

**CONWAY PLANNING BOARD AND  
MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2023**

**PAGES**

1

Work Session

**CONWAY PLANNING BOARD  
AND MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2023**

A meeting of the Conway Planning Board and the Master Plan Steering Committee was held on Thursday, September 28, 2023 beginning at 5:30 pm at the Conway Town Office, Conway, NH. Those present were: Chair, Benjamin Colbath; Vice Chair, Ailie Byers; Selectmen's Representative, Steve Porter; Secretary, Erik Corbett; Bill Barbin; Eliza Grant; Mark Hounsell; Alternate Ted Phillips; Josh McAllister; Ben Wilcox; Kate Richardson; Jason Gagnon; Janine Bean; Debra Haynes; Barbara Lyons; Town Planner, Ryan O'Connor; and Deputy Town Manager, Paul DegliAngeli.

**WORK SESSION**

The Board and Committee followed the attached Meeting Agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly L. Whitelaw  
Planning Assistant



# MEETING AGENDA

9.28.2023  
5:30 – 7:00 PM

## CONWAY MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE – MEETING #5

Conway Town Office  
23 Main Street  
Conway, NH

### MEETING OVERVIEW & PREPARATION

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#### Meeting Purpose

- To discuss the proposed outline for the Master Plan.
- To discuss the goals and strategies identified in the draft Transportation chapter.
- To finalize the Master Plan Vision Statement.

#### Pre-Meeting Preparation

Since we have limited meeting time and many voices to hear from, we are expecting that Steering Committee members will have completed the following tasks prior to the meeting.

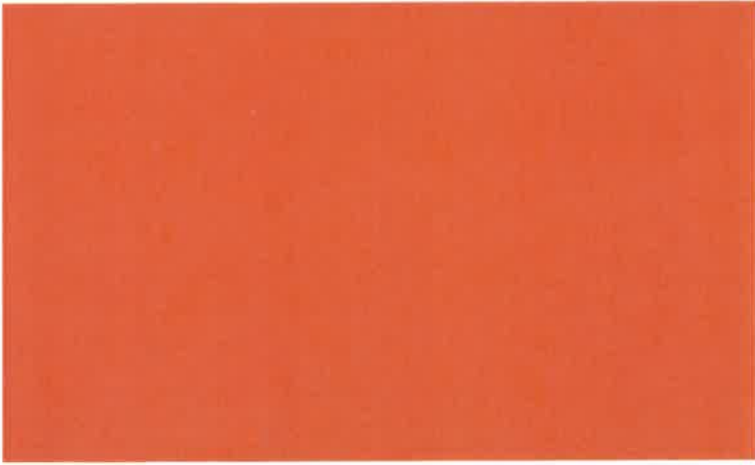
- Review the Master Plan Vision Statement, draft Master Plan Framework, and draft Transportation Chapter.
- Provide your feedback on the strategies included in the draft Transportation Chapter. Please provide your survey response by **Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>**.
  - Survey link: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7529344/Conway-Master-Plan-Steering-Committee-Draft-Transportation-Chapter>

### AGENDA DETAILS

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NOTE: This meeting is a work session of the Town of Conway Planning Board and is open to members of the public. Steering Committee members should plan to arrive 5 minutes early to ensure a prompt start.

5:30 – 5:35 pm	Review of Agenda & Meeting Procedures
5:35 – 5:50 pm	Discussion of Master Plan Framework
5:50 – 6:40 pm	Discussion of Draft Transportation Chapter
6:40 – 6:50 pm	Discussion of Vision Statement
6:50 – 7:00 pm	Wrap Up & Next Steps



# **F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places**

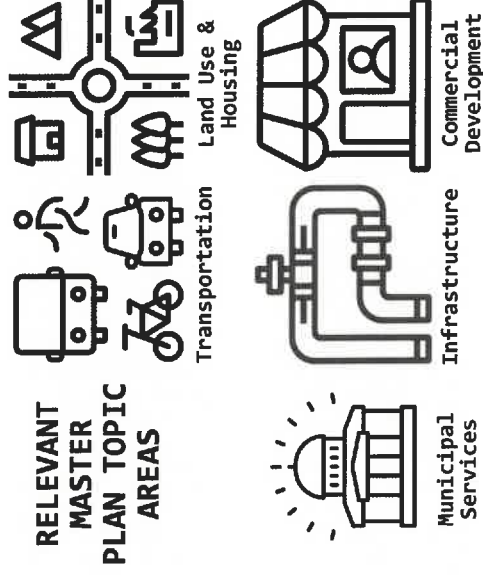
## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents goals and strategies for improving transportation options for Conway residents, including strategies for addressing transportation infrastructure and services. It also includes strategies related to land use regulation, as local development patterns have a significant impact on what transportation options are available and convenient for residents.

Conway's transportation system is reflective of its unique geography, development, and economy. As a gateway to the White Mountains and a regional service hub, Conway experiences significant influxes of workers and visitors, with the slopes of the Mount Washington Valley funneling regional traffic onto a handful of state and federal highways. Unlike most towns of its size that have a single downtown area, Conway has multiple village areas and commercial hubs. Within each of these areas, the Town must contend with how to balance heavy regional traffic with local transportation safety and convenience needs.

Through the Master Plan process, residents clearly articulated a desire for improved pedestrian and bicycle safety in Conway, as well as continued attention towards managing traffic congestion. Improving multi-modal transportation options - walking, bicycling, and public transportation - can help alleviate congestion by providing residents with alternatives to driving for local trips. Given that the primary highways through Conway are managed by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), continued collaboration between the Town and State will be critical to implementing local transportation solutions.

**Traveling through Conway should be safe, convenient, and comfortable for all modes of transportation - driving, walking, bicycling, and others.**



## F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places



### Desired Outcomes

- *Conway's villages are more safe and comfortable for pedestrians and wheelchair users.*
- *Commercial areas are more easily navigated by drivers and pedestrians.*
- *Bicycling between Conway's villages is safer, more comfortable, and more convenient.*
- *A wider range of public transportation services are available to residents.*
- *Traffic congestion is managed and monitored.*

### Recent And Planned Transportation Infrastructure Projects

#### Recent Projects:

- The Mount Washington Valley Rec Path, a multi-use path connecting Redstone and North Conway (2023)
- Main Street in Conway Village was reconstructed with improved sidewalks in in (2022).

#### Planned Projects:

- Reconstruction of roadway and sidewalks along NH 16 from Washington Street to the NH 113 intersection, upgrading the NH 16/Washington St/Pleasant St traffic signal, and realignment of the NH 16/NH 113 intersection.
- Construction of a roundabout at the intersection of US 302 and East Conway Road.
- The Mount Washington Valley Trails Association secured funding in 2023 to extend the Mount Washington Valley Rec Path to Intervale.

## GOAL F-1:

### Manage Traffic Congestion Following Recent And Planned Transportation Infrastructure Projects

#### CHALLENGE:

**Conway has longstanding traffic congestion issues, particularly in Conway Village.** Conway is a regional traffic bottleneck, with multiple key state and federal highways converging in village areas. There have been various attempts to address traffic congestion over the years, including a proposed bypass of NH Route 16 around Conway's villages. Intersection upgrades have been completed at the junction of NH 16, Washington St, and Pleasant St, and upgrades are planned for the intersection of NH 16 and East Main St.

#### STRATEGIES:

**F-1.1: Monitor before and after traffic flow following intersection improvements in Conway Village.**

- Coordinate with NHDOT and North Country Council to monitor traffic volumes, turning movements, and delays.
- Coordinate with NHDOT regarding traffic signal timing enhancements as needed.

**F-1.2: Designate North-South Rd as a parkway and draft an ordinance to limit curb cuts and impervious surface along the roadway.**

- The North-South Road was constructed as a bypass to "The Strip" (NH 16/US 302); restricting additional access points will help limit potential congestion along this key local road.



Heavy traffic volumes in Conway Village

## GOAL F-2:

### Improve Walkability In Village Centers And Commercial Areas

#### CHALLENGE #1:

**Heavy regional traffic and wide roadways in villages discourage walking.** There needs to be a balance between regional traffic throughput and the safety and comfort of pedestrians in walkable village areas. While North Conway Village and Conway Village feature extensive sidewalks, there are minimal protections for pedestrians crossing busy roadways.



During peak times of year, traffic along “The Strip” (NH 16/US 302) can exceed 20,000 cars per day, a volume of traffic typically associated with towns with much larger populations.



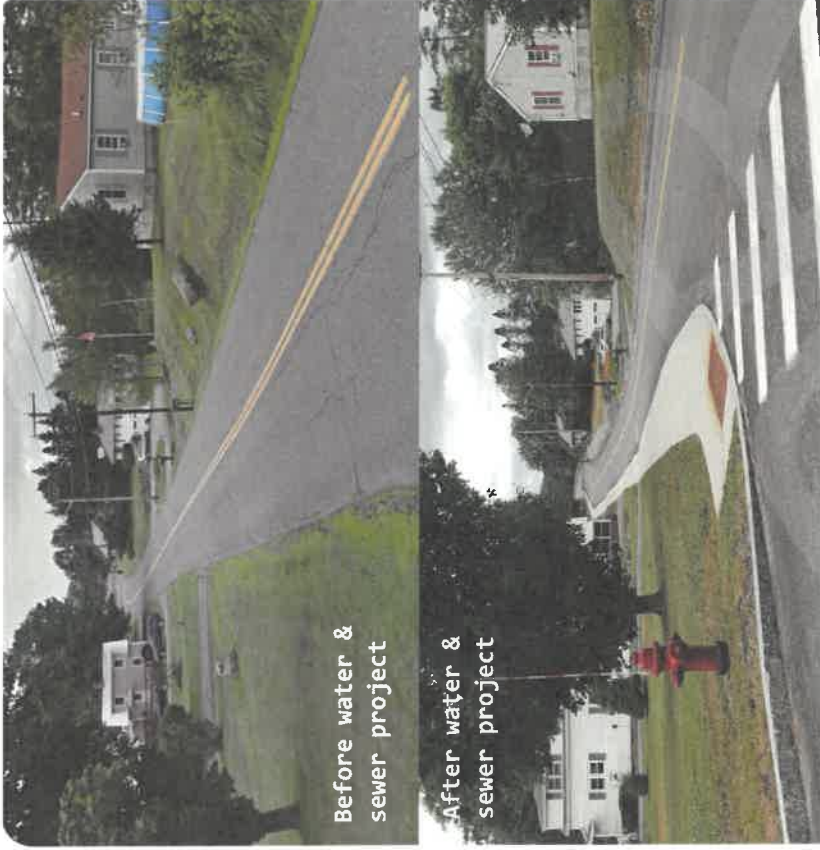
NH 16/US 302 in North Conway Village has a curb-to-curb width of nearly 80 feet in places. Combined with heavy traffic, this distance discourages people from crossing the road on foot, particularly families with children and residents with limited mobility.



During the process to develop the Master Plan, residents expressed a strong desire to see Conway’s village centers become more pedestrian- and wheelchair-friendly.



## F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places



Before water & sewer project

After water & sewer project

Water and sewer line infrastructure projects can be an opportunity to upgrade transportation infrastructure as well, as these projects typically involve digging up a roadway to access buried lines. Pictured is Mascoma Street in Lebanon, NH. The City of Lebanon used a water and sewer improvement project as an opportunity to add a sidewalk along this busy residential street.

### STRATEGIES:

#### **F-2.1: Find short-term, low-cost pedestrian safety improvements for Conway's villages.**

- Examples of relatively low-cost pedestrian safety improvements include painting high-visibility crosswalks, "yield to pedestrian" signs at crosswalks, temporary curb extensions at crosswalks, and/or rectangular rapid flashing beacons.

#### **F-2.2: Identify opportunities for beautifying village streetscapes.**

- This could include lower-cost improvements, such as planter boxes and public art, as well as adding street trees and landscaping as part of larger infrastructure improvement projects.

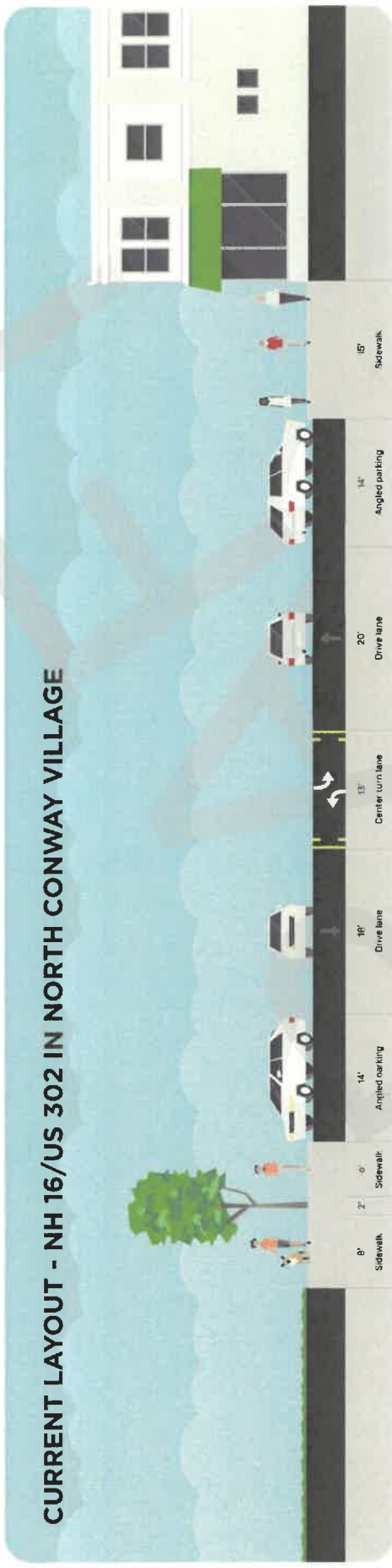
#### **F-2.3: Address gaps in the sidewalk network.**

- There are three significant gaps in the regional sidewalk network in Conway: 1) between the Intervale area and Memorial Hospital, 2) along NH 16 between "The Strip" and Conway Village, and 3) along US 302 in the village area of Center Conway. Some residential streets in village areas lack sidewalks as well.
- Potential funding strategies include federal infrastructure grants, creating a local capital reserve fund, conditions of development approvals, and incorporating sidewalks into other infrastructure improvement projects (e.g., road reconstruction, water/sewer infrastructure expansion).

## F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places

### F-2.4: Explore long-term pedestrian safety infrastructure improvements projects for Conway's villages.

- Consider spot improvements at key intersections such as curb extensions, pedestrian refuge medians, and/or improved crosswalk lighting.
- In partnership with NHDOT, explore reducing the overall width of NH 16/US 302 in North Conway Village by reducing excessive travel lane widths, calming vehicular traffic, and increasing the width of sidewalks. This could also help create public spaces for outdoor dining, pocket parks, and other public uses.



*Current and potential roadway layouts for NH 16/US 302 in North Conway Village. By reducing excessively wide travel lanes, new public spaces could be created that add to the safety, enjoyment, and vibrancy of the village.*

## F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places

### F-2.5: Create safer walking routes to school.

- Assess popular walking routes and identify opportunities for spot improvements (e.g., crosswalk enhancements, wayfinding signage) or new pedestrian connections.
- Evaluate crosswalks on Main Street at Conway Elementary School and Kennett Middle School and consider crosswalk enhancements such as additional pedestrian signage or rapid-flashing beacons.



Crosswalk enhancements, such as the centerline YIELD signs and rapid flashing beacons pictured above, can significantly improve driver awareness of crossing pedestrians. These enhancements are typically used at “mid-block” crosswalks where there are no stop signs or traffic signals to stop vehicular traffic.



## F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places

### CHALLENGE #2:

**Current development patterns and zoning regulations contribute to a lack of walkability.** Conway's villages provide a mix of homes, businesses, and other uses in relatively close proximity to one another - making these areas more convenient to walk from place to place than other areas of town. When considering potential zoning changes, there should be an emphasis on promoting compact development with a mix of uses in village areas and areas where infill development is desired, such as the Strip.

### STRATEGIES:

**F-2.6: Revise zoning to promote walkable development patterns within and adjacent to village areas.**

**F-2.7: Revise zoning to promote mixed-use infill development within existing commercial areas.**

**F-2.8: Include pedestrian-friendly design standards in zoning.**

**F-2.9: Revise zoning to encourage shared parking and "right-size" minimum parking requirements in different zoning districts to limit excessively large parking lots, which can discourage walking.**

**F-2.10: Update Town roadway design standards using Complete Street principles.**

- "Complete Streets" means considering the needs of all roadway users (drivers, pedestrians, wheelchair users, bicyclists, etc) in roadway design.

**F-2.11: Revise subdivision regulations to encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections between adjacent residential subdivisions.**



An example of pedestrian-friendly building design along Washington Street.

## GOAL F-3:

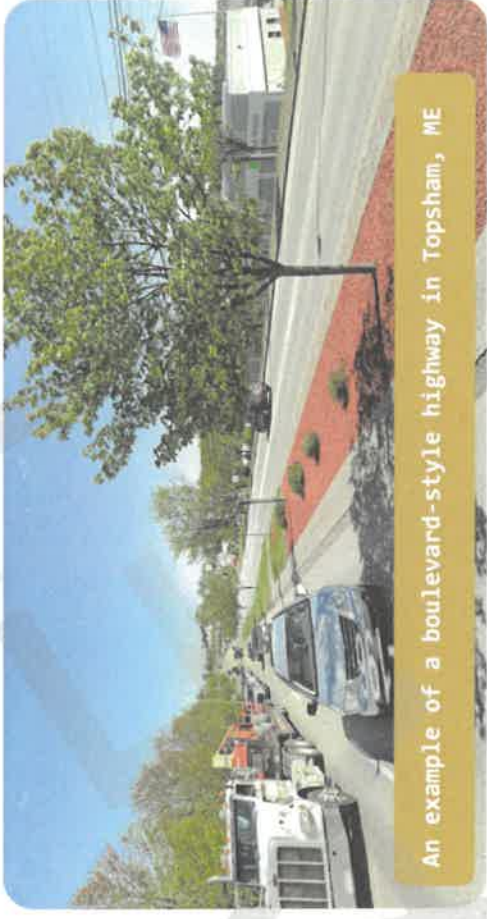
### Improve Transportation Safety And Access In Commercial Areas

#### CHALLENGE:

**Conway's commercial areas are difficult to navigate.** In particular, commercial development along "The Strip" (NH 16/US 302) features disconnected shopping areas, frequent driveway intersections, and inconsistent sidewalks.

#### STRATEGIES:

- F-3.1: Develop a comprehensive corridor study for "The Strip" that addresses vehicular traffic safety, pedestrian access, and commercial access management along NH 16/US 302.**
- F-3.2: Consider potential long-term options for a redesign of "The Strip", including "boulevard-ing" NH 16/US 302 with center medians and landscaping.**
- This would likely need to be done in partnership with NHDOT through the New Hampshire Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan ("Ten Year Plan") or another federal funding program.
- F-3.3: Encourage improved connectivity within and between adjacent shopping areas, commercial developments, and residential areas along "The Strip".**
- This could include the construction of new driveways that allow drivers to avoid re-entering NH 16/US 302, as well as new sidewalk connections that allow people to park once and walk to multiple destinations. This can be encouraged through zoning and site plan regulations.
  - Explore opportunities for trail connections between residential areas, accommodations, and commercial destinations.



An example of a boulevard-style highway in Topsham, ME

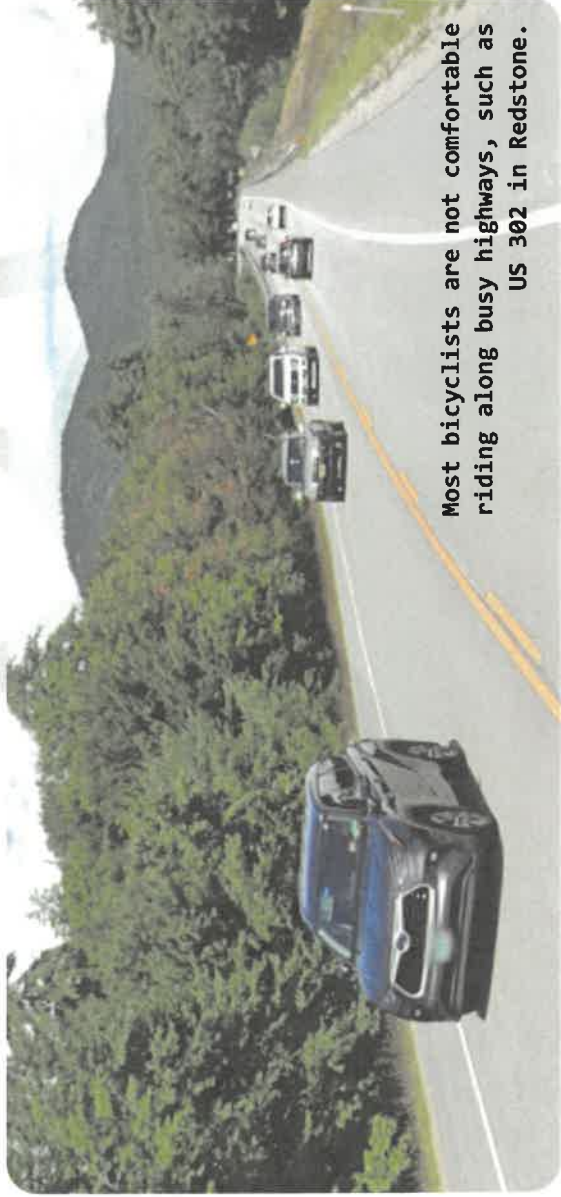
## GOAL F-4:

### Improve Bicycle Connectivity Between Different Areas Of Town

#### CHALLENGE:

**The bicycle routes between Conway's villages are along high-traffic roadways.**

The Mount Washington Valley Rec Path provides a safe and comfortable bicycle route from Redstone to North Conway Village; however, no equivalent bicycle connections exist between other village areas. Additionally, there is a lack of alternatives to biking along primary highways such as NH 16, US 302, and NH 113 to connect between villages.



Most bicyclists are not comfortable riding along busy highways, such as US 302 in Redstone.

**i** According to research conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, the vast majority of interested bicyclists are not comfortable sharing the road with higher traffic volumes unless there is some level of physical separation from traffic (i.e., riding on a separate bike path such as the Mount Washington Valley Rec Path).

**i** During the process to develop the Master Plan, residents expressed a desire for improved bicycle connectivity between Conway's village centers.

## F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places



### STRATEGIES:

#### **F-4.1: Extend the Mount Washington Valley Rec Path to Intervale.**

#### **F-4.2: Explore opportunities for improving bicycle connections to the Mount Washington Valley Rec Path.**

- This could include connections to Settler's Green and other destinations adjacent to the path.

#### **F-4.3: Connect the Mount Washington Valley Rec Path to the planned Mountain Division Rail Trail in Fryeburg.**

- This planned rail trail will connect Fryeburg, ME to Portland, ME using the Mountain Division line that currently runs through Center Conway and Redstone. The route would connect Center Conway and Redstone directly to the Rec Path.

#### **F-4.4: Identify other opportunities for alternative bicycle connections between villages and other key destinations.**

- Consider the role of the Town in implementing the recommended trail connection projects identified in the *Mount Washington Valley Off-Road Trails Plan*, prepared by the Mount Washington Valley Trails Association.
- Evaluate other potential path or trail connections between residential areas and recreation destinations.
- Evaluate potential "rail-with-trail" possibilities along the rail line owned by Conway Scenic Railroad between North Conway and Conway Village, which would also create a safe route to Kennett Middle School.

#### **F-4.5: Identify opportunities for improved bicycle parking, including new public bicycle racks and revising zoning to encourage bicycle parking as part of new developments, including covered bicycle parking.**

## GOAL F-5:

### Explore Options For Improved Public Transportation Services

#### CHALLENGE:

##### **Public transportation options are limited in Conway.**

There is currently no public bus service in the Mount Washington Valley other than the Concord Coach Line, which is not suitable for local or commuter use. Tri-County Transit provides low-cost dial-a-ride bus services (i.e., door-to-door) that are focused on senior and limited-mobility residents but are also available to the general public in Conway. Tri-County Transit previously operated the Blue Loon commuter bus, which provided service to Conway and adjacent towns, but was unable to sustain the service.

#### STRATEGIES:

##### **F-5.1: Explore possible microtransit solutions for Conway.**

- Microtransit is an emerging transit innovation that involves on-demand bus or shuttle services with highly flexible routing and scheduling. This allows microtransit services to potentially succeed in more rural areas where traditional bus service is not viable. Public/private partnerships with large employers could be examined.

##### **F-5.2: Promote carpooling/ridesharing.**

- Encourage participation by employers in CommuteSmartNH programs and explore opportunities for regional employer carpooling and ridesharing programs with organizations such as the Mount Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce, Mount Washington Valley Economic Council, and Carroll County Regional Coordination Council.

##### **F-5.3: Explore opportunities for improved school transportation services.**



## GOAL F-6:

## Manage Parking Effectively



In 2018, the Town of Littleton, NH completed a comprehensive Downtown Parking Plan. The planning process included an ad-hoc citizen committee, a study of parking occupancy, and a public open house.

The plan includes recommendations for expanding parking facilities, improving signage, encouraging turnover in high-demand parking areas, and strategies for funding ongoing parking management.

### CHALLENGE:

The Town lacks a comprehensive strategy for managing parking demand in village areas.

### STRATEGIES:

**F-6.1: Implement a comprehensive parking management approach for existing public parking in village areas.**

- Consider conducting a basic study of parking occupancy of public parking areas at different times of day, days of the week, and/or times of year.
- Informed by a study of parking, consider approaches for parking management that address parking duration, navigation and wayfinding, employee parking, pedestrian access, enforcement, and electric vehicle parking.
- Consider strategies for decreasing parking demand, such as improved pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation connections that allow residents and visitors to reach popular destinations without a car.
- Promote a “park once” experience for visitors to villages and shopping areas.

# CONWAY FORWARD: MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK

This document presents a proposed outline for how the Master Plan will be structured. The primary objectives with this framework are to have a Master Plan that is accessible, clear, comprehensive, and actionable. The plan includes sections on traditional master planning topics (e.g., transportation, natural resources, economic development) as well as sections on key “catalyst projects” that will be a priority for implementation efforts and cut across many topic areas.

## Chapter 1. Vision & Introduction

### Vision Statement

### Plan Purpose

### Planning Process

### Plan Organization

- Infographic w/ Key Goals/Chapters

## Chapter 2. Executive Summary & Planning Topics

These are the major themes and topical areas that the Master Plan addresses. These issues intersect with each other in different ways throughout Conway. This section will provide a summary of relevant challenges, goals, and strategies associated with different planning topics (1-2 pages each).

### Housing

### Land Use

### Transportation

### Economic Development & Tourism

### Arts, Culture, & Historic Preservation

### Recreation

### Natural Resources & Open Space

### Municipal Services & Infrastructure

## Chapter 3. Catalyst Projects to Move Conway Forward

These are major projects that transcend multiple challenges and opportunities faced by Conway and will be a primary focus of future implementation efforts.

- **Catalyst Project #1: Reform Zoning Regulations to Bring Back Balance: Promote Housing, Tame Commercial Development, and Protect Natural Resources**
  - This section provides a comprehensive overview of needed zoning reform, connecting proposed zoning reforms to desired changes for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, natural resources, and water quality.
  - This is where we will include the future land use map that will be used to identify potential new zoning districts.
  - Identify process details and responsible parties.

- **Catalyst Project #2: Expand and Enhance Water and Wastewater Infrastructure to Support Housing and Economic Development and Protect Water Quality**
  - This section provides a comprehensive overview of water and wastewater expansion and enhancement needs.
  - Define desired future water and sewer service areas and any corresponding zoning changes.
  - Connect to goals around land use, housing, transportation, and natural resources (e.g., groundwater protection).
  - Identify comprehensive projects that can address water/sewer and transportation infrastructure (e.g., adding new sidewalks as part of water/sewer installation under roadways)
  - Identify process details and responsible parties.

## Chapter 4. Key Focus Areas & Strategies

### A. Improve Long-Term Housing Availability and Affordability

- **Introduction**
- **Topics** – land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, municipal services
  - These would be a set of icons showing the relevant planning topics that intersect with housing
- **Desired Outcomes**
  - Example desired outcome: an increase in the supply of available homes for rent or purchase that are affordable to residents of different income levels; greater workforce stability; lower cost of living
  - Identify case studies as appropriate
- **Goals & Strategies**
  - **Example Goal A1:** Promote the creation of new homes in and around Conway's village areas.
    - **Example Challenge:** Current village area zoning is very restrictive to mixed-use development (e.g., ground-floor retail with apartments above) and larger multi-family housing.
      - **Key data points** (if applicable)
      - **Example Strategy A1.1:** Revise zoning in village areas to promote multi-family housing and mixed-use development.

### B. Thoughtfully Manage Commercial Development

- **Introduction**
- **Topics** – land use, housing, transportation, economic development, infrastructure, natural resources, historic preservation
- **Desired outcomes**
- **Goal**
  - **Challenge(s)**
    - **Key data points** (if applicable)
    - **Strategies**

### C. Promote a Local Economy That Works for Conway

- **Introduction**
- **Topics** – economic development, land use, housing, infrastructure, commercial development, recreation, municipal services, arts & culture
- **Desired outcomes**
- **Goal**
  - **Challenge(s)**

- **Key data points (if applicable)**
- **Strategies**

#### D. Steward Conway's Unique Natural Resources and Open Spaces

- **Introduction**
- **Topics – land use, housing, transportation, economic development, natural resources, recreation, infrastructure, tourism**
- **Desired outcomes**
- **Goal**
  - **Challenge(s)**
    - **Key data points (if applicable)**
    - **Strategies**

#### E. Invest in Conway's Villages

- **Introduction**
- **Topics – land use, housing, transportation, economic development, infrastructure, historic preservation, municipal services, arts & culture**
- **Desired outcomes**
- **Goal**
  - **Challenge(s)**
    - **Key data points (if applicable)**
    - **Strategies**

#### F. Enhance Transportation Options to Connect People and Places

- **Introduction**
- **Topics – land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, commercial development, municipal services**
- **Desired outcomes**
- **Goal**
  - **Challenge(s)**
    - **Key data points (if applicable)**
    - **Strategies**

#### G. Steward Conway's World-Class Recreational Opportunities

- **Introduction**
- **Topics – recreation, economic development, natural resources, tourism, municipal services**
- **Desired outcomes**
- **Goal**
  - **Challenge(s)**
    - **Key data points (if applicable)**
    - **Strategies**

#### H. Enhance Municipal Services & Plan for the Future

- **Introduction**
- **Topics – municipal services**
- **Desired outcomes**
- **Goal**
  - **Challenge(s)**
    - **Key data points (if applicable)**
    - **Strategies**

**Appendix A**

Existing Conditions Memoranda

Public Input Summary

DRAFT