NORTH AVENUE PILOT PROJECT

Project FAQ *Sheet 1*

What does the pilot project involve?

The North Avenue Pilot Project involves measures to make North Avenue safer for pedestrians and bicyclists including signal improvements, temporary restriping and intersection changes between Washington Street and Plattsburg Avenue. The following changes will be made:

- The 4-lane segments of North Avenue will be reconfigured to 3 lanes,
- The intersections at Shore Road, Ethan Allen Shopping Center, Ethan Allen Parkway, and the VT 127 will be made more pedestrain-friendly,
- The signal at the intersection with VT 127 will be adjusted to increase safety by closing the high-speed northbound ramp and the free-flow westbound right-turn movement,
- Bike lanes will be added and existing bike lanes will be improved,
- Drain grates will be repaired or replaced with bike-friendly grates,
- Parking on North Avenue between Institute Road and VT 127 ramps and between Shore Road and Plattsburg Avenue will be swapped with the bike lanes.

A map of the changes can be viewed here

What is the project schedule?

The pilot measures will be installed in mid-June 2016, and an initial decision as to whether to remove or retain some or all of the measures prior to winter will be made by mid-October[1]. For more a more detailed schedule, please see the project timeline.

[1]If the changes result in longer than expected traffic queues or significantly higher crash rates, they will be removed sooner.

How much will the project cost?

The pilot installation will cost approximately $155,000. DPW's annual street and sidewalk capital budget is $2.4 million.

> "...Safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and riders, and motorists."

What has been the planning process for North Avenue?

In 2011, the City Council adopted a Transportation Plan that envisioned North Avenue as a Complete Street, designed to accommodate safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and riders, and motorists.

In 2013-14, the Department of Public Works and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission conducted a North Avenue Corridor Study. The Corridor Study was approved by the City Council and makes recommendations regarding short, medium and long-term projects on North Avenue.

Why is the city conducting this pilot?

The city hopes that the pilot measures will decrease the number of and severity of crashes, calm traffic, reduce speeding and make North Avenue safer for cars, pedestrians and bicyclists, while still providing efficient traffic flow.

Additionally, the pilot will determine whether the middle section of North Avenue should ultimately be designed with three or four lanes. This determination is critical as it will direct the design of future improvements called for in the corridor study including signalization, transit stops, crosswalks, and bike facilities.

Project FAQ *Sheet 2*

Is traffic safety on North Avenue an issue?

VTrans ranks high crash locations[1] on the 3,900 miles of federal aid highways in the state. The crash rate on North Ave[2] is significantly higher than that for comparable roads statewide[3].

Is speeding an issue on North Avenue?

Yes. Between 127 and Ethan Allen Parkway, 86% of cars speed, and between the Shopping Center and Shore Road, 46% of cars speed[4].

How long does it currently take to drive the 4-lane section of North Ave?

A vehicle traveling at the speed limit (30 mph) that received all green lights would take 1 minute and 36 seconds to travel the 0.8 mile 4-lane section.

Travel time data collected during the morning and evening commute hours in June and November 2015 found that, on average, it takes about two minutes to drive northbound, and slightly over two minutes to drive southbound.

I live in the New North End, and commute to work. Will my driving time increase?

One of the project's goals is to calm traffic and reduce speeds while still providing efficient travel times, so if you are one of the 86% of drivers who currently speed on North Ave between Ethan Allen Parkway and VT 127, your driving time is likely to increase slightly.

One of the purposes of the pilot is to determine what effect these changes have on driving times. DPW will closely monitor travel times and will, as needed and as possible, make modifications to optimize roadway and intersection efficiency. If pilot components result in unacceptable increases in driving times, it will be removed.

Why can't bikers use the sidewalk?

To safely accommodate both bikes and pedestrians, sidewalks should be widened to become a shared-use path 10 feet wide (8 feet in rare and very constrained areas)[5]. Existing sidewalks along North Ave are 5 feet wide.

The safety of biking on-road versus off-road is a hotly debated topic. While it may intuitively seem safer for bicyclists to be off the road, this is not the case where there are many cross streets, driveways, and visual obstructions. If the pilot is unsuccessful and alternate accommodations for bicyclists are needed, the City will explore the other design options that were included in the North Avenue Corridor Study.

How will I pass a bus or recycle truck?

If you get behind a bus or recycling truck, you can either wait, or pass if it's safe to do so.

[1] High crash locations are locations that have 5 or more crashes in a 5-year period and have an Actual/Critical ratio of 1.0 or higher.

[2] This crash rate does not include crashes on side streets and in the shopping center.

[3] For more information on crash rates, please see pages 30-31 of the corridor study.

[4] Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

[5] 2012 AASHTO Guide for the Department of Bicycle Facilities; 2002 Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Design Manual.

Project FAQ *Sheet 3*

Is this really a pilot? Once the changes are made, isn't it a "done deal"?

This is a pilot. All the modifications that will be made are reversible, and DPW is committed to removing modifications that are problematic.

How will decisions about the project be made?

The City Council directed the Department of Public Works to:

- Collect data throughout the course of the pilot,
- Conduct a public input survey,
- Keep the project area City Councilors apprised of pilot developments, and
- Make recommendations to the City Council 4 months into the pilot regarding the removal or continuation of the pilot components.

The October 2014 City Council resolution regarding the North Avenue Corridor plan states that, "If public input from the New North End does not support its continuation, the City will restore the 4-3 lane pilot area to its current configuration."

Will raw data be shared?

Yes. Some residents have sought to have the raw data so that they can ensure DPW and the CCRPC is properly compiling and interpreting the data. The raw data files are linked on the project website.

How can I get more information?

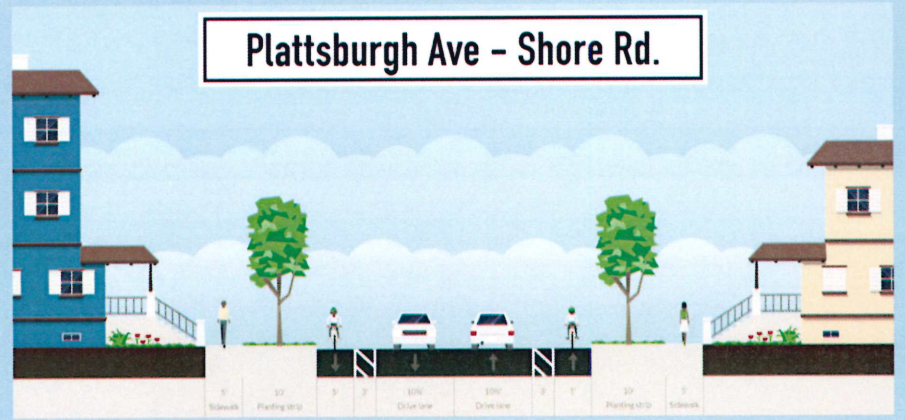
For more information, please visit the **DPW website**:
www.burlingtonvt.gov/dpw/north-avenue-corridor

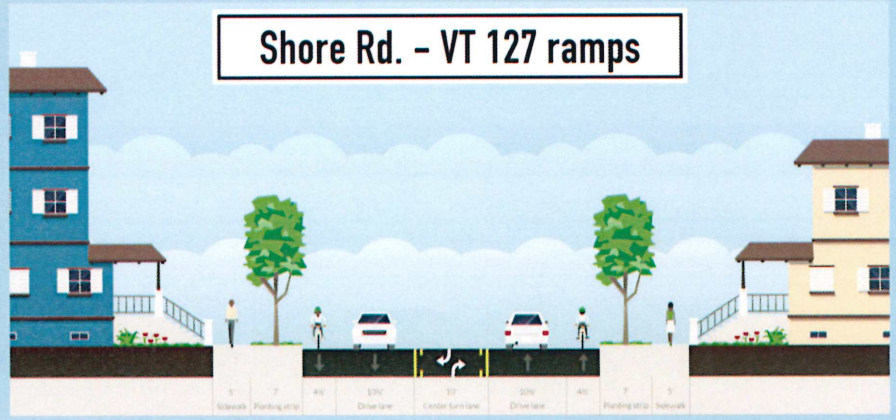
Or contact **Nicole Losch**:
645 Pine Street Suite A, Burlington VT 05401
Phone: (802) 863-9094 x3 Email: northavepilot@burlingtonvt.gov

How can I provide input regarding my opinion?

You have a number of ways to provide your input:

- Attend the June 7 public forum
- Comment by e-mail (northavepilot@burlingtonvt.gov)
- Comment by phone: (802)-863-9094 x3
- Attend the mid-September public forum
- Participate in the September public input survey (Surveys will be available in print, online and via phone)
- Attend the October 17 City Council meeting





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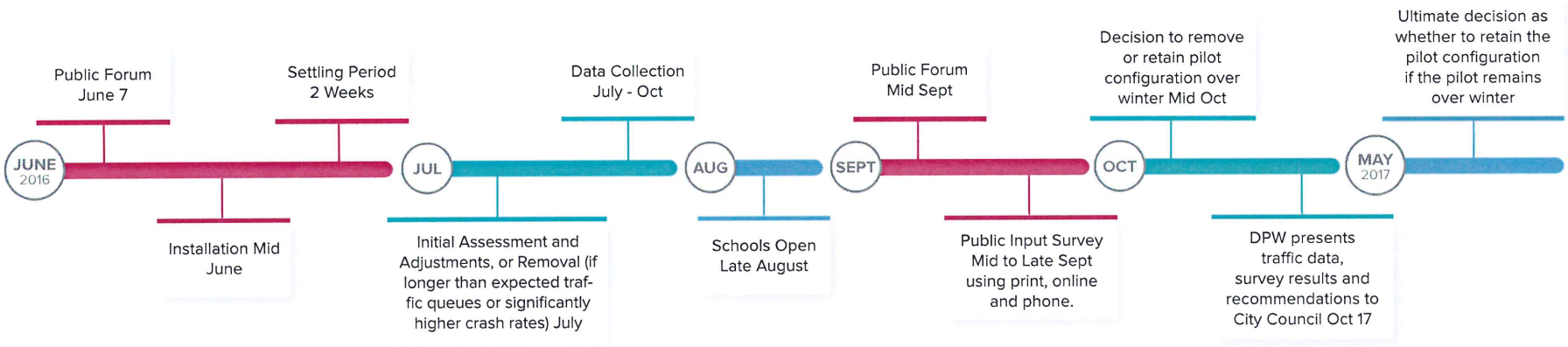

Timeline

DPW will be collecting and reviewing public comments throughout the pilot project. Please e-mail any comments to ***northavepilot@burlingtonvt.gov***

About the Project

The North Avenue Pilot Project involves temporary restriping and intersection changes along North Avenue between Washington Street and Plattsburgh Avenue. The pilot measures will be assessed to see if they have the desired effect of calming traffic and making North Avenue safer for cars, pedestrians and bicyclists, while still providing efficient traffic flow. The pilot measures will be installed in mid-June 2016, and a decision as to whether to remove or retain some or all of the measures over winter will be made by mid-October.

For more information about this pilot project, please contact:

Nicole Losch, Senior Planner
645 Pine Street Suite A, Burlington VT 05401
(802) 863-9094 x3
northavepilot@burlingtonvt.gov

Or visit the Burlington DPW website: www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW

Opportunities for Public Input

- June 7 Public Forum
- Comments by e-mail, phone or snail mail throughout the project
- Sept Public Forum
- Public Input Survey using print, online, and phone Mid to Late Sept
- October 17 City Council Meeting