

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING AND FUTURE CORRIDOR CONDITIONS

Corridor Crash History

High Crash Locations

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans) identifies high crash locations (HCLs) for intersections and segments statewide. In order to be designated a HCL segment or intersection, a location must have experienced five or more crashes over a five year period, and crashes must occur at higher frequency than the average rate for similar roadways statewide.

During the 2006-2010 period, four segments on the study corridor were identified as HCLs (Figure 10 on the following page).

The Actual/Critical Ratio compares the crash rate for these locations to the average ratio for comparable facilities statewide. A ratio over 1.0 indicates higher than average frequency of crashes at all locations. The Severity Index, which is the average cost associated with crashes, indicates that the average severity of crashes is greatest between Lakewood Parkway and Ethan Allen Parkway; the Actual/Critical Ratio is highest here too. This segment is four-lanes, with frequent cross street and driveway connections. Crash records indicate high instances of at-angle crashes, typically associated with turning traffic.

Crashes Involving Pedestrians or Bicyclists

Six of the crashes occurring during the 2006-2010 period involved pedestrians. Two of these occurred near the Ethan Allen Shopping Center, indicating that specific attention may be necessary at this location. None of the crashes recorded over this period involved bicyclists. However, because of the relatively low sample size, it is not uncommon for pedestrian and bicycle crashes to exhibit patterns that do not lead to specific conclusions, requiring that these safety issues be analyzed proactively during design, rather than based on specific data analysis.

Other Potential Safety Issues

A number of potential safety concerns for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists on the corridor were identified by staff review of the corridor and through the public outreach process:

- Excessive speeds, particularly where lanes are wide and on-street parking lanes are sparsely used.
- Considerable distance between crosswalks for pedestrians crossing North Avenue, and no accommodations to improve the convenience or safety of pedestrians crossing the street.
- Lack of pedestrian signals and poor visibility of traffic signal heads at many locations (pedestrians do not know who has the right-of-way).
- Narrow travel lanes in the four-lane segment.
- Lack of accommodations for bicyclists.
- Worn and missing pavement markings.
- Skewed intersection at Shore Road/Heineberg Road.
- High speed, heavy volume turns at the VT 127 connection, along with unclear geometry and allocation of pavement space.
- High speed, heavy volume right turns at Ethan Allen Parkway and Plattsburg Avenue, which conflict with pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Difficulty in making left turns at several critical locations.
- Presence of frequent residential and commercial driveways.
- Uncomfortable pedestrian environment along the rock bluff immediately adjacent to the sidewalk in the southbound direction between the VT 127 ramps and Institute Rd intersections.

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Figure 10: High Crash Locations (2003-2007)

Birch Ct to Woodbury Rd

Crashes: 39
 PDO: 33 (85%)
 Crash Rate: 6.48 per MVM
 Actual/Critical Ratio: 1.23
 Severity Index: \$21,677

Gosse Ct/Woodlawn Rd to Poirier Pl

Crashes: 46
 PDO: 42 (91%)
 Crash Rate: 6.18 per MVM
 Actual/Critical Ratio: 1.22
 Severity Index: \$13,100

Lakewood Pkwy to Ethan Allen Pkwy

Crashes: 76
 PDO: 60 (79%)
 Crash Rate: 10.16 per MVM
 Actual/Critical Ratio: 2.00
 Severity Index: \$41,204

Strong St/Ward St to Sherman St

Crashes: 58
 PDO: 4 (93%)
 Crash Rate: 9.51 per MVM
 Actual/Critical Ratio: 1.81
 Severity Index: \$12,107

