



# VERGENNES DOWNTOWN-BASIN MASTER PLAN

*Connecting Downtown and the Basin*

**Final Report**

*November 16th, 2016*

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## Project Partners

This project is funded by a Strong Communities, Better Connections (SCBC) grant from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development (ACCD). The goal of the SCBC program is to encourage communities to proactively coordinate land use decisions and transportation investments. Matching funds are provided by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) and the City of Vergennes. Technical support was provided by Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC). The Master Plan was guided by the project Steering Committee, comprised of:

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City of Vergennes



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## Introduction

The City of Vergennes has evolved into a livable, attractive city with a growing economy. The City provides all the goods and services needed for local residents and employees, as well as high quality destinations that attract Vermonters from throughout the region. Tourism is a growing sector of the economy as Vergennes is increasingly recognized as a “must see” place for travelers. The Otter Creek Basin, the Vergennes Falls, and the central Downtown area of Vergennes are potentially major tourism draws for the City. However, economic benefits are not being fully realized due to lack of physical and economic connections between these assets. Although the gap between the Downtown and Basin has been considered numerous times, an effective and realistic solution has eluded the City, and it remains a critical obstacle to livability and sustained economic growth.

To address these issues, the City applied for a Strong Communities, Better Connections grant to produce this Downtown-Basin Master Plan. This plan explores ways to better connect the central downtown area with the Basin area, recognizing the Basin as part of the City, and developing a path forward to realize the economic potential and livability of Vergennes. The planning process used public outreach, demonstration projects, an assessment of existing conditions, and a review of past studies to develop recommendations and action steps for improvements. This Master Plan document is a concise overview of the outcome of the planning process. Additional details are provided in the appendices which are found on the Vergennes City website: <http://vergennes.org/downtown-basin-master-plan/>

*“Vergennes is a ‘quality’ community that offers both small town feel and connectivity to its residents and businesses. In addition to an active downtown, the city and its immediate environs offer amenities not found in many communities. In particular, the adjacent basin is unique in the state.”*

*A response from business questionnaires distributed during the project process*



# What is a Master Plan?

A master plan is a general plan that outlines a series of projects that a City should undertake over the next 10-20 years in order to achieve a shared community vision. The process for developing a master plan is typically led by a steering committee and involves gathering public input, identifying existing issues and opportunities, and recommending solutions to address the issues and achieve the vision. It is essentially a roadmap from Point A (existing conditions) to Point B (the desired future).

# About this Master Plan

## Planning Context

The City of Vergennes Downtown-Basin Master Plan is a direct outgrowth of the 2014 Vergennes Community Visit by the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD). The Community Visit report recommended the creation of task forces to move projects and initiatives forward: the Basin and Riverside Task Force, the Transportation Task Force, and the Economic Development Task Force. These focus groups have advanced ideas and concepts and have been involved in developing this Master Plan.

The Vergennes Partnership has also been an active partner in developing this Master Plan. With the mission of “enhancing the economic viability and preserving the beauty and character of Downtown Vergennes,” the Partnership is a logical teammate in moving this Master Plan forward.



LEFT: Cover of the 2014 Vergennes Community Visit Report and Action Plan by the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD)

RIGHT: Voluntary donations box for boaters docking at Macdonough Park



Green Mountain Power (GMP) owns the hydroelectric dam at Vergennes Falls and much of the adjacent property, including Settlers Park. The dam at Vergennes Falls has been referred to as the birthplace of GMP, so GMP should be considered an important partner/stakeholder in the implementation of this Master Plan.

Likewise, the state’s Northlands Job Corps/Weeks School, UTC Aerospace Systems, and Kennedy Bros. are all significant stakeholders who serve as civic hubs that are nearby or even about the Basin area, and they may be able to play a part in the implementation of the Master Plan.

### **Relationship to the Municipal Development Plan (MDP)**

Both the 2014 Community Visit and this Downtown-Basin Master Plan are guided by the community vision, goals and recommended actions within Vergennes’ MDP. Improvements to the Basin area as a recreation destination have long been on the books for many residents and City Council, as have desired improvements to Vergennes’ Downtown for the continuous evolution into a thriving community center. This is reflected in the MDP and in the City’s participation in the Vermont Downtown Designation Program. This plan focuses in on the Otter Creek Basin District and the area of Downtown associated with the Central Business and the Designated Downtown district, recognizing the need to better physically and economically connect these two areas specifically, due to their proximity and density of amenities.

The MDP is the domain of the Planning Commission, while the Downtown-Basin Master Plan will be acted on by the Planning Commission and various committees and task forces that may include the Basin and Riverside Task Force, the Transportation Task Force, the Economic Development Task Force, and other stakeholders in Vergennes. Most of the action items will be the responsibility of various committees and/or task forces to carry forward, while others may require the leadership of the City or a partnership with other organizations and agencies, such as the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). Moving forward, it is essential that the City adopt a concurrent maintenance plan to protect the investments recommended in this plan.

### **Relationship to previous planning studies**

Over the past 20 years, Vergennes has conducted numerous scoping studies related to street design, gateways, wayfinding, multi-modal transportation, circulation and the Otter Creek Basin. Implementing the ideas from these studies has improved Vergennes greatly in many of these areas. This Downtown-Basin Master Plan highlights existing opportunities, some of which may have already been studied in greater detail, and some of which have not. This plan attempts to show the bigger picture context for these studies, potential new projects, and the prioritization of these projects towards realizing the vision of this plan and that of the MDP.

**“enhanc[ing] the economic viability and preserv[ing] the beauty and character of Downtown Vergennes”**

*The Vergennes Partnership  
mission statement*





**“Potential residential buyers in the Vergennes market are typically most impressed by the particular sense of community that exists, making it different from more suburbanized options in the Burlington area.”**

*A response from business questionnaires distributed during the project process*

## Why is this Master Plan important?

### *Public investment spurs private investment.*

Public and private investment are vital components to invigorate an area. Public investment from state or municipal agencies is a clear sign to communities, individuals and private developers that work is actively being done to improve a city or town. When publicly funded improvements are made, it will spur private developers to make investments, provide capital and contribute to the overall growth of an area.

This Master Plan identifies important long-term public investments needed to support a healthy, livable city and sustained economy. It guides future investment decisions and provides a roadmap for implementation and maintenance. The Vergennes Downtown-Basin Master Plan:

- Identifies opportunities for improvements to realize the Master Plan vision
- Demonstrates public ownership by incorporating input on existing conditions, recommendations, and priorities
- Provides prioritized action items in the implementation plan
- Demonstrates municipal commitment to the Master Plan vision by providing a roadmap for capital investment



*Community members participate in the Master Plan “Walk & Talk” at Macdonough Park during the Community Event in September 2015*



LEFT: Interpretive panel at Macdonough Park

CENTER: Vermont Historic Sites Commission informational panel in Macdonough Park

RIGHT: Wayfinding signage leading to Vergennes Falls Park

## Justification for public investment

Numerous studies, including briefing papers by the American Planning Association<sup>1,2</sup> and the 2012 VTrans report, “Economic Impact of Bicycling and Walking in Vermont,”<sup>3</sup> have indicated the benefits of investing in biking and walking facilities, parks, and infrastructure.

For example:

- Open spaces such as parks and recreation areas can have a positive effect on nearby residential property values, and can lead to proportionately higher property tax revenues for local governments.
- Retirees are attracted to and stay in communities that provide leisure and recreation amenities.
- Knowledge workers and talent are attracted to live and work in places with a diverse range of outdoor recreation activities.
- Parks and protected open space attract home buyers.
- Creating an interconnected system of parks and open space is more beneficial than creating parks in isolation.
- Municipalities can use parks to reduce public costs for stormwater management, flood control, transportation, and other forms of built infrastructure.
- Recent estimates indicate that overnight travelers to Vermont spend approximately \$166 daily for lodging, food/beverage, retail, gas, and other items and services.<sup>4</sup>

Public investment in the Basin and Downtown will not only help to achieve the vision and goals articulated below, but, as evidenced by these studies, will benefit Vergennes as a whole.

<sup>1</sup>American Planning Association (APA), City Parks Forum Briefing Paper #03: How cities use parks for economic development, 2002.

<sup>2</sup>APA, City Parks Forum Briefing Paper #05: How cities use parks for green infrastructure, 2002.

<sup>3</sup>VTrans, “Economic Impacts of Bicycling and Walking, 2012.

<sup>4</sup>Proprietary Vermont Mountain Resort Expenditure data; Impact of Tourism Sector on The Vermont Economy, prepared by Vermont Tourism Data Center, School of Natural Resources, The University of Vermont; Economic Impact of the Ski Industry in Maine, Research by Davidson-Peterson Associates, Inc.; Per capita expenditure studies used in the studies have been factored up to account for CPI increases.

*Creating an interconnected system of parks and open space is more beneficial than creating parks in isolation.*







## Study Area

The Downtown-Basin Master Plan includes Vergennes Falls Park, Macdonough Park, Settlers Park, and Main Street from Monkton Road to Canal Street.

However, there are important hubs beyond this defined study area that influence the Master Plan: the Northlands Job Corps/Weeks School, UTC Aerospace Systems, Kennedy Bros., the park and ride lot and the train station. Therefore, the study area contains connections to these hubs, and the Master Plan recommendations take them and their stakeholders into consideration.

*The following page contains a map of the city hubs and Downtown-Basin Study Area.*



Project study area



**Map Overview:**

The future vibrancy of Vergennes will be maintained and enhanced by acknowledging the importance of, and building on, the downtown and basin's connectivity and synergy with 3 other hubs in the City. These areas, which, in essence serve as "bookends" for the city's downtown, include the Industrial District, the Gateway District and the State of Vermont's Otter Creek Campus where Northlands Job Corps Center is located.

**Recommendations for the Northlands Job Corp / Weeks School and Public District:**

- Rezone for mixed uses
- Sidewalk improvements and add missing section just before High Street
- "Market" the Arsenal and Fairbanks buildings as future development or adaptive reuse opportunities
- Future crosswalks across Macdonough Drive to the Arsenal and Fairbanks buildings
- Add pedestrian and vehicular directional signs as part of the proposed wayfinding system
- Development possibilities for land and interior spaces are present in the area as outlined in the September 2105 report "A Master Plan for the State of Vermont Otter Creek Campuses and Lands in Vergennes and Ferrisburgh" by LandWorks

**Recommendations for the Northern Gateway District**

- Complete sidewalk/pedestrian connections to the police station
- New welcome sign /existing welcome sign relocated to more prominent and accessible location as an artwork (in the city green?)
- Review sidewalk conditions – establish "pause place" with a bench/shade halfway to downtown area
- Add pedestrian and vehicular directional signs as part of the proposed wayfinding system
- Development possibilities exist for land and interior space in the Kennedy Bros. Building and elsewhere in this district.

**Recommendations for the Industrial District**

- Strengthen trail connections to UTC site along Otter Creek shoreline
- New welcome sign /existing welcome sign relocated to more prominent and accessible location as an artwork (in Vergennes Falls Park?)
- Review sidewalk conditions and all pedestrian elements- restripe crosswalks
- Add pedestrian and vehicular directional signs as part of the proposed wayfinding system
- Intersection improvements at Canal and West Street
- Development possibilities for land and building lots exist in the Industrial district



**City Hubs and the Downtown-Basin Study Area**



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## Vision and Goals

The vision statement for the Master Plan stems from the 2014 Vergennes Community Visit, which indicated there is untapped potential in Vergennes. The vision is as follows:

*“To realize the economic potential of Vergennes’ assets by strengthening the connection between the Downtown and Otter Creek Basin, improving multi-modal (that is, walking, biking, transit) opportunities, street design, and recreational opportunities.”*

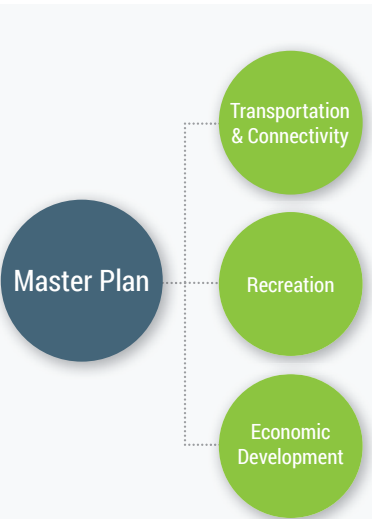
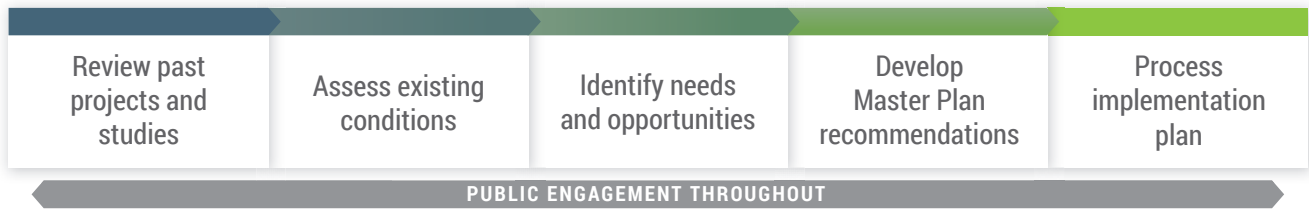
In support of the vision, there are three goals which provide the structure of the Master Plan. The goals, which, like the vision statement, also stem from the Vergennes Community Visit, are:

- Improving the transportation connections between the Basin and Downtown
- Developing the Basin’s draw as a recreation destination
- Identifying economic development issues and opportunities through a market analysis

*“The community should actively seek to become part of the ‘creative economy.’ The city’s amenities and sense of community are attractions – use them to attract creative persons.”*

*A response from business questionnaires distributed during the project process*





## Project Process

The project planning team consisted of a project manager from ACRPC, the consultant team, and the Steering Committee, as previously described. Public outreach was conducted throughout the Master Plan’s development to establish a foundation of public support and ownership.

The Master Plan was developed by conducting an intensive existing conditions assessment (Appendix D) to document issues and opportunities, and by demonstrating design concepts to show how specific recommendations would work if implemented permanently. This section describes the public outreach activities and assessment findings which informed the priority action items identified in this plan.

### Public Outreach

A master plan must be rooted in public feedback and support if it is to be successful. This Master Plan used a variety of methods to reach out to and listen to the public. The methods used to gather input and feedback from the public included the following:

- Website
- Intercept surveys
- Outreach to bicycle tour companies
- Business owner and developer interviews
- Walking tours of the study area
- Pop-up demonstration event of temporary curb extensions, splitter islands, gateways, bike lanes, and an information kiosk
- Open House at the Vergennes Opera House
- Farmers’ Market table for project Q + A

The recommendations resulting from the public process were organized according to the three Master Plan goals:

- Improving the transportation connections between the Basin and Downtown
- Developing the Basin’s draw as a recreation destination
- Identifying economic development issues and opportunities through a market analysis

*A complete description of the public process begins on page 7 of Appendix D, and results are described in Appendix C.*

## Assess Existing Conditions

Through public outreach, a review of previous scoping studies and a thorough site analysis, constraints and opportunities were identified within the study area. This analysis focused on three areas of interest: recreation, transportation and connectivity, and economic development.

A market analysis provided the economic context of Vergennes business, housing and recreation constraints and opportunities within Addison County and within the State.

*This report is organized to concisely summarize the overall Master Plan findings and recommendations, while providing additional detail in the Appendices. Full descriptions of the transportation and connectivity, recreation, and economic analyses are provided in Appendices D and E.*

## Identify Needs and Opportunities

Site analysis, public input and discussion with the Steering Committee provided the foundation for prioritization of potential projects and next steps.

The final stage of the economic analysis incorporated public feedback and concerns, priorities and assessment findings to provide economic development recommendations unique to Vergennes and unique to the goals of the Downtown-Basin Master Plan.

## Develop Master Plan

The Master Plan encapsulates the needs and opportunities found in the assessment stage into big picture concepts with associated recommendations. The Master Plan recommendations are summarized in graphic maps on the following pages. These recommendations are then broken down into specific tasks within the implementation plan.

## Create Implementation Plan

The implementation plan does four things:

- Identifies potential tasks toward Master Plan realization
- Outlines associated information associated with each task
- Prioritizes those tasks based on public and Steering Committee input and in association with the goals of this plan
- Outlines next steps for implementation by prescribing next steps for each task force



*TOP: A volunteer adding temporary bike lanes to Main Street during the Master Plan Community Event in September 2015.*

*BOTTOM: A poster distributed throughout Vergennes for the Master Plan community event in September 2015.*





LEFT: Participants having a discussion at the “Walk & Talk”, as part of the Master Plan Community Event in September 2015.



CENTER: Vergennes community members review work and give feedback as part of the master planning process at the Vergennes Opera House in February 2016.



RIGHT: Project booth for the Master Plan Community Event in September 2015.

**“Relatively few rentals are currently listed in the Downtown area; this reflects both the scarcity of Downtown core housing and a presumed low current vacancy rate”**

*A response from business questionnaires distributed during the project process*

## Assessment of Existing Conditions

The *Existing Conditions, Opportunities, and Constraints* analysis had four major conclusions which impact the success of all areas of the study site:

### Wayfinding

Wayfinding, information and signage are needed to both unify and connect the Basin and Downtown. (A preliminary wayfinding plan is provided in Appendix A.)

### Maintenance

Lack of maintenance is a key issue, and has a direct negative impact on economic development. When a new project is built, a maintenance plan and budget should accompany it.

### Trucks

Trucks on Main Street are disruptive. This is a major issue in Vergennes, one that warrants its own study and approach. The City is discussing possible solutions and mitigation with VTrans. (Pages 29-30 of Appendix D provide additional information.)

### Macdonough Drive Intersection

The Macdonough Drive/South Water Street intersection is centrally located within the study site and is a key barrier to the successful and safe connectivity to/from the Basin, Central Business District and surrounding neighborhoods. It has a series of problems associated with it, including the number of large trucks that travel through, the proximity of driveways, the location of head-in parking adjacent to it, the wide curb radii, and the slope on which it is located. A 2006 intersection study by VTrans, the ACRPC, and the City provided several recommendations for improving the intersection. Although some (like the recommendation for a traffic signal) might need to be revisited, many others from this study could be applied to improve the intersection.





Vergennes community members review work and give feedback as part of the master planning process at the Vergennes Opera House in February 2016.

## Community Assets

Why visit/live in Vergennes? In the process of developing this Master Plan, a set of unique assets were found to comprise Vergennes' identity:

- The presence of the Vergennes Falls and Basin within easy walking distance of the commercial core, UTC and Northlands Job Corps/Weeks School.
- The potential for recreation-based, tourism-based, and commercial-based activities in a small, walkable area.
- The geographic location (that is, situated between Burlington and Middlebury), which is within driving range for both commuters and tourists.
- The restaurant-based market 'niche' that has been carved out by Vergennes' unique cluster of downtown eateries. Visitors that come to the city to eat can be induced to spend their money on other goods, services and attractions.
- The City's affordability: housing and other aspects of Vergennes life make it a more affordable option than nearby Burlington or Middlebury.
- 'Small-Town-Feel' – while this phrase is over-used, it remains true for Vergennes. While city residents have access to a full range of services, they live in a community that recognizes the value of familiarity.
- Vergennes is on the [Lake Champlain Byway](#). A byway is defined as: A public road having special scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, (and/or) natural qualities that have been recognized as such through legislation or some other official declaration. (*FHWA Interim Policy, May 18, 1995*)
- Vergennes is on the Lake Champlain Bikeway.
- The City is a port of Lake Champlain, offering boaters access via Otter Creek.

*“Small Town Feel’ – while this phrase is over-used, it remains true for Vergennes.”*

## Vacancies and Development Options

Business owner and developer interviews conducted as part of the economic development study yielded vacant, under-developed, and undeveloped parcels that could be considered as options for future development. The map on page 15





*Temporary 'bulb-out' / curb extension at the corner of Green Street and Main Street as part of the Community Event demonstration projects in September of 2015.*

illustrates these options.

## Otter Creek Basin

There has been and continues to be a large investment of time and ideas from the Basin and Riverside Task Force regarding the opportunities within the Otter Creek Basin District – for recreation, wildlife, and water quality improvements. Preliminary design and programming ideas for improving recreational access and public enjoyment of Macdonough Park and Vergennes Falls Park were provided to the consultants and informed the recommendations of this plan.

Feedback from other public events suggested the need to think of the Basin within the context of a city-wide recreation/greenspace plan, connecting recreation assets, including off-street trails, the Village Green and the school athletic fields.

*More detailed preliminary design and programming concepts can be found for these parks in the implementation section.*

## Street Design and Connectivity

Main Street and adjoining street connections and street crossings are crucial to the success of this Master Plan. The project analysis included measurements of the current street network and the potential for design improvements for increasing the enjoyment of safely walking and bicycling to and from sites and amenities. A pop-up demonstration project showed ample room for a 5-foot bike lanes on Main Street, pedestrian splitter islands in key locations, and curb extensions for narrowing street crossings within the study area.

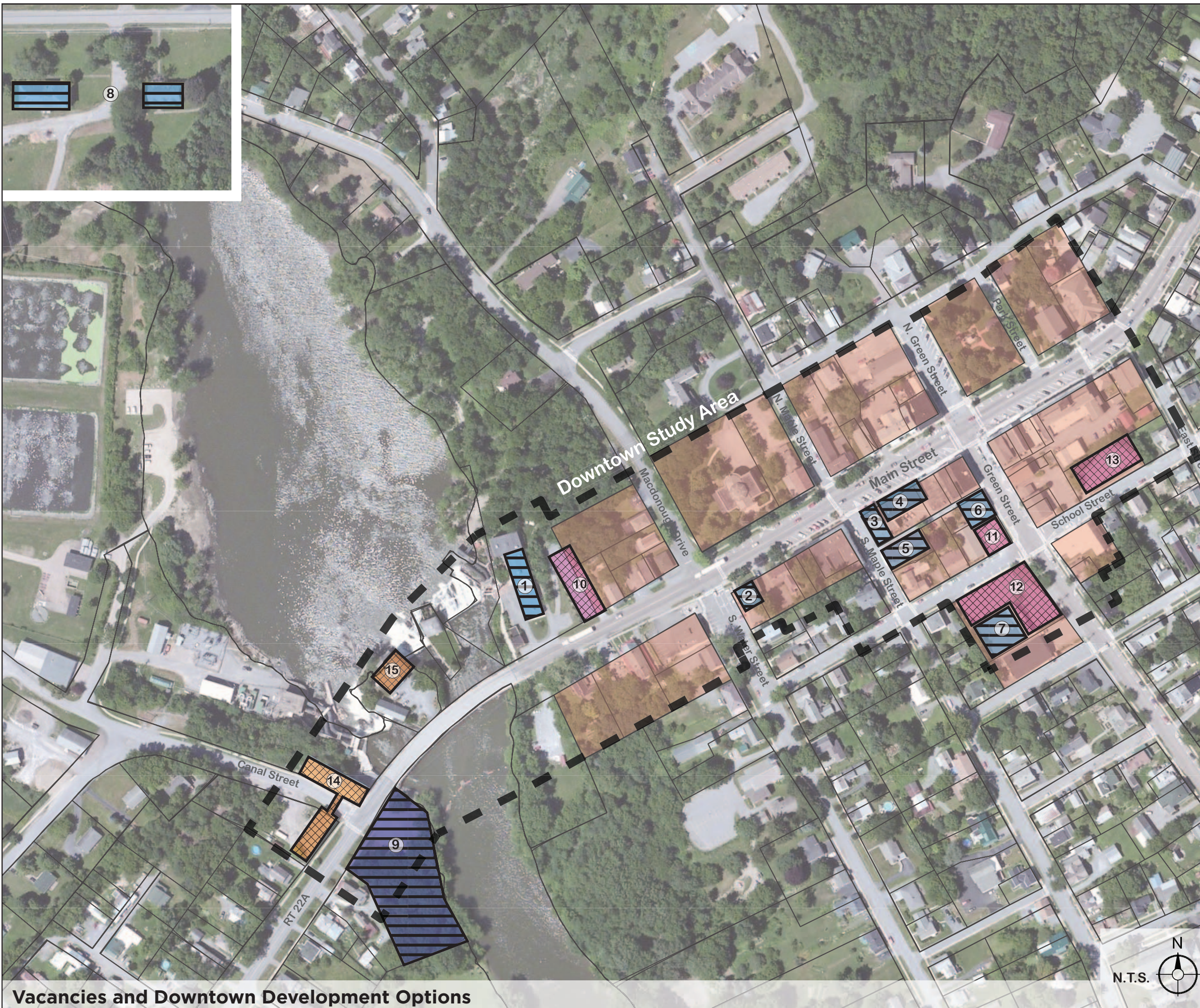
*The complete Analysis of Existing Conditions, Opportunities, and Constraints is included in Appendix D. The Economic Development Report is included in Appendices D and E.*

*The following pages contains a snapshot from February 2016 of real estate vacancies and possible Downtown development options.*



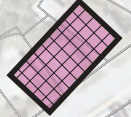
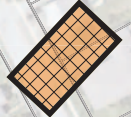

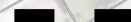
***“Commuter rail – with a stop to the east of Downtown – would be a great boon to the Vergennes residential market”***

*A response from business questionnaires distributed during the project process*





**Legend:**

-  **VACANCY (full or partial building)**
  1. LF Benton Company
  2. Storefront; lower level
  3. Former 3 Squares
  4. Available office space
  5. Building, vacant
  6. Building, vacant
  7. Building, past / current vacancies
  8. Arsenal and Fairbanks Buildings (Northlands Job Corp / Weeks School, insert)
-  **UNDEVELOPED**
  9. "Duffy" Lot \*
-  **PARKING LOTS**
  10. Main Street adjacent to Benton building / lot
  11. School and Green Street (north)
  12. School and Green Street (south)
  13. School Street
-  **UNDER DEVELOPMENT**
  14. Haviland Shade Roller Mill and Annex Residential - 17 units (in permit process)
  15. Norton Grist Mill Residential
-  **Central Business District (CBD)**  
(per City of Vergennes Zoning Map, ACRPC dated 1/2012)
-  **Downtown Study Area**

**Notes:**

A) Any future development or redevelopment of buildings and parking lots must address and satisfy regulatory requirements for parking space numbers by use.

B) Identified vacancies and developments lots are based on available resources, information provided by Doug Kennedy Advisors, the Vergennes City Manager, and field reconnaissance conducted in **February 2016**. Actual vacancies may change at any time. Potential development options are subject to owner interest and zoning parameters.

\* The lot owner indicated in a phone conversation on 2-17-16 that there was an Act 250 permit for a 25 unit motel for this site. That permit has lapsed. The lot has been evaluated for a 25 unit residential development as well, but the owner has indicated that there are no immediate plans for development.

**Vacancies and Downtown Development Options**



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## The Master Plan

*Looking at the Vergennes Falls and Basin from Macdonough Park*

The Master Plan presented on the following pages is organized into the following actions:

- Create and market an identity
- Maximize recreation opportunities
- Connect assets
- Stimulate local economy

Each of the Master Plan recommendations, from creating more active recreation in the Basin to considering the potential of a hotel Downtown, seeks to enhance and make the most of Vergennes' assets.

Reading through the recommendations, one may find a degree of repetition and overlap. The findings and recommendations that came out of this master planning process are overlapping and not linear. This is somewhat unavoidable and intentional, as the Master Plan is an entwined, systematic approach to achieving the Vision: it is a comprehensive program of recommendations.

For example, the recommendation for expanding the docks is grouped under "Stimulate local economy," because it will increase revenue and increase capacity for more visitors, but it also supports recreation opportunities. Similarly, the active recreation recommendations under "Maximize recreation opportunities" will support economic development by enhancing assets that attract visitors and new residents.


**Note on Vergennes Falls Park and Macdonough Park:** *More detailed preliminary design and programming concepts can be found for these parks in the implementation section.*



# 1. CREATE AND MARKET AN IDENTITY



## IDENTITY

-  Above all the other recommendations and action items in this Master Plan, ‘creating and marketing an identity’ was repeated throughout the Steering Committee discussions and the public input process.

A brand identity will unify the Downtown and Basin areas, market Vergennes as a destination, and result in economic development.

Therefore, this is the first recommendation, and it is achieved through the development of graphics (a logo, color schemes, fonts, etc.) and messaging (“things to do in Vergennes,” etc.). The formatted messages are then disseminated through wayfinding and information kiosks, brochures, and regional media.

The following page contains a conceptual wayfinding plan.

See **Appendix A** for more wayfinding concepts.



*TOP: One of three wayfinding concepts created for the master planning effort*

*BOTTOM: A temporary kiosk designed and built by David Raphael of LandWorks with assistance from volunteers for the Master Plan Community Event in September 2015*



**Legend**

- Signage / Wayfinding
- Pedestrian
- Vehicular
- Interpretation
- Overlook
- ID Sign
- Gateway to downtown
- 'Welcome to Vergennes'
- Information Kiosk

**Notes:**

- 1) Move existing 'Welcome to Vergennes' artwork / signs to more visible and accessible locations in the city (i.e. the city green) to better preserve and feature the signs and the artisans they represent.
- 2) All sign locations are approximate.
- 3) Final messaging to be determined.
- 4) Kiosks could include maps, bus directories and brochure racks.

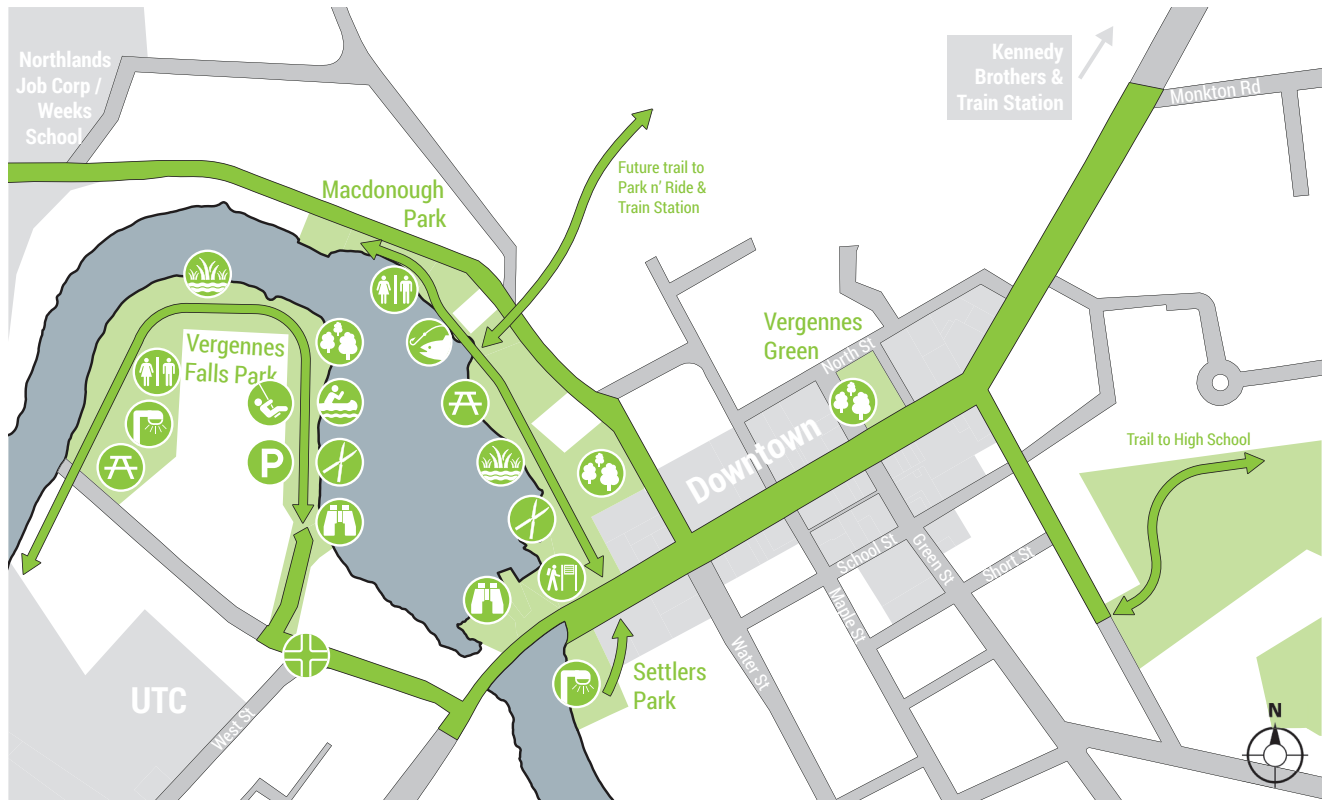










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## 2. MAXIMIZE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES







### LANDSCAPE

-  Create a cohesive language of landscape materials throughout the Basin and Downtown.
-  Selectively trim vegetation to enhance views.
-  Add a 'no-mow' buffer of low plantings for shoreline restoration on both sides of the Basin.
-  Reconfigure the parking area at Vergennes Falls Park to create a planted buffer between the parking area and Otter Creek
-  Redesign the Canal Street entrance of Vergennes Falls Park to feel more park-like and less industrial
-  Bring/install permanent or temporary art to the Main Street and Basin/Parks to include in 'Arts Walk'




### INTERPRETATION

-  Improve overlook and interpretation for viewing the Vergennes Falls and historic hydro facility. Work with Green Mountain Power as appropriate.
-  Add coordinated signs and artifacts to interpret historic and natural resources.

### ACTIVE RECREATION

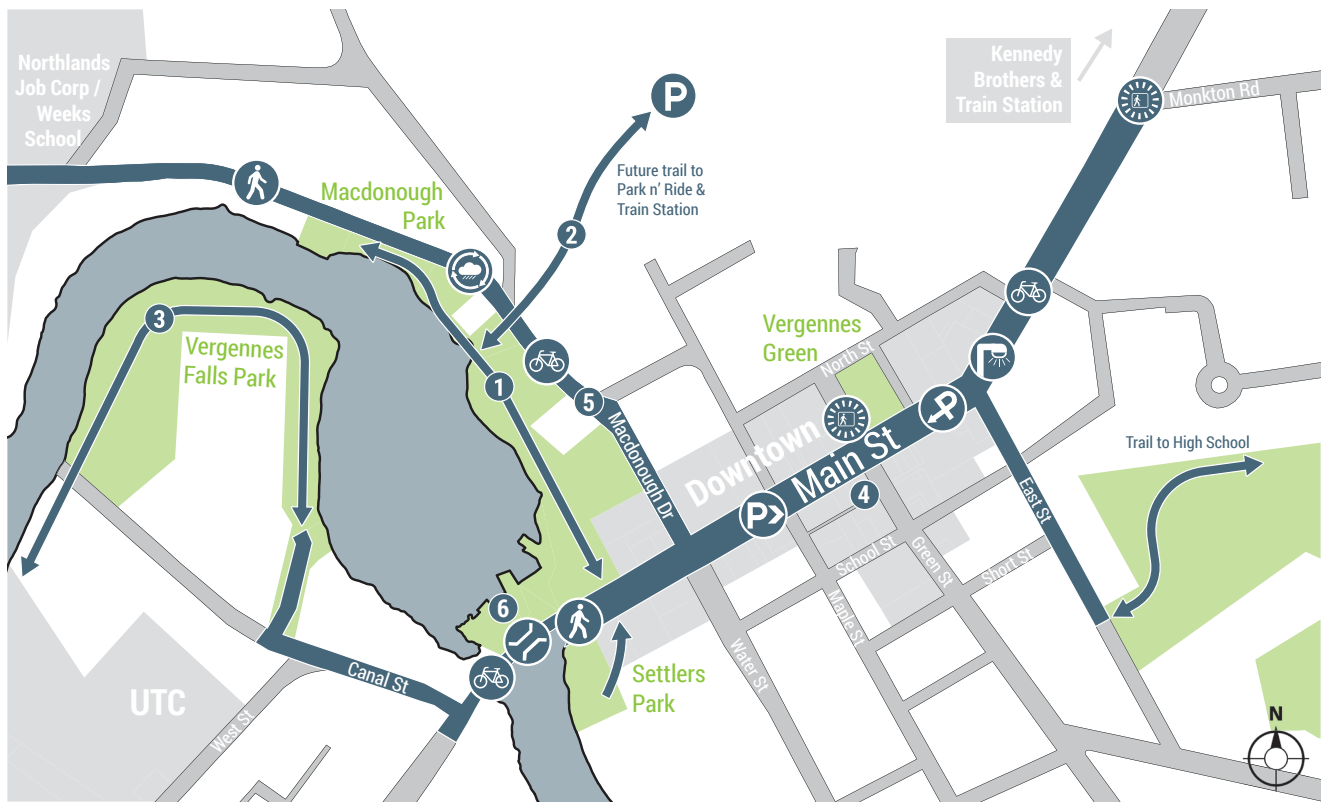
-  Provide a location for canoe rentals in the Basin.
-  Provide opportunities for fishing in the Basin including bait and tackle rental.
-  Develop a natural play area and dog park at Vergennes Falls Park.
-  Design and maintain street as intricate parts of the recreation network.

### AMENITIES

-  Construct bathrooms and showers on both sides of the Basin.
-  Install furniture such as benches and picnic tables on both sides of the Basin to encourage visitors to linger.
-  Install pedestrian-scaled lighting strategically in the parks.



# 3. CONNECT ASSETS



## TRAILS

- 1 Construct a boardwalk trail to connect the docks to the stairway.
- 2 Construct a trail from Macdonough Park to the Park-and-Ride and Train Station.
- 3 Improve and maintain the trail through Vergennes Falls Park and to UTC.

## STREET IMPROVEMENTS

### Main Street 4

- Install pedestrian signals on Main Street at Monkton Road and Green Street.
- Improve parking management by directing drivers to under-utilized lots.
- Stripe bike lanes.
- Replace highway-style lights with pedestrian-scale lighting.
- Test back-in angle parking for a year in conjunction with an education campaign, or widen sidewalks and convert to parallel parking to accommodate the high demand for outdoor seating.

### Macdonough Drive 5

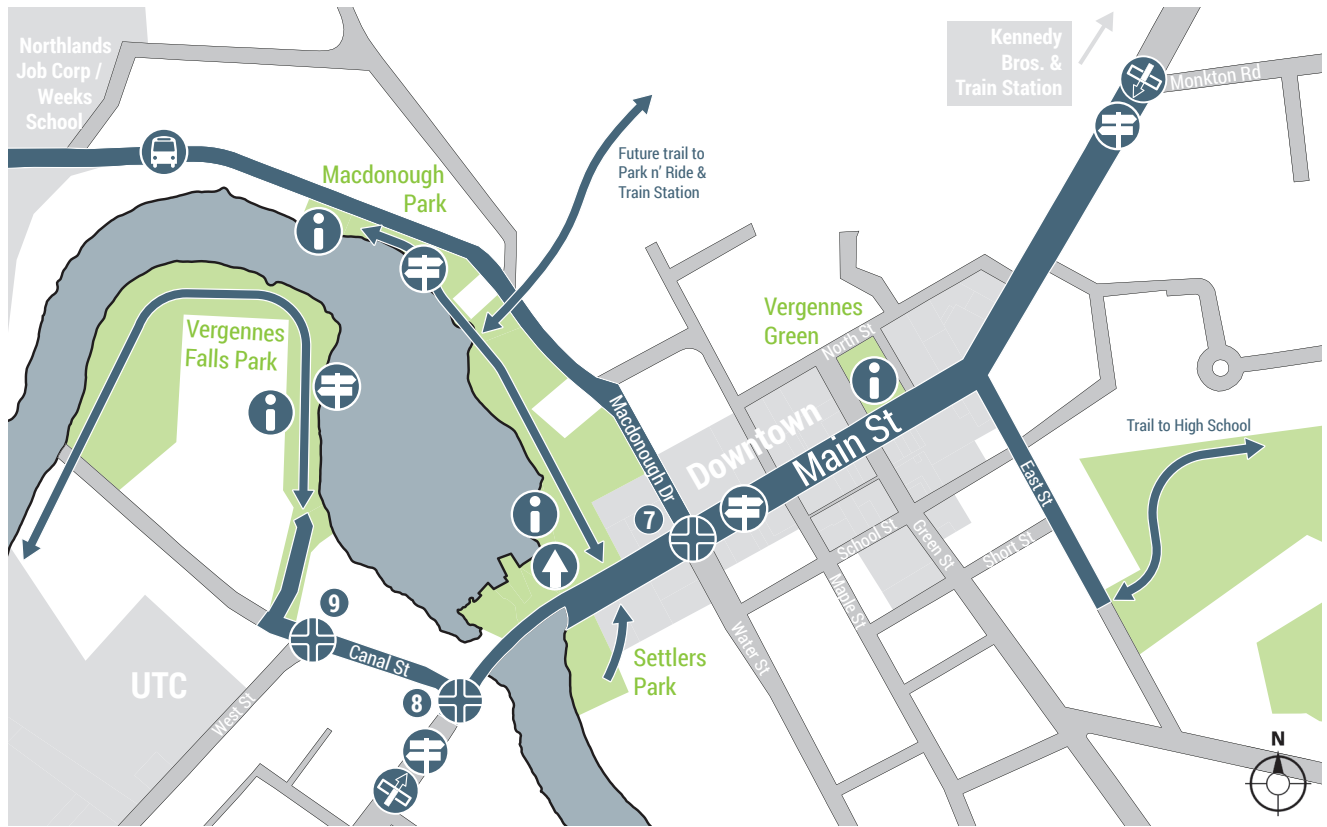
- Extend and repair sidewalks to the Northlands Job Corps/Weeks School.
- Stripe bike lanes.
- Improve stormwater management.

### Otter Creek Bridge 6

- Redesign the bridge to slow traffic and indicate the entrance to Downtown.
- Work with VTrans to develop bike accommodations on the bridge and provide a sidewalk on the north side.
- After implementing speed reduction measures on the bridge, install enhanced crossing treatments at Settlers Park.
- Develop access to City-owned Pumthouse Island/overlook.



### 3. CONNECT ASSETS (CONTINUED)



#### INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS



##### Main Street @ Macdonough Drive 7

- Signalize the intersection.
- Reduce the curb radius on the northeast corner of the intersection by extending the curb.
- Add a curbed island to the northwest corner.
- Work with the gas station/market to improve parking and access issues on South Water Street.
- Explore the potential for making South Water Street one-way southbound.



##### Main Street @ Canal Street 8

- Reduce the curb radius on the northeast corner of the intersection by extending the curb.
- Reduce the crossing distance on Main Street by maintaining a consistent edge of street.

##### West Street @ Canal Street



Realign the intersection to improve circulation and address traffic and safety concerns.

#### GATEWAYS



Construct gateway treatments such as splitter islands, pavement material changes, signage, and lighting, on Main Street at either end of Downtown to tell drivers they are entering a slower speed area.

#### SHUTTLE SYSTEM



Develop a shuttle system to connect the Northlands Job Corps/Weeks School, both sides of the Basin, Downtown, and the Park and Ride/Train Station.

#### WAYFINDING



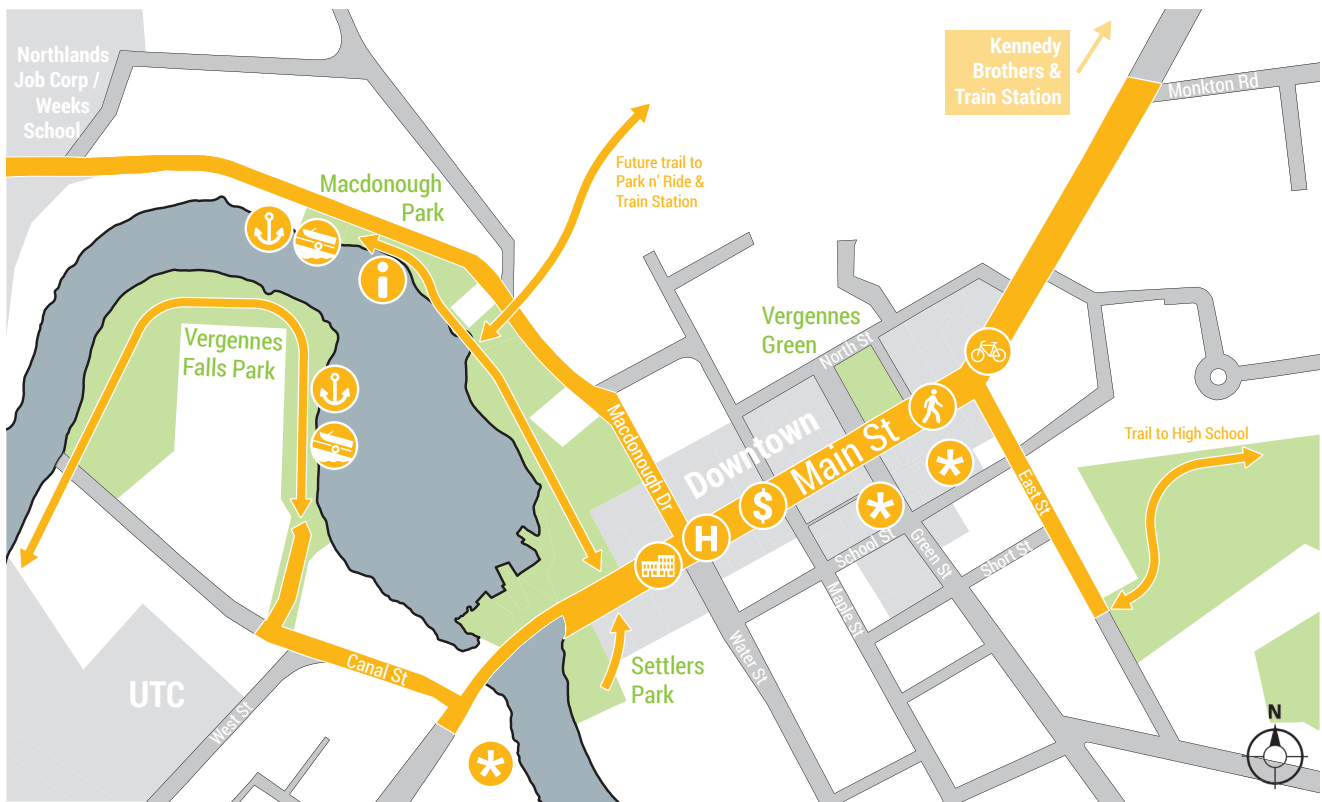
Develop a system of wayfinding signage to direct visitors to and from key destinations around Downtown and the Basin.







Provide kiosks or directories at key sites to work with an eventual Vergennes app.





## 4. STIMULATE LOCAL ECONOMY



### DOCK EXPANSION

-  Develop a mooring field and expand the docks. Re-build portions of the docks for safer access and construct longer ramps for high water.
-  Implement a dock registration program to replace the current voluntary donation system.
-  Work with merchants to offer delivery services to the docks.
-  Provide dockside information on amenities/services within a five-minute walk.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

-  Stimulate private investment and activity through public investment in infrastructure and maintenance (i.e. sidewalks, bicycle facilities, wayfinding, parking improvements, etc.).
-  Construct trails and redesign streets/public transit for better access between Downtown, Basin, Northlands Job Corps/Weeks School, and other activity centers to make getting around safe and easy.

### DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS

-  Pursue development opportunities on key potential development sites.
-  Maintain and monitor an inventory of vacancies and key development sites.
-  Develop new, high density housing Downtown and in adjacent areas.
-  Develop a retail strategy to recruit and encourage Downtown retail/commercial activity.
-  Investigate the potential for a hotel Downtown through meetings with property owners and potential developers.



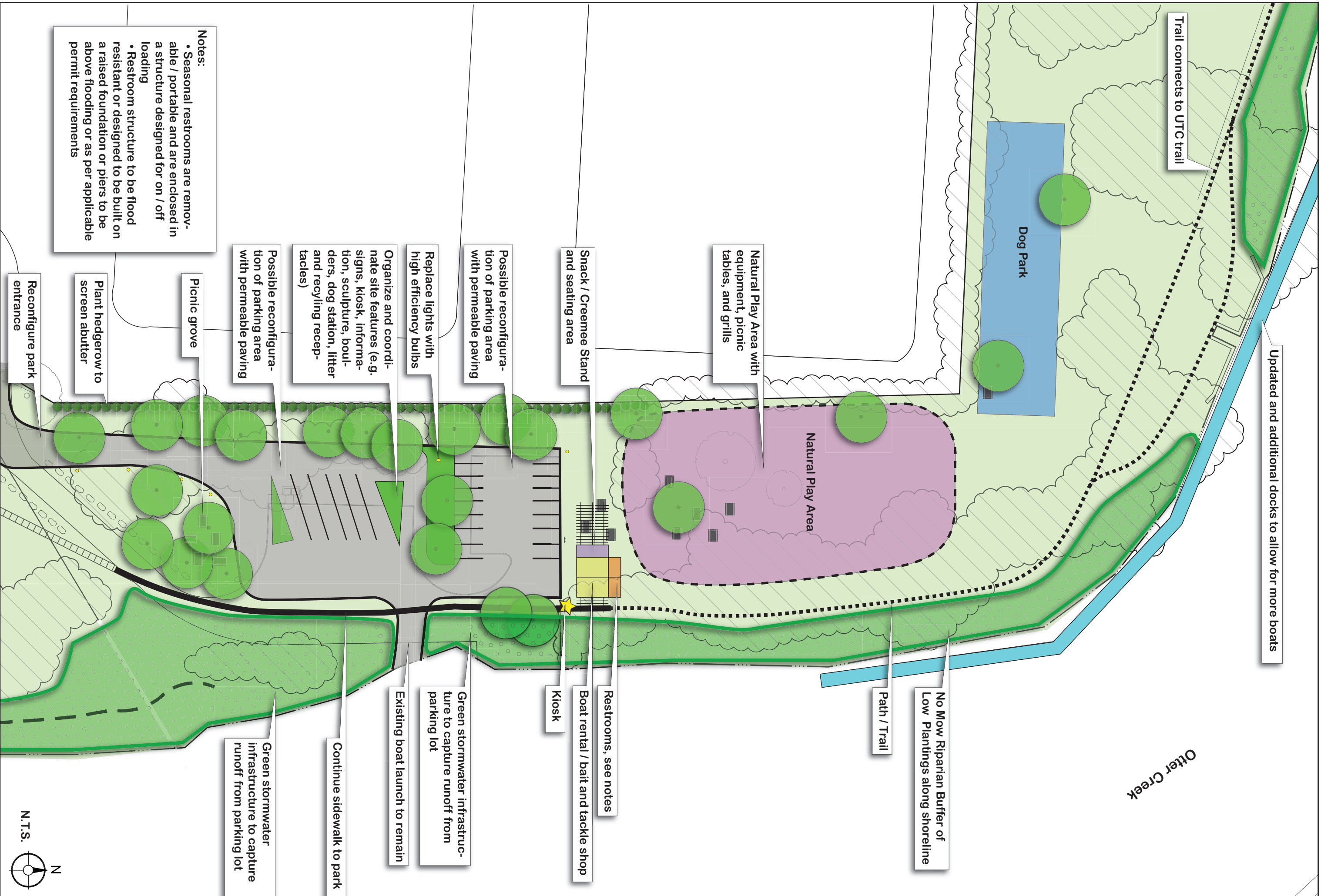
## Vergennes Falls Park and Macdonough Park Preliminary Concept Designs

As mentioned in the Master Plan, the Basin and Riverside Task Force has spent numerous hours and energies on how to improve the health, enjoyment and accessibility to the parks in this area. The following preliminary concepts are based on work previously done by the Basin and Riverside Task Force and provide the basis for a more detailed design and implementation phase.

*Multiple studies indicate that property values for homes and businesses near parks / recreation areas are greater - with increases ranging from between 4% and 20% - when compared to properties not along trails*







Updated and additional docks to allow for more boats

Trail connects to UTC trail

Dog Park

Natural Play Area

Natural Play Area with equipment, picnic tables, and grills

Snack / Creemee Stand and seating area

Possible reconfiguration of parking area with permeable paving

Replace lights with high efficiency bulbs

Organize and coordinate site features (e.g. signs, kiosk, information, sculpture, bollards, dog station, litter and recycling receptacles)

Possible reconfiguration of parking area with permeable paving

Picnic grove

Plant hedgerow to screen abutter

Reconfigure park entrance

Otter Creek

No Mow Riparian Buffer of Low Plantings along shoreline

Path / Trail

Restrooms, see notes

Boat rental / bait and tackle shop

Kiosk

Green stormwater infrastructure to capture runoff from parking lot

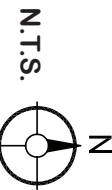
Existing boat launch to remain

Continue sidewalk to park

Green stormwater infrastructure to capture runoff from parking lot

Notes:

- Seasonal restrooms are removable / portable and are enclosed in a structure designed for on / off loading
- Restroom structure to be flood resistant or designed to be built on a raised foundation or piers to be above flooding or as per applicable permit requirements





Extend / fix sidewalk to Northlands Job Corp / Weeks School campus

Seating area with picnic tables, grills

Kiosk with improved visitor information

Updated and additional docks to allow for more boats

Organize and coordinate site features in this area (e.g. signs, kiosk, information, sculpture, boulders, dog station, litter and recycling receptacles)

Planting / landscape around entrance, with similar plants and materials to Vergennes Falls Park

Integrate trail and Park & Ride

Add benches at key locations

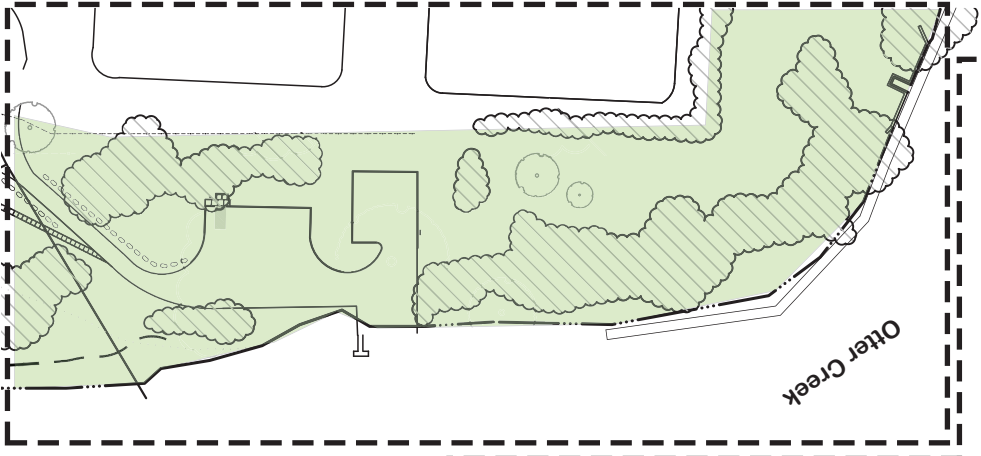
Proposed boardwalk\*

Identify location for public art display

No mow native riparian buffer of low plantings along shoreline to capture runoff and prevent erosion

Overlook along boardwalk

Proposed pedestrian bridge



Area of Enlargement -

Vergennes Falls Park, see separate Vergennes Falls Parks Conceptual Schematic Plan

Overall Plan

\*Note: boardwalk design and layout is based on the work of Ashley Robinson and the Vergennes Otter Creek Basin and Riverside Task Force. Planning and design ideas are also derived from the work of the University of Vermont students in the course PRT 138 Landscape Architecture for Parks and Recreation.

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*Visitor walk through the temporary curb extension during the Master Plan Community Event in September 2015.*

## Street Design Concepts

Understanding the needed improvements in street design is essential to moving forward with the implementation of this Plan. Street improvements mentioned throughout this Plan are needed for slowing traffic, safer walking, cycling and the ability for more people to easily connect to and from the Basin and Downtown.

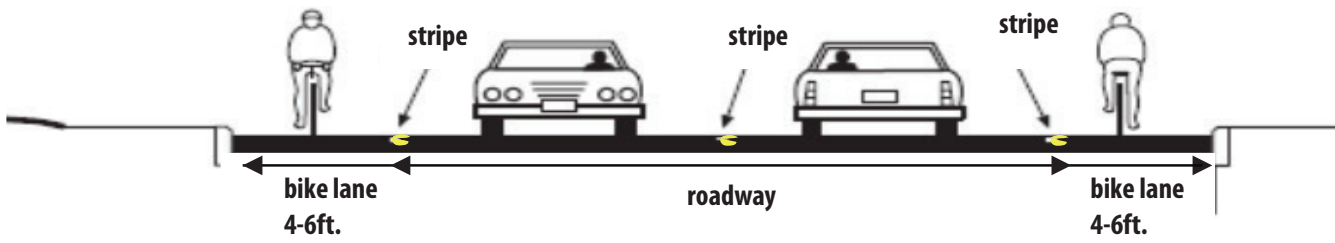
This project demonstrated that many of the recommendations for improving the streets can fit within the restrictions of right-of-way measurements found on Main Street, including 5-foot striped bike lanes from the Vergennes Falls to the Vergennes Opera House. Recommendations for Main Street improvements can be found on the following pages.

[http://vtransengineering.vermont.gov/sites/aot\\_program\\_development/files/documents/ltf/PedestrianandBicycleFacilityDesignManual.pdf](http://vtransengineering.vermont.gov/sites/aot_program_development/files/documents/ltf/PedestrianandBicycleFacilityDesignManual.pdf)



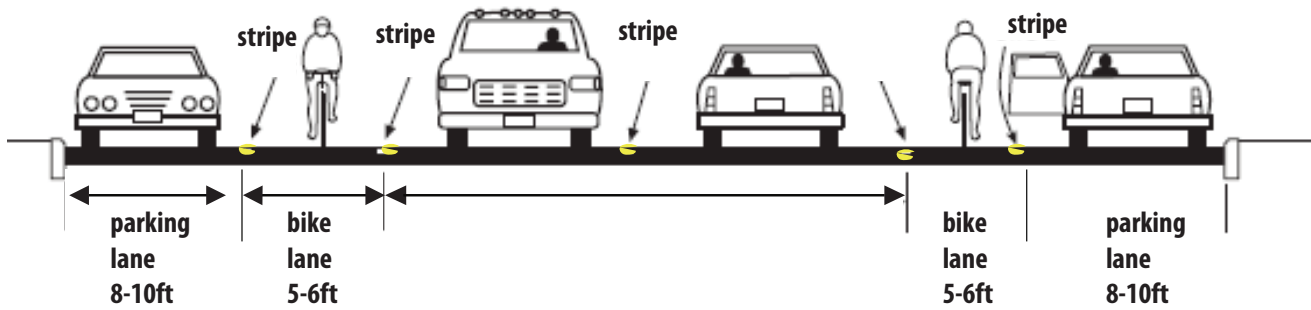


### Bicycle Lane, Curb Street, No Parking



Based on Fig. 4-4 in the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual and demonstrated on Main Street from Canal Street to Macdonough Drive and South Water Street intersection.

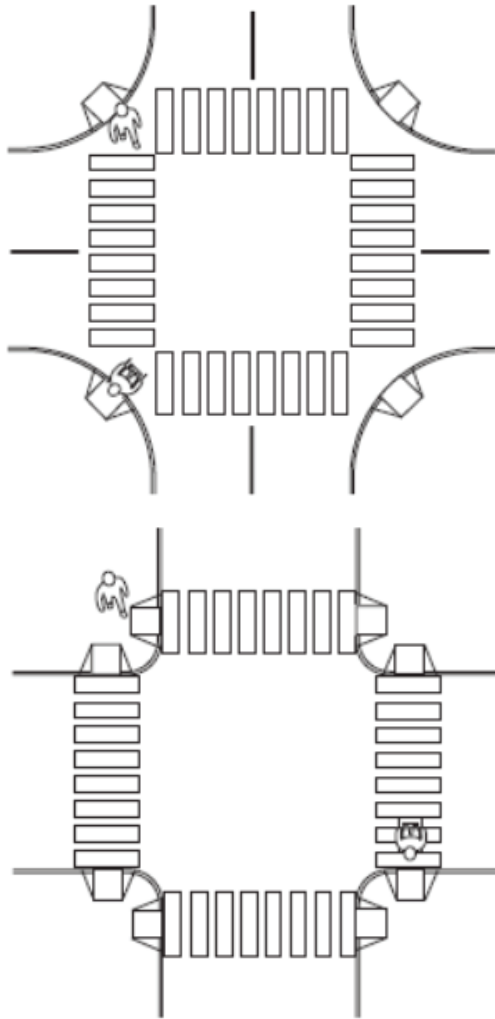
### Bicycle Lane, Curb Street, With Parallel Parking



Based on Fig. 4-5 in the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual and demonstrated on north side of Main Street from Green Street to Macdonough Drive.

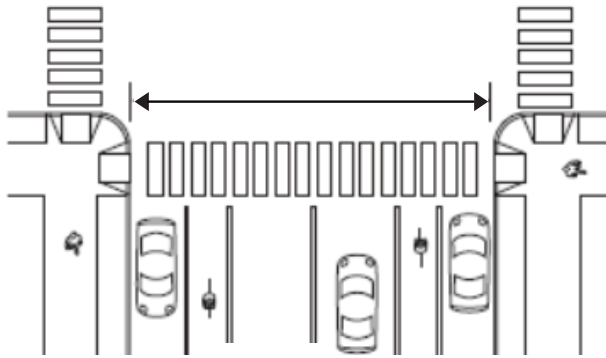


## Tighter Curb Radii to Shorten Crossing Widths

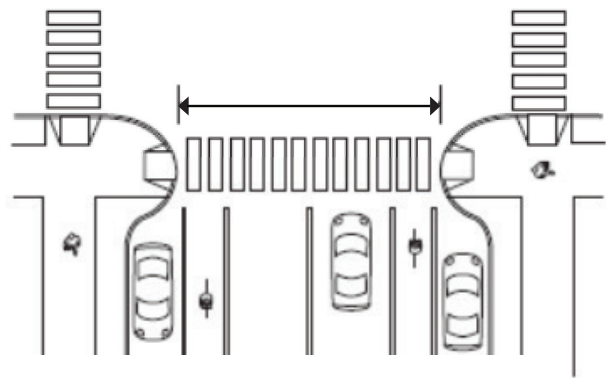


*Based on Fig. 3-23 in the Vermont Pedestian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual and recommended for Macdonough Drive intersection.*

## Curb Extensions To Shorten Crossing Widths



Before

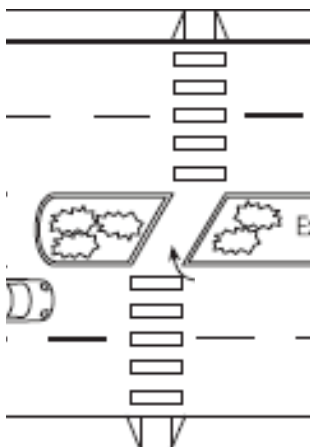


After



Based on Fig. 3-50 in the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual and demonstrated at the intersection of Main Street and Green Street.

## Mid-Block With Pedestrian Refuge



Based on Fig. 3-51 in the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual and demonstrated at existing crossing in front of the Opera House. Existing ROW allows room for both travel lanes, space for refuge and emergency vehicle, as demonstrated on Sept 25th, 2015.

## Implementation and Next Steps

Each recommendation identified in the preceding maps is described more fully in the following implementation tables. The implementation tables summarize the recommendations and estimate timeframes, order of magnitude costs, potential constraints, and anticipated maintenance needs.

During the February public meeting, attendees were asked to indicate which of the recommendations they thought were most important for the City to pursue. These were considered alongside prioritization discussions with the Steering Committee. Projects were ultimately ranked high, medium, or lower “priority” using the following criteria:

1. Indication of importance by public participants
2. Recreational and economic impact – based on findings in this and other studies
3. Financial feasibility – either by City and/or funding resources available
4. Sustainable maintenance schedule

The recommendations are listed in the implementation tables in order of priority. Following the implementation tables are tables identifying next steps for pursuing the recommendations.




All high, medium and lower ranking recommendations are important steps in realizing the vision of the Master Plan. All should be reviewed frequently. Priorities can shift based on new funding opportunities and/or interested partners, etc. Therefore, the highest priority recommendations include the greatest level of detail in their next steps, since they are to be pursued first; medium and lower priority items have more general next steps associated with them since they may be pursued later on and under a different set of funding opportunities or circumstances.

***“There is greater potential to use Vergennes as a ‘base camp’ for biker groups. Too many groups simply visit Vergennes for a day or several hours. With better infrastructure, the community could host these groups over multi-day periods and capture a larger share of their expenditures.”***

*A response from business questionnaires distributed during the project process*



## 1. Create and Market an Identity: Recommendations Matrix

Priority	Category	Recommendation/Action Item	Time-frame	Estimated Order of Magnitude Cost	Potential Constraints	Anticipated Maintenance Needs
1.1	Marketing 	Create and Market and Vergennes Identity	<5 years	>\$10,000	None	None
1.2	Marketing 	Regularly Maintain and Update Vergennes Website	on-going	>\$1,000	Restrictions of web management funding	Continuous updating and web management
1.3	Marketing 	Update and Advertise Walking Tour Map and Guide	>5 years	>\$1,000	None	Re-printing and placement at kiosks/throughout town




-  highest priority
-  medium priority
-  lower priority

*\*see following pages for next steps for each recommendation and corresponding funding opportunities*



## 2. Maximize Recreation Opportunities: Recommendations Matrix


Priority	Category	Recommendation/Action Item	Time-frame	Estimated Order of Magnitude Cost	Potential Constraints	Anticipated Maintenance Needs
Highest Priority	2.1 Landscape 	Unify Landscape and Materials to be Consistent	<5 years	>\$100,000	None	Maintain and trim vegetation
	2.2 Landscape 	Improve Canal Street and Vergennes Falls Park Entrance to be Less Industrial and More 'Park-Like'	<5 years	>\$100,000	None	Trash pick up, maintain landscaping, signs
	2.3 Active 	Enhance Water-Related Recreation Opportunities for Fishing, Boating, Etc.	<5 years	>\$1,000	Floodplain	Assign to vendor/contractor
	2.4 Active 	Design and Maintain Streets as Part of the Walk/Bike Network to Improve Safety and Accessibility	Ongoing	>\$100,000	Rights-of-way	Maintain pavement markings, signs, pavement conditions, etc.
	2.5 Active 	Develop a Natural Play Area at Vergennes Falls Park	5-10 years	>\$10,000	Floodplain (possibly)	Repair play area facilities as needed.
Medium Priority	2.6 Amenities 	Develop a Dog Park at Vergennes Falls Park	5-10 years	>\$10,000	Floodplain (possibly)	Clean dog park as needed, maintain fencing and signs, stock dog waste bag dispensers.
	2.7 Amenities 	Construct Park Amenities at the Basin (i.e. bathroom/showers, benches, picnic tables, etc.)	5-10 years	>\$100,000	Floodplain, maintenance, GMP site restrictions	Clean; keep plumbing functional; maintain plantings, furniture, etc.; empty trash receptacles
	2.8 Interpretation 	Coordinate Interpretive Elements Throughout the City	<5 years	>\$10,000	None	Maintain signs: clean, repair, and replace as needed
Lower Priority	2.9 Landscape 	Install Permanent and/or Temporary Public Art in the Downtown and Basin	on-going	>\$10,000		Coordination of installment, removal with artists, subcommittee and City
	2.10 Landscape 	Revise Parking Area at Vergennes Falls Park to Create a Planted Shoreline Buffer Along Otter Creek and Minimize Run Off	5-10 years	>\$100,000	Floodplain, maintenance, permitting	Maintain pavement markings, signs, pavement conditions, etc.
	2.11 Interpretation 	Improve Overlook and Intrepretation at Pumphouse Island	5-10 years	>\$10,000	Floodplain, access to/through GMP site	Maintain overlook structure and seasonal access to it.
	2.12 Amenities 	Install Pedestrian-Scaled Lighting at Key Locations	5-10 years	>\$100,000	Floodplain, utility costs	Upkeep of lights, electricity costs

-  highest priority
-  medium priority
-  lower priority

*\*see following pages for next steps for each recommendation and corresponding funding opportunities.*



### 3. Connect Assets: Recommendations Matrix







Priority	Category	Recommendation/Action Item	Time-frame	Estimated Order of Magnitude Cost	Potential Constraints	Anticipated Maintenance Needs
Highest Priority	3.1 Wayfinding 	Develop a Comprehensive Wayfinding System for the City that Includes Signs, Maps, Visitor Info, and Key Destinations	<5 years	>\$100,000	None	Maintain signs: clean, repair, and replace as needed
	3.2 Gateways 	Create Gateways to Downtown Through Visual Cues to Slow Traffic and Improve Safety	<5 years	>\$10,000	None	Regular weeding, upkeep of signs
	3.3 Street Improvements 	Improve Multimodal Safety and Access on Macdonough Drive	5-10 years	>\$100,000	None	Regular road maintenance; regular sidewalk and pavement marking inspections to document condition and identify needed repairs
Medium Priority	3.4 Intersection Improvements 	Improve Intersection at Main Street and Macdonough Drive/South Water Street (Multiple Phases)	Phase 1: <5 years Phase 2: 5-10 years	Phase 1: >\$10,000 Phase 2: >\$100,000	None	Regular road maintenance; regular but infrequent signal maintenance and upkeep
	3.5 Street Improvements 	Improve Main Street Pedestrian, Vehicular, and Bicycle Access and Safety (Multiple Phases)	Phase 1: <5 years Phase 2: 5-10 years	Phase 1: >\$10,000 Phase 2: >\$100,000	Possible public resistance to parking change	Clean, repair, and replace signs, pavement markings, and sidewalks as needed; signal maintenance
	3.6 Trails 	Construct a Boardwalk in Macdonough Park	<5 years	>\$10,000	Floodplain	Repair and replace boardwalk as needed, trim vegetation
Lower Priority	3.7 Trails 	Build a Trail Connecting Macdonough Park to the Park-n-Ride and Train Station	5-10 years	>\$100,000	Terrain, right-of-way/easements, railway crossing	Upkeep of path surface, trim vegetation
	3.8 Street Improvements 	Improve Otter Creek Bridge Safety Through Traffic Calming Measures	10+ years	>\$1M	Access/right-of-way to pumphouse park	Regular bridge, pavement markings, and sidewalk inspections to document condition and identify needed repairs
	3.9 Intersection Improvements 	Improve Main Street and Canal Street Intersection by Extending Curb to Reduce Road Crossing Distance	5-10 years	>\$10,000	None	Regular road maintenance; regular sidewalk and pavement marking inspections to document condition and identify needed repairs
Lower Priority	3.10 Intersection Improvements 	Improve West Street and Canal Street Intersection Through Realignment	5-10 years	>\$100,000	None	Regular road maintenance; regular sidewalk and pavement marking inspections to document condition and identify needed repairs
	3.11 Shuttle System 	Develop Shuttle or Transit System that Connects Basin to Resources in Downtown and Beyond	<5 years	Depends	None	Vehicle maintenance, bus stop signage maintenance

- highest priority
- medium priority
- lower priority

*\*see following pages for next steps for each recommendation and corresponding funding opportunities.*



## 4. Stimulate Local Economy: Recommendations Matrix

Priority	Category	Recommendation/Action Item	Time-frame	Estimated Order of Magnitude Cost	Potential Constraints	Anticipated Maintenance Needs
4.1	Infrastructure 	Utilize Public Investments to Stimulate and Promote Private Investment	Ongoing	Depends on investments	None	None
4.2	Infrastructure 	Secure Capital and Investment for Pedestrian, Bike, and Vehicular Infrastructure	Ongoing	Depends on investments	Property boundaries, terrain	Clean, repair, and replace as needed
4.3	Docks 	Provide Wayfinding and Tourist Information About Amenities and Local Businesses at Docks	<5 years	>\$100,000	None	Maintain signs: clean, repair, and replace as needed
4.4	Development Directions 	Maintain and Monitor an Inventory of Vacancies and Key Development Sites	Ongoing	>\$10,000	None	None
4.5	Development Directions 	Develop New High Density Housing In/Near Downtown	Ongoing	Depends	None	None
4.6	Development Directions 	Develop a Strategy to Recruit and Encourage Downtown Retail and Commercial Activity	Ongoing	>\$1,000	None	None
4.7	Docks 	Expand/Redevelop Docks and Mooring Field to Allow for More Boats and Safer Access	<5 years	>\$100,000	Shoreline easements may be needed	Upkeep of docks and moorings
4.8	Docks 	Consider Mandatory Dock Registration and Fees	<5 years	Depends on extent of technology used	None	Depends on extent of technology used
4.9	Docks 	Work with Local Businesses to Create Delivery Services to Docks	<5 years	\$0	None	None
4.10	Development Directions 	Investigate Potential and Need for a Hotel in the Downtown with Property Owners and Private Developers	<5 years	\$0	None	None

-  highest priority
-  medium priority
-  lower priority

*\*see following pages for next steps for each recommendation and corresponding funding opportunities.*



# 1. Create and Market an Identity: Next Steps (A)

## Recommendation # 1.1 Identity

*Category* **Marketing**

*Project Description* Create a Vergennes "brand" through a city logo and communications; disseminate through wayfinding and kiosks: "Vergennes as a unique and fun destination"

*Potential Partners* Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee, UTC, Northlands Job Corps/Weeks School, Kennedy Bros., City Staff and website manager

*Next Steps* Develop an RFP to solicit proposals from marketing and advertising consultants to develop graphics (a logo, color schemes, fonts, etc.) and messaging ("things to do in Vergennes," etc.) and recommended dissemination strategies  
See also 2.9 (Public Art)

## Recommendation # 1.2 Website Updates

*Category* **Marketing**

*Project Description* Integrate new information and branding (see 1.1) into City website

*Potential Partners* Website manager, Vergennes Partnership

*Next Steps* Discuss incorporation of branding and ideas generated from 1.1 with website manager


## Recommendation # 1.3 Walking Tour Map and Guide


*Category* **Marketing**

*Project Description* Update/create a destination and historical tour guide map which connects visitors to sites throughout the City and Basin

*Potential Partners* Vergennes Partnership, Chamber of Commerce

*Next Steps* Develop an RFP to solicit proposals from marketing and advertising consultants to develop City map

 highest priority

 medium priority



## 2. Maximize Recreation Opportunities: Next Steps (A)

### Recommendation # 2.1 Unification and Landscaping

<i>Category</i>	<b>Landscape</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Create a cohesive language of landscape materials and plantings, and a maintenance plan throughout the Basin and Downtown (including Vergennes Green) appropriate to associated street and/or trail design. See also 2.7 Amenities
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vermont Urban and Community Forestry, Master Gardeners club, Maintenance crews, Northland Job Corps/ Weeks School students, UVM Design Build students, VTDEC, Master Plan Committee, Vergennes Partnership
<i>Next Steps</i>	<p>Form subcommittees to work on the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create landscape plan to determine look, feel and maintenance schedule appropriate to different areas of the Basin and how this relates to other parks and streets in the City. (Examples for the Basin include: selectively trimming vegetation to enhance views and adding a no-mow buffer of low plantings for shoreline restoration) (See Design Concept in Appendix A for Sample Planting Plan for Basin Shoreline)</li> <li>• Create seasonal maintenance schedule</li> <li>• Apply for funding through VTDEC, Ecological Restoration Program to determine green infrastructure strategies to incorporate into the the Basin Park's landscape plan</li> <li>• Refer to the 2015 Street Tree Inventory and consider updating the 1998 Urban Forestry Management Plan</li> <li>• Determine tree/garden planting grants with agencies such as Vermont Urban and Community Forests and Vermont Forests, Parks and Recreation</li> <li>• Determine citizen-led volunteer groups interested in planting and maintenance assistance</li> </ul>

### Recommendation # 2.2 Canal Street/Vergennes Falls Park Entrance

<i>Category</i>	<b>Landscape</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Redesign the Canal Street entrance of Falls Park to feel more park-like and less industrial and incorporate tree plantings within design, see also 3.1 and 3.2
<i>Potential Partners</i>	GMP, Vermont Urban and Community Forestry, Master Gardener's club, MasterPlan Committee, Vergennes Partnership, Vergennes Historical Society
<i>Next Steps</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate discussions with GMP to identify common goals, partnership opportunities</li> <li>• Work with City and Master Plan Committee to incorporate this into street improvements and wayfinding recommendations, see also 2.4 and 3.1</li> </ul>

### Recommendation # 2.3 Recreation Enhancements

<i>Category</i>	<b>Active Recreation</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Provide water-related active recreation/adventure elements such as boat rentals, fishing opportunities
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Private operator, Vergennes Partnership, Basin and Riverside Task Force
<i>Next Steps</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide on activities to offer</li> <li>• Develop a request for proposals for vendors/contractors to provide services</li> </ul>

	highest priority
	medium priority
	lower priority



## 2. Maximize Recreation Opportunities: Next Steps (B)

### Recommendation # 2.4 Walking and Biking

*Category* **Active Recreation**

*Project Description* As a general rule, design and maintain streets as intricate parts of the recreation network to include dedicated space for walking and cycling. See also 3.1-3.5

*Potential Partners* VTrans, Basin and Riverside Task Force, Master Plan Committee, UTC, Northlands Job Corps/ Weeks School, Highway Department, Addison County Walk-Bike Council, ACRPC, MiddSafeRoutes, GMP

- Next Steps*
- Get familiar with the grant cycles and application process to implement infrastructure such as pedestrian signal heads, curb extensions, traffic calming, and gateways, like those demonstrated on Main Street in September 2015 (pages 17-23 of Appendix D)
  - Connect with your local representative on the new Addison County Walk-Bike Council
  - Support a Safe Routes to School initiative: <http://saferoutes.vermont.gov/sites/saferoutes/files/StartingProgram.pdf>
  - Prioritize 3.2 and 3.4 improvement projects - see below

### Recommendation # 2.5 Falls Park Play Area

*Category* **Active Recreation**

*Project Description* Advance concept plans of a natural---style play area in Vergennes Falls Park

*Potential Partners* Vergennes Partnership, interested citizen group, Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Community Foundation, KaBoom --- <https://kaboom.org/>

- Next Steps* Form playground committee to research design styles and complete the following tasks:
- Determine permitting needed
  - Research pro-bono opportunities
  - Apply for funding to advance the plans shown in Appendix A Preliminary Basin
  - Concept Plan/set up crowd sourcing funding alternative
  - Identify materials and request contractor bids. Use local resources when possible like Northlands Job Corps, Boy/Girl/Eagle Scouts, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, UVM design/build classes

### Recommendation # 2.6 Vergennes Falls Park Dog Park

*Category* **Amenities**

*Project Description* Develop a dog park

*Potential Partners* Vergennes Partnership, Vergennes Basin and Riverside Taskforce, interested citizen group; crowd source funding

- Next Steps*
- Apply for funding to advance the plans shown in Preliminary Basin Concept plans
  - Request a 'call for interest' for a citizen group to lead this effort and speak to Town of Middlebury on their experience

### Recommendation # 2.7 Amenities

*Category* **Amenities**

*Project Description* Construct amenities like bathrooms/showers,( or porter potty enclosures) benches, picnic tables, on both sides of the Basin in coordination with 2.1, cohesive 'suite' of amenities

*Potential Partners* GMP, Basin and Riverside Task Force

- Next Steps*
- See Preliminary Basin Concept Plans in implementation chapter of this plan.
  - Research and apply for funding.





## 2. Maximize Recreation Opportunities: Next Steps (C)

### Recommendation # 2.8 Interpretive Elements

<i>Category</i>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Add coordinated signs and artifacts to interpret historic and natural resources in coordination with marketing/tour map in 1.3
<i>Potential Partners</i>	GMP, Vergennes Partnership, Basin and Riverside Task Force
<i>Next Steps</i>	Apply funding to advance the wayfinding plans shown in the Design Concepts. See also 3.1.

### Recommendation # 2.9 Public Art

<i>Category</i>	<b>Landscape</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Bring/install permanent or temporary art to Main Street and Basin/Parks to include in 'Arts Walk'
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, interested citizen group
<i>Next Steps</i>	Develop sub committee, develop a 'call for artists'

### Recommendation # 2.10 Parking Lot

<i>Category</i>	<b>Landscape</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Reconfigure the parking area at Vergennes Falls Park to create a planted buffer between the parking area and Otter Creek.
<i>Potential Partners</i>	GMP, Vergennes Partnership, Basin and Riverside Task Force
<i>Next Steps</i>	Apply for funding to advance the plans shown in Appendix A Preliminary Basin Concept Plan. (This could potentially be a 2nd phase of the "redevelopment of Canal Street and Vergennes Falls Park entrance" project above.)

### Recommendation # 2.11 Overlook

<i>Category</i>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Improve overlook and interpretation for viewing the Falls and historic hydro facility
<i>Potential Partners</i>	GMP, Vergennes Partnership, Basin and Riverside Task Force
<i>Next Steps</i>	Initiate discussions with GMP to identify common goals, partnership opportunities.

### Recommendation # 2.12 Lighting

<i>Category</i>	<b>Amenities</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Install pedestrian-scaled lighting strategically in the parks.
<i>Potential Partners</i>	GMP, Vergennes Partnership, Basin and Riverside Task Force
<i>Next Steps</i>	Investigate community support for lighting Falls Park; initiate discussions with GMP to identify common goals, partnership opportunities.

- highest priority
- medium priority
- lower priority



### 3. Connect Assets: Next Steps (A)

#### Recommendation # 3.1 Comprehensive Wayfinding System

*Category* **Wayfinding**

*Project Description* Develop a cohesive wayfinding system of signage to welcome, orient and direct visitors to and from key destinations around the City and the Basin. Separate, but connected projects also include: City Map + Guide, and directory kiosks in both French and English at key locations

*Potential Partners* Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee, Basin and Riverside Task Force, UTC, GMP, Northlands Job Corps / Weeks School, Kennedy Brothers, interested citizen group, UVM Design Build teams/students, Vergennes Historical Society

- Next Steps*
- Form a sub-committee to research what other Towns and City's have done to get a sense of possible styles and ideas  
Phase sign priorities
  - Apply funding to advance the wayfinding plans shown in Appendix A.

#### Recommendation # 3.2 Gateways

*Category* **Gateways**

*Project Description* Construct gateway treatments such as splitter islands, pavement material changes, signage, and lighting, on Main Street at either end of the designated downtown to tell drivers they are entering a slower speed area

*Potential Partners* VTrans, Basin and Riverside Task Force, Master Plan Committee, UTC, Northlands Job Corps / Weeks School, Highway Department, Addison County Walk-Bike Council, ACRPC, MiddleSafeRoutes, GMP

*Next Steps* As an extension of 3.1 next steps above, develop gateway design with signs, landscaping, traffic calming treatments like those demonstrated on Main Street in September 2015 (pages 17-23 of Appendix A)

#### Recommendation # 3.3 Macdonough Drive

*Category* **Street Improvements**

*Project Description* Extend and repair sidewalks to the Northlands Job Corps / Weeks School; stripe bike lanes; improve stormwater management

*Potential Partners* VTrans, Northlands Job Corps / Weeks School

*Next Steps* Apply for funding to identify stormwater improvement needs



### 3. Connect Assets: Next Steps (B)

#### Recommendation # 3.4 Main Street at Macdonough Drive/South Water Street

*Category* **Intersection Improvements**

*Project Description* Main Street at Mcdonough Drive/South Water Street  
(Including recommendations from the 2006 intersection study)

Phase 1

- Repaint crosswalks
- Reduce the curb radius on the northeast corner by extending curb
- Add curbed island to northwest corner

Phase 2

- Signalize the intersection
- Work with gas station/market and Riverside Apartments to improve parking and access issues on South Water Street
- Explore the potential for making South Water Street one-way southbound

*Potential Partners* Planning Commission, VTrans, ACRPC

*Next Steps* Pursue funding; 2006 study may need to be updated; schedule regular maintenance and inspection of pavement markings; approach property owners to discuss options; advance traffic calming treatments like those demonstrated on Main Street in September 2015 (pages 17-23 of Appendix A)

#### Recommendation # 3.5 Main Street

*Category* **Street Improvements**

*Project Description* Phase 1

- Add pedestrian signals at Main and Green, and Main and Monkton
- Improve parking management by putting up signs directing drivers to under-utilized lots
- Test back-in angle parking for a year in conjunction with an education campaign, OR widen sidewalks and convert to parallel parking to accommodate the high demand for outdoor seating

Phase 2

- Replace highway-style lights with pedestrian-scale lighting
- Stripe bike lanes on Main Street

*Potential Partners* Planning Commission, VTrans, ACRPC

*Next Steps* Phase 1:  
Implement as part of wayfinding system (above); develop education campaign and signage for parking update (see pages 26-27 of Appendix A for more info)

Phase 2:  
Retrofit signals; stripe bike lanes after head-in diagonal parking is changed; identify street light types

#### Recommendation # 3.6 Boardwalk in Macdonough Park

*Category* **Trails**

*Project Description* Finalize design and construct a boardwalk trail to connect the docks to the stairway

*Potential Partners* Basin and Riverside Task Force, Northlands Job Corps / Weeks School

*Next Steps* Finalize alignment shown in Preliminary Basin Concept Plan. Identify materials and request contractor bids. Use local resources when possible like Northland Job Corps, Boy/Girl/Eagle Scouts, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, UVM design/build classes.

-  highest priority
-  medium priority
-  lower priority





### 3. Connect Assets: Next Steps (C)

#### Recommendation # 3.7 Trail from Macdonough Park to Park-and-Ride/Train Station

<i>Category</i>	<b>Trails</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Construct a trail from Macdonough Park to the Park-and-Ride and Train Station
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Planning Commission, Basin and Riverside Task Force, Transportation Task Force, Northlands Job Corps / Weeks School
<i>Next Steps</i>	Conduct a feasibility study; potential alignment shown in Appendix A.

#### Recommendation # 3.8 Otter Creek Bridge

<i>Category</i>	<b>Street Improvements</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with VTrans to redesign the bridge to slow traffic enough to enable sight distance needed to make the crosswalk at Settlers Park safe, and to indicate the entrance to Downtown</li> <li>• Work with VTrans to develop bike accommodations on the bridge and provide a sidewalk on the north side</li> <li>• After implementing speed reduction measures on bridge, repaint crosswalk at Settlers Park, add advance crosswalk warning signs, and install additional crosswalk safety enhancements, like Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)</li> <li>• Develop access to City-owned Pumphouse Island/overlook</li> </ul>
<i>Potential Partners</i>	VTrans, Master Plan Committee, GMP
<i>Next Steps</i>	Approach VTrans to discuss options for bridge improvements and timeframes

#### Recommendation # 3.9 Main Street at Canal Street

<i>Category</i>	<b>Intersection Improvements</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Reduce curb radius on the northeast corner by extending the curb and reduce the crossing distance on VT 22A
<i>Potential Partners</i>	VTrans, Master Plan Committee, UTC
<i>Next Steps</i>	Conduct a scoping study (could be combined with redesign of Canal Street/Falls Park entrance project and/or improvements for West Street at Canal Street).

#### Recommendation # 3.10 West Street at Canal Street

<i>Category</i>	<b>Intersection Improvements</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Realign the intersection to improve circulation and address traffic and safety concerns
<i>Potential Partners</i>	VTrans, Master Plan Committee, UTC
<i>Next Steps</i>	Conduct a scoping study (could be combined with redesign of Canal Street/Falls Park entrance project and/or improvements for Main Street at Canal Street).

#### Recommendation # 3.11 Shuttle System

<i>Category</i>	<b>Shuttle System</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Develop a shuttle system to connect the Otter Creek Campus, both sides of the Basin, Downtown, and the Park and Ride/Train Station
<i>Potential Partners</i>	ACTR, Master Plan Committee, UTC, Northlands Job Corps / Weeks School
<i>Next Steps</i>	Approach ACTR to explore potential for incorporating into existing route; will likely require transit demand study

## 4. Stimulate Local Economy: Next Steps (A)

### Recommendation # 4.1 Utilize Public Investments

<i>Category</i>	<b>Infrastructure</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Stimulate private investment and activity through public investment in infrastructure and maintenance (that is,
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Master Plan Committee, UTC, Northlands Job Corp / Weeks School, Kennedy Bros.
<i>Next Steps</i>	Apply funding to advance the wayfinding plans shown in Appendix A.

### Recommendation # 4.2 Support Pedestrian, Bike, and Vehicular Infrastructure

<i>Category</i>	<b>Infrastructure</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Construct trails and redesign streets/public transit for better access between Downtown, The Basin, Northlands Job Corp / Weeks School, and other activity centers to make getting around safe and easy.
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Master Plan Committee, UTC, Northlands Job Corp / Weeks School, Kennedy Bros.
<i>Next Steps</i>	Apply for grants to pursue trails, bike lanes, pedestrian signal heads, curb extensions, traffic calming, gateways, etc. as described in the conceptual designs of this plan.

### Recommendation # 4.3 Provide Information at Docks

<i>Category</i>	<b>Docks</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Work with Master Plan Committee and others to develop a cohesive wayfinding system of signage to welcome, orient and direct visitors to and from key destinations around the City and the Basin.
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Master Plan Committee, UTC, GMP, Northlands Job Corp / Weeks School, Kennedy Bros., interested citizen group, UVM Design Build teams/students
<i>Next Steps</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a sub-committee to research what other Towns and City's have done to get a sense of possible styles and ideas</li> <li>• Phase sign priorities</li> <li>• Apply funding to advance the wayfinding plans shown in Appendix A.</li> </ul>

### Recommendation # 4.4 Maintain and Monitor Site Inventory

<i>Category</i>	<b>Development Directions</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Maintain and monitor an inventory of vacancies and key development sites
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee
<i>Next Steps</i>	Develop database beginning with Grand List.

	highest priority
	medium priority
	lower priority



## 4. Stimulate Local Economy: Next Steps (B)

### Recommendation # 4.5 Develop Housing

<i>Category</i>	<b>Development Directions</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Develop new, high density housing Downtown and in adjacent areas
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee
<i>Next Steps</i>	<p>Create a 'Developers Kit' of materials that both promotes and documents that need for housing in Vergennes, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Market Study – documenting relevant demographics, pricing, market activity, etc.;</li> <li>• Inventory and provide relevant data for potential development sites, infill locations or underutilized building stock with potential for residential redevelopment;</li> <li>• Provide relevant background data regarding Vergennes: Location; Major Employers; City Services; Relevant Regulations, etc.</li> <li>• Regulation – stay abreast of innovative regulation concerning infill housing. In particular, we note that the parking requirements of urban/infill housing are often less than those for housing units in other settings</li> <li>• Explore Neighborhood Development Area Designation to offer state incentives to encourage addition housing in and around the Designated Downtown</li> </ul>

### Recommendation # 4.6 Recruit and Encourage Retail and Commercial Activity

<i>Category</i>	<b>Development Directions</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Develop a retail strategy to recruit and encourage downtown retail/commercial activity
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee
<i>Next Steps</i>	<p>A retail/commercial enhancement and implementation plan should be founded on the principle that public dollars should be spent on projects that stimulate significant private investment in the downtown. The City needs to fund a retail strategy that identifies retail development sites, recruitment, management and financial incentives to ensure a critical mass of retail in the downtown. The strategy should incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive database as a leasing and information tool;</li> <li>• A recruitment brochure and information on downtown sites and opportunities;</li> <li>• Formation of a representative retail recruitment team;</li> <li>• Development incentives for retailers and public/private partnerships to encourage retail development.</li> </ul>

### Recommendation # 4.7 Expand/Develop Docks and Mooring Field

<i>Category</i>	<b>Docks</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Develop mooring field and expand docks; re-build portions of dock for safer access and construct longer ramps for high water
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee
<i>Next Steps</i>	Determine number of additional spots needed, potential areas for expansion

- highest priority
- medium priority
- lower priority



## 4. Stimulate Local Economy: Next Steps (C)

### Recommendation # 4.8 Consider Mandatory Dock Registration and Fees

<i>Category</i>	<b>Docks</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Implement dock registration program to replace current voluntary donation system
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee
<i>Next Steps</i>	Plan program logistics

### Recommendation # 4.9 Work with Local Businesses to Create Delivery Services

<i>Category</i>	<b>Docks</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Work with merchants to offer delivery services to docks
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee
<i>Next Steps</i>	Reach out to merchants

### Recommendation # 4.10 Investigate Potential for Hotel

<i>Category</i>	<b>Development Directions</b>
<i>Project Description</i>	Investigate the potential for a hotel downtown through meetings with property owners and potential developers
<i>Potential Partners</i>	Vergennes Partnership, Master Plan Committee
<i>Next Steps</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present conceptual plans and market study findings to gauge interest and a willingness to proceed with redevelopment of the site.</li> <li>• Meet with State officials to identify possible grants and tax credit funding options that would be applicable for a site (a summary of potential funding sources follows).</li> <li>• Meet with community institutions and downtown stakeholders to identify target businesses and tenants for project.</li> <li>• Present the owners/developers with options for public grants and infrastructure improvements that will support redevelopment of the site.</li> <li>• Work with the property owner as plans are developed for the site to provide guidance regarding expectations for the development. Consider negotiating a development agreement between the City and the developer that will define the terms of the development. Typical topics for an agreement include terms for funding, amount and phasing of development, public improvements, fees, etc.</li> <li>• If the owner is unable or unwilling to proceed alone, support or create a partnership with the City and/or private entities as a development team for the project.</li> <li>• If the City becomes a partner in the development, hire a development consultant to advise on the development of a project proforma that will create a financially feasible project.</li> </ul>

- highest priority
- medium priority
- lower priority



*Economic development should prioritize the enhancement of Vergennes as a unique 'place,' ... any action should always be cognizant of Vergennes' sense of history and authenticity... an emphasis on connections between natural features, historic features and urban features is essential to the overall success of the plan.*

# Grant and Funding Opportunities

*The following contains grant information and opportunities that can contribute to improvement projects for the City. Note that many grants and funding resources require the applicant provide money or in-kind time/services to match a grant. Contact grant source for specific requirements.*

*Please note that grants are only listed once, but may be relevant to several categories, recommendations, and actions.*

## Transportation and Infrastructure

### VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

State matching grants for the scoping, design, and construction of bike and pedestrian facilities, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, crosswalks, shared-use paths, and lighting.

**Range:** No minimum or maximum range. Local match of 20% for construction and 50% for scoping.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, transit agencies, school district, and regional planning commissions

**Deadline:** Annually in July

**Contact:** Jon Kaplan, (802) 828-0059 jon.kaplan@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://vtransengineering.vermont.gov/bureaus/mab/local-projects/bike-ped>

### Downtown Transportation Fund

State grants for municipalities to finance transportation-related capital improvements in support of economic development, within or serving a Designated Downtown, including construction or alteration of roads and highways, parking facilities, pedestrian and streetscape improvement, rail or bus facilities or equipment, and underground relocation of electric utility, cable and telecommunications lines.

**Range:** 50% of overall project costs up to maximum of \$100,000

**Eligibility:** Municipalities with a Designated Downtown

**Deadline:** Annually in March

**Contact:** Gary Holloway, (802)828-3220 gary.holloway@vermont.gov

**Website:** [http://accd.vermont.gov/strong\\_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown\\_transportation\\_fund](http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown_transportation_fund)

### VTrans Transportation Alternative Program

State matching grants for the construction, planning, and design of bike and pedestrian facilities (on or off road), sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, lighting, and others.

**Range:** \$50,000 - \$300,000. Local match of 20% for construction and 50% for scoping.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, transit agencies, school district, and regional planning commissions

**Deadline:** Annually in October

**Contact:** Scott Robertson, (802) 828-5779 scott.robertson@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://vtransengineering.vermont.gov/bureaus/mab/local-projects/transportation-alternatives>

### **VTrans Park and Ride Grant Program**

Supports the engineering and construction of small municipal owned park and ride facilities to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles on the roadway.

**Range:** No minimum or maximum range.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities. Location must be on a municipal, state or leased property on or near a state highway.

**Deadline:** Annually, in August.

**Contact:** Wayne Davis, (802) 828-5609, wayne.davis@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/parkandride=s>

### **Vermont State Infrastructure Bank**

State low interest loan program for the construction or reconstruction of highways, roads and bridges, and pedestrian facilities, as well as certain capital facilities related to rail transit ,public transit or electric vehicle charging stations.

**Range:** No minimum or maximum range. Loan term may not exceed 30 years and requires borrower equity of 10-20%.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, Regional Development Corporations or political subdivisions of the state or private sector companies that have entered into a contract with a public authority.

**Deadline:** No deadline, ongoing loan program.

**Contact:** Steve Greenfield, 802-828-5627 or sgreenfield@veda.org

**Website:** <http://www.veda.org/financing-options/other-financing-option/state-infrastructure-bank-program/>

## **Ecological and Watershed Restoration, Planning, and Conservation**

### **ANR Vermont Watershed Grant**

Supports projects that contribute to the protection, restoration and enjoyment of waters. Funds are available for projects that protect or restore fish and wildlife habitats and water quality and shorelines; reduce phosphorus or nitrogen loading and sedimentation; enhance recreational use and enjoyment of a watershed; educate people about watershed resources; identify and protect historic and cultural resources. Groups new to watershed protection fund-raising are especially encouraged to apply.

**Range:** Grants amounts to \$10,000.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, local or regional governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and citizen groups



**Deadline:** Varies annually

**Contact:** Rick Hopkins, (802) 490-6115, rick.hopkins@vermont.gov

**Website:** [http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/erp/images/lp\\_watershedapplguide2016.pdf](http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/erp/images/lp_watershedapplguide2016.pdf)

### **ANR Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Planning Fund**

State Revolving Loan to assist in the planning and design of public, private and nonprofit community water, wastewater and stormwater systems. Details on various programs on website.

**Range:** \$100,000 maximum. No minimum project amount.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, non-profit organizations and private developers

**Deadline:** Accepted on a continuing basis.

**Contact:** Ashley Lucht, (802) 585-4904 ashley.lucht@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://dec.vermont.gov/facilities-engineering/water-financing/dwsrf-water-planning-loan>

### **ANR Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Construction Fund**

State Revolving Loan to assist in construction of public, private and nonprofit community water, wastewater and stormwater systems. Details on various programs on website.

**Range:** \$2,000,000 per funding cycle and \$6,000,000 cap for any one project. No minimum project amount.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, private developers and non-profit organizations

**Deadline:** Annually in January

**Contact:** Ashley Lucht, (802) 585-4904 ashley.lucht@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://dec.vermont.gov/tags/drinking-water-state-revolving-fund-dwsrf>

### **Lake Champlain Basin Program Local Implementation Grant**

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) supports local community involvement in the implementation of the comprehensive management plan Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin ([plan.lcbp.org](http://plan.lcbp.org)). Past funds have included pollution prevention and habitat conservation; AIS spread prevention; flood resilience and climate change; impervious surface management; watershed organization support for road maintenance; cultural heritage grants; organizational support grants; education and outreach grants.

**Range:** Varies by grant

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, local or regional governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and citizen groups

**Deadline:** Varies by grant

**Contact:** Lake Champlain Basin Program, (802) 372-3213

**Website:** <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/>

### **ANR Caring for Canopy Grant Program**

State 50:50 grants to help communities care for tree canopy by taking the necessary actions to developing and sustaining a community-wide tree program, including tree plantings, inventories, maintenance, and planning.

**Range:** \$500 - \$5,000. Local match of 50%.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities and non-profits associations.

**Deadline:** Annually in April

**Contact:** Danielle Fitzko, (802) 598-9992 [danielle.fitzko@vermont.gov](mailto:danielle.fitzko@vermont.gov)

**Website:** [http://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/community\\_forests/community\\_canopy\\_grants](http://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/community_forests/community_canopy_grants)

## **Recreation and Assistance Programs**

### **ANR Forest Parks & Recreation: Recreational Trails Program Grant**

Matching state grants for the maintenance, restoration, design and construction of recreational trails. Both motorized and non-motorized trail projects may qualify for RTP funds.

**Range:** Maximum of \$50,000. Local match of 20%.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, non-profit organizations, and other governmental entities may apply.

**Deadline:** Annually in February. Pre-applications due in December.

**Contact:** Sherry Winnie, (802) 760-8450 [sherry.winnie@vermont.gov](mailto:sherry.winnie@vermont.gov)

**Website:** <http://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/grants/rtp>

### **Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program**

The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation.

The RTCA program helps: define project vision and goals; inventory and map community resources; identify and analyze key issues and opportunities; engage collaborative partners and stakeholders; design community outreach and participation strategies; develop concept plans for trails, parks, and natural areas; set priorities and build consensus; identify funding sources; develop a sustainable organizational framework to support the project.

**Range -** N/A

**Eligibility:** Nonprofit organizations, community groups, tribes or tribal governments, and local, state, or federal government agencies

**Deadline:** Annually by August 1

**Contact:** Jennifer Waite, (802) 457-3368, ext 221, [jennifer\\_waite@nps.gov](mailto:jennifer_waite@nps.gov)

**Website:** <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

### **Recreational Facilities Grants Program**

Matching state grants for capital costs associated with the development and creation of community recreational opportunities.

**Range:** \$1,000 - \$25,000. 1:1 local match.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities and non-profit organizations

**Deadline:** Annually in July

**Contact:** Chrissy Gilhuly, (802) 828-3519 christine.gilhuly@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://bgs.vermont.gov/formsandpublications>

### **ANR Land and Water Conservation Fund**

Assists in acquiring land for parks and public outdoor recreation, as well as the development of new facilities and/or renovations of existing facilities or outdoor recreation.

**Range:** Not specified. Local match of 50%

**Eligibility:** Municipalities

**Deadline:** Annually in February

**Contact:** Jessica Savage, (802) 249-1230 jessica.savage@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/grants/lwcf>

### **VHCB Local Conservation Projects**

Local conservation projects for agricultural and recreational land, town parks and forests, swimming holes, greenways, and buildings for public use.

**Range:** Up to \$150,000. Local match of 33%.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities.

**Deadline:** Five deadlines throughout the year.

**Contact:** Marcy Christian, (802) 828-5070 marcy@vhcb.org

**Website:** <http://www.vhcb.org/local-conservation.html>

## **Downtown and Economic Development**

### **Regional Economic Development Grant Program**

Matching state grants to stimulate the creation and development or retention of economic development of individual or regional Vermont communities.

**Range:** \$1,000 - \$25,000

**Eligibility:** Municipalities and non-profit organizations

**Deadline:** Annually in October

**Contact:** Chrissy Gilhuly, (802) 828-3519 christine.gilhuly@vermont.gov

**Website:** <http://bgs.vermont.gov/formsandpublications>

### **Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit**

State investment tax credit for qualified historic rehabilitation, façade, code and technology upgrades for properties constructed before 1983 located within a Designated Downtown or Village Center.



**Range:** 10 – 50% of eligible expenditures

**Eligibility:** Properties within Designated Downtown or Village Center

**Deadline:** Annually in July

**Contact:** Caitlin Corkins, (802) 828-3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov

**Website:** [http://accd.vermont.gov/strong\\_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown\\_village\\_tax\\_credit](http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown_village_tax_credit)

### **Sales Tax Reallocation Program**

Municipalities and the developer of a qualified project jointly apply for a reallocation of sales taxes on construction materials. Qualified projects must be located within a Designated Downtown.

**Range:** Based on sales tax generated in excess of \$100,000 to \$1M depending on the size of municipality

**Eligibility:** Joint application between municipality and developer located within Designated Downtown

**Deadline:** Annually in July

**Contact:** Caitlin Corkins, (802) 828-3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov

**Website:** [http://accd.vermont.gov/strong\\_communities/opportunities/funding/salestaxreallocation](http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/salestaxreallocation)

### **Certified Local Government Program**

Federal grants available for resource identification and planning, National Register nominations, Downtown planning, public education, archeological studies, and building feasibility studies.

**Range:** \$500 - \$25,000

**Eligibility:** Municipalities that are enrolled as Certified Local Governments

**Deadline:** Annually in January

**Contact:** Devin Colman, (802) 828-3043 devin.colman@vermont.gov

**Website:** [http://accd.vermont.gov/strong\\_communities/preservation/planning/clgp](http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/preservation/planning/clgp)

## **Culture and Public Art**

### **Vermont Arts Council Arts Impact**

Arts Impact Grants supports efforts to create a more vibrant quality of life by providing equal and abundant access to the arts. Examples of fundable projects include: performances, exhibits, screenings, readings, fairs, public art projects, and festivals with a strong community outreach component; increased access to the arts for people with disabilities; public art projects, creation of new work where the community is engaged in the planning, presentation, and/or fabrication; after-school programs or summer camp activities.

**Range:** \$500-\$3,000. A 1:1 cash match is required

**Eligibility:** Nonprofits with 501(c)(3) designation or using a fiscal agent, a municipality, or a school

**Deadline:** Annually in spring

**Contact:** Sarah Mutrux, (802) 828-5425, smutrux@vermontartscouncil.org

**Website:** <http://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants-and-services/organizations/arts-impact>

### **Vermont Arts Council Animating Infrastructure**

Animating Infrastructure Grants support community projects that integrate art with existing or proposed infrastructure improvements and demonstrate the positive impact of art in helping communities meet goals of livability, walkability, safety, economic vitality, and community vibrancy. Anything that serves a functional purpose in the built or natural environment qualifies. Proposed projects would not be limited to, but could include improvements to: buildings; recreational paths; parks; bridges; small-scale renewable energy projects; water treatment facilities.

**Range:** Up to \$15,000. No local match required.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, non-profit organizations, schools, libraries, Downtown associations, historical societies, chambers of commerce, regional planning organizations.

**Deadline:** Annually

**Contact:** Michele Bailey, (802) 828-3294 mbailey@vermontartscouncil.org

**Website:** <http://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants-and-services/organizations/animating-infrastructure>

### **State Historic Preservation Grants**

State 50:50 matching grants for the repair and restoration of historic buildings listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Range:** \$1,000 - \$20,000

**Eligibility:** Municipalities and non-profit organizations

**Deadline:** Annually in October

**Contact:** Caitlin Corkins, (802) 828-3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov

**Website:** [http://accd.vermont.gov/strong\\_communities/preservation/grants/historic\\_preservation](http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/preservation/grants/historic_preservation)

### **Cultural Facilities Grant Program**

Matching state grants for community facilities used to provide cultural activities to the public and to enhance or expand the capacity of an existing building to provide cultural programming.

**Range:** \$1,000 - \$30,000

**Eligibility:** Municipalities and non-profit organizations

**Deadline:** Annually in the spring

**Contact:** Michelle Bailey, (802) 828-3294 mbailey@vermontartscouncil.org

**Website:** <http://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants-and-services/organizations/cultural-facilities>

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### **Preservation Trust of Vermont**

Implementation and planning grants available to preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings.

**Range:** Varies.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities and nonprofit organizations

**Deadline:** Varies.

**Contact:** Paul Bruhn, (802) 343-0595 paul@ptvermont.org

**Website:** [http://www.ptvermont.org/help/preservation\\_grants.php](http://www.ptvermont.org/help/preservation_grants.php)

### **Vermont Community Foundation**

A variety of grants are available to support projects to improve environmental sustainability, cultural heritage, social justice, historic preservation, and vitality of Vermont communities

**Range:** Up to \$25,000. No local match required.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities, nonprofit organizations, grant availability varies by geographic area.

**Deadline:** Varies by grant, throughout the year.

**Contact:** Lauren Bruno, (802) 388-3355 ext. 222 lbruno@vermontcf.org

**Website:** <http://www.vermontcf.org/Nonprofits/AvailableGrants.aspx>

