

APPENDIX A:

ROADWAY CHARACTERISTICS SUMMARY

The following comments are the result of a "windshield survey" of the state highways and other roads identified by the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission (SWCRPC) as being important to bicyclists in the region. The intent of these descriptions is to provide a summary of the conditions for bicyclists on these roads and to make a general assessment of the pedestrian conditions in village areas.

US Route 5

Route 5 parallels Interstate 91 along the Connecticut River and runs most of the length of Vermont. The road travels predominantly in a north-south direction and passes through the towns of Windsor, Weathersfield and Springfield for a distance of approximately 21 miles. Route 12 shares its routing with Route 5 from the village of Ascutney, in Weathersfield, to Hartland, north of the Town of Windsor.

The northern most segment of Route 5 is generally in fair condition for bicyclists. The presence of shoulders is somewhat inconsistent, going from sections with paved shoulders wider than 6 feet to no shoulder at all. The pavement is in fair condition approaching Windsor village from the north. The rural section north of Windsor village is fairly scenic with mountain views and scattered historic structures. Windsor village has a fairly complete system of sidewalks along the highway. There is on-street parking provided and sidewalks are present on both sides of the street in the main downtown area. There appear to be some opportunities to facilitate crossings through the use of curb extensions at intersections and some mid-block crosswalks. South of Windsor village, the pavement is in fair to poor condition with a variable shoulder from 1 to 4 feet in width. Traffic volumes are relatively low because of the option of traveling on I-91 for higher speed trips. NH Route 12A runs parallel providing another option for north-south travel. The scenic qualities of this section are enhanced by the farm land at the edge of the Connecticut River and views of forested hills in New Hampshire.

Route 5 in Weathersfield has little or no paved shoulder, but sight distance is generally good due to the relatively straight alignment. Sight distances around the intersection with Route 44A are not good. The pavement conditions are fair to poor. This section of Route 5 is enclosed by trees, with few long distance views. Ascutney village is defined by a concentration of buildings with a mix of uses, but is not served by a sidewalk system, except for a short section of sidewalk near the intersection of Route 5 and Routes 131/12. The highway south of the village is narrow with no shoulders and

has limited sight distance due to curves and hills. There is some opportunity for wider paved shoulders in areas where adjacent slopes are not immediately abutting the travel lane.

The hamlet of Weathersfield Bow is mostly a concentration of residential homes with no sidewalks or paved shoulders. The highway south of the village goes through agricultural land without paved shoulders. As the road enters the town of Springfield, it runs parallel to the Connecticut River. There are no paved shoulders and the pavement surface is rough. Traffic volumes are fairly low and the road has a number of curves and hills as it approaches the intersection with Route 11. This segment is scenic due to the contrast of open fields, agricultural lands and wooded hillsides.

Generally, Route 5 south of Wilgus State Park is suitable for bicycling. The scenic nature and low traffic volumes on the southern half of Route 5 in Southern Windsor County and low volume of vehicular traffic makes it a desirable road for cyclists. Conditions are inconsistent and generally not favorable for cyclists north of Wilgus State Park. Although the section of Route 5 connecting the Wilgus State Park segment north to Route 44A is an important link for recreational bicyclists. The connection via Route 12 to NH Route 12A is also important, as Route 12A is well suited for bicyclists. Windsor is the one village along Route 5 that has extensive pedestrian facilities.

Route 10

Route 10 is a 4-mile long east-west highway that connects Routes 103 and 106 in the Towns of Chester and Springfield, respectively.

In the Town of Chester, east of Gassetts, the road has limited paved shoulders, but the pavement is in good condition. There is an opportunity to widen the shoulders in some areas, although a stream on the north side of the road is a constraint. The roadway alignment is winding, resulting in areas of poor sight distance. Traffic volumes appear to be fairly low. In contrast to the segments with no shoulder, there are some short sections of the road with wide freeway-like paved shoulders and shoulders are present as the road enters Springfield. Route 10 offers a mix of conditions for cyclists, with about half of the length of the road having wide, paved shoulders and the other half having very limited shoulders.

Route 11

Route 11 travels approximately 19 miles east to west through the southern part of southern Windsor County. It passes through the towns of Springfield, Chester and Andover and serves as Main Street in downtown Springfield and Chester village.

From the I-91 interchange to the beginning of more densely developed land close

to the eastern edge of downtown Springfield, the highway has 6-8 foot paved shoulders and two travel lanes in each direction. Traffic volumes are fairly heavy with a high percentage of trucks. The road has a freeway-like appearance and traffic appears to travel at or above the 50 MPH speed limit. The pavement is in fair to poor condition. The Toonerville Trail, a 3-mile shared-use path, parallels Route 11 connecting downtown Springfield with Route 5 north. The Trail provides pedestrians and less experienced bicyclists an ideal facility and offers an alternative route to Route 11. At the approach to downtown, the shoulders disappear and sidewalks begin on both sides. Downtown Springfield has a fairly complete pedestrian system along the highway and on-street parking on both sides of the street. Traffic speeds through the downtown are fairly slow, but volumes are heavy. North of the downtown core, the roadway is very wide with only one lane in each direction.

A sidewalk continues on the south side of Route 11 past the Springfield Plaza, Riverside Middle School and to the west, connecting to several residential neighborhoods. To the west of the Springfield Plaza, after the "McDonald's Bridge" over the Black River, Route 11 has wide (6-10 feet) paved shoulders. The wide shoulders and freeway-like character of the road continues into Chester with the shoulders narrowing at the Green Mountain Turnpike approach into Chester village.

Chester village has a mix of facilities for pedestrians. There are some bituminous paved walks, some concrete walks and some areas where there is no real walkway, but only a painted corridor to get across large commercial accesses. In the center of the village, there is a green separating a row of shops from the highway. A small frontage road serves the shops, but there are no walks. The village is very scenic, with many historic buildings and street trees. There is on-street parking present. At the west end of the village, the walks become narrow and disappear.

Church Street in Chester connects Route 11 in Chester village with Route 103 in Stone Village, and provides an alternate route to the Depot Street/North Street section of Route 103.

Route 11 west of Chester generally has very limited paved shoulders and is a winding corridor. This section of roadway is an enclosed, wooded area which is less scenic with very few long distance views or visual contrast. The Andover hamlet of Simonsville is very small, with just a few buildings and no pedestrian facilities. West of Simonsville, Route 11 has short sections of paved shoulder, but they are narrow.

In summary, Route 11 has adequate shoulders for cyclists from the I-91 junction to Chester. However, the traffic volumes and speeds may not make this section the most desirable route for cyclists, especially those touring Vermont and seeking a more scenic, rural experience. West of Chester, shoulders are infrequent. Springfield and Chester both have moderately complete pedestrian facilities along

the highway, but some areas of discontinuity.

Route 44

Route 44 is located in the northeast corner of the region. It runs east-west and begins at the intersection with Route 106 in Reading, before passing through West Windsor and Windsor to intersect with Route 5. Route 44 has a length of approximately 7 miles. It experiences fairly low traffic volumes. It was resurfaced in 2018.

From its western end at the junction with Route 106, the highway has very limited paved shoulders. The road winds as it follows Mill Brook, resulting in areas of limited sight distance. Development along the road is mostly scattered rural residential other than within the village of Brownsville. Open fields and contrasting views of wooded hillsides make this road very scenic.

The village of Brownsville has intermittent sidewalks on the north side of the road. The village is compact, well-defined and has narrow shoulders which may act as parking lanes. The access road to Ascutney Mountain Resort is located just east of the village center. Brownsville is very scenic with the contrast of open fields at the village edge and the wooded mountain slopes of Mt. Ascutney in the background.

East of Brownsville, Route 44 continues to curve with little or no paved shoulder. As the road approaches the village of Windsor, sidewalks are present on both sides.

Brook Road, in Windsor and West Windsor, used to be an unpaved alternate route option for bicyclists who do not wish to travel the narrow, curving portion of Route 44. In 2011, Tropical Storm Irene washed out sections of Brook Road in Windsor that remain unpassable.

Route 44 has very little in the way of shoulders to accommodate bicycle travel. The road is highly scenic and has fairly low traffic volumes.

Route 44A

Route 44A is a 2-mile long connecting road between Route 44 in Windsor and Route 5 in Weathersfield. It runs in a southeasterly direction as it leaves the intersection with Route 44. There are very limited paved shoulders for the length of the road. The road has very low traffic volumes. It was resurfaced in 2018.

Route 44A is mostly an enclosed, wooded corridor with few views. There are occasional openings that offer ridge line views to the south. Mt. Ascutney State Park is accessed from this road. There appears to be limited opportunity for widening due to the steepness of banks on both sides of the road. Based on the

low traffic volumes, Route 44A may be desirable for bicycle touring, even without any additional pavement width.

The intersections with both Route 5 and Route 44 have been regional safety concerns for many years.

Route 100

Route 100 runs north-south through the northwestern corner of Andover and the town and village of Ludlow at the western edge of the region. Route 100 is a popular tourist road that runs the length of Vermont. This road serves as access to the Okemo Mountain ski resort.

The 4 miles of Route 100 south of Ludlow village has generally narrow shoulders, but the pavement condition is fair to good. The roadway is scenic with long distance mountain views and contrasting open fields. There is very little roadside development along this section. There are steep grades heading down to Ludlow village. There appears to be some opportunity to widen shoulders. The road is winding with some areas of poor sight distance.

Ludlow village has a generally complete pedestrian network along the highway. There are some excessively wide business accesses and areas of deteriorated sidewalks. There is on-street parking present. Curb extensions would help to improve the safety of pedestrian crossings.

Routes 100 and 103 share a common alignment for about 2 miles. This section has very wide paved shoulders. It experiences heavy traffic volumes and large numbers of trucks.

Route 100 continues for 3 miles north of the junction with Route 103 to the Ludlow/Plymouth town line. This section of Route 100 has narrow or non-existent shoulders and limited sight distance due to the number of curves. There is a sign just north of the junction warning motorists of the possible presence of bicycles for the next 9 miles. This section of Route 100 is highly scenic with older homes and a variety of views including Lakes Rescue and Pauline. Traffic volumes are moderate. The roadway conditions are consistent to the town line.

The section of Route 100 north of Ludlow Village (after the junction with Route 103) is not especially suitable for cyclists. The narrow shoulders, encroaching guardrails, moderate traffic volumes, and geometry of the road result in unsafe conditions. However, the scenic aspects of the road are exceptional and are attractive for bicycle tourists as part of the Route 100 scenic corridor that runs the length of Vermont. This segment of Route 100 is a high priority for improvements.

Route 103

Route 103 is a north-south road that passes through the town of Chester and a portion of Cavendish for approximately 15 miles before intersecting with Route 100 in Ludlow. Routes 100 and 103 share their alignment for about 2 miles in Ludlow before splitting. Route 103 continues in a westerly direction for another 1.5 miles before reaching the Ludlow Town line. Route 103 is part of the National Highway System.

From north of the junction with Route 100 to the Ludlow/Mt. Holly town line, Route 103 has wide, paved shoulders and a moderate alignment. The shoulder along the climbing lane segment has been widened and improved for bicyclists. This section has a freeway-like appearance and is fairly heavily traveled. There are some mountain views, but the section is mostly an enclosed, wooded corridor.

High Street and Dug Road provide an alternate route for bicyclists wanting to avoid the higher traffic volumes and on-street parking along the Ludlow Main Street portion of Route 103.

Between Ludlow and Proctorsville, the shoulder conditions change heading north to south. At the north end, the shoulders are narrow. East of the Ludlow/Cavendish Town line, the shoulders widen, with some flat, straight sections that may encourage vehicular speeding.

South of Proctorsville, the road has 8 foot paved shoulders up to Proctorsville Gulf, where the shoulders narrow to less than 3 feet, especially where there are slow vehicle climbing lanes. There may be an opportunity to widen shoulders in this area, but roadside ledge is a constraint. The wider shoulders pick up again south of the gulf and the roadway appearance is more freeway-like again. The boundaries of Gassetts are not very well defined and there are no pedestrian facilities along the highway. The shoulders are narrow south of Gassetts to the stone village and Chester Depot. This section is scenic as the road generally parallels the Williams River.

Stone Village and Chester-Depot have sidewalks on one side of the road or the other, connected with crosswalks, but full pedestrian access is not provided. The village area is well-defined by the concentration of development. The Town offices, retail shops and a train depot that serves the Green Mountain Railroad are located in the center of Chester-Depot. There are no sidewalks leading up to the station and no bicycle parking is provided. There is no on-street parking on Route 103, however on-street parking is provided on several side roads. Crosswalks and pedestrian areas in the village are not well defined, but the Town is making improvements through some ongoing projects.

South of Chester village, Route 103 has narrow paved shoulders as it passes

through a residential area. The road widens at the limit of residential development and an area of emerging commercial development begins. This wide roadway section continues past Green Mountain High School to the town line. There is very little roadside development south of the High School.

Route 103 does not offer a consistent facility for cyclists, and conditions go from one extreme to the other over the length of the highway. Pedestrian facilities in Chester-Depot and Stone Village could be improved. The high ADT, truck traffic and inconsistent shoulder widths make much of Route 103 not desirable for bicyclists.

Route 106

Route 106 travels for approximately 17 miles north-south through the towns of Springfield, Weathersfield, a small portion of Cavendish, and Reading. Route 106 connects with the town of Woodstock to the north, making it a desirable route for both bicyclists and motorists. The highway serves an area of strip development in North Springfield and passes through Downer's Corners and the villages of Perkinsville and Felchville.

From the junction with Route 11 in Springfield to the north, Route 106 has wide paved shoulders. The area north of the Springfield Plaza exhibits many access points to industrial and commercial uses that line the roadway. Despite the wide shoulders, the current access management issues in this area make it less desirable for bicyclists. There is a sidewalk on the east side of the road from the Route 11 junction up to the developed area to the north. However, the development is all located on the west side of the road and is not served by sidewalks or any marked crosswalks. The wide shoulders continue to the junction with Route 10. North of the Route 10 junction, the highway has little or no paved shoulder. There are opportunities to widen the shoulder beyond this intersection. Development in this section is mostly low density residential. This area is moderately scenic with stone walls lining the road and some long distance views.

There is no change in character of the road to indicate to motorists that they are entering the village of Perkinsville in Weathersfield. Although there is some definition to the village, there are no sidewalks and no on-street parking. North of Perkinsville, there are 3-4 foot paved shoulders which narrow to 2 feet approaching the junction with Route 131, which is called Downer's Corners.

Upper Falls Road is an unpaved, alternate route option for bicyclists wishing to bypass the intersection of Routes 106 and 131. The Upper Falls Covered Bridge over the Black River is a scenic and historic highlight.

North of Route 131, there is very limited paved shoulders. There are opportunities to widen the shoulders. This area is very scenic, with open fields, historic farm

houses, and views of wooded hillsides and Little Ascutney Mountain. The village of Felchville in Reading is a well-defined collection of residences, a few businesses, town hall, library and the school. There are intermittent sidewalks, some on-street parking and marked crosswalks.

North of Felchville, Route 106 has widened, paved shoulders up to the junction with Route 44. North of the junction with Route 44, Route 106 has very narrow paved shoulders. There may be some opportunity to widen shoulders on this section. Adjacent land is mostly undeveloped. The road curves as it follows a stream and is mostly an enclosed, wooded corridor. Traffic volumes are moderate.

Route 106 passes through Hammondsville, which consists of a general store and a few residences. The northern most portion of Route 106 in Reading has sections of steep grades as the highway approaches the Reading/Woodstock town line.

The majority of Route 106 does not have adequate shoulder width for cyclists. There are scenic areas that would be attractive to bicycle tourists, especially as part of a route that would continue north to Woodstock.

Route 131

Route 131 traverses the middle portion of the region in an east-west direction for about 14 miles. It starts from its intersection with Route 5 in Ascutney, in the Town of Weathersfield to a junction with Route 103 in the Town of Cavendish. Route 131 terminates at its western end at this junction. The highway passes through the villages of Cavendish and Proctorsville.

At the eastern end of Route 131, near its intersection with Route 5, the highway has fairly wide shoulders, especially in the immediate vicinity of I-91. This section of Route 5 is part of the National Highway System. To the west of the interchange area, the shoulders narrow to a more moderate width of approximately 3 feet. The road alignment is winding with moderate grades. Between the village of Ascutney and the hamlet of Amsden, development along the road is mostly scattered rural residential. There are some areas of ledge along the road that would be a constraint to any efforts to widen the shoulders. This section of Route 131 is scenic with some ridge line views and contrasting agricultural land. There are long, steep grades as the highway approaches Amsden. The shoulder narrows as the road enters Amsden. Amsden consists of a loose collection of buildings along the roadway without a well-defined village center.

West of the intersection with Route 106, Route 131 has narrow paved shoulders and many curves as it follows the Black River. The pavement is in very poor condition. This section is very scenic with views of the river on the south side of the road. The north side is undeveloped and wooded. There may be some opportunity for widening the shoulder on the north side of the highway although

some areas of steep slopes and ledge outcrops may be a constraint.

The village of Cavendish has a mix of conditions for pedestrians. In some areas, asphalt walkways immediately adjacent to the road have deteriorated over time and are hard to distinguish from parking areas. Other areas have concrete sidewalks in reasonable condition, separated from the road by a planting strip. There are no marked crosswalks in this village. It is notable that on the south side of the highway, at the western end of the village, there are several establishments (Mack Molding, former general store, Cavendish Historical Society) that are not served by any sidewalks. Also notable is a subdivision at the west edge of the village that does not have any pedestrian connection to village services, even though it is less than 1/2 a mile from the village.

The village of Proctorsville has old, deteriorated sidewalks on both sides of the highway, except for a section near the green that was improved recently. There are several businesses with excessively wide commercial accesses. There are some areas with a green strip between the road and the walks, but parking has overtaken the planting strip in several locations. Proctorsville has similar conditions to Cavendish, with some adequate walks and some that are indistinguishable from on-street parking. There is on-street parking and a need for crossings in the village. Curb extensions would help to improve pedestrian crossing safety.

The eastern half of Route 131 accommodates bicycle travel fairly well, without sacrificing the character of the road. The western half after the junction with Route 106 is less adequate due to the narrow shoulders and many curves as the road follows the Black River. Traffic volumes, truck traffic and the scenic nature of this part of the road would indicate the need for improvements for bicycle travel. The western segment of Route 131 is a high priority for improvements.

Route 143/Skitchewaug Trail/Summer Street

Although this road has a state Route number, it is locally-owned and maintained by the Town of Springfield. The road runs for about 5 miles in a northeasterly direction from downtown Springfield to the junction with Route 5. It is locally known as Summer Street and Skitchewaug Trail.

At the beginning of the road near Main Street, there are sidewalks on one side and then both sides as the road goes through a densely settled residential area along Summer Street. The roadway is narrow, with some steep sections and no paved shoulders. At the end of the residential neighborhood, the sidewalks end. There are no shoulders as the road continues into a more rural section. There are scenic areas with farm land and some open views of wooded hillsides. The road is winding with some steep grades. There may be some opportunities for shoulder widening in this section. As the road nears its junction with Route 5, there is a long steep grade. Traffic volumes are low on this road.

This road is scenic and could be improved through the addition of paved shoulders. Traffic volumes are probably high enough that all but the most experienced cyclists will feel a level of discomfort with the existing amount of traffic because of the narrow shoulders.

Center Road/Brook Road/Valley Street

Center Road has a north-south alignment as it travels for a total of 8 miles in the Towns of Weathersfield and Springfield. At its north end, it intersects with Route 131 and it continues south to its terminus in downtown Springfield.

There are no delineated shoulders and the overall pavement width is not much greater than two travel lanes. The road begins with a long, continuous grade as it climbs upward leaving Route 131. At the high point of the road, there is a long distance view of Hawks Mountain to the west. Weathersfield Center is very lightly developed, but it is notable for the scenic and historic Weathersfield Center Church and grove. Heading south from there, there are more vistas of open fields and low hills. The road becomes enclosed and wooded again after the country club and entering the Town of Springfield. There are sidewalks on one side of the road as it enters the downtown.

Moderate traffic volumes result in this road being a desirable bicycling road without the addition of paved shoulders. This road is popular for cyclists within southern Windsor County and is also used by bicycle tourists starting in other counties.

Hartland-Brownsville Road

Hartland-Brownsville Road heads north out of the village of Brownsville and intersects with Route 12 in the Town of Hartland. The portion of the road in West Windsor is approximately 4 miles in length.

It heads north out of Brownsville on a steep grade. There are no shoulders, but traffic volumes are low, making this a desirable road for touring bicyclists. The road has several steep sections and many curves. There are a few scattered residences along the road, but it is generally very rural. The pavement is in overall good condition.

State Street/County Road

County Road travels in a southeasterly direction from its intersection with Hartland-Brownsville Road in Hartland to its intersection with Route 5 in Windsor village. The portion that is in Windsor is approximately 3 miles in length.

This town highway does not have any delineated paved shoulders. There are long, steep grades and a number of curves. The road is scenic with intermittent open

fields and some long distance views of mountains. The character of the road is more suburban residential after passing under the Interstate heading towards Windsor village. The road widens and a sidewalk begins after passing Mt. Ascutney Hospital. The low traffic volumes on this road would make it a desirable facility for touring cyclists, despite the lack of paved shoulders.

Twenty Mile Stream Road

Twenty Mile Stream Road runs in a north-south direction for 6 miles through Reading and Cavendish. Its northern terminus is at Tyson Road and it intersects with Route 131 near the village of Proctorsville.

The northern half of this town highway is unpaved. The road has many curves with moderate to steep hills. There are some scenic aspects on the north section of the road with farm land and open views. The southern, paved section of the road is narrow and does not have delineated shoulders. This section is more scenic with stone walls, open fields, farm land and views of low hills. This road has very low traffic volumes, which generally makes this road suitable for experienced or moderately experienced cyclists.

Tyson Road

Tyson Road runs in an east-west direction for approximately 9 miles, initially Kingdom Road in Plymouth, it connects with Route 100 and, becoming Tyson Road as it enters Reading, intersects with Route 106 in Felchville. Tyson Road is a popular bike touring route for those who enjoy hills.

From the junction with Route 100, the road is narrow and there are no shoulders. There is little opportunity to widen the road due to the topography. There are steep winding grades as the road heads east. At a high point on the road, near the Plymouth/Reading town line, there is a panoramic view. Most of the road is in an enclosed, wooded corridor which does not afford long distance views. The surface condition of this road is generally good. There is very little development along this road and very low traffic volumes. South Reading village is a small collection of older homes and a church. There are no sidewalks and the roadway width and character does not change as it passes through the village. The eastern end of the road is scenic as the views to Mt. Ascutney open up and the road descends into Felchville.

Weston-Andover Road

Weston-Andover Road intersects with Route 11 in the Town of Chester. It travels east-west and continues for approximately 6 miles through Andover to the Andover/Weston town line. It is located in the southwest portion of the region.

This town highway has no paved shoulders. At the east end, the road is generally enclosed and wooded with very low traffic volumes. There are long, steep grades with some sharp curves which limit sight distance. Peaseville in Andover is a small hamlet with only a few older buildings including the Town Hall along the road. There are no sidewalks. As the road approaches Weston, there are more open views of mountains and open land. This road does not have shoulders for bicycle travel, but traffic volumes are very low.