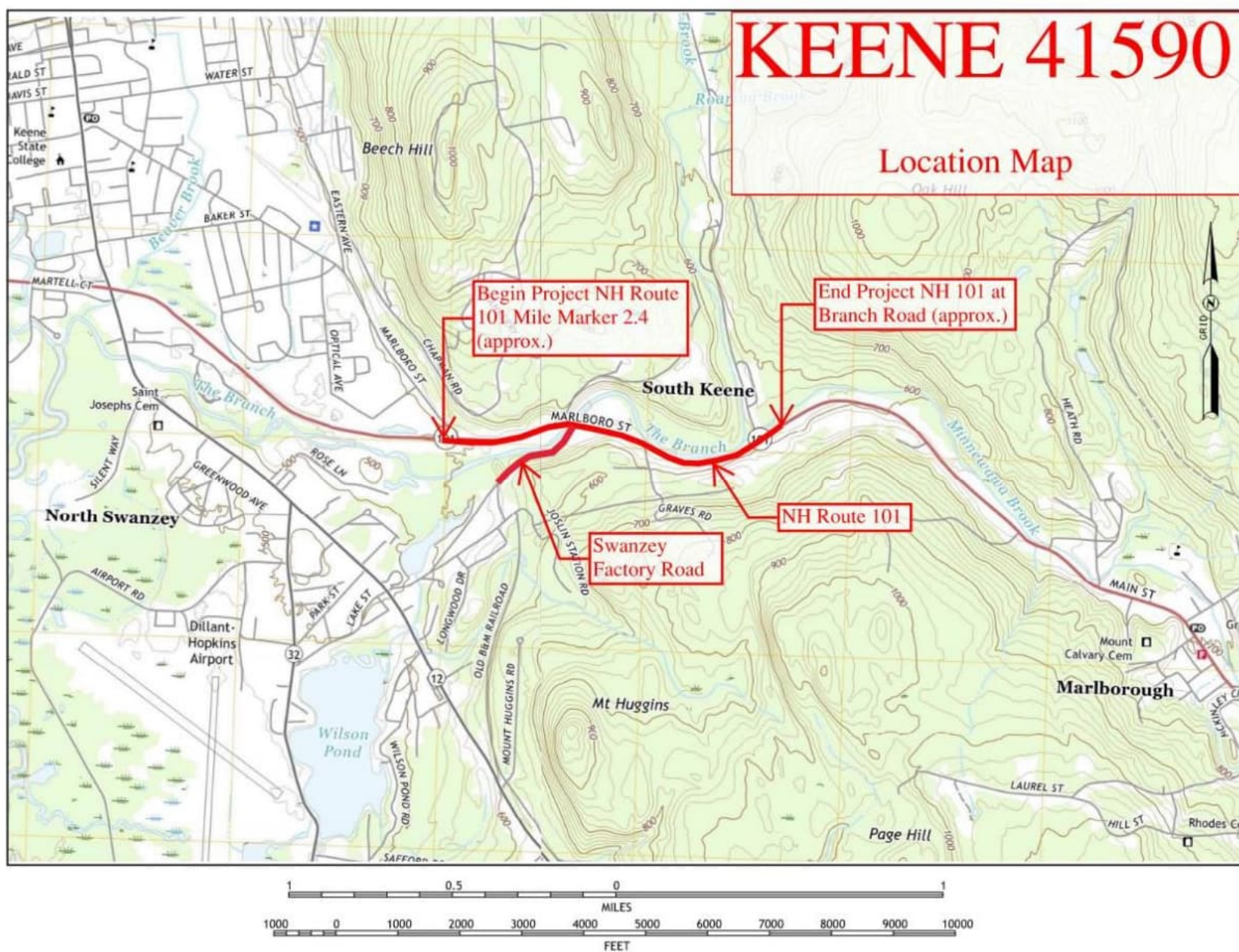


Keene 41590 NH Route 101 Improvements

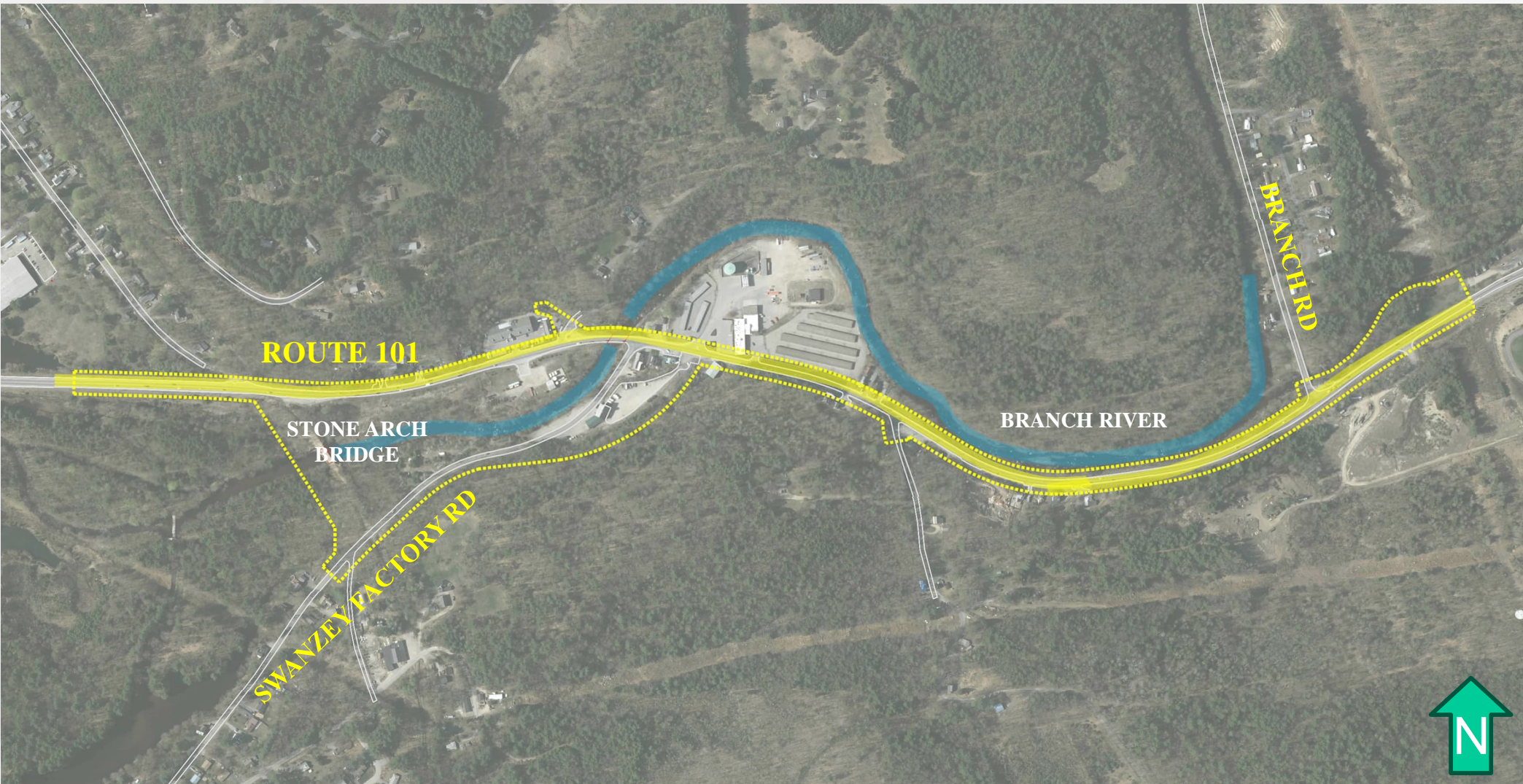


Project Location



Project Location

Route 101: Starting east of Optical Avenue to Branch Road



Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
 - Project Development Team
 - Project Working Group
 - City and Elected Officials
- Project Development Process and Public Outreach
- Meeting Purpose, Goals and Expectations
- Project Purpose and Need
- Project Overview
- Interactive Plan Review and Comment Workshop
- Next Steps

Project Development Team

New Hampshire Department of Transportation

- David Smith – Project Manager
- Curtis Morrill – Bureau of Highway

Consultant Team: CHA Consulting, Inc.

- Ellen Moshier – Project Manager
- John Parrelli – Highway Design
- Rob Faulkner – Principal

Project Working Group

City of Keene

- Don Lussier – City Engineer
- Jesse Rounds – Community Development Director

Southwest Regional Planning Commission

- J. B. Mack – Assistant Director

Town of Swanzey

- Stephon Mehu – Assistant Town Planner

The PWG's purpose is to support the project providing local leadership and guidance on behalf of the stakeholders.

Key Public Outreach Efforts



- Project Working Group
 - ✓ Kick-off Meeting – 7/20/23
 - ✓ Coordination Meeting – 12/6/23



- City of Keene
 - ✓ Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure meeting (Standing Committee of the Council) – 9/27/23



- Agency consultation meetings
 - ✓ Natural Resource Agencies – 9/20/23
 - ✓ Cultural Resource Agencies – 10/12/23

Public Information (PI) Meeting

- ✓ Initial PI meeting – 2/8/2024
 - Outreach Letters sent directly to 50 abutters on the NH101 corridor
 - Press Release to public

Ten Year Plan Process

CYCLE BEGINS

THE TWO YEAR CYCLE

New Projects are Introduced

Fall of Even Years
(2008, 2010, 2012, etc.)

Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) request proposals from constituent communities for candidate projects.

RPC

Projects are Regionally Ranked

(November-December of Even Years)

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for each RPC rank projects submitted for consideration based on selection criteria established by each RPC.

Ten Year Plan Drafted / Debated

January – April of Odd Years
(2009, 2011, 2013, etc.)

Early in the new year each RPCs TAC develops and approves a draft of the regional priorities and recommendations for consideration – keeping in mind selection criteria and each project's relative scores – for submission to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT).

RPC Plan Submitted

May 1 of Odd Years
Each RPC submits its regional priorities and recommendations to NHDOT.

GACIT

Draft Statewide Ten Year Plan Prepared

May – July: NHDOT prepares the draft Statewide Ten Year Plan, using the information provided by each RPC for submission to the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT).

July - December: GACIT amends the Ten Year Plan after a series of statewide public hearings and submits it to the Governor.

Adoption of Statewide Plan

December – June of Even Years
The Governor reviews the Statewide Ten Year Plan and submits it to the Legislature for consideration and approval. Public Hearings are held and input considered.

Governor & Legislature

IMPLEMENTATION

After adoption by the Legislature, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) incorporate approved projects into their Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

CYCLE BEGINS AGAIN

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Project is Federally Funded
- Project required to study potential impacts natural, cultural, and social environments
- Section 106: National Historic Preservation Act offers an advisory role as “Consulting Parties”
- Interested parties need to indicate in writing to the Federal Highway Administration
- Any concerns about natural, cultural, or socioeconomic resources can be brought to our attention tonight or after this meeting

Public Informational Meeting Statement
Keene, 41590
February 8, 2024

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other state and federal regulations, the NHDOT must investigate the potential impacts that our projects will have on the surrounding natural, cultural, and social environment. Identifying key resources early in the project development process enables the Department to avoid or minimize impacts as design proceeds.

Part of the environmental review involves identifying historic resources. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Department and the Federal Highway Administration are reviewing the project area in consultation with the NH Division of Historical Resources to determine if there are historic resources within the vicinity that would be impacted by the construction of this project. Historic properties can include buildings and structures fifty years old or older, as well as archaeological sites. In addition to age, it also must be determined if a structure maintains enough integrity to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Please note that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act offers those that possess a direct interest in historical resources, including town officials and Historical Societies, an opportunity to become more involved in an advisory role during project development as “Consulting Parties.” Those interested would need to indicate so in writing to the Federal Highway Administration. Please see me after the meeting if you would like more information.

We ask that if anyone has concerns about natural, cultural, or socioeconomic resources within or adjacent to the project area, they bring them to our attention tonight or contact us after this meeting.

Contact Information:

Mr. Jamison S. Sikora
NH Division Environmental Programs Manager
Federal Highway Administration
J.C. Cleveland Federal Building
53 Pleasant Street, Suite 2200
Concord, NH 03301
jamie.sikora@dot.gov

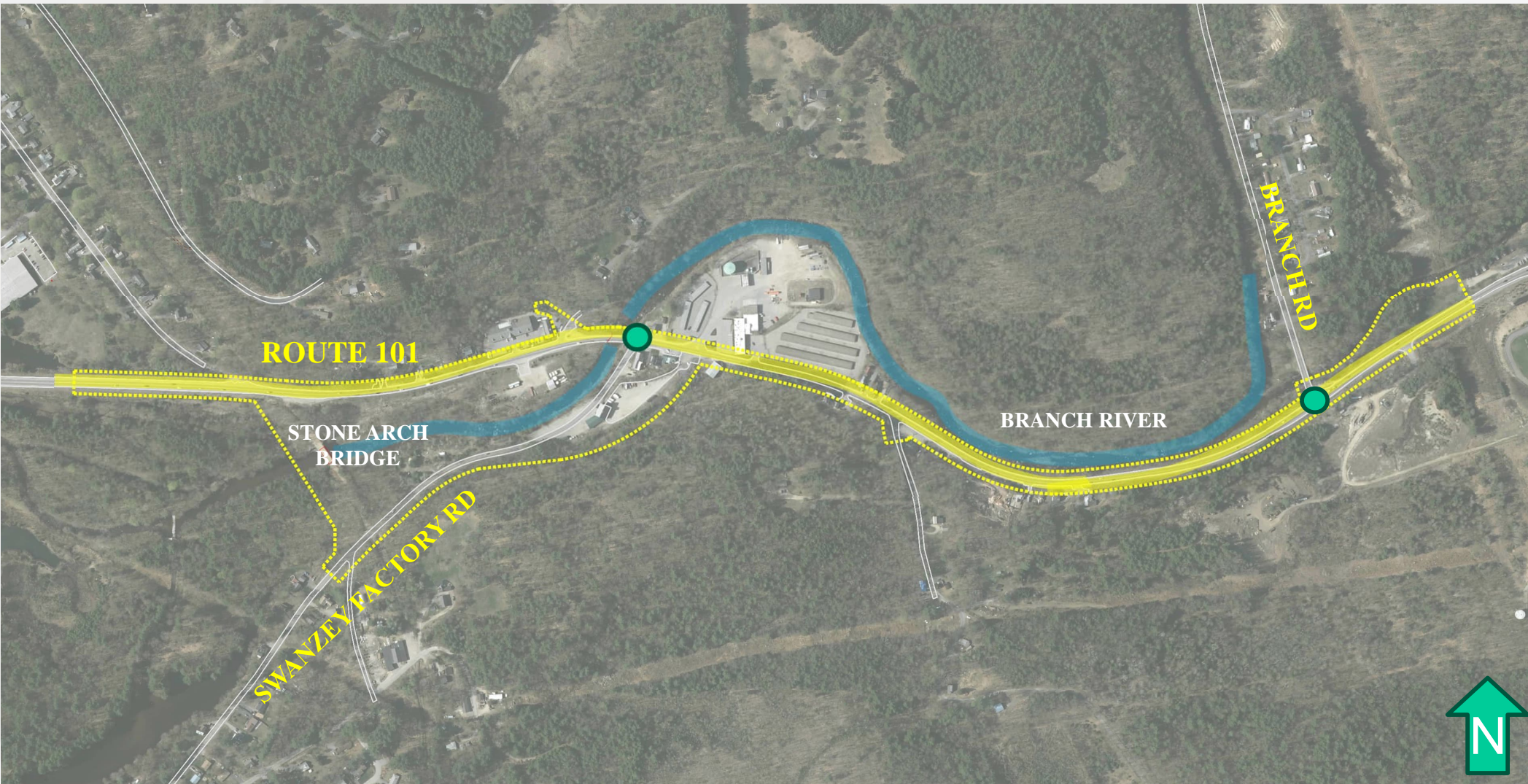
Marc Laurin
Senior Environmental Manager
NH Department of Transportation, Bureau of Environment
7 Hazen Dr., PO Box 483, Concord, NH 03302-0483
Email: marc.g.laurin@dot.nh.gov

Meeting Purpose, Goals and Expectations

- Provide presentation on proposed scope of improvements
- Obtain input to help refine the purpose and need and shape the scope of work
 - “Plan Review and Comment Workshop”
 - “Open Discussion/Question & Answer”
- Expectation:
 - All communication and interaction will be open and respectful

Project Location

Route 101: Starting east of Optical Avenue to Branch Road



Project Need

- Route 101 major east-west route
 - Commerce, commuting, tourism
 - Gateway to City of Keene
- Poor pavement condition
- Poor drainage / no water quality treatment
- Branch River bridge on Red List
- Swanzey Factory Rd Intersection Safety
- Challenges for pedestrians and bicyclists



Project Purpose

- Pavement Rehabilitation
- Improve Drainage
- Widen Shoulders
- Address NH Route 101 Bridge over Branch River
- Improve Safety at Swanzey Factory Rd Intersection

Draft Purpose and Need

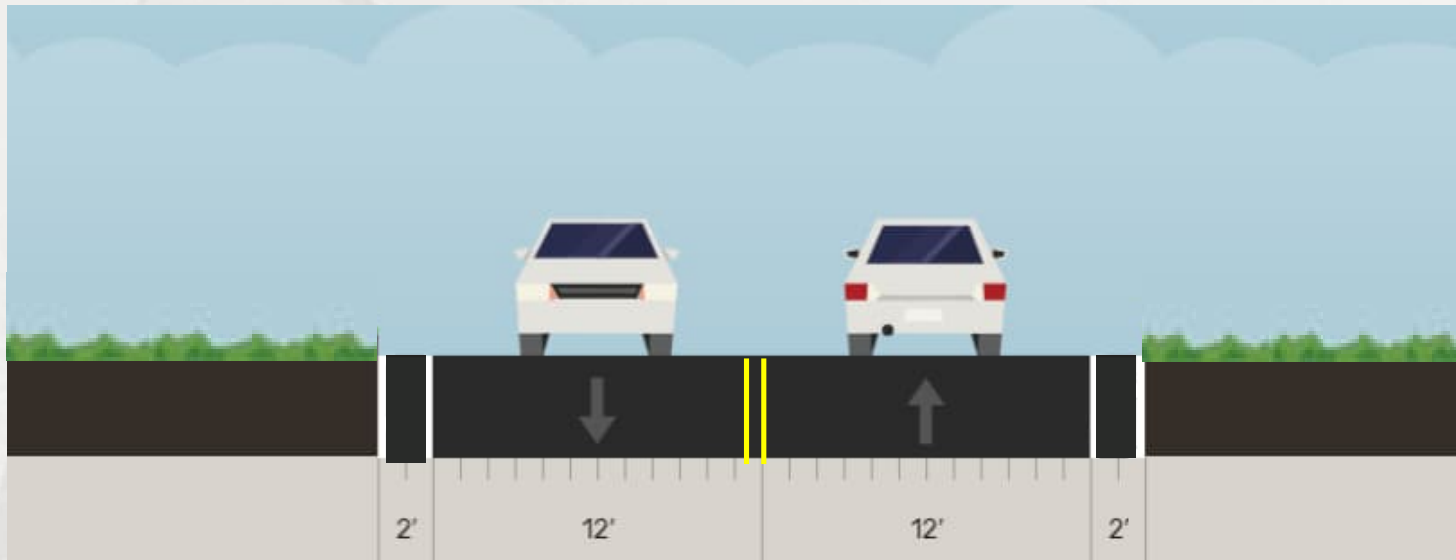
Project Purpose:

The purpose of the project is to provide safety improvements, improve accessibility for bicyclists and pedestrians, and improve roadway and bridge conditions along NH Route 101 and Swanzey Factory Road while minimizing environmental and right-of-way impacts to the greatest extent practical. One of the primary design considerations is to improve the intersection sight distance deficiencies at the intersection of Swanzey Factory Road and NH Route 101 where the geometric deficiencies are attributed to multiple crashes over the years.

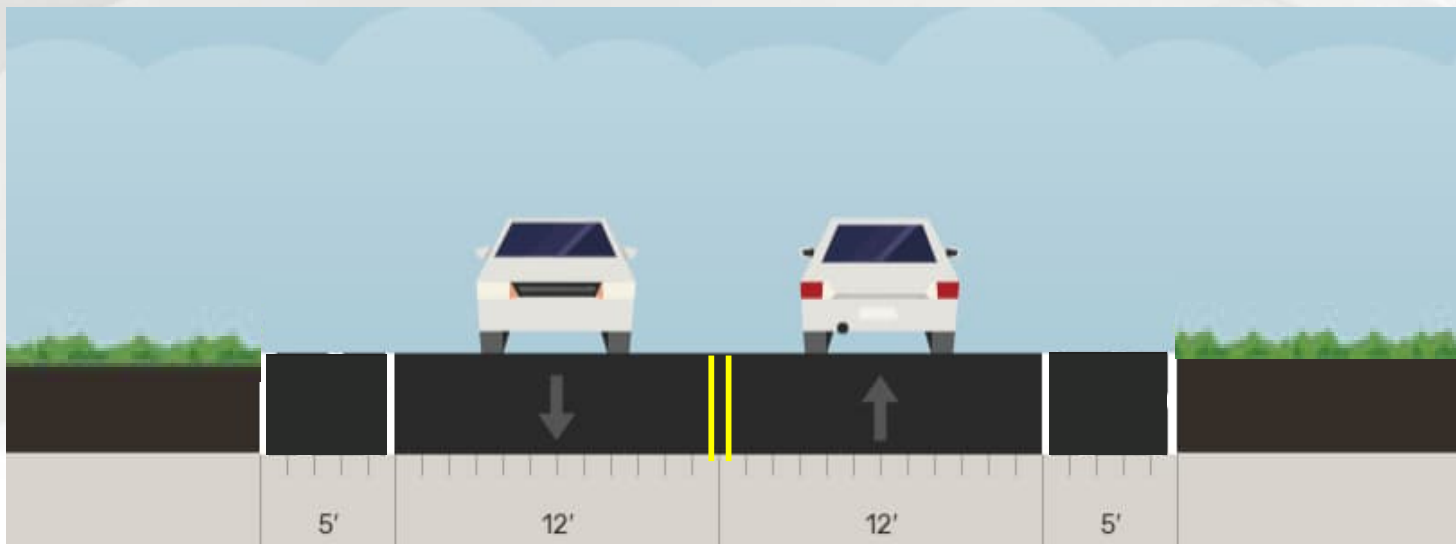
Project Need:

NH Route 101 is one of two major east-west routes in southern New Hampshire and has an average daily traffic (ADT) of 11,000 vehicles based on 2023 traffic counts. The roadway's safety and state of good repair is critical for state commerce, commuting, and tourism. The project is needed to correct the following deficiencies throughout the project's corridor: the existing pavement requires regular maintenance and repairs due to the failing underlying concrete slab; the roadway's untreated drainage discharges to the Branch River which does not meet current water quality treatment standards; roadway geometric deficiencies which are attributed to multiple crashes at the intersection of Swanzey Factory Road; the NH Route 101 bridge over the Branch River is structurally deficient, placing it on the State's Red List; the bridge width is narrower than the approaching roadway, and; the width of NH Route 101 and Swanzey Factory Road limit safe pedestrian and bicycle usage.

Route 101 Cross Section

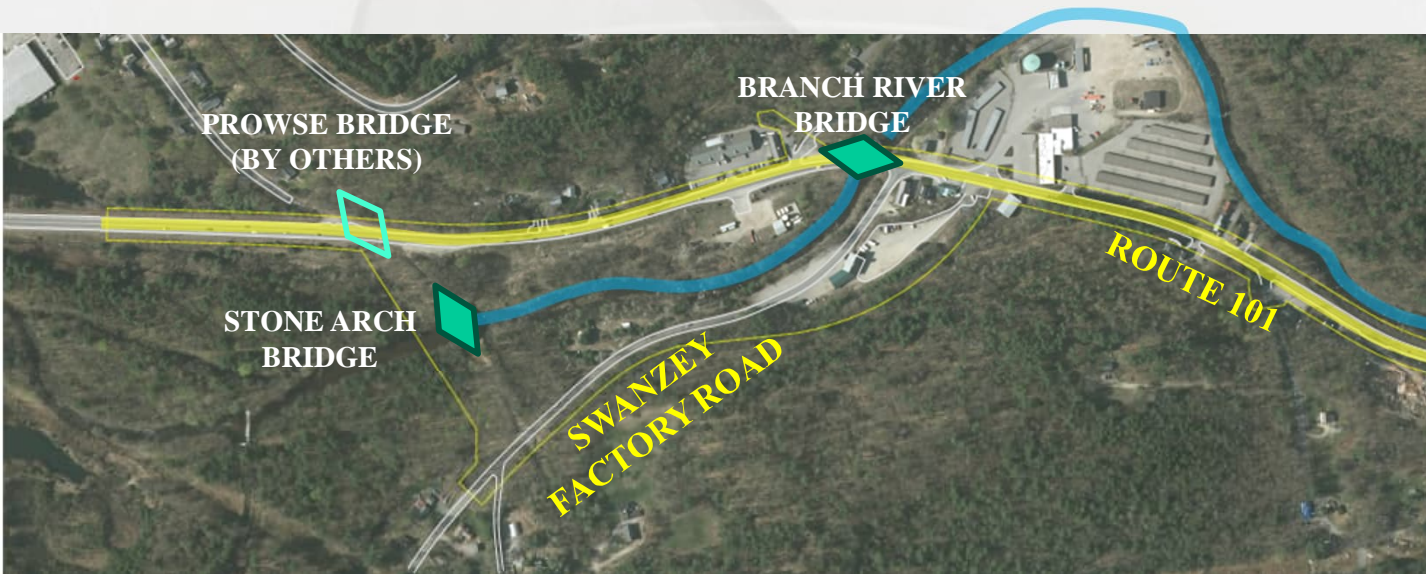


Existing: ~28-feet (shoulders vary)



Proposed: 34-feet

Bridge Structures



Branch River Bridge
National Register Eligible



Prowse Bridge (Future)
By Others

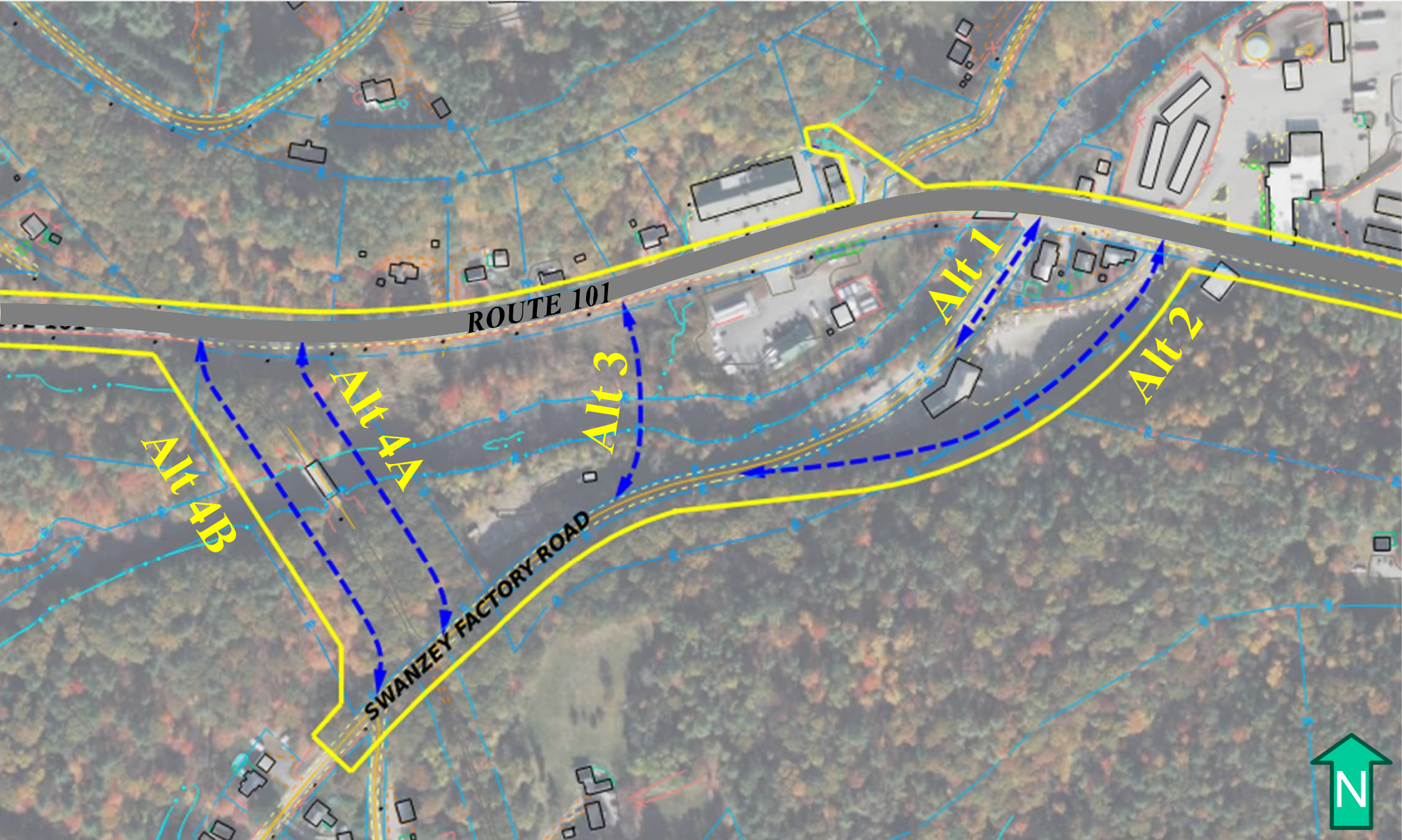


Stone Arch Bridge
National Register

Existing Traffic Conditions: Route 101

- Traffic Counts conducted in May 2023
 - 11,000 Average Daily Vehicles
 - 1,000 Vehicles Per Hour
- Speed Limits
 - Route 101 currently posted 40 mph
 - Advisory speed 30 mph at Swanzey Factory Road
- General Observations:
 - Travel speeds are 45-49 mph
 - Sight Distance limited at Swanzey Factory Road
 - Notable number crashes at Swanzey Factory Road
 - Intersection operations/delays are satisfactory

Swanzey Factory Road Alternatives



Branch River Floodplain / Floodway

Legend

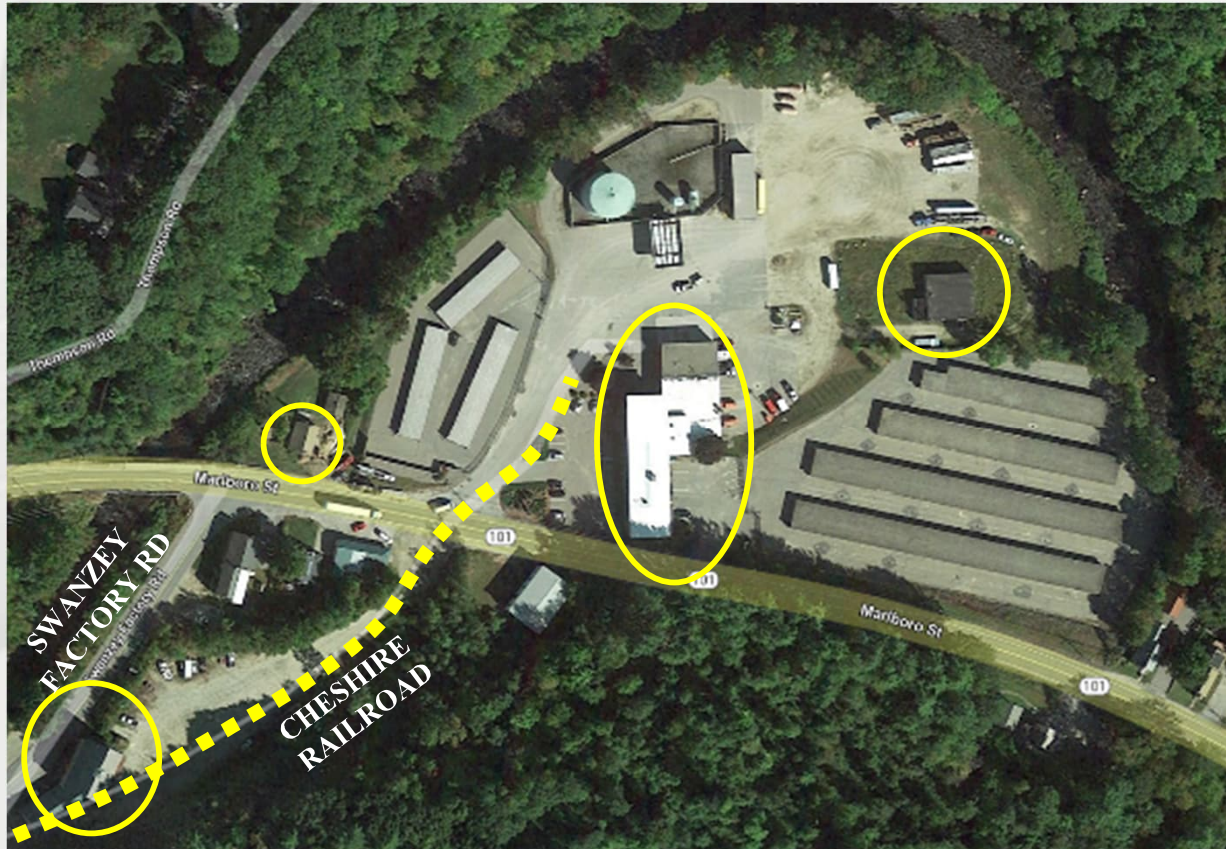
- Road Centerline
- Existing Bridge
- Model Extent
- 100-year Floodplain
- Floodway
- 500-year Floodplain



Natural Resource Assessments to Date

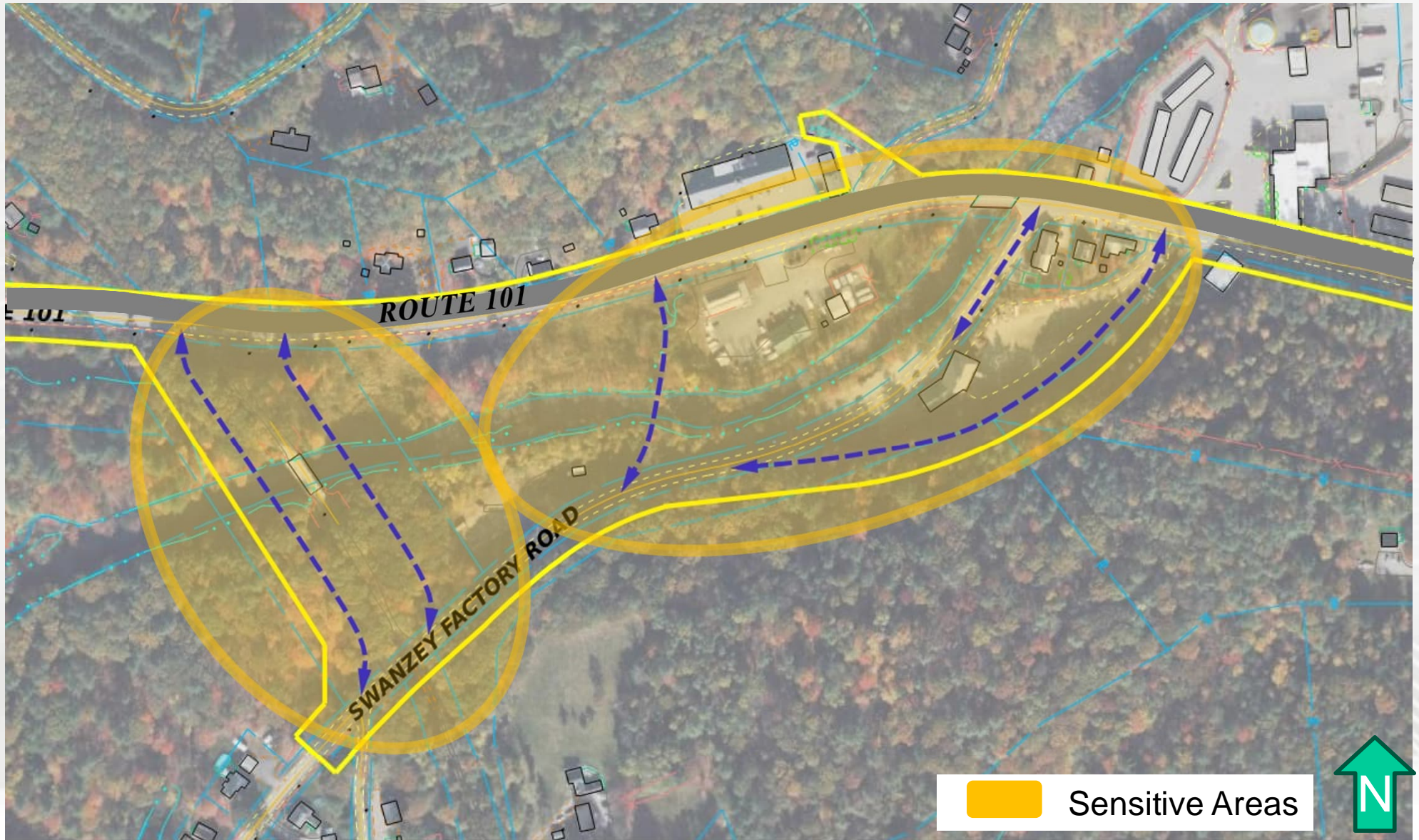
- Floodplains & Floodways – Branch River
- Wetlands – The Branch & Minnewawa and Otter Brooks
- Shorelands
- Federally Listed Species
 - Northern Long Eared Bat
 - Tri-Colored Bat
- State Listed Endangered Species – no findings
- Essential Fish Habitat
- Contaminated Properties
- Invasive Species
- Section 4(f) – Cheshire Rail-Trail, Stone Arch Bridge, other potential properties
- Section 6(f) – no resources

Historic Resources



- Several significant buildings
- Cheshire Railroad – pending

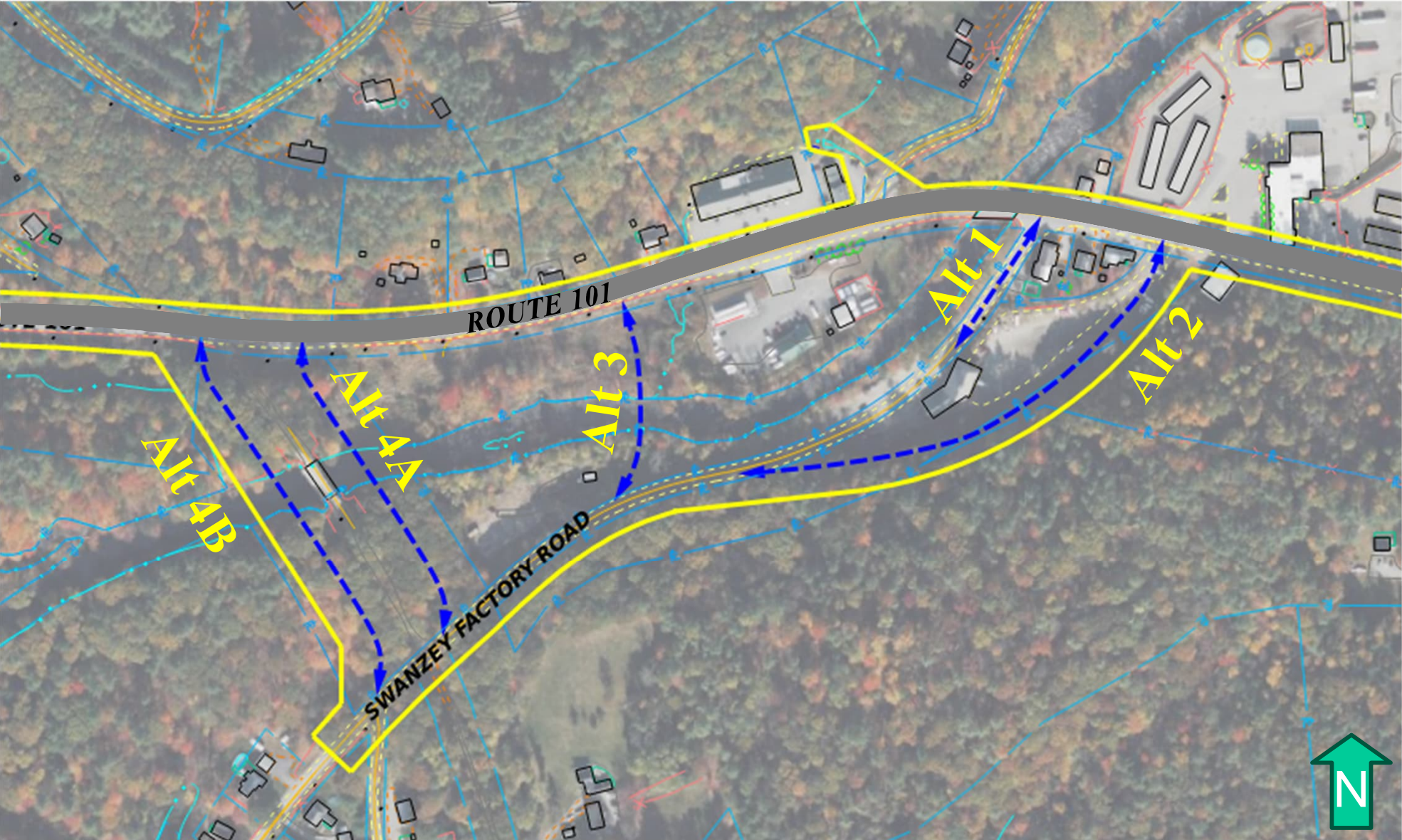
Archaeological Assessments



 Sensitive Areas



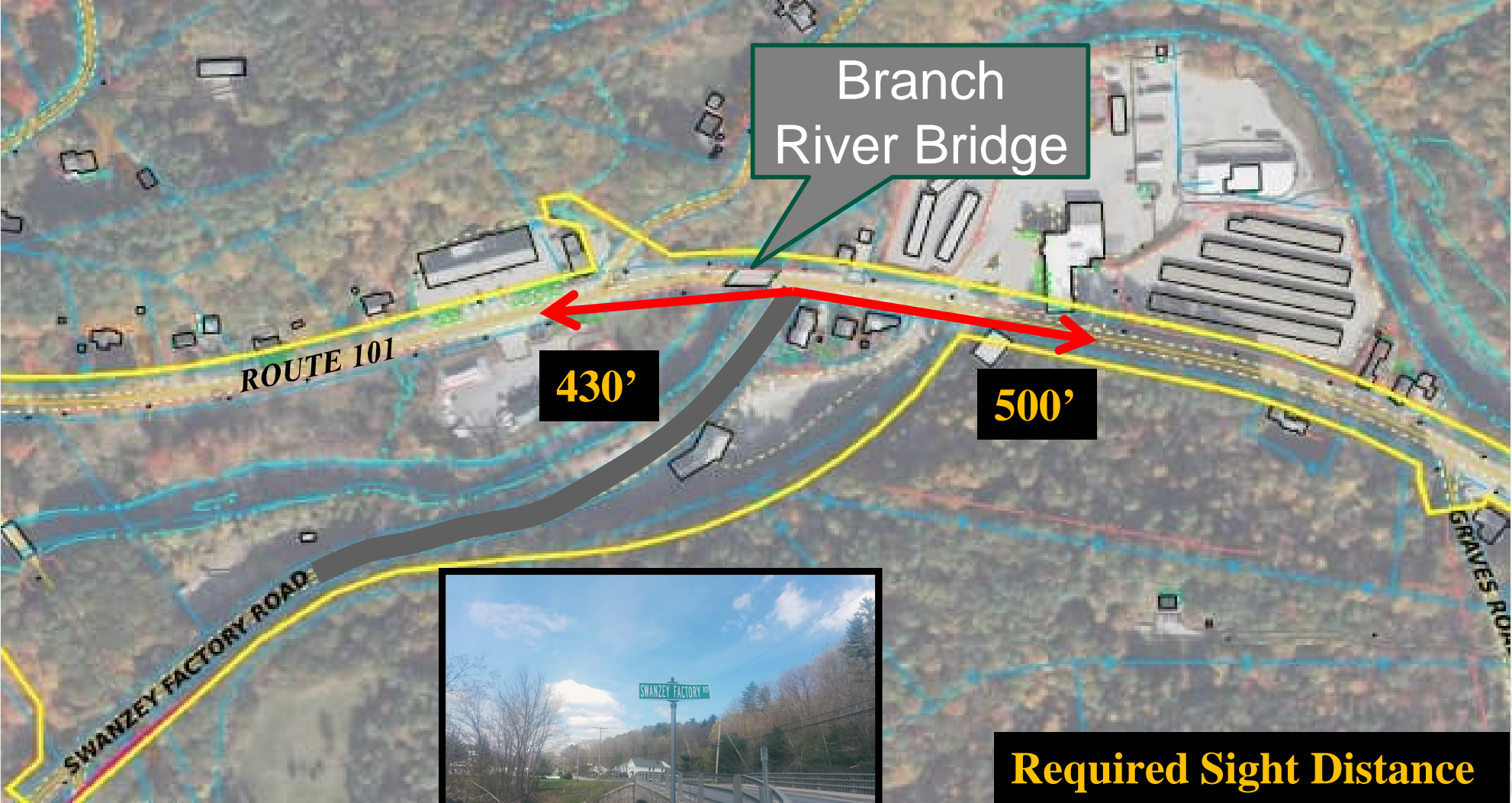
Swanzey Factory Road Alternatives



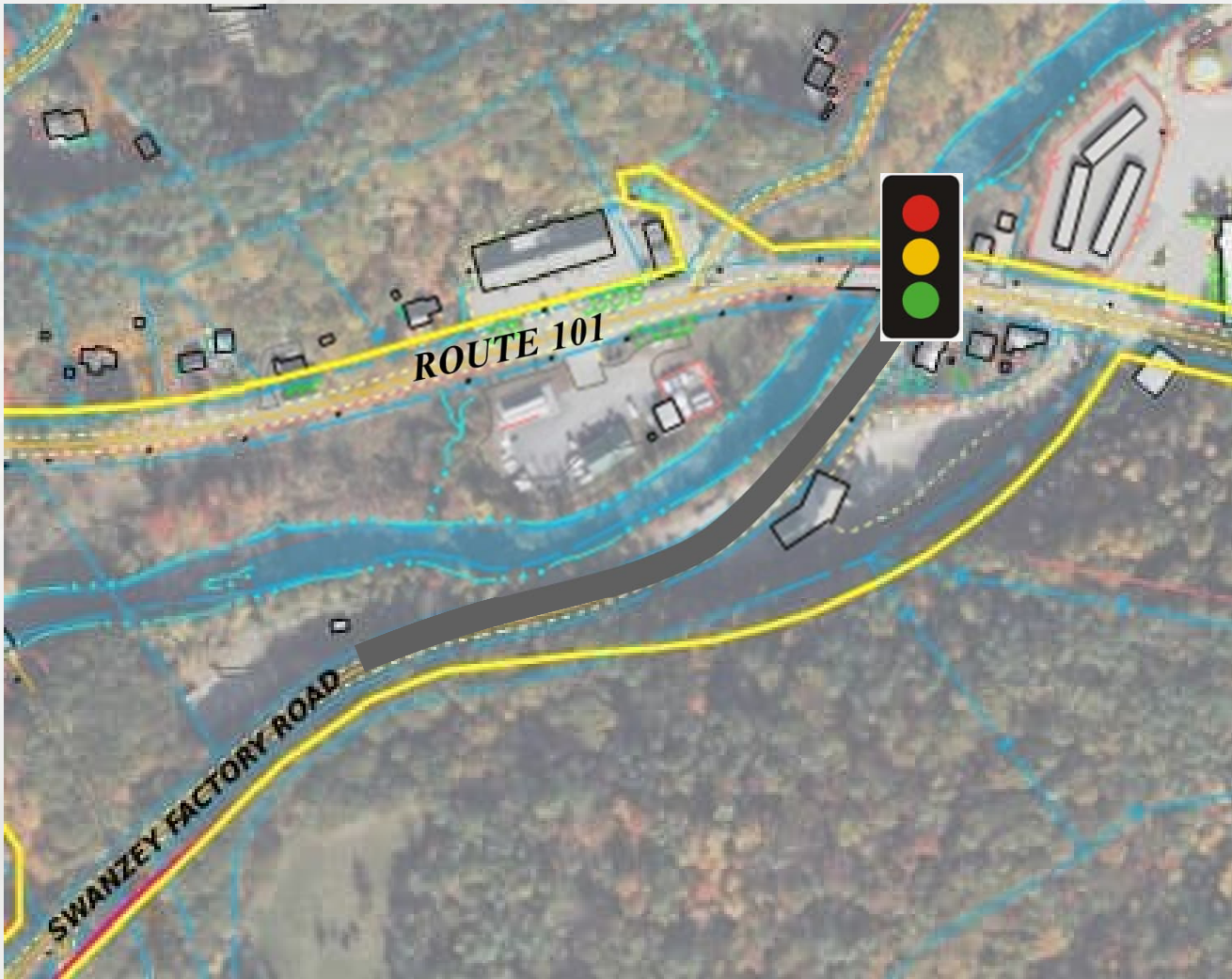
Swanzey Factory Road Selection Criteria

- Safety
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations
- Resource Impacts and Accommodations
- Right-of-Way
- Utilities
- Cost
- Constructability
- Bridge Considerations
- Maintenance
- Meets Purpose and Need
- Public and Stakeholder Support

Sight Distance at Swanzey Factory Road



Alternative 1 Existing Intersection



- Intersection meets signal warrants.
- Signal needed to mitigate sight distance.
- Widening on Route 101 for a left-turn lane needed.
- Roundabout does not fit at this location.

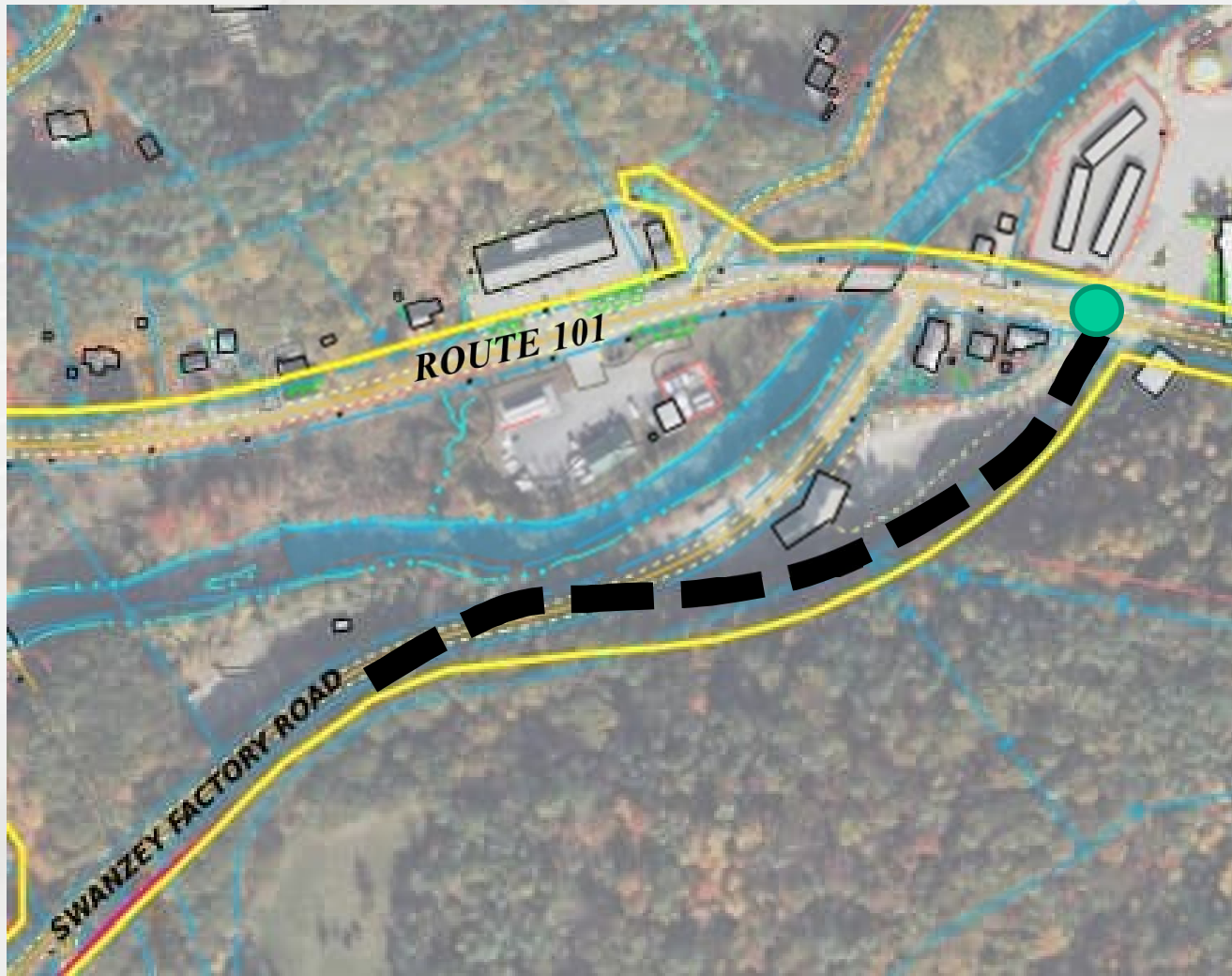
Alternative 1 (Existing) Location



Image source: Google

Looking East on Route 101

Alternative 2: Swanzy Factory Road Realignment



- Follows Cheshire Spur Line
- Intersection control:
 - Traffic signal
 - Roundabout
- Unsignalized intersection will not meet sight distance
- Retaining walls
- Right-of-Way impacts
- Least impactful to:
 - Wetlands/floodplain

Alternative 2: Cheshire Rail Spur – Site Walk

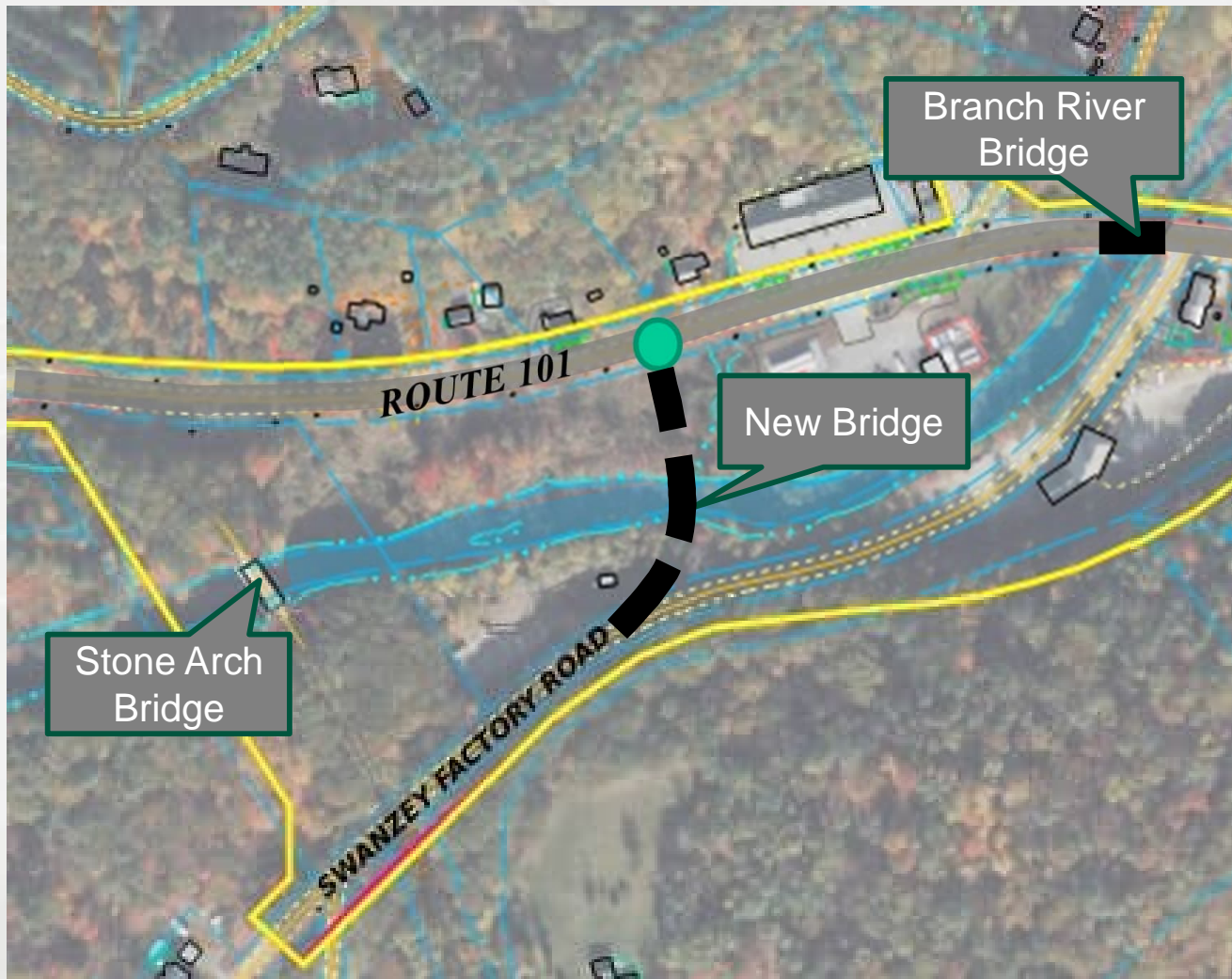


Approximate Alternative 2 Location



Looking East on Route 101

Alternative 3 New Bridge Crossing



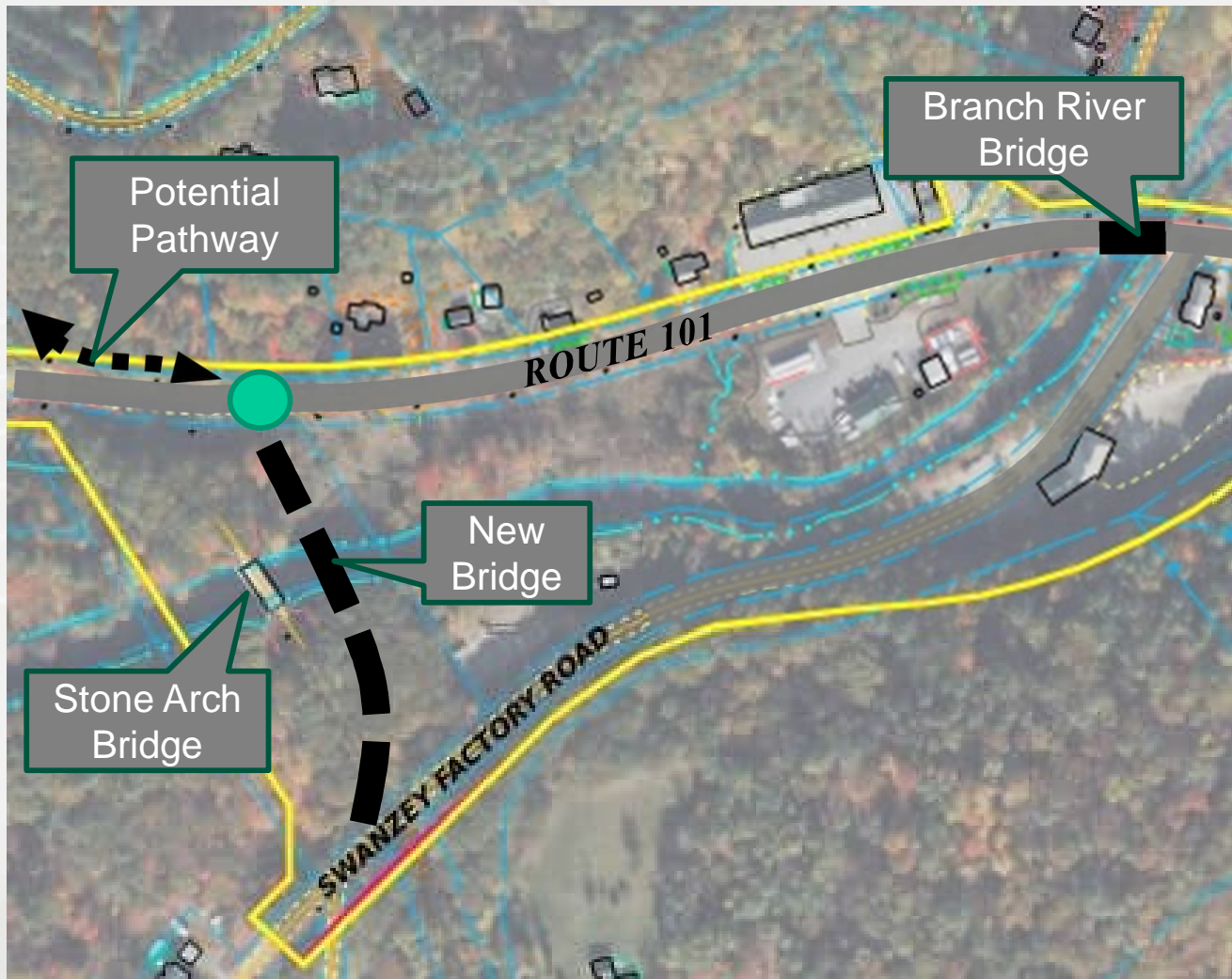
- Right-of-Way required
- New bridge required
- View of Stone Arch Bridge
- Intersection could be:
 - Signalized
 - Unsignalized / Stop-controlled
- Roundabout does not fit well at this location.
- Floodplain impacts
- Early Archeological Sensitivity

Approximate Alternative 3 Location



Looking East on Route 101

Alternative 4A New Bridge Crossing



- In State Right-of-Way
- Requires new bridge structure
- Potential to enhance view or obstruct Stone Arch Bridge
- Intersection control:
 - Signal
 - Unsignalized/Stop-control
 - Roundabout
- Early Archeological Sensitivity
- Visual Impacts to Stone Arch Bridge
- Floodplain Impacts

Approximate Alternative 4A Location

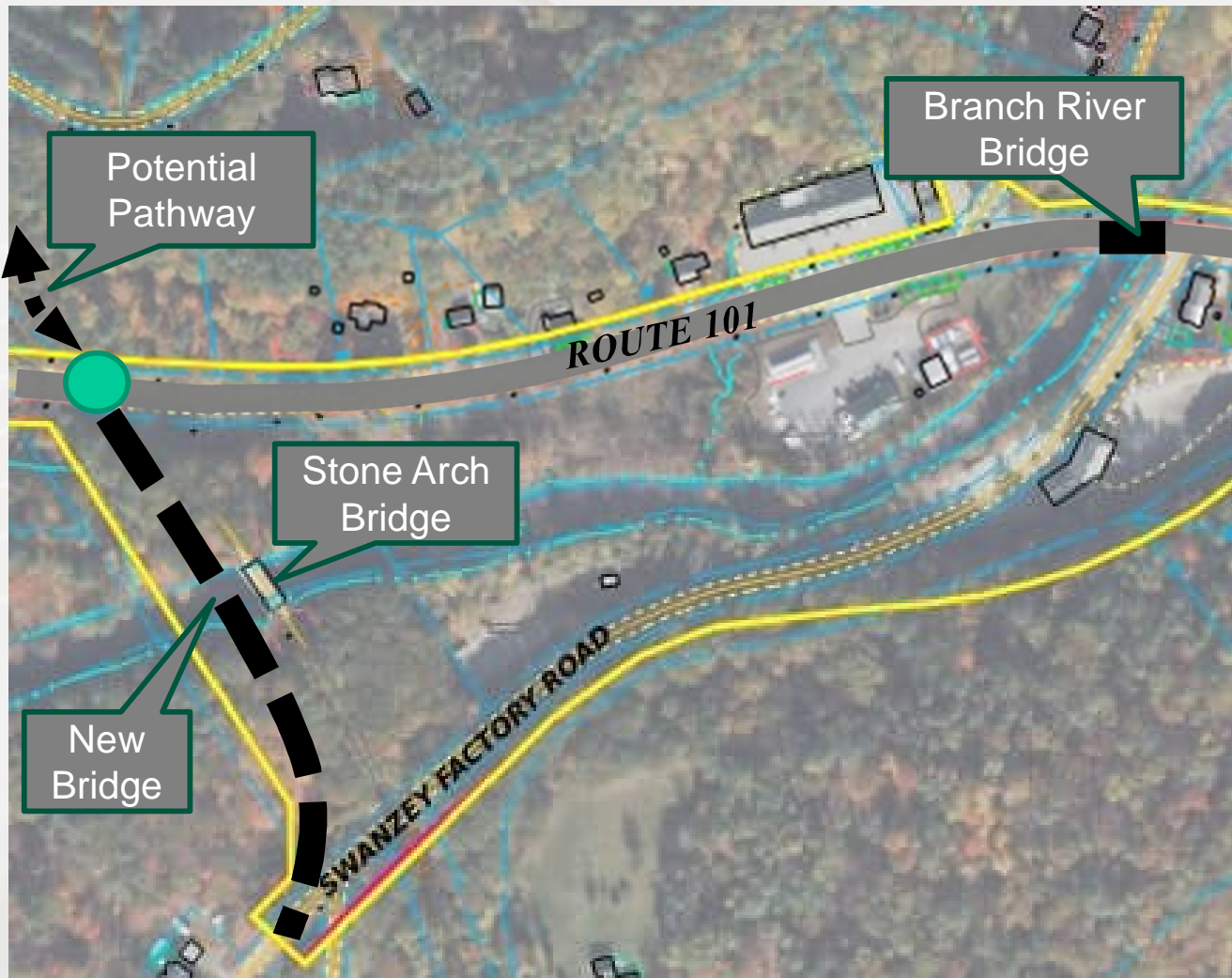


Potential pathway connection

Looking East on Route 101

Image source: Google

Alternative 4B New Bridge Crossing



- In State Right-of-Way
- Requires new bridge structure
- Within the Stone Arch Bridge view shed
- Intersection could be:
 - Signalized
 - Unsignalized / Stop-controlled
 - Roundabout
- Provide an at-grade crossing for Cheshire Rail Trail.
- May preclude Prowse Bridge Overpass
- Early Archeological Sensitivity
- Floodplain Impacts

Approximate Alternative 4B Location

Potential pathway connection



Looking East on Route 101

Image source: Google

Tonight's Workshop

1. Review the Project Purpose and Need
2. Provide General Comments on the Project
3. Provide Comments on the Swanzey Factory Rd Alternatives
4. What do you want to hear at the next meeting?

Next Steps

- Evaluate 2 Swanzey Road Alternatives
- Investigate Repairs/Replacement of Branch River Bridge
- Continue Project Working Group / Public Officials Meetings
- Preliminary Engineering / NEPA Permitting 2025
- **Next Public Information Meeting – TBD**
- Public Hearing – Spring 2025
- Final Design: 2026-2028

Thank you!

David S. Smith, P.E.
Project Manager
Bureau of Highway Design
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

Office (603) 271-2165

David.S.Smith@dot.nh.gov

<https://www.dot.nh.gov/projects-plans-and-programs/project-center/keene-41590>