

---

## 4.0 Vision for the Future

This Vision Statement is based on the Visioning Workshop held on September 19, 2001. It was later revised to reflect development of the plan with the Advisory Committee.

Route 101 is a major highway that divides the Town of Bedford and has impacts on neighborhoods and businesses along the 101 Corridor; traffic on the highway creates significant safety problems for those who depend on it for local access; yet, a majority of the traffic carried by the highway is regional, not local, in origin. The following represents a vision for improving the highway and making it a productive and enjoyable part of the Town of Bedford.

Safety is the highest priority. Route 101 should be made safe for Bedford residents and businesses by controlling speeds, providing safer intersection designs and traffic signals as necessary, improving visibility and appropriately managing access to and from businesses. Some inconvenience is acceptable to achieve better safety.

*Possible options:* reduction of posted speeds with increased enforcement, traffic signals at key intersections with coordinated signal timing, restrictions on left turns at some locations, jug-handle intersection for reversing direction.

There should be a better balance between the capacity of the highway and the traffic it carries, but this should be accomplished without undue impacts to residences, businesses, open space, and landscaping along the highway. Improvements to Route 101 should be made so that traffic does not divert through neighborhood streets and cause impacts on these neighborhoods.

*Possible options:* selective widening at intersections while maintaining a two-lane cross-section between intersections, coordinated signal timing, depressing through lanes at some locations.

Conflicts between through traffic and local access should be reduced.

*Possible options:* frontage roads or direct connections between parcels for local access, turning lanes at intersections and business driveways

The best solution from the point of view of many in Bedford would be to remove regional traffic from the Route 101 Corridor (through construction of a bypass); however, it is recognized that a bypass proposal does not have support from other towns and has too many serious obstacles to



Route 101 at Gage Girls Road  
(photo by Sandy Chandler)

---

success to make it a practical strategy for solving Bedford's problems with the highway.

The barrier effect of Route 101, which divides the town in half, should be reduced and mitigated. Pedestrians and bicycles should be able to move safely across the corridor, within the town center, and within residential neighborhoods.

*Possible options:* pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular overpass for local trips at locations such as the Bell Hill/Nashua Road crossing.

The heritage and pedestrian scale of the historic town center should be preserved, but additional town center open space is desired, and existing activity centers such as shopping and recreation areas should be strengthened in a way that is pedestrian-oriented.

*Possible options:* development or redevelopment of some commercially zoned land in the town center area; use of land along Route 101 for town center parkland; use landscaping to denote town center and signal motorists to slow down.

Development along Route 101 should be limited to areas already zoned commercial. New development of vacant commercial parcels and redevelopment of older commercial sites should provide adequate landscaping, building design in keeping with Bedford's heritage, and should be on a scale compatible with the aesthetic and the traffic management vision for the Route 101 Corridor. Development should be pedestrian-friendly.

*Possible options:* site plan review, clear design guidelines and incentives, landscaping along roadway and on commercial development sites.