

New Lebanon's Walkable Downtown Fact Sheet

What are the basic facts and history?

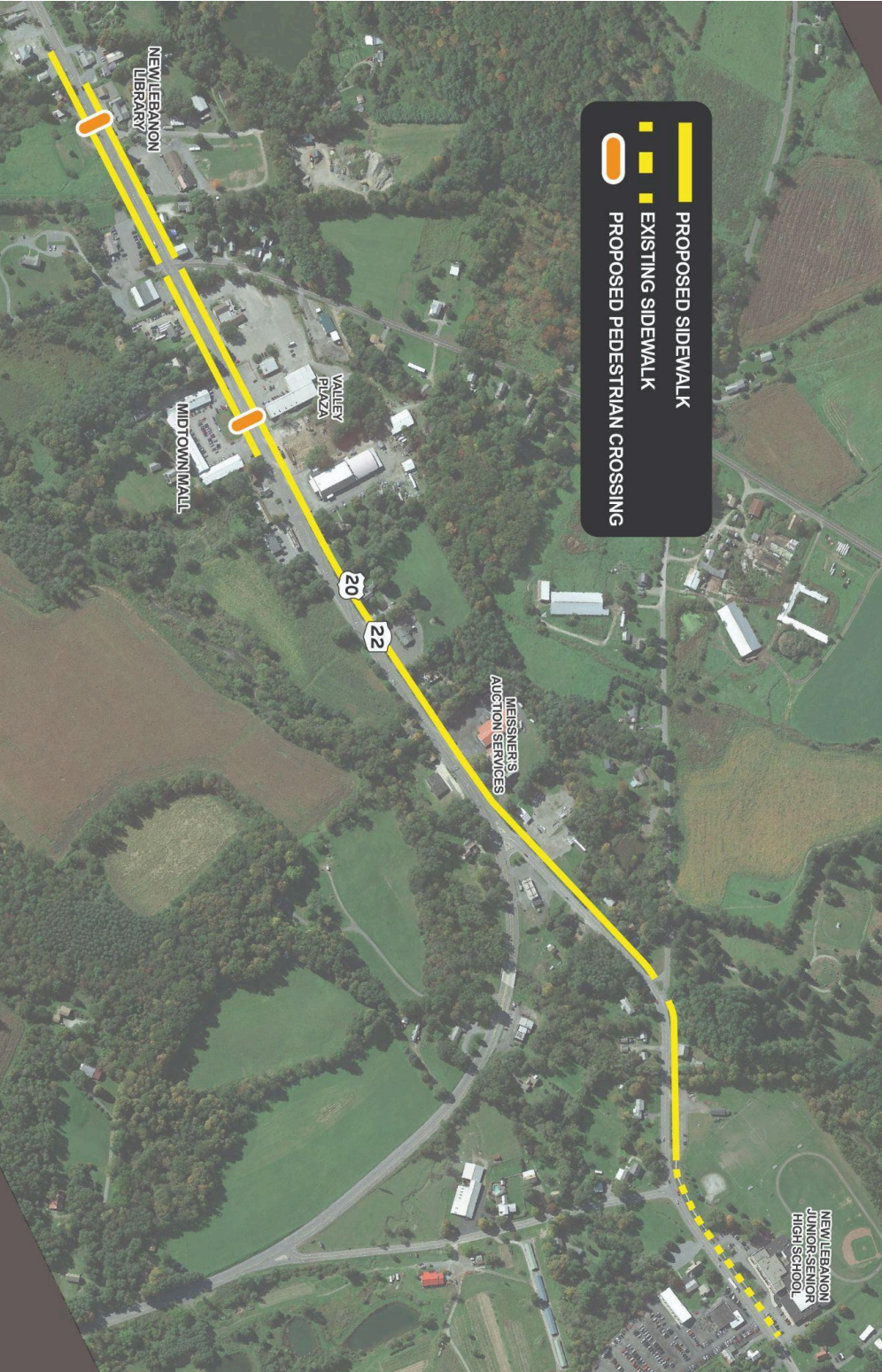
Spring and summer 2023 — The Town began to engage residents on the topic of a more walkable downtown. Two public meetings enabled the Town to collect and incorporate input from 100 participants.




Winter 2024 — Guided by engineering firm Creighton Manning, the Town Board settled on the specifics of this \$2.5 million project and pitched it to the State.

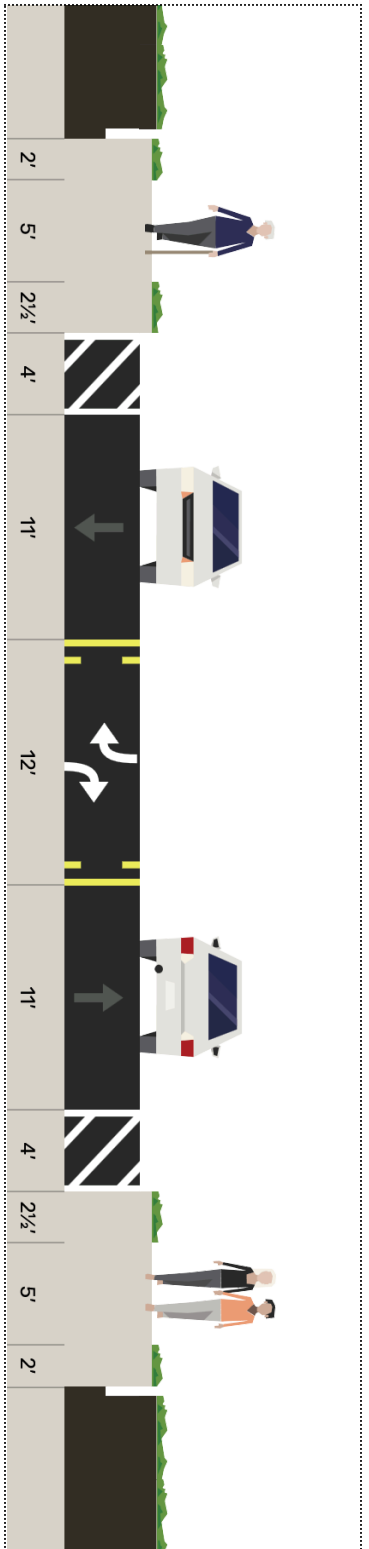
Summer 2024 — The State awarded the Town 80% of the funds necessary for the project. That means the Town would need to contribute roughly \$500,000.

Fall 2024 — The Town Board decided that residents should make the final choice about this project.

Winter 2025 — Set for January 21, a special election will determine whether the Town carries out this project and has the option of issuing a bond. Construction would likely start in 2027.



-  PROPOSED SIDEWALK
-  EXISTING SIDEWALK
-  PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING



What exactly is this project?

The first component is adding walking paths on both sides of 20/22. On the north side of the road, a path would connect the high school to the library. On the south side, a path would go from Midtown Mall to Roaring 20s. The walking paths would have a hard, smooth, durable surface called stone dust. It is a mixture of limestone gravel and fine limestone particles, and it is becoming more popular in New York, with a new path connecting Lake Placid and Saranac Lake and another in Valatie. In addition, the new paths in Shatford Park are stone dust.

The paths would be built like dirt roads with multiple layers of material. The builder will remove at least 12 inches of dirt and put down a layer of road fabric. Then the builder will put down a mixture of coarse sand and crushed stone, compacting and grading that material to make sure the pathway is very level. Then the builder will put down a top layer of stone dust, compacting and giving it a 2% grade to ensure minimal puddles and erosion from stormwater.

There would be concrete ramps at road intersections and at crosswalks. And where the pathways cross a driveway, the project will keep the existing surface. The walking paths downtown would remain entirely inside the DOT's right-of-way. They would be separated from traffic by a concrete curb and roughly 2 feet of grass, landscaping, or hardscaping.

The Town would be responsible for maintenance of the walking paths. Creighton Manning expects that the Town would have to budget less than \$8,000 a year for short- and long-term maintenance. (Normal annual maintenance would cost about \$3,200, while once-a-decade maintenance would cost \$50,000, for a total of \$78,000 in costs every ten years.)

Additionally, the Town Board has discussed the Town assuming responsibility for clearing snow from these pathways. A local industry professional estimates the annual cost of snow removal to be approximately \$8,000.

The second component is putting in two crosswalks. There are two proposed locations. Pending final approval by the DOT, one would connect Midtown Mall and Valley Plaza, while the other would cross near the library. Each crosswalk would have a pedestrian island in the middle. Between and around these pedestrian islands, the center lane would continue to make space for cars and trucks to make left turns.

The third component is narrowing the shoulders of the roadway. The core roadway would keep its current size. There would be two full-width driving lanes and an extra-wide middle turning lane, sometimes called a two-way left-turn lane. The shoulder space outside the white lines would be reduced to 4 feet, and concrete curbs would be put in place. Multiple studies show that reducing the overall width of the pavement slows traffic and improves safety. If and when this happens, DOT will reduce the legal speed limit at a later date.

How can I learn more?

The Town is holding two public information sessions about this project.

An engineer from Creighton Manning will give a presentation, and then there will be time for questions and answers.

The first session will be at Town Hall on Monday, December 30, at 6pm. It will be live-streamed via Town Hall Streams, which is accessible at townhallstreams.com or via this QR code.



The second session will be at the community center on Saturday, January 11, at 11am.

When is the special election?

We will hold a special election open to all voters registered in New Lebanon.

A 'yes' is a vote for the Town to carry out this project and for the Town to have the choice to pay for this project by using funds from our regular budget, by issuing a bond, or both. A 'no' is a vote for the Town not to carry out this specific project.

You can cast your ballot in-person on January 21, 2025, from 8am till 8pm at the Immaculate Conception Meeting Hall (at 732 US Highway 20, New Lebanon, NY, 12125).

Absentee voting is also an option. You can apply for an absentee ballot at the office of the Town Clerk (at 14755 Route 22 North, New Lebanon, NY, 12125). If you deliver your application in-person, the deadline is January 17 at 5pm. If you mail your application, the Clerk must receive it by January 14. Your absentee ballot must be returned for receipt to the Town Clerk by January 21 at 5pm.

All residents who are already registered to vote are eligible to cast a ballot in this special election. There will also be a special window for getting registered to vote. The Town will hold that registration event on January 11, 2025, from 4pm till 8pm at Town Hall.

The costs of printing and mailing this fact sheet were covered by New Lebanon resident Tony Murad