Village Streets Engineering Study

What is the Village Streets Engineering Study?

This study examines the possibility of street safety improvements as part of the road work scheduled for 2025. A warrant article in March 2022 was approved by the Amherst voters to fund an engineering study for possible improvements, to streets in the village. In summer 2022, the DPW hired Mobycon and CMA Engineers to conduct the study.

Who is involved?

The Amherst DPW started the study in September 2022 and has requested participation from many town organizations including members of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Heritage Commission, Library, Historic District Commission, Schools, Planning Board, Amherst Land Trust, individuals who have previously shown interest, etc. Public hearings are planned and anybody who is interested is welcome to participate.

What is the time frame?

In October, we will gather public input about how we envision the streets. In November, three scenarios will be produced and then, a preferred option will be selected. In January and February, CMA will assist the Town in applying for grants to fund improvements beyond regular maintenance.

How will this be paid for?

The study has been funded with \$98k by warrant article. The normal road work will be funded by the 2025 town budget. Any additional costs beyond normal road work will be solicited by grants. At this point, there are no other plans for funding, so the grants are considered critical for any improvements recommended by the study.

Will this impact the rural and historic character of the village?

No, the purpose of the study is to make the streets in the Village safer and more comfortable while respecting the historic and rural character of The Village. Public input will shape the vision and direction of the three scenarios and ultimately, of the preferred option.

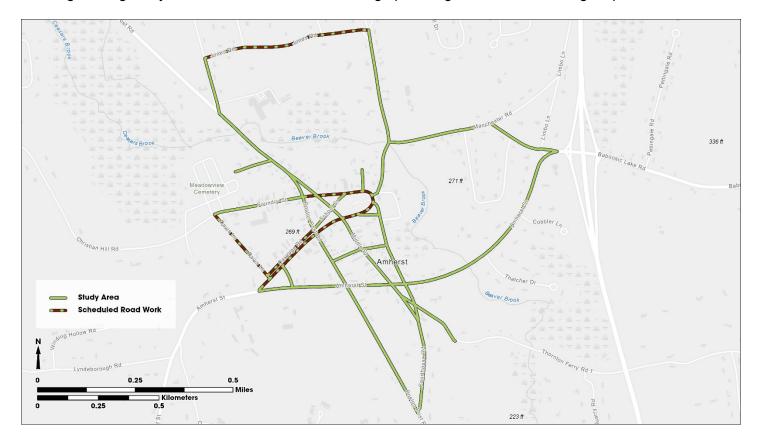
What factors are being considered?

First and foremost, public input is the primary consideration. In addition, there are many factors that are being considered:

- The historical and culturally sensitive environment of the Amherst Village Historic District
- Pending housing developments with prospective traffic pattern changes, impact on traffic volumes, etc.
- Persistent resident complaints about safety and speed concerns
- Public feedback indicating walkability of the village area
- Recent traffic studies which indicate potential failure of intersections
- A proposed consolidation of elementary schools, etc.

What specific streets are part of the study?

The engineering study will look at all streets in the village per the green on the following map:



The streets that are already scheduled for road work in 2025 are marked in brown and green: Carriage Rd, Church St, Davis Ln, Jones Rd, and Main St.

What are "Shared Streets?"

Shared streets prioritize pedestrians but still allow vehicle access. These streets are designed to slow car traffic down to a safe enough speed that the space can be comfortably shared between people walking, using wheelchairs, pushing strollers, cycling and driving. They have many benefits including: reduced vehicle collisions, reduced road noise, reduced vehicle wear and tear on streets and the creation of an inviting pedestrian environment that is both safe and comfortable. However, not every street is suitable to become a Shared Street. The Mobycon team has many tools in our toolbox for improving road safety and comfort. Shared streets are being used successfully in a wide range of places in the US and throughout the world.

How might Shared Streets be applied in Amherst?

Specific road safety improvements have not been proposed at this phase but all Mobycon options for Amherst streets will be founded on preserving the rural and historic character of Amherst, and derive from extensive experience in other communities, including rural settings. The Mobycon Team will also listen carefully and incorporate public feedback on the vision for the Village's streets.