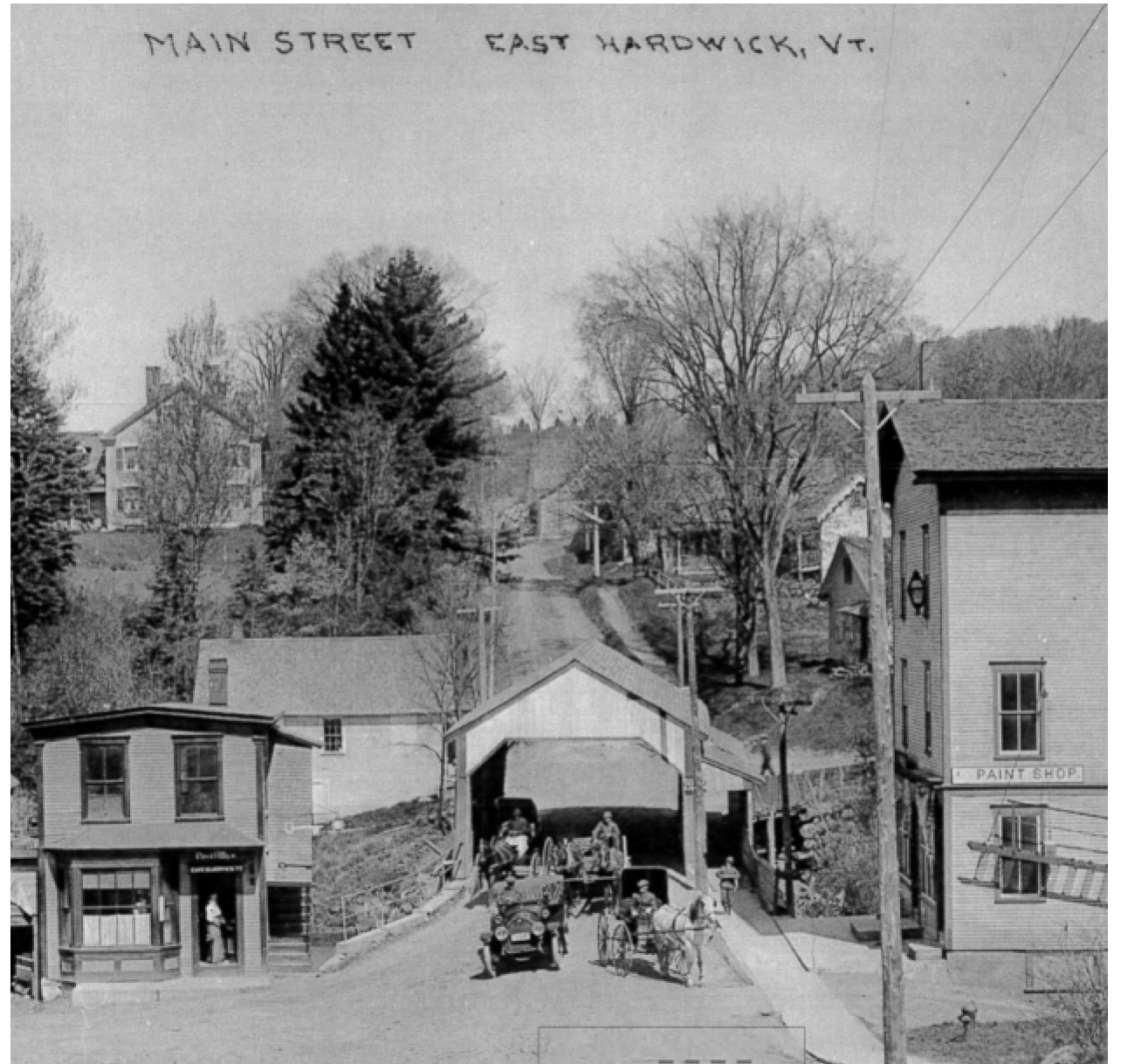


Welcome to an update on the East Hardwick Better Connections Process!

Agenda

- Introductions
- Review of the Process
- Preliminary Findings/Recommendations for Discussion/Input
- Further Questions/Discussion
- Next Steps



To download the draft report, go to www.easthardwick.com

Any comments/questions can be emailed to Peter Fairweather at pfairweather@fairweatherconsulting.com

Introductions

Project Managers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
David Upson	Hardwick Town Manager
Tracy Martin	Hardwick Community Development Coordinator

Steering Committee

Community Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Kathleen Hemmens	East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization
Meredith Holch	Caledonia Grange #9
Irene Nagle	East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization
David O'Brien	East Hardwick Fire District #1

State of Vermont Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Matthew Arancio	VTrans, Planning Coordinator
Faith Dall	VTrans, Planning Coordinator
Natalie Elvidge	ACCD/DHCD, Planning Coordinator

Regional Planning Commission Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Kyle Dwyer	NVDA Regional Planner
Annie McLean	NVDA Community & Economic Recovery Specialist

Municipal Government Liaisons

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Kristen Leahy	Hardwick Zoning Administrator
David Gross	Chair, Hardwick Planning Commission

Project Consultants

<u>Name</u>	<u>Firm</u>
Peter Fairweather Consulting	Lead Project Consultant, Fairweather Consulting
Andrea Day, PE	Dufresne Group

Review of the Process

The East Hardwick Better Connections Process has sought to identify ways to maintain and enhance the vitality of East Hardwick by:

- improving pedestrian and bicycle pathways, signage, parking
- recommending potential village redevelopment projects
- identifying improvements in stormwater/drainage

Review of the Process

The process has been based on public outreach, including:

- a community-wide survey (61 responses)
- a Village Supper, July 29, 2024, at the Grange Hall (over 50 attendees)
- a project website (www.easthardwick.com)

Review of the Process

Priorities identified in the public outreach process

Improve Sidewalks: The results of the survey and village supper highlighted people's concerns about the condition of Village sidewalks. Pedestrian access and safety were frequently mentioned as important to improving the walkability of the Village.

Improve Infrastructure for Water Distribution: People expressed concern that the Village water system be protected, given the current high quality of its water and the aging of the system.

Improve Drainage and Stormwater Management: Respondents recognized the damage done by the flooding in the past year and the necessity of improving drainage and stormwater management to protect the Village properties and safeguard its quality of life.

Protect and improve Village Appearance: There were concerns expressed about the importance of maintaining and improving the physical appearance of the Village as a matter of both civic pride and enhancing the Village's economic viability

Connect to the River and Lamoille Valley Rail Trail: The River and the Rail Trail were both seen as important under-used assets for the Village. Residents are looking for ways to enhance connections to these assets to improve quality of life in the Village.

Improve Housing Opportunities: The need to improve the quality and quantity of housing available to Village residents was a consistent concern in both the survey and village supper.

Improve Community Connections in General: People appeared to be interested in strengthening opportunities for community connections in general. This included a desire to improve community gathering spaces such as the Grange Hall, a potential small greenspace at the site of the former library/fire department, the desire to create another community gathering place/cafe in East Hardwick.

Preliminary Findings/Recommendations for Discussion

A FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING ABOUT THESE PRIORITIES:

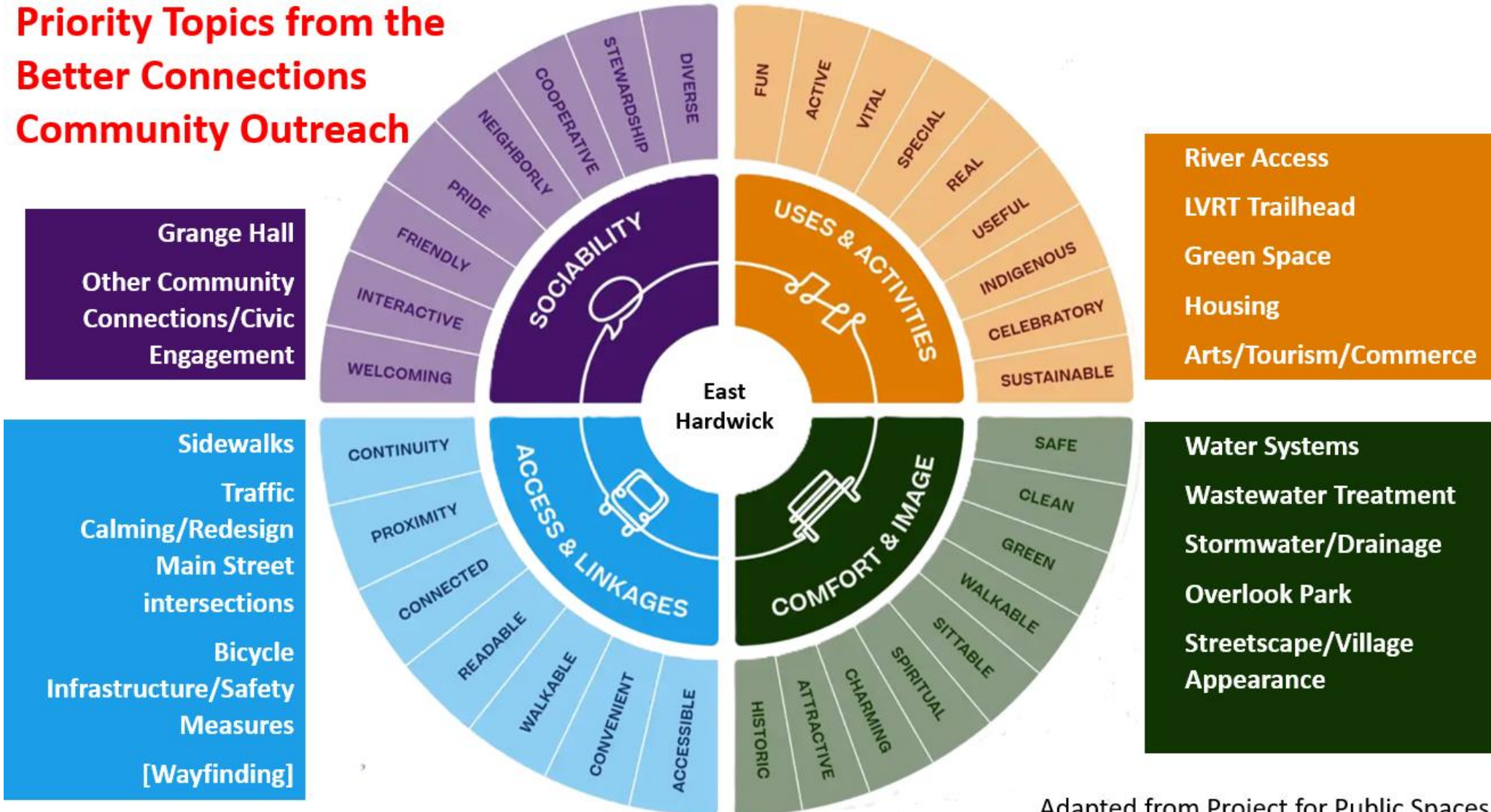
4 Elements of a Vibrant Place

In the presentation, this slide has an animation that cannot be shown here.

Preliminary Findings/Recommendations for Discussion

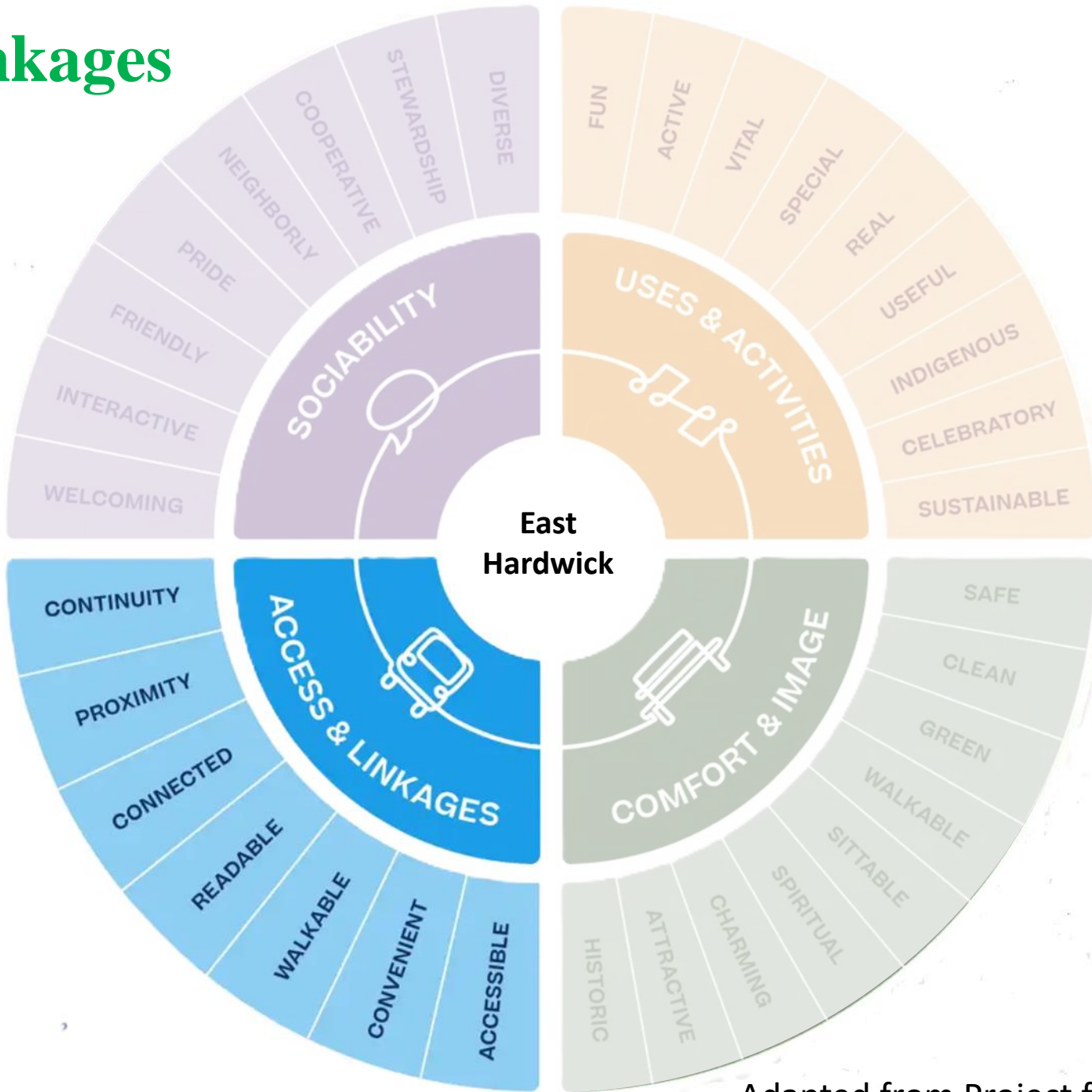
A FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING ABOUT THESE PRIORITIES:

Priority Topics from the Better Connections Community Outreach



Access & Linkages

Grange Hall
 Other Community
 Connections/Civic
 Engagement



River Access
 LVRT Trailhead
 Green Space/Playground
 Housing
 Arts/Tourism/Commerce

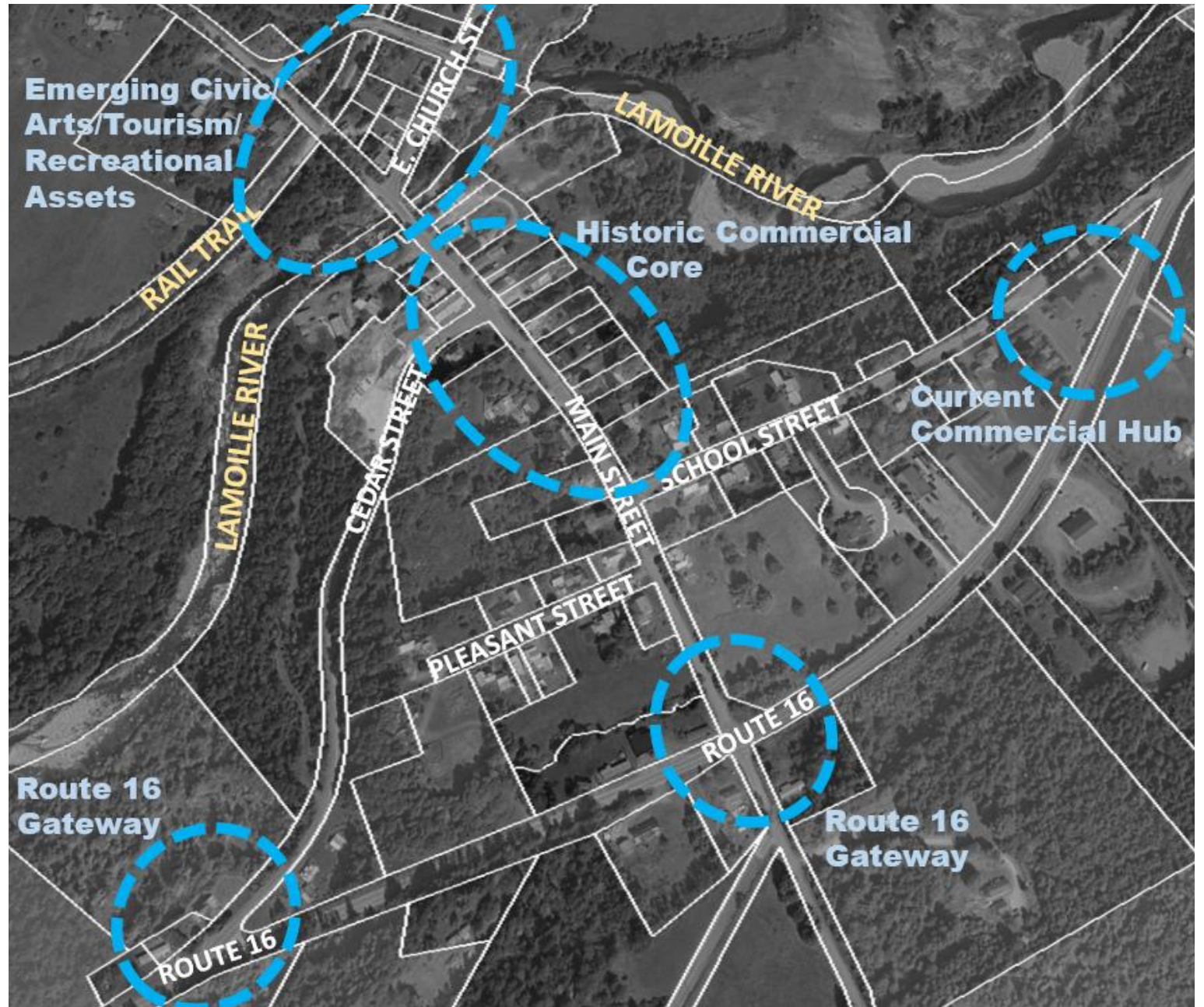
Sidewalks
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 [Wayfinding]

Water Systems
 Wastewater Treatment
 Stormwater/Drainage
 Overlook Park
 Streetscape/Village
 Appearance

Adapted from Project for Public Spaces

Access & Linkages

Current and Emerging Activity Centers in East Hardwick



Access & Linkages



Sidewalks being replaced.



An example of a strong streetscape.

Replace Sidewalks (potentially including streetscape enhancements)

Main Street – Replace existing sidewalk with one of concrete with granite curbing along existing alignment between School Street and East Church Street. An option including streetscaping (e.g., complete streets) is possible.

“Sharrows” (see below) could also be added to Main Street to enable riders on the LVRT to access the traditional commercial core and, for the time being, to access the LVRT via Ward Hill Road.

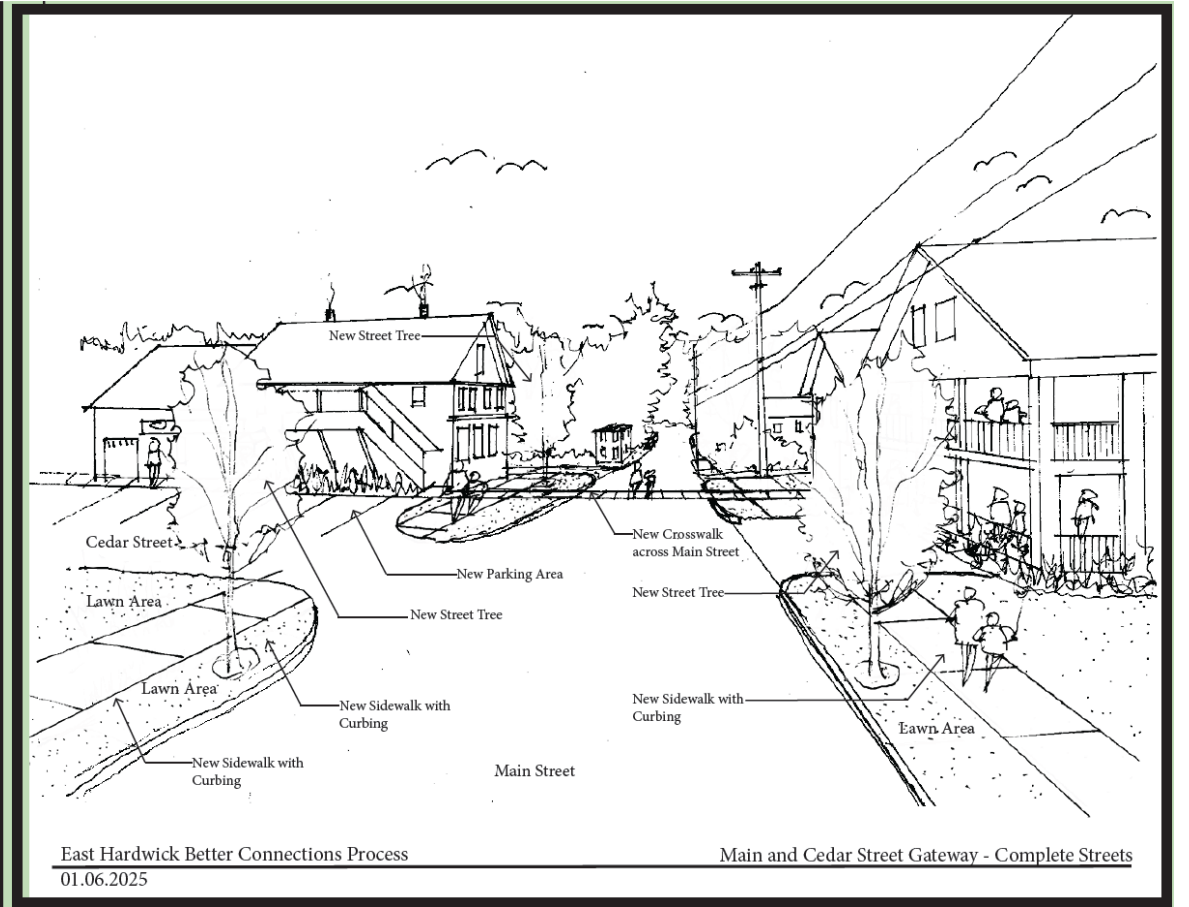
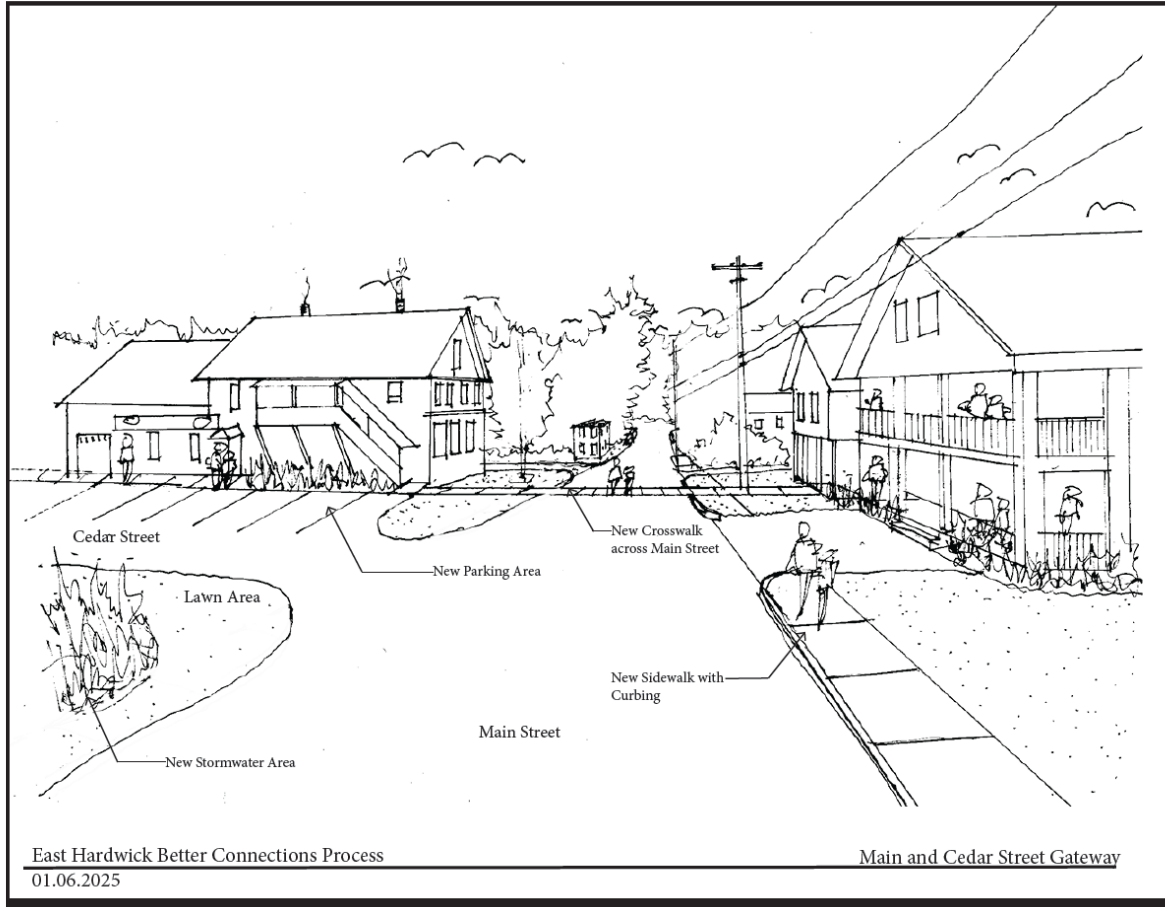
Purpose: Creates a stronger link between the traditional commercial core of East Hardwick and the Village’s residential areas as well as the emerging civic, tourism and recreational assets in the Village. In addition, the presence of sidewalks and a strong streetscape can provide traffic-calming for vehicles entering the Village off Route 16.

Brickhouse Road – Replace existing sidewalk between East Church Street and the LVRT.

Purpose: Strengthen the link between the LVRT and the core of East Hardwick to encourage residents to use the trail and provide access for tourists to the Village core.

Access & Linkages

Options for Main Street Streetscape

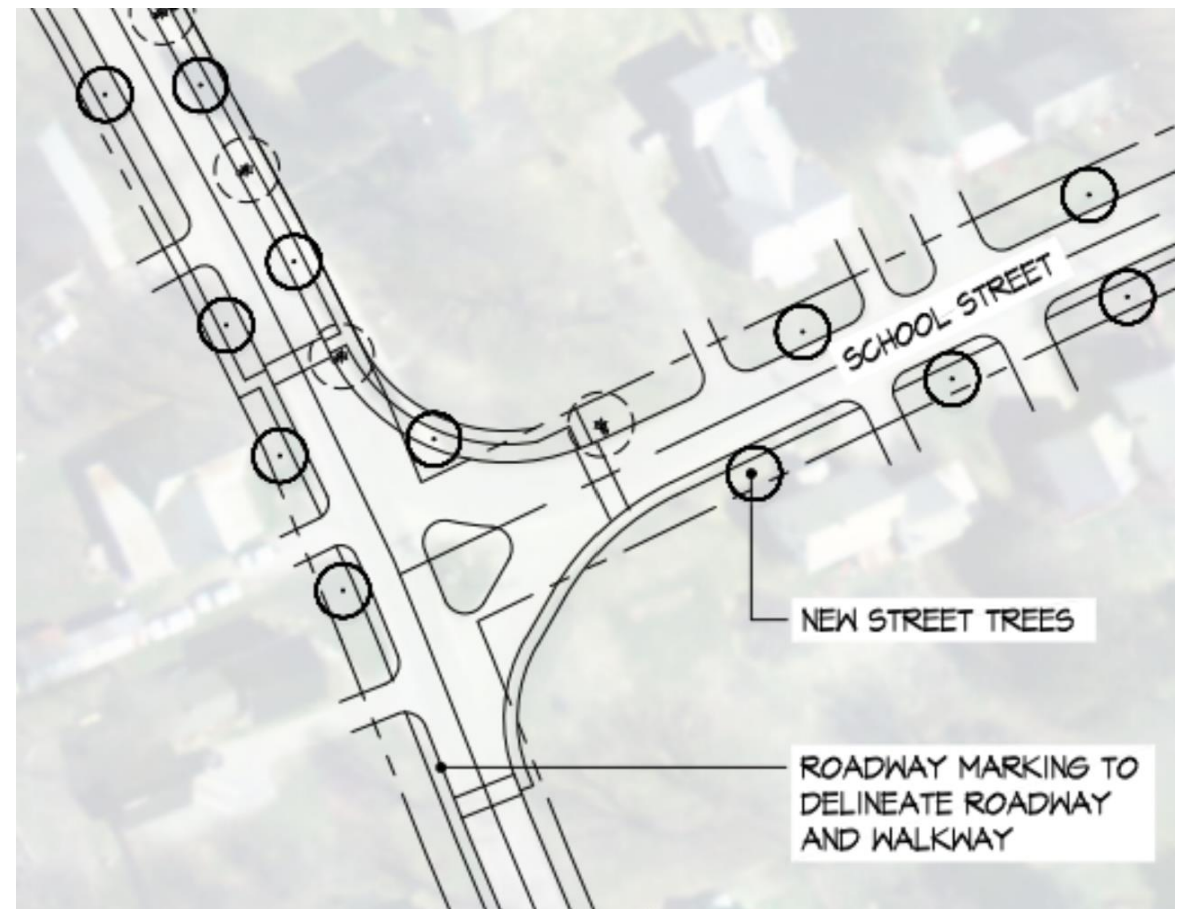


Access & Linkages

Reconfigured Intersections

School Street/Main Street Intersection –

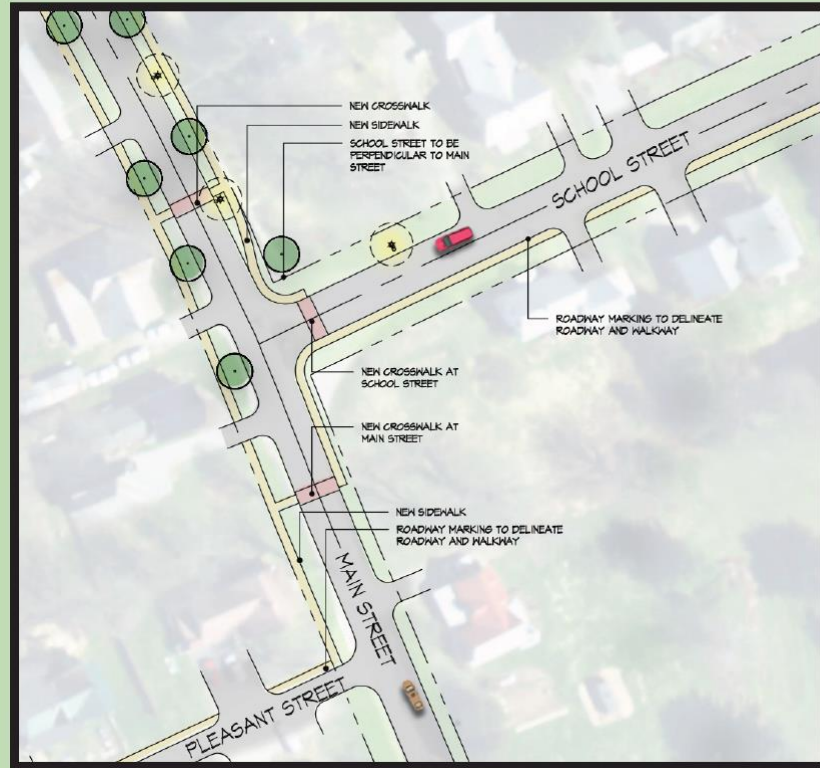
Reconfigure intersection to have one point of access. Three options are being considered: two of the alternatives will be with one or the other side of the road on each side of the water tub closed off. The third option will be a perpendicular intersection that would likely require relocating the water tub which could trigger review by the Division for Historic Preservation.



Access & Linkages

Options for School Street/Main Street Intersection

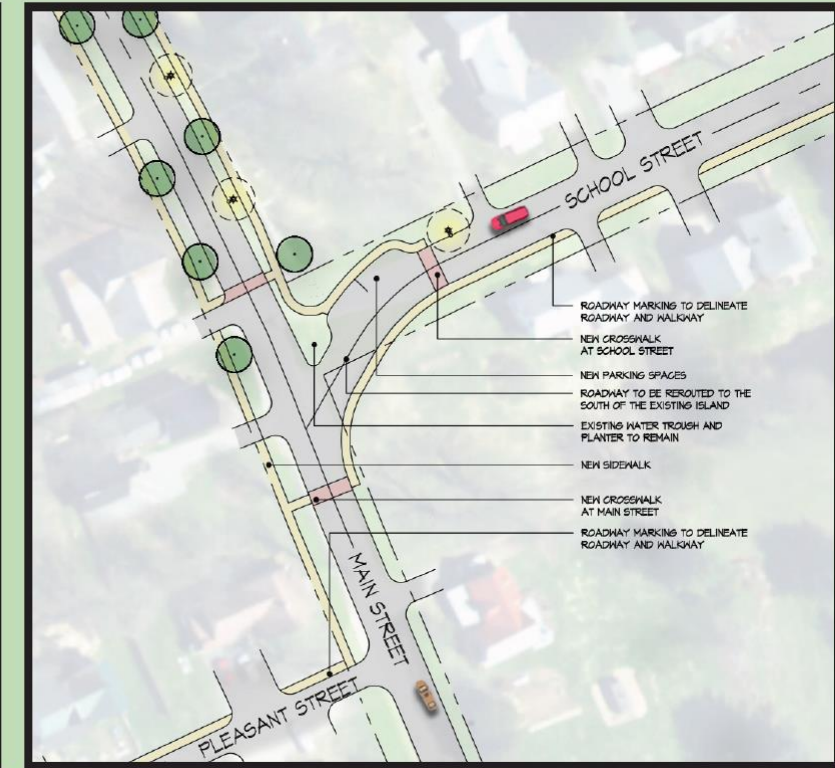
Option #1 - Perpendicular Intersection



Option #2 - North Intersection



Option #3 - South Intersection

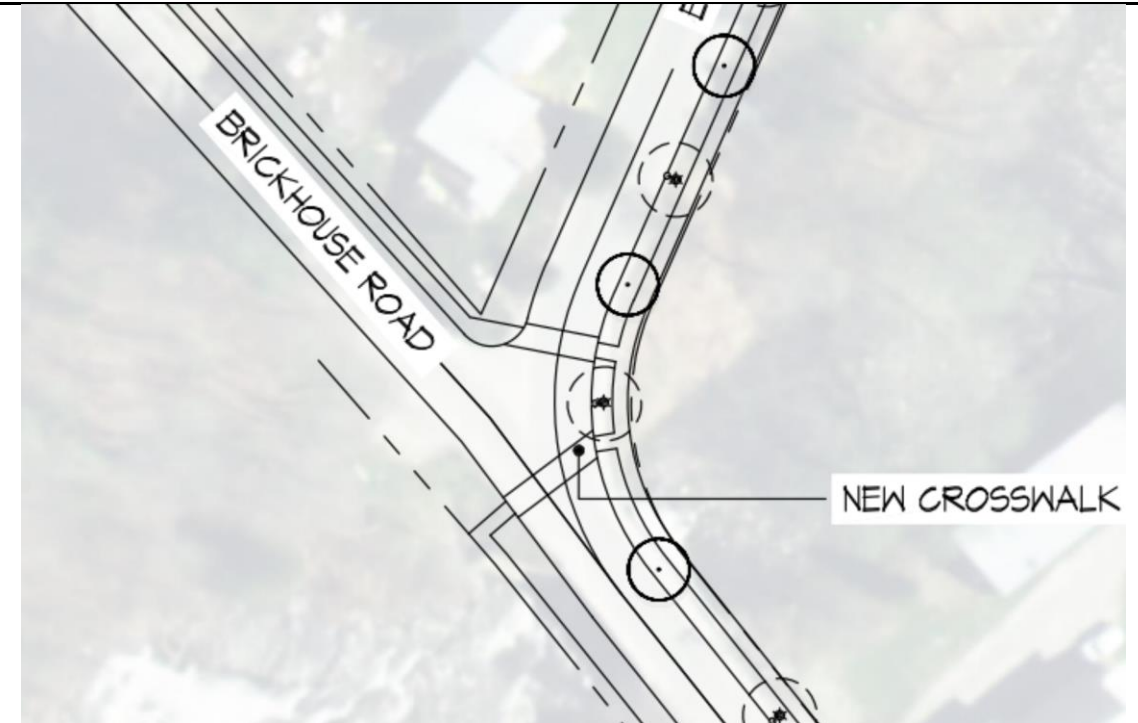


Access & Linkages

Reconfigured Intersections

Brickhouse Road/Main Street Intersection –

Reorient the intersection in accordance with the Local Motion recommendations to create a more perpendicular intersection.

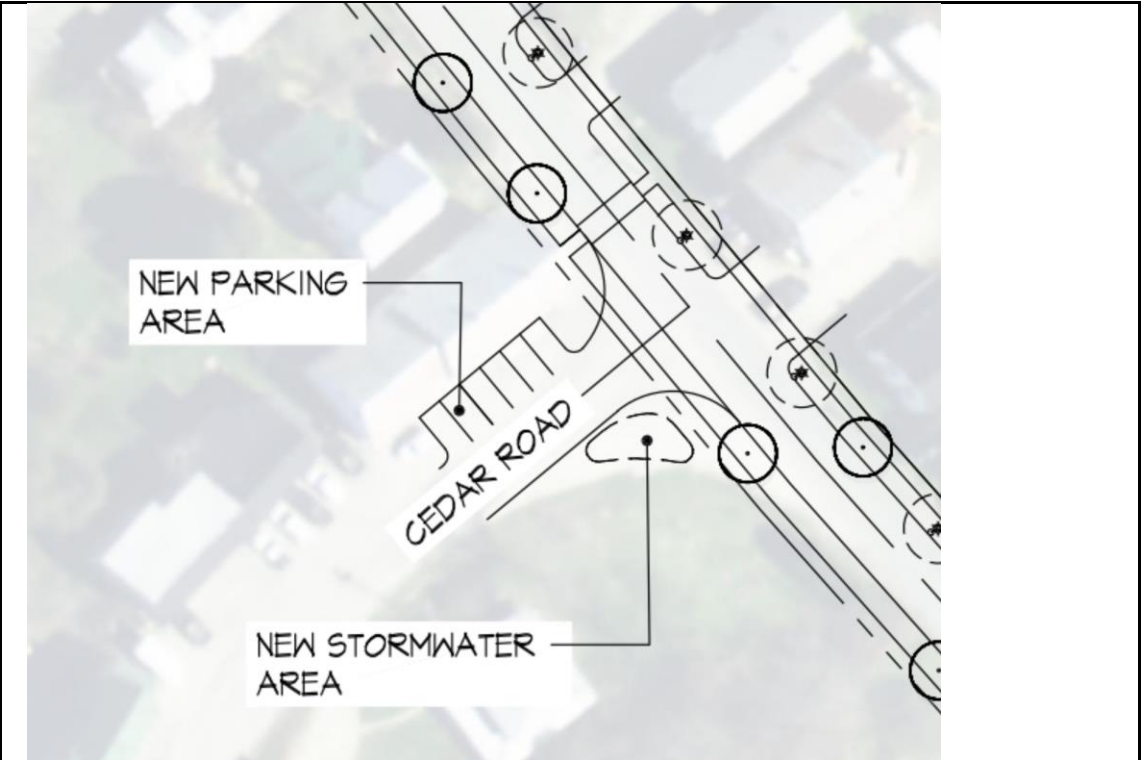


Access & Linkages

Reconfigured Intersections

Cedar Street/Main Street Intersection –

Reduce the width of the intersection, add parking along McFeeters and add stormwater infiltration on the uphill side.



Access & Linkages

Reconfigured Intersections

Enhanced Route 16 Gateways

Cedar Street/VT-16 Intersection – It is recommended that the intersection be reconfigured to be perpendicular with VT-16 to provide clearer sight lines. This could include possible traffic calming measures for traffic coming off Route 16 and into the Village.

Purpose: To improve the safety and sight lines at this intersection, given the often-high traffic speeds it experiences.



Main Street/VT-16 Intersection – Narrow, poor sightlines, increased traffic with closing of School Street/VT 16 intersection.

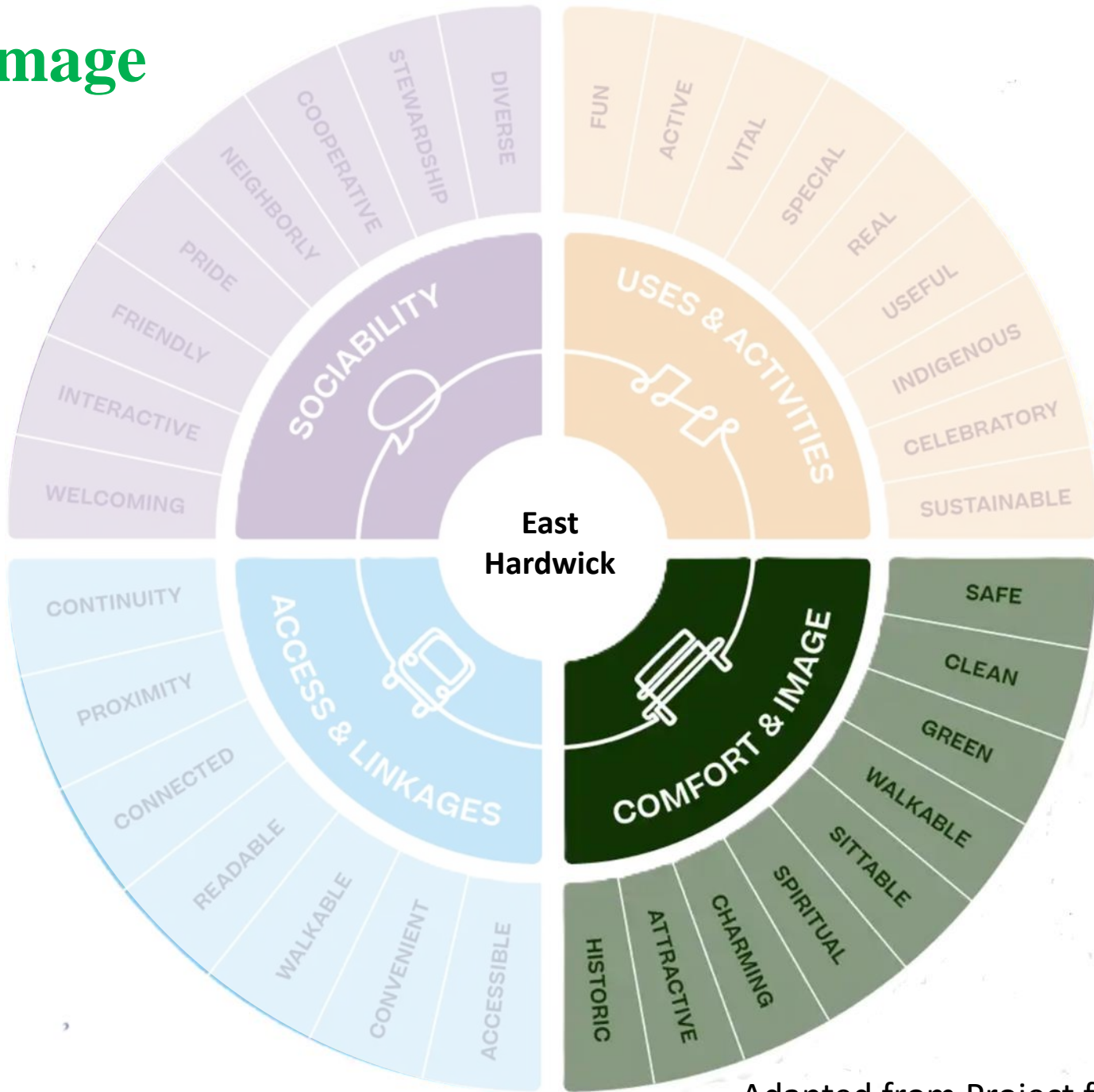
Purpose: Creates a stronger link between the traditional commercial core of East Hardwick and the Village's residential areas as well as the emerging civic, tourism and recreational assets in the Village. In addition, there has been a previous attempt to get the speed limit lowered along VT 16 in the area of East Hardwick that did not progress beyond the selectboard. Discussions of adding a blinking light near the end of Main Street to encourage people to slow down in the Village. The presence of sidewalks and a strong streetscape can provide traffic-calming for vehicles entering the Village off Route 16.



THOUGHTS?

Comfort & Image

Grange Hall
 Other Community
 Connections/Civic
 Engagement



River Access
 LVRT Trailhead
 Green Space/Playground
 Housing
 Arts/Tourism/Commerce

Sidewalks
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 Measures
 [Wayfinding]

Water Systems
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 Stormwater/Drainage
 Overlook Park
 Streetscape/Village
 Appearance

Adapted from Project for Public Spaces

Comfort and Image

Emerging Priorities: Key priorities that have emerged for East Hardwick based on community input include:

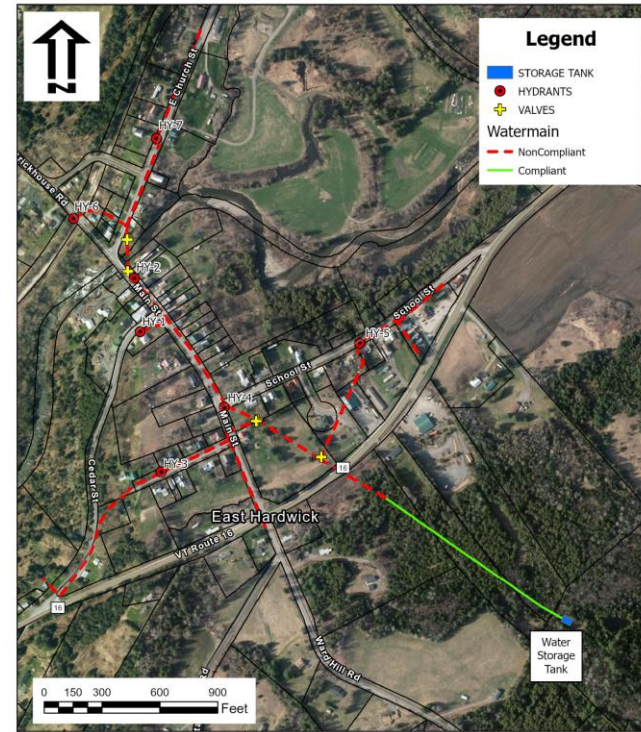
- **Improve stormwater collection and treatment** to protect properties and riverbank erosion during rain and runoff events.
- **Provide Park areas** including Overlook Park and access to the river.
- **Maintain and improve the Village water system.**
- **Consider** the need for a village-wide wastewater system.

Comfort and Image

Water Systems: Recommendation

The East Hardwick Fire District is working to evaluate the water system and identify projects that will allow the system to continue to provide high quality water to their users.

Purpose: Maintain clean, safe drinking water service to the users in East Hardwick.



Projects and associated costs will be identified in the study being undertaken by the Fire District.

Comfort and Image

Stormwater Projects

Due to the hilly nature of East Hardwick, stormwater collection has always been a concern, more so in recent years with events increasing in intensity. The current stormwater collection and treatment system is inadequate and has been the focus of several reports that have provided recommendations to reduce the current streambank erosion.

More detailed information is included in the separate East Hardwick Stormwater Treatment Report.



Recommended Locations

Main Street:

Purpose:

Improve collection and treatment to protect both property and water quality by reducing erosion.

E. Church Street:

Purpose:

Improve collection and treatment to protect both property and water quality by reducing erosion.

Brickhouse Road:

Purpose:

Improve collection and treatment to protect both property and water quality by reducing erosion.

School Street/Route 16 intersection:

Purpose:

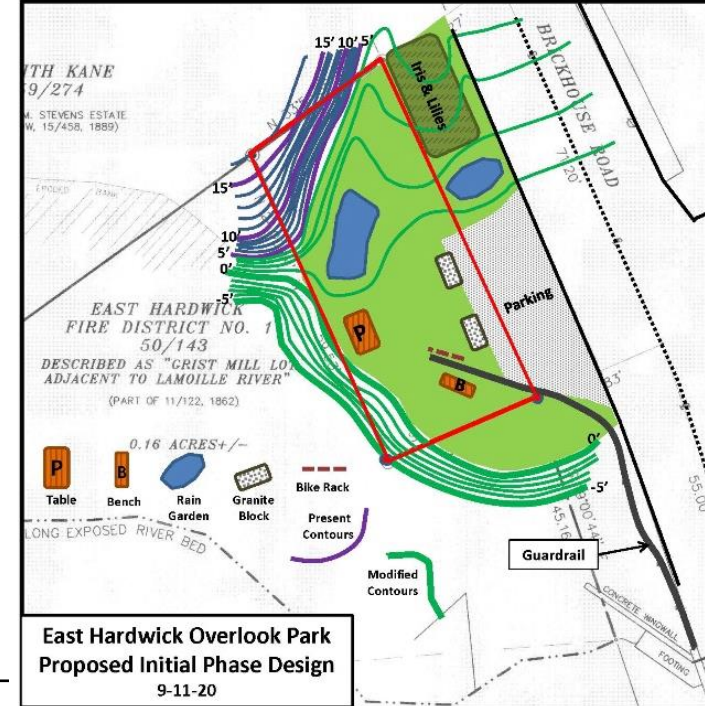
Stabilize the bank along School Street and improve stormwater collection and treatment to protect both property and water quality by reducing erosion.

Comfort and Image

Overlook Park

The East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization (EHNO) has been working on improvements to Overlook Park for several years. The guardrail that extends into the park is planned to be shortened and replaced with granite blocks and a historic marker will be installed at the park in the Spring.

River access from Overlook Park may not be feasible unless it is incorporated into a stormwater step conveyance feature.



Recommendations

Overlook Park is making progress towards the vision developed by EHNO. Continued progress is anticipated to occur in the coming year. No further recommendations are included as part of this study.

Comfort and Image

Streetscape/Village Appearance

Purpose: Improved sidewalks and streetscapes will increase the connectivity of the village to points of interest.
 (The Streetscape and Village Appearance section is closely linked with the recommended sidewalk improvements in the Access & Linkages section.) FINAL
 STREETSCAPING DECISIONS WILL DEPEND UPON PUBLIC INPUT

Recommended Locations

Main Street:

A sidewalk exists on the north side between the bridge and School Street is deteriorated and unsafe in most locations. Sidewalk improvements are discussed in the chapter on Access & Linkages. No other streetscape improvements exist along Main Street. Improvements considered by the community include Lighting & Landscaping.

E. Church Street:

There are no existing sidewalks along East Church Street. Points of interest accessed from East Church Street include the Grange Hall, Lamoille Valley Rail Trail trailhead and the East Hardwick Congregational Church. Sidewalk improvements are discussed in the chapter on Access & Linkages. No streetscape improvements exist along Main Street. Improvements considered by the community include Lighting & Landscaping.

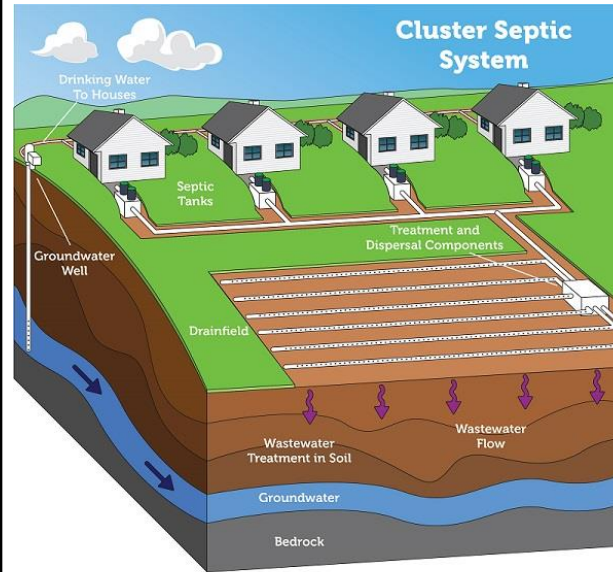
School Street:

No streetscape improvements exist along School Street. The only store in the Village is located near the end of School Street. In addition, housing density along School Street is greater than in some other areas of the Village. Sidewalk improvements are discussed in the chapter on Access & Linkages. No streetscape improvements exist along Main Street. Improvements considered by the community include Lighting & Landscaping.

Comfort and Image

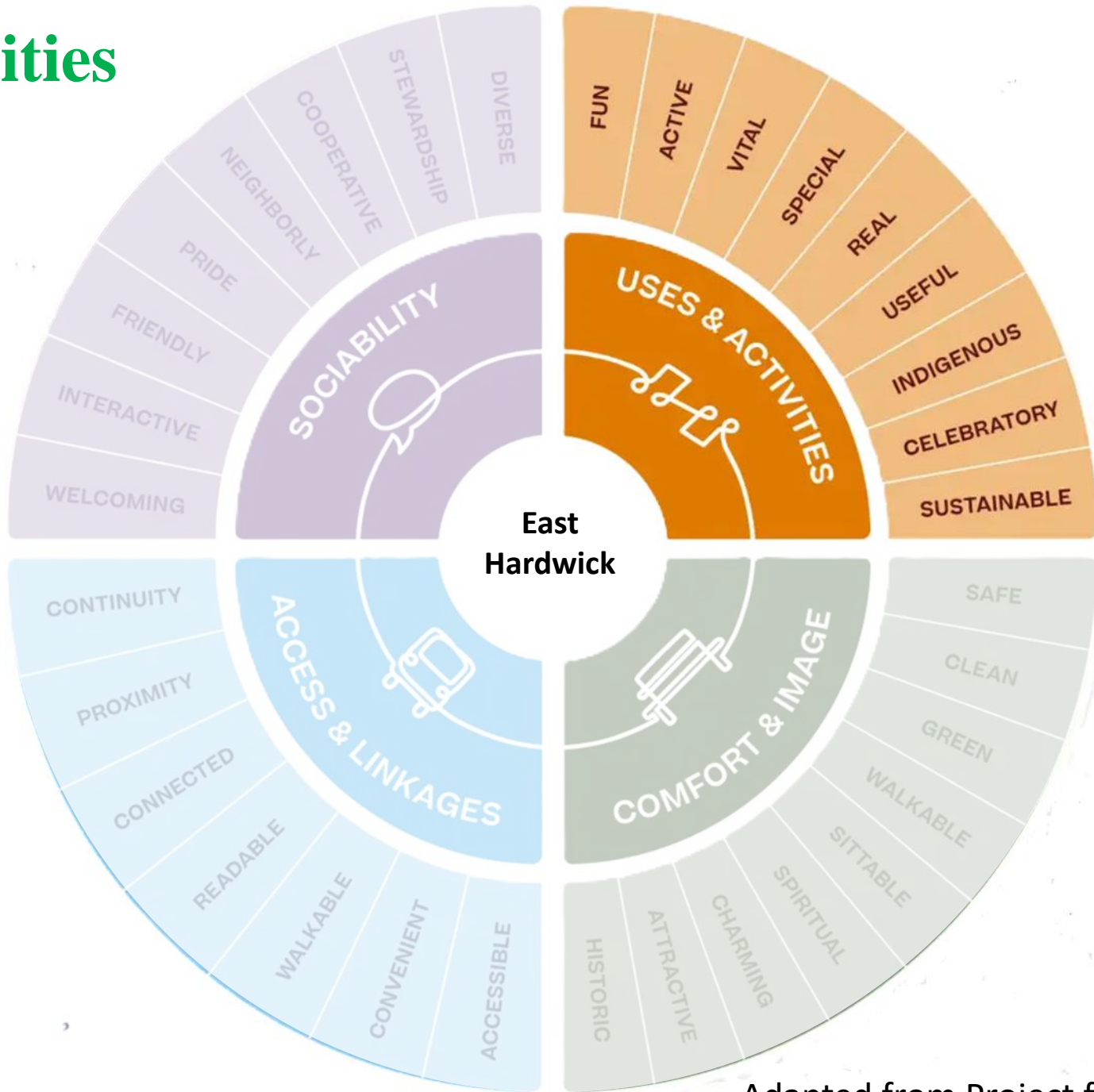
Wastewater Treatment

Village wastewater is something that could be considered, as much for existing homes and businesses, as for future growth.



Uses & Activities

Grange Hall
 Other Community
 Connections/Civic
 Engagement



River Access
 LVRT Trailhead
 Green Space/Playground
 Housing
 Arts/Tourism/Commerce

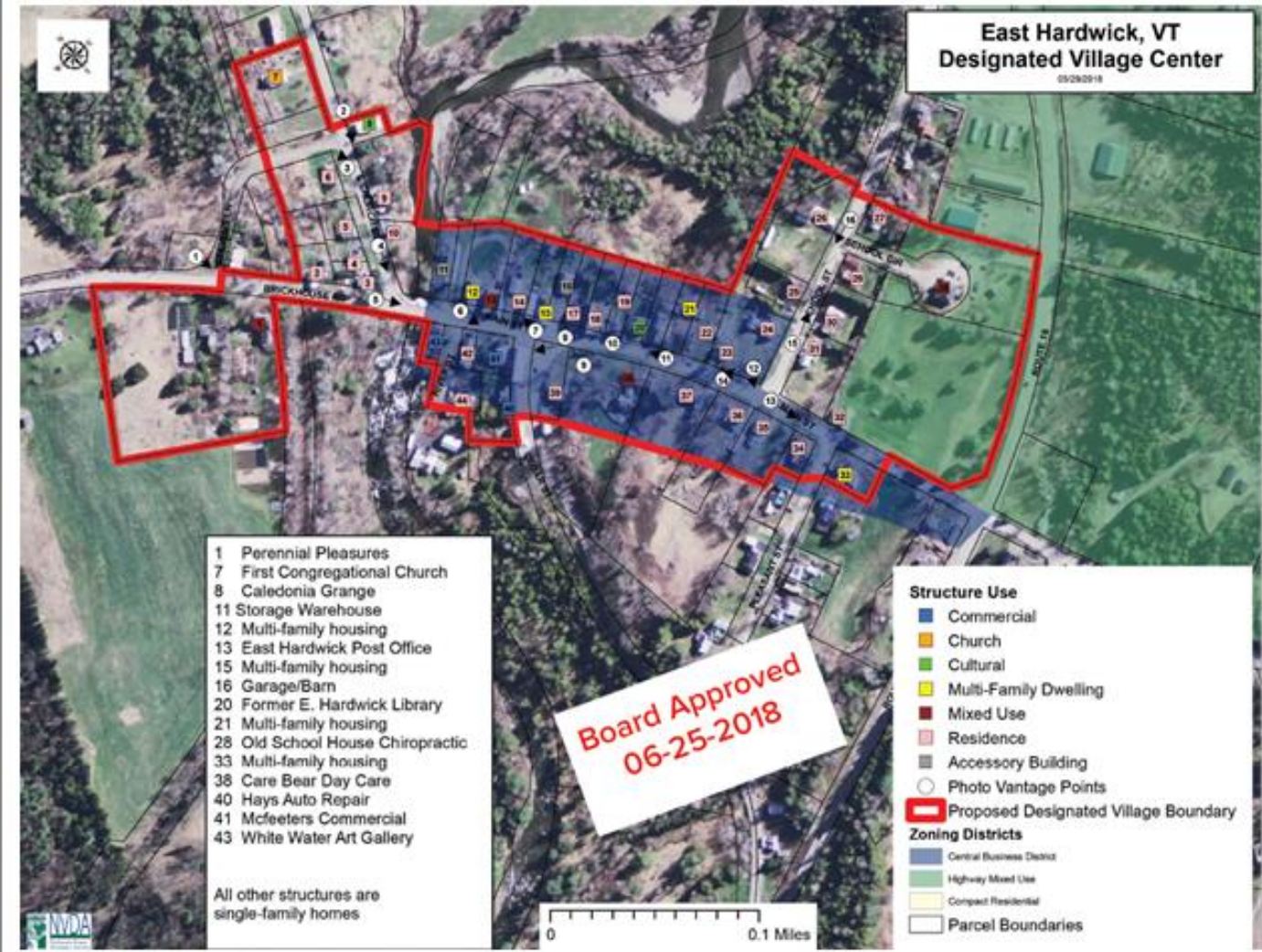
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 Appearance

Adapted from Project for Public Spaces

Uses & Activities

Figure 1. Village Center Designation Map showing uses



- East Hardwick currently has
- 3 parcels devoted solely to commercial uses
 - 1 church
 - 2 cultural facilities
 - 4 parcels in mixed uses
 - 4 multifamily dwellings
 - 27 residences
 - 2 parcels in accessory uses.

Uses & Activities

Much of the land in and around East Hardwick is constrained for development due to flood hazards (in blue & purple) and steep slopes (in yellow & tan).

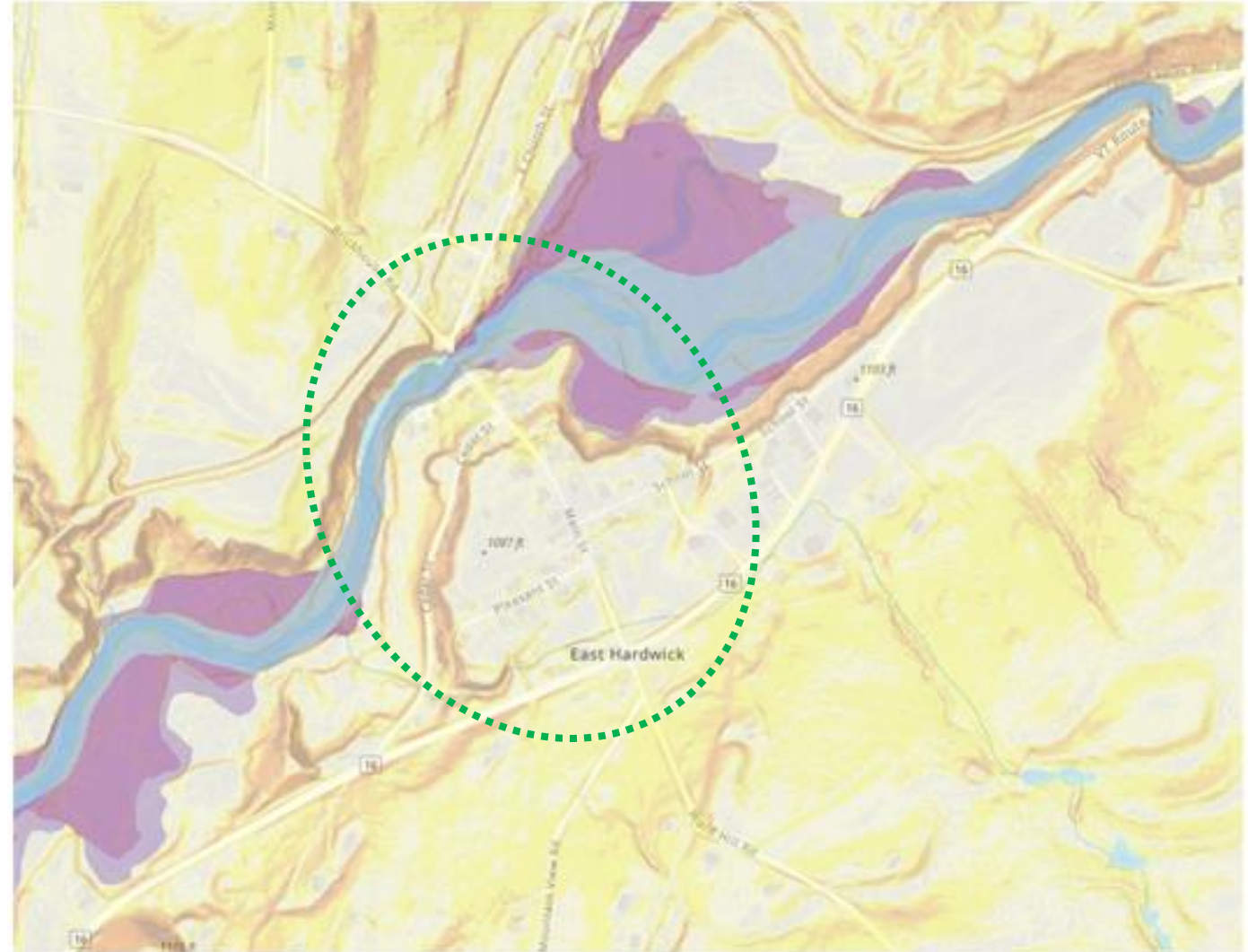
Figure 2. Constrained Lands in and Around East Hardwick

USA Flood Hazard Areas

-  0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
-  1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
-  Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
-  Regulatory Floodway
-  Area with Reduced Risk Due to Levee
-  Special Floodway

Terrain: Slope Map

-  Flat (0°)
-  Nearly level (1°)
-  Gently level (2°)
-  Gently sloping (3° - 5°)
-  Strongly sloping (6° - 10°)
-  Gently steep (11° - 15°)
-  Moderately Steep (16° - 20°)
-  Steep (21° - 30°)
-  Very steep (31° - 90°)



Uses & Activities

Emerging Priorities: Key priorities that have emerged for East Hardwick from the Better Connections Process and other community projects include:

- **Create a coffee shop** to serve as a community gathering place. Suggestions included a small diner or snack bar or farmers market in the Village
- **Small office space.** Encourage home businesses.
- **Bicycle and fishing-related businesses** were mentioned, both find support in the market analysis
- **Maintaining the gas/convenience store.**
- **Using the LVRT to support village vitality** by, for example, having food carts on LVRT.

Uses & Activities

Specific Investments in Vitality	
<p>Recognize the Grange Hall as an important community center for East Hardwick. Obtaining funding for its full restoration is an important component in securing the ongoing vitality of East Hardwick.</p>	<p>Purpose: Properly restored the Grange Hall could become the signature community gathering space for East Hardwick and beyond.</p>
<p>Develop the LVRT Trail head as a major gateway to the Village. There may also be opportunities to collaborate with similar trail-related initiatives in Greensboro Bend and other nearby communities.</p>	<p>Purpose: The LVRT can be an important way to introduce all visitors (locals, as well as tourists) to East Hardwick.</p>
<p>Develop the Overlook Park and pursue other opportunities for access to the Lamoille River.</p>	<p>Purpose: River access can be an important source of local activity as well as a tourist attraction for the Village.</p>
<p>Explore housing development opportunities with private developers and groups such as Rural Edge, with a focus on the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. This could include mixed use buildings, with a store or office on the first floor and housing on the floor above.</p>	<p>Purpose: The market analysis indicates that the one use for which there is a clear demand in East Hardwick is housing. Reusing existing building for new housing can bring added social and economic vitality to the Village.</p>

Uses & Activities

Village-wide Initiatives

Adopt a Village Center District for East Hardwick. This would create a separate district for East Hardwick so the Village would not be subject to zoning changes as Town regulations may be changed to address problems elsewhere in the Town.

Purpose: According to the draft language of this zoning proposal, “The Village Center District enables a variety of housing opportunities with a mix of small-scale commercial in a pedestrian-friendly setting.”

Improve the Village appearance and connectivity to support “experience-based” enterprises in the Village.

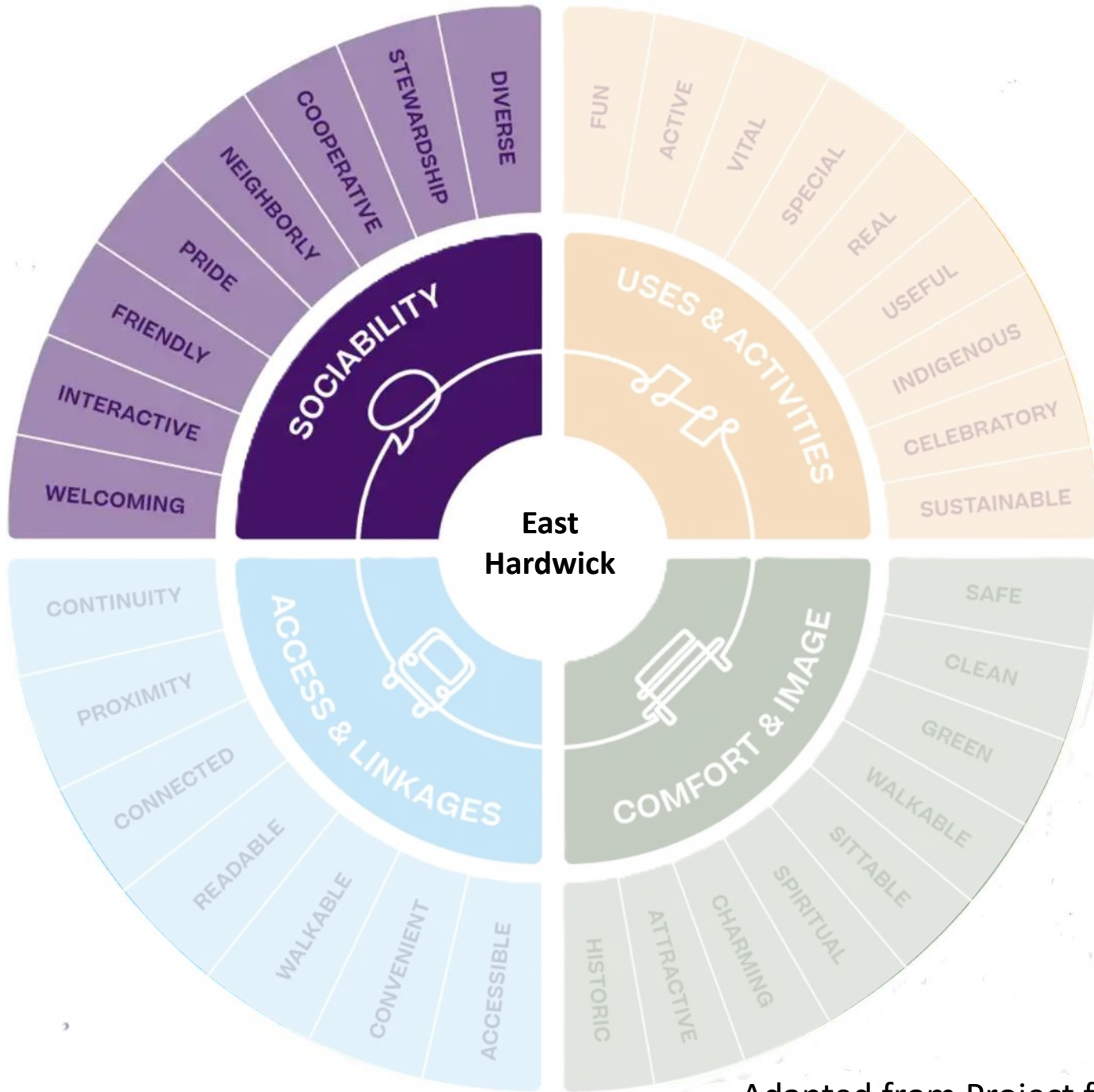


Village of Cabot 4th of July Parade

Purpose: As mentioned in the marketing report, the opportunities for enhancing vitality in the Village are dependent upon being part of a large experience of the Village. Thus, all of the recommendations in this Better Connections Process will serve to improve the ability of East Hardwick to host the small shops, cafes and other gathering spaces that were identified as desirable in the community outreach process.

Sociability

Grange Hall
Other Community
Connections/Civic
Engagement



River Access
LVRT Trailhead
Green Space/Playground
Housing
Arts/Tourism/Commerce

Water Systems
Wastewater Treatment
Stormwater/Drainage
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Main Street
intersections
Bicycle
Infrastructure/Safety
Measures
[Wayfinding]

Adapted from Project for Public Spaces

Sociability

Emerging Priorities: Key priorities that have emerged for East Hardwick from the Better Connections Process include:

- A desire for more community events. At the Village supper, participants identified a variety of events they would like to see, including an annual block party, contradances, free community meals, townwide yard sales, book clubs, etc.
- Preserve the Grange Hall, including fixing the kitchen.
- Creating public gathering spaces.
- Maintain and grow the East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization.

Sociability

Mobilizing Existing Assets: Recommended Actions

The Grange Hall should be embraced as a community center which could serve as a focus of community activities as indicated in the Uses and Activities recommendations.

Purpose: Properly restored the Grange Hall could become the signature community gathering space for East Hardwick and beyond.

Use the LVRT Trail Head to provide information about community events and activities. As mentioned above, the effort could be strengthened via collaboration with neighboring communities along the LVRT.

Purpose: Since most of the trail users will be local residents, a local message board at the site could be an important way to provide information about community events and other activities.

Create opportunities for socializing on Main Street. The sociability of a community requires its own infrastructure. This could involve placing benches at several location along Main Street and possibly elsewhere in the Village. Development of greenspace at the site of the former Library/Firehouse could be part of this effort.

Purpose: To strengthen the role of Main Street as a informal gathering place for residents and visitors. This will in turn make the Village feel more welcoming and help support local businesses such as restaurants/cafes.

Sociability

Community Stewardship: Recommended Actions

Recognize EHNO as a major contributor to sociability in East Hardwick. It could work with the Town and private and public Internet providers to monitor the state of Internet connectivity in the Village.

Purpose: Ensure that there is capacity to undertake and encourage efforts to maintain and enhance sociability in the Village have

Create a formal events calendar for East Hardwick. A formal events calendar could be maintained through an annual meeting of community organizations to coordinate the schedule of events each year.

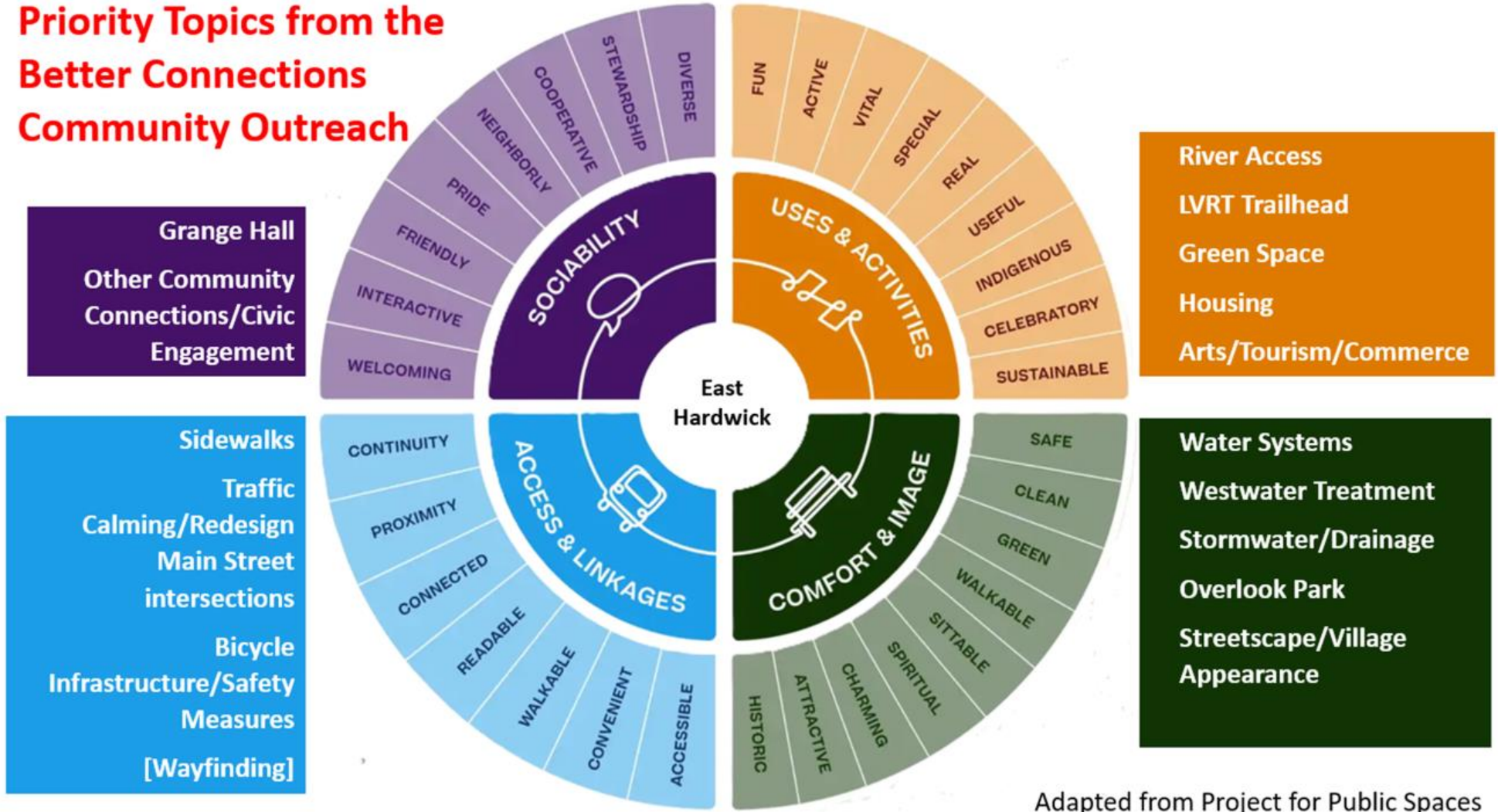
Purpose: The creation of a formal calendar of events would keep both residents and visitors aware of what is happening in the Village, potentially boosting participation in and support for community events.

Celebrate successes. Each Better Connections project, large or small, is an opportunity to celebrate its completion (or its initiation) and an excuse to bring people together in appreciation of the Village. It also keeps the momentum going to see other projects through to completion.

Purpose: Such celebrations make people aware of the accomplishments coming out of the Better Connections Process and build community support and momentum to take on other, larger projects for East Hardwick.

Thoughts?

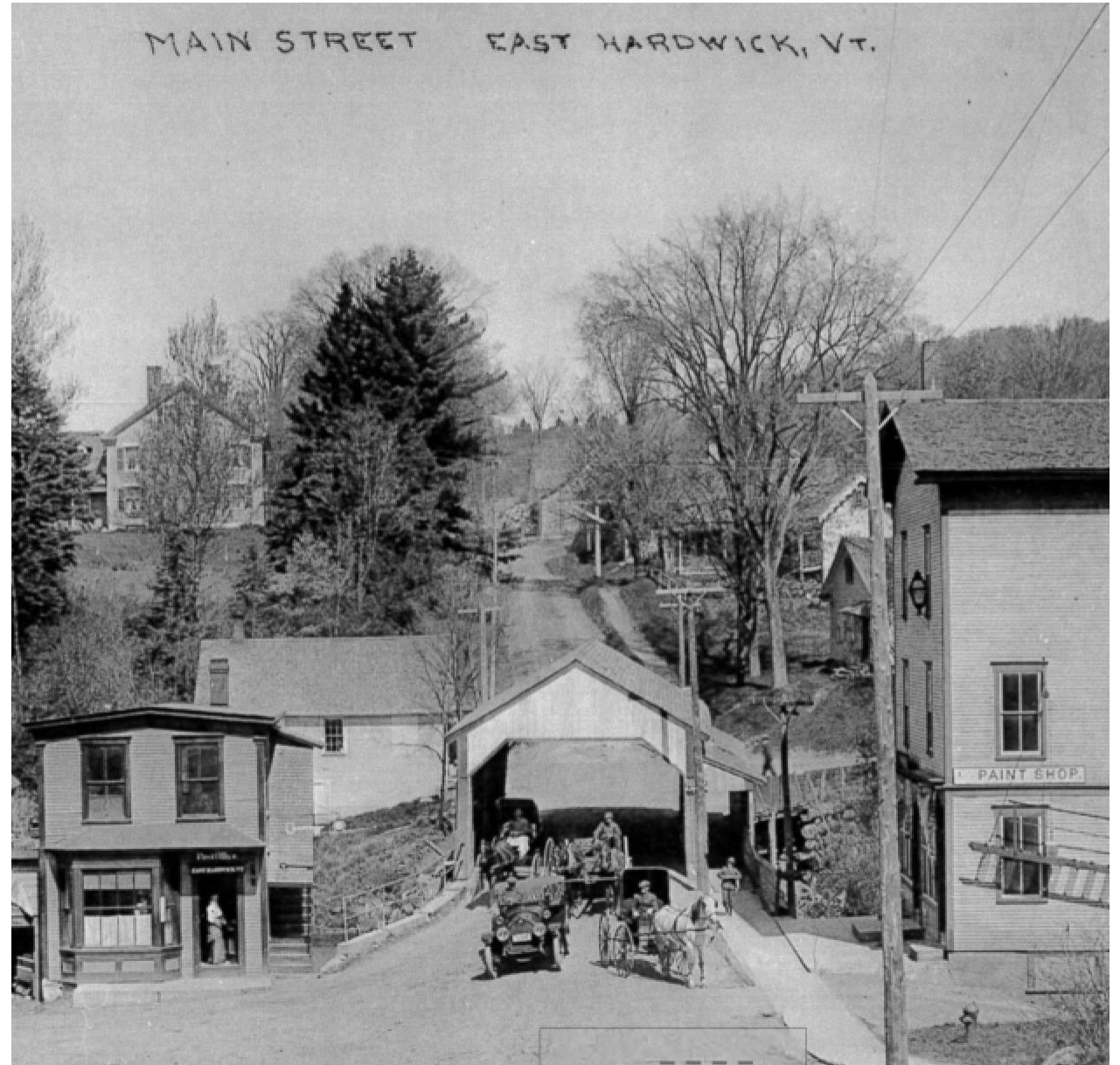
Priority Topics from the Better Connections Community Outreach



Adapted from Project for Public Spaces

Next Steps

- Finalize recommendations (including streetscape configurations) base on input.
- Develop cost estimates for each recommendation.
- Identify funding sources for each recommendation.
- Create action plan.
- Present Final Report to Selectboard.



To download the draft report, got to www.easthardwick.com

Any comments/questions can be emailed to Peter Fairweather at pfairweather@fairweatherconsulting.com