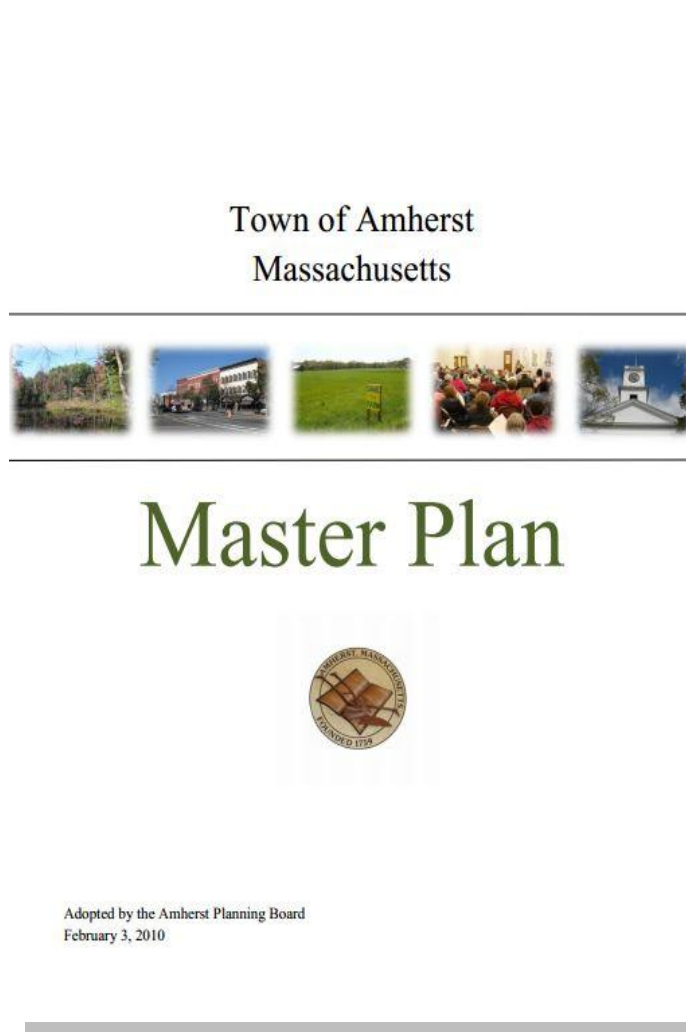


**AMHERST MASTER PLAN**  
**Goals, Objectives, & Strategies Regarding Parking**  
**(Excerpted)**

**Chapter 9, Transportation & Circulation**



**OBJECTIVE T.4 Observe transportation demand management principles in local planning and regulation.**

“Transportation demand management” (TDM) is a traffic management approach that seeks to influence drivers’ choices by reducing or redistributing the number of vehicles on the road and increasing mobility options. Planning policies and land use regulations are essential components of TDM. In order for public and alternative transportation to be viable and help reduce automobile traffic, regulations influencing land use and development patterns must allow for higher densities and a mix of uses, as in village centers, and roadway design that supports a variety of users. Amherst should revise its zoning and subdivision regulations to promote infill and direct new development toward appropriate locations and to allow densities sufficient to support viable public transit.

**STRATEGIES**

**T.4.A Use zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations, and permitting board project review to advance transportation goals.**

...

- Encourage dense, mixed-use residential or commercial development in village centers, with appropriately-designed streets, sidewalks, limited parking, etc., to maximize access to public transit and encourage transit ridership.

#### **T.4.B Adjust existing regulations to help reduce the number of cars in the downtown area.**

- Expand the Municipal Parking District (within which selected uses are exempt from parking requirements) to other areas of the downtown and village centers.
- Remove or reduce parking requirements in the Zoning Bylaw for most residential and commercial development in the downtown area in order to increase density, maximize the area available for residential and commercial development, and create a vital pedestrian atmosphere.
- Increase shared parking and off-site parking for residential and commercial development where applicable, by expanding on existing zoning regulations and pursuing public/private agreements.

#### **OBJECTIVE T.5 Within the context of community transportation demand management planning, provide adequate public parking to support existing and desired new development in the downtown and elsewhere.**

Amherst is a regional center for numerous outlying communities only some of which are served by public transit. Both during and after the transition away from an oil-based economy, parking for personal vehicles will continue to be a necessary form of infrastructure for the downtown, village centers, and commercial areas.

#### **STRATEGIES**

##### **T.5.A Make changes in parking policies to organize the public parking supply more efficiently.**

- Inventory existing downtown parking to assess current parking patterns, demand, and availability.
- Encourage employers to offer parking permits to employees.
- Restructure metered parking into zones with a tiered fee structure such that the most convenient parking is the most short-term and more expensive than areas further away from downtown.
- Consider applying a progressive price structure to meters with three-hour limits or more.
- Set meter rates so that a minimum percentage (15%?) of parking spaces remains open during peak periods.
- Increase parking revenue by adding meters on Town streets near University of Massachusetts.

##### **T.5.B Evaluate existing downtown public and private parking areas for reorganization, management, enhancement, or potential redevelopment as multi-modal facilities, preferably in concert with private mixed-used redevelopment of adjacent streetfront areas.**

Areas to include in this evaluation include, but are not limited to, the Boltwood Walk parking garage, CVS lot, Amity Street lot, parking sites at the north end of downtown, in the interior of the East Pleasant/Triangle/Pray Street block, and the Amherst College alumni parking lot south of Spring Street.

**T.5.C Plan for meeting current and future transportation demand through off-street multi-modal facilities providing a range of services.**

Where appropriate, multi-modal facilities should include such amenities as:

- Automobile parking.
- Public transit/shuttle stops.
- Full service public transit terminals.
- Access to rail transit.
- Pedestrian facilities and directional information.
- Bicycle parking, secure storage, and changing rooms/showers.
- Rentals of bicycles, Zip cars or the like.
- Recharging stations for hybrid/electric vehicles.

**OBJECTIVE T.8 Aggressively pursue funding strategies for achieving transportation goals.**

Amherst should undertake a variety of initiatives to enhance its access to transportation funding. These may include applying for additional federal and state funds, engaging in lobbying activities, and instituting local policy changes in order to generate additional transportation revenues for the Town.

**T.8.C Enact residential- and business-unit permit fees for village center and downtown development projects to support public transportation.**

The purpose of this fee would be to provide for expanded public transportation and enhancements to the system on established routes. Since development is generally encouraged in designated growth centers such as the villages and downtown area, this fee could be coupled with other incentives to reduce private vehicle use such as a reduction of on-site parking, shared parking agreements, and permitting for peripheral public parking spaces for downtown and village residents.

**T.8.D Explore the potential for parking overlay districts in the downtown and village centers with payment-in-lieu-of-parking provision.**

Allowing developers to pay a fee or other consideration in lieu of providing new parking spaces can reduce the amount of on-site and isolated parking lots in downtown and village centers, while still providing adequate parking for commercial and residential uses. The fee could be used to expand or enhance public parking facilities available to all user groups and improve public transportation facilities and services. The fee structure should be based on the estimated cost of constructing a new parking space. Funds collected should be directed to the Transportation Enterprise Fund, which funds the maintenance, expansion and enhancement of public parking and transportation.