



VTrans Fall 2022 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Grant Application

Thoroughly read the ***Vermont Transportation Alternatives Fall 2022 Application Guide*** before you begin your application. It includes important program information and step-by-step instructions. Pay particular attention to the application process requirements. **Applications are due in hand or by e-mail by December 14, 2022.** Please e-mail the completed application to: Scott.robertson@vermont.gov

Forest Dale Shared Use Path Scoping Study
(Project Name/Title)

(802) 247-3635 x213
(Phone)

Bill Moore
(Municipality contact person responsible for the management of this project)

bmoore@townofbrandon.com
(e-mail address)

Brandon
(Town)

\$40,000
Amount of **Federal Funds requested** (no more than 80% of the project cost estimate).

05731
(Zip Code)

\$ 10,000

49 Center Street, Brandon, VT 05733
(Mailing Address)

Amount of Local Match. Example:
Federal Award = \$300,000 (80% of total)
Local Match = \$75,000 (20% of total)
Total Project Cost = \$375,000 (100% of the total)

County: Rutland County

Town/Village/City: Brandon

Specific location, street, or road: Forest Dale Senior Center to Brandon Designated Downtown

Regional Planning Commission: RRPC

If a linear project, what is the length in feet? N/A

Is the project on or intersecting to a State maintained highway? Yes No

- *Note: If yes, be sure to include documentation that you have notified the VTrans District Transportation Administrator of the intent to apply for TA funding and have provided them with a brief (one paragraph) description of the proposed project.*

Project type being applied for: **Scoping** **Design/Construction**

The municipality understands that a typical construction project utilizing Transportation Alternatives Program funds will take roughly three years (min.) in the Design and ROW phases prior to going to construction (as pointed out in the TA Program Application Guide)? Yes No

Does this project have a previously completed scoping or feasibility study? Yes No

Note:

Attach a map(s) of the project area and clearly show the limits of the project as well as surrounding benefits from the proposed improvement. If the project is within or adjacent to a designated downtown, village or growth center, clearly indicate the relationship of the proposed project to the boundary of the designated area. Color photos of the area are also recommended.

Fiscal Information:

Accounting System Automated Manual Combination

SAM Unique Identifier # J4C5TNNDUEP3

Fiscal Year End Month June

Property Ownership:

If the proposed project is on private property that will need to be acquired by the Municipality through purchase, easement, or eminent domain (includes temporary construction rights) in accordance with the "Uniform Act", then the municipality is committed to exercising its right of **eminent domain** to acquire the rights to construct the project if necessary. Yes No

Funding:

Does this project already have existing funding? If so, please describe. Yes No

Will you accept an award less than you applied for? Yes No

- If yes, please indicate whether local funds will be used to make up the shortfall, or if the project scope will be reduced. If the project scope is to be reduced, describe what part of the project (please be specific) you would accept partial funding for.

A support letter from the governing body of the applicant municipality or organization and an acknowledgement and source of the local match and commitment to future maintenance responsibility for construction projects is required (must be dated within 1 year of the application). Is a letter of support attached?

Yes No

Regional Planning Commission Letter of Support:

In order to apply, the project must have a letter of support from the regional planning commission. Is a letter of support attached?

Yes No

Application Scoring Criteria:

- 1. Please give a brief description of the project (be sure to indicate the primary facility type being applied for and be concise). (10 points max.)**

The project will provide a scoping study on the feasibility of creating a shared-use path from Forest Dale to Brandon’s designated downtown, either along Forest Dale Road or via an off-street path. Though Brandon’s designated downtown is the densest and most populous area of the town, there is a secondary ‘neighborhood center’ located at Forest Dale with a cluster of residential buildings, religious institutions, commercial properties, the New England Woodcraft office/shipping facility, the Neshobe School and the Brandon Senior Citizens Center. Currently, there is no dedicated and safe bicycle and/or pedestrian connection between Forest Dale and downtown Brandon.

- 2. What is the feasibility of this project? Feasibility (or Scoping) study applications will not be scored on this criterion. Also, please describe the extent of project development completed to date. (10 points max.)**

N/A

- 3. Does this project address a need identified in a local or regional planning document? If so, please describe. (5 points max.)**

This scoping study is listed as an explicit goal in the Neshobe School Travel Plan and aligns with multiple aspects of Brandon’s Town Plan and the Regional Plan. The 2013 Neshobe School Travel Plan calls for the Town to “Evaluate VT Route 73 or other viable bicycling routes between the Brandon town center and Forest Dale Road for ways to improve bicycling conditions.” (pg. 20) The Brandon Town Plan states one of the town’s main goals is “Attract and keep people, businesses, and organizations in Brandon by providing high-quality municipal infrastructure.” (Brandon Town Plan 2016 pg. 14) As walkable and bikeable communities are increasingly desired by young professionals, providing active transportation infrastructure is crucial towards helping to attract younger generations who can contribute to the local economy for decades to come. The plan later clarifies that one type of quality infrastructure that should be planned for is “transportation facilities designed for multiple modes of transportation.” (pg. 84) The potential path also aligns with Brandon’s goals of creating “a physical and social environment in which recreation is a key aspect of healthy community life and daily activity for all Brandon’s residents.” (pg. 60) This is aligned with the Rutland Regional Plan, which lists as a goal developing “transportation alternatives projects that advance multi-modal transportation options.” (pg. 273)

- 4. Does this project benefit a State Designated Center per the link below (i.e., downtowns, villages, or neighborhood growth centers recognized by the Vermont Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development)? (10 Points Max.)**

<http://maps.vermont.gov/ACCD/PlanningAtlas/index.html?viewer=PlanningAtlas>

Yes, the scoping study will investigate connecting Brandon’s Designated Downtown to Forest Dale.

- 5. Provide a project cost estimate below (project costs below include both federal dollars and local dollars). Projects will be scored based on whether the cost appears realistic for the size and scope of the project. For scoping studies, use PE and Local Project Management lines only.**

Note: If you are applying for additional funds for an existing project, show the amount being requested for this grant in the PE, ROW, Construction, Construction Engineering, and Municipal Project Management rows below. Also, be clear regarding total project cost and other funding amounts and sources in the additional funding comments box below. (10 points max.)

Preliminary Engineering (PE)
(Engineering, Surveying, Permitting)

\$ 45,000

Right-of-way / Acquisition (ROW) <i>(appraisals, land acquisition and legal fees)</i>	\$ NA _____
Construction <i>(construction costs with reasonable contingency)</i>	\$ NA _____
Construction Engineering <i>(cost to provide inspection during construction)</i>	\$ NA _____
Municipal Project Management Costs <i>(minimum of 10% of total PE, ROW and Construction Phases).</i>	\$ 5,000 _____
Total Project Cost	\$ \$50,000 _____

Addition Funding Comments: (ex. Total and additional funding for existing projects)

6. Select the eligibility category below (A, B, C or D) that best fits your project and answer the corresponding questions for that category (choose only one category). **10 bonus points will be awarded to projects that are primarily Bicycle or Pedestrian facilities.**

A. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities (includes Safe Routes for Non-Drivers and Conversion of abandoned railroad corridors.

(i) Will the project contribute to a system of pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities? (10 points max.)

The scoping study will contribute greatly to a system of bicycle/pedestrian facilities. Downtown Brandon has an extensive sidewalk network centered around the Route 7/Center Street corridor and Forest Dale has sidewalks down Forest Dale Road, around the Neshobe School as well as on North Street. However, these two discrete sidewalk networks have no connection point. Currently, it is impossible to travel from downtown Brandon to Forest Dale as a cyclist or pedestrian without traveling on roads which lack any dedicated infrastructure.

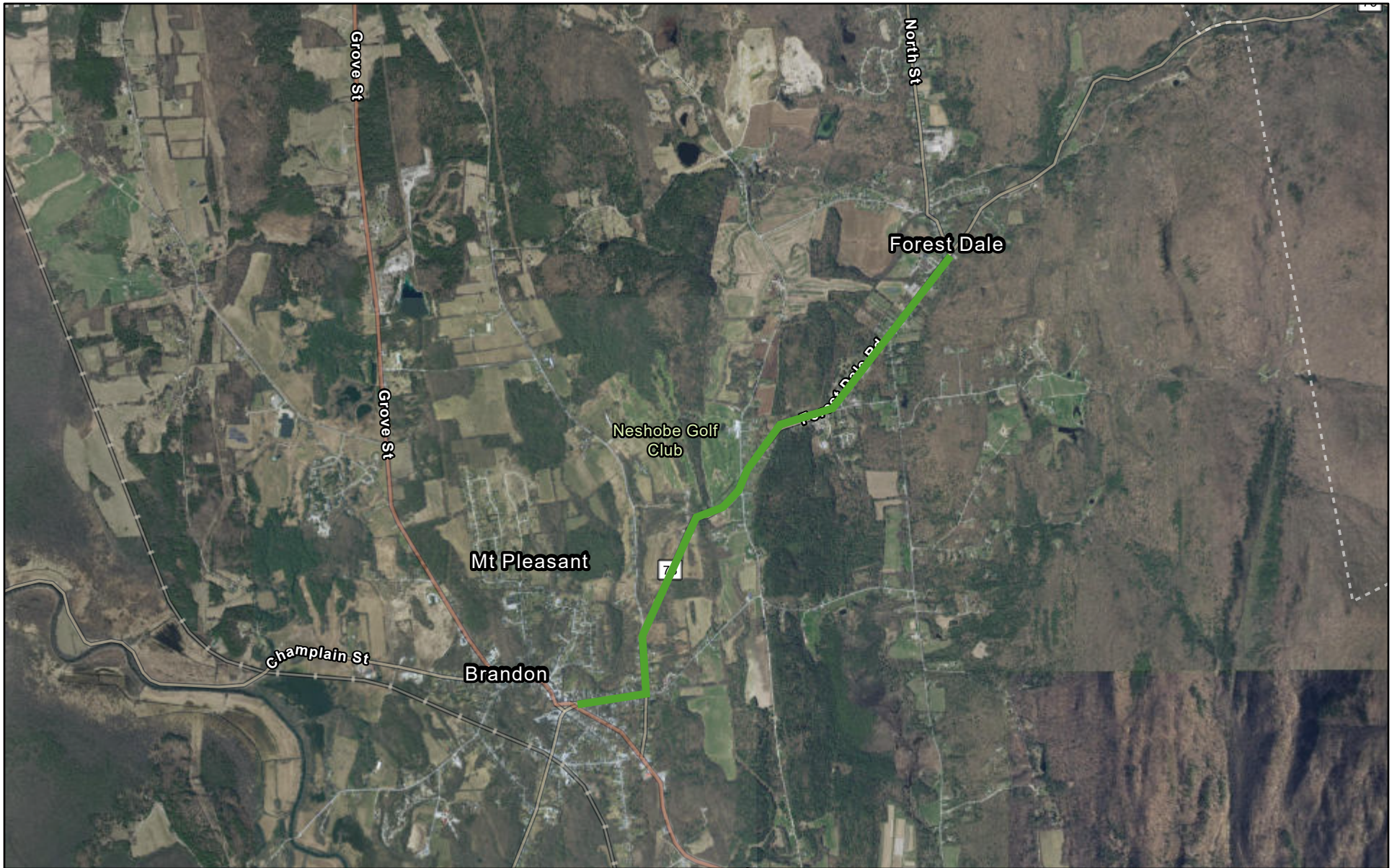
(ii) Will the project provide access to likely generators of pedestrian and/or bicyclist activity? (10 points max.)

The scoping study will look to provide a key connection between Brandon’s largest generator of pedestrian and bicycle traffic, the designated downtown district, and Forest Dale, the second densest cluster of development in the town. The two most notable trip generators in Forest Dale are the Neshobe School and the Brandon Senior Citizens Center, which serve two vulnerable demographics groups (children and older adults) with a higher propensity for walking and biking than the average population.

(iii) Will the project address a known, documented safety concern? (10 points max.)

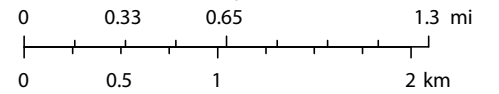
Yes. In the Neshobe School Travel Plan, a parent survey revealed that many parents who live within a mile of the school do not let their children walk to school due partially to concerns about “the volume and speed of the traffic on the road” and “the lack of sidewalks or paths” (pg. 10). From a crash data perspective, the corridor does not appear unsafe, however this obscures the fact that there is a widespread and documented perception in town that the corridor is not safe for bikes or pedestrians which is discouraging potential users.

Forest Dale Potential Path



12/14/2022

1:54,093



VCGI, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, VCGI, Maxar



December 12, 2022

Scott Robertson
Vermont Agency of Transportation
Barre City Place
219 N Main Street
Barre, VT 05641

Dear Scott,

The Town of Brandon is ready to move forward with our next steps around “Building a Better Brandon” We will be working with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, in the person of planner Ethan Pepin, to apply for a Transportation Alternatives Program grant to help fund a scoping study to explore a Downtown Brandon-Forest Dale shared use path.

Since the folding in of Forest Dale into the Town of Brandon, there has been a historical disconnection due to the geography of the town. The residents of Downtown Node and Forest Dale Node have longed for a way to safely walk/ride in either direction. The downtown is the home of the lion’s share of Brandon’s shopping, eating and entertainment opportunities and Forest Dale is home to not only the town’s elementary school but the senior center as well. Connecting these vital community resources with the downtown is a great way to support these vulnerable populations.

Independent of the safety and health issues a shared path would help to mitigate, there is also the economic and recreational benefit to having a miles long path that connects Forest Dale to the new miles of sidewalk in our very walkable downtown.

The town has the financial resources to provide the match which could come from recreation and economic development budgets and/or the select board has indicated that these types of infrastructure projects are, by policy, a perfect fit for the proceeds of our local option tax.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions. I look forward to working with you again!

Cheers,

David J. Atherton

Dave Atherton
Town Manager



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

December 12, 2022

Scott Robertson
Vermont Agency of Transportation
Barre City Place, 219 North Main St. Barre, VT 05641

RE: Letter of Support for Brandon Forest Dale Shared-Use Path Scoping Study

Dear Mr. Robertson,

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) is pleased to offer its support for the Town of Brandon's Forest Dale Shared-Use Path scoping study application to the VTrans Transportation Alternatives Program Grant.

The RRPC is excited to support the Town of Brandon, and recognizes the important transportation benefits the scoping study will provide for the Rutland Region. Brandon's designated downtown and Forest Dale are both mixed-use centers which are walkable, but lack a safe, dedicated bicycle and pedestrian connection. Additionally, Forest Dale is the location of both a school and a senior center making a dedicated connection crucial to help safeguard the most vulnerable road users, as well as providing opportunities for local recreation.

The proposed scoping study not only supports goals of the Brandon Town Plan but also supports economic, health and wellness, and transportation goals of the 2018 Rutland Regional Plan. The RRPC fully supports the Town of Brandon's dedication to planning and urges VTrans to fund this planning effort.

The RRPC fully supports the Town and strongly encourages VTrans to fund the Forest Dale Shared-Use Path scoping study. Thank you for the consideration and supporting our community partners.

Thank You,

Ethan Pepin
Transportation Planner

The Opera House | 67 Merchants Row | Rutland, Vermont
P.O. Box 430 | Rutland, Vermont 05702
RutlandRPC.org | (802) 775-0871

COOPERATIVE PLANNING IN THE REGION