

Merrimac Street at Atkinson Common Project – Phase I

The Lower Atkinson Common is a popular recreational destination with playing fields and a playground. Limited parking capacity in the area is a significant issue, and the existing angled parking spaces on Merrimac Street cause conflicts with passing traffic and pedestrians and bicyclists. There is no sidewalk on the southern side of the street adjacent to the park, and the narrow existing sidewalk on the northern side is in poor condition and curbing is minimal or missing. Crosswalks are missing at locations such as the Plummer Avenue intersection and the existing crossings lack wheelchair ramps.

The Parks Department and Commission have been pursuing a broader project to address the parking, pedestrian and bicyclist circulation issues through significantly re-configuring and increasing parking capacity by establishing a substantial off-street parking and circulation area within the park. This approach would require the removal and relocation of the old playground as well as potentially the Pioneer League building.

The proposed first step “phase I” project focuses on reconstructing the sidewalks on the northern side of Merrimac Street, and re-aligning and upgrading the crosswalks with curbing bump-outs, ADA-compliant ramps, and solar-powered pedestrian-activated warning devices at the park entrance and Plummer Avenue. The project is intended to be accomplished within the Merrimac street right-of-way in the near term, and provide some momentum towards the broader improvements needed.

TEC estimates the project would cost \$405,000 to construct, and \$70,000 for survey and design. The City has recently applied to the state’s Complete Streets Tier 3 grant program for construction funding. Potential variations (e.g., modification of on-street parking, installation of bicycle lanes, delineation of parking spaces in the park’s gravel lot, installation of shared-use pathways within the park, extent of sidewalk work, etc.) will be discussed and pursued during the design process.



Conceptual Graphic



TEC, Inc.
146 Dascomb Road | 169 Ocean Blvd
Andover, MA 01810 | Hampton, NH 03842

Scale: 1" = 50'
February 14, 2019

Legend
= Concrete Sidewalk
= ADA Wheelchair Ramp

= ADA Detectable Panel
= Landscaped Area

Merrimac Street Pedestrian Accommodation (Phase I)
Complete Streets Prioritization Plan
Newburyport, Massachusetts

