

**Pearl Street Planning Study –  
Battery Street to St. Paul Street**



Prepared for:  
Chittenden County Regional  
Planning Commission and City of  
Burlington

Prepared by:  
Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

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# 1 Project Description

The City of Burlington with support from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) proposes to reconfigure Pearl Street between Battery Street and St. Paul Street as a complete street consistent with the recent improvements made to Pearl Street at Church Street. The current configuration includes a four-lane cross section west of North Champlain Street and a two-lane cross section with on-street parking east of North Champlain Street. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway throughout this section. Greenbelt widths and locations vary. The recently improved section at Church Street accommodates on-street parking protected by curb extensions, bike lanes and a single travel lane in each direction. The City would like to consider a short-range plan for Pearl Street that respects the existing curb lines and a longer range plan that could involve relocation of the curbs to encourage pedestrian activity, foster economic growth, and improve transportation for all modes. Plans are being developed now in anticipation of construction funding being made available within two years through a recently approved Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district. The proposed scope of services described below is intended to lead to the City's adoption of conceptual short-range improvement plan for the subject segment of Pearl Street and, possibly, selection of a long-range improvement strategy.

A number of issues have been cited by City staff that should be considered in the planning study. These include:

- Prior proposals by the City to improve pedestrian connections across Battery Street by eliminating one of the two northbound right-turn lanes on Battery Street to Pearl Street, and vehicle storage requirements (queuing space) along Pearl Street between the Battery Street and North Champlain Street intersections if a turn lane is removed
- Accommodation of buses on Pearl Street in consideration of the plan to move the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA) transit center from Cherry Street to St. Paul Street
- Consideration for long-term parking for tour buses in or near the study area
- Coordination with the Downtown Parking Initiative to determine the appropriate on-street parking supply to support businesses located along Pearl Street
- Enhancing the streetscape and intersections to support pedestrian travel via Pearl Street between Church Street and the Lake Champlain Waterfront/Battery Park area and improve the economic vitality of the Pearl Street corridor
- Bicycle network connectivity
- Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements at sidewalk crossings of driveways and streets

Additional issues may be identified during the proposed study.

## 2 Scope and Approach

The proposed scope of services represents a streamlined process relative to typical CCRPC scoping in recognition of the limited project budget and extensive work that has been completed to date for the corridor. The objective of this study is to build community support for a conceptual improvement plan for the corridor. Future work efforts would include preparation of construction drawings for the recommended plan.

### 2.1 Kick-Off Meeting

Stantec will attend a project kick-off meeting with the City and CCRPC staff to review the project goals, proposed scope of services, timelines and deliverables. Prior to attending this meeting Stantec will review earlier studies for the area to understand the extent of data available from these studies and to understand the recommendations which have been presented in these earlier works.

### 2.2 Compile Existing Data / Compile Base Map

Stantec will compile existing data from readily available sources to establish existing roadway, parking and travel conditions in the corridor. High resolution orthophoto plans as available from the State will be used to locate existing features including curb lines, driveways, sidewalks, pavement markings and on-street parking. Field measurements will be taken at certain locations to verify critical measurements. Property line information provided by the City will be used to locate the above features within the public right-of-way. Traffic count data from recent studies will be used to determine existing weekday commuter peak vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic flow conditions. New counts may be taken by Stantec or the CCRPC at the Pearl Street intersections with Battery Street and North Champlain Street to establish current travel demands. Stantec will also use the latest VTrans crash database to establish traffic safety conditions in the corridor.

Stantec will collect and review existing studies, town and regional plans and record drawings. Using the Vermont State Standards, Stantec will develop the project's design criteria.

### 2.3 Identify Land Use Context

Stantec will consult with City staff and reference prior studies to identify the existing and proposed land use conditions in the project area that may influence future travel demands. Land use assumptions from Plan BTV and traffic forecasts for the new transit center will be considered along with historic travel demand patterns for the area. Similarly, potential new pedestrian and/or bicycle connections to in or adjacent to the study area will be evaluated. Travel demand forecasts will be prepared for a future design year to be determined in consultation with the advisory committee.

### 2.4 Develop Conceptual Alternatives

It is assumed that the City and CCRPC will establish an advisory committee for the project that would provide overall project direction and initial review of project deliverables. A working meeting will be held with the project advisory committee to develop the purpose and needs statement and review each of the improvement alternatives, their benefits and their impacts.

Alternatives will be illustrated on the existing conditions base plan and will include typical sections locating proposed features with respect to existing roadway rights-of-way, curb lines and building facades. The expected performance of each alternative will be evaluated in terms of its ability to adequately, comfortably, safely and efficiently serve travel demands for all modes. Similarly, information will be presented relative to impacts to on-street parking supplies and adjacent private properties. Potential impacts to existing utilities and resources will be identified and described. An evaluation matrix will be prepared.

## 2.5 Alternatives Presentation

Stantec will work with the City to organize a public meeting to present the purpose and need of the project, present the preferred alternative plans and to receive public comment on these plans as well as any existing issues in the corridor. Findings comparing the benefits and impacts of the alternatives will be summarized in an evaluation matrix. Plans will be made available in pdf format for on-line viewing by project stakeholders in advance of the meeting. Paper and Powerpoint versions of the plans will be available at the meeting for public review. Stantec will record meeting minutes to document public comments received.

Plan changes may be recommended at this meeting and/or new alternatives may surface. Any new plans or substantially modified plans will then be developed and analyzed to the same level of detail as the original proposals. Some or all of the alternative plans may also be selected by the advisory committee for presentation to the public. Aerial and street view renderings will be prepared for the selected plans as appropriate.

## 2.6 Recommended Plan

Stantec will meet with the project advisory committee following the public hearing. Based on the public comment received the committee will decide if there is sufficient consensus of opinion to identify a recommended plan. The recommended plan may be one of the alternatives presented at the public hearing, a modified plan based on comments received or, in the absence of any consensus of opinion, a strategy for moving forward to develop a new recommended plan. The recommended plan is intended to reflect a viable short-term project that is compatible with longer-term strategies that may also be preferred by the advisory committee and/or the community. Stantec will develop and evaluate the recommended plan to the same level of detail as the alternative plans presented at the public hearing. A preliminary cost estimate for plan design and construction will also be prepared. Stantec will then attend a second public meeting before the appropriate City body to seek City “adoption” of the plan.

## 2.7 Report Production

Stantec will prepare a technical memorandum summarizing the study process, data collected, alternatives developed, analyses completed and final recommendations. A draft memorandum will be provided to the advisory committee for review and comment before preparing a final memorandum that will be available to all project stakeholders.

### 3 Project Team

The proposed Stantec project team includes:

Gregory Edwards, PE – Senior Principal

Rick Bryant, PE – Project Manager

Joseph Burke – Design Engineer

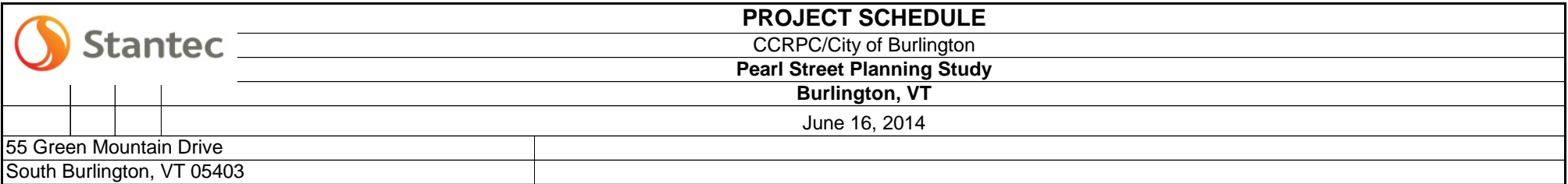
We will also be working with ORW of White River Junction, Vermont to assist with the urban design and streetscape elements of the study.

## 5 Appendices

**APPENDIX A    PROJECT SCHEDULE**

**APPENDIX B    ESTIMATE PROJECT BUDGET**

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