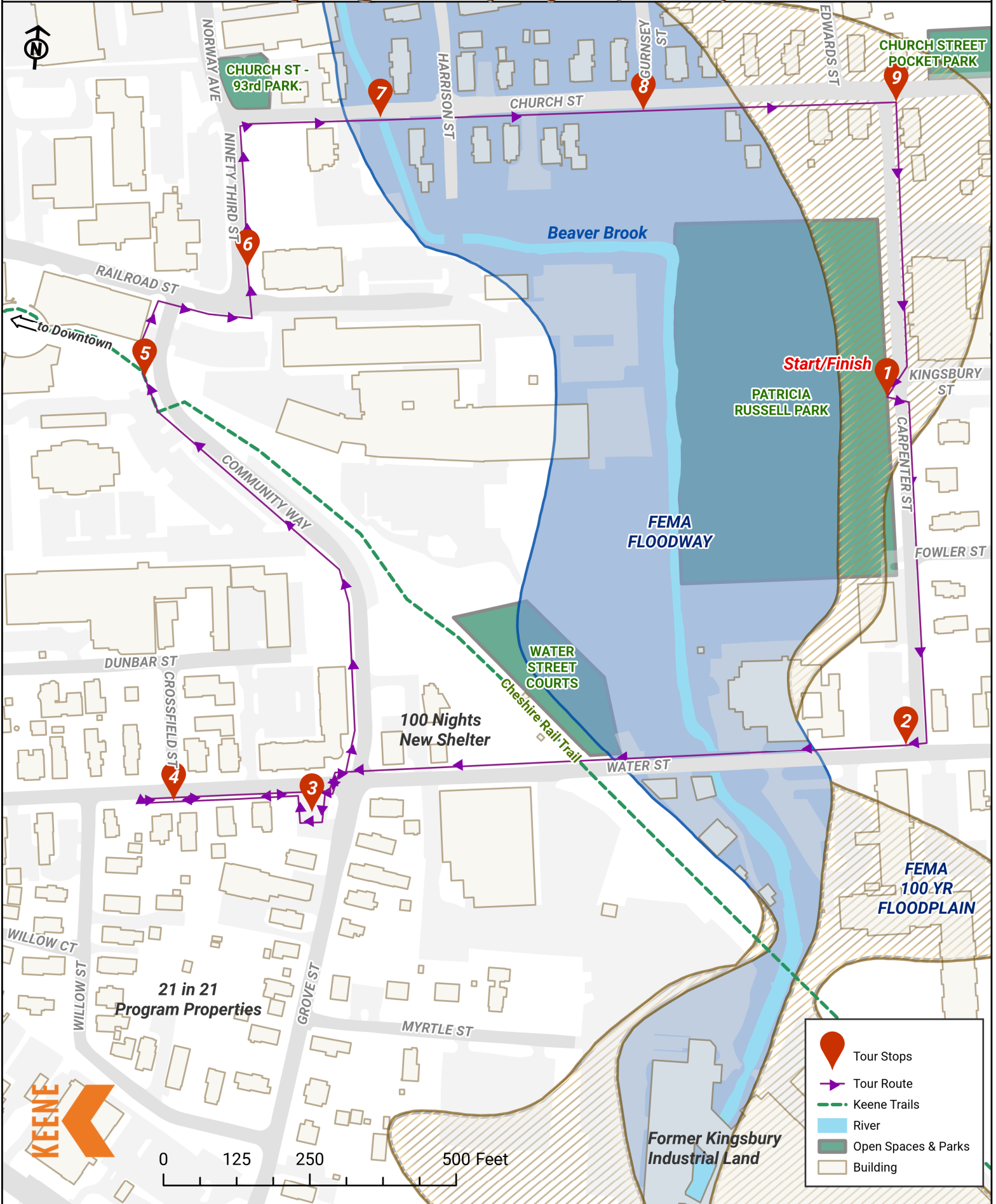








# City of Keene, NH Housing Resiliency Walking Tour Spring 2023 (May 16, 2023)



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-  Open Spaces & Parks
-  Building

# City of Keene Walking Tour

## Tour Stops

- 1. [Patricia T. Russell Park Redevelopment & Carpenter St. Stormwater Resiliency Project](#)** – The final design includes a playground, parking area, public restroom, stream bank restoration, flood storage, and upgraded stormwater infrastructure through the park and along Carpenter St. to reduce surface flooding. The \$3.2 M project was funded through two Land and Water Conservation Fund grants and municipal bonding.
- 2. Findings Property (future city skate park)** – This vacant property was purchased for \$175 K as part of a land swap for a smaller property in the downtown, which will be a mixed-use development with housing. Funding for the skate park will come from money fundraised by the Keene Skate Group, a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant, and municipal budget. The City has also applied for funding to demolish the existing Findings building (Invest NH).
- 3. Hundred Nights Shelter and Cityside Apartments** – Both properties are located on former Railroad land (brownfields site) and went through a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), Phase II ESA, and Remedial Action Plan. Both properties were recently rezoned as downtown form-based districts. The Zoning Code was also updated in 2021 to specifically allow “congregate living and social service uses,” including homeless shelters.
- 4. [21 in 21 Program](#)** – This program is a collaborative effort by and between the City of Keene and Southwestern Community Services (SCS) to invest in working-class/“missing middle” neighborhoods and expand SSC’s current Home Weatherization/Energy Services and Home Rehabilitation programs. The program is funded by New Hampshire Housing, NH utilities (Eversource and Liberty) and tax credits through the CDFA Community Development Investment Program. Target homes for Phase I include single family and small multifamily property owners in Keene’s “East Side” neighborhood.
- 5. Railroad Land Development and Cheshire Rail Trail** – This former railroad right-of-way and switchyard was redeveloped utilizing several different funding sources and programs to build senior and workforce housing, condominium units, office space, a grocery store, restaurant, hotel and more all within walking distance of the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Funding sources for this \$40M+ development included EPA brownfields grants, HUD Community Development Block Grants, USDA Community Facilities Loans, ARRA grants, Northern New England Housing Investment Fund, Private Loans, the City of Keene (TIF and Sewer Fund), and more.
- 6. Ninety-Third Street & Westmill Senior Housing** – The City utilized TIF funding to make streetscape improvements in this area, with ongoing maintenance funded through the City’s parking revenue fund. Affordable housing was developed in an existing former mill (Princess Shoe Factory), and new affordable housing was built for seniors with parking on the ground level. The housing development utilized funding from the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program through New Hampshire Housing.
- 7. Beaver Brook Channelization** – Flooding along this stretch of Beaver Brook has been a recurring problem with major historical flood events occurring in the ‘50s, ‘60s, and ‘70s. The retaining walls along the banks of the brook were built by the Army Corps of Engineers between 1985-87 to control flooding. More recent floods in 2005, 2007, and 2012 have caused significant damage to existing housing stock in Keene’s East Side neighborhood. The City developed a brook restoration plan in 2009 with a goal to return the brook to a more natural state. In addition, the City participates in the FEMA Community Rating System program and has adopted a [Floodplain Ordinance](#) and a [Surface Water Protection Overlay District](#) to mitigate the impact of development on the floodplain and surface waters within the city, including Beaver Brook.
- 8. Church Street neighborhood** – This street was first laid out in 1811 as Beaver St, connecting Main St to Beaver Brook. Development along the street transitioned from mills and commercial businesses in the downtown to residential neighborhoods with working class housing to support factory workers and their families. In 1925, this street was zoned as “Business” from Main St to Carpenter St, “General Residential” for one block, then “Single Family Residential” east of Carpenter St. Today, the zoning transitions from downtown form-based zoning on the west end, to High Density residential, then Medium Density residential. The City is exploring changes to zoning to better match the historical development pattern.
- 9. Church Street Pocket Park** – The City purchased this property through the FEMA repetitive loss program and received a donation from Friends of Open Space to create a pocket park. Formerly the location of a commercial property that experienced repetitive loss from repeated floods.