

MEMO: Hardwick Select Board, David Upson & Mike Henry

FROM: Tonia Chase

Date: October 15, 2026

Subject: Liquor, Tobacco & Tobacco Substitute Endorsement License Request

Hello Everyone:

Tonight you have the following permits for consideration.

First Class license for:

Second Class Licenses for:

NU Beverage, LLC d/b/a M & M Beverage

Third Class Licenses for:

Outside Consumption Permit for:

Tobacco License:

NU Beverage, LLC d/b/a M & M Beverage

Tobacco Substitute Endorsement:

NU Beverage, LLC d/b/a M & M Beverage

All applications are renewals and have no violations.

Town of Hardwick FY 2027 Budget Update Through 09-30-2026

Revenues:

After one quarter of the fiscal year, General Fund revenues appear to be on track to meet the budget.

Tax revenue shows over 100% because the amount shown as "Actual" represents the total amount billed, including the school portion, which has not yet been paid to the schools. The budget amount represents the Town's expected share of tax revenue after the school payments are made. The amount billed has also not all been collected yet.

If we estimate that the Town has collected approximately 25% of its expected tax revenues (25% of \$4,104,255), overall revenues would be at approximately 25.75% of budget.

Town of Hardwick Revenue Summary			
Department	Budget	Actual	% Collected
Tax Revenues	\$4,104,255	\$7,195,160	175.31%
Office Revenues [Licenses, Recordings, etc.]	\$40,025	\$11,662	29.14%
Highway Revenues	\$202,000	\$66,798	33.07%
Police Revenues [Tickets, Grants, etc.]	\$51,650	\$8,878	17.19%
Grant Revenue - Other	\$400	\$5,130	1282.47%
Other Revenue [Misc, Interest, W/S Transfers]	\$398,012	\$116,344	29.23%
	\$4,796,341.50	\$7,403,972.30	154.37%

Expenses:

After the first full quarter of the fiscal year, expenses, excluding flood-related costs, are at 23.25% of budget, slightly below the 25% we would expect at this point in the year.

Trails has expended approximately 37% of its budget; however, the Pumpkin Walk is its largest event, and most of those expenses were incurred in September. At this time, there are no major budget concerns among the departments.

The Highway Department is slightly above the 25% benchmark, primarily due to the price of diesel fuel. The average price is about \$1.50 per gallon higher than the previous year. We should expect the diesel fuel expense to go over budget this year as we had not anticipated prices to be \$5.50 gallon or more.

Town of Hardwick Expense Summary				
Department	Budget	Actual	\$ (Remaining) or Over Budget	% Used
Office [Clerk/Manager/Supplies, Etc.]	\$860,040	\$211,130	(\$648,910)	24.55%
Other Payroll [Stipend employees, etc.]	\$15,118	\$1,088	(\$14,030)	7.20%
Buildings	\$67,763	\$12,409	(\$55,354)	18.31%
Police Department	\$1,063,574	\$234,289	(\$829,285)	22.03%
Fire Department	\$71,605	\$17,378	(\$54,227)	24.27%
Highway Department	\$1,169,684	\$329,874	(\$839,810)	28.20%
Flood Expenses	\$0	\$380,275	\$380,275	100.00%
Rescue Squad	\$107,910	\$0	(\$107,910)	0.00%
Appropriations	\$54,743	\$9,461	(\$45,282)	17.28%
County & Gravel Pit Taxes	\$36,358	\$0	(\$36,358)	0.00%
Line Items	\$1,321,534	\$294,827	(\$1,026,707)	22.31%
Recreation	\$16,180	\$245	(\$15,935)	1.51%
Trails	\$11,833	\$4,375	(\$7,458)	36.97%
	\$4,796,341.50	\$1,495,351.16	\$ (3,300,990.34)	31.18%
<i>Without Flood</i>	\$4,796,341.50	\$1,115,076.49	\$ (3,681,265.01)	23.25%

Caspain Lake Dam Maintenance Project 2026

Construction Cost Estimate

Prepared by Riverbend Consultants
8/12/2026

Bid Item No.	Construction Costs	Unit	Estimated Quantity	Unit Price	Projected Cost
1	General Conditions: mobilization, portapotty, bonds & insurance	LS	1	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
2	Erect temporary orange plastic fencing around work area, and signs "area closed for construction"	LS	1	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
3	Establish temporary access routes, including creek crossing, cuts and fills, moving stone slabs and replacing afterwards, etc.	LS	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
4	Temporary removal of some chain link fencing, replacement as needed	LS	1	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
5	Concrete removal: central spillway wall and tops of metal culverts	LS	1	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
6	Concrete sidewalk: remove 30 ft, subgrade prep, install new concrete sidewalk	SF	100	\$ 100.00	\$ 10,000.00
7	Concrete spalling repair, incl. surface prep, bonding agent, screw anchors to tie to existing concrete, small forms as needed	LS	1	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
8	Mowing of north side dam embankment	LS	1	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
9	Remove trees from north side dam embankment	LS	1	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
10	Remove old stumps from north side dam embankment, fill holes with granular material	EA	6	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
11	Furnish & deliver large rock, 2-4 ft nominal dimension	CY	40	\$ 300.00	\$ 12,000.00
12	Placement of large boulders for buttress on lake side of existing concrete wall	CY	40	\$ 100.00	\$ 4,000.00
13	Furnish and install steel walkway, pedestrian rated, 3 ft X 16 ft, anchor ends to existing concrete	LS	1	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
14	Demobilization, temp. fence removal, site cleanup, seed & mulch disturbed areas	LS	1	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Construction Subtotal:					\$ 126,000.00
Contingency 20%:					\$ 25,200.00
					\$ 151,200.00
Tax @ 6.00%:					\$ 9,072.00
Total Estimated Project Cost:					\$ 160,272.00

Maintenance Plan

Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance Concept Plans

Riverbend Consultants

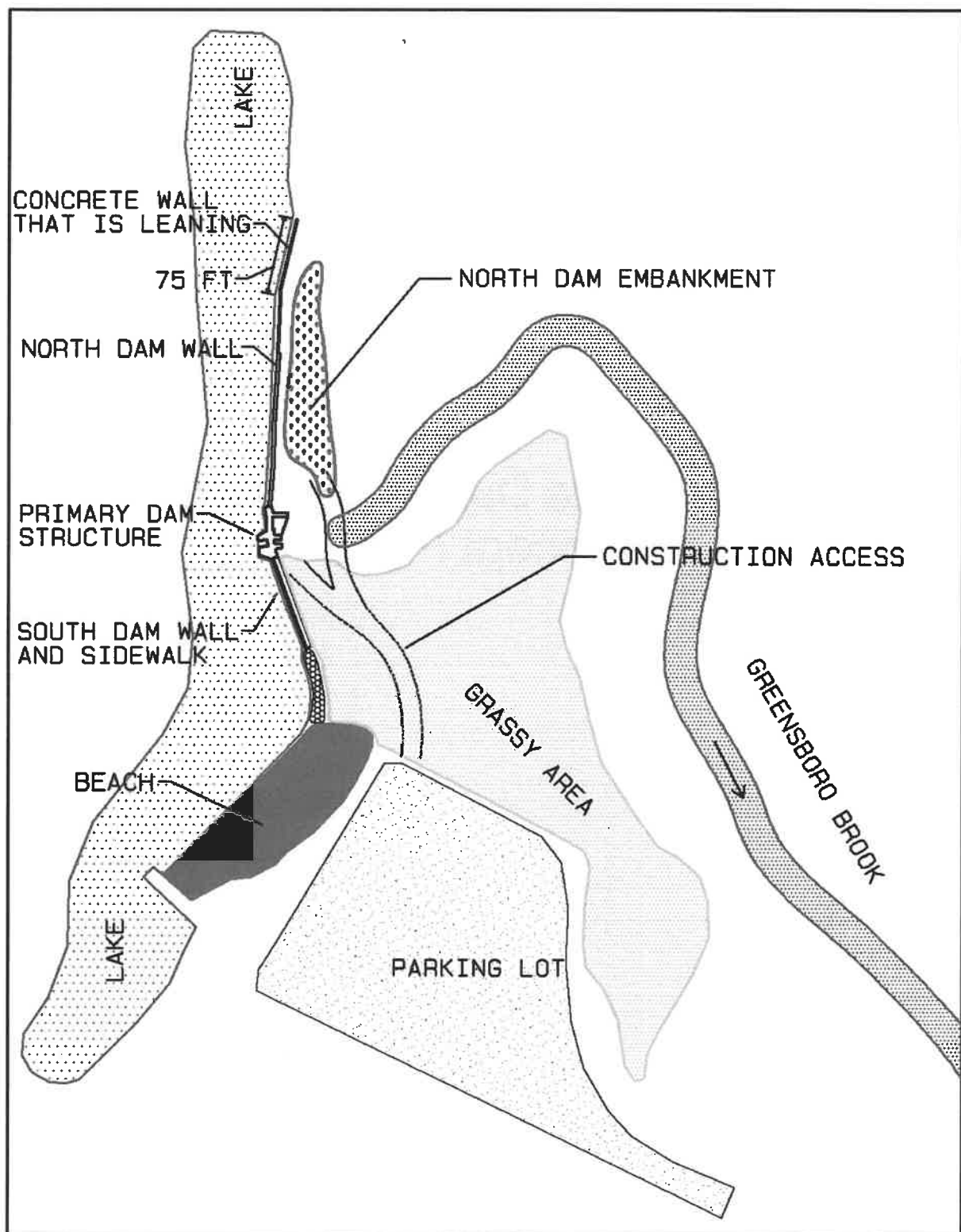
PO Box 51 Greensboro, VT 05841
www.riverrestoration.com 505-344-3315

COVER SHEET

Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance

8-12-2026

Sheet 1



Riverbend Consultants

PO Box 51 Greensboro, VT 05841
www.riverrestoration.com 505-344-3315

GENERAL SITE PLAN

Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance

Scale: 1"=100 ft

8-12-2026

Sheet 2

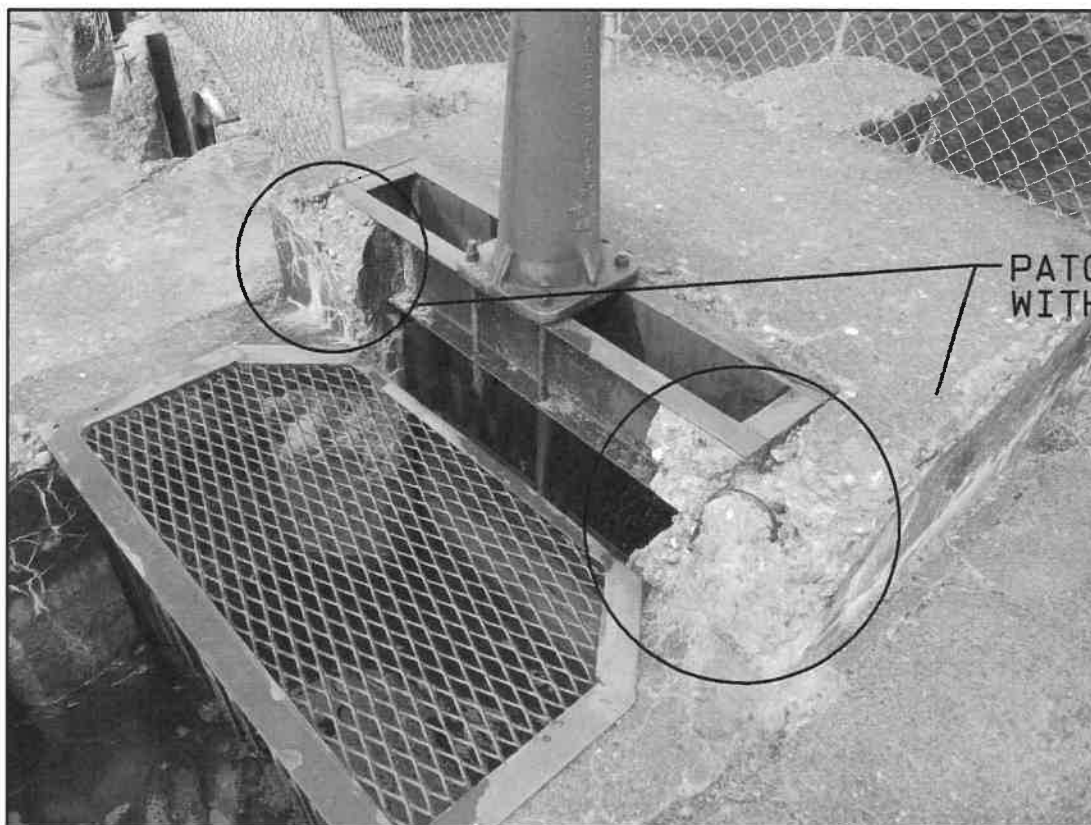


Riverbend Consultants

PO Box 51 Greensboro, VT 05841
www.riverrestoration.com 505-344-3315

**NORTH DAM EMBANKMENT
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance



PATCH SPALLED AREAS
WITH CONCRETE GROUT



PATCH SPALLED WALL AREAS
WITH CONCRETE GROUT

REMOVE AND REPLACE
3'X30'X4" CONCRETE
SIDEWALK

Riverbend Consultants

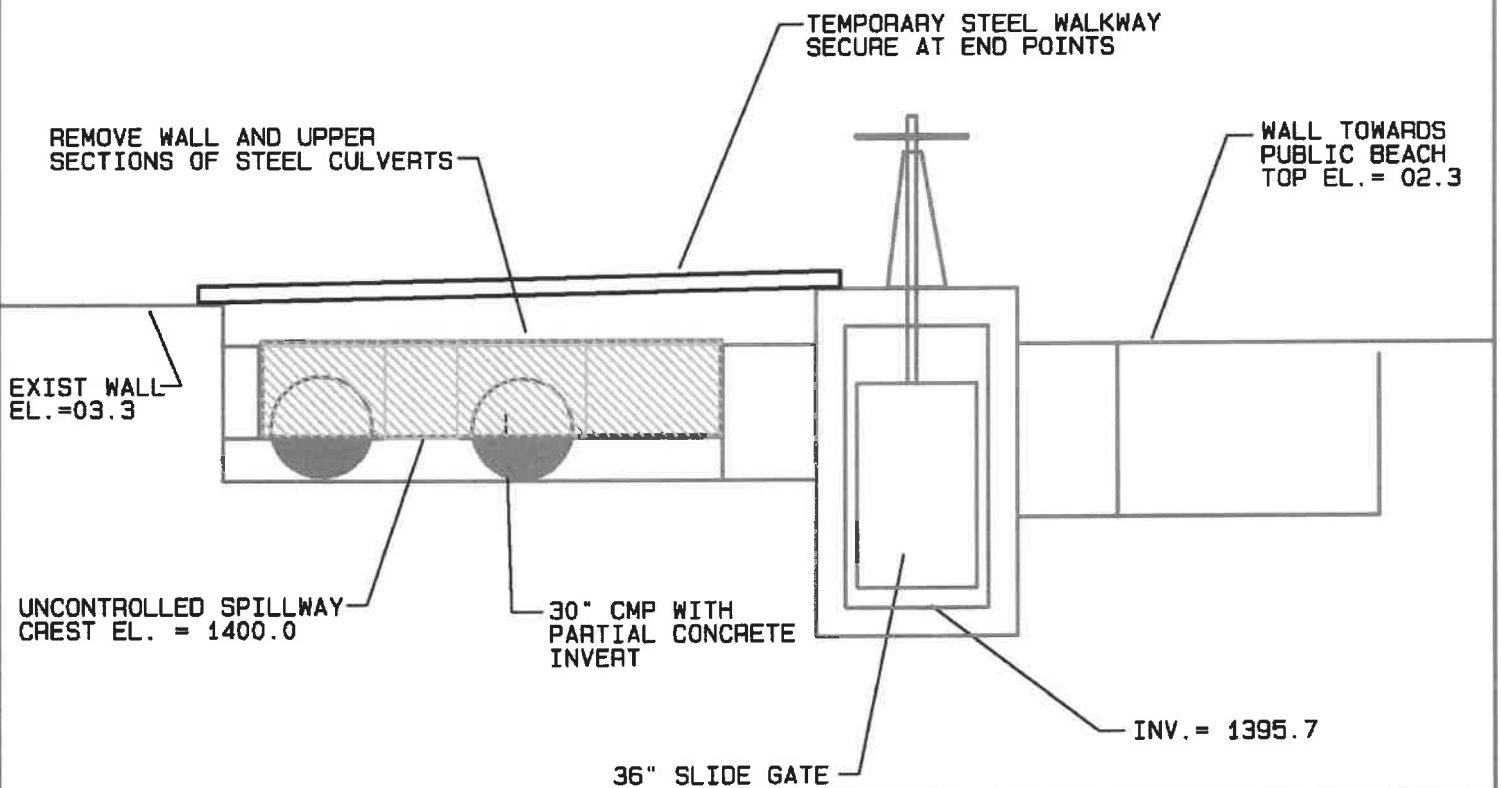
PO Box 51 Greensboro, VT 05841
www.riverrestoration.com 505-344-3315

PRIMARY DAM STRUCTURE
CONCRETE REPAIR

Caspian Lake Dam Modifications



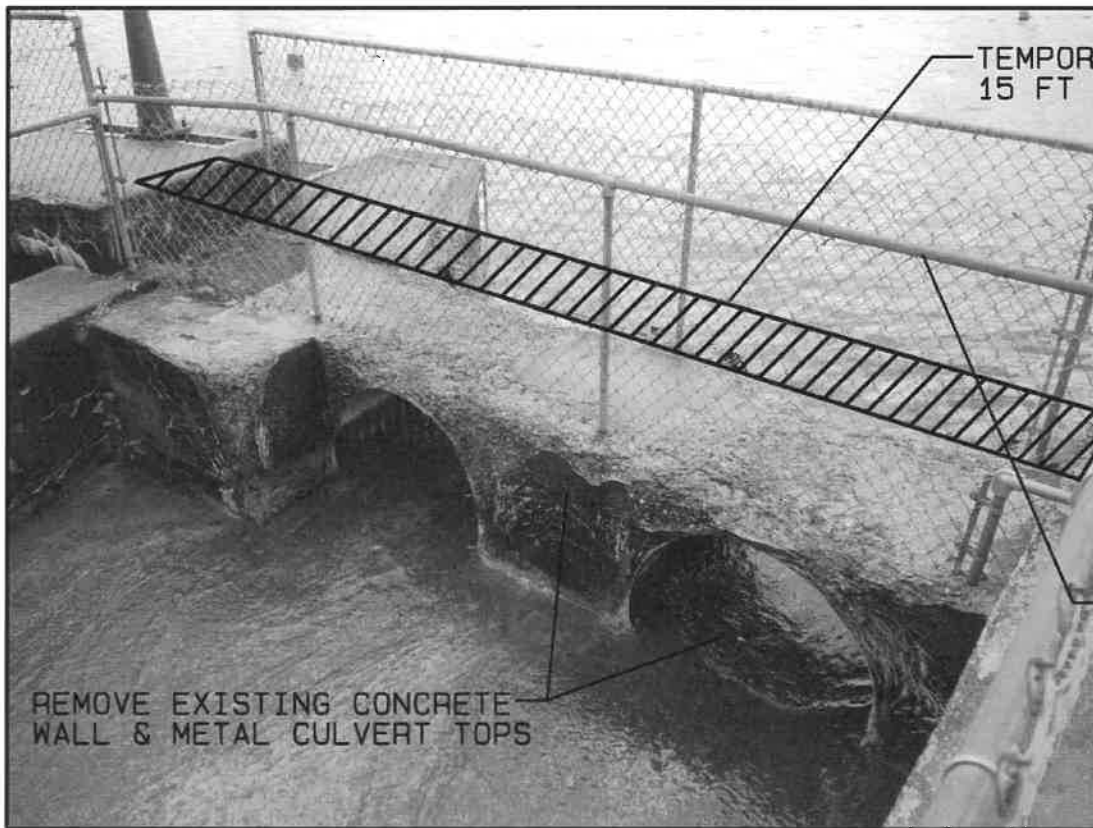
REMOVE CONCRETE WALL AND PIPE CULVERT TOPS
PATCH RESULTING HOLES WITH CEMENT GROUT



Riverbend Consultants

PO Box 51 Greensboro, VT 05841
www.riverrestoration.com 505-344-3315

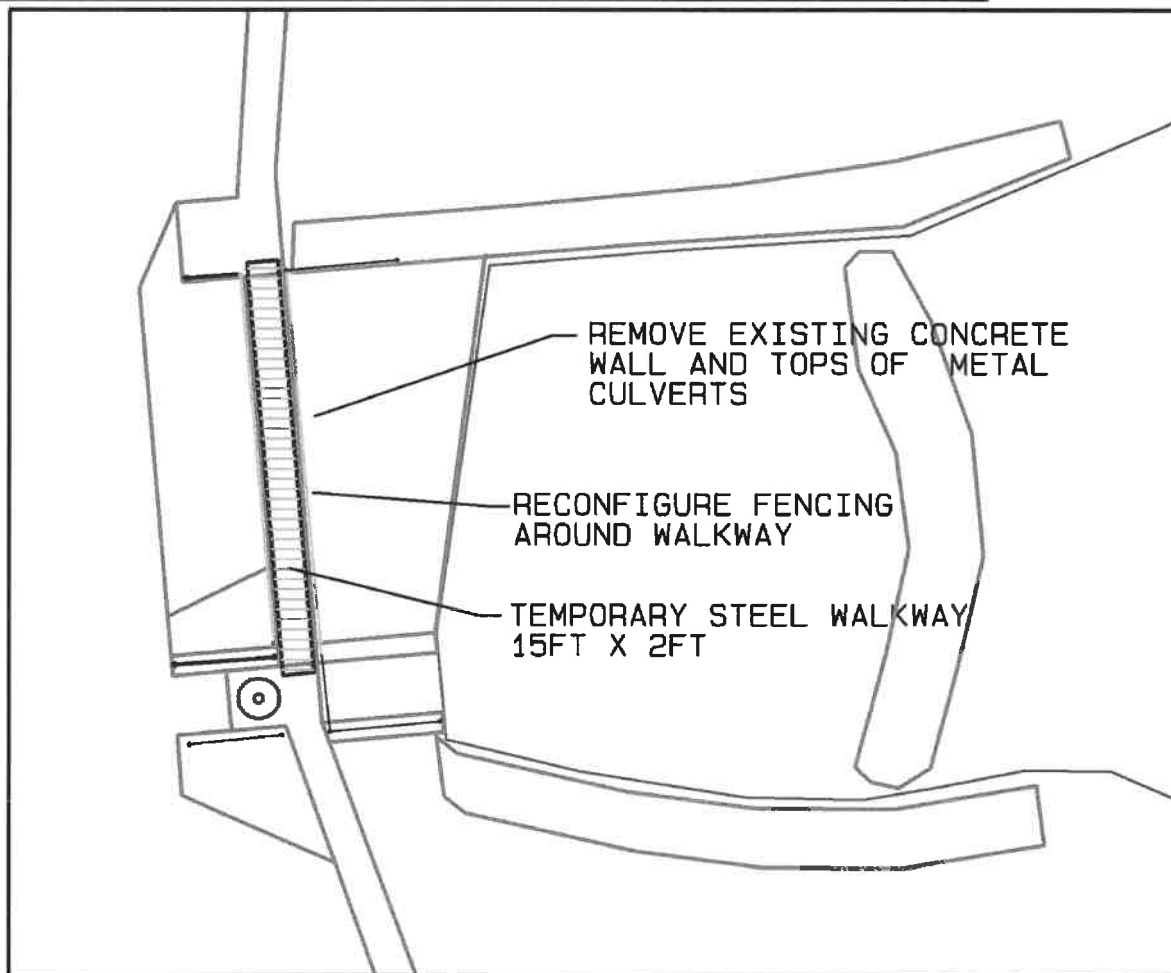
**PRIMARY DAM STRUCTURE
OPEN PRINCIPAL SPILLWAY**
Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance



TEMPORARY STEEL WALKWAY
15 FT SPAN, SECURE AT ENDS

RECONFIGURE FENCING
ACCORDINGLY

REMOVE EXISTING CONCRETE
WALL & METAL CULVERT TOPS



REMOVE EXISTING CONCRETE
WALL AND TOPS OF METAL
CULVERTS

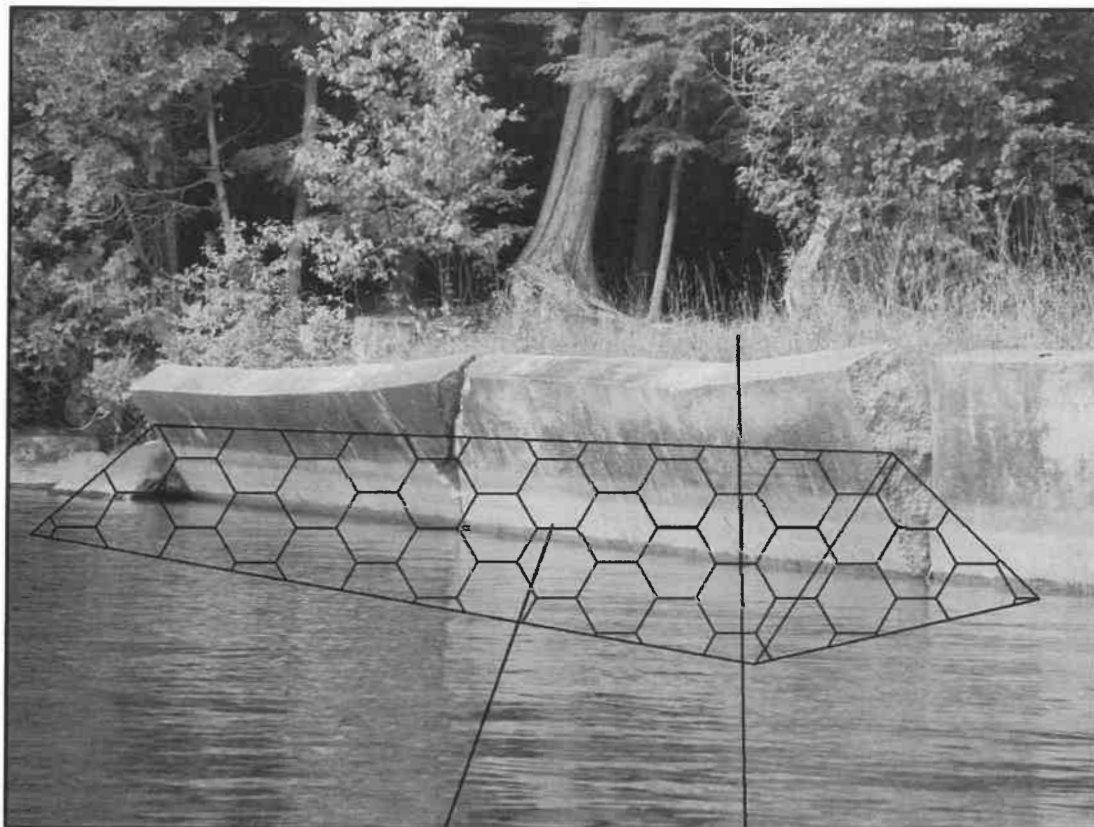
RECONFIGURE FENCING
AROUND WALKWAY

TEMPORARY STEEL WALKWAY
15FT X 2FT

Riverbend Consultants

PO Box 51 Greensboro, VT 05841
www.riverrestoration.com 505-344-3315

**PRIMARY DAM STRUCTURE
OPEN PRINCIPAL SPILLWAY**
Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance



PLACE LARGE ROCK,
2-4 FT SIZE, TO FORM A
BUTRESS AT THE BASE
OF THE WALL

EXCAVATE BEHIND WALL,
ATTEMPT TO ROTATE WALL
BACK TOWARDS VERTICAL,
BACKFILL & COMPACT SOIL

Riverbend Consultants

PO Box 51 Greensboro, VT 05841
www.riverrestoration.com 505-344-3315

**NORTH CONCRETE WALL
TEMPORARY ROCK BUTRESS**

Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance

Memorandum

Date: August 12, 2026
To: Select Board, Town of Greensboro, VT
From: Caspian Lake Dam Task Force: S. Arnold, J. Schweizer, J. Hanowski, P. Brierre, C. Philips
Regarding: Maintenance recommendations for the Caspian Lake Dam

Executive Summary

Caspian Lake Dam is the sole outlet for water in Caspian Lake. The dam was first constructed nearly 100 years ago. The dam is located in the community of Greensboro, it sits on land that is owned by the Town of Hardwick, and the dam itself is owned and operated by Hardwick Electric. A Dam Safety Inspection conducted by the State Dam Safety Program in 2023 categorized the Dam as being in “Poor” overall condition. From discussions with the State Dam Safety Program, it is clear that the State wants the dam brought into compliance with current State dam safety guidelines. To accomplish what the State wants will likely be a multi-year process of analysis, design, reports, permit approvals, then construction. The funding for construction of partial dam remediation or full dam replacement is estimated to be several million dollars. This amount of money is not in Hardwick Electric’s budget and they acknowledge that Caspian Lake Dam is at the bottom of their priority list of dams that they own and that need attention.

The 2023 Dam Safety Inspection Report identified a series of dam maintenance efforts that should be undertaken by the Dam owner, efforts which do not require approval of the State’s Dam Safety Program prior to implementation. This Task Force recommends that basic maintenance efforts on the dam be implemented as soon as possible (2026 or 2027). Estimated costs for this maintenance work is about \$160,000. The Task Force believes that there are potential funding sources for this work from private donations. The Task Force also recommends that the three public entities cited above that have a stake in the future of the Dam, enter into a cooperative agreement to share costs for the initial engineering work, and to share resources to secure project funding in the coming years.

Maintenance Recommendations

The proposed maintenance work on Caspian Lake Dam is described herein, and is graphically depicted in the attached document “Maintenance Plan, Caspian Lake Dam Maintenance Concept Plans”. A second attached document itemizes the maintenance work and shows the estimated cost for that work.

Construction Access – some parts of the maintenance work will require site access with heavy equipment. The south side of the dam is the most obvious access route, with materials staged in a corner of the public beach parking lot. From there, the south side of the dam is easily accessed across the grassy area. To access the north side of the dam, the contractor will have to establish a temporary access route across the brook below the dam, including cutting the soil to make a ramp into the creek and back

out of it, and temporary removal and replacement of the large stone slabs currently used for streambank erosion protection (see sheet 2).

North Dam Embankment – this embankment needs annual maintenance to control vegetation and prevent roots from compromising the seepage integrity of the dam. Sheet 3 shows recent tree growth that needs to be removed, and shows old tree stumps that may have rotted to the point where they can be dug out. Per the State's recommendation, holes that are discovered or created should be filled with granular material and compacted.

Southside of the dam and sluice gate – The 3 ft wide concrete sidewalk immediately behind the south side vertical concrete wall is in poor condition (see sheet 4). The recommendation herein is to replace approximately 30 ft of this sidewalk. The vertical wall facing the lake is aging, but it does not appear to be failing structurally. Spalling of concrete is concentrated at vertical wall joints, and these areas can be filled with concrete grout. Normal concrete repair work should include surface preparation of the existing concrete to ensure adequate bonding, screw anchors into the existing concrete to help hold the patches, and may require some small formwork to ensure the correct finished surface is achieved. A similar treatment is envisioned for the corners of the sluice gate frame.

Primary Dam Structure and Principal Spillway – some of the worst concrete deterioration is in the middle of the principal spillway, in the low wall that connects the two half-steel culvert sections (see sheets 5 & 6). The deterioration is extensive enough that patching with concrete grout is likely to not be successful. Given the State's concerns regarding "*keeping the ... spillway free of debris and ensuring free flow conditions*", removal of this wall and the upper parts of the two steel culverts is an appropriate interim solution. Replacing this wall would be premature: the full remediation plan for the dam will likely change the spillway configuration. Recognizing that pedestrian access across the top of the dam has been allowed for many decades, simply fencing off the historic walking route would inevitably lead to people crossing the spillway in an unsafe location or manner. Therefore, a temporary steel walkway is proposed to span across the opening of the principal spillway. What becomes of the walkway element in the remedial design for the dam is yet to be determined.

North End of the Concrete Wall at the lake edge – most of the concrete wall (that faces the lake) on the north side of the principal spillway is standing vertically and appears to be in OK shape. However, the last 75 ft at the north end is in trouble, the wall is rotating into the lake and appears to get worse with each year of ice (see sheet 7). This section of wall has no visible foundation, which may be a contributing factor to the condition we see now. Even in its leaning condition, this section of wall does offer some protection of the embankment from water/wave erosion. Simply replacing this section of wall would be expensive and premature: full remediation plans for the dam may want a different wall design or a taller wall to achieve the freeboard requirements of the State. A temporary fix is recommended herein, including 1) rotating the wall towards a vertical position if possible, with removal of some soil behind the wall and using a large excavator to pull the top of the wall towards vertical, and 2) placing large rocks (2-4 ft median size rocks) in the lake at the toe of the wall, to buttress the wall against further rotation. The rock pile would extend up 3-4 ft in height, and would be placed from above with an excavator. The rocks can be pushed into place to lock the big rocks together in a triangular section (see sheet 7). This rock pile is temporary, until the full remediation project can be implemented.

Steps towards full remediation of the Dam

- 1) Commission the engineering studies needed to address the State's Dam Safety Bureau's concerns and current regulatory guidelines. The engineering studies will likely include: confirmation that the hazard classification is appropriate, assessment of the Inflow Design Flood on the current

dam structure, schematic plans for remediation work on the dam, cost estimates of the recommended remediation work, an assessment of the impacts of removing the dam, and preparing a summary report that is acceptable to the State's Dam Safety Bureau.

- 2) As the engineering study work progresses, the three government entities and the engineer should meet regularly with the State's Dam Safety Program, to ensure that the remediation plan is well thought-out and will address the concerns of other State and Federal agencies that have some form of regulatory authority. Whatever lake water levels are proposed in the engineering studies, there are approximately 140 property owners around the lake, all with significant investments in lakeside amenities, erosion protection and flood preparedness. There will be significant public interest in the remedial plans for the dam.
- 3) Develop a memorandum of cooperation between the public government agencies that are directly involved in the Caspian Lake Dam: Hardwick Electric, The Town of Hardwick, the Town of Greensboro. This agreement would include a cost sharing agreement beginning in FY 2027 that would fund the preliminary engineering studies and concept plans for full dam remediation. It would not obligate any of the parties to fund future construction or engineering work. It would not change any of the existing responsibilities of the parties, including ownership of land or of the dam itself, operation and maintenance activities, liability, etc. It is believed that full cooperation and communication between these three entities will be critical to achieving success with maintenance and remediation work on this dam. If State funding becomes the ultimate source for money to remediate the dam, having multiple communities working collaboratively on a shared problem certainly elevates the attention of legislators.

TOWN OF HARDWICK

MEMORANDUM

To: Hardwick Select Board

From: Zoning & Floodplain Administrator / Resilience & Adaptation Coordinator

Date: October 13, 2026

Re: Granite Street Historic District Neighborhood Flood Resilience Plan – Completion of Planning Process and Formal Acceptance

Purpose

I am requesting that the Select Board formally accept the Granite Street Historic District Neighborhood Flood Resilience Plan as a municipal planning and reference document.

This request is primarily about recognizing the completion of a neighborhood-driven planning process, establishing a permanent municipal record of what we have learned, and providing a framework for the work that follows. Acceptance would not authorize construction projects, commit Town funds, or obligate the Town to implement every recommendation.

Background

Following the flooding of July 2023 and July 2024, residents of the Granite Street neighborhood began asking what could be done to reduce future damage and help them remain safely in their homes.

The Granite Street Historic District is one of Hardwick's established residential neighborhoods. It is also a place where flooding is complicated by the interaction of Cooper Brook, the Lamoille River, local drainage, and groundwater. The neighborhood's historic character, existing housing, and close connections among residents make finding practical solutions especially important.

The neighborhood pushed for a more comprehensive examination of these issues. Rather than approaching each flooded property or drainage concern separately, the Town pursued a Municipal Planning Grant to bring residents, municipal staff, community partners, and technical consultants together.

The Town received a \$33,300 Municipal Planning Grant to support this work, with assistance from the Center for an Agricultural Economy and SLR Consulting.

The Planning Process

The planning process began with the understanding that residents needed to be participants in identifying problems and developing solutions, not simply recipients of a technical report.

The work included:

- A neighborhood household survey, with approximately 30 responses representing a substantial portion of the neighborhood.
- Neighborhood meetings and opportunities for residents to describe their flooding experiences, identify recurring problems, and review possible approaches.
- Technical evaluation of flooding mechanisms, drainage conditions, and potential mitigation measures.
- Coordination with other municipal and watershed-scale flood resilience projects.
- Development of neighborhood priorities, project profiles, funding opportunities, and an implementation matrix.
- Identification of preparedness and recovery measures that can help residents before, during, and after future flooding.

The process also benefited from the relationships developed through the neighborhood and the Town's broader community recovery efforts.

One of the most important outcomes is that the plan documents local knowledge that might otherwise be lost. Residents know where water enters their basements, which streets become difficult to travel, where drainage backs up, and what happens in the days and weeks after a flood. That information now has a place alongside engineering assessments and municipal records.

What the Plan Accomplishes

The plan is organized around four goals: Prepare, Protect, Recover, and Adapt.

It recognizes that there is no single project that will eliminate flooding in the neighborhood. Instead, it identifies a combination of measures that can reduce damage, improve preparedness, and support long-term neighborhood resilience.

The work has already helped advance several important initiatives.

Residential utility elevation: The Town is moving forward with a neighborhood utility elevation program intended to reduce damage to vulnerable mechanical and electrical systems in participating homes. This is an important example of planning translating into direct assistance for residents.

Priority drainage and floodplain projects: The plan identifies the Granite Street culvert and flood benching concept and Spring Street Extension floodplain restoration as priority projects for further engineering and evaluation. These concepts provide a foundation for pursuing future design and construction funding.

Connection to watershed-scale work: The plan places neighborhood flooding in the context of the larger Lamoille River and Cooper Brook systems. Work involving Jackson Dam, the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail embankment, and other floodplain restoration initiatives may have implications for the neighborhood. The plan provides a basis for ensuring that neighborhood concerns remain part of those broader discussions.

Preparedness and recovery: The plan also addresses what happens when flooding cannot be prevented. Communication, access to supplies and equipment, debris management, and coordination of recovery assistance are important parts of reducing the long-term consequences of a flood.

Implementation and accountability: The plan includes an implementation matrix identifying potential actions, partners, funding opportunities, and next steps. This allows the Town and neighborhood to track progress and revisit priorities as circumstances change.

The planning process has also demonstrated how a relatively modest municipal planning investment can support a much larger body of work, including technical analysis, resident engagement, project development, and coordination with other funding programs.

A Model for Other Vermont Communities

To our knowledge, this is the first neighborhood-scale flood resilience plan of its kind in Vermont. While communities across the state have completed flood studies, hazard mitigation plans, and recovery initiatives, this effort brings those elements together at the neighborhood level, with residents directly involved in identifying priorities and shaping the work.

The plan and planning process have been reviewed by multiple professional planners and state partners. Their involvement has provided an important outside perspective on both the technical work and the planning approach. The process has also attracted interest as a model that could be replicated in other Vermont communities facing repeated flooding.

What makes this effort particularly valuable is that it was developed at the municipal level, in direct response to residents' concerns, rather than through a regional or statewide planning initiative. It demonstrates that a small town, working with its residents and partners, can undertake a comprehensive neighborhood resilience planning process.

The approach is also adaptable. Other communities may face different flooding conditions, have different resources, or identify different priorities. The underlying process—listening to residents, documenting local experience, bringing in technical expertise, identifying practical actions, and establishing an implementation framework—can be applied elsewhere.

This is an important outcome of the \$33,300 Municipal Planning Grant. In addition to producing a plan for Granite Street, the Town and its partners have developed a planning approach with potential value well beyond Hardwick.

Why Formal Acceptance Matters

The Granite Street plan is intended to be a living document. Engineering information will improve, funding opportunities will change, and projects will move through their own review and approval processes.

However, the information gathered through this process should not have to be reconstructed each time the Town considers a project, applies for funding, or experiences another flood.

Formal acceptance would:

- Recognize the work and leadership of neighborhood residents.
- Establish the plan as a municipal reference for future decisions and grant applications.
- Preserve the neighborhood's experiences, priorities, and technical findings as part of Hardwick's institutional memory.
- Provide continuity as Select Board members, municipal staff, and project partners change.
- Support coordination between neighborhood-scale priorities and larger municipal and watershed projects.

Acceptance is not the same as adopting a capital improvement program or approving the individual projects described in the plan. Those decisions will continue to require separate consideration by the Select Board, including review of engineering, costs, funding, permitting, and municipal responsibilities.

Next Steps

Following acceptance, I anticipate that the Town will:

1. Make the final plan available on the Town website and maintain it as a municipal reference document.
2. Provide copies to the Planning Commission and Hardwick Historical Society.
3. Continue working with neighborhood residents and project partners on the implementation priorities.
4. Use the plan to support funding applications and further engineering for identified projects.
5. Periodically review the implementation matrix and update project status as work advances.

The plan will also provide useful background for the upcoming update of the Hardwick Town Plan, particularly its housing, historic resources, infrastructure, and flood resilience components.

Recommendation

I recommend that the Select Board formally accept the Granite Street Historic District Neighborhood Flood Resilience Plan.

The neighborhood asked for this work because residents wanted to understand their risks and identify practical ways to protect their homes and community. The Town responded by bringing together resident experience, technical expertise, and municipal planning.

The resulting plan has benefited from review by outside planning professionals and state partners, and the process offers a potentially replicable approach for other Vermont communities. That is an accomplishment worth recognizing, particularly given the relatively modest planning grant that supported the work.

The result is more than a report about flooding. It is a record of what this neighborhood has experienced, what residents value, what we have learned, and what we can work toward together.

The Town cannot promise that the Granite Street neighborhood will never flood again. We can, however, make sure that the knowledge and momentum developed through this process are not lost.

Proposed Select Board Motion

Move that the Hardwick Select Board formally accept the Granite Street Historic District Neighborhood Flood Resilience Plan as a community-developed municipal planning and reference document; recognize the contributions of neighborhood residents and project partners in its development; and support its use to inform future flood resilience initiatives, grant applications, and municipal planning decisions.

Acceptance of the plan does not constitute authorization of individual projects or expenditures, which will remain subject to separate review and approval by the Select Board as appropriate.



Caledonia County

Natural Resources Conservation District

481 Summer Street, Suite 202 St. Johnsbury, VT | 802-424-3149 | www.caledoniadistrict.org | emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org

October 13, 2026

Town of Hardwick
Select Board
P.O. Box 523
Hardwick, Vermont 05843

To the Hardwick Selectboard,

We are writing to recommend that a question regarding the future of Jackson Dam be included on the March 2027 Hardwick town ballot, and that the question be decided by Australian ballot.

The Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District has secured the necessary funding for a full design and permitting process for the removal of Jackson Dam. We secured this funding from a variety of sources, including Partners for US Fish & Wildlife, a State Wildlife Grant, and Watersheds United Vermont (through the state Clean Water Fund). The funding needed for data collection and a preliminary design for removal is available right now. However, the funding needed to advance the process from preliminary to final design and permitting is contingent upon demonstrated public support for the removal option. We will provide the residents of Hardwick with a preliminary design for removal by early 2027, which will include details about the benefits, drawbacks, costs, and sediment issues related to removal. With the support of the Jackson Dam Steering Committee, we also plan to create several opportunities for learning and conversation prior to March 2027 related to the Jackson Dam, covering topics including potential downstream impacts of removal; how removal might impact fish and wildlife habitat; and options moving forward if residents decide not to pursue removal.

If the residents of Hardwick vote to move forward with removal in March 2027, that does not mean that residents are committing local taxpayers to a specific future construction cost. The project will also be subject to state and federal regulatory review. This milestone also would not mean that public engagement would end. We would continue to provide opportunities for Hardwick residents to engage throughout the remainder of the design and eventual implementation process.

At this point, we are not recommending that the Select Board approve the wording of a ballot question. We are recommending that the board commit to placing a question about the future of Jackson Dam on the March 2027 ballot, and specifically to have that question decided by an Australian ballot.

Sincerely,



Caledonia County

Natural Resources Conservation District

481 Summer Street, Suite 202 St. Johnsbury, VT | 802-424-3149 | www.caledoniadistrict.org | emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org

Emily Finnegan
District Manager

East Hardwick Resilient Public Spaces Planning Project 2027 VOREC Community Grant Program

From Kristen Leahy

The Town has an opportunity to apply to the 2027 VOREC Community Grant Program for \$25,000 to \$35,000 for planning and design work in East Hardwick. No municipal match is required.

The proposed project would engage East Hardwick residents and a landscape architect in planning a connected series of resilient public spaces. The project would include at least three former residential properties acquired through two rounds of the Flood Resilient Communities Fund, with the possible inclusion of another municipal property located between them.

Together, these properties form a potential village corridor:

- The first two buyout properties are less than one-quarter mile from the grant and EHNO funded Lamoille Valley Rail Trail trailhead.
- The East Hardwick Grange, which serves as a primary community gathering place, is next door.
- The East Hardwick Fire District property lies between those sites and the convenience store.
- The third buyout property is located near the convenience store.

The project builds directly upon two previous planning efforts. The East Hardwick Better Connections process identified walkability, recreation, public space and stronger connections to the LVRT as village priorities. A later flood-mitigation alternatives analysis determined that engineered flood-mitigation projects on the buyout properties would not be cost-effective.

The proposed work would include:

- Review of previous planning and technical work
- Assessment of the properties and the connections between them
- Community meetings or design workshops
- Conceptual landscape and public-space alternatives
- A preferred community-supported plan
- Pedestrian, accessibility and LVRT connectivity recommendations

- Flood-compatible landscaping and stormwater considerations
- Preliminary implementation costs and phasing
- Identification of permits and future construction funding

The current planning-level estimate is between \$25,000 and \$35,000. This is a staff estimate based on the anticipated scope. The final request would be adjusted when professional cost information becomes available. The grant would fund planning and design, not construction.

This proposal closely aligns with the current VOREC round, which emphasizes project development, outdoor recreation, economic connections, equity and climate resilience. The program guidance specifically identifies landscape-architecture planning for former flood-buyout properties as an example of eligible work.

The Town's existing VOREC grant is expected to be formally closed by the end of October, before the eligibility deadline for this funding round.

Requested action:

Support staff moving forward with a VOREC pre-application for the East Hardwick Resilient Public Spaces Planning Project, with an anticipated request between \$25,000 and \$35,000 and no required municipal match.