

Halls Road Improvements Committee

This booklet presents key elements of the master plan for Halls Road in Old Lyme Connecticut prepared by the BSC Group. The following pages highlight two detailed drawings from the plan which represent two distinct but interrelated aspects: public right-of way improvements for roadways and sidewalks (to be paid for by the town), and new potential redevelopment resulting from Village District zoning for mixed use along Halls Road (to guide future development by private investors).

The public right-of-way roadway and sidewalk improvements create safe pedestrian and bike routes along Halls Road to Lyme Street. Pedestrian lighting, landscaping, open green spaces, sidewalks, and crosswalks are all a part of the improvements the town will undertake. The plan also includes the most popular element suggested in town-wide surveys conducted at the beginning of the planning process: a new 'Bow Bridge.' This biking and walking bridge will span the Lieutenant River at the old bridge abutment, creating a safe and beautiful connection between Lyme Street and our main commercial district on Halls Road. Work on these improvements will begin as soon as the town secures funding and the required regulatory approvals.

The second illustrative plan shows how new zoning could affect future development. This is just one example of how new private investments could play out over the next 20 years. Village District zoning is designed to attract retail and residential investment, and will no longer require the deep set-backs and large parking lots that favored strip centers. The zoning that once attracted strip centers now disproportionately favors investments aimed primarily at serving highway traffic (e.g. gas stations and fast food chains). The town has said for decades it does not want Halls Road to be dominated by highway services. New zoning is required to address that. In the new zoning, cluster housing, town houses, and second-story apartments will help ease the severe shortage of smaller-scale housing options in Old Lyme, and help turn a "9-to-5, commercial-only" area into a living neighborhood with mixed use—as Lyme Street was before the 1960s. The drawing is a tool to help in writing new zoning and design guidelines. The goals of those guidelines are, first and foremost to attract the kinds of investments that serve the needs of Old Lyme, and to create a 'look and feel' in keeping with the rest of the town. The long term goal is to create a mixed-use commercial and residential neighborhood that feels like a part of Lyme Street and the wider town of Old Lyme.



Halls Road Master Plan for the Town of Old Lyme, CT

June 2021



EXISTING CONDITIONS

- No sidewalks along Halls Road
- Minimal street lighting
- No crosswalks from north to south sides of road
- No safe bike pathways
- 60' setbacks from road create parking lot view of strip center
- Commercial-only zoning encourages commercial development and attracts chain-based retail that mainly serves I-95 highway needs not town's needs
- Commercial-only zoning disproportionately favors highway services in current market conditions



Halls Road looking East



View of Old Lyme Shopping Center



Halls Road looking West



Halls Road looking East

COMMUNITY GOALS

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

- Safe streets with sidewalks, crosswalks and pedestrian safety
- Bike accommodating pathways
- Pedestrian lighting
- Green space for town gatherings
- Connect old town center to renewed Halls Road commercial center.
- Pedestrian bridge at old bridge abutment to allow non-vehicle access to Halls Road across the Lieutenant River
- Bridge opens the Lieutenant River to residents and visitors

PRIVATE INVESTMENT

- Reflect Old Lyme's small town feel in any future development
- Maintain and enhance Old Lyme's commercial center
- Address ongoing need for diverse housing for young and older residents
- Provide new Village District zoning to allow mix of residential and commercial developments
- Provide new options for private property owners as older sites become vacant or outdated



PART ONE

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

Introduction

The Public Right of Way Improvements plan represents the major items and improvements that will start to create the character of the new "Halls Road Village District". This plan for public improvements provides Halls Road with an enhanced public realm that will support for future development.

Pedestrian Connections

The plan provides new pedestrian connections and amenities all along Halls Road from the intersection at Lyme Street to and across Route 156 / Neck Road. Sidewalks and new pedestrian street lighting will run along Halls Road, leaving enough space for street trees and future on-street parking. Crosswalks have been provided across commercial driveways and all intersections to further enhance pedestrian connectivity.

The Public Right of Way Improvement plan takes advantage of the infrastructure from the former bridge crossing over the Lieutenant River by installing a new and iconic pedestrian bridge in this location. The new bridge and multi-use path will provide greater pedestrian and bicycle

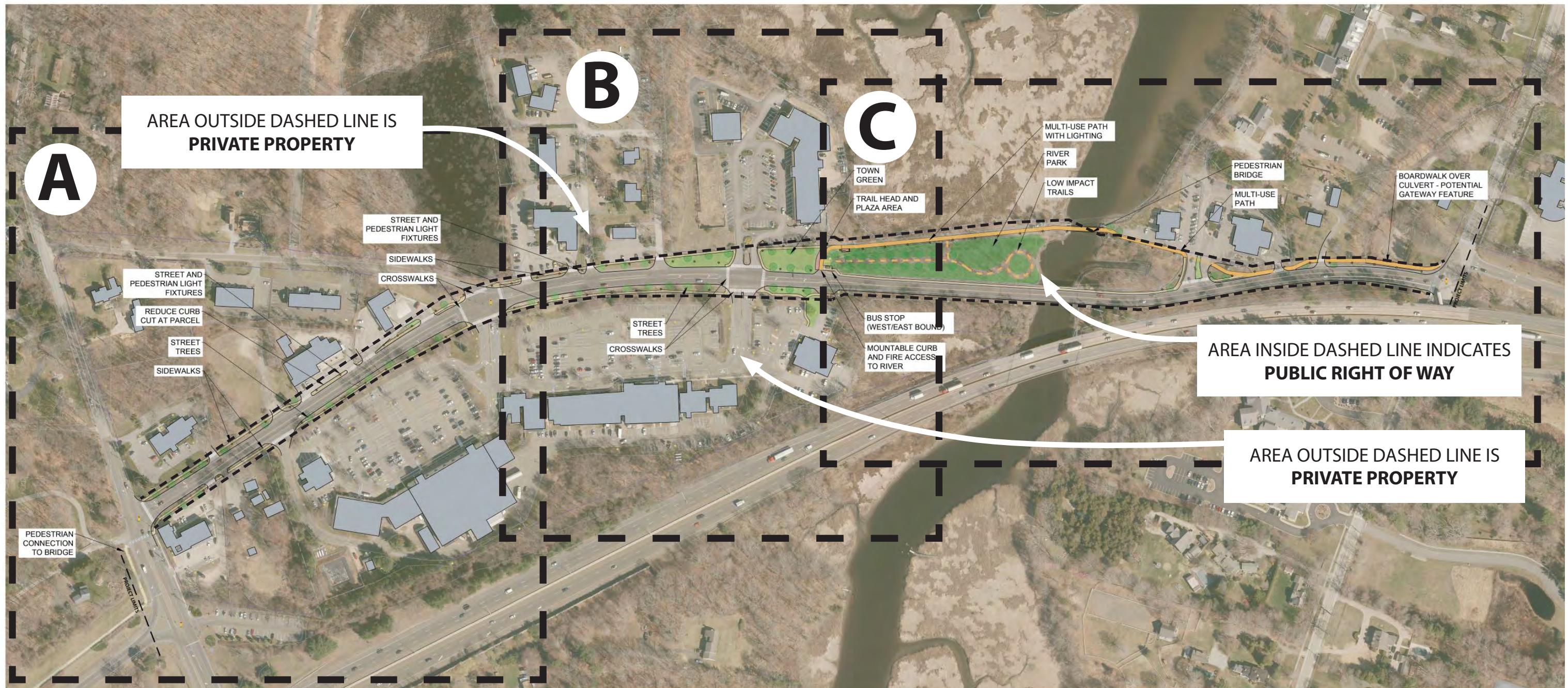
connectivity from the Town's historic center to and within the Halls Road Village District. The multi-use trail will also include a boardwalk over the culvert located near the Lyme Street intersection. This multi-use path then crosses the river and goes through a new river park and ends at the new trail head and bus stop locations along Halls Road. This new multi-modal hub provides the Halls Road Village District area with new ways for people to access the space, and encourages people to spend longer times circulating throughout the corridor.

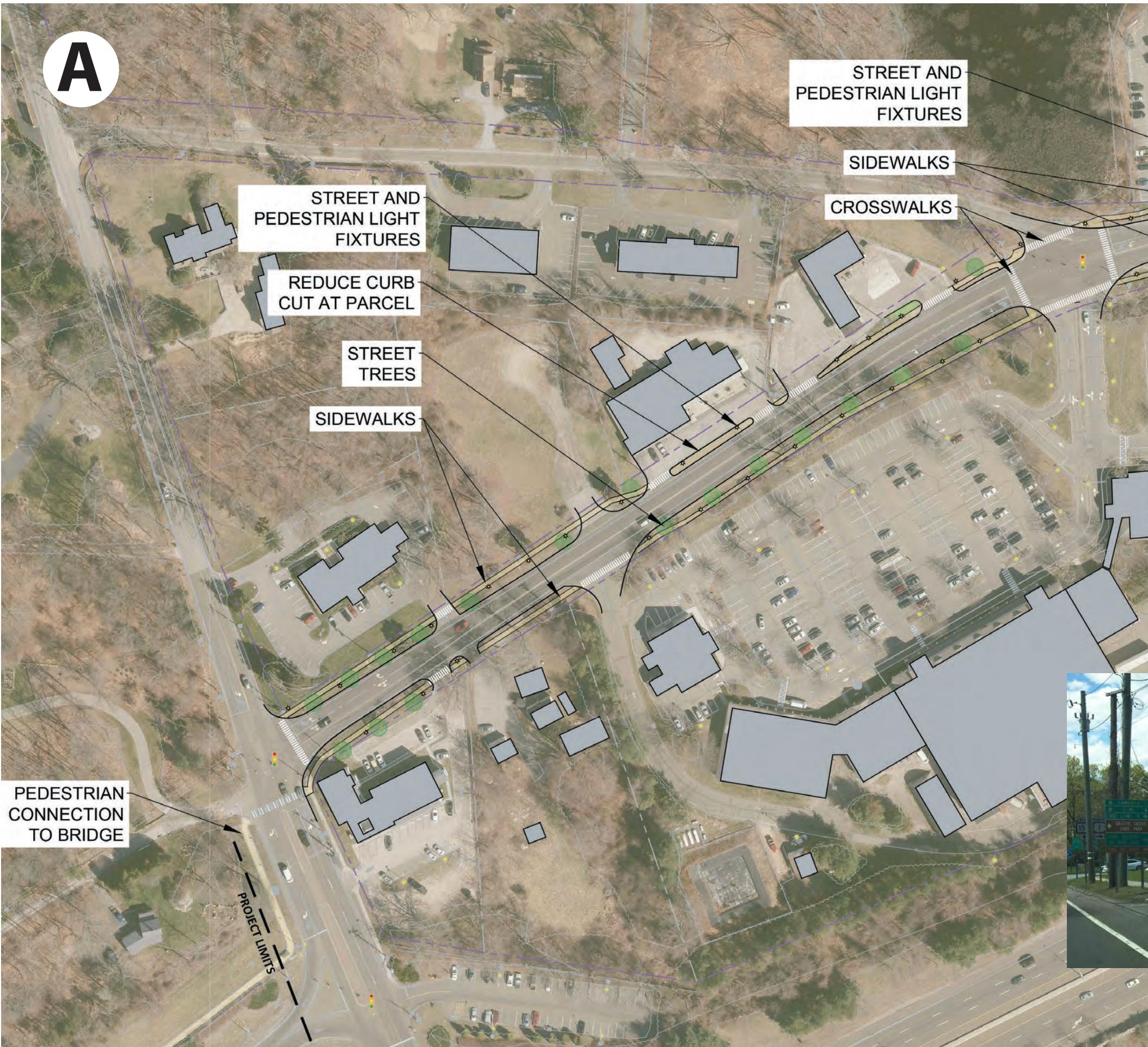
Open Space Enhancements

Open space improvements such as a river park area and new town green space enhance and formalize the existing public space, helping to create that vital central space where people will gather. These types of spaces encourage recreation and pedestrian movement throughout the space, and will help define the new village character of the project area.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

Plan Overview





MAIN ENTRY TO HALLS ROAD FROM WEST

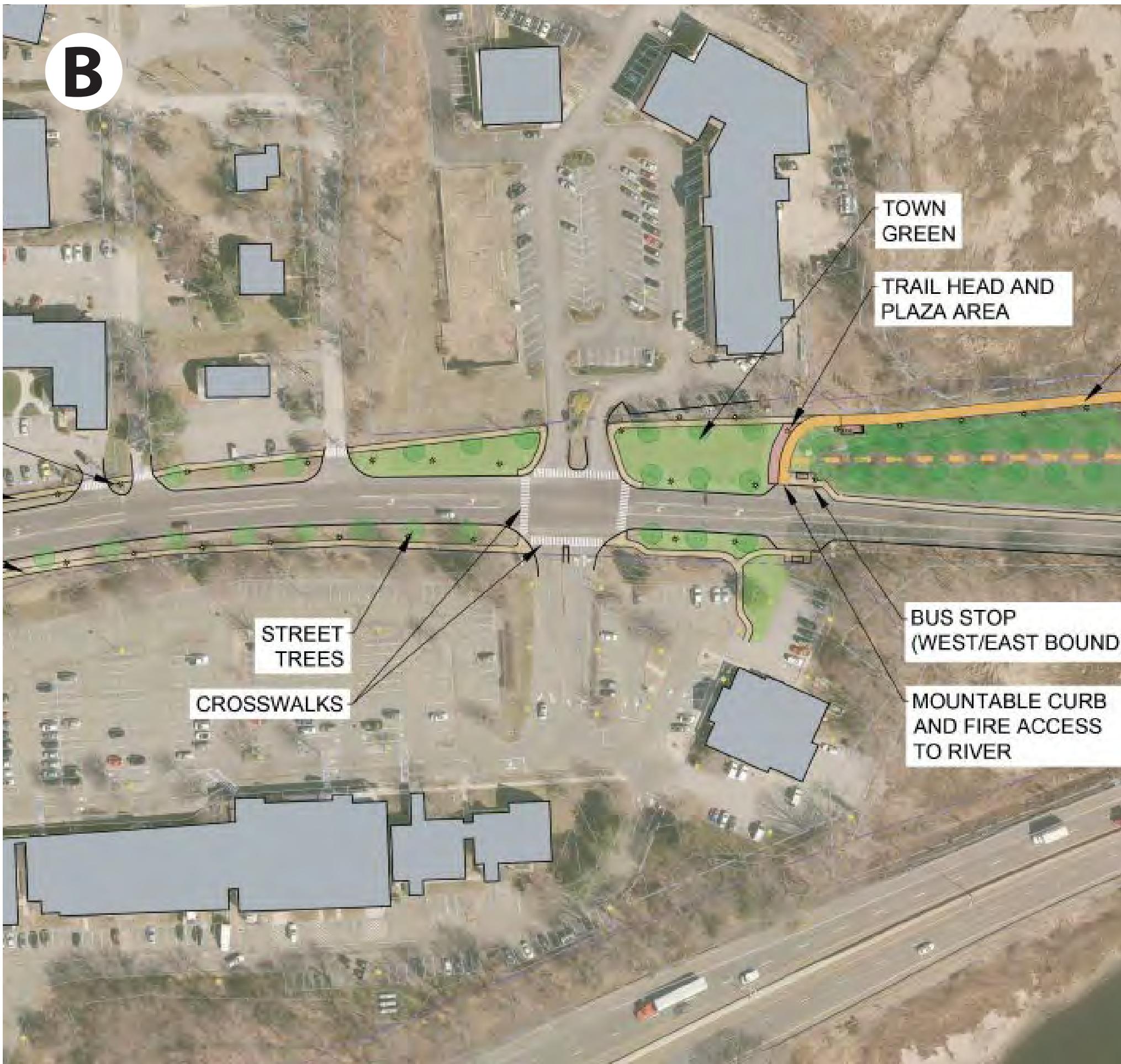
- New crosswalks at Halls Corner to lead pedestrians to Baldwin Bridge and park below bridge
- Street trees line roadway along with pedestrian lighting, sidewalks, bike paths and street furnishings
- Existing commuter parking with future bus stop kiosk



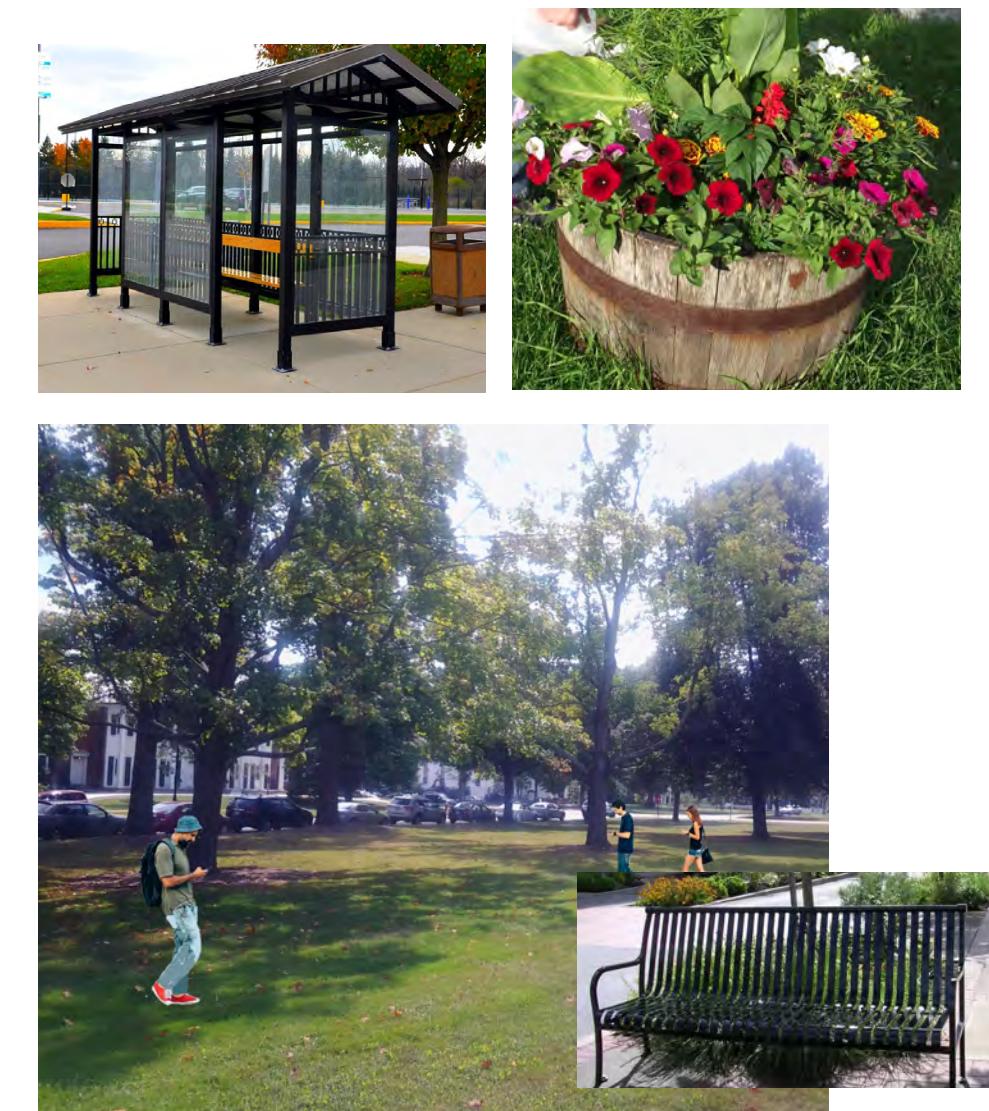
EXISTING GATEWAY TO HALLS ROAD

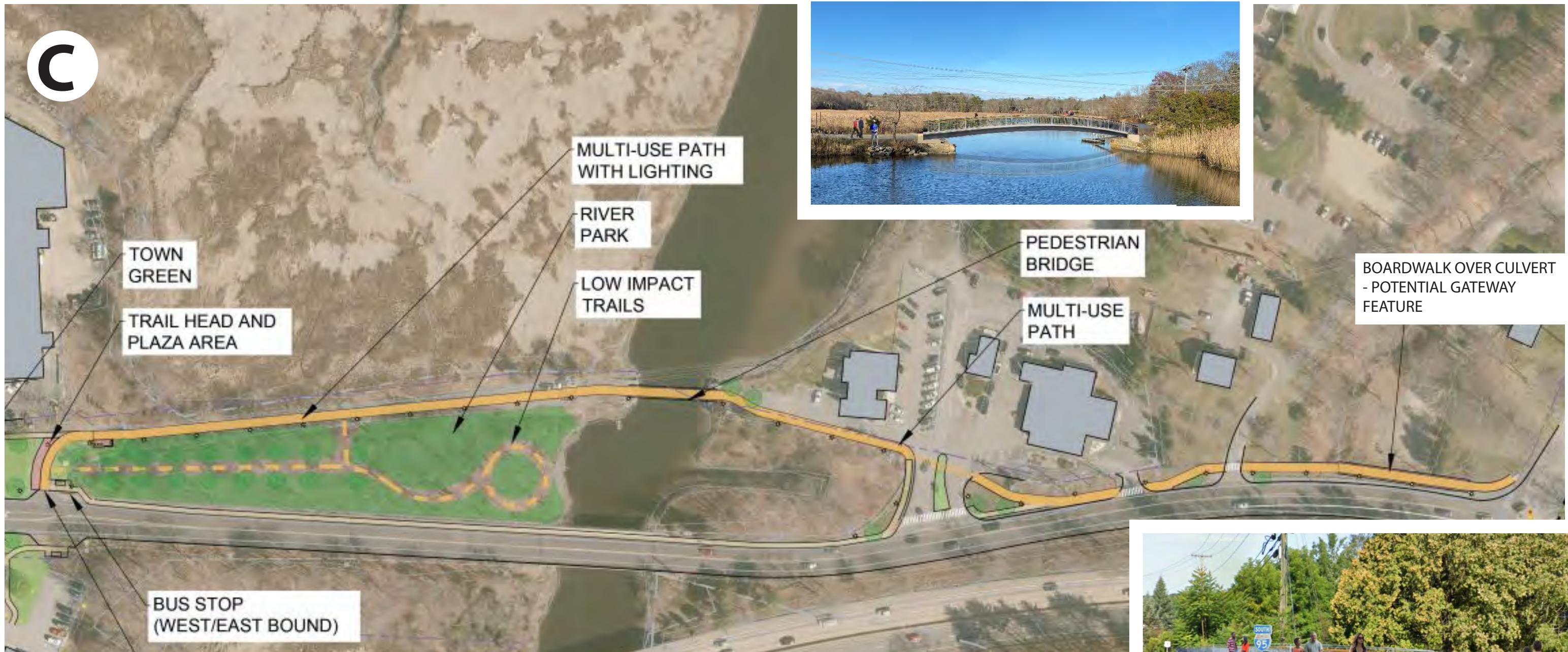


HALLS ROAD CENTER



- New town green for community gatherings
- Access to riverside
- Bus stop kiosk
- Street trees line roadway along with pedestrian lighting, sidewalks, bike paths and occasional benches

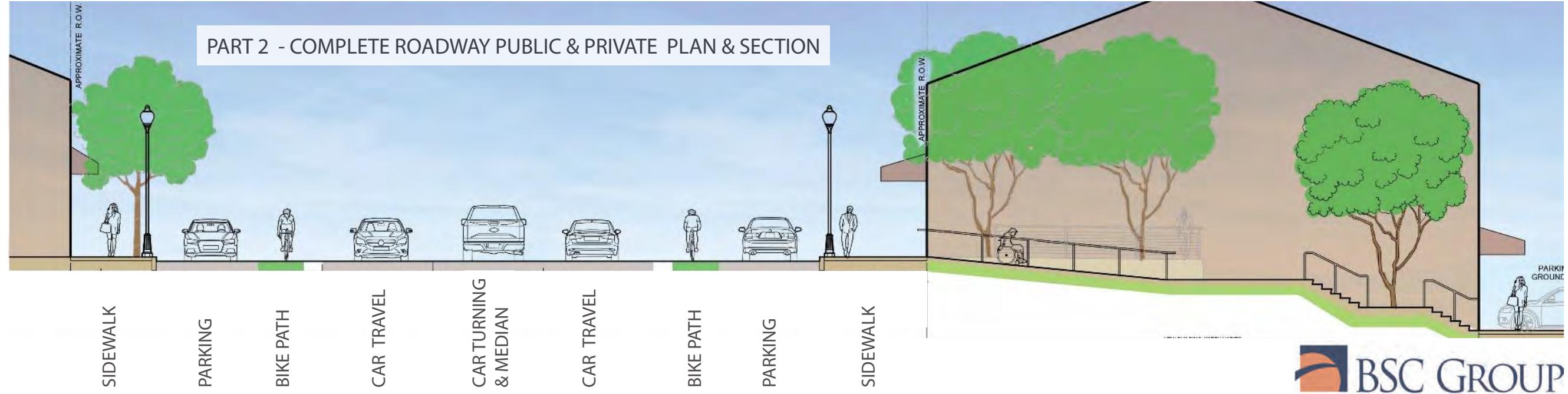
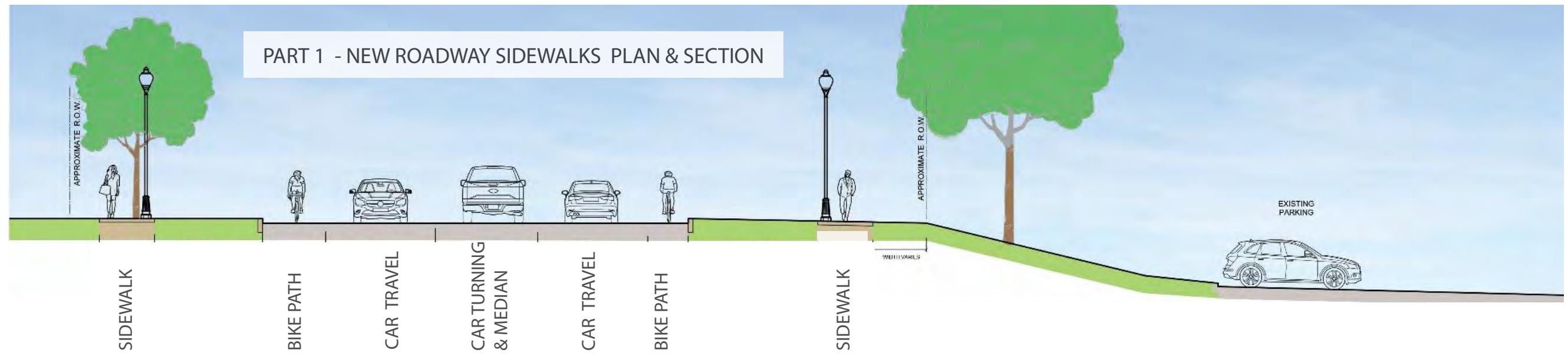
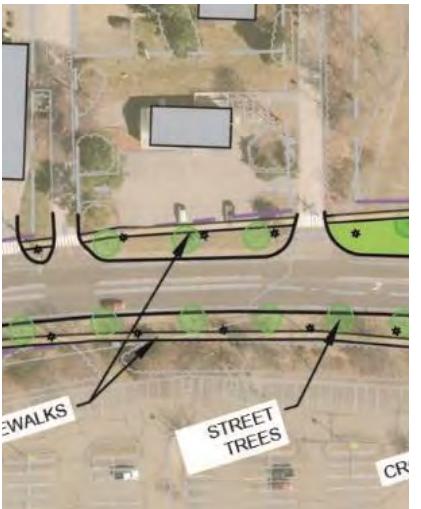




MAIN ENTRY TO HALLS ROAD FROM EAST

- Pedestrian and bike path connects to Lyme Street using boardwalk to span feeder creek at Art Association.
- New Bow Bridge provides views up Lieutenant River and safe access into commercial and residential center.
- River Park with low impact trails leads up to town green.
- Pedestrian lighting creates evening connection between old and new sections of town.

ROADWAY SECTIONS OVER TIME



PART TWO

POTENTIAL PRIVATE REDEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The concept plan that illustrates Potential Private Redevelopment shows one way that the "Halls Road Village District" could evolve when property owners redevelop their property in accordance with new Village District zoning regulations.. This private redevelopment concept plan builds off the Public Right of Way Improvements plan by making additional roadway improvements such as restriping, planted median islands, on-street parking, bike lanes, safety improvements to commercial driveways, and redevelopment of the adjacent parcels to build multi-use buildings close to the sidewalk.

Village District Redevelopment Potential

Based on prior community input, citizens voiced their preference to encourage redevelopment along Halls Road that is economically viable as well as in keeping with the older and more traditional character of Old Lyme.

The following items were expressed as community preferences for the Halls Road corridor and have been reflected in the Potential Private Redevelopment Plan. The plan is conceptual in nature and is intended to:

- Show that Old Lyme is serious about creating a more prosperous business environment
- Attract good investment and developers to the Halls Road area
- Guide development to be in keeping with Old Lyme's traditional look and feel
- Help create town homes and apartments to meet the unserved needs of young and old
- Reconnect Lyme Street to a pedestrian and bicycle friendly shopping and dining area
- Increase town revenues without spreading new development across acres of open land

The plan will help create a place where people want to "park once and walk", which is better for business, for socializing, and for the environ-

ment. Zoning Regulations will be updated to allow development consistent with this conceptual plan to encourage elements lacking from the corridor such as

- Outdoor dining, cafes, and retail displays
- Active first floor uses with engaging storefronts along new sidewalks and safe streets
- Places to live above and behind retail uses
- Parking located behind or beside businesses with easy access to retail and sidewalks
- Public spaces that complement abutting private uses

Design guidelines will help guide the design of buildings and sites to reinforce the look and feel of Old Lyme by recommending appropriate materials, features, and architectural styles.

Again, the following plans are conceptual in nature, showing the redevelopment potential, which will be guided new zoning regulations and design guidelines. Actual redevelopment plans by private property owners and developers have not yet been proposed, but are anticipated once new regulations are adopted.

Additional Public Improvement to Support Private Redevelopment

As development proposals come forward from private land owners and developers, the Town is prepared to invest in further public right of way improvements as appropriate, such as:

Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections

The plan provides recommendations for additional pedestrian connections along Halls Road, leaving enough space for street trees and future development.

The Potential Private Redevelopment Plan also builds on the multi-use path created in the master plan by reallocating space on the roadway to install bike lanes. This provides a continuous connection from the Lyme Street intersection to the pedestrian connection to the Baldwin Bridge located off Neck Road. This is important since it provides an additional method people can use to access the Halls Road Village District.

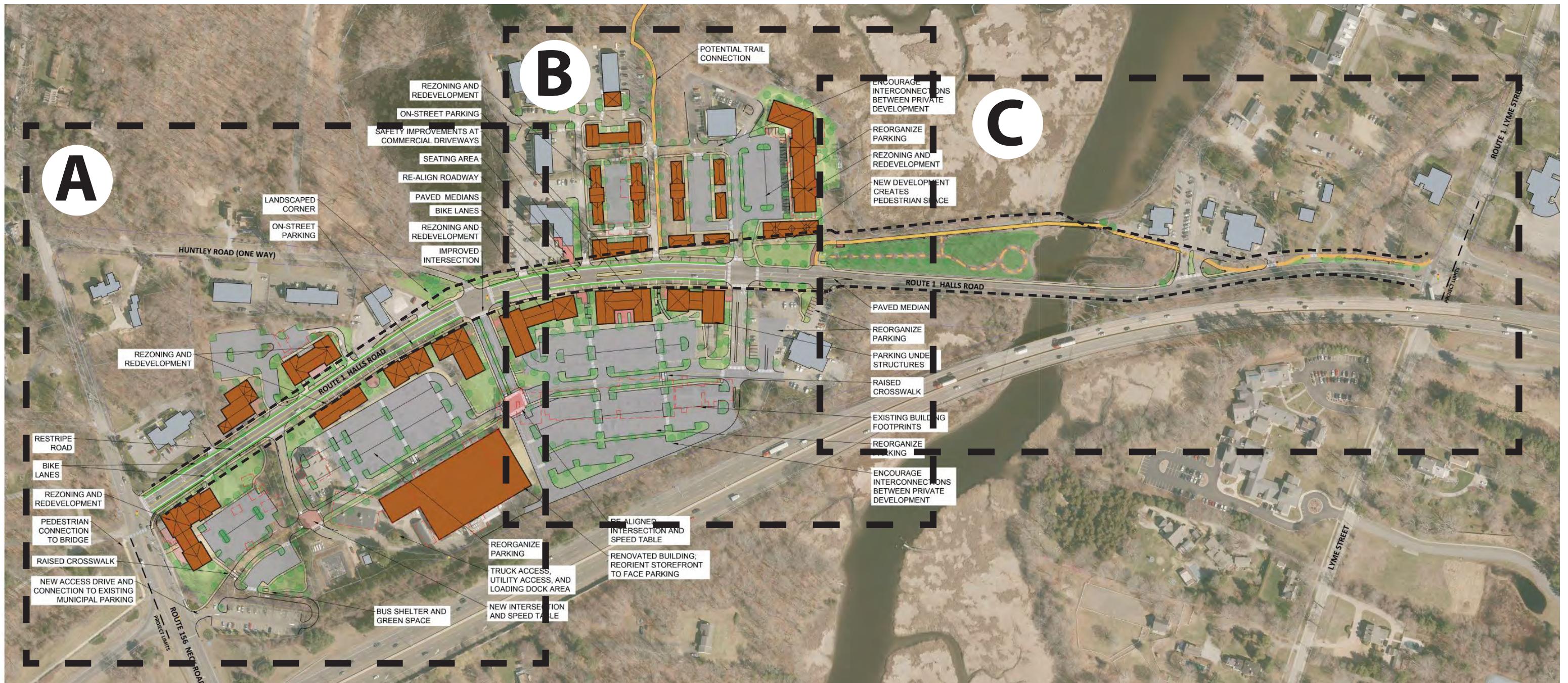
Open Space Enhancements

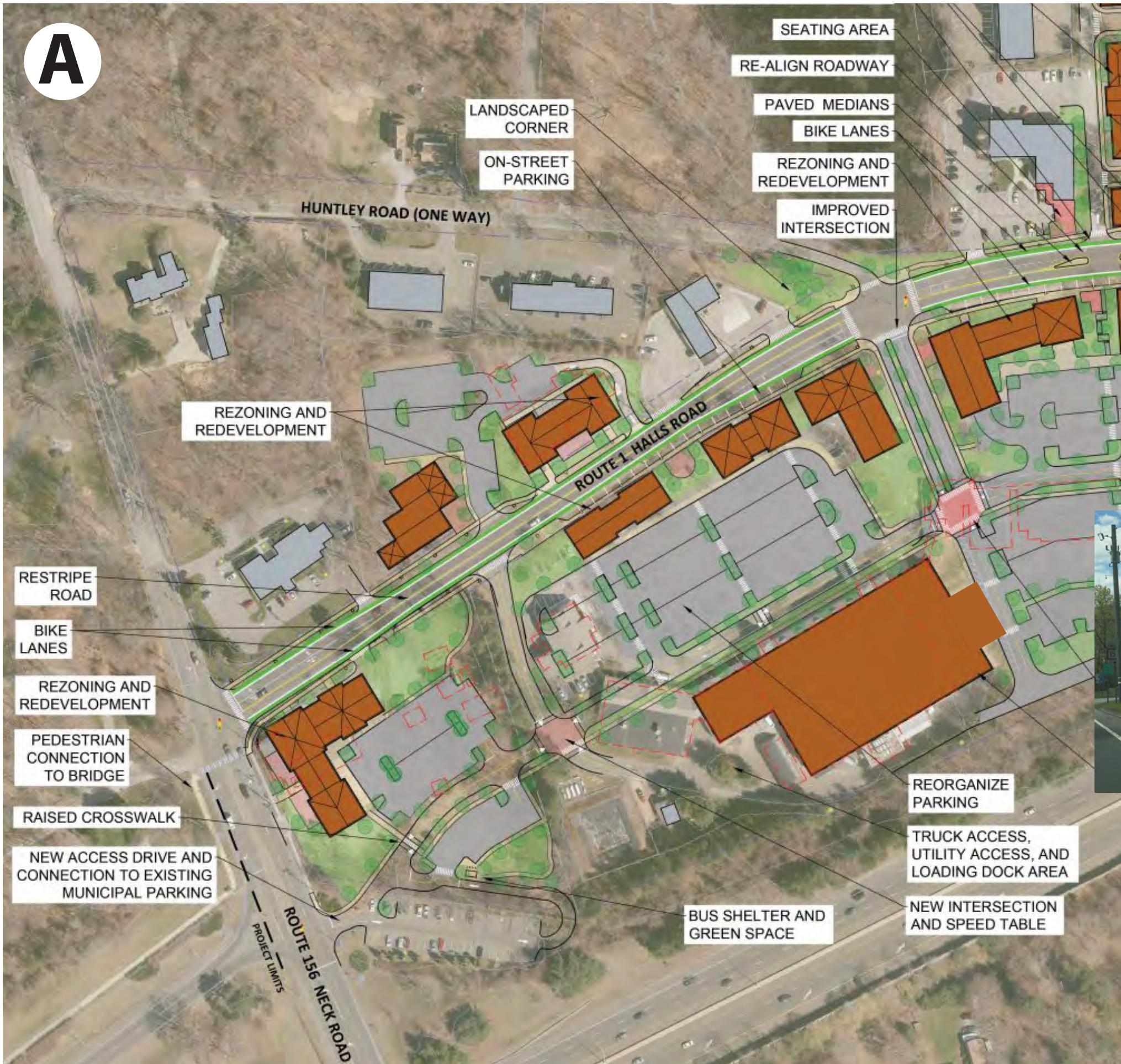
Additional open space and public areas could be created between buildings which would draw pedestrians to the new storefronts. By building new buildings close to the right of way, pedestrians will have better access to the storefronts, and on-street parking could be installed to further increase circulation to the street-level businesses. These public areas could even become outdoor dining areas or small outdoor market areas.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

The potential to add Transit Oriented Development amenities would add a huge opportunity and value to the Halls Road District. With the addition of a larger bus stop at the existing municipal parking lot, additional parking, and a building that could support apartments for commuters, the TOD would increase business and attract new visitors to the corridor.

POTENTIAL PRIVATE REDEVELOPMENT Plan Overview





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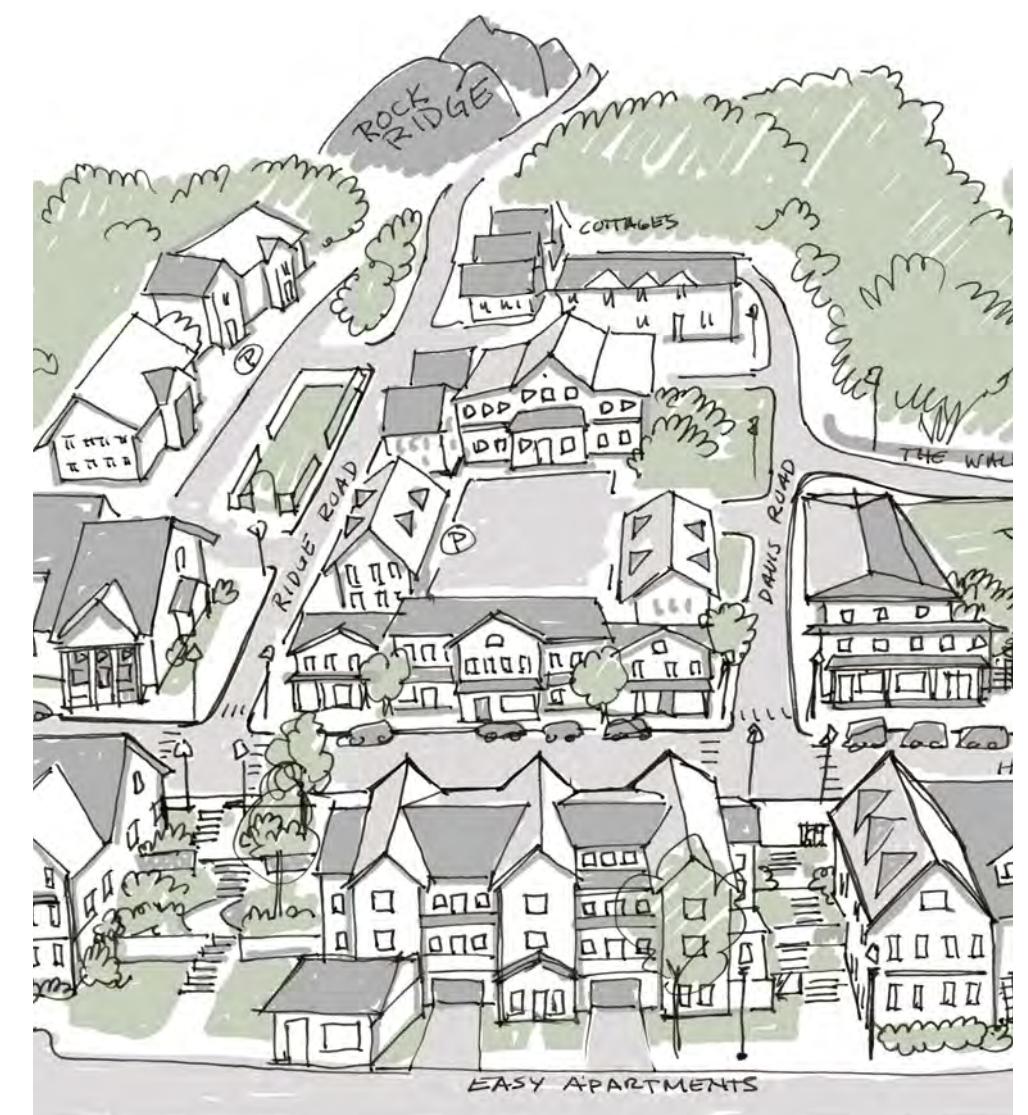
- New signature building provides gateway to town
- New access drive to private property and connection to existing commuter parking with bus stop kiosk
- Encourage landscaping by new investors
- Reorganized parking, access roads and supermarket entry with truck access maintained



HALLS CORNER

HALLS ROAD CENTER

- New streetscape made up of buildings lining Halls Road
- Allow for additional rental income from apartments above shops.
- New residential opportunities off Halls Road for town houses and apartments
- Walkable browsing and community interaction





MAIN ENTRY TO HALLS ROAD FROM EAST

- New multi-modal trail between Halls Road and Lyme Street creates connection between old and new
- New Lieutenant River bridge provides a unique setting for residents and investors to take advantage of Old Lyme's natural beauty



COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Reinvigorated commercial center more in keeping with the small town feel of Old Lyme
- Increased tax base for town with introduction of multiple stories and mixed use occupancies
- Iconic bridge connecting Halls Road to Lyme Street
- Open space leading to beautiful Lieutenant River for community access
- Walkable shopping
- New housing opportunities
- Investment incentives created by new Village District zoning

NEXT STEPS

Public Improvements

- Obtain approvals from CT DOT and other agencies
- Provide a comprehensive list of available grants for Public Right of Way
- Provide grant writing assistance to apply for grants
- Apply for grants (Town)

Private Redevelopment of Halls Road Village District

- Provide recommended zoning language changes to describe a new mixed-use Village District for the Halls Road area
- Help those responsible to finalize language for this new zoning district
- Create Design Guidelines as a supplement to the new Village District zoning





Halls Road Improvements Committee

