

TRANSPORTATION

From the state-owned Routes 32 and 122, to the winding roads which connect Barre's three villages, to the historic bridges that greet travelers as they cross the Ware River, the roads of Barre ensure safe and efficient transit through the town and help to establish its rural character. Barre has a unique transportation history despite its current rural and agricultural character.

In 1849 a freight rail company was established to connect Barre to Worcester and Boston, named appropriately the Boston, Barre and Gardner Railroad. Unfortunately, this project was abandoned, and though later the company did connect Gardner to Worcester by rail, this route bypassed tranquil Barre completely.⁴⁵ Other railroad companies succeeded in connecting Barre to its neighboring communities, eventually leading to the

Massachusetts Central Railroad Line which operates freight service between Palmer and South Barre on 24 miles of track owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.⁴⁶

A proposed link of the Mass Central Rail Trail passes near the southeastern border of town, next to the Massachusetts Central Railroad line. Despite the lack of infrastructure for biking, cyclists are also present on the roads of Barre whose winding rural roads and pastoral scenes offer pleasant views of the New England countryside. For older residents who may have difficulty getting around, the Council on Aging offers para-transit vans which provide affordable trips to ten towns across the region for senior residents.

Key findings and goals in this chapter were informed by the Master Plan Survey, the CMMPO Pedestrian and Bike Plan (2018), the Barre Economic Strategic Development Plan, the Town of Barre Rapid Recovery Plan, data from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and other studies of transportation behaviors and roadway conditions. Residents and stakeholders shared satisfaction with the priorities

of the Highway Department and the progress being made to improve transportation conditions across town but expressed concern for the accessibility of transit services, the maintenance of town roads, and the safety of several intersections. The goals and action items aim to address these concerns and build positive momentum to improve transportation for all residents and travelers.

45 Karr, Ronald Dale (2017). *The Rail Lines of Southern New England* (2nd ed.). Pepperell, MA: Branch Line Press. pp. 229–231. ISBN 978-0-942147-12-4. OCLC 1038017689

46 Andrew Grahl; Steve Carlson; Zachary Carlson (February 2021). "Railfanning the Massachusetts Central Railroad". *Railpace* Newsmagazine. White River Productions. Retrieved 30 November 2022.

THEMES

- Accessibility
- Safety
- Exploring Alternatives



TRANSPORTATION DEFINITIONS

Desire Paths

An unplanned route or path, such as one worn into a grassy surface by repeated foot traffic, that is used by pedestrians in preference to or in the absence of a designated alternative such as a paved pathway.

Federal Aid Eligible Roadway

All roads that have some type of eligibility to federal funds, including federal-aid highways, limited federal-aid eligible rural minor collectors and the National Highway System routes.



Photo source: Dennis Pariseau



TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

Improving Roadway Infrastructure

Town residents strongly support repairing and maintaining the roadways of Barre. According to the Community Survey, respondents ranked roadway infrastructure as the highest transportation priority, with 61% saying that it was extremely important, and 33% saying it was somewhat important.

Improving Pedestrian Infrastructure

The residents of Barre have a strong interest in improving overall walkability in town. According to the Community

Survey, respondents ranked walkability as a transportation priority, with 39% saying that it was extremely important, and 36% saying it was somewhat important. Additionally, 62% of community survey respondents indicated that they would like to see more hiking trails in and around Barre.

Creating Cycling Infrastructure

Currently no cycling infrastructure exists within Barre, however, there is a desire among residents for this infrastructure to be put in place. According to the community survey, respondents ranked bikeability as a priority, with 30% saying that it was

extremely important, and 37% saying it was somewhat important.

Developing Public Transit Options

There are currently no public transit options in Barre, however there is an interest from the town in exploring options for providing public transit to nearby cities and towns. According to the community survey, respondents ranked public transit options as a priority, with 21% saying that it was extremely important, and 34% saying it was somewhat important.



TRANSPORTATION FINDINGS

Conditions

The Town of Barre contains approximately 117 miles of road⁴⁷ and CMRPC’s Pedestrian Network inventory catalogues approximately 3.1 miles of sidewalk, primarily within Barre Town Center.⁴⁸ There is no bicycle infrastructure in Barre. Travel to and from destinations in and around Barre for residents is defined more by the lack of alternatives to personal automobiles than any strong affinity for automobile use.

Data from the American Community Survey (ACS) shown in Figure T2 presents three five-year ACS estimates covering the periods 2009-2013, 2014-2018, and 2019-2023. Over this

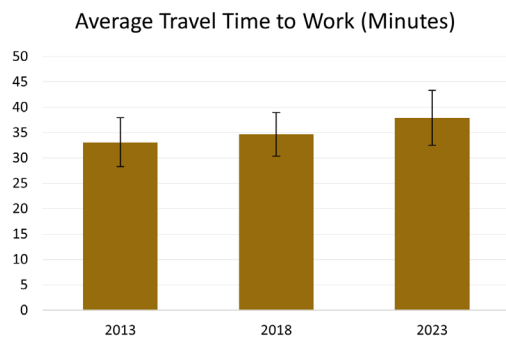


Figure T2: Average Travel Time to Work.
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates

What types of transportation options would you like to see more of in Barre?	Percent
Roadway conditions	60%
Improved sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrian	54%
Van program for older adults	45%
Improved walking trails and cycling trails	44%
More public transit options	35%
Street furniture such as bench, lighting etc.	28%
Taxi or rideshare	26%
More street trees	21%
Improved signage	21%
More kiosks on rest areas to highlight the Lost Village Scenic Byway	20%
ADA Accessible transportation assets (e.g., accessible sidewalks, ramps, parking spaces, etc.)	18%
Electric Vehicle charging stations	15%
Dedicated and protected bike lanes	15%
Parking	12%
More travelers services	9%
Park-n-ride parking lot	8%
Car-sharing services such as Zipcar	8%
Other (please specify)	7%

Figure T1: Community Survey Question 17: “What types of transportation options would you like to see more of in Barre?”

timeframe, the estimated average commute increased from 33.1 minutes to 37.9 minutes. While this change points to an increase in commuting time, it is not statistically significant, meaning the difference may reflect normal variation in survey data rather than a clear, measurable change in travel behavior.

Consistent with longer commute times, a growing share of Barre residents travel outside the town for work.

Data from the US Census Bureau’s Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program shows that the share of residents working outside of Barre increased from 84% in 2011 to 89% in 2023.

47 Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services “Town of Barre Community Snapshot” <https://dls-gw.dor.state.ma.us/reports/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=CommunityPage>

48 CMRPC Pedestrian Network Inventory <https://cmrpc.org/data-center/community-snapshots/barre/#T-T>



Share of Barre Residents Working in Barre and Elsewhere, 2011–2023

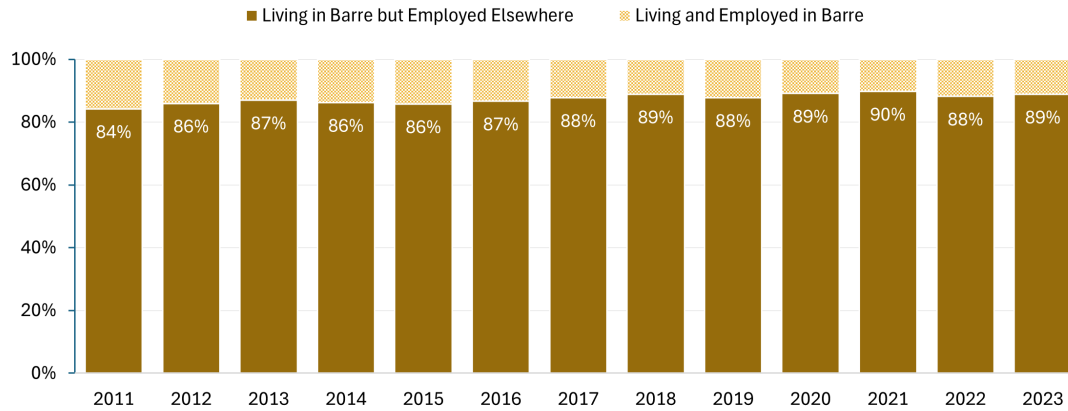


Figure T3: Share of Barre Residents Working in Barre and Elsewhere, 2011–2023.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD)

Condition	Miles of Roadway	Percent of Total
Excellent	5	15%
Good	8	25%
Fair	13	38%
Poor	4	14%
Very Poor	3	9%
Total	33	100%

Figure T4: Pavement Condition on Federal Aid Eligible Roadways

Among Barre residents who commute outside the town for work, Worcester is the most common destination. As of 2023, just over 14% of out-commuting residents work in Worcester, followed by Boston at approximately 6%. The remaining commuters are spread across a wide range of cities and towns throughout the region.

Data collected by CMRPC on the

condition of federally eligible roadways in Barre shows a wide range of conditions, from very poor to excellent (Figure T4). This dataset does not include locally owned roads. Of the approximately 33 miles of roadway included in CMRPC’s inventory, 61% were rated in fair, poor, or very poor condition, indicating that a significant portion of the town’s roadway network requires repair. These federally

eligible roadways may qualify for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding through the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization application process. The town’s Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance of public roads and town owned properties in Barre and faces budgetary shortfalls that prevent much needed repairs and improvements. This includes the repair of roads and associated drainage, snow and ice removal, sanding, street sweeping, as well as roadside and right-of-way brush clearing. This department is also responsible for all town highway work scheduling and coordinating with other town departments and local public utilities.

According to town reports, the Highway Department budget has largely remained the same year over year for the past decade. Not accounting for snow removal costs, the annual budget that the town has appropriated ranged from a low of \$623,205.60 in 2021 to a high of \$749,433.64 in 2020, a change of approximately 20%.⁴⁹ During that same decade the cumulative rate of inflation has decreased the buying power of the dollar by over 50% for construction materials, leaving the Highway



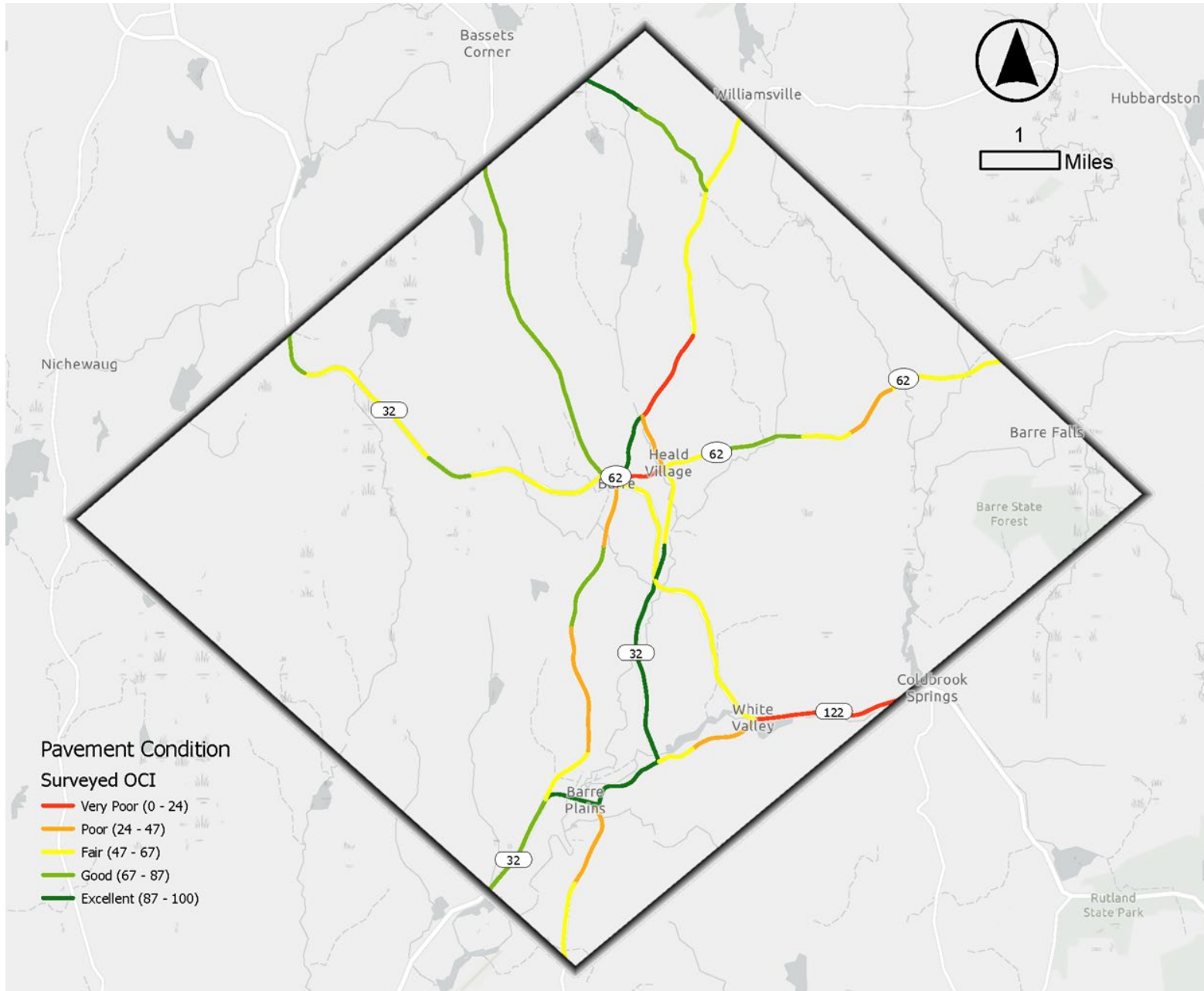


Figure T5: Pavement Conditions on Federal Aid Eligible Roadways



Department to do more with less. Figure T6 identifies the actual buying power of that budget adjusted for inflation, comparing the Public Works Budget from 2014 to 2024 against the General Construction Producer Price Index and the USDOT National Highway Construction Costs Index, using 2014 as the base year.

Chapter 90

One of the most important sources of funding for roadway maintenance in Barre is the state’s Chapter 90 Program, which provides annual formula-based funding to cities and towns for transportation infrastructure improvements. Each year, the Massachusetts Legislature establishes the overall funding level for the program, and those funds are then distributed among the Commonwealth’s 351 municipalities based on the formula. Chapter 90 funds

“

Highway department does a great job with snow removal and sanding/salting. They need more funding to properly fix poor road conditions.

(2023 Community Survey)

are allocated by state fiscal year, which runs from July 1 through June 30. Between 2013 and 2025, Barre’s annual Chapter 90 apportionment changed very little in nominal dollar terms. However, when accounting for inflation, particularly the sharp

increases in construction costs in recent years, the purchasing power of this funding has declined substantially. As shown in Figure T7, both the actual amounts and inflation-adjusted amounts (expressed in constant 2013 dollars using construction materials

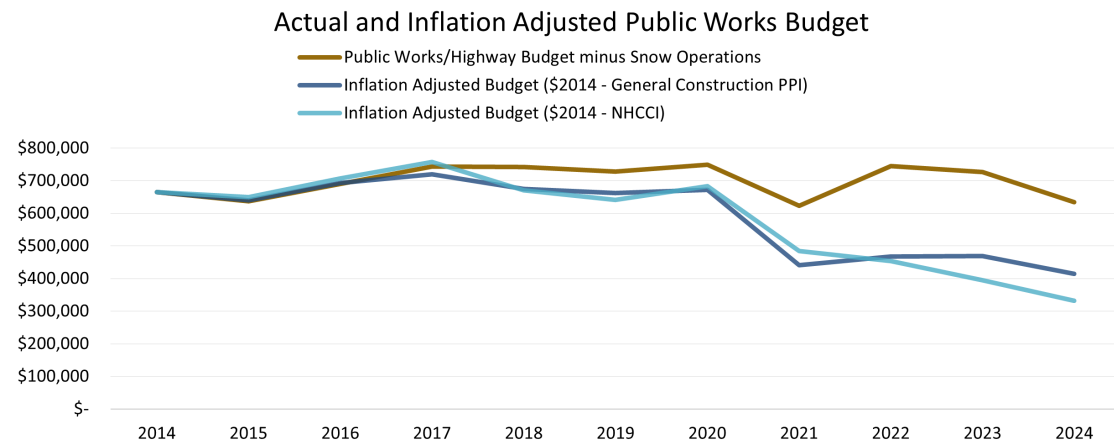


Figure T6: Actual and Inflation Adjusted Public Works Budget

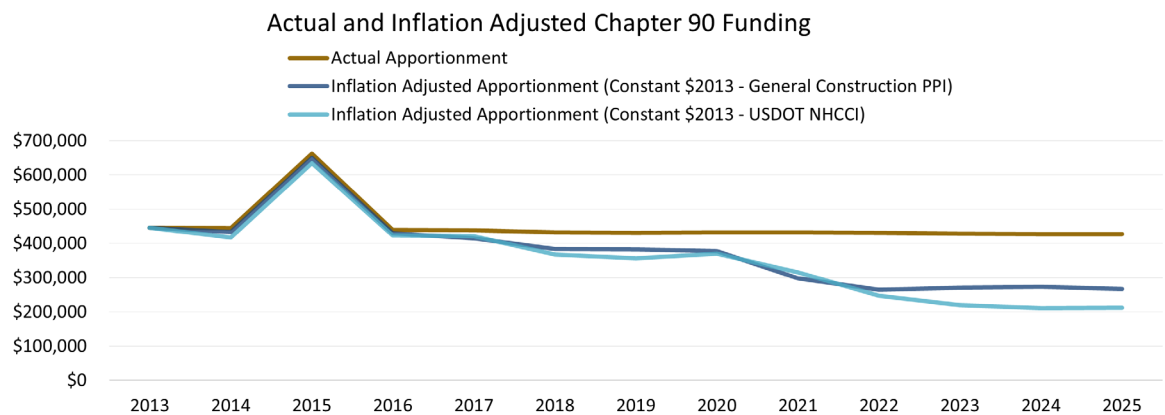


Figure T7: Actual and Inflation Adjusted Chapter 90 Funding



Producer Price Index and the USDOT NHCCI) are presented.⁵⁰ While the nominal apportionment changed little from \$445,158 in 2013 to \$426,910 in 2025, the inflation-adjusted value fell to between \$211,984 and \$272,369, depending on the measure of inflation.

The most recent Chapter 90 funding authorization included an additional \$180 million statewide, resulting in a substantial increase in Barre’s annual apportionment to \$964,891. When adjusted for inflation using the first half of 2025 construction materials Producer Price Index, this increase represents an approximately 35% gain in purchasing power compared to 2013 levels.

One way that communities can better manage the long-term costs of maintaining roads and utilities is by making more productive use of the infrastructure they have already built.

“

Some of the roads are pretty damaged and collect water that turns to ice very quick. Especially the roads the school buses drive on.

(2023 Community Survey)

Town	Local Road Miles	Population	Housing Units	Miles of Road / 1000 Residents	Miles of Road / 1000 Housing Units
Rutland	80.87	9,049	3,257	8.9	24.8
West Brookfield	50.64	3,833	1,831	13.2	27.7
North Brookfield	68.91	4,735	2,163	14.6	31.9
Barre	97.7	5,530	2,157	17.7	45.3
Oakham	44.06	1,851	697	23.8	63.2
Hardwick	85.64	2,667	1,181	32.1	72.5
New Braintree	49.9	996	396	50.1	126.0

Figure T8: Miles of Local Road per 1000 People and Housing Units

This can include land use strategies such as allowing more housing, mixed uses, or small-scale commercial activity along roads that already have public infrastructure. When more residents and businesses are served by the same miles of roadway, the cost of maintaining that infrastructure can be spread across a broader tax base, improving the town’s overall fiscal sustainability.

Compared to nearby communities, Barre’s roadway network is neither unusually extensive nor unusually compact relative to its population and housing base. As shown in Figure T8, Barre falls near the middle when comparing miles of roadway per 1,000 residents and housing units across six neighboring towns. This suggests that while Barre does not face an outsized infrastructure burden relative

to its peers, future land use decisions, particularly those that concentrate growth along existing roads, could play an important role in managing maintenance costs over time.

Safety for Drivers, Pedestrians, and Cyclists is an ongoing concern.

There are several factors that shape day-to-day travel conditions and influence how comfortable residents feel walking, biking, or driving in Barre. Community feedback and data point to common themes, including vehicle speeds, roadway design, and the visibility and condition of signs and pavement markings. Limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure,

⁵⁰ As of this writing, the annual PPI measure had not been released for 2025, therefore the PPI for the first half of 2025 was used.



such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and shoulders, can also affect how safely people move through town, particularly along busier roads and in village areas. Beyond the physical conditions of roadways, some roadway designs have been noted to be difficult to navigate, and even dangerous by residents. Survey respondents indicated that the intersection of Pleasant Street and South Street in Barre Town Center, and the intersection of Valley Road were the most difficult (i.e. hazardous, congested, or hard to navigate) areas or intersections in Barre.⁵¹

Crash data for Barre, available through the MassDOT Impact Portal, dates back to 2002. Total crashes peaked at around 90 incidents in 2008 and have generally declined since that time. Since 2019 crashes have averaged approximately 37 per year. While this overall downward trend is encouraging, the number of fatal and serious injury crashes has remained relatively steady, with eight such crashes occurring over the past five years. Less severe injury crashes have declined alongside overall crash totals. Figure T9 illustrates five-year crash density on Barre's roadways, with locations of fatal and serious injury crashes highlighted. Barre Center experiences a relatively high concentration of crashes, with

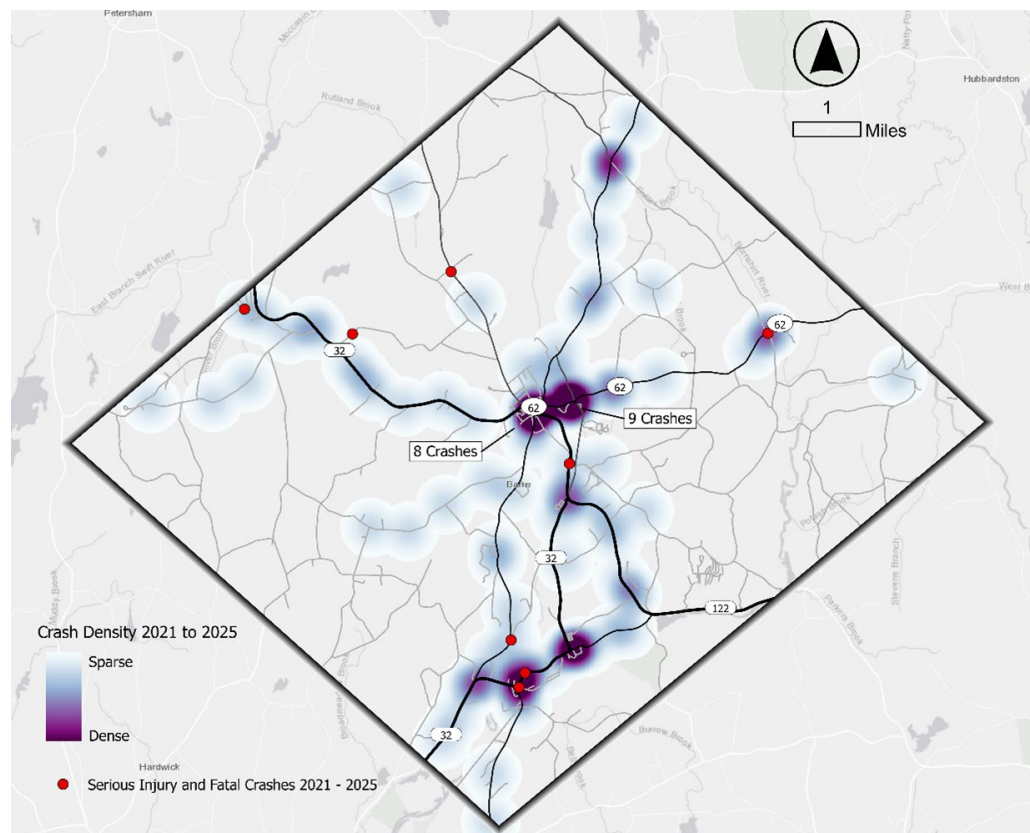


Figure T9: Crash Density 2021-2025. Source MassDOT Impact Portal

22 occurring over the past five years; however, none of these incidents resulted in a fatality or serious injury. The intersection of Pleasant Street and South Street, located within Barre's Town Center which has the highest number of crashes has a confusing traffic pattern: three state routes converge on or near this intersection (Route 122/32 and Route 62) as well as

South Street/Mechanic Street, James Street, Moulton Street, Exchange Street (which exists more as a parking lot around the common with a one way street running through the middle), Cat Alley, School Street and Common Street all have intersections around this area. This confusion has consequences:

51 Community Survey 2023, Q19



According to MassDOT, 44 of the crashes that have occurred in the years of 2019-2021 have occurred in or near this intersection.⁵² Another area of elevated crash density is South Barre, where several crashes involving serious injuries and fatalities have occurred.

Vehicle speed is an important indicator of both actual and perceived safety. It is especially critical in areas where drivers interact with pedestrians and cyclists. As vehicle speeds increase, the risk of serious injury or death in a crash rises sharply. For example, a pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 20 miles per hour has an estimated 18% chance of being seriously injured or killed. At 30 miles per hour, that risk increases to approximately 50%, underscoring the importance of speed management in areas with pedestrian and bicycle activity.

Figure T11 shows 85th percentile vehicle speeds on a subset of roadways in Barre; speed data is not available for all roads in town. It represents the speed at or below which 85% of drivers travel when the road is uncongested and conditions are favorable.

An area of potential concern in town

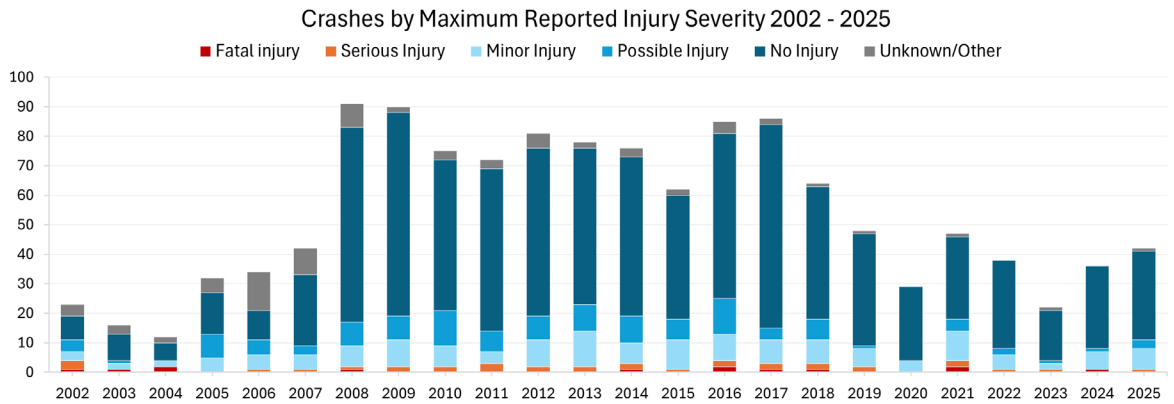


Figure T10: Crashes by Maximum Reported Injury Severity 2002 - 2025

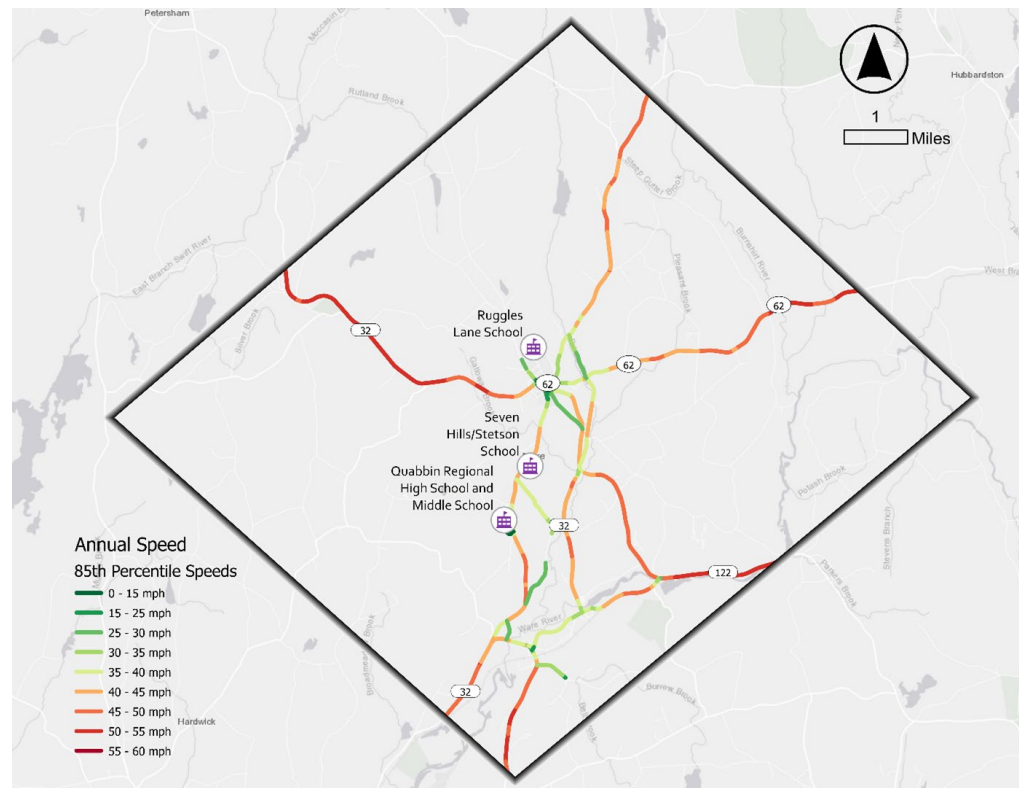


Figure T11: Vehicle Speeds in Barre





Sidewalks in Barre Plains and A sidewalk to Quabbin. It is very dangerous that the track team runs on South Street - BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD!!

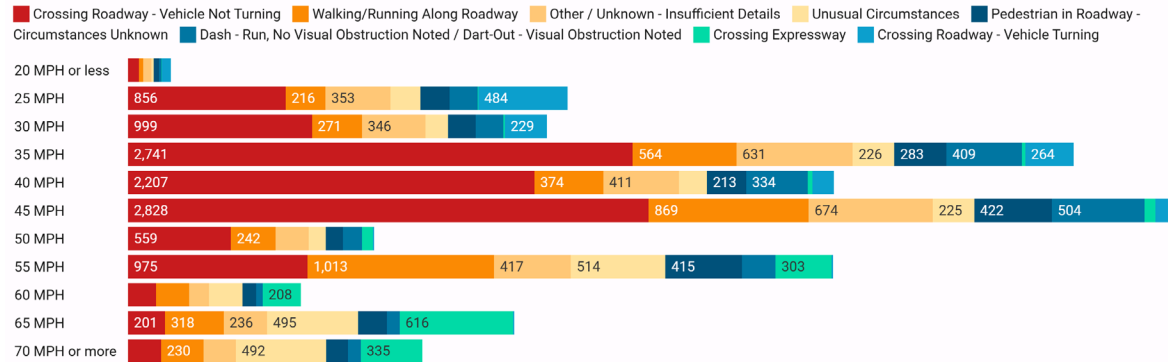
(2023 Community Survey)

is South Street. Community members noted that school sports teams, such as the cross country team, often use South Street for running. The design of this roadway, and the vast majority of roadways in Barre, creates conditions where the potential for fatal interactions between pedestrians and automobiles is increased.

While reductions in speed limits increase the overall survivability for crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists, what is lost in the dataset is that an overall reduction in interactions between pedestrians, cyclists and automobiles would save the most lives. For pedestrians, the most common fatal interactions occur during street crossings, with the second most being walking or running along the roadway. This data is similar for cyclists, who are at an even greater risk of death from cycling in the roadway with drivers

Grouped Pedestrian Fatal Crash Types by Speed Limit

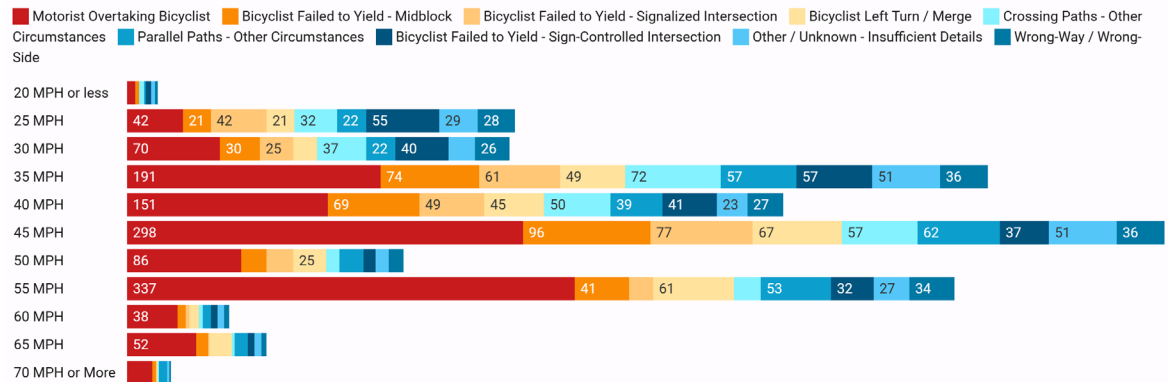
For roads with speed limits below 55 mph, the most common fatal crash type for people walking occurs when a driver is proceeding straight and hits a person walking across the roadway. At speed limits above 55 mph, other crash types become more common, with "unusual circumstances" and "crossing expressway" being two of the most common types.



Only "Pedestrian Crash Group" types with more than 1,000 pedestrian deaths recorded between 2017-2021, including those with unknown speed limits, shown. Chart: The League of American Bicyclists • Source: NHTSA • Get the data • Download image • Created with Datawrapper

Grouped Bicyclist Fatal Crash Types by Speed Limit

For most speed limits, the most common fatal crash type for people biking occurs when a driver is proceeding straight and hits a person biking while overtaking them. This crash type is especially prominent at higher speed limits.



Only "Bicyclist Crash Group" types with more than 200 bicyclists deaths recorded between 2017-2021, including those with unknown speed limits, shown. Chart: The League of American Bicyclists • Source: NHTSA • Get the data • Download image • Created with Datawrapper

Figure T12: Grouped Pedestrian and Cyclist Fatal Crash Types by Speed Limit
Source: The League of American Bicyclists, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration



attempting to overtake them. In both cases, the pedestrians and cyclists are in or immediately adjacent to the roadway at the same level as the car and not on a grade separated side or cross walk.

Removing pedestrians and cyclists from the roadway removes the potential of fatal interactions between pedestrians, cyclists and automobiles from occurring and increases the safety and enjoyability of transportation pathways for all users. Importantly, the creation of safer pathways for cyclists and pedestrians increases the usage and the adoption of alternative modes of transportation. Adding buffered bike lanes in high-speed areas, and conventional bike lanes in lower speed town centers will induce demand for these modes of transportation. Cyclists generally prefer separated bicycle infrastructure as it is safer;

“

I don't drive so like I mentioned a crosswalk between the pharmacy and the plaza would be extremely helpful, there's no crosswalks or sidewalks in the area I live.

(2023 Community Survey)

consequently is more likely to be used by even the most risk-averse cyclists.⁵³

The Community is interested in expanding the accessibility and reach of existing public transportation options.

Rural communities face unique challenges in providing transportation alternatives. A smaller population base for ridership, and longer distances between destinations lead to an intractable problem: less economic demand for a more expensive service. This tends to result in defaulting to individualized transportation centered on automobile usage. However, these challenges are not insurmountable if there is popular support for alternatives. The desire to expand transportation services was identified as a high priority in Barre's 2020 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan.⁵⁴ According to the Community Survey, 55% of respondents ranked public transit options as either extremely important or somewhat important. Over one third of respondents indicated that they wanted more public transit options in Barre. Additionally, 45% of respondents indicated that they wanted to see more support for the Elder Services Van Program The Montachusett Regional

“

What about a Barre to Worcester bus like there used to be?

(2023 Community Survey)

“

It would be great to have public transportation to Amherst.

(2023 Community Survey)

Transit Authority (MART) supports this on-demand transit program through the Barre-Hardwick Council On Aging, which provides fare-free rides to Barre's elderly (60+) and disabled residents. These services require 48-hour advance warning to book a trip but are adaptable to the needs of those it services with a wide range of destinations. Greater outreach is required to inform and assist residents on how to access to these services.

For residents under age 60 there are few options for transit to destinations

53 de Freitas, L.M., Axhausen, K.W. What influences cycling infrastructure preferences? A stated-preference survey. *Transportation* (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-025-10624-7>

54 Barre MVP Summary of Findings 2020



as Barre finds itself outside of nearby regional transit authorities' service areas for Worcester and Montachusett. Commuting patterns in Barre have remained largely unchanged over the past decade. American Community Survey data on commute mode share, shown in Figure T13, indicates that most residents continue to rely on single-occupancy vehicles as their primary way of getting to work. Although there have been modest increases in public transportation use, carpooling, walking, and bicycling, driving alone still accounts for 70% of work trips. This suggests that structural factors, such as job locations, travel distances, and limited transportation alternatives, continue to shape travel behavior, even as interest in other modes grows.

American Community Survey data indicates that vehicle availability is high in Barre, with nearly 90% of households having access to at least one vehicle and approximately 65%

Commute Mode	Mode Share		
	2013	2018	2023
Drove Alone	76%	73%	70%
Carpooled	11%	12%	13%
Public Transportation	0%	0%	4%
Walked	1%	0%	2%
Bike, Taxi, Motorcycle or Other	0%	0%	3%
Worked from home	12%	15%	9%

Figure T13: Commute Mode Share to Work 2013-2023
Source: ACS 5-year estimates

having access to two or more vehicles. At the same time, an estimated 204 households depend on alternatives for everyday needs such as grocery shopping, medical appointments, and other essential trips as they do not have access to a vehicle. This includes approximately 72 workers who must rely on other transportation options to reach their jobs. Ensuring that safe, reliable, and convenient transportation options are available for these residents is an important consideration for the town's transportation system. As noted in the Conditions section, of those who commute outside the town for work, Worcester is the most common destination with 14% followed by Boston with 6%. A transportation service to Worcester could service the needs of both Worcester and Boston commuters through connections to public transit, as well as provide opportunities to access work for the approximately 35% of households in Barre with access to one vehicle or fewer.

The Community has an interest in low impact alternatives to car usage such as cycling and pedestrian access to nearby communities and regional trail networks.

“

I think making the town more walkable overall would be valuable.

(2023 Community Survey)

“

There are no sidewalks in the majority of Barre, which makes it unsafe for the young and old.

(2023 Community Survey)

Looking at transportation holistically, an overwhelming majority of those surveyed view increasing other modes of transit, such as walking and biking very highly. According to the Community Survey 77% of respondents ranked walkability as either extremely or somewhat important, and 67% of respondents ranked bikeability as either extremely or somewhat important. As noted previously in the Conditions section, CMRPC's Pedestrian Network inventory catalogues approximately 3.1 miles of sidewalk in Barre, primarily within Barre Town Center.⁵⁵ The

55 CMRPC Data Center, Barre Community Snapshot





FINAL DRAFT

town has taken steps in supporting walkability in the pedestrian friendly center, with excellent curbing and ADA accessible curb cuts. However, this support is not distributed equally among the residents of Barre, with less affluent areas having substandard sidewalks or no sidewalks at all, which reduces the ability of residents to safely get from place to place. What sidewalks do exist outside of the town center are overwhelmingly in poor to fair condition, and many of them are at grade with the street. This is especially true in the neighborhood of South Barre. Sidewalk conditions were the most highly ranked pedestrian transportation issue in the community survey, along with gaps in sidewalks and ADA accessibility. Residents noted the

“

South Barre’s sidewalks are horrible!

(2023 Community Survey)

“

Lack of sidewalks, especially on South Street

(2023 Community Survey)

following roadways and neighborhoods as particular areas of concern:

- Route 122
- Kendal Street to Quabbin Regional High School
- Barre Plains
- South Barre
- South Street
- West Street
- Grogan Road

None of these roads have pedestrian infrastructure. The survey also notes that there is concern about the maintenance of sidewalks in the winter, as well as interest in a proposed pedestrian path to the Quabbin reservoir.

According to the community survey, 79% of respondents agreed that “expanding connections for walking and bike trails as well as sidewalks” was either important or extremely important. The CMMPO 2018 Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan noted a number of opportunities for the town of Barre to increase connectivity in town, with nearly 20 miles of roadways and trails identified that could have a high potential for bikeway and pedestrian improvements.⁵⁶ Nowhere is the need

⁵⁶ CMMPO Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plans, 2018, Barre Recommendations



for improved pedestrian access more apparent than in the desire paths leading to and from Quabbin Regional High School. The South Street entrance to Quabbin Regional High School (QRHS) is only accessible by motor vehicle, however it is clear from the wear along the shoulder of South Street that it is being used by pedestrians to get to the school. In discussion with the master planning committee as well as in the community survey, South Street was identified as being a route used by the QRHS Cross Country Team.

Figure T14 shows the MassDOT Bike Level of Stress Index for Barre. Level of traffic stress (LTS) is an approach that quantifies the amount of discomfort people feel when they ride a bicycle close to traffic. The LTS methodology applies a numeric value to roadway segments and trails to quantify stress level based on attributes such as traffic speed, traffic volume, number of lanes, presence of bicycle facilities, type of bicycle facilities, frequency of parking turnover, ease of intersection crossings, presence and number of conflict points, and more. The LTS methodology relies on a “weakest link” logic; even if many attributes of a roadway indicate low stress, if one attribute indicates high stress, that segment will be categorized as high stress. In other words, the LTS

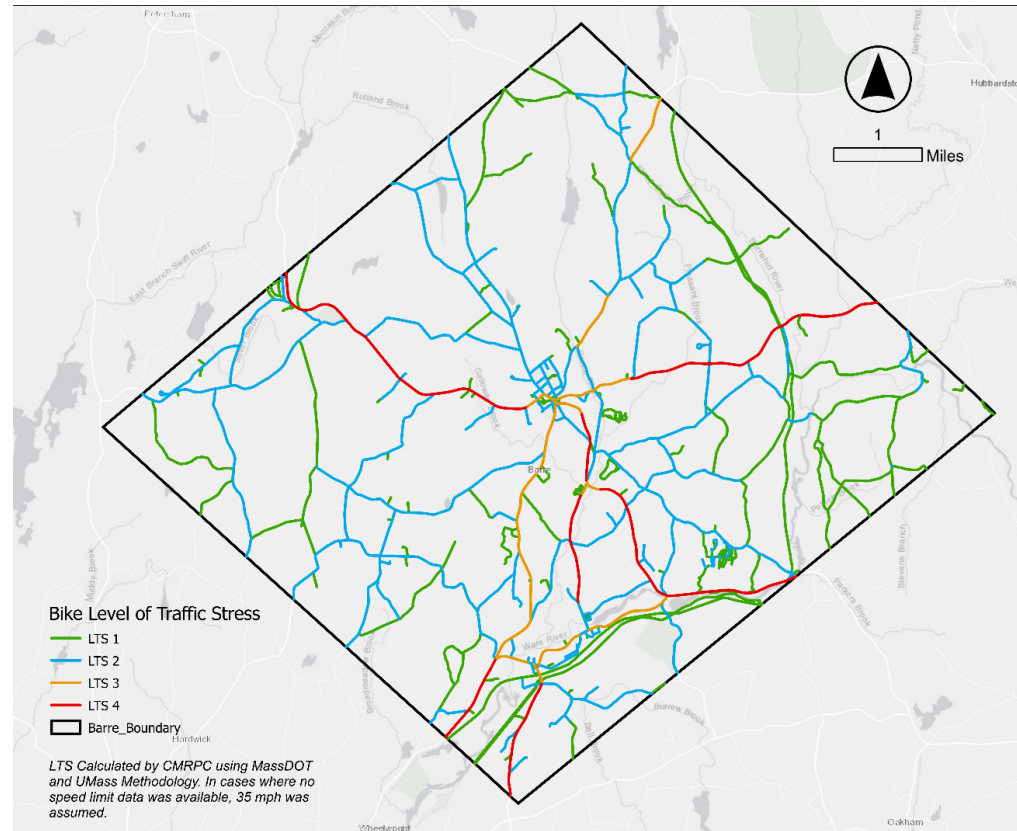


Figure T14: Map of MassDOT Bike Level of Stress Index for Barre

rating assigned to a roadway segment is determined by its most stressful link. The level of traffic stress of a roadway segment is quantified 1 through 4, broadly defined as follows:

- LTS 1: Very low stress, suitable for most children.
- LTS 2: Low traffic stress, suitable for the those interested but cautious.
- LTS 3: Moderate traffic stress, suitable for confident cyclists.

- LTS 4: High stress, suitable for only strong and confident cyclists.

Many of the road segments in Barre meet the criteria for LTS 1 and 2. Some of those that fall in the LTS 1 category are unpaved gravel roads with limited traffic or function primarily as trails. Most of the roads classified as LTS 2 are due to low traffic levels and posted speed limits of 35 mph or less.



GOAL 1: MAINTAIN A SAFE, RELIABLE, AND FISCALLY SUSTAINABLE ROADWAY NETWORK THAT REFLECTS COMMUNITY PRIORITIES AND LOCAL TRAVEL NEEDS.

Barre's roadway system is critical to daily life and economic activity. Improving the maintenance and safety of the system while managing long-term costs is a central transportation priority for the town. volunteer resources, Barre can continue to utilize regional and state partners and grant programs to augment the town budget.

STRATEGY 1.1: IMPROVE ROADS AND INTERSECTIONS BY USING BOTH A TRANSPARENT, DATA- DRIVEN PRIORITIZATION FRAMEWORK AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.

- 1.1.1. Develop and adopt a roadway improvement and maintenance prioritization framework that considers pavement condition, functional classification, traffic volumes, safety history, drainage conditions, and proximity to key destinations (schools, village centers, emergency routes).
- 1.1.2. Establish a standardized, publicly accessible system for residents to report roadway maintenance and safety concerns, such as potholes,

drainage issues, signage visibility, and sidewalk conditions, through an online form or similar platform, and integrate this input into the town's data-driven roadway prioritization and maintenance framework.

- 1.1.3. Maintain a roadway capital improvement and deferred maintenance plan that outlines known roadway needs.

STRATEGY 1.2: PROACTIVELY PURSUE AND LEVERAGE STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING TO SUPPORT ROADWAY MAINTENANCE, SAFETY, AND RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.

- 1.2.1. Maintain a prioritized list of roadway, drainage, and safety proj-

ects with preliminary scopes, cost estimates, and readiness status to support timely application to programs such as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and other MassDOT funding opportunities.

- 1.2.2. Coordinate with CMRPC and MassDOT to monitor upcoming state and federal transportation funding programs, application timelines, and eligibility criteria, and identify projects that are well positioned to advance.
- 1.2.3. Actively pursue applicable MassDOT Grant Central funding opportunities, such as the Municipal Pavement Program, Complete Streets Funding Program, Shared Streets and Spaces Program, and Safe Routes to School.





Photo source: Melissa Bonenfant

FINAL DRAFT

STRATEGY 1.3: IMPROVE SAFETY AT COMPLEX OR HIGH-RISK INTERSECTIONS AND ROADWAY SEGMENTS.

- 1.3.1. Conduct Road Safety Audits (RSAs) for Barre Town Center and other priority locations identified by residents, including the Pleasant Street, South Street area, and routes 32, 122, and 62.
- 1.3.2. Implement low-cost safety improvements following RSAs, such as improved signage, pavement markings, curb extensions, visibility improvements, or traffic calming measures.
- 1.3.3. Work with MassDOT to evaluate potential changes to traffic control, lane configuration, or speed management on state-owned roadways passing through village areas.
- 1.3.4. Maintain a list of safety priority locations. Regularly review MassDOT Impact Portal data to update and monitor the list.

STRATEGY 1.4: IMPROVE WAYFINDING AND TRAVELER INFORMATION THROUGHOUT BARRE.

- 1.4.1. Assess townwide wayfinding needs, including signage for the

town center/common, public parking, civic buildings, recreational areas, and trail access points.

- 1.4.2. Assess signage geared toward pedestrians and cyclists, particularly in Barre Town Center and South Barre.
- 1.4.3. Coordinate wayfinding improvements with economic development efforts, including the Lost Villages Scenic Byway and Town Center revitalization initiatives.



GOAL 2: EXPAND AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES.

While Barre's rural context presents challenges for fixed-route transit, expanding access to flexible, demand-responsive, and regional transportation options is important for seniors, residents without vehicles, and those traveling to work or services outside town.



Photo source: CMRPC

FINAL DRAFT

STRATEGY 2.1: IMPROVE AWARENESS AND USABILITY OF EXISTING TRANSIT AND MOBILITY SERVICES.

- 2.1.1. Create a centralized, easy-to-understand transportation information page on the town website that outlines available services, eligibility, booking procedures, and contact information.
- 2.1.2. Develop printed and digital outreach materials on Council on Aging transportation services and MART on-demand options, distributed through town buildings, libraries, senior housing, and community events.

STRATEGY 2.2: STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS WITH REGIONAL AND NEIGHBORING TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS.

- 2.2.1. Work with regional transit authorities and neighboring municipalities to explore shared or pilot expanded demand-responsive services.
- 2.2.2. Evaluate the feasibility of a town-owned or shared community van to supplement existing services and fill gaps for working-age residents and non-traditional trip needs.
- 2.2.3. Monitor regional transit planning efforts to advocate for Barre's inclusion in future service expansions or pilot programs.



**STRATEGY 2.3:
EXPLORE LONG-TERM
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FIXED-
ROUTE, TOURISM- AND
RECREATION-ORIENTED
PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION.**

- 2.3.1. Conduct a high-level feasibility and needs assessment of seasonal or special-event bus or shuttle service tied to eco-tourism, agriculture, and regional trail networks.
- 2.3.2. Work with state agencies and regional partners, such as CMRPC, to assess market demand, costs, and potential funding sources to pursue more detailed studies.

**STRATEGY 2.4:
SUPPORT LAND USE CHANGES
AND DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY
IN VILLAGE CENTERS AND
ALONG KEY CORRIDORS THAT
MAINTAIN RURAL CHARACTER
BUT COULD ENABLE MORE
EFFICIENT AND VIABLE FIXED-
ROUTE OR SCHEDULED TRANSIT
SERVICE IN THE FUTURE.**

- 2.4.1. As outlined in the land use and housing chapters, evaluate and, where appropriate, update zoning and development regulations to

allow rural-scale housing typologies, such as cottage courts, small multifamily buildings, and clustered housing, within village centers and along priority corridors, as it reflects documented community interest and support for walkable, transit-supportive development patterns.

- 2.4.2. Identify village centers and corridors where modest increases in housing density and mixed-use development could improve the long-term feasibility of scheduled or fixed-route transit, and consider these areas for infrastructure investments, pedestrian improvements, and future transit planning initiatives.

Grants opportunities could include:

- Community Transit Grant Program
- Mobility Assistance Program
- AARP Community Challenge
- Eco-One Stop Grant Program
- Transit Connectivity Grant
- Helping Hand Mini Grant



GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT TO MEET CURRENT AND FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.

Residents consistently expressed appreciation for the work of Barre's Highway Department and recognized the essential role it plays in maintaining roads, sidewalks, and public infrastructure. Community input and funding trends also point to growing challenges in keeping pace with rising construction costs, increasing maintenance needs, and expanding expectations around safety and accessibility. Strengthening the capacity of the Highway Department reflects a shared understanding that well-maintained infrastructure underpins public safety, economic vitality, and quality of life in Barre.

STRATEGY 3.1: IMPROVE LONG-TERM FUNDING STABILITY FOR ROADWAY AND INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE.

- 3.1.1. Regularly evaluate Highway Department funding needs relative to inflation, material costs, and infrastructure conditions.
- 3.1.2. Consider maintenance priorities alongside land use and development decisions to support fiscally sustainable development patterns.
- 3.1.3. Use data on roadway conditions and costs to clearly communicate funding needs to residents and

in decision making situations such as town meeting.

STRATEGY 3.2: LEVERAGE GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPLEMENT LOCAL RESOURCES.

- 3.2.1. As outlined under Goal 1, pursue state and federal grants for equipment purchases, safety improvements, and multimodal projects that reduce long-term maintenance burdens.
- 3.2.2. Coordinate with partners, such as CMRPC, to identify and apply for planning and implementa-

tion grants that support early-stage project development.

- 3.2.3. Explore opportunities for shared services or equipment with neighboring towns where feasible.



GOAL 4: IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND CONNECTIVITY WITHIN BARRE AND TO REGIONAL NETWORKS.

Residents of Barre expressed a desire for safer, more comfortable options to walk and bike, both for everyday trips and for recreation. Community feedback highlighted concerns about vehicle speeds, sidewalk conditions, and the lack of safe separation between pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles, particularly along key corridors and near schools. Improving pedestrian and cycling safety and accessibility reflects both a practical need and a shared aspiration to make Barre a town where people of all ages feel comfortable moving around without relying solely on a car.

STRATEGY 4.1: ADDRESS SIDEWALK GAPS, CONDITIONS, AND ACCESSIBILITY BARRIERS.

- 4.1.1. Implement priority sidewalk improvements identified through community input, focusing on South Barre and other areas with documented deficiencies and maintenance needs.
- 4.1.2. Upgrade existing sidewalks and curb ramps to improve ADA accessibility, drainage, and separation from vehicular traffic where feasible.

STRATEGY 4.2: IMPROVE SAFETY FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS ALONG HIGH-SPEED AND HIGH- USE CORRIDORS.

- 4.2.1. Work with regional partners and the Quabbin Regional School District to pursue Safe Routes to School funding for improvements, along South Street and routes serving Quabbin Regional High School, as well as routes serving other schools.
- 4.2.2. Evaluate opportunities for shared-use paths, buffered shoulders,

or other physical separation between vehicles and non-motorized users along corridors that could serve as prime opportunities for alternate modes of transportation.

- 4.2.3. Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle safety considerations into all roadway reconstruction and resurfacing projects.

STRATEGY 4.3: EXPAND CONNECTIONS TO RECREATIONAL AND REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORKS.

- 4.3.1. Improve trail access, signage,



and connections between key trails, such as the Mass Central Rail Trail and Ware River Trail, and the Barre village centers.

- 4.3.2. Pursue federal, state, and regional trail funding to close gaps in existing trail systems and enhance connectivity between the trails and communities.

Grant opportunities could include:

- Mass Trails Grants
- Complete Streets Funding Program
- Shared Streets and Spaces Program
- Safe Routes to School Program

