



KEENE CITY COUNCIL
Council Chambers, Keene City Hall
March 5, 2026
7:00 PM

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

- February 19, 2026 Minutes

A. HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

1. Public Hearing - Ordinance O-2025-40 Relating to Setback Exceptions, Accessory Dwelling Units, and Parking Regulations

B. ELECTIONS / NOMINATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / CONFIRMATIONS

1. Nominations - Airport Development and Marketing Committee; Bicycle Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee

C. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Terry Bishop - Concerns With Parking on Marlboro Street and Enforcement Measures
2. Mark Rebillard/Keene Downtown Group - Request to Use City Property - Monadnock 250th Independence Celebration - July 4, 2026

D. REPORTS - COUNCIL COMMITTEES

1. Presentation - City Budgeting/Capital Planning/Property Tax Rate Overview
2. Payment In Lieu of Taxes Agreement with Cedarcrest

E. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

F. REPORTS - CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS

G. REPORTS - BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

H. REPORTS - MORE TIME

I. ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

1. Relating to Updates to Section 94-321, "Stop Signs" in the City Code Ordinance O-2026-03

J. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

K. RESOLUTIONS

1. Relating to Service Connected Total Disability Veteran Tax Credit Resolution R-2026-07

NON PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, February 19, 2026. The Honorable Mayor Jay V. Kahn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Roll called: Randy L. Filiault, Michele A. Chalice, Catherine I. Workman, Bryan J. Lake, Jacob R. Favolise, Laura E. Tobin, Robert C. Williams, Philip M. Jones, Kris E. Roberts, Bettina A. Chadbourne, Edward J. Haas, Laura E. Ruttle-Miller, Molly V. Ellis, Thomas F. Powers, and Mitchell H. Greenwald were present. Councilor Chalice led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

Councilor Ellis pointed out an error with the spelling of Planner Megan Fortson's last name in the PLD minutes of February 11, 2026, and noted the same error within the January 26, 2026 Planning Board minutes. Mayor Kahn noted these corrections would be passed along as scrivener errors to the appropriate staff.

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to adopt the February 5, 2026 City Council meeting minutes as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Powers. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Kahn announced upcoming dates of interest in March 2026:

- March is Women's History Month and Care Workers Recognition Month
- Tuesday, March 17: St. Patrick's Day
- Thursday evening, March 19: Ramadan Ends

Next, the Mayor shared reminders for the City Council's schedule in March 2026:

- Tuesday, March 3, at 5:30 PM in Heberton Hall: City Council Workshop on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2027 through 2033. Councilors should arrive by 5:00 PM for a meal prior to the meeting.
- Tuesday, March 10, at 5:30 PM: A special meeting of the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee (FOP) to continue review of the proposed CIP. A meal will be served to Councilors prior to the meeting.
- Thursday, March 12 at 5:30 PM: The regularly scheduled FOP Committee meeting will start early for CIP review as well. A meal will be served to Councilors prior to the meeting.

CONFIRMATIONS - ASSESSORS BOARD; *AND* HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn nominated Christine Houston to serve as a Regular Member of the Assessors Board, with a term to expire December 31, 2028. The Mayor also nominated Thomas M. White to serve as an Alternate Member of the Human Rights Committee, with a term to expire December 31, 2028.

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to confirm the nominations was duly seconded by Councilor Powers. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

COMMUNICATION - FARMERS' MARKET OF KEENE - REQUEST FOR USE OF CITY PROPERTY - 2026 FARMER'S MARKET

A communication was received from Kati Woodard of the Keene Farmers' Market, requesting an annual license to operate the Keene Farmers' Market on Saturdays from April 25, 2026, through October 31, 2026, at their usual location in the Gilbo Avenue/Commercial Street Parking Lot. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR FAVOLISE - REQUEST FOR PRESENTATION OUTLINING THE ROLE OF CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS

A communication was received from Councilor Jacob Favolise, requesting that the City Manager prepare a presentation outlining the role of contractors and consultants in completing construction projects within the City. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee for discussion during their March 25, 2026, regular meeting.

COMMUNICATION - CAROLYN OGREN - REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF WAREHOUSE ZONING AS IT RELATES TO THE POTENTIAL HOUSING OF DETAINED INDIVIDUALS

A communication was received from Carolyn Ogren, asking what protective measures the Planning Board may have in place regarding warehouse zoning being utilized for the purpose of "housing" detained individuals, specifically mentioning the issue in Merrimack, New Hampshire, with Department of Homeland Security seeking a location to set up operations.

Mayor Kahn stated his intention to refer this communication to the Planning, Licenses and Development (PLD) Committee; unless any Councilor raised an objection, which he said might be based on a belief that the federal government has a supremacy right and therefore that this should be filed as informational. Conversely, he said Councilors may believe a discussion with PLD Committee limited to questions about the City's Zoning Ordinance may be appropriate, with the PLD Chair keeping the conversation focused on Keene and not drifting into questions related to other communities.

Councilor Filiault agreed with referring this to the PLD Committee, stating that he thought it was too important to accept as informational. He said the Committee would keep things in check.

Councilor Haas agreed with referring this to the PLD Committee as well, more on the basis that it is educational for everybody anytime there is a review of what is allowed and prohibited in the City's Zoning Ordinance. He agreed that the supremacy clause would rule in this instance and the Committee would not drift into that. Councilor Haas trusted that Chair Filiault would manage the discussion well. Councilor Haas supported looking at and understanding the code.

Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

PLD REPORT - ENERGY & CLIMATE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY & RESILIENCY (C-PACER) PROGRAM

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be directed to submit an Ordinance for first reading relating to establishing a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resiliency (C-PACER) District. A motion by Councilor Filiault to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Jones. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORTS - MARK REBILLARD/KEENE DOWNTOWN GROUP - REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY FUNDED EVENT STATUS - SERIES OF SMALL-SCALE FESTIVALS DURING DOWNTOWN CONSTRUCTION

The first Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommendation was read, unanimously recommending that any available unspent funds from the City's FY26 community events budget be used to help offset the cost of City services for the Keene Downtown Group for two small-scale festivals as part of the "Dig Into Keene" project, with event dates tentatively scheduled for April 4 and June 13, 2026. Costs over the above available funds will be the responsibility of the Keene Downtown Group. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

Councilor Chalice had expressed her thanks at the Finance, Organization and Personnel (FOP) Committee meeting. She wanted to thank the Keene Downtown Group again for the wonderful idea of these small-scale festivals and finding ways to bring people together in a playful manner, while doing their best to acknowledge these circumstances. Councilor Chalice could not speak highly enough about the Downtown Group's efforts.

Councilor Haas requested to be recused from these votes as a sitting member of the Keene Downtown Group Board. Mayor Kahn confirmed that if recused, Councilor Haas could not speak as a source of information and advocate. Hearing no objections from the Council, Mayor Kahn granted the recusal and Councilor Haas stepped away.

The motion to carry out the intent of the first FOP Committee recommendation carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Haas abstained.

A second Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommendation was read, unanimously recommending that the City Council suspend Resolution R-2012-19, the City Council Policy on Funding for Community Events to allow the City Manager to include funding in the proposed FY27 Community Events Budget for the Keene Downtown Group to conduct up to four small-scale festivals as part of the "Dig Into Keene" project, with event dates tentatively scheduled for July 25, September 12, October 10, and November 27, 2026, for consideration by the City Council during budget deliberations. Said funding not to exceed the \$10,000 threshold.

A motion by Councilor Powers to Suspend Resolution R-2012-19, to consider extending Community Event funding status to the proposed events scheduled in FY27, was duly seconded by Councilor Lake. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Haas abstained.

The following motion by Councilor Powers was duly seconded by Councilor Lake: to allow the City Manager to include funding in the proposed FY27 Community Events Budget for the Keene Downtown Group to conduct up to four small-scale festivals as part of the “Dig Into Keene” project, with event dates tentatively scheduled for July 25, September 12, October 10, and November 27, 2026, for consideration by the City Council during budget deliberations. Said funding not to exceed the \$10,000 threshold. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Haas abstained.

Councilor Haas returned to his seat.

FOP REPORT - MARK REBILLARD/KEENE DOWNTOWN GROUP - REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY FUNDED EVENT STATUS - KEENE 250TH INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION - JULY 4, 2026

Councilor Ellis asked to be recused because of her role Chairing the Monadnock 250 Committee. Hearing no objections from the Council, Mayor Kahn granted the recusal, and Councilor Ellis stepped away.

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending that the City Council suspend Resolution R-2012-19, the City Council Policy on Funding for Community Events to allow the City Manager to include funding in the proposed FY27 Community Events Budget for the Keene Downtown Group to conduct the Keene 250th Independence Celebration on July 4, 2026 for consideration by the City Council during budget deliberations. Said funding not to exceed the \$10,000 threshold.

Councilor Haas requested to be recused from these votes as a sitting member of the Keene Downtown Group Board. Hearing no objections from the Council, Mayor Kahn granted the recusal and Councilor Haas stepped away.

A motion by Councilor Powers to Suspend Resolution R-2012-19, to consider extending Community Event funding status to the proposed event scheduled in FY27 was duly seconded by Councilor Lake. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Haas and Ellis abstained.

A motion by Councilor Powers was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault to allow the City Manager to include funding in the proposed FY27 Community Events Budget for the Keene Downtown Group to conduct the Keene 250th Independence Celebration on July 4, 2026 for consideration by the City Council during budget deliberations. Said funding not to exceed the \$10,000 threshold.

Councilor Chalice wanted to express how impressed she was with the Keene Downtown Group, the extent of the event's organization, the details involved, and the many parties coming together. She said there was an amazing amount of work going into this and she was excited to see both events.

The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Haas and Ellis abstained.

Councilors Haas and Ellis returned to their seats.

FOP REPORT - ALLOCATION OF CASINO REVENUE DONATION TO FY27 CIP

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending that the City Council approve the allocation of the Revo Casino donation in the amount of \$13,788.35 to the FY27 Police Department CIP for the Exacom purchase. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

Councilor Greenwald said he does not think it is appropriate for the City to be expending or receiving money from an organization that is still coming to the City to go through Planning Board and inspections processes, etc. He called it a conflict of interest. Councilor Greenwald said he would vote against this. He said he is all for the City getting money from any source other than taxpayers, but he did not think this was appropriate.

Councilor Williams said he does not like casinos, so he would also be voting against this.

Councilor Favolise said he was hoping this maybe would not turn into a rehashing of the merits of the [casino] agreement like the Council had already discussed last time. He noted that this question came up around the conflict-of-interest piece. Councilor Favolise said that a state statute authorizes this, and it is not that the City is "going hat in hand to the casino and saying please give us \$13,000 for this project." He stated the requirement that if there are dates available, then those dates have to be held in case the host community wants to enter into this sort of agreement. So, Councilor Favolise said he would be voting to take \$13,000 off of what would otherwise be a property tax funded project. He hoped that the majority of his colleagues would do the same.

Councilor Haas noted that as he understood it, the City already agreed to accept this money, and this vote was just to say where it would go. He said voting against this would not change anything; the City would still be accepting the money, it would just not be directed to anything in particular. Councilor Haas agreed with the stated opinions that it is inappropriate for the City to accept money from a business it may be regulating. However, he said this is not like a tax that is general for everybody, which he said would be different. This is a specific fee the City is taking from the casino based on its success. Councilor Haas said he would vote to support the FOP Committee's recommendation but hoped that in the future, the City could re-examine whether to participate in this program.

Councilor Ellis clarified whether Councilor Haas was correct that this vote would only be for the allocation of the money. Mayor Kahn said that was correct.

The motion to carry out the intent of the FOP Committee report carried with 12 Councilors voting in favor and 3 Councilors voting in opposition. Councilors Williams, Ellis, and Greenwald voted in the minority.

FOP REPORT - EXECUTION OF A CHANGE ORDER FOR CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING SERVICES WITH GREENMAN PEDERSON INC. FOR ISLAND STREET 2026 RECONSTRUCTION

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute a change order for Construction Engineering Services with Greenman Pederson Inc. for 2026 construction as part of the Island Street Corridor Improvements Project. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Lake. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

FOP REPORT - COUNCILOR WORKMAN - REQUEST FOR REVIEW AND UPDATE OF 2019 INTER-AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING INVOLVING LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the request for review and update of the 2019 Inter-Agency Memorandum of Understanding Involving Local Law Enforcement Partners be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn filed the report as informational.

Councilor Workman extended her deep thanks and appreciation to the FOP Committee, City Attorney Amanda Palmeira, and especially Police Chief Steven Stewart for all having that discussion. Councilor Workman thought that it was important and the only pathway for the public to express those concerns. She hoped Chief Stewart's explanation and the full discussion helped to clarify a lot of things and to reduce some of those concerns. Councilor Workman expressed her appreciation again.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

Rebecca Landry, Deputy City Manager, followed up on the questions and interest about the Downtown Infrastructure Project bidding process. She reported that the bids would be advertised on March 17, 2026, which includes allowing time for both the City and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services to review recent project changes. The bids are due on April 16, 2026. The Deputy City Manager said that hopefully the project would start soon thereafter.

REPORT - REALLOCATION OF UNSPENT FUNDS FOR THE GRIT CHAMBER DUCT INSULATION REPAIR PROJECT

02/19/2026

A memorandum was read from Assistant Public Works Directors / Operations Manager Aaron Costa, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to reallocate unspent funds from the Wastewater Treatment Plant Air Compressor Replacement Project (32JW026A) and Wastewater Treatment Plant Laboratory Renovation Project (32JW008A) to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Grit Chamber Duct Insulation Repair Project (32JW006A).

A motion by Councilor Powers to suspend Section 26 of the City Council Rules of Order to act on this time sensitive matter was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

Councilor Powers explained this time-sensitive item: the City's opportunity to work parallel with a project happening already with the same contractor and with funding available within the City's budget for it. Councilor Powers noted that photos have been provided for the Council. He briefly explained that when a contractor was working on a project at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, it became obvious to them that a part of the ductwork would need to be cleaned in a specific fashion (i.e., more than scrubbing). Councilor Powers said this contractor was already there with the scaffold and equipment set up, and for a reasonable price this work could be done, but it was not listed in this particular project. This motion would move unspent funds (no new money) from the Wastewater Treatment Plant Air Compressor Replacement and the Wastewater Treatment Plant Laboratory Renovation projects—both completed—to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Grit Chamber Duct Insulation Repair Project. Councilor Powers called it a small amount of money, just enough to help with this project.

A motion by Councilor Powers was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault: that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to reallocate unspent funds from the Wastewater Treatment Plant Air Compressor Replacement Project (32JW026A) and Wastewater Treatment Plant Laboratory Renovation Project (32JW008A) to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Grit Chamber Duct Insulation Repair Project (32JW006A). The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO UPDATE OF CHAPTER 18 PROPERTY AND HOUSING STANDARDS CODE - ORDINANCE O-2025-36-B

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the adoption of Ordinance O-2025-36-B. Mayor Kahn filed the report. Ordinance O-2025-36-B, Relating to Update of Chapter 18 Property and Housing Standards Code, was read for a second time. A motion by Councilor Filiault to adopt Ordinance O-2025-36-B was duly seconded by Councilor Jones. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR ZONING APPLICATIONS AND THE DEFINITION OF PRIMARY ENTRANCE - ORDINANCE O-2025-39

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the adoption of Ordinance O-2025-39, with an effective date of March 13, 2026. Mayor Kahn

filed the report. Ordinance O-2025-39, Relating to Application Procedures for Zoning Applications and the Definition of Primary Entrance, was read for a second time. A motion by Councilor Filiault to adopt Ordinance O-2025-39, with an effective date of March 13, 2026, was duly seconded by Councilor Jones.

Mayor Kahn said the effective date was to allow adequate time for departments to finalize the application procedures.

The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO FINES FOR NUISANCE, MENACE AND VICIOUS DOG OFFENSES - ORDINANCE O-2026-01

A Planning, Licenses and Development Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the adoption of Ordinance O-2026-01. Mayor Kahn filed the report. Ordinance O-2026-01 Relating to Fines for Nuisance, Menace and Vicious Dog Offenses was read a second time. A motion by Councilor Filiault to adopt Ordinance O-2026-01 was duly seconded by Councilor Jones.

The Mayor asked if Councilor Williams had comments. Councilor Williams said he thinks it is interesting that all the dog items come through the Planning, Licenses and Development (PLD) Committee. Mayor Kahn said, as noted during the PLD hearing, there are reasons for the legislature to take a look at this again, but this is what state law provides for the time being.

The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

Mayor Kahn appreciated the work of Councilor Williams and Representative Jodi Newell, two people who saw this through from the beginning to end.

RELATING TO THE APPROPRIATION OF PLANNED FUNDS FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE ROBIN HOOD PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT - RESOLUTION R-2026-05

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the adoption of Resolution R-2026-05. Mayor Kahn filed the report. A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2026-05 was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

Councilor Williams said that on Keene's east side, he heard a lot from his constituents about needing to save the pool. So, he was very glad the City was doing this project.

Mayor Kahn noted that grant funds associated with this would push the timeline in order to make good use of those funds.

02/19/2026

The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

RELATING TO THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR RECYCLING EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT - RESOLUTION R-2026-06

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the adoption of Resolution R-2026-06. Mayor Kahn filed the report. A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2026-06 was duly seconded by Councilor Lake. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

RELATING TO SERVICE CONNECTED TOTAL DISABILITY VETERAN TAX CREDIT - RESOLUTION R-2026-07

A memorandum was read from City Assessor Dan Langille, recommending that Resolution R-2026-07 be referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee. Mayor Kahn recalled that this came up at the previous City Council meeting, with a request for a Resolution to be prepared, which was now before the Council. The Mayor referred Resolution R-2026-07 to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kahn adjourned the meeting at 7:55 PM.

A true record, attest: 
City Clerk



PUBLIC HEARING

Amendment to Land Development Code -

Setback Exceptions, Accessory Dwelling Units, & Parking Regulations

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held before the Keene City Council relative to Ordinance O-2025-40 "Relating to Setback Exceptions, Accessory Dwelling Units, and Parking Regulations." The Petitioner, the City of Keene Community Development Department, proposes to amend Sec. 1.3.3.4.a of the LDC to clarify that retaining walls are exempt from setback requirements; modify Sec. 8.4.2.A by removing the requirement for an interior door and access to City utilities for Accessory Dwelling Units; amend Sec. 9.2 to increase the percentage of parking spaces that can be reduced administratively from 10% to 25% and prohibit the creation of remote parking spaces on parcels with a residential primary use; and update Table 9-3 to include parallel parking.

The Ordinance is available for inspection in the office of the City Clerk during regular business hours.

HEARING DATE: March 5, 2026

HEARING TIME: 7:00 pm

HEARING PLACE: Council Chambers, Keene City Hall

Per order of the Mayor and City Council this fifth day of February, two thousand and twenty-six.

Attest: 

City Clerk

STAFF REPORT

Ordinance 0-2025-40 – Zoning Text Amendment – Relating to Setback Exceptions, Accessory Dwelling Units, & Parking Regulations

ORDINANCE OVERVIEW:

This Ordinance proposes several amendments to the zoning ordinance in Chapter 100 of City Code, the Keene Land Development Code (LDC). The proposed modifications are as follows:

- **Section 1.3.3.A.4.a** – Add a new subsection “viii” to indicate that retaining walls are exempt from structure setback requirements.
- **Section 8.4.2.A.2** – Remove subsection “e” to eliminate the need to install an interior door between a principal structure and an attached Accessory Dwelling Unit. Additionally, subsection “g” is proposed to be modified to eliminate the need for all ADUs to be connected to City water and sewer services.
- **Section 9.2.7.A** – Increase the percentage of required on-site parking spaces that can be reduced administratively by the Zoning Administrator from 10% to 25%.
- **Section 9.2.9.B** – Amend this section to prohibit the creation of remote parking spaces on parcels where the primary use is residential, rather than prohibiting them in any residential district.
- **Table 9-3** – Update this table to clarify that parallel parking is allowed and establish a width for drive aisles adjacent to these spaces.

The intent of these proposed changes is to reduce the number of variances or other zoning relief required due to on-site parking requirements and to allow retaining walls within setbacks. Additionally, this ordinance proposes to bring the City’s requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) into compliance with recent updates to state law.

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

Section 1.3.3.A.4.a – Structure Setback Exceptions:

This Ordinance proposes to add a new list item “viii. Retaining Walls” to the list of structures that are exempt from setbacks in Section 1.3.3.A.4.a of the LDC. The list of exempt structures currently includes the following:

- i. Steps and stairs necessary to provide access to a building or structure
- ii. Access landings up to 25-sf
- iii. Structures necessary to afford access for persons with physical disabilities
- iv. Canopies and awnings
- v. One detached utility accessory building less than 125-sf in size (e.g. a garden shed)
- vi. Fences
- vii. Signs as regulated by Article 10 of the LDC

While retaining walls meet the LDC’s definition of “structure,” they are often used for aesthetic purposes, site grading, and managing stormwater runoff and are generally not considered to be a nuisance for neighboring properties. Under the current building code, a building permit is

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required for the installation of a retaining wall that is more than 4 feet tall or for a retaining wall of any height that may be subject to pressure from vertical loads or lateral forces. Exempting retaining walls from setback requirements will ease the site design process for residents and property owners while ensuring that all necessary building code standards are met.

Section 8.4.2.A.2 – Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) Use Standards:

This ordinance proposes to amend the ADU use standards in Section 8.4.2.A.2 of the LDC by removing the requirement for an interior door between an attached ADU and the principal dwelling (use standard e) and clarify the wording of use standard “g” regarding utility requirements. These changes will bring the city’s ADU standards into compliance with changes to state law that were made during the 2025 legislative session with House Bill 577 and will help make the ADU use standards simpler and easier to understand.

Section 9.2.7.A – Administrative Reduction of Required Parking:

Article 9 of the LDC requires that a minimum amount of on-site parking be provided for each use. For example, offices are required to have 4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. In addition, this article provides three alternatives to providing the required parking: (1) a parking reduction, (2) a parking credit, or (3) provision of remote parking.

Under the “Reduction of Required Parking” section (9.2.7), an applicant may seek up to a 10% reduction in the number of required on-site parking spaces from the Zoning Administrator through an administrative process, or up to a 50% reduction from the Zoning Board of Adjustment through a Special Exception public hearing process. To receive the requested reduction, applicants must submit documentation regarding the characteristics of the use & site and a description of how the use & site meets the criteria listed below.

1. A specific use or site has such characteristics that the number of required parking spaces is too restrictive.
2. The requested reduction will not cause long term parking problems for adjacent properties or anticipated future uses.
3. One or more of the following site conditions are applicable or present on the lot where the principal use(s) is located: reserve area; proximity to alternative modes of transportation; shared parking; and/or proximity to on-street parking.

In practice, staff have found that a 10% reduction is often not enough to meet the needs of applicants, especially for smaller projects where the total amount of parking required is less than 25 spaces. In addition, the process of requesting a 50% reduction can be too expensive for some applicants due to the requirement to submit a full parking study. As a result, some applicants have opted to request a variance rather than using the “Alternate Parking” option or they have reduced the scope of their project.

This Ordinance proposes to increase the amount of parking that may be reduced administratively from 10% to 25% to provide applicants with a faster and less expensive option for seeking relief from the minimum parking requirements in Article 9. As part of this change, this ordinance would require any residential uses seeking an administrative reduction of greater than 10% to provide a reserve area (an area of land that could be used for future parking spaces), and it would add a

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requirement for all administrative parking reduction requests of more than 10% to provide a traffic and parking analysis (but not a full study).

The intent of this change is to remove a barrier to development by streamlining the process and reducing the number of variances or other zoning relief that is sought due to parking requirements. Table 1 below shows examples of the existing and proposed number of parking spaces that could be reviewed administratively by Zoning Staff.

Table 1 – Example Administrative Parking Reductions Under Current & Proposed Zoning

Base Parking Requirement	10% Reduction (Current)	25% Reduction (Proposed)
10 spaces	9 (-1 space)	8 (-2 spaces)
25 spaces	23 (-2 spaces)	19 (-6 spaces)
65 spaces	59 (-6 spaces)	49 (-16 spaces)

Section 9.2.9.B – Remote Parking:

Another alternative method for meeting the parking requirements in Article 9 is through the provision of remote parking, described in Section 9.2.9 of the LDC. The requirements for offsite (or “remote”) parking state that all spaces must be within 1,000-ft of the property on which the principal use is located and cannot be obtained from any parcel located within a residential zoning district. However, throughout the City there are existing commercial properties within residentially zoned areas (legal nonconforming uses) as well as residential uses within commercial areas.

This Ordinance proposes to amend this section to state that remote parking spaces cannot be obtained from a residential property (rather than district). The intent of this change is to make it possible for uses to lease remote parking spaces from non-residential uses that are legally located in a residential district. All required accessible spaces will still be required to be on site, and the remote parking spaces must be “excess” spaces – in other words, they cannot be double-counted for the property where they are located and the use that is leasing them.

This change would make it easier for uses located in/near residential districts to lease off-site parking spaces on non-residential properties within the required 1,000 sf distance.

Table 9-3 – Travel Lane Dimensions:

This Ordinance proposes to amend Table 9-3 of the LDC (Figure 1) to include parallel parking spaces as an option and to clarify that a 10’-wide travel aisle is required if a one-way flow of traffic is proposed and a 20’-wide travel aisle is required if a two-way flow of traffic is proposed. Currently, the table includes width requirements for parking spaces measuring 30, 45, 60, and 90 degrees, but does not address parallel (0 degree) parking spaces.

Parking Space Angle	Travel Lane Width
90 degree	22 ft
60 degree	18 ft
45 degree	11 ft
30 degree	10 ft

Figure 1. Table 9-3 from the Land Development Code.

The aim of this proposal is to clarify that parallel parking is allowed and reduce any potential confusion on the part of applicants or future code interpreters.

STAFF REPORT

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES:

This Ordinance proposes a series of changes that will simplify, clarify, and update existing City processes and requirements related to structure setbacks, alternate parking requirements, and ADU use standards. The potential impacts of these proposed changes include less regulation of certain structure types, including retaining walls and ADUs, and relaxed parking requirements. As they exist today, these regulations may unintentionally reduce a small-scale developer's interest in pursuing a project due to the perceived complexity of the processes. The impact of this ordinance would be to provide both applicants and City Staff with additional flexibility in navigating the design review process and remove roadblocks that could otherwise hinder a development project.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE MASTER PLAN:

The 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan is centered around six pillars, including Livable Housing, Thriving Economy, Connected Mobility, Vibrant Neighborhoods, Adaptable Workforce, and Flourishing Environment. Chapter 6.0 of the Master Plan includes an Implementation Matrix for each of these pillars and their associated goals. The matrix outlines the priority and role of the City in achieving each of the action items associated with a pillar's goals. Goal 2 of the Livable Housing Pillar is to, "*Remove barriers to housing development.*" Action Item #2.6 under this goal is to "*Update zoning map and/or code to encourage desired development.*" Additionally, Action Item #2.7 states that the community should "*Continually review and assess the city's permitting and approval processes.*"

Each of these items is categorized as being a high priority action that should be led by the City. Modifying the zoning code in the ways described in this staff report would serve as a starting point for updating the zoning regulations to encourage development within the community. In addition, Goal 3 of the Livable Housing Pillar is to "*Promote sustainable and healthy housing standards that align with the community's character.*" Action Item #3.2 under this goal is to "*Review zoning code and development regulations to ensure clarity.*" Modifying the ADU regulations to remove unnecessary requirements; updating the process for obtaining off-site parking spaces and parking reductions; and accounting for additional types of parking spaces are all changes that will serve to offer more clarity to those individuals reviewing the LDC with the goal of developing a project within the City of Keene.

Recommended Motions:

The following language is recommended for the motion for each board:

Planning Board Motion: "To find Ordinance O-2025-40 to be consistent with the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan."

Planning, License & Development Committee Motion: "To recommend that the Mayor set a public hearing date."



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Setback Exceptions, Accessory Dwelling Units, and Parking Regulations

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows.

1. That a new section be added after Section 1.3.3.4.a, sub-section vii to indicate that retaining walls are exempt from setback requirements, as follows.
 4. Structure Setback Exceptions.
 - a. The following may be excluded from required setbacks.
 - i. Steps and stairs necessary to provide access to a building or structure
 - ii. Access landings up to 25-sf
 - iii. Structures necessary to afford access for persons with physical disabilities
 - iv. Canopies and awnings
 - v. One detached utility accessory building of less than 125-sf (e.g. garden shed)
 - vi. Fences
 - vii. Signs as regulated by Article 10
 - viii. Retaining walls**
2. That Section 8.4.2, Subsection A be amended by removing sub-sections 2.e and 2.g, as follows. The intent of this proposed change is to come into compliance with recent changes to state law, specifically HB 577 which amended NH RSA 674:71 to :73.

A. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

1. Defined. An independent living unit ancillary to a single-family dwelling and under the same ownership as the principal dwelling unit. The unit may be an attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), located within or attached to the principal dwelling unit, or a detached ADU, located in or as a detached accessory building on the property.
2. Use Standards
 - a. Only 1 ADU shall be permitted per lot.
 - b. There shall be no more than 2 bedrooms in an ADU.
 - c. ADUs shall be permitted in any district and on any lot that contains a singlefamily dwelling. This shall include any legal non-conforming single-family dwelling.
 - d. ADUs shall not exceed a maximum gross floor area of 1000-sf.
 - ~~e. An interior door shall be provided between the principal single-family dwelling unit and an attached ADU. This interior door does not need to remain unlocked.~~
 - ~~f.e.~~ Only 1 parking space shall be required for an ADU.
 - ~~gf.~~ An ADU shall have city water and sewer service, or, ~~i~~in the absence of city sewer, a septic system plan approved by the state shall be required prior to the issuance of a building permit.
 - ~~h.g.~~ A scaled and dimensional plot plan of the property shall be submitted as part of the building permit application for an ADU. This plan shall show the location and number of required parking spaces, driveway and paved areas, buildings, building setbacks, utilities, fences, and any other relevant site features.
 - ~~i.h.~~ The record property owner shall occupy either the single-family dwelling or the ADU, and shall submit an affidavit in support of an ADU with their building permit application stating under oath that they satisfy the owner occupancy requirement.
 - ~~j.i.~~ Adequate notice in an acceptable legal form for recording at the County Registry of Deeds shall be duly executed by the owner of record identifying the property on which the ADU is located by source deed sufficient to notify successor owners that the ADU is subject to the City's Zoning Regulations.
 - i. This notice shall be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator for acceptable form and, upon signature, it shall be recorded at the Registry by the property owner.
 - ii. Evidence of recording shall be submitted to the Community Development Department prior to the issuance of a building permit.

- k.j. An ADU is subject to the same overlying zoning district's dimensions & siting, buildout, and height requirements, as permitted by RSA 674:72, that would be required for a single-family dwelling without an ADU. In the case of zoning districts that do not allow a singlefamily dwelling, the zoning district's dimensions & siting, buildout, and height requirements shall apply.
 - i. An ADU may encroach up to 10-ft from the rear lot line of any lot where an ADU is permitted.
3. That Section 9.2.7.A "Administrative Reduction" of Article 9 be amended to increase the amount of parking that may be reduced through an administrative process, as follows. The intent of this proposed change is to reduce barriers to development where the proposed development can clearly demonstrate that the number of required parking spaces as detailed in Table 9-1 is too restrictive based on the characteristics of the specific use or site.

9.2.7 Reduction of Required Parking

- A. Administrative Reduction. The Zoning Administrator may grant up to a ~~10%~~ **25%** reduction in the number of required on-site parking spaces for the principal use or mixture of principal uses on a lot when the following can be demonstrated.
 - 1. A specific use or site has such characteristics that the number of required parking spaces is too restrictive.
 - 2. The requested reduction will not cause long term parking problems for adjacent properties or anticipated future uses.
 - 3. One or more of the following site conditions are applicable or present on the lot where the principal use(s) is located.
 - a. Reserve Area. An area of land suitable for the development of a parking facility and equal in size to the area of land needed to provide the parking spaces for which a reduction is granted will be reserved as undeveloped open space on the lot. **This criteria shall be required for residential uses seeking a reduction of more than 10%.**
 - b. Proximity to Alternative Modes of Transportation. The main entrance to the building of the proposed use is located within a 1,000-ft walking distance of an operating transit route or there is direct access from the lot to a multi-use bicycle pathway.
 - c. Shared Parking. The required parking is for a use that shares a parking lot with other uses that have different peak parking demands or operating hours (e.g. a movie theatre and a bank).
 - d. Proximity to On-Street Parking. Located contiguous to the lot there is on-street public parking that meets all the requirements for on-street parking in accordance with the City Code of Ordinances.

B. Administrative Reduction Request Procedure

1. A written request for an administrative parking reduction shall be filed with the Zoning Administrator and shall include, at a minimum, the following information. The Zoning Administrator may request additional information and/or technical studies at the applicant's expense.
 - a. The size and type of the proposed use(s).
 - b. The anticipated rate of parking turnover.
 - c. The anticipated peak parking and traffic loads for all uses.
 - d. A description of how the site and/or use meets the criteria in Section 9.2.7.A.
 - e. A traffic and parking analysis stamped by a NH licensed engineer shall be required for parking reduction requests greater than 10%.**
 - ~~f.~~e. Additional information and/or technical studies deemed reasonably necessary by the Zoning Administrator, at the expense of the applicant.
 2. The Zoning Administrator shall issue a written decision on requests for administrative reduction of required parking in accordance with the procedures for a written interpretation in Section 26.9 of this LDC.
4. That Section 9.2.9.B "Remote Parking" of Article 9 be amended to allow remote parking to be located on lots located in residential districts with legally non-conforming uses and excess parking capacity, as follows. The intent of this proposed change is to allow for more flexibility for remote parking arrangements in areas that are located within a residential district.

9.2.9 Remote Parking

If the required number of on-site parking spaces for any land use cannot be reasonably provided on the same lot on which the principal use is located, the Zoning Administrator may permit all or part of the required parking to be located on a separate lot, provided it complies with the following standards.

- A. The remote parking spaces shall be within a 1,000-ft walking distance of the property on which the principal use is located. This distance is measured from the nearest point of the remote parking area to the primary entrance of the use served. The path of travel from the remote parking to the principal use shall have adequate pedestrian facilities (e.g. crosswalks and sidewalks) for pedestrians to safely travel between the two sites.
- B. Remote parking spaces shall not be allowed **on lots where the primary use is residential (single family, two family, or multifamily).** ~~in any residential zoning district.~~
- C. All required accessible parking spaces shall be provided on-site.
- D. Where remote parking spaces are under separate ownership from the principal lot, a written and duly executed parking agreement between the record owners, which guarantees the use and operation of remote parking areas for the life of the principal

use, shall be submitted to and approved by the Zoning Administrator and recorded in the County Registry of Deeds. Change of ownership or use of either parcel shall require a renewal of the agreement.

E. The remote parking spaces shall not be counted toward the minimum parking requirements for the primary use(s) of the lot where the remote parking is located.

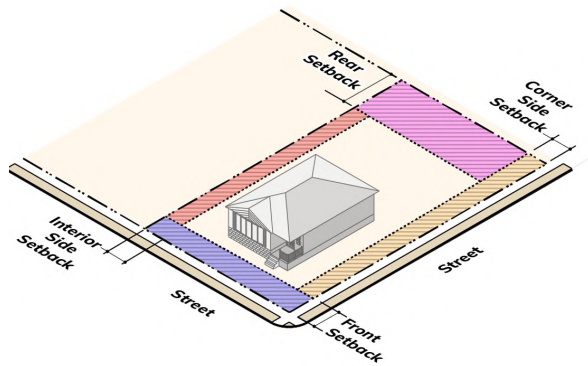
5. That Table 9-3 “Travel Lane Dimensions” be modified to include travel lane widths adjacent to parallel parking spaces, as follows. The intent of this proposed change is to clarify that parallel parking is allowed and to specify the required width of adjacent travel lanes.

Parking Space Angle	Travel Lane Width
90 degree	22 ft
60 degree	18 ft
45 degree	11 ft
30 degree	10 ft
0 degree	10 ft (one-way)
(parallel parking)	20 ft (two-way)

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council February 5, 2026.
Public Hearing set for March 5, 2026,
at 7:00 PM.


City Clerk



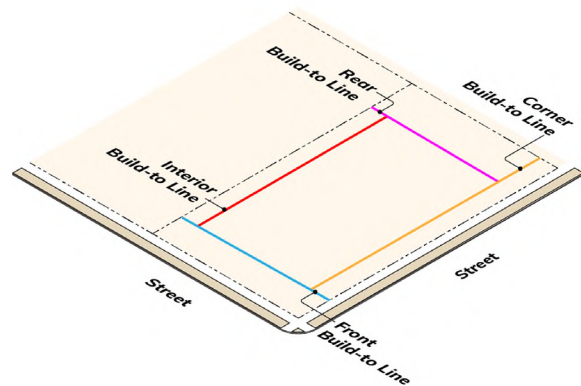
4. Structure Setback Exceptions.

- a. The following may be excluded from required setbacks.
 - i. Steps and stairs necessary to provide access to a building or structure
 - ii. Access landings up to 25-sf
 - iii. Structures necessary to afford access for persons with physical disabilities
 - iv. Canopies and awnings
 - v. One detached utility accessory building of less than 125-sf (e.g. garden shed)
 - vi. Fences
 - vii. Signs as regulated by Article 10
 - viii. **Retaining walls**
- b. Paved and unpaved parking lots and associated travel surfaces associated with all uses other than single- and two-family dwellings shall comply with the setback requirements in Section 9.4 of this LDC.
- c. Driveways and parking spaces associated with single- and two-family dwellings shall comply with the setback requirements in Section 9.3 of this LDC.
- d. If a front building setback extends beyond the front of a legally nonconforming building, an accessory use or structure may occupy the portion

of the front setback beyond the front of the building.

- e. The following structures may encroach up to 10-ft from the rear lot line of lots in residential zoning districts.
 - i. Pools, either above- or in-ground
 - ii. Decks, either detached or attached
 - iii. Garages, either detached or attached
 - iv. Accessory Dwelling Units, either detached or attached

- B. **Building Façade Line.** The vertical plane along a lot where the building's façade is located. Upper story building façade lines relate to that part of the façade that requires a setback.
- C. **Build-To Line (BTL).** A build-to line (BTL) is a set line on a lot, measured perpendicularly from the applicable lot line, where all principal buildings or principal structures must be located. The building façade line of all principal buildings or principal structures must be located on the build-to line. Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) are not counted



as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.

- D. **Build-To Percentage.** A build-to percentage specifies the percentage of the building façade that must be located within the build-to zone or at the build-to line. Façade articulation (e.g. window or wall recesses and projections) do not count against the required build-to percentage.

8.4.2 Specific Use Standards

A. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

1. **Defined.** An independent living unit ancillary to a single-family dwelling and under the same ownership as the principal dwelling unit. The unit may be an attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), located within or attached to the principal dwelling unit, or a detached ADU, located in or as a detached accessory building on the property.
2. **Use Standards**
 - a. Only 1 ADU shall be permitted per lot.
 - b. There shall be no more than 2 bedrooms in an ADU.
 - c. ADUs shall be permitted in any district and on any lot that contains a single-family dwelling. This shall include any legal non-conforming single-family dwelling.
 - d. ADUs shall not exceed a maximum gross floor area of 1000-sf.
 - e. ~~An interior door shall be provided between the principal single-family dwelling unit and an attached ADU. This interior door does not need to remain unlocked.~~
 - f. Only 1 parking space shall be required for an ADU.
 - g. ~~An ADU shall have city water and sewer service, or, in~~ the absence of city sewer, a septic system plan approved by the state shall be required prior to the issuance of a building permit.
 - h. A scaled and dimensional plot plan of the property shall be submitted as part of the building permit application for an ADU. This plan shall show the location and number of required parking spaces, driveway and paved areas, buildings, building setbacks, utilities, fences, and any other relevant site features.
 - i. The record property owner shall occupy either the single-family dwelling or the ADU, and shall submit an affidavit in support of an ADU with their building permit application stating under oath that they satisfy the owner occupancy requirement.
 - j. Adequate notice in an acceptable legal form for recording at the County Registry of Deeds shall be duly executed by the owner of record identifying the property on which the ADU is located by source deed sufficient to notify successor owners that the ADU is subject to the City's Zoning Regulations.
 - i. This notice shall be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator for acceptable form and, upon signature, it shall be recorded at the Registry by the property owner.
 - ii. Evidence of recording shall be submitted to the Community Development Department prior to the issuance of a building permit.
 - k. An ADU is subject to the same overlying zoning district's dimensions & siting, buildout, and height requirements, as permitted by RSA 674:72, that would be required for a single-family dwelling without an ADU. In the case of zoning districts that do not allow a single-family dwelling, the zoning district's dimensions & siting, buildout, and height requirements shall apply.
 - i. An ADU may encroach up to 10-ft from the rear lot line of any lot where an ADU is permitted.

TABLE 9-1: MINIMUM ON-SITE PARKING REQUIREMENTS

USE CATEGORY	MIN ON-SITE PARKING REQUIREMENT
OPEN SPACE USES	
Cemetery	0.5 spaces / 1 acre of grave space if no internal road is present
Community Garden	No minimum
Conservation Area	No minimum
Farming	No minimum
Golf Course	2 spaces / tee + 4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Gravel Pit	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA of office space
INFRASTRUCTURE USES	
Public Utility Facilities	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA of office space
Telecommunications Facilities	1 space / standalone facility
TRANSPORTATION USES	
Parking Lot (Principal Use)	No minimum
Parking – Structured Facility (Principal Use)	No minimum

9.2.2 Use Determination

- A. Where the classification of use is not determinable from Table 9-1, the Zoning Administrator shall determine the minimum on-site parking requirements by considering all factors entering into the parking demand for the use, including the most current version of the ITE Parking Generation Manual. Such determination shall be documented in writing and kept on file with the Community Development Department.

9.2.3 Mixed Uses

Where multiple primary uses occupy the same structure or lot, the required minimum parking is the sum of the requirements for each use computed separately.

9.2.4 Accessible Parking

- A. The number of required accessible parking spaces shall be calculated based on the minimum number of parking spaces required in Table 9-1 not including any reduction, and shall comply with the requirements of the State Building Code.
- B. In no circumstance shall the number of required accessible parking spaces be reduced.

9.2.5 Zoning District Specific Requirements

- A. No on-site parking is required for uses in the Downtown Core, Downtown Growth, and Downtown Limited Districts, with the exception of residential uses in the Downtown Growth and Downtown Limited Districts as stated in Table 9-1.
- B. When parking is provided in zoning districts that do not require on-site parking, all design standards and specific limitations in this Article shall apply.

9.2.6 Alternate Parking Requirements

Recognizing that the parking requirements provided in Table 9-1 may not be appropriate for all uses or sites, the number of on-site parking spaces required may be reduced in accordance with Sections 9.2.7, 9.2.8 and 9.2.9.

9.2.7 Reduction of Required Parking

- A. **Administrative Reduction.** The Zoning Administrator may grant up to a **10% 25%** reduction in the number of required on-site parking spaces for the principal use or mixture of principal uses on a lot when the following can be demonstrated.
 - 1. A specific use or site has such characteristics that the number of required

parking spaces is too restrictive.

2. The requested reduction will not cause long term parking problems for adjacent properties or anticipated future uses.
3. One or more of the following site conditions are applicable or present on the lot where the principal use(s) is located.

a. Reserve Area. An area of land suitable for the development of a parking facility and equal in size to the area of land needed to provide the parking spaces for which a reduction is granted will be reserved as undeveloped open space on the lot. **This criteria shall be required for residential uses seeking a reduction of more than 10%.**

b. Proximity to Alternative Modes of Transportation. The main entrance to the building of the proposed use is located within a 1,000-ft walking distance of an operating transit route or there is direct access from the lot to a multi-use bicycle pathway.

c. Shared Parking. The required parking is for a use that shares a parking lot with other uses that have different peak parking demands or operating hours (e.g. a movie theatre and a bank).

d. Proximity to On-Street Parking. Located contiguous to the lot there is on-street public parking that meets all the requirements for on-street parking in accordance with the City Code of Ordinances.

B. Administrative Reduction Request Procedure

1. A written request for an administrative parking reduction shall be filed with the Zoning Administrator and shall include, at a minimum, the following information. The Zoning Administrator may request additional information and/or technical studies at the applicant's expense.
 - a. The size and type of the proposed use(s).

- b. The anticipated rate of parking turnover.
- c. The anticipated peak parking and traffic loads for all uses.
- d. A description of how the site and/or use meets the criteria in Section 9.2.7.A.
- e. **A traffic and parking analysis stamped by a NH licensed engineer shall be required for parking reduction requests greater than 10%.**
- f. Additional information and/or technical studies deemed reasonably necessary by the Zoning Administrator, at the expense of the applicant.

2. The Zoning Administrator shall issue a written decision on requests for administrative reduction of required parking in accordance with the procedures for a written interpretation in Section 26.9 of this LDC.

C. Major Reduction Request

1. Requests for reductions in required parking that exceed 10% and are less than 50% shall be considered by the Zoning Board of Adjustment through the special exception process.
2. In determining whether to grant a special exception, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall make the following findings.
 - a. The specific use or site has such characteristics that the number of required parking spaces is too restrictive.
 - b. The requested reduction will not cause long term parking problems for adjacent properties or anticipated future uses.
3. The applicant for a special exception shall submit a parking study conducted by a NH licensed engineer that clearly demonstrates the need for a reduction in required parking. The parking study shall address the following.

- a. A description of the proposed use(s).
- b. Days and hours of operation of the use(s).
- c. Anticipated number of employees and number of daily customers or clients.
- d. The anticipated rate of turnover for proposed spaces.
- e. The availability of nearby on-street parking or alternative modes of transportation (e.g. public transit, multi-use pathways).
- f. The anticipated peak parking and traffic loads for each of the uses on the site.
- g. Total vehicle movements for the parking facility as a whole.

(single family, two family, or multifamily). in any residential zoning district.

- C. All required accessible parking spaces shall be provided on-site.
- D. Where remote parking spaces are under separate ownership from the principal lot, a written and duly executed parking agreement between the record owners, which guarantees the use and operation of remote parking areas for the life of the principal use, shall be submitted to and approved by the Zoning Administrator and recorded in the County Registry of Deeds. Change of ownership or use of either parcel shall require a renewal of the agreement.
- E. The remote parking spaces shall not be counted toward the minimum parking requirements for the primary use(s) of the lot where the remote parking is located.

9.2.8 Parking Credit

Any existing parking deficiencies of the required on-site parking spaces for the previous use may be credited to the new use at the discretion of the Zoning Administrator, provided that the previous use was legally established and the number of parking spaces has not decreased.

9.2.9 Remote Parking

If the required number of on-site parking spaces for any land use cannot be reasonably provided on the same lot on which the principal use is located, the Zoning Administrator may permit all or part of the required parking to be located on a separate lot, provided it complies with the following standards.

- A. The remote parking spaces shall be within a 1,000-ft walking distance of the property on which the principal use is located. This distance is measured from the nearest point of the remote parking area to the primary entrance of the use served. The path of travel from the remote parking to the principal use shall have adequate pedestrian facilities (e.g. crosswalks and sidewalks) for pedestrians to safely travel between the two sites.
- B. Remote parking spaces shall not be allowed **on lots where the primary use is residential**

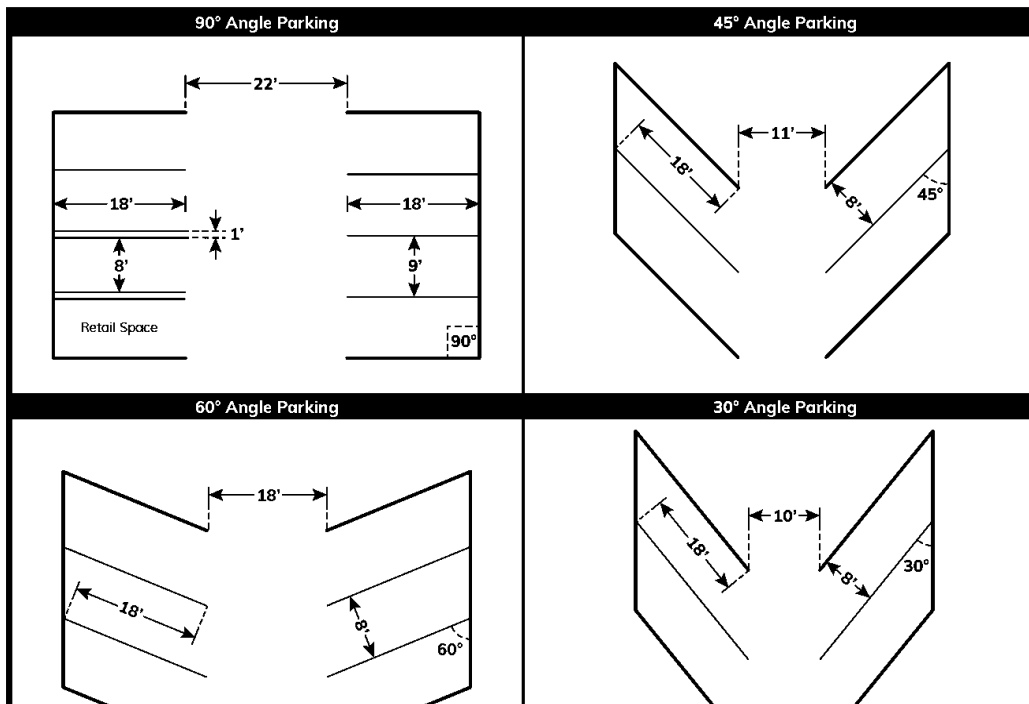
9.4.3 Surface Material and Grade

The surface of parking lots shall be designed as follows.

- A. The surface material shall be of either concrete; asphalt installed at a minimum thickness of 3-in on top of 4-in compacted subgrade base; crushed stone (installed at a minimum thickness of 4-in on top of a 4-in compacted subgrade); or, semi-pervious materials (e.g. permeable pavers, pervious asphalt or concrete, etc.) that are able to withstand vehicular traffic or other heavy-impact uses.
- B. Shall be striped to delineate parking spaces.
- C. Shall be graded to prevent drainage across sidewalks and curb cuts or onto adjacent property.
- D. Shall have a substantial curb or wheel stop of concrete, masonry, steel or heavy timber placed at or near the end of each parking space to prevent vehicles from damaging nearby buildings, lawns, trees or shrubs, or from creating a hazard to pedestrians on any sidewalk or walkway.

Table 9-3: Travel Lane Dimensions

Parking Space Angle	Travel Lane Width
90 degree	22 ft
60 degree	18 ft
45 degree	11 ft
30 degree	10 ft
0 degree (parallel parking)	10 ft (one-way) 20 ft (two-way)





CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #B.1.

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Mayor Jay V. Kahn
Through: Terri Hood, City Clerk
Subject: **Nominations - Airport Development and Marketing Committee; Bicycle Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Rinehart, Sally_Redacted
2. Mast, Dave_Redacted

Background:

I hereby nominate the following individuals to serve on the designated board or commission:

Airport Development and Marketing Committee

Sally Rinehart
24 School Street
Alternate, Slot 12

December 31, 2028

Bicycle Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee

David Mast
27 Park Avenue
Alternate, Slot 11

December 31, 2028

From: [City of Keene](#)
To: [Meagan McLaughlin](#); [Terri Hood](#); [Heather Fitz-Simon](#)
Subject: New submission from City Board or Commission Volunteer Form
Date: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 12:24:39 PM

Submitted on 01/14/2026

Submitted fields are:

Name
Sally Rinehart
Email
[REDACTED]
Phone
[REDACTED]
Address
24 School St. Keene, New Hampshire 03431 United States Map It
How long have you resided in Keene?
12 years
Employer
retired
Occupation
real estate
Retired?
Yes
Please list any organizations, groups, or other committees you are involved in
Keene Senior Center Friends of Keene Public Library
Have you ever served on a public body before?
Yes
Please select the Boards or Commissions you would be most interested in serving on.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Airport Development & Marketing Committee
Please let us know the Board or Commission that you are most interested in serving on.
Airport Development & Marketing

Optional - Please select your second choice of which Board or Commission you would like to serve on.

N/A at this time

Please share what your interests are and your background or any skill sets that may apply.

I have served as Race Director for two Runway 5K and am serving for the Airport 5K to be held May 17, 2026.

I consider the Airport to be a crown jewel for Keene and love being there. The first friends to visit after we moved here 12 years ago landed at Dillard-Hopkins. My granddaughter got her pilot's license from Monadnock Aviation.

I'm not sure what skills the Commission is looking for. I have an open mind and follow through.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally

Suggest other public bodies of interest

Congregate Living

Pedestrian

Please provide two personal references:

Name

Ockle Johnson

Email

ojohnson@keene.edu

Phone

[REDACTED]

Name

Alan Stroshine

Email

alan.stroshine@edwardjones.com

Phone

[REDACTED]

From: [City of Keene](#)
To: [Nicole Howe](#); [Terri Hood](#); [Heather Fitz-Simon](#)
Subject: New submission from City Board or Commission Volunteer Form
Date: Saturday, January 10, 2026 9:43:29 AM

Submitted on 01/10/2026

Submitted fields are:

Name
Dave Mast
Email
[REDACTED]
Phone
[REDACTED]
Address
27 Park Ave Keene, New Hampshire 03431 United States Map It
How long have you resided in Keene?
16 years as a home owner, but after attending KSC starting in 1987, I have rented apartments in Keene since 1987
Employer
Florentine Films
Occupation
Technical Director
Retired?
No
Please list any organizations, groups, or other committees you are involved in
none
Have you ever served on a public body before?
No
Please select the Boards or Commissions you would be most interested in serving on.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ashuelot River Park Advisory Board● Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee● Heritage Commission● Historic District Commission
Please let us know the Board or Commission that you are most interested in serving on.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee

Optional - Please select your second choice of which Board or Commission you would like to serve on.

Historic District Commission

Optional - Please select your third choice of which Board or Commission you would like to serve on.

Heritage Commission

Please share what your interests are and your background or any skill sets that may apply.

I love Keene and wish to keep it preserved and beautiful. I believe that Keene's character and appeal (to both residents and businesses) are achieved through the preservation of its historical (and tastefully constructed) architecture and its parks and/or nature areas.

I have the best job in the world working for Ken Burns in Walpole, which correlates with my interests in film, technology, and history.

I may be old and fat, but I still manage to bike about 100 miles per week in the summer.

Suggest other public bodies of interest

Ashuelot River Park Advisory Board

Please provide two personal references:

Name

Cauley Powell

Email

[REDACTED]

Phone

[REDACTED]

Name

Loren Howard

Email

[REDACTED]

Phone

[REDACTED]



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.1.

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Terry Bishop
Through: Terri Hood, City Clerk
Subject: **Terry Bishop - Concerns With Parking on Marlboro Street and Enforcement Measures**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Communication_Bishop_redacted

Background:

Mr. Bishop is concerned about parking on Marlboro Street and would like to discuss solutions related to parking enforcement along this gateway corridor.

To the Mayor and Council. 26/02/2026

We have a parking issue on Marlboro st or lack of enforcement with in our gateway to our city.

I would like to discuss solutions please.

Thank you

Terry Bishop

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry Bishop".

124 Eastern Ave [REDACTED]



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.2.

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Mark Rebillard
Through: Terri Hood, City Clerk
Subject: **Mark Rebillard/Keene Downtown Group - Request to Use City Property -
Monadnock 250th Independence Celebration - July 4, 2026**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Rebillard Communication

Background:

Mr. Rebillard has submitted a request for a license to conduct the Monadnock 250th Independence Day Celebration in Downtown Keene, July 4, 2026. The event will include a parade, sidewalk sales and family friendly activities.

Mark Rebillard

Chairperson
PO Box 80
Keene, NH 03431
(603) 439-0321
Mark@DeepRootsMB.com



March, 2 2026

Keene City Council

Mayor Jay Kahn & Keene City Council
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

To the Honorable Chair and Members of the Council:

As the licensee for the Monadnock 250 Independence Day Celebration, I am writing to ask for event license approval from the city council.

The event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, July 4th, 2026.

We are so excited to help bring this community celebration to life.

Sincerely,

Mark Rebillard



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Presentation - City Budgeting/Capital Planning/Property Tax Rate Overview**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the acceptance of the presentation on City Budgeting/Capital Planning/Property Tax Rate Overview as informational.

Attachments:

None

Background:

City Assessor Dan Langille and Finance Director Kari Chamberlain addressed the Committee. Mr. Langille stated staff was before the committee to present an overview of the budget process, in time for the upcoming CIP and the budget process. Staff would also be discussing the tax rate and how it is calculated. He turned the presentation over to the Finance Director.

Ms. Chamberlain stated she wanted to explain the baseline for how staff generate both the capital and operating budgets for the City. She stated that both the City master plan and the Council goals are the backbone of both budgets. Together, the two documents outline the long-term vision, community priorities, and desired outcomes. Ensuring that our annual budget decisions align with the City's overall direction. Every budget recommendation is evaluated for its consistency with these guided documents.

Ms. Chamberlain went on to say that the master plan translates community values into long-term policy direction. It identifies needs, including infrastructure, sustainability, housing, transportation, economic vitality, and quality-of-life investments. Both the operating and capital budgets help advance these master plan focus areas over time, turning strategic vision into practical implementation. The operating budget funds the day-to-day services needed to deliver on both the master plan and Council goals. Considerations include staffing and training to maintain consistent service levels. Program support is tied to strategic goals such as safety, sustainability, and community engagement. Maintenance of City facilities, fleet, and infrastructure that support ongoing operations.

Mr. Chamberlain stated the capital budget, which staff is in the process of finalizing, for long-term infrastructure investments that directly support master plan objectives. These projects often span multiple years. They include roads, bridges, storm water improvements, public buildings and facilities, parks, trails, and recreation assets, technology systems, and equipment. This capital planning ensures that investments are timely, cost-effective, and aligned with the City's strategic priorities. Using both the master plan and the Council goals ensures alignment with financial decisions and service delivery. It further ensures infrastructure needs and community outcomes are met and allows the City to create a balanced, forward-looking financial strategy that manages risks and supports sustainable growth.

Ms. Chamberlain next referred to the General Fund. The General Fund is the City's main operating fund; these are the resources necessary for day-to-day operations.

The departments included in the general fund are Airport, Assessing, City Attorney, City Clerk, City Manager, Community Development, Facilities, Finance (which includes Human Services), Fire, Human Resources, Information Technology, Library, and Mayor and Council. It also includes community events and outside agencies, Police, Parks and Rec, and Public Works.

The resources are discretionary and allow the Mayor and the Council to allocate to programs and services with few restrictions.

She next referred to Enterprise Funds. These funds are self-supporting through user fees rather than general taxes. Those funds include Parking, Sewer, Solid Waste and Water.

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is updated biannually and reviewed annually. Once the CIP has been adopted by Council, the first two years of the capital budget are included in the next operating budget proposal. The City departments submit operating budget recommendations to the Finance Department. The Finance Department then compiles and calculates overall City budget impacts.

Meetings are then scheduled in which each department presents its budget proposals to the City Manager and Finance. The City Manager then reviews departmental and overall budget priorities and their impacts, and makes necessary revisions to ensure compliance with fiscal policies.

There are three important areas that staff ensure the City is in compliance with: Use of unassigned fund balance, consumer price index, and debt service limitations. Property tax revenues, the City has to stay within a three-year average of the Northeast Region Consumer Price Index.

The unassigned fund balance, which is used to offset emergency expenditures, downturns, and collection of significant revenues or other unforeseen events, is restricted to between 7% and 17% of the sum of the total General Fund operating budget plus the tax commitment for the school and the county.

Ms. Chamberlain noted that the debt service limits are capped at a five-year average of 12% or less of the General Fund operating budget.

Once the City Manager ensures compliance with fiscal policy, the City Manager then presents the proposed budget to the City Council. The departments then have an opportunity to present their respective budget proposals to the Finance Organization and Personnel Committee. There is a public hearing scheduled, and then the City Council adopts the operating budget with any adjustments as adopted by vote of the City Council.

Ms. Chamberlain referred to a calendar that outlines upcoming meetings. She stated the City encourages the public to participate so they can ask questions, gather information about the various proposed budgets, and provide their input.

Ms. Chamberlain next referred to the FY 26 budget. She indicated that the first slide discusses revenues, and the other refers to expenditures. The largest portion of revenue comes from property taxes. She indicated that property taxes are not just for City expenditures –taxes are collected for the school and the county. There are also other revenue sources, such as licenses, permits, fees, intergovernmental, which could be grants, and rooms and meals tax, charges for services, and other sources, such as trust income and rents.

Expenditures - The largest portion of expenditures in the budget is for Community Services. Community services include those provided by the Fire Department and Police Department. Those services alone are 46% of the budget.

She then turned the presentation over to the Assessor.

Councilor Chalice asked what is covered under Municipal Development Services. Ms. Chamberlain stated this is for the Airport, Community Development, and Public Works.

Mr. Langille addressed the Committee. He stated that the Finance Director mentioned 50% of the City portion is raised through taxation. He indicated the Department of Revenue sets the tax rate each fall. Taxes are billed twice a year; the first bill, sent in June, is an estimate from the prior year, and the final bill accounts for any changes in the budget.

Mr. Langille stated the tax rate for 2025 is \$34.37; 50% is the School, 40% is the City, and the County is 9%. The assessed value for the entire community is around \$3 billion, of which the taxable value is \$2.3 billion. The largest portion is residential, 48%; commercial, 26%; utilities, 22%; and exempt, 22%. Exempt property in the community includes all municipal buildings, school buildings, county buildings, churches, other charitable organizations, and Keene State College.

Mr. Langille noted that for the \$3 billion assessed value, the City is only at 66% of market value, which means that when it is brought up to 100%, that value will increase substantially.

Ms. Vicky Morton, of 275 Water Street, asked what utilities include. Mr. Langille stated the utilities are Eversource (electric) and Liberty (Gas).

Councilor Chalice referred to payment in lieu of taxes and asked which aspect of revenue it is. Mr. Langille stated that the City receives approximately \$1.5 million annually in payment in lieu of taxes. This is another revenue that would come off the total that needs to be raised – it is listed under the General Fund.

Mr. Langille, for demonstration purposes, used only one example: the first column in the rendering shows that the total amount to be raised for taxation for the School, City, and County is \$78 million. Assessed value is 2.3 billion dollars. If the budget increases by 3%, the tax rate would rise from \$34 to \$35.

During a revaluation, not all properties increase by the same percentage.

Mr. Tom Burton of 45, Dover Street, stated that he has heard that other towns have been bringing their home assessments up to the actual market rate, which would significantly increase their taxes, and asked whether Keene would be doing the same. Mr. Langille stated that the City is going through a revaluation this year, as required by state law, which is required every five years. This year, all the properties will be brought up to market value. He indicated that, depending on how much the market value of a property goes up relative to the rest of the community, as well as what happens in the budgeting process, determines the overall tax on an individual property. It is not just because values are going up that your taxes will go up.

Chair Powers clarified that the Department of Revenue dictates this process. This is not a process that Keene decided. Every community follows the same process. Mr. Langille agreed and added there are a number of documents the City has to submit to the State to determine the overall budgets

Councilor Haas thanked staff for the explanation they are providing tonight. He also indicated what the public would like to learn, namely how we compare to other towns.

Councilor Chalice asked whether this revaluation would have any effect on a property owner's insurance rates. Mr. Langille stated insurance was a completely different process.

The City Manager added it is very difficult to compare one city to another city and wouldn't rely on that as they go through the budget process because for example a fire department might be similar to a fire department in another town, based on the number of calls and the region that they serve but the Finance Department or the Community Development might be formed completely different. Hence, it is difficult to find an organization with which you can compare yourself entirely.

The second issue the Manager raised is that the City's budget, in general, is made up of two things: operational increases are very minor throughout the year. It is about wages, benefits, and the cost of providing a service because we are a service organization or your capital projects.

Those are your two areas. She indicated that the budget driver for the municipal rate has recently been increased in the Fire Department. From FY 24 to 26, their wages are up \$1.2 million. The City Council has added four firefighters twice over the last eight years, and each time that added half a million dollars to the budget. The Manager went on to say the other challenge is overtime. The last increase in personnel for the fire department was to run the third ambulance due to the increase in call volume. She indicated the City's current issue is that there aren't enough firefighters above the minimum staffing level. Whenever someone is out on family medical leave or vacation, the department is paying overtime. Overtime costs are dramatically increasing. Last year, overtime in the fire department was over budget by about \$400,000. This year, they anticipate between \$500,000 and \$ 600,000. She stressed that what drives the overall budget is the services provided and the staff required to provide them.

What is driving the majority of the tax rate increase is what is happening at the school district. The school district is not receiving the funding needed to provide an adequate education. Some of the required programs are not being funded. Special education is not being funded at the state level, and that puts pressure on local taxpayers. The Manager indicated that every municipality is feeling this pressure.

She stated in the State of New Hampshire: as home prices continue to escalate, we are going to see more pressure on the residential portion of the community in terms of what they are paying in taxes.

The Manager stated there are only a couple of things we can do: either not invest in infrastructure that the City will eventually pay for, or not provide a service, and that goes for the city, the school, or the county.

Mayor Kahn thanked the Manager for providing that context. The Mayor asked for the schedule for the revaluation process and asked for the reason for the delay in tax bills going out late this year. Mr. Langille, as far as the schedule for the revaluation, properties, and values, they need to be completed by April 1, but the department is still looking at sales data and trends occurring all the way through April. He indicated preliminary values should be ready by summer. Preliminary notices will be sent to taxpayers, giving them an opportunity to come and speak with someone who was part of the revaluation to review their assessment throughout the process. This should take place during the August period, as the values have to be wrapped up by September.

Regarding the tax bill, the Finance Director stated that the process of filing all documents with the New Hampshire DRA is very involved. If a document wasn't signed or the City missed any communication from the DRA, it could slow the process. The City hit a roadblock because a form needed a signature. The Mayor clarified that because of this change in valuation, the impact is going to be on the second bill. Mr. Langille agreed.

Councilor Powers clarified that much of the reason for the tax billing delay might not have much to do with the City, as the City has very little control over it, as it relies on the State for much of it. The other issue is that the City of Keene is the tax collector, and the City has the honor of sending a bill for the monies it collects; the City has to pay the county and school district their portion, whether or not everyone has paid their taxes on time. This is one of the business functions the City must consider as it prepares the budget.

Mr. Peter Moran of Myrtle Street asked what the components used to determine commercial value are. Mr. Langille stated that market value dictates the overall value of a commercial property. The City is looking at sales, looking at what land is selling for, and what buildings are selling for. Commercial can mean a big box retail store, it can mean a restaurant, a community apartment complex. For commercial property, specifically, the City also looks at what it calls an income-and-expense value. It is not just what a business actually makes, not what they are selling or what they are producing, but what the rental potential is for that property minus the expenses.

Ms. Vicky Morton of 275 Water Street began by thanking the presenters. She stated that when she wrote her letter in January, the issue she was concerned about was the bad optics of Keene being the state's second-highest tax rate. She asked whether there was a collective acknowledgement among City staff or the City Council that, when these rates went out, this was the tag we would have, being the second-highest residential community in the State of New Hampshire. She questioned why anyone would want to move to Keene. Markem Image has laid off nearly 60 people. There are many empty spaces. Houses are almost out of reach for new families to move to Keene. Ms. Morton asked whether there was no way we could change the optics that we are not the second-highest tax rate and questioned what makes us the second-highest tax rate.

She went on to say she was informed at the January 5 meeting that the reason our tax rate is so high is that we have so much nontaxable property within the City of Keene. She felt that every county seat in the State of New Hampshire has a lot of nontaxable property because it provides space for the county, courtrooms, municipal jails, airports, and community colleges.

Mr. Langille, in response, stated it was a no-good idea to compare tax rates. He indicated, for example, Portsmouth has a tax rate of \$12 or \$15 per thousand, but in Portsmouth, you wouldn't be able to purchase a home for less than \$1,000,000 right now. If someone were to look at a comparison, it shouldn't be a tax rate; it should be the overall tax bill. From there, it is the affordability of that tax bill. He felt that was a fair comparison. Different communities can be at different levels of market value; if you have two identical towns, just like Keene, one is at 50%, one is 100%, you are going to have two different tax rates, one could be \$20, and one could be \$10 per thousand. Neither one of those tells you the story of what the real effect is, which is the actual tax bill, which is what one should be looking at, and not the tax rate.

The Manager stated she would agree with that. If the City was at 100% of value, our rate would probably be somewhere down in the 20's. There are also personal decisions that are made in each community about how much you invest in different things, including your schools. Some communities are not investing in their schools, and it is definitely not a one-for-one comparison. It is a combination of the decisions this community has made about what you feel is important to invest in, and, secondly, where we are in our equalized value.

Mr. Peter Moran asked how persuasive the City is in encouraging entities to support the pilot program. He felt some of these entities require dramatic services at no cost, but stressed that it is not free. He felt all entities should be reviewed, including churches, and everyone should support the City, as they are also benefiting. Mr. Langille stated that the properties that are exempt are exempt by state law, and there is no requirement for them to contribute. In some instances, in addition to being tax-exempt, the City also pays them for the services they provide. He did not feel that being aggressive in asking these entities to contribute to the City was the right tactic.

Mr. Langille added that since he started with the City 13 years ago, the City has taken in close to \$400,000 annually in pilot money, and working with the City Manager over the past few years, the City has increased that amount to \$1.5 million. As new organizations come into the community and they become exempt, the City is having those conversations right away.

Mr. Ken Kost of 51 Railroad Street stated he was concerned when he looked at his valuation and clarified that what the City was doing was bringing all properties up from 60% to 100%, and hence, he should not be too concerned at this moment about that \$34 tax rate, as this would decrease. Mr. Langille felt Mr. Kost's tax rate should be in the 20s, and, again, a lot of that depends on budgets and a few other variables, but agreed the tax rate will be coming down considerably to account for the overall increase in value.

Councilor Chalice asked whether the State designates a process by which the payment in lieu of taxes happens, or do we do this as a community, and if the community does this, do we compare how other communities are putting this in place?

The Manager added that the City had just worked with the hospital to negotiate a new pilot agreement and had significantly increased the amount they are paying the City. The City put this in place by looking at what they were paying in other communities, came up with a per-square-foot calculation, and requested fairness in terms of equal payment.

In addition, when Covenant Living was being built, the City negotiated a payment in lieu with them equal to the city and county portion, but not taking into consideration the school portion, as they are impacting city and county services but not school services. This was the same process as Keene

State College, and the last agreement maintained their payment in lieu of taxes, even though their enrollment had been declining, but the need for city services had also declined.

Asst. City Manager Rebecca Landry noted that only religious, charitable, and educational entities are tax-exempt, but not all nonprofit organizations are.

Councilor Filiault addressed the Committee and stated that the reason our taxes are going up is that, in this past year alone, the State has downshifted nearly ½ billion dollars in revenue to municipalities, which directly impacts property taxes. He added that there are multiple bills to further downshift to municipalities in the future. He felt that unless something is done in Concord, things will only get worse.

Mr. Moran addressed the Committee again and agreed with Councilor Filiault. He added, with reference to nonprofits, that even if it is a penny on the dollar, the City should try to obtain those funds, as nothing is free. He agreed that \$1.5 million is a lot better than nothing, but when you have 21 million that is not taxable, this becomes an issue for taxpayers.

Tim Jordan of 275 Water Street addressed the Committee and stated that, following up on what Councilor Filiault said about downshifting, some municipalities are already pushing back on this very thing. He encouraged Keene to join them and push back. He felt that the more municipalities push back, the better chance we have of having some sort of positive effect. The Manager stated there is an organization called the New Hampshire Municipal Association, to which the City belongs. A City staff member is on the board of that Association, and this group advocates for funding for towns and cities and also works to kill bills that shift costs downward. The Association has all communities in New Hampshire represented.

Ms. Jennifer Sizoo of Fairfield Court raised the issue of the 22% exempt. She asked if there was a way for an individual to find out the breakdown. Mr. Langille stated that if Ms. Sizoo would reach out to his department, he could provide that information.

Mr. Tom Burton, Dover Street, stated that if Concord were to pay the municipalities what they are supposed to pay, would that not mean the State would have to raise those funds from taxpayers? Mr. Langille stated that the state doesn't control the raising of property taxes. They would need to figure out another source of funding - some other kind of tax or service. Councilor Lake stated that as the State decreases what they pay municipalities, for example, like room and meals tax, residential property owners are the ones being burdened.

Councilor Filiault stated that, with reference to rooms and meals tax, the State was required to send municipalities \$0.40 on the dollar; they reduced that amount to \$0.21 on the dollar. When municipalities complained, they increased it to \$0.30 on a dollar.

Interest and dividends tax go to the wealthiest in New Hampshire. The State decided they were going to cut that, which took about 1/2 billion dollars away from cities. The taxes they are cutting go to the wealthiest of the wealthy. He added the Speaker of the House, who is a free stater – his goal is just to cut everything and make everything local control, which means collect your own taxes. The Councilor added that if the state had done nothing over the last five years, left everything as is, taxes would be flat this year.

Councilor Roberts noted that the number of different partnerships the State has with municipalities to

contribute towards revenue is drastically reduced, especially at the Federal level, and added that the state is running on a deficit. This ends up being less money for fire, police, and natural disasters. The money is just not coming into the State from the Federal government. Last weekend's snow disaster would normally qualify for federal disaster funding to cover overtime costs.

Councilor Roberts continued that the businesses are not appreciating as much as residential properties, but many people listening think they will be slammed with higher taxes. He used his house as a hypothetical example. Five years ago, it was assessed at \$50,000; someone just bought a home for \$100,000; the amount of taxes will not be the same. The \$50,000 will have a greater impact than the person who just bought the \$100,000 home. Mr. Langille stated that the value of the homes will be as of April 1st, not at the time that they purchased the home. So, it should be the same for all.

Mayor Kahn stated that, in addition to the efforts that are pursued through the New Hampshire Municipal Association, he takes a pretty active role in legislation and used the increase in room and meals tax as an example. The letters and the role that the Mayor had helped to keep the room and meals tax at 30%. He stated he also stays active in school funding policies. For example, the SWEPT property tax – Statewide Education Property Tax – there are some that get more money through that than they need for an adequate education. This is because the distribution is done by the legislature. These excess SWEPT dollars can be redistributed back through the distribution formula and benefit all schools in the state, which is another issue he stays active on.

He added that when the SWEPT tax was implemented, it was \$6, but it has now been reduced to \$1.80. This is because properties have risen in price, but the state has frozen the dollar amount, and those excess SWEPT dollars are going back to communities that don't really need it. He stated that he is only one voice, and that we can collectively have an impact on our legislators, but it has to be a massive one. They need to hear it from all of us, and they need to ask the State not to put caps on municipalities, because we are left in the position of needing to sustain the services.

Ms. Morton stated it would be extremely helpful if there was a forum or a way to communicate exactly what Mayor Khan just said, as she was not aware of this overpayment to one community over what they need or what they requested. She felt there could be a Community Action Activity that would try to make an impact and change. She felt there were plenty of people who would step up and use the example of No Ice in Merrimack, which was made possible by people stepping up. She asked for a Forum to be created.

The following motion by Councilor Chalice was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the acceptance of the presentation on City Budgeting/Capital Planning/Property Tax Rate Overview as informational.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.2.

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Payment In Lieu of Taxes Agreement with Cedarcrest**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to negotiate and execute a Payment In Lieu of Taxes agreement with Cedarcrest Inc.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Mr. Langille stated that Cedarcrest is one of the City's charitable properties. They offer a specialized pediatric medical facility and school providing comprehensive services to children with complex medical and developmental needs. The City had preliminary conversations about the fact that they were exempt, and there is a demand on police and fire with this organization. This organization has a complex financial situation, and but wanted to contribute something to the community. Because of the relationship they have with the Fire Department, they wanted to contribute to that department. Per the Chief's request, Cedarcrest will donate Class A uniforms at a cost of \$ 5,300 annually as part of this pilot agreement.

The Manager expressed her appreciation to Cedarcrest for the donation and felt it would have a significant impact on the budget.

The following motion by Councilor Chadbourne was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the City Manager be authorized to negotiate and execute a Payment In Lieu of Taxes agreement with Cedarcrest Inc.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #1.1.

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager
Donald Lussier, Public Works Director

Subject: **Relating to Updates to Section 94-321, “Stop Signs” in the City Code Ordinance O-2026-03**

Recommendation:

Recommend that Ordinance O-2026-03 be referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee for review and recommendation to the City Council.

Attachments:

1. O-2026-03 Relating to the Updates to Section 94-321, “Stop Signs” in the City Code

Executive Summary:

Ordinance O-2026-03 proposes adding a stop sign at the intersection of School Street at Winter Street. The proposed ordinance would also update Section 94-321 of the City Code to standardize and clarify the language describing stop sign locations.

Background:

As part of the 2025 Roadway Safety Action Plan, three locations were identified and recommended for the installation of stop signs. Those intersections included: Forest Street at Chestnut Street; School Street at Winter Street; and all-way stop signs at Roxbury Street and the Lincoln Street (South and North) intersection. Based on the engineering division's study and review of the MUTCD warrants, Roxbury Street at South/North Lincoln Street and Forest Street at Chestnut Street do not meet the warrants for the installation of stop signs as recommended and the School Street at Winter Street intersection is recommended to be furnished and installed.

In addition, in reviewing the existing City Code provisions of Section 94-321, “Stop Signs” in Division 5, “Specific Street Regulations” in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled “TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS”, it was identified that some of the language that describes the locations of the existing stop signs varies from the standard language that is used a majority of the time and the intended described locations of Stop Sign is either unclear or redundant. This proposed ordinance

adds the stop signs that were recommended to be added by the City's consultant as part of the Safe Streets for All Study and revises the wording to be consistent for all stop sign locations throughout this section of the City Code.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Six

AN ORDINANCE Relating to the Updates to Section 94-321, "Stop Signs" in the City Code

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by adding the bolded text and by deleting the crossed-out text to the provisions of Section 94-321, "Stop Signs" in Division 5, "Specific Street Regulations" in Article IV of Chapter 94, entitled "TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC WAYS" as follows;

- Airport parking lot ~~north~~ **east** end exit at **Airport Road**
- Airport parking lot ~~south~~ **west** end exit at **Airport Road**
- Castle Street Extension for eastbound traffic ~~from Harper Acres~~ **at Ashuelot Street**
- ~~Center at Keene for southbound traffic at Emerald Street.~~
- Chapman Road for westbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Eastern Avenue
- Chestnut Street for westbound traffic at Forest Street.**
- Dort Street for northbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Pinehurst Avenue
- Edgewood Avenue for southbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Greenwood Avenue
- Gilsum Street for ~~South bound~~ **southbound** traffic at ~~the intersection with~~ Washington ~~St. Street~~
- Greenwood Avenue for eastbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Route 32.
- Jennison Street for northbound traffic at ~~the intersection with~~ Foster Street.
- Kenworth Avenue for northbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Greenwood Avenue.
- Linden Street at ~~Woodburn Street~~ for eastbound traffic **at Woodburn Street**
- Linden Street at ~~Woodburn Street~~ for westbound traffic **at Woodburn Street**
- Lynwood Avenue for westbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Edgewood Avenue
- ~~Main Street, Route 12, for eastbound traffic at Route 32~~
- Martin Street for northbound traffic, ~~and southbound traffic~~ at Tiffin Street.

Martin Street for southbound traffic at Tiffin Street.

Mechanic Street **for westbound traffic** at Court Street

Mechanic Street **for eastbound traffic** at Washington Street

North Lincoln Street for northbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Beaver Street

North Lincoln Street for southbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Beaver Street

Pako Avenue for **north**-eastbound traffic at Pako Avenue ~~at the point where it runs north and south.~~

Summit Road for northbound ~~and southbound~~ traffic at Hastings Avenue/Maple Avenue.

Summit Road for southbound traffic at Hastings Avenue/Maple Avenue.

~~Union Street for southbound traffic on Elm Street~~

Vernon Street ~~and for eastbound traffic at~~ Washington Street ~~for eastbound traffic on~~ Vernon Street.

~~West Hill Base~~ **Hill Road** for northbound traffic ~~on north end of West Hill Base Road, at~~ its ~~intersection with~~ West Street.

West **Hill Road** ~~Street~~ for eastbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ West Hill Base **Hill** Road.

~~Wilbur~~ **Wilber** Street for southbound traffic at ~~its intersection with~~ Water Street.

Winter Street for westbound traffic at School Street.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor



ITEM #K.1.

CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Relating to Service Connected Total Disability Veteran Tax Credit Resolution R-2026-07**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 4 to 0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2026-07, with an effective date as of April 1, 2026.

Attachments:

1. R-2026-07_Referral

Background:

Councilor Roberts was recused from this item.

Mr. Langille explained that the recently enacted state law increased the amount of the service-connected disability credit from \$4,000 to \$5,000. Staff recommends increasing the \$4,000 to \$4,300. The main reason for this recommendation is that the same veteran could also receive another credit for which they are no longer eligible, so raising it to \$4300, at least at this time, keeps them whole and they are not actually seeing a decrease. He added that, as part of the City Council's fiscal policy, the Council would review all exemptions and credits as part of the budget process, and, after the revaluation, could review this issue.

The following motion by Councilor Lake was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne.

On a vote of 4 to 0, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2026-07, with an effective date as of April 1, 2026.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Six

A RESOLUTION Relating to Service Connected Total Disability Veteran Tax Credits

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

Whereas, RSA 72:35 was established for the purpose of allowing tax credits to qualifying disabled Veterans; and

Whereas, the City Council enacted Resolution R-2019-33 which amended the Tax Credit for Service Connected Total Disability in the amount of \$4,000; and

Whereas, the Legislature has amended RSA 72:35 to include the Standard Service Connected Total Disability Veteran Tax Credit to be in the amount of \$700 and the Optional Service Connected Total Disability Veteran Tax Credit to be in an amount of \$701 up to \$5,000.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved by the Council of the City of Keene that Resolution R-2019-33, adopted August 1, 2019, is rescinded.

And Be It Further Resolved by the Council of the City of Keene that it hereby wishes to comply with the procedure for modification of the Tax Credit for Service Connected Total Disability set forth in RSA 72:35, by responding in the affirmative to the following:

“Shall the Council of the City of Keene amend the Optional Service Connected Total Disability Veteran Tax Credit in the amount of \$4,300.” This act shall take effect as of April 1, 2026.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council February 19, 2026.
Referred to the Finance, Organization and
Personnel Committee.


Ceri Wood
City Clerk