



CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™
Community Development Department

REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

From: Timothy J. Thompson, AICP, Assistant Director of Community Development
Date: August 11, 2025
Subject: UNH Law Accessible Parking (City Council Referral to Parking Committee)

Recommendation:

Accept this report.

Background:

On October 25, 2024, UNH Law students, and members of UNH Law's Diversity Coalition, Madison Snyder, Uthej Kunamneni, and Lexi Turner sent an e-mail to Mayor Champlin requesting "the city consider the creation of two or more accessible parking spots on Washington and White Streets, specifically, near the three main entrances to the school."

On October 28, 2024, Mayor Champlin forwarded the e-mail to the City Clerk for inclusion on the November 12, 2024 City Council Agenda. At that meeting, the Council referred the request to the Parking Committee.

The Parking Committee discussed the referral at their December 30, 2024, February 26, 2025, June 30, 2025, and July 28, 2025 meetings (a partial discussion was held on June 30 due to the Committee quorum being lost during the discussion). The below summary of the Committee's discussion and recommendation is provided for the City Council's consideration.

Discussion:

The students reported that parking has become an issue for students and staff that require accessible parking near the UNH Law School. They reported there are four accessible parking spaces in the defined accessible lot on Blanchard Street and added that they have been able to fit six vehicles. The students recognize this is not in compliance and stated no one is requiring the use of an accessible parking space that has a ramp for a wheelchair at this time. It was further reported that some students have been missing class due to lack of accessible parking near the building and further stated due to physical restrictions, some students cannot walk from the other designated University parking lots.

The students stated that they had started with reaching out to the school in the fall of 2023. They initially met with the Dean of the school and continued to reach out over the course of the year and have not found relief for the issue. Members of the Diversity Coalition met with the University and were told to reach out to the City.

The Parking Committee discussed reaching out to residents in the area about open parking, resident parking permits, and the community's concerns with UNH Law School seeking and receiving a variance for less than 1/3 of the parking required for a building of that size and the need for additional relief for offsite parking lots to meet land use requirements in the expansion of 2010. The Committee also expressed the frustrations of the nearby residential community which were expressed in the narrow streets study and various previous interactions with the Parking Committee.

In conclusion, *the consensus of the Parking Committee was to take no ordinance action at this time, for the following reasons, but encouraged the students to continue to press UNH Law to address their concerns with on-site parking options:*

- *Accessible parking spaces within City roadway rights-of-way cannot be reserved for any individual or land owner, and must be made available to any driver with an applicable placard/license plate because the spaces are publicly owned and maintained. Therefore, there is no way to ensure that any accessible public on-street parking space along Washington Street or White Street would be available to a UNH Law student or staff member.*
- *Elimination of any unrestricted parking space that would be replaced by an accessible parking space increases the likelihood that people will further encroach into the surrounding residential neighborhoods to find parking, which has long been the primary complaint of residents in the law school area.*
- *Both neighborhood residents and the City have expressed in the past to UNH Law that the remote parking lots owned by UNH are underutilized, and that students and staff continue to take up parking spaces on-street in closer proximity to the school rather than use the parking lots.*
- *The City as a whole typically does not provide accessible parking spaces when there is opportunity for on-site accessible spaces.*