

**Rutland City**  
**Rutland Creek Path**  
**Segment 5 Scoping Study**  
**Alternatives**



*Submitted by:*

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*In conjunction with*

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**Heritage Landscapes, LLC**

**University of Vermont Consulting Archeology Program**

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## A. INTRODUCTION

### 1. OVERVIEW

The City of Rutland has been working to realize the Rutland Creek Path for over 10 years. Earlier sections of the Creek Path are in various stages of development or already installed. The City recently received funding through the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) to undertake a scoping study of Segment 5, the southernmost segment in the overall Rutland Creek Path Master Plan. This section picks up at the end of Segment 4, at the Dorr Drive Bridge over Otter Creek and extends west close to Dorr Drive to the College of St. Joseph and possibly to the Ripley Road bridge over the creek near the city line.

The City organized a Steering Committee (SC) for the project of local officials, citizens and the President of the College of St. Joseph to provide direction for the study. The City hired the consulting team consisting of Broadreach Planning & Design, Lamoureux & Dickinson, Heritage Landscapes LLC and the University of Vermont Consulting Archeology Program (the BRPD Team) to assist them with the work.

The Study Area for this project includes the lands around Dorr Drive from River Street to the College of St. Joseph campus.

This summary report is the second product of the work of the SC and the BRPD Team. The summary describes the alternative solutions currently under consideration. The report is formatted for double-sided printing; blank pages are intentional.

### 2. PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of Segment 5 of the Rutland Creek Path is to extend bicycle and pedestrian facilities to the west side of Otter Creek in the City of Rutland and provide a convenient non-motorist link between the schools, business and residents in this area with the other areas served by other portions of the Rutland Creek Path for walkers and bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

Needs for the improvements include:

- The lack of easy walking and bicycling links between the College of St. Joseph, where most of the resident population lacks motor vehicles, and the rest of the City, including the downtown and city parks;
- The limited sight distances around the curve on Dorr Drive that make bicycling and walking along the edge of the road difficult; and

- The high rate of childhood obesity in Rutland caused, in part, by the difficulty of incorporating regular physical activity into daily lives due to the lack of supporting facilities.

### 3. ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Once the BRPD Team, with assistance from the SC, examined the existing conditions, they held an initial public work session on January 7, 2014. After consideration of the comments received at that meeting, the BRPD Team led a work session with the SC to identify as many alternatives as possible for extending the Rutland Creek Path to the College of St. Joseph's campus. The group worked together to do an initial analysis of the alternatives to refine or eliminate those that did not meet the purpose and need or were otherwise unsuitable. Subsequently, the BRPD Team conducted a more detailed analysis of the remaining alternatives and developed a concise, viable set for public discussion. They prepared an initial comparison matrix to help in reviewing and understanding the various initial alternatives. **Table B-1** includes information on the various initial alternative alignments and evaluation conclusions.

**Figure B-1** shows the location of the alternatives initially developed by the BRPD Team; **Figure B-2** shows the alternatives that remained viable after the initial analysis. **Table B-2** provide comparisons of the different remaining alternatives. **Figure B-3** provides more information on the issues or impacts associated with the remaining alternatives.

## B. ALTERNATIVES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The following descriptions of the alternatives typically begin on the east side of the Study Area and head generally west. The BRPD Team organized the alternatives into a series of small linking segments that could be combined in a variety of ways to create one or more routes between the end of Segment 4 and the College of St. Joseph and the Ripley Road bridge.

The endpoint of the first four alternatives is at the eastern end of the College of St. Joseph campus. Sight distances on Dorr Drive are good in both directions at this location on Dorr Drive. It is also a location that would allow the transition from a path on the north side of Dorr Drive to one on the south side to potentially eliminate impacts to the residences along the western portion of Dorr Drive by routing a path onto the College campus. If the crosswalk is included in the preferred alternative, the installation should include rapid flashing beacons.

The preferred alternative might ultimately include a mix of elements from several alternatives, parts of one alternative or several different alternatives grouped

together. The possible crosswalk serves as a means of combining various alternatives.

The second crosswalk shown in front of the College of St. Joseph's entrance is to be constructed as part of the Ripley Road bridge replacement project. If the second crosswalk becomes an integral part of the preferred alternative by linking proposed segments on either side of Dorr Drive, it should also include rapid flashing beacons.

2. ALTERNATIVE #1

Alternative #1 is a shared use path that starts on the east side of Dorr Drive at the planned end of the new Dorr Drive Bridge. A crosswalk on the new bridge would bring westbound bicyclists across the road to the path. The path heads north along the east side of Dorr Drive as a boardwalk for the first 300 feet. After the boardwalk, the path converts to a ten-foot-wide shared use path along the side of the road, extending approximately three feet beyond the outer edge of the Dorr Drive right-of-way. After approximately 500 feet, the path returns to boardwalk to keep the path above the floodplain and low areas that are close to the north side of Dorr Drive. The second boardwalk is approximately 715 feet long. It ends adjacent to the old dam. At this point, the path again becomes a ten-foot-wide shared use path, which extends to a point opposite the eastern corner of the College of St. Joseph's campus on the south side of Dorr Drive. The entire length of the path would be separated by a grass strip averaging five feet wide.

3. ALTERNATIVE #2

Alternative #2 is a shared use path that starts at the end of Alternative #1 and extends to the point opposite the entrance to the College of St. Joseph. The path itself extends beyond the edge of the Dorr Drive right-of-way by approximately three feet, with a five-foot separation between the edge of the existing Dorr Drive pavement and the path.

4. ALTERNATIVE #3

Alternative #3 is a shared use path that runs along the north side of Dorr Drive between the College of St. Joseph entrance and the southern end of the Ripley Street bridge. It would extend approximately three feet outside of the existing Dorr Drive right-of-way. It would replace the new sidewalk that is to be installed in this location as part of the replacement of the Ripley Road bridge.

5. ALTERNATIVE #4a

Alternative #4a follows the same alignment as Alternative #1 but would add a sidewalk and narrower boardwalk along the north side of the road instead of a shared use path. Dorr Drive would be widened by approximately six feet to provide three-foot-wide paved shoulders on each side of the road for bicycle travel. The

widening would be more on the east side than the west side to minimize impacts to the steep slopes and stone walls on the west and south side of the road. The sidewalk would be separated from the wider road by a grass strip by approximately five feet wide. Even with the widening, the sidewalk would lie totally within the Dorr Drive right-of-way.

6. ALTERNATIVE #4b

Alternative #4b would be the same as alternative #4a except that the road would be widened by approximately ten feet to add a five-foot-wide bicycle lane to both sides of the road.

7. ALTERNATIVE #5a

Alternative #5a follows the same alignment as Alternative #2 opposite the eastern corner of the College of St. Joseph Campus to a point across from the College of St. Joseph entrance but would add a sidewalk along the north side of the road instead of a shared use path. Dorr Drive would be widened by approximately six feet to provide three-foot-wide paved shoulders on each side of the road for bicycle travel. The sidewalk would be separated from the road by a five-foot-wide grass strip. Even with the widening, the sidewalk would lie totally within the Dorr Drive right-of-way.

8. ALTERNATIVE #5b

Alternative #5b would be the same as alternative #5a except that the road would be widened by approximately ten feet to add a five-foot-wide bicycle lane to both sides of the road.

9. ALTERNATIVE #6

Alternative #6 would create a shared use path on the College of St. Joseph campus starting at the northeast corner of the campus on Dorr Drive. The path would head southwest through the undeveloped area to the north side of the baseball field. Turning west, it would pass along the north side of the field and continue along the north side of the Athletic Center, passing at least ten feet away from the new solar panel control area. The path would stay south of the existing drainage outfalls heading towards the southern portion of the entry drive. It would head north towards Dorr Drive along the east side of the entry drive, ending at the new crosswalk to be installed as part of the Ripley Street bridge replacement project.

9. ALTERNATIVE #7

Alternative #7 would create a shared use path along the south side of Dorr Drive from the eastern corner of the College of St. Joseph's campus to their main entry. The path would extend approximately three feet outside of the existing Dorr Drive

right-of-way. The five-foot-wide grass strip would separate the path from the roadway.

10. ALTERNATIVE #8a

Alternative #8a would add a sidewalk at the outer edge of the Dorr Drive right-of-way on the south side between the eastern corner of the College of St. Joseph's campus and their main entry. The road would be widened by approximately six feet to provide three-foot-wide paved shoulders on each side. The five-foot-wide grass strip would separate the sidewalk from the roadway.

11. ALTERNATIVE #8b

Alternative #8b would also include a sidewalk following the same alignment as Alternative #8a but Dorr Drive would be widened by approximately ten feet to add five-foot-wide bicycle lanes to each side of the road. The sidewalk would be separated from the wider road by a five-foot-wide grass strip.

12. ALTERNATIVE #9a

Alternative #9a would add a shared use path on the south side of Dorr Drive between the main entrance to the College of St. Joseph and the southern end of the Ripley Street Bridge. The shared use path would extend approximately three feet beyond the edge of the Dorr Drive right-of-way. The path would be separated from the edge of the roadway pavement by a five-foot-wide grass strip.

13. ALTERNATIVE #9b

Alternative #9b would be a sidewalk that follows the same alignment as the shared use path in Alternative #9a but would lie fully within the existing Dorr Drive right-of-way.

## C. IMPACTS & ISSUES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Each of the links has associated issues and potential impacts. **Tables B-2** provides a comparison of several issues and impacts of the different Links. **Figure B-3** shows the locations of various issues and potential impacts of the different links. There are several common issues that are shared by many of the links. The following text briefly presents these issues, which should be considered when comparing and analyzing the different links and evaluating which combination would be the most appropriate alignment of Segment 5 of the Rutland Creek Path.



## 2. PURPOSE & NEED

The shared use path alternatives that lie along the side of the road, because they are direct, would meet the purpose and need of the project by providing facilities for walkers and bicyclists of all ages and abilities. The sidewalk alternatives, when combined with wider paved shoulders or bike lanes on Dorr Drive, would provide appropriate facilities for walkers and most bicyclists. Younger bicyclists or those not comfortable riding close to motor vehicles might not be adequately served by the wider, on-road facilities.

## 3. DIRECTNESS

Each of the alternatives under consideration provides a relatively direct path from the end of Segment 4 to the Campus and the Ripley Road bridge. The only real digression is Alternative #6, which loops into the campus before heading back to Dorr Drive. This might be considered out of the way for bicyclists or walkers headed towards the bridge and Rutland City's existing bicycle route.

## 4. FRONT YARDS & RIGHT-OF-WAYS

Each of the alternatives along Dorr Drive would impact what the residents along the road most likely perceive as front yards. The outside edge of the sidewalks would be approximately one foot inside the right-of-way and would not require new permanent easements. Even though located totally within the Dorr Drive right-of-way, the sidewalks could be perceived as being well into the front yards of the residents. The City may need to obtain temporary construction easements to allow disturbance of the adjacent properties while the sidewalk are being installed.

The shared use paths would need to extend beyond the limits of the Dorr Drive right-of-way if they are to be separated from Dorr Drive by anything larger than a two-foot-wide green strip. Since the BRPD Team believes that just a two-foot separation would be too small, we are assuming the extension of the path beyond the right-of-way with a five-foot-wide separation. This would place the outside edge of a shared use path up to fifteen feet away from the current edge of the pavement, requiring both temporary and permanent easements.

## 5. UTILITY POLES

Each of the alternatives with the exception of Alternative 6 would most likely require the relocation of some utility poles. The number varies depending on the location along Dorr Drive and the type of facility being proposed. The details on which poles might need to be relocated for which alternative are provided on **Figure B-3** and **Table B-2**.



## 6. SURFACE MATERIAL

The sidewalk alternatives would most likely be paved with concrete but could also be paved with asphalt or hard packed crushed stone. The shared use path alternatives would most likely have the same surface as the other Rutland Creek Path segments. The final decisions as to which type of pavement to use will be made by the City when it moves the projects forward to construction. Each of these pavement options is considered to be impervious for the purpose of calculating the increase in stormwater runoff.

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