



# MANCHESTER CONNECTS

A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION + LAND USE PLAN  
FOR THE MILLYARD, RIVERFRONT, AND DOWNTOWN  
MANCHESTER, NH

June 2017



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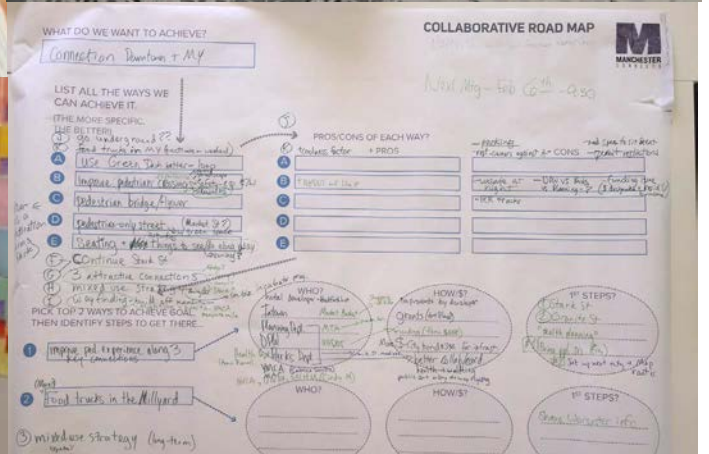
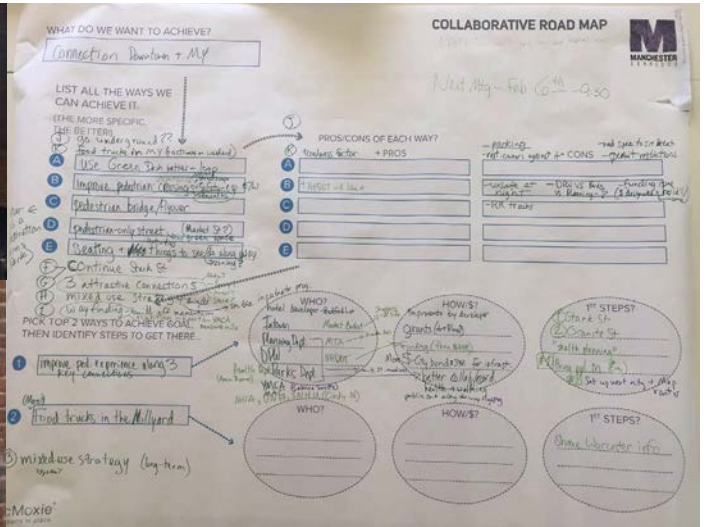
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# MANCHESTER CONNECTS

A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION + LAND USE PLAN  
FOR THE MILLYARD, RIVERFRONT, AND DOWNTOWN  
MANCHESTER, NH

*Manchester is ripe with opportunity. The 19th Century Millyard that put Manchester on the map as a bustling northern New England industrial city currently houses numerous companies at the cutting-edge of 21st Century technology. The Millyard and Downtown host the core of the city's knowledge workers and account for 28% of the city's businesses and almost 31% of its payroll.*

*Manchester businesses, residents, and employees are in the midst of the Millyard's rebirth as a high-tech and educational magnet. The city's residents, businesses, and visitors enjoy the historic city core and Millyard while maintaining easy access to the Merrimack River and surrounding natural areas.*

*This project---Manchester Connects---identifies ways to ensure people, places, and programs are better connected and that the city and residents have what is needed to ensure a high quality of life, healthy tax base, and amenities that draw businesses and visitors alike.*

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# PART 1

WHY MANCHESTER CONNECTS?

# WHY MANCHESTER CONNECTS?

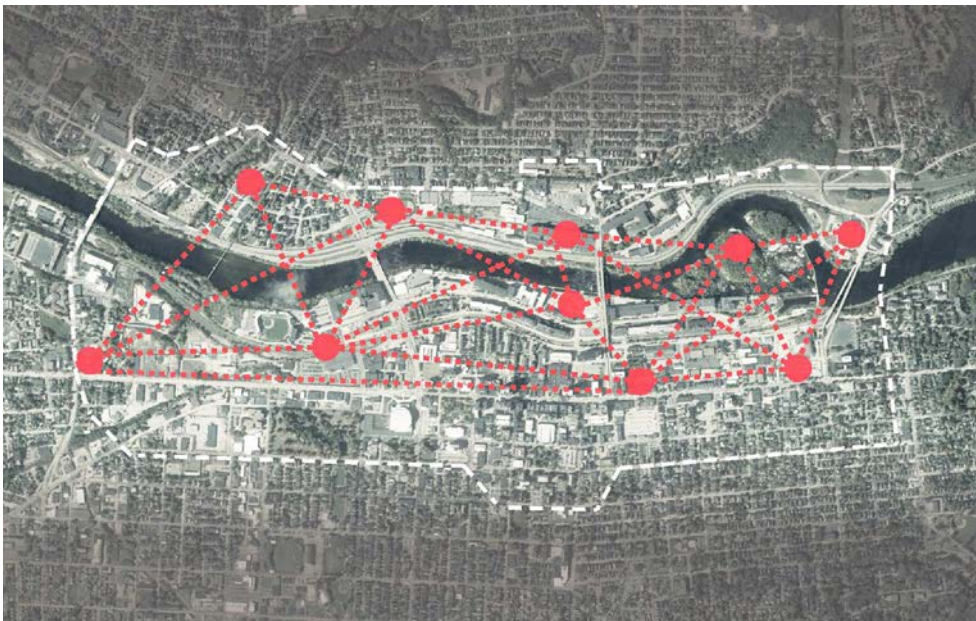
## A PROJECT OF COLLABORATORS CONNECTING OVER THEIR PASSION FOR THE CITY THEY LOVE

Manchester, New Hampshire's largest city, has witnessed a renaissance over the past several decades. This renaissance is visible in the changes in the Millyard, which is bursting with companies focused on innovation and on institutions committed to education; in the creation of new trails and open space connections such as the "Hands Across the Merrimack" pedestrian bridge, and in new residential developments downtown such as 875 Elm Street and The Flats micro unit development on Hanover Street that are responding to trends favoring urban, walkable living. All of these changes speak to an understanding and commitment to quality of life factors that make Manchester a desirable place to live, work, and play. Right now, the timing is right to make bold plans for the city's future. With the cost of living soaring in Boston to the south, millennials seeking to combine high-paying jobs with a high quality of life, and

a renewed interest in the amenities and walkability that come with urban living, Manchester could potentially be poised to ride the trends and become a city that has something for everyone. The following pages review the historical importance of the Millyard and Downtown, providing the context to today's existing conditions. The section then looks at today's trends and future projections, identifying opportunities and challenges that Manchester faces as we move deeper into the 21st Century.

Throughout history, cities have had to adjust to new conditions and trends in order to remain relevant. Today is no different. Manchester will need to adapt to new conditions and trends to thrive as a 21st Century city. This planning initiative connects current trends driving business decisions and lifestyle choices to what is happening in Manchester in order to create good outcomes for businesses and residents.

*This graphic illustrates how multiple destinations located throughout the city create a web of activity as people move between destinations.*



Source: CivicMoxie

The Manchester Connects planning initiative wasn't dreamed up one day over lunch—it builds on years of hard work and investment by key stakeholders in the city who have long sought to reinvigorate the riverfront and Millyard to make Manchester a more appealing destination for new businesses and residents. This planning initiative is driven by a group of dedicated, civic-minded individuals who understand the power of collaborators sharing their ideas, skills, visions, and resources. This community-driven spirit isn't new to Manchester. Over eighty years ago, when the riverside mills were on the brink of bankruptcy in 1936, a group of Manchester business owners partnered to buy them to retain local control and save them from likely demolition.

This action paved the way for rehabilitation of the historic mill buildings decades later; renovations in the Millyard, alongside efforts by public officials beginning in the 1970s to clean up the Merrimack River, have drawn new economic activity to the area. The creation of Intown Manchester in the 1990s also marked a transition point, as the City and downtown business owners began to work together to address the need for programming, improved public spaces and streetscapes, and other efforts to make the downtown area more attractive to residents, visitors, and potential businesses.

In more recent years, efforts to improve transportation alternatives and connectivity within the city's core have included new and expanded bike trails, the rebranding of the Manchester Transit Authority's "Green Dash" transit line, the construction of the "Hands Across the Merrimack" pedestrian bridge, and the building of a section of the Riverwalk along the eastern side of the Merrimack. Nearly all of these recent projects have involved public-private partnerships, with property owners, local institutional leaders, business people, public officials, and ordinary citizens all working together to achieve shared goals.

These groups recognized a growing need for a larger, more strategic framework to shape long-term change in the area, rather than individual piecemeal projects. These individuals and groups began working together; it is from this partnership that Manchester Connects was born.

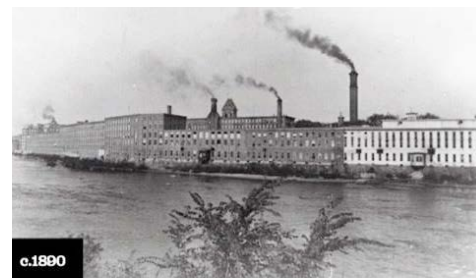
Though it officially kicked off in spring 2016, this plan builds upon earlier efforts to expand and reimagine the Riverwalk, as well as ongoing work by key stakeholders to improve places and connections Downtown, in the Millyard, and West Side. Some of the major contributors to this initiative are engaged individuals--

long-standing residents and community leaders with a passion for their city's success, while others represent local businesses and institutions—the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the New Hampshire Institute of Art, DEKA, the Millyard Museum, UNH Manchester, Intown Manchester, and the Manchester Arts Commission, just to name a few. Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) provided funding through their Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) agreement with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and was a central participant in the planning effort.

Most importantly, this solid base of collaborators will make it easier to implement the recommendations and ideas presented in this plan. Not only do they have experience working together (strengthened by the planning process itself), but they also possess the capacity and know-how to make things happen in Manchester. A list of all participants in this planning process, as well as project funders, can be found on the inside front cover of this report.

## WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT MANCHESTER AND THE MILLYARD/ DOWNTOWN?

Manchester Connects is about protecting and growing a major economic engine for the city and region. That means this project isn't just about the Millyard, or just about Downtown. The health of this combined area and its attractiveness to businesses and skilled knowledge workers is of critical importance to the tax base, quality of life, and ongoing desirability of the city and region as a place to live and work.



*The Millyard has evolved into a high-tech innovation hub, but it is disconnected from other areas of Manchester*

*Sources, top to bottom: CivicMoxie, Courtesy of the Manchester Historic Association and Mark Peterson/Redux Pictures for Politico Magazine, CivicMoxie*

### Economic Development Trends – The City and County Economic Base

Manchester's economic fortunes have long been tied to the Boston regional economy, dating back to the formation of the Amoskeag Manufacturing Corporation by Boston investors and development of the city's mill district as an integrated manufacturing center and residential neighborhood in the 19th century. Over the past several decades, Manchester and Southern New Hampshire have attracted many expanding and relocating Boston businesses and entrepreneurs based on the area's lower costs, transportation infrastructure, and quality of life. This trend began with defense, computer and electronics manufacturers, beginning in the 1960s and has expanded to financial services firms such as Fidelity Investments, and more recently, the software, internet and information technology industries<sup>1</sup>. The availability of affordable and highly

of knowledge-intensive industries to the region's economy.

In Hillsborough County, knowledge-based sectors that include information, professional and technical services, and education and health care account for 26.5% of total employment (see Figure 1). When high technology components of manufacturing are added, the share increases to one-third. Manchester's employment is more heavily concentrated in knowledge-based industries with information, education and health care, and professional and technical services together accounting for 42.2% of employment. Additionally, the share of each of these sectors is larger for Manchester than the county.

*Manchester is the county leader in knowledge-intensive job growth with employment becoming more concentrated in Manchester, which added more jobs between 2008 and 2015 than the entire county.*

adaptable mill buildings in Manchester's Millyard district has been an important asset in attracting and growing these enterprises. Consequently, Manchester and the surrounding region is now home to a large and multi-faceted mix of knowledge-intensive and high technology businesses that include advanced equipment manufacturers, specialized parts and components for complex products and systems, information and communications firms, and professional and technical services. A local educational and health care services sector adds to the importance

<sup>1</sup>Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission. Target Industry Analysis. Page A-10

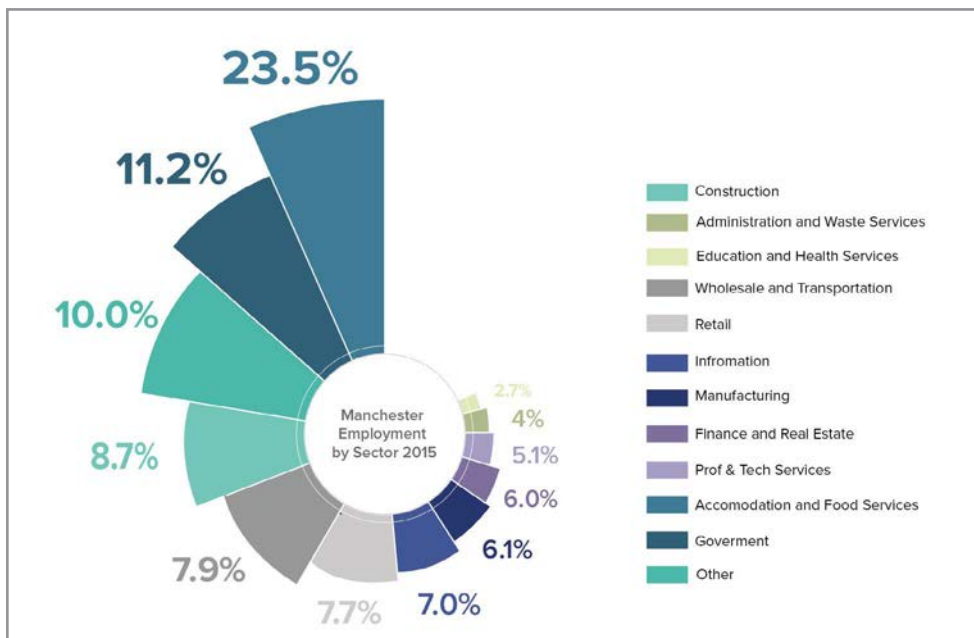
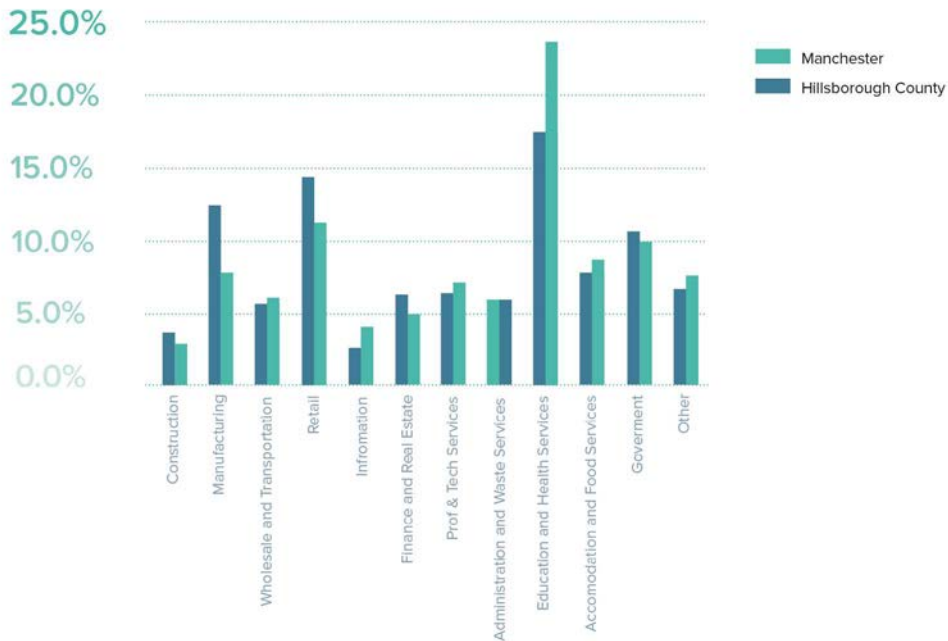


*The directory for 500 Commercial Street in the Millyard shows a diverse group of tenants.*

Source: CivicMoxie



**Figure 1: Employment by Sector Manchester and Hillsborough County, 2015**



Data source: US Census Bureau

### Recent Employment Trends

In the post-recessionary period, Manchester has had more job growth than Hillsborough County as a whole. Between 2008 and 2015, Hillsborough County's employment increased only 0.4%. During the same time period, Manchester's employment growth was 1.8% (see Table 1). Additionally, employment became more concentrated in Manchester. The city added more jobs between 2008 and 2015 than the entire county. While Hillsborough County added 866 net new jobs and 1,595 private sector jobs, job growth in Manchester totaled 1,213 and the private sector expanded by 1,735 positions. Job growth in both the city and county have been driven by an expansion of knowledge-intensive sectors, especially in the education and health care sectors.

Job growth for both the city and county was highly concentrated in a few sectors. The knowledge-intensive information, professional, and technical services and education health care sectors were important growth sectors for Manchester. Economic sectors that expanded in both Manchester and Hillsborough County are:

- Administration and Waste Services;
- Education and Health Services; and
- Accommodation and Food Services.

Administration and Waste Services grew twice as fast in Manchester as at the county level (29.2% versus 14.6% for Manchester), but Manchester had faster growth in the other two sectors. Education and Health Services was especially important for Manchester, growing by 24% and adding almost 3,100 jobs from 2008 to 2015. With the county adding 4,313 Education and Health Care jobs during this period, Manchester accounted for 72% of county's employment expansion in this key part of the economy.

While Hillsborough County experienced job losses in most other sectors, Manchester also had job growth in two additional sectors<sup>2</sup>:

- Information (which includes software, publishing, and media companies) expanded by 6.2%, adding 161 jobs; compared with a loss of 489 jobs countywide; and
- Professional and Technical Services added 528 jobs, growing by 12.6% versus stable county employment that shed 46 jobs, a 0.4% decline.

Among declining sectors, Manufacturing was especially hard hit losing 4,611 jobs county wide and 1,418 in Manchester.

TABLE 1. EMPLOYMENT GROWTH, 2008 TO 2015, MANCHESTER AND HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Sector	Manchester	Hillsborough County
Construction	NA	-1.9%
Manufacturing	-20.7%	-15.8%
Wholesale and Transportation	-17.0%	-8.6%
Retail	-7.1%	-0.3%
Information	6.2%	-8.7%
Finance and Real Estate	-14.5%	-6.3%
Professional and Technical Services	12.6%	-0.4%
Administration and Waste Services	14.6%	29.2%
Education and Health Services	23.8%	14.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	10.7%	8.6%
Government	-7.1%	-12.2%
Other	-2.1%	5.1%
Total Employment All Sectors	1.8%	0.4%

Source: New Hampshire Employment Security, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (ES-202 Data Series)

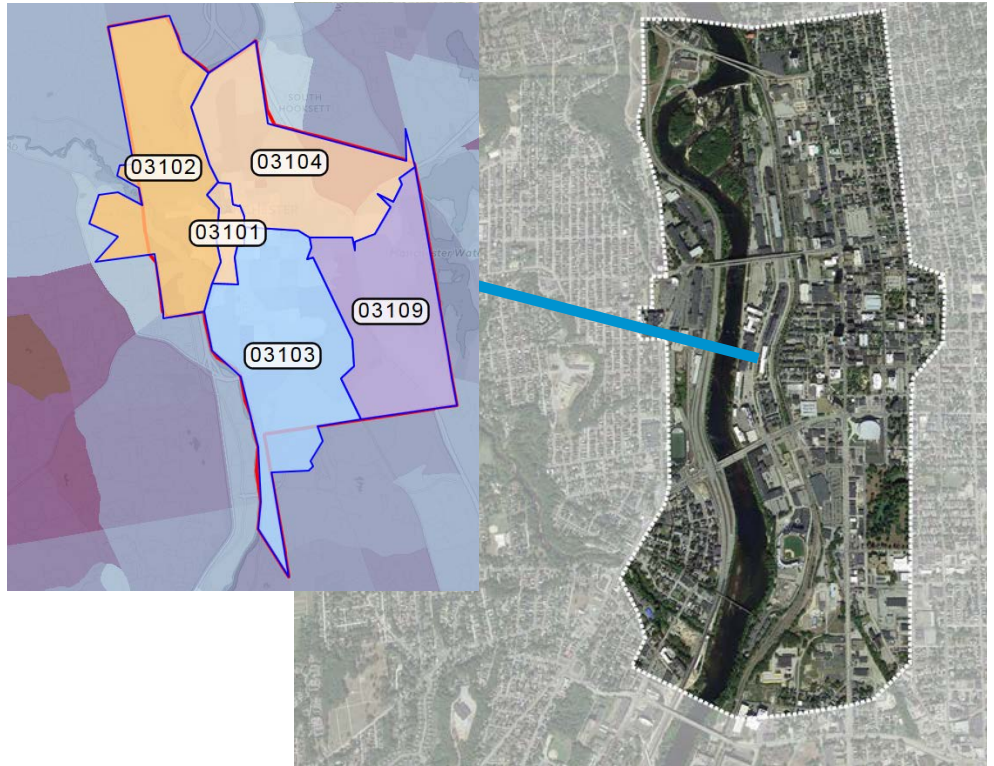
<sup>2</sup>Small gains in county employment occurred in three sectors included in the other category: management of companies added 322 jobs and arts, entertainment, and recreation added 314.

### Role of the Millyard and Downtown District

The economic data illustrates the importance of Manchester to the regional economy and within the city, the Millyard and Downtown play a key role in the city's economic dominance in the county. Manchester is becoming increasingly important as a regional economic center, especially for higher paying knowledge-intensive industries, and the Millyard and Downtown District constitutes a large part of the city's economy.

To demonstrate the value of the Millyard and Downtown to Manchester as a whole, the number of establishments, employment, and total payroll for the Millyard and Downtown were compared to the total for all Manchester zip codes using 2015 County Patterns zip code data (see Table 2).

Not surprisingly, the Millyard and Downtown zip codes are some of the



Source: CivicMoxie

**TABLE 2: MANCHESTER ESTABLISHMENTS, EMPLOYMENT AND PAYROLL BY ZIP CODE, 2015**

Geographic Area	Number of Establishments	Paid Employees	Annual Payroll (\$000)
Zip Code 03101	814	14,208	881,256
ZIP Code 03102	420	8,916	408,880
ZIP Code 03103	1,078	24,098	1,073,323
ZIP Code 03104	569	8,128	411,961
ZIP Code 03105	19	471	16,133
Zip Code 03108	19	471	16,133
Zip Code 03109	31	848	45,581
Zip Code 03111	3	5	1,050
Total	2,953	57,145	2,854,317
Millyard/ Downtown Percentage	27.6%	24.9%	30.9%

Source: US Census Bureau County Business Patterns

largest employment centers in Manchester, second only to the zip code that includes Manchester's airport. These zip codes account for nearly 28% of business establishments and one-quarter of the city's total employment<sup>3</sup>. Reflecting its role as a center for higher paying technology- and knowledge-intensive businesses, it generates a significantly larger share of Manchester's total payroll, at 30.9%.

### **Growing Economic Development: Importance of Talent and Local Placemaking**

Where does Manchester Connects play into this picture? It's all about quality of life, connectivity, and current trends in location factors for businesses and knowledge-workers.

The knowledge-intensive Manufacturing (high technology), Information, Professional and Technical Services, and Education and Health Care sectors all share a need for talent and highly-skilled and educated workers. Access to highly educated and skilled labor is becoming increasingly important for knowledge-based firms--often outstripping business cost as a driving factor for location

decisions among firms and entrepreneurs. In 2013, 150 founders of the fastest-growing companies in the United States were surveyed about where they chose to locate their company. This survey found that the most frequently cited factor when choosing a location was access to talent<sup>4</sup>.

In addition to companies choosing a location based on their access to talent, an overwhelming majority (two-thirds) of younger professionals looking for a job after college choose where they want to live before they look for a job<sup>5</sup>. These workers are in demand, able to obtain good employment throughout the nation and world, and are attracted to cities and communities with a high quality of life, strong sense of place, and rich amenities. Younger workers, especially in the "Millennial" generation are attracted to cities and urban living rather than suburban areas.

These demographic trends and preferences are creating a strong nexus between attracting young skilled and talented workers and economic development both to grow local enterprises and attract new firms.

<sup>3</sup> The zip code that includes Manchester Airport is the city's largest employment center, which reflects the employment impact of the airport

<sup>4,5</sup> Cited in Place Matters: The Role of Placemaking in Economic Development, International Economic Development Council, p. 7.

*Walkable neighborhoods with amenities like public space and retail are increasingly desired by knowledge-sector employees - the exact population that companies in the Millyard, Downtown, and West Side are seeking.*



Sources, clockwise from top left: [www.transitscreen.com/blog/an-open-letter-to-urban-grocery-stores](http://www.transitscreen.com/blog/an-open-letter-to-urban-grocery-stores), [www.pps.org/blog/eight-placemaking-principles-for-innovation-districts](http://www.pps.org/blog/eight-placemaking-principles-for-innovation-districts), [www.time.com/money/collection-post/4000798/best-places-millennials](http://www.time.com/money/collection-post/4000798/best-places-millennials), [www.businessinsider.com/best-cities-for-millennials-2017-4](http://www.businessinsider.com/best-cities-for-millennials-2017-4)



This trend in urban residential preference is increasingly being matched by business preferences for urban versus suburban locations. The key factors driving urban business locations are to:

- Attract and retain talented workers
- Inspire creativity and collaboration
- Be closer to customers and business partners
- Generate “triple bottom line” outcomes of profit, environmental sustainability, and social equity<sup>6</sup>.

Given these trends, the way for cities to improve their competitiveness and ability to attract highly-skilled workers, expanding the high value business base that relies on these workers, and attracting firms that seek the benefits of a location in an urban center is to focus on creating attractive and high quality urban centers with rich amenities and quality of place.

Further, a strong and growing knowledge-intensive employment sector will have a multiplier effect on the greater Manchester region. The higher wages associated with the knowledge-sector will help expand the

*It's important to take care of the Millyard and Downtown so they can continue to be a strong contributor to the city and region. This project focuses on ensuring Manchester can capture this moment to its best advantage.*

spending and investment that supports the construction, retail, arts, business services, and food sectors.

## HOW CAN WE SUSTAIN THE MILLYARD AND DOWNTOWN?

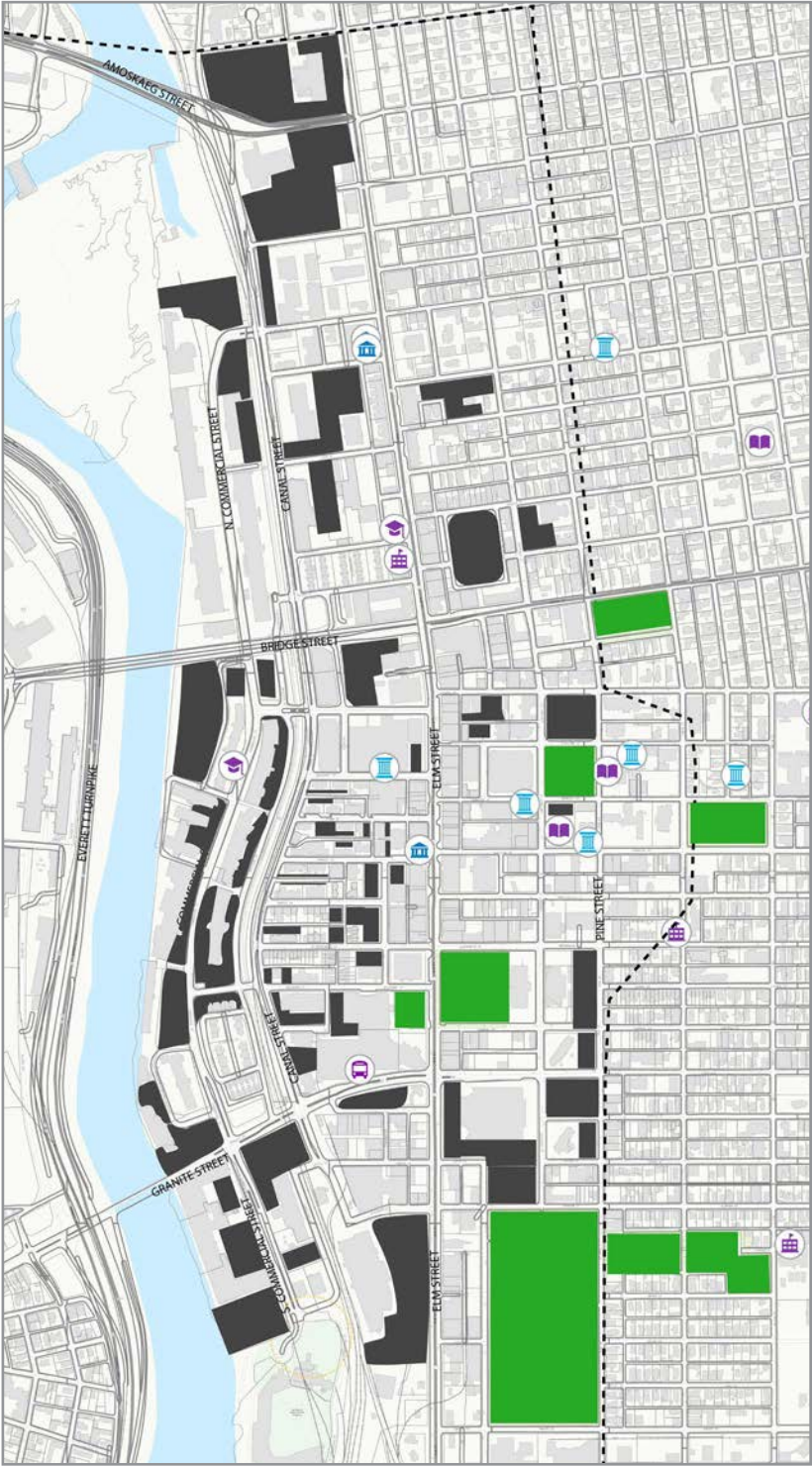
Today's Millyard functions like an island, but it should not be treated that way. It can be tempting to think of the area as an isolated location where relatively few landowners can work to meet challenges without outside support, but the economic and social impact the Millyard has on Manchester and the region means that the Millyard is intrinsically linked to the economic and social health of the region. The economic data, sheer number of companies and jobs, and outsized

<sup>6</sup> Place Matters: The Role of Placemaking in Economic Development, International Economic Development Council, p. 8-9.



Sources, left to right: [www.theodysseyonline.com/4-reasons-why-new-england-is-the-best-region-in-america](http://www.theodysseyonline.com/4-reasons-why-new-england-is-the-best-region-in-america), [www.portsmouthnh.com/listing/puddle-dock-pond-at-strawbery-bank](http://www.portsmouthnh.com/listing/puddle-dock-pond-at-strawbery-bank), [www.shapedscape.com/projects/village-of-yorkville-park-martha-schwartz-ken-smith-david-meyer-landscape-architects-toronto](http://www.shapedscape.com/projects/village-of-yorkville-park-martha-schwartz-ken-smith-david-meyer-landscape-architects-toronto)

MILLYARD AND DOWNTOWN PARKING



The Millyard has approximately 3,697,000 square feet of building area. Compare this with approximately 11,573,000 square feet of asphalt!

Source: CivicMoxie

contribution to Manchester's image mean that the Millyard is "everyone's Millyard" and should not be taken for granted.

Growth and prosperity are reliant on embracing change and being responsive to trends. Threatening the continued prosperity of the Millyard and Downtown are the challenges that have arisen from changing times and lifestyle patterns of 21st century living.

At its height of prosperity, the mills attracted workers who lived in the areas surrounding the Millyard. Workers, many of them immigrants, walked to work in the Millyard across the bridge from the West Side and from other residential housing areas. There were fewer people in these buildings than there are today. Cars were not part of the worker/workplace equation in the 19th century. In addition, mill workers didn't seek trendy cafes to have a bite with coworkers or schedule power lunches. Lastly, mill management (the 19th century's version of a 21st century knowledge worker) sought to separate their living and working environments... locating their homes away from the noise and smells of the Millyard as a sign of status and wealth.

Likewise, Elm Street was the business and retail center of the city. Banks, insurance companies, clothing stores, and all the other services needed by residents and workers could be found here. The Mall of New Hampshire, with its 125 stores and ample parking did not exist, and families saw Downtown as the destination for special meals and entertainment.

All of this has changed for the Millyard and Downtown in 21st Century Manchester. Technology, new expectations about work and home life, rising costs, and a myriad of factors have created challenges threatening

this important economic engine of the city and region.

**Businesses and residents are seeking mixed-use communities in which to locate.**

- The Millyard is a mostly single-use district that doesn't offer the vibrancy and choices that new and desirable innovation districts can. Innovation districts are multiplying fast in the Northeast (see the note about Innovation Districts on pages 34 through 37).
- Downtown property owners have found it difficult-to-impossible to convert commercial space to residential units, despite the strong demand for housing. The cost of addressing code compliance issues in the conversion of older buildings on and near Elm Street, particularly in smaller buildings, is a major impediment to achieving the mix of uses that Downtown needs to thrive.

**Walkability and multimodal transportation are desired by today's workforce and that trend shows every sign of growing, not receding**

- Currently, 98% of Millyard employees drive alone or carpool to work. In addition, the number one priority for the respondents to the Manchester Connects survey put "good pedestrian and multimodal connections" from Elm Street to the Millyard and Riverwalk" as the highest priority for this planning initiative. One can only conclude that many don't think walkability and transportation choices exist today.
- The MTA Green Dash is underutilized by the community and isn't seen as a viable alternative to driving to work or school despite good efforts to provide

- reliable, safe service for the Millyard.
- Though the Millyard, West Side, and Downtown are all within a mile of each other, these neighborhoods are very disconnected, in part due to grade level changes, the presence of the railroad tracks, and the former existence of the canals that has created street patterns that are fragmented.

**Without a true mix of uses and connectedness, the Millyard and Downtown are missing their competitive advantage.**

- The Millyard can't compete with suburban office parks in terms of free parking and ease of access and so must differentiate itself by providing the unique high-quality-of-life live, work, play environment that millennials and entrepreneurs want. Parking constraints, land use patterns, and lack of connectivity all hamper efforts to successfully adapt to changing expectations and competition.

**Quality-of-life amenities are key driving factors in decision-making on where to live and where to locate businesses. These amenities are key to attracting knowledge professionals and the companies that employ them.**

- The potential of the Riverwalk is enormous but, currently, most of the Merrimack River edge is occupied by highway on the west side of the Merrimack, or parking lots on the east side of the river. Walking to work, running along the Riverwalk on a Saturday morning, enjoying a drink at the Millyard beer garden, exploring public art on the walk from the Millyard to the Currier Museum of

Art. These are all quality-of-life choices knowledge-workers want in their living and working environments.

- Elm Street property owners are struggling to attract more destination restaurants that can create a cluster of dining choices that adds foot traffic to Downtown and supports all businesses.

**The level of activity and energy that is desired by Millennials and urban residents is missing for the majority of the year.**

- Arms Park is referred to as "Arms Park-ing Lot." The vast asphalt spaces of the Millyard host automobiles, not people or activities.
- A lack of dining choices, retail, and communal spaces in the Millyard more closely resembles a suburban office park – not what high-tech companies, knowledge workers and entrepreneurs are seeking.

These challenges should not overshadow the good things happening in Manchester. The abundance of people, organizations, and businesses committed to positive change and nurturing the things they love about the city is extraordinary. Manchester Connects has harnessed this positive action and community capacity for collaboration to align efforts where possible and achieve success through innovative solutions.

The city's response to past challenges and the current initiatives underway are inspiration for Manchester Connects.

1. The regional airport and the downtown arena have done much to give Manchester a solid position within the region.
2. Millyard businesses and institutions are providing their employees and students with innovative options to



# A confluence of collaborators and trends presents the right time for planning

## GATEWAY PARK

### MANCHESTER, NH

**CONTEXTUALLY RELATED USE**

Located closest to the residential shutters, an imaginative natural children's play area is proposed. Additionally, therapeutic treatment plants and stone walls is provided to mitigate hurricane run-off from the east and south. Existing trees in this area are to be preserved where health isn't a concern.

City street parking to the east provides opportunity for event vendors, and food trucks to support the park users.

**MAIN LAWN**

The existing slope of the park lends itself to an informal community lounge theater for summer classes, small performances, lunch breaks, etc. The terraced steps are at least wall height and ADA accessible from the main path. The stone material would reflect the building foundation and casual walls throughout the Willyard. Shade trees and ground covers can be incorporated within the amphitheater to soften the space and invite casual use.

Running down the center of the park would be an interactive canal/sink system. Moving water further provides atmosphere and attracts users to the passive space. The water is fed by internal recirculation. A shallow pool, powered on-site electric generation. The terminus of this feature is a rain/wildflower garden.

UNH Manchester is leading a community effort to redesign Gateway Park. Through a series of design charrettes, the community developed a plan for the park.

Source: CivicMoxie

## MANCHESTER CULTURAL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

VICTORY PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT	CULTURAL DISTRICT
1 Former U.S. Post Office	5 NHIA, Lowell Hall
2 Manchester Historic Association	6 Old Sol Music Hall
3 Carpenter Memorial Library	7 NHIA, Williams Hall
4 NHIA, French Hall	8 Palace Theatre
	9 NHIA, Fuller Hall

The new six-block Cultural District was approved on March 7, 2017 by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The District, which encompasses the Palace Theatre, City Library, Manchester Historic Association, New Hampshire Institute of Art, and the site of the old Rex Theatre, is the culmination of a collaborative effort by civic and institutional leaders to improve the public realm and bring visibility to the richness of arts and culture in this area and throughout the city.

Source: City of Manchester

make commuters more willing to come into the area, such as SNHU's shuttle buses from remote parking lots and subsidized off site parking.

3. Dean Kamen runs The Foundry Restaurant in the Millyard because he believes the Millyard needs a restaurant here.
4. Recognizing the need for a coordinated effort to improve Downtown, the City and others came together to create Intown Manchester in 1996; this organization provides a variety of services to its members and also hosts events and activities in Downtown to attract residents and others to the area.
5. A group of civic leaders and City Hall have come together to improve Victory Park and the Cultural District in Downtown has been formed, recognizing the wealth of arts, culture, and creativity in the city.
6. University of New Hampshire, Manchester, has led the Gateway Park redesign initiative with hundreds of volunteer hours and the deep involvement of the design profession in the region to transform this important site as the first welcome to the city and Millyard at the Granite Street Bridge.

Despite all these efforts, things can also be better. These same businesses and organizations who have addressed challenges fear options outside of Manchester are enticing some businesses, workers, and residents to leave the area. There is a limit to growth until some of the larger challenges are met.

Whether or not the Millyard keeps pace (or outpaces) the competition and whether or not Downtown can reinvent itself as a destination for empty nesters, millennials, and others looking for a unique and walkable place to live, work, and play will

depend on the City's ability to meet new challenges head-on and ride the wave of change.

Manchester Connects is the acknowledgment that challenges are best met by coordinated efforts involving a wide variety of stakeholders with complementary expertise, combined resources, and a proven track record of "doing." The planning process that led to these recommendations involved an extraordinarily diverse group of businesses, individuals, and civic leaders. The online survey garnered hundreds of responses with overwhelming consensus on the top three priorities for this planning project:

- Create strong connections between Elm Street and the Millyard and Riverwalk.
- Provide things to do (placemaking) and excellent public spaces in the Millyard and Riverwalk.
- Address parking challenges so the Millyard can adapt and continue to thrive and spaces for autos can be balanced with wonderful spaces for people.

All three priorities speak to the core challenges facing the Millyard and Downtown. These challenges are explored further in Part 3 and are the focus of the recommendations in this Plan and Action Kits. Manchester Connects speaks to the commitment of these stakeholders to act, to do, to effect positive change. It's time to continue the work...







# PART 2

WHAT IS MULTIMODAL?

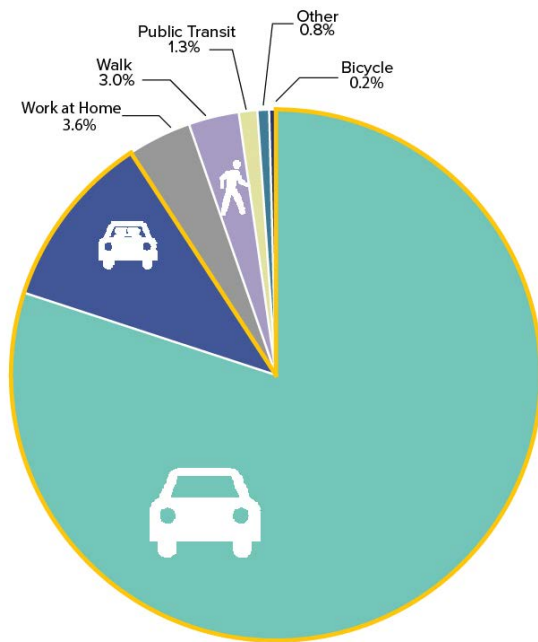
# WHAT IS MULTIMODAL?

Multimodal is about mixing and combining types or travel modes. Multimodal transportation describes moving cargo or people from one place to another by more than one means. It might involve single-occupancy car travel for a distance and then a switch to train or bus. Multimodal could combine train and bicycle, or combine walking and bus. The use of some combination of car, bus, train, walking, bicycle, motorcycle, Segway, or other creative form of transport is what characterizes multimodal transportation. Manchester Connects is about multimodal transportation and the land use policies that influence our travel choices.

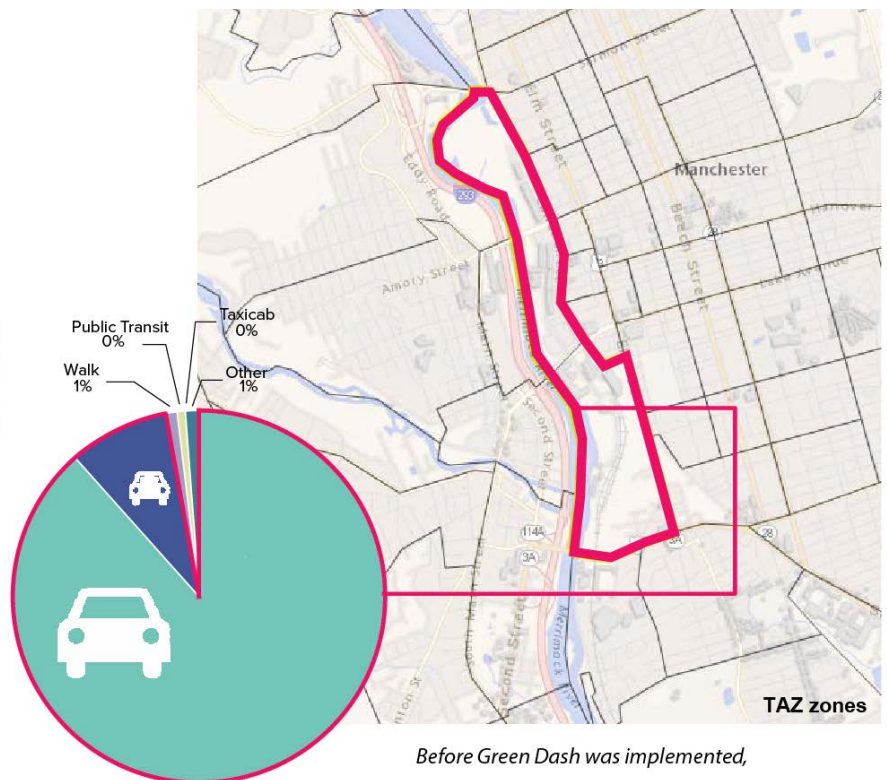
Streets built in previous decades were typically designed to serve cars, often at the expense of walkers, bikers, and

other travelers. The “Complete Streets” philosophy bucks this trend with designs that allow cars, bicycles, pedestrians, buses, and others to move together, safely and efficiently. Complete Streets are exactly what multimodal transportation is about: serving all transportation users safely and equally.

Manchester Connects is also about multimodal connectivity of people and ideas. It is about creating an environment for innovation, community, and collaboration that incubates ideas and encourages coordinated action to improve quality of life and support economic development in the Milliard, Riverfront, and Downtown, and by extension, for the entire city and region.



A majority of Manchester residents drive to work (**91%**)



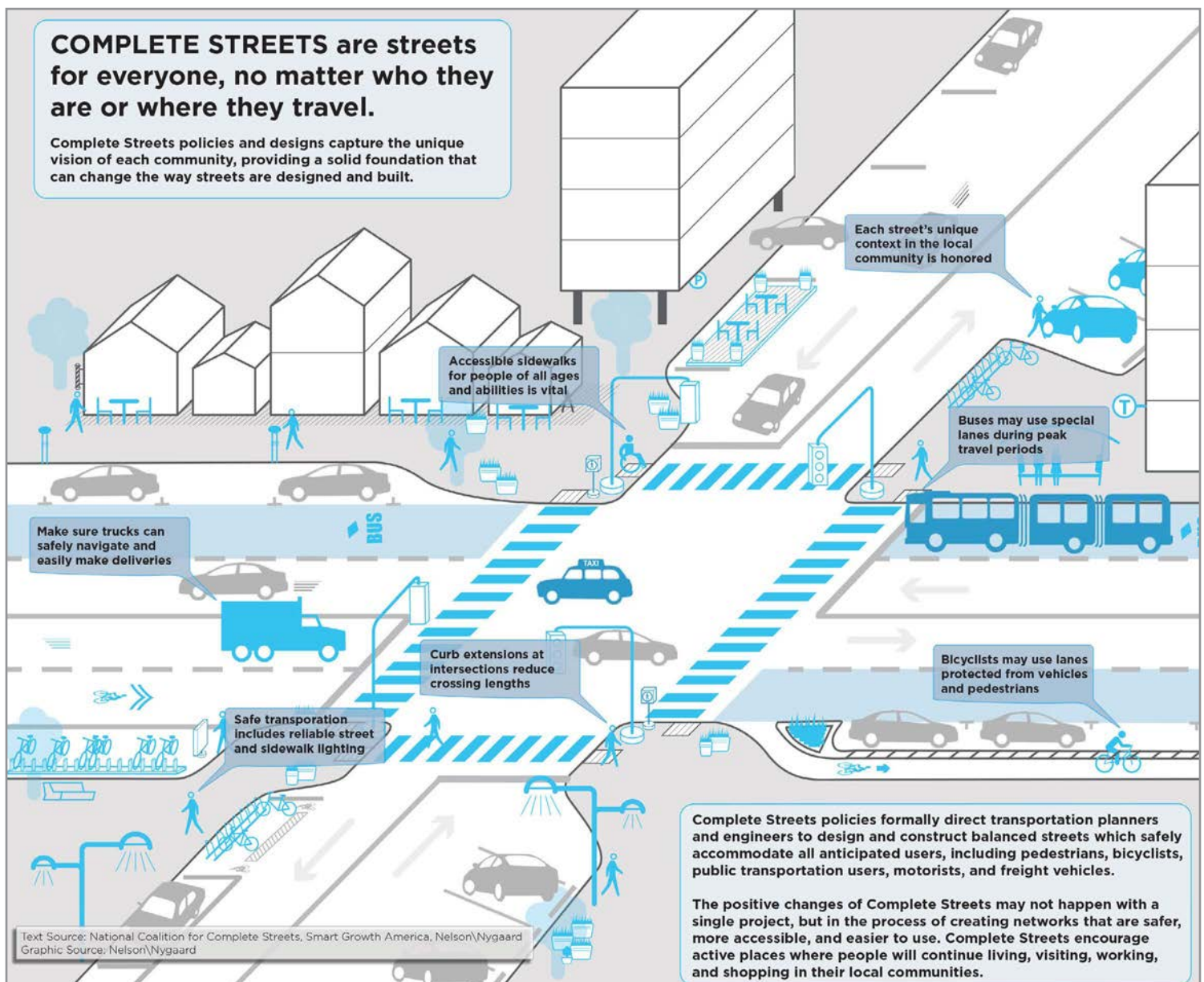
Before Green Dash was implemented,

**98%** of Milliard employees drive alone or carpool to work

Note: Census figures are from before the Green Dash was implemented.

Graphic Source: Nelson\Nygaard  
Data Source, left to right: US Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006-2010 5-Year Estimates Special Tabulation: Census Transportation Planning

Complete streets are an integral part of every multimodal strategy. The philosophy is to design streets so everyone can use them, no matter who they are, where they travel, or how they want to get there. The Manchester Connects planning initiative advocates for Complete Streets as a way to achieve the connectivity desired by the community.



Graphic Source: Nelson\Nygaard  
Text Source: National Coalition for Complete Streets, Smart Growth America, Nelson\Nygaard



This project proposes enhancing connectivity and mode choices one step at a time (pun intended). The Millyard and downtown weren't designed and built for modern-day multimodal transportation and placemaking. The Merrimack River was a source of power for Amoskeag Industries,

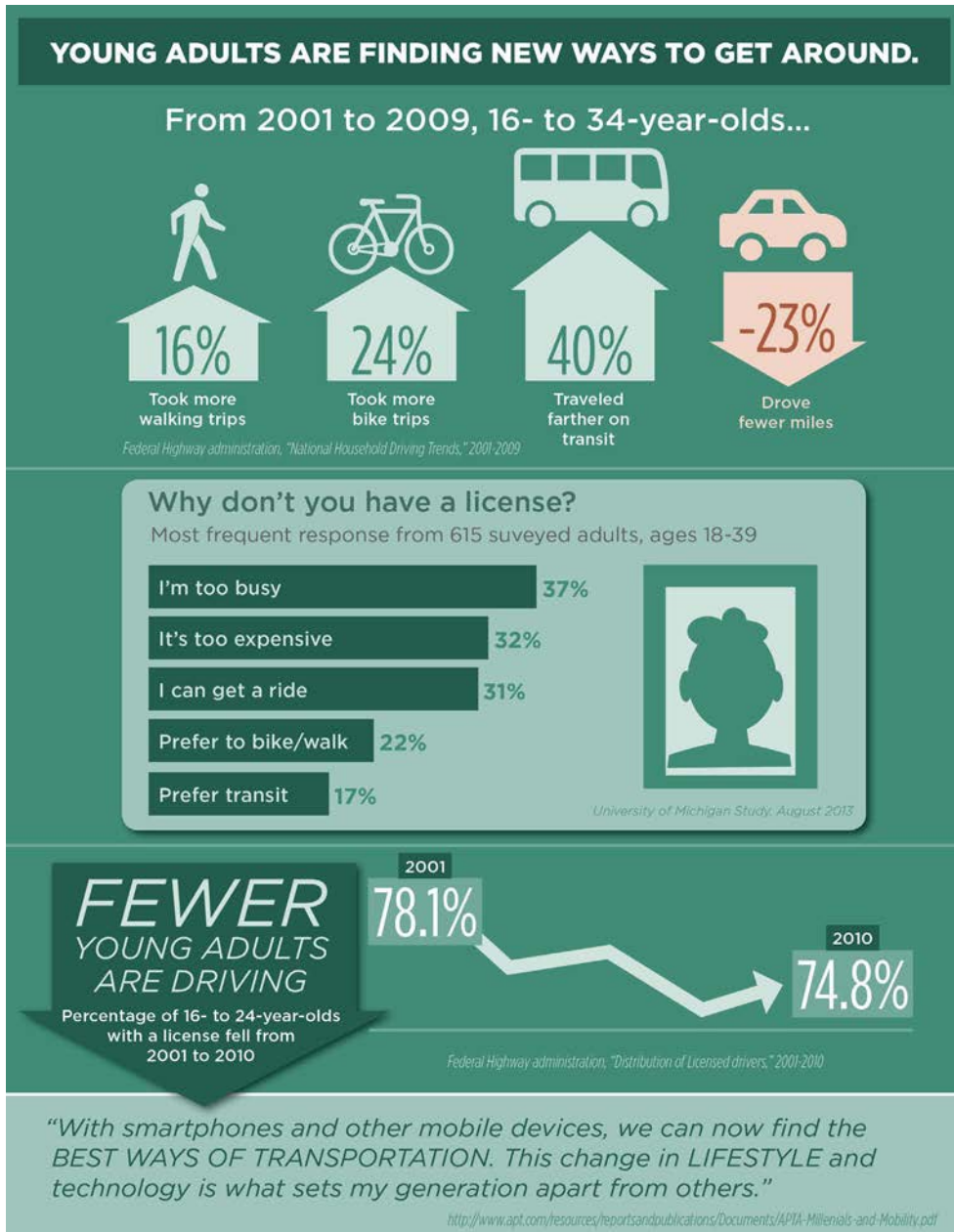
not a destination for a lazy Saturday stroll or the site of a winter carnival. The managers and owners of Amoskeag Industries lived separately from the noise, work, and bustle of the mills and the disconnect between Elm Street and the Millyard is experienced to this day. While the canals no longer separate Downtown from the Millyard, the railroad tracks, significant grade level changes, and traffic all serve as modern-day barriers.

This disconnect is exacerbated by the fact that those destined for the Millyard are overwhelmingly driving cars as the sole occupants.

Changing the modeshare (shown in the pie chart on page 32) to show a larger percentage of people biking and walking will take more than just saying things can change. How people get from one place to another and the modes they choose for transport are closely tied to land use and the availability and convenience of transportation alternatives.

If a bus runs every 30 minutes and isn't convenient to use, people won't use it. If there are no eating choices within easy walking distance of the office, no one will spend most of an hour lunch break walking to and from a restaurant. Manchester Connects looks at land uses, transportation options, and placemaking activities that can offer more choices for residents, employees, and visitors to ensure that the Millyard, Downtown, and Riverfront are multimodal and connected. This also includes the west side of the Merrimack where once, hundreds of workers walked across bridges to labor in the mills.

Investment in diverse transportation alternatives is a critical component of a truly multimodal transportation system. Carsharing, supporting and improving existing public transit, innovative shared



Source: Nelson\Nygaard

Data Source: Federal Highway administration, "Distribution of licensed drivers," 2001-2010



parking strategies, focusing on alternative modes, and other efforts are necessary to realign transportation investments with shifting user trends. Young adults are consistently finding new ways to get around - that's an important thing to remember as the City and region continue to seek to attract highly-skilled workers and the companies that employ them.

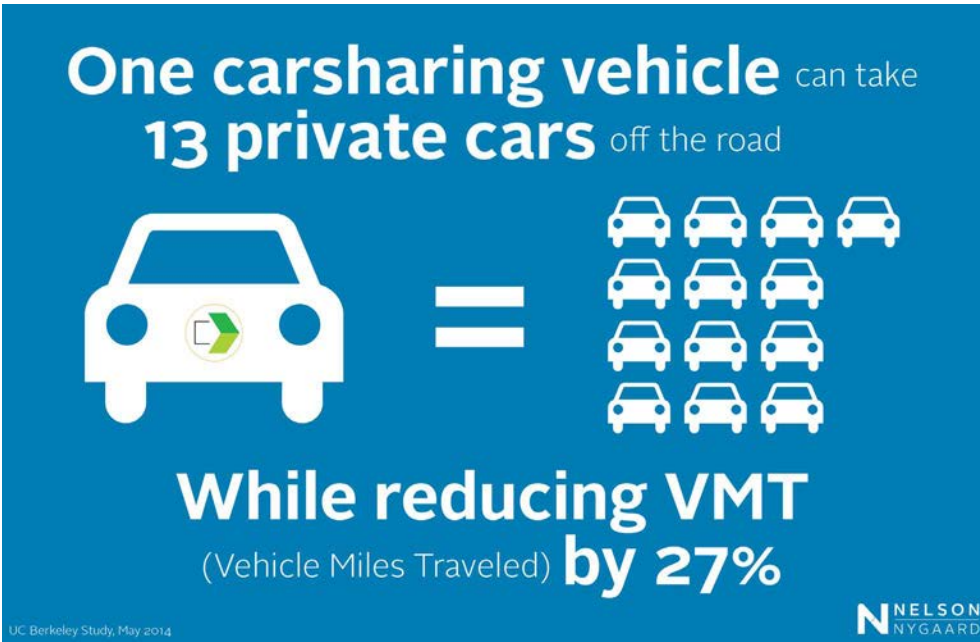
All of this is critically important as cities seek to maximize the return on investment of limited resources. Thinking about multimodal transportation can be smart for the bottom line because investment in transit and other alternative modes of transportation provides great economic return and contributes to livability and desirability of Manchester as a place to work, live, and play.

In Manchester, the ongoing discussion regarding the proposed Capitol Corridor Commuter Rail line fits within the larger trend away from cars and single-mode transportation to a different way of thinking about mobility and how it affects other public investments and quality of life.

The transportation toolbox is always changing and growing; taking advantage of new trends and technologies is critical to Manchester's multimodal future.



*Manchester Connects focuses on multimodal transportation and multimodal connectivity of ideas and people.*



Source, top to bottom: Nelson\Nygaard  
Data Source (bottom): UC Berkeley Study, May 2014



# PART 3

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

# WHERE ARE WE NOW?

This multimodal transportation and land use planning initiative builds on the positive things that have occurred in the city in the previous decades and draws inspiration from the civic leadership and collaborative spirit that made these things possible. Some of the investments that have been made that have reaped significant returns for the city and for quality of life include:

- Merrimack River cleanup (1970s)
- Millyard revitalization
- Parks programming + improvement
- Fisher Cat/Delta Dental stadium
- SNHU Arena
- Manchester-Boston Regional Airport

In addition to these success stories, Manchester finds itself as a potential alternative business and home location for those seeking escape from the high cost of living in Boston and its suburbs. Less than 60 miles from Boston, Manchester is within commuting distance of metro Boston as well as Nashua, Concord, NH Seacoast, and other New Hampshire towns and cities. Manchester has the added

bonus of being an hour from the NH Lakes Region, ocean beaches, and mountains. As housing prices increase in Boston, Manchester increasingly offers an attractive alternative to city-dwellers seeking the attractions of urban living along with affordability.

The proposed Capitol Corridor commuter rail extension from Lowell to Manchester would further amplify this trend if service is extended from Lowell, MA to the city.

In the context of these positive trends, Manchester Connects acknowledges and addresses the challenges posed by current physical, economic, and political conditions, and changing preferences for living, work, and tourism that are creating new regional competition. While Manchester is an economic hub in the state, the city's ability to meet challenges and instigate positive change will determine its trajectory going forward. Manchester's success as a 21st Century city depends on its ability to adapt and thrive under new conditions and challenges.



Sources, clockwise from top left: [www.pinterest.com/pin/273734483573183648](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/273734483573183648), [ballparkreviews.com](http://ballparkreviews.com), Steve Lux, Jr. ([www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Steve\\_Lux,\\_Jr.](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Steve_Lux,_Jr.)), [www.www.hvs.com/article/3013-manchester-boston-regional-airport-expansion-serves-as-catalyst-for-growth](http://www.www.hvs.com/article/3013-manchester-boston-regional-airport-expansion-serves-as-catalyst-for-growth), Milos ([www.fearles357.deviantart.com/](http://www.fearles357.deviantart.com/)), Joseph Kallou ([www.josephkallou.blogspot.com](http://www.josephkallou.blogspot.com))

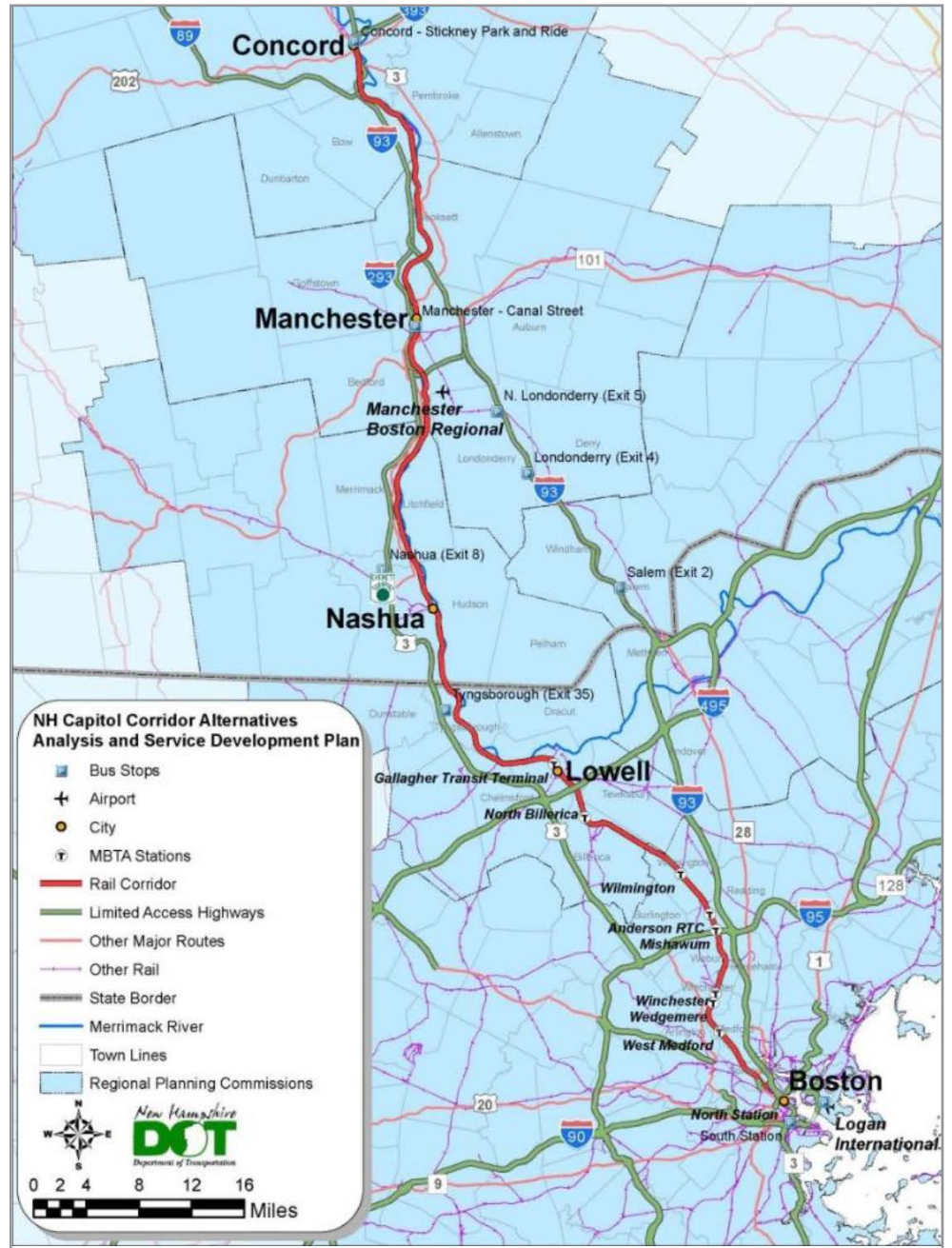


This section highlights the challenges and changes relevant to Manchester's continued competitiveness as a major economic engine and high quality of life city:

1. New Trends in Urban Living
2. Parking vs. People
3. Parking Has Varied Ownership, Policies, and Prices
4. Changing Competition: The Rise of Innovation Districts
5. An Asphalt Riverwalk
6. Lack of Complete Streets, Existing Single Mode Travel + Weak Connectivity
7. Lack of "Third Places"
8. Mix of Uses is Weak and Active Ground Floor Uses are Missing
9. The Municipal Tax Cap



## POTENTIAL COMMUTER RAIL LINE



Manchester has a prime location and is an hour or less to Boston, MA, Concord, NH, Lowell, MA, Portsmouth, NH, and Nashua, NH. Extending commuter rail service from Boston, MA to Concord, NH is under consideration. If this extension occurs, there would be a commuter rail station in the heart of the Millyard.

Sources, left to right: Nelson\Nygaard, NHDOT

## 1. NEW TRENDS IN URBAN LIVING

There is a resurgence of interest in city living for a number of reasons, including:

- A desire to reduce commuting times and take back time for family and friends is leading,
- Denser, walkable cities are the model of sustainability; these places require less energy usage and contribute to healthy living habits,
- A concentration of activities, arts, culture, and educational opportunities appeals to residents and workers,
- Millennials are driving less and relying on other modes of transport, making denser urban centers more desirable. See page 34 for more information about this change.
- The history and architecture of cities provides a multitude of interesting buildings, neighborhoods, and stories to explore.

Millennials and empty nesters are two groups driving the renaissance of cities and in many cases, these two demographics want the same things. To compete on the regional scale, Manchester must offer amenities such as local services (grocery stores, dry cleaners), vibrant public spaces (parks, plazas, seating areas), and connectivity (walkable streets, variety of land uses, multiple modes of transportation) that knowledge workers, the companies that employ them, and empty nesters want in their living and working environments.

Currently, Downtown landlords and merchants are struggling to maintain a mix of uses and get the foot traffic they need to thrive. There is evidence of a positive trend in some of these things; new housing on

Elm Street and the city's first micro-unit housing are steps in the right direction. However, more critical mass is needed to provide the households necessary to support the vibrant mix of uses that will draw more residents, businesses, employees to Downtown and the Millyard, and increase the quality of life for current residents and workers.

## 2. PARKING VS. PEOPLE

People walk and travel to interesting places. In part, the distance we are willing to walk is determined by the quality of that experience. When you are walking past public art, a variety of retail, or outdoor dining along a sidewalk, the walk seems shorter, safer, and much more pleasant than walking past vacant storefronts, blank walls, parking garages, and asphalt parking lots. In addition, the more people we see along the way, the more likely we are to want to walk. This is a cycle that feeds itself. A lack of destinations and active ground floor uses supports low street activity which reinforces the perception that the pedestrian experience is not pleasant and contributes to a sense of insecurity and isolation.

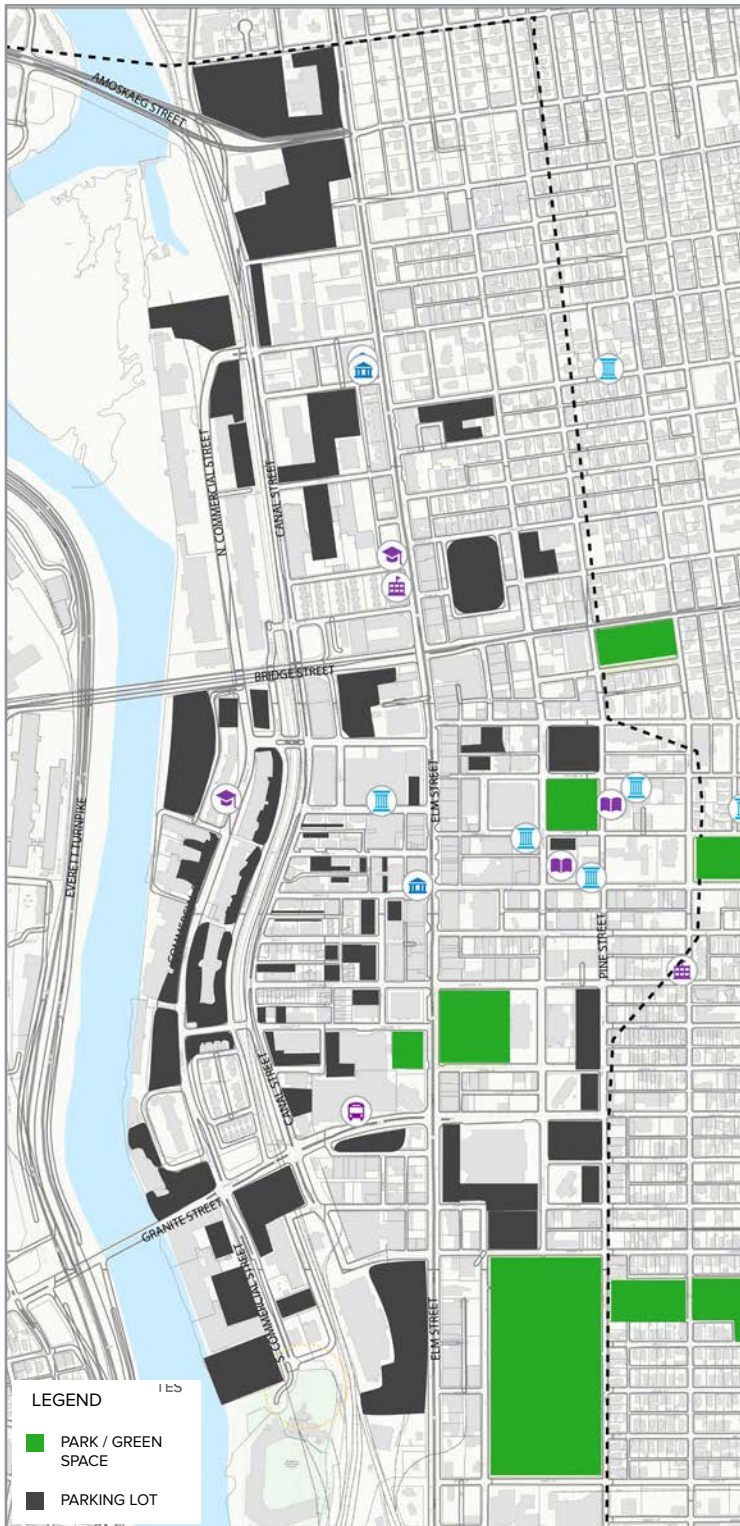
In this regard, the Millyard and the connections from Elm Street to the Millyard and Riverfront need help. The Millyard boasts almost three times the amount of surface parking as it does building square footage. To get to Arms Park, one must walk through a sea of asphalt parking spaces. In addition to a sea of parking, walking paths and sidewalks in the study area are deteriorated and unlit. There are also significant grade changes that pedestrians must navigate. As addressed in this planning initiative, parking is a complex issue that requires a multi-pronged approach.

*People are moving back to the city to be in walkable environments where they can walk to work and have shopping, recreational activities, and entertainment at their doorstep.*



Sources, top to bottom: [www.flickr.com/photos/otavio\\_dc/6134644986](http://www.flickr.com/photos/otavio_dc/6134644986), [www.newengland.com/today/travel/new-hampshire/portsmouth/winter-day-trip-to-portsmouth-new-hampshire](http://www.newengland.com/today/travel/new-hampshire/portsmouth/winter-day-trip-to-portsmouth-new-hampshire)





Source: Nelson\Nygaard

## PARKING IN THE MILLYARD AND DOWNTOWN



Millyard Building Square Footage:  
~3,697,000

Millyard Asphalt Square Footage:  
~11,573,000

The map at left shows how much of the Millyard and Downtown is devoted to parking.



### 3. PARKING HAS VARIED OWNERSHIP, POLICIES, AND PRICES

Consistent feedback during the Manchester Connects planning process indicates that many decisions are being driven by parking. With parking closely linked to economic vitality, tourism, the quality of the pedestrian environment, traffic patterns, and development patterns, the current state of parking and potential for change is a major priority for property owners and should be in the top concerns for the City.

*There are TWENTY different parking entities and price structures in the Study Area. There are FOURTEEN in the Millyard alone.*

Remarkably, there are 20 different parking entities and price structures in the study area and at least 14 in the Millyard alone! There is also diverse public and private ownership, including City of Manchester public parking spaces and lots.

Supply is spread out across many different entities with no one policy unifying price or availability. While a complete parking study (detailed demand, documentation of all employer/landlord policies, times of usage, pricing structures, and off-site parking accommodations) was beyond the scope of the Manchester Connects initiative, a general survey of parking conditions illuminates a complex and opaque parking supply and demand system.

#### **Existing Supply - Locations and Pricing**

Existing parking is scattered throughout the Millyard and Downtown and is offered in surface lots and garages by private and public entities. This creates challenges for presenting clear information to the public and attempting to share information that could ease parking challenges, at least in the short term.

#### *Existing Supply - Varied Ownership*

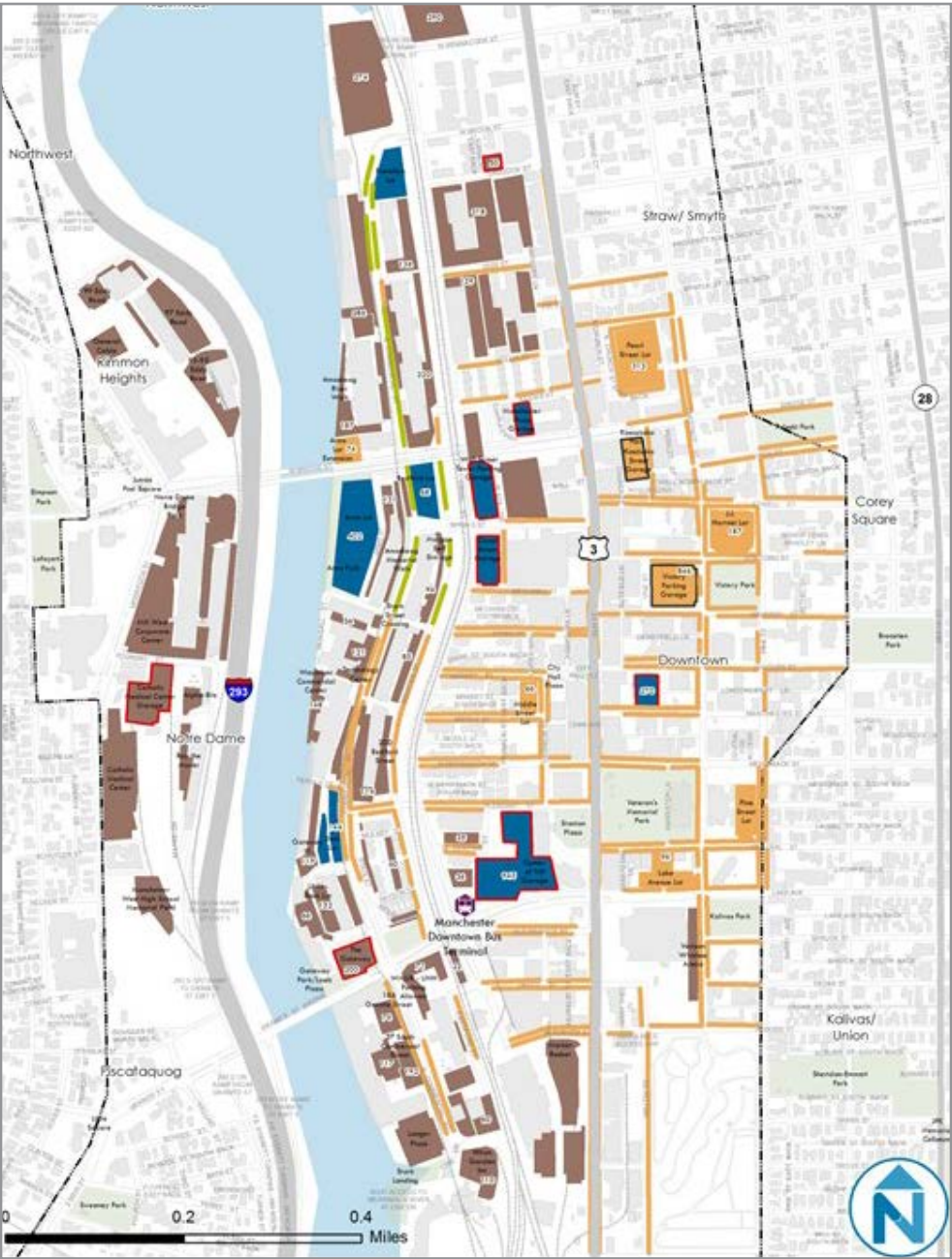
Varied ownership has led to diverse pricing for parking. Even within publicly-owned parking facilities, pricing structures differ with no clear indication if pricing is based on a peak demand model or other determinants.

#### *Existing Supply - Lack of Information*

There is also no single parking map for use by the public with pricing and public availability/permitting information, creating a situation where circling for parking and guesswork can add to congestion on streets and create frustration for residents, employees, and visitors alike.



EXISTING PARKING SUPPLY BY OWNERSHIP



Source: Nelson\Nygaard

Millyard Parking Spaces

On Street Public	857
Off Street Public	790
Private	3,202
Total Supply	4,849

- Public
- Private
- Public-owned permit parking
- Private-owned public parking

Source of parking supply and ownership information: LMG  
Parking Assessment Study, City of Manchester, NH

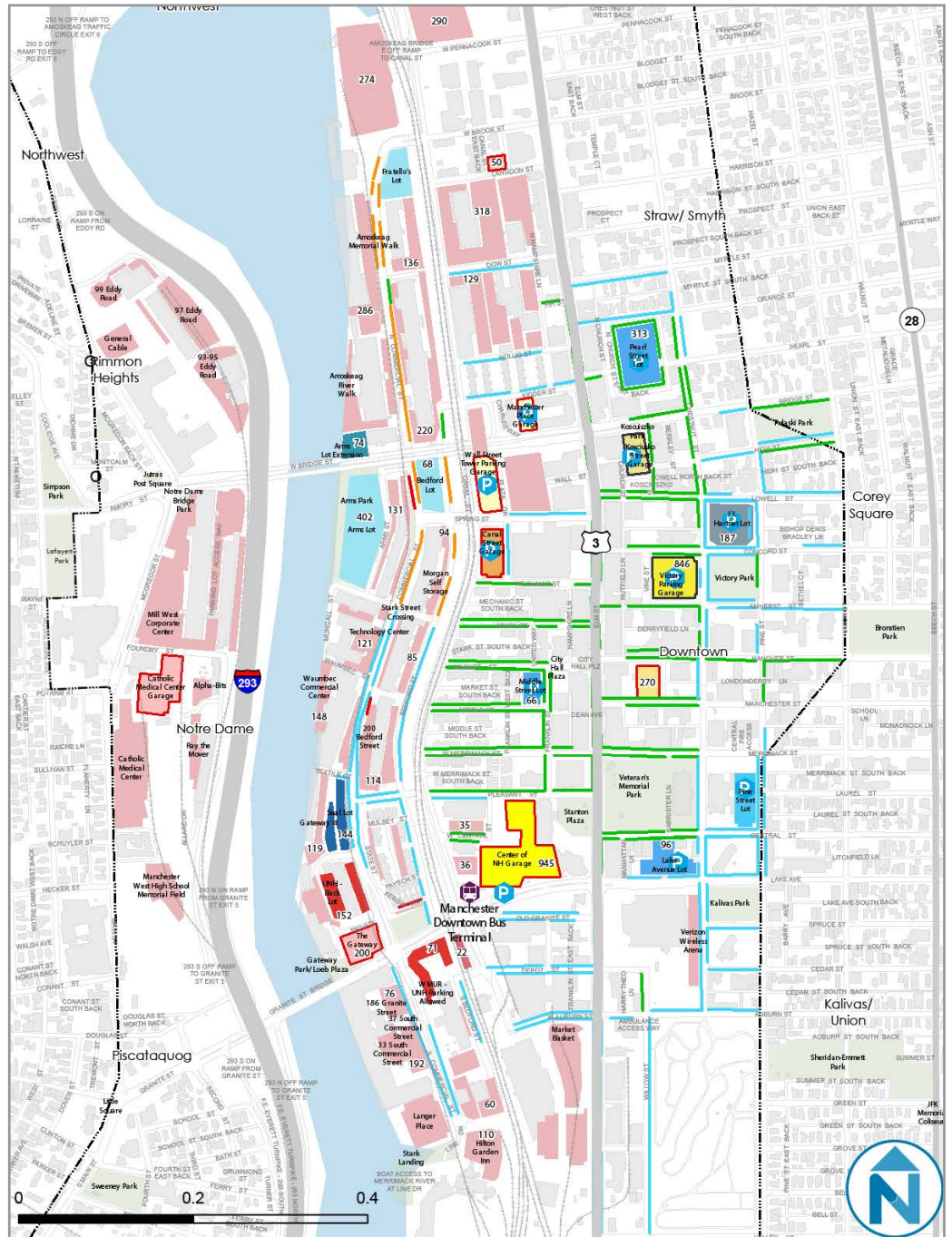
# EXISTING PARKING SUPPLY BY REGULATION

## Onstreet Parking Regulation

- 2-Hour Metered Parking, \$0.75/hr
- 10-Hour Metered Parking, \$0.75/hr
- Permit Parking Only
- Private Parking

## Offstreet Parking Regulation

- Leased Lot - \$0.75/hr for 10 hours
- Leased Lot - \$0.75/hr for 2 hours, \$85/month
- Metered Lot - \$0.75/hr for 10 hours
- Public Lot - \$0.75/hr for 2 hours, \$60/month
- Public Lot - \$0.75/hr for 10 hours, \$60/month
- Public Lot - \$60/month
- Public Garage - \$75/month
- Public Garage - \$0.75/hr for 2 hours, \$85/month
- Privately-Owned Public Garage - \$50/month
- Privately-Owned Public Garage - \$1/hr, \$75/month
- Privately-Owned Public Garage - \$2/hr, \$95/month
- Privately-Owned Public Garage - \$6/hr, \$105/month
- Private Lot
- Private Lot - UNH Parking Allowed
- Private Lot - \$0.75/hr for 12 hours
- Private Garage
- StudyArea

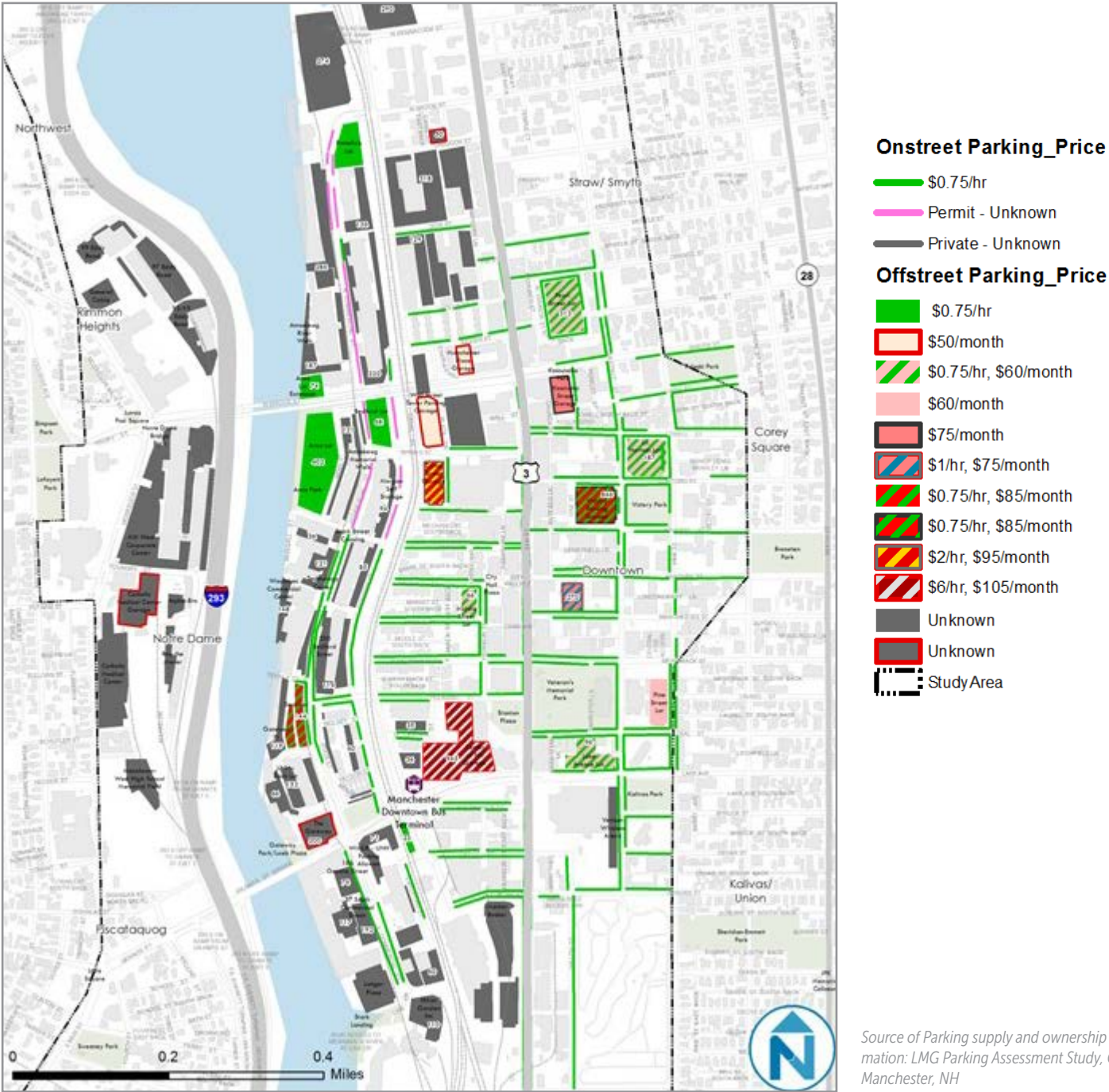


Source of Parking supply and ownership information:  
LMG Parking Assessment Study, City of Manchester, NH

Source: Nelson\Nygaard



EXISTING PARKING SUPPLY BY PRICING



Source: Nelson\Nygaard

## EXISTING PARKING SUPPLY - HOURLY PRICING

### Onstreet Parking\_hourly

— \$0.75/hr \$55/month

— Private - Unknown

### Offstreet Parking\_hourly

■ \$0.75/hr

■ \$0.75/hr, \$60/month

■ \$0.75/hr, \$85/month

■ \$0.75/hr, \$85/month

■ \$1/hr, \$75/month

■ \$2/hr, \$95/month

■ \$6/hr, \$105/month

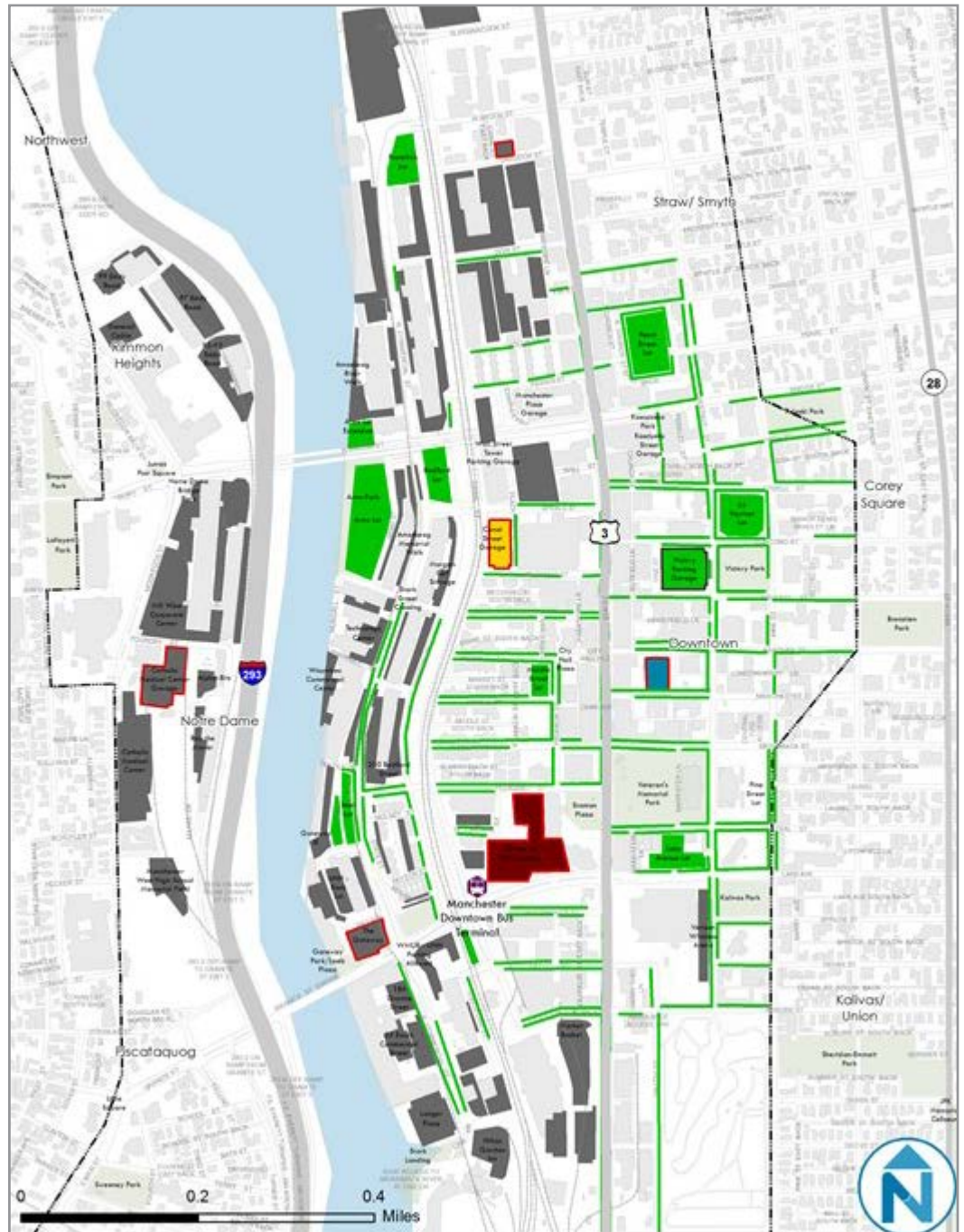
■ Unknown

■ Unknown

■ Study Area

■ Public Garage

■ Privately-Owned Public Garage

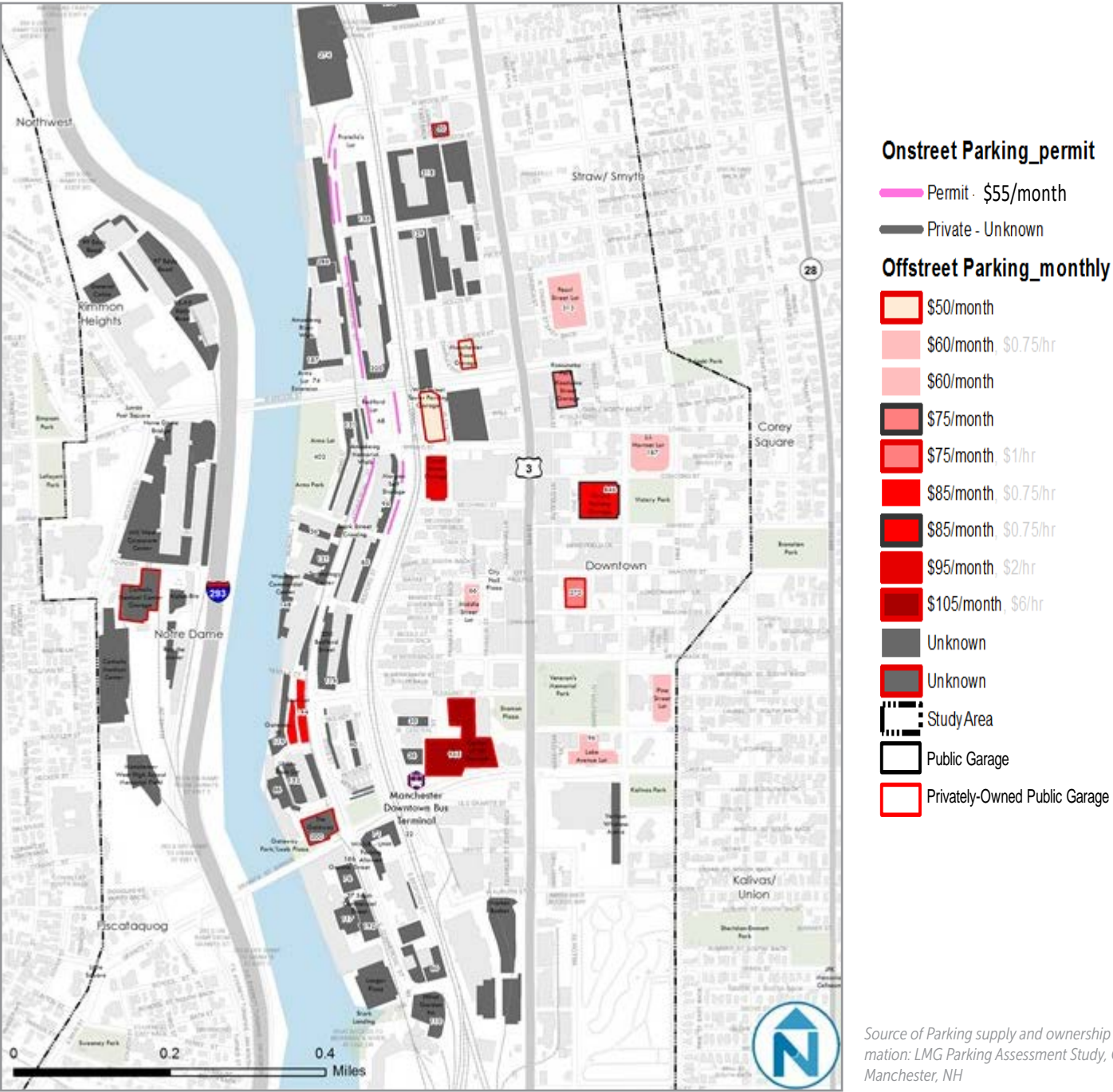


Source of Parking supply and ownership information: LMG Parking Assessment Study, City of Manchester, NH

Source: Nelson\Nygaard



EXISTING PARKING SUPPLY - MONTHLY PRICING



Source: Nelson\Nygaard

## 4. CHANGING COMPETITION: THE RISE OF INNOVATION DISTRICTS

The Millyard is no longer competing with suburban office parks and it isn't competing solely on price. Knowledge-based companies and their employees are seeking urban amenities, vitality, and other quality of life characteristics in the places they locate. Part 1 outlines some of the research on how these preferences are driving changes in cities and commercial districts. The rise of the innovation district is testament to the new trends and changing competition to attract workers and companies. In many ways, the term "innovation district" is a new way to describe what downtown business districts were in the early part of the 20th century. These districts are characterized by:

- Anchor institutions
- Dense clusters of companies
- Business incubators and startups
- Physically compact environment
- Mixed-use development including housing, retail, and office
- Networking spaces
- Recreational and entertainment amenities

While the Millyard has a dense cluster of companies and high-profile anchor institutions, it's lack of mixed-use development and urban amenities causes it to function more like a suburban office park than innovation district. The challenges inherent in these conditions must be addressed for the Millyard to overcome issues of connectivity, parking challenges, and perception so that it can most successfully compete for the next wave of regional growth.

## WHAT'S AN INNOVATION DISTRICT AND WHY SHOULD IT MATTER?

Innovation districts are a recent development in urban areas that provide an opportunity for leading-edge institutions and companies, start start-ups, business incubators, and innovation-oriented firms to cluster together. These mixed-use districts offer easy transit access and include amenities and housing as well as public spaces for collaboration and interaction. Innovation districts thrive on the intrinsic qualities of proximity, density, authenticity, and vibrancy found in cities and show that concentrated activity generates economies of scale in knowledge.

Global cities like Barcelona, Stockholm, London and Berlin contain prominent examples of developing innovation districts. In addition to global cities, innovation districts are popping up in smaller cities throughout the United States to attract high-tech and innovation / creative economy businesses. Cities like Chattanooga, TN, Detroit, MI, and even Lowell, MA have designated areas as innovation districts. Other cities are looking to innovation districts as models to guide their own revitalization projects in old industrial zones or activate high-potential areas within the city.

Innovation districts are a direct result of changing preferences among workers. Young workers especially prefer working in urban environments where they can walk to work and have easy access to amenities like restaurants, bars, and cafés. In addition to the

*Knowledge-intensive companies and employees who work in the Millyard seek something other than single land use, isolated suburban office parks. The Millyard is competing on a different scale with other business and economic centers.*



Sources, top to bottom: [www.planetizen.com/node/70529](http://www.planetizen.com/node/70529),  
[www.the-city-space.com/2015/06/08/old-is-new/](http://www.the-city-space.com/2015/06/08/old-is-new/)

workforce's changing preferences, cities are increasingly embracing and recognizing the benefit of encouraging and supporting economy-shaping, place-making, and network-building approaches to land development. There are several characteristics that are specific to innovation districts that distinguish them from traditional business or office districts and are key to their success:

- high tech
- encourage a variety of actors and spark spontaneous interactions
- vibrant, 24-hour communities
- include housing as an essential asset
- promote inclusive growth.

*Automobile Alley in Oklahoma City's innovation district*



*South Lake Union is an innovation district in Seattle, WA (left)*

Source, for both: [www.pps.org/blog/eight-placemaking-principles-for-innovation-districts/](http://www.pps.org/blog/eight-placemaking-principles-for-innovation-districts/)



### ***Innovation Districts are High Tech***

An increasingly important part of working as a firm in the technology field is the recognition that crucial answers to technological challenges are discovered by finding and collaborating with other firms. Innovation districts recognize this potential and have gone to great lengths to grow, lure, and fund the development of companies that actively reach outside their discipline to collaborate. Many innovation districts have included plug-and-play physical environments, DIY “maker spaces” equipped with industrial tools, machinery, and technology to support entrepreneurs and access to training, specialized facilities, and technical support to help attract the best employees.

Advanced technology also provides the platform upon which future innovations are conceptualized, advanced, and developed. Specializations such as artificial intelligence, next-generation genomics, and software development rely heavily on advanced technologies,

such as robotics, nanotechnology, and sophisticated computer systems. The extent to which technologies now drive advancements in science and other fields is what propels districts to invest in technology enhanced facilities. The companies that innovation districts seek to attract require high tech spaces with enough bandwidth on a high-speed internet connection and sufficient electrical and water service to support a variety of high-powered computers and other equipment.

### ***Innovation Districts Encourage a Variety of Actors and Spark Spontaneous Interactions***

Instead of building isolated science parks, innovation districts focus extensively on creating a dynamic physical environment that encourages interactions between companies and individuals. Rather than focusing on discrete industries, innovation districts represent an intentional effort to create new products, technologies and market solutions by bringing different types of

companies together (e.g., information technology and bioscience, energy, or education).

Firms in innovation districts often design programs, and even construct new buildings, to support the growth process of entrepreneurs. As firms emphasize the importance of “choreographing ‘spontaneous’ opportunities for smart people to interact with each other’,” innovation districts do the same by providing communal spaces and shared amenities.

### ***Innovation Districts are Vibrant, 24-Hour Communities***

Innovation districts seek to create lively communities in which residents and workers feel invested. When designed and programmed well, a district’s public spaces—often both within buildings and outside of them—facilitate innovation by offering numerous opportunities to meet, network, and brainstorm. Innovation districts offer a mix of uses, including offices, residences, shops, and bars and restaurants that encourage people



*A rendering of the Hamilton Canal Innovation District in Lowell, MA (left)*

*The Medellín Innovation District in Medellín, Colombia (right)*

<sup>1</sup>The Rise of Innovation Districts: A New Geography of Innovation in America, Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, May 2014, p. 19

Source: City of Lowell



to meet up and socialize. Innovation districts recognize the importance of combining and activating physical assets in ways that create vibrant “third places”—places that are neither home nor work where people can gather. Strong third places like cafés, bars, restaurants, parks, and other public spaces, extend opportunities for people to collaborate and create a culturally and educationally enriched environment that strengthens human interaction, knowledge, and motivation.

### **Innovation Districts Include Housing as an Essential Asset**

Innovation districts include plans for the creation of new housing that increase district density and vibrancy. Cities and metropolitan areas are increasing in population faster than suburban or rural areas.

This trend is due to a shift in preferences; city life is desired by both Millennials and Baby Boomers. These two generations are the two largest in the United

States, so they have a large impact on real estate and other markets. City dwellers tend to place a high priority on walkability, proximity to health care, entertainment, recreation, work and school, and social contacts. Older Americans are increasingly seeking smaller homes and apartments, as well as places with easy access to medical services, shopping, and other daily necessities. Middle-aged “empty nesters” show greater interest in urban neighborhoods, cultural amenities, and shorter commutes. These preferences are also particularly prevalent among the Millennial generation, whose young and educated members form the core of our innovation workforce. For many of these young people “quality of life” is increasingly understood to mean proximity to urban amenities such as restaurants, retail, cultural, and social venues. As this demographic is the type of talent that innovation districts want to attract, providing places for urban-oriented professionals to live is crucial to the districts’ success.

### **Innovation Districts Promote Inclusive Growth**

Promoting inclusive growth means using Innovation districts as a platform to regenerate adjoining distressed neighborhoods as well as creating educational, employment, and other opportunities for low-income residents. Given broader trends around economic restructuring, anemic job growth, and wage stagnation, many cities and metropolitan areas have experienced substantial increases in the number of people living in poverty and near poverty over the past decade. Innovation districts offer multiple opportunities for neighborhood revitalization, quality employment, and poverty alleviation through job creation in multiple sectors and levels and through the stimulation of local entrepreneurship, which provides learning and training opportunities. Pursuing these opportunities and connecting local residents with innovation district businesses can lessen the tensions between innovation and inclusive growth that have emerged in many communities.



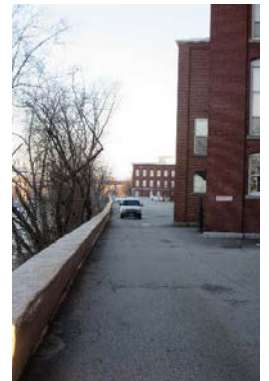
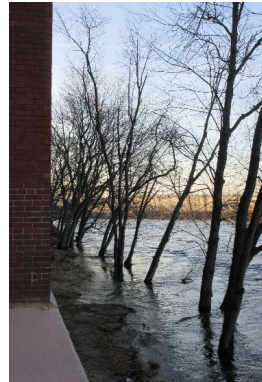
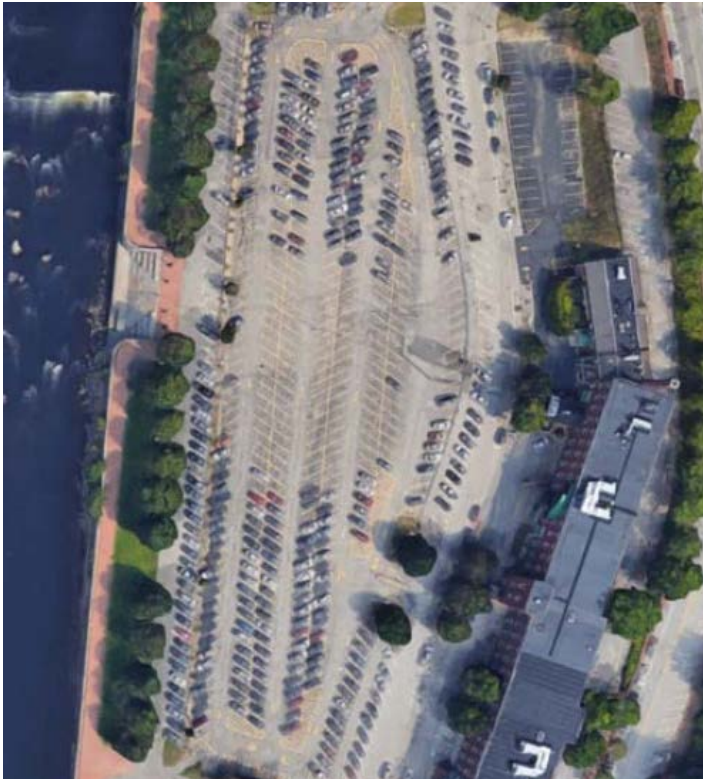
Source: [www.carloratti.com/project/medellinnovation-district/](http://www.carloratti.com/project/medellinnovation-district/)

## 5. AN ASPHALT RIVERWALK

The Riverwalk, an amenity that has the potential to be an iconic destination for the city and key part of its image, is instead mostly a strip of asphalt inhabited by cars. This is an extraordinary missed opportunity for the Millyard property owners, tenants, the city, and the region.

The riverfront in the Millyard is also a missing link in the north-south regional trail. Capitalizing on the opportunity of converting the riverfront parking into a destination would not only improve the Millyard, but provide an important connection in the regional trail network.

*The Millyard has unparalleled views and access to the Merrimack River, but instead of celebrating this incredible resource, the riverfront is dedicated to parking and pavement.*



Source: Google Maps

Source, all photos above: CivicMoxie



## 6. LACK OF COMPLETE STREETS, EXISTING SINGLE MODE TRAVEL + WEAK CONNECTIVITY

### Lack of Complete Streets

Complete Streets are those that balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers to provide infrastructure that ensures the safety of all and does not prioritize one mode of transportation over another. Manchester has very few complete streets.

Though sidewalks exist in much of the Millyard and Downtown, they are often narrow, in disrepair, and uninviting. Very few bicycle lanes are provided. The streetscape is dominated by relatively wide travel lanes and parking lots.

Even though Manchester's Downtown, Millyard, and West Side were developed before the auto-age, as time has passed, these areas have developed into car-centric areas with streetscapes that encourage people to drive. Even the pedestrian infrastructure that exists tells people they should get back to their cars as quickly as possible. Cracked and crumbling sidewalks, broken stairs, cars parked immediately adjacent to buildings, and unclear pedestrian routes through the Millyard's parking lots silently remind pedestrians that they are second to cars.

### Single Mode Travel

Manchester's Downtown, Millyard, and Downtown predate the automobile. These areas were initially walking districts where people moved on foot or by wagon. Then streetcars, trolleys, and trains transported people and goods through the city. Today, single occupancy car travel dominates transportation in Manchester. We know



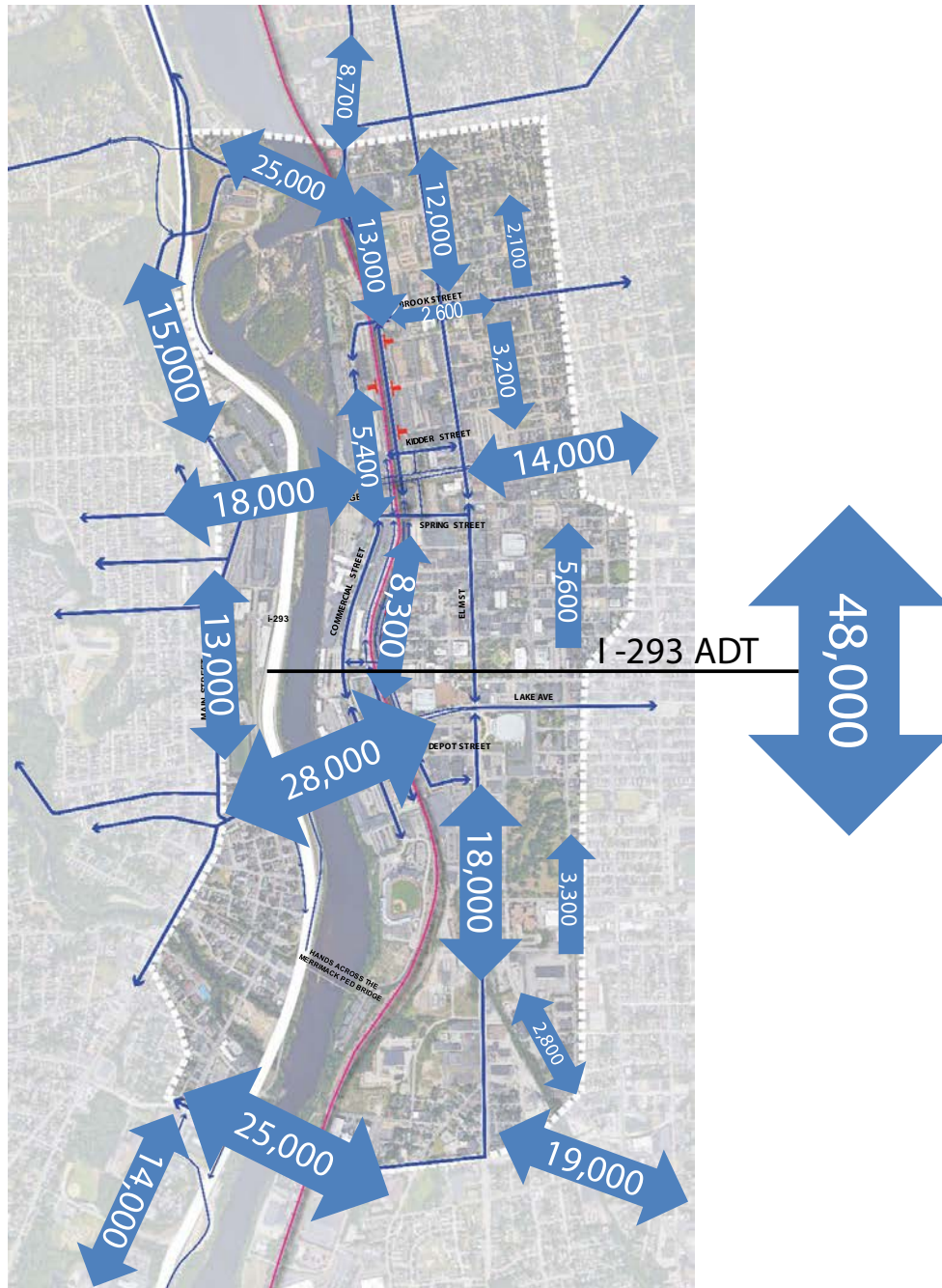
*Top: Dow at Canal, looking east, grade changing over rail*

*Bottom: Kidder at North Bedford, no sidewalk*

*Photo Source (this page): Nelson\Nygaard*

## MILLYARD AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

*There is significant vehicular traffic in the Millyard and Downtown. Almost 5,500 cars travel Commercial Street on a daily basis and there are an additional 10,000 cars that travel Canal Street -- that's more than 15,000 cars going through the heart of the Millyard each day!*



that 80% of Manchester residents drive alone to work; an additional 10.8% carpool. This means that 91 percent of Manchester residents are driving to work. In the Millyard, that number is 98%! Eighty-nine percent of employees in the Millyard drive alone to work. People frequently make multiple trips per day and rarely walk between destinations. This occurs for a number of reasons. Employees have few living choices within walking or biking distance of the Millyard; our culture of car ownership and single-mode travel ensures this is the default condition; public transit may not be convenient and the headways (times between buses) may be too long during peak times. Other reasons may include that there are no good bike facilities, showers aren't provided for cyclists, or simply that parking is free and convenient.

These statistics on driving are directly opposite of how young adults like to travel. Manchester's reliance on single-occupancy vehicle trips exacerbates the Millyard's parking problem; it also doesn't work for the young employees the city is trying to retain or bring to Manchester.

### Weak Connectivity

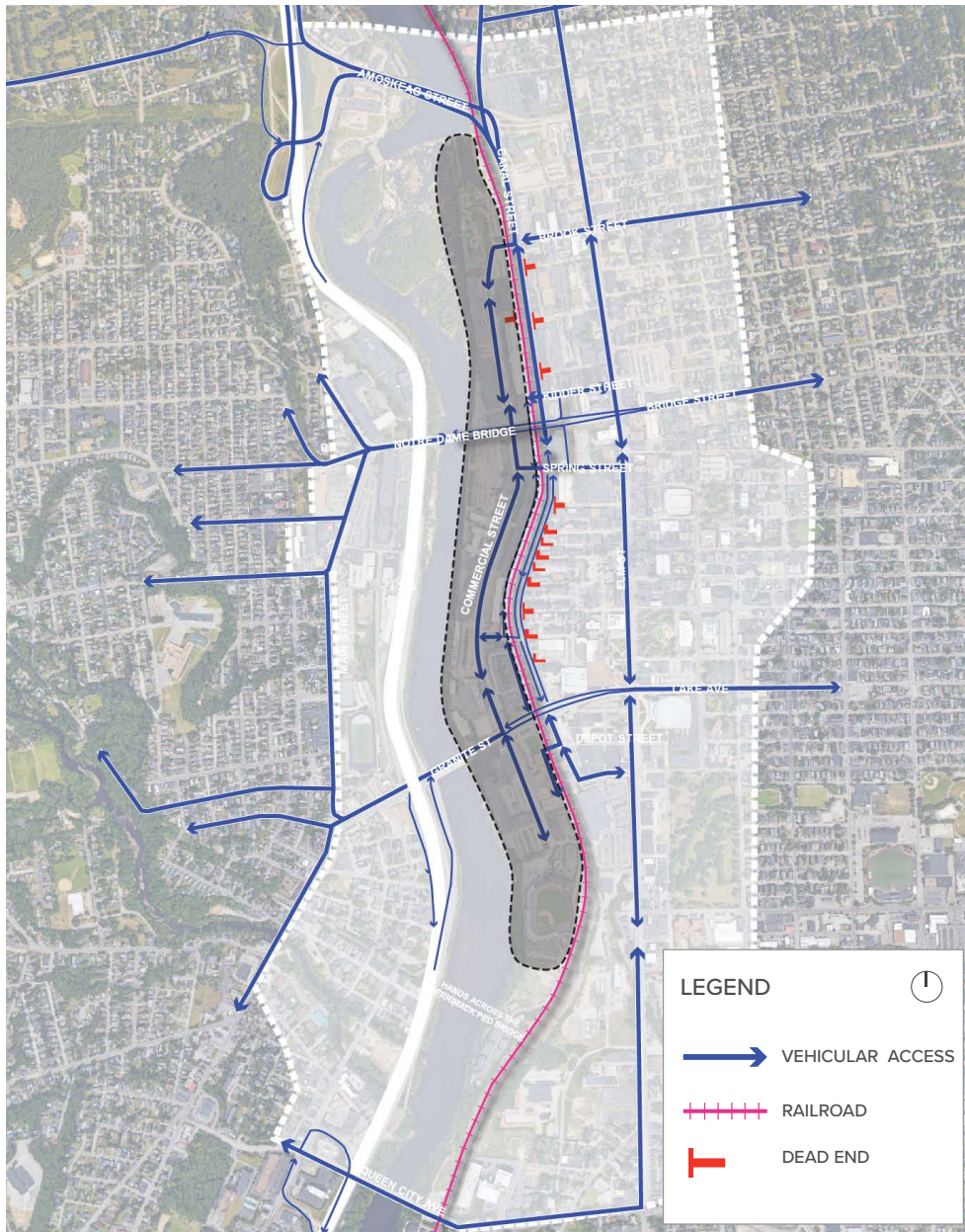
Limited vehicular and pedestrian connectivity also create other challenges. Canal Street has Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 8,300 vehicles and these vehicles mainly enter the Millyard from two points at the north and at the south of the district. This limited connectivity causes pinch points in car congestion and limits connectivity.

In many ways, the Millyard functions like an island. The legacy of canals, the presence of the Merrimack River to the west and the railroad tracks to the east, all work to isolate the Millyard. In addition, two out of three vehicular entries to the



Access to the Millyard is limited - it functions more like an island than as an integrated part of Downtown, in part, a legacy of the canals that once existed here. There are only THREE entries to the Millyard, TWO of which require a railroad crossing.

## MILLYARD ACCESS

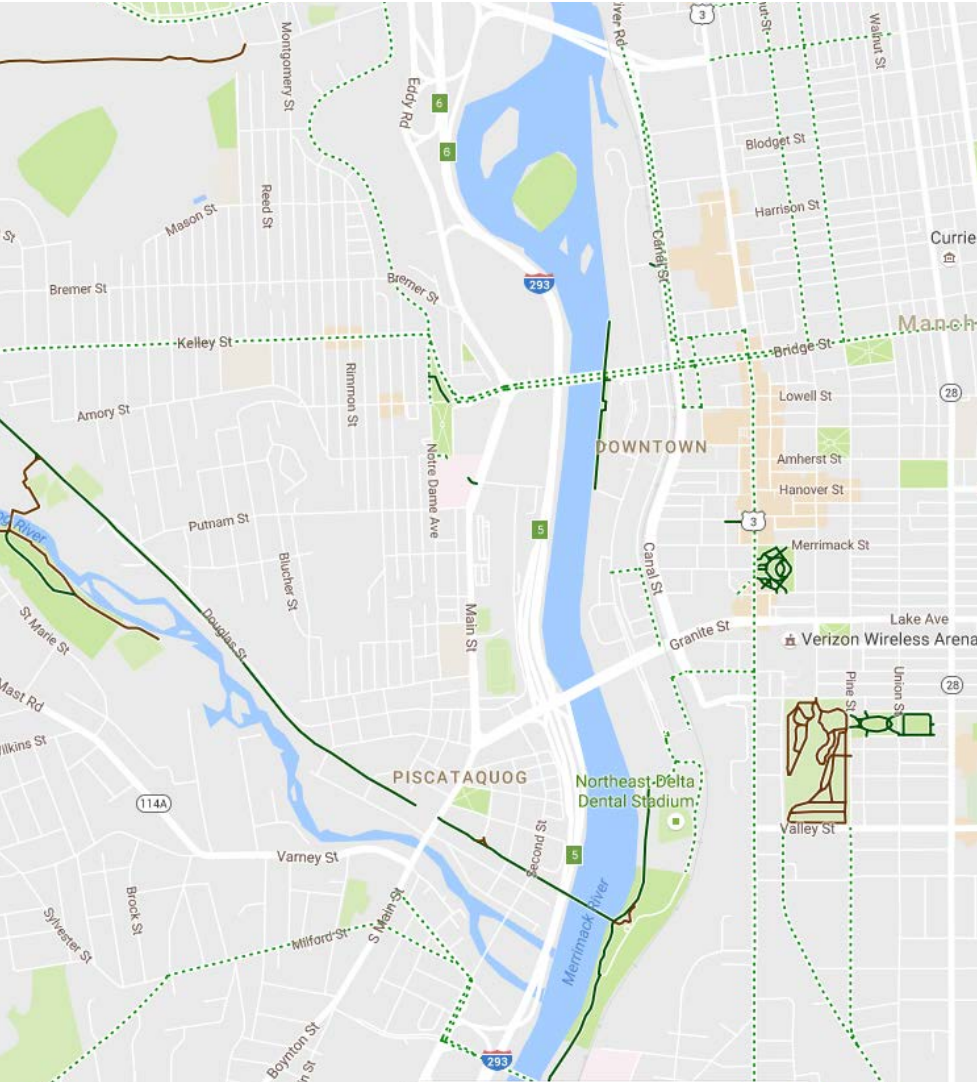


Source: Nelson\Nygaard

The Millyard functions a lot like an island - many of the streets in Downtown deadend at the railroad tracks, creating limited access to the Millyard.

Millyard cross railroad tracks. Pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers may wait up to 30 minutes for a 90-car train to pass through if they are unlucky enough to be crossing at the wrong time.

CURRENT BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE



Pedestrian Infrastructure

Pedestrian connectivity is also a major concern. The grade changes and general lack of connectivity between the West Side, Millyard, and Downtown discourage people from walking, even those residents and employees in the Millyard who like to walk to work, to get lunch, or run errands say they are concerned about the pedestrian infrastructure. Not only are the sidewalks and stairs not always well maintained, the steps and grade change increase the perception that the Millyard and Downtown are too far apart to walk comfortably.

When assessed from Elm Street, the walk to the Merrimack River has few active ground floor uses and consists of many linear feet of parking, inactive street front, and blank brick walls. Add to that physical barriers such as grade level changes and steps, and railroad tracks, and the environment is one which doesn't invite a pleasant stroll.

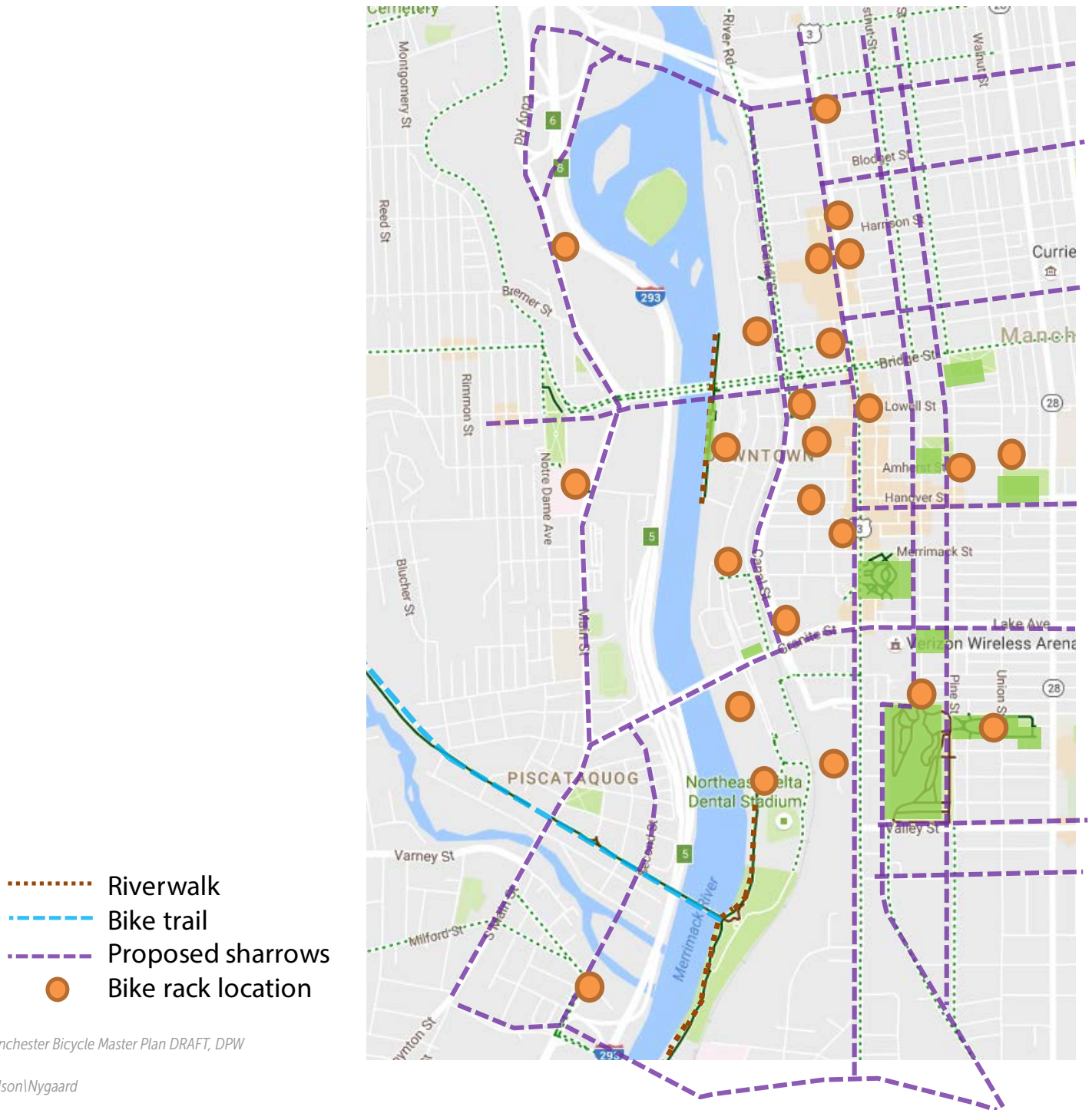
Bicycle Infrastructure

Bicycle connectivity is also limited although there are plans for future improvements (highlighted in the Mixed Land Use and Parking Action Kit). It is not only a lack of bike lanes and signage that creates weak bicycle connectivity. A complete bike system needs secure lock facilities, showers, and bike sharing as well. The new bike share program is a great start to building a system that can work for everyone.

Source: Nelson\Nygaard

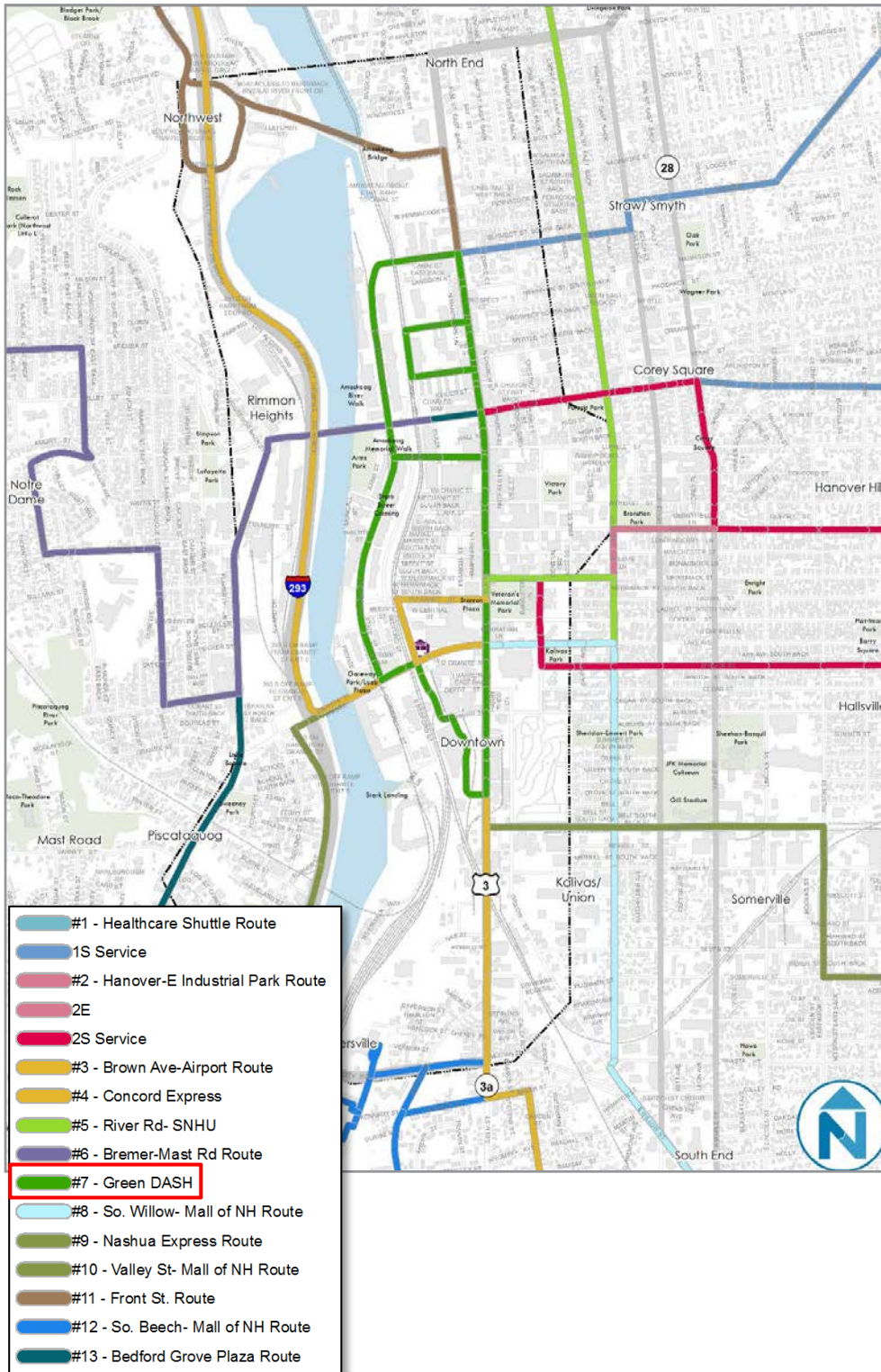


## PROPOSED BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE



Source: Manchester Bicycle Master Plan DRAFT, DPW

Source: Nelson\Nygaard



## Transit Service

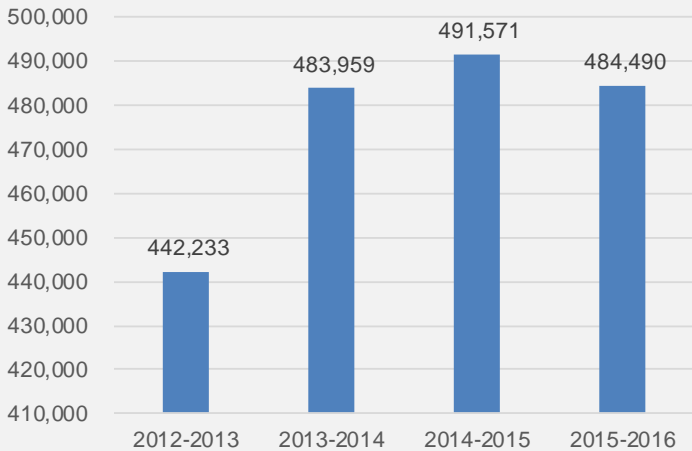
Currently, the only public transportation in the Milliyard is the Green Dash. The Green Dash is a free bus that runs every twenty minutes weekdays between 7am and 7pm. There are other buses in Downtown and a bus that crosses the river to service part of the West Side, but the Green Dash is one of Manchester's most used routes. Even though some of the MTA's bus routes have lost ridership over the last several years, total Green Dash ridership has increased by more than ten percent since 2012 and it currently serves approximately 40,000 passengers annually who are mostly Milliyard and Downtown employees, visitors and business customers, Health Department and City employees, and Market Basket Shoppers (source: MTA).

## Summary

The lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, weak connections, and car-dominated mode share, combined with the lack of active ground floor uses has created a local culture where people travel by car from one Downtown/Milliyard destination to another or simply don't travel at all because it is inconvenient to walk or drive.



## MTA Total Transit Passengers Served (annual)

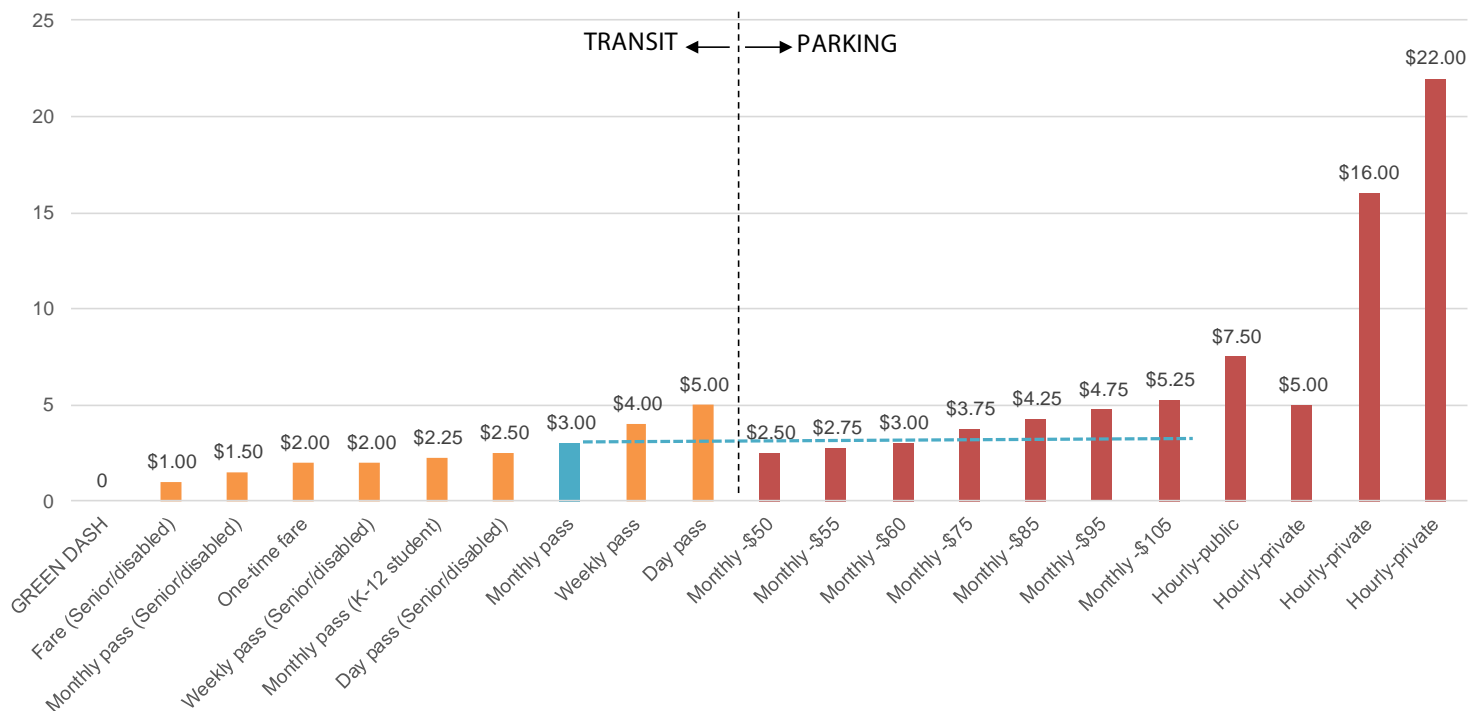


## MTA Fares

One-time fare:	\$2
Day pass:	\$5
Weekly pass:	\$20
Monthly pass:	\$60

Because it is cheaper to drive and pay for parking than to take transit, in many cases, there is no incentive to switch modes of travel in Manchester. An assessment of parking, congestion, and multimodal strategies must take into account all factors that contribute to current conditions.

## Daily Commuting Cost



Note: for weekly permit, assuming 5 days/week; for monthly permit, assuming 20 days/month

Source: Nelson\Nygaard

## 7. LACK OF “THIRD PLACES”

“Third Places” are the publicly accessible spaces that are neither home nor work. Urban socialist Ray Oldenburg coined the term to describe public spaces that are highly accessible and free or inexpensive. These spaces are neutral places where people have no obligation to inhabit them but do so because of their welcoming and playful nature. These places help build a sense of community and foster spontaneous interactions that are the hallmark of a robust and healthy civic society. Third places also are key components of innovation districts.



The Millyard has very few spaces that are openly public gathering spots that are easily accessible and free. The solid nature of the buildings also works against the notion of connected and accessible space with lobbies and offices hidden behind solid brick walls. This lack of gathering space makes it difficult for the Millyard to function as an incubator, innovation, and social place with active uses and destinations that create street life and activity.



*Several companies, including Dyn, have inviting lounges and other spaces for their employees to gather. These spaces are important as they allow for organic, unplanned interaction between people. However, there are very few publicly-available spaces for people to gather in the Millyard.*

*Source: CivicMoxie*

## WHAT'S A THIRD PLACE?

Urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg coined the term “third place” in his 1989 book “The Great Good Place” to describe a communal space that is neither home nor work. Third places are part of the public realm and serve as the glue that binds people together and offers respite from other spaces and places in our lives. Far from an abstract theoretical construct, third places are all around us and are a necessary ingredient of vibrant work and live environments. One of the main factors that contribute to the sterility of suburban office parks is the lack of third places within these complexes.

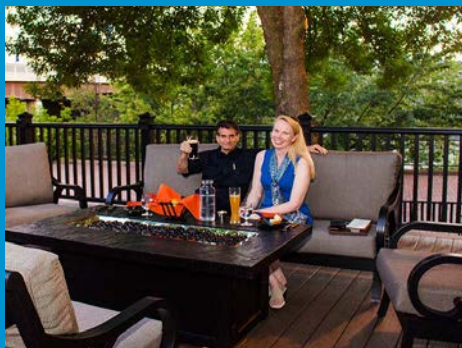
Oldenburg suggests the following hallmarks of a true “third place:”

- Free or inexpensive
- Food and drink, while not essential, are important
- Highly accessible: proximate for many (walking distance)
- Involve regulars – those who habitually congregate there
- Welcoming and comfortable
- Both new friends and old should be found there

In the "Impact of third places on community quality of life," by Leo Jeffres and others, third places are described as a diverse assortment of places that can possibly function as social spaces and gathering spots. These include:

- Coffee shops and cafes
- Bars and pubs
- Restaurants
- Stores
- Recreation centers
- Movie and performance theaters
- Schools
- Libraries
- Neighborhood parties
- Block parties

It is interesting to note that neighborhood parties and block parties are on this list. Placemaking, which encourages ephemeral activities such as festivals, markets, and other activities creates third places for the duration of the event. In lieu of bricks and mortar third places, placemaking can serve as a stop gap measure to create these vital public spaces.



Sources, clockwise from top left: Montgomery [www.planning.com](http://www.planning.com), [www.resilience.org](http://www.resilience.org), UNH Manchester, The New York Times, USA Today, [www.pinterest.com/pin/427208714632432698/](http://www.pinterest.com/pin/427208714632432698/), [www.nhmagazine.com/The-best-outdoor-dining-spots-in-greater-Manchester/](http://www.nhmagazine.com/The-best-outdoor-dining-spots-in-greater-Manchester/)



## 8. MIX OF USES IS WEAK AND ACTIVE GROUND FLOOR USES ARE MISSING

### EXISTING LAND USES

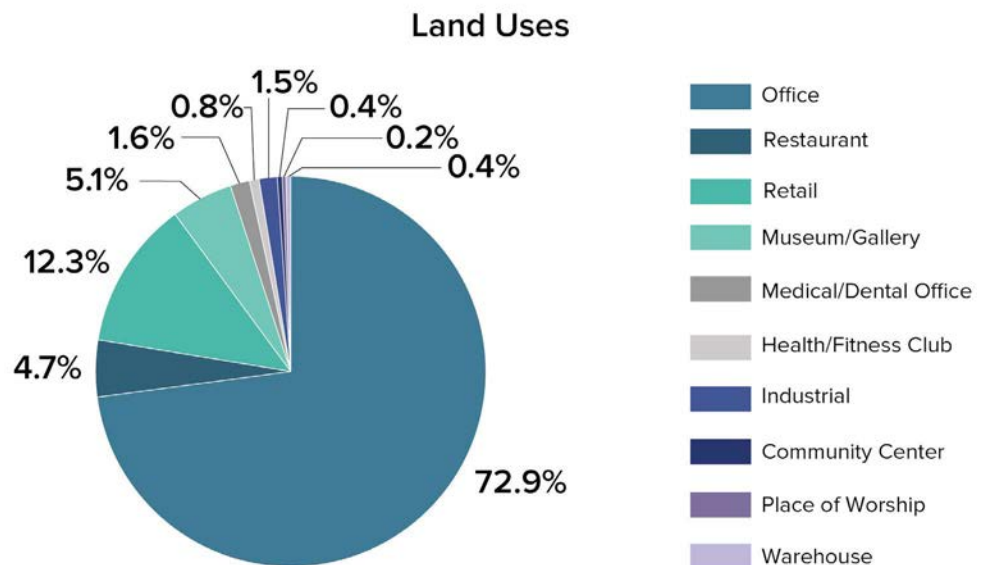


The Millyard functions mostly as a single use district with the majority of tenants being office, or office-like uses such as educational facilities. The architectural style of the buildings – brick industrial structures that looked inward rather than outward to the world—contributes to the lack of active ground floor activity and uses that create a vibrant public realm and offer reasons for people to walk and gather.

In addition, most of the placemaking activities in the area, such as seasonal events and activities, are located away from the Millyard, in Downtown. This

means that the one improved Riverwalk spot at Arms Park is surrounded not by active uses that can draw people to the Merrimack but rather, by parking lots that have no programmed activities or festivals. Simply put, there are no reasons for people to walk to the river or gather in the Millyard.

In addition, this lack of mixed-uses and active ground floor uses makes it difficult for the Millyard to compete with the burgeoning number of innovation districts in the surrounding region (including an innovation district in Lowell, MA and innovation district-like development patterns in Portsmouth, NH). The Millyard simply doesn't offer the mix of attractions, amenities, and public spaces that are a core part of these districts.



*This map shows that the primary land use for the highlighted area is the same for each of the Millyard parcels. Primary land use was not available for all of the Millyard parcels. The pie chart on the opposite page shows that more than 70% of the uses in the highlighted area are office uses!*

Map Source: Nelson\Nygaard  
Data Source: City of Manchester



Source: CivicMoxie



## SEASONAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### SPRING

- 1 Seamus the Leprechaun
- 2 Adopt-A-Block
- 3 Trolley Nights
- 4 Fat Tuesday 5K
- 5 Shamrock Shuffle

### SUMMER

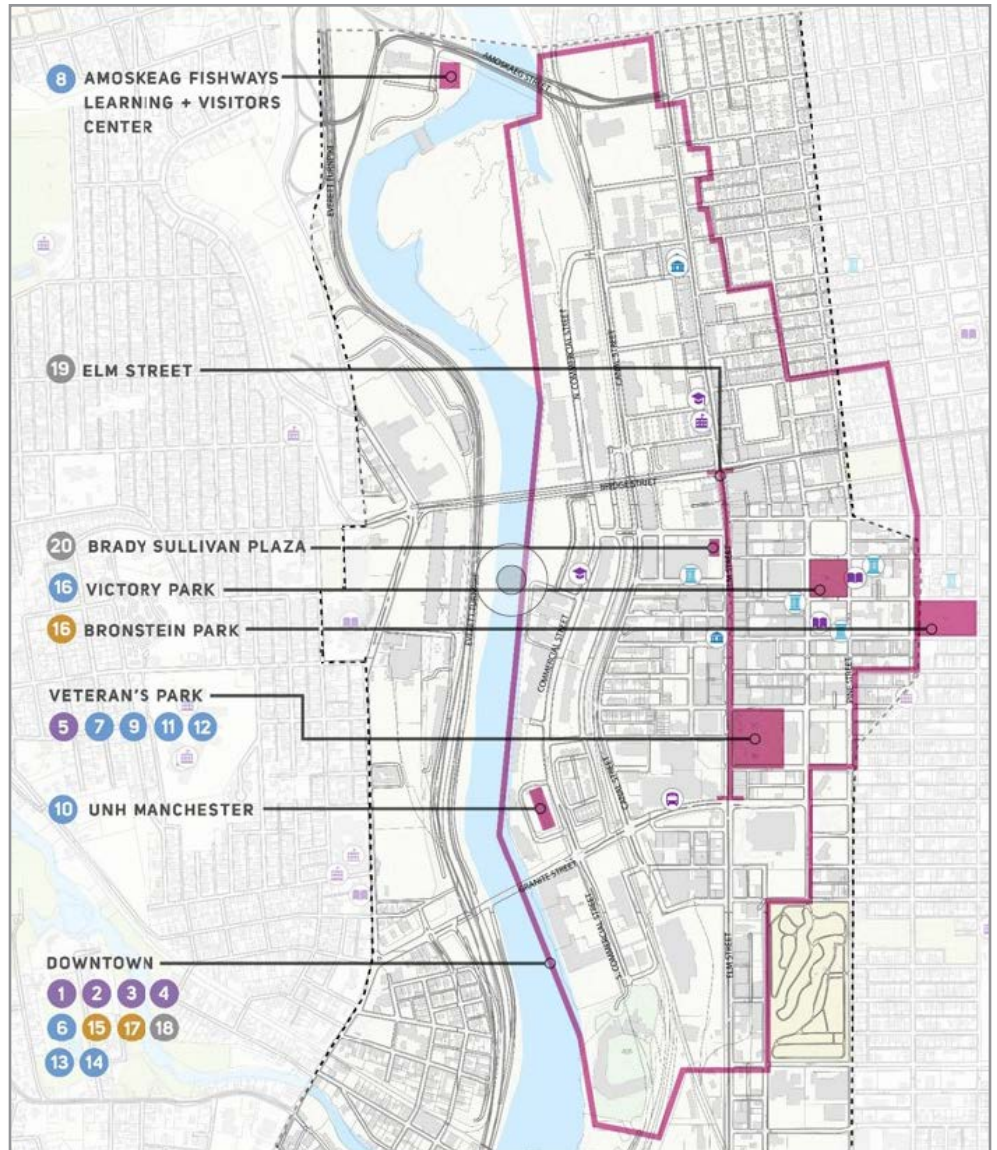
- 6 Monsters on the Loose
- 7 Recycled Percussion LIVE
- 8 Amoskeag Fishways Family Adventures
- 9 Manchester Community Market
- 10 Smyth Summer Music Series
- 11 Intown Manchester + TD Bank Summerfest
- 12 Intown Manchester Yoga + Fitness in the Park
- 13 Palace Theater Summer Children's Series
- 14 Fisher Cats Baseball

### FALL

- 15 Manchester Zombie Walk
- 16 Chalk the Block
- 17 The Taste of Downtown

### WINTER

- 18 Morty the Elf
- 19 The Manchester Christmas Parade
- 20 InTown Downtown Holiday Market



*Placemaking could help activate ground floor spaces in the Millyard, but the majority of events occur Downtown, not on the river or in the Millyard.*

Source: CivicMoxie



## 9. THE MUNICIPAL TAX CAP

The Municipal tax cap creates constraints in how smart investment can be made to reap returns in the future. Many of the successes of the past decades were made possible by savvy investments in the future of the city. These existing investments include the SNHU Center (previously known as the Verizon Center) and the Fisher Cats Stadium. Making investments to ensure that Manchester remains competitive and grows its economy (which will help grow the tax base and keep tax bills low) will require collaborative spirit and creativity.

Examples of the constraints imposed by the tax cap include parking garage finance. Portsmouth, NH has financed a new 613-space parking garage to serve new development and answer existing high demand by issuing general obligation bonds. Parking demand is strong and they expect the parking fee revenue will fully cover the cost of the garage and there will be no impact on taxes. However, they were able to do this because the City can guarantee the payments on the bonds with general revenue. If that becomes necessary, there is a risk that taxes/general

revenue will be affected. There is no such option in Manchester.

The limited capacity to make real investments in city infrastructure to keep pace and stay competitive mean that other measures must be identified and the means to support the infrastructure needed in the Millyard and Downtown may be restricted. These are very real challenges that must be addressed as the city and Manchester Connects prioritizes next actions. There is no such thing as staying at status quo. Cities that aren't moving forward are losing ground to regional competition. The means to invest now to incentivize long-term payoffs for the city and region must be done in creative and collaborative ways including public-private partnership, through private development, and perhaps special district assessments.



*Manchester Connects seeks to identify smart investments in the city's future that can have a positive impact on revenue in the long term.*

## SUMMARY

*Cities that focus on creating attractive and high quality urban centers with rich amenities and quality of place will improve their competitiveness*

Many of these challenges have similar themes—lack of active ground floor uses, limited destinations that compel walking, and a dearth of mixed-uses that could put foot traffic on the streets and contribute to increased business health on Elm Street and additional eyes on the street to enhance a sense of security.

How Manchester meets these challenges facing the Milliard and Downtown will determine the city's competitiveness moving forward. Cities that focus on creating attractive and high quality urban centers with rich amenities, a strong sense of place, and quality of life will be able to improve their competitiveness in attracting high skilled workers and firms that seek the benefits of a location in an urban center.

As illustrated in the next section, what Manchester residents and employees want is in alignment with the needs identified in this section. The City has also been working on some of these issues, such investing in bicycle infrastructure. In Part 4, planning priorities as set by stakeholders are outlined and then, in Part 5, recommendations are made to meet these challenges and support Manchester as a competitive destination for living, working, and playing.







# PART 4

WHAT HAVE WE HEARD?

# WHAT HAVE WE HEARD?

*This initiative has included thorough efforts to engage those who know Manchester best—residents, business people, area leaders, and other community members. What follows is a summary of the extensive feedback received during this planning process, beginning with a list of three general challenges and three opportunities that summarize the public comment and responses. Following this list is more detail about the specifics of what we heard.*

The project team developed an outreach plan and sought ideas, information, and feedback through various engagement techniques including surveys, interviews, working groups, public meetings, a table at a 2016 Downtown concert, and social media. A website was also established to share meeting slides and other project information with the public.

Community feedback was added to information gathered from previous plans and studies. Field tours of the area and careful analysis of spatial, demographic, and transportation data contributed to an in-depth picture of the Millyard, Downtown, West Side and the future possibilities.

## HIGHLIGHTS/COMMON THEMES

- Opportunities for public art and innovation
- Public-private partnerships
- Particular roads as important corridors for walkability and bikeability, e.g. Granite Street and Stark Street
- Combining historic legacy with modernity
- Need for a cohesive identity and sense of place

## THREE CHALLENGES

### Connectivity

There is a need for better connections between the West Side, Millyard, and Downtown, between the neighborhoods and the river, and between the surrounding region and downtown Manchester.

### Parking

The Millyard has become a popular destination for tech businesses and educational institutions, but it's now experiencing growing pains. Specifically, worries about parking capacity have made people think the Millyard has reached its growth limit.

### Funding

Placemaking efforts, physical infrastructure changes, and other projects needed to improve multimodal access and connections will require funding, but the city's tax cap and budget deficit mean public funds will likely be scarce.

While past success stories in Manchester have demonstrated the power of public-private partnerships (such as the SNHU Arena, Market Basket, and the revitalization of the Millyard), such partnerships may not be able to carry out larger-scale infrastructure projects like commuter rail expansion.

## THREE OPPORTUNITIES

### Sense of Place

The Millyard, West Side, and Elm Street each possess a strong sense of identity, with historic buildings, distinct architecture, and unique land uses. Additional placemaking efforts, such as public art and programming, could bring further activity to these spaces, particularly during weekend and evening hours



## Momentum

Since the days when the Millyard was practically abandoned, Manchester's core has been transformed, thanks to the efforts of invested and persevering citizens. The city has come a long way and is now much more attractive to people and businesses. Downtown is becoming more of a draw, especially with new businesses and apartments adding 24/7 activity, but it still needs a stronger commercial and residential presence; building off this momentum, encouraging mixed-use redevelopment and adaptive reuse will further strengthen the area economically, socially, and spatially.

## Advocates

Manchester benefits from a very engaged, civic-minded business community as well as a variety of strong institutions. Rather than leaving the downtown core for the suburbs or razing older buildings, forward-thinking business and property owners

have continually chosen to invest in the existing urban fabric and in what makes the city unique. These business stakeholders, along with key public officials, local banks, and leaders of cultural institutions, are an invaluable resource for further transformation, since they can advocate for improvements, marshal resources, and contribute social and political capital (as well as technical know-how). In this way, every step of the process was community-driven, from early information-gathering to implementation.

## THE DETAILS ON WHAT WE HEARD

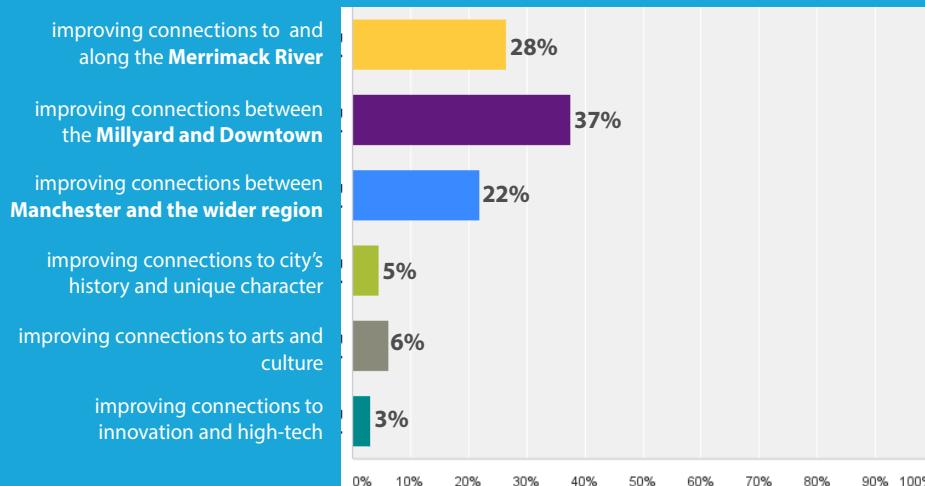
### Interviews

- Ten interviews with key stakeholders, people who know the Downtown, West Side, and Millyard well and who have capacity to make things happen
- Interviewees highlighted:
  - a. Potential of the river as an attraction

## MANCHESTER CONNECTS OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS

- 3 public meetings, 291 total attendance
- 3 stakeholder steering committee meetings, 68 total attendance
- 4 project branding meetings, 22 people attending multiple meetings
- 6 working group meetings on *The Loop* pilot project, 32 people, attending multiple meetings
- 1 working group meeting on the *Riverwalk/placemaking* (then was merged with the *loop* group)
- 32 one-on-one in-person or phone interviews
- 3 Gateway Park meetings
- Manchester Connects Facebook Group with 1173 members (as of 6/30/17)
- Online survey with 256 respondents

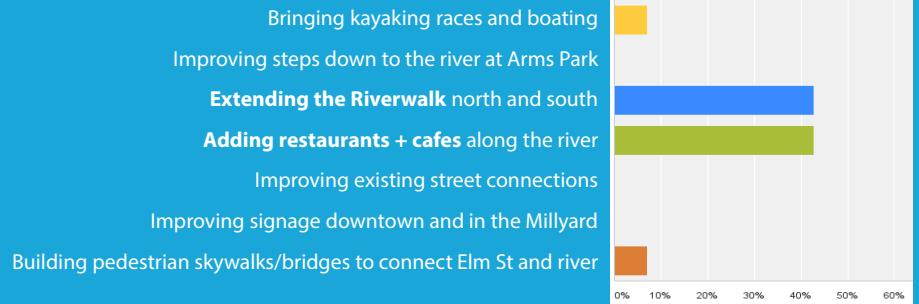
### Which of the following themes do you think is most important to connect people, places, and ideas in the Millyard and Downtown?



### Responses to 2016 Survey

Source: CivicMoxie

## MOST IMPORTANT PROJECTS/ ACTIONS for improving connections to the Merrimack River from the Millyard/Downtown



Responses to 2016 Survey



## MOST IMPORTANT PROJECTS/ ACTIONS for improving connections between the Millyard and Downtown/Elm St



Responses to 2016 Survey

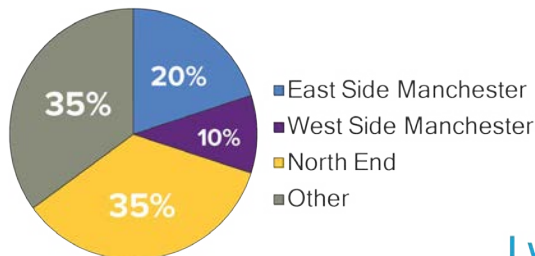


Source: CivicMoxie

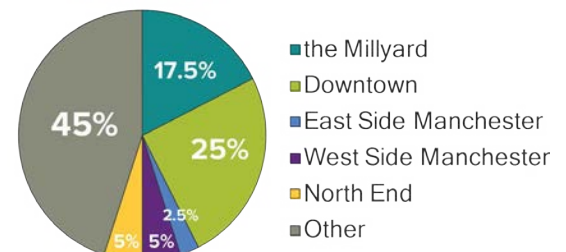
- b. Need for safer walking/biking routes in the area
- c. Need for better connections between Millyard and Downtown (and beyond)
- d. Challenges—funding and political will
- e. Shift in demographics—more young people (and empty nesters) moving downtown

## WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?

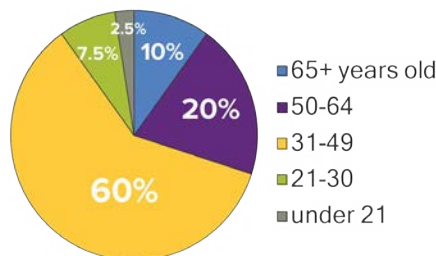
### I live in:



### I work in:

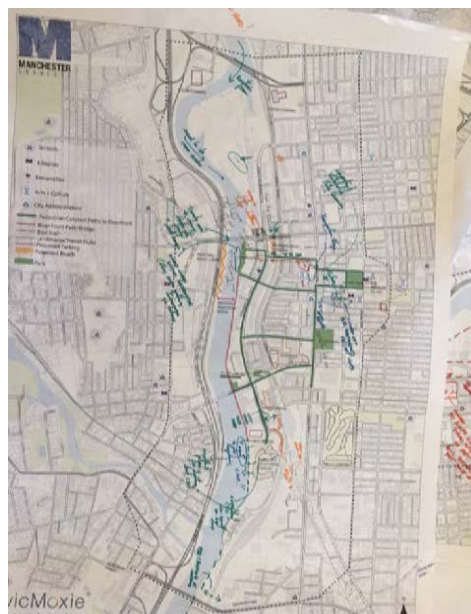
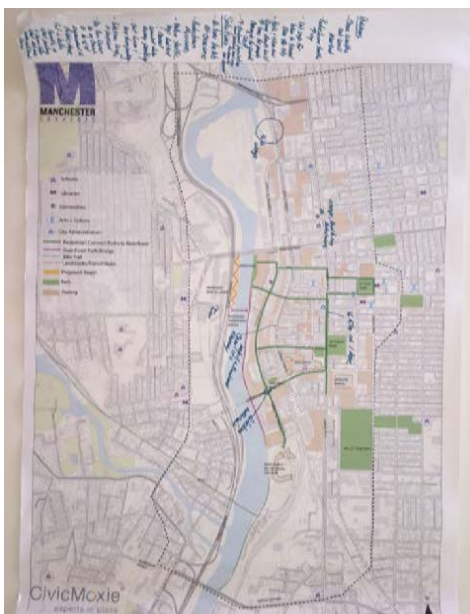


### I am:



## Survey Results

- Online survey was distributed via email, social media, meetings, and in-person interactions, with 183 total responses
- Respondents prioritized:
  - a. Improving connections between Downtown/Elm St and the Millyard (37%)
  - b. Improving connections to the Merrimack River (24%)
  - c. Improving connections between Manchester and the wider region (21%)



Marked up maps from Manchester Connects public meetings provided detailed feedback for the planning process.

Source: CivicMoxie



Community input also helped define progressively more specific goals for the Manchester Connects initiative. From general ideas about how to better connect Downtown and the Millyard and making the Merrimack River more of an attraction, these goals narrowed to: establishing a pedestrian and bike-friendly “loop” between Elm Street and the Millyard, and expanding and improving the Riverwalk with markings and placemaking.



Manchester Connects Twitter + Facebook accounts have an enthusiastic and growing following!  
Source: CivicMoxie

### Public Meetings

Public meetings were publicized via local newspapers, public TV, email, social media, flyers, and in-person interactions, with approximately 250 participants. Each public meeting brought new people into the process.

- Respondents prioritized:
  - a. Improving connections between Downtown/Elm St and the Millyard
  - b. A complete streets approach that prioritizes and is safer for pedestrians and cyclists
  - c. Need for more programming and events to draw in people, especially in existing public spaces
  - d. Solution for parking in the Millyard
  - e. More things to do and see along (and in) the river

### Social Media

- Manchester Connects Facebook group quickly grew. As of June 2017, there are 2,458 members sharing countless posts with ideas for the Millyard, Downtown, West Side, and the river, as well as local information and examples from other cities
- @MHTConnects Twitter page has 620 followers and 398 tweets, sharing more ideas and information as well as publicizing public meetings

### Working Groups/Stakeholder Meetings

- Several stakeholder meetings and working groups were held over the course of the planning initiative, to first gain deeper understanding of the area and the issues at hand, then later to prioritize projects and ideas, develop a shared plan for action, and set up steps for implementation
- Two additional focus groups helped brand the project as “Manchester Connects” and develop the distinctive M logo.

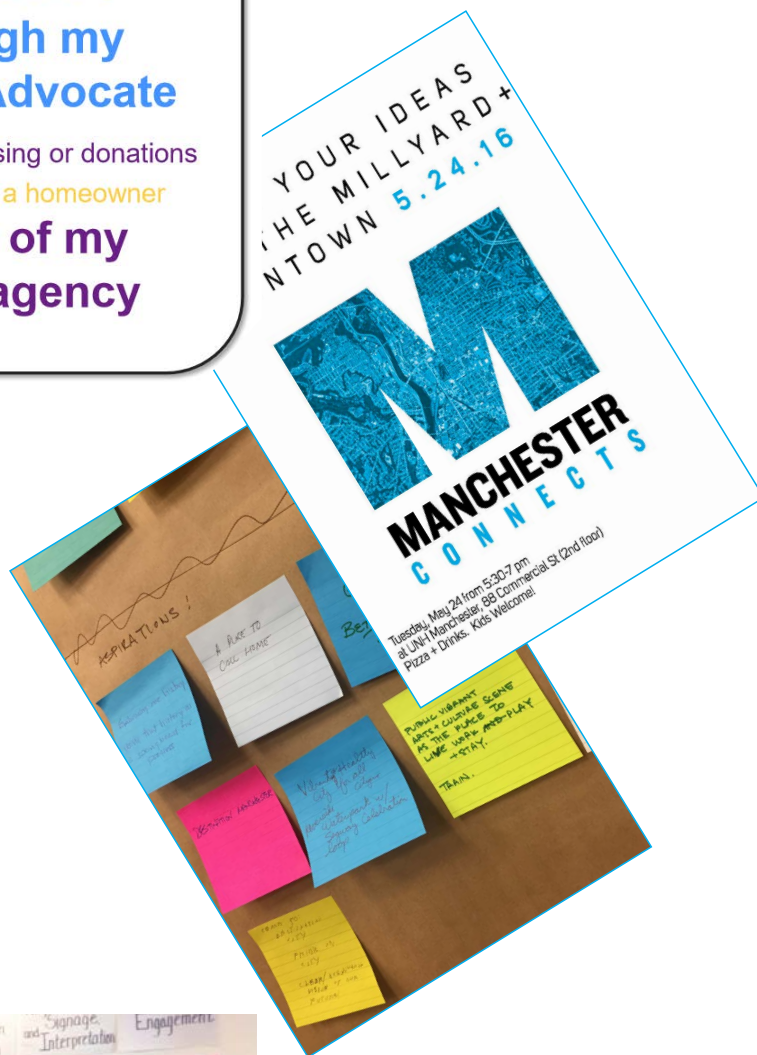
## How Can YOU Help?

117 Responses

**Volunteer my time**  
**Spread the word through my networks** **Share my knowledge** **Advocate**  
**Share my skills** Help with fundraising or donations  
 Organize or promote events **My taxes as a homeowner**  
**Contribute the support of my organization/company/agency**  
 Share ideas

Residents and other stakeholders are ready to act

Source: CivicMoxie



UNH Manchester held a robust process to solicit ideas for Gateway Park in the Winter and Spring of 2017. Manchester Connects supports this collaborative effort to redesign the park as a vibrant gateway to the Millyard and Downtown.





# PART 5

WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

# WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

## THE TIME IS NOW

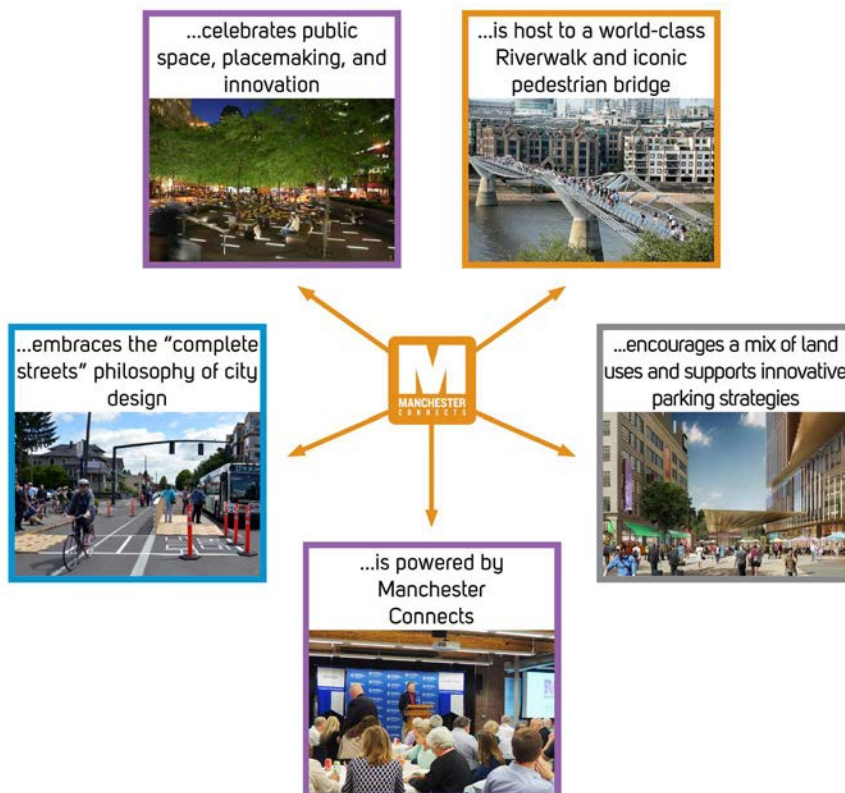
With the extraordinary assets of the historic Amoskeag Millyard, the Merrimack River, downtown Elm Street, and myriad top-notch educational institutions in the city, all connected to a regional open space system, there is no reason Manchester shouldn't be thriving as an innovation hub with robust economic health and high desirability as a place to live, work, and visit. In fact, this is what we want Manchester to be in the decades to come.

Manchester Connects lays the groundwork to support the city's positive momentum and the goals of this planning initiative with recommended near and long-term actions rooted in current assets, interests, and resources.

## MANCHESTER CONNECTS GOALS

- The Manchester of the future celebrates vibrant public spaces, placemaking, and innovation by creating opportunities for good city design that utilize the latest technology. The city encourages creative programming of public and semi-public spaces with events, activities, and destinations that activate the public realm and create a sense of place.
- The Manchester of the future embraces the "complete streets" philosophy of city design. The city is connected in multiple ways and offers choices in how people travel and how they live and work. The city takes advantage of the possibility of future rail to create a walkable core that is vibrant, attracts events and activities, and that sees choices in cycling, walking, driving, and commuting by bus and train.
- The Manchester of the future is host to a world-class Riverwalk and an iconic pedestrian bridge connecting the east and west sides of the Merrimack and Millyard...creating a destination that supports dining, retail, and high quality of life for workers and residents alike.
- The Manchester of the future encourages a mix of land uses and supports innovative parking strategies that sustain a healthy Millyard and Downtown where people live as well as dine and work. Parking choices encourage people to park once and walk to everything they want to do and see.
- The Manchester of the future is powered by Manchester Connects—a collaborative effort of the public, private, and non-profit sectors who recognize that putting our heads together can extend our limited

### GOALS THE MANCHESTER OF THE FUTURE...

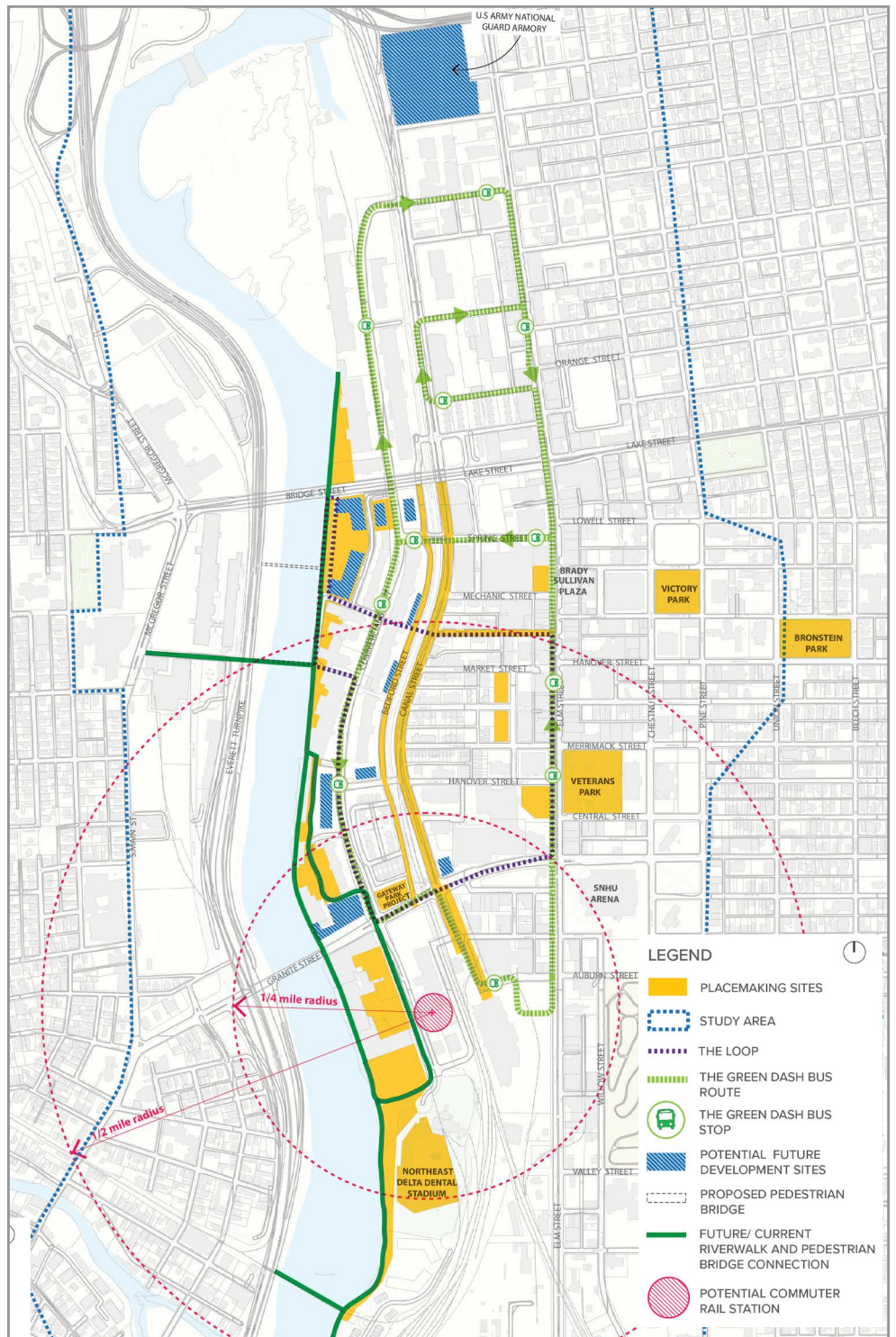


Source: CivicMoxie

resources and create benefits we all can enjoy. This advocacy and programming initiative is dedicated to the economic health of the city and its desirability for residents, visitors, and cutting-edge businesses and entrepreneurs.

*To reach these future goals, Manchester Connects outlines specific strategies to move forward. The Action Kits in this plan provide detailed information on near-term implementation guidance to ensure the momentum transforms from planning to doing.*

## MANCHESTER CONNECTS VISION MAP



Source: CivicMoxie



# GOAL #1: CREATE VIBRANT PUBLIC SPACES



*The Manchester of the future celebrates vibrant public spaces, placemaking + innovation by creating opportunities for good city design that utilize the latest technology. Creative programming of public and semi-public spaces with events, activities, and destinations that activate the public realm and create a sense of place.*

*Sources, top to bottom: [www.worldlandscapearchitect.com/leicester-square-city-quarter-london-uk-burns-nice/#.WUkzX-cZGIPY](http://www.worldlandscapearchitect.com/leicester-square-city-quarter-london-uk-burns-nice/#.WUkzX-cZGIPY), [www.commonswikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zuccotti\\_Park\\_at\\_night\\_October\\_2014.JPG](http://www.commonswikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zuccotti_Park_at_night_October_2014.JPG)*



People will go where there are things to do, places to see, people to meet. Chock full with employees and full parking lots during the week, the Millyard is almost empty after working hours and on weekends. Elm Street has existing businesses, vacancies, and underutilized spaces that could be supported by more foot traffic and activity. Opportunities for chance encounters, myriad of social interactions, and choices that balance hard work with recreation are hallmarks of the type of urban working and living environment that is attractive to knowledge businesses and educated workers choosing where to locate. Providing nodes of activities and offering compelling destinations supports connectivity and multimodal transportation while contributing toward making the Millyard and Downtown Manchester an exciting place for working, living, and visiting.

*Placemaking turns an uninteresting street corner into an attractive park, it brings children and adults together to swing and blow bubbles, it provides an opportunity for individuals, cities, and organization to try out different ideas without committing years' worth of planning and significant funding.*

Creating a variety of destinations within Downtown, the Millyard, and West Side encourages people to move throughout the community, bringing eyes on the street, activity, and foot traffic to local businesses.

## MANCHESTER CONNECTS IS COMMITTED TO:

- Employing tactical urbanism to create temporary and pop-up events and enhanced public spaces in the near-term with innovative and inexpensive solutions that don't rely on capital-intensive projects.
- Identifying private property owners who will "host" placemaking projects and working with them to address issues and regulatory barriers.
- Working with existing entities including Intown Manchester, Millyard businesses, groups that are running events to support their efforts, offer ways to expand their impact, and marketing their offerings.
- Working with the strong arts and cultural community including the Public Art Commission, New Hampshire Institute of Art, and the newly formed Cultural District to ensure arts and culture are woven into placemaking strategies.
- Embracing innovation as a statement of the relevance of the 21st Century economy in Manchester by partnering with local companies where possible to use the latest technology for lighting, art, and street furniture.
- Promoting and managing events, activities, and programs in public spaces and interior common spaces in the Millyard and along the Merrimack that create a network of destinations and reinforce connectivity while offering reasons to walk and bike.

## WHAT IS PLACEMAKING AND TACTICAL URBANISM?

The term placemaking is used in a variety of ways by various people, and the terms activation, placemaking, and programming are used interchangeably in this Waterfront Plan. At its heart, placemaking is about using a multi-faceted grassroots approach to create places that are enjoyable for people to work, live, and play.

Components of placemaking include both physical improvements and activities or events to activate public places and attract a wide diversity of people. From NYC's Times Square to Blue Back Square in nearby Hartford to small-town

Main Streets all across the country, placemaking brings spaces alive and neighbors together. Placemaking needs the following elements to be successful:

- Focus on action in the short term
- High-quality design using accepted design principles
- Funding for programming (activities and events)
- Management entity (someone or some organization to make decisions on activities, space maintenance, coordination, fundraising)
- Public input and involvement—this is key!

The placemaking map on the next page highlights all the potential places in the Millyard and Downtown for events, activities, and public realm improvements. The goal is to supplement Intown Manchester activities in Downtown with more activity and visibility for the Riverwalk and the Millyard and also enhance connections between Elm Street, the River, and the West Side. Three priority areas for placemaking should be:

1. Gateway Park – this initiative is led by UNH Manchester and UNH Extension and is an extraordinary collaboration between educational institutions, the City of Manchester, design professionals, and others to remake Gateway Park at the corner of Commercial and Granite Streets as a people-centered park that serves employees in the Millyard and Downtown, nearby residents, and the larger Manchester area.
2. Arms Park(ing) Lot – As the central open space of the Millyard, this City-owned riverfront strip of open space and adjacent parking area has the potential to be a central point of focus for the Merrimack Riverwalk and the entire Millyard. Repurposing the parking lot on weekends is a start to activating this space with people and activities.
3. The Loop – a pilot project of this planning initiative. The Loop is a circuit that includes Elm Street, Stark Street, the Riverfront, and Granite Street. Described as “The Loop,” a portion of this—Stark Street from Elm to Commercial Street—is the location for early action.

## STRATEGIES

### Focus on the Millyard

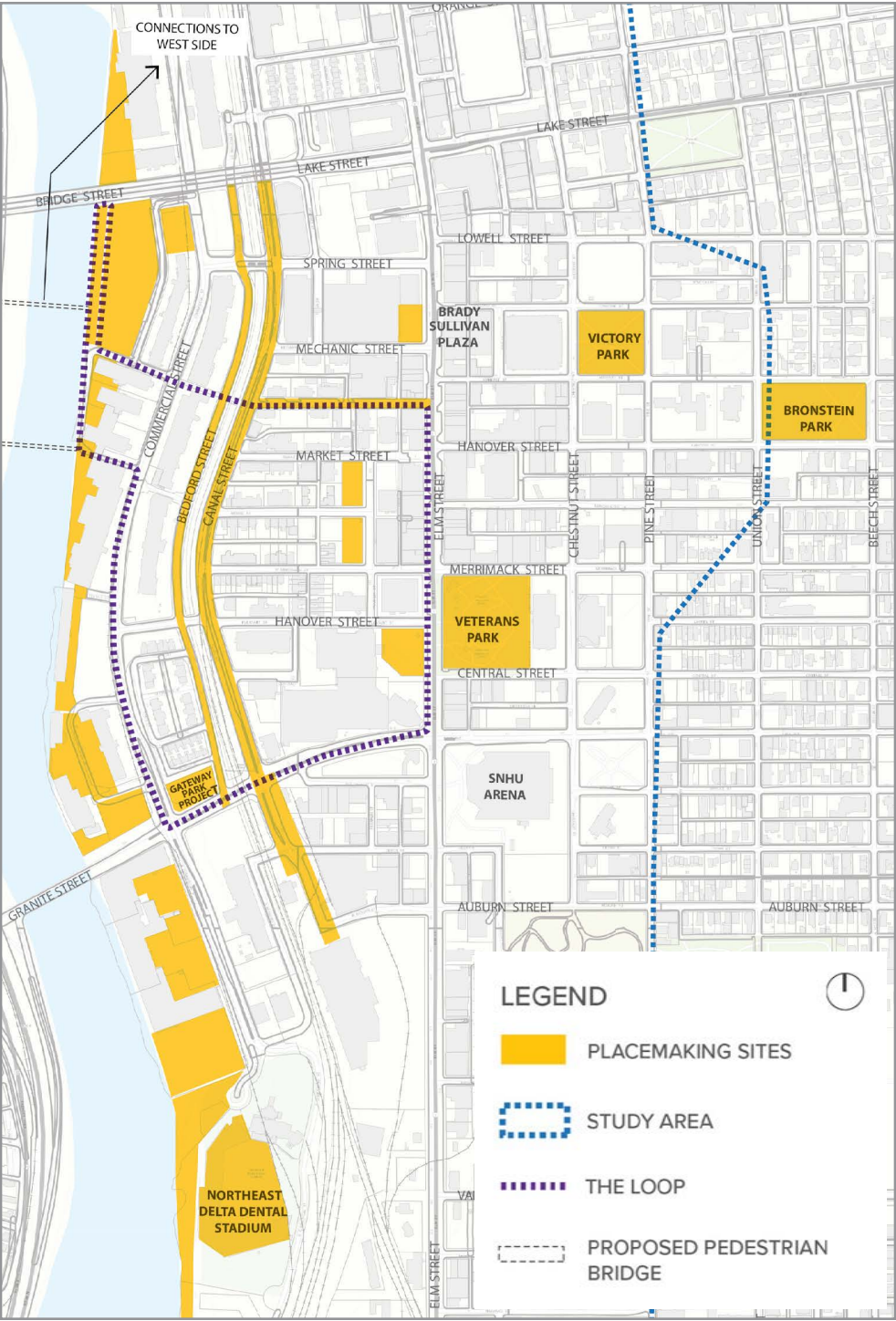
- Coordinate Millyard Owners and tenants to activate the Millyard.
- Develop a contact list of all Millyard owners and tenant businesses, resident groups, and institutions so that there exists a master list serve and data base of Millyard stakeholders.
- Use the Millyard listserv to complete the existing Manchester Connects Placemaking List to create as complete a list as possible of existing initiatives in the Millyard including business social activities, music, Museum events, and other “happenings.”
- Create a common calendar of events, spaces, and programs in the Millyard. Make it easy to list an activity and easy to find something to do. Advertise it widely.

### Use tactical urbanism

- Contact Millyard property owners and work with this group and the City (as a property owner and permitting agency) to determine who is willing to offer their spaces for placemaking and events.
- Use the Placemaking Kit to match events to places in the Millyard and recruit groups, businesses and organizations to run activities and host events.
- Partner with the NHIA, the Currier Museum, the Public Art Commission, and others to identify ways that public art can be incorporated in temporary ways into Millyard spaces. Ideas could include temporary murals on plywood mounted to brick mill building exterior walls, contests to design movable lightweight furniture for the Riverwalk and Arms Park, signage design, lighting, video, and other exciting methods to create a dynamic platform for art.



POTENTIAL PLACEMAKING LOCATIONS IN THE MILLYARD + DOWNTOWN



Source: CivicMoxie

## TAXI

Denver, CO

Denver's Zeppelin Development transformed a former taxi depot into a highly desirable mixed-use development with offices, startup space, associated services, Millennial housing, and now, family-oriented residences. Begun in the early 2000s, the original taxi depot was rehabbed using industrial design elements and many "third places" where employees could gather, have events, and even swim in the shipping container pool after a hard day's work. Zeppelin provided a small activities fund for residents and employees to have Friday BBQ's or poetry readings in the office corridors after work. Recent additions include a STEM program for area youth that is a collaboration of the Zeppelins and the public library.

The Zeppelins have worked collaboratively with the City. On a recent land purchase, they have rerouted a road away from the river and converted asphalt to recreation space. A pedestrian bridge, suggested in the City's master plan, would span the Platte River. "That's an opportunity that you can't build into a neighborhood", Zeppelin said, "There's only one river that runs through downtown and RiNo."

### Create a variety of destinations

- Gathering spaces, activity spaces, and transition spaces all have a place in the public realm. To support connectivity, attention should be given to all three:
- Stark Street and other Loop streets should be designed with multimodal movement in mind and also have places to stop and rest.
- Small gathering spaces may be those protected areas that are framed by buildings on some sides, or even interior lobbies and privately-owned spaces that can be used by the public. These should have tables, chairs, and other types of seating that are movable and lightweight.
- Events and larger activity spaces should have access to electrical hookups, water, if possible, and larger expanses of area to accommodate festivals, larger markets, and other activities that require more space and more complex logistics. Space

for large events can be created by temporarily closing a street for an afternoon or evening.

- Keep an archive of events and activities and where they have occurred and the issues/solutions that have been experienced. Use the archive of information as a resource to make placemaking as easy as possible and to inform potential strategies for streamlining operations. For instance, repeated difficulties around permitting can highlight the benefits of coordinating with City Building and Planning around ways to address concerns on all sides.

### Repurpose underutilized space and parking lots on weekends

- Focus on Arms Park(ing) Lot as the location of weekend placemaking through the placement of temporary seating, tables, and public art structures.
- Encourage Arms Park(ing) Lot as the site of festivals, markets, other activities.
- Use the Placemaking Kit to calculate crowd sizes, location of activities, and need for site furniture and seating.

### Create “Third Places” in the Millyard

- Create a map of the Millyard that includes all places that are open to the public to dine, sit, and gather.
- Clarify when spaces, businesses and Museums are open to the public and add this information to the map and ensure these areas are well-labeled and information is available online as well.
- Work with tenants and property owners to identify locations that can serve as third places such as existing ground floor lobbies, student lounges and gathering areas, or seasonal outdoor seating areas adjacent to

## THIRD PLACES

Third Places, as characterized by the urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg, are those informal public gathering spaces that are necessary to foster civic engagement and support a functioning civic society. These spaces are characteristic of highly desirable working and living environments.



Harvard plaza

Source: [www.stoss.net/projects/16/the-plaza-at-harvard/](http://www.stoss.net/projects/16/the-plaza-at-harvard/)



Coffee shop in SOHO

Source: [www.coffeeshopjournal.com](http://www.coffeeshopjournal.com)

buildings. Add these to the map.

- Offer zoning incentives for third places in new development projects in all new development in the Milliard and Downtown. These uses should be defined as open to the public, generating foot traffic, and providing places for people to work, meet, and talk with or without requirement of purchase. Examples include:
  - i. Building lobbies that double as public seating areas with adjacent seasonal outdoor seating
  - ii. Spaces with public wi-fi access
  - iii. Seasonal outdoor “reading rooms” offered by the public library and sponsored by a local business

#### **Use innovative and cutting-edge lighting, technology, and materials**

- Identify Milliard businesses who can contribute to the goal of using innovative technology to enhance the public realm, access to information, and public art. Examples include businesses involved with:
  - i. Lighting technology
  - ii. Public information technology
  - iii. Video streaming
  - iv. Materials such as paint, plastics, other items for temporary installations and furniture
- Identify placemaking that can benefit from technology. Suggestions include:
  - i. City-to-city video wall (Manchester, NH to Manchester, England?)
  - ii. LED lights on The Loop
  - iii. Solar lighting on the river piers

For more detailed information about placemaking and its importance to Manchester Connects, see the Placemaking Action Kit.



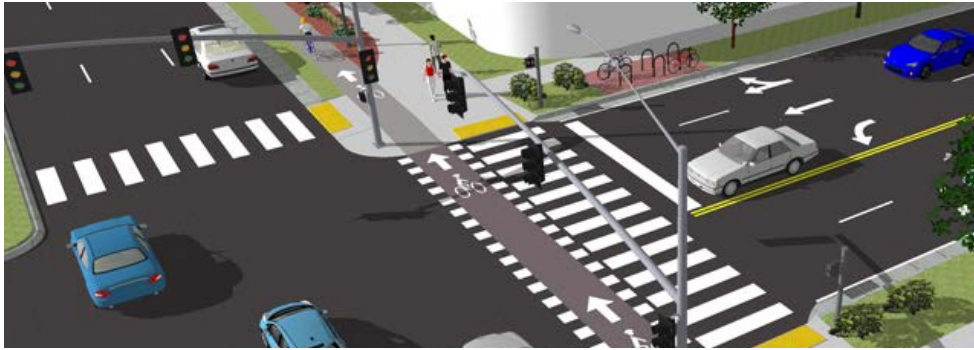
*The use of innovative and cutting-edge technology and materials in public spaces can act as an attractor to bring activity into different areas of the city.*

*Sources, top to bottom: [www.jcdecauxna.com/innovate/gallery/smith-family-using-showscreens-australia-0](http://www.jcdecauxna.com/innovate/gallery/smith-family-using-showscreens-australia-0), [www.weekend-amsterdam.com](http://www.weekend-amsterdam.com), [www.nytimes.com/2013/06/18/technology/att-to-introduce-solar-powered-charging-stations.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/18/technology/att-to-introduce-solar-powered-charging-stations.html)*



## GOAL #2:

# PROMOTE COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION CHOICES



Research shows that the more street intersections that exist, the more opportunities there are for human interaction and vitality—key attributes of great places to live and work. At a base level, street intersections are a good indicator of a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment because they allow people to take a short path from their origin to their destination. Because of its history and physical layout, the Millyard is disconnected from Downtown and there are limited choices for crossing the Merrimack from the east to the west side.



*With over 98% of Millyard employees driving to work alone or in a carpool, the adoption of strategies to make streets that can be used by everyone--- pedestrians, automobiles, bicycles, and transit— can support alternative transportation in the Millyard and Downtown and put people on the streets, adding to vitality and providing foot traffic to support local businesses while also easing demand on parking.*



*Complete streets balance the needs of multiple modes of transportation, providing space for cars, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit.*

Source, top to bottom: [www.insideofknoxville.com/2014/10/complete-streets/](http://www.insideofknoxville.com/2014/10/complete-streets/), [www.insideofknoxville.com/2014/10/complete-streets/](http://www.insideofknoxville.com/2014/10/complete-streets/), [www.blog.aarp.org/2012/01/25/what-is-a-complete-street/](http://www.blog.aarp.org/2012/01/25/what-is-a-complete-street/)

Working to provide adequate infrastructure for each mode of transportation, a complete streets approach results in a pleasant urban experience that leads to a

high quality of life. Both Millennials and Baby Boomers want affordable, accessible urban environments – something that complete streets naturally promote. In addition to making the West Side, Millyard, and Downtown more attractive and pleasant areas to walk or bike, a complete streets approach improves safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The City has been proactive about bicycle infrastructure, recently completing a Bike Master Plan. As the area attracts more residents and the businesses in the Millyard continue to grow, the parking demands and pressures will only multiply. Getting people out of cars entirely or into remote parking facilities outside the core of activity and walking, taking transit, or biking through the city benefits local retail and restaurants. Placing more people on the street, either walking or bicycling, supports businesses. People walking or biking are more likely to stop in for a cup of coffee or pop into a smaller retail establishment. People on the street also increase safety and attract even more pedestrians and bicyclists to the area.

*Complete street strategies can include street art, safe biking infrastructure, and parklets in key locations.*



## MANCHESTER CONNECTS IS COMMITTED TO:

- Increasing transportation options and enhancing access and convenience of these options to get to, and move within, the Millyard, Downtown, and West Side.
- Enhancing pedestrian connections with near-term tactical urbanist approaches to make pedestrian routes clear and fun and to encourage more foot traffic which can support existing businesses and enhance sense of security.
- Supporting additional connections to regional trail systems and green spaces that will enhance the attractiveness of the city for residents, visitors, businesses, and workers (see Goal #3 for more info on the Riverwalk and Pedestrian Bridge).
- Encouraging collaboration between entities to achieve more efficient and cost-effective transportation alternatives.
- Promoting mixed land uses that support walkability and promote multimodal transportation (see Goal #4 for more info on land use and parking).
- Educating the public and advocating for proactive land use, parking, and economic development policies that will keep the Millyard vibrant.

*Complete streets are about moving people, and providing choices for how they get around. Complete streets policies place equal importance on automobile, pedestrian, transit, and bicycle transportation.*



Sources, left to right: [www.charlotterailtrail.org/projects/jessie-katey](http://www.charlotterailtrail.org/projects/jessie-katey), [www.bikemore.net/completestreets](http://www.bikemore.net/completestreets), [www.theaccessiblecity.com/2012/12/28/san-franciscos-public-parklets](http://www.theaccessiblecity.com/2012/12/28/san-franciscos-public-parklets)





*Focus walkability improvements in the Millyard.*  
Source: Google

## STRATEGIES

### Increase Walkability

- Focus walkability improvements in the Millyard and on the Loop pilot project.
- Collaborate with DPW and the City to create temporary or permanent pavement markings for a pedestrian path. This marking system could be color coded by district (Cultural District, Elm Street, Millyard, the Loop, a cultural or historical path, etc.) or it may simply have different logos stenciled on the line, depending on location. Using the “M” from Manchester Connects is also a viable possibility—after all, walkability is all about connectivity!

- Work with the downtown wayfinding effort to ensure signage is clear and pedestrian pathways easily legible.
- Coordinate pedestrian focus areas with placemaking efforts to expand reasons why people would choose to walk. This means public art, special lighting, movable seating, and other physical enhancements should be planned to encourage more foot traffic and destinations.
- One of the most efficient ways to improve walkability is to focus on intersections. Those that feel unsafe or take a long time to cross can be barriers to walkability, and tools such as curb extensions, improved signal timing, and high-quality crosswalks can quickly shrink the perception of a “long walk.”

## BETTER CONNECTIONS

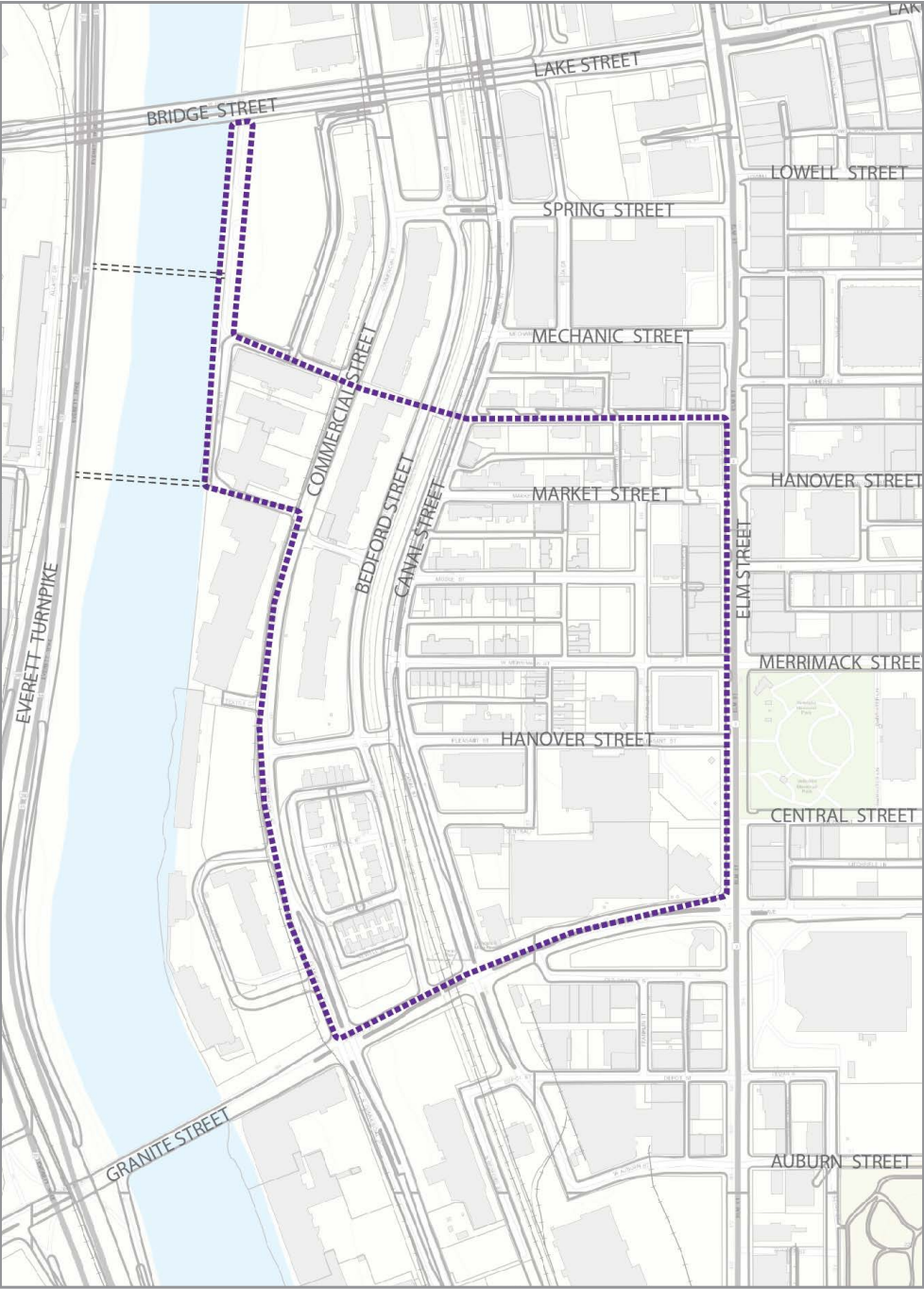
In a survey in the Summer/Fall of 2016, the number one priority for Manchester Connects, identified by 256 respondents, was better connections between Elm Street and the Millyard and Merrimack River. In a project working group formed in early 2017, 32 stakeholders worked during six meetings through the spring to identify a location for a pilot project in Manchester that will exemplify best multimodal practices and celebrate the quality and uniqueness of the city including its rich arts and cultural traditions, educational institutions, and history.

This “Loop” recommendation, shown on the facing page, consists of a portion of Elm Street, Stark Street, the Millyard and Riverwalk at Arms Park, Commercial Street, and Granite Street. This area was chosen because it acknowledges and ties together existing initiatives (the new Cultural District, proposed Arms Park placemaking activities, The Gateway Park initiative) while providing an excellent “canvas” upon which to test run strategies for connectivity in the city.

Examples of types of interventions recommended for The Loop are also shown to the right and more details are given in The Loop Action Kit that is a part of this planning initiative.

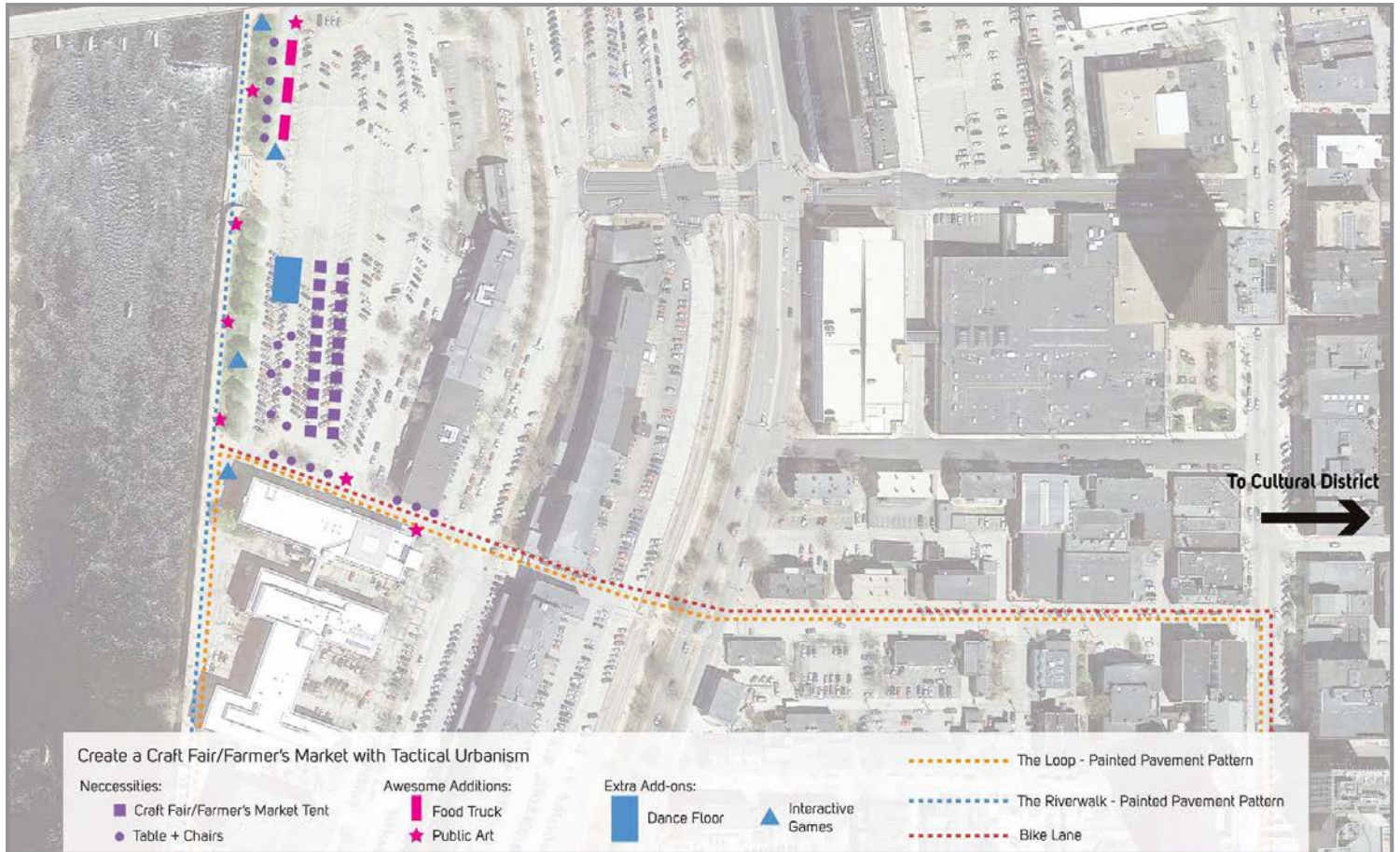


THE LOOP



Source: CivicMoxie

## POSSIBLE LAYOUT FOR A FAIR OR MARKET



*Riverwalks provide both recreation and transportation options.*



Sources, top to bottom: CivicMoxie, [www.wheretraveler.com/boston/boston-harborwalk](http://www.wheretraveler.com/boston/boston-harborwalk), [www.prevuemeetings.com/destinations/north-america/wilmingtons-new-riverfront-evolves-for-meetings/](http://www.prevuemeetings.com/destinations/north-america/wilmingtons-new-riverfront-evolves-for-meetings/)



## Reimagine the Riverfront

- Exciting destinations compel pedestrian activity and create foot traffic. Creating a destination at the riverfront can support mobility and multimodal improvements.
- The riverfront is an important link in the open space and trail system in Manchester and the surrounding region. Completing this missing link can improve Manchester's position as a destination.
- The focus on healthy living brings with it a range of initiatives that could be hosted on the riverfront such as senior walking mornings, exercise stations, weekend family walks.
- The educational, health, recreational, and environmental themes and possibilities inherent in a re-imagined riverfront support multiple types of connectivity.
- See goal # 3 for Riverwalk and Iconic Pedestrian Bridge for details on recommendations for activating the riverfront and the Placemaking Action Kit for near-term proposals for enhancing the city's Riverwalk and adjacent spaces.



*Bicycle infrastructure can take many forms!  
Area artists can contribute to designs and  
racks can be crafted by local craftspeople*

## Improve Bicycle Access

- Build on the City of Manchester Bicycle Master Plan to implement dedicated on-street bicycling facilities and connect the Millyard to the rest of the City and region along robust bicycle networks.
- Create designated bicycle facilities for riders so that it is clear that they are welcome on Manchester's streets. These facilities can also act as traffic calming elements that narrow vehicle lanes.



*Sources, top to bottom: [www.gearjunkie.com/dero-bike-racks](http://www.gearjunkie.com/dero-bike-racks), [www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2016/01/16/how-frozen-minneapolis-became-biking-mecca/78269374](http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2016/01/16/how-frozen-minneapolis-became-biking-mecca/78269374), [www.vahi.org/planned-improvements-to-ponce-de-leon-ave/](http://www.vahi.org/planned-improvements-to-ponce-de-leon-ave/)*





- There is a wide variety of on-street treatments, ranging from simple bicycle lanes to sidewalk level cycle tracks. The more protected a facility, the wider variety of riders will feel comfortable using it.
- Providing enhanced bicycle parking is necessary in addition to providing facilities. Long-term bicycle parking (i.e. for employees or residents) should be covered and secure, while shorter-term bicycle parking should be accessible to local destinations.
- Encourage Millyard employers to provide lockers, showers, and other facilities that encourage a “bike to work” culture.

#### Enhance transit

- Create a more direct route for the Green Dash (the current Green Dash Route is shown in the map on pg. 13)
- Whenever possible, transit routes should be linear in nature; transport loops add trip time, which discourages riders
- Utilize clock-face timing (for example, every 15 minutes“)
- Provide visible and accessible information
- Boldly mark the route
- Improve facilities for riders including seating, weather shelter, and free wi-fi on board
- Explore sharing of resources with other shuttle services. Currently, SNHU runs a remote parking shuttle service that costs over \$500k per year. Is there a way to combine resources to create a legible and user-friendly system that serves all?

#### Create multimodal hub(s)

- Ensure locations for bike-share racks are convenient to the Green Dash and other MTA routes

- Provide secure bike lock facilities at the bus station and at other locations such as a future Millyard public gathering space, and Green Dash waiting areas.
- Ensure that the Loop pilot project is well served by bike racks and bike locking facilities.
- Putting multiple transportation options in one place makes transitions seamless for users. It is also an opportunity to provide transportation information to users, such as real-time transit arrivals. Hubs can combine transit, shuttles, bicycle facilities, car sharing, parking and even cab stands to maximize choice and access.
- Multimodal hubs help to solve the “last mile” problem, by providing a range of choices to get from the hub to a person’s final destination. These can include local frequent circulator shuttles, bike shares, branded and celebrated pedestrian routes, and safe and secure bicycle parking.

#### Comply with ADA

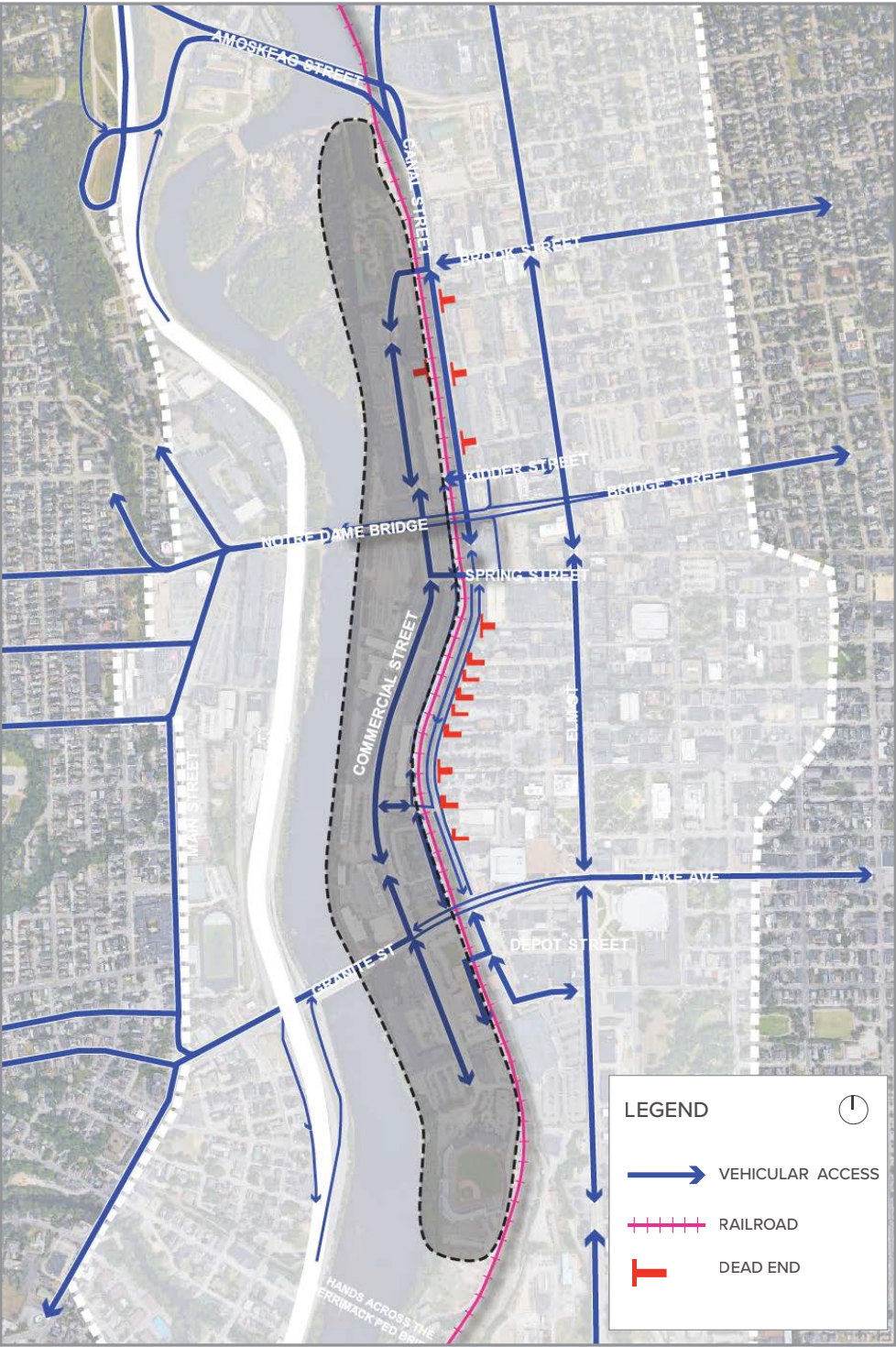
- Use every streetscape and sidewalk improvement project as an opportunity to enhance accessibility.
- Ensure that the Loop pilot project includes an accessible route.
- Note that ADA improvements improve the experience for all users, including parents with strollers, an aging population or even young children.
- Review key access points, such as intersections along the loop or transit stops, for ADA accessibility.
- Use ongoing maintenance, repaving, and utility work as opportunities to align infrastructure with ADA guidelines.

The Loop Action Kit details how many of these strategies can be employed in a pilot project to better connect Elm Street and the Millyard and riverfront.

*Enhance transit with accessible information, boldly marked signage, and improved facilities.*

Sources: [www.bostonglobe.com](http://www.bostonglobe.com), [www.urbanplacesandspaces.blogspot.com/2011/12/need-for-comprehensive-visitor.html](http://www.urbanplacesandspaces.blogspot.com/2011/12/need-for-comprehensive-visitor.html), [www.smartcitydisplays.co.uk](http://www.smartcitydisplays.co.uk), [www.directenquiries.com/information/Bus%20Stop%20\(Upper%20Parliament%20Street\)/75362/other/information.aspx](http://www.directenquiries.com/information/Bus%20Stop%20(Upper%20Parliament%20Street)/75362/other/information.aspx)

MILLYARD ACCESS



Source: Nelson\Nygaard

Each of the red 'T's on this map indicate a dead end road that does not provide access to the Millyard.

There are only three access points for to enter the Millyard. Two of the three entryways into the Millyard cross active freight train lines. It is a 30-minute wait for a 90-car train to pass.



### GOAL #3:

# WORLD-CLASS RIVERWALK AND ICONIC PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE



*Active and well-designed urban waterfronts around the world support economic development and enhance livability. Waterfront walkways provide healthy living alternatives for exercise, support wintertime and summertime festivals, and provide social spaces for communities to come together to dine, play, and learn.*



Manchester's Merrimack Riverfront was a working space during the 19th Century and the river was a power source, not recreation area. The close location of the mill buildings, inaccessibility of the west side waterfront due to the highway location, and the prevalence of parking and asphalt along the water's edge have worked against the use of the Riverwalk for recreation and vibrant public space. In addition, the bridges that spanned the Merrimack, connecting the west and east Millyards exist no longer. Near-term pilot projects can jump-start a re-imagining of the riverfront as an integral part of the Millyard and Downtown while the community can begin to dream to set the stage for an iconic project that can reconnect west and east with a pedestrian bridge that can become a destination in its own right. These initiatives can provide significant benefits to the City by providing a local and regional destination and enhancing Manchester's image.

*The Manchester of the future is host to a world-class Riverwalk and an iconic pedestrian bridge connecting the east and west sides of the Merrimack and Millyard...creating a destination that supports dining, retail, and high quality of life for workers and residents alike.*

Sources, top to bottom: [www.walklondon.com/london-attractions/millennium-footbridge.htm](http://www.walklondon.com/london-attractions/millennium-footbridge.htm), [www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/deanna-isaacs-riverwalk-chicago-river/Content?oid=18168577](http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/deanna-isaacs-riverwalk-chicago-river/Content?oid=18168577)



## MANCHESTER CONNECTS IS COMMITTED TO:

- Employing tactical urbanism to create a Riverwalk now...using temporary events and markings to make the River more inviting and visible for all.
- Supporting a collaborative effort to provide signage, create maps, and generally make the Riverwalk more visible.
- Working with private property owners and the City to identify locations for placemaking and develop an MOU that specifies uses and addresses key elements to making the Riverwalk a success.
- Working with a range of advocacy groups to envision programming, educational opportunities, and public art along the water's edge.
- Exploring longer-term options for rebuilding a pedestrian bridge across the Merrimack and committing to design excellence to ensure this bridge is an iconic destination.
- Identifying a range of funding options including healthy living grants, transportation monies, and other sources to capitalize on the multiple benefits and wide-spread appeal of a Riverwalk and pedestrian bridge.

## STRATEGIES

### **Convene riverfront property owners to set goals and discuss challenges for creating a Riverwalk**

- The ownership map on the following page illustrates a major challenge in creating a cohesive and continuous Riverwalk: there are multiple owners and varied conditions along the Merrimack River. Even more of these properties fall under combined ownership.
- A property owner group would need to establish core goals of discussing common goals and interests, ways to achieve riverfront accessibility, and addressing concerns or obstacles in order to make the Riverwalk a reality.
- Creating a public access pathway by partially using private land is not a new challenge in New Hampshire. There are models for addressing the mechanisms for doing this including:
  - i. MOU and release of liability with the City or an associated non-profit (often in return for

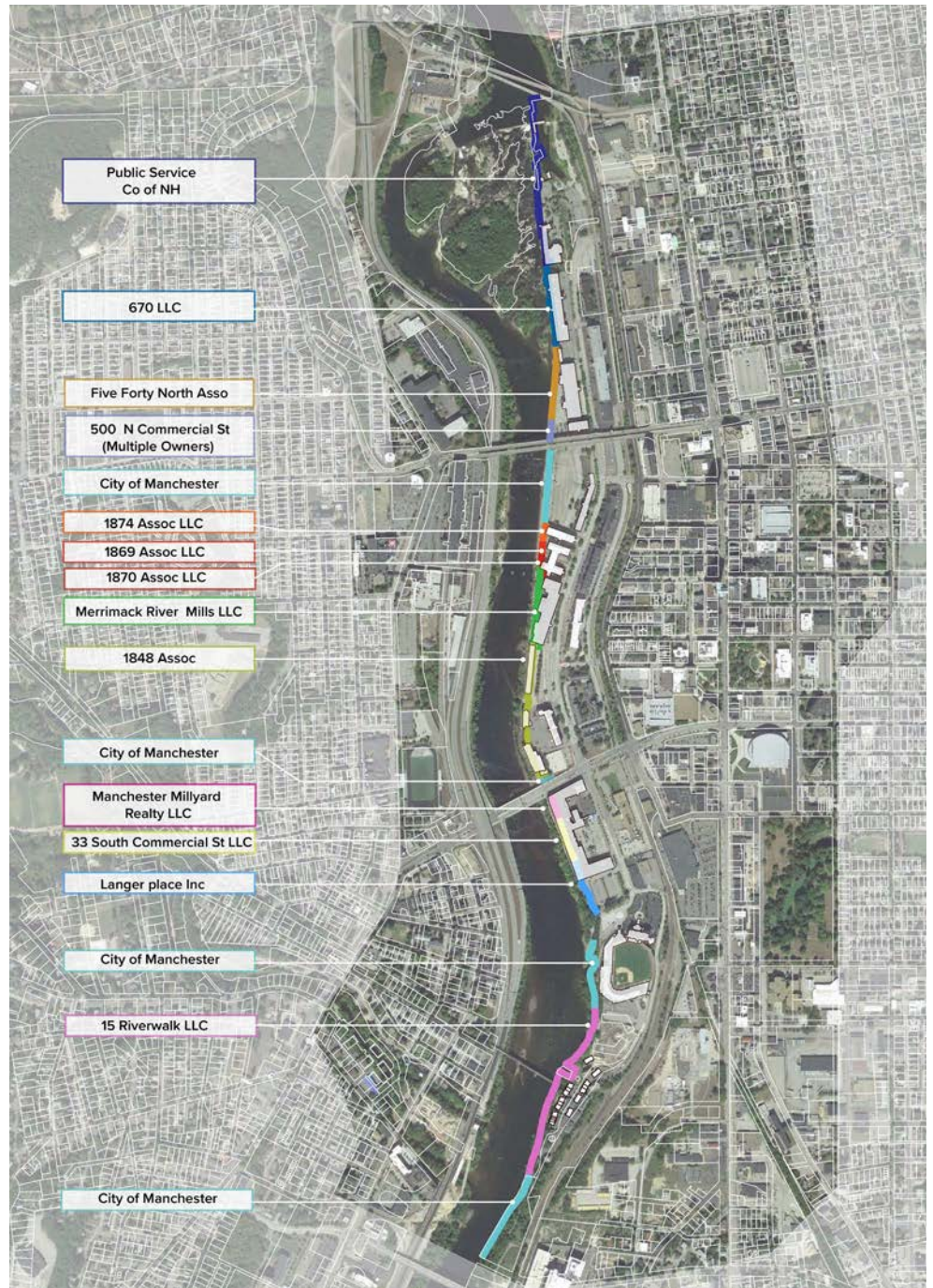
- public or non-profit commitment to contribute to physical improvements and maintenance).
- ii. Creation of a public use easement.
- iii. Transfer of property to a non-profit with corresponding tax incentives and transfer of liability.

### **Create a Riverwalk map that builds on the draft map provided as part of this planning effort that identifies riverfront space and rights of way that can be used for a continuous pathway**

- Create a near-term pathway that uses both riverfront property, adjacent paved areas, and public rights-of-way away from the river as a continuous pathway to ensure a complete path links north to south.
- Work with property owners to explore ways the Riverwalk can be completed in areas where parking would be permanently removed or relocated to make way for a pathway (see the sidebar on "Parking vs. The Riverwalk")

## RIVERWALK PARCELS BY OWNERSHIP

Of the 14 owners listed on the map to the right, many of these properties fall under master ownership structures. Most property in the Millyard is owned by 7 larger entities, including the City of Manchester. This makes the task of bringing everyone together to plan and act easier.



Source: CivicMoxie

- Where there is no land between a building's edge and the river:
  - i. Routing of the Riverwalk through ground floor mill building spaces where these buildings directly abut the river can be a viable solution. This could happen if some buildings in the Millyard transition from purely office/educational space to a mix of uses. For example, the ground floor of a building could be converted to restaurant and retail space that would benefit from having "frontage" on the Riverwalk which would be an interior public-use pathway. In this scenario, the valuable "frontage" that is now found on Commercial Street will also extend to the Riverwalk frontage that is either inside buildings or along an exterior pathway.
  - ii. The proposal for a train/trolley and remote parking aligns the tracks for this train along the Riverwalk. This solution for remote parking and shuttle service would serve a secondary and important role of providing a cantilever for the tracks along the River which could also accommodate the Riverwalk in areas where there isn't room for a pathway at the current time.

#### **Focus on temporary actions instead of capital-intensive improvements**

- Think temporary and inexpensive!
- Improvements such as paint and ground murals as Riverwalk pavement markings and temporary signage or other markings such as flags can be used to "claim the space" as a Riverwalk and make it visible and

interesting.

- Temporary actions include a wider group of stakeholders which builds a core group of Riverwalk users and support for longer term improvements. Think about artists coordinating Riverwalk pavement murals, children designing banners or flags, and local university students creating temporary and movable furniture, with local tech companies contributing lighting, multi-media, or other know-how.

#### **Match business/employee/organizational efforts to distinct locations along the riverfront to make placemaking opportunities tangible**

- Think about what activities and installations make sense along segments of the Riverwalk and match these with existing initiatives. Some groups are doing music nights.

## **PARKING VS. THE RIVERWALK**

Every spare area of the Millyard is dedicated to parking. Along the river's edge, parking spots are marked in the asphalt, and these spots are used either as employee parking, loading areas, or guest parking. What gets priority? Building owners would say parking (at least until other solutions can be found to address parking demand). So what are some ways to reconcile the parking vs. Riverwalk dilemma?

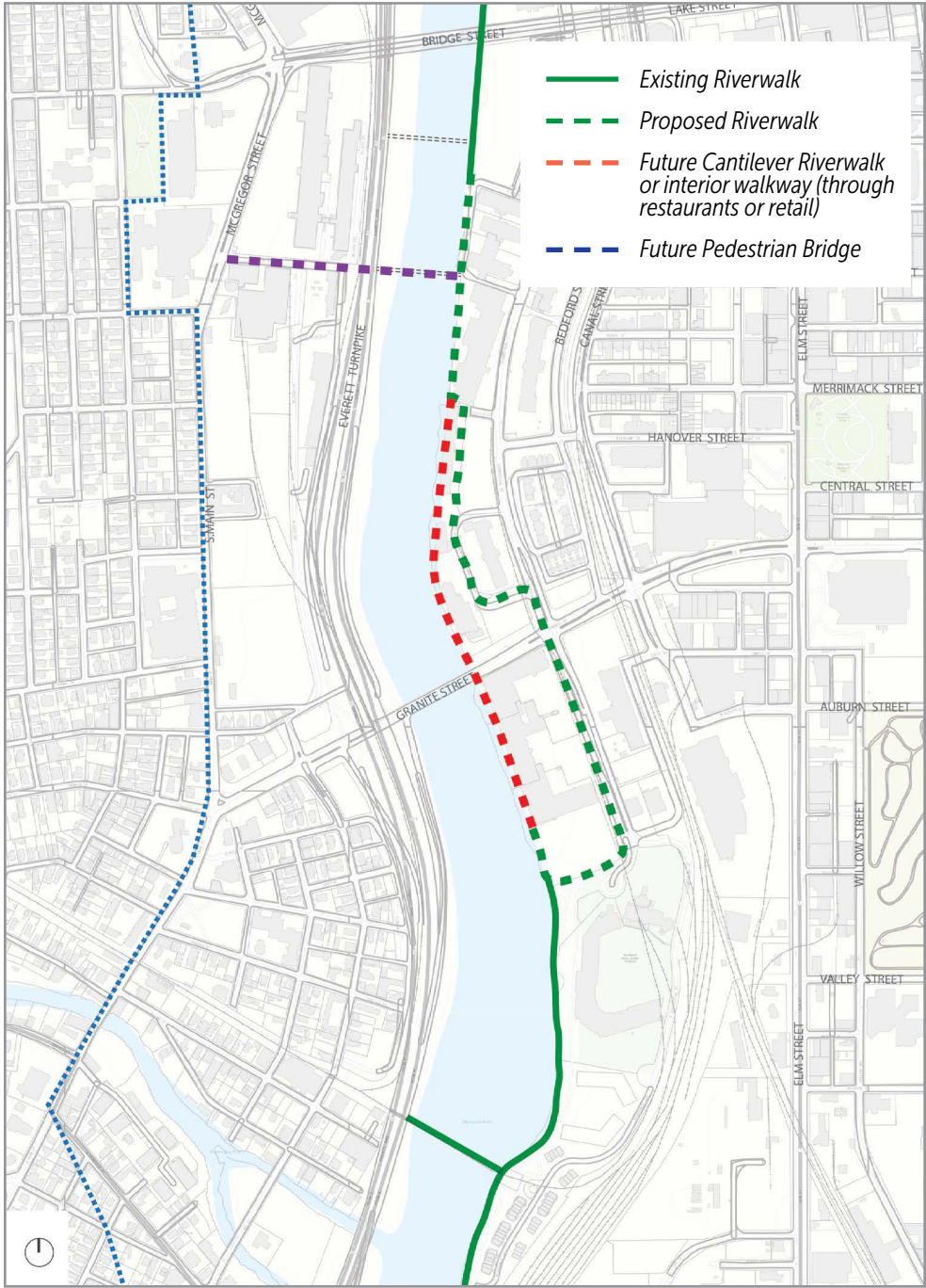
1. Use Riverwalk markings and signage that acknowledge the space may be filled with cars during weekday hours (but also create signage or policies that allocate these spaces as last resort parking (loading area, guest parking).
2. Make clear that full Riverwalk access is only available on weekends, holidays, and before 8am and after 5pm weekdays.
3. Explore ways to replace these private parking spaces with the same number of spaces in City-owned lots and spaces – on an annual basis while longer-term solutions are adopted.



# PROPOSED RIVERWALK



Currently, it would take a pedestrian almost 20 minutes to walk from DEKA Research to Catholic Medical Center on the west side of the Merrimack River. With a pedestrian bridge, it would take about 8 minutes to walk between the same two points!  
 Source: Google Maps



Source: CivicMoxie

Businesses may be doing Friday afternoon beer gatherings or holding meet-and-greets. Could some of these existing initiatives become more official? (for example, Segway Saturday)

- An “adopt-the-Riverwalk” system could be put into place whereby various stakeholders are responsible for programming activities and even maintaining the space.

#### **Add the Riverwalk, even in temporary condition, to area trail maps**

- Manchester sits in the middle of a significant network of recreational trails and paths. The Millyard is one of very few missing links in a path through Manchester along the Merrimack River. North and South of the Millyard, recreational walking and cycling paths extend out of the city and are connected with regional trails and paths. Adding even a temporarily marked Riverwalk to these maps can increase foot traffic along the Merrimack and gain support for more permanent improvements in the future.

#### **Gather additional information necessary to make decisions about a pedestrian bridge**

- All long-term visionary projects start with a few simple steps: the idea, some fact finding, some inspiring examples. Performing due diligence now for a pedestrian bridge project can set things, such as a feasibility study, in motion and to gauge interest and support.
- Pedestrian bridges historically spanned the Merrimack...connecting neighborhood to Mill and Millyard to Millyard. Piers remaining from

two of those bridges sit in the Merrimack. A structural investigation of the remaining pedestrian bridge supports in the Merrimack River has supposedly been made. The results of this assessment should be found and reviewed so that it is understood if a new bridge can use existing supports or if entirely new construction is needed.

- Bridge construction will most likely involve a close partnership with NHDOT as the grade level change from one side of the Merrimack to the other and the presence of the highway all present design challenges that will need to be addressed in a collaborative manner.
- Pedestrian bridges around the world have garnered widespread attention and have their own appeal as destinations.
- Verify structural soundness of river piers and continue research for funding opportunities.
- Contact NHDOT regarding possibilities for spanning the highway on the west side of the Merrimack to connect to the west side.



*The Walkway Over the Hudson is a successful pedestrian bridge in New York that was converted from an unused rail bridge (before photo below). For more information about this bridge, see the case study in The Loop + Riverwalk Action Kit.*



Sources, top to bottom: [www.hikethehudsonvalley.com/walkway-over-the-hudson](http://www.hikethehudsonvalley.com/walkway-over-the-hudson), [www.walkway.org/media-coverage](http://www.walkway.org/media-coverage), <http://ersi-usa.com/projects/walkway-over-the-hudson/>



## GOAL #4:

# SUPPORT MIXED LAND USES AND SMART PARKING STRATEGIES



*Companies and knowledge workers, as well as residents, are looking for amenity-rich environments in which to live, work, and play.*

Both millennials and empty nesters are driving urban residential markets. The rise of innovation districts has mirrored the resurgence in interest in cities and a mix of land uses that brings 24/7 activity, offers amenities for workers after hours, and allows employees to walk or bike to work is the desired environment for businesses and knowledge workers.



Manchester's Downtown has struggled to provide the vibrant mix of dining, office, and residential that is desirable in today's market. Vast lots of asphalt in the Milliard exacerbate the problem by creating pedestrian environments that feel unsafe and uninteresting and foreclosing on higher and better uses for the land. Downtown vacancies fuel the perception of lack of safety in some areas and the lack of foot traffic makes it difficult for a broad mix of retail and other businesses to survive. Likewise, the Milliard is predominately office and educational. Dining options are few and while there are some residential buildings, they don't provide enough residents to support the range of active ground floor uses that would draw more activity and animate the street life of the area.

*The Manchester of the future's Milliard and Downtown are transformed into vibrant, 24/7 neighborhoods that house a mix of uses and a variety of housing options.*

Sources, top to bottom: <https://www.mnn.com/green-tech/research-innovations/blogs/the-simple-charms-of-the-mixed-use-parking-garage>, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2016/05/18/will-kendall-square-finally-feel-like-real-neighborhood/hlv1mwISl8WuheSfluA74M/story.html>

An integrated solution to land uses and parking strategies can help solve some of the challenges of an inactive ground floor and put more property into economic use.



## MANCHESTER CONNECTS IS COMMITTED TO:

- Supporting short-term and longer-term solutions to the parking challenges in the Millyard by convening property owners and the City to explore collaborations and funding options.
- Advocating for redevelopment of Millyard and adjacent vacant property and parking lots when responsible development solutions of mixed-uses and integrated parking are found to be viable (and committed to exploring financing options and environmental remediation support where possible and necessary).
- Advocating for Transit-oriented Development (TOD) to create the density necessary to support existing businesses and attract new residents, economic development, and visitors to the Downtown and the Millyard/Riverwalk.
- Advocating for smart land use that can prepare the city for possible future Capitol Corridor rail service.
- Balancing the need for parking and vehicular access with a desire to use valuable land for more active uses.

## PARKING STRATEGIES

### **Recognize that the Millyard parking challenges are everyone's challenge**

- As the second largest employment center in the city, the Millyard makes a significant contribution to the economic health and vitality of the city and region. The successes and challenges of the Millyard affect everyone and a collaborative approach is needed to address issues and meet challenges.

### **Convene a working group to address parking challenges**

- A working group of Millyard property owners, the City of Manchester (as a property owner and regulator, funder), SNHPC, the MTA, and others should convene to address parking issues and develop collaborative solutions.

- Regular meetings are a beginning to creating an environment where solutions can be discussed and the new for more information addressed.

### **Share information and seek additional data when necessary to make the best decisions possible**

- No matter what the strategies to be employed, the best outcomes will result when information is shared and all parties are willing to collaborate.
- Additional data collection will most likely be necessary. An example is documenting actual usage of parking spots, costs that are passed on (or not) to employees or tenants, and demand times for spaces. Additional data collection can also be helpful when looking at funding sources and financing options.

### Explore a range of additive strategies to address Millyard parking

- Expand and coordinate existing initiatives – MTA, bike facilities, etc.
- Coordinate approach to parking – share information, explore a unified parking district.
- Transportation demand management (TDM) – coordinate all policies
- Expand and improve parking supply – additional parking and improved facilities
- Implement remote parking and coordinate transit systems whether that includes MTA, university services, or new business options - working together will result in improved solutions.

More information about these strategies can be found in the Land Use + Parking Action Kit.

## THE ECONOMICS OF PARKING

A multi-pronged strategic approach to parking is needed because the economics of funding additional parking structures doesn't pencil out in the current market. Without full information on what the true cost of parking is for landlords as well as tenants, it is difficult to understand the exact gaps between potential revenue and costs for structured parking. The simple calculations on the following page, offered in general terms, indicate the challenges of privately funding garage parking at the current time.

*Current parking situation in the Millyard.*

Source: CivicMoxie



Surface Parking:  
\$5,000 per parking space



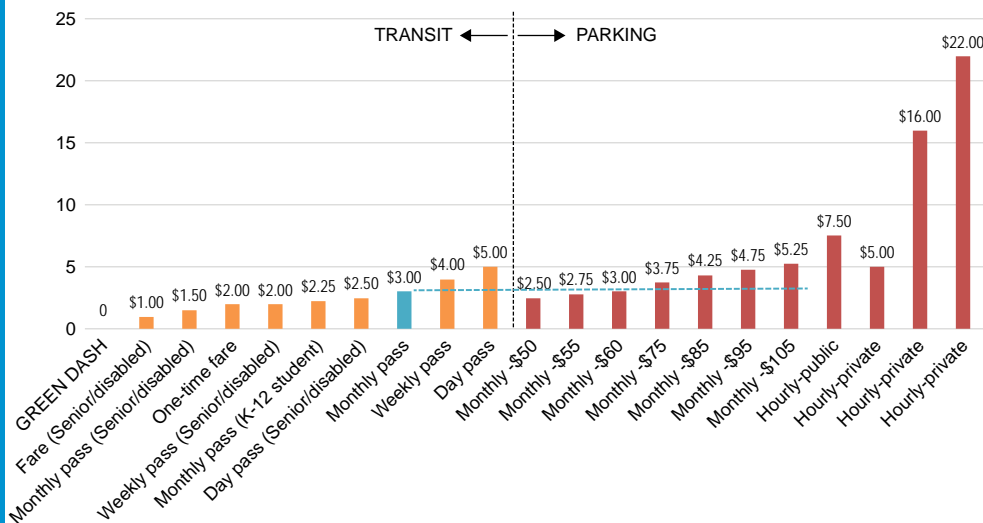
Above Ground Structure:  
\$20,000 - \$25,000 per parking space



Underground Structure:  
\$35,000 per parking space



Daily Commuting Cost



Note: for weekly permit, assuming 5 days/week; for monthly permit, assuming 20 days/month  
Source: MTA, City of Manchester, NH

The monthly cost for a parking space in a structured parking lot can be generally calculated as follows:

Assume:

- \$24,000 per space construction cost
- 6.0% interest
- 40 year life span

Approximate Results:

\$130 per space per month  
+ \$ 32 operating costs per month

**\$162 per month to break even...or \$7+ per day, per space!**

Note that the most expensive parking garage identified during this planning initiative Downtown or in the Millyard costs \$105 per month... this is \$57 per month cheaper than the break even parking price needed for new structured parking!!



## MIXED LAND USE STRATEGIES

### Identify sites for transit-oriented development (TOD) in the area and encourage mixed-uses and park once development and redevelopment

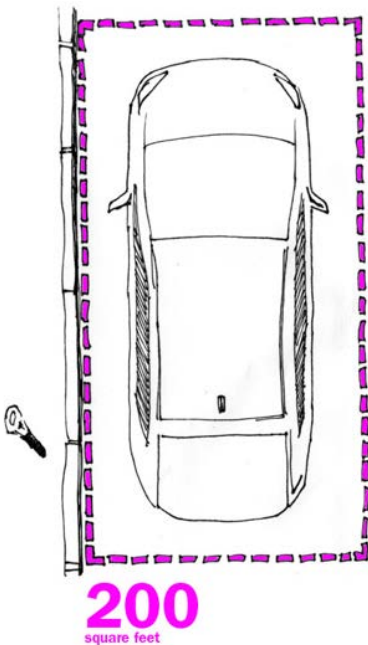
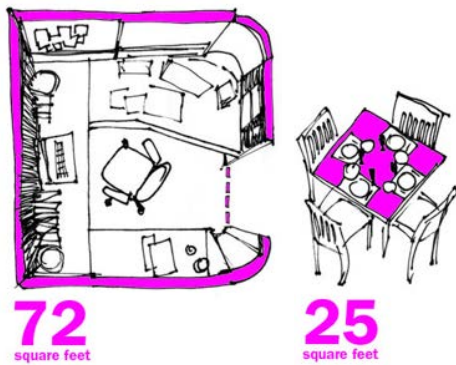
- Encourage a mix of land uses that can activate the Millyard after 5pm on weekdays and on weekends. Provide incentives to encourage these uses and encourage clustering uses to support success. Uses that should be encouraged include:
  - i. Dining
  - ii. Communal gathering spaces
  - iii. Entertainment
  - iv. Outdoor recreation areas
  - v. Theaters
  - vi. Residential development
- Identify selected redevelopment parcels, such as the National Guard Armory, explore the opportunities and constraints of each site, and create regulatory incentives for future development. Incentives could include density bonuses for mixed-use development within a one-half mile of the possible Capitol Corridor rail station and adjacent to or in the Millyard District.

### Encourage “third places” in all new development and identify existing spaces that could serve as community gathering spots

- Work with property owners and tenants to identify any possible private space that can be transformed into publicly-accessible space.
- Encourage existing dining spots to provide three-season outdoor seating
- Create public wi-fi zones in the Millyard to encourage people to stay, work, and gather outside of regular office areas and private spaces.

### Use development and placemaking to add active ground floor uses

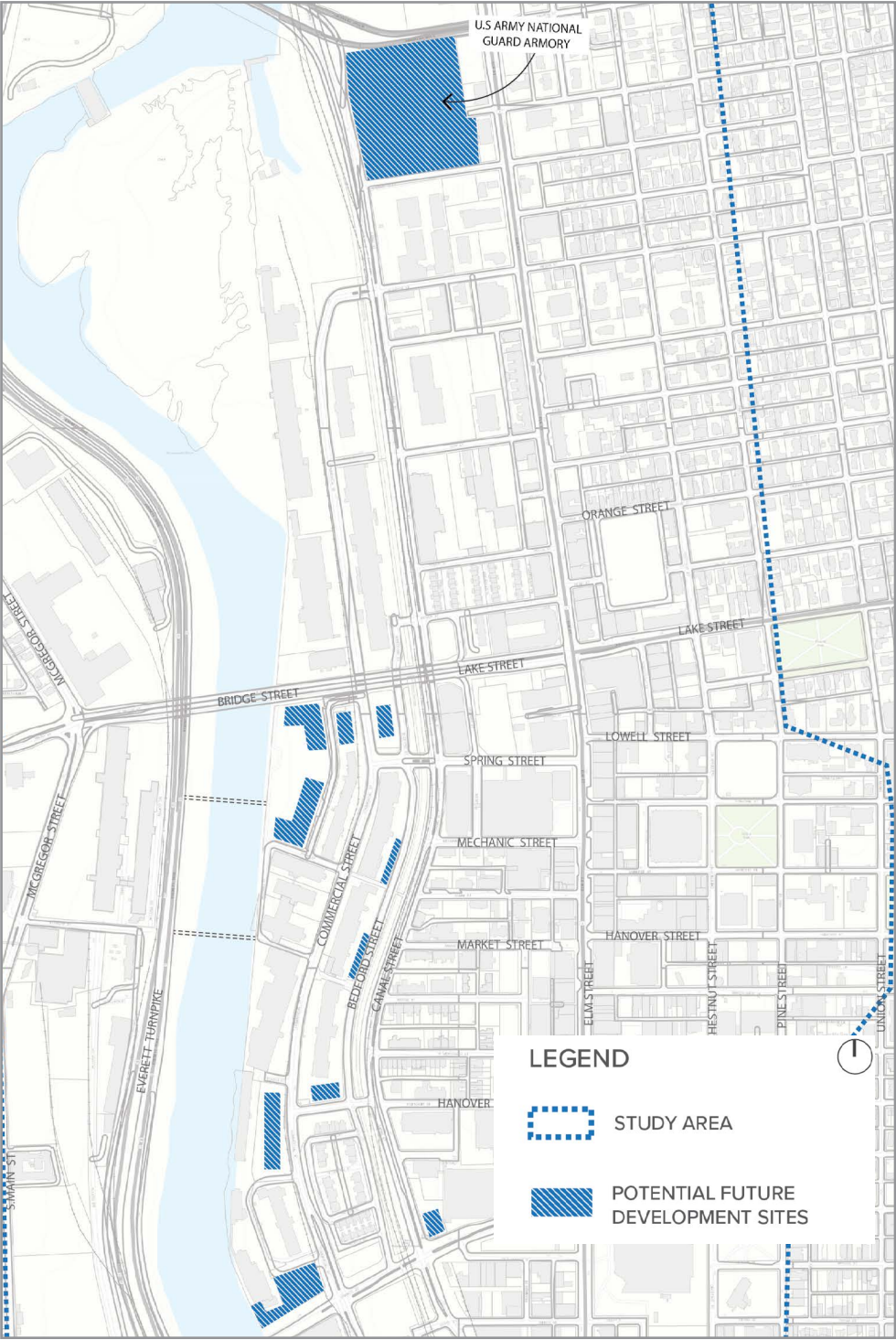
- Require ground floor publicly accessible spaces in all new development.
- Facilitate the use of vacant storefronts in Downtown for pop up shops for active uses such as artist studios, galleries, educational initiatives, and temporary dining spots.



*What else can be done with a parking space? The average parking space is 200 square feet... that's four eating tables for four people each!!*

*Source: Nelson\Nygaard*

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES



Source: CivicMoxie

## THE BENEFIT OF STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

An enhanced Riverwalk showcasing views of the Merrimack punctuated by the strategic development of Arms Park can create a destination and the mix of uses needed to activate the Millyard and bring people to the Riverwalk. Visible from the highway across the Merrimack, a signature development that provides parking wrapped with active ground floor destination uses can frame public space and create a backdrop and connection point to the river. The key principles for any redevelopment of Arms Park should be:

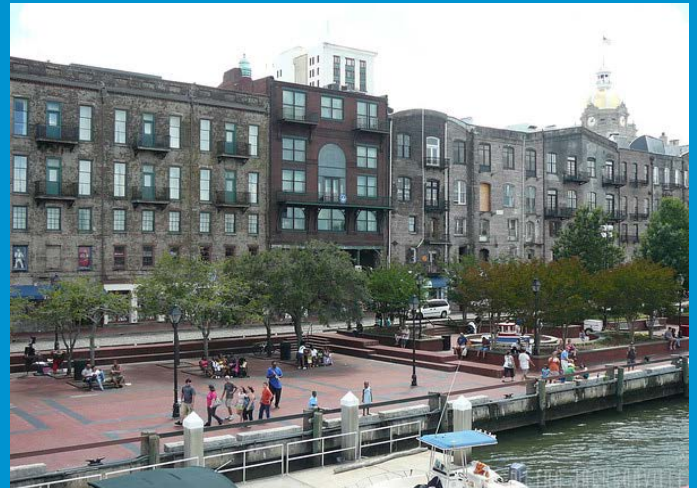
- Protect the view corridor to the Merrimack River
- Provide parking for new

development and replace Arms Park surface parking

- Hide parking by wrapping it with active ground floor uses
- Ground floor uses should be destination uses that contributed to a mixed-use Millyard
- Development should provide “third places” for social interaction
- Public open space should provide amenities such as seating, outdoor tables, and visual and physical connections to the Riverwalk as well as accommodations for events such as large flat areas for gathering and outdoor data, water, and electrical hookups

- Provide a platform for temporary installation of art, mixed media, and programs to highlight local colleges and businesses.

Two examples from Auckland, NZ and Savannah, GA illustrate a core principle for active waterfronts. As noted by the Project for Public spaces, “design and program buildings to engage the public space” is a key principle for transforming waterfronts. The ten principles to transform a waterfront can be found at: [www.pps.org/reference/turnwaterfrontaround/](http://www.pps.org/reference/turnwaterfrontaround/).



Sources, left to right: [www.destination-cook-islands.com/Harbour-Development-Site.html](http://www.destination-cook-islands.com/Harbour-Development-Site.html), [www.metrojacksonville.com/article/2012-nov-positioning-for-the-post-panamax-port-of-savannah](http://www.metrojacksonville.com/article/2012-nov-positioning-for-the-post-panamax-port-of-savannah)



### **Activate passive open spaces with adjacent development**

- Open space and green space with no active uses can sit empty and unused. Strategic planning for all pathways, parks, and open space should include an assessment of the existing adjacent active uses and potential for additional uses.
- Placemaking and temporary elements can activate previously passive spaces by providing destinations and reasons for people to enjoy spaces.
- The Riverwalk will be most successful if people have other things to do and see along its length. Possibilities include food trucks on weekends, temporary and movable seating and streetscape elements, public art, pathway ground murals, and more.

### **Develop a comprehensive strategy to address brownfields issues**

- Get information from the City on past brownfields investigation and remediation funding.

- Use available brownfield funding (through SNHPC) to do first phase investigations of potential development/improvement sites with a priority given to the City-owned Arms Park and adjacent parking lot.

### **Think ahead about Capitol Corridor Rail potential**

- Think about TOD now and use the ¼ mile and ½ pedestrian radius from a possible rail station to guide decision-making about land uses and zoning.

More information on strategies to move forward with recommendations can be found in the Placemaking and Land Use + Parking Action Kits.

## GOAL #5:

# CREATE THE ORGANIZATION “MANCHESTER CONNECTS”



Good things happen because leaders come forward to advocate for change and as people, institutions, and businesses collaborate to put their knowledge, political capital, and resources to work.

*Transformative change in cities can almost always be traced to visionary leaders and public, private and non-profit partnerships.*



Manchester and the region is teeming with entrepreneurs, civic leaders, collaborators, and energy. This planning initiative has seen an outpouring of support from the public, private, and non-profit sectors who are eager to translate plans to action.

In addition to creating physical connections, Manchester Connects seeks to bring people and ideas together. Manchester is rich with opportunity and capacity. Many people are excited about the city and interested in sharing their city with the world. Manchester Connects has already begun to bring those individuals, with similar ideas but differing skill sets, together to turn the idea into reality. As Manchester Connects grows from this planning process, the people who love Manchester need to stay connected with one another and with local organizations and businesses that are interested in improving the city as well. Manchester Connects needs to foster a collaborative environment that helps match people, ideas, and capacity with each other. Learn more about the planning process and follow the progress of Manchester Connects at [www.manchesterconnects.org](http://www.manchesterconnects.org)!



*This initiative is the result of passionate and dedicated people coming together to support the city they love. The capacity in Manchester is strong, there are talented people, with a wide variety of skills and interests, throughout the city who are waiting to help!*

Source: CivicMoxie

## MANCHESTER CONNECTS IS COMMITTED TO:

- Creating an inclusive platform of ideas and action that welcomes ideas and energy and provides a transparent vehicle to create great things in the city we love.
- Building capacity by bringing people together to work on common challenges and to identify collaborative solutions.
- Serving as an umbrella of support for existing initiatives to ensure all projects combine to be greater than the sum of the parts.
- Communicating ideas and goals clearly and compellingly to build widespread support within the community and ensure there are many “doers” to translate plans to action.
- Providing the initiatives, “brand,” and buzz to help recruit businesses and entrepreneurs to call the city home.
- Embracing innovation and creativity to solve difficult challenges.

## STRATEGIES

### Form the “Manchester Connects” advisory committee and working groups

- Act Now! In the near term, an advisory committee can keep the momentum going and support pilot projects that can test recommendations and bring everyone to the table to collaborate.
- In the longer term (fall/winter 2017-18) a permanent advisory committee and organizational structure (or existing organization, such as the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce) can be formed to create a lasting foundation for the Manchester Connects principles and goals.

### Create an inclusive and wide umbrella for the myriad initiatives, ideas, energy in the city

- Manchester is an extraordinary city with an unusually robust network of civic leaders, non-profits, and

committed businesses and institutions. The organization Manchester Connects can provide the most value by convening this exception group of people, not duplicating it.

- Aligning multiple stakeholders and identifying common goals across initiatives can make good use of limited resources. Manchester Connects can offer a valuable contribution as civic convener to maximize impact.

### Utilize the Manchester Connects logo and brand to create a positive and compelling vision of the city

- Manchester Connects is a powerful message that can be used to gather support and accomplish important goals.

Detailed information on these strategies can be found in the Organization Action Kit.

## THE POWER OF MANCHESTER CONNECTS



**MANCHESTER**  
C O N N E C T S

The Manchester Connects name has been used to identify this multimodal transportation and land use planning initiative, but has grown to be much more. A symbol for the collaborative spirit of civic leaders who have championed collaborative work and visionary goals, the Manchester Connects name and logo will live on as the symbol of the reality and potential of the city. As a new organization, Manchester Connects can use the logo to advocate for collaborative action to achieve important goals and to position the city in a positive light to businesses, entrepreneurs, and residents who may locate here.

