MECHANIC STREET PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALK SCOPING STUDY NORTH BENNINGTON STP BP13(22)

VILLAGE OF NORTH BENNINGTON, VT

May 29, 2015

Submitted to:
James Sullivan, Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
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Presented By:

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SECTION 1: SUMMARY

The objective of this project is to create a safe and accessible route for pedestrians to travel along Mechanic Street to the Village Center and the Village School. The study area extends from Prospect Street east to the North Bennington Cemetery. The study includes an evaluation of the north and south sides of Mechanic Street. The study area was broken into three segments for evaluation, as follows:

- Segment 1: Prospect Street to North Street
- Segment 2: North Street to Frederick Street
- Segment 3: Frederick Street to the North Bennington Cemetery

Characteristics of each segment and alternative were reviewed including right-of-way widths, roadway features, traffic data, historic/archeological features, natural resources and other environmental impacts. There were no environmental impacts identified for any of the alternatives.

An Archeological Resource and Historic Preservation Assessment was completed, which indicated that the project area is archeologically sensitive due to a high potential for precontact and historic deposits and features. When the proposed route is further defined during final design, the potential for archaeological impacts should be reviewed again. This review would consist of conducting a Phase 1B archeological investigation.

The project was discussed at a Local Concerns meeting. As a result of this meeting, the following Purpose and Need Statement was developed:

> *Purpose: Increase pedestrian safety and accessibility for residents of the Village seeking to walk to the Village Center and for school children who walk from residential neighborhoods to the Village School.*
>
> *Need: The lack of safe and accessible pedestrian facilities in this area causes pedestrians to walk within the road's traveled way at times, which is dangerous. Due to the significant public use of this area, safe and accessible pedestrian facilities are a necessity.*

After the Local Concerns meeting, alternatives were developed based on design criteria and local input. This development included identification of potential grass strip and curbing locations, drainage improvements and crosswalk locations. The alternatives were compared on the basis of cost, impacts to historic and archeological features, permitting requirements and locally identified critical elements.

The alternatives were discussed at an Alternatives Presentation. The discussions focused on the specifics of each alternative, including traffic calming, curbing and on-street parking. The participants showed support for a continuous sidewalk along the south side of Mechanic Street. There was also interest in a sidewalk on the north side of Mechanic Street from Prospect Street to North Street, with a crosswalk, and possibly a three-way stop, at the

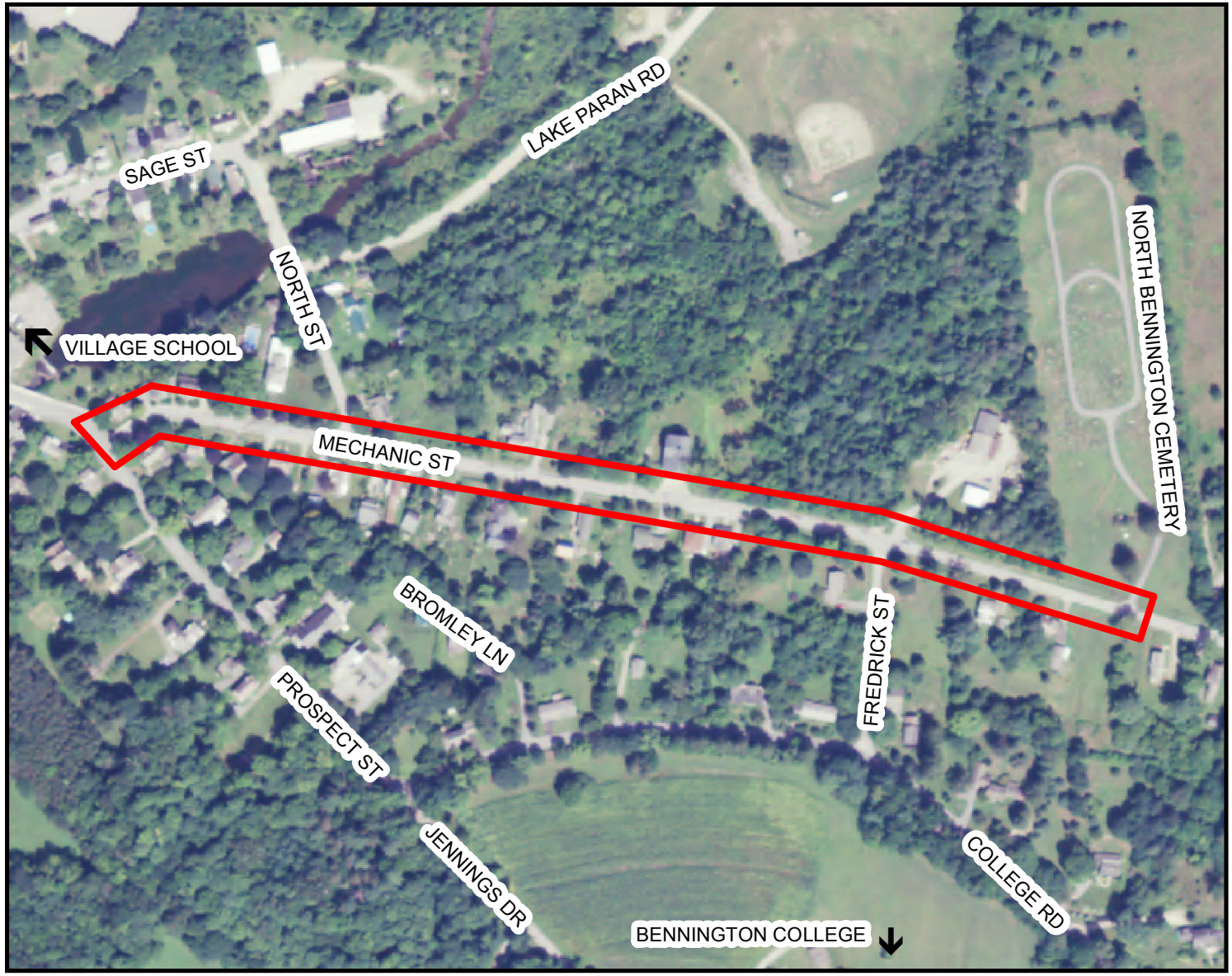
intersection with North Street. Upon completion of the presentation, the preferred alternative was identified as a continuous sidewalk along the south side of Mechanic Street and a sidewalk on the north side of Mechanic Street from Prospect Street to North Street.

The preferred alternative was further developed to include recommendations for crosswalk locations, traffic calming, access management and drainage improvements. Approximately 1,930 linear feet of 5-foot wide sidewalk is proposed on the south side of Mechanic Street, with an additional 440 linear feet of 5-foot wide sidewalk proposed on the north side of Mechanic Street. The estimated total project cost for these improvements with concrete sidewalk is $560,000 based on a 2015 construction cost estimate of $395,000. The estimated total project cost for the Mechanic Street sidewalk with asphalt sidewalk is $440,000 based on a 2015 construction cost estimate of $275,000. Based on funding under the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, the local share of the total project cost is $56,000 for concrete sidewalk or $44,000 for asphalt sidewalk. However, other funding programs have different local match requirements.

Additionally, the construction and total project cost estimates were separated by segment. This information will assist the Village if they choose to construct the project in phases. The costs by segment can be found in Section 4 of this report. If the project is anticipated to be phased, it may be beneficial to consider locally funding the design and construction of Segment 3 as this would significantly reduce the total project cost by eliminating the federal funding requirements and eliminating the local project management costs. When VTrans funding is used there are several federal funding requirements that can increase the total project cost. When local funding is used, these federal funding requirements are not necessary. Additionally, the schedule is significantly shorter when local funding is used.

Upon local endorsement of this study, it is recommended that the Village apply to the VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program for design and construction funds to implement the sidewalk project. It is recommended that at least Segments 1 and 2 be designed and constructed as a single project in order to reduce the total project costs.

FIGURE 2-1
PROJECT STUDY AREA



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According to local knowledge, there was a pedestrian sidewalk along the south side of Mechanic Street between Prospect Street and Frederick Street many years ago; however, there is no visible evidence of marble slabs, concrete or pavement. The Village of North Bennington has maintained a plowed path in this location in the winter for several years. In the summer, the worn grass and exposed dirt path is evidence of heavy foot traffic.

Photo 2-2: Existing foot path on Mechanic Street

Natural and Cultural Resources

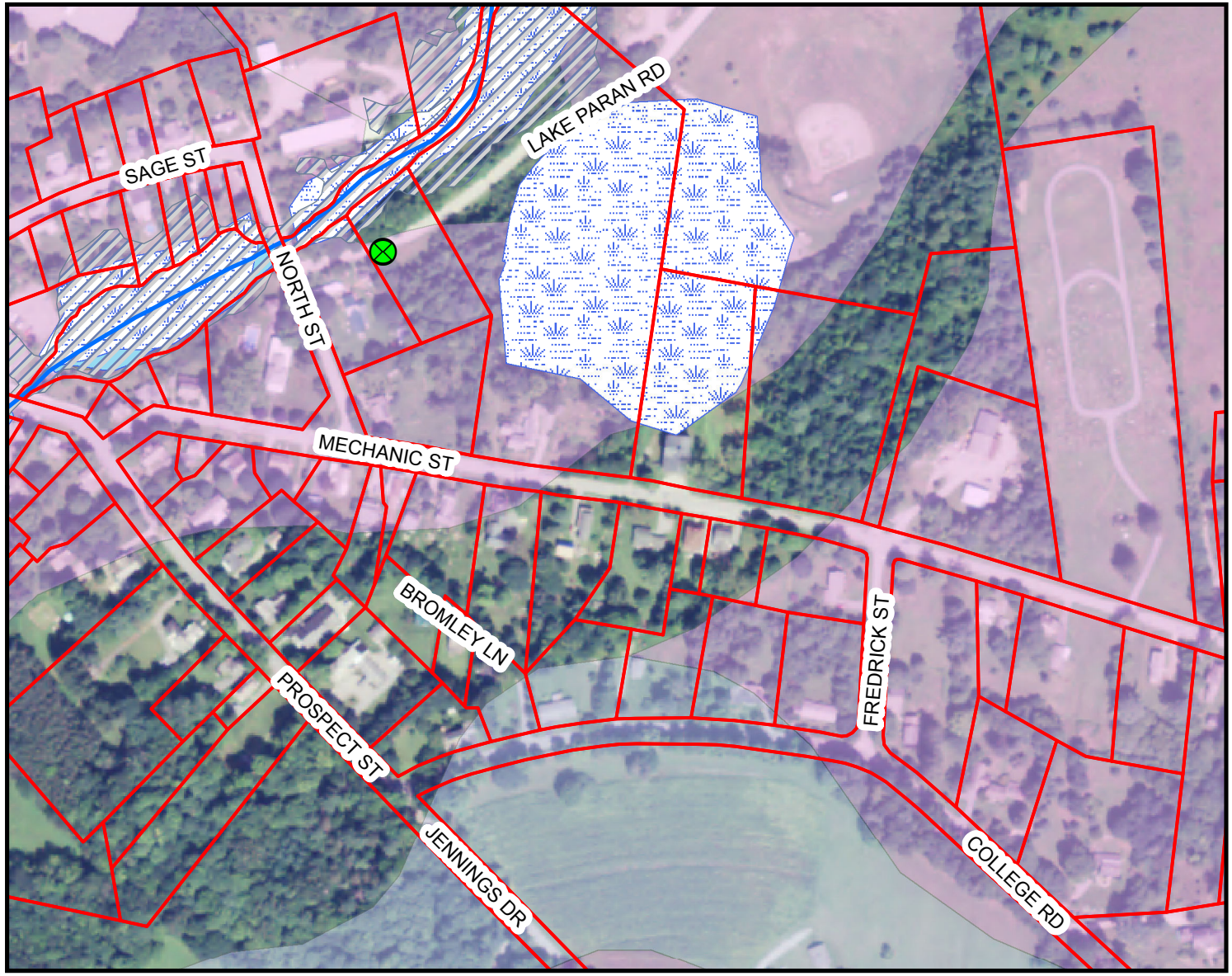
The following Geographical Information System (GIS) data was compiled from the Agency of Natural Resources and the Vermont Center for Geographic Information:

- Wetlands
- Surface Water
- Floodplains
- Endangered Species
- Flora/Fauna
- Stormwater
- Hazardous Wastes
- Forest Land
- Agricultural Land
- Public Land

The GIS mapping is shown in Figure 2-3. There are several resources near the project area; however, the only mapped resource within the study area is Statewide agricultural soil. However, as sidewalk improvements would be located within close proximity to the edge of the road and within the Village right-of-way, the soils impacted would likely be previously disturbed soils. Based on discussions with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, the sidewalk project would have no impact to the agricultural soils. The correspondence with the Agency of Agriculture is included in Appendix A for reference.

An Archeological Resource and Historic Preservation Assessment was completed in January 2015 by Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. The report indicates the project area is in an archeologically sensitive location due to the potential for precontact and historic deposits and features in undisturbed areas. The project area is partially located within the historic district of North Bennington. The report describes that there are eighteen structures that are included in the National Register and an additional six structures that have previously been surveyed by the Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey. Additionally, there are historic features, such as a gravel path, possible carriage blocks, walkways and walls associated with these

FIGURE 2-3
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES



N

Legend

- Parcels (Tax Map)
- Stream
- Surface Water
- Hazardous Waste Site
- Wetland
- FEMA Flood Zone
- Prime Ag Soil
- Statewide Soil

0 150 300 600 Feet

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structures that are located in or directly adjacent to the project area. The report notes that these features are part of the historic landscape and may be associated with subsurface features or deposits.

As the proposed alignment is further defined during final design, the potential archeological impacts should be reviewed again, which may include documenting existing historic features and performing a Phase 1B archeological investigation for any historic features to be disturbed. The complete report is included as Appendix B.

Right-of-Way

The public road right-of-way (ROW) is not documented in the land records. As such, the land surveyor reviewing this project recommended using a ROW width of 49.5 feet, or 3 rods, for the purpose of this study and verifying the ROW width during the final design phase by attempting to locate field monuments. The property boundaries for the parcels adjacent to the study area are shown in Figure 2-4.

Utilities

There are multiple utilities within the study area including the following:

- Municipal water system along the north side of Mechanic Street.
- Municipal sewer system along the center of Mechanic Street.
- Municipal storm drain system along the south side of Mechanic Street as shown in Figure 2-5.
- Utility poles with electric, telephone and cable wires (owned by Fairpoint) throughout the project area as shown in Figure 2-5.

The municipal water and sewer systems and the utility poles should not be impacted by the proposed sidewalk alignments. There will likely be minor impacts to the municipal storm drain system due to curb installation. These impacts would improve stormwater runoff collection.

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MATCHLINE - FIGURE 2-4B

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Project #	7140027
Project Mgr.	C.M.HASKINS
Design	C.M.HASKINS
Drawn	C.M.HASKINS
Checked by	N.R.JOHNSON
Date	MARCH 2015
Scale	1"=200'
Approved by	C.M.HASKINS

MECHANIC STREET SCOPING STUDY
NORTH BENNINGTON STP BP13(22)

RIGHT-OF-WAY AND PARCEL MAPPING

NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

2-4A

DWG. NO. Basemap.dwg

SHEET 1 OF 2

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JENNIFER L. WREN
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NORTH BENNINGTON, VT
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TM# 15-50-23
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MATCHLINE - FIGURE 2-4A

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MECHANIC STREET SCOPING STUDY
NORTH BENNINGTON STP BP13(22)

RIGHT-OF-WAY AND PARCEL MAPPING

NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

2-4B

DWG. NO. Basemap.dwg

SHEET 2 OF 2

FILE: M:\CADD Files\North Bennington VT\Mechanic Street\Basemap.dwg Mar 18, 2015 - 6:02pm

FIGURE 2-5
STORM DRAIN STRUCTURES AND UTILITY POLES

N

Legend

- Utility Pole
- Drainage Structure

0 150 300 600 Feet

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SECTION 3: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Developing a Purpose and Need Statement requires obtaining input from multiple sources, reviewing the existing characteristics of the area and reviewing local and regional plans to identify the relationship of the planned improvements to these plans.

A Project Kick-off Meeting was held with the Village of North Bennington Board of Trustees and the Highway Department to discuss the project and identify possible alternatives. The information obtained at this meeting was used to prepare for the public meetings. One concept alternative discussed at this meeting included a sidewalk along the south side of Mechanic Street. The group encouraged the use of curbing and a green strip.

Local Concerns Meeting

A Local Concerns Meeting was conducted on December 9, 2014 to discuss the project and obtain input from the public regarding the purpose and need for the project. A copy of the meeting minutes is included as Appendix C.

The meeting was well attended and the public expressed strong support for the project. The participants discussed the increased pedestrian traffic along Mechanic Street by both children and college students. Safety of pedestrian traffic was discussed with specific mention of high vehicular speeds. Some of the participants noted a desire to maintain the ability to park on the street. Occasionally vehicles park partially in the street and partially on the grass; however there is no delineated on-street parking. There is one location at 33 and 35 Mechanic Street where there is a gravel parking area that provides sufficient space for parallel parking along the street.

The project area was reviewed and the concept identified at the kick-off meeting was discussed briefly. The participants expressed concern regarding the potential sidewalk location on the south side of Mechanic Street due to drainage issues on many properties along the south side of the street. The drainage issues appear to be caused by water draining to the north from the College Road area. They voiced concern that the drainage issues would not be addressed and potentially be worsened.

Purpose and Need Statement

After the Local Concerns Meeting, the following Purpose and Need Statement was developed based on input from the Trustees and the public:

> *Purpose: Increase pedestrian safety and accessibility for residents of the Village seeking to walk to the Village Center and for school children who walk from residential neighborhoods to the Village School.*
>
> *Need: The lack of safe and accessible pedestrian facilities in this area causes pedestrians to walk within the road's traveled way at times, which is dangerous. Due to the significant public use of this area, safe and accessible pedestrian facilities are a necessity.*

Alternatives Presentation

An Alternatives Presentation was conducted on February 10, 2015 to present the alternatives, obtain input from the public regarding the proposed alternatives and select an alternative. A copy of the meeting minutes is included as Appendix D. A summary of the comments received at the Alternatives Presentation is included in Section 4.

Public Informational Meeting

A Public Informational Meeting was held on May 12, 2015 to present the draft report and solicit input from the public. A copy of the meeting minutes is included as Appendix E.

Relationship to Local and Regional Plans

The North Bennington Village Plan and the Bennington County Regional Commission Plan both contain goals, policies and recommendations in support of the proposed improvements. The North Bennington Village Plan contains language in Chapter 8, Transportation, as follows:

- The Village should prepare and maintain a five-year roadway and sidewalk improvement plan that includes priorities, costs and proposed funding sources.
- Roadways are important public spaces and should include attractive landscaping and pedestrian amenities.
- Continue to apply for and use Transportation Enhancement grants to improve the Village's transportation infrastructure and related facilities and resources.

The Village Plan also identifies preferred sidewalk components in Section 8.4 as follows:

- Sidewalks within the Village's Historic Districts must be carefully integrated with the architecture and site features of the area.
- A green strip between the curb and sidewalk should be included when feasible and crosswalks should be carefully sited at locations which are visible and where vehicle speeds are not excessive.

The Bennington County Regional Commission Plan contains the following policies and actions in Sections 9.3 and 9.7:

- Encourage the development and maintenance of safe pedestrian pathways in villages, hamlets, neighborhoods and all areas of concentrated residential or commercial development.
- Transportation planning should encourage healthful and environmentally sound activities.
- In village and urban areas, sidewalks should be sited and planned so as to offer convenient and pleasant travel routes between adjacent commercial areas while connecting to nearby residential neighborhoods.
- In rural residential areas, sidewalks or footpaths should be located alongside busy roads to provide a safe travel route for pedestrians.

Both the Village Plan and the Regional Plan support the sidewalk project.

SECTION 4: EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

There are several factors that influence the development of alternatives, including public input, existing pedestrian facilities and existing conditions. The critical elements defined by the review of existing conditions and local input are as follows:

1. Maximize the use of existing pedestrian facilities.
2. Avoid adverse effects on existing drainage issues for properties south of Mechanic Street and preferably improve conditions.
3. Improve roadway drainage.
4. Utilize green strips where possible.

The development of alternatives was also guided by regulatory standards including the following:

- Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design

In order to develop alternatives for the project, the study area was divided into three segments as follows:

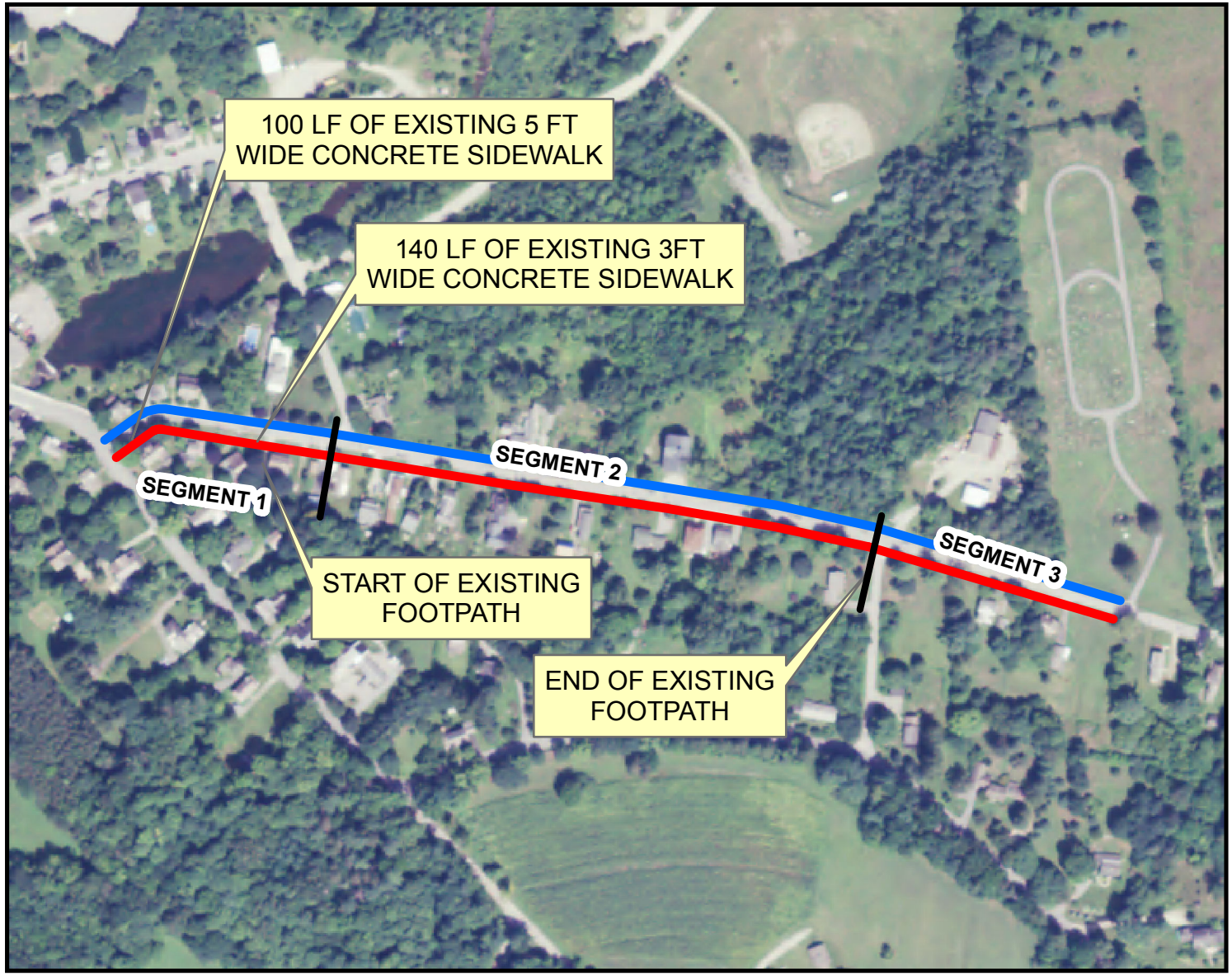
- Segment 1: Prospect Street to North Street
- Segment 2: North Street to Frederick Street
- Segment 3: Frederick Street to the North Bennington Cemetery.

In each of these segments, two alignment alternatives were considered. The two alignment alternatives are the north side and south side of Mechanic Street, as shown in Figure 4-1. All alternatives include a five foot wide sidewalk. Some alternatives include a green strip and/or curbing, depending on the specific segment characteristics. The proposed alternative typical cross sections A, B and C are shown in Figure 4-2. In addition, a mandatory “no build” alternative was considered.

The options for sidewalk material include Portland cement concrete and bituminous concrete (asphalt). Concrete sidewalks tend to be more durable than asphalt sidewalks; however the concrete should be treated with a sealant to protect it from salt. Asphalt sidewalks will likely need to be replaced more frequently than concrete. Concrete also provides a strong visual delineation of pedestrian areas at driveway crossings, whereas asphalt sidewalks do not. In regard to cost, concrete is typically more expensive than asphalt.

The options for curb materials include granite and concrete (cast-in-place, precast or bituminous). Granite is more durable and requires little to no maintenance. Concrete curbs can be easily damaged by vehicles and plows and will require more frequent replacement than granite. In regard to cost, granite is more expensive than concrete. Based on local input, the preferred curb material is granite and the decision on sidewalk material will likely depend on cost. As such, construction cost estimates for both concrete and asphalt sidewalk will be provided for the preferred alternative.

FIGURE 4-1
ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENTS



N

Legend

North Alignment

South Alignment

0 150 300 600 Feet

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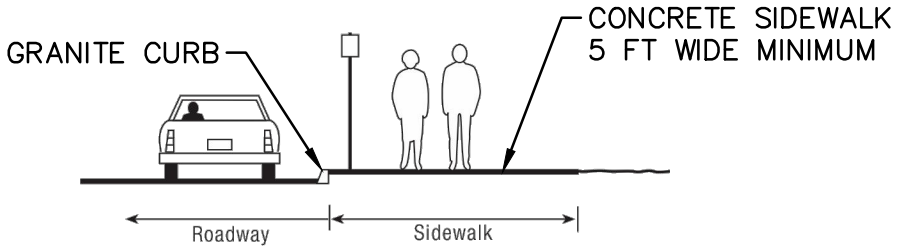
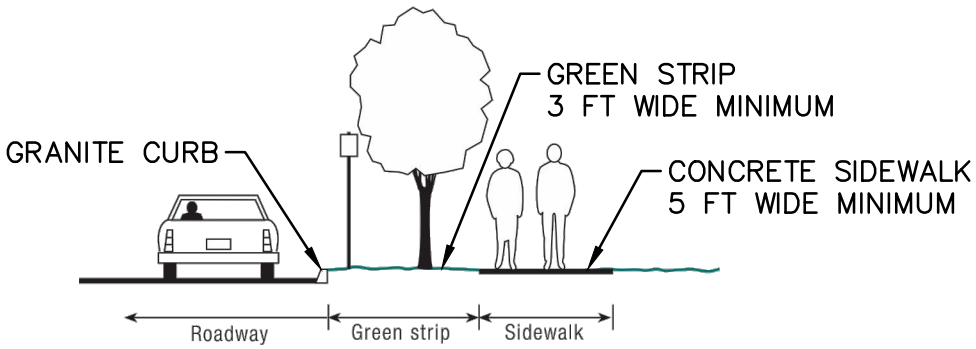
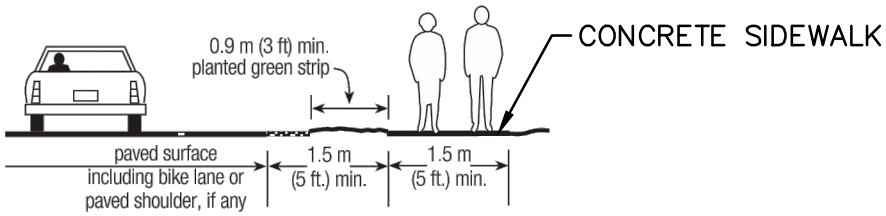


TYPICAL SECTION A: SIDEWALK ADJACENT TO ROAD



TYPICAL SECTION B: SIDEWALK AND GREEN STRIP WITH CURB



TYPICAL SECTION C: SIDEWALK AND GREEN STRIP

NOTE:
THESE SCHEMATICS ARE ADAPTED FROM FIGURES 3-5 AND 3-16 IN THE VTRANS PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITY PLANNING AND DESIGN MANUAL.

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MECHANIC STREET SCOPING STUDY

FIGURE 4-2
ALTERNATIVE CROSS SECTIONS

NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

PROJECT NO. 7140027
PROJECT MJR. CMH
SCALE NOT TO SCALE
DATE MARCH 2015
DRAWING NO. STP BP13(22)

Table 4-4:
Comparison of Cost Factors

	Estimated Sidewalk Length	Estimated Curb Length	Additional Cost Factors
Segment 1:			
Northern Alignment	440	390	Sidewalk demolition
Southern Alignment	440	90	
Segment 2:			
Northern Alignment	980	0	Fill for leveling
Southern Alignment	1,050	880	Adjustment of catch basin rims, additional catch basin
Segment 3:			
Northern Alignment	500	0	
Southern Alignment	460	0	
No Build:			
No Build	0	0	No future maintenance cost

Based on the similar sidewalk lengths for each segment, the main difference in cost will likely be the use of curbing and any additional cost factors. In Segment 1, the northern alignment will likely cost more than the southern due to the additional curb length. In Segment 2, the southern alignment will likely cost more than the northern due to the use of curb and drainage considerations. In Segment 3, the alignments will likely be very similar in cost. In the "no build" alternative, there would actually be a maintenance cost decrease for the Village as there would no longer be a cost associated with plowing the walkway.

However, without a full project defined, the individual segment costs would be unreliable as there are other factors that will add to the cost of the total project. For example, depending on the preferred alternative for each segment, there will be at least one, and possibly up to four, crosswalks required. As such, specific cost estimates are not provided for each alternative. A detailed cost estimate is provided for the preferred alternative later in this section.

Permitting Requirements:

Sidewalk projects do not typically require significant permitting. Since all alternatives are fairly similar in scope and typically have similar impacts in regard to permitting, Table 4-5 applies to all alternatives. As shown in Table 4-5, there are no State permits or approvals anticipated for this project. If Federal funding is utilized, an environmental analysis will be required in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). It is likely that the project would qualify for a Categorical Exclusion as it is not anticipated to have a significant effect upon natural and cultural resources, nor a significant environmental impact.

TABLE 4-5
PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

Permit or Approval	Required?	Notes
Act 250	No	Less than 10 acres, no previous permit
Agency of Agriculture	No	No undisturbed agricultural soils impacted
Construction General Permit	No	Less than 1 acre disturbed area
Fish and Wildlife Division	No	No Threatened/Endangered species impacted
Stream Alteration	No	No streams impacted
Stormwater Discharge Permit	No	Less than 1 acre of new impervious
19 VSA 1111 Access Permit	No	No State roads impacted
Waste Management Division	No	No hazardous waste sites impacted
Wetland Permit	No	No wetlands impacted

Alternatives Presentation

The alternatives described in this section were discussed at the Alternatives Presentation Meeting. The critical design elements were reviewed and each alternative was briefly described. The participants discussed concerns regarding high vehicular traffic speeds on Mechanic Street and questioned if crosswalks would slow traffic. There was a suggestion to consider the use of stop signs at the crosswalk locations. Another key topic included the location of curbing and parking. It was noted that the current "on-street" parking makes it difficult to maintain grass in the green strip and curbing would prevent parking in the green strip. However, full length curbing throughout all segments would change the drainage pattern and likely require the installation of new drainage structures. Therefore, curbing is proposed in Segment 2 on the south side of Mechanic Street from Frederick Street to 19 Mechanic Street and at locations in Segment 1 where the sidewalk is directly adjacent to the road.

The participants showed support for a continuous sidewalk along the south side of Mechanic Street. However, there was also support for a crosswalk at the intersection with North Street due to high pedestrian activity, which spurred discussion regarding replacement of the existing sidewalk along the north side of Mechanic Street from Prospect Street to North Street. There participants supported the concept of replacing the existing sidewalk on the north side in addition to installing sidewalk on the south side.

Preferred Alternative

Based on input from the Alternatives Presentation, the following segment alternatives were identified as the preferred alternatives and will be combined to form the preferred alternative for the project.

- Segment 1: Combination of Northern and Southern alignments
- Segment 2: Southern Alignment
- Segment 3: Southern Alignment

The preferred alternative was chosen for multiple reasons, which are summarized as follows:

1. The area surrounding the Mechanic Street and North Street intersection is a high pedestrian traffic area.
2. The majority of pedestrians to be served by the proposed sidewalk facility either live on the south side of Mechanic Street or travel from Frederick Street, which is located off the south side of Mechanic Street.
3. The public participants and board members felt that if the sidewalk crossed Mechanic Street too many times, pedestrians would not use it and instead would make their own path or walk on the road.
4. There is minimal impact to physical features on the south side of Mechanic Street due to the existing pathway.
5. There is the opportunity for improved drainage on the south side of Mechanic Street due to the installation of curbing.

The preferred alternative is summarized as follows:

- Prospect Street to North Street:
  - 5-foot wide sidewalk on both sides of Mechanic Street
  - Sidewalk directly adjacent to the road on the north side with granite curbing (typical section A)
  - Sidewalk directly adjacent to the road on the south side with granite curbing until the first utility pole east of Prospect Street (typical section A)
  - Sidewalk set back from road with a green strip from first utility pole east of Prospect Street for remainder (typical section C)
  - Crosswalk to be considered on the western side of the intersection with North Street
- North Street to Frederick Street:
  - 5-foot wide sidewalk on south side of Mechanic Street
  - Sidewalk set back from road with a green strip (typical section C)
  - Granite curbing from 19 Mechanic Street to Frederick Street (typical section B)
  - New catch basin at 25 Mechanic Street
  - Crosswalk required across Frederick Street
- Frederick Street to North Bennington Cemetery:
  - 5-foot wide sidewalk on south side of Mechanic Street
  - Sidewalk set back from road with a green strip (typical section C)
  - Crosswalk required across Mechanic Street at cemetery entrance

The new sidewalk should be located in the same alignment as the existing pathway. As the new sidewalk will be wider than the existing pathway, the new sidewalk should be located using a “best fit” method to minimize impact to physical features and utility poles.

Design Considerations for the Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative is summarized above; however, there are some additional design considerations that will need to be evaluated during final design. These design considerations include traffic calming, access management and drainage improvements.

Traffic Calming:

Local input during the public meetings has indicated that there is a desire for traffic calming on Mechanic Street. This study did not include a survey of speeding violations on Mechanic Street; however there was a consensus amongst the meeting attendees that Mechanic Street is used as a short cut from New York to Route 7 and that vehicles frequently exceed the speed limit. Traffic calming can be approached using physical features, pavement markings and signage. Physical features include concepts such as bulb-outs and speed bumps/tables that encourage or require drivers to slow down. These features typically have an impact on snow removal and street sweeping efforts and may require the installation or relocation of drainage structures. The cost of physical features can vary depending on the type and scale; however, they are typically more expensive than pavement markings and signage.

Pavement markings can aid in traffic calming by visually restricting the travel area, changing the perception of speed or reminding the driver to slow down. Some pavement markings can deter from aesthetics in the summer and be covered up in the winter. Drivers can also become used to pavement markings and ignore them after some time has passed. A good, low cost option for traffic calming on Mechanic Street may be the use of lane striping. When a center line and “fog” (white) lines are added, they can be spaced to make the travel lane appear narrower, without actually narrowing the pavement. Lane narrowing or its perception tends to decrease vehicle speed. In the case of Mechanic Street where the pavement allows for approximately 10 foot wide travel lanes, the fog lines could be placed approximately 9-9.5 feet from the center line to create the appearance of a narrower travel lane.

Signage for traffic calming can extend beyond speed limit signs. Pedestrian activity signs can provide traffic calming by indicating to the driver a need to be cautious due to possible pedestrian and/or bicycle activity. The preferred alternative will require three crosswalks. These crosswalks would be located in the following areas:

1. Across Mechanic Street on the west side of the intersection with North Street
2. Across Frederick Street at the intersection with Mechanic Street
3. Across Mechanic Street at the entrance to the cemetery

The crosswalks across Mechanic Street will require crosswalk signage at the crosswalk and in advance of the crosswalk. However, there is a local concern that crosswalks and related signage will not slow down the traffic on Mechanic Street. This concern was raised at a public meeting, along with a request to consider the use of stop signs at crosswalks. The crosswalk across Frederick Street would be located at an existing stop sign; however, the crosswalks across Mechanic Street would not be located at existing stop signs. According to the Board of Trustees, a new stop sign may be installed after conducting an engineering study to determine if a particular location meets the safety and traffic requirements needed for a stop sign.

State law requires that the State and municipalities follow the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) when installing signs. Based on a review of MUTCD Section 2B.04, it does not appear that stop signs would be warranted at the crosswalk locations on Mechanic Street. The factors considered in determining intersection control include traffic volumes, number of approaches, approach speeds, sight distance and crash history. The location of the

proposed crosswalk at the cemetery entrance does not meet any of the requirements for the placement of a stop sign. The location of the proposed crosswalk at the intersection of Mechanic Street and North Street meets the requirements for a stop sign on North Street, which currently exists. Detailed traffic counts for this intersection would need to be collected to determine if stop signs on Mechanic Street are warranted; however, it is unlikely that this location will meet the requirements for a multi-way stop. If a full determination for this intersection is desired, an engineering study with detailed traffic counts may be performed during final design. It is important to note that MUTCD specifically states that stop signs are not to be used for traffic calming purposes.

It is recommended that a combination of pavement markings and signage be utilized for traffic calming. The pavement markings should include a center line and fog lines from Prospect Street to Frederick Street. As the existing road is approximately 20-feet wide, the fog lines should be painted to allow for 9-foot travel lanes with a 1-foot shoulder on each side. The signage should include pedestrian crossing signage at each crosswalk location, as per MUTCD.

Access Management:

Access management is the process of reviewing existing driveway locations and widths in order to improve safety and traffic flow. VTrans Standard B-71 provides typical widths for residential and commercial driveways. For the preferred alternative, there is a single area of concern, which is located at 33 and 35 Mechanic Street. Each property appears to have a dedicated driveway; however, there is also a paved parking lane in front of the two properties. This 100 foot long parking lane creates a safety hazard for pedestrians as the vehicles are basically parking in the sidewalk alignment causing pedestrians to walk in the road. There are two main alternatives in this case:

Photo 4-5: Access at 33-35

1. Eliminate the parking lane and install the sidewalk with a green strip matching the typical cross section to the east and west.
2. Keep the parking lane and install a raised sidewalk south of and directly adjacent to the parking lane.

If the driveways do not provide sufficient parking space for these properties, the Village may choose to install a parking lane as described in alternative 2 above. The parking lane should be between 8 and 10 feet wide, depending on the available space. This alternative may require the sidewalk width to be reduced to 4 feet due to the location of concrete stairs for 33 Mechanic Street and a stone wall for 35 Mechanic Street. In addition, the bottom step to 35 Mechanic Street may be lower in elevation than the proposed sidewalk. In order to avoid the potentially costly effort of resetting the steps to the proposed sidewalk elevation, the sidewalk

could ramp down to a landing at this location. This would serve two purposes as it would provide ADA access from the parking lane, as well as eliminate the need to disturb the steps.

If the Village determines the parking lane is not required, it would be eliminated as described in alternative 1 above. In this case, the steps at 35 Mechanic Street would likely still be an issue. There should be sufficient space to move the sidewalk a 2 to 3 feet west, however this may not resolve the elevation issue as the grading behind the sidewalk could still create a low spot in this area. It may be necessary to ramp the sidewalk down to a landing to match the step as described above.

Drainage Improvements:

The three existing catch basins located in segment 2 will require minor rehabilitation to ensure proper stormwater collection. Curbing is recommended to be installed adjacent to these three catch basins. The frames and grates will need to be adjusted to be located directly adjacent and parallel to the curb. This will allow for optimum stormwater collection. The drainage structures should not require relocation as the frame and grate can be moved to the ideal location as long as it is still somewhat located over the catch basin opening. If catch basins require replacement due to deterioration, it would be ideal to replace them during the construction of the sidewalk project. However, catch basin replacement is not included in the preferred alternative as it appears that the drainage system was installed in the past few years and therefore should not require replacement at this time.

Due to the installation of new curbing down the hill to 25 Mechanic Street, a new catch basin will be required to collect stormwater runoff traveling along the curb line. The catch basin should be located east of the driveway to 25 Mechanic Street. This location is the transition area from the hill to the flatter portion of Mechanic Street. This catch basin should be connected to the catch basin near 19 Mechanic Street with an 18-inch diameter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe.

Total Project Cost Estimate

The preliminary cost estimates presented in Tables 4-6 and 4-7 have been prepared for the preferred alternative. These estimates include 5 foot wide sidewalk for the full project length, granite curbing as described previously, full length center line and fog line striping, crosswalk markings and signage, and catch basin rehabilitation. Table 4-6 shows the cost for concrete sidewalk and Table 4-7 shows the cost for asphalt sidewalk. As shown in Table 4-6, the preliminary construction cost estimate for concrete sidewalk is $395,000 in 2015 dollars. As shown in Table 4-7, the preliminary construction cost estimate for asphalt sidewalk is $275,000 in 2015 dollars.

Table 4-8 presents the total project costs for the preferred alternative. The total project cost for concrete sidewalk is estimated at $560,000 based on a construction cost of $395,000 in 2015. The total project cost for asphalt sidewalk is estimated at $440,000 based on a construction cost of $275,000 in 2015.

Table 4-6:
Preliminary Construction Cost Estimate – Concrete Sidewalk

DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL COST
Removal of Existing Concrete Sidewalk	100	SY	$30	$3,000
Excavation of Surfaces	280	SY	$10	$2,800
Bituminous Concrete Pavement	110	TON	$115	$12,650
Detectable Warning Surface	60	SF	$45	$2,700
Portland Cement Concrete Sidewalk	1,330	SY	$100	$133,000
Vertical Granite Curb	1,360	LF	$35	$47,600
Catch Basin	1	EA	$3,500	$3,500
18” HDPE Storm Drain	240	LF	$60	$14,400
Catch Basin Rehabilitation	4	EA	$1,500	$6,000
Painted Pavement Markings	1	LS	$10,000	$10,000
Crosswalk Signs	4	EA	$110	$440
Sign Post (12 ft high)	4	EA	$100	$400
Remove and Reset Sign	4	EA	$35	$140
Relocate Mailbox (single support)	5	EA	$125	$625
Flaggers	200	MHRS	$30	$6,000
Tree Protection	1	LS	$9,000	$9,000
Traffic Control	1	LS	$10,000	$10,000
Mobilization/Demobilization	1	LS	$55,000	$55,000
Subtotal Construction Cost				$317,000
Contingency (25%)				$78,000
Total Construction Cost 2015				**$395,000**

Notes:
1. Construction costs are preliminary and are not based on detailed plans and specifications. Actual cost may vary substantially from these estimates. Contingencies are based on approximately 25% of the construction cost at the preliminary planning stage.
2. The Engineering News Record Construction Cost Index was 9962 when the cost estimate was completed in March 2015.
3. Painted pavement markings include full length 4-inch white line on both sides of road, 4-inch yellow center line, two stop bars for Mechanic Street/North Street intersection and three crosswalks.
4. Restoration of growth and protection of historic features are included in the Mobilization/Demobilization item.

Table 4-8:
Total Project Cost

DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST CONCRETE SIDEWALK	TOTAL COST ASPHALT SIDEWALK
Construction Cost (2015) with 25% Contingency	$395,000	$275,000
Engineering:		
Design Phase Engineering	$58,000	$58,000
Construction Phase Engineering	$58,000	$58,000
Local Project Management	$38,000	$38,000
Legal, Administrative and Fiscal	$11,000	$11,000
Total Project Cost	**$560,000**	**$440,000**

Notes:
1. Construction costs are shown in Table 4-6. The construction cost includes 25% contingency.
2. Engineering costs are estimated at 15-21% of the construction cost.
3. Local Project Management costs are estimated at 10-14% of the construction cost.
4. Legal, administrative and fiscal costs are estimated at about 3-4% of the construction cost.

Phasing Alternatives

At the Public Informational Meeting, there were discussions with the Village Trustees regarding phasing the pedestrian improvements. The construction of the project can easily be separated following the same segments developed for the alternatives evaluation. The segments are summarized as follows:

- Segment 1: Northern and Southern sides of Mechanic Street from Prospect Street to North Street, including the crosswalk at the intersection with Prospect Street.
- Segment 2: Southern side of Mechanic Street from North Street to Frederick Street.
- Segment 3: Southern side of Mechanic Street from Frederick Street to the cemetery, including the crosswalks at Frederick Street and at the cemetery.

The construction cost estimates and total project costs are presented for each segment of the project in Tables 4-9 and 4-10. If the project is separated into phases, the engineering, local project management and legal, administrative and fiscal costs will tend to be a higher percentage of the construction cost as many tasks will need to be repeated for each phase. For example, the environmental documentation would need to be prepared and submitted for each phase separately. Additionally, lower cost construction projects, such as Segment 3, will have even higher percentages as there are tasks in the VTrans design and construction process that are not based on the size of the project. Larger projects can absorb the cost of these tasks better than smaller projects can, therefore the percentage of engineering and local project management is increased on smaller projects.

Table 4-9:
Total Project Cost by Segment – Concrete Sidewalk

DESCRIPTION	SEGMENT 1 COST ESTIMATE	SEGMENT 2 COST ESTIMATE	SEGMENT 3 COST ESTIMATE
Construction Cost (2015) with 25% Contingency	$125,000	$225,000	$45,000
Engineering:			
Design Phase Engineering	$22,500	$40,000	$10,000
Construction Phase Engineering	$22,500	$40,000	$10,000
Local Project Management	$15,000	$27,000	$7,000
Legal, Administrative and Fiscal	$5,000	$8,000	$3,000
Total Project Cost	**$190,000**	**$340,000**	**$75,000**

Notes:
1. Construction costs are shown in Table 4-6. The construction cost includes 25% contingency.
2. Engineering costs are estimated at 18-22% of the construction cost. Segments with lower construction costs will have engineering costs at a higher percentage of the construction cost.
3. Local Project Management costs are estimated at 12-16% of the construction cost. Segments with lower construction costs will have local project management costs at a higher percentage of the construction cost.
4. Legal, administrative and fiscal costs are estimated at about 4-6% of the construction cost. Segments with lower construction costs will have legal, administrative and fiscal costs at a higher percentage of the construction cost.

Table 4-10:
Total Project Cost by Segment – Asphalt Sidewalk

DESCRIPTION	SEGMENT 1 COST ESTIMATE	SEGMENT 2 COST ESTIMATE	SEGMENT 3 COST ESTIMATE
Construction Cost (2015) with 25% Contingency	$85,000	$170,000	$20,000
Engineering:			
Design Phase Engineering	$22,500	$40,000	$10,000
Construction Phase Engineering	$22,500	$40,000	$10,000
Local Project Management	$15,000	$27,000	$7,000
Legal, Administrative and Fiscal	$5,000	$8,000	$3,000
Total Project Cost	**$150,000**	**$285,000**	**$50,000**

Notes:
1. Construction costs are shown in Table 4-6. The construction cost includes 25% contingency.
2. Engineering costs were developed in Table 4-8.
3. Local Project Management costs were developed in Table 4-8.
4. Legal, administrative and fiscal costs were developed in Table 4-8.

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operations. Home-based employment and telecommuting are becoming an increasingly popular option with advances in information technology. Many of these home occupations provide flexibility for workers and reduce transportation-based energy consumption. Such practices should continue to be supported as long as the uses and intensities are consistent with the standards and guidelines set forth in the zoning bylaws, and do not alter the residential character of neighborhoods.

5.4 Resources to Support Business Development

North Bennington is an attractive location for development of small businesses for a number of reasons. First of all, the quality of life available to business owners and employees is outstanding, with a beautiful natural environment, a historic village center, and a surprising number of recreational and cultural resources. The Village also is served by public water and sewer systems and high speed internet access is available throughout the community. The industrial buildings and sites in the Village have significant potential for re-use and re-development, and a number of buildings in the village center offer locations for commercial uses. Finally, the Village is located near transportation facilities in Vermont and New York that offer relatively easy access to major market areas.

It will be important for the Village to work together with the Town, the BCIC, and other business interests to ensure that these existing resources are maintained and that other resources are developed. Economic development analyses of the regional economy have suggested that more attention needs to be directed toward additional workforce development activities and the provision of high quality and affordable housing.

5.5 Policies and Recommendations

1. Support existing businesses and new economic development activities that provide high-quality jobs while enhancing the historic character of the Village. Special attention should be given to initiatives and investments that will preserve historic buildings through re-use. Mixed uses may be allowed in these buildings, in conformance with zoning standards, provided such uses do not have adverse impacts on the environment, nearby residential neighborhoods, the vitality of the village center, or on roads or other public infrastructure.

2. The village center shall maintain its historic character while permitting infill and redevelopment of compatible commercial and professional uses.

3. Maintain good transportation connections to Bennington and the region. Attention should be given to maintenance of quality roads and bridges, renewed rail transportation, and improved access for bicycles and pedestrians.

4. Ensure that the latest telecommunication technologies are available to the Village and that public water and sewer service is adequate for future growth.

5. Maintain and enhance the quality of life – cultural, recreational, environmental, and historic resources – and seek opportunities for improving the Village's housing stock to attract business owners and employees.

6. Ensure that residents have access to educational opportunities, continuing education, and a variety of workforce development activities that meet the needs of area businesses.

7. Communicate with Bennington College to ensure that growth at that institution benefits the Village and offers employment for residents.

The Haviland's Privilege property is an attractive redevelopment of old mill buildings on the shoreline of Paran Creek.

The Sage Street Mill, seen from across a mill pond on Paran Creek, is an example of ongoing adaptive re-use of a former manufacturing building.

The narrow road profile, gravel surface, and mature trees that arch over the roadway make Park Street a particularly scenic road and an important community asset.

Overhead utility lines in the Village's historic district should be relocated or buried to reduce visual clutter and allow for enhanced landscaping.

8.3 Public Transportation

Public transportation provides a vital service to people who do not have access to a car and also can reduce fuel use and traffic congestion. The Green Mountain Community Network operates fixed route bus and demand response car and van services. Funding to support these programs is provided by the Federal Transit Administration and the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

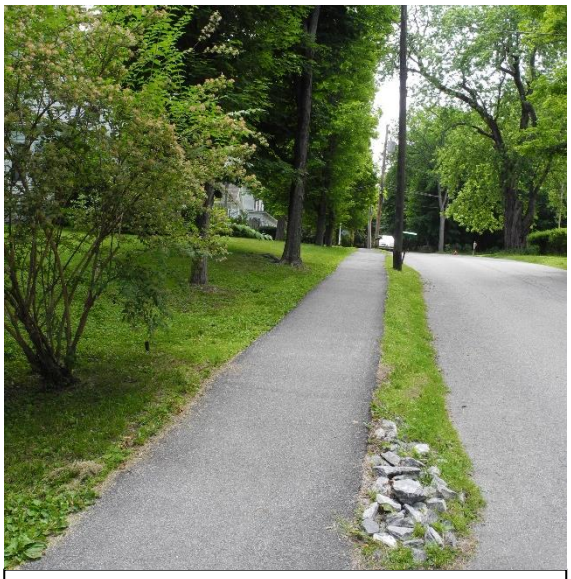
The "Green Mountain Express" fixed route bus service stops at commercial, residential, office, educational, and medical facilities throughout Bennington. Connections to that bus route from South Shaftsbury and North Bennington are provided via a separate bus that stops several times a day, Monday through Saturday, at the North Bennington Depot, Homestead Mews, Paulin's gas station, and in front of the Maple Brook Farm Cheese company. It may be appropriate to consider an additional stop at Lincoln Square (or replacing the Paulin's stop with a stop at Lincoln Square) to serve the Library and businesses in the center of the Village.

The Green Mountain Community Network also provides door-to-door transportation to and from medical appointments, as well as special trips for elders, nursing home residents, and persons with disabilities. Several other human service agencies in Bennington also provide similar van-based services for their particular clientele.

Limited regional bus service is available from Bennington, with two daily trips to Albany offered by Yankee Trails and four daily trips to Manchester (with possible connections to Rutland) provided by the Green Mountain Express. Improved intercity bus service would be beneficial to the area and efforts to establish regular east-west and north-south connections should be supported.

8.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The importance of considering opportunities for safely accommodating pedestrians and bicycles on and adjacent to the network of roadways in North Bennington was discussed earlier in this section and the developing system of trails in and around the Village, largely on conserved lands, was briefly described in Chapter 3. Walking and bicycling are important transportation modes that should be encouraged whenever possible.



This popular walking route along Prospect Street was improved recently by the Village.

Sidewalks

Several Village streets are lined by sidewalks, providing for access from the street to adjacent residences and businesses and accommodating people walking between destinations such as residential neighborhoods and the school, post office, or commercial areas. Several sidewalk projects have been completed along the Main Street - Water Street corridor. The sidewalk currently crosses the Hillside/River intersection and the bridge over Paran Creek, but ends at that point; a crosswalk exists, but a sidewalk extension is needed to provide a safe connection for the two segments of the Short Aldrich Trail (which continues down Scarey Lane). The sidewalk also should be continued a short distance down Route 67A to provide access to the residential neighborhood at Royal Street.

Sidewalks within the Village's historic districts must be carefully integrated with the architecture and site features of the area. A green strip between the curb and sidewalk should be included when feasible and crosswalks should be carefully sited at locations that are visible and where vehicle speeds are not excessive. Amenities such as park benches, shade trees, and informational signs for pedestrians should be made available when possible.

The Mile Around Woods trail is a very well-maintained pathway that connects to a network of marked "singletrack trails

Trails and Pathways

North Bennington is fortunate to have an outstanding network of trails available for residents. Those trails exist in three areas (Maps 3-3 and 8-1):

speeds. The use of "jake" engine brakes by trucks on Village streets should be discouraged.

3. Roadways are important public spaces and should include attractive landscaping and pedestrian amenities, with planting of attractive street trees a high priority. Landscaping can be undertaken by the Village, private organizations, as part of local or state highway improvement projects, or mandated as part of the approval of private development plans.

4. Potential locations for additional public off-street parking should be found and existing parking areas clearly marked and well-maintained. Parking for private developments should be provided as required by the Zoning Bylaws.

   Parking lots must provide adequate spaces for users of a site, include provisions for safe and efficient access and circulation, be carefully sited and fully landscaped to avoid adverse aesthetic impacts, and include safe and convenient facilities for pedestrian movements to and through the lots.

5. Continue to work to implement planned improvements at Lincoln Square, including enhanced green space and improved traffic flow and parking.

6. Work with the State of Vermont and Vermont Railway on ownership and maintenance issues associated with Depot Street. Eventual ownership by the Village could improve design and maintenance of the street.

7. Support plans to develop new trails and pathways in and around the Village and connections between those trail systems. Protect access and use of those trails and pathways through acquisition of easements when necessary. Work with the Town of Bennington to determine if it is feasible to develop a rail-trail along the rail spur between the two communities – and pursue funding and development for the project if appropriate.

8. Maintain traffic carrying capacity and safety on local and state highways through implementation of planned improvements and application of access management and traffic calming techniques.

9. Require that new public and private roads be designed according to Village and State standards. New roadway construction should avoid adverse impacts to natural or scenic resources.

10. New or reconstructed bridges should be consistent with the Village's historic character and shall include provisions for safe passage by pedestrians and bicyclists.

11. Highway paving and reconstruction projects shall include paved surfaces consistent with need and the Vermont State Roadway Design Manual and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Design Manual.
Identify and eliminate roadway hazards for bicyclists and provide signs, bicycle racks, and other facilities to support bicycle use.

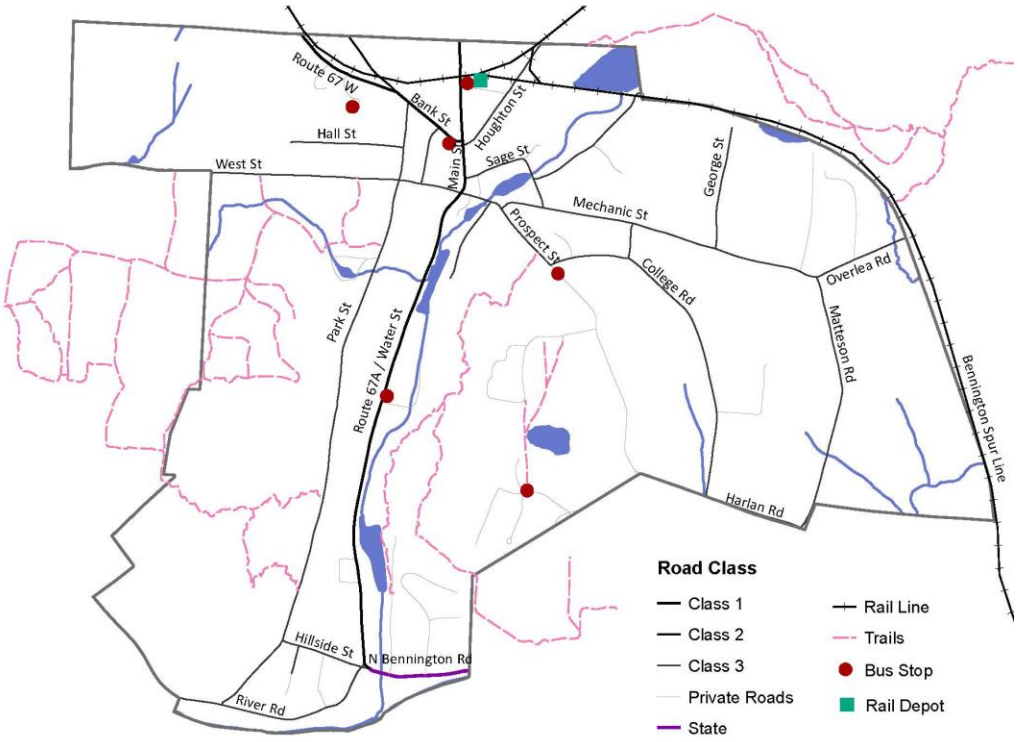
12. Support railroad track upgrades and the reestablishment of passenger and freight rail service to and through North Bennington.
The Village does not support the storage of hazardous materials on rail lines. Explore safety measures and alternative freight storage options with VTrans and Vermont Rail System.

13. Support existing public transportation services and extensions to meet demonstrated demand.

14. Promote the utilization of alternative fuel vehicles and other energy conservation measures in the transportation system.

15. Seek opportunities to remove overhead utility lines from historic and scenic areas of North Bennington.

16. Continue to apply for and use Transportation Enhancement grants to improve the Village's transportation infrastructure and related facilities and resources.



Map 8.1 - North Bennington Transportation Facilities.

Note: The Main Rail Line is in active use; the Bennington Spur Line is not currently being used.