Chapter 3 – Transportation

Stautory Requirements:

(3) Transportation plan –
a. statement of present and prospective facilities;
b. corresponding map;
c. all modes of travel, parking, trails, scenic roads;
d. priority of need

Chester experiences relatively heavy automobile traffic for its size. Recreational and commercial traffic travels down VT Route 103 causing seasonal weekend congestion and potentially dangerous conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other users. For Chester residents calm and quiet streets, safe for all users are a priority. The challenge of balancing regional travel convenience while maintaining the safety and peace of local pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists is core to Chester's transportation plan.

Roadway Inventory

State Highways

Those highways passing through Chester are VT Routes 10, 11 and 103. There are 19.1 miles of state highways in Chester.

VT Route 103 runs southeast to northwest from I-91 in Rockingham to Route 7 just south of Rutland. It has been part of the National Highway System (NHS) since 1997 has served large trucks and oversized loads for years. The NHS roads are intended to be part of an "interconnected system of principal arterial routes" and "serve interstate and interregional travel." Truck traffic averages about 10 percent of the total traffic volume along VT Route 103 in Chester.

VT Route 11 connects I-91 in Springfield to Route 7 in Manchester Center. Truck traffic also averages about 10 percent of the total volume of VT Route 11 in Chester.

VT Route 10 runs east to west from North Springfield to Route 103 in Gassetts. Truck traffic is about 6 percent of the total traffic volume on Route 10, between North Springfield and Gassetts.

Town Highways

Town highways are classified as Class 1, 2, 3, or 4 depending on their level of significance and maintenance requirement. Class 1 – 3 roads are maintained for year-round traffic. VT Routes 11 and 103 are Class 1 roads in the village. Class 4 roads are public rights of way, but are not maintained by the town except for stormwater management under the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP).. Class 4 roads are highly valued for recreational purposes.

Town Highways in Chester, 2025

Highway Class	Length (miles)
1	2.50
2	12.61
3	74.94
4	16.67

Legal trails, established as a public right-of-way under 19 V.S.A. § 302, are not maintained by the town but provide recreational opportunities for residents. There are no legal trails currently in Chester.

Roadway Needs

A section of Popple Dungeon Road is eroding and sliding into the river. The Town has made arrangements with an adjacent land owner to move that section of road away from the river bank, and is seeking the financing to fund construction.

The 2009 VT-103 Corridor Management Plan identifies the following intersections as having safety and/or congestion problems. The town should work with the MARC and VTrans to address these needs.

- "The Triangle" consisting of the intersections of Main Street, Grafton Road and Maple Street; Depot Street and Maple Street; and Depot Street and Main Street;
- Intersection of VT Route 103 and VT Route 11 East;
- The intersection of Routes 103/11 and Maple Street should be improved or realigned to accommodate the turning radius of trucks and busses. Improvements such as mountable truck aprons that improve truck turning conditions without increasing the pedestrian crossing distance should be prioritized.

The 2026 MARC Safety Action Plan identifies Town and State intersections and roadways that are a priority for safety improvements such as turn lanes, lighting, sight line clearing, and rumble strips. See the Safety Action Plan for the full list of recommended mitigation measures.[1]
Priority intersections in Chester for safety improvements are:

- VT-103 and Peck Road
- VT-11 and Green Mountain Turnpike
- Green Mountain Turnpike and Flamstead Road
- VT-103 and Green Mountain Turnpike
- VT-11 and Andover Road
- VT-11 and Church Street
- VT-103 and Church Street
- VT-11 and Elm Street

Priority roadway corridors in Chester for safety improvements are:

- VT-10
- VT-103
- Weston-Andover Road

Bridges and Culverts

The Town of Chester maintains 55 long structures with a span of over 20 feet that VTrans inspects regularly. According to the Town's VTCulverts inventory, the town maintains an additional 92 short structures that are between 3ft and 20ft in size and nearly 650 smaller drainage culverts. The Town does not regularly inventory, install, or maintain private driveway

[1] https://www.marcvt.org/uploads/1/4/7/0/147010472/marc_safety_action_plan_-_3-23-26.pdf

culverts; however, driveway culverts are subject to the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) and the town is required to replace noncompliant driveway culverts as part of larger MRGP compliance projects.

Municipal Roads General Permit

The Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) was established by the Vermont Clean Water Act (Act 64 of 2015). The MRGP regulates stormwater management practices on municipal roads that impact waters of the state. Several funding sources are available to assist in making upgrades to implement MRGP best management practices. Chester regularly takes advantage of these opportunities and has been consistently implementing MRGP-compliance upgrades to its municipal road network.

Existing Traffic Conditions

Through-traffic, especially truck and ski-recreation traffic, in the village, is a concern to residents. VT-103 is a significant East-West route between I-91 and US 7. VT-103 also provides direct access to Okemo Mountain Resort in Ludlow and indirect access to Killington via Route 100 and Route 4. VT-11 also sees notable truck and recreation traffic. Congestion is often observed in Chester during ski season weekends, when truck , recreation, and local traffic overlap. Killington and Okemo resorts are both developing four-season attractions at their resorts. As these resorts expand, seasonal traffic may expand to more of the year.

The intersection of Route 103/Route 11 and Maple Street is a notable congestion point: Due to a tight turning radius, long trucks and buses block traffic while they wait for the longer traffic window needed to turn.

In 2001, a *Ski Corridor Traffic Management Study* was developed by the Southern Windsor County RPC, Rutland RPC, and Two Rivers Ottauquechee RPC working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Killington and Okemo Mountain ski resorts. The purpose of the study was to identify short-, mid- and long-range strategies to assess the impacts of and to mitigate traffic generated by the region's ski resorts. The report contains roadway mitigation strategies, such as control and design of curb cuts to manage access, turning lanes to channelize traffic and prevent traffic backup, roadway realignment, zoning controls on setbacks and use, and enhancement of pedestrian and bike facilities to all for alternative access for town residents during peak traffic periods. It also includes mitigation strategies for the resorts and destination facilities, which the Town may desire to require of the resorts and facilities in mitigation of the effects of traffic generated by expansion or improvement of the resort. The intersection of Main Street and Maple Street (VT Routes 103 and 11 West), experiences significant congestion during the peak traffic on Friday evenings, Sunday afternoons and holiday weekends. Town traffic control, paid for by Okemo Mountain Resort, used during peak times at this intersection improves congestion significantly.

Traffic in Chester is often compared to traffic in Woodstock, Vermont – both are popular tourist destinations in proximity to major ski resorts that see heavy east-west truck and recreation traffic routed through walkable village centers. As traffic in both towns is evaluated and planned, town, regional, and state decision makers should be careful that efforts to control truck and recreational traffic in one town do not re-direct traffic toward the other. See "Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts" at the end of this chapter.

Commuter Patterns

Commuter traffic makes up a signficant portion of all road traffic, and happens in regular and predictable peaks, making it a significant factor in transportation planning. Chester is largely a bedroom community – 85% of workers in Chester worked outside of the town (including remote work) in 2023. This is a similar rate to other towns in the region. Top commute destinations for Chester workers include Springfield, Ludlow, the Upper Valley, Claremont NH, and Rutland. Like many rural communities, commute times are high for Chester workers. 30% of commuters in Chester work more than 25 miles (as the crow flies) from their job.

Commutes for Chester residents have almost doubled in the past 30 years – from 16 minutes each way in 1990 to 28 minutes in in 2019 - 2024[2]. In 2024, 67% of workers in Chester drove alone to work each day. 11% carpooled, and 4% walked or bicycled. 14% of workers in Chester work from home – up significantly from pre-COVID measures.[3].

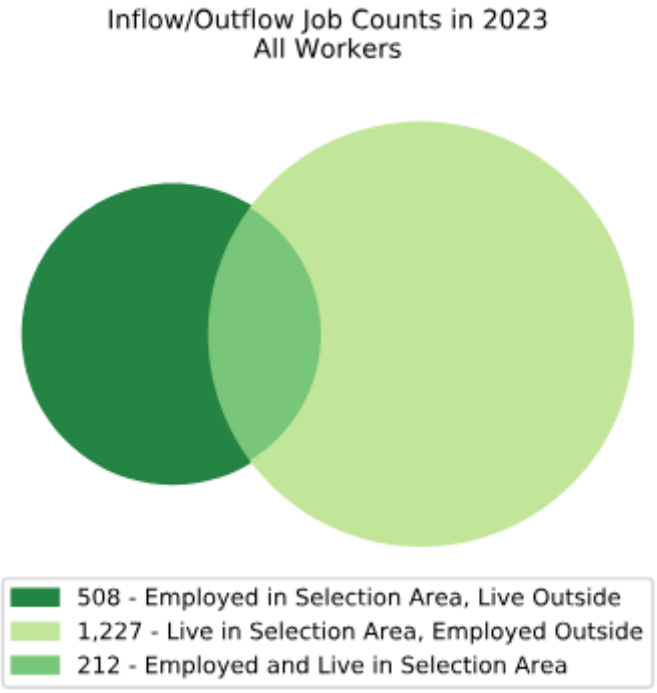

Figure 0-1 Chester Commuting Patterns, 2023 (US Census 'On The Map')

Public Parking Facilities

Public parking in Chester consists of on-street parking, head-in parking by the common, and a 29-space lot at Cobleigh field (including two four public Level 2 EV charging spaces). The Cobleigh field lot is a town-marked Park and Ride facility, but it is not on the VTrans Park and Ride list.

[2] 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, S0801.
[3] 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, S2406

Bicycle Facilities

There are currently no formal bike lanes or multi-use paths in Chester. However, slow traffic and/or wide shoulders on residential streets and Main Street through the Village create a relatively bicycle-friendly village core.
VT-103 from Pleasant Street north through the Stone Village is designated by VTrans as a 'high use / high priority' bicycling corridor. VT-103 south toward Rockingham and VT-11 toward Springfield are both designated as 'moderate use / moderate priority' corridors. However, most of these areas of heavier use are also rated as 'uncomfortable for most bicyclists' or 'comfortable for [only] experienced and confident bicyclists.'
Improved visibility and signage, traffic calming measures, and painted bicycle lanes may all help improve bicycle comfort and safety in Chester without a fundamental transformation to traffic patterns. Chester should coordinate changes to street design with VTrans re-paving scheduling of the state and class 1 highways in town to lower cost and limit disruption to residents.

Chester's rural roads – especially slower moving, gravel roads – are popular with recreational cyclists and cycling comfort should be preserved on these roads. The popular (though unofficial) VTXL Massachusetts-to-Quebec cycle route passes through Chester on Smokeshire Road.

The 2017 Chester Village Master Plan identified recommended bicycle and pedestrian projects:

1. Establish marked bike lanes along both sides of Main Street between Church and Depot Street.
    a. Consider reducing travel lane widths on Main Street to accommodate this.
2. Indicate Depot Street between Main and Town Hall as an in-lane bicycle corridor, using signage and lane painting (Sharrows).
    a. Visually reinforce to drivers the existing presence of bicycles in the lane.

Pedestrian Facilities

Chester maintains 4.11 miles of sidewalk throughout the village core and through the Stone Village area. Chester must continue to prioritize its pedestrian transportation network, especially in the Village. A well-connected, pedestrian-prioritized village improves public safety, reduces traffic congestion, encourages restaurant and retail patronage, and improves community interconnectedness. A connected and well-maintained pedestrian network is also essential to achieving and maintaining Tier 1B Act 250 exemptions.

Chester should continue to investigate pedestrian and traffic calming facilities in the village, such as crosswalk bump outs, radar speed feedback signs, road diets, raised crosswalks, etc. Chester should continue to limit curb cuts in the village.

A sidewalk and crosswalk inventory was conducted by MARC staff in 2025. 32% of Chester's sidewalk network was identified as "needing replacement" – an additional 49% was in need of repair. Pedestrian improvements were also identified as a priority in the 2017 Chester Village Master Plan. Projects to improve sidewalk network quality are identified below:

1. Remove and reconstruct western Main Street sidewalk segments from Church Street to the western end of the network, both sides of the road
2. Reconfigure intersection of Depot Street and Maple Street, connecting Maple Street sidewalk spur to Depot Street and preventing dangerous crossings.
3. Reconstruct and connect the two halves of the Depot Street sidewalk from Coach Road to Flamstead Street – complicated by railroad crossing.
4. Reconstruct Elm Street section, as it is completely impassable to foot traffic (recommended simultaneously with Depot Street)
5. Remove organic material between paths and curbs and apply sealant to prevent further deposition and regrowth across much of the network.
6. Construct 'bulb outs' for key pedestrian crossings, such as Main/Grafton, the Elementary School, Main/School Street, the Green, and Main/Church.
7. Evaluate and construct sidewalk extension to Green Mountain Union High School, to connect students and residents to the Village Center.

Public Transportation, Rail, and Air

Public Bus Service

Chester is served by the Southeast Vermont Transit MOOver bus service. The MOOver Route 57 service makes two round trips daily on weekdays (once daily on weekends) between Bellows Falls and Ludlow, stopping at Chester Town Hall each way. This service is fare-free and provides a vital, car-free connection between Chester and the surrounding region. SEVT also provides supplemental door-to-door transportation for non-emergency medical appointments, limited social and wellness trips, and access to adult day centers for older adults and persons with disabilities.

Intercity Transportation

There is currently no scheduled intercity transportation by bus, rail, or air within Chester. Nearby *Greyhound* and *Dartmouth Coach* stops in Bellows Falls, White River Junction, and Lebanon, NH provide regional connections to Montreal, New York and Boston. *Dartmouth Coach* provides direct service to Boston Logan airport. Amtrak's *Vermonter* stops in Bellows Falls and provides rail connection to northern Vermont, southern New England, and the major cities of the Northeast.

Hartness State Airport in Springfield is the nearest airport to Chester, but has no scheduled passenger service. Rutland and Lebanon NH airports offer regional flights to Boston and White Plains, NY through the Essential Air Service. Airports in Boston, Harford, Manchester, Burlington, and Albany offer connections to domestic and international destinations.

Green Mountain Railroad

The town of Chester is serviced by Green Mountain Railroad. The railroad runs from its terminal in Bellows Falls through Chester north to Rutland. There is an existing rail siding at Chester Depot which allows for rail freight loading/unloading in Chester. An increase in freight transport would potentially benefit Chester by reducing the amount of the through truck traffic on VT Route 103, which parallels the track from Bellows Falls to Rutland. The town highway garage has access to an unused rail siding. Efforts should be made to explore the use of this siding for the delivery of materials such as road salt to the Chester highway department and those of nearby towns.

The Green Mountain Railroad line through Chester is a freight line, but is rated for "tourist, museum, or science passenger service."[4]Occasional tourist service runs on these tracks for foliage and winter-time sight-seeing. Investigating a "coordinated connection" between Bellows Falls and Rutland through Chester was identified as a Tier 3 Recommendation in the 2025 Vermont Rail Plan.

Chester supports the expansion of both freight and passenger rail (and associated track and bridge upgrades) on the Green Mountain Railroad to increase Chester's connection to the surrounding region, facilitate tourism, and decrease regional truck traffic.

Chester supports.

Maintenance

Maintaining a safe and efficient highway system is important but can be very costly.

Costs for materials have increased much more quickly than inflation or household incomes. Expense is an obstacle to proper maintenance – but neglecting maintenance increases long term costs if the transportation network is to be preserved.

Chester should continue to use its Capital Budget program and Road Surface Management plan to prioritize maintenance projects and the long-term costs of Chester's highway system. Chester should consider including other forms of transportation assets such as culverts, highway department equipment, sidewalks, signs, and guardrail to its Capital Budget to assist in long term capital planning and avoid unanticipated costs.

The highway department should continue to inspect and evaluate the condition of bridges and culverts under 20 feet that are not inspected by VTrans and replace deficient or undersized drainage structures annually as funding allows. As time and funding allow, the department should also continue to keep costs down and extend the life of these high value assets by keeping up on bridge maintenance work, such as washing and painting. Culverts and drainage ditches should allow for an adequate flow of stormwater so as to protect infrastructure from damage during typical large snowmelt and rain events.

[4] US DOT FRA Rail Network Map, 7/27/2026

New Highways

All new roads must comply with the Town Highway specifications for subdivision approval and/or zoning permits, and before they will be considered for acceptance by the Selectboard as a Town Highway. In 2026, the Town adopted the latest Road and Bridge Specifications. Before new roads are accepted as town roads the Selectboard must judge if the public good, or the necessity, or the convenience of individuals require such a highway to be laid out. The capital costs of road construction or improvement of existing town roads to service new residential and commercial development should be borne by the developer. All accesses to lots should be limited to one curb cut.

Access Management

A key component to keeping traffic flowing through a downtown/main street area is being able to balance the number of access points (i.e. driveways or access roads). Access Management balances mobility and access. The logic behind Access Management usually becomes obvious after conditions on a transportation corridor become a problem. The presence of a large number of accesses results in a high level of turning movements and points of conflict, thus increasing the likelihood of traffic accidents. Unlimited curb cuts also contribute to sprawl, and result in dangerous conditions for bicycles and pedestrians. The goal of access management is to ensure that curb cuts, or access points, are properly planned to avoid the above mentioned complications.

Controlling accesses along VT Route 103 south and north of the village is important. In 2008-9, the Town of Chester is working with the SWCRPC, WRC, Town of Rockingham and VTrans to develop a VT Route 103 Corridor Management Plan to address access management and other issues.

The Residential 40,000 zoning district currently allows many commercial uses along VT Route 103 south, which may result in unwanted strip development.

Transportation Goals

1. Keep the existing transportation network in good repair to avoid costly replacement in the future.
2. Prioritize a compact, walkable village center which is friendly and welcoming to pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. Reduce the impact of truck traffic on the village center.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts of current peak traffic volumes.
5. Expand the use of public and rail transportation as an alternative to automobile and truck traffic on Route 103.
6. Encourage bicycle and pedestrian transportation through maintenance and expansion of existing facilities.
7. Limit access points (curb cuts) wherever possible to discourage sprawl and maintain safe travel conditions for all roadway users.

8. Encourage the expansion of public transit within Chester and between it and regional towns.
9. In accordance with the Town's 2024 Vision Zero resolution, achieve the goal of zero traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2040.

Transportation Policies

1. Involve citizens in planning processes concerning the long-range structure and viability of Chester's transportation network.
2. Make needed replacements and repairs to the sidewalk network and expand the network to prioritize connectivity.
3. Ensure all road design and construction prioritizes the inclusion of complete streets elements.

4. Work with Green Mountain Railroad to expand the capabilities of its rail corridor.
5. Work with Southeast Vermont Transit to expand its local service and schedule.
6. Continue to expand the sidewalk network while at the same time maintaining those segments that are in "good" and "fair" shape.
7. Maintain ongoing communication and coordination with the regional planning commission concerning state and federal funding opportunities to expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities and other enhancements to Chester's transportation network.
8. Coordinate with other towns to alleviate the effects of truck and peak ski/tourist traffic.

Transportation Recommendations

1. Create a capital program for needed replacement of existing sidewalk sections and expansion of new pedestrian facilities to those areas of town that need them.
Work with the regional planning commission to Conduct regular traffic counts around the village.
2. Obtain representation of the Town of Chester on the Southeast Vermont Transit Board.
3. Examine options to address potential access management problems along VT Route 103 South and allow growth that does not detract visually or economically from the Village.

Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts (AADT) for Chester (2022)

Segment	AADT
Vt 35 from Grafton Tl to High St/River St	772

Vt 35 from High St/River St to Vt 11	772
Vt 103 from Vt 10 to Cavendish Tl	5819
Vt 103 from Rockingham Tl to Peck Rd	6252
Andover Rd from Andover Tl to Vt 11	902
Depot St from Main St to Green Mtn Turnpike	4744
Vt 11 from Andover Rd to Lovers Lane	5038
Vt 11 from Andover Tl to Andover Rd	3941
Main St from Lovers Lane to Vt 103	5821
Vt 10 from Vt 10 to Vt 103	1126
Vt 103 from Peck Rd to Vt 11	8125
Pleasant St from Vt 103 to Springfield Tl	3425
S Main St from Vt 11 to Main St	6827
Vt 103 from Green Mtn Turnpike to Vt 10	4154
Vt 10 from Vt 103 to Springfield Tl	2862
Vt35 Chester Hill Rd from Route 121 E to Chester Tl	772

Chapter 3 – Transportation

Stautory Requirements:

(3) Transportation plan –
a. statement of present and prospective facilities;
b. corresponding map;
c. all modes of travel, parking, trails, scenic roads;
d. priority of need

Chester ~~has experienced a large increase in automobile and truck traffic in recent years, especially on VT Route 103 which is part of the National Highway System (NHS) and Vermont Truck Network (VTN).~~experiences relatively heavy automobile traffic for its size. Recreational and commercial traffic travels down VT Route 103 causing seasonal weekend congestion and potentially dangerous conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other users. ~~Thus, for VT Route 103 as part of the NHS and VTN, mobility and convenience for regional travel are most important. However, it is also a local road for~~For Chester residents ~~for whom mobility and speed are reduced in importance, presenting the classical functional conflict between roadway uses.~~calm and quiet streets, safe for all users are a priority. ~~As a result mobility, convenience and safety all suffer. The residents of Chester feel this conflict and are faced with the~~The challenge of balancing ~~the need to provide for increased traffic on State and local roads~~regional travel convenience ~~-~~while maintaining the safety and peace of local pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists is core to Chester's transportation plan.~~traffic safety and the rural character and quality of life that are some of the town's greatest assets.~~

Roadway Inventory

State Highways

~~State highways connect large population areas outside Chester. ~~Those highways passing through Chester are VT Routes 10, 11 and 103. There are 19.1 miles of state highways in Chester.

VT Route 103 runs southeast to northwest from I-91 in Rockingham to Route 7 just south of Rutland. It has been part of the National Highway System (NHS) since 1997 ~~and prior to becoming a part of the NHS this Route~~ has served large trucks and oversized loads for years. The NHS roads are intended to be part of an "interconnected system of principal arterial routes" and "serve interstate and interregional travel." ~~This Route is also designated as part of the Vermont Truck Network and this designation allows trucks that are 72 feet in overall length to travel on the Network without a permit from the Department of Motor Vehicles. Trucks of this length traveling on highways off of the Network are required to get a permit, which encourages more trucks to use VT 103. ~~Truck traffic averages about 10 percent of the total traffic volume along VT Route 103 in ~~southern Windsor County~~Chester.

~~Running east to west across the southern section of Chester, ~~VT Route 11 connects I-91 in Springfield to Route 7 in Manchester Center. Truck traffic also averages ~~is 7.6~~ about 10 percent of the total volume of VT Route 11 in ~~between Springfield and ~~Chester.

VT Route 10 runs east to west from North Springfield to Route 103 in Gassetts. Truck traffic is about 6~~.1~~ percent of the total traffic volume on Route 10, between North Springfield and Gassetts.

Commented [OE1]: I could look into confirming this but I don't believe the Vermont Truck Network exists anymore and trucks 72ft and less don't need a permit at all.

Commented [KA2]: This designation and permitting no longer exist in Vermont.

~~*Town Highways*~~

Town Highways

Town highways are classified as Class 1, 2, 3, or 4 depending on their level of significance and maintenance requirement. Class 1 – 3 roads are maintained for year-round traffic. VT Routes 11 and 103 are Class 1 roads in the village. ~~In the Town of Chester there are presently 2.559 miles of Class 1 town highways. VT Routes 11 and 103 become Class 1 town highways as they pass through the village. These sections of the state numbered routes are maintained by the town with funds being provided to the town through the State Aid Funding program; however, the Vermont Agency of Transportation is responsible for scheduled road resurfacing and center line pavement markings. The town has 12.609 miles of Class 2 town highways, formerly state aid highways or roads that connect town to town.~~

Town Highways in Chester, 2025	
Highway Class	Length (miles)
1	2.50
2	12.61
3	74.94
~~4~~3	16.67

~~Grafton Road (VT Route 35), Green Mountain Turnpike, Church Street, Flamstead Road, and the Andover Road are examples of Class 2 Highways. There are 75.250 miles of Class 3 town highways, roads that the Selectboard has designated for year-round maintenance. There are more than 7 miles of known Class 4 town highways in Chester. Class 4 town highways are all other town roads, not including ancient roads or trails, and are not maintained by the town. Class 4 town highways are highly valued as recreational assets by residents.~~

~~Act 178, enacted in May 2006, established a new town highway classification for "unidentified corridors," and encourages towns to conduct research to inventory all ancient town roads. Prior to adoption of this legislation, there was never a reason to inventory Class 4 town highways; Chester – like many towns – does not have comprehensive records of where these legal roads still exist.~~ Class 4 roads are public rights of way, but are not maintained by the town except for stormwater management under the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP). ~~for vehicular use~~. Class 4 roads are highly valued for recreational purposes. ~~Under Act 178 (2006), t~~The Town has hired a ~~consultant to conduct the research to identify these old roads.~~to identify Class 4 roads and Ancient ~~Roads in the town, which are now cataloged.~~

Legal t~~T~~rails, established as a public right-of-way under 19 V.S.A. § 302, are not maintained by the town but provide recreational opportunities for residents. There are no legal trails currently in Chester.

Roadway Needs

A section of Popple Dungeon Road is eroding and sliding into the river. The Town has made arrangements with an adjacent land owner to move that section of road away from the river bank, and is seeking the financing to fund construction.

~~Based on the on-going VT Route 103 corridor planning efforts~~The 2009 VT-103 Corridor Management Plan~~,~~ identifies the following intersections ~~were identified~~ as having safety and/or

Commented [KA3]: Update?

Commented [KA4]: True?

Commented [OE5R4]: I didn't see any on the official TH map, but should confirm with the Town

Commented [KA6]: Complete?

congestion problems. The town should work with the ~~SWCRPC~~ MARC and VTrans to address these needs.

- "The Triangle" consisting of the intersections of Main Street, Grafton Road and Maple Street; Depot Street and Maple Street; and Depot Street and Main Street;
- Intersection of VT Route 103 and VT Route 11 East;
- ~~Widen and realign t~~The intersection of Routes 103/11 and Maple Street should be improved or realigned to accommodate the turning radius of trucks and busses. Improvements such as mountable truck aprons that improve truck turning conditions without increasing the pedestrian crossing distance should be prioritized.

The 2026 MARC Safety Action Plan identifies Town and State intersections and roadways that are a priority for safety improvements such as turn lanes, lighting, sight line clearing, and rumble strips. See the Safety Action Plan for the full list of recommended mitigation measures.[1]
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- VT-103 and Green Mountain Turnpike
- VT-11 and Andover Road
- VT-11 and Church Street
- VT-103 and Church Street
- VT-11 and Elm Street

Priority roadway corridors in Chester for safety improvements are:

- VT-10
- VT-103
- Weston-Andover Road

Bridges and Culverts~~*Intersection of VT Route 103 and VT Route 10.*~~

~~*Bridges and Culverts*~~

The Town of Chester ~~has~~maintains 55 long structures with a span of over 20 feet that VTrans inspects regularly. According to the Town's VTCulverts inventory, the town maintains an additional 92 short structures that are between 3ft and 20ft in size and nearly 650 smaller drainage culverts. The Town does not regularly inventory, install, or maintain private driveway culverts; however, driveway culverts are subject to the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) and the town is required to replace noncompliant driveway culverts as part of larger MRGP compliance projects. ~~78 large drainage structures, including bridges with a 20 foot or greater span and culverts with a 6 foot or greater span. Based on regular inspections by VTrans and the federal sufficiency rating criteria, 13 structures are eligible for replacement and 27 for~~

[1] https://www.marcvt.org/uploads/1/4/7/0/147010472/marc_safety_action_plan_-_3-23-26.pdf

Commented [OE7]: Don't these also count as parts of "The Triangle"?

Commented [KA8]: ?

Commented [KA9]: Move to traffic conditions or projects if not completed already?

Commented [OE10]: Check with the Town that this accurately describes their policy with respect to private driveway culverts. They don't include driveway culverts in their VTCulverts inventory which leads me to believe that installation and maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner. But we should confirm that.

Commented [KA11]: Map?

Commented [KA12R11]: And update data.

Commented [OE13R11]: We should break these out and track them differently since they're treated very differently. Bridges with a 20ft span or larger are inspected regularly by VTrans. Anything smaller (including 6' culverts) are entirely the Town's responsibility to inventory and maintain. In theory, those should all show up in VTCulverts.

Commented [KA14R11]: That makes sense – I think that's how they're seperated by VTCulverts as well so we can represent that on the map.

Commented [KA15]: Will be tallied and reflected on transportation map.

~~rehabilitation. Money spent now to rehabilitate those 27 bridges, can add life to the structures and save significant amounts of money to replace those same bridges later if no preventative maintenance is done.~~

~~There are approximately 600 other shorter bridges and smaller culverts in town. The Chester Highway Department maintains an inventory of these bridges and culverts.~~

~~*Bridge and Culvert Needs*~~

~~The stone culvert under North Street in the Stone Village is failing and needs to be replaced. The Highway Department has secured funds to engineer the project and is seeking funding for construction.~~

Commented [OE16]: Update and reference VTCulverts

Commented [KA17]: Update?

Commented [OE18R17]: Get an updated list of (large) culvert replacement needs from Kirby

Commented [KA19R17]: Will update with Kirby information.

Municipal Roads General Permit

The Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) was established by the Vermont Clean Water Act (Act 64 of 2015). The MRGP regulates stormwater management practices on municipal roads that impact waters of the state. Several funding sources are available to assist in making upgrades to implement MRGP best management practices. Chester regularly takes advantage of these opportunities and has been consistently implementing MRGP-compliance upgrades to its municipal road network.

Existing Traffic Conditions

~~Traffic on VT Route 103 in the Town of Chester, and especially in the~~Through-traffic, especially truck and ski-recreation traffic, in the vi~~V~~illage ~~of Chester~~, is a ~~growing~~ concern to ~~local~~ residents. VT-103 is a significant East-West route between ~~Given the lack of a limited access east-west highway in the state, traffic patterns in southern Vermont tend towards Route 103, which serves as a direct route between the north-south arteries of~~ I-91 and US 7~~. In addition to supporting the travel needs of its local residents, Route 103 carries a large portion of truck traffic, seasonal tourist traffic and recreation related commuters.~~.

~~Route~~ VT-103 also provides direct access to Okemo Mountain Resort in Ludlow~~,~~ and ~~also carries traffic destined for~~indirect access to Killington via Route 100 and Route 4. VT-11 also sees ~~heavy~~notable truck and recreation traffic. Congestion is often observed in Chester during ski season weekends, when truck , recreation, and local traffic overlap. Killington and Okemo resorts are both developing four-season attractions at their resorts. As these resorts expand, seasonal traffic ~~make~~may expand to more of the year.~~There are inevitable conflicts between traffic trying to pass through Chester, and traffic that is trying to access service in the village, resulting in congestion and reduced traffic safety~~

~~. This congestion is especially pronounced during ski season because of the very high, sharp peaks of traffic at the beginning and end of busy ski weekends. In particular during these high peaks of seasonal tourist and recreation related traffic and the nearly continuous weekday commercial truck traffic t~~The intersection of Route 103/Route 11 and Maple Street~~.~~ is a notable congestion point: Due to a tight turning radius, long trucks and buses block traffic while they wait for the longer traffic window needed to turn. ~~becomes congested and safety is compromised. The turning radius~~

~~for commercial vehicles is extremely tight. At this intersection the long trucks and the busses need to wait for traffic to clear the intersection before making the turn, thus blocking the traffic behind them, and temporarily block all lanes at this intersection during the turning movement.~~

~~VT Route 11 west experiences heavy truck volumes as it connects Chester to I-91 in Springfield. In addition, it also connects VT Route 103 to VT Route 30 in Winhall and US Route 7 in Manchester. Tourist traffic on Route 11 west bound for Manchester and Magic and Bromley Mountains is also significant.~~

In 2001, a *Ski Corridor Traffic Management Study* was developed by the Southern Windsor County RPC, Rutland RPC, and Two Rivers Ottauquechee RPC working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Killington and Okemo Mountain ski resorts. The purpose of the study was to identify short-, mid- and long-range strategies to assess the impacts of and to mitigate traffic generated by the region's ski resorts. The report contains roadway mitigation strategies, such as control and design of curb cuts to manage access, turning lanes to channelize traffic and prevent traffic backup, roadway realignment, zoning controls on setbacks and use, and enhancement of pedestrian and bike facilities to all for alternative access for town residents during peak traffic periods. It also includes mitigation strategies for the resorts and destination facilities, which the Town may desire to require of the resorts and facilities in mitigation of the effects of traffic generated by expansion or improvement of the resort. The intersection of Main Street and Maple Street (VT Routes 103 and 11 West), experiences significant congestion during the peak traffic on Friday evenings, Sunday afternoons and holiday weekends. Town traffic control, paid for by Okemo Mountain Resort, used during peak times at this intersection improves congestion significantly.

Traffic in Chester is often compared to traffic in Woodstock, Vermont – both are popular tourist destinations in proximity to major ski resorts that see heavy east-west truck and recreation traffic routed through walkable village centers. As traffic in both towns is evaluated and planned, town, regional, and state decision makers should be careful that efforts to control truck and recreational traffic in one town do not re-direct traffic toward the other. See "Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts" at the end of this chapter.

~~The following are the Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts (AADT), in 2006 or 2007, for the Town of Chester.~~

Commented [KA20]: Update and move to the end as an appendix. Only discussion here pls.

Commented [OE21R20]: Use VTrans route logs to update https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/maps/route-logs

~~**In Village of Chester**~~

~~*Route*~~	~~*Location*~~	~~*AADT*~~
~~103~~	~~Between VT 11 East and Maple Street~~	~~8,500~~
	~~10 feet north of Marshall Road~~	~~6,700~~
	~~200 feet south of Green Mountain Trnpk.~~	~~4,800~~

11	0.1 mile east of Cobleigh Street	5,200
Grafton Road (VT 35)	0.1 mile south of Main Street (VT 11)	1,300

Outside the Village of Chester

Route	Location	AADT
103	Near Chester – Rockingham line	5,200
	Just north of Goodrich Road	4,600
11	Near Chester – Springfield line	4,000
	0.2 miles east of Green Mountain Trnpk.	4,100
	Just west of Reservoir Road	4,000
	At Chester – Andover line	2,400
10	Near Chester – Springfield line	3,300
	Between Mineral Spring and Davidson Hill	3,100
Andover Road	0.1 mile east of Potash Brook Rd.	1,000

Chester traffic in relation to other Towns

The village of Woodstock, VT (sitting on the US Route 4 corridor), much like Chester, is perceived to be overburdened with traffic, specifically truck traffic. Much like Chester, Woodstock is home to a tourist intensive, pedestrian friendly village center. Ludlow, VT (north of Chester on Route 103) is also home to high levels of truck traffic and receives heavy ski season traffic.

AADT east of the village of Woodstock in Hartford is 4,900, with 8.7 percent of that traffic being in the form of trucks. West of Woodstock village traffic is 5,900, of which 8 percent is trucks. Within the Village of Woodstock AADT is 12,900 with 7.8 percent of the traffic being trucks.

AADT south of the Village of Ludlow is 9,200, of which 7.9 percent is truck traffic. Once in the Village, just south of the Okemo Mountain access road, traffic increases to 10,000, of which 9 percent is trucks. North of the Village the AADT is 8,500.

Because Route 4 in Woodstock, like Route 103, serves as an east-west corridor between I-91 and Route 7 in Rutland, truck traffic in Chester and Ludlow is affected by restrictions on truck travel through the Village of Woodstock. The more restrictions on use by trucks through Woodstock, the more truck traffic will use Route 103 and impact Chester and Ludlow with a higher number of trucks using the Route 103 corridor. Truck traffic levels on VT Route 103 is similar to the statewide average for state highways of the same functional classification (principal arterials), but it remains a concern for the residents of Chester and Ludlow.

Seasonal Traffic

~~Ski resorts pose special challenges to Vermont's road system. Ski areas are typically connected to the interstate highways by older, narrow two-lane rural and village roads and bridges. The number of ski resorts in Vermont has been declining since 1970; conversely, the remaining resorts are currently undergoing significant expansion. While this smaller number of ski resorts have undergone moderate to high levels of growth, the roads and bridges that service those resorts have not seen appreciable improvement since the early 1970's.~~

~~With Killington and Okemo becoming four season resorts, the traffic during spring, summer and fall may increase significantly, causing short term peaks in other seasons of the year. While Chester struggles with the added traffic from the recreation generated traffic using the narrow rural roads, it benefits economically from those passing through the Town availing themselves of the goods and services provided by the business community of Chester. It is important for the economic life of the Town that future maintenance and road construction take into consideration the economic benefit of continuing the flow of through traffic through the commercial areas of the village of Chester.~~

~~In 2001, a *Ski Corridor Traffic Management Study* was developed by the Southern Windsor County RPC, Rutland RPC, and Two Rivers-Ottauquechee RPC working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Killington and Okemo Mountain ski resorts. The purpose of the study was to identify short-, mid- and long-range strategies to assess the impacts of and to mitigate traffic generated by the region's ski resorts. The report contains roadway mitigation strategies, such as control and design of curb cuts to manage access, turning lanes to channelize traffic and prevent traffic backup, roadway realignment, zoning controls on setbacks and use, and enhancement of pedestrian and bike facilities to all for alternative access for town residents during peak traffic periods. It also includes mitigation strategies for the resorts and destination facilities, which the Town may desire to require of the resorts and facilities in mitigation of the effects of traffic generated by expansion or improvement of the resort. A corridor travel time model was also developed as part of this study in order to measure the traffic impacts of ski resort expansion along the ski corridor, including VT Route 103 through Chester. The intersection of Main Street and Maple Street (VT Routes 103 and 11 West), experiences significant congestion during the peak traffic on Friday evenings, Sunday afternoons and holiday weekends. Town traffic control, paid for by Okemo Mountain Resort, used during peak times at this intersection improves congestion significantly.~~

Commuter Patterns

~~The implications of commuting patterns relate to all aspects of transportation planning.~~Commuter traffic makes up a signficant portion of all road traffic, and happens in regular and predictable peaks, making it a significant factor in transportation planning. Chester is largely a bedroom community – 85% of workers in Chester worked outside of the town (including remote work) in 2023. This is a similar rate to other towns in the region. Top commute destinations for Chester workers include Springfield, Ludlow, the Upper Valley, Claremont NH, and Rutland. Like many rural communities, commute times are high for Chester workers. 30% of commuters in Chester work more than 25 miles (as the crow flies) from their job. ~~Of particular concern are traffic flow, peak hour traffic patterns, and the capacity and maintenance of the infrastructure. It is important to take into account the size, density and location of population and employment when planning for infrastructure improvements and public transportation needs.~~

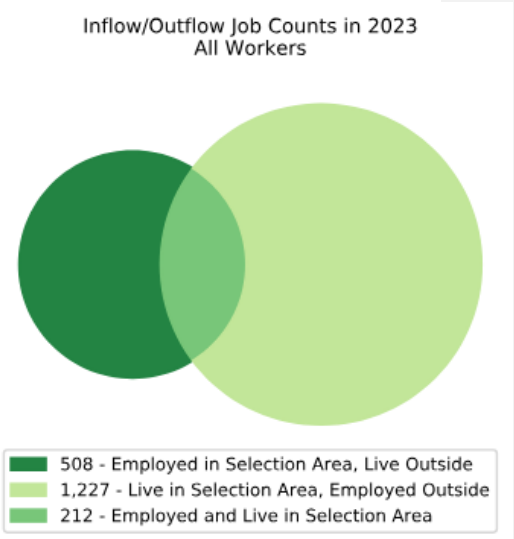

Figure 0-1 Chester Commuting Patterns, 2023 (US Census 'On The Map')

~~According to 2000 U.S. Census data, Chester had the fourth highest number (537) of workers in the region who worked within their town of residence. Springfield, Ludlow, Rockingham, Hartford, Brattleboro are the other top work destinations (respectively) for Chester residents.~~

~~Forty-four percent of people that work in town are Chester residents. Nine percent of Chester workers commute from Springfield, with 7 percent from Rockingham. Twenty-seven percent of Chester workers commute from the towns directly surrounding Chester.~~

~~Peak hour commuting times for Chester residents increased by 35 percent, from an average of 15.9 minutes in 1990 to 21.4 minutes in 2000~~Commutes for Chester residents have almost doubled in the past 30 years – from 16 minutes each way in 1990 to 28 minutes in in 2019 - 2024[2]. In 2024, 67% of workers in Chester drove alone to work each day. 11% carpooled, and 4% walked or bicycled. 14% of workers in Chester work from home – up significantly from pre-COVID measures.[3]~~Though the majority of Chester's commuters drive to work alone (76%), seven percent indicated that they carpool to work. There are currently no Park & Ride facilities in Chester. Almost 8 percent said they bicycled or walked to work, and eight percent worked at home~~.

Commented [KA22]: Update.

Public Parking Facilities

~~Other than on-street parking, public parking in Chester is very limited. Public parking is limited to the establishments that provide parking for their customers or patrons.~~Public parking in Chester consists of on-street parking, head-in parking by the common, and a 29-space lot at Cobleigh field

[2] 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, S0801.
[3] 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, S2406

(including two four public Level 2 EV charging spaces). The Cobleigh field lot is a town-marked Park and Ride facility, but it is not on the VTrans Park and Ride list. ~~There are no facilities for a Park and Ride in the Town. For the economic health and for commuters to and from the Town public parking facilities should be planned and developed.~~

Bicycle ~~and Pedestrian~~ Facilities

There are currently no formal bike lanes or multi-use paths in Chester. However, slow traffic and/or wide shoulders on residential streets and Main Street through the Village create a relatively bicycle-friendly village core.

VT-103 from Pleasant Street north through the Stone Village is designated by VTrans as a 'high use / high priority' bicycling corridor. VT-103 south toward Rockingham and VT-11 toward Springfield are both designated as 'moderate use / moderate priority' corridors. However, most of these areas of heavier use are also rated as 'uncomfortable for most bicyclists' or 'comfortable for [only] experienced and confident bicyclists.'

Improved visibility and signage, traffic calming measures, and painted bicycle lanes may all help improve bicycle comfort and safety in Chester without a fundamental transformation to traffic patterns. Chester should coordinate changes to street design with VTrans re-paving scheduling of the state and class 1 highways in town to lower cost and limit disruption to residents.

Chester's rural roads – especially slower moving, gravel roads – are popular with recreational cyclists and cycling comfort should be preserved on these roads. The popular (though unofficial) VTXL Massachusetts-to-Quebec cycle route passes through Chester on Smokeshire Road.

The 2017 Chester Village Master Plan identified recommended bicycle and pedestrian projects:

1. Establish marked bike lanes along both sides of Main Street between Church and Depot Street.
    a. Consider reducing travel lane widths on Main Street to accommodate this.
2. Indicate Depot Street between Main and Town Hall as an in-lane bicycle corridor, using signage and lane painting (Sharrows).
    a. Visually reinforce to drivers the existing presence of bicycles in the lane.

~~Bicycle and pedestrian facilities take a wide variety of forms. A bicycle facility can be as simple as a road with no additional width beyond the travel lane or as elaborate as a separated path for exclusive use by cyclists. A pedestrian facility can range from a stable, gravel shoulder on a rural road to a paved sidewalk separated from travel lanes by a curb and planted green strip.~~

~~The 2006 Regional Bicycling and Walking Plan for southern Windsor County outlined several improvements to existing bike and pedestrian network of Chester. The plan identified Bridge #8 on VT Route 103, the Mountain View Bridge, to be in need of improvements for cyclists. This bridge provides a critical point of access to the village area, but is currently too narrow to allow bicyclists and/or pedestrians to share the bridge with automobile and truck traffic. Preliminary plans for improvements to Bridge #8, scheduled to be replaced by VTrans in 2011 or 2012, include wider shoulders for cyclists and a sidewalk on the north side of the bridge.~~

Commented [KA23]: Update deleted projects for completeness.

Commented [OE24R23]: Do we want to say anything about the gravel road network and its use by cyclists?

Commented [KA25R23]: That's a good idea.

Commented [OE26R23]: Looks good!

Commented [OE27]: Are there any specific areas we want to point to where the town would like to see bike lanes or other bike infrastructure? Are there existing bike connections that should be improved? New ones that should be made? This is good to have, but it'd be even better to have a few specific locations or corridors called out that are priorities for the Town. That would be helpful for coordination with VTrans projects and grant applications.

There may even be releveant scoping studies or the Village Master Plan that it'd be helpful to reference here. Worth checking with the Town

~~VT Route 103 from Gassetts to Chester Village (approximately three miles) has very narrow shoulders. VTrans maximized the existing shoulders during a repaving project in 2007, however, the shoulders remain very narrow. The stretch of road is winding and has several road side obstacles such as the Williams River, ledges, guardrails, loose gravel and debris on the paved shoulder. This stretch of roadway has high speeds and high volumes of traffic. Widening the shoulders by 18 inches to three feet on each side would provide continuity on Route 103 and enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety~~

~~VT Route 11 westbound out of the village is narrow and the shoulders are almost non-existent. Horizontal curves limit site distance and the pavement is in poor condition. Levels of traffic, especially large trucks, are heavy and present obstacles for cyclists. Adding or widening the shoulders by 18 inches to three feet on each side would enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.~~

~~Two sections of VT Route 10 between North Springfield and the junction of Route 103 have shoulders that are less than three feet wide and traffic volumes tend to be around 4,000 AADT. This route is also very popular among bike touring groups. Widening the shoulders by 18 inches to three feet on each side would provide continuity on Route10 in these narrow sections and enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.~~

~~*Sidewalk Inventory*~~ *Pedestrian Facilities*

Chester maintains 4.11 miles of sidewalk throughout the village core and through the Stone Village area. Chester must continue to prioritize its pedestrian transportation network, especially in the Village. A well-connected, pedestrian-prioritized village improves public safety, reduces traffic congestion, encourages restaurant and retail patronage, and improves community interconnectedness. A connected and well-maintained pedestrian network is also essential to achieving and maintaining Tier 1B Act 250 exemptions.

Chester should continue to investigate pedestrian and traffic calming facilities in the village, such as crosswalk bump outs, radar speed feedback signs~~s~~, road diets, raised crosswalks, etc. Chester should continue to limit curb cuts in the village.

A sidewalk and crosswalk inventory was conducted by MARC staff in 2025. 32% of Chester's sidewalk network was identified as "needing replacement" – an additional 49% was in need of repair. Pedestrian improvements were also identified as a priority in the 2017 Chester Village Master Plan. Projects to improve sidewalk network quality are identified below:

1. Remove and reconstruct western Main Street sidewalk segments from Church Street to the western end of the network, both sides of the road
2. Reconfigure intersection of Depot Street and Maple Street, connecting Maple Street sidewalk spur to Depot Street and preventing dangerous crossings.
3. Reconstruct and connect the two halves of the Depot Street sidewalk from Coach Road to Flamstead Street – complicated by railroad crossing.
4. Reconstruct Elm Street section, as it is completely impassable to foot traffic (recommended simultaneously with Depot Street)
5. Remove organic material between paths and curbs and apply sealant to prevent further deposition and regrowth across much of the network.

Commented [OE28]: As above in the bike section, are there any gaps in the network (either due to lack of sidewalks or sidewalks in poor condition/non ADA compliant) that are priorities for the Town to address? If so, it'd help to list those somewhere in this section.

I believe the High School (or a school) has come up as isolated with no bike or pedestrian infrastructure connecting it to the village.

Commented [KA29]: Briefly summarize findings and link to study.

6. Construct 'bulb outs' for key pedestrian crossings, such as Main/Grafton, the Elementary School, Main/School Street, the Green, and Main/Church.
7. Evaluate and construct sidewalk extension to Green Mountain Union High School, to connect students and residents to the Village Center.

~~During the summer of 1999, SWCRPC staff conducted a sidewalk inventory for the village of Chester. The inventory showed Chester to have over 23,000 linear feet (LF) of sidewalk. Fiftyseven percent of the existing sidewalk network was ranked as being in "good" condition, 36 percent was in "fair" condition and another seven percent was ranked as "poor." The overwhelming majority of the sidewalk network, 91 percent, was between four and six feet in width. The remaining nine percent was less than four feet in width.~~

~~Twenty percent of Chester's existing sidewalks have a curb to help separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic. Over 80 percent of the sidewalk network is accompanied by a planting strip.~~

~~The longest stretch of complete sidewalk (sidewalk, curbing, and planting strip) was from~~

~~Grafton Street (TH 3) to Lover Lane (TH 43). A stretch of sidewalk, with curbing, runs from Main St. south on Grafton Rd to the intersection of River St. Another small segment of "good" sidewalk with a planting strip exists near the Chester Depot area, at the intersection of the Elm Street and Depot Street. 100 feet of "good" sidewalk with planting strip runs north along the west side of Route 103/North Street. Near the end of the sidewalk on the west of North St., a section of "good" sidewalk with planting continues on the east side of the street and continues another 1000 feet. There is about 800 LF of "good" sidewalk with planting strip running north along Church St. to its intersection with Main St.~~

~~A stretch of sidewalk in "fair" condition runs along the north side of Route 103/Main St. from Pleasant Street to the junction of Depot St. This section of sidewalk is accompanied by a planting strip. 300 feet of sidewalk runs along the south side of Maple Street from Main Street to Depot Street. Another of 250-300 foot section of "fair" sidewalk with curb runs along the west side of Main Street from Maple St. to Grafton Rd. There is also a small stretch of fair sidewalk along School Street.~~

~~A stretch of sidewalk, which runs easterly 1000 LF from the intersection of Route 103 along the south side of Pleasant St./Route 11, was reconstructed in 2000.~~

~~There is a need for improved sidewalks along the Depot and School Streets, the existing network is not continuous, traffic is relatively high, existing roadways are wide and lack defined crosswalks in these areas.~~

~~Residents at the 2009 planning workshop identified a desire for new sidewalks along VT Route 103 south, connecting the Green Mountain Union High School with existing sidewalks in the village.~~

Public Transportation, Rail, and Air

~~Public Bus Service~~

Public Bus Service

Chester is served by the Southeast Vermont Transit MOOver bus service. The MOOver Route 57 service makes two round trips daily on weekdays (once daily on weekends) between Bellows Falls and Ludlow, stopping at Chester Town Hall each way. This service is fare-free and provides a vital, car-free connection between Chester and the surrounding region. SEVT also provides supplemental door-to-door transportation for non-emergency medical appointments, limited social and wellness trips, and access to adult day centers for older adults and persons with disabilities ~~or disabled residents~~.

Intercity Transportation

There is currently no scheduled intercity transportation by bus, rail, or air within Chester. Nearby *Greyhound* and *Dartmouth Coach* stops in Bellows Falls, White River Junction, and Lebanon, NH provide regional connections to Montreal, New York and Boston. *Dartmouth Coach* provides direct service to Boston Logan airport. Amtrak's *Vermonter* stops in Bellows Falls and provides rail connection to northern Vermont, southern New England, and the major cities of the Northeast.

Hartness State Airport in Springfield is the nearest airport to Chester, but has no scheduled passenger service. Rutland and Lebanon NH airports offer regional flights to Boston and White Plains, NY through the Essential Air Service. Airports in Boston, Harford, Manchester, Burlington, and Albany offer connections to domestic and international destinations.

~~Public bus service by Connecticut River Transit (CRT) is available in the Town of Chester. In the winter months only this service provides transportation from Springfield and Chester to Ludlow up VT Route 103. This route serves as the main route for Okemo employees who ride for free as an incentive to reduce automobile traffic in Ludlow. Dial-A-Ride transportation services are available in Chester for shopping, medical appointments and general public transportation. CRT also offers weekend service to travelers on the Green Mountain Flyer and residents, connecting the train depot to various stores and restaurants around Chester.~~

Green Mountain Railroad

The town of Chester is serviced by Green Mountain Railroad. The railroad runs from its terminal in Bellows Falls through Chester north to Rutland. There is an existing rail siding at Chester Depot which allows for rail freight loading/unloading in Chester. An increase in ~~the~~ freight transport would potentially benefit Chester by reducing the amount of the through truck traffic on VT Route 103, which parallels the track from Bellows Falls to Rutland. The town highway garage has access to an unused rail siding. Efforts should be made to explore the use of this siding for the delivery of materials such as road salt to the Chester highway department and those of nearby towns.

The Green Mountain Railroad line through Chester is a freight line, but is rated for "tourist, museum, or science passenger service."[4] Occasional tourist service runs on these tracks for foliage and winter-time sight-seeing. Investigating a "coordinated connection" between Bellows Falls and

Commented [OE30]: My understanding was that this service no longer operates?

[4] US DOT FRA Rail Network Map, 7/27/2026

Rutland through Chester was identified as a Tier 3 Recommendation in the 2025 Vermont Rail Plan.

Chester supports the expansion of both freight and passenger rail (and associated track and bridge upgrades) on the Green Mountain Railroad to increase Chester's connection to the surrounding region, facilitate tourism, and decrease regional truck traffic.

~~Primarily a freight line, the tracks do host tourist excursions on the Green Mountain Flyer during the summer and fall months between Bellows Falls and Chester and on special occasions on to Ludlow. Okemo Mountain is also hoping to expand this service in winter to bring skiers to their resort, and thus eliminate some of the peak winter weekend traffic of Route 103. This could have an adverse impact on the economy of Chester unless stops at Chester Depot were included in the scheduling to allow for travelers to use the train and find lodging, restaurants and opportunity to shop in Chester, as well as access the ski resort from Chester. Expansion of the passenger service to include commuter transportation would benefit the Town and residents.~~

~~An increase in the transport of freight would potentially benefit Chester by reducing the amount of the through truck traffic on VT Route 103, which parallels the track from Bellows Falls to Rutland~~Chester supports~~. Improvement to the track and signaling would be necessary to allow for greater speed along the corridor, which would increase the potential for use for time sensitive freight shipments. The most common goods shipped efficiently by rail, however, are long distance hauls of bulk goods, such as talc, coal, grain, pulp/paper, wood and minerals, which are not timesensitive and the loading and unloading are more efficiently done in bulk shipments. Green Mountain Railroad ships such bulk items, and had an increase in carloads is anticipated with the completion of the project expanding the vertical clearance of the Bellows Falls railroad tunnel. The use of rail for these bulk goods has already had the effect of reducing truck traffic on Chester through roads. Improvement of the tunnel at Bellows Falls on the New England Central line would allow for the use on multi-modal rail cars and stacked rail/truck cargo vans, and could potentially allow for more of the trucked goods to be shipped by rail not only through Chester but throughout the region~~. ~~Efforts by Chester to encourage the improvements to the rail facilities and thus expansion of rail use could potentially reduce auto and truck traffic on VT Route 103, resulting in less congestion and improvement in traffic safety and convenience to local travel.~~ ~~**Road Policy and Maintenance**~~

Maintenance

Maintaining a safe and efficient highway system is important but can be very costly. ~~The town should continue to maintain the existing highway network in good condition, which can greatly limit the long-term roadway maintenance costs.~~

Costs for materials have increased ~~dramatically in recent years making the costs for doing the proper road maintenance difficult to impossible~~much more quickly than inflation or household incomes. Expense is an obstacle to proper maintenance – but neglecting maintenance increases long term costs if ~~roads~~the transportation network ~~are~~is to be preserved. ~~For example, winter sand has increased nearly 45% in cost from 2008 to 2009, and asphalt has increased about 60% in the last five years. However, not keeping up with routine maintenance can result in the need to rebuild roads in the future, which will be extremely expensive.~~

~~A capital budget and program could help to plan for road projects and other capital expenses. A capital reserve fund to generate local funds over time to pay for the necessary road and bridge work can help to reduce dramatic one time impacts to the local budget.~~ Chester should continue to use its Capital Budget program and Road Surface Management plan to prioritize maintenance projects and the long-term costs of Chester's highway system. Chester should consider including other forms of transportation assets such as culverts, highway department equipment, sidewalks, signs, and guardrail to its Capital Budget to assist in long term capital planning and avoid unanticipated costs.

~~A Road Surface Management Plant has been developed by the Town Manager and Selectboard.~~ The highway department should continue to inspect and evaluate the condition of bridges and culverts under 20 feet that are not inspected by VTrans~~,~~ and replace deficient or undersized drainage structures annually as funding allows. As time and funding allow, ~~The~~ the department should also continue to keep costs down and extend the life of these high value assets by ~~doing their own~~keeping up on bridge maintenance work, ~~as appropriate~~such as washing and painting. Culverts and drainage ditches should allow for an adequate flow of stormwater so as to protect infrastructure from damage during typical large snowmelt and rain events.

New Highways

All new roads must comply with the Town Highway specifications for subdivision approval and/or zoning permits, and before they will be considered for acceptance by the ~~Selectmen~~ Selectboard as a Town Highway. ~~On May 20, 2009~~In 2026, the Town adopted the latest Road and Bridge Specifications. Before new roads are accepted as town roads the ~~Selectmen~~ Selectboard must judge if the public good, or the necessity, or the convenience of individuals require such a highway to be laid out. The capital costs of road construction or improvement of existing town roads to service new residential and commercial development should be borne by the developer. ~~Ample off-street parking should be provided and~~ A~~a~~ll accesses to lots should be limited to one curb cut.

Access Management

A key component to keeping traffic flowing through a downtown/main street area is being able to balance the number of access points (i.e. driveways or access roads). Access Management balances mobility and access. The logic behind Access Management usually becomes obvious after conditions on a transportation corridor become a problem. The presence of a large number of accesses results in a high level of turning movements and points of conflict, thus increasing the likelihood of traffic accidents. Unlimited curb cuts also contribute to sprawl, and result in dangerous conditions for bicycles and pedestrians. The goal of access management is to ensure that curb cuts, or access points, are properly planned to avoid the above mentioned complications.

Controlling accesses along VT Route 103 south and north of the village is important. In 2008-9, the Town of Chester is working with the SWCRPC, WRC, Town of Rockingham and VTrans to develop a VT Route 103 Corridor Management Plan to address access management and other issues.

The Residential 40,000 zoning district currently allows many commercial uses along VT Route 103 south, which may result in unwanted strip development.

Commented [OE31]: Unless already included of course

Commented [OE32R31]: The town may object to expanding what's covered by their capital plan so this can be a point of conversation. It doesn't hurt to aspire to a more complete capital plan though.

Commented [KA33]: Is this most recent?

Commented [OE34R33]: Good catch, no. They should've adopted the latest version earlier this year. We'll want to double check with the town that they actually did that.

Commented [KA35]: Probably delete but assess.

Commented [OE36R35]: I think it's worth continuing to include language on access management. I'll check the 103 Management Plan to see what it says and if we want to continue to refer to it here. We also talk about access management as a function of land use category in the RTP and it may be worth referencing that.

Has the Town mentioned any areas where there are too many curb cuts or where they'd like to limit future curb cuts?

I'll think on this one.

Transportation Goals

~~1. Ensure that future development of transportation related facilities in the town of Chester are designed to maintain the beauty, integrity and rural characteristics of the town.~~

1. Keep the existing transportation network in good repair to avoid costly replacement in the future.
2. Prioritize a compact, walkable village center which is friendly and welcoming to pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. Reduce the impact of truck traffic on the village center.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts of current peak traffic volumes.
5. Expand the use of public and rail transportation as an alternative to automobile and truck traffic on Route 103.
6. Encourage bicycle and pedestrian transportation through maintenance and expansion of existing facilities.
7. Limit access points (curb cuts) wherever possible to discourage sprawl and maintain safe travel conditions for all roadway users.

~~8.1. Widen and realign the intersection of Routes 103/11 and Maple to accommodate the turning radius of trucks and busses.~~

~~9. Provide more parking for commercial uses and provide parking for Park & Ride.~~

8. Encourage the expansion of public transit within Chester and between it and regional towns.

~~10.~~9. In accordance with the Town's 2024 Vision Zero resolution, achieve the goal of zero traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2040.

Commented [KA37]: ?

Commented [OE38R37]: Moved to roadway needs. Not really a goal

Transportation Policies

1. Involve citizens in planning processes concerning the long-~~-~~range structure and viability of Chester's transportation network.
2. ~~Continue to expand the sidewalk network while at the same time maintaining those segments that are in "good" and "fair" shape.~~ Make needed replacements and repairs to the sidewalk network and expand the network to prioritize connectivity.

~~1.~~3. Ensure all road design and construction prioritizes the inclusion of 'complete streets ~~-~~elements~~policies.~~'

~~2.~~4. Work with Green Mountain Railroad to expand the capabilities of its rail corridor.

~~3.~~5. Work with ~~Town and Village Bus~~Southeast~~ern~~ Vermont ~~Transportation~~Transit to expand its local service and schedule.

~~4.~~6. Continue to expand the sidewalk network while at the same time maintaining those segments that are in "good" and "fair" shape.

~~5.~~7. Maintain ongoing communication and coordination with the regional planning commission concerning state and federal funding opportunities to expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities and other enhancements to Chester's transportation network.

~~6.~~8. ~~Work with other towns along the Route 103 corridor to c~~Coordinate with other towns ~~mitigation efforts aimed at~~to alleviat~~eing~~ the effects of truck and peak ski/tourist traffic.

~~7. Obtain the property necessary to widen the intersection or Routes 103/11 and Maple Street to provide adequate, or better, turning radius for commercial vehicles.~~

~~8. Obtain the property necessary to provide more parking for commercial properties and Park and Ride.~~

~~9. Promote access management techniques along VT Route 103 south in order to balance growth with highway mobility.~~

Transportation Recommendations

1. Create a ~~timeline~~ capital program for needed replacement of existing sidewalk sections ~~that are in "poor"~~ shape and expansion of new pedestrian facilities to those areas of town that need them.

~~1.~~

Work with the regional planning commission to ~~develop the capabilities to monitor traffic volumes/patterns on an internal basis.~~ Conduct regular traffic counts around the village.

~~2. Identify properties for acquisition by the Town for parking and Park & Ride facilities~~

~~3. At the intersection of Routes 11/103 and Maple St., acquire the parcel on the northeasterly corner for widening and realignment of the intersection.~~

~~4.~~2. Obtain representation of the Town of Chester on the ~~Public Bus Service~~Southeast Vermont Transit Board.

~~5. Continue working with SWCRPC~~MARC~~, VTrans and other partners to develop the VT Route 103 Corridor Management Plan. Consider incorporating the Corridor Management Plan, or portions of it, as a component of the Town Plan.~~

~~6.~~3. Examine options to address potential access management problems along VT Route 103 South and allow growth that does not detract visually or economically from the Village.

Formatted

Commented [KA39]: Still want?

Commented [OE40R39]: Maybe check what they mean by that? Regular traffic counts?

Commented [OE41]: I believe this is still a priority for the Town but we can check that. Unless you've heard otherwise!

Commented [KA42]: Still want?

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Commented [KA43]: What happened here?

Commented [OE44R43]: Completed forever ago (2009) and promptly ignored

Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts (AADT) for Chester (2022)

Segment	AADT
Vt 35 from Grafton Tl to High St/River St	772
Vt 35 from High St/River St to Vt 11	772

Vt 103 from Vt 10 to Cavendish Tl	5819
Vt 103 from Rockingham Tl to Peck Rd	6252
Andover Rd from Andover Tl to Vt 11	902
Depot St from Main St to Green Mtn Turnpike	4744
Vt 11 from Andover Rd to Lovers Lane	5038
Vt 11 from Andover Tl to Andover Rd	3941
Main St from Lovers Lane to Vt 103	5821
Vt 10 from Vt 10 to Vt 103	1126
Vt 103 from Peck Rd to Vt 11	8125
Pleasant St from Vt 103 to Springfield Tl	3425
S Main St from Vt 11 to Main St	6827
Vt 103 from Green Mtn Turnpike to Vt 10	4154
Vt 10 from Vt 103 to Springfield Tl	2862
Vt35 Chester Hill Rd from Route 121 E to Chester Tl	772

TOWN OF XXXX TOWN PLAN

Adopted DD MMM, YYYY

Authorship and Other Information

1 | DOCUMENT INFO

Side Stripe	Accent Color	Tertiary	Other Color	Other Text
375D7D	C78543	813740	4999AB	DADDE7

1.1 Instructions for Use

Header Font: **Bahnschrift Bold**

Sub-header: Bahnschrift

Body: Calibri

Captions: Calibri Light

“Document Info” is a dynamic text that matches whatever “Heading 1” is in play at the start of the page.

Side Strips is 1.3 Inches Wide. Full-Page Maps and Images should be formatted to 8.5”x9.7”

2 | LOREM IPSUM

2.1 Neque Porro Quisquam

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Figure 2-1: Asmodeus Incarnatius

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Table Housing Weights by FLU Category	
Regional Future Land Use Category	*Housing Target*
Downtown Center	15%
Village Center	10%
Planned Growth Area	45%
Village Area	10%
Enterprise Area	0%
Transition/Infill Area	10%
Rural-General	5%
Rural- Agriculture and Forestry	5%
Rural-Conservation	0%

3 | LORETICUS MARSLIUS