TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN
STAFF REPORT
For September 8, 2025, Town Council Meeting

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff suggests Town Council implement the recommendations of *Ridgeway Avenue One-Way Analysis*, a study prepared by McAdams (formerly Traffic Planning and Design, Inc. (TPD)) for the Town and dated April 7, 2023. In addition, staff suggest Council direct staff to create a zone for pedestrians and cyclists on the roadway segments that are converted to one-way.

With a finding that converting to a one-way traffic pattern will not negatively impact Levels of Service, the McAdams (formerly TPD) study recommends making S. Ridgeway Avenue, as well as the portion of Sutton Avenue between S. Ridgeway Avenue and S. Richardson Avenue, one-way.

DETAILS OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Town engaged McAdams (formerly TPD) to conduct a traffic analysis for S. Ridgeway Avenue and the adjacent portion of Sutton Avenue, evaluating a one-way traffic flow scenario. "This two-way to one-way traffic conversion will create an opportunity to reallocate roadway width to provide a shoulder for bicycle and pedestrian traffic on S. Ridgeway Avenue" (quoting from the executive summary).

Ridgeway Avenue One-Way Analysis recommends making South Ridgeway Avenue, as well as the portion of Sutton Avenue between S. Ridgeway Avenue and S. Richardson Avenue, one-way. To implement the recommendation, the Town will have to take the following steps:

- In consultation with DOT, adjust the timing of the signal at S. Richardson Boulevard & State Street.
- Install signage:
    - At the S. Ridgeway Avenue & State Street intersection: One-Way signage on S. Ridgeway Avenue to alert motorists of the direction of vehicular flow.
    - At the S. Richardson Boulevard & Sutton Avenue intersection:
        - DO NOT ENTER and Right Turn Only signage on Sutton Avenue to alert motorists of the direction of vehicular flow and prevent wrong way travel.
        - NO LEFT TURN signs on southbound Richardson Boulevard.
    - At the S. Ridgeway Avenue & Center Avenue intersection:
        - DO NOT ENTER, ONE WAY, and NO RIGHT TURN signs on Center Avenue and S. Ridgeway Avenue to alert motorists of the direction of travel and prevent wrong way travel.

With the street segments serving in a one-lane/one-way capacity, there is room to create a zone for pedestrians and cyclists, with pavement markings and/or physical barriers safely separating motorized and non-motorized users. As this area of downtown is experiencing development and redevelopment,

and as the large parcel that is 141 S. Richardson Blvd can reasonably be expected to be occupied or more intensely developed in the future, now is the time to establish critical portions of the Town's long-stated multi-modal transportation goals.

South Ridgeway Avenue is 0.19 mile in length, according to the Powell Bill Stret Map of Black Mountain. Sutton Avenue between South Ridgeway Avenue and South Richardson Avenue is approximately 0.076 mile in length. Thus, the full extent of the project is .266 mile. South Ridgeway Avenue is bordered by the Central Business (CB) zoning district on the west, by CB and Highway Business (HB-8) on the east. Sutton Avenue between South Ridgeway Avenue and South Richardson Avenue is bordered by CB on the north and by the Norfolk Southern right-of-way on the south.

ANALYSIS

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED POLICY GUIDANCE:

The Future Land Use Map in the Town's comprehensive plan, *Elevate Black Mountain*, identifies all of South Ridgeway Avenue and all of Sutton Avenue as being in the Downtown area. Downtown is one of six ***Activity and Employment*** areas on the map. (In addition, there are five ***Neighborhood*** areas.) One of the four *Opportunities* for Downtown is: "Enhance streetscapes with street trees, wider sidewalks, pedestrian amenities, and burying overhead wires."

Elevate Black Mountain has eight Development Principles, one of which specifically emphasizes pedestrians and cyclists:
Principle 4: Places throughout Black Mountain are well connected and designed to balance the needs of pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, and transit users.
Among the opportunities identified are:

- Well-connected streets will be designed with short blocks and include sidewalks to facilitate walking.
- Streets and trails will have high connectivity within and between neighborhoods and commercial districts.
- Bicycle and pedestrian paths and supporting amenities will be integrated into new development and areas undergoing redevelopment.

Elevate's goals emphasize multi-modal transportation, including specific policy recommendations.
WALKABLE & LIVABLE
Goal 2.1: Complete neighborhoods with diverse housing options and walkable daily needs, jobs, and services
Policy 2.1.2: Build a network of active mixed-use walkable centers that are well-connected by multimodal corridors.

Goal 2.4: Unique community character that celebrates the Town's history, provides gateways, enhances safety, and creates active and exciting places

Policy 2.4.2: Use the town's walkable and special historic character as a guide for design of new development.

Goal 2.6: An active environment that supports physical activity and healthy living
Policy 2.6.1: New growth should use best practice principles of walkable design to improve human health through active modes of transportation.

CONNECTED & ACCESSIBLE
Goal 6.1: Multiple safe and realistic transportation mode options for residents
Policy 6.1.1: Enhance street intersection safety, pedestrian crossings, and other traffic-calming measures.
Policy 6.1.2: Prioritize physical barriers, such as curbs, on-street parking, trees, curbs, or bollards, between automobile lanes and non-automotive infrastructure.

Goal 6.2: Non-automotive transportation network
Policy 6.2.1: Establish a connected network of local and regional protected bicycle lanes, paths, and greenways.
Policy 6.2.2: Expand the Town's sidewalk and street tree network within both new and existing development. Enhance connectivity between denser neighborhoods and services.

The *Black Mountain Creating Outdoor Recreation Economies (CORE) Strategic Plan 2023-2028* includes Action Strategy #5 that states, in part, "Walkability and bikeability are vital to making the community more hospitable to a broader variety of people including young children."

Black Mountain by Bike – A Plan for Bicyclists (2026) identifies how the Town can create places where residents can access healthy food and reconnect neighborhoods via multi-modal transportation infrastructure.

Photos taken on 7/28.2025:




SPEED LIMIT
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