Foxstand Bridge
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Town of Royalton 8/6/2025

Why was Foxstand Bridge closed?
The State of Vermont inspectors discovered critical findings on the gusset plates and trusses in May of 2024 and closed the bridge to avoid structure failure and risk of potential injury or death.

What is the current plan for re-opening Foxstand Bridge?
The Selectboard voted on June 24, 2025 to proceed directly to the permanent bridge project with the goal of being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. Construction will begin in the summer of 2027, and the bridge will open in the fall of 2028.

Who are the key players on this project?
This project is managed by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT).

How much will it cost to build a permanent replacement bridge?
If built today, a permanent bridge would cost ~$6,000,000 and the town would be responsible for 5% of the cost. Considering that construction costs increase 5% each year, a permanent bridge would cost ~ $6,945,750 in 2028. The town share would $347,287.

How much will this cost the average taxpayer?
The town would need to raise $82,429 annually for three years by increasing the tax rate by $.29. The tax increase for a property appraised at $200,000 would be $58 per year for a three-year total of $174. The tax increase for a property appraised at $300,000 would be $87 per year for a three-year total of $261.

Why can't Foxstand Bridge just be removed now?
Foxstand Bridge is a historic structure and falls under the Federal historic preservation permitting process. Once paperwork is started it can take up to 2 years before a structure can be altered.

Was bridge rehabilitation given serious consideration?
Yes, this was not a viable option given the cost of the repairs that would only temporarily extend the life of the bridge.

When could the state install a temporary bridge?
The AOT could install and open a temporary bridge by fall of 2026.

How much would a temporary bridge cost?
If built today, a temporary bridge would cost ~3,000,000 and the town would be responsible for 5% of the total cost. Factoring in a 5% cost increase each year, the town share in 2026 would ~$157,000.

How would a temporary bridge impact the permanent bridge project?
Constructing a temporary bridge increases the town's cost share of the permanent bridge from 5% to 10% (ACT 153). Additionally, the state has confirmed that a temporary bridge would be in place until 2035, delaying the permanent project by 9 years.

If built today, a permanent bridge would cost the Town ~$6,000,000. Factoring in a 5% cost increase each year, the town would be responsible for 10% of ~$9,773,367 in 2035.

The total cost to the town for both the temporary bridge and the permanent bridge would be ~$1,134,336. The cost difference between the two options is ~ $787,049.

How much would pursuing a temporary bridge cost the average taxpayer?
The town would need to raise $103,433 annually for 10 years by increasing the tax rate by $.37. The tax increase for a property appraised at $200,000 would be $74 per year for a ten-year total of $740. The tax increase for a property appraised at $300,000 would be $111 per year for a ten-year total of $1,110.

Has the town explored other sources of a temporary bridge?
Yes, the town requested assistance from the Vermont National Guard, Army Corps of Engineers and explored bridge options in other states. These were either not viable options or were more cost-prohibitive than proceeding with AOT plans.

Why does constructing a temporary bridge cost the town more money?
Act 153 was established in 2012 by the Vermont Legislative to support the advancement of accelerated bridge construction throughout the state. Act 153 reduces the town share by 50% of projects if the town elects to close the bridge rather than install a temporary bridge.

How much money does the town have currently saved for this project?
The town currently has $100,000 set aside for the bridge project. This amount was raised per an earlier estimate from AOT before their engineers knew that there was deeper and less stable bedrock, requiring larger abutments and a longer bridge span of 220ft.

What is the scope of community impact during bridge closure?
AOT has calculated an estimated cost to the community with the assumption that 550 vehicles per day would use the bridge if open today (residents, contractors, delivery truck drivers, farms, and businesses). This estimated cost to users is ~$587,394.50 per year of bridge closure.

How was this figure calculated?
AOT assumed 80% of the traffic travels southbound on Back River Road back to VT 14 over Bridge St. (3.5 mile detour – added 2.2 miles) and 20% of the traffic travels northbound on Gilman Rd traveling around to the I-89 Northbound Ramp. (6.9 mile detour – additional 6 miles).

550 trips * 80% * 3.5 miles * $0.70 = $1,078 per day for southbound traffic
550 trips * 20% * 6.9 miles * $0.70 = $531.30 per day for northbound traffic
=$1,609.30 per day
=$587,394.50 per year

This calculation assumes that every vehicle starts at one side of the bridge, can't cross, and then must seek a detour to the north or to the south depending on their direction of travel. This does not consider the people that know the road is closed and depart directly from their homes in the appropriate north or south direction.

What is the status of Bridge Street Bridge (Bridge #31)?
ECI sandblasted, repaired, and painted Bridge Street Bridge in 2023. The decking was repaired in 2024. There are no current structural concerns for this bridge.

What if I have additional questions or need something clarified?
Please contact Ryan Britch, Royalton Town Administrator, with any questions at 802-763-7967 or Townadmin@royaltonvt.gov.