Lee Complete Streets Report

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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BRPC
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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The Complete Streets Prioritization Planning Study Project was made possible by:

Town of Lee Complete Streets Steering Committee:

- Christopher Brittain, Town Administrator
- Leonard Tisdale, Highway Superintendent
- Chief Craig Desantis, Lee Police Department
- Brooke Healy, Town Planner
- Catherine Laird, town resident, Sustainability Committee member
- John Toole, town resident, Lee Bikeway committee member

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission:

- Nicholas Russo, Senior Transportation Planner
- Ryan Griffis, Transportation Planner

Waypoint Transit, Inc.

- Ryan Johnston

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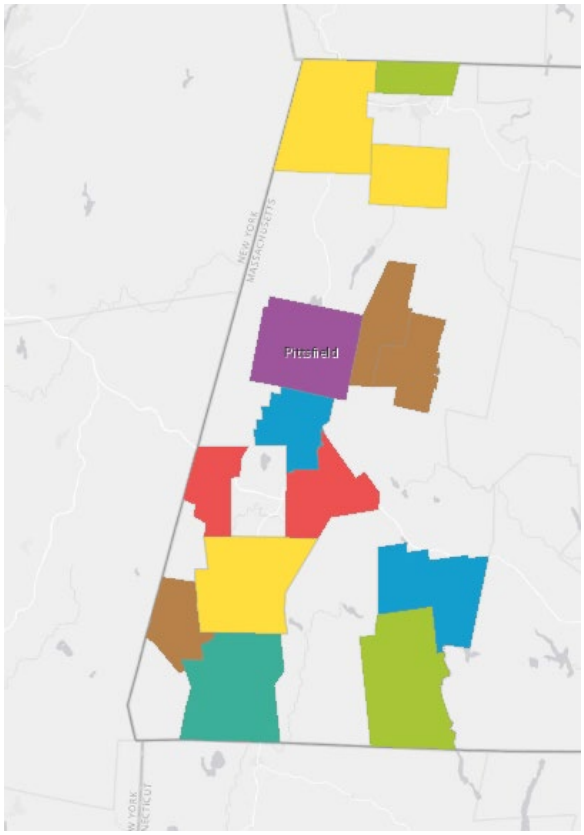

Source: MassDOT Grant Central

Across the country, planners, municipal officials, and policymakers know the benefits of creating connected, walkable communities. Pedestrian-oriented planning has been a major priority for Massachusetts. MassDOT's Complete Streets program – which helps communities to make their streets safe and accessible for all travel modes – has awarded over $100 million in total funding through 289 construction awards since the program began in 2016.[1] A number of Berkshire communities have demonstrated their commitment to pedestrian-oriented planning by participating in the program (Figure 1). The Town of Lee is now among these communities and has worked diligently over the past several months to identify complete streets improvements that will enhance the transportation network for residents and visitors alike.

According to the National Household Travel Survey of 2017, 46% of all vehicle trips are three miles or less in length, and 21% of trips are one mile or less. A 2012 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that almost half of people will walk to destinations of one mile or less. Non-motorized travel can provide a range of benefits including improved public health, promotion of tourism and economic development, and increased connectivity and livability – particularly for children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Concept of Complete Streets

Complete Streets represents a commitment to provide safer and more accessible means of travel between all manner of destinations. In so doing, the aim is to foster more livable, attractive, and healthier communities. Complete Streets roadways are designed to accommodate all users safely and comfortably, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. In addition to providing safety and access for all users, Complete Street design treatments consider accommodations for disabled persons as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Design considerations for connectivity and access management are also accounted for with regards to nonmotorized road users. With this vision in mind, the Town of Lee underwent a process to study in more detail the opportunities to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle-friendly design into future transportation investments.

As a rule of thumb, enhancements to the multimodal network must be done in a balanced and context-sensitive approach. This approach considers a wide array of factors from safety to livability and economic development to connectivity. Complete Streets components include typical roadway design features such as traffic calming, bicycle lanes, wayfinding, safe crossings, landscaping, sidewalks, and/or

[1] Massachusetts Department of Transportation. (2024). https://www.mass.gov/news/healey-driscoll-administration-45m-in-complete-streets-awards

wide shoulders to accommodate nonmotorized travelers in more rural areas. However, not all streets need to include every Complete Streets element. Certain criteria generally dictate which design features are appropriate. This means that the appropriate level of roadway completeness depends on its context and function. Complete Streets can be planned as a retrofit to existing streets or incorporated into the design of new streets.

Report Overview

This report has three key expected outcomes:

1. Support Lee's Complete Streets Policy, adopted by the Select Board in 2023.
2. Evaluate existing conditions for nonmotorized users of the transportation system.
3. Recommend an implementation strategy for Complete Streets projects that follows a template designed by MassDOT to fulfill the requirements for a Complete Street Project Prioritization Plan.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) that was enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) reauthorizes the Fixing American's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, that supports the multimodal approach to transportation planning and programming and encourages communities to consider all users of the system in designing a safe, and well-connected system. MassDOT's Complete Streets Funding Program has provided Lee with the opportunity to look at existing conditions, potential improvements, and implementation strategies that support Complete Streets throughout the Town.

MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program and Updates

Technical assistance to the Town of Lee by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) was made possible through funding from MassDOT's Complete Streets program. The Complete Streets program was "authorized by the 2014 Transportation Bond Bill, [and] offers Massachusetts municipalities incentives to adopt policies and practices that provide safe and accessible options for all travel modes." Technical assistance funding of up to $38,000 is available to communities to develop a Complete Streets prioritization plan.[2]

New Grant Framework Beginning in 2025

Changes to the Complete Streets grant award limit and how it is administered were rolled out in November 2025. Overall, the grant structure was simplified and the funding limit for a community was increased. Changes are listed in more detail below:

- The Tier 1-3 system of moving through the program was retired. Communities no longer need to "advance" through tiers to unlock construction funds.
- Any community may now apply for Complete Streets projects through Grant Central's Fully Integrated Application (FIA).
- The FIA provides a single intake point for a community's capital needs, and grant awards are made from different funding programs depending on the type of project.
- A community may receive up to $1 million (increased from $500,000) towards eligible types of activities under Complete Streets.

[2] MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program Guidance: https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/CompleteStreets/Content/Docs/Complete%20Streets%20Funding%20Program%20Guidance%20and%20Appendix.pdf

With the retirement of tiers, a "Tier 2" Prioritization Plan is no longer a required component of the Complete Streets program. Communities may simply apply for funding toward a qualifying activity through the FIA. However, communities that do have a "Tier 1" policy and/or a Prioritization Plan will receive extra consideration in the grant award process, according to MassDOT.

Another change to the Complete Streets grant structure is removal of the $500,000 rolling "budget" that was assigned to towns that entered Tier 3. Previously, communities could pull from this budget up to the $500,000 limit over the course of 4 years following the first successful grant award. The balance would reset back to $500,000 every four years and the community could continue drawing from it. Now, communities may apply for up to $1 million in funding through the Grant Central FIA during any grant round to be considered for funding. For the Town's Tier 2 list that was submitted to MassDOT, see Appendix B.

Eligible Roadways and Project Types

The MassDOT Complete Streets funding program provides potential funding for projects of six main project types including: Intersection redesign, street reconfiguration and traffic calming, pedestrian crossing modifications, pedestrian and bike network connections, transit investments, and environment and streetscape improvements. (Table 1). Only locally maintained roadways are eligible for potential funding; state highways and roads maintained by other entities are not. However, this assessment examines complete streets needs on all roadways within the Town of Lee, regardless of jurisdiction, to ensure maximum connectivity throughout the transportation network. While some projects identified may not be eligible for funding, this needs assessment will become a tool to advocate for future changes to state roadways.

Ineligible Activities

The Complete Streets program is intended to fund capital expenses toward multimodal infrastructure. As such, the program guidance lists the following examples of activities that are ineligible for funding:

- All projects on facilities where bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited, such as freeways posted to exclude non-motorized transportation
- State-owned roadways
- Projects done under Minor Vehicle Access Permit or Non-Vehicle Access Permits
- Routine roadway maintenance projects (e.g. pothole patching, crack sealing, joint repair, micro surfacing, chip seals, etc.)
- Non-roadway maintenance projects (e.g. catch basin cleaning, street sweeping, grass mowing)
- Bridge maintenance projects (e.g. joint repair, deck repair, superstructure repair, substructure repair, etc.)
- Emergency repairs
- Drainage-only projects
- Guardrail-only projects
- Landscape-only projects
- Signage-only projects
- Noise barrier-only projects
- Shim/leveling projects
- Vertical construction
- Pedestrian bridges

Table 1: Eligible Complete Streets Activities

If a project or element does not appear in this list, it may still be eligible for funding. The applicant should provide justification for the decision based upon the classification of comparable projects.

Intersection Redesign	Street Reconfiguration & Traffic Calming	Pedestrian Crossing Modifications	Ped. & Bike Network Connections	Transit Investments	Environment & Streetscape Improvements
Roundabouts/ Mini Traffic Circle	Road Diet/ Lane Elimination	ADA-compliant Curb Ramps	Sidewalk	Transit Service Improvements (bus lanes, bus pullouts, TSP, etc.)	Street Lighting
Intersection Reconstruction (addresses multi-modal issues)	Lane Narrowing (adds exclusive bike space)	Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon/HAWK	Shared-Use Path/Separated Bike Lane	Transit Station/ Stop Access Improvements (curb ramps, bus shelters, bike parking, Park & Ride, etc.)	Wayfinding for Pedestrians/ Bicyclists
Tighten Curb Radii/Curb Extension (at pedestrian crossing)	Other Traffic Calming Elements	Pedestrian-Activated Warning Device/ Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB)	On-road Bike Lane		Bicycle Parking
Intersection Signalization (addresses multi-modal issues)		Pedestrian Signal Upgrades	Bicycle Boulevards		Bicycle-Friendly Drain Grates
		Crossing Islands	At-grade Rail Crossing Improvements for People Biking		Stormwater Management
		Raised Intersection or Raised Crosswalk			Street Trees/ Landscaping
		Crosswalk Improvements			

Benefits of Complete Streets

Equity Benefits of Complete Streets

Complete streets improvements can be an important component of equitable transportation systems and communities. Not all residents can afford an automobile, and in aging communities, older residents may not be able to or wish to drive. Complete Streets enable and create affordable transportation that can be used by anyone.

Economic Benefits of Complete Streets

People-oriented streets are more financially productive. Numerous studies and reports show businesses located along streets where walking is safe and easy usually thrive.[3] [4] [5] [6] [7] Improving an areas walkability or bikeability can drastically impact property values as well. A 2009 study revealed that in a typical market, an additional one-point increase in Walk Score (a measure of the amenities that can be accessed by walking) was associated with between $500 and $3,000 increase in home values.[8] A ten-point increase in Walk Score was found to increase commercial property values by 1% to 9%[9]. A 2012 report from Vermont estimated that biking and pedestrian related activities were associated with over $53 million in direct economic impact and helped support over 1000 jobs[10]. Implementing Complete Streets policies can stimulate private investment, especially in retail districts.[11] Other communities have seen direct increases in retail sales following complete streets investments.[12]

Walkability is also an important consideration for employers. These days, young workers prefer living within walking distance of work, restaurants and shopping areas and fewer want cars. In 1995 people aged 21 to 30 drove 21% of all miles driven in the U.S. In 2009 it was 14% despite the consistent growth of this age group.[13] The bottom line, living car-free in walkable areas fits neatly within younger lifestyles. Considering the region's demographics, the Berkshires has a higher proportion of seniors in relation to younger people – a trend that is expected to continue to grow. Creating walkability is one strategy to draw young professionals and families to the area – and it also works to serve the needs of older populations as well.

In the U.S., the percentage of people who cease driving doubles each decade after the age of 65. As life expectancies increase and the number of non-drivers continues to grow – with more baby boomers aging-out of driving – providing mobility options that mesh with car-free lifestyles will be ever more

[3] Cortright, Joe. (2009). *Walking the Walk: How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities*. CEOs for CITIES. Impresa, Inc. (Link)
[4] Tolley, Rodney. (2011*). Good for Business: The benefit of making streets more walking and cycling friendly*. The Heart Foundation. (Link)
[5] Florida, Richard. (2014). *Walkability is Good for You*. CitiLab. (Link)
[6] Sisson, Patrick. (2019). *Why building walkable cities is the key to economic success*. Curbed: Real Estate / Urban Planning. (Link)
[7] Alfonzo, Mariela. (2015). *Making the Economic Case for More Walkability*. Urban Land. (Link)
[8] Cortright, Joe. (2009). *Walking the Walk: How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities*. CEOs for CITIES. Impresa, Inc. (Link)
[9] Pivo, Gary, et al. (2010). *The Walkability Premium in Commercial Real Estate Investments*. University of Arizona & Indiana University. (Link)
[10] https://headwaterseconomics.org/trail/84-bicycling-walking-vermont/
[11] https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/economic-revitalization-benefits-of-complete-streets
[12] https://smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets-pay-off/
[13] Federal Highway Administration. (2009). *Summary of Travel Trends: 2009 National Household Travel Survey*. U.S. Department of Transportation. (Link)

important. Moreover, families living in walkable areas save $400 - $500 monthly in auto-costs compared to those in auto-dependent communities.[14]

Public Health and Safety Benefits

Complete Streets are intended to provide safe access for all roadway users, including motor vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians; creating infrastructure that respects all users, improves access and safety for all. An evaluation of Complete Streets in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, reported that reversing the planning priorities from a primary focus on automobile traffic to a focus on pedestrian and bicycle users resulted in improved public fitness and health.[15] The interventions implemented to improve pedestrian safety included road diets that reduced the number of lanes, increased bicycle and pedestrian facilities, reduced speeds, and compact development types that improved pedestrian access.

In 2015, Smart Growth America surveyed 37 different states, regions, and counties in the U.S. that have participated in Complete Street projects. Among those surveyed, 70% of the projects reported a reduction in collisions, and approximately 56% of these projects also reported a reduction in injuries resulting from collisions. These projects also reported an increase in pedestrian and bicycle traffic, with no change in motor vehicle traffic. Rates of collision and injury decreased despite the increase in pedestrian use, suggesting that the projects improved pedestrian safety.[16]

It is well established that physical activity promotes longevity, decreases risk of chronic conditions, and improves mental health and well-being, while relieving stress.[17,18] Access to an active living system can improve a community's health through the promotion of physical and recreational activity, while reducing poor health outcomes. An active living system that is used for commuting can help to reduce cardiovascular risk by 11%, increase daily steps, and increase time spent walking.[19] Researchers have correlated communities that report higher rates of walking and cycling to work with more daily physical activity and lower rates of obesity and diabetes.[20] Cycling and walking have been recognized as an important means to promote health since they are the most common forms of physical activity as well as active transport. An increase of one-hundred minutes of cycling per week reduces the mortality risk by 10% when compared to non-cyclists. An increase of one-hundred and sixty-eight minutes of walking per week reduces the risk of early mortality by approximately 11%.[21]

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[14] Walk Boston. (2012). *Good Walking is Good Business*. WalkBoston.org (Link)

[15] Litman, T. (2010). *Evaluating public transportation health benefits*. Retrieved from http://www.vtpi.org/tran_health.pdf

[16] Anderson, G., Searfoss, L., Cox, A., Schilling, E., Seskin, S., & Zimmerman, C. (2015). Safer streets, stronger economies: Complete streets project outcomes from across the United States. *Institute of Transportation Engineers, 85* (6), 29-36.

[17] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015b) *Physical activity and health*. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/index.htm

[18] American Heart Association. (2015). *Physical activity improves quality of life.* Retrieved February 11, 2016, from http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/PhysicalActivity/%20StartWalking/Physical-activity-improves-quality-of-life_UCM_307977_Article.jsp#.WHZ9qf4zXVl

[19] American Public Health Association. (2010). *Active transportation: Benefitting health, safety and equity.* Retrieved February 8, 2016, from http://www.apha.org/~/media/files/pdf/topics/transport/apha_active_transportation_fact_sheet_2010.ashx

[20] Pucher, J., Buehler, R., Bassett, D. R., & Dannenberg, A. L. (2010). Walking and cycling to health: A comparative analysis of city, state, and international data. *American Journal of Public Health, 100*(10), 1986-1992.

[21] Schepers, P., Fishman, E., Beelen, R., Heinen, E., Wijnen, W., & Parking, J. (2015). The mortality impact of bicycle paths and lanes related to physical activity, air pollution exposure and road safety. *Journal of Transport & Health*, 2 (4), 460–473.

Background

The Town of Lee developed this report with the support of their Complete Streets Steering Committee, and technical assistance provided by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC). The Steering Committee is not a formally appointed town board or committee, and includes members of the public, the Town Administrator, Town Planner, and Highway Superintendent. The town's Complete Streets Steering Committee was established in 2025, with the town having adopted their Complete Streets Policy in 2023. Members of the Steering Committee include:

- Christopher Brittain - Town Administrator
- Brooke Healy - Town Planner
- Leonard Tisdale - Highway Superintendent
- Craig Desantis – Lee Police Chief
- Catherine Laird - town resident, Sustainability Committee member
- John Toole - town resident, Lee Bikeway committee member

Complete Streets have many benefits including safety, multimodal transportation options, economic development, environmental benefits, public health, and accessibility. The Complete Streets Steering Committee discussed these benefits and more broadly, how the integration of these elements into Lee's streetscape might work to better the community, for residents and visitors alike. For a list of Complete Streets Committee meetings, please see Appendix A.

Planning Framework

Implementing the town's Complete Streets Policy will benefit stakeholders across the town of Lee. With full-scale implementation of Complete Streets elements, the community can see benefits in safety, increased transportation options, enhanced economic vitality, environmental benefits, public health impacts, and accessibility for people with disabilities.

Vision and Intent

As stated in the town's Complete Streets Policy:

The purpose of Lee's Complete Street policy […] is to accommodate all road users by creating a road network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. It is the intent of the Town of Lee to formalize the plan, design, operation and maintenance of streets so that they are safe for all users of all ages and abilities as a matter of routine. This policy directs decision-makers to consistently plan, design and construct streets to accommodate all anticipated users including, but not limited to pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, emergency vehicles, and freight and commercial vehicles.

Goals and Performance Measures

The goals and objectives of this Complete Streets Project Prioritization plan, guided by the Lee Complete Streets Committee, were developed to provide safety, promote economic vitality, increase livability, and connectivity, and spur additional mobility and usability for all users of the street network, including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, commercial vehicles, and emergency vehicles.

During the growth of their planning framework, the Complete Streets Committee developed system-wide performance measures for each of their eight goals. The performance measures, listed by goal area, are shown in Table 2. The overall goals, and performance measures for achieving those goals, were found to most closely identify with the projects prioritized by the committee.

Table 2: Annual System Performance Measures

Goal	Performance Measure	Data Source
Safety	Total crashes by severity and mode	MassDOT HSIP Crash Clusters[22]
Economic Vitality	Annual number of improvements in activity centers (as identified by the committee) or Census designated Urban Area	Town of Lee
Livability	Number of residents within ¼ mile of a dedicated high-activity facility and/ or transit stop	Town of Lee, U.S. Census American Community Survey data
Connectivity	Number of new ADA complaint curb ramps/linear feet if ADA compliant sidewalk or pathway. Share of non-automobile commuters.	Town of Lee, U.S. Census American Community Survey data
Mobility	Number of new ADA-compliant curb ramps, linear feet of new ADA compliant sidewalk or pathway.	Town of Lee
Usability	Number of, or linear feet of roadway(s) with dedicated pedestrian and cycling facilities	Town of Lee

Public Input and Feedback

Along with ranking and scoring by the Complete Streets Streeting Committee, the project team also worked to gather feedback from residents with the assistance of Waypoint, Inc. consultation. Along with initial data collection for sidewalk conditions and traffic crashes, Waypoint designed an interactive webpage that allowed for feedback for each proposed project. Visitors to the site could cast votes for the projects that they liked the most, as well as leave comments or questions for the team to see. Waypoint processed the feedback into a visual summary available in Appendix A. Sidewalk-type projects garnered the most votes overall, and generally projects that addressed sidewalks were higher ranked in order of most votes. The vote rankings for all the projects are shown in Figure 2 below.

Comments provided by visitors to the webpage were sorted in terms of their sentiment; that is, whether they were generally supportive, neutral, or concerned/opposed. Based on the comment processing performed by Waypoint, the comments received were 50% supportive, 29% neutral, and 21% concerned or opposed. This information is visualized in Figure 3, along with the key themes pulled from the comments.

Figure 2: Project rankings by votes (via Waypoint)

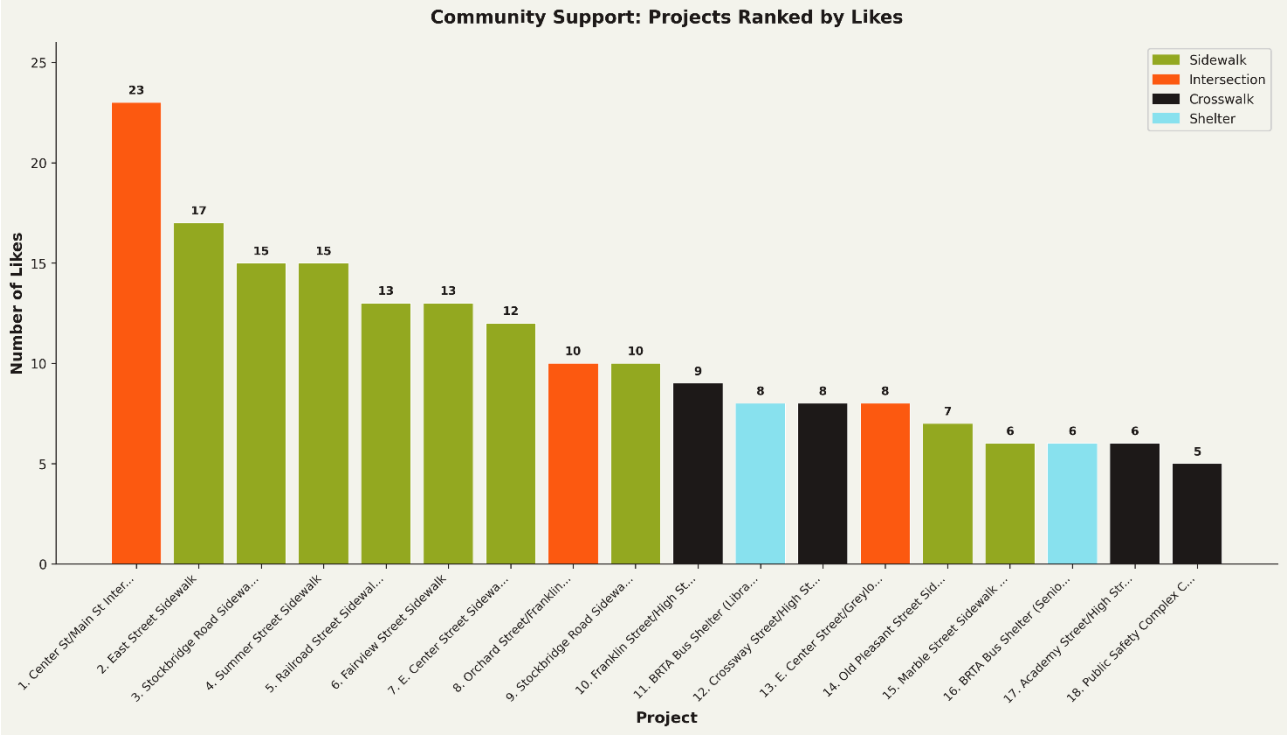
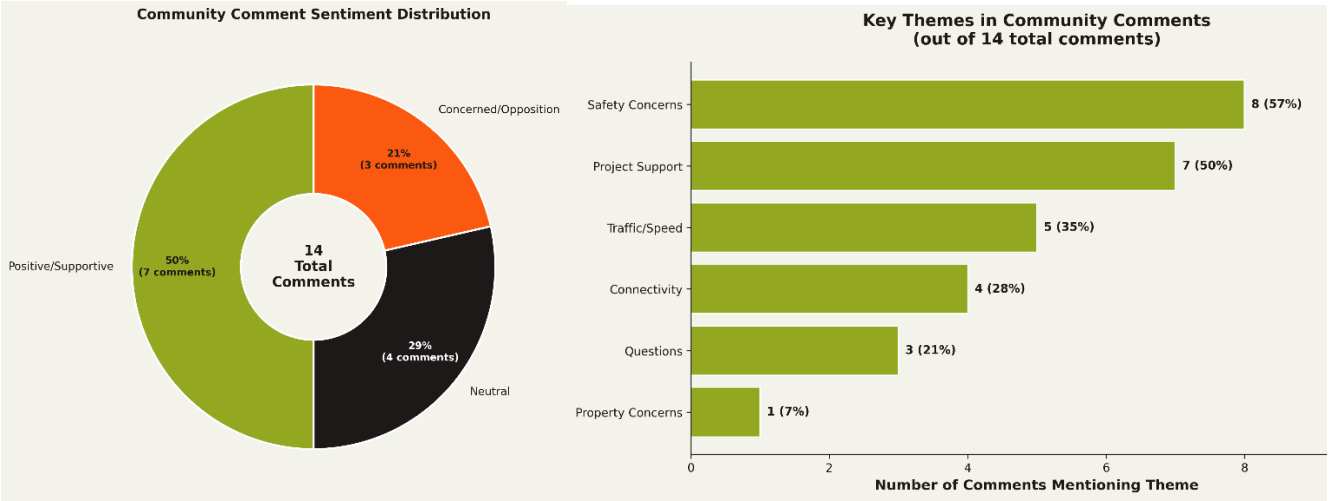


Figure 3: Comment sentiment and themes (via Waypoint)

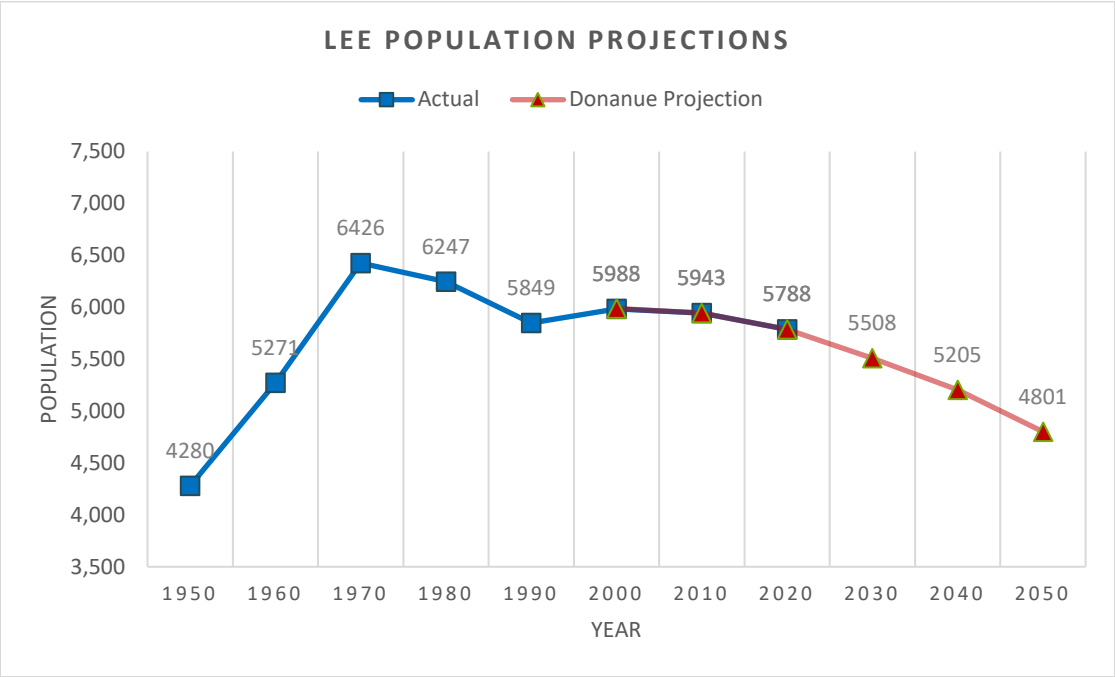


Existing Conditions

Sociodemographic Profile

Based on census data, the Town of Lee has around 5,788 year-round residents, with population peaking in 1970 at 6,400. Following a decline in the 80s, the population has generally plateaued around 5,900 in the subsequent decades. The UMass Donahue Institute[23] predicts that the population of the town will decrease to approximately 5,508 residents by the year 2030, and to 5,205 residents by 2040 (see Figure 4). This is common in Berkshire County, which has been declining in population since the 1970s, and all but a few municipalities are predicted to decline in population over the next few decades.

Figure 4: Lee Population (with projections for 2020, 2030, 2040, & 2050)



Source: U.S. Census: 1990, 2000 Census, 2010 Demographic Profile Data, and 2025, 2030, 2035, and 2040 Projections Courtesy of the UMass Donahue Institute

As aging in place becomes more popular among seniors, addressing elements like wayfinding, walkability, and roadway safety are important considerations. Additionally, being in a semi-rural community, Complete Streets improvements could be conceptualized as a form of public health infrastructure, enabling active transportation for older residents, and creating a connected network of town amenities and recreation areas.

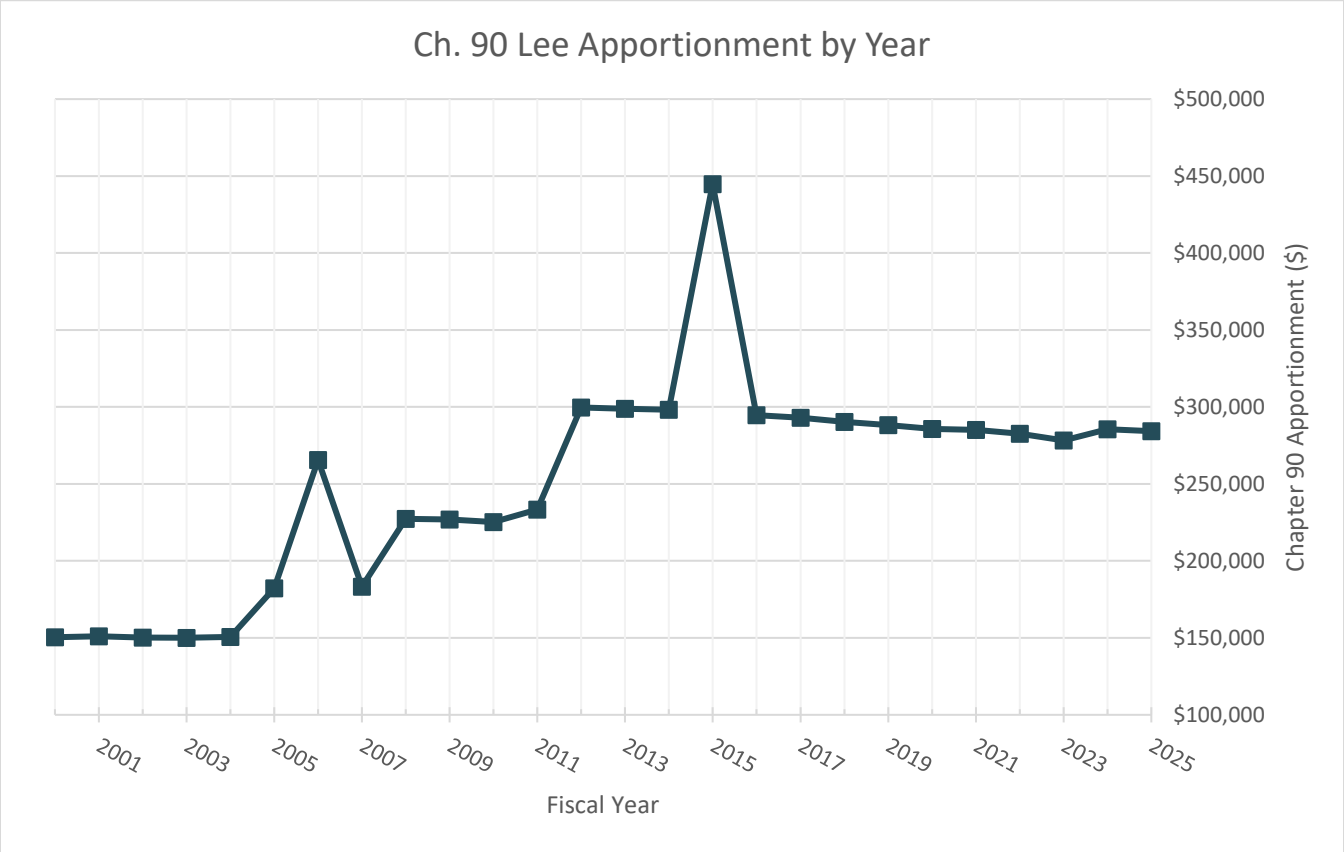
[23] http://www.donahue.umassp.edu/business-groups/economic-public-policy-research/expertise-services/economic-demographic-research

Fiscal Conditions

In Massachusetts, the "Chapter 90" highway funding program was enacted in 1973 to entitle municipalities to reimbursement of documented expenditures on approved highway projects. Funds are provided through state Transportation Bond Issues and can be used for a variety of project types and municipal uses including preservation and improvement projects that create or extend the life of capital facilities, garages, salt sheds, buildings for storage of equipment, and road building machinery, equipment, and tools.

Chapter 90 apportionments fluctuate from year to year and are distributed based on a formula that factors in road miles (58.33%), population (20.83%) and employment (20.83%). In Lee, Chapter 90 funding is generally around $285,000 each fiscal year (FY), with a significant increase in 2015 to $444,857 due to additional statewide funding that fiscal year that was allocated by the Baker administration (see Figure 5).[24] Towns in Massachusetts also now benefit from increased funding from the Fair Share Amendment, which is a surtax on high-income earners in Massachusetts implemented in 2023. According to the Chapter 90 webpage[24], the town has received an additional $71,389 in 2024 and $63,986 in funding toward town road and infrastructure maintenance on top of the base Chapter 90 apportionments.

Figure 5: Chapter 90 Apportionment FY 2001- FY 2025



Source: Massachusetts Department of Transportation: Highway Division

[24] MassDOT Chapter 90 Past Apportionments: https://www.mass.gov/chapter-90-program

Topography and Land Use Characteristics

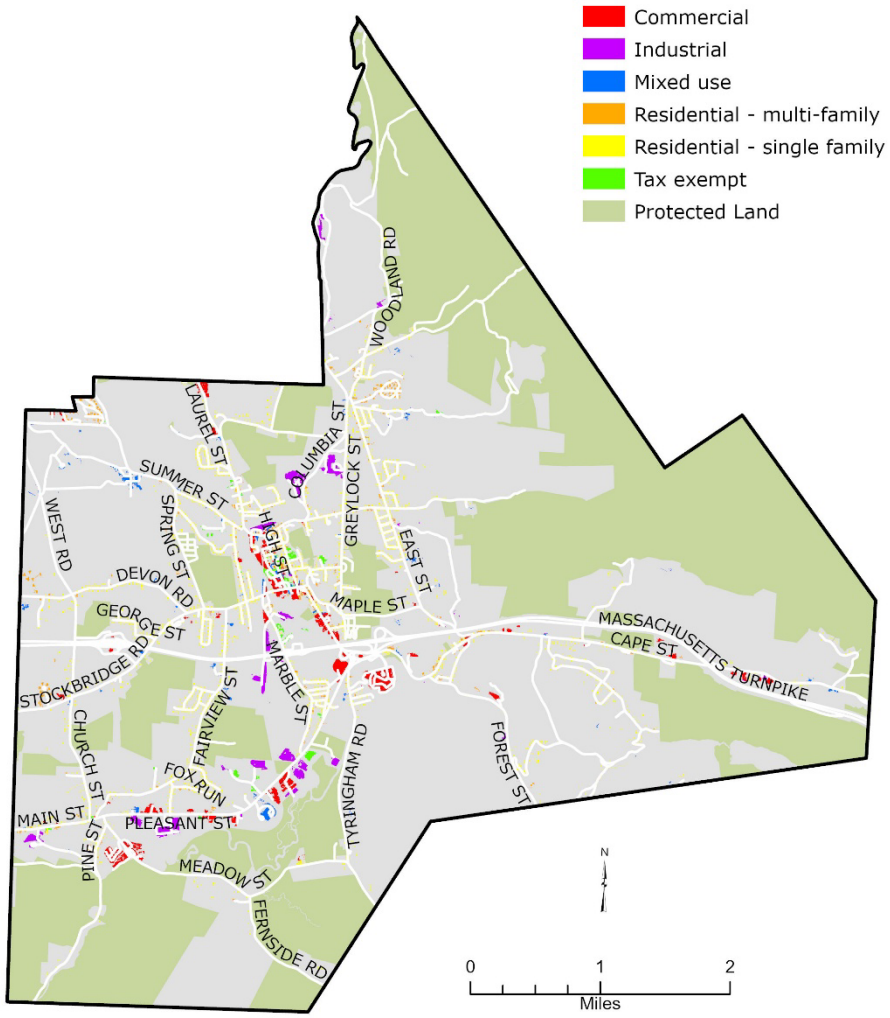
The town of Lee's land use and development patterns were shaped by the Housatonic River valley that carves through central Berkshire County. The town's main thoroughfares, Main Street and Pleasant Street, directly parallel the Housatonic's path. The Housatonic Railroad similarly parallels the river through Lee and beyond, adding to the multi-modal corridor of road, rail, and water through the town. Along with the town center and core neighborhoods centered around Main Street, Lee also contains distinct villages of South Lee and East Lee. In addition, there are residential subdivisions that have grown off of the town's collector roads, such as along Fairview Street, Greylock Street, Marble Street and East Street. Other residential development is generally low density and rural in character, lining the town's collector and local roads.

Lee supports commercial and industrial activity around several key nodes. Most notably is the Exit 10 (formerly Exit 2) interchange with the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90). The Lee Premium Outlets are located directly adjacent to the interchange. The Big Y supermarket is also situated at the major intersection with Route 102, Route 20, and the Turnpike. As Route 20 leads to Lee's town center, it is lined with commercial and retail establishments. The town's other major business corridor is Pleasant Street (Route 102). West of Marble Street, the route is lined with light industrial, manufacturing, and commercial businesses. Two major mining operations of marble and sand are also established in the town. Main Street itself is a mixed-use downtown corridor with street-level small business retail and dining, along with civic buildings such as Town Hall and the fire department.

The town is currently host to upcoming developments that will significantly increase the residential density of the town center, bringing 200 new housing units online within the next several years of the time of writing.[25] The Eagle Mill redevelopment at the north end Main Street, along with a second proposed apartment development. According to the 2023 American Community Survey estimate, there are approximately 812 total households in the town. (See Figure 6).

[25] https://www.berkshireeagle.com/news/southern_berkshires/affordable-housing-development-lee/article_92095254-e9e8-49a6-84e6-43ff8a4a585f.html

Figure 6: Town of Lee Land Use



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Transportation Infrastructure

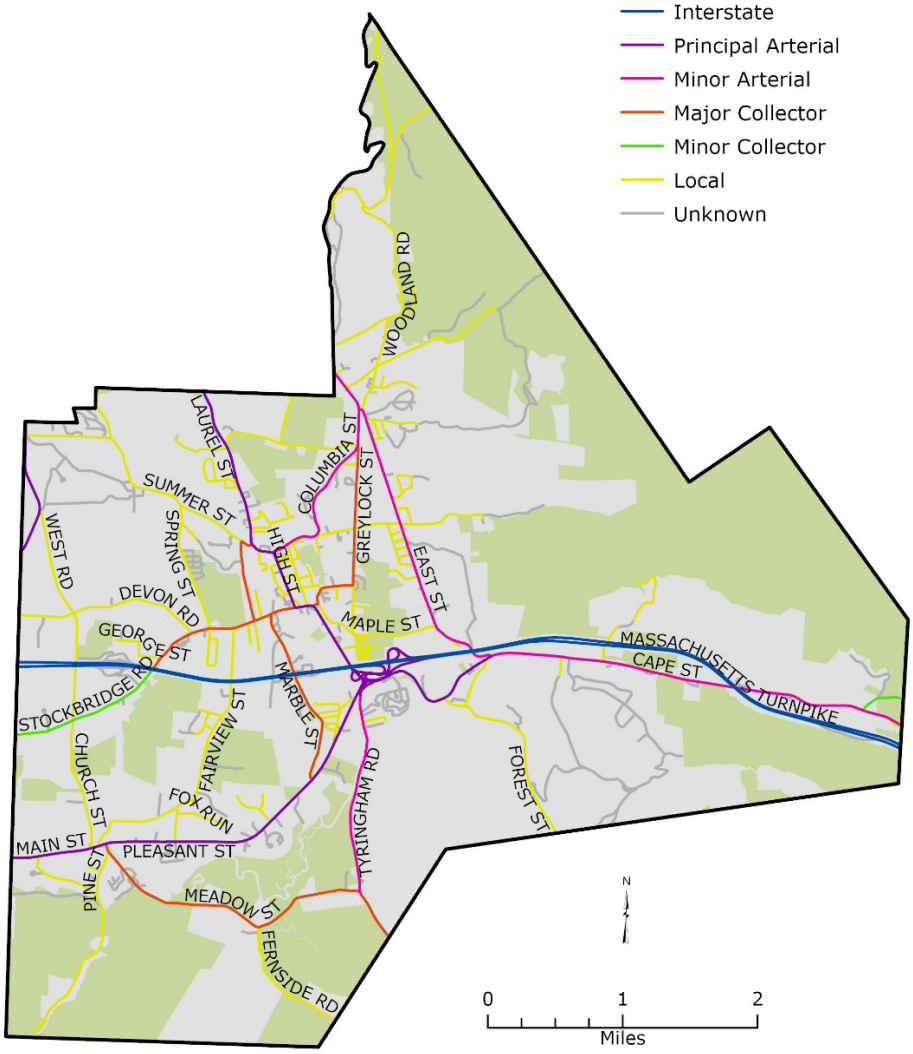
Lee has a road network that crisscrosses the town with predominantly rural collector roads, with the central spine of Route 20 through the town center and the Massachusetts Turnpike cutting across the town in an east-west direction. While the Turnpike is a major feature on the town's landscape, the road network was not interrupted by its construction. Within Lee, there were no dead-ends created by the highway; all roads cross the Turnpike either as overpasses or underpasses. This helps to keep local traffic on local roads, rather than having to take detours to concentrated points where crossings were built, like in more urbanized areas. Any traffic that enters or exits the Turnpike, however, must converge at the one interchange in the town, Exit 10. This interchange is a major traffic generator in the region; cars and

trucks must pass through Lee's Main Street corridor to travel north from the Turnpike or when traveling southbound to get on. Route 102 is the other major state highway in the town, connecting the Exit 10 interchange with the commercial and industrial areas in South Lee.

Functional Classification

Functional classification is a way of grouping roadways into classes or systems based on character and type of traffic service they are intended to provide. All roadways are grouped into one of three classes (arterial, collector or local), and provide for transportation based on a spectrum between overall mobility and land access. Arterials provide for travel over long distances but offer a lesser degree of land access than local or collector roads. Conversely, local roadways provide a high degree of land access, but traverse shorter distances and provide less overall mobility (see Figure 7 and Table 3).

Figure 7: Functional Classification in Lee



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Road Network

There are approximately 119 miles of roads total in Lee, of which 29 miles are under MassDOT jurisdiction (Including Interstate 90), 37 miles are privately-owned and the remaining 53 miles are town accepted roads (see Table 4 and Figure 8).

Users of the roads include private motor vehicles, freight/commercial vehicles, emergency vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, and school bus riders.

Table 3: Functional Classification Descriptions[26]

Functional System	Services Provided
Arterial	Provides the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance, with some degree of access control.
Collector	Provides a less highly developed level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them with arterials.
Local	Consists of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors; primarily provides access to land with little or no through movement.

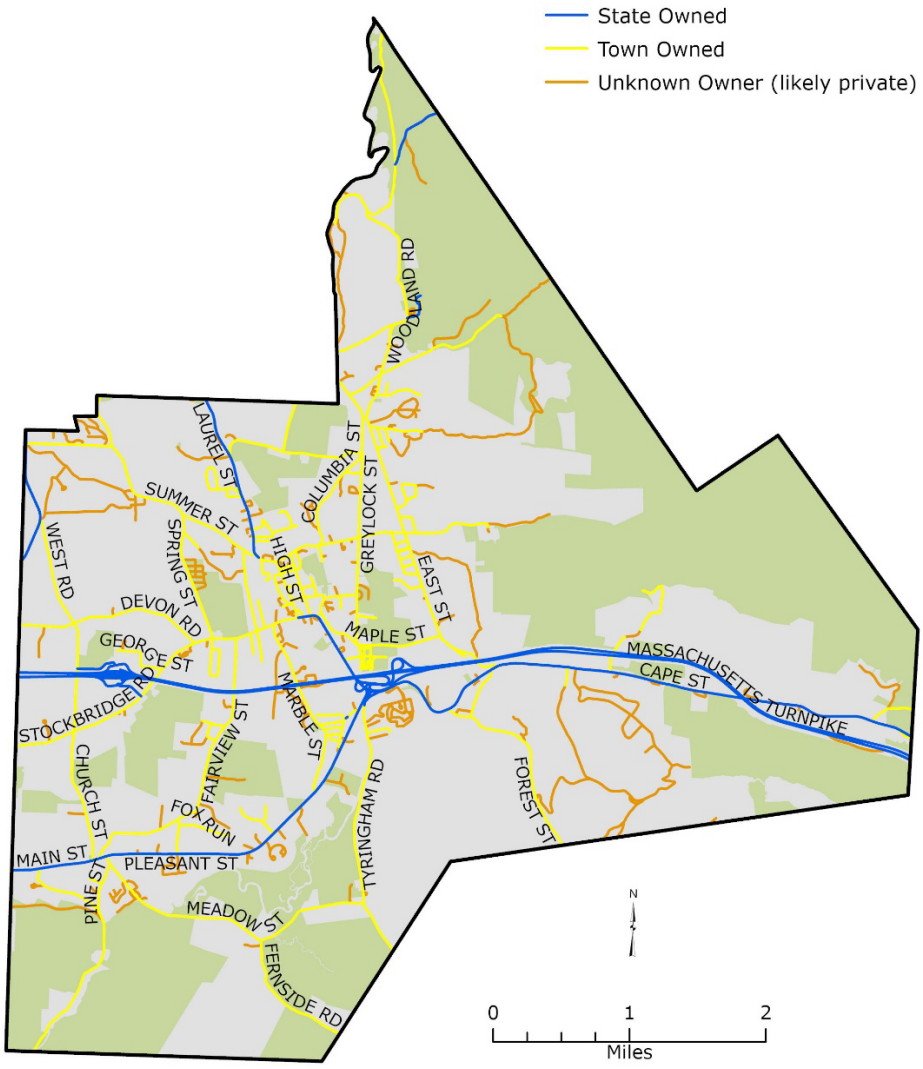
Table 4: Lee Roadway Jurisdiction Breakdown

Jurisdiction	Mileage	Percent of Roads
MassDOT	29	24%
Town	53	45%
Total Public	*82*	*69%*
Private/Undef.	37	31%
Total	119	100.0%

Within Lee, Routes 102 and 20 (west of Maple Street) are the only principal arterial classified roads. Route 20 east of Maple Street is classified as a minor arterial. A small portion of Route 7 also crosses into Lee in its northwest corner and is classified as principal arterial. Columbia Street and East Street are classified as minor arterials. Streets such as Greylock Street, Marble Street, West Park Street, Meadow Street, and Prospect Street are classified as major collectors. Roadways classified as arterials and collectors are eligible to receive federal funds to implement projects that, for example, seek to improve nonmotorized infrastructure. This includes monies made available through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The remaining roads in Lee are all considered local roads. (See Figure 7). Local roads are not eligible for federal funding.

[26] Table adapted from Federal Highway Administration, Flexibility in Highway Design. Available from: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/publications/flexibility/ch03.cfm

Figure 8: Road Jurisdiction in Lee



This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.

Pedestrian Conditions

Sidewalk Network

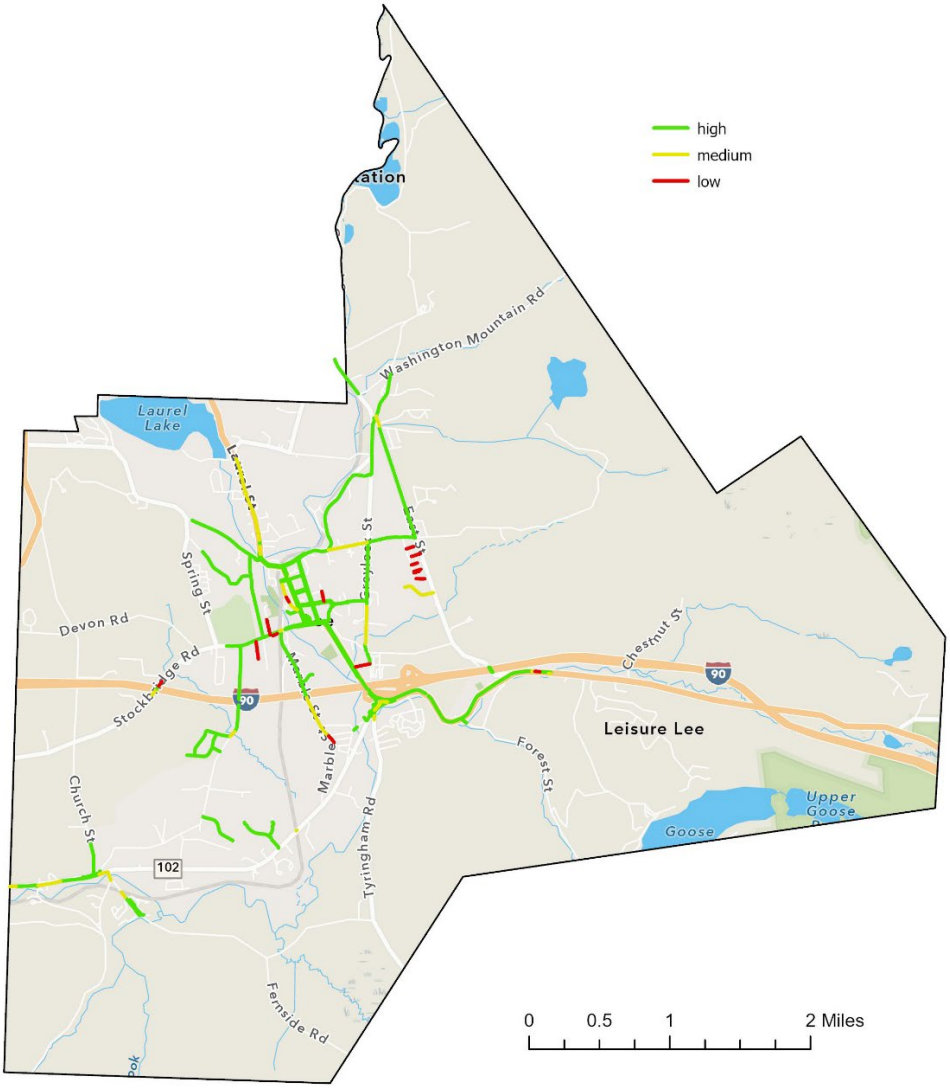
Numerous studies show that millennials[27] and baby boomers[28] prefer walkable neighborhoods, with walkability serving as an important variable in housing and neighborhood choices. Those findings

[27] https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2016/2/12/americans-want-walkable-neighborhoods
[28] https://www.curbed.com/2017/7/25/16025388/senior-living-walkability-survey

demonstrate the importance of creating walkable neighborhoods, especially for communities seeking to attract and retain young professionals while also allowing older adults to comfortably age-in-place

Lee has a core connected sidewalk grid through most of the town center (see Figure 9). It follows Route 20 west of Maple Street to Summer Street, and covers most of the local grid of streets between those points. There is currently a gap along East Street where a Complete Streets project is proposed. Several neighborhood subdivisions have their own sidewalk network independent of the main grid in the center of town. These include South Lee and the neighborhood near the crossroads of E. Center Street and East Street.

Figure 9: Lee Sidewalk Network and Surface Quality



Crossings

Most crosswalks found in Lee are along Main Street and the sidewalk grid surrounding it, though not all eligible intersections contain marked crossings. Several crosswalks along Main Street have had rectangular rapid-flashing beacons (RRFBs). The only signalized crossings are located on MassDOT jurisdiction roads along Route 20 and Route 102, in the vicinity of the Exit 10 interchange, Lee Premium Outlets, and Big Y. Recently, the town has explored the potential of adding RRFB apparatus to the crossings along Route 20 between West Park Street and the Exit 10 interchange. There are seven crosswalks along this stretch, with six that are "midblock" crossings.

Off-Road Pedestrian Network and Trails

The town is considering a potential future trail project that would run within the new town open space at 300 Stockbridge Road. The town is also in the process of design and engineering for the Lee Bikeway shared-use path project that runs parallel to Housatonic Street from Big Y to West Park Street along the Housatonic River.

Bicycle Conditions

On-Road Bicycle Conditions

There are currently painted bike lanes along Route 102 from the Stockbridge town line to Tyringham Road.

Off-Road Bicycle Conditions

From Tyringham Road to the entrance to Lee Premium Outlets, there is a 1000 foot segment of off-road shared use path along Route 20.

Bicycle Parking

There are no known public bicycle racks in the town.

Safety

Safety is a major reason many communities look at Complete Streets improvements, and though safer infrastructure is one component in improving the safety of users, there is also a behavioral component that must be supported through encouragement and education. Several projects that aim to provide a greater offering and perception of safety for road users are proposed in the Tier 2 listing.

Crash Data

Crash data was gathered for a ten-year period from 2014 to 2024. Crashes are grouped into four types based on damage, including fatality, non-fatal injury, property damage only (PDO) and when information is unavailable the crash type is listed "not reported." Crash statistics can be seen in Table 5. It is important to note that the crash statistics for the town also include those that take place on the Massachusetts Turnpike, though the town does not have jurisdiction on this highway. These account for about 473 crashes that could be identified in the dataset. Two of the fatal crashes reported in this time period occurred on the Turnpike. As noted in Table 5, most crashes result in property damage only (80%) followed by accidents involving non-fatal injuries (20%).

Figure 10 illustrates the locations of the highest number of crashes in the town off of the Turnpike (red circles). The green points on the map indicate where a crash has occurred that involved a vulnerable road user (VRU). A VRU is considered someone who is not in a vehicle, such as a pedestrian, bicyclist, or someone working in the road such as a construction worker or maintenance person. Sites where crashes

involved a vulnerable road user should be taken under consideration as often as possible for general maintenance and improvement projects, as well as complete streets projects. While several points are within state highway jurisdiction, the town is encouraged to work with MassDOT to implement solutions along these segments when possible.

Figure 10: Lee Crash Hotspots and VRU Crashes (courtesy of Waypoint Transit)

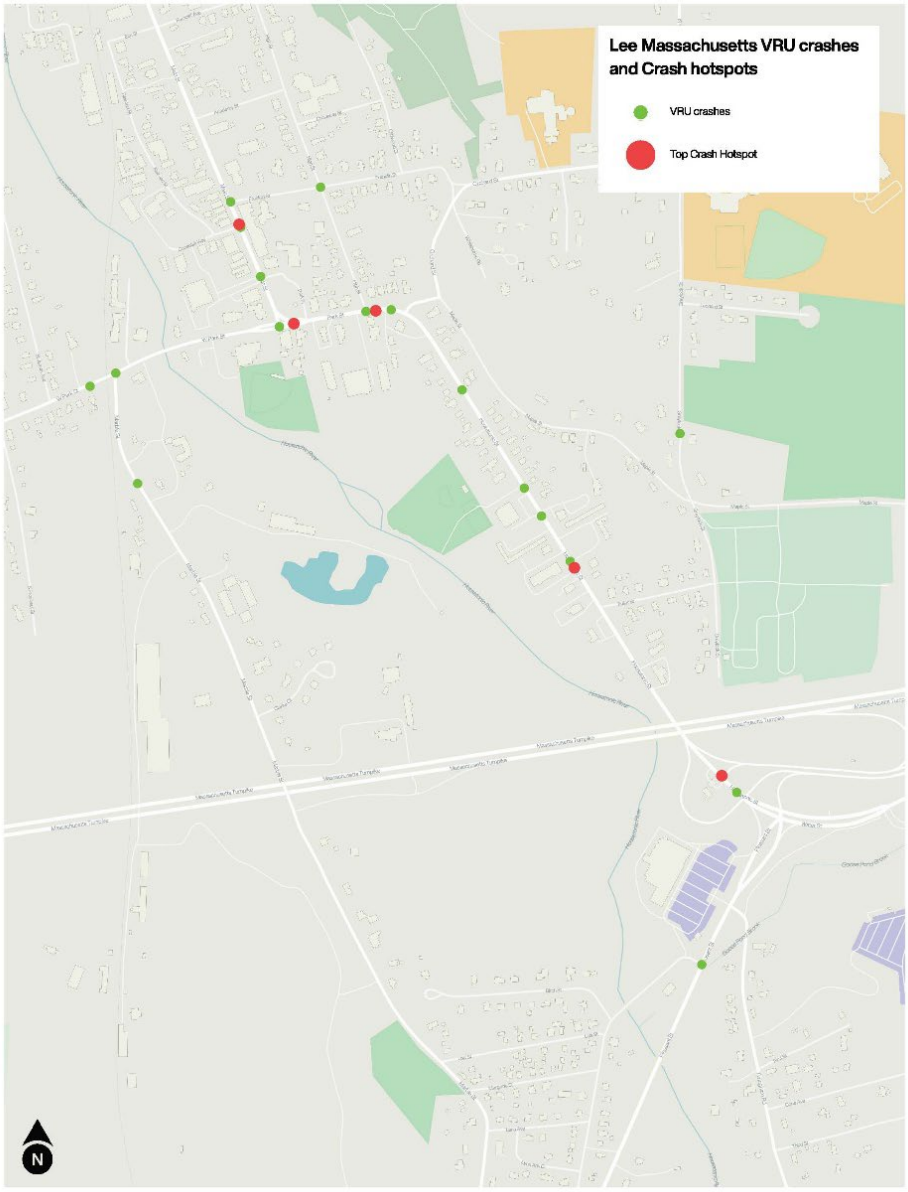


Table 5: Lee – 2018-2022

	Fatal	Non-Fatal Injury	Property Damage-only
Number	5	370	1508
Percent	<1%	20%	80%

Public Transportation (BRTA Bus Route)

Lee hosts three BRTA bus routes: Route 2, Route 21, and Route 921. Route 2 runs from Pittsfield via Lenoxdale and through downtown Lee, terminating at Lee Premium Outlets. Route 21 begins at Lee Premium Outlets and runs south to Great Barrington via Route 102. Route 921 is an express service that runs continuously from Great Barrington to Pittsfield through Lee, without the need to transfer at Lee Premium Outlets.

Needs

The needs portion is a qualitative system gap analysis based on field observations, existing planning documents and GIS data, aerial imagery, and concerns of the Complete Streets Steering Committee. The analysis looks at on- and off-road networks and has identified gaps in the network and intersections that are barriers to nonmotorized travel. This is a baseline to be used for the identification of potential Complete Streets improvements in Lee.

Narrow and Constrained Roadways

Most roadways in Lee are narrow and constrained by existing development, topography, wetlands, vegetation, and other conditions. This limits the ease with which nonmotorized facilities could be added to existing roadways and greatly increases the costs that would be required to do so. It is also a key factor that limits cycling and pedestrian infrastructure along town roadways. Narrow roadways are common in Berkshire County and provide a positive contribution to the rural character of the region. They can help keep traffic speeds in check by visually narrowing the traveled way and preserving greenery and habitat. The town should plan strategically in how best to implement cycling infrastructure while also deciding how or if it would like to alter town roads.

Sidewalks

Lee has a well-integrated sidewalk network around its Main Street and core neighborhoods. As noted in the sidewalk inventory (see Figure 9 above), some segments are in need of rehabilitation to improve safety and accessibility. This includes new sidewalk surfaces as well as curb cuts and ramps. Some residential subdivisions that are farther outside of the town center remain isolated from a continuous walking route. These neighborhoods, in general, are situated in rural settings, such as long collector and local roads several miles from the town center. While practical trips by foot may not be feasible from these locations to workplace or retail destinations, sidewalks can still contribute to quality of life by providing opportunities for wellness from walking and jogging, cycling for younger children, and walking to visit neighbors or to bring pets outdoors.

Intersections

Lee's road network features many different sizes and types of junctions. The only traffic signals in the town are situated around the area of the Exit 10 interchange with the Massachusetts Turnpike. As a result, the town center is known for having intersections that can see significant delays for traffic in the non-predominant direction of flow (north-south through the town), though in return, the Main Street corridor is able to support high volumes of traffic with generally minimal delays thanks to steady movement free from interruptions from red lights. Exiting driveways and side streets along the main Route 20 corridor can also be a challenge to exit due to this fact.

Intersection complexity at Main/West Park Street and Main/Center Street also create the need for detouring for pedestrian travel in some cases. The Main/West Park Street intersection has one crosswalk

on the western leg of the junction. The next crosswalk is 250 feet east at Park Place. The Main Street/Center Street intersection has one crosswalk on the northeastern leg of the junction.

In general, other intersections in the town are stop controlled or yield controlled. Opportunities exist where intersecting streets that support sidewalks can be upgraded with crosswalks and curb radius reductions.

Opportunities

In addition to the Complete Streets projects proposed in this report, the town has unique opportunities to enhance its transportation network. The Lee Bikeway is the largest investment that the town has made for active transportation. The town should continue to explore regional connections to this asset as it is completed in the coming years. A continuous Berkshire Bike Path is a vision shared by proponents across the region. Working across borders with neighboring towns to continue the Berkshire Bike Path project will prove consequential in future years.

The town also has many open spaces and recreational assets that can be connected via active transportation infrastructure and wayfinding. Examples include Laurel Lake, Goose Pond reservation, Hop Brook WMA, October Mountain State Forest, Beartown State Forest, High Lawn Farm, Greenock Country Club, and town parks and playgrounds such as the athletic fields on Housatonic Street and Marble Street, and the new open space at 300 Stockbridge Road. While full sidewalk or bike lane construction may not be within a Complete Streets project budget, the town can also strategically implement wayfinding directions and distances using guide signs and informational kiosks to raise awareness of how these properties can be accessed.

Finally, the town has the opportunity to leverage the existing transit lines that serve the town, including local BRTA routes and regional Greyhound and Peter Pan connections to Albany and Springfield. Lee should consider additional investments to encourage transit use, especially as denser housing developments are completed in the town center. Transit can be a viable option for residents living in the town center to reach destinations nearby such as grocery shopping and employment opportunities along the Route 102 commercial corridor.

Project and General Recommendations

This section outlines some project specific and general recommendations that are not site-specific.

Project Selection and Final List

The Committee developed its final list of projects to submit to MassDOT. The key factors of safety, economic vitality, livability, connectivity, mobility, and usability for all users of the street network, as well as overall budgeting based on an anticipated $1 million for construction funding, guided the committee's decision making. For the complete list of potential improvements, see Table 6 below; for the Tier 2 list submitted to MassDOT, see Appendix B. Table 7 provides expanded project descriptions, cost estimates, and funding needs.

Table 6: Final Complete Streets Project Prioritization (Tier 2) List

Project #	Project Type	Project Location	Safety	Economic Vitality	Livability	Connectivity	Mobility	Usability
PROJECT 1	Orchard Street / Franklin Street Redesign / Pedestrian Improvements	Intersection of Orchard St and Franklin St	X				X	
PROJECT 2	High Street Crosswalks at Academy, Crossway, and Franklin Street	High Street from Academy St to Franklin St		X			X	X
PROJECT 3	East Street Sidewalk	East Street from Martin Ave to Hartwood St		X				X
PROJECT 4	E. Center Street/Greylock Street Intersection Improvements	Intersection of E. Center and Greylock St		X				X
PROJECT 5	Railroad Street Sidewalk Improvements	Railroad Street		X				
PROJECT 6	Stockbridge Rd Sidewalk Phase 1 / Devon St Redesign	Stockbridge road from current terminus east of Spring St to Devon St						X

Project #	Project Name	Project Location	Safety	Economic Vitality	Livability	Connectivity	Mobility	Usability
PROJECT 7	BRTA Bus Shelter (Library) and Pull-Out	East side of Main Street at Public Library			X			X
PROJECT 8	BRTA Bus Shelter (Senior Housing) and Pull-Out	West Side of Main Street at Hyde Place senior housing			X			X
PROJECT 9	Stockbridge Rd Sidewalk Phase 2	Stockbridge Rd from Phase 1 terminus at Devon Rd to existing sidewalk on 1-90 overpass			X			
PROJECT 10	E. Center Street Sidewalk Improvements	E. Center Street from Columbia St to Greylock St	X				X	
PROJECT 11	Marble Street Sidewalk Improvements	Marble St from I-90 overpass to Margerie St					X	X
PROJECT 12	Old Pleasant Street Sidewalk	From sidewalk terminus on bridge over Housatonic to Big Y driveway					X	X
PROJECT 13	Fairview Street Sidewalk	Between existing sidewalk termini on either side of I-90 overpass						X
PROJECT 14	Summer Street Sidewalk	From current terminus of existing sidewalk on south side of Summer St to Prospect St						X
PROJECT 15	Public Safety Complex Crosswalk	Near intersection of Railroad St and Consolati Way						

Table 7: Project Rankings, Descriptions, and Cost Estimates

Project Basics				Funding	
Project Priority Ranking	**Project Name**	**Project Description**	**Project Source**	**Estimated Cost Range**	**Funding Requested from MassDOT**
1	Orchard Street / Franklin Street Redesign / Ped. Improvements	Reduce intersection complexity and reduce conflict areas for pedestrians and vehicle users; improve ADA compliant crosswalks and infrastructure; eliminate/move/improve median/center island.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$111,660
2	High Street Crosswalks at Academy, Crossway, and Franklin Street	Rehabilitation of crosswalks to square up alignments with sidewalks and install ADA compliant curb ramps at all landings. Add crosswalk to fourth intersection leg at Franklin Street.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$122,750
3	East Street Sidewalk	Build a 5-foot wide concrete sidewalk beginning at the existing sidewalk terminus on Summer Street at the intersection of Martin Ave and continuing approximately 500' to the sidewalk on Summer Street at the intersection of Hartwood Street .	CS Needs Assessment	$50,000 - $100,000	$97,960
4	E. Center Street/ Greylock Street Intersection Improvements	Rehabilitation of existing intersection to tighten curb radii, squaring off of crosswalk legs, and meeting ADA standards with compliant curb cuts and ramps.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$229,160
5	Railroad Street Sidewalk Improvements	Rehabilitation of existing sidewalk infrastructure to meet ADA standards and uniform width.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$192,440
6	Stockbridge Road Sidewalk Phase 1 / Devon St Redesign	Build a 5-foot concrete sidewalk beginning at the current terminus on Stockbridge Road and ending at the intersection of Devon Road which will be improved with sufficient curb cuts and ramps to meet ADA standards.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$239,740

Project Priority Ranking	Project Name	Project Description	Project Source	Estimated Cost Range	Funding Requested from MassDOT
7	BRTA Bus Shelter (Library) and Pull-Out	Construction of a bus pull-in/out space in front of the Library for northbound fixed route bus travel and installation of a bus shelter and bicycle racks on the brick pavers, with an accessible 5'x8' boarding/alighting area will be provided adjacent to the shelter.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$113,040
8	BRTA Bus Shelter (Senior Housing) and Pull-Out	Construction of a bus pull-in/out space in front of the Senior Housing for southbound fixed route bus travel and installation of a bus shelter and bicycle racks on the brick pavers, with an accessible 5'x8' boarding/alighting area will be provided adjacent to the shelter.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$113,040
9	Stockbridge Road Sidewalk Phase 2	Build a 5-foot wide concrete sidewalk beginning at the existing sidewalk terminus on Summer Street at the intersection of Martin Ave and continuing approximately 500' to the sidewalk on Summer Street at the intersection of Hartwood Street .	CS Needs Assessment	$250,000 - $500,000	$303,060
10	E. Center Street Sidewalk Improvements	Rehabilitation of existing sidewalk infrastructure to meet ADA standards and uniform width, from Columbia Street to Greylock Street	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$237,470
11	Marble Street Sidewalk Improvements	Rehabilitation of existing sidewalk infrastructure to meet ADA standards and uniform width.	CS Needs Assessment	>$500,000	$683,220

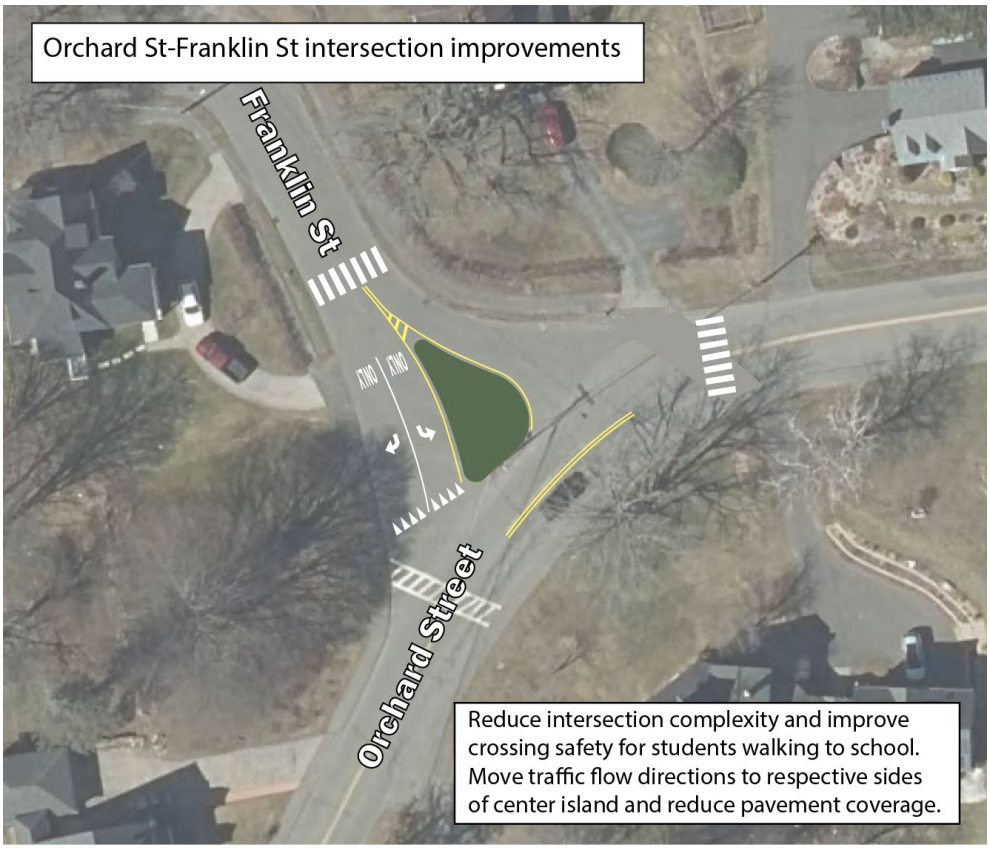
Project Priority Ranking	Project Name	Project Description	Project Source	Estimated Cost Range	Funding Requested from MassDOT
12	Old Pleasant Street Sidewalk	Construct a 5-foot sidewalk along Old Stockbridge Road from the terminus of the existing sidewalk on the bridge over the Housatonic River to connect with the Big Y supermarket.	CS Needs Assessment	$50,000 - $100,000	$95,440
13	Fairview Street Sidewalk	Build a 5-foot wide concrete sidewalk beginning at the existing sidewalk terminus on Fairview Street and continuing approximately 175' under I-90 to the existing one on the other side of the highway.	CS Needs Assessment	$100,000 - $250,000	$150,450
14	Summer Street Sidewalk	Build a 5-foot wide concrete sidewalk beginning at the existing sidewalk terminus on Summer Street and continuing approximately 200' to the sidewalk on Prospect Street.	CS Needs Assessment	$50,000 - $100,000	$97,090
15	Public Safety Complex Crosswalk	Construction, relocation, or improvement of existing crosswalk in front of future public safety building located at the corner of Consolati Way and Railroad Street with ADA compliant curb cuts and ramps.	CS Needs Assessment	<$50,000	$16,140

Project Descriptions and Concepts

Orchard Street/Franklin Street Intersection Improvements

This 3-way intersection is uniquely situated on a curve and contains some non-standard design elements. Currently, traffic can travel in both directions on both sides of the central "island" that divides the intersection. Based on committee feedback and experience, it was reported that traffic flow is very heavily weighted on Franklin Street, with much lower traffic volume on Orchard Street. BRPC determined that reimagining the intersection as a neighborhood roundabout would unnecessarily disrupt the dominant flow of through traffic on Franklin Street. Regardless, the intersection presented an opportunity to improve walking routes to the nearby public schools, so a slight redesign to create a more predictable and uniform traffic pattern and improved crossings for pedestrians is proposed. The central island would be enlarged, which provides opportunities for neighborhood beautification and additional protection for the utility pole that is positioned on the island. Traffic flow directions would be moved to one-way on each side of the island. New crosswalks with ADA-accessible curb ramps would be constructed to facilitate safer routes to the school grounds just up the street. See Figure 11.

Figure 11: Orchard St/Franklin St Intersection



High Street Crosswalks at Academy, Crossway and Franklin Streets

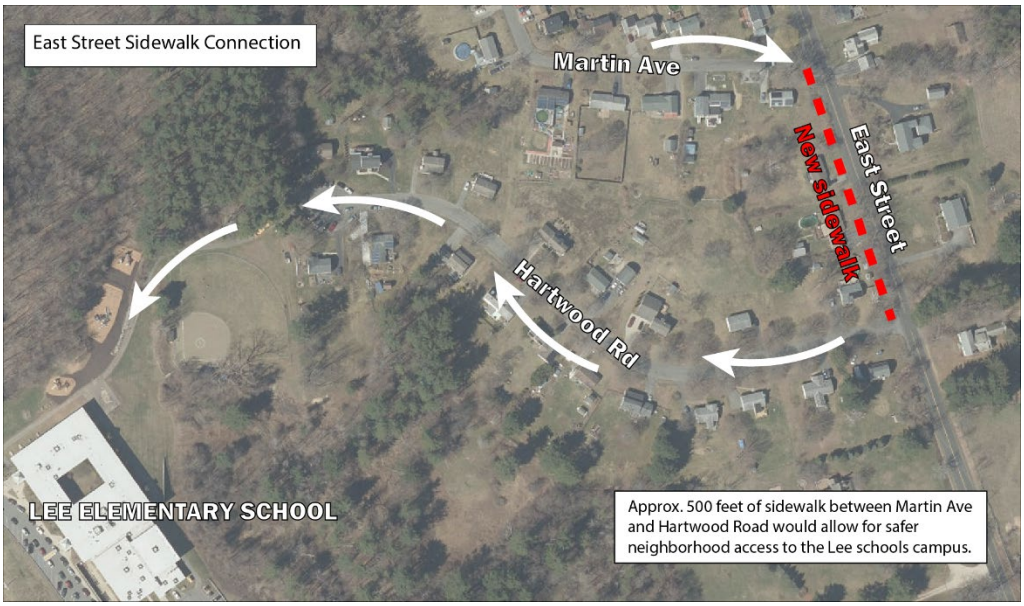
High Street is north-south through street that runs parallel to Main Street and often provides a local bypass for travelers avoiding Main Street. There are frequent intersections along the street, with three junctions closely clustered along a 500-foot segment of High Street: Academy Street, Crossway Street, and Franklin Street. This project proposes to update the crosswalks currently in place at these intersections with more standardized designs and ADA-accessible crub ramps. Crosswalk legs would be squared off at Academy Street and High Street to reduce crossing distance and improve the experience for people with blindness or low vision. Franklin Street currently has three crosswalk legs, and it is proposed to add a fourth to complete the intersection and officially connect the sidewalks on either side. See Figure 12 for the crosswalks proposed to be improved, circled in red.

Figure 12: High Street Crosswalks to be improved

East Street Sidewalk Construction

Currently, East Street does not have sidewalks despite having residential development along much of its length. This project proposes constructing a short 500-foot segment of new sidewalk between Martin Street and Hartwood Street. This segment would provide a connection between the residential neighborhood to the north and the school campus complex to the south, providing a continuous 5-kilometer walking loop between East Street and Lee town center via Hartwood Road and the school campus. See Figure 13 for a visualization of the sidewalk location and the walking route that it would connect.

Figure 13: East Street Sidewalk Construction



East Center Street/Greylock Street Intersection Improvements

The intersection of East Center Street and Greylock Street does not feature a marked crosswalk, despite having a sidewalk available on the south side of East Center Street, across either side of Greylock Street. The intersection is designed as a 4-way stop. This project proposes constructing a new crosswalk and ADA-accessible ramps on either side of Greylock Street to connect the existing sidewalk on both sides.

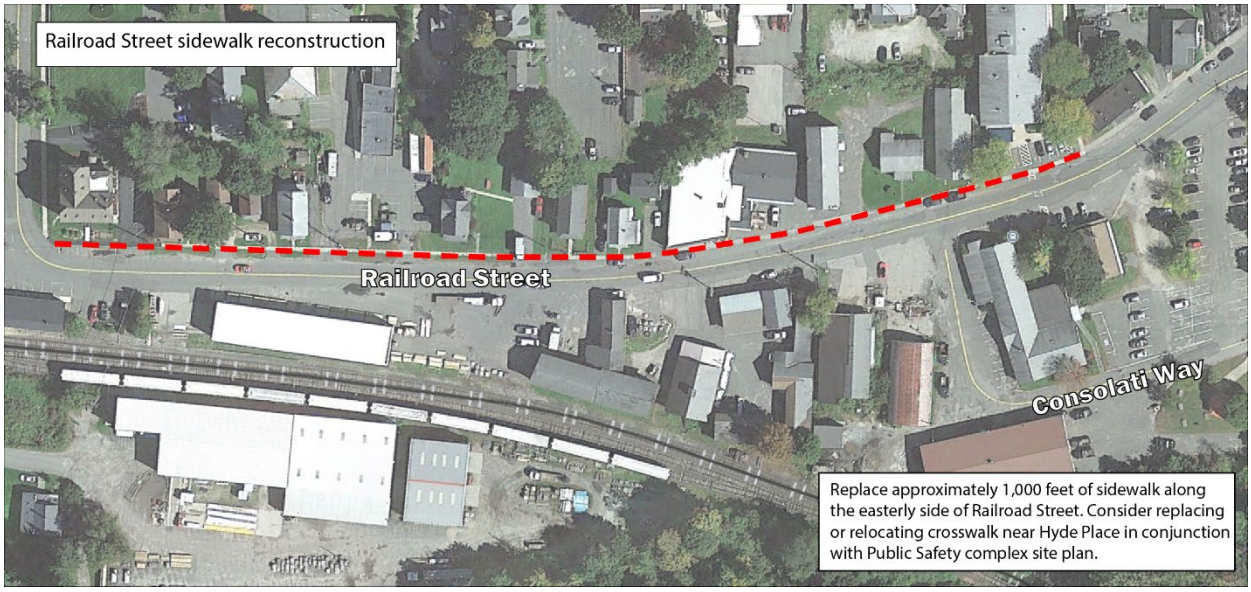
Railroad Street Sidewalk Improvements

Railroad Street runs parallel to Main Street, one block west. It has primarily industrial character, historically providing access to rail yards for loading and unloading freight, and still supports lumber and shipping industries today. An existing sidewalk currently runs along the west side of Railroad Street, closer to Main Street, creating a connected loop along the interior of this block of Main Street and Railroad Street. This sidewalk also provides a rear connection to the Hyde Place senior living apartments, along with a mid-block pedestrian cut-through to Main Street. The sidewalk was inventoried in fair to poor condition (see Appendix). This project would rehabilitate approximately 1000 feet of existing sidewalk to new concrete surfacing and construct ADA-accessible curb ramps where applicable. See Figure 14.

Stockbridge Road Sidewalk Construction – Phase 1 and 2

Stockbridge Road is a main connector between Lee's town center and Route 7. The road changes names several times – it is referred to as Lee Road after crossing the Stockbridge town line, and as West Park Street east of Spring Street in Lee. Currently, a sidewalk exists on the north side of the road beginning at the intersection with Main Street (as West Park Street) and terminating 350 feet east of Spring Street. This project would consist of constructing a new sidewalk in two phases beginning at this terminus, extending the walking route ¾ of a mile to a new town-owned open space situated at 300 Stockbridge Road. This open space is expected to provide new recreational opportunities for residents. Phase 1 would run between the current sidewalk terminus and end at Devon Road, including improvements to the intersection of Devon Road and Stockbridge Road to provide safe crossing facilities and traffic calming. Phase 2 would then pick up at the intersection of Devon Road connect with the existing segment of sidewalk that runs along the I-90 overpass bridge, which currently runs 650 feet along Stockbridge Road, but is disconnected from any broader sidewalk network on either end. Beyond th I-90 corridor to the south, the corridor's land use changes to a more rural, low-density character, and it is envisioned the sidewalk would terminate at the Lee Service Plaza driveway as the most logical end point. This could provide a potential waling connection to this employment center in the town.

Figure 14: Railroad Street Sidewalk



Main Street Bus Shelters and Pull-Outs

The Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) serves the town of Lee via the Route 2, Route 21, and Route 921 buses. Routes 2 and 921 pass through Main Street, while Route 21 serves the Premium Outlets and points west and south to Stockbridge and Great Barrington. Historically, the 2 and 921 routes serviced Main Street in the northbound direction at a stop near the Town Hall, and in the southbound direction at a stop near Hyde Place senior living. These two stops were separated about 600 feet along Main Street. In 2025, BRTA opted to move the northbound stop to be directly across from the southbound stop, placing it outside the Lee Public Library. This project would provide for the opportunity to install new bus shelters at the new locations to provide an improved ridership experience.

East Center Street Sidewalk Improvements

The town's sidewalk inventory (see Appendix) noted that the existing sidewalk between Columbia Street and Greylock Street was in fair condition overall, though there are sections of this segment of asphalt sidewalk that appear more warped and distressed. Rehabilitation of this sidewalk would provide an improvement in this segment that is surrounded by existing higher-quality sidewalks. This project would likely pair with the E Center Street/Greylock St intersection improvements described above.

Marble Street Sidewalk Improvements

This 2000-foot segment of sidewalk is currently listed in fair to poor condition in the sidewalk inventory (see Appendix). The segment begins at the I-90 overpass bridge and continues south along the east side of Marble Street. The segment terminates on Marble Street on the block between Margerie Street and Lana Ave. This project proposes reconstruction of this existing sidewalk in-kind, though the town is encouraged to determine the feasibility of extending the sidewalk an additional 100 feet south to meet the intersection of Lana Ave.

Old Pleasant Street Sidewalk Construction

Old Pleasant Street runs generally parallel to and east of Marble Street, connecting Birch Stret, Lois Street, Margerie Street, and Lana Ave to the greater neighborhood grid. A bridge over the Housatonic River connects Old Pleasant Street to the modern alignment of Pleasant Street as Route 102, along with a southerly driveway for the Big Y supermarket. A sidewalk was constructed as a component of the bridge, but is currently isolated as a single 175-foot segment. This project would extend the sidewalk approximately 320 additional feet to connect to the sidewalk within the Big Y supermarket property, via a new crosswalk across the driveway.

Fairview Street Sidewalk Construction

Fairview Street features an existing sidewalk for a portion of its full length, beginning at the intersection with West Park Street in the north, and terminating with the intersection with Via Franco to the south, approximately 3,600 feet in length. There is one gap along this segment – approximately 200 feet in length where Fairview Street passes beneath the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90). This project proposes to close the gap under the pair of bridges carrying I-90 above, to create a continuous and safe segment of sidewalk that would connect the residential areas of Fairview Ave to Lee town center.

Summer Street Sidewalk Construction

The short segment of Summer Street between Route 20 and Prospect Street has a sidewalk on both sides, save for a 200-foot segment along the southern side of the street. This necessitates crossing Summer Street twice to walk from Prospect Street to Lee town center. This project would construct a segment of sidewalk to close this gap along the south side of Summer Street. Due to the topography, a segment of retaining wall will likely be needed along the sidewalk.

Public Safety Complex Crosswalk Construction

This project involves reconstructing the crosswalk across Railroad Street in the vicinity of the new Lee Public Safety Complex. The crosswalk construction would likely pair with the Railroad Street sidewalk rehabilitation project described above. Given that the Public Safety Complex is under construction at the time of writing, the town is encouraged to place the crosswalk strategically to harmonize with potential changes in traffic patterns and site use after the Complex comes online.

General Recommendations

This section outlines some general recommendations that are not site-specific and may occur at a higher level than the project level. These recommendations are intended to outline opportunities to support Complete Streets in Lee on an ongoing basis.

Design & Engineering

This element broadly covers some of the design and engineering recommendations that will enhance multimodal accommodations and encourage people to utilize active modes.

Complete Streets improvements can come in many forms, whether signage or entire sidewalks or streets, the different elements are based on their context and needs. Improvements are for a variety of modes, whether motorists, cyclists, or pedestrians, Complete Streets are for everyone.

Below are recommendations for general and specific improvements to the transportation network that support Complete Streets principles and goals. Recommended projects that were also included on the town's Tier 2 list have been noted throughout this section. Any improvements will likely need design and/or engineering and it is encouraged that the town reference the following detailed best practices, as applicable, which include but are not limited to:

- MassDOT Project Development and Design Guide
- FHWA Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
- AASHTO A Policy on the Geometric Design of Highways and Streets
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide
- NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- NACTO Transit Street Design Guide
- ITE Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach
- US Access Board Streets and Sidewalks Guidelines
- AASHTO Guide for Planning, Designing, and Operating Pedestrian Facilities
- National Complete Streets Coalition Resources

These improvements may be paid for by a variety of funding sources, which include but are not limited to:

- MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program
- MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Program
- Chapter 90 Funds
- MassWorks Grants
- Federal TIP Funds (STBGP, CMAQ, TA Set-Aside, etc.)

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are a critical component of many small village areas and as such, ensuring pedestrian movement and access improves connectivity, improves public health and safety, and promotes increased economic development. Sidewalks should be vertically and horizontally separated from the roadway. It is desirable for a sidewalk through zone to be a minimum of 6 feet, although 5 feet is acceptable if right-of-way does not allow it. The minimum of 5 feet is due to ADA requirements, to ensure all ages and abilities can use the facility. In non-village centers it may be more advantageous to look at combining pedestrians and cyclists on a shared use path.

The town should consider sidewalks along Swamp Road in the extreme long-term, while keeping in mind a general goal to make as many locations as possible walkable within a ½-mile radius of the village center, equating to a 10-minute walk one-way.

Implement Traffic Calming Measures in Key Locations

Traffic calming takes elements of design and landscaping together to slow down cars and increase awareness of pedestrians and cyclists. This can improve nonmotorized safety, enhanced walkability, improved stormwater management, and contribute to the beautification of the natural character in rural areas. Traffic calming comes in many different forms and may include vertical deflections (speed humps or raised intersections), horizontal shifts (traffic circle or chicane), and/or roadway narrowing (choker or center island). These treatments are often accompanied by visual enhancements like trees, plantings, wayfinding, and/or street furniture. An easy-to-implement option for traffic calming is speed feedback signs.

Speed Feedback Signs

In Lee, the town has been proactive in installing digital speed feedback signs at key locations, such as around the Lee Middle and High school grounds, and as drivers enter more thickly settled areas along Stockbridge road for example. The town is encouraged to continue evaluating effective locations to install speed feedback signs, which are eligible expenses under the Complete Streets program. See Figure 15 for an example of a mounted speed feedback sign.

Figure 15: Example Speed Feedback Sign

View Every Repaving Project as an Opportunity to "Complete the Street"

During every repaving project, the town should assess the condition of the roadway and determine if low-cost improvements could be added to each project.

Additionally, shoulder widening and lane narrowing are crucial ways to improve cycling and walking on roadways that do not have dedicated nonmotorized facilities like sidewalks or bike lanes. Paved shoulders have benefits for vehicle drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.[29] Shoulders are often an option to accommodate nonmotorized travelers in low density areas where dedicated facilities aren't feasible. Wide

[29] http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/walkways_brochure/

shoulders are shown to increase the safety for nonmotorized travelers by separating them from the vehicle lane, although there is the potential that with wider shoulders, speeds can increase. Cyclists report feeling more comfortable having extra space that is outside the vehicle lane, and an extra 4-6 feet[30] can provide them with precious separation from moving vehicles.

The Town of Lee should evaluate the usage of wider shoulders to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian travelers where dedicated facilities are infeasible. Providing paved shoulders as part of routine resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, and/or reconstruction work on roadways is a way to implement the Town's Complete Streets Policy given consideration. Based on guidance from MassDOT, shoulder widths to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists should be at least 4' wide for a Case 4 Shared Bicycle/Pedestrian Accommodation.[31]

Moreover, pavement striping is one of the cheapest ways to reduce vehicle speeds[32], and in areas without dedicated pedestrian and cycling facilities, help to define the road shoulder for these users. Also consider lane widths throughout town. For collector type roads, the FHWA and MassDOT note that vehicle lane widths can range from 10-12' in width[33,34]. For local roadways, guidance from these agencies notes that lane widths can be 9-12' in width.[35]

These widths are of course dependent on other local conditions such as the design speed of the road. For instance, MassDOT guidance suggests that for collector roads, 10' lane widths may be possible on roads where the design speed is below 45 mph. The town should consult with MassDOT or a traffic engineer for specific guidance on lane widths. By narrowing lanes, it may be possible to gain additional right of way for widened road shoulder or other facilities. Narrower lane widths could be easily incorporated into routine repaving or restriping projects.

Berkshire Bike Share

The need and interest for additional choices for transportation has grown as the costs for automobiles have also grown, along with the conscientiousness toward the environmental and social impacts of driving. While not owning a car is not a practical option for most residents of Berkshire County, increasing the options available to residents to accomplish some daily or periodic needs without driving. Town centers and urban centers in Berkshire County are conducive to a potential bike share system as seen in a growing number of communities around the world.

While a bike share system is not an eligible type of project for the Complete Streets program, projects that complement the bike share system can be implemented by the town through the Highway department or the Complete Streets program. Projects such as bike lanes, bike parking, along with signage and wayfinding improve cycling conditions for all riders.

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[30] https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/multimodal_networks/8_paved_shoulders.pdf

[31] https://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Portals/8/docs/designGuide/CH_5.pdf

[32] http://nacto.org/docs/usdg/roadway_striping_as_a_traffic_calming_option_kahn.pdf

[33] https://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Portals/8/docs/designGuide/CH_5_a.pdf (See Exhibit 5-14)

[34] http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/geometric/pubs/mitigationstrategies/chapter3/3_lanewidth.cfm(See Table 3)

[35] The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) recently issued a Highway Safety and Design Engineering Instruction stating Vermont state highways "should have a maximum lane width of 11 (eleven) feet for all directions of travel." Noting that when "greater widths are used shoulder widths are typically reduced, resulting in a shoulder width that is less than ideal for bicycle traffic." http://vtrans.vermont.gov/sites/aot/files/highway/documents/structures/HSDEI%2015-103%20-%2011%20Foot%20Lane%20Width.pdf

The town should explore funding opportunities to pursue a pilot bike share program that could connect the town center and core neighborhoods with resources such the Big Y grocery store, work places along Route 102, and connections to transit like BRTA and national bus lines like Greyhound and Peter Pan.

Invest in Easy Wins to Support Local Cyclists and Bike Tourism

Bicycle parking is a key element to the usability of bicycles for transportation, if there is nowhere to safely park a bicycle, people will be less likely to rely on it for transportation. Bicycle parking is good to have at major public facilities and at/near key town destinations; there are many options for bicycle parking, and for reference see the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals' *Essentials of Bike Parking*.[36]

In Lee, the recommendation is to include bicycle racks at key locations including:

- Main Street business district
- South Lee near destinations like the playground and Post Office on Church Street
- Lee Middle and High School

To help support bike tourism in Lee, the town can also install bike repair stations, such as along Main Street or at the future termini of the Lee Bikeway. Adding a bench and table in this location for cyclists would also be beneficial. If constructed, the town should promote these amenities on its website and regionally so that that cyclists become aware of them.

Implementation

In an effort to ensure the Town of Lee can successfully implement their Complete Streets Policy, the Complete Streets Working Group and BRPC staff developed a table which outlines annual steps that ensure timely implementation of Complete Streets projects in the town. Annual implementation steps can be seen in Table 8.

[36] http://www.apbp.org/?page=publications

Table 8: Annual Implementation Tasks and Model Project Cycle

Action	Responsible Party	Timeline (Annual)	Others Interested
Project Identification	Complete Streets Working Group	Spring	Select Board, Highway Dept., Community Members
Score and rank new projects, Revise Tier 2 List	Complete Streets Working Group	Late Spring	Select Board, Highway Dept., Residents
Project Budgeting	Complete Streets Working Group, Community Members	Early Spring - Early Summer	Select Board, Finance, Highway Department
Prepare RFP for design needs on identified projects requiring engineering or design	Highway Dept.	Fall	Select Board, Finance, Complete Streets Working Group
Construction	Highway Dept.	Following Spring	Select Board, Complete Streets Working Group
Evaluate and document performance (See Performance Measures section)	Complete Streets Working Group	Following Summer or Fall	Select Board, Highway Dept., Community Members

Conclusion

The Town of Lee has great potential to invite more walking and cycling around its many community assets. Leveraging complete streets project funding is just one way to start this initiative. A good strategy to keep in mind when planning projects is the "Five E's" of active transportation: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation.

Engineering involves the design and construction of complete streets and other safety improvements.

Education can include public and private workforces, schools, and other PSAs to communicate the value added to all users of a complete street.

Encouragement can consist of community bike rides and walks, signage, events, and branding to grow active participation and use of complete streets.

Enforcement includes communicating traffic laws to all users of the road and demonstrating how the facilities are effectively used.

Finally, Evaluation includes performance measures, like those discussed in this report, that show how effective a new street design is at accomplishing the goals of the Town leadership.

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission welcomes the opportunity to further assist town leaders in the development of future projects and will be working to ensure the success of this valuable initiative.

Appendix A

Public Outreach and Engagement

Complete Streets Committee Meeting #1: September 25, 2025

The first meeting of the Complete Streets Working Group was held on September 25, 2025, at 2:00 at the Lee Town Hall courtroom. The participants were:

- Complete Streets Working Group Committee
- BRPC Planning Staff

The goal of this meeting was to kick off the project and provide Committee members an outline of the process. The Committee reviewed existing conditions, planning framework, and the project schedule. They discussed potential goals for the project. Committee members were asked to consider their top goals and performance measures for the projects.

Complete Streets Committee Meeting #2: October 16, 2025 (site walks)

The second meeting of the Complete Streets Working Group was held on October 16, 2025, at 2:00pm at the Lee Town Hall courtroom. The participants were:

- Complete Streets Working Group Committee
- BRPC Planning Staff

The Steering Committee reviewed the goals and performance measures exercise and BRPC staff also introduced the weighting and ranking request for Committee members to complete. The majority of meeting was dedicated to site walks and visits around the town center. Stops included: Main Street/Center Street, Railroad Street, High Street, and a driving visit past the future site of the 300 Stockbridge Road open space.

Complete Streets Committee Meeting #3: November 11, 2025

The third meeting of the Complete Streets Working Group meeting was held on November 11, 2025, at 2:00pm at the Lee Town Hall courtroom. The participants were:

- Complete Streets Working Group Committee
- BRPC Planning Staff

The working group reviewed proposed projects and provided additional ideas for town projects. The Committee discussed draft project listings that had been generated by BRPC staff, and discussed scheduling and logistics for the upcoming public forum.

Complete Streets Public Presentation & Forum: November 18, 2025

BRPC staff presented the Complete Streets project progress to the town Select Board, shared proposed projects with the members, and solicited comments and feedback from the body as well as members of the public present at the meeting. Several Steering Committee members also attended the meeting.

Complete Streets Committee Meeting #4: November 20, 2025

The fourth meeting of the Complete Streets Working Group meeting was held on November 20, 2025, at 3:00pm at the Lee Town Hall courtroom. The participants were:

- Complete Streets Working Group Committee
- BRPC Planning Staff

A conceptual public feedback map was discussed with the Committee, and a draft Tier 2 document was reviewed with members present to refine projects and scopes.

Complete Streets Committee Meeting #5: December 4, 2025

The fifth meeting of the Complete Streets Working Group meeting was held on December 4, 2025, at 2:00pm at the Lee Town Hall courtroom. The participants were:

- Complete Streets Working Group Committee
- BRPC Planning Staff

The final draft Tier 2 Prioritization Plan was shared with Committee members and the project ranking was shared based on the ranking and scoring exercise completed by the members. A final timeline of the public involvement, draft report and Tier 2 submission were summarized and agreed upon by Steering Committee members and BRPC staff.

Lee Infrastructure Projects

Web-Map Community Engagement Overview

Collection Period: December 8 – December 30, 2024

KEY METRICS

18	191	14	39%
Total Projects	Total Likes	Comments	With Feedback

PROJECT TYPE SUMMARY

Type	Count	Likes	Comments
Sidewalk	9	108	11
Intersection	3	41	1
Crosswalk	4	28	2
Shelter	2	14	0

TOP 5 BY LIKES

#	Project	Likes
1	Center St/Main St Intersection	23
2	East Street Sidewalk	17
3	Stockbridge Road Phase 1	15
4	Summer Street Sidewalk	15
5	Railroad Street Sidewalk	13

SENTIMENT

- **50%** Positive (7)
- **29%** Neutral (4)
- **21%** Concerned (3)

KEY THEMES

- **57%** Safety Concerns
- **50%** Project Support
- **36%** Traffic/Speed Issues
- **29%** Connectivity Needs

MOST DISCUSSED

- **4** Old Pleasant St Sidewalk
- **3** East Street Sidewalk
- **2** Stockbridge Rd Phase 1
- **2** Crossway/High St Crosswalk

KEY INSIGHTS

- Sidewalk projects dominate engagement — 50% of projects, 79% of comments, 57% of likes
- Intersection improvements most supported — 13.7 avg likes (highest of all types)
- Safety is the #1 community concern — mentioned in 57% of comments
- 11 projects (61%) received no comments — consider additional outreach

RECOMMENDATIONS

High Priority: East Street Sidewalk • Stockbridge Road Phase 1 • Old Pleasant Street

Needs Outreach: Summer Street (property concerns) • Crossway/High St (speed)

Lee Infrastructure Projects — Web-Map Community Engagement Analysis

Appendix B

Complete List of Potential Improvements