

City of Essex Junction

City Council Regular Meeting Agenda



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2026 • 6:00 PM

Online & 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452

www.essexjunction.org • P: 802-878-6944

E: admin@essexjunction.org

Please note the earlier start time.

This meeting will be in-person and available remotely. Options to watch or join the meeting remotely:

WATCH: The meeting will be live streamed on Town Meeting TV

JOIN ONLINE: [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

JOIN CALLING: (toll free audio only) 888-788-0099 | Meeting ID: 944 6429 7825; Passcode: 635787

1. **CALL TO ORDER** **[6:00 PM]**
SITE VISIT AT 6PM AT ESSEX JUNCTION FIRE STATION (NEXT TO 2 LINCOLN)
2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
3. **APPROVE AGENDA**
4. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**
 - a. Comments from Public
5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Annual Report and Presentation
 - b. Water Resource Recovery Facility Department Head Brief to Council
 - c. Discussion and Consideration of Command Vehicle Purchase
 - d. Discussion and Consideration of Land Development Code Amendments and Warning of Public Hearing
 - e. Discussion and Consideration of Vermont League of Cities and Towns Annual Meeting Voting Delegate
 - f. Discussion and Consideration of the Annual Meeting Date, the Informational Hearing Date, and the Annual Meeting Schedule
 - g. *Discussion and Consideration of an Executive Session to discuss personnel
6. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - a. Approve City Council Meeting Minutes 09/09/26
 - b. Approve an Application for and Acceptance of a State Grant for the Hiawatha Stormwater Project
 - c. Approve the Water Resource Recovery Facility Flare Replacement Contract Award and Associated Capital Fund Amendment
7. **COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT**
8. **READING FILE**
 - a. Main Street Park Improvements Plan Update
 - b. Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes 090206

- c. Planning Committee Minutes 090326
- d. Bike Walk Advisory Committee Minutes 091026
- e. Board of Civil Authority Minutes 091426
- f. Tree Farm Management Group Minutes 091426
- g. Police Community Advisory Board Minutes 091526
- h. Brownell Library Board of Trustees Minutes 091526

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. *An Executive Session may be needed to discuss personnel

10. ADJOURN

Members of the public are encouraged to speak during the Public to Be Heard agenda item, during a Public Hearing, or, when recognized by the President, during consideration of a specific agenda item. The public will not be permitted to participate when a motion is being discussed except when specifically requested by the President. Regarding zoom participants, if individuals interrupt, they will be muted; and if they interrupt a second time, they will be removed. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings of the City Council, like all programs and activities of the City of Essex Junction, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the City Manager's office at 802-878-6944 TTY: 7-1-1 or (800) 253-0191.

**Upcoming City Council Meetings
(Meeting Dates are Subject to Change)
(* denotes special meeting or date change)**

October 14, 2026	*December 2, 2026	January 27, 2027
October 28, 2026	*December 16, 2026	
*November 10, 2026	January 13, 2027	

City Council Rules for Public Participation

Vermont's Open Meeting Law protects the public's right to attend and participate in meetings of local public bodies, but the purpose and function of these meetings is for the public body to do the work of the public; they are not meetings of the public (i.e., public forums). Consequently, these rules are necessary to manage the public's participation to ensure an environment in which the public feels safe to express their views on matters considered by the public body while minimizing disruptions so that the public body can get its work done. The full City Council Rules of Procedures for Meetings can be found here: www.essexjunction.org/codes/policies.

1. Please raise your hand to speak, whether in person or attending virtually.
2. You may only speak after you have been recognized by the president.
3. Before speaking, please state your name and address for the record.
4. All remarks must be addressed to the president.
5. Comments must be germane to the agenda item being addressed.
6. Comments under "Public to be Heard" must pertain to the business of the public body.
7. Repetitive and irrelevant comments are not allowed.
8. Please wait your turn; do not interrupt others.
9. Each person will be limited to two minutes of comment. This time may be extended only by permission of the president. The balance of time not used by each person will expire and cannot be reserved or yielded to another.
10. Each person may only speak once on the same agenda item, time permitting, with the consent of the president.
11. Those yet to be heard will be given priority over those who have already spoken.
12. You do not have the right to vote on agenda items.
13. Please obey orders and rulings of the president.
14. Keep your cool. Disruptive people will be asked to leave and removed if necessary.
15. Listen well, pay attention, and participate.



FY26 ANNUAL REPORT

CITY of ESSEX JUNCTION



All information available at: ccrpcvt.org/essex-junction

The **Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)** is a political subdivision of the State created by the municipalities of Chittenden County in 1966 for the development of policies, plans and programs that address regional issues and opportunities in Chittenden County. The CCRPC also serves as the region's federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and is responsible for transportation planning in Chittenden County in close collaboration with our municipalities, state and federal agencies, other partners, and the public.

The CCRPC is governed by a 29-member board consisting of one representative from each of the County's 19 municipalities, transportation representatives, and at-large members representing the interests of agriculture, environmental/conservation, business, and housing/socio-economic. CCRPC's purpose is to assist and serve its member municipalities to provide effective local government and address regional issues.



[Learn more about CCRPC »](#)

In **FY26**, the CCRPC invested about **\$9.8 million** in:



REGIONAL
LAND USE



TRANSPORTATION



EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT



ENERGY



NATURAL
RESOURCES



EQUITABLE
PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT



TRAINING



TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE

The program leverages more than **\$9.2 million** in Federal and State investment with \$270,000 in municipal dues and another \$330,000 in local match for specific projects — a more than 15:1 return on local investment.

Specific activities the CCRPC is engaged in with **Essex Junction** and CCRPC's regional activities are discussed in the following sections of this report and at ccrpcvt.org/essex-junction.

FY26 ESSEX JUNCTION REPRESENTATIVES

CCRPC Board | Representative: Scott McCormick | Alternate: Dan Kerin

Transportation Advisory Committee | Rep: Chris Yuen | Alt: Michael Giguere

Planning Advisory Committee | Rep: Chris Yuen | Alt: Michael Giguere

Clean Water Advisory Committee | Rep: Chelsea Mandigo | Alt: Tyler Marshall

Regional Emergency Management Committee | Ron Hoague, Chris Gaboriault

ESSEX JUNCTION ACTIVITIES

In FY2026, the CCRPC provided assistance to Essex Junction on the following projects and initiatives:

- **Pearl Street Multimodal Improvements Scoping:** [This study](#) began in FY25 and builds on the 2018 Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements study along VT Route 15 between Susie Wilson Road and West Street Extension. The primary goal is to develop an alternative that improves safety and connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians and can be funded with available budget. In FY26, staff refined design concepts, held a public meeting with the Planning Commission in August, and presented a draft report to the City Council in November. The final study was delivered and posted in December. Total consultant budget: \$30,000.
- **Essex Junction Comprehensive Plan Update:** CCRPC began working with the city to lead its Comprehensive Plan update. Staff finalized the contract and held a project kickoff with City staff and the Planning Commission in January, then developed a Public Engagement Plan that included three focus group discussion guides. Staff conducted door-to-door business outreach and hosted three focus groups (Housing in April, Energy and Climate in May, and business owners in June). Staff also began exploring updates to the Future Land Use Map, including a proposed approach to consolidate zoning districts into broader land use categories, and drafted updates to the plan's Energy and Natural Resources chapters. The work will continue into FY27 to continue drafting the plan, meeting with city staff and volunteers, and supporting the plan's adoption.
- **Pearl Street Pedestrian Crossings Scoping Study:** CCRPC worked with the city and consultant Hoyle Tanner to evaluate two locations for crosswalks along Pearl Street between Warner Avenue and Weston Way. The study evaluated five alternatives: no build; a marked crosswalk with a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at Willeys Court (Alternative 2); the same crossing with a raised refuge median (Alternative 3); a crosswalk with RRFB near Complex 159 (Alternative 4); and that crossing with a raised median (Alternative 5). The [final report](#) for this project was completed in FY26, and the Essex Junction City Council unanimously voted to endorse Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative for implementation, with the other alternatives to be considered at a future date. Total consultant budget: \$33,530
- **ICMA Grant-Funded Economic Mobility Manager:** CCRPC hired Cymone Bedford as the full-time Economic Mobility Manager, funded by and working with Essex Junction, Shelburne, South Burlington, and Winooski to co-design and implement strategies that improve economic mobility and opportunity for residents experiencing economic hardship. In FY26 Cymone established three Economic Mobility Communities of Practice on housing, entrepreneurship, and participation in local government comprised of municipal staff and community leaders. The Economic Mobility and Opportunity (EMO) Initiative also identified over 50 stakeholders and potential organizational partners for each economic mobility priority and began facilitating partnerships with key institutions including the VT Small Business Law Center. Cymone debuted a business support event series in partnership with the VT Professionals of Color Network called Startup and Scale to build awareness of existing statewide free resources for the small business community and to facilitate peer learning and networking.
- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Master Planning:** The City was selected to participate in the CCRPC's Northwest Vermont TOD project. The project, funded through a federal RAISE grant, is supporting TOD planning and bylaw updates in 12 communities in Northwest Vermont. In FY26, the project team completed the Connect the Junction Master Plan and continued community engagement, including an in-person open house in September and a joint presentation to the City Council and Planning Commission in November. Following Planning Commission endorsement,

the City Council adopted the Master Plan in December. The project then shifted to zoning updates, with staff and consultants beginning Land Development Code revisions, including development of a form-based code and updated design standards for the City Center and Pearl Street corridor. Total consultant budget: \$178,816.

- **Energy Planning and Implementation:** CCRPC continued to provide technical support for the statewide [Municipal Energy Resilience Program and EV charging grant opportunities](#). As part of the Comprehensive Plan update work, staff participated in piloting the use of the Municipal Climate Planning Guide developed by the Climate Action Office.
- **Infill Housing Education:** CCRPC worked with the four cities in Chittenden County (Burlington, Essex Junction, South Burlington, and Winooski) to create informational materials and hosted two panel discussions on [infill housing to encourage creation of ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, etc. on existing single-unit lots](#).
- **Emergency Response:** Staff developed and shared the final 2024 and 2025 All-Hazards Mitigation Plan monitoring reports to City staff to present to the city council.
- **Technical Assistance:** CCRPC staff provided a variety of technical assistance to Essex Junction:
 - Participated in the City's Walk Bike Committee, gave feedback to City staff on a RRFB siting for a proposed crosswalk location, and supported the City's Bike/Ped grant program application.
 - Answered zoning and technical assistance questions, advised on a potential housing study, and supported broader planning coordination throughout the year.
 - Reviewed a Section 248 application for proposed solar facilities located at Global Foundries.
 - CCRPC hosted and maintained the [Essex Junction Map Viewer](#).
- **Water Quality Planning Assistance:** CCRPC staff worked with the City on Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) compliance, Road Erosion Inventories (REIs), and other transportation-related water quality tasks.
- **Traffic Counts:** Two Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) counts, and Four Turning Movement counts were conducted in Essex Junction in FY26. Historic traffic counts conducted in support of Essex Junction's transportation projects and studies can be [found here](#).
- **Byway Coordination:** Chittenden County includes eight of Lake Champlain Byway's 22 communities: Milton, Colchester, Winooski, Essex Junction, Burlington, South Burlington, Shelburne, and Charlotte. In FY26, CCRPC worked with City to update the map and content of their Byway Informational Kiosk located at the corner of Railroad Avenue and Route 15. These new kiosk panels will be installed in the fall of 2026. CCRPC staff maintained the [Byway website](#) including a helpful [Interactive Map](#).
- **Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities (O&D) Transportation Program:** [The Chittenden County O&D Transportation Program](#) supports community members through affordable transportation to medical appointments, access to fresh food at the grocery store, and social visits. In FY26, 599 trips were provided to Essex Junction residents as part of this program.

FY2027 CCRPC WORK PROGRAM

Project Name	Brief Description	Total Budget
Essex Junction Comprehensive Plan Update	The current Essex Junction Comprehensive Plan needs to be updated prior to its 2027 expiration. Recent and ongoing projects such as the 2024 Community Vision and Strategic Action Plan and the Connect the Junction Transit Oriented Development Master Plan have identified the need to strengthen policy around emerging community priorities. The identified topics include Housing, Public Services, Economic Development, Transportation, Environmental Stewardship and Community Engagement, all of which will be addressed in a Comprehensive Plan update. This plan must also align with new State statutory requirements, the Regional Future Land Use map and municipal housing targets.	\$20,000
Five Corners Traffic Operations Feasibility and Modeling Study	The Five Corners intersection in Essex Junction is a key, complex facility identified in the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan for traffic operation improvements to enhance safety and support downtown growth. This project will evaluate prohibiting direct movement between Park Street and Main Street, rerouting traffic via Railroad Street to improve pedestrian conditions and optimize signal operations. This study will focus on a feasibility analysis and recommendations for next steps.	CCRPC Staff Assistance Only – No Cost to the City
Essex Junction Stormwater CCTV Inspection (Phase 4)	Phase 4 of this project will include hiring a consultant to televise the stormwater pipes in selected areas. Results will be consolidated into a pre-existing PACP standards condition and replacement report. Phases 1-4 data will be used in capital planning to develop a schedule framework for slip-lining or replacement of deficient pipes.	\$50,000
Short-term Planning Office Support	CCRPC will provide limited short-term planning office assistance in summer 2026 to cover front-desk duties, development review support, and meeting staffing during reduced staff availability.	\$6,580

ESSEX JUNCTION PROJECTS IN THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

The [TIP](#) is a prioritized, multi-year list of transportation projects in Chittenden County. To receive federal funds, each transportation project, program, or operation must be authorized through CCRPC approval of the TIP. Essex Junction projects included in the TIP are listed below. These projects are also included in the Vermont Agency of Transportation Capital Program.

- **AMTRAK Train Station Upgrades:** In 2022, the City received a \$3 million grant through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI), Congressionally Directed Spending program for renovations and improvements to the Essex Junction Multimodal Train and Bus Station. Design and planning are underway.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

The following is a summary of CCRPC's regional work completed during fiscal year 2026 (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026). For more information, visit ccrpcvt.org/annual-reports.

Economy

Chittenden County Brownfields Program: The Brownfields Program aids property owners, potential developers, and municipalities with investigating environmental issues prior to potential property redevelopment. In FY26, CCRPC used the remainder of three different grants from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) totaling nearly \$750,000 to conduct environmental assessment and clean-up planning services at 13 project sites in four municipalities across the county. CCRPC anticipates applying for an additional \$1M Coalition Assessment Grant from EPA this fall to continue supporting assessment work. In FY27, funds from a \$1M EPA grant will be available from the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund CCRPC established in FY26 to aid municipalities and property owners with environmental clean-up of contaminated properties.

Economic Mobility and Opportunity: In partnership with Essex Junction, Shelburne, South Burlington, and Winooski, CCRPC launched a regional economic mobility initiative through the International City/County Management Association's national Economic Mobility and Opportunity Program. Using the Urban Institute's Upward Mobility Framework, CCRPC helped the municipalities identify shared priorities and develop a regional vision for economic mobility. CCRPC also established Municipal Equity Communities of Practice focused on housing, entrepreneurship, and participation in local government; identified more than 50 potential partners for each priority area; and began building partnerships with key organizations. This work included launching *Startup and Scale* with the Vermont Professionals of Color Network, an event series connecting small businesses with free statewide resources, peer learning, and networking opportunities.

Chittenden County Communications Union District (CCCUD): CCRPC assisted [the CCCUD](#) as they worked to provide high-speed internet access to unserved and underserved addresses in their eight-municipality district, which includes Essex, Essex Junction, Jericho, Shelburne, South Burlington, Underhill, Westford and Williston. In 2026, the CCCUD partnered with Fidium/Consolidated Communications to provide broadband service to all the unserved and underserved locations in the district (~500+ locations). Phase 1 of the project, funded with \$2.1M in Construction Grant funds from the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB), is complete and has brought symmetrical, multi-gig speed internet access to the unserved and underserved locations in Shelburne, Essex, Westford and Williston. Phase 2 will be funded with an additional grant award to Comcast from the Federal BEAD program and will include Jericho and Underhill.

Community Development

2026 ECOS Regional Plan: The [2026 Chittenden County ECOS Plan](#) (Environment; Community; Opportunity; Sustainability) is the regional plan for Chittenden County and combines the Regional Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and Enhanced Energy Plan into one. On May 20, 2026, the CCRPC Board of Directors adopted the 2026 ECOS Regional Plan and received [Land Use Review Board approval](#) on July 31, 2026. Approval of the Plan by the LURB follows over five years of work by municipalities, CCRPC staff, and the public. Staff look forward to implementing the plan's goals and actions through CCRPC's work program.

- **2026 ECOS Regional Plan Outreach:** CCRPC coordinated public communications and engagement supporting the development and adoption of the 2026 ECOS Regional Plan. This included public notices and hearings, online engagement opportunities, and the development

of accessible, graphically designed outreach materials – including posters, flyers, one-page summaries, presentations, maps, handouts, and other materials – to make complex planning topics easier to understand during the more than 160 public engagement activities held in all 19 municipalities.

Municipal Plans & Staff Support: CCRPC reviewed nine municipal plans for compliance with state planning goals and compatibility with the ECOS Regional Plan. In FY26, CCRPC staff provided designated staff support to Shelburne, St. George and Underhill to fill zoning administrator and town planner vacancies.

Housing: CCRPC organized semi-annual Regional Housing Convenings to facilitate peer exchanges on housing initiatives across the county. The fall event included a presentation on the Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) and a municipal roundtable. In the spring, the NH Youth Movement and 603 Forward presented how to build pro-home communities in cities and towns. CCRPC coordinated with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) and City of Essex Junction on the [Homes for All Initiative](#), specifically the 802 Homes catalog pilot project. The catalog includes 10 pre-permitted, construction-ready Missing Middle Housing designs (ADUs through four-unit buildings) that municipalities can adopt in their development regulations to speed up permitting and cut costs for small-scale developers. These designs will be available for use by any municipality after completion of the pilot project.

Northwest VT Transit Oriented Development (TOD): Beginning in FY23, the CCRPC initiated work on a \$2.1M federal RAISE planning grant to advance transit-oriented development (TOD) planning across 12 communities in five Northwest Vermont counties. The grant work included community TOD master plans, municipal zoning updates to support compact, mixed-use development, a regional real estate market analysis, and a transit-focused assessment to evaluate opportunities for enhanced regional transit service. In FY26, CCRPC completed the Transit, Finance, and Governance Task and substantially completed the community master planning and municipal zoning updates for all 12 participating communities.

Transportation

Regional Transportation Safety Action Plan: In FY26, CCRPC completed a comprehensive [Regional Safety Action Plan \(RSAP\) for Chittenden County](#). The RSAP provides a data-driven, proactive and integrated approach to enhance regional roadway safety by identifying innovative and proven safety solutions to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury crashes for all road users in the county. This ready-to-implement RSAP meets all the requirements of a safety action plan required by the USDOT Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant program and enables the CCRPC and member municipalities to apply for implementation funding.

Traffic Alert Program: During FY26, CCRPC distributed 42 weekly emails with timely information about construction, road closures, and other activities affecting travel in Chittenden County. This free seasonal service runs from April through December and is available to anyone interested in staying informed about regional traffic impacts. To subscribe to the weekly Traffic Alert email, or for more information, visit the [Traffic Alert webpage](#).

Public Transportation Planning: CCRPC remains engaged with [Green Mountain Transit \(GMT\)](#) on a variety of public transit planning projects and initiatives. During FY26, CCRPC provided \$761,000 to GMT for transit planning in Chittenden County. CCRPC and GMT also coordinated with VTrans and South Burlington to continue a Regional Transit Signal Priority (TSP) feasibility study that is currently piloting TSP technology on a transit priority route: Dorset Street between Williston Road and Garden Street.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): The CCRPC Board adopted the [Regional Transportation Options Plan](#) on February 18, 2026. The plan assesses the feasibility of TDM options and provides a

framework to advance recommendations of both the 2023 [Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#) (MTP) and the Chittenden County [I-89 2050 Study](#). CCRPC staff participated in CATMA's 4th Annual Transportation Summit and their Chittenden County Major Employer Regional Transit Roundtable.

Active Transportation Planning: CCRPC provided active transportation (walk, bike, roll) technical assistance to municipalities and businesses, assisted municipalities with active transportation grants and UPWP applications, managed active transportation UPWP projects, and conducted bicycle/pedestrian counts on paths, designated bike lanes, and other roadways. These efforts are designed to advance the infrastructure and program recommendations in the [Regional Active Transportation Plan](#).

Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities (O&D) Transportation Program: [The Chittenden County O&D Transportation Program](#) supports community members through affordable transportation to medical appointments, access to fresh food at the grocery store, and social visits. In FY26, the O&D Committee held six meetings to discuss and decide on program funding, the VTrans grant application process, volunteer driver outreach, and the transition of the program from GMT to Rural Community Transportation (RCT) and Special Services Transportation Agency (SSTA).

Regional Transportation Resilience Planning: The purpose of this project is to identify and prioritize road segments and structures in the county that are vulnerable to flood damage. In FY26, CCRPC staff worked with a consultant to use the Transportation Resilience Planning Tool (TRPT) vulnerability scoring and develop a more robust prioritization schema. They also worked with municipal Road Foremen to map 35+ repeat storm-damage locations across nine municipalities and developed a prioritized list of projects that will move forward to scoping. Phase 2 of this project will begin in FY27 and will conduct scoping on the highest priority segments and structures that were identified during phase 1.

Exit 14 Scoping Study: CCRPC, in collaboration with VTrans, the cities of South Burlington and Burlington, and other partners initiated a scoping study to evaluate alternatives to improve safety, connectivity, and operational efficiency for all users of the [Exit 14 Interchange](#) area. The study recommends short-, medium-, and long-term improvements to address multimodal issues. The final report is available [here](#).

Energy & Climate

Regional Energy Planning and Implementation: CCRPC helped create or update municipal enhanced energy plans for several municipalities in FY26. CCRPC continued to provide technical support to municipalities for the statewide [Municipal Energy Resilience Program](#) for municipal buildings, EV charging, fleet electrification, and other energy and climate-related programs. CCRPC coordinated with state agencies, utilities, and other partners to provide information about energy and resilience programs and funding opportunities for municipalities. CCRPC staff also served as the state planning representative on the [Vermont Systems Planning Committee](#) (VSPC).

Emergency Management & Hazard Mitigation

Emergency Management: CCRPC continued to staff the Regional Emergency Management Committee ([REMC](#)), a group that coordinates and supports regional all-hazard emergency planning and preparedness activities to improve the region's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from all disasters. Over the past year, the REMC met three times, hosting presentations on the Vermont Wildland Fire Program, the State Emergency Management Plan update, Red Cross disaster services, and a training session on the FEMA Public Assistance program. Work on regional emergency management planning has been limited because federal emergency management planning grant (EMPG) funds have been unavailable from FEMA. CCRPC staff continued to support municipal and state emergency management partners through information sharing, training opportunities, and preparedness activities. CCRPC staff maintain readiness to support the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) when called upon and to serve as the local liaison between municipalities and the state to collect damage assessment information after significant storm events. CCRPC also collected information from each municipality on annual implementation of

hazard mitigation activities.

Infrastructure & Implementation

VT Culverts: [The VT Culverts website](#) can be used by municipalities to view a town's bridges and culvert locations on a map and to understand their condition or inventory date. CCRPC is one of two RPCs that manage the website. As of June 2026, five Chittenden County municipalities actively used VT Culverts to inventory town-maintained bridges and culverts. In FY26, CCRPC staff contracted with Stone Environmental to execute enhancements to the VT Culverts platform. Work included enhanced user guides, ArcGIS online content organization, and general technical assistance.

Clean Water / Stormwater & Natural Resources

Clean Water: CCRPC coordinated regional clean water efforts through its [Clean Water Advisory Committee and MS-4 Sub-Committee](#) and continued serving on the Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program Advisory Committee. On behalf of the nine municipalities and three organizations – UVM, Patrick Leahy Burlington International Airport, and VTrans – subject to the [MS4 permit](#), CCRPC managed shared public education and involvement programs, including [Rethink Runoff](#). As the [Clean Water Service Provider \(CWSP\) for the Northern Lake Champlain Direct Drainages \(Basin 5\)](#), CCRPC worked with the [Basin 5 Water Quality Council](#) to oversee non-regulatory projects that reduce phosphorus entering local waterways and Lake Champlain. Staff also coordinated regularly with the Clean Water Service Providers for the neighboring Lamoille (Basin 7) and Winooski (Basin 8) watersheds.

Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) Compliance and Water Quality Planning Assistance: CCRPC helped Chittenden County municipalities meet their Municipal Roads General Permit requirements by conducting Road Erosion Inventories, tracking and documenting improvements to road segments and drainage outlets, and supporting required reporting to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. CCRPC also assisted municipalities with the State's Grants in Aid program, which provides funding for stormwater improvements that support permit compliance. In FY26, 15 Chittenden County municipalities participated in the program and received awards totaling \$448,500.

Partnership & Engagement

Municipal Elected Official Forums: CCRPC hosted three forums for Chittenden County Selectboard/City Council members and Town/City Managers/Administrators to support information-sharing and regional collaboration.

Municipal Legislative Breakfast: CCRPC convened the annual Municipal Legislative Breakfast, bringing together municipal officials, legislators, and regional partners to discuss shared priorities and issues affecting Chittenden County communities.

Public Participation Plan: CCRPC developed and began implementing an organization-wide [Community Liaison Policy](#), [Stipend Policy](#), and [Language Access Plan](#) as part of the ongoing update to the federally required [Public Participation Plan](#).

Accessible and Inclusive Communications: CCRPC improved the accessibility and usability of its website, project pages and materials, meeting information, and online engagement resources while supporting language access and inclusive participation in regional planning activities.

Religious and Cultural Days of Significance Calendar: CCRPC maintained and expanded an online [calendar](#) that outlines religious and cultural days of significance. The list is not exhaustive but is intended to be a resource to be consulted prior to scheduling meetings and events.

Funding Opportunities Database: CCRPC maintained and expanded this searchable [public database](#), a near complete list of funding opportunities available to municipalities, non-profits, and businesses for

planning and infrastructure-related projects.

Community Engagement Database: CCRPC maintained and expanded a searchable [public database of Community Engagement Efforts in Chittenden County](#) to improve coordination among organizations and municipalities, reduce duplication of outreach, and minimize engagement fatigue.

Municipal Equity Community of Practice: With funding support from Essex Junction and Winooski, CCRPC launched a Municipal Equity Community of Practice, convening monthly meetings of municipal staff working on equity and engagement to share best practices, discuss challenges, exchange resources, and identify opportunities for collaboration. In FY26, topics included language access, equitable hiring and retention practices, ethical AI use, and community engagement strategies, while also advancing shared resources and tools such as CCRPC's [Community Engagement Tracker](#) and Community Asset Map and exploring collaborative multilingual civic engagement resources.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

CCRPC helps municipalities turn local priorities into coordinated plans, projects, and investments. Through its annual [Unified Planning Work Program \(UPWP\)](#) application process, CCRPC provides municipalities and partners the opportunity to apply for federal funds to advance municipal and regional priorities.

Every November, CCRPC begins the process of creating the next fiscal year's UPWP and announces a request for projects. CCRPC receives funding from local, state, and federal sources for various programs and initiatives. We typically have about \$2M available for new municipal and partner projects. Please [visit the UPWP webpage](#) for more information. Applications are due in late January.

The following is a summary of the types of services CCRPC provides.

Transportation-Related Projects (Federal Transportation Planning Funding)

- Project development/scoping that will lead to implementation (roadways, bridges, intersections, traffic signals, sidewalks, and bike facilities).
- Multimodal transportation planning (Corridor and Area-wide Studies).
- Stormwater/Water Quality planning and project scoping consistent with the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP), tactical basin plans or state/regional goals, plans, and permits.
- Transportation-related education or outreach to historically excluded and underrepresented populations.

Land Use and Energy Implementation Assistance (may be eligible for transportation funding if the project has a transportation connection)

Municipal Plans and Regulations: CCRPC staff are available to help municipalities write and amend municipal plans on a fee-for-service basis. CCRPC staff can also assist municipalities with developing or amending municipal regulations on a fee-for-service basis. CCRPC staff may be able to temporarily fill zoning administrator or town planner positions for a municipality after the loss of an employee. In FY26, CCRPC provided both services to Chittenden County municipalities. CCRPC also retains pre-qualified consultants with municipal regulation experience that can be called upon to assist with municipal bylaws.

Chittenden County Better Connections Program: the CCRPC encourages municipalities to coordinate land use decisions with transportation investments that build community resilience, with a particular emphasis on projects that support the implementation of walkable communities.

Energy & Climate Implementation Assistance, including but not limited to:

- Education and outreach conducted to increase awareness and understanding of local, regional, and state energy and climate plans
- Energy-related transportation and land use sector implementation activities (e.g., climate resilience, public transportation, bike-ped projects, compact mixed-use development, electric vehicles, charging infrastructure and e-bikes)
- Electricity sector implementation activities (e.g., electric efficiency and conservation measures, smart grid, appropriate siting of renewables-based generating facilities, electricity/power resilience)

Other assistance, including Health and/or Equity Impact Assessments as part of any of the previous categories.

Communications, Outreach & Engagement Assistance

Communications, design, and document support: CCRPC provides fee-for-service communications support to help municipalities present information clearly, accessibly, and professionally to municipal officials and staff, regional partners, community organizations, and the public. Services may include: writing and editing; document design, formatting, and production; logo and visual identity development; and the creation of coordinated graphics and communications materials such as flyers, one-pagers, presentations, posters, reports, newsletters, public notices, webpages, and ready-to-share outreach packages.

Outreach and engagement support: CCRPC provides support for municipal planning projects, studies, and decision-making processes, including developing accessible engagement strategies and outreach materials, identifying and reaching stakeholders, and designing opportunities for community input.

Planning and facilitating accessible public meetings, workshops, surveys, focus groups, tabling opportunities, and other engagement activities.

Support for reaching historically excluded and underrepresented populations and reducing barriers to participation through accessible and inclusive engagement approaches.

Support for documenting, summarizing, and incorporating community feedback into plans, projects, and decisions.

Technical Assistance

CCRPC makes free technical assistance available to all member municipalities across all planning-related topics. For details and limitations, please see CCRPC's [technical assistance policy](#). Below is an overview of the different types of technical assistance to member municipalities each fiscal year.

- **Transportation Technical Assistance:** CCRPC can provide the following transportation technical assistance to member municipalities:
 - Speed studies
 - Roadway safety assessments
 - Traffic signal and stop sign warrant analyses
 - Pavement condition assessments
 - Roadway capacity, signal timing, and level-of-service evaluations
 - Data collection – traffic, walk/bike, sidewalk, culverts, and more
 - Road erosion inventories for Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) compliance
- **Land Use and General Technical Assistance:** Member municipalities are eligible to receive 12 hours of land use and general technical assistance per fiscal year at no charge. Examples of

technical assistance in this category include municipal plan data requests, review of development review decisions, development regulation audits, or project development-related guidance.

- **Geographic Information System (GIS) Technical Assistance:** Member municipalities or non-profit municipal organizations are eligible to receive 12 hours of GIS-related technical assistance per fiscal year at no additional charge. These hours can be used for map creation, data development, GIS analysis, or GIS user assistance.

For further information about the CCRPC, please visit ccrpcvt.org or contact Charlie Baker, CCRPC Executive Director: cbaker@ccrpcvt.org.



MEMO

To: City Council
From: Chelsea Mandigo, Water Quality Superintendent
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Agenda Item: DH Conversation Water Quality

This is intended to be an opportunity for the Council to engage with the Department Head and to have a conversation that is not driven by a business item or budget need, but an honest look into their operations, staff, and services. The Department Head will begin with a few highlights from each of the three sections below before opening it up to a dialogue with the Council. The intention is for this conversation to be 10-15 minutes.

Six-Month Department Look Back (celebrations, accomplishments, mistakes, challenges, staff, volunteers, community members, partnerships, budgets, programs, initiatives, efforts, etc.)

- Water Resource Recovery
 - Challenge and Accomplishment: Failure of Anaerobic Digester (sensitive biological process that is the stomach of solids management)- Completed an emergency takedown and repair of the digester system. This involved cleaning the system in-house, fixing the failed internal mechanical system, and starting the digester system from scratch with support from South Burlington Water Resource Recovery Facility. This was a 3-month process and a tremendous learning curve.
 - Invested in maintenance management software and app, to better keep track of preventive maintenance needs, create schedules, inventory of parts, and track on-demand repairs.
 - Gave a half-dozen tours of the facility, including 1) Governor Institute of Vermont Engineering and 2) Center of Technology Essex Natural Resources Program in partnership with the Vermont Department of Labor Apprenticeship Week with VTDOL Commissioner and Staff, ANR Secretary, DEC Commissioner, and VT Rural Water Association in attendance. Participated in Vermont Water Quality Week 9/21-9/25, giving two tours with nearly a dozen people attending.
 - Created a Lab Manager position and promoted within, improving workflow efficiencies
 - Celebrations
 - Fourth successful year of wastewater internship program, with one of the two interns becoming a wastewater operator for South Burlington. We also hosted one Essex High School student for 40-hour academic internship, inspiring her to apply as an environmental engineering major on college applications.
 - John Brooks passed his VT Grade 2 Domestic Wastewater License Exam, Ken McGowan passed his New England Water Environment Association Lab Analyst Exam, and Tyler Sullivan received the Green Mountain Water Environment Association Bob Wood Young Professional Award.
 - Four years ago, we experienced complete staff turnover due to the Grey Tsunami. Now, most of the team has been with the City for three years, allowing us to find our

rhythm as a team. We have developed the skill set to manage a wide range of tasks related to day-to-day operations, maintenance, troubleshooting, and problem-solving in-house. Our team excels at thinking on our feet, collaborating effectively, and leveraging diverse skills to address complex issues related to equipment and the wastewater treatment process.

- Installed a 3-bay drying bed, eliminating our dependency on the Winooski WWTF bed and decreasing the time Public Works spends assisting with pump station cleanings.
- Land applied 600,000 gallons of liquid biosolids with Whitcomb Farm this past spring.
- Stormwater
 - Hit one year of having a Stormwater Coordinator on staff again, allowing stormwater projects to move forward again.
 - Completed a partially grant-funded outlet stabilization project on Brickyard Rd to comply with our MS4 permit requirements.
 - Partnered with Rethink Runoff to host a rain garden clean-up event on Green Up Day with nearly 20 residents in attendance.
 - Continued increased erosion control inspections of construction sites to comply with new MS4 permit requirements.
 - Completed design of two Phosphorus Control Projects using grant funds 1) Hiawatha Stormwater Infiltration 2) South St/Tyler Drive Stormwater Treatment Practice retrofit.
 - Developed a prioritization plan for sliplining based on 4 years of TV work.
 - Updated the Land Development Code to make stormwater regulations better match new MS4 permit requirements and capture smaller-sized projects for erosion control measures.
 - Discovered major illicit discharge and worked with a local restaurant to resolve the issue.
 - Summer interns inspected catch basins, developed maintenance and cleaning lists, and conducted water quality sampling as required by the MS4 permit.
- Sanitation
 - Worked with Public Works to create a plan for utilizing a camera purchased last year. This camera will enable Public Works to examine sewer lines after flushing them to help identify sources of inflow and infiltration.
 - Continued to move forward the three pump station replacement projects as well as the force main replacement project.
 - Updated Land Development Code to contain only requirements related to parcel development and move unrelated requirements to a Sewer Ordinance currently under development.

Six-Month Department Look Ahead (celebrations, accomplishments, mistakes, challenges, staff, volunteers, community members, partnerships, budgets, programs, initiatives, efforts, etc.)

- Water Resource Recovery
 - Challenge: Facility has entered “middle-age” since last major upgrade, resulting in more costly maintenance and repair cycles. Working on developing a system to predict these needs better and build the capital plan accordingly.
 - Complete additional in-house capital projects, including equalization tank membrane replacement.

- Begin planning for post-2028 biosolids management, which is when land application will no longer be an option.
- Update the septage receiving and acceptance policy.
- Stormwater
 - Slipline Maplewood Lane stormwater pipes. Plan for next phase of sliplining.
 - Follow discussion regarding the State Regional Stormwater Utility Study Committee, provide input via Green Mountain Water and Environment Association representative.
 - Develop a stormwater management strategy to encourage sump pump disconnection from sewer in homes.
 - Work with Finance Director to build capital plan now that we have some larger projects engineered through final design.
 - Update infrastructure maps using QGIS for more efficient field work.
- Sanitation
 - Draft and adopt a Sewer Use Ordinance
 - Draft and adopt a Sewer Allocation Policy
 - Allocated 10% of Stormwater Coordinator time for FY28 to tackle inflow and infiltration. They will work in collaboration with Public Works to identify sources in the collection system and implement solutions.
 - Continue to work with the Town of Essex on the West St force main and pump station replacements.
 - Finish updating the two-party agreement with the Town of Essex.
 - Collaborate with Hamlin Engineers to complete the Collection System Capacity Study. The final product will be a database model that enables us to update flow data, identify pinch points in the system as new developments arise, and flag current issues.

Anything you think the Council should know

- Biosolids management: Statewide challenges ahead; costs expected to rise significantly due to reduced reuse options and longer hauling distances.
- Growth pressures: Balancing support for Vermont's housing needs with limitations of remote pump stations and treatment capacity.
- Inflation: Many capital projects and equipment quotes received during budget formation a year in advance are being impacted by inflation when we request updated quotes before making a purchase. I am collaborating with the Finance Director this budget season to establish a more effective adjustment factor.
- PFAS Report- All 92 WWTF's in VT had their influent and effluent sampled for PFAS compounds. Detectable levels were found at every facility. Magnitude varied. VT DEC is focusing on source reduction and control with facilities seeing elevated amounts. Report is being released in October.



MEMO

To: City Council
From: Regina Mahony, City Manager
CC: Chris Gaboriault, Fire Chief and Rick Smith, 2nd Assistant Chief
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Agenda Item: Discussion and Consideration of Command Vehicle Purchase

ISSUE: To purchase the EJ Fire Department Command Vehicle in the Capital Plan/Rolling Stock.

DISCUSSION: This topic was last discussed at the Council on July 8, 2026. At that meeting the conversation was tabled to a future date. In summary there were two main reasons to table, with one Council member ready to vote to purchase on July 8th. The reasons for tabling were to wait until we have a handle on what the FY28 budget looks like; and the other was to wait until we have a better idea of how this years reappraisal has impacted taxpayers.

While we do not yet have a handle on what the FY28 draft budget looks like, we know this \$70,000 (already approved) expenditure is not going to make or break the FY28 budget. We do have a handle on the reappraisal impacts (only 9 assessment appeals to the BCA is an indicator).

Meanwhile, the importance of bringing this forward now has elevated based on recent incident response. We have had several fire incidents of late that have clarified the need for this command vehicle. To put it succinctly, when we have a multiple alarm fire, we have some failures in our current setup. Therefore, this command vehicle is not an optional apparatus purchase, but a firefighter-safety and incident-management investment. The attached summary from 2nd Assistant Chief, Rick Smith, describes the situation in full detail.

We recognize it may be useful to visit the Fire Station and see the current “Car 9” to fully understand the challenge. We’d like to offer that opportunity sooner than later and before we get into the busy budget and holiday season.

Background:

The fire department currently operates a 2019 Ford F-150 pick-up truck to fill the role of Utility Vehicle, First Response and Command. This vehicle is called “Car 9”. This vehicle is housed at the fire station, to accommodate those roles.

To fill an Incident Command role, a chief officer is required to respond to the station, gear up and respond to a reported emergency. In most cases, a command officer is responding along with fire apparatus.

The Incident Commander (IC) is the designated individual responsible for overseeing the entire incident response process. This role is vital for ensuring effective coordination and decision-making during emergencies.

Performing a size-up and directing responding resources is challenging when an IC arrives at the same time or shortly after fire units are already on scene. Having a Command Vehicle will provide an expedited response

providing critical minutes to an IC, who needs to evaluate an incident, access resources are required, review resources responding, establish a plan of action and communicate that plan to responding units.

A Command Vehicle will also serve as a critical outpost, providing IC with the necessary space and technology to coordinate effectively during more complex emergencies.

COST: The estimated cost for adding this resource is \$82,912.00 for both the vehicle and the upfit. Two quotes were received: one from MHQ for both the truck and upfit for \$79,408.65; and Key Chevrolet (truck) & Hardwired (upfit) for \$75,011.49. The lower price is with Key Chevrolet and Hardwired. There is also a command cabinet for \$7,901, bringing the total to \$82,912. Radios were also purchased in FY26 for this vehicle. There are sufficient funds to cover this purchase: \$70,000.00 currently in Rolling Stock (FY26) and the additional \$12,912.00 would be supported from the Fire Departments FY27 budget.

RECOMMENDATION: Under the new purchasing policy the City Council is the authorizing agent for purchases of \$70,000 or more. It is recommended that the Council approve the \$82,912.00 expenditure to improve Incident Management Operations.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: “I move that the City Council authorize the purchase of the command vehicle and the associated cabinet for \$82,912.”

ATTACHMENTS:

Summary of Incident Response from 2nd Assistant Chief, Rick Smith dated August 22, 2026

“The problem we have that continues to exist is that Car 9 is currently being asked to serve two competing purposes: incident command and utility/EMS response. As a result, it is not properly configured to perform either mission when an incident escalates. If Command remains inside Car 9, we have access to two mobile radios and an iPad, but there is insufficient workspace to effectively manage accountability, tactical worksheets, incoming resources, and expanding incident organization. Remaining inside the vehicle also limits some of the situational awareness available from directly observing conditions, including wind, smoke behavior, fireground activity, and radio traffic around the command post. It also makes Command less visible and accessible to incoming mutual-aid chief officers. If Command operates outside Car 9, those problems improve, but another serious problem is created: communications.

At today's fire, I required three portable radios simply to monitor and manage Tac 2, VTAC 11, and interior crews operating on Channel 3. Had a MAYDAY occurred and required a dedicated emergency channel or additional communications function, I potentially would have needed a fourth radio or another person dedicated to managing communications. NFPA 1550 19.1.3 states “When a division or group has been implemented, the communications system shall have the capacity to provide a dispatch radio channel, a command radio channel, and a tactical radio channel.” And it is then backed up by **19.1.4** “The communications system shall provide reserve capacity for complex or multiple incidents.”

More concerning, is today, we experienced actual communications failures. Crews operating within visual range of Command on the balcony of the fire apartment could not be heard on my portable radio. During initial entry, the fire attack crew was unable to communicate with Command. We ultimately had to compensate by moving personnel into positions where face-to-face communication was possible and, in one instance, communicating by yelling between the ground and a second-floor balcony. Fortunately, no firefighter emergency occurred during those communications failures.

That should not be interpreted as evidence that our current system worked. It should be treated as a warning that we identified a vulnerability before someone was injured. Utility 61 was used for years on Routine Calls and Car 9 took over that roll but NFPA 1550 19.1.1 states “The communications system shall meet the requirements of the emergency services organization (ESO) for both routine and large-scale emergencies.” Our current system does not do this for any call above Routine. Once a Second Alarm fire is called, we have 6 agencies, multiple divisions and groups assigned and limited ability to account and communicate with them all.

NIOSH firefighter fatality investigations have repeatedly identified incident command, communications, accountability, and situational awareness as critical firefighter-safety issues. In its analysis of firefighter fatality investigations, NIOSH identified incident command and communications among its most frequent recommendations associated with traumatic firefighter fatalities. NIOSH has specifically recommended that incident commanders maintain accountability for personnel, that firefighters maintain reliable two-way communications with Command, and that departments establish procedures to prevent excessive or conflicting radio traffic from interfering with emergency communications.

Those recommendations exist because fire departments career, paid call, and volunteer, have experienced tragic outcomes when these systems failed.

I believe our recent incidents demonstrate that we currently have a gap between those principles and the equipment we are providing our incident commanders. A properly designed command vehicle would provide a dedicated command platform with a radio bank capable of simultaneously monitoring necessary channels, an adjustable accountability and tactical worksheet system, reliable communications equipment, charging and technology capability, command identification and visibility, and sufficient workspace to manage a growing incident. This is not simply additional transportation; it is part of the incident-management system. NFPA 1550 A.18.3.8 states “In order to effectively command an incident, it is recognized that the incident commander needs to be in the most advantageous position possible. The best position is a fixed, visible, and accessible location at the command post. This can be accomplished utilizing the incident commander’s staff vehicle, a designated command vehicle, or fire apparatus. An acceptable alternative is **utilizing the rear area of a sport utility vehicle** or van-style vehicle. This method will provide the incident commander with an area that is quiet and free of distractions from which to command an incident.”

There is a second issue that became apparent during the four-alarm fire last Tuesday.

Because Car 9 is being used as a combination command/utility vehicle, its storage is occupied by equipment intended to support other response functions. Yet during an extended incident, when we began exhausting filled SCBA cylinders, drinking water, and other supplies, the department did not have an appropriate utility vehicle available to shuttle personnel and equipment between the station and the incident. Members ultimately had to use personal vehicles.

That creates another preventable safety concern. Fireground equipment and PPE can carry combustion products, contaminants and carcinogens. Using members' personal vehicles to transport contaminated equipment creates the potential to transfer those contaminants into vehicles later occupied by their families and friends. A dedicated utility/logistics vehicle would allow us to move SCBA cylinders, rehab supplies, equipment, and personnel without unnecessarily introducing fireground contamination into privately owned vehicles.

The distinction is important: **a command vehicle and a utility vehicle perform different operational functions.** Trying to make Car 9 perform both missions has resulted in compromises to both.

I am also concerned about the City's risk exposure now that these deficiencies have been identified through actual incidents. The need for a command vehicle was identified by the Fire Department, reviewed through the

budget process, and at one point funded before ultimately being denied on the premise that the purchase could wait because the department has operated without it for many years. Past practice does not necessarily establish that current practice is adequate.

The Essex Junction Fire Department is responding to increasingly complex incidents, including significant mutual-aid operations requiring multiple tactical channels, multiple agencies, expanded accountability, logistics, and command coordination. Our incident-management capability needs to reflect the incidents we are responding to today. Today, we had the personnel. We arrived within minutes of dispatch. We had experienced officers and mutual-aid resources available. Yet we still experienced communications problems significant enough that crews and Command had to resort to face-to-face and shouted communications. My greatest concern is that we have now identified the problem **before** a firefighter is hurt. We should not wait for a MAYDAY, firefighter injury, or line-of-duty death before addressing deficiencies we already know exist.”



MEMO

To: City Council

From: Chris Yuen, Community Development Director

Meeting Date: September 23, 2026

Agenda Item: 2026 Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments as submitted by the Planning Commission

ISSUE:

Whether the City Council should warn a public hearing on the 2026 Land Development Code amendments submitted by the Planning Commission.

DISCUSSION:

Where This Stands

The Planning Commission approved its report under 24 V.S.A. § 4441(c) on August 11, 2026, and warned a public hearing on August 19. It held that hearing on September 3. Following the hearing the Commission approved a revised report and voted 5-0 to submit it, together with the proposed amendments, to the City Council.

The amendments implement the Connect the Junction Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan, which the Council adopted in December 2025. They also carry a set of technical corrections and updates that have accumulated since the last amendment cycle.

Presentation slides are included as attachment 7. Staff does not intend to go through all of them on September 23, since the Council has already seen earlier versions. Staff will give a short overview and take questions.

What the Amendments Do

- A form-based code for the Village Center (VC) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) districts. This replaces the current standard, which asks whether a design is harmonious with its surroundings, with measurable standards for building height in relation to street width, setbacks and buffers next to residential neighborhoods, building frontage and articulation, parking location and screening, landscaping, and residential unit mix.
- Adjustment of the Design Review Overlay boundary to exclude the areas now covered by the form-based standards, and extension of the Historic Preservation Overlay boundary to include the Village Center.
- Technical updates to development review procedures and timelines, parking and driveway standards, sign standards, the stormwater and erosion control provisions under Section 713, and the definitions in Chapter 2.
- An exemption from design review for 802 Homes Catalogue designs, subject to specified conditions.

- Reorganization of the parking waiver and joint parking provisions, along with revised bicycle storage, driveway, and setback encroachment standards.
- Revisions to the livestock standards in Section 724, and to related definitions and use provisions, to conform to Vermont Act 166 (2026).
- Updates to the sewer provisions in Chapter 11 and the water system provisions in Chapter 14.

The form-based standards apply only within the Village Center and TOD districts, which extend from the City Center west along Pearl Street to approximately the Champlain Valley Exposition. The remainder of the Connect the Junction study area, west of that point, is not part of this package due to pending wastewater infrastructure upgrades that are not yet complete and will be taken up in a later phase.

The § 4441(c) report attached to this memo describes the amendments in full and contains the findings the statute requires.

Building Height and Scale

The maximum height in the TOD district is nine stories, with a tenth story available only for affordable housing developments under the state affordable housing density bonus. In the Village Center the maximum varies by subdistrict, with the tallest areas between Park Street and Maple Street. The street room standard limits building height relative to the width of the street a building faces, so the maximum shown on the zoning map will not be achievable on every parcel.

These limits are not new in this package. The Council set them in December 2025 when it adopted the Connect the Junction Plan, and these amendments implement that decision.

The Council's choice was driven partially by the City's housing targets. The Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2025-2029 establishes statewide and county-level housing need, and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission divides the county figure into a target for each municipality. Essex Junction's mid-range target is 3,061 additional homes by 2050. The capacity analysis prepared for the master plan tested three height options against that target. It estimated capacity for 1,144 homes at four stories with a bonus story, 1,662 at seven with a bonus story, and 2,008 at nine with a bonus story. The nine-story option accommodates roughly two-thirds of the mid-range target within the City Center and Pearl Street corridor. The balance would need to be accommodated elsewhere in the city.

Public engagement also informed the decision and is described in the attached summary. The Planning Commission and City Council considered the three options and selected the nine-story limit, with a tenth story available only for affordable housing. The Council retains the authority to modify the proposal, including the height limits, before adoption.

Public Engagement

Outreach on the form-based code began with the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan process in 2025, when the height limits were set, and continued through the Planning Commission's public hearing on September 3, 2026. The attached Public Engagement Summary describes the outreach conducted, presents the results of the 2025 engagement on building height, and reproduces or summarizes every comment received.

Five members of the public spoke at the Planning Commission's hearing. Most of the comment concerned building height. Commenters said that nine or ten stories is out of scale for Essex Junction, that taller buildings would block sunlight and change the character of the community, and that the tallest permitted buildings would be among the tallest in the state. One resident who lives near Pearl Street suggested five to six stories as a more livable limit for that corridor. Other comments addressed

affordability, infrastructure costs and property taxes, fire department capacity, air quality near highways, street trees and landscaping, and enforcement of Code standards after construction. The Public Engagement Summary sets out the comments in full.

The Commission discussed whether to reopen the height limits in light of the testimony and did not do so. It voted 5-0 to close the hearing and 5-0 to forward the amendments to the Council.

Comprehensive Plan

It is important to note that the 2026 Housing Omnibus bill (Act 179) included two additions to the housing element within Comprehensive Plans (which is currently being drafted and will need to be adopted by August 2027). These two additions to 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(10) are:

- “The housing element shall also include an analysis of any regulatory, labor, and physical constraints preventing the development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of sufficient housing to meet the housing needs and targets, and a description of what actions the municipality may take to accommodate the projected housing needs. Municipalities must reflect the housing targets and also the constraints on housing production *and the actions we will take to address those constraints.*” [emphasis added] In other words, we need to be taking action toward these targets, and if not, we will need to explain why not.
- “Progress toward the construction of the housing units identified as needed to meet projected housing targets shall be documented within the housing element and updated as appropriate when the plan is amended or readopted according to section 4385 or 4387 of this title, as the case may be.”

Possible Schedule

- September 23, 2026: introduction of the amendments to the Council and warning of the public hearing.
- October 7, 2026: publication of the legal notice in Seven Days and posting in three or more public places. Section 4444(a) requires notice at least 15 days before the hearing. Because Seven Days publishes weekly, October 7 is the last edition that meets that requirement.
- October 28, 2026: City Council public hearing. The Council may adopt the amendments at that meeting. The Council may modify the amendments throughout the process, but if substantial changes are made after the public hearing, an additional hearing will be required. Also the Planning Commission will need to review these changes and modify their written report.

COST:

There is no direct cost associated with the proposed LDC amendments.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Council should raise any questions or proposed changes at this meeting. If satisfied with the draft, staff recommends that a public hearing be warned for October 28, 2026.

RECOMMENDED MOTIONS:

If the Council is ready to warn the public hearing:

I move that the City Council warn the 2026 Land Development Code amendments as presented for public hearing on October 28, 2026.

If the Council wants more time before warning a hearing:

I move to continue consideration of the 2026 Land Development Code amendments to the Council meeting of [date].

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Planning Commission Report on the Proposed 2026 Land Development Code Amendments, prepared pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4441(c)
2. Draft 2026 Land Development Code Amendments (track changes) *[This is a large file and is attached separately from the packet. Also available online at <https://www.essexjunction.org/meeting/city-council-09-23-2026> and at <https://www.essexjunction.org/departments/community-development/form-based-code>]*
3. Draft 2026 Land Development Code Amendments (clean version) - *[This is only available online at <https://www.essexjunction.org/meeting/city-council-09-23-2026> and at <https://www.essexjunction.org/departments/community-development/form-based-code>]*
4. Draft public hearing notice
5. Public Engagement Summary
6. Frequently Asked Questions, as posted to the City website
7. Presentation slides



Planning Commission Report on the Proposed 2026 Land Development Code Amendments

Prepared pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4441(c)

This report is prepared in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 4441(c), which provides that when considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. The report must provide a brief explanation of the proposed amendments, include the statement of purpose required for notice under 24 V.S.A. § 4444, and include findings on how the proposal conforms with or furthers the goals and policies of the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of safe and affordable housing and 24 V.S.A. §§ 4412, 4413, and 4414; is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities of the municipal plan; and carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for planned community facilities.

The report is organized to follow the fields of the Municipal Bylaw Report form issued by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development.

Bylaw Summary and Statement of Purpose

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the proposed 2026 Land Development Code (LDC) amendments is to implement the Connect the Junction Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in December 2025, and to make a number of other technical corrections and updates to the LDC to meet the requirements of state planning law (24 V.S.A. Chapter 117) and to comply with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The centerpiece of the amendments is a new form-based code for the Village Center (VC) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) districts (Sections 604 and 608), which replaces the current subjective standard asking whether a design is harmonious with its surroundings with clear, measurable standards governing building height in relation to street width, setbacks and buffers next to residential neighborhoods, building frontage and articulation, parking location and screening, landscaping, and residential unit mix. The amendments also include technical updates to development review procedures and timelines, definitions, parking and driveway standards, sign standards, stormwater standards, and agricultural use standards required to conform to Vermont Act 166 (2026), together with updates to the City's sewer and water system provisions.

Form-Based Code for the Village Center and TOD Districts

A form-based code regulates the physical form of buildings, rather than only their use, through objective and measurable standards. The proposed standards include:

- Building height in proportion to street width (the "street room"), requiring upper-story setbacks where a building would otherwise sit tall relative to its street (§§ 604.E.1 / 608.E.1);

- Increased setbacks and landscaped buffers where a VC or TOD parcel abuts a lower-scale residential district, with a 30-foot setback and buffer where the height difference is four or more stories (§§ 604.D.3 / 608.D.3);
- Frontage type standards governing how a building meets the sidewalk, encouraging storefronts, entrances, and windows and discouraging blank walls and parking facing the street (§§ 604.E.2 / 608.E.2);
- Façade composition, materials, and articulation standards for larger buildings (§§ 604.F / 608.F);
- Parking location and screening standards, including a new pathway addressing off-site parking for residential development in the Village Center (§§ 604.G / 608.G, referencing Chapter 7);
- A points-based Landscape Performance Score, with a minimum score of 30 points, and a defined method for applying the score to additions and retrofits (§§ 604.H / 608.H);
- A minimum unit mix requirement of 25 percent two-or-more-bedroom units for residential developments containing more than 20 dwelling units, with a Development Review Board (DRB) alternative-mix pathway (§§ 604.D.2 / 608.D.2);
- Scalable applicability standards and a waivers and exemptions provision for retrofits and additions (§§ 604.C / 608.C);
- An exemption for detached single-family dwellings from the street room and frontage type standards, with a separate setback standard, so that existing single-family and historic homes in the Village Center are not made nonconforming (§ 604.D.4);
- Adjustment of the Design Review Overlay boundary to exclude the areas now covered by form-based standards, and extension of the Historic Preservation Overlay boundary to include the Village Center (§§ 620, 621);
- Retention of transit and bicycle infrastructure standards for large-parcel redevelopment in the TOD district, including coordination with Green Mountain Transit (GMT) on new bus stops and five-foot bike lanes where needed for district connectivity.

Other Technical Amendments, by Chapter

- Chapter 2 (Definitions): New and revised definitions supporting the form-based code, the 802 Homes Catalogue, and other technical corrections (§ 201).
- Chapter 3 (Boards): Conforming updates to the duties of the Development Review Board (§ 303).
- Chapter 5 (Development Review Procedures): Clarified zoning permit requirements, a second permit extension option for larger projects, authority for the Zoning Administrator to approve walkway connections in the right-of-way, standardized 10-day completeness and 30-day decision timelines, administrative approval of a change of use that increases the parking requirement where existing spaces already satisfy it, and consolidation of prior stormwater and land disturbance review provisions with Section 713 (§§ 501–516).
- Chapter 6 (Zoning Districts, other than the form-based provisions): An 802 Homes Catalogue exemption from design review subject to specified conditions, and a broadened primary pedestrian entrance standard in the R1 and R2 districts to accommodate certain catalogue home designs (§§ 600, 618, 619, 620, 622).

- Chapter 7 (Development Standards): Reorganized parking waiver and joint parking provisions with the off-site distance increased from 200 to 600 feet; a requirement that shared bicycle storage rooms contain racks; revised driveway apron surfacing and a minimum driveway width for small residential uses; an allowance for window wells within a setback; sign standard corrections; reorganization and strengthening of the stormwater and erosion prevention and sediment control provisions under Section 713; reorganization of the landscaping requirements, including confirmation that the minimum landscaping cost standard does not apply in the VC and TOD districts; and a substantially revised Section 724 (Raising, Keeping, or Harboring Livestock) to conform to Vermont Act 166 (2026).
- Chapters 9, 11, and 14 and Appendices A, B, and C: Subdivision infrastructure dedication numbering corrections, updated sewer use, private sewage disposal, and sewer allocation provisions, updated water system delinquent payment provisions, and a reference to the VTrans Town Road and Bridge Standards.

Findings on Municipal Plan Furtherance

The City's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2019 and remains in effect while the City undertakes a scheduled update. The Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in December 2025, is the City's implementing plan for the City Center and the Pearl Street Corridor. That plan calls for a denser center, including taller buildings in some locations, to help meet the City's share of the region's housing targets.

The proposed form-based code is the direct zoning implementation of the Connect the Junction plan. It replaces a subjective and unpredictable design review standard with objective standards intended to allow the additional housing and mixed-use development the plan calls for, while managing the transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods through required setbacks, buffers, and stepbacks.

The following goals and objectives of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan support the proposed amendments:

- Objective 1.2: Encourage the development of a diverse array of residential units in the Village Center and Pearl Street Districts.
- Objective 1.4: Encourage a mix of land uses and mixed-use buildings to enhance the streetscape and add value aesthetically, economically, and socially to the Village Center.
- Goal 2: Promote thoughtful growth.
- Objective 2.3: Promote the redevelopment of underutilized properties in the Transit Oriented Development and Village Center Districts.
- Objective 2.4: Continue improvements in the public realm for a high-quality pedestrian experience.
- Objective 2.6: Continue to work with the community through a charrette process to develop design standards for the Downtown.

On this basis, the proposed amendments conform with and further the housing, transportation, and land use goals and policies of the municipal plan.

Findings on Safe and Affordable Housing

The proposed amendments are expected to have a positive effect on the availability of safe and affordable housing.

- The form-based code enables the additional housing density contemplated by the Connect the Junction plan, including greater building height in the Village Center and TOD districts. A housing capacity analysis prepared for that plan identified capacity for up to 2,008 additional housing units in the City Center and Pearl Street Corridor under the height limits adopted by the City Council.
- The Code continues to provide the affordable housing density bonus authorized by 24 V.S.A. § 4412. In the TOD district the maximum height is nine stories, with a tenth story available only for an affordable housing development. In the Village Center the maximum height varies by subdistrict and does not exceed ten stories including the affordable housing bonus.
- The minimum unit mix requirement, 25 percent two-or-more-bedroom units in residential developments containing more than 20 dwelling units, is intended to broaden the range of household sizes the City's housing stock can serve. A DRB alternative-mix pathway is available where a different mix better supports the district's housing goals.
- The 802 Homes Catalogue exemption from design review reduces regulatory cost and delay for a set of State-vetted attainable housing designs.
- Revised parking waiver provisions, the unbundled residential parking pathway, and revised driveway apron and minimum driveway width standards for small residential uses are intended to reduce the cost of building housing without compromising safety.
- Replacing subjective design review with objective standards reduces the risk of delay and of inconsistent outcomes, which are costs that are ultimately reflected in the price of housing.

No provision of the proposed amendments reduces the availability of safe or affordable housing.

Findings on Required Provisions and Prohibited Effects (24 V.S.A. § 4412)

The proposed amendments do not remove, narrow, or conflict with any required provision of 24 V.S.A. § 4412. Except where identified below, the sections of the Code that implement § 4412 are not amended by this proposal. Findings on each applicable provision follow.

- **Mobile, modular, and prefabricated housing.** Not amended. The Code continues to treat mobile, modular, and prefabricated housing on the same terms as other single-family dwellings.
- **Mobile home parks.** Not amended.
- **Duplex uses.** Not amended. Duplexes remain permitted wherever single-family dwellings are permitted.
- **Multi-unit dwelling uses.** The amendments expand rather than restrict the opportunity for multi-unit dwellings. In the Village Center and TOD districts, which are served by municipal water and sewer, multi-unit dwellings remain permitted and the applicable height and dimensional standards are increased. Residential density is not capped in either district; development potential is determined by the ability to meet the applicable form, parking, height, setback, and coverage standards.
- **Accessory dwelling unit uses.** Not amended. Section 721 and the related review procedures are unchanged.
- **Residential care homes and group homes.** Not amended. These uses continue to be treated as single-family residential uses as required by statute.
- **Hotels for emergency housing.** Not amended.

- **Existing small lots.** Not amended. Chapter 8 (Nonconformities), which governs existing small lots, is not part of this proposal.
- **Required frontage.** Not amended. Section 720 (Lot Frontage) is unchanged. The frontage type standards in the form-based code govern how a building meets the street and do not alter the statutory requirement for lot frontage on, or access to, a public road.
- **Home occupations.** Not amended. Section 711 and the related review procedures are unchanged.
- **Childcare home or facility.** Not amended. Section 717 is unchanged, and childcare homes and facilities continue to be permitted as required by statute.
- **Heights of renewable energy structures.** Not amended. The building height standards in the form-based code apply to principal buildings and do not regulate the height of renewable energy structures.
- **Nonconformities.** Chapter 8 is not amended. The form-based standards are drafted to avoid creating new nonconformities: detached single-family dwellings in the Village Center are exempt from the street room and frontage type standards and are subject to a separate setback standard, and retrofits and additions that do not increase gross floor area by more than 30 percent may be permitted without full compliance, provided the degree of nonconformity is not increased.
- **Communications antennae and facilities.** Not amended. Section 715 (Telecommunications) is unchanged.
- **Planting projects in flood hazard areas.** Not amended. The Code continues to exempt qualifying planting projects as required by statute.
- **Accessory on-farm businesses.** Not amended in substance. Section 724 has been revised to conform to Act 166 (2026), and the accessory on-farm business provisions continue to operate as required by statute.
- **Lot and dimensional standards for minimum dwelling unit density.** The amendments increase, and do not reduce, allowed density in the Village Center and TOD districts. Neither district sets a maximum residential density, minimum lot size remains 5,000 square feet, and lot coverage allowances are generous. No lot or dimensional standard in the proposal has the effect of reducing the minimum dwelling unit density required by statute.
- **Density for affordable housing.** The Code retains the affordable housing density bonus authorized by 24 V.S.A. § 4412. In the TOD district, an affordable housing development may build to ten stories rather than nine. In the Village Center, the affordable housing bonus is available within a district maximum of ten stories. The bonus is also retained in the districts outside the form-based code area, where it allows one additional story above the base limit.

The proposed amendments also address 24 V.S.A. § 4412(15), added by Act 166 (2026). Section 724 has been revised to address the keeping of poultry by deferring to Municipal Code Chapter 17 and to the statute. Conforming updates were made to the Section 201 definitions and the Section 622 use chart.

Findings on Limitations on Municipal Bylaws (24 V.S.A. § 4413)

The proposed amendments conform with the limitations of 24 V.S.A. § 4413. The uses listed in § 4413(a) remain subject only to regulation of location, size, height, building bulk, yards, courts, setbacks, density of buildings, off-street parking, loading facilities, traffic, noise, lighting, landscaping, and screening requirements, and only to the extent that those regulations do not have the effect of interfering with the

intended functional use. The form-based standards regulate matters within that list. They govern where a building sits, how tall it is relative to its street, how it meets the sidewalk, how its facade is composed, where parking is located and how it is screened, and how the site is landscaped. They do not regulate the conduct of the use itself.

- **State and community owned and operated institutions and facilities.** Conforms. Subject only to the dimensional and site standards permitted by § 4413(a).
- **Public and private schools and other educational institutions certified by the Agency of Education.** Conforms. Same basis.
- **Places of worship.** Conforms. Same basis.
- **Public and private hospitals.** Conforms. Same basis.
- **Regional solid waste management facilities.** Conforms. Not amended.
- **Hazardous waste management facilities.** Conforms. Not amended.
- **Emergency shelters.** Conforms. Not amended.
- **Required agricultural practices.** Section 724 has been substantially revised to conform to the state farming exemption at 24 V.S.A. § 4413(d) as amended by Act 166 (2026). The revised section recognizes the exemption, including the carve-out allowing municipal regulation of livestock on farms under one contiguous acre, and expressly carves out plant cultivation as required by statute, while excluding cannabis and hemp and preserving generally applicable health and safety standards such as the visibility triangle.
- **Accepted silvicultural practices.** Conforms. Not amended.
- **Solar energy devices.** Conforms. Not amended. No provision of the form-based code has the effect of prohibiting or having the effect of prohibiting the installation of solar collectors, clotheslines, or other energy devices based on renewable resources.
- **Ancillary telecommunications improvements and lines.** Conforms. Not amended.

The waivers and exemptions provisions at §§ 604.C and 608.C give the Development Review Board authority to waive specific standards for good cause, which provides an additional safeguard against any application of the standards that would interfere with the intended functional use of a § 4413 use.

Findings on Permissible Types of Regulation (24 V.S.A. § 4414)

The proposed amendments are drafted within the types of regulation authorized by 24 V.S.A. § 4414 and related provisions of Chapter 117.

- **Zoning districts (§ 4414(1)).** The height, setback, coverage, and density standards for the Village Center and TOD districts are conventional district standards.
- **Village center districts (§ 4414(1)(A)).** The form-based code advances the objectives the statute identifies for downtown and village center districts, including a compact settlement oriented toward pedestrian activity with consistently higher densities than surrounding districts, a variety of housing types and uses in close proximity, a coordinated transportation system serving pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and vehicles, and buildings that form a consistent, distinct edge oriented toward streets and defining the border between public street space and the private block interior. The street room standard and the frontage type standards are the direct expression of that last objective.
- **Overlay districts (§ 4414(2)).** The Design Review Overlay and Historic Preservation Overlay are overlay districts supplementing the requirements of the underlying districts.

- **Design review districts (§ 4414(1)(E)).** The Design Review Overlay is retained and its boundary is reduced to exclude the areas now governed by objective form-based standards. No new design review district is established.
- **Local historic districts (§ 4414(1)(F)).** The Historic Preservation Overlay boundary is extended to include the Village Center, so that a single set of historic review standards applies across the city center and the City's major corridors. [Insert map, boundary justification, description of integral resources, and statement of significance.]
- **Parking and loading facilities (§ 4414(4)).** The reorganized parking waiver provisions, the increase in the permitted off-site parking distance from 200 to 600 feet, and the unbundled residential parking pathway are within the City's authority to set standards for off-street parking. The Code requires one parking space per dwelling unit for single-family, duplex, triplex, and multi-family dwellings, consistent with the statutory limit of one space per dwelling unit in districts served by municipal sewer and water that allow residential uses.
- **Waivers (§ 4414(8)).** The waivers and exemptions provisions at §§ 604.C and 608.C, and the reorganized parking waiver provisions at § 703.L, specify the standards and process by which waivers may be granted, and decisions remain appealable under the Code's existing appeal provisions.
- **Stormwater management and control (§ 4414(9)).** The reorganization and strengthening of the stormwater and erosion prevention and sediment control provisions under Section 713 is consistent with the program developed by the Secretary of Natural Resources under 10 V.S.A. § 1264.
- **Site plan review (§ 4416).** Site plan and landscaping submittals in the VC and TOD districts continue to follow the existing Chapter 5 procedures.
- **Planned unit developments (§ 4417).** The Code's planned unit development provisions continue to operate as before.
- **Inclusionary zoning (§ 4414(7)).** The unit mix requirement is not an inclusionary zoning provision. It requires a range of unit sizes, not units meeting defined affordability standards, so the conditions of § 4414(7) do not apply to it.

The form-based standards regulate the dimensions, placement, and exterior form of buildings, which are among the matters a municipality may address. The replacement of a discretionary design standard with objective standards narrows, rather than expands, the discretion exercised in review.

Municipal Plan Future Land Uses and Density Compatibility

The proposed amendments are compatible with, and are intended to implement, the future land use categories of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan and the regional future land use map. The form-based code implements the Comprehensive Plan future land use categories corresponding to the Village Center and Transit Oriented Development zoning districts. Those districts fall within the Downtown Center category of the Regional Future Land Use Map in the CCRPC ECOS Plan.

While the future land use map of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan generally follows the zoning map, the Comprehensive Plan states that the future land use may allow for greater densities and building heights in certain core mixed-use zoning districts to realize the energy, social community, and village investment goals needed to enhance the vibrancy of the Village core. The increased heights proposed in the Village Center and TOD districts are consistent with that direction and with the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan.

The technical amendments to Chapters 5, 6, and 7 do not change the future land use pattern or the permitted density of any zoning district.

Planned Community Facilities

The proposed amendments carry out specific proposals for planned community facilities identified in the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan. For the redevelopment of large parcels in the TOD district, the amendments retain and carry forward standards requiring new streets to incorporate bus stops coordinated with Green Mountain Transit, with written GMT comments required as part of review, and to include five-foot bike lanes where needed for connectivity across the district. These standards implement the plan's transit and multimodal infrastructure recommendations for the City Center and Pearl Street Corridor.

The amendments to Chapter 11 (Sewer Regulations) and Chapter 14 (Water System Management and Use) do not propose new community facilities. They update the regulatory framework governing existing public sewer and water infrastructure.

Availability

A copy of the proposed amendments and of this report has been filed with the City Clerk. The documents are available on the City website at www.essexjunction.org and by contacting Chris Yuen, Community Development Director, at cyuen@essexjunction.org.

Prepared By

Chris Yuen, Community Development Director, City of Essex Junction, on behalf of the Essex Junction Planning Commission.

Approved by the Essex Junction Planning Commission on September 3, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
Essex Junction Land Development Code Amendment

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4441 and §4444, notice is hereby given of a public hearing by the Essex Junction City Council to hear comments on the following proposed amendments to the City of Essex Junction's *Land Development Code* (LDC). The public hearing will take place during the City Council meeting on **Wednesday, October 28, 2026, with the hearing starting at 6:30pm.**

You may access the hearing/meeting as follows:

To join virtually from a Computer, please click this URL to join, and enter the Meeting ID and/or Passcode if prompted:

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/94464297825?pwd=T0RTL0VteHZXNHlteTJpQi83WUg4QT09>

To join virtually by phone, dial this number and enter the Meeting ID when prompted:

Number: (888) 788-0099 **Meeting ID:** 944 6429 7825 **Passcode:** 635787

To join the meeting in person:

Municipal Offices Conference Room, 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction

Pursuant to the requirements of 24 V.S.A. §4444(b):

Statement of purpose:

The purpose of the proposed 2026 Land Development Code amendments is to implement the Connect the Junction Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in December 2025, and to make a number of other technical corrections and updates to meet statutory requirements. The amendments include:

1. Form-based standards for the Village Center (VC) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) districts, including standards governing building height in relation to street width, setbacks and buffers next to residential neighborhoods, building frontage and articulation, parking location and screening, landscaping, and residential unit mix.
2. Adjustment of the Design Review Overlay boundary to exclude the areas now covered by form-based standards, and extension of the Historic Preservation Overlay boundary to include the Village Center.
3. Technical updates to development review procedures and timelines, and consolidation of prior stormwater and land disturbance review provisions.
4. An exemption from design review for 802 Homes Catalogue designs subject to specified conditions.
5. Reorganization of parking waiver and joint parking provisions, along with revised bicycle storage, driveway, and setback encroachment standards.
6. Reorganization and strengthening of the stormwater and erosion prevention and sediment control provisions under Section 713.
7. Revision of the standards for raising, keeping, or harboring livestock, and of related definitions and use provisions, to conform to Vermont Act 166 (2026).

8. Updates to the City's sewer use, private sewage disposal, and sewer allocation provisions, and to water system delinquent payment provisions.
9. Updates to definitions and correction of technical inconsistencies throughout the document.

Geographic areas affected: These amendments apply to all areas and zoning districts within the city.

List of section headings affected: The proposed amendments modify the following sections of the *Essex Junction Land Development Code*:

Chapter 2: Definitions and Rules of Construction

Chapter 3: Decision Making and Administrative Bodies

Chapter 5: Development Review Procedures

Chapter 6: Zoning Districts Regulations

Chapter 7: General Development Standards

Chapter 9: Subdivisions

Chapter 11: Sewer Regulations

Chapter 14: Water System Management and Use

Appendix A: Public Works Specifications

Appendix B: City Council's Policy for Funding Engineer Plan Review and Inspections

The full text of the 2026 *Essex Junction Land Development Code* amendments is available online at <https://www.essexjunction.org/departments/community-development/form-based-code>. The proposed amendments can be reviewed in hard copy at the City Municipal Offices, 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, Vermont 05452.

Form-Based Code and 2026 Land Development Code Amendments

Public Engagement Summary

Prepared for the City Council meeting of September 23, 2026. Comments received as of September 17, 2026.

This document summarizes public outreach and comment on the proposed form-based code. It covers the engagement conducted for the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan in 2025, which is where the building height limits were set, and the outreach conducted on the draft code itself between March and September 2026.

Written comments are reproduced verbatim. Names, email addresses, street addresses, and other personal identifying information have been removed. Comments received by email in response to direct outreach, and comments received by telephone, are summarized rather than reproduced, and are identified as such. Comments are presented in the order received.

Engagement on Building Heights, 2025

The height limits in these amendments were set by the City Council in December 2025, when it adopted the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan. Engagement on that plan ran from June through October 2025 and is documented in the Summer Engagement Summary Report prepared by Framework in October 2025. More than 400 people participated across organized events, an online open house, an online survey, stakeholder focus groups, a walking tour, and direct conversations with property owners, producing over 100 written comments and 569 sticker votes.

Responses on height

Height drew the most comment, and responses differed depending on how people were reached. Asked whether they supported increased height along the Pearl Street corridor as a way to address the housing shortage, 94 percent of in-person respondents said yes, 61 of 65 responses. Among online respondents, 47 percent said yes, 39 percent said no, and 14 percent were neutral, out of 51 responses. On maximum height, 87 percent of in-person respondents favored eight to ten stories in both the Village Center and the TOD district. Among online respondents, roughly half favored keeping the existing five-story limit in the Village Center or reducing it to four.



Above: August 2025 outreach at Maple Street Park

Patterns in the in-person outreach

Staff and the consultant recorded two patterns in the in-person outreach. Children and teenagers at the Maple Street Park event consistently selected higher preferred height limits than their parents, including within the same families. The two Pearl Street ice cream socials, held in front of apartment buildings and attended mostly by renters, produced generally supportive comments on height and density where well designed. These were observations from staff notes rather than survey findings. Demographic information was not collected consistently at in-person events, so support for height cannot be cross-tabulated against age or tenure.

Limits of the data

Neither set of numbers is a representative survey. Participation in both was self-selected, in different ways. The online tools reached people motivated enough to seek them out, and drew primarily homeowners and long-term residents. None of the online respondents who mapped their homes lived within the study area. The in-person events reached people who were already out at a fireworks display, a swimming pool, or a street festival, which is a broader cross section but still not a random sample. Staff and consultants were present at those events to explain how the standards would work, and the consultant noted that this may have affected responses.

The Council's decision

The Planning Commission and City Council considered three height options in 2025. The Council selected the nine-story limit, with a tenth story available only for affordable housing, in December 2025 as part of the Connect the Junction Plan.

Media coverage

The proposal drew local news coverage at several points during 2025. The Essex Reporter covered the draft plan and the request for public input on July 15, 2025, under the headline "Connect the Junction master plan: City of Essex Junction wants to hear from you." ABC22/Fox44 covered the proposal in November 2025 as "Essex Junction considers housing changes, Five Corners projects." The Council's December 2025 vote was covered by The Essex Reporter as "Essex Junction to allow nine-story housing, council adopts Connect the Junction Master Plan," and by the Vermont Daily Chronicle as "Essex Junction City Council votes for increased building heights." The plan also drew

extended discussion on Reddit. This coverage was not City outreach, but it indicates how widely the height proposal was known before the Council acted.

Outreach on the Draft Code, 2026

The form-based code implements the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan, which the City Council adopted in December 2025 following the process described above. Outreach on the draft code itself ran from March 2026 through the Planning Commission's public hearing on September 3, 2026. The Commission reviewed the draft at its meetings of March 31, May 7, June 4, July 2, July 8, and August 11, 2026, each of which was a warned public meeting.

The City reached residents through the following.

- **A utility bill insert** mailed in July 2026, and mentions in the monthly newsletter.
- **A form-based code page on the City website**, launched in July 2026, carrying the full draft amendments and supporting materials.
- **A frequently asked questions page** responding to the themes raised in written comments: building height, housing need and capacity, infrastructure and property taxes, schools, commercial viability, green space, historic preservation, and Main Street and Five Corners.
- **News releases and accompanying social media posts**, including a release announcing the Planning Commission hearing issued on August 28, 2026.
- **An episode of Junction City News** on the proposal, aired July 20, 2026.
- **A staff presentation to the City Council** on July 22, 2026.
- **Direct outreach to property owners and housing developers** beginning in early July 2026, with follow-up in early August. This outreach and the responses received are described below.
- **A public information display at National Night Out** on August 4, 2026, described at the end of this summary.
- **The legal notice of the Planning Commission's public hearing**, published and posted on August 19, 2026.

Two conceptual renderings were posted to the City website, one showing the street room standard applied to Park Street and one showing an eastbound view of Pearl Street near the Spark Hotel. Written comments asked to see what maximum build-out would look like, and the renderings respond to that request. Each shows a building at the upper end of what the standards and the site geometry would allow on that block. They illustrate how the standards work and are not proposed projects. The Park Street rendering was posted in August 2026 and the Pearl Street rendering by early September.

Written Comments Received

Comment 1, received July 8, 2026

Subject: Design of new building replacing Lincoln Inn

Feedback, as requested by "Form-Based Code" email:

I would love to see three changes when the Lincoln Inn is torn down. I do not support planning an identical building across the street:

1. More green up front. There is too much concrete. There must be more imagination regarding some sort of green space in front of the building. There seems to be room to pull the building away from the road. I also see residents having trouble walking their dogs, so their dogs urinate on the concrete areas (sometimes).
2. The model of small stores/restaurants on the first floor has history now. Would y'all agree it's a mixed review? Perhaps Essex Junction can design for a larger space on the bottom, attracting an organization that needs a larger space?
3. Is there a way to capture a bit of the building's history?

Thanks for asking for feedback,

[Name and address removed]

Comment 2, received July 9, 2026

Subject: Comments: new rules / new buildings

Greeting EJPC members -

I'm writing to provide comments on the New Rules that are being proposed for New Buildings.

1. It's not clear by the example provided in the mailed flier where in the Village there could be 9 or 10 story buildings based on the example provided (see included image). The buildings in this image appear to be 6 stories tall (with a set back 7th story). The street appears to be four lanes for vehicles, plus two lanes for bikes, plus sidewalks. It's not clear to me where in the proposed zones the streets have a "W" this large and as such it is not clear to me where in the Village buildings will be allowed to be H = 6 stories (let alone > 6).

A much more useful presentation of the proposal, I believe, would be to provide a 3D rendering of the impacted zones in the Village showing new buildings constructed to their maximum "H" based on the local "W". This would allow Villagers to more properly assess the impact of the proposal.

2. How much capacity will be added under this maximum buildout scenario? What data indicates that this much new housing is needed? What is the current residential occupancy rate in the Village and surrounding area? What will be the impact of this population growth on Village/town/district resources?

3. What is the current vacancy rate of store fronts in the Village and surrounding areas. The latter seems relevant as new construction in the Village center seems to have difficulty attracting/sustaining businesses, thus is additional spaces could be underutilized as well.

4. When will be the meeting to discuss this proposition?

[Name and address removed]

Comment 3, received July 10, 2026

Subject: Input on Connect the Junction

I'm writing to provide input on the New Rules that are being proposed for New Buildings.

1. The example provided in the flyer is very deceiving. The buildings in the image appear to be 6 stories tall (with a set back 7th story). The street appears to be 4 lanes for vehicles, plus two lanes for bikes, plus sidewalks on both sides. The flyer strongly implies that for any building in the proposed zone, the H (height) of the building will equal the W (width) of the street, including bike lanes and possibly sidewalks; however, there is currently no place in the proposed zones where the building in this image with a W large enough to support a H>6 stories would fit, much less anywhere that would support the 9 or 10 story buildings that the zoning changes are proposing. Yet this proposed H change, plus real estate listings claiming that certain lots being offered for sale are zoned for 10 stories, makes me believe that zoning permits are going to be issued up to the maximum height regardless of the width of the street.

A much more useful presentation of the proposal is to provide a 3D rendering of the proposed zones in the Village showing new buildings that would be constructed to their maximum "H" based on the local "W". This would allow Villagers to more properly assess the impact of the proposal.

2. What data indicates that this much new housing is needed? What is the current residential occupancy rate in the Village and surrounding area? How much capacity will be added under maximum buildout? What will be the impact of this population growth on Village/town/district resources and assuming that it will be significant, will the developers be responsible for paying the full amount of the infrastructure improvements needed to support their projects? Are schools being included in the planning process so that they will be able to accommodate the increased population? What will be the impact of this population growth on traffic?

3. What is the current vacancy rate of store fronts in the Village and surrounding areas? The latter seems relevant as new construction in the City Center seems to have difficulty attracting and retaining businesses. Why would you assume that it would be different for any additional buildings?

4. Where are these new walkable spaces mentioned in the flyer? I've heard repeated talk of turning a portion of Main Street at 5 Corners into a walk street. The impact on the surrounding neighborhoods as traffic is re-routed to accommodate this would be significant. And also, what about the Main Street block between Railroad Ave. and 5 Corners is there that makes anyone think that it would and should become a vibrant walk street?

5. When will there be more meetings to discuss this proposition?

[Name and address removed]

Comment 4, received July 14, 2026

Subject: Form Based Code Map marking

Hello,

I was looking at the website about the proposed form based code. The site is well laid out and easy to navigate and very clear... Thank you! I did have a question about the map shown here:

[web page link]

What do the thick red lines indicate?

Thanks,

[Name removed]

Direct Outreach to Property Owners and Developers

In early July, staff emailed property owners and housing developers active in or near the Village Center and Transit Oriented Development districts. The email summarized the proposed changes to height, design standards, and unit mix, attached a clean copy of the proposed Village Center and TOD sections, and linked to the full draft and the City web pages. Staff followed up in early August with recipients who had not responded, and encouraged them to share comments with the Planning Commission whether positive, neutral, or negative. Two email addresses were undeliverable.

The following responses were received.

Stepback requirements

One developer active in the City Center wrote that the proposed standards were workable overall, and that stepbacks are a good idea, but raised one concern. In his view a stepback should only be required at greater heights, and buildings under about seven stories should not need one. He noted that 17 Park Street is roughly 55 feet tall and is not too high in his judgment, asked what the right-of-way width is at Five Corners, and acknowledged that where the line is drawn is partly a matter of preference.

Staff responded that the Park Street right-of-way is approximately 66 feet in front of the Lincoln Inn property, and that a building constructed to the lot line there could reach roughly six stories before a stepback would be required under the 1:1 street room ratio. That is the condition illustrated in the Park Street rendering posted on the City website.

No concerns identified

A property management company with holdings on Pearl Street reviewed the proposal and reported that they did not see anything that would affect their existing buildings. Staff replied that existing buildings can continue to operate as they are, and that the proposed standards would apply to future development or redevelopment. Staff also noted that the proposed unit mix requirement would apply to their future projects, and that one recently approved project would not have met the 25 percent two-bedroom minimum had it been reviewed under the proposed standards.

Acknowledged, no comment submitted

One developer confirmed he would review the draft. No comments were received as of the date of this summary.

Comment Received by Telephone

One resident called the Community Development Director in late August to discuss the proposal. The following reflects staff's notes of that conversation and is not a transcript. Staff encouraged the caller to submit written comments to the Planning Commission or to speak at the public hearing.

The caller raised the following concerns:

- Whether additional housing is needed, given that Vermont's population has declined in recent years.
- That taller buildings would change the scale of Essex Junction and reduce quality of life. He described the community's current size as something residents value, and said the proposal would bring a big-city scale to the Village.
- That new growth would create infrastructure demands, and that the cost of meeting them would fall on existing residents through higher property taxes.
- Traffic impacts.
- That buildings at the maximum permitted height would be among the tallest in Vermont.

September 3, 2026 Planning Commission Public Hearing

The Planning Commission held its public hearing on the amendments on September 3, 2026. Five members of the public spoke. The draft minutes are the official record. The following summarizes the comments received.

- *Height and community scale.* One resident said high-rise buildings are a threat to the Vermont way of life, that the proposed limits could produce some of the tallest buildings in the state, and that taller buildings block sunlight. He questioned the survey finding that most residents are amenable to buildings at this height. He described Essex Junction as a community of single-family homes and said what is needed is more starter homes. A resident of a neighborhood adjacent to Pearl Street said he understands the pressure to produce housing and tax revenue, but that nine or ten stories is too high for Pearl Street, and suggested five to six stories as a livable scale for that corridor. A third resident agreed that livability has to be weighed alongside housing demand. The chair of the Tree Advisory Committee also said ten stories is too high.
- *Affordability.* A resident who teaches in the public schools said she pays more than half her income in rent, and that raising the height limit does not by itself produce affordable housing. She said affordable housing should be required before the tenth story is granted, and asked how the Commission is addressing affordability for seniors and young families.
- *Infrastructure, taxes and emergency response.* Commenters said the infrastructure costs of new growth would fall on existing taxpayers through higher property taxes, and questioned whether the fire department is equipped to protect buildings of this size. A commissioner responded that the Fire Department was consulted during drafting and can serve buildings of this height with its current apparatus.
- *Air quality near highways.* One resident said housing within 500 to 1,000 feet of a highway is not recommended and housing within 500 feet is a health hazard. He cited studies on air quality near highways and described housing within 1,000 feet of Route 15 or Route 2A as a health risk.
- *Landscaping and street trees.* The chair of the Tree Advisory Committee asked for more detail on the proposed landscaping standards and raised the need for street trees in new development. He asked about setback variation within the City Center, which in his view could reduce pedestrian friendliness and the room available to plant street trees.

- **Enforcement.** One resident said the City should ensure developers continue to meet Code standards after a building is constructed, and suggested fines for noncompliance.
- **Housing targets.** A resident asked what the consequences are if the City does not meet its housing targets. Staff responded that the targets do not carry an enforcement mechanism, but that municipalities need to demonstrate they are working toward them.
- **Fences on corner lots.** A resident raised an unrelated enforcement matter involving a fence on a corner lot. The Commission discussed the corner lot setback and fence provisions and added the subject to its list of items for possible future amendment. No change was made to the draft, because a substantive change would have required re-warning the hearing.

Commission discussion and action. The Commission discussed whether to reopen the height limits in light of the testimony. One commissioner said the City will not meet its housing targets without the additional height. Another noted that the street room standard will limit where ten stories is achievable, and that allowing a height does not mean it will be built. Commissioners asked for continued public input and for a more proactive discussion of what the Commission wants to see in specific parts of the downtown core. The Commission voted 5-0 to close the public hearing, and 5-0 to approve the revised § 4441(c) report and submit it, with the amendments, to the City Council.

Comment on the form-based code itself, from March 2026 through the date of this summary, consists of the four written comments, one telephone call, and five speakers at the public hearing described above, along with the informal responses collected at National Night Out. Comment has run strongly against increased height. The 2025 engagement described earlier reached a substantially larger number of participants.

National Night Out

Planning Commission volunteers staffed a public information display on the form-based code at National Night Out on Tuesday, August 4, 2026, at the Essex High School grounds. Participants were invited to indicate their reaction to the proposed standards on a set of poster boards covering height, street room, frontage types, and parking screening. Responses from those who chose to participate were positive. Photographs of the display boards are included below.

This was an informal activity at a community event. It was not a survey of residents, and the number of responses was small.

[illegible][illegible]

Community Development staff will table at Meet Me on Main on Saturday, September 19, 2026, using the same display boards presented at National Night Out. That event falls after the deadline for this packet.

[Pay Bills Online](#)

Menu

[Home](#) / [Departments](#) / [Community Development](#)
/ [Form-Based Code for the City Center & Pearl Street Corridor](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

The questions below come from questions and comments the City has received from residents and other community members about the proposed Form-Based Code amendments for the City Center and Pearl Street Corridor.

The answers explain what is currently proposed, how the Form-Based Code relates to the City's broader planning efforts, and where certain questions involve policies or decisions outside the scope of the current zoning amendments.

Building Height & the Height-to-Width (H:W) Standard

Q: Where would 9-10 story buildings actually be allowed? Some residents are concerned that the flyer example is misleading, or that real estate listings advertising a property as “zoned for 10 stories” suggest the full height will be allowed regardless of street width. Is a 3D build-out rendering available?

A: Building height is established by the zoning map. In the TOD District, the maximum is nine stories, with a tenth story available only for affordable housing developments under the state affordable housing density bonus. In the Village Center, the maximum varies by sub-district, with the tallest areas between Park Street and Maple Street, and the tenth story likewise available only through the affordable housing bonus.

The zoning map establishes the maximum height, but it does not guarantee that every parcel can physically accommodate

that height. The street room standard regulates how a building steps back as it gets taller. On a smaller or narrower lot, there may not be enough space to provide the required step-backs, which could mean that the full height allowed by the zoning map cannot be achieved.

In other words, a property may be zoned for up to 10 stories, but the actual height of a building will depend on the size and configuration of the parcel and the project's ability to meet all applicable dimensional and site design standards.

For a specific property, the [zoning map](#) shows the applicable maximum height.

The City now has a rendering showing a potential build-out scenario on Park Street [here](#). A similar rendering for Pearl Street is in development.

Housing Need, Growth Capacity & Infrastructure

Q: How much housing capacity would be added under the maximum build-out scenario?

A: A housing capacity analysis conducted as part of the [Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan](#) identified capacity for up to 2,008 additional housing units in the City Center and Pearl Street Corridor under the height limits adopted by the City Council (the 9+1 option).

The 2,008-housing unit capacity represents about two-thirds of the City's mid-range target of 3,061 additional homes by 2050. That target is based on the [2025 Vermont Housing Needs Assessment](#) and the region's housing allocation.

Q: What data supports the conclusion that this much new housing is needed?

A: The need for additional housing is documented in the [Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2025–2029](#), prepared for the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development.

The assessment identifies a need for an additional 7,301 to 10,537 housing units in Chittenden County by 2030, and 15,783

to 47,407 additional units by 2050.

Those estimates account for several factors, including:

- housing additional households as the population grows;
- bringing vacancy rates back to healthier levels;
- addressing homelessness; and
- replacing housing lost to disrepair, flooding, and other causes.

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) divides this county-level target into a target for each city and town in the county, including Essex Junction. The methodology and municipal targets are available [here](#).

The Vermont Housing Needs Assessment is a thorough, independently researched report, and we'd encourage anyone who wants to dig into the underlying data to read it directly: <https://accd.vermont.gov/housing/plans-data-rules/needs-assessment>

Q: What is the current residential occupancy/vacancy rate?

A: Chittenden County's rental vacancy rate has increased recently but remains below the roughly 5% rate often cited as a general benchmark for a healthy rental market. As of June 2026, the countywide rental vacancy rate was [3.3%](#), compared with less than 1% during the pandemic.

The increase followed significant apartment construction, including 824 new apartments countywide in 2024. Future vacancy rates will depend on housing construction and changes in housing demand, including population and household trends.

Q: How will population growth affect City resources and traffic?

A: Where housing is built is an important part of this question. The proposed code directs a significant amount of future housing growth to the Pearl Street Corridor and Village Center, where residents have more opportunities to walk, bike, or use public transit for some trips.

Concentrating development in already-developed areas also makes use of existing roads and utility infrastructure. New development in these areas generally does not require the same extension of water, sewer, and other infrastructure that may be needed for development farther from the existing built-up area.

The City will continue to evaluate transportation, utility, and other infrastructure needs as development occurs.

Q: Are schools included in the planning process?

A: School capacity is not a formal component of the Form-Based Code amendments. The City is aware of current enrollment trends and will continue to coordinate with the Essex-Westford School District as the proposal moves forward.

The District has been consolidating facilities rather than expanding them in recent years, including the repurposing of Summit Street School in Essex Junction. Those changes have been driven by declining enrollment rather than a lack of school capacity.

Vermont is also experiencing broader demographic changes, including an aging population and relatively low birth rates. School enrollment can vary by district and over time, so the City will continue to monitor conditions with the School District.

Q: Will developers pay for infrastructure improvements?

A: Developers are responsible for infrastructure improvements associated with their Site Plan and for applicable fees. These can include the City's sewer allocation and connection fees, which can be substantial depending on the size of the project and are used to reserve wastewater treatment capacity and connect to the system. These fees are separate from the costs of required on-site stormwater management, which developers must also provide as part of their project.

Larger projects may also be subject to additional requirements based on applicable development standards.

Depending on the project, these can include improvements such as sidewalks, landscaping, or public spaces.

The City has also heard questions about whether existing fees fully account for the City's infrastructure costs and whether a broader impact fee system should be considered. That is a separate policy question that could be considered as part of a future budget or policy process. It is not part of the current Form-Based Code work.

Commercial/Ground-Floor Retail Viability

Q: Can the City require larger ground-floor commercial spaces in the City Center?

A: The Form-Based Code establishes standards for how ground-floor commercial space relates to the street, including frontage, transparency, and entrances. These standards are intended to create an active and pedestrian-oriented street environment.

The code does not establish a specific square footage requirement for commercial space. The size and configuration of individual spaces will be determined by the property owner and developer based on the building and the needs of prospective tenants.

This approach provides flexibility as market conditions change and avoids requiring commercial spaces of a particular size that may not meet the needs of future businesses.

Q: I am concerned about the current storefront vacancy rate. Why would new commercial space be different?

A: The City Center and Pearl Street Corridor have generally high occupancy levels, although individual storefronts do turn over from time to time.

Retail and other commercial uses depend in part on having enough nearby customers. Adding residents within walking distance of these businesses can increase the potential customer base for existing and future businesses.

The Planning Commission also considered the potential for vacant commercial space when developing the code. The proposed standards do not require ground-floor commercial space in every location. In some locations, the code allows residential uses at the ground floor when they are designed with landscaping, terraces, or other features that maintain an active and pedestrian-oriented street frontage.

Site Design - Green Space, Setbacks & Streetscape

Q: Can there be more green space and less concrete in front of buildings?

A: Yes. Increasing landscaping and improving the quality of the street environment are objectives of the Form-Based Code.

The proposed standards include requirements for street trees, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities. The code also introduces a points-based system that provides additional credit for features such as tree canopy and green stormwater infrastructure.

The intent is to create a more consistent streetscape with more shade, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities.

Historic Character & Preservation

Q: Is there a way to capture a building's history when it is redeveloped?

A: Essex Junction's Land Development Code includes historic preservation standards for buildings that are listed on, or eligible for, the State or Federal Register of Historic Places and are located within the Historic Preservation Overlay District.

The overlay district includes portions of the Main Street, Lincoln Street, Pearl Street, Park Street, and Maple Street corridors, as well as the City Center.

For properties covered by these standards, demolition, alteration, additions, and redevelopment are subject to Development Review Board review. The Board reviews applications against the applicable historic preservation standards.

Demolition of an eligible historic building also requires the applicant to address the applicable criteria, which can include economic hardship, structural infeasibility, or a significant community benefit associated with the redevelopment.

Main Street / Five Corners Changes

Q: What makes the Main Street block between Railroad Avenue and Five Corners a candidate for a pedestrianized street? I am concerned about traffic being rerouted into surrounding neighborhoods.

A: An earlier concept considered permanently closing this section of Main Street to vehicle traffic. The City did not pursue that approach when it adopted the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan in 2025. Under the adopted plan, Main Street remains open to traffic, and pedestrianization is limited to special events.

The plan does call for studying whether certain turning movements at Five Corners could be restricted. One option identified for study is restricting the Main Street-to-Park Street movement and directing that traffic through the new Railroad Street connection.

Any change to traffic patterns would require additional traffic and engineering analysis and approval by the City Council before implementation.

More information is available in the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan [here](#)

The Form-Based Code itself does not make changes to Main Street traffic. The Five Corners and Main Street traffic questions are part of the broader TOD Master Plan and are separate from the zoning amendments currently being considered at public hearing.

Public Process & Engagement

Q: When will there be a meeting or additional meetings to discuss the proposal?

A: The Planning Commission has completed its initial review of the draft Form-Based Code amendments. The Commission

will hold a public hearing on September 3, 2026, at 6:30 PM.

Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission may vote to forward the draft amendments to the City Council, or it may continue its review and make additional changes before forwarding the proposal.

The public hearing is an opportunity for residents and other interested parties to provide comments directly to the Planning Commission.

[Quick Answers](#)

[All Contacts](#)

Phone: 802-878-6944

Accessibility Statement

Privacy Policy



Report a public works issue



Like us on Facebook

News & Initiatives

Community-Wide Events

Community: Live & Visit

Work: Jobs & Business

Recreation & Parks

Brownell Library



City Council



Upcoming Meetings

© 2026 City of Essex Junction
2 Lincoln Street
Essex Junction, Vermont 05452

Municipal website design by Ecopixel

Form-Based Code Proposal/ LDC Amendments 2026

September 23, 2026



CITY OF
Essex
Junction

LDC Amendments necessary to implement Connect the Junction Transit Oriented Master Plan (Adopted Dec 17, 2025)



New housing unit estimates based on building height

2025 Vermont Housing Needs Assessment

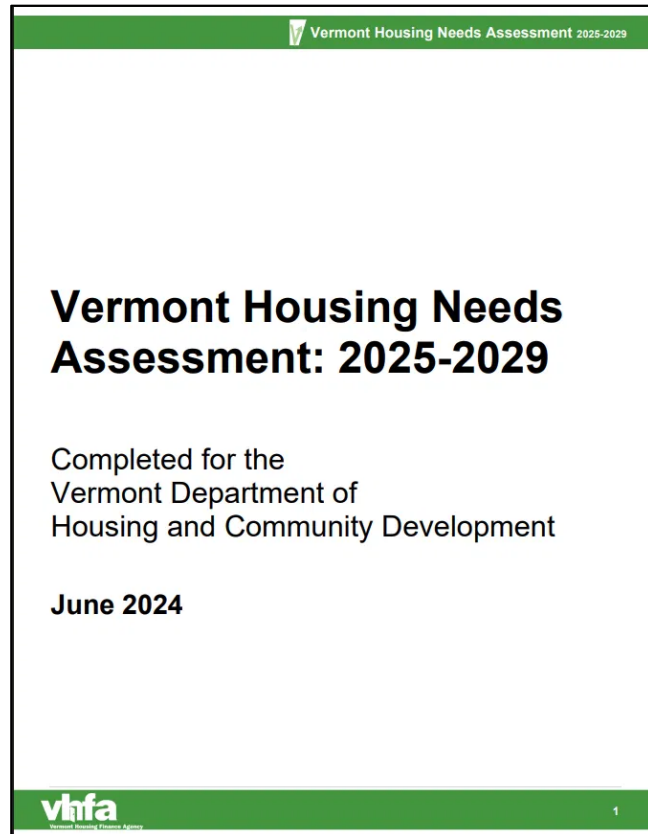
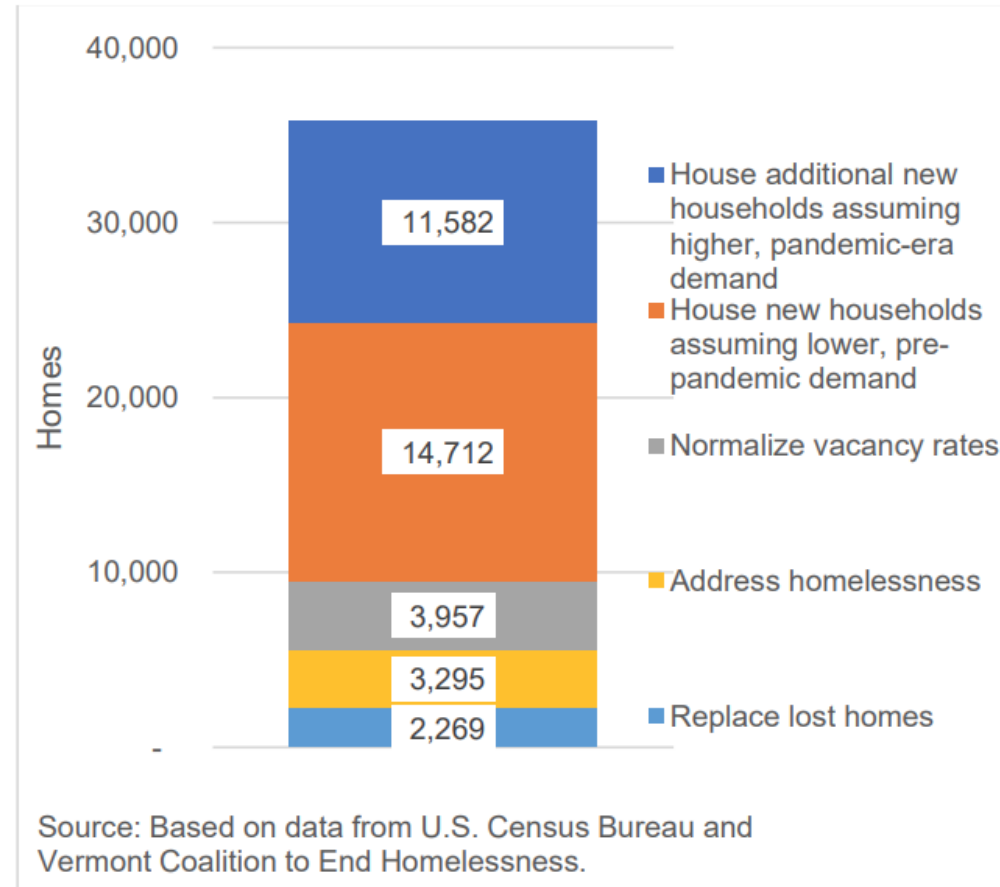


Chart shows the 2025-2029 statewide target. The 2050 targets use the same components and add a margin for Vermont's 15 percent seasonal home rate.

Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2025-2029, prepared for DHCD

Figure 1-1 36,000 Vermont primary homes needed in 2025-2029



From a statewide range to an Essex Junction number

Appendix 1 of HNA, gives Chittenden County a 2050 range of **15,783 to 47,407 homes**.

CCRPC uses 31,595 midpoint, as its middle target and further breaks it down among municipalities

Essex Junction:

1,529 low, **3,061 middle**, 4,594 upper.

	EXISTING HOUSING UNITS (2023)	2050 HOUSING TARGET RANGES						ANNUAL HISTORIC GROWTH (2000-23)	2050 ANNUAL #S*		
		LOW # and %		MIDDLE # and %		UPPER # and %			LOW	MIDDLE	UPPER
BOLTON	550	59	11%	118	21%	177	32%	6	2	5	7
BUEL'S GORE	12	1	11%	3	21%	4	32%	0	0	0	0
BURLINGTON	18,245	3,490	19%	6,986	38%	10,482	57%	77	140	279	419
CHARLOTTE	1,643	176	11%	353	21%	530	32%	6	7	14	21
COLCHESTER	7,673	846	11%	1,695	22%	2,543	33%	39	34	68	102
ESSEX	4,889	1,111	23%	2,224	45%	3,337	68%	51	44	89	133
ESSEX JUNCTION	4,955	1,529	31%	3,061	62%	4,594	93%	52	61	122	184
HINESBURG	2,071	324	16%	649	31%	973	47%	16	13	26	39
HUNTINGTON	876	94	11%	188	21%	282	32%	6	4	8	11
JERICO	2,014	225	11%	450	22%	675	34%	10	9	18	27
MILTON	4,515	707	16%	1,416	31%	2,124	47%	42	28	57	85
RICHMOND	1,729	200	12%	400	23%	600	35%	8	8	16	24
SHELBURNE	3,529	741	21%	1,483	42%	2,224	63%	33	30	59	89
SOUTH BURLINGTON	9,921	3,788	38%	7,583	76%	11,378	115%	172**	152	303	455
ST. GEORGE	314	34	11%	67	21%	101	32%	2	1	3	4
UNDERHILL	1,313	141	11%	282	21%	423	32%	9	6	11	17
WESTFORD	899	96	11%	193	21%	290	32%	6	4	8	12
WILLISTON	4,725	1,557	33%	3,118	66%	4,678	99%	70	62	125	187
WINOOSKI	3,665	663	18%	1,327	36%	1,991	54%	27	27	53	80
COUNTY TOTAL	73,538	15,783	21%	31,595	43%	47,407	64%	602	631	1,264	1,896

HOW WERE THE NUMBERS ASSIGNED TO EACH CITY AND TOWN?

*Annual new units needed to reach 2050 targets.

**Calculated using South Burlington's zoning permit data from 2000-2023.

The middle tier is CCRPC's, not the State's. Appendix 1 publishes only a lower and an upper target for 2050.

What that means per year

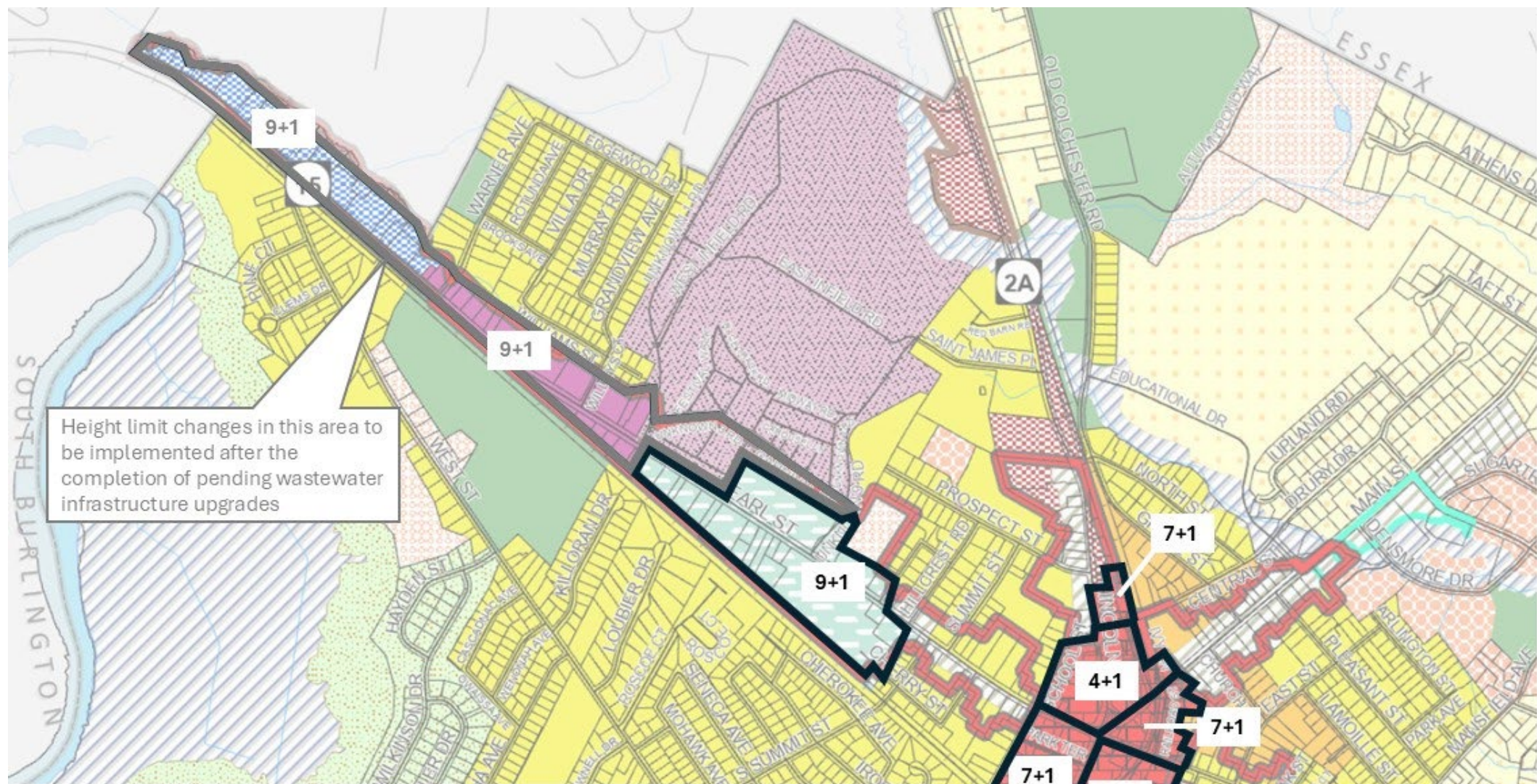
52

Added housing units per year
actual, 2000 to 2023

122

Added housing units per year
to reach the mid-range 2050 target

Chittenden County rental vacancy was 3.3 percent in June 2026,
below the 5 percent benchmark for a healthy rental market.



Height Limits by area

2025 Connect the Junction Transit-Oriented-Development Master Plan

- “+1” indicates Statewide Affordability Housing Height Bonus
- Specific building form regulations to be determined through forthcoming Form Based Code Recommendations



What "form-based" means

- Conventional zoning mainly regulates use: what activity is allowed on a property.
- Form-based code focuses on the physical form of buildings and how they shape the public realm: height, placement, how a building meets the sidewalk, and street-level activity.

The core shift for the DRB

- Existing Code: The DRB reviews projects against a various standards, including whether the design is "harmonious" with its surroundings.
- Proposed: the DRB review projects against clear, measurable, objective standards.
- Objective standards are more predictable, easier to apply consistently, and more defensible if a decision is challenged.

Discretion Narrows for the DRB

- Discretion narrows where standards are objective. If a project meets the standard, that element is satisfied; it is not reweighed on taste.
- Discretion remains where the code calls for it, including waivers and exemptions, site plan judgment, and areas the standards intentionally leave flexible.
- The Board's role moves toward applying standards consistently rather than negotiating design.

What the standards cover (high level)

- Building height and how it relates to the width of the street ("street room")
- Residential Adjacency
- How buildings sit on the lot and meet the sidewalk (frontage types)
- Façade composition, articulation, and materials
- Parking placement and screening
- Landscaping, through a points-based performance score

What is NOT changing

- Permitted and conditional uses are still governed by the use chart; the form-based code does not change what uses are allowed.
- Historic resources remain protected, but falls under HRO district rules
- The existing Design Review overlay district will remain but will have the VC and TOD districts carved out
- Site Plan Review still applies.

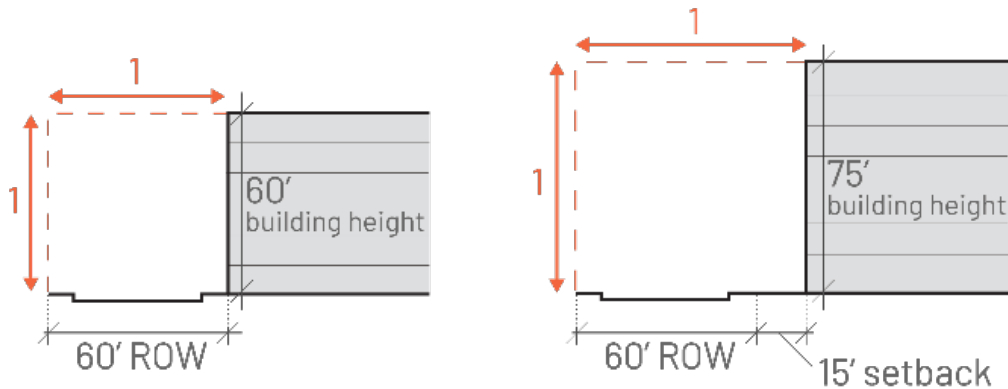
Building height and how it relates to the width of the street ("street room")



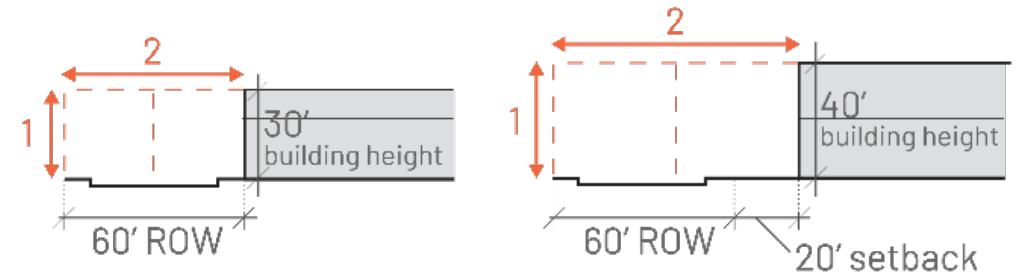
Building height and how it relates to the width of the street ("street room")

ALLOWED:

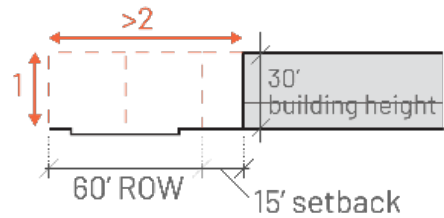
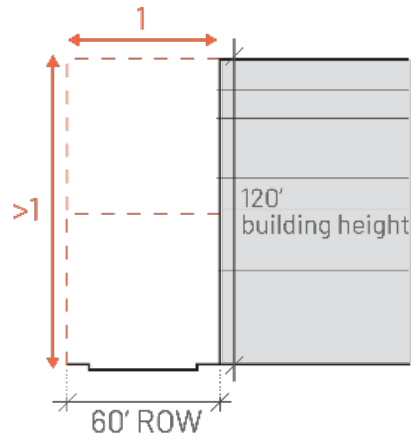
1:1 RATIO



1:2 RATIO

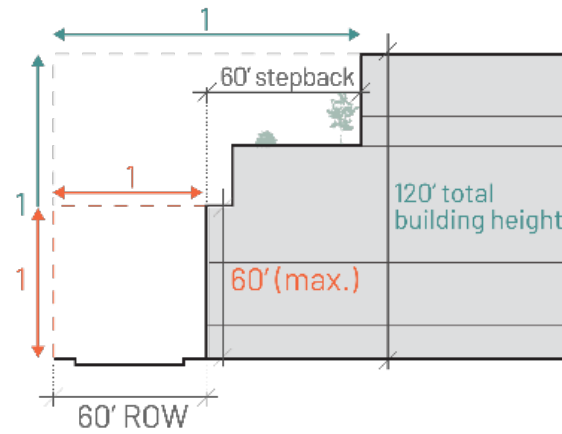


NOT ALLOWED:

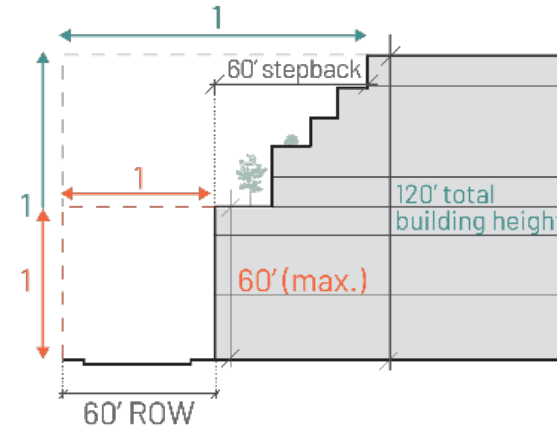


OPTIONS FOR COMPLIANCE:

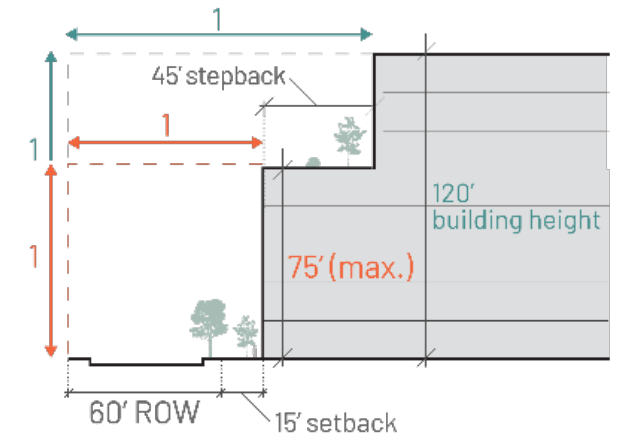
MID-LEVEL STEPBACK (NOT EXCEEDING 3-STORY HEIGHT)



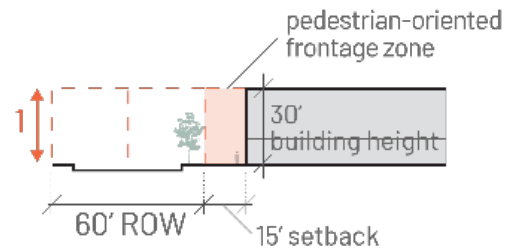
STAIR-STEPBACK



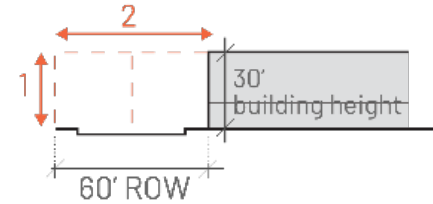
STREET-LEVEL SETBACK + STEPBACK



PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED FRONTAGE IMPLEMENTATION



REDUCED SETBACK



Example: 17 Park St

5 stories;
0.78 street
room ratio



Example: Hypothetical 7 story version of 17 Park St

7 stories;
1:1.09 street
room ratio



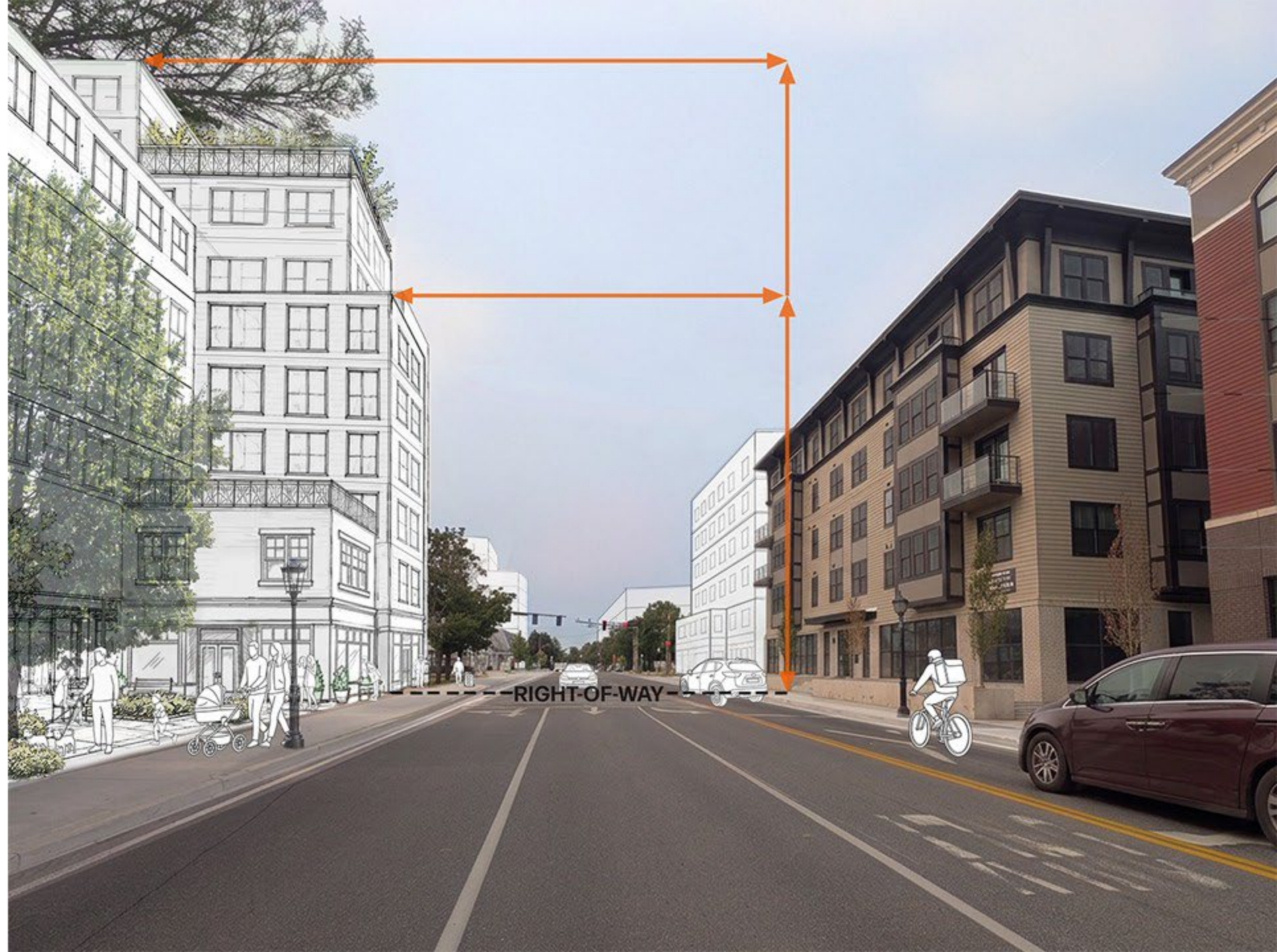
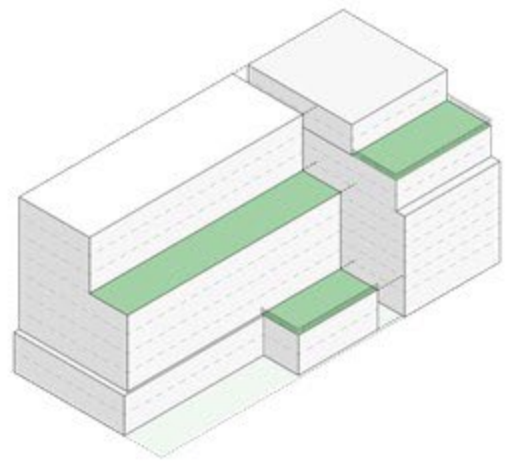
79.5'
Height

66' ROW + 6.8' Setback
= **72.8'** Street Room Width

Note: this is an AI generated illustration

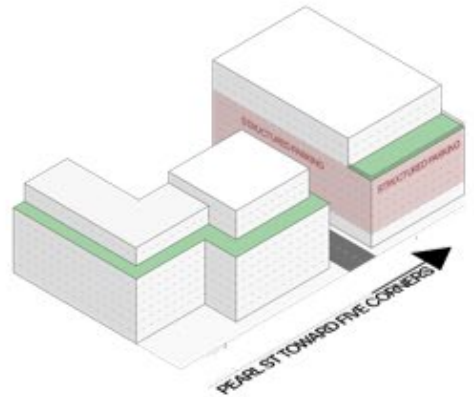
The Street Room, Applied to Park Street

*A conceptual rendering, not a
specific design proposal*



The Street Room, Applied to Pearl Street

*A conceptual rendering, not
a specific design proposal*

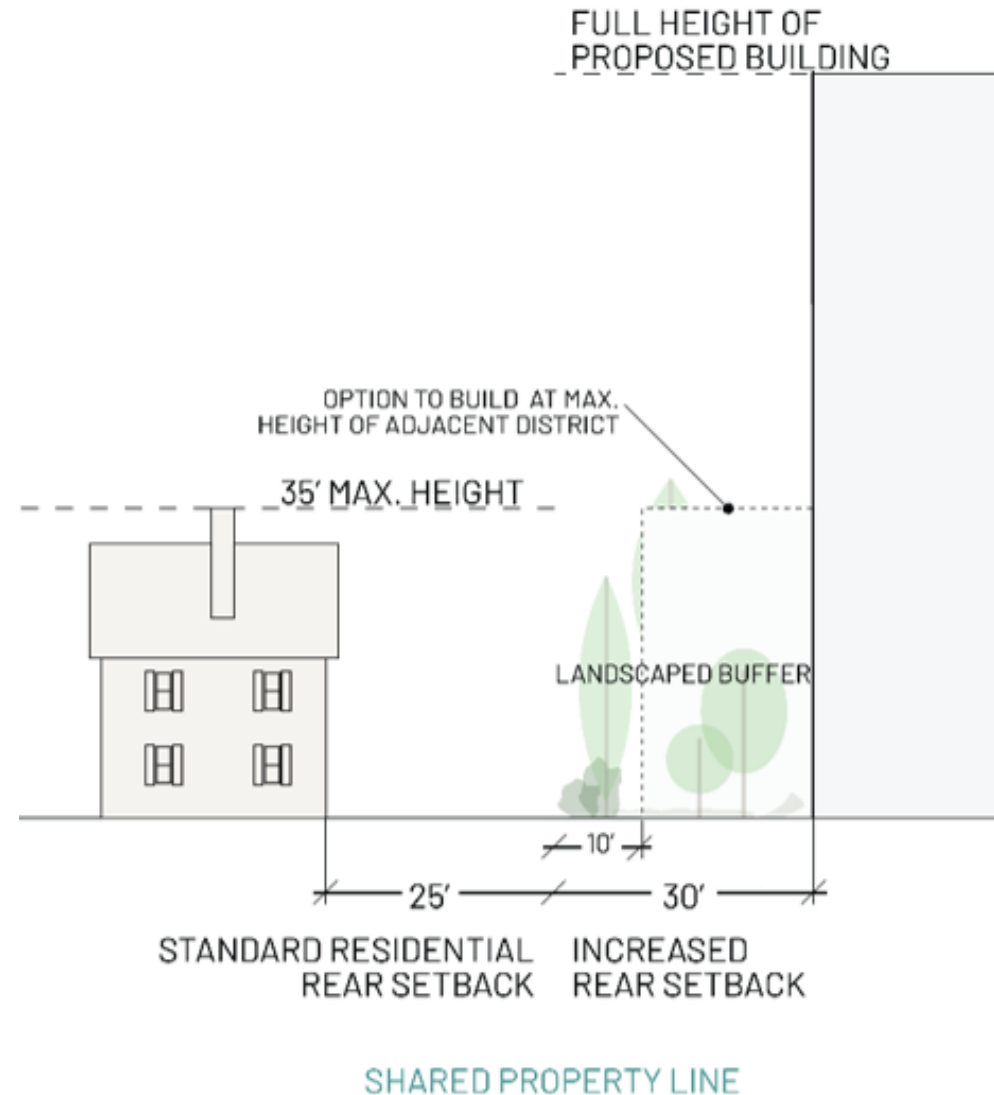


Residential Adjacency

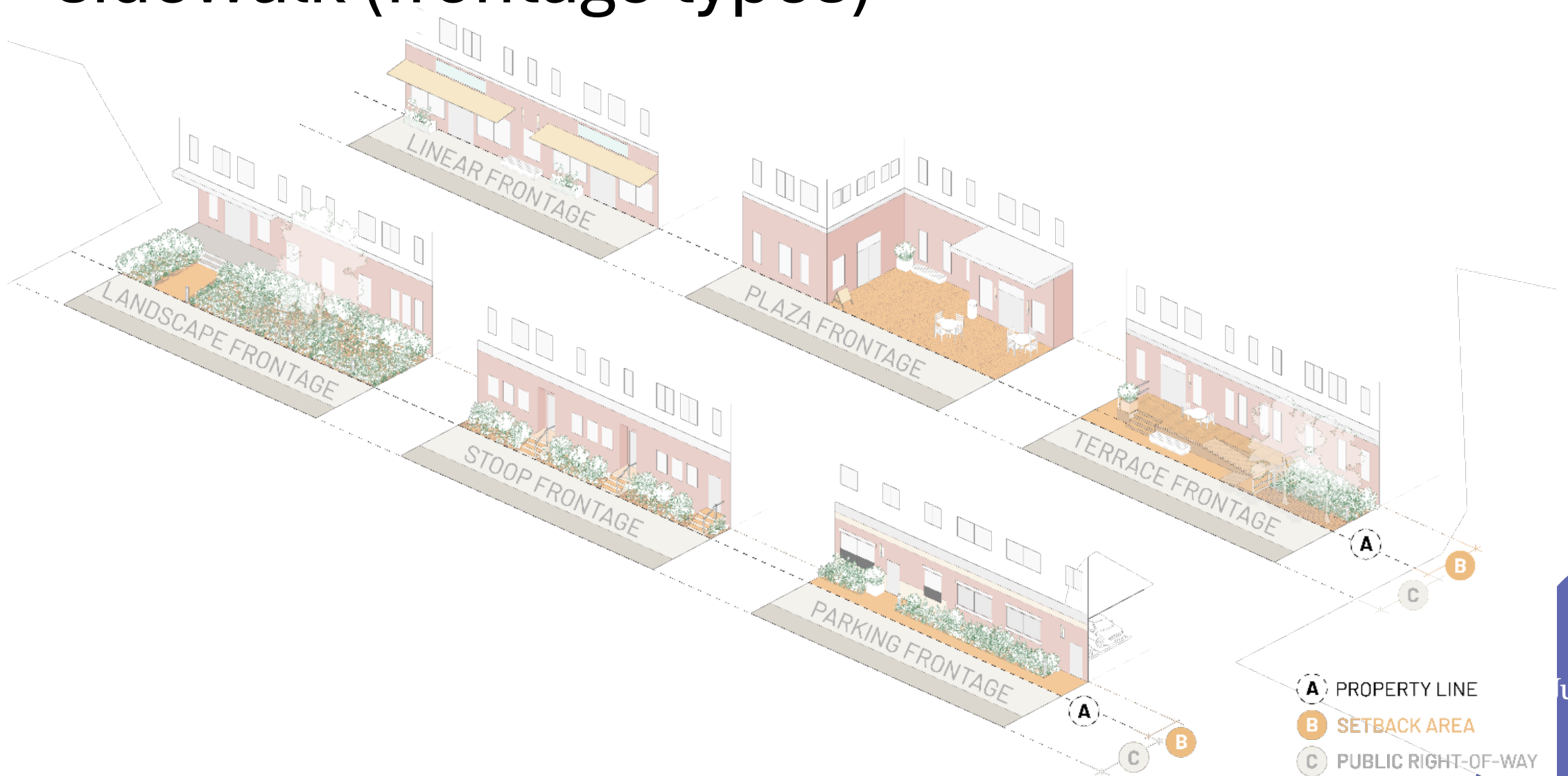
- *Where the difference between a new development's proposed building height and the maximum building height of the abutting residential district is **four (4) or more stories**, the required **setback shall be increased to 30 feet**, and a landscaped buffer shall be provided along the shared property line.*

Residential Adjacency

- *Where the difference between a new development's proposed building height and the maximum building height of the abutting residential district is **four (4) or more stories**, the required **setback** shall be increased to **30 feet**, and a landscaped buffer shall be provided along the shared property line.*

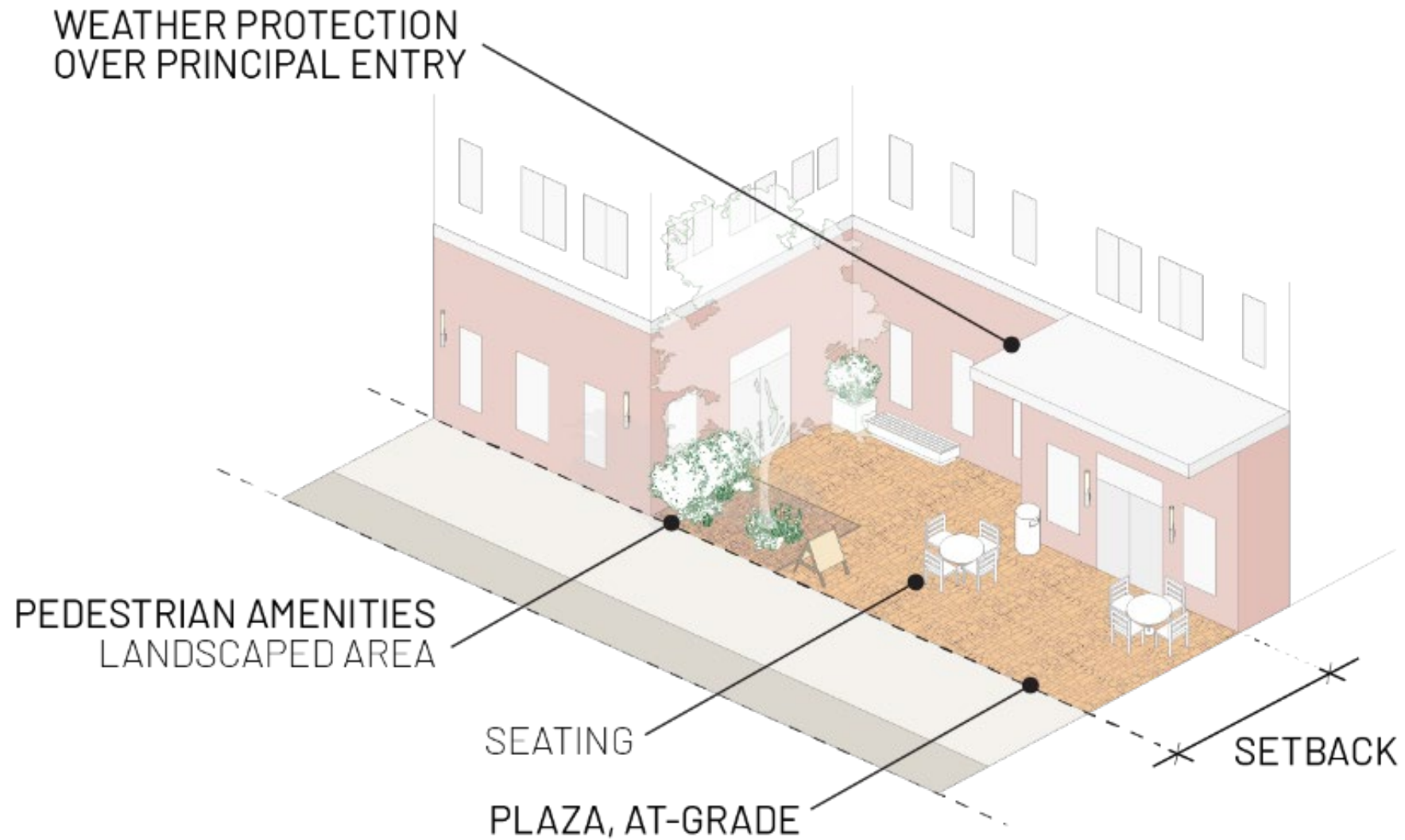


How buildings sit on the lot and meet the sidewalk (frontage types)



Frontage Type	Front setback (feet)	Purpose	Intended/Suggested Ground-Floor Use
Linear	0' min, 10' max	Creating a continuous, sidewalk-aligned building edge that prioritizes storefront visibility, pedestrian movement, and lingering.	Active commercial uses.
Plaza	10' min, 30' max	Integrating publicly accessible open space with building frontage to support gathering, seating, and programmed activity.	Commercial or civic uses.
Terrace	8' min, 15' max	Creating a defined transition space between the building and sidewalk that supports either semi-private residential use or publicly accessible commercial/civic activity while maintaining an active and accessible pedestrian edge.	Any uses. Different application of facade elements and amenities depending on intended ground-floor use.
Landscape	5' min, 20' max	Establishing a landscaped buffer between building and street that prioritizes privacy and green space.	Residential or office
Stoop	5' min, 15' max	Providing a residential street edge that balances neighborhood activation with privacy through elevated entries and landscaped transitions.	Residential
Parking	10' min, 30' max	Providing a landscaped or built buffer between parking and the public realm to screen vehicles and maintain a defined and pedestrian-oriented street edge.	Parking. Intended as a secondary frontage condition.

- Figure 608-H. Plaza Frontage



Each frontage type comes with definitions and specs....

(ii) Plaza

a. Setback

The Plaza Frontage includes a pedestrian-oriented plaza between the building and street edge. The plaza shall be at sidewalk grade and located within a 10- to 30-foot front setback. The plaza should extend along a minimum of 30 feet of frontage and provide at least 1,500 square feet of public plaza space. Building frontage not part of the plaza may extend up to zero-foot setback at the property line.

b. Access

Primary entrances shall be oriented to the plaza. Entrances may be at grade or elevated as required to accommodate site slope.

c. Lighting

Pedestrian-scale lighting in compliance with Section 704 is required at regular intervals along primary pedestrian paths and plaza edges and should be integrated with landscape, seating, or plaza features where possible. In addition, at least one (1) lighting fixture is required at each building entry.

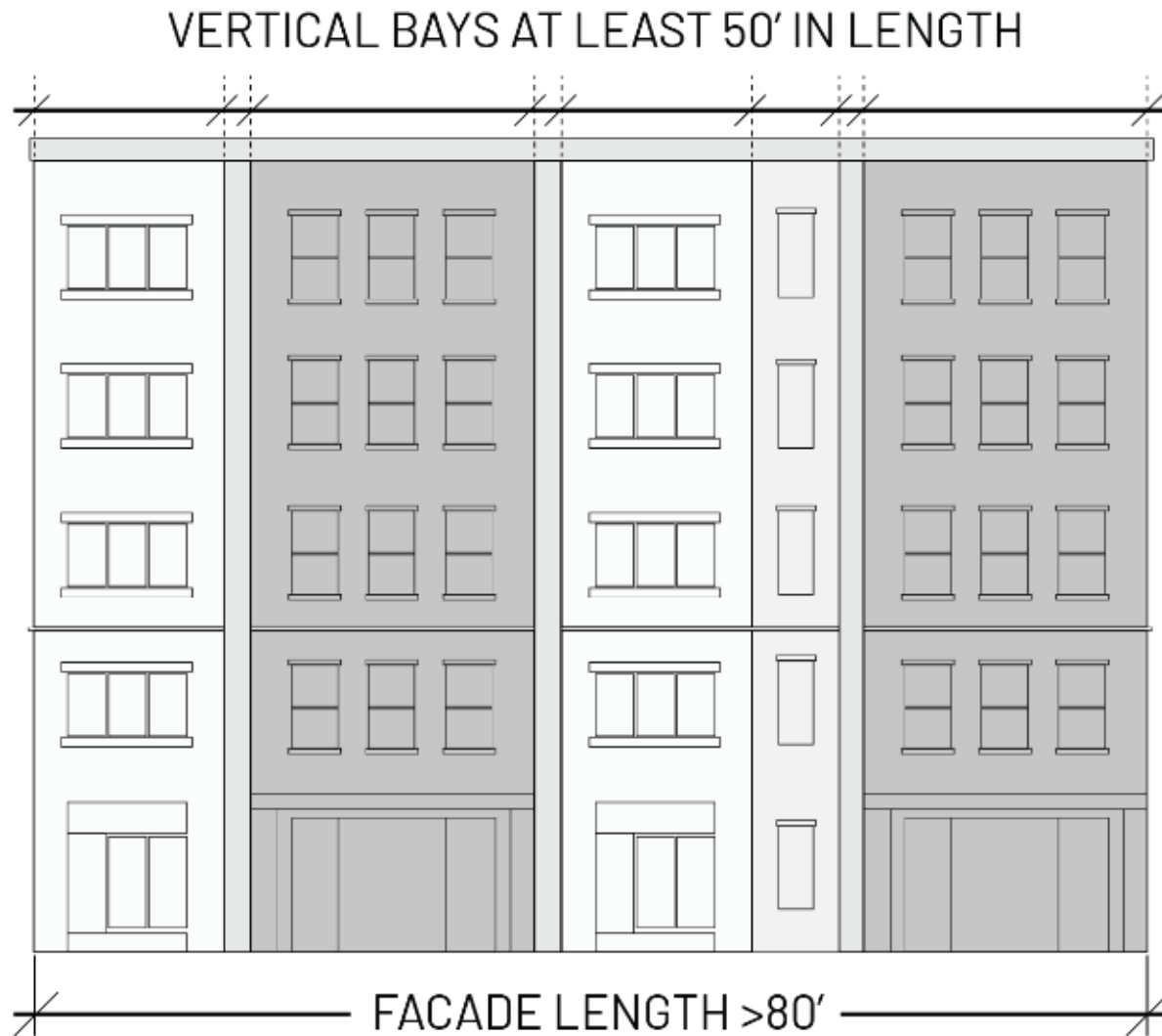
- e. Weather Protection
Weather protection with a minimum depth of five (5) feet is required over each primary entry.
- f. Amenities
At least three (3) linear feet of seating area (bench, ledge, etc) or one (1) individual seat is required per 60 square feet of plaza area. Seating may include a combination of fixed and moveable furniture and/or may be integrated with other plaza features such as planting beds. In addition, a plaza must incorporate at least one (1) of the following amenities:
 - i A continuous landscaped area of at least 20 square feet.
 - ii One (1) planter box per 100 square feet of plaza area. Each planter box should have a minimum area of eight (8) square feet and a minimum soil depth of 18 inches and may include trees, shrubs, or seasonal plants.
 - iii A public art feature with a minimum of six (6) feet in height or 20 square feet in area.
 - iv A water feature with a minimum of 20 square feet in area.
- g. The Plaza Frontage may not be implemented with ground-floor residential uses at the time of initial development, except lobbies or

Façade composition, articulation, and materials

Materials

- (a) Primary materials shall be used on at least 75% of each Principal Facade. Primary materials for the TOD District include wood or high-quality fiber cement siding, brick, natural stone, stucco, and certain metals (copper, titanium, and stainless steel, 18-8 or better).
- (b) Secondary materials may be used for trim, accent areas, upper-story stepbacks, and/or architectural details.

Vertical Articulation

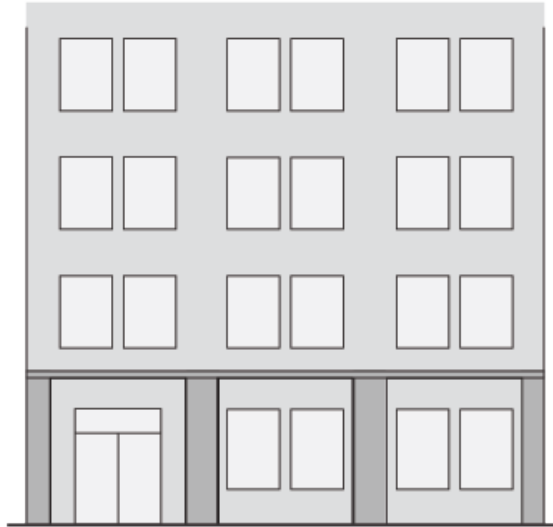


Blank walls exceeding 20 feet in length are prohibited along Frontage Line. Blank walls are façade segments without windows, doors, transparency, or façade articulation.

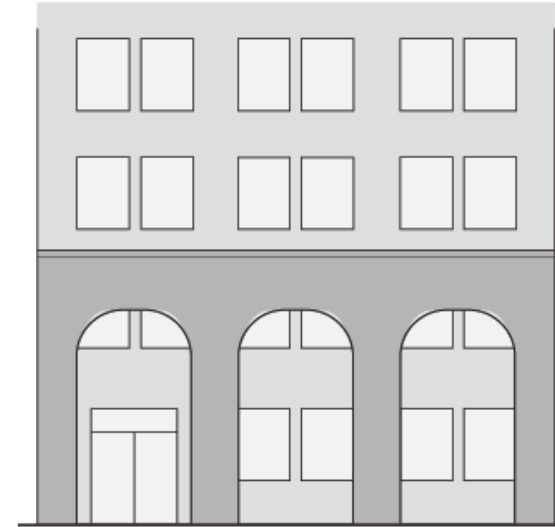
Building Base Articulation



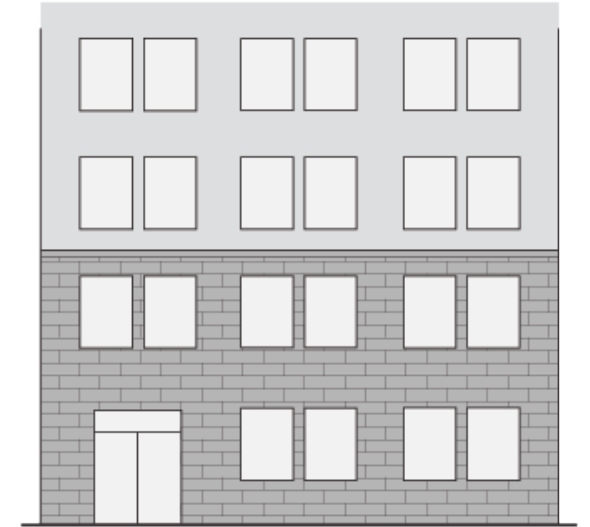
FENESTRATION PATTERN



COLUMNS OR PILASTERS



ARCADE



CHANGE OF MATERIAL

- Figure 608-L. Parking Frontage

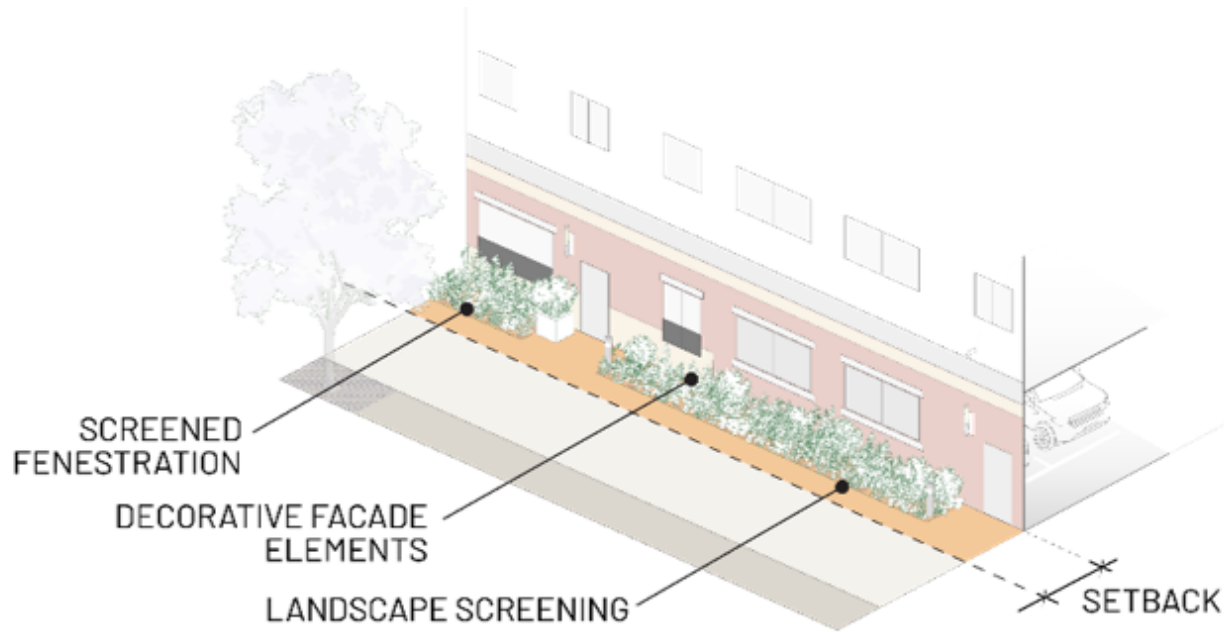


Figure 608-L. Parking Frontage (Structured)

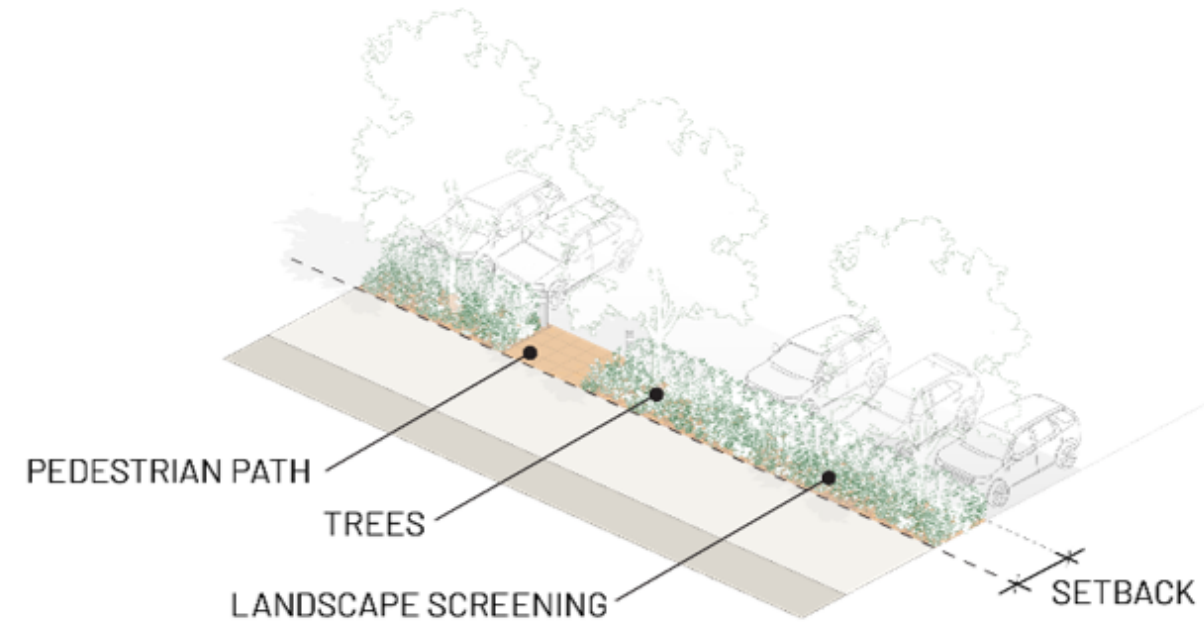
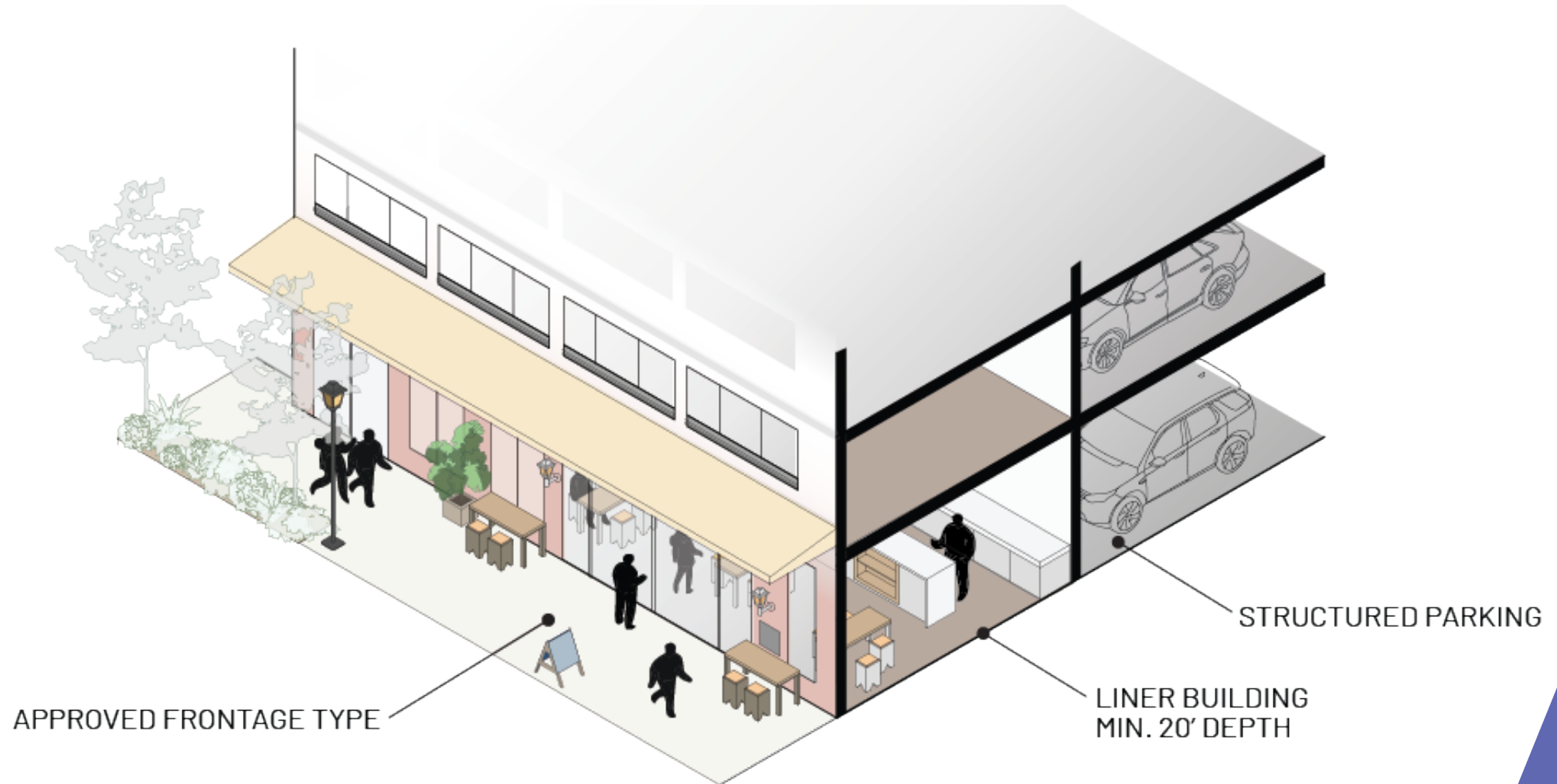


Figure 608-M. Parking Frontage (Surface)

Parking Placement & Screening



Example of Parking Frontage from outside of Essex Junction:
10 Manseau St, Winooski VT



Example of Parking Frontage from outside of Essex Junction: 80 Winooski Falls Way Winooski VT



- Figure 608-L. Parking Frontage

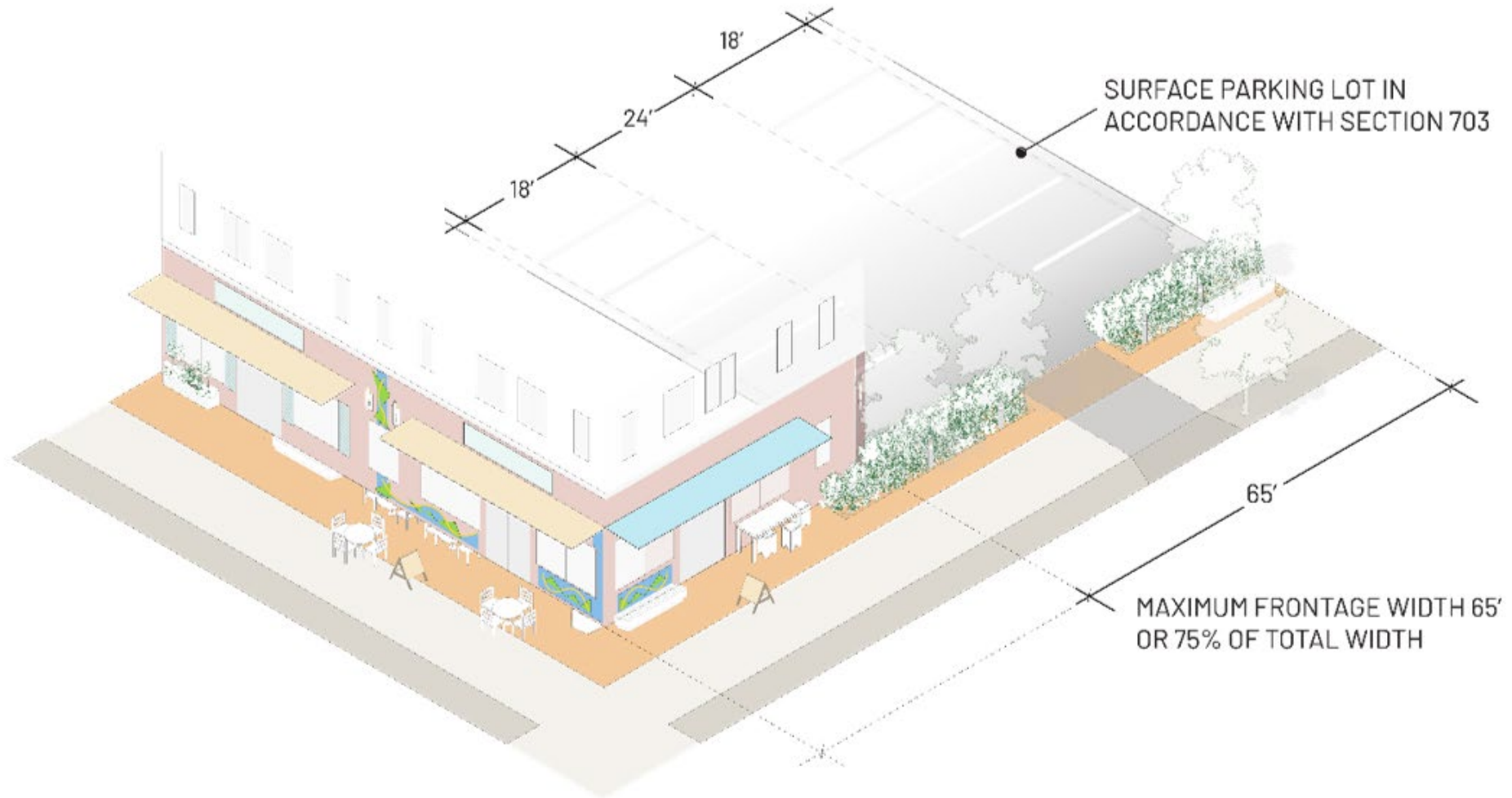


Figure 608-N. Surface Parking Frontage Maximum Width

Landscaping, through a points-based performance score

- Existing rules require 2 or 3% (depending on project size) of the cost of construction to be spent on landscaping
- New system is point-based

Landscaping: performance scoring

Site Landscape Components		Component Amount <i>Area (square feet) or Number of Plants/Trees</i>	Performance Factor <i>Based on contribution to environment, neighborhood, and site quality</i>	Component Score <i>Component Amount x Performance Factor</i>
Planted Areas	Planted areas with soil depth less than 24"	Area	15	
	Planted areas with soil depth of 24" or greater	Area	60	
	Bioretention Facilities	Area	100	
Small Plantings, Shrubs, and Perennials	Mulch, ground cover, and other plants less than 2' tall at maturity	Area	15	
	Medium shrubs or perennials 2-4' tall at maturity	Number of plants	270	
	Large shrubs or perennials 4' tall or greater at maturity	Number of plants	1,080	
Trees	Trees with canopy spread of 8-15' at maturity	Number of trees	2,250	
	Trees with canopy spread of 16-20' at maturity	Number of trees	7,500	
	Trees with canopy spread of 21-25' at maturity	Number of trees	17,500	
	Trees with canopy spread of 26' or more at maturity	Number of trees	31,500	
	Preservation of existing	Number of trees	24,000	

	trees with a minimum trunk diameter of 6" measured at 4' above the ground			
Green Roofs and Walls	Green roofs with less than 4" of growth medium	Area	20	
	Green roofs with 4-8" of growth medium	Area	30	
	Green roofs with 8" or more of growth medium	Area	40	
	Green walls: living vegetation on building or structural vertical surfaces	Area	15	
Permeable paving	Permeable pavers over soil or gravel with a depth of less than 24"	Area	20	
	Permeable pavers over soil or gravel with a depth of 24" or greater	Area	50	
Bonuses	Landscaped area with at least 70% native plant coverage	Area	40	
	Landscaped area with at least 70% drought-tolerant species	Area	20	
	Landscaped area dedicated to food-producing planting (edible crops, orchards, food gardens)	Area	10	
	Landscaped area planted with a mix of flowering species that collectively provide blooms in spring, summer, and fall	Area	30	
	Vegetation planted along the street frontage*	Area	20	
	Structural soil systems	Area	50	
	Landscaped area with preserved, reused, or compost-amended topsoil	Area	25	
	Landscaped areas where at least 50% of annual irrigation needs are met	Area	20	

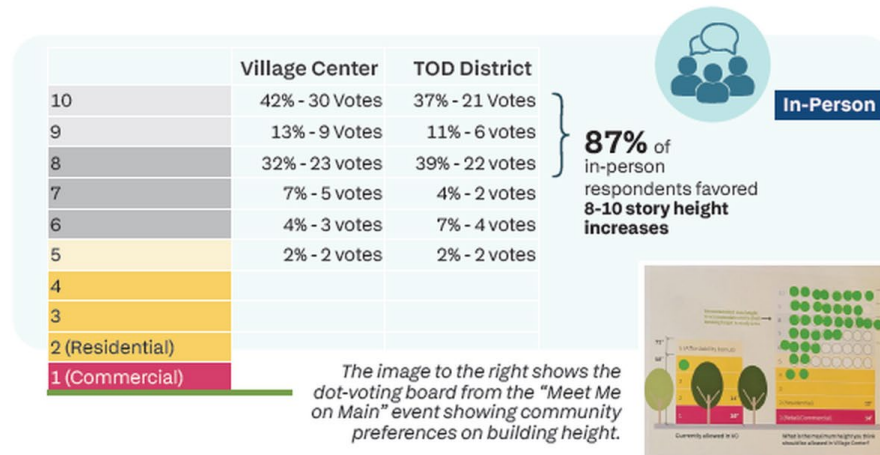
Public Outreach

- Connect the Junction outreach ran June through October 2025.
 - 400+ participants
 - Six in-person events plus an online open house
 - 100+ written comments, 569 sticker votes



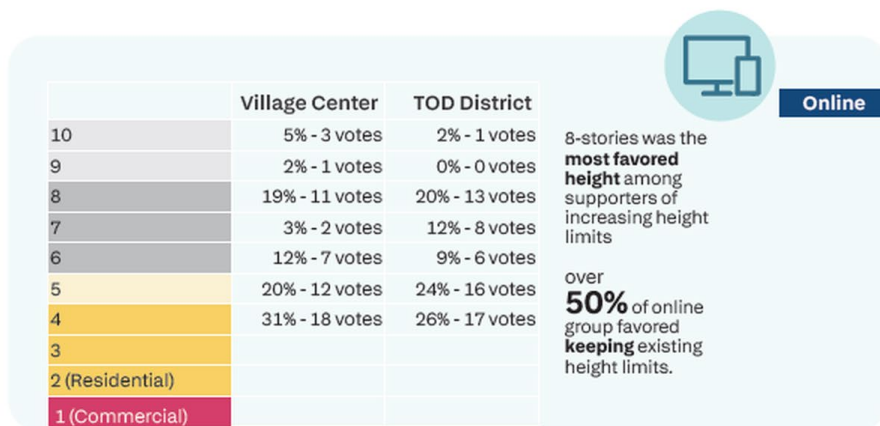
What we heard on height, 2025

Q2/Q3. What is the maximum height you think should be allowed in the Village Center District? The TOD District*?



In person: 87 percent favored 8 to 10 stories.

Online: more than half favored keeping the existing limit.

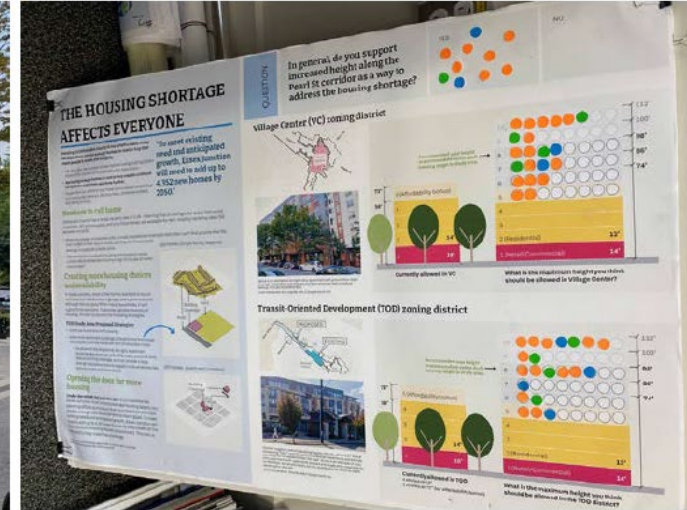


Neither group was a representative sample. Participation in both was self-selected.

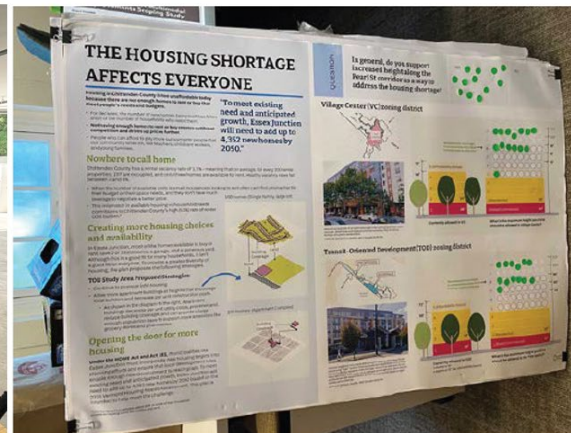
Summer Engagement Summary, Framework, October 2025

Meeting people where they already were

Maple Street Park, August 2025



235/241 Pearl Ice Cream Social - August 26, 2025





THE ESSEX REPORTER



- November 2025
“Essex Junction considers housing changes, Five Corners projects”
- July 15, 2025
“Connect the Junction master plan: City of Essex Junction wants to hear from you”
- November/December 2025
“Essex Junction to allow nine-story housing, council adopts Connect the Junction Master Plan”
- December 2025
“Essex Junction City Council votes for increased building heights”

- Plan received significant attention on Reddit

↑ 108 ↓ · 62

reddit

Q

Search Reddit

←

r/vermont

• 8mo ago

mrshark99000

...

ESSEX JUNCTION ADOPTS CONNECT THE JUNCTION MASTER PLAN!

I am a little bit late to this, but nevertheless after almost a year of planning and coordinating the connect the junction master plan by the city council has been officially adopted! This will not only allow for more transit oriented development to be a part of Essex Junction, but this will also allow 9 to 10 stories of buildings in the city! Right now the highest you can go is only five stories so seeing what developments are going to come with this is very exciting! They are also going to look at some of the concerns that people have with higher buildings, including shadows and setbacks. You can read the full article below. :) 🍌

Article: https://www.essexreporter.com/news/government/transit-oriented-development-essex/article_0f85ee5f-db22-48ae-a501-da06e336f5bc.html

↑ 108 ↓ · 62

↑ 58 ↓

steveholt-lol

• 8mo ago

Honestly, super hyped for this! The junction has been making a lot of very smart decisions around growth lately and the food/downtown scene is finally starting to pick up in the last year or two. A great place to live!

↑ 34 ↓

Metallidan

• 8mo ago

Love this, I don't know how going up in a city with no views would bother anyone, but people just hate change. Up is the way.


 CITY OF
Essex
 Junction

Public Outreach specifically for Form-Based Code Proposal

March through August 2026

- Six Planning Commission meetings: March 31- August 11

July 2026

- Web pages launched
- Utility bill insert mailed
- Developer and property owner outreach
- *Junction City News* episode, aired July 20
- Staff presentation to City Council, July 22

August 2026

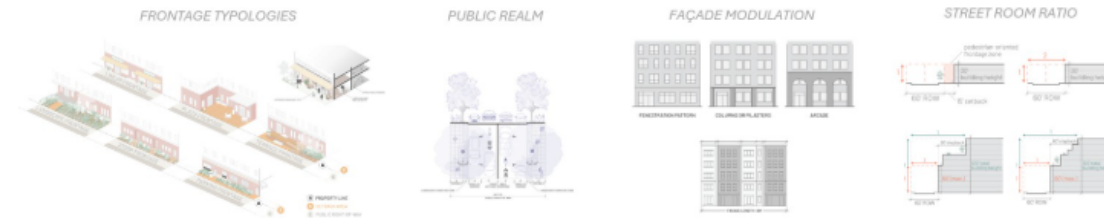
- National Night Out display
- News release and social media
- FAQ page Uploaded
- Park Street rendering created and posted

September 2026

- PC public hearing, September 3
- Pearl Street rendering posted
- Meet Me on Main tabling, September 19

[Home](#) / [Departments](#) / [Community Development](#)

Form-Based Code for the City Center & Pearl Street Corridor



Form-Based Code for the City Center & Pearl Street Corridor

Essex Junction is proposing new rules for how buildings are designed in the City Center and along the Pearl Street corridor. These rules, called a “form-based code,” focus on the size and shape of buildings and how they meet the street, rather than leaving design to case-by-case judgment. This page explains what is changing, why, and how you can weigh in.

Have thoughts to share? Reach out to the [Community Development Department](#) or the [Planning Commission](#)! Public hearings will be held this fall. See full details at the bottom of this page.

[Explore the topic:](#)

- [Why is the City Doing This?](#)
- [What's Changing: The Big Ideas](#)
- [Building Height, Explained](#)
- [See it on a Map](#)
- [Timeline & Get Involved](#)

This code is one part of a larger update to the City's Land Development Code. There are also a number of more technical changes proposed, which are described in the staff memos to the Planning Commission (linked below). The proposal is still being refined and may change over the coming month before it is finalized for public hearing.

[Planning Commission Memo on the Proposed Amendments \(As of July 2, 2026\)](#)

What we heard at the September 3 hearing

- Five members of the public commented on the amendment.
- Most comment concerned height.
- Comments are in the draft PC minutes and in the Public Engagement Summary
- The Commission considered reopening the height limits and did not. It voted 5-0 to forward the amendments to the Council.

Also in This Package

- Form-based code is the main piece of the LDC amendments under consideration. The rest is housekeeping.
- Technical adjustments include:
 - Permits & review timelines
 - Parking & driveways
 - Signs & stormwater
 - Backyard chickens & farming (new state law)
 - Corrections & cross-references

Where things stand and what's next

- Tonight (September 23, 2026): Council introduction and warning of the public hearing
- October 7: legal notice published and posted
- October 28: City Council public hearing. The Council may adopt the amendments at that meeting.
- The Council may modify the amendments before adoption, including the height limits. Substantial changes after the hearing require an additional hearing.



MEMO

To: City Council
From: Regina Mahony, City Manager
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Agenda Item: Discussion and Consideration of Vermont League of Cities and Towns Annual Meeting Voting Delegate

ISSUE: A voting delegate needs to be selected for VLCT's annual business meeting to be held virtually, on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, from 1:30PM to 3:30PM.

DISCUSSION: Every VLCT, PACIF, and VERB member that wants to vote at the annual meetings must designate voting delegate(s). To ensure that all three organizations' members are represented and able to participate in the election of officers and any other item that may properly come before the membership, VLCT is asking that we designate one official as the voting delegate for each VLCT organization that we are a member of. We may delegate different people for each VLCT organization or a single person as the delegate for two or all three of the meetings.

Here is the link for more information about the agenda: vlct.org/vote (must be logged in)

This meeting will only be held virtually via Zoom. The delegate will need to register separately from the Town Fair.

Also this year there is a new process for electing Directors for PACIF and VERB. The PACIF and VERB Boards desire to have greater member involvement than what typically occurs at the VLCT Town fair. By adopting a mailed ballot approach, the Board gives every member the opportunity to cast a ballot.

VLCT also prepares a Draft Municipal Policy statement every other year for consideration at the Annual Meeting. This will be on the agenda this year. The policy statement was developed by VLCT's new year-round Policy Committee, this draft was reviewed and recommended by the VLCT Board of Directors at its September 10, 2026 meeting. I have read the draft policy statement and while not all statements are relevant to Essex Junction, I see no reason to not approve it.

COST: N/A

RECOMMENDATION: None

RECOMMENDED MOTION: "I recommend that the City Council approve **(Name)** as the voting delegate for VLCT, PACIF and VERB."

ATTACHMENTS: 2027-2028 DRAFT Municipal Policy

2027-2028 DRAFT

Municipal Policy



This policy will be voted on by VLCT members who attend the 2026 Annual Meeting.

Developed by VLCT's new year-round [Policy Committee](#), this draft was reviewed and recommended by the VLCT Board of Directors at its September 10, 2026 meeting.

You can scroll to below this draft 2027-2028 policy to see the policy that was used during the 2025-2026 legislative biennium.

[Request a Policy Amendment](#)

Municipal Guiding Principles

Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) supports:

1. a robust and transparent partnership between state and local government;
2. granting municipalities authority to develop and implement local ordinances and regulations to address matters that primarily concern their communities;
3. intermunicipal collaboration to develop regional governance structures that provide the technical, administrative, and financial scale necessary to tackle multi-jurisdictional issues without dismantling local control;
4. creating sustainable funding for municipalities beyond the property tax to ensure every municipality can meet its obligations, including sharing revenue collected or raised at the municipal level;
5. fair access to public services, the encouragement of broad participation in civic life, and the use of evidence-based approaches to improve communities and address documented disparities;



6. flexibility and discretion in implementing state statutory and regulatory requirements, consistent with applicable law and local circumstances;
7. flexibility in implementing state regulatory and statutory requirements
8. including local officials in determining changes in local response to emergency situations;
9. state collection of fees and taxes assessed to implement statewide goals;
10. resources to provide sustainable public safety, fire protection, and emergency medical services; and
11. direct aid to municipalities to mitigate the effects of economic distress.

Each new obligation imposed on municipalities without sufficient funding to cover its costs results in increased municipal property taxes or fees. VLCT opposes all unfunded mandates, pre-emption of municipal action, regulatory overreach by state agencies not supported in statute, and cost shifts to local government. We urge the completion of fiscal impact statements that itemize potential shifts in costs to local governments prior to action being taken by the legislature or administration.

1. FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION, AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS (FAIR)

1.1 Priorities

1. Provide municipalities with technical assistance and funding necessary to meet existing obligations;



2. Avoid the creation of new layers of government in solving local capacity challenges and instead focus on empowering local governments to band together to create councils of government and other intermunicipal agreements to reach scale;
3. Designate the State Ethics Commission to receive, investigate, and report on municipal ethics complaints for elected and appointed officials; and require the commission to establish a process to resolve municipal complaints within 90 days;
4. Provide adequate funding and resources to the State Ethics Commission to support municipal services;
5. Give Vermonters new tools to hold municipal officials accountable by authorizing municipalities, at a town meeting, to hold recall elections with appropriate safeguards for election integrity; and
6. Universally authorize municipal revenues beyond the municipal property tax rate.

1.2 Vermont Tax Structure Overhaul

1. Establish a municipal revenue sharing program that provides sustainable, reliable annual funding to every municipality to support the delivery of services, innovative programs, and maintenance of infrastructure;
2. Reform Vermont's tax system to ensure sustainability, affordability, equity, and balance;
3. Provide local voters with the authority to impose municipal service fees on properties that are exempt from property tax;
4. Authorize variable municipal property tax rates using the property tax classifications created in Act 170 of 2026;



5. Authorize municipal gross receipts tax for amusements, hotels, short-term rentals, and transportation use;
6. Authorize an additional 1% on existing Local Option Tax categories by a vote of the town;
7. Remit a share of state revenues from non-property taxes, including from land gains, property transfer tax, and consumption taxes, to the municipality where the property is located; and
8. Support the recruitment and retention of the municipal workforce by making VMERS pensions exempt from state income tax.

1.3 K-12 Education

1. Establish a transparent education finance system that reduces the education property tax and links voters' actions in approving budgets to the taxes they pay to fund their school districts;
2. Revise Vermont's education funding system and annually evaluate school district budgets;
3. Use Education Fund monies only for pre-K-12 education;
4. Authorize the local legislative body to appoint a replacement member representing that municipality to a consolidated school board in the event of a vacancy until an election is held;
5. Establish a cap on the annual increase of education property tax rates that the legislature may enact;
6. Acknowledge the burden on education property taxpayers and assure that skyrocketing residential property values do not prevent Vermonters from staying in their homes;
7. Ensure that no property owner pays less than \$0 in education property taxes; and



8. Hold municipalities harmless from paying education property taxes that are uncollected due to delinquencies; provide for zero interest borrowing to municipalities for the purpose of remitting state property tax revenues; and
9. Better inform state education tax policy by tracking and reporting state property tax delinquency and collection annually.

1.4 Open Meeting, Public Records, and Election Laws

1. Apply the Open Meeting Law and Public Records Act to the legislative branch of state government;
2. Provide adequate funding and practical recommendations to municipalities that enable them to comply with Open Meeting Law and Public Records Act mandates;
3. Modernize public records law to support compliance and allow municipalities to recover the true cost of producing records; clarify statute to allow municipalities to charge fees for reviewing records;
4. Amend the Public Records Act to reduce individuals' ability to harass public officials with repetitive public records requests; and
5. Extend period to comply with initial public records requests.

1.5 Protecting and Enhancing Municipal Finance

1. Adequately resource the transformation of Vermont's property valuation, parcel identification, and property tax system; appropriately provide for the state's share of training, compensation, and overhead expenses of municipal listers, assessors, and boards of civil authority;



2. Provide collectors of delinquent taxes the resources and authority to collect unpaid taxes in compliance with Act 106; and allow municipalities to change method of delinquent tax collection without a vote of the town if the delinquent tax collector is unable to fulfill their duties;
3. Eliminate the mandate that local governments take over non-municipal cemeteries unless the state pays for the expenses to do so;
4. Continue state funding of education for local officials whose responsibilities include complying with state performance standards;
5. Revise the formula for payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) for state-owned property specified in 32 V.S.A. § 3701–3707.
6. Return existing and any future surplus in the PILOT fund to municipalities;
7. Provide aggregate data to municipalities assessing Local Option Taxes that demonstrate which sectors are paying LOT; establish a mechanism for auditing LOT revenues to the assessing municipality;
8. Make PILOT payments to assessing municipalities on a quarterly basis;
9. Increase clerk fees and establish a three-year cycle for reviewing and updating them consistent with the schedule for state fees; and
10. Adopt for municipalities the monetary damages cap that the legislature has enacted for the State but not municipalities.

1.6 Intermunicipal Cooperation and the Regionalization of Public Services

1. Assure that intermunicipal agreements and regional efforts that provide for delivering services at a scale of two or more municipalities are optional and self-directed;
2. Promote intermunicipal efforts by funding and supporting the necessary technical assistance, legal guidance, and local capacity necessary to implement



new intermunicipal authorities;

3. Maintain authority and oversight for intermunicipal services at the municipal legislative body, or to an authority appointed by the legislative body;
4. Allow municipalities and other subdivisions of state government to jointly exercise shared authorities similar to the Minnesota Joint Powers Act; and
5. Authorize collaborative procurement between municipalities and other subdivisions of state government.

1.7 Intergovernmental Relations

1. Support the recruitment and retention of municipal workers by reforming the VMERS system to control increasing contribution costs and allow for more flexible benefit plan enrollment, later career revisions, and better coordination with the state pension system;
2. Make accurate and timely aggregated tax return data available to municipalities to address a range of issues, including short-term rentals and local option tax collections, to facilitate audits and inform local decision making;
3. Require local legislative body approval of the county operating budget;
4. Transition county sheriff's office to two-year terms; and
5. Ensure equitable access of public safety services statewide by creating minimum qualifications for candidates running for county sheriff.

1.8 Health Care

1. Assure that every community has access to affordable, accessible, quality health care; and
2. Address the root causes of the escalation in cost for health care services and commit to controlling the costs of the health care system.



2. TRANSPORTATION

2.1 Priorities

1. Simplify funding, permitting, and program administration to maximize use of all state and federal dollars;
2. Ensure transparency and collaboration with municipalities when developing the transportation budget and allocating funds to cities, towns, and villages;
3. Provide enough funding to municipalities to build and maintain a modern transportation system that can withstand increased use, the impacts of climate change, and other safety demands;
4. Develop diverse and sustainable Transportation Fund funding sources that achieve the state goal of reducing fossil fuel usage, are commensurate with use of state and local transportation infrastructure, capture usage by out of state visitors, consider the reality of rural residents' road usage, reduce total vehicle miles traveled, and reduce crash fatalities;
5. Secure additional funding for core municipal transportation programs (Town Highway Aid, Town Structures, Town Bridges) sufficient to pay for statutory obligations to provide safe transportation for the traveling public;
6. Encourage adoption of the "Complete Streets" program, finalize updated State Design Standards, and incorporate their principles into projects, including in rural villages and on town highways;
7. Establish policies that empower municipalities to reduce local emissions, increase resiliency to the effects of climate change, and participate in the transition to a cleaner energy economy;
8. Authorize municipalities to set speed limits on roads below 25 mph; and



9. Provide new funding to electrify vehicles and equipment and install charging infrastructure.

2.2 Additional Funding Priorities

1. Ensure that funding for local transportation meets current local assessments of documented needs and design standards;
2. Remit a portion of vehicle registration fee to the municipality in which the vehicle is registered to support the municipal road maintenance budget;
3. Provide funding and technical support so town highways, culverts, and bridges are accurately rated for weights they carry;
4. Fund, design, and build resilient infrastructure that can withstand more extreme weather and meet stormwater management standards through construction, upon completion, and in the next storm;
5. Ensure that funding for the Town Non-Federal Disaster Fund is sufficient to cover municipal costs resulting from natural or human-caused disasters, regardless of a Federal Disaster Declaration;
6. Appropriately fund programs such as Complete Streets, alternative transportation, and bike-pedestrian improvements through block grants to achieve implementation success;
7. Establish adequate state funding of right-sized, efficient public transit services that , preserve existing routes, support social services and advance transportation priorities of a state-wide system;
8. Support the design-bid-build process in all VTrans funded projects;
9. Use mileage-based user fee revenue to leverage federal match dollars and support local transportation investment;
10. Retain revenues from the Vehicle Use and Purchase tax within the state Transportation Fund;



11. Authorize municipal non-property tax revenues – including special assessments for town highway frontage, local fees assessed on vehicle registration, local fuel consumption tax, and tolls on non-interstate highways – to fund town highways, bridges, and structures; and
12. Authorize new and increased state investment in town highways, bridges, and structures, including low- and no-interest revolving loan funds and enhanced funding from state revenues for the Local Option Transportation Fund.

2.3 State and Local Cooperation

1. Improve VTrans's response, communication, and cooperation with municipalities;
2. Provide incentives to municipalities to take over state highways that function as main streets;
3. Eliminate provisions in VTrans's master license agreements that require municipalities to indemnify VTrans or the railroads on activities related to municipal projects;
4. Establish deference to local experience and conditions when studying speed limits on state highways;
5. Allow VTrans district transportation administrators to enter into agreements, and intermunicipal agreements, to allow municipalities to use specialized equipment;
6. Establish state tracking of municipal paving projects and town highway to inform funding needs and prioritize Class 1, 2, and 3 highway paving needs statewide;
7. Consult with municipalities when deciding where to install rumble strips on state highways and paved Class 2 highways;
8. Require advance notice to municipalities and the opportunity to attend bridge inspections conducted by state engineers; and



9. Make the town highway and bridge rating standard commensurate with the state rating of 80,000 pounds.

2.4 Commercial Vehicles

1. Develop a statewide and state-run process for permitting overweight or oversized vehicles on all roads administered at the district level;
2. Index and raise vehicle registration fees to axle weight and remit fees to the Transportation Fund;
3. Remit a portion of overweight permitting fees to municipalities; and
4. Require commercial, forestry, and agricultural custom service vehicles to comply with all motor vehicle laws when operating on state and local highways.

2.5 Rail

1. Require all railroad-related projects to comply with all environmental regulations;
2. Require rail companies to notify municipalities of hazardous materials they are transporting through or storing within a municipality;
3. Work with railroad companies to prohibit trains from speeding in downtown areas;
4. Extend and enhance passenger rail service between Vermont and major northeast metro areas as soon as practicable;
5. Authorize municipalities to extend municipal amenities and infrastructure under or across railroad tracks to serve residents with no railroad-imposed annual charge, ensure access to maintain them, and protect municipalities from liability for accidents caused by the railroad or VTrans that affect those lines; and
6. Require all railroads and railroad-related projects to maintain stormwater and flood resiliency infrastructure so as not to damage municipal infrastructure and



to disclose the condition of such infrastructure to host municipalities.

3. PUBLIC SAFETY

3.1 Priorities

1. Implement initiatives that reverse the critical shortage of public safety personnel statewide and that implement new ways to recruit and retain them;
2. Implement law enforcement principles of procedural justice and continued efforts to ensure:
 3. fair, equitable, and impartial law enforcement;
 4. building trust and legitimacy in communities including marginalized, vulnerable, and disadvantaged populations;
 5. sound policy and oversight mechanisms in accordance with the governance structure of the municipality;
 6. best practices in the use of technology and social media;
 7. community policing principles that include crime reduction strategies;
 8. ongoing training and education to employees;
 9. officer wellness, safety, mental health, and critical incident stress management;and
10. sufficient funding to attain these goals;
11. Provide public safety officials with the technology, authority, information, training, funding, and revenue to ensure the above law enforcement services;
12. Ensure statewide access to affordable state-of-the-art telecommunications services that benefit public safety and first responders and builds the economy;
13. Support Fire Departments and Emergency Medical Services in meeting OSHA/VOSHA standards;



14. Preserve qualified immunity for law enforcement and all government officials;
and
15. Permit municipalities to provide tax incentives to assist in recruiting firefighters
and explore other possible means of increasing Fire Department staffing.

3.2 Opioid Crisis

1. Establish funding to increase the availability of on-demand substance use disorder and mental health treatment services;
2. Extend eligibility for Medicaid reimbursement to substance use disorder treatment;
3. Provide funding to establish and maintain sober housing alternatives;
4. Increase efforts to disrupt, arrest, and prosecute drug dealers and suppliers;
5. Assure that policies balance and deliver treatment, accountability, and enforcement services;
6. Support the expansion of syringe exchange service programs; reimburse or fund municipal safe needle collection;
7. Support new models of delivering mental health crisis and public inebriate beds;
and
8. Implement authorized administration of buprenorphine by EMTs and paramedics for all municipal emergency service agencies.

3.3 Judiciary and Accountability

1. Improve the judicial system's capacity to require accountability for offenders' actions;
2. Sufficiently fund and staff the Vermont Statewide Treatment Court and implement recommendations for improvement;



3. Establish accountability for transparent, accurate, and timely reporting of data on judicial disposition of cases, individual recidivism, and recovery rates, to assure the safety of the public;
4. Modernize retail theft laws and allow for flexibility in sentencing for repeat offenses, including when repeat charges are made while the defendant is released with condition;
5. Create a felony charge for reckless endangerment with a firearm;
6. Keep perpetrators of serious and violent offenses in Vermont state custody pending extradition, or waiver of extradition, to the state where the warrant is held; and
7. Fund and implement accountability court for repeat offenders statewide, using data-informed program improvements that address recidivism.

3.4 State, Local, and Regional Cooperation

1. Incentivize and provide ongoing funding and assistance to support municipalities that explore, consolidate, integrate, or regionalize public safety services;
2. Establish systemic criminal justice reforms that address the drivers of crime and reduce re-offending;
3. Provide for sealing of criminal records in place of their expungement to ensure protection of victims and the public;
4. Authorize a Vermont law enforcement officer to make an arrest based on a warrant from another state;
5. Maintain the independent status and function of the E-911 Board;



6. Assure that all dispatch systems are compatible and can communicate with one another;
7. Ensure that equal access to emergency services exists in rural communities;
8. Establish a default statewide ban on firearms in designated municipal buildings/property, from which an individual municipality may opt out; and
9. Provide clarity and education on state regulation of electric powered bicycles, motos, and other recreational vehicles and allow for appropriate local regulations and enforcement of their use.

3.5 Corrections

1. Develop collaborative solutions among all affected stakeholders to manage incapacitated persons;
2. Require the Department of Corrections (DOC) to notify local officials of changes in offenders' status, particularly those at risk to re-offend, collaborate with local officials in the placement of released persons, and assure that reasonable support and supervision are in place to protect the community, victim, and offender;
3. Adhere to municipal zoning in approving and providing housing for offenders in state custody or under pretrial supervision, and ensure adequate support services for those individuals;
4. Authorize DOC officials to serve citations and domestic abuse orders to offenders in correctional facilities in lieu of municipal police officers serving them; and
5. Encourage corrections department personnel to provide field-based services, including for pretrial supervision.

3.6 Public Safety Funding



1. Urgently establish a systemic approach to financially support call handling and dispatch emergency services for implementation by FY29;
2. Increase cooperation of state agencies for incident response on interstate and state highways to share the burden currently placed on local public safety departments;
3. Authorize local emergency service agencies to recover all costs associated with complying with any federal, state, or court-ordered licensing, registration, training, or testing requirements;
4. Provide funding to municipalities to undertake drug investigations at the local level;
5. Continue to support and fund state increased Medicaid reimbursement rates for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to cover the actual cost of care; and
6. Share a portion of the state excise tax on the sale of recreational cannabis products with the municipality where the cannabis retailer is located.

3.7 Public Safety Training

1. Institute flexible no residency and low residency alternatives to the existing Vermont Police Academy training program;
2. Provide adequate funding and resources to the Vermont Fire Academy, the Vermont Police Academy, and the Department of Health for certified training programs and activities for all emergency services personnel;
3. Ensure that statutorily authorized training mandates and the associated impacts on public safety personnel and agencies are current, necessary, and appropriate to an officer's level of experience;
4. Focus Vermont Police Academy funding and training on core law enforcement responsibilities, including the VLCT Board adopted document entitled Perspectives on Police Reform;



5. Provide adequate funding to ensure appropriate levels of staffing and training to each sector of the public safety community;
6. Implement standards for providing reciprocity with other states' training programs;
7. Continue to fund training for emergency medical service providers; and
8. Create additional opportunities outside of existing state-sponsored programming – such as through tech centers, colleges and universities, and non-traditional education providers – to enable more Vermonters to become certified public safety officials, including police, fire fighters, and emergency medical service providers.

4. QUALITY OF LIFE AND HOUSING

4.1 Priorities

1. Enable every municipality in the state to grow economic vitality by encouraging and facilitating community-driven economic development;
2. Establish new sources of adequate, ongoing funding to invest in infrastructure in downtowns, new town centers, villages, and any area in which state or local policies encourage housing or economic development;
3. The state is responsible for providing transitional and supportive housing for Vermonters. The state must lead homelessness prevention and response efforts including establishing and following a plan to address unit production, mental health service delivery, substance misuse treatment, and homeless shelter creation; and
4. Protect and support statutory authority and local processes for municipalities to determine the form and density of future development through local planning



and regulation; oppose state and regional preemption of municipal zoning and subdivision bylaw.

4.2 Housing and Economic Growth

1. Establish funding and incentives that support the variety of housing needed across the state and which have been encouraged through recent housing legislation;
2. Authorize municipalities to raise revenues sufficient to appropriately regulate short-term rentals for life safety and to protect against negative impacts to the environment and local housing inventory;
3. Implement policies that encourage, but do not mandate, models of high-density, multi-unit housing, because solutions to the housing crisis must be appropriate to the size and planning priorities of every municipality;
4. Direct housing incentives and programs to areas designated in municipal plans and provide for potable water and wastewater system capacity in those places;
5. Prioritize funding and regulatory reform to facilitate design, construction, and maintenance of infrastructure to support development and redevelopment of the wide variety of housing Vermonters need (workforce, elderly, downsizing, middle income, affordable, and supportive);
6. Allow for flexible posting requirements for municipal permitting bodies;
7. Create and maintain programs to enable municipalities to invest in infrastructure that supports a transformational economic development project in the community;
8. Continue to authorize tax increment financing for public infrastructure that supports housing and economic development, including through the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program; ensure that all Vermont municipalities may participate and benefit; and



9. Authorize state and local property tax stabilization agreements for small scale, priority economic and housing developments.
10. Improve quality of multi-unit housing by supporting providers to directly manage disruptive guests and home takeovers.

4.3 Local Land Use and Act 250 Regulatory Reform

1. Oppose the preemption of local zoning and subdivision bylaw in state law or regional plans;
2. Provide adequate funding and support, and ensure municipal input when implementing new land-use mapping and Act 250 location-based jurisdiction;
3. Ensure that the Community Investment Program (replaces Downtown Designation Program) defers to municipal plans and authority when transitioning existing designated areas, granting new areas, and offering benefits;
4. Base development decisions upon adopted municipal plans and use adopted regional plans as guidance documents;
5. Advance strategies to reduce the volume and burden of permit appeals;
6. When state law creates new bylaw preemptions, allow the municipality to expedite updates to local zoning and bylaw through an action of the legislative body; and
7. Allow penalty-free disenrollment from the Current Use program specifically for the creation of workforce housing for agricultural and working lands enterprises.
8. Allow penalty-free disenrollment from the Current Use program specifically for municipal lands required for clean water projects, potable water and wastewater systems, and other public infrastructure necessary for safe and affordable housing.



4.4 Homelessness and Human Services

1. Reform the General Assistance Hotel/Motel Emergency Housing program to ensure equitable and proportionate impact on municipalities;
2. Coordinate with municipal officials when the state creates or provides temporary housing or shelter in a municipality and require the state provide necessary support services and/or appropriate local funding;
3. Establish a statewide, integrated approach for wellness, critical incident stress management, mental health, and substance use disorder services across health, human services, first responders, and public safety departments and agencies;
4. Work to create opportunities for state leaders to work with local leaders and area stakeholders to create additional shelter capabilities;
5. Provide municipalities with resources to provide basic public health amenities and remove hazardous materials from encampments and public spaces;
6. Prioritize funding for providers of field-based services (municipal, non-profit, and designated agencies), including for day shelter, emergency shelter, community outreach, and case management services; and
7. Support existing state case management personnel in providing field-based services.

5. ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Priorities

1. Authorize and support municipalities in developing regional governance structures that provide the administrative and financial scale necessary to tackle environmental issues that cross municipal boundaries;



2. Provide municipalities with new resources, authority, and avenues for intermunicipal collaboration to respond to the impacts of climate change;
3. Charge the State with the responsibility of managing rivers, streams, and watersheds for resiliency and recovery;
4. In collaboration with local governments, develop coordinated, long-term, statewide recovery plans that address the wide range of resiliency and rebuilding needs across agencies, services, and municipalities;
5. Provide proactive support through outreach, technical assistance, increased state funding, and user supported financing for brownfield assessment, clean-up, and redevelopment;
6. Reform the 3-Acre Rule General Permit implementation to consider cost, feasibility, and effectiveness in reducing stormwater impacts and maintain municipal authority to operate stormwater utility districts;
7. State land conservation goals and Act 59 implementation must balance private property rights, municipal grand list values, statewide equity in conserved lands, and environmental justice principles;
8. Ensure that state environmental regulations and requirements align with state housing goals and support economic and community development in designated areas;
9. Promote a culture and system framework in the Agency of Natural Resources that prioritizes feasibility and outcomes; and
10. Reduce duplicate regulatory frameworks and permitting requirements.

5.2 Climate and Environment

1. Share federal and state resources to assist in local resilience and adaptation efforts;



2. Ensure ongoing funding for the Flood Resilient Communities Fund (the state buyout program for flood-impacted properties) including relocation and rebuilding of municipal properties in flood danger;
3. Implement policies that empower municipalities to reduce emissions across all sectors, plan for and increase resiliency to the effects of climate change, and transition to cleaner energy sources;
4. Increase state energy code compliance without clouding property titles or imposing further mandates or administrative burdens on municipalities;
5. Provide accessible, low-barrier funding for weatherization efforts at scale;
6. Ensure local input and control over siting and permitting of energy projects, including decisions about building close to where energy will be used;
7. Hold municipalities harmless from liability for presence or consequences of forever chemicals;
8. Relax regulations that require relocation of lightly contaminated urban soil, accounting for policies to encourage economic development and housing in urban locations;
9. Increase funding for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment; and
10. Allow municipalities to protect habitat blocks, forest blocks, river corridors, wetlands for carbon sequestration and resiliency, flood and stormwater mitigation, and aquifer recharge through established local planning processes.

5.3 Agency of Natural Resources System Improvement

1. Produce efficient and coordinated permitting, grant management, program management, and enforcement of regulations across the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR);



2. Direct and authorize leadership in ANR and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to:
3. Provide leadership in developing regional solutions in pursuit of conservation and resiliency initiatives.
4. Undertake a comprehensive review of all rules with the objective of reducing burdens and liabilities to municipalities.
5. Require rule revisions that balance conservation and resiliency objectives with municipal capacity and societal needs in Vermont and prohibit "Interim Strategies" and "Guidelines" as substitutes for duly adopted rules.
6. Resolve regulatory conflicts in favor of the programs or requirements that produce the most economically feasible environmental benefits whenever compliance projects encounter conflicting requirements among programs.
7. Whenever possible, provide a "service provider model" for technical and planning assistance; and
8. Ensure timely responses from ANR at all levels and in all programs regarding permit and permit renewal requirements, and clear guidance for implementing those requirements.

5.4 Vermont Clean Water Act Funding and Implementation

1. Ensure that federal and state funding instead of competitive grants pay for federal and Vermont Clean Water Act priorities;
2. Provide sufficient funding for project development including research, planning, design, and scoping to ensure that projects will successfully implement mandates such as Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permits, Vermont's Stormwater Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Combined Sewer Systems, and Municipal Road General Permits (MRGPs);



3. Afford relief from permit compliance deadlines when corresponding funding is delayed or eliminated;
4. Prohibit diverting Revolving Clean Water funds to other purposes;
5. Update river corridor plans and develop a hazard mitigation plan that promotes reductions to the impacts of natural disasters including flooding;
6. Direct VTrans to develop a statewide inventory of private properties where owners have installed stormwater and flood resiliency controls and make the inventory available not only to the state but also to municipalities;
7. Authorize municipalities to require private property owners to install and maintain stormwater and flood resiliency controls outside of the public right-of-way to prevent damage to municipal and state highways;
8. Revise the technical assumptions underlying the original TMDL modeling to determine whether current compliance obligations remain appropriately calibrated using today's science prior to assessing or enforcing per parcel fees and implementation of clean water projects on developed lands;
9. Reform the 3-acre permit rule to allow cost to be a factor in determining the feasibility and approval of engineered treatments, remove dispersed residential neighborhoods without common ownership, and only require treatment at the time of redevelopment; and
10. Allow municipalities to separate publicly owned facilities (such as town roads) from private parcels under 3-acre permits.

5.5 Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLS)

1. Direct ANR to track and publish up-to-date data on the cost to construct TMDL-compliant projects to ensure consistency, transparency, and unified standards;
2. Allow permitted entities to pursue water quality gains elsewhere in the drainage basin when the cost of treatment at facilities within regulatory boundaries



reaches an excessive benefit-to-cost ratio;

3. Ensure fair, effective, efficient spending of local, state, and federal dollars to achieve TMDL goals;
4. Subject potential mitigation efforts to a cost-effectiveness analysis and base implementation on that analysis; and
5. Reduce and cost-effectively infiltrate runoff from non-point sources of pollution on all properties.

5.6 Potable Water and Wastewater Permitting

1. Enforce provisions of the Wastewater Systems and Potable Water Supplies Program, including requirements to repair or replace failed on-site septic systems;
2. Establish sufficient funding to municipalities to protect public health by ensuring availability of potable water supplies and to test for, remediate, and manage per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination;
3. Regulate emerging contaminants at the source instead of the point of discharge in a science-based and economically feasible manner;
4. Redefine "waters of the state" to exclude constructed waterworks such as reservoirs, settling ponds, and any infrastructure related to water supplies;
5. Apply new permitting requirements only upon expiration of the permit term and renewal; and
6. Adopt modernized septic and well regulations.

5.7 Materials Management

1. Hold municipalities harmless from liability for any hazardous material incident at any facility or property that conforms with all state and federal permits and regulations;
2. Hold municipalities harmless from liability for any PFAS-related contamination;



3. In state regulation and permitting, consider the entire treatment cycle and the useful life or capacity of the facility, and ensure in-state disposal for septage, residuals, recyclables, contaminated soils, and solid waste;
 4. Develop a plan for locating solid waste management facilities (landfills) closer to the point of waste production to reduce the carbon footprint of waste transportation, increase efficiency, and protect Vermont's waters; and
 5. Incentivize and fairly compensate municipalities for hosting solid waste facilities and transfer stations.
-
-

The 2025-2026 VLCT Municipal Legislative Policy

Approved by the membership at VLCT's 2024 Annual Meeting, the policy shown below was developed through recommendations from VLCT's former five legislative policy committees, each of which focused on one of the top-level numbered areas.

Municipal Guiding Principles

Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) supports:

1. a robust and transparent partnership between state and local government;
2. granting municipalities authority to legislate solutions to matters solely affecting the municipality;
3. inter-municipal collaboration to develop regional governance structures that provide the technical, administrative and financial scale necessary to tackle multi-jurisdictional issues without dismantling local control;





MEMO

To: City Council
From: Ashley Snellenberger, Communications & Strategic Initiatives Director
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Agenda Item: Annual Meeting Engagement and Schedule

ISSUE: The Communications Director and City Clerk have provided information on engagement and annual meeting deadlines for the Council to discuss.

DISCUSSION:

Annual Meeting Date

Per the City Charter, “Annually on or before January 1, the Council shall set the date of the next annual meeting, at which time the voters shall vote for the election of officers, the voting on the City budget, and any other business included in the warnings for the meetings.” (Subchapter 4: CITY MEETINGS § 401. City meetings and elections (a))

The attached schedule assumes the City Annual Meeting will be held on March 2, 2027, the traditional Town Meeting Day. The budget and Annual Meeting Warning must be finalized by the January 27 City Council meeting so it can be printed on the ballot, in the City Newsletter, and in the Annual Report. Staff requests that the Council discuss and decide on the annual meeting date.

Budget Day

Below are potential dates for Budget Day. With the new Annual Meeting date on March 2, 2027, we need to hold the Budget Day in November. Staff requests that the Council discuss and decide on the date for Budget Day.

- Tuesday, November 17
- Wednesday, November 18
- Thursday, November 19

Also, looking upstream of this date we need to reschedule the November 10 City Council meeting. The regular first Wednesday falls on November 11th, Veteran’s Day so we moved that to Tuesday November 10th. Now that the School District schedule is out, EWSD is closed on Tuesday, November 10th for Diwali. Diwali is actually on Sunday, November 8th; but due to the EWSD schedule we may want to avoid meetings on November 10th. Therefore, staff recommends that we hold the November City Council meeting on Thursday, November 12th (we would just need to move Bike Walk Advisory Committee).

Community Engagement and Community Event

For the past few years, the Council has hosted budget discussion activities before the Warning and budget are finalized. This past year, attendance was again low, with the Senior Luncheon and Whitcomb Woods drawing the most attendees. (See table below) One thing of note was that events held closer to the annual meeting had higher attendance.

Date	Engagement Event	Number of Attendees
Feb 3	Lunch & Learn	1
Feb 7	Saturday at Brownell	1
Feb 12	Lunch & Learn	0
Feb 14	Saturday at EJ Market	0
Feb 18	Evening Exchange	0
Feb 23	Senior Luncheon	10
Feb 26	Coffee Chat	1
Feb 28	Saturday at Brownell	4
Mar 2	Whitcomb Woods	12-14
Mar 3	Lunch & Learn	0
Mar 7	Saturday at Park	1

Staff suggests that the Council focus its engagement efforts on educating residents about the articles on the ballot after the Warning and budget are finalized, rather than gathering feedback on the budget beforehand. This is for two reasons: 1) the window for engagement before the Warning is finalized is very small (December 16- January 13, though early January for practical reasons due to the holidays) and 2) with our new Engagement Plan, we should consider how the feedback we are receiving is useful and can affect the outcome of our decision.

An exception would be if there is a larger portion of the budget that residents could affect. For example, if we decided to add an Economic Development staff member, that would be a larger increase to our budget, and residents could provide feedback on whether to add it to the budget. If there were items in the budget like this, an option for engagement would be to use the poster board concept from last year's open house, but leave them up at 2 Lincoln from January 4th to 13th (and perhaps other locations if there aren't many) rather than one 2-hour window for input.

After the Warning and budget are finalized, the Council could host activities leading up to the annual meeting to educate residents about the articles on the ballot and what a Yes or No vote would mean.

In addition to these Council activities, there are two options for our Community Meal concept for the Council to discuss.

- Actual Engagement Option 1: Mimic the fairly common practice other communities do of holding this hearing the night before Town Meeting Day with food.
 - Con: some folks have their ballots well in advance of this date (but we do not plan to universally mail ballots)
 - Pro: there is a lot of energy and attention to the ballot items around this time period; data from last year shows that events held closer to the annual meeting had higher attendance; and the

Clerk has noted that some folks miss the in-person Annual Meeting, and this could be a good substitute.

- Actual Engagement Option 2: Another option is to hold it closer to when the ballots are published, which will be February 10th. We could consider a date between February 13th and February 18th to stay ahead of the school vacation week.
 - Con: too far in advance of the Annual Meeting
 - Pro: closer to the time when some folks have their ballot (but we do not plan to universally mail ballots)

Public Hearing and Informational Hearing

- *Required Step:* The City Charter sets a requirement for a budget hearing in addition to the statutorily required informational hearing. This hearing must be held at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting. We suggest that this hearing be held at the January 13th Council meeting for it to be meaningful, prior to the budget being finalized at the January 27th Council meeting.
- *Required Step:* There is a statutorily required informational hearing that must be held after the budget and ballot are finalized; and within 30 days before the Annual Meeting. The window for this hearing is from January 31st to March 1st.

Staff requests that the Council discuss and decide if this overall concept works, and to provide feedback on the date for the public informational hearing (night before Annual Meeting, or closer to when the ballots are printed - within Feb 13th to Feb 18th).

COST: None

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the City Council set the Annual Meeting date; set the Informational Hearing date; set the Budget Day date; adjust the November City Council meeting date; and provide direction on the date for the Community Event and Budget presentation. Though no formal motion is needed on the last piece.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: If the Council decides to follow the recommended motion:

"I move the Council set the Essex Junction Annual Meeting for Tuesday, March 2, 2027 from 7am to 7pm , and the Public Informational Hearing date for [XXXX]."

"I move the Council set the Budget Day date to [XXXX], and move the City Council meeting on November 10th to Thursday, November 12th to avoid significant holidays."

ATTACHMENTS: DRAFT 2027 Annual Meeting and Budget Schedule

2027 Annual Meeting and Budget Deadlines

November	
November 10	Regular Council meeting on Tuesday 11/10 due to Veteran's Day. However the EWSD is off for Diwali on 11/10. Move to 11/12?
November TBD	Budget Day - week of 11/16/26
December	
December 2 (adjusted from regular time)	City Council Meeting & Budget Work Session
December 16 (adjusted from regular time)	City Council Meeting & Budget Work Session Warn Public Hearing on the Budget
January	
January 13	City Council Meeting & Budget Work Session - Public Hearing on the Budget (<i>per City Charter §904(a)</i>) - Adoption of Resolution for bond vote - The Council should adopt a resolution <i>that the public interest or necessity demands the _____ (description of project) and that the cost ... will be too great to be paid out of the ordinary annual income and revenue, and a proposition of incurring a bonded debt to pay for public improvements will be submitted to the qualified voters of the City at Annual City Election on March 2, 2027.</i> (Wording in italics is taken from VSA 24, Section 1755).
January 14	Last day to file petitions signed by at least 5% of the voters with the City Clerk for Articles to be included in the City Meeting Warning. (<i>Not less than 47 days before the Annual Meeting</i>)
January 25	5:00 p.m. - deadline for nominating petitions and Consent of Candidate forms to be filed with City Clerk (<i>6th Monday before Election</i>) Each petition must contain at least 30 valid signatures.
January 27	City Council Meeting & Budget Discussion - Budget Finalized - Adoption of Warning for Annual City Meeting (to include bond vote)
January 31	Last day that the Warning may be posted in two public places, plus in or near the Clerk's office, and on the City website; and the Budget must be available. (<i>No earlier than 40, nor later than 30 days before Annual Meeting; also satisfies City Charter §904(b)</i>)
January 31/TBD	January 31st is the first day to hold a public information hearing on any public questions to be voted on by Australian ballot at annual meeting. The hearing must be held within 30 days before annual meeting and must be warned at least 10 days in advance of the hearing. Last day to hold the hearing is 3/1/27.
January/February/March TBD	Community Meal and Budget Discussion
February	
Week of February 1	Publish Notice of Bond Vote in local newspaper. (<i>Notice must be published once a week for 3 consecutive weeks</i>). #1
Week of February 8	Publish Notice of Bond Vote in local newspaper. (<i>Notice must be published once a week for 3 consecutive weeks</i>). #2
February 10	Ballots must be ready by this date, and absentee ballots must be mailed no later than this date. (<i>20 days before election</i>).
February 10	City Council Meeting
Week of February 15	Publish Notice of Bond Vote in local newspaper. (<i>Notice must be published once a week for 3 consecutive weeks</i>). #3
February 19	Publish Budget in local newspaper (or send in Newsletter by this date). (<i>Budget must be published at least 10 days before meeting</i>).
February 20	Annual Report must be published <i>10 days before Annual Meeting</i> (auditors report – 24 VSA §1682; town meeting warning 17 VSA §2641(b); and annual City report – City Charter §904(c))
February 24	City Council Meeting
February 25	Publish Warning in local newspaper (if it has not been mailed out in Annual Report/Newsletter). (<i>Warning must be published at least 5 days before meeting</i>).
March	
March 1/TBD	Hold a public information hearing on any public questions to be voted on by Australian ballot at annual meeting. The hearing must be held within 30 days before annual meeting and must be

	warned at least 10 days in advance of the hearing. First day to hold is January 31 st ; and the last day to hold the hearing is 3/1/27.
March 1	Clerk's Office closes from noon on this date until noon on March 3 rd .
March 2	Annual Election - Polls open 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (Champlain Valley Exposition) Note: The vote will be with the school election.
March ???	Clerk must certify to Secretary of State by this date the results of Charter proposal vote as well as show the facts as origin and procedure followed.

Conflicts to be aware of in case anything moves around:

- January 18th - Martin Luther King Day
- Saturday, Feb 6th - Chinese New Year - avoid scheduling important events and activities on this date.
- Ramadan February 7 (first day) to March 9. Sundown Sunday to Sundown Tuesday; this is just for awareness. The full timeframe can't be avoided.

City Charter for Reference:

§ 903. Governing body's action on budget

The Council shall review and approve the recommended budget with or without change. The budget shall be published not later than two weeks after its preliminary adoption by the Council. The Council shall fix the time and place for holding a public hearing for the budget and shall give public notice of the hearing. (Added 2021, No. M-10 (Adj. Sess.), § 2, eff. July 1, 2022.)

§ 904. Budget meeting; warning

(a) The Council shall hold at least one public hearing at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting to present and explain its proposed budget and shall give a public notice of such hearing.

(b) The Manager shall, not less than 30 days prior to the annual meeting, make available the Council's recommended budget and the final warning of the pending annual meeting.

(c) The annual City report shall be made available to the legal voters of the City not later than 10 days prior to the annual meeting. (Added 2021, No. M-10 (Adj. Sess.), § 2, eff. July 1, 2022.)

§ 905. Appropriation and transfers



MEMO

To: City Council
From: Regina Mahony, City Manager
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Agenda Item: Executive Session for Personnel

ISSUE: The issue is whether the City Council will enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

DISCUSSION: To have a complete and thorough discussion about this topic, an executive session may be necessary. Personnel matters can be a protected discussion.

COST: N/A

RECOMMENDED MOTION: "I move that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss a personnel evaluation (check-in), pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to include the City Council and the City Manager."

ATTACHMENTS: None

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING
September 9, 2026**

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Amber Thibeault, President; Tim Miller, Vice President; Bethany Clark, Clerk; Raj Chawla, Brian Shelden.

ADMINISTRATION: Regina Mahony, City Manager; Ashley Snellenberger, Communications & Strategic Initiatives Director; Chris Yuen, Community Development Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: Gail Boundy; Marcus Certa; Joe Cornacchia; Michael Miller; Reed Nye; Dennis Thibeault; Resa.

1. CALL TO ORDER

City Council President Thibeault called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

None needed.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public

Gail Boundy asked for clarification and guidance regarding a fence that was put up on her property. She said it was installed in alignment with fencing regulations but that she received a notice that there were other regulations she did not follow when she installed it, one of which is that there are visibility concerns. She noted that the City suggested installing landscaping instead of a fence, but that she does not have financing to do that. She requested some sort of reasonable compromise. City Manager Mahony advised G. Boundy to work within the Development Review Board process and with City staff to resolve this issue.

Joe Cornacchia spoke about a neighbor around the proposed Pine Court stop sign that has an unkempt property, and asked if there is municipal code that could help remedy this. City Manager Mahony advised J. Cornacchia to connect with the Community Development Department staff on this topic.

Marcus Certa thanked staff for providing information about the Economic Development Fund and the reference to the capital improvement tax. M. Certa noted that the reasoning and justification for using that and the local option tax fund seem to have overlap, and suggested a more in-depth discussion about fund uses in the future.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Discussion and Consideration of Proposed Amendments to Municipal Code Chapter 8: An Ordinance Relating to Motor Vehicle Regulations Enforcement for Park Street Striping and Pine Court Stop Sign
City Council President Thibeault opened the public hearing.

City Manager Mahony began by noting that this ordinance change is being done to implement the restriping of Park Street for the bicycle lanes as approved by the City Council on April 29, 2026. She noted proposed amendments in Chapter 8 of the Municipal Code that would accomplish this. She also noted the addition of a stop sign on Pine Court and West Street, which is not related to the bicycle lanes project. She said that this stop sign is similar to the approach taken to have stop signs on the rest of the entryways to West Street.

The following public comments were received:

- Joe Cornacchia noted that there are very few homes in the area of the proposed stop sign, and very few vehicles that would be crossing that intersection, given the nearby dead end. He said that having

a stop sign here might cause problems, and that the issue is that a motorist wasn't obeying the traffic laws and rights-of-way requirements that are already in place.

City Council President Thibeault closed the public hearing.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Discussion and Consideration of Proposed Amendments to Municipal Code Chapter 8: An Ordinance Relating to Motor Vehicle Regulations Enforcement for Park Street Striping and Pine Court Stop Sign
Councilor Miller said that the proposed stop sign location is in an area that doesn't seem to have limited sign distance, and noted that the sight lines on the other end of Pine Court and Clems Drive were more inhibiting than the sight lines at Pine Court and West Street. Community Development Director Yuen said he received a complaint from a neighbor that encountered someone coming from Pine Court in an unsafe way, which was captured on security footage and reviewed by the City Engineer, who determined that a stop sign was the recommendation. He noted that having a stop sign there entering West Street is a regulatory standard. Councilor Chawla said that the cost is not prohibitive and that the City Engineer is recommending it, which he could support. Councilor Miller said he could also support it, given that it came from a resident and the placement of the stop sign seems prudent. Councilor Sheldon agreed, noting the City Engineer's comment that having a standardized and predictable approach for intersections leading to West Street is a regulatory best practice. City Council President Thibeault said it makes sense to follow the City Engineer's advice and place the stop sign.

Councilor Clark made a motion, seconded by Councilor Chawla, that the City Council adopt the amendments to Chapter 8 of the Municipal Code as presented. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Discussion and Consideration of Rebranding Update of New City Signs
Communications & Strategic Initiatives Director Snellenberger began by noting that the City solicited estimates for updated signs in 2022, which were around \$14,375. She noted that prices have increased since then. She noted that the rebranding project still has an unspent balance of \$2,350, which could be repurposed to cover these costs. She noted that they received updated quotes from two companies in Williston, for \$6,805 and \$7,400. She noted that based on this, staff are requesting an additional \$10,000 from the Economic Development Fund, to cover costs.

Councilor Miller asked how many banners were included in the quote. He also asked if this quote includes replacement of the 5 entry signs into the City and whether it also includes replacing the sign in front of the municipal office. Director Snellenberger said the quotes include 50 banners and the 5 entry signs, not the municipality signage. Councilor Chawla asked if they could use additional funding for professional imagery, and suggested that they could find additional funds in the FY28 budget to do so. Councilor Clark asked why the original estimate was so far off, and Director Snellenberger replied that they were initial estimates in the middle of a range, and that they have been further refined and reflected in these finalized numbers.

Councilor Chawla made a motion, seconded by Councilor Clark, that the City Council authorize the use of the Economic Development Fund in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for the rebranding sign project. The motion passed 5-0.

c. *Discussion and Consideration of an Executive Session to discuss the appointment of Public Officials
See item #9a below.

d. **Discussion and Consideration of an Executive Session to Discuss Personnel
See item #9b below.

e. ***Discussion and Consideration of an Executive Session to Discuss a Possible Contract
See item #9c below.

7. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Approve Meeting Minutes – August 26, 2026
- b. Acting as the Local Cannabis Control Commission: Approve Retail Cannabis License Renewal for Sweetspot Vermont LLC

Councilor Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilor Clark, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 5-0.

8. **COUNCILOR COMMENTS & CITY MANAGER REPORT:** City Manager Mahony noted that the first installment of property taxes are due on September 15, 2026. She also noted that fees are due to the City on 4:30 P.M. on the day they are due. City Council President Thibeault noted that the Council is holding a snack and school supply drive on September 15 at 2 Lincoln Street. Councilor Clark noted that the first Meet Me On Main event is on September 19, and on each subsequent Saturday. Councilor Shelden commended Public Works for their swift action with some plumbing issues he experienced. Councilor Miller noted that there was a major fire this afternoon that was swiftly dealt with by the Fire Department, and commended their efforts.

9. **READING FILE**

- a. Check Warrant #27004 – August 21, 2026; #27005 – September 3, 2026
- b. August Financial Reports
- c. Regional Boards and Committees Memo
- d. Brownell Library Trustees Minutes – August 18, 2026

10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. *An Executive Session may be needed to discuss the appointment of public officials

Councilor Clark made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss the appointment of public officials, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) to include the City Manager and Kolby LaMarche. The motion passed 5-0.

Councilor Shelden made a motion, seconded by Councilor Chawla, to exit executive session. The motion passed 5-0 at 7:56 P.M.

Councilor Clark made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, to appoint Kolby LaMarche to the Police Community Advisory Board for a 3-year term ending June 30, 2029. The motion passed 4-0 (Councilor Miller absent for vote).

- b. **An Executive Session may be needed to discuss personnel

Councilor Clark made a motion, seconded by Councilor Miller, that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss a personnel evaluation (check-in) pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) to include the City Council and City Manager. The motion passed 5-0.

- c. ***An Executive Session may be needed to discuss a possible contract

Councilor Miller noted that he will be recusing himself from this executive session, due to a conflict of interest with the Fire Department.

Councilor Clark made a motion, seconded by Councilor Shelden, that the City Council make the specific finding that premature disclosure of the contractual matters would place the City at a substantial disadvantage, and further that the City Council enter into executive session to discuss a contract, pursuant to 1.V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(A) to include the City Council (except for Tim Miller due to the conflict of interest with the Fire Department) and City Manager. The motion passed 4-0 (Councilor Miller abstaining).

11. **ADJOURN**

Councilor Shelden made a motion, seconded by Councilor Chawla, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 4-0 at 7:56 P.M (Councilor Miller absent for vote).

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Coonradt



MEMO

To: City Council
From: Chelsea Mandigo, Water Quality Superintendent
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Agenda Item: Hiawatha Stormwater Infiltration System Project Grant

ISSUE: To apply for and accept, if awarded, the Ms4 3 Acre Adoption Grant to construct the Hiawatha Stormwater Infiltration System Project.

DISCUSSION: The State of Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation formed a new grant program for the 13 Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit holders, encouraging the MS4 municipalities to incorporate residential properties that are out of compliance with the State-required 3-acre impervious area stormwater improvement into their permit.

While the City does not have any residential 3-acre sites within its municipal boundary and the commercial/school sites are already in compliance, there is potential for the City to receive the minimum award of \$525,000 to use to construct a Phosphorus Control Plan or Flow Restoration Plan project.

The Hiawatha Stormwater Infiltration System Project has completed final design and is a Phosphorus Control Project and would be the project we would advance to construction if awarded this grant.

The grant application is due October 9th, with possible awards issued by October 30th. Eligible costs for this grant can take place from September 2026- October 2028.

COST: The Hiawatha Stormwater Infiltration System project is expected to cost \$550,000. The City could potentially receive a maximum grant award of \$525,000 through this program. Additionally, a 20% match is required, which amounts to \$105,000. This brings the total out-of-pocket cost for the City to approximately \$130,000 to complete the construction.

Funds for this project were included in the Stormwater Capital Plan under the Phosphorus Control Plan in FY27 and will cover the required match.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended to authorize the Manager to apply for the grant and to sign the grant award if received.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: "I make a motion to authorize the Manager to submit an application for the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) 3-Acre Adoption grant for the Hiawatha Stormwater Infiltration System Project and if awarded, execute the grant agreements necessary to accept the grant."



MEMO

To: City Council

From: Chelsea Mandigo, Water Quality Superintendent

Meeting Date: September 23, 2026

Agenda Item: Water Resource Recovery Facility Flare Replacement Contract Award

ISSUE: To award the contract for the replacement of the Waste Gas Flare System at the Water Resource Recovery Facility and amend the FY27 Wastewater Capital Plan to include the revised cost of the project.

DISCUSSION: This project was first described via a consent agenda memo to the Council at the June 25, 2025 meeting.

The project involves replacing the flare system that serves the anaerobic digester. The anaerobic digester is part of the facility's solids treatment process and produces methane gas. Most of this methane is used by the facility's cogeneration system to generate electricity and heat, but the flare provides an important backup method for safely burning excess gas when needed.

The flare system failed four years ago, and the State mandated its replacement during our 2023 inspection, revealing complete corrosion of the control panel. Due to updated safety codes, the flare must be relocated 50 feet from buildings and power lines and 25 feet from roadways and property lines. This relocation requires a different flare system. In addition, some other modifications on top of the digester are needed for safety during gas system maintenance.

Because the flare equipment is custom manufactured, it was ordered in July 2025 and was delivered in July 2026. The construction portion of the project was advertised for bid at the end of August, and one bid was received from Kingsbury Construction LLC. The project was originally included in the FY25 Wastewater Capital Program and has since been carried forward to FY27.

Since the flare equipment was ordered, staff have identified a new issue with the secondary anaerobic digester cover. The floating cover has begun to bind at certain operating levels over this past summer, raising concerns about its reliability. Because the flare replacement project already requires work on the digester cover and may require the tank to be taken out of service, staff plan to complete the necessary cover repairs at the same time. Completing both projects together will reduce costs, minimize disruption to operations, and help prevent a potential cover failure during the winter months.

COST: An adjustment to the FY27 Wastewater Capital Plan of \$70,000 is needed for this project. The extra funds are to cover some of the base bid, engineering construction support services, and the floating cover repair work. The low bidder was Kingsbury Construction LLC at \$159,125. There are sufficient funds in the Wastewater Fund Capital Reserve Balance to amend the project's overall budget by \$70,000.

Wastewater Fund Capital Reserve Balance					
	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31
Beginning Fund Balance	2,372,466	2,229,543	2,421,791	2,874,985	3,411,847
Planned Spending	(819,784)	(304,615)	(63,668)	-	-
Debt Payments (ARRA Stimulus Loan ends FY31)	(3,138)	(3,138)	(3,138)	(3,138)	(3,138)
Revenue Sources					
<i>Transfer In from Wastewater Operating Budget</i>	480,000	500,000	520,000	540,000	560,000
<i>Williston and Town of Essex share of drying beds (1/3 each community)</i>	200,000				
<i>Interest Earnings</i>					
Total Revenues	680,000	500,000	520,000	540,000	560,000
Ending Fund Balance	2,229,543	2,421,791	2,874,985	3,411,847	3,968,709

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended to award the contract to the low bidder, Kingsbury Construction, for replacement of the Waste Gas Flare System. It is further recommended to amend the FY 27 Wastewater Capital Plan to include the revised cost of this project.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: “I make a motion to authorize the Manager to execute the contract with Kingsbury Construction for the Waste Gas Flare Replacement project at the Water Resource Recovery Facility.”

“I make a motion to amend the Fiscal Year 2027 Wastewater Capital Fund by \$70,000 to include the revised project budget.”

ATTACHMENTS: A+E Bid Award Recommendation

9/15/2026

City Of Essex Junction
Essex Junction WWTF Waste Gas Flare Replacement
35 Cascade Street
Essex Junction, Vt 05452

RE: **Bid Analysis and Recommendation for Contract Award**
Essex Junction WWTF
Waste Gas Flare Replacement
A+E Project 25014

Dear Ms. Mandigo,

We have compiled the results of the bids received on September 2nd, 2026, for the above-mentioned project. The results of the attached bid tabulation confirm that Kingsbury Companies, LLC was the sole and low bidder for the project. After review of the pricing submitted by Kingsbury Companies, we recommend the following:

- The Waste Gas Flare Replacement project be awarded to Kingsbury Companies, LLC of Middlesex VT, in the amount of \$159,125.00
- Job superintendent must be consistent on the job at all times.
- Retainage in an amount up to a maximum of 10% should be held from each pay requisition by the contractor until such time that the work is determined, by the OWNER to be substantially complete.
- Contractor to submit Performance and Payment bonds and a current Certificate of Insurance listing the City of Essex Junction and Aldrich + Elliott, PC as additional insured.

Please feel free to contact our office if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Aldrich + Elliott, PC



Jason R. Booth, P.E.
President

Attachments



CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A SMALL PROJECT

This Contract is by and between **The City of Essex Junction** (Owner) and Kingsbury Companies, LLC (Contractor). Owner and Contractor hereby agree as follows:

ARTICLE 1—THE WORK

1.01 *Work*

- A. Work includes all labor, materials, equipment, services, and documentation necessary to construct the Project defined herein. The Work may include related services such as testing, start-up, and commissioning, all as required by the Contract Documents.
- B. The Contractor shall complete all Work as specified or indicated in the Contract Documents. The Project is generally described as follows:
 - 1. **Essex Flare Project** which consists of **Construction of a new waste gas burner and related appurtenances a minimum of 50 ft away from the existing digester complex and electrical transmission lines, construction of a new waste gas burner control assembly, and installation of related gas transmission lines, methane transmission lines, and related minor electrical work. Contractor shall also install new gas safety appurtenances on the digesters.**
 - 2. The Site of the Work includes property, easements, and designated work areas described in greater detail in the Contract Documents but generally located **35 Cascade Street, Essex Junction VT 05452.**

ARTICLE 2—CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

2.01 *Intent of Contract Documents*

- A. It is the intent of the Contract Documents to describe a functionally complete Project. The Contract Documents do not indicate or describe all of the Work required to complete the Project. Additional details required for the correct installation of selected products are to be provided by the Contractor and coordinated with Owner and Engineer. This Contract constitutes the entire agreement between Owner and Contractor, and supersedes prior negotiations, representations, and agreements, whether written or oral. The Contract Documents are complementary; what is required by one part of the Contract Documents is as binding as if required by other parts of the Contract Documents.
- B. Engineer will be the initial interpreter of the requirements of the Contract Documents, and judge of the acceptability of the Work under the Contract Documents. During the performance of the Work and until final payment, Contractor and Owner shall submit to Engineer all matters in question concerning the requirements of the Contract Documents, or relating to the acceptability of the Work. Engineer will render a written clarification, interpretation, or decision on the issue submitted, or initiate a modification to the Contract Documents.
- C. Contractor, and its subcontractors and suppliers, shall not have or acquire any title to or ownership rights to any of the Drawings, Specifications, or other documents (including copies or electronic media versions) prepared by Engineer or its consultants.

- D. *Contract Price or Contract Times*: References to a change in “Contract Price or Contract Times” or “Contract Times or Contract Price” or similar, indicate that such change applies to (1) Contract Price, (2) Contract Times, or (3) both Contract Price and Contract Times, as warranted, even if the term “or both” is not expressed.
- E. Nothing in the Contract Documents creates any contractual relationship between Owner or Engineer and any Subcontractor, Supplier, or other individual or entity performing or furnishing any of the Work, for the benefit of such Subcontractor, Supplier, or other individual or entity.

2.02 *Contract Documents Defined*

- A. The Contract Documents consist of the following documents:
 - 1. This Contract for Construction of a Small Project.
 - 2. Performance bond.
 - 3. Payment bond.
 - 4. Specifications as listed in the Specifications Table of Contents.
 - 5. Drawings as listed on the Drawing Sheet Index.
 - 6. Addenda.
 - 7. Exhibits to this Contract (enumerated as follows):
 - a. **Exhibit 1 – Varec Process Equipment Submittal**
 - 8. The following which may be delivered or issued on or after the Effective Date of the Contract:
 - a. Notice to Proceed (EJCDC® C-550).
 - b. Work Change Directives (EJCDC® C-940).
 - c. Change Orders (EJCDC® C-941).
 - d. Field Orders (EJCDC® C-942).

ARTICLE 3—ENGINEER

3.01 *Engineer*

- A. The Engineer for this Project is **Aldrich + Elliott**

ARTICLE 4—CONTRACT TIMES

4.01 *Contract Times*

- A. The Work will be substantially complete within **60** days after the Effective Date of the Contract and completed and ready for final payment within **90** days after the Effective Date of the Contract.

4.02 *Milestone*

- A. Parts of the Work must be substantially completed on or before the following Milestone:

1. Milestone 1: **Substantial Completion, December 18th, 2026.**

4.03 *Liquidated Damages*

- A. Contractor and Owner recognize that time is of the essence in the performance of the Contract, and that Owner will incur damages if Contractor does not complete the Work according to the requirements of Paragraph 4.01 and 4.02. Because such damages would be difficult and costly to determine, Owner and Contractor agree that as liquidated damages for delay in completion (but not as a penalty) Contractor shall pay Owner **\$750** for each day that expires after the Contract Time for substantial completion.

4.04 *Delays in Contractor's Progress*

- A. If Owner, Engineer, or anyone for whom Owner is responsible, delays, disrupts, or interferes with the performance or progress of the Work, then Contractor shall be entitled to an equitable adjustment in the Contract Times or Contract Price.
- B. Contractor shall not be entitled to an adjustment in Contract Price or Contract Times for delay, disruption, or interference caused by or within the control of Contractor or its subcontractors or suppliers.
- C. If Contractor's performance or progress is delayed, disrupted, or interfered with by unanticipated causes not the fault of and beyond the control of Owner, Contractor, and those for which they are responsible, then Contractor shall be entitled to an equitable adjustment in Contract Times.
- D. Contractor shall not be entitled to an adjustment in Contract Price or Contract Times for any delay, disruption, or interference if such delay is concurrent with a delay, disruption, or interference caused by or within the control of Contractor or Contractor's subcontractors or suppliers.

4.05 *Progress Schedules*

- A. Contractor shall develop a progress schedule and submit it to Engineer for review and comment before starting Work on the Site. Contractor shall modify the schedule in accordance with Engineer's comments.
- B. Contractor shall update and submit the progress schedule to Engineer each month. Owner may withhold payment if Contractor fails to submit the schedule.

ARTICLE 5—CONTRACT PRICE

5.01 *Payment*

- A. Owner shall pay Contractor, in accordance with the Contract Documents, the lump sum amount of **[\$[Contract Price]]** for all Work.
- B. Owner shall pay Contractor, in accordance with the Contract Documents at the following unit prices for each unit of Work completed:

Item No.	Description	Unit	Estimated Quantity	Unit Price	Extended Price
1	Waste Gas Flare	LS	1	\$156,000	\$156,000
2	Bonds	LS	1	\$3,125	\$3,125

Total of all extended prices for Estimated Quantities of Work					\$ 159,125

Payment will be made in an amount equal to the total of all extended prices for actual Work completed. The extended price is determined by multiplying the unit price times the actual quantity of that Work item completed. Actual quantities installed will be determined by the engineer.

ARTICLE 6—BONDS AND INSURANCE

6.01 Bonds

- A. When Contractor delivers the signed counterparts of the Contract to Owner, Contractor shall also deliver the performance bond and payment bond to Owner. Each bond must be in an amount equal to the Contract Price, as security for the faithful performance and payment of all of Contractor's obligations under the Contract. These bonds must remain in effect until the completion of the correction period specified in Paragraph 7.12 but, in any case, not less than one year after the date when final payment becomes due.
- B. Upon request, Owner will provide a copy of the payment bond to any person or entity claiming to have furnished labor, services, materials, or equipment used in the performance of the Work.

6.02 Insurance

- A. When Contractor delivers the signed counterparts of the Contract to Owner, Contractor shall furnish certificates, endorsements, and any other evidence of insurance requested by Owner. Insurance is to be provided by companies that are duly licensed or authorized in the jurisdiction in which the Project is located with a minimum A.M. Best rating of A-VII or better. Contractor shall provide insurance in accordance with the following:
 1. Contractor shall provide coverage for not less than the following amounts, or greater where required by Laws and Regulations:

a. Workers Compensation and Employer's Liability

Workers Compensation	Statutory
Employer's Liability	
Each Accident	\$1,000,000
Each Employee	\$1,000,000
Policy Limit	\$1,000,000

b. Commercial General Liability

General Aggregate	\$ 4,000,000
Products - Completed Operations Aggregate	\$ 4,000,000
Personal and Advertising Injury	\$ 4,000,000
Bodily Injury and Property Damage—Each Occurrence	\$ 2,000,000

c. Automobile Liability

Bodily Injury	
Each Person	\$ 2,000,000

Each Accident	\$ 2,000,000
Property Damage	
Each Accident	\$ 2,000,000
[OR]	
Combined Single Limit (Bodily Injury and Property Damage)	\$2,000,000

d. *Excess or Umbrella Liability*

Per Occurrence	\$ 3,000,000
General Aggregate	\$ 3,000,000

- B. All insurance policies required to be purchased and maintained will contain a provision or endorsement that the coverage afforded will not be canceled or materially changed or renewal refused until at least 10 days after notice has been received by the purchasing policyholder. Within three days of receipt of any such notice, the purchasing policyholder shall provide a copy of the notice to each other insured and Engineer.
- C. Automobile liability insurance provided by Contractor will be written on an occurrence basis and provide coverage against claims for damages because of bodily injury or death of any person or property damage arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of any motor vehicle.
- D. Contractor's commercial general liability policy will be written on a 1996 or later ISO commercial general liability occurrence form and include the following coverages and endorsements:
 - 1. Products and completed operations coverage maintained for three years after final payment;
 - 2. Blanket contractual liability coverage to the extent permitted by law;
 - 3. Broad form property damage coverage; and
 - 4. Severability of interest; underground, explosion, and collapse coverage; personal injury coverage.
- E. The Contractor's commercial general liability and automobile liability, umbrella or excess, and pollution liability policies will include and list Owner and Engineer and the respective officers, directors, members, partners, employees, agents, consultants, and subcontractors of each as additional insureds; and the insurance afforded to these additional insureds will provide primary coverage for all claims covered thereby (including, as applicable, those arising from both ongoing and completed operations) on a non-contributory basis.
 - 1. Additional insured endorsements will include both ongoing operations and products and completed operations coverage through ISO Endorsements CG 20 10 10 01 and CG 20 37 10 01 (together). If Contractor demonstrates to Owner that the specified ISO endorsements are not commercially available, then Contractor may satisfy this requirement by providing equivalent endorsements.

2. Contractor shall provide ISO Endorsement CG 20 32 07 04, "Additional Insured—Engineers, Architects or Surveyors Not Engaged by the Named Insured" or its equivalent for design professional additional insureds.
- F. Umbrella or excess liability insurance will be written over the underlying employer's liability, commercial general liability, and automobile liability insurance. The coverage afforded must be at least as broad as that of each and every one of the underlying policies. Contractor may meet the policy limits specified for employer's liability, commercial general liability, and automobile liability through the primary policies alone, or through combinations of the primary insurance policy's policy limits and partial attribution of the policy limits of an umbrella or excess liability policy that is at least as broad in coverage as that of the underlying policy.
- G. The Contractor shall provide property insurance covering physical loss or damage during construction to structures, materials, fixtures, and equipment, including those materials, fixtures, or equipment in storage or transit.
- H. If Contractor has failed to obtain and maintain required insurance, Owner may exclude the Contractor from the Site, impose an appropriate set-off against payment, and exercise Owner's termination rights under Article 15.

ARTICLE 7—CONTRACTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

7.01 *Contractor's Means and Methods of Construction*

- A. Contractor shall be solely responsible for the means, methods, techniques, sequences, and procedures of construction.
- B. If professional engineering or other design services are needed to carry out Contractor's responsibilities for construction means, methods, techniques, sequences, and procedures, or for Site safety, then Contractor shall cause such services to be provided by a properly licensed design professional, at Contractor's expense. Neither Owner nor Engineer has any responsibility with respect to (1) Contractor's determination of the need for such services, (2) the qualifications or licensing of the design professionals retained or employed by Contractor, (3) the performance of such services, or (4) any errors, omissions, or defects in such services.

7.02 *Supervision and Superintendence*

- A. Contractor shall supervise and direct the Work competently and efficiently, devoting such attention thereto and applying such skills and expertise as may be necessary to perform the Work in accordance with the Contract Documents.
- B. At all times during the progress of the Work, Contractor shall assign a competent resident superintendent who will not be replaced without notice to and approval by the Owner and Engineer except under extraordinary circumstances.
- C. Contractor shall maintain good discipline and order at the Site.
- D. Except as otherwise required for the safety or protection of the Work or persons or property at the Site or adjacent thereto, and except as otherwise stated in the Contract Documents, all Work at the Site will be performed during regular working hours, Monday through Friday.

7.03 *Other Work at the Site*

- A. In addition to and apart from the Work of the Contractor, other work may occur at or adjacent to the Site. Contractor shall take reasonable and customary measures to avoid damaging, delaying, disrupting, or interfering with the work of Owner, any other contractor, or any utility owner performing other work at or adjacent to the Site.
- B. Contractor shall notify Owner, the owners of adjacent property, the owners of underground facilities and other utilities (if the identity of such owners is known to Contractor), and other contractors and utility owners performing work at or adjacent to the Site when Contractor knows that prosecution of the Work may affect them; and Contractor shall cooperate with them in the protection, removal, relocation, and replacement of their property or work in progress.

7.04 *Services, Materials, and Equipment*

- A. Unless otherwise specified in the Contract Documents, Contractor shall provide and assume full responsibility for everything necessary for the performance, testing, start-up, and completion of the Work.
- B. All materials and equipment incorporated into the Work must be new and of good quality, and be stored, applied, installed, connected, erected, protected, used, cleaned, and conditioned in accordance with instructions of the applicable supplier, except as otherwise may be provided in the Contract Documents.

7.05 *Subcontractors and Suppliers*

- A. Just as Contractor is responsible for its own acts and omissions, Contractor shall be fully responsible to Owner and Engineer for all acts and omissions of Contractor's employees; of suppliers and subcontractors, and their employees; and of any other individuals or entities performing or furnishing any of the Work. The Contractor's retention of a subcontractor or supplier for the performance of parts of the Work will not relieve Contractor's obligation to Owner to perform and complete the Work in accordance with the Contract Documents.

7.06 *Licenses, Fees and Permits*

- A. Contractor shall pay all license fees and royalties and assume all costs incident to performing the Work or the incorporation in the Work of any invention, design, process, product, or device which is the subject of patent rights or copyrights held by others.
- B. Contractor shall obtain and pay for all construction permits, licenses, and certificates of occupancy, unless otherwise provided in the Contract Documents.

7.07 *Laws and Regulations; Taxes*

- A. Contractor shall give all notices required by, and shall comply with, all local, state, and federal laws and regulations applicable to the performance of the Work. Neither Owner nor Engineer shall be responsible for monitoring Contractor's compliance with any laws or regulations.
- B. If Contractor performs any Work or takes any other action knowing or having reason to know that it is contrary to laws or regulations, Contractor shall bear all resulting costs and losses, and to the fullest extent permitted by law Contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless Owner and Engineer, and the officers, directors, members, partners, employees, agents, consultants, and subcontractors of each and any of them, from and against all such claims, costs, losses, and damages.

- C. Contractor shall pay all applicable sales, consumer, use, and other similar taxes.

7.08 *Record Documents*

- A. Contractor shall maintain one printed record copy of all Drawings, Specifications, Addenda, Change Orders, Work Change Directives, Field Orders, written interpretations and clarifications, and approved shop drawings in a safe place at the Site. Contractor shall annotate them to show changes made during construction. Contractor shall deliver these record documents to Engineer upon completion of the Work.

7.09 *Safety and Protection*

- A. Contractor shall be solely responsible for initiating, maintaining, and supervising all safety precautions and programs in connection with the Work.
- B. Contractor shall designate a qualified and experienced safety representative whose duties and responsibilities are the prevention of Work-related accidents and the maintenance and supervision of safety precautions and programs.
- C. Contractor shall take all necessary precautions for the safety of, and shall provide the necessary protection to prevent damage, injury, or loss to:
 - 1. All persons on the Site or who may be affected by the Work;
 - 2. All the Work and materials and equipment to be incorporated therein, whether in storage on or off the Site; and
 - 3. Other property at the Site or adjacent thereto, including trees, shrubs, lawns, walks, pavements, roadways, structures, other work in progress, utilities, and underground facilities not designated for removal, relocation, or replacement in the course of construction.
- D. All damage, injury, or loss to any property caused, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, by Contractor, or anyone for whose acts the Contractor may be liable, will be remedied by Contractor at its expense (except damage or loss attributable to the fault of the Contract Documents or to the acts or omissions of Owner or Engineer and not attributable, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, to the fault or negligence of Contractor).
- E. Contractor shall be responsible for coordinating any exchange of safety data sheets or other hazard communication information required to be made available to or exchanged between or among employers at the Site in accordance with laws or regulations.
- F. In emergencies affecting the safety or protection of the Work or persons or property at the Site or adjacent thereto, Contractor shall act to prevent damage, injury, or loss. Contractor shall give Engineer prompt notice if Contractor believes that any significant changes in the Work or variations from the Contract Documents have been caused by an emergency, or are required as a result of Contractor's response to an emergency. If Engineer determines that a change in the Contract Documents is required because of an emergency or Contractor's response, a Work Change Directive or Change Order will be issued.

7.10 *Submittals*

- A. Contractor shall review and coordinate shop drawings, samples, and other submittals with the requirements of the Work and the Contract Documents, and shall verify all related field measurements, quantities, dimensions, specified performance and design criteria,

installation requirements, materials, catalog numbers, and similar information. Contractor shall confirm that the submittal is complete with respect to all related data included in the submittal.

- B. Shop drawings and samples must bear a stamp or specific written certification that Contractor has satisfied its obligations under the Contract Documents with respect to Contractor's review of that submittal, and that Contractor approves the submittal.
- C. With each shop drawing or sample submittal, Contractor shall give Engineer specific written notification, in a communication separate from the shop drawing or sample, of any variations that the shop drawing or sample may have from the requirements of the Contract Documents.
- D. Engineer will provide timely review of submittals. Engineer's review and approval of submittals will not extend to the means, methods, techniques, sequences, or procedures of construction, or to safety precautions or programs.
- E. Engineer's review of shop drawings and samples will be only to determine if the items covered will, after installation or incorporation in the Work, comply with the requirements of the Contract Documents, and be compatible with the design concept of the completed Project as a functioning whole.
- F. Engineer's review and approval of a separate item in a shop drawing or sample does not indicate approval of the assembly in which the item functions.
- G. Contractor shall make corrections required by Engineer, return the required number of corrected copies of shop drawings, and submit new samples for review and approval. Contractor shall direct specific attention in writing to revisions other than the corrections called for by Engineer on previous submittals.
- H. Shop drawings are not Contract Documents.

7.11 Warranties and Guarantees

- A. Contractor warrants and guarantees to Owner that all Work will be in accordance with the Contract Documents and will not be defective. Engineer and its consultants are entitled to rely on Contractor's warranty and guarantee.

7.12 Correction Period

- A. If within one year after the date of substantial completion, any Work is found to be defective, or if the repair of any damages to the Site, adjacent areas that Contractor has arranged to use through construction easements or otherwise, or other adjacent areas used by Contractor as permitted by laws and regulations, is found to be defective, then Contractor shall promptly correct any such defective Work and repairs, at no cost to Owner.

7.13 Indemnification

- A. To the fullest extent permitted by law, and in addition to any other obligations of Contractor under the Contract or otherwise, Contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless Owner and Engineer, and the officers, directors, members, partners, employees, agents, consultants, and subcontractors of each and any of them, from all losses, damages, costs, and judgments (including but not limited to all fees and charges of engineers, architects, attorneys, and other professionals, and all court or arbitration or other dispute resolution costs) arising from third-party claims or actions relating to or resulting from the performance or furnishing of

the Work, provided that any such claim, action, loss, cost, judgment or damage is attributable to bodily injury, sickness, disease, or death, or to damage to or destruction of tangible property (other than the Work itself), including the loss of use resulting therefrom, but only to the extent caused by any negligent act or omission of Contractor, any subcontractor, any supplier, or any individual or entity directly or indirectly employed by any of them to perform any of the Work, or anyone for whose acts any of them may be liable.

ARTICLE 8—OWNER’S RESPONSIBILITIES

8.01 *Responsibilities*

- A. Except as otherwise provided in the Contract Documents, Owner shall issue all communications to Contractor through Engineer.
- B. Owner shall make payments to Contractor as provided in this Contract.
- C. Owner shall provide the Site and easements required to construct the Project.
- D. While at the Site, Owner’s employees and representatives shall comply with the specific applicable requirements of Contractor’s safety programs of which Owner has been informed.
- E. Owner shall furnish copies of any applicable Owner safety programs to Contractor.
- F. If Owner intends to contract with others for the performance of other work at or adjacent to the Site, unless stated elsewhere in the Contract Documents, Owner shall have sole authority and responsibility for such coordination.
- G. Owner shall not supervise, direct, or have control or authority over, nor be responsible for, Contractor’s means, methods, techniques, sequences, or procedures of construction, or for related safety precautions and programs, or for any failure of Contractor to comply with laws and regulations applicable to the performance of the Work. Owner will not be responsible for Contractor’s failure to perform the Work in accordance with the Contract Documents.

ARTICLE 9—ENGINEER’S STATUS DURING CONSTRUCTION

9.01 *Engineer’s Status*

- A. Engineer will be Owner’s representative during construction.
- B. Neither Engineer’s authority or responsibility under this Article 9 or under any other provision of the Contract, nor any decision made by Engineer in good faith either to exercise or not exercise such authority or responsibility, or the undertaking, exercise, or performance of any authority or responsibility by Engineer, will create, impose, or give rise to any duty in contract, tort, or otherwise owed by Engineer to Contractor, its subcontractors, suppliers, or sureties, or to any employee or agent of any of them.
- C. Engineer will make visits to the Site at intervals appropriate to the various stages of construction. Engineer will not be required to make exhaustive or continuous inspections to check the quality or quantity of the Work.
- D. Engineer will not supervise, direct, control, or have authority over or be responsible for Contractor’s means, methods, techniques, sequences, or procedures of construction, or for related safety precautions and programs, or for any failure of Contractor to comply with laws

and regulations applicable to the performance of the Work. Engineer will not be responsible for Contractor's failure to perform the Work in accordance with the Contract Documents.

ARTICLE 10—CHANGES IN THE WORK

10.01 *Authority to Change the Work*

- A. Without invalidating the Contract and without notice to any surety, Owner may, at any time or from time to time, order additions, deletions, or revisions in the Work.

10.02 *Change Orders*

- A. Owner and Contractor shall execute appropriate Change Orders covering:
 - 1. Changes in Contract Price or Contract Times which are agreed to by the parties, including any undisputed sum or amount of time for Work actually performed in accordance with a Work Change Directive;
 - 2. Changes in the Work which are: (a) ordered by Owner or (b) agreed to by the parties or (c) resulting from the Engineer's decision, subject to the need for Engineer's recommendation if the change in the Work involves the design (as set forth in the Drawings, Specifications, or otherwise), or other engineering or technical matters; and
 - 3. Changes in the Contract Price or Contract Times or other changes which embody the substance of any final binding results under Article 12.
- B. If the provisions of any bond require notice to be given to a surety of any change affecting the general scope of the Work or the provisions of the Contract Documents (including, but not limited to, Contract Price or Contract Times), the giving of any such notice will be Contractor's responsibility. The amount of each applicable bond will be adjusted to reflect the effect of any such change.

10.03 *Work Change Directive*

- A. A Work Change Directive may be issued to Contractor ordering an addition, deletion, or revision in the Work. A Work Change Directive will not change the Contract Price or Contract Times, but is evidence that the parties expect that the modification ordered or documented by the Work Change Directive will be incorporated in a subsequently issued Change Order, following negotiations by the parties as to the Work Change Directive's effect, if any, on Contract Price or Contract Times.

10.04 *Field Orders*

- A. Engineer may issue a Field Order to authorize minor changes in the Work, provided that the changes do not involve an adjustment in the Contract Price or Contract Times.
- B. If Contractor believes that a Field Order justifies an adjustment in the Contract Price or Contract Times, then Contractor shall request such adjustment before proceeding with the Work.

ARTICLE 11—DIFFERING SUBSURFACE OR PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

11.01 *Differing Site Conditions Process*

- A. If Contractor believes that any subsurface or physical condition (including but not limited to utilities or other underground facilities) that is uncovered or revealed at the Site either (1) differs materially from that shown or indicated in the Contract Documents, or (2) is of an unusual nature, and differs materially from conditions ordinarily encountered and generally recognized as inherent in Work of the character provided for in the Contract Documents, then Contractor shall promptly notify Owner and Engineer about such condition. Contractor shall not further disturb such condition or perform any Work in connection with the condition (except with respect to an emergency) until receipt of authorization to do so.
 - 1. Contractor shall be entitled to an equitable adjustment in Contract Price or Contract Times, to the extent that the existence of a differing subsurface or physical condition, or any related delay, disruption, or interference, causes an increase or decrease in Contractor's cost of, or time required for, performance of the Work. Contractor shall not be entitled to any adjustment in the Contract Price or Contract Times if Contractor knew of, or should have known of, the existence of the condition prior to entry into the Contract.
- B. After receipt of notice regarding a possible differing subsurface or physical condition, Engineer will promptly:
 - 1. Review the condition in question;
 - 2. Determine if it is necessary for Owner to obtain additional exploration or tests with respect to the condition;
 - 3. Determine whether the condition falls within one of the two differing site condition categories described in Paragraph 11.01.A.;
 - 4. Obtain any pertinent cost or schedule information from Contractor;
 - 5. Advise Owner of Engineer's findings, conclusions, and recommendations, including recommendations to Owner regarding the Contractor's resumption of Work in connection with the subsurface or physical condition in question, the need for any change in the Drawings or Specifications, and possible Contract Price or Contract Times adjustments.
- C. After receipt of Engineer's findings, conclusions, and recommendations, Owner shall issue a written statement to Contractor regarding the subsurface or physical condition in question, addressing the resumption of Work in connection with such condition, indicating whether any change in the Drawings or Specifications will be made, adopting or rejecting Engineer's written findings, conclusions, and recommendations, in whole or in part, and granting any equitable adjustment in Contract Times or Contract Price to which Contractor is entitled.

ARTICLE 12—CLAIMS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

12.01 *Claims Process*

- A. The party submitting a claim shall deliver it directly to the other party to the Contract and the Engineer promptly (but in no event later than 10 days) after the start of the event giving rise thereto.
- B. The party receiving a claim shall review it thoroughly, giving full consideration to its merits. The two parties shall seek to resolve the claim through the exchange of information and direct negotiations. All actions taken on a claim must be stated in writing and submitted to the other party.
- C. If efforts to resolve a claim are not successful, the party receiving the claim may deny it by giving notice of denial to the other party. If the receiving party does not take action on the claim within 45 days, the claim is deemed denied.
- D. If the dispute is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parties, Owner or Contractor shall give notice to the other party of the intent to submit the dispute to a court of competent jurisdiction unless the Owner and Contractor both agree to an alternative dispute resolution process.

ARTICLE 13—TESTS AND INSPECTIONS; CORRECTION OF DEFECTIVE WORK

13.01 *Tests and Inspections*

- A. Owner and Engineer will have access to the Site and the Work at reasonable times for observation, inspection, and testing. Contractor shall provide proper and safe conditions for such access.
- B. Contractor shall give Engineer timely notice of readiness of the Work for all required inspections and tests, and shall cooperate with inspection and testing personnel to facilitate required inspections and tests.
- C. Except as otherwise provided in the Contract Documents, Contractor shall be responsible for arranging, obtaining, and paying for all inspections and tests required: (1) by the Contract Documents; (2) by codes, laws, or regulations; (3) to attain Owner's and Engineer's acceptance of materials or equipment; and (4) to obtain Engineer's approval prior to purchase of materials, mix designs, or equipment.
- D. If any Work that is to be inspected, tested, or approved is covered by Contractor without written concurrence of Engineer, Contractor shall, if requested by Engineer, uncover such Work for observation. Such uncovering will be at Contractor's expense.

13.02 *Defective Work*

- A. Contractor warrants that the Work is not defective.
- B. Engineer has the authority to determine whether Work is defective, and to reject defective Work.
- C. Prompt notice of all defective Work of which Owner or Engineer has actual knowledge will be given to Contractor.
- D. The Contractor shall promptly correct all defective Work.

- E. When correcting defective Work, Contractor shall take no action that would void or otherwise impair Owner's warranty and guarantee on said Work.
- F. If the Work is defective or Contractor fails to supply sufficient skilled workers or suitable materials or equipment, or fails to perform the Work in such a way that the completed Work will conform to the Contract Documents, then Owner may order Contractor to stop the Work, or any portion thereof, until the cause for such order has been eliminated.

ARTICLE 14—PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTOR

14.01 *Progress Payments*

- A. Contractor shall prepare a schedule of values that will serve as the basis for progress payments. The schedule of values will be in a form acceptable to Engineer. Lump sum items will be broken into units that allow for measurement of Work in progress. For unit price work, the unit price breakdown in Article 5 will be used as the schedule of values.

14.02 *Applications for Payments*

- A. Contractor shall submit signed applications for payment to Engineer monthly, in a form acceptable to the Engineer. Contractor shall provide supporting documentation required by the Contract Documents. Owner will pay for Work completed as of the date of the application for payment.
- B. Beginning with the second application for payment, each application must include an affidavit of Contractor stating that all previous progress payments have been applied to discharge Contractor's obligations associated with the prior applications for payment.

14.03 *Retainage*

- A. The Owner shall retain **10%** of each progress payment until the Work is substantially complete.

14.04 *Review of Applications*

- A. Within 10 days after receipt of each application for payment, Engineer will either recommend payment and present the application for payment to Owner, or return the application for payment to Contractor indicating Engineer's reasons for refusing to recommend payment. The Contractor will make the necessary corrections and may resubmit the application for payment.
- B. Engineer will recommend reductions in payment (set-offs) which, in the opinion of the Engineer, are necessary to protect Owner from loss because the Work is defective and requires correction or replacement.
- C. The Owner is entitled to impose set-offs against payment based on any claims that have been made against Owner, or any incurred costs, losses, or damages, on account of Contractor's conduct in the performance of the Work; for defective Work; or for liquidated damages that have accrued as a result of Contractor's failure to complete the Work.

14.05 *Contractor's Warranty of Title*

- A. Contractor warrants and guarantees that title to all Work, materials, and equipment furnished under the Contract will pass to Owner free and clear of (1) all liens and other title

defects, and (2) all patent, licensing, copyright, or royalty obligations, no later than 7 days after the time of payment by Owner.

14.06 *Substantial Completion*

- A. When Contractor considers the Work ready for its intended use, Contractor shall request that Engineer issue a certificate of substantial completion. Contractor shall at the same time submit to Owner and Engineer an initial draft of punch list items to be completed or corrected before final payment.
- B. Promptly after Contractor's request, Engineer will inspect the Work with Owner and Contractor to determine the status of completion. If Engineer does not consider the Work substantially complete, Engineer will notify Contractor and Owner of the reasons for Engineer's decision.
- C. If Engineer considers the Work substantially complete, or upon resolution of all reasons for non-issuance of a certificate, Engineer will deliver to Owner and Contractor a certificate of substantial completion that will fix the date of substantial completion and include a punch list of items to be completed or corrected before final payment.

14.07 *Final Inspection*

- A. Upon notice from Contractor that the entire Work is complete, Engineer will promptly make a final inspection with Owner and Contractor, and will notify Contractor of all particulars in which this inspection reveals that the Work is incomplete or defective. Contractor shall immediately take such measures as are necessary to complete such Work and remedy such defects.

14.08 *Final Payment*

- A. Contractor may make application for final payment after satisfactorily completing all Work, including providing all maintenance and operating instructions, schedules, guarantees, bonds, certificates or other evidence of insurance, certificates of inspection, annotated record documents, and other documents.
- B. The final application for payment must be accompanied (except as previously delivered) by:
 - 1. All documentation called for in the Contract Documents;
 - 2. Consent of the surety to final payment;
 - 3. Satisfactory evidence that all title issues have been resolved such that title to all Work, materials, and equipment has passed to Owner free and clear of any liens or other title defects, or will so pass upon final payment;
 - 4. A list of all pending claims; and
 - 5. Complete and legally effective releases or waivers (satisfactory to Owner) of all lien rights arising out of the Work, and of liens filed in connection with the Work.
- C. The Work is complete (subject to surviving obligations) when it is ready for final payment as established by the Engineer's written recommendation of final payment and issuance of notice of the acceptability of the Work.

14.09 *Waiver of Claims*

- A. By making final payment, Owner waives its claim or right to liquidated damages or other damages for late completion by Contractor, except as set forth in an outstanding claim, set-off, or express reservation of rights by Owner. Owner reserves all other claims or rights after final payment.
- B. The acceptance of final payment by Contractor will constitute a waiver by Contractor of all claims and rights against Owner other than those pending matters that have been duly submitted as a claim.

ARTICLE 15—SUSPENSION OF WORK AND TERMINATION

15.01 *Owner May Suspend Work*

- A. At any time and without cause, Owner may suspend the Work or any portion thereof for a period of not more than 60 consecutive days by notice to Contractor and Engineer. Such notice will fix the date on which Work will be resumed. Contractor shall resume the Work on the date so fixed. Contractor shall be entitled to an adjustment in the Contract Price or Contract Times, to the extent directly attributable to any such suspension.

15.02 *Owner May Terminate for Cause*

- A. Contractor's failure to perform the Work in accordance with the Contract Documents or other failure to comply with a material term of the Contract Documents will constitute a default by Contractor and justify termination for cause.
- B. If Contractor defaults in its obligations, then after giving Contractor and any surety 10 days' notice that Owner is considering a declaration that Contractor is in default and the termination of the Contract, Owner may proceed to:
 - 1. Declare Contractor to be in default, and give Contractor and any surety notice that the Contract is terminated; and
 - 2. Enforce the rights available to Owner under any applicable performance bond.
- C. Owner may not proceed with termination of the Contract under Paragraph 15.02.B if Contractor within 7 days of receipt of notice of intent to terminate begins to correct its failure to perform and proceeds diligently to cure such failure.
- D. Subject to the terms and operation of any applicable performance bond, if Owner has terminated the Contract for cause, Owner may exclude Contractor from the Site, take possession of the Work, incorporate in the Work all materials and equipment stored at the Site or for which Owner has paid Contractor but which are stored elsewhere, and complete the Work as Owner may deem expedient.
- E. In the case of a termination for cause, if the cost to complete the Work, including related claims, costs, losses, and damages, exceeds the unpaid contract balance, Contractor shall pay the difference to Owner.
- F. If Contractor has provided a performance bond, the provisions of that bond will govern over any inconsistent provisions of Paragraph 15.02.

15.03 *Owner May Terminate for Convenience*

- A. Upon 7 days' notice to Contractor, Owner may, without cause and without prejudice to any other right or remedy of Owner, terminate the Contract. In such case, Contractor shall be paid for the following, without duplication of any items:
 - 1. Completed and acceptable Work executed in accordance with the Contract Documents prior to the effective date of termination, less any set-offs, and including fair and reasonable sums for overhead and profit on such Work;
 - 2. Expenses sustained prior to the effective date of termination in performing services and furnishing labor, materials, or equipment as required by the Contract Documents in connection with uncompleted Work, plus fair and reasonable sums for overhead and profit on such expenses; and
 - 3. Other reasonable expenses directly attributable to termination, including costs incurred to prepare a termination for convenience cost proposal.
- B. Contractor shall not be paid for any loss of anticipated profits, or revenue, post-termination overhead costs, or other economic loss arising out of or resulting from such termination.

15.04 *Contractor May Stop Work or Terminate*

- A. If, through no act or fault of Contractor, (1) the Work is suspended for more than 60 consecutive days by Owner or under an order of court or other public authority, or (2) Owner fails for 30 days to pay Contractor any sum finally determined to be due, then Contractor may, upon 7 days' notice to Owner, and provided Owner does not remedy such suspension or failure within that time, either stop the Work until payment is received, or terminate the Contract and recover payment from the Owner.

ARTICLE 16—CONTRACTOR'S REPRESENTATIONS

16.01 *Contractor Representations*

- A. Contractor makes the following representations when entering into this Contract:
 - 1. Contractor has examined and carefully studied the Contract Documents.
 - 2. Contractor has visited the Site, conducted a thorough visual examination of the Site and adjacent areas, and become familiar with the general, local, and Site conditions that may affect cost, progress, and performance of the Work.
 - 3. The Contract Documents are generally sufficient to indicate and convey understanding of all terms and conditions for performance and furnishing of the Work.
 - 4. Contractor's entry into this Contract constitutes an incontrovertible representation by Contractor that, without exception, all prices in the Contract are premised upon performing and furnishing the Work required by the Contract Documents.

ARTICLE 17—MISCELLANEOUS

17.01 *Giving Notice*

- A. Whenever any provision of the Contract Documents requires the giving of notice to Owner, Engineer, or Contractor, such notice must be in writing, and delivered in person (by

commercial courier or otherwise); by registered or certified mail; or by e-mail to the recipient, with the words "Formal Notice" or similar in the e-mail's subject line.

17.02 Cumulative Remedies

- A. The duties and obligations expressly imposed by this Contract, and the rights and remedies expressly available to the parties under this Contract, are in addition to, and are not to be construed in any way as a limitation of, any duties, obligations, rights, or remedies otherwise imposed or available by laws or regulations, by warranty or guarantee, or by other provisions of the Contract.

17.03 Limitation of Damages

- A. Neither Owner, Engineer, nor any of their officers, directors, members, partners, employees, agents, consultants, or subcontractors, shall be liable to Contractor for any claims, costs, losses, or damages sustained by Contractor on or in connection with any other project or anticipated project.

17.04 No Waiver

- A. A party's non-enforcement of any provision will not constitute a waiver of that provision, nor will it affect the enforceability of that provision or of the remainder of this Contract.

17.05 Survival of Obligations

- A. All representations, indemnifications, warranties, and guarantees made in, required by, or given in accordance with the Contract, as well as all continuing obligations indicated in the Contract, will survive final payment, completion, and acceptance of the Work or termination of the Contract or of the services of Contractor.

17.06 Contractor's Certifications

- A. Contractor certifies that it has not engaged in corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, or coercive practices in competing for or entering into the Contract.

17.07 Controlling Law

- A. This Contract is to be governed by the law of the state in which the Project is located.

The Effective Date of the Contract is [date to be inserted at the time of execution].

Owner:

(typed or printed name of organization)

By: _____
(individual's signature)

Date: _____
(date signed)

Name: _____
(typed or printed)

Title: _____
(typed or printed)

Attest: _____
(individual's signature)

Title: _____
(typed or printed)

Address for giving notices:

Designated Representative:

Name: _____
(typed or printed)

Title: _____
(typed or printed)

Address:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Agreement.)

Contractor:

Kingsbury Companies, LLC

(typed or printed name of organization)

By: _____
(individual's signature)

Date: 09/01/2028

(date signed)

Name: Travis J. Kingsbury

(typed or printed)

Title: President

(typed or printed)

(If Contractor is a corporation, a partnership, or a joint venture, attach evidence of authority to sign.)

Attest: _____
(individual's signature)

Title: Lead Estimator

(typed or printed)

Address for giving notices:

58 Center Road

Middlesex, VT 05602

Designated Representative:

Name: Clemente Varas

(typed or printed)

Title: Lead Estimator

(typed or printed)

Address:

58 Center Road

Middlesex, VT 05602

Phone: 802 496 2205 - ext 45

Email: cvaras@kingsburyco.com

License No.: n/a

(where applicable)

State: Vermont



MEMO

To: City Council
From: Chris Yuen, Community Development Director
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Agenda Item: Reading File: Main Street Park Project Update

Issue:

This memo provides the Council with an update on the Main Street Park project at 1 Main Street.

Discussion:

Background

In April 2023, the Downtown Development Board awarded the City a \$200,000 Downtown Transportation Fund (DTF) grant for the park. Construction was deferred in 2023 to avoid conflicts with the Crescent Connector, Main Street waterline, and Brickyard culvert projects. In December 2023, the Council prioritized another project over the park.

On May 8, 2024, the Council directed staff to pursue a lower-cost design that reduces the City contribution while still using the grant. The Council approved the amended design and budget on October 30, 2024. The State approved the change in scope through a grant amendment signed on February 12, 2025. The amended project includes two shade sails, planters, decorative screens, benches and tables, bike racks, lighting, curbing and paving, and an entry sign.

Site conditions

The site is a former gas station. Soil testing found lead and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in shallow soils on parts of the parcel. Petroleum contamination from the former Road Res-Q station is present in deeper soils and groundwater.

The existing asphalt and concrete act as a protective cap over the contaminated soil. This drives much of the design. Removing pavement in the contaminated areas would require at least 18 inches of clean soil cover and a more extensive Corrective Action Plan. Removing all of the contaminated shallow soil would mean hauling approximately 2,400 cubic yards to a landfill. For these reasons, the design keeps the pavement in place and uses above-ground planters.

Staff applied for a Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Community Tree Planting Grant to plant a tree in subsurface soil cells outside the contaminated area. That grant was not awarded, so an in-ground tree is not part of the current project.

Environmental review

Earth disturbance is now limited to approximately 41.5 cubic yards for the shade sail foundations, new curbing, and sign posts. Our environmental consultant, Waite-Heindel Environmental Management, submitted a Corrective Action Plan to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on September 3, 2026. The plan calls for an environmental professional to be on site during excavation and for excavated soil to be disposed of at a landfill.

Once DEC completes its review, the plan will be posted for a 30-day public comment period. Excavation cannot begin until DEC approves the plan. After construction, the City will apply for a Certificate of Completion under the State's Brownfields Reuse and Environmental Liability Limitation Act (BRELLA) program. That certificate will be filed in the land records with a restriction on future soil disturbance at the site.

Design and procurement

The Development Review Board approved the site plan on April 17, 2025. Final construction plans were completed in June 2026, and the City advertised the project for sealed bids on June 19, 2026. The work was split into four sections (site work, sun shades, sign, and decorative screens) so that smaller firms could bid on part of the work. Several contractors requested the plans, but no bids were received at the bid opening on July 24, 2026.

Staff and the City Engineer are now negotiating with vendors and contractors directly, consistent with the City's Purchasing Policy. Final pricing is gathered for the site work, decorative screens and the sign. Suppliers have been identified for the shade sails, lighting, benches, and tables.

Schedule

Staff's goal is to complete site work this fall, pending DEC approval of the Corrective Action Plan. Component procurement fabrication will continue through the winter and be installed in the spring. The grant agreement requires the project to be complete by April 30, 2027.

Cost:

The approved project budget is \$240,000, funded by the \$200,000 DTF grant and a \$40,000 City match.

Recommendation:

This item is for information only. No action is required.

Recommended Motion:

None.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Main Street Park final design bid package



CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION MAIN STREET PARK IMPROVEMENTS

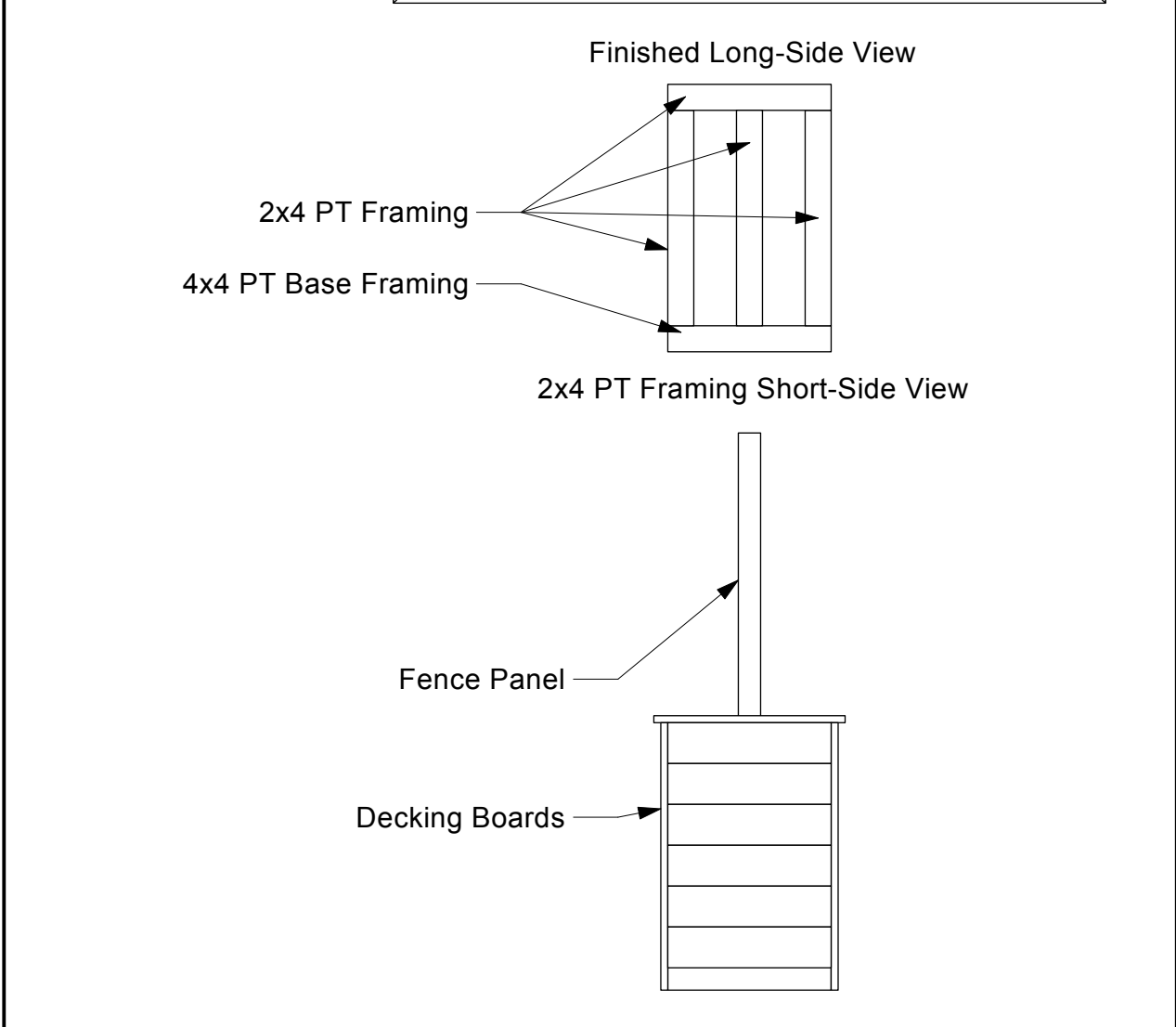
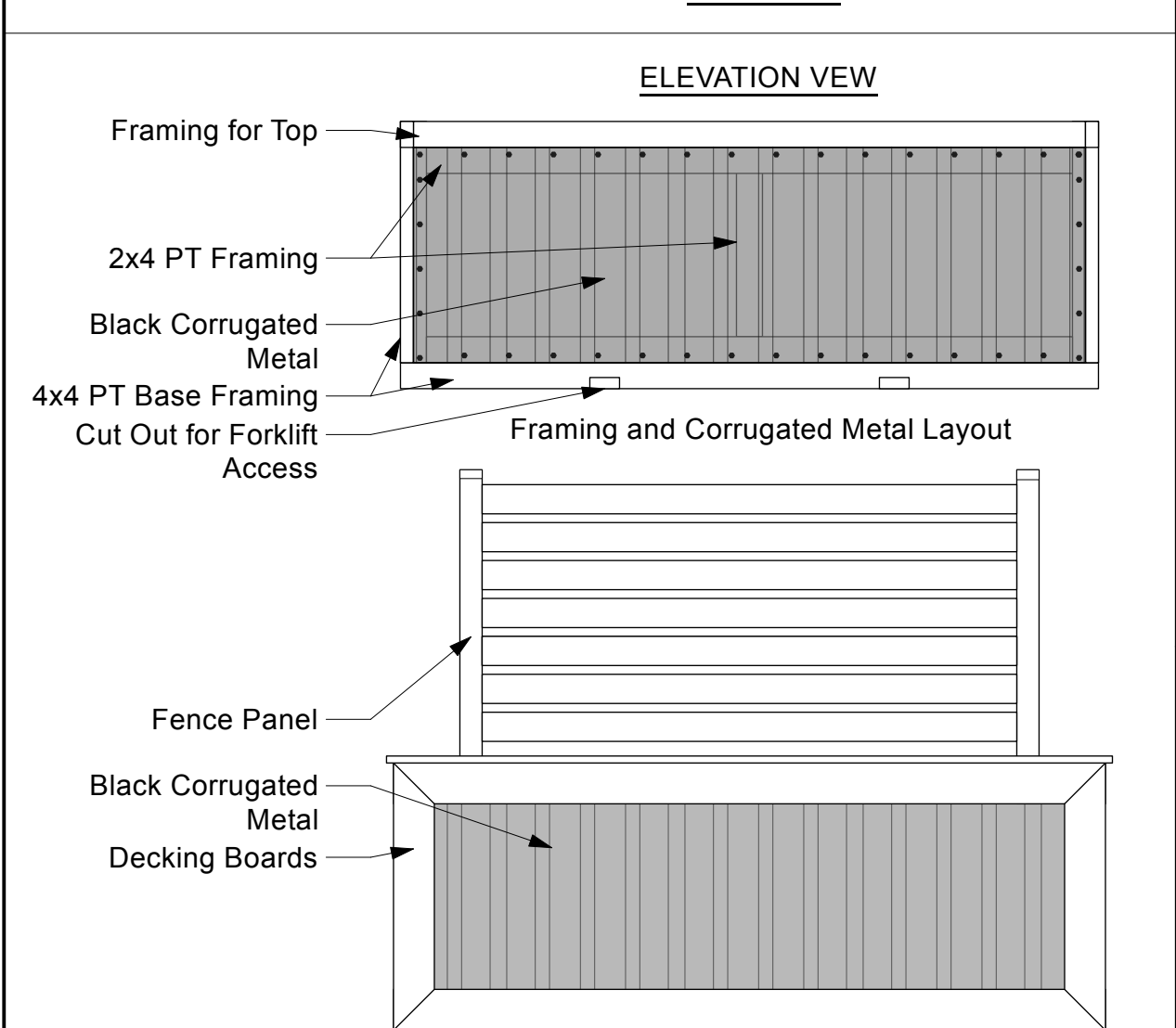
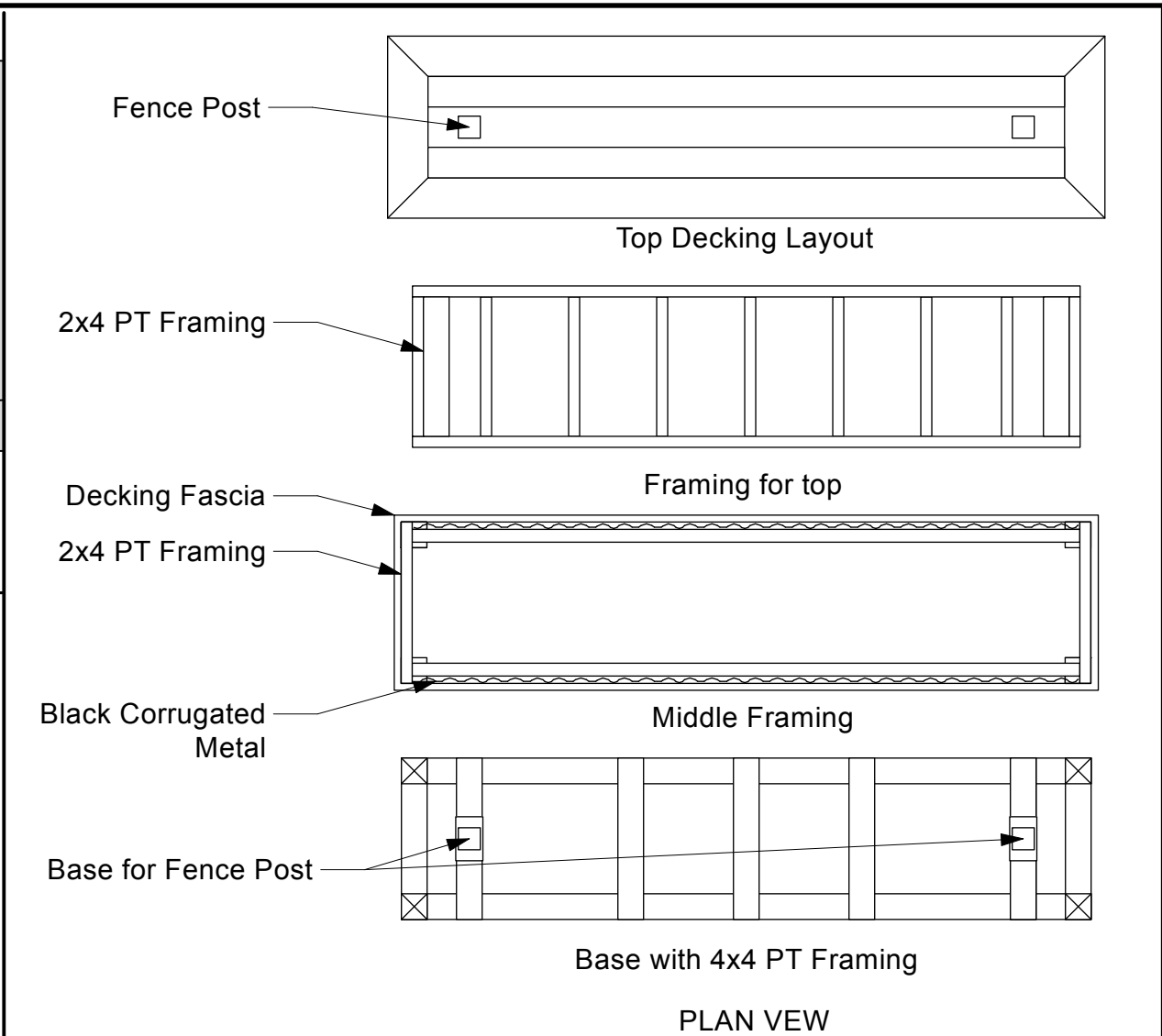
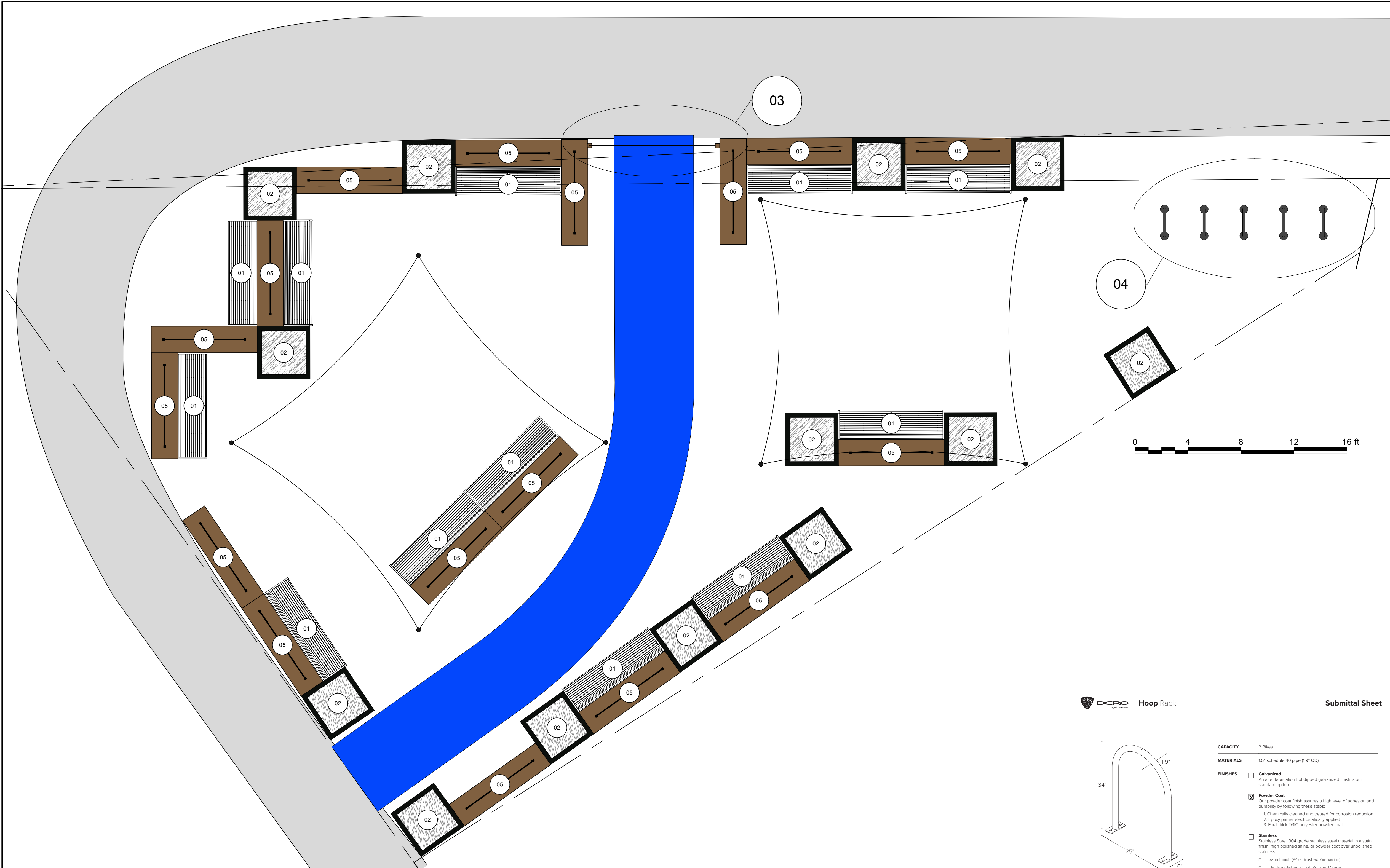
GINKO DESIGN, LLC
DONALD L. HAMLIN CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC.
TURNER GROUP



- L-01 Site Furnishings
- S-1 Existing Conditions
- S-2 Site Plan
- S-3 Construction Layout and Grading
- S-4 Lighting Plan
- S-5 Details
- S-6 Details
- SK-1 Shade Sail Footings



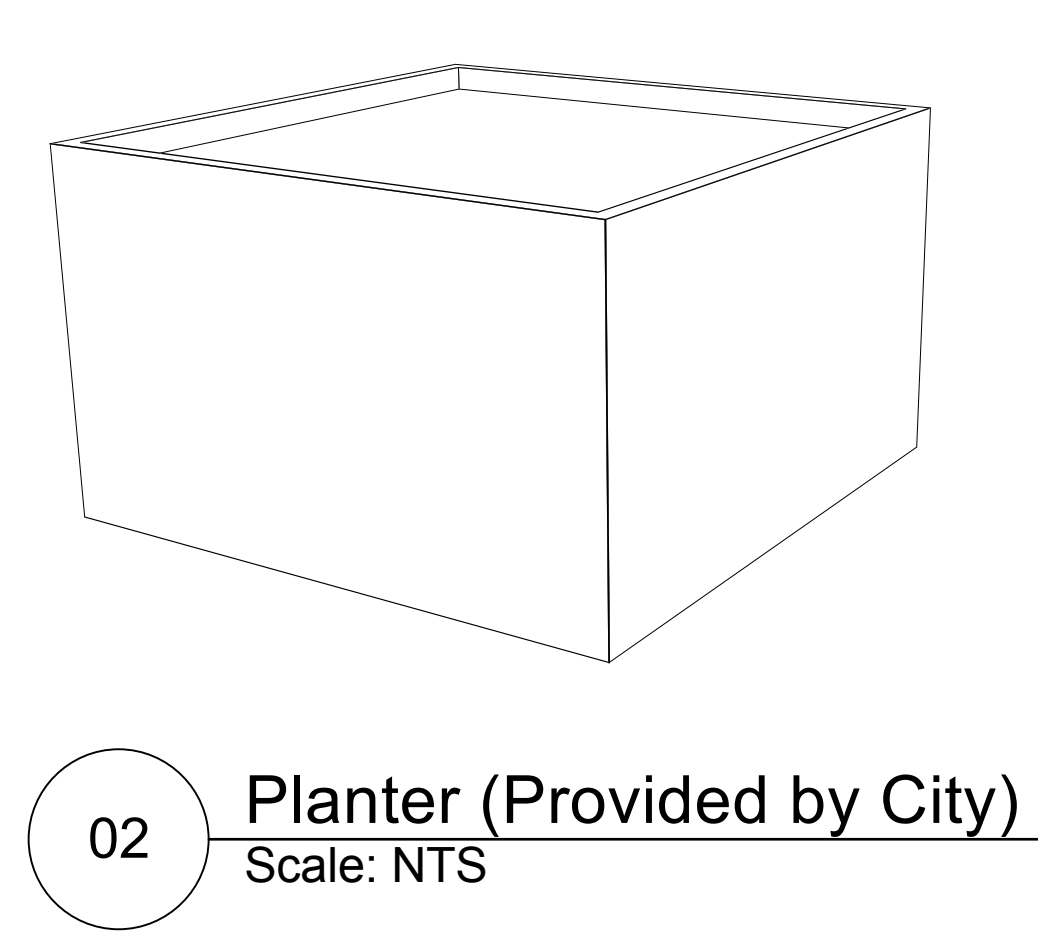
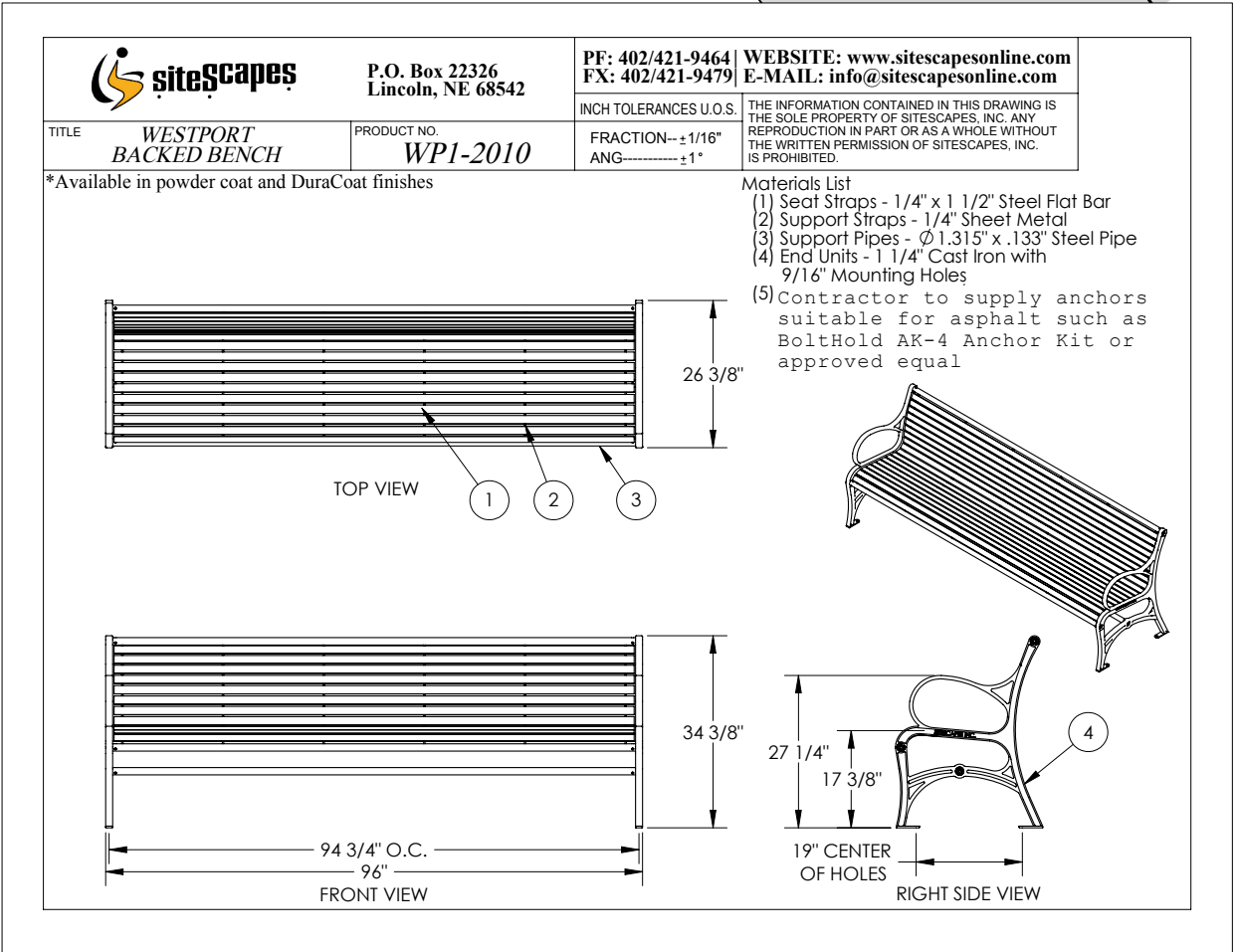
June 19, 2026



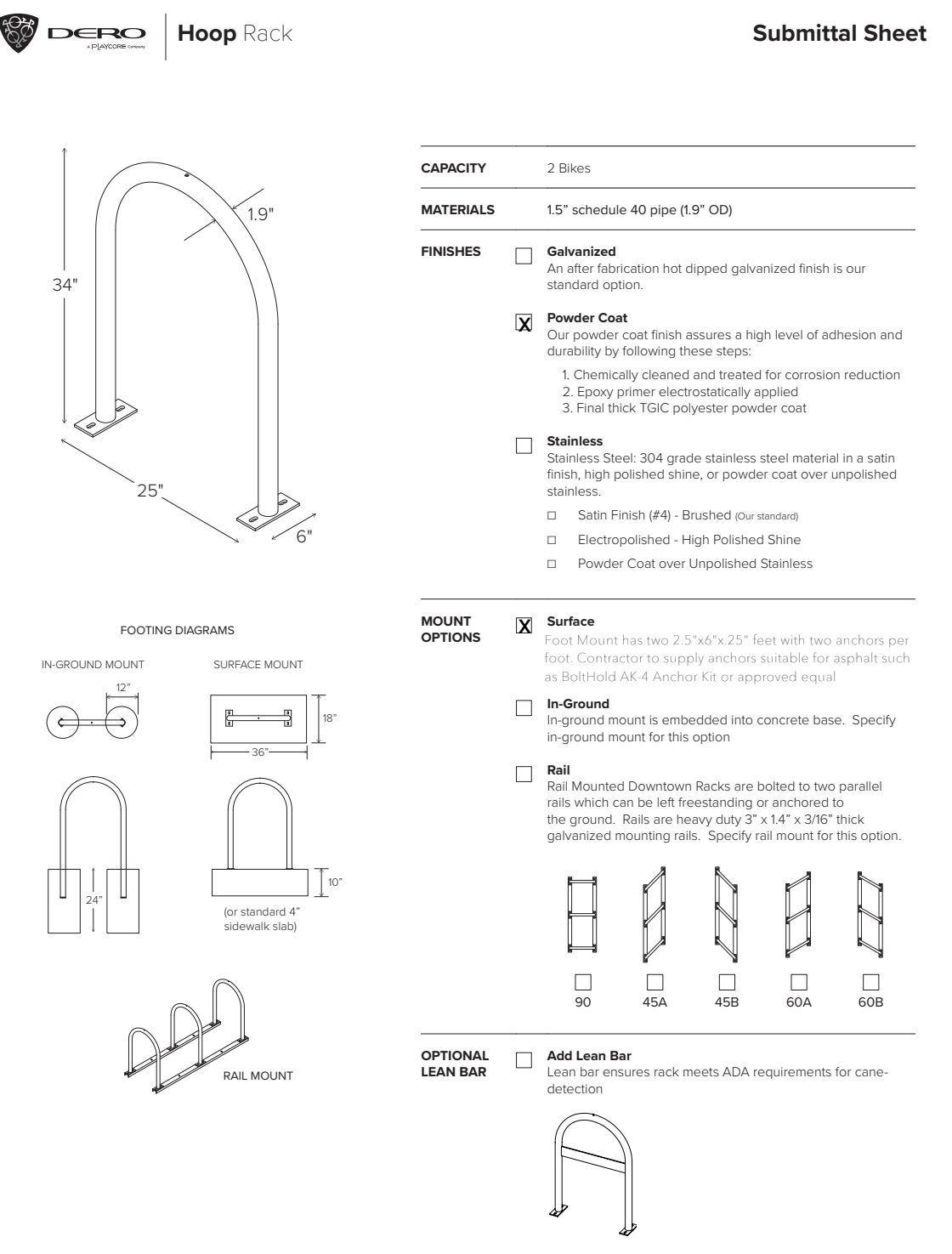
Decorative Screen
Scale: 1/2"=1'

Material Selections
Framing: Pressure Treated Pine
Corrugated Metal: 26-gauge galvanized dual coat steel, black, 7/8" wave profile
Fence Panel: Mondaria 6 ft x 6 ft All-Aluminum Open Slat Fence Panel (or approved equal)
Decking Boards: Trex Select Saddle (or approved equal), hardware to match the color of the boards
Use sandbags or other weights for stability if necessary.

Note: Concept drawing shown for aesthetic reference only. Contractor assumes full responsibility for structural integrity and attachment details in accordance with local codes.



Notes: Alumium Planter 48in.L x 48in.W x 24in.H
Modern Powder Coated Black
With Built-in Reservoir



North Arrow

Designed By

David Burton

Drawn By

David

Checked By

David

Date

6/8/26

Revision

GINKGO DESIGN, LLC

PO BOX 358

UNDERHILL, VT 05489

GINKGO DESIGN

Smart Landscape Solutions

Project Title

One Main - City Park

Scale

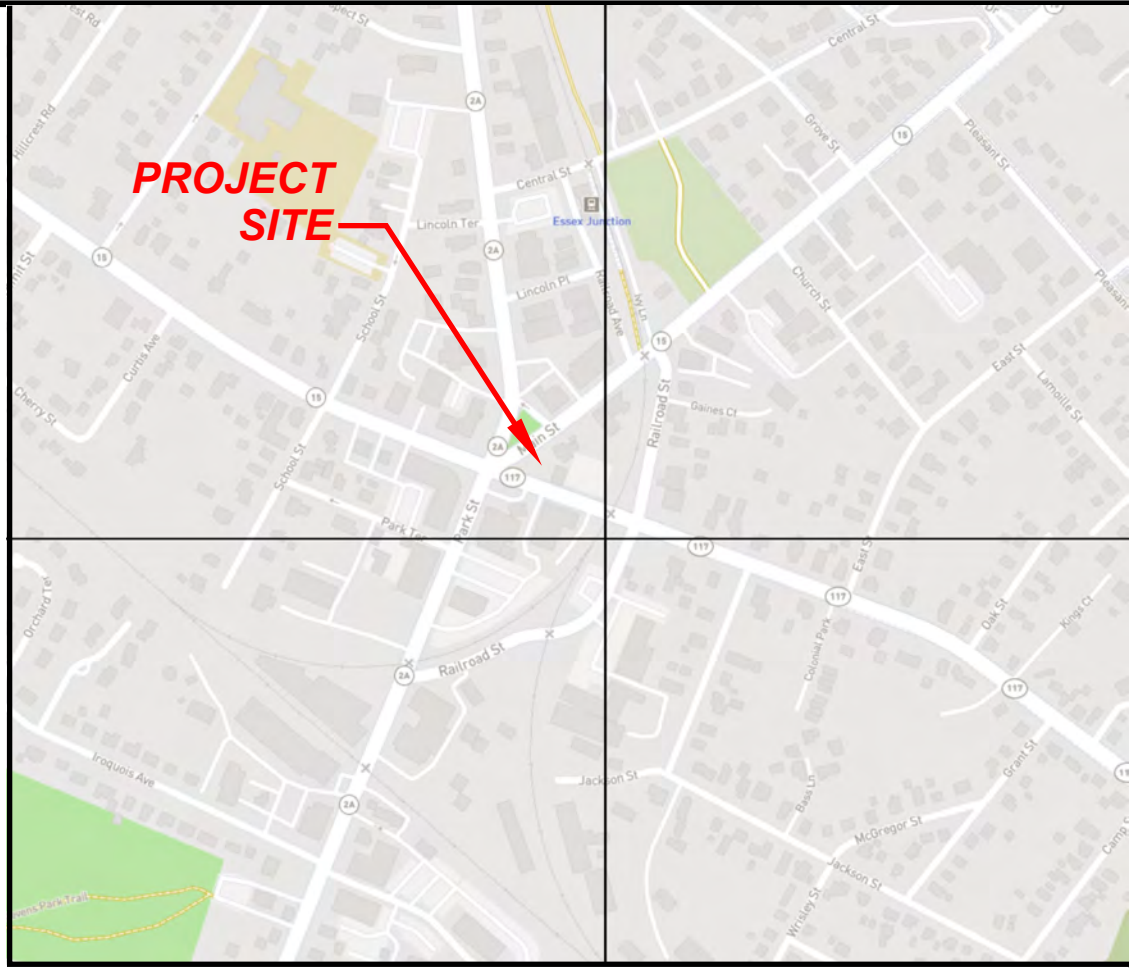
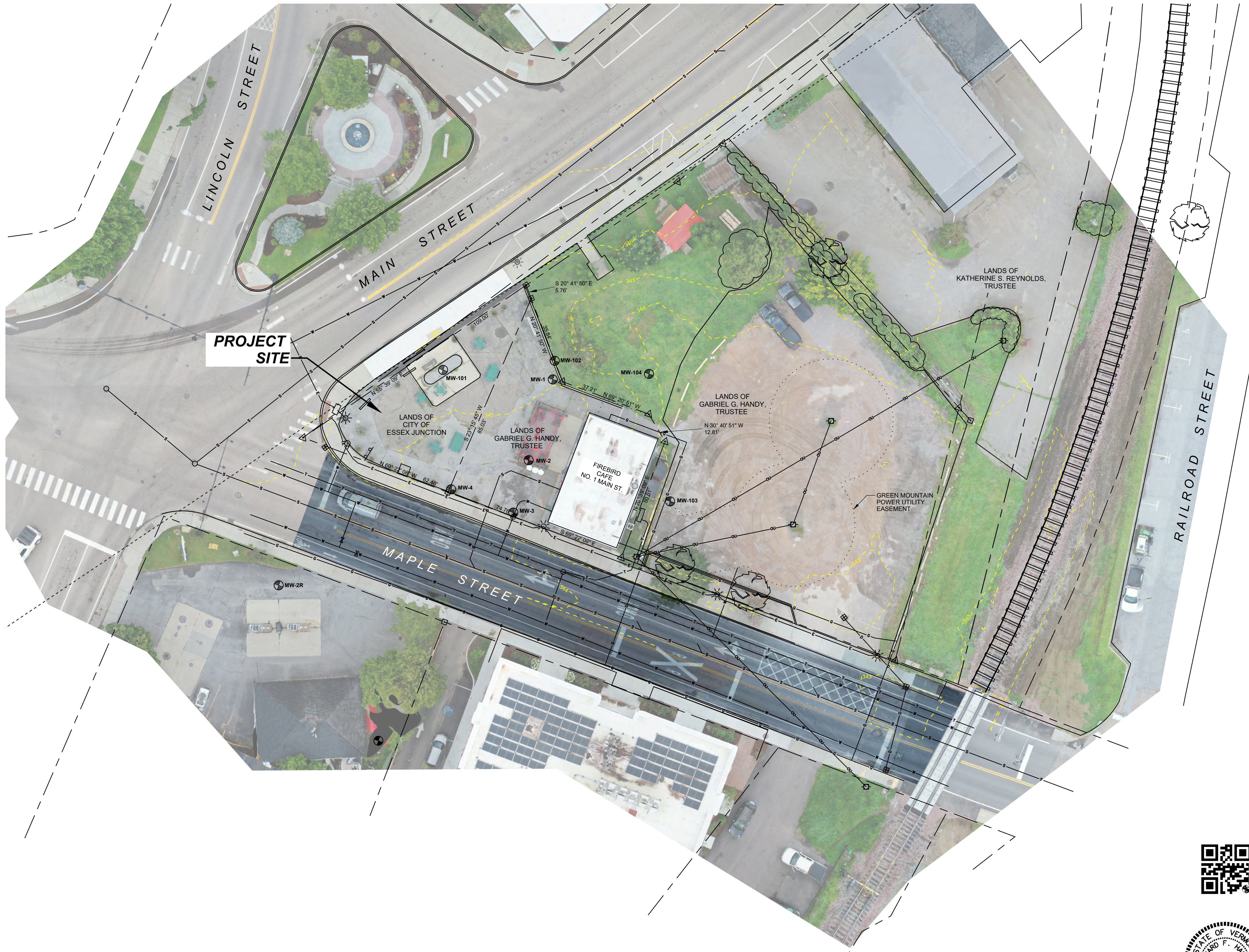
1 Main St.

Sheet No.

Essex Jct. VT 05452

Site Furnishings

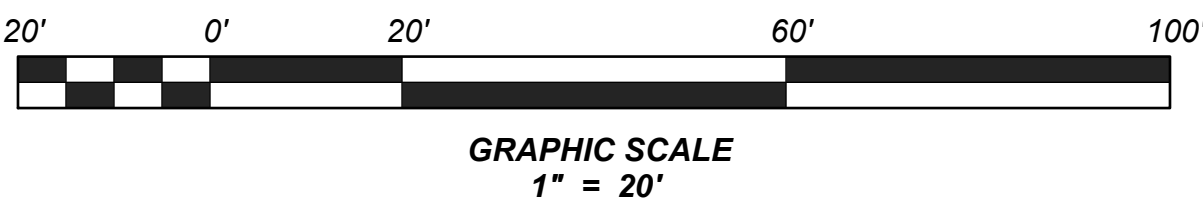
L-01



VICINITY MAP

LEGEND

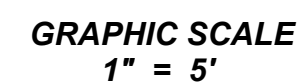
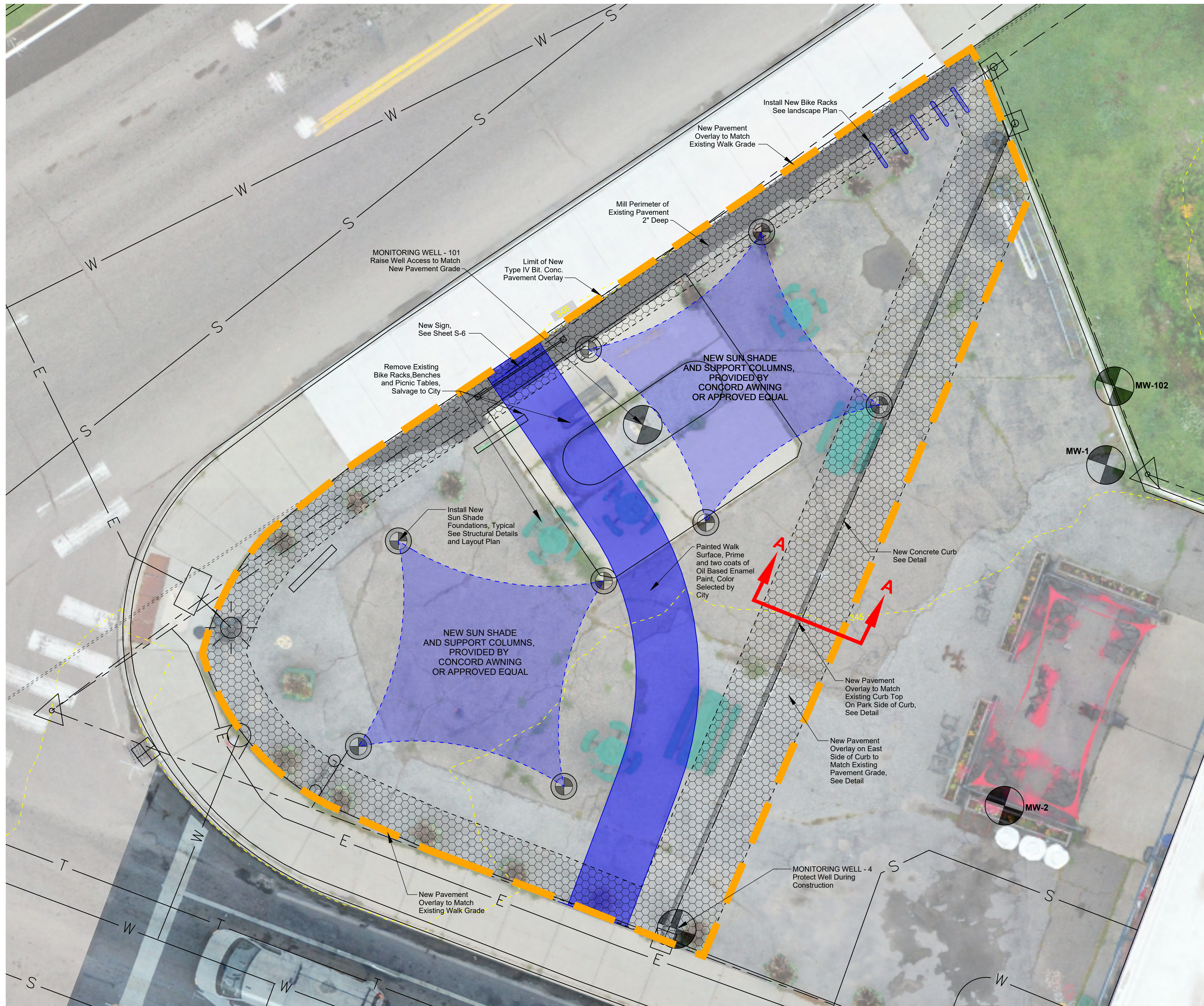
- EXISTING BOUNDARY LINE
- EXISTING EASEMENT
- APPROXIMATE WATERLINE
- APPROXIMATE SEWER LINE
- APPROXIMATE STORM DRAIN
- EXISTING OVERHEAD UTILITY
- EXISTING BURIED TELEPHONE UTILITY
- EXISTING GAS UTILITY
- EXISTING STREET CURB
- EXISTING UTILITY POLE WITH GUY
- EXISTING STREET LAMP
- EXISTING CATCH BASIN
- EXISTING HYDRANT
- EXISTING GATE VALVE
- EXISTING CURB STOP
- EXISTING CONCRETE BOUND
- UNMONUMENTED POINT
- EXISTING STEEL PIPE
- SET 4" X 4" CONCRETE BOUND
- MONITORING WELL



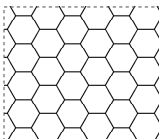
GRAPHIC SCALE
1" = 20'



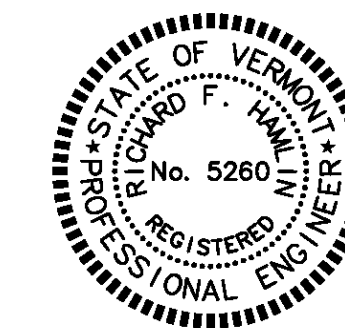
DATE	04/1/26	REVISION	Added Groundwater Monitoring Wells		BY	RFH
CLIENT	VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION 2 LINCOLN STREET ESSEX JUNCTION, VT 05452					
PROJECT TITLE	MAIN STREET PARK					
DRAWING TITLE	EXISTING CONDITIONS					
Survey	DLHCE	 Donald L. Hamlin Consulting Engineers, Inc. 136 Pearl Street Essex Junction, Vermont	Scale	1" = 20'		
Design	—		Job	22-815		
Drawn	RFH		File	—		
Checked	JKP		Drawing	S-1		
Date	03/30/26					



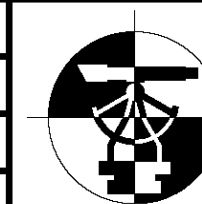
.....	EXISTING BOUNDARY LINE
_____	EXISTING EASEMENT
_____ W _____ W _____	APPROXIMATE WATERLINE
_____ S _____ S _____	APPROXIMATE SEWER LINE
_____ D _____ D _____	APPROXIMATE STORM DRAIN
_____ OU _____ OU _____	EXISTING OVERHEAD UTILITY
_____ T _____ T _____	EXISTING BURIED TELEPHONE UTILITY
_____ G _____ G _____	EXISTING GAS UTILITY
_____	EXISTING STREET CURB
	EXISTING UTILITY POLE WITH GUY
	EXISTING STREET LAMP
	EXISTING CATCH BASIN
	EXISTING HYDRANT
	EXISTING GATE VALVE
	EXISTING CURB STOP
	EXISTING CONCRETE BOUND
	UNMONUMENTED POINT
	EXISTING STEEL PIPE
	SET 4" X 4" CONCRETE BOUND

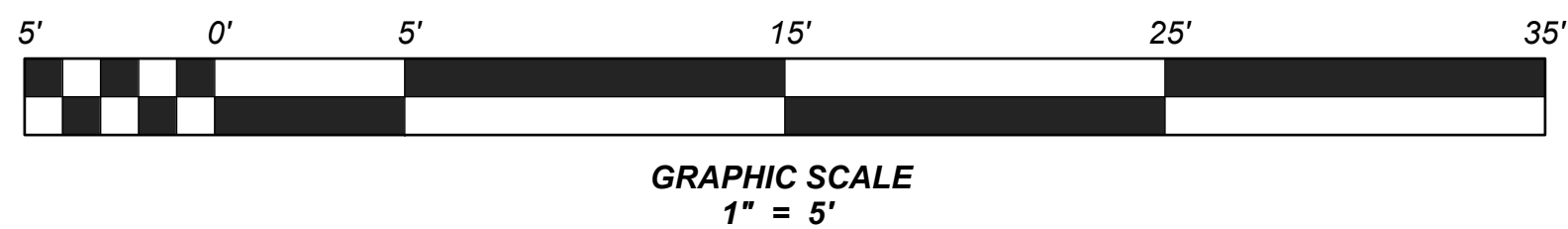
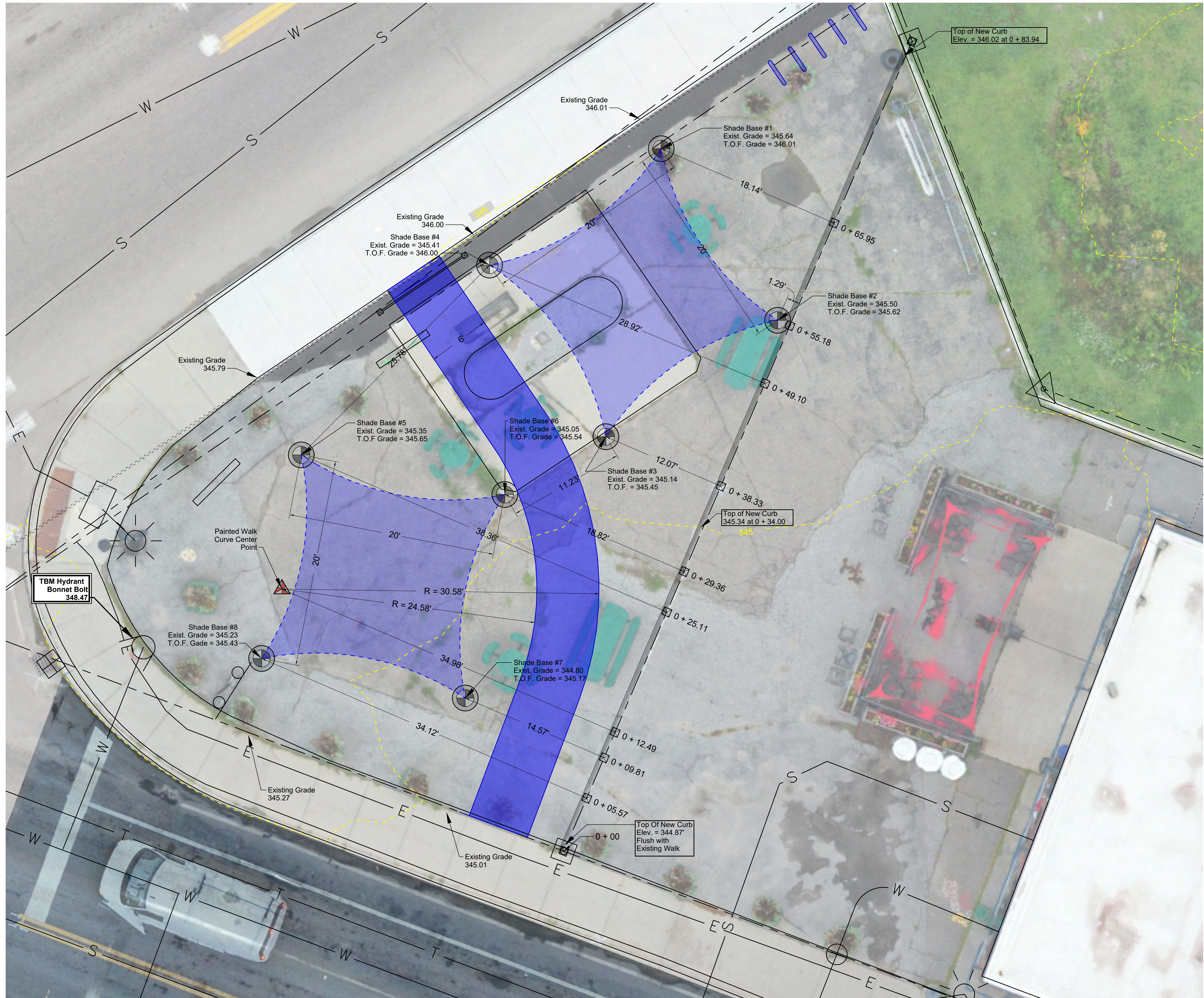
	NEW SUN SHADE FOUNDATION LOCATION
	LIMITS PROPOSED SUN SHADE CANOPY
	NEW PAINTED PAVEMENT PATH
	LIMITS OF PAVEMENT MILLING 2' DEEP
	LIMIT OF TYPE IV PAVEMENT OVERLAY
	MONITORING WELL

Note: All paving and paving preparation work shall conform to the latest edition of the VTrans Standard Specifications.



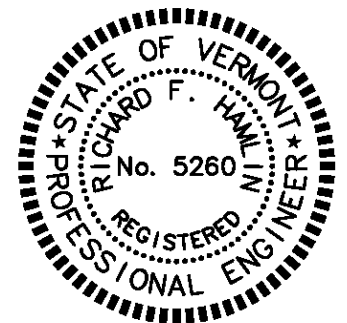
06/02/26		Revised Sign Note		RFH	
04/01/26		Added Groundwater Monitoring Wells		RFH	
DATE	03/30/26	REVISION	Removed tree well, added entrance sign	BY	RFH
CIENT VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION 2 LINCOLN STREET ESSEX JUNCTION, VT 05452					
PROJECT TITLE MAIN STREET PARK					
DRAWING TITLE SITE PLAN					
Survey DLHCE			Scale 1" = 5'		Drawing S-2
Design RFH			Job 22-815		
Draw RFH			File		
Checked JPK					
Date 03/30/26			136 Pearl Street Essex Junction, Vermont		

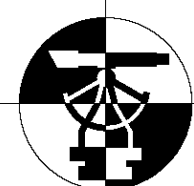


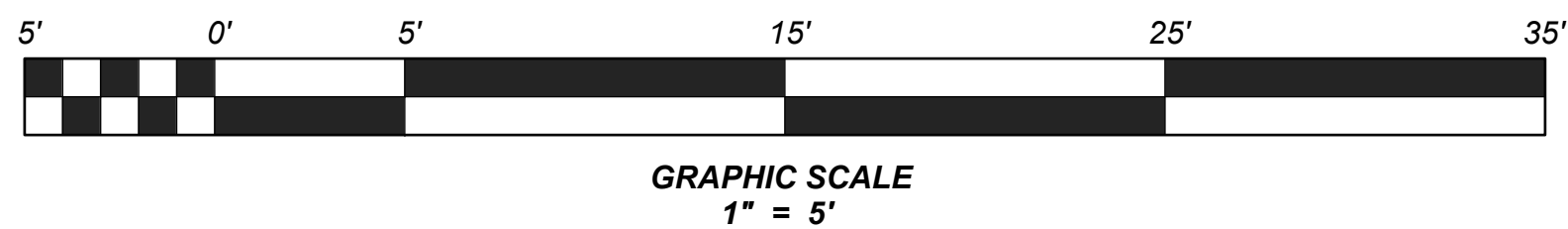
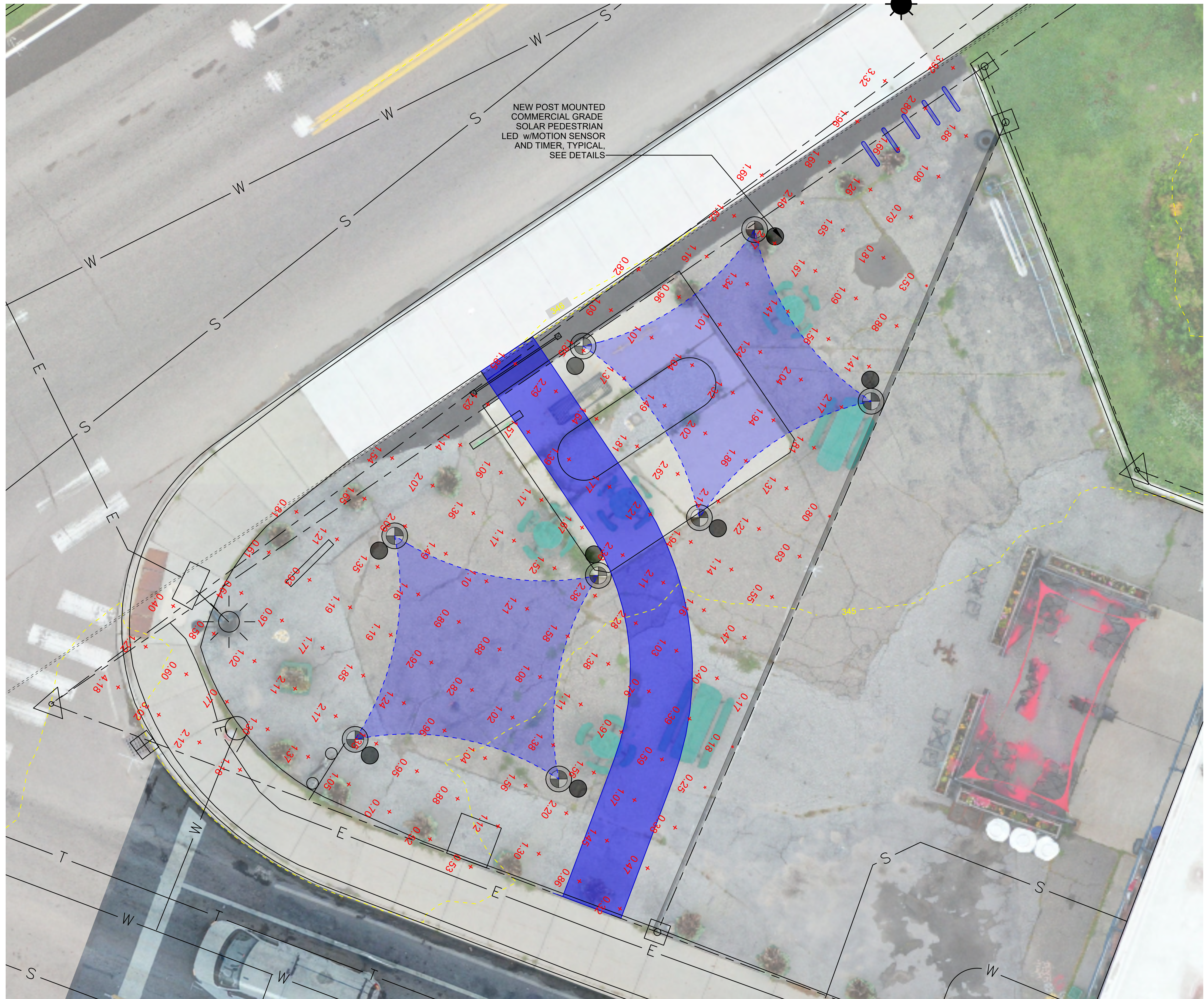


LEGEND

- | | |
|-----|---|
| --- | EXISTING BOUNDARY LINE |
| --- | EXISTING EASEMENT |
| --- | APPROXIMATE WATERLINE |
| --- | APPROXIMATE SEWER LINE |
| --- | APPROXIMATE STORM DRAIN |
| --- | EXISTING OVERHEAD UTILITY |
| --- | EXISTING BURIED TELEPHONE UTILITY |
| --- | EXISTING GAS UTILITY |
| --- | EXISTING STREET CURB |
| --- | EXISTING UTILITY POLE WITH GUY |
| --- | EXISTING STREET LAMP |
| --- | EXISTING CATCH BASIN |
| --- | EXISTING HYDRANT |
| --- | EXISTING GATE VALVE |
| --- | EXISTING CURB STOP |
| --- | EXISTING CONCRETE BOUND |
| --- | UNMONUMENTED POINT |
| --- | EXISTING STEEL PIPE |
| --- | SET 4" X 4" CONCRETE BOUND |
| --- | NEW 30" DIA. SUN SHADE FOUNDATION |
| --- | LIMITS PROPOSED SUN SHADE CANOPY |
| --- | NEW PAINTED PAVEMENT PATH |
| --- | CONSTRUCTION STATIONING FOR SITE LAYOUT |
| --- | PAINTED PATH CURVE CENTER POINT |



DATE	04/13/26	REVISION	Revised TBM	BY	RFH
CLIENT	VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION 2 LINCOLN STREET ESSEX JUNCTION, VT 05452				
PROJECT TITLE	MAIN STREET PARK				
DRAWING TITLE	CONSTRUCTION LAYOUT AND GRADING				
Survey	DLHCE		Scale 1" = 5'		
Design	RFH		Job 22-815		
Drawn	RFH		File _____		
Checked	JPJ		Drawing _____		
Date	03/30/26		S-3		
		136 Pearl Street Essex Junction, Vermont			



LEGEND

- EXISTING BOUNDARY LINE
- EXISTING EASEMENT
- APPROXIMATE WATERLINE
- APPROXIMATE SEWER LINE
- APPROXIMATE STORM DRAIN
- EXISTING OVERHEAD UTILITY
- EXISTING BURIED TELEPHONE UTILITY
- EXISTING GAS UTILITY
- EXISTING STREET CURB
- EXISTING UTILITY POLE WITH GUY
- EXISTING STREET LAMP
- EXISTING CATCH BASIN
- EXISTING HYDRANT
- EXISTING GATE VALVE
- EXISTING CURB STOP
- EXISTING CONCRETE BOUND
- UNMONUMENTED POINT
- EXISTING STEEL PIPE
- SET 4" X 4" CONCRETE BOUND
- NEW SUN SHADE FOUNDATION LOCATION
- NEW POST MOUNTED LIGHT ORIENTATION
- LIMITS PROPOSED SUN SHADE CANOPY
- NEW PAINTED PAVEMENT PATH

MAIN STREET PARK LUMINAIRE SCHEDULE	
SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
	Gama Sonic USA Solar LED Light mounted on sun shade pole See Details
	King Luminaire King V, Existing (1) "KING" K56-P4AF-V-60(SSL)-7030

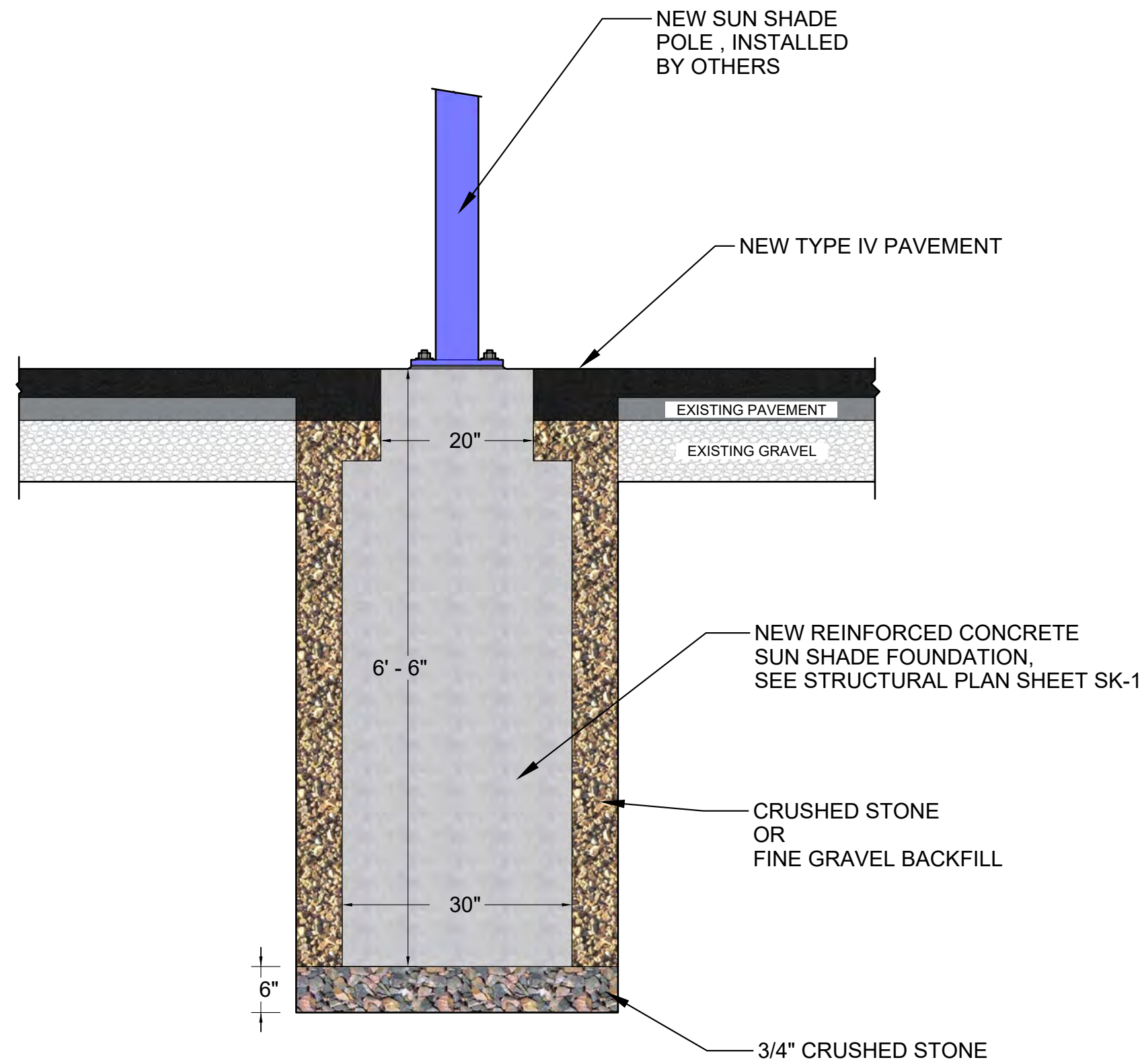
LIGHTING STATISTICS

MAXIMUM - 4.18 FC
MINIMUM - 0.32 FC
AVERAGE - 1.40 FC
UNIFORMIITY RATIO - 4.37



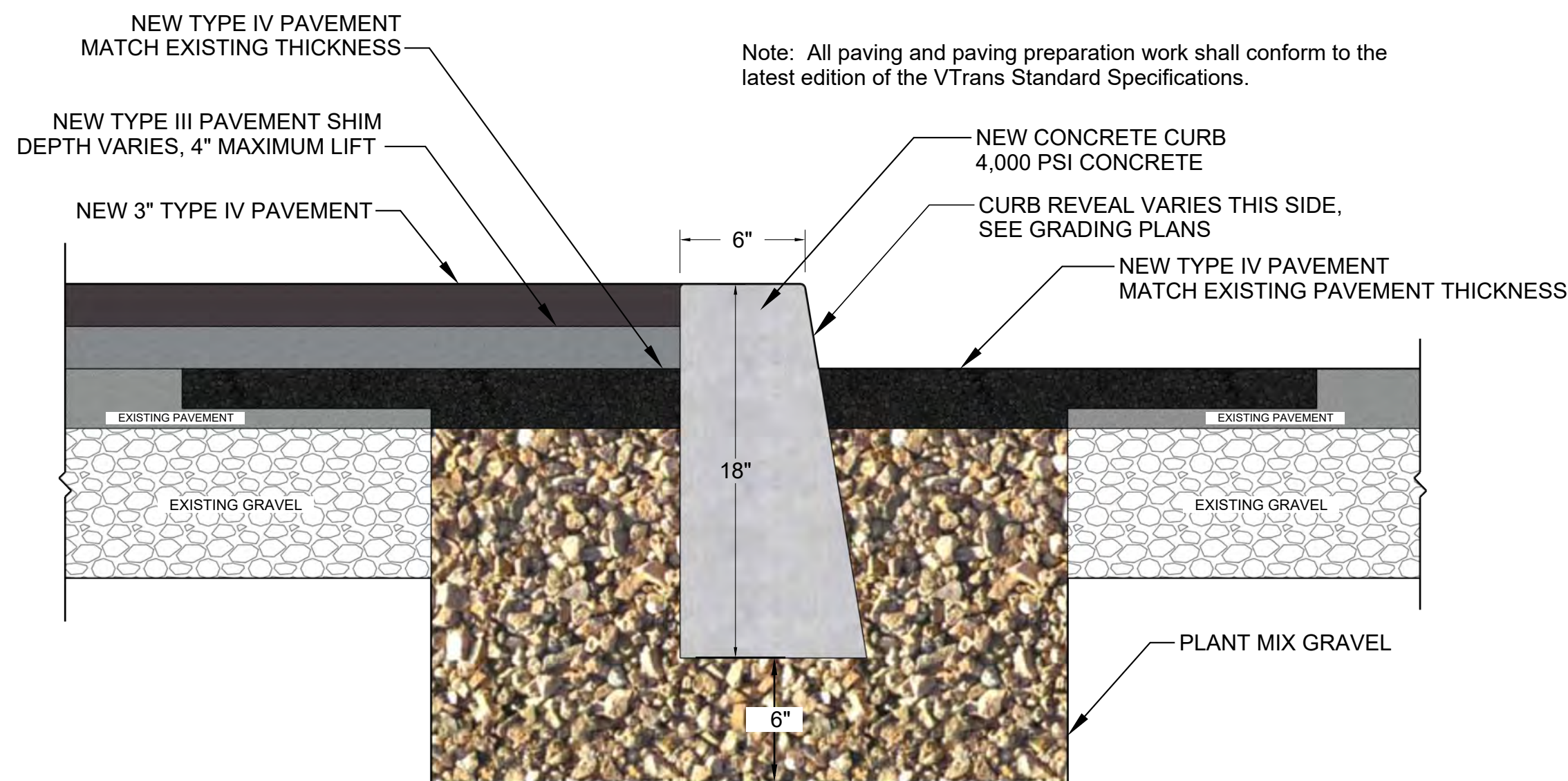
DATE	REVISION	BY
CLIENT	VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION 2 LINCOLN STREET ESSEX JUNCTION, VT 05452	
PROJECT TITLE	MAIN STREET PARK	
DRAWING TITLE	LIGHTING PLAN	
Survey	DLHCE	Scale 1" = 5'
Design	RFH	Job 22-815
Drawn	RFH	File
Checked	JPJ	Drawing
Date	03/30/26	S-4

Donald L. Hamlin
Consulting
Engineers, Inc.
136 Pearl Street
Essex Junction, Vermont



SUN SHADE FOUNDATION GRADING DETAIL

NTS



NEW CURB DETAIL SECTION A - A

NTS

Commercial Grade Solar Pedestrian LED Post Light w/ Motion Sensor and Timer - 3" Fitter 5 Year Limited Warranty

The Commercial Grade Solar Pedestrian LED Post Light is perfect for areas with high pedestrian traffic, such as sidewalks, small parking areas and parks. This quality commercial-grade solar post light has a motion sensor, timer, and dusk to dawn operation. It is a commercial-grade, maintenance-free solar post light. It fits standard 3" posts, making it an excellent choice for replacing and retrofitting outdated gas or traditional electric lights. Entirely powered by an efficient 20-watt monocrystalline solar panel, this light fixture requires no wiring, digging, or trenching for installation. The IP65 weather-resistant, corrosion-resistant, powder-coated cast aluminum fixture has tempered glass panel protection and coastal-approved. The light turns on automatically from dusk until dawn and, for added convenience, Commercial Grade Solar Pedestrian LED Post Light features a "PIR" mode switch that turns the light on when motion is detected. It also has a timer that allows users to set the light from 4-8 hours, or "0" for dusk to dawn performance. The solar post light's direct downward lighting controls glare and provides adequate lighting for solar outside lights, shining at up to 3,700 lumens when motion is detected "PIR" mode and 900 lumens when the constant "ON" mode is used.

Materials and Composition

Frame Material: Powder-Coated Cast Aluminum
Frame Finish Color: Black
Lens Material: Tempered Glass
Dimensions: 19.5" Diameter, 28.0" Tall
Weight: 24.6 lbs
EPA: 1.05

Lamp Information

24 SMD LEDs
80 CRI | Constant Current | Hi/Lo Mode
Integrated LED Rated Lifespan in Hours: 50000

Solar Panel Specifications

Number of Solar Panels per Light: 1
Panel Protection: Tempered Glass
Solar Panel Wattage: 20

Battery Information

Battery Name: LIFEPO4-12.8V/6AH
Number of Battery Packs per model: 2
Battery Type: Lithium Ion

Compliance and Certifications

Wet Listed | US HTS Code: 9405.40.8440 | IPX Rating: IPX5 | IP Rating: IP65 | UN Number: UN 3481 | Non-Hazmat | Does Not Contain Lead | California Proposition 65 Warning: Carcinogens and Reproductive | Uniform Packaging and Labeling Regulations (UPLR) Compliant

DOES NOT APPLY: UL 2108 Listed | UL Listed | cUL Listed | Title 20 - California Code of Regulations | Uniform Packaging and Labeling - Regulations (UPLR) Compliant | Commercial OR Residential Certifications | ENEC Certified | ISO 14000 Certified | GREENGUARD Certified | ISO 14001 Certified | ISO 9000 Certified | ISO 9001 Certified | ISTA 3A or 6A Certified | ISTA 1A Certified | CPQ Compliant | Star Compliant | Title 24 Compliant | ADA Compliant | Compliant | CALGreen Compliant | Energy Policy Act 1992 Compliant | RoHS Compliant | CSA Certified | CE Certified | FCC Certified ETL Listed | cETL Listed | MET Listed | CSA Listed for USA | CSA Listed for Canada | Fire Rated |

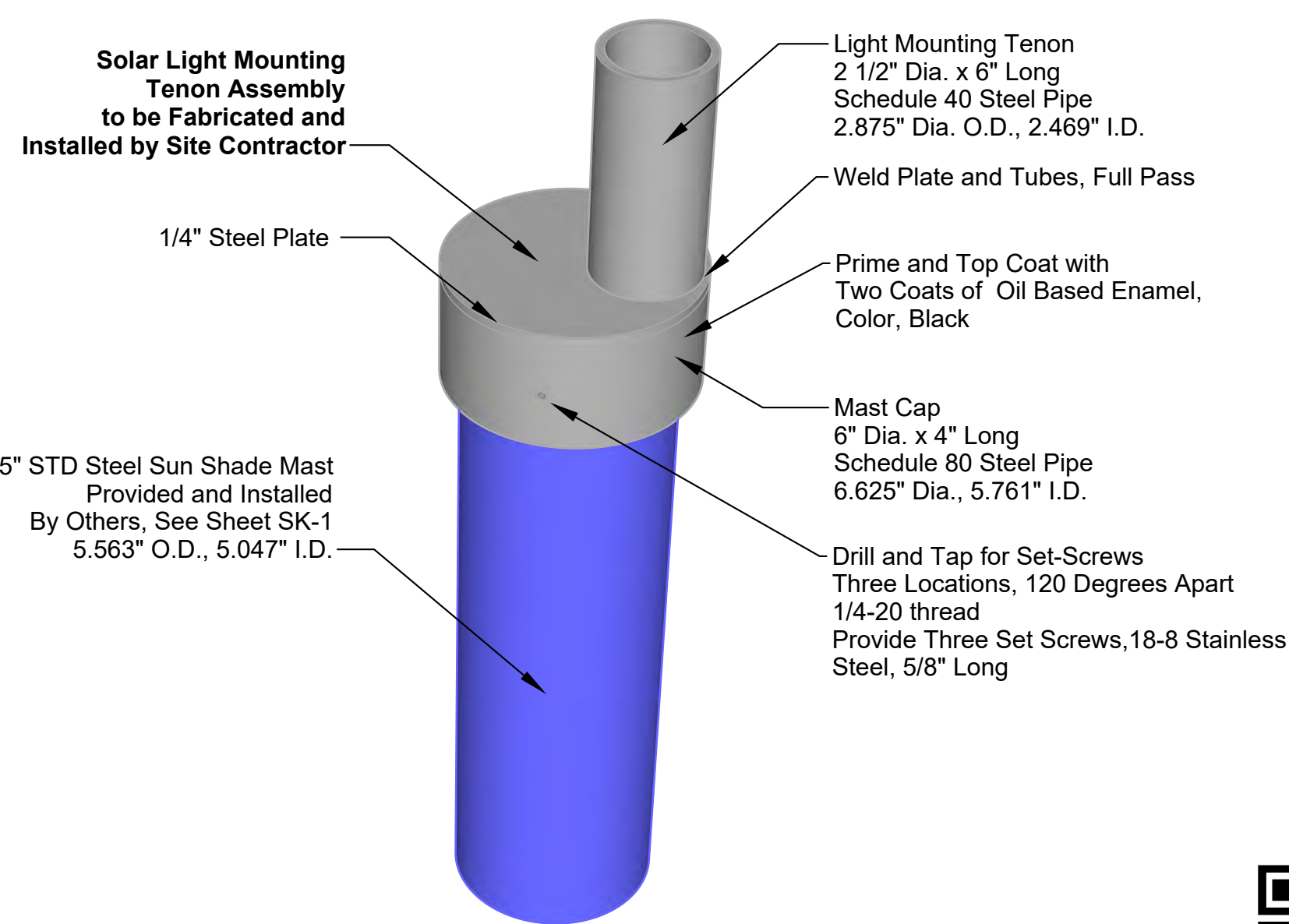


Warehouse-Lighting.com
2750 South 163rd St
New Berlin, WI 53151

Warehouse-Lighting.com
Phone: 888-454-4480
info@warehouse-lighting.com

NEW SOLAR LIGHT MOUNTING TENON FABRICATION DETAIL

NTS

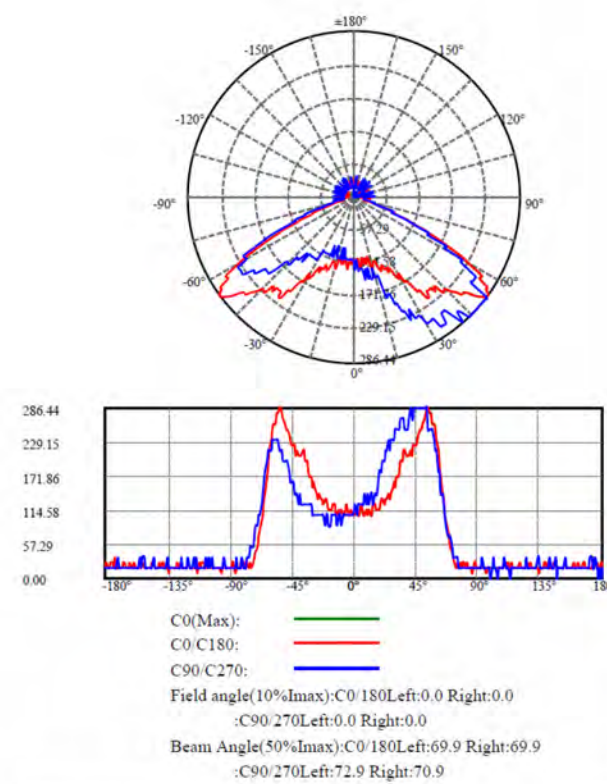


NEW SOLAR LIGHT MOUNTING TENON FABRICATION DETAIL

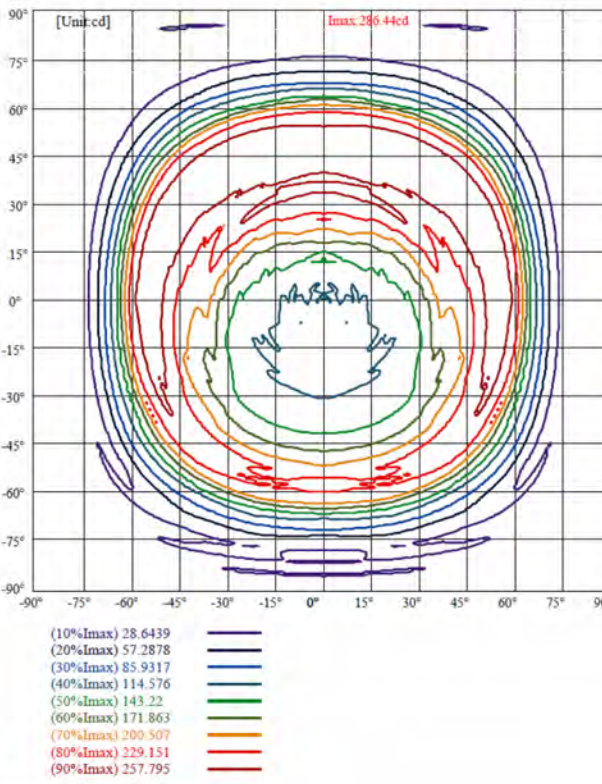
NTS



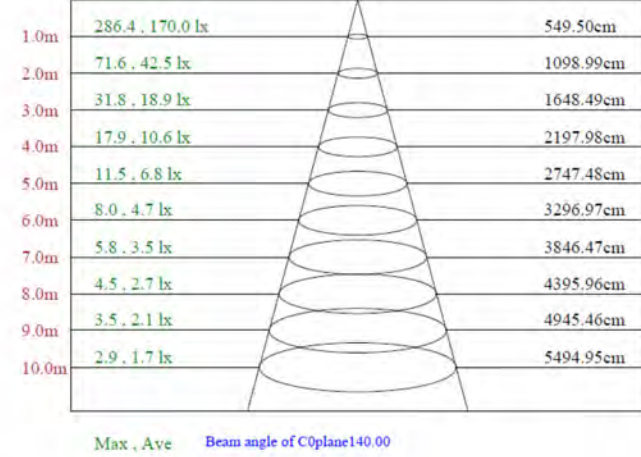
Light Distribution Curve [Unit:cd]



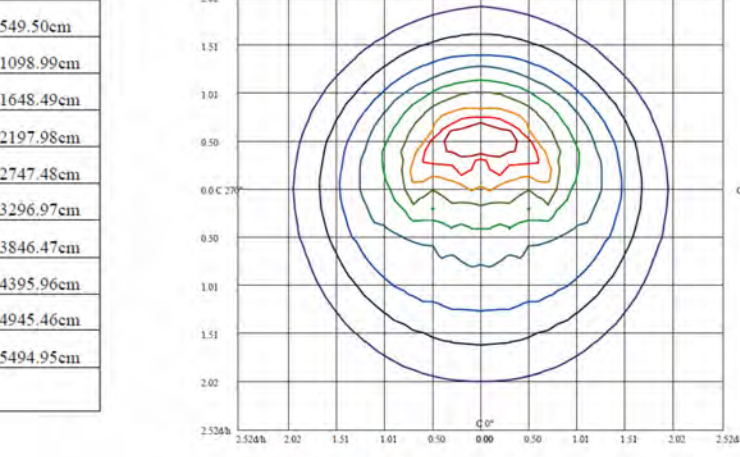
ISO-Intensity (V-H)



Distance Curve

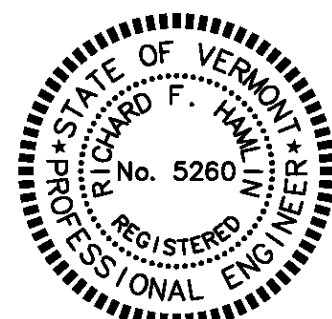


ISO Illuminance Diagram



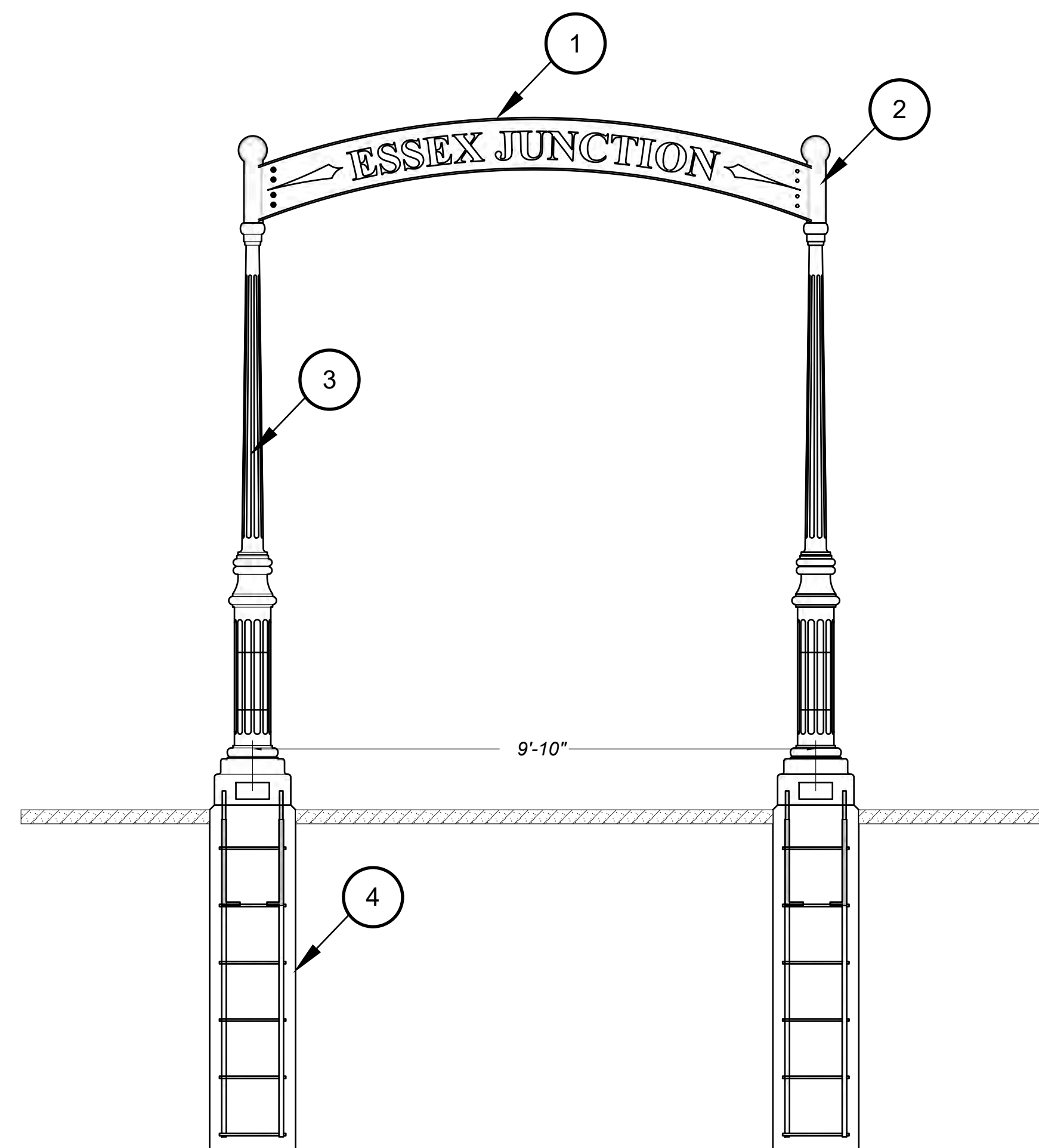
Warehouse-Lighting.com
2750 South 163rd St
New Berlin, WI 53151

Warehouse-Lighting.com
Phone: 888-454-4480
info@warehouse-lighting.com

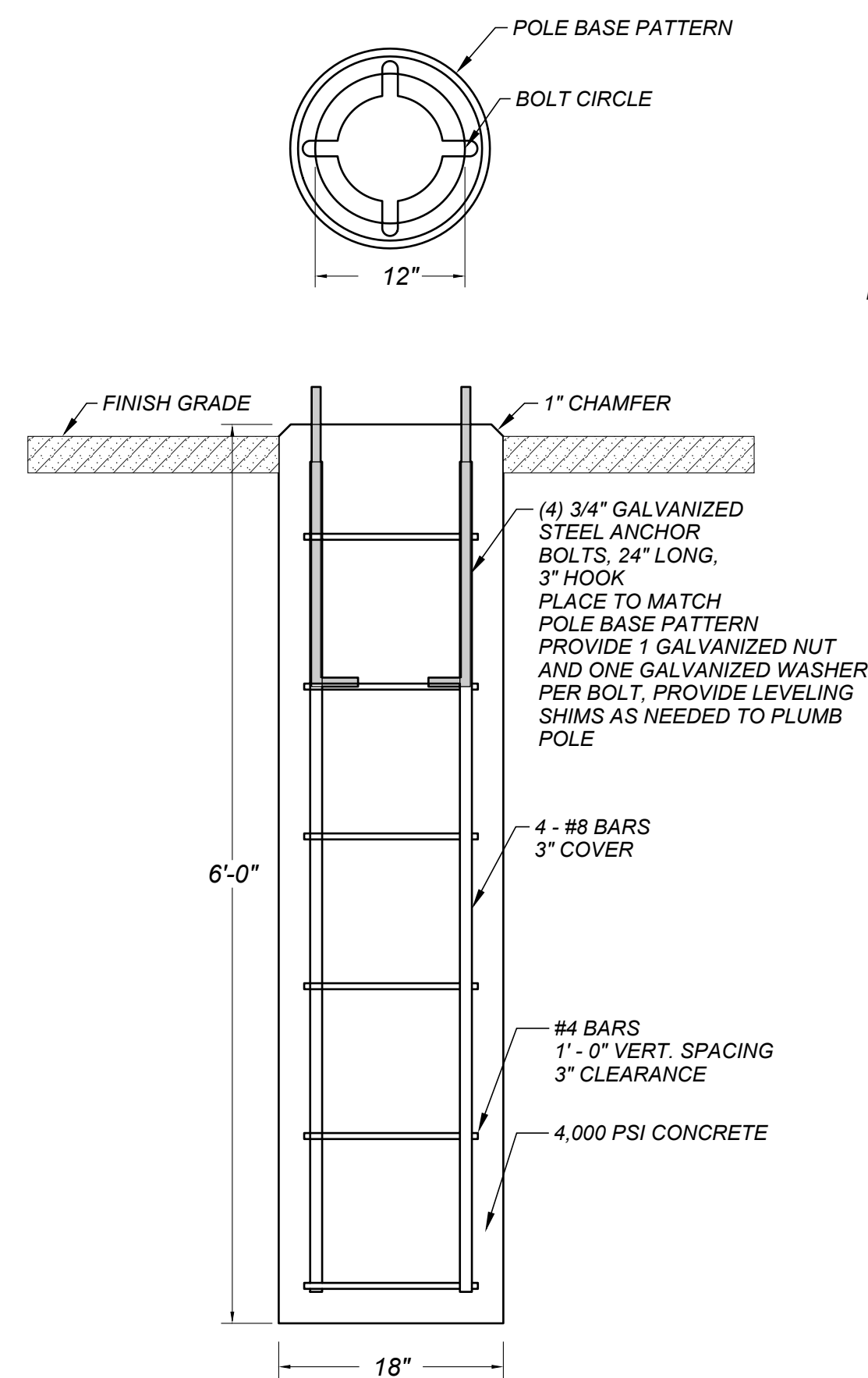


DATE	REVISION	BY
CLIENT	VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION 2 LINCOLN STREET ESSEX JUNCTION, VT 05452	
PROJECT TITLE	MAIN STREET PARK	
DRAWING TITLE	DETAILS	
Survey	DLHCE	Scale 1" = 5'
Design	RFH	Job 22-815
Drawn	RFH	File
Checked	JKP	Drawing
Date	03/30/26	S-5

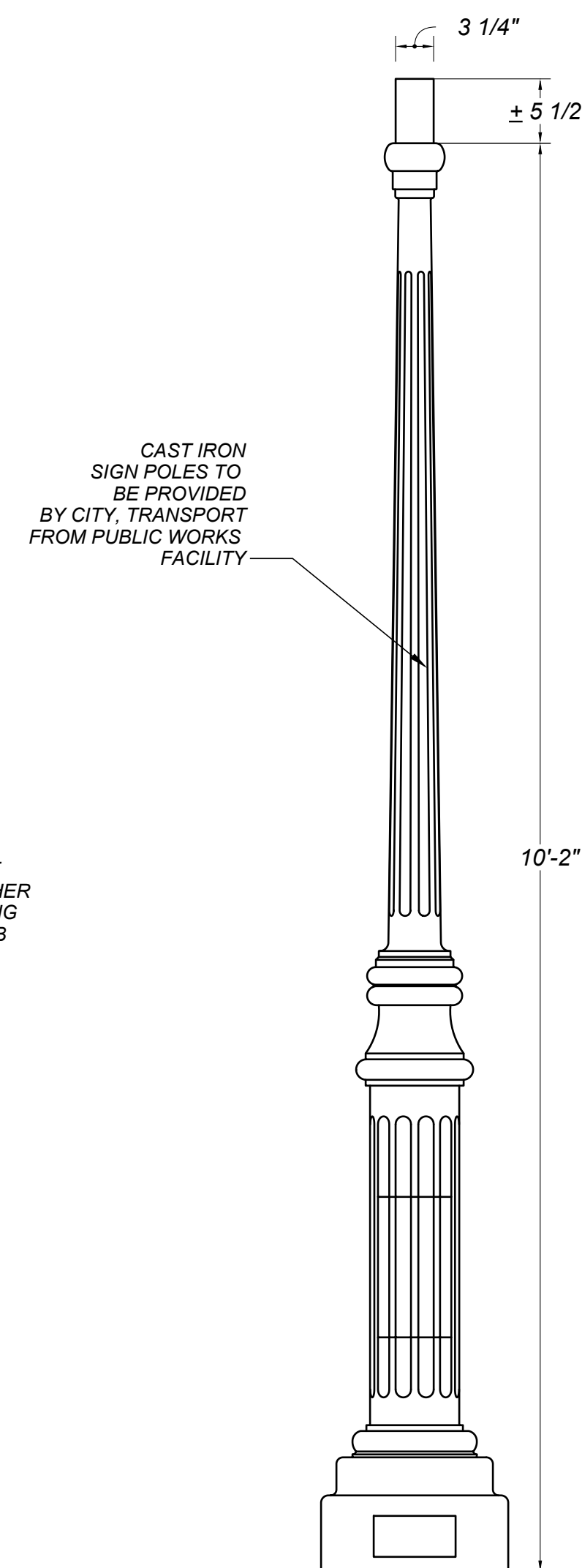
Donald L. Hamlin
Consulting
Engineers, Inc.
136 Pearl Street
Essex Junction, Vermont



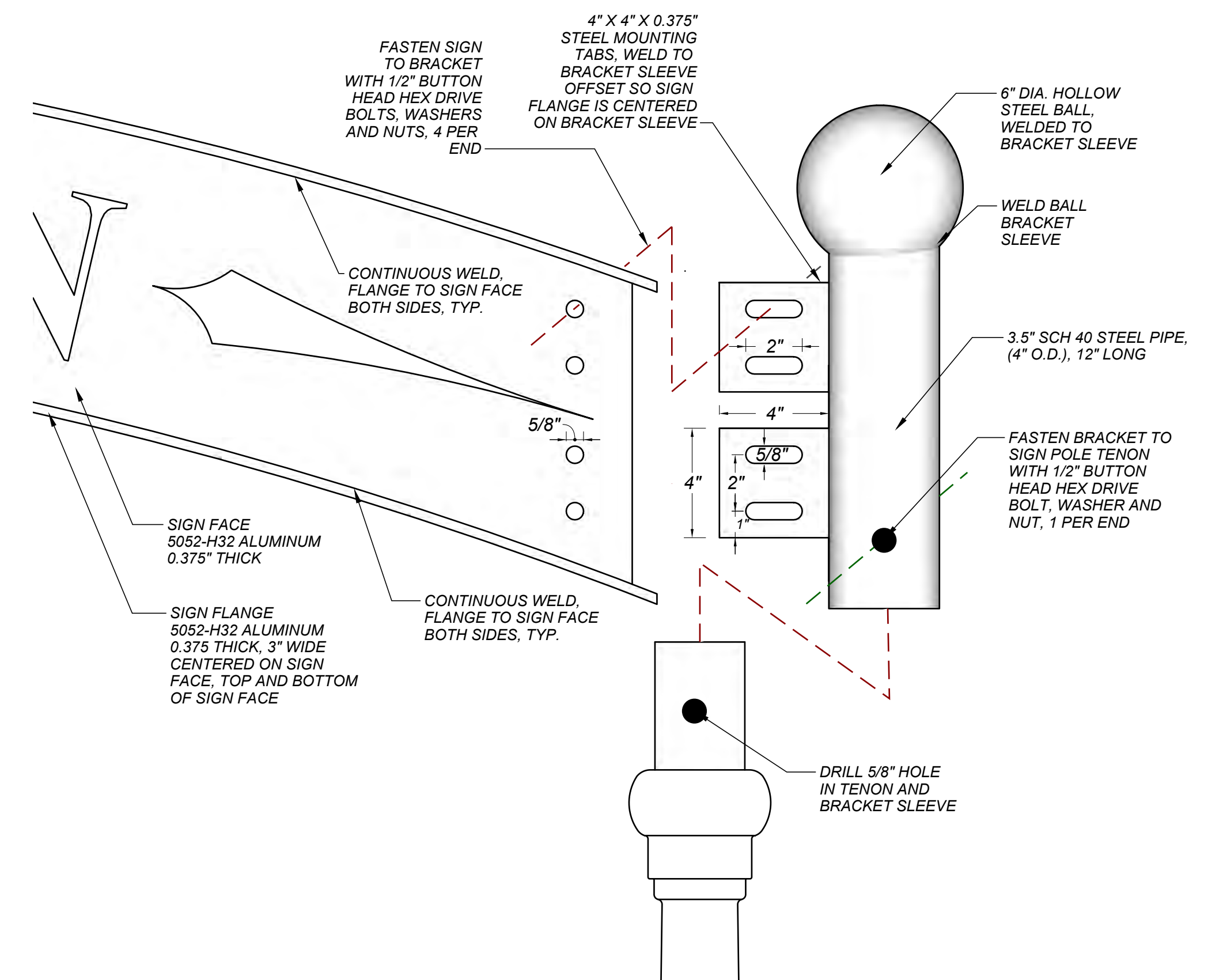
SIGN ASSEMBLY KEY
nts



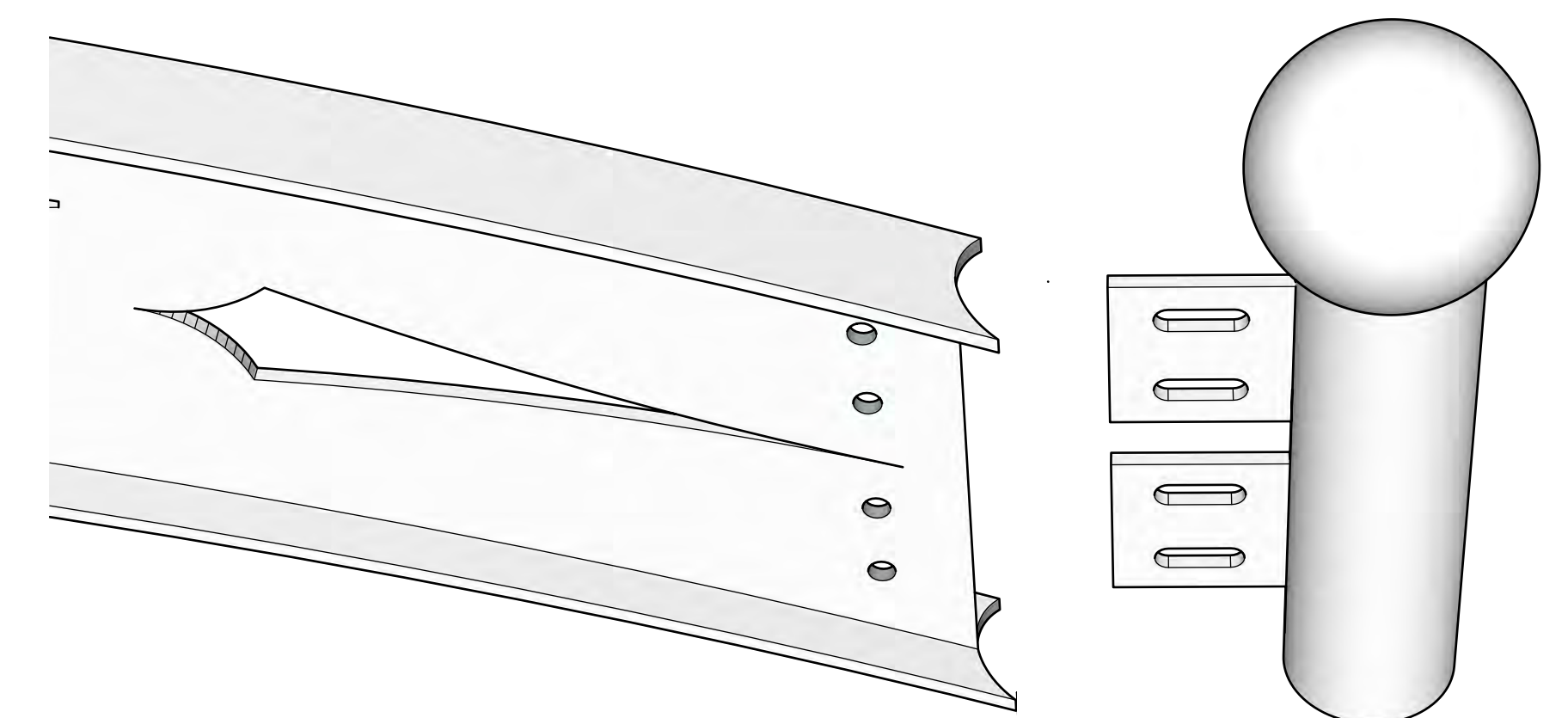
FOUNDATION DETAIL
nts



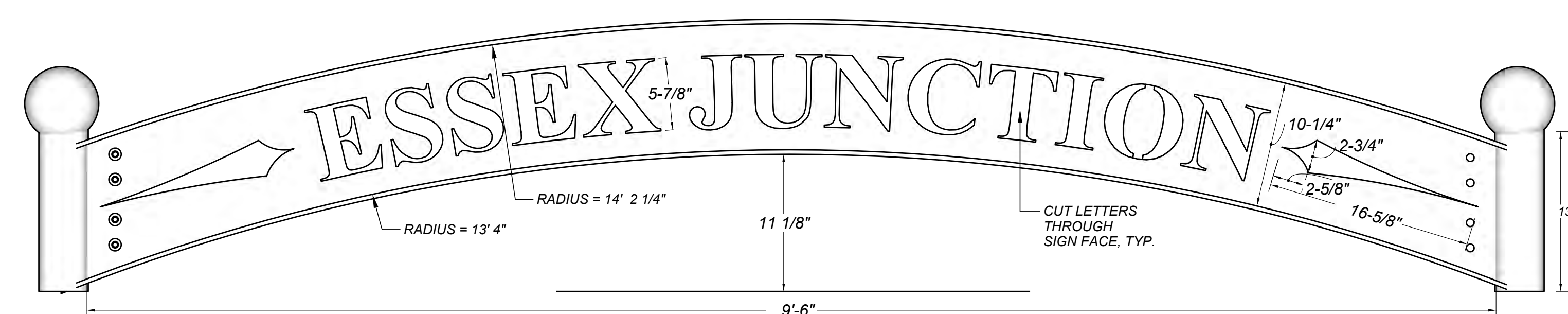
SIGN POLE DETAIL
nts



SIGN BRACKET DETAIL
nts



SIGN BRACKET PERSPECTIVE
nts



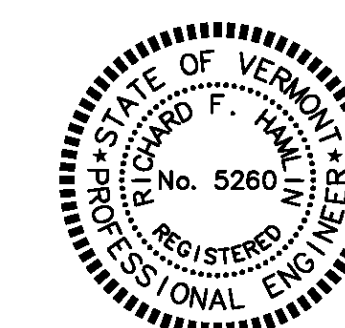
SIGN PANEL DETAIL
nts

NOTES:

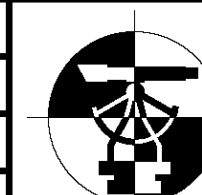
1. The City will provide the two sign poles, available at the Public Works Facility
2. The cast iron sign poles shall be sanded, bare metal primed, and two coats of black gloss enamel applied
3. The steel sign bracket shall be primed and two coats of gloss black enamel applied
4. The aluminum sign panel assembly shall be powder coated, gloss black
5. Confirm pole spacing and tenon diameter prior to sign assembly fabrication



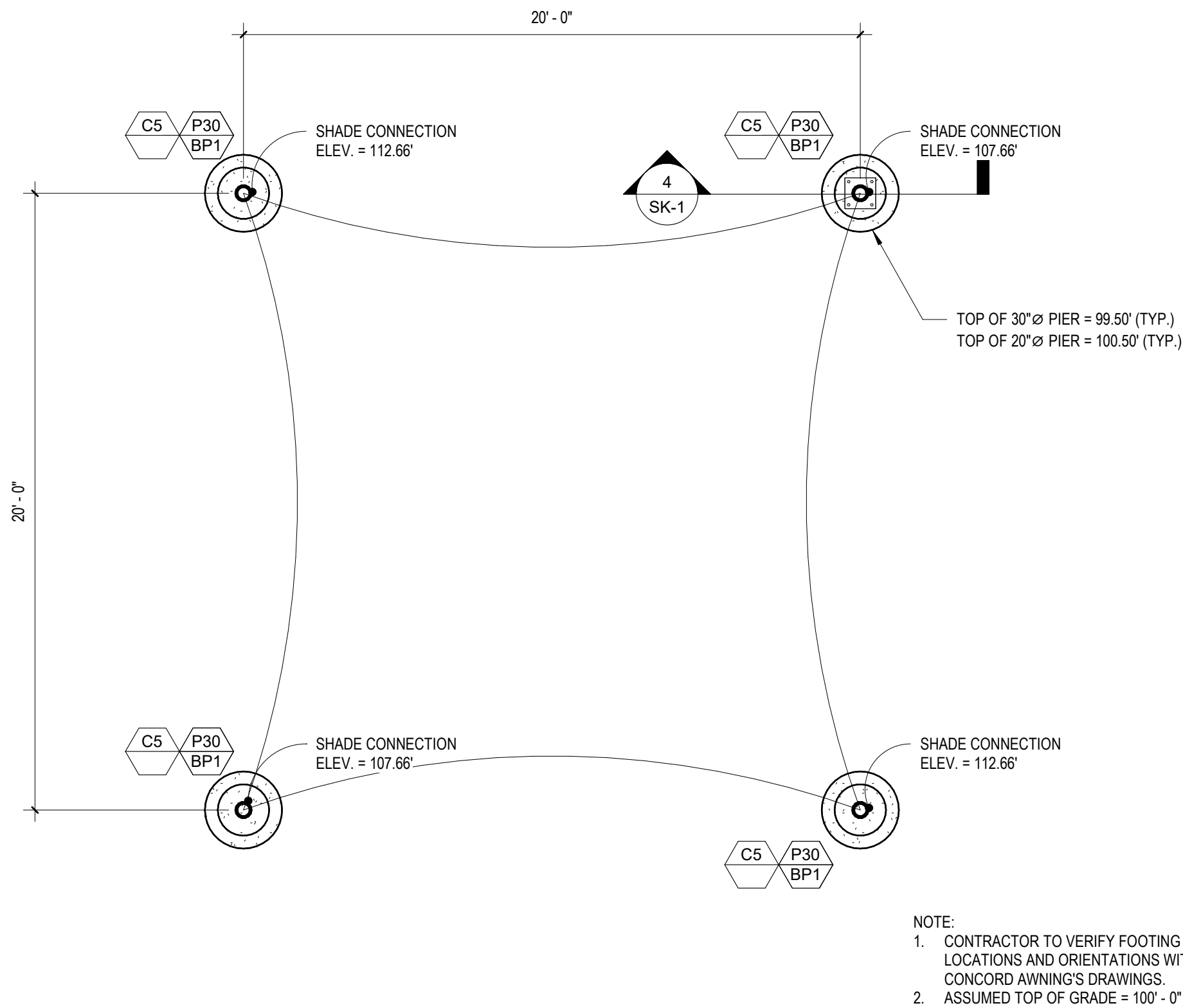
SIGN PERSPECTIVE
nts



DATE	REVISION	BY
CLIENT	VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION 2 LINCOLN STREET ESSEX JUNCTION, VT 05452	
PROJECT TITLE	MAIN STREET PARK	
DRAWING TITLE	DETAILS	
Survey	RFH	Scale SHOWN
Design	RFH	Job 22-815
Drawn	RFH	File
Checked	JKP	Drawing
Date	05/18/26	S-6



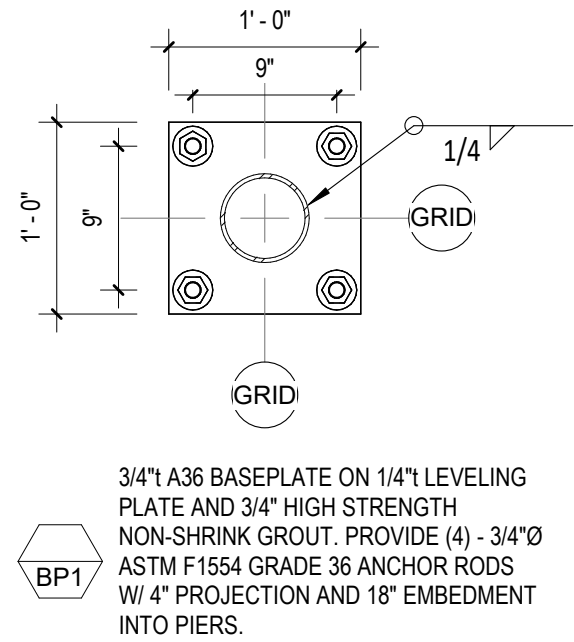
Donald L. Hamlin
Consulting
Engineers, Inc.
136 Pearl Street
Essex Junction, Vermont



NOTE:
1. CONTRACTOR TO VERIFY FOOTING LOCATIONS AND ORIENTATIONS WITH CONCORD AWNING'S DRAWINGS.
2. ASSUMED TOP OF GRADE = 100' - 0"

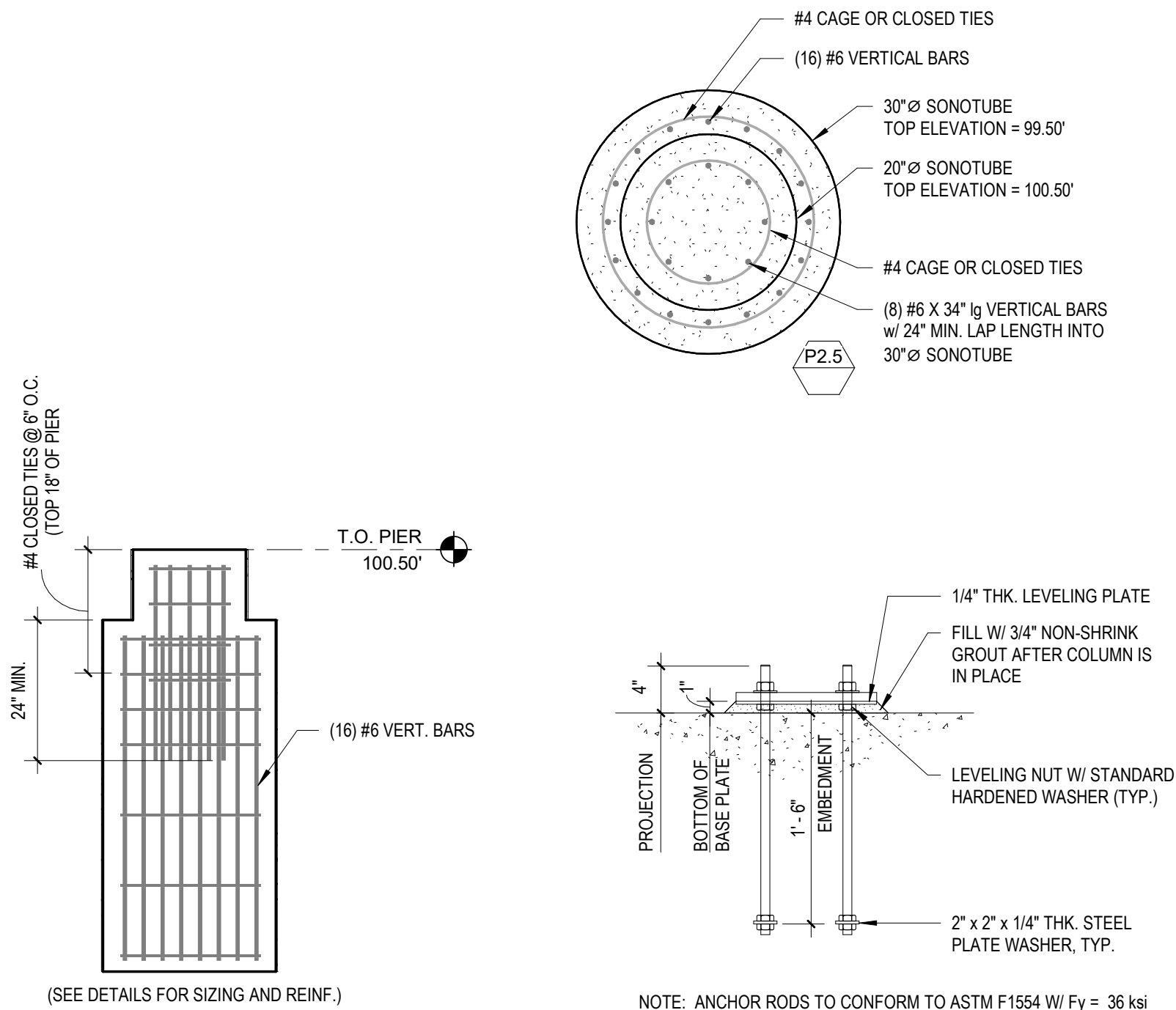
COLUMN SCHEDULE		
MARK	COLUMN TYPE	MAX. HEIGHT
C5	PipeSSTD	13'

PIER SCHEDULE	
MARK	COLUMN TYPE
P30	30"Ø



2 BASEPLATE
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"

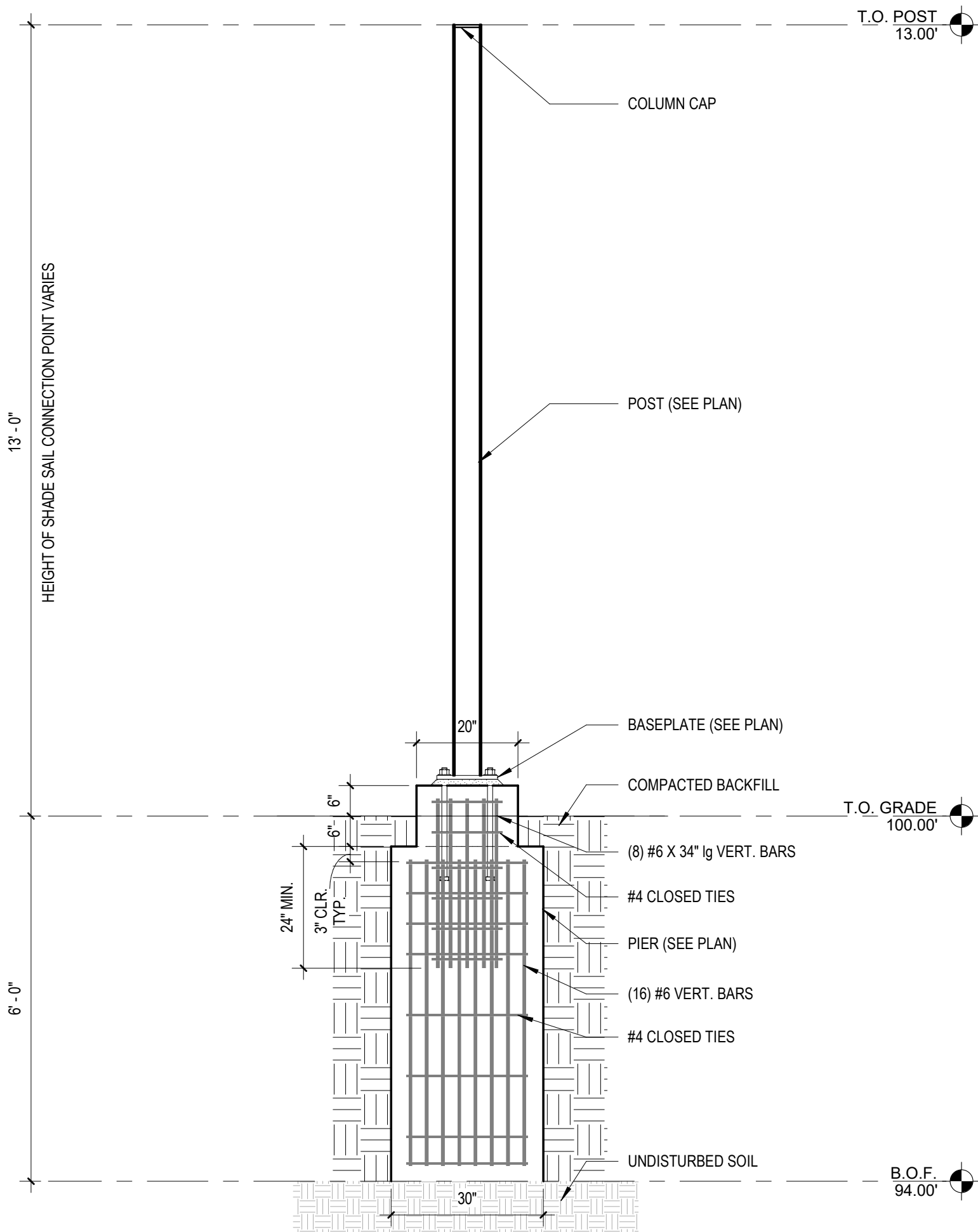
1 SHADE SAIL PLAN
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



TYP. PIER ELEVATION

GROUTED BASE PLATE REQUIREMENT

3 PIER TYPES
Scale: 3/4" = 1'-0"



4 TYP. POST & FTG SECTION
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

GENERAL NOTES:

- All material and workmanship shall conform to the requirements of the 2021 International Building Code.
- Do not scale from the drawings. If a required dimension is not provided, consult the engineer.
- If any of the work to be done as shown on the drawings does not correspond with the existing field conditions, contact the engineer prior to proceeding with the work in question.
- The contractor shall verify all dimensions, elevations and site conditions prior to the start of construction. If there are any discrepancies, consult the architect/engineer prior to proceeding with the work in question.
- Where a construction detail is not shown or noted, the detail shall be the same as for other similar work.
- The contractor shall determine the location of utility services in the area to be excavated, before beginning excavation.
- These drawings represent the finished structure and do not indicate the method of construction. The contractor is responsible for all temporary bracing, shoring and support necessary to achieve the finished structure. The contractor is responsible for determining and enforcing all construction load limits on the structure.
- All sections and details marked typical or not referred to a specific location shall be considered typical for all similar conditions.

REINFORCED CONCRETE NOTES:

- All concrete work shall be in compliance with the 2021 International Building Code, Chapter 19, "CONCRETE" ACI 301 "Specifications for Structural Concrete for Buildings" and ACI 318 "Building Code Requirements for Reinforced Concrete and Commentary" except as modified by these notes.
- Cement shall conform to ASTM C150, Type II.
- Ready-mix concrete shall be mixed and delivered in accordance with ASTM C94.
- All concrete shall have a minimum 28 day compressive strength shall be 3000 psi.
- The concrete shall be placed with a maximum 4' slump and shall be vibrated in a workman like manner.
- The concrete for the footings shall be air entrained concrete, containing 4% to 8% entrained air. The concrete for the floor slab shall be non-air entrained.
- Admixtures may be used with prior approval of the engineer. Admixtures shall comply with ASTM C494.
- The concrete shall be mixed, placed and cured without the use of calcium chloride. The placement of all concrete shall comply with the latest American Concrete Institute (ACI) codes, including ACI 308R-16 / ACI306.1-90 for Cold Weather Concreting and ACI 305R-10 / ACI 305.1-14 for Hot Weather Concreting.
- The concrete shall have attained at least fifty percent (50%) of its 28 day compressive strength prior to the removal of the forms.

REINFORCING STEEL:

- All reinforcing steel to be grade 60 and shall conform to the standards in ASTM A615. All reinforcing shall be bent cold.
- Minimum lap splices of reinforcing bars shall be as follows;
Concrete - Class B as defined in ACI 318.
- All reinforcing steel, welded wire fabric, anchor bolts, dowels and inserts shall be well secured in position with wire positioners before placing concrete and grout.
- Furnish #3 spacer ties at approximately 2'-6" on center in all footings to secure reinforcing in place.

FOUNDATION & SLAB NOTES:

- Foundations shall be carried to the elevations indicated to obtain a minimum allowable bearing capacity of 3000 pounds per square foot (psf).
- The finish excavation for the foundation shall be neat and true to line.
- Foundation excavations shall be kept free of loose material and standing water.
- If fill is required below the footings, it shall be structural fill. The material shall be well compacted to 95% of maximum dry density per ASTM 1557.
- All footings shall be placed on undisturbed earth or compacted backfill. All topsoil and any deleterious materials shall be removed before placing any concrete.
- No footings or foundations shall be placed in water or on frozen ground. The bottom of the footing shall be a minimum of 4'-0" below finish grade.

DESIGN CRITERIA:

DEAD LOAD: D = 2 PSF
ROOF LIVE LOAD: L_r = 0 PSF (NOT A WALKABLE SURFACE)
SNOW LOAD: S = 0 PSF (STRUCTURE IS DISSEMBLED DURING WINTER MONTHS)
WIND LOAD: gh = 16 PSF (V = 100 MPH, EXPOSURE "C", MONOSLOPE OPEN STRUCTURE)

NOTE: THIS DESIGN APPLIES TO BOTH SHADE SAILS TO BE INSTALLED AT THIS LOCATION.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

CONCORD AWNING
ESSEX JUNCTION PARK
ESSEX JUNCTION, VERMONT

PROJECT TEAM:



KEY PLAN:

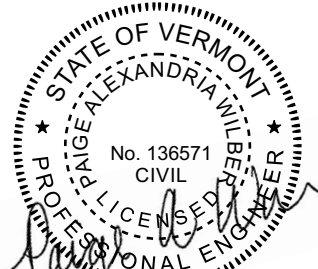
ISSUE:

FOR CONSTRUCTION
11/06/2025

SHEET INFORMATION:

PROJ. NO.: 4972-43
SCALE: As indicated
DES. BY: PAW
DRAWN BY: AAS
CHKD BY: PAW
ISSUE DATE: 11/06/2025

SEAL:



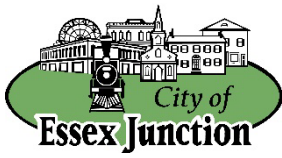
REVISIONS:

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE

SHEET TITLE:

SHADE SAIL POSTS & FOOTINGS

SK-1



**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Online & 75 Maple St.
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Wednesday, September 2, 2026
7:00 PM

This meeting will be in-person at Essex Junction Recreation and Parks located at 75 Maple Street and available remotely. To join the meeting remotely click below:

- **JOIN ONLINE:** [Join the meeting now](#)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS [7:00 PM]
2. ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA
3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD
4. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING
5. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DISCUSSION
6. RAC MEMBER FEEDBACK TIME
7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT UPDATES
 - Meet Me on Main
 - Pumpkin Carving Nights
 - Pumpkin Palooza
8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/UPDATE
9. DISCUSS ANY POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS
10. ADJOURN

Attachments:

- DRAFT Rec Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – June 3, 2026
- Comprehensive Plan
- Director's Report – September 2, 2026

Members of the public are encouraged to speak during the Public to Be Heard agenda item, or when recognized by the Chairperson during consideration of a specific agenda item. Regarding remote participants, if individuals interrupt, they will be muted; and if they interrupt a second time they will be removed. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings of the Recreation Advisory Committee, like all programs and activities of the City of Essex Junction, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Essex Junction Recreation and Parks office at 802-878-1375 TTY: 7-1-1 or (800) 253-0191.

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
SEPTEMBER 3, 2026
DRAFT**

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Elijah Massey, Chair; Diane Clemens, Vice-Chair; Elena Juodisius, Finn Hamilton (non-voting), Scott McCormick; Kirstie Paschall

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

ADMINISTRATION: Chris Yuen, Community Development Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Gail Boundy, Kevin Collins, Cora Delucca, Brett Grabowski, Theresa Gookin, Stephen Lemcke, Sue McCormick, Resa Mehren, Nick Meyer, Reed Nye, Mitchel Stern, Stephen, RMJ

1. CALL TO ORDER

E. Massey called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

None.

3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

G. Boundy said she recently installed a fence on her property and received a letter from the City stating that she is in violation of the Land Development Code (LDC). She feels that complying with the guidelines will prevent her from enjoying her privacy, as she would need to move the fence substantially further into her yard and make a portion of her yard unusable. She would like to request a waiver from the City to address this issue. C. Yuen said staff reviewed this case, noted that the PC cannot make immediate decisions on waivers and that he does not see a viable path forward within the LDC as written. He said there is no substantial proposed change to the LDC that would currently allow this to occur. The PC agreed to discuss these concerns after the Public Hearing.

4. MINUTES

a. August 11th, 2026

ELENA JUODISIUS made a motion, seconded by SCOTT MCCORMICK, to approve the minutes of August 11th, 2026. Motion passed 5-0.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. 2026 Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments

i. Overview Presentation on Proposed Amendments

C. Yuen presented the proposed 2026 Land Development Code amendments aimed at implementing the Connect the Junction Transit Oriented Development Master Plan adopted in December 2025. The most significant change is increasing the allowable building height limit to a maximum of nine stories, with an additional story for affordable housing, in specific areas of the City Center and Pearl Street Corridor. Much of this change is driven by a desire to accommodate the majority of the City's 2050 housing target within the City Center and Pearl Street corridor. C. Yuen provided an overview of form-based standards to regulate building form and public realm interactions. This will allow the Development Review Board to review projects against clearer and more defensible standards. Permitted and conditional uses are still

covered by the use chart and historic resources will remain protected. C. Yuen provided an overview of the street room ratio and intent to have human-scale development in Essex Junction. Properties which exceed the 1:1 street room ratio would not be permitted. C. Yuen presented renderings to demonstrate the impact that this would have on the pedestrian-level view from Pearl Street and from Park Street in Essex Junction. He reviewed the residential adjacency standards, which are intended to mitigate the impact of increased height on established, lower-density neighborhoods. C. Yuen discussed changes to façade composition, articulation and materials standards. He described how structured parking frontage can be used to conceal the location of parking in mixed-use buildings. A new performance-based landscaping system is proposed to replace the previous cost-based approach. C. Yuen detailed the extensive online and in-person public outreach associated with the LDC update, noting that this project was also featured by the local news media and Reddit. Additional technical adjustments are included in the LDC, as well as changes to meet statutory requirements.

ii. Public Hearing on LDC Amendments

E. Massey requested public input and asked that commenters keep their input under three minutes.

M. Stern described high-rise buildings as a threat to the Vermont way of life. He said changes to the height standards could result in Essex Junction having some of the tallest buildings in Vermont. He questioned the results of the survey stating that most residents are amenable to buildings this high. Taller buildings block sunlight and will result in the need for significantly more infrastructure. The fire department is not equipped to protect buildings of this size. He described Essex Junction as a community of single-family homes and said more starter homes are needed in the community. The infrastructure needs from the construction of taller buildings will result in higher taxes. M. Stern said housing within 500ft to 1,000ft from highways is not recommended, and housing less than 500ft from highways is a health hazard. The mitigation for buildings in these locations is keeping windows always closed and utilizing air conditioning filters, which is not environmentally sustainable. He cited several studies which have found unhealthy air quality along highways. M. Stern described housing within 1,000 feet of a major highway, such as Route 15 or Route 2a as being a health risk and a “death threat.” C. Delucca emphasized the need for affordable housing rather than luxury apartments. She said she is a public-school teacher and pays more than 50% of her income in rent. Raising the height limit does not mean that housing will be more affordable. She believes that affordable housing should need to be required prior to building the 10th story. She asked how the PC is addressing affordability and helping seniors and young families in obtaining affordable housing.

N. Meyer, Chair of the Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), asked for additional details on what the changes to the landscaping standards would involve. He also stated that ten stories is too high for buildings in Essex Junction. He discussed the need for street trees in new developments. N. Meyer asked for clarification on setback standards in specific areas of the City Center and said such variability may reduce the pedestrian-friendliness and ability to plant street trees. He believes the mandate to build housing should be done in a way that protects the livability of Essex Junction. S. Lemcke said he lives in a neighborhood adjacent to Pearl Street. He said he understands the pressure to carry tax revenue and develop new housing but said he believes that nine or ten stories is too high on Pearl Street. He would like to see a more livable scale building height. He does not believe such a high concentration of housing is healthy in a community. He encouraged the PC to consider livability, not just tax revenue. He suggested 5-6 stories as a livable height for the Pearl Street corridor. R. Mehren concurred with S. Lemcke that

livability needs to be considered along with housing demands. She also said it is important to ensure that all developers meet the standards of the LDC, even if they already have a building constructed. She suggested setting fines and ramifications for not meeting the LDC. M. Stern asked what the repercussions would be for not meeting the housing targets. C. Yuen said the housing targets do not come with an enforcement mechanism; however, municipalities need to prove that they are working towards these goals.

iii. Discussion and Consideration of LDC Amendments

D. Clemens said the Fire Department was consulted when developing LDC standards and can serve high-rises with their current apparatus. S. McCormick thanked all members of the public for their comments. He said he would like to see the PC be more proactive with what they would like to see in specific areas and buildings in downtown core. He would also like to see methods of integrating public feedback throughout the process. E. Juodisius said the PC would like to make the development process as understandable as possible, which is why the landscaping regulations were changed. Regarding affordability, the PC has discussed incentives and further regulations. S. McCormick said Essex Junction is working to update the Comprehensive Plan and is looking into alternative methods of transportation. Denser housing may result in less room for parking, and thus additional options need to be investigated. K. Paschall said, just because ten story buildings are allowed, does not mean that they will be built. This allows for making space for possibilities for the future.

D. Clemens said the street room standards may make it so that ten stories would not be allowed in many areas. She said it would be helpful to hear from developers about the practicalities of the LDC. She encouraged members of the public to continue communicating with the PC and the City Council regarding what is important to them about their community. E. Massey said all input provided at this meeting has been delivered with care and knowledge. He said the PC is aware that these changes are not small nor simple and have consequences. As Vermonters, he said issues of housing are not something that can be handled in isolation or that we can push off on other communities or groups. The City is engaged in other efforts to increase different types of housing other than multi-family developments along Pearl Street and the City Center. E. Massey said that what is built is dependent on market drivers and the intent of developers. D. Clemens said she would like to see typos and other formatting issues resolved with the LDC draft and ensure that all requested changes are incorporated.

E. Massey noted that the setback requirements for fences were brought up during public comment. C. Yuen said that while they may discuss this issue, an actual change to the LDC amendments would require re-warning a hearing. Per the regulations, corner lots are considered to have two front and two side yards for setback purposes. Combined with the prohibition of full-height non-transparent fences in the front yard setback, this means that corner lots face more restrictive fence standards than non-corner lots. He said the property at 1 Mansfield Road had a privacy fence installed and the City has had complaints from drivers about blocking their view. The fence is outside of the visibility triangle; however, he believes it does have an impact on visibility. He said he does not know the full history of why these regulations were put in place. He noted that trees and hedges are allowed in front setbacks so long as they do not block the visibility triangle, while full-height non-transparent fences are prohibited. He said this distinction suggests an urban design rationale behind the regulations. The intent appears to be improving the pedestrian connection with the surrounding environment and avoiding long, featureless opaque surfaces along pedestrian routes, similar to the form-based code prohibitions on blank walls. E. Massey noted that he considers the recently installed fence is attractive, however a different property owner could put something

ESSEX JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION

9/3/26

PAGE 4

up with a less neighborly feel. S. McCormick discussed how large fences can impact the community feel of a neighborhood but said he can see the need for it in a more heavily traveled area.

E. Massey asked if there is a precedent for offering a solution for properties which are facing a highly traveled road. C. Yuen described how some communities do not have this similar prohibitions against full-height fences and how that impacts the pedestrian experience. E. Juodisius said corner lots can have high visibility, and she understands the conflict between the need for privacy and maintaining an attractive public realm. G. Boundy discussed privacy concerns at her property. E. Massey recommended that the PC move forward with the LDC draft as presented, with the clarification cross-references between the Fence regulations and the corner lot set-back regulations already included in the draft. He suggests adding this subject to the PC's list of possible adjustments for further consideration.

M. Stern asked how the height limits had been established and asked if they could be changed by the PC. E. Massey said it was originally suggested by a consultant and approved by the City Council. E. Massey asked if PC members would like to open back up discussion on height limits based on tonight's discussion. S. McCormick said he understands these concerns, but that Essex Junction will be unable to meet the housing targets if they do not increase the allowable building heights. He said not meeting the targets may prevent Essex Junction from obtaining state or federal grants in the future.

DIANE CLEMENS made a motion, seconded by SCOTT MCCORMICK, to close the public hearing on the Land Development Code amendments. Motion passed 5-0.

SCOTT MCCORMICK made a motion, seconded by ELENA JUOSIDIUS, that the Planning Commission approve the revised § 4441(c) Report and submit it, together with the proposed 2026 Land Development Code amendments, to the City Council for consideration. Motion passed 5-0.

6. MEMBERS UPDATES

D. Clemens suggested that all members listen to a new piece by Carly Berlin on Vermont Public Radio regarding Vermonters who are "stuck" in larger homes because there are no options for downsizing. S. McCormick thanked C. Yuen for his hard work on the LDC project.

7. STAFF UPDATES

C. Yuen said staff continue work on the Comprehensive Plan, and there will be an additional PC meeting on September 21, 2026 to discuss this.

8. ADJOURNMENT

DIANE CLEMENS made a motion, seconded by ELENA JUOSIDIUS, to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Darby Mayville

City of Essex Junction

Bike Walk Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2026 • 7:00 PM
Online & 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452

www.essexjunction.org • P: 802-878-6944 x 1625
E: mgiguere@essexjunction.org

1. MEMBERS PRESENT:

John O'Brien, Lauren Philbrook, David Achee, Robert Frederick, Jessie Huntley, Daniel Liguori, Ian VanKirk

2. OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Giguere, Ashley Snellenberger, Jack Evans

3. CALL TO ORDER

John called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

4. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Michael added a Staff Update on the Comprehensive Plan.

5. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

No public comment was provided.

6. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

a. August 13th, 2026

- i. David made a motion, seconded by Daniel, to approve the August 13th, 2026 minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Open Meeting Law and Ethics Policy Training

Ashley presented an overview of Open Meeting Law. Information provided included background on the Community Vision and Strategic Action Plan, departmental workplans, the categories of various City committees, and basic expectations for committee members and staff. State law requirements were covered, including public notice for meetings, allowing for public participation, the definition of quorum, taking and posting minutes, preparing agendas, subcommittee work, and an overview of the Open Meeting Law complaint process.

Michael asked for clarification on what types of staff updates can be added after an agenda has been published. Ashley clarified that staff updates should not involve any committee work or detailed discussion. David asked to what extent committee members are permitted to ask follow up questions on a staff update, and Ashley clarified that wider committee-level discussion of the topic or decision-making should be avoided until the topic can be posted in a public agenda.

Ashley provided a second presentation on Code of Ethics, specifying that this is a state law requiring a municipal code of ethics. This requires a complaint process, an appointed liaison, and training provided for staff and committees. Ashley covered the definition of conflict of interest and how to recuse oneself from a conflict of interest. Jessie asked for clarification on how to determine whether a committee action leads to an increased personal benefit, and Ashley provided reassurance that the example of installing a new sidewalk would not disproportionately benefit an individual since it's publicly accessible infrastructure. Ashley provided further guidance, explaining recusal, disclosure, and keeping confidential information safe. She provided more examples of prohibited actions under the ethics policy, such as encouraging others to act unethically or accepting gifts that are intended to influence behavior. She mentioned that Colleen Dwyer, Human Resources Director, is the City's liaison for processing ethics complaints. A complaint form is available on the City's website.

b. Review of Bicycle Friendly Community Feedback

The group reviewed the scorecard and feedback provided by the League of American Bicyclists in response to the City's application as a bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community. The report card provided feedback on how the City could improve the safety and accessibility of cycling.

Lauren mentioned that Pearl Street West's shared-use path should be a huge improvement as a low stress route. Education was a category identified as a key area to improve in, and Michael mentioned that building on the library pavilion bicycle repair event hosted in 2025 provided some learning lessons for outreach on events. He also mentioned a desire to improve outreach to target demographics. Lauren mentioned that Hiawatha Elementary had bicycle education as a part of their curriculum last year and could be tied into the next BFC application.

Daniel was interested in the feedback to encourage to work with Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) more and encourage them to get involved in the Bicycle Friendly programs. Lauren mentioned that BWAC should prepare event programming for Celebrate National Bike Month in May, and the committee discussed the idea of handing out food for cyclists. John mentioned that having this scorecard as a roadmap will be helpful for BWAC in the coming years.

Michael noted that the League recommended performing more bicycle and pedestrian counts to better understand movement patterns around and through the City. Lauren asked if any New England towns have gold status, noting that winter can be a deterrent for some cyclists. Michael mentioned that Fort Collins, CO is a platinum status BFC, and Jack mentioned that the selection criteria is adjusted depending on climate. David mentioned that bikeshare programs have had

difficulties in the region and questioned whether pursuing more League Cycling Instructors was useful at this time. Michael mentioned wanting to work on the feedback provided of performing a connectivity analysis and improved mapping evaluation.

John asked if updating the 2014 Bike and Pedestrian Plan would be a BWAC responsibility. Michael confirmed that the committee would be key in that process, and that a consultant would likely need to be brought on board to help with this process, but agreed to discuss this idea further with City staff.

The group agreed to discuss Bike to Work programming in December.

c. Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes Rotation

David made a motion, seconded by Lauren, to approve the drafted meeting minutes rotation as presented. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

8. MEMBER UPDATES

John and David presented their work on organizing two bike bus routes to Hiawatha Elementary with help from Local Motion. They connected with Daniel, who volunteered to help pilot one of the routes. Lauren asked if they were planning on running the route all winter, which John confirmed, and David offered the possibility of walking if cycling was not possible due to weather.

9. STAFF UPDATES

a. Park Street Complete Streets

Michael mentioned that the City accepted a bid to restripe Park Street to include wide, buffered bicycle lanes and remove all on-street parking in the project area, other than the diagonal spaces in front of 27 Park Street, which will remain. Daniel asked if the City had determined whether BWAC's annual funds will be used for this project's budget, which Michael agreed to look into and report back.

b. Grove Street Traffic Calming Community Input Meeting

i. Thu 10/8 during BWAC

Michael mentioned that BWAC will host a Community Input Meeting to discuss potential traffic calming improvements on Grove Street during their October 8th meeting. The City will be mailing property owners on Grove Street and placing yard signs along the roadway in an effort to increase public participation. David asked if a traffic calming treatment has been chosen for Grove Street, which Michael clarified has not been finalized, as a community input meeting is a prerequisite step. Lauren asked if the City planned on contacting residents on North Street,

noting that changes made to Grove Street may have impacts on how North Street is used.

Michael mentioned that all members of the public are encouraged to attend these meetings, but would discuss the idea of targeted outreach to North Street residents among City staff.

- c. Meet Me on Main
 - i. Sat 9/19, 9/26, and 10/3

Michael promoted Meet Me on Main, a series of events put on by Essex Junction Recreation and Parks. For three Saturdays in a row, a short portion of Main Street near Five Corners will be closed to vehicular traffic to provide space for food, vendors, music, movies, and other activities.

- d. Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Chapter

Michael noted that CCRPC and staff have been working on required updates to Essex Junction's Comprehensive Plan, the primary long-term planning document that guides policy, development, and growth in the City. BWAC will be presented with the drafted update to the Transportation chapter in November. Michael will plan to share the Transportation chapter from the 2019 Comprehensive Plan in BWAC's October meeting packet to prepare for this review.

- e. Pearl Street West

David asked if there were any updates on Pearl Street West. Michael mentioned that this is still going through design work internally with no update on bidding or construction scheduling.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Ian made a motion, seconded by David, to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 pm. Motion passed (7-0).

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD of CIVIL AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2026**

BCA MEMBERS PRESENT: Dylan Giambatista (Chair), Jordan Verasamy (Vice-Chair) (remote), Kelly Adams (remote), Bethany Clark (remote), Diane Clemens, Cheri Davis (remote), Susan McNamara-Hill (Clerk), Gibson Smith, Amber Thibeault (remote), Carmon Verasamy, Elisa Ziglar
STAFF PRESENT: Regina Mahony (City Manager), Kristin Shamis (City Attorney)
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: None

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Giambatista called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/ CHANGES

Mr. Giambatista suggested that Item 6a, Appoint Election Worker(s) be discussed after Items 6b, BCA Rules of Procedure (for tax assessment appeals) and 6c, Review Tax Assessment Appeals Procedure, Process and Updates. All agreed.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

ELISA ZIGLAR made a motion, seconded by CARMON VERASAMY, to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion passed 10-1 with GIBSON SMITH not yet in attendance.

4. APPROVE MINUTES of PREVIOUS MEETING

a. July 6, 2026

DIANE CLEMENS made a motion, seconded by ELISA ZIGLAR, to approve the minutes of July 6, 2026, as amended.

Amendments:

-The adjournment time will be changed to 7:19 PM.

5. PUBLIC to be HEARD

a. Comments from Public

None.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. BCA Rules of Procedure (for tax assessment appeals)

Mr. Giambatista said nine total appeals have been submitted to date. He wishes to establish a timeline for the BCA hearing appeals. Ms. Mahony noted that a recent Supreme Court decision has allowed for additional time for the BCA to make decisions. Less appeals have been submitted than expected, which may have been due to lower-than-expected tax bills despite higher assessments. The BCA must visit all property in person if the owner is requesting an appeal.

Mr. Giambatista presented the draft Rules of Procedure, using the Vermont League of Cities and Towns as a model. He highlighted the rules of quorum, role of the assessor and recess procedures. Ms. Shamis discussed evidence which is accepted by the BCA, noting that irrelevant or unreliable evidence may be excluded. The BCA is responsible for giving evidence the weight it deserves. Public comment is not required during hearings. Ms. Clemens clarified that no new testimony can be provided on the site visit. Decisions will be made during deliberative session. Ms. Shamis said the Assessor's assessment is assumed to be correct, and the burden of persuasion is on the property owner. Once a meeting is closed,

it is expected that no additional evidence will be submitted. A decision must be issued 15 days after the hearing is closed. Should the property owner not allow the BCA to enter their property the appeal will automatically be withdrawn. Ms. Shamis said the BCA can and should request that property owners have their dogs contained for the visit. The BCA may request access to any rooms at the property.

At the hearing, appellants can bring forth experts to present on their behalf. Ms. Thibault suggested that all appellants receive the same amount of time to present, all agreed. This time was set as being not more than 30 minutes. All appellants will receive specific time slots to present. Should an appellant not attend the hearing, evidence can be submitted in advance. Ms. Shamis will check to determine if the site visit notes are subject to public record or not. Photographs should not be taken on site visits. Site visits and deliberation are not subject to public meeting law. Ms. Shamis detailed potential appeal opportunities for property owners who disagree with the decision of the BCA.

The Rules of Procedure was distributed to all members of the BCA. Mr. Giambatista discussed changes which would be incorporated into the document, based on feedback from this evening. Ms. Shamis suggested limiting participation in deliberative sessions to those who attended the hearing and site visit, and asked that if this is not possible participating BCA members should watch the meeting recording.

KELLY ADAMS made a motion, seconded by BETHANY CLARK, to approve the rules of procedure for property tax assessment appeal hearings with the deletion of the footer reference and the four instances of lister changed to assessor or assessors as needed. Motion passed 11-0.

Mr. Giambatista suggested two hearing dates of September 28th at 6 PM and September 30th at 6 PM. A regular BCA meeting is also scheduled for October 5th. Everyone in attendance at the hearing does not need to attend the site visit, however they should plan to attend the deliberative session. Information on the hearings will be e-mailed and mailed to appellants.

ELISA ZIGLAR made an amendment to adopt the schedule as presented and instruct the Clerk's office to facilitate scheduling. No second, amendment failed.

DYLAN GIAMBATISTA made an amendment to adopt the schedule as presented and to instruct the Clerk to include appellants 1-5 as Group 1, and appellants 6-9 as Group 2. No second, amendment failed.

Ms. Ziglar suggested the commercial property be included with Group 2, as it is smaller.

DYLAN GIAMBATISTA made a motion, seconded by KELLY ADAMS, to amend the motion to request approval of the proposed timeline for tax assessment appeals and the meeting schedule, with discretion given to the clerk for scheduling the appellants. Motion passed 11-0.

DYLAN GIAMBATISTA made a motion, seconded by BETHANY CLARK, to approve the amended motion. Motion passed 11-0.

b. Review Tax Assessment Appeals Procedure, Process and Updates

Discussed with previous business item.

c. Appoint Election worker(s)

Mr. Giambatista read the list of potential election officials, noting that James Redfield and Dennis & Margaret Thibault are interested in serving but not listed on the memo. There is no formal application

process beyond e-mailing Ms. McNamara-Hill with interest. Mr. Giambatista said he would like to see some kind of staff or board-level vetting for potential election workers. He suggested requesting that the Clerk speak further with those who are not in the memo to provide more information about themselves prior to being appointed.

KELY ADAMS made a motion, seconded by ELISA ZIGLAR, to add the following names to the list of assistant election officials as set out in the memo. Motion passed 11-0.

Ms. McNamara-Hill will speak with other clerks in the area to determine if they have a process in place for vetting election workers.

Mr. Giambatista requested feedback on the primary election. Ms. McNamara-Hill said she would like to see each book manned by pairs to ensure checks and balances in the future. Confusion over multiple binders and the co-location of districts was discussed. Mr. Giambatista suggested that elections process improvements be discussed further at the next meeting. He suggested anyone who would like to offer feedback or ideas to send them forward.

Ms. McNamara noted that any tax payments put in the drop-box or made online after 4:30 PM on the 15th will be considered late. This change was voted upon last year.

7. ADJOURNMENT

KELLY ADAMS made a motion, seconded by ELISA ZIGLAR, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 11-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Darby Mayville
Recording Secretary

Tree Farm Management Group - Monthly Meeting

Date: Monday 9/14/26 at 6:00 PM

**Location: Essex Police Department's Conference Room
145 Maple St., Essex Junction, VT 05452**

In attendance: Aaron Stewart, Giles Willey (late 645), Maria Godleski, James Goudie, Debbie Knakal, Paul Benoit, Wendee Pringle (late 615) Julie Shorter and Bill Wagner, Mike Nick

Absent - Garry Scott, Ally Vile, Harlan Smith

AGENDA

Call to Order: 603 PM

Agenda Additions/Changes: 2027 Tournament Scheduling, Last Reservation Date, Vets Cup Debrief, Field Condition/Closure Update, Lost and Found Location add to website, vehicles parked at Tree FF, New Vendor

1. Public to be heard - none present

2. BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. **Approval of the August Meeting Minutes** [TFMG Meeting Minutes, August Approved 9.14.26.docx.pdf](#) Aaron made a motion, which was seconded by James, that the minutes be approved. All were in favor.
- b. **Field Scheduling and Reservation Updates (Debbie)** - Frisbee received kudos on their conduct from a TF neighbor. The cross country middle school meet will be on 10/25. Nothing else is scheduled that day. No additional services needed. Debbie to send addendums to the reservation packet to Maria for incorporation into the 2027 reservation packet and rules. Maria will also review 2026 minutes for other references to improving clarity in these documents.
- c. **2027 Tournament Scheduling (Debbie)** - While hourly reservations are first come first serve, long standing tournaments will have right of first refusal.
- d. **Water Shut Off/Last Reservation/Facility Close Date (Debbie)** - Water will be shut off and the lines cleared on 10/23. The current last reservation was 11/1, but after discussion we can accommodate through 11/8. The renter will be informed about lining limitations. The facility close activity (moving goals, picking up trash, determining off season or early spring projects) will occur on 11/8 at 10 AM.

3. Financial Review (Giles) - [TF Financials September 2026](#)

- a. **Financial updates** - We have spent a little more than half of the money we approved for field repairs. We have repaired 4, 6, 7, 10 & 13 which went back on-line yesterday, 9/13/26. We will be working on 9 next and keep 3 open. We will do 8 and 12 in the spring, but should reassess as the fall goes on. We can do ACH. A renter would just need to arrange this with Giles. Nordic may do this. Payment of the lining crew has been going smoothly over the last couple of weeks.
- b. **Vets Cup Debrief (James)** - Mike and James attended this meeting with Bruce from the Vets Cup along with Jeff from Hello Burlington. While there were condition issues with the fields, the experience overall was seen as positive for those participating, organizing and the Burlington area. They are strongly considering returning. Though traveling participants prefer a new location each year, local interest and participation would likely increase. If they did return, it would be at the 2027 rate. They would like to be reimbursed for topsoil they purchased in hopes of remediating some goal mouth issues. Aaron motioned we reimburse them as these issues were noted in our facility walk through. Giles seconded the motion. All were in favor. Final amount \$533.
- c. **Donations via Website (Maria)** - More discussion to be had but the website would support this. Bill suggested a free platform called Zeffy.

4. Other -

- a. **Calendar (Ally)** - Events for this month's report were incorporated last month.
- b. **Report outs on completed/in progress Facility Walk Through Items (All)** - Signage for the main entrance is on site in the barn and will be installed in the near future. Julie will send an updated cross country trail map to Mike to update the website. The City has mowed along the pedestrian path and will look for signage solutions for the problematic drop off location by the cemetery/street crossing.

5. Additions to the Agenda -

Lost and Found on Website (Maria) - The most frequent use for the contact form from the website seems to be people with missing items. Mike to add information above the contact form(s) informing folks where the lost and found bin is located at the TF.

Vehicles Parked at TF (Maria) - If vehicles are left unattended at closing time, they will be locked in the facility.

New Vendor Cycle Coffee (all) - Was set up by the barn this past weekend and using the outlet. Reports a successful first day. The other vendor is set up by the picnic area.

6. Executive Session - none occurred

- 7. Next Meeting & Adjournment** - At 721 PM Aaron motioned for the meeting to adjourn, Maria seconded this motion. All were in favor.
Next meeting Monday 10/5/26 at 6 PM at the Town Office's Conference Room.

**POLICE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
(DRAFT)**

**POLICE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2026**

POLICE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD: Gwendolyn Evans, Chair; Jenny Parker, Vice Chair; Nancy Bean, Lisa Helme, Dawn Hill-Fleury, Kolby LaMarche

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Michelle Hodgson, Administrative Assistant; Ron Hoague, Chief; Michael Chistolini, Lieutenant

OTHERS PRESENT: None

1. CALL TO ORDER

GWENDOLYN EVANS called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

JENNY PARKER made a motion to approve the Agenda. Motion passed.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

None.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

a. JENNY PARKER made a motion to approve the minutes for the July 21, 2026, meeting. Motion passed.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. **Welcome new members** – The meeting began with introductions and backgrounds from new board members Kolby LaMarche from the city and Dawn Hill-Fleury from the town. Existing members shared their backgrounds.
- b. **Lt Michael Chistolini Introduction** – The new Patrol Lieutenant introduced himself and discussed his background. Discussed running the Citizen's Academy and the importance of bridging the gap between the community and the police department.
- c. **EPD Update** – Chief Hoague provided an update on the Champlain Valley Fair noting a decrease in incidents this year and in the past, so were able to decrease the amount of personnel working. The fair goers have stated very appreciative of the officers there. Also clarified that the officers working the fair are compensated by the fair, not through tax funding. We were unable to have a recruitment table this year, hopefully next year. Regarding staff – the department has lost two officers over the summer, currently have one officer in the academy graduating in November and three candidates going through

the hiring process. Two officers that graduated the academy in May have graduated FTO and are on their own. Announced Stephen Gragg was promoted to Sergeant to fill one of the two open positions with the second position remaining unfilled to maintain the patrol division. We are currently at 24 out of 31 positions and have not been fully staffed since 2014-2015.

Traffic enforcement has increased in recent months. Stephen Gragg was the previous Traffic Safety Officer, but continues to support traffic enforcement efforts, hoping to fill the position by the end of the year. Also clarified that traffic calming measures such as speed bumps require a long, formal process and the City and Town have recently established traffic calming policies.

d. **Debrief of National Night Out/PCAB attended events since last meeting –**

GWENDOLYN EVANS added an adjustment in the Agenda to add PCAB attendance at the Essex Community Fall Festival this Saturday. Lisa will be attending and will set up photo booth and drop off candy/supplies at the PD.

Discussion of National Night Out was attended by Lisa, Nancy and Jenny. It was very fun, well organized, easy to navigate and we had a positive community response.

Attendance was up, probably close to 700. Need a tent for next year. The Coming Together Summit workshop was attended by Dan and Jenny, had some good conversations.

e. **PCAB outward facing image goals** – Jenny expressed concerns about representation and shouldn't be representing the police department. PCAB should be safe and accessible to all members of the community, not advertising as an extension of the police department. Members discussed that it might depend on the event attending for what props/visuals are being utilized and the board should decide as a committee what is utilized at each event. Members expressed a need to have more guidelines for starting as a member of the board.

f. **Annual Selectboard Check In – Chair scheduled for October 5** – Gwendolyn Evans will be participating by Zoom to go over the PCAB work plan.

7. READING FILE

None

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. **An executive session was held to discuss board dynamics**

A motion was made to exit Executive Session. Motion passed at 7:15pm.

9. ADJOURN

JENNY PARKER made a motion, seconded and approved for the board to adjourn. Motion passed at 7:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Hodgson
Administrative Assistant

Brownell Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Kolvoord Community Room
6 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT
Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Attendees:

Trustees: Karen Hergesheimer, Dottie Bergendahl, Venessa Luck, Alex Carmical, Christine Packard, Jessica Dow, Shelia Porter, and Kory Riemensperger

Teen Trustees: Rhiannon Adams, Piper Willis

Staff: Wendy Hysko, River West

Public: Jeanne Grant

Meeting Called to order by Karen at 7:00pm

1. Agenda Changes/Deletions: None
2. Public To Be Heard: Jeanne Grant, former trustee, came to say hi and observe the meeting.
3. Announcements: Karen welcomes the new teen trustee, Piper Willis. Piper has been a Brownell volunteer for a year. All welcomed Piper and introduced themselves. Dottie Announced that she has submitted her resignation and that this would be her last meeting. She will be moving to New York to be closer to her children. Dottie acknowledged that it has been an honor and a pleasure to serve Brownell Library. All clapped for Dottie.
4. Minutes of August 18th, 2026: Shelia moved that we accept minutes as written. Venessa Seconded. All in favor.
5. Financial Report: Venessa gave the financial report. The trustee account has \$4982.09. Venessa proposed putting \$2500 into a CD. Currently, the bank has a CD offer for 8 months at 4%. Dottie mentioned that the Federal government was talking about raising interest rates. It was decided to table this decision until the next meeting to see what the interest rates are then. It was noted in the operational budget that Technical Services was up. Wendy explained there was a wifi issue that required purchasing new equipment. In the buildings budget Venessa took note of the cleaning cost being a bit high. Venessa also gave an update on the budget working group that had met prior to the trustee meeting. She explained that the staff had done a great job on the budget proposal. The first draft of the proposed budget was going to be presented by staff to the city next week and the final draft of the proposed budget would be presented to the trustees in the October meeting. There was a 4% increase to the operational budget, due to increasing adult programming and continued increased digital material demand. The 4% increase is on target for what the city requested. The buildings budget increased 2.95% due to gas and electric rates being higher.
6. Reports: Sign ups for staff and trustees tabling for the Meet Me on Main event were finalized. Karen is going to send out the set up/event information email to those who are signed up. Jessica is going to come early to help Shadia walk over to the event since this is her first time working this event. Staff will decide if a book giveaway will be part of the meet me on Main event. Karen was excited to see the communication and

marketing plan coming together. Wendy is hopeful that the new gutters will be installed before winter, finally finishing the roof project. Wendy also explained the research she has done for how staff can handle service animals in the library. A new policy is being developed.

7. Work Groups: The 100th planning group did not meet this month. The last event for the 100th year celebration will be ghost stories on 10/16. There is also a final push to get book submissions in by 10/1 for the 100th anniversary book. The board is planning to have books for sale for the holidays. The cost of the book has not been determined yet. Alex has been focusing on the 100th anniversary book and not much has been done for sustainability as of late. Venessa gave an update on mentoring. She and Karen met to discuss it and she plans to do some reorganizing and present it at a future meeting.
8. Old Business: None
9. New Business: River discussed the new program policy, Program Proposal Form, and Material Reconsideration Form updates. These changes were made with current program challenges and staff sustainability in mind. River walked the board through the policy and explained how the policy established guidelines and set limits to help staff. Edits and tweaks to the policies and forms were discussed, including potential AI usage, typos, language consistency and clarity. Karen is going to email River small edits. River will make changes discussed in addition to talking with staff about adding an Sustainable Library Initiative explanation under the "About Us" section of the library website. Staff will discuss this paragraph explaining the SLI and make a decision. Trustees were impressed with the policy efforts and glad to have these in place and available for public access. Trustees will vote on policy updates at the October meeting.
River also provided updates on the strategic plan efforts. Staff has been working on marketing and communication. There have been changes to the newsletter, and staff has shifted their approach to social media posts. They will no longer post flyers for every program. There will be a focus on high priority/investment programs, new items, accessibility, and sharing fun stories and photos. Efforts will also be made to encourage people to use the web and print calendar. The hope is to get more engagement with this approach. Staff will also watch the circulation stats to see how this effort is working. There was also a brief discussion about the mobile website calendar glitches. A temporary link to a pdf copy of the print calendar was proposed as a solution while the website glitches are addressed.
10. Shelia moved for adjournment and Venessa seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.