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REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Matthew R. Walsh, Director of Redevelopment, Downtown Services,
& Special Projects

DATE: September 25, 2019

SUBJECT: Narrow Streets Parking Study
Zone 2 (City Hall Neighborhood)
Proposed Parking Ordinance Amendments

Recommendation:

- Set the attached ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances; Title II, Traffic Code; Chapter 18, Parking, Article 18-1, Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 18-1-6, Parking Prohibited at All Times in Designated Places, Schedule I, for public hearing on November 12, 2019.

The intent of this Ordinance is to remove 1 on-street parking space on Blake Street at the Green Street intersection.

- Set the attached ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances; Title II, Traffic Code; Chapter 18, Parking, Article 18-1, Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 18-1-7.1(a), Parking Prohibited During Certain Hours and Months in Designated Places, Schedule IX, for public hearing on November 12, 2019.

The intent of this Ordinance is to remove on-street parking on the following streets from January 1 – March 15: Short Street (Huntington to Rumford; Rumford to North Spring) and Summit Street (School Street to curve).

Background:

In January 2017, the Parking Committee initiated a comprehensive review of narrow streets located in Wards 4, 5, and 6. The study area was predominately focused on the neighborhoods located to the south, west, and north of the Downtown Central Business District.

This effort was initiated in response to growing resident complaints and concerns regarding a variety of parking issues. These included: difficulty accessing / egressing driveways, safe travel on narrow streets when snow banks are present and vehicles are parked, the City's ability to effectively and efficiently clear snow from certain narrow streets, as well as the ability for

emergency service vehicles to safely and efficiently navigate narrow streets when vehicles are parked.

To be considered a “narrow street” a road must have less than 12’ of travel way for vehicular travel whenever vehicles are parked on the roadway. This concept is articulated in Section 18-1-1 and Section 18-1-4 of the City’s Codes of Ordinances. The graphics below explain minimum pavement widths in order to comply with these Ordinances.

Figure 1: 20’ Minimum Pavement Width
(Low Traffic Volume Streets; Room to Pass 2 Vehicles is Not Critical; Parking 1 Side Only)
20’ Pavement Width

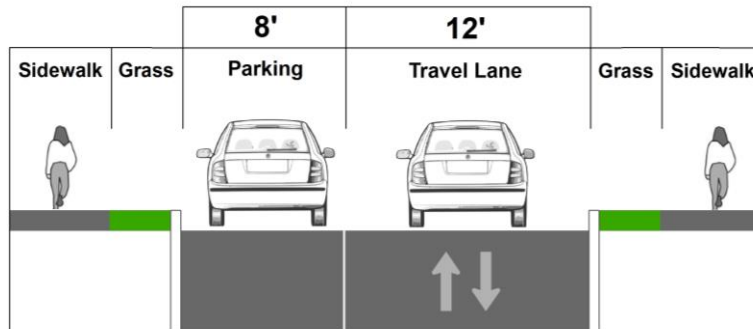


Figure 2: 28’ Minimum Pavement Width
(Low Traffic Volume Streets; Room to Pass 2 Vehicles is Not Critical; Parking Both Sides)
28’ Pavement Width

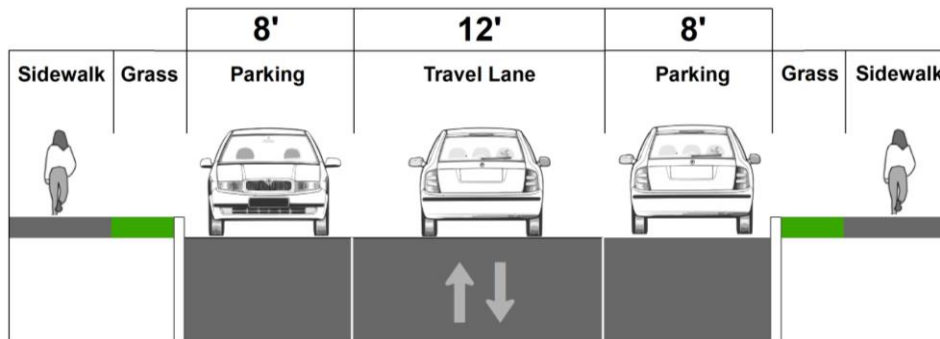
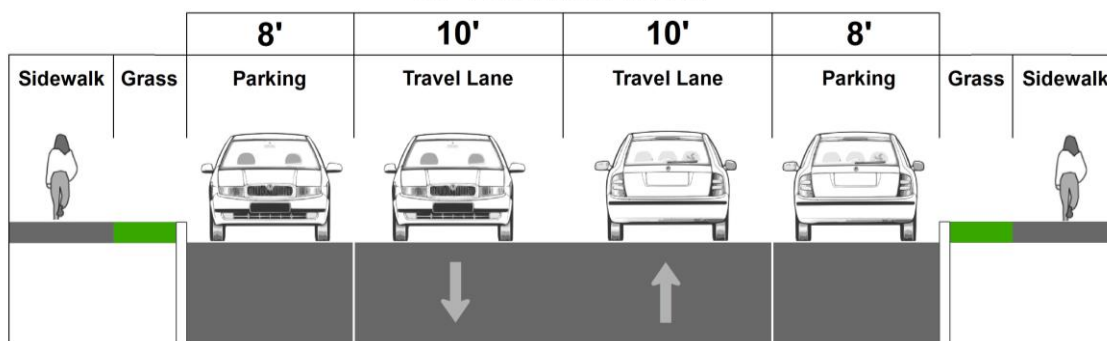


Figure 3: 36’ Minimum Pavement Width
(Low Traffic Volume Streets; Room to Pass 2 Vehicles Required; Parking 1 Side Only)
36’ Pavement Width



Working with City staff, the Parking Committee identified and studied approximately 143 narrow street segments within the study area. Of this total, approximately 84 were of potential concern. Please see Maps 1 and 2 attached to this report for more information.

In order to make review process manageable, the Parking Committee subdivided the study area into 4 separate zones. These zones are as follows, and are depicted on Map 2 attached to this report.

Zone #	General Description	North Boundary	South Boundary	East Boundary	West Boundary
1	Wall Street Neighborhood	Pleasant St.	West St.	Storrs St.	South Spring St.
2	City Hall Neighborhood	Centre St.	Pleasant St.	Storrs St.	Liberty St.
3	UNH School of Law / White Park	Beacon St.	Centre St.	North Main St.	Liberty St.
4	Old North Cemetery Neighborhood	Curtice Ave.	Beacon St.	Prospect St.	Liberty St.

Review of Zone 1 was completed in April 2019. Review of Zone 2 began in February 2019.

Discussion:

Zone 2 of the Narrow Streets Study Area included 22 street segments of concern. Please see Map 3 attached to this report for more information.

The Parking Committee employed a comprehensive process to review these streets, as well as secure neighborhood input related thereto, as follows:

1. Community Forum #1: An initial community forum was held on February 4, 2019 at the City Council Chambers to discuss issues surrounding narrow streets, as well as secure public input on the street segments of concern and potential recommendations associated therewith. All property owners in the Zone 2 neighborhood were notified. The forum was also advertised on the City’s website, social media, and local media.
2. Subcommittee Development of Draft Recommendations: The Parking Committee formed a subcommittee to review potential recommendations presented at the initial community forum, and public feedback related thereto. This process included a tour of all 22 street segments. The Subcommittee then proposed draft recommendations for the full Parking Committee’s review.
3. Community Forum #2: The Parking Committee held a second community forum on September 17, 2019 to present the Committee’s final recommendations. Like the initial forum, all property owners were notified, and the forum was promoted on social media and the City’s website.
4. Parking Committee Final Review: The Parking Committee met on September 23, 2019 and voted to submit its recommendations to the City Council for public hearing.

Copies of the February 4th and September 17th presentations are attached to this report.

After completing this comprehensive process, the Parking Committee is recommending changes to 4 of the 22 street segments of concern, affecting approximately 18 parking spaces, as follows:

- Eliminate On-Street Parking:
 - Blake Street (1 parking space affected).

- Winter Parking Ban (January 1 – March 15th):
 - Short Street (Huntington to Rumford) (4 parking space affected);
 - Short Street (Rumford to North Spring) (7 parking space affected); and,
 - Summit Street (School to Curve) (6 spaces affected).

The Parking Committee felt that these recommendations represented the least impact possible to the neighborhood, while simultaneously balancing the concerns relative to public safety, safe and efficient movement of traffic, safe access by emergency response vehicles, as well as safe and effective delivery of municipal services (such as snow removal).

Please see the attached spreadsheet for complete details regarding these streets, as well as other reviewed in the Zone 2 Study Area.