

**Agenda Summary**  
**May 22, 2024**

**Agenda Item No. B-1**  
**Stowe Foliage Arts Festival Traffic Mitigation Discussion**

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**Summary:** Attached is a letter from Tim Cianciola of Craftproducers asking to further discuss the Selectboard's request that he evaluates ways to mitigate traffic impact from the Stowe Foliage Arts Festival on Indigenous People's Day Weekend (October 11-13), such as a shuttle service. The letter explains from his perspective that a shuttle would not work for a singular event. Also, that Stowe's Traffic Study indicates "there is no spike in traffic the weekend of the craft show compared to any other fall weekend." His letter also indicates measures they do take to mitigate traffic.

**Town Plan Impact:** N/A

**Fiscal Impact:** N/A

**Recommendation:** Discuss and advise.

At the February 14 Selectboard meeting, the application for the Stowe Arts Festival was approved. However, the issue of traffic on the holiday weekend was a concern, and I was asked to research possible solutions, including a shuttle. I did research shuttles, as well as attended the Selectboard meeting where the findings of the Town of Stowe Highway Capacity and Congestion Evaluation (aka Traffic Study) were presented.

Starting with the Traffic Study:

- **Slide 8** of the Traffic Study titled “**Winter Analysis – February**” shows distinct peaks and valleys when comparing weekends (peaks) to weekdays (valleys) in February for ski season. There is an additional, isolated weekend spike the third week of February, which may correspond to school breaks or other ski-weekend-related factors.
- On the other hand, **Slide 13** of the Traffic Study titled “**Summer Analysis – August**” does not show distinct peaks and valleys, which seems to indicate there is no individual cause for more congestion at any given time during summer.
- This brings us to **Slide 16** titled “**Fall Analysis – October.**” The study shows that, while traffic is heavier in the fall (ie., Sept through Oct) than it is earlier in summer, there is no spike in traffic the weekend of the craft show compared to any other fall weekend. For example, the blue line representing 2019 shows that Oct 6-8 (the weekend of the show that year) is not the busiest.

Regarding a shuttle, I found that:

- The idea of running a shuttle from Waterbury or Richmond to the show assumes that most people are coming to the show from Burlington or elsewhere. Not only does your data not support this, but your consultant said any such single-weekend response would not work because it would be impossible to get the word out for a shuttle to a single event. Other professionals explained that, for such a shuttle to be appealing, it would need to run every 20 minutes which means it would require at least 6-8 vehicles running non-stop and that most would be empty and just contribute to the congestion.

- The idea of running a shuttle within Stowe is also problematic to do for a single weekend. What is worse, to get to the Events Field lot, people would have to pass through two big choke points first – (1) the intersection at the village and (2) the Moscow Road entry to the Mountain Road. Again, before or after the show they are heading to the notch, to the resort for activities there, or around town to other destinations. The consultant recommended that a gradual and organic approach is required instead and that a shuttle for just a single event would not help and would only add more backup and traffic.

What have we done and will continue to do?

- We have all been aware for years that Stowe is busy. We have partnered well with the Stowe Police and our parking lot attendants to enforce a long driving lane after turning in towards parking to avoid backups; in fact, the Traffic Study shouted us out in recognition of our efficiency.
- We have had designated bike parking for years and continue to welcome anyone who attends by way of the bike path. We also ensure the path is open and not blocked in all directions.
- When tour buses reach out for group pricing (such as school groups in the area or others), we coordinate with them in advance and have reserved space for them to park and easily get in and out of the show. We can and will do some paid social media posts as well as advertise on our website that any such groups reach out to us in advance to arrange group pricing.

## Summary

Because the people coming to the show are mostly tourists, we are not the only destination. They are out, coming to the show, going to the mountain, driving over the gap, and shopping and dining in town. According to the consultant, a solution needs to be more holistic, such as possibly an extension of the winter shuttle to year-round. This requires extensive work and planning, such as parking, a schedule of stops, turnarounds, running longer hours, etc.

We hope to partner with the town for this type of long-term, ongoing solution so that our long signature event that has contributed much to the town over the years may continue. Meanwhile, if the driveway is widened for faster in/out we can beef up the lot attendants to move the traffic

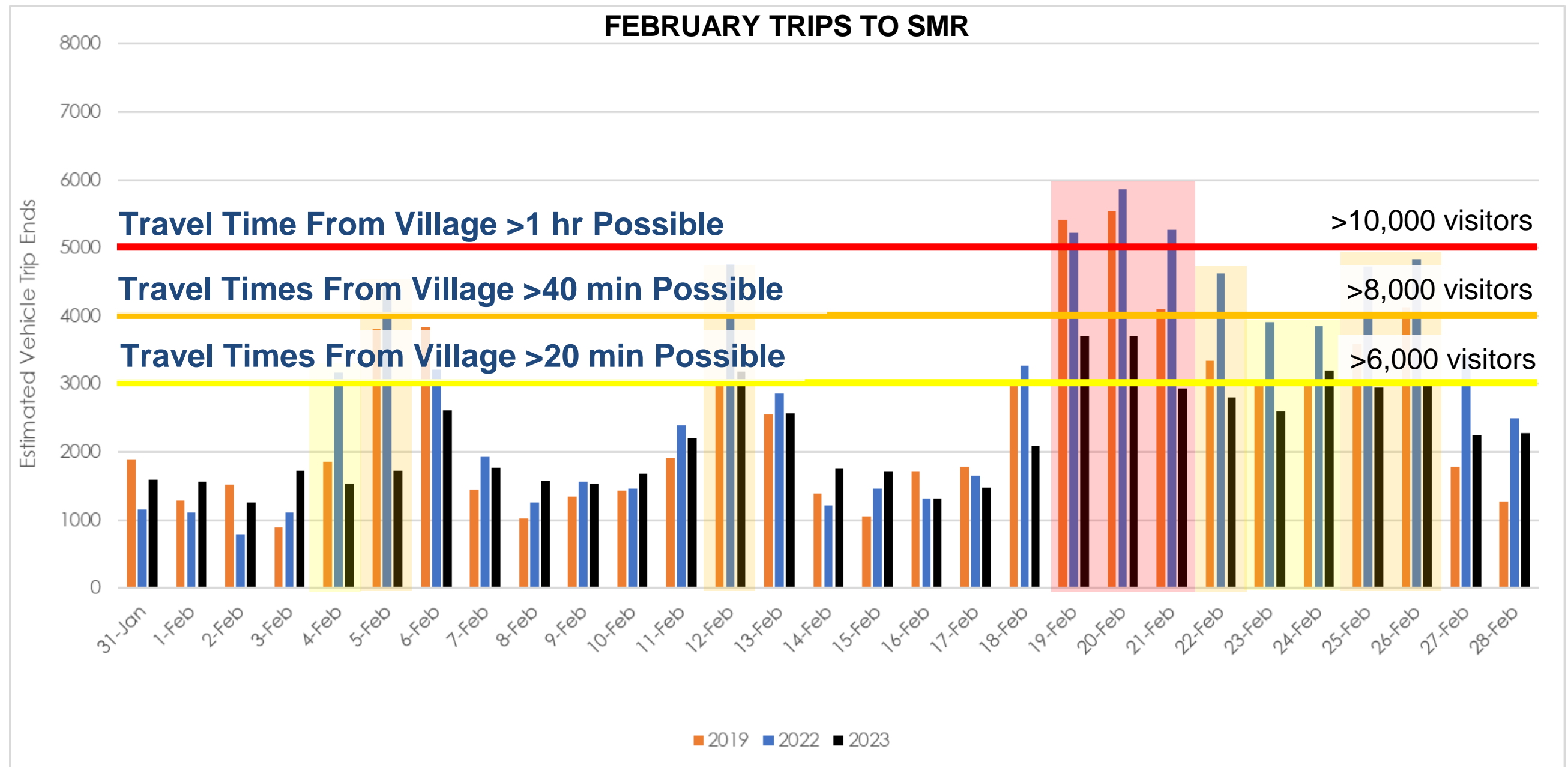
there even faster. Or, if people were to arrive by a season-wide shuttle, we would happily charge patrons a discounted entry fee. Meanwhile, a do-it-alone solution for a single event shuttle on our part is not a viable or helpful option.

I look forward to meeting with you and discussing this.

Respectfully,

Tim Cianciola  
Craftproducers

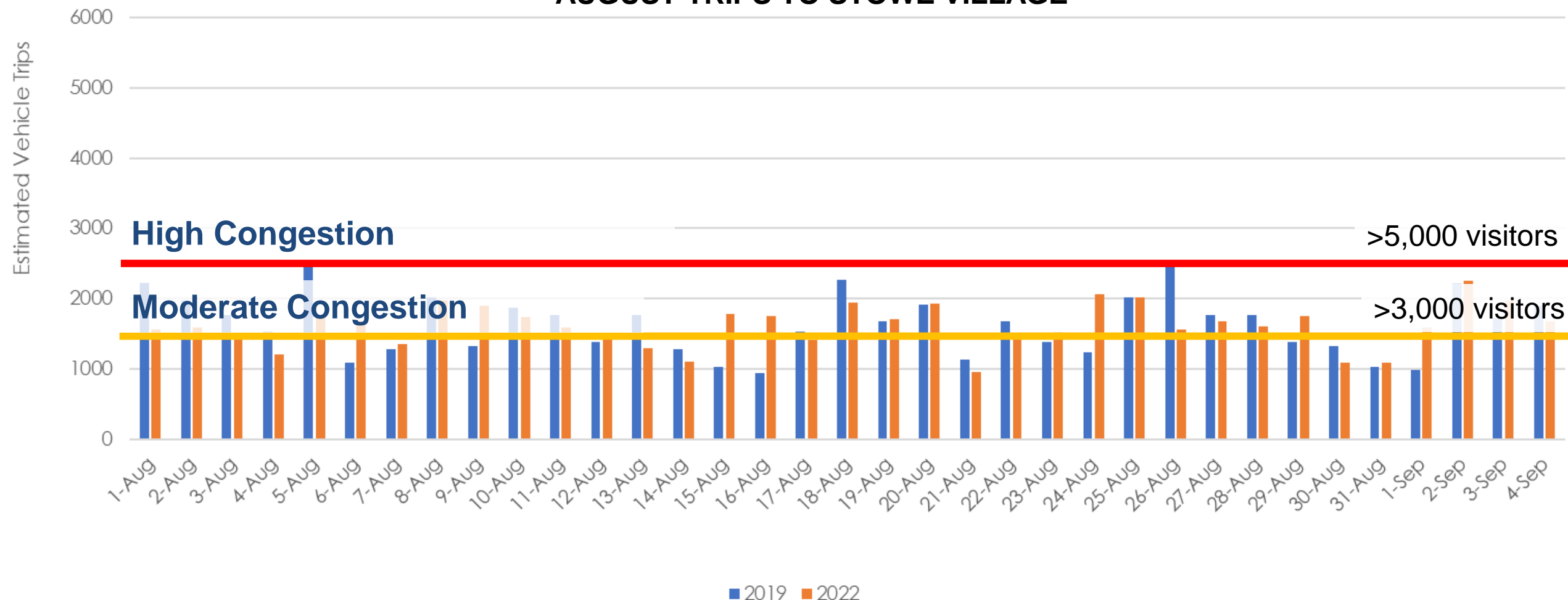
# WINTER ANALYSIS - FEBRUARY



**\*The values presented here are intended to be used for general guidance only. Other factors such as weather, operating hours, events, parking policies, etc. may affect levels of congestion.**

# SUMMER ANALYSIS - AUGUST

## AUGUST TRIPS TO STOWE VILLAGE



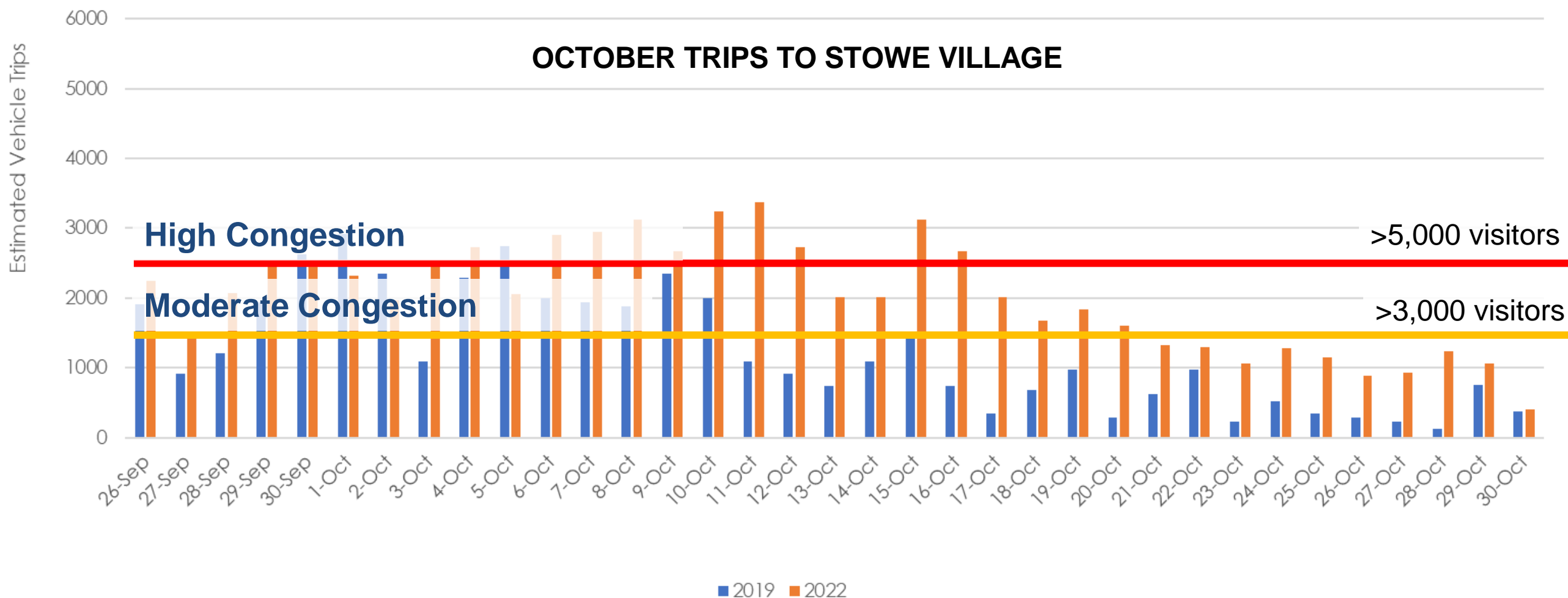
**High Congestion:** Significant daytime queuing on Main Street and Mountain Road into village. Queues may exceed ½ mile at times. Periods of stand still traffic through the village. Intersections in village operate at LOS F for at least 8 hours of the day.

**Moderate Congestion:** Moderate daytime queuing on Main Street and Mountain Road into Village. Queues may exceed ¼ mile at times. Intersections in village operate at LOS F for at least 4 hours of the day.

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# FALL ANALYSIS - OCTOBER



**High Congestion:** Significant daytime queuing on Main Street and Mountain Road into village. Queues may exceed ½ mile at times. Periods of stand still traffic through the village. Intersections in village operate at LOS F for at least 8 hours of the day.

**Moderate Congestion:** Moderate daytime queuing on Main Street and Mountain Road into Village. Queues may exceed ¼ mile at times. Intersections in village operate at LOS F for at least 4 hours of the day.

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