divided highway, usually with two or more lanes) in various locations along the route. The full effects of this expansion are yet to be seen in Hooksett, though it should be noted that any increase in vehicular traffic in the region which is facilitated by this infrastructure project might spark increasing and varied demands on the use of the lands immediately adjacent to interstate access points. The Town should plan for denser developments associated with these pressures.

C. Conservation Lands, the Natural Environment, and Preservation

As land is developed and becomes less readily available, it should be noted that the Town will continue to consider the conservation of open space lands, the protection of natural features such as wetlands and wildlife habitats, and the preservation of the historical built environment due to myriad reasons which might include NHDES requirements or strong support from local conservation and historic preservation advocates. Land is a finite resource, and as the Town reaches a build-out scenario in the coming decades, decision-makers and other officials should consider the necessity to facilitate the development of denser neighborhoods and commercial areas in targeted sections of Town.

D. Proximity to Larger Markets

The Town is uniquely positioned between the largest urban area in the state of New Hampshire, the City of Manchester, and the State capital, Concord. Furthermore, the Town is at the northern terminus of the Greater Boston Combined Statistical Area as defined by the United States Census Bureau. The Town will continue to enjoy strong economic ties with the surrounding region and Greater Boston, and will therefore likely continue to experience a healthy interest in vacant lands from the development community.

E. Economic Factors and Market Conditions

The prevalence of E-Commerce continues to place a strain on brick and mortar retail establishments. If this trend continues into the foreseeable future, it is highly likely that many of the larger retail establishments will choose to close their doors, leaving vacant properties available for redevelopment. The Town should identify potential opportunities for redevelopment in these spaces.



Big Kmart, DW Highway, closed in early 2020. Large retailers which anchor shopping centers such as RK Plaza in Hooksett are struggling to remain open nationwide.

5.COMMUNITY **FACILITIES,** **SERVICES AND** **RECREATION**

5.1 Introduction

A primary purpose of municipal government is delivery of services designed for the health, safety, and welfare of its constituents. The Town has numerous quality community facilities which serve Town residents as well as the residents of surrounding Towns who work, shop, and recreate in Hooksett. The responsibility of effectively managing these services is shared by several public and quasi-public entities. These entities include the Town of Hooksett Administration Department, Hooksett Wastewater Department and Sewer Commission, Hooksett Village Water Precinct, Central Hooksett Water Precinct, three non-local public water utilities, the Department of Public Works, Hooksett Fire and Emergency Management Services, Hooksett Police Department, the Hooksett School Commission, the Hooksett Library Trustees, and various other outside agencies which provide necessary utilities such as power, gas, internet, and cable.

Without comprehensive planning, the competing demands of maintaining existing facilities versus the construction of new facilities to service future development can overwhelm the capacity of a municipality to respond effectively to changing circumstances. The lack of adequate municipal facilities can also impede future growth and compromise efforts to encourage economic development.

5.2 Local Government Facilities and Services

A. Town Offices

Hooksett's Town Office is located at 35 Main Street. The building is set on a 20-acre site and is a two-story brick structure which contains over 20,000 square feet of floor space on the first and second floors. The original portion of the building was constructed in 1936 as the Hooksett School, expanded in 1968, and continued to serve as the elementary school until the building was converted into Town Office space in the early 2000's. The facility is served by municipal sewer and water service and is handicapped accessible.

The Town Office building serves primarily as an office building for various town functions. Located on the first floor of the building are the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Department, Assessing Department, Family Services Department, and Town Council Chambers, which is used as a meeting room for various boards and committees. The building houses the Administration Department, Finance Department, Building Department, Community

Development Department, and an employee break room on the second level. The building also houses a wide variety of Town records in various file rooms, including financial records, legal records, payroll records, property assessments, automobile registrations, old meeting minutes, building and planning files, and site plans. The building also contains a small gymnasium and adjacent kitchen area.

Currently, the Town Office building contains a large amount of underutilized space which should be considered for community meeting rooms or other needs as they arise. The original building construction contains three large former classroom spaces, restroom facilities, and an office space. At the time of this writing, various community groups utilize the space on an infrequent basis.

Town Council Chambers has been fitted with audio/visual technology which allows recording and broadcasting of meetings via the Town website. The Town should continue to explore new and improved technologies which allow for the most effective and efficient virtual meeting facilitation possible.

There is, at times, inadequate parking at this facility. Generally, this facility hosts all Town Council meetings, Budget Committee meetings, and most of the Town's various land use board meetings. The Town should consider additional parking adjacent to the rear of the existing parking behind the building to accommodate for times of high demand.

The small kitchen area and accessory storage are utilized by the Hooksett Food Pantry for its daily operations. The gymnasium is available for reservation and is generally utilized for pickleball during the winter months. The space is ideal to host small/medium-sized gatherings. The Town charges a small reservation fee to users for use of the facilities. Those funds could be earmarked to provide updates to the facility, such as new basketball equipment, yoga mats, jump ropes, ping pong equipment, etc. At this time, the kitchen facility is non-functional.



B. Life Safety Facilities and Services

The Town provides comprehensive police, fire, and EMS service on a full-time basis. Police and Fire services are both administered from the Hooksett Safety Center located on Legends Drive just north of Hooksett Village Shoppes. The facility was constructed in 1997 and includes over 14,000 square feet of office space, training rooms, detention areas, and equipment storage. A portion of the building houses administrative Fire personnel and equipment, and hence serves as one of the Town's two active fire stations. The facility underwent \$750,000 in renovations in 2018/2019 to address building maintenance issues and to relocate the dispatch area within the building.

C. Hooksett Police Department



The mission statement for the Police Department states:

“The mission of the Hooksett Police Department is to serve the community, to prevent crime, to fairly and impartially enforce the law, and to protect life and safeguard property. The Hooksett Police Department will strive to instill public confidence by maintaining a high degree of professionalism, dedication and expertise in the delivery of law enforcement service. The integrity of, and respect for, the Hooksett Police Department is enhanced by its contribution to the welfare of the citizens, its concern for excellence, and by the guidance it provides to its members towards a high level of ethical practice.”

The Police Department employs 30 sworn officers and will add a K-9 Team during the summer of 2024 as part of its patrol component. The department employs 6 dispatchers, one prosecutor assistant, one prosecutor, an Executive Assistant, a clerk and an evidence technician. The department also employs a part-time receptionist, a support specialist, and has an opening for a part-time officer. The department offers the Law Enforcement Against Drugs (LEAD) program to Hooksett fifth graders.

The Department has seen a steady increase in the number of arrests made in Town since 2000 – average annual arrests have more than doubled from 300 in the year 2000 to an average of over 600 annually in the years 2018-2020. The Department has noted a marked increase in the number of drug-related activities and arrests as well as arrests made for property crimes and petty theft. Despite these statistics, Hooksett remains one of the safest communities of its size in New Hampshire. Violent crime rates remain well under both state and national averages. The Department should focus future crime deterrent efforts on reducing illegal drug activities. This includes continuing to implement education programs for Hooksett youth, identifying problem

areas and hotspots for illegal drug activity, and devoting resources to both local and state rehabilitation programs.

The Department is also responsible for the enforcement of all traffic laws on both state and local roadways in Town. Incidents of traffic violations and accidents are up since the year 2000 – an average of 246 accidents were reported on Hooksett roadways annually between 2000 and 2002 while the period between 2018 and 2020 saw the average increase to 354. Not surprisingly, the vast majority of these accidents are reported on DW Highway, with other problem areas including West River Road, Londonderry Turnpike, and to a lesser extent Whitehall Road, Quality Drive, and Commerce Drive. December and January see the most reported accidents, likely due to icy road conditions, with the fewest accidents being reported in the months of April and May. The Department should continue to work with Community Development staff as well as NHDOT to identify current and future potentially dangerous roadway locations in order to enhance patrols in these key areas. Most notably, current development proposals adjacent to West River Road will likely generate large increases in traffic volume along that corridor in the period 2020-2030.

As of 2023, the Department is working on a comprehensive update of the Police Department's radio system to be funded by the Capital Reserve. This includes the replacement of the South Bow Radio Tower. The Department maintains a commitment to operating a fleet of police vehicles as reliably and efficiently as possible, with vehicles being replaced on a rotating basis to ensure continued reliability.

D. Hooksett Fire and EMS

The Hooksett Fire-Rescue Department provides fire protection, emergency medical services, rescue, hazardous material mitigation, disaster response, community services, and fire prevention - in the form of public education and inspections. The department currently employs 32 full-time members and 4 active on-call and/or part-time members. Current staffing includes 7 members per shift between 2 stations; these shifts work a 24-hour rotation. Each shift consists of an Officer plus 3 firefighters at the Safety Center and an Officer plus 2 firefighters at Station 1. Fire Administration staff consists of: Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director, Assistant Fire Chief/Assistant Emergency Management Director, Administrative Captain-EMS, Administrative Captain-Fire Prevention, Executive Assistant, and part-time Administrative Assistant.

There are 2 fire stations in Hooksett. They are strategically located as follows:

1. Hooksett Safety Center
Hooksett Fire & Rescue Department - Central Station
15 Legends Drive



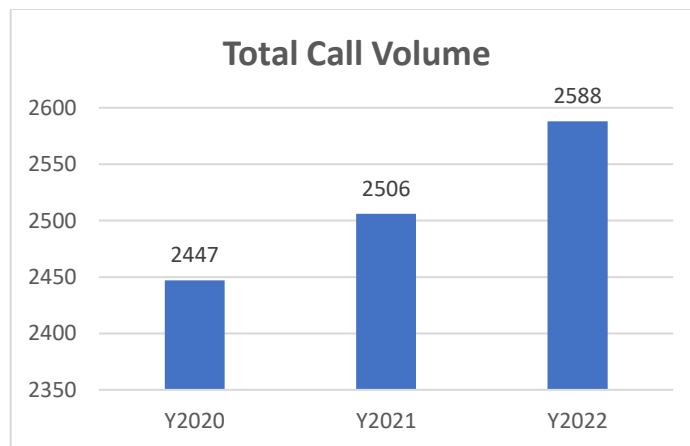
2. Hooksett Village Fire Station
Hooksett Fire & Rescue Department - Station 1
1 Riverside Street



The Hooksett Fire and Rescue Department - Central Station is located in the Hooksett Safety Center, 15 Legends Drive. It was built in 1997 and houses the following: Fire Administration, on-duty crew (officer and 3 firefighter/EMTs), apparatus, the Town of Hooksett - Emergency Operations Center, Hooksett Police Department, fire/police fitness center, and the safety center training room (also EOC). The safety center has been plagued with building issues such as water intrusion and HVAC since it was constructed. The CIP includes requests in the 25/26 year for a feasibility and design study to address these issues, along with the potential need for additional space and a potential bond for construction in 2029/30.

Hooksett Fire & Rescue Department - Station 1, located at 1 Riverside Street houses the on-duty crew (officer and 2 firefighter/EMTs), apparatus and also serves as the backup Town of Hooksett - Emergency Operations Center. Station 1 had a remodel completed in 2015 to address space needs.

Demand for Fire and EMS continue to increase year after year. The concentration of new employment and population throughout the area could generate a demand for additional personnel and fire stations to safely and adequately keep up with the current pace of growth.



For several years, the Town has discussed the possibility of acquiring a vacant parcel of land on the west side of the Merrimack River for a future safety center annex. With the TIF District

on the west side of Hooksett, the Department has forecast the need for a 3rd fire station to handle the additional call volume that will be generated by the TIF District, as well as to address response times to areas of Hackett Hill. The current CIP plan calls for a needs and design study in 2027/28.

Count	Year ▼			
Incident Category ▼	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total
1 - Fire	82	43	60	185
2 - Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (No Fire)	8	4	2	14
3 - Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	1503	1828	1778	5109
4 - Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	88	59	56	203
5 - Service Call	117	111	142	370
6 - Good Intent Call	191	215	189	595
7 - False Alarm & False Call	257	244	340	841
8 - Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	1	1	18	20
9 - Special Incident Type		1	1	2
Grand Total	2247	2506	2586	7339

Hooksett Fire and Rescue Department operates a modern well-maintained fleet of apparatus including: 3 fire engines, 1 ladder truck, 1 tanker, 3 ambulances, 3 forestry units, 1 utility truck and 4 command/staff vehicles, 2 boats and 1 off road UTV. The CIP plan, utilizing funding sources from the Apparatus Capital Reserve and the Ambulance Revolving Fund, will allow the department to replace the apparatus as needed to meet department needs.



Since 2009, the Hooksett Fire-Rescue Department has provided ambulance transport at the Advanced Life Support level (ALS). All members are certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), with the majority being certified to the Advanced EMT level. In addition, each shift also has a Paramedic level provider, which is the highest level of pre-hospital emergency care. The department continues to support training for our members to obtain the Paramedic certification with the goal of maintaining a Paramedic at each station on every shift. Revenue generated by billing the patient's insurance for services rendered provides the funding to replace the ambulances, all EMS equipment including consumables, ambulance maintenance, training and relicensing of all department responders, wages and benefits for three (3) members of the Fire-Rescue Department and covers 50% of the Fire Department dispatching fees. The Hooksett Fire Rescue Department continues to move forward as a modern and progressive emergency medical

service. With the addition of ultrasound imaging, advanced cardiac & trauma care, active shooter preparedness and other capabilities, the department's delivery of EMS is of the utmost quality and professionalism. In line with national statistics, the department's call volume reflects 60% medical emergencies, accounting for the majority of our emergency responses. The department transports to three (3) area hospitals: Elliot Hospital in Manchester, Catholic Medical Center in Manchester and the Concord Hospital in Concord, NH. All three (3) hospitals are trauma centers and cardiac/stroke centers, amongst other capabilities.

The roles and responsibilities of the Fire/Rescue Department continue to expand, as we face many more challenges in today's society. The Department personnel continue to train and further their education on a variety of topics to assure that they have the latest knowledge and tools needed to mitigate all of the challenges that they face as first responders. The Department remains diligent in its ongoing training programs for not only fire related emergencies, but in all areas of public safety and hazard mitigation. To accomplish this goal and ensure today's challenges are met, the Department requested a Training structure/facility be placed in the CIP for 2029/30

E. Public Library

The Hooksett Library is located at 31 Mount Saint Mary's Way. The library occupies a two-story building of approximately 25,000 square feet. The building features meeting rooms, stacks and community spaces. At the 2015 Community Forum, the library was overwhelmingly identified as the town's community center.

Since the writing of the 2004 Master Plan, the library has seen exponential growth in resources and use by the community. Circulation of materials has increased 250% and library visits have increased 150%.

Utilizing the library's six meeting room spaces, approximately 2,000 meetings are hosted each year. Three of the six meeting rooms provide large-screen or audiovisual features and the current New Hampshire Room was renovated to accommodate additional meetings in 2017. In 2014, the Hebert and Village Depot meeting rooms were equipped with a full audiovisual system and two large drop-down screens providing a conference space that accommodates 120 people.

In 2017, the library renovated the Youth Services Department to create age-defined spaces for youth, such as areas for babies/toddlers, preschool age play and learning areas, preschool to elementary age exploratory play spaces that provide opportunities not available if sharing the space with young toddlers.

As of 2020, the library has several areas of focus:

1. Early literacy with young children birth through first grade. The library will be adopting the nationally acclaimed Family Place Libraries model.
2. Technology literacy for all ages.
3. Emerging technologies such as 3-D printing

4. Digital content in addition and/or in lieu of physical materials. The library currently provides eBooks, e-audios, e-magazines and the Library of Things.
5. Collection lending beyond books – Lego kits, Science kits, cake pans, literacy backpacks, appliance lending, telescopes, museum passes.
6. STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) focus on programs and services provided to youth such as the FIRST Lego League and STEAM-focused programs provided by library staff.

Three to Five Years:

1. Increase library hours to include Sunday afternoons and Friday evenings (extend to 6:00pm).
2. Increase library staff for all open hours, focusing on children's staff.
3. Community collaboration – Providing space and resources for community members to create content and collaborate with one another.
4. Digitize New Hampshire collection and local resources.
5. Outdoor community spaces – outdoor play area for children and an outdoor space for all ages to meet, collaborate and relax.

Five to Ten Years:

1. Explore alternative energy resources for the library such as solar power.
2. Renovate large storage room for increased public space.



The library remains a great asset to the community in many ways, and there has been a concerted effort on behalf of the staff to expand programs for children in recent years. The library should focus efforts going forward on developing similar programs for elderly residents. Currently, the facility hosts monthly meetings of the Hooksett-ites, an organization of Hooksett residents 80 years of age and up. In recent years, Community Development staff have worked with the library and the Hooksett-ites to further explore the possibility of devoting library staff time and resources to the development of age-appropriate programming for residents in this age group. The library will remain a valuable facility to host social interaction and educational programming to Town seniors.

F. Department of Public Works

Highway Division

The Town of Hooksett, Department of Public Works Highway Division is located at 210 West River Road. The current facility was constructed in 1989. The building is approximately 200 ft. x 90 ft., and includes a garage with ten truck bays, three maintenance bays, and a mechanics office with storage for parts and inventory. The building includes restrooms and shower facilities, a lunch room, two offices and a second floor that is being used for storage of plans and files and some building maintenance and custodial supplies. There is a newly constructed salt storage structure that is a steel tube frame with a soft top liner which holds approximately 2,500 tons of salt.

The Division presently includes seventeen employees when fully staffed which include a Director, one Executive Administrative Assistant, one Highway Crew Chief, one Assistant Highway Crew Chief, one Assistant Building Maintenance employee, two Heavy Equipment Operators, five Truck Driver/Laborers, one Master Mechanic, one Mechanic, and three Part time Custodians.

The road maintenance portion of the division is responsible for routine maintenance of catch basins, roadway shoulders, drainage ditches, paving, patching potholes, as well as winter plowing, sanding and salting. The Town is responsible for eighty-nine miles of roads and around one hundred and sixty plowing miles. The Department oversees paving contracts and the reconstruction of roadways.

The fleet maintenance portion of the division performs town-wide fleet maintenance on all cars, trucks, heavy equipment, light equipment, fire apparatus, and mowers. This equals an estimated 190 pieces of equipment that are repaired or maintained by the Fleet division.

The building maintenance portion of the division is responsible for all of the Town owned buildings. The division consists of one full time assistant crew chief and 3 part time custodians. The maintenance includes small repairs, receiving quotes for outside vendors when needed, the purchasing of custodial supplies, and general maintenance and cleaning. Presently Building Maintenance is responsible for the following buildings: Town Hall, Station I, the Safety Center, Courthouse, Library, Recycling and Transfer Division (consisting of three buildings and an awning), Highway Division (consisting of one building and two large awnings), and the Parks and Recreation Division consisting of three buildings. This division also maintains two radio towers, and three historical buildings – Old Town Hall, the Arah W. Prescott Library, and the Head's School #1 (1828)..

Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Division

The Parks and Recreation Division has a total of seven employees when fully staffed including one Crew Chief, one Assistant Crew Chief, two truck driver/laborers, and three laborers. Two seasonal employees are also hired as needed. This division reports to the Highway Division during the winter months.

The Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Division is responsible for the mowing, maintaining and the opening/closing of graves in the Town municipal cemeteries.. The division is presently

responsible for the maintenance of all public playgrounds and the grounds of all Town owned buildings.

Donati Field is comprised of two separate properties with one section owned by the Town and other section leased by the town from the State of New Hampshire. The portion of property owned by the Town hosts three of the Town's baseball diamonds, a T-ball diamond, two tennis courts, a basketball court, Kids playground, two public bathroom facilities, the Parks and Recreation facility building, concessions building, and associated parking. The portion of property that is leased holds two softball fields, 4 playing fields, a track field and a small concessions/bathroom facility.

Fraser Field has two tennis courts, a playground and a basketball court.

Petersbrook Field presently has the following soccer field setups: 1-9v9 field, 1-11v11 field, 4-7v7, 5 nipper fields, with 1 lacrosse field. Half of the site has lighting installed with the second half still in progress as of the end of 2023. The remaining lighting will be installed when funding becomes available. A new concession stand and bathroom facility is being constructed and will be operational in 2024.

The Division maintains the Cawley and Memorial School playing fields and athletic fields.

Other parks include Lamberts Park, Pinnacle Park, Heads Pond trails (in conjunction with the Hooksett Kiwanas), Veterans Park at Jacob Square, the Hooksett Dog Park, and River Walk Trails located by the courthouse. Every year this division prepares for and cleans up the Community Gardens located at both Donati Field (by the Town Hall) and Fraser Field. The Division also installs and maintains the flowers on the Main Street Bridge, changing them out three times throughout the year. This is coordinated with the Hooksett Garden Club. The Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Division also works with the Boy Scouts on the Eagle Scout projects, as well as the Historic Society and the Garden Club. This division is instrumental in working with the Old Home Day Committee preparing for Old Home Day. The division is also responsible for working with the Hooksett Youth Athletic Association doing all the playing field layouts, striping and for the coordination of all event permits and works with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to plan long range park and recreational needs.

Recycling and Transfer Division

The Recycling and Transfer Division of the Department of Public Works has a total of seven employees when fully staffed including one Crew Chief, one Assistant Crew Chief, one heavy equipment operator, and three truck driver/laborers. There are 4 part-time positions to assist on weekends and as needed during the week. This Division assists the Highway Division during the winter months with snow plowing.

The Recycling and Transfer Division is responsible for the curbside collection of trash, the operating and maintenance of the drop off facility at 210 West River Road, and the hauling off site of all the material collected from residents, Town departments, and in-town commercial businesses. The Division previously has permanently transitioned to automated collection trucks and barrels used at the curb, which helps to provide more service with fewer personnel. The facility borders the Town landfill which has been capped since 2000. The landfill is presently monitored per the Department of Environmental Services. The facility consists of an office, a transfer building, a recycling building (which houses the trucks during off hours), an outside

material storage area that is covered on 3 sides, a vehicle scale, an outside loading dock and a 1,000-gallon used oil tank to heat the recycling building and 10,000 gallon underground diesel fuel tank. This division of the facility also houses the diesel fuel pumps for all Town Departments.

This division is fortunate to have a Solid Waste Special Revenue Account. The money that is put into this account is from recycling revenues and user fees. The Town can use this money towards the purchase of vehicles if it is approved at Town meeting. This account has helped this division purchase trash trucks, a storage area, skid steer loader, a front-end loader and a pickup.

The facility requires a new office/scale house structure to support the staff with an adequate breakroom, bathrooms, kitchen, and office space. CIP planning has been taking place for this project with design and engineering planned to be started withing the 2024-2025 budget year and construction thereafter.



Cemeteries

The Town of Hooksett has four municipal public cemeteries, one private cemetery, and three known burial grounds:

Municipal Public Cemeteries

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Martins | Cemetery Road (town maintained) |
| 2. Head | Pleasant Street (town maintained) |
| 3. Riverside | Route 3A (town maintained) |
| 4. Davis-Cate | Hacket Hill Road (town maintained) |

Private Cemetery:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Holy Rosary | Main Street (private) |
|----------------|-----------------------|

Burial Grounds (known at this time)

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. Austin | Mary Ann Road off Bow Road (private) |
| 2. Clay | off Chester Turnpike on long dirt road (private) |
| 3. Judge Cate | on 12 Cate Road property (private) |

Two of the public cemeteries, Head and Martins Ferry currently have grave lots available for purchase (right to inter). The Martins Ferry Cemetery will not be expanded until most of the

available grave lots are purchased. Hooksett residents, former residents and families can purchase grave lots.

All Town municipal public cemeteries exist in accordance with the sections of NH RSA 289, and are placed under the local control of three Cemetery Trustees, who are elected by the voters of the Town. The Trustees operate according to Town Administrative Code Section 4.2 and State RSAs 289 and 290.

As of January 01, 2024, the cost of individual grave lots in municipal public cemeteries is \$500.00 for a full size lot and \$200 for a cremation lot. The funds from the sale are turned over to the Trustees of the Trust Funds for deposit in the Cemetery Maintenance Trust Fund. On January 01, 2024, the sale of grave lots was changed to a Rights to Inter deed from what was previously a deed to the grave property.

Holy Rosary Cemetery, located on Main Street, is a private cemetery owned and operated by the Holy Rosary Cemetery Church. The Church controls all sales, burials and maintains the records. The required burial permits are turned over to the Town.

The Town-owned land west of Martins Cemetery, located on the north side of Martin's Ferry Road, should be retained and reserved for future cemetery development.



Riverside Cemetery

5.3 Public Utilities

A. *Electric Service*

Electric service is provided by Eversource. With the onset of deregulation, or “customer choice”, customers can choose their supplier of “kilowatts”, but Hooksett is still a franchised area of Eversource “poles and wires”. The capacity is currently adequate and will be expanded as needed. Four areas are targeted as growth areas where new facilities/capacity will be expanded or added as needed. Capacity on Route 3 near Mt. Saint Mary’s is at maximum and new lines need to be added; especially if and when the Head’s Pond development begins. The retail area at Exit 10 on Route 3A needs to be upgraded from single phase to three-phase power to feed the new enterprises and surrounding growth as the area redevelops. Bypass 28 is also a growing area and facilities there need to be upgraded to 3-phase service. Exit 11 is the largest vacant developable area of Town and will need adequate power services as development proposals continue to be reviewed in the vicinity of the area.

The Hooksett Hydro Dam on the Merrimack River is one of nine hydroelectric plants that Eversource owns and is one of the smallest at 1.6 Mega-Watts.

The Town should continue to work with Eversource to provide lead-time on major planned projects and enhancements. Major infrastructure projects should be coordinated in tandem to provide for maximum efficiency and minimal interruptions in service. Alternatives to traditional power generation should also be encouraged and further explored.

In 2019, the Hooksett Wastewater Treatment Plant installed solar arrays on property adjacent to its facility on Egawes Drive. The new facility is expected to generate a surplus of power which will be sold back to Eversource. The Town should continue to identify properties which might support a future solar array to feed other Town facilities. The development community should also be encouraged to install solar panels on new construction when possible. In October of 2023, Town Council authorized the Town Administrator to contract with ReVision Energy for a solar array at the old landfill site.

B. *Cable Service*

There are several internet companies that provide cable services within the Town of Hooksett. These services include traditional cable (video) service, high-speed Internet access, and local digital telephone service. As part of the video produce offerings, there are several packages available of digital television and music channels.

C. *Cell Towers and Wireless Communications*

There are currently three active wireless communication towers in Hooksett – one located on Gosselin Avenue adjacent to Route 3A, one located adjacent to DW Highway behind the site of the former Dolly Dimple Motel, and one located adjacent to Mammoth Road behind the Emmanuel Baptist Church. A tower has been approved at 180 Londonderry Turnpike but has not yet been constructed. The Town should continue to require that EMS wireless equipment may be installed on these facilities as a condition of building permitting.

D. *Municipal Water Service*

The Town of Hooksett is served by five different public water systems. The following entities

provide water service to the majority of Hooksett's "urban" areas served by public water – Central Water Precinct, Hooksett Village Water Precinct, Pennichuck East Utilities, Inc., Pembroke Water Works, and Manchester Water Works.

The approximate service area boundaries of each of these public utility providers are shown on the map below. The majority of properties serviced by a municipal system are on the east side of the Merrimack River, with the exceptions being the area adjacent to Exit 10, which is serviced by Manchester Water Works, and the area near Exit 11, which is serviced by Hooksett Village Water Precinct. Most residential homes on the west side of Town are on private wells.



Hooksett Village Water Precinct

The Hooksett Village Water Precinct (HVWP) was established as a governmental subdivision of the Town in 1941, and was initially created through the acquisition of two local water systems dating back to 1900±. The affairs of the Precinct are administered by an elected board of (5) five commissioners, which employ a superintendent and professionally licensed system operators to perform day-to-day operations. Over 3,000 people are currently served by HVWP.

The Precinct's water is provided by four wells located around Pinnacle Pond. In their current configuration, the maximum supply capacity of the wells is approximately 1,248,000 gallons per day (gpd). The maximum permitted production volume of the system is 1,872,000 gallons. Present usage varies considerably, with an average demand of 315,000± gpd and a peak summer demand of 900,000± gpd. Water quality from the Precinct's sources is considered excellent.

The Hooksett Village system provides water to the northern part of the Town and is centered in the historic Hooksett Village. On the east side of the Merrimack River, the Precinct boundary is located just north of the Granite Hills development on Route 3, in the vicinity of Hannah-Ho-Hee Pond, and extends to the Allenstown town line including Head's Pond. On the west side of the Merrimack River, the Precinct extends from just north of I-93 – Exit 10, to the Bow town line.

The Precinct's wells represent the only community water source locally owned and controlled by a Town agency. For emergency purposes, HVWP maintains a limited interconnection with Central Hooksett Water Precinct on Route 3 near Hannah-Ho-Hee Pond.



Village Water Source Protection Area

System storage includes a 200,000-gallon tank located off Route 3, which has an overflow elevation of 425 feet. The highest elevation served by the system from this tank without booster pumping is 340 feet+/- . A 1,100,000-gallon tank and booster station were constructed in 2007 in the Head's Pond area, forming a high elevation zone for the Carriage Homes and University Height's developments. These improvements increased the Precinct's service elevation to approximately 520 feet. In 2019, the Precinct constructed a new 1 million gallon storage tank at the Pike Quarry off Hackett Hill Road to improve system resiliency and in anticipation of the development of commercial lands at Exit 11.

Expansion of the Precinct's active service area is generally initiated and funded by private commercial and residential development. Expansion by HVWP beyond the limits of the existing service area requires the authorization of Town Council.

Significant developments in recent years have required fairly extensive additions and upgrades to the water system. On Route 3, approximately 1,600 linear feet of new 12-inch water main was installed from Post Road to the Head's Pond development entrance. Just to the southeast of that installation, approximately 1,600 linear feet of new 8-inch water main was installed to service the second phase of the University Heights residential development.

As part of the servicing of those two large development projects, with the potential for hundreds of additional residential units, the Precinct constructed two of its four gravel-packed wells, the booster station and its largest storage tank. These improvements provide water storage as well as domestic and fire flow benefits for both the development projects and the entire HVWP system.

To plan for the future needs and demands of the HVWP system, the HVWP Commission regularly evaluates emerging issues pertaining to the adequacy of the system. Recent studies have focused on groundwater exploration, available development capacity and additional

storage needs. As a result, a 397,000-gallon replacement for the smaller storage tank is under construction and new source exploration is ongoing. In addition, 1,800± feet of new 12-inch water main was installed in the Route 3A area to better connect Precinct sources and storage to the Village areas.

Available capacity will be limited once currently planned development projects are fully completed. HVWP anticipates that the new source, tank and main will assist the Town in providing fire flows and potable water to the planned commercial and industrial growth on Route 3A adjacent to Interstate 93 between Exits 10 and 11. The Precinct is an active partner with the Town on its current Route 3A infrastructure improvement project, which includes the installation of about two miles of new water main.

The clustering of HVWP's current sources, as well as their proximity to Route 93, suggest that a redundant backup or emergency source is needed. The Precinct plans to continue evaluating possibilities for a new well source and/or an additional emergency interconnection with a neighboring public water system. The Town and HVWP recently installed a redundant connection over the Lilac Crossing to provide a second supply line over the River in case of disruption to the existing water line on the auto bridge.



Central Water Precinct, Photo taken by Joan McDonald

The Central Hooksett Water Precinct was established in 1955. The Precinct has its own Board of Commissioners elected by its Precinct members with day-to-day operations supervised by a Superintendent.

The Precinct boundary begins at Zapora Road where it abuts the Manchester Water Works service area and goes north to Granite Hill where it abuts the Hooksett Village Water Precinct. The easterly boundary is dependent on the ability of the Precinct to provide service.

The original water supply was a series of gravel-packed wells. Use of these wells was discontinued in 1991. Central Hooksett Water Precinct now distributes water from Manchester Water Works (MWW) with two connections. The connections are located at North River Road near Southern New Hampshire University and on Zapora Drive near Springwood Drive.

The Central Hooksett Water Precinct maintains three pressure zones. The original “gravity” system operates from an overflow elevation of 491 feet +/- . Two tanks are presently in service, which provide 1,250,000 gallons of storage at this elevation. These tanks are primarily fed by

MWW's high service area, which has an overflow elevation of 500 feet.

There are three additional service areas which are fed by booster pump stations. The first is Granite Hill Development which has a tank overflow of 560 feet. The second is the Campbell Hill Development which has a tank with an overflow elevation of 590 feet. The third is the Glencrest Tank which has an overflow elevation of 545 feet providing both fire and domestic water. The highest service elevation for the original non-pumped system is 410 feet +/-.

Properties located above the 410 foot elevation could possibly be served by one of the higher pressure service areas, particularly Campbell Hill. The Campbell Hill tank could serve developments at or below a 517 foot elevation. The Granite Hill tank could serve developments at or below the elevation 480 foot elevation.

Central Hooksett Water Precinct expansion and upgrades to the water system are dependent upon private development. For example a pump station was added to the system to provide both fire protection and water supply to the new residential homes of Berry Hill Estates and to aid with fire protection and water supply to the Glencrest area.

The Manchester Water Works (MWW), which is a municipal corporation of the City of Manchester, has been providing water to the southern portion of Hooksett since the 1930's. In more recent years, it has extended service to the I-93 – Exit 10 area on the west side of the Merrimack River.

The MWW obtains its water from Lake Massabesic. It treats this supply and distributes water to Manchester, Derry, and parts of Auburn, Londonderry, Bedford, and Goffstown, as well as to Hooksett. Its operations in Hooksett are regulated by the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in regard to rates and expansion of their franchise area. An appointed Board of Water Commissioners oversees operation of the MWW through a director and staff. The MWW presently serves approximately 600 users in Hooksett. Expansion by MWW beyond the limits of the existing service areas shown on Map 4-3 requires permission of both Hooksett and the PUC.

The Hooksett service areas are primarily connected to the MWW's so-called Third Pressure System. This system operates from a storage overflow elevation of 620 feet and a highest service elevation of 590 feet. The MWW Wellington Hill tank in Manchester is now augmented by a second tank located on Beacon Hill in Hooksett.

Expansion of the Manchester Water Works system in the delineated service area is much like the HVWP and CHWP, dependent upon private development. A developer must determine the construction cost to install the water mains and services for the project. The developer must then provide the estimated funds to MWW, then MWW either contracts the work or the work is performed by the developer. MWW has extended water supply mains when the water main work is associated with an upgrade of their system, which has included looping dead-end mains.

A recent improvement to the MWW water distribution system in Hooksett is a 24-inch water main crossing the Merrimack River near Exit 10. This crossing provides a much-needed redundant water supply connection from the east side of the Merrimack River to the west side and provides additional water supply to the Rte. 93 Exit 10 area in Hooksett. MWW is currently constructing a "Radial Well" along the westerly shore of the Merrimack River near Exit 10. This well along with a future planned water treatment facility, will provide additional supply to the MWW. As of 2020, plans are in place to construct a raw water pumping facility as part of

Manchester Water Works' system on riverfront property adjacent to Kimball Drive.

Aside from a dozen small non-community systems with on-site supplies, there are two other providers of water in Hooksett.

One such provider is the Pennichuck East Utility (PEU) of Nashua, which operates water systems serving Smyth Woods, off Bypass 28 in the southeastern part of Hooksett, and the Wesco system off Pine Street in northwestern Hooksett. PEU purchases domestic water (no fire protection) from MWW for the Smyth Woods area. The Wesco system, including the I-93 rest areas, is supplied by water purchased from the Hooksett Village Water Precinct. Both of these systems have limited capacity to serve other areas beyond their boundaries.

The Pembroke Water Works provides water to 15 customers on Pleasant Street at the northern border of Hooksett with Allenstown. Pembroke has a PUC-regulated franchise area, as shown on the map. Expansion of the service area requires approval of Hooksett and the PUC. One of the Pembroke storage tanks is located in Hooksett, but there is presently no direct connection for this tank to the water main serving Hooksett users.

Both Pennichuck and Pembroke operate under PUC regulations.



Hooksett Village Water new tank at Pike Industries, constructed in 2019.

In an effort to ensure that balanced growth occurs within the community, with the commercial and industrial base growing to offset the costs associated with residential development, the following recommendations are proposed:

Providers should have a ten-year expansion and replacement plan. Each plan should address the quality and design life of the applicable distribution system. In addition, areas outside franchised areas should be evaluated and incorporated into existing water utilities when and where feasible. Examples include approximately one mile of frontage along Londonderry Turnpike which is zoned for commercial and/or industrial development, but which is currently not serviced by

either Manchester Water Works or by Central Water.

Continued effort should be made to consolidate existing water systems into one entity where there is a potential net benefit to the Town. This consolidation may lead to more consistent planning efforts and provide a more uniform level of service throughout the town.

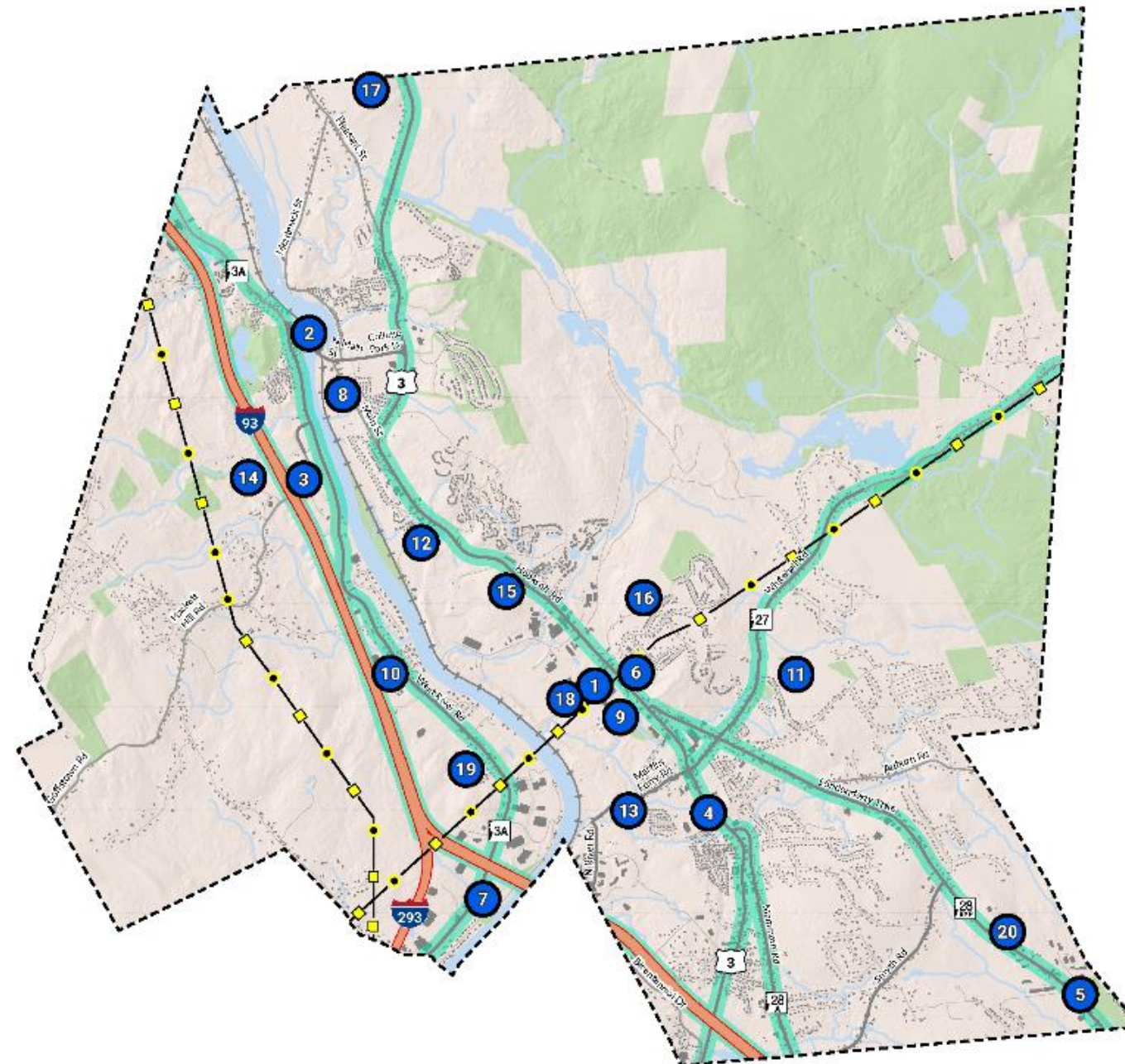
The Hooksett Utility Coordination Team should continue to meet every other month to address utility related issues, coordinating of work in town streets and new main extensions for development work. The Coordination Team is comprised of representatives from the five water utilities, the Sewer Department, Liberty Utilities, Eversource, Comcast, Consolidated Communications, NH DOT, Planning, Code Enforcement, Engineering, Administration, Police and Fire.

A potential water system connection for emergency water supply and supplemental fire flow between Hooksett Village Precinct and MWW systems on Rt. 3A should continue to be evaluated. The feasibility of connecting to the adjoining municipal systems of Pembroke and Bow should also continue to be considered.


Additional wells are not feasible in the Pinnacle Pond area. The current HVWP wells at the pond present a crucial source for the Town's sustainability and growth. The Town and Hooksett Village Precinct should work together to develop and implement pond and wellhead protection measures for this area. These entities should also work together to identify and protect any remaining viable source areas in town, which are quickly, and in some cases permanently, slipping away due to the pace of development.


The water providers and the Town of Hooksett should work with other communities in our region and the Nashua region to develop a plan to encourage inter-regional water connections to guard against a disruption of water service.

Hooksett: Critical Facilities



- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. James Oliver Safety Center | 11. Cawley Middle School |
| 2. Village Fire Station | 12. Memorial School |
| 3. NHDOT Highway Garage | 13. Underhill School |
| 4. ClearChoiceMD-CMC Urgent Care | 14. Map 12 Lot 11 Wireless Tower |
| 5. CMC Primary Care - Lakeview Internal Medicine | 15. Map 18 Lot 48 Wireless Tower |
| 6. Elliot Family Medicine | 16. Map 19 Lot 7 Wireless Tower |
| 7. Hooksett Internal Medicine | 17. Map 2 Lot 10-1 Wireless Tower |
| 8. Hooksett Municipal Building | 18. Map 25-80-1 Wireless Tower |
| 9. US Post Office | 19. Map 29 Lot 2 Wireless Tower |
| 10. Highway Department | 20. Map 49 Lot 1-4 Wireless Tower |

 Evacuation Routes

 High-Voltage Transmission Lines



2

Miles



Category One Critical Facilities as identified in the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Created by SNHPC, 2024. Sources: Bureau of Transportation Statistics; Microsoft; NH Department of Transportation; OpenStreetMap; Town of Hooksett; University of NH; US Census Bureau; US Geological Survey.

E. Sewer Service

The Wastewater Treatment Facility and sewer collection system are operated by the Hooksett Sewer Commission (HSC). The HSC has three elected commissioners who oversee the HSC operations. There are eight full time employees and one part-time employee. The administrative staff consists of an office manager, an administrative assistant and a part-time accountant. The plant operations staff includes Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent, Laboratory Director, and three operators/mechanics. The HSC is funded by user fees. The current rate is \$6.80 per thousand with a base charge of \$37 per quarter.

The HSC office and the Wastewater Plant are located at 1 Egawes Drive in Hooksett. The office was built in 1998 and is adequate to service the Commission's needs for the foreseeable future.

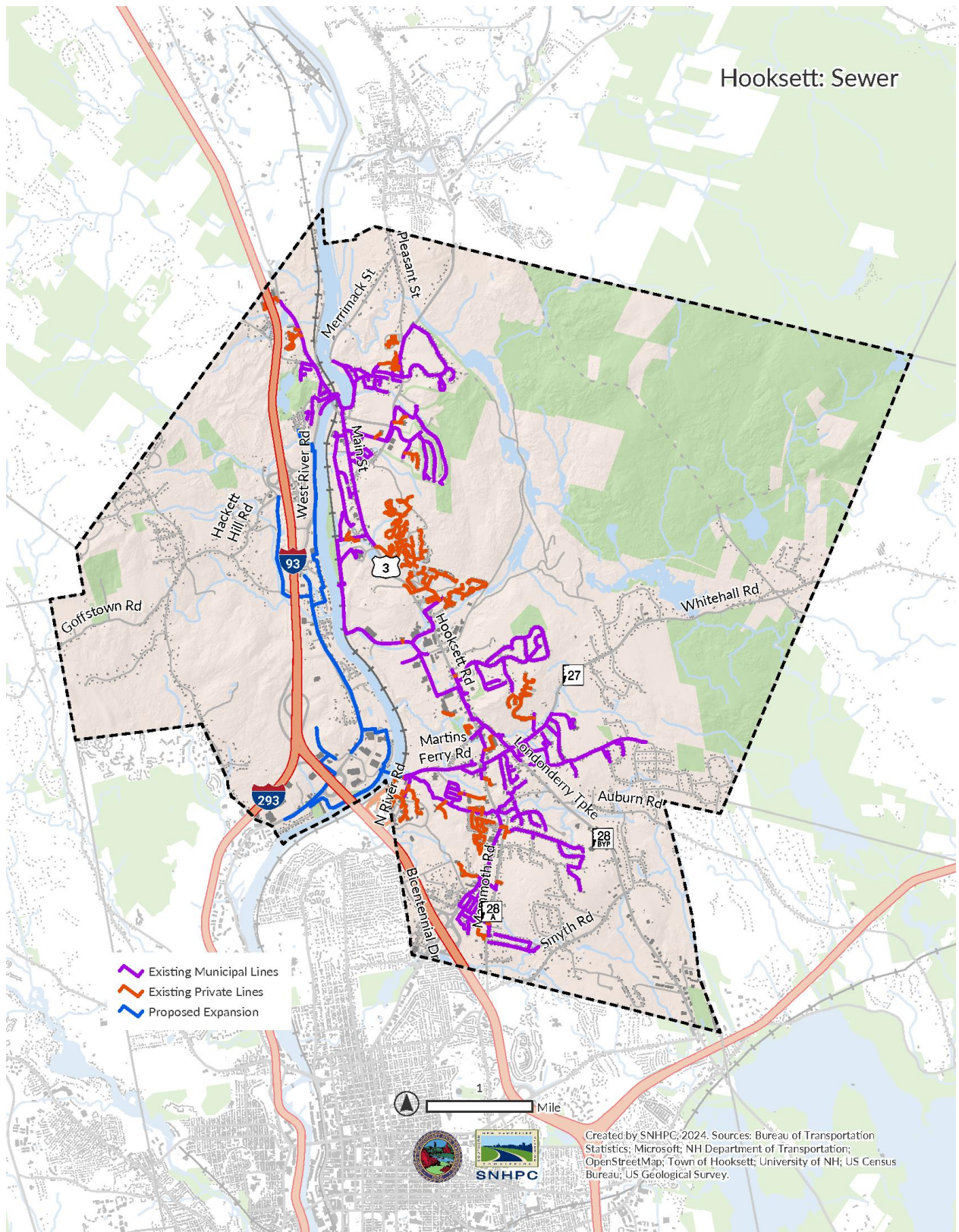
The Wastewater Plant was constructed in 1969 and went on-line in September of 1970 with a capacity of .255 MGD. As flows increased the plant underwent upgrades in 1973, 1980, 1988, and 1990 to 1.1mgd. In 2005 Hooksett undertook an ambitious three phase capital improvement project to upgrade the facility, increase plant capacity, and lower the nutrients and phosphates in the effluent. The upgrade started in 2008 and was completed in 2011.

As of 2020 the treatment facility has an EPA permit of 2.2 MGD.

The Town of Hooksett Wastewater collection system consists of 57 miles of sewer main and interceptor mains of which 14.5 miles are private sewers; five town owned pump stations and four privately owned pump stations. The system has calculated inflow /infiltration rate of 2,400 gallons per day mile of pipe.

The present service area of the sewer collection system is over 6000 acres, with a potential service area of 13,000 acres. This is over 54.4% of the town's total land area. Historically, expansion of the sewer collection system has been accomplished through private development, primarily residential development.

Moving forward, the Sewer Commission has several areas of focus for long range planning efforts. Most notably, the Route 3A TIF district was established between 2007 and 2011 for the purposes of funding infrastructure – mostly sewer – in the areas of Exits 10 and 11. Currently, sewer designs have been completed although some easements need to be acquired prior to some of the work. The Town has acquired rights to a property along Quality Drive for the location of a future pump station. This project, and the Route 3A TIF district, are explained in further detail in the Economic Development section of this plan.



5.4 Parks and Recreational Facilities

Hooksett hosts a broad range of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Many of the passive recreational opportunities enjoyed by the community have been addressed in the Conservation and Cultural Resources section of this plan.

There are about 47 acres of Town-owned park and recreation facilities. These include: Donati Park— 28 acres (the parcel with the football field/softball and baseball fields is state-owned and leased to the Town); Fraser Field— 3 acres; Riverside Park— 10 acres; Petersbrook Park— 6 acres. These four parks combined include basketball courts, tennis courts, baseball fields and a batting cage, softball fields, soccer fields, one football field, a single 1/6th mile running track, playgrounds, one picnic area with tables, one boat launch, one outdoor ice/rollerblade rink, and clubhouses. These facilities are owned and operated by the Town. At these facilities, there are no indoor basketball courts, and no area for public swimming. A skateboard park has recently been built on Legends Drive across from the Safety Center.

The Hooksett School District (SAU #15) and the Parks and Recreation Department maintain recreation facilities at the three school sites—Underhill, Memorial, and Cawley—comprising a combined total of approximately 14 acres. All of these school facilities include indoor gymnasiums, one outdoor basketball court, one full and two half- sized indoor basketball courts, one baseball field, one softball field, two soccer fields, a multi-use field, and one playground.

There are another 5 acres of Town-owned land at Lambert Park. The Town of Hooksett has provided an easement to the State for a state-developed boat ramp; this is also a picnic area. A state historic marker identifies this area as an historic location of the NH Canal Transportation System. In addition, the Town owns Jacob Square at Veterans Park, a one-acre war memorial which includes a monument for the Lilac Crossing.



Veterans Park and Memorial

A. *Donati Park*

The Parks and Recreation Department's cornerstone facility continues to be the 28-acre Donati Field area (the southern half of the park is owned by the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation with a 99-year lease). Located just off Route 3 (Hooksett Road) on Main Street in The Village, the park (along with the former Village School facilities) provides the majority of the Town's athletic fields and facilities. The soccer/football field and the baseball field are lighted for night. The park hosts most of the Town's large gatherings and events, such as Old Home Day in September. Parking is limited, however the Town should consider expanding parking at the rear of Town Offices to accommodate for larger events.

B. *Fraser Field*

This is the smallest residential park—approximately three (3) acres on K Avenue in the southern part of town. It has a basketball court, two tennis courts, and a small playground. These facilities are not lighted. There is currently no room to expand the size or number of facilities in this park, except for additional playground equipment. Parking is limited.

C. *Riverside Park*

Riverside Park is a long, narrow, approximately 10-acre site on Merrimack Street just north of the Eversource power plant on the grounds of town-owned property leased to the Merrimack District Court. The south end of the property features an undeveloped overlook of the Merrimack River—one can view the picturesque island and the old railroad bridge abutments of the former Portsmouth to Concord Railroad, and one can look downstream to the Hooksett Falls dam. This area could be better utilized as a picnic area. The middle portion is grassed with a full view of the river and has a short path to a sitting area. The central part of the park is occupied by the Hooksett Dog Park. The northern part of the park is reached by a paved road leading to the boathouse of the Amoskeag Rowing Club, which leases space from the Town to store their sculls. The park provides access to the Merrimack River Rail Trail to the north.

D. *Petersbrook Park*

Manchester Sand and Gravel Company donated this park to the Town of Hooksett. It is a 6-acre site that has been developed with soccer fields in 2003. The park is lighted; however the parking area is currently stone with precast parking curb stops. The lower parking lot is handicap accessible. The Town should consider providing seating (bleachers) as well as upgrading the parking area and providing appropriate handicapped accessible sidewalks from the parking area to the fields.



Petersbrook Park

F. Commercial Recreation

The Town also hosts a variety of commercial recreational opportunities which are managed by the private sector. These include arcade/indoor game centers, a movie theatre, and several ice rinks.

G. Community Center

There has been ongoing discussion relative to a centralized recreational facility/community center. Construction and staffing costs are very important considerations for the residents in their decision-making process with regard to the creation of such a facility. In 2018, a group of residents active in the community worked with Kiwanis to form a nonprofit with the aim of identifying a parcel of land upon which to construct a community center. The group identified a parcel abutting the Merrimack River just north of the Sewer Treatment facility on Egawes Drive. The land is currently owned by the Manchester Rowing Association.

Exploration of available land in the village area should be considered. In the interim, the Town should work with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to develop a plan to better utilize the existing space which the Town presently owns and maintains, such as the Town gymnasium.



Vacant land at College Park Drive and DW Highway; Cigna in background

H. Town Beach and Water Recreation

Through the process of updating the master plan in 2020, it has also become clear that there is a growing desire for the Town to provide water recreation opportunities; currently the Town provides none aside from the boat ramp at Riverside Park.

There had been discussion with Planning Board in conjunction with the development of the so-called “Head’s Pond” residential and golf course project. Manchester Sand and Gravel Company proposed deeding approximately 145 acres of land in the north central part of Hooksett to the Town of Hooksett. This land includes a 30-acre pond and accompanying beach frontage as well as approximately 115 acres of upland forest. This parcel is adjacent to about 70 acres of land that could be dedicated as “conservation” land by the developer of the Southern NH University’s former North Campus site. If this proposal is finalized in the future, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee should develop a plan for access, parking, club- and/or bathhouse, and related beach facilities. There are several different types of recreational opportunities in this area, including but not limited to swimming, fishing, non-motorized boating, picnicking, hiking/nature trails, etc. This facility would have the added potential to become tied by a trail system to the statewide Heritage Trail System. Upon accepting the deed to this parcel, the Town of Hooksett would have an opportunity to develop it into an unparalleled asset for the use of Hooksett residents for many generations to come.

Additionally, there have been discussions centered on locating an area in Donati Park to construct a water feature, such as a splash pad or a small pool, for summertime use. The Town should work with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to gather information on construction and ongoing maintenance costs associated with these proposals.

I. Trails

The Hooksett Conservation Commission has spearheaded several recreational trail projects since the 2004 Master Plan. The two areas of focus have been completion of the Heritage Rail Trail along the eastern shore of the Merrimack River, connecting to Manchester and Allentown, as well as a smaller trail system around the Heads Pond Conservation Area.

The Heritage Rail Trail has been a collaborative ongoing effort among several New Hampshire communities since 1990. In Hooksett, the trail will enter town from Manchester at Southern

New Hampshire University and continue north to Robie's Store in the Village. Robie's Store has been designated as a National Historic Register site; this would be one of the many attractions along the trail. Part of the Heritage Trail Plan is to restore the former "Lilac Bridge" as a river crossing of the trail over to Veteran's Memorial Park on the west side of the river; this was completed in 2019. Several spurs are contemplated to extend off the Heritage Trail to points of cultural, historical, and recreational interest. This is an effort that would incorporate a 7-mile portion of trails in Hooksett to the 230-mile trail that is planned to eventually run from the Massachusetts border in Salem northward into Canada.

The Town enjoys several thousand acres of land held in conservation trusts on both sides of the Merrimack River. The Town should work with the Conservation Commission to identify parcels on the West side of the river which may present recreational trail opportunities, particularly in the area of the Town-owned property adjacent to Quimby Mountain.

J. Bicycle Lanes

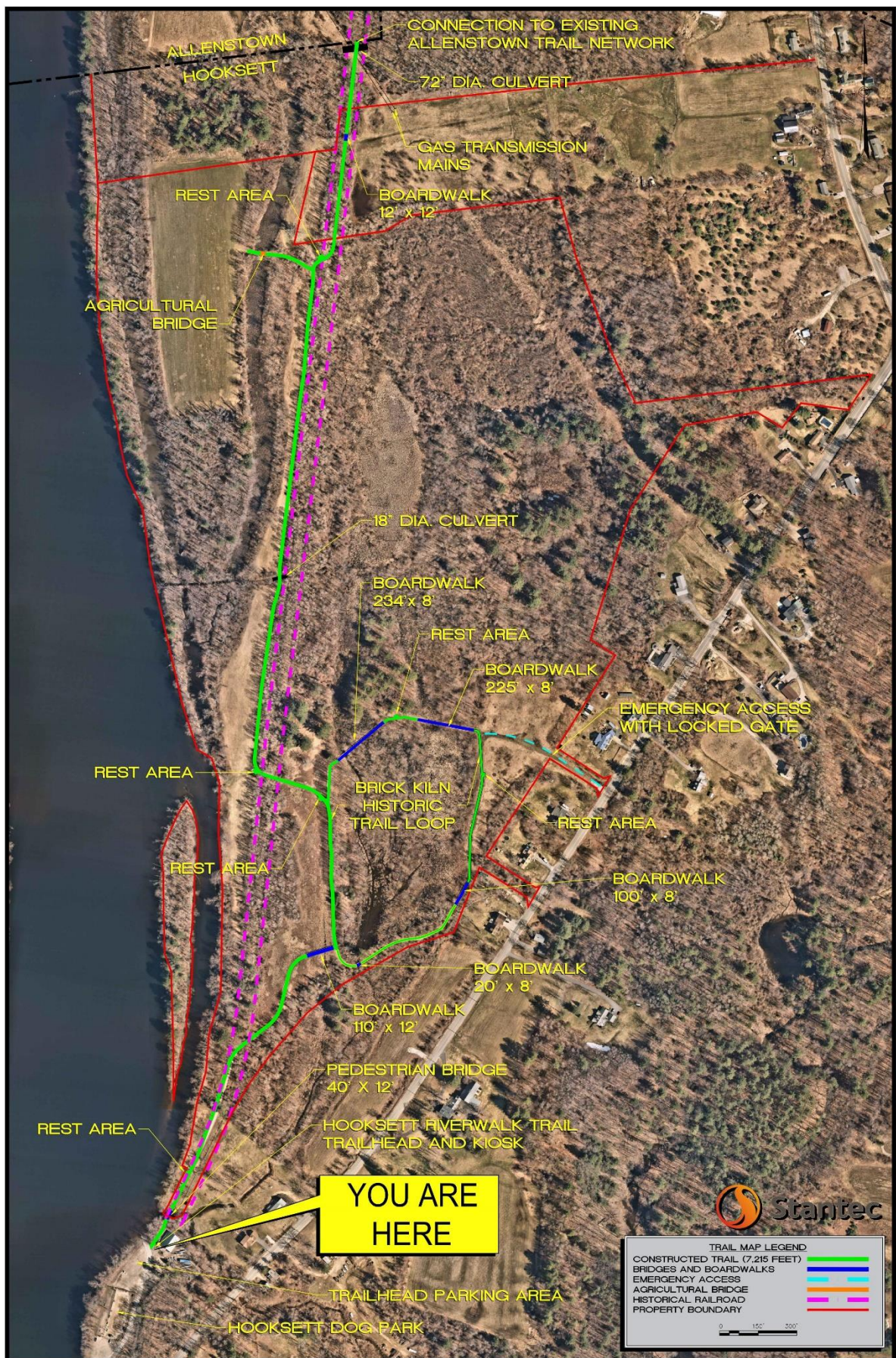
The Town currently does not offer adequate, safe, interconnected travel lanes for bicycles in between commercial and residential areas. The Town should coordinate with NHDOT to install bike lane infrastructure on major thoroughfares including DW Highway and West River Road as maintenance and expansion occurs.

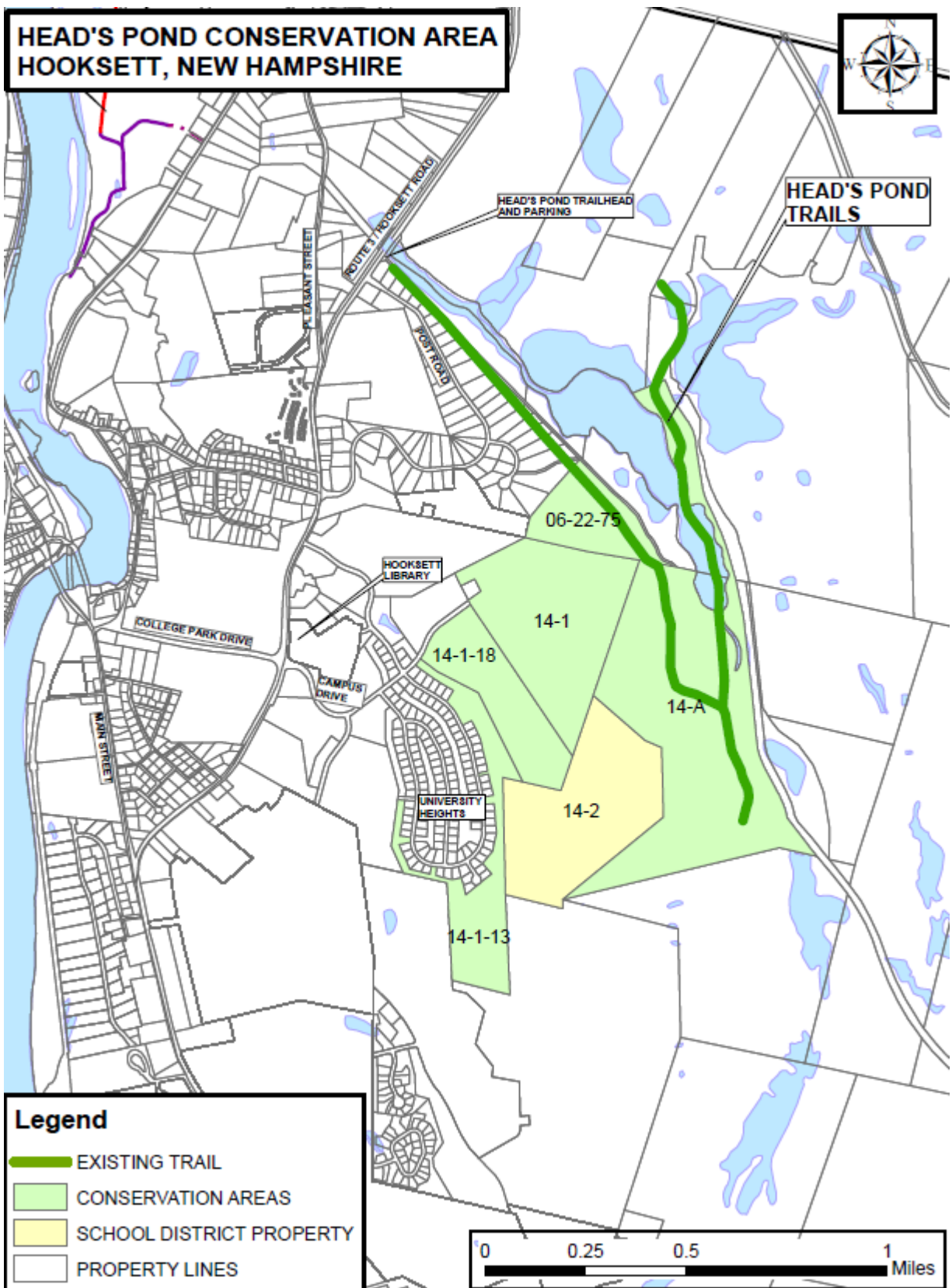
K. Quimby Mountain Area

The Town recently acquired ownership of this scenic property—approximately 80 acres of upland along the western boundary near the meeting of Bow and Dunbarton. One of the attributes that makes this land valuable for conservation and/or recreation use is the elevation. The land is adjacent to the highest point in Hooksett, approximately 900 feet in elevation. The Town's Park and Recreation Advisory Committee should develop a plan for the use of this area, to include the potential development of trail areas.

L. The Pinnacle

This unique rock formation is on private land now owned by the Town and Bear Paw Regional Greenways, was formerly owned by resident Arthur Locke. The area is comprised of approximately 34 acres and provides passive recreation opportunities. The town has made provision with the Hooksett Village Water Precinct Commission to preserve the land; this provides an added benefit of keeping the wells at Pinnacle Pond from contamination. The Town of Hooksett and Hooksett Village Water Precinct should work cooperatively to provide limited public access for recreational purposes and to develop a recreational use policy for the pond and surrounding lands.





5.5 Public School Facilities

The Hooksett School District is responsible for K-12 education. Currently, Hooksett provides K-8 in three school facilities in town (David R. Cawley Middle School, Hooksett Memorial and the Fred C. Underhill Elementary School). The High School of record for Hooksett students is Pinkerton Academy, located in Derry. In keeping with Federal special educational requirements, one half of the Pre-K programs/services are currently outsourced to private childcare centers and through child screening. Prior to 2022, kindergarten was a half-day program with 4 classrooms meeting twice per day (8 sections of Kindergarten). Currently, there are seven full day Kindergarten classes at the Fred C. Underhill Elementary School. Half-day programs are no longer offered.

The Hooksett School District provides public education for all children ages 3 to 22 that have been determined to have an educational disability. This student population continues to increase (28% from October 2020 to October, 2023).

Determining the need for school facilities is based on many variables that relate to a growing student population and changing educational state and federal requirements such as Special Education. The Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA), and the programming needs are considered by the SAU Administrator and the Hooksett School Board (7 person, town elected board) The School Board strives to provide quality education within the current maximum class size ratios.

Hooksett is a member of School Administrative Unit 15 (SAU #15) with both Candia and Auburn. SAU 15 is Hooksett's School Administrative service provider and works in cooperation with the elected school board members. The day-to-day operations and management of educational programs, and budget considerations and curriculum is the responsibility of the Hooksett School District Administration and SAU #15.

A. *David R. Cawley Middle School*

In fall of 2003, the new middle school opened its doors for 480 students in grades 6-8. The site is situated on 25 acres on Rt. 27, Whitehall Road in the southeast region of town. The school has been designed with a core facility to house 900 students. 27 homeroom classrooms were built with a capacity for 675 students. When necessary, an area adjoining the school is available for an additional 12 classrooms, bringing the school's design capacity to 900 students. The building is designed with a full size gymnasium. Athletic facilities on the school grounds include two soccer fields, a baseball diamond and a softball diamond. The soccer fields are also used for lacrosse and field hockey. The fields are irrigated. Three hundred parking spaces are available to accommodate many different events.

B. *Hooksett Memorial School*

This school property is situated on a 40 acre site on Memorial Drive near the center of town, east of the Merrimack River. The facility houses 27 homeroom classrooms with a capacity of 675, serving grades 3-5.

The site is considered fully developed, serving a maximum of 675 students. Land constraints make the property extremely limited for future expansion. The site is limited to one multi-purpose field used for recess and gym classes. This field lacks irrigation and is considered a low grade field which makes it unsuitable for competition.

C. Fred C. Underhill Elementary School

The Underhill School is situated on Sherwood Drive on a 22-acre site in the southern area of town, east of the river and serves students K-2. It is a one story building constructed in 1958, with additions added in 1966 and 1990. The facility has a capacity of 550 students.



Cawley Middle School

D. School Operations

Currently the gym facilities at all three schools are used for town sports during the winter season. The David R. Cawley Middle School is used for voting, band and chorus productions, larger town meetings, and local civic/school group events, shows and fundraisers. Transportation of grades K-12 students is provided by a private contract. Some students walk to school however, sidewalks are not adequate to and from the existing schools or from most area bus stops.

E. High School

The Town of Hooksett has a total of 677 high school students. The current high school of record for Hooksett students is Pinkerton Academy, located in Derry. In 2016, the Hooksett School Board entered into a tuition agreement with Pinkerton Academy. In addition, the Hooksett School Board has memorandums of understanding in place that allow parents to petition to allow their students to attend Londonderry High School, Goffstown High School, Bow High School, or Pembroke Academy. There is still a tuition agreement with the Manchester School District allowing students to petition to attend any of the three high schools in Manchester, however the majority of students grades 9-12 attend Pinkerton Academy.

If Hooksett were to consider building a high school within the community, a number of issues

would have to be analyzed, including finding an appropriate site. Under the statutory regulations of the State of New Hampshire there are Educational Minimum Standards for site criteria for senior high schools. A minimum of 15 acres of usable land plus one additional acre for each 100 students is required.

State High School Minimum Land Standards:

800 students:	23 acres required
1000 students:	25 acres required
1500 students:	30 acres required

The Hooksett School Board will continue to monitor the high school situation given growth projections.

Memorial School on Egawes Drive



The Hooksett School Board, working cooperatively with the Town of Hooksett, has the responsibility to ensure that adequate land in appropriate locations is set aside and available for use in the future to accommodate school needs and to effectively share statistical information to properly plan ahead for needed school facilities. The Hooksett School District should work closely with the Planning Board to identify available parcels of land for future school building sites. In order to accommodate anticipated future school needs, at least two parcels of land should be acquired; one parcel for a future Elementary School in the north area of Hooksett (Heads Pond) and one site in the central area of the community, between University Heights and Granite Hill. Future land acquisitions for school facilities should be determined soon before costs rise further and availability is limited.

The Hooksett School District and the Town should better coordinate school facilities planning efforts. The school district should budget the funds to hire a consultant to study the projected short- and long-term enrollment of all school facilities as well as the classroom space which will be required to accommodate this growth.

The Underhill School and Memorial site acreage should be investigated/surveyed to define how much of the land is actually “usable” for future growth.

Of critical importance to the well-being of the Town is the inclusion of the school district's capital improvement needs in a town-wide Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This requires a unified and comprehensive long-range plan of both town and school district needs. The Hooksett School District must continue to be involved in the Town CIP program so that orderly and comprehensive capital improvement spending strategies can be developed.

Hooksett must continue to balance commercial and industrial growth with residential growth so that the school district can support growing student enrollments in a well-managed way without negatively impacting school programs and curriculum.

The Hooksett Town Council, with recommendations from the Planning Board, should meet with the Hooksett School Board at least once per year to determine school facility needs. This should include a review of the school impact fee structure.

The Hooksett School Board should continue to monitor the High School issue and continue to communicate and gather input from town residents on this issue.

6. TRANSPORTATION

ANALYSIS

6.1 Existing Transportation Systems

A community's transportation system provides a means by which people can get to work, shop, move materials and finished products, and pursue their social, civic and cultural interests. It is also the most basic component of the local, county and state safety service network. To a great extent, the transportation infrastructure dictates the quality of the response of police, fire and ambulance services. Thus, the system should be capable of supporting the collective mobility needs of the people within the area covered by the system. In addition, reasonable access must be supplied to residential, commercial and industrial developments within the community.

Although Hooksett's transportation needs are primarily served by its highway system, other transportation system components are available, either within the community or within the greater Southern New Hampshire area. These components are described below.

A. Highways

The major highways in Hooksett are generally oriented to facilitate north-south movements. Interstates 93 and 293 (F.E. Everett Turnpike), U.S. Route 3 (Daniel Webster Highway), and N.H. Routes 28, 3A (West River Road), Bypass 28 (Londonderry Turnpike) and 28A (Mammoth Road) are in this category.

Access to I-93 is available at three locations in Hooksett: in the south end of town, east of the Merrimack River, at the U.S. Route 3 interchange (Exit 9); in the south end of town, west of the Merrimack River, at the N.H. Route 3A interchange (Exit 10); and the north end of town, west of the river, at the Hackett Hill Road interchange (Exit 11 toll plaza).

I-93 northbound provides direct access to Concord, central and northern New Hampshire and I-89. I-93 southbound provides direct access to Manchester, I-293, N.H. Route 101, and the Boston area, including I-495 and I-95 (a.k.a. Massachusetts Route 128).

The F.E. Everett Turnpike also provides access to downtown Manchester, west Manchester, Nashua and other southerly destinations, including I-495 and Boston's western suburbs on Massachusetts I-95 (a.k.a. Route 128). The Everett Turnpike carries portions of I-93 and I-293 through Hooksett.

I-293 can only be accessed in Hooksett from interchanges with I-93. Southbound, after the tolls, there is a large, heavily used, high-speed split with I-293 south going straight towards Manchester. Northbound there is a somewhat inconvenient and underutilized access to I-293 south from an unnumbered exit ramp north of Exit 10.

U.S. Route 3 and N.H Route 3A provide access to the cities of Manchester and Concord. N.H. Route 28/U.S. Route 3 are the same road the entire length of Hooksett. New Hampshire Route 28A (Mammoth Road) provides service to Manchester and Londonderry; and the towns of Auburn and Derry are accessible via N.H. Route Bypass 28.

N.H. Route 27 (Whitehall Road) accommodates east-west movements between the south end of town and Candia and Raymond to the east.

Finally, southern portions of Hooksett benefit from other highway exits in adjoining towns. Exit 1 on N.H. Route 101 east serves the southeastern corner of town. This interchange with N.H. Bypass 28 is located just south of the Hooksett-Manchester city line. Exit 2 off N.H. 101 in Auburn provides access via Hooksett Road, which becomes Auburn Road in Hooksett. N.H. Route 28A can be accessed from Exit 8 on I-93. On the west side of the River, Exit 7 on I-293 provides access to Route 3A, about 2 miles south of Hooksett.

B. Bus

Interstate bus service is provided between Manchester and major New England cities. The intercity carriers are Concord Trailways, Vermont Transit Lines, and Boston Express Lines. They operate from the Manchester Transportation Center at 119 Canal Street (corner of Granite St.).

The Manchester Transit Authority operates a demand-response bus service in Town Monday through Friday between 9 AM and 3 PM free of charge; medical appointments take priority. This service is the result of a federally funded grant through NHDOT which will provide the service over the life of the existing bus – approximately 10 years.

C. Rail

There is no passenger rail service available in Hooksett or the Manchester/Concord metropolitan area.

In 2002 Amtrak inaugurated the new *Downeaster* service between Portland, Maine and Boston's North Station. This train, which offers 4 daily round trips, has three stops in the New Hampshire towns of Dover, Durham and Exeter. Exeter is the closest stop to Hooksett, a distance of approximately 20 miles.

Amtrak also has the high speed *Acela Express* service from Boston to Washington, D.C. via New York City, as well as service to Chicago. Vermont has two Amtrak trains. The *Vermont* provides service to New York City and Washington from St. Albans via Burlington and Bellows Falls, VT and Claremont, NH (approximately 65 miles from Hooksett). The *Ethan Allen Express* provides service between Rutland and New York City via Saratoga Springs and Albany, NY.

D. Air

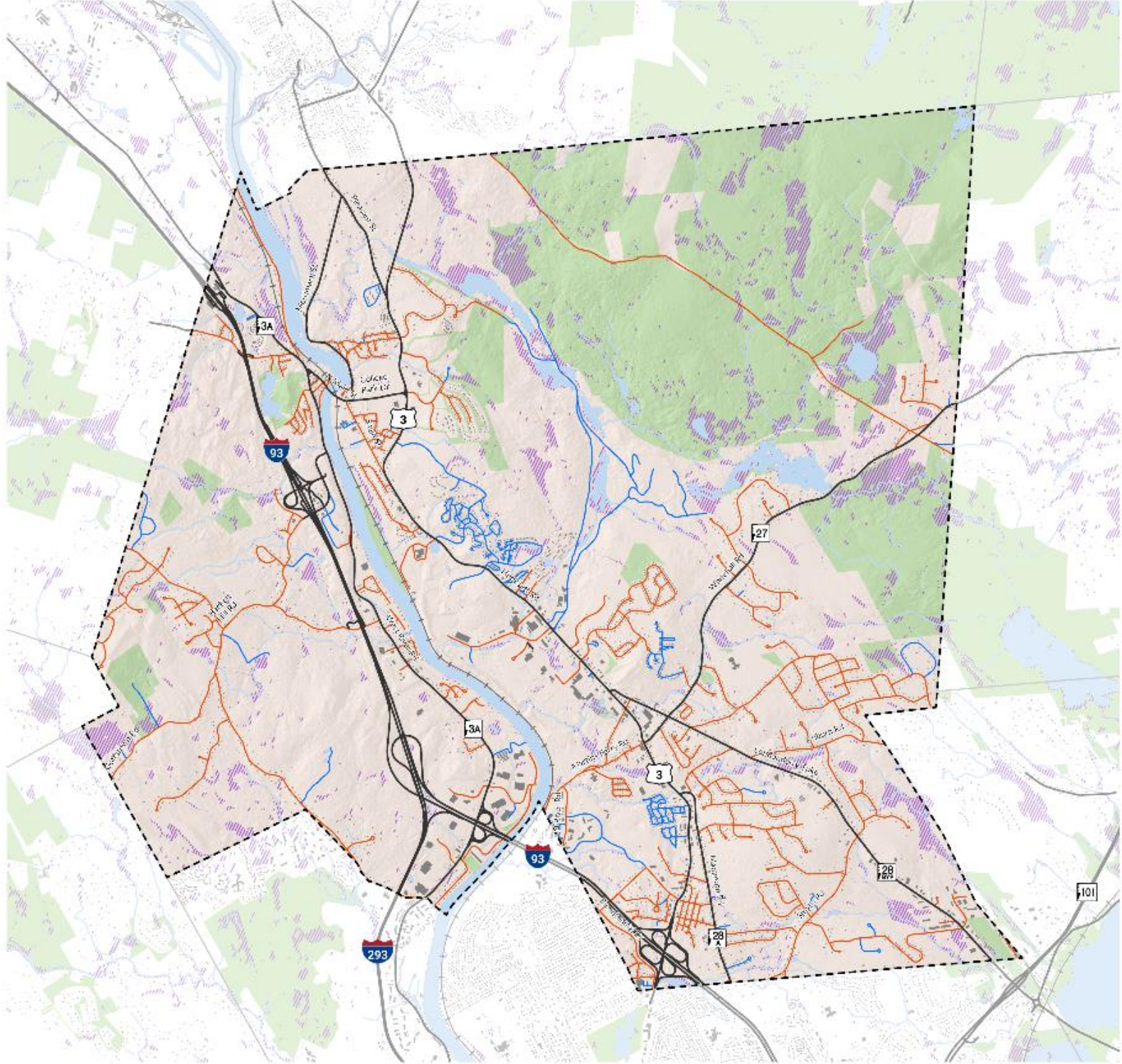
Passenger and freight air services are provided out of Manchester Airport (MHT), located approximately 10 miles south of Hooksett. This airport is one of the fastest growing in the country, serving approximately 1.3 million passengers in 2022. The airport is a large cargo hub and processed over 200 million pounds of cargo in 2022. The airport is served by 5 airlines,

with non-stop service to 10 cities and direct (same plane) service to more.

MHT is not an airline hub, thus it isn't dominated by a single carrier. Previously it was hampered by high fare prices, but that changed in 1998 when low-cost Southwest and Metrojet (since departed) entered the market. New airlines have established stations there in order to maintain market share. There is currently no competition on individual routes as airlines have consolidated or cutback operations, however, this is not unusual for non-hub airports in small cities. This airport is critical to people and businesses in Hooksett.



DW Highway looking south toward the Exit 9 area



Hooksett: Roadway Ownership

- State
- Town
- Private
- Railroad
- Building
- Open Water
- Wetland
- Conservation Area



Created by SNH-IPC, 2024. Sources: Bureau of Transportation Statistics; Microsoft; NH Department of Transportation; OpenStreetMap; University of NH; US Census Bureau; US Fish & Wildlife Service; US Geological Survey.

The City of Manchester has made some access improvements to MHT. Brown Avenue (Route 3A) has been expanded. The airport has constructed a new entrance further south on NH 3A with a new multi-lane access road to the terminal.

Separately, the NHDOT opened an access road from the F.E. Everett Turnpike – Raymond Wieczorek Drive - crossing the Merrimack River and connecting to the new airport access road. This road has junctions with U.S. Route 3 in Bedford and NH 3A in south Manchester. It provides access to large tracts of undeveloped industrial land in north Londonderry, which the town plans to use for light industry and office buildings. This will present new and formidable industrial competition for Hooksett and other surrounding towns, due to its desirable location and easy highway access.

There are other airports available to Hooksett residents. Boston's Logan International Airport (60 miles to the south) is the largest airport in New England and is especially important for international and transcontinental flights, or for other distant business or vacation destinations not provided by Manchester. Hooksett does not have any scheduled limousine service to Logan; however, there is direct bus service out of Manchester and Londonderry.

Pease International Tradeport in Portsmouth, 45 miles to the east, has concentrated on freight service and has had only limited success in establishing a passenger airline market. Pease has a low-cost service by Allegiant Airlines to secondary airports near large cities.

E. Non-Motorized

The Town does not currently host designated bicycle lanes along Town or State roadways. Sidewalk infrastructure is scattered and is generally not well-connected to provide efficient pedestrian access between residential and commercial areas.

Regional Transportation Planning and Major Projects

The following regional transportation projects are either under construction or in various planning stages. All these projects directly or indirectly benefit Hooksett.

A. Highways

Manchester Area

It has been many years since any significant improvements have been made to the highway system in the Manchester region. This was mostly due to the State concentrating on two major projects, the Everett Turnpike widening in Nashua and the extension of Route 101 towards the seacoast, and smaller projects like Exit 13 in Concord and bypass roads in North Conway and Hillsborough. The state has since turned its attention to Manchester. Most of the major projects are located in the southern portion of the city and in Bedford. The projects include:

- Planned I-93 widening from Manchester to Salem (complete)
- Planned widening of parts of NH Route 101 in Bedford (in progress)
- Planned reconfiguration of Exit 6 off I-293/Amoskeag Street Bridge (5-10 years)
- Planned reconfiguration of I-293 off Exit 11 (West River Road) to allow southbound access onto the freeway (5-10 years)
- Planned DW Highway widening in Hooksett north of Alice Avenue (5-10 years)
- Planned I-293 Exit 11 reconfiguration to serve the Hackett Hill area (10 years)
- Planned Exit 4A in Derry (in progress)

B. I-93 Widening Impact on Hooksett

The I-93 widening project as completed will increase the capacity of the highway to either 8 or 6 lanes from Manchester to Salem. Construction on this project began in 2005 and has been piecemeal. This expansion is expected to facilitate large increases in traffic volume and potentially large increases in residential development in southern New Hampshire. Hooksett's two access points onto I-93 as well as the intersection of Route 101 and Londonderry Turnpike will be affected by this expansion. Lands adjacent to these access points will likely experience intense development pressures for warehousing, industrial, and other auto-centric uses going forward. Furthermore, Hooksett may see significant land takings to satisfy EPA required secondary impact mitigation, a controversial subject.

C. Hooksett Projects

The following smaller projects are under construction or planned for Hooksett:

- Route 3/Bypass 28 intersection realignment and widening between Alice Avenue and Martins Ferry Road (NH DOT # 29611)
- Install EV Infrastructure off I-93 & Rt. 3 (NH DOT # 44627)
- Route 3A improvements between the intersections of Hackett Hill and Route 3A, and Route 3A and Main Street (NH DOT # 43851)

D. Other Transportation Considerations

There several major regional developments that directly impact Hooksett's economic future – they are the revitalization of Downtown Manchester, the I-93 widening project, other major roadway infrastructure projects linking New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

The renaissance of downtown Manchester, is due in large part to the opening of the SNHU Arena and the Fisher Cats baseball stadium. The success of the airport and the civic center has instilled a refreshingly positive, “can do” attitude within the city – an attitude that is spreading to outlying towns. There have been proposals for investment in downtown nightspots (e.g. gaslight district), office buildings, hotels, residential units and walking trails. The success of the Manchester Monarchs hockey club when the franchise was located in Manchester helped facilitate the development of a new minor league baseball stadium on the riverfront. This is all good economic

news for the region.

The region's ability to sustain this growth and take advantage of these opportunities during difficult economic times and post-pandemic is, of course, unknown.

Manchester is the largest and most important city in New Hampshire, and Hooksett is fortunate to be situated just north of it. Hooksett has easy access to the downtown to catch a show at the civic center, enjoy baseball, or a flight at the airport, without requiring a long drive to Boston.

Growth and expansion in Manchester will spur residential development in Hooksett. Some residential growth in Hooksett will be due to families moving here from out of state. While there are a numerous reasons that motivate people to move to New Hampshire, the price of housing has been a prime motivator in the past, though this is changing as housing prices continue to rise. This potential for additional residential growth will place pressure on the local school and road systems. Emphasis needs to be placed on improving Hooksett's roadway system and the way in which the Town either controls or exacerbates residential sprawl.

In general, many Hooksett residents who would prefer to work closer to home are instead forced to commute south to Boston for higher paying jobs. Large numbers of commuters creates congestion and safety problems on I-93 and other highways, necessitating highway expansion, creating a cycle of sprawl, and reinforcing the notion that most southern New Hampshire towns are bedroom communities within the Greater Boston region.

In the broader region several important projects impact NH travelers and commerce. US Route 3 is being widened in Massachusetts from the NH border south to I-95 (a.k.a. MA Route 128). After many years the "Big Dig" project to depress I-93 in Boston has finally been completed. This should ease the commute into downtown Boston. In Maine, the I-95 is being expanded from York to Portland.

The MBTA and NHDOT studied the possibly of extending commuter rail service from Lowell to Nashua. The NHDOT had made provision for the possible future construction of a light rail facility in the I-93 median area between the north and southbound lanes from the state line in Salem to the Exit 5 area in Londonderry where the line would turn westward towards the Manchester Airport. The project was defunded. DOT does not believe there is sufficient demand for light rail service. There are connection issues in Manchester, where existing rail lines have been abandoned or discontinued, and in Massachusetts, where integration with existing rail lines is undetermined.

6.2 Federal and State Roadway Classifications

Roads and highways are classified according to administrative and functional classification systems. This administrative classification system defines governmental responsibilities for construction and maintenance purposes. The functional system is based on the role of a given road in terms of the amount of traffic it carries and the type of area it serves.

A. *Administrative Classification*

Highways under state maintenance and control include Class I, II and III highways. Class IV, V and VI are under the jurisdiction of municipalities. The descriptions below detail the differences between administrative classes.

- Class I, Trunk Line Highways, consist of all existing or proposed highways, which are part of the primary state highway system, except portions of such highways that lie within the compact sections of towns and cities. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) assumes complete control and pays the costs of construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of its sections. The sections within the compact areas of municipalities are controlled by the cities and towns as Class IV highways.
- Class II, State Aid Highways, consist of all existing or proposed highways on the secondary state highway system, except those portions of such highways, which are within the compact sections of towns and cities. These are classified as Class IV highways.
- Class III, Recreational Roads, consist of all roads leading to, and within, state reservations designated by the legislature. The NHDOT controls the construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of such roads.
- Class IV, Town and City Streets, consist of all highways within the compact sections of towns and cities. As previously stated, extensions of Class I and Class II highways through these areas are included in this classification.
- Class V, Rural Highways, consist of all other traveled highways, which the town has the duty to maintain regularly.
- Class VI, Unmaintained Highways, consist of all other public ways, including highways discontinued as open highways, highways closed subject to gates and bars, and those highways, which have not been maintained in suitable condition for travel for a period of five years or more.
- Scenic Roads are special town designations (by vote of the town meeting) or any road, other than a Class I or Class II highway, where repair, maintenance, reconstruction, or paving work shall not involve or include the cutting or removal of trees, or the destruction of stone walls, except as provided for under RSA 231.158. At present, Goffstown Road is the only Scenic Road designated in Hooksett.

Road Mileage by Administrative Classification – June 2020

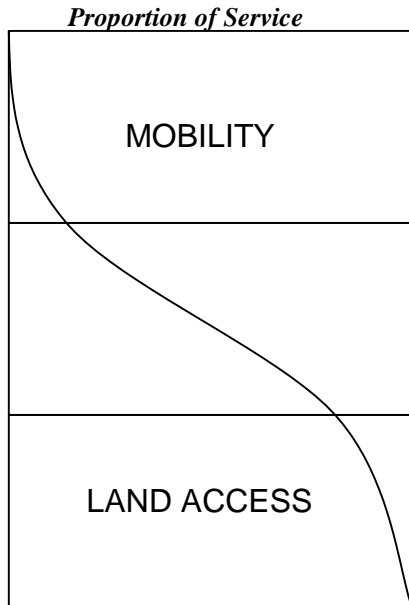
	<i>Miles</i>	
<i>Class I</i>	28	
<i>Class II</i>	27	
<i>Class III</i>	0	
<i>Class IV</i>	0	
<i>Class V</i>	43	
<i>Class VI</i>	6	
<i>Scenic</i>	4	
<i>Total</i>	108	

6.3 Functional Classifications

The functional classification system, utilized for transportation planning purposes, classifies roads according to the various functions they perform. Highway systems have two purposes: to provide mobility and to provide land access.

Where the highway's primary function is to provide mobility, relatively high and preferably sustained speeds are desirable. In contrast, low speeds are necessary where the highway's function is to provide safe access to end egress from abutting land uses. In between these extremes are other highways, which have a dual function of having to provide both mobility and access. Travel speeds may be somewhat higher on these roads than on those which primarily serve an access function, but rarely as high as on roads whose primary function is to provide mobility. The general relationship of functionally classified systems, with respect to mobility and land access is shown below.

**Relationship of Functionally Classified Systems
Serving Traffic Mobility and Land Access**



ARTERIALS

A network of continuous routes that provide for relatively high travel speeds with minimal interference to through movement.

COLLECTORS

Branches of the arterial system that provide access to adjacent land and provide service to travel over relatively shorter distances.

LOCALS

Branches of the collector system that provide direct access to abutting land, but relatively little mobility between locations.



Everett Turnpike Toll Ramp at Hackett Hill Road



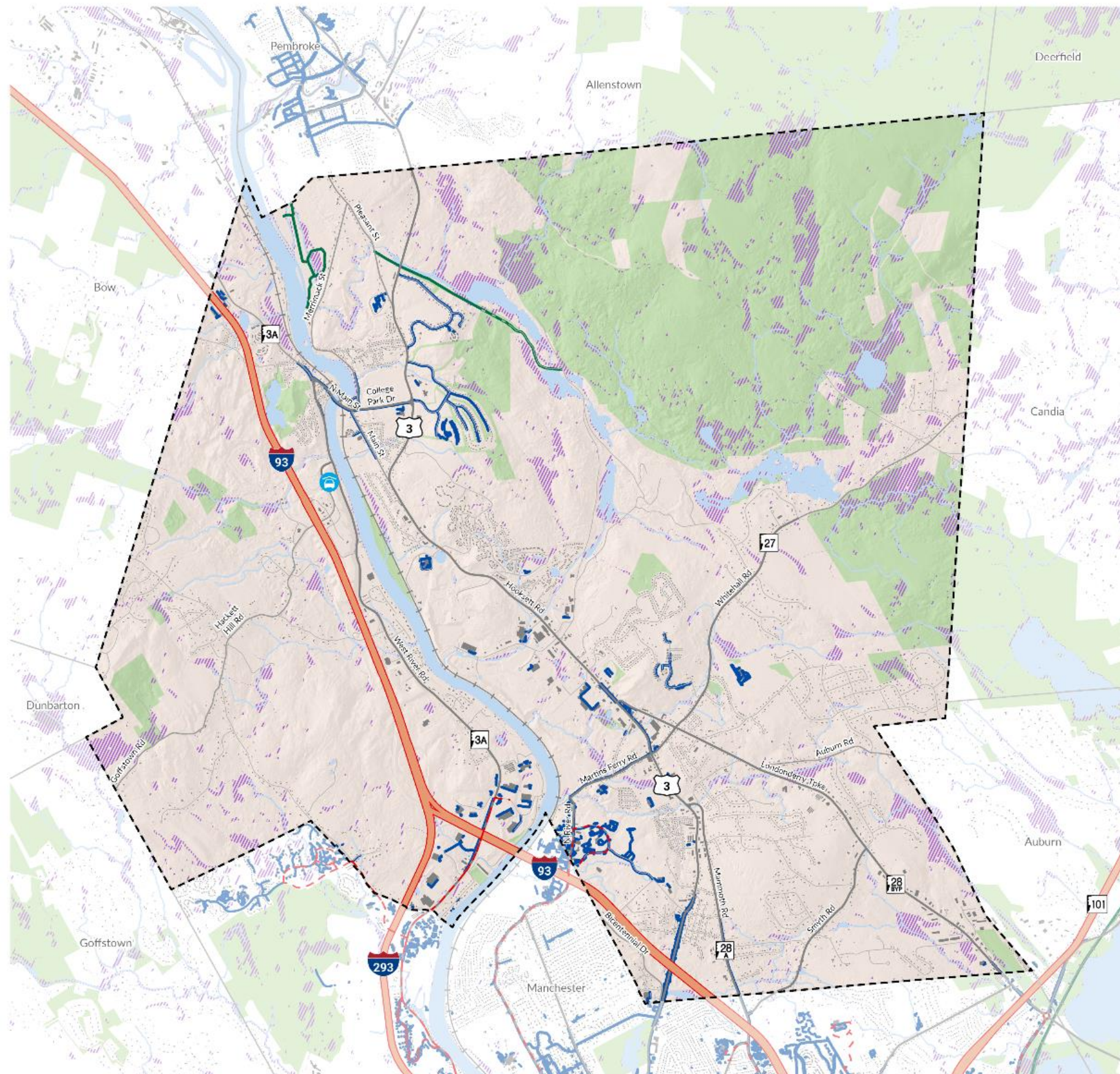
Signalized pedestrian crosswalk at DW Highway and Benton Road

Sidewalks along River Road on SNHU campus



Sidewalk discontinuity on Mammoth Road, north of Alice Avenue

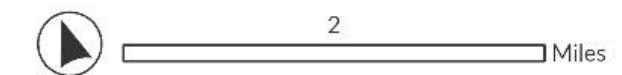




Hooksett: Transportation System

- Limited-Access Expressway
- Arterial
- Collector
- Local
- Not Maintained
- Sidewalk
- Fixed-Route Bus
- Park & Ride Lot
- Railroad
- Mutli-Use Trail
- Building
- Open Water
- Wetland
- Conservation Area

On-demand transit service also available throughout Hooksett. Sidewalk data known to be incomplete.



Created by SNHPC, 2024. Sources: Bureau of Transportation Statistics; City of Manchester; Google Maps; Manchester Transit Authority; Microsoft; NH Department of Transportation; NH Statewide Asset Data Exchange System; OpenStreetMap; University of NH; US Census Bureau; US Fish & Wildlife Service; US Geological Survey.

Principal Arterial:

Principal arterials consist of highways which interconnect with the interstate system and other expressways, providing service to trips of moderate lengths at somewhat lower levels of mobility. They link cities, towns and major resort areas that are capable of attracting sufficient travel. US Route 3 and NH Route 3A are in this category. The community should consider asking the DOT to add NH Bypass 28 to this category, since it connects with NH Route 101.

Minor Arterial:

These include all arterial highways not classified as principal and include facilities that place more emphasis on land access than does the higher system, and offer a lower level of mobility. These facilities provide intra-city and intra-town continuity, generally without penetrating identifiable neighborhoods. Included in the category are NH Routes 27, 28A, and Bypass 28 and Main Street, Martins Ferry Road, and North River Road. The community should add West Alice Avenue and Donati Drive to this category or the next.

Collector Streets:

These roadways penetrate neighborhoods collecting traffic from local streets in the neighborhoods and channeling it to the arterial systems, and vice versa. These routes link places with nearby towns, cities or routes of higher classification and/or link locally important traffic generators. Included in this category are Smyth Road, Auburn Road, Hackett Hill Road, Merrimack Street and Pleasant Street. The community must consider adding the following as collectors: Alice Avenue, Cross Road, Granite Street, Zadora Road, Pine Street, and possibly Lindsay Road and Farmer Road.

Local Streets and Roads:

These facilities primarily provide direct access to adjacent land and access to the higher orders within the highway network. They usually provide service to travel relatively short distances compared to collectors and other higher components of the system. Service for through traffic is deliberately discouraged. All other streets not otherwise classified above are local streets.

The process of functionally classifying streets and highways recognizes that, with the exception of cul-de-sacs (where through travel is not possible), all the highway facilities carry varying amounts of “through” and “local” traffic.

6.4 Traffic Congestion Mitigation Focus Areas

This section identifies areas of primary concern with regard to future traffic congestion. These are areas in which the Town should focus transportation planning efforts going forward. It also describes some important developments in Manchester that will likely impact transportation corridors in Hooksett.

A. Exit 10 Commercial Area

In Autumn of 2003, work was completed on the large commercial development along and just off NH 3A (accessed by Quality Drive) just north of the Interstate 93 Exit 10. The development includes several “big boxes” – Target, Kohl’s, the former BJ’s Wholesale Club (now an Amazon distribution site) and Home Depot. In addition, other retail outlets include Wendy’s, Subway, Dunkin’ Donuts, Petco, Walmart, Bass Pro Shoppes, and Market Basket.

The Town of Hooksett, by referendum, voted to establish a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district in order to build the necessary road infrastructure to make the shopping district possible. The people of Hooksett made a significant investment in their town’s future by approving this \$2.6 million bond. As a result NH 3A was widened from Exit 10 north to Quality Drive, the capacity of the interchanges was increased, and 3 new traffic signals were installed.

As of 2020, the Exit 10 TIF District has been expanded to include several parcels of land along Route 3A north to the undeveloped area at Exit 11. The project, if successful, will bring municipal sewer to commercially developable properties at both exits, thus incentivizing development.

Current market trends are placing development pressures on Exit 10. In 2018, Amazon opened a distribution facility at the site of the former BJ’s Wholesale Store. The facility serves as a “last mile” distribution warehouse for Amazon’s customers in central and northern New Hampshire. This area will likely continue to experience intense interest from the development community for similar uses given its proximity to freeway access. The Town should continue to coordinate with NHDOT on long range planning efforts to identify traffic bottlenecks and subsequently widen Route 3A at these locations. As the area in the vicinity of Exit 10 develops into the future, the Town should also coordinate with NHDOT on traffic congestion mitigation efforts and roadway designs which accommodate the safe and efficient movement of larger vehicles.

B. Industrial Park Drive Area

West of US 3, Manchester Sand and Gravel (MS&G) developed an industrial park, which they continue to market. This is the area in the vicinity of Industrial Park Drive and Lehoux Drive. Brox Corporation owns land north of MS&G, which contains a sand and stone mining operation. Once mining operations are complete the intent is to develop the land as an industrial park. Brox and MS&G have proposed a plan to interconnect their road systems, creating in effect a short loop road.

East of US 3, MS&G has a working mining operation which will continue for many years to come. MS&G had proposed to develop the land closest to US 3 into a major commercial development, encompassing approximately 250,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, though the area is

zoned for industrial use and has developed solely as such. Current industrial uses include Cummings Printers, Huttig Building Products, and GE Aviation to name a few. This area is a major concentration of Hooksett's industrial workforce. PROCON, another large employer, is located directly across DW Highway.

As of 2020, the Town is providing a police detail twice daily, which is paid for by GE, during the morning and evening rush hours. This detail is located at the intersection of DW Highway and Industrial Park Drive, and it greatly disrupts the safe, efficient flow of traffic through this highly congested area. Traffic backs up for over a mile in either direction when stopped. This inefficient method of traffic control hampers development opportunities on vacant industrial lands adjacent to Industrial Park Drive and poses a safety threat to Hooksett patrol officers as well as motorists on DW Highway. The Town should work with NHDOT to develop a long-range solution to congestion at this intersection – signalization and widening should be explored as alternatives to the detail.

C. Head's Pond

Manchester Sand and Gravel owns the majority of land in the northeast quadrant of Hooksett. In 2002 the Town voted to designate Head's Pond as "wetlands with special concern" rather than the more restrictive "prime wetlands". This will allow for the development of land near Head's Pond while still protecting this valuable resource. This wetlands designation will allow MS&G to build a road and develop the area. As of 2020, the Planning Board has granted entitlements to construct over 400 single family homes at this site, though no work has commenced. MS&G has also agreed to donate approximately 120 acres of land and a 27-acre pond for a town beach and recreation area. As the Head's Pond and other residential projects are developed, MS&G has also agreed to donate land for one or more future schools.

The Town should consider the potential traffic-related consequences of this large scale residential development on the community and the region as a whole when coordinating future transportation planning efforts along DW Highway north of the Village.

D. North Campus

Land now or formerly owned by Southern NH University, just to the east of the Mount Saint Mary's apartments, is being developed by 3A Development Corporation. The project, as approved by the Planning Board, includes a master planned community of 400 residential units (including single-family homes, townhouses, and garden-style apartments), some assisted living units, and several commercial/retail sites. After the recession of 2008/2009, the master plan was amended to eliminate a large portion of the proposed commercial uses. The project now consists of the University Commons condominium project, University Heights Apartments, and the single-family subdivision to the east. As of 2020, the project is approaching buildout and will continue to generate a substantial amount of residential traffic in the vicinity of the Village.

E. Southern New Hampshire University

The campus of SNHU is bisected by the Manchester-Hooksett town line; a majority of the main campus is in Hooksett, as well as much of the developable land for future expansion of the University. The University is the largest employer in Hooksett and one of the largest in Manchester, and as such

generates a substantial volume of traffic in the region. The University has developed new academic buildings on the west side of North River Road, and two new student dormitories on the east side. As of 2020, campus officials have indicated that SNHU's focus going forward will be the development of its online programs and therefore the student population on campus has peaked at a maximum of approximately 3,000. The Town should collaborate with SNHU to bolster pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure connecting the campus with DW Highway, particularly on Martins Ferry Road.

Currently, SNHU does not have a designated main entrance to its campus on DW Highway, though Alice Avenue to Victory Lane could serve this purpose in the future. If SNHU does fashion this area as its main entrance, the Town should plan to see a marked increase in traffic at Exit 9 during times when classes are in session.

As of 2020, the University has worked with the Derryfield School to gain planning entitlements from the City of Manchester to construct a roundabout at North River Road and Bicentennial Drive. This is relevant for Hooksett due to the fact that it will facilitate a larger volume of traffic flowing into Hooksett northbound on North River Road.

F. U.S. Route 3 (NH Route 28)

Route 3 (DW Highway) is the major north-south local road through Hooksett. It carries approximately 33,000 average annual daily trips (AADT), with individual summer days approaching 40,000 daily trips. A significant portion of these total trips are through traffic (attempting to move to points north or south of Hooksett), while the remaining is destination traffic (local traffic). These travelers experience gridlock during peak hours, especially during the afternoon peak hours. This problem is particularly acute from Granite State Marketplace south to and past Merchants Motors. Essentially, Route 3 is a two-lane highway—one lane north, one lane south. Developers of adjacent lands have widened the road to four lanes with exclusive left-turn lanes and acceleration/deceleration lanes at certain points along the road (Granite State Marketplace, Legends Drive and the Granite Hill residential development). The NHDOT has completed improvements at Alice Avenue (Exit 9), and has plans to widen the road to a dual carriageway in either direction between Alice Avenue and Martins Ferry Road. Design plans are being finalized in 2024. While these improvements have made, and will make, a significant difference in the capacity and mobility of the roadway, there is still a great deal of work that needs to be done to improve the ability of the road to handle the amount of traffic that is projected to travel on it over the next 10 to 20 years. There are several bottlenecks and sections of the roadway in which the dual carriageway is reduced back to a single lane of travel. The amount of traffic on DW Highway between Exit 9 and College Park Drive warrants a dual carriageway in both directions.

The Town should pursue a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for three priority segments of Route 3, with the goal of securing widening commitments from DOT for these priority segments (listed below).

1. From the Route 3/Bypass 28 intersection south to Alice Avenue:
 - a) Bypass 28 to Martin's Ferry Road
 - b) Martin's Ferry Road to Mammoth Road
 - c) Mammoth Road to Alice Avenue

2. From Industrial Park Drive to the Allenstown town line:

- a) Industrial Drive to Shannon Road
- b) Shannon Road to Main Street
- d) Main Street to Granite Street
- e) Granite Street to the Allenstown town line

The widening of each segment above must include capacity and safety improvements at the terminating intersection if necessary, and all smaller intersections in between. For example, Segment 1a) must include improvements at Benton Road and K- Mart and widening and realignment of the Martin's Ferry/Whitehall Road intersection. Segment 1b) must encompass the Mammoth Road intersection. Segment 1c) may require major reconstruction of the Alice Avenue intersection if and when the Parkway connects to it.

To further facilitate the safe and efficient flow of traffic along the DW Highway corridor, NHDOT should conduct a study on the coordinated timing of the signals between Martins Ferry Road and Legends Drive, particularly during peak hours.

As of 2020, NHDOT plans to begin the process of acquiring lands on either side of DW Highway for a widening project which will increase the capacity of this major thoroughfare to two lanes in either direction between the intersections of Alice Avenue and Martins Ferry Road. Where possible, the Town should request that pedestrian infrastructure be planned with this expansion to include at minimum: interconnected sidewalks on either side of the highway, a pedestrian crossing and signalization at the existing Mammoth Road intersection, and a six-foot dedicated bike lane.

Concerns have been raised regarding the intersection of DW Highway and Cinemagic Way. The private road provides access to Hooksett's movie theater, as well as CMC Urgent Care and Osborne's Agway retail store. The volume of traffic on DW Highway effectively prohibits a safe left turn northbound out of this driveway. Traffic tends to back up for a half hour or more, particularly when a movie ends at the movie theatre. Issues at this intersection will be addressed with the widening of the roadway, currently under design in 2024.

G. NH Route Bypass 28/Londonderry Turnpike

Overall, Route Bypass 28 south of NH 27 still has excess capacity. While development on that segment of the road has increased, including new curb cuts, it is expected that it will not exceed its capacity in the next 10 years. This could change if a major new development comes in, since there is a considerable amount of undeveloped land nearby, particularly in the Eastpoint Drive Industrial Park. In 2018, the Town re-zoned all residential lots with frontage on this road south of Farmer Road to allow commercial uses. Since that time, the area has seen several new businesses populate lots which were previously single-family residential homes.

NH Bypass 28, is however, experiencing congestion and delays between NH 27 (Whitehall Road) and US 3. There are often long queues northbound at the Route 3 intersection and long delays making left turns into or out of commercial areas and Clough Road. It is expected that this segment will need capacity and safety improvements in the next 3-5 years.

The intersection of NH Bypass 28 and NH Route 27 has been the site of more serious accidents. The intersection is very narrow, with no left or right turn lanes. The David R. Cawley Middle School off Route 27, which opened in the fall of 2003, raised concerns about increased traffic and the realization that school buses will not have a large enough turning radius to safely turn on to or off NH 27. NHDOT installed a signal at this intersection in 2008. While the intersection's safety record has slightly improved, traffic congestion remains a problem at this intersection.

Given the recent rezoning and the potential for new developments in this area, the Town's focus should be to improve the safety and capacity of NH Bypass 28 from US Route 3 south to the NH 101 exchange; there is a need for exclusive left-turn lanes, sidewalks, and shoulders. Ideally, NHDOT would plan to complete these improvements, or a center turning lane at select locations, for the entire length of the highway in anticipation of future commercial and industrial growth in the area, but an improvement project of that magnitude will undoubtedly be cost prohibitive as well as very lengthy. In the interim, the Town should approach NHDOT with proposals for upgrades to the following intersections:

- a. Smyth Road/Joanne Drive
- b. Farmer Road
- c. Zapora Road
- d. Auburn Road
- e. Eastpoint Drive

Furthermore, the Planning Board should encourage shared access points on all future commercial/industrial developments south on NH Route 27, unless adequate turning lanes are in place.

H. Martins Ferry Road

This $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long stretch of roadway links SNHU campus with Hooksett's major commercial node on DW Highway. Currently, the road is narrow, with a 30 MPH speed limit. The roadway is primarily residential in character, though it is fairly heavily traveled, particularly during the morning peak hours. The Town should work with SNHU to develop a corridor plan to enhance the safety of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to the intersection of DW Highway. Though widening this roadway would aid in this end, it is not a feasible proposal. Rather, the Town should consider traffic calming measures such as pavement markings and speed tables.

I. NH Route 28A (Mammoth Road)

This north/south roadway is a major residential corridor connecting DW Highway to east Manchester. While the roadway provides a necessary commuting linkage between Hooksett and Manchester, it is largely residential in character, with most of the abutting properties being zoned either Medium or Low Density Residential. The Town should explore the possibility of requesting that NHDOT provide an exclusive left turn bay at the intersection of this roadway and Alice Avenue. Many SNHU employees and students commuting in from Manchester regularly make this left turn, and the area has a tendency to become congested during the morning peak hours.

As the roadway is mostly residential, there has been a noticeable increase in the amount of pedestrian traffic along the roadway – usually joggers and residents walking their dogs in the evening - however there are currently no sidewalks along Mammoth Road north of Alice Avenue. Higher density housing developments, such as the existing Carrington Farms Condominiums, Stonegate, and future Forest Oaks development, will bring more residents to this area in higher concentrations, creating a need for more sidewalk pedestrian infrastructure linking to DW Highway and south to Manchester. Due to traffic volumes, traffic speeds, and blind hills along the route, walking/running is not a safe activity, and pedestrians are strongly discouraged from walking in this roadway. The Town should work with NHDOT and abutting property owners to designate areas appropriate for the future installation of sidewalks north of Alice Avenue to increase pedestrian safety.

J. Route 3A (West River Road) and Exit 11/Hackett Hill Road

West River Road presents the single most congested commuting corridor in Hooksett. The roadway provides an alternative north/south route between Manchester and Concord, abutting NHDOT's tolled Everett Turnpike. In Hooksett, the road connects Exits 10 and 11 – two of the Town's largest commercially developable areas. Due to geographical factors, widening the roadway between these two exits is problematic – the road is situated between the Merrimack River and steep slopes to the west.

The current 3A TIF project aims to bring sewer and municipal water to properties abutting this roadway. This will likely incentivize larger scale developments at the Exits, as well as commercially zoned properties between.

For three successive years between 2015 and 2018, the Town voted down the construction of a proposed roundabout at the intersection of Hackett Hill Road and Route 3A. The intersection, along with the signalized intersection of 3A and Main, are the most congested peak hour bottlenecks in Hooksett. Both intersections currently underperform according to NHDOT intersection performance standards, and each are expected to fall below a "Failure" classification within 3-5 years if no improvements or upgrades are made. Any development activities at Exit 11 will likely further contribute to the dysfunctionality of these two intersections as well as general traffic congestion along Route 3A.

The Town has begun the process of soliciting a detailed traffic study on the potential signalization of the intersection of Hackett Hill Road and 3A, in coordination with the existing signal at the intersection of Route 3A and Main, or the installation of a roundabout. As development pressures at Exit 11 mount, these proposals will need to be factored into any studies which are performed. Off-site roadway improvements to this area should be considered, based upon the results of these studies, and developer(s) at Exit 11 should contribute to these off-site improvements in a manner proportional to their impact on the transportation networks in this area.

Additionally, NHDOT should consider widening the roadway at select locations, allowing for turn bays, at the following proposed locations:

1. Pine Street
2. Cross Road

3. Recycle and Transfer Station
4. Brookside West

K. Regional Transportation Networks

Hooksett should work with Manchester and the NHDOT to develop a full interchange with I-293 at the south end of Hackett Hill Road (Exit 7), near the city line. Currently, there is no northbound access to I-293 from Route 3A. The purpose of this intersection is to provide access to existing industrial land in Manchester and potential developable land in Hooksett, and to relieve congestion on NH Route 3A. This project has been added to the NHDOT 10 year plan.

L. The Parkway

The Parkway, from near the Allenstown border to West Alice Avenue, has been a part of the Hooksett Master Plan for nearly 40 years. As the major property owner, Manchester Sand and Gravel has evolved from an earth materials mining company to a land development company, and its master plan has also evolved. As the most recent update of that plan was approved by the Planning Board in the fall of 2003, it is clear that the Parkway will come into being in segments.

Although the timing is uncertain, it is expected development of the northernmost segment, from Green's Marine east to service the Head's Pond 450-unit residential development, may occur first. As MS&G develops its industrial land in the Valley between Route 3 and the Merrimack River, it will become important to consider how the Parkway may be developed between the Valley and West Alice Avenue.

M. Merrimack River Crossing

As the Town grows to its maximum desirable population, from a long range planning scenario, a new bridge location to cross the Merrimack River should be considered. In order to begin this planning, a comprehensive traffic analysis should be undertaken within the next five years to determine if another bridge crossing is warranted and if so, where is the most appropriate location. Ideally this would be undertaken after the revised buildout analysis is completed in order to provide a reasonable basis for potential future growth. Once a final location has been identified, the Town should proceed with securing the location in order to protect it from the risk of future development.

N. East-West Connection

As the MS&G master planned community at Heads Pond and the University Heights project unfold over the next decade or so, the Town should work with the owners to bring the concept of an east-west highway into that master plan. It may be possible to connect the Village with the conservation lands east of University Heights, and further east to the proposed Town Beach at the intersection of the proposed Parkway, and on eastward to a connection with an improved Chester Turnpike and south to Whitehall Road.

6.5 Alternative Modes of Transportation

Mass Transit

Many elderly and low-income people are unable to afford private transportation. Some people have disabilities or health concerns that prevent them from driving an automobile or using mass transit. For many, walking on sidewalks or crosswalks on Hooksett's busy streets can be frightening and dangerous.

People without the means for transportation often rely on volunteers to provide rides to essential services. Usually, a service like this is provided by local or regional civic or religious organizations. They may have access to cars or other handicapped accessible vehicles and utilize insured drivers. They usually provide low cost or free transportation services to the elderly and children. These organizations must continuously deal with the shortage of qualified volunteer drivers. Most opt for non-profit status, which introduces some legal requirements, but allows them the ability to apply for government assistance grants.

Good transportation planning should consider the needs of those without access to transportation – to do otherwise would be shortsighted and could lead to serious consequences for a small but growing segment of the population. The Master Plan recommends that the Town of Hooksett do what it can to support the needs of local organizations providing transportation services within the community. This support could be in the form of operating funds, help securing non-profit status, assistance in grant applications, etc.

As of 2020, the Town has achieved the goal of providing regular transportation services to residents free of charge. In 2018, the Town received a grant through NHDOT and Manchester Transit Authority to purchase a small bus which is utilized for Hooksett's demand response shuttle service. This service operates five days a week between 9 AM and 2 PM, and is mostly used for medical appointments and shopping for necessities. Due to operational budget constraints, the Town decided in 2018 to discontinue the Hooksett Shoppers Shuttle in order to allow the demand response shuttle to operate five days per week instead of three.

The Town should work to market the Hooksett Shuttle Program to ensure it is utilized to its maximum potential. The Town should also explore funding sources to provide operational funds to expand service hours to weekends. This may be accomplished via a public-private partnership with SNHU, which operates a fleet of small bus vehicles for students on campus. The Town should approach SNHU about this partnership. The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission also has mobility options available to Hooksett residents demand response services and dedicated bus service.

Non-Motorized Transportation

The Hooksett Conservation Commission and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee have spearheaded the development of several miles of the Heritage Rail Trail in Hooksett since 1990, as well as the Head's Pond trail. The Town should encourage and support the future development of these trails and also encourage the creation of spur trails from the main route to points of interest in the Town. While much of the focus on the development of these trails is purely recreational in nature, it must also be considered that walking trails may serve as a functional facility for pedestrian

transportation as well. Future trail planning and development should consider this utility. The Town should plan to provide linkages between existing and future trails between residential areas and commercial areas. This should be accomplished by promoting links between trails systems and existing sidewalk infrastructure, as well as by requiring future residential developments to provide access easements to these trails.

The Town should also work cooperatively with the NHDOT to create bike routes, intermodal connections between roadways, sidewalks, and trails, and establish vehicle parking lots as needed near intersections with trails. Bike lanes should be provided as a linkage between residential areas and commercial nodes, though there are safety concerns providing this infrastructure along Route 3A and DW Highway.

7. Economic **Analysis**

7.1 Introduction

The decisions made by the Town of Hooksett through this Master Plan will not only affect the future land use of the Town but its economic future as well. To understand the implications of these decisions for the local economy, the existing economic framework of the Town must be analyzed. The economic analysis provides an assessment of economic forces which influence the future demand for commercial, industrial, office, and even residential land uses. All land uses are affected by market factors to some degree; however, commercial land uses, particularly retail uses, are critically dependent on the economic health of the area, especially as compared to residential land uses. Hooksett is a mature community with three different corridors serving as primary commercial districts with additional commercial development potential emerging at the Exit 11 area. Hooksett is fortunate in that it does have undeveloped land for future expansion in the perimeter areas of the Town, as well as infill opportunities available along each of its commercial corridors. This economic analysis will examine the current status of retail, office, manufacturing, and other non-governmental economic categories to provide an understanding of the community's general economic environment. From that point, the plan will draw conclusions about the Town's market potential and determine the appropriate development patterns to provide an optimum economic future for the Town of Hooksett.

This analysis is predicated on the idea of what locals call the "New Hampshire Advantage." Specific to Hooksett, this includes:

- ✓ **The Crossroads of New Hampshire:** Hooksett sits at the confluence of three major highways and the state's largest river, making it a crucial link in New Hampshire's flow of people, materials, money, and ideas.
- ✓ **Advantageous Geography:** In just one hour's drive, a traveler from Hooksett can reach the city of Boston, the Atlantic coast, or the heart of the White Mountains. The town is also just a few miles north of the fourth largest airport in New England.
- ✓ **Moderate tax rates:** Hooksett's overall tax rate has fluctuated since 2011, and in 2022, the tax rate was 10% lower than that in 2001.

- ✓ **New businesses and new jobs:** Between 1998 and 2022, the number of jobs in Hooksett increased by nearly 66%. The town's unemployment rate also sits far below both the state and national averages.
- ✓ **A strong economic base:** Hooksett is home to some of New Hampshire's strongest businesses and institutions, including Southern New Hampshire University, GE, United Healthcare, Amazon, Cummings Printing, ProCon, and many others.
- ✓ **A growing population:** Hooksett is poised to continue growing well into the 21st Century.
- ✓ **Excellent schools:** Hooksett students scored 16% above the state average in math.
- ✓ **Natural beauty and a high quality of life:** In 2009, Hooksett was named one of the "Top 100 places to live in America" by *Money Magazine*.

The Town's future economic development policies should aim to achieve at least one of the following four goals and their associated objectives:

1. Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health

- Identify, develop, and fund a plan for the strategic placement of water and sewer.
- Employ debt financing and use of Tax Increment Funding Districts for major infrastructure improvements.
- Establish a Route 3 and Route 3A "Opportunity Corridor Loan Fund."
- Determine optimal/best land use at Hooksett's major intersections and interchanges.

2. Foster Redevelopment

- Promote economic revitalization through brownfields assessment and remediation/clean up.
- Expand and improve the older industrial parks/industrial areas within the community.
- Promote use of established community revitalization tax credits within the existing designated areas of the community (this also includes working with the state to maintain these credits in the future).
- Promote shared infrastructure facilities and municipal services through regional co-ops and inter-municipal agreements.
- Promote densification in specific commercially zoned areas designated for mixed use through incentives, rezoning and increased infrastructure capacity.

3. Maintain/Improve Mobility and Accessibility

- Plan and build the Route 3 alternative route – extend through the industrial park and Manchester Sand and Gravel's proposed master-planned community to Route 3.

- Manage access on Route 3/3A and Routes 28Bypass/28A through a driveway agreement with the District Engineer and through local zoning/site plan regulations.
- Establish a road connectivity requirement for new development to ensure secondary and emergency access.
- Enhance existing traffic signal coordination and consider roundabouts at appropriate intersections to enhance traffic flow and smart growth.
- Pursue strategic road widening and new alignments through site plan and subdivision coordination.
- Create transit-oriented development (TOD) at appropriate sites through proactive zoning as passenger rail and other public transit opportunities emerge in the future.
- Coordinate with Manchester and NH DOT for future reconstruction of Exits 5 and 6 on I-293
- Coordinate with Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission and the Central Regional Planning Commission on projects that are targeted in the regions Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

4. Promote Hooksett as a Preferred Place within the Region

- Establish and implement a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) ordinance to increase density in the 3A corridor with the Green Infrastructure identified in the town's open space plan. Improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility/mobility within Hooksett's activity centers, neighborhoods and village center.
- Create town entrance signs/gateway beautification.
- Continue farmers market and improve walkability in village center by opening and improving the old rail bridge for pedestrian/bicycle accessibility.
- Promote incentives for enhanced open space/trail development – along the Merrimack River and connecting schools and residential/shopping areas.
- Support and promote the presence/visibility of Southern New Hampshire University in Hooksett.
- Seek and implement user-friendly land use regulations and expedited planning review processes.
- Increase public access and use of the Merrimack River, maximizing the economic impact of the Merrimack River.

7.2 National and Regional Market Conditions

New Hampshire has a diverse, service-oriented economy⁴. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2023 20% of New Hampshire's jobs were in Trade, Transportation and Utilities. 18% of workers are employed in the Education and Health Services field, followed by 14.7% in the Professional and Business Services category. Manufacturing jobs are at 10.3%, Leisure and

⁴ Hoover, Makinzi; Ferguson, Stephanie; Lucy, Isabella. "Understanding the New Hampshire Labor Market", US Chamber of Commerce, fall 2023. <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-new-hampshire-labor-market>

Hospitality at 9.9%, with Government positions employing 12.6%. Other sectors include Other at 5.3%, Financial Activities at 4.9% and Construction at 4.5%.

Small businesses are the backbone of New Hampshire and 99% of all New Hampshire businesses fall in that category. 40% of New Hampshire's small businesses are women owned. The small business sector employs 49.8% of all New Hampshire employees.

New Hampshire's labor market is still recovering post-pandemic and the market is showing signs of improvement. There is a severe workforce shortage, with only 28 available workers for every 100 open jobs. The State's unemployment rate is still significantly lower than the national average of 3.5%. Hooksett's unemployment rate in 2022 was 2.2%.

New Hampshire's residents are well-educated. As of 2023, 95% of New Hampshire residents have obtained a high school diploma, which is points above the national average. The State ranks 9th nationally in the number of residents over the age of 25 who have completed a Bachelor's degree program, at 40.2 percent, which is 18% higher than the ranking in 2016. 16% of residents have achieved at least one graduate degree. Despite this positive ranking, New Hampshire also ranks as one of the lowest state funders for higher education as a percentage of the state budget. In addition, New Hampshire has the highest community college tuition rates in the nation, and close to the highest four-year public higher education tuition. New Hampshire ranks 24 in the nation for student debt with the average student loan debt at \$33,880 during 2023. Based on 2021 statistics, less than half of the incoming freshman college students are remaining in New Hampshire for their higher education. There are approximately 198,000 students enrolled in a New Hampshire college for the 2022-2023 year. Finding ways to entice these students to stay in the state after graduation would go a long way to assist in the worker shortage.

Combine this with an aging population (New Hampshire's median age increased from 40.2 in 2010 to 43 years in 2020) and a decline in young adults, it should be noted that New Hampshire's educational system and workforce may face challenges in the future. Statewide the age groups 30-39, increased between 2015 and 2019 by 2,995 residents. Those in the 40-49 and 50-59 age group in the same period declined by 3,275 and 2,470, respectively. There have been steady increases in the 60 year or older age group. This trend has raised concerns about the long-term sustainability of the state's labor force. People within these ranges are generally the most economically productive members of society, as they constitute the highest percentage of mid-career professional positions, usually in management or other key professional roles.

What this demographic data means is that with fewer adults 30 to 49 years old in New Hampshire, there likely will be fewer children in the state in the near-term future. At the same time, New Hampshire is now the 2nd oldest state in the nation.

As related to Hooksett, these demographic shifts mean that the southern New Hampshire region will need to continue to improve the state's educational system, which ranks high, and increase efforts to attract and retain the younger workforce to replenish the state's workforce as the Baby Boom

generation retires.

Between 2010 and 2016, New Hampshire's population grew by fewer than 11,000 people – a rate of just over 1 percent. In contrast, the United States population grew by 5.2 percent over the same time period. With the exception of the early 1990's, New Hampshire has not experienced such a slow population growth in more than 60 years. In comparison, New Hampshire experienced its largest expansion between 1985 and 1988, averaging a gain of more than 28,000 annually over that time period.

Beginning in 2000, New Hampshire's population grew at the fastest rate in New England and grew at a faster rate than the nation. From 2002 to 2006, even though the state grew at a slower rate than the nation, the state was still the fastest growth in New England. Between 2006 and 2008, however, New Hampshire's growth slowed down significantly, and the population growth rates for other New England states slowed as well. Given recent population growth increases, New Hampshire remains one of the fastest growing states.

Rockingham County experienced the highest population growth rate in the State between 2010 and 2016, at only 2.2 per cent. Merrimack County experienced growth at 0.5 percent between 2010 and 2022, with the largest annual population increase occurring between 2019 and 2020, at a rate of 1.6%. All counties in the Southern New Hampshire region experienced small net increases in population, while counties in the northern and western regions of the State experienced small net losses.

As of 2021, Merrimack County's median household income has increased to \$101,292, which is above the state median household income of \$83,449.

Hooksett's potential economic growth will be affected by these demographic trends as well as several other factors. Most notably, the Town hosts several hundred acres of vacant, readily developable commercial and industrial land which is situated only minutes from one of three interstate highway access points. The Town is located between the State's largest city and the state capital, and the Town hosts the physical location of Southern New Hampshire University, the State's second-largest institution of higher learning. All of these factors present economic development opportunities to the Town.

As of 2020, national trends in the development of commercial properties – mostly retail establishments – indicate that brick and mortar retailers are becoming obsolete. Increasingly, consumers are choosing to shop via the internet, and the advent of huge companies such as Amazon and Ebay have easily facilitated this phenomenon. This trend – in conjunction with the ongoing worldwide COVID-19 pandemic – are beginning to alter the market demand for commercial lands, and subsequently how those lands are developed. The Town should consider these trends well into the future, particularly where long range planning efforts seek to develop property with the highest and best use.

7.3 Employment Sectors and Hooksett Businesses

The Town of Hooksett is more than just another bedroom community adjacent to the City of Manchester. Hooksett hosts a growing civilian labor force of 9,226 -up 16.3 percent from 2010- and a diverse and well-balanced employment base consisting of over 490 businesses producing roughly 13,840 jobs and an average weekly wage of \$1,595 (NHES-ELMI, 2022).

While the Town of Hooksett has been working to increase its commercial and industrial tax base, actual tax revenues to the town in 2009 declined due to the economic recession. However, over a longer period of time (between 2001 and 2008), Hooksett's local property tax receipts significantly increased from \$18.5 million to over \$33 million at an annual rate of growth of 8.6 percent.

With the recovery of the national economy following the 2008-2009 recession, Hooksett's economy is fairly well-balanced and is poised to improve. The Town's current unemployment rate of 2.2 percent (2023), is lower than the national average. The Town continues to be an attractive place for land and business investments, as is evident in the upcoming development of Exit 11 into one of the Town's largest commercial/industrial nodes as well as with a fair amount of single-family home construction.

Another important economic development factor for the Town of Hooksett is the ratio or percentage of residential land to commercial/industrial land within the community. This ratio is important in terms of the community's overall tax base and revenues. It is also important as an indicator or as an economic development goal. As of 2009, the Town of Hooksett exhibited a ratio or percentage of residential land to industrial and commercial land in the order of 3:1 (based upon the MS-1 Report submitted to the NH Department of Revenue).

According to the US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics data, in 2019 Hooksett's largest industries by sector include: Retail Trade (20.5%) Finance and Insurance (15.5%), Manufacturing (9.8%), Construction (7.4%), Wholesale Trade (7.1%), and Accommodation and Food Services (6.8%). The table below itemizes all jobs and sectors of employment in Hooksett according to 2019 counts.

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector

	2019	
	Count	Share
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	31	0.3%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	25	0.2%
Utilities	203	1.8%
Construction	831	7.4%
Manufacturing	1,103	9.8%
Wholesale Trade	792	7.1%
Retail Trade	2,294	20.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	333	3.0%
Information	84	0.7%
Finance and Insurance	1,737	15.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	305	2.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	428	3.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	195	1.7%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	581	5.2%
Educational Services	468	4.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	367	3.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	128	1.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	762	6.8%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	369	3.3%
Public Administration	171	1.5%

Additional employment data collected by the NHES ELMB for the Town of Hooksett is summarized in the Major Employers of this chapter. This employment data also indicates that over the past two decades, the majority of local jobs within Hooksett are in retail trade as well as the service and construction sectors.

According to the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security, the average weekly wage for workers in the Town in 2016 was just over \$1100 per week. In New Hampshire, rent at fair market value during 2016 for a two-bedroom unit was \$1,519 per month. Housing is considered affordable when monthly rent/mortgage payments meet or fall below 30 percent of gross monthly income. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 2016 nearly 5 percent of Hooksett residents earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000 annually lived in housing deemed unaffordable relative to their incomes.

Diagram 7-1

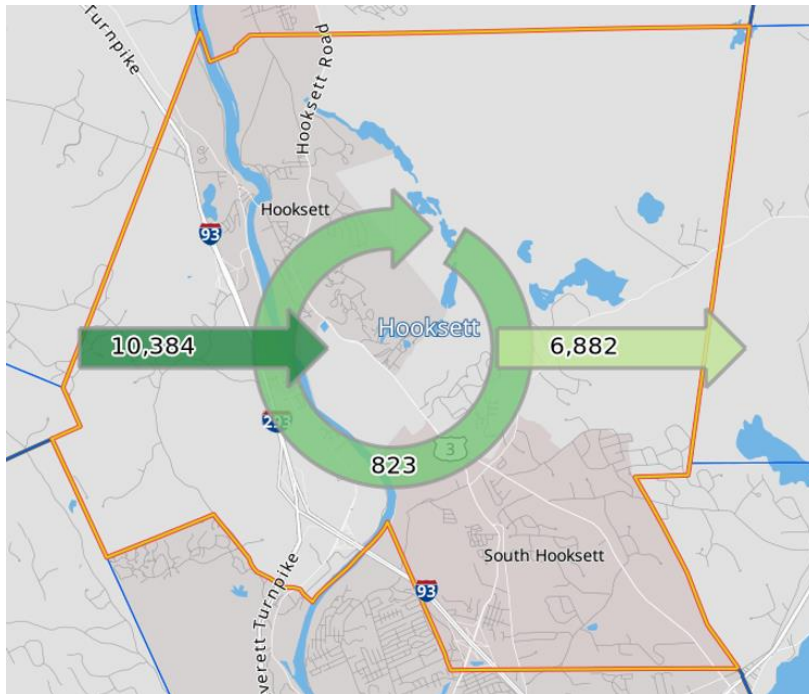


Diagram 7-1 summarizes commuting patterns for the Town. In 2019, over 10,300 people commuted into Hooksett for work on an average weekday, while over 6,800 Hooksett residents worked outside of Hooksett. Fewer than 1,000 people both lived and worked in Hooksett. Source: US Census Bureau's OnTheMap.

A. Property Taxes

The State of New Hampshire derives the vast share of its net operating income through property taxation. As there is currently no State sales tax on most goods nor a State tax on income, property tax rates in New Hampshire are among the highest in the nation. The total combined property tax rate in the Town of Hooksett between 2001 and 2022 is shown in Table 7-7. Overall, Hooksett's tax rates have varied widely over the last decade, with a high rate of \$26.74 per \$1,000 of valuation in 2017. The 2022/2023 rate is set considerably lower at \$15.98 per \$1,000.

Stability in property tax rates is crucial to economic development and vice versa. The lower the property tax rate, the higher the incentive for businesses to relocate to Hooksett, though this is a delicate balancing act, as the Town must maintain an effective level of quality services and infrastructure to support growth. Currently, property values in Southern New Hampshire are on the rise. Due to the property tax structure in New Hampshire, property owners are particularly sensitive to increases in property valuation. The Town's economic development policy should aim to stabilize large fluctuations in the annual property tax rate. Potential investors in Hooksett properties view stability favorably.

Table 7-7
Tax Rates 2010 Through 2023

Year	Municipal	County	School	Total
2010	6.05	2.55	12.97	21.68
2011	6.16	2.67	12.85	21.68
2012	6.31	2.64	13.37	22.32
2013	6.88	2.76	13.84	23.48
2014	6.49	3.08	15.26	24.83
2015	6.04	3.23	15.54	24.72
2016	6.70	3.36	16.33	26.39
2017	6.83	3.42	16.49	26.74
2020	5.63	2.95	13.93	22.51
2022	6.90	2.62	14.53	24.05
2023	4.61	1.64	4.01	15.98

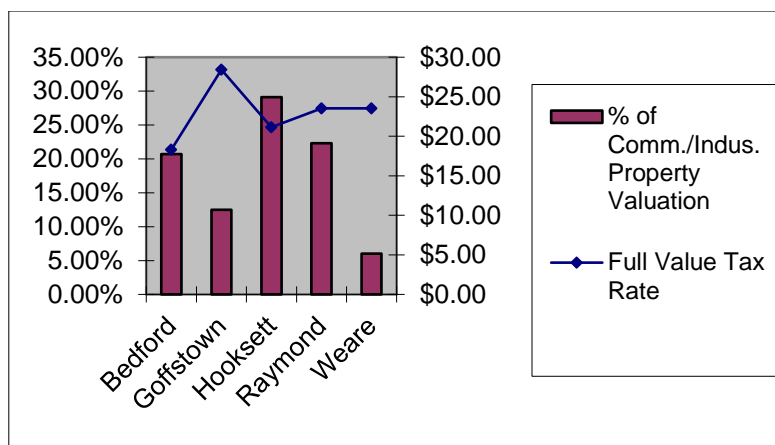
Source: Hooksett Finance and Tax Collector's Office

B. Property Tax Comparisons with Other Communities

Overall, business development and growth in Hooksett provides an important source of tax revenue to the Town. This tax revenue helps to decrease the amount of local revenues required from residential property to sustain both municipal and school operations and services. Individual businesses generally have higher property values than residential properties and thus contribute more to the tax base. In addition, property taxes paid by businesses help finance the Town's schools while not directly contributing to school enrollment.

Currently, land within the Town of Hooksett that has been developed for commercial and industrial use represents close to 30 percent of the Town's property tax base as shown in Figure 7-2 (Source: Hooksett's MS-1 Report). This figure indicates that Hooksett's overall percent of property valuation of commercial/industrial land is much higher than many similar sized communities within the region. In 2022, Hooksett's full tax rate is lower than the thirteen municipalities within the Southern New Hampshire Planning Region. As the Town continues to expand its current commercial and industrial base to offset the cost of residential growth, Hooksett's property tax revenues will increase in the future.

Figure 7-2
2020 Percentage of Commercial/Industrial Property Valuation and Full Value Tax Rate for
Hooksett and Selected Communities



Source: Hooksett Town Assessor's Office for Year 2020

In order to better understand the relationship between Hooksett's tax revenues and expenditures according to land use type (residential, open space, commercial, and industrial), the Town of Hooksett conducted a Cost of Community Services (COCS) study in 2007. Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that in 2006 and most likely every year since, the Town of Hooksett: (1) spent more on the provision of municipal services to residential land than it received in revenue; and (2) the town received more in revenue from commercial/industrial land and open space than the town spent on services for these land use types.

A COCS is an important study as it provides an overall snapshot of an individual municipality's revenues and expenses based on the Town's percentage of existing land use. The COCS model however does not seek to determine what current or future land use policy decisions or actions are best for the community, but rather provides useful information to community leaders in making these value judgments. The Town should consider updating the 2007 COCS in the period 2020-2030.

C. Hooksett's Current Economic Health

Job Growth: Job growth in the Town of Hooksett has increased at a relatively healthy rate in recent years. The overall number of jobs in Hooksett has increased from 4,889 in 1999 to 7,065 in 2008, representing an overall increase of 44.5 percent. As of 2020, data from the Department of Labor estimate an increase to 9,000 jobs in Hooksett.

Prior to the 2008 economic downturn, the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security had projected that job growth between the years 1996 and 2006 in Rockingham, Merrimack, and Hillsborough Counties would increase by 15 percent. Hooksett's job increase during this time period far exceeded these county projections.

Major Employers: According to the most current and available data in 2023, the largest employers contributing to Hooksett's job base include Southern New Hampshire University, with just over 700 employees; General Electric Company with 800 employees; and United Healthcare with over 500 employees. More recently, the Amazon distribution facility which began operations at the site of the former BJ's Retail Store added 400 jobs to the local economy, though many of these positions are seasonal and part-time.

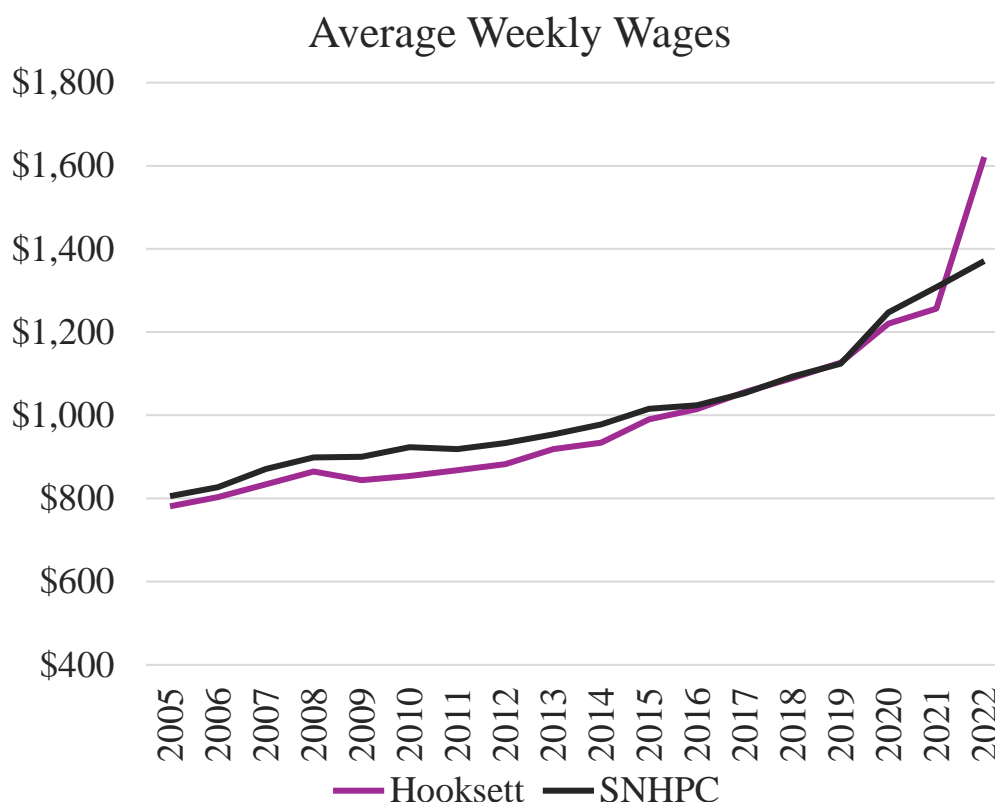
Of the 407 Hooksett businesses identified as part of the 2010 Census, 101 were in wholesale and retail trade which represented nearly 25 percent of the town's total employment. Clearly, this sector also plays an important part in the local economy. In 2020, wholesale and retail trade employed 22% of the Town's population. Trending declines in brick and mortar retail establishments nationwide mean that the Town will likely see a shift away from employment in these sectors. The Town should adopt an economic development policy which clearly outlines the types of employment sectors it wishes to attract in the coming decades.

Average Weekly Wage Comparison: Wages paid by employers provide another important indicator of the strength of a local economy. According to the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security, the average weekly wage in Hooksett in 2022 was \$1,621. Wages grew by \$879 or 119% between 2000 and 2022. The rate of growth has increased in recent years with 2021 to 2022 seeing an annual increase of almost 30%. While wages have historically mirrored regional rates, that most recent increase was an outlier for the area. Wages have also managed to grow faster than the rate of inflation.

In real terms, Hooksett average annual wages increased by 41% between 2000 and 2022.⁵

⁵ <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CPIAUCSL>

Figure 7-5



Source: NH Employment Security Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau

Source: New Hampshire Department of Employment Security

Income of Hooksett Residents: Data provided by the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development between 1999 and 2010 reveals that the Town of Hooksett ranked **17th** among all the municipalities located within Merrimack and Hillsborough counties in terms of median family income. Median Family Income represents the total income received by all family members 15 years of age and older.

Median Family Income (MFI) is included in this plan rather than Median Household Income or Per Capita Income because MFI includes a preponderance of young adults that have short work histories and garner less income than the more experienced work force. The presence of an institution or college (such as Southern New Hampshire University in Hooksett) with a resident population also has a profound effect on per capita income and therefore is not included.

Workforce and Unemployment Trends: The Town of Hooksett is part of the Manchester NH Metro-NECTA labor market region. The Manchester NH Metro-NECTA region historically has contained the highest concentration of employers and the largest workforce within the SNHPC region. In 2022, the NH Employment Security, Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau (NHES ELMB) reported that the Town of Hooksett's labor force consisted of a total of 9,226 people. Out of this

workforce, approximately 9,026 Hooksett residents were employed and 200 residents were unemployed, with a local unemployment rate of 2.2 percent.

7.4 Economic Development Tools

1. Land Use Analysis

As with any mature municipality, the improvement of undeveloped land and the redevelopment of existing property are essential steps to maintaining a fiscally secure community. One viable option for Hooksett is to expand the local tax base through the attraction of additional commercial and industrial development. The Town's three interstate exchanges are all viable commercial/industrial districts and should be areas of focus moving forward. While new commercial retail, dining, and entertainment establishments located along DW Highway will certainly contribute to the tax base, the focus of long-term improvement should be at these three interchanges – Exits 9, 10, and 11. The Route 101 interchange off Londonderry Turnpike also presents an economic advantage to the Town. A land use analysis of the areas in the vicinity of each of these interchanges should be performed to determine the highest and best use of these areas. The Town should subsequently explore potential zoning amendments or other amendments to local land use regulations to permit the identified uses in these areas.

2. Floor Area Analysis

A floor area analysis is an examination of space occupied by specific categories of uses. The Town should consider conducting an in-depth floor area analysis at 5 year intervals to determine which sectors of the economy are demanding space in Hooksett, and how this trend is changing over time.

3. Tax Incentives and Other Legislative Tools

Currently, the State of New Hampshire allows municipalities to enact four main statutory economic development tools at the local government level. Under the SB2 form of local government, the local governing body (Town Council) is responsible for adopting these economic development incentives. The Town of Hooksett has previously adopted three of the four. These are listed below along with a brief explanation of each.

A. RSA 162 – N: Economic Revitalization Zones

This offers short-term business tax credit for development projects which make capital improvements to existing properties, or which create at least one full time job. Targeted areas must be blighted areas; i.e. brownfield sites, underutilized structures, deteriorated or vacant structures, etc., and must be identified by the municipality as an Economic Revitalization Zone. Applicants may receive a business tax credit of up to \$240,000 - \$40,000 annually over the course of six (6) years if all criteria are met. Currently, the Town has established five (5) of these zones, and since the Economic Development Advisory Committee and Community Development have aggressively begun advertising this incentive in 2018, there have been at least twelve (12) successful applicants.

Through the assistance and coordination of the EDAC and the Town Council, the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) approved the designation of five (5) new “Economic Revitalization Tax Credit Zones (ERZs) in the Town of Hooksett. These five zones are identified below and are shown on the following map:

1. Former Chinese Food Restaurant Zone
2. The “Valley” Industrial Park
3. Exit 11 – West River Road/Hackett Hill Road/Route 3A
4. Exit 10 – West River Road/Technology Drive/Kimball Drive
5. Londonderry Turnpike/Eastpoint Drive, Sutton Circle

Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZs) are areas designated by the State that meet certain state criteria enabling qualifying new and existing businesses to obtain tax credits. These tax credits can be used against the state Business Profits tax and the Business Enterprise tax for up to 100 percent of an investment in the property, facility or business.

While ERZs are not zoning districts per se, the zones identify areas within the Town of Hooksett where revitalization and the development/reuse of sites for industrial and commercial expansion would help to encourage local economic development and job growth within the community. As a result, these zones portray potential areas within the community where the Town of Hooksett would support and promote economic growth and revitalization.

Each of the five adopted ERZs are zoned either for industrial, commercial or mixed use development. In order to establish an ERZ, the area must contain a brownfields site (typically an industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or underutilized due to environmental contamination or the fear of such contamination) or the area must have at least one of the following characteristics:

- There has been a population decrease according to the last recorded census;
- At least 20% of the households have a median income level below the poverty level and at least 51% of the census tract of which the zone is located have incomes less than 80% of the median income of households in the state (according to HUD or NHES) or
- The area contains: unused or underutilized industrial parks or vacant land for industrial, commercial, or retail purposes and the designation of the ERZ would likely result in a reduction of the rate of vacant or demolished structures or the rate of tax delinquency.

The last criterion as noted above was used as the main criterion as well as the existence of brownfields sites to qualify the five ERZs within the Town of Hooksett. There is a sixth proposed zone which would encompass all lots with frontage along DW Highway between the Manchester town line and Martins Ferry Road. The Town should work to officially designate this area as an ERZ. It is recommended that the names for each ERZ zone be reviewed and amended to provide clarity as to where the zone is located.

B. RSA 79-E: Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive

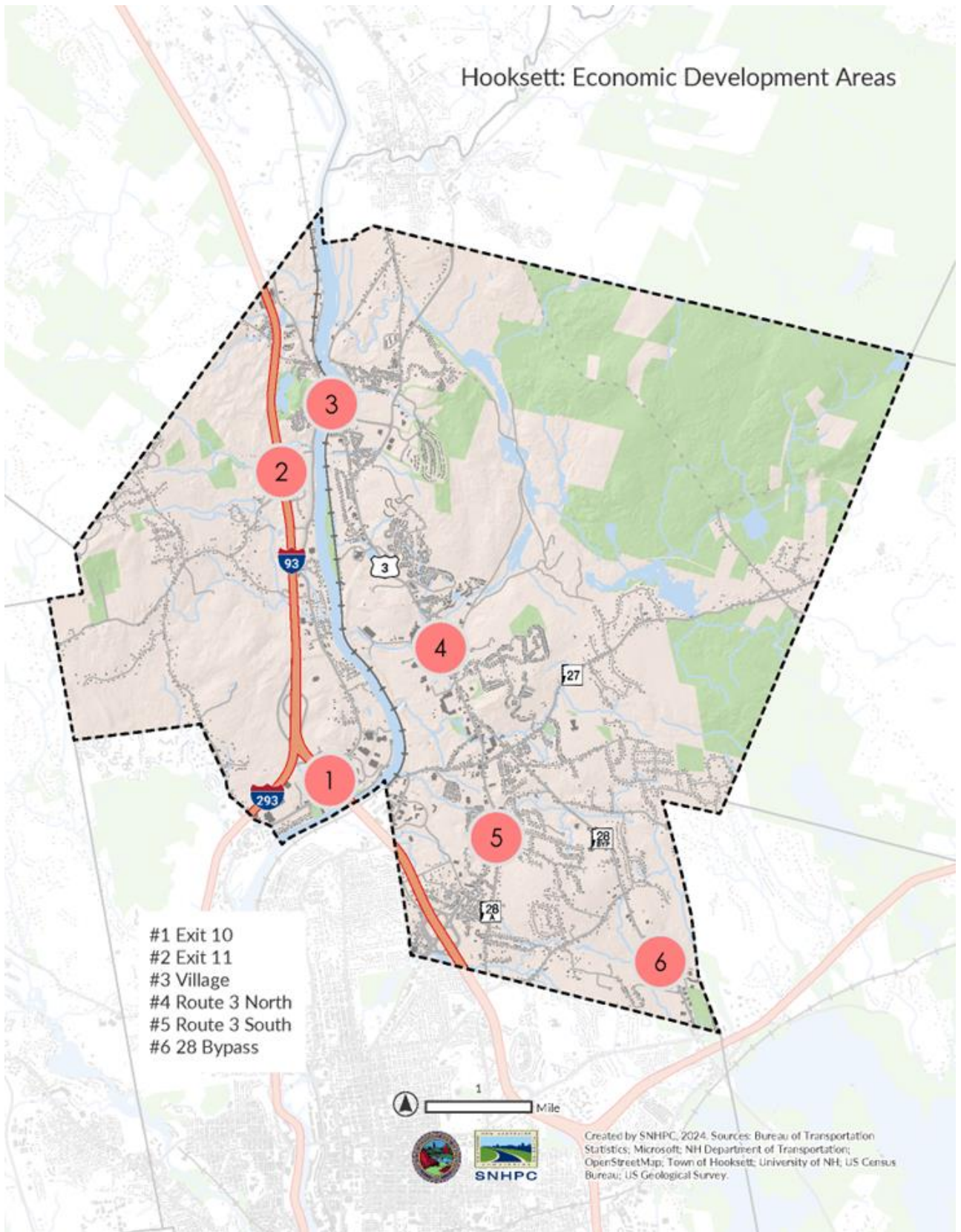
This incentive offers property tax relief for substantial rehabilitation of qualifying structures – usually designated by a municipality as being a downtown area or other central area of historic importance – by providing a 5-year exemption on increased property values as a result of a rehabilitation or renovation project. The goal is to incentivize the adaptive reuse of the existing building stock, revitalize blighted downtown areas, and preserve historic structures. Currently, the Town has a designated zone – the Village – in which properties are eligible for this exemption, however the incentive has not been utilized to its full potential.

C. RSA 162-K: Tax Increment Finance Districts

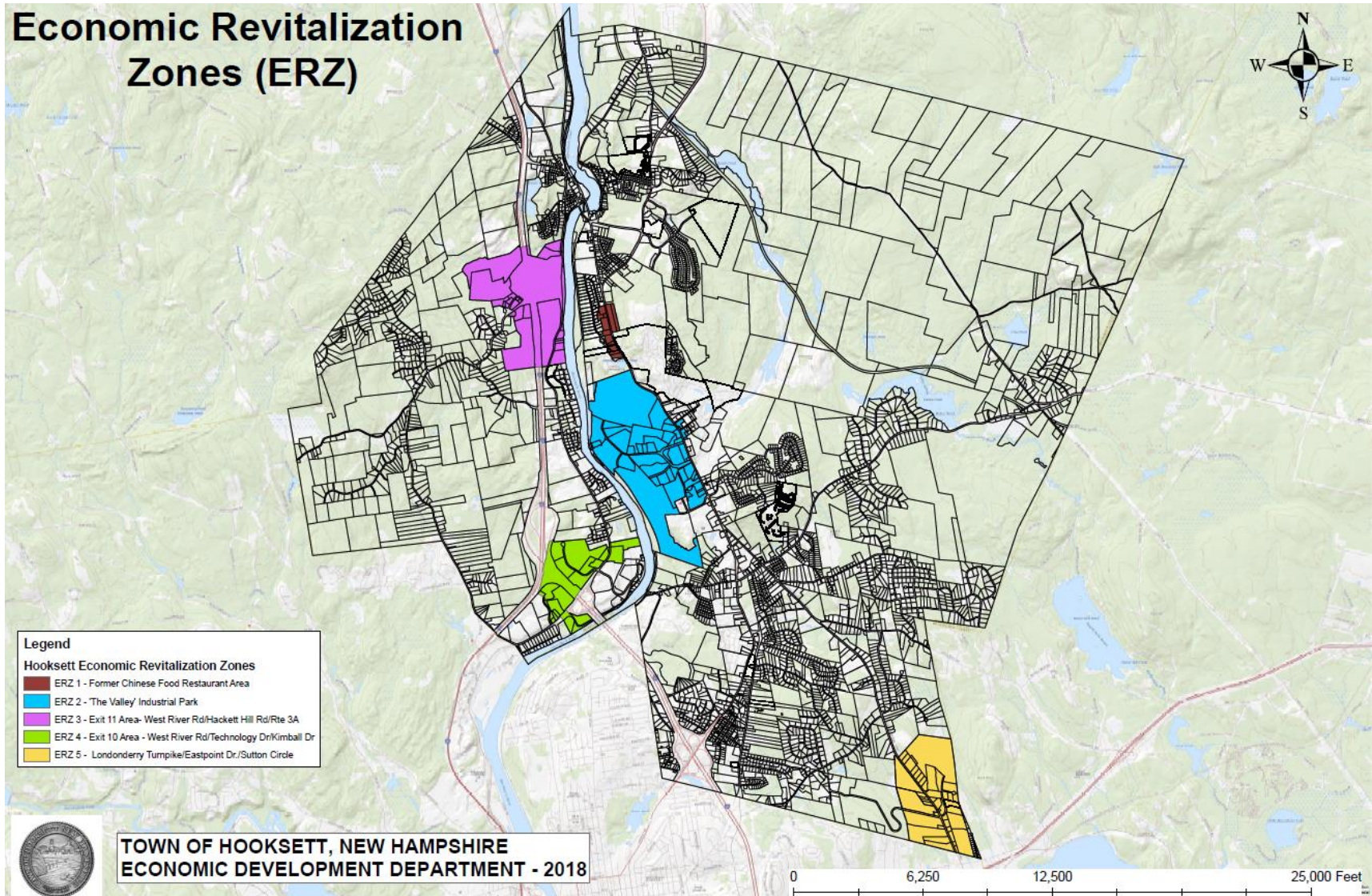
TIF Districts provide a funding mechanism for new infrastructure by capturing property tax increases over and above current property taxes once the infrastructure has incentivized further development within a specified area. The 3A TIF and associated sewer/water infrastructure is currently the Town’s most substantial economic development initiative.

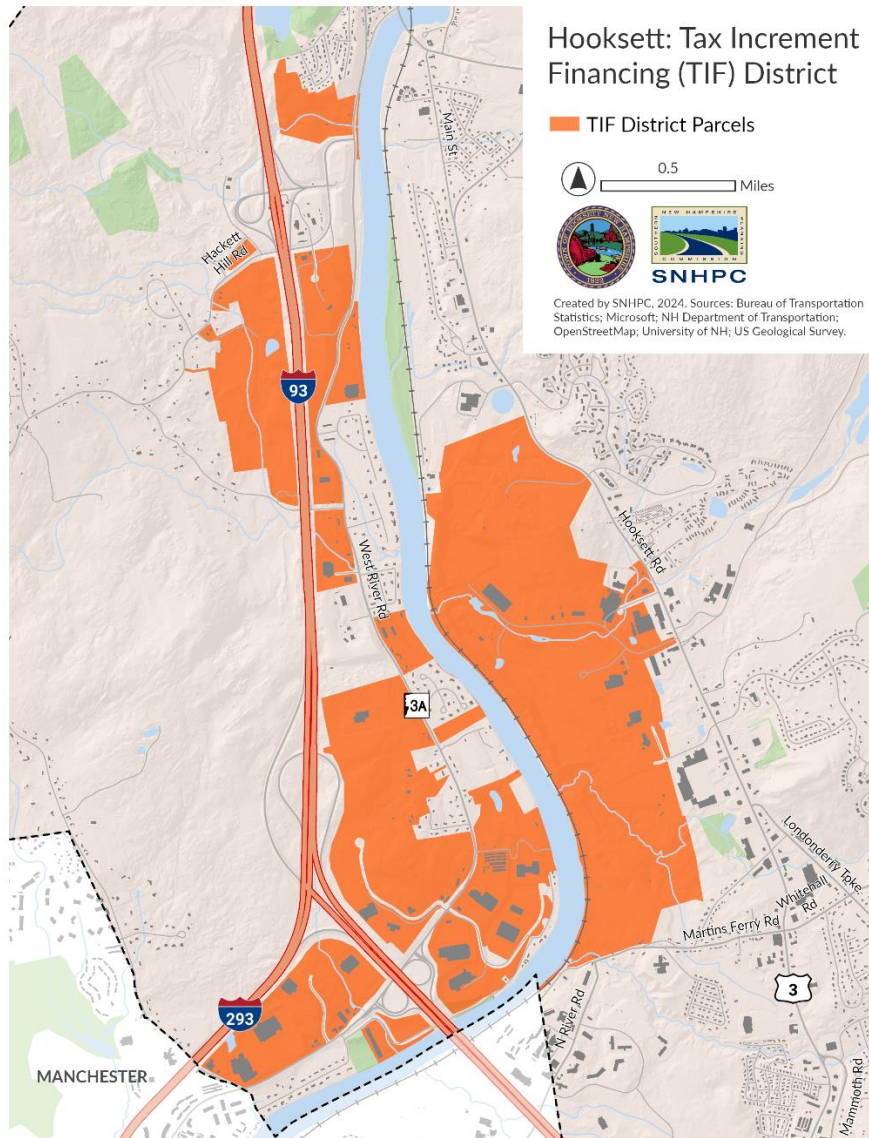
D. RSA 72:81 – Commercial and Industrial Construction Exemption

This exemption incentivizes new construction in commercial zones, industrial zones, or both. Under advisement of the Economic Development Advisory Committee, the Town Council may specify certain parcels of land to which this exemption applies. The exemption includes up to 50% of the increased municipal property tax as a result of new construction, or renovations/additions/improvements to existing structures. The exemption may not exceed a period of 10 years from the date the application is granted. The goal is to attract construction and generate jobs in commercial and/or industrial sectors at short term reductions in property tax revenues, while potentially benefitting from new construction in the long term in terms of net gains/increases in property tax revenue and employment. The Town adopted this exemption in 2021. The exemption applies to the municipal and local school portion of the property tax for the increase in assessed value, and excludes the State education property tax and county tax. This incentive is only applicable for sixteen (16) properties in town as of 2023.



Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZ)





4. *Improvement Districts*

The Town should identify areas of blight or areas of underutilized but potentially developable property. Currently, the Town has considered focusing economic development efforts on the area immediately north of the “Miracle Mile” on DW Highway. This area consists of approximately two miles of frontage along U.S. Highway 3 between Industrial Park Drive and Main Street. Most of the properties along this corridor are zoned to permit commercial development by right, and the area is slowly receiving attention from the development community. Existing commercial properties along this corridor are in need of maintenance and redevelopment.

The Town should consider the establishment of a Business Improvement District in this area. This is a financing tool in which property owners and businesses within a designated area are assessed a special tax or fee to pay for infrastructure improvements and other business-related activities. A BID can be requested by local property owners and businesses; there is no tax burden on the greater community.

5. *Southern New Hampshire University*

Southern New Hampshire University offers the Town a competitive economic advantage in that it hosts students with working knowledge across a wide variety of employment sectors. The Town should consider becoming involved with the University to develop a business incubator program for students who are looking to start a business in Southern New Hampshire.

6. *Affordable Housing*

Large employers need to be assured that their employees will be able to find affordable housing locally before they make the decision to set up business operations within a community. The Town should work to promote the development of affordable housing across a wide range of income levels as indicated earlier in this document. In order to attract and retain a young workforce, the Town must work to provide accommodation for this segment of the population.

7. *Revolving Loan Funds*

Revolving Loan Funds (RLFs) can offer cheaper and more flexible financing to public and private borrowers for various economic development and redevelopment projects. Governmental RLFs are typically capitalized with federal grants, state aid, or local funds. Once an RLF is established, fixed or low interest loans can be made to eligible borrowers based on the lender's criteria, and loan terms can be tailored to a specific project's needs. Depending on the RLF pool, loans can range from only a few thousand dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars. As initial loans are repaid, local governments can make new loans to borrowers in its service area, thereby making the program self-sustaining.

8. *Community Development Block Grants*

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program through U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is one of the most utilized federal programs for local governments across the country. All states receive an annual appropriation from HUD based on population. CDBG is principally used for infrastructure improvements, downtown revitalization, and rehabilitation of homes and neighborhoods. For a local unit of government to be eligible for CDBG it must demonstrate in its application that the project will meet one of HUD's three national objectives: benefit to low- and moderate-income persons, elimination of blight, or addressing an urgent need relative to basic quality of life factors.

Local governments and private businesses have mutually benefited from CDBG-funded economic

development projects. Though CDBG is a highly valuable tool for local governments, it is not always convenient or efficient for the businesses that communities wish to attract or help expand. Besides the normal lag time between project application and award, all CDBG projects are subject to an environmental review, which can take between 45 and 90 days to complete. And projects that involve new construction will likely see higher costs as federal labor and wage standards automatically go into effect. Another factor is payment for work is often on a reimbursement basis and it can take several days or weeks to receive payment once a draw request has been submitted. Block grants, and generally most grant programs, are time intensive for local government staff and there are usually stringent reporting/auditing requirements. However, CDBG and other programs are viable options for local governments, especially communities that do not have a large tax base to levy.

CDBG grants may present a benefit to Hooksett, but the Town should consider hiring a full or part-time grants administrator to coordinate the application and expenditure reporting requirements of this program.

9. Building Blocks for Economic Development

The Town should investigate what it would cost and who should be responsible for maintaining and updating the Town of Hooksett's *Building Blocks for Economic Development* prepared by the SNHPC for the Town of Hooksett. Prepared along with the Building Blocks is a Business List and Business Database and Map for the Town of Hooksett (dated December 1, 2008); and an Atlas of Commercial/Industrial and Mixed-Use Zoned Land in Hooksett (dated May 2009). It is important to establish and maintain a business list to assist with business retention and outreach.

10. Brownfield Assessment and Revitalization Program

The Town of Hooksett continues to participate on the SNHPC's Brownfield's Advisory Committee. The Town and the EDAC may want to set up a meeting with the SNHPC and the Capital Regional Development Council (CRDC) to review the SNHPC's existing region-wide brownfields community-wide assessment and revitalization program, and CRDC's revolving loan fund for brownfields clean up. This consultation could include identifying eligible brownfields sites within the community; contacting property owners and local developers/real estate professionals in seeking interest in the program; and pursuing the nomination of sites and as well as the award of funding which can help finance necessary environmental assessment work. Often all that is necessary to facilitate the re-use/redevelopment of contaminated sites is to work with the property owner to obtain the available funding for this work.

Once a site or property is entered into the program, it stands a better chance of obtaining state support and funding for clean-up. Program participation and clean up can also help to remove liabilities and other obstacles often standing in the way of selling and/or redeveloping the site.

Funding for clean-up of brownfields sites has been available since 2012 through the CREDC's Revolving Loan Fund Grant from the EPA. These grant funds may be available to provide direct assistance to brownfields property owners in Hooksett. In addition, sub-grants may be available to

the Town of Hooksett to help facilitate brownfields clean-up of both municipal and privately owned sites.

11. Business Park Growth and Development

The Town of Hooksett and the EDAC continue to discuss the need for and efforts to support and promote industrial and commercial development and business growth and development within the community. The EDAC through its ongoing advocacy and Ambassador's Program could continue to focus its efforts as recommended in the EDAC Work Plan on commercial/industrial development and water/sewer improvements at Exits 9, 10 and 11. These kinds of development are where many new jobs could be created within the community.

12. Ambassador Program

The Town of Hooksett and the EDAC should continue to implement its successful Ambassador Program to improve communications between municipal government and the private sector and to continue to identify and address issues and needs affecting both the business community and the Town of Hooksett. This is a key strategy included in this plan and in the EDAC's Work Plan.

During the initial public focus meetings sponsored by the EDAC and the SNHPC that were held with area business leaders, the need for a single contact person and more business friendly regulations, processes and procedures was identified as an important economic development issue. While efforts have been put into place to improve communications and the land development process, it was suggested that the Town of Hooksett and the Hooksett Planning Board consider developing a Land Development Guidebook which could help facilitate and expedite both planning and building review functions in the town.

13. Intern and/or Professional Economic Development Practitioner

There is no better or more important time to have on staff, or as a contractual resource, an intern or professional economic development practitioner who can help implement and shepherd economic development projects and initiatives in Hooksett. This resource person would need to work directly in cooperation with the Town Administrator, Town Council, and the EDAC. This has been and continues to be a key recommendation of the EDAC and of this plan.

14. Business Incubation

The results and findings of the *Community Introduction to Business Incubation: Model Recommendations* Study prepared as part of the REDP found that relatively "low cost" internet-based incubator service concepts would be feasible to explore and develop within the region, including the Town of Hooksett. Specifically, the study recommended that a new and innovative Creative Business Accelerator (CBA) program be developed within the SNHPC Region in cooperation with the Center for Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation (CESI) located at the Southern New Hampshire University campus in Hooksett.

This CBA would provide business incubator services to new and emerging businesses involved in IT and software development with a specific focus on video gaming media. At present no such program exists within the SNHPC region or the State of New Hampshire. The Town of Hooksett and EDAC may want to discuss and consider participating in this program, if it is launched in the near future.

15. NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) and TIP

The Town of Hooksett, the EDAC, and the Hooksett Planning Board should continue to participate in the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and the SNHPC Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP involves identifying priorities and establishing funding for transportation improvements within the state. These projects include planning and engineering studies, and actual project development and implementation.

In addition to the TIP, the Town of Hooksett, the EDAC, and the Planning Board may want to seek available transportation funding through the Transportation Enhancement (TE) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) programs. The TE Program is a tool to help develop “livable communities” by selecting projects that preserve the historic culture of the transportation system and/or enhance the operation of the system for its users. The CMAQ Program specifically provides assistance for air quality improvement and congestion mitigation projects in urbanized areas which have been identified as nonattainment in terms of not meeting national air quality standards. The Town of Hooksett is currently located within the Southern New Hampshire nonattainment area.

Some of the following activities/transportation improvements that are eligible for TE and CMAQ funding include:

- Facilities, and safety and educational activities for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
- Scenic or historic highway programs (including the provision of tourist and welcome center facilities)
- Landscaping and other scenic beautification
- Historic preservation and rehabilitation/operation of historic buildings, structures, or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals)
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion for use as bicycle paths and pedestrian facilities)
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity
- Establishment of transportation museums.

16. Public and Private Economic Growth Partnerships

The Town of Hooksett and the EDAC could also discuss working with area businesses to forge public and private partnerships in economic growth and expansion. This can be accomplished through both the CDBG programs mentioned as part of Strategy #8 as well as a number of small

business loan programs such as the Tax Credit Program and the Small Business Administration SBA 504 Loans.

Market Tax Credits, which were originally created to attract capital to historically underserved projects and communities, are another potential source of growth. These credits provide an incentive to debt and equity investors in the form of a 39 percent federal income tax credit over a seven-year period for investing capital into qualified projects in eligible targeted areas. While the Town of Hooksett currently does not have any eligible targeted areas for New Market Tax Credits (according to the 2000 census), the Town Planner may want to carefully review the results of the 2020 Census to see if there are any census tracts or neighborhoods in Hooksett that might qualify.

EDAC may also want to explore the need for improvements to and/or expanding some of the older industrial parks or creating new industrial parks within the community through public/private partnerships and the use of Industrial Revenue Bonds and other similar financing tools. In addition, the Town of Hooksett may want to continue to propose the use of the Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) as a financing tool to fund necessary public improvements and encourage economic growth and development. The use of TIFs such as the one established at Exit 11 can be a key resource in the town's economic development war chest.

17. Workforce Development Job Training Programs

The Town of Hooksett and the EDAC should consider investigating grant funding to establish workforce development job training programs in Hooksett. This can be accomplished by working with applicable local, state and federal agencies, local businesses, and existing educational institutions such as Southern New Hampshire University. This program provides companies matching grants in an 18-month period to train newly-hired employees to foster business growth and competitiveness. The program also allows for skills upgrade training of current workers who need retraining to ensure ongoing employment. Under the program, companies can apply to receive a grant that pays up to 50 percent of the cost of a training program for their employees. All New Hampshire companies that regularly pay into the state's Unemployment Compensation Fund, including nonprofits, are eligible for these grants.

18. Financing for Public Improvements

In the future, the Town of Hooksett, the EDAC, and the Hooksett Planning Board may want to discuss the possibility of establishing a revolving loan fund or matching grant program as well as other incentives to offer financing assistance to businesses including façade improvements to promote economic development and fund necessary public improvements.

In addition, there are a number of economic development assistance programs for communities offered through the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, the U.S. Small Business Administration's Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUB), and the USDA Rural Development Administration's loans, grants and technical assistance programs. The Town of Hooksett and the EDAC may want to explore the viability and benefit of these programs within Hooksett.

Revolving loan and façade grant programs are typically financed through public funds as either matching grants and/or low interest loans provided to eligible businesses located within target areas to upgrade store fronts and make façade improvements. The City of Manchester administers a Neighborhood Façade Improvement Program which provides matching grants of up to \$5,000 per building or \$3,500 per retail space for businesses in targeted neighborhoods for visible exterior improvements (see City of Manchester’s economic development façade improvement website at: <http://www.yourmanchesternh.com/grow-your-business/incentives.aspx>).

The Manchester Development Corporation (MDC), a non-profit corporation closely affiliated with the City of Manchester also has in place a revolving loan fund which through approval of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen can make loans to promote economic development of the city, based upon its investment guidelines. While it may not be possible for the MDC to expand into Hooksett, the Town of Hooksett can work jointly with the CRDC’s revolving loan fund to essentially accomplish the same goals.

HUD’s Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program also provides a source of federal funding primarily for non-entitlement communities for financing various economic development and housing rehabilitation projects. Eligible projects can include: acquisition of real property, rehabilitation of publicly owned real property, housing rehabilitation eligible under CDBG, construction, reconstruction, or installation of public facilities (including street, sidewalk, and other site improvements), payment of interest on guaranteed loan and issuance costs of public offerings, debt service reserves for the benefit of low-to moderate-income persons, or to aid in the prevention of slums. To apply for such funds, the Town of Hooksett would need to identify a specific project and work directly with the CDFA in the submission of an application.

The SBA has established a fairly new Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUB) empowerment contracting program which provides federal contracting opportunities for qualified small businesses located in distressed areas. The City of Manchester has recently established this program within eligible parts of the city. The SBA utilizes a number of criteria to establish eligible areas for HUB zones.

Currently there are no areas or census tracts in the Town of Hooksett that qualify. However, again with the 2020 Census, the Town of Hooksett may want to explore if any changes have occurred within a census tract or area in Hooksett that might qualify.

In addition, the USDA Rural Development offers a number of loans, grants and technical assistance to eligible communities according to various income limits. Currently, the Town of Hooksett’s median income of \$61,491 exceeds the USDA’s minimum income limits for two such programs -- the Community Facility Direct Loans and the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program. As noted earlier with the release of the 2020 Census, there may be areas identified within Hooksett which may qualify for these funds in the future.

19. Community Technical Assistance Program

The Town of Hooksett, the EDAC, and the Hooksett Planning Board may also want look for opportunities similar to NH DOT and SNHPC’s Community Technical Assistance Program, if such programs are available in the future. The CTAP was a five year initiative established to provide

planning services to 26 municipalities projected to be impacted by future growth and development as a result of the widening of I-93.

During the CTAP program Town of Hooksett was successful in obtaining grant funds – both discretionary, target and collaborative - to fund several projects, including the village zoning initiative; workforce housing; Rt. 3A corridor study, and the regional economic development plan. In addition to these projects, the Town of Hooksett obtained services provided through the SNHPC to update the town's open space plan, create a build out study, initiate a farmer's market and began work to provide opportunities for workforce housing. Future CTAP programs and services could directly benefit economic development and Hooksett's economy. The Hooksett Town Planner and Town Administrator should carefully monitor the status of the CTAP in the future.

8. Conservation and Cultural Resources

8.1 Conservation Lands and Environmental Protections

As in the 19th Century when development in this country followed the spines of our growing network of railroads, so in the 20th Century economic and residential growth followed the skeletons of our highway systems.

Construction of the interstate highway system and related limited-access highways in the second half of the 20th Century further concentrated development along corridors on either side of those highways.

In central New Hampshire, this has meant that development has proceeded from our southern boundary with Massachusetts northward along corridors on either side of Interstate 93 and the Everett Turnpike to Manchester. Those two major highways come to a confluence with New Hampshire Route 101 in Hooksett, the apex of the so-called golden triangle in south central New Hampshire.

As a result of these trends, a significant amount of open space has been lost in Hooksett through both residential and commercial development since the last master plan. Virtually all existing road and river frontage is already developed.

Despite this recent surge in development, Hooksett still has a considerable amount of undeveloped open space. Much of it is intact, contiguous, and adjacent to large bodies of protected publicly and privately owned land.

Running north to south and practically dividing the town in half, the Merrimack River remains a vital and valuable natural resource to the town. Due to the Amoskeag Dam, the Hooksett Dam and the Garvin Falls Dam, the entire stretch of River in Hooksett is navigable and is available for both active and passive recreational uses, including swimming, boating, canoeing, and rowing.

Open Space

One of the major goals of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire's Forests in the next decade is to preserve existing, unfragmented open space. The Objective is to retain and

enlarge substantial masses of open space that have not been developed, either linearly or in clusters. Under its program of New Hampshire Everlasting, the Forest Society recommends that New Hampshire towns and cities, where possible, target as a goal 25% of their total land area as open space.

An inventory of current land use in Hooksett indicates that of the 23,232 acres comprising the town, 2,964 acres, or approximately 12 percent are currently protected. Almost all of this acreage is conserved through fee simple ownership of the land. In addition, as of 2020, another 4,381 acres, or 18 percent of the town's landmass, was held in Current Use. Thus, at a minimum, over 30% of Hooksett's land mass remains open and undeveloped. It should be noted that this figure does not include hundreds if not thousands of additional acres which remain undeveloped but which are not either in current use or expressly protected by public ownership. In addition, Current Use property does not guarantee permanent protection from development. Among the properties thus protected are a number of parcels on which the town of Hooksett has received conservation easements. These parcels, while not contiguous to each other, total several hundred acres.

Much of this open space is located in large, contiguous blocks of land. The largest area is located in the northeast quadrant of the town both north and south of New Hampshire Route 27 as well as east and west of the Chester Turnpike north of Route 27. Much of the existing open space in these areas is owned by two public entities. The State of New Hampshire owns large tracts in the extreme northeastern area as part of Bear Brook State Park. This land runs from the Allenstown border southerly and southwesterly to approximately 1.5 miles from Rowe's Corner. The other major block of contiguous, open space in this part of town is owned by the Manchester Water Works and exists for the purpose of protecting the watershed of Lake Massabesic, the primary drinking water supply for the City of Manchester. Water Works property runs from the southeastern edge of town to Route 27 and continues north of Route 27 in several contiguous but somewhat fragmented parcels which abut the boundary of Bear Brook State Park. In addition to these tracts of publicly owned land, an additional tract of public land is owned by the Town of Hooksett immediately west of and adjacent to the Manchester Water Works south of Route 27. Dividing these parcels north to south is Dube's Pond and the land surrounding the pond to the east, north, and west. The Pond perimeter itself is subject to a conservation easement to a width of 30 feet around the entire pond.

The Water Works property north of Route 27 provides protection of Clay Pond, which is a tributary of Dube's Pond and, ultimately, Lake Massabesic.

In addition to this publicly-owned land, there are substantial tracts of privately owned land in the extreme northeast area of Hooksett which, when combined with the State and Water Works land, constitutes approximately 6 square miles of consolidated, unfragmented, and undeveloped land.

To the immediate west of these protected parcels north of Route 27 are a number of additional parcels of contiguous, consolidated open space owned by a single taxpayer, Manchester Sand and Gravel. All of these parcels in the northeast quadrant of Hooksett combined represent more than 9 square miles of contiguous, unfragmented, consolidated open space. Furthermore, this land mass is merely the southwesterly tip of Bear Brook State Park which, in itself, contains over 10,000 acres of undeveloped, open space.

Finally, and equally significantly, this area of Hooksett would represent the westerly most extension of a current public-private partnership to establish probably the largest, contiguous unfragmented block of open space in southern New Hampshire extending from Pawtuckaway State Park in Nottingham through Bear Brook State Park into Hooksett. This project, known as the Bear-Paw Regional Greenways, has already added more than 1,300 acres in the targeted area between the two state parks to preserve open space.

The second large area of contiguous open space in Hooksett is in the northwest quadrant of the town generally bounded by Pine Street on the north, Interstate 93 on the east, and Hackett Hill and South Bow Roads on the south. This open space commends itself for consideration for future preservation because it abuts in part 761 acres of consolidated open space known as Nottingcook Forest, which was conserved by the town of Bow through a purchase in 1999 for 1.9 million dollars. Together, these spaces also form a significant portion of the Source Protection Area for the Hooksett Village Water Precinct's water supply wells, a critical piece of the Town's infrastructure.

The remaining two areas of the last essentially consolidated open space also exist west of I-93. The first one is located south of South Bow Road and west of Hackett Hill Road and north of Old Goffstown Road. This area includes town-owned Quimby Mountain, land which abuts the highest elevation in the Town of Hooksett.

The remaining significant parcel of consolidated, undeveloped land in Hooksett is an island within the bounds of Hackett Hill Road and Cross Road. As with the other tracts of consolidated open space in town, this land is currently owned by a combination of private property owners and the State of New Hampshire.

Merrimack River

As a result of environmental protection laws and the Merrimack River cleaning itself up over the last 3 decades, virtually all of the land bordering the river has been developed. The only remaining tracts of any significant size that have not yet been developed, or are not currently being used for other uses, are several tracts of land north of the Hooksett Dam on the easterly side of the river extending from the Hooksett District Court to the Allenstown border, and in the southerly area of town. The southerly land however is owned for the most part by Manchester Sand & Gravel and is slated for eventual development. Only small tracts of undeveloped land along the westerly side of the river remain in the extreme southerly end of town.

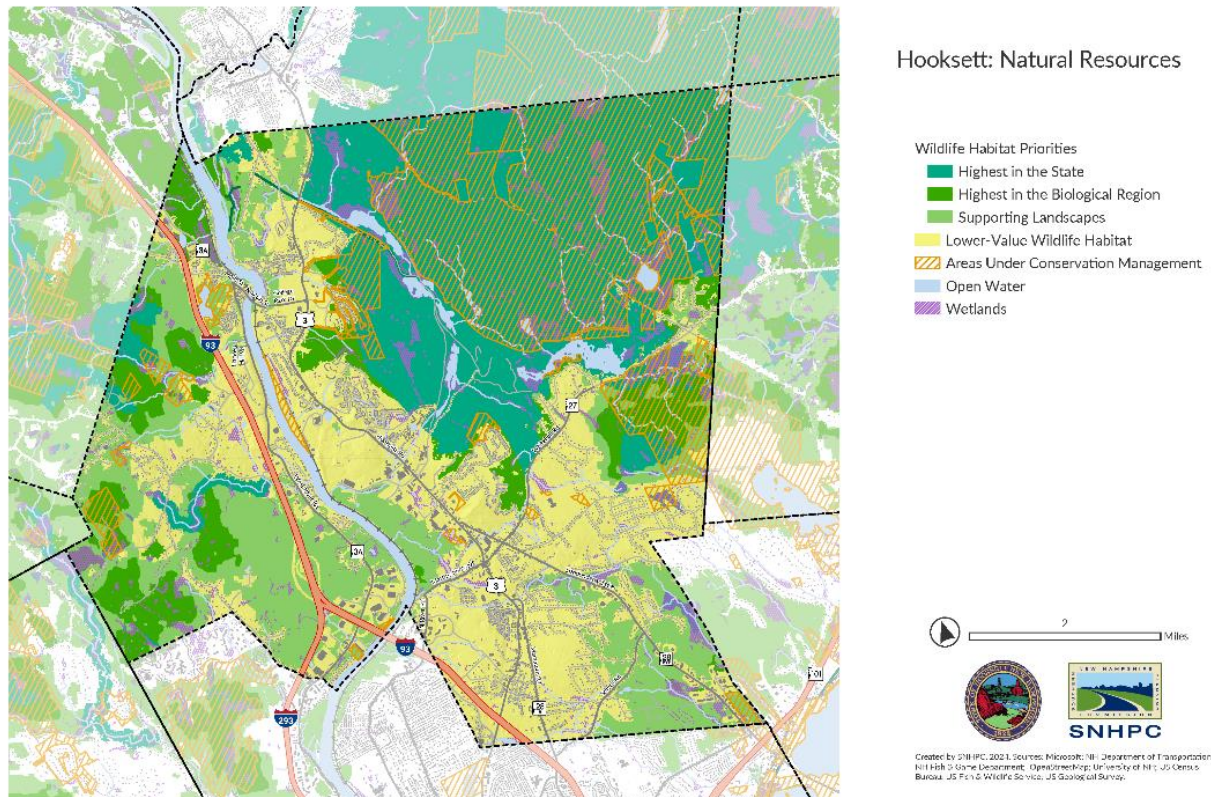
Unique Natural Features

Hooksett continues to have substantial bodies of unfragmented, open space, and is fortunate to have several rare, endangered or threatened natural communities and plant and animal species within the Town limits. Also, through NH's Regional Environmental Planning Program, Hooksett identified its 21 Prime Wetlands as a priority for natural resource protection. Nevertheless, three natural features in particular set themselves apart for special attention.

The first is the Pinnacle, a rock outcropping with an elevation of 450 in the Village area.

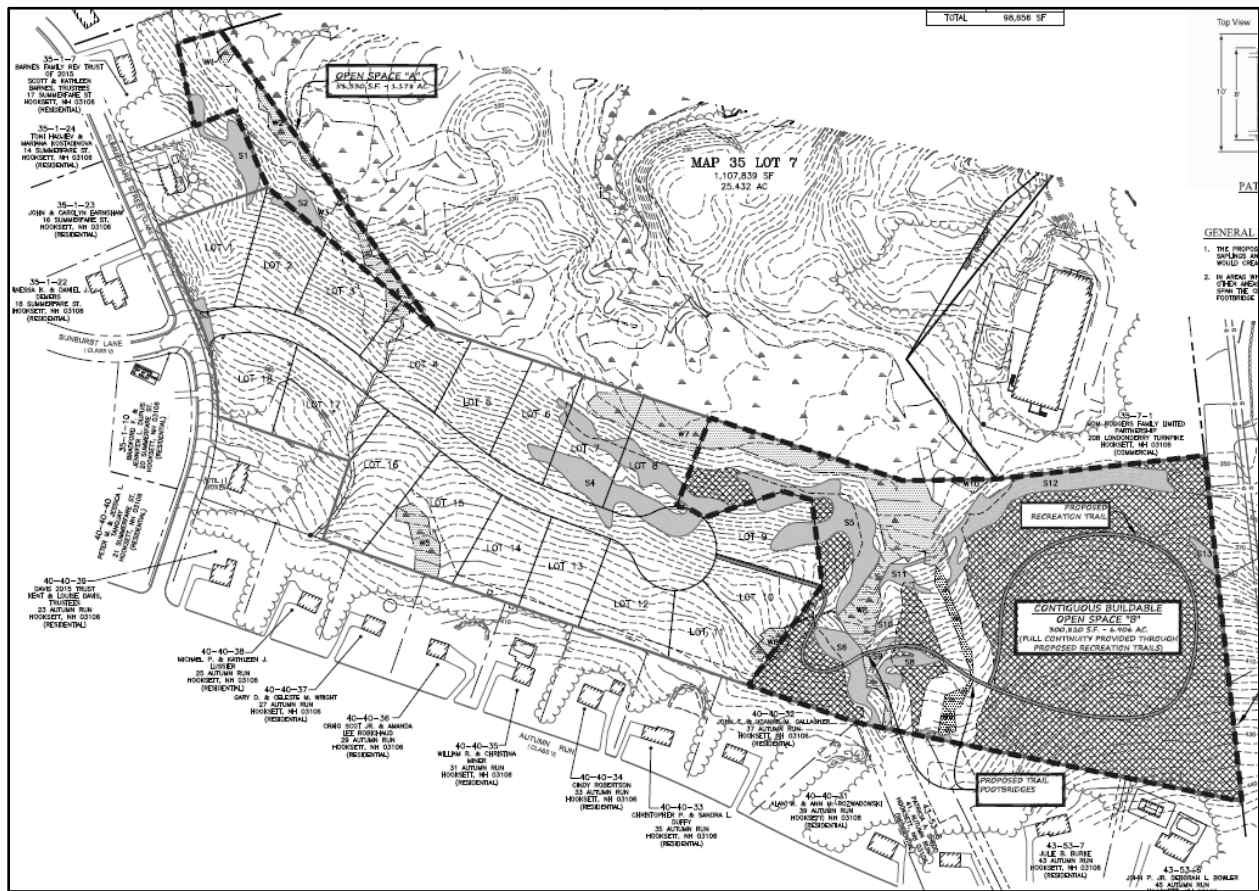
The second prominent natural feature in town is Quimby Mountain, the highest elevation in Hooksett at an elevation of 902 feet; which is the peak of Hackett Hill on the extreme western boundary of the town adjacent to Dunbarton town boundary.

The third prominent natural feature is the Community's prime wetlands. The Town's twenty-one Prime Wetlands are protected via a Wetlands Conservation Overlay District (in the Hooksett Zoning Ordinance). As of this writing a majority of the Prime Wetlands are inaccessible to the Town's residents.



Natural Resource Inventory & Prioritization of Current Use Lands

In the fall of 2003, students from the Natural Resource Department at the University of New Hampshire completed a project that identified priority lands for conservation efforts. Areas containing forests, wetlands, surface and groundwater, and wildlife were reviewed. A series of resources maps and tables were included in this study effort. This document will assist the community in focusing limited conservation funds to high priority lands. This report is considered an addendum to the Conservation and Cultural Resources Chapter of the Master Plan.



Autumn Frost Subdivision – an example of a conservation subdivision with open space lots

The Town of Hooksett and its citizens must decide how and to what extent they wish to preserve existing natural resources so that they will be available not only to this generation but to future generations. To assist in this discussion, there are a number of specific projects which have been identified within the town which would promote the preservation of one or more of our remaining natural resources. These are listed below in no particular order or priority.

A. Preserve and/or expand undeveloped open space in the northeast quadrant.

As stated above, Hooksett continues to have an abundance of existing, contiguous open spaces, particularly in the northeast and westerly parts of the town. However, that open space has been increasingly lost to development.

There is a vast track of consolidated, undeveloped, mostly unfragmented open space in the northeast quadrant of Hooksett measuring approximately 6.4 square miles in size. This area is divided almost equally among parcels already protected and conserved under ownership of the State of New Hampshire (Bear Brook State Park and the Manchester Water Works), and parcels currently held in private hands. One important potential project that the people of Hooksett should consider is preserving this mostly unfragmented open space in as much of its current shape and size as is desirable.

As noted above, preserving this open space would substantially enlarge this unfragmented,

consolidated area into a much larger area. If the Bear-Paw Initiative were successful, it would be part of an unbroken, undeveloped block of open space extending from Pawtuckaway State Park in the east, west to Bear Brook State Park, and then south toward Massabesic Lake. As such, it would undoubtedly be the largest such tract in southeastern New Hampshire and would provide a tremendous resource for continuing natural habitat, active and passive recreational uses, and even timber harvesting if that were determined to be appropriate. This project commends itself simply because of the sheer size and diversity of natural features, which would be protected and encompassed within its borders.

B. Retain, expand, and/or preserve open space in the northwest quadrant.

The second block of unfragmented, undeveloped property in Hooksett which merits consideration is the block of undeveloped woodland in the northwest quadrant of the town west of I-93, north of Hackett Hill and South Bow Roads, and south of Pine Street. Because this land is contiguous to a tract of 761 acres across the border in Bow which was acquired by that town and preserved in its natural state in 1998, preservation of this existing undeveloped land would create a contiguous block of natural woodland of more than 1200 acres.



Dube's Pond during spring

C. Preserve and/or enlarge the Pinnacle.

The rocky promontory rising over the Village known as the Pinnacle is currently in public hands. It abuts the Pinnacle Pond, which is a publicly owned body of water to the west, and the pond, in turn, is connected to an area of approximately 40 acres southwards, which remains in its natural state. This area also contains the four wells which provide drinking water and fire protection for the Village Water Precinct system.

The Town should continue to preserve the Pinnacle in its current, natural state and ensure its continued availability to future generations for hiking and viewing. The Town and the Village Water Precinct may also wish to consider consolidating the Pinnacle with the pond and the contiguous southerly tract into a single, larger recreational parcel serving the village area of Hooksett. The Pond and surrounding lands would benefit from a recreational use policy developed cooperatively by the Town and the Precinct, with a primary goal being the protection of the pond and the underlying aquifer.

D. Quimby Mountain

Quimby Mountain is the height of Hackett Hill in the southwestern area of Hooksett north of Old Goffstown Road and south of South Bow Road. The tract, which is a part of this promontory, is owned by the Town. Strong consideration should be given to preserving this tract for both passive and active recreational uses in the future as well as possibly expanding or retaining and preserving current natural forested areas around the Quimby Mountain tract to expand this area into a much larger area available for multiple public uses.

E. Expand Merrimack River Access

The popularity of Lambert Park and Riverside Park just below the Hooksett Dam in the Village area during the summer months is testimony to the importance of the Merrimack River as a valuable natural resource to the Town of Hooksett. The popularity of these Parks and the boat ramp indicate that additional river access should be obtained for general and diverse public use. In that regard, the town should consider access on the Merrimack River both in the stretch of river that runs through most of Hooksett above the Amoskeag Dam as well as that part of the river flowing through Hooksett above the Hooksett Dam.

In the Amoskeag Dam section, serious consideration should be given to obtaining or providing additional access to the river in the southern part of town. This would most readily be accomplished on the western side of the river because of the railroad tracks. Access here should be for multiple uses including both boating and swimming. One parcel of land immediately north of Goonan Road is already publicly owned by the NH Fish & Game and could be used for one or more of the aforementioned purposes. An additional tract of land bordering on the river is located just north of the public property and just immediately south of the 1-93 bridges across the river. This includes a very flat area, which could be inexpensively developed for either recreational or parking uses, and would provide access to the river through a very gradual descent as the riverbank in this area is only a few feet above water level. In addition, serious thought should be given to gaining access and preserving river frontage for public use above the Hooksett Dam. The entire extent of the Merrimack River frontage between the Hooksett District Court and the Allentown town line is undeveloped. Some of this frontage would provide an ideal location for a multifunctional recreational area very much like the riverside park in Pembroke several miles upstream. This stretch of the river north of the Hooksett Dam is much less congested and much less intensively used than the stretch south of the Hooksett Dam. As such, this area would provide a particularly appropriate location for recreational uses such as swimming, canoeing and rowing. It should be noted that the Amoskeag Rowing Club already has a ramp just north of the Hooksett District Court, which it uses for rowing during the summer months.

F. Preserve and Provide Limited Access to Prime Wetlands

The Town's Prime Wetlands are afforded a higher level of protection via the Town's wetland overlay district and State wetland rules; however, a concerted effort has not been made to permanently protect or provide limited access to these biologically diverse resources. Protection of Prime Wetlands through conservation easements or other land protection measures can serve to protect the water quality, water quantity, ecological integrity, and provide access for passive recreational opportunities.

G. Preserve and Provide access to the lower section of Browns Brook

The lower section of the Brown's Brook watershed is mainly undevelopable, but also inaccessible to the general public. However, certain tracts of shoreland are developable and threaten this unique, undisturbed, ecologically active waterbody. Due to its location, this corridor provides an opportunity to act as a passive recreation connector. There is potential to link this property with the potential Head's Pond recreation areas, as well as the Merrimack River frontage north of the Hooksett Dam.

H. NPDES – MS4 – Compliance

In 2003, the federal government required operators of certain small storm sewer systems (MSs) to obtain a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. This permit is required because their stormwater discharges were considered “point sources” of pollution. The Town of Hooksett falls into the small MS4 category. All operators of MS4s must design a storm water management program to satisfy applicable Clean Water Act (CWA) water quality requirements and technology standards. The program must include the development and implementation of best management practices (BMPs) and measurable goals for the following six minimum control measures, including evaluation and reporting efforts:

Public Education and Outreach on Stormwater Impacts

Public Participation/Involvement

Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination

Construction/Erosion and Sediment Control

Post-Construction Stormwater Management

Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping

Each of the above-listed minimum control measures has measurable goals that range from updating and revising regulations, developing new policies and educating the public, to mapping the location of the Town’s stormwater system outfalls.

The Town of Hooksett was issued its most recent MS4 permit in 2019. For each year of the five-year permit, the Town files an annual report to US EPA, Region 1, outlining how the Town is complying with the permit and the minimum control measures. In 2022, the EPA issued a new Construction General Permit which requires the operator of the permit, in this case the Town of Hooksett, to ensure there are ordinances or other regulatory mechanisms in place to ensure sediment is not reaching the Town’s stormwater system from construction sites. In 2023, the Town implemented a post-construction stormwater management standard.



The Pinnacle

I. Continue to map and identify land presently held in current use

Each parcel of land presently held in current use has been identified by location and owner and mapped accordingly. This information should be updated annually. The Town should strongly consider contacting the present landowners in an effort to either acquire the land outright or, more likely, propose that conservation easements be granted to the Town to protect the property from future development. Conservation easements would provide the town with open, available land and the property owner with favorable tax consequences, while keeping the property on the Town's tax rolls.

J. Identify specific wildlife habitat

Numerous and various types of wildlife live and have been identified in Hooksett including beaver, turkey, fox, bear and moose. It is crucial to the survival of these and other animals that large tracts of undeveloped land are kept in their natural state and protected from development. The existence of this wildlife enriches the quality of life in Hooksett and helps to maintain what is left of its rural quality. It is suggested that wildlife habitats be identified within the Town. A natural resource inventory was completed in the fall of 2003 by UNH, which identified general habitat areas within the community.

K. Develop a comprehensive open space priorities plan

Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission completed a comprehensive open space priority plan. This plan was been adopted by the Planning Board in 2011 and should be periodically updated. The Planning Board should be encouraged to continue its current practice of aggregating open space from adjacent developments into single, larger contiguous tracts. Developers should be encouraged to prefer cluster developments over traditional subdivisions which consume large tracts of open land. They should also be encouraged to incorporate walking and bike paths into new development so that residents are able to more easily access the open space. Finally, efforts should be made to obtain conservation easements or similar protective mechanisms from landowners of large undeveloped parcels of land.

L. Alternative funding sources should be considered

Eversource is currently seeking the relicensing of the Hooksett hydropower facility. As part of the relicensing process, issues such as recreation, river access, and land protection priorities are assessed and often improved as a condition of the Federal Energy Resource Council (FERC) license. This may be a means of protecting the two prime wetlands immediately upstream of the dam, as well as protecting the shore land northeast of the dam. If land or access were improved as part of the relicensing, there would be no monetary cost to the Town. The Conservation Commission has requested that Eversource review the opportunities for acquiring additional open space.

A second means of protecting large parcels of undeveloped land at virtually no cost to the Town is to identify those parcels held in current use and approach each landowner with the prospect of him/her granting to the Town a conservation easement across the land. The benefit of such an easement to the landowner lies in the tax consequences.

A third option would be a Capital Improvement Plan line item or annual warrant article in the town budget devoted exclusively to acquiring conservation easements and/or other means of protecting and preserving undeveloped land. An annual CIP budget line item or warrant article would enable the Town to assemble a significant amount of funds over time without an impact upon the local tax rate in any given year.

Another potential funding source of revenue is the use of impact fees. While impact fees cannot be used to purchase open space, if the impact fee ordinance can be written so that the developer can donate land instead of paying cash, when funding is difficult to coordinate and raise, this would be a useful option.

M. Develop a Municipal Open Space Trail System Plan

This plan would serve to link the existing formal and informal trail networks through the Town, as well as propose new trail and recreational opportunities. This plan would complement and enhance an Open Space Priorities Plan, as it would develop means to ensure connectivity, access, and passive recreational use of the properties identified in the Open Space study.

More importantly, the Towns of Pembroke and Bow have each already developed a Municipal Open Space Trail System Plan. This creates the potential for a multi-town trail system, which would only increase the value, access, appropriate, and appreciation of Hooksett's resources.

N. Reactivate the Wellhead Protection Program

In 2007, the Town Council, in conjunction with the Planning Board and Conservation Commission, endorsed and adopted a comprehensive Wellhead Protection Program with the intent of implementing its recommendations. While some of the recommendations were implemented soon thereafter, the program has been largely inactive in recent years. The Wellhead Protection Program is critical in protecting existing and future drinking water sources.

Key recommendations of the program include but are not limited to:

- Protection of Brickyard Brook and its watershed.
- Development of an emergency response/spill containment and mitigation plan for I-93 near Pinnacle Pond and the aquifer supplying the Hooksett Village Water Precinct.
- Secure and protect a new water source east of the river for the Village Water Precinct, most likely along the river or within the conservation lands associated with Carriage Hill, University Heights and Head's Pond developments.
- Coordination of a restoration plan for Pike Industries land once the quarry is depleted to protect water resources.
- Establishment of recreational use limits for Pinnacle Pond and surrounding public lands.
- Update of the Town's Groundwater Resource Conservation District Regulations and mapping.
- Land conservation initiatives in sensitive water resource areas.

Vacant land within the Groundwater Resource Conservation District tends to be either already developed, or highly developable. With every year that passes, new construction and future development further restrict the potential to institute land conservation and protection initiatives that are designed to protect local aquifers and/or provide for critical sources of public water supply.

It is recommended the Town, in partnership with the Hooksett Village Water Precinct, reactivate the Wellhead Protection Program through the formation of a new steering committee. Town boards and resources should be dedicated to supporting wellhead protection actions being undertaken by the Precinct. The Precinct's wells are the only community water source owned and controlled by a Town agency and the wells provide drinking water and fire protection to a significant portion of Hooksett.

8.2 Preserving the Historic Built Environment

A. Arah W. Prescott Historical Library

Listed to the NH State Register of Historic Places, 2008. For detailed information and history, see the State's Inventory form.

The Arah W. Prescott Historical Library (originally named the Arah W. Prescott Library) is owned by the town and since 1975 has been the home of the Hooksett Historical Society, a private organization. Located on Main Street next to the old Town Hall, it was built in 1909 by the town of Hooksett with a generous donation by local resident Arah Prescott. It



Photo by Kathleen Northrup

served as the town's library until 1973 when the library was moved to larger quarters on Route 3.

In 1975 the passage of a warrant article allowed the Hooksett Historical Society permanent use of the building to accommodate various memorabilia of Hooksett interest. It was renamed the Arah W. Prescott Historical Library at that time.

The building is a single room with no restroom or suitable storage space. It is heated by a gas furnace in the basement. It has an interior space of approximately 660 square feet (approx. 22' x 30') and houses the Historical Society's collection of artifacts. The Historical Society is responsible for the collection; maintenance of the building remains the responsibility of the town.

Accessibility concerns mentioned in the 2004 Master Plan were addressed in 2013 when a ramp and new barrier-free rear entrance were installed, providing access to both the library and the old town hall. The design of the back door and ramp was reviewed by the NH Division of Historical Resources and determined to address accessibility concerns without diminishing the historical significance of the building's architectural design. The new back door was constructed utilizing the space previously occupied by a window to minimize damage to the building.

Parking is inconvenient for some due to steep slopes. The location of handicap parking vis-a-vis the building entrance makes getting to the building difficult for some users.

This building is best suited to continue as a small museum featuring the best of the town's historical collections. Access to restroom facilities will be resolved when the old Town Hall renovations are complete. Shared access when needed is recommended.

If the Society is to meet its obligation of care and preservation of the collection, additional storage

is necessary to better display items and provide access to the public. Donated artifacts are still being accepted, but space is very limited. Secure display space off the premises has been utilized to help alleviate the crowded conditions.

Any new storage should be climate controlled in order to protect and preserve sensitive documents, antiques, and artifacts. Over the years, many current and former residents have entrusted family, organizational, and business items to the Society. These are important pieces of the town's history, and it is to everyone's benefit to ensure the Society can continue accepting these items, keeping them safe, and making them accessible.

B. Head School and Head Cemetery

Listed to the NH State Register of Historic Places, 2007. For detailed information and history prior to the 2009 reversion to a school, see the State's Inventory form.

The Head School is a town-owned building located at 16 Pleasant Street at the southeast corner of the Head Cemetery property.

The site consists of two buildings:

- The main schoolhouse, built in 1839, is a 24' x 28' brick building with a granite foundation and asphalt-shingled roof. It has electrical service, but no water, heat, or bathroom facilities. There is attic space, access to which is gained through an entry in the ceiling of an anteroom in the southeast corner of the building, but it is not used.
- The 10' x 14 ½' adjoining wood-framed shed/storage building (date of construction unknown) contains two "two-hole outhouse" areas and room for overhead storage. The exterior is clapboard; the roofing material is similar to that on the schoolhouse.



A schoolhouse was first built on the site in 1805 by the town of Chester. Hooksett built the present brick structure in 1839 at a cost of \$500. It served as the District 1 schoolhouse until it was closed in 1912 for lack of pupils. The town voted to raise the sum of money (\$300) necessary to remodel No. 1 schoolhouse as a chapel in 1922. Not much has been found about its use until 1965 when a renovation project was undertaken by the Hooksett Women's Club. On May 15, 1966, the dedication of the building as a nondenominational chapel was held. A review of the guest book indicates that from 1966 to 1984 visitors stopped by the chapel frequently; the chapel was then closed (locked) to public access.

In early 2004, the Hooksett Heritage Commission, with the approval of the town council, adopted the rehabilitation of Head Chapel as a project. The Commission completed the project in 2010,

returning the building to its original use as a school.

Interior work: The metal ceiling was restored, electrical units in the classroom removed, the plaster stabilized and skim coated, carpet removed, and wood flooring sanded and refinished. The interior was repainted. New student benches were built by a volunteer, and furnishings for the interior were collected by the Heritage Commission and Head School Society.

Exterior work: Clapboards on the privy were replaced; sill and foundation replaced; roof re-shingled on both buildings; replaced Plexiglass in storm windows with Lexan; constructed one new storm window for the window in the northwest corner which had been covered with plywood; replaced sill on that northwest window; and painted clapboard, windows, and trim areas.

The Head School Society, a group of retired Hooksett teachers, formed in 2009. They developed a living history program and since 2010 have been offering programs to local first and third graders as well as classes from neighboring communities. Thousands of students have visited since 2010. Classes and visits are generally scheduled in the fall and spring. The schoolmarms also offer programs for adults and other groups. They charge a nominal fee to cover expenses and expand their programming. The Society rents a port-a-potty for use when classes are scheduled.

The earliest documented graves in Head Cemetery date to 1800 when this area was part of Chester. Early Hooksett settlers and their descendants are interred as is Natt Head, New Hampshire Governor (1879-1881).

The buildings will continue to be used for living history and other programs to benefit the children and citizens of Hooksett.

C. Old Town Hall

Listed to the NH State Register of Historic Places, 2009. For detailed information and history prior to the building closing in 2008, see the State's Inventory form.

Hooksett's original Town Hall (1828-1961) and former Municipal Building (1961-2008) is located just west of the Merrimack River in the heart of the Village.

The facility is served by municipal sewer and water services. The building was closed in 2008 when town offices moved to the former Village School.

The Town Hall Preservation Committee was formed by a vote of the Town Council in June 2009. Its charge is to stabilize, preserve and maintain the building historically known as the Hooksett Town Hall located at 16 Main Street. Various configurations of the group have existed over the years. Minutes from their meetings are available on the town website.

After reviewing various sources of public input and deliberations of prior committees, a plan was developed by the current membership—the second floor in the main building will be removed, and both the main hall and the 1937 addition will be rehabilitated and made available for public use once again. Women's and men's rooms, a kitchen, storage, and a reception area are planned for the addition. Accessibility has been addressed with a new ramp and designated entrance door. Parking is inconvenient for some due to steep slopes and distance to the entrance.

The deconstruction work so far has been done by the Department of Public Works. Two major grants have been received for work in the main building—the first will restore the 1928 metal ceiling and the second will fund restoration of the four large windows in the main hall which were infilled during the 1961 conversion to town offices.

Funding thus far has come from grants, the building maintenance line, and fundraising activities. Further work will be prioritized and done in phases.



*Old Town Hall
Photo by Kathleen Northrup*

D. Lilac Crossing

Formerly Hooksett Village Bridge

Listed to State Register of Historic Places April 2008, Official Project of Save America's Treasures 2000, and eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. For detailed information and history, see the State's Inventory form and the NH Historic Property Documentation by Historic Documentation Company Inc, Portsmouth RI.



The bridge was built by the town in 1909 at a cost of \$26,000 to replace a wood-lattice truss bridge. Designed by John William Storrs, New Hampshire's only specialist in bridge design during the early 20th century, it is the only remaining three-span Pratt truss bridge in the State.

In the flood of 1936, the southern span collapsed into the river after being impacted by a wooden truss bridge washed downstream. The span was replaced in kind closely following the original drawings by Storrs. The bridge remained in use until bypassed in 1976 when the Memorial Bridge opened. The town council renamed it the Lilac Bridge in 1997 at the suggestion of Grace Pomeroy, then president of the Historical Society.

A routine State inspection in 2014 found critical deficiencies in the structure, and it was deemed unsafe. Restoration was determined economically impractical, and its future was the subject of many meetings with State and Federal officials. The Town Council voted to demolish the superstructure and replace it with a pedestrian bridge sympathetic to its surroundings. As part of that process the existing bridge was advertised for sale and a contract to preserve one span (southern span) coordinated with the removal and construction of a new pedestrian-utility bridge. As of April 2020, the bridge has been demolished and replaced with a pedestrian bridge, officially designated as Lilac Crossing. A commemorative plaque and artwork utilizing the original bridge's framing has been designed and was installed at Veteran's Park in 2021.

E. Robie's Country Store

Listed to National Register of Historic Places 2000, State Register of Historic Places 2002, Official Project of Save America's Treasures, designated historic site by the town council.

The site is privately owned by an IRS § 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Robie's is located at 9 Riverside Street along the Merrimack in the heart of the Village.

At the same site since settlement times, when it closed Robie's store was the oldest continuously operating business in Hooksett.

The original building had a dock facility and received merchandise by river barge until the advent of the railroad in 1842. The building burned in 1857, was rebuilt, burned again in 1906, and was again rebuilt. George A. Robie bought the store in 1887, and over the next 110 years it was passed down from father to son.



State and local candidates and presidential hopefuls in New Hampshire for the nation's first primary find the picturesque shop an ideal photo opportunity, perhaps as a way to be seen keeping in touch with "small-town America." Campaign posters, keepsakes and photographs of candidates are displayed on the walls of the store. Memorabilia, keepsakes, and historic artifacts from the late 1800s to the present decorate the museum-like interior. The store is an opportunity for a glimpse into the past of a small business in a rural New England town and provides a resource and research tool for our children.

The last family owner of the store was Lloyd Robie, the fourth generation to operate the store and post office. Lloyd and his wife Dorothy took over the business in March 1965. Hoping to preserve a building of such historical significance, as well as the character of the enterprise operated by the Robie family for 110 years, a group of local volunteers formed Robie's Country Store Historic Preservation Corp. when the store closed.

In 2000 the corporation purchased the property from the Robie family. It leases the space to operators who will continue the country-store tradition while abiding by lease terms and conditions designed to protect the structure and character of the store.

As the Town was incorporated in 1822, there are numerous other privately owned and maintained structures which may not be listed on any historic registry, but which nevertheless contribute to a meaningful sense of place and history for Hooksett's residents. A few examples of such structures include the Stone House on DW Highway and the Underhill House on Martins Ferry Road. The Town, in consult with the Heritage Commission, should create an inventory of these structures. The Town should subsequently develop a comprehensive approach to incentivizing the preservation of these buildings, as there are currently no statutory rules in place which permit a New Hampshire municipality to deny a demolition permit application.

8.3 The Village

The Hooksett Village is a unique place; it was the center, historically, of commercial and public activity in our community. It is no longer a commercial center; however, many aspects of public activity are still conducted in the Village—the Municipal Building is located there and likely will remain for some years. In addition, the Village is home to the Library, the Village Fire Station, and the Hooksett Village Water Precinct offices. The Village is still a place people come to conduct their public business; it is a place that should be preserved and enhanced.

In the fall of 2003, the Town and the Community Economic Development Corporation of Hooksett (CEDCOH)—a volunteer, non-profit entity—undertook a study of the Village, held two design workshops, or “charrettes”, and later produced a report entitled, *Hooksett Village Design Study*. This study is part of the Hooksett Master Plan by reference and is available at the Hooksett Public Library and the Community Development Department at the Municipal Building.

The purpose of the *Hooksett Village Design Study* was to develop a vision for the future of the Village—it is a conceptual study; it is a vision that may be implemented or may be changed as future events dictate. The *Design Study* outlines the means to achieve that vision. The results of this effort are incorporated herein to serve as a blueprint for public and private actions to improve Hooksett Village.

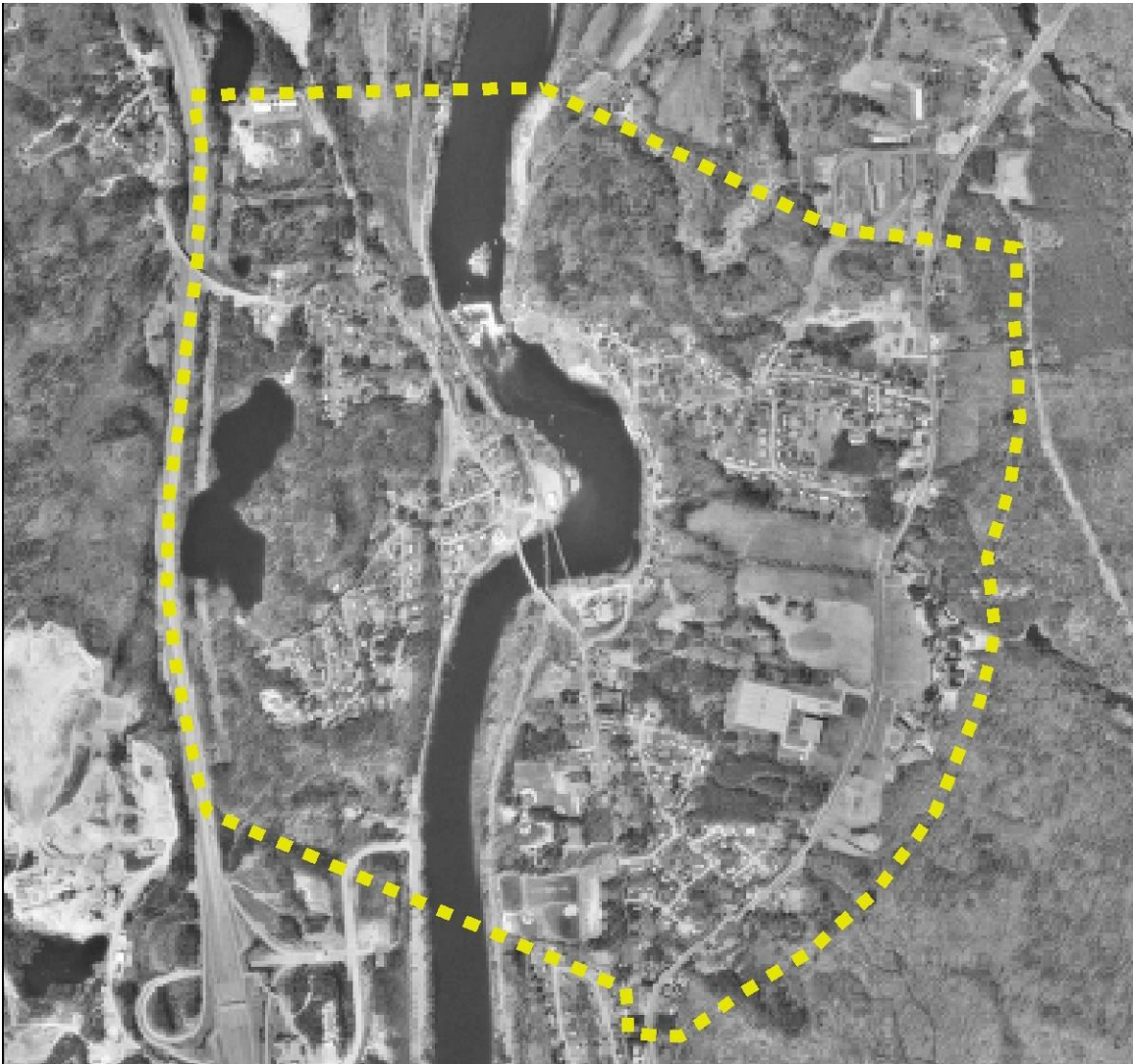
Hooksett Village can be the heartbeat or spiritual heart of the community, the place that people identify with when they think of Hooksett. The “Village” should have a well- defined sense of place – readily identified as Hooksett Village. Distinct boundaries to the Village and well-defined gateways should be hallmarks of the Village. The Village should present a positive image of Hooksett with well-maintained public and private property.

Hooksett Village can serve a variety of roles. The Village can be an attractive, enjoyable place to live, work, and visit. It can continue to be the center of community affairs. Key public and community facilities are located in the Village. The former Village School building, the current location of town hall, should continue to be an important location in the community. The Village can also be a residential center with livable, walkable residential neighborhoods. The Village can also provide convenient access to small, local shops and services so that residents can meet some of their day-to-day needs within the Village.

The Merrimack River and a restored Lilac Bridge should be the focal points for the Village. The scenic character of the river and its shorelines should be maintained while improved public access to the river could be provided. Open space and green areas along the river can be retained and enhanced.

Most of the Hooksett Village area has a pedestrian scale – things are close together—and it should remain so. Residents should be able to walk or bike to nearby gathering places. New development in and around the Village should continue this village scale and character and be designed to enhance the Village’s identity and sense of place. A mix of uses should be encouraged. Hooksett Village should also be pedestrian-friendly – with sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities to encourage people to walk, bike, and enjoy the village environment.

Hooksett Village Study Area



The livability of existing residential neighborhoods can be enhanced. Access to the river and community facilities should be upgraded. Traffic that uses neighborhood streets as a “short-cut” can be controlled. Commuter and through-truck traffic should be diverted from the village. New transportation patterns south of the Village can, in time, be part of this solution. Main Street and Merrimack Street can regain their role as local, village streets.

Important open spaces and green areas should be preserved within the Village as well as on its fringes. As new development occurs, a variety of additional protected open space can be created.

Hooksett Village can re-emerge as a community center in our town – it can evolve into a true New England village, but one that meets the needs of the 21st Century.

Future Land Use in the Hooksett Village

The Future Land Use Plan identifies, in broad terms, how the land within Hooksett Village should be used in the future. It can be thought of as a generalized zoning plan for the Village.

The five Village neighborhoods—Pinnacle, Pine, Rosedale, Bert, and Beauchesne—were built before the existing zoning was put in place; they were built according to an earlier set of requirements. The *Design Study* notes that the existing residential zoning in the Village has dimensional requirements (area, frontage, and setbacks) that are simply too large for the neighborhoods, and recommends that these requirements be reduced to bring the residential lots more into conformity with new zoning districts.

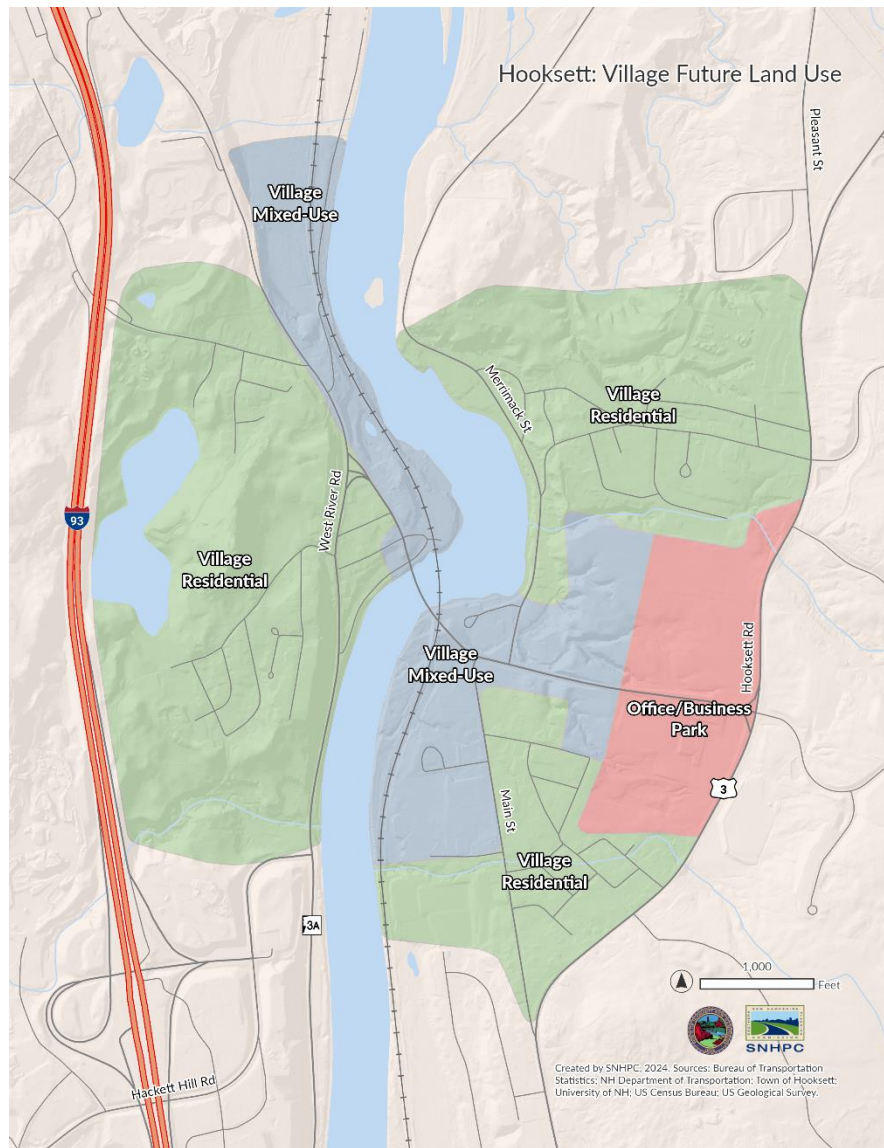
The Future Land Use Plan suggests that the Village be designated as three land use categories:

1. Village Residential District
2. Village Mixed Use District
3. Office/Business Park District

1. The Village Residential District

The Village Residential designation is intended to include the developed residential areas of the Village as well as areas that are suitable for future village scale/style residential development. New zoning standards to implement this designation should assure that Hooksett Village would have a pedestrian scale – that things will be close together so that residents can walk or bike. They should assure that new residential development in and around the Village will have a village scale and character and be designed to enhance the Village’s identity and sense of place as well as providing sidewalks, trails, and bike facilities to encourage people to walk and enjoy the village environment.

Future Land Use Plan – Hooksett Village



2. *The Village Mixed Use District*

The Village Mixed Use designation is intended to allow for the reuse or redevelopment of existing buildings in the Village. It also allows for the construction of new buildings in designated areas to expand the range of shopping and services available in the Village in a manner that is consistent with the desired character of the Village. While it is recognized that the owners of some developed property in the Village may not choose to take immediate advantage of the opportunities created by this designation, the objective is to allow the Village to evolve over time in the direction of the vision.



Lilac Crossing Pedestrian Bridge, 2019

3. The Office/Business Park District

This designation is intended to allow suburban style office park uses on property along Route 3 and College Park Drive. The proposed Office/Business Park designation is similar to the current Mixed Use District 1 zone with limitations on retail uses (size, mass) and provisions for some pedestrian facilities (pocket parks, etc.).

The vision for Hooksett Village is one wherein the Village re-emerges as the community center of the town—at least for the foreseeable future—and that it will evolve into a true New England village, but one that meets the needs of the 21st Century. Attaining this vision for the future of the Village will require that the community implement municipal policies that support this vision.

Hooksett Village has been the historic governmental center for the Town even though it is not located in the municipality's geographic center. The *Design Study* envisions that Hooksett Village will continue to be the community center and that key public facilities will continue to be located in the Village. The Planning Board agrees that, at least for the short term, the town offices will likely continue to be located in the Village; however continued growth may indicate that the municipal center can and should be located in the geographical center of town, for the convenience of all the citizens. The Village School should serve as the town offices for as long as is practical and it is hoped this use will be a catalyst for the improvement of the Village according to the vision of the *Design Study*.

Upkeep of the Public Realm

The Vision for Hooksett Village depicts a village that will be an attractive, enjoyable place to live, work, and visit. The Village should present a positive image of Hooksett with well-maintained public and private property. It should embody the “BSNP” concept (bright, shiny, neat, and pretty). The Town’s current stewardship of the public realm within the Village including town-owned buildings and grounds and streets falls short of this goal. The Town needs to make a commitment to the “BSNP” concept as it relates to “housekeeping” in Hooksett Village, and to make an extra effort to make the existing public infrastructure as attractive as possible.

The Study of Traffic Facilities and Improvements

For better or worse, the Main Street Bridge in Hooksett Village offers the only crossing of the Merrimack River between the northern edge of Manchester and Concord. As the region grows, the volume of traffic desiring to cross the river in Hooksett Village will increase. Since much of this traffic is “through traffic” that simply wants to get through the Village as quickly as possible, this growing traffic volume is a significant impediment to achieving the community’s vision for Hooksett Village.

Therefore, the policy of the Town should be to work with appropriate state agencies to improve traffic flow and safety in and through Hooksett Village in the short run. It should be noted that the Town expects to see approximately 1,000 new homes approved and constructed just east of the Village and east of Route 3, though it is uncertain when much of this development will take place. The morning trips south and the evening trips north threaten to overwhelm the Village and increase the flow of traffic south on Route 3. In addition, the Town should begin working with the state and the developer of property at Exit 11 to facilitate improvements to the intersection of Hackett Hill Road and Route 3A.

This section identifies a program of possible improvements that can be undertaken to improve Hooksett Village. Some of these improvements can be undertaken for little or no cost utilizing volunteers and community groups. Others will involve a significant investment of community resources. The list of possible improvements probably exceeds the ability of the community to carry out and fund within any reasonable period of time. Therefore, the Town should establish priorities based upon available resources, manpower, and support. The following list begins to identify possible priorities as part of an implementation program:

- Lilac Crossing Pedestrian Bridge (completed in 2019)
- Village Beautification
 1. *Public and Community Buildings and Facilities*
 2. *Forgotten Places*
 3. *Flower Boxes and Beds*
 4. *Gateways and signage*
 5. *Access to the River*
 6. *Pedestrian Connections and Facilities*
 7. *Administrative Approaches*

The vision for Hooksett Village establishes lofty expectations for the future of the Village. For these expectations to be achieved there will need to be a strong advocate for village interests and an administrative body that can undertake some of the projects. The Town should consider whether it should be that body or whether a formal development corporation should be formed to play this role.

Financing Alternatives

While some of the projects identified above can be accomplished at little or no cost, many of the activities will require significant resources. The Town should develop innovative funding to support the village improvement effort. This should include consideration of the following:

1. The Existing Impact Fee System
2. Village Improvement Trust

9. Future Land

Use Plan

9.1 TOWN OF HOOKSET SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis consists of an overview of a community's **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats. While the items listed below may be based in factual evidence, it is important to note that they may include perceptions of those parties who participated in the making of this plan. The purpose of this analysis is to guide future land use and policy decisions by capitalizing on the Town's existing assets and opportunities while simultaneously working to mitigate weaknesses and threats for the most optimal outcome possible.

STRENGTHS:

- **Proximity to key infrastructure**

The Town enjoys direct access to Interstate 93 at three different interchanges as well as direct access to NH 101 at one interchange. Most of the Southern New Hampshire region is easily accessible by car within one-half hour, and most of the Greater Boston region is accessible by car within 90 minutes. Manchester-Boston Airport is a twenty-minute drive from Hooksett and the Boston Logan hub is a short one hour drive.

- **Geographic Location**

The Town is located between two of the State's largest population centers, Manchester and Concord.

- **Moderate tax rates**

Compared to other municipalities in Southern New Hampshire and relative to the high rates typical of New Hampshire municipalities, the tax rate in Hooksett is moderate, though it has fluctuated widely in recent years.

- **Robust Commercial Stock**

Compared to other New Hampshire communities of a similar size, Hooksett boasts more commercial square footage per capita than the state average. The Town hosts several hundred acres of readily developable commercial and industrial lands.

- **Natural beauty and Outdoor Recreational Opportunities**

The Town is home to several scenic, sweeping vistas of the Merrimack River Valley region and is also host to an abundance of hiking trails, recreational ponds, and outdoor recreational activities.

- **Exit 10 Retail Center**

Exit 10 is home to several big box superstores, including one of only two Target stores in the Manchester area, as well as one of only two Wal-Mart Supercenter stores in the Manchester area. These, along with other big box stores in the vicinity, are a large commercial hub for residents of Hooksett and also most of north Manchester and other surrounding communities.

WEAKNESSES:

- **Limited infrastructure on West side of Merrimack River**

Currently, the vast majority of the land on the West side of the Merrimack does not provide municipal sewer or water services. Growth potential in the areas of Exits 10 and 11 are stunted due to this lack of basic infrastructure, which also limits the density of residential development in the area.

- **Poor Curb Appeal**

Certain areas of the Town – mostly in areas zoned for Commercial development, are vacant or host buildings which are currently in poor or decaying condition. In many areas, there is little to no continuity or coordination in exterior design of buildings.

- **No East-West Arterials**

The Town is split into thirds – one-third of the land area on the West and two-thirds of the land area on the east – by the Merrimack River. With only a single in-Town crossing at Main Street in the Village, quick and efficient east-west travel is difficult.

- **Stagnant Economic Diversification/Retail Growth**

The majority of the Town's commercial property tax revenues are generated from brick and mortar retail establishments. Given the current market trends away from the development of such spaces, and the ever-present threat of existing retailers folding and leaving Town, Hooksett could suffer losses to its property tax revenues in the long run if appropriate action is not taken to attract and retain other types of businesses.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Exit 10 and 11**

Exits 10 and 11 present commercial/industrial development and redevelopment opportunities which are highly desirable due to their location adjacent to Interstate 93.

- **Large Amount of Developable Land**

Exit 11 along with several hundred acres of lands north of the Miracle Mile on DW Highway and in the area of East Point Drive are vacant and zoned appropriately to accommodate either Commercial or Industrial development.

- **Route 3A TIF/Sewer Project**

Once the Route 3A sewer project has been completed, denser types of development will be achievable at both Exits 10 and 11.

- **Ample Redevelopment Opportunities in Existing Spaces**

Large, vacant spaces which previously housed retail establishments are available for redevelopment and present new development opportunities for compatible office/medical/education uses.

THREATS:

- **Increasing Traffic Congestion on Local Roads**

Traffic congestion at bottlenecks along Route 3A and Route 3 present safety concerns as well as interrupting the efficient flow of traffic, costing commuters– and the economy - time and money.

- **Shifting Consumer/Market Trends**

The advent of E-Commerce has placed a strain on brick and mortar retail operations nationwide. Retailers account for a sizable percentage of the Town's existing taxable commercial development.

The COVID-19 Pandemic affected worldwide markets and economies. Long term impacts on the world and national economies are still being determined. The Town should recognize that this pandemic had an impact on long range planning goals and should be prepared to pivot to accommodate changing market trends.

- **Town Staff Limitations on Growth and New Programming**

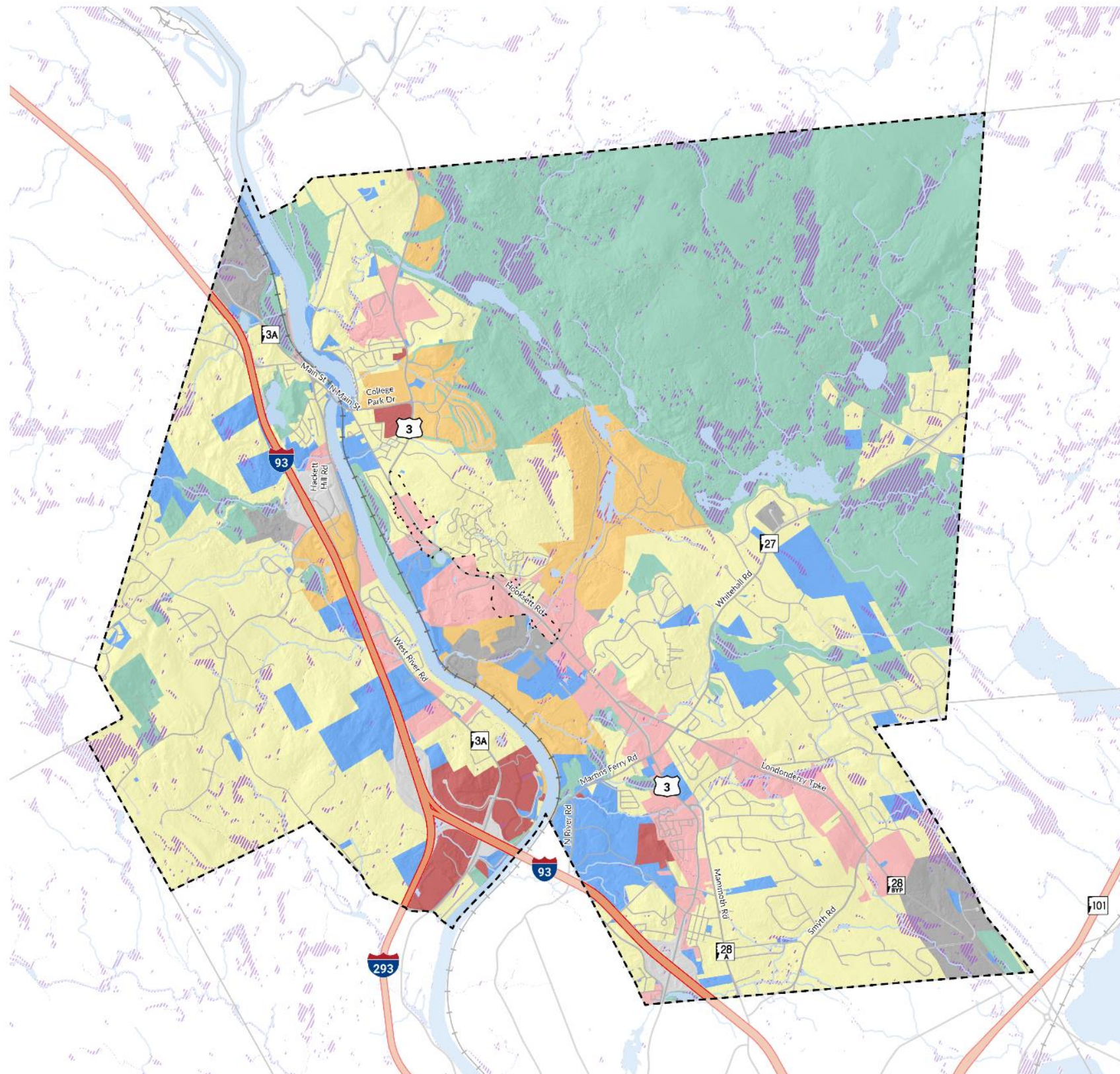
In order to continue providing a range of quality Town services and to administer new programs, the Town must hire additional staff. Areas lacking qualified staff to oversee operational excellence include recreational programming and economic development initiatives/grant writing.

- **Rising Cost of Housing**

Steady and marked increases in the cost of housing present the single largest threat to the economic future of the community. Inflated rents and housing prices dissuade young workers from locating to this community. Inflated housing prices also reduce the amount of disposable income which might otherwise be spent locally within the Town economy.

9.2 Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan has been developed solely as a general guide to development; this plan should be viewed as a general framework for informing land use planning decisions in the future, but it does not make predictions about future market conditions or other factors which drive demand for land. Rather, the Town should use this plan to amend land use regulations, zoning ordinances, and other Town policies in an effort to influence land development in a way which promotes the goals spelled out in this document. As market conditions are in a constant state of change, it is unreasonable to assume that all goals set forth in this future land use plan will be fully realized, or that desirable development will be achieved in all areas of this plan. Rather, the Town should periodically conduct a plan audit to monitor the outcomes and, if necessary, develop alternative scenarios for guiding development into the future.



Hooksett: Future Land Use

Future Land Use

- Civic/Institutional
- Commercial
- Commercial/Industrial
- Conservation
- Industrial
- Roadway
- Open Water
- Residential
- Suburban Mixed-Use
- Miracle Mile Revitalization Corridor



2

Miles



SNHPC

Created by SNHPC, 2024. Sources: Bureau of Transportation Statistics; Microsoft; NH Department of Transportation; OpenStreetMap; Town of Hooksett; University of NH; US Census Bureau; US Fish & Wildlife Service; US Geological Survey.

Generalized land use areas are identified on the Future Land Use Plan Map and reflect the patterns of existing land use, the analysis of existing conditions, the population projections, the community goals and objectives, and other aspects discussed in previous sections. As not every type of land use can be represented, the map has been organized into categories of uses which also represent future planning for any given area. Commercial uses include the existing Performance Zone, and Mixed Use Zones 1, 3, and 4. Industrial uses are represented as Industrial. Residential uses include Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and High Density Residential. The Suburban Mixed Use Category includes Mixed Use Zones 2 and 5. Additional land use categories include Civic/Institutional which includes land owned by public entities, non-profits, churches, fraternal organizations and the like. This category also includes town owned ball fields and outdoor recreation areas if they are not tied to conservation areas with trails. The category for Conservation land includes any land which has a permanent or de factor permanent conservation restriction (such as land owned by Manchester Water Works).

The basic concepts for the Future Land Use Plan are as follows:

- ❖ •The Town of Hooksett strives to be a community that maintains its vibrant, small-town atmosphere where possible.
- ❖ •The Town strives to provide a variety of business, housing, recreational, and employment opportunities.
- ❖ •The Town strives to encourage the orderly expansion of new development that maintains a high quality of life in the community. New development will not be implemented at the expense of existing development or infrastructure.
- ❖ •The Future Land Use Plan encourages sustainable development that encourages the integration of uses into compact areas.
- ❖ •The Future Land Use Plan will explore providing a concentrated area for businesses, services and entertainment in or near the Village.
- ❖ •Regional Commercial will explore a new emerging district at Exit 11, while the Town also explores redevelopment opportunities and alternatives at locations adjacent to Exit 10.
- ❖ •Neighborhood Commercial districts may be placed in less intensive development areas that are complementary to residential neighborhoods.
- ❖ •High Density Single Family Residential districts may be provided to create a buffer transition use between Single Family Residential and higher intensity uses like Multiple Family districts.
- ❖ •The Town strives to pursue the development of mixed-use, transit-oriented alternatives to traditional auto-dependent development. Areas of focus include Exits 9, 10, and 11 for potential consideration.
- ❖ •The Town strive to identify parcels of land adjacent to DW Highway which are adequately suited to be developed into high density residential and/or elderly housing/convalescent homes.

- ❖ •Low impact, light Industrial districts may be concentrated around existing industrial development and shall be encouraged to develop in attractive, industrial park-type settings. Focus areas will primarily be the southern end of Londonderry Turnpike/Eastpoint Drive and the vicinity of Industrial Park Drive and Lehoux Drive.
- ❖ •The preservation of the natural environment and the acquisition of additional open space and park land in the northeast quadrant of Town will continue to ensure the area remains undeveloped.
- ❖ •The historically and culturally significant areas of the community as well as local water resources shall be given particular consideration toward protection with all development proposals.

A. Residential Land Uses

The Town should explore potential rezoning or zoning amendments which will permit the development of housing as an integrated, mixed-use style of development in areas which currently only permit commercial development by right. These areas include Exits 9, 10, and 11.

The Town may identify parcels adjacent to major commercial corridors which present development opportunities for either mixed-use or high density residential development in a transit-oriented and well-connected manner. The Town may also market these parcels as being appropriately zoned for elderly housing developments or convalescent/nursing and assisted living facilities.

The Town may consider adopting a zoning amendment allowing for high density single family homes in areas which might provide a buffer between medium density residential zones and commercial zones. High density single family homes might include small homes on quarter-acre lots or duplexes. Lots in the vicinity of Mammoth Road should be considered as part of this proposal.

Once sewer and water infrastructure is available on the West side of the Merrimack River, the Town may consider zoning density alternatives in areas which are currently zoned for Low Density Residential. Once highway improvements have been made to the intersection of Hackett Hill Road and Route 3A, the vicinity of Hackett Hill Road, South Bow Road, and Goffstown Road may be considered for a potential rezoning to Medium Density Residential.



Attached Single Family Homes in the Berry Hill Development



B. Commercial Land Uses:

The Town may audit its commercial and mixed-use zoning ordinances to ensure a full range of commercial uses aside from retail are not only permitted by right, but also encouraged in these zones.

The Town strives to work with the development community to explore alternative uses for vacant or underutilized properties.

The Town will enforce adopted provisions within the Town Development Regulations which impose

architectural design standards on all commercial development within the Town.

The Town should investigate potential amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and the Development Regulations which will require new commercial development design to consider pedestrian scale rather than traditional auto-centric scale.

The Town will continue to focus economic development efforts on the area immediately north of Industrial Park Drive and south of Main Street on DW Highway – the area shown on the Future Land Use Map as the Miracle Mile Revitalization Corridor.

The Town will plan adequately for future commercial growth and adaptive reuse of existing structures along Londonderry Turnpike; this corridor is primed to experience significant commercial and industrial growth in the coming decade.



Example of pedestrian scale commercial development – parking located in rear.



Example of a mixed-use development, with ground floor retail/office space and residential above.

C. Industrial Land Uses:

The Town should encourage industrial development in two key areas: Eastpoint Drive and Industrial Park Drive.

The Town strives to work with private developers and property owners to rebrand the areas of Eastpoint Drive and Industrial Park Drive as Hooksett's two designated industrial parks. The goal would be to work with private developers and property owners in these districts to enhance the curb appeal of industrial zones and develop a cleaner public image of industrial parks in Hooksett.

The Town recognizes a growing demand for warehousing and distribution facilities and will work to identify parcels of land adjacent to freeway access which may be suitable for this type of use.

The Town actively advocates for the expansion of infrastructure and utilities in and adjacent to industrial areas to provide the necessary catalysts for development in those locations. Roadway, sewer, and water infrastructure should be readily available and/or expanded in these areas to accommodate future demand for industrial space.

The Town promotes the development of cleaner and environmentally friendly industries to protect the natural environment and quality of air and water.



GE Aviation Plant at Industrial Park Drive

D. Public/Institutional/Recreational Land Uses:

Continue the process of studying the need for additional Town life safety facilities (Fire/Police/EMS) on the West side of the Merrimack.

The Town should consider identifying centrally located parcels for future acquisition for the purposes of maintaining a stock of vacant lands for the development of Town facilities. These facilities may include but are not limited to a school facility, a community center, a Town aquatic center, meeting space, or life safety administration.

The Town should consider asking land developers to consider conservation subdivisions as a viable development option moving forward, and will require the preservation and interconnectivity of open spaces within and across these developments as they are built out.

The Town continues to identify parcels of land on the west side of the Merrimack in the vicinity of Hackett Hill Road, South Bow Road, and Quimby Mountain to retain for future public park space.

The Town will work to acquire additional waterfront property for the purpose of providing additional active recreational opportunities to residents as well as access to these natural elements of the Hooksett landscape.

The Town will work with the Hooksett Village Water Precinct to implement the Town's Wellhead Protection Program and to protect the Pinnacle Pond area and its watershed for water supply and recreation purposes.

The Town will continue working with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Conservation Commission, the development community, and private property owners to ensure that the Heritage Rail Trail is completed along its planned course adjacent to the eastern bank of the Merrimack River.

The Town will, where possible, require developers to provide access easements and walking paths which connect existing trails with sidewalk infrastructure and open space within new subdivisions.

10. Plan Objectives and Implementation Matrix

10.1 Public Policy and Administrative Action

A. Plan Adoption

The first implementation strategy is the adoption of the Town of Hooksett 2024-2034 Master Plan by the Planning Board and Town Council as provided under New Hampshire planning enabling statute RSA 674:2.

B. Cooperation and Coordination Among Units of Government

The health and vitality of the Town greatly impacts the surrounding communities, particularly those in the Southern New Hampshire region. The Town has a tradition of cooperation with adjacent Towns and State agencies in order to foster quality services and development in a managed and controlled manner. The support of this new Master Plan by adjacent communities and the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission will further enable the Town to implement the objectives set forth in this Plan. Continued cooperative efforts with other governmental and planning entities are critical to successful planning efforts. For example, road improvements affect the quality of life for Hooksett residents and workers, but some decisions regarding roads in or immediately adjacent to the Town are made by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. Clearly, these other agencies must be aware of the Town's land use planning objectives in order to develop compatible transportation plans. The development of corridor plans can facilitate intergovernmental cooperation by communicating in detail the transportation objectives of the Town to NHDOT.

C. Continuous Planning

Community planning is a dynamic process that does not end with the completion of the Master Plan. Municipalities experience constant change and planning involves identifying and responding to this change. Under the New Hampshire Planning Enabling Act, the Town is required to review and reevaluate the Master Plan every 10 years, as events or changing needs of the Town may impact the Plan. As such, the Hooksett Master Plan should be regarded as a continuing work in progress, not as a finished document. When conducting land use decisions, the Town must refer back to the guidance offered within the Master Plan. All of Hooksett's other longer term planning activities (Parks and Recreation Plan, Capital Improvements Plan, etc.), should perform in concert with the Master Plan's goals and objectives. In addition to the Master Plan, more detailed plans for specific areas and issues such as the downtown area, architectural design standards, the industrial park expansion areas, should be identified as requiring further study in order to achieve the community's goals as stated within this document.

10.2 Information and Education

The success of the Master Plan depends to a great extent on efforts to utilize the plan on a regular basis for guiding land use and Capital Planning decisions by the Town, and for prioritizing staffing and administrative duties. Elected and appointed officials and Town administration must be aware of the Master Plan's recommendations, and they must actively utilize the document. Second, it is important to inform and educate citizens about the Plan and the need for regulatory measures to implement the Plan. Successful implementation requires the support and participation of residents, property owners, and business owners.

10.3 Zoning Tools

Land development review and regulation is the primary regulatory tool used by the Town to implement the Master Plan. In order to realize the Master Plan vision, the Town must ensure that ordinances and regulations permit the style and type of development recommended by the Plan and desired by the community. A comprehensive review of the Town's ordinances, particularly the Zoning Ordinance, General Ordinances related to property maintenance, and the Development Regulations, is necessary to determine the scope of amendments needed to achieve the goals of the Master Plan.

A. Architectural Design Standards

Most Zoning Ordinances are developed to separate uses and to control vehicle placement. To have thriving downtowns, these regulations must be modified to enable the development of areas that have a traditional urban layout and appearance that predates the negative impacts of the automobile on urban areas. Since adoption of the 2004 Master Plan, a set of Commercial Design Standards for all commercial development in the Town have been adopted as part of the Town Development Regulations. These design standards are written in precise regulatory language that is difficult for non-practitioners to understand. It is recommended that these development standards be expanded into a design standards manual that can be used to communicate specific detailed written and graphic concepts and ideas to supplement the Zoning Ordinance. The manual should be made available to developers and property owners to guide them in the preparation of good, consistent architectural design plans that create attractive new architecture and promote building renovation. In the process, the Town can evaluate the effectiveness of architectural design standards in the Development Regulations to determine where improvements in language and regulation are necessary.

B. New Zoning Districts

The Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated for its applicability to the Future Land Use Chapter. To reflect the new Future Land Use designations, the ordinance will have to be amended with the creation of several new zoning districts.

C. Overlay Zoning

Overlay zoning allows the Town to enforce an additional set of regulations on special areas within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zone is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. The overlay zoning has been used in Hooksett (Performance Zone) mostly for commercial development, but examples found in other communities address special conditions and features, such as historic areas and environmentally sensitive areas (Groundwater Protection or Watershed Protection), without disrupting the underlying zoning plan. In the Town of Hooksett, additional overlay zoning would be an effective tool for achieving stated economic development goals as well as protecting the historic built environment.

D. Planned Unit Development

Planned Unit Development (PUD) involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. Planned developments should achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible. Applied judiciously, PUDs are a useful zoning technique to achieve development in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. The Town does not currently have a provision within the Zoning Ordinance or the Development Regulations which allows for the establishment of a PUD, however the Town should consider adding verbiage which allows this option. Areas which might benefit from the establishment of PUD criteria include projects which include a mixed-use component. Exits 10 and 11 may benefit from these provisions in the future.

10.4 Financial Strategy

While it is not possible to construct a finance strategy that accounts for every eventuality that may come to pass in the future, the Planning Board can draw a likely scenario that describes a method for financing infrastructure improvements that will be necessary as new development comes online. This methodology can describe a combination of known funding sources that are advantageous to meet future needs. While applicable to most developments, the following principles apply readily to transportation-related deficiencies.

1. **Offsite Improvements and Impact Fees:** The need for new infrastructure is customarily occasioned by new development; therefore the new development will be called upon to provide off-site improvements as has been done in the past. This may involve water, sewer, or drainage improvements and possibly the construction of new roadways; it may also include the payment of impact fees in lieu of actual construction such as school, public safety, recreation and/or roadway impact fees or other transfers of funds. Some of these improvements may be located adjacent to the new development—others may be located within a “zone of influence” as the development may occasion an improvement some distance removed from the site but within a rational nexus.

2. **State and Federal Transportation Funding:** With regard to roadway improvements, the Town may need to create a relationship not only with the applicant, but with the NH Department of Transportation (DOT) to determine appropriate funding mechanisms. Although it is most often the Town that has approved the developments along a roadway, the DOT retains jurisdiction over state roadways for safety, mobility, and capacity. There may be state or federal funds available to assist the Town with future improvements, and according to a new DOT “business plan” there may be innovative ways to solve problems in the short term, buying time for a more extensive “fix” when and if one is needed in the future.

3. **TIF Revenue Funds:** It may become necessary for the Town to issue bonds or other funding from taxation for a portion of the improvements deemed necessary. One strategy is the tax increment financing (TIF) district wherein the increment of new taxation occasioned by new development is held in reserve for designated improvements within that district. All such funding mechanisms that involve local tax monies should be carefully investigated by the Town.

4. **Capital Reserve Accounts:** Based on an assumption that contributions from the development community will not solve all the traffic-related needs of the town, it may be wise to create a reserve account and build up a fund from which future needs may be augmented, or with which preliminary studies or land takings may be financed.

For the most part, none of the above strategies will work on its own—the solution to development-related problems will likely involve a combination of these and some intense negotiations among all parties.

Plan Objectives and Implementation Matrix

	Objective	Plan Partners	Timeframe
<div>HOUSING</div> <div>Chapter 3</div>	Provide opportunities for the development of affordable multi-family housing options.	Planning Board, Development Community, NeighborWorks, New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority	Mid-Term
	Incentivize the development of small starter homes in centrally located neighborhoods.	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Development Community	Mid-Term
	Review the zoning at Exit 10 and Exit 11 to allow for residential development in a Mixed-Use District.	Planning Board	Mid-Term
	Identify parcels of land adjacent to DW Highway which may be suitable for high-density multi-family residential development.	Planning Board, Property Owners	Mid-Term
	Incentivize the Zoning Ordinance to require multi-family development and large subdivisions to provide onsite recreational opportunities for residents in lieu of recreational impact fees.	Planning Board	Mid-Term
	Provide various transportation options which effectively link residential areas with commercial areas and employment centers.	Planning Board, DPW, NHDOT, Development Community	Long-Term
	As infrastructure becomes available, rezone properties in the vicinity of South Bow Road and Hackett Hill Road to allow denser residential development	Planning Board	Long-Term
	Identify and promote suitable parcels for development of older person and elderly housing to include assisted living facilities for the elderly.	Planning Board, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Property Owners	Short-Term
	Reinforce the Town’s conservation and preservation efforts by maintaining low density residential zoning in areas adjacent to conservation lands and significant prime wetlands	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Ongoing
	Streamline the process of permitting Accessory Dwelling Units in order to reduce costs.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement	Short-Term
	Curate resources for first time homebuyers and provide educational assistance programs on mortgages, condominium bylaws, home maintenance, etc.	Town Staff, Economic Development Advisory Board, New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority	Ongoing
	Create incentives for the adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized structures into residential dwelling units	Planning Board, Code Enforcement	Ongoing
	Work with the development community to customize a long-range plan for the reduction of residential development costs in areas of site planning, zoning administration, code inspection, etc.	Planning Board, Town Staff, Code Enforcement, Town Engineer, Development Community	Ongoing
<div>COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND RECREATION</div> <div>Chapter 5</div>	Upgrade and enforce building codes to address neighborhood blight, such as parking on lawns, litter control, and deferred home maintenance.	Code Enforcement, Planning Board, Local Residents, Non-Profits	Ongoing
	Conduct a needs assessment for a potential new Fire/EMS/Police kiosk on the West side of the Merrimack	Fire, Administration, Town Council, Planning Board, Consultant	Long-Term
	Determine current level of service for Fire/Police/EMS in areas of potentially high growth, such as the Head’s Pond development and University Heights	Fire, Administration, Town Council, Planning Board, Consultant	Long-Term
	Identify parcels for future acquisition and use for Fire/EMS/Police at various locations throughout the Town	Fire, Administration, Town Council, Planning Board, Consultant	Long-Term
	Designate DW Highway and Route 3A Safety Corridors to maintain police presence and speed/safety monitoring	Police, Administration	Short-Term
	Conduct comprehensive review of CIP with all relevant Town Departments on an annual basis	Administration, Planning Board, Town Department Heads, Town Council, Budget Committee	Ongoing
	Develop an expansion plan for Town Office meeting space and parking	Administration, DPW, Town Council	Mid-Term
	Expand Library hours and programming to include more adult and older person activities and educational opportunities as proposed by the Library Trustees	Library Trustees, Local Residents, Administration	Short-Term

		Objective	Plan Partners	Timeframe
<div> <div>COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND RECREATION (CONTINUED)</div> <div>Chapter 5</div> </div>		Continue to develop Town roadway maintenance and repaving plans and coordinate with underground utility providers.	DPW, Consultant	Ongoing
		Promote a Town-wide recycling program by educating the public on the value of recycling.	DPW	Ongoing
		Explore the possibility of consolidating Town water precincts to better facilitate efficient infrastructure planning and levels of service	Town Water Precincts, Administration, Town Legal Counsel	Long-Term
		Work with Manchester Water Works and Water Precincts to develop an expansion plan for service in underserved areas.	MWW, Town Water Precincts, Administration	Long-Term
		Continue to support Route 3A TIF District water and sewer project to completion.	Sewer Commission, Town Engineer, TIF Committee, Property Owners, Development Community, Consultant, Village Water Precinct	Ongoing
		Integrate the Utility Coordination Committee with Technical Plan Review process	Town Planner	Short-Term
		Enhance communication between School Board and Town Officials	Planning Board, School Board	Short-Term
		Obtain reliable data on short- and long-term student enrollment projections in order to more realistically determine facility and land needs	School Board	Short-Term
		Integrate Town Schools into the CIP development process; better facilitate school facilities planning with the Planning Board	School Board, Planning Board, Administration	Short-Term
		Retain Town-owned land adjacent to Martins Cemetery for future use	Cemetery Commission, Town Council	Ongoing
		Provide the necessary support to implement and maintain a robust recreation program for youth, adults, and seniors	Town Council, Administration, Budget Committee	Mid-Term
		Provide recreational equipment which appeals to residents of all ages in the Town gym	Town Council, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	Mid-Term
		Explore opportunities to provide pedestrian access and sidewalk/handicapped facilities at all Town owned and maintained parks, such as Petersbrook	Town Council, DPW, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	Mid-Term
		Explore opportunities to provide Hooksett residents with enhanced public water access	Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, DPW, Town Council, Administration	Mid-Term
		Complete the Heritage Rail Trail	Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Town Staff, Administration	Mid-Term
<div> <div>TRANSPORTATION</div> <div>Chapter 6</div> </div>		Explore possible construction of safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along major commercial corridors and ensure connectivity to existing pedestrian infrastructure in residential areas.	NHDOT, DPW, Community Development Staff, Planning Board	Long-Range
		Explore opportunities for both passive and active recreational opportunities for Town-owned land adjacent to Quimby Mountain	Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, DPW, Community Development	Long-Term
		Establish a plan for the proposed Town beach as part of the previously approved Manchester Sand & Gravel Head's Pond subdivision development	Planning Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	Long-Range
		Identify and promote a list of historically significant sites.	Heritage Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	Long-Term
		Promote easements from property owners along the proposed trail route from Southern New Hampshire University to the Lilac Pedestrian Bridge and north to the Allenstown town line.	Town Staff, Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Administration	Mid-Term
		Implement water supply development and protection measures in the Village area	Village Water Precinct, Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Mid-Term
		Mitigate traffic congestion issues in the vicinity of Hackett Hill Road, Main Street, and Route 3A	Town Engineer, Consultant, Town Planner, Planning Board, local utilities	Mid-Term
		Coordinate with NHDOT on future widening projects along the entire length of DW Highway south of College Park Drive	NHDOT, Town Engineer, Town Planner, Planning Board	Long-Term
		Conduct a study of traffic signal timing at Alice Avenue and Industrial Park Drive	NHDOT, Consultant, Town Engineer	Mid-Term
		Advocate for the construction of bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and crosswalks along newly reconstructed and widened sections of DW Highway	NHDOT, Town Council, Planning Board, Town Engineer, Town Planner	Long-Term
		Work with Manchester Sand & Gravel, NHDOT and future developer to improve future development on Manchester Parkway and DW Highway	NHDOT, Manchester Sand & Gravel, Town Planning Board, Consultant, DPW	Long-Term

	Objective	Plan Partners	Timeframe
<div>TRANSPORTATION</div> <div>(CONTINUED)</div> <div>Chapter 6</div>	Approach NHDOT to include in its 10-year plan center turn lanes along the length of Londonderry Turnpike south of Auburn Road to the intersection with 101	NHDOT, Town Planner, Town Engineer, Planning Board, Village Water Precinct	Long-Term
	Advocate for the widening of bottlenecks on Route 3A to dual carriageway from the Manchester line north to Quality Drive	NHDOT, Town Engineer, Town Planner	Long-Term
	Approach NHDOT to install dedicated turn lanes at several locations along the north end of Route 3A, including at the intersections of Pine Street, Cross Road, the Recycle and Transfer Station, and Brookside Way	NHDOT, Town Planner, Town Engineer	Mid-Range
	Develop a comprehensive inventory of Town sidewalks and identify opportunities for enhanced connectivity	DPW, Town Planner, NHDOT, Town Engineer	Mid-Term
	Develop a pedestrian/complete street plan for local streets with heavy foot traffic, such as Martins Ferry Road, Mammoth Road, and Alice Avenue	Consultant, SNHPC, DPW, Southern New Hampshire University	Mid-Term
	Continue partnering with Manchester Transit Authority to coordinate the expansion of service hours for the current demand-response commuter bus service	Town Planner, Family Services Director. MTA, Local Older-Person Housing Communities	Ongoing
	Work with MTA to perform a feasibility study for the implementation of regular scheduled bus service in key areas of Hooksett, such as SNHU campus, Exit 9, Exit 10, and the Village	MTA, Town Planner	Mid-Term
	As recommended in all previous Town Master Plans, conduct a feasibility study for a potential new Merrimack River crossing at a centrally-located point between Exit 9 and the Village	Community Development, DPW, NHDOT, Town Engineer, Administration	Long-Term
	As proposed in prior Town master plans, extend College Park Drive/Campus Drive in an easterly direction through the University Heights development and into abutting conservation lands in order to provide future access to the proposed Town beach at the Town pond behind Heads Pond	DPW, Town Engineer, Community Development, Planning Board, Administration	Mid-Term
<div>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</div> <div></div> <div>Chapter 7</div>	Conduct a comprehensive build-out analysis of all commercial and industrial lands; consider conducting a floor area analysis as part of this study	SNHPC, Town Planner, EDAC	Short-Term
	Identify specific commercial and industrial sectors which the Town wants to attract	EDAC, Town Administrator	Short-Term
	Advocate for the creation of an Economic Development Coordinator position to advance Economic Development initiatives and research grant opportunities	EDAC, Administration, Town Council	Mid-Term
	Define new focus areas to direct economic development opportunities, such as the Miracle Mile Revitalization Corridor on DW Highway and both of the Town’s industrial parks	EDAC, Planning Board, Town Administrator, Community Development Department	Short-Term
	Promote the prioritization of infrastructure improvements, specifically relating to the ROUTE 3A TIF District Plan, in areas of potential economic development	EDAC, Hooksett Utility Coordination Committee, Administration, Utility Providers, DPW, NHDOT	Ongoing
	Advocate for the development of a reasonable supply of affordable housing in order to provide housing for employees of potential new businesses	EDAC, Planning Board, Development Community	Ongoing
	Develop alternative scenarios for the development of vacant commercial/industrial properties	EDAC, Planning Board	Mid-Term
	Designate staff/EDAC members to fully implement the Hooksett Business Ambassador Program as previously envisioned	EDAC, Community Development	Ongoing
	Promote existing development incentives as adopted previously, including the Economic Revitalization Zones, the Community Revitalization Tax Incentive, and TIF	EDAC, Town Council, Community Development	Ongoing
	Facilitate an efficient, low-cost development review process for new businesses	Town Staff	Ongoing
	Where appropriate, promote the development of mixed-use districts to facilitate walkable live-work communities	EDAC, Planning Board, Development Community, Town Planner	Mid-Term
	Research a Town Economic Development Program, with qualified staff and a devoted EDAC website to inform the community on new development activities and incentives	EDAC, Administration, Town Council	Mid-Term
	Continue to promote the adaptive reuse of vacant, historic, or otherwise underutilized structures to provide incentives for new businesses to inhabit these existing spaces	EDAC, Planning Board	Mid-Term

	Objective	Plan Partners	Timeframe
<div> <div>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</div> <div>Chapter 7</div> </div>	Allow for increased density of Commercially zoned lands in at the south end of DW Highway adjacent to the Manchester line	Planning Board, Zoning Board, Community Development	Mid-Term
	Establish and periodically review a list of vacant commercial/industrial properties and advertise in various locations for the local business community	Community Development Staff, EDAC	Mid-Term
	Streamline the Occupancy Review process	Town Staff	Ongoing
	Conduct a review of the impact fee ordinance to ensure the Town’s fees remain competitive with similar communities in the region	Town Staff, Planning Board	Mid-Term
	Engage in Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission’s Brownfield Assessment Program to create an inventory of brownfield sites which might support commercial/industrial development	EDAC, Town Staff, SNHPC	Short-Term
<div> <div>CONSERVATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES</div> <div>Chapter 8</div> </div>	Retain a minimum of 25% of the Town’s total land area – or 5,800 acres – remain undeveloped as conservation or open space land through 2030.	Conservation Commission, Planning Board	Ongoing
	Coordinate conservation lands planning efforts with all abutting municipalities to expand open space lands across municipal boundaries	Conservation Commission, Town of Bow, Town of Dunbarton, Town of Candia, City of Manchester, Town of Allenstown, Town of Auburn	Ongoing
	Establish conservation lands on the West side of the Merrimack in the vicinity of Town-owned land adjacent to Quimby Mountain, as well as 500+ acres of adjacent privately-owned lands	Administration, Conservation Commission, Property Owners	Long-Term
	Establish conservation lands and a recreational use policy around Pinnacle Pond to protect Village Water Precincts wells	Village Water Precinct, Conservation Commission, NHDES	Mid-Term
	Establish conservation land on the West side of the Merrimack south of Pine Street and north of South Bow Road, in the vicinity of Brickyard Brook	Conservation Commission, Town of Bow	Long-Term
	Expand protected access to the Merrimack River in key locations, including on the west side of the river adjacent to Route 3A and in the vicinity of Southern New Hampshire University’s campus	Conservation Commission, Private Land Owners, NHDES, Southern New Hampshire University	Long-Term
	Continue to expand the Heritage Rail Trail until a complete connection has been made between the Manchester City line and the Allenstown Town line	Conservation Commission, Land Owners, Community Development Staff, Southern New Hampshire University, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	Long-Term
	Provide limited public access to select prime wetland areas for passive recreational and educational purposes; limit access to other prime wetlands	Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Administration, NHDES	Long-Term
	Incentivize or require open space land within new residential subdivisions.	Planning Board	Mid-Term
	Create and maintain a local water resources management and protection plan	Conservation Commission, NHDES, Hooksett Water Precincts	Mid-Term
	Create and maintain a database of historically significant structures by 2026.	Heritage Commission, Town Planner	Short-Term
	Review the Town demolition ordinance to determine alternative strategies to exclude identified historic structures from demolition permit application	Heritage Commission, Private Property Owners, Town Legal Counsel, Town Council	Mid-Term
	Author a list of adaptive reuse incentives for historic properties	Heritage Commission, Town Planner, Planning Board	Mid-Term
	Produce and enforce a small area preservation plan for the Village	Heritage Commission, Town Staff	Mid-Term
	Develop property maintenance incentives/programs for areas of historic significance such as the Village	Heritage Commission, EDAC, Town Staff	Mid-Term
	Draft local land use policy to require and/or incentivize the conservation of trees in all new developments	Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Development Community	Long-Term
	Reactivate the Wellhead Protection Program to protect future and existing local drinking water sources	Village Water Precinct, Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Mid-Term

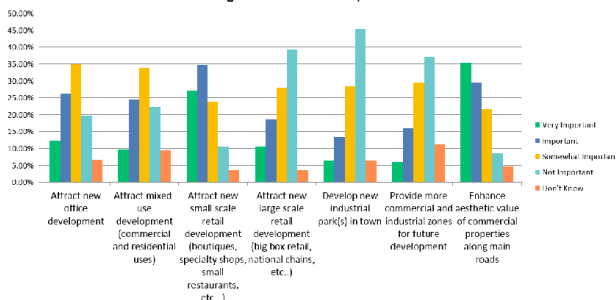
APPENDIX

HOOKSETT MASTER PLAN

SURVEY RESULTS:

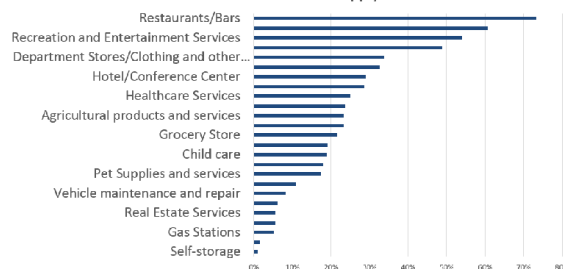
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Please indicate the level of importance that the town should give to the following economic development actions



Respondents felt that Enhancing the Aesthetic Value of Commercial Properties Along Main Roads was the most important economic development action, followed by Attract New Small-Scale Retail, Attract New Office Development, and Attract Mixed-Used Development.

What kind of new businesses would you like to see in Hooksett?
Please check all that apply.



When asked what types of new businesses respondents would like to see in Hooksett, Restaurants/Bars was the most selected choice (73.2%) followed by Coffee Shops (60.8%), Recreation and Entertainment Services (54.1%) and Boutiques (48.8%).



When asked if there were any other types of businesses they would like to see in Hooksett, 206 responded; predominately identifying smaller, retail store development. Other commonly identified businesses included restaurants and other local food businesses. Additionally, many respondents did not want to see any other types of businesses in Hooksett.



Survey conducted October–December 2018

Graphic prepared by SNHPC, July 2019

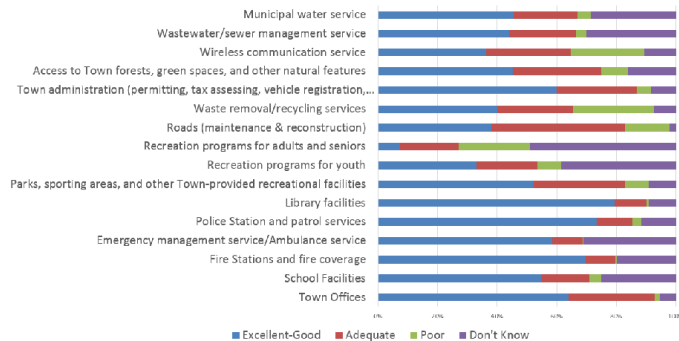


HOOKSETT MASTER PLAN

SURVEY RESULTS:

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Please rank the following town facilities, departments, and services as excellent, good, adequate, or poor by checking the appropriate box.



Respondents were asked to rank Hooksett facilities on a scale of Excellent-Good, Adequate, Poor, or Don't Know. Respondents were most satisfied with Library Facilities, followed by Police Station and Patrol Services, Fire Stations and Fire Coverage, and Town Offices. Respondents were the least satisfied with Waste Removal/Recycling Services followed by Wireless Communication Service.

Are there any facilities or services you'd like to see provided by the Town, but which are not currently available?



336 respondents answered this question. One of the most mentioned services was town recycling. Many respondents cited a need for a town high school. Other commonly mentioned services included recreation services such as a pool or a splash pad. Many respondents felt that that additional services are non needed.



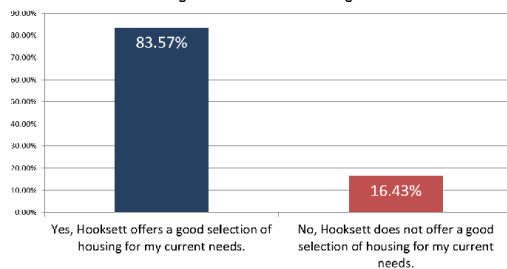
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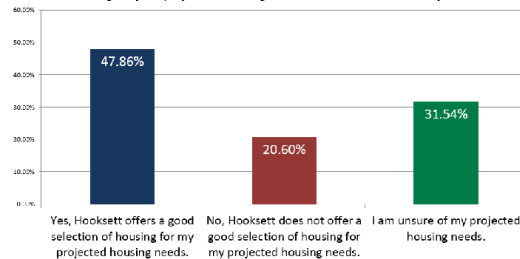
HOOKSETT MASTER PLAN SURVEY RESULTS: HOUSING

Based on your current housing needs, does Hooksett offer a good selection of housing?



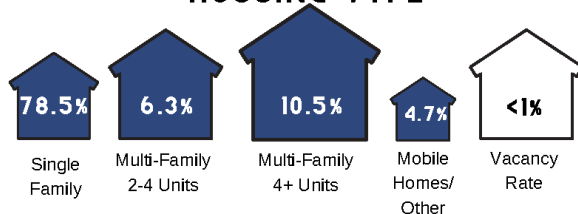
The majority of respondents (87.6%) think Hooksett offers a good selection of housing based on their current needs.

Based on your best estimation, does Hooksett offer a good selection of housing for your projected housing needs over the next 10 to 15 years?

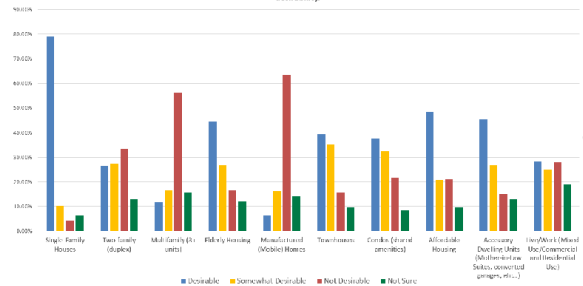


When asked about future housing needs, 47.9% felt that Hooksett offers a good selection of housing, 20.6% felt that Hooksett does not offer a good selection of housing, and 31.5% were unsure of their future housing needs.

HOOKSETT HOUSING STOCK BY HOUSING TYPE

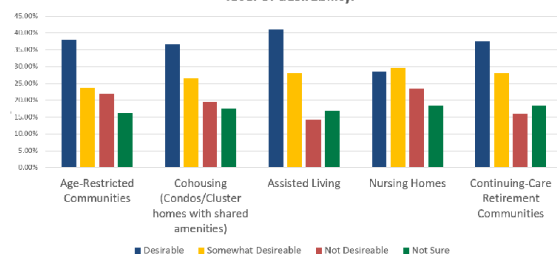


In looking at potential new housing in Hooksett, please prioritize the following housing types based on their level of desirability.



When asked to rank housing types based on their level of desirability, respondents felt that Single-Family Homes were the most desirable (79.2%), followed by Affordable Housing (48.4%), Accessory Dwelling Units (45.3%), and Elderly Housing (44.6%).

Please prioritize the following elderly housing types based on their level of desirability.



Respondents ranked elderly housing types based on their level of desirability. Assisted Living were found to be the most desirable (40.9%), followed by Age-Restricted Communities (38%), Continuing-Care Retirement Communities (37.5%), and Cohousing (36.6%).

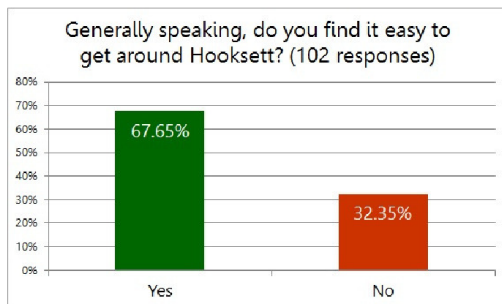


Survey conducted October–December 2018

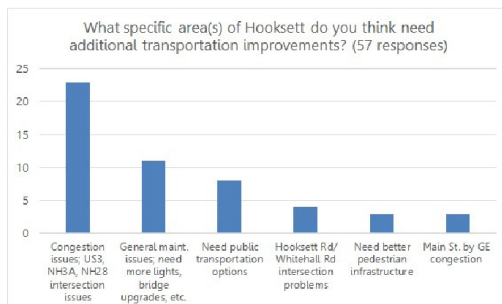
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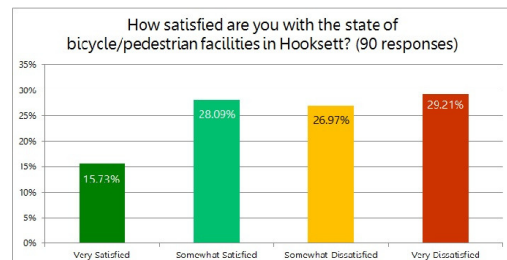
HOOKSETT MASTER PLAN SURVEY RESULTS: TRANSPORTATION



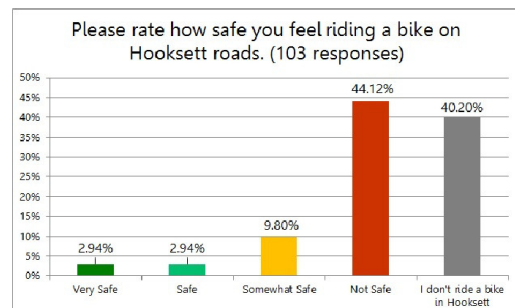
Generally speaking, 2/3 of respondents (67%) found it easy to get around Hooksett, with the dissenters (33%) noting issues such as traffic congestion and the lack of public transportation options as barriers.



When asked to list areas in Hooksett needing additional improvements, 40% of respondents mentioned congestion issues, along with intersection issues on Routes 3, 3A, and 28.



Town bicycle infrastructure was not seen favorably. Only 40 of 90 respondents (44.4%) were somewhat or very satisfied with the state of bike/ped facilities in town.



Of 62 bicycle-riding respondents, only 16 (25.8%) felt 'somewhat safe', 'safe', or 'very safe' on Hooksett roads.

70% of respondents would use bike/walking trails if they were available, and only 27% of those responding indicated that they would NOT support the use of taxpayer funds for bike/walking trails.



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Graphic prepared by SNHPC, July 2019

