



TOWN OF RICHMOND

RICHMOND TOWN CENTER
203 Bridge Street, P.O. Box 285
Richmond, Vermont 05477



May 3, 2021

Secretary Joe Flynn
Vermont Agency of Transportation
219 North Main St.
Barre, VT 05641

RE: Route 2 Repaving Project in Richmond

Dear Mr. Flynn,

For the last decade, we, the Town of Richmond, have been waiting for the Route 2 Repaving Project. We have upgraded our infrastructure and policies to anticipate the outcomes of your Vermont Department of Transportation (VTrans) project. We expected that through coordination, VTrans and the Town would foster the revitalization of our downtown, facilitate economic development, and advance our shared goals to enable multimodal transportation.

After several years of delays, we been working closely with the VTrans Asset Management Team since October 2020 to bring this project into fruition. We appreciate the time and energy they have spent to discuss the project details and our requests.

However, after multiple conversations with the VTrans Asset Management Team and a comprehensive review of the New Project Summary (NPS) for the project, we find that VTrans's responses to our continued requests to be inadequate and unsatisfactory. The VTrans Asset Management Team has been slow in their response to us, and have delayed the release of reports and plans multiple times in the last nine months. Upon receiving the New Project Summary, we were disappointed in the VTrans Asset Management Team's response to the requests we have made not only to them multiple times since October 2020 but also made to VTrans in the last decade.

We have reiterated to the Asset Management Team that we would like Route 2 in Richmond to look like Route 2 in Waterbury. The following were our specific requests to the VTrans Asset Management Team:

- Construction and reconstruction of sidewalks and curbing,
- The restriping of parking and crosswalks,
- Six-foot shoulders for the entirety of the project scope, and
- The installation of left-turn signals at the Route 2- Bridge Street intersection.

We are also requesting improvements to the storm water infrastructure under Route 2. This request was not previously discussed, but within the project scope per the NPS.

Our bases for these requests are as follows:

Construction and reconstruction of sidewalks and curbing: The Town wants to restate its continued interest in including sidewalks and curbing as part of the scope of this project. The sidewalks along Route 2 within Richmond Village have been failing to adequately serve the town for the last decade. The sidewalks on East Main Street within the village are temporary asphalt sidewalks with no curbing. The curbing on the south side of West Main Street is crumbling. The Town has invested in streetscape designs in 2011, a bicycle and pedestrian scoping report in 2014, and a bicycle/pedestrian master plan in 2021. The town has also applied for VTrans grants to rebuild the sidewalks and build a multiuse path between Richmond Village and the Park and Ride. Both grant applications were rejected.

Currently, the Asset Management Team posits that the sidewalks are outside the scope of the project. However, the sidewalks are within the Route 2 right-of-way. The cost of incorporating sidewalks into this project is proportional to the current usage of the sidewalks, the crash data you collated, and the lack of constraints within this segment. Constructing and reconstructing the sidewalk within Richmond Village would improve the safety of pedestrians of all ages and abilities using Route 2. Therefore, we conclude that improving the sidewalks and curbing within the Richmond Village aligns with VTrans's Complete Streets Guidance and the intent of the 2011 Complete Streets Bill.

The Restriping of Parking and Crosswalks: Currently, Route 2 within Richmond Village has no markers for parking. The Asset Management Team in the NPS informed us that the town is responsible for clarifying parking issues along Route 2. We concur that the management of parking in town is under our jurisdiction. However, we want VTrans to put in the effort to accommodate parking into Route 2 within the village and to delineate parking spaces within the village. In addition, the striping for crosswalks has washed away, and we would like to confirm with VTrans that the crosswalks will be restriped. Both aspects are within the scope of the project pursuant to the NPS, and therefore must be incorporated into the project scope.

Six-foot shoulders for the entirety of the project scope: At the moment, most of Route 2 within Richmond has less than four-foot shoulders. The Asset Management Team has proposed four-foot shoulders for most of the project scope. The Town finds this to be inadequate for most of the project scope, especially in regards to the Route 2/I-89/Route 117 intersections, Route 2 alongside the cemetery approaching Richmond Village, and Route 2 past the village towards the Andrews Community Forest. The Town has requested six-foot shoulders for the entirety of the project. This would effectively establish a bicycle connection between Richmond Village and the Park and Ride, and vastly improve bicycle and pedestrian traffic flow along Route 2. 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 installation of left-turn signals at the Route 2-Bridge Street intersection: To improve peak-hour traffic flow onto Route 2, we requested that a left-turn signal be installed at the Route 2-Bridge Street intersection. This intersection and signal timing was an issue raised in the 2014 Route 2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Scoping Report, which the NPS made reference to. VTrans identified the Route 2-Bridge Street intersection as a high-crash location. VTrans recommended in the NPS to replace the existing traffic signals and program a left-turn phase from Bridge Street. The Asset Management Team gave the town the inclination that the left-turn signal could not be turned on without a left-turn lane. However, MUTCD design standards does not require a left-turn signal with a designated left-turn lane, and VTrans has installed intersections with left-turn signals without a designated left-turn lane. The Town would like to confirm that the left-turn signal without a designated left-turn lane will be operational as a result of this project.

Storm water Improvements under Route 2 within Richmond Village: Currently, the storm water systems for the developments north of Route 2 within Richmond Village (East Main Street) are connected to the Town's wastewater system. This configuration is out of compliance with the Town's Wastewater Policy and fails to support Vermont efforts to disconnect storm water from wastewater treatment. When the town replaced the water lines on East Main Street, the Town looked into removing the interconnections between the storm water and wastewater systems under Route 2. VTrans prevented the Town from daylighting the storm water--allowing the storm water to percolate into the ground or, possibly, sheet across the East Main Street roadway--until VTrans made storm water improvements to direct the drainage. All of the developments of north of East Main Street are minor (single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, and small businesses); none of these developments have on-site storm water management because of how small these developments area. The NPS makes no mention of storm water improvements on this portion of East Main Street. The Town would like to confirm with VTrans that drainage improvements, including curbing, will be made along East Main Street within Richmond Village, that the Town would be able to resolve the noncompliant interconnections between the sewer and storm water systems under Route 2, and that the Town would be able to daylight storm water so that storm water runoff can sheet across Route 2.

The Town also requests that all the storm water infrastructure under Route 2 be improved and replaced. The Town has invested in revamping its storm water infrastructure, evidenced by the 2018 Storm water Master Plan and recent replacements of storm water infrastructure on Bridge Street. We have evidence that the storm water infrastructure under Route 2 is aging and subject to fail in the near future. Storm water infrastructure within VTrans's right-of-way is VTrans's responsibility and this policy is referred to in the NPS.

Going forward, our goals are to work with you to fulfill our requests and to ensure the success of this project. We hope to further the state's goals of furthering Smart Growth and improving the economic vitality of downtowns.

Thank you for your consideration,

Christine Werneke, Richmond Selectboard Chair

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