



## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Select Board

**FROM:** Christopher Dillon, Town Manager

**SUBJECT:** Town Manager's Report

**DATE:** February 2, 2026

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### Town Manager

I received questions at the previous Select Board meeting. I have some responses below and the question regarding the breakdown of costs associated with the Town Center project and BETA can be found in under Department of Public Works.

1. I received a question regarding RD Management receiving a permit for the residential units at the mall. The question was how is Avalon able to build when the permit was for RD Management, not Avalon?

The PUD Site Plan Special permit goes with the land, not the owner. That is why it is able to be sold. Developments are frequently sold as “permit-ready” to new owners.

2. Who subdivided the land and is it approved?

The ANR subdivision which created the 8.74-acre residential portion as its own parcel was endorsed by Planning Board in accordance with MGL Subdivision Control Act in April 2022. It was filed with the county: Plan Book 250 49, in May 2022.

### Department of Public Works

- **Boston Road TIP Project:** *The new traffic signals at Boston Rd / Good St have been activated and are currently operating in a 30-day flashing sequence. The signals are tentatively scheduled to be activated for full operation during February school vacation week on 2/17/2026.*
- **Town Center:** *You requested a breakdown of the design fee for the project. The 2022 Fall Town Meeting authorized \$1,000,000 for design services.*

*Design work completed in 2022–2023 was based on the full Town Center project, which included two-way traffic, comprehensive utility undergrounding, and associated improvements.*

*In 2024, after construction funding for the full project was not approved, the design was revised to a scaled-down alternative to meet a construction budget of \$2,150,000. This scope maintained existing traffic patterns, incorporated a shared-use path, and limited utility undergrounding to aerial services crossing the roadway.*

*Design work in 2025 and continuing to the present reflects the addition of funding secured through Congresswoman Trahan. This phase includes implementation of the River Street left-turn lane and signal modifications to align with the revised total project budget of \$3,650,000.*

*Please see attached cost breakdown from our Consultant, BETA Group. They also summarized overall tasks as follows:*

*2023*

- COA roundabout concept February 2023*
- Utility Meeting plan February 2023*
- Proposed Concepts (3) & Historical Review of Common March 13, 2023*
- Traffic Data and O/D submission to town March 2023*
- Revised Town Common Options (2) - 03/20/2023*
- Underground Utilities Preliminary Design March 2023*
- Town Center Parking Options April 2023*
- Town Common Green Space Calculation April 2023*
- Underground Utilities Preliminary Design April 2023*
- MassWorks funding Application May 2023*
- Underground Utilities Preliminary Design May 2023*
- O'Connor Plaza Options – June 2023*
- COA Rendering - July 2023*
- Lighting and Underground Conceptual Design Aug 2023*
- Traffic Design Plans September 2023*
- Town Center Cost Estimate September 2023*
- Roadway Design – Profiles/ Cross-sections Dec 2023*
- Town Center Design Plan Set (working copy) December 2023*

*2024*

- Undergrounding Utility Plan February 2024 (updated per NGRID)*
- Town Center Rendering with UP UG February 2024*
- Town Center Interim Concepts May 2024*
- Town Center Interim Concepts SUP -Revised July 2024*
- River Street Options December 2024*

*2025*

- Reduced Scope Design (no left Turn River St ) April 2025*
- River Street Left Turn Options Rendering November 2025*
- River Street Left Turn Options & Estimate December 2025*
- Town Center Grant Application December 2025*

### **Proposed Topics for Meetings:**

There has been discussion on various topics that are scheduled to come back before the board. However, there are a couple scheduling conflicts which are impacting when some of those will be scheduled. An example is the Town Center discussion with other related topics. DPW Director, Fred Russell, had a conflict with the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. There will likely be a lot of discussion and unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Therefore, this is currently scheduled for the March 2<sup>nd</sup> Select Board meeting. Although this is not a full list of everything that will be scheduled for these meetings, I wanted to provide as much information as I could to show these topics are in the works.

**February 23, 2026:** (Assistant Town Manager, Ann Marie Casey, will take my place for this meeting)

1. Superintendent Tony McIntosh has requested to be placed on the agenda to speak to the Board regarding Shawsheen Tech. For some additional information, the Town Manager's from the participating communities are meeting with Superintendent McIntosh on Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup>.
2. Messaging Signs: During a previous meeting, the board asked about messaging signs. Assistant Town Manager, Ann Marie Casey, has worked with our Building Commissioner on what prohibits the signs and what would have to change or steps we would have to take prior to moving forward with a messaging sign. This is a separate topic from the Champion signs scheduled to be discussed during the February 2<sup>nd</sup> Select Board meeting.

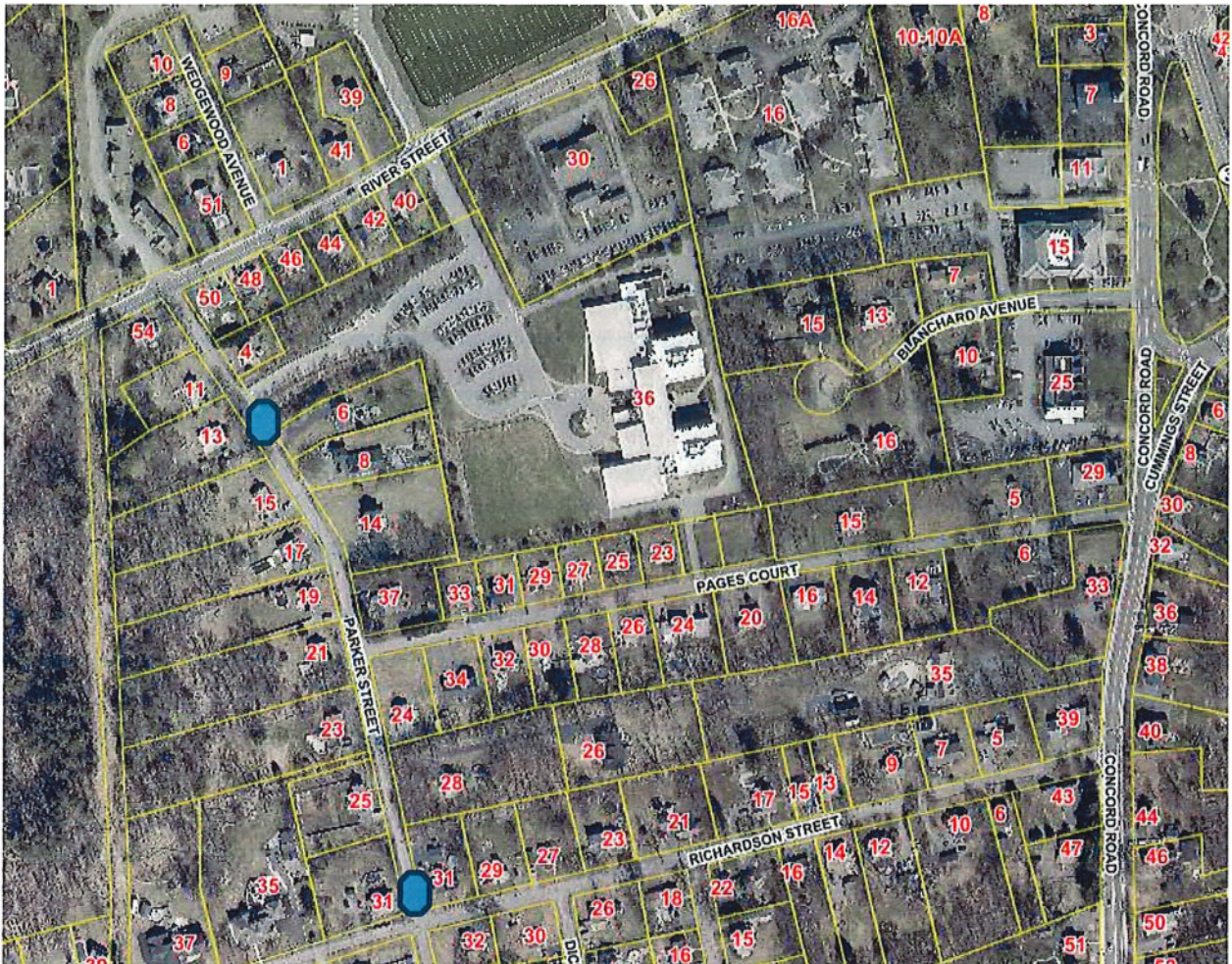
**March 2, 2026:** Not necessarily in this order.

1. Town Center: BETA is the engineering firm working with the Town on the design of the Town Center. You can see from information above, they have completed a lot of tasks since this project was initially discussed. Their latest rendering based on funding and feedback received will be presented to the Board and public on March 2, 2026 for additional discussion and either adoption and/or direction towards additional modifications.
2. Charnstaff Lane: There was discussion during a Board meeting regarding Charnstaff Lane and work that was to be completed. In sitting with staff, they are in agreement that this road could be a great TIP project. However, in order to qualify, this road would need to meet the state standards with bike lanes, sidewalks and driving lanes. In order to capture all these features, the cost increases significantly. Staff would like to have a discussion with the board to explain the options and receive feedback to meet the expectations and goals of the Board.
3. Presenting an overview of the FY2027 budget: After spending the past three weeks with department heads, I have a much better sense of operations and will be prepared to discuss at great length for the March 2, 2026 Select Board meeting.
4. Possible Discussion on Chelmsford Forum: I mentioned in a previous TM Report the Chelmsford Forum is disputing their water bill. I have sent an email asking if they would like to present to the Board/Water Commissioners on March 2<sup>nd</sup> or March 16<sup>th</sup>. Because of the number of topics already scheduled for the March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, I asked if they could do the 16<sup>th</sup> and if not, would the 2<sup>nd</sup> work. I have not received a response from them as of the creation of this report.
5. Parker Street:
  - a. Safe Routes to School

There has been some discussion regarding options for Parker Street and Safe Routes to Schools. These topics will be discussed at greater length on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. DPW has incorporated sidewalks on Parker Street and the surrounding roads into the road program. I believe a sidewalk from River Street to the Parker Street School Driveway will be part of a bid alt in 2027. If bidding is not favorable, it will be completed in 2028. The rest of Parker Street is proposed to receive a sidewalk in 2029, with Pages Court the following year.

Another topic I would like to confirm with the Select Board has to do with the approved signs on Parker Street. At a previous board meeting, the board approved adding no entry signs during certain times just after the elementary school entrance and further down by Richardson Street. Legal Counsel stated the first step in the process to accomplish this, the

board has done. The next step is to advertise in accordance with G.L.c.40, §22. Prior to this advertising, I wanted to confirm with the board that there is no resident waiver in the prohibition. Residents that live in between these two signs will be required to access their residence during the posted times via Pages Court. If the board is ok with this, we will get this advertised and then the signs up ASAP.



### March 16, 2026

1. Chelmsford Forum: Already addressed in #5 above, but leaving this place holder until we hear from them.

### Recreation

**Winter Programs are well underway. One highlight we held recently was our Winter Wonderland Ball.** This was a fun social evening of music, activities, dancing, and dinner for participants with a disability. A great time was had by all!

One other unique program offered was a Moonlight Hike on 1/30. This allowed us to take advantage of the full moon to naturally light the way, while participants snowshoed a two-mile path along the site of the future Yankee Doodle Rail Trail. Big shout out to Marlies Henderson for her efforts in grooming the trail!

The Recreation Center work continues with extensive interior work, including completion of framing and rough-in for trades work. This project continues to move forward on schedule.