

Morristown Transportation Infrastructure

Categories

- **Town Highways**
 - Paved and gravel (92.13 miles of Town Highway)
 - Highest road mileage in Lamoille County
 - Second highest when compared to Franklin County (Fairfield 93.19 miles)
 - Fourth highest when compared to Chittenden County
- **Sidewalks**
 - 9 miles
- **Bridges**
 - 17 Town Maintained Bridges

Paved Town Highways

Morristown has 36.8 miles of paved Town Highways. Our biggest maintenance cost is paving.

- In 2025 we paved 3.8 miles - Funded by a \$.02 on the dollar special article, and the depletion of our Bridge and Infrastructure fund
- **15.6 miles or 42.4% of our paved Town Highways are still in Poor to Very Poor Condition**
 - Based off a 2024 pavement condition assessment that cost \$15,000
 - Similar to [VTrans Pavement Condition Map](#)
- If we pave roughly 4 miles a year, we can address all our Poor and Very Poor roads in 4 more years.
 - This will take roughly \$800,000/year
 - That equates to a **9.3% increase** to the total town budget
 - Despite careful management of inflationary pressures, we are facing a **6.8% increase** to our town budget even without paving
 - It would take a **16.1% increase** to the town budget to complete this plan with property taxes
 - **In total we have an estimated \$3.2M backlog of paving**
- This **does not** account for the deterioration of roads that are currently in Good or Fair condition

Our only funding source for paving outside of property taxes is the Class 2 Roadways Grant Program.

Town Highway Class 2 Roadway Program

- Maximum grant award is \$200,000 with a 30% town match, or 20% with adoption of Town Road and Bridge Standards and a MRGP Map
 - This is only 25% of Morristown's current annual paving needs
- Less than half (15.4 Miles, 41.85%) of our paved roads are Class 2
- 21.4 miles (**58.15%**) of our paved roads are not eligible for this grant and rely solely on property tax increases for paving
- The average amount of Class 2 Highways per town in Vermont (270) is 10.357 ([VTrans General Statistics](#))
- Of the 11,465 miles of Town Highways in Vermont, only **24.4%** are Class 2 ([VTrans Mileage Summary](#))

What percentage of Vermont's paved Town Highways are eligible for Class 2 Roadway Program??

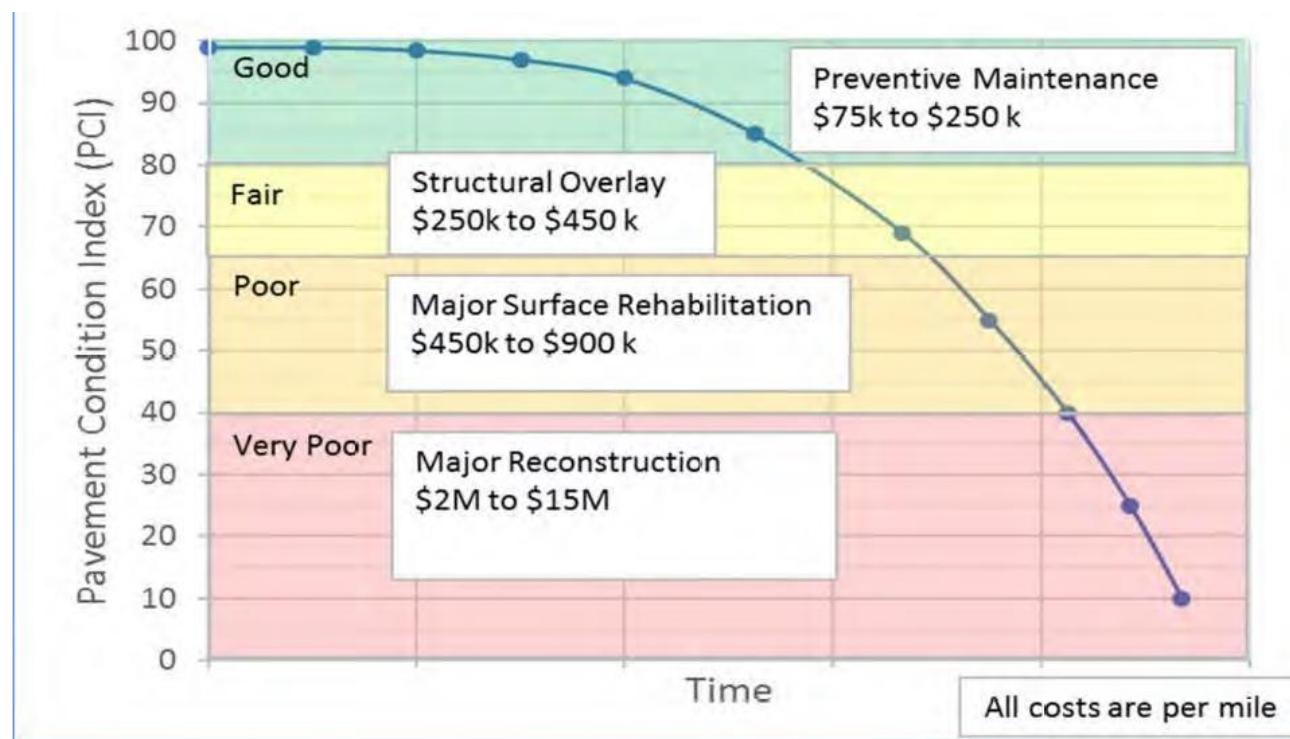
- There is limited data available on paved Town Highway mileage or condition statewide
- A pavement condition assessment for Town Highways statewide would provide invaluable data for capital planning and allocating funding
- Lamoille County Planning Commission estimates it would cost \$71,400 for a pavement condition assessment, and 3 years of database use for all of Lamoille County

The Cost of Deferring Paving

- Cost of paving is based on tonnage requirement = $((\text{Length} \times \text{Width})/9) \times .0567 \times \text{Depth}$
- $\frac{3}{4}$ " Paver Shim Overlay - \$56,905/mile
 - Ideal, most cost-effective pavement treatment
 - Only suitable for roads in **good to fair condition**
 - This is one of NHDOT's standard applications on an 8-year cycle
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ' Leveling Course and $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Overlay - \$151,715/mile
 - **266.61%** more expensive than a $\frac{3}{4}$ " paver shim overlay
 - Suitable for roads in **poor condition**
- Reclaim and Pave 4" - \$345,670/mile
 - **607.5%** more expensive than a $\frac{3}{4}$ " paver shim overlay
 - **227.8%** more expensive than a $\frac{1}{2}$ " leveling course and $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Overlay
 - Often required for roads in **very poor condition**

Typical Pavement Deterioration Curve

(From our Pavement Condition Assessment conducted by Greenman-Pedersen Inc.)



“The strategy of fixing the roads in very poor condition instead of preserving good roads is known as the worst-first approach and generally regarded as the least cost-effective strategy. The explanation for this is that the roads are allowed to deteriorate until they are very poor and then spend large sums to make repairs rather than smaller expenditures that keep the road in good condition for a longer period of time. The common analogy is changing the oil in your car is more cost effective than waiting for the engine to seize and replacing the engine.” - GPI

Gravel Town Highways

Morristown has roughly 70 miles of gravel Town Highways. Our main cost are:

- Ditching
 - Stone lining - \$30,000/yr
 - Hydro seeding - \$5,000/yr
- Culvert replacements
 - Replaced 16 in 2025 - \$1,200/per - \$19,200/yr
- Grading
 - Fortunate to have a 12-person Highway Department and 2 Town owned graders
- De-Berming
 - Also done with out 12-person Highway Department, 2 graders, and 3 bucket loaders
- All costs are based on materials only, no labor or equipment included

Funding Sources outside of property taxes:

- Grants in Aid -ditching hydrologically connected segments
 - FY25- \$25,250
 - FY26- \$42,000
- Better Roads Grant Category B/C/D
 - B- Ditching & Small Culverts less than 36" – max award - \$20,000 – 20% match
 - C- Stream Banks and Slope Stabilization – max award - \$40,000 – 20% match
 - D- Box Culverts and Culverts over 36" – max award - \$60,000 – 20% match

Sidewalks

Morristown has about 47,000', or 9 miles of sidewalk.

- In 2025 we replaced 1,100' of sidewalk
- 6,000' is still in very poor condition
- If we replace 1,500' per year, we can catch up in 4 more years
 - This will cost roughly \$150,000 per year
 - That equates to a **1.7% increase to the total town budget**
 - Despite careful management of inflationary pressures, we are facing a **6.8% increase to our town budget even without replacing sidewalks**
 - \$600,000 Backlog
- This does not account for continued deterioration of sidewalks

Funding sources outside of property taxes:

- Small Scale Bike/Ped Grant
 - \$150,000 project max, 50% town match – max award \$75,000

Bridges

Morristown has 17 Town owned bridges

- Most all of these bridges are noted on VTrans Bridge Reports as needing repairs, including several that need significant work including repair of decks and abutments
- We recently held a competitive bid process to **paint** one of our bridges, and the low bid was **\$286,000**

Funding sources outside of property taxes:

- Town Highway Structures Program
 - \$200,000 max award -20% match or 10% with adoption of Town Road and Bridge Standards and a MRGP Map

Summary

- **Paved Town Highways**
 - Current funding levels fall short of needs (only 25% of current annual costs if awarded)
 - The current Class 2 Roadway Program guidelines exclude the majority of Morristown's paved Town Highways
 - More data on paved Town Highways statewide is needed
- **Gravel Town Highways**
 - Current funding levels meet Morristown's needs
 - Receiving Grants in Aid is vital to maintaining gravel Town Highways
 - **Towns receive this every year**, and appropriations have been increasing
 - More rural towns with smaller crews, less equipment, and less Grants in Aid appropriations may disagree
- **Sidewalks**
 - Current funding levels fall slightly short of needs (50% of current annual costs if awarded)
 - VTrans Small Scale Bicycle/Pedestrian Grant Program is incredibly valuable on a yearly basis
- **Bridges**
 - Current funding levels fall short of needs based on project cost vs. award maximum
 - Detailed data is available through VTrans Bridge Inspection Reports