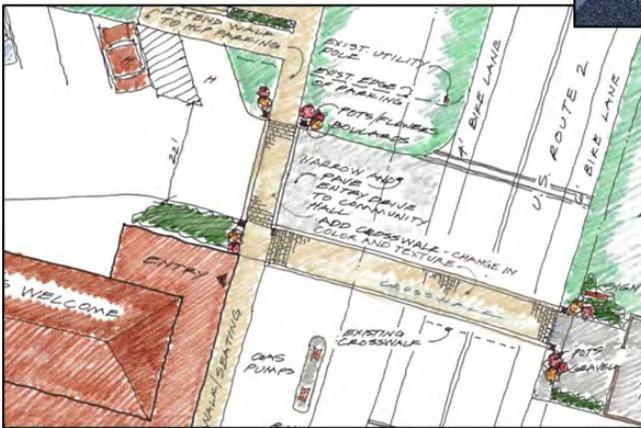


North Hero Village Master Plan



APRIL 2021

NORTH HERO, VERMONT

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This project is funded by a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) grant from the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development (ACCD). The goal of the SCBC program is to encourage communities to proactively coordinate land use decisions and transportation investments.



PROJECT TEAM:



Executive Summary

The Town of North Hero received a Municipal Planning Grant from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development to develop a Village Master Plan. The exploratory project engaged the community in defining appropriate options for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements to support the people who work, live or come to the Village daily in addition to seasonal visitors. The Village Master Plan identifies safety improvements through infrastructure and streetscaping in the North Hero Village with both corridor wide concepts and site-specific opportunities. This report documents the process, alternatives explored and opportunities for action.

Introduction

Project Purpose

The Village Master Plan defines a vision for a walkable and bikeable village center in North Hero. This concept level planning effort addresses the safety and mobility concerns of all user groups (motorized and non-motorized) along US Route 2 in the Village of North Hero and considers a suite of improvements and amenities primarily targeted for the “public space” or roadway right-of-way. The plan explores the initial feasibility of potential improvements and provides implementation steps to enable the Town to put various elements of the plan into action in the short and long term. Finally, the Plan outlines concept level cost ranges that can serve as a basis for future capital improvement planning.

The Project Team identified the following as specific goals for the project:

- Enhance the Village streetscape character to achieve traffic calming.
- Create safe pedestrian crossings.
- Encourage pedestrian connectivity and safety between the North Hero House and Hero’s Welcome.
- Enhance North Hero “sense of place” to encourage a sense of arrival.
- Consider on-street parking solutions.

Focus Area

The project area follows the boundaries of the Village Zoning District, which matches the boundary of the State Designated Village Center. This district is shown in red on Map 1 and begins at Station Road at the southern end and extends north to Savage Point Road.

The Historic District, shown in blue on Map 1, is defined at the southern end by the building currently occupied by the Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation and extends to the Grand Isle County Courthouse in the north. This area is the heart of the village and contains

concentrated destinations and amenities. Given the density of development, the historic district was the focus area for improvements stretching from Hero's Welcome to the Methodist Church.

Project Team

This project was guided by a Steering Committee made up of North Hero representatives from the Selectboard, Planning Commission, and Recreation Committee. To complete the scope of work, the Town contracted with Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC). NRPC used the landscape architecture services of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB).

Project Steering Committee membership:

MEMBER	AFFILIATION
Bev Poquette	Planning Commission, Chair
John Skutel	Recreation Committee
Robert Miller	Planning Commission
Tim Bourne	Selectboard
Warren Wright	Planning Commission
Heather Bickford	Selectboard*

*H. Bickford served on the committee from May to September 2020.

Milestones

The project began in May 2020. The Project Team defined four key milestones to mark progress of the project, listed below.

MILESTONE	DESCRIPTION
CONDUCT VISIONING WORKSHOP	Two-week community input event. Public input was compiled and informed the project vision and options explored during the project.
PUBLIC SPACE ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPTS	VHB developed illustrative concepts of potential public space improvements along US Route 2 focused around the designated Village center boundary and Village District.
CLASS 1 HIGHWAY DESIGNATION ANALYSIS	NRPC examined the costs and benefits of Class 1 Highway classification of US Route 2 Village area.
VILLAGE MASTER PLAN	NRPC compiled project information into a Village Master Plan that contains an “action plan” the Town can use to implement the vision.

Map 1. Project area and location of the two focus corridors.



Prior Community Action

In recent years, the Selectboard has heard sustained public concern on safety along US Route 2 for all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, etc.) in the Village. In 2019, there were two related community efforts that led to this project: a pilot speed reduction study and a Village walk audit. Information from these two efforts along with ongoing community discussions informed the suite of opportunities explored through this effort.

Pilot Speed Reduction -- Success

In the fall of 2018, the Selectboard engaged the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) in conversation to explore concerns around speed and parking on US Route 2 in the Village. VTrans agreed to pilot a speed reduction during the summer of 2019 that reduced the speed limit from 35 mph to 25 mph in the Village.

Upon completion of the pilot, VTrans evaluated the results of the pilot and its effectiveness and impact on safety. VTrans determined that the observed speeds during the pilot did not lead to a consistent result of lower vehicle speeds; VTrans recommended to the Town the speed limit stay at 35 mph. The Selectboard recommended VTrans consider a 30-mph speed limit from Savage Point Road to Station Road.

Outcome - At its September 15, 2020 meeting, the Vermont Traffic Committee voted to establish a permanent (year-round) speed limit of 30 mph through the most built-up portion of the Village, with 40 mph transition zones on either side. "Summer Recreation Area" signage with advisory speed plaques for 25 mph will also be installed in the immediate vicinity of Hero's Welcome and North Hero House.

Route 2 Walk Audit

In the fall of 2019, the North Hero Planning Commission hosted a Walk Audit led by NRPC. Over twenty community members attended and walked along US Route 2 in the Village District. The group was asked to assess the current roadway and share their experiences in terms of safety and accessibility for walking, biking, driving and parking in the Village. The following were the key themes from the event, which are also shown visually in Figure 1:

RESULTS OF PILOT

A letter from VTrans dated 11/21/2019 stated,

"The study found that speeds were reduced...in the area of the North Hero House, where conflicts with turning movements, on-street parking, and pedestrian crossings are common. The speed reduction was less pronounced in other locations studied within the reduced speed zone. This suggests that the speed reductions were primarily due to perceived hazards and not the lower speed limit; the reductions in speed may have also been due, in part, to increased enforcement presence through the area in the summer."

1. Road shoulder

- Walking is a challenge due to potholes, surface cracks, sloped surface, brush encroachment, and narrow width.
- Proximity to passing vehicles is unsettling.

2. Undefined vehicular access to businesses from Route 2

- Vehicle access is not managed, does not provide safe or comfortable pedestrian route and encourages parking adjacent to the travel lane.

3. Crosswalks

- Crosswalks are often blocked which creates blind spots for pedestrians and reduces visibility to traffic.

4. Parking along Route 2

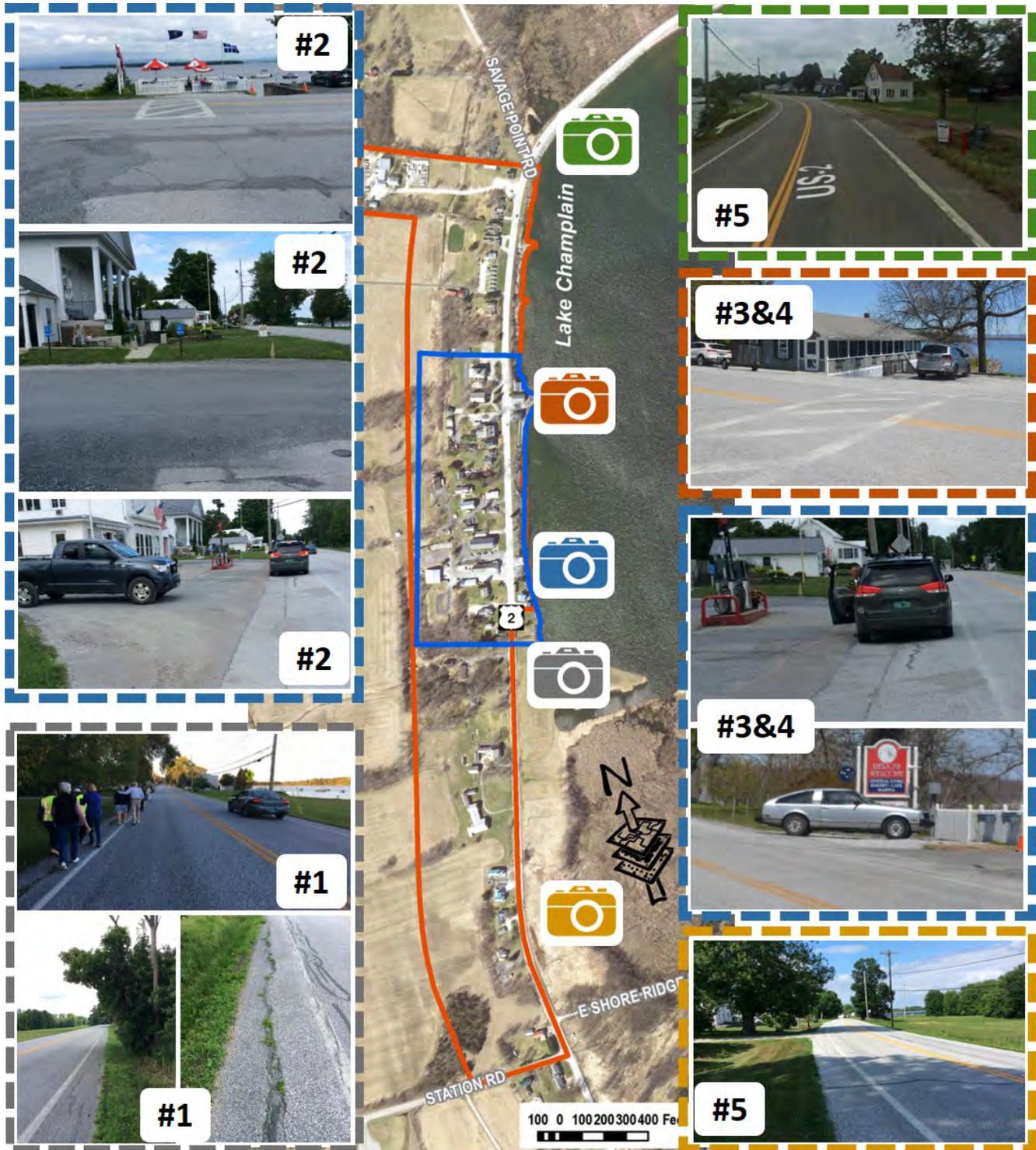
- On-street parking results in vehicles extending into travel lane when loading and unloading.

5. Minimal signage prior to Village area

- Minimal visual cues are present to signal the driver they are that about to enter a Village and speeds should slow.

Figure 1 displays the conditions of Route 2 as identified during the 2019 Village Walk Audit. To read this graphic, the numbers on the photo refer to the specific theme number listed above. The photo border is color coded to match up with the location of that photo on the map as marked by the camera icon in the corresponding color.

Figure 1. The condition of Route 2 as identified during the 2019 Village Walk Audit. The numbers refer to the specific walk audit theme number and the color of the photo border links the image to the location on the map marked with the camera icon.



US Route 2 Today: Review of Existing Conditions

The Town of North Hero consists of quiet open farmland and residences surrounded by beautiful Lake Champlain waterfront areas with spectacular mountain views. The Village Center at the heart of the study area is located on the crescent of City Bay, which combines a traditional historic Vermont village with Lake Champlain shoreline and panoramic views of the Green Mountains.

The Village District south to north is defined by Station Road in the southern end and Savage Point Road to the north. The US Route 2 traverses the Village District corridor for an approximate length of 0.8 miles. This section of the corridor is characterized primarily by single and two-family residences, but also includes a mix of commercial, civic and recreational uses, primarily concentrated in the Historic District.



Images clockwise from upper right: Community Hall, looking north on Route 2 from Hero's Welcome, Grand Isle County Court House, The Hookenspoon, looking south on Route 2 towards library from Hero's Welcome, Hero's Welcome and post office.

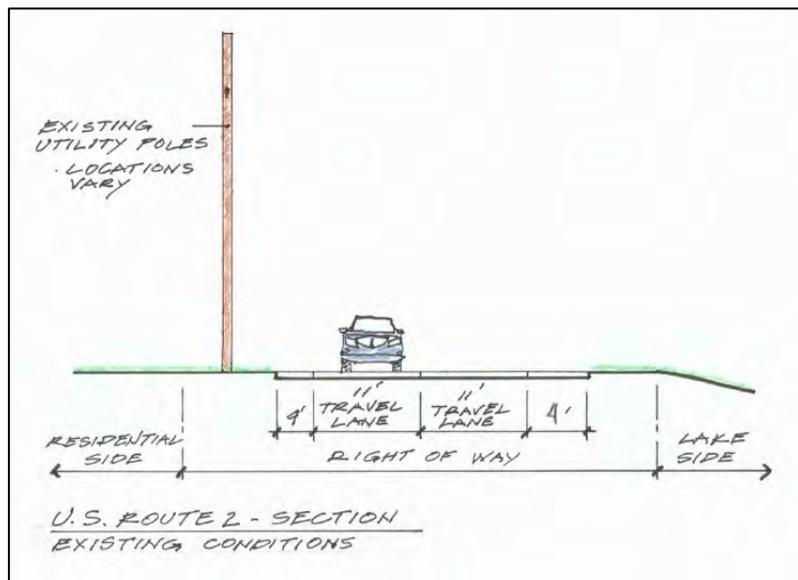
The Route 2 roadway is classified as a State Highway Minor Arterial which means it serves as a primary connection through the county and balances land access with maintaining acceptable levels of mobility. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) from 2014-2018 in the corridor is 2,600-2,900 vehicles a day; the Design Hourly Volume (DHV-30) in 2019 was 310 vehicles per hour. The 2019 data classified 91% of the traffic volume as passenger vehicles and 9% as a Business or Commercial vehicle. Tourism in the county and the associated foot and vehicle traffic peak in summer and fall.

AADT estimates the mean traffic volume across all days for a year for a given location along a roadway.

DHV estimates the two-way traffic volume; this traffic criterion is used for the design of the capacity of a roadway segment.

Figure 2. Approximate Cross Section of US Route 2

The typical width of the state highway right-of-way in this corridor is 48 to 50 feet. The road is designed to provide 4-foot shoulders and 11-foot travel lanes; however, on the ground the width of the shoulder varies from 3 to 5 feet wide. The exception to this is adjacent to Hero’s Welcome and the North Hero House where the corridor is 6 to 8 feet wide. The Historic District is adjacent to Lake Champlain with minimal setbacks from the lake.



The current facilities provide minimal accommodations for bicyclists; the minimum acceptable width of a bike lane is 4-feet. Aside from the two existing crosswalks near the Community Hall and Methodist Church there are no formal accommodations for pedestrians. Pedestrians in the corridor use the road shoulder.

Corridor Map

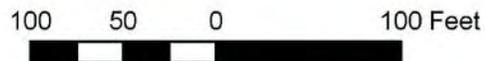
The existing conditions of the roadway are shown in the map series of the following pages. These corridor maps show the approximate extent of the state right-of-way along the corridor as well as approximate locations of the travel lanes and shoulder. It should be noted that when VTrans paints the centerline of the road, it is restriped based on visual placement in the field and can shift over time. Fog lines, the white lines at the road edge, are measured and painted based on the centerline location. This map is intended to be used to provide the Steering Committee and Town a sense of where potential improvements would be located and approximate impacts they could have.

North Hero Village Corridor Map 1 of 6



For planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
Northwest RPC
www.nrpcvt.com
October 2020



Legend *Placement is approximate

- Fog line*
- ... Road Centerline*
- Rte 2 State Right-Of-Way*

North Hero Village Corridor Map 2 of 6



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Prepared by:
Northwest RPC
www.nrpcvt.com
October 2020

100 50 0 100 Feet



Legend *Placement is approximate

- Fog line*
- Road Centerline*
- Rte 2 State Right-Of-Way*

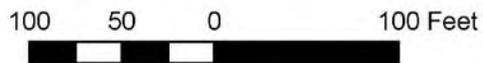
North Hero Village Corridor Map 3 of 6



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Northwest RPC
www.nrpcvt.com
October 2020



Legend *Placement is approximate

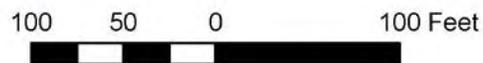
- Fog line*
- Road Centerline*
- Rte 2 State Right-Of-Way*

North Hero Village Corridor Map 4 of 6



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Northwest RPC
www.nrpcvt.com
October 2020



Legend *Placement is approximate

-  Fog line*
-  Road Centerline*
-  Rte 2 State Right-Of-Way*

North Hero Village Corridor Map 5 of 6

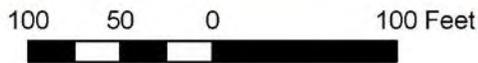


ROW Width (48.5 ft)
Paved Width (29.5 ft)

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October 2020



Legend *Placement is approximate

- Fog line*
- Road Centerline*
- Rte 2 State Right-Of-Way*

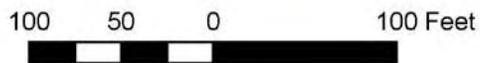
North Hero Village Corridor Map 6 of 6



For planning purposes only.



Prepared by:
Northwest RPC
www.nrpcvt.com
October 2020



Legend *Placement is approximate

- Fog line*
- Road Centerline*
- Rte 2 State Right-Of-Way*

Community Engagement

This section provides an overview and summary of the public engagement for the Village Master Plan. The project began in May 2020 and from the start had to re-envision community engagement in light of public gathering constraints under Covid-19. The opportunities for engagement at the start of the project focused on building an awareness of the project and advertising the Community Open House. A project website, hosted by NRPC, served as the main source of project information and notice of meetings. The Steering Committee and NRPC utilized print and digital communication tools in order to reach a broad spectrum of residents and introduce them to the project. Leading up to the Open House, a press release was published in The Islander, reminders were posted on Front Porch Forum, and a postcard was mailed to all addresses in the North Hero zip code (668 in total). The Steering Committee also sent a letter directly to property owners in the Village Center notifying them of the project and encouraging participation in the process.

The project Steering Committee meetings were open to the public and community member participation in meetings was encouraged. Meetings were held remotely utilizing an online meeting platform; meetings were noticed by the Town and on the project website.

Table 1. The project Steering Committee meetings served as one opportunity for public input; meeting summaries are provided in Appendix E.

PROJECT MEETING	MEETING TOPIC
<i>May 13, 2020</i>	Project kick-off with election of chair, review of scope and schedule.
<i>June 17, 2020</i>	Review the goals for the visioning project and discussion of public outreach strategies under COVID restrictions.
<i>July 15, 2020</i>	Review draft public participation strategies and outreach communications.
<i>August 19, 2020</i>	Review public input received from Community Open House.
<i>September 23, 2020</i>	Check-in on direction for next steps and deliverables.
<i>October 21, 2020</i>	Presentation on visualizations of potential improvements and existing conditions map of corridor with extent of right-of-way.
<i>November 18, 2020</i>	Presentation on Class 1 Town Highway analysis.
<i>January 20, 2021</i>	Review first draft of Village Master Plan.
<i>February 17, 2021</i>	Review first draft of Implementation section of Village Master Plan.
<i>March 17, 2021</i>	Review second draft of full Village Master Plan.
<i>April 19, 2021</i>	Selectboard Public Presentation.
<i>May 19, 2021</i>	Community Public Presentation.

Community Open House

To gather input from the community at large, the Steering Committee hosted a Community Open House from July 22, 2020 – August 5, 2020. The open house showcased different types and scales of potential safety and accessibility improvements for those on foot, by bicycle or by car and included

examples of enhanced crosswalks, widen shoulder along the roadway, public lighting and signage. The purpose of the open house was to clarify the community's vision and level of support for potential pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements in the Village District, and to receive feedback on a variety of potential options.

Given the constraints around in-person gatherings due to COVID-19, the team provided two opportunities for public participation to accommodate a virtual and in-person option.

Virtual Open House: Entirely online with opportunity to provide feedback remotely. Material was accessible on the project website and provided background information and conceptual improvements. An online survey was used to gather impressions from visitors.

Physical Open House: A display and opportunity to provide feedback was set up at the North Hero Town Office; the display was accessible during normal business hours while wearing a mask and adhering to social distancing. Poster display boards provided visitors the opportunity to explore conceptual improvements. A paper survey was used to gather impressions from visitors and folks were encouraged to view additional material available on the project website.

Initial Visualizations of Opportunities

The concept plans developed for the Community Open House depicted potential improvements in the Village district; the visualizations focused on the historic district and noted the improvements that could extend the entire study area. Three separate sets of concept plans were presented to show levels of improvements that could build upon one another however, features in these concepts could also be implemented individually. As initially defined, these opportunities were to vary by scale, cost and level of coordination and/or approval required to implement them. This section will review the summary of improvements presented for each level, the full set of concept plans is provided in Appendix A.

Class 1 Town Highway refers to whether the Town or the Agency of Transportation would maintain the highway and related infrastructure. A cost-benefit analysis of transferring this responsibility to the Town is provided in section "Evaluation of Designating US Route 2 in Village as Town Highway".

Opportunities for Improvement by Level

Level 1. Improvements that can be made to the streetscape that may not require Class 1 Town Highway designation:

- Gateway signage,
- Clarifying where on-street parking is allowed and not allowed with signage and markings,
- Adjusting the alignment of crosswalks,
- Improving crosswalk paint in compliance with approved signage,
- Create pedestrian connections between roadway and destinations,

- Widened shoulder of roadway for safer pedestrian and bicyclist travel,
- Vehicular access management at driveway entrances, and
- Banners on existing utility poles.

Level 2. Improvements include those that may require Class 1 Town Highway designation, but are considered lower cost and/or semi-permanent.:

- Incorporates all Level 1 improvements,
- Crosswalk enhancements (texture or color) to visually define the crossing,
- Bollards and removable landscape pots at crosswalk to visually identify crossing and provide seasonal interest,
- Pave entry of Community Hall and add pedestrian connecting across driveway,
- Rumble strips ahead of crossing to warn vehicles of with vibration, and
- Reduce posted speed limit of US Route 2.

Level 3. Improvements include those that may require Class 1 Town Highway designation, but are considered higher cost and permanent changes:

- Incorporates all Level 1 improvements,
- Incorporates all Level 2 improvements,
- Pedestrian scale lighting with opportunity for banners or flowers,
- Sidewalk on residential side within the state right-of-way,
- Crosswalks enhancements (texture and color) with speed table to define crossing,
- Double crosswalk at southern end to align with Community Hall,
- Street trees, and
- Wayfinding and parking signage.

Community Preference Survey

A sixteen-question survey was available at both locations for the Open House to gather input; a total of 55 surveys were completed during the two-week period that includes both online and paper surveys. This number does not capture the full engagement that occurred during this period; there were several more visitors to the project website (Table 2) and Town Office during this period that did not complete a survey. The results of the full survey are in Appendix B.

Table 2. Website Analytics during the period of July 21, 2020 – August 19, 2020.

PROJECT WEBSITE PAGE	TOTAL # OF PAGE VIEWS	TOTAL # OF UNIQUE VISITORS
<i>Village Master Plan main page</i>	241	125
<i>Community Open House Page</i>	212	129

The initial survey question was open-ended and asked respondents to state the features they liked the most about the Village; the following three themes were provided the most:

- Quaint, simple, and/or small-town feel/not commercialized.
- Views (especially of the lake & mountains) and scenery.
- Historic/traditional and old town charm.

The following are responses to questions related to walking and biking in the Village:

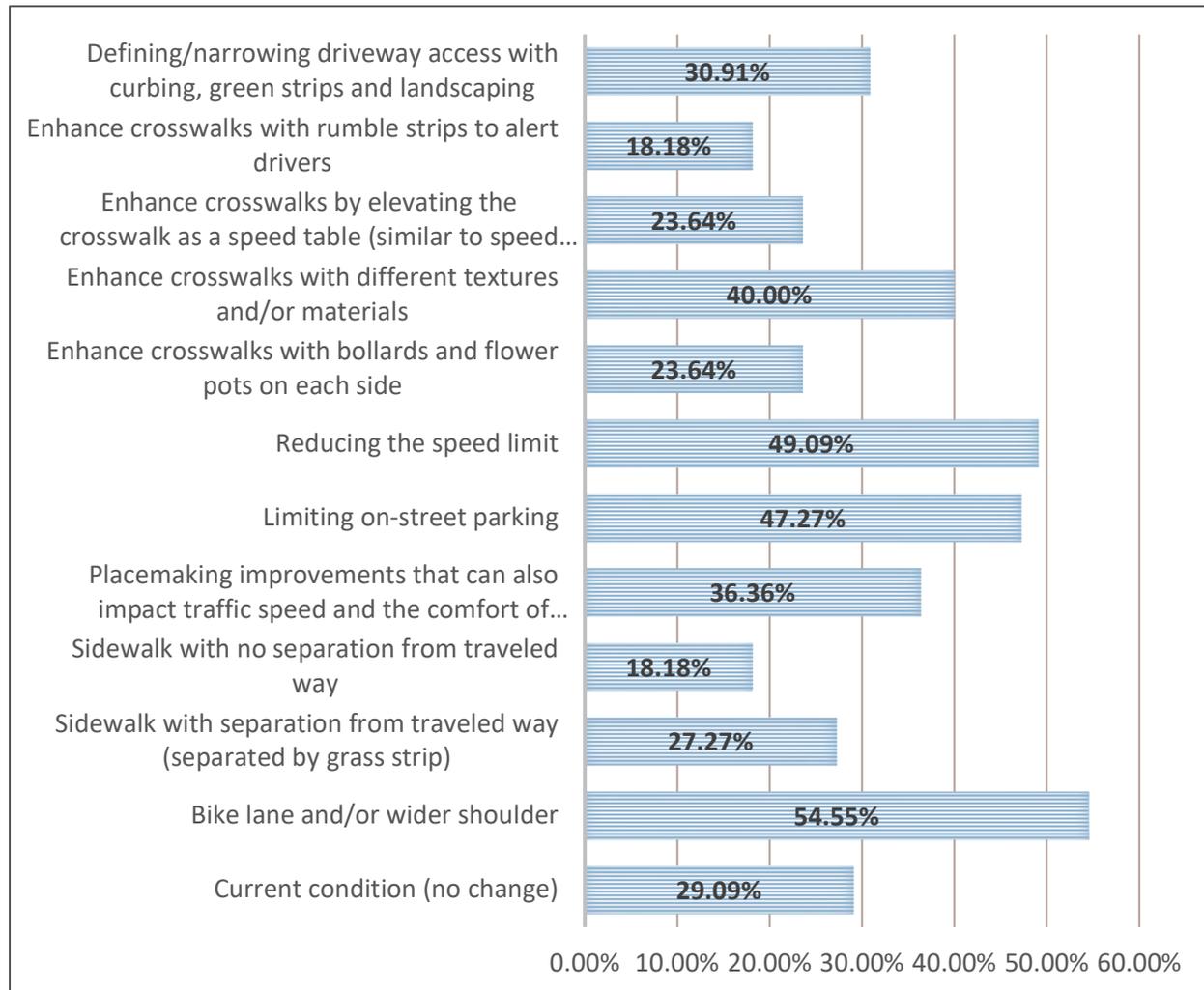
- The majority of respondents (87%) stated they walk or bike in North Hero; the following areas were reported by the most respondents: Route 2, in the village, Hero's Welcome.
- Fifty-seven (57%) percent of respondents do not feel safe walking or biking in the Village area due to speed of traffic, narrow shoulder, lack of visibility and conflicts with parked cars.
- The majority of respondents (63%) do feel safe using the existing crosswalks however many of these respondents also indicated areas for improvement at the crossings. A concern widely expressed from this question was that many cars do not yield.

The survey was coordinated with the Selectboard to obtain feedback regarding the speed limit in the Village District. There were three questions related to the speed limit and this information directly informed the Town's communication with VTrans and outcome of the new posted speed limit of 35 mph (see section "Pilot Speed Reduction – Success"). The majority of respondents (75%) stated a preference for a speed limit below 35 mph for the village area and for the lowered limit to be seasonal.

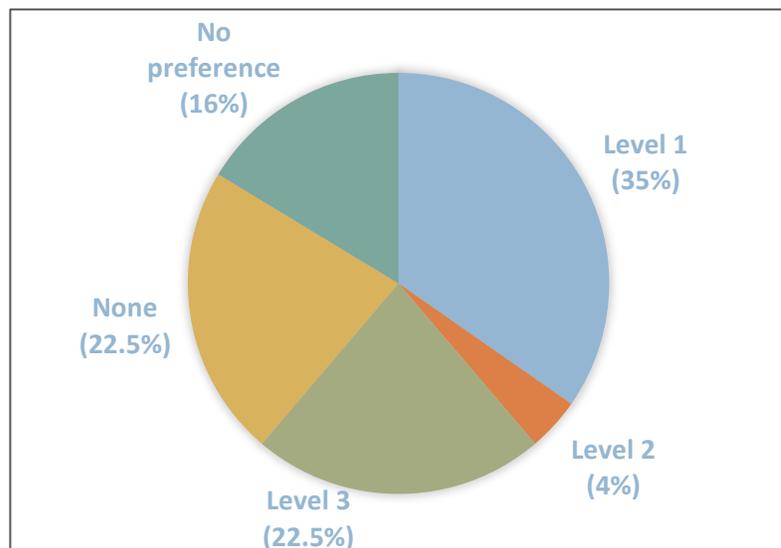
One question was asked on parking, "Do you have trouble locating a parking space"? The majority of respondents stated they did not and the places they park most frequently were the Store, Restaurant, and Post Office.

When respondents were asked to identify which pedestrian and bicycle amenities they would generally support in the historic district, the most noted options were a "bike lane and/or wider shoulder", "reducing the speed limit" and "limiting on-street parking".

Question 9: What pedestrian/bicycle amenities would you generally support in the historic village area from just north of the Court House to just south of the Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation? Check all that apply.



Question 10: Which illustration level best represents a vision for North Hero Village that you would support?



The final set of survey questions asked respondents to provide feedback on the three levels of improvements as presented. Overall preferences were provided, however, there was no clear majority response to any one set of improvements including the “No preference” option. This question was followed by a series of open-ended questions as an opportunity for respondents to provide specific comments related to each level of improvement. The following are some of the most prevalent sentiments from those responses:

- Not wanting to implement change or not wanting change that alters the character of the village.
- Concern about the space for the walkway or bicyclist path.
- Support for wider shoulders for pedestrians noting it would depend on the design and impacts based on topography.
- Some also expressed concern for some of the changes being difficult or too expensive to maintain and that larger changes may alter the feel of the village.
- Many do not support the idea of rumble strips in the center of the Village due to noise concerns.
- Preferences stated desire for more defined parking areas to specific destinations like the Post Office and less on-street parking.
- Support for making crosswalks more visible; if pursue crosswalk enhancements ensure they do not compete with general flow of cross traffic and existing landscaping by property owners.
- For Level 3, those not in favor felt the concept plan included unnecessary elements or was in general unnecessary, while those in favor felt the more permanent options may require less maintenance over time.
- Some respondents that selected “None” as the level of improvement they would support did note in their subsequent comments support for individual elements such as addressing on-street parking, lowering speed limits and improve crosswalks.

Visualizing Infrastructure Improvements

This plan considered and sought input on a variety of physical improvements that would positively impact safety and mobility for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles in the study area. This “Complete Streets” approach to planning, design and construction is specific to each roadway and factors in the unique context of a place as well as the current and potential travel patterns. It is important to understand that it is rarely feasible to implement a single golden ticket solution that will address all safety and mobility concerns on a roadway, whether due to cost, community support, or effectiveness. More commonly and as is the case in North Hero Village, there are many context-appropriate and community supported improvements, which may be installed incrementally and all together achieve the desired outcome.

The project team evaluated issues and opportunities for safety and mobility improvements by type of improvement category. This approach brought about a greater understanding of context and intent for seeking potential solutions. Overall, the improvements seek to achieve traffic calming to make North Hero Village safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists by reducing the speed of vehicular traffic and defining space for all users.

Impact and Evaluation of Improvements

This next section will review the improvement categories the Steering Committee wanted to explore in more detail based on community input. This section is presented with the following format for each improvement category:

- Definition of the category of improvement and purpose.
- Infrastructure Today: Description of existing conditions.
- Observations: Description as provided by stakeholders during the process and detailed from Prior Community Action events.
- Opportunities for Tomorrow: Presentation of concept designs for visualizing improvements.

Crossing Area Enhancements

Pedestrian crossings serve to increase the visibility of pedestrians crossing the roadway and provide a designated area for non-motorized users. Visual cues such as the painted pattern across the road and nearby crossing sign cue the driver to slow down and anticipate pedestrians.

Infrastructure Today. In North Hero there are two crosswalks in the Historic District, located adjacent to the Community Hall in the south and the Methodist Church in the north. At both locations, paint extends across the travel lanes but stops at the fog lines (white lines marking the shoulder); this is the defined extent that VTrans paints. The required crossing signs are posted close to the crossings but vary in their locations to accommodate driveways and other obstacles. Repainting of the crossing occurs on a cycle determined by VTrans.

Current crossing facility showing extent of markings and signage.



Observations. The crossings as painted do not provide a connection to a defined pedestrian zone on either end of the crossing. In both locations pedestrians are mingling with vehicles as they navigate to their destination. At the southern crossing (left photo below), pedestrians are led to the driveway of the Community Hall and the front access to gas pumps for Hero’s Welcome. At the northern crossing (right photo below), pedestrians are led to a driveway or parking area. In both locations, parked cars have blocked the use and visibility of the crossings.

Current crossing facilities do not link to a defined zone or facility for pedestrians.



Opportunities for Tomorrow. Opportunities to enhance the crossings in the Village vary in scale and magnitude. The following are examples of the concepts presented for discussion: enhanced signage, modified paint patterns and extent, installation of textured crossing as well as slightly elevating the crossing. The crossing “receiving areas”, or the space on either end of the crosswalk, can be further enhanced as well. The use of objects such as bollards or planters, can define the crossing “receiving areas” and provide a protected space for pedestrians once they leave the crossing.

These objects can vary from temporary, seasonal to permanent installations. The graphic below provides visual examples of these elements used to enhance the streetscape and define spaces.



The graphics on the following pages depict how these infrastructure elements above could be integrated into the two crossings in the Village area. These graphics are concepts and would require further review to ensure proper placement of the elements to serve as pedestrian connections as well as accommodate desired traffic patterns.

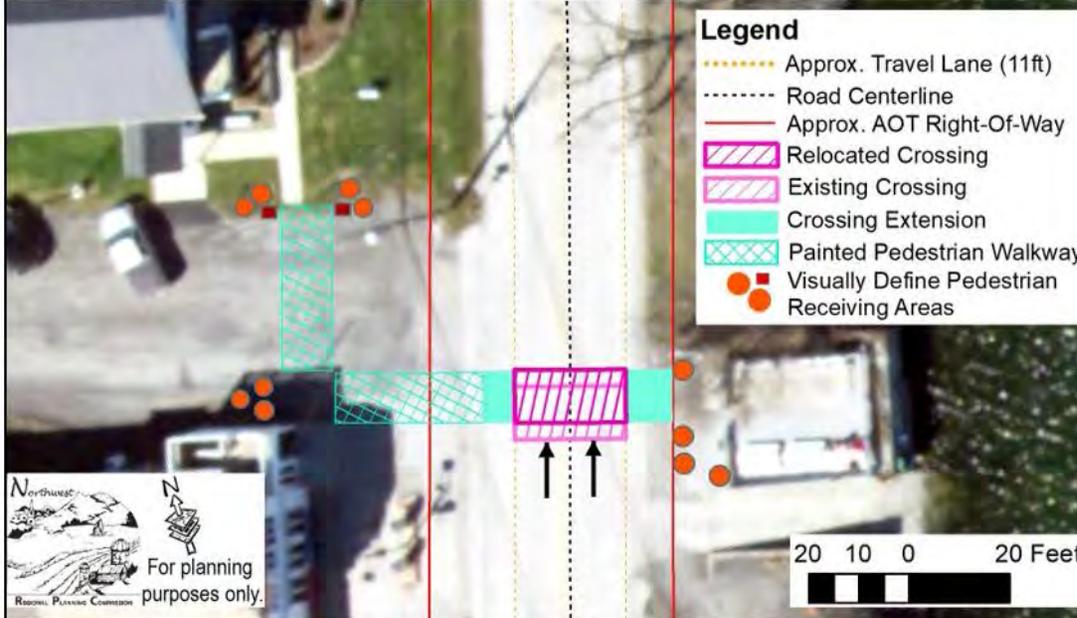
NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN – APRIL 2021

Southern Crossing - The concepts below show shifting of the crossing to the north to align with walkway and entrance to adjacent destinations. The crossing area extends with a defined walkway to provide the expected pathway for pedestrians. Planters or bollards are shown in groupings at each pedestrian receiving area that serve as a visual cue to drivers as well as provide protection to pedestrians. If pursued, a review of vehicular movements should be conducted on both sides of the road and parking to refine feature placement.

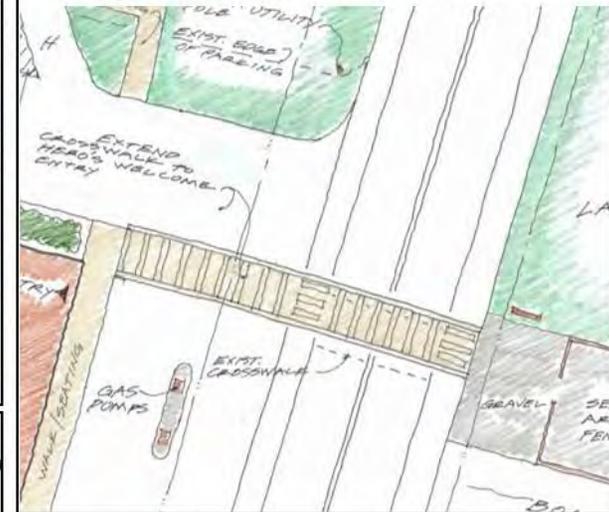
North Hero Village, southern crossing looking east



Aerial view of concept



Example 1. Paint & Extension



Example 2. Texture & Definition

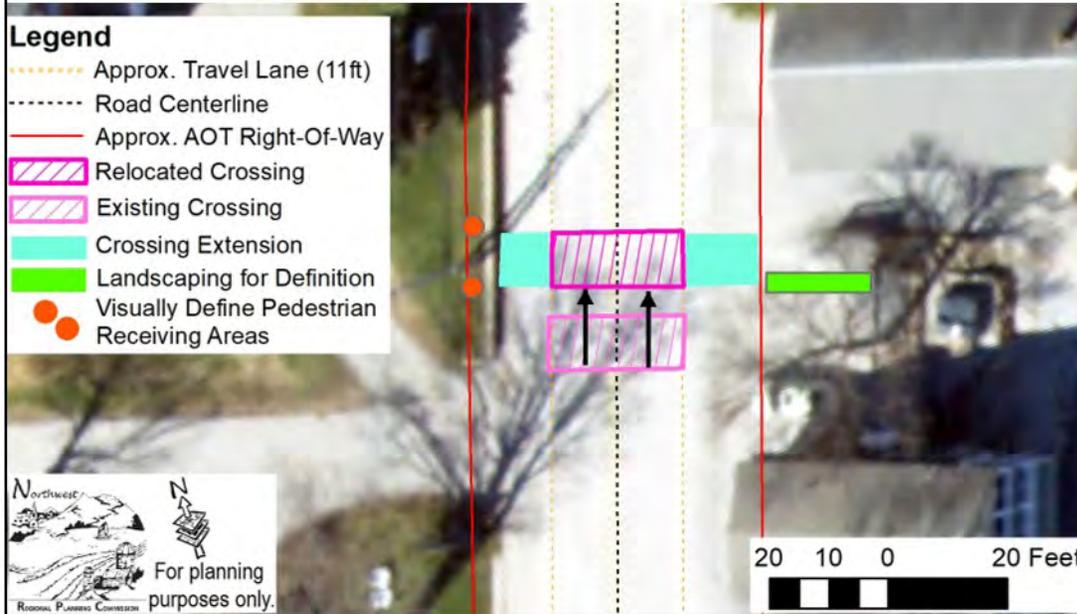


Northern Crossing – The concepts below show the relocation of the crossing to the north to minimize conflicts between cars and pedestrians on both ends. The new crossing aligns with the walkway on the east and can be further defined with landscaping as shown to create a separation from parked cars. Planters on the west side above the retaining wall serve as a visual cue to drivers; the wide shoulder adjacent to the Methodist Church could be further explored to identify if additional enhancements could be located adjacent to the road.

North Hero Village, northern crossing looking north



Aerial view of concept



Example 1. Paint & Extension



Example 2. Texture & Definition



Gateway Signage

The placement of a sign or “gateway” at the entrance to a community marks a transition and signals to drivers they are entering a slower-speed area. Signage is often considered one element that should be combined with other elements provided in this plan to reinforce the visual presence of the Village setting or “arrival”.

Infrastructure Today. As you travel north or south on US Route 2, the main indicator that you will be entering the Village area is the reduced speed limit signs and pedestrian crossing signs.

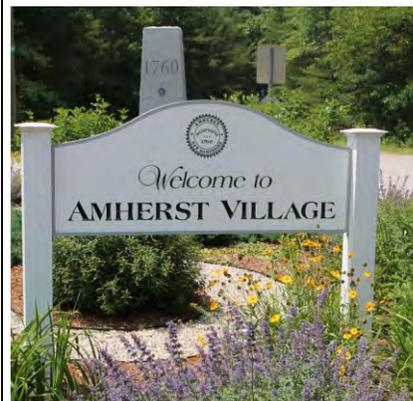
Observations. Additional cues could be provided to alert drivers they are coming upon a Village area.

Opportunities for Tomorrow. There are many examples of gateway signage from communities in Vermont and beyond, as shown below.

The siting of gateway signs on either end of US Route 2 can create a sense of arrival to the Village. These areas could be further enhanced with a planting at the base of the sign. External lighting on the sign could also be a consideration to give it presence at night.



Examples of Gateway Signage



The following graphic depicts how this infrastructure element could be integrated into the landscape to enhance the appearance of the Village. This is conceptual only; design plans and locations should be vetted with a community process.



Reducing Speeds

Ensuring appropriate speed limits are followed in the Village reduces potential conflicts between vehicles and with non-motorized users. Aside from safety concerns, fast traffic can limit physical activity, use of public space, and quality of life.

Infrastructure Today. Prior to 2019, the posted speed limit transitioned from 50 to 35 in the Village. As detailed in the “Prior Community Action” section of this plan, the Town has taken strides and been successful in working with VTrans to reduce the posted speed limit in the Village area to 30 mph with an advisory 25 mph in the summer for the historic district.

Observations. As was noted by VTrans, during the 2019 pilot which posted a reduced speed limit, this signage alone was not effective in lowering speeds outside of the area adjacent to the North Hero House. It likely was effective at the North Hero House location given the concentration of activity adjacent to the roadway serving to slow traffic down as they pass.

Opportunities for Tomorrow. Reducing speeds starts with an evaluation of the posted speed limit to ensure effectiveness, as was conducted by VTrans. Signage alone typically does not solve an

issue along a corridor; thus, the incorporation of other elements can visually change the corridor and cause a driver to slow down. The layering of elements noted in this plan would enhance the streetscape and serve to create some visual change along the highway. To monitor speeds, the use of a radar speed feedback sign could be explored as either a temporary installation or feedback signs co-located with the posted speed limit sign to slow traffic entering the Village.

Public Parking Definition and Wayfinding

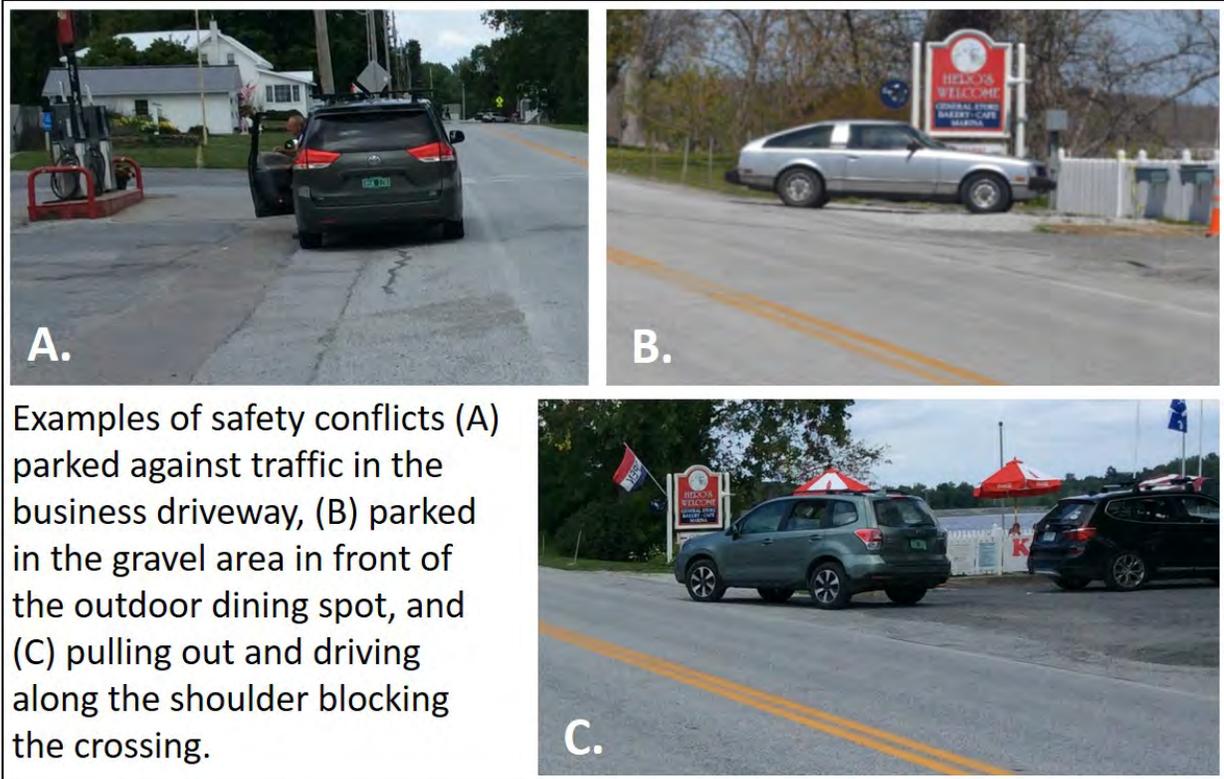
By defining and signing areas where public parking is allowed, either on a public parcel or via agreements with landowners, it will be easier to manage and anticipate where parking occurs in the Village area. This also helps direct drivers to acceptable locations, reinforce the areas parking is not preferred, and reduces potential conflict with non-motorized users both on the road and in accessing their destination.

Infrastructure Today.

On-street – Public parking is occurring on-street along the Route 2 travel lane, primarily on the eastern side. Cars park adjacent to the travel lane but with the narrow shoulder, the swing of the door often opens into the travel lane. The wide shoulder in front of the Methodist Church on the west side of Route 2 has also been used for parking and results in the same safety concern of exiting the car. Parking is allowed on a state highway but vehicles should be clear of the roadway.

Off street – There are no municipally owned properties in the Historic District to provide parking. The off-street parking in this area is associated with the Community Hall, Hero’s Welcome, North Hero House and the County Courthouse; these areas are currently being used to informally meet the public parking needs in the Village.

Observations. Cars that park along US Route 2 currently create a safety hazard for all parties - the driver, oncoming traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Drivers can be seen parking along any open space available adjacent to the travel lane, even if that space was not intended for vehicular traffic. These “on-street” parking scenarios put pedestrians in the travel lane and obscures the visibility of the crossings as well as the pedestrians in the crossings. As an example, the photos below show the various iterations that can occur outside Hero’s Welcome where vehicles have parked or are pulling out.



Examples of safety conflicts (A) parked against traffic in the business driveway, (B) parked in the gravel area in front of the outdoor dining spot, and (C) pulling out and driving along the shoulder blocking the crossing.

Opportunities for Tomorrow.

On-street – Parking along US Route 2 should be discouraged near the crossing areas and other locations that do not provide adequate space for a vehicle to clear the travel lane and paved shoulder. Areas where on-street parking is not desired should be signed as “No Parking”; one area to consider is the shoulder in front of the Methodist Church. To further discourage parking and improve safety, the Town should consider installation of elements proposed in the *Crossing Area Enhancements* section to establish a different intended use for these areas and aid traffic calming. As was noted in the VTrans pilot evaluation, speeds were reduced in the areas of the North Hero House likely due to the perceived hazards from the combination of elements near the roadway (parked cars, crosswalk, etc.) that unintentionally served to slow traffic speeds.

Off street – Wayfinding to direct drivers to locations where parking is available and desired can be an improvement that is implemented as a standalone item or in tandem with the action to sign the roadway with “No Parking” signage. As was noted under “Infrastructure Today”, there are parking areas in the Village being informally used to meet the public parking needs. The Town can work with these private property owners as an opportunity to sign these locations and better define the parking spaces.

Potential public parking locations.



Access Management at Driveways

Driveways are places where vehicles are turning in and out of a destination. These areas are often conflict points between the turning vehicles and pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motorists because the flow of traffic is unclear and multiple users can be trying to navigate in the space. The term “access management” addresses the number, size, and spacing of driveways or access points from the roadway to the property to improve safety.

Infrastructure Today: The frontage along Hero’s Welcome and the driveways between Hero’s Welcome and the Community Hall is a wide and undefined paved area that provides access to parking for each establishment as well as access to the gas pumps. This section of road frontage lacks definition for vehicular ingress or egress and pedestrian travel. There is no curbing, pavement markings, signage or other form of access management aside from the white painted fog line at the roadway edge.

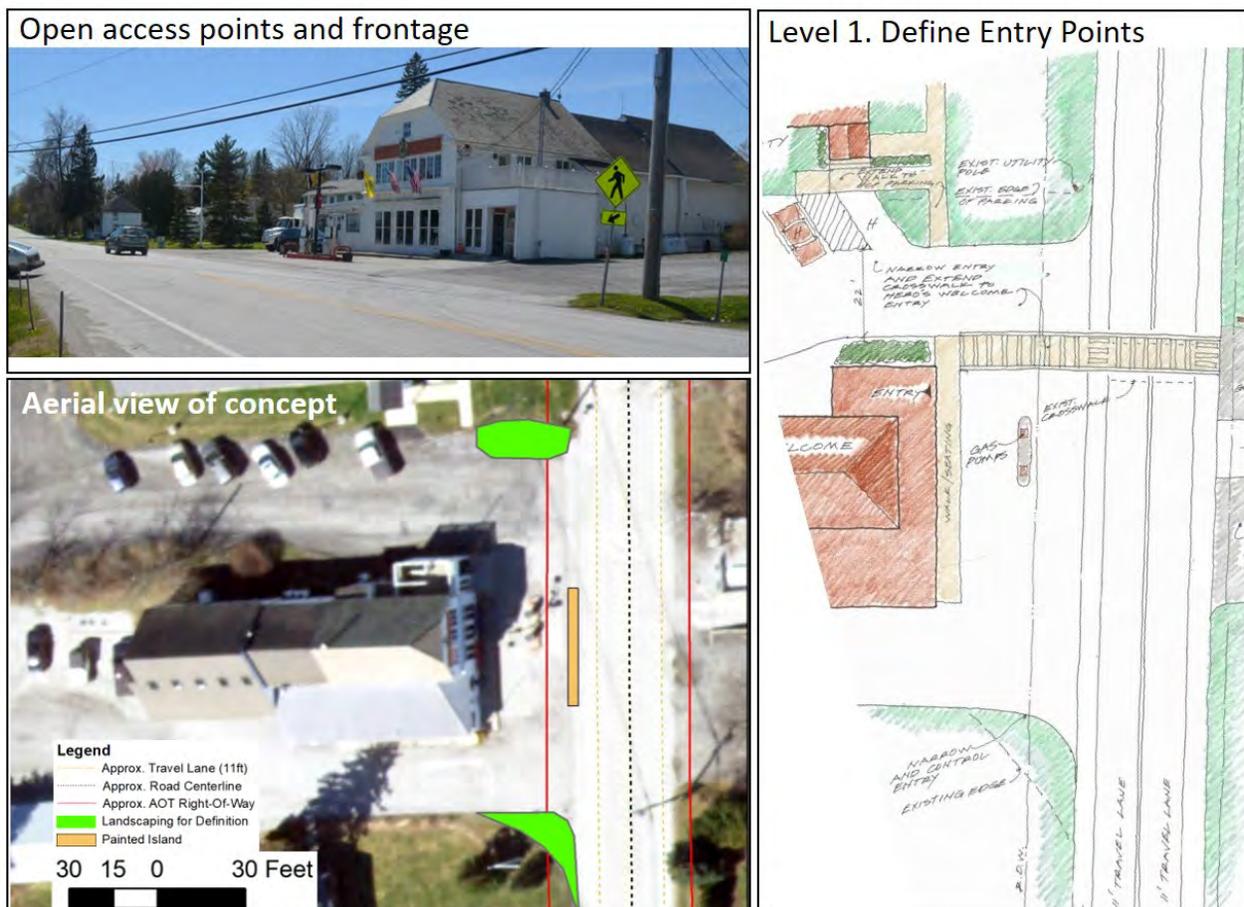
Observations: The wide undefined area in front of Hero’s Welcome creates a space with unpredictable vehicle flows. Vehicles pull into the frontage area for access to the gas pumps as intended however, with no definition, this area also becomes a space for a “quick stop” to drop off or pick up at the post office or a run into the store. This becomes a safety issue when there is more than one vehicle in this space as another vehicle or pedestrian will have multiple places to look to avoid an interaction.



In terms of the driveways, the access driveway to Hero’s Welcome to the south is a wide curve, likely widened over time as vehicles and trucks have worn the corner. A wide turn radius typically results in high-speed turning movements by vehicles and the ability for vehicles to try and dart in at an angle. The driveway at the Community Hall is wide and creates a longer and undefined path for pedestrians accessing the building. The placement of parking on either side of the walkway and abutting the roadway can also create conflict points between vehicles and pedestrians.

Opportunities for Tomorrow: There is a range of improvements that could be considered to address these access management concerns; the following depictions are concepts and would require further review to ensure correct placement and accommodation of traffic patterns (vehicles, trucks, boats, etc.), parking and turning movements. At the Hero’s Welcome driveway to the south, the concept shows creating a more defined edge to the driveway to narrow the turning radius but does not impact the width of the driveway itself. A consideration for the Community Hall driveway is to create an expanded landscaped area from the roadway to the sidewalk which will direct vehicles turning in to travel behind the parked cars and it creates an area that can be an extension of the pedestrian and landscaped space. Narrowing the drive at the entrance would entail relocating one or both handicap parking spaces.

For the frontage of Hero’s Welcome, paint could be used to define the road shoulder between the travel lane and the gas pumps and discourage its use as a travel or parking lane. The use of paint to



simulate a curbed island is a potential solution for the tight space and could be enhanced with temporary or moveable objects such as planters or bollards. The areas identified in this concept could be further improved with other elements noted in the plan such as the crossing enhancements.

Pedestrian Improvements

Pedestrian facilities define a space for users and increases safety. Facilities should be designed with the safety of the user in mind and provide access to desired destinations both along (sidewalks, pathways and paved shoulders) and across (appropriately designed crossings) roadways. As a pedestrians' perception of safety is greatly affected by traffic volumes and speed, in village centers, it is often necessary to reduce traffic speed through roadway design features that slow traffic.

Infrastructure Today: No infrastructure currently exists to accommodate pedestrians along the roadway in the corridor; pedestrians are using the paved road shoulder. The shoulder varies in width from 3-5 feet.



Observations. Walking on the shoulder is a challenge due to the width, surface condition, slope as well as the proximity to vehicles. Pedestrians also have the challenge of navigating around parked vehicles. Pedestrians have noted the desire for improved infrastructure that connects to the library.

Opportunities for Tomorrow: Given the dimensions of the roadway, there are not any options to better accommodate pedestrians on the existing roadway. A dedicated pedestrian facility (sidewalk or path) would best accommodate users along this corridor; the path could be physically separated from the roadway with a grassed swale or adjacent to it with a barrier such as the bollards used by South Burlington. It was noted during this planning process that there are challenges along either side of the road to accommodate a facility; these constraints would need to be explored further with project scoping. The alternative to a pedestrian specific facility is the use of widened shoulders by pedestrians; while this is not an official pedestrian facility it would better accommodate

pedestrians compared to the current conditions. The Town can work with VTrans to discuss widening the road shoulders during the next repaving cycle of Route 2.

Bicyclist Improvements



On-road bicycle facilities include bicycle lanes and paved shoulders. To accommodate a wide range of bicyclists in a shared roadway situation, the on-road facility should be 5 to 6-ft wide. Providing an adequate facility ensures safety between vehicles and pedestrians, increases visibility and provides a facility more people are likely to use.

Infrastructure Today. The road shoulder width varies along the corridor, while the state standard is 4 feet for US Route 2, there are areas where the shoulder narrows to 3 feet (*see map series in the section Corridor Map*).

Observations. US Route 2 is used as a bike route for local traffic and seasonally by tourists. The majority of the road shoulder meets minimum standards for a bike lane with a width of 4 feet. As the Village district is less than one mile in length and this facility is also being used by pedestrians, it is not recommended to sign the shoulder as a bike lane.

Opportunities for Tomorrow. Bikes could be better accommodated for with a 5- or 6-foot shoulder width; this could be provided as the entire width in a lane or offer a buffered bike lane. Buffered bike lanes either visually or physically separate the lane with a 1.5-foot buffer.



Additional Streetscape & Traffic Calming Elements

Additional infrastructure elements were considered at the Community Open House and by the Steering Committee. With consideration of public input and other factors, the Steering Committee determined that the following elements do not meet the goals and context of the community at this time:

- Banners to create an enhanced sense of arrival to the Village area. This improvement did garner interest, however, there was concern over cost, responsibility and whether it necessitated obtaining Class 1 Town Highway designation.
- Pedestrian scale lighting to improve visibility. This element was not explored further as Village residents generally expressed a desire for no increased lighting to maintain the current character of the Village.
- Elevated pedestrian crossings and stamped crossings to define the pedestrian space and increase the visibility of the crossing area. Both opportunities were viewed as having a higher maintenance cost over time and potential to produce noise.
- Rumble strips placed as a warning prior to the crossing with the goal of slowing down vehicles. These features were removed for noise considerations.
- Sidewalk to create a dedicated pedestrian facility. The Steering Committee is in support of improving conditions for pedestrians but the placement and type of infrastructure would need to be explored in scoping to reduce impacts to historic elements.

Evaluation of Designating US Route 2 as a Town Highway

In municipalities where a state highway passes through a downtown or village center, municipalities can request changing the state route to a Class 1 Town Highway in order to pursue various roadway improvements. A Class 1 Town Highway, is a state highway that is maintained by the municipality. The benefits of Class 1 designation include ability to control and have greater flexibility in the design of the roadway (including placement and incorporation of crosswalks, street trees, parking, wayfinding, etc.) as well as the set speed limit and access management (approval of new driveways or accesses).

A municipality does not have maintenance responsibility over a state highway; the exception to this is with pedestrian improvements, such as sidewalks and street lights, where the municipality is responsible for their management. However, when a state highway is designated as a Class 1, the municipality assumes the all responsibility of maintenance along the roadway except centerline striping and pavement resurfacing. These roadways are then subject to concurrent authority and jurisdiction between the municipality and VTrans. Municipalities with Class 1 designated roadways do receive an allocation from the Town Highway Aid Funding set the Legislature in order to provide for maintenance costs of the designated road section as well as grant funding for major improvements.

VTrans has outlined a process to estimate the net impacts from a change in roadway designation. *The following five step process should be conducted by a municipality as a part of the assessment:*

1. Establish goals for reclassification,
2. Inventory the road,
3. Identify limits for reclassification & factors for decision,
4. Calculate costs & revenues, and
5. Discuss among the community and with VTrans.

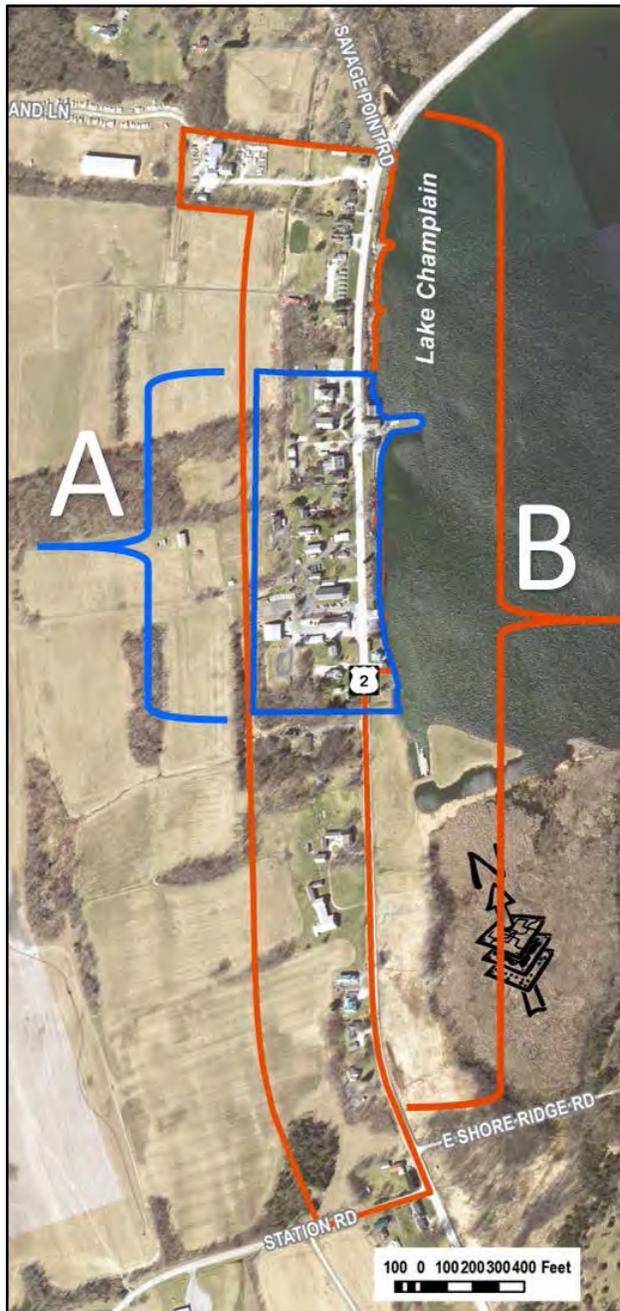
This section will review results of the five-step process to assess the portion of Route 2 in North Hero Village.

1. *Establishment of goals for the reclassification.* As it relates to this project, the purpose and goal as defined in this effort is, “To have the flexibility to implement preferred safety and traffic calming improvements.”
2. *Inventory the roadway to evaluate the condition of the infrastructure (pavement, culverts, catch basins, etc.).* The road surface is in good condition, VTrans completed a resurfacing project for the length of US Route 2 in 2013-2015. This stretch of roadway does contain drainage culverts and catch basins; the status of this infrastructure was assumed to be in

good condition for the purposes of this analysis. The Town would want to confirm the condition of all infrastructure features to determine if action by VTrans is necessary prior to designation.

Map 2. Roadway segments considered for reclassification.

3. *Identify the limits for reclassification and factors for the decision.* NRPC explored two scenarios to define the potential extent of the designation, as shown in Map 2. In Scenario A, the Class 1 boundary matches that of the Historic District in blue (0.3-mile segment) and in Scenario B, the boundary matches closely to the Village District in red using the 2020 VTrans approved speed limit zone of 30mph to define the limits (0.73-mile segment). These boundaries followed the VTrans guidance to not place the transition of this designation close to intersections.



4. *Calculate costs and revenue.* The aim in this stage is for municipalities to receive enough Town Highway Aid to adequately reimburse for the necessary maintenance activities. The results of this cost analysis for these two segments are shown in Table 3. In Scenario A, the Historic District, the segment is small and funding is just shy of covered the costs as estimated below. In Scenario B, the greater Village District, the aid funding would provide enough revenue to cover estimated costs. It should be noted that this cost exercise is based on estimates such as average cost per mile, typical annual costs, and incorporates a contingency amount. For these two scenarios, the lack of higher maintenance infrastructure along these segments such as a traffic light or bridge kept the cost ratio close to neutral.

5. *Discuss among the community and with VTrans.* This step was initiated with conversation by the Project Steering Committee and communication with the VTrans District office. This information will be provided to the Town Selectboard and NRPC is available to provide a presentation of the analysis.

Table 3. Cost Analysis for State Highway Reclassification to Class 1 Town Highway (based on VTrans 2016 White Paper and cost template and Town Highway Aid Revenue rate as of Fiscal Quarter October-December FY2021).

	SCENARIO A	SCENARIO B	ITEM
WINTER	\$100	\$100	Per hour of plowing
	80	80	Average plow events per year
	0.07	0.18	Hour plowing per mile per storm
	\$1,320	\$3,212	Salt allowance
	\$1,896	\$4,614	Total Winter Maintenance Cost
SUMMER	\$390	\$949	Line striping
	\$225	\$548	Culvert & drainage maintenance
	NA	NA	Signal Maintenance
	NA	NA	Electricity allowance
	NA	NA	Bridge maintenance (bridge over 6 ft. in length)
	\$150	\$365	Sign replacement allowance
	\$450	\$1,095	Pavement repairs (patching, crack sealing)
	\$500	\$500	Contingency allowance
	\$1,715	\$3,457	Total Summer Maintenance Cost
TOTAL	\$3,611	\$8,070	TOTAL Winter & Summer Maintenance Cost
	103%	95%	Ratio Cost per revenue received (Annual Town Highway Aid)

The potential need for Class 1 Town Highway designation was considered for every level of improvement throughout this planning process. The initial classification of improvements by level, as presented at the Open House, was the first attempt at determining whether an improvement would necessitate designation. The level of improvements that were selected by the Steering Committee to be pursued at this time do not require Class 1 designation in order to implement them, although it would allow for more flexibility in conducting improvements such as the crossing area enhancements. As the Town looks to pursue the elements of this planning effort, the Town should ensure there is continued coordination with VTrans on desired improvements in the corridor.

The full presentation of the Class 1 Town Highway analysis as presented to the Steering Committee is provided in Appendix C. This analysis was completed using the VTrans White Paper titled, “Class 1 Town Highways – Costs and Issue for Vermont Communities Considering Reclassification of State Highways” dated February 2016 as guidance.

Implementation Plan

The five goals defined at the beginning of the planning process guided the development of the Village Master Plan and the selected actions for implementation presented in this plan. Throughout the process, the Steering Committee also emphasized the importance of maintaining the historic look and feel of the Village when considering potential improvements.

Village Master Plan Goals:

- Enhance the Village streetscape character to achieve traffic calming.
- Create safe pedestrian crossings.
- Encourage pedestrian connectivity and safety between the North Hero House and Hero's Welcome.
- Enhance North Hero's "sense of place" to encourage a sense of arrival.
- Consider on-street parking solutions.

Implementing the vision of the Village Master Plan involves communication and coordination with many stakeholders. This section provides a series of tasks the community can pursue, individually or combined, to implement each of the recommended improvements in this plan. Each task has an Action Plan Worksheet that outlines necessary next steps, considerations, partners and potential funding opportunities. Magnitude of cost is reported for each improvement category as low (<\$10,000), medium (\$10,000-\$25,000) or high (>\$25,000).

The improvements selected for this section represent the elements which were supported by the Steering Committee. These improvements draw from aspects of the Level 1 and Level 2 initial concept plans as presented at the Community Open House. The Steering Committee determined many of the Level 3 elements were outside of the interests of the community at this time. The consideration of a dedicated pedestrian facility, however, was included in the action plan as an opportunity for further exploration given the strong interest in providing a facility for pedestrians along the corridor. The full array of concepts is provided in Appendix A.

Action Plan Worksheets:

- Task 1. Crossing Area Enhancements at the Southern Crossing
- Task 2. Crossing Area Enhancements at the Northern Crossing
- Task 3. Speed Limit Enforcement
- Task 4. Gateway Signage
- Task 5. Public Parking Definition & Wayfinding – On-Street Parking
- Task 6. Public Parking Definition & Wayfinding – Off-Street Parking
- Task 7. Access Management at Hero's Welcome and the Community Hall
- Task 8. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement: Widen Shoulder of US Route 2
- Task 9. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement: Pedestrian Facility Exploration

Task1. Crossing Area Enhancements at the Southern Crossing

Project Description: Enhancing the crossing areas was identified as a primary element that could be pursued to aid traffic calming; both crossing areas in the Village were identified as locations with a high amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The improvements that are provided below would necessitate communication and implementation with VTrans for elements in the roadway (travel lane and shoulder) and private property owners for areas outside the roadway. The first sub-task below, aligns with that of the Access Management improvements as both action plans necessitate working with adjacent landowners. While the implementation of the full suite of elements provided in this action plan will have the greatest impact, the actions related to the crossing and pedestrian receiving areas (adjacent to the crossing) can be pursued separately.

Sub-tasks 3 and 4 are items that would be carried out by VTrans. The relocation of a crosswalk within a state right-of-way must be approved by a VTrans Traffic Operations Engineer. The extension of the crossing paint through to the road shoulder should be requested of the VTrans District staff for consideration during the next paint cycle. This area has been previously painted as shown in the image from Google Street View from September 2008.

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: Low to Medium

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No

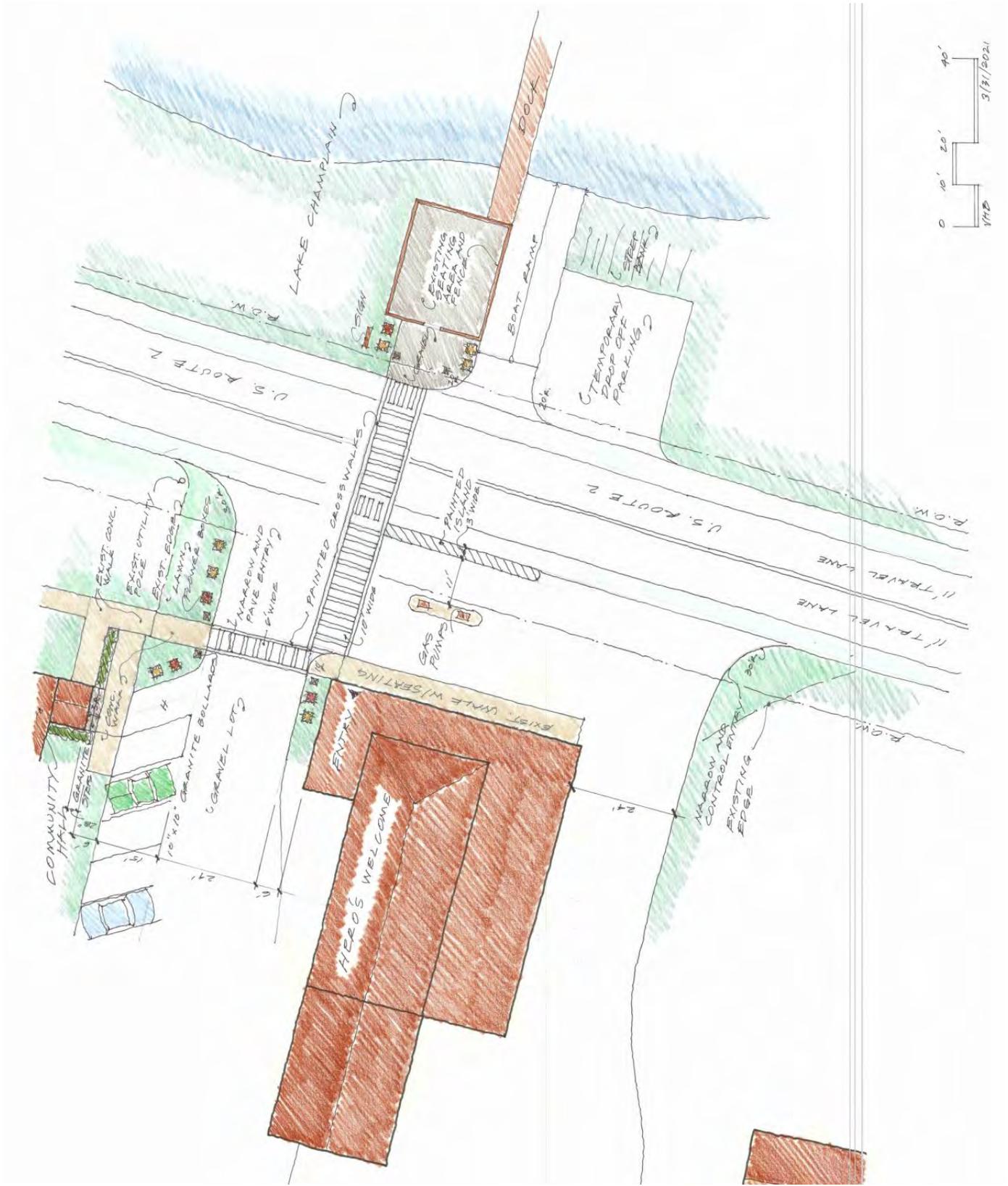
	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Public messaging to advertise the Village Master Plan vision and voluntary steps to achieve improvements.	Local Committee, Planning Commission, LCIEDC	-
2A	Conduct Demonstration Project with VTrans approval (See Appendix D)		Grant opportunity
2B	Modify design of access management post-demonstration	NRPC, VTrans	Town; Grant opportunity
3	Realign the crosswalk Request approval from VTrans to shift the crosswalk to the north	VTrans	-
4	Extend the painted crossing the width of the roadway (travel lane and shoulder) Request action of VTrans District for next paint cycle	VTrans	-
5	Engage property owner(s) on desired safety improvements outside the highway right-of-way	Historical Society, Hero's Welcome	-
6A	Create a pedestrian walkway to Community Hall	Historical Society	Landowner; Grant opportunity

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
	Pave driveway entrance Paint the walkway in coordination with the crossing extension		
6B	Visually define the pedestrian receiving areas on either side of the crosswalk Review by VTrans for safety considerations Installation of defining elements	Historical Society, Hero's Welcome	Landowner; Grant opportunity

Image of southern crossing in 2008 with paint extending width or entire roadway.



Figure 2. Southern crossing area concept plan to show enhancements identified to improve the safety of the area for all users.



Task 2. Crossing Area Enhancements at the Northern Crossing

Project Description: Enhancing the crossing areas was identified as a primary element that could be pursued to aid traffic calming; both crossing areas in the Village were identified as locations with a high amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The improvements that are provided below would necessitate communication and implementation with VTrans for elements in the roadway (travel lane and shoulder) and private property owners for areas outside the roadway. The first sub-task below, aligns with that of the Access Management improvements as both action plans necessitate working with adjacent landowners. While the implementation of the full suite of elements provided in this action plan will have the greatest impact, the actions related to the crossing and pedestrian receiving areas (adjacent to the crossing) can be pursued separately.

Sub-tasks 2 and 3 are items that would be carried out by VTrans. The relocation of a crosswalk within a state right-of-way must be approved by a VTrans Traffic Operations Engineer. The extension of the crossing paint through to the road shoulder should be requested of the VTrans District staff for consideration during the next paint cycle. This area has been previously painted as shown in the image from Google Street View from September 2008.

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: Low

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Public messaging to advertise the Village Master Plan vision and voluntary steps to achieve improvements.	Local Committee, Planning Commission, LCIEDC	-
2	Realign the crosswalk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request approval from VTrans to shift the crosswalk to the north 	VTrans	-
3	Extend the painted crossing the width of the roadway (travel lane and shoulder) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request action of VTrans District for next paint cycle 	VTrans	-
4	Engage property owner(s) on desired safety improvements outside the highway right-of-way	North Hero House, Methodist Church	-
5	Visually define the pedestrian receiving areas on either side of the crosswalk to enhance safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of defining elements 	North Hero House, Methodist Church	Landowner; Grant opportunity

Image of northern crossing in 2008 with paint extending width or entire roadway.



Task 3. Speed Limit Enforcement

Project Description: During this planning process, the Town was able to obtain approval from VTrans to reduce the speed limit to 30 mph in the Village area. As was noted by VTrans in their considerations, posting a reduced speed limit without other actions taken, may not fully provide the lower speeds the Town desires. The following are additional opportunities the Town can take to enforce the reduced speed limits in the village. One opportunity to reinforce lower speeds is the installation of a radar speed feedback sign; these signs alert speeding drivers of their actual speed. The MUTCD provides guidance on their use; the VTrans District office can provide more information on the process and a permit application. See *guidance document available from VTrans titled “2009 Guidelines for the Use of Radar Speed Feedback Signs on the State Highway System”*. A second option is the use of a temporary speed trailer. The Town can also communicate with the County Sherriff or Vermont State Police to contract for additional enforcement services.

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: Low

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1A	Acquire a VTrans access permit to install radar speed feedback sign	VTrans	Town
1B	Town is responsible for installation and maintenance		Town
2	Contract for police services to provide additional enforcement where needed	County Sherriff or VT State Police	Town

Examples of speed limit enforcement tools. A radar speed feedback sign (left) is a permanent installation and the speed trailer (right) is allowed to be used on a 2-week basis.



Task 4. Gateway Signage

Project Description: The Gateway concept provided in this plan illustrates how wayfinding signage could be located at each entrance to the village as a way to mark the traveler’s arrival. Installation of gateway treatments can reinforce the transition from the rural areas to a lower speed zone in the village. Signage is not allowed within the US Route 2 state right-of-way unless the municipality assumes responsibility for the roadway as Class 1 Town Highway*. Access to power will be required for nighttime illumination.

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: \$5,000-\$8,000 per sign, Low to Medium (electrical costs will vary depending on the type of fixtures and distances to available power)

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No*

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Explore locations for gateway signage, incorporating public process.	Local Committee, Planning Commission	-
2	Agreement(s) with landowner(s) for easement and access to sign locations		-
3	Design Gateway Signage Panel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option A. Use existing community logo and branding. Option B. Engage Consultant to develop new branding. 		Grant opportunity Grant opportunity
4	Select and purchase a sign mount.		Town
5	Fabrication and installation of signage.		Town



Task 5. Public Parking Definition & Wayfinding – On-Street Parking

Project Description: Removing on-street parking was a supported action to be pursued by the Steering Committee in order to reduce conflicts among motorized and non-motorized users. This process will require coordination and communication with VTrans for approval and execution. The type of sign would be determined in communication with VTrans, the examples below show complaint signage with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the required state format.

Several Vermont communities have adopted ordinances with provisions specific to parking and inclusive of other traffic measures such as the obstruction of crosswalks. The following are examples of Vermont communities with parking ordinances: Montgomery (standalone ordinance dated 2019), Waterbury (dated 2018) and Royalton (dated 2020) have parking provisions within a traffic ordinance. The VT League of Cities and Towns has a resource titled, “Quick Guide to Ordinance Adoption, Amendment, or Repeal” (2018) for a reference on the adoption process.

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: Not applicable to Low

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Identify desired locations to prohibit parking along US Route 2.	Planning Commission	-
2	Submit a letter to the VTrans District to request “No Parking” signage be located at identified areas. The Traffic Committee will review and take action on request.	VTrans	-
3	Adopt a parking ordinance.	NRPC, VLCT	-
4	Development of sign plans and installation by VTrans.	VTrans	-

Examples of MUTCD Compliant Parking Signage.



R7-1



R7-2



R7-2a



R7-3



R7-4



R8-1



R8-2



R8-3



R8-3a

Task 6. Public Parking Definition & Wayfinding – Off-Street Parking

Project Description: This planning process identified a strong desire to reduce parking conflicts from vehicles parking along US Route 2. To further support the on-street parking action in this plan, the Town should work with partners to better define and convey the areas where parking is preferred in the Village. The Community Hall and Court House were two informal parking areas identified as potential off-street public parking during this planning process. The Town should engage these property owners to discuss the opportunity to utilize these parking areas as public parking for Village as appropriate.

In terms of the installation of wayfinding for these parking areas, there are two avenues for signage. The MUTCD D4-1 sign could be utilized, however these signs can only be used to sign parking areas that are designated for public use. In order to sign the private parking lots, the Town would need a formal agreement with the landowner designating this use. If the Town would like to pursue other options for wayfinding with Community Wayfinding signs (see Burlington and Montpelier examples below), then approval of a sign plan would also be required from the Travel Information Council (TIC). For this option, the Town would need to develop a sign plan in conformance with the MUTCD and submit it to the TIC for approval.

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: Low (signs) to Medium (parking lot improvements)

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No*

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Engage property owners on formalizing use of parking areas for general public.	Historical Society, Court House	-
2	Evaluate the efficiency and flow of parking at each location to determine optimum arrangement and capacity.	Historical Society, Court House	Grant opportunity
3	Improvements to parking areas as needed (paving, marking, etc.)	Historical Society, Court House	Town; Landowner
4A	Apply for a VTrans Highway Access Permit (1111 permit) to install wayfinding.	VTrans	Town
4B	Install signs that are compliant with state requirements (MUTCD or TIC).		Town

Examples of Wayfinding Parking Signage (left to right): Current state approved sign for guiding drivers to parking areas (MUTCD D4-1), example of signage in Montpelier on Class 1 Town Highway, proposed wayfinding for Burlington (RSG), proposed wayfinding for Montpelier (Surface Matter Design).



Task 7. Access Management at Hero’s Welcome and the Community Hall

Project Description: In order to achieve the vision for the village, the planning process identified changes to the streetscape adjacent to the roadway that can have a big impact. The tasks below will better define the flow of traffic at this high use area, which will in turn improve safety for all users. The proposed physical improvements include the narrowing of driveway access points and turning radius (corner radii) as well as closing the open access in front of Hero’s Welcome with a painted curb. To ensure these levels of improvements are considered in the entire community, the Town should develop provisions to further address access management in the land development regulations.

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

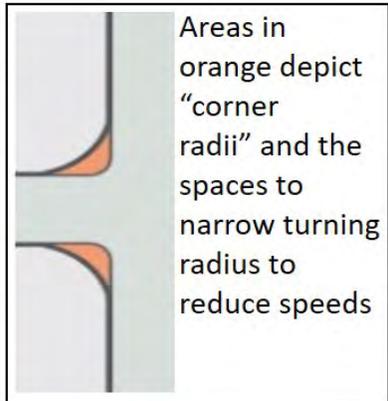
Conceptual Cost Estimate: Medium

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Public messaging to advertise the Village Master Plan vision and voluntary steps to achieve improvements.	Local Committee, Planning Commission, LCIEDC	-
2A	Develop provisions to land development regulations that address driveway access and width and require compliance to the vision.	Planning Commission, NRPC	Grant opportunity
2B	Engage property owner(s) on desired safety improvements		-
3A	Conduct Demonstration Project with VTrans approval (See Appendix D)	NRPC	Grant opportunity
3B	Modify design of access management post-demonstration (may require technical review by engineering firm)	NRPC	Town; Grant opportunity
4A	Installation of voluntary improvements to driveways initiated by landowners, with support of the Town.	Hero’s Welcome, Historical Society	Landowner; Grant opportunity
4B	Installation of improvements to driveways initiated by Town to address safety and fulfill the vision with landowner support.	Hero’s Welcome, Historical Society	Town; Landowner; Grant opportunity

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
5A	Apply for a VTrans Highway Access Permit (1111 permit) to install a painted curb in frontage of Hero's Welcome.	Hero's Welcome	Town; Landowner
5B	Installation of painted curb (Landowner or Town)		Town; Landowner

Example of defined frontage by gas pumps in East Dorset



Task 8. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement: Widen Shoulder of US Route 2

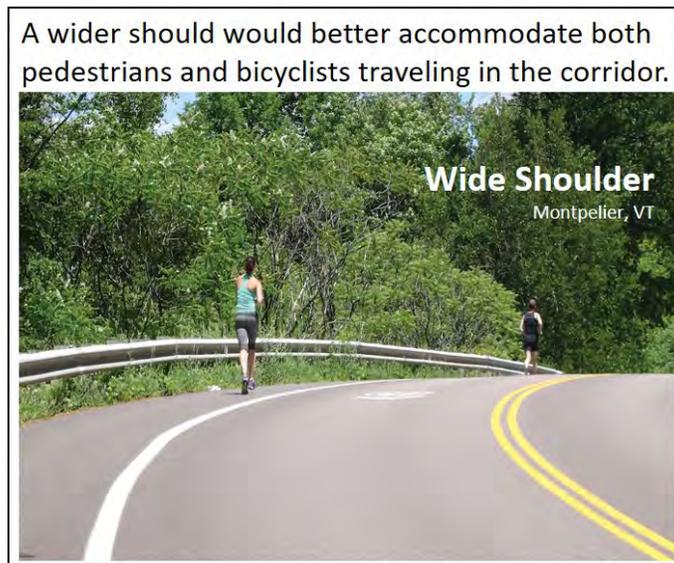
Project Description: A widened shoulder along US Route 2 can provide a safer facility for all non-motorized users to use the existing roadway. To pursue this action further, the Town should coordinate with NRPC in the request for VTrans to evaluate shoulder width during the next paving project for the corridor. VTrans will reach out to NRPC in the pre-design phase to obtain local and regional information in order to inform the design. This is the stage where considerations such as pavement widening could best be considered in order to determine feasibility. *As the corridor was last paved in 2013-15, it is anticipated that the next paving project will be targeted for approximately 2033. Widening of a facility is typically only considered during a full reclamation project that removes pavement to the sub-base.*

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: Not applicable

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Engage in pre-design planning process for the US Route 2 paving project	NRPC, VTrans	-



Task 9. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement: Pedestrian Facility Exploration

Project Description: As identified during this planning process, pedestrians along Route 2 in the Village area do not have access to a facility aside from the narrow road shoulder. The community can further explore the potential for a pedestrian facility, in order to provide the safest accommodation for users along this corridor. To fully evaluate potential placement and type of facility that could be accommodated in the corridor, an initial design stage should be initiated with a scoping study. Scoping will be able to evaluate feasibility such as impacts to existing land features and the best type of facility for the context such as a path or a sidewalk. *Implementation of the preferred alternative is not provided in action steps below but could be supported by the VTrans grant programs provided.*

Responsible Party: The Selectboard is the primary responsible party for this task.

Conceptual Cost Estimate: \$8,000 (20% local match of \$40,000 VTrans grant), Low

Require Class 1 Town Highway Designation: No

	SUB-TASK	PARTNER(S)	FUNDING
1	Apply for funding to scope a dedicated pedestrian facility	NRPC, Planning Commission	Grant opportunity
2	As a part of the scoping process ensure a robust community input process to determine the preferred alternative for the facility.	Local Committee, Planning Commission	Grant opportunity

The following are examples of infrastructure that could be considered during a scoping phase for pedestrian accommodations:

- (A.) Physically separated facility with a bollard barrier [South Burlington, VT],
- (B.) Sidewalk separated with curbing [Alburgh, VT],
- (C.) Sidewalk separated by grass strip [Fairfax, VT].



Funding Opportunities

Grants and Programs

Municipal Planning Grant Program – An Agency of Commerce and Community Development program provides grants for projects that promote planning, revitalization and development activities that maintain VT’s land use goal of compact settlements surrounding by rural lands. This grant can fund up to a maximum of \$22,000 and requires a 10% cash match. (<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/municipal-planning-grant>)

Transportation Alternatives Program – A VTrans grant program that supports projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities. This grant program requires a 20% local match and a maximum award of \$300,000. (<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/transport-alt>)

VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program – A VTrans grant program that supports bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects. Scoping studies and large-scale design/construction projects require a 20% match. (<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped>)

Foundations and Organizations

Vermont Community Foundation – A range of grant opportunities to support projects to improve environmental sustainability, cultural heritage, social justice, historic preservation, and vitality of Vermont communities. (<https://vermontcf.org/nonprofits-and-grantseekers/available-grants/>)

Rise VT Amplify Grant - Grant for community partners whose projects make the healthy choice the easy choice where we live, work, learn, and play. Projects should increase access and reduce barriers to: Physical activity, Healthy foods, or Physical, social, and emotional wellbeing. A maximum grant award is \$1,500. (<https://fgi.risevt.org/amplify-grants/>)

Better Places - An Agency of Commerce and Community Development pilot program as of winter 2020 to provide “placemaking” grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 that improve the vitality of state designated downtowns, village centers, new town centers, or neighborhood development areas. (<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/better-places>)

AARP Community Challenge – An AARP program that provides small grants to fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages. Applications are accepted for projects to improve public spaces, housing, transportation, civic engagement, diversity and inclusion, and more. Project Types include: permanent physical improvements in the community, temporary demonstrations that lead to long-term change or new, innovative programming or services. (<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge>)

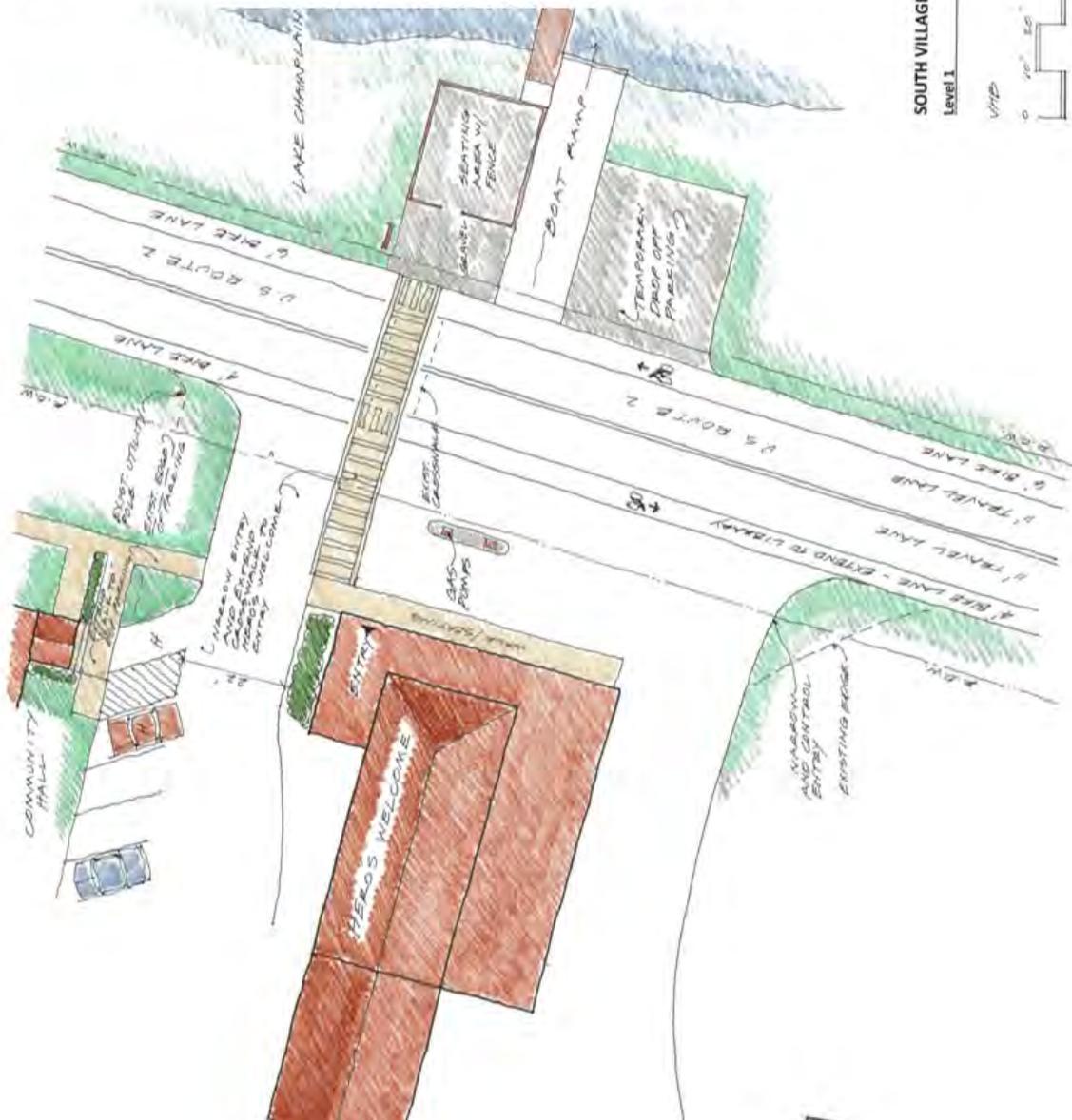
Appendix A. Visualizing Opportunities – Level 1- 3 Concepts as Presented at Community Open House

Visualizing Potential Improvements

Level 1

Improvements that can be made to the crosswalks and streetscape that do not require Class 1 Town Highway designation.

- Gateway to the Village signage
- Banners on existing utility poles
- Clarify where on-street parking is allowed and not allowed with signage and markings
- Crosswalks painted with marked with state approved signage
- Relocated northern crosswalk to align with pedestrian access to the North Hero House lakeside dining area. Currently the crosswalk directs pedestrians to the rear of parked cars creating a dangerous situation with traffic
- Extend paint from southern crosswalk to Hero's Welcome entry to provide a defined pedestrian path
- Provide pedestrian connections to Community Hall from the parking area
- Narrow width of entry drives at the Community Hall and Hero's Welcome to control traffic
- 4' and 6' bike lanes on the road shoulders; continuous entire length of the designated Village Center



SOUTH VILLAGE AREA

Level 1

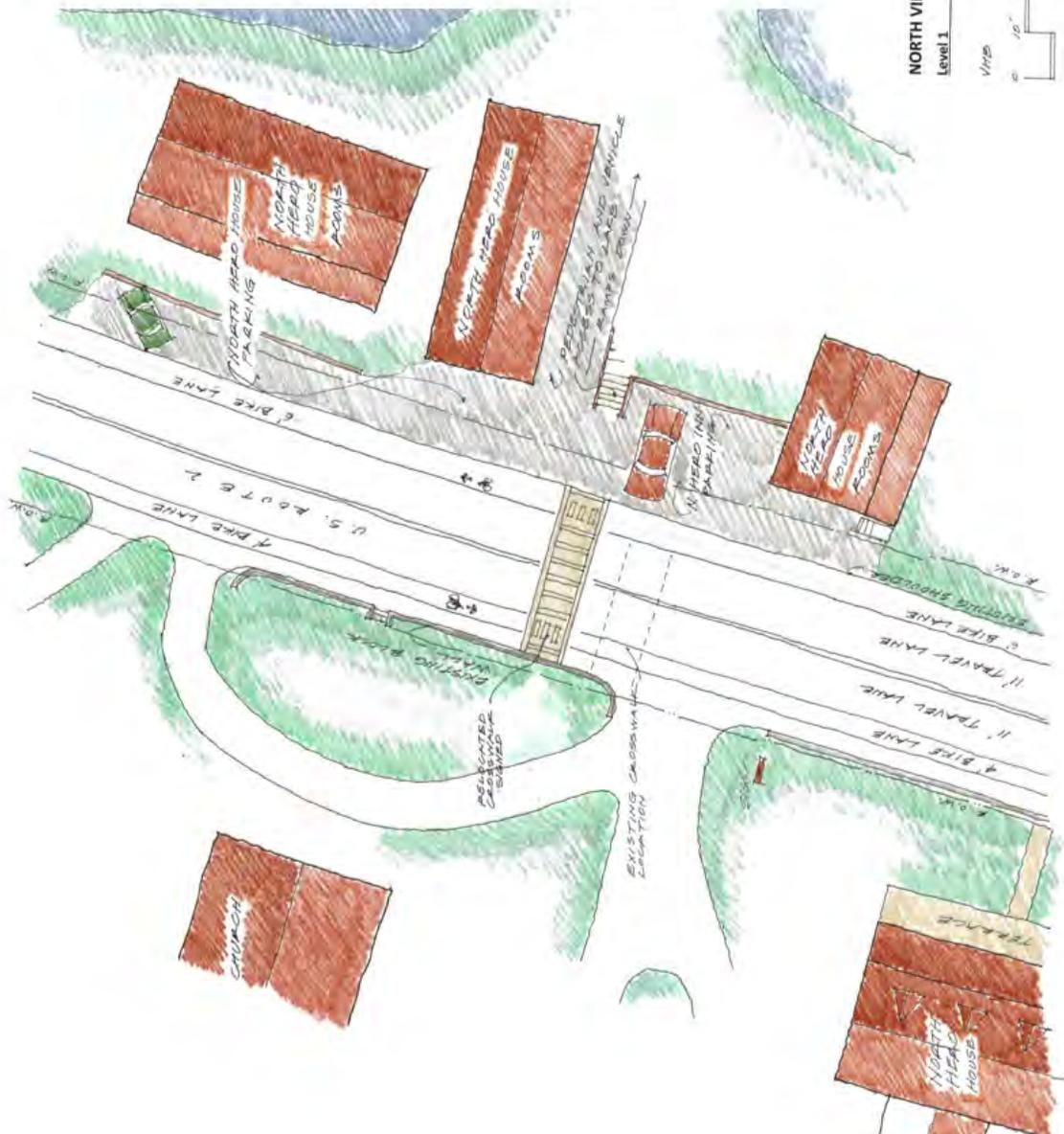


Visualizing Potential Improvements

Level 1

Improvements that can be made to the crosswalks and streetscape that do not require Class 1 Town Highway designation.

- Gateway to the Village signage
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- Extend paint from southern crosswalk to Hero's Welcome entry to provide a defined pedestrian path
- Provide pedestrian connections to Community Hall from the parking area
- Narrow width of entry drives at the Community Hall and Hero's Welcome to control traffic
- 4' and 6' bike lanes on the road shoulders; continuous entire length of the designated Village Center



NORTH VILLAGE AREA

Level 1

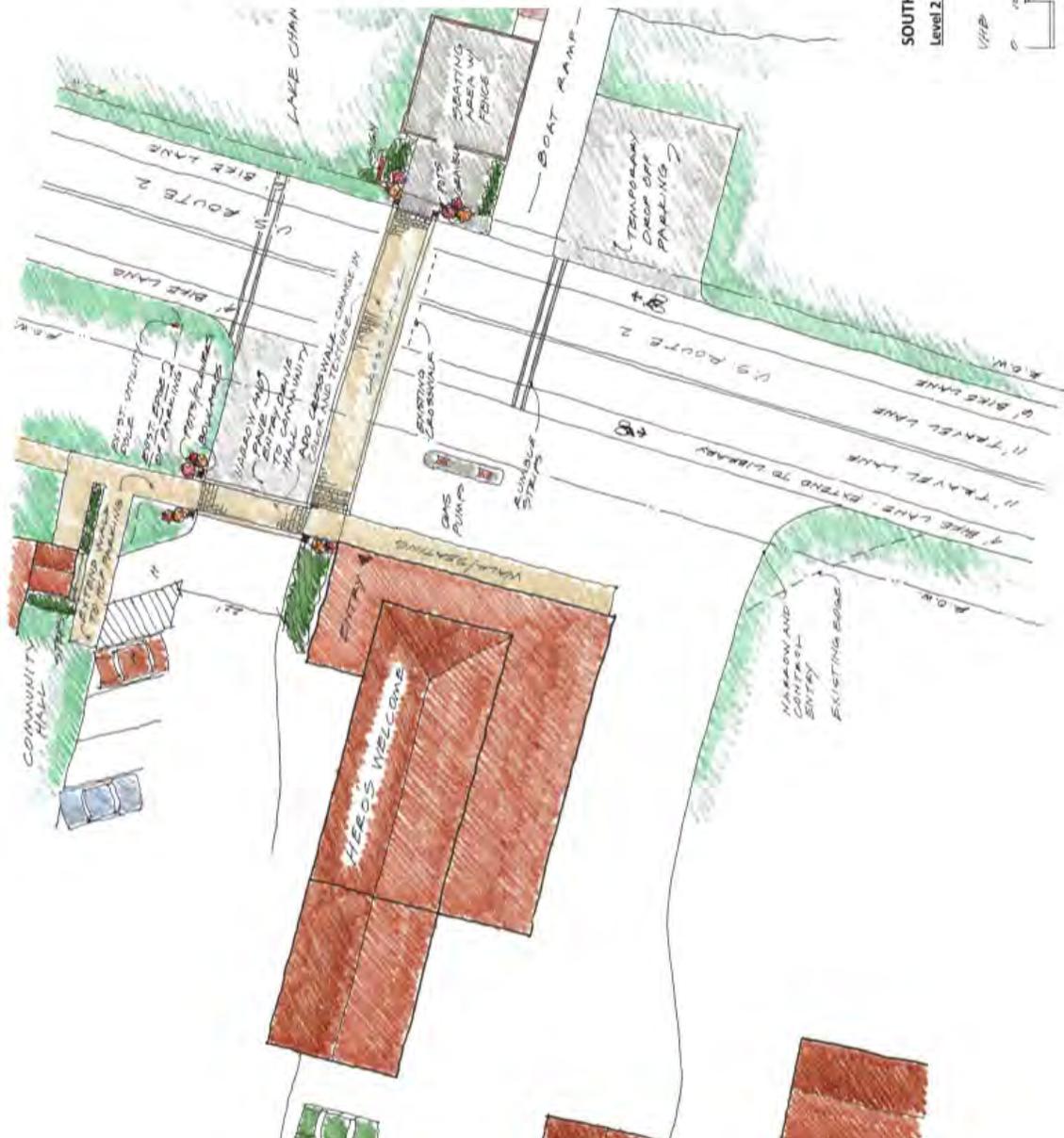


Visualizing Potential Improvements

Level 2

Improvements that require Class 1 Highway designation, but are still considered low cost and/or semi-permanent.

- Incorporates all Level 1 improvements including:
 - Crosswalk with change in color and texture to visually identify it as a crossing, improving safety for the pedestrian
 - Rumble strips to warn vehicles of crossing both visually and with vibration
 - Bollards and removable landscape pots at crosswalk to visually identify crossing and provide seasonal interest
 - Pavement and add crosswalk between Community Hall and Hero's Welcome entry
 - Reduce posted speed of U.S. Route 2

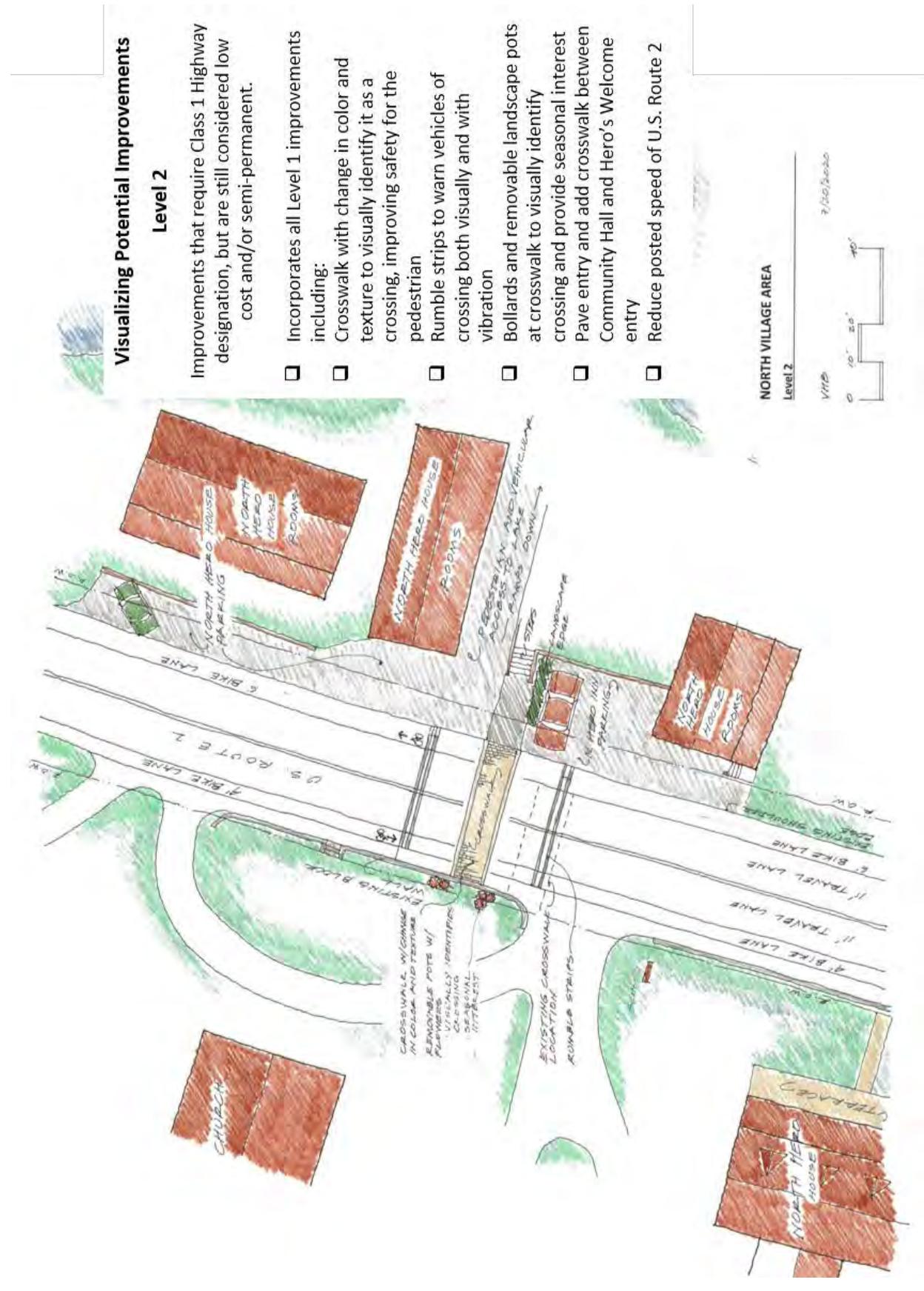


SOUTH VILLAGE AREA

Level 2



APPENDIX A



Visualizing Potential Improvements

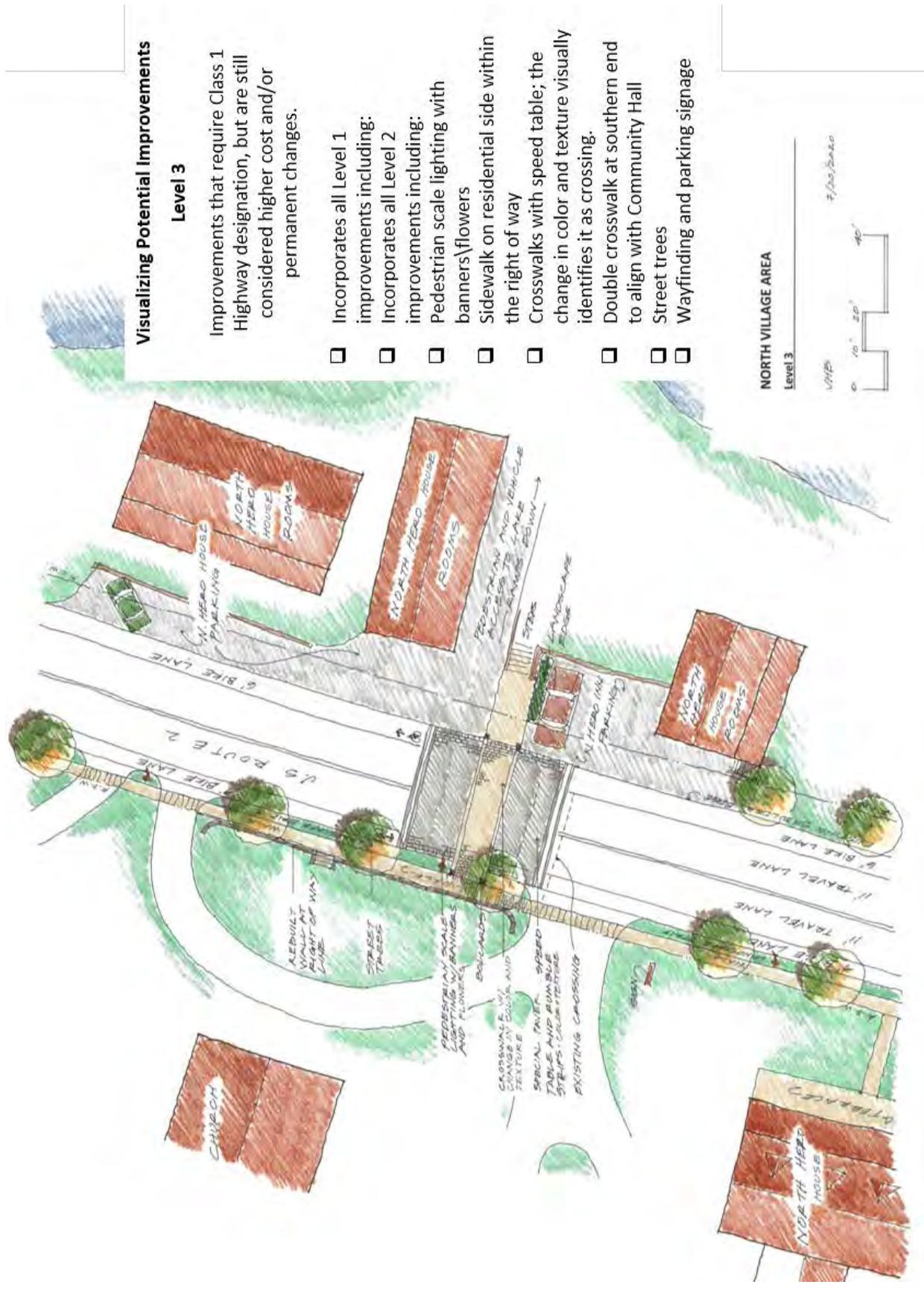
Level 2

Improvements that require Class 1 Highway designation, but are still considered low cost and/or semi-permanent.

- Incorporates all Level 1 improvements including:
 - Crosswalk with change in color and texture to visually identify it as a crossing, improving safety for the pedestrian
 - Rumble strips to warn vehicles of crossing both visually and with vibration
 - Bollards and removable landscape pots at crosswalk to visually identify crossing and provide seasonal interest
 - Pavement and add crosswalk between Community Hall and Hero's Welcome entry
 - Reduce posted speed of U.S. Route 2

NORTH VILLAGE AREA Level 2





Visualizing Potential Improvements

Level 3

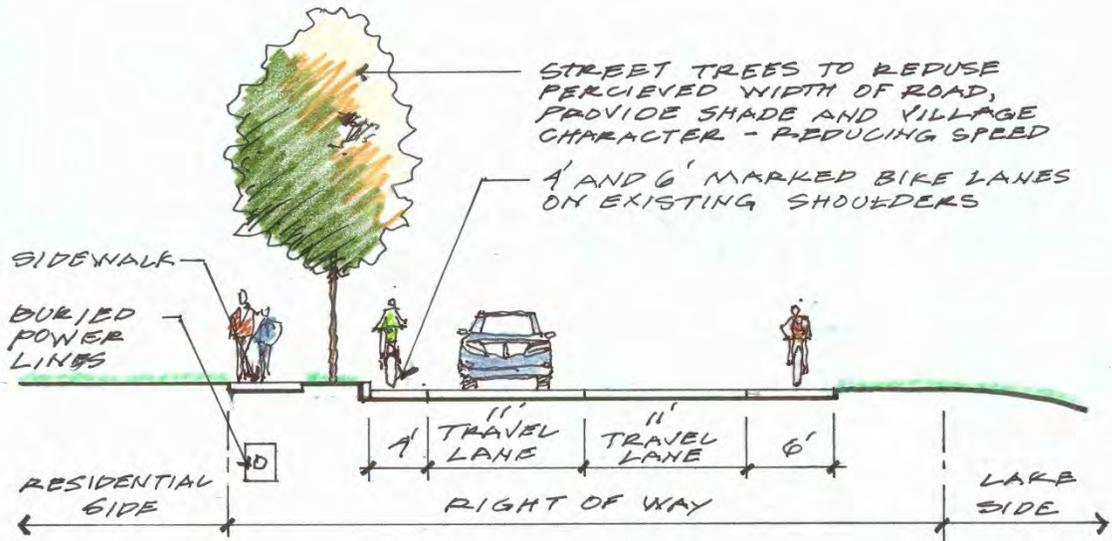
Improvements that require Class 1 Highway designation, but are still considered higher cost and/or permanent changes.

- Incorporates all Level 1 improvements including:
- Incorporates all Level 2 improvements including:
- Pedestrian scale lighting with banners/flowers
- Sidewalk on residential side within the right of way
- Crosswalks with speed table; the change in color and texture visually identifies it as crossing.
- Double crosswalk at southern end to align with Community Hall
- Street trees
- Wayfinding and parking signage

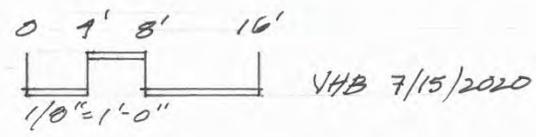
NORTH VILLAGE AREA
Level 3



Level 3 Cross Section for the Village area



U.S. ROUTE 2 - SECTION
LEVEL 3
PROPOSED CONDITIONS



Appendix B. Survey Results from Community Open House

North Hero Village Master Plan

Draft Open House Survey Results

Total Responses: 55

Survey Period: July 22, 2020 to August 5, 2020

Number of Questions: 16

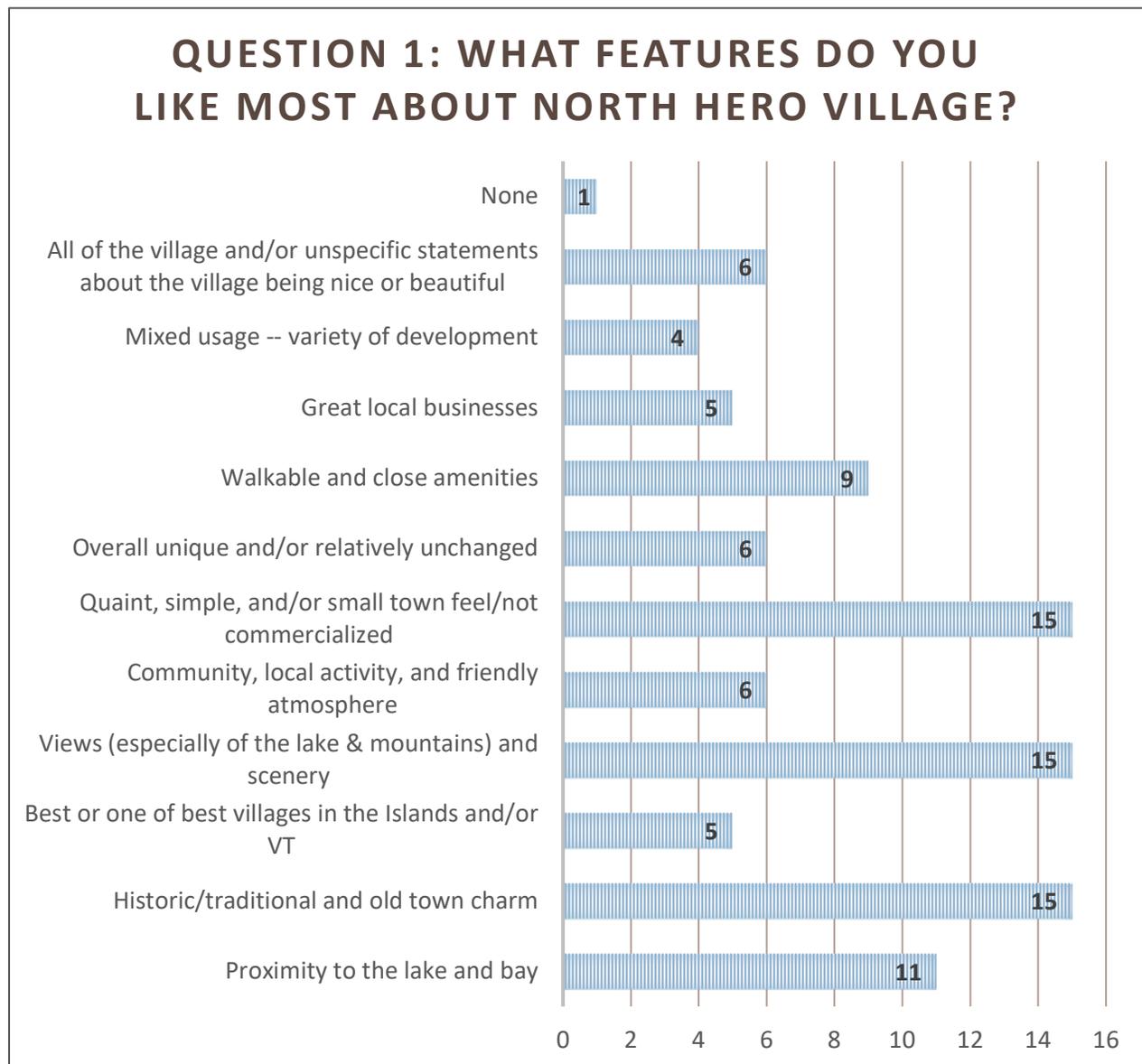
Website Analytics during the period of July 21, 2020 – August 19, 2020

	Total # of Page Views	Total # of Unique Visitors
Village Master Plan Project Page	241	125
Open House Page	212	129

Town of North Hero, Vermont

Prepared by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission

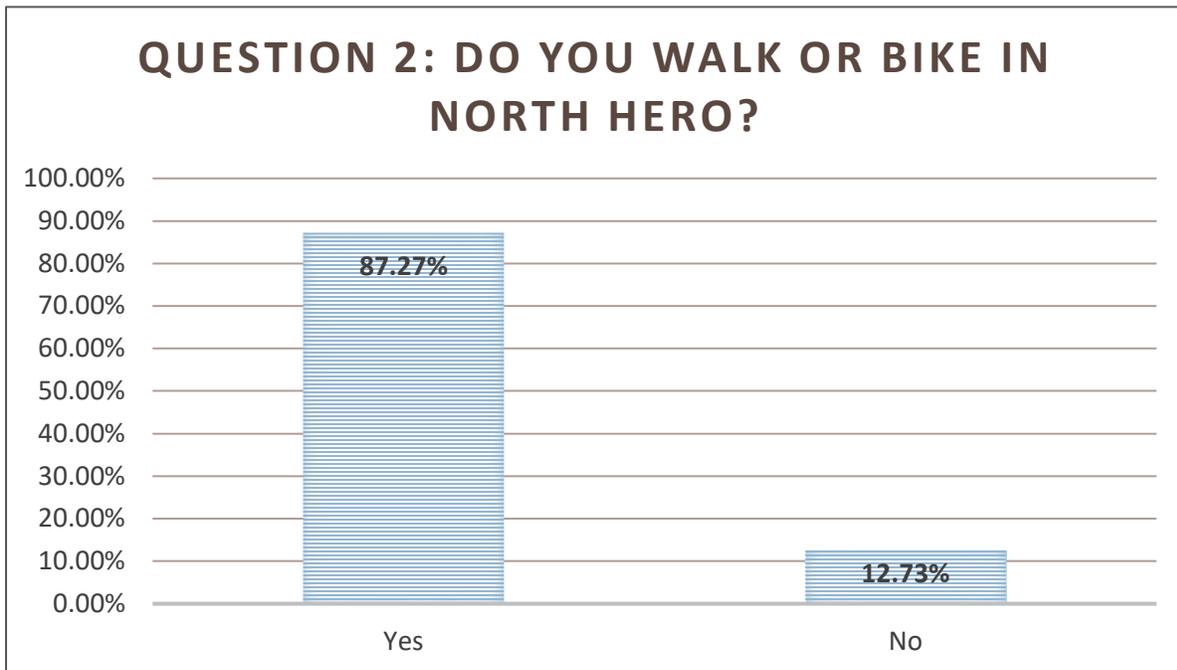
August 18, 2020



This was an open-ended question that received 48 responses.

Respondents liked many of the same features, and their answers are separated into themes in the graph above. Each time one of these themes was mentioned in an individual response, it received a vote. The three most popular features in North Hero Village tied with 15 votes each:

- Quaint, simple, and/or small-town feel/not commercialized
- Views (especially of the lake & mountains) and scenery
- Historic/traditional and old town charm

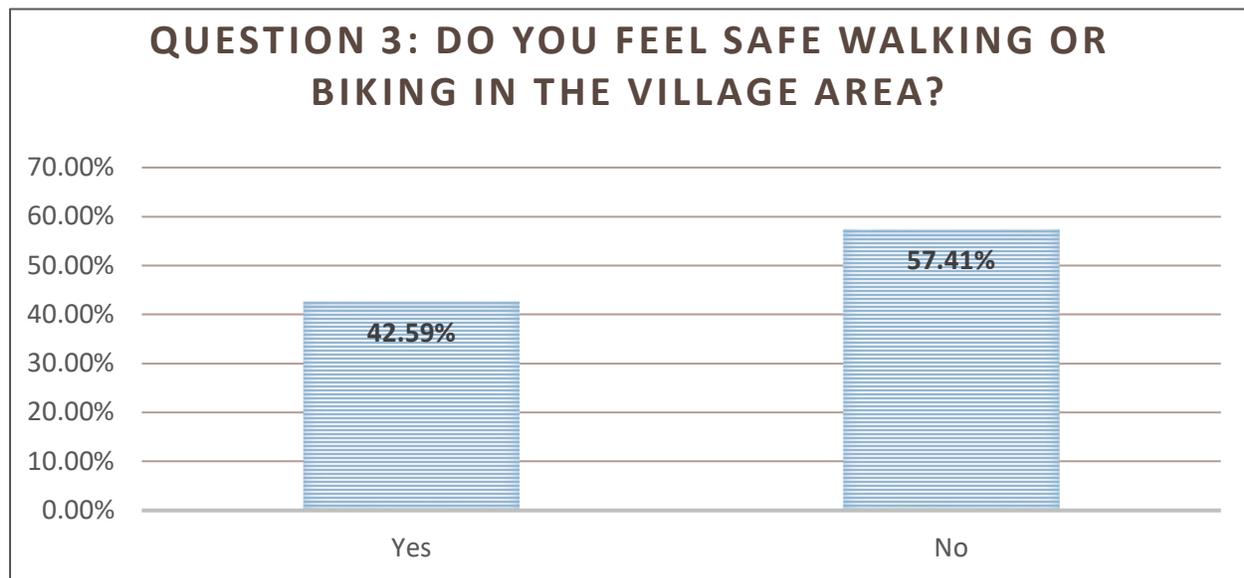


Fifty-five (55) respondents answered this question.

The majority, 87.27% (or 48 respondents), answered that **they do walk or bike** in North Hero.

Survey takers were also asked “If so, where?” Forty-seven respondents answered this question. The three destinations mentioned most are listed below.

- Route 2 – mentioned 16 different times
- In the village – mentioned 11 different times
- Hero’s Welcome – mentioned 10 times



Fifty-four respondents answered this question. Most respondents, 57.41% (or 31 respondents), **do not feel safe** walking or biking in the village area.

There were three main concerns regarding safety:

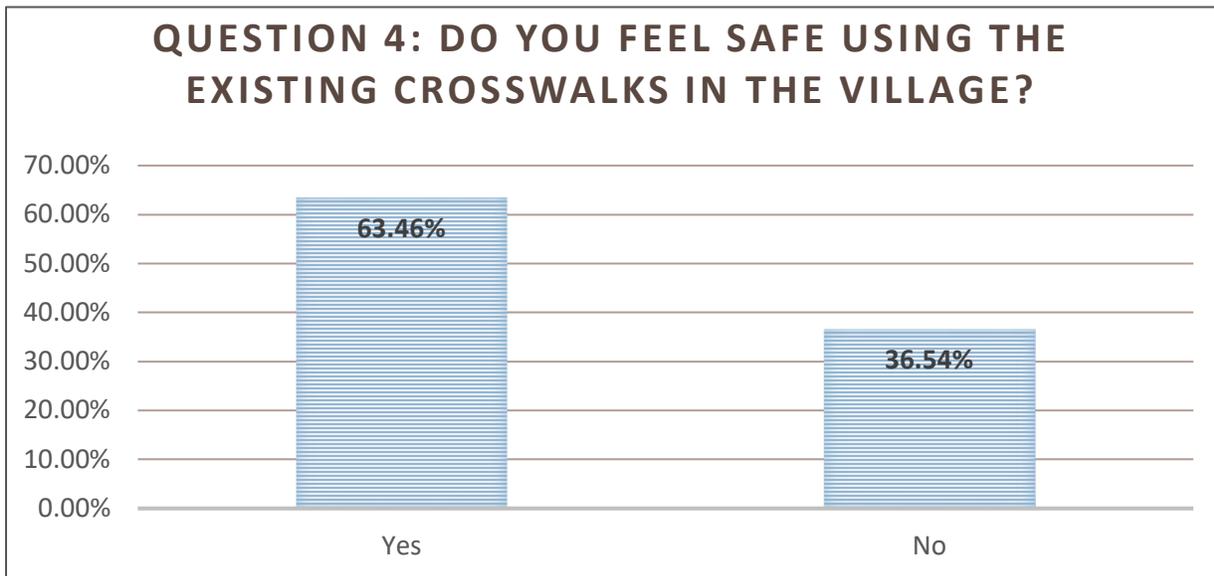
- Eleven (11) people mentioned that the cars are too fast/don't slow down.
- Ten (10) people mentioned that the shoulder/space to walk is too narrow and the road space gets tight.
- Ten (10) people mentioned the way the cars park creates problems and there is inadequate parking.

Other concerns included:

- cars do not yield
- pedestrians and bicyclists cause problems
- lines are not clear/lack of signage
- busy confusing tourist season/generally confusing when busy
- limited lighting
- no designated area for pedestrians and/or bicyclists
- distracted/incautious drivers
- lack of visibility
- guard rails and snow impact ability for pedestrians and bicyclists to move out of the way
- It is overall too dangerous or specifically too dangerous to bike

Forty-two percent (42.59%) of respondents **do feel safe** when walking or biking in the village. Many of these respondents commented that they generally feel safe but not all the time.

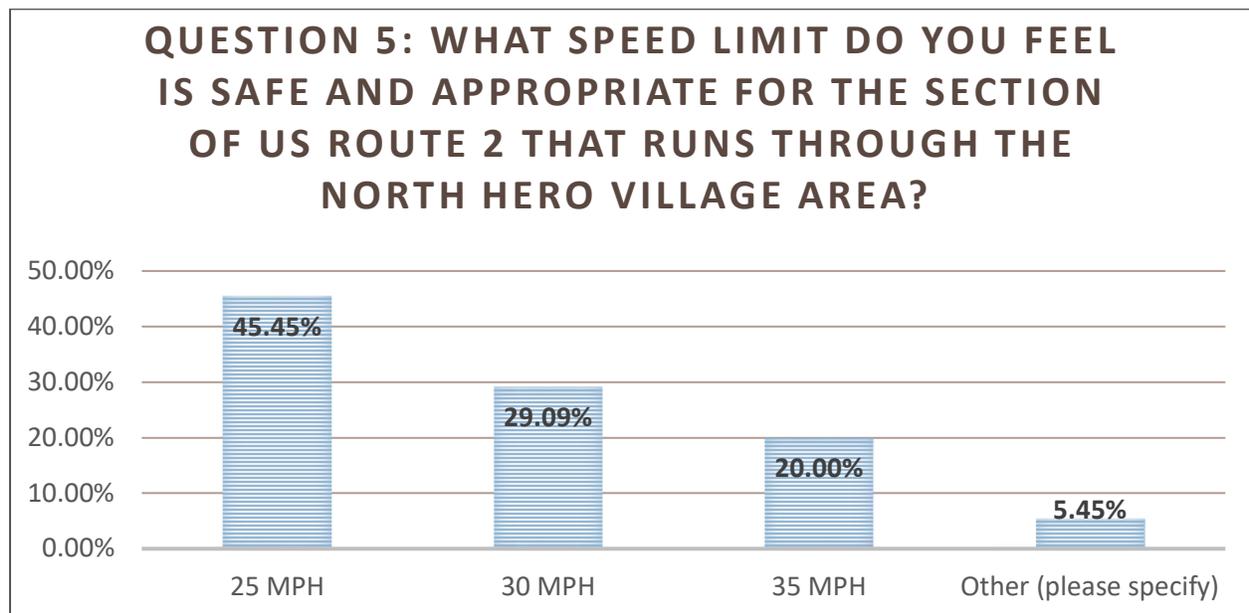
The most common reason for feeling safe (5 responses) is the familiarity of the area and/or the mindfulness and responsibility for themselves that they have/exercise when they are walking or biking in the village.



Fifty-two (52) respondents answered this question. The majority, 63.46% (or 33 respondents), said that they ***do feel safe using the existing crosswalks*** in the village.

The main reason given for feeling safe when using the crosswalks is that the respondents are familiar with them and therefore comfortable using them. Many of those that said they feel safe also indicated areas for improvement.

A concern widely expressed by those who feel safe and those who do not is that many cars do not yield.



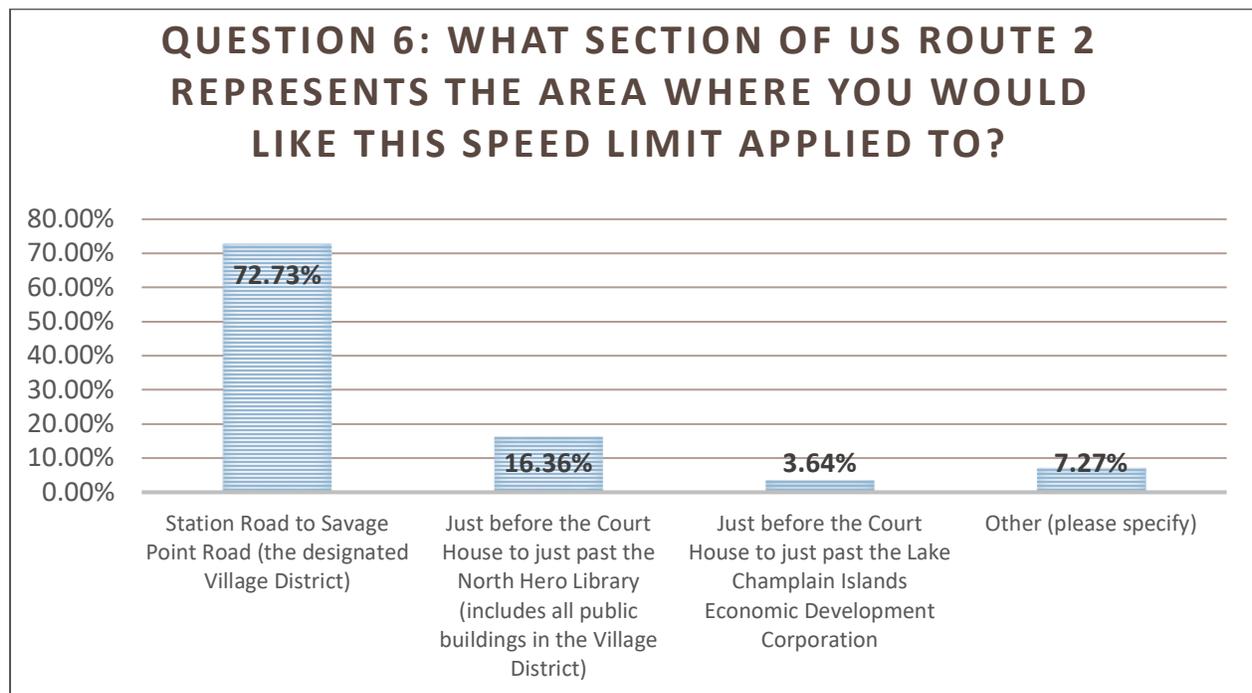
[Note: The current speed limit is 35 MPH from just north of the Court House to just south of the Lake Champlain]

Fifty-five (55) respondents answered this question.

The most people, 45.45% (or 25 respondents), chose 25 mph.

Three respondents chose the "other" option. Their answers are summarized below:

1. 35 mph is too high as it means most are going 45 mph. The speed limit should be 30 mph for the full length of the village core from City Bay/Savage Pt. Rd. to the Library/Station Rd.
2. Respondent commented they think 35 mph is reasonable but that this is a tough question; it would be nice if people went slower, but if all VT towns did this then driving in VT would be frustrating. The key is to keep people from going faster than 35 mph.
3. Speed limit should be 25 mph in the summer and 35 mph in the winter.

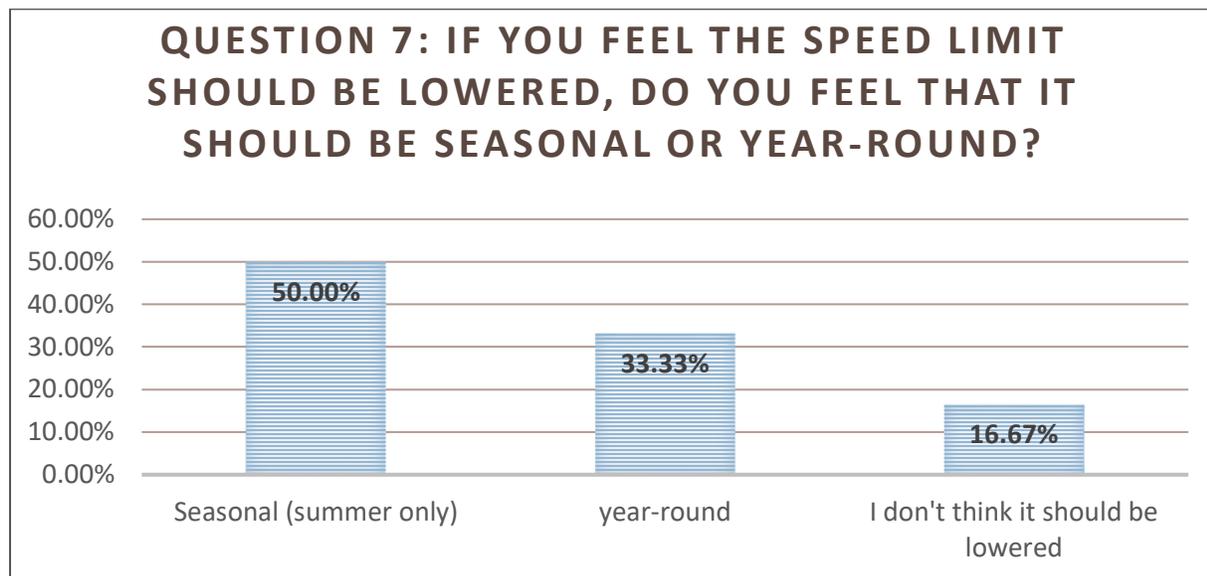


Fifty-five (55) respondents answered this question.

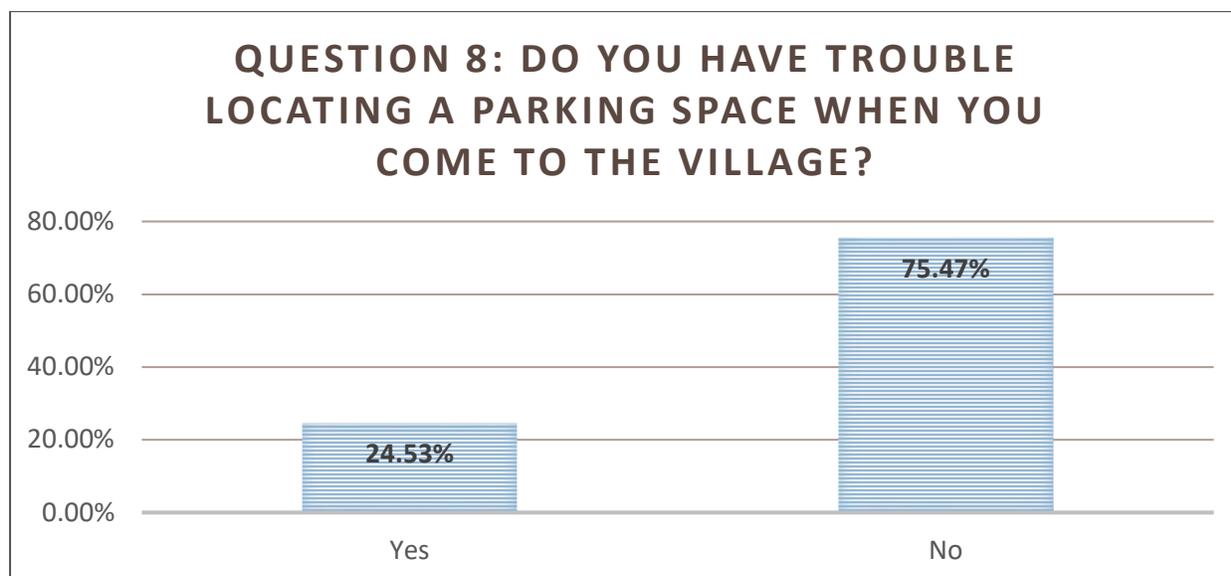
The majority, 72.73% (or 40 respondents), chose Station Rd. to Savage Point Rd.

Four (4) respondents chose the "other" option. Their answers are summarized below:

1. Respondent did not see the need to change the speed limit.
2. The speed limit should be left alone.
3. Year-round 25 mph speed limit should be applied to all businesses and personal property addressed as Route 2.
4. The speed limit is not the problem; businesses do not have proper off-street parking.



Fifty-four (54) respondents answered this question and one skipped. Half of those who answered, 50% or 27 respondents, chose seasonal.

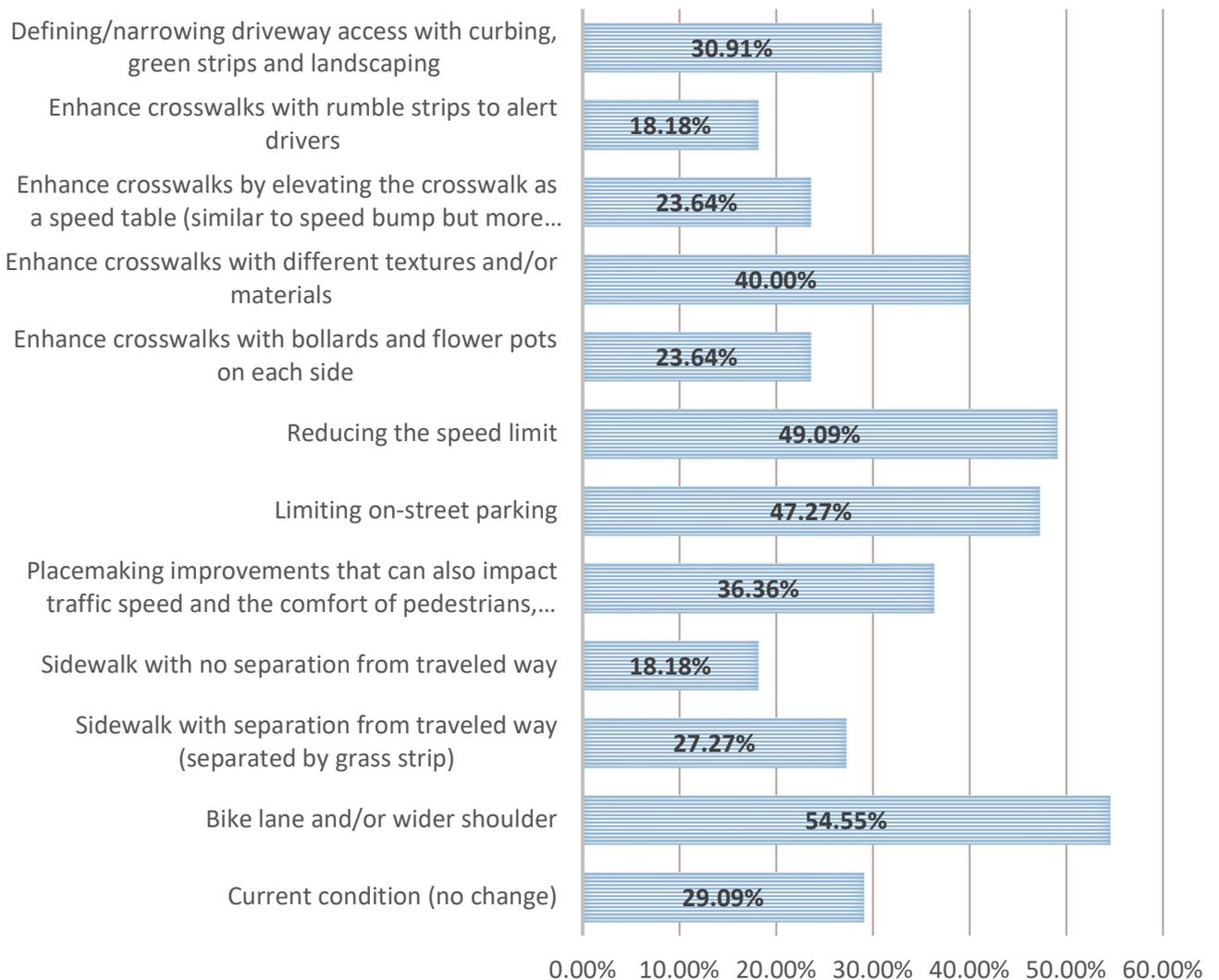


Fifty-three (53) respondents answered this question.

The majority, 75.47% (or 40 respondents), said that they ***do not have trouble locating a parking space*** in the village.

The three (3) most popular places to park are village businesses and community gathering places. Many did not indicate the exact place, but used a general word. The three most popular general places given are: Store, Restaurant and Post Office. The most mentioned examples of stores and restaurants are Hero's Welcome, North Hero House, and Pier Bar.

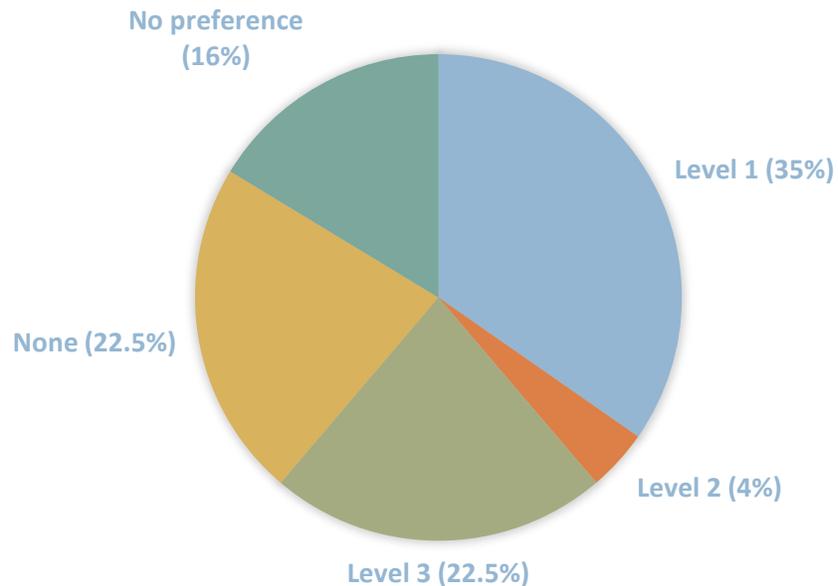
QUESTION 9: WHAT PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE AMENITIES WOULD YOU GENERALLY SUPPORT IN THE HISTORIC VILLAGE AREA FROM JUST NORTH OF THE COURT HOUSE TO JUST SOUTH OF THE LAKE CHAMPLAIN ISLANDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.



Fifty-five (55) respondents answered this question. The three most popular options are as follows:

1. Bike lane and/or wider shoulder – received 30 votes (54.55%)
2. Reducing the speed limit – received 27 votes (49.09%)
3. Limiting on-street parking – received 26 votes (47.27%)

QUESTION 10: WHICH ILLUSTRATION LEVEL BEST REPRESENTS A VISION FOR NORTH HERO VILLAGE THAT YOU WOULD SUPPORT?



Forty-nine (49) respondents answered this question.

Level 1 received the most approval with 17 votes (34.69%).

Question 11: Do you have specific comments and/or concerns about Level 1 potential improvements?

Twenty-six (26) respondents answered this question.

Two (2) of the most prevalent comments/concerns include:

- Concern about the space for the walkway or bicyclist path.
 - Not wanting to implement change or not wanting change that alters the character of the village.
-

Question 12: Do you have specific comments and/or concerns about Level 2 potential improvements?

Twenty-one (21) respondents answered this question.

Two (2) of the most prevalent comments/concerns include:

- Many do not support the idea of rumble strips.
 - Some also expressed concern for some of the changes being difficult or too expensive to maintain and that larger changes may alter the feel of the village.
-

Question 13: Do you have specific comments and/or concerns about Level 3 potential improvements?

Twenty (20) respondents answered this question.

The most prevalent comment/concern was that this plan includes unnecessary elements or is in general unnecessary.

Question 14: Would you like more information on any of the potential opportunities presented?

Thirty-seven (37) respondents answered this question.

Yes	45.95%	17 votes
No	54.05%	20 votes

“If yes, what?”

Thirteen (13) respondents answered this question.

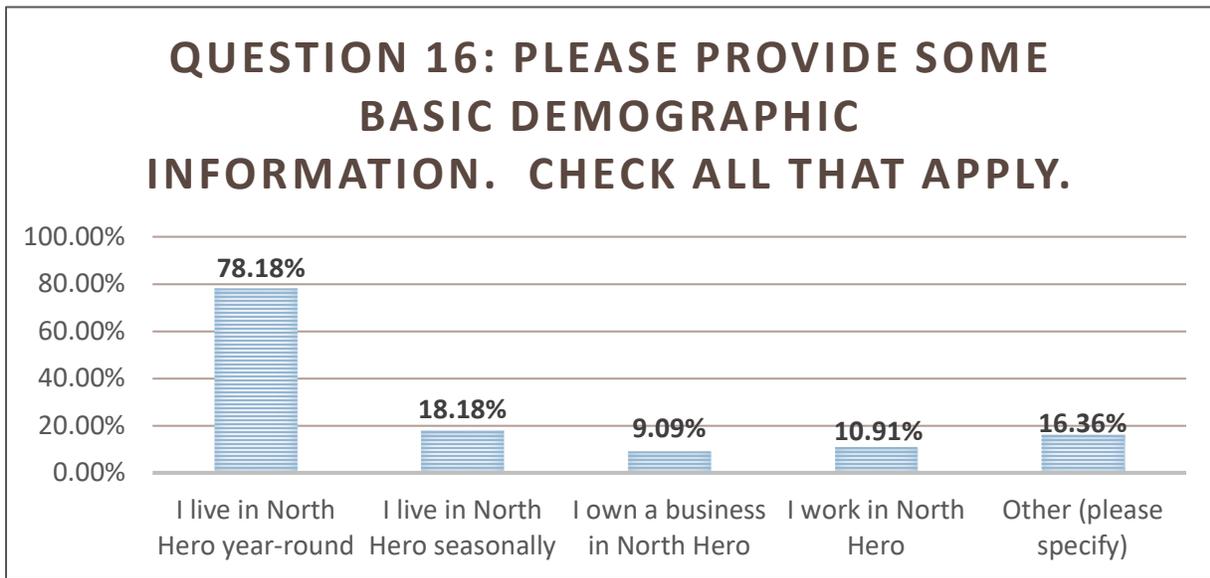
Questions and information respondents would like to know represented below:

- The timeline for build-out and financing as well as the approval process for the final design.
 - Show where and how a sidewalk would fit and what would be done to acquire the space for it.
 - What can be done to have the wires buried in the village?
 - Notice of any of the changes going forward.
 - One respondent does not want the village to change.
 - Meeting minutes and audio of the steering committee meetings.
 - Updates on opportunities to be involved and help as the project progresses.
 - Information on how aggressive the speed bumps and rumble strips would be.
-

Question 15: Do you have any other comments you would like to share?

Twenty-eight (28) respondents had a comment to make. The main points are summarized below.

- Enhance the unique features that North Hero has and be careful not to implement ideas that compete or distract from those features; and keep in mind the year-round residents as well as the tourists.
 - Several commented that the village is very nice "as is" and that they do not want the feel of the town to be changed.
 - More/better parking is needed.
 - Sidewalks and other improvements that make walking/biking safer and more enjoyable are welcomed.
-



Fifty-five (55) respondents answered this question. The majority, 78.18% (or 43 respondents), live in North Hero year-round.

Appendix C.
“Consideration of Class
1 Town Highway
Designation”
Presentation dated
November 2020



Consideration of Class I Town Highway (TH) Designation

NRPC FOR TOWN OF NORTH HERO

NOV 18, 2020



Outline

- ▶ Background Class I Town Highway (TH)
- ▶ Maintenance Responsibility
- ▶ Benefits of Class I TH takeover
- ▶ Municipal Survey
- ▶ Steps for Evaluating Opportunity
- ▶ Next Steps



Class I TH: Definition

- Connecting state highway link as it passes through downtown or village centers
- Subject to concurrent authority and jurisdiction between municipality and VTrans
- Marked with a state route number, but maintained by the municipality
- Typically limited to downtowns or village centers, where land use and economic activity is most intense



Maintenance Responsibility

Town vs. VTTrans

Item	State Highway		Class 1 Town Highway	
	Town	VTTrans	Town	VTTrans
Street Lights-Pedestrian	✓		✓	
Maintenance and Repair of Culverts		✓	✓	
Sidewalks	✓		✓	
Striping* – Centerline		✓		✓
Striping* – Edge lines		✓	✓	
Striping* – Crosswalks across State Highway		✓	✓	
Plowing – Travel Lanes		✓	✓	
Plowing – Sidewalks	✓		✓	
Pavement – Major Resurfacing		✓		✓
Pavement – Patching and crack sealing		✓	✓	
Stormwater – Maintaining and cleaning		✓	✓	
Replacing or Repairing Signs		✓	✓	

* routine refreshing of pavement markings town responsibility, VTTrans resurfacing projects include all pavement markings, and typically use durable products that reduce future maintenance requirements.



Town Highway Aid Funding by Class

Current Rate – Oct-Dec FY2021

Classification	Town Highway Aid rate per mile	Portion of Annual Funding Set by Legislature
Class 1	\$ 11,634.87	0.06
Class 2	\$ 4,273.21	0.44
Class 3	\$ 1,587.76	0.50

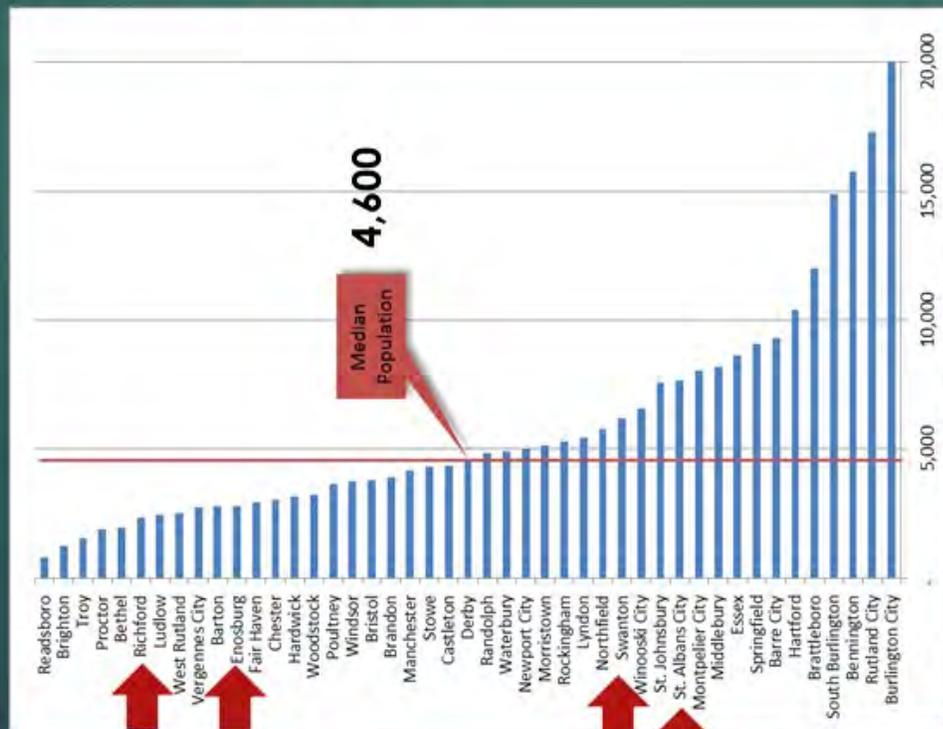


Benefits of Class I TH

- ★ 1. Design Control and Flexibility
 - ❖ Crosswalk location & surface type
 - ❖ Street trees & other amenities (benches, street lights & landscaping)
 - ❖ Traffic calming (bulb outs, curb extensions etc.)
 - ❖ On-street parking, including angled parking
 - ❖ Placement of road and wayfinding signs
 - ❖ Travellane and shoulder widths
 - ❖ Median islands
2. Speed Management
3. Access Management
 - ❖ Town grant access and driveway permits
4. Coordination of Maintenance Activities
5. Utilities w/in ROW



Existing Class I Town Highways



Smaller Community Statistics:

	Population	Road Miles
Readsboro	805	0.5mi
Brighton /Island Pond	1,260	1.7mi
Troy	1,565	1.0mi

Municipal Survey (2014) of Current Class I TH

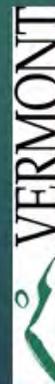
Findings:

- 80% would keep as Class I
 - Design control and flexibility
 - Greater local autonomy for speed limits, closures & ROW permitting
- 20% would give back to VTrans
 - Inadequate funding
 - Staffing challenges
 - Tended to be in more economically distressed areas



Steps for Evaluating

1. Establish Goals for Reclassification
 - ▶ Statement about purpose and goals, **“To have flexibility to implement preferred safety and traffic calming improvements.”**
2. Inventory the Road
3. Identify Limits for Reclassification & Factors for Decision
4. Calculate Costs & Revenues
5. Discuss among the community and with VTrans



Steps for Evaluating

2. Inventory the Road & Evaluate Condition of Infrastructure

- ▶ Existing conditions of infrastructure (pavement, culverts, storm drains, etc.).

INFRASTRUCTURE	STATUS/CONDITION
Bridges/Culverts >6'	NA, none in potential limits
Traffic Signals & Lighted Signs	NA
Streetlights	NA
Drainage Culverts	Y, Condition inventory report
Catchbasins	Y, Count & assess condition
Road/Pavement Condition	US Route 2 last paved 2013-2015
Signs & Pavement Markings	Y; Standard
MS4 Community	NA



Steps for Evaluating

3. Identify Limits for Reclassification & Factors for Decision

- ▶ Village context/character that is less compatible with VTrans management and maintenance practices.
- ▶ Economic development goals

Scenario A – Historic District, extent is just beyond boundary (0.3mi)

Scenario B – Village District to match approved speed limit of 30mph (0.73mi)



Steps for Evaluating

4. Calculate Costs & Revenues

Does Class I TH Aid Adequately Reimburse Municipalities?

Answer: It depends upon the complexity of infrastructure along a given road segment



Maintenance Cost Comparison

Based on 1.0 Centerline Mile of Class I TH

	Without Signal, Bridge & MS4	With Signal, Bridge & MS4	Item
W I N T E R	\$100	\$100	Per hour of plowing
	80	80	Average plow events per year
	0.25	0.25	Hour plowing per mile per storm
	\$4,400	\$4,400	Salt allowance
	\$6,400	\$6,400	Total Winter Maintenance Cost
S U M M E R	\$1,250	\$1,250	Line striping
	\$ 750	\$1,500	Culvert/drainage maintenance
	\$ 0	\$2,000	Signal Maintenance –per 4-way signalized intersection
	\$ 0	\$ 500	Electricity allowance
	\$ 0	\$3,300	Bridge maintenance – annual cost per bridge over 6 ft. in length
	\$ 500	\$ 500	Sign replacement allowance
	\$1,500	\$1,500	Pavement repairs (patching, crack sealing)
	\$ 500	\$ 500	Contingency allowance
	\$4,500	\$11,050	Total Summer Maintenance Cost
T O T A L	\$10,900	\$17,450	TOTAL Winter & Summer Maintenance Cost
	97%	156%	Ratio Cost per revenue received (Annual Town Highway Aid)



Steps for Evaluating

4. Calculate Costs & Revenues

Scenario A – Historic District, extent is just beyond boundary (0.3mi)

Ratio Cost per revenue received (Annual Town Highway Aid)

103% -- DRAFT

Scenario B – Village District to match approved speed limit of 30mph (0.73mi)

Ratio Cost per Revenue Received (Annual Town Highway Aid)

95% -- DRAFT



VTrans Programs for C1TH Projects

Reminder: still eligible for grants as C1 TH

Program Name	Description	Local Match
Pavement Management: Class I Town Highway Paving	Resurfacing, including reclamation or mill-and-fill of C1-TH. Frequency approximately every 12-15 years.	None.
Highway Safety & Design	Addressing safety issues such as High Crash Locations or other items as recognized in State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC) and Strategic Highway Safety Plan.	None.
Transportation Alternatives	Provides funding for a variety of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, streetscape enhancement, and environmental mitigation. Grants capped at \$300,000.	Minimums: 20% for design & construction 50% for scoping
Bicycle-Pedestrian Program	Provides funding for locally managed bicycle and pedestrian projects. Some streetscape amenities are not eligible for funding. There is no maximum award.	20% Local cash match. Proposal pending to increase to 20% effective SFY17.



Next Steps

- ▶ Meet with municipal officials to review cost assumptions and identify town capacity for maintenance of existing town infrastructure. For example, who performs line striping on current paved roadways. What is current plow path?
- ▶ Obtain feedback from VTrans on status of culverts and stormwater infrastructure (catchbasins)
- ▶ Obtain feedback from VTrans as to whether streetscape improvements being considered for traffic calming would require Class I TH designation.



Appendix D. Demonstration Guide to Pilot Crossing Enhancements in the Southern Village

NORTH HERO VILLAGE POP-UP DEMONSTRATION FOR PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS: AN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



Prepared by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, with input from VHB and with funding in part from the Vermont Municipal Planning Grant Program. April 2021

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW:

Demonstration Projects:

- Identify opportunities to improve walking, bicycling, transit access, public spaces and traffic flow.
- Make temporary changes to the physical characteristics and/or design of a roadway.
- Evaluate effectiveness of changes in achieving long-term goals.

The North Hero Master Plan recommends several community supported opportunities to improve pedestrian safety in the North Hero Village area. These improvements are varied in scale, cost and feasibility. A pop-up demonstration is one tool available to communities to explore the efficacy and community appetite for a particular improvement in a temporary, low-cost, inclusive and hands-on manner.

This document outlines plans for completing a pop-up demonstration for pedestrian safety improvements in the area of Hero's Welcome store in the historic center of North Hero Village. The plans include accentuating the cross walk across Route 2 with temporary signage, bollards and planters, defining pedestrian areas at either end of the crosswalk and addressing access management along the frontage of the Hero's Welcome property. The pop-up demonstration would be completed in the State of Vermont Route 2 Right-of-Way and on the private property of Hero's Welcome and the Community Hall. Approval of both of these landowners is necessary prior to implementing the pop-up demonstration.

PROJECT PURPOSE:

The goals for the North Hero Village temporary pop-up installation are to:

- Improve pedestrian safety during the event and demonstrate how relatively simple improvements can make the Village Center feel safer.
- Encourage the community to think about the impact that simple pedestrian improvements can have on placemaking and beautification.
- Familiarize the public with the North Hero Village Master Plan and its recommended pedestrian safety improvements.

*For the purposes of this guide, **temporary** can mean as short as a weekend or as long as a season.*

PROJECT DESIGN:

Demonstration projects located in the State ROW require a permit with a 2-phase application process, which is outlined in the VT Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Demonstration Project Guide. Projects must comply with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which is the adopted standard for Vermont state and local highways per 23 V.S.A. § 1025. Additionally, the project must be accessible to people of all abilities and meet ADA requirements and may require compliance with other design standards as outlined in the Guide.

The level of design required for a project varies based on the project location, type of project and complexity. In addition to complying with the MUTCD and state design standards, it is important that demonstration projects are well thought out and take into consideration the potential for conflicts and unintended consequences.

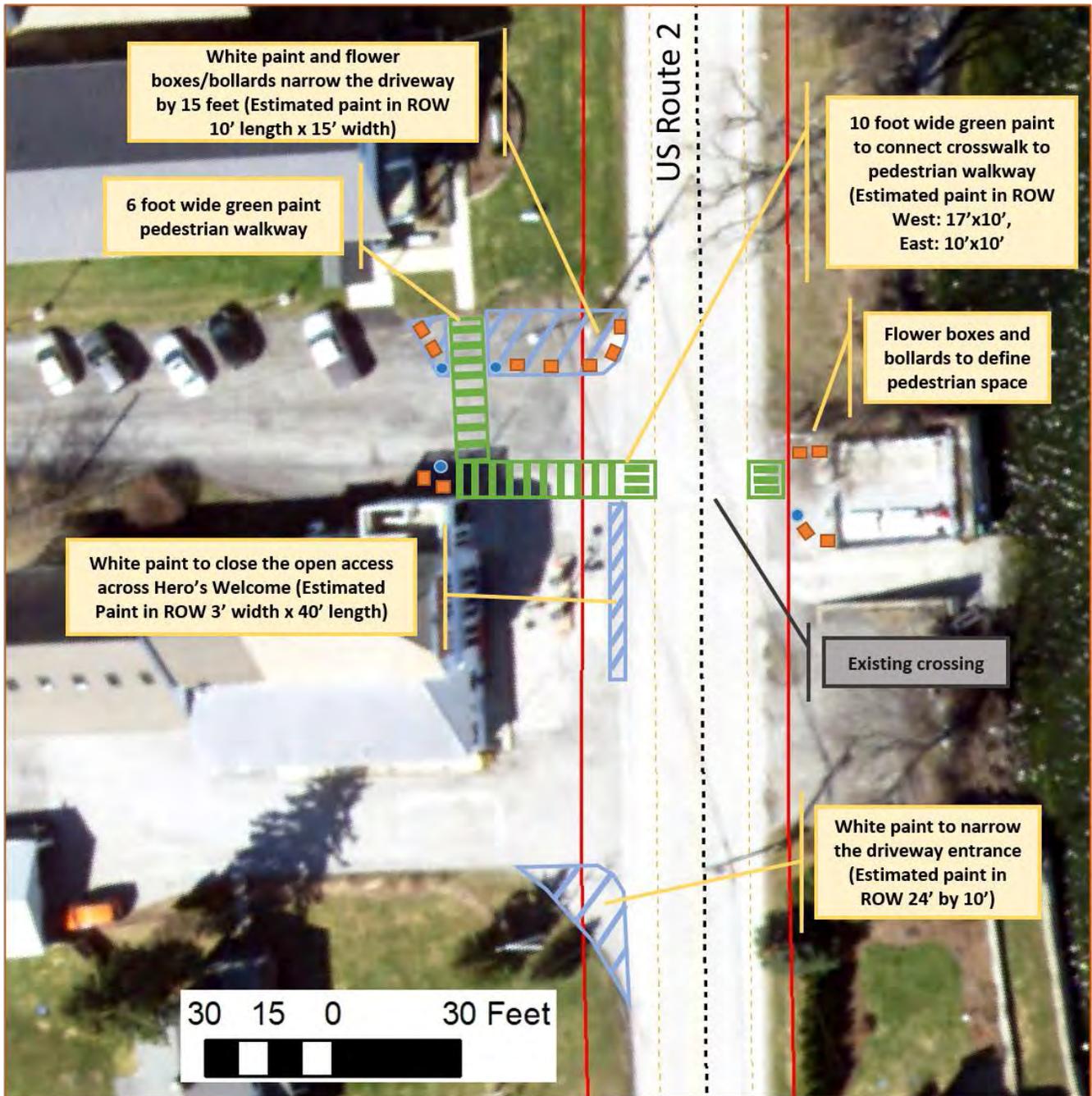
This guide includes a conceptual design (included below), which is ready for the VTrans Phase 1 Demonstration Project Application. Based on this application process, it may be necessary to make changes to the design.

This guide includes a conceptual design ready for the VTrans Phase 1 Demonstration Project Application. During application review, it may be necessary to make changes to the design.

The North Hero Village demonstration project design includes the following components, which are illustrated on the attached project design map:

- 1) Extending the crosswalk paint beyond the edge of traveled way where it currently ends. To the east this involves extending towards the fenced in seating area near the boat launch. To the west, this involves extending it to the entrance of Hero's Welcome.
- 2) Add bollards and planters to accentuate the crosswalk to motorists and pedestrians alike, and define the space where pedestrians enter and exit the roadway.
- 3) Define and narrow vehicular access along the Hero's Welcome property with paint, including the shared driveway access with the Community Hall.
- 4) Add a pedestrian crossing from Hero's Welcome to the Community Hall entrance across the driveway, which accesses parking in the rear.

Figure 1. Demonstration layout of suggested improvements at the southern crossing in the North Hero Village area.



North Hero, VT
 Southern Village Crosswalk Pop-up

Legend

- ⋯ Approx. Travel Lane (11ft)
- ⋯ Approx. Road Centerline
- Approx. AOT Right-Of-Way



PROJECT MATERIALS:

This project has been designed to use Local Motion’s pop-up mobile support unit, which contains most of the materials needed.

- Local Motion Pop-Up Trailer
 - Plastic delineator post (bollard) and stand (~6 count)
 - Portable plastic crosswalk sign & stand (standard “State Law—Yield to Pedestrians within Crosswalk” sign)
 - Wooden crate planters, measuring roughly 12” x 18” x 12”, stacked in groups of 3 (~36 count)
 - Crosswalk stencil
 - Tempura paint, green and white (~5 gallons, need to replace what is used)
 - Paint roller frames
 - Traffic vests for set up and take down

- Other materials that need to be sourced locally
 - Plants for wooden crate planters (~12 count). Sourced from local greenhouse/nursery or farm. Potted annuals (i.e. *chrysanthemum*) or perennials (*nepeta*, etc.) are ideal. Grant or donation.
 - Distance measuring wheel (borrow for NRPC)
 - Paint roller covers and paint trays (~5 count)
 - Laminated posters/signs about the demo project (NRPC has templates)

Local Motion’s Pop-Up Project Mobile Support Unit



Local Motion has a 12-foot trailer filled with all of the supplies needed to run a successful pop-up demonstration project in your town. Whether it's traffic calming, crosswalks, bike lanes, bump-outs, a pedestrian refuge or a plaza, our trailer can help build support for permanent safety and speed management improvements.

www.localmotion.org/borrow_pop

Note: Demonstration projects **may not** include items like planting pots, wooden boxes and other materials or objects deemed to be a hazard to the traveling public within the normal roadway area, unless placed behind an approved protective barrier or outside the clear zone.

PROJECT COST:

The table below provides a conceptual cost estimate for supplies needed to complete the demonstration project identified above.

MATERIAL	COUNT/RATE	COST
Motion Pop-Up Trailer	Fuel for delivery	\$100
Plants	16 count x \$30, or donation	\$500
Paint replacement	5 gallons x \$15	\$100
Roller brushes and trays	5 count	\$20
Miscellaneous		\$20
Installation	Volunteers, 5 hours set up, 3 hours take down	\$0
Total		\$740

Note: The Regional Planning Commission may be able to provide support on design, permitting and coordination. Additional professional assistance for design, permitting and/or coordination would be an additional cost, but there are grants that will fund this type of work.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Better Places

The Better Places program provides “placemaking” grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 that improve the vitality of state designated downtowns, village centers, new town centers, or neighborhood development areas. One of the goals of the Better Places program is to promote place based economic development through “quick build” projects that boost confidence, builds partnerships and sparks momentum. Grants usually due early in calendar year with announcements made within in month (FY21 cycle grants were due January 22 and awards were made in March).

More information: <https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/better-places>

AARP Community Challenge

AARP Community Challenge grant program funds quick-action projects that can range from several hundred dollars for small, short-term activities to several thousand or tens of thousands for larger projects. AARP prioritizes projects that deliver inclusive solutions that meet the needs of diverse populations, as well as those that directly engage volunteers through permanent or temporary solutions that aim to achieve one or more specific outcomes, including:

APPENDIX D

- Create vibrant public places that improve open spaces, parks and access to other amenities.
- Deliver a range of transportation and mobility options that increase connectivity, walkability, bikeability, wayfinding, access to transportation options and roadway improvements.

Grants usually due in spring with awards made in June (FY 21 cycle grants were due April 14 and awards made in June).

More information: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/?cmp=RDRCT-61887811-20200707>

Rise VT Amplify

RiseVT works to amplify community efforts that are making the healthy choice the easy choice where we live, work, learn, and play. Toward this goal, RiseVT supports a variety of projects by awarding Amplify Grants to community partners in the communities we serve. All grant applications must:

- Work to address one or more of the CDC strategies to reduce obesity
- Increase access and reduce barriers to physical activity, healthy foods, and/or physical, social, and emotional wellbeing

Amplify Grants range \$250-\$1,500—the budget of the proposed project must not exceed \$1,500. The grants are typically due early in the calendar year with awards made in the Spring.

More information: <https://risevt.org/amplify-grant/>

PROCESS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

A demonstration project takes careful planning and coordination, which is more involved for a project located in the State ROW.

PLANNING AND COORDINATION

A demonstration project needs to be coordinated and spearheaded by a local committee, municipal staff or organization. The responsible party needs to have the time and skills necessary to coordinate with local leadership, VTrans, affected property owners, NPRC and other interested community members. It is possible to seek planning and coordination assistance from NRPC or hire other professional assistance, which will reduce but not eliminate the role of the local committee/responsible party. Planning for this pop-up demonstration should start 3-6 months in advance. The earlier a phase 1 application is submitted the better in order to confirm design compliance with VTrans.

Elements that should be considered during the planning process include:

- Project timeline,
- Roles and responsibilities,
- Data collection/evaluation of impact,
- Budget and funding,
- Permitting,
- Reservation of Local Motion pop up trailer,
- Volunteers for set up, maintenance and removal,
- Project design and compliance with VTrans standards,
- Coordination with affected property owners and businesses
- Community outreach
- Visibility and coordination with local events,
- Traffic control,
- Level of professional assistance needed
- For painted areas, will pressure washing be required for removal

Responsibility: Local Committee, Municipal Staff or Organization.
May contract for assistance with NRPC or consultant.

DESIGN

This guide provides a sufficient level of design for a Phase 1 application. Phase 1 application review will confirm whether the design is compliant with all applicable standards and whether additional design services are needed.

NRPC may be able to provide design services or, if engineering or landscape architect services are needed, can help guide the Town on how best to acquire and fund these services.

Responsibility: Contract with NRPC or Consultant

INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE, REMOVAL AND TRAFFIC CONTROL

It is necessary to prepare a detailed breakdown of timeline, tasks, roles, and responsibilities related to installation, maintenance and removal. This information is required as part the Phase 1 application. These tasks can be completed entirely by volunteers. NRPC may be available to provide assistance. All persons involved will require insurance coverage (see separate section).

APPENDIX D

Installation: Installation will require a team of volunteers to work together over several hours setting up the demonstration. The number of volunteers and time required can vary depending on the ability of the volunteers and the complexity/extent of the demonstration. For the North Hero Village demonstration project, a team of 3-5 volunteers working for 3-5 hours should be sufficient.



Don't Forget:

- To factor in time to clean up the demonstration area of litter, debris or other matter that will interfere with painted areas or otherwise detract from aesthetics.
- To organize traffic control
- To make sure all volunteers are covered by the appropriate insurance.
- Food, water and work clothes
- Weather may cause delay, especially if painted areas are involved

Maintenance: The level of maintenance will depend on the length of the demonstration project and the amount of traffic (by all modalities, including pedestrians) it is exposed to. Responsibility should be delegated to staff or volunteers to check on the demonstration daily to ensure that it is continuing to function and has not been damaged. Rain can wash away or dull the color of painted areas. If this happens, the committee or staff in charge will need to decide whether touching up the paint is feasible and warranted.

Removal: Removal of the demonstration project will require similar coordination as installation. Generally, less time is needed. For painted areas, there needs to be coordination with property owners on whether the paint can be left to wear off naturally or whether they want it to be pressure washed.

Traffic Control: The application process requires a Temporary Traffic Control Plan (TTC Plan). A TTC Plan describes means and methods for facilitating vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic during installation and removal of the demonstration project. The degree of detail of the TTC Plan and whether it needs to be prepared by a qualified engineer is dependent on the complexity of the situation and will be determined during the phase 1 application review. Considerations include what facilities are being closed or reduced, the work to be performed, the duration of the work, and the volume of traffic through the work zone (vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians). Since installation and removal are relatively short and simple in duration, the TTC Plan required for this demonstration project will in turn likely be simple. The TTC Plan may include public notice, temporary signage and potential lane closure.

Responsibility: Local Committee, Municipal Staff or Organization responsible for coordinating the project, in addition to other volunteers as needed.

TRACKING THE IMPACT/EVALUATION

Collecting data and information that can demonstrate the impact of a change is critical to evaluating its efficacy and whether it is worth pursuing it as a permanent improvement. The organizing committee or staff needs to make a plan on the type of information and data needed for evaluation. Data and information can be collected in the following ways:

- Intercept Surveys.** Collect qualitative information on the experience of people that pass by, interact with or otherwise have something to share about the demonstration project. This can be done by a volunteer standing near the demonstration during peak hours. Survey responses can be recorded manually or digitally with a tablet.
- General Surveys.** General surveys to the community at large or a specific targeted population can be used to collect information about the area where the demonstration is and the need for change. This information can be helpful to generate support for the demonstration project. General surveys can also be completed after the demonstration.
- Stakeholder Interviews.** Interviews targeted to specific stakeholders can be effective and necessary for building support for a project. Examples include business associations, school children and their parents, businesses or groups that may have specific types of vehicles or uses, such as large trucks, boat trailers, or recreation activities.
- Volume Counts (# pedestrians, bicyclists).** Counting the number of pedestrians, bicyclist or vehicles can help justify the need for a change. The higher the number the greater reach the improvement will have.
- Speed Counts.** Documented speed during the existing condition and during the demonstration and show whether speed is impacted and can be an effective tool.

Responsibility: Local Committee, Municipal Staff or Organization responsible for coordinating the project, in addition to other volunteers as needed.

INSURANCE

The Town and/or involved property owners will be required to provide liability insurance covering all labor and staff, including but not limited to volunteers, professionals, non-professionals, and third-party participants. Liability insurance is also required to cover all potential risk categories of a proposed project, including but not limited to injury to persons

and property, construction installation and removal, engineering design, road and traffic hazards, theft, as well as alcohol, food, festival, and public events.

Responsibility: Town of North Hero

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Getting the word out about the demonstration project and background information on why it is happening is important to ensure its success! In addition to evaluating the impact of the demonstration, demonstration projects play an important role in educating the community on the need and impact of potential changes. If the change is to be pursued as permanent, community buy-in and support will be needed and engagement at this level can be critical to getting it. This can be done through traditional methods such as mailing, social media, websites, posting physical flyers/lawn signs and front porch forum.

It can also be effective to plan for the demonstration to happen during a community event so that publicity efforts can be shared and a greater number of people will be present to experience the demonstration.

Responsibility: Local Committee, Municipal Staff or Organization responsible for coordinating the project, in addition to other volunteers as needed.

PERMITTING AND APPROVAL:

US Route 2 is a State of Vermont Highway Right of Way. A demonstration project within State Highway ROW must obtain a permit from VTrans. Demonstration projects require a two-phase application process. Applications can be submitted at any time and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The timeframe to complete the process will vary based on the complexity of the proposed project.

Phase 1 Application: Phase 1 consists of a Pre-Application Form meant to help streamline what can be a complex permitting process. Upon successful completion of the Phase 1 Pre-Application and subsequent consultation process, approved applicants may advance to Phase 2. The approval process for Phase 1 could take several months. There are no fees associated with Phase 1. To prepare for Phase 1 Application, the following information is needed: a narrative describing the proposed project; the goal/intent of the project; a conceptual plan to illustrate the project that includes a base map, such as from Google Earth, with streets and project area labeled; 3-5 relevant photos. Phase 1 approval will determine whether the design needs to be developed by a professional civil engineer or landscape architect licensed in Vermont.

Phase 2 Application: Phase 2 consists of the formal application for a State Highway Access and Work Permit (1111 Permit). Applicants should anticipate receiving a State Highway Access and

Work permit or denial within 30 days of submittal of a complete application. Approval of a demonstration project in no way commits the Agency to funding or building the potential final capital infrastructure.

TIMELINE:

Demonstration projects within the state highway ROW may be allowed to be in place for a prespecified timeframe between April 15 and December 1, which is the standard timeframe for all construction and permit activities on state highway ROW.

Planning for the demonstration project should start 6 - 12 months prior installation, depending on the complexity and whether professional design assistance is necessary.

POTENTIAL TIMELINE FOR NORTH HERO DEMONSTRATION PROJECT COMMUNITY HALL/HERO’S WELCOME CROSSING (ASSUMING NO ADDITIONAL ENGINEERING DESIGN IS REQUIRED)

1	Identify project goals, confirm roles and responsibilities	8+ months out
2	Contact NRPC for assistance	8+ months out
3	Coordinate and gain approval from involved property owners and local boards	8+ months out
4	Identify and coordinate timing with potential funding sources, submit application(s)	6 – 8 months out
5	Develop project budget, timeline and plan for community outreach in coordination with NRPC	6 – 8 months out
6	Prepare and submit Phase 1 Application to VTrans, with assistance from NRPC	6 – 8 months out
7	Reserve the Local Motion Pop Up Mobile Support Unit	6 months out
8	Address comments from Phase 1 Review, including any additional design requirements, traffic control and any other requirements.	3 – 5 months out
9	Coordinate/reserve/secure local materials needed	3 – 5 months out
10	Organize data collection, surveys	3 – 5 months out
11	Confirm/plan for volunteers	3 months out

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12	Finalize community outreach plan, coordinate with community boards and organizations	3 months out
13	Submit Phase 2 Application to VTrans	2 months out
14	Finalize plan for volunteers and local materials	1 – 2 months out
15	Receive permit from VTrans	1 month out
16	Prepare and submit press release to local media	3 weeks out
17	Implement project!	0 weeks out

OTHER RESOURCES:

- 1) Guidance Document: Demonstration Projects in State Highway Right-of-Way.
<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/permitting>
- 2) Community Led Demonstration Project Policy and Guide, City of Burlington, 2018.
<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/sites/default/files/CommunityLedDemonstrationProjectPolicyGuide2018.pdf>
- 3) DIY Community Cookbook, AARP and Community Workshop.
<https://www.communityworkshopllc.com/diy-community-cookbook>
- 4) The Pop-Up Placemaking Toolkit, AARP, Team Better Block.
<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2019/pop-up-toolkit.html>

Appendix E. Meeting Summaries of Project Steering Committee

Meeting #1 – May 13, 2020

NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday May 13, 2020 - Virtual meeting via Zoom

Attendance: Warren Wright, John Skutel, Time Bourne, Heather Bickford, Robert Miller, Bev Poquette, Greta Brunswick and Amanda Holland (NRPC)

Greta Brunswick, NRPC called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Election of Officers. G. Brunswick suggested the Committee be led by elected Officers to build local ownership of the project and proposed the option to have a Co-Chair that would alternate meetings. NRPC can take notes during the meeting and provide them to the Committee. *T. Bourne motioned to elect B. Poquette and H. Bickford to serve as co-chairs of the Steering Committee. J. Skutel seconded the motion. All in favor.*

It was discussed whether additional members could be added to the Committee to represent the business community or general public. H. Bickford noted that she would reach out to Sherri Potvin from Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce to loop in interest from the business sector.

G. Brunswick noted that for this type of project, it is common to build a list of interested folks that receive notice of meetings and copies of materials to stay informed on the project. We can build this list as requests come in to NRPC and to the Town or Committee members.

Review Scope of Work. G. Brunswick reviewed the six tasks outlined in the scope: 1. Steering Committee Work Sessions, 2. Public Outreach, 3. Visioning Workshop(s), 4. Public Space Illustrative Plan and Report, 5. Class 1 Highway Designation Report, 6. Village Master Plan & Presentation. NRPC will be working with Mark Hamelin, a landscape architect from VHB.

The Committee discussed some of the outcomes of the study, such as how towns typically pay for these improvements, would phases of improvements be considered, and who would be the responsible party for maintaining the improvements. It was noted that it is typical to use a variety of financing options including local and grant funds. Are variety scales and phasing options will be considered. Discussion was tabled on getting into specifics of improvements until we explore them as a part of the process.

Review Schedule. G. Brunswick reviewed the proposed schedule to meet monthly for the duration of the project. The group decided to meet the 3rd Wednesday from 7:00-9:00pm.

G. Brunswick reported on tentative options to hold a demonstration in the fall that would install temporary features to simulate the feel of the improvements. For example, green paint and planters could be utilized to create enhanced pedestrian crossings. Speed counts could also be conducted to collect information on how effective it is for slowing traffic. NRPC is communicating with AOT to identify if this pilot would be feasible in 2020; if it can move forward NRPC would work with AOT and the Sherriff to coordinate logistics of the event.

Discussion on Design Workshop under COVID restrictions. NRPC is working with VHB to identify options to gather public input in place of holding a large public gathering for a workshop. We will aim to have both in-person and online options to garner input. For online input, G. Brunswick showed an example of a virtual charrette that would allow for several design options to be displayed and members of the public could provide comment on them. For an in-person option the use of display boards that show the design options could be used and either provide a comment box or information on where to provide feedback. The Committee discussed various locations where display boards could be placed including

the Community Hall, Chamber of Commerce and Historical Society. Boards could either be weather proofed and kept outside or mounted in windows facing out. The virtual charrette and boards are recommended to be displayed for 2 weeks.

J. Skutel asked who will be collecting the information necessary to inform these decisions such as the state right-of-way width, parcels of land owned by the town, etc. It was noted that this would be a task of NRPC and VHB; available information will be shared at the next meeting.

In order to develop designs, the landscape architect will be utilizing prior documents such as Selectboard and Planning Commission minutes, summary from the September 2019 walk audit and input from the Steering Committee. The Committee noted it would like to review the design concepts before they are provided to the public. NRPC will communicate with Mark/VHB on their timeline for developing drafts and if they can be shared in advance of the next meeting.

At the next meeting the Committee will review and make decisions on format and display options for the public input as well as messaging for public outreach.

Review of Last Fall's Walk Audit. A. Holland reviewed the NRPC summary of the September 17, 2019 Walk Audit of feedback gathered from the public; see enclosed. B. Poquette noted that the Town reached out to all landowners in the village district to inform them of the audit.

B. Poquette noted that in a meeting following the walk audit several folks voiced that they do not want to change the character of the village and needs to make sure that feedback represents the entire community. G. Brunswick noted that through the illustrations that are a part of this project, the community can see the type of impacts these measures can and consider their impact on character. W. Wright asked in communities who is responsible for providing services like parking. G. Brunswick replied that the municipality plays a role in improving and maintaining the public space within the village center. H. Bickford stated it was the Town's responsibility to be safe for residents and visitors (both pedestrians and automobiles). G. Brunswick reminded the Committee that this was a visionary process to work through potential solutions and can provide as a result levels of options depending on the desire and financial ability of the town.

Other Business. The Committee generally discussed the opportunities to inform the public of the project such as Front Porch Forum, the Islander, and a website. While we do not have an email list of folks interested in this topic, we have a list of names from prior meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Meeting #2 – June 17, 2020

NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday June 17, 2020 - Virtual meeting via Zoom

Attendance: Warren Wright, John Skutel, Tim Bourne, Heather Bickford, Robert Miller, Greta Brunswick and Amanda Holland (NRPC)

Materials reviewed at the meeting will be posted on the project website.

<https://www.nrpcvt.com/northherovillagemasterplan>

Review press release and website for project. A. Holland reviewed the draft documents. Overall, the Committee felt the information provided good project detail. They did express the language emphasize

that this study is going to look at “potential” improvements to convey that it is an exploratory process. The press release will be provided to The Islander.

Review Plan for Outreach. G. Brunswick and A. Holland reviewed a variety of options for public outreach and the Steering Committee decided to pursue the following list:

- The Islander for press release, calendar and discuss support for effort
- Front Porch Forum postings (NRPC to draft, Town Clerk to post)
- Project Website and link on Town website
- Flyer to post around community
- Village district property owner letter to inform them of the project and timeline
- Town-wide postcard mailing – this option is dependent on cost, NRPC obtaining an estimate

It was discussed that aside from the virtual workshop we are also planning to have a display at the Town Office with poster boards of the options as well as some paper forms for folks to fill out for comments. The Committee also discussed support for a location in the Village Center to display boards however none was identified that would work for this purpose.

Review Draft Design Strategies for Visioning Workshop. The Committee reviewed the draft diagram showing the range of possible solutions that could be proposed to the community at the visioning workshop.

- The Committee reviewed the overall goals of the project as stated in the draft and felt that they captured the aims of the project. However, they did note their perception of the project’s intent is to improve the safety of the village to support the current levels of service being provided and it is not to attract more visitors to the area. G. Brunswick noted that we can incorporate a few survey questions into the “workshop” to gather feedback on the intent.
- The Committee discussed parking in the area and agreed that the stated parking goal should be modified to the theme of “better manage on-street parking opportunities to prioritize safety”.
- In the diagram options are currently organized as levels based on feature of improvement or location. It was agreed that the levels will be modified for the workshop to show three levels such as:
 - o Level 1 – Improvements that can be made to whole area crosswalk and streetscape that do not require Class 1 Highway.
 - o Level 2 - Improvements that require Class 1 Highway but that are still considered either low cost and/or semi-permanent.
 - o Level 3 - Improvements that require Class 1 Highway but are higher cost, permanent changes.

For reference: Class 1 Town Highway, refers to whether the Town or VTrans would maintain the highway and related infrastructure. A cost-benefit analysis of transferring this responsibility to the Town will be completed as a part of this effort to inform the feasibility of the options being explored.

- The Committee commented on each the general areas of improvements.
 - o For the Level 1 - Crosswalk areas, it will be good to see how the “bump outs” will work on the ground with drawings to understand how this could potentially impact bicyclists and how these could function without sidewalks.
 - o For the Level 3 – Lakeside, the boardwalk option should be removed.
 - o For Level 2 – Residential Side, no comments aside from wanting to see how these improvements could fit within the road right-of-way.

- For Route 2, would like to see a widened shoulder option to extend down to library. Modify the statement “remove parking from lakeside” to better manage/restrict unauthorized parking on the lakeside.
- It was noted that this study is conceptual and all improvements would need further study beyond this effort to explore the detailed level of impacts they would have in the right-of-way. This level of detail would be available from a scoping study that would take the concepts to detailed drawings.

Review Project Schedule. NRPC and the VBH team are still on track to hold the public outreach for a two-week period in July from the 15th to the 29th. The Steering Committee will hold a July meeting on the 8th to review the draft workshop materials prior to launch the following week. The focus of the July meeting will be a review of the material to get feedback or identify changes to how the materials is presented such as descriptions provided on each of the boards.

Next meeting: July 8th 7:00-9:00pm via Zoom.

Meeting #3 – July , 2020

NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday July 15, 2020 - Virtual meeting via Zoom

Attendance: Warren Wright, Bev Poquette, Tim Bourne, Heather Bickford, Robert Miller, Greta Brunswick and Amanda Holland (NRPC)

Members of the public: Jim and Linda Cantrell, Michael Murdock, Tracy Giroux, Sherri Potvin, Bob Camp, Jean and Will Heise, Nicholas and Belinda Boit, Walter Blasberg, Jane Way, Karl Raacke

Review Status of Outreach for Open House. A. Holland reviewed the status of the public outreach activities to date:

- The Islander was sent a press release to be released in the next edition
- Village district property owners were sent a letter to inform them of the project and timeline
- Project Website is up and a link is on Town website under Planning Commission and Selectboard
- Town Clerk will post the flyer at the Town’s 3 posting places. If Steering Committee members know of additional places to post, please get a copy of the flyer from the Corinn.
- Town-wide postcard mailing went out this week; 668 postcards were mailed to add home addresses and PO Box addresses in the USPS system.
- Front Porch Forum postings – NRPC will draft and send to B. Poquette to post on forum

Review Draft Virtual Platform for Open House. G. Brunswick and A. Holland reviewed the outline of the virtual platform. The consulting team explored the use of the original virtual platform presented at the last meeting however the cost estimate to utilize the platform came in higher than anticipated and outside the budget of this project. NRPC will provide the virtual platform as an integrated experience to the project website to present the material and provide opportunity for comment.

G. Brunswick walked through the presentation to describe the purpose of the project, summary of past activity, different types of opportunities, and the three levels of concepts for consideration at the open house. It was noted that some projects being presented are on private property and would need to work with landowners in order to pursue. These concepts show a full range of options that can be explored and how concepts build upon each other should they be completed incrementally.

The following is comments from the review of the draft platform.

- What will the format be for Town Office display? The designs will be provided on posters and comments will be taken using a paper survey.
- Who is currently responsible for painting/maintaining the crosswalk? The State/Agency of Transportation
- It was noted that the crosswalks were originally requested to serve the two adjacent community spaces, Community Hall and Methodist Church.
- G. Brunswick noted that the proposed crosswalk improvements are designed to make crossing safer for pedestrians and not necessarily to serve the businesses.
- B. Camp is supportive of discussing these improvements and would like to see it as a lively discussion.
- A focus of the open house will be to get feedback to define a future vision and opportunities to enhance safety.
- It was noted the northern drawings incorrectly name the North Hero House as North Hero Inn
- There was conversation around the current placement of the northern crosswalk and the concept of shifting it north. B. Poquette noted that it was located there to reduce conflicts for parked cars; cars do not always pull up completely into a space and often hang onto the end of the roadway. W. Blasberg stated the main area where conflicts with parking and visibility occur is on the side by the church. Parking has been removed on the church side. It was highlighted that on the Inn side as shown on the concepts, there will be a break between the back end of the cars and the roadway so that people would be more visible. It was asked if there could be the potential to add definition to the parking edge with curbing; a variation of this is provided in the Level 3 drawing using a hedge line.
- J Cantrell stated there are signs for the current crosswalks and only 50% of drivers stop; could the use of signs with activated crossing lights be considered? It was noted that this was not provided as an option but is the type of feedback that should be provided at the Open House.
- H. Bickford asked if the rumble strips could be pulled further away from the crosswalk to provide more advanced warning. N. Boit noted that rumble strips create a level of noise that is not ideal for the residents that live adjacent to it and references the small divot in the road a few years ago that similarly created a lot of noise. T. Giroux agreed with that comment.
- G. Brunswick again noted that this level of feedback are the types of comments we want to collect with the outreach event.
- A question was raised on the existing conditions with 11-foot travel lanes and if this represents the width in the entire study area. A. Holland noted we will confirm the width of the travel lane and shoulders.
- Bob Camp noted that this is a historic district and wonders if these improvements are necessary for safety. H. Bickford noted that this is the beginning of the process and these are the types of comments we are looking for.
- It was noted that people currently do not walk to destinations in the village. A resident noted that they have observed less than 10 people per day currently walking in this area. Outside of the high tourism season will the sidewalk/walkway be used?
- G. Brunswick noted that these visualizations meant to spark communication and gather feedback on community preference.

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- G. Brunswick reviewed the draft of the survey questions and opened it up to suggestions on the types of information and feedback we should be requesting.
 - o H. Bickford noted there is not a question on parking. Could ask “Do you have difficulty parking in village. If so when? What event is it? (church, yoga, etc).”
 - o T. Giroux noted that there is not an opportunity for folks to provide feedback no what they like about the village.
 - o G. Brunswick noted we can frame a question around asking what folks feel the purpose of these improvements would be. Do you want to encourage more visitors or make it safer for who is there? We have heard from past meetings the interest of trying to keep what you have and make it safer.
- M. Murdock wanted the existing conditions and width of the shoulders confirmed. The designs show 4 and 6 foot bike lanes at all levels. Is this utilizing the existing roadbed or is the proposal widening the route 2 corridor to facilitate that additional forage. A. Holland noted the VHB team measured a areas within the historic district and found these to be existing conditions. We plan to measure areas outside the historic district to confirm this improvement.
- It was stated that level 3 with a sidewalk would wipe out or disturb several features like fences, stonewalls, and trees that currently make the village what it is today. This was again noted as the type of feedback we folks should provide on open house platform.
- Next week we will kick off the virtual open house and we will review feedback obtained at the next meeting.
- Folks asked how they can be informed of future meetings. It was noted that the Committee meets on the 3rd Wednesday and agendas are posted by the Town and provided on the project website with meeting details.

Next meeting is set for the 3rd Wednesday of August (8/19).

Meeting #4 August 19, 2020

North Hero Village Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting August 19, 2020

Attendance: Robert Miller, Warren Wright, Beverlee Poquette, John Skutel, Heather Bickford, Tim Bourne, Walter Blasburg, Belinda Boit, Nick Boit, Jean Heise, Will Heise, Tracy Giroux, Michael Murdock, Greta Brunswick (NRPC), Amanda Holland (NRPC)

Open House/Survey Results:

There were 55 survey responses which amounts to an eight percent response rate; a general aim is for 10% but this response is typical for municipal surveys. The Survey/Open House was well advertised through a direct mailing, front porch forum, flyers at town posting locations, and the Islander. COVID and summer months could have impacted the rate. There were many more people that visited the website and reviewed the posters at Town Hall than filled out the survey, we will provide the number of website visitors in the survey summary document. For many, the issues may not have been important enough to them to fill the survey out.

Amanda reviewed summary results of Open House Survey (*see Draft Open House Survey Results dated 8/18/20*).

Public Comments:

- Concern for impacts of private property – especially for Level 3 in the center of the Village where several houses have retaining walls. While some residences may have encroachments within the state highway ROW, what came first? In many cases, these residences may have been there first.
- For Level 1 and 2, which includes a 4 foot and 6 foot bicyclist/pedestrian shoulder on the side of the road, the intent is to accommodate some facilities within the existing paved area. This is at a conceptual level, but our initial measurements indicate that in some areas an additional 3 feet of pavement will be necessary to allow for this.
- Request that plans show where there may be potential for infringement on private property. It needs to be clearer whether something is within the current paved area versus road right-of-way.
- 3 foot is the minimum width for a bike shoulder under state guidelines.
- If Town decides to install landscaping, planters, banners or other such aesthetic improvements – they need to have a plan on how these will be maintained.
- While 60% of respondents support some level of change (level 1, level 2 or level 3), ~75% support the options of “none”, have “no preference” or level 1. It all depends on how you summarize the results. It was noted that many of the “no preference” votes provided comments that stated they supported many of the level improvements.
- Town should do bike/pedestrian counts to understand what levels of bike/pedestrian traffic exist. This should be used to make sure the scale of improvement is responsive to the amount of traffic. Perception is that there is actually very little bike/pedestrian activity. Therefore, it does not justify a significant investment/change.
- On-street parking is essential to the North Hero House business. Owner is making good faith efforts to address the community’s concerns with the on-street parking demand from his clients. He is working with the state (VTrans and DEC Lakes and Ponds) on expanding the retaining wall across from the Church to allow for deeper parking spaces so parking will not interfere with road shoulder. He has also been a part of the conversation to remove use of the wide shoulder in front of the Church as parking.
- Need to consider the impacts on homeowners and businesses for the sake of a few bicyclists and pedestrians.
- It was noted that Barbara Hampton from West Shore Road submitted supporting information on various bike and pedestrian improvements as a reference for the Committee.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- Flashing speed limit signs have been effective at reducing speed in other communities; examples were noted in Irasburg and Craftsbury Commons.
- Changes need to have minimal impact. Don’t have improvements to be overkill. Need to address speed limit and on-street parking.
- While standing at edge of crosswalk waiting to cross recently, cars did not slow or stop. Could better mark/accentuate the crosswalk.
- Need better enforcement of the speed limit.
- On-street parking an issue that increased with the opening of the Pier Bar.
- Safety of pedestrians and bicyclists is overarching issue. Improvements need to have minimal impact. Speeding should be controlled more.
- Should look at the simplest solution.
- Consider signs at crossings.

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- General support for Level 1 improvements. Ensure lane and shoulder is clear for bikes/peds.
- Support gateway signage. Perhaps with planters/landscaping.
- Notes that some changes can also enhance the beauty of the Town.
- Does not support impacting the existing historic landmarks or retaining walls that define some of the existing private residences front yards. But where can would like to make it wider on the shoulder even if on one side.
- Support for impermanent, seasonal bollards/cones/caution signs/planters as traffic calming measure at crosswalks. Either at edge or in middle. Would like to see a range of examples in how these could be incorporated.
- Need to confirm process with AOT for such temporary traffic calming enhancements. Distinguish where any of these can be considered Level 1 (no class 1 town highway) options. Level 1 option currently does not include this type of improvement, Level 2 does. However, are there more temporary/seasonal materials that could be allowed by AOT without Class 1?
- Support unified no parking signage controlled by the Town, perhaps through ordinance.
- Consider whether a public parking lot could be located and advertised as such as the Court House.
- Selectboard looking for recommendation on what speed limit to pursue with VTrans. Committee members provided support to either a year-round 30MPH or 35MPG with better enforcement. It was noted that the Selectboard will be reviewing the survey results and providing a recommendation to VTrans in September.

Next Steps:

- The goal is to refine and finalize an illustrative plan that demonstrates a vision for North Hero Village and that addresses the safety concerns driving this project. The plan will be incorporated into a final master plan report. As part of this project, we will also be completing a cost/benefit analysis of the impacts of class 1 highway designation.
- Next meeting is on September 16. We were looking to understand after this meeting whether the Committee was ready to provide us input on how to finalize the plan and let this drive the agenda for the next meeting.
- It seems that there is general support for Level 1 improvements, with a few tweaks.
- For the next meeting, NRPC will bring the Level 1 sketch to life with photographs and images of specific improvements that can be implemented in alignment with Level 1 and the discussion from tonight's meeting. With these images, we will work to finalize the vision for the master plan.
- NRPC will prepare language for Front Porch Forum update on the project status. Following the September meeting it may be a good time for an Islander article.
- The Survey results will be posted to the website.

Meeting #5 September 24, 2020

North Hero Village Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting September 24, 2020

Attendance: Warren Wright, Beverlee Poquette, John Skutel, Heather Bickford, Tim Bourne, Tracy Giroux, Michael Murdock, Greta Brunswick (NRPC), Amanda Holland (NRPC)

Call to order at 7:10pm. No adjustments to agenda.

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Approval of August Minutes – Motion by T. Bourne to approve the minutes, seconded by J. Skutel. Motion carries.

Review deliverables and discussion points for October meeting

- G. Brunswick reviewed "Next Steps" from the August minutes and points provided by H. Bickford's via email.
- B. Poquette felt this was outside the open meeting guidelines and wanted to review items in a meeting to discuss
- B. Poquette read comments provided by Robert Miller. R. Miller feels the project should not address parking on land the town doesn't own. The Planning Commission stated at their Sept. meeting the Town should not be incurring any expense or investigating parking.
- H. Bickford – stated when she gathered feedback from Committee members at the last meeting, concerns with parking was brought up as an issue.
- G. Brunswick clarified that the project is focusing on the public right of way. Not private property.
- B. Poquette – commented that since the August meeting, the Judge stated they are interested in considering expanding parking. Asked if this would this be duplicative if this study also looked at parking.
- H. Bickford noted there are only a few places where could put public parking like the courthouse.
- A. Holland noted the public present at the August meeting did provide comment that the plan should address parking in some way aside from no parking.
- W. Wright asked what if private businesses then use this public space, should they be able to use it?
- J. Skutel noted the main issue is safety. More important than parking. Even Courthouse not town property.
- M. Murdock asked what we are delineating as public parking?
- G. Brunswick stated what has been conveyed is the Village Hall and the Courthouse. Neither are currently delineated on plans so this would be a decision point of areas either owned by the Town or institutions that allow for public parking. We do not know how official those spaces are for allowing public parking. If the Committee wanted to explore this the project could look at the capacity of the areas identified.
- G. Brunswick – After the study the Town would then need to with those organizations further to come up with an agreement for public parking as well as signage. This is a conceptual plan so if looking for areas off street is a goal to help improve pedestrian and bike safety along the roadway. We could propose it in the Master Plan as an idea for further exploration. And next steps would be for left to the Town to explore them further.
- G. Brunswick asked the Committee if they want to explore those items in the overall vision.
- W. Wright - Steering away from what we wanted. Safety of the road. Not parking.
- H. Bickford - Where could we put safe parking that is not impeding residents
- Eliminate parking on ROW for entire length of roadway.

J. Skutel motioned to concentrate on the safety of the traffic and pedestrians through the village as the primary focus of the master plan. W. Wright seconded. Motion carries.

- G. Brunswick confirmed NRPC focus on highway right of way and the level 1 improvements.
- Question – Is the Town able to accommodate parking on a state highway? Requirements - must be completely off of traveled portion of the road. PC inquired of sheriff and stated would need complaint would enforce.

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- G. Brunswick - for solution we can look into what precedent is around state putting up no parking signs and how it ties into class 1 town highway designation. Without Class1 need to understand what conditions necessary to put up no parking sign. Perhaps only enforcing
- T. Bourne - once we identify the plan should we involve AOT for their assistance? G. Brunswick - Yes.
B. Poquette – asked if there were funds available to do parking exploration? Could these items be presented as recommendations or options in the plan?
- G. Brunswick - we would be able to provide conceptual information only, completed by NRPC staff. Entire plan is conceptual exploring possibilities.

J. Skutel motioned, that appropriate areas outside the public right of way, such as the Community Hall and Court House, can be shown on the Level 1 plan for future consideration as potential off-street public parking areas. H. Bickford seconded. Motion carried.

- T. Giroux noted the Community Hall already provides a lot of parking with handshake agreements. Community Halls owns all the way to Hero's Welcome and can utilize their parking for large events. People currently park at Hero's Welcome when folks go to the island. T. Giroux reps the Community Hall and Historical Society.
- H. Bickford – stated the intent of the propose parking task was to explore if the current parking alignments were maximizing the parking at the Community Hall. If it were formalized is there a way to better maximize parking (diagonal vs etc).
- B. Poquette - if road parking not enforced than public parking won't be used
- Committee mentioned if there is potential for standardized signs vs residents putting up stones/posts/etc.
- Parking - How many do we have now and how many do we need to accommodate for those lost spaces.
- J. Skutel - we would like to show where the road ROW is exactly. Understand it is an issue for those on private property. Would be helpful to see those lines for reference.
- Want to see how those lines will impact existing features like stone walls
- These lines are not to survey level detail but AOT's design plans
- Tim B - outcome request to AOT on signage for parking and request to sheriffs dept for enforcement.

Motion to adjourn – T. Bourne, W. Wright second.

Meeting #6 October 22, 2020

North Hero Village Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting

October 21, 2020 7:00PM

Committee Attendance: Bev Poquette, Robert Miller, Tim Bourne, Warren Wright

Public Attendance: Michael Murdock, Alan Lendway, Jane Lendway, Jean Heiss, Nick Boit, Belinda Boit, Tracy Giroux, Karl Raacke, Greta Brunswick (NRPC), Amanda Holland (NRPC)

Opened 7:05

- 1) **Call to Order.**
- 2) **Adjustments to Agenda:** None

- 3) Minutes.** Bev made edit to minutes to note she had a conversation with a Side Judge not the Judge who is considering researching expanding the parking.

Tim motioned to accept September minutes. Warren seconded. Motion carried.

4) Review Visuals of Potential Improvements

Amanda presented photos and descriptions of existing conditions and opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Pedestrian and Bike Facilities

- Bev noted that she is more concerned about pedestrian traffic than bike traffic. She noted that some shoulder areas have less than 4 feet and participants at the Walk Audit noted they felt the conditions (width) were unsafe.
- Tim noted that he likes the idea of sharrows.
- Committee agreed that they want to learn more about the feasibility for a visually separated pedestrian lane on one side of the road coupled with bike sharrows within the traveled lane. These improvements are supported.
- Discussed whether widening of the road would be necessary. Amanda clarified that we are still discussing what improvements are possible without widening the paved area of the road and what would require some widening of the paved area.
- Discussed that if widening is desired, a town could have plans ready and reviewed by VTrans and request that they do this when they do a full reconstruction of the road. This could be 20 years from now but it is necessary to have plans ready a minimum of 5 years in advance to ensure they are accepted by VTrans.

Crosswalks

- VTrans maintains crosswalks within the traveled way only. Other designs would need to be maintained by the municipality.
- Discussion of whether the stamped brick or brick crosswalks make noise. Mixed opinions, concern that the brick speed table would add undesirable noise to village area.
- Comment that stamped brick is difficult and expensive to maintain.
- Comment that any traffic control device with lighted features is undesirable due to ambient light.
- Committee agreed that they do not support stamped pavement, speed tables or traffic control devices with light such as rapid flashing beacons in the village area. Other opportunities are acceptable and supported (better placement of crosswalks, reflective enhancements, etc).

Better Defining Spaces

- Clarification that bump outs, bollards and planters need to be located outside or the ROW, the town or landowner is responsible for cost of installation and maintenance through a 1111 permit or Class 1 Highway designation.
- Comment that temporary options are appealing due to the seasonality of pedestrian traffic and would like these improvements to be listed as options with information on what would be involved for consideration.
- Concern that bump-outs would work not work in the Village because there is no on-street parking and the roadway is narrow. This would limit space for bike traffic in the ROW.
- Amanda clarified that there are no bumpouts that protrude into the ROW at each end of the crosswalk proposed in the draft plans. The bumpouts in the plan as shown in the Level 2 plan are to narrow access points.

- It was clarified that the existing crosswalks were proposed for the Community Hall and the Methodist Church – not Hero’s Welcome and North Hero House. It was also commented that the Hero’s Welcome Area is a multi-use dynamic area. The Community Hall owns up to the wall of Hero’s Welcome, which incorporates the entire drive in between the two buildings. The area is also impacted by the boat launch and traffic and parking associated with that. Comment that the access way needs to be wide enough to serve that traffic. It was noted that bollards had been used in the past in this area for something similar, staff will follow up to find out details.

Gateway Signage, Signs and Banners

- Gateway signage is supported by the Committee; should be in master plan. It was clarified that gateway signs need to be outside the ROW (unless Class 1) and there needs to be an agreement for use of the property between the property owner and the Town.
- Inquiry about no parking signs for on-street parking. Clarified that there is a process to apply to VTrans to install enforceable no-parking signage, although NRPC is still confirming with VTrans what this process is. The signage does need to be coupled with a local ordinance in order for it to be enforceable.
- The Committee is supportive of signage for no on-street parking and a local ordinance.
- The Committee is not supportive of additional street lighting in the Village, such as lamp posts. It was noted that lamp posts are traditionally installed where there is a sidewalk or physically separate pedestrian path.
- The Committee is not supportive of banners. Installation on telephone pole would require Class 1 Town Highway. It was commented that special equipment may be required for installation and takedown.

5) Review of Level 1 Improvements

Amanda noted that as we continue conversations with VTrans on what is feasible and what the approval process is we will be modifying the way the opportunities are divided into different levels. Things will be moved around and presented based on type of approval process.

It was suggested that the plan include level 1 supported improvements with several other options that may be supported but that would require more complicated steps to implement.

6) Draft project map: existing conditions and right-of-way

It was clarified that we are still learning from VTrans what might be possible in terms of pedestrian facilities without widening the current paved area of the roadway. Unless the centerline is shifted to narrow one shoulder, widening of the paved area may likely be necessary at least in some areas in order to accommodate a pedestrian path. Also, VTrans has not vetted the visually separated pedestrian path for use on a state highway. It may not be an option unless the Town choose to do Class 1.

7) Public Comment

(Comment was provided in prior sections)

8) Review and Discussion of Next Steps

Next meeting will be November 18 to review Class 1 Town Highway analysis.

A draft report will be prepared for review at the December 16 meeting.

Committee requested updates as NRPC learns more on what VTrans will allow and what the approval process is. For November, NRPC can prepare a memo with these updates.

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Tim motioned to adjourn at 8:48. Warren seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting #7 – November 18, 2020

NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday November 18, 2020

Committee Attendance: Bev Poquette, Robert Miller, John Skutel, Tim Bourne

Public Attendance: Walter Blasburg, Michael Murdock, Alan Lendway, Jane Lendway, Will Heiss, Jean Heiss, Nick Boit, Kevin ?, Nathaniel ?

Consultant Attendance: Greta Brunswick, Amanda Holland from Northwest Regional Planning Commission

1. Call to order. B. Poquette opened the meeting at 7:05.

2. Adjustments to Agenda. None.

3. Approval of Minutes.

Tim Bourne motioned to accept the October meeting minutes. John Skutel seconded. Motion carried.

4. Presentation & Discussion on Draft Class 1 Town Highway Analysis. Amanda Holland gave a presentation on the cost/benefit of Class 1 Town Highway designation. Presentation posted on project website.

5. Opportunity for public comment. It was discussed whether the Class 1 Town Highway designation should be brought up at Town Meeting. It was clarified that this would be premature since this is an analysis and not a proposal. This Committee will have the opportunity to recommend an action to the Selectboard related to Class 1 Designation as part of this project.

There was a comment that there may not be a significant need for improvements that need class 1 designation since there are so few businesses in the village.

There was a comment that this report and plan will outline what is possible and the decision makers for the Town can take it from there.

6. Project Schedule. Next meeting scheduled for January 20, 2021 to review draft plan.

Adjourned at 7:45

Meeting #8 - January 20, 2021

NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday January 20, 2021

Committee Attendance: Bev Poquette, Robert Miller, John Skutel, Tim Bourne, Warren Wright

Public Attendance: Tracy Giroux, Karl Raacke, Michael Murdock, Jean Heiss, Will Heiss

Consultant Attendance: Greta Brunswick, Amanda Holland from Northwest Regional Planning Commission

1. Call to order. B. Poquette opened the meeting at 7:02.

2. Adjustments to Agenda. None.

3. Approval of Minutes. Tim Bourne motioned to accept the November meeting minutes. John Skutel seconded. Motion carried.

4. Review & Discussion on Draft Village Master Plan. Amanda Holland walked through the draft Village Master Plan sections provided to the Committee; the completed sections to date

summarize the existing conditions, community open house, and the categories of potential improvements discussed. The action plan to implement these improvements will be provided at the February meeting. The January version of the draft report is posted on project website.

Committee comment on the draft report:

- T. Bourne and W. Wright confirmed that road line striping is contracted out by the Town.
 - Speeding enforcement was discussed – potential to ticket, ordinance tied to a specific area, contracting for enforcement
 - B. Poquette share information from Sherri Potvin, the Court House area was available for parking after court hours.
 - In relation to the access management recommendations, it was discussed that if a curb or barrier were present in front of Hero's Welcome it would necessitate further review to ensure this would not conflict with boat traffic. This improvement would need VTrans approval even if it was just paint. B. Poquette noted the safety improvement in Alburgh as a result of the Mobil station there installing a curb at the junction of 78 and Route 2. G. Brunswick stated that another opportunity for enabling access management improvements is with site plan review when a development next comes for a permit.
5. Opportunity for public comment. None.
 6. Project Schedule. Next meeting scheduled for February 12, 2021 to review next section of draft plan.

Motion to adjourn by Robert Miller, seconded by Warren Wright.

Adjourned at 8:09pm

Meeting #9 – February 17, 2020

NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday February 17, 2021

Committee Attendance: Bev Poquette, Robert Miller, Tim Bourne, Warren Wright

Public Attendance: Tracy Giroux, Karl Raacke, Michael Murdock, Jean Heiss, Will Heiss, Jim Cantrel, Linda Cantrel, Nathaniel Keefe, Nick Boil, Belinda Boit

Consultant Attendance: Greta Brunswick, Amanda Holland from Northwest Regional Planning Commission

1. Call to order. B. Poquette opened the meeting at 7:05.
2. Adjustments to Agenda. None.
3. Approval of Minutes. T. Bourne motioned to accept the January meeting minutes. W. Wright seconded. Motion carried.
4. Review & Discussion on Draft Village Master Plan. Amanda Holland walked through the draft Village Master Plan sections provided to the Committee; the new sections for the meeting was the Implementation Plan with action worksheets for the eight potential improvements identified. The February draft report material is posted on project website <https://www.nrpcvt.com/northherovillagemasterplan>.

Committee comment on the draft report:

- Task 1. Crossing Area Enhancements at the Southern Crossing: J. Cantrell asked a question about the right-of-way widths. G. Brunswick clarified that the demonstration project outlined in the

plan is not planned to be conducted as a part of the grant but NRPC will be a resource for the future if the Town and landowners want to pursue it.

Task 2. Crossing Area Enhancements at the Northern Crossing: No comment

Task 3. Speed Limit Enforcement: Comment on radar speed feedback sign, if utilized would want to consider placement with the residential setting and minimize light impacts to the adjacent homes. Question on the cost for these signs and process for pursuing. A. Holland noted the plan provides the reference for the VTrans guidelines for these signs.

Task 4. Gateway Signage – Support was mentioned for this improvement. Member of the public noted this would be an opportunity for fundraising and a public selection process. It was stated that a local champion could work with Town leadership on this effort and could have community engagement.

Task 5. Public Parking Definition & Wayfinding – On-Street Parking: No comment

Task 6. Public Parking Definition & Wayfinding – Off-Street Parking: No comment

Task 7. Access Management at Hero's Welcome and the Community Hall: It was stated the Town is in communication with the Historical Society on moving the municipal offices to the Community Hall. This move would add additional trips to this spot and would further support the need to consider these improvements.

Task 8. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement - Widen Shoulder of US Route 2: It was stated that support for this improvement could be stated in the Municipal Plan when updated next. This would document the potential improvement as an interest to be further explored and provide support for implementation. Concern was raised by a homeowner on the lakeside with road widening given proximity of their home to the road.

Task 9. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement - Pedestrian Facility Exploration: No comment.

5. Opportunity for public comment.

- There was a comment to consider the addition of a third crosswalk in the northern part of the Village and that speeds near Savage Point Rd are high. A. Holland and G. Brunswick noted the VTrans process for adding crosswalks and the challenges with adding a new crossing given the proximity to the nearby crossing and lack of on-road pedestrian facilities.
- Comment on the placement of the recent speed limit signs by VTrans. The 30-mph sign going south is hard to see. It was noted that some are placed directly in front of a house which impacts views. J. Heiss stated that when the signs were being installed, were able to communicate on placement near their residence and have it out of sight; suggested reaching out to VTrans to convey concerns on placement.
- W. Heiss stated that he felt some of the original proposals were radical for the village but those discussed in the action plan are more moderate. Stated support for signage and improving the visibility of the crosswalks as good steps.
- It was asked if this Village Master Plan was to be adopted in the Town Plan. G. Brunswick stated that a planning document like this was developed to help implement needs identified in the Town Plan; it could be referenced in the plan in the future but does not need to be incorporated into it.
- T. Giroux asked what the role of the Planning Commission was for the plan. It was noted the PC can help support these projects as they move forward.

6. **Project Schedule.** Next meeting scheduled for March 17, 2021 to review a full draft of the plan. It was noted that April could be an opportunity for public outreach and a presentation. T. Bourne proposed a quick presentation to the Selectboard and will mention to board. Motion to adjourn by Tim Bourne, seconded by Warren Wright. Adjourned at 8:43pm

Meeting #10 - March 2021

NORTH HERO VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday March 17, 2021

Committee Attendance: Bev Poquette, Robert Miller, Tim Bourne, Warren Wright, John Skutel

Public Attendance: Jean Heiss, Will Heiss

Consultant Attendance: Greta Brunswick, Amanda Holland from Northwest Regional Planning Commission

1. **Call to order.** B. Poquette opened the meeting at 7:05.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda.** None.
3. **Approval of Minutes.**

W. Wright motioned to accept the February meeting minutes. T. Bourne seconded. Motion carried.

4. **Review & Discussion on Draft Village Master Plan.** Amanda Holland noted the new content since the Committee's last review was the write-up for the Class 1 Town Highway analysis from the November presentation. In addition, text was inserted to note the potential improvements that were not supported for implementation. The list of appendices was reviewed and includes: concepts displayed at the July 2020 Open House, draft survey results, Class 1 Town Highway presentation, a demonstration guide to conduct a temporary installation of improvements at the southern crosswalk and Steering Committee meeting summaries. The demonstration guide is the new material and was presented in its draft form. Greta Brunswick noted that while this is new material, it is outlining the improvements for the southern crossing as defined in the Village Master Plan. The March draft report material is posted on project website <https://www.nrpcvt.com/northherovillagemasterplan>.

- W. Wright asked about the inclusion of the Town Highway designation in the report. A. Holland noted that while none of the recommendations from the Committee necessitate Class 1 designation, the analysis is a part of the project and therefore is included for reference.
- T. Bourne asked how far in advance a demonstration project should be scheduled with Local Motion; G. Brunswick noted Local Motion should be contacted in the March/spring timeframe for a summer demonstration and also allows time for event coordination with VTrans and landowners.
- J. Skutel asked who conducts the demonstration? G. Brunswick stated that a Committee could start if but would want approval of the Selectboard both for financial purposes and municipal support/coordination.

- G. Brunswick stated this is a fund way to get community engaged beyond simply reading a report, to understand the recommendations in the plan as well as gain interest in the improvements.

5. Discuss Opportunities for Public Comment

It was discussed that there would be two presentations of the material. NRPC will work with the Committee to put an announcement of the community meeting on Front porch forum and in The Islander.

1. NRPC will present the plan to the Selectboard in April, Tim will confirm the date but aiming for April 5th and scheduling the presentation for the second half of the meeting.
2. A community presentation, tentatively scheduled for May 19th at 7:00pm which was the Committee's standing meeting time. It is not yet known whether it will be remote or an in-person opportunity; decision pending covid restrictions on gatherings.

6. Opportunity for public comment.

- Will Heiss thanked the NRPC team for the project work.

7. Project Schedule. The project will wrap up with public outreach on the final plan. The grant ends at the end of May.

Motion to adjourn by Tim Bourne, seconded by John Skutel.

Adjourned at 7:45pm