



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Matthew R. Walsh, Director of Redevelopment, Downtown Services, and Special Projects

DATE: August 29, 2022

SUBJECT: Meter Expansion Zone Contraction and Mechanical Meter Replacement

Recommendation:

1. Accept the following report; and,
2. Set the attached ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances; Title II, Traffic Code; Chapter 18, Parking, Article 18-3, Parking Meters and Article 18-1-8, Parking Time Limited in Designated Places, for public hearing on October 11, 2022

Background:

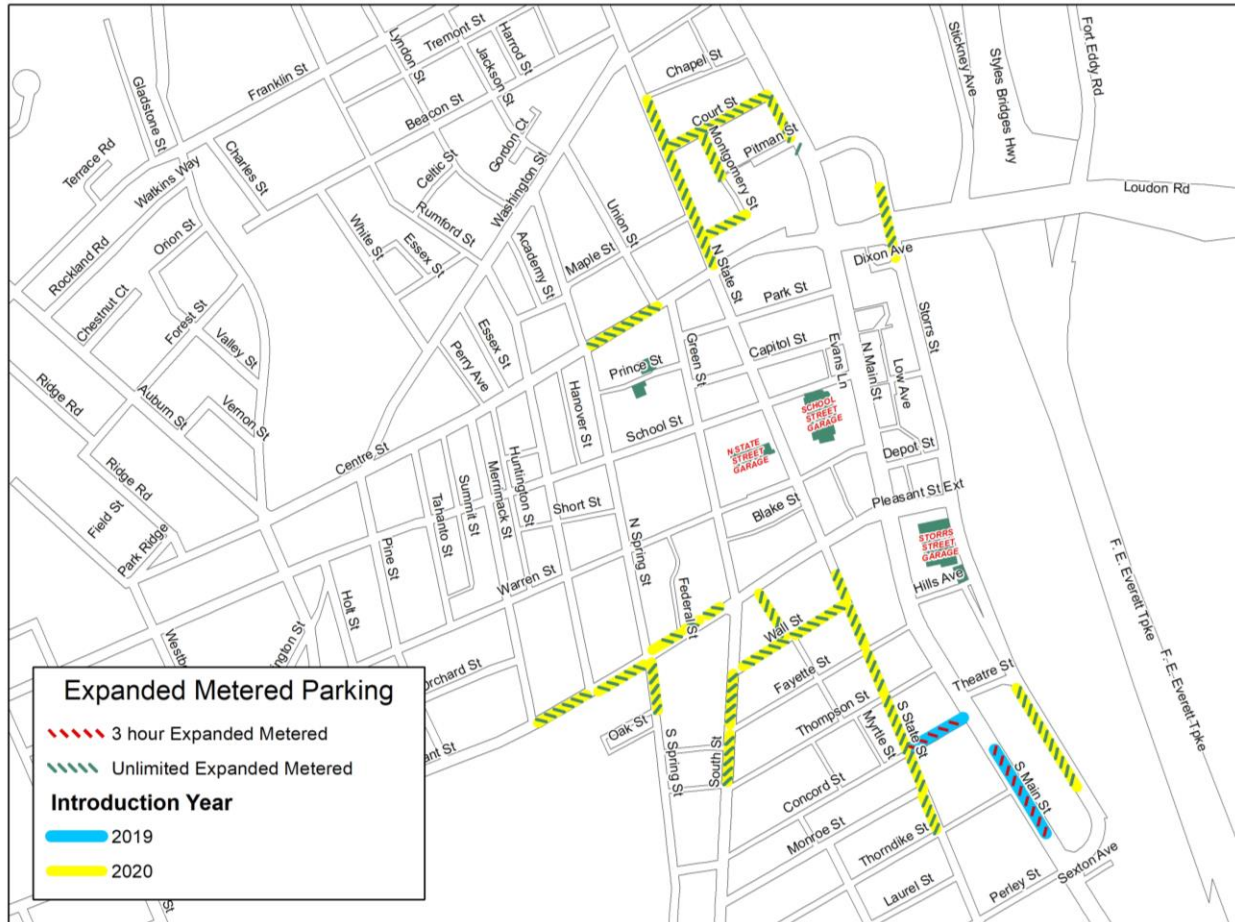
On December 18, 2017, the City Council accepted the Strategic Parking Plan (the Plan). The primary objectives of the Plan were to:

- Restore the Parking Fund to financial solvency;
- Support community economic development goals and initiatives;
- Improve customer service and user friendliness of the Parking System; and,
- Providing clean, safe, and well-maintained parking facilities for the community.

In accordance with the recommendations of the 2017 Strategic Parking Plan, and subsequent resolutions related thereto approved as part of the FY2019 and FY2020 budgets, the City metered an additional 325 parking spaces throughout the Downtown area. This increased the total number of metered parking spaces (i.e. on-street, surface lots, and parking garages, combined) from 1,333 to 1,658 spaces.

Meters within the so-called “Meter Expansion Zone” were installed in two phases. Phase I consisted of 41 meters on Concord Street (South Main to South State) and South Main Street (Wentworth to Perley), and was completed in Fall 2018. Phase 2 consisted of 284 meters, and was completed in January 2020. Please see the map below for more information.

Map #1: Meter Expansion Zones



The Meter Expansion Zone initiative had two primary objectives.

First, expanded meter coverage was intended to manage parking around activity centers such as the Merrimack County Superior Courthouse, the U.S. District Courthouse, the Capitol Center for the Arts, as well as recent real estate development on South Main Street (i.e. the Hotel Concord Building / Red River Theatres, Smile! Building, Love Your Neighbor Building, and forthcoming NH Employment Security Redevelopment).

Secondly, these meters were intended to generate positive net operating income (NOI) to support repair and replacement of parking infrastructure, as well as grow working capital to support overhead and operating costs.

The meter expansion program was originally intended to include more than 325 metered spaces; however, various modifications were made after implementation. Changes included reduction of metered spaces on Court Street (west of Montgomery Street), restoration of Law Enforcement Parking on Pleasant Street along the frontage of the US District Courthouse, as well as loss of meters near certain intersections due to parking setbacks stipulated by City Ordinance and State Law.

The meter expansion project was financed by \$385,000 in Parking Fund supported bonds. Specifically, \$40,000 was appropriated in FY2019, and \$345,000 in FY2020. In addition to financing the installation of these 325 meters, an additional 170 mechanical meters were replaced using surplus funds from these appropriations.

Currently, 184 mechanical meters remain in service. Of this total, 19 mechanical meters located at the Hills Avenue Lot will be replaced with a spare parking pay station kiosk, which was previously used to manage the City’s interim parking lot at the former NH Employment Security property on Fayette Street. (The Fayette Street Lot was closed due to the sale of the property on June 9, 2022 for redevelopment by a subsidiary of the John Flatley Company). Therefore, 165 mechanical meters remain to be replaced.

In June 2022, the City Council, as part of its FY2023 budget deliberations, declined a \$180,000 request included in CIP #595 to replace the remaining 165 mechanical meters. Rather, at the time, a majority of the City Council expressed interest in reviewing meter zones, and utilizing smart meters to be removed therefrom to replace remaining mechanical meters in the system.

Discussion:

The Parking Committee reviewed potential adjustments to meter zones during its May 2, 2022 and August 22, 2022 meetings. The Committee recommends removing a total of 159 meters, as detailed in Table 1. Of the 159 spaces, all except 5 located on North Main Street (between Center and Pitman) were installed as part of the meter zone expansion program.

Excluding parking citations and encumbrance permits associated with these spaces, an analysis completed by Staff in May 2022 suggested these spaces would generate approximately \$15,286 of revenue in FY2022. This figure is approximately 1% of total meter revenue generated by the Parking System in FY2022.

Once meters are removed, these spaces will be regulated as free parking with time limits as shown in Table 1, and as set forth in the attached ordinance. Proposed time zones either restore original time limits of said spaces, or match time limits of adjacent free parking zones. Converting these 159 meters to free time zone spaces may result in some attrition from adjacent meter areas; however, the financial impact of potential attrition is challenging to forecast.

Table 1

	Meter Type	Total Metered Spaces	FY2022 Revenue Estimate	Per Space	New Time Zone Regulation Upon Meter Removal
Centre St: Green St to Spring St	Smart Meter	16	\$1,531.13	\$95.70	3 HR
Court St: North Main St to Montgomery St	Smart Meter	9	\$853.53	\$94.84	3 HR
North Main St: Centre to Pitman	Mechanical Meter	5	\$249.59	\$49.92	2 HR
North Main St: Pitman to Court	Smart Meter	8	\$399.34	\$49.92	2 HR
North State St: Chapel St to Court St	Smart Meter	7	\$530.20	\$75.74	10 HR
Pleasant St: Rumford St to Merrimack St	Smart Meter	16	\$505.47	\$31.59	10 HR
South Main St: Thorndike St to Perley St	Mechanical Meter	22	\$4,527.47	\$205.79	10 HR
South St: Fayette St to Thompson St	Smart Meter	14	\$994.27	\$71.02	2 HR
South St: Wall St to Fayette St	Smart Meter	12	\$1,008.07	\$84.01	2 HR
Storrs St: Theatre St to Main St	Smart Meter	50	\$4,687.36	\$93.75	10 HR
<u>Subtotal</u>		<u>159</u>	<u>\$15,286.43</u>	<u>\$96.14</u>	

Smart meters removed locations detailed in Table 1 will be used to replace remaining mechanical meters elsewhere in the system. Before being relocated, harvested smart meters will need to be reprogrammed, and their PayByPhone decals will need to be updated for their new location. Meter poles located on streets which will receive harvested smart meters will also need to be modified (shortened) to receive these smart meters.

Accounting for the 27 mechanical meters to be removed on South Main Street (Thorndike to Perley) and North Main Street (Center to Pitman) as shown in Table 1, only 138 mechanical meters remain in the City system. These proposed meter changes noted in Table 1 will result in 132 smart meters being made available for mechanical meter replacement. Therefore, the Parking Division will use funds in the FY2023 operating budget to purchase six additional smart meters required to achieve full replacement. However, this approach will not result in any spare meters for the system. Therefore, funding requests for spare smart meters will be addressed in the FY2024 Capital Improvement Program.

Costs of new PayByPhone decals, as well as associated miscellaneous expenses related with mechanical meter replacement, will also be funded by the FY2023 Parking Division operating budget.