PORTSMOUTH

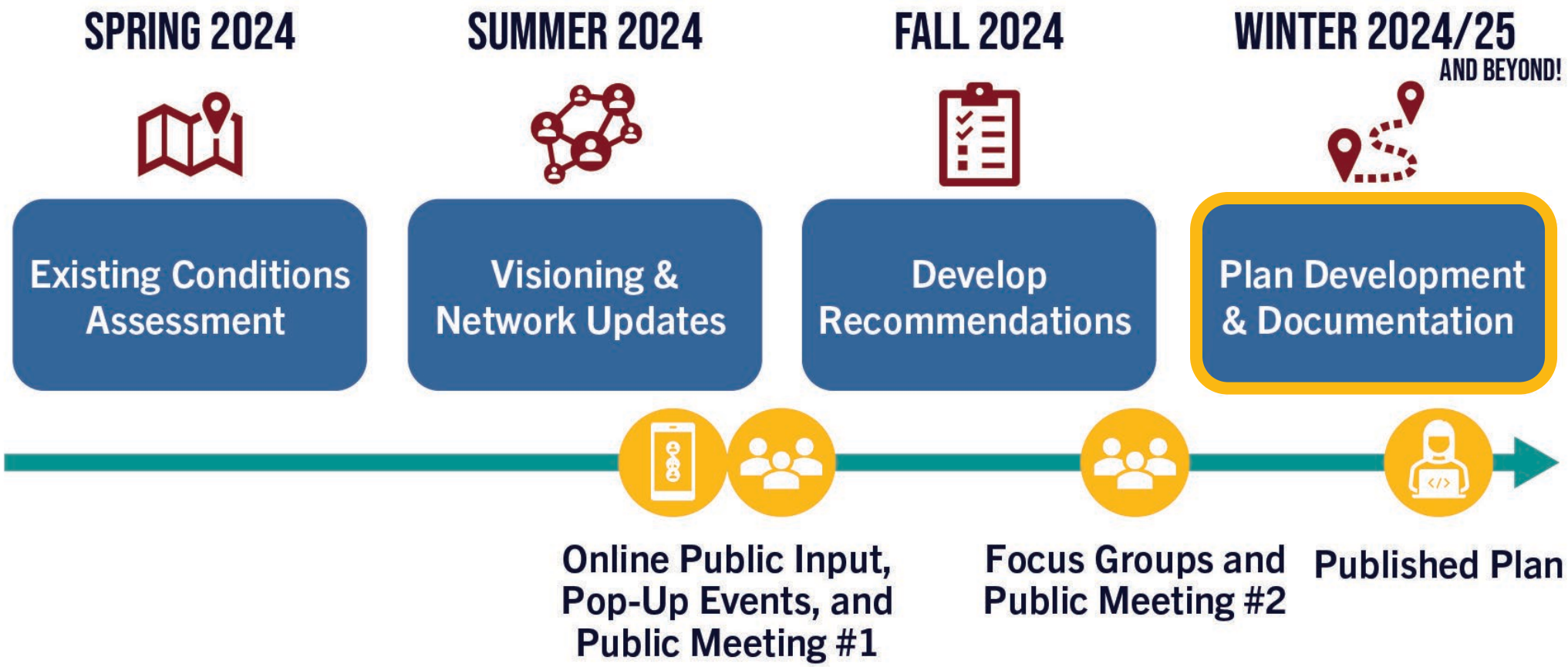
Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

February 6, 2025

AGENDA

- Status Update
- Engagement Update
- Plan Outcomes
- Recommendations Preview
- Discussion
- Next Steps

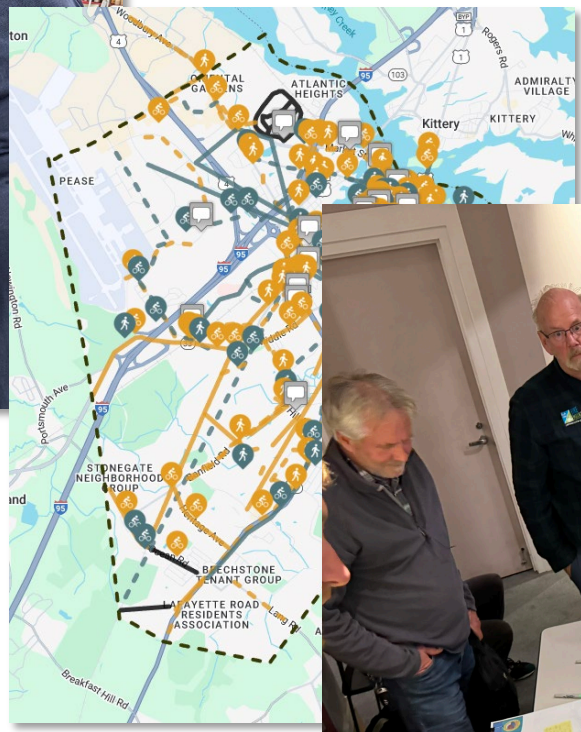
STATUS UPDATE



OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

- **Project postcards**
  - Distributed at local events
- **Online Survey**
  - 442 responses
- **Interactive Map**
  - 468 entries
- **1 x Pop-Up Event**
- **3 x Focus Groups**
  - Senior Activity Center
  - South Lafayette Neighbors
  - High School Students
- **1 x Public Meeting**
  - +1 more planned



PUBLIC MEETING #2

- Will be hosted in person
- Aiming for March 10, 12, or 13th
- Current Agenda
  - Project Overview
  - Engagement Update
  - Plan Outcomes
  - Recommendations Preview
  - Next Steps
  - Discussion

Are there any community conflicts with these dates?

Discuss!

What can we do to maximize awareness and attendance?

PLAN OUTCOMES

- Existing Conditions Summary
- Public Outreach Summary
- Design Resources and Toolkit
- Recommended Projects and Prioritization
- Implementation Framework
- Funding Opportunities

FINAL VISION AND GOALS

Vision: Portsmouth residents, workers, and visitors will view walking and bicycling as comfortable and convenient ways to get around the city. Walking and bicycling will be a part of Portsmouth's culture, making the city a healthy and vibrant place to live.

- **Goal 1:** Improve the safety and awareness of walking and bicycling in Portsmouth for all ages and abilities.
- **Goal 2:** Increase the number of walking and bicycling trips in Portsmouth.
- **Goal 3:** Advance Portsmouth's reputation as a city where walking and bicycling are a visible part of everyday and year-round life and there are high-quality facilities that are well-maintained.
- **Goal 4:** Improve connectivity for walking and biking throughout Portsmouth and equitable access to key destinations like employment, schools, and transportation.
- **Goal 5:** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and household transportation costs through the implementation of walking and biking improvements, and support complementary City priorities such as the Climate Action Plan's climate targets and supporting affordable housing

Underlined text has been updated based on **community input**

Goal 5 added in response to **Working Group input**

FACILITIES TOOLKIT

Corridor Improvements

Treatment

Local or precedent image

SHARED-USE PATH

A shared use path is fully separated from the road and shared between cyclists, pedestrians, and other non-motorized modes. Side paths, rail trails, and multi-use paths are all types of shared use paths.

Benefits
- Combined facility for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Provides separation from vehicle traffic
- Designed for all ages and abilities

Constraints
- Requires substantial buffer to separate from roadways
- Unlit paths may not be comfortable for users
- Potential conflicts with vehicle or other crossings

Typical Applications
- Links between communities that also serve as recreational facilities
- Parallel alternative route to roads in areas where sidewalks or on-street facilities are not provided
- Best for areas where crossings can be minimized

Design Considerations
- Apply high-visibility treatments where there are crossings
- Generally, should be designed with a width of 10 feet

Description and purpose

Benefits and Constraints

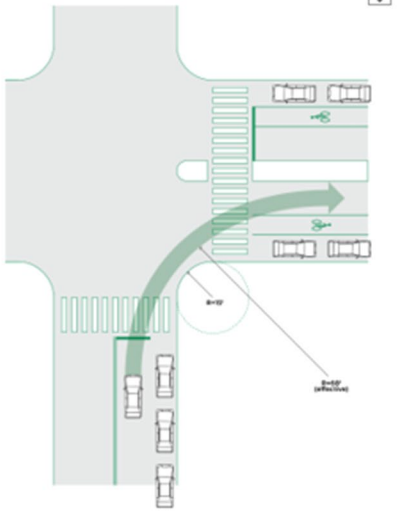
Typical Applications

Design Considerations

FACILITIES TOOLKIT

Spot Improvements

INTERSECTION TIGHTENING



Source: NACTO Urban Design Guide

A general intersection improvement includes a number of measures such as repaving, new pavement markings to clarify travel through the intersection, signal retiming, equipment, and implementing automatic pedestrian recall.

Benefits
- Clarify the preferred path of travel through the intersection to help avoid potential conflicts
- Provides appropriate pedestrian signal timing

Constraints
- Signal retiming may have minimal benefits in over-saturated conditions
- Pavement markings may require regular maintenance, especially on roads with high traffic volumes

Typical Applications
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) cluster intersections
- Roadways with high traffic volumes and/or pedestrian activity

Design Considerations
- Signal retiming should account for appropriate pedestrian crossing times
- Thermoplastic pavement markings are more durable

BIKE PARKING

Bike parking provides space for people to store bicycles when they are not being used. Parking facilities include racks, lockers, and covered areas. The type of bike parking depends on the anticipated duration of stay, type of destination, and security needs.

Benefits
- Formalizes ad hoc bicycle parking along street signs and railings
- Prevents bicycle theft
- May provide protection from the elements

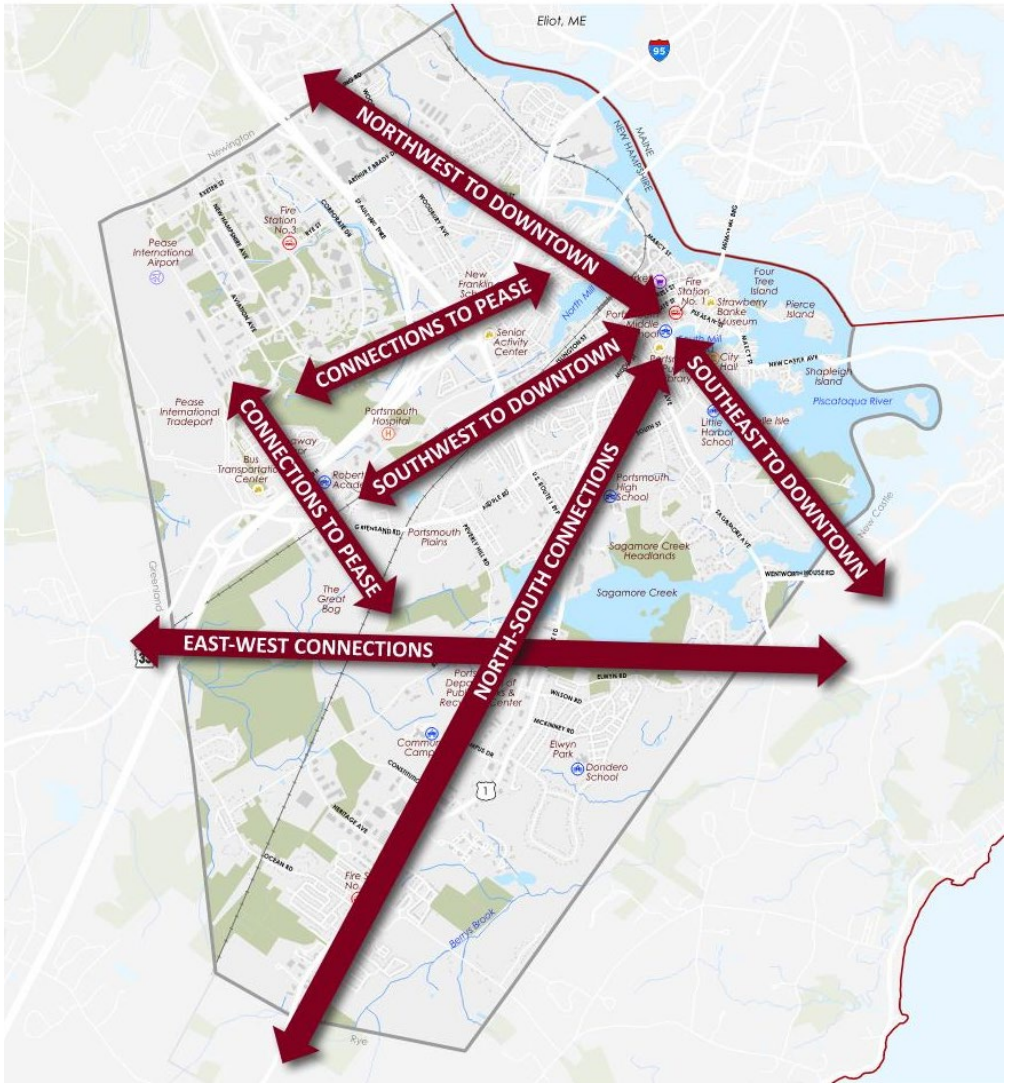
Constraints
- May require additional sidewalk space

Typical Applications
- Areas with a high potential for cycling activity such as commercial districts, parks and recreation sites, schools, transit centers, libraries and community destinations
- Covered bike parking is best for locations where patrons will be parked for longer periods

Design Considerations
- **Short-term bike parking**: Bike parking should be highly visible and conveniently located near entrances of the destinations being served
- **Long-term bike parking**: Security and weather protection are more important than visibility and convenience for bikes being stored across multiple hours
- Suitable bike racks allow bikes to be locked via the frame
- Use "inverted U" or "post and loop racks" for secure and space-efficient bike parking
- Typical dimensions are 6x2 feet for a single rack

RECOMMENDATIONS - INFRASTRUCTURE

Prioritizing biking and walking projects that will improve connections between neighborhoods, across barriers, and to key destinations in Portsmouth



Organizing Framework:

- Southeast to Downtown
- Southwest to Downtown
- Northwest to Downtown
- North-South Connections
- East-West Connections
- Connections to Pease

RECOMMENDATIONS - INFRASTRUCTURE

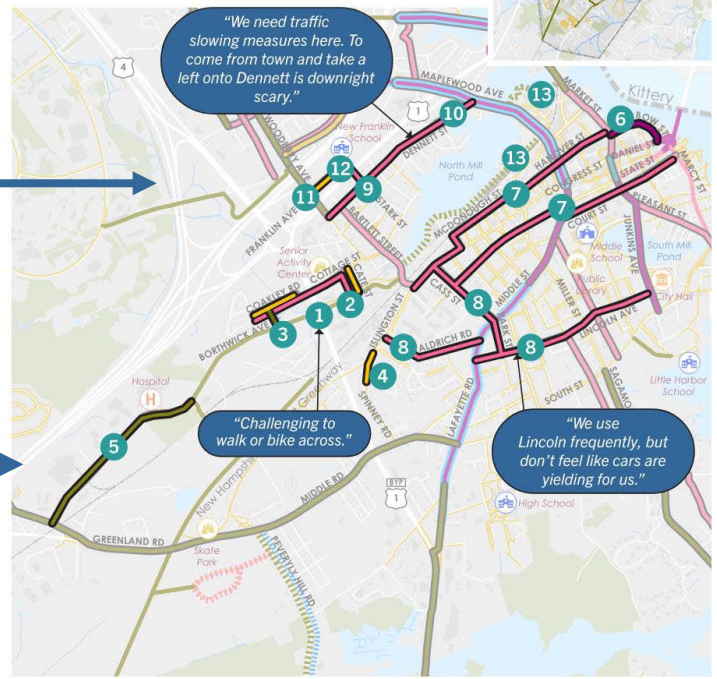
Key connections

Recommended corridor and intersection projects (map)

Relevant public feedback

SOUTHWEST TO DOWNTOWN

Connections: New Hampshire Seacoast Greenway, Portsmouth Senior Activity Center, Downtown Portsmouth, Kittery, Portsmouth Regional Hospital, Portsmouth Middle School, City Hall



Project Needs and Constraints

While the New Hampshire Seacoast Greenway provides the most continuous and direct connection between southwest Portsmouth and Downtown, the path only takes people as far north as Barberry Lane. Since a direct extension north along the rail corridor is not possible, a network of parallel routes, bike boulevards, and shared use paths will enable path users and nearby neighbors to continue their journey on foot or by bike to major destinations Downtown. The upcoming North Mill Pond Path will play a key role in enhancing this connection, and the addition of a Downtown bike boulevard network can help to improve direct access to destinations off the path. Additional recommendations for southwest to Downtown connections include filling sidewalk gaps, improving connections to the New Franklin School, and adding a shared use path on Borthwick Avenue.

Recommendations

1. Enhance pedestrian crossings across Route 1 Bypass at Borthwick Avenue.
2. Complete sidewalk gap on Cate Street between Hodgdon Way and Cottage Street and on Coakley Road between Coakley Road and Cottage Street. Add a pedestrian crossing across Cottage Street at Cate Street to access the Senior Activity Center and enhance the pedestrian crossing at Coakley Road and Cottage Street. Add a bike boulevard with traffic calming on Cate Street and Cottage Street to access Senior Activity Center.
3. Add a shared use path on the proposed Coakley-Borthwick Connector Roadway.
4. Complete sidewalk gap on Spinney Road between Islington Street and Sewall Road.
5. Continue shared use path on Borthwick Avenue to Greenland Road.
6. Add bike lane on Bow Street between Daniel Street and Market Street.
7. Add bike boulevard with traffic calming on Court Street between Marcy Street and Middle Street, on State Street between Middle Street and Cass Street, and on Hanover Street/McDonough Street/Islington Street between Market Street and Bartlett Street as lower-stress alternative routes through Downtown.
8. Add bike boulevards with traffic calming on Park Street/Cass Street and on Aldrich Road between Islington Street and Lincoln Avenue/Middle Street. Add traffic calming to the existing bike boulevard on Lincoln Avenue between Junkins Avenue and Middle Street.
9. Improve pedestrian crossings and ramps at Dennett Street and Stark Street.
10. Convert Dennett Street to Neighborhood Slow Street by removing the center line and adding traffic calming, enabling a low-stress connection to Maplewood Avenue.
11. Complete and upgrade sidewalk on Franklin Avenue.
12. Convert Stark Street to a bicycle boulevard to improve access to New Franklin School.
13. Continue design of North Mill Pond Trail and New Hampshire Seacoast Greenway.

EXISTING	PROGRAMMED	PROPOSED
Sidewalk	Sidewalk	New Sidewalk
Buffered Bike Lane	Shared Use Path	Separated Bike Lane
Bike Lane	Bike Boulevard	Bike Lane
Shared Use Path		Shared Use Path
Bike Boulevard		Bike Boulevard
		Pedestrian Street

Context map

Key needs or constraints

Recommended corridor and intersection project descriptions

RECOMMENDATIONS – NON-INFRASTRUCTURE

The **2014 Plan** developed a comprehensive list of recommendations, many of which are **still relevant today.** Updates have been provided where applicable.
New recommendations are underlined.

- Education
  - Bicycle Safety
  - Planning and Engineering
  - Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities
  - Students, adults, and City staff
- Encouragement
  - Events like Open Streets
  - Programs like Safe Routes to School, Commuter Choice, and Bike Benefits
  - Wayfinding and wayfinding resources
- Evaluation
  - Track funding opportunities
  - Inspection of facility conditions
  - Establish Standing Advisory Committee
  - Bike and pedestrian volume and crash analysis
  - VMT reduction targets and mode shift goals
- Enforcement
  - Develop a policies related to speed feedback sign applications and the use of e-mobility and motorized devices
- Engineering
  - Resources and programs for amenities
  - Construction access maintenance
  - Transit-Focused Study and COAST Coordination
  - Snow Clearance
  - Facility maintenance and year-round maintenance equipment
  - Quick-Build program
  - Explore privately-operated bike share system
  - Adopt Safe Systems Approach

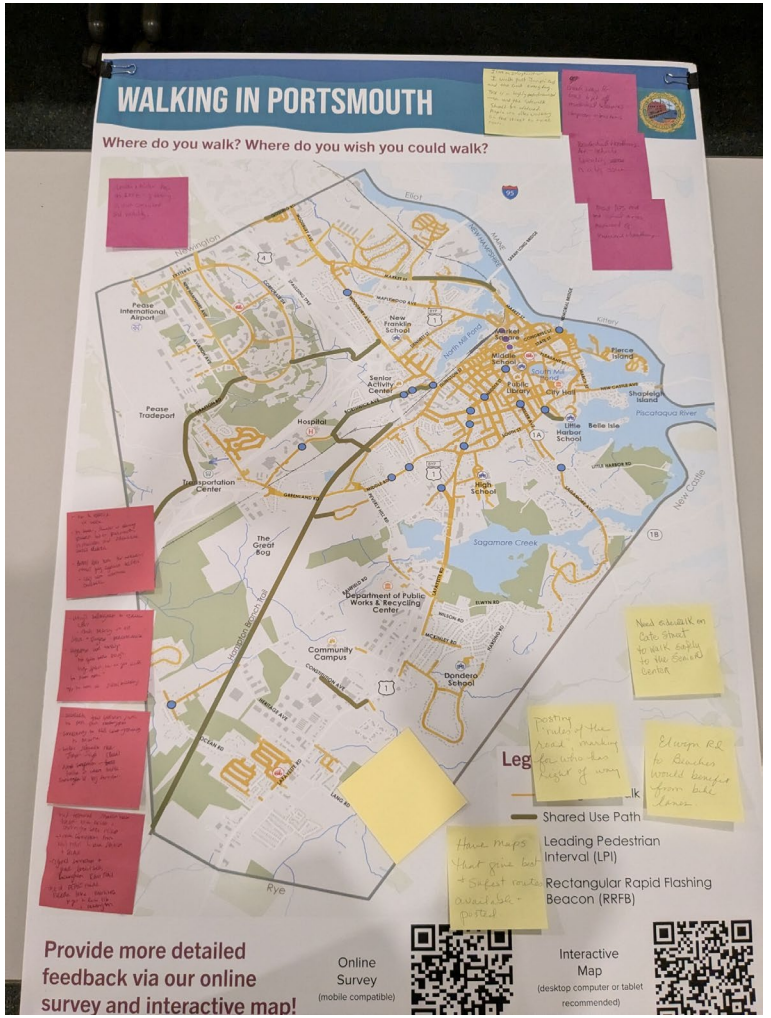
PRIORITIZATION

Projects will be prioritized using a combination of the following factors:

- Safety
- Public Realm Enhancement
- Connectivity
- Feasibility and Timeframe
- Equity
- Life Cycle Cost

CONTINUITY

All public and Working Group feedback has been documented and is shared with the City for on-going reference!



DISCUSSION

What types of non-infrastructure recommendations would you like to encourage the City to focus on first?

Discuss!

DISCUSSION

In your role in the community or in the City, how can you help maintain momentum on implementing this plan?

Discuss!

DISCUSSION

The plan is visionary and will take many years or even decades to complete.

What will successful implementation look like to you?

Discuss!

NEXT STEPS

- **Public Meeting**
  - Help us by sharing the public meeting announcement, once scheduled
- **Finalization of Plan**
- **City approval process**

CONTACTS

City of Portsmouth Points of Contact

Jillian Harris, Principal Planner

Planning and Sustainability Department

jharris@cityofportsmouth.com

Eric Eby, City Engineer

Department of Public Works

ebeby@cityofportsmouth.com

Project Team Points of Contact (Kittelson & Associates, Inc.)

Liz Flanagan, Senior Planner

eflanagan@kittelson.com

Megan Mello, Planner

mmello@kittelson.com

Juliet Walker, Principal Planner

jwalker@kittelson.com