

Public Meeting

May 18, 2021

WJCTC Bicycle Pedestrian Connectivity Study

Photo: Black River Blueway

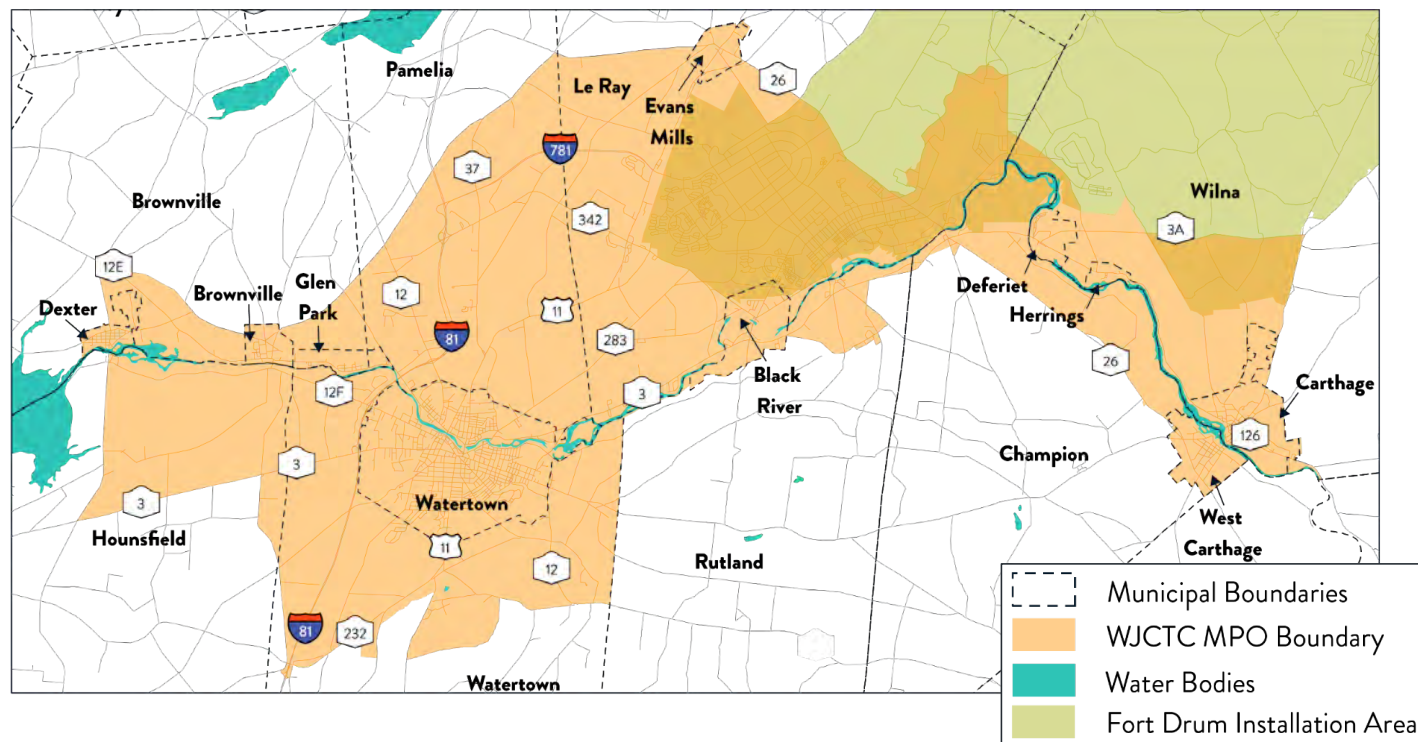


**Barton
& Loguidice**



What is the Watertown-Jefferson County Transportation Council (WJCTC)?

WJCTC was established in 2014 as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Watertown Urbanized Area. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) requires that every urbanized area in the Country that exceeds 50,000 in population has an MPO to represent the area and receive federal highway and transit funds to carry out the metropolitan planning process.



Meeting Agenda

1. Team Introduction & Project Overview

2. MPO-Wide Analysis

- Vision & Goals
- Existing Conditions Overview
- Key Takeaway and Preliminary Needs
- Public Input: Issues & Opportunities

3. Black River Trail Extension

- Project Objectives
- Overview of Preliminary Alternatives
- Design Components
- Public Input on Alternatives

4. Next Steps



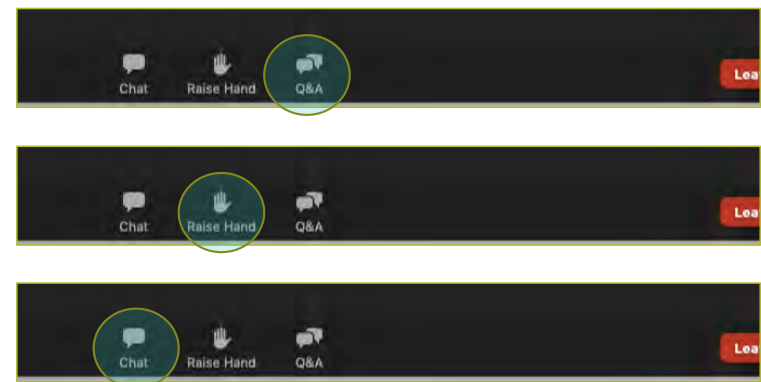
Project Team

- **Watertown-Jefferson County Transportation Council**
 - Scott Docteur, MPO Director (NYSDOT)
 - Al Ricalton, MPO Highway Technical Committee (NYSDOT)
 - Geoff Urda, MPO Bike/Ped Coordinator (City of Watertown)
 - Jim Lawrence, MPO Highway Technical Committee (Jefferson County)
 - Kris Reff, MPO Highway Technical Committee (NYSDOT)
- **Barton & Loguidice**
 - Keith Ewald, AICP, PLA
 - Katie Darcy, AICP
- **Highland Planning**
 - Christopher Dunne



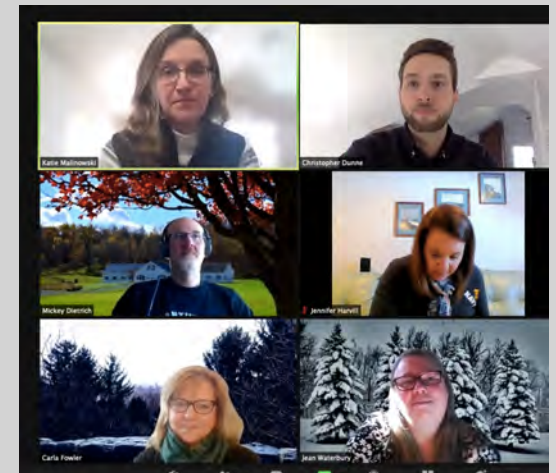
Webinar Instructions

- Click “Q&A” to **type** a question that panelists can respond to
- **Chat** is also available to type comments
- If joining by phone audio only, **press *9** to “Raise Hand” and you will be acknowledged
- Attendees are muted and have video disabled by default when they enter the webinar



Public Outreach

- Public Engagement Plan
- Preliminary Stakeholder Interviews
 - Fort Drum
 - Village of Black River
 - Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
 - Tug Hill Commission
 - GYMO Architecture, Engineering & Land Surveying
 - Black River Adventurers' Shop
- Outreach to property owners along Black River Trail Extension options
- Comment form and stakeholder database



Project Overview



- Identify Gaps in Bicycle & Pedestrian Networks
- Provide Context-Sensitive Solutions for Future Active Transportation (Bike/Pedestrian) Investment
- Enhance Connectivity & Accessibility for Active Transportation Users of All Types

DRAFT Project Vision & Goals

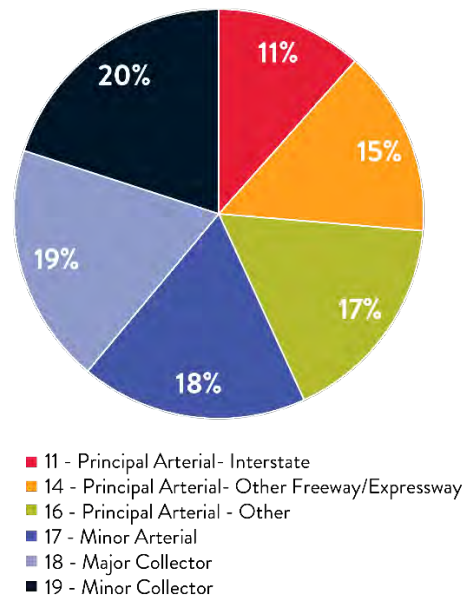
“WJCTC will promote a connective, accessible, and safe pedestrian and bicyclist networks in which people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can easily travel to and from the region’s key destinations without relying on personal motorized vehicles. This will help foster a growing community of pedestrians and bicyclists that will contribute to and enjoy the benefits of a vibrant, active community that supports healthy living, increased economic activity, and the ability to age in place.”



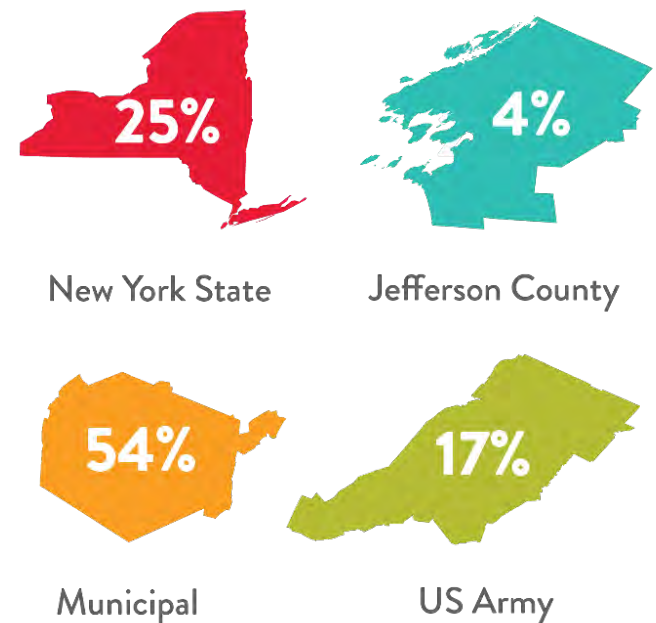
Existing Conditions

- **Roadway Characteristics**
 - Functional Class
 - Roadway Jurisdiction
 - Roadway Laneage
 - Traffic Volumes
 - Speed limits
 - Etc.
- **Existing Infrastructure**
 - Sidewalks
 - Parks & Trails
 - Bicycle Facilities
 - Proposed Extensions

Functional Class Distribution

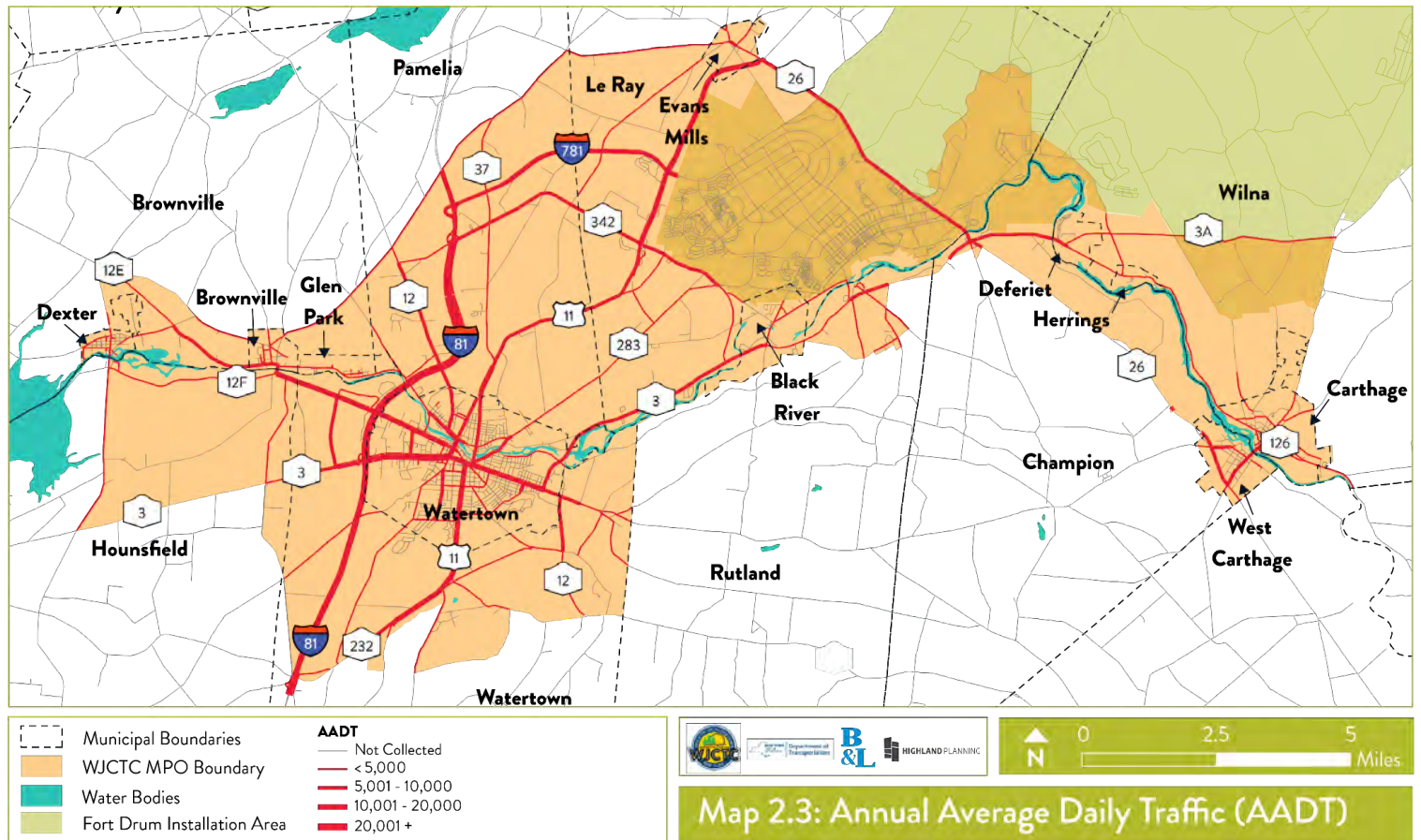


Roadway Ownership



Existing Conditions

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Existing Conditions

Out of 100 Commuters in Jefferson County*...



78 Drove Alone



5 Worked from Home



8 Carpooled



1 Took Public Transit



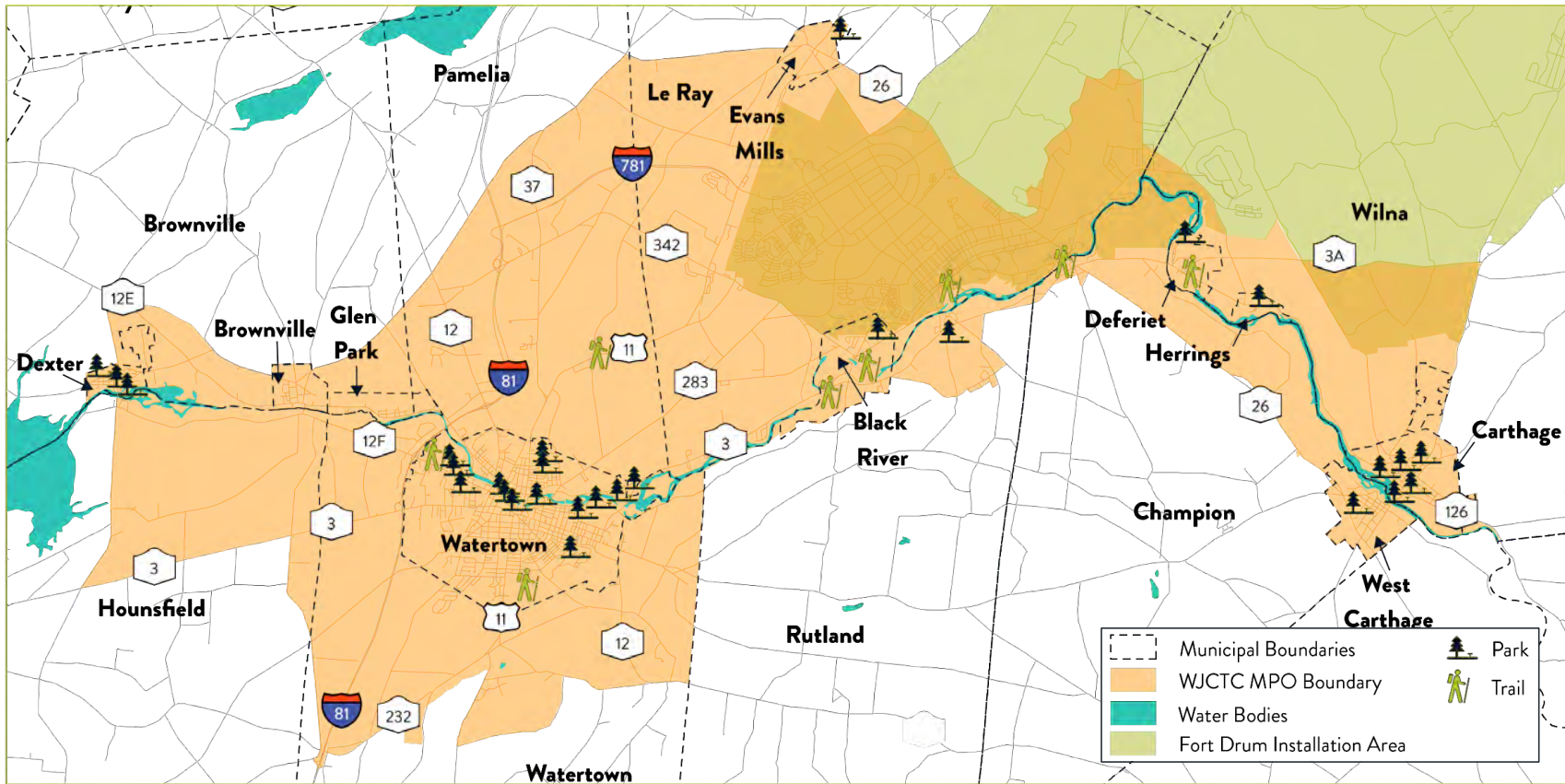
6 Walked



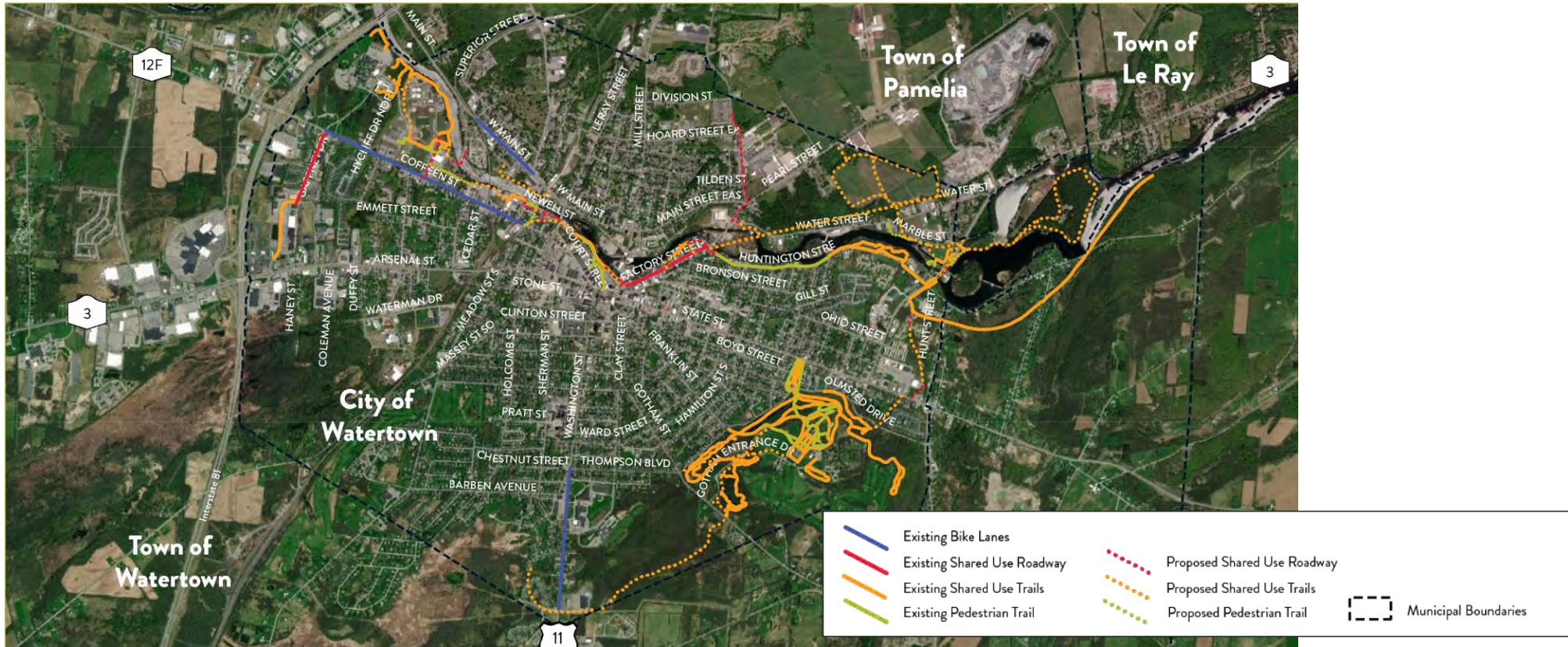
0 Biked

**2 workers took an alternative form of transportation such as a taxi or motorcycle.*

Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions



Preliminary Needs Assessment

1. Promoting access to the Black River and other natural resources of the region
2. Creating linkages between existing pedestrian & bicyclist facilities
3. Fostering connections between activity centers
4. Providing safe connections between residential areas and schools
5. Developing programs & policies that support future multi-modal investment



What are the key issues & opportunities in the region regarding bicycle & pedestrian connectivity?

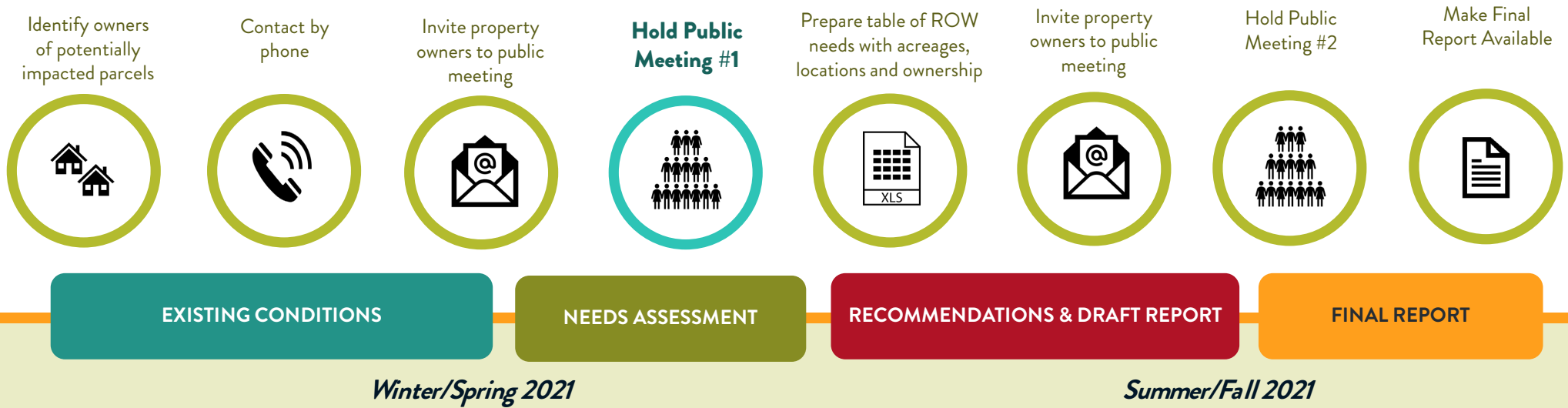
Priority Project No. 1 Black River Trail Extension

Project Objective

- Evaluate alternatives for eastward expansion of the Black River Trail from its current eastern terminus south of SR 3 in Black River, to Fort Drum
- Identify and engage in dialogue with key involved property owners (both public and private)
- Assess environmental impacts (wetlands, floodplains, rare & endangered species habitats)
- Constructability assessments
- Develop cost estimates for future construction
- Identify potential funding sources



Black River Trail Extension Property Owner Outreach Timeline



- ALTERNATIVE 1 OWNERS
- ALTERNATIVE 2 OWNERS
- ALTERNATIVE 3 OWNERS



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE PROPERTY OWNERS

Outreach: What We've Heard

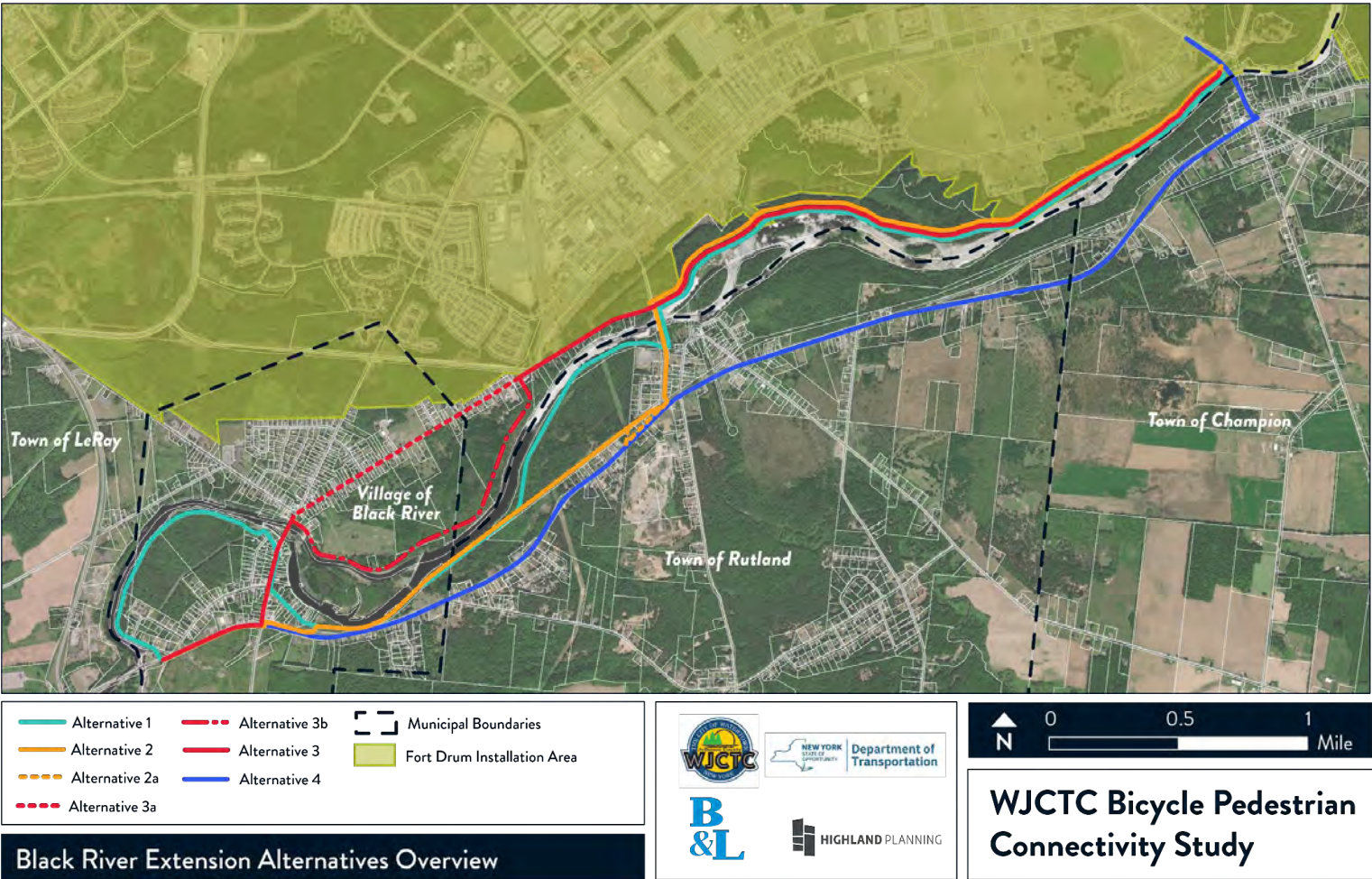
Opportunities

- Longer Black River Trail = regional destination
- Connections to base would increase use and link to relocated Fort Museum
- Trail extension through Village of Black River could benefit downtown
- Partnerships can make new trails and extensions viable

Issues

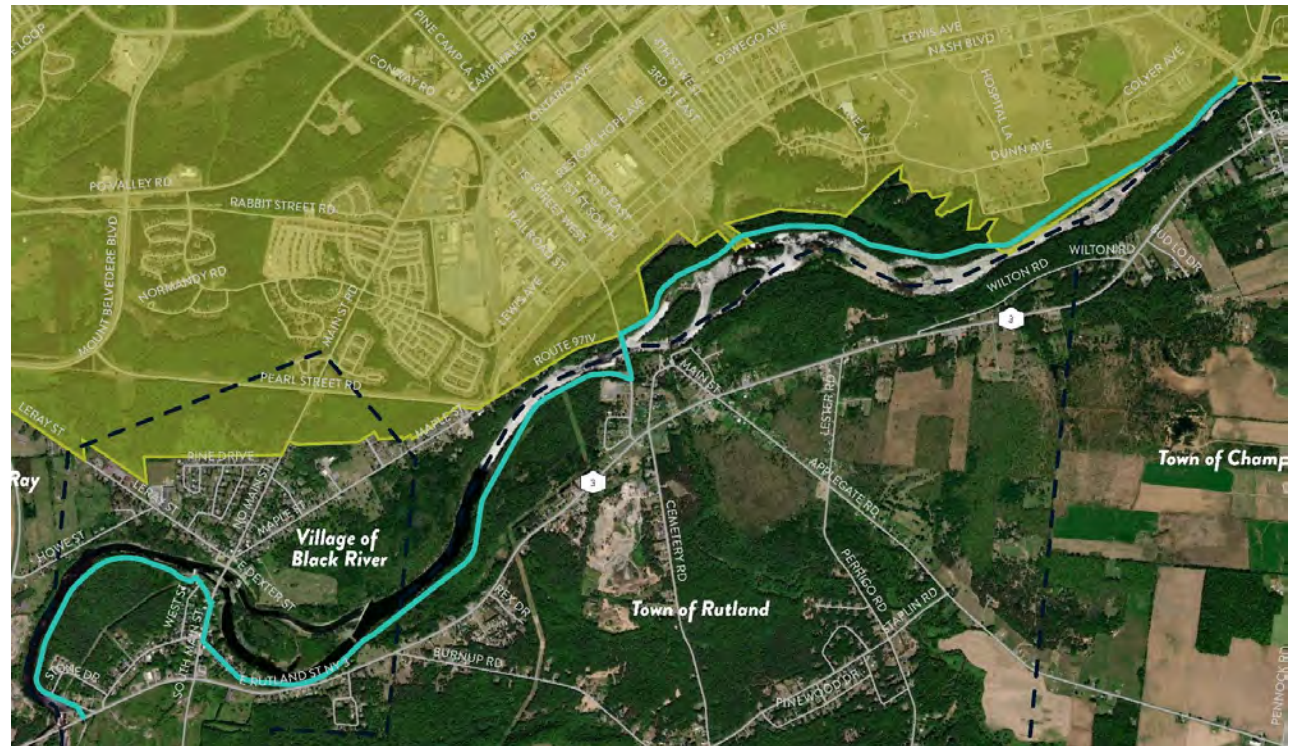
- Funding and resources
- Multiple privately owned properties and liability issues
- Route 3 traffic volumes and speeds
- Use of existing dirt trails by motorized vehicles
- Safety around the Black River

Overview of Preliminary Alternatives



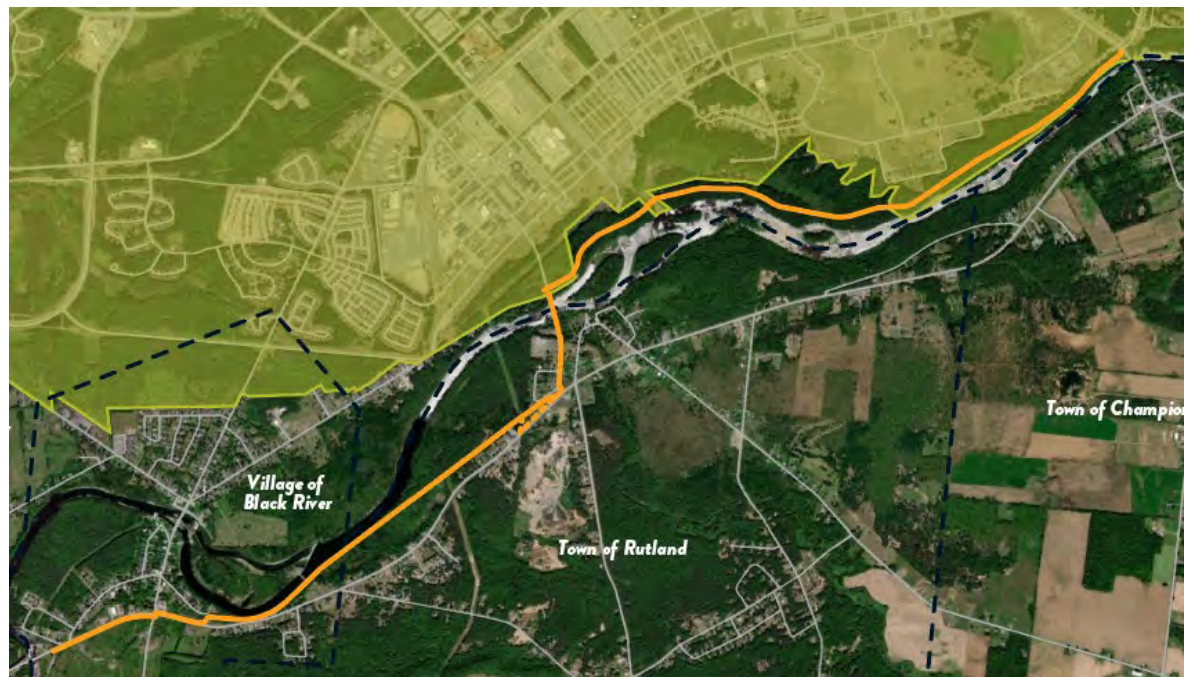
Alternative #1

- Follows the riverbank within the Village of Black River
- Continues along Black River in Town of Rutland until 1st Street Bridge
- Connects to existing informal trail on northern side of river



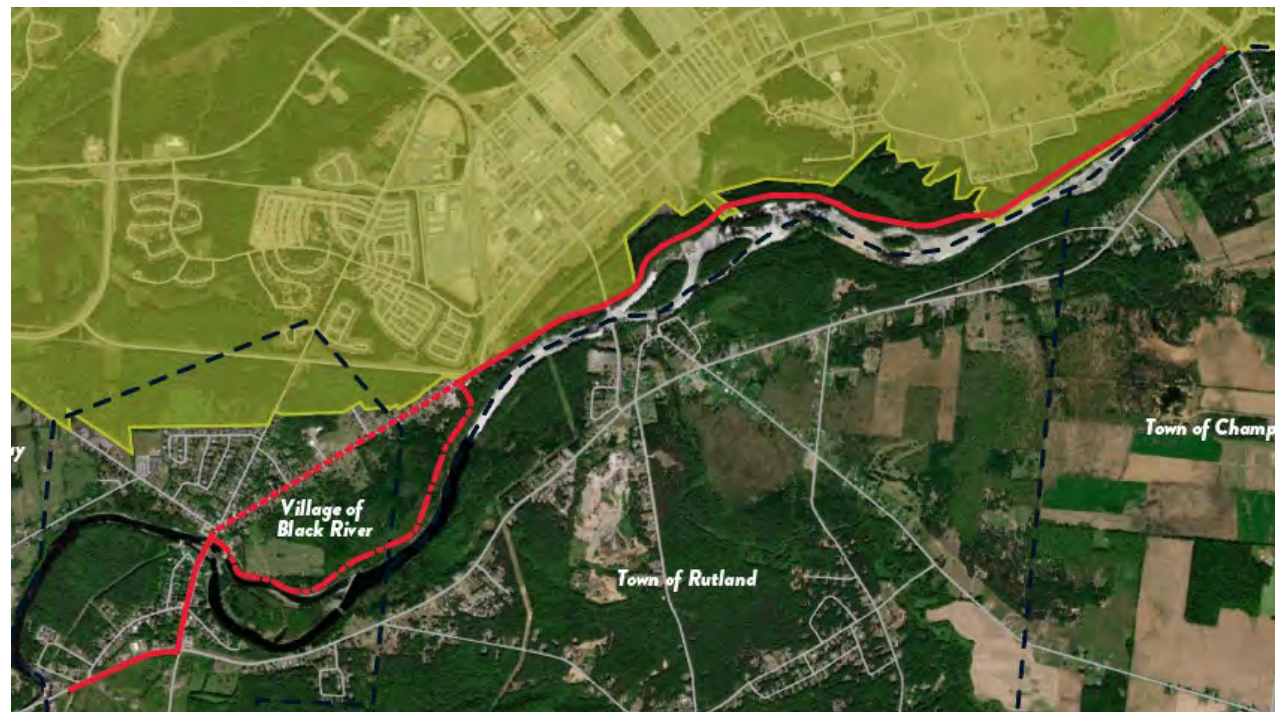
Alternative #2

- Follows Route 3
- Transitions off-road near the border of Rutland to follow the Black River until 1st Street Bridge
- Connects to existing informal trail on northern side of river
- Alternative 2a cuts back to Route 3 ~1000 feet before Route 971V intersection



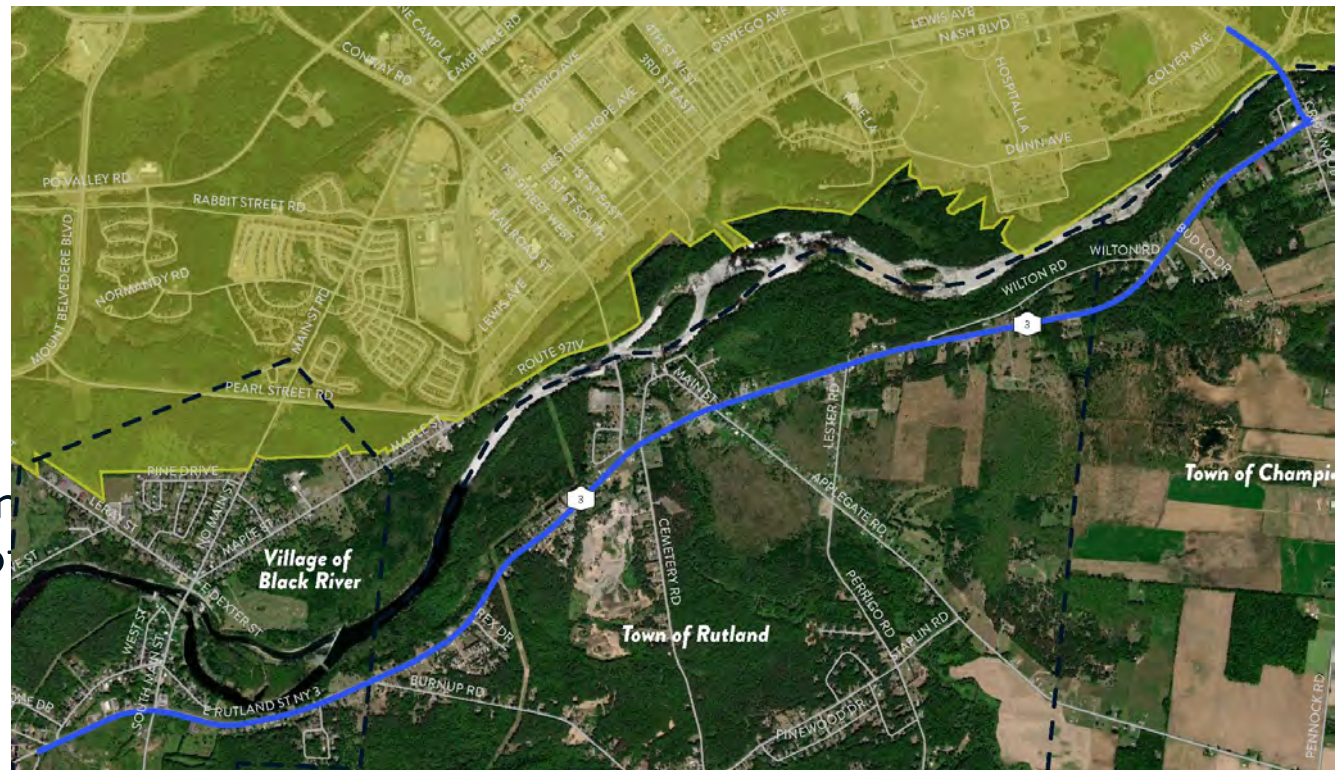
Alternative #3

- Follows Route 3 until heading north on South Main Street in Black River & crosses the river
- Alternative 3A:
 - Follows Maple Street
- Alternative 3B:
 - Transitions off-road off East Dexter Street & follows the riverbank
- Transitions back to on-road on 971V, heading east until reaching existing informal trail



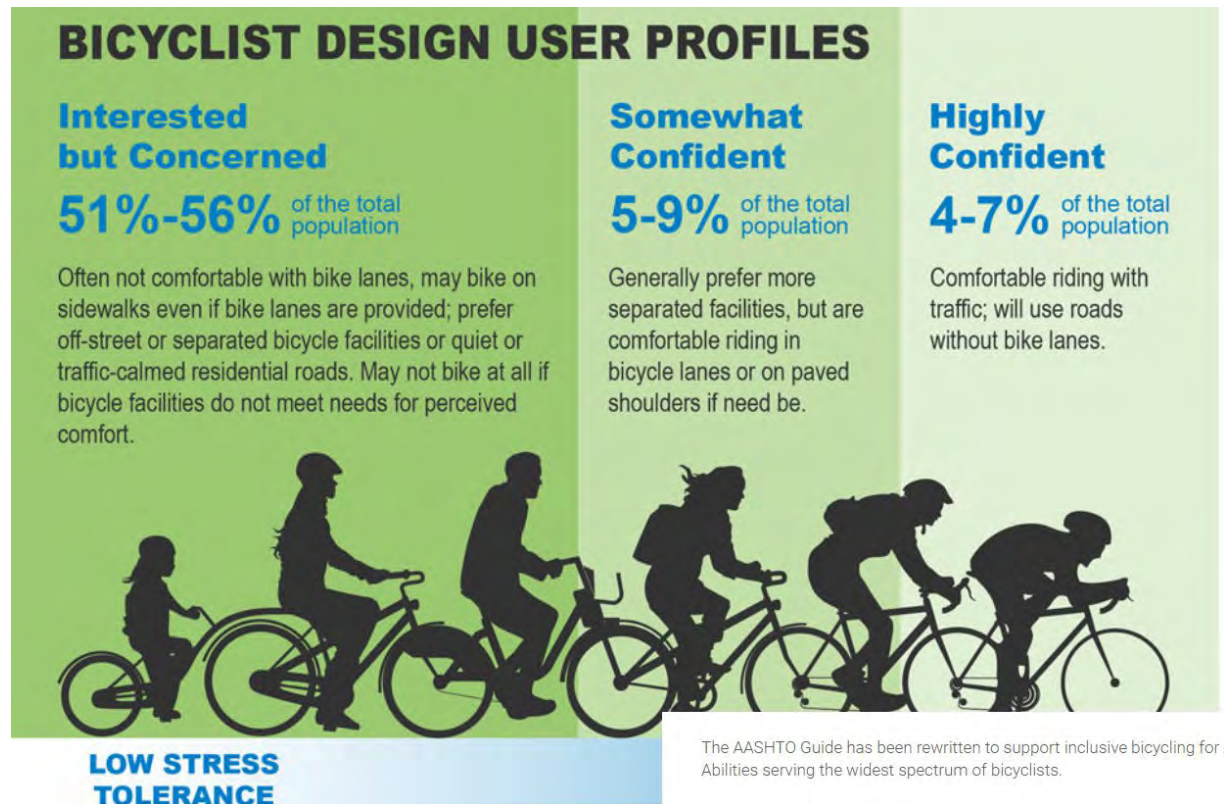
Alternative #4

- Follows SR 3
- Assumes shared use shoulder for bike/peds
- Will evaluate whether a separated 8'-10' side path can be built within the ROW
- Would only be an option if ROW off-road cannot be obtained, where needed

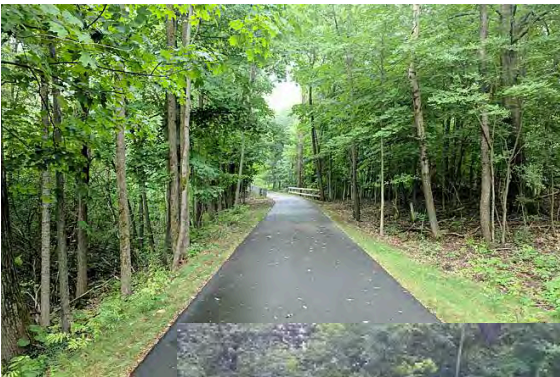


Design Criteria

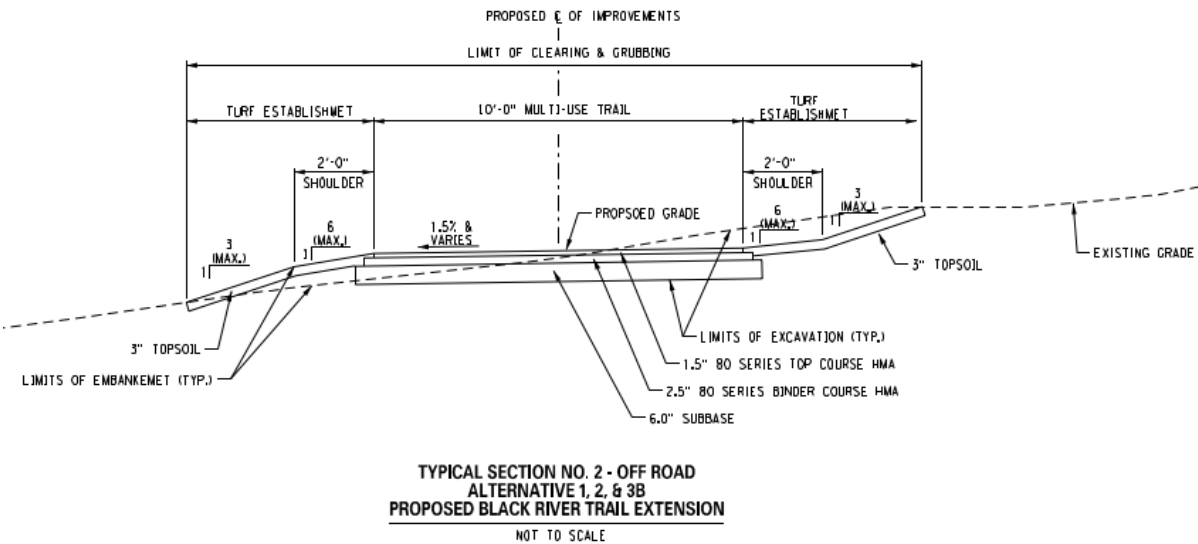
- AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities (2012)
- AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (2020)
- ADA Standards for Accessible Design, 2016
- NYSDOT Highway Design Manual, Chapters 17 and 18



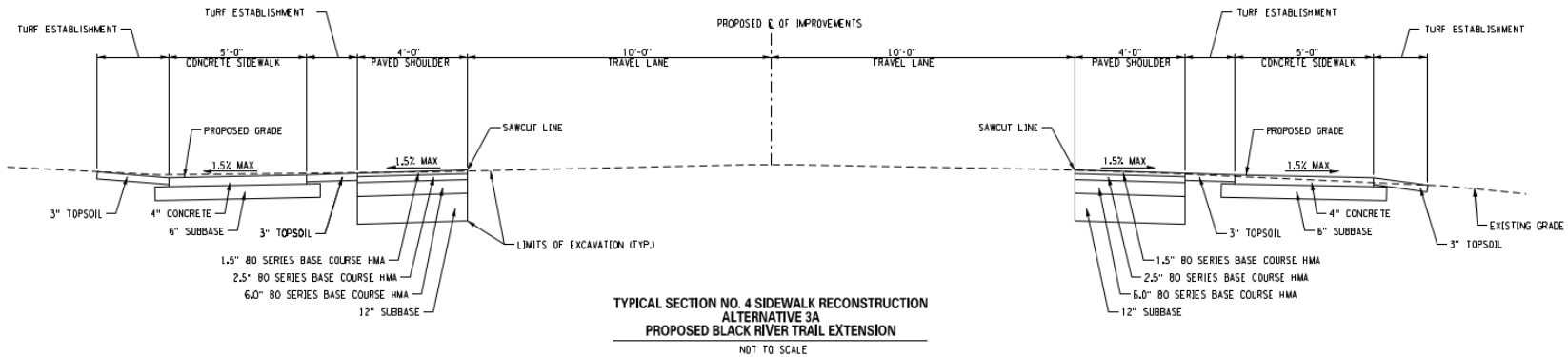
Trail Facility Design: Existing Trail Segments



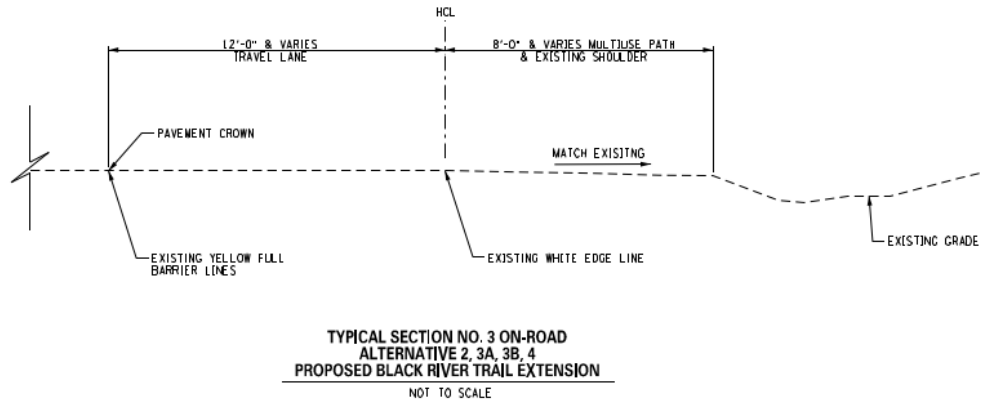
Trail Facility Design: Off-road trail



Trail Facility Design: On-road Separated Facility (Maple Street)

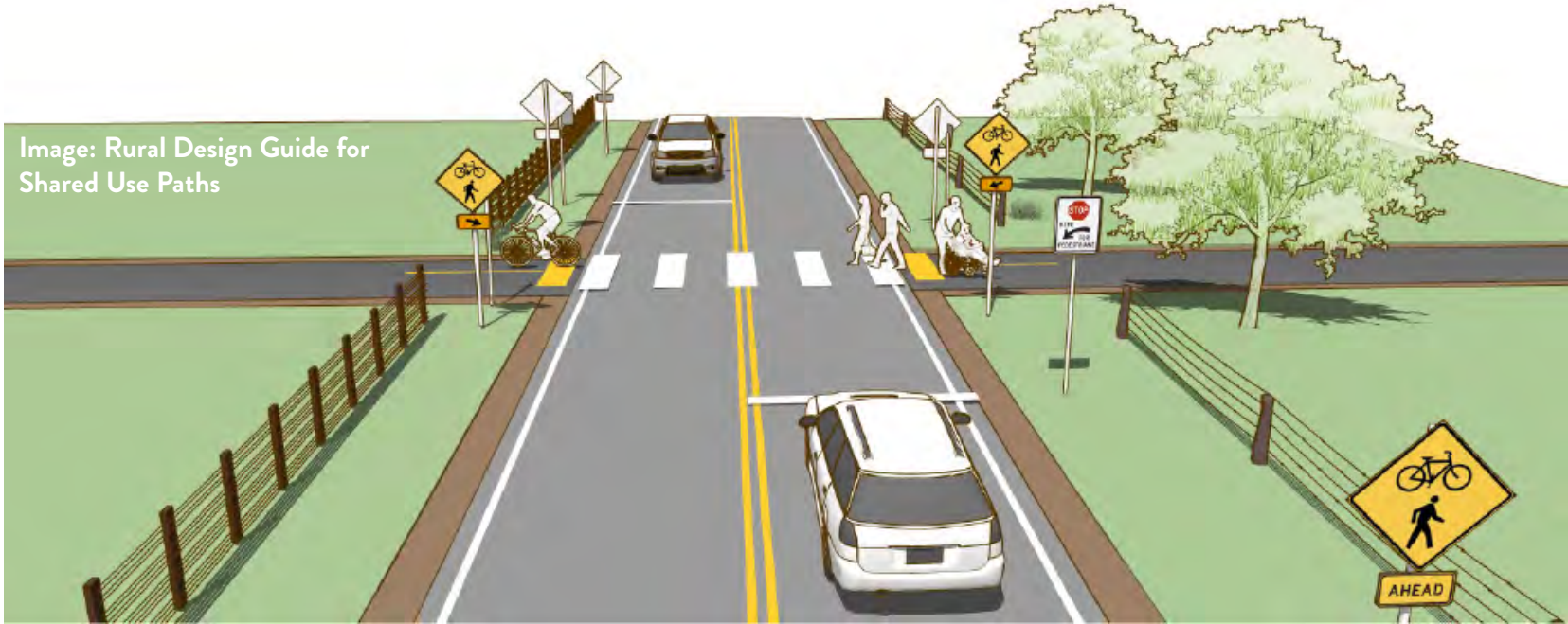


Trail Facility Design: On-road Shared Shoulder (least desirable)



Trail Facility Safety Considerations

Image: Rural Design Guide for Shared Use Paths



Trailhead Facilities



Above: Existing Parking Area at Garrison Drive and Great Bend Road at the entrance to Ft. Drum

Below: Existing Pathway at First Street in Felts Mills





Outreach:
What are your thoughts on the alternatives presented?

Next Steps

- Continue gap analysis for MPO-wide bike & pedestrian connectivity
- Continue to evaluate ROW constraints
- Further conversations with property owners
- Constructability assessments of all alternatives
- Safety analyses
- In-person and outdoor trail walk/meeting this summer or early fall
- Develop Connectivity Study report with recommendations for regional connectivity and feasible alternatives for BRT Extension to Ft. Drum



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THANK YOU!

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Photo: Black River Blueway



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