

September 17, 2025

Patrick Kirby
Acting Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
1 Home Farm Way
Montpelier, VT 05602

Attn: Elizabeth Shipley, Environment and ROW Program Manager
Re: NEPA Environmental Assessment Re-evaluation and Request for Finding of No Significant Impact:
Federal Street Multimodal Connector Project - St. Albans HPP 8000 (17) / RAIZ(3)

Dear Mr. Kirby,

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Federal Street Multimodal Connector Project ["Project," St. Albans HPP 8000(17)] was first issued by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on April 26, 2013 with subsequent reevaluations completed by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) received FHWA concurrence on February 22, 2017 and October 29, 2020. In the time since the last re-evaluation, the Project design has been further modified, and regulations or guidelines have changed for some resources. For this reason, the Environmental Assessment (EA) has been re-evaluated and continues to support a FONSI for the Project; the FONSI is enclosed. By this letter, VTrans requests FHWA concurrence for this FONSI.

The Project would reconstruct the Federal Street corridor to improve its use by automobiles, trucks, pedestrians, bicycles, and public transit. The Project consists of a new roadway section and redevelopment of existing roads within St. Albans in order to redirect through traffic from Main Street. The essential design approach for the Project remains unchanged from the original EA. The Project would commence at US Route 7 across from the St. Albans Access Highway (SASH), creating the new roadway referred to as Nason Street Connector. The Nason Street Connector would effectively extend the SASH westerly for roughly 800 feet, where it would turn north to intersect with Nason Street and connect to Lemnah Drive, which continues north, turning into Allen Street and Catherine Street, ending just north of the intersection of Stebbins Street and Catherine Street. The Project excludes the intersection of Lake/ Catherine/ Federal Streets based on improvements completed there in 2018, resuming on Federal Street at the intersection with Hampton Lane, and continuing north to Lower Newton Street, ending at the intersection of Lower Newtown Street with US Route 7/ North Main Street.

The following is a list of the minor modifications between the original Proposed Action and the current Proposed Action:

- › **Intersection of Nason Street Connector with Nason Street/ Lemnah Drive:** The current design is unchanged from the 2016 Preliminary Plans (two-way stop controlled on Nason Street) except that the sidewalk on Nason Street west of the intersection has been moved from the north side of the road to the south side of the road (see **Plan 2.2-4** in the enclosed EA).
- › **Lemnah Drive:** The Lemnah Drive roadway alignment has been revised to better match the existing alignment, as opposed to the more westerly, straighter alignment proposed in the 2016 plans.

- › **Stevens Brook Crossing:** The proposed replacement box culvert at Stevens Brook has increased from a 16'-0" wide by 7'-6" high opening shown in the 2016 plans to 24'-0" by 10'-0" wide in the current plans. Both plans included the installation of Type II (stream bed) stone fill. See **Plan 2.2-6**.
- › **Intersection of Lemnah Drive/ Lower Welden Street/ Allen Street:** The single-lane roundabout that was proposed in the 2016 Preliminary Design Plans has been revised somewhat with respect to the positioning of the roundabout center island and sidewalk connections, but is otherwise functionally identical. See **Plan 2.2-7**.
- › **Intersection of Allen Street/ Stebbins Street/ Market Street:** The 2012 plans proposed one-way traffic circulation improvements at this intersection. Based on the City's fiscal constraints and inability to negotiate the required property acquisitions prior to the 2016 reevaluation, a two-way traffic flow and single multiuse lanes on all approaches with stop control on Stebbins Street and Market Street were selected for the traffic improvements. Since that time, the City has entered into negotiations to acquire the parcel denoted as SPAN 549-173-10150 (including E911 addresses 24, 26, 28, and 30 Catherine Street and 0 Market Street) and the intersection design has been altered appreciably. Property acquisition has allowed for a new Catherine Street approach to the intersection, with the street being shifted westerly to align with Allen Street and create a simpler two-way stop-controlled T-intersection (stops on Market Street and Stebbins Street), allowing for flow through on Allen and Catherine Streets (see **Plan 2.2-9**).
- › **Intersection of Lake Street / Catherine Street / Market Street / Federal Street:** The current Proposed Action does not include any improvements to those areas where work was completed during 2018 (*i.e.*, Phase 1). This includes all work proposed along Market Street, Catherine Street, Lake Street, and Federal Street between the Stebbins Street and Kingman Street intersections.
- › **Federal Street Improvements:** The 2012 Conceptual Plans and 2016 Preliminary Design Plans included sidewalks on both sides of Federal Street. Following the award of the BUILD grant, the City incorporated a 5' sidewalk along the western side of Federal Street and an 8' multi-use path along the eastern side into the plans. See **Plans 2.2-11 to 2.2-16**.
- › **Intersection of Federal Street and Lower Newton Street:** The 2016 Preliminary Plans included a three-way signalized intersection. Currently, because of the ongoing redevelopment of the former Fonda site located north of this intersection, the design plans include a four-way signalized intersection with new public roadway providing access to Fonda site. See **Plan 2.2-17**.
- › **Stormwater Management:** The stormwater design plans for the sole treatment practice located at the western end of the Nason Street Connector have been modified due to Right-of-Way ("ROW") constraints, resulting in changes to the Class II wetland and associated buffer impacts (see **Section 3.2**).

VTrans has reviewed the re-evaluated EA and considered the potential environmental consequences of the Project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). There have not been any substantive changes in the scope of work or the design of this Project since the issuance of the original FONSI or the two subsequent re-evaluations. It has been greater than three years since the most recent 2020 reevaluation and the next major action consists of the construction of the next phase of the Project. Therefore, we request your concurrence that the FONSI for the Project remains valid. Please contact Jeff Ramsey at 802-917-4467 if you need additional information.

Ref: St. Albans HPP 8000(17)

September 5, 2025

Page 3

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colin Judge".

Colin Judge

Environmental Program Manager

Endorsement to the Vermont Agency of Transportation

Concur _____

[Patrick Kirby]

[Date]