



Downtown Manchester Improvements Project

Board of Directors – May 7, 2024



WHY??

- **Downtown:**
 - Is one of Manchester's greatest assets
 - Is a place the community has told us is critically important
 - Has aging infrastructure
 - Is a place where we want to support existing businesses and encourage new investment
 - Can be even better than it is today!



A Product of Community Input

- Downtown Walking Audit (2011)
- Manchester 2020 Plan (2012)
- DMSSD Downtown Strategic Planning Workshop (2017)
- Downtown Manchester Improvements Survey (2021)
- Manchester NEXT (2023)



Manchester NEXT (2023)

What we heard...

- There is a shared vision among residents that Downtown Manchester can become even more of a destination.
- People want Downtown to be a vibrant place but worry about the potential for future gentrification in surrounding neighborhoods.
- Some felt that Downtown needs a core employer.
- In terms of street design, Downtown feels one-sided.
- Residents want the Town's amenities to be well-connected to Downtown to improve accessibility and spur economic growth.

What we heard...

- Downtown is currently more service-oriented than retail-oriented.
- If there were more quality housing options, people would live Downtown.
- Downtown is currently one-sided, and the western side feels incomplete. Additional mixed-use development on the western side would help, and it would add shade to the eastern side, effectively cooling the street for pedestrians in summer.
- Participants said they would love if businesses were dog-friendly, as many Manchester residents are dog owners.
- Outdoor dining has become more popular since Covid, temporarily taking up parking spaces for tables and chairs. Downtown visitors are enjoying it!





Market Lights on Purnell Place



"One Manchester" mural

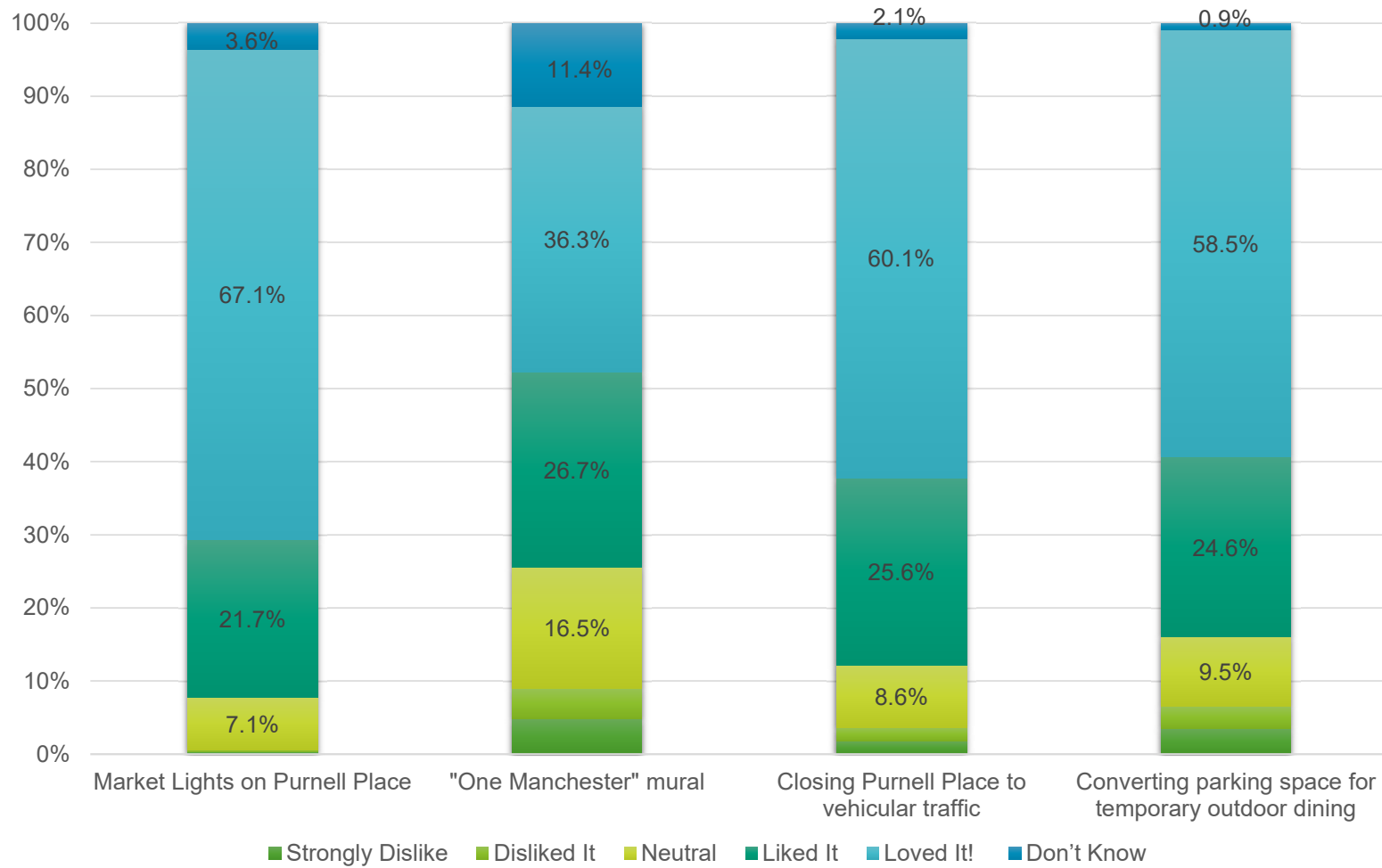


Temporary outdoor dining



Closing Purnell Place to vehicular traffic

Downtown Manchester Improvements Survey (2021)



Downtown Manchester Improvements Survey (2021)

Other Themes:

- Parking
 - Need an adequate supply & distribution through district
 - Diagonal vs parallel spots
 - Wayfinding & Signage (where is the parking?)
- Public Gathering Spaces
- Public Safety
 - Police Presence/Lighting
 - Traffic calming to improve the pedestrian experience
- More programming and Events
- Specific properties of concern
 - Mary Cheney Library, 942 Main

Town of Manchester Complete Streets Policy

Adopted by the Board of Directors in 2017

Purpose

It is the intent of this policy to continue to ensure safety, comfort, convenience and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, public transit, emergency responders and all other users, regardless of age or ability. By considering the needs of all users in the planning, programming, design, construction, retrofit and maintenance activities related to all roads, streets and sidewalks we can provide a safe, efficient transportation network which enhances quality of life and economic vitality in Manchester. For the purposes of this policy, Complete Streets shall be defined as a means to provide safe access for all users by providing a comprehensive, integrated, connected multi-modal network of transportation options.

Vision

The Town of Manchester will provide an integrated and balanced transportation network for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, public transit, emergency responders and all other users, regardless of age or ability. Complete Streets will directly contribute to improved safety, health, equality, economy and environment.



Town of Manchester Complete Streets Policy

Adopted by the Board of Directors in 2017

Goals

- a) To improve the quality of life and local economy by providing a multi-modal transportation network that connects neighborhoods with areas of employment, education, shopping, entertainment, social gathering, parks and recreation, and other points of interest.
- b) To improve the health and wellness of the community by expanding safe and convenient opportunities for walking and cycling, and by promoting them as viable modes of transportation.
- c) To protect and preserve the environment by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and consumption of non-renewable energy resources.
- d) For Manchester to be recognized for its leadership, innovation and excellence in the areas of smart growth, bicycle and pedestrian-friendliness.





The project will make **Main Street** from **Center Street** to **Hartford Road** a '**Complete Street,**' more **welcoming, accessible and walkable for all users.** This will strengthen **Downtown's** status as a **destination-** rather than a place to pass through.





Concord, NH Downtown Complete Street



Project Goals

01

**Improve
Safety**

02

**Enhance
Economic
Vitality**

03

**Advance
Connectivity,
Accessibility**

04

**Modernize
Infrastructure**



01

Improve
Safety

Why do we need to improve safety downtown?

- This section of Main Street is rated #1 in the Capitol region (of 38 municipalities) for non-motorized crashes (crashes involving bikes/pedestrians) in CRCOG's Regional Transportation Safety Plan.
- The intersections at Main Street/Center Street and Main Street/Hartford Road are ranked in the top 3% (#260 and #264 out of 8,000 intersections studied in the region) in CRCOG Roundabout Screening Study.
 - Ranking factors included:
 - Injurious and fatal crashes
 - Traffic volumes
 - Available right of way



01

Improve
Safety

Why do we need to improve safety downtown?

- #1 in the Capitol region for non-motorized crashes
- Top 3% in CRCOG Roundabout Screening Study.



01

Improve
Safety

Why do we need to improve traffic safety downtown?

SUBSCRIBER ONLY

Pedestrian suffers life-threatening injuries in Manchester crash

Two-car crash in Manchester sends vehicle into Main

[Traffic & Transit](#)

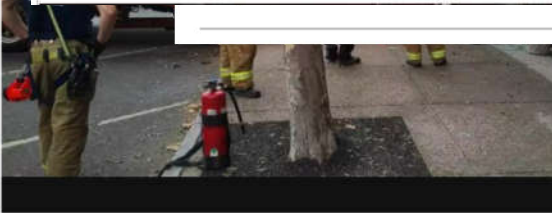
Car, Pedestrians Collide At Foot Of Main Street In Manchester

A Sunday car versus pedestrian incident sent a pair to area hospitals, police said.



Chris Dehnel, Patch Staff

Posted Mon, Oct 30, 2023 at 9:36 am ET



A vehicle that crashed through through the front of Bray Jewelers on Main Street in Manchester on Friday was pushed out by a flat bed truck.

Matthew P. Knox/Hairst CT Media

TRANSPORTATION

2022 was the deadliest year for car crashes in Connecticut

... intended to reduce traffic

Journal Inquirer, Manchester, Conn.

Student hit by car at dismissal

Joseph Villanova, Journal Inquirer, Manchester, Conn.

Thu, Sep 8, 2022 · 1 min read



Sep. 8—MANCHESTER — Police say a car struck a Bennet Academy student who was walking home from school after dismissal Wednesday afternoon.



01

Improve
Safety

Proven traffic safety countermeasures



Road Diet

Converting a 4-lane road to 3 lanes can reduce total crashes by 19-47%.



Dedicated Turn Lanes

Introducing left-turn lanes alone can reduce total crashes by 28-48%.



Modern Roundabout

Converting a signalized intersection to a roundabout can decrease fatal & injurious crashes by approximately 78%.



High Visibility Crosswalks

High visibility crosswalks can lower pedestrian injury crashes by up to 40%.

Source: Federal Highway Administration





Safety Benefits:

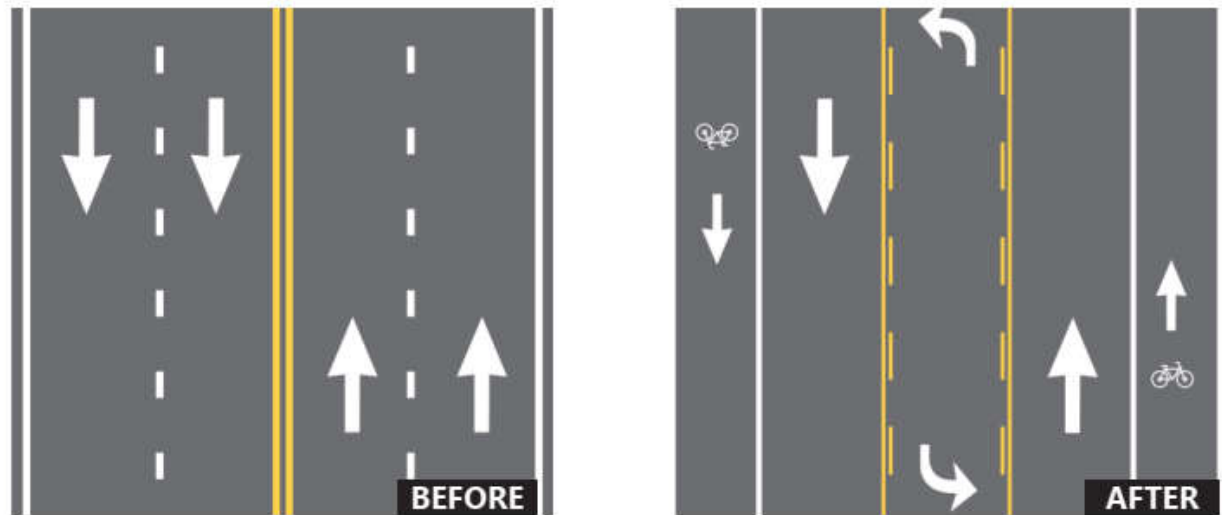
4-Lane to 3-Lane
Road Diet Conversions

19-47%

reduction in total crashes.¹

Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration)

A Road Diet, or roadway reconfiguration, can improve safety, calm traffic, provide better mobility and access for all road users, and enhance overall quality of life. A Road Diet typically involves converting an existing four-lane undivided roadway to a three-lane roadway consisting of two through lanes and a center two-way left-turn lane (TWLTL).

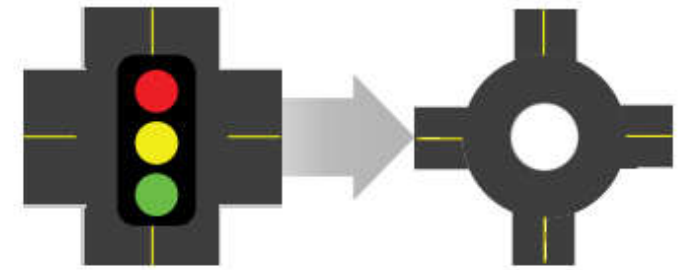


Source: Federal Highway Administration





Signalized Intersection to a Roundabout



78%
reduction in fatal
and injury crashes.¹

Roundabouts

The modern roundabout is an intersection with a circular configuration that safely and efficiently moves traffic. Roundabouts feature channelized, curved approaches that reduce vehicle speed, entry yield control that gives right-of-way to circulating traffic, and counterclockwise flow around a central island that minimizes conflict points. The net result of lower speeds and reduced conflicts at roundabouts is an environment where crashes that cause injury or fatality are substantially reduced.

Source: Federal Highway Administration



01

Improve
Safety

Who benefits from a safer downtown?

- Visitors
 - Residents
 - Business Owners
 - Property Owners
 - Students
 - Seniors
 - Children
 - Disabled
 - Drivers
 - Pedestrians
 - Cyclists
 - Skateboarders
 - Taxpayers
- EVERYONE!**



02

Enhance
Economic
Vitality



**Attract foot traffic
to enhance economic
vitality.**



02

Enhance
Economic
Vitality



Smart Growth America
Making Neighborhoods Great Together



National Complete
Streets Coalition

SAFER STREETS, STRONGER ECONOMIES

Complete Streets project outcomes
from across the country



MARCH 2015



02

Enhance
Economic
Vitality

Case Study: Edgewater Drive, Orlando FL

- Total collisions dropped **40%**
- Injuries fell by **71%**
- Bicycle counts increased by **30%**
- Pedestrian counts increased by **23%**
- Automobile traffic dipped slightly at first, but quickly rebounded to increase by **41%**
- **77** net new businesses opened*
- **560** new jobs were created*
- Property values on Edgewater Drive increased by **80%**
- Property values within ½ mile increased by **70%**

*over a 5-year period

The street was resurfaced again 11 years later. No one suggested it should go back to its original configuration.



02

Enhance
Economic
Vitality

Case Study: Lancaster, CA

- Invested \$11.5 million in Downtown street redesign
- Attracted \$130 million in private investment
- \$273 million in additional economic output
- 48 new businesses and 802 permanent jobs created
- Retail sales rose 96%²



1. Congress of the New Urbanism
2. Smart Growth America, 2015



Benefits: Economic Vitality

Washington, DC: Barracks Row/8th Street SE



\$8 million public investment in streetscape improvement 2003-2004

\$8 million in private investment in following 2 years



32 new business establishments

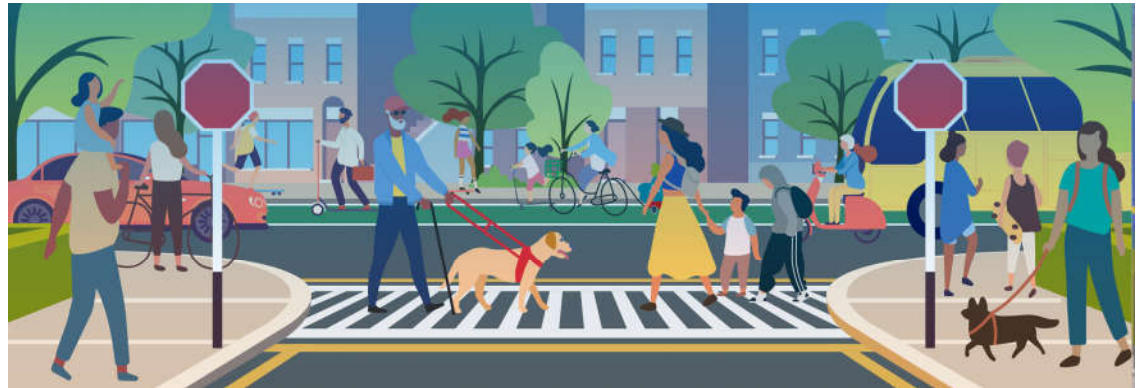
\$80,000 in sales tax annually

14

03

Advance Connectivity, Accessibility

- Connections to:
 - East Coast Greenway
 - Charter Oak Park
 - Center Springs Park
 - Cheney District
 - Cheney Rail Trail
 - North End
 - East and West Sides
 - Cheney Bennet Academy



04

Modernize
Infrastructure

Modernize infrastructure & streamline maintenance



Light Poles



Street Trees



Hardscape



Traffic Signals



Process to Date

- Staff designs concept plan based on public interest 2021
- Preliminary meetings with Downtown stakeholders, SSD and BoD 2021
- Published project website, Story Map and YVM page 2022
- Presented to BoD in January, 2022
- Applied for and received Community Investment Fund Grant in 2023
- Refined Concept based on Community Feedback
- Held Community Open Houses 2024
- Safe Streets for All Application Deadline- May 16



Frequently Asked Questions

Does the plan remove parking spaces?

No, the concept plan shows no net change in on-street parking spaces and an increase in off-street spaces.



Are the plans set in stone?

No, the plans are a work in progress, and the Town is hosting a series of events to collect feedback.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can large vehicles navigate a roundabout?

Yes, the proposed roundabouts have been designed to accommodate emergency vehicles and large trucks.



Will the road diet cause traffic delays?

No, the traffic signals and lane configuration are designed to enhance traffic flow without changing travel times through Downtown.



Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the cycle track included in the plan?

The cycle track offers dedicated infrastructure for bicycles and other human-powered transportation, ensuring safe access along or through Main Street, in line with the project's objectives.



Who would use the cycle track?

**Residents and visitors to Downtown
Youth/Non-drivers
Individuals with Limited Car Access
Recreational Cyclists, Skateboarders, etc.**



Frequently Asked Questions

Will the proposed plan harm Downtown events?

No, the town is working closely with the Manchester Road Race Committee to ensure changes do not disrupt the race significantly. Additionally, nothing in the proposed plan would end or significantly disrupt the car show.

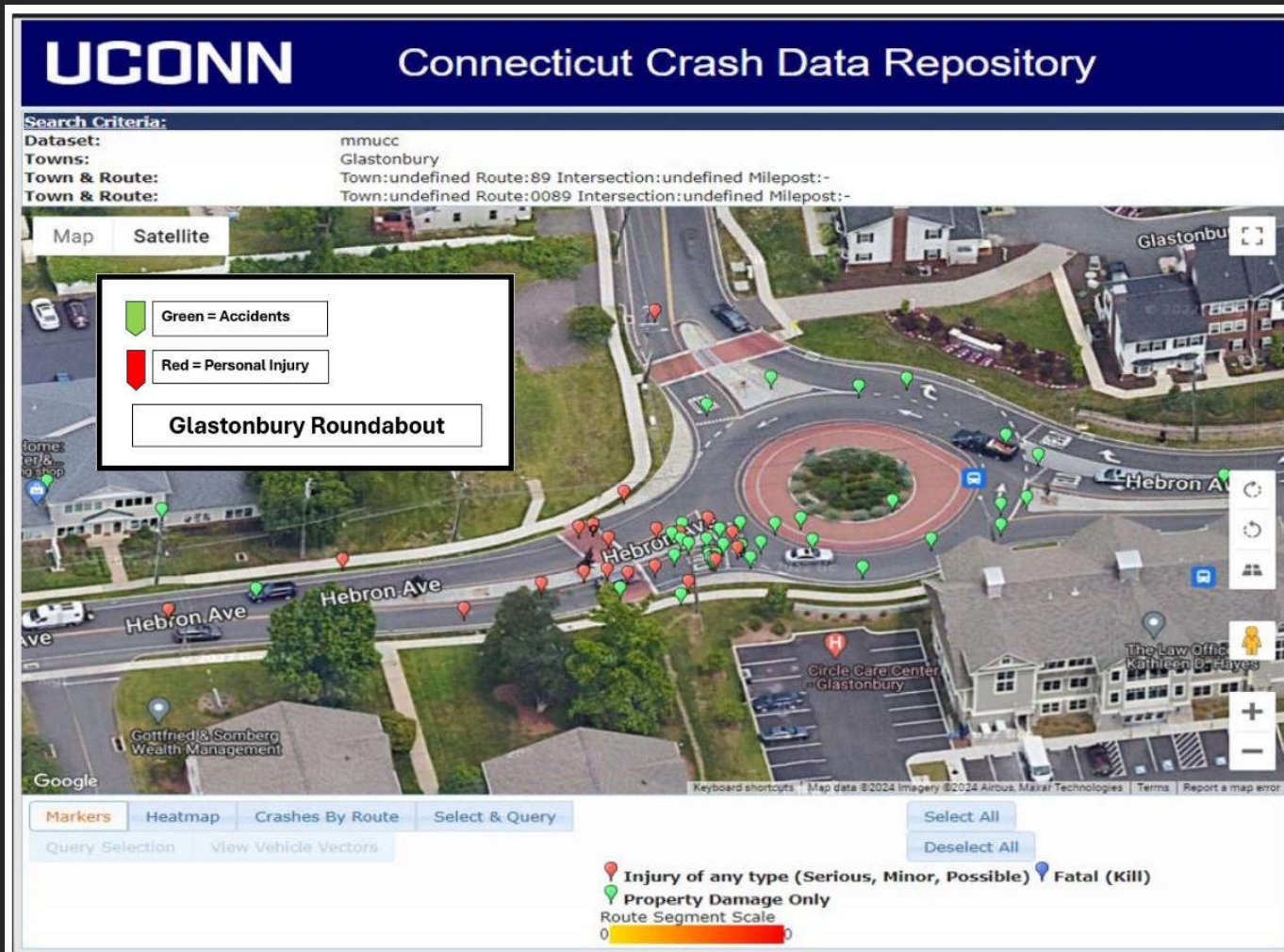


Will the project decrease Downtown visits?

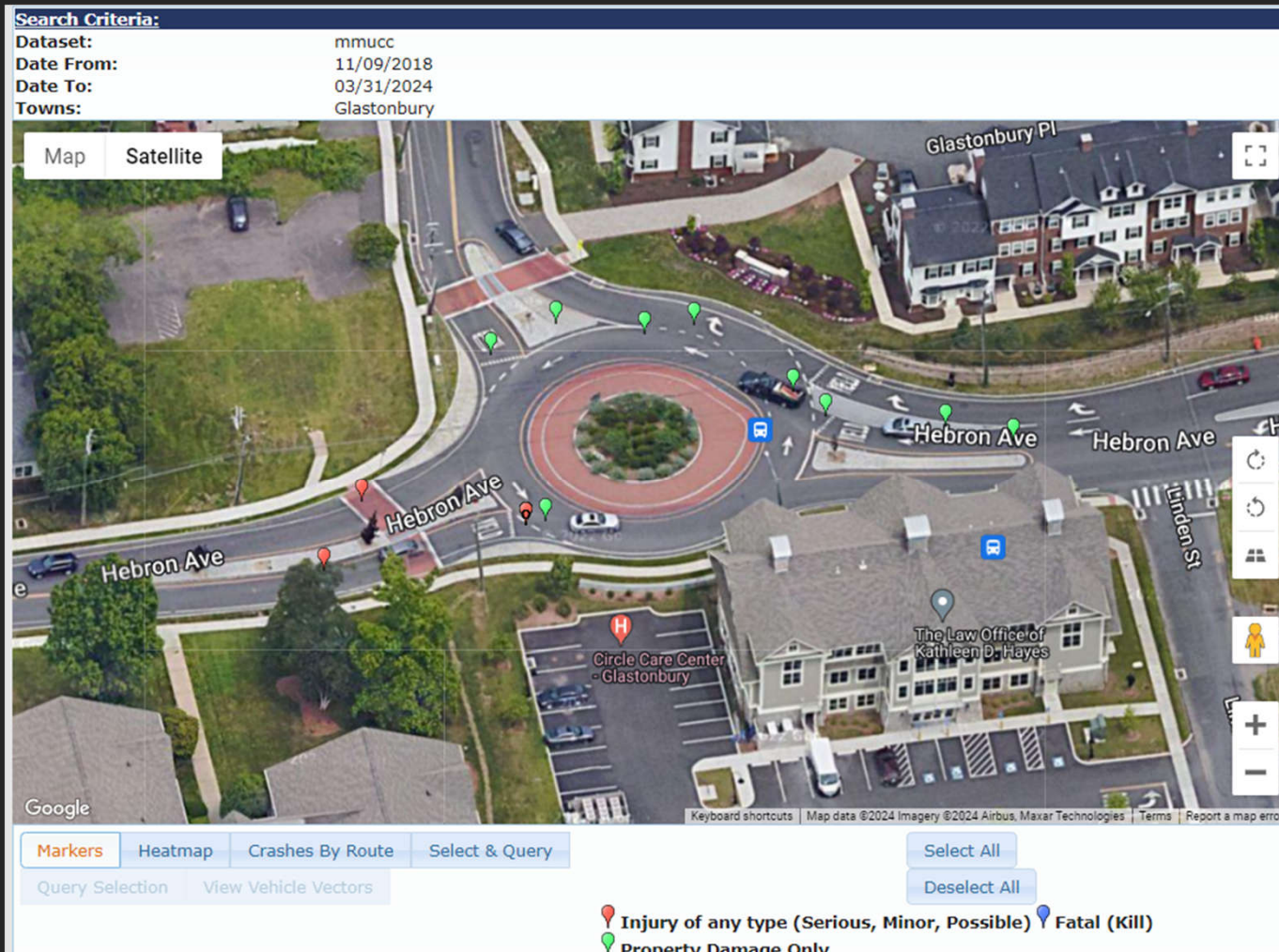
No, the project is not expected to reduce the number of motor vehicles traveling through Downtown. The plan is intended to attract more people downtown.



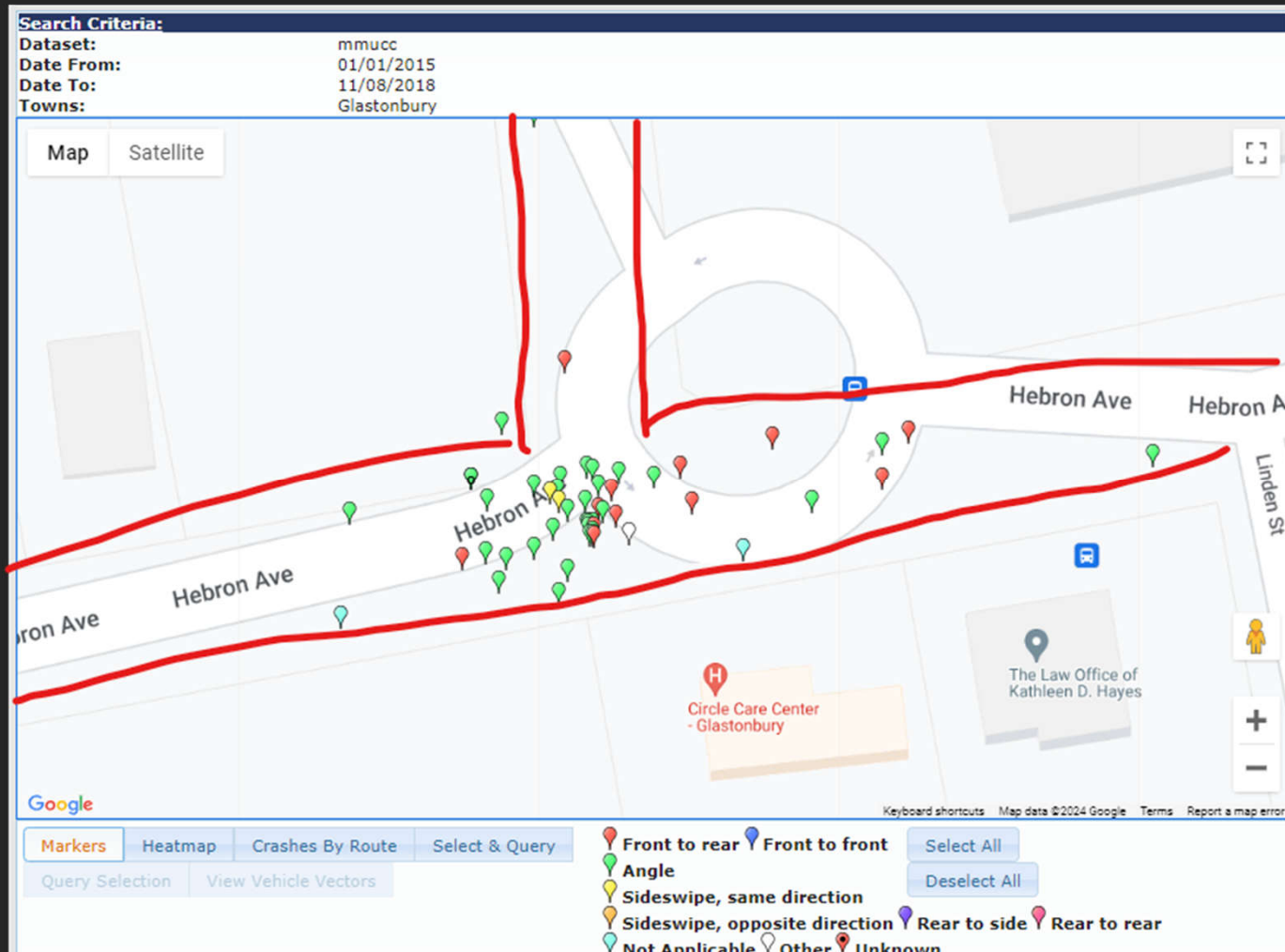
Misinformation Alert: Roundabout Safety



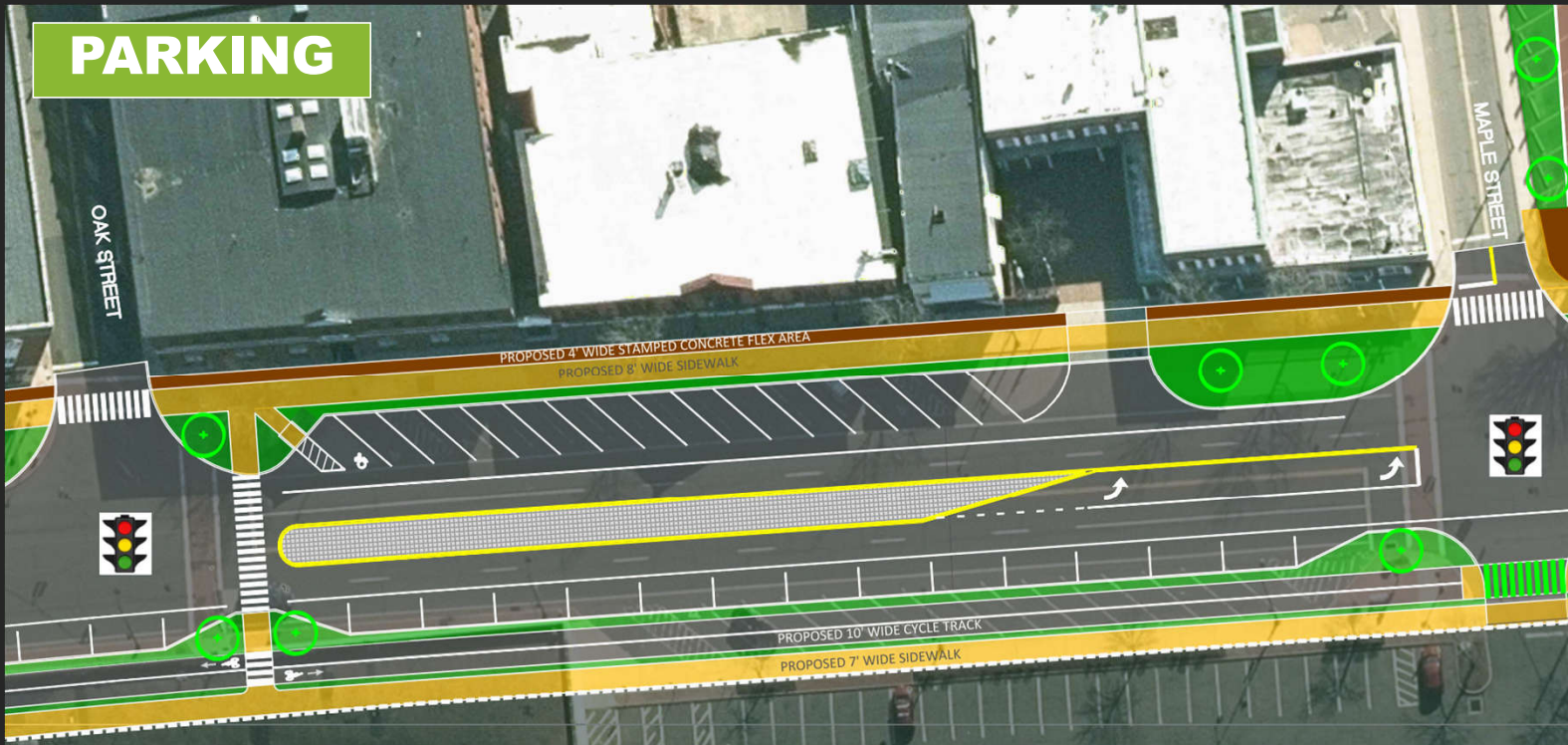
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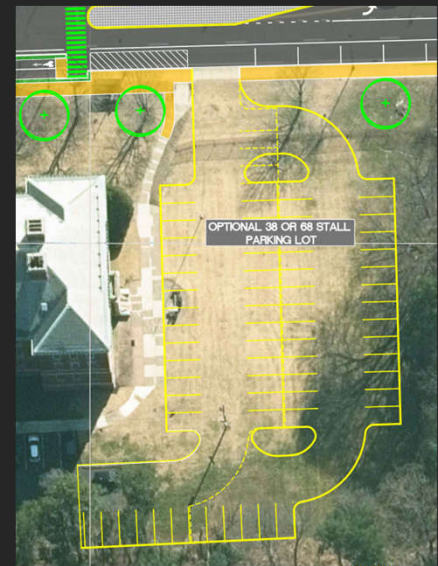
PARKING

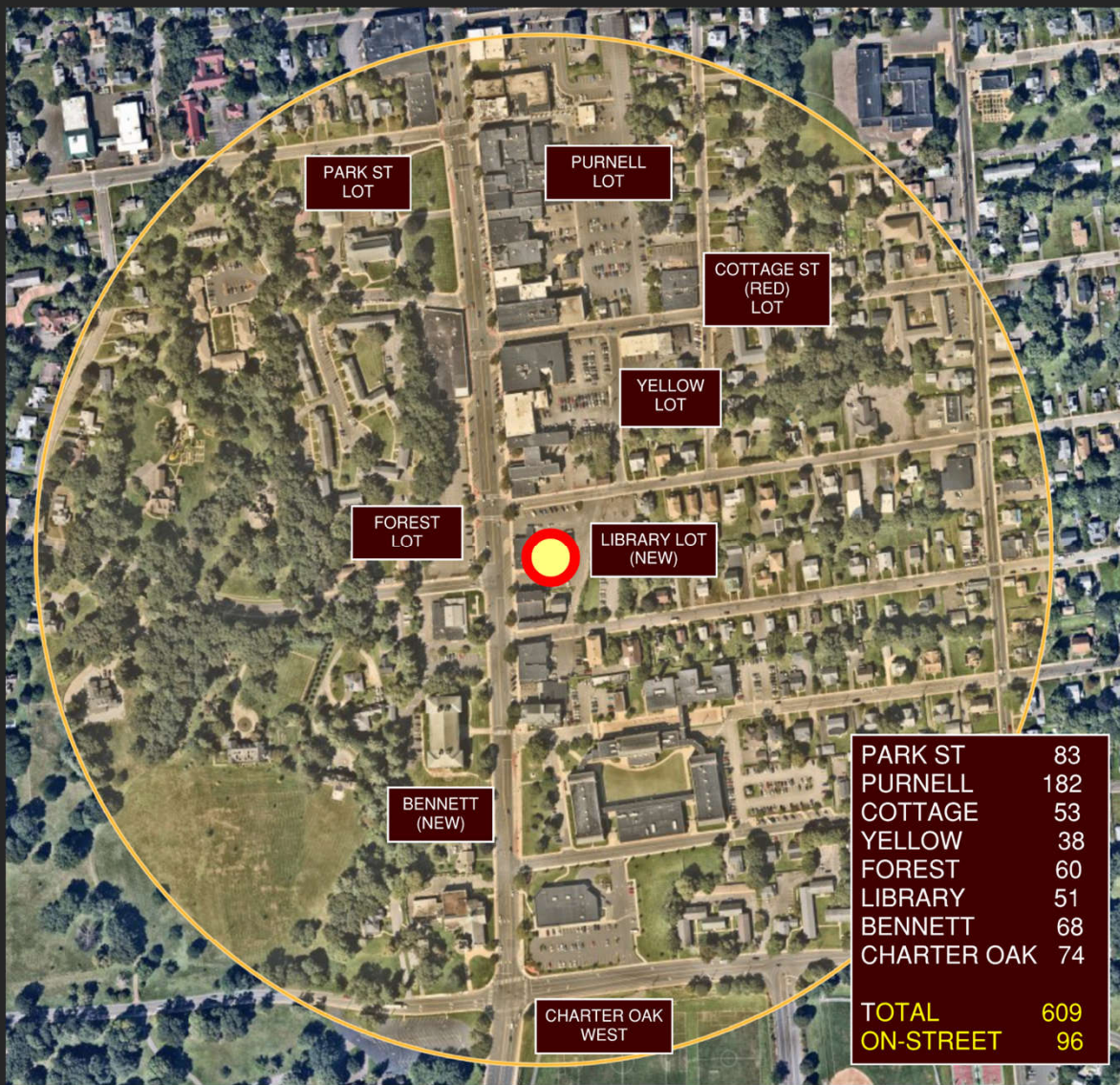


East Side: Angled parking
West Side: Parallel parking

No net change in the number of on-street parking stalls
Additional off-street parking

	WEST SIDE	
	EXISTING	PROPOSED
ANGLED	48	0
PARALLEL	17	57
TOTAL	65	57
	EAST SIDE	
	EXISTING	PROPOSED
ANGLED	111	119
PARALLEL	7	8
TOTAL	118	127
TOTAL	183	184



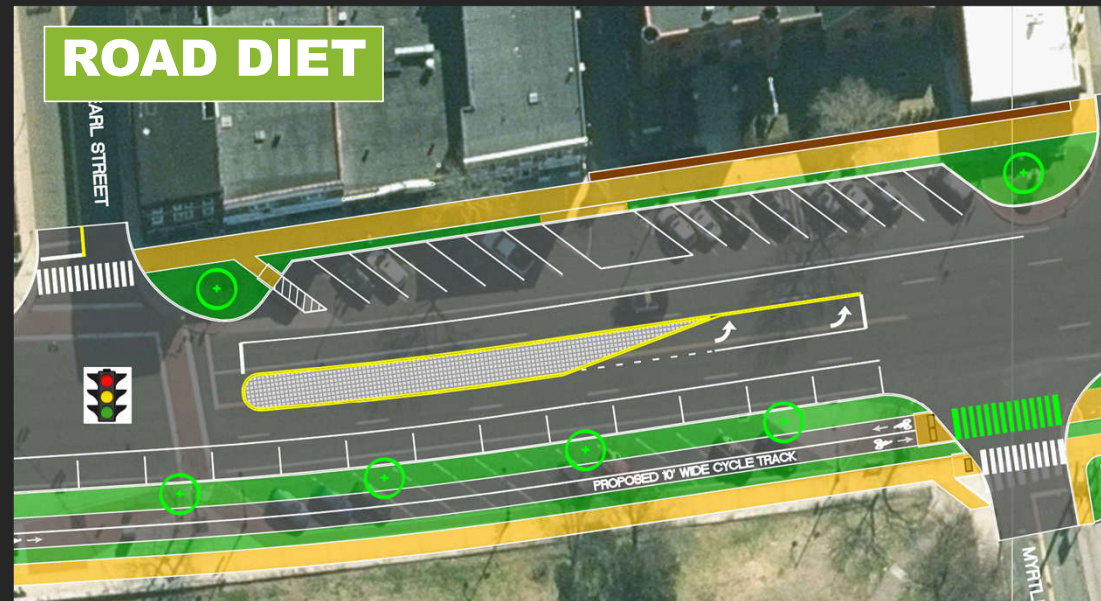


There will be 8 off-street public parking lots with over 600 stalls and 96 on-street, lined parking stalls within a quarter mile radius of the new library

To walk from one end of the Shoppes at Buckland Hills to the other is one third of a mile



ROAD DIET



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

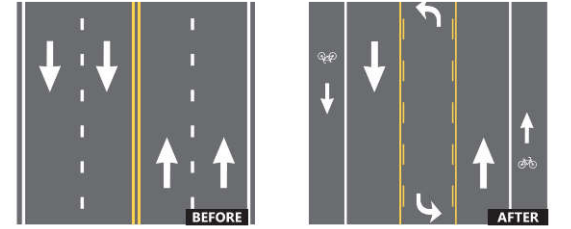
OFFICE OF SAFETY
Proven Safety Countermeasures



Safety Benefits:
4-Lane to 3-Lane
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reduction in total crashes.¹

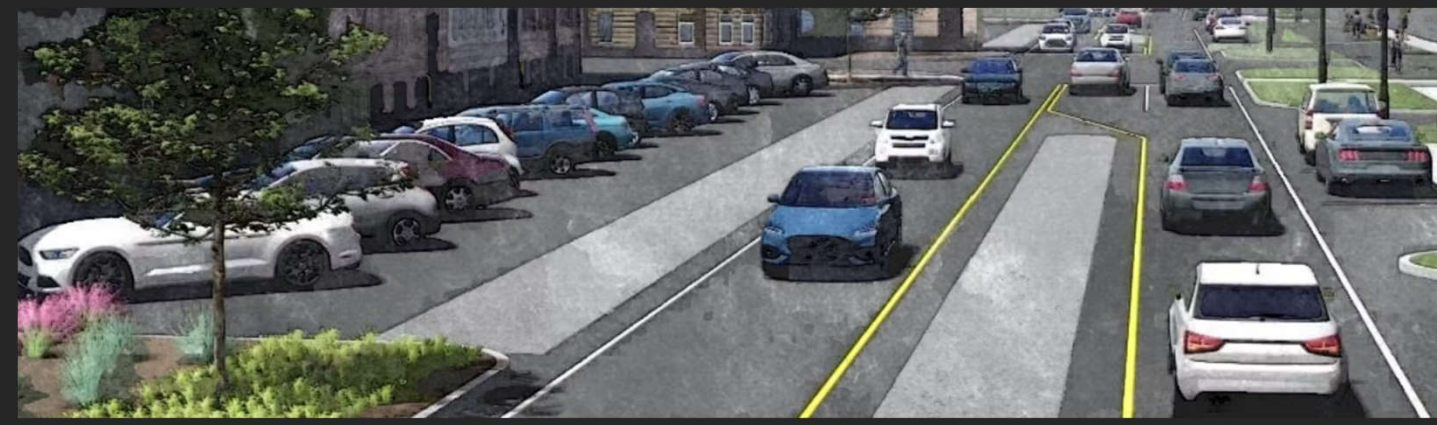
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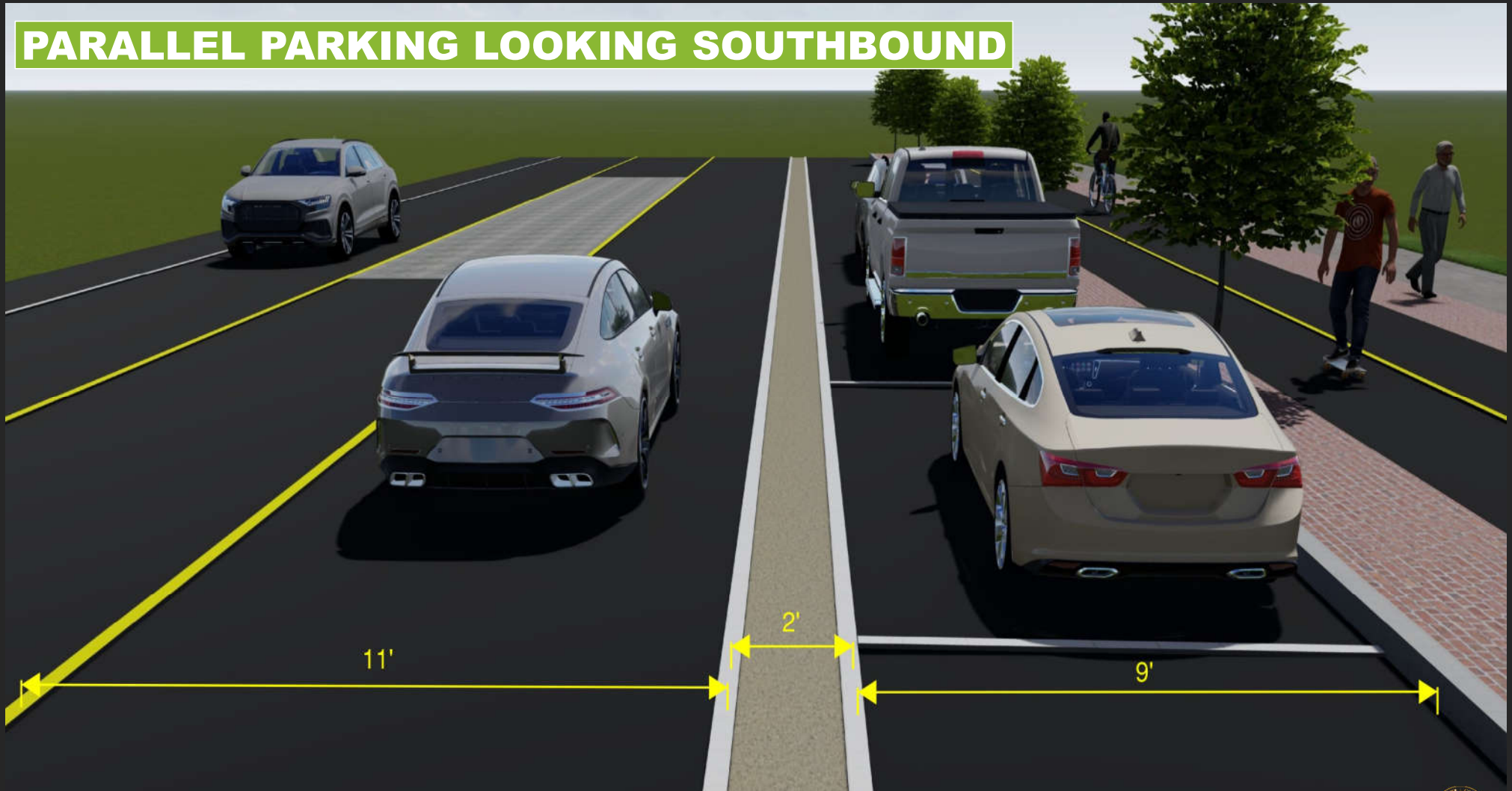


4 lanes to 3
Connected signals
Flush median
Benefits

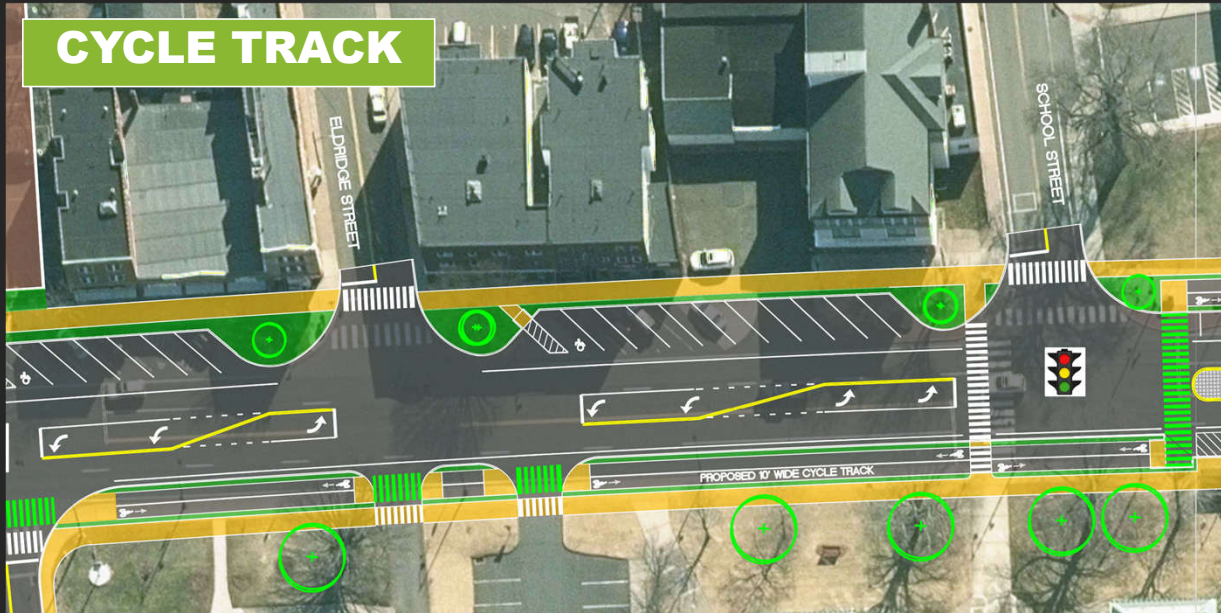
- Traffic calming
- Less weaving
- Less shielding
- Fewer lanes to cross



PARALLEL PARKING LOOKING SOUTHBOUND



CYCLE TRACK

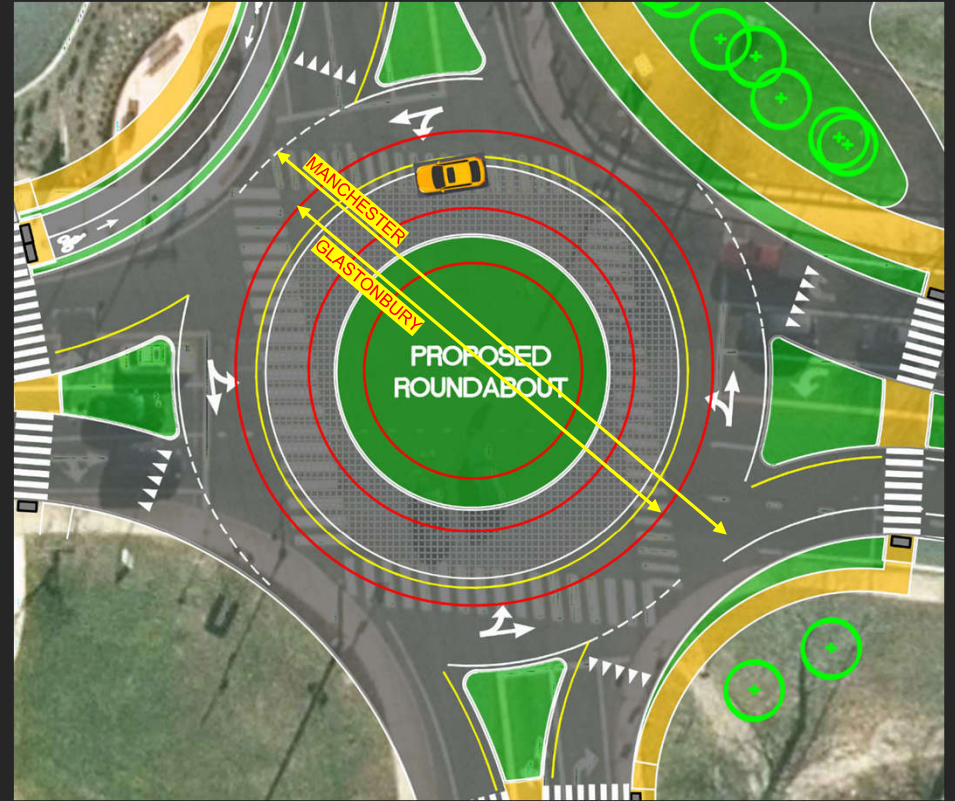


10' wide paved path
Separated from vehicles and pedestrians
Mostly on west side....cross at School St
Connections to existing trail network and
surrounding neighborhoods



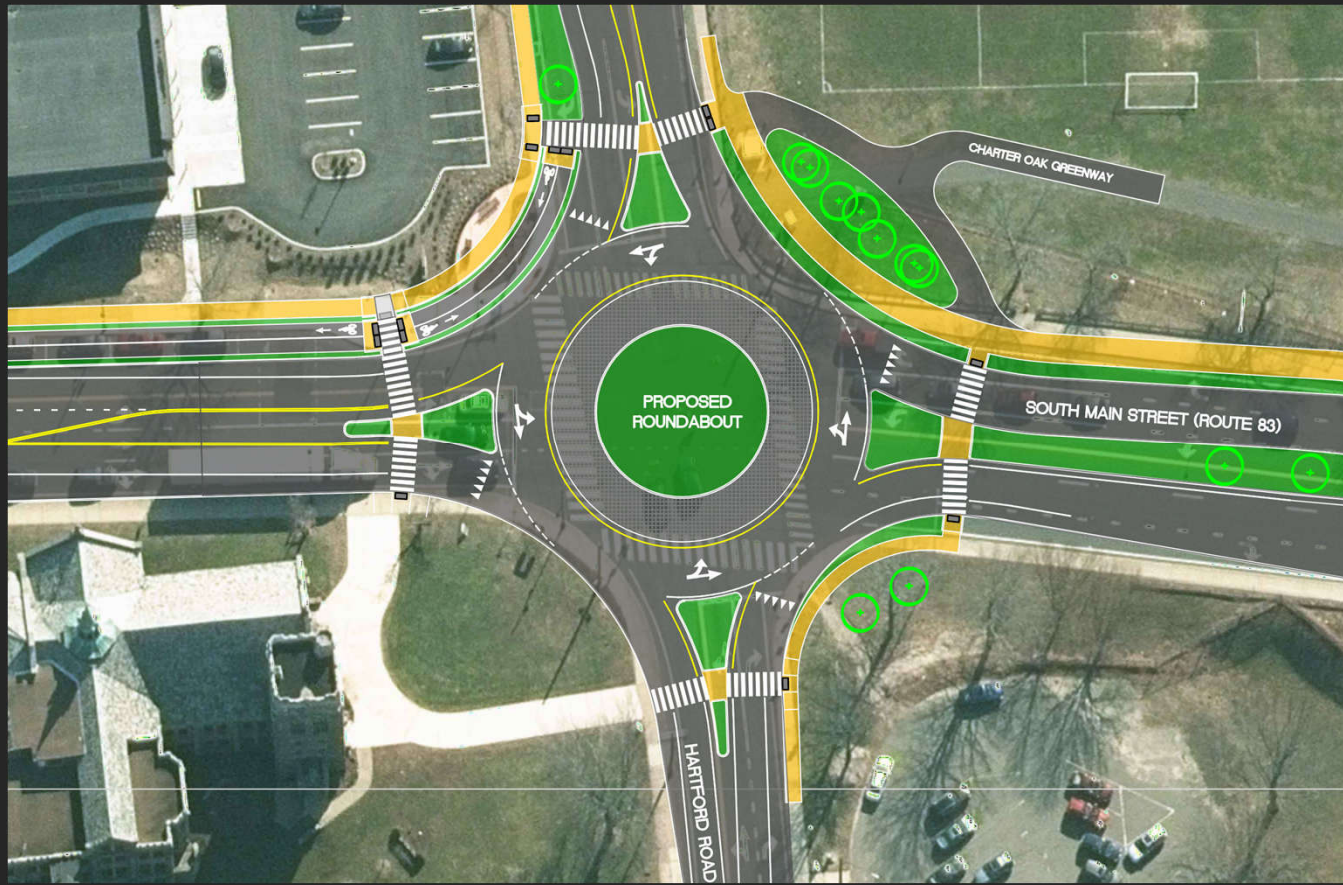


Designed to accommodate tractor trailers and emergency vehicles



Will be larger than ones in Glastonbury





ROUNDBOUTS

Safety

Signalized Intersection to a Roundabout

78%
reduction in fatal and injury crashes.¹

Roundabout	Intersection
● 8 Vehicle conflicts ■ 8 Pedestrian conflicts	● 32 Vehicle conflicts ■ 24 Pedestrian conflicts

Efficiency

- Reduced delays
- Improved traffic flow
- Reduced Emissions
- Reduced Energy Costs



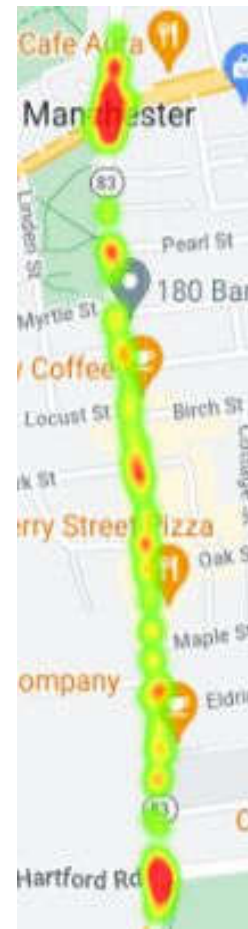
Safe Streets for All Application Support

- Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)
- Watch for Me CT
- AARP
- UConn Connecticut Training and Technical Assistance (T2 Center)



Snapshot of Crash Data Since 2015

- 187 crashes in the downtown area.
- 44 crashes resulted in injuries.
- 1 fatal injury



Heat Map of Crashes from 2015-2024

From [Downtown Manchester Improvements Project Town of Manchester \(manchesterct.gov\)](https://manchesterct.gov)

The Impact of Speed and DOT Proven Safety Measures



- Road diets reduce crashes by 19-47%.
- Roundabouts reduce crashes resulting in fatalities and injuries by 78%.

Livability Benefits

Increased Pedestrian and
Bicyclist Volume

Benefits that Go
Beyond Safety

Drive To vs Drive Through

Increased Investment

Visit the Project Page

REVIEW PROJECT
DETAILS



SUBSCRIBE FOR
UPDATES



SUBMIT FEEDBACK



YourVoiceMattersManchesterCT.com



DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT



Next Steps

Early 2024

Collect public feedback through outreach initiatives.

Summer 2024

Analyze feedback received and initiate the formal design process.

Through 2025

Continue Public Engagement efforts.

Finalize the Concept Design and proceed with the permitting process.

Spring 2026

Construction of the infrastructure will start once the funding is secured, and the design is finalized.



WHAT'S AT STAKE?

- Implementing Board Adopted Plans and Policies
- Community Safety (proven tools to reduce fatalities and serious injuries)
- Competitive Advantage
- Infrastructure Improvements
- \$7.5 Million CIF Grant
- \$875,000 Federal Community Project Funding
- Safe Streets for All (TBD) Application

