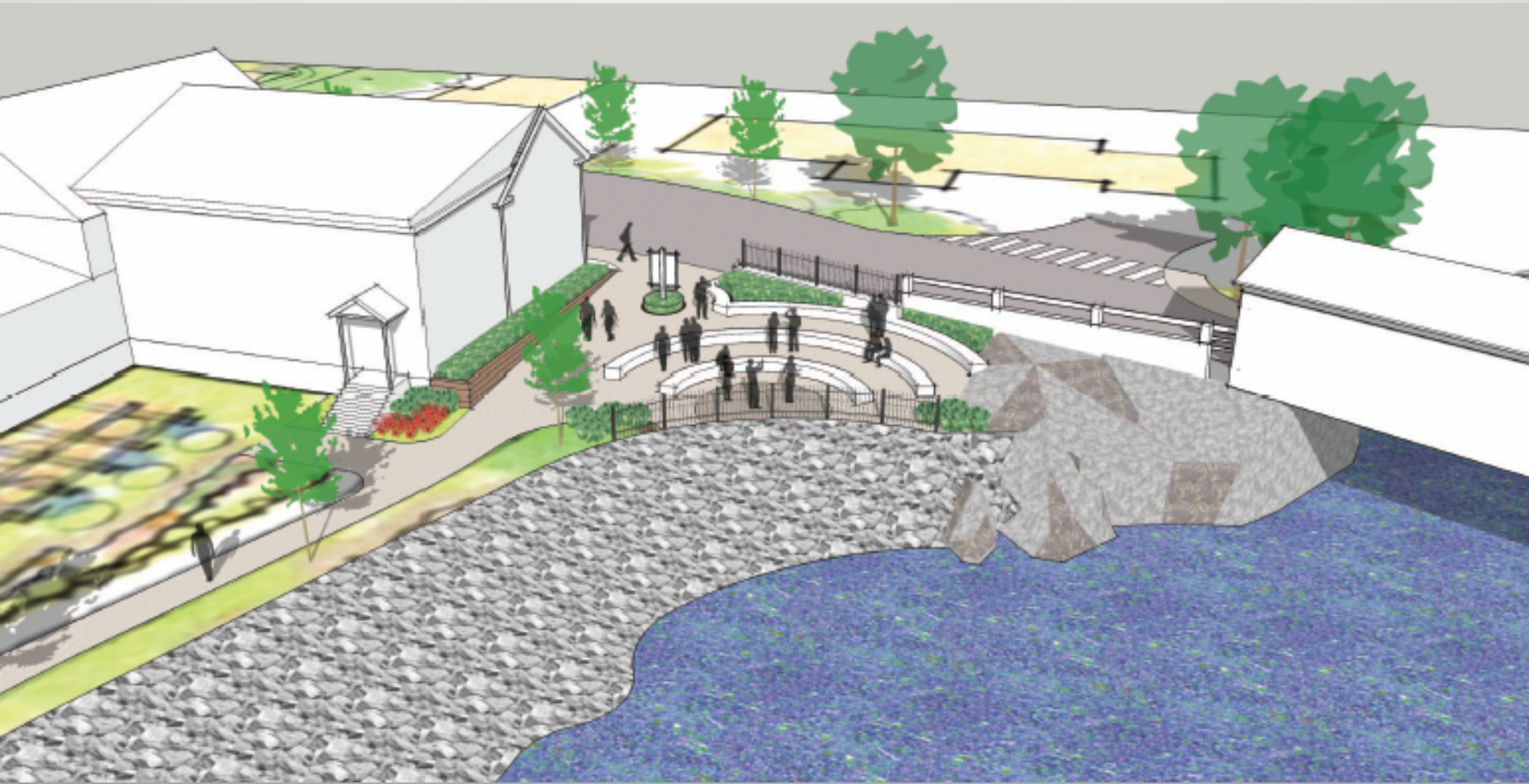
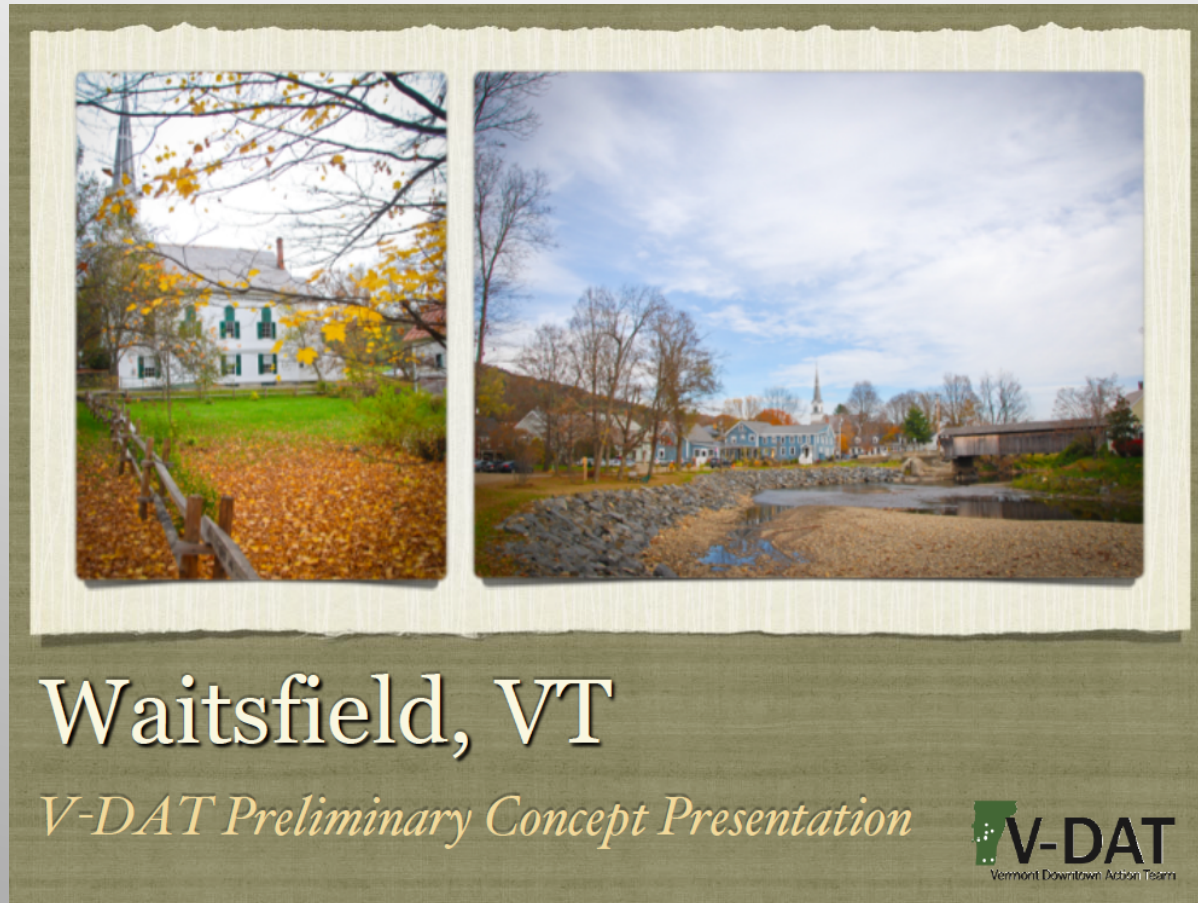


Waitsfield Pocket Park Project



Community Development Block
Grant-Disaster Recovery II Grant

Vermont Downtown Action Team



- DHCD, CDBG-DR
- 8 Communities
- Design Workshops
- Advisory Committee
- Oct. 2013

V-DAT Final Report



Vermont Downtown Action Team Report
August 1, 2014

**Waitsfield,
Vermont**





Conceptual Vision Plan for Our Community

With a town population of 1,719, Waitsfield, VT is located in the Mad River Valley in Central Vermont. It is a small rural village known for its beautiful scenery, the prominence of the Mad River, and the historic village center. The Village Center extends slightly beyond the historic district of Waitsfield and includes less than sixty properties. The "core" of the Village is at the intersection of Bridge Street and Main Street through the designated village center extends north to the school and stops short of Iraville.

Waitsfield is a major support community for the Sugarbush and Mad River Glen Ski Resorts creating a unique mixture of businesses in the community that serves both local residents and visitors to the resorts. The village center also contains significant open spaces, trails, and outdoor recreation that are become even more appealing to visitors outside of the typical ski season.

Catastrophic Event

On August 28, 2011, Tropical Storm Irene dropped over seven inches of rain in Waitsfield, causing the Mad River to crest at over 19 feet in the Village Center (just shy of the 1927 flood). Floodwaters heavily damaged many village businesses, several of which occupy historic structures; others were swept off their foundations and destroyed. The Great Eddy Covered Bridge (or Waitsfield Covered Bridge) was not destroyed but did suffer damage to the bridge abutments.

Recovery

To date, Waitsfield has done significant recovery work. The Covered Bridge abutments are scheduled for repair in 2014 and the Town of Waitsfield purchased property destroyed by the storm with plans under way for a waterfront pocket park. Streetscape and sidewalk improvements are underway, with a focus of making a more pedestrian friendly village center. Additionally, private sector investors have restored businesses, repaired buildings, and opened new businesses in Waitsfield.

The community is exploring future wastewater treatment options, the use of the Old Methodist Church, and the reuse of the Flemer Barns. Most recently, town voters approved the construction of a new Town Office within the Village that will provide much needed space (out of the threat of floods) for town business.

The Vermont Downtown Action Team (V-DAT) was selected by the State of Vermont, Department of Housing and Community Development, Vermont Downtown Program in May 2013 to conduct a community planning and economic development charrette in Waitsfield. The V-DAT was comprised of experts in architecture, planning, landscape architecture, historic preservation, economic development, organizational structure, landscape architecture, engineering and community branding.

The V-DAT planning charrette operates on three key tenants: utilizing an asset based approach, addressing the community in a holistic manner, and conducting the exercise in a public forum.

Market Opportunities

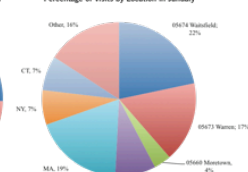
Two zip code surveys were held in Waitsfield to track customer visits to the community.

Waitsfield, Warren, and Montpelier represented slightly over 40% of the visits to local businesses in both surveys. Regional visitors from Vermont comprised 13% of the customers in October and 8% in January. Nearby state visitors greatly increased in the winter months as ski season was in full play. Massachusetts, New York and Connecticut went from 10% of the visits collectively in October to 33% in January. Conversely, visitors from other states outside of the Northeast and international customers contributed 33% of recorded visits in October compared with only 16% in January. Ultimately, the visitor market remains equally strong in the fall and winter surveys but dramatically shifts from a broad market from across the nation to a much more compact regional market in New England.

Percentage of Visits by Location in October



Percentage of Visits by Location in January



Project Funding and Support

This project was supported by funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery. The plan was prepared as a cooperative effort of the State of Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Community Planning and Rehabilitation and the Town of Waitsfield. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of HUD or the State of Vermont. For more information on the Vermont Downtown Action Team (V-DAT) program and links to the detailed presentation and report for Waitsfield please visit <http://vdat.vermont.gov/downtowndevelopmentactionteam/> or call (802) 828-5229.



Main Street Improvements/Traffic Calming

Waitsfield has successfully implemented a new sidewalk on the east side of Main Street and plans to continue improvements on the west side from East Lane to Old County Road. As additional enhancements are refined and implemented, the following should be considered:

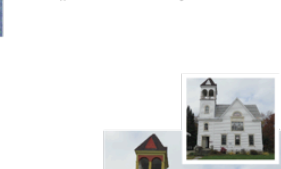
- Provide crosswalk lighting.
- Provide street furnishings including benches and bike racks.
- Incorporate some segments of planting strips between the sidewalks and roadway between zones of parallel parking.
- Enhance entrance to public parking area opposite Bridge Street to narrow the pavement area at the entrance, providing shorter pedestrian crossing area as well as planting islands for canopy tree planting and low seasonal plantings.
- As enhancements are being made to parking area entrance, incorporate electric vehicle charging stations into parking lot.
- Plant canopy shade tree planting (select sidewalk as easement within private property and within planting strip between curb and sidewalk where feasible and if permitted by VTDMR).
- Remove overgrowth at rack outcropping (near the Cottage Crescent area) to visually highlight the prominent natural feature.



Bridge Street Pocket Park

While the ultimate designs for the park are pending, designs should consider the following:

- Continue to explore ways to minimize visual impact of overhead utility lines and utility poles on aesthetics of bridge, in coordination with Bridge Street streetscape improvements.
- Utilize the existing grade change to create a series of terraces that could also function as seating.
- Take advantage of long views down the river and avoid obstructions that might block these views.
- Consider the utilization of materials that both reflect the natural surroundings, such as well placed boulders to reflect the natural rock outcroppings, but will be resilient to future flood events.
- Provide for an information kiosk, particularly one that could advertise village events, businesses and attractions to users of the Mad River Path and visitors to the bridge.
- Provide areas for seasonal color.
- Consider cantilever decking to extend gathering area and create more dramatic opportunities to overlook the river if flood regulations allow.



Former Methodist Church

Preserve the reuse of this structure for private investment to take advantage of state and federal historic tax credits and contribute to the reuse of the building. Ideal uses for the building include meeting space, wedding and event venues, classroom space, offices, artist studios, a gallery cooperative, restaurant or combination of several of these uses.

A new paint color scheme, new front stair and updating the landscaping are the few things that would make this building more appealing and inviting to potential tenants. The following before and after illustrations show how the building might look as another use.



Cottage Crescent

Cottage Crescent represents one of the most unique and exciting opportunities to provide space for additional micro businesses that might have a small and specialized retail component (with potential to ship product around the country). This development would grow retail within the village core while enhancing the waterfront (provided the zoning is modified to allow commercial use). The concept would provide several retail cottages in an informal layout amidst the trees. The scale of the buildings reflects the existing cottage currently located on the property.



The Waitsfield Brand

One of the important steps in establishing a brand is to understand the values for which it stands. The Waitsfield community relies around the Great Eddy Covered Bridge and it is a natural symbol of the community. Moreover, it is a location that is not easily seen if traveling Main Street (Route 100) through the core of Waitsfield. The identity values upon heritage to that end are several other important things:

- It reinforces that there is a center of Waitsfield and that it is historic.
- It features a connection to the Mad River Rail and the Great Eddy Covered Bridge.
- It quickly conveys that there is more to discover in Waitsfield.



Implementation

- CDBG-DR II
- Consultants – Environmental Review
- Project Prioritization
- 12/16/13 Selectboard Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Kingsbury made a motion to select the pocket park and Main St./Bridge St./Farr Lane intersection as project to pursue through the V-DAT process. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cooke. All voted in favor.

- Town Meeting 2014

ARTICLE 6: Shall the voters authorize the Town to borrow an amount not to exceed \$20,000, to be paid over a period not more than five years and on such other terms as the Selectboard shall negotiate, for the purpose of providing matching funds for up to two grant applications, if awarded, from the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery fund to implement the Bridge Street improvement projects identified in the Vermont Downtown Assistance Team (V-DAT) final report? Chris Pierson made a motion to adopt Article 6, and the motion was seconded by Bill Parker. Discussion ended, and the motion to adopt Article 6 was approved by majority voice vote.

Waitsfield Village Pocket Park Project

- 50 Bridge Street
 - Birke Photography Studio
- Owned by Town of Waitsfield
 - Motion to Purchase: 1/14/13 Selectboard Meeting
 - *...owning the site may provide options for channeling the river in the future and averting flood damage to the bridge and Village.*
 - *Mr. Cooke asked if we have the money to establish a park.*
 - *...add to the original motion an earmark of \$2,000 to ensure that the park is developed.*

Waitsfield Village Pocket Park Project

- Conceptual Design
- Goals
 - Reinforce the economic & flood resilience of the existing village center by:
 - Increasing accessibility & usability for citizens and visitors
 - Enhancing viewing of the river and bridge
 - Protecting riparian area from erosion

Project Description

Waitsfield Pocket Park Project DR-IG-2012-Waitsfield-00069

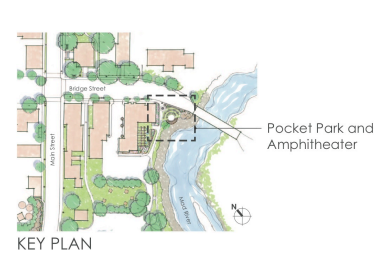
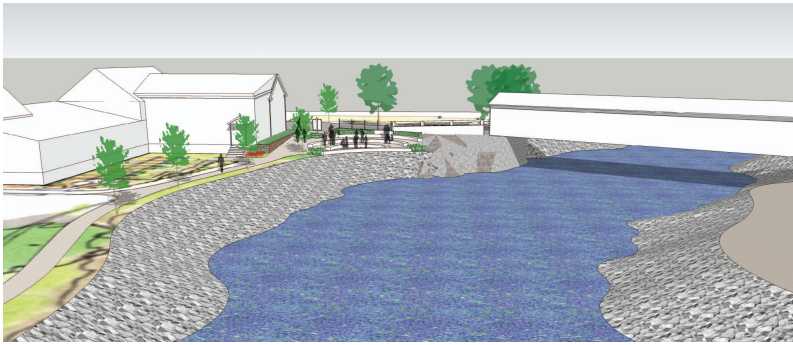
The proposed Waitsfield Pocket Park Project will fund final design and construction of a public pocket park adjacent to the Bridge Street business district along the Mad River in historic Waitsfield Village. Repairs to the river embankment and former building foundation area immediately following Tropical Storm Irene included re-contouring and armoring of the bank. Continued redevelopment of this under-utilized area is required to prevent blight and better integrate with existing business activities.

The proposed project will utilize the existing grade change to create a series of terraces that also function as seating. This “amphitheater design” will create a built environment that provides excellent viewing of the river and the historic covered bridge from a durable concrete terrace, while improving pedestrian safety and access with new walkways.

The proposed project will be specifically designed to enhance the visual quality of the area, accent the river and riparian areas and guide access to these resources in an environmentally sound manner. The proposed amenities are to be scaled and placed in a manner to cohesively integrate the park into the historic covered bridge and street access areas. The project will utilize materials that both reflect the natural surroundings such as well-placed stones to reflect the natural rock outcroppings, but will be resilient to future flood events.

The project area currently consists of a gently sloping walking path and a small “terrace” formed by a remnant building foundation. Minor regrading of key areas will enhance drainage and stormwater runoff control and allow installation of the proposed amenities, including pedestrian seating area and walkways, a retaining wall providing physical separation and safety from Bridge Street, landscape plantings serving stormwater catchment, and welcome/information signage.

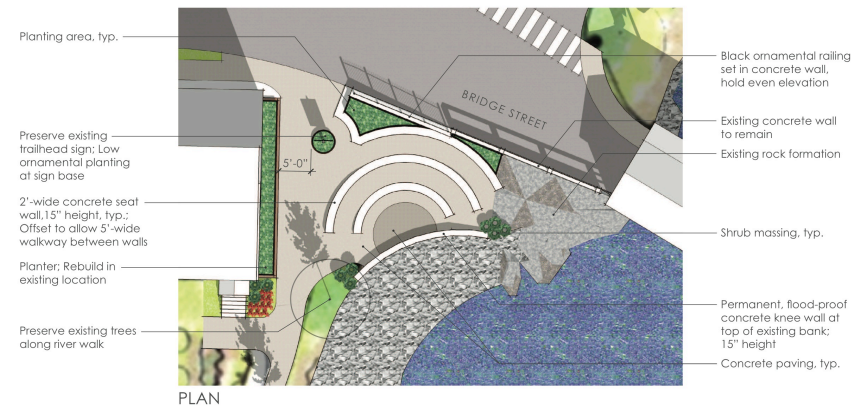
Erosion control will be enhanced through the use of materials that will be “flood proof.” Concrete will be utilized along with contouring and alignment of seating and walkways to minimize cross-sectional area exposed to the flow of floodwaters. In this manner, erosional forces will be absorbed by the structures protecting the ground surface and retaining wall/abutments.



View looking north along river walk.



Birdseye view looking northwest toward Bridge Street.



Note: This exhibit is for design intent only.

FIGURE X.X, DOWNTOWN POCKET PARK & AMPHITHEATER - KNEE WALL OPTION

Waitsfield, Vermont

April 2014



FIGURE X.X, DOWNTOWN POCKET PARK & AMPHITHEATER - KNEE WALL OPTION

Waitsfield, Vermont

April 2014



Waitsfield Riverfront Park

Item	Quantity	Units	Unit Cost	Total/Subtotal	Notes (VTrans Price List Jan 2012 - Dec 2013)
Riverfront Park					
Selective Grading/Seeding	248	SY	\$ 25.00	\$6,188	Entire Site
Excavate Pavements & Surfaces	213	CY	\$ 23.26	\$4,951	203.28 3" deep
Subbase Dense Graded Crushed Stone	121	CY	\$ 30.16	\$3,649	301.35 8" deep
Common Excavation	40	CY	\$ 8.90	\$353	203.15
Structural Excavation	79	CY	\$ 22.75	\$1,801	204.25
Seating Structure & Base	280	LF	\$ 108.50	\$30,380	RSMeans 2014
Portland Cement Concrete Sidewalk, 8 inch	182	SY	\$ 69.84	\$12,676	618.11
Textured & Colored Pavement	16	SY	\$ 100.00	\$1,595	AOT Unit Costs
Timber Wall	60	LF	\$ 80.50	\$4,830	RSMeans 2014 4' ht
Planting Backfill	12	CY	\$ 25.00	\$300	
Landscape - Shrubs	24	Each	\$ 52.77	\$1,266	656.35
Entry Sign	1	Each	\$ 2,000.00	\$2,000	assumes decorative entry sign
Tree Protection	1	Each	\$ 1,606.05	\$1,606	656.85
Retaining Wall at Road	50	LF	\$ 108.50	\$5,425	RSMeans 2014
Fence (decorative)	50	LF	\$ 100.00	\$5,000	
Subtotal				\$82,020	
Mobilization (10%)				\$8,202	
Erosion & Sediment Control (3%)				\$2,461	
Contingency (15%)				\$12,303	
Traffic & Pedestrian Control				\$5,000	
Total Construction Cost				\$109,985	
Independent Project Manager (10%)				\$10,999	
Preliminary/Final Engineering/Design Cost (25%)				\$28,000	
Permitting (15%)				\$17,000	
Bidding Assistance (15%)				\$17,000	
Construction Inspection (15%)				\$17,000	
Total Project Cost				\$199,984	

Notes

Excludes sidewalk improvements & riverwalk.
Excludes roadway improvements (inc. curb)
Excludes slope stabilization