

Richmond Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #2
Wednesday, February 20, 2021



CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

T'OOLE
DESIGN

Agenda



Welcome and
Introductions



Public Comment



Update on
Schedule



Discussion: Draft
Vision Statement
and Goals



Presentation:
Highlights of
Existing
Conditions
Assessment,
Public Input



Discussion:
Opportunities and
Constraints



Next Steps

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Project Team

Ravi Venkataraman, AICP
Town Planner
Town of Richmond

Bryan Davis, AICP
Senior Transportation Planner
CCRPC

Marshall Distel
Transportation Planner
CCRPC

Kristen Lohse, ASLA
Senior Urban Designer
Toole Design

Lily Ko
Planner II
Toole Design

Advisory Group Members

Please introduce yourself in alphabetical order:

- Jean Bressor (Trails Committee)
- James Floyd (Transportation Committee)
- Justin Graham (RiseVT)
- Colin Green
- Allen Knowles (Transportation Committee)
- Samantha Peikes
- Chase Rosenberg (Trails Committee)
- Ian Stokes (Richmond Climate Action Committee)
- Jonathon Weber (Local Motion)

Did we miss anyone?



PUBLIC COMMENT

(10 min)

SCHEDULE UPDATE



Plan Development



Community Engagement

Work Plan & Schedule



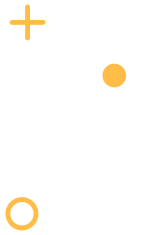
TASKS	2020		2021		
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Project Kick-off					
Conduct Community Outreach	*	*	*		
Existing Conditions Analysis					
Network Development					
Assemble Master Plan					

* *Steering Committee meetings*

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a lush, green landscape. A small bridge with a metal truss structure crosses the river. The surrounding area is filled with dense trees and green fields. Some buildings are visible on the left side of the river, and a church with a steeple is on the right. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Draft Vision Statement



Richmond will be a place where all residents and visitors have **safe and welcoming connections** to get where they need to and want to go, a place that is a **healthy community with recreational and economic opportunities**, and a place that is **responsive to climate change**.

Vision Framework

Safe and Welcoming

- On-street and off-street walking and biking is safe and welcoming to all residents, offering equitable access to work, school, and recreation.
- Set a precedent for neighboring communities by acting as a testbed for the use of trails as transportation.

Connected

- Connected by foot and bike both locally and regionally – among neighborhoods, between neighborhoods and the Village, and to neighboring towns.

Healthy

- Build a healthy community, empower social connections, and responsibly increase market opportunities
- Sustainable recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Climate Adaptive

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by providing more opportunities to walk and bike
- Encouraging people to choose active transportation by increasing the efficiency of it and multi-modal travel.

**Anything you would change
or add to the Vision
Framework or Statement?**

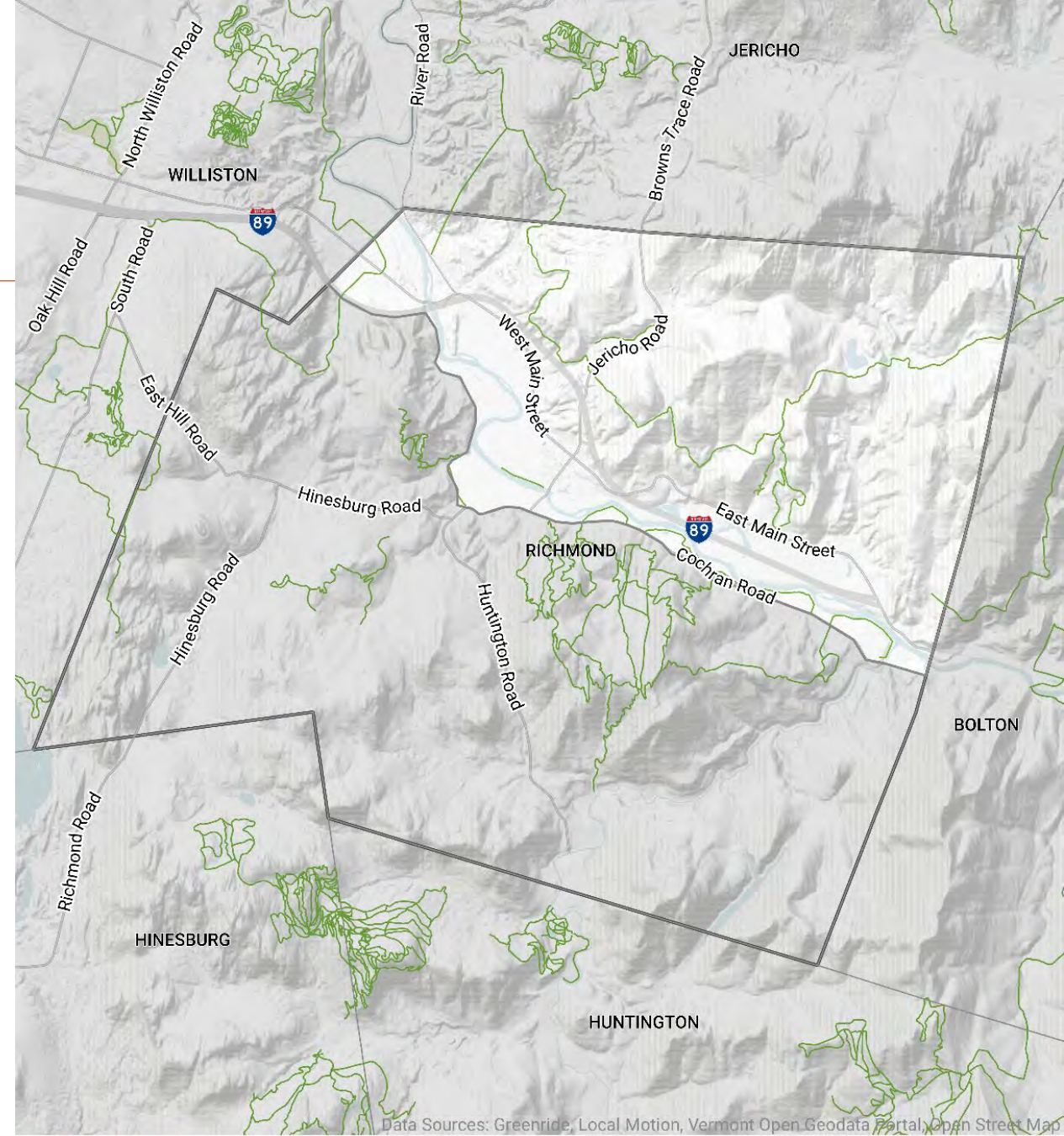


EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT



Background and Project Area

- **Complete Street Network** – on and off-road connections
- **Phase 1(1/2)** Focuses on the area within the Town's boundaries north of the Winooski River





What we set out to understand

- Plan and Policy framework
- Land Use, Cultural (historic) and Natural Resources
- Destinations and Circulation Patterns
- Operational and functional characteristics of roadways

Plan and Policy Review: Documents

- 2016 Town of Richmond Public Improvement Standards & Specifications
- 2018 Town Plan
- Village - School - Park & Ride Connections in Richmond, VT: Survey Report on Bike & Pedestrian Needs (2019)
- Transportation Implementation Plan (2020)
- Richmond Trails Committee Minutes (2019-2020)
- Road Safety Audit Review: Fays Corner (2004)
- East Hill Road – Capacity & Transportation Improvement Plan (2006)
- 2007 RSG report at Jericho Road
- Bridge Street Bicycle & Pedestrian Feasibility Study (2010)
- Vermont Route 2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Scoping Report (2014)
- Bridge Street Complete Streets Corridor Study – Scope of Work (2020)
- Chittenden County, Vermont Active Transportation Plan (2017)
- 2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan: Supplement 5 – Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Annual Report (2016)
- VTrans On-Road Bicycle Plan
- VTrans Bicycle Level of Comfort Analysis
- VTrans Bike Counts

Plan and Policy Review: Findings Overview

- **Access to safe walking and bicycling and livability for Richmond – safe, sustainable, convenient mobility**
 - Many indicated that they walk and/or bike, but felt unsafe doing so
 - No dedicated infrastructure to support safe walking or biking outside the village and there are few sidewalks and no bike or shared use facilities for people walking along important routes
 - Lack of on-street bikeways in Richmond, lack of bicycle priority in planning
 - Top bicycling issues in Chittenden County: bicycling on bridges, bike lanes dropping at intersections, conflicts with turning vehicles, lack of bike detection at signalized intersections, and motorist compliance

Plan and Policy Review: Findings Overview

■ **Recreation and economy**

- Support for more social, cultural, and recreational offerings, including open space facilities and connections between them
- Interest in attracting new businesses that cater to locals, as well as provides sustainable jobs and opportunities for recreation and social connections, supporting Richmond's natural resources

Plan and Policy Review: Findings Overview

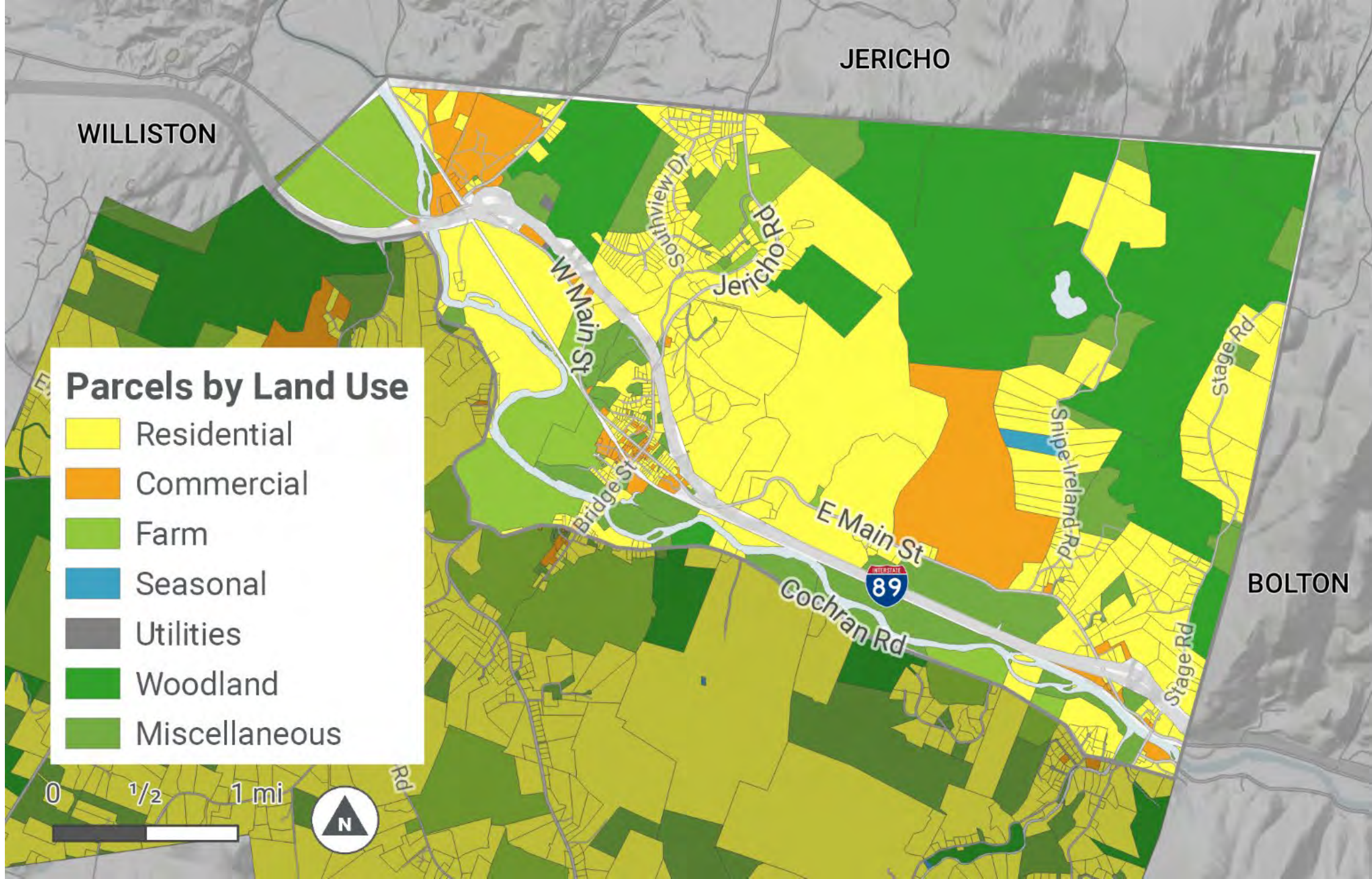
■ **Environment**

- Provide sustainable mobility choices and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through active transportation
- However, transportation options in Richmond are limited and key commuter routes/locations cause congestion
- More investment in walking and biking is needed to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
 - Design Complete Streets and better trail connectivity



Key Take-Aways

- Historic development patterns and focus on vehicle-centered planning resulted in a network that doesn't support biking and walking
- Benefits of active transportation and recreational clearly understood and valued
- Goals and plans at all levels of government in place to support more active transportation
- Big focus Route 2 (but other roadways also play an important role)



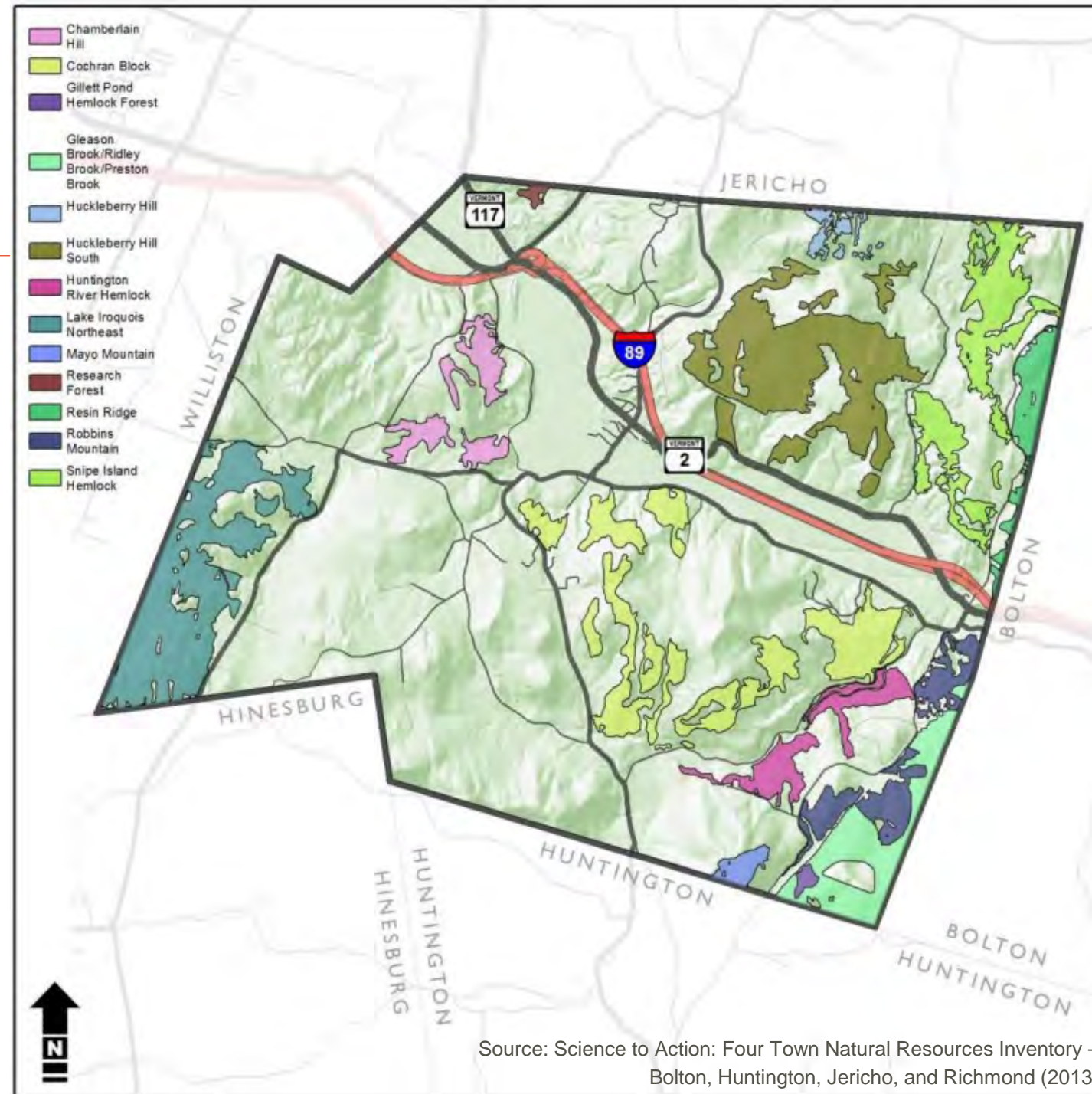
Land Use: Future



FUTURE LAND USE AREA	PURPOSE
Northwest Industrial-Commercial	Commercial and industrial uses that might not be suitable in the Village center area
Gateway	The attractive entrance to the historic Richmond Village, which includes commercial, light industrial, and residential uses
Villages	<u>Richmond Village</u> : Commercial and residential hub of the Town <u>Jonesville</u> : Secondary commercial and residential center
High Density Residential	<u>Riverview Commons Area</u> : Affordable housing in a densely settled neighborhood <u>North of Richmond Village Area</u> : Moderate to high density residential and accessory uses
Adaptive Agricultural-Residential	Commercial activities that diversify and support existing uses (i.e. event spaces, recreational activities, agricultural and forestry related uses)

Natural Resources

- Mix of deciduous/mixed forest and wetlands
- Five upland areas are in the Phase I area:
 - Research Forest
 - Huckleberry Hill
 - Huckleberry Hill South
 - Snipe Island Hemlock
 - Resin Ridge
- Snipe Ireland Road and Stage Road are wildlife travel corridors that should be conserved



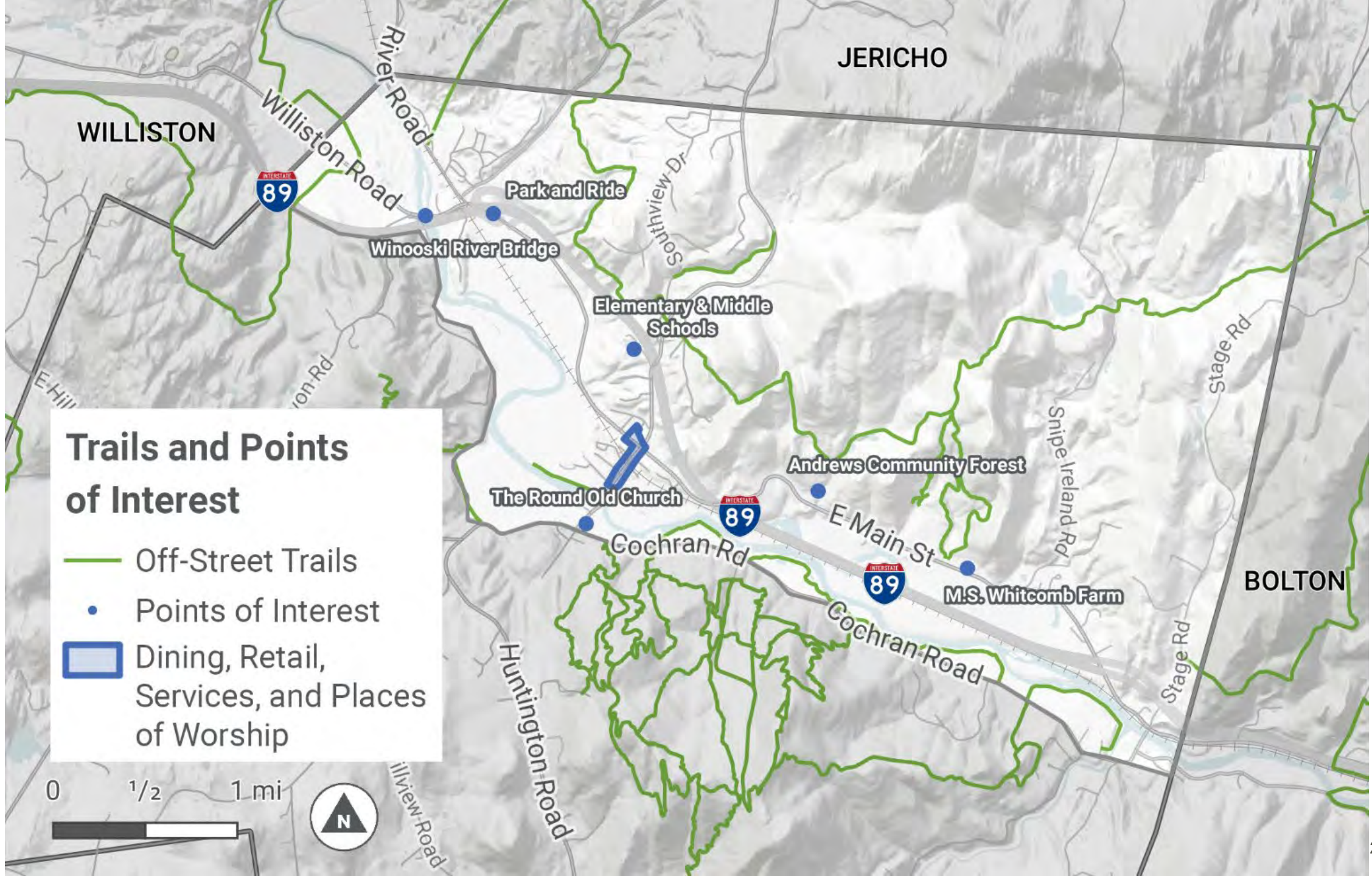
Source: Science to Action: Four Town Natural Resources Inventory – Bolton, Huntington, Jericho, and Richmond (2013)

Historic Sites

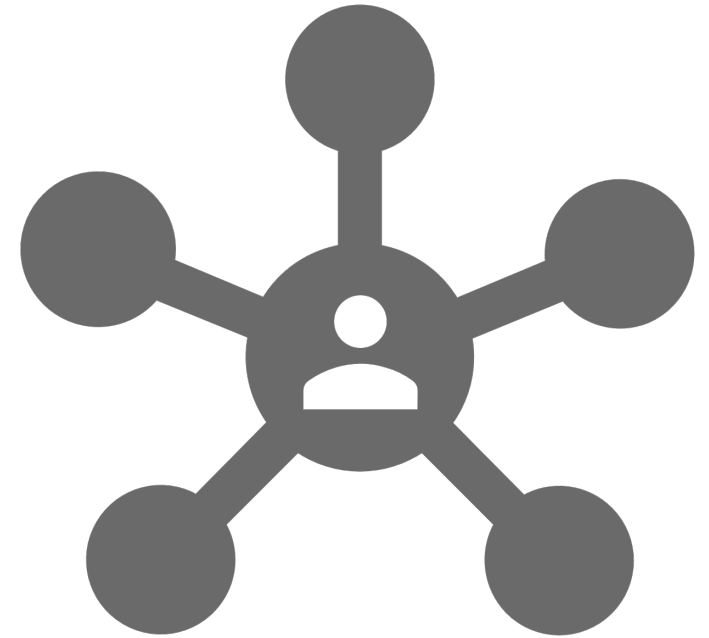
- Historic sites within Phase I area:
 - North (West) Main Street and Bridge Street are historic districts listed in the Vermont Register of Historic Places with over 50 historic sites
 - Six sites are in the National Register of Historic Places:
 - Gray Rocks (Andrews Farm)
 - Richmond Congregational Church
 - Richmond Underwear Company Building
 - Round Church (also a National Historic Landmark)
 - M.S. Whitcomb Farm (Venture Farm/Monitor Barn Farm)
 - Winooski River Bridge (Checkered House Bridge)
 - Proposed changes that impact historic sites need to be reviewed for potential negative impacts (including archaeological sensitivity and aesthetic impacts), may not be fundable

Walking and Biking in Richmond

- Community feedback suggests that walking and biking are popular modes of travel, but there are significant barriers to making it safe and comfortable for all ages and abilities
- Bicycling
 - Phase I area lacks bicycle facilities, despite having popular routes (Bridge St, Main St)
 - Lack of convenient places to park in the downtown area
- Walking
 - Village has marked crosswalks at majority of intersections, but crossings are uncontrolled
 - Significant sidewalk gaps along walking routes on Jericho Rd and Bridge St
- Off-street paths and trails
 - Limited trail network in publicly accessible land north of Route 2 (most of Richmond's trails are located south of the river)



**What are the
neighborhoods we
should try to
connect to each
other and to the
Village?**



Commute (2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

- Vast majority of workers in Richmond commute by driving

(Note: Telecommute and Other categories are not shown below)

Driving (including carpooling)	Motorcycle	Public Transit	Biking	Walking
93.1% (2361)	0.0% (7)	0.0% (35)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (24)

- Over 1/3 have commutes of over 30 minutes, indicating they are traveling outside of Richmond for work
- Almost every worker has access to at least one vehicle in their household

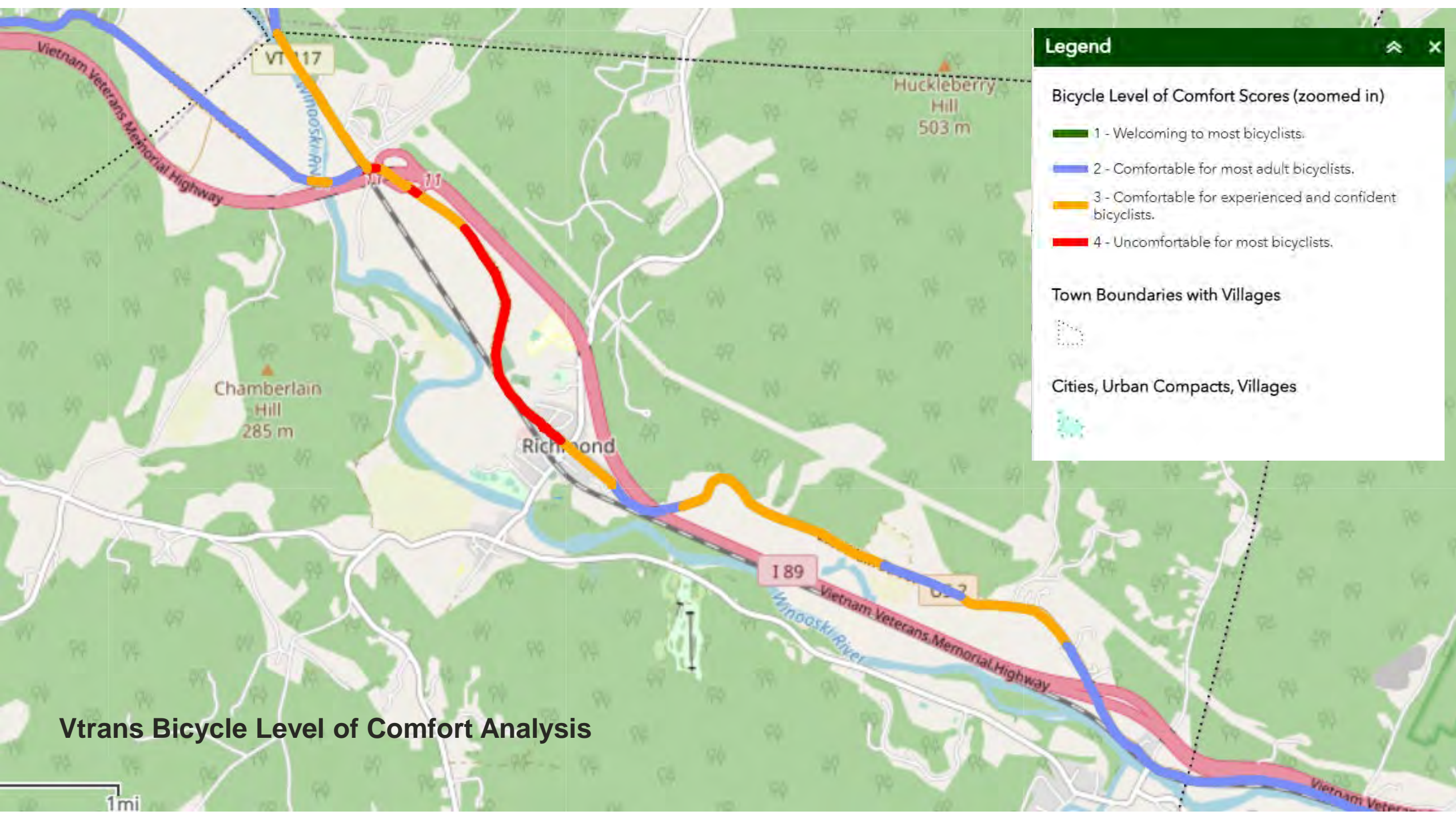
No vehicles	1 vehicle	2 vehicles	3 vehicles	4 vehicles	5 or more vehicles
1.0% (24)	11.0% (278)	51.3% (1301)	18.4% (468)	10.3% (261)	8.0% (204)

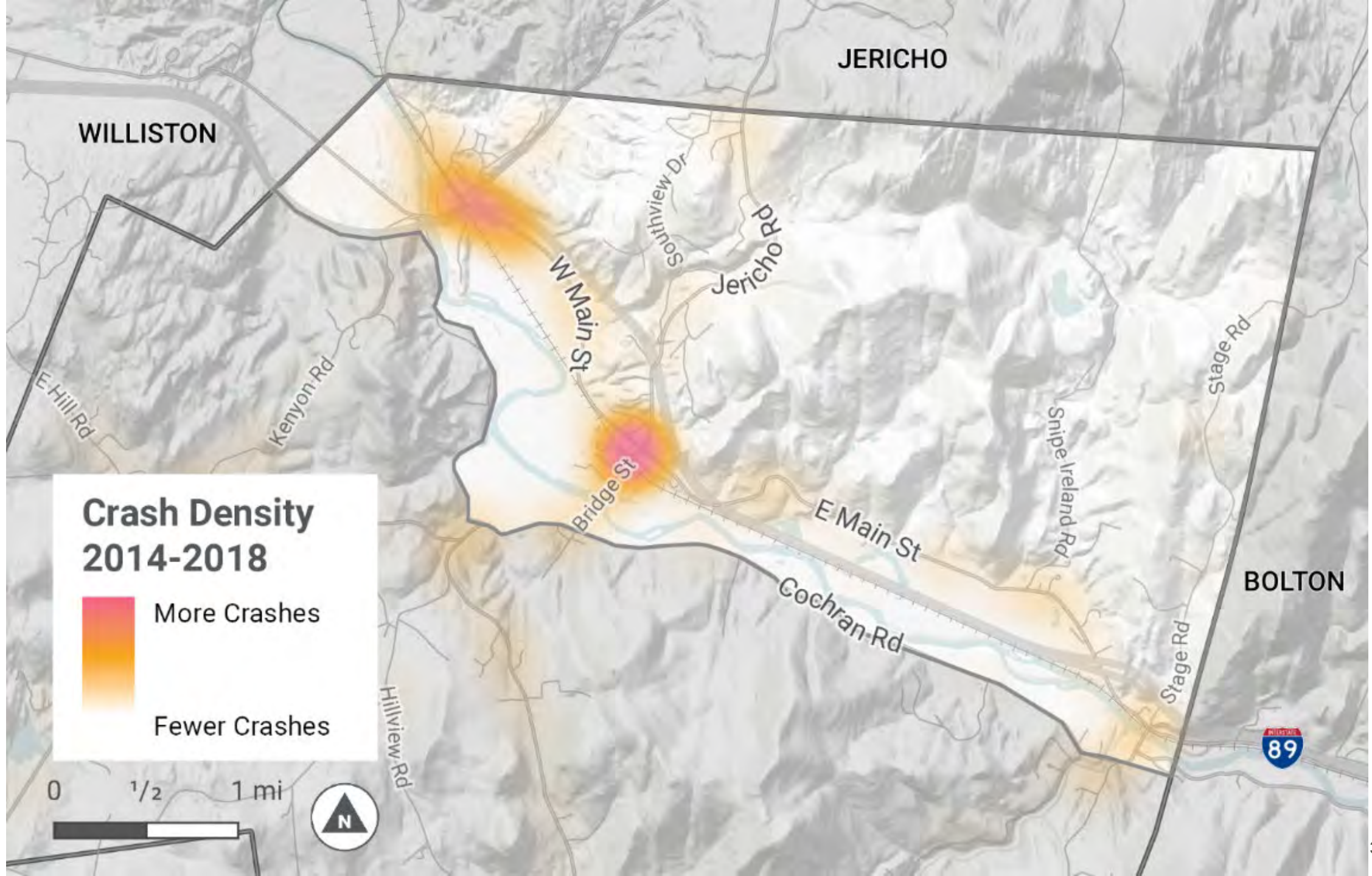
- Note: Trips made for errands and leisure are not included, which may rely on other travel modes beside driving

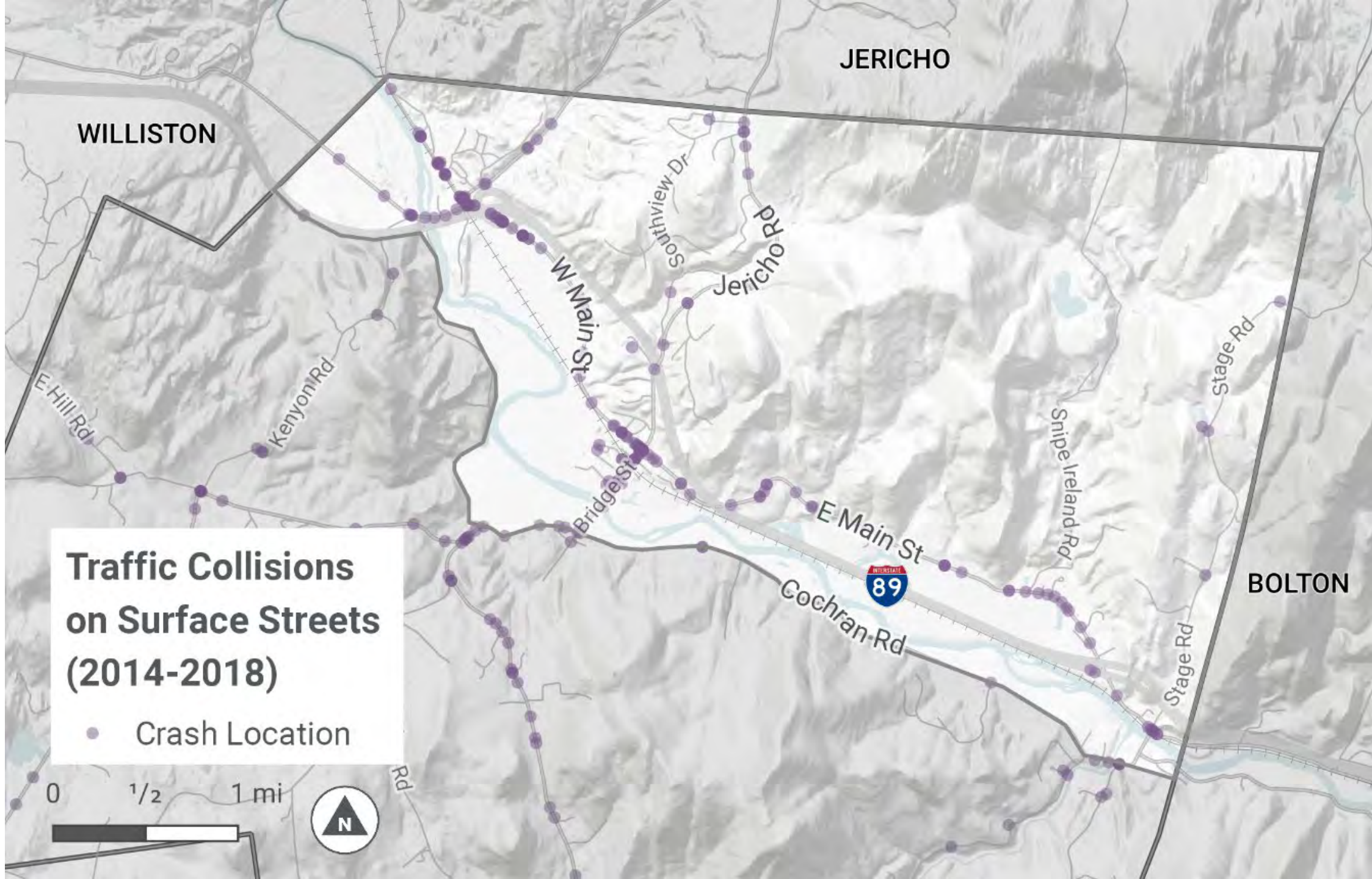
Popular Bicycling and Walking Routes (Strava)

- Popular bicycling routes:
Jericho Rd, Main St/Rt 2, Snipe Ireland Road, and Stage Rd
- Popular walking routes:
Concentrated in Richmond Village (on Bridge St), Main St/Rt 2 from Bridge St west until there is no longer sidewalk infrastructure, Jericho Rd.











Key Take-Aways

- Most town destinations are within bikeable, walkable distance
- Several factors conspire to make Richmond's roadways less friendly to bicyclists and pedestrians: many drivers, narrow and curving roadways, speed limits, inconsistent accommodation
- Stressful conditions can make short distances feel uncomfortable
- Islands of development separated by lack of infrastructure
- Existing trails could benefit from improved access and connections




Public Input

OUTREACH

- Front Porch Forums
- Advisory Committee
- Fliers in town
- Social media
- CCRPC regional newsletter

INPUT

- Emails to project team
 - Online crowdsource map (Wikimap)
 - Destinations
 - Barriers
 - Desired connections
 - Demographics of Wikimap users
- 

Wikimap

- 154 users
- Mostly white (90%)
- More than half female (57%)
- Two-thirds live in Richmond
- One-third live AND work in Richmond
- 69 destinations and/or barriers identified
- 60 suggested connections (route and type, e.g., Bike Lane, Sidewalk, Paved Shared Use, Unpaved Trail, Winter Trail)

Destinations Summary

- Park and Ride
- Riverview Commons
- School
- Village Center
- Services on Huntington Rd
- Johnnie Brook Trail
- Town Forest
- Fay's Corner
- ...

Connections Summary

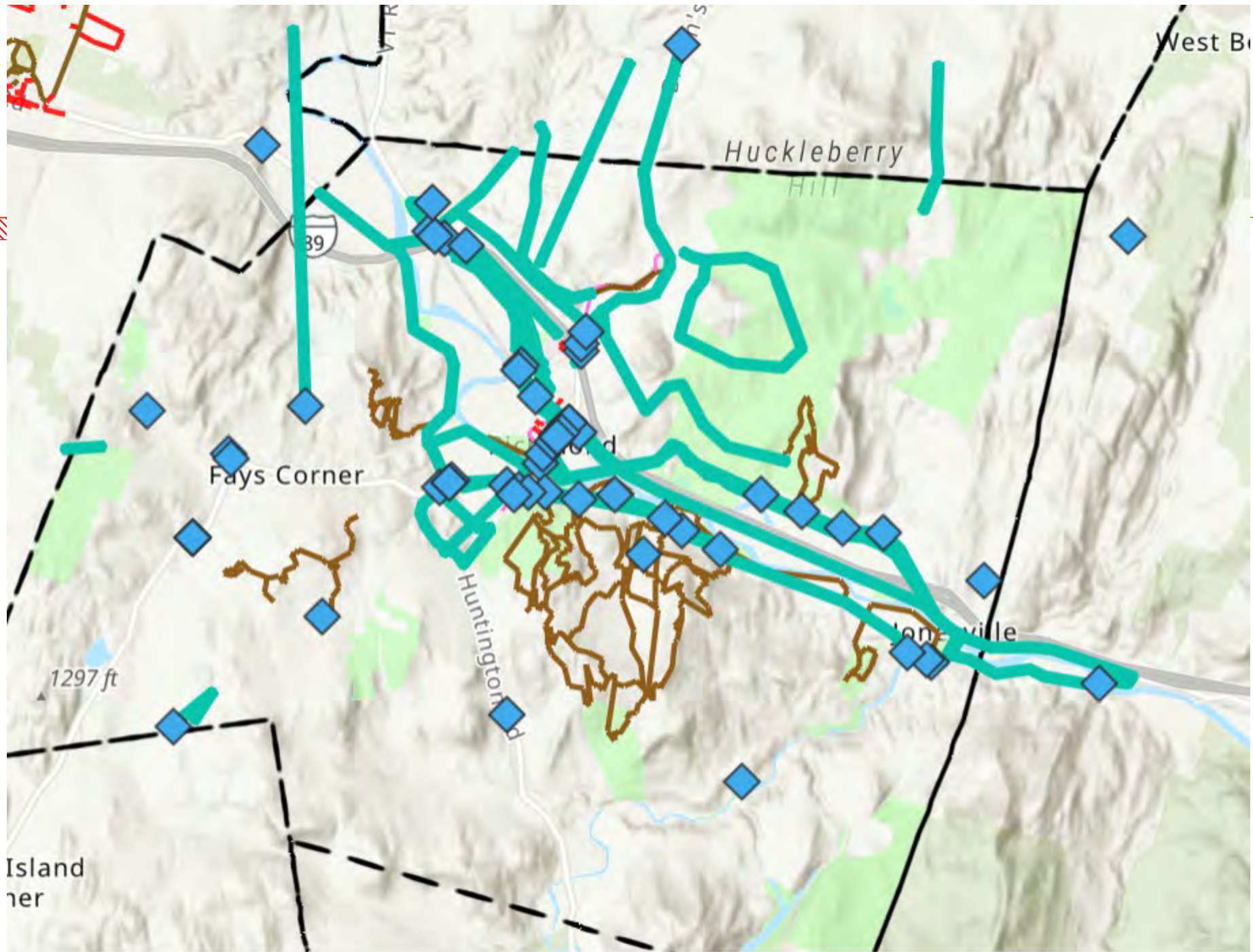
- Williston to Richmond to Montpelier
- Route 2 West: Riverview Commons, Park and Ride
- Route 2 East: Town Forest, Jonesville
- Valley View Rd, Southview to school
- Catamount Trails and Richmond Trails
- Jericho to Richmond (Jericho Rd/Browns Trace)
- Fay's Corner to Village
- ...

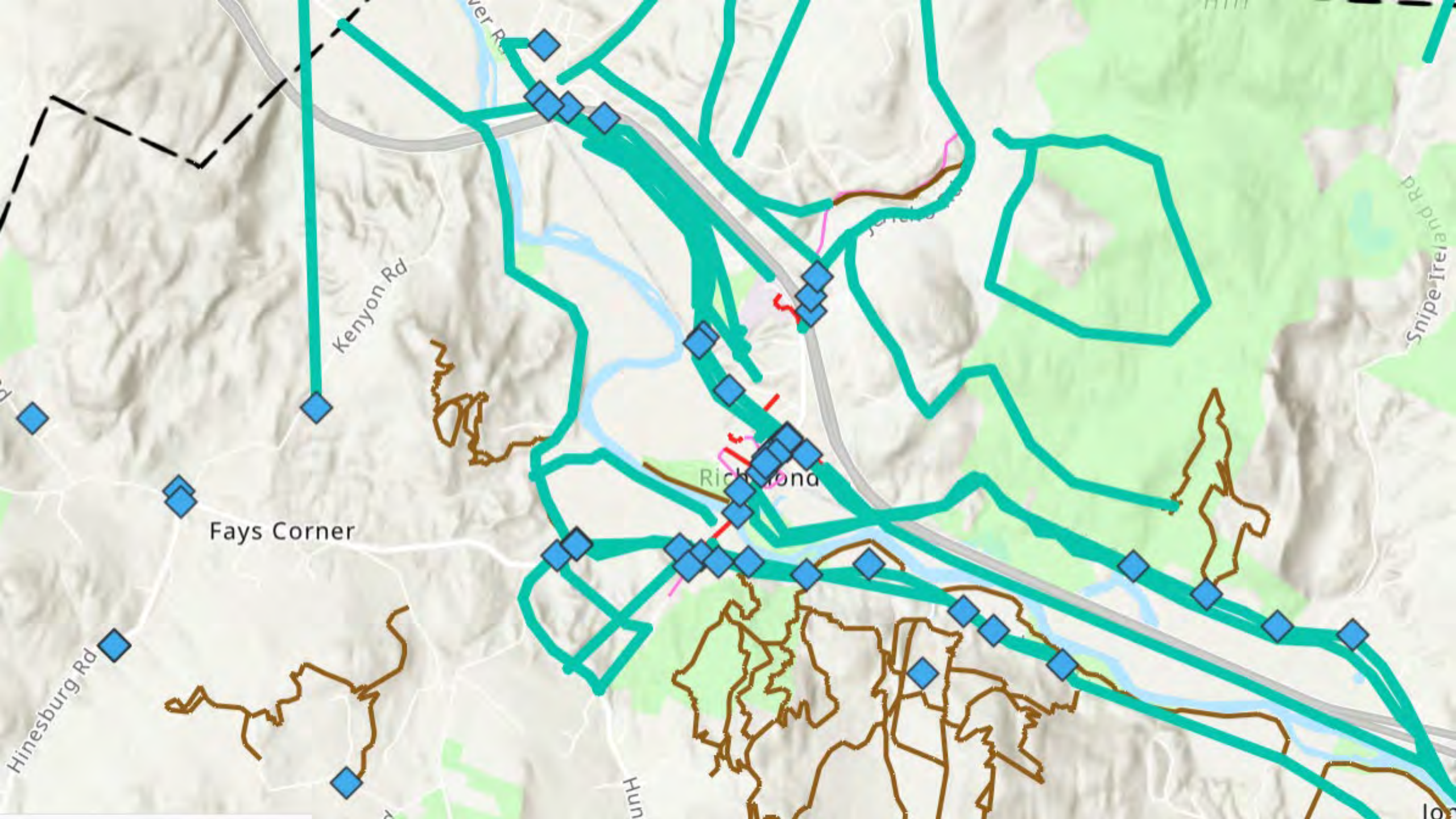
Barriers Summary

- Area around I-89 ramps
- Bridge Street/Route 2 intersection
- Bridge
- Bridge St/Huntington Rd/Cochran Rd/Thompson Rd intersection
- Narrow roadways, lack of facilities, sightline issues, traffic volumes and speeds

Other Comments

- More lighting
- More bike parking
- More car parking at trailheads
- Lands conserved with public dollars should (and are supposed to be) open to public
- Maintain shoulders, stripe fog lines, better markings, better signage





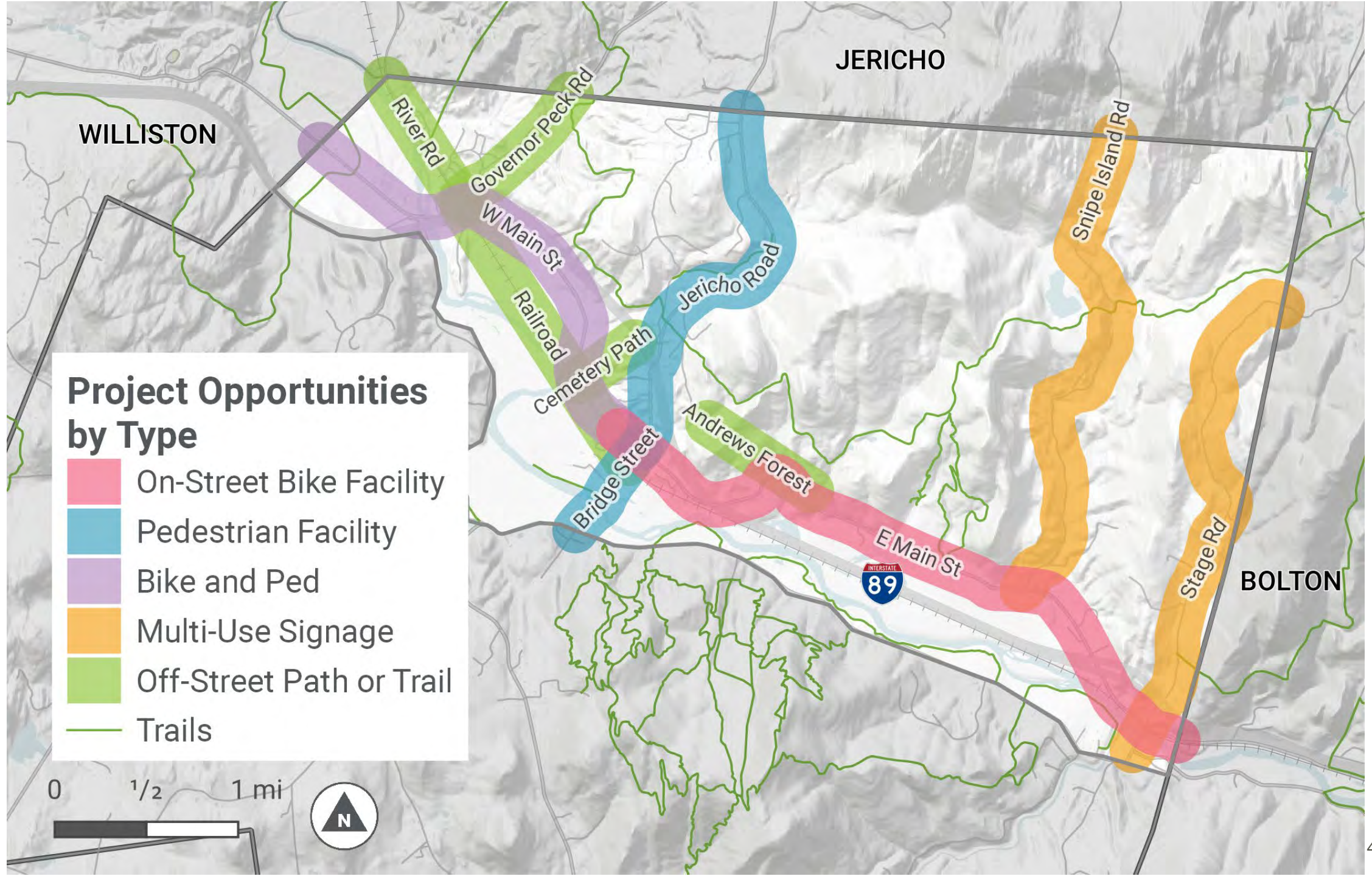


OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Constraints



CONSTRAINT	DESCRIPTION
Limited public right of way	Existing roadways are narrow, making it challenging to create safe and comfortable bicycle facilities by limiting possibilities for separating bicycles and pedestrians from travel lanes
Privately owned land	Implementation of paths and off-street trails may depend on the Town's ability to acquire land that is currently privately-owned.
Hilly topography	Varied and steep topography creates challenges for new and existing multimodal routes – many existing roads are prone to erosion due to their steep grade, steep drops to roadside ditches
Natural Resources	Recommendations should accommodate conservation of wildlife travel corridors, conserved areas, and natural upland communities.
Historic Sites	Recommendations should investigate potential negative impacts to historic sites that may impact funding opportunities
Special Flood Hazard Area	Area around the Winooski River as a Special Flood Hazard Area, and recommendations must comply with any existing floodplain management regulations.
Seasonal and Maintenance Concerns	Snow removal, seasonal flooding, poor surface conditions, and lack of maintenance funds can diminish the usefulness of facilities.



Complete Street opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists

- Main St/Rt 2 from Williston to Bolton
 - Safety improvements + accommodation (sidepath)
- Interchange
- Jericho Rd
 - Used by runners/walkers recreationally; connects to elementary and middle schools; safety concerns for people walking north of schools
 - Previously recommended: Wider sidewalk with buffer; Sidewalk extension from School St to entrance of Camel's Hump Middle School
- Bridge St
 - Safety issues with crossing the bridge; dangerous crossings in downtown; segment in downtown lacks sidewalk on eastern side
 - Previously recommended: four new sidewalks

Opportunities for new and improved paths and trails

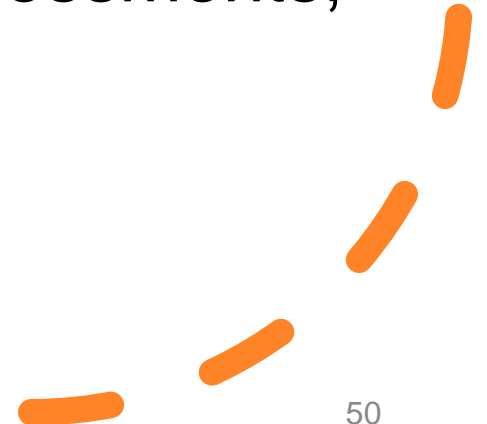
- Railroad along Main St/Rt 2 – connections to the Park and Ride
- Andrews Community Forest
 - Very challenging to access by foot or bicycle
 - Could potentially be connected to Valley View Rd through off-street trail
- Governor Peck Rd

Opportunities for Multimodal signage

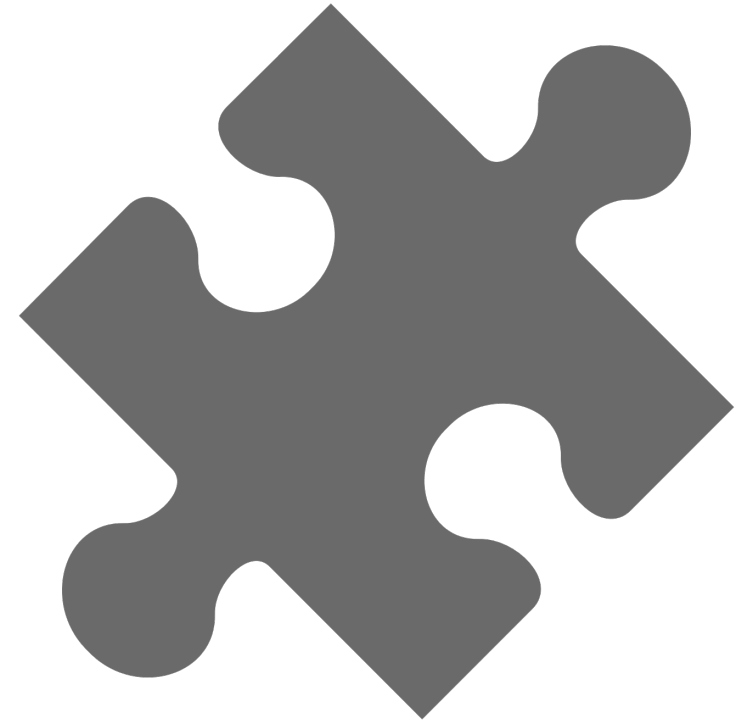
- Increases awareness of people walking and biking in areas where there are currently problems with speeding and collisions or near-misses
- Encourages sharing of the road, especially where bicycle and pedestrian facilities are more difficult to implement
- Wayfinding signage can indicate walking and biking travel times and helps people realize destinations are closer than they appear
- Snipe Ireland Rd and Stage Rd
 - Both provide connections to West Bolton and are utilized by multimodal traffic

Out of the box opportunities to explore

- Interim/ “quick-build” solutions or pilot projects
- Prioritization, implementation of smaller segments + “work arounds”
- Seasonal adaptations and programming
- Leverage Vision Zero angle: speed limit reductions, traffic calming
- Leverage public health angle – social distancing, health impact assessments, etc.



**Are there other
opportunities we
should consider?**



NEXT STEPS



Upcoming Tasks

- Develop draft network and facilities recommendations
- Prepare for and conduct virtual open house
 - Steering Committee assistance
- Finalize network, prioritize projects





THANK YOU

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TOOLE
DESIGN



CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

From 1st meeting



Background

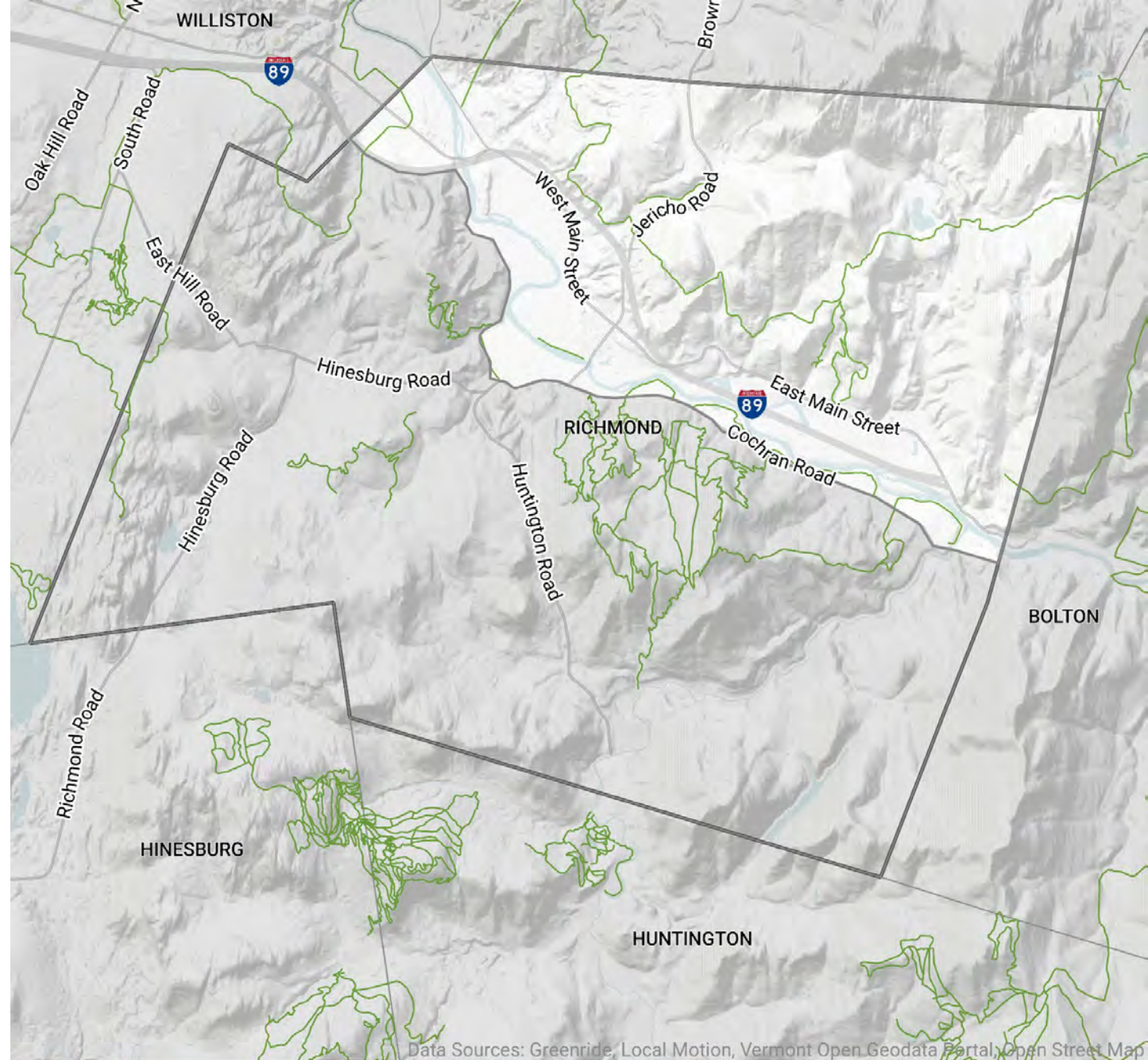
- **Goal:** Create a master plan to guide the establishment of a Complete Streets network that includes off-road connections and trails
- Project budget: \$40,000
 - CCRPC: \$32,000
 - Town of Richmond: \$8,000
- In response to request from Richmond Transportation Commission meeting on September 3, 2020

Plan Purpose

- Identify existing streets, trails, and off-road connections that can be incorporated into the future network
- Analyze town and state roads to determine their potential to be upgraded



Phase I Focus Area



Data Sources: Greenride, Local Motion, Vermont Open Geodata Portal, Open Street Map

Community Engagement

- Inclusive and equitable engagement to reach a broad and representative group of residents



Steering Committee



Engagement Event



Interactive Webmap



Existing Conditions Review and Analysis

- Plan and policy review
- Existing conditions analysis and memo
 - GIS base map (includes, e.g., parcel data, bicycle facilities, sidewalks, collision data, natural resources – as data is available)
 - Identify points of origination and destination
 - Key points that generate walking and bicycling trips
 - Identify opportunities (e.g., planned regional projects to piggyback on) and constraints (e.g., narrow rights-of-way)

Network Development



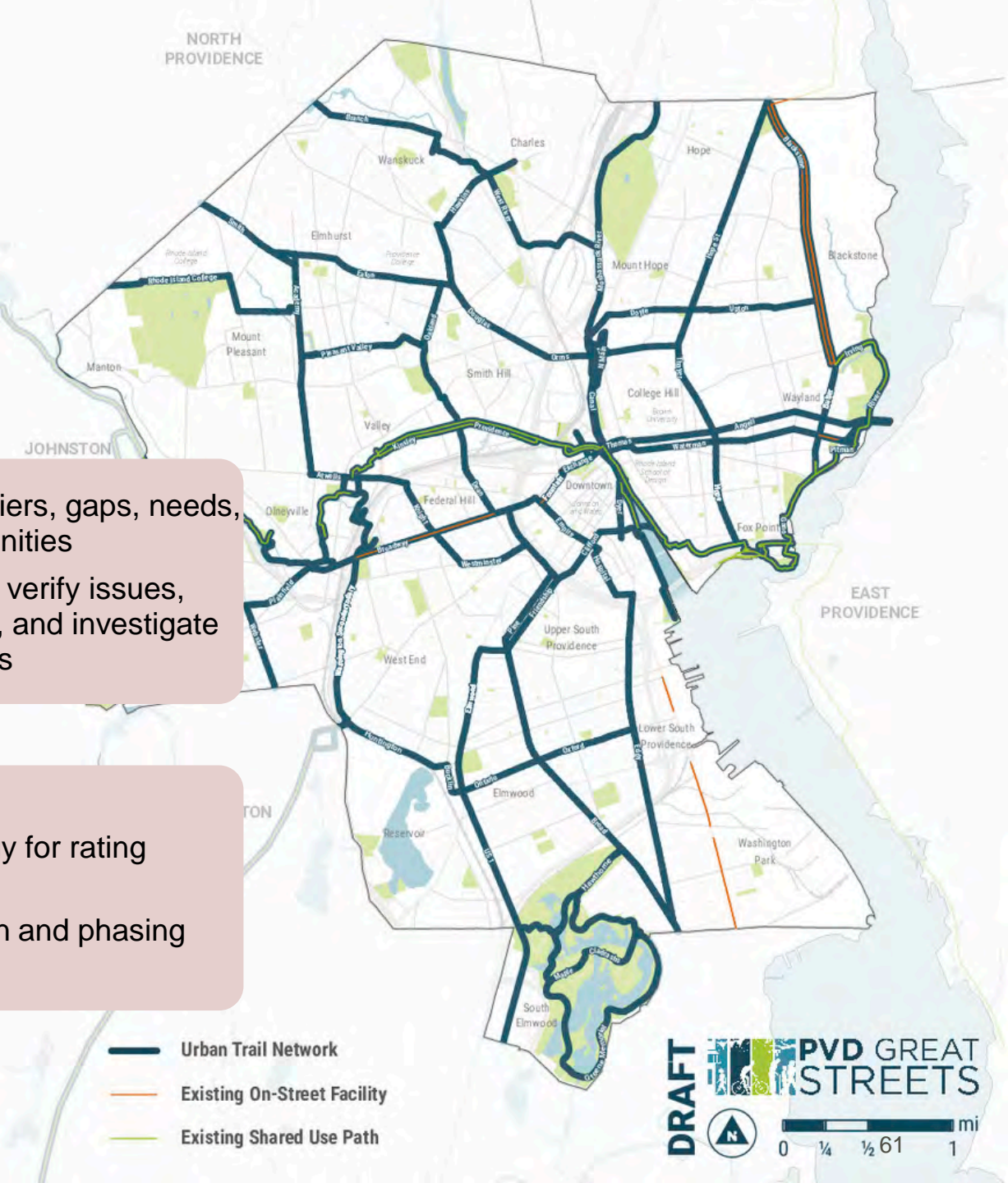
Draft network & facilities recommendations

Identify barriers, gaps, needs, and opportunities
Field visit to verify issues, take photos, and investigate opportunities



Final network & prioritization

Methodology for rating projects
Prioritization and phasing



Assemble Master Plan

- Executive summary
- Overview of planning and engagement process
- Recommendations for connected system
- General design solutions for each roadway or path in the network
- Implementation plan
- Maintenance and management recommendations

Work Plan & Schedule



TASKS	2020		2021	
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Project Kick-off				
Conduct Community Outreach	*	*	*	
Existing Conditions Analysis				
Network Development				
Assemble Master Plan				

* *Steering Committee meetings*



DISCUSSION



How can we best leverage the Steering Committee?



How can we best engage the community?



Are there projects or programs underway at your organization that dovetail with this Plan or should be included?



6

GROUP EXERCISE



*Richmond Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan
purpose/need statement brainstorm*

**What is your vision
of success for this
project?**



**Final
questions
or thoughts?**

