

Main Street (Route 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Study Town of Branford, CT



Prepared for:

South Central Regional
Council of Governments
and
Town of Branford



Prepared by:
Clough Harbour & Associates LLP
Rocky Hill, CT



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Blackstone Memorial Library, Main Street at Cedar Street

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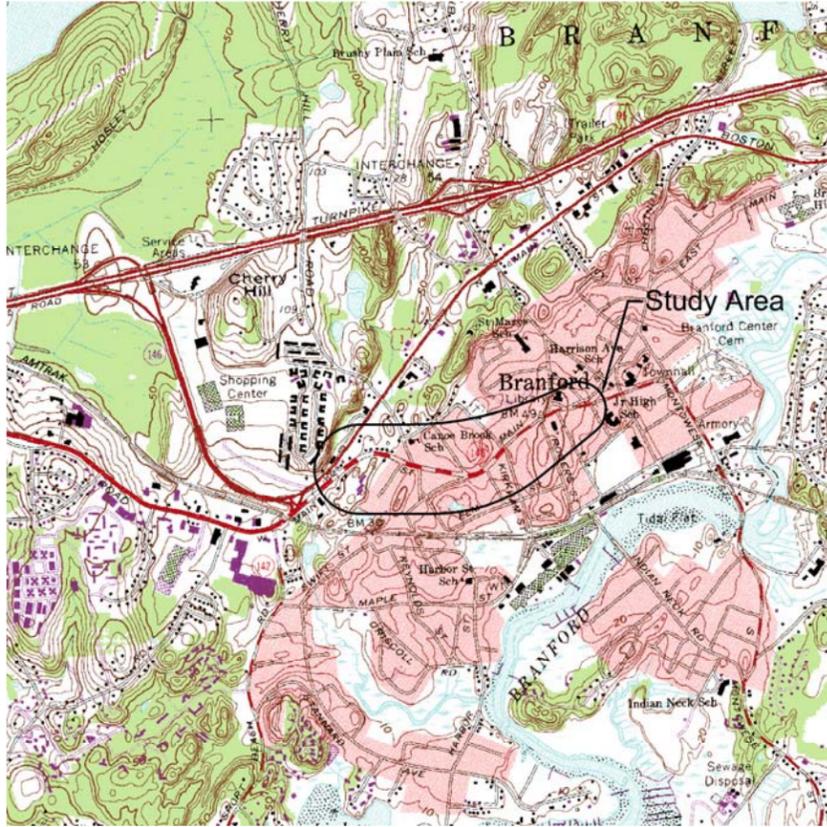
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Study Limits
Source: USGS Maps

1.0 Study Overview

1.1 Purpose and Need

The Town of Branford, in association with the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG), is preparing a plan for the Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway in Branford. This planning study was initiated by a recent Town-wide Transportation Study that recommended that Route 146 (Main Street) from U.S. Route 1 (West Main Street) to the Branford Town Green be improved to reduce traffic speeds, provide a safer and more comfortable environment, and provide a more welcoming gateway into Branford.

The study also recommended that the emerging concept of “Complete Streets” be considered. “Complete Streets” is a relatively new set of principles where streets are designed to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. Features used to create Complete Streets include:

- Wide sidewalks with street trees
- Wide and visible crosswalks
- Center medians or crossing islands in appropriate midblock locations
- Bus pullouts and other improvements to support transit.
- Curb extensions or sidewalk bulb-outs
- Curb-cut consolidation or driveway width reduction
- On street parking and bike lanes

Complete Streets calm traffic and can improve motorist attitude and behavior toward pedestrians and bicyclists by providing visual cues which cause motorists to instinctively slow down. Drivers also tend to be more courteous and vigilant on streets that are visually pleasing and are designed to complement the unique character of the neighborhood.

1.2 Study Limits

The study area includes a 4,000 foot (3/4) mile long section of Main Street (Route 146) from U.S. Route 1 (West Main Street) to the Branford Town Green.

1.3 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Reduce unsafe traffic speeds.

Objectives:

- Utilize “Complete Streets” concept and strategies.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures.

Goal 2: Create a safer and more comfortable environment for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users.

Objectives:

- Balance the need for vehicular mobility with the need to provide safer routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Recommend streetscape improvements that are appropriate to the scale of the street and character of the surrounding neighborhoods.



Main Street – Branford Town Center

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**Stakeholder Interview
Branford Town Hall**

Goal 3: Enhance the living and working environment for the properties along the corridor, many of which are historically significant.

Objectives:

- Work collaboratively with stakeholders to understand issues and design sensibilities.
- Explore Context Sensitive Design techniques and alternative zoning strategies to better integrate the highway with adjacent land uses while protecting and enhancing the aesthetics and village character of the town center.
- Provide more on-street parking to support businesses and to provide traffic calming benefits.

1.4 Summary of Public Involvement Process

An important component of the study process was public outreach to residents, business owners, and commuters who live and work in the project area. Towards this end, stakeholder interviews and two public information meetings and workshops were conducted.

CHA also conducted two group interviews with community stakeholders to obtain insight on issues that are critical to the growth, development and conservation of the Town. The stakeholders were individuals that responded to a mailing by town staff to residents and businesses along the corridor. The stakeholders live or work directly in the corridor and thereby have special or intimate knowledge of Main Street. The purpose of the stakeholder interviews was to obtain input in redesigning the street to be a Complete Street and a more welcoming gateway into Branford. The results of the interviews were documented and served to inform the planning of the corridor. A summary of the Stakeholder Interviews is provided in Appendix F.

The informational meetings and workshops were held at the Blackstone Library and were facilitated by CHA with assistance from the Town of Branford staff and the SCRCOG. The informal and interactive nature of the meetings gave citizens the opportunity to participate in the planning process. Residents were notified of the meetings through publication of notices in The Sound weekly newspaper. Stakeholders were also notified by email of the dates and times of the public workshops.

The first informational meeting and workshop was held on March 13, 2008. This meeting provided interested citizens an opportunity to learn about the study purpose, and to establish the study's goals and objectives. Participants also helped planners understand existing conditions of the corridor and identify any specific areas of concern. This meeting was also used to identify "Complete Street" strategies that might be appropriate and effective along the Route 146 corridor.

The second public meeting and workshop was held on May 22nd, 2008. CHA staff presented a draft Conceptual Improvement Plan of the study area indicating where the "Complete Streets Tools" most favored by the public (as expressed by votes cast at the 3/13/08 Public Workshop) could be best utilized given the specific character of the various sections of the corridor and its physical constraints (e.g. available right-of-way, need for turning lanes, proximity of commercial buildings, particular need for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements). Residents were then asked to provide comments on the plan and identify specific modifications that would improve the plan.

Exhibits presented at each of the public meetings and workshops have been posted on line at the following website:

<http://www.scrkog.org/index.htm>

Minutes and sign-in sheets of the meetings and workshops can be found in Appendices E, F and G.



Public Workshop at Blackstone Library

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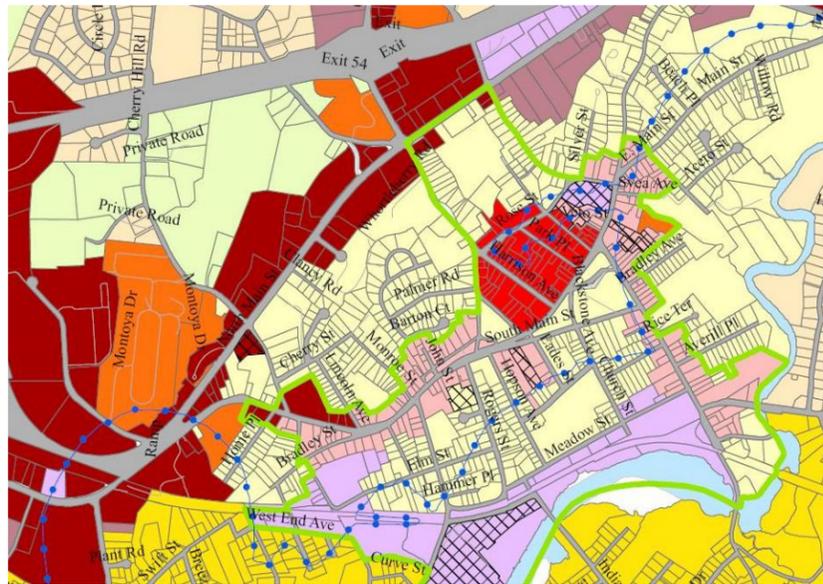
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Excerpt of Zoning Map
Town of Branford



2.0 Existing Conditions

2.1 Land Use

2.1.1 Zoning

There are five principal zoning classifications along the Main Street corridor within the study limits. The limits of these various zoning districts are shown on the Land Use and Zoning Map (Appendix A) including:

Residential (R-1, R-3 and R-5): Primarily single family residences. These districts comprise the vast majority of land north and south of the corridor and within a few hundred feet of the corridor.

Multifamily Residential (MF): Residential district that provides for attached, moderate density housing such as condominiums. The Rockledge Condominium complex at the west end of the corridor is located in an MF district.

Center Business (BC): Multi-story retail, services and office facilities are allowed in the BC district in a “downtown” type density. The Branford Town Center north of the Town Green is a BC District.

Local Business (BL): These districts accommodate a variety of commercial functions necessary for service to the community including general automotive sales and service uses. BL districts are situated along main highways. In the Main Street Corridor, the BL district is located in the western end and includes properties that have frontage on Route 1.

Restricted Business (BR): These districts are designed to recognize business uses resulting from the conversion of residential structures as well as to provide sites for essential retail service in or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. The design, density and intensity of commercial uses and the extent of parking is controlled so as to harmonize with the adjacent residential zones.

An area of General Industrial zone exists adjacent to and south of the corridor in the vicinity of Bradley Street.

2.1.2 Underutilized Properties

In order to understand how the town might best meet Goal 3 of this study, “Enhance the living and working environment for the properties along the corridor” it is first necessary to identify areas of the corridor where improvement and enhancement are most needed. Underutilized sites where redevelopment would be most effective due to inefficient site design, large, underutilized parking lots, and buildings that do not conform to the village scale and character of the district include:

- The several commercial properties located on the north side of Route 146 near its intersection with Route 1.
- The Richlin Shopping Plaza site at the intersection of Route 146 and Cherry Hill Road.
- The Elm Café site on the south side of Route 146 between Bradley and Russell streets.

Refer to Section 3.0 of this report for further discussion of redevelopment strategies and options.

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Aerial View of Main Street at Route 1
Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth



Corner of Route 1 & Main Street
(Route 1) – View South

2.1.3 Parking

The lack of parking in the corridor to support existing retail and other commercial uses is one of the more common issues identified by residents. Currently, on-street, parallel parking is allowed in most areas of the corridor; however, there are very few spaces that are formally acknowledged as legal on-street parking spaces by pavement markings and signs. More specifically, there are only about 36 on-street parking spaces provided on Main Street between Route 1 and South Main Street. They are grouped around the various commercial nodes as follows:

- Vicinity of Home Place and Cherry Hill Road: Approx. 5 spaces.
- Vicinity of Bradley Street and Lincoln Avenue: Approx. 11 spaces.
- Kirkham and Monroe streets (Fourth Ward): Approx. 16 spaces.
- Vicinity of South Main and Eades Street: Approx. 4 spaces.

(Note: Parking is allowed on the north side of Main Street along the frontage of the Library as evidenced by signs that read “One Hour Parking”; however, there are no pavement markings.)

2.1.4 Community Facilities

Community facilities on Main Street or in the immediate vicinity of the Main Street Corridor include:

- The Canoe Brook Senior Center on Cherry Hill Road
- The M.P. Rice Fire Station No. 2 on the south side of Main Street just east of North Harbor Street
- Blackstone Memorial Library on Main and Cedar Street.
- The Branford Police Department on Laurel Street
- The Sliney Elementary School on Eades Street

2.2 Traffic and Transportation

2.2.1 Existing Traffic Conditions

Main Street is a two-lane (one lane in each direction) state highway (State Route 146) owned and maintained by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT). According to CTDOT, it has a functional classification as an “Urban Collector” which means that it serves access between local streets in Branford and regional routes like US Route 1. This route is identified as an Evacuation Route” according to mapping provided in the “Town Wide Transportation Study.”¹ The posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour between Route 1 and the intersection of Main Street and Bradley Street and 25 miles per hour between Bradley Street and the intersection of Main Street and South Main Street. This route carries approximately 13,500 vehicles per day (bi-directional traffic volume)² which is appropriate for a two lane urban arterial. (Refer to Appendix B –“Transportation Map”). The highway is projected to carry over 16,000 vehicles per day by the year 2025³. Actual average speeds are ___ miles per hour according to a recent speed study conducted by the Town of Branford Police Department.

Three Main Street intersections in the study area have traffic signals; 1) Main Street at Route 1, 2) Main Street at Cherry Hill Road, and 3) Main Street at Kirkham Street/Monroe Street. Two of these intersections, Main at Route 1 and Main at Kirkham/Monroe, have traffic signal systems that include pedestrian activated crossing signals.



¹ EarthTech, “Town of Branford Connecticut – Town-wide Transportation Study and Town Green Parking and Circulation Study – Final Report”, Evacuation Routes Map. November 20, 2006.

² Ibid. 2006 and 2025 Average Daily Bi-Directional Traffic Volumes Map.

³ Ibid

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Aerial View of Richlin Shopping Plaza
Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth



Richlin Shopping Plaza

2.2.2 Accident History of Corridor

According to traffic accident data provided by CTDOT and the Town as analyzed and reported in the Town-wide Transportation Study, the recent accident history of Main Street can be classified as “Medium” (34-66 annual accidents per mile) for the western half of the corridor (Route 1 to Kirkham Street) and “Low” (10-33 annual accidents per mile) for the eastern half of the corridor (from Kirkham Street to the Town Green).⁴

Intersections identified as problem intersections either because of their accident history or because they have awkward geometry include:

- Main Street at Route 1 (5-10 accidents per year)⁵
- Main Street at Cherry Hill Road
- Main Street at Bradley Street/Lincoln Avenue
- Main Street at Cedar Street
- Main Street at Laurel/South Main/ Eades streets



CT Transit bus on Kirkham Street

2.2.3 Existing Transit

The existing public transportation infrastructure consists of two regional bus lines running between Old Saybrook and New Haven. The bus lines principally use Route 1 but take Route 146 as a spur to the Branford Town Green. The first line, operated by DATTCO, runs between Old Saybrook and New Haven, Monday through Friday with no service on the weekends. This service line circulates throughout the day running from about 6:00 A.M to 7:00 P.M. The second line, operated by Connecticut Transportation (CT TRANSIT), runs between Branford and New Haven, Monday through Friday, with limited service on Saturdays. This service serves primarily as a commuter line running from about 6:00 A.M to 8:30 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. On Saturdays this line circulates once at around 7:00 A.M. On the way to the Town Green the buses stop bi-directionally at the Rockledge Condos, Cherry Hill Road, Lincoln Avenue, Russell Street, Kirkham Street, and John Street. Traveling around the green, buses make stops at Eades Street, Bradley Avenue, a bus shelter on Montowese Street, Harrison Avenue, and Laurel Street.

A regional commuter rail service also stops at the Branford Train Station on Kirkham Street about one-quarter mile south of Main Street. Shoreline East provides routine service every half hour running westbound from New London to New Haven during A.M. peak hours (5:30 A.M. to 8:00 A.M.) and eastbound service from New Haven back to New London during P.M. peak hours (5:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.). During off peak hours, hourly service is generally available in each direction. From New Haven, this rail system connects to Metro-North which takes passengers to the Grand Central Terminal in New York City. Interstate passenger train service provided by Amtrak is also available at the Branford Train Station, although on a much more limited schedule than Shoreline East service.

⁴ Ibid. “Annual Traffic Accident Rates Map”. Page 11.

⁵ Ibid. “Annual Traffic Accident Rates Map”.

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Intersection of Main/South Main/Eades Streets

2.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

2.3.1 Pedestrian Destinations

Buildings or facilities along the corridor or in the immediate vicinity of the corridor that generate or attract notable levels of pedestrian traffic include:

- The WalMart store located on the north side of Route 1 on Commercial Parkway.
- The Starbucks coffee shop located on the north side of Route 1 near its intersection with Main Street.
- The Canoe Brook Senior Center and the Richlin Shopping Plaza on Cherry Hill Road.
- The cluster of stores, shops, restaurants and services located in the Fourth Ward (near Kirkham Street).
- St. Mary's Church and rectory and St. Mary's School in the vicinity of Cedar Street.
- Blackstone Memorial Library between Cedar and Laurel Streets.
- The Sliney Elementary School on Eades Street.
- Branford Town Center, the churches and the Branford Town Hall on the Town Green located near the eastern end of the corridor.

2.3.2 Crosswalks

Painted crosswalks are provided at many but not all of the intersections of Main Street, as follows:

- Main Street and Route 1: Crosswalk (with pedestrian activated crossing signal) provided on Route 1 to south corner of Main Street but not across Main Street.
- Main Street and Home Place: No crosswalks provided at this 3-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Cherry Hill Road: Only one crosswalk provided on Main Street (east of Cherry Hill) at this 3-legged, signalized intersection. The traffic signal system does not include pedestrian crossing signals.
- Main Street and North Harbor Street: No crosswalks provided at this 3-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Lincoln/Bradley: No crosswalks provided at this 4-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Russell Street: No crosswalks provided at this 3-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Kirkham/Monroe: Four crosswalks (with pedestrian activated crossing signals) provided at this 4-legged, traffic-signalized intersection.
- Main Street and John Street: No crosswalks provided at this 3-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Rogers Street: No crosswalks provided at this 4-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Cedar Street: Two crosswalks provided at this 3-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Hopson Street: One crosswalk provided at this 3-legged intersection.
- Main Street and Laurel/Eades Street: Four crosswalks provided at this complicated, offset, 4-legged intersection.

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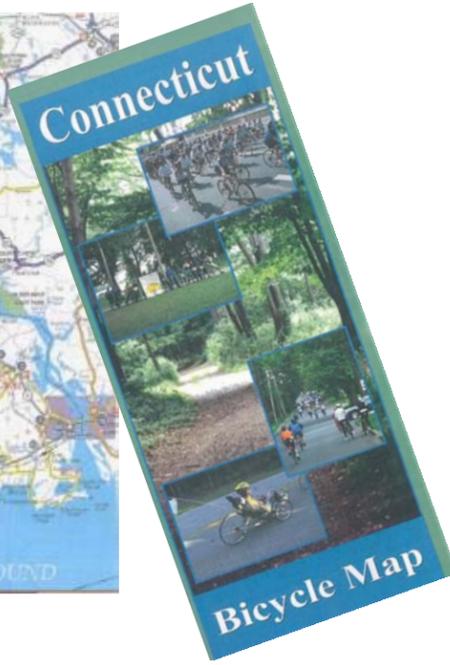
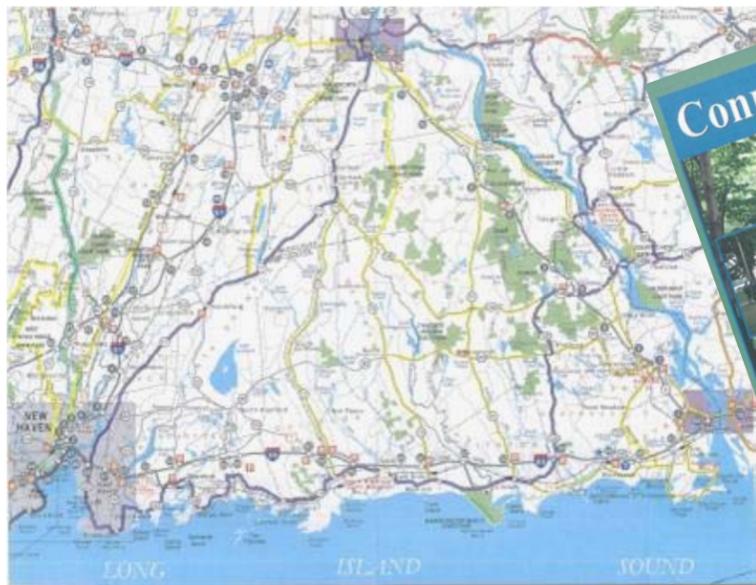
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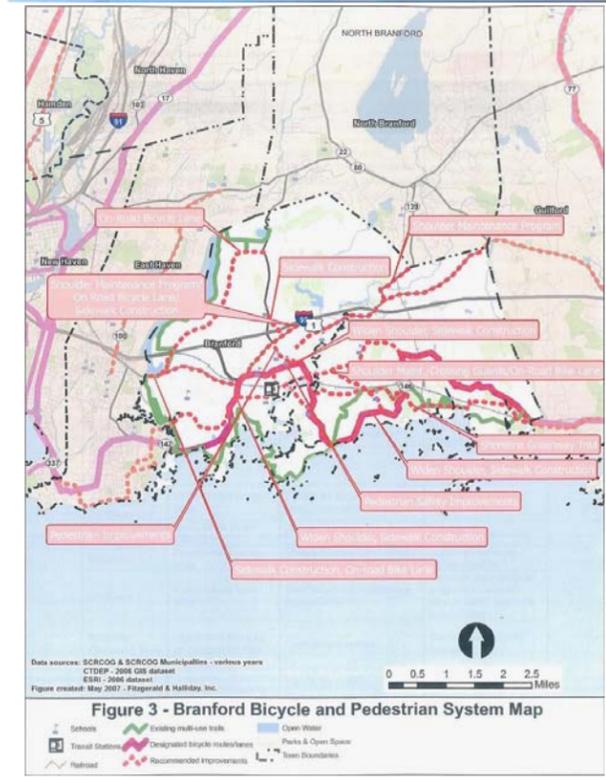
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2.3.3 Sidewalk Conditions

Sidewalks exist along both sides of Main Street along much of the corridor. The exception is along the far west end of the corridor between the intersection of Route 1 and Home Place where there is only 200 feet of sidewalk on the north side in the vicinity of Cherry Hill Road. Generally, the width (four feet wide on average) and condition (well-maintained poured concrete precast concrete unit pavers) of the sidewalks are good from Lincoln Street east to South Main Street. From Lincoln west to where the sidewalks terminate just west of Cherry Hill Road, the width of the walks is narrow (3 feet or less) and the condition of sidewalk surfacing is poor (crumbling bituminous concrete or old and cracked concrete with numerous heaves) and curbs that separate walks from the vehicular travel ways are also poor (deteriorated or nearly flush bituminous concrete curbs in most areas, with the exception of areas east of Kirkham Street where curbs are concrete and are in relatively good condition).



2.3.4 Local, Regional and Statewide Bike Routes

Main Street and the entire reach of Route 146 through Branford is designated a bicycle route, as indicated on the State of Connecticut Bicycle Map⁶ as a “Cross State Route”. Regionally, this Cross State Route follows Route 1 from Westbrook to Guilford, then Route 146 from Guilford to Route 1 in Branford at the junction of Route 146 (west end of the corridor). There it follows Route 1 briefly to the west side of the Amtrak railroad bridge and then joins Route 142 to East Haven. While the Main Street corridor is classified as a Cross State Bicycle Route, it does not have any bicycle signs, directional or informational markers, nor any pavement delineation to indicate bicycle lanes and is therefore considered a “shared roadway” where a bicycle lane is not provided but the road can be legally used as a bicycle route.⁷ An important note on the aforementioned State Bicycle

Map reads “It is recommended that only experience bicyclists use these routes for touring. Major routes not marked with overlays have not been recommended due to heavy traffic volumes or adverse road conditions. Connecticut’s roads were not designed for bicycle touring, and it is important to note that any inclusion of a route on this map does not certify it to be a safe bicycling route.”

The CTDOT recognizes that there is a growing need to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian commuters on arterial roadways in the state in order to help reduce air pollution and traffic congestion; accordingly, one of CTDOT’s recommended policies and actions is that “the Connecticut Bicycle Map and the Long Range Bike Map should be used as a base when evaluating the suitability of providing sidewalks, shoulder widening, etc. and multi-use trails within projects.”⁸

Additionally, the “South Central Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan” recommends the construction of on-road bicycle lanes, shoulder maintenance and/or shoulder widening for Route 146 in Branford (including the sections of Main Street within the study area).⁹ It also recommends improving bicycle and pedestrian connections between transit stations and stops, municipal areas such as the town center, and commercial areas. Also, the Town of Branford’s 2008 Draft Plan of Conservation and Development advocates improving bicycle transportation facilities (safe bike routes, bicycle racks and lockers) throughout town, but especially along both sides of streets in the Town Center, in recognition of the growing interest in “the use of bicycles as a means of recreation and as a mode of transportation.”¹⁰

⁶ Connecticut Department of Transportation in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, “Connecticut 2002 Bicycle Map.”
⁷ Connecticut Department of Transportation, “Connecticut Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. Pg. vi. Source website: <http://www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?a=1390&q=259670>

⁸ Ibid. Page 12
⁹ South Central Regional Council of Governments, “South Central Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan” by Fitzgerald and Halliday Inc. in association with Clough, Harbour & Associates LLP. Page 39. June 2007.
¹⁰ Planimetrics, “Town of Branford’s 2008 Draft Plan of Conservation and Development”; Transportation Chapter of 12-13-2007 Discussion Booklet.

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Aerial View of Intersection of Main Street at Bradley & Lincoln
Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth



South side of Main Street near North Harbor Street

2.4 Visual Analysis

2.4.1 Village Character and Dominant Visual Elements

In general, the Main Street corridor functions as a transition from the relatively dense, mixed-use commercial and civic district of the Town Center and the Town Green to the lower density residential districts surrounding the center. Building spacing is greater, densities are lower and the mix of uses includes more residential units and former residences converted to commercial uses or professional offices. A few exceptions to this development pattern are:

- The western end of the corridor where Main Street intersects Route 1. In this area, the visual character of the north side of Main Street is compromised by the “backdoor” views of commercial and service buildings that front on Route 1. There is also a billboard in this area that further detracts from the residential and village character of Main Street.
- Vicinity of Home Place and Cherry Hill Road. This section of the corridor contains several commercial buildings interspersed along Main Street near the intersections of Cherry Hill Road and Home Place. The buildings include the Richlin Shopping Plaza, Shelley’s Garden Center, Shoreline Wine and Spirits, Pepe’s Gulf service station, Bridal Trousseau, and several small retail stores. It has an interesting eclectic character and small-town feel; however, the large expanse of parking situated directly on the corner of Cherry Hill Road and Main Street associated with the Richlin Plaza detracts from what is otherwise a village-like district.
- The highest concentration of commercial uses (18-20) in the corridor is situated at the intersection of Kirkham and Monroe streets (also known as the Fourth Ward). This district has a more intimate feel to the streetscape since the buildings are mostly small-scale, traditional-style, two-story storefronts and parking is mostly located in discrete parking lots behind the stores and service establishments. Consequently, the Fourth Ward has a distinct village character and more walkable sidewalks. Stores or services include Palma’s Deli, Salvatores Fine Foods by the Green, Branford Jewelers, an Exxon station, World Tek Travel, to name a few.

- The eastern end of the corridor is less residential and more civic oriented since it is adjacent to the Town Center and situated between Tyler Green and the Town Green. Principal uses and dominant architecture includes the majestic Blackstone Memorial Library, the multi-tenanted Branford Theatre Building, St. Mary’s Church, and Wachovia and Webster banks.



Harrison House, Main Street, Branford

2.4.2 Historical/Cultural Features

The Main Street corridor contains many historic properties that define the built environment along much of Main Street. The historic and cultural resources of Branford represent important links to the town’s past and provide a sense of identity and stability. Included in the many historic structures are dozens of properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places including the Harrison House (c. 1724) on Main Street near Home Place and the Blackstone Library (c. 1897). Most of these historic structures are situated within one of the two historic districts through which Main Street passes: 1) the Canoe Brook Historic District in the western end of the corridor in the vicinity of Cherry Hill Road and Bradley Street; and, 2) the Center Historic District which includes all properties on Main Street from Monroe/Kirkham streets east to and beyond the Town Green, as well as extensive areas beyond Main Street. Refer to Appendix A for limits of the Canoe Brook and Town Center Historic Districts.

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2.5 Environmental Resources

2.5.1 Wetlands, Watercourses, and Floodplains

According to town mapping, there are no significant wetlands or watercourses within the immediate area of Main Street in the study area, although pockets of wetlands exist nearby (see Map No. to the left). The Coastal Zone Boundary extends to the intersection of Route 1 and Main Street and parallels the southern edge of Main Street extending to within 600 feet of Main Street near Russell Street and the Town Green.

The corridor is not located within any floodplain areas according to mapping prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The 100 year floodplain limits of coastal flooding associated with the Branford River to the south extend to within 600 feet of the corridor.¹¹ The elevation of this 100 year flood ranges between 11 and 12 feet above sea level but most of the properties along the corridor lie 30 to 60 feet above sea level.



Map of Wetlands & Watercourses in study area
Source: Branford GIS Mapping



Billboard on Main Street near Route 1

2.5.2 Vegetation

There are few street trees planted within the right-of-way of Main Street with the exception of a few trees planted between the commercial buildings and curb in the Fourth Ward (vicinity of Kirkham and Monroe streets) and numerous, mature and specimen-quality trees located within the area known as Tyler Green (on the north side of Main Street between John Street and Cedar Street) and within the triangular traffic island located at the junction on of Main, Laurel, South Main and Eades streets.

¹¹ Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Flood Insurance Program. "Flood Insurance Rate Map – Town of Branford CT, New Haven County – Panels 3 and 5 of 10". Maps revised June 16, 1992 and April 18, 1983, respectively.

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North side of Main Street near Monroe



South side of Main Street at Fire Station

3.0 Traffic Calming/ Complete Streets Tool Box

As mentioned in the introduction of this report, “Complete Streets” can be created by applying various design principles that enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. In order to introduce the public to the various features or strategies used to create Complete Streets and better understand how and where they would be best applied, CHA has developed a “Complete Streets Tool Box” that includes descriptions of each “tool” and images of installations of the tool in other localities.

At the first Public Workshop, CHA presented this “Complete Streets Tool Box.” It included 16 strategies that help to calm traffic, create more walkable neighborhoods, and more multi-use streets. Each resident was given three voting buttons and were then asked to choose three Complete Streets “tools” that they thought would be most appropriate for the corridor to achieve the goals and objectives of the study. Following is a list of the 16 tools in descending order as ranked or selected by residents along with the total number of votes each tool received:

COMPLETE STREETS TOOL BOX		
Results of Public Workshop		
Board #	Tool	No. of “Votes” Received
7	Street Trees and Streetscaping	25
12	Landscaped Medians	20
9	Bicycle Lanes	18
8	On-Street Parking	14
1	Articulated Crosswalks and Pedestrian Refuge	13
13	Shared Parking	13
3	Curb Extensions	13
5	Narrow Traffic Lanes	11
2	Mid-Block Crosswalks	10
6	Modern Traffic Roundabouts	7
11	Textured Pavements at Crosswalks	5
10	Channelizing Island	3
4	Tight Intersection Radii (Curb Radius Reduction)	2

These tools are discussed in the following paragraphs and organized in four categories – Traffic Enhancements, Aesthetic Enhancements, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Enhancements, and Transit Enhancements. The remaining category, Enhancement of Village Character, was not included in the Tool Box because it is a development strategy that is best implemented by the private sector. The actual “Tool Box” boards that were presented at the Public Workshop are provided in Appendix D.

3.1 Traffic Enhancements

- **Narrow Traffic Lanes (Board #5):** Urban streets should be designed for slower travel speeds and with narrower travel lanes (11’ vs. 12’ or 13’) and narrower or no shoulders. Urban streets are often designed using criteria that are more appropriate for rural streets – that is, they are designed to accommodate higher speeds.
- **Modern Traffic Roundabouts (Board #6):** Modern traffic roundabouts are gaining favor as a viable alternative to the traditional signalized traffic intersection. They improve both traffic safety and efficiency and can safely accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. Unlike older traffic circles or rotaries, modern roundabouts require entering vehicles to yield the right-of-way to vehicles already in the circle and therefore discourage higher speeds. The incidence of vehicle-pedestrian accidents is also less in roundabouts than in signalized intersections. Lastly, roundabouts also serve as attractive and landscaped gateways or distinctive entry points into a town center.

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Intersection of Main Street at South Main Street & Laurel Street

- **Channelizing Island (Board #10):** At many arterial street intersections, pedestrians have difficulty crossing due to right-turn movements and wide crossing distances. A channelizing island provides a right turn slip lane separated from other lanes by a raised median. Well-designed right turn slip lanes place right-turning vehicles at a 60° angle from through traffic. This angle limits vehicle turning speeds and increases the visibility of pedestrians. Right-turn slip lanes should be accompanied by pedestrian refuge islands within the intersection. Pedestrians can cross the right-turn lane and wait on the island for their walk signal.

3.2 Aesthetic Enhancements

- **Street Trees and Streetscaping (Board #7):** Streetscape improvements (e.g. street trees, pedestrian-level ornamental street lights, bollards) visually reinforce that the street is in a high pedestrian, slow traffic zone. These improvements also provide vertical elements that enclose the street or reinforce the 'street-wall'. Studies have shown that vertical enclosure of the street reduces the perceived width of the street and causes drivers to reflexively slow down.
- **Landscaped Medians (Board #12):** Medians are raised islands located along the centerline of a street. They provide traffic calming benefits by visually narrowing the travel lanes. Medians are often landscaped to provide a visual amenity and can be fitted with a gap to allow pedestrians to walk (i.e. a pedestrian refuge).

3.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Enhancements

- **Wide Sidewalks:** Walkways within the public right-of-way but separated from roadway vehicles. Safe and accessible sidewalks include four to five foot wide walks separated from the street with a grass strip and six inch high curbs, curb ramps, marked crosswalks, safe lighting, narrow and consolidated curb-cuts
- **Articulated Crosswalks & Pedestrian Refuge (Board #1):** A new generation of crosswalks are wider, better-designed and more articulated which greatly improves

pedestrian safety. To provide a pedestrian refuge, crosswalks are extended through the tips of medians to provide a safety zone. Examples of safe crosswalks in arterial streets include illuminated crosswalks with pavement imbedded lights, raised crosswalks, speed tables or raised intersections, and crosswalks with pedestrian count-down signals.

- **Mid-Block Crosswalks (Board #2):** These are crosswalks at located mid-block along the street and not coincident with an intersection. They are desirable where block lengths are especially long. They need to be carefully designed because motorists do not expect to find pedestrians crossing the street outside of an intersection. For this reason they should be marked with adequate advance warning signing and protected with medians and curb extensions (i.e. mid-block chokers).
- **Textured Pavements at Crosswalks (Board # 11):** Textured and colored pavement includes the use of stamped pavement or alternate paving materials to create an uneven surface for vehicles to traverse. They may be used to emphasize either an entire intersection or a pedestrian crossing, and are sometimes used along entire street blocks.
- **Curb Extensions (Board # 3):** Curb extensions (also called build-outs or neck-downs) extend the line of the curb into the traveled way to reduce the width of the street at intersections. They are designed to shadow the width of a parking lane, bus stop or loading zone and serve to better define and delineate the traveled way as being separate from the parking lane and roadside.

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Bus shelter at corner of Main Street and Montowese on Town Green

Bicycle Lanes (Board #9): Bicycle lanes indicate a preferential or exclusive space for bicycle travel on a street, and are typically striped – although colored pavement is sometimes used. They create more consistent separation between bicyclists and passing motorists, and can also provide a buffer zone between motor vehicles and pedestrians on a sidewalk.

- **Tight Intersection Radii (Board #4):** (curb radius reduction): The geometry of intersections is often designed for the needs of vehicles rather than pedestrians. For example, wide curb radii make it easier for vehicles to turn, especially trucks, but make it dangerous for pedestrians to cross the intersection because the crossing distance is greater and turning vehicles are traveling at faster speeds. Tight radii at intersections provide for shorter pedestrian crossing distances and also cause turning vehicles to travel slower.

from moving traffic; and to increase activity on the street. On-street parking can provide the following benefits:

- Supports the local commercial economic.
- Increases pedestrian comfort by providing a buffer from moving traffic.
- Slows traffic, making pedestrian crossing safer.
- Facilitates safe and convenient curb-side drop-off of passengers.
- Increases pedestrian activity on the street.
- Provides a cue to motorists that travel speeds are reduced and that they are entering a low speed area.

3.4 Transit Enhancements

- **Bus Shelters (Board #7):** Several intersections along Main Street within the study area are designated bus stops for CT Transit (refer to discussion in Section 2.2.3); however, there are no bus shelters or benches provided. The nearest bus shelter is located on the Town Green at the intersection of Main and Montowese streets (see photo). Residents have expressed an interest in providing better accommodations for bus transit-riders to make it more convenient and comfortable for people to use transit; however, a large bus shelter similar to the one at the Town Green may be unnecessary and pricey for bus stops in the study area considering current low demand. A smaller and less expensive version of a combination bench and canopy (such as the one shown in the photo to the right) may be more appropriate.
- **On-Street Parking (Board #8):** The presence and availability of on-street parking serves several critical needs on urban thoroughfares including: to meet parking needs of adjacent uses (especially retail uses); to protect pedestrians



Simple canopy style bus shelter with bench

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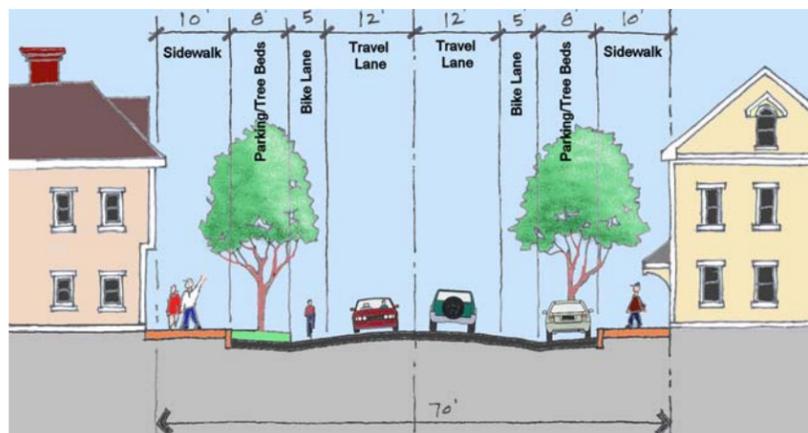


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Typical Cross-Section of Proposed changes to Main Street – Vicinity of Fourth Ward

3.5 Enhancement of Village Character

3.5.1 Context Sensitivity and Design Recommendations

One of the objectives of this study is to “Explore techniques and alternative zoning strategies to better integrate the highway with adjacent land uses while protecting and enhancing the aesthetics and village character of the town center.” During the public outreach meetings and workshops, many residents expressed an interest in providing streetscape improvements to the study corridor, similar to the improvements constructed along Main Street in the Town Center. However, most people recognize that the intensity of improvements constructed in the Town Center would not be appropriate for the less densely developed areas along the gateway corridor.

Therefore, one of the recommendations of this study is to construct pedestrian-scaled, period or ornamental street lighting, shade trees and other improvements along new and improved sidewalks in the study area not only to create a more attractive corridor, but also, and more importantly, to impart a distinctly village character to the street that will remind motorists that they are in special district and are using streets that are designed for multiple users.

Design techniques and zoning tools need not be limited to those that only deal with the publicly owned highway right-of-way since the character of the street is defined more by the type of development that exists on private lands beyond the street-line than by the improvements that can be constructed within the narrow band between the curb and the street-line.

This is not to suggest that the public sector acquire private lands for redevelopment nor require the private sector to implement improvements; rather, it is to explore ways that public policy can or should encourage or incentivize the private sector to implement improvements that would improve the aesthetics of the corridor, encourage private reinvestment, improve real estate values, and enhance the town’s grand list.

Such positive change can be encouraged by providing private landowners with development concepts and by revising zoning and other municipal regulations to allow and regulate redevelopment. Not incidentally, the private redevelopment in the form of infill development that evokes a village character creates enclosure and greatly improves the “walkability” and safety of the street.

Design strategies such as human-scaled, mixed-use buildings situated close to a tree-lined street, with porches, cafes, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and discretely located parking located to the rear of buildings or along the curb not only create more walkable streets but also help to calm traffic. While these strategies do not change the geometry of the street, they result in a form of non-traditional traffic calming, by changing the psychological feel of the street. They send a clear reminder to motorists of the dual functions of the street, as both a movement corridor and as a place for social and cultural activity.¹² The presence of pedestrians, bicyclists, parked vehicles and prominent cross-walks also conveys a sense of uncertainty and a reminder that movement on the street is not limited to vehicles. The attention to detail of the design of the street edge and the creation of an interesting and compact “street-wall” on private property have a moderating influence on motor vehicle speeds and obligate motorists to drive slowly and attentively.¹³

The successful use of architectural strategies to create walkability and a village atmosphere that results in traffic calming can be found in the Town Center of Branford. Through preservation of many historically significant mixed-use buildings, and the implementation of carefully crafted zoning codes that perpetuate this character and regulate the density, form and style, the town has created a compact, vibrant district where motorists drive slowly and are cognizant and respectful of pedestrians and bicyclists. People, not cars, are the priority.

¹² Engwicht, David, “Street Reclaiming Through Design”; Source website: <http://www.lesstraffic.com/Articles/Traffic/SRdesign.htm>

¹³ Nozzi, Dom. “The Ingredients of a Walkable Street” Source website: <http://www.walkablestreets.com/walkingred.htm>

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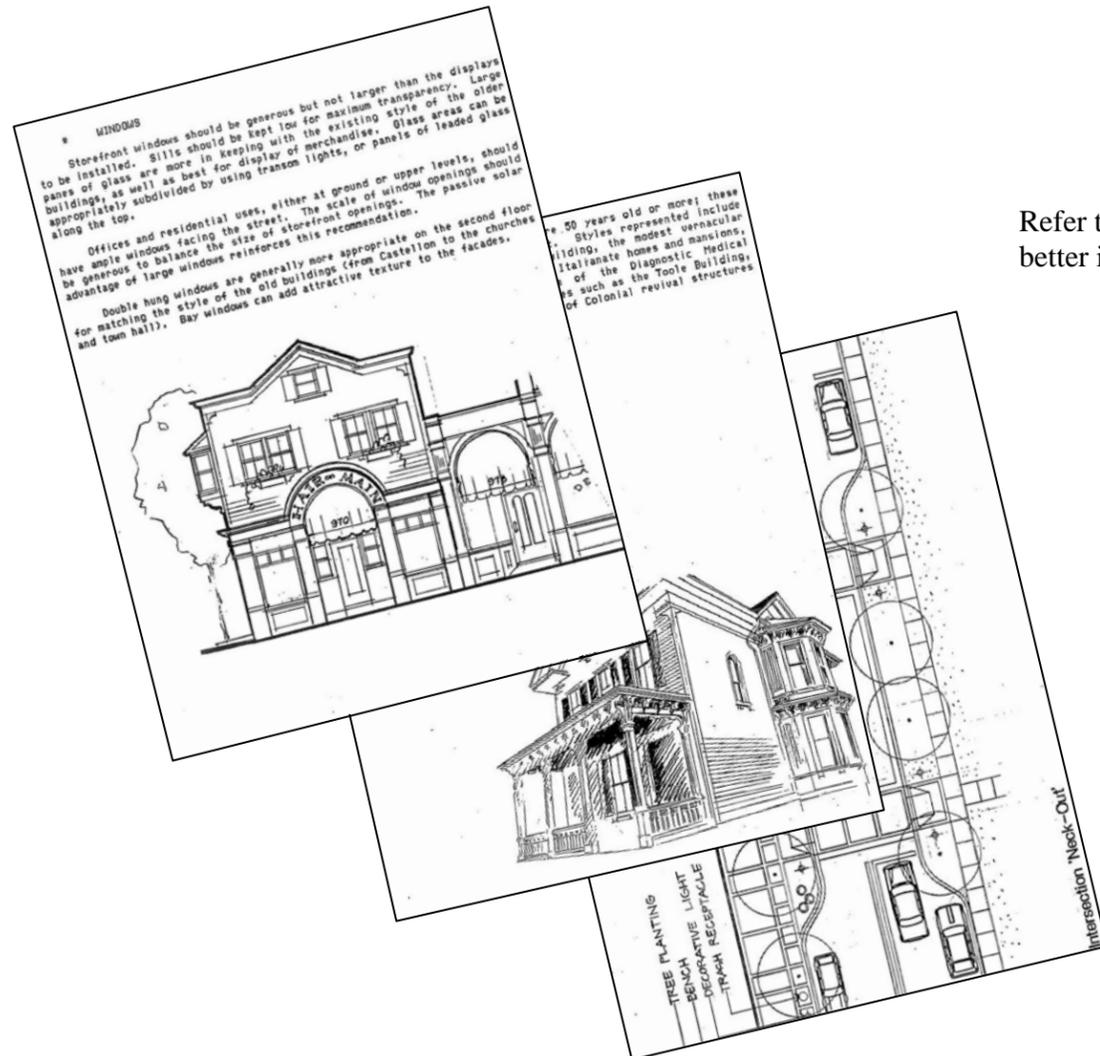
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Similar village character, albeit to a lesser density, can be achieved along the Main Street corridor. Through the adoption of master plans and form-based zoning codes (similar to the Town Center Overlay District, see Section 3.5.2), the Main Street corridor can be reinvigorated with thoughtful infill development. Underutilized sites where this redevelopment would be most effective, as identified in Section 2.1.2 and include:

- Commercial properties located on the north side of Route 146 near its intersection with Route 1.
- The Richlin Shopping Plaza site at the intersection of Route 146 and Cherry Hill Road.
- The Elm Café site on the south side of Route 146 between Bradley and Russell Streets.

Refer to the Conceptual Site Plan (Appendix C) for concepts that would better integrate these sites into the greater district.



Excerpts from Design Criteria & Guidelines – Branford Town Center

3.5.2 Zoning Recommendations

As noted in Section 2.1.1, properties in the study area lie in several zoning districts. Most of the commercial uses in the corridor lie in the Restricted Business and Local Business zoning districts. The zoning provisions or restrictions for these two districts do not have the flexibility to allow the design recommendations discussed in the previous section and the land use concepts that include Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND, refer to Section 4.1) to be implemented.¹⁴ The building massing, density, building relationship to the streetline, minimum parking requirements and several other characteristics necessary to achieve the desired village character of a TND; however, can be achieved under the zoning provisions established for the Center Business (BC) zoning district. Combined with the provisions of a Village District¹⁵ or the Town Center Overlay District (which currently applies to the Town Center and to most properties in the study area), which sets forth design standards¹⁶ and provides for advisory design review by the Town Center Revitalization Review Board in order to assure that the more subjective aspects that recognize the unique cultural, historic and aesthetic context of the area are provided for. The BC district regulations are rather unique in Connecticut and result in the maintenance and enhancement of a townscape that is reminiscent of a 19th century village, i.e. the Branford Town Center.

¹⁴ Planning and Zoning Commission, Town of Branford CT, "Zoning Regulations". January 2007.

¹⁵ The Village Districts Act is a form of historic overlay zoning similar to the Town of Branford's Town Center Overlay District which serves to protect a community's character and historic development patterns. Connecticut PA 98-116 allows municipal zoning commissions to create village districts to preserve historic and scenic resources.

¹⁶ Selbert Design Associates "Design Criteria and Guidelines – Branford Town Center – Town of Branford, CT" by. May 21, 1987.

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Aerial View of intersection of Main Street at Kirkham & Monroe; Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth



Main Street at Monroe



Main Street in Fourth Ward

4.0 Draft Action Plan

4.1 Preferred Alternative

Following Public Workshop No. 1 where residents were asked to state their issues and concerns about Main Street and indicate their preferences for the various tools and strategies available to create “Complete Streets”, CHA developed a Conceptual Improvement Plan of the study area indicating where the “Complete Streets Tools” most favored by the public (as expressed by votes cast at the Workshop) could be best utilized given the specific character of the various sections of the corridor and the physical constraints (e.g. available right-of-way, need for turning lanes, proximity of commercial buildings, particular need for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements). The Conceptual Improvement Plan showed numerous Traffic Calming improvements such as curb extensions, landscaped medians (or pedestrian refuge islands), prominent cross-walks, and narrow traffic lanes. The Conceptual Improvement Plan also showed continuous bicycle lanes on both sides of the street and discussed where bus pull-outs can be created to provide for multi-use streets. The plan also illustrated where on-street parallel parking can be provided to meet the study goals and objectives related to supporting businesses and providing safer and slower streets.

The Conceptual Improvement Plan also addressed placemaking or context sensitivity and the desire of residents to continue the streetscaping improvements associated with the Town Center (e.g. street trees, attractive and wide sidewalks and ornamental, pedestrian-scaled light standards), albeit at a lower level of intensity in consideration of the lower density and residential character of much of the study area.

The Conceptual Improvement Plan also showed supportive future redevelopment opportunities in the form of “Traditional Neighborhood Developments” (TNDs). One TND was located at the site of the Richlin plaza and the other at the underdeveloped land that surrounds the Elm Café. The intent is to create contextual, carefully planned, compact, and walkable neighborhoods. Building and site design guidelines would require clustering and integration of a mix of land uses appropriate to the district (e.g. residential, small-scale retail, restaurants, professional services such as doctors, lawyers finance and real estate offices).

The proximity and mix of uses would allow for shared parking and reduce parking demand (in part because each use would have a different or complimentary peak hour). The compact and intimate nature of the development would preserve land (by requiring less parking and allowing greater density than currently exists), reduce dependency on the automobile and create a unified and coherent townscape similar to the character that exists in other mixed-use areas along the corridor. The TND would embody the best elements of a New England village while accommodating current lifestyles and land uses.

It should be noted that the TND recommendations of the Conceptual Improvement Plan are illustrative only and that the town would not be acquiring private land for redevelopment. Rather, if residents like the concept, the private sector would initiate and implement the development and assemble any land that may be necessary. As noted in Section 3.5.2, the town may want to facilitate the TND by revising zoning to allow the uses and densities, adopting design standards to control the more subjective aspects of development. This TND strategy is consistent with recommendations in the “Branford 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development” recently adopted by the town, particularly the “Community Structure” section of that document.¹⁷

CHA also prepared various alternatives for several areas along the corridor including:

- alternative intersection designs (including a Modern Traffic Roundabout) at the intersection of South Main Street/Laurel Street/Eades Street;
- plans to provide traffic signals at the intersections of Main Street with Cherry Hill Road and Cedar Street; and,
- possible alternatives for the location and width of bicycle lanes.

The public was asked to comment on this draft Conceptual Improvement Plan (see Appendix C) which was published on the SCRCOG website: <http://www.scrcog.org/index.htm>

¹⁷ Planimetrics, “Town of Branford’s 2008 Draft Plan of Conservation and Development”; Community Structure Chapter of 12-13-2007 Discussion Booklet.

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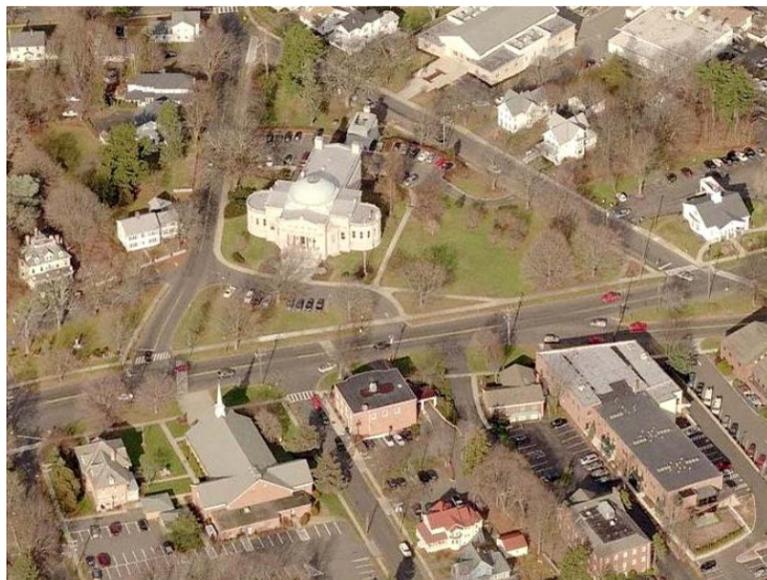
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Aerial View of Main Street at Cedar Street
Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth



St. Mary's Church on Main Street near Cedar

Key traffic safety improvements included on the Conceptual Improvement Plan are:

1. Defined, on-street parallel parking on both sides of Main Street where the width of the right-of-way allows and where the parking would not interfere with turning vehicles at intersections or curb-cuts. The parked vehicles would be protected from vehicles in travel lanes by bump-outs or curb extensions. Currently, there are 36 defined parking spaces on Main Street in the study area (see Sec. 2.1.3); the Conceptual Improvement Plan depicts a total of 148 parking spaces – a net increase of 112 spaces. It is interesting to note that, despite this 400% increase in formalized parking and the creation of 5 foot wide bicycle lanes on both sides of Main Street, the Conceptual Improvement Plan would not result in an increase of pavement. In other words, the pavement area of the proposed on-street parking and on-street bicycle lanes would be taken from the surplus paving that now exists as travel lanes on Main Street.
2. Pedestrian refuge islands at major intersections to provide traffic calming and to protect pedestrians in crosswalks. (see Sec. 3.3)
3. Geometric changes to the intersections of Main at Cherry Hill Road and Main at Bradley/Lincoln in order to better align the opposing, offset streets and make the angle of intersection closer to 90 degrees.
4. TND-type infill development (refer to Section 4.1), if and when the properties are redeveloped by their owners in the future, at the Richlin Shopping Plaza and at the Elm Café site.
5. A 30 foot wide landscaped median in Main Street between the Tyler Green and the Town Green.
6. A modern traffic roundabout to replace the awkward and unsafe intersection at Main/Laurel/South Main/Eades streets.
7. Street trees along both sides of Main Street for its entire length at spacing no less than 50 feet on center. Care should be taken to avoid planting trees where they would obstruct the view of signs to commercial establishments.

Subsequent to the second Public Workshop and technical meetings with the Town's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), including the Chief of Police, CHA further developed and revised the Draft Conceptual Improvement Plan to incorporate public and TAC comments. The result is the Preferred Alternative which is provided in Appendix C.

Notable changes to the Draft Concept include:

1. Modify proposed changes to intersections in the vicinity of Main/Laurel/South Main/Eades Streets to better accommodate a modern traffic roundabout. These changes include converting Laurel Street to one-way north in order to simplify traffic operations at Main/Eades/Laurel and converting Harrison Street from one-way north to one-way south since having two adjacent streets with one-way travel in the same direction is detrimental to overall traffic flow and emergency response.
2. Provide diagonal parking on Laurel Street (at least one side of the street) since there is a deficit of parking at the Library and at the Police Headquarters. Currently, there are approximately 22 parallel parking spaces on one side of Laurel Street (west side); the conversion of Laurel Street to one-way traffic with diagonal parking on the west side will result in approximately 40 parking spaces – a net increase of 18 parking spaces.
3. Recommend the installation of a traffic signal at Cedar and Main in recognition of the high traffic volumes at this intersection and the difficulty of left-turning traffic negotiating the proposed 30 foot wide landscaped median without benefit of a traffic light.
4. Recommend the installation of a traffic signal at Cherry Hill Road to improve identified safety issues at this location. It is difficult for motorists on Cherry Hill Road to see eastbound traffic on Main Street because of the acute angle of the intersection and because of the curve on Main Street to the west. The accident rate at this intersection is not unusually high; however, the types of accidents are severe in nature due to high speeds of vehicles on Main Street.
5. Reconfigure the intersection of Main Street at Lincoln and Bradley to align Bradley opposite Lincoln (to correct the current offset) but modify the proposed intersection design to reduce property impacts on the west side of the intersection by shifting the proposed realignment slightly to the east.
6. Eliminate traffic connections between the proposed TND at Cherry Hill Road (the Richlin Shopping Plaza) and Cherry Street.
7. Provide a landscaped gateway at the intersection of Main Street and Route 1.
8. Provide a traffic speed notification and control sign on eastbound Main Street, west of Cherry Hill Road that would flash the actual speed of the approaching vehicle.

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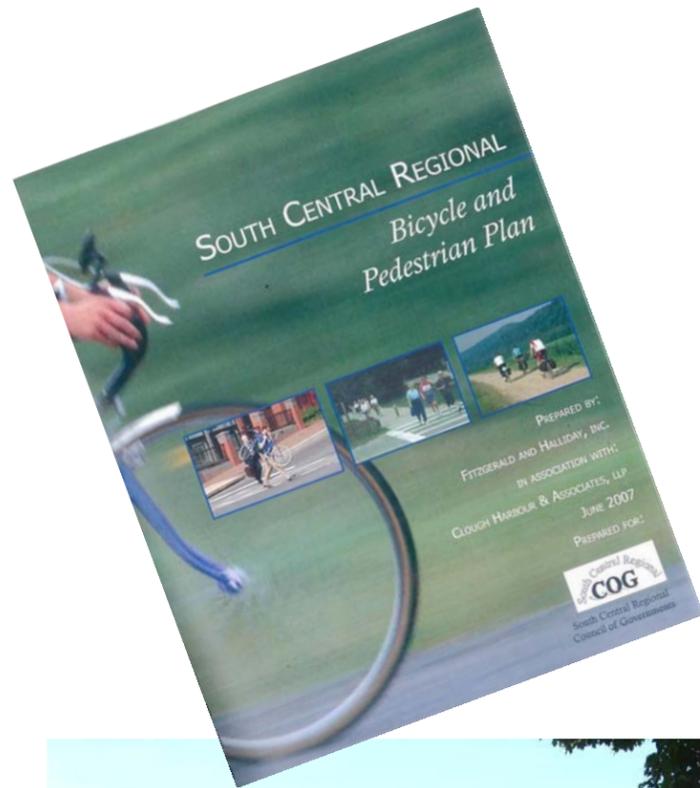
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Streetscape Improvements on Main Street at the Town Green

4.1.1 Access Management

Implementation of access management strategies to reduce the number of curb-cuts will improve traffic safety. Excessive curb-cuts and wide curb-cuts tend to inhibit through traffic operations, create additional vehicular conflict points, and create unsafe conditions for pedestrians who tend to be less alert at intersections of sidewalks and curb-cuts than they are street intersections.

4.1.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

The Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was developed by the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) to identify actions that will improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the region in order to advance bicycling and walking as viable modes of transportation rather than just a means of recreational activity.¹⁸

Walking and bicycling would be more effective and attractive forms of transportation if a comprehensive network existed in the Town of Branford since there are many areas of town where people are unable to walk or bicycle safely because facilities (e.g. sidewalks, lighting, safe crosswalks, bicycle lanes, multi-use trails) do not exist and because there are not adequate connections between major destinations (e.g. employment centers, schools, parks, shopping centers).¹⁹ For example, a number of Shoreline East transit users live close enough to walk or bike to the Branford Train Station, but cannot because there are no sidewalks or safe biking spaces on the connecting streets.

Another example in the study area is the lack of sidewalks and safe crosswalks between St. Mary's Church and rectory on Main Street near Cedar Street and St. Mary's School on Cedar Street near Rose Street. Even though the distance between the church and the parochial school is only one-quarter of a mile, the church chooses to bus children between the two sites because it considers the existing pedestrian facilities unsafe.

A related concern raised by a resident during one of the public workshops for this study is Cherry Hill Road. There are no sidewalks north of the Canoe Brook Senior Center and there are numerous residences along the street and many more further to the north across

Route 1. Traffic on Cherry Hill Road, which provides an alternate connection between Route 1 and Main Street as well as shoreline points to the south, is relatively fast-moving. Consequently, many residents deem Cherry Hill Road unsafe for walkers and bicyclists, especially school age children and the elderly. Everyday destinations such as the Senior Center, convenience stores on Main Street, the Town Center and local schools and churches are within easy walking distance but may as well be in another town.

This lack of safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities forces people to drive to popular destinations when they may prefer to walk or bike. Following are the pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements recommended for the Main Street corridor; these improvements are graphically depicted on the Conceptual Improvement Plan:

1. Provide continuous, five foot wide concrete sidewalks on both sides of Main Street for its entire length.
2. Provide bump-outs or curb-extensions at all crosswalks where possible in order to minimize the distance that a pedestrian would be in the travel-way of the street.
3. Provide improved shoulders and five foot wide bicycle lanes on both sides of Main Street for its entire length (except through intersections).
4. Provide street lighting on both sides of Main Street. Street lighting in areas where there is a concentration of commercial uses (i.e. Home Place to the M.P. Rice Fire Station; Russell Street to John Street; and in the vicinity of the Blackstone Library) should be illuminated with pedestrian-scale (12' to 16' height), ornamental light standards of a design that is similar to the standards provided in the Town Center.
5. Provide a sidewalk on the east side of Cedar Street along the frontage of the Blackstone Library and sidewalks on at least one side of Cherry Hill Road between Main Street and Route 1.

¹⁸ South Central Regional Council of Governments, "South Central Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan" by Fitzgerald and Halliday Inc. in association with Clough, Harbour & Associates LLP. Page 1. June 2007.

¹⁹ Ibid. Page 1

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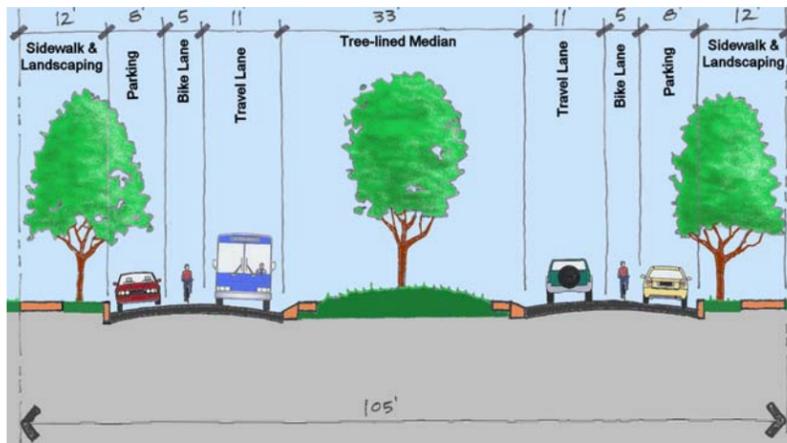


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Typical Cross-Section of Proposal Changes to Main Street – Vicinity of Cedar Street

4.1.3 Transit Enhancements

Getting people out of their cars and using buses, trains, and bicycles to commute has multiple benefits including improved air quality and less production of greenhouse gases by reducing use of fossil fuels; improved water quality because less pavement would be needed for parking lots; and, reduced traffic congestion. Use of transit can be increased by making transit more convenient and comfortable to use. Accordingly, it is a recommendation of this study to provide better pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit stops and to construct bus shelters where appropriate to encourage the use of the regional bus service.

Reduced reliance on single-occupant automobile use can also be effected by creating compact, mixed-use developments, or TND's (see Section 4.1), on underutilized properties on or near the corridor. TND's would encourage "park-and-walk" behavior. Increasingly, people prefer to live, work, and conduct business and social activities in mixed-use districts that are attractive, compact, walkable, have a human scale, cater to an array of lifestyles, and are alive with a diversity of activities (business, retail, entertainment, dining, cultural, mixed-income housing, artist lofts and galleries). These innovative developments foster sustainable lifestyles and make the use of transit, walking and biking a convenient, attractive option for building occupants – residents and office workers alike. TNDs provide better travel options for its residents and effectuate expansion of the ridership of current transit services. TND's can provide the town with new economic activity while minimizing the impacts of this activity on highway congestion.

4.2 Action Steps

The SCRCOG and CHA recommend the following action steps to implement the recommendations of this study:

1. Town formally adopts this Conceptual Improvement Plan .
2. Town boards and agencies modify zoning regulations to allow TND type development as infill development along Main Street.
3. Town petitions the SCRCOG to prioritize the project recommended in this study as a high priority safety improvement and have them placed in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

4. Obtain State funding (and Town matching share) for survey and Phase I design and construction.
5. Obtain State funding (and Town matching share) for Phase II design and construction.

4.3 Suggested Phasing of Improvements

4.3.1 Short-Term Improvements

Short-term or Phase I improvements would significantly improve safety with minimal expenditures. These Phase I improvements should include: improved crosswalks, better traffic safety signs, pavement markings for bicycle lanes and on-street parallel parking.

4.3.2 Long-Term Improvements

Long-term or Phase II improvements would include the more costly construction associated with reconstruction of the street and streetscape. Specifically, it would include new curbs, new sidewalks, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaped medians, modern traffic roundabout, angled parking on Laurel Street, new traffic signals at Cherry Hill Road and Cedar Street, intersection realignments at Cherry Hill Road, Bradley/Lincoln Streets, street tree plantings, pedestrian-scale, ornamental street lighting, bus shelters and signage.

4.4 Order of Magnitude Costs for Preferred Alternative

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ROUTE 146 MAIN STREET SCENIC HIGHWAY GATEWAY PLAN - BRANFORD, CT

LAND USE AND ZONING MAP

KEY	
ZONING	LAND USE
RESIDENTIAL 1 (R-1)	CIVIC BUILDING
RESIDENTIAL 3 (R-3)	SCHOOL
RESIDENTIAL 5 (R-5)	CHURCH
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (MF)	PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
CENTER BUSINESS (BC)	TRANSIT
LOCAL BUSINESS (BL)	COMMERCIAL
RESTRICTED BUSINESS (BR)	CANOE BROOK HISTORIC DISTRICT
GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (IG-1)	BRANFORD CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
	PROJECT LIMITS



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Appendix A
 Land Use and Zoning Map

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Appendix B Traffic and Transportation Map

Conceptual Improvement Plan - East



JUNE 2008

POTENTIAL PRIVATE REDEVELOPMENT USING TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPALS

LEGEND	
Roadway	Land Use/Development
Proposed Bike Lane	Potential Private Redevelopment Opportunity
Proposed Parking Lane	Existing Commercial Development
Proposed Median or Island	
Crosswalk	
Proposed Sidewalk	

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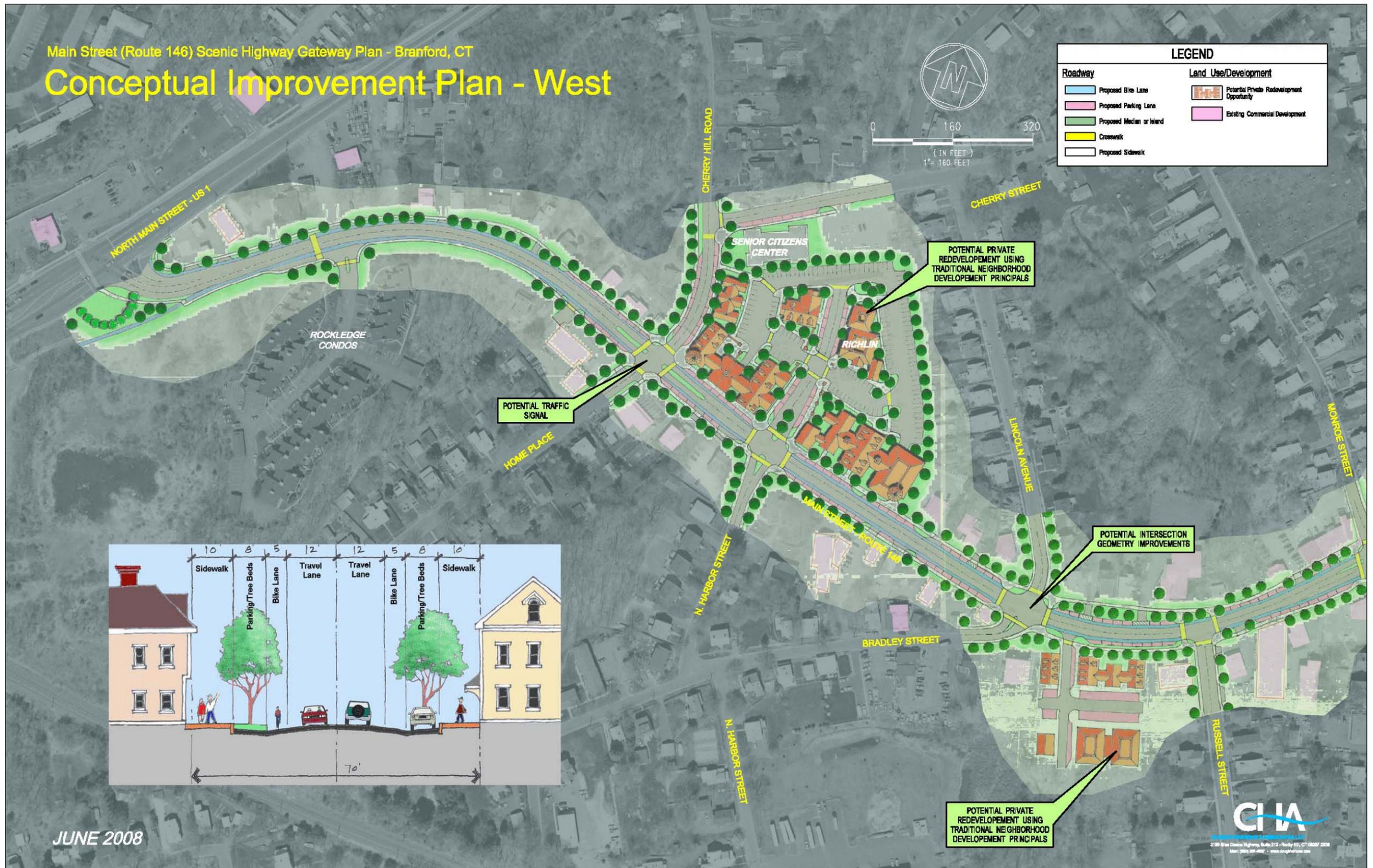
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Appendix C
Conceptual Improvement Plan

Conceptual Improvement Plan - West



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Appendix C
Conceptual Improvement Plan

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Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan – Branford, CT Complete Streets Tool Box

Articulated Crosswalks & Pedestrian Refuge

Wider, better-designed and more articulated crosswalks greatly improve pedestrian safety. Where possible, extend crosswalks through the tips of medians to provide a pedestrian safety zone.

Examples of safe crosswalks in arterial streets include illuminated crosswalk with pavement imbedded lights, raised crosswalks, speed tables or raised intersections, and crosswalks with pedestrian count down signals.



Branford Center – Main Street at Blackstone Ave.



Pedestrian Refuge – Downtown Keene, NH



Pedestrian Refuge- Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable Communities, Inc.

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Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

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Complete Streets Toolbox

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Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan – Branford, CT
Complete Streets Tool Box

Mid-Block Crosswalks

Crosswalks at mid-block locations are desirable where block lengths are especially long provided they are signaled and are protected with medians and curb extensions (i.e. mid-block chokers).



Midblock median island- Richard Drdul



Main Street – Branford Center (on the Green)

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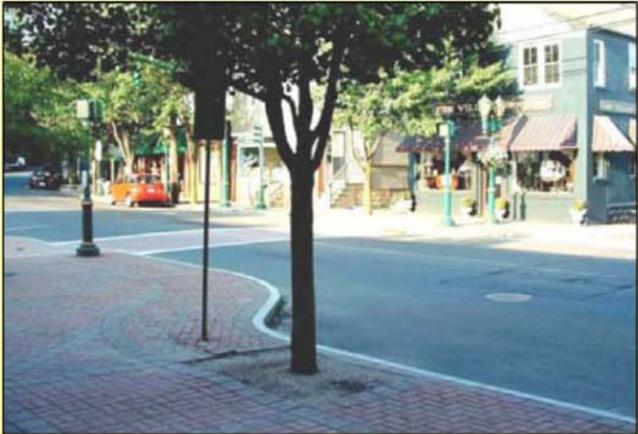
Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan – Branford, CT
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Curb Extensions

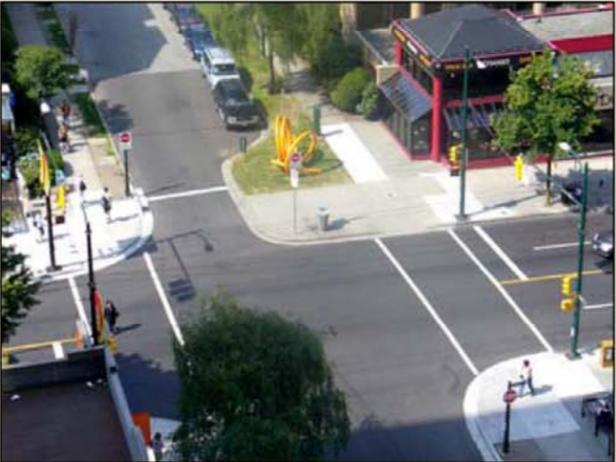
Curb extensions (also called build-outs or neck-downs) extend the line of the curb into the traveled way to reduce the width of the street at intersections. They are designed to shadow the width of a parking lane, bus stop or loading zone and serve to better define and delineate the traveled way as being separate from the parking lane and roadside.



Mid-block crosswalk – Annapolis MD (Sousa)



Main Street – Branford Town Center



Robson Street, Vancouver BC (Sousa)

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Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

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Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan – Branford, CT Complete Streets Tool Box

Tight Intersection Radii (Curb Radius Reduction)

The geometry of intersections is often designed for the needs of vehicles rather than pedestrians. For example, wide curb radii make it easier for vehicles to turn, especially trucks, but make it dangerous for pedestrians to cross the intersection because the crossing distance is greater and turning vehicles are traveling at faster speeds.



Reduced radius corner, location unknown



Branford Center - Main Street at Chestnut

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Narrow Traffic Lanes

Urban streets should be designed for slower travel speeds and with narrower travel lanes (11' vs. 12' to 13') and narrower or no shoulders. Urban streets are often designed using criteria that are more appropriate for rural streets – that is, they are designed for speed in the misguided belief that speed increases capacity. An urban street can carry more vehicle traffic at 30 mph than it can at 50 mph because the capacity is controlled at signalized intersections. Higher design speeds lead to lower street capacity because higher speed signals require more red clearance time. The increased width requires longer pedestrian cycle times which can reduce green time for vehicles.



Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable Communities, Inc.

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Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

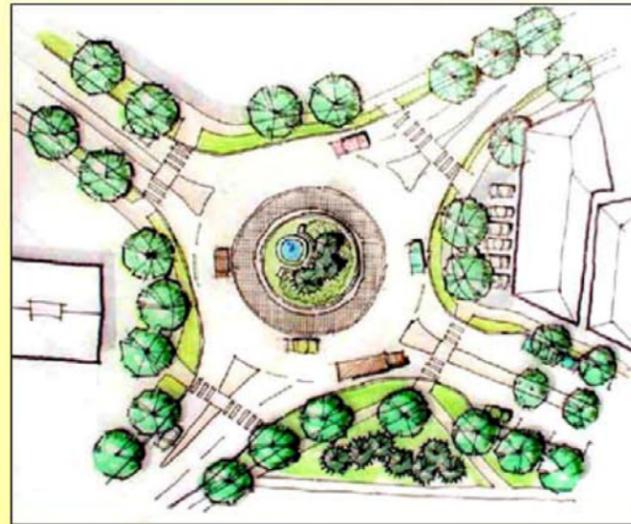
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Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan – Branford, CT Complete Streets Tool Box

Modern Traffic Roundabouts

Modern traffic roundabouts are gaining favor as a viable alternative to the traditional signalized traffic intersection. They improve both safety and efficiency for pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles. Unlike older traffic circles or rotaries, modern roundabouts require entering vehicles to yield the right-of-way to vehicles already in the circle and therefore discourage higher speeds. The incidence of vehicle-pedestrian accidents is also less in roundabouts than in signalized intersections. Lastly, roundabouts also serve as attractive and landscaped gateways or distinctive entry points into a town center.



Rendering of Roundabout – Clough Harbour & Associates



Roundabout - Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable Communities, Inc.

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Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

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Street Trees and Streetscaping

Streetscaping improvements (e.g. street trees, pedestrian-level ornamental street lights, bollards, etc.) visually reinforce that the street is in a high pedestrian, slow traffic zone. They also provide vertical elements that enclose the street or reinforce the 'street-wall'. Studies have shown that vertical enclosure of the street reduces the perceived width of the street and causes drivers to reflexively slow down.



Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable Communities, Inc



Main Street on the Green, Branford Town Center



Main Street – Keene, NH (Sousa)

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Town of Branford, Connecticut

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Complete Streets Toolbox

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On-Street Parking

The presence and availability of on-street parking serves several critical needs on urban thoroughfares including: to meet parking needs of adjacent uses (especially retail uses); to protect pedestrians from moving traffic; and to increase activity on the street. On-street parking can provide the following benefits:

- Supports the local commercial economy.
- Increases pedestrian comfort by providing a buffer from moving traffic.
- Slows traffic, making pedestrian crossing safer.
- Facilitates safe and convenient curb-side drop-off of passengers.
- Increases pedestrian activity on the street.
- Provides a cue to motorists that travel speeds are reduced and that they are entering a low speed area.



Main Street on the Green, Branford Town Center

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Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
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Bicycle Lanes

Bicycle lanes indicate a preferential or exclusive space for bicycle travel on a street, and are typically striped – although colored pavement is sometimes used. They create more consistent separation between bicyclists and passing motorists, and can also provide a buffer zone between motor vehicles and pedestrians on a sidewalk.



Bike lane at channelizing island - Portland, OR



Bike lane adjacent to parked cars- Portland, OR



Shared bike lane and right turn lane -Richard Drdul

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Channelizing Island

At many arterial street intersections, pedestrians have difficulty crossing due to right-turn movements and wide crossing distances. Well-designed right turn slip lanes place right-turning vehicles at a 60° angle from through traffic. This angle limits vehicle turning speeds and increases the visibility of pedestrians.

Right-turn slip lanes should be accompanied by pedestrian refuge islands within the intersection. Pedestrians can cross the right-turn lane and wait on the island for their walk signal.



Channelizing island – location unknown

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**Main Street (Route 146)
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Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan – Branford, CT **Complete Streets Tool Box**

Textured Pavements at Crosswalks

Textured and colored pavement includes the use of stamped pavement or alternate paving materials to create an uneven surface for vehicles to traverse. They may be used to emphasize either an entire intersection or a pedestrian crossing, and are sometimes used along entire street blocks.



Branford Center - Main Street at Ivy



Crosswalk with thermoplastic markings - Main Street in Keene NH
(Clough Harbour & Associates)

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Complete Streets Tool Box

Landscaped Medians

Raised island located along the centerline of a street to visually narrow the travel lanes. They are often landscaped to provide a visual amenity and are sometimes fitted with a gap at crosswalks to allow pedestrians to walk through.



Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable Communities, Inc



Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable Communities, Inc

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Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

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Shared parking in Madison Center
(Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth)



Shared parking behind stores, restaurants and offices in downtown Great Barrington, MA (Sousa)

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Shared Parking

Advantages of small, discretely located and landscaped off-street parking lots in mixed-use districts include:

- Maximize parking efficiency and extent of paved surfacing;
- Minimize or consolidate curb-cuts to create safer streets and sidewalks;
- Encourage people to park once and walk to multiple destinations;
- Safer, coordinated traffic flow through rear parking lots; and,
- Shared expense of parking lot operation and maintenance.

Shared parking also results in significantly decreased demand due to complementary, cross-utilization of parking by surrounding uses (e.g. an office building parking lot will be empty when the restaurant next door is packed after 5 P.M., so requiring both to provide for 100 percent of their parking needs is wasteful).



Concord MA historic town center (Source: Microsoft Virtual Earth)

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**Main Street (Route 146)
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Town of Branford, Connecticut

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Complete Streets Toolbox

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Bethany - Branford - East Haven - Guilford - Hamden - Madison - Meriden - Milford
New Haven - North Branford - North Haven - Orange - Wallingford - West Haven - Woodbridge

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Judy Gott, Executive Director

For Immediate Release February 25, 2008

PRESS RELEASE – March 13 Public Meeting and Workshop for Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford CT

The Town of Branford, in association with the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG), is preparing a plan for the Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway in Branford. This planning study was precipitated by a recent Town-wide Transportation Study that recommended that Route 146 (Main Street) from U.S. Route 1 (West Main Street) to the Branford Town Green be improved to reduce traffic speeds and to provide a safer and more comfortable environment, and a more welcoming gateway into Branford

The study also recommended that the emerging concept of “Complete Streets” be considered. “Complete Streets” is a relatively new set of principles where streets are designed to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. Features used to create Complete Streets include:

- Wide sidewalks with street trees
- Wide and visible crosswalks
- Center medians or crossing islands in appropriate midblock locations
- Bus pullouts and other improvements to support transit.
- Curb extensions or sidewalk bulb-outs
- Curb-cut consolidation or driveway width reduction
- On street parking and bike lanes

Complete Streets calm traffic and can also improve motorist attitude and behavior toward pedestrians and bicyclists by providing visual cues that make pedestrians and bikers more visible and visual enclosure which causes motorists to instinctively slow down. Also, drivers tend to be more courteous and vigilant on streets that are visually pleasing and are designed to complement the unique character of the neighborhood.

An important component of the study process is public outreach to residents, business people, and commuters who live and work in the project area. Towards this end, a public information meeting and workshop has been scheduled for Thursday, March 13, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. at Branford Senior Center, 11 Cherry Hill Road, Branford CT 06405.

The public information meeting and workshop will provide interested citizens an opportunity to learn about the study purpose, and will allow them to provide input to SCRCOG and town staff and our technical consultant, Clough Harbour & Associates LLP. Specifically, citizens can help planners understand existing conditions and any specific areas of concern. The informal and interactive nature of the meeting will also give citizens the opportunity to participate in the planning process, including helping to establish the project’s goals and objectives and to identify “Complete Street” strategies that might be appropriate and effective along the Route 146 corridor.

For further information on this press release or the study, please contact Judy Gott, Executive Director of SCRCOG, at (203) 234-7555.

127 Washington Avenue
4th Floor West
North Haven, Connecticut 06473-1715

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Phone: (203) 234-7555
Fax: (203) 234-9850
E-Mail: jgott@scrcog.org

Public Meeting

Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan

The South Central Regional Council of Governments and the Town of Branford invite you to a public information meeting and workshop to help establish project goals and objectives, and to brainstorm strategies to make Main Street (Rte. 146) safer, more pedestrian-friendly, and more visually pleasing. The project area extends from West Main Street (US Rte. 1) to the Branford Town Green.

Public input is welcome and participation is encouraged.

Date: Thursday, March 13, 2008

Time: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Blackstone Library Auditorium
758 Main Street, Branford, CT

Doors will open at 6:45 pm followed by a presentation at 7:00 pm.

Informal discussion will continue until 8:30 pm.

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut**

Appendix E
Public Workshop Materials

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ROUTE 146 SCENIC HIGHWAY GATEWAY PLAN
PUBLIC WORKSHOP NO. 1

DATE: March 13, 2008
PLACE: Blackstone Memorial Library, Branford, CT
TIME: 7:00 P.M.

AGENDA

1. Study Purpose and Need
 - What Precipitated the Study?
2. Study Overview
 - Study Limits
 - Existing Conditions
 - Summary of Stakeholder Comments
 - Discuss Issues and Concerns
 - Consensus on Draft Goals and Objectives
3. What are Complete Streets?
 - Driver Behavior and Multi-Use Streets
 - Benefits of Integrating the Highway with Land Uses and Neighborhoods
 - Review Complete Streets "Tool Box"
4. Exchange of Ideas
 - "Vote" for Preferred "Complete Streets Tools"
 - What are Key Resources of the Corridor?
 - What are Opportunities?
5. Next Steps
 - Study of Alternative Strategies
 - Draft Action Plan
 - Public Workshop No. 2 (May)
 - Final Action Plan (June)

Presentation Materials

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Draft Goals and Objectives (with image of project limits)
- Summary of Stakeholder Comments
- Comment Sheet

Boards:

- Land Use and Zoning Plan
- Traffic and Transportation Plan
- Complete Streets Tool Box (13 boards)

Supplies:

- Easels
- Colored Stickers (Dots)
- Post-It pads
- Laser Pointer
- Masking tape
- Scotch Tape
- Markers
- Tracing Paper Overlay
- Camera

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut

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SUMMARY OF MEETING

Date: April 9, 2008
Project: Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT
South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)
CHA Project No.: 17202
Date of Meeting: March 13, 2008, 7:00 P.M.
Location of Meeting: Blackstone Memorial Library, Branford, CT
Purpose of Meeting: Public Meeting
In Attendance: Anthony "Unk" DaRos First Selectman
Stephen Dudley SCRCOG
Judy Gott SCRCOG
Janice Plaziak Town Engineer, Town of Branford
Shirley Rasmussen Town Planner, Town of Branford
Richard Stoecker Asst. Town Planner, Town of Branford
Rod Bascom Clough Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA)
Jeff Parker CHA
Dave Sousa CHA
*For members of the public present, see attached sign-in sheet.

Summary of Meeting - The following points were discussed among the participants relative to Route 146 Main Street Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT:

Traffic and Transportation Map

- When travelling west on the corridor there is an operational issue when people are making a left hand turn onto Kirkham Street. Cars try to bypass the turning movement and run into problems when there is on street parking present.
- Parking is needed at the west end of Tyler's Green; maybe provide parallel parking along Tyler Street using porous pavers so as not to detract terribly from Green.
- The intersections of Hopson Avenue, Rogers Street and Cedar Street with Main Street are difficult for drivers since these streets are close in proximity, and do not align. This makes it very hard for drivers using these streets to turn onto Main Street.
- It is difficult to turn left onto Cedar Street from Rose Street. There are pedestrian safety concerns due to the proximity to St. Mary's School. A stop sign is desired here.
- Area of corridor from town green to John Street is problematic; high accident rate and driver confusion.
- Additional parking needed on Laurel Street due to library and other destinations.
- Bus pullouts needed along Main Street from park Place to Hillside Avenue.
- Consider providing bus pullout along Main Street in area between Park Place and Hillside Avenue.

CHA

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- There is a strong opposition to angled parking along South Main Street, adjacent to the Town Green.
- There is an opportunity for streetscape improvements on Kirkham Street.
- Botanical Garden senior housing to be located on Kirkham Street
- Poor aesthetics along corridor at Richlin's Store

Land Use/Zoning Map

- Cedar Street is used to access I-95.
- Shared parking should be encouraged behind access to existing retail stores to provide better customer access and provide for more efficient use of valuable parking.
- The area where Eades Street, South Main Street and Main Street converge is very problematic. Intersection geometry needs to be addressed here. This area is very dangerous for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.
- The intersection of Main Street and Cedar Street is dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians. Main Street is too wide here.
- School buses travel north on Eades Street through town green area.
- There is an island on Rogers Street at its intersection with Main Street that houses a telephone pole.
- Signal improvements and "cat-tracks" (to guide drivers through the intersection) could be used to improve unsafe conditions at the junction of North Main Street and Main Street.
- When travelling northeast on Main Street the right turn onto Montowese Street has a very tight radius.
- Dow Realty is located along the corridor between Monroe Street and John Street. Parking is an issue here.
- Sidewalks are very narrow along the north side of the corridor from Lincoln Avenue to John Street.
- Pedestrian crossing is very dangerous in the area where Lincoln Avenue and Bradley Street intersect with Main Street.
- Drivers travelling west on Main Street make right-hand turn onto Lincoln Ave too fast creating a hazardous situation.
- There are narrow sidewalks on the east side of Lincoln Avenue at its intersection with Main Street. The geometry of this intersection creates driver confusion.
- Speed is a problem in both directions throughout the Corridor.

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Main Street (Route 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Study Town of Branford, Connecticut

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Questions/Comments from the Public

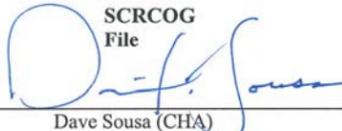
- What are traffic calming measures?
- Stakeholders are more than corridor abutters. Whole town is a stakeholder.
- Will crosswalks work where motorists don't have good visibility of crosswalks (i.e. near Route 1)
 - Dave Sousa answers: Pedestrian refuge (island) could be considered.
- Adequate lighting is needed at crosswalks. There are currently areas in town where crossings are not visible.
- Kids walk along Cherry Hill Road, but the sidewalk stops at Canoe Brook Center. There is enough room for sidewalks here. This whole area needs to be more accessible and walkable.
- There is a problematic situation in front of the library. Cars will pass vehicles on right who are just stopping for pedestrians crossing, not making a turning movement.
- How can land use changes be facilitated?
 - Dave Sousa answers: This is a long term process. There is no way to achieve the density of the town green throughout the corridor, however infill is possible.
- There is a concern about the character of New England charm, it needs to be maintained.
- There should be careful consideration for the type of trees selected for use.
- Resident does not want Route 146 to look like US Route 1 in Orange, CT in regards to density.

Should attendees note any discrepancies in the above minutes of meeting, please contact Jeff Parker or Dave Sousa of CHA (860-257-4557) as soon as possible so that we may issue a correction.

CC:

Town of Branford Officials
SCRCOG
File

Submitted By:


Dave Sousa (CHA)

Date:

4/9/08

CHA

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Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

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**SIGN-IN SHEET
PUBLIC MEETING**

ROUTE 146 SCENIC HIGHWAY GATEWAY PLAN

DATE: March 13, 2008
PLACE: Blackstone Memorial Library
Branford, CT
TIME: 7:00 p.m.

Your Name	Affiliation	Address
Martha Clark	Resident Ad. Member (JBML)	86 Harbor St. Brd.
MIKE DALY	RESIDENT	27 CHERRY HILL RD
Sandra Reiners	Blackstone	40 Shannan Ave.
Sean O'Brien	resident trustee	97 Fay St.
Hughie M	Conserv. Com Resident	230 Stony Brook Rd
← MARSH	Resident	11 Pinewood Rd
Frank Twohill	RTN member	P.O. Box 794 Branford CT 06405
Lenore Stetzer	Resident	18 Lanphier Road
Shari Stetzer	BHS student Resident - Bike safety	18 Lanphier Rd
Chuck Aubrey	P+Z	11 Hopton Court.
Robert Mary Sotolowski	Residents	P.O. Box 416
Robert & Fannie	Neighbors	112 THURSE ELMS Rd
Del Stedler	P+Z	
M. Gercken	Resident	2 Lincoln Ave 43 Willford Ave 556 Main St Bfd.
Bob Jack	Resident	246 Pleasant Point Rd.

**SIGN-IN SHEET
PUBLIC MEETING**

ROUTE 146 SCENIC HIGHWAY GATEWAY PLAN

DATE: March 13, 2008
PLACE: Blackstone Memorial Library
Branford, CT
TIME: 7:00 p.m.

Your Name	Affiliation	Address
RW Sullivan	Vision Group	Branford
Kathy Rieger	Library	Branford
Kate Hostelt	Library	Branford
Jeff Klaman	Clancy F.H.	504 Main St. Bfd
E. McGUIREAN	P+Z	10 RIVERSIDE DR
EARL LIND	P&Z	16 Gould Lane
STEVE DUHANE	P+Z	38 Sybil Ave
Dave Burke	Taxpayer	21 Cedar St
Ben Burke	"	"
Bernice Spade		245 Danvers Rd.
Vivian Giacino	Library	207 Pine Orchard Rd
Linda Giacino	"	"
Jane Boyle	Branford H.S. SOG	61 Beckett Ave
Dorothy Doherty		81 Main St.
Jeff Dea	Dow Realty	North Branford / 622 Main Branford

Airley Assmann - Town Planner
Unt Dabos - 1st Selectman

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**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut**

**Appendix E
Public Workshop Materials**



Bethany - Branford - East Haven - Guilford - Hamden - Madison - Meriden - Milford
New Haven - North Branford - North Haven - Orange - Wallingford - West Haven - Woodbridge

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Judy Gott, Executive Director

For Immediate Release April 14, 2008

PRESS RELEASE – May 8, 2008 Public Information Meeting and Workshop for Main Street (Rt. 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT

The Town of Branford, in association with the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG), is preparing a Scenic Highway Gateway Plan for Main Street (Rt. 146) in Branford. Preparation of this plan was precipitated by a recent town-wide transportation study that recommended improvements to Main Street to reduce traffic speeds; enhance safety; and provide a more welcoming gateway into Branford. The area of study is the Main Street (Rt. 146) corridor from West Main Street (US Rt. 1) to the Branford Town Green (South Main Street).

An important component of the Main Street (Rt. 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Plan is public outreach to residents, business people, and commuters who live and work in the project area. Towards this end, a public information meeting and workshop has been scheduled for Thursday, May 8, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Blackstone Library Auditorium, 758 Main Street, Branford, CT 06405. This is the second of two public meetings to be conducted under this project.

This public information meeting and workshop will allow interested citizens to learn how SCRCOG, town staff and our technical consultant, Clough Harbour & Associates LLP, applied the tools from the "Complete Streets Tool Box" (selected by residents at the first workshop) to the design of the corridor. Specifically, citizens can review concept plans that identify improvement strategies such as intersection reconfigurations, landscaped medians, bicycle lanes, and on-street parking. Citizens can then engage in open and informal discussions about the appropriateness and effectiveness of the improvements along the various segments of the Main Street corridor.

For further information on this press release or the study, please contact Judy Gott, Executive Director of SCRCOG, at (203) 234-7555.

Public Meeting

Main Street (Rt. 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Plan

The South Central Regional Council of Governments and the Town of Branford invite you to a public information meeting and workshop to review "Complete Streets" strategies and concept plans to help make Main Street safer, more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, and more visually pleasing. The project area extends from West Main Street (US Rt. 1) to the Branford Town Green.

Public input is welcome and participation is encouraged.

Date: Thursday, May 8, 2008

Time: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Blackstone Library Auditorium
758 Main Street, Branford, CT

Doors will open at 6:45 pm followed by a presentation at 7:00 pm.
Informal discussion will continue until 8:30 pm.

127 Washington Avenue
4th Floor West
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E-Mail: jgott@scrcog.org

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut**

Appendix E
Public Workshop Materials

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Main Street (Route 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Branford, CT
Public Workshop No. 2
Thursday, May 8, 2008 - 7:00 P.M.
Blackstone Library

1. Study Overview

•Study Purpose and Need/ Study Limits

This planning study was precipitated by a recent Town-wide Transportation Study that recommended that Route 146 (Main Street) from West Main Street (U.S. Route 1) to the Branford Town Green be improved to **reduce traffic speeds and to provide a safer and more comfortable environment.**

•Goals and Objectives

•What are Complete Streets?

“Complete Streets” is a relatively new set of principles where streets are designed to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. Features used to create Complete Streets include:

- Wide sidewalks with street trees
- Wide and visible crosswalks
- Bike lanes
- Center medians or crossing islands in appropriate midblock locations
- Bus pullouts and other improvements to support transit.
- Curb extensions or sidewalk bulb-outs
- Curb-cut consolidation or driveway width reduction
- On street parking

2. Recap of Public Workshop No. 1

Summary of Resident Issues and Concerns

- Speeding is a problem along the entire corridor, especially between Route 1 and Cherry Hill Road.
- There is a need for more on-street parking to support businesses.
- A “road diet” is needed along most of the corridor to limit speeds, illegal maneuvers around left-turning vehicles, and make illegal U-turns; and to reduce driver confusion.

- Pedestrian crossings are inadequate along the corridor but especially at Main Street and:
 - Cedar Street
 - Cherry Hill Road
 - Lincoln Avenue

- Geometric improvements are needed at the intersection of Main Street and:
 - Lincoln Avenue/Bradley Street
 - South Main Street/Laurel Street/Eades Street

These areas are dangerous for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

- A traffic signal at the intersection of Main Street and Cherry Hill Road is desirable and was proposed several years ago but never funded.
- Cherry Hill Road lacks sidewalks which creates a dangerous condition for pedestrians.
- Parking is needed at the west end of Tyler’s Green.
- Area of corridor from town green to John Street is problematic; high accident rate and driver confusion.
- Additional parking on Laurel Street is needed due to library and other destinations.
- Consider providing bus pullouts along Main Street.
- There is opposition to angled parking along South Main adjacent to the Town Green.
- Poor aesthetics along corridor at the Richlin’s plaza.
- Shared parking behind existing retail districts would provide better customer access and provide for more efficient use of valuable parking.
- Sidewalks are too narrow in many places and missing altogether in some areas.
- Better lighting is needed at crosswalks.
- The character of corridor and its New England charm needs to be maintained.

Prepared by:



Prepared by:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut**

Appendix E
Public Workshop Materials

3. Presentation of Alternatives

- Discussion of Opportunities
 - Traffic Calming
 - Multi-Use Streets
 - Placemaking/ Context Sensitivity
 - Supportive Future Redevelopment

4. Alternative Strategies

- Alternatives Considered
- Preliminary Findings and Recommendations
- Draft Action Plan

5. Questions and Comments

6. Next Steps

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

Appendix E
Public Workshop Materials

SUMMARY OF MEETING

Date: May 15, 2008
Project: Main Street (Rt. 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT
South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)
CHA Project No.: 17202
Date of Meeting: May 8, 2008, 7:00 P.M.
Location of Meeting: Blackstone Memorial Library, Branford, CT
Purpose of Meeting: Public Meeting No. 2
Study Team in Attendance:

Anthony "Unk" DaRos	First Selectman
Stephen Dudley	SCRCOG
Shirley Rasmussen	Town Planner, Town of Branford
Richard Stoecker	Asst. Town Planner, Town of Branford
Jeff Parker	CHA
Dave Sousa	CHA

*For members of the public present, see attached sign-in sheet.

Summary of Meeting - The following points were discussed among the participants relative to *Main Street (Rt. 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT*:

- 1) A. DaRos and S. Rasmussen provided a brief overview of the purpose and need for this planning study. They explained that this study was precipitated by the recent "Town-wide Transportation Study and Town Green Parking and Circulation Study" which recommended that Route 146 (Main Street) from West Main Street (U.S. Route 1) to the Branford Town Green be improved to reduce traffic speeds and to provide a safer and more comfortable environment.
- 2) D. Sousa explained the goals and objectives of the study and the concept of "Complete Streets". More specifically, that Complete Streets is a relatively new set of principles where streets are designed to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders.
- 3) Sousa also reviewed the "Complete Streets Tool Box" that was presented and discussed at the first Public Workshop (3/13/08). The "Tools" or features used to create Complete Streets include:
 - Wide sidewalks with street trees
 - Wide, visible crosswalks
 - Bike lanes
 - Center medians or crossing islands in appropriate midblock locations
 - Bus pullouts and other improvements to support transit.
 - Curb extensions or sidewalk bulb-outs
 - Curb-cut consolidation or driveway width reduction
 - On street parking

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- 4) J. Parker recapped comments received from the public at the 3/13/08 Workshop; in summary, comments from residents and others that live, work or commute along Main Street include:
 - Speeding is a problem along the entire corridor, especially between Route 1 and Cherry Hill Road.
 - A "road diet" is needed along most of the corridor to limit speeds, illegal maneuvers around left-turning vehicles, and illegal U-turns; and to reduce driver confusion.
 - Pedestrian crossings are inadequate along the corridor but especially at Main Street and: a) Cedar Street; b) Cherry Hill Road; and c) Lincoln Avenue.
 - Geometric improvements are needed at the intersection of Main Street and: a) Lincoln Avenue/Bradley Street; and b) South Main Street/Laurel Street/Eades Street. These areas are dangerous for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.
 - A traffic signal at the intersection of Main Street and Cherry Hill Road is desirable and was proposed several years ago but never funded.
 - Sidewalks are too narrow in many places and missing in some areas along Main Street. Cherry Hill Road lacks sidewalks altogether which creates a dangerous condition for pedestrians.
 - There is a need for more on-street parking to support businesses. In particular, parking is needed at the west end of Tyler's Green. Additional parking is also needed on Laurel Street due to library and other destinations.
 - Area of corridor from Town Green to John Street is problematic; high accident rate and driver confusion.
 - Consider providing bus pullouts along Main Street.
 - There is opposition to angled parking along South Main adjacent to the Town Green.
 - Poor aesthetics along the corridor at the Richlin's plaza.
 - Shared parking behind existing retail districts would provide better customer access and provide for more efficient use of valuable parking.
 - Better lighting is needed at crosswalks.
 - The character of the corridor and its New England charm needs to be maintained.
- 5) D. Sousa and J. Parker presented a draft concept plan of the study area indicating where the "Complete Streets Tools" most favored by the public (as expressed by votes cast at the 3/13/08 Public Workshop) could be best utilized given the specific character of the various sections of the corridor and the physical constraints (e.g. available right-of-way, need for turning lanes, proximity of commercial buildings, particular need for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, etc.).

The concept plan shows numerous Traffic Calming improvements such as curb extensions, landscaped medians (or pedestrian refuge islands), prominent cross-walks, and narrow traffic lanes. It also showed continuous bicycle lanes on both sides of the street and discussed where bus pull-outs can be created to provide for multi-use streets. The plans also illustrated

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Prepared for:



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where on-street parallel parking can be provided to meet the study goals and objectives related to supporting businesses and providing safer and slower streets.

- 6) Relative to placemaking or context sensitivity, D. Sousa and J. Parker discussed the desire of residents to continue the streetscaping improvements associated with the Town Center (e.g. street trees, attractive and wide sidewalks and ornamental, pedestrian-scaled light standards), albeit at a lower level of intensity in consideration of the lower density and residential character of much of the study area.
- 7) The draft concept plan also showed supportive future redevelopment opportunities in the form of "Traditional Neighborhood Developments" (TNDs). One TND was located at the site of the Richlin plaza and the other at the underdeveloped land that surrounds the Elm Café. The intent is to create contextual, carefully planned, compact, and walkable neighborhoods. Building and site design guidelines would require clustering and integration of a mix of land uses appropriate to the district (e.g. residential, small-scale retail, restaurants, professional services such as doctors, lawyers finance and real estate offices). The proximity and mix of uses would allow for shared parking and reduce parking demand (in part because each use would have a different or complimentary peak hour). The compact and intimate nature of the development would preserve land (by requiring less parking and allowing greater density than currently exists), reduce dependency on the automobile and create a unified and coherent townscape similar to the character that exists in other mixed-use areas along the corridor. The TND would embody the best elements of a New England village while accommodating current lifestyles and land uses.

D. Sousa emphasized that the TND concepts are illustrative only and that the town would not be acquiring private land for redevelopment. Rather, if residents like the concept, the private sector would initiate and implement the development and assemble any land that may be necessary. The town may want to facilitate the TND by revising zoning to allow the uses and densities, adopting design standards to control the more subjective aspects of development¹. This TND strategy is consistent with recommendations in the "Branford 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development", particularly the "Community Structure" section of that document.

- 8) D. Sousa and J. Parker also discussed various alternatives that have been studied for several areas along the corridor such as:
 - alternative intersection designs (including a Modern Traffic Roundabout) at the intersection of South Main Street/Laurel Street/Eades Street;
 - plans to provide traffic signals at the intersections of Main Street with Cherry Hill Road and Cedar Street; and,
 - possible alternatives for the location and width of bicycle lanes.
- 9) D. Sousa and J. Parker briefly discussed the preliminary findings and recommendations of the study team and indicated that the Draft Action Plan will incorporate verbal and written

¹ For this reason, the town may consider an overlay zoning district such as a Village District. The Village Districts Act is a form of historic overlay zoning similar to the Town of Branford's Town Center Overlay District which serves to protect a community's character and historic development patterns. Connecticut PA 98-116 allows municipal zoning commissions to create village districts to preserve historic and scenic resources.

comments made by the public. The public is welcomed and encouraged to review the draft report which will be made available at Town Hall as well as on line at:

<http://www.scrkog.org/index.htm>

- 10) The meeting was then opened to questions and comments from the public, a summary of which follows:

- Can truck traffic along Main Street be relocated? (*Response: Main Street is a state highway and must be accessible to trucks that make deliveries to local businesses and industry; however, various mechanisms can be implemented to slow trucks and discourage through truck traffic. These mechanisms will be discussed in the report.*)
- Bike lanes should be more holistic, concerns about only providing in this location. (*Response: Bicycle travel is being addressed on a town-wide and regional level. The Town of Branford recently participated in the development of the "South Central Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan" (prepared by the SCRKOG). This plan was completed in June 2007 and contains specific recommendations for on-road and off-road bicycle facilities that would traverse the town. The report is available at the following website: <http://www.scrkog.org/index.htm>*)
- Lots of talk about speeds/safety, what about reducing traffic volume? (*Response: The recommendations of this study will include creating more walkable, transit-friendly neighborhoods and providing facilities to make alternative transit and transportation systems more accessible and usable. These actions will serve to reduce traffic demand and possibly encourage a culture where people will be more apt to walk or bike for short trips and take a bus or the train for longer trips.*)
- There are high traffic volumes southbound on Laurel Avenue at the proposed roundabout. Much of this traffic is heading east into the Town Center; how will traffic get there from Laurel? (*Response: Various alternatives are being considered including making Laurel one-way north and Cedar Street one-way south (from its intersection with Laurel). Another is to provide a breach in the proposed median at Laurel to allow left turns. These alternatives will be studied further and addressed in the report.*)
- There is no bike lane shown in the roundabout...how will bikes get through? (*Response: There are two possible ways: 1) bikes can travel as a vehicle would within the single travel lane of the roundabout; because the roundabout is designed for 10-15 mph traffic, bikes will not hinder traffic flow; 2) an off-road bike lane can be provided along-side or around the roundabout within the land that would be made available by reducing the number of intersections.*)
- There recently was a bicyclist fatality at a West Haven intersection that is similar to what is proposed for Cedar Street (i.e. side street turning onto a main street that has a center median). Was that accident caused by the design of the intersection or median? (*Response: The team is not familiar with the accident or the intersection but will attempt to learn about the specifics of the accident and determine if there is cause to rethink the design of Cedar Street. There may very well be a need for a traffic signal at Cedar and Main Street to allow for numerous turning vehicles.*)

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Prepared for:



Main Street (Route 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Study Town of Branford, Connecticut

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- Can sidewalks and traffic calming be provided on Cedar Street between Main Street and Rose Street? (*Response: will explore options.*)

Should attendees note any discrepancies in the above minutes of meeting, please contact Jeff Parker or Dave Sousa of CHA (860-257-4557) as soon as possible so that we may issue a correction.

CC: Town of Branford Officials
SCRCOG
CHA Project File

Submitted By: _____ Date: _____
Dave Sousa (CHA)



Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study**
Town of Branford, Connecticut

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**SIGN-IN SHEET
PUBLIC MEETING**

*Main Street (Rte 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Plan*

DATE: May 8, 2008
PLACE: Blackstone Memorial Library
Branford, CT
TIME: 7:00 p.m.

Your Name	Affiliation	Address
William Cotter	BFD	77 Manatwood Dr.
Jean Cotter	Bfd	same
Augusta Cleveland	Bff	321 Thimble Island Rd
Jim Perito	BFD	55 Averill Place
Rich Stoeckl	BFD	126 Village Lane
Lemore Stelzer	Bfd	18 Lanphier Road
Dottie Maynard	BFD	127 Elm St.
Peter Ramon	BFD	668 MAIN ST (TYLER ST)
Kate Hostelt	BFD/Blackstone	Averill Place
Ann Trapano	Bfd	10 Cherry Hill Rd
Chat Campuzano		33 WILSON ROAD

**SIGN-IN SHEET
PUBLIC MEETING**

*Main Street (Rte 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Plan*

DATE: May 8, 2008
PLACE: Blackstone Memorial Library
Branford, CT
TIME: 7:00 p.m.

Your Name	Affiliation	Address
Vik Davis	Town of Branford	1019 Main
Franc Walsh	" "	" "
Red Meehan		Branford Review
E.E. McGuire	P+Z	10 RIVERSIDE DR
Stirky Rosmussen	P+Z	Town Hall
STEVE Duhamel	P+Z	38 Sybil AVE BRANFORD
Kathy Sharp	Branford resident	23 Cherry St
Maryann Hall	" "	" "
MIKE LAYMAN	P+Z	29 MANSFIELD RD
Richard Gudine	resident	18 Pine Hollow Rd
John Goring	Home owner	5 Woodlark Rd
Phil Fischer	P+Z	236 Stony CK Rd
Jennie Wymack		2 THREE HILLS ST, STONY CREEK
ROBERT WYOMACK	Home owner	" " "
Dave Bente	Property Owner	707 Main St
Bob Ferretti	Conservation Commission	321 Thimble Islands Rd
Jeff Clark		86 Heerlow St.

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut**

**Appendix E
Public Workshop Materials**

Sousa, Dave

From: Stephen Dudley [SDudley@scrcog.org]
Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2008 9:33 AM
To: Parker, Jeff; Bascom, Rod; Sousa, Dave
Cc: Judy Gott (SCRCOG); Shirley Rasmussen
Subject: FW: Branford- Main Street Gateway Plan

FYI

From: James Perito [mailto:jperito@susmanduffy.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2008 9:33 AM
To: Stephen Dudley
Subject: Branford- Main Street Gateway Plan

Steve
I attended the public meeting last week concerning the draft plans for Main St. Overall, I was impressed with the concepts and thought it went a long way to making the entry to the Town Center very much improved. Specifically I thought the center median was a very good tool to reduce the speed of traffic and offer a refuge for pedestrians. My only concern is the future maintenance of such a strip since if the plantings are not kept up and the garbage removed it can look very shabby. The traffic circle is a nice touch but maybe it could shift west a bit or try to center it on the large oak at the small stub of the Green so you can keep that tree. Lastly, I would not be in favor of a light at Cherry Hill. If we implement the other design tools it should keep traffic speed down so its not necessary. Lights result in backups and motorist frustration which in turn creates speeding when the lanes open up. I think its better to have a constant flow at a slower pace. That's my initial reaction, kindly pass it along to SCRCOG.
Thanks
Jim

James J. Perito
Susman, Duffy & Segaloff, PC
55 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, CT 06510
Phone: (203) 624-9830
Fax: (203) 562-8430
email: jperito@susmanduffy.com

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5/16/2008



Comment Form

Please provide us any comments, concerns, or insights you have regarding the study information and potential improvement concepts that were presented tonight.

If there is heavy southbound traffic on Cedar St, how do you prevent gridlock when this traffic wants to go east on Main St, particularly if the eastbound traffic is heavy? I'm concerned that the added width created by the medians will make it almost impossible to get out of Cedar St. This situation seems to encourage impatient drivers to stack up across the path of the westbound traffic.

Can you create a pedestrian crosswalk across Main St approximately midway along the long stretch between Rogers St and Kirkham St?

Can there be any traffic calming imposed on the stretch (both ways) of Cedar St between Main St and Rose Street

I think it's time to discuss where the funds will come from, the impact on mill rate and the time frames foreseen.

Please submit your completed comment form in the box before you leave tonight or mail to:

Stephen Dudley
South Central Regional Council of Governments
127 Washington Avenue - 4th Floor West
North Haven, CT 06473-1715

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT.

For additional information, please contact the South Central Regional Council of Governments at: (203) 234-7555 or visit our website at www.scrcog.org

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
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**Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford CT
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

The Town of Branford, in association with the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG), is preparing a plan for the Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway in Branford. This planning study was precipitated by a recent Town-wide Transportation Study that recommended that Route 146 (Main Street) from U.S. Route 1 (West Main Street) to the Branford Town Green be improved to reduce traffic speeds and to provide a safer and more comfortable environment.

The study also recommended that the emerging concept of "Complete Streets" be considered. "Complete Streets" is a relatively new set of principles where streets are designed to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. Features used to create Complete Streets include:

- Wide sidewalks with street trees
- Wide and visible crosswalks
- Bike lanes
- Center medians or crossing islands in appropriate midblock locations
- Bus pullouts and other improvements to support transit.
- Curb extensions or sidewalk bulb-outs
- Curb-cut consolidation or driveway width reduction
- On street parking

As a resident or businessperson who uses Route 146 daily (i.e. a Stakeholder), your input in redesigning the street to be a Complete Street and a more welcoming gateway into Branford is greatly desired. Clough Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA), the consultant retained by SCRCOG to assist with this study, will be conducting interviews with stakeholders for this purpose.

The informal interviews will be conducted in two small group meetings at the Town Hall. Your attendance at one of these meetings will provide the design team with your unique insights of the study area and help provide a more comprehensive understanding of existing conditions and future needs. The date, time, and place of the interviews are:

Friday, February 29, 2008 at 9:00 A.M. or

Friday, February 29, 2008 at 12:00 P.M. at

Branford Town Hall, Room ____, Branford, CT 06405

We expect that the meetings will last no more than 90 minutes. If you are unable to attend either of these meetings, staff from CHA will interview you by telephone at your convenience. To prepare for that interview, we encourage you to review the attached Draft Goals and Objectives for the project and the Stakeholder Questionnaire.

If you prefer not to be interviewed by phone, and are unable to attend either Stakeholder meeting, you may answer the questions at this time and mail or fax the completed questionnaire to:

Richard Stoecker, Assistant Town Planner
Town of Branford Planning and Zoning Department
1019 Main Street
Branford CT 06405
Fax: 203-315-2188

We look forward to meeting with you and working with you to plan how best to make Route 146 a Complete Street.

**MAIN STREET
STAKEHOLDERS MEETING
February 29, 2008**

9:00 a.m.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BUSINESS</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
Dave Burke	Weickert Realtors Shoreline Properties	dburke@weickertshoreline.com
Shirley Rasmussen	Town of Branford	s.rasmussen@branford-ct.gov
Janice A. Plaziak	Town of Branford	jploriak@branford-ct.gov
John Montgomery	Clough Harbour & Assoc.	jmontgomery@cha-llp.com
Rev. Christopher M. Ford	St. Mary's Church	stmarybranford@yahoo.com
Maureen Gercken	1237 M, 588-6004 2 Lincoln	mlgercken@hotmail.com

12:00 p.m.

Steve Milano	Richlin Shopping Center	srmilano53@yahoo.com
Tricia Bohan	Tricia Bohan Photography	tricia@tbphoto.com
Lenore Stelzer	Resident-Bicyclist 483-0355	lmsstelzer1@yahoo.com

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



**Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut**

**Appendix F
Stakeholder Interview Materials**

SUMMARY OF MEETING

Date: March 10, 2008
Project: Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT
South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)
CHA Project No.: 17202
Date of Meeting: February 29, 2008, 9:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m.
Location of Meeting: Town Hall, Branford, CT
Purpose of Meeting: Stakeholder Interviews
In Attendance:

Tricia Bohan	Tricia Bohan Photography
Dave Burke	Weichert Realtors-Shoreline Properties
Rev. Christopher M. Ford	St. Mary's Church
Maureen Gercken	Resident, Business Owner
Steve Milano	Richlin Shopping Center
Janice Plaziak	Town Engineer, Town of Branford
Shirley Rasmussen	Town Planner, Town of Branford
Richard Stoecker	Asst. Town Planner, Town of Branford
Lenore Stelzer	Resident-Bicyclist
John Montgomery	Clough Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA)
Dave Sousa	CHA

Summary of Meeting - The following points were discussed among the participants relative to Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT:

General Information

- Route 146-Route 1 Junction known as "the pretzel" among residents.
- Section of Route 146 from Monroe-Kirkham to Lincoln is known as the "4th Ward" to residents.

General Issues/Concerns

- Currently the corridor is unsafe for biking, and people feel that this is why biking is not popular. The many bump outs in the town center make bikers feel uncomfortable as they are too close to traffic. However, there is a feeling that if bike lanes were created, people would use them.
- There are an increased number of automobiles using corridor leading to congestion and impatience among drivers.
- Main-S. Main Junction – there is a need to evaluate geometry and turning movements here in order to make area safer and less confusing to drivers. A median here might create problems.
- People are in favor of on street parking and widening of sidewalks.
- The senior center could be moving closer to Town Green.
- Large truck traffic is an issue.
- There is very limited parking in the "4th Ward".
- There is a seasonal traffic load due to many summer-only residents.

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- There is a potential and desire for increased walking (even not owning a car at all) in Branford (specifically close to Town Green) because there is a grocery store and pharmacy in close proximity.
- The section of Route 146 from Hopson Avenue to Kirkham Street is a very tough place for pedestrians to walk (especially on north side) because it is very busy and there are many curb cuts.
- Although there is a feeling of a need for increased parking in the town center, some feel that the existing parking is not being utilized because some parking spots are farther away and people don't want to have to walk.
- Main Street is too close to historic homes in vicinity of Home Place.
- Section of corridor near Cherry Hill Road and North Harbor Street could use aesthetic improvements.
- Shelly's (a popular flower shop on Main Street located between Home Place and Cherry Hill road) has a need for parking.
- Clancy Funeral Home has frequent processions that stage/queue in Route 146.

Site Specific Issues

Cherry Hill Drive

- There is no sidewalk by the senior complex making it dangerous for senior citizens to walk.
- Very hard to turn onto Main Street from here.
- Fire department uses this road for access to corridor, but often has long delays before it can safely turn onto corridor.
- People feel that a traffic signal is needed here.

North Harbor Street

- Hard to turn onto Main Street from here.
- Many people use street as "cut-through" to access various points of interest.

Home Place

- Pedestrian crossing is very difficult here due to vehicular speed and poor sight distance caused by the curve in roadway.
- Turning maneuvers for vehicles is poor due to limited sight distance turning onto Route 146.

Monroe Street

- It is very hard to turn onto Main Street here.
- People turning right onto Monroe from Route 146 create hazardous situations.
- Monroe Street is two-way north of Route 146 for a short distance, and then becomes one-way (in south direction); some feel that Monroe should be one-way throughout.

Rose Street

- Many senior citizens live on and use this street.

Cedar Street

- Dangerous section due to poor sight distance caused by a slight hill combined with curve in roadway.
- There has been a fatality in this area.
- There is no sidewalk at beginning of Cedar on either side.
- No sidewalk on east side of Cedar in general.

Roger Street

- Has island with utility pole located on it.
- Many people make illegal maneuver turning down wrong side of island with utility pole.

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Prepared by:



Prepared for:



Main Street (Route 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Study Town of Branford, Connecticut

Appendix F Stakeholder Interview Materials

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Kirkham Street

- People unhappy with aesthetics of DOT sidewalk improvements, and location of equipment cabinets.
- New senior housing to be located here.

Lincoln Avenue

- Geometry problems here. Both Lincoln Avenue and Bradley Street enter Main Street at acute angles. This combined with Bradley Street having an island with utility pole on it and large curb radii at Lincoln Avenue make for unsafe conditions at this intersection.
- Curb radius reduction needed on east side.
- Sidewalks very narrow here.

Eades Street

- Elementary School located here.
- There is a need for Safe Routes to School.

Route 1-Route 146 junction

- Turning from Route 1 onto Route 146 is a tough turn, many drivers cut turn too close, hit curb, and pop tires.
- Many people cut through gas station here to avoid queue of traffic.
- Problems with speeding here.

St. Mary's Church

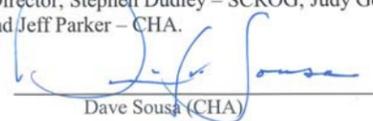
- Space is needed in front of church for funerals and weddings.
- Funeral queue starts in front of church and stretches around corner onto Rogers Street.

General Desires

- A visual cue at junction of Route 146 with Route 1 to signal people to slow down.
- Medians are very attractive, but may not be appropriate in all sections of the corridor. Median is possible in front of St. Mary's.
- Do not like the idea of turning South Main into one-way street near green, and do not want to see this happen.
- People would like to extend the feeling of the Town Center down the corridor towards Route 1.
- General feeling that more of a police presence is needed in the corridor. Increased use of radar guns, or electrified signs telling drivers their current speed was suggested. There is also a problem with graffiti which could be alleviated with the increased police presence.
- Trees are poorly maintained and intertwine with utility lines; any new trees would have to be carefully located.

Should attendees note any discrepancies in the above minutes of meeting, please contact Jeff Parker or Dave Sousa of CHA (860-257-4557) as soon as possible so that we may issue a correction.

Distribution (via Email only): All attendees; John DeCarlo – Police Chief; Terry Elton – Economic Development Director; Stephen Dudley – SCROG; Judy Gott – Executive Director of SCRCOG; Rod Bascom and Jeff Parker – CHA.

Submitted By: 

Dave Sousa (CHA)

Date: 3/10/08

CHA

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Prepared by:



Prepared for:



Main Street (Route 146)
Scenic Highway Gateway Study
Town of Branford, Connecticut

Appendix F
Stakeholder Interview Materials

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SUMMARY OF MEETING

Date: February 5, 2008
Project: Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT
South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)
CHA Project No.: 17202
Date of Meeting: February 1, 2008, 3:15 p.m. (immediately following meeting with FHI on Route 1 Access Management Planning)
Location of Meeting: Town Hall, Branford, CT
Purpose of Meeting: Technical Advisory Committee Meeting No. 1
In Attendance:

Jack Ahern	Fire Chief, Town of Branford
Ed Masotta	Public Works Director, Town of Branford
Janice Plaziak	Town Engineer, Town of Branford
Shirley Rasmussen	Town Planner, Town of Branford
Richard Stoecker	Asst. Town Planner, Town of Branford
Stephen Dudley	SCRCOG
John Montgomery	Clough Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA)
Dave Sousa	CHA

Summary of Meeting - The following points were discussed among the participants relative to Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT:

- 1) Sousa presented "Summary of Project Scope" (see attached).
- 2) Sousa presented Draft Goals and Objectives (see 2/1/08 version, attached) for review and adoption by the Committee. The Committee agreed with the Goals and Objectives listed and requested that we add new bullet under Goal #3 for an objective to provide more on-street parking to support businesses and to provide traffic calming benefits.
- 3) Sousa presented graphic exhibits of existing conditions and aerial images of the corridor (see attached) for discussion of issues, concerns and opportunities.
 - Committee agreed that project limits should extend from Route 1 east to the Town Green.
- 4) Parking is a big issue for Main Street businesses - More on-street parking needed throughout the corridor but especially near:
 - Kirkham Street
 - Lincoln Ave./Bradley Street intersections.
 - Flower Shop at Home Place
- 5) The intersection of Main Street (Route 146) at Route 1 is problematic for fire engines due to poor geometry (Route 1 northbound to Route 146 east bound) and due to vehicle queuing problems from left turn lanes of Route 146 west to Route 1 south. The FHI Access Management study should look into this in consideration of the proposed relocation of the Branford Connector (to be realigned to be opposite Route 146).
- 6) A "Road Diet" is a concept that should be applied to the whole corridor, not just near John Street and Hopson Avenue areas. The only exception is near the intersection of Route 1 where turning traffic issues create a bottleneck. Throughout the rest of the corridor, cars currently use wide shoulders to pass left-turning vehicles which creates safety issues for

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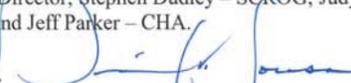
- cyclists and pedestrians. One particular problem spot is the high left turn volume from Main Street (westbound) onto Kirkham Street.
- 7) Kirkham Street /Main Street intersection recently received new signal/crosswalks under a CTDOT project. The standards used for that work relative to lighting can serve as a model for the corridor.
 - 8) Hopson Street/Main Street intersection also has a high pedestrian crossing - unexpected to drivers.
 - 9) St. Mary's Church parish plans to build new facilities for youth services adjacent to the church.
 - 10) Signalizing the intersection of Cherry Hill Road at Main Street (Route 146) has been brought up twice in the past because of speed, pedestrian safety concerns and delays. The Fire Department also uses Cherry Hill Road to access the town center area and finds that the left turns onto Main Street from Cherry Hill southbound are difficult due to sight lines and traffic volumes. The intersection did not meet CTDOT warrant analysis for signalization and therefore has not proceeded. Traffic has increased since and there are 10 more housing units proposed north of Main Street on Cherry Hill Road. The Committee agrees that this new study should make signalization of this intersection a recommendation.
 - 11) Monroe Street at Main Street: Property owners in this area not sharing off-street parking which creates parking and access problems. Our study should recommend better coordination of off-street parking and explain the many benefits of shared parking.
 - 12) The old bowling alley site on Main Street near Russell Street is vacant and has problems for reuse since there is no land for parking.
 - 13) Sousa presented "Proposed Schedule" (copy attached):
 - Stakeholder meeting(s) to be scheduled after we receive response from mailing to property owners that are adjacent to the corridor.
 - Public Workshop No. 1 to be scheduled for March 13, 2008 at 7 PM. Meeting to be held at Senior Center on Cherry Hill Road.
 - Next meeting with Technical Advisory Committee to be 3/7/08 at 2 PM. CHA to provide materials for Public Workshop No. 1 to committee a few days in advance of this meeting for their review and comment.

14) The meeting concluded at 4:00 p.m.

Should attendees note any discrepancies in the above minutes of meeting, please contact Jeff Parker or Dave Sousa of CHA (860-257-4557) as soon as possible so that we may issue a correction.

Distribution (via Email only): All attendees; John DeCarlo - Police Chief; Terry Elton - Economic Development Director; Stephen Dudley - SCRCOG; Judy Gott - Executive Director of SCRCOG; Rod Bascom and Jeff Parker - CHA.

Submitted By:


Dave Sousa (CHA)

Date:

3/10/08

CHA

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Prepared by:



Prepared for:



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SUMMARY OF MEETING

Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

Date: May 23, 2008
Project: Main Street (Rt. 146) Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT
South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)
CHA Project No.: 17202
Date of Meeting: May 22, 2008, 3:00 p.m.
Location of Meeting: Town Hall, Branford, CT
Purpose of Meeting: Technical Advisory Committee Meeting No. 4
In Attendance: Anthony "Unk" DaRos First Selectman, Town of Branford
Lt. Jeff Morgan Traffic Division, Town of Branford Police Dept.
Janice Plaziak Town Engineer, Town of Branford
Shirley Rasmussen Town Planner, Town of Branford
Richard Stoecker Asst. Town Planner, Town of Branford
Stephen Dudley SCRCOG
Dave Sousa Clough Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA)

Summary of Meeting - The following points were discussed among the participants relative to Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT:

1. D. Sousa distributed draft minutes of the 5/8/08 Public Workshop which summarizes discussion and public questions and comments. Attached to the minutes are two written comments received from the public.
2. Neither the Branford Planning office nor the SCRCOG have received any further written comments since the meeting.
3. All major features (i.e. roundabout, broad median between the Tyler Green and the Town Green, the bike lanes, and the supportive development/TND's) shown on the concept plan at Public Workshop No. 2 have not met with any negative public comment or concern; A. DaRos stated that he thought that the public is enthusiastic about the median.
4. R. Stoecker said that he received some verbal comments that the roundabouts, if similar to the one recently constructed in New Haven at Woodward Ave., would not be conducive to bikes. J. Plaziak thought that the Woodward Ave. circles were not Modern traffic roundabouts but mini-roundabouts that were installed as traffic calming devices and not to accommodate heavy traffic.
5. Lt. J. Morgan expressed concern about how bikes would travel through the roundabout as well as school buses and emergency vehicles such as fire trucks, including ladder trucks. Sousa briefed him on the function of the roundabouts and the options for accommodating bikes (as explained on page 4 of the minutes of the 5/8/08 Public Workshop). Sousa also explained that school buses, trucks and fire vehicles can negotiate through the roundabout (albeit at slow speeds) by virtue of the diameter of the circle and the provision of the truck apron where rear wheels of large vehicles will track, but not passenger vehicles. The truck apron is typically separated from the passenger vehicle travel lane by a sloped granite curb or concrete park curb; also, the surface of the truck apron is usually coarse textured (e.g. granite cobbles) in order to discourage passenger vehicles from travelling through the apron. S. Dudley asked whether and how that apron is maintained in the winter months to remove snow to allow emergency vehicles. Sousa said that he will check into that question by canvassing New London (where two roundabouts exist at Fort Trumbull) and Keene NH where a roundabout designed by CHA was constructed last fall. J. Plaziak to send J. Morgan photos of the New London roundabouts for his info.

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6. S. Rasmussen was pleased that the public was not opposed to the parallel parking spaces of permeable pavers shown at the Tyler Green (near John Street) and suggested that that improvement be undertaken in the short term due to the high need for parking there.
7. There was much discussion on the traffic leading to Main Street from Cedar and Laurel Streets, especially in light of traffic patterns if the roundabout and median in Main Street are constructed. The consensus of those present is for the following:
 - Do not provide breach in the proposed Main Street median to allow left turns from Laurel onto Main since that would detract from the character and intent of the median and would create two points of conflict in close proximity to the proposed roundabout.
 - Make Laurel Street one-way north (which eliminates the problem with left-turning vehicles from Laurel to Main) and provide 45 degree parking where possible to meet a growing demand for parking at the library and at the police department.
 - Convert the one-way north Harrison Street to one-way south; study the turning movement of vehicles at the intersection of Harrison and Main Street since this is a constriction point that may make turns difficult. It may be necessary to eliminate parking on the south side of Main Street to provide more berth for turning vehicles; however, there is great demand for parking here and any loss of parking should be mitigated by providing replacement parking nearby if at all possible.
 - Maintain Cedar Street as two-way and provide a traffic signal at its intersection with Main Street. However, A. DaRos indicated that a few people are very concerned about providing new signals at this location because it would give Main Street a more urban character and detract from the village character. A suggestion for mitigating this effect is to provide more traditional traffic signal standards and paint them green to match ornamental light standards.
8. CHA should revisit the design of the Bradley/Lincoln/Main Street intersection to:
 - See if existing utility pole in the triangle at Bradley can be maintained at its current location.
 - Move the Bradley Street intersection slightly to the east to minimize impact to the business on the SW corner; this will result in a more acute angle to the intersection and more difficult truck turning radius but town staff was not concerned about that because there are other ways trucks can get to Bradley Street.
 - Consider the realignment of Lincoln a long-term solution since there does not seem to be a major traffic problem with the current offset of Lincoln and Bradley and because it will require the taking of property at the NW corner.
9. The proposed realignment of Cherry Hill and Main Street was discussed:
 - A traffic light is a logical solution here (and reportedly warranted based on previous study by others) but may be long term, again due to no urgency to the current situation and to the fact that the realignment would require the taking of a business on the NW corner.
 - CHA will propose narrative in the report that states that this acquisition and realignment will not likely happen unless and until the private sector implements the Cherry Hill TND so that properties can be assembled and the existing business at the NW corner can be relocated into a new building at the TND. It is not clear if this means that an interim traffic light will be required based on the current intersection alignment.
 - Some present thought that the traffic light may not be required in the short term if traffic calming can be implemented in Main Street west of the intersection. Some ideas include: a) a solar-powered speed-indicating traffic sign to prominently post speed limit and flash the

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actual speed of approaching vehicles; b) street trees and other streetscaping to provide visual enclosure; c) flush median of granite pavers or other textured pavement along the entire curve to the west toward Route 1 (although there was concern that CTDOT would not approve this device).

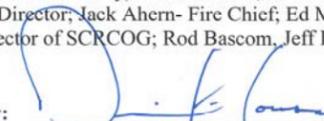
10. All present agreed that not much can or should be done to the intersection of Main Street and Route 1 due to the probability that that intersection will be reconstructed when the Branford Connector is moved east to be coincident with Commercial Parkway and Main Street is moved west to align with it. However, short term improvements should include:
 - Sidewalks along both sides of Main Street to Route 1.
 - Bike lanes on both sides of Main Street to Route 1 (however, a shared bike lane/pedestrian path is not a good idea for this area due to the short distance and curve).
 - Street trees and other landscaping to screen the business properties along Route 1; however, we need to understand if there is a need to maintain sight lines from Main Street to the existing billboards on the north side of the street (possible in some form of deeded easement).
 - Provide more intensive landscaping at the intersection of Route 1 to create a more attractive gateway.
11. The TNDs at Cherry Hill Road and the Elm Café are fine as illustrated and need not be revised in the final plan except that:
 - The Canoe Brook Center (current Senior Center) should not be included in the TND.
 - The proposed connection between the internal streets of the TND and Cherry Street should be eliminated.
 - There is no need to quantify the potential square footage of development of the TND, just provide narrative of the intent and benefits and explain how the TND would be a private initiative.
12. The proposed on-street parallel parking is fine as illustrated. CHA to quantify the approximate number of parallel spaces that currently exist along Main Street and the number of potential spaces that can be constructed in the concept plan.
13. The typical cross-sections are fine as illustrated and do not need to be modified for the final version of the study.

The meeting concluded at 4:30 p.m.

Should attendees note any discrepancies in the above minutes of meeting, please contact Jeff Parker or Dave Sousa of CHA (860-257-4557) as soon as possible so that we may issue a correction.

Distribution (via Email only): All attendees; John DeCarlo – Police Chief; Terry Elton – Economic Development Director; Jack Ahern- Fire Chief; Ed Masotta -Public Works Director; Judy Gott – Executive Director of SCRCOG; Rod Bascom, Jeff Parker, John Montgomery – CHA.

Submitted By:


Dave Sousa (CHA)

Date:

5/23/08

CHA

Prepared by:



Prepared for:



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SUMMARY OF MEETING

Date: June 4, 2008
Project: Route 146 Scenic Highway Gateway Plan, Branford, CT
South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)
CHA Project No.: 17202
Date of Meeting: May 27, 2008, 4:00 P.M.
Location of Meeting: Branford Police Headquarters, 33 Laurel Street, Branford, CT
Purpose of Meeting: Coordination Meeting
In Attendance: John C. DeCarlo Chief of Police, Town of Branford
Janice Plaziak Town Engineer, Town of Branford
Thomas Fowler Deputy Chief of Police, Town of Branford
Lt. Geoff Morgan Branford Police Department, Traffic Division
Stephen Dudley SCRCOG
Jeff Parker Clough Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA)
Dave Sousa Clough Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA)

Summary of Meeting

- 1. D. Sousa presented the draft concept plan of the Main Street (Rt. 146) corridor that was presented at the 5/8/08 Public Workshop and explained its principal features including proposed traffic calming, modern traffic roundabout, landscaped medians, on-street parking, crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands, bike lanes, etc.
- 2. D. Sousa also provided some general design information on modern traffic roundabouts including: "Photos of Roundabouts Built in NY State" (15 pgs.); "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide" by the FHWA (6 pgs); CHA project sheet on Keene NH roundabout (1 pg.); attached.
- 3. The Chief and his staff had the following questions and comments:
 - a. The Eades/Main Street intersection handles a lot of school bus traffic and currently, police department staff direct bus and pedestrian traffic before and after school. Does the roundabout accommodate bus traffic and would uniformed staff still need to direct school traffic after the roundabout is built? CHA Response: School buses can easily negotiate the roundabout; uniformed traffic patrols will not be needed for buses but they (or crossing guards) may be desired to escort school children through the roundabout before and after school.
 - b. In general, the police department is in favor of the roundabout and the plan to convert Laurel Street to one-way north-bound in order to simplify traffic operations at Main/Eades/Laurel.
 - c. Providing diagonal parking on Laurel Street (at least one side of the street but possibly on two sides if space allows) is a good idea since there is a deficit of parking at the Library and at the Police Headquarters.
 - d. The police department has no objections to converting Harrison Street from one-way north to one-way south if Laurel Street is made one-way north.
 - e. A traffic signal at Cedar Street and Main would be a good idea.



- f. The median in Main Street from Tyler Green to the Town Green is also a good idea provided that sloped curbing is provided to allow emergency vehicles to pass.
 - g. The plan for the "road diet" (i.e. narrow traffic lanes, on-street parallel parking defined by pavement markings and curb extensions at crosswalks, bike lanes in each direction) is a good thing.
 - h. A traffic signal at Cherry Hill Road is needed since it is difficult for motorists on Cherry Hill Road to see east-bound traffic on Main Street because of the acute angle of the intersection and because of the curve on Main Street to the west. The accident rate at this intersection is not unusually high; however, the types of accidents are severe in nature due to the high speeds of vehicles on Main Street.
 - i. Reconfiguring the intersection of Main Street at Lincoln and Bradley to align Bradley opposite Lincoln (to correct the current offset) is also a good idea; however, CHA will study whether the intersection design can be modified to reduce property impacts on the west side of the intersection by sliding the proposed realignment slightly to the east.
 - j. The intersection of Main Street at Route 1 (West Main Street) is a problem because east-bound vehicles on Main that want to turn left into the gas station on the corner have to pass through two lanes of west-bound traffic that is queued at the light. Often, the inner lane will allow the car to turn but the vehicle in outer lane does not see the vehicle, resulting in an impact. CHA will explore whether the curb-cuts to the gas station can be a) reduced in width; b) consolidated; c) convert the west curb-cut to one-way out and the east curb-cut to one-way in. These modifications cannot be done without the landowners consent so any modification will be a recommendation.
4. The Police Department often collects data on average travel speeds and will conduct a new study for traffic on Main Street. That data will be provided in the SCRCOG report to bolster the case for safety improvements to Main Street.

Should attendees note any discrepancies in the above minutes of meeting, please contact Jeff Parker or Dave Sousa of CHA (860-257-4557) as soon as possible so that we may issue a correction.

CC:

Town of Branford Officials
SCRCOG
File

Submitted By:

Dave Sousa (CHA)

Date:

6/4/08



Prepared by:



Prepared for:



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