



Town of Bristol
Planning & Zoning
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MEMORANDUM

To: Bristol Selectboard
CC: Greg Faust, Freeda Powers
From: AZ Larsen, Planning & Zoning Administrator
Date: March 18, 2026
RE: West Street Scoping Study – Draft Scoping Report

OVERVIEW:

Monday March 23, 2026 is the Recommended Preferred Alternative Presentation for the West Street Sidewalk Improvement Scoping Study. This presentation will be to review the Draft Scoping Report for this study. The Selectboard is responsible for reviewing this draft report and providing feedback. Following this presentation the VHB will then prepare the final report. The Selectboard will then be responsible for approving and accepting the Final Report.

This project is funded through the VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program. The award end date for this project is April 2, 2028. The Proposed Project Schedule per the contract with VHB has a project completion of April 2026. The RFP posted for this project had a very aggressive project schedule with a December 2025 end date. Based on their experience VHB recommended extending the schedule to April as many scoping studies take around nine months to complete.

FEEDBACK CONSIDERATIONS

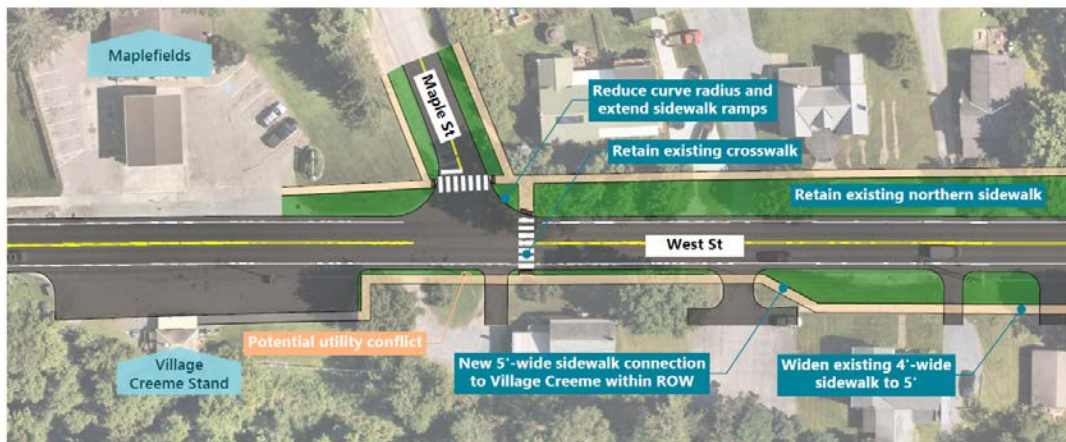
There has been feedback received from a landowner within the project area regarding the preferred alternative. The concern is largely related to the proposed removal of an existing curb cut access located at 39 West Street. The current configuration of the access is a U-shaped drive with two curb cuts. The landowner is in support of this project overall, but opposes this curb cut removal.

The selectboard does have the authority over access management and could go forward with this project with the current proposed alternative. However, the Selectboard should also consider the importance of maintaining amicable relationships during development projects.

MPM Advisement

In considering landowner feedback and in a review of the Draft Report it is my advisement to the Selectboard that this draft report is not endorsed for the final report.

Reviewing the report and alternatives presented it is my advice that the Selectboard requests that VHB evaluate the costs/benefits of maintaining the Maple Street crosswalk location and proposed in Alternative B (shown below).



Alternative B - New Connections and Sidewalk Widening

This alternative would involve reducing the curve radius and extending sidewalk ramps. At the alternative's presentation in December, concerns arose from the Selectboard about the impacts of a large tree on the visibility of cars turning from maple street. There was discussion regarding the health of the trees in this area and a desire not to remove trees if possible.

Given the feedback received, the project moved forward with the alternative that involved moving the Maple Street crosswalk. However, given the feedback from the landowner of 39 West Street this alternative would cause potential conflicts later in the project.

When feedback was first received, I reached out to VHB to get some information on what the possibilities would be for keeping the location. The costs of both locations are relatively the same. Both proposals would increase pedestrian visibility and safety. It was noted by VHB that tree removal may require additional permitting due to federally protected bat habitat. However, the reasons behind moving the sidewalk appear arbitrary as both alternatives achieve the goal of this project, and potential additional permitting can be integrated into this study.

There have not been any formal decisions on this project yet and it is my strong advisement that it should further consideration should be given to maintaining the current crosswalk location.

While this is a scoping report and changes could be made during the design and construction phase it is not a recommended path forward. This scoping report can be used to obtain future funding opportunities. The selected preferred alternative should be consistent with the vision outlined in the Town Plan and supported by the community itself.