



# COMPLETE STREETS NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITIZATION PLAN

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TOWN OF CHESHIRE, MA

April 2018



PREPARED BY:  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC)  
& the Town of Cheshire Complete Streets Committee

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Town of Cheshire completed a comprehensive Master Plan in 2017 and continues to work toward a community that is attractive, welcoming and safe for all residents of all ages through Complete Streets planning. Complete Streets can help increase and improve access to local destinations and attractions by walking, bicycling or riding public transit. As part of its pledge to these efforts, Cheshire has adopted an age-friendly resolution outlining its commitment to ensure older adults remain healthy, active, and engaged. Cheshire has also pledged to create safer roadways for pedestrians and motorists alike by adopting a Complete Streets Policy.

According to the National Household Travel Survey of 2009, 50% of all household trips are less than three miles in length, and 28% are less than one mile. However, the majority of these trips were completed by driving a vehicle. 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 (**Figure 1.1**). 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. With this vision in mind, the Town of Cheshire has begun to study in more detail the opportunities to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle-friendly design into future transportation investments.

While our current transportation system was designed primarily with cars in mind, Complete Streets represents a commitment to provide safer and more accessible means of travel between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations which work to foster more livable, attractive and healthier communities. Complete Streets are roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all users, 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 users of the facility.

Enhancements to the multimodal network must be done in a balanced and context-sensitive approach that looks at a wide range of factors from safety to livability and economic development to connectivity. These criteria must be considered when thinking about Complete Streets improvements that accommodate all users of all abilities. Complete Streets components include typical roadway design features such as traffic calming, bicycle lanes, sharrows, wayfinding, safe crossings, landscaping, sidewalks, and/or 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.

This report has three key expected outcomes. The first is to support Cheshire’s Complete Streets Policy, adopted by the Board of Selectmen on April 12, 2016. The second is to evaluate existing conditions for

**Figure 1.1 Distance and Destinations**



Source: Centers for Disease and Prevention, 2010, [www.newpublichealth.org](http://www.newpublichealth.org)

nonmotorized users of the transportation system. The third is to 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 newest federal transportation legislation, Fixing American's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, 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 Cheshire 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

Technical assistance to the Town of Cheshire by 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 \$50,000 was available to communities to "conduct a needs assessment, network gap analysis, and/or safety audit to determine a targeted investment strategy for Complete Streets infrastructure."<sup>1</sup>

To participate and maintain eligibility in the funding program, communities are required to proceed through three tiers of the program. At Tier 1, a Town employee was required to attend a Complete Streets training session. The Town then had to adopt a policy affirming the community's commitment to Complete Streets in all aspects of transportation design and construction. At Tier 2, communities were required to draft a prioritization plan that outlined at least 15 eligible projects programmed over a 5-year period. This needs assessment and prioritization plan prepared by BRPC and the Town of Cheshire Complete Streets Committee meets the requirements for the town's Tier 2 eligibility. At Tier 3, communities were required to submit projects to MassDOT for potential construction funding. Up to \$400,000 is available in construction funding yearly through the Complete Streets program. However, this funding is distributed as a grant program, with no guarantee of funding from year to year. For the Town's Tier 2 list that was submitted to MassDOT, see **Table 6.2**.

### Eligible Roadways and Project Types

The MassDOT Complete Streets funding program provides potential funding for projects of four main project types including: traffic and safety; bicycle facilities; transit facilities; and pedestrian facilities (**Table 1.1**). For a complete list of eligible project types, refer to MassDOT Complete Streets Program Guidance.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, 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 Cheshire, 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Mass. Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT). 2016. Complete Streets Flyer. Available from: <https://www.mma.org/massdot-offers-%E2%80%98complete-streets%E2%80%99-funding-opportunities>

<sup>2</sup> Available from: <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/DoingBusinessWithUs/LocalAidPrograms/CompleteStreets/FundingProgram.aspx>

**Table 1.1 Eligible Complete Streets Infrastructure**

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.

<b>S - Traffic &amp; Safety</b>	<b>B - Bicycle Facilities</b>	<b>P - Pedestrian Facilities</b>	<b>T - Transit Facilities</b>
<b>S1.</b> Pavement markings or signage that provides a new separate accommodation for bicycle, pedestrian, or transit modes	<b>B1.</b> Improvement of shared use paths (non-safety related)	<b>P1.</b> Sidewalk repairs (tree roots, uplifted panels, etc.)	<b>T1.</b> Improving transit connections for pedestrians, including: ramps, providing and/or moving crosswalks, signing
<b>S2.</b> Removal of protruding objects (pedestrian path of travel, bicycle, vehicular or transit facility)	<b>B2.</b> Designated bicycle lanes	<b>P2.</b> Providing ADA/AAB compliant curb ramps	<b>T2.</b> Improving transit connections for bicyclists, including: providing secure bicycle parking, signing
<b>S3.</b> Pedestrian signal & timing (minor updates)	<b>B3.</b> Bicycle parking fixtures and/or shelters at transit and other locations	<b>P3.</b> Detectable warning surfaces	<b>T3.</b> Transit shelter
<b>S4.</b> Changing pedestrian signal timing (i.e., lead pedestrian interval)	<b>B4.</b> On-street bicycle parking	<b>P4.</b> Pedestrian wayfinding signs	<b>T4.</b> Transit signal prioritization
<b>S5.</b> Radar speed feedback ("Your Speed") signs	<b>B5.</b> Provide bicycle-safe drain grates and other hardware	<b>P5.</b> Providing new sidewalks	<b>T5.</b> Bus pull-out areas
<b>S6.</b> Reducing corner radii to lower vehicle speeds and/or decrease pedestrian crossing distances	<b>B6.</b> Bicycle boulevards	<b>P6.</b> Providing pedestrian buffer zones	<b>T6.</b> Railroad grade crossings improvements (signs, flange way fill, etc.)
<b>S7.</b> Additional regulatory signing (for existing regulations)	<b>B7.</b> Bicycle wayfinding signs	<b>P7.</b> Pedestrian Refuge Islands	<b>T7.</b> Transit contra-flow lanes
<b>S8.</b> Speed humps/speed tables	<b>B8.</b> Shared lane markings (sharrows)	<b>P8.</b> Curb extensions at pedestrian crossings	<b>T8.</b> Park-n-ride facilities
<b>S9.</b> Street lighting	<b>B9.</b> Bike route signs	<b>P9.</b> Crosswalks	<b>T9.</b> Transit-only lanes
<b>S10.</b> Road diets	<b>B10.</b> New shared use paths	<b>P10.</b> Widening existing sidewalks	<b>T0.</b> Transit Facilities - Other
<b>S11.</b> Speed attenuation devices	<b>B11.</b> Designated Separated Bicycle Lane	<b>P11.</b> Accessible pedestrian signals	
<b>S12.</b> Roadway resurfacing or micro surfacing if restriping for new bicycle lanes	<b>B12.</b> Elimination of hazardous conditions on shared use paths	<b>P12.</b> New or improved crossing treatments at intersections, midblock, etc. including RRFB's and HAWK signals	
<b>S13.</b> Intersection reconstruction – reducing complexity and crossing distance	<b>B13.</b> Intersection treatments (bicycle signals, bicycle detection, bike lane extensions, turn boxes)	<b>P13.</b> New pedestrian accommodations at existing traffic signals	
<b>S14.</b> New curbing or edging on uncurbed streets.	<b>B0.</b> Bicycle Facilities - Other	<b>P14.</b> Interim public plazas	
<b>S15.</b> Addition of or widening of shoulders		<b>P15.</b> Traffic re-routing to create pedestrian zones	
<b>S16.</b> Intersection signalization (major updates/upgrades & new Installation)		<b>P16.</b> Providing medians with ADA/AAB-compliant design	
<b>S17.</b> Traffic calming measures		<b>P0.</b> Pedestrian Facilities - Other	

*Economic Benefits of Complete Streets*

Complete streets improvements and aspects of nonmotorized transportation have shown some impressive economic benefits to communities and regions. 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<sup>3</sup>. Implementing Complete Streets policies can stimulate private investment, especially in retail districts.<sup>4</sup> Other communities have seen direct increases in retail sales following complete streets investments.<sup>5</sup> Studies have shown increases in property values following the addition of bike lanes along streets, as well as higher values in walkable neighborhoods in general<sup>6</sup>. Other research has found that every dollar spent on bike infrastructure returns between four and five dollars in benefits. New York City found that construction of bicycle infrastructure resulted in fewer vacancies along those streets. Finally, investments in nonmotorized transportation reduce the economic burden placed on residents. When residents can use cheaper transportation options, such as biking and walking, they are free to use money that would otherwise go to fuel or vehicle maintenance in other ways.

### 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 or wish to drive. Complete Streets enable and create affordable transportation that can be used by anyone.

### 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, 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.<sup>7</sup> 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 (SGA) 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.<sup>8</sup>

It is well established that physical activity promotes longevity, decreases risk of chronic conditions, and improves mental health and well-being, while relieving stress.<sup>9,10</sup> 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%,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://headwaterseconomics.org/trail/84-bicycling-walking-vermont/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/economic-revitalization-benefits-of-complete-streets>

<sup>5</sup> <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets-pay-off/>

<sup>6</sup> [http://vibrantneo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/VibrantNEO\\_EconomicBenefitsofCompleteStreets.pdf](http://vibrantneo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/VibrantNEO_EconomicBenefitsofCompleteStreets.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Litman, T. (2010). *Evaluating public transportation health benefits*. Retrieved from [http://www.vtpi.org/tran\\_health.pdf](http://www.vtpi.org/tran_health.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015b) *Physical activity and health*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/index.htm>

<sup>10</sup> 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#.WHZ9qf4zXVI](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/PhysicalActivity/%20StartWalking/Physical-activity-improves-quality-of-life_UCM_307977_Article.jsp#.WHZ9qf4zXVI)

increase daily steps, and increase time spent walking.<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup> 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%.<sup>13</sup>

## Background

The Town of Cheshire developed this report with the support of their Complete Streets Committee, and technical assistance provided by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

The Town of Cheshire's Complete Streets Committee was established in 2016, after the town adopted their Complete Streets Policy. Members of the Committee include:

- Mark Webber, Town Administrator
- Christine Emerson, Town Clerk
- Blair Crane, Cheshire Highway Superintendent & Tree Warden
- Peter Traub, Planning Board Member
- Diane Hitter, Historical Commission

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

## 2. PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Implementing Cheshire's Complete Streets Policy will have various benefits that are experienced by many different stakeholders. 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 persons with disabilities.

### Vision and Intent

As it states in the Town of Cheshire's Complete Streets Policy:

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<sup>11</sup> 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](http://www.apha.org/~media/files/pdf/topics/transport/apha_active_transportation_fact_sheet_2010.ashx)

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

*The purpose of the Town of Cheshire’s Complete Streets Policy...is to accommodate all users by creating a roadway network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. It is the intent of the Town of Cheshire to ensure the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of streets so they are safe for users of all ages and abilities and to provide a multi-modal transportation network. This Policy directs staff to consistently plan, design, construct, and maintain streets to accommodate a range of multi-modal transportation users including, but not limited to: pedestrians, cyclists, other nonmotorists, transit users, motorists, emergency vehicles, and freight/ commercial vehicles.*

## Goals and Performance Measures

The goals and objectives of this Complete Streets Project Prioritization plan, guided by the Cheshire Complete Streets Committee, were developed to provide safety, mobility/connectivity, usability, traffic calming, and accessibility for all users of the street network, including pedestrians, cyclists, other nonmotorists, transit riders, motorists, commercial vehicles, and emergency vehicles.

### Mode Share

Mode Share is a general Complete Streets performance measure that the Town can track independent of any others identified. The Town of Cheshire currently sees a commute mode-share dominated by automobile travel (95.4% of commuters). The mode-share is described in **Table 2.1** The Town would like to see modest increases in all modes other than automobile.

**Table 2.1 Cheshire Mode-Share for Commuters**

Mode	Percent of Commuters
Car, Truck, or Van	95.4%
Public Transit	1.8%
Bicycle	0.0%
Walk	0.6%
Taxi, Other (motorcycle, etc.)	0.6%
Work from Home	1.6%

*Source:* 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

During the development of their planning framework, the Cheshire Complete Streets Committee developed system-wide performance measures for each of their five goals. The performance measures, listed by goal area, are shown in **Table 2.2**

### Methodology

In an effort to develop a data-driven process to guide the prioritization of Complete Streets projects in Cheshire, the Complete Streets Committee developed a planning framework that outlined: goals, performance measures, evaluation criteria/scoring, and weighting. This framework ensured the goals were measurable, and that scoring of the projects directly related to the plan’s goals. The Committee was asked to weight and rank each goal, and that was integrated into the multi-criteria analysis used to prioritize the Town’s improvements. Based on combined weighting and ranking scores from each Committee member, projects related to the safety and usability goal areas received the greatest weight. Projects related to the goal of allowing residents to age-in-place were weighted the lowest. The planning framework matrix can be seen in **Table 2.2**.

**Table 2.2 Annual System Performance Measures**

SYSTEM			PROJECT-SPECIFIC	
Goal Area/Theme	Goal	System Performance Measure	Project Scoring	Weight
<b>Mobility/Connectivity</b>	Improve infrastructure and transit/specialized transit services to ensure those with limited mobility can move in and around Cheshire. Provide transportation choices by improving system connectivity within and between modes.	Number of new ADA compliant curb ramps, linear feet of ADA compliant sidewalk or pathway. Share of non-automobile commuters (ACS)	0 - project does not address sidewalk or pathway, curb ramps, or public/specialized transit 1 - project addresses one of the following: ADA compliant sidewalk or pathway, curb ramps, or public/specialized transit 2 - project addresses TWO of the following: ADA compliant sidewalk or pathway, curb ramps, or public/specialized transit 3 - project addresses ALL of the following: ADA compliant sidewalk or pathway, curb ramps, or public/specialized transit	<b>1.53</b>
<b>Safety</b>	Prioritize safety for all users of the transportation system.	total crashes by severity and mode	0 - project reduces or does not impact safety for users of the transportation system 1 - project addresses safety concern for vulnerable user (cyclist, pedestrian, etc.) 2 - project addresses safety concern for all users (drivers, vulnerable users, etc.) 3 - project addresses safety concern for all users (drivers, vulnerable users, etc.)	<b>3.67</b>
<b>Usability</b>	Prioritize projects in Cheshire that will impact the most residents	number of residents with ¼ mile of a dedicated mode facility	0 - not in a residential or urban area 1 - in/adjacent to a low-density residential area 2 - in/adjacent to a medium-density residential area 3 - in/adjacent to a high-density residential area	<b>2.27</b>
<b>Traffic Calming</b>	Promote traffic calming measures in Cheshire to encourage access for all modes, reduce speeds in activity hubs, and promote attractive streetscapes	annual number of citations for speeding	0 - project has no traffic calming component 1 - project has traffic calming component that impacts ONE of the following: speed reduction, streetscape improvement, encourages access for all modes 2 - project has traffic calming component that impacts TWO of the following: speed reduction, streetscape improvement, encourages access for all modes 3 - project has traffic calming component that address ALL of the following: speed reduction, streetscape improvement, encourages access for all modes	<b>1.35</b>
<b>Aging-in-Place</b>	Ensure connectivity for residents of all ages to ensure the community is livable for anyone aged “8 to 80.” Promote connectivity to local businesses, public facilities, such as schools, town buildings, libraries, parks, and recreation areas.	annual number of projects adjacent or connecting to future senior housing, COA, schools. Number of projects connecting to or adjacent to public facilities or town businesses	0 - project is not adjacent or does not connect to a public building/ facility or town business 1 - project is adjacent/connects to ONE public building/ facility or town business 3 - project is adjacent/connects to TWO or more public buildings/ facilities or town businesses	<b>1.18</b>

### Related Plans and Initiatives

The Town of Cheshire worked with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) in 2017 and 2018 to develop this Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, which examines needs for Complete Streets in the town and identifies potential projects for implementation. Completion of this Tier 2 plan and other project implementation by the town will help it to advance several goals, objectives, and actions of the 2017 Master Plan.

### Cheshire Master Plan (2017)

The Cheshire Master Plan is a recently completed advisory document that sets a direction for the community and is intended to guide policy decisions, investment and decision-making for the next 10-15 years. The Master Plan contains an entire chapter dedicated to assessing the Town's transportation infrastructure, funding sources, crash data and road jurisdictions. Moreover, transportation goals, objectives and actions developed by the Town's Master Plan Committee, with input from residents, outlines a pathway for improving the existing roadway network. Guiding these transportation improvement decisions is an overarching transportation vision statement put forth by the Town. The vision statement says: *Cheshire will provide a well-maintained road network and transportation system, where residents of all ages and abilities can move safely and efficiently – whether by driving, biking, walking, or public transit.*

The vision statement represents Cheshire's commitment to provide a complete and well-maintained multimodal network that accommodates multiple user types. Identifying and implementing complete streets design elements will enable Cheshire to achieve these outcomes and will lead to other co-benefits that include enhancing the Town's aesthetic appeal and improving the quality of life among residents. In fact, many of the complete streets projects that have been identified, and indeed the philosophy behind the complete streets movement, work to make communities more livable by improving connectivity through accessibility. That is, by expanding the ways that residents can access recreational areas, goods and services, areas of employment, education and residence, the more convenient and appealing the area ultimately becomes. The complete streets projects identified by the complete streets committee address many of the transportation goals outlined in the Master Plan. The objectives and associated actions identified in the Master Plan that directly relate to complete street goals and objectives are listed below:

#### **Objective: Collaborate Regionally to Address Existing and Future Transportation Needs**

**Action:** Collaborate with local, regional, and statewide partners to assess needs, evaluate funding opportunities, and construct projects that improve multi-modal transportation in and around Cheshire.

#### **Objective: Plan for and Address Existing and Future Roadway Needs**

**Action:** Identify and implement low-cost beautification options to add value to town transportation projects, such as landscaping.

#### **Objective: Improve Nonmotorized Transportation and Transit Within Cheshire**

**Action:** Continue participation in the MassDOT Complete Streets program. Develop a Tier 2 prioritization plan for future Complete Streets related improvements and apply for funding to implement these projects.

**Action:** Ensure annual road projects are reviewed for compliance with the town Complete Streets policy.

**Action:** Coordinate with surrounding communities on regional shared-use path projects.

**Action:** Design and implement a town wayfinding system.

**Action:** Seek out ways to slow traffic down in key areas as way to improve traffic safety.

### Age Friendly Community Resolution in Cheshire, Massachusetts (2017)

Cheshire's Age Friendly Resolution outlines the Town's commitment to account for an aging population when formulating, implementing and monitoring future plans, designs and development strategies. Berkshire County is currently experiencing a rise in the number of older adults sooner and faster than the State or the nation. To underscore this point, in 2011, the number of residents 65 years and older overtook the number of residents aged 18 years and younger in the county. This shift is projected to occur nationally by 2030.<sup>14</sup>

With 26.6% of the town's population over the age of 60, Cheshire recognizes and is committed to the development and "effective implementation of a comprehensive plan to support an aging population." Items

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<sup>14</sup> [http://berkshireplanning.org/images/uploads/documents/Berkshire\\_County\\_Age\\_Friendly\\_Survey\\_Report.pdf](http://berkshireplanning.org/images/uploads/documents/Berkshire_County_Age_Friendly_Survey_Report.pdf)

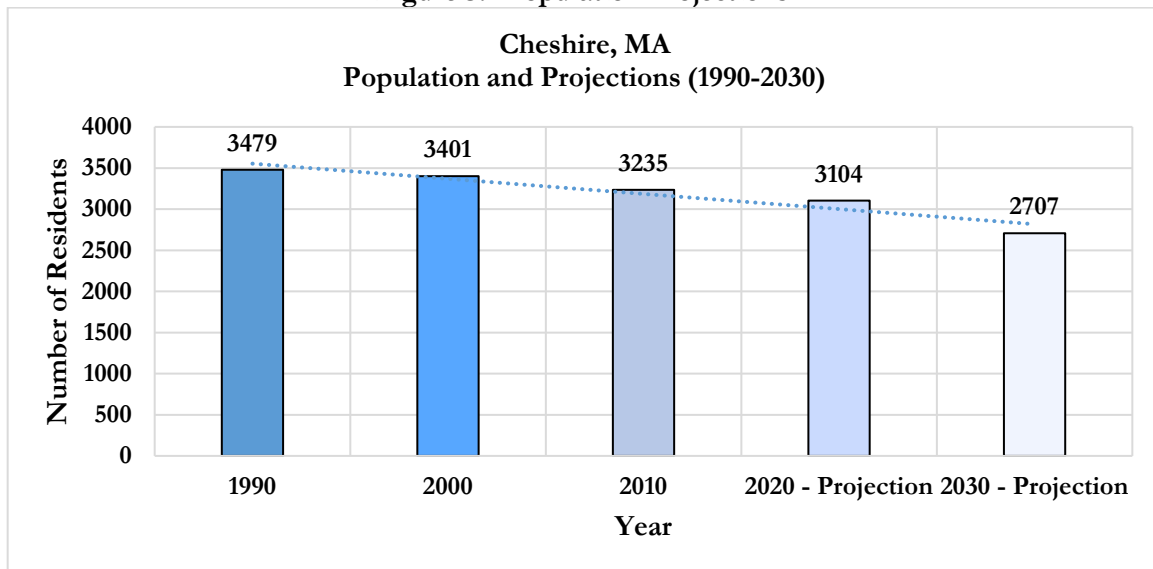
in the resolution that relate to Complete Streets include providing accessible streets, easier access to public transportation, encouraging access to fresh food and encouraging active lifestyles.

### 3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### Sociodemographic Profile

The Town of Cheshire has around 3,235 year-round residents and has seen minor population loss since 1990. From the US. Census estimate of population in 2010 (3,235), the UMass Donahue Institute<sup>15</sup> predicts that the population of the town will decline to approximately 2,707 residents by the year 2030, a decrease of 16.3% (see **Figure 3.1**). 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 3.1 Population Projections**

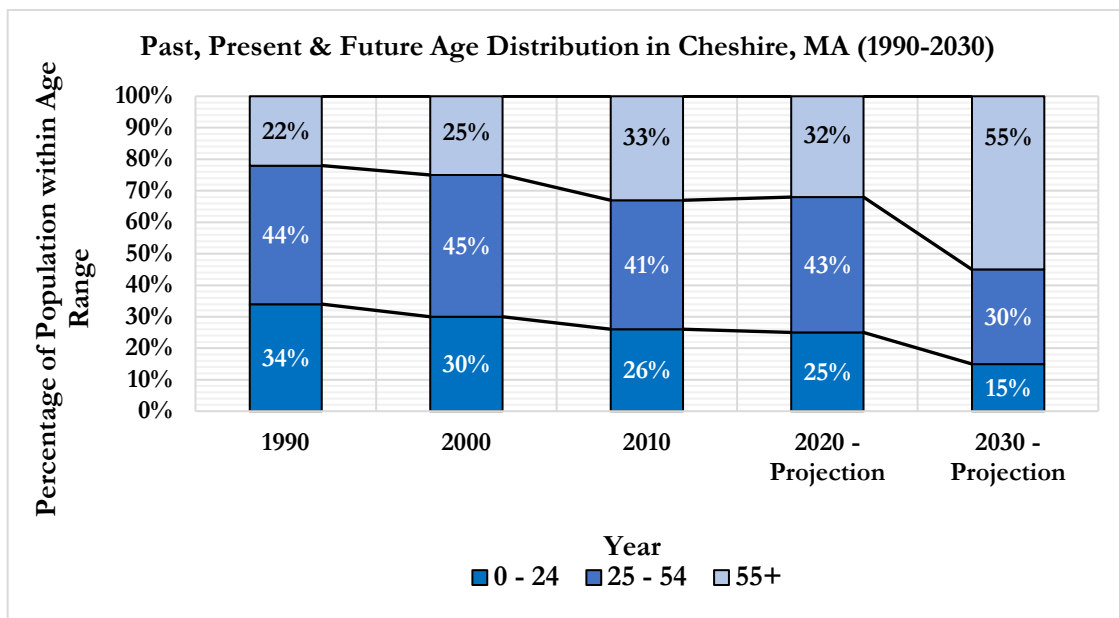


*Source:* U.S. Census: 1980, 1990, 2000 Census, 2010 Demographic Profile Data, & 2020-2030 Projections  
Courtesy of the UMass Donahue Institute

According to recent data, approximately 33% of the population is over the age of 55, and by 2030 it is expected that around 55% of the population will be over the age of 55. As aging in place becomes more popular among seniors, the composition of the population is important to consider when addressing things like wayfinding, walkability, and roadway safety. Additionally, as 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. (See **Figure 3.5**)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.donahue.umassp.edu/business-groups/economic-public-policy-research/expertise-services/economic-demographic-research>

Figure 3.2 Age Distribution



*Source:* U.S. Census: 1980, 1990, 2000 Census, 2010 Demographic Profile Data, & 2020-2030 Projections  
 Courtesy of the UMass Donahue Institute

### Climate

There are on average 183 sunny days per year and about 86 precipitation days per year,<sup>16</sup> the latter of which may make travelling by bicycle or foot difficult at times throughout the year. Berkshire County receives snowfall throughout the winter months and is at a higher elevation than most of Massachusetts. However, the summer months aren't as hot on average as the rest of the state, and many are great days to travel using active modes.

### Topography & Land Use Characteristics

Cheshire owes much of its character to the natural landscape it inhabits. Located in the northern half of Berkshire County, Cheshire is bordered by the Towns of Savoy and Windsor to the east, Dalton to the south, New Ashford and Lanesborough to the west and by Adams to the north. The town is also positioned centrally between the two largest municipalities in Berkshire County, the cities of Pittsfield and North Adams.

Cheshire's topography is defined by two mountain ranges separated by the south to north flow of the Hoosic River. The Hoosic River flows north for about 3.5 miles to the municipal boundary of Adams and has created rich floodplains and marshes that afford prime habitat for a host of diverse plant species. The Mt. Greylock Reservation sits on the northwest border of the town and to the east, amid open county and rolling hills (Woodchuck Hill and Stafford Hill), many spectacular views of Mt. Greylock and much of Cheshire Lake await.

### Urban Area and Open Space

Cheshire is mostly forested – 70% of town is classified as forest land – with residences and agriculture typifying the remaining land use. Much of the agricultural acreage in Cheshire is in the eastern portion of

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.bestplaces.net/climate/city/massachusetts/cheshire>

town. Developed land in the town can be found primarily along the Route 8 corridor and in the village center along Church Street (See **Figure 3.3**). The village center serves as the residential, business and civic center for the town. There are some significant demographic differences between those living in the village center compared to those living in the rest of the town. The population living in the village center – as compared to more dispersed settlement outside the village area – has been identified and defined as a Census Designated Place (CDP) by the U.S. Census Bureau.

A CDP is often a village or neighborhood within a larger municipality that has been identified by the Census Bureau to allow for statistical comparisons with the larger community. Two notable differences between Cheshire CDP and the entire town can be found in income and age distribution. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income data for Fiscal Year 2016, Cheshire CDP has the highest percentage of low to moderate-income individuals in the state, topping out at 75%. Low income is defined as 50% of median income for the area, and moderate income is defined as 80% of median income for the area. This compares to 43% of individuals earning a low to moderate-income when looking at the town (including both the CDP and surrounding areas). Based on the 2012-2016 Census ACS, the median age of the CDP is 38.7. The median age for the entire town is significantly higher, averaging 49 years-old. Most housing in both the CDP and the entire town are 1-unit detached type housing.

According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey, the Town of Cheshire is around 27.53 mi<sup>2</sup> (17,619 acres) in size, with an average population density of approximately 126 residents per square mile.<sup>17</sup> There are 1,634 households in town according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> <http://cheshire-ma.net/about/demographics.html>

<sup>18</sup> <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

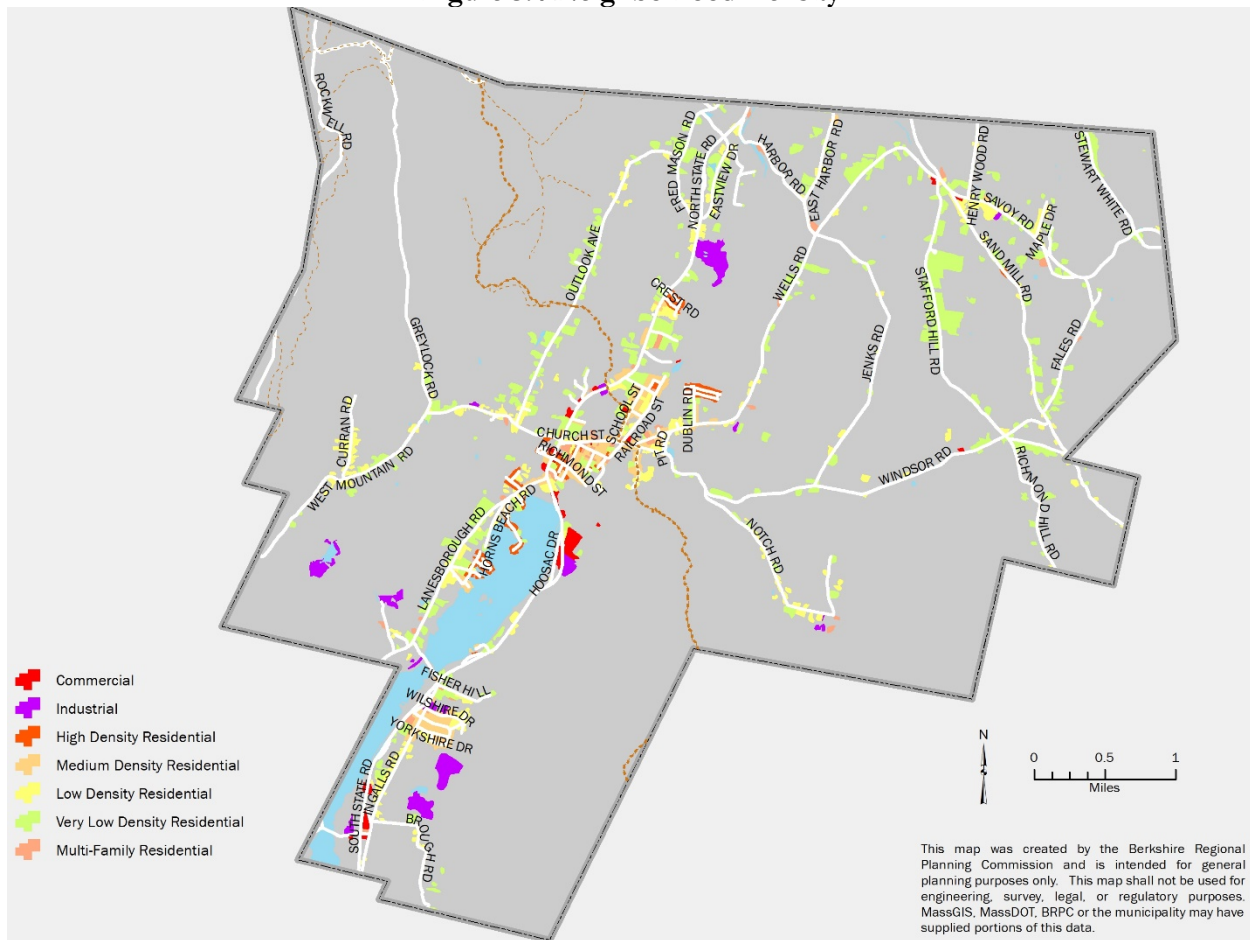
Figure 3.3 Cheshire Urban Area



### Neighborhood Density

Neighborhood density, using MassGIS categories, can be seen in **Figure 3.4**. The densest neighborhoods in Cheshire include those in the center of town, which includes some multi-family residential structures as well as in the southwest portion of Cheshire. Neighborhood density is derived from the MassGIS Land Use dataset that was last updated in 2005. High density neighborhoods are identified as areas where housing is located on lots smaller than  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre. Medium density neighborhoods are areas where housing is located on  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre lots. Low density neighborhoods are areas where housing is located on  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 acre lots. Finally, very low-density neighborhoods are areas where housing is located on lots greater than 1 acre in size and very remote rural housing. Notes from the land use dataset describe more about the residential land use interpretation process, stating: “residential densities were determined either from the parcel data, or by visually comparing the house to surrounding houses, observing the spacing between the houses as well as the relative amount of yard space between them. If housing in an area seemed to fall between two classes, the most accurate density was chosen to maintain consistency throughout blocks and subdivisions or neighborhoods.”

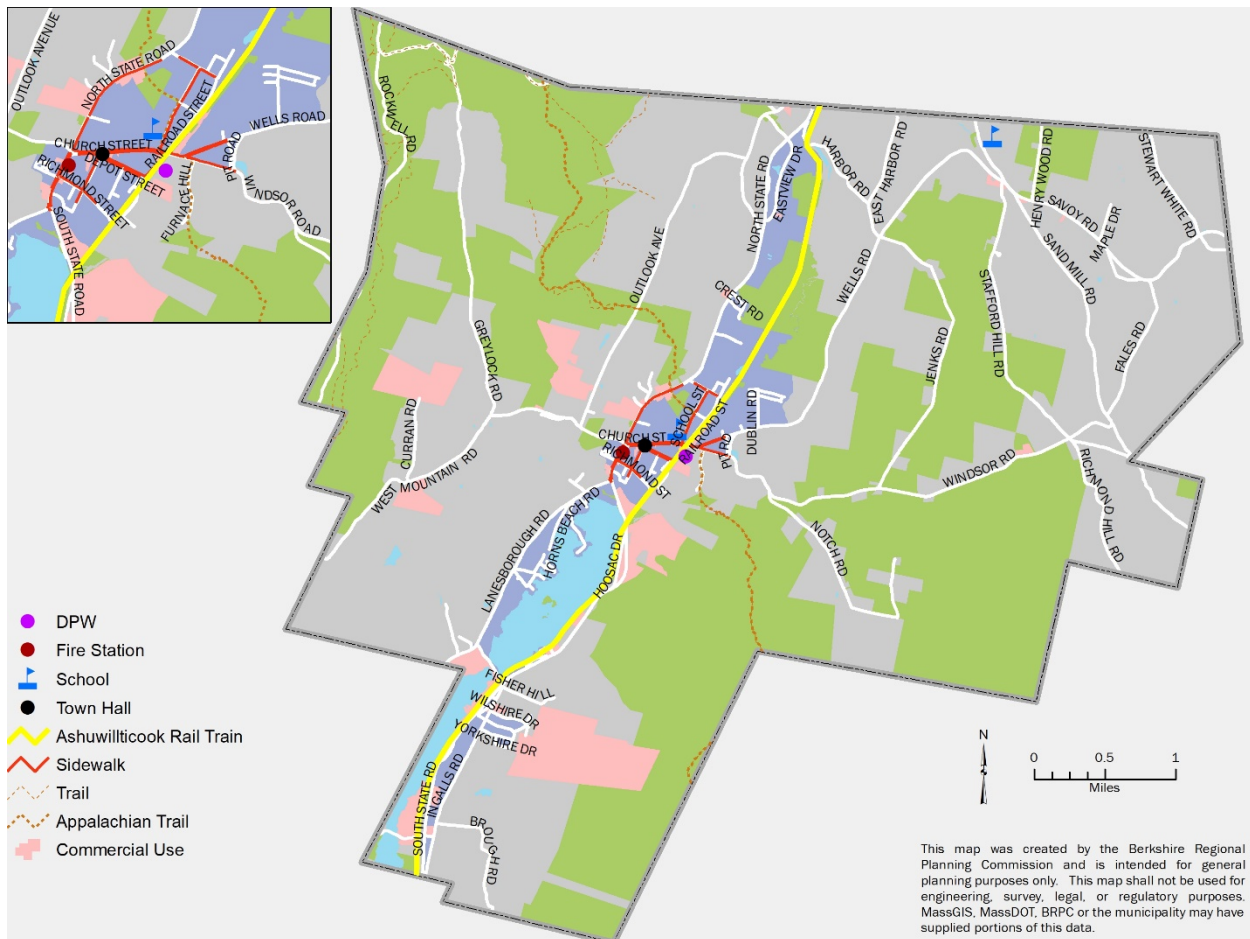
**Figure 3.4 Neighborhood Density**



Local Destinations and Attractions

The Town of Cheshire is working to make the town more pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly, with the goal of encouraging residents and visitors to walk or bike to their destination, whether it be to run errands, visit a local business to shop or eat, or visit one of the many cultural or natural attractions that the Town has to offer. Providing safe routes and wayfinding to these destinations is key to getting more people out of their cars and creating a pedestrian/biking environment. One important step in creating this environment is to identify where key destinations are located throughout the town and evaluate the condition of the routes between them. Destinations and attractions are businesses, institutions, cultural sites, and outdoor recreational areas that entice tourists and residents alike. These include the Appalachian Trail and Cheshire Cobbles, the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, Cheshire Lake, State Land and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). **Figure 3.5.** illustrates areas or sites that were considered as key destinations/attractions.

Figure 3.5 Town Destinations and Attractions

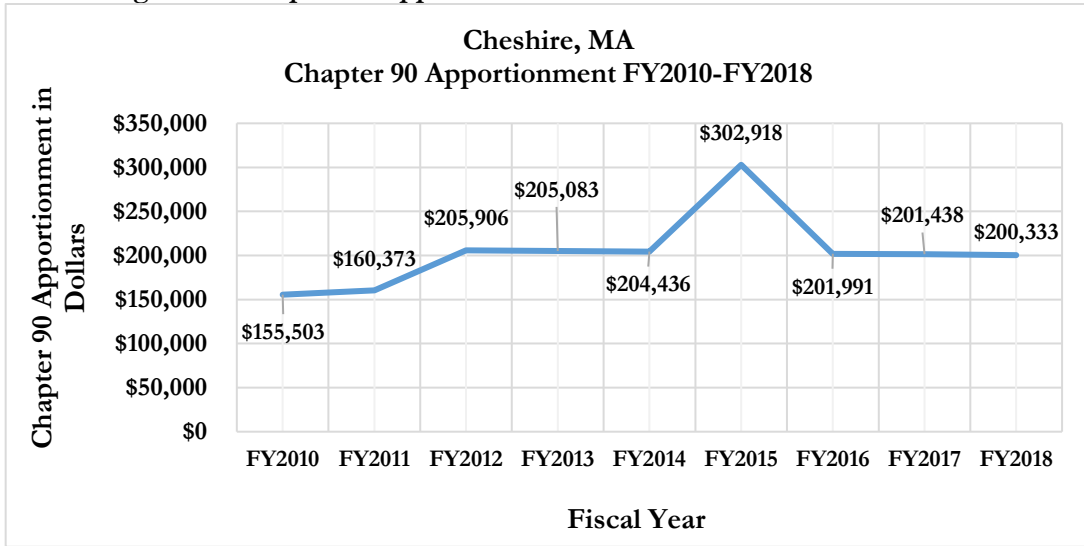


## Fiscal Conditions

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 Cheshire, Chapter 90 funding is generally around \$200,000 each fiscal year (FY), with a significant increase in 2015 to over \$302,000 due to additional statewide funding that fiscal year that was allocated by the Governor Baker administration (see **Figure 3.6**).

Figure 3.6 Chapter 90 Apportionment Fiscal Year 2010-Fiscal Year 2018



Source: Massachusetts Department of Transportation: Highway Division

## Transportation Conditions

### Road Network

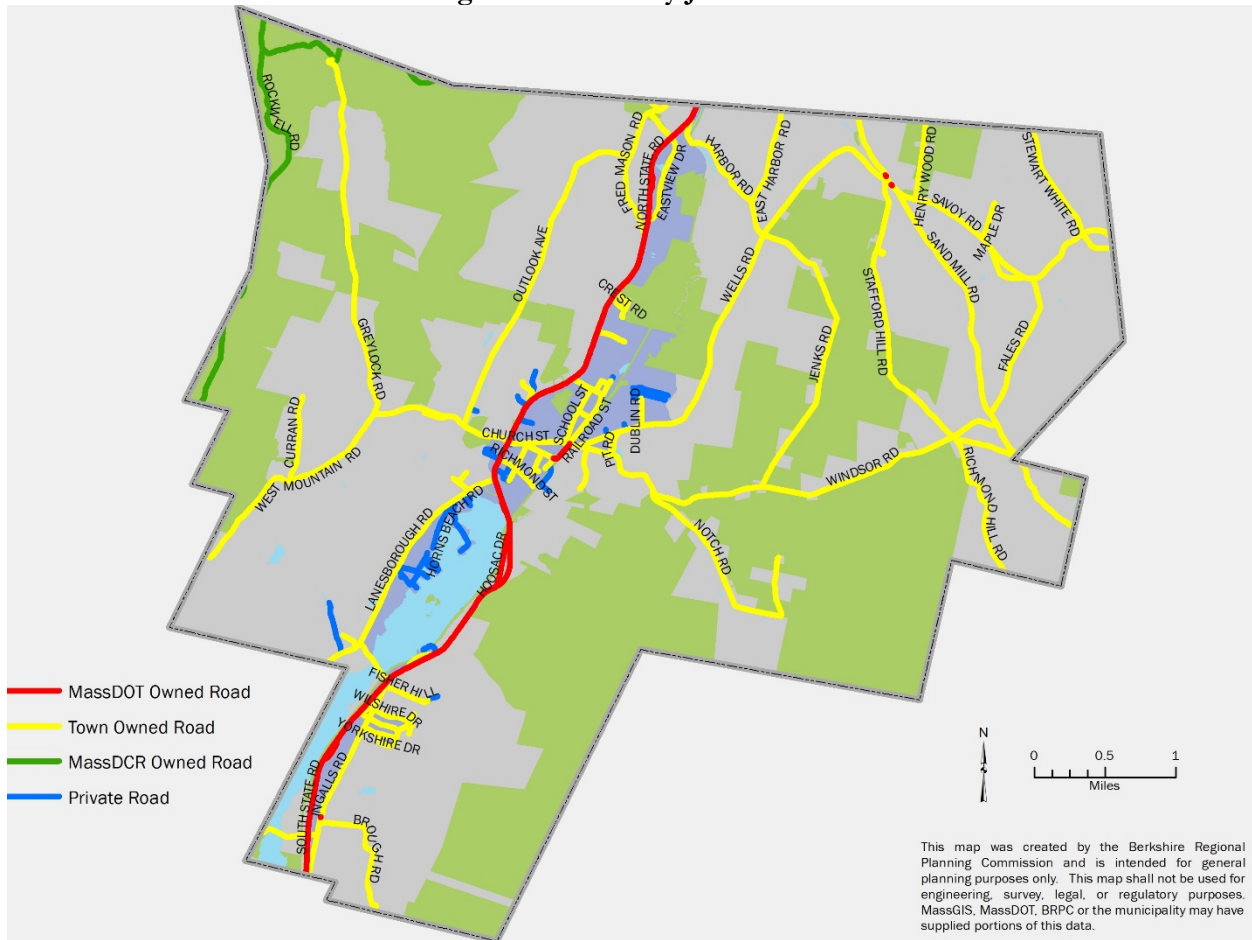
There are just over 63 miles of road in Cheshire, of which 11.55 miles are under MassDOT’s and MassDCR’s jurisdiction, 4.93 miles are privately-owned and the remaining 46.73 miles are town accepted roads (see **Table 3.1**). The 11.55 miles of MassDOT/DRC roads consist of Route 8 and several roads on the Mt. Greylock Reservation. Roads around the Pine Valley Mobile Home Park represent an example of privately maintained roads. (See **Figure 3.7**).

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

**Table 3.1 Cheshire Road Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Mileage	Percent of Roads
MassDOT	7.61	12%
MassDCR	3.94	6.2%
Town	46.73	73.9%
Private	4.93	7.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.21</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Figure 3.7 Roads by Jurisdiction**



*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 **Table 3.2**).

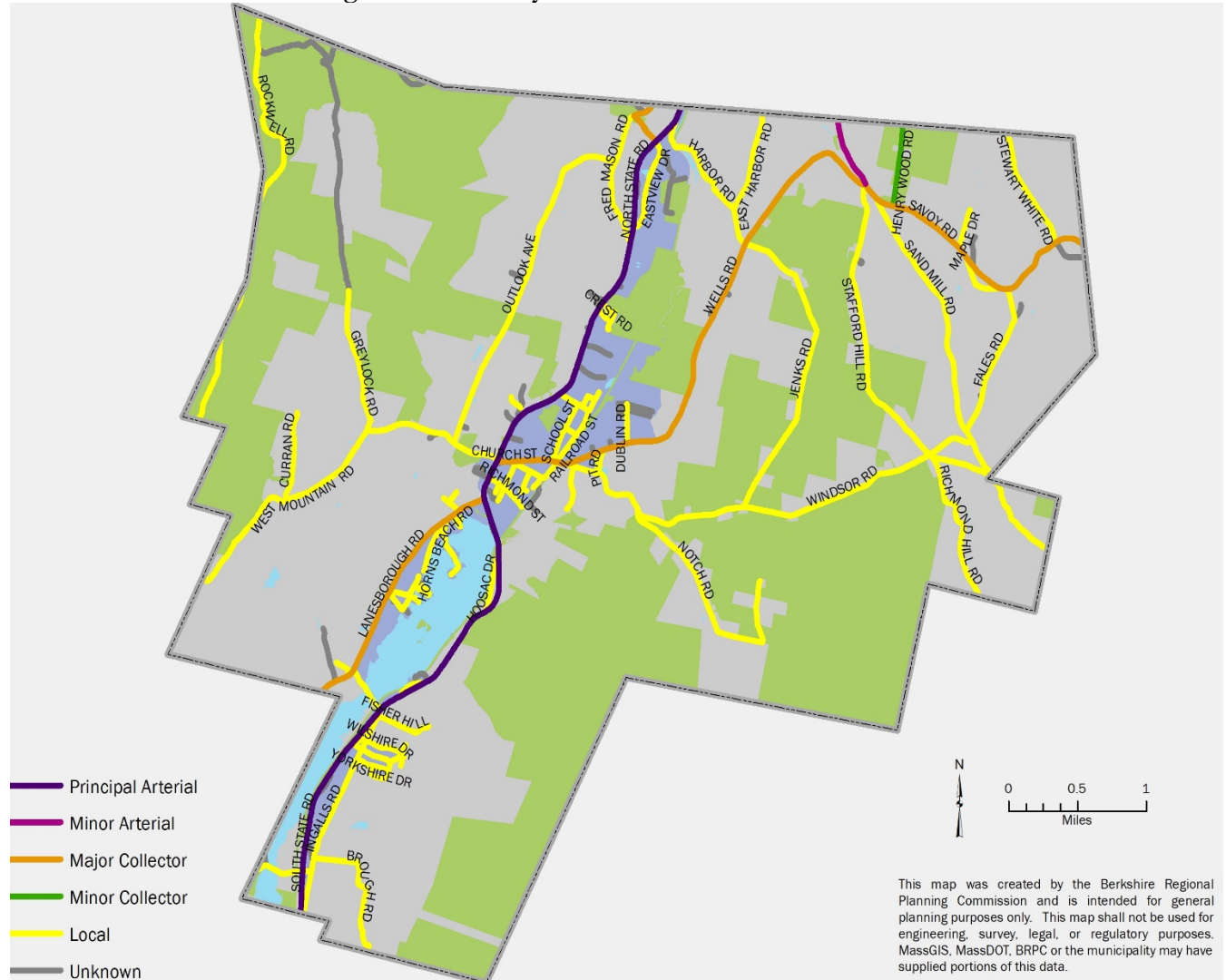
**Table 3.2 Functional Classification Descriptions<sup>19</sup>**

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.

<sup>19</sup> Table adapted from Federal Highway Administration, Flexibility in Highway Design. Available from: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/publications/flexibility/ch03.cfm>

Within Cheshire, Route 8 is the only road considered a principal arterial. Savoy Road (Route 116), is considered a major collector that transitions into a minor arterial beyond the Wells Road/Stafford Hill Road intersection heading north. Wells Road, Lanesborough Road and the northern portion of East View Drive and Fred Mason Road are considered major collectors. Henry Wood Road is the only minor collector. Roadways classified as arterials and collectors are eligible for receiving 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 Cheshire are all considered local roads. (See **Figure 3.8**). Local roads are not eligible for federal funding.

**Figure 3.8 Roads by Functional Classification**



### Speed Limits

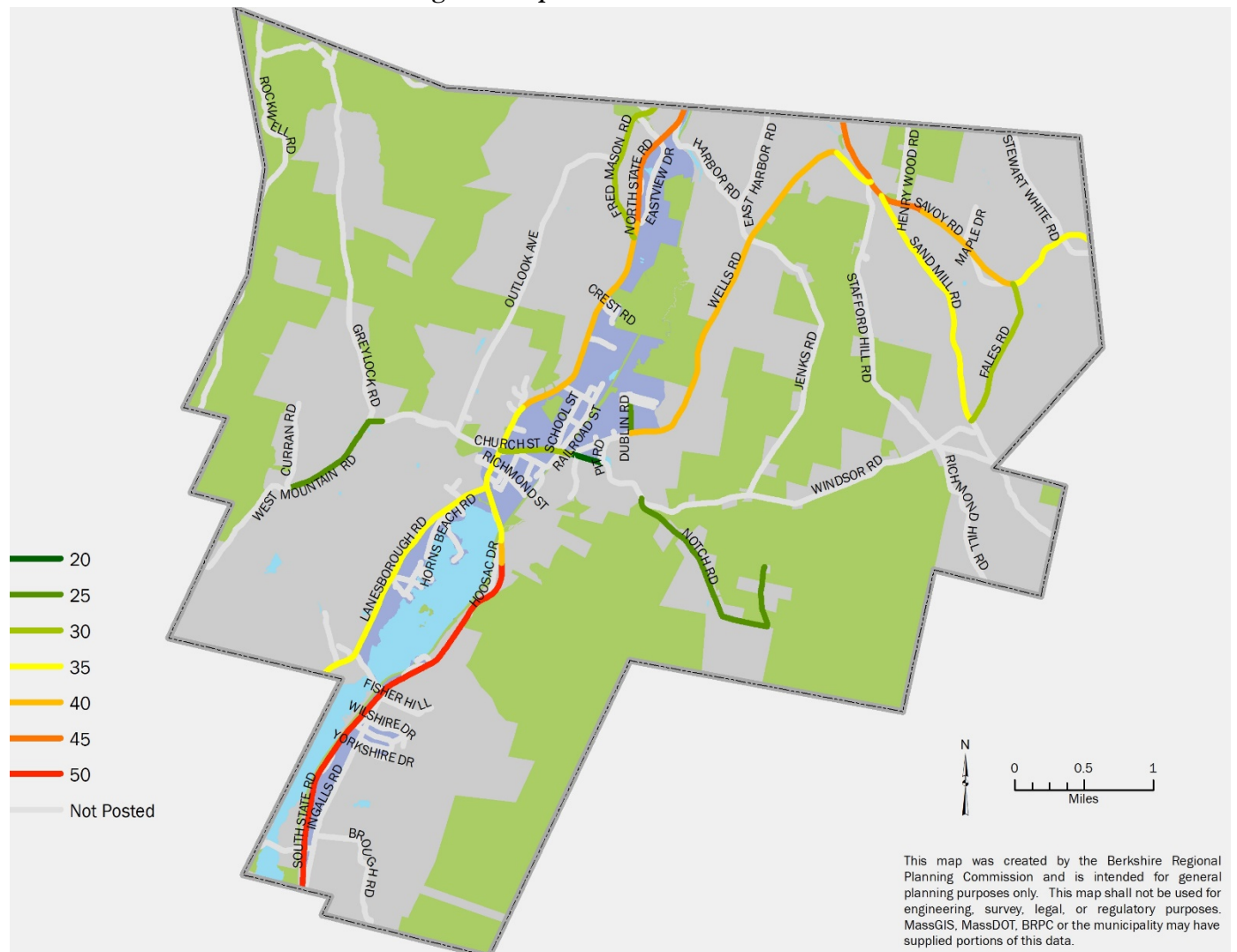
Speed limits, in conjunction with other factors like traffic volume, shoulder width, sight distance, have an impact on both the actual and perceived safety of nonmotorized travelers when they travel along a roadway without a dedicated facility. When speeds are higher, the severity of accidents involving nonmotorists is drastically increased, and separation from fast moving vehicle traffic is preferred. On low-volume roadways with high speed limits, ensuring safety for nonmotorized travelers within the corridor is critical for safety

(actual and perceived). When speeds are high and there is little room to accommodate nonmotorists, looking at parallel routes, or separate facilities is important.

Route 8 has speed limits ranging from 40 to 55. Other arterials and collectors tend to be in the 30-40 mph range. Downtown has speed limits in the 20-30 mph range. Many of the local roads in town do not have a posted speed limit. A map of speed limits is shown below in **Figure 3.9**

The 2016 Municipal Modernization Act allows communities to reduce the speed limit to 25mph on unposted roadways without the need for a traffic study. However, this can only occur on roadways within a “thickly settled” area. Much of the village center would likely qualify as thickly settled based on building density.

**Figure 3.9 Speed Limits**



### Road Surface Type

Road surface type has potential implications for Complete Streets improvements, specifically for pedestrian and bicycling facilities. Generally, unpaved (dirt or gravel) roadways are considered exempt from many potential improvements. Unpaved roadways cannot be striped, and thus rely solely on warning signage to convey information, which means that elements such as bike lanes or shared lane markings cannot be added

to these roadways. Moreover, pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks are generally not included along unpaved roadways, unless they are in the form of an informal path alongside the roadway.

In general, vehicle speeds on unpaved roadways are lower due to road width and the surface type. Traffic volumes are generally lower as well. Low traffic speeds and volumes can make these roadways ideal for pedestrians, particularly recreational walkers. However, the surface type may create issues with accessibility as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA regulations requires that all accessible floor and ground surfaces be “firm, stable and slip resistant” and other ADA guidance notes that “most loose materials, including gravel will not meet these requirements unless properly treated to provide sufficient surface integrity and resilience<sup>20</sup>.” Additionally, unpaved roads are sometimes used by cyclists, particularly those who ride mountain bikes with wider tires, and may be preferred due to relatively low traffic volumes. The narrow tires of many road bikes limit their use on unpaved roadways.

The majority (67.72%) of roads in Cheshire are surface-treated (i.e. asphalt, concrete, pavement, etc.), followed by gravel/stone and unimproved, graded dirt. Only 3.54% of the town’s roads are classified as having an ‘unknown’ surface type (See **Table 3.3** and **Figure 3.10**).

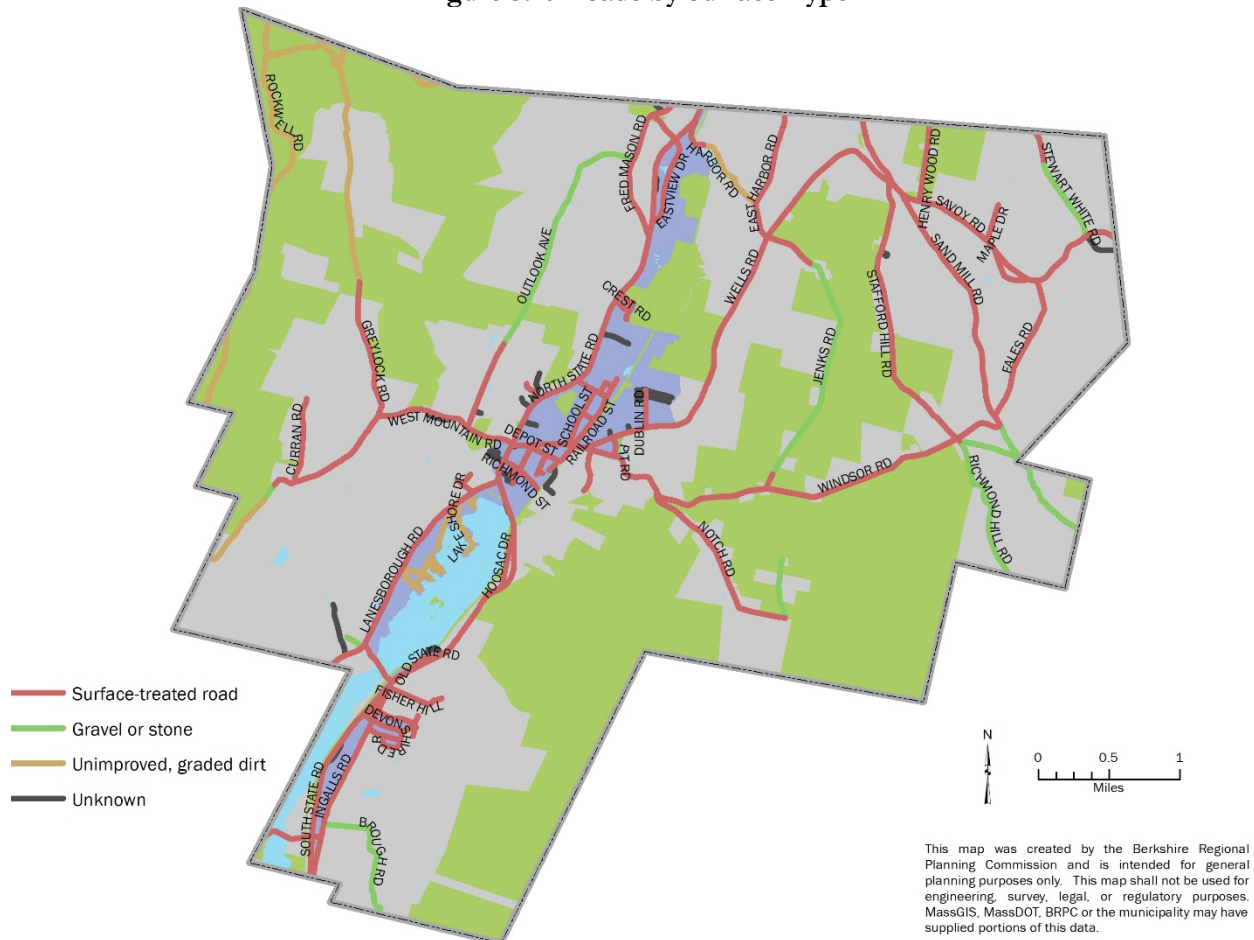
**Table 3.3 Cheshire Road Surface**

Surface Type	Mileage	% of Roads
Surface-Treated	42.81	67.72%
Gravel/Stone	8.45	13.36%
Unimproved, Graded Dirt	8.45	13.36%
Unknown	3.54	5.69%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.21</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards/guide-to-the-ada-standards/chapter-3-floor-and-ground-surfaces#3021>

Figure 3.10 Roads by Surface Type



## Pedestrian Conditions

### Sidewalk Network

Numerous studies show that millennials<sup>21</sup> and baby boomers<sup>22</sup> prefer walkable neighborhoods, with walkability serving as an important variable in housing and neighborhood choices. Those findings 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. Cheshire’s Selectboard adopted an “age friendly community” resolution affirming its commitment to support policies that help older adults in the community. The resolution outlines items that include more accessible streets, easier access to public transportation, encouraging access to fresh food, and encouraging active lifestyles.

Overall, Cheshire has a limited sidewalk network that predominately serves the village center (see **Figure 3.11**). The sidewalk network radiates outward from the village center, providing access to the Town Hall, Police Department, the old elementary school, a few small businesses, such as H.D. Reynolds Hardware, and residential homes.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2016/2/12/americans-want-walkable-neighborhoods>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.curbed.com/2017/7/25/16025388/senior-living-walkability-survey>

**Figure 3.11 Existing Sidewalk Network**



### Crossings

Only one intersection in Cheshire is signalized, and as such, most crossings consist of unsignalized crosswalks. The single signalized intersections in Cheshire can be found at the intersection of Church Street, South Street (Route 8) and West Mountain Road.

Notable mid-block crossings include those on South Street (Route 8), Church Street and Main Street which include in-street pedestrian yield signs. The usage of mid-block crossings enhances the walkability and convenience of these areas. The Town does not currently use curb extensions, RRFBs (Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons), or other pedestrian warning systems to enhance crossings.

### Off-Road Pedestrian Network and Trails

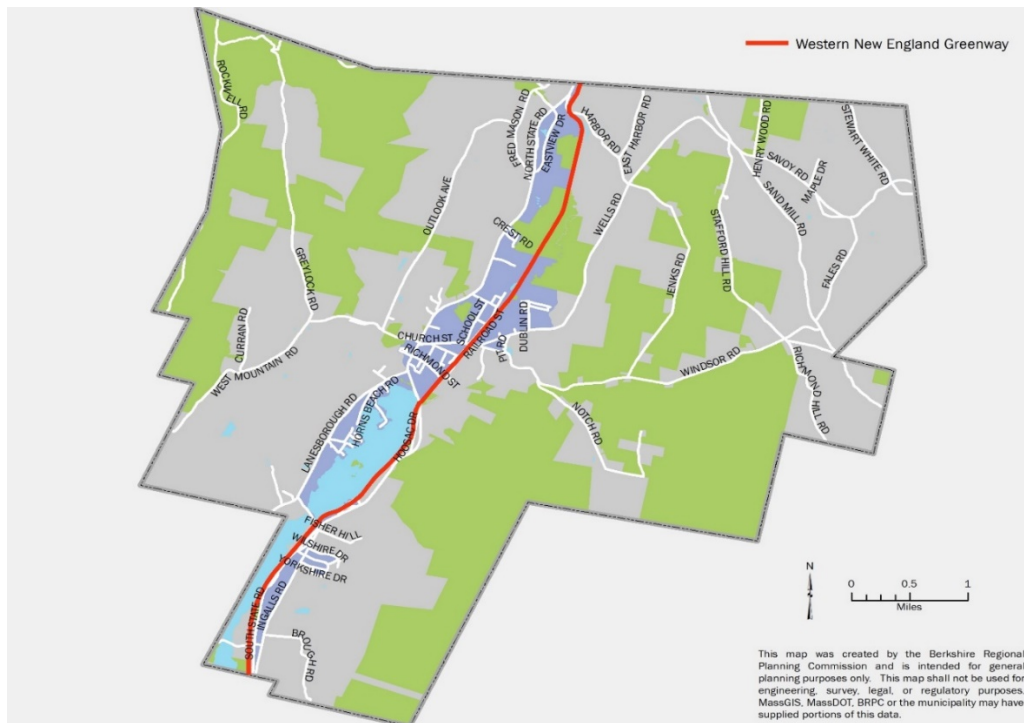
The Appalachian Trail is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world, stretching over 2,000 miles along the east coast from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Mt. Katahdin in Maine. A portion of the Appalachian Trail passes through Cheshire, with the nearest formal trailhead located at the end of Furnace Hill Road. Cheshire is one of a handful of communities in the County where the Appalachian Trail travels along town-owned roadways and passes in close proximity to the village center. Another notable trail for nonmotorized use that passes through Cheshire is the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail (see **Off Road Bicycle Conditions** Section).

## **Bicycle Conditions**

### On-Road Bicycle Conditions

Cheshire has no on-road bicycle facilities. There are also no formal bike accommodations, such as sharrows. The only accommodation bicyclists will encounter is a widened shoulder, on major routes running through the town such as Route 8. Uneven pavement and unmaintained gravel roads may make on-road bicycling difficult in some areas. However, roads with better pavement condition tend to experience higher speeds, which can result in safety issues for cyclists.

Figure 3.12 Western New England Greenway Route in Cheshire



### Bicycle Competency Mapping

Competency mapping is a method of classifying roadways that indicates the level of experience that is generally required for cycling on the roadway and accounts for various roadway characteristics including shoulder width, traffic speed and volume, or the presence of existing facilities, such as bike lanes. BRPC evaluated all roadways in the town as part of this planning process. A flow-chart explaining the categorization process is described in **Figure 3.12** and a description of the five competency levels can be found in **Table 3.4**. Final mapped competency levels are found in **Figure 3.13**

The levels rank competency needed to safely cycle on a road and describe both the easiest and the most difficult areas to ride. The levels enable a quick reading of how useable the existing roadway network is for residents of and visitors to the Cheshire area. For example, most cyclists will be able to use Level 1 categorized routes, but far fewer will feel comfortable using level 4 or 5 roadways. The resulting map shows the roads that are most difficult to navigate and is useful for identifying gaps and barriers to nonmotorized travel as well as the planning of alternative routes on easier to travel routes to bypass higher competency level roadways.

**Table 3.4 Bicycle Competency Levels<sup>23</sup>**

Competency Level	Route Ease/Safety	Usability
Level 1	Easiest routes	Learning to bike, beginner, casual, experienced, expert - <b>everyone</b>
Level 2	Easy routes	Beginner, casual, experienced, expert – <b>most people</b>
Level 3	Moderately difficult routes	Casual, experienced, expert – <b>confident, but cautious riders</b>
Level 4	Difficult routes	Experienced, expert – <b>experienced riders</b>
Level 5	Most difficult	Expert (rider with a lot of experience riding on-road) – <b>expert riders, with caution</b>

Many residential, low volume roads have been determined to be Level 2 or Level 3 roads, allowing most riders to feel comfortable riding them, however, steep grades (which are not accounted for in the competency mapping) may limit their potential for use by casual cyclists. There are many Level 2 facilities in Cheshire and these are usually low-volume neighborhood streets where cyclists have room to ride. The only road rated as a Level 5, considered the most difficult to bike along, was a stretch of South State Road (Route 8) entering from the southern border of the Town continuing approximately 500 feet past Hoosac Drive.

Most of the minor arterial and collector roads in the town have been rated as Level 3, 4 and 5. All the Cheshire sections of the Western New England Greenway are rated as Level 1, as this route exists along the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail. Level 4 facilities suggest major barriers for cyclists, whether in the form of high speeds and volumes or lack of separation from motorized traffic. Safety improvements and dedicated facilities should be considered on these roadways so that riders are separated from the higher volumes/speeds.

South State Road, South Street, North Street and North State Road (Route 8), which compose one principal arterial, have been rated at Level 3, 4 and 5. Portions of Savoy Road (Route 116) were rated as Level 3 and 4, (See **Figure 3.14**).

<sup>23</sup> Adapted from Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. 2015. Regional Nonmotorized Transportation System Plan.

**Figure 3.13 Bicycle Competency Classification Methodology**

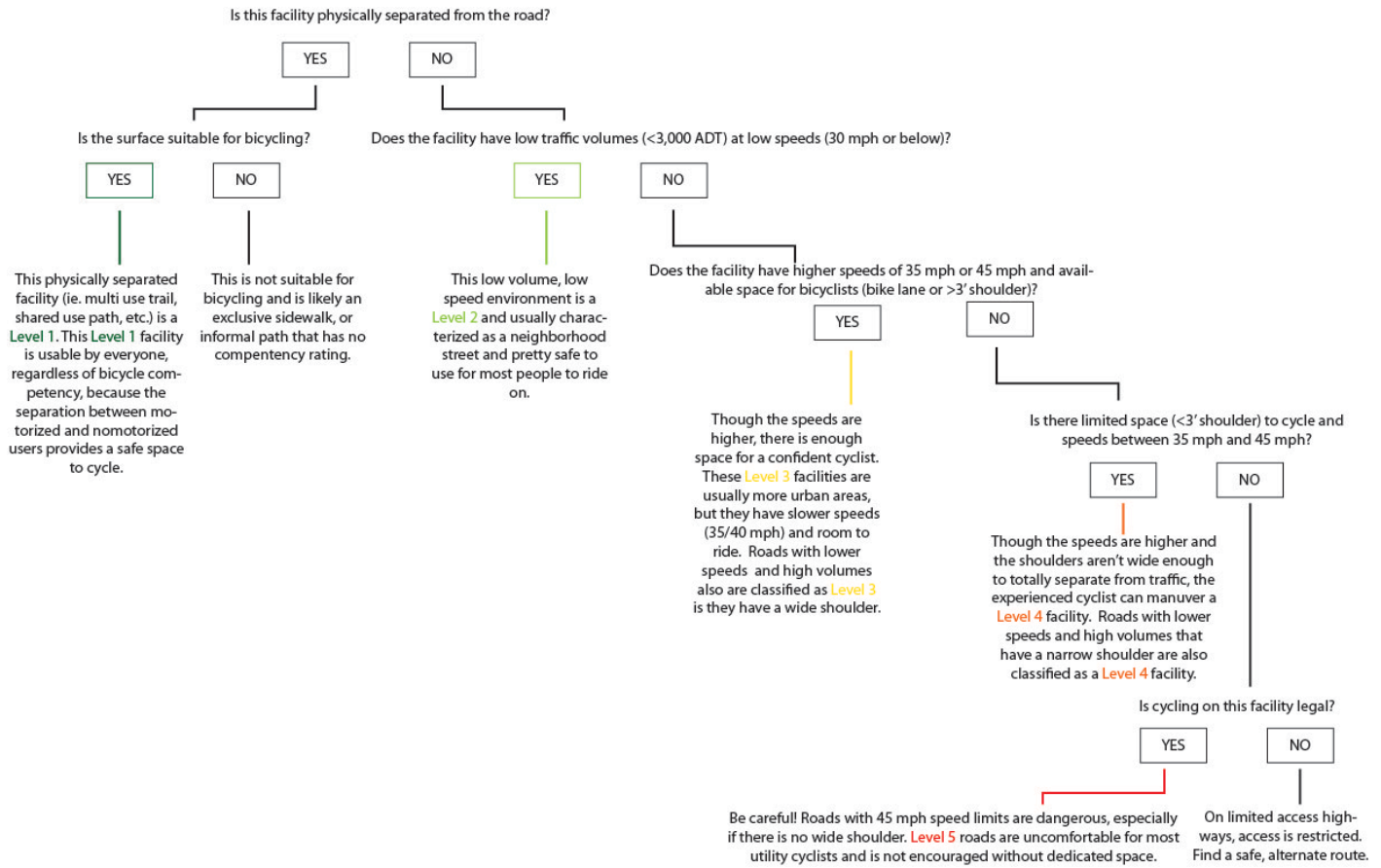
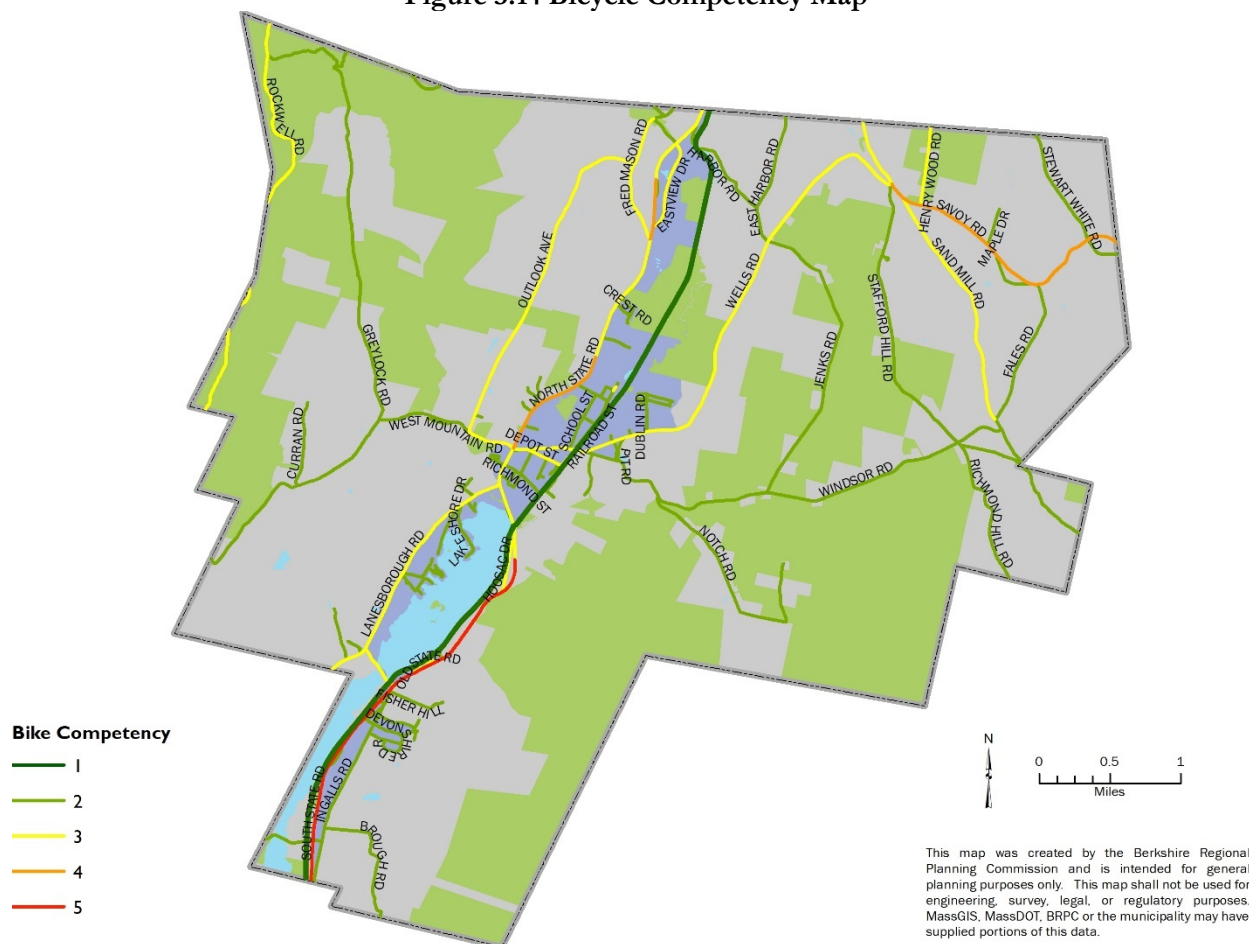


Figure 3.14 Bicycle Competency Map



### Off-Road Bicycle Conditions

As mentioned previously, off-road bicyclists often use the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail that passes through Cheshire. The Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, a 10<sup>1</sup>-wide universally accessible shared-use path that begins near the entrance of the Berkshire Mall off Route 8 in Lanesborough and travels over 11 miles north to its terminus in the center of the Town of Adams. The trail passes along the eastern shore of Cheshire Lake and has multiple access points within Cheshire’s borders, including on Farnams Road, Route 8 (near the northern end of Cheshire Lake) and Railroad Street, in the middle of the village center.

### Western New England Greenway

The Western New England Greenway, or U.S. Bicycle Route 7, is a multi-segment, multi-state bike route that links New York City and Montreal, passing north to south directly through the middle of Berkshire County.<sup>24</sup> The route largely follows Route 7 through the western portions of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont. The route links with East Coast Greenway at the Merritt Parkway near Norwalk, CT at its Southern terminus, and with Quebec’s Route Verte at its northern terminus at the Canadian Border. Most of the route is located along existing roadways, which in Berkshire County are generally running along or parallel to Routes 7, 8, and 2. However, the Greenway does take advantage of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, the region’s existing shared-use path, which passes through Lanesborough, Cheshire, and Adams (See **Figure 3.12**). In Cheshire, the

<sup>24</sup> <http://wnegreenway.org/>

Greenway travels entirely along the Ashuwillticook Trail, the only community in the Berkshires where the route is entirely off-road.

There are plans to add wayfinding and signage to the multi-state route in the coming years. The effort will be coordinated across state lines to ensure a consistent look and feel to the route. This effort is not yet underway as of April 2018 but is a short- to mid- term plan of the Western New England Greenway's Executive Committee.

### Bicycle Parking

A bicycle rack can be found at Cheshire's elementary school. The town should work to incorporate bicycle parking at major destinations to encourage cycling in the long-term.

### Signage/Wayfinding

There are some scattered wayfinding signs found in Town, mostly along Route 8 and Church St. Both the Master Plan and Complete Streets Committee identified the need for some sort of wayfinding system in Town that would help consolidate other individual wayfinding. The Complete Streets Committee identified that this might involve some new sign installation along Church St that would consolidate directional signage to various destinations. However, no greater detail was explored. Another concern was too much signage in general, and possible consolidation of traffic signage to eliminate clutter. For example, there are 14 "No Parking" signs found along Church St. While sign placement requirements may have led to a high number of signs, the town should explore ways to reduce and eliminate redundant signage – maybe through implementing spacing requirements that reduce the number of signs installed along roadways. The Town should continue to explore wayfinding signage, as well as gateway signs, to brand the town and guide residents and visitors to the many recreational destinations throughout the community.

### 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. Recent accident data was collected and reviewed to determine what types and under what conditions accidents are occurring.

### Accident Data and Crash Clusters

Crash data is available for a three-year period from 2012 to 2014. 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 as "not reported." Accident statistics can be seen in **Table 3.5**.

MassDOT uses crash data collected over a three-year period to identify areas that have multiple crashes, these locations are called Crash Clusters. Each cluster is given a rating that measures the "equivalent property damage only" crashes. "Equivalent property damage only" is a method of combining the number of crashes with the severity of crashes based on a weighted scale where a fatal crash is worth 10, an injury crash is worth 5 and a property damage only crash is worth 1. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation identifies "crash clusters" using crash reports provided by its Registry of Motor Vehicles Division. They determine the locations of clusters by grouping crashes that occur within a certain distance of each other (25 meters for vehicle crashes and 100 meters for bike and pedestrian crashes). The clusters are ranked based on the sum of the Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO) values of the crashes within the clusters.

As seen in **Figure 3.15**, Route 8 has the highest percentage of non-fatal crashes. This in part, is most likely due to the high volume and speed of vehicle traffic and the many turning and stopping movements to and from businesses. The highest concentration of traffic accidents in Cheshire occurred on sunny days during the winter months when road conditions are less the ideal. As noted in **Table 3.5** the majority of accidents

result in property damage only (64%) followed by accidents involving non-fatal injuries (29%). Luckily, there were no crash fatalities reported over the three-year period.

**Table 3.5 Cheshire Accident Statistics, 2012-2014**

CHESHIRE ACCIDENT STATISTICS 2012 - 2014				
<b>CRASHES BY TYPE</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>NOTES</b> A majority of accidents that occurred during the 2012-2014 period are classified as "Property Damage Only."
Total Crashes	47	66	54	
Fatality	0	0	0	
Non-fatal Injury	13	22	15	
Property Damage Only	27	43	38	
Not reported	7	1	1	
<b>COLLISION TYPE</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>NOTES</b> Most types of collisions that occurred in Cheshire from 2012-2014 were classified as "Single Vehicle Crash," meaning just one vehicle was involved in the accident.
Angle	2	5	3	
Head-on	2	5	1	
Not Reported	1	1	2	
Rear-end	13	19	14	
Rear-to-rear	1	0	0	
Sideswipe	4	4	3	
Single Vehicle Crash	24	30	31	
<b>DAY OF WEEK</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	
Sunday	8	5	6	
Monday	9	6	6	
Tuesday	4	16	11	
Wednesday	6	10	5	
Thursday	7	7	6	
Friday	5	8	11	
Saturday	8	14	9	
<b>TIME OF DAY</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>NOTES</b> The data show that the time between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. saw the highest percentage of crashes for all three years – 2012, 2013 and 2014.
4 AM - 10 AM	13	17	12	
10 AM -4 PM	16	21	17	
4 PM - 10 PM	11	21	15	
10 PM - 4 AM	7	7	10	
<b>MONTH</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>NOTES</b> Interestingly, each year saw a different spike in car accidents during different months. In 2012, the worst period of crashes occurred between August and September. In 2013, September to November saw the highest spike in crashes. In 2014, the most dramatic uptick in accidents occurred between April and May.
January	6	6	9	
February	1	3	8	
March	2	2	6	
April	2	7	1	
May	5	5	7	
June	5	7	2	
July	4	5	2	
August	2	1	3	
September	7	3	2	
October	2	8	4	
November	6	13	6	
December	5	6	4	
<b>WEATHER</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>NOTES</b> According to these statistics, a clear majority of car accidents from 2012-2014 in
Clear	30	31	27	
Clear/Cloudy	2	-	-	
Clear/Other	-	1	-	

Cloudy	5	14	7	Cheshire occurred on days with clear weather conditions.
Cloudy/Other	1	1	1	
Cloudy/Rain	-	1	1	
Cloudy/Snow	-	1	1	
Rain	3	1	4	
Snow/Ice	1	11	7	
Other	5	5	6	
ROAD SURFACE	2012	2013	2014	<b>NOTES</b> Most accidents in Cheshire from 2012-2014 occurred on roads considered to have dry surface conditions.
Dry	35	40	37	
Wet	5	11	7	
Ice	-	8	2	
Snow/Slush	4	5	7	

*Data Source: MassDOT 2012-2014 Crash Data*

Figure 3.15 Accident Locations



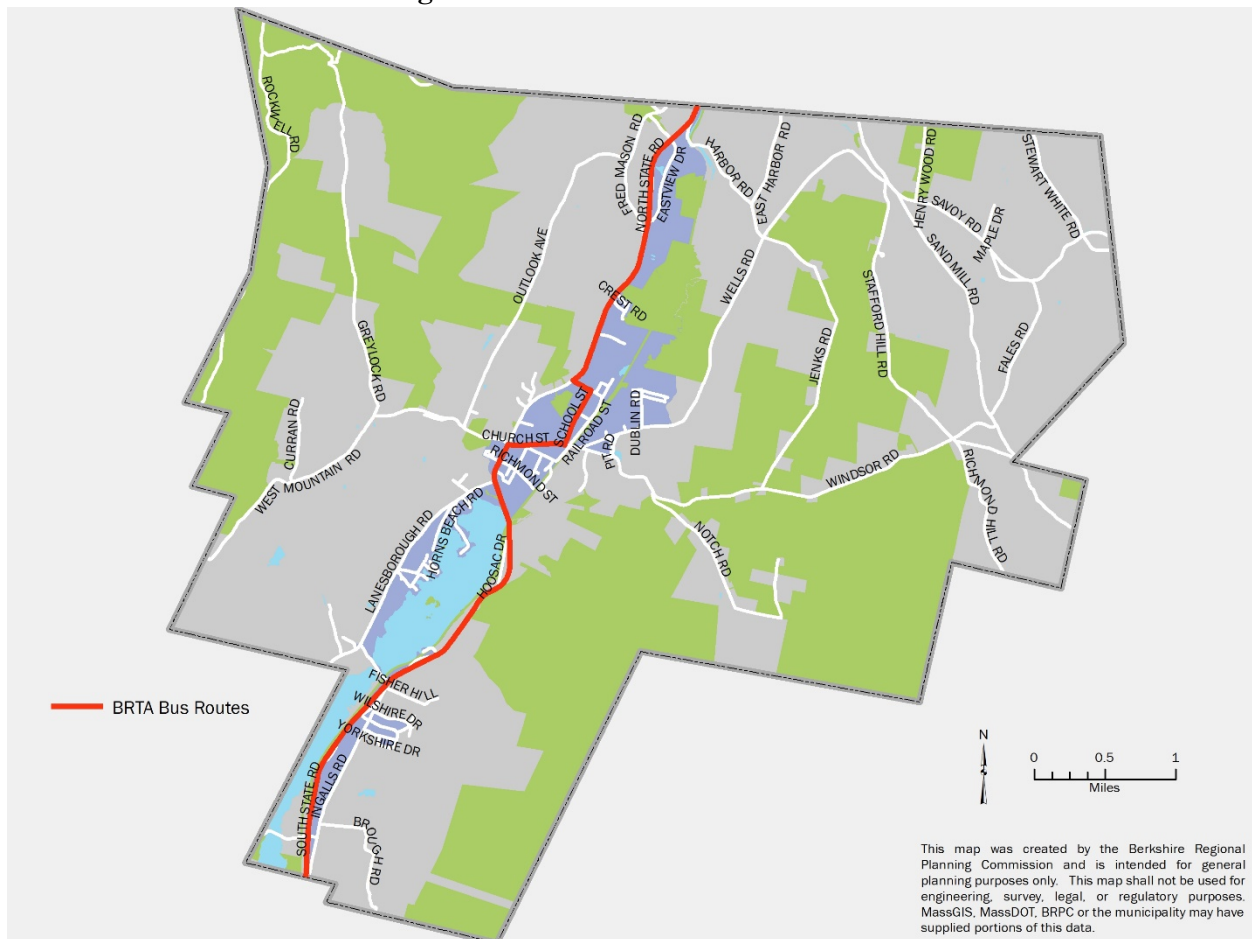
### Public Transportation (BRTA Bus Route)

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) operates a bus route (see **Figure 3.16**) that runs directly through the center of Cheshire. The bus route operates along Route 8, passing through Cheshire's village center, after which is reconnects with Route 8. The BRTA, where appropriate and particularly in Cheshire, operates on a flag-stop system whereby riders can flag down the bus along its fixed route to catch a ride.

There is no evening bus service past six, and none on Sundays or holidays. This is a serious transportation gap, particularly as many local jobs are in the service and/or hospitality sector where wages are relatively low, and evening, weekend and holiday shifts are common.

As of April 2018, Cheshire has one designated bus shelter on South Street (Route 8) near the Adams Community Bank. Another, more informal bus stop location that does not consist of a physical shelter, is located at the intersection of Church Street and School Street in the village center. This area was identified as a potential complete streets project and would benefit from the implementation of a transit shelter.

**Figure 3.16 Cheshire BRTA Bus Route**



## 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 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 Cheshire.

### Major Challenges

#### Connections to the Ashuwillticook Trail

The Ashuwillticook Trail is Cheshire's major piece of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. While the Trail connects much of the village center, several neighborhoods lack a connection to it. The town should explore ways to provide more pedestrian and cycling connections to the Ashuwillticook Trail. These could take the

form of an expanded sidewalk network or new bike facilities along major roadways. With limited funding, the TIP may be a way to complete these types of projects.

### *Narrow and Constrained Roadways*

Most roadways in Cheshire 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 cost that would be required to do so. It is also a key factor that limits cycling and pedestrian infrastructure along town roadways.

### *Speeding Vehicles*

High vehicle speeds can deter pedestrians and cyclists from using the roadway, particularly where no nonmotorized facilities are present. Many of the roads that are not located in or directly around the village center, such as Route 8 and Savoy Road (Route 116), tend to have higher posted speed limits. This coupled with the absence of pedestrian facilities discourages traveling along these roads via walking or biking. The town may want to consider implementing speed feedback signs or other traffic calming measures that slow vehicle speeds in key areas.

## **Gaps, Barriers & Opportunities**

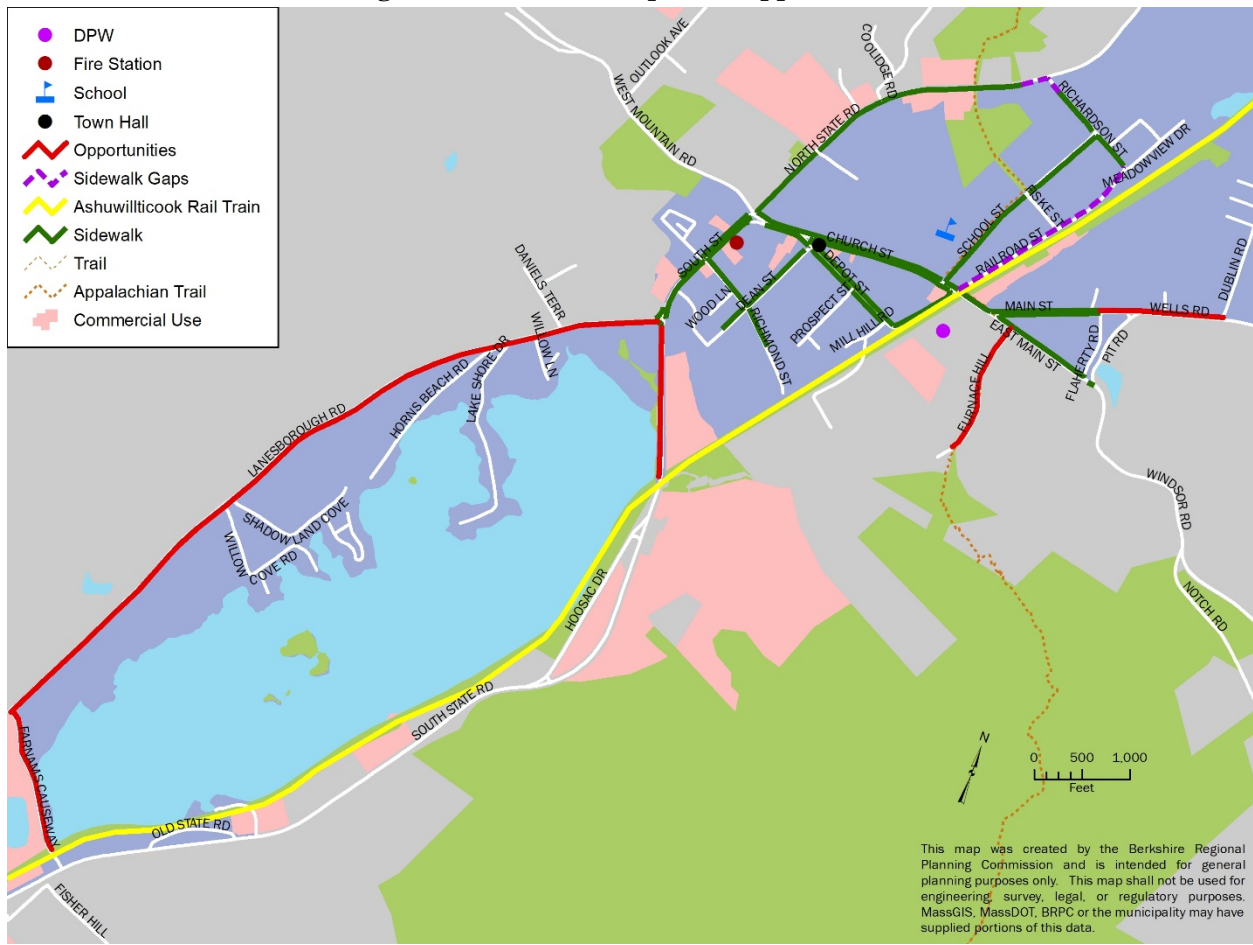
Gaps are considered missing links where pedestrian infrastructure is either inadequate, antiquated or is non-existent. Location specific gaps and barriers are either point-specific locations such as a lack of a crosswalk or ADA ramps, or an entire intersection that presents a barrier to nonmotorized travel and is unsafe for vulnerable users. This might be due to inadequate crossing treatments, confusing geometry, long crossing distances, lack of crosswalks or traffic control devices. Generally, these are areas that provide access to or within major destinations or are desirable in connecting residential areas to primary activity centers.

BRPC mapped locations of existing sidewalk and identified gaps within the network (**Figure 3.17**). Gaps were identified by connecting two segments of existing sidewalk through the shortest possible route. This method does not consider existing conditions, such as Right-of-Way width, existing topography or wetlands that will affect potential construction. Moreover, gaps were only assessed from street to street or along streets containing a large sidewalk gap along both sides. Smaller sidewalk gaps, such as a gap in sidewalk along one side of a street, where sidewalk on the opposite side is continuous, were not identified.

Major linear gaps and opportunities identified by the Complete Streets Committee include:

1. Gap in sidewalk along Main Street / Wells Road to the Pine Valley Mobile Home Park on Dublin Rd.
2. Gap in sidewalk along Richardson Road, to Route 8 sidewalk network (MassDOT jurisdiction).
3. Gap in sidewalk along Route 8, from current sidewalk end and south to the Ashuwillticook Trail
4. Sidewalk for students walking along Route 116 from Stafford Hill Rd. / Wells Rd. area to Hoosac Valley High School.
5. Sidewalk along Furnace Hill Rd. for users of the Appalachian Trail.
6. Sidewalk along Railroad St. (east of Church St). Sidewalk may be desired in this area to connect to sidewalk along Richardson St.
7. Sidewalk along Lanesborough and Farnam's Rd, this would create a several-mile long walking loop through the village center that would connect to and utilize the Ashuwillticook Trail.

Figure 3.17 Sidewalk Gaps and Opportunities



### Intersections

Several intersections in Cheshire were identified by the Complete Streets Committee as being unsafe for both drivers and pedestrians and in need of possible redesign and reconfiguration. Some of these intersections are currently in a “Y” configuration, where two roadways meet at an acute angle. Reconfiguring and redesigning these intersections to make the roadways meet at a 90° (right) angle could help to improve safety for drivers as well as reduce the distance needed to cross the intersection for pedestrians. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) states that:

*“there is broad agreement that right-angle intersections are the preferred design. Decreasing the angle of the intersection makes detection of and judgments about potential conflicting vehicles on crossing roadways much more difficult. In addition, the amount of time required to maneuver through the intersection increases, for both vehicles and pedestrians, due to the increased pavement area”<sup>25</sup>*

Right angle intersections can also provide a measure of traffic calming by preventing drivers from treating Y-intersections as a “yield” or “merge lane” by requiring them to complete a full stop before proceeding through the intersection.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/humanfac/01103/ch1.cfm>

Other intersections might be overly complex or have significant pedestrian crossing distances. The Town should consider implementing simple intersection safety improvements as part of route road maintenance projects.

Some intersections in Cheshire that could benefit from reconfiguration or general safety improvements are represented in **Table 3.6**.

**Table 3.6 Cheshire Problem Intersections**

Intersection Location	Specific Issues
Lanesborough Road & South State Road (Route 8)	T-Intersection – Difficult for motorists to turn left onto South State Road (Route 8 – northbound) from Lanesborough Road. Feels unsafe for pedestrian’s crossing at intersection.
Main Street & East Main Street	Y Intersection – Difficult for motorists to turn onto Main Street (westbound) from East Main Street due to limited visibility.
Fales Road & Savoy Road (Route 116)	T-Intersection – Due to sharp turn in Savoy Road (Route 116) just before Fales Road, motorists feel unsafe while making a left onto Savoy Road (westbound) from Fales Road. Higher rates of speed along Savoy Road exacerbate perceptions of being unsafe.
East View Drive & North State Road (Route 8) Both intersections	T-Intersections – Both ends of East View Drive intersect Route 8. Both intersections have challenges relating to steep topography. As motorists drive southbound on Route 8, they tend to reach higher speeds as they travel downhill, making it very difficult to turn left onto Route 8 (southbound) from East View Drive. Likewise, it’s challenging for motorists to turn right onto Route 8 (northbound) from the north end of East View Drive, as motorists again travel downhill, reaching higher speeds, along Route 8 as they pass by East View Drive.
Church St. and Railroad St.	Dedicated right turn lane from Church onto Railroad St. allows for high vehicle speeds, increases intersection complexity and increases pedestrian crossing distance. Elimination of this turn lane might help address these concerns and provide traffic calming effects.
South Street (Route 8) & Church Street & West Mountain Road	Steep grades, high traffic volume. No existing crosswalks for east / west pedestrian traffic or existing pedestrian signalization.
Savoy Road (Route 116) & Stewart White Road	T-Intersection – Challenges surrounding this intersection relate to topography and speed. As motorists travel westbound on Savoy Road, they approach Stewart White Road after a steep curve in the road. They are also traveling downhill, presumably gaining speed. Feels unsafe for motorists taking a left onto Savoy Road (eastbound) from Stewart White Road.
Savoy Rd. (Route 116), Wells Rd. & Stafford Hill Rd.	Complex intersection where two roadways enter Route 116. Pedestrian crossing distance and intersection complexity reduction might be achieved by eliminating the entrance of Stafford Hill Rd. onto Route 116.

## 4. PROJECT AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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

### Engineering + Design References

Complete Streets improvements can come in many forms, whether signage or entire sidewalks, 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.

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
- Chapter 90 Funds
- MassWorks Grants
- Federal TIP Funds (STBGP, CMAQ, TA Set-Aside, etc.)

### Project Selection and Final List

The Committee developed its final list of projects to submit to MassDOT. Project readiness was a key factor in decision making, as well as overall budgeting based on an anticipated \$400,000 for construction funding. It should be noted that as several recommended projects are located on MassDOT owned roads (Red), cooperation with MassDOT District 1 will be necessary to move these projects forward. The Town of Cheshire will submit these projects, in writing, to the District 1 Highway Director. For the complete list of potential improvements, see **Table 4.1** below; for the Tier 2 list submitted to MassDOT (town projects only), see **Appendix C**.

**Table 4.1 Final Complete Streets Project Prioritization (Tier 2) List**

Project #	Project Type	Project Location
PROJECT 1	Install RRFBs. Raise Rail Trail Crossing to provide traffic calming. Restripe Crosswalks	Intersection of Church St. and School St. Ashuwillticook Rail Trail at intersection of Church St. and Railroad St.
PROJECT 2	Intersection safety improvements and traffic calming	Church St / Railroad St Intersection - remove turn lane (one leg of "Y") from Church onto Railroad
PROJECT 3	Replace existing street lighting throughout entire town with LED lighting.	Church Street (village center) area and branching out to entire town.

Project #	Project Type	Project Location
PROJECT 4	Replace curb ramps to comply with ADA regulations.	Town-Wide
PROJECT 5	Install new sidewalk	Main St./Wells Rd from sidewalk end to intersection of Dublin Rd.
PROJECT 6	Repaving and sidewalk replacement	Depot St.
PROJECT 7	Repaving and sidewalk replacement	Railroad Street
<b>State Road 1</b>	<b>Sidewalk extension</b>	<b>Route 8 - south to intersection of Ashuwillticook Trail</b>
PROJECT 8	Install new sidewalk	Lanesborough Rd. from Route 8 to Farnam's Rd. for walking route in proximity to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail.
PROJECT 9	Intersection safety improvements and traffic calming	Reconstruct intersection of Wells, Stafford, and Savoy Rd.
<b>State Road 2</b>	<b>Sidewalk extension</b>	<b>Route 8 - north to Richardson St.</b>
PROJECT 10	Install new sidewalk	East Main St.
PROJECT 11	Install new sidewalk	Furnace Hill Rd. to connect with Appalachian Trail
PROJECT 12	Construction of Public Bus Stop-Shelter.	Corner of School Street and Church Street
PROJECT 13	Install new sidewalk	Farnams Rd. from Lanesborough Rd. to Ashuwillticook Trail for walking route in proximity to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail
PROJECT 14	Wayfinding	Consolidation/potential removal of some existing street signage to improve wayfinding in village center, installation of new wayfinding sign
PROJECT 15	Streetscape improvements	School St. - Install fences and lighting to increase safety near park and school (just before intersection at Church St.)
PROJECT 16	Install new sidewalk	Route 116 from Wells Rd. to High School Entrance (Hoosac Valley High).
PROJECT 17	Shoulder Widening and Bike Lanes	Wells Road - repave, narrow lanes & widen shoulders to install new bike lanes

*Project 1: Install Flashing Beacons and Raise Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Crossing at Intersection of Church St. and Railroad St.*

This project would establish various traffic calming measures to make the village center safer for pedestrian use. This project would implement flashing beacons at the intersection of Church Street and School Street and at the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail crossing, located just beyond the intersection of Church Street and Railroad Street (traveling east bound). In addition to designated pedestrian crossing signage, the crossing of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail across Church Street would be raised. Raising the crossing serves a similar purpose as installing a speed hump or speed table, which strongly encourages motorists to reduce their speed as they approach and traverse the Rail Trail crossing (see **Figure 4.1**).

**Figure 4.1 Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Crossing on Church Street**



*Project 2: Church Street Intersection Safety Improvements – remove the turn lane from Church St. onto Railroad St*

Project 2 would focus on improving safety at the intersection of Church Street and Railroad Street to reduce the quantity of vehicles traveling at varying speeds through Cheshire’s village center – particularly those turning right (south) onto Railroad from Church. Eliminating the first right-hand turn onto Railroad from Church Street would also reduce the crossing distance pedestrians must traverse to cross Railroad while walking down east along Church Street (See **Figure 4.2 – X marks lane to be removed**). Located directly in the village center, this project ranked highly particularly within the context of safety concerns.

**Figure 4.2 Intersection of Church Street & Railroad Street**



*Project 3: Replace Existing Street Lighting Town-Wide with LED Street Lights*

Much of Cheshire’s existing street lights are found in the village center, along streets such as Church, School, Railroad, Main (See **Figure 4.3**), East Main, Richardson, Dean and Richmond Street. Route 8, which passes

through the heart of the Town's municipal boundaries, contains almost ¼ of the Town's street lights. The Town currently has approximately 150 street lights, all of which are attached to existing utility poles and are likely high-pressure sodium lamps. Upon driving through Cheshire at night, it becomes apparent that visibility is significantly reduced while traveling through the village center. Committee members believe that improving the street lighting with brighter, more energy efficient LED's, especially within the village center, will bolster safety for pedestrians and motorists alike. In addition to providing more visibility, LED street lights will help the Town reduce costs by increasing energy efficiency, subsequently reducing Cheshire's overall carbon footprint.

**Figure 4.3 Main Street – Street Lighting**



*Project 4: Replace Curb Ramps Town-Wide to Comply with ADA Requirements*

To guarantee Cheshire's roadways are safe for multiple user types, the Committee identified making infrastructural upgrades to comply with regulations put forth by the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) as an important step. Many pedestrian crossings for instance, do not have curb ramps with detectable warning panels that are required by the ADA to ensure wheelchair and mobility impaired usability. ADA upgrades should be considered in key areas, particularly in the village center, along Church, School (See **Figure 4.4**), Railroad and Richardson Street.

**Figure 4.4 Intersection of Church Street & School Street**



*Projects 5: Main Street Sidewalk Extension – new sidewalk along Main Street up to intersection of Dublin Road*

Project 5 looks to expand pedestrian connectivity by installing approximately 1200 feet of new sidewalk along Main Street/Wells Road up to the intersection of Dublin Road. Dublin Road is home to the Pine Valley Mobile Home Park, containing approximately 67 mobile homes and 8 stand-alone, traditional houses. Committee members mentioned that during the warmer months residents and school-children can be seen walking down the side of Main Street/Wells Road to and/or from Dublin Road. This poses safety concerns for both pedestrians and motorists. **Figure 4.5** below shows the point at which the sidewalk ends along Main Street, leaving the portion of Wells Road leading to Dublin Road without a sidewalk connection between the village center and Pine Valley Mobile Home Park. A bridge along Wells Road creates a major challenge to creating this potential pedestrian connection.

**Figure 4.5 End of Main Street Sidewalk**



*Project 6 and Project 7: Depot Street Sidewalk Replacement (Project 6) & Railroad Street Sidewalk Replacement (Project 7)*

As mentioned, the Depot Street sidewalk is located directly in the village center, affording access to the Town Hall and the Town's Police Station. The sidewalk is a crucially important sidewalk from a pedestrian connectivity standpoint, providing access to and from the village center to residents living on Dean Street, Richmond Street, Prospect Street, Mill Hill Road and Meadow Brook Lane (See **Figure 4.6**). While sections of the Depot Street sidewalk remain in relatively good condition, there are portions that require extensive repair. That statement also applies to the condition of the Railroad Street sidewalk (See **Figure 4.7**). Serving as a critical connection linking Cheshire's sidewalk network, these projects ranked highly as they can coincide with water main repairs that are already scheduled to occur along Depot and Railroad Street.

**Figure 4.6 Depot Street Sidewalk**



**Figure 4.7 Railroad Street Sidewalk**



*Project 8 & Project 9: Cheshire Reservoir Walking Loop – Phase 1 & Phase 2*

Capitalizing on Cheshire’s stunning natural resources, the Committee identified the potential to create a walking loop around Cheshire Reservoir. The walking loop would encourage residents to walk around the Reservoir, would allow for residents and visitors to absorb magnificent scenic views, and provide more access-points to the Reservoir for recreational water activities. Phase 1 (Project 8) involves constructing sidewalk along Lanesborough (represented by the **RED** dashed line). Lanesborough Road is functionally classified as a major collector and as such, is eligible to receive federal funding for construction costs. Phase 2 (Project 9) involves the construction of new sidewalk along Farnams Road (represented by the **GREEN** dashed line). The new sidewalk along Farnams Road would connect with the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail that passes along the east side of Cheshire Reservoir (represented by the **YELLOW** dashed line). State Road Project 1, discussed later in this section, would establish a connection allowing pedestrians traveling southbound along Route 8 to connect with the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail. State Road Project 1 (represented by the **BLUE** dotted line) would help complete the walking loop around Cheshire Reservoir. The Town will need to advocate to MassDOT to complete this project, perhaps during the next major rehabilitation of Route 8 through Cheshire.

**Figure 4.8 Potential Cheshire Reservoir Walking Loop**



*Projects 10: Wells, Stafford Hill and Savoy Road Intersection Safety Improvements*

The intersection of Wells, Stafford Hill and Savoy Road (Route 116) has been identified by the Committee as particularly challenging (See **Figure 4.9**). Turning left from Wells Road on to Savoy Road (Route 116) can be noted as being dangerous as visibility from on-coming traffic is limited and vehicles likely traveling at high rates of speed. Conversely, turning right on to Wells Road from Savoy Road (Route 116) is difficult due to the sharp turn in the road while entering Wells. These problems are further exacerbated after accounting for traffic approaching from Stafford Hill Road attempting to turn onto Wells or Savoy Road (Route 116). Removing one of the entrances (likely the Stafford Hill Road entrance) off Savoy Road (Route 116) would reduce intersection complexity and likely increase safety.

**Figure 4.9 Intersection of Wells Road, Stafford Hill Road and Savoy Road (Route 116)**



*Projects 11: East Main Street Sidewalk Installation*

The existing sidewalk along East Main Street is in a state of much needed repair, (See **Figure 4.10**). The pavement is cracking and heaving. The sidewalk runs along East Main for approximately 150 feet before blending into the road. Replacing and expanding this sidewalk by approximately 1,110 feet to Flaherty Road will afford new pedestrian connections and create safer walking conditions for residents traveling to the Appalachian Trail head, located on Furnace Hill Road, or those travelling to the village center

**Figure 4.10 East Main Street Sidewalk**



*Projects 12: Appalachian Trail Sidewalk Construction – add sidewalk along Furnace Hill Road to Connect with Appalachian Trailhead*

Among Cheshire’s unique characteristics is the Appalachian Trail, which passes through the center of town, and creates a connection to Mt. Greylock, and the popular Cheshire Cobbles area (See **Figure 4.11**). The trailhead is located at the end of Furnace Hill Road, a residential street, which lies just off East Main Street. Committee members are concerned with pedestrian safety as the summer months bring trail enthusiasts and day-time hikers that filter into the village center from the Furnace Hill Road trailhead. Installing sidewalk along Furnace Hill Road would increase pedestrian safety by eliminating the need for hikers to walk on the road upon entering/exiting the trailhead. The sidewalk might also help to identify that indeed this is the way to or away from the trailhead. As it exists, a visitor to Cheshire might have a difficult time discerning the location of the trailhead, as it sits directly in-front of a private, residential drive-way.

**Figure 4.11 Furnace Hill Road – Appalachian Trailhead**



*Projects 13: Construction of Bus Stop Shelter near intersection of Church Street and School Street*  
Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) operates a bus route (see **Figure 3.16**) along Route 8, passing through Cheshire’s village center, after which reconnecting with Route 8 again. The BRTA, where appropriate and particularly in Cheshire, operates on a flag-stop system whereby riders can flag down the bus along its fixed route to catch a ride.

As of April 2018, Cheshire has one designated bus shelter on South Street (Route 8) near the Adams Community Bank. An additional, informal bus stop that does not consist of a physical shelter is located at the intersection of Church Street and School Street in the village center (See **Figure 4.12**). The Committee recommended that erecting a formal shelter somewhere in this area that would serve as a public transit infrastructure investment, would allow pedestrian to feel safe and comfortable while waiting for the bus in the village center. The Town will need to carefully select a location for the new shelter that does not conflict with the existing Cheshire Cheese Monument.

*Projects 14: Wayfinding – consolidate Cheshire’s street signage to be less distracting by maximizing wayfinding information*

Another concern expressed by Committee members was the prevalence of seemingly meaningless signage strewn about Cheshire’s roadways. Committee members mentioned the distraction this poses to visitors who may not be familiar with Cheshire and may further be confused by inconsistent informational signage. Moreover, the prevalence of signage was thought to diminish the effect or impact of the messaging on subsequent signage. The idea being, with so many signs on the roadways, pedestrians and motorists might ignore or go ‘blind’ to street signage because its everywhere. It becomes a part of the normal backdrop – like wallpaper. Therefore, Committee members identified the implementation of a town-wide wayfinding system that is consistent, clear and effective. This may involve reducing redundant signage, such as ‘no parking’ signs, replacing them with paint on the road. It could also involve consolidating signage, using one sign to convey multiple messages.

*Projects 15: School Street Streetscape Improvements*

School Street, located off Church Street, begins across the street from the Town’s post office and connects to Richardson Street. Other than residential homes, the old Cheshire Elementary School is located on School Street. While the school is no longer active, young residents utilize the play structures and equipment that remains (See **Figure 4.13**). Being in the village center and having a great sidewalk condition makes School Street a desirable area to implement aesthetic improvements. The aesthetic improvements would both make the area more attractive and act to slow traffic driving along School Street, encouraging motorists to reduce speeds. The Town might consider possible improvements here such as decorative lighting or fencing, benches and tables for seating, or tree and shrub plantings.

**Figure 4.13 School Street**



*Projects 16: Hoosac Valley High School Pedestrian Improvements*

Another concern noted by Committee members is the lack of pedestrian infrastructure connecting school-aged residents with the Hoosac Valley High School. Located along Savoy Road (Route 116), the Hoosac Valley High School is the only active school facility in the Town. During the warmer months, Committee members noted that school-children can be seen walking down Savoy Road (Route 116) to the intersection of Wells, Stafford Hill and Savoy Road (Route 116). Savoy Road (Route 116) has speed limits fluctuating from 25-55 mph. The section of road approaching the school is a 50-mph zone. Naturally, this poses significant

safety concerns for students walking along a road with high speed traffic passing within feet. Constructing a sidewalk and installing a buffer strip in-between the sidewalk and roadway will drastically improve safety. However, the existing bridge along this route will pose a significant challenge to creating a walking connection. This project, as well as other improvements along Route 116, are eligible for Federal Aid.

**Figure 4.14 Savoy Road (Route 116) & Entrance to Hoosac Valley High School**



*Projects 17: Wells Road Shoulder Widening*

Wells Road is classified as a collector road. As such, Wells Road is federal aid eligible, meaning that any improvements or construction that might occur along the road in the future, can utilize federal TIP monies. As mentioned, Wells Road runs from the village center up and through to Savoy Road (Route 116) – providing a connection to the Hoosac Valley High School. Committee members believe that widening the shoulder of Wells Road would allow for a shared-use path or sharrow which would allow residents and school children to walk or bike from the village center to Savoy Road (Route 116) and access the school if need be. While this project would establish a much-needed pedestrian connection, the length of the project (amount of linear feet to be added) and the geographic characteristics of the surrounding terrain (drainage trench along portions of roadway) make it both costly and time consuming.

**Figure 4.15 Wells Road**



*State Road Project 1: Route 8 Sidewalk Extension south to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail*

Extending the sidewalk south from where it ends at the intersection of South Street (Route 8) and Lanesborough Road to where the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail intersects Route 8 would establish another pedestrian connection – connecting the northwestern portion of Town to the eastern shoreline of Cheshire Reservoir. State Road Project 1 will help formalize a walking loop around Cheshire Reservoir that utilizes the existing Ashuwillticook Trail (See **Figure 4.8**). This project is not eligible for Complete Streets funding as it is located along a MassDOT controlled roadway. As such, the Town will need to advocate to MassDOT for any potential changes.

*State Road Project 2: Route 8 Sidewalk Extension north to Richardson Street*

The existing sidewalk that runs along North State Road (Route 8) ends approximately 500 feet before Richardson Street. Extending the sidewalk from where it ends now to the entrance of Richardson Street (See **Figure 4.16** – by the BLUE dotted line inside the yellow circle), would allow residents living along or near

Richardson Street to walk or bike along a new, safer pathway affording access to businesses and other amenities along Route 8. Constructing new sidewalk from where it ends on Richardson Street is not feasible due to geological constraints – water drains under a culvert at the end of Richardson Street and widening it for new sidewalk would require significant investment. Essentially this project would fill a pedestrian gap in Cheshire’s existing pedestrian infrastructure. This project is not eligible for Complete Streets funding as it is located along a MassDOT controlled roadway. As such, the Town will need to advocate to MassDOT for any potential changes.

**Figure 4.16 Cheshire’s Sidewalk Network with BLUE Dotted Line showing State Road Project 2**



### Cost Estimates

Cost estimates for each project were prepared by BRPC for the Town of Cheshire and can be seen in **Table C1**. Cost estimates are for conceptual purposes only and are not based on construction drawings or other engineering design. Only by town investment in design and engineering and full evaluation by an engineer or designer will more accurate project costs be developed. For detailed cost estimates for each project, contact the Town of Cheshire.

## General Recommendations

### *Regional TIP Participation*

The TIP requires that communities fund design and engineering work; however, when the project can be scheduled and programmed through the TIP, construction is fully funded. While projects can sometimes take years to become integrated into the Transportation Improvement Program, it is a way to fund expensive and complicated transportation projects. The Town should consider investment in design and engineering for its federal aid-eligible roadways to ensure they are competitive on the regional TIP. Projects on federal-aid eligible roads have been noted in the project descriptions above.

### *Continue to Activate the Village Center*

The Town should continue to hold regular events in the village center.

### *Consider a Range of Simple Pedestrian and Traffic Calming Improvements in Town*

Simple improvements could benefit pedestrian movement in the village center.

- The Town should take steps to ensure that all marked crosswalks in the village center are well maintained by preventing fading or deterioration. The town should consider investing in high visibility crosswalks, such as red colored stamped asphalt, and in-street pedestrian yield signs at crossings in the downtown area where speed limits are 25 mph or below. A study of crosswalk markings by the FHWA found that continental or “ladder” type crosswalk designs were detected by drivers about twice the distance upstream as standard transverse or “bar” type crosswalks.<sup>26</sup> The town should consider using these crosswalk types as a standard throughout the community. Other potential crossing improvements (at mid-block crossings where speed limit is 25mph or below) include:
  - Pedestrian flashing beacons
  - Raised crosswalks
  - Use of in-street pedestrian yield signs
  
- Traffic calming was a major concern of the Master Plan Committee as well as the Complete Streets Committee, and several projects identified contain traffic calming improvements. The Town should continue to identify areas to reduce vehicle speeds. Some simple traffic calming measures the town can implement include:
  - Speed feedback signs
  - Lane narrowing
  - Installation of curbing
  - Street tree planting

### *Wayfinding*

Wayfinding is an important element that supports all modes. Ensuring all users of the transportation system can easily navigate the network is critical to the use of nonmotorized and motorized travelers. Wayfinding can also educate residents and visitors about aspects of town including cultural, historic, and environmental features. A wayfinding system could encourage residents to walk for exercise, or to walk instead of drive to businesses and services in the town center.

Moreover, developing a town wayfinding system is a unique opportunity to “brand” the town as part of economic development activities and creates a coordinated system for navigating the area. Wayfinding can create a consistent and distinct system that conveys the town’s “story” and “personality” to visitors.

Typically, wayfinding systems include simple directional signage as well as detailed “nodes” that convey more in-depth information, such as through interpretive signage or kiosks. These signage systems and locations are unified through design elements such as fonts and typography, imagery, and color scheme. The Town should consider consulting a designer who will assist the town in developing a wayfinding system and in planning sign locations and content. Additionally, wayfinding content, such as maps, should be integrated into the town’s website to ensure that visitors can use mobile phones to navigate the town and explore destinations online before visiting the community.

With that said, the Complete Streets Committee identified the prevalence of signage, particularly in the village center, as serving to distract residents and detract from the aesthetics of Cheshire’s village center. On the other hand, during the development of the Town’s Master Plan in 2017, the Master Plan Committee identified implementing a robust town-wide wayfinding system. This means that attempts to implement a town-wide wayfinding system must be balanced with concerns of sign clutter and appropriate consolidation of information on street signs (to reduce the actual number of physical signs present on the Town’s streets).

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/pedbike/10067/>

### *View Every Repaving Project as an Opportunity to “Complete the Street”*

During every repaving project, the town should assess the condition of the existing sidewalk, the width of the existing lanes and shoulder, streetscape amenities (trash receptacles, trees and shrubs, bike racks, lighting, wayfinding signs, etc.) 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. Shoulders are often an option to accommodate nonmotorized travelers in low density areas where dedicated facilities aren’t feasible. Wide 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 can provide them with precious separation from moving vehicles.

The Town of Cheshire 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 Cheshire Complete Streets Policy given due 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.

### *Use the 2016 Municipal Modernization Act to Reduce Speed Limits in Key Areas and Prioritize Nonmotorized Users*

The Town should consider lowering speed limits in specific areas where pedestrian safety may be at risk. Studies have correlated increased risk of injury or death with rising vehicle speeds. Risk of death from a collision at 23 mph is only 10%. However, as vehicle speed increases to 32 mph, the risk of death during a collision increases to 25%, and at 42 mph rises to 50%.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, high vehicle speeds can act as a deterrent to potential pedestrians and cyclists.

The 2016 Municipal Modernization Act<sup>28</sup> gives municipalities greater flexibility and control over reducing speed limits and establishing 20 mph “safety zones” on local roadways. Municipalities can now opt-in to the statutory 25 mph limits on local roadways within a “thickly settled” area or business district without conducting a traffic study. MGL Chapter 90, Section 1 defines a thickly settled or business district as, “the territory contiguous to any way which is built up with structures devoted to business, or the territory contiguous to any way where dwelling houses are situated at such distances as will average less than two hundred feet between them for a distance of a quarter of a mile or over.”<sup>29</sup> Much of the Cheshire village center would qualify as thickly settled. Additionally, safety zones of 20 mph can be established near adjacent to land uses where “where vulnerable road users are likely to be present” – such as parks and playgrounds, senior housing and centers, high schools, and daycare facilities.<sup>30</sup> Pursuing a 25 mph statutory speed limit in areas of the city would not alter the speed limit on roads with “special speed regulations” – essentially those roads with existing posted speed limits. The City of Pittsfield recently utilized the new legislation to reduce speed limits along North St.<sup>31</sup> Refer to **Figure 3.9** for mapped speed limits throughout town. Most

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.aaafoundation.org/sites/default/files/2011PedestrianRiskVsSpeed.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/city-town/2016/16ctown-aug18.pdf>

<sup>29</sup>

<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/Departments/TrafficandSafetyEngineering/SpeedLimits/FrequentlyAskedQuestions.aspx>

<sup>30</sup><http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/Departments/TrafficandSafetyEngineering/SpeedLimits/FrequentlyAskedQuestions.aspx>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.berkshireagle.com/stories/pittsfield-trims-speed-limit-on-north-street-from-30-to-25-mph,498393>

“unknown” speed limits are likely statutory speed zones where the town could pursue a reduced 25 mph speed limit.

*Reconfigure Key Intersections to Reduce Complexity and Pedestrian Crossing Distance*

As discussed in the **Needs** section, several intersections were identified for potential reconstruction or general safety improvements. Review the list found in **Table 3.6** and consider improvements as part of upcoming repaving projects.

*Advocate for Complete Streets Improvements on State Roadways*

Two potential projects on state owned roadways were scored and ranked during the planning process to see how these projects compared to others in the community. The town should advocate to MassDOT to advance and construct these projects. The Town of Cheshire should submit these projects, in writing, to the District 1 Highway Director.

*Ensure Bike Parking and Amenities at Town Facilities and Open Space Areas*

Bicycle parking is a key street furnishings 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 in village center areas for visitors to shops and restaurants. There are many options for bicycle parking, and for reference see the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals’ *Essentials of Bike Parking*.<sup>32</sup> Bicycle repair stations are another component of cycling infrastructure that include tools and an air pump for repairing or maintaining bicycles. Repair stations can help cyclists “in a pinch” who may not have a set of tools on hand and show that the town is bike friendly and encourages cycling.

*Formalize a Complete Streets Review and Implementation Process*

The Town of Cheshire should formalize a review process that ensures its Complete Streets policy is implemented thoughtfully and carefully. The Public Works Department should begin project proposals yearly by formulating a budget and identifying roadway needs. This initial project list should be reviewed by key staff members including the Town Administrator, Selectboard and others. After this initial review, staff should organize a site visit to discuss potential complete streets improvements and evaluate other means to enhance the overall project value. Moreover, key staff members, such as the DPW director and Town Administrator, should draft a yearly memorandum that evaluates implementation progress based on the performance measures listed in **Table 2.2** and describing each Complete Streets project.

**Implementation**

In an effort to ensure the Town of Cheshire is able to successfully implement their Complete Streets Policy, the Complete Streets Committee and BRPC staff developed a table that details annual steps that ensure timely implementation of Complete Streets projects in the Town of Cheshire. Annual implementation steps can be seen in **Table 4.2**.

**Table 4.2 Annual Implementation Tasks and Project Cycle**

Action	Responsible Party	Timeline (Yearly)	Others Interested
Project Identification	Highway Department, Complete Streets Committee	Spring	Selectboard

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.apbp.org/?page=publications>

Action	Responsible Party	Timeline (Yearly)	Others Interested
Score and rank new projects, Revise Tier 2 List	Complete Streets Committee	Late Spring	Highway Department
Project Budgeting	Highway Department	Summer or Fall	Selectboard, Finance Committee,
Prepare RFP for design needs on identified projects requiring engineering or design	Highway Department	Fall	Selectboard, Finance Committee, Complete Streets Committee
Construction	Highway Department	Following Spring	Selectboard, Complete Streets Committee
Evaluate and Document Performance (See Performance Measures section)	Complete Streets Committee	Following Summer or Fall	Selectboard, Highway Department

## APPENDIX A: PUBLIC PROCESS

### Complete Streets Committee Meeting #1: October 17, 2017

The first meeting of the Complete Streets Committee meeting occurred on Wednesday, October 17 at 5:00 p.m. at Cheshire Town Hall.

The goal of this meeting was to kick-off the project and provide committee members an outline of the process. The committee reviewed goals, performance measures, and preliminary ideas. The committee discussed potential project sites. Initial data and documentation needs were also discussed. Goals and performance measures were chosen by committee members and a preliminary list of potential complete streets project was generated.

### Complete Streets Committee Meeting #2: November 21, 2017

The second meeting of the Complete Streets committee occurred on Tuesday, November 21 at 1:00 p.m. at Cheshire Town Hall.

During this meeting the committee was made aware of a broader range of methods that help identify complete streets projects. These efforts include conducting a sidewalk safety audit or a village center study, generating a problem intersections list, using traffic count data, and so forth. Committee members generated a list of problem intersections and asked for a sidewalk condition study. Committee members filled out weighting worksheet relating to criteria evaluation to help prioritize during project selection.

### Complete Streets Committee Meeting #3: January 9, 2018

The third meeting of the Complete Streets committee occurred on Tuesday, January 9 at 4:00 p.m. at Cheshire Town Hall.

This meeting centered on discussing the results of the weighting worksheets, criteria importance, and the order in which the projects ranked based on the weighting worksheets. State Road projects were also discussed. A new project that would replace the street lights with LED replacements town-wide was mentioned and sign-consolidation ideas were generated specifically for Church Street. Project cost estimates were also presented by BRPC.

## Complete Streets Committee Meeting #4: February 13, 2018

The fourth meeting of the Complete Streets committee occurred on Tuesday, February 13 at 4:00 p.m. at Cheshire Town Hall.

During this meeting revisions to preliminary project cost estimates were presented to the committee. Project ranking and the criteria that influenced order of projects was also discussed at length. A portion of the complete streets report draft was submitted to the committee and edits and comments were incorporated based on feedback from committee members. Depot Street project and Railroad Street project were selected as the two highest priority projects.

## Complete Streets Committee Meeting #5: March 6, 2018

The fifth meeting of the Complete Streets committee occurred on Tuesday, March 6 at 4:00 p.m. at Cheshire Town Hall

This meeting consisted of committee members reviewing the draft Tier 2 spreadsheet outlining projects that will be submitted to MassDOT for funding through the complete streets program. Revised cost estimates for the Depot and Railroad Street projects were presented to the committee with various construction material options. The option of implementing streets trees was also discussed and considered.

The committee reviewed the final documentation, project costs, and next steps for FY 2017 implementation of Complete Streets in Egremont.

\*Full meeting minutes are on file with the town for each of the five meetings.

## APPENDIX B: PROJECT SCORING

**Table B1** outlines the complete list of potential complete streets improvements identified by the Cheshire Complete Streets Committee and their scores. Projects in this list were further refined into a final list for submittal to MassDOT. Project locations have also been mapped in **Figure B1**.

Red text in the table denotes projects that are located along state highways, and which are not eligible for funding through the MassDOT Complete Streets Program. The town should work closely with MassDOT to advocate for and include these improvements in future state roadway work.

Below the table are project descriptions for each of the potential improvements, in order of weighted score.

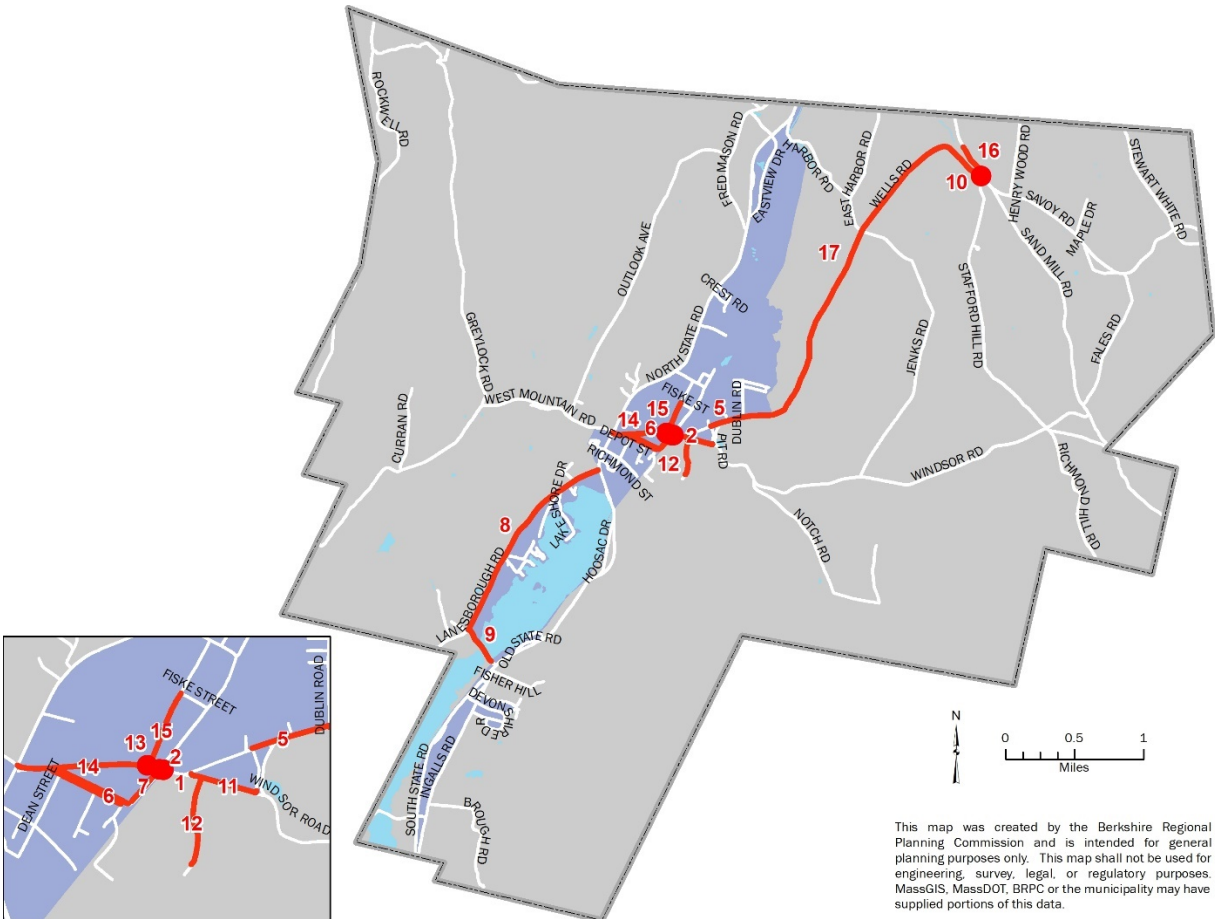
**Table B1 Complete List of Potential Improvements**

				Safety	Mobility/ Connectivity	Usability	Traffic Calming	Aging in Place/Access to Commercial + Public Facilities	Score Unweighted	Score Weighted
Project	Type	Location	WEIGHT	3.67	1.53	2.27	1.35	1.18	-	-
PROJECT 1	Install RRFBs. Raise Rail Trail Crossing to provide traffic calming. Restripe Crosswalks	Intersection of Church St. and School St. Ashuwillticook Rail Trail at intersection of Church St. and Railroad St.		3	2	3	2	1	11	24.76
PROJECT 2	Intersection Reconstruction	Church St / Railroad St Intersection - remove turn lane (one leg of "Y") from Church onto Railroad		3	2	3	2	1	11	24.76
PROJECT 3	Replace existing street lighting throughout entire town with LED lighting.	Church Street (village center) area and branching out to entire town.		3	0	3	1	3	10	22.71
PROJECT 4	Replace curb ramps to comply with ADA regulations.	Town-Wide		1	2	3	1	3	10	18.43
PROJECT 5	Install new sidewalk	Main St./Wells Rd from sidewalk end to intersection of Dublin Rd.		1	3	3	1	0	8	16.42
PROJECT 6	Repaving and sidewalk replacement	Depot St.		1	2	3	1	1	8	16.07
PROJECT 7	Repaving and sidewalk replacement	Railroad St.		1	2	3	1	1	8	16.07
State Road 1	Sidewalk extension	Route 8 - south to intersection of Ashuwillticook Trail		1	2	3	1	1	8	16.07
PROJECT 8	Install new sidewalk	Lanesborough Rd. from Route 8 to Farnam's Rd. for walking route in proximity to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail.		1	2	3	1	0	7	14.89
PROJECT 9	Intersection Reconstruction	Reconstruct intersection of Wells, Stafford, and Savoy Rd.		3	0	0	2	1	6	14.89
State road 2	Sidewalk extension	Route 8 - north to Richardson St.		1	2	3	1	0	7	14.89
PROJECT 10	Install new sidewalk	East Main St.		1	2	2	1	1	7	13.8
PROJECT 11	Install new sidewalk	Furnace Hill Rd. to connect with Appalachian Trail		1	2	2	1	1	7	13.8

PROJECT 12	Construction of Public Bus Stop-Shelter.	Corner of School Street and Church Street		1	1	3	1	0	6	13.36
PROJECT 13	Install new sidewalk	Farnams Rd. from Lanesborough Rd. to Ashuwillticook Trail for walking route in proximity to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail		1	2	1	2	1	7	12.88
PROJECT 14	Wayfinding	Consolidation of street signage to improve wayfinding in village center		0	0	3	1	3	7	11.7
PROJECT 15	Streetscape improvements	School St. - Install fences and lighting to increase safety near park and school (just before intersection at Church St.)		1	0	2	1	1	5	10.74
PROJECT 16	Install new sidewalk	Route 116 from Wells Rd. to High School Entrance (Hoosac Valley High)		1	2	0	1	1	5	9.26
PROJECT 17	Shoulder Widening and Bike Lanes	Wells Road - repave, narrow lanes & widen shoulders to install new bike lanes		1	0	1	1	0	3	7.29

**Figure B1. Potential Improvements**

Project numbers refer to Tables B1 and C1.



## APPENDIX C: MASSDOT COMPLETE STREETS PROJECT PRIORITIZATION PLAN

The following Appendix section (**Table C1**) is a copy of the Tier 2 Prioritization Plan that was submitted to MassDOT. Projects are identical to those found in **Table 6.2** but includes additional information such as estimated start and end locations, anticipated construction duration and other information.

**Table C1 MassDOT Complete Streets Tier 2 Prioritization Plan**

Project Details			EJ	Complete Streets Location			Project Origin and Type		Complete Streets Needs							Complete Streets Funding Request			Construction Schedule		
Rank	Project Name	Project Description	Environmental Justice Population	Project Limits	Project Start Location: X,Y Coordinates (MA State Plane meter)	Project End Location: X,Y Coordinates (MA State Plane meter)	Complete Streets Project Origin (planning documentation or supporting analysis)	Complete Streets Project Type (refer to the Eligible Projects Worksheet)	Safety	ADA Accessibility	Pedestrian Mobility	Bicycle Mobility	Transit Operations and Access	Vehicular Operations	Freight Operations	Will this project be in Coordination with other Communities? (list, if applicable)	Total Estimated Project Cost	Complete Streets Funding Requested	Other Funding Source(s) and Amount (if applicable)	Anticipated Construction Duration (number of months)	Desired Construction Start Date (month/year)
1	Ashwilticook Rail Trail Crossing	Raise rail trail crossing and install pedestrian activated crossing beacon at crossing on Church/Main Street	NO	Church St. from intersection of School St. east to Main St.	63778, 924908	64051, 924793	CS Needs Assessment	P12, S17		X	X					NO	\$137,097	\$124,634	\$12,463 (Chap. 90)	5	4/21
2	Church Street Intersection Reconstruction	Remove the turn lane (one leg of "Y") from Church onto Railroad Street to reduce pedestrian crossing distance and calm vehicle traffic.	NO	Intersection of Church St and Railroad St.	63235, 924837		CS Needs Assessment	S13		X	X					NO	\$28453	\$25,176	\$3,278 (Chap. 90)	1	4/21
3	LED Street Lighting Replacement	Replace existing street lighting at key intersections with LED lighting	NO	Key intersections throughout town	Multiple	Multiple	CS Needs Assessment	S9	X		X			X		NO	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0	1	4/19
4	ADA Ramp Upgrades	Relace curb ramps town-wide to comply with ADA requirements	NO	Town-wide	Multiple	Multiple	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P9		X	X					NO	\$ 198,305	\$ 172,439	\$ 25,866 (Chap. 90)	5	4/19
5	Main Street Sidewalk Extension	Install new sidewalk along Main St./Wells Rd. to the intersection of Dublin Rd.	NO	Main St. from end of sidewalk east to Dublin Rd.	64371, 924910	64753, 925025	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9		X	X					NO	\$ 212,732	\$ 195,713	\$ 17,019 (Chap. 90)	4	4/21
6	Depot Street Sidewalk Replacement	Replacement of approx 2500 lf of sidewalk and 10 curb ramps along Depot Street concurrent with repaving. Planting of 10 new street trees.	NO	Depot St. from Church to Railroad St.	63937, 924823	63769, 924647	CS Needs Assessment	P1, P2, P3, P9			X					NO	\$ 322,692	\$ 293,356	\$ 29,336 (Chap. 90, Town)	3	10/18
7	Railroad Street Sidewalk Replacement	Replacement of approx 750 lf of sidewalk and 4 curb ramps along Railroad Street concurrent with repaving. Planting of 7 new street trees. Northern end of project area is within 1/4 mile of Cheshire Community/Senior Center.	NO	Railroad St. from Depot to Church	63777, 924647	639342, 924819	CS Needs Assessment	P1, P2, P3, P9			X					NO	\$ 105,936	\$ 96,305	\$9,631 (Chap. 90, Town)	3	10/18
8	Cheshire Reservoir Walking Loop - Phase 1	Install new sidewalk along Lanesborough Road from Route 8 to Farnams Road for walking route in proximity to Ashwilticook Rail Trail	NO	Lanesborough Rd. from Route 8 west to Farnams Rd.	63051, 924436	61543, 922547	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9		X	X					NO	\$ 796,219	\$ 400,000	\$396,219 (Chap. 90, TIP)	8	4/22
9	Cheshire Reservoir Walking	Install new sidewalk along Farnham's Road from Lanesborough Rd. south to the Ashwilticook Trail for	NO	Farnams Rd. from Lanesborough	61543, 922547	61871, 922129	CS Needs	P2, P3, P5, P9		X	X					NO	\$ 114,792	\$ 104,356	\$10,436 (Chap. 90, TIP)	3	4/23

Project Details			EJ	Complete Streets Location			Project Origin and Type		Complete Streets Needs								Complete Streets Funding Request			Construction Schedule				
	Loop - Phase 2	walking route in proximity to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail		Rd. south to Ashuwillticook Trail			Assessment																	
10	Wells, Stafford & Savoy Intersection Reconstruction	Reconstruct intersection of Wells, Stafford Hill and Savoy Road	NO	Intersection of Savoy Road (Route 116), Stafford Hill Road and Wells Road	67544, 927825		CS Needs Assessment	S13						X		NO	\$25,904	\$23,158	\$2,746 (Chap. 90)	1	4/20			
11	East Main Street Sidewalk Installation	Install new sidewalk along East Main Street	NO	East Main St. from Main St. east to Flaherty Rd.	64054, 924791	64439, 924691	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9							X	NO	\$211,766	\$192,514	\$19,251 (Chap. 90)	4	7/22			
12	Appalachian Trail Sidewalk	Install new sidewalk along Furnace Hill Road, connecting it to the Appalachian Trail Head located at the end of Furnace Hill Road	NO	Furnace Hill Rd.	64135, 924772	64050, 924306	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9			X	X				NO	\$267,015	\$242,741	\$24,274 (Chap. 90)	4	4/23			
13	School/ Church St. Bus Shelter	Construction of a public bus-shelter at the corner of School and Church Street	NO	Intersection of Church Street and School Street on the west-side corner	63870, 924838		CS Needs Assessment	T3, P1							X	NO	\$30,237	\$27,488	\$2,749 (Chap. 90)	1	6/19			
14	Wayfinding	Consolidation of street signage and installation of a new wayfinding sign to improve wayfinding in village center	NO	Church St. from Route 8 to Main St.	63228, 924839	64005, 924795	CS Needs Assessment	P4							X	X	NO	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	1	4/19		
15	School Street Streetscape Improvements	Install fences, lighting, seating, etc., to enhance streetscape along School Street	NO	School St. from intersection of Church north to Fisk St.	63880, 924830	64172, 925445	CS Needs Assessment	PO, P5			X	X				NO	\$123,219	\$112,017	\$11,202 (Chap. 90)	2	6/20			
16	Hoosac Valley High School Pedestrian Improvements	Install new sidewalk along Route 116 from Wells Road to the entrance of Hoosac Valley High School	NO	Along Route 116 (Savoy Rd), from the intersection of Wells Road west to the entrance of the Hoosac Valley High School	67548, 927844	67326, 928163	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9							X	X	NO	\$242,713	\$220,648	\$22,065 (Chap. 90, TIP)	4	4/23		
17	Wells Road Shoulder Widening	Repave, narrow lanes and widen shoulders to install new bike lanes along Wells Road	NO	Wells Rd. from Main St. to Route 116 (Savoy Rd).	64382, 924914	67552, 927832	CS Needs Assessment	S1, S15, B2							X	NO	\$1,334,762	\$400,000	\$934,762 (TIP, Chap. 90)	9	4/23			

## APPENDIX D: PROJECT AREA PHOTOS



## Complete Streets Funding Program Project Prioritization Plan

Municipality: Cheshire  
MassDOT District: 1

Date: 6/15/2026  
Name/Title: Mark Webber / Town Administrator

Project Details			EJ	Complete Streets Location			Project Origin and Type		Complete Streets Needs						Complete Streets Funding Request			Construction Schedule			
Rank	Project Name	Project Description	Environmental Justice Population	Project Limits	Project Start Location: X,Y Coordinates (MA State Plane meter)	Project End Location: X,Y Coordinates (MA State Plane meter)	Complete Streets Project Origin (planning documentation or supporting analysis)	Complete Streets Project Type (refer to the Eligible Projects Worksheet)	Safety	ADA Accessibility	Pedestrian Mobility	Bicycle Mobility	Transit Operations and Access	Vehicular Operations	Freight Operations	Will this project be in Coordination with other Communities? (list, if applicable)	Total Estimated Project Cost	Complete Streets Funding Requested	Other Funding Source(s) and Amount (if applicable)	Anticipated Construction Duration (number of months)	Desired Construction Start Date (month/year)
1	Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Crossing	Raise rail trail crossing and install RRFB at Ashuwillticook Trail crossing on Church/Main Street. Replace signage and restripe crosswalks.	NO	Church St. from intersection of School St. east to Main St.	63778, 924908	64051, 924793	CS Needs Assessment	P12, S17		X	X					NO	\$137,097	\$124,634	12463 (Chap. 90)	5	4/21
2	Church Street Intersection Safety Improvements	Remove the turn lane (one leg of "Y") from Church onto Railroad Street to reduce pedestrian crossing distance and calm vehicle traffic.	NO	Intersection of Church St and Railroad St.	63235, 924837		CS Needs Assessment	S13		X	X					NO	\$28,453	\$25,176	3278 (Chap. 90)	1	4/21
3	LED Street Lighting Replacement	Replace existing street lighting at key intersections with LED lighting to improve visibility and safety for all users.	NO	Key intersections throughout town	Multiple	Multiple	CS Needs Assessment	S9	X	X			X			NO	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0	1	4/19
4	ADA Ramp Upgrades	Replace curb ramps town-wide to comply with ADA requirements	NO	Town-wide	Multiple	Multiple	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P9		X	X					NO	\$198,305	\$172,439	25866 (Chap. 90)	5	4/19
5	Wells Rd. Sidewalk Extension	Install approx. 1300 lf of new 5' wide sidewalk along Wells Rd. from end of sidewalk near bridge east to the intersection of Dublin Rd.	NO	Wells Rd. from end of sidewalk near bridge east to Dublin Rd.	64371, 924910	64753, 925025	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9		X	X					NO	\$212,732	\$195,714	17019 (Chap. 90)	4	4/21
6	Depot Street Sidewalk Replacement	Replacement of approx. 2500 lf of 5' wide sidewalk and 10 curb ramps along Depot Street concurrent with repaving. Planting of 10 new street trees. Funding request does not include any repaving of vehicle lanes.	NO	Depot St. from Church to Railroad St.	63937, 924823	63769, 924647	CS Needs Assessment	P1, P2, P3, P9			X					NO	\$322,692	\$293,356	29336 (Chap. 90, Town)	3	10/18
7	Railroad Street Sidewalk Replacement	Replacement of approx. 750 lf of 5' wide sidewalk and 4 curb ramps along Railroad Street concurrent with repaving. Planting of 7 new street trees. Northern end of project area is within 1/4 mile of Cheshire Community/Senior Center. Funding request does not include any repaving of vehicle lanes.	NO	Railroad St. from Depot to Church	63777, 924647	639342, 924819	CS Needs Assessment	P1, P2, P3, P9			X					NO	\$105,936	\$96,305	9631 (Chap. 90, Town)	3	10/18
8	Cheshire Reservoir Walking Loop - Phase 1	Install approx. 1.6 miles of new 5' wide sidewalk along Lanesborough Road from Route 8 to Farnams Road for walking route in proximity to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail	NO	Lanesborough Rd. from Route 8 west to Farnams Rd.	63051, 924436	61543, 922547	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9		X	X					NO	\$796,219	\$400,000	396219 (Chap. 90, TIP)	8	4/22
9	Cheshire Reservoir Walking Loop - Phase 2	Install approx. 1500 lf of new 5' wide sidewalk along Farnham's Road from Lanesborough Rd. south to the Ashuwillticook Trail for walking route in proximity to Ashuwillticook Rail Trail	NO	Farnams Rd. from Lanesborough Rd. south to Ashuwillticook Trail	61543, 922547	61871, 922129	CS Needs Assessment	P2, P3, P5, P9		X	X					NO	\$114,792	\$104,356	10436 (Chap. 90)	3	4/23

Project Details			EJ	Complete Streets Location			Project Origin and Type		Complete Streets Needs							Complete Streets Funding Request			Construction Schedule		
Rank	Project Name	Project Description	Environmental Justice Population	Project Limits	Project Start Location: X,Y Coordinates (MA State Plane meter)	Project End Location: X,Y Coordinates (MA State Plane meter)	Complete Streets Project Origin (planning documentation or supporting analysis)	<a href="#">Complete Streets Project Type</a> (refer to the <a href="#">Eligible Projects Worksheet</a> )	Safety	ADA Accessibility	Pedestrian Mobility	Bicycle Mobility	Transit Operations and Access	Vehicular Operations	Freight Operations	Will this project be in Coordination with other Communities? (list, if applicable)	Total Estimated Project Cost	Complete Streets Funding Requested	Other Funding Source(s) and Amount (if applicable)	Anticipated Construction Duration (number of months)	Desired Construction Start Date (month/year)
10	Wells, Stafford & Savoy Intersection Safety Improvements	Intersection safety improvements @ Wells, Stafford Hill and Savoy Road. Remove access to Savoy Rd. from Stafford Hill Rd. to calm traffic and reduce pedestrian crossing distance and intersection complexity. Striping of new crosswalks.	NO	Intersection of Savoy Road (Route 116), Stafford Hill Road and Wells Road	67544, 927825		CS Needs Assessment	<b>S13</b>						X	NO	\$25,904	\$23,158	2746 (Chap. 90)	1	4/20	
11	East Main Street Sidewalk Installation	Install new 5' wide sidewalk along East Main Street	NO	East Main St. from Main St. east to Flaherty Rd.	64054, 924791	64439, 924691	CS Needs Assessment	<b>P2, P3, P5, P9</b>			X				NO	\$211,766	\$192,514	19251 (Chap. 90)	4	7/22	
12	Appalachian Trail Sidewalk	Install approx. 1600' lf of 5' wide new sidewalk along Furnace Hill Road, connecting it to the Appalachian Trail Head located at the end of Furnace Hill Road	NO	Furnace Hill Rd.	64135, 924772	64050, 924306	CS Needs Assessment	<b>P2, P3, P5, P9</b>		X	X				NO	\$267,015	\$242,741	24274 (Chap. 90)	4	4/23	
13	School/Church St. Bus Shelter	Construction of a public bus-shelter at the corner of School and Church Street. Misc. minor sidewalk repairs concurrent with shelter installation. Restriping of nearby crosswalks.	NO	Intersection of Church Street and School Street on the west-side corner	63870, 924838		CS Needs Assessment	<b>T3, P1</b>						X	NO	\$30,237	\$27,488	2749 (Chap. 90)	1	6/19	
14	Wayfinding	Consolidation of street signage and installation of a new wayfinding sign to improve wayfinding in village center	NO	Church St. from Route 8 to Main St.	63228, 924839	64005, 924795	CS Needs Assessment	<b>P4</b>			X	X			NO	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	1	4/19	
15	School Street Streetscape Improvements	Install fences, lighting, seating, etc., to enhance streetscape along School Street.	NO	School St. from intersection of Church north to Fisk St.	63880, 924830	64172, 925445	CS Needs Assessment	<b>PO, P5</b>		X	X				NO	\$123,219	\$112,017	11202 (Chap. 90)	2	6/20	
16	Hoosac Valley High School Pedestrian Improvements	Install approx. 1300 lf of new 5' wide sidewalk along Route 116 from Wells Road to the entrance of Hoosac Valley High School	NO	Along Route 116 (Savoy Rd), from the intersection of Wells Road west to the entrance of the Hoosac Valley High School	67548, 927844	67326, 928183	CS Needs Assessment	<b>P2, P3, P5, P9</b>		X	X				NO	\$242,713	\$220,648	22065 (Chap. 90, TIP)	4	4/23	
17	Wells Road Shoulder Widening	Repave, narrow lanes and widen shoulders to install new 5' bike lanes along Wells Road	NO	Wells Rd. from Main St. to Route 116 (Savoy Rd).	64382, 924914	67552, 927832	CS Needs Assessment	<b>S1, S15, B2</b>				X			NO	\$1,334,762	\$400,000	\$934,762 (TIP, Chap. 90)	9	4/23	