Hardwick Downtown Mill and Main Street Scoping Study

Hardwick, VT

PREPARED BY

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Introduction

The Town of Hardwick conducted a Scoping Study to evaluate opportunities for multimodal transportation improvements along the Mill Street and Main Street corridor in downtown Hardwick, Vermont. This report documents the scoping process and resulting selection of a community supported, preferred alternative for the study corridor. A phased approach to implementation of the preferred alternative was recommended. The phased implementation plan details the transportation infrastructure improvements within the project area and can be leveraged by the Town to pursue funding to design and construct the preferred alternative which has been approved by the Hardwick Selectboard.

Study Overview

The Study Area was established at project initiation and defines the limits of this scoping effort (Figure 1). The corridor, comprised of Mill Street and a segment of South Main Street, is located within downtown Hardwick and collocated with VT-15. The downtown area hosts a variety of retail, restaurant, and service establishments and serves as a focal point in the community's business sector. The study corridor has documented needs for improvement and has been the focus of several previous planning efforts, including the Kingdom Roads – Safer Spaces for Walking and Biking report by Local Motion which identified an array of transportation deficiencies and recommendations. The Town has made progress in pursuing corridor improvements however opportunities remain to advance towards the long-term vision for the corridor.

Additionally, ongoing investment in and rehabilitation of the nearby Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) is expected to increase pedestrian and bicycle travel into downtown Hardwick and other trail towns. As a recreational destination and potential economic engine, this increase in trail use is poised to benefit the community. Given this context, this scoping effort provided a timely opportunity for the project team and Town to evaluate and identify improvements for the multimodal network in Hardwick's downtown that strengthen access to community resources and improve safety, usability, and connectivity for residents and visitors, including current and future LVRT users.

Figure 1 Study Area Context

Study Process

The scoping process outlined below follows the VTrans Municipal Assistance Section (MAS) guidebook.

1. Establish the project team, a group of representatives from the Town of Hardwick to serve as an advisory body to the project development and public engagement process.
2. Review existing information, settle on project goals, and determine the appropriate project timeline to develop the vision for the Study Area. Gather any additional data and resources to refine the project team's understanding of the current conditions.
3. Engage with project stakeholders and the local community at integral milestones to gather public input and make sure project goals are met.
4. Develop conceptual alternatives that align with project goals, satisfy the project purpose, and address the project needs as established in the project Purpose and Need statement.
5. Refine the conceptual alternative to a preferred alternative that is supported by the community and approved by the Town Selectboard. Prepare an implementation plan, anticipated construction costs, probable impacts, and factors that should be considered when moving the project forward into the development of design and construction documents.
6. Develop a final report outlining the process and work completed throughout the scoping effort and identifying next steps on the path to design and construction of the preferred alternative as envisioned by the community.

Project Purpose and Need Statement

At project initiation, a project goal to identify and evaluate opportunities to create multimodal transportation infrastructure improvements along 925 feet of Mill Street and Main Street in downtown Hardwick was used to guide the early phases of this scoping effort. After the Local Concerns Meeting and review of existing conditions and community priorities, Purpose and Need statements were developed to serve as guiding principles for project development.

Project Purpose

The purpose of the Hardwick Mill Street and Main Street Scoping Study is to identify and evaluate transportation improvements that:

- *Create a safe, comfortable environment in the Village core and clearly establish a transition from the surrounding higher-speed rural highway context to a lower-speed, multimodal core area.*
- *Improve continuity and connectivity of the pedestrian network to support safe and convenient access to community destinations including local businesses, services, and recreational resources.*
- *Improve multimodal transportation connectivity and infrastructure to better accommodate active transportation and support a vibrant and accessible village center.*

Project Needs

The needs for this project are demonstrated by existing and anticipated deficiencies within the Study Area, including:

- ***Inadequate transition from rural highway to village center*** *A lack of an effective transition zone from a high-speed rural highway environment to lower-speed village center results in safety and comfort concerns for all users.*

- ***Discontinuous Pedestrian Network*** *The pedestrian network is non-continuous, with missing links, gaps, and inconsistent facilities that limit safe and direct walking routes to community destinations.*
- ***Insufficient Capacity and Facilities for Multimodal Activity*** *Existing infrastructure does not adequately accommodate the increased and anticipated multimodal activity associated with the LVRT, including access to the trail and circulation within the village.*
- ***Infrastructure Deficiencies affecting Safety, Operations, and Resilience*** *Additional infrastructure deficiencies include vehicle turning movement challenges at key intersection and access points, missing or inadequate crosswalks that compromise safe pedestrian crossings, and impaired stormwater drainage that can affect roadway conditions, user safety, and infrastructure durability.*

Existing Conditions

Prior to developing conceptual alternatives, a review of existing physical, environmental, and cultural resource conditions was conducted to identify key issues and opportunities in the Study Area. These assessments were completed through a desktop review of available digital resources and on-site investigations. This section summarizes the project area's transportation system characteristics, geographic context, and relevant past plans, studies, and projects.

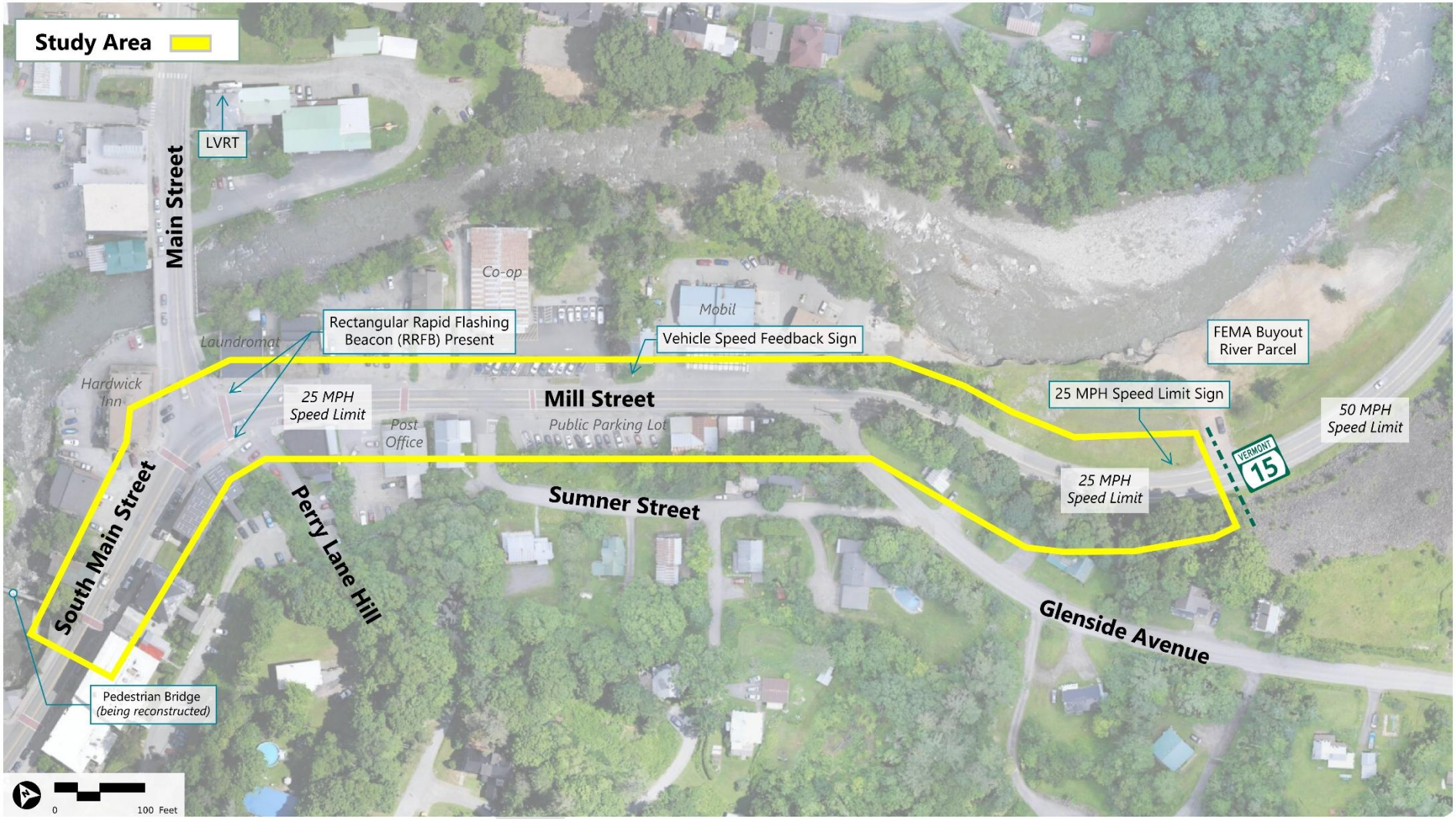
Study Area Description

The Study Area includes Mill Street and a segment of South Main Street in downtown Hardwick, where VT-15 transitions into the downtown core while serving as a thoroughfare to connect the area regionally. Existing corridor conditions, as depicted in Figure 2 and Figure 3, include discontinuous and deteriorated sidewalks, accessibility barriers due to slopes and uneven surfaces, access management issues, limited bicycle accommodations, and gaps in pedestrian crossing treatments and signage. While the Study Area is a community center, it is not comfortable or inviting for walking, as documented in the Hardwick Pedestrian and Traffic Study Task Force 2021 sidewalk reviews. These conditions are further exacerbated by lack of an effective transition zone from the high-speed rural State Highway to the village center. A more detailed view of the Study Area is included in Figure 4.

Figure 2 Study Corridor (Mill Street, EB)

Figure 3 Study Corridor (South Main Street, SB)

Figure 4 Study Area



Transportation System Characteristics

Review of the existing transportation system characteristics was conducted, including review of the study corridor roadway, intersections, pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure, crash history, right-of-way, and utilities.

Study Corridor Roadway

South Main Street & Mill Street (VT-15)

VT-15, which includes Mill Street and a segment of South Main Street within the Study Area, is a Class I Town Highway with a posted speed limit of 25-mph. The state highway ends at the east edge of the Study Area, with a posted speed limit of 50-mph. The annual average daily traffic (AADT) in the Study Area is 5,058 vehicles per day. Within the Study Area, the road cross section consists of two 11-foot travel lanes with marked edge lines and variable width shoulders, typically two feet wide. Shared bicycle lane markings were painted as part of the 2022 VT-15 paving project but are now worn and faded. Intermittent curbed sidewalks and on-street parallel parking are present along portions of the corridor, and one public off-street parking lot is located on the south side of Mill Street, across from the Buffalo Mountain Market Co-op.

Study Corridor Intersections

South Main Street (VT-15) / Mill Street (VT-15) / Main Street

The intersection of South Main Street (VT-15), Mill Street (VT-15), and Main Street is a key downtown junction. Shown in Figure 5, the intersection is unsignalized with stop control on the southbound approach from Main Street and free flow movements for the VT-15 northbound and westbound approaches. Marked crosswalks are present on the east (Mill Street) and south (South Main Street) legs, with no crosswalk present on the north leg of the intersection.

Curb extensions are present on the northwest and south sides of the intersection, but the overall layout remains wide and open, resulting in long pedestrian crossing distances and a relatively large expanse of minimally defined pavement for vehicle movements. Pavement wear patterns indicate that the paved intersection area exceeds what is typically used for vehicle turning movements. This is most evident for the westbound approach, where the available pavement width is nearly two lanes wide. Angled parking on the northwest corner in front of the Hardwick Inn is a point of friction as vehicles back out into the southbound travel lane when exiting parking spaces in close proximity to the intersection.

Just east of the South Main Street / Mill Street / Main Street intersection, Perry Lane Hill intersects Mill Street from the south at a steep downgrade, contributing stormwater to the corridor. Stormwater drainage issues were observed at this location (shown in Figure 6), where runoff does not fully drain to outlets and sediment settles onto the south side of VT-15 near The Clip Joint and within the curb extension gutters.

Figure 5 South Main Street / Mill Street / Main Street

Figure 6 Sediment Accumulation in front of The Clip Joint

Mill Street (VT-15) / Sumner Street

Sumner Street is a residential connector that intersects Mill Street on a steep downgrade and is stop-controlled as the minor leg of the T intersection. Due to the intersecting slope of Sumner Street, there is no crosswalk across Sumner Street. There is demand for a crossing here given the off-street public parking lot east of the intersection and multiple downtown destinations to the west.

Mill Street (VT-15) / Glenside Avenue

Glenside Avenue intersects VT-15 (Mill Street) with a Y-intersection, where Glenside Avenue has a split, stop-controlled approach to Mill Street. A horizontal curve and vertical hill crest create sight line constraints for vehicles entering downtown from the east and for turning movements onto Mill Street from Glenside Avenue. Located near the transition from the high-speed rural state highway to the downtown corridor, the combination of limited sight distance and challenging geometry make this intersection a key friction point for the community.

Figure 7 VT-15 (Mill Street) / Glenside Avenue

Existing Pedestrian & Bicyclist Infrastructure

Depicted in Figure 8, Figure 9, and Figure 10, sidewalks are present along portions of the corridor, but are missing or discontinuous in several locations, particularly along the eastern end of the study corridor. Several existing sidewalk segments are in poor condition, including areas in front of the Hardwick Inn and across from the Buffalo Mountain Market Co-op.

Marked crosswalks are present at multiple locations along the corridor; however, several markings are worn and lack visibility. Existing crosswalks are marked with red paint between standard white transverse markings. The north leg of the Main Street / Mill Street / South Main Street intersection does not have a marked crossing, though crossing activity was observed here. Shared lane markings for bicyclists have been painted on VT-15 but are faded.

Access management issues also contribute to multimodal safety challenges. Several commercial and private driveways are wide or undefined, which increases risk for conflicts especially for bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

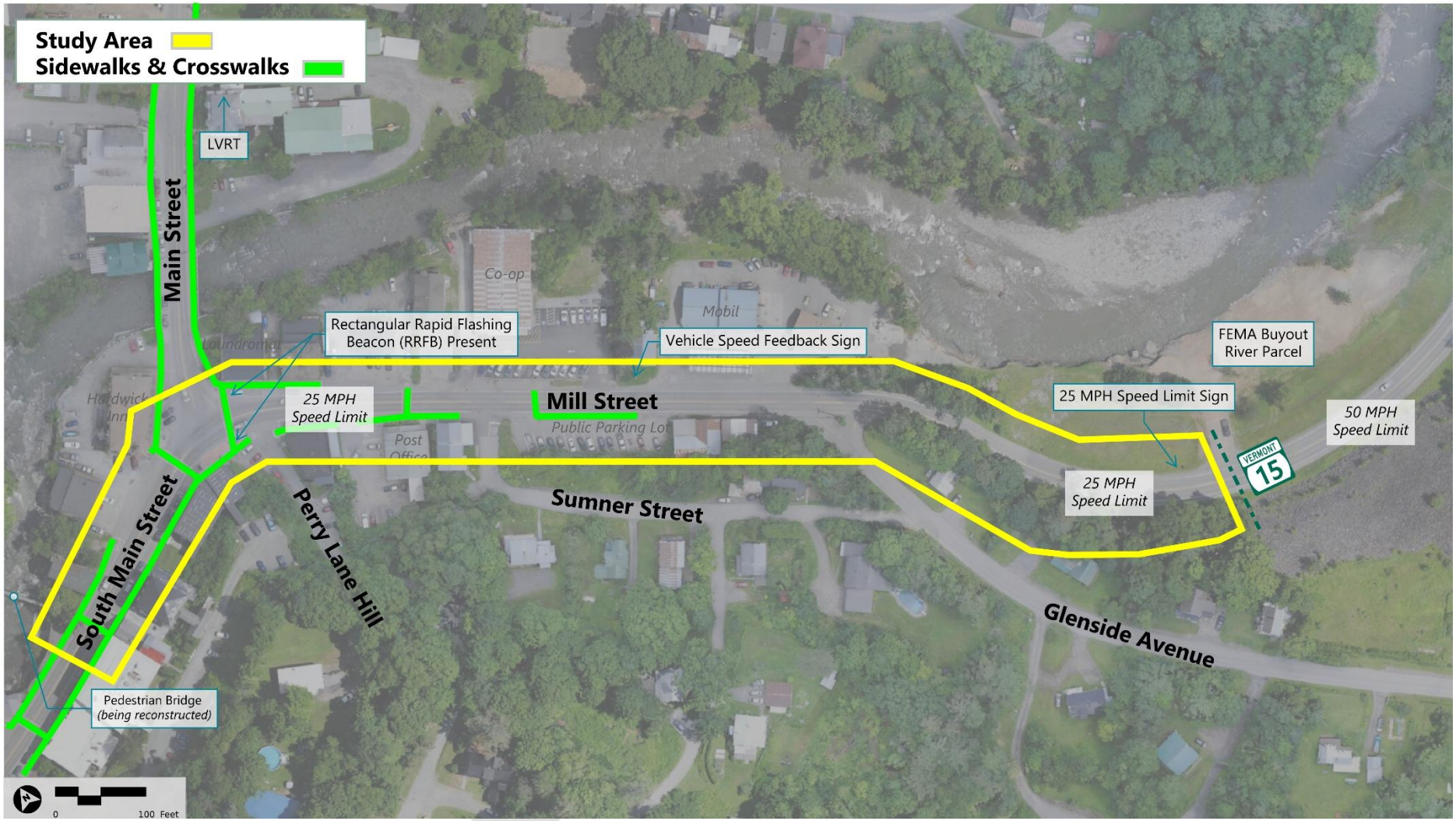
Access from the LVRT to the downtown area is connected via sidewalk outside of the Study Area, with no bike lanes or markings on Main Street. A bicycle landing area exists near the Hardwick Inn, and additional bicycle racks are planned for Memorial Park.

The Hardwick Pedestrian Bridge connects South Main Street to Daniels Road across the Lamoille River at the southwest end of the study corridor. During the course of the study, the bridge was demolished in preparation for replacement under a separate project.

Figure 8 Existing Sidewalk (by Hardwick Inn)

Figure 9 Existing Sidewalk (east of Sumner St.)

Figure 10 Existing Pedestrian Facilities

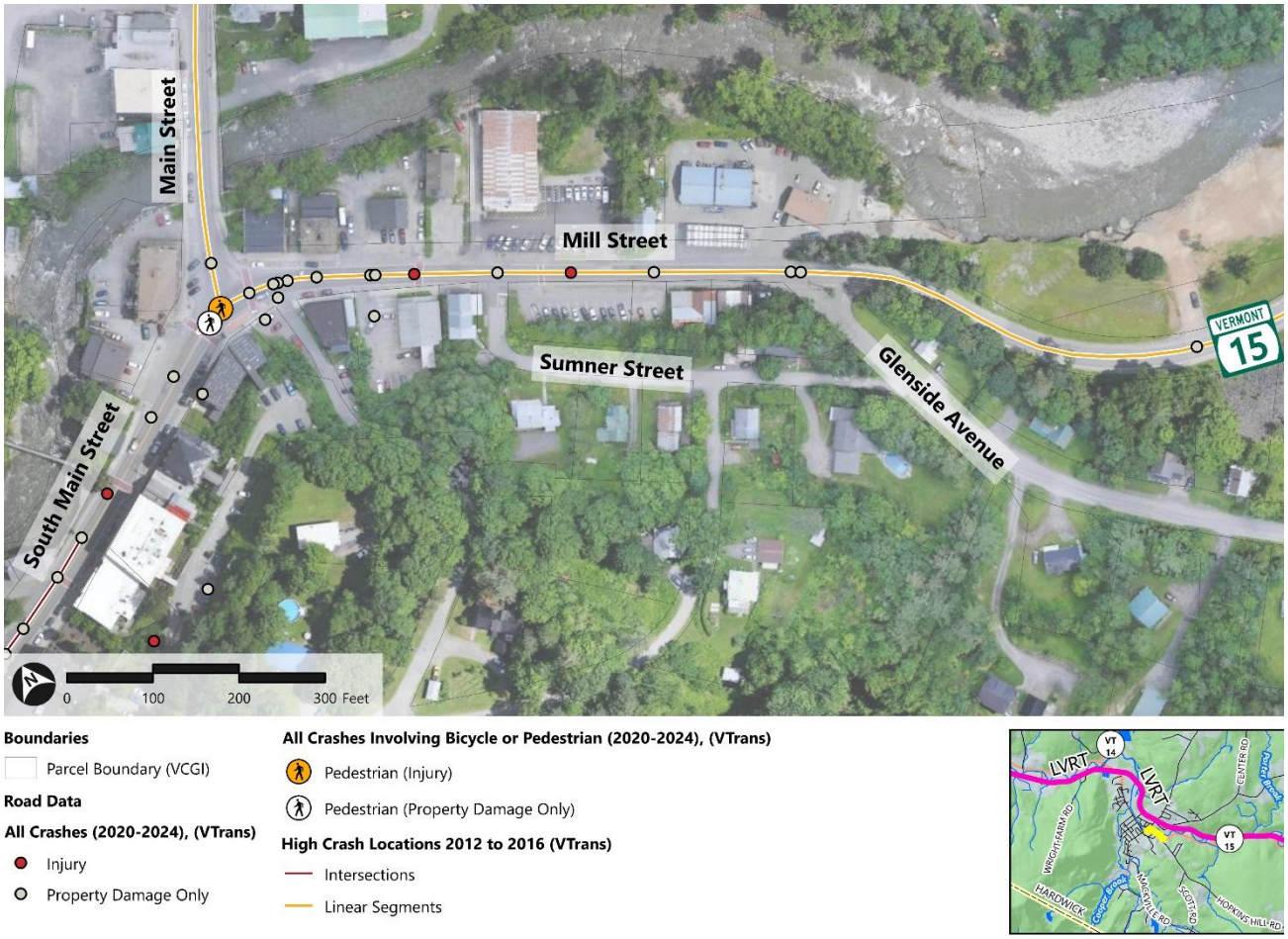


Crash History

Crashes in the Study Area for the most recent available five-year period (2020–2024) were sourced from the public VTrans Crash Query Tool and shown in Figure 11 below. During this period, most crashes in the area occurred near the South Main Street / Mill Street / Main Street intersection, including two crashes involving a pedestrian, one of which resulted in an injury. In both cases, pedestrians were struck by vehicles while using the crosswalks in front of the Hardwick Inn. One of these crashes resulted from an operator going around a vehicle already stopped for the pedestrian in the crosswalk and one of these crashes occurred at night. There is also a high crash location (HCL) segment present along Mill Street and Main Street, depicted in Figure 11.

As discussed during public engagement and demonstrated in the data, there have been occurrences of crashes at the Post Office driveway due to conflicts between Mill Street through traffic and vehicles turning into or out of the Post Office.

Figure 11 5 Year Crash History



Right-of-Way (ROW)

VTrans provides public access to state right-of-way (ROW) information through the Vermont Right-of-Way Spatial Data Hub. This dataset is the same source used for State records and is derived primarily from two inputs: CAD-based plans from more recent projects and georeferenced digital scans of historic plans. Within downtown Hardwick, the ROW for the Study Corridor is based on a historic project scan and is delineated to the back of the existing sidewalks. While ROW can be defined by property lines or monuments, it is not uncommon for historic ROW to be carried forward based on existing infrastructure limits. The default state ROW is 3 rods (49.5 feet), which was recognized as the standard for VT-15 at a Hardwick selectboard meeting on July 14, 2005.

In cases where potential impacts extend beyond the 49.5-foot default ROW but remain within the back-of-sidewalk delineation that has been present, publicly used, and municipally maintained for 15 years or more, "dedication and acceptance" would likely apply, allowing the Town to formally claim the area as public ROW. More details on this process can be found in the Municipal Assistance ROW Guide.

Utilities and Structures

Existing assets in the public ROW are well inventoried and mapped for public planning purposes. Data from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Atlas, Vermont Center for Geographic Information, Vermont Agency of Transportation, site visits, and aerial imagery were used to review Study Area existing conditions.

Survey data from the 2022 VT-15 paving project was also procured. The survey shows above ground assets and the existing road layout. A field visit was also conducted at which above-ground utility locations and facility conditions were confirmed and considered in conceptual alternative development.

The primary utilities and structures inventoried in the Study Area include:

- Water/Wastewater/Stormwater infrastructure – *Stormwater, sewer, and drinking water underground lines, above ground evidence (e.g., valves, structure covers, inlets), infrastructure locations, and overland flow paths.*
- Electric Utilities – *Utility poles and above-ground distribution lines.*
- Other Infrastructure – *Hydrants, street lighting, signs, buildings, fences, walls*.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Natural Resources Review

VHB conducted a desktop review of natural resources within the Study Area, with findings summarized by resource type below.

Hazardous Waste Sites: Based on desktop review of previously mapped resources, three potential hazardous waste sites were identified as present within the Study Area, as is typical of a developed area. These sites are associated with previous or current uses as gas stations or garages and are shown in Appendix A. Concerns for potential hazardous sites are related to conditions where surface or subsurface disturbances could affect areas containing potentially contaminated soil or groundwater.

River Corridor and Floodplains: A Town of Hardwick initiated project within the 100-year floodplain would be regulated by the Town of Hardwick Floodplain Zoning Regulations. These regulations apply to all areas within the town that are mapped as a special flood hazard area on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NRIP) maps.

To identify a community's flood risk, FEMA uses data to create the flood hazard maps (DFIRMs) that outline community's different flood risk areas. Some parts of floodplains may experience frequent flooding while others are only affected by severe storms. However, areas directly outside of these high-risk areas may also find themselves at considerable risk. The area in which a river or stream is likely to meander is referred to as a "River Corridor". State mapped river corridors are developed at a coarse, statewide level and may over-depict the actual erosion hazards in some areas and under-depict them in others. Site-specific data and past flood records should guide future planning and design.

The Study Area is adjacent to the Lamoille River, within its river corridor and near its 100-year floodplain. Given the documented flood risk and the recent increase in frequency and severity of flooding, new development and infrastructure improvements within the Study Area should incorporate flood-resistant design measures and avoid impacts that could worsen erosion or inundation hazards.

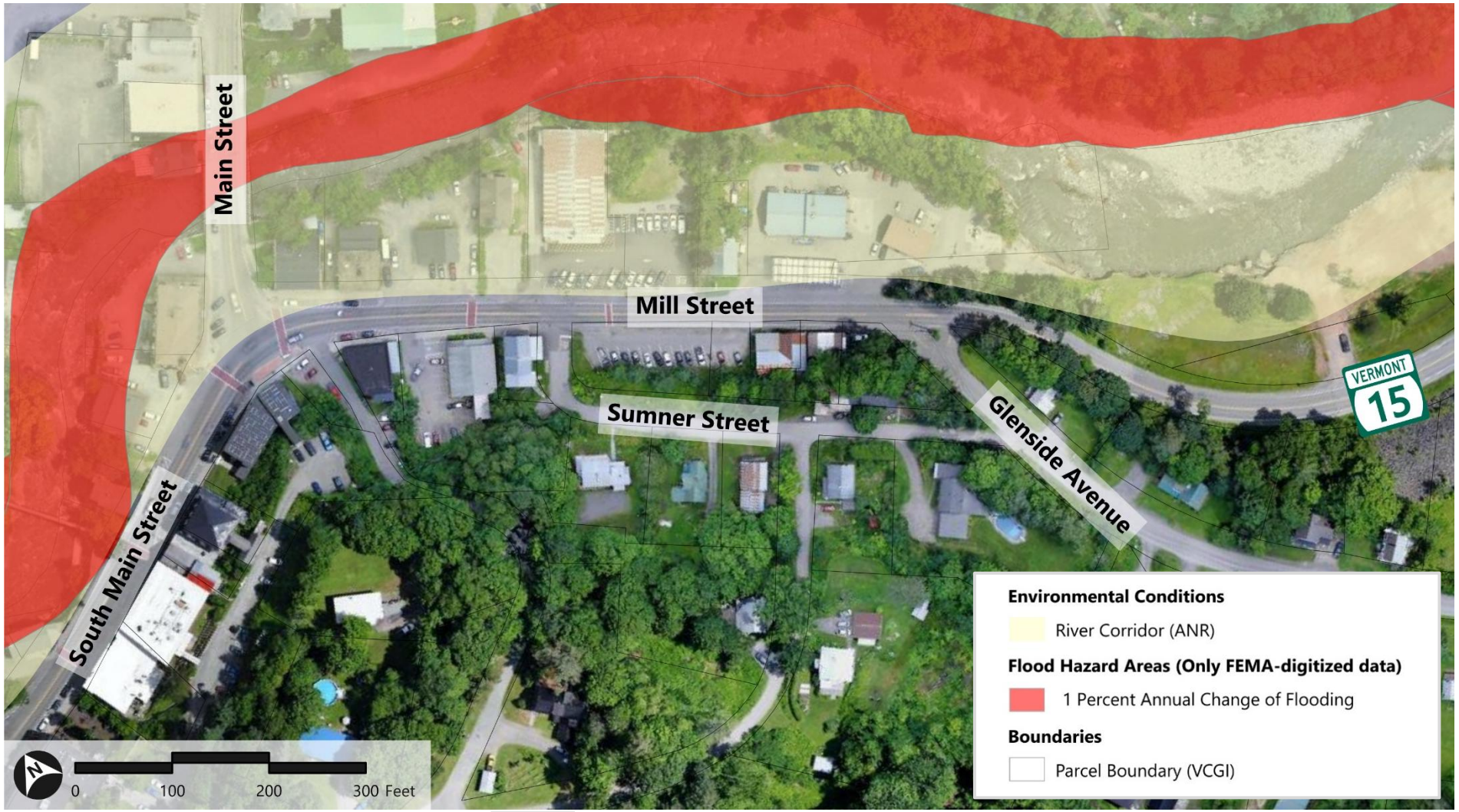
FEMA Buyout Property: FEMA buyout properties are those acquired with FEMA assistance for structure demolition or relocation projects. They must be dedicated and maintained in perpetuity as open space for the conservation of natural floodplain functions. Compatible open space uses include parks for outdoor recreational activities, wetlands management and natural reserves, cultivation, grazing, camping (with some safety-related exceptions) and unimproved, unpaved parking lots.

Just east of downtown Hardwick, a FEMA buyout property at the former Inn by the River presents an opportunity for redevelopment to a public natural area. Planning is underway to permanently stabilize the riverbank from Hay's Service Station through the FEMA buyout parcel. If permanent stabilization is implemented, and conversion to a natural area is advanced, the parcel could be an additional community asset to consider connection to.

Any change in land use of FEMA buyout properties must be approved through a formal review process and approved by FEMA. No new structures may be built, except:

- *Public buildings that are open on all sides and functionally related to a designated open space or recreational use*
- *Public restrooms.*
- *Structures that are compatible with open space, recreational or wetlands management use and applicable floodplain management policies and practices, and for which compatibility is confirmed in writing by the FEMA regional administrator before construction of the structures begins.*

Figure 12 Environmental Conditions



Archeologic Resources

An Archaeological Resources Assessment (ARA) was completed by VHB as part of this Scoping Study. The assessment identified one Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA) in the southeastern portion of the Study Area within the FEMA buyout parcel. Any future project impacts within this area should be reviewed for the potential to affect deeply stratified archaeological deposits. If project impacts extend beyond the area evaluated as shown in the full ARA provided in Appendix B, additional archaeological investigation will be required.

Historic, Section 106 and Section 4(f) Resources

VHB assessed above-ground historic resources within the project area to support project planning and future Section 106 review. Section 4(f) resources include publicly owned parks and recreation areas and properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Within the Study Area, 12 properties are listed in or recommended as eligible for listing in the National Register and therefore qualify as Section 4(f) resources. Peace Park at 34 South Main Street is a Section 4(f) park resource and, if converted to a public natural area, the FEMA buyout parcel at the eastern end of the Study Area may also be considered a Section 4(f) park resource. There are no wildlife or waterfowl refuges within the Study Area.

Potential effects from proposed sidewalk and pedestrian improvements in a village setting primarily relate to impacts to character-defining features, including building façades, front steps, storefronts, recessed entrances, and stone walls. A granite stone wall at the intersection of Mill Street and Glenside Avenue could be affected by intersection realignment however, if project impacts avoid disturbance, obstruction, or removal of the wall, the historic integrity of the wall would not be adversely affected. Other concerns noted in VHB's assessment of potential project impacts in the Study Area are temporary or permanent easements. Land incorporated into the project from historic or recreation properties through permanent easements or acquisitions would likely result in a Section 4(f) historic or park de minimis determination. Early coordination with VTrans Historic Preservation is recommended. Based on this initial assessment, no adverse effects under Section 106 are anticipated from the proposed pedestrian and multimodal improvements along South Main Street and Mill Street. The complete historic resources assessment is attached as Appendix C. Past Plans, Studies & Projects

Past Plans, Studies & Projects

The Study Area has been the subject of several previous studies and planning efforts. The Town has advanced and implemented past recommendations and continues to work toward the shared vision outlined in these efforts. Key past plans, studies, and related projects were reviewed to inform this study, with relevant information summarized below.

Hardwick Municipal Plan (2019)

The Municipal Plan establishes clear goals, policies, and implementation actions for the Town that directly support the purpose of this Study. The following elements are particularly applicable:

- Goal: Pedestrian and non-vehicular transportation networks should be safe and conveniently located to encourage their use.
- Policy: Hardwick should adopt a Complete Streets philosophy that includes universal design for accessibility.
- Policy: The town should continue planning for trailhead connections to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.
- Action and Recommendation for Implementation: The Select Board should continue to seek funding to improve and extend sidewalks.
- Action and Recommendation for Implementation: The town should encourage the provision of safe and convenient alternatives to automobile travel for local trips.

As part of the Municipal Plan development, a survey was administered in 2018 asking "what places would you improve?" Relevant responses cited in the 2019 Municipal Plan include:

- "I think the downtown streetscape could use some help. More coordinated plantings, lights and help to fix up some of the more derelict buildings."
- "Lots of room to improve the 'look' of downtown and to make it more pedestrian-friendly."

Recommendations from the Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Task Force (2024 Update)

In 2020, the Hardwick Planning Commission formed a Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Task Force. The Task Force developed recommendations, updated in 2024 and listed below:

- Repaint the crosswalks in a high visibility color.
- Install a speed sign before Hardwick Downtown (prior to the Glenside intersection).
- Install signage to direct cars to alternate parking.
- Stop, wait, and wave signs at the crosswalks.
- Install a crosswalk near the northern end of the bridge on Main Street (over the Lamoille River).
- Educate younger riders about sidewalk and crosswalk safety.

AARP Community Walk Audits (2021 and 2024)

In 2021, the Pedestrian and Traffic Study Task Force conducted AARP walkability audits of Mill Street and Main Street (from Holton Hill to Perry Lane). In 2024, an audit of South Main Street was also conducted. The audits identified issues including discontinuous and deteriorated sidewalks, insufficient separation from traffic, accessibility barriers due to slopes and uneven surfaces, limited bicycle accommodations, and gaps in pedestrian crossing treatments and signage.

The audits graded the walkability along Mill Street as "poor" and along South Main Street as "fair," with targeted sidewalk repairs, continuity improvements, access management, and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities identified as priority needs.

Kingdom Roads – Safer Spaces for Walking and Biking (2025)

The Kingdom Roads Plan, prepared by Local Motion, evaluated walking and biking priorities, existing conditions, and travel patterns of residents and visitors to identify opportunities for improvement and advancement of project areas in Hardwick, Craftsbury, Greensboro, and Barton Village. In Hardwick, the plan focused on traffic calming and pedestrian safety along Main Street (VT-15). The recommendations identified included a set of infrastructure improvements aimed at helping downtown Hardwick become safer and more accessible for all users. Recommended improvements included traditional and raised pedestrian crosswalks, curb extensions along the linear downtown corridor to improve pedestrian visibility and moderate vehicle speeds, and the installation of two radar speed feedback signs to support self-enforcement of the speed limit.

Vermont Rail Trail Wayfinding Project

The Vermont State Rail Trail Wayfinding Guidance was recently developed to provide a consistent, MUTCD-compliant approach to trail and off-route wayfinding that supports user orientation, safety, and connections to nearby community destinations. They have also recently established a Rail Trail Friendly Business (RTFB) program which recognizes, educates, and promotes local businesses that provide amenities and services to trail users. Several participating businesses are within downtown Hardwick and a related VTrans project is actively being advanced to install wayfinding signage at rail trail crossings near RTFBs, which includes the LVRT crossing just north of the Study Area.

Hardwick – LVRT Connector Loop Proposal (2022 and 2024)

Local Motion worked in collaboration with the Town of Hardwick to develop recommendations that would improve safe bicycle connectivity between the LVRT and downtown in anticipation of the completion of the LVRT in 2022. The recommendations from a 2022 report on the effort focused on potential treatments for Main Street between the pedestrian bridge and Hazen Union School, as well as Church Street, Highland Avenue, and Brush Street. Recommendations included bike lanes along Main Street north of the intersection with Mill Street and South Main Street and sharrows along South Main Street between the intersection and pedestrian bridge, among other recommendations for the loop segments.

A set of recommendations stemming from this effort were revised and updated by the Planning Commission in 2024, focused on elements for a USDA Community Facilities Grant. These recommendations, made to support LVRT and downtown connectivity, included:

- bike parking at the pause park next to the Memorial Park as an intercept for bicyclists to park their bikes and walk to downtown destinations,
- temporary signage on the LVRT and in the Downtown area directing bicyclists to downtown, bike parking, local businesses, and other destinations,
- bike racks in the Peace Park,
- bike racks or corrals near the Hardwick Inn.

VT-15 Paving STP PC23(1) (2022)

In 2022, VT-15 within the Study Area was resurfaced as part of the VT-15 Paving Project STP PC23(1). Work consisted of milling the existing pavement to a 2" depth, then placing a 1/2" lift of Type IVS pavement to level the road surface, followed but a 1-1/2" lift of Type IVS pavement as the final wearing surface. The project also included replacing sidewalk ramps and pedestrian crossing infrastructure, and painting bicycle shared lane markings.

Public Outreach

The public outreach process for this study included multiple points of engagement throughout the project timeline over which more than 70 residents, business owners, and stakeholders provided input through meetings, discussion, and follow-up feedback. The engagement process followed the project schedule approved at the outset, including alternatives development, public review, and refinement phases. Three public meetings were held, followed by a brief presentation to the Hardwick Selectboard. Public meeting materials are included in Appendix D. Meeting materials and Hardwick Community TV (HCTV) recordings are also available on the Town website.

Local Concerns Meeting

A Local Concerns Meeting was held on August 13th, 2025 to introduce the project and gather input from community members. The meeting included a presentation which summarized the scoping process, project goals and existing conditions assessed to date followed by an open discussion to gather community perspectives, identify issues and opportunities, and respond to questions.

Community feedback included concerns regarding vehicle speeds through the corridor, visibility constraints at the eastern gateway, worn and low-visibility pedestrian crossings with inconsistent driver yielding, sidewalk disrepair, and gaps in pedestrian connectivity.

Conceptual Alternatives Presentation

An Alternatives Presentation Meeting was held on November 5th, 2025 to present the conceptual alternatives developed for the Study Area. The presentation outlined the three alternatives, highlighting differences in connectivity, design intent, implementation feasibility, and tradeoffs or impacts. A facilitated discussion followed to gather community feedback and identify preferences to inform selection and refinement of a preferred alternative. The primary takeaways from the discussion helped to shape the preferred alternative and included:

- The primary corridor treatments, pedestrian crossings improvements, and gateway treatments presented in Alternative 2 were supported for near-term, priority implementation.
- Longer-term phasing was favored for the Glenside Avenue intersection improvements and the proposed pedestrian path to the FEMA buyout parcel from Alternative 3.
- The concept of dead-ending Sumner Street to complete the accessible sidewalk connection on the southside of Mill Street was not supported.
- A strong desire to not lose any more parking spaces than necessary and increase the utility of existing public parking was shared.
- An extended sidewalk connection up Glenside Avenue was desired.

Though not advanced, it is noteworthy that community discussed opportunities that would make dead-ending Sumner Street to complete the southside sidewalk connection on Mill Street more palatable to the project stakeholders. One idea in particular was discussed that would connect Sumner Street through to Perry Lane Hill instead of turning down towards Mill Street. This concept would require land acquisition from the Post Office parcel and was ultimately determined to be outside of the scope of this effort, however, should the opportunity to develop a new road connection between Sumner Street and Perry Lane Hill, the concept of dead-ending Sumner Street at Mill Street may be revisited.

Final Public Meeting

A Final Public Meeting was held on January 7th, 2026 to present refinements to the conceptual alternatives, receive final community input for incorporation into the Scoping Report, discuss implementation considerations and any remaining refinements, and outline the final steps in the scoping process.

Selectboard Meeting

This text will be updated after the final Selectboard Meeting occurs.

Conceptual Alternatives

Following the review of existing Study Area conditions and preliminary public engagement, three conceptual alternatives were developed. These alternatives represent increasing levels of intervention to address needs identified along the corridor. The alternatives are presented below with key features summarized in the Alternatives Development section and evaluation of the conceptual alternatives summarized in evaluation matrices in the Alternatives Evaluation section.

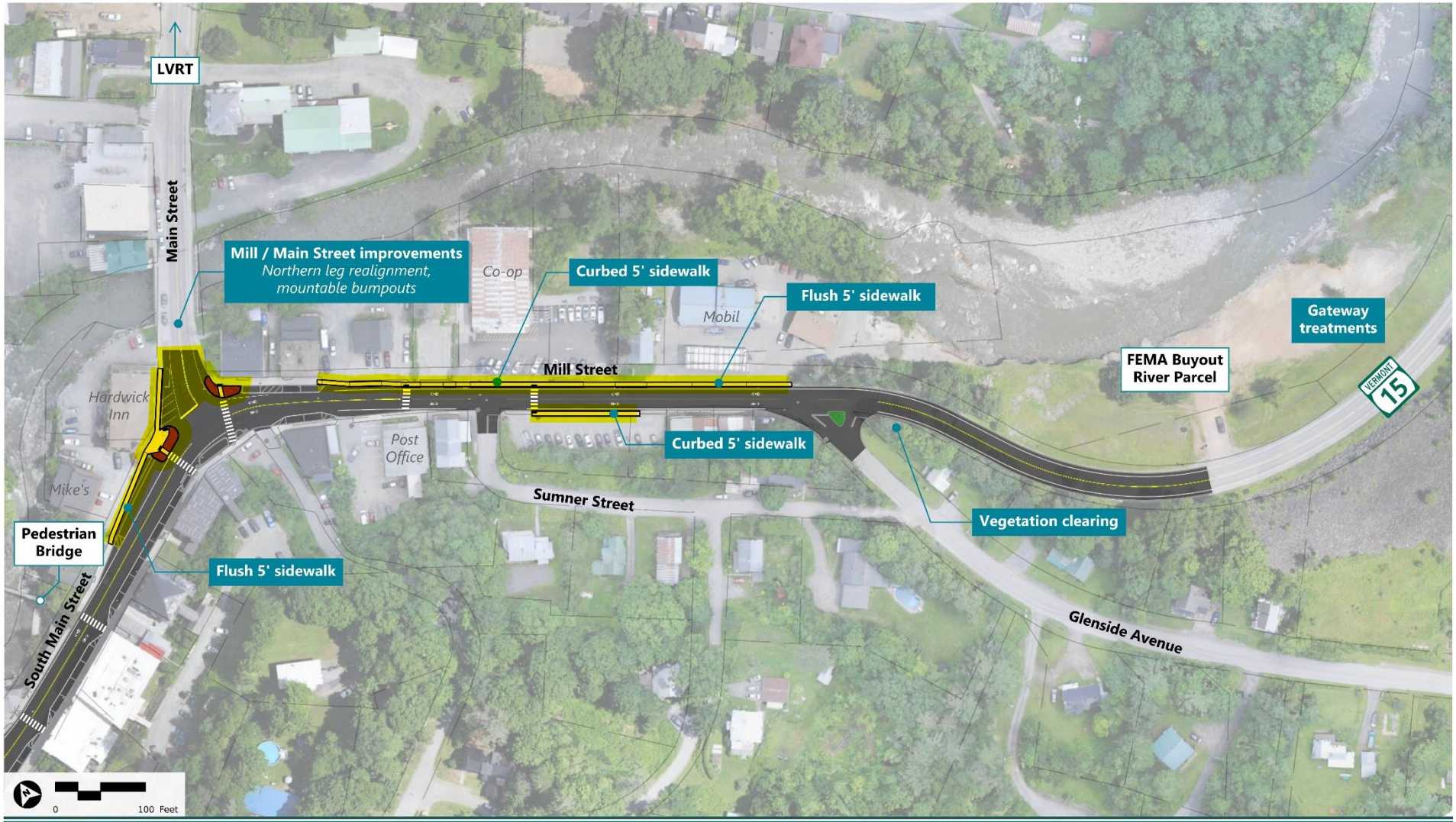
Alternatives Development

The design approach, goals, and summary of the conceptual alternatives are presented with high level layouts included in the pages below and in greater detail in Appendix E. Detailed treatments for each alternative are annotated in the conceptual plans included in the Appendix. Because each alternative builds on the previous one, Alternative 1 is described in greater detail, with subsequent alternatives summarized by highlighting key differences. Cost estimates presented are planning-level and are inclusive of design and construction.

Table 1 Conceptual Alternatives - Summary

Alternative		Description
0	No Build	No action taken. The Study Area remains in its existing condition, serving as a baseline for comparison.
1	Baseline Treatment Package	Baseline pedestrian connectivity and safety improvements, including a new sidewalk on the north side of Mill Street, replacement of degraded sidewalk segments, minor intersection realignment and curb extension at Mill/Main Street, and miscellaneous gateway treatments.
2	Moderate Treatment Package	Builds on Alternative 1 with all baseline treatments plus expanded intersection treatments at the Mill/Main Street intersection including a north leg sidewalk, a larger bump out extension, relocation of the Post Office driveway, a southside curbline at the eastern gateway, and moderate realignment at the Glenside Avenue intersection.
3	Comprehensive Treatment Package	Builds on Alternatives 1 and 2 and advances a continuous sidewalk on both sides of Mill Street to Glenside Avenue, plus a major realignment of the Glenside Avenue intersection, dead-ending Sumner Street, and a new pedestrian path to the FEMA buyout River Parcel.

Figure 13 Alternative 1 – Baseline Treatment Package



Hardwick Downtown Scoping Study

Alternative 1: Baseline Treatments

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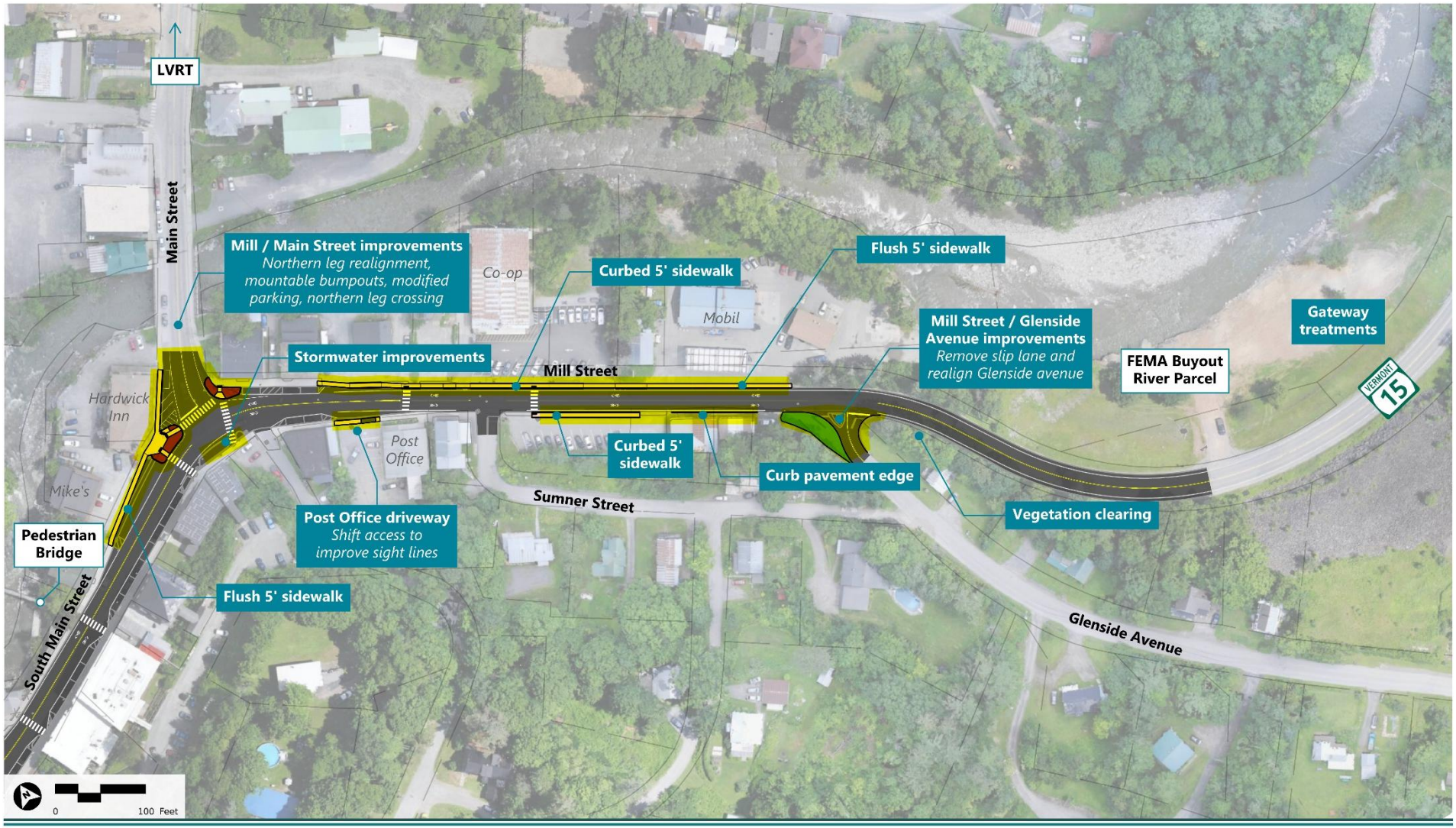
Figure 14 Alternative 2 – Moderate Treatment Package

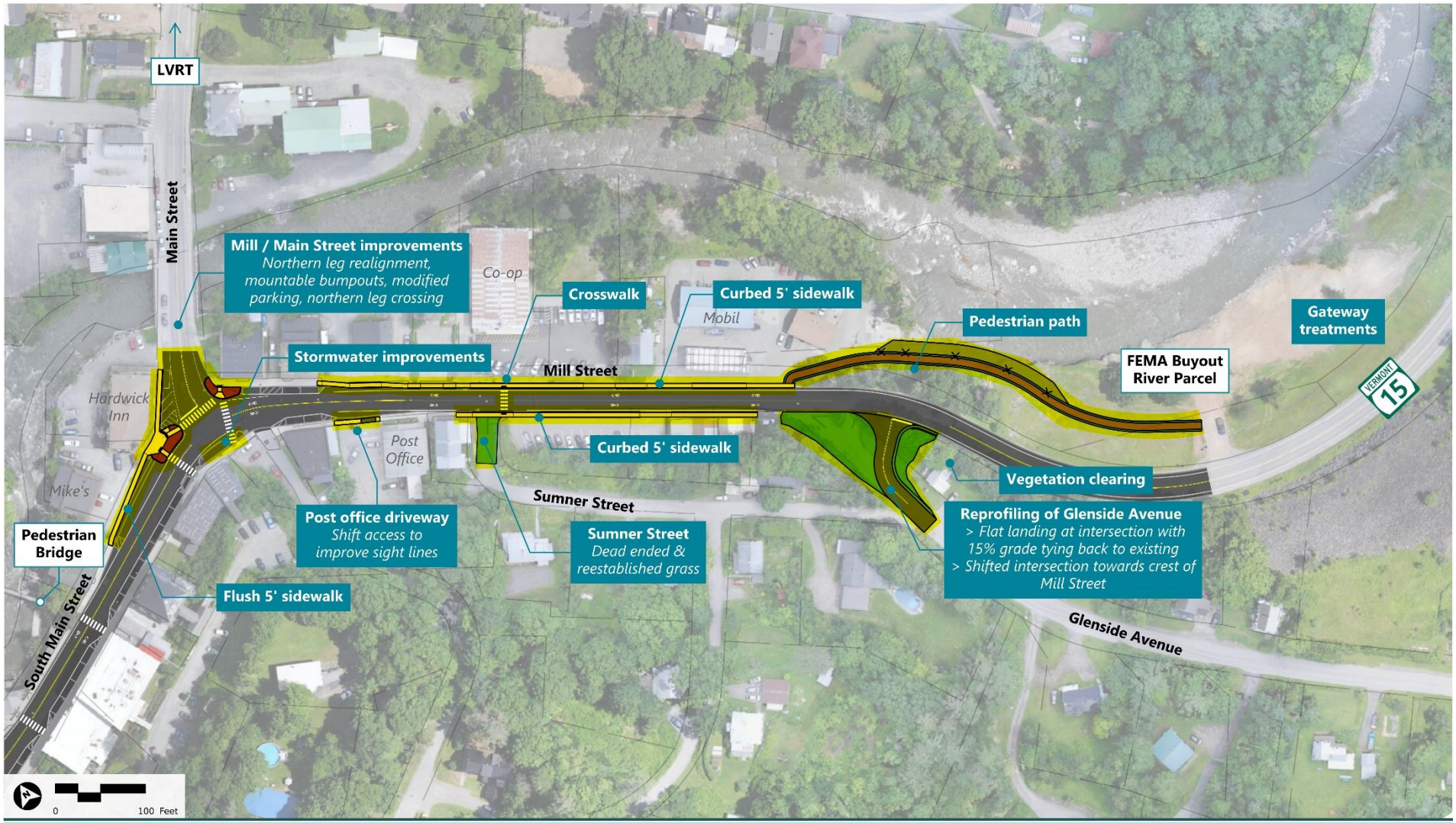


Hardwick Downtown Scoping Study

Alternative 2: Moderate Treatments

10/20/2025

Figure 15 Alternative 3 – Comprehensive Treatment Package



Hardwick Downtown Scoping Study

Alternative 3: Comprehensive Treatments

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10/20/2025

Alternative 1 – Baseline Treatment Package

Alternative 1 focused on closing key pedestrian gaps, improving corridor access management, and bringing sidewalks and crossings to a standard condition. The alternative proposes extending bump-outs at the Mill Street and Main Street intersection and a minor realignment of Main Street, achieved through restriping, to meet Mill Street at a more perpendicular angle. The bump-outs serve to effectively shorten the crossings for pedestrians and further define the approaches for vehicles in the intersection. The bump-outs are intended to address pedestrian crashes at this location where an operator maneuvered around a vehicle already stopped for a pedestrian in the crosswalk and hit the pedestrian in the crosswalk.

Gateway treatments are recommended at corridor transition areas to reinforce a defined downtown center. These elements include a planted tree line along the eastern approach to calm traffic through visual roadway narrowing, vegetation clearing at the Glenside Avenue intersection to improve sight lines, and more prominent Town of Hardwick welcome signage. Additional gateway treatments for those arriving by bicycle include designated bicycle landing areas near Memorial Park, Peace Park, and the Hardwick Inn.

Sidewalk treatments include a new 5-foot-wide curbed sidewalk along the north side of Mill Street with modifications to driveway delineations that are consistent with access management best practices. A flush 5-foot sidewalk is proposed across Mike's driveway while retaining space for truck loading and unloading between the sidewalk and the travel way. Existing curbed sidewalk in poor condition on the south side of Mill Street in front of the public parking area and in front of the Hardwick Inn would be replaced. Pedestrian crossings would be upgraded to meet standards, including formalizing the existing crosswalk between Buffalo Mountain Market Co-op and the public parking area, and adding advance warning signage and gate-posted crossing signs where missing.

This alternative represents a set of treatments that address core safety and accessibility needs while minimizing impacts and would cost approximately $500,000 in present day value (PDV). The typical cross section for this alternative retains existing 11-foot lane and 2-foot shoulder width and increases the coverage of curbed 5-foot sidewalks along the corridor. Bicycle safety and mobility would be somewhat improved via repainting existing bicycle shared lane marking and establishing the above-mentioned landing areas. Probable impacts and permitting requirements would be relatively minimal for this alternative as all work proposed falls within existing areas of sidewalk or pavement coverage. Utility impacts are expected for 1 stormwater structure at the Mill and Main Street intersection, and potentially a hydrant and light pole near the Co-op road frontage depending on the final sidewalk layout identified in design. The evaluation of this alternative is further detailed in the evaluation matrices below.

Alternative 2 – Moderate Treatment Package

Alternative 2 builds on Alternative 1 by expanding treatments at the Mill Street and Main Street intersection, adjusting the Glenside Avenue intersection, introducing improvements at the Post Office driveway, and establishing a distinct edge of travel way between the public parking lot and Glenside Avenue.

At the Mill and Main Street intersection, recommendations include expanded curb extensions in front of the Hardwick Inn, providing shortened crossing distances and traffic calming effects while still meeting truck turning geometry requirements. The bump-outs would similarly provide clear delineation on vehicle approaches to the intersection and crosswalk, addressing safety issues at this location. The northwestern bump out would include a tip down to a newly established accessible parking space and access to a new marked crosswalk across the north leg of the intersection. Parking modifications are also recommended to increase the parking angle to further define the travel way and minimize conflicts for vehicles backing out of spaces into the southbound travel lane of Main Street in close proximity to the intersection.

In this alternative existing stormwater drainage deficiencies on the south side of the Mill and Main Street intersection are recommended to be addressed. Recommendations include modifications to the existing gutters between the south-side curb extensions and sidewalk, minor pavement regrading to eliminate low points, and adjustments to drainage structure elevations as needed to restore the intended function of the localized drainage system.

A recommendation to shift the Post Office driveway farther from the Mill Street and Main Street intersection would improve sight lines and extend space between driveway turning movements and existing on-street parking.

Along Mill Street in the east segment of the corridor, curb is proposed along the south edge of pavement between the public parking lot and Glenside Avenue. The curb line serves to visually narrow the roadway and define the edge of travel way, reinforcing the downtown context especially for vehicles entering the corridor from the east.

The most significant addition in Alternative 2 is the proposed removal of the slip lane and realignment of the Glenside Avenue intersection with Mill Street to a defined T-configuration. This change is the primary driver of increased effort and cost, with an estimated incremental increase of approximately $100,000 (PDV). The added cost reflects slip lane removal, full-depth pavement reconstruction to replace the existing splitter island, relocation of utilities within the splitter island area, milling and overlay of existing intersection pavement, cutting back vegetation, and potential minor drainage modifications to ensure overland flow functions maintains intended paths to the appropriate drainage structures. This intersection treatment is intended to reduce complexity of the intersection operations and produce a minor improvement to sight lines.

Other treatments contemplated in Alternative 2 remain consistent with Alternative 1. Overall, this alternative would improve pedestrian safety and mobility and provide additional driver safety and operational benefits compared to Alternative 1. Corridor impacts are largely similar, with added work concentrated at the Glenside Avenue intersection. While not substantially different from Alternative 1, this alternative extends the scope of corridor improvements through a moderate level of intervention. The evaluation of this alternative is further detailed in the evaluation matrices below.

Alternative 3 – Comprehensive Treatment Package

Alternative 3 presents the most comprehensive build-out for the Study Area and incorporates the elements of Alternative 2 with the addition of a continuous southside sidewalk along Mill Street, a full realignment and reprofiling of the Glenside Avenue intersection, and a new pedestrian path to the FEMA buyout parcel.

Under this alternative, the southside sidewalk becomes fully continuous through the corridor, achieved via dead-ending Sumner Street. This would allow construction of the sidewalk segment across Sumner Street, a treatment that is not feasible while retaining Sumner Street's access point to Mill Street due to the steep approach grade. This adaptation would allow consolidation of the two existing crosswalks near the Post Office and the Buffalo Mountain Market Co-op into a single crossing at Sumner Street. The two existing crossings are spaced closer than the recommended 200-foot minimum for midblock crossings. Limiting the number of closely spaced midblock crossing locations is recommended to improve driver compliance, which can be reduced when midblock crossings are oversaturated.

In this alternative, the Glenside Avenue intersection is recommended to be fully realigned and reprofiled, representing the most substantial intervention among the alternatives. The work would shift the intersection east to meet VT-15 near the crest of the vertical curve and include associated earthwork and reprofiling, retaining wall construction to support the new alignment, removal of a significant portion of the existing intersection geometry, full-depth reconstruction, excavation, and clearing and grubbing. This realignment would require significant right-of-way acquisition on the southeast corner. This treatment advances a full set of intersection improvements, improving safety and operational performance. The required work is substantial and estimated to cost approximately $450,000 (PDV).

A new gravel-surface pedestrian path is proposed to connect the corridor to the FEMA buyout parcel at the east end of the study corridor. The path would be contingent on compatibility of this connection with the plans in development for the parcel. The estimated cost is approximately $160,000 for path and fence construction, excluding the bank armoring that would be required and advanced through the parcel's floodplain restoration and adaptive reuse initiative.

The total estimated cost for Alternative 3 is approximately $1.2 million (PDV). While this alternative provides the greatest improvements to community character, safety, and multimodal connectivity, it also carries the highest cost and level of impact. Key considerations include right-of-way acquisition at the Glenside Avenue intersection and potential for environmental, natural resource, floodplain, and archaeological impacts associated with the proposed path to the FEMA buyout parcel. The evaluation of this alternative is further detailed in the evaluation matrices below.

Alternatives Evaluation

The alternatives presented above, including the No Build Alternative, were evaluated comparatively based on a range of criteria, including impacts to the community, satisfying the purpose and need, engineering and safety considerations, resource impacts, and permitting needs. The summary of evaluation and detailed evaluation matrices are presented below.

Alternatives Evaluation Summary

Table 2 provides a high-level evaluation of the alternatives. The "+" and "-" indicate comparative outcomes for the given criteria, reflecting either greater improvement ("+" or "++") or greater adverse impacts ("-" or "--").

Table 2 Alternatives Evaluation Summary

	No Build	**Alternative 1** Baseline Treatment Package	**Alternative 2** Moderate Treatment Package	**Alternative 3** Comprehensive Treatment Package
Traffic Operations	*No Change*	+	+	++
Safety		+	++	++
Satisfies Purpose & Need		+	+	+
Utility Impacts		-	-	--
ROW Impacts		*Not Expected*	-	--
Resource Impacts		*Typical & Not Significant*		-
Permitting Needs		*Typical & Not Significant*		-

At a high level, Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 progressively improve operations and safety outcomes, addressing the needs identified for the project in progressively more impactful ways. The tradeoffs for the progressively more comprehensive improvements along the corridor are impacts to utilities, right-of-way, resources, and necessary permitting. These categories of metrics are detailed further in the evaluation matrices included below.

Cost and Community Impacts

The first set of metrics by which the alternatives were evaluated included conceptual cost estimates, community impacts, and satisfying the purpose and need. These metrics are detailed in Table 3.

Table 3 Local & Regional Impacts

		No Build	**Alternative 1** Baseline Treatment Package	**Alternative 2** Moderate Treatment Package	**Alternative 3** Comprehensive Treatment Package
Local & Regional Impacts	Anticipated Cost (PDV)	$0	$500,000	$600,000	$1,200,000
	Aesthetics	No change	Improved	Improved	Improved
	Community Character	No change	Improved	Improved	Significantly Improved
	Economic Impacts	No change	Minor	Minor	Minor
	Conformance to Regional Plan	No change	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Satisfies Purpose & Need	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Engineering & Safety

Metrics related to engineering and safety considerations were included in Table 4. Specifically, the evaluation considered the facility cross section geometry and safety and mobility improvements for bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular modes.

Table 4 Engineering & Safety

		No Build	**Alternative 1** Baseline Treatment Package	**Alternative 2** Moderate Treatment Package	**Alternative 3** Comprehensive Treatment Package
Engineering & Safety	Typical Facility Dimensions	11' lanes, variable shoulder and inconsistent sidewalk	11' lanes, 2' shoulder, curbed 5' sidewalk	11' lanes, 2' shoulder, curbed 5' sidewalk	11' lanes, 2' shoulder, curbed 5' sidewalk
	Bicycle Safety and Mobility	-	**Somewhat Improved** *Bike landing areas, repainted sharrows*	**Somewhat Improved** *Bike landing areas, repainted sharrows*	**Somewhat Improved** *Bike landing areas, repainted sharrows*
	Pedestrian Safety and Mobility	-	**Improved** *Northern sidewalk continuity, formalize existing Co-op crosswalk, bump outs shorten crossings and limit potential conflict points*	**Improved** *Northern sidewalk continuity, formalize existing Co-op crosswalk, Main St crossing, bump outs shorten crossings and limit potential conflict points*	**Improved** *Northern and southern sidewalk continuity, crossings consolidated, bump outs shorten crossings and limit potential conflict points*
	Vehicular Safety and Mobility	-	**Somewhat Improved** *Main St realignment, bump outs, gateway treatments*	**Improved** *Main St realignment, bump outs, gateway treatments, Glenside Ave moderate layout change*	**Improved** *Main St realignment, bump outs, gateway treatments, Glenside Ave significant layout change*

Resource Impacts

Evaluation of resources along the corridor that may be impacted as part of the project were considered and detailed in Table 5. Of importance within this context are the potential impacts to right-of-way, historical resources, archaeologically sensitive areas, floodplains, hazardous materials, Section 4(f) resources, utilities, and changes to impervious surfaces.

Minor or major realignment of the Glenside Avenue intersection in Alternatives 2 and 3 would likely require temporary easements or permanent right-of-way, respectively. Review of potential impacts to Section 106 and Section 4(f) resources will be required during design and is recommended to be done in close coordination with VTrans Historic Preservation. The design process should take care to minimize or avoid easements from historic or recreation properties and maintain historic integrity of elements, like avoiding disturbance, obstruction or removal of the granite stone wall at the Glenside Avenue intersection. Review of three parcels with potential hazardous materials should be examined further in design across any of the three Alternatives. Additionally, it is anticipated that each alternative will have some impact to utilities, particularly considerations for stormwater structures, a fire hydrant, and a light pole, with additional considerations for Alternative 2 requiring utility pole relocation.

Table 5 Resource Impacts

		No Build	**Alternative 1** Baseline Treatment Package	**Alternative 2** Moderate Treatment Package	**Alternative 3** Comprehensive Treatment Package
Resource Impacts	Right-of-Way (ROW)	-	None Expected	Potential Temporary Easements	Significant
	Historic Resources	-	None Expected	Potential	Potential
	Archaeological	-	No	No	Yes
	Agricultural Lands	-	No	No	No
	Floodplains	-	No	No	Yes
	Hazardous Materials	-	Potential	Potential	Potential
	Fish & Wildlife	-	No	No	No
	Rare, Threatened & Endangered	-	No	No	No
	Public Lands - Sect. 4(f)	-	Maybe - Likely de minimis determination	Maybe - Likely de minimis determination	Yes - Likely de minimis determination
	LWCF - Sect. 6(f)	-	No	No	No
	Managed Lands	-	No	No	No
	Utilities	-	1 stormwater structure, potential hydrant, potential light pole	1 stormwater structure, potential hydrant, potential light pole, utility pole relocation	2 stormwater structures, potential hydrant, potential light pole
	Wetlands	-	No	No	No
	Impervious Surfaces	-	No Change	Minor Change	Minor Change

Permitting

The required permitting for each of the alternatives was considered as presented in Table 6. In this built environment context, where the majority of the work will be in previously disturbed and developed areas, the permitting for each of the alternatives is anticipated to be minimal. Assuming the town will progress the project, a Section 1111 permit is likely to be required in coordination with VTrans. Depending on the area of disturbance, a construction phase stormwater permit may be required for Alternatives 2 or 3 and should be examined further in early design phases. Should the town pursue the path into the FEMA buyout parcel, consideration for stream alteration permits and floodplain zoning permits should be examined in design.

Table 6 Permitting

		No Build	**Alternative 1** Baseline Treatment Package	**Alternative 2** Moderate Treatment Package	**Alternative 3** Comprehensive Treatment Package
Permitting	Act 250	-	No	No	No
	Section 404 - Wetlands (USCOE)	-	No	No	No
	Section 401 Water Quality Certification	-	No	No	No
	State Wetlands Permit	-	No	No	No
	Stream Alteration Permit	-	No	No	Potentially
	Construction Phase Storm Water Discharge	-	No	Potentially	Potentially
	Operational Phase Storm Water Discharge	-	No	No	No
	Lakes & Ponds	-	No	No	No
	Town of Hardwick Floodplain Zoning Permit	-	No	No	Yes
	Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species	-	No	No	No
	Section 1111 Permit	-	Yes	Yes	Yes

Preferred Alternative

Based on input from the public, representatives from the Town of Hardwick, local stakeholders, and findings from the alternatives evaluation, Alternative 3 was refined into the Preferred Alternative presented below. The complete conceptual layout for the Preferred Alternative is provided on the following pages.

Refinement Process

The Preferred Alternative was refined based on community input for Alternative 3, with specific changes incorporated as follows:

- Primary corridor sidewalk treatments, pedestrian crossings, and gateway treatments advanced.
- Mill and Main Street intersection improvements advanced.
- Glenside Avenue intersection reprofiling and realignment advanced as a long-term phase, with the addition of sidewalk connection extending up Glenside Avenue and an opportunity for onsite stormwater treatment.
- Path to FEMA buyout parcel advanced as a long-term phase.
- The Sumner Street dead-ending concept removed along with the associated sidewalk segment across Sumner Street and the consolidated crosswalk concept. Instead, the easternmost crossing is recommended to be formalized and shifted east to meet midblock crossing spacing standards.
- One new parking space established on the northside of Mill Street, with addition of parking wayfinding to improve utilization of existing public parking.
- Additional traffic calming elements recommended for the transition from state highway to Mill Street, including transverse markings ahead of the eastern gateway and relocating the vehicle speed feedback sign to the east of the Glenside Avenue intersection. Transverse markings are recommended for westbound VT-15 along the state highway as detailed in Section 3B-28 of the MUTCD and would require coordination with VTrans.

Implementation Plan

The Preferred Alternative was recommended to be implemented through a phased approach, allowing the Town to advance improvements incrementally as funding becomes available. This strategy provides flexibility to align construction with funding opportunities and project readiness and reflects an approach successfully used by other Vermont communities.

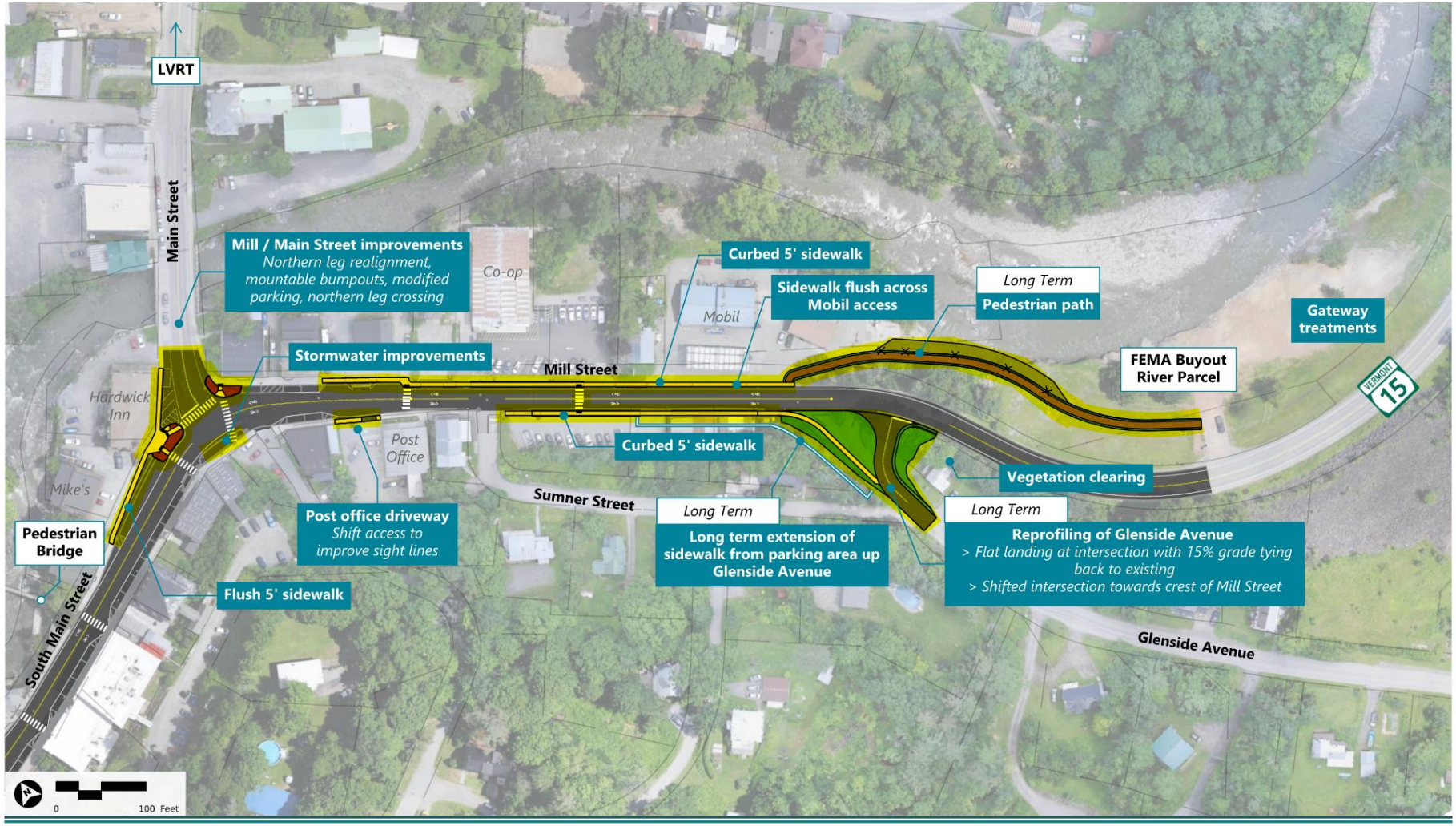
In the conceptual layouts included below, long-term elements are labeled as such, while all other elements are assumed to be included as part of near-term improvements. The following cost estimates are provided in present day value (PDV), inclusive of design and construction and in future terms accounting for anticipated inflation at 4% per year. The proposed phases of implementation are as follows:

Near-Term: Corridor Improvements | $830,000 PDV, $1,100,000 in 2031

Long-Term: Mill Street / Glenside Avenue Intersection Improvements | $610,000 PDV, $950,000 in 2036

Long-Term: Path to FEMA Parcel | $210,000 PDV, $350,000 in 2036

Figure 16 Preferred Alternative (Sheet 1 of 6)



Hardwick Downtown Scoping Study

Preferred Alternative: Comprehensive Treatments

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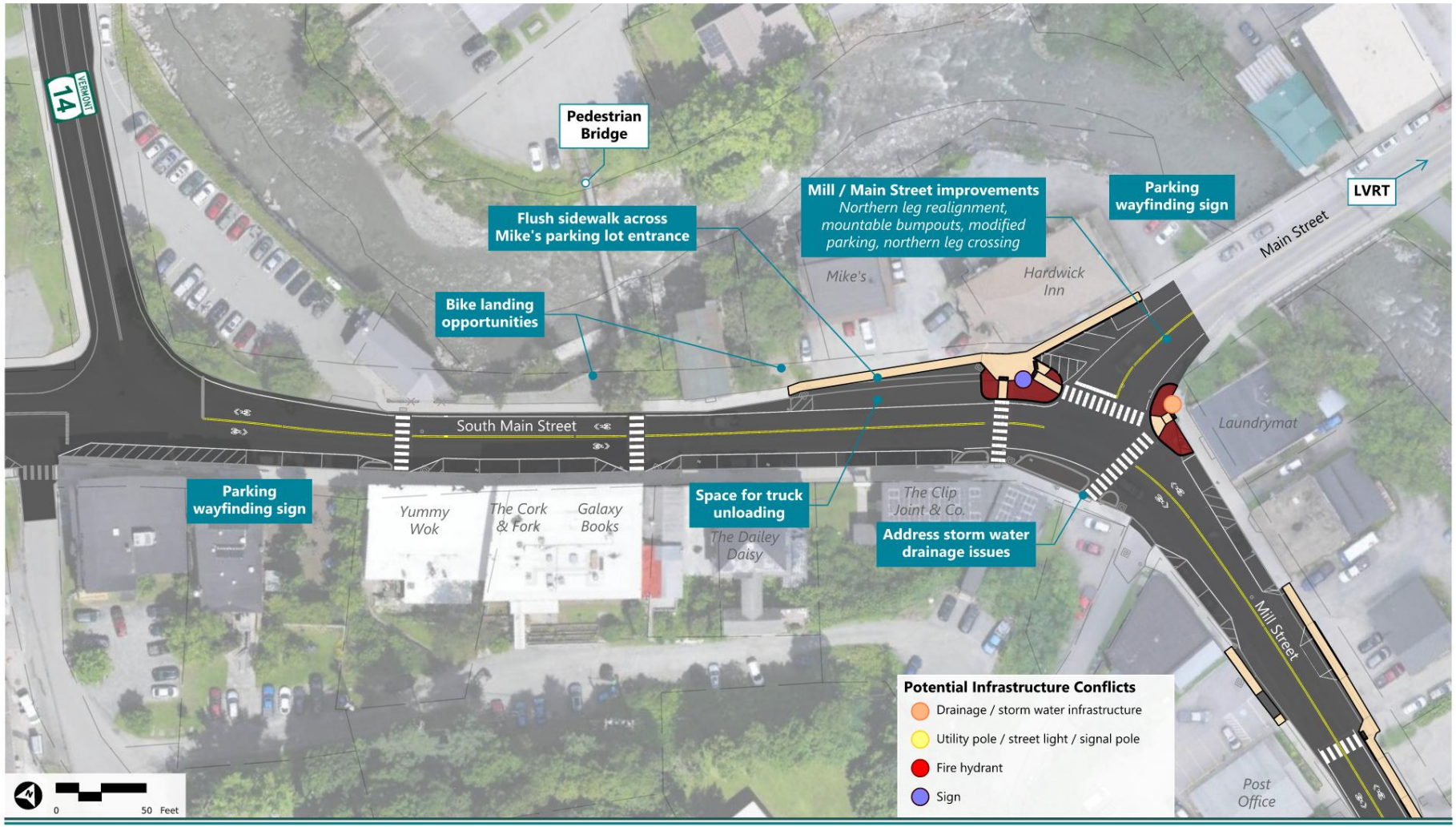
Figure 17 Preferred Alternative (Sheet 2 of 6)



Hardwick Downtown Scoping Study

Preferred Alternative: Comprehensive Treatments

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Figure 18 Preferred Alternative (Sheet 3 of 6)

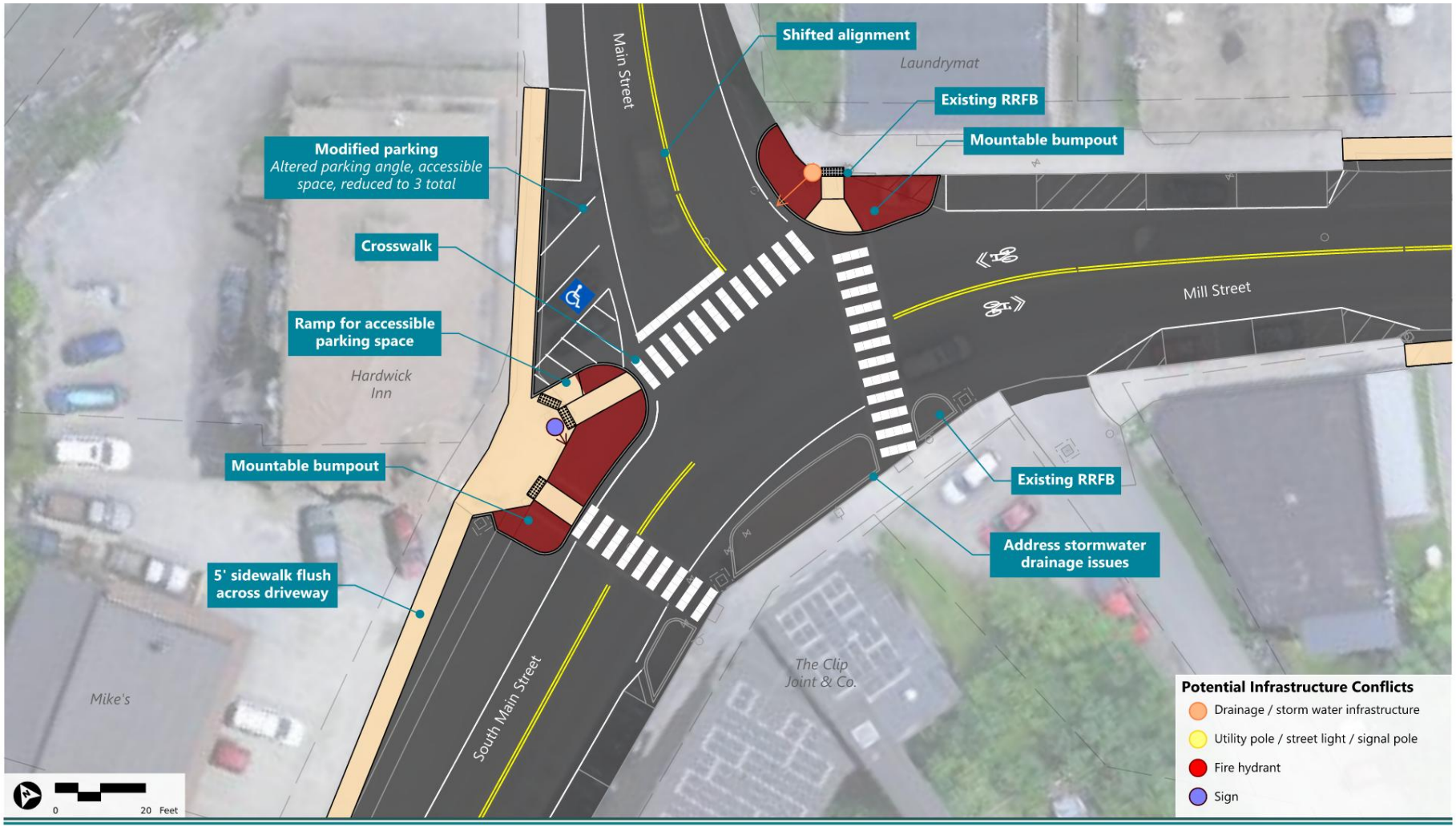
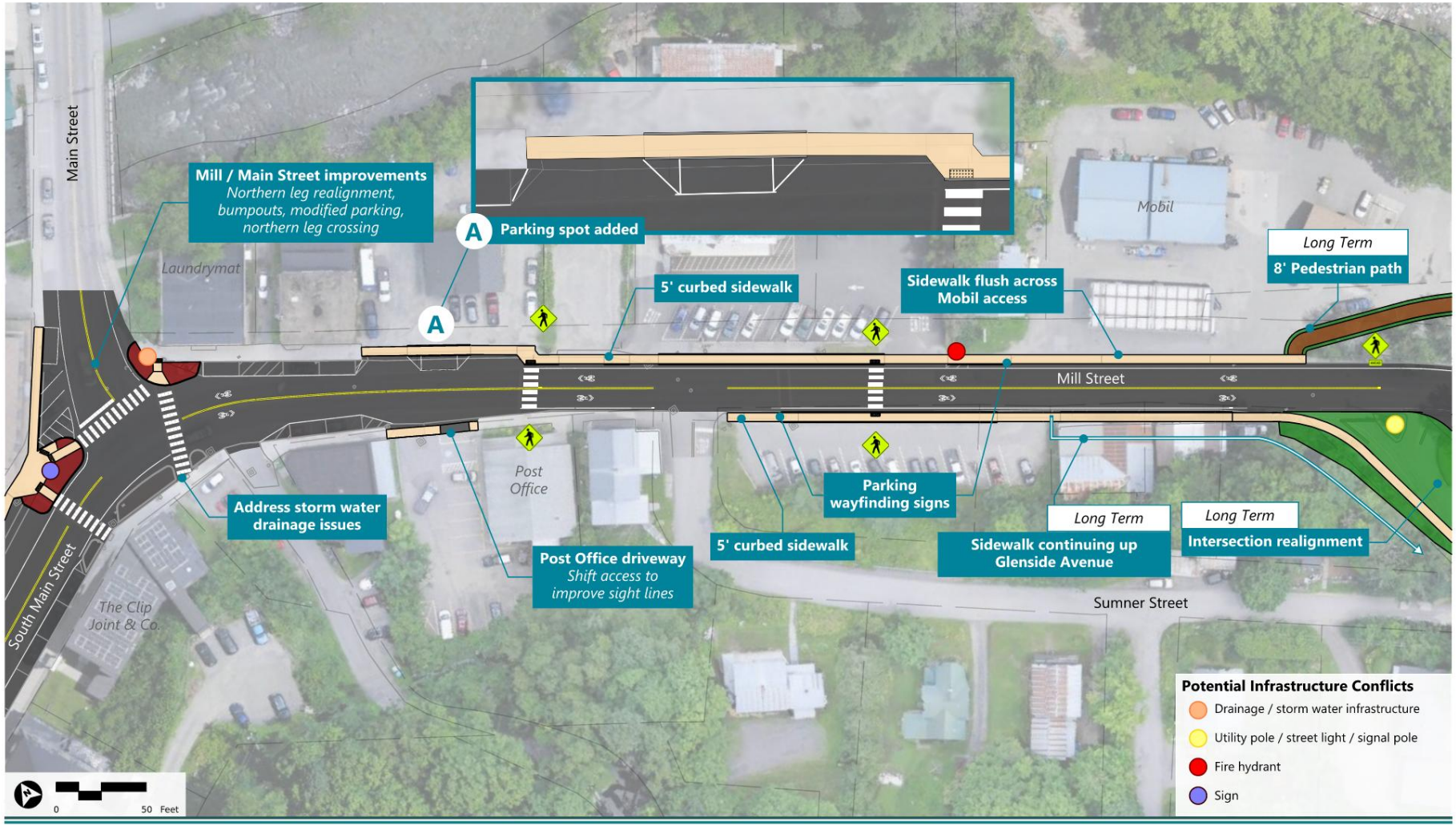


Figure 19 Preferred Alternative (Sheet 4 of 6)



Hardwick Downtown Scoping Study

Preferred Alternative: Comprehensive Treatments

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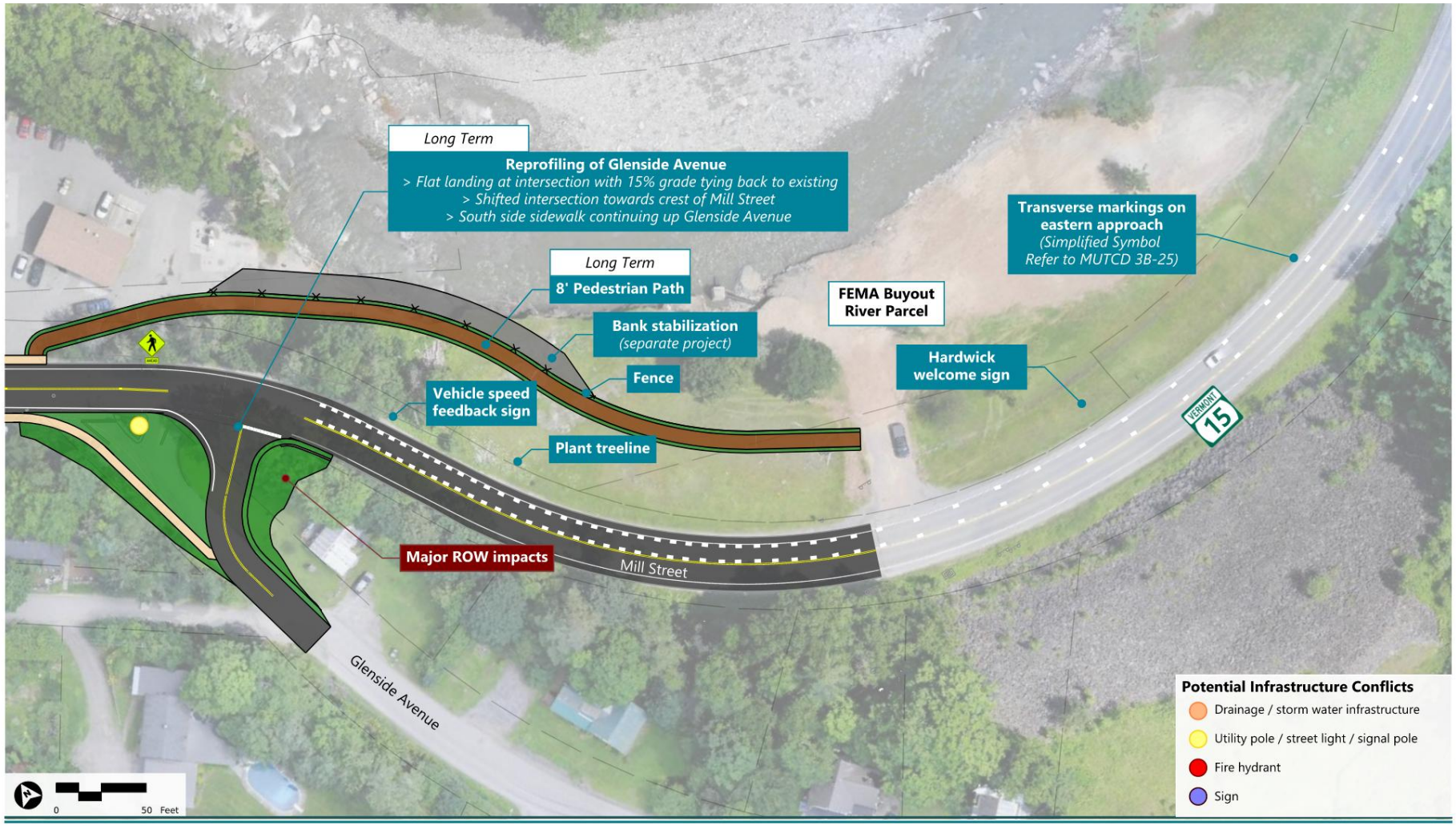
Figure 20 Preferred Alternative (Sheet 5 of 6)



Hardwick Downtown Scoping Study

Preferred Alternative: Comprehensive Treatments

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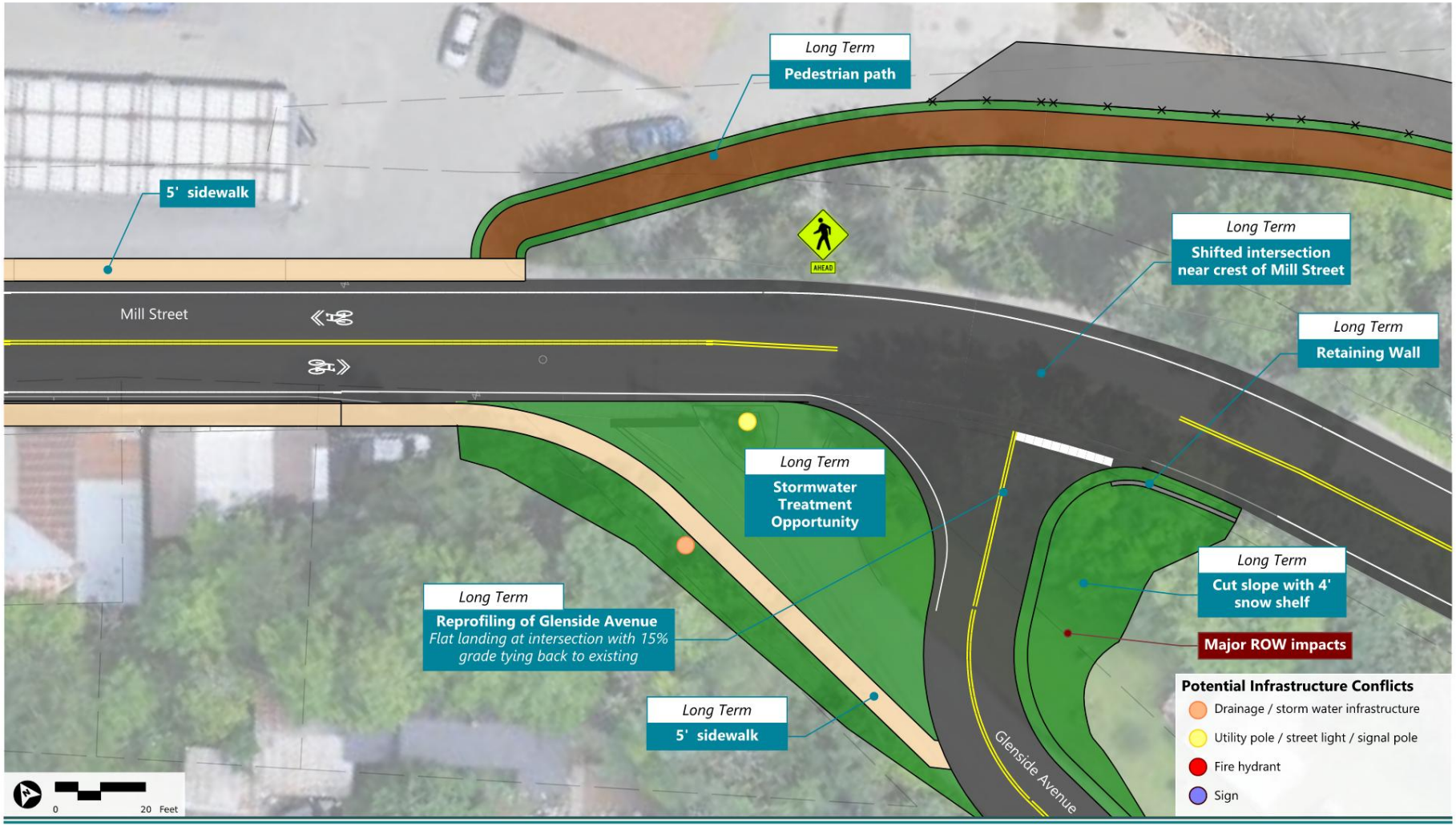
Figure 21 Preferred Alternative (Sheet 6 of 6)



Preferred Alternative Crosswalk Treatments

Crosswalks were examined to identify treatments that achieve visibility, durability, and pedestrian safety consistent with current best practices and applicable standards, including guidance from Vermont Agency of Transportation Pedestrian Crossing Treatment Guidelines and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

The Preferred Alternative assumes high-visibility crosswalk treatments, with white longitudinal bar markings as the typical application. Supporting elements include gate-posted pedestrian signs, advance warning signage, improved street lighting, reflective elements on sign posts, and selective use of in-street pedestrian signs where appropriate. Accessible curb ramps, appropriate level landings, and truncated domes will be included at reconstructed or new crossings.

The corridor treatments advanced through the Preferred Alternative, including traffic calming elements and curbed sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, are anticipated to work together to reinforce the village context and increase driver awareness and anticipation of pedestrian crossings.

Future Consideration: Stormwater Treatment Opportunity

Based on the proposed realignment of the Glenside Avenue intersection, a new green space would be established that could accommodate future stormwater treatment. This opportunity was reviewed during development of the Preferred Alternative and recommended to be considered in coordination with long-term Glenside Avenue intersection improvements. This treatment is not included in the cost estimates previously presented and was only preliminarily investigated as a future consideration.

Based on the initial review of the potential treatment area, possible options for stormwater treatment include a gravel wetland, or set of subsurface infiltration chambers. The specific practice will depend on the quality of the underlying soils for infiltration of stormwater. While the steep grades in the area are a design constraint, the proposed location could potentially treat anywhere from a localized 0.1-acre area of new impervious, to the full 1.5-acre upstream area of Glenside Avenue. Treatment options range from approximately $40,000 for a small, localized practice, to almost $200,000 for a larger system treating more area. Costs will also vary based on the quality of the soils at the site.

Additional considerations include:

- The treatment area is on a relatively steep grade, which will make grading difficult and may restrict the practice size.
- Treatment is not required unless more than 0.5 acres of impervious surface is added or redeveloped at full depth.
- Pricing is based on an approximation of $100,000 to $125,000 per acre of impervious area treated.
- A smaller proprietary treatment structure at the corner of Main Street and Mill Street may also be appropriate, based on its downhill or low point location, and the ability to link together many existing closed systems.

Future Consideration: Sumner Street Regrading

Sumner Street approach grade in the existing condition was identified as a constraint to continuation of an accessible path along the southside of Mill Street. The two midblock crossings in the Preferred Alternative provide an accessible pathway to continue along Mill Street in lieu of connecting the southside sidewalk across the steep cross slope at the Sumner Street intersection. As such, advancing alternatives to address the steep cross slope at the Sumner Street and Mill Street intersection could be pursued separately.

A feasibility investigation could be pursued to potentially remove pavement buildup and assess whether reconstructing the approach could achieve an appropriate cross slope that meets PROWAG design standards. More thorough understanding of the paving history at this location, sample cores of the existing pavement depths, and some limited ground survey would likely be needed to inform the potential for this option. Another alternative of note that was explored in the engagement process was a connection of Sumner Street to Perry Lane Hill with a new roadway. This option would enable the closure of Sumner Street at the intersection with Mill Street while providing a secondary outlet for those residents along Sumner Street. Though not advanced as part of this project, the potential for this alternative would require land acquisition from the Post Office to develop a new roadway and could be further investigated in a future study.

Funding Options

The next steps for moving this project forward include securing funding for design and construction of the preferred alternative through the phased approach recommended in the implementation plan. Opportunities for funding elements of the preferred alternative are included with brief descriptions below.

- **VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program:** Provides funding for the scoping, design, and construction of sidewalks, crosswalks, shared use paths, and other bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. This is a competitive grant program with a required 20 percent local match for federally funded construction and a 50 percent local match for smaller state-funded construction projects. Applications generally open in spring and are due in mid-summer.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):** Offers up to $750,000 in funding for the design and construction of environmental mitigation activities related to stormwater or pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including traffic calming, lighting, and safety-related enhancements. Requires a 20 percent local match.
- **Better Places Grant Program:** Supports streetscape and placemaking improvements in designated Downtowns and Village Centers, with grants of up to $40,000. Applications accepted on a rolling basis. The grant program is managed by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development, within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.
- **Downtown Transportation Fund:** Provides up to $125,000 (with a 20 percent local match) for projects that improve multimodal and resilient transportation infrastructure in designated downtown areas. The grant program is managed by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.
- **Vermont Community Development Program:** Offers additional grant opportunities that can support project elements aligned with economic and community development. Applications accepted on a rolling basis.
- **AARP Vermont's Placemaking Grant Program:** Provides small-scale funding for projects that promote livability and public space enhancements, particularly for older adults and people of all ages and abilities. Applications are generally open annually through September.
- **Northern Border Regional Commission – Catalyst Program:** Federal-State partnership program supporting economic development and transportation revitalization projects. Expected March 2026 deadline for pre-applications and waivers.