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## **Richmond Western Gateway Scoping Study**

Richmond Transportation Committee

October 24, 2023

### Project Overview and Status

Richmond's Western Gateway Scoping Study has completed two public surveys and two public meetings and is moving toward identifying a Preferred Design Concept to detail further in the Scoping Study document. This Preferred Design Concept will identify an alternative transportation route between Richmond Village, the Park and Ride, and Riverview Commons that is the town-favored product of technical feasibility, estimated cost, and public support. However, selecting a Preferred Design Concept does not commit Richmond to any particular future action or timetable.

While costs and environmental impacts remain concerns, survey respondents indicated a strong public desire for safer routes between Richmond Village, the Park and Ride, and Riverview Commons.

Our prior discussion with the Transportation Committee offered a higher-level view of the two alternative design concepts: one largely along the north side of Route 2 between the Village and Riverview Commons, the other deviating to the east of the Mobil station for a more "overland" route (called the Emerald Trail) westward toward Riverview Commons. This second concept features "underpasses" under the I-89 exit ramps, which have been provisionally supported by both VTrans District 5 and FHWA.

### Transportation Committee Discussion Points

At this 10/24/2023 Transportation Committee meeting, we'd like to touch on some of the finer-grained particulars of these strategies.

1. Where the road bends and the Route 2 shoulder narrows at the Cemetery, and there is no viable separated off-road option, we have discussed using Flexible Delineators to delineate the alternative transportation route. Here's is a video describing how these posts work, including mention that they would be removed during plowing seasons. Your thoughts? This type of delineation, and where it might be useful, would also be informed by the Pinch Point Study.

<https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=2761872>

2. An alternative transportation route between the Village and Riverview Commons could be built in phases. However, for a project to be funded with state or federal dollars, each phase must supply "independent utility" that has standalone transportation value. In other words, Richmond cannot build a partial path that does not connect two identifiable departure/destination points. For example, a connection between Riverview Commons and the Park and Ride could be "Phase 1." What do you think? Are there obvious segments of the larger route that should be prioritized?
3. It may also be possible to phase the surfacing. The future sewer extension between the Village and the Mobil station (potentially) has been discussed. An alternative transportation route could be

built above portions of the sewer extension's path. At first, the path portion could be gravel, but later could be asphalt paved. Would this be acceptable?

4. Boardwalks through wetlands would be a significant part of the "overland" Emerald Trail. Here's a video created by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation about this work. The types of ADA-compliant boardwalk that could also accommodate cyclists are discussed starting at 7:43 of the video. Richmond would work closely with the District Wetland Ecologist (currently Tina Heath) on this work. Your thoughts?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npjTvXmI3RY>