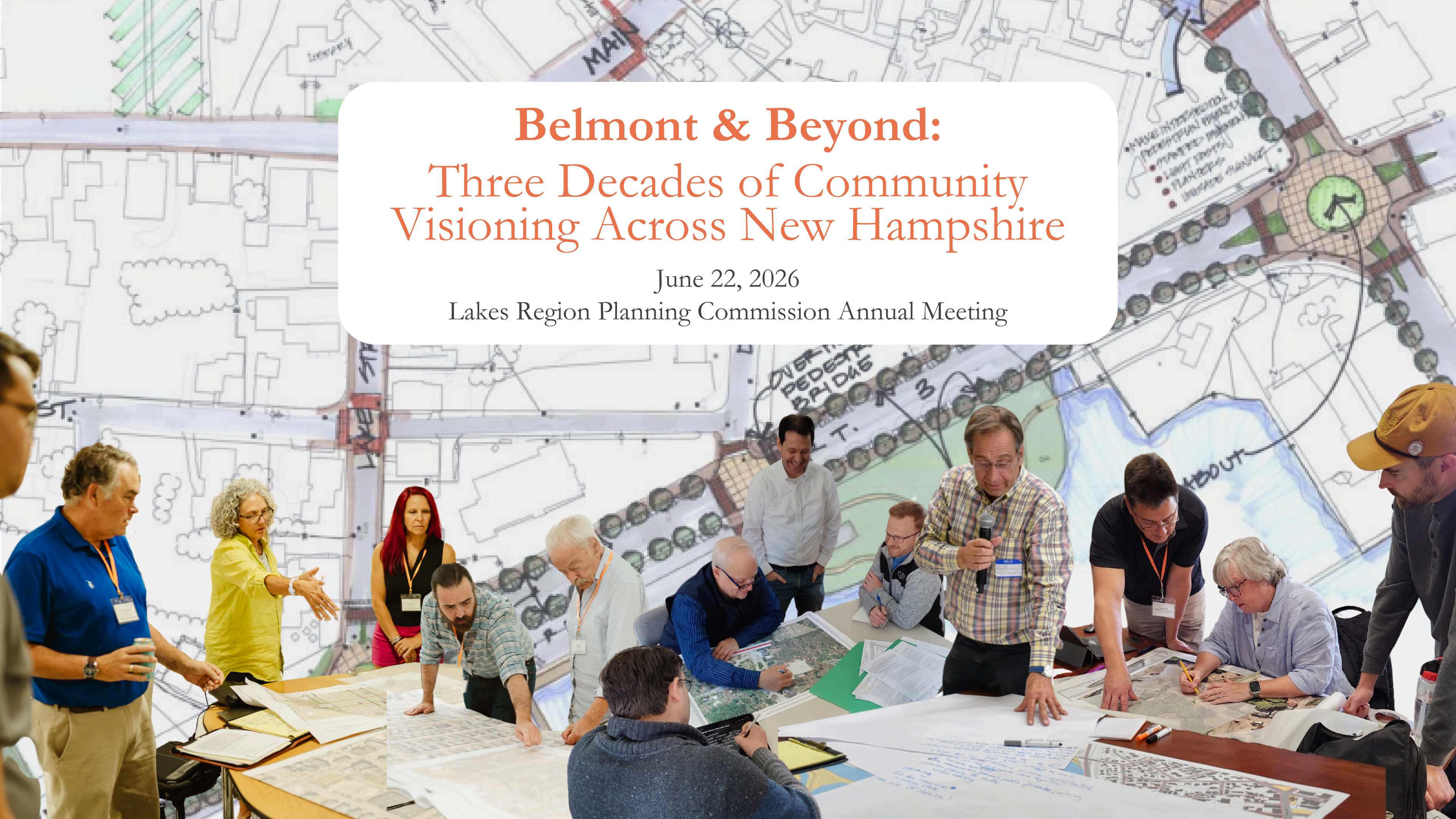




Belmont & Beyond: Three Decades of Community Visioning Across New Hampshire

June 22, 2026

Lakes Region Planning Commission Annual Meeting



Plan NH



- 501(c)3 organization founded in 1989
- *Vision* of healthy and vibrant communities across the Granite State
- *Mission*: to foster excellence in planning, design, and development of New Hampshire's *built environment*
- *Strategy*: to share information and inspiration for how community design and the built environment can contribute positively to where we live, work, and play

Thank you to our members!

PLATINUM MEMBERS



GOLD MEMBERS



SILVER MEMBERS



FREE
municipal
membership
this year!



Town Meeting + Barn Raising

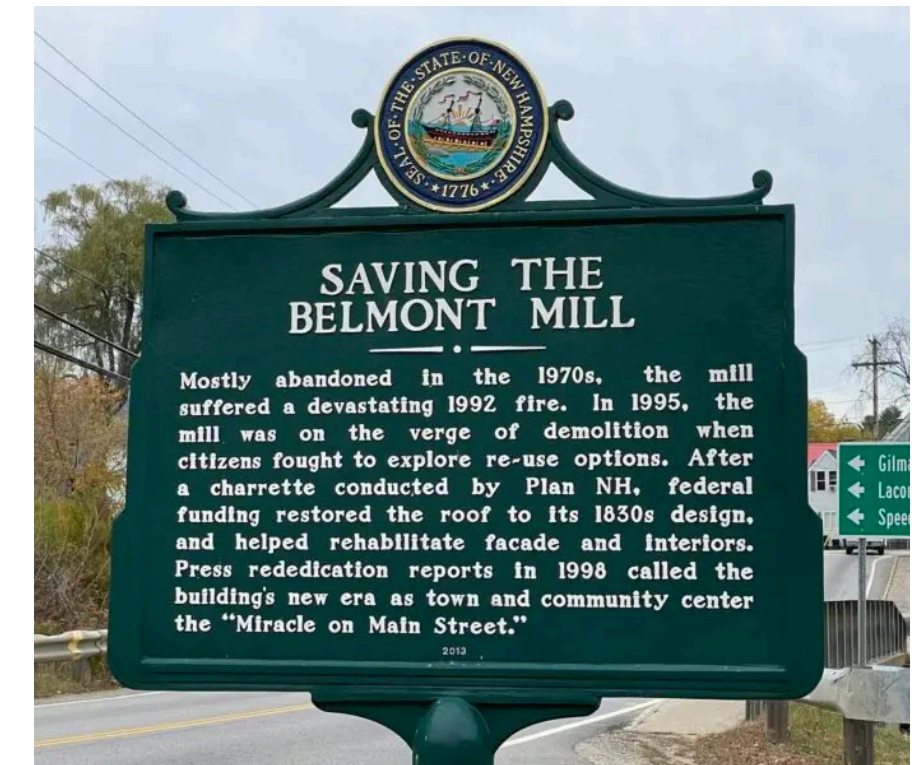
- French, literally meaning ‘cart’; a historical reference to the use of a cart in 19th-century Paris to collect architecture students' work on the day of an exhibition.
- Associated with architecture, but utilized for a variety of collaborative problem solving purposes.
- A charrette is a collaborative planning event in which all stakeholders in a project attempt to resolve conflicts and map out solutions, typically focused on physical space.



La Charrette, by Alexis Lemaistre at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts c. 1889

Program History

- Jeff Taylor, Director of the NH Office of State Planning from 1989-2003, saw a need to encourage outside the box thinking and design by bringing communities together through design charrettes in the mid 1990s.
- An avid member of Plan NH, Jeff helped organize the first official Plan NH Community Design Charrette in 1996 in Belmont, NH focused on preservation of the historic Belmont Mill.



Belmont Mill, before & after the 1996 Plan NH Charrette led by Jeff Taylor.

PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE PROGRAM

Program History

- Following Belmont, Plan NH began conducting several charrettes each year, focusing primarily on rural communities with limited or no planning staff.
- Larger communities began seeking assistance in the 2000s, including Merrimack, Goffstown, Rochester, and Nashua.
- The 2010 Exeter Charrette marked an evolution in the program model, introducing facilitated small-group discussions that broadened participation and created meaningful opportunities for community voices to shape the outcome.

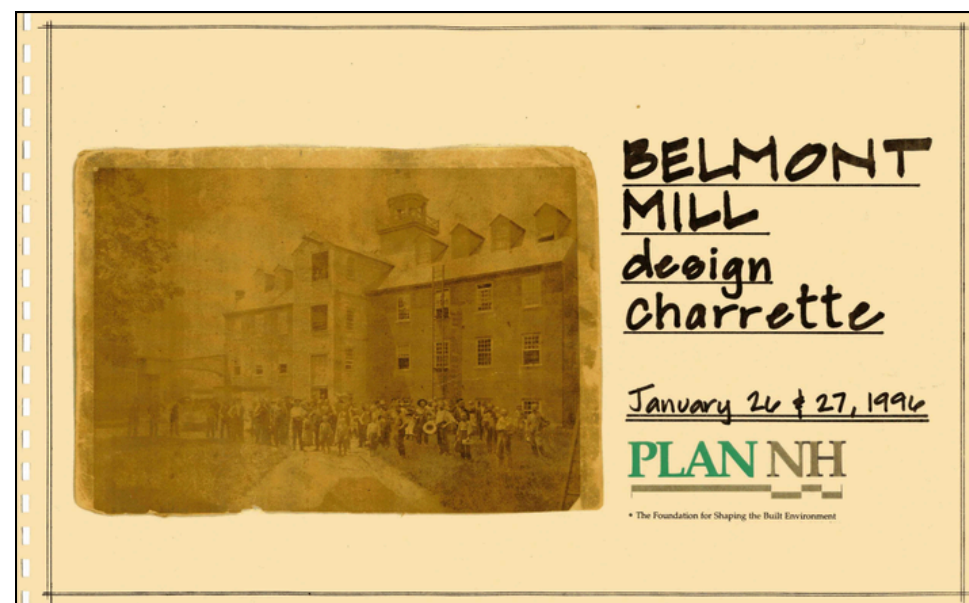


Top to bottom:
Whitefield 1997, Meredith 2005, Exeter 2010

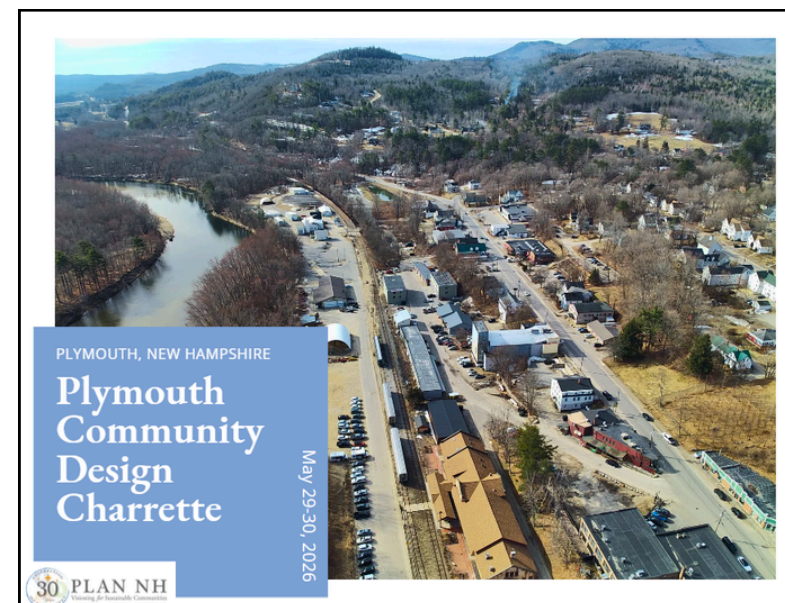
PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE PROGRAM

Program History

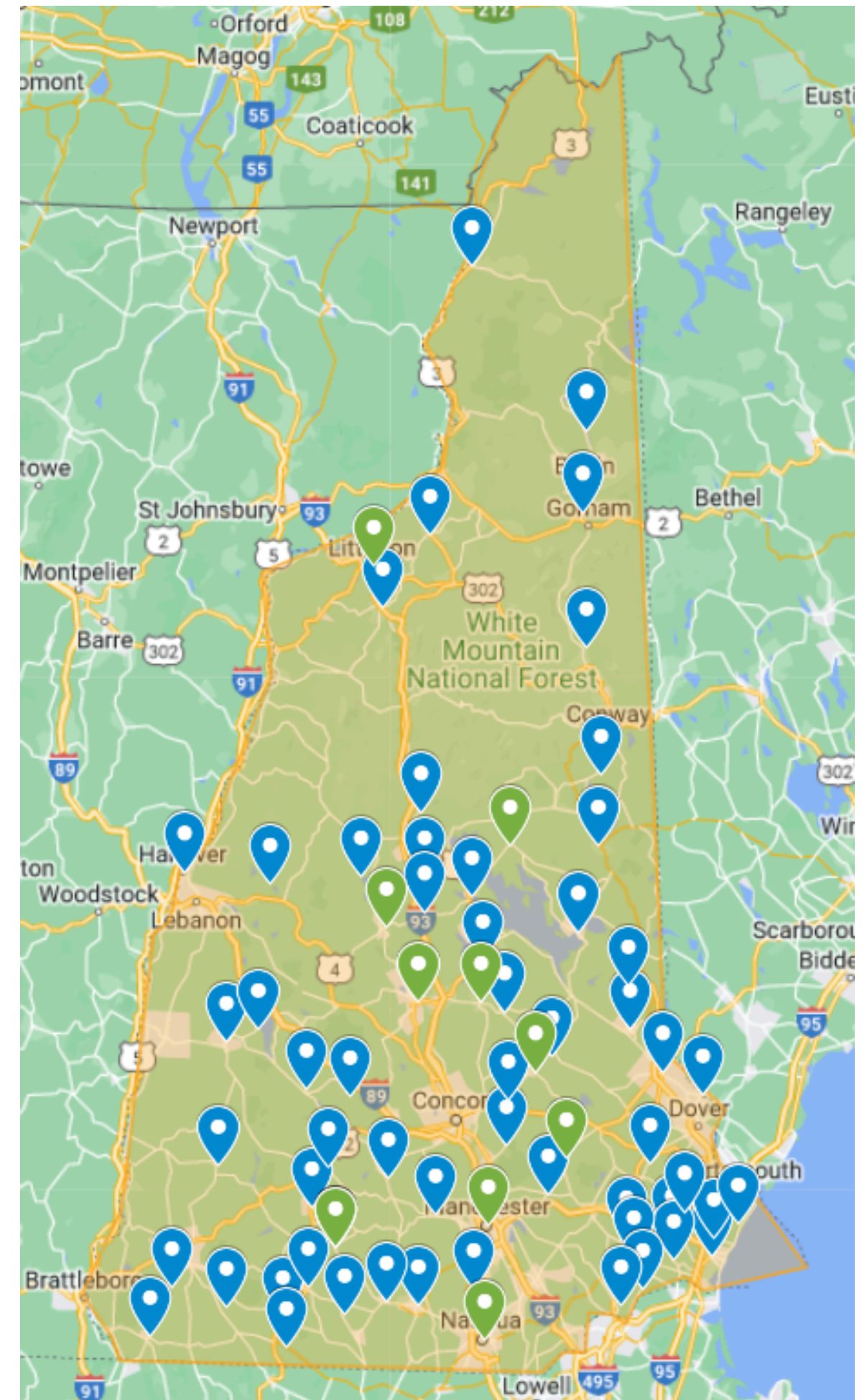
- Since 1996, Plan NH has organized 86 community design charrettes in 71 communities, with some communities hosting two or even three charrettes.
- Over 500 individual practitioners have volunteered their time and talents through this program.



Belmont Charrette, 1996 - Plan NH's first documented charrette.



Plymouth Charrette, 2026 - Plan NH's most recent charrette.



Program Overview

- Response to an application from a town or city and their identified design challenge
- Listening and brainstorming session grounded in planning and design, focused on the built environment
- Two-day exercise utilizing an multidisciplinary team of volunteers



Wolfeboro Charrette, 2021

Program Leadership

Plan NH Staff



Tiffany Tononi McNamara
Executive Director



Anna Wells
Program Coordinator

Charrette Committee



Bob White
Robert White
Landscape Architect



Brian Pratt
Fuss & O'Neill



Cassie Cashin
Nashua Regional
Planning Commission



Jamie Simchik
Simchik Planning &
Development



Jason Plourde
BETA Group



Karl Franck
City of Manchester &
Archlab Design Studio



North Sturtevant
JSA Design



Steve Hebsch
Novo Studio Architects

PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE PROGRAM

Two-Day Itinerary

- Day 1 (Friday) - 10:00am-8:00pm
 - Tour of the target area
 - Stakeholder meeting
 - Community input session #1
 - Community input session #2
- Day 2 (Saturday) - 8:00am-5:00pm
 - Team work session
 - Public presentation
- Post-Charrette
 - Final report provided to host community within 8-10 weeks



Sunapee Charrette, 2024

Volunteers

- Every team is built to meet the unique design challenges of the host community
- Designers, planners, engineers, preservationists, and others
- Individuals passionate about the built environment and giving back
- Plan NH Members and key partners receive priority invitation to participate in a team



Brentwood Charrette, 2023

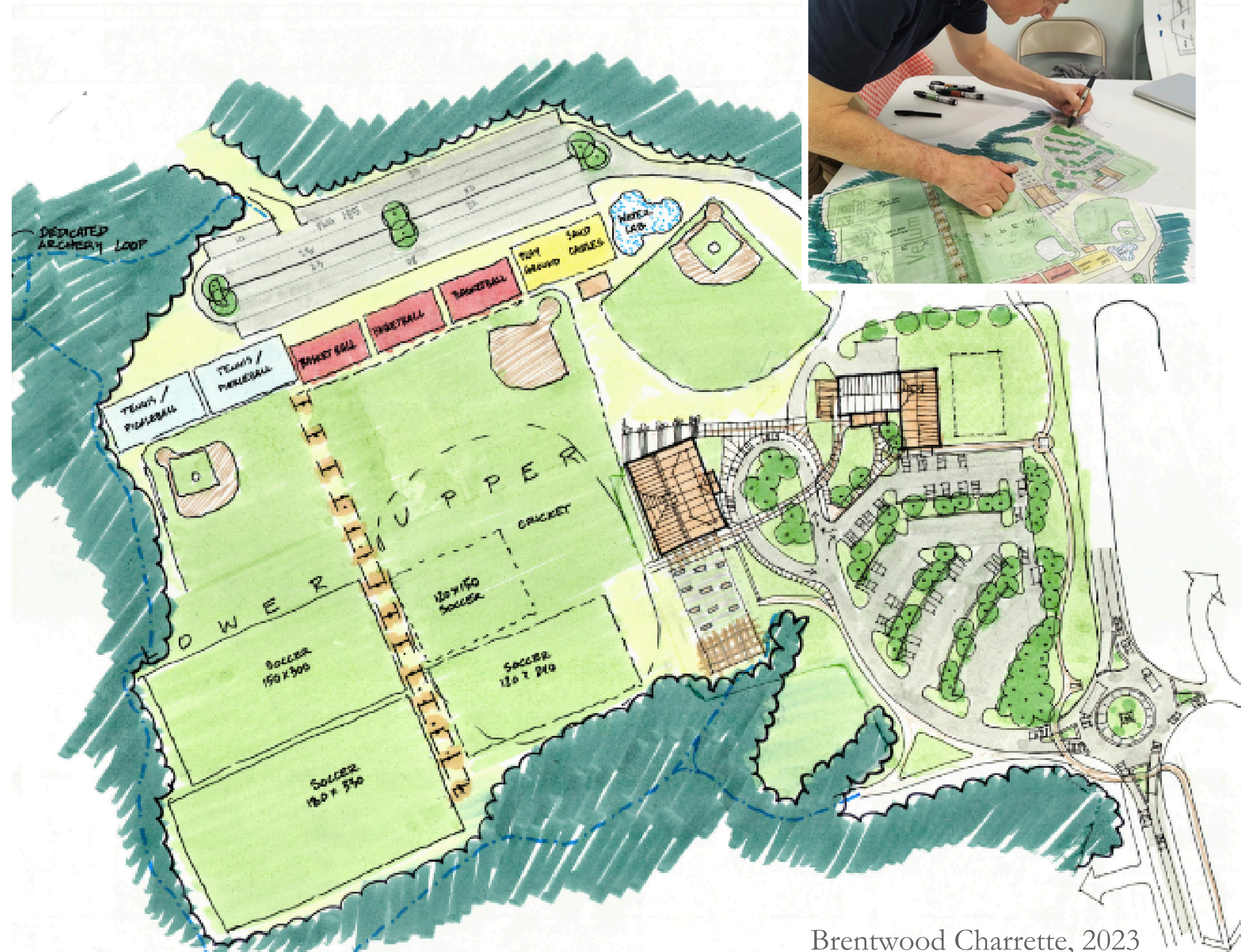
Recent Charrette Team Example

Community Design
Charrette Team -
Hampton Charrette,
October 2025

Brian Pratt	Civil Engineer	Fuss and O'Neill
Cecilia Ulibarri	Artist/Placemaker	Positive Street Art
Chuck Gregory	Traffic Engineer	VHB
C.R. Willeke	Traffic Engineer	NH Department of Transportation
Darren Winham	Economic Developer	Town of Exeter
George Reagan	Housing Expert	New Hampshire Housing
Ivy Vann	Planner	Ivy Vann Town Planning
James Vayo	Development Consultant	MPACT Collective
Jeff Hyland	Landscape Architect	Ironwood Design
Julia Mistretta	Plan NH Intern	UNH Community and Environmental Planning Major
Manuel Ramirez	Artist/Placemaker	Positive Street Art
Mike Simoneau	Report Writer	Fuss & O'Neill
Nichole Davis	Marketing Professional	Hoyle Tanner
Randy Knowles	Landscape Architect	Dubay Group
Robbi Woodburn	Landscape Architect	Woodburn & Company
Ryan Pope	Housing Expert	New Hampshire Housing
Steve Hebsch	Architect	Novo Studio Architects

Recommendations

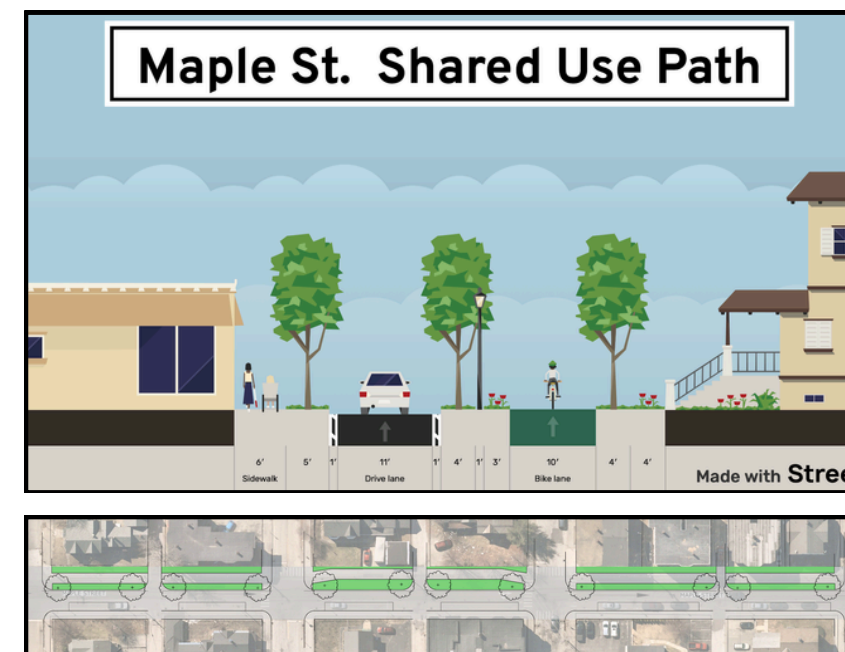
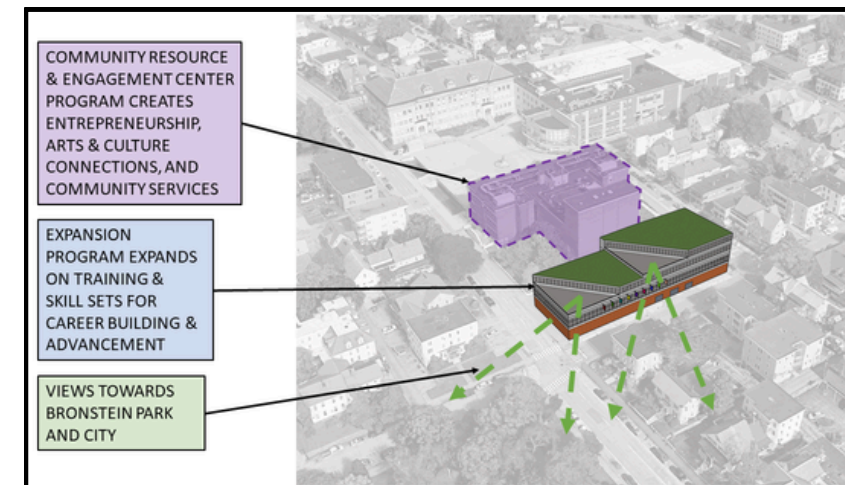
- Recommendations are developed that bridge the professional knowledge of the team members with what they have heard from the community
- Recommendations include visuals, narrative points, and further resources for funding or planning



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE PROGRAM

Recommendations

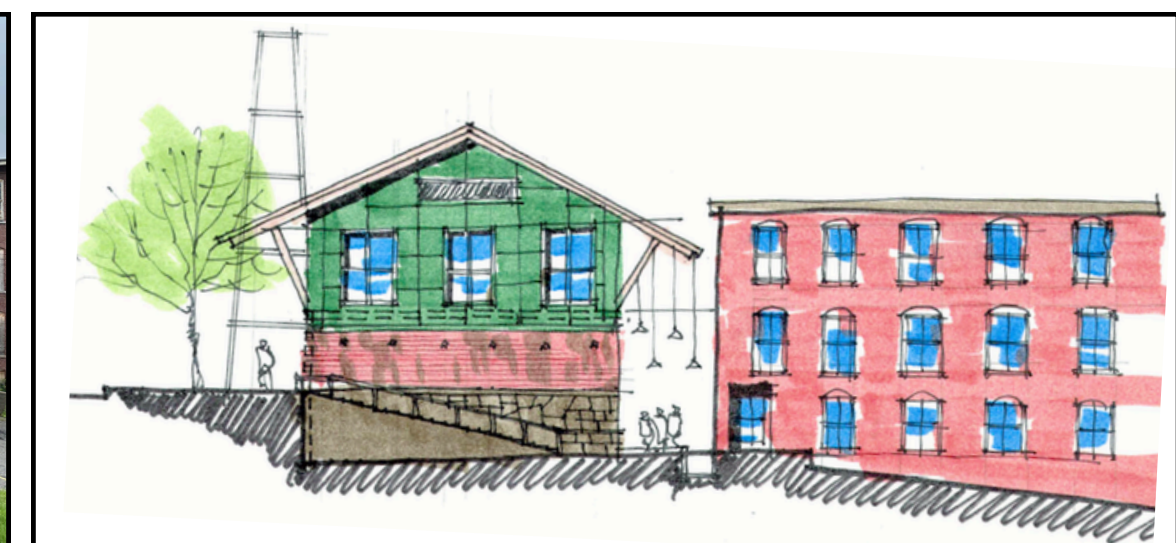
- Heavy emphasis on visual recommendations created in real time
- Recommendations are presented publicly at the end of the charrette and memorialized in greater detail in a final report



Manchester Charrette, 2023



Newmarket Charrette, 2024

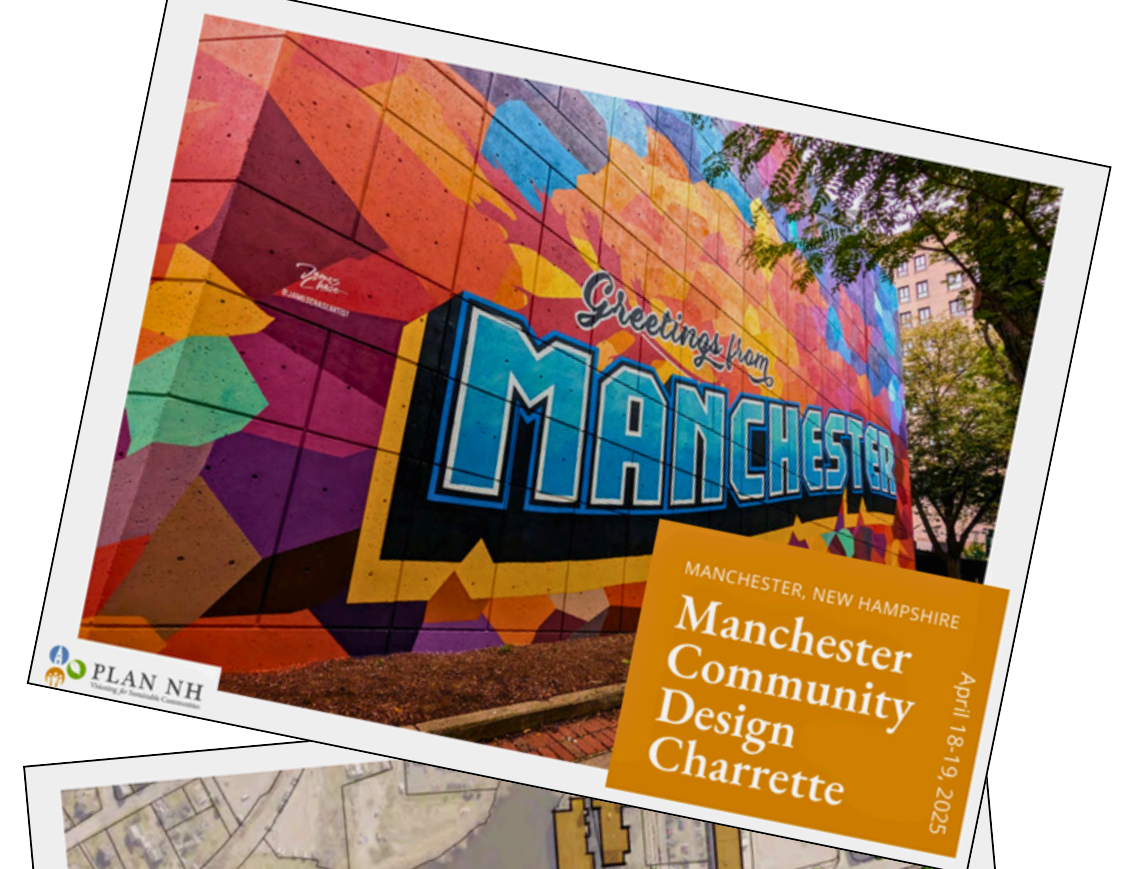
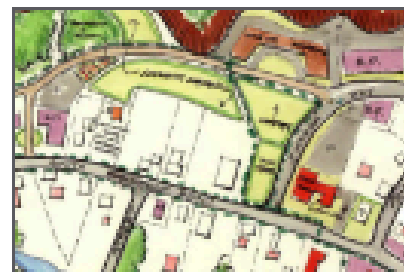
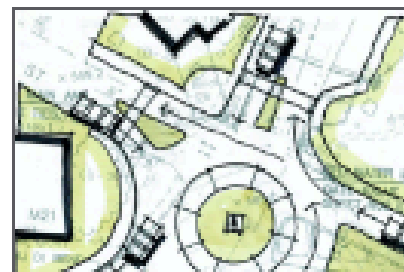


Nashua Charrette 2025

PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE PROGRAM

Final Report

- Following the charrette weekend, a final report is completed 10-12 weeks following the charrette
- Final reports files are provided to the host community and made available online at www.plannh.org/library



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE PROGRAM

In their own words...

It is truly amazing what can be accomplished when a broad cross-section of professionals collaborate for a common purpose. Everyone did an incredible job and made the event a success!

-Jason Bachand, Town Planner
Hampton Charrette, 2025

*The knowledge of the charrette team and the enthusiastic participation of the residents is a wonderful memory that lingers with me. **People do care and do participate.***

- Kingston 2016

The most memorable part was having so many engaged, especially in the small group sessions.

- Rye 2019

*The charrette helped to give us some **focus** and **enthusiasm!***

- Bristol 2009

*I usually approach things trying to not change anything because I like Temple the way it is. I was really amazed and impressed by the suggestions that this group presented. They were all well thought-out and thought-provoking... **every idea seemed creative and in-line with Temple.***

- Temple 2022

Benefits for Host Communities

- Increased resident and stakeholder input
- Productive format for voicing fears, hopes, and ideas
- Results in a shared vision that informs next steps
- New or renewed momentum
- Final report memorializing the input and recommendations from the process



Bristol Walking Tour, July 2022 (Charrettes in 2008 & 2018)

Benefits for Volunteers

- Being a part of an energizing and creative process
- Connecting more closely with local communities
- Collaborating and networking with others in the community development field
- Professional development credits for most professions



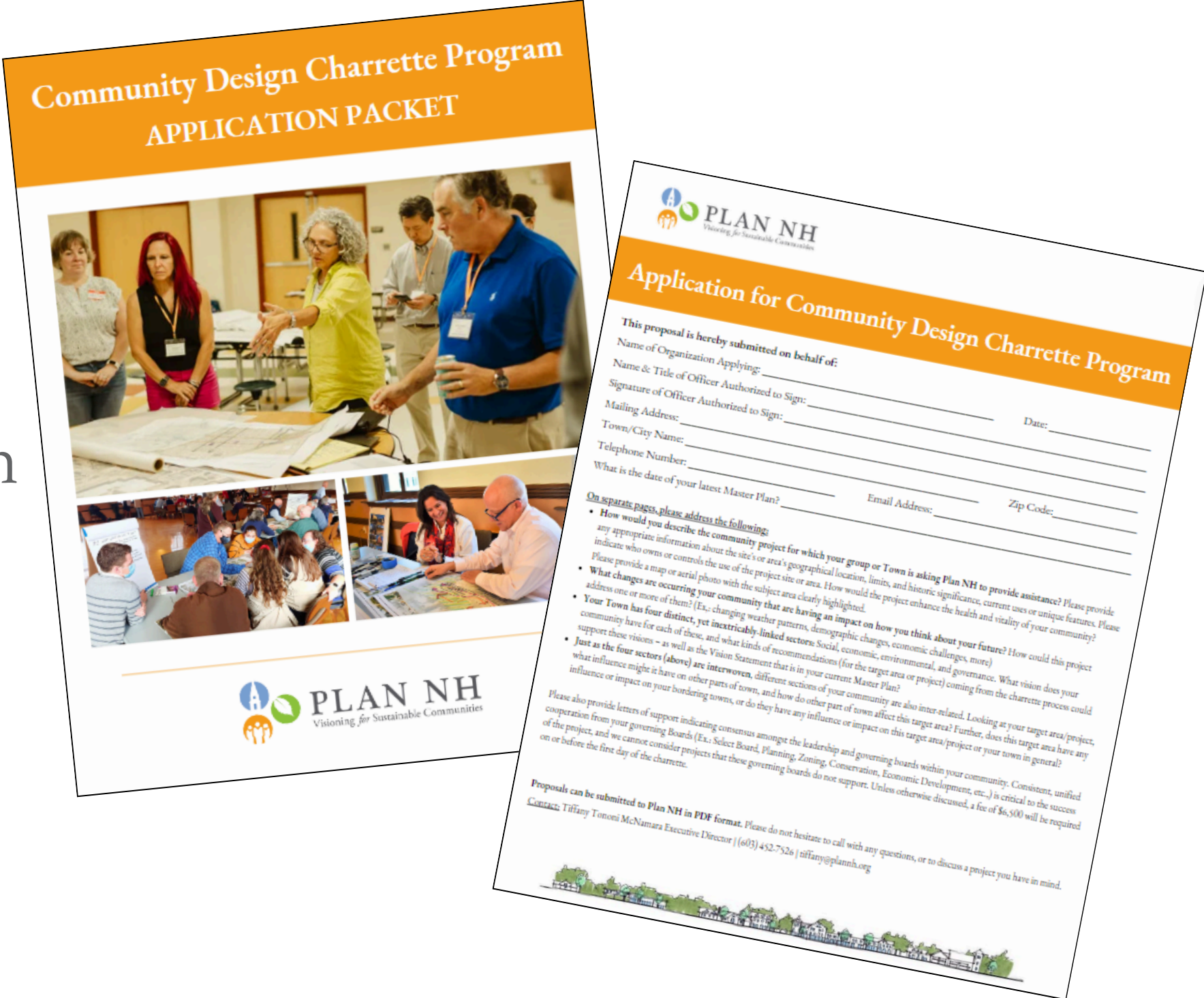
Newmarket Charrette, October 2024

Volunteer interest form available [here](#)
and at: plannh.org/programs/charrettes

PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE PROGRAM

Application Details

- Program fee \$6,500
- Additional expenses:
 - promoting the charrette
 - event planning and hosting
 - food (and caffeine!) for the team
 - lodging for team members on Friday night, as needed
- Funding through municipal appropriation, grant funding, or private fundraising
- *2 Available Spots for HOP-related charrettes in 2027!*



The image displays two documents related to the Community Design Charrette Program. The top document is the 'APPLICATION PACKET', which features a title in white text on an orange background. Below the title is a photograph of four people (three women and one man) gathered around a table, looking at and pointing to a large map or plan. The bottom document is the 'Application for Community Design Charrette Program' form. It includes the PLAN NH logo at the top left, followed by the title 'Application for Community Design Charrette Program' in white text on an orange background. The form contains several sections for applicant information, including 'Name of Organization Applying', 'Name & Title of Officer Authorized to Sign', 'Signature of Officer Authorized to Sign', 'Mailing Address', 'Town/City Name', 'Telephone Number', 'Email Address', and 'Zip Code'. It also includes a section for 'On separate pages, please address the following:' with bullet points asking for details about the project, community changes, and vision. At the bottom, there is a section for 'Proposals can be submitted to Plan NH in PDF format.' and contact information for Tiffany Tonosol McNamara, Executive Director.

Community Design Charrette Program
APPLICATION PACKET

PLAN NH
Visioning for Sustainable Communities

Application for Community Design Charrette Program

This proposal is hereby submitted on behalf of:

Name of Organization Applying: _____

Name & Title of Officer Authorized to Sign: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Officer Authorized to Sign: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Town/City Name: _____

Telephone Number: _____

What is the date of your latest Master Plan? _____ Email Address: _____ Zip Code: _____

On separate pages, please address the following:

- How would you describe the community project for which your group or Town is asking Plan NH to provide assistance? Please provide any appropriate information about the site's or area's geographical location, limits, and historic significance, current uses or unique features. Please indicate who owns or controls the use of the project site or area. How would the project enhance the health and vitality of your community?
- Please provide a map or aerial photo with the subject area clearly highlighted.
- What changes are occurring your community that are having an impact on how you think about your future? How could this project address one or more of them? (Ex.: changing weather patterns, demographic changes, economic challenges, more)
- Your Town has four distinct, yet inextricably-linked sectors: Social, economic, environmental, and governance. What vision does your community have for each of these, and what kinds of recommendations (for the target area or project) coming from the charrette process could support these visions – as well as the Vision Statement that is in your current Master Plan?
- Just as the four sectors (above) are interwoven, different sections of your community are also inter-related. Looking at your target area/project, what influence might it have on other parts of town, and how do other parts of town affect this target area? Further, does this target area have any influence or impact on your bordering towns, or do they have any influence or impact on this target area/project or your town in general?

Please also provide letters of support indicating consensus amongst the leadership and governing boards within your community. Consistent, unified cooperation from your governing Boards (Ex.: Select Board, Planning, Zoning, Conservation, Economic Development, etc.) is critical to the success of the project, and we cannot consider projects that these governing boards do not support. Unless otherwise discussed, a fee of \$6,500 will be required on or before the first day of the charrette.

Proposals can be submitted to Plan NH in PDF format. Please do not hesitate to call with any questions, or to discuss a project you have in mind.

Contact: Tiffany Tonosol McNamara Executive Director | (603) 452-7526 | tiffany@plannh.org

Application available [here](https://plannh.org/programs/charrettes) and at:
plannh.org/programs/charrettes

Application Details

- Application must include:
 - application cover page
 - responses to the 5 key questions
 - map of the intended project area
 - letters of support
 - supplement page for HOP-related applicants
- Apply at least 4 months prior to your preferred charrette dates



 **PLAN NH**
Visioning for Sustainable Communities

Application for Community Design Charrette Program

This proposal is hereby submitted on behalf of:

Name of Organization Applying: _____

Name & Title of Officer Authorized to Sign: _____ Date: _____

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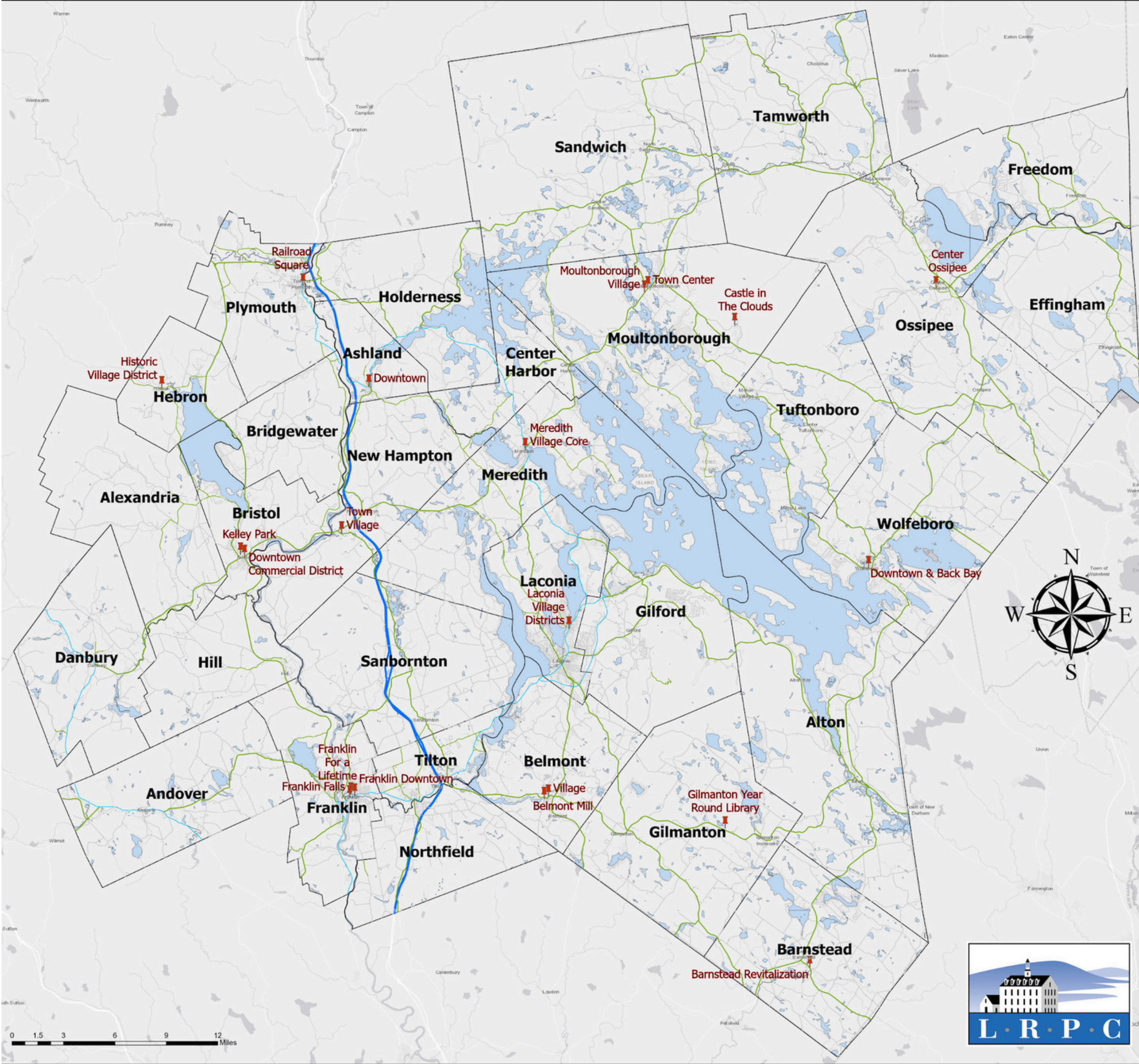
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PLAN NH
Visioning for Sustainable Communities

Lakes Region

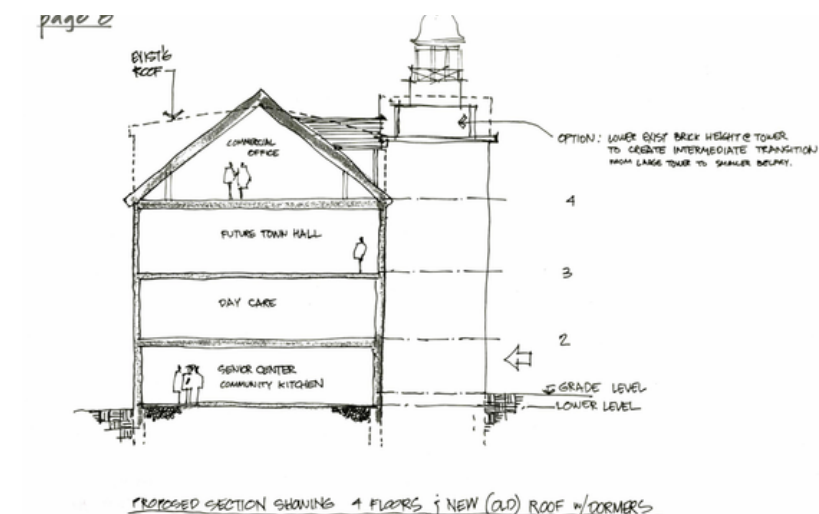
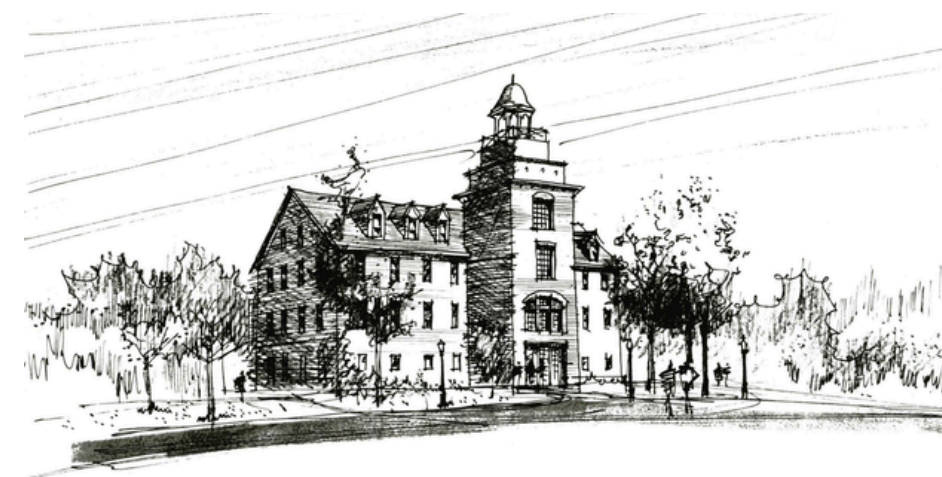
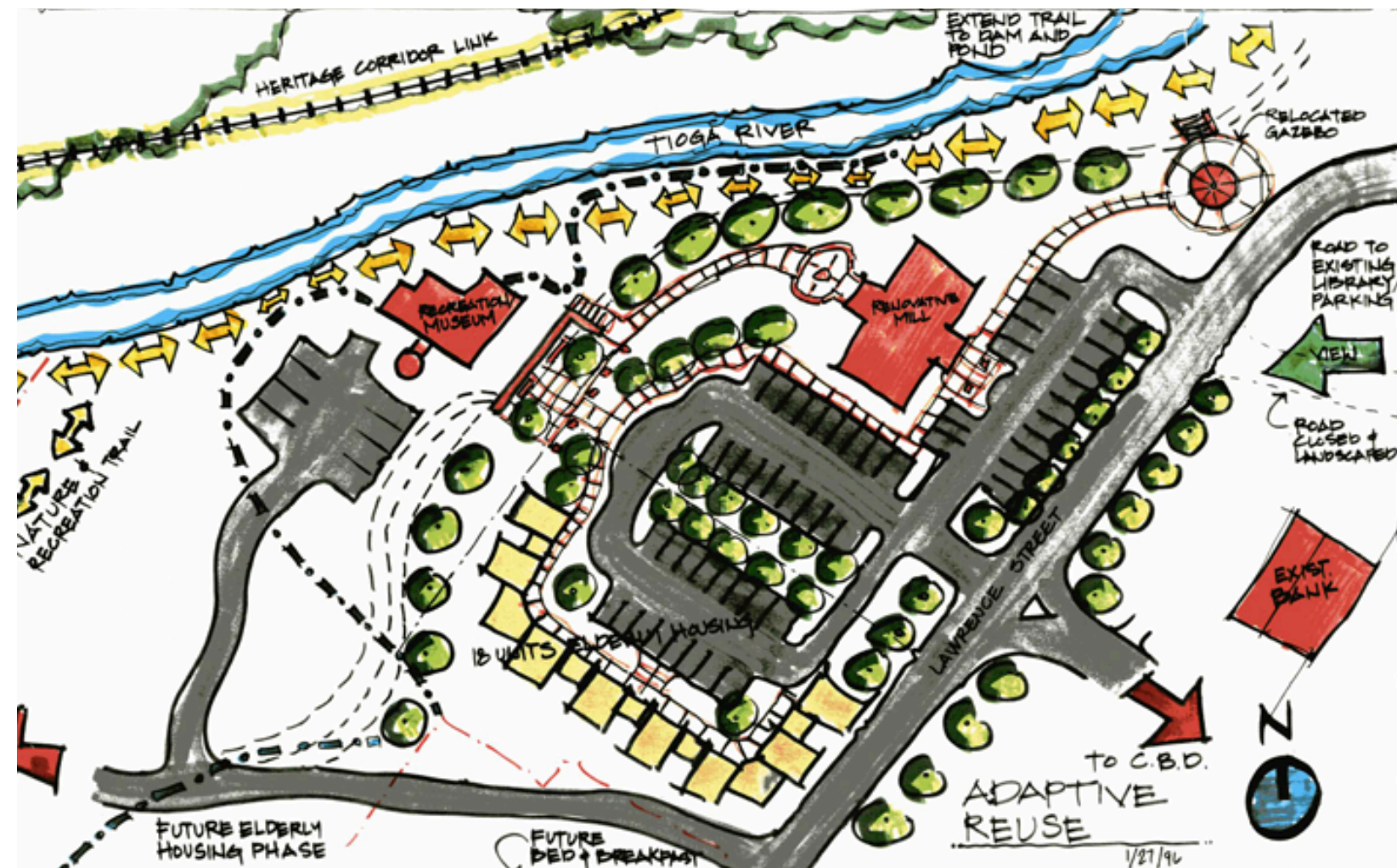
- 2026 Plymouth
- 2021 Castle in the Clouds
- 2021 Wolfeboro
- 2018 Bristol
- 2018 Moultonborough
- 2015 Franklin
- 2015 Laconia
- 2012 Moultonborough
- 2011 Hebron
- 2011 Ashland
- 2010 Belmont
- 2010 Gilmanton
- 2008 Bristol
- 2007 Center Ossipee
- 2006 Barnstead
- 2006 Franklin
- 2005 Meredith
- 2003 New Hampton
- 1997 Franklin
- 1996 Belmont



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE

Belmont, NH - 1996

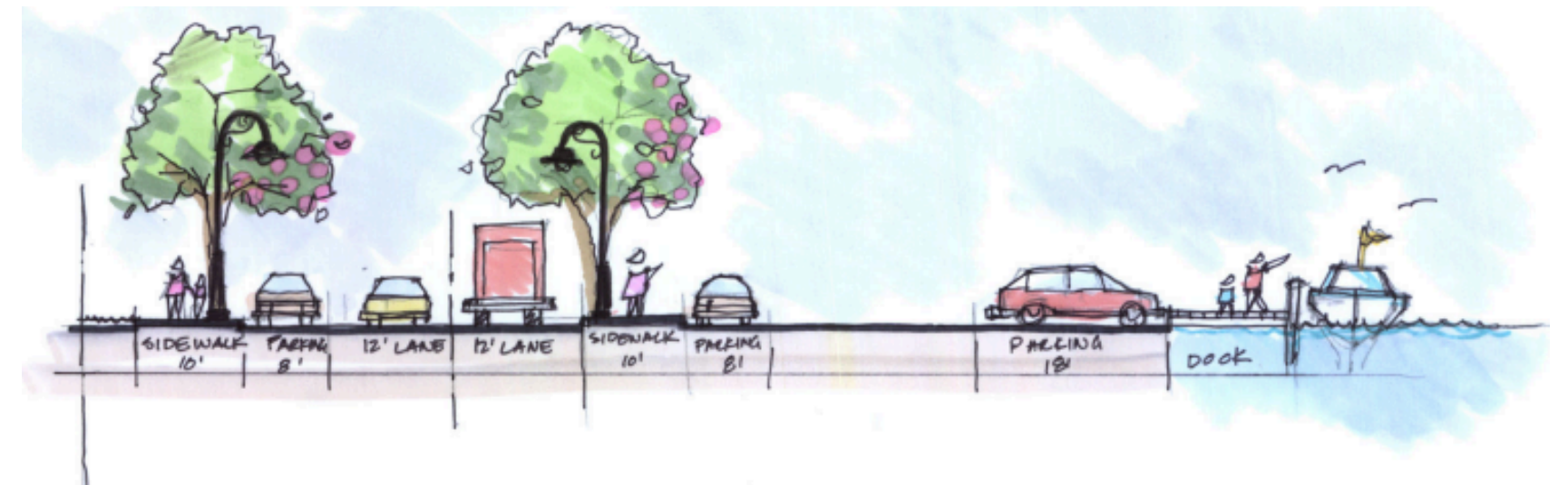
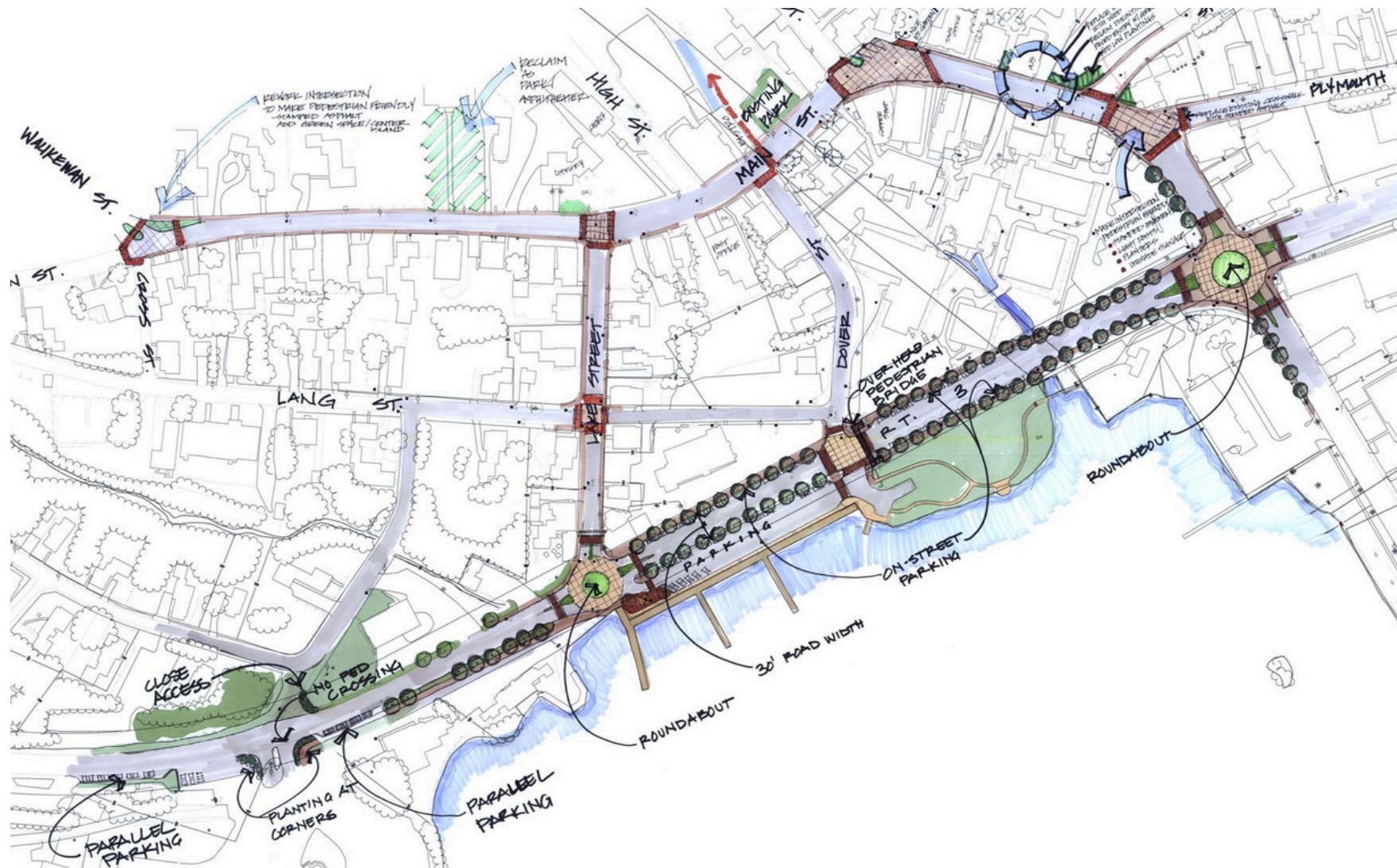
- Address the future of the historic Belmont Mill
- Present potential scenarios for property



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE

Meredith, NH - 2005

- Revitalization of the village center
- Main street enhancements, walking trail connections, overall connectivity
- Redevelopment potential for key property



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE

Franklin, NH - 2006

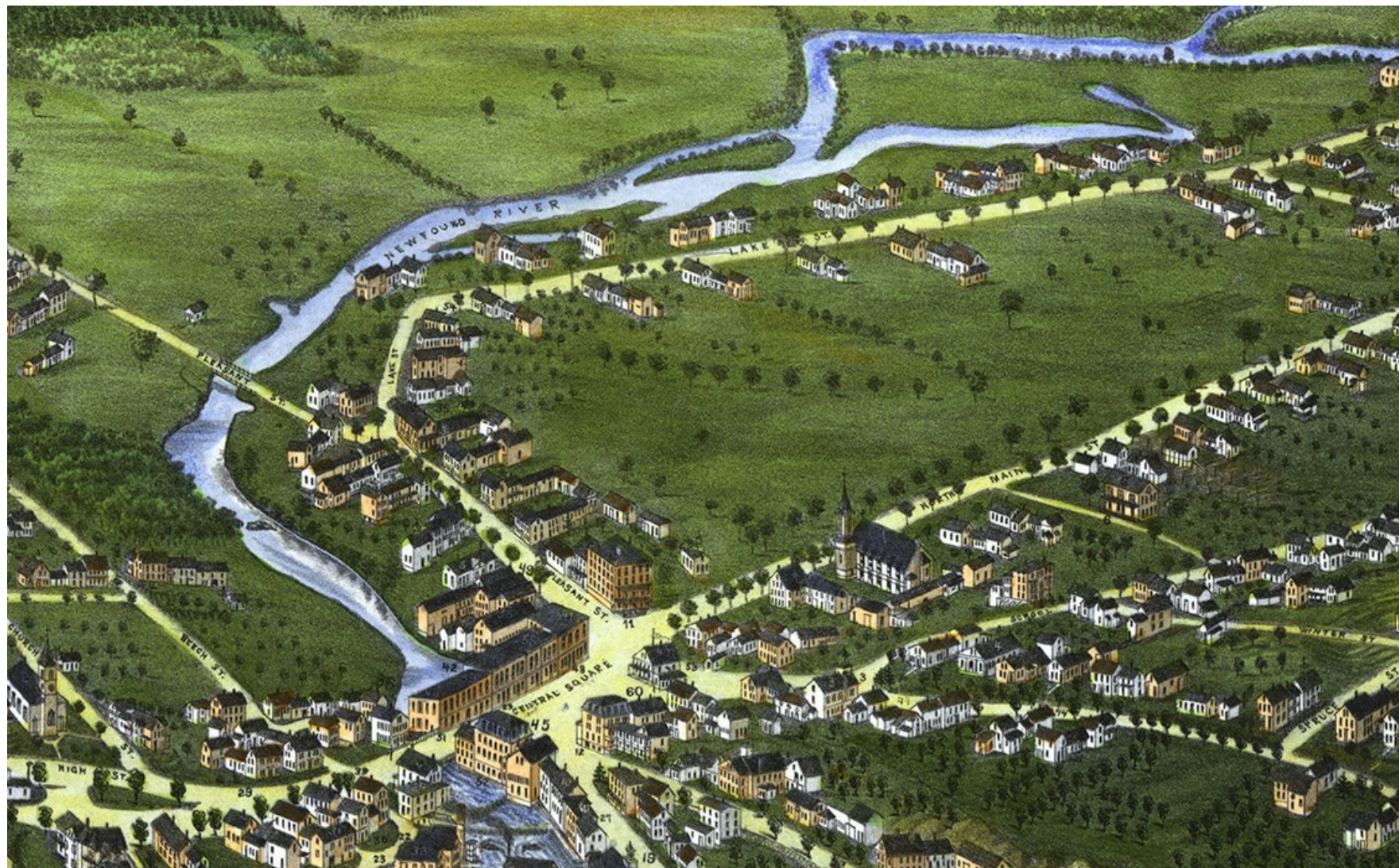
- Revitalization of the the aging Main Street in Franklin Falls Historic District
- Spur new economic activity in the District



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE

Bristol, NH - 2008

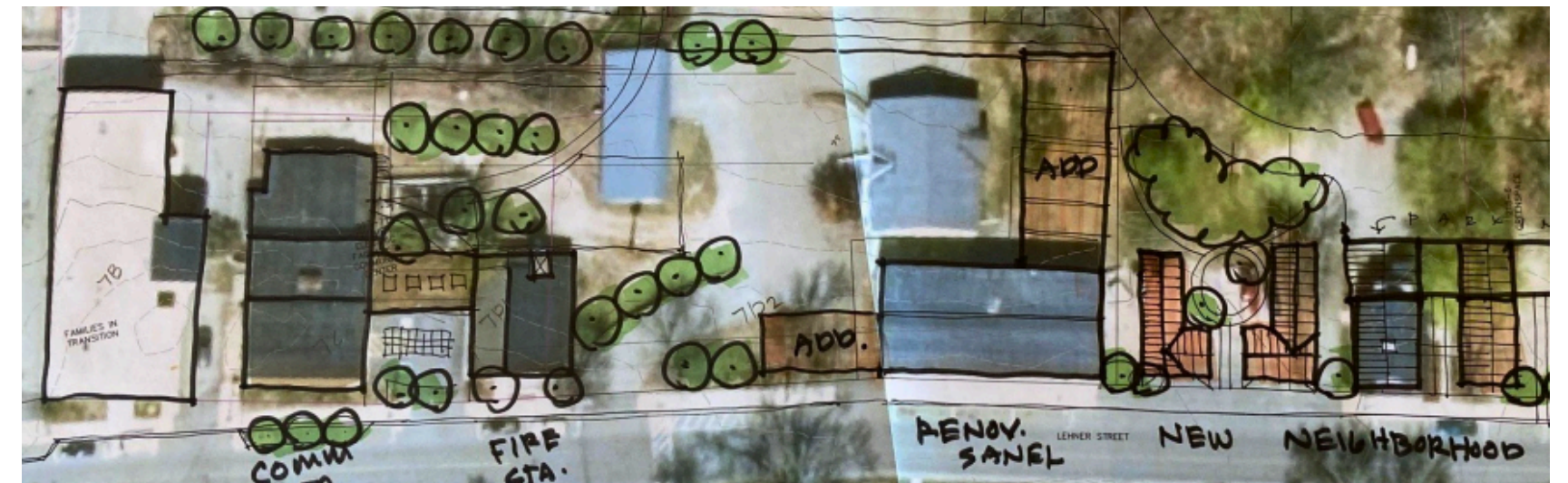
- Focus on Central Square, the heart of downtown and National Historic District
- Vehicular safety, pedestrian access, and parking improvements
- Economic revitalization of downtown



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE

Wolfeboro, NH - 2021

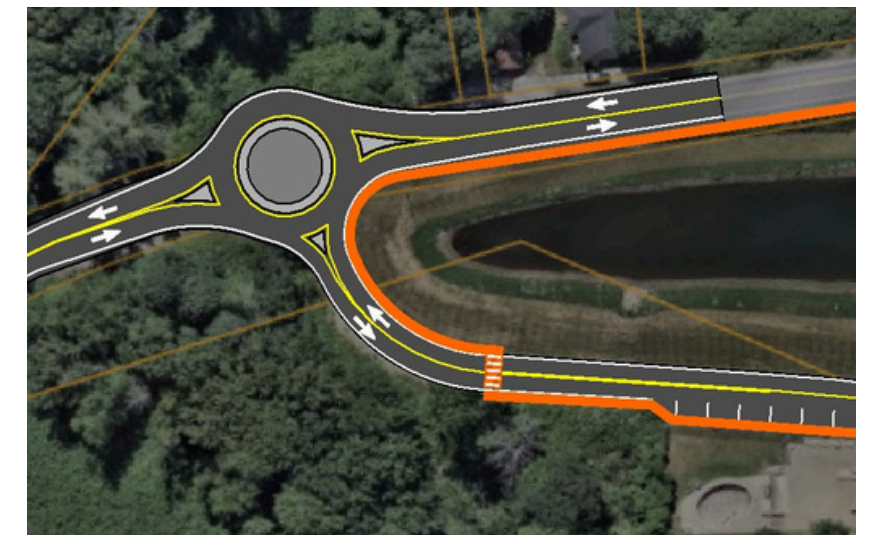
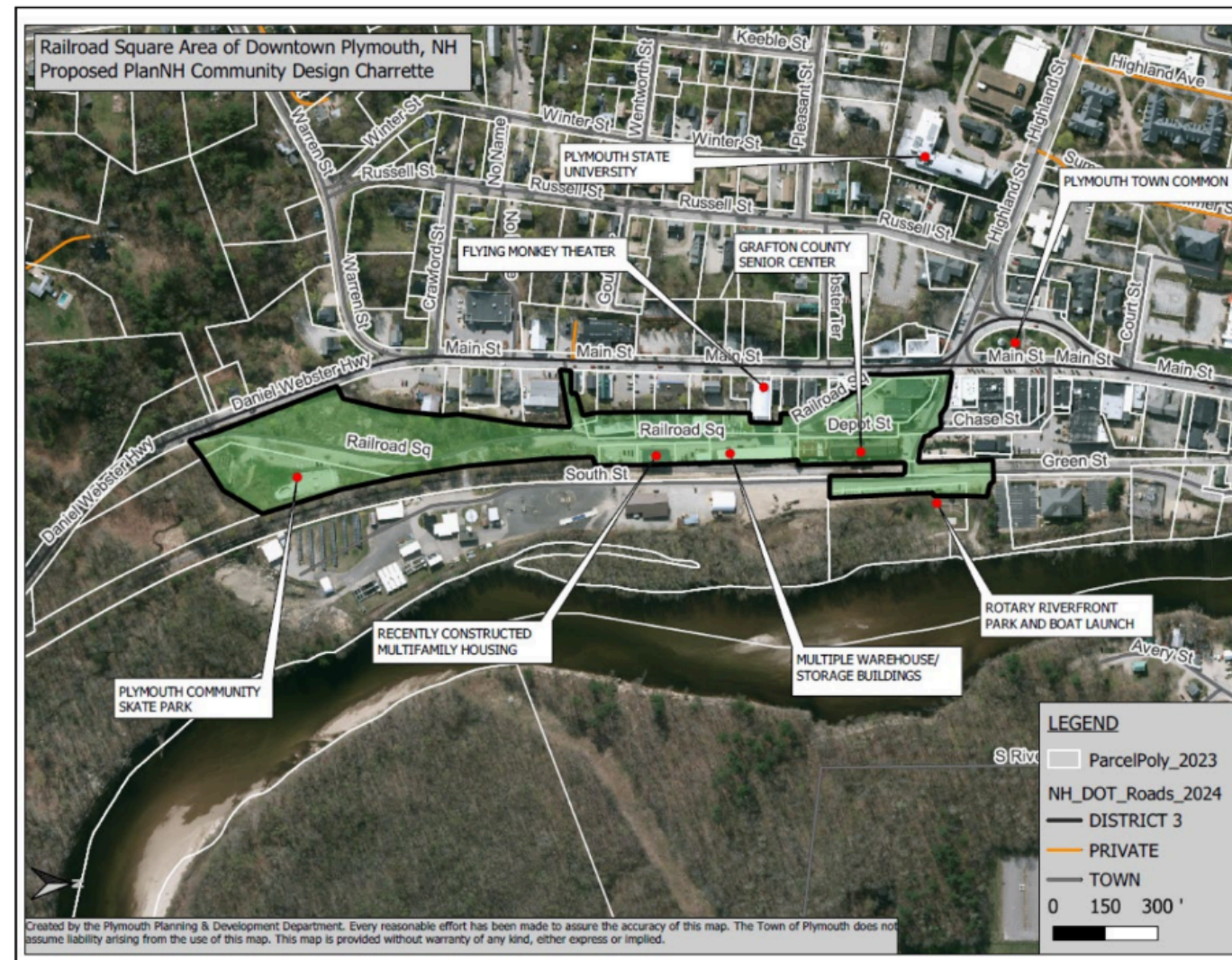
- Preservation and enhancement of historic character of the community
- Linking downtown and the Back Bay area
- Enhancing the streetscape and increasing walkability



PLAN NH COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE

Plymouth, NH - 2026

- Public improvements for the Depot Street/ Railroad Square area including river access
- Maintain historic character of the area
- Increase walkability, economic vitality, and access to attainable housing



Final report coming soon!

2026 Charrette Programming



- Charrettes:
 - Plymouth, NH - May 29-30
 - Exeter, NH - Aug 7-8
 - Greenland, NH - Oct 16-17
- “It Started with a Charrette” community walking tour
 - Belmont, NH - July (TBD)
- Semester for Impact Interns completed analysis of several past charrettes
- Spotlight on long time volunteers
- End of year celebration honoring our program volunteers



PLAN NH
Visioning *for* Sustainable Communities

Q&A

Thank You!

Contact:

Tiffany Tononi McNamara
tiffany@plannh.org

