

New Project Summary RPC Input Questionnaire

This project, **Richmond - Bolton STP 2924(1)** is located on US Route 2 (US2) in the towns of Richmond and Bolton. The project extends from Richmond mile marker 0.000 to Bolton mile marker 1.860 (ETE 48.647 to 56.886). The total project length is approximately 8.239 miles. The project limits begin at the Williston-Richmond town line and end approximately three quarters of a mile west of Bolton Village.

1. Are there any town highway projects, or municipal operations planned that might be impacted by this project or coordination needed?

The Town is currently considering a sewer line extension project from the current end of the sewer line on West Main Street (approximate location: MM 2.45) to the Richmond Mobil gas station (approximate location: MM 1.30). This sewer line extension project was discussed during October 22, 2020 meeting between the Town and VTrans project staff. Coordination of both projects was verbally agreed upon during that meeting. The town will confirm the sewer line extension project and its details in summer 2021.

2. Is there a local business association, chamber of commerce, regional development corporation, or downtown group that we should be in contact with?

The Town recommends contacting the Western Slopes Business Association (WSBA).

3. Is this project on specific routes that school buses or students use to walk to and from school?

School bus routes utilize the entirety of Route 2 within the town, and cross Route 2 at the Route 2/Bridge Street/Jericho Road intersection. Students also use the Route 2/Bridge Street/Jericho Road intersection to cross Route 2 to reach the school on Jericho Road.

4. Are there any bicycle and/or pedestrian specific concerns within the project limits?

The Town has numerous concerns on the lack of safe and continuous bicycle facilities along the Route 2 corridor as well as pedestrian facilities (sidewalks and crosswalks) within the Village area. Specifically, the Town has the following bicycle and pedestrian concerns with the project as proposed:

- The four-foot shoulders for the majority of the project are vastly inadequate, especially in regard to the Route 2/I-89/Route 117 intersections (MM 0.943 to MM 1.217), Route 2 alongside the cemetery approaching Richmond Village (MM 1.217 to MM 2.500), and Route 2 past the village towards the Andrews Community Forest (MM 2.940 to approximate MM 4.000). The latter segments have narrow to no shoulders, and poor sight distances for vehicle and bicycle traffic.
- The five-foot shoulders from MM 1.217 to MM 2.500 are severely deficient for pedestrian and bicycle traffic flow. The Town currently has no bicycle, pedestrian, or transit facilities between Richmond Village and the Park and Ride. Without the inclusion of adequate bicycle

and pedestrian on Route 2 between Richmond Village and the Park and Ride, the Town concludes that the recommendation does not align with VTrans "Vermont Long Range Transportation Plan" and its goal of improving the condition and performance of multimodal transportation facilities.

- The sidewalks along Route 2 within the Village area are either failing or not properly buffered for safe pedestrian use and they need to be upgraded as part of this project.
- The Route 2/Bridge Street/Jericho Road intersection lacks features for safe crossing by persons with disabilities. The design of this intersection should be ADA compliant so it could be used safely by pedestrians of all ages and capabilities.

5. Are there any transit specific concerns within the project limits?

The lack of public transit, between the Richmond Village and the Park and Ride as well as between the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park (one of the areas in town with affordable housing) and the Park and Ride is a major issue for the Town. If expansion of public transit services is not feasible at this time, then providing safe bicycle and pedestrian connections (mainly wide shoulders) from these areas to the Park & Ride facility is crucial to provide access to transit (LINK Express).

6. Are there any existing, pending, or planned development proposals that would impact future transportation patterns? Please provide a map, if appropriate.

The Town is expecting buildout of a commercial planned unit development consisting of office uses, a restaurant, and light manufacturing uses off Willis Farm Road (approximately 830 West Main Street). Buildout is anticipated over the course of five years, and it may include increased turns at the Route 2/Willis Farm Road intersection primarily during peak hours. The town is also expecting buildout over the course of 10 years of a 45-unit Planned Unit Development at Jolina Court--approximately 0.20 miles from the Route 2/Bridge Street intersection. Currently, 14 residential units have been built. Anticipated indirect impacts upon buildout may include increased peak hour traffic from Bridge Street onto Route 2 and from Route 2 onto Bridge Street. The town is discussing plans for possible redevelopment of the Mobil gas station at 1436 West Main Street. Project construction and expected impacts are to be determined.

7. Are there any scoping studies or Master Plans developed through programs such as Better Connection or Municipal Planning Grant that we should be aware of?

The Town and the CCRPC are currently conducting a Bridge Street Corridor Study and a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan for areas north of the Winooski River. Both projects are slated to be completed in July 2021.

8. Are there any intersection counts within the project limits that could be useful in determining design features such as turning lanes? No recent TM counts are available.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sommer Roefaro Bucossi, VTrans
FROM: Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
CC: Bard Hill, Ravi Venkataraman, Josh Anderson, and David Sander
DATE: March 12, 2021
RE: CCRPC and Town of Richmond Comments on the Richmond - Bolton STP 2924(1) Project

Thank you for sending the New Project Summary (NPS) for the Richmond - Bolton STP 2924(1) Project. We understand that this project is well into the preliminary design stage and that VTrans and the Town had discussions already, but we would have appreciated this summary earlier in the process to have more time to review and document all major issues from the local and regional perspective.

The CCRPC and Town views this project as a unique opportunity to meet the shared interests and goals of VTrans, the Town and the region in support of active transportation, public transit, and a vibrant Village center. The Town also notes that they have communicated their goals and expectations verbally in the past, and the comments in this document are the same as communicated to VTrans and CCRPC before the NPS was developed.

CCRPC staff met with Richmond staff and officials Monday, March 8th to review the NPS and especially the recommendations to address safety, bicycle/pedestrian travel, parking, and the operations of the new signal at the US-2/Bridge Street/Jericho Road intersection in the Village. Below, we offer our combined local/regional comments:

- We appreciate the thorough safety analysis for this segment of US-2, and we agree with most of the safety recommendations. The Town requests additional information on the proposed left turn lane on US-2 at the intersection with Kenyon Road, the proposed left turn lane at the Park & Ride, as well as details for the proposed centerline rumble strips, in time to allow comment and influence on the final design.
- As stated in the NPS, the entire segment of US-2 is designated as a High Use/Priority corridor for bicycle travel in the VTrans On-road Bicycle Plan and is also designated as a High Priority/Feasibility corridor in the Regional Active Transportation Plan. Based on the significance of US-2 in bicycle travel in the region we ask that the shoulders be 6 ft throughout the entire project with the exception in the Village area where the built environment is different, with parking and sidewalks on one or both sides of US-2. Having 6 ft shoulders are particularly important in the segment between the Village and the Richmond Park & Ride since access, by bicycle, to the facility and the only public transportation service (LINK Express) available to Richmond residents is a significant local and regional goal. The desire to improved safety for cyclists by having a continuous 6 ft shoulder throughout the US-2 segment was

discussed at all previous meetings that the Town had with VTrans. As soon as they are available, the Town would like detailed information on the design elements of the bicycle facilities in time to provide comments that will be considered in the final design.

We recognize that the installation of wide shoulders (6 Ft) on US-2 between the cemetery and the railroad area will require removal of soils and replacement of previously installed retaining walls, but we feel this is necessary to accomplish state, regional and local goals.

- The Town supports providing parking where feasible and would like clear delineation of the locations of parking on US-2 in the Village area. The Town would like vertical curbing and sidewalks to be installed in the Village. The NPS does not mention sidewalk improvements and we believe that investments in pedestrian infrastructure beyond crosswalks are needed to help support regional and local goals of promoting walkable, livable, and healthy communities. The Town is again noting the desire that this project includes features similar to the nearby town of Waterbury, including sidewalks, curbs, and parking. The Town would like to discuss the specific locations and details of these features with VTrans in time to allow comment and influence of the final design.
- The full replacement (with mast arms) of the signal at the US-2/Bridge Street /Jericho Road intersection is appreciated. We understand that a left turn phase from Bridge St will be included in the programming of the new signal but are concerned that the NPS also associates this feature with a possible (future) exclusive left turn lane on Bridge Street. The Town has been very clear in all previous conversations that a left turn lane at this location is not feasible due to impacts to surrounding buildings in the historic commercial center of Richmond and the associated elimination of scarce parking in this area. We would like a clarification whether a left turn arrow will be implemented without requiring an exclusive left turn lane on Bridge Street.
- Finally, we believe that while new, the NPS has great potential as a tool for engaging the Town and the RPC early on in the process of designing a significant transportation project, and we encourage you to strengthen it by including a Municipal Comment section in addition to the RPC Comment section.

Thanks for the opportunity to offer these comments. The CCRPC and the Town of Richmond would appreciate a response on the issues discussed above soon, and in time to allow for meaningful conversations that will influence the final design.